

NOORA LAINE-MÜLLER

# LIFE AS A REFLECTION

A TRUE STORY  
ON LIVING THE  
ART OF  
SHADOW WORK

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*A true* story on living the art of  
shadow work

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*Maybe the teaching isn't what the teacher says  
Or what she writes  
Or who she is*

*Maybe the teaching is embedded in what you hear  
How you read the words  
Through which glasses you see her*

*You will hear the message that reflects your inner  
world  
Your mind twisting the meaning of the words so that it  
resonates with your own beliefs*

*No matter what the message says  
No matter who the messenger is  
No matter what the intended meaning is*

*You see what you choose to see  
You hear what you choose to hear*

*\*\*\**

*Maybe there isn't a teacher better than another  
Maybe we are all teachers to each other  
With equal importance and potential*

*Maybe the clarity of the message isn't about the  
excellence of the teacher, but the awareness of the  
listener*

*Maybe there is an infinite potential of seeing into the  
deep well of your being  
And endless possibility to learn about your mind's  
clouds, about the beliefs you hold, about the spells  
your mind got you under  
When you understand*

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*That all you ever see is a mirror image of your own stories*

*And maybe that's why the teachings of enlightened beings got twisted on the way  
As they were interpreted by unaware minds busy with beliefs  
And those interpretations were interpreted through yet another cloudy and patriarchal filter*

*Maybe the most important - if not only - teaching is to remember and accept that*

*Everything you see  
Everything you hear  
Everything you read*

*Is the interpretation you see through the glasses you are wearing*

*Awareness is to remember that you are wearing glasses*

*\*\*\**

*What do you think the message of the other is?  
That is your message to yourself  
Do you like what you hear? Good  
If not - instead of changing the messenger, become aware of your filter and see past it*

*Do not seek for the best teacher  
Simply become an excellent student*

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*"One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious." - Carl Jung*

## Prelude

Why would one want to do, nay, live shadow work? This question is still waiting for a *definite* answer. My personal response would be “because it gives me life”. My passion for this work is what woke me up from apathy and depression. This work is the purpose that carries me to the next moment. Someone else’s purpose might be something entirely different, which is why I do not assume anyone else doing (living) this to the same extent as I do.

As far as I know, shadow work is a term attributed to Carl Jung, but I believe none of this is any one’s to own. Or perhaps it’s precisely that – anyone’s to own. It’s all *ours*, universal and ancient wisdom to be discovered from the depths of one’s own well which is all of our well.

My current definition to “living the art of shadow work” might go along these lines:

*To live shadow work is to see one’s life, the scenery life holds up in front of you, as a reflection of your inner world, its dynamics and relationships – to see yourself in every window. Shadow work is the work of looking into the mirror, of acknowledging those once unconscious parts and patterns, and of embodying them in order to live as a whole human being.*

I believe that the intention (or one of the intentions) of life is to show us who we truly are - not to be a bitch, but to offer us a chance of loving ourselves completely, in our messy, complex and magnificent entirety.

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“My” shadow work, this set of attitudes, tools and practices, this *way of living*, that I found from within myself (with the help of precious external influencers and teachers) is **a method with which I can translate and transcribe the message life is giving me**. This work helps me in seeing what I have yet to understand about myself. Additionally, it is a way to embody, to consciously and holistically express, that which I discover from my shadow. It is a way to excavate more of my creative power as a human being.

I notice a temptation of listing alluring, easy-to-swallow benefits and results of this work. But I decide not to do that. I’m not selling anything here, I’m just telling my story and that does not fit in simplified marketing phrases. It’s complicated. I’m not ready and I haven’t gotten anywhere. I feel more fulfilled, yet I haven’t moved an inch. I’m happier and I’m still as melancholic as I ever was. Sounds like a waste of time? Maybe.

This work is a way of living, not a means to an end (it never ends). What it does do is that it turns a grainy black and white 2D image into a luscious jungle of endless discovery – I go nowhere, yet I live a completely different life. It adds glitter to my mundane shit and makes art of it all, spreads it to the walls and asks for more. Fear of living becomes an insatiable hunger for life.

