

EMBRACE  
THE  
BASE

CAMPFIRE BOOK



GREENHAM WOMEN  
EVERYWHERE

# THE GATES

The women created "Gates", each one known by a different name, each one developing its own character and value system, and resultant way of working.

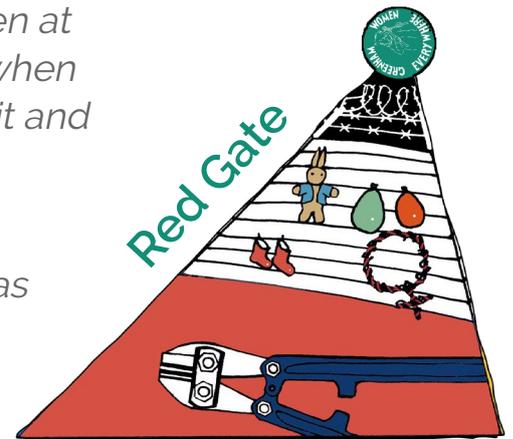


Originally known as Main Gate, Yellow Gate was known as the most heavily populated, where journalists would go to interview activists. It was where visitors used to enter the camp for large scale actions, and where supporters left donations.

*"My sister was Yellow Gate hardcore: snip through the fence, jump on the commander's bonnet, get locked up for a week in Holloway! She just really went for it!"*  
~ Carolyn Francis

At Red Gate they had *"this pram, that was our kitchen at Red Gate, and all our food ... went in that, and then when they came around to evict us, we put everything in it and wheeled it away."* ~ Fenja Hill

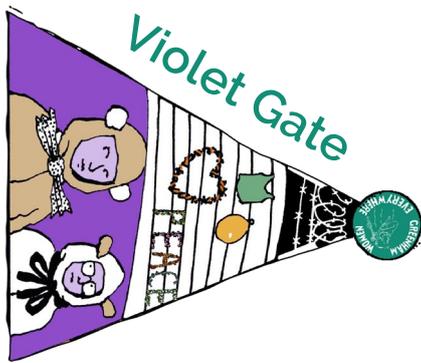
*"We re-established Red Gate ... Red Gate was there originally, but it wasn't there when I was there ... It was suitable for children, and then women who wanted to be involved could come for childcare as well."* ~ Tamsin Clayton



Directly opposite the silos, Green Gate was set up in response to them being built to house the incoming cruise missiles. It was the only space that was women-only twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and it had a reputation of being "the spiritual gate."



*"Oh, getting up late ... 9 or 10 o'clock ... Having cups of tea, sitting around. Visitors coming, talking to visitors, going off 'wooding' – that's going off into the woods to get lots of fuel for the fire – going and getting water. Sometimes going to the shop, sometimes going into the swimming pool to take a shower."* ~ Maggie Parks



*"At Violet Gate, you made it a policy to always try to talk to anybody that was to do with the police, the military – communicate with them ... give them a little bun or something, and then have a little chat with them."* ~ Maria Ragusa

*"Orange Gate was the creative Gate ... people used to play musical instruments, and people would gravitate there, it was sort of arty ... and they used to sometimes drive round in a van, and all of a sudden they'd leap out and perform some kind of skit or songs or something to entertain you, and then they'd all pile back in and drive off, so they were the entertainment Gate."* ~ Jade Britton



*"Orange Gate was definitely older at that time ... or it felt older to us – they were probably in their thirties! But there were lots of women there who'd been part of the Aldermaston marches and stuff, and it was lovely. They had settees at Orange Gate! They always had better cake!"* ~ Penny Gulliver

