

On Life, Love and Mysticism
Katrin Figge | June 08, 2009



Odyle Knight started writing "Bali Magic" two years ago. (Photo courtesy of the author)

5:26pm Jun 9, 2009

i was really fascinated by the book and stories in Bali Moon.seems like she is indonesian more than myself and the journey she has been through, she shared it with amazing words and i felt really experienced them myself with her. Great book!!must read and never get bored of it..!

Odyle Knight appears uncomfortable being in the spotlight. During the launch of her second book, "Bali Magic," at a book store in Kemang, she seemed ill at ease in front of the cameras, smiling shyly. But as soon as the Australian started to talk about her second memoir of her life in Bali, she lit up.

"Bali Magic" is the sequel to Knight's first book, "Bali Moon," which she wrote in 1998. Bali Moon sold so well that a third edition was just released. In a soft, smooth voice, Knight talked about her unforgettable experiences.

" 'Bali Moon' tells my story, an Australian lady who came to Bali for a one week holiday that lasted 20 years in the end," she said.

"I believe in destiny. My life has revolved around Bali for the last 20 years, and it's very much a love-hate relationship. It's been a difficult journey for me, but I gained a lot of knowledge and wisdom, which you can't put a price on."

The reason she stayed in Bali was simple: She fell in love with a Balinese man. Finding herself immediately drawn to him, Knight gave up life in Australia, where she was a teacher and school psychologist, to stay in Bali.

"He was a very charismatic man," she recalled, "but he was hiding many secrets, two of which were two wives he hadn't told me about."

Despite the time that has passed since that incident, Knight still looked hurt when she talked about it.

"We were together for a long time, and he was, like many Balinese, polygamous," she said. "And they just don't tell you. This happened not just to me. Many women who go to Bali fall in love and don't realize there's something beneath the surface."

Her lover's polygamy was not the only thing that made their relationship problematic. Remy, as Knight refers to him in her book, was raised by his grandfather to become a priest. He was also a transmedium: He went into trances so the Gods could speak through him. There was one God in particular who used Remy as his voice.

“It was the God of Nusa Penida, a small island located southeast of Bali,” Knight said. “That God brings misfortune over Bali once a year, at least that’s what the people believe. It was very hard for me to be in that relationship because he became very affected by his experiences and very taken over by the darkness of this God.”

Knight’s relationship with Remy was the main topic of her first book. She started to work on “Bali Magic” two years ago, and it went through many changes. After unproductive negotiations with different publishers, Knight eventually decided to self-publish.

“This book follows on from the first one, but it comes from a more personal perspective about my life,” she said. “It seemed like learning about priests and spiritual belief and discovering my link with Indonesia had a higher purpose which I started to see when the same theme started to repeat itself: the Majapahit empire.”

She said that everything she did and the people she met kept taking her back to the Majapahit kingdom, the major Hindu empire that ruled the Malay archipelago for 200 years from the end of the 13th century.

“Spirits were constantly coming through in totally different situations, and they told me, ‘You have reincarnated, you lived in the Majapahit court before, as a scribe to the kings, and you promised to come back to write about the history of Indonesia.’”

“I know this is hard to believe,” she eventually said with a smile, “but everything in this book is true.”

“Bali Magic” not only describes her journey, but also gives readers deep insight into Balinese spiritual life. In one chapter, Knight describes how she was shown the mystical mask of Gajah Mada — the prime minister of the Majapahit kingdom — a privilege normally only granted to people of high social standing.

“I met the king of Blahbatuh in Bali,” Knight said. “He is a descendant from Majapahit. And he decided to show the mask to me.”

The king took Knight into a special room where the mask of Gajah Mada was.

“Suharto used to borrow this mask because he believed he could draw on the power of the mask,” Knight said. “And here I was, standing next to the king, looking at 22 sacred masks, and in the middle was Gajah Mada’s, with all its power and energy. It was such an extraordinary gift for me to have been allowed to see those things.”

Knight said some people, including some Balinese, doubted that story.

“But when I had the book launch in Bali in December, the king himself came, and suddenly they couldn’t say anything anymore — because the king was there and that meant it was true.”

She has received an overwhelming number of e-mails from readers.

“While for Bali Moon it was mostly Westerners who wrote to me, I have received many responses about my second book from Indonesians,” she said. “Mostly, they are Indonesian people who grew up in countries outside of Indonesia and don’t know about their own country. They’ve been in Western countries and don’t know their own history and don’t understand about the mysticism.”

When asked if she planned to write a third memoir, Knight smiled and said, “My journey is not over yet, so you never know.”

<http://www.amazon.com/Bali-Moon-Spiritual-Odyle-Knight/dp/1865051381>

<http://www.biblioz.com/lp25764352223.html>

<http://www.ganeshabooksballi.com/>