

# DIVANATION™

—*from perfection to passion*

*diva*: EXTREMELY ENGAGED  
AND WILDLY TALENTED WOMEN  
+ *divination*: SKILLFUL,  
ACCURATE, AND INSPIRED  
INSIGHT AND FORECASTING

## Story-pull!

—trust the call of the story’s power to pull you home.

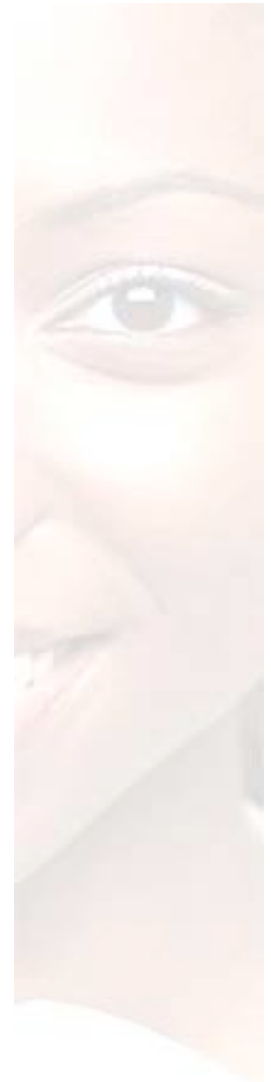
Maura had been working diligently to wrangle her story. She had come to us because, as she put it, she was “tired of waiting for tomorrow to sort itself out.” She had recently broken off a five-year relationship of “convenience.” Having developed an amazingly successful career in a male-dominated financial-services field, Maura wanted, now, to live in a way that was “less buttoned-down” and more attuned to her “aesthetic.” She wanted “more color, more art, more flair” in her day-to-day living. She wanted to “feel alive” doing her work and in “her living.” She wanted to open a new chapter in her life where who she wanted to be would be more integrated with what she was “actually doing.”

To this end, Maura had engaged the coaching process genuinely and with diligence. She had come to the sessions well prepared. She had applied the reflective assessment exercises to examine her past and present. She had a firm handle on what was meaningful to her, what skills she had, and how her personality aided her in doing her job well, being actively social, and playing a touch-stone role for many of her friends.

Maura could tell us clearly about those things about which she was passionate, such as extended family, ongoing learning and education, helping others, interior design, spirituality, community engagement, and social interaction. Yet when we worked to have her tell what she saw as her future, she struggled and became frustrated. The potential paths to her future, which we could see clearly, remained distant. “I can’t see it,” she kept telling us. When Maura tried to imagine her future, all she could see was “grey soup.”

She turned her frustration inward: first she questioned whether she had done the work properly, then pondered if she wasn’t “just being silly” for “wanting something more,” and then she fell back on wanting (which often happens in these situations) to make certain that we weren’t disappointed in her.

This was a tense moment, we assured her that she was on track, and suggested a brief break. When we reconvened, Maura was in thought, twirling the twine from the blind around her finger. Sitting down Frank held touched a piece the twine and said, “Let the story pull you; let the story pull you home.”



Maura had been fighting her story. She had been trying to push through the “grey soup.” She had been trying to intellectualize and process her way into her story. She had yet to come to believe in her story. She had yet to trust its call, its guidance, and its direction. When Maura focused the twine this changed.

“When you feel the future’s tug, where are you going? Can you tell me where you’d like to be in six months?”

Maura held the twine in both hand, tilted her head upward, began to calm down, and said with a matter-of-fact clarity:

“I will have had a conversation to reconfigure my working relationship with the firm. I will have worked out an agreement to continue to support my existing customers for two to three more years. I will have ensured that my junior partner is positioned to expand her role. I will take two months off and use this time to visit my college roommate, and spend three-weeks working with my architect friend in Sacramento, where she helps me better understand the business and partnering aspects of the interior design consultancy I will be building. I will have met with my brother and sisters to make certain we are in agreement on how to best accomplish the selling our mother’s home and finding her independent living arrangements.”

When she finished the room went quiet. Maura lowered her head, she gave a little laugh, and said, “That, I saw Wow!” And with that, Maura was well on her way of making sense of who she would become. She had allowed the story to pull her into clarity. Her story, her future, awaited her patiently; she hadn’t yet had the confidence to give herself over to it.

Though Maura’s experience is of note given how utterly stuck she had become when imagining her future, yet in many ways her path is very typical. Too often our instinct is to force the story, to over analyze it, or to distrust it because it’s not romantic, adventurous, or just not perfect enough. We often get caught up in the common belief that stories are fiction or fantasy, not real, so we have a hard time giving ourselves over to them.

Only when we trust the fact that we story our way into the future, as guided and informed by the choices we’ve made in the past, which give meaning to the actions of aspiration in the present, can we follow the story-pull. Story-pull takes you to those places where you can respond to your call and claim to be who you imagine yourself being. Story-pull is the pull of you disclosing and creating your identity, honestly and in full recognition of the possibilities and the limitations.

Because Maura had taken the coaching work seriously and engaged in self-reflective work, when she followed the story-pull and finally began to tell her story, she recognized all the elements in her narrative as coming from her life. She used her passions to guide her but in ways that made sense and were doable given the configuration of her responsibilities and commitments.

Like Maura, let the story-pull take you home—where you are well grounded and confident on your path to living who you imagine yourself being—no longer waiting for tomorrow to sort itself out.



For more information on how storytelling and identity development can assist with transitional concerns, contact:

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