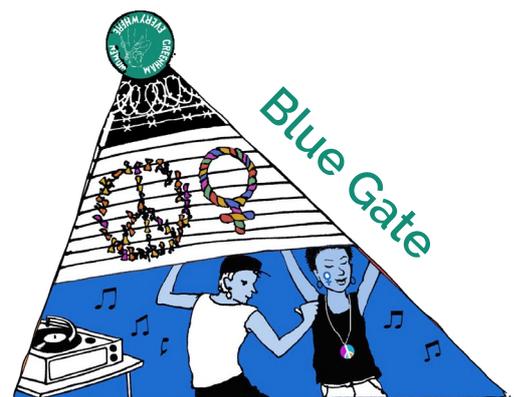


On a day of festivities at Indigo, they put on a puppet show; once it had played to its Greenham Woman audience *"they turned all the screens around and showed it to the soldiers on the other side of the fence."* ~ Maggie O'Conner

With a reputation as the party Gate, Blue Gate was the closest Gate to the the Rockeby Arms, the only local pub that would, intermittently, serve Greenham women. Blue Gate would usually be first on the bailiff's rounds, leaving the women living there little time to grab any belongings they didn't want to be thrown into the back of the Muncher - though they would find time to dash ahead to other Gates and issue warnings there.

*"A lot of things happened all the time, it was quite full on ... because they've got cruise missiles coming through, and if you happened to be there, and they're bringing cruise missiles in, you just have to go and lie in front of the gate."*

~ Janet Smith



# LOCATIONS

You can add more Locations to this book from information you find at the [Greenham Women Everywhere](#) website.



## Prison

Despite aligning themselves with the principles of Non-violent Direct Action and remaining peaceful, women were regularly arrested for breach of the peace, and many received prison sentences. That the women ended up in the court system and spent time in prison wasn't just an unfortunate consequence of the campaign, but a direct part of their strategy. Women spoke of plans to fill up the prisons and to challenge patriarchal behaviours in the judicial system. They aimed to expose the ways in which the system stood in the way of the path to peace and nuclear disarmament, and to reveal its misogynistic treatment of women. *"People began to react very badly to seeing women, you know, shoved into prison day after day, it reminded people of the suffragettes and everyone knew how bad that had been ... they had to sort of take it more seriously and think about it."* ~ Elizabeth Woodcraft

## Quaker Meeting House

*"There was a big Quaker presence there. The Quaker women were absolutely gorgeous. And they were just so peaceful and so gentle, and they were a real big presence there ... my discovery of the Quakers was at Greenham, was part of the peace movement. Because the thing about Quakers they seem to – they live what they believe. For them, the political is the personal, and they quietly just get on with stuff."* ~ Annei Soanes

*"We were banned from everywhere in Newbury, except the Quakers ... In the end, they turned over their meeting hall ... and they installed a shower and a washing machine and a dryer. Because drying things was a nightmare. And we could have meetings there if we were planning NVDA (Non-violent Direct Action) ... we could talk there, so that was a really supportive thing."* ~ Jill 'Ray' Raymond



## Rockeby Arms

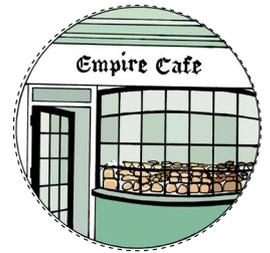
Rockeby Arms was the only local pub that would, intermittently, serve Greenham Women. The others in Newbury sported signs that frequently said things along the line of: 'No dogs, Irish, Lesbians or Greenham Women'. It was located nearest to the Blue Gate.

## The Empire Cafe

*"And there was one cafe called The Empire Grill which would let us in. Because we did stink, you couldn't really not stink ... So yeah, we were banned from everywhere except The Empire Grill, which was quite near the bus station."* ~ Jill 'Ray' Raymond

*"We used to go to the town cafe for egg and chips."* ~ Lyn Barlow

The Empire Café is still incredibly supportive of Greenham Women to this day, providing lunch for them on the last day of the 40th anniversary walk from Cardiff to Greenham in September 2021.



## Telephone Box

The telephone tree: When the cruise missiles came out, a woman would call one local person, who would call ten other people, who would each call ten other people and so on.

Many of those people, after making their calls, would then get into their cars and make their way to the A-roads around the common until the military convoy was spotted. Then these ordinary members of the public, and occasionally some sympathetic journalists, would flank the road, ending all pretence at secrecy for the military manoeuvres, and sharing the information with their networks the next day.

