

## Katarina (Kit) Dunbar & Lily Greenwood

Narrator, investigator, columnist, journal writer Kit Fraser, guide for these stories, is an ingenious woman drawn into childhood memories, ancient roots and the in-between.



A single woman in her early seventies, **Kit Dunbar** finds that life at her age is anything but over. She tells the story of her life adventures, all the while inviting the reader/viewer to think about their own. In the 1960s, Kit joined the imaginary but no less real club of women of her generation, *Women Who Break All the Rules*. Not going to settle for the constraints society imposed on them through convention or discriminatory laws, these women sought the truth, going to considerable length to uncover it. Inclusive spiritual perspectives became central to her inquiries. She also was a young romantic, finding her soul mate in her college lover, Jan Aroyan, only to lose him to an undiagnosed but fatal condition when they were still in their twenties. When Kit found herself alone, she vowed to make investments in environmental and social welfare operations, something she knew Jan also wanted. These enterprises were financially successful, giving Kit the freedom to experiment. Because she was fascinated by the rapidly changing opportunities for women, Kit works on and off in a variety of professional fields and working class occupations to gain hands-on experience. Extended periods of studying, traveling and exploring assorted forms of spiritual inquiry offsets her more conventional endeavors, as well as turns up eccentric associates. She shares penetrating insights from her *Reflections Journal* where she explores her internal process.

### Lily Greenwood -- Kit's psychic side

Ever since her college days working on the University newspaper, Kit has penned a column about the changing face of American society, and its place in the world. Using the nom de plume *Lily Greenwood*, her lens on the world is that of a modern woman seeking understanding of the transitional nature of her position in society. Her opinions often created quite a stir which both amused and sustained her spirit. She frequently interviews others to gain a broader perspective which provides material to explore in her column. Throughout her decades of wandering, Kit discovered—no matter what their social situation, marital or parenting status—women were in hot pursuit of their full personhood. The variety of styles she encountered, however, was staggering and a bit paradoxical. What was freeing and what was coopting was a never ending source of intriguing conversation and fed the content of the columns she wrote.



## PROLOG by Kit Dunbar, Storyteller

Greetings., I am Kit Dunbar, the fictional narrator of *Rainbows at the Crossroads: Activating the Moral Power of Caring and Sharing* as well as one of the main players in this story that, through the use of flashbacks, spans decades. The action takes place in several locations, allowing for a global perspective.

My birth name is Katarina Ann Dunbar, but I use the nickname “Kit” which I adopted when I was ten years old. (I have also been called Kat and Katie at various times during my long life,) My approach varies from what you read in memoirs and confessional novels. My written words are blended with juicy bits and pieces made available by acquaintances, colleagues, my parents and their generation, and far away and long ago ancestors. They come in the form of illustrations, songs, videos, words—both prose and poetry—and personal correspondence.



Now in my early seventies, I am happy in my life as a self-supporting, independent observer of humanity. Living solo in Northern California for decades, I am well-connected to a network of artistic acquaintances, spiritual seekers, intellectuals who like a good argument, and ghosts. I have been drawn to wide-ranging cultural experiences and people of different backgrounds, sensing somehow all this diversity had a central tie-in. Discovering what these connections are has become an on-going, often challenging quest. It has led me into quite a life review.

I find that I have to use improvisation to make a coherent pattern of these pieces of my life, much like some African-American quilters piece together irregular scraps of fabric, in the process creating a work of art that holds considerable spirit.

By taking this journey with me, you will appreciate your own story more fully.

I grew up in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. The place projected a semi-rural feeling, having been farmland before they subdivided it into large, half acre lots with thick wooded parkland adjacent to our backyards. My parents had hobbled together a down payment on a lot, and enough to build the first floor of a house with expansion capacity.

As a girl, I loved reading novels and inspirational literature as well as making charm bracelets. I had a homemade swing set crafted by my father with his do-it yourself professional quality saw. Our pet became a Shetland Sheep dog named



Thomas Jefferson (Jeffie for short) by my parents: Shetland because my mother was Scottish; and Thomas Jefferson because my parents revered this president for his democratic ideals. In those days the conflicting attitudes around Jefferson’s relationship to Sally Hemings were not known. I find knowing this piece of history fed my on-going interest in the truth about American history. Jeffie, became my 4-H partner when I grew into my teen years, learning late in his life to perform obedience drills.

