
 **CLOSE TO HOME** 

**"EXPRESS YOURSELF"**



A UNIQUE SELECTION OF DECORATIVE HARDWARE

BATH FAUCETS, FIXTURES, & ACCESSORIES  
VESSEL & PEDESTAL SINKS  
CAST IRON CLAWFOOT TUBS  
ACRYLIC FREESTANDING TUBS  
KITCHEN FAUCETS & FIXTURES  
DOOR HARDWARE & ENTRY SETS  
PASSAGE, PRIVACY, & DUMMY SETS  
SWITCHPLATES & HOUSE NUMBERS

OVER 6000 CABINET KNOBS & PULLS ON DISPLAY

65 FALLS ROAD, SHELBURNE, VERMONT, 05482, 802 985-8568.

M-F 9-5 Sat. 10-5 or by appointment

 closetohomevt.com 

20 Charming Rooms  
Peace & Privacy

A LESBIAN PARADISE

*The*  
**Highlands Inn**  
P.O. Box 118  
Bethlehem, NH 03574  
603-869-3978  
1-877-LES-B-INN (537-2466)

100 Acres • Pool  
Hot Tub • Trails

www.highlandsinn-nh.com  
vacation@highlandsinn-nh.com

Intellectual Property law  
Business and General Corporate law.

**Lisanne C. Dorion, Esq.**

Attorney and Counselor at Law

phone 802-649-2224

fax 802-649-2223

cell 802-989-8002

Emerson House PO Box 442 Norwich, VT 05055

**celebrate Pride!**

candles

stickers

books

CIVIL UNION

gifts, t-shirts, hats,

pillows, soap

jewelry

hammocks

peace & justice store



Open Seven Days • 863-8326 • 21 Church Street, Burlington

# Spiritual Essence: Walking a Tightrope Between Light & Darkness

*She changes everything she touches,  
Everything she touches, changes...*  
— Equinox Chant to Kore

Now comes the time when, driving down lonely country roads in the Northeast Kingdom, one begins to see splashes of red, orange, and yellow winking through the haze of the late September sun. Hidden in the vast green canopy are signs of the impending winter even as we are in the midst of the full and bountiful harvest that began coming to us at Lammas, the festival of the first fruits, celebrated when the Sun was in Leo, not two months before.

The autumnal equinox, sometimes called by its Celtic feast name of Mabon, is sacred to the Greek goddess Kore, daughter of Demeter. Kidnapped and ravished by Hades, god of the underworld, he took her by force to be his queen. And for over two thousand years the Eleusinian Mysteries were passed from generation to generation in reverence of her story.

Kore (also known as Persephone) is a symbol of balance between dark and light, between winter and summer, between infertility and abundance and between masculine and feminine. Her story teaches us to seek balance in our own lives, to understand the roles that darkness and light play as we dance our own spiral dance. Because Kore is the daughter of Demeter, the goddess of Agriculture, she has a particularly important role in our lives as rural people. Demeter is one of Vermont's most important symbols; she stands on top of the golden dome of Vermont's State House and presides over us all.

After her daughter's capture, Demeter wandered in despair for many moons, furious with her brother Zeus, who had approved Hades' rapacious behavior. No fruit would grow, no grain would ripen, and the people began to waste away from hunger and cold. Knowing that his people would be destroyed by this famine, Zeus ordered Hades to release the girl goddess from his realm of darkness and death. With Kore's return, all the earth burst into flower once again. And yet Kore had eaten seeds of the pomegranate — a symbol of marriage and union — while in Hades' deathly garden, and his control over her would never end. In some versions, the number of seeds Kore ate indicated the number of moon cycles she had to spend in the underworld.

**pippin**

And now Kore spends half of the year in Hades. During that time, beginning at Mabon, Demeter mourns her lost daughter and all becomes dark, bleak and infertile. Yet with her joyful return in the spring, new life arises and the earth is filled with light and growth.

Kore is a symbol of the cycles of change and the balance between light and dark. This is why her story is celebrated on the Equinoxes, for her presence is most keenly felt at those times of the year when she is making her journey between the worlds, when there is balance between the darkness of Hades and the shining light of Demeter.

The pagan chant to Kore only emphasizes the notion that balance requires change. The balance of the earth creates the change of seasons that we see represented in the story of Kore, Demeter, and Hades.

When I start to think of balance and of change in a queer context, I begin to think of the struggle that Kore must have had between the divine feminine represented in Demeter and the divine masculine incarnate in Hades. Within each of us, we struggle to find the balance of masculine and feminine, dark and light, summer and winter. The autumnal equinox is one of those places in the cycle of the year where that balance is easier to manifest.

Starhawk writes of this balance in *The Spiral Dance*: "Now day and night are equal, in perfect balance, and we give thought to the balance and flow within our own lives. ... Life declines; the season of bareness is on us, yet we give thanks for that which we have reaped and gathered."

The equinox is the tipping point in the seasons, and just for a moment, as though perched on the top of a huge wave about to come crashing down, we are able to see over the horizon in both directions, and we have a much larger perspective than we might normally be able to have. At this point, although we

are in flux, we are able to see our feminine and masculine energy merge and swirl, creating a kaleidoscope of colors, forms and energy. As a queer man, this time is sacred to me, elucidating my conviction that I need not live in imbalance but rather may choose to remain between the worlds, outside of them and among them all at once.

Queer people have been the shamans and the sacred mystics for many cultures for thousands of years. Many of us believe this is so because of our ability to live in balance and in harmony with nature and spirit. Many of the pagan sabbats celebrate the moments in the cycle of the seasons when balance is most easily achieved or when the veil between the worlds is at its thinnest. Because of this, these holidays are inherently queer. It is time to reclaim the story

**The equinox is  
the tipping point  
in the seasons,  
and just for a  
moment, we  
have a much  
larger  
perspective  
than we might  
normally be able  
to have.**

of Kore, the story of her struggle to maintain her balance between the dark and the light. Kore's tale is the story of another queer goddess girl walking toward freedom. ▼

*Pippin is a radical faerie walking the tightrope between Burlington and Faerie Camp Destiny in Grafton. He is also known as Christopher Kaufman, Executive Director of R.U.1.2? Community Center. He can be reached at pippin@sover.net.*