



PLANT MAGIC FOR GRIEF SUPPORT

A collaborative digital zine featuring  
visual art, stories, poems, essays, love  
letters, remedies, recipes, rituals, &  
spells celebrating the magic of plants  
for grief support

December 2022





"Red Cedar" by Dio Dimitri,  
Cover: digital art inspired by Osha root by Adrienne Stiles



# DEAR READER,

Thank you so much for being here!!

This zine is an invitation to play in, to create with, and remember your own capacity to experience magic and medicine in collaboration with plants, and an invitation to honor all those plants who you are already in relationship with, and all the ways you are already supported and nurtured by them.

This zine is a celebration of plant magic, plant stories, and plant relationships and the ways that these relationships persist despite the ways they have been disrupted, forgotten, stolen through legacies of state, colonial, patriarchal violence.

This zine is a celebration of the ways that remembering our relationships with plants can be a part of a long lineage of ways of being in the world that are centered in care--for ourselves, one another, and the ecosystems we are inextricable from. This zine is an invitation to sense ourselves as a part of a tapestry of grievers, plants, animals, ecosystems.

This zine is a conversation and love poem between grievers as well as between plants and people, and an invitation to see plants speaking through us, as Sophie Strand says, "*What if I can let myself be thought of by something much wilder and stranger than me? What if I can let myself be borrowed as an instrument, as a mouthpiece?*"

This zine is not a project of getting back to normal or healing grief. This zine is a kaleidoscope of spells for slowness, listening, and loving the world and each other in ways that crack us open, in deep acknowledgement that what pours out of these cracks is sacred, is nourishment, is courage, is a kind of homecoming.

Thank you to the plants for existing, for holding us and teaching us so much in grief, for nourishing us and reminding us that we are not alone. Thank you to the pollinators, the soil, the farmers, the sun, the rain, the mycelium, the webs of relationship necessary for a seed to sprout.

Thank you so much to all those who contributed your knowledge, spells, art, poetry, recipes, stories, and love to this zine!

Thank you reader for seeking out plant magic. Thank you all for seeking out and holding relationships of care for yourselves, plants, and bringing these relationships into your lives and communities.

Thank you to those who have preserved and shared the seeds of this knowledge, care, relationship, and the parts of ourselves that remember and are called back into this relationship with plants, grief, and community care.

Thank you grief for being a portal back into remembering the sacredness of our relationships.