In my early teens clear through senior year, I managed to become a perpetual straight A student, an extracurricular activity enthusiast, and a full blown romantic. The search for the sacred marriage of literature fascinated me. Early, I was drawn to soulful, spiritual inquiry advocating love and inclusivity.



Then a shock made me rethink the goal of ‘happily ever after.’ This, it turns out, was a generational awakening. My change of perspective had a lot to do with my best friend who was my co-editor of the school literary magazine. Our friendship was shattered when she became involuntarily pregnant during our senior year because she shunned birth control. The *Scarlet Letter* had been assigned reading in our honors English class. Too bad its contemporary message was suppressed by social mores of the times. Her parents blamed me for the entire happening. They insisted she stop talking to me which she did. I could never forgive her for this, until I learned an important fact toward the end of this story. I won’t spoil this for you by telling you now.



Editing the literary magazine stimulated my desire to fathom the hidden aspects that writing can tap into. During the mid-to-late 1960s at the University of Michigan, when I was free from parental oversight and social constraints, I claimed the right to express myself. I wrote poetry and short prose,



revealing my inner thoughts, though mostly keeping them in my journals, safe from exposure. Using my mind, just as I had done in high school, served me. I began to find lots of information and approaches that challenged the ones I had been taught in suburban America. The atmosphere at the University was one of curiosity about social trends and finding root causes for global tensions; this attitude was light years from the suburban closed community of my childhood and adolescence. I needed to find myself in all of this.

Then I decided to write for the university newspaper. First I composed feature stories of all kinds. These were focused on the keen challenges youth and marginalized groups were putting forth: civil rights, free speech, anti-war and Martin Luther King's message all grabbed my attention.

The social movements of the day advocating free speech for students. Actions against racism, classism and elitism were the center of interest of many. I was eager to get the inside story about these so I took on assignments that brought me into the center of the radical edge.



Just forty-five minutes east of Ann Arbor is Detroit Michigan. The culture and tension present in Detroit during the 1960s found its way into my University experience.

*Intersection of 12th Street and Clairmount, Detroit, MI Saturday, July 23, 1967;  
Detroit Free Press image, Public*



I did notice, however, the gender gap in leadership in these endeavors. After a couple of years of writing about male led social movements, however, I realized what women were facing was one of the hottest topics I could take on. I used a combination of humor and insight to reflect upon what women were doing and thinking which included sexuality and the changing nature of relationships. Being one of the few women on the staff at the time, I got my own column.

***Lily Greenwood: Women Who Break All the Rules: self-selected females who became college age adults in the 1960s and made up their own minds.*** We rule breaking women told ourselves: “Define yourself. Allow no one, nothing to define you, except what comes from within. Be your own counsel. Once you allow someone else or some standard to define you or guide your behavior, you deny everything that you can be. It’s a self-induced paralysis that will speed your demise faster than any illness or accident that could befall you.” This was the beginning of my writing career which spanned decades.



Meanwhile, freedom to relate brought me into a passionate liaison with a male student **Jan Aryan**, a man of Armenian descent who was quite connected to the issues of his ancestry. He shared many of my views and curiosities. Both majoring in psychology, we soon came across the burgeoning consciousness movement, much of it emanating from California, a far off place we both had visited briefly, though under different circumstances. The West Coast music and hippie culture was intriguing to us, a marked contrast to our Mid-Western upbringings.



After graduating, and influenced by the beat generation, we headed West in a pick-up truck outfitted for sleeping, and found a small, rundown apartment in West Berkeley where we lived for several years. Our relationship thrived in this eccentric town still holding onto idealism as well as conflict. We planned to marry, but never did because Jan suddenly died of a little known undiagnosed heart condition.



Quite to my surprise, Jan left me a sizable life insurance settlement. While left with a feeling of love lost, having financial assets to invest gave me freedom. Life drew me into many opportunities for exploring both the burgeoning freedom we women were claiming and my own internal reactions to the social chaos. Jan I feel is pleased I carried on our mutual quest.

*Lily Greenwood: Question for the Women Who Break All the Rules:*

What should I do with the freedom from worrying constantly about expenses?

Answer: Explore life in an assortment of ways, keeping curiosity and hope central when things seemed to be getting worse.



Theater and storytelling is a serious interest for me. In childhood, I impersonated the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Bearded Lady in school productions. I acted in several plays in high school: ones that taught me about the diverse personas available to women. The comic and tragic both had a place in my literary life and my tender emotions, but the professional life of an actor or director was not something I could imagine, let alone undertake.