*"And you'd go 'oh my god there's loads of police arriving', and it'd be like three in the morning, and you'd go 'they must be bringing it out', and someone would have to run or cycle to the nearest phone box on the estate to set off the telephone tree – but invariably someone would get to the box and the phone wasn't working, because they used to cut the phone lines at the same time as cruise came out."* ~ Penny Gulliver

## Getting to Greenham

Women often travelled to Greenham in hired buses from all over the country for large actions such as Embrace the Base. At these times, there would be thousands of women pouring off buses, climbing out of cars, walking up from the station, singing.



## Police Van

Josetta Malcolm was put in a prison van for hours. The vans were filled with tiny cubicles and several women reported troubling feelings of claustrophobia. *"I had air, but no windows – it was like being in a box ... I didn't know how long I would be in there, what was going to happen to me."* But Josetta remembers

the sense of camaraderie when other women joined them in the van: *"As soon as other women came in, we could talk and we could sing, and that was always the thing that we would sing – we'd learn songs and we'd sing."*

# ACTIONS

All Actions were leaderless, some were planned collectively, many were spontaneous and the focus was on Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA).

If you roll Action on the Story die, choose an Action from the selection given below.

**If you roll a one, three or a five:**

**The firewood needs replenishing** after a windy night. Take a walk and gather some sticks and kindling. Collect one Hand token.

**A journalist has arrived** at Yellow gate and wants to interview someone about their reasons for being at Greenham. If you have story to tell you can share it - or pass this on to someone else. Collect one Hand token.

**You receive a letter from your cousin.** She is coming to visit you and wants to stay for a week. Go to the station to meet her. She brings you news from home, and some biscuits. Collect one Hand token.

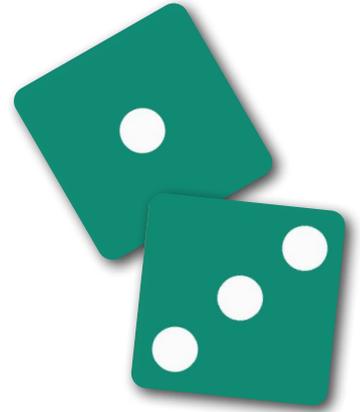
**The local Quaker women have installed** a washing machine and dryer in the Meeting House. Take the washing to the meeting house. Lose one Hand token.

**Someone at your gate is flirting with you** - and you are very pleased! Take them to the café for a cup of tea.

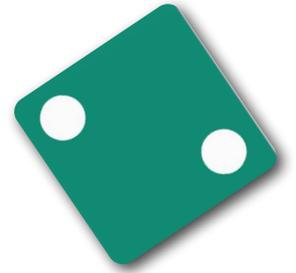
**A theatre company sends a hamper** of old costumes to the camp. Collect one hand token. You can keep them, donate them to another gate or swap them with resources from another gate



**Free the Geese!** There are geese guarding the base - and you think they should be released into the wild. Get the support of two other gates (one Hand token per gate) to free them from captivity. All these Hand tokens go into the centre of the board.



## If you roll a two or a four:



An 11 year old boy and his friend have been taken by the police for carrying bolt cutters. Hitchhike to the police station to sort out the situation. Lose one Hand token.

**Bailiffs have destroyed property** at Blue Gate. Donate a Hand token to help them rebuild the camp.

**A cruise missile is on the move!** Go the Telephone Box to start the telephone tree. Collect one Hand token from every gate and place them in the centre of the board.

**Local vigilantes have threatened to set fire to the camp.** Stay up all night to keep watch. Miss one turn.



**Embrace the Base:** Hold hands around the board. Each gate takes one Hand token from the centre of the board

**Someone has donated** a pile of warm sleeping bags to the camp. Give one Hand token to every gate.

**Reflect the Base:** You want to show the military personnel what you see. Gather mirrors or as many reflective surfaces as possible and hold them up at each gate.

