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## Marlo Morgan

**Mutant Message Down Under**  
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**Prior to your time living in Australia, did you have any experience with Aborigines? What did you know about this community, and how did that knowledge play into your early work with Aborigine youth?**

Prior to living in Australia I knew nothing about Aborigines. When I attended primary school many years ago we studied a little about many continents, but I don't recall anything about Australia even having a native population. As an adult I had travelled to Asia, Mexico and South America only. My early work with the young Aborigines was based upon a program I was involved with for many years here in the USA called Junior Achievement. It was designed to help youth from under privileged backgrounds learn about starting their own business and becoming self-supporting.

**What was your principal aim in writing *Mutant Message Down Under*?**

My aim in writing this story was down for my grandson who at the time was too young to understand where Grandma had been and what Grandma had experienced — to let my grandson read about something wonderful when he was old enough to do so, even if I was gone by then. I feel however, that the mere fact I had no attachment to the results, didn't try to get it published, didn't seek fame and fortune, but merely shared it with whomever crossed my path and asked for a copy of my notes, that the universe took it and became the distributor.

**How and in what ways have you been involved with Australian Aborigines since *Mutant Message Down Under* was published?**

My involvement with the Aboriginal culture since the publication of the book has been limited. As you will see the dedication in the 10th anniversary edition is made to two special Aboriginal people. Both very dear beloved friends, both elderly like myself, and with their help I was able to be of service without calling attention to the source. The Australian Aboriginal people in my opinion are basically very proud people, rightly so, who have been beaten down for the last 200 years and would prefer to handle things in their own way, with their own hands and not have foreign outsiders (which of course is what I am) interfering. I respect and honor that.

**What was the Australian reaction to your account of an endangered community of Aborigines? Has the Australian government's treatment of the Aborigine community changed in any way since you wrote *Mutant Message Down Under*?**

The Australian government reaction to my account of a group of Aborigines living in the wild was quite remarkable. It immediately made these people, (if they truly existed) criminals. They were breaking many laws. In Australia all children must go to school or the parents are subject to criminal prosecution, all births must be reported, all deaths must be reported — if someone dies you can't just dispose of the body, you must complete census forms even if you can't read and write, you must have the minimum health vaccinations, you need permits in many areas to live off the land and hunt and eat what grows there. There are special reservations designated by law for various tribes to stay within and somehow these people either escaped or did not obey. Needless to say, if the book is sold as fiction then the government can save face and the people are temporarily safe.

**You write: "I had not found a new religion, but I had found new faith." What aspects of Aboriginal spirituality and worldview have you embraced in your own life?**

Before I experienced the Real People, I did not realize that religion can be seen as manmade and spirituality is God-given. Organized religion, it seems to me, tends to separate people into groups and beliefs where spirituality joins us all together. I try everyday to incorporate the wisdom I inherited from my experience into my daily life.

**What is your next project?**

I received information from the tribal elders, Burnum Burnum and Alice Kelly before they died that I believe was told to me so I could pass it on. My next project will be doing that.