In the end, I suppose, shadow work is just a path among many other paths, to walk the length of a life. And to me, so far, this is the prettiest one. Shadow work may be a tool to build a better, kinder, more loving world. Or it may be pure entertainment for

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the while we are here. I offer my work to you because living it and offering it invigorates and entertains me, makes me feel alive. I also offer it in hopes that it'll make your way to experiencing *your intrinsic wholeness* a little shorter.

I sometimes do believe that engaging in shadow work is a revolutionary act. Much of our culture is based on repressing parts of ourselves. And to actively engage in excavating and enlightening those parts, and embodying a whole human being is a powerful counterforce to the current system.

But who really can know if any of our actions has some bigger purpose than to keep us busy and alive. Through shadow work I come into terms with the possibility of my purposelessness and smallness too. This work has helped me in keeping my head above water in the waves of existential crisis that I regularly find myself swimming in. To me life just gets a tiny bit clearer and more meaningful this way, just enough so that I can keep going.

I'm not entirely sure how I got here though. This awareness was born somewhere between drowning in the ocean of mental health crisis and wanting to still live. I never set out to do shadow work - just a few years ago, I didn't even know it was a thing. I simply followed the breadcrumbs life left on my path - clues that caught my interest - one here, another there.

Without a map, but with a vague intention of becoming aware as a goal, I entered the dark woods inside of myself. And so, I ended up here, deep in the well of wisdom called shadow work. My passion for this makes sense, as I've always loved investigating.



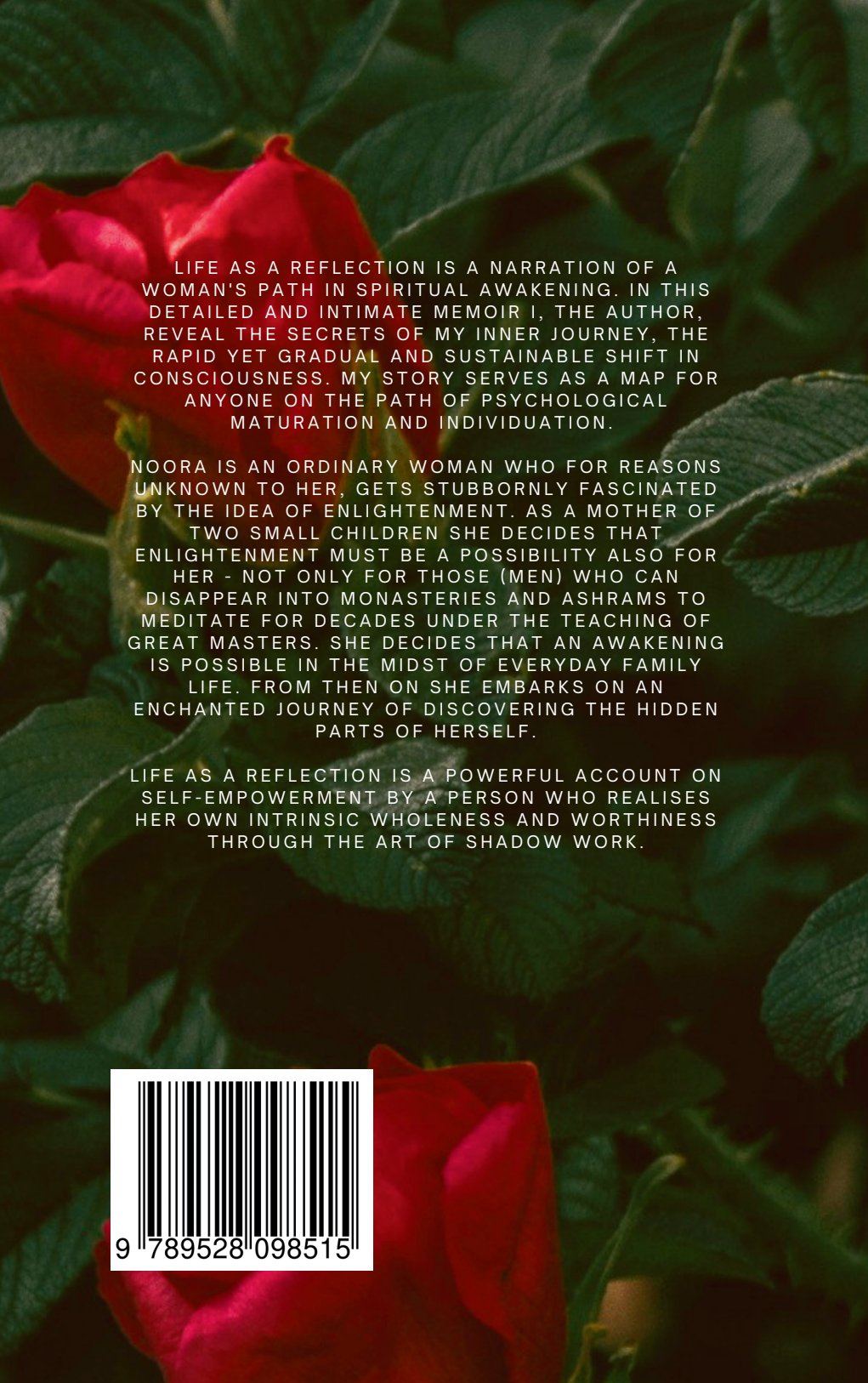
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That's what shadow work ultimately is about - investigating one's inner landscape in order to better understand its projection to the outer world, and in order to embody a more harmonious way of existing.