**Time to mend your benders.** Go and visit another gate to see what resources you can borrow. Swap a Hand token with one from the centre of the board.

## If you roll a six:

You can choose to use your Gate's Action token or roll the Number die again. You can only use your Gate's Action token once per game.

If you use your Action token, you will find instructions for the Action on the next page.



## Cutting The Fence

"How we did it was a woman would get down like that, and you would climb up on her back. And then you had to snip one, two, three, four wires quickly. And then unravel it. That's how we cut it..." ~ Helen MacRae



**Action:** if you can do so safely, give your friend a piggy back!

## Dancing on The Silos



Women broke into the base and climbed up on the silos that housed the cruise missiles, held hands in a circle and danced.

**Action:** celebrate with a drink and a dance

## Blockades

"Looking up into the face of a police officer who was telling you to move and saying 'No', was one of the most liberating things I'd ever done, you know, to actually be confronted by that real authority figure and say 'No', was quite incredible." ~ Maggie Parks

**Action:** Military vehicles are entering the base. Link arms and sing a Greenham song



## Teddy Bears Picnic

Women dressed up as teddy bears, broke into the base, sat on the runway and had a picnic.

**Action:** dress up and have a mini picnic.

## Watching



Greenham Women discovered vantage points in the wooded areas of the Common where they could see into the base but the soldiers couldn't see them.

**Action:** play hide and seek!

On the 5th September 1981, Women for Life on Earth walked from Cardiff to Greenham.



## Arrival

**Action:** share a story from your Gate, or your own story of activism.

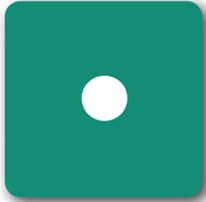
Art was a huge part of the camp, either in zines, posters and flyers or as part of an action adorning the fences with symbols of webs, doves, dragons and peace as well as daubing the cruise missiles and parts of the base with peace and women's symbols.

**Action:** create an artwork with textiles, drawings, or objects. You can invite other gates to contribute, or create their own.



# CHANCE

You can create more Chance events using information you find at the Greenham Women Everywhere website.

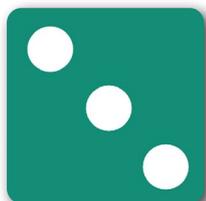
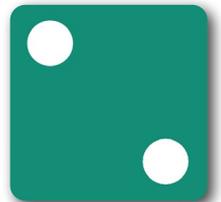


## In-between evictions, get creative with your tent or bender

*"Bits of tarpaulin, bits of plastic, bits of string – if we weren't being evicted, if we had sort of the possibility for more stable structures, then benders were amazing! You need quite a lot of bendy sticks. So you have some bendy sticks going vertically that combine at the top, and you tie them together. And then you have some bendy sticks going horizontally which weave in and out, and you tie them together until it's fairly stable, and at whatever size or shape you wish. I took my cello briefly and I had one that was tall enough for me to sit in it and play cello at one point." ~ Jane Griffiths*

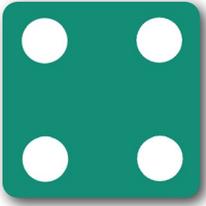
## Stay up to watch your sleeping sisters because of local vigilantes

*"We all slept in the teepee...one night one of the 'neighbours' came with a big Roses tin, you know, full of maggots and threw it in [...] then they set it on fire eventually one night, and people were in it. And so some of us had to stay up all night after that to keep the place safe." ~ Annie Brotherton*



## Assess if your male partner is pulling his weight

*"He would always say he would babysit – and it knocks me when men call being at home alone with their babies 'babysitting' because it's ridiculous – and then would fail to turn up. Would fail to turn up home from work, and let me down...And I was constantly having to cancel meetings, because he would subvert ... And in fact, I think the reality is that ... Greenham was one of the factors of me becoming less of a nice girl, becoming more an independent woman, and someone with my own views, and someone who would do things independently of him. And ultimately...I left him." ~ Sally Hay*



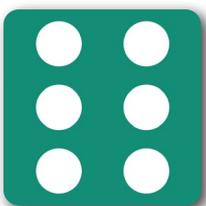
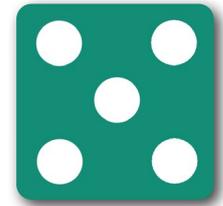
## Throw a Green Gate party!

