

Waking Up to the Dark: The Black Madonna's Gospel for an Age of Extinction and Collapse

Clark Strand

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Clark Strand's mystical treatise *Waking Up to the Dark* encourages reconsidering and preserving the entity of night amid a world of incessant brightness.

The book reflects upon life prior to gas lighting and Thomas Edison's revolutionary incandescent bulb. It claims that people were more attuned to natural light then, and that their biological rhythms adjusted to the seasonal shifts of the sun. Candles and oil lamps existed, but for the most part, darkness enveloped dwellings until morning. The night was a time for "storytelling and listening, musing...sleeping and dreaming." Even sex seemed more intimate.

Following the advent of electricity, when light became available upon demand and televisions soon followed, people's attention spans were diverted, and the evening hours were extended. The book notes that laptops and cellphones create a constant, interactive glow of information, while the artificial illumination of landscapes disorients wildlife and diminishes the moon and stars.

With an intriguing balance of scientific and spiritual wisdom, the book suggests that perceptions of the night be reevaluated. Often associated with sinister entities or insomnia, the night should instead be regarded as a time of healing. It claims that, without the "velvety silences" of darkness, humans suffer from physical and emotional imbalances.

Here, the night evokes the divine feminine; there are appeals to Mary and to the goddesses Parvati, Durga, and Kali. And Jesus, Muhammad, and the Buddha made prayers or meditated with deep intention either during the night or just before dawn. There's a disturbing vision of Our Lady of Climate Change, too—her mouth bound with electrical tape, an apparition who foretells dwindling resources and eventual extinction.

Eloquent and provocative, *Waking Up to the Dark* is a work of timely guidance that encourages embracing the night's replenishment to prepare for an unsettling future.

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