

A FREE PREVIEW

RECLAIM *Her*

50 SENSUAL SECRETS FOR THE
WOMAN STARTING OVER AFTER DIVORCE

"She's been there all along. Go find her."

ISADORA MONTCLAIR

WELCOME

You are holding five secrets from a book written for the woman who gave everything to a marriage — and is now, on the other side of it, trying to remember who she is.

These are not secrets about dating. They are not instructions for becoming more attractive to someone new. They are something rarer and more necessary than that.

They are about coming back to yourself.

Your body. Your pleasure. Your presence. Your desire. The woman who went quiet during the marriage and has been waiting, patiently, for you to come back for her.

She has been there all along.

This preview contains five secrets from the full book of fifty. Each secret includes a truth drawn from real experience, an honest exploration, and a simple practice you can begin today.

If these five pages move you — the other forty-five are waiting.

SECRET

One

Let Her Be Tired

The first thing Alison did, the weekend after she moved into the new apartment, was sleep.

Not the fractured, one-eye-open sleep of a woman sharing a bed with a marriage that was ending. Not the performance of rest. Real sleep — the kind where you don't know what time it is and don't care, where your body sinks into the mattress like it's been waiting years for permission.

She slept eleven hours on Friday night. Nine on Saturday. She woke up Sunday feeling something she hadn't felt in so long she'd forgotten it had a name. Rested.

Here is the first secret: your body has been carrying this longer than your mind has.

Your mind had the luxury of negotiating — telling itself stories, finding reasons to hope, constructing arguments for staying and leaving and just getting through the week. Your body didn't have that option. Your body just carried it. The clenched jaw. The shallow breath. The shoulders that lived somewhere near your ears. The stomach that tightened every time you heard the key in the lock.

Your body knew before you did. And it has been exhausted since long before you signed anything.

The first act of reclaiming your sensual self is the least glamorous and the most necessary: let her be tired. Stop pushing through. Stop filling the silence with productivity because the silence feels dangerous. Let the silence be. Let the body sink. Let rest be the first thing you give her.

The Practice

This week, choose one morning or one afternoon and give it entirely to physical rest. Not Netflix, not your phone, not productive self-care. Lie down. Let your body be heavy. If you sleep, sleep. If you don't, simply be still and notice what your body feels like when no one needs anything from it. Notice where it holds tension. Notice where it softens. Don't fix anything. Just notice. This is the beginning of coming home.

SECRET

Ten

Reclaim the Pleasure of Your Own Company

This one took Alison the longest.

For months after the divorce, being alone felt like a condition to be managed — a symptom of failure, a gap where a life should be. She filled it the way most of us do: with noise, with plans, with the relentless performance of being fine. She was the last to leave every dinner party. She said yes to every invitation.

She was also desperately, quietly avoiding herself.

The turning point came on a Sunday in March when every plan fell through and she found herself with an entirely unscheduled day. She stayed home. She made a long, slow breakfast. She read for four hours. She took a bath in the afternoon for no reason. She ordered Thai food and ate it at her coffee table watching a film she'd wanted to see for years.

By evening she felt something she hadn't felt in so long she'd forgotten its texture. Content. She felt content.

Your own company is not a consolation prize. It is, for a woman rebuilding herself after the end of a marriage, one of the most nutrient-dense experiences available. In your own company you begin to remember who you are without an audience. What you think. What you feel. What makes you laugh when no one is watching.

This is the foundation of sensuality: knowing yourself well enough to be fully present in your own skin.

The Practice

Schedule one unstructured solo day — or half-day, or morning — in the next two weeks. No plans. No productivity goals. Simply be with yourself and see what you reach for when nothing is required of you. Pay attention to what emerges. She has things to tell you.

SECRET

Twenty-One

Understand That Desire Is Not About Sex

Alison's desire, in the first year after the divorce, had almost nothing to do with sex.