*"At night people would come and drum around the fire, and we'd sing, and we'd dance, and we'd read books and someone might read poetry to another, it was just amazing. I'd never lived out in nature before. I think the spiritual awareness [...] your real interconnectedness with nature, you know, literally living collectively together on the land. And of course, our periods started to sync and we got into moon magic and all of that stuff. So we celebrated the moons and, you know, did body painting." ~ Maggie Parks*

## Create Camp Dole to support each other:

With donations coming in, multiple gates and women from all classes and backgrounds debating together, you will need a money meeting: *"And they were meetings we had every week, where people would come from all the gates because that was how we would collectively decide how we were going to spend whatever funds we had. And to say they were fraught is an understatement, because there was no, there was no organisation, there was no structure, there was no leader, there was no money committee as such, or treasurer, or whatever. So you came to a 'money meeting'. And you stuck your hand up if you wanted some money for something. So it might be 'I need a hundred quid to print some leaflets', you know, say from the office in Islington. Or it might be 'I need a hundred quid to buy a camera because I feel like I need to express my photographic instincts'. And the latter kind of request tended to meet some kind of controversy [...] They were intensely difficult money meetings because it wasn't just about how we were going to collectively decide to spend the money. It became kind of value judgements on what people were asking for the money for, it opened up all sorts of interesting stuff, way beyond the initial sort of thing."*

~ Hazel Pegg



## Have a political epiphany

*"I was going through that whole process of: What does it mean then? What does it mean to be a woman in the world? What does it mean to not be a Conservative with high heels? ...You know, what is it, what's it like being in the world in a different kind of way?...And what that experience of Greenham gave me was an opportunity to learn about myself, and other people ...after I did that, I went into Harrods on the Monday morning and I handed my notice in." ~ Annei Soanes*

# CAMPFIRES

The format of the Campfire is up to the player that started it. Pick something from the selection of resources below, or visit [greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk](http://greenhamwomeneverywhere.co.uk) for a wealth of materials to explore!

## Script: Hamper

### Characters:

- Chauffeur – 20's, northern
- Nanette – 40's, upper class
- Anita – 30's, London, east end

*Yellow gate, bustling hub of the camp. Sound of women chatting, a chauffeur picks his way through the mud towards them*

**Chauffeur:** Excuse me, ladies?

*They ignore him*

Whose in charge, please? I need to speak to them about this donation.

**Nanette:** Well I'm in charge of me, and she's in charge of her -

**Anita:** Anita, how do you do?

**Nanette:** Don't tell him your name, you don't know who he works for!

**Chauffeur:** Linda McCartney.

**Anita:** (a beat) That's your name or who you work for?

**Nanette:** I didn't know she owned a paper?

**Chauffeur:** Oh, I'm not a journalist, I'm Mrs McCartney's chauffeur.

**Nanette:** Silly us, that makes much more sense, of course you are...

**Anita:** Oh that'll be why the nice car, very nice car! Is it a Jag?

**Chauffeur:** And she's sent me here with this hamper -

**Anita:** Oh that's from Harrods! From a Mrs Beatles!

**Chauffeur:** Mrs McCartney wanted me to let you know how much she appreciates what you are all doing here -

**Nanette:** Well we are not doing it for her!

**Chauffeur:** (losing confidence a little) - and the heartfelt support she has for your aims -

**Nanette:** Look, we get a lot of this, we had the cast from the National here last week, wanting a big song and dance made because they'd bought caviar and quail. This is a vegan camp, it's bad enough when normal people send us tins of beef stew, without smoked salmon showing up -

