

Burnished by Love...

A lineage of continuing revelation

By Anne Morgan Stadler

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“Love is a spirit all compact of fire.”

— Wm Shakespeare

HELLO, SHALL WE SIT TOGETHER AT THE SAME TABLE?
I'm happy to run into you here, taking refuge as I am from the sudden rain and wind. If we make ourselves comfortable in this glassed-in porch, and have some tea, we can be out of the weather and watch the ferry and the people come and go as we talk.

You've not come here before? Then, let me suggest that we share a pot of their special blend black tea, and a plate of scones with jam. Would that suit you?

What am I doing here? Ah, that's a question I've been asking myself. I just arrived yesterday. It's my

twelfth visit to Iona. Amazing how such a small place can be so endlessly attractive, isn't it?

It's only your first visit? And you are wondering why anyone would've come here so many times to a place only three miles long and one mile across?

Iona is a place that has always attracted explorers of the cosmic mystery. You can see a bit of evidence for that in the restored wall of the 15th century Christian nunnery just up the road. One of the stones is a relic of a stone vulva from the time of Great Mother worship. God has a good sense of humor, wouldn't you say?

Yes, Iona is said to have been a center for the Druids, as well as the location of St. Columba's monastery. It is most famous for the Celtic Christian heritage of Columba.

You've come here to the Abbey? Ah-h-h. Many people do, but the Abbey is not the only evidence of spirituality on this small island. Oh no, Iona itself is a spiritual teacher.

How long do you plan to be here? A week? Then you have time to explore what I mean, especially if you open your heart and listen.

I don't mean listen, as in noticing the birdsong, the rattling call of the corncrakes or the shush shush of the waves. I mean listen inwardly to your inner voice and the guidance it can offer.

How does my inner voice appear to me? Well, here's an example: yesterday I was feeling at loose ends, wondering why I had been called again to this place...so far from my own home. So finally I asked, "What is it optimal for me to do?"

"Climb up Dun-I and clear out the cobwebs." was the instruction I got. So up I went, up a dusty trail through weathered granite shoulders and wind beaten grasses, to the top of Dun I, the highest point on Iona. My feet followed the packed down treads of others but my head kept asking: "Why?" "What am I here to learn, and from whom?"

As I turned off the track, picking my way up the rock face, I heard "Stop trying to organize your time. You are here to explore and write about your spiritual

lineage. You must clear your head of all ‘shoulds’. Just be here with open heart and mind. What you need will come to you.”

After Dun-I, I walked the North Beach, listening for clues, looking for stones that wanted to come with me.

I am always accompanied by stones. You are too? Ah, Iona will love you. Her stones have taken residence in many many places around the world! Beside my computer in my little cottage, I now have several, arranged in stacks. A small grey one with a white eye is balanced on a larger black and grey layered oval. Next to it is a lopsided triangular stone, smooth green with a band of white quartz forming a cock-eyed heart on the top. On top of the third pile is a small white spiral, almost translucent, shell. They are my writing companions.

So that is how my time on Iona has begun. And I am sure that yours will evolve according to what YOU need, if you will let it.

Would you like some more tea? Let’s ask for hot water as well so we can keep topping up the pot.