These acting experiences did come in handy in my everyday life. The 1970s was a time of emerging life-styles across the social spectrum. I recognized, because rapid social change for women was on an upswing, I should grasp the opportunity to live an unconventional life. Throughout my 30s and 40s, I used my desire to understand the roles people play by temporarily adopting different professions. I found many obstacles, widespread confusion, and a variety of approaches. Of course I continued my practice of *Breaking All the Rules*.



Carrying on a life of diverse cultural activities counter-balanced my formal positions in non-profit organizations and corporations. I joined special interest clubs, attended musical events, theatrical presentations and political gatherings to gain access to others' points of view so I could develop some of my own. Because I loved nature, I briefly tried back-to-the-land living, but found it was too rugged so I opted for the occasional camping trip. I am an avid user of nature based products like aromatherapy and herbal teas and supplements.

***Lily Greenwood: Question for the Women Who Break All the Rules***

How should we handle the negative responses to women breaking out of traditional roles and behavior?

Answer: Appreciate paradox and irony, maintain self-respect no matter what the social norms tried to impose, and include compassion and *agape* (widest love possible) as part of your responses to repression, while all the while being tenacious and daring.



I can hear you asking a few questions about now, like what about my personal life? Having experienced the traumas of first losing my best friend in high school and then my chosen life partner impeded the power that seduction might otherwise have had over me. It seems to me these unfortunate events actually protected me from unintended and potentially destructive entanglements. Of course, they may also have made me too shy about taking relationship risks. Whatever the reason, I was frequently on my own.

Over the years I have connected with numerous platonic companions. These keen friendships, often long distance, kept me from being lonely or deprived of stimulating conversation. A few casual romantic infatuations also surfaced. For some of these folks I carry continued affection; others have faded without a trace. All of my prolific associations did not, however, produce someone to ‘settle down with.’ Perhaps I’m just not drawn to settling down.



Investigation was another fascination for me. This extended to a variety of life’s arenas. History was one of my fascinations. I took up studying women’s status, issues and passions over past decades, and into the nineteenth century. My inquiries lead me to encounter a little known suffragist from the nineteenth century: Matilda Joslyn Gage, who none-the-less was one of the most important players in the women’s movement until she was banished for criticizing Christianity as misogynous. She wrote *Woman, Church and State* in 1893 carefully articulating her views which read as if it were a contemporary assessment. Matilda was a primary influence on L. Frank Baum, author of the *Wizard of Oz* and 14 other Oz books, who was her son-in-law. The family interest in esoteric religious concepts came through in the yellow brick road metaphor. To top it off, she was an inducted member of the Wolf Clan of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people of upstate New York. *The original Woman Who Breaks All the Rules!*

Frequently asked question -- What does woman want?

Woman desires freedom in order to become what she is capable of becoming.  
~Matilda Joslyn Gage, 19<sup>th</sup> century Women’s Rights Activist [www.matildajoslyngage.org](http://www.matildajoslyngage.org)



Historical events reverberate in contemporary lives. I pursue their uncovering by practicing, whenever possible, the *Lost Art of Conversation* with acquaintances of diverse perspectives. During these encounters, intimate disclosures of personal history and the actual realities behind political points of view arise, shedding a bit of light on the origins of social norms and the rampant defiance of them.

*Lily Greenwood: Question for the Women Who Break All the Rules* Did the changes that women made in their lifestyles in the 1960s relate to the calls for control of their own life choices that women made in the late 1900s? And if so, how do we not again lose the freedoms we have gained?

Answer: Yes, women historically have wanted control of their bodies. To retain your spirit of freedom, confidently assert that you, and all women, are competent moral agents who can make your own best choices. Take charge of your life, especially in regard to sexuality and motherhood, and don't let a patriarchal world view rob you of your personhood.



If you recall from my previous comments, I took up writing a newspaper column when I was studying at the University. What I didn't mention is that I decided to stay anonymous so I wrote under the alias **Lily Silvermore**. This plume de nom is a takeoff on the name Lilith, the first wife of Adam which is sometimes attributed to the snake in the tree in the Garden of Eden; and the powers of the silvery moon. These both become important elements in *Culture at the Crossroads*. My column, an early blog style, was first published in the student newspaper, next in counter-culture circulars, then larger main stream weeklies.

Commenting on the changing landscape of America and its global ramifications, they honored both paradox and invention, challenging sex roles and racial stereotypes. Because of its controversial nature, Lily's column became syndicated, drawing fan mail and critical tirades both.