With love,  
Mara June





This Poem Came To Me Under a Cedar Tree

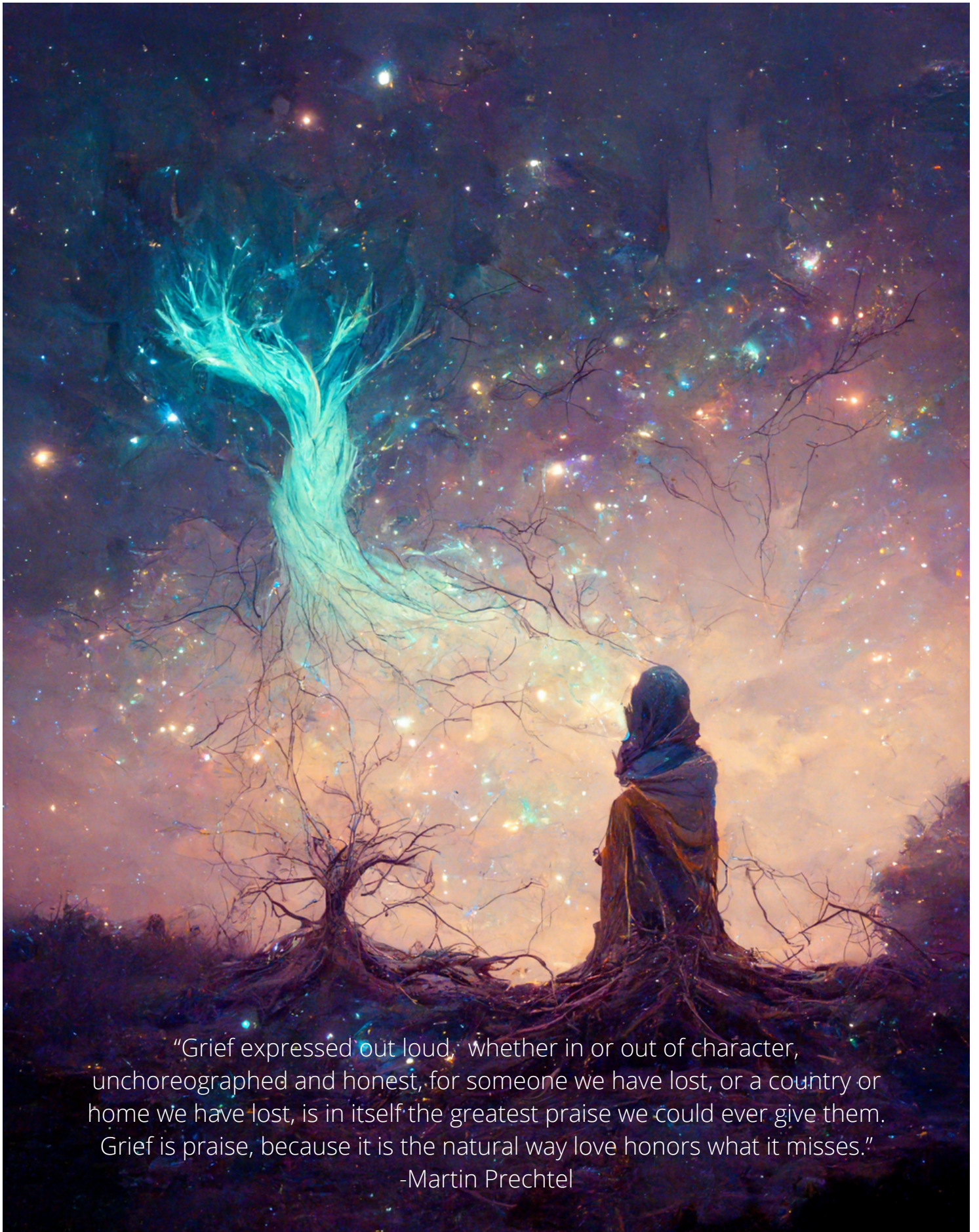
There is an abundance of death. This is true.  
The people I love will keep dying. It is the cost  
of being alive. I stood, a waving tree with my arms  
out as they cleared the gate and walked off  
across the valley to a stand of trees that exists  
only in the future, much like hope.  
I miss everyone I have ever met and simultaneously  
can feel them everywhere at once.  
I exist so briefly and yet it is all I know. World,  
who I both rage against and hold tenderly in my arms  
prayer is not a plea, but a repeated and insistent thank you.