**Chauffeur:** Ah, would it help to know that Mrs McCartney is a committed vegetarian?

**Nanette:** So everything in here is veggie then?

**Chauffeur:** Absolutely!

**Nanette:** Oh well that's brilliant, that changes things a lot!

**Anita:** Don't Violet Gate eat meat? And Hannah at Bloo -

**Nanette:** Yes I'm well aware you come and sneak Hannah off for chicken sandwiches -

**Anita:** I come to see you, I just occasionally bring Hannah a chicken sandwich -

**Nanette:** And eat it with her!

**Anita:** Do you mind?

**Nanette:** Not really, make your friends, just don't expect me to kiss you for a while after!

**Anita:** That's a strong argument for a life without chicken sandwiches, my darlin'...

**Chauffeur:** (coughs) Sorry, could I just, it's just the hamper's heavy. Is there a donations area?

**Nanette:** We did have a nice tent set aside wonderfully crammed with kind donations but the bailiffs put it all straight in the muncher on day one of evictions.

**Anita:** Anything the women can't carry gets destroyed now, sometimes several times a day -

**Chauffeur:** Sounds shit, sorry awful.

**Nanette:** Yes, it's shit. But it means we don't have to save goodies! We can send this round the group meeting tonight!

**Anita:** Here, give that to me -

**Chauffeur:** As I say, it's heavy -

**Anita:** I'll take it to the others, don't want you losing your grip and getting the treats muddy! Look at your nice shoes, they were so shiny when you arrived.

**Chauffeur:** Oh, yes, it doesn't matter (it sounds like it does a bit).

**Anita:** Give them a wipe in the snow by the verge before you get back in Mrs McCartney's nice car, Ms McCartney! See you at the meeting, Nanette.

**Nanette:** Be with you in five, Anita.

**Chauffeur:** She makes carrying that hamper look easy.

**Nanette:** You should see her throw a blanket over the razor wire and scale the fence!

**Chauffeur:** The base certainly looks well defended, and yet you get in.

**Nanette:** And yet we do!

**GREENHAM  
WOMEN ARE  
EVERYWHERE**

**Chauffeur:** I wonder if there is anyone I know in there.

**Nanette:** You ex-military?

**Chauffeur:** Yup.

**Nanette:** Does it feel odd to be on this side of the fence?

**Chauffeur:** Always. And no.

**Nanette:** Mostly it'll feel good to get back in the nice car?

Chauffeur: Yes mam!

Nanette: Off you pop then, and thanks her-nibs for the hamper, could mean we might stay in good spirits for tonight's meeting, you never know! Mind you, it's a money one so maybe not...

Chauffeur: Best of luck with it, with all of it.

Nanette: (calling after him) Don't forget to wipe your shoes!

## Songs

### A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

slow - lilting

C G Dm C

F C F C

C G  
What would you do if I closed down your base,  
Dm C  
Would you fire silver bullets at me?  
C G  
Lend me your ears and I'll sing you a song  
F C  
And you'll walk out and link arms with me.  
F C  
I'll ban Cruise with a little help from my friends,  
F C  
I'll stop war with a little help from my friends.

What do I do with my family away?  
Doesn't worry me, I'm not alone.  
How do I feel by the end of the day?  
I'm worn out, but I'm not on my own.  
No, I get by with a little help from my friends,  
I get high with a little help from my friends.

Would you believe in a peace that will last?  
Yes, I'm certain that we'll make it stick this time.  
What does it look like, this peace that will last?  
I can't tell you, but I know it's mine.  
We'll ban Cruise with a little help from our friends.  
We'll do more with a little help from our friends.

Are there more women needed?  
The world needs plenty of love.  
Can it be any woman?  
The world needs all of our love.  
Oh we'll ban Cruise with a little help from our friends.  
We'll close the base with a little help from our friends.  
We'll do more with a little help from our friends.  
We'll stop war with a little help from our friends.

