Ancient Thera, Present Teacher

The wall murals of ancient Thera (~2000-1500 BCE) are the most artful expression of the ancient Goddess culture, realistic images that evoke, even today, the joy of living fully with Life.

Written in Santorini, 2004

The wind working its
way through ancient
cracks and ill-fitting doors pestered
me all night.

Now it is morning and
nothing has settled down the
wind refuses to clear a space
for contemplation. This is stormy

country, lost to fire and sea, buried by meters and
meters of hard pumice rain and heavy boulders,
the volcano falling into its

fiery heart and sea blazing in to fill the steaming
crater that once was island.
Gorgeous culture ended here.

Island home to painters who knew
no restraint who took ceremonial rooms and

made them come alive with color and form
bound by no convention strong
joyful brush strokes bringing

life to barren walls on barren
land their homes painted
still today reminding us of times when

dolphins danced with fleets and
swallows swept the wild sea air
with song. Even now when

it all collapsed and 3600 years of
grief and dust had to be gently cleansed
to see their life even now their joy

is here and even now their happy
life lifts my human heart above
my own ruined time and

reminds me that life can be
good even when lived in the shadow of
what must destroy it.

They knew what was coming.

Many times tremors and ash
warned them to take their
treasures and flee yet they
returned to clean and

rebuild and recreate the life they loved.

And then the volcano would
have no more of them and
Earth erupted with violence that
only lives deep inside
creation. All fire the

blast blew black obsidian boulders
like dust, mythic energy reminding
humans how tenderly to walk
the Earth that goes from beloved
to fire when it tolerates us

no longer.