



Foreword

It is a rare gift to encounter someone who embodies authenticity so completely that they inspire others to live their truth. Chantelle Botha offers us exactly the gift of being that person and sharing it with others. I have had the privilege of knowing her as a colleague, a friend, and a fearless champion for transformation. Her unwavering commitment to living boldly and authentically is not just inspiring – it is life-changing for those fortunate enough to learn from her.

Phoenix Rising is a testament to Chantelle's extraordinary journey – a journey that is both deeply personal and universally relatable. It is a book that invites us to reflect on the parts of ourselves we've hidden, to shed the layers of shame and doubt, and to embrace the full being of who we are. Chantelle's story is not just one of awakening but of empowerment, offering practical insights and heartfelt encouragement to help readers reclaim their flame.

Chantelle's message is profoundly relevant in today's world. Societal and professional norms often ask women to compartmentalise their lives, to adapt to structures that undervalue authenticity, and to conform to definitions that deny the full expression of their identities. The result is an overwhelming pressure to diminish or deny the very qualities that make us unique. Chantelle's work is a refreshing

antidote to these pressures. She not only calls women to reclaim their authenticity but offers the guidance to support the reader on the next steps.

Phoenix Rising shines as a beacon of hope and empowerment. Chantelle's voice reminds us that authenticity is not a weakness; it is the foundation of true power. Her ability to transform her personal experiences into lessons that resonate universally is a testament to her courage, insight, and deep commitment to helping others.

Knowing Chantelle has shaped how I view authenticity, leadership, and self-discovery in new ways. Surrounded by conformity and hesitation, Chantelle teaches that true strength lies in vulnerability and the courage to embrace all facets of oneself. Her ability to navigate her journey with such raw honesty has given me permission to reflect on my own experiences, confront hidden doubts, and gain a clearer sense of who I am. This book will help the reader do the same. Her example has been a powerful reminder that the path to personal and professional growth begins with self-awareness and the willingness to step into our own light.

Reading her work has deepened this understanding. Chantelle has a way of speaking directly to the heart, addressing the unspoken fears and aspirations many of us carry. Her stories and lessons will inspire the reader to move beyond surface-level solutions and to embrace the sometimes messy but always rewarding work of self-discovery. Her message is both an invitation and a challenge – to reclaim the parts of ourselves we've tucked away and to lead with boldness, not just for ourselves but for those who look to us for guidance.

I have seen Chantelle's transformative magic first-hand. She has a unique ability to challenge and encourage, to create space for others to explore their potential, and to inspire them to take the lead with bold steps forward. This book is

just one part of the impact she has one-on-one and in groups with her coaching, facilitation, and presentations.

For those ready to embark on their own journey of self-discovery and liberation, *Phoenix Rising* will feel like both a mirror and a map. It will challenge you to confront what holds you back, encourage you to reimagine what's possible, and empower you to step boldly into the life you were meant to lead.

Chantelle has taught me, both through her words and her actions, that our greatest strength lies in our willingness to be vulnerable and authentic. It is my hope that as you read this book, you, too, will feel the spark of possibility that Chantelle so effortlessly ignites in others.

This is not just a book – it is an invitation. An invitation to rise, to embrace your full self, and to reclaim your flame. I am honoured to share these words as an introduction to Chantelle's work and her remarkable story. May you, like me, find inspiration in her courage, her wisdom, and her light.

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Aroused to Awakened

It was a beautiful summer afternoon in November 2023, and I was coming to the end of a business lunch with a young man when the foreign feeling took my breath away. Time stopped as I found myself getting lost in his gaze. We were deep in philosophical conversation, and it felt like he was inside my head, probing, exploring. What was this? I squirmed. Then it hit me – I was attracted to him. The primal arousal grew inside me, spread through my body and my cheeks flushed. I wanted to take him to the nearest hotel and have my way with him.

God almighty! Where had that thought come from? I felt the adrenaline prick my skin as I wrestled for control and pushed the feeling away. “Ridiculous!” I told myself, “He’s younger than your son!” My head and heart engaged in a tumultuous battle as I wrestled my focus back to the present moment. Dual conversations were playing out in real-time, and the one in my head was deafening.

Logic prevailed for a heartbeat as I reminded myself that lunch was nearly over, and I was scheduled to give a talk in a few hours. There was no way I was giving in to the hedonistic ideas that had dictated so much of my past. I reminded

myself how much I had changed. I wasn't that person anymore. I no longer propositioned men over a business lunch.

I cannot remember how I held that conversation together for the rest of the lunch. My brain was pinballing all over the place. One moment I was listening to his words and formulating my responses very deliberately, and the next moment I was watching his lips and thinking wicked thoughts. I remember biting my lip at one point in an effort to stem the tide of desire, but I was fighting a losing battle. When we embraced to say goodbye, I'm sure I held on for longer than was normal.

As I drove away, I momentarily gave in to all the sinful thoughts that had plagued me, stymied by the rush of the fantasies that flooded in. I let the heat of desire spread through my body. My breath caught in my throat. It felt so good. But as those energetic waves crashed over me, I remembered the person I was the last time I gave in to those feelings.

"No!" I was not going to allow myself to go there. I pushed the feelings away and talked myself off the ledge.

"Get your head back in the game, Chantelle! You are delivering your first Pecha Kucha talk tonight – it has to go well."

That night I delivered what felt like the worst talk of my life. I froze on stage. I forgot my words. I even said the dreaded "sorry" to the audience. *Gasp. What was going on with me?* Having fumbled my way through my talk, feeling like a total imposter, I was counting down the minutes until I could put my tail between my legs and crawl away to lick my wounds.

I berated myself all the way home. *You can't do anything right. Everything you do ends in disaster. And what is with that stupid sensation that happened over lunch? What were you thinking? You see? You're Broken. Twisted. Deviant. Definitely not normal!*