# BRAZEN HUSSIES

Can sing octave lower

Musical notation for the first system of 'BRAZEN HUSSIES'. It consists of three staves in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff is the vocal line with a note above it indicating 'Can sing octave lower'. The second and third staves are guitar accompaniment. Chords G, D, and C are indicated above the notes. A 'repeat' sign is present in the second staff.

We're brazen hussies  
 and we don't give a damn  
 We're loud, we're raucous  
 and we're fighting for our rights  
 And our sex, and our need, to be free

Men call us names to be nasty and rude  
 Like lesbian, man hater, witch and prostitute  
 What a laugh, 'cause half of it's true.

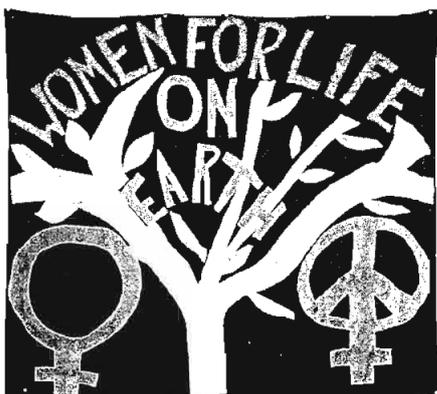
The fragile docile image of our sex must die  
 Through centuries of silence we are  
 screaming into action.

We're Greenham hussies  
 and we don't give a damn  
 We're loud, we're raucous  
 and we're fighting for our rights  
 for our sex, for our fun, and we'll win.

# YOU CAN'T KILL THE SPIRIT

Musical notation for the first system of 'YOU CAN'T KILL THE SPIRIT'. It consists of two staves in C major, 4/4 time. The first staff is the vocal line. The second staff is guitar accompaniment. Chords C, F, and C(Cm) are indicated above the notes.

You can't kill the spirit  
 She is like a mountain  
 Old and strong  
 She goes on and on and on.  
 You can't kill the spirit  
 She is like a mountain.....



## Poem

# And Women Dance

In  
'Gamma'  
cold and empty  
- a graveyard to male violence -  
the land yearns to breathe freely again  
and  
women  
dance.

Once again  
women  
dance  
on the silos  
dance  
around a fire  
a beacon of strength  
a promise of another way  
a fire that contains  
all the fires  
all the loving and struggles  
of ten long years.

The gates have been opened  
freeing the land  
freeing our hearts  
our lives  
and women dance  
weaving our visions  
with the land's  
reclaiming  
the common  
the Earth

This death place  
is man's domain  
women are forbidden here  
They strut around  
boasting of their power  
but their language bares the lie  
they are afraid  
of women  
of the land

They cannot find us  
we are hidden  
protected  
by the silent darkness  
the land is strong here  
and still  
we dance.

In their fear  
they weld the gates shut  
trapping themselves forever  
women cut down the fences  
leaving gates  
that will never open again  
standing alone  
silent sentinels  
to a crazed world  
messengers  
of women's power.

We know who is strongest here  
they know they have lost control

Women will not let our lives  
be bound  
by men's fear

we will dance on the land  
we will climb the watchtowers  
to see beyond the confines they  
create  
we will light fires of life  
in the belly of their death machines  
we will reclaim the Common  
the sacred Earth  
and there is nothing  
absolutely NOTHING  
they can do  
to stop us.

Zohl dé Ishtar  
in celebration of the Tenth Birthday  
Greenham Common  
Sept 9 1991.



# RESOURCES

Visit the Greenham Women Everywhere website for further resources - click (digital) or scan (printed) this QR Code to visit:



## How to Scan a QR Code

Below you will find a selection of resources you can access simply by scanning the QR code. Start by installing a QR Code reader on your smartphone (you can find this software on your phone's App store).

**Step one:** Open up the QR Code reader.

**Step two:** Hold your phone over the QR Code so you can see it clearly in the screen.

**Step three:** Your phone will automatically scan the code and take you to the website. If this doesn't happen, you may need to press a button on your phone - like taking a picture!

### Animations



### Interviews



### Extra Pages



### Images



### Written Testimonials



### Music