It had to do with a particular piece of music that made her feel like the top of her head might come off. With the smell of rain on hot pavement. With the first sip of an extraordinary wine. With a paragraph in a novel that was so precisely true she had to put the book down and simply breathe for a moment.

This is desire. Real desire. The fundamental appetite for aliveness — for experience that reaches past the surface of things and touches something deeper, something that responds with a yes that feels physical.

We have done desire a tremendous disservice by reducing it almost entirely to its sexual expression. Desire in its fullest sense is the force that makes you lean forward instead of back. That makes you curious instead of numb. That makes you reach for the thing rather than watch it from a distance.

It is the opposite of depression. It is the signal that you are present in your own life rather than simply passing through it.

In the aftermath of a difficult marriage, desire often goes quiet — not because it is gone but because it has been systematically discouraged, deferred, or drowned in the noise of surviving. Coming back to it is not a dramatic event. It is a series of small recognitions: oh. That moved me. I feel something. I am still here.

The Practice

For one week, keep a small running list of the moments that move you. Not major events. Small ones. The song that makes you catch your breath. The food that surprises you. The view that stops you mid-step. The sentence that hits you somewhere below the throat. Write them down. This list is a map of who you are. Study it.

SECRET

Thirty

Trust That You Are Enough — Right Now, Exactly As You Are

This is the secret underneath all the other secrets.

The reason Alison had gone numb. The reason the desire had gone quiet. The reason she had dressed for invisibility and fed herself like an afterthought and saved the good candles and waited for an occasion that never arrived.

She had not believed she was enough.

Not thin enough, young enough, successful enough, recovered enough, healed enough, finished enough. Always arriving slightly short of the unmarked standard that would finally grant her permission to fully inhabit her own life.

This is the deepest wound that a difficult marriage can inflict — not the obvious wounds of betrayal or loss, but the quiet interior wound of a woman who has spent years being subtly, persistently told in a thousand wordless ways that she is not quite enough. And has believed it.

She is enough. You are enough. Right now, in this body, at this age, at this particular complicated and unfinished point in your becoming — you are enough to deserve pleasure, beauty, desire, presence, adornment, delight, and the full experience of being alive in your own magnificent skin.

You do not have to earn this. You do not have to become something first. You do not have to wait.

The Practice

Write this down, somewhere you will see it: I am enough to begin. Not enough to be finished. Not enough to be perfect. Enough to begin — to light the candle, to feel the desire, to put on the coat, to take up space, to let yourself want things, to come back, fully and without apology, to the life that is yours. Begin.

SECRET

Fifty

Know That This Is Your Season

Alison thought, for a long time, that the best years were behind her.

She thought this quietly, without quite admitting it — the way women think many of their most painful thoughts, in the private language of the interior, where they cannot be challenged or comforted. She thought: the great loves, the great beginnings, the great expansive possibilities — those were for younger women.

She was wrong.

She knows she was wrong because she is living the evidence. Because the woman she is now — rebuilt from materials she found in the rubble of a life she had to leave — is more fully herself than the woman she was at twenty-five or thirty-five or even forty-two. More present. More honest. More genuinely alive in her own skin. More clear about what matters and what doesn't.

This is her season. Not the season she planned. Not the season she would have chosen. But hers — entirely, specifically, irreplaceably hers.

Your season is now. Not when you are more healed. Not when you are more certain. Now. In this complicated, unfinished, quietly extraordinary moment of your becoming.

Go live in it. Fully, sensually, presently, without apology. You have everything you need. You always did.

The Practice

Today — not eventually, not when things are more settled — find one small thing that gives you genuine, uncomplicated pleasure and let yourself feel it fully. Laugh at the thing that is funny. Enjoy the thing that is beautiful. Let the good moment be simply and completely good. You are allowed. You have always been allowed. Begin allowing.

She came back.

So will you.

The full book contains all fifty secrets — organized into six parts that take you from the first raw days of starting over to the full, magnificent arrival of a woman who has come home to herself.

Reclaim Her

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