I considered myself a mystic of sorts, which sometimes seeped into Lily's opinions. I was happy to write about the political and the spiritual intertwined, using rituals and symbols that honored women and nature.

### Lily Greenwood's range of column topics

- 1960s – Birth control availability on campuses, where is it?  
Black women and white women, can we talk?  
What is balancing the female and male (Taoism)?
- 1970s – Women-honoring religion, how about it?  
Was God ever a woman?  
Do discos and back-to-the-land relate?
- 1980s – Jobs for women, are they really liberation?  
What is slavery here and now?  
Taking a step up the ladder and liking it?
- 1990s – Rape as a weapon of war, how can this be?  
Does backlash prompt retreat or regroup?  
Why is sisterhood a fragile link?
- 2000s – Where are the places of peace post 9-11?  
Forced motherhood becoming the law, again?  
Is strength/courage resurging in the young-at-heart?
- 2010-2016 rise of patriarchal backlash; political polarization, tea party;  
2016+ Compromised election; women rushing into politics; Me Too Movement



I also wrote more candidly and personally but did not publish these, until now. In my **journal/diary entries**, I record my thoughts about what might really be going on in the magical, spiritual realm. A few of these I excerpt in *Culture at the Crossroads* to add psychic dimension. I called them **Reflections**. In the late 1990s, I acquired this original color pencil drawing by UK artist Chesca Potter which captures my feelings about my journals. This image appears on a card called **Reflection** in the *Greenwood Tarot* (which Potter created with Mark Ryan.) The serpent tail and mirror associate **Reflection** with mermaids.

Potter suggests she holds a mirror up so we are forced to look at our reflections, which teach us how to either appreciate what we see or change what we don't like.

The orb of light she holds in her left hand is reminiscent of the moon and helps illuminate the shadows of our inner lives so we can gain insight. The heron, cauldron and figure lying in the boat all indicate otherworldly adventure, which is where this form of journaling often takes me. Healing is associated with this image. Insights into the healing process mark my journal entries in this trilogy.

The values trumpeted by Jesus of Nazareth in what is known as liberal Christianity made sense to me; but the hierarchical nature of any religious organization and the absence of women in spiritual leadership go against my grain. I find direct experience of my *divine nature* more my style.



I have observed that peoples of varied ethnic groups seek much the same...love, community, art and beauty in ways that make them more similar than would have been guessed. Historical pagan and Jewish influences are also part of these sagas. The history of persecution and suffering and the rich humanistic quality of many of these communities has deeply influenced several of my closest confidants.

My story is told in two parts. The first starts in California in present day, revealing my views on contemporary reality. The story moves quickly to a suburb of Cleveland Ohio where I grew up and to my remembrances of 1999 when my father is dying. I go through major personal transformation...learning first about my birth family and childhood, and finally end-of-life choices from my father. I become curious about who my personal ancestors from Croatia and Scotland might have been ...and how that lineage speaks through me. Dialoging with African American women feeds our mutual appreciation for one another. My attitudes toward my high school betrayal also demand revision.



Rock and Roll Museum



In part two, I return to the present and my life in the Monterey Bay and San Francisco Bay areas. I team up with old and new friends to explore multiple ancestral layers of adventure. Finding history still alive in our everyday present lives, no matter how we try to deny it, further broadens our frames of reference. I begin doing short

biographies of important characters in Central California, most often women, who are little known but highly significant in the changing winds of what is possible. I call this *The California Notebook* and share these intermittently.



I also recount my trip in September 2001, coinciding with 9-11, to the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas to find out about past lives linked to my father's side of the family that is still demanding real time attention. The British Isles, from which my mother's family hails, also exerts its influence through the travels of my close associates. We all keep in communication about what we are discovering in these diffuse locations. Both of these ancestral lines have verifiable links to folk healing beliefs and make me wonder about modern materialistic outlooks. There is a lot of testimony that little folk live all over the world...and have quite a

bit to tell us about the mess we have caused with our overly technological culture.

My storytelling is colored with related productions of music, video, visual art, prose and poetry from multiple sources I find inspiring—links to what others are doing that you might want to consider doing yourself, in one way or another. By the end of this tale, you will be interested in your own ancestry and how you might get the most out of going down this road of personal, social and cosmic discovery. And what you will be able to do to turn things around, because you will want to do so, once you see what I have to show you. **Rev. 11-11-2015 then 12-2019**