I do not intend to present myself as ready or any of this wisdom as final. I know I am not nearly ready, and actually that goal might just be a mirage, ever-eluding illusion. I'm sharing my work now, because I will not let it rot in my drawers while I wait to become perfect. I share it acknowledging my completeness and my incompleteness, simultaneously. I share whatever wisdom I have so far gathered, because I am full of it, because it doesn't fit in the container of me any longer, because it wants out.

I'm aiming to *experience* wholeness. I believe we all strive for it, psychologically and spiritually. As humans we have varied ways in achieving that. What I'm called to do is to cultivate the feeling of wholeness, completeness, internally. Self-sourcedly. Without depending on the circumstances or other people for my feeling of wholeness. It smells a lot like hyper-individuality, I know. "*I don't need anyone.*" Which does suit a spiritual nomad-hermit like me very well.

Apart from that I happen to believe, and have experienced myself, that I'm a safer person to my surroundings, to my children, to my husband, and to all the people I meet, when I perceive wholeness within me. When I'm not relying on other people to fulfil me. When I don't see in others simply the potential of soothing my wounds, filling my gaps, fixing me.



LIFE AS A REFLECTION IS A NARRATION OF A WOMAN'S PATH IN SPIRITUAL AWAKENING. IN THIS DETAILED AND INTIMATE MEMOIR I, THE AUTHOR, REVEAL THE SECRETS OF MY INNER JOURNEY, THE RAPID YET GRADUAL AND SUSTAINABLE SHIFT IN CONSCIOUSNESS. MY STORY SERVES AS A MAP FOR ANYONE ON THE PATH OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MATURATION AND INDIVIDUATION.

NOORA IS AN ORDINARY WOMAN WHO FOR REASONS UNKNOWN TO HER, GETS STUBBORNLY FASCINATED BY THE IDEA OF ENLIGHTENMENT. AS A MOTHER OF TWO SMALL CHILDREN SHE DECIDES THAT ENLIGHTENMENT MUST BE A POSSIBILITY ALSO FOR HER - NOT ONLY FOR THOSE (MEN) WHO CAN DISAPPEAR INTO MONASTERIES AND ASHRAMS TO MEDITATE FOR DECADES UNDER THE TEACHING OF GREAT MASTERS. SHE DECIDES THAT AN AWAKENING IS POSSIBLE IN THE MIDST OF EVERYDAY FAMILY LIFE. FROM THEN ON SHE EMBARKS ON AN ENCHANTED JOURNEY OF DISCOVERING THE HIDDEN PARTS OF HERSELF.

LIFE AS A REFLECTION IS A POWERFUL ACCOUNT ON SELF-EMPOWERMENT BY A PERSON WHO REALISES HER OWN INTRINSIC WHOLENESS AND WORTHINESS THROUGH THE ART OF SHADOW WORK.



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