"Bloodroot" (Top) and "Poison Ivy" (Bottom) by Mila Roeder



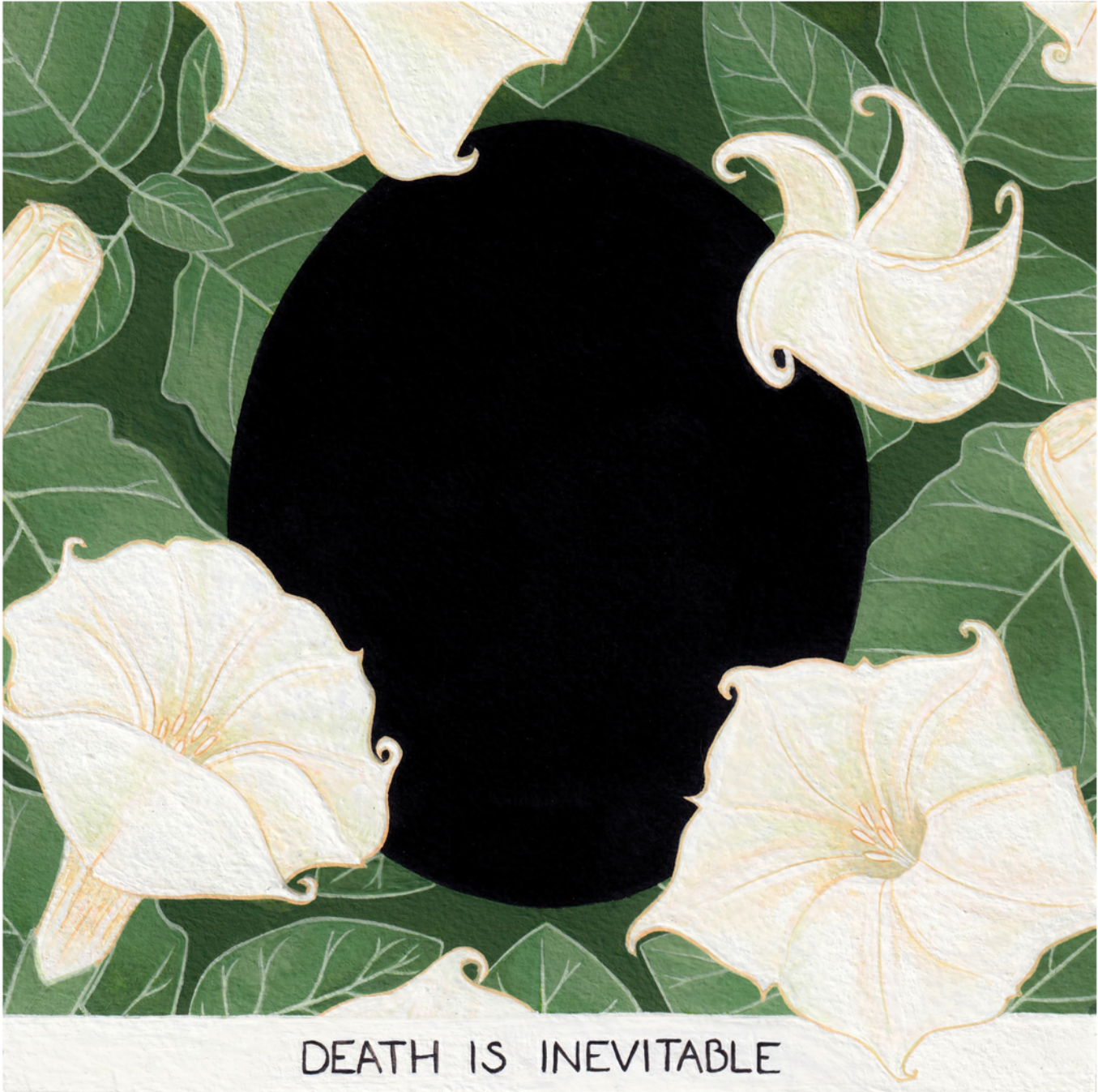


"Grief expressed out loud, whether in or out of character, unchoreographed and honest, for someone we have lost, or a country or home we have lost, is in itself the greatest praise we could ever give them. Grief is praise, because it is the natural way love honors what it misses."

-Martin Prechtel

digital art inspired by Osha root by Adrienne Stiles





"Datura" by Mila Roeder





"Mugwort" by Dio Dimitri



# GLOW: A NOT SO OBVIOUS HERBAL REMEDY TO SUPPORT GRIEF

photos + words by Damiana Calvario



As the wheel of the year keeps turning, we observe how the outside landscape starts changing and if we pay close attention, we can observe how our inner landscape does as well. Just like plants stop giving fruit and trees dropping their leaves, it's the time to bring our energy inwards and process, 'tis the season to grieve.



In my tradition, it's also the time to honor our dead and losses. It's important for us to feel sadness, melancholy and celebrate death as a part of life. Cempazúchitl (Marigold) is our flower of the dead, we work with them in many ways ceremonially and spiritually but they also gift medicinal properties in herbal preparations.

Today I want to share with you about a very special remedy, probably my favorite this time around because I've never worked with it in this way! It's easy, quick and fun to make once you have all your ingredients. They make an amazing gift for yourself and others. It's herbal body scrub aka glow or polish.

I've learnt how it's very important for us to give ourselves the time and space to grieve, and it's equally as important to keep that grief as a flow so we won't get stuck in it. There are many ways to support this process, some involve expression through speaking or writing. This has been super helpful for me at certain moments, but also completely inaccessible at others. Whenever I feel disembodied, airy, fragmented, disassociated I have to go back to basics which is usually calling myself back into my body. We have traditional ceremonies and treatments for that but I always feel like this little trick carries me through them or in between them.

This little trick is self touch. Reminding myself of how my own touch feels, of how my own body feels in my hand. This is precisely why I thought of a Glow, which allows me to do something nice for myself, to bring my attention to a certain texture on my skin, or a special scent, to feel my own self holding me...

Glow can be sugar or salt based. I personally like a blend of sugar and salt. Sugar is a natural humectant, helps soothe the skin while energetically brings sweetness; salt is deeply purifying and energetically protective. Also, both of these ingredients are crystals so the magic of the mineral realm also comes into play here.

To craft your own, begin with a cup of salt, sugar or a mix of both. Add a couple of tablespoons of infused herbal oil, I chose a blend of Cempazúchitl (Marigolds) Helichrysum, Calendula and St. Joan's Wort in Olive oil for skin nourishment, pain management and a beautiful bright orange color. Depending on the type of salt/ sugar you chose and your personal preference the amount of oil will vary. Keep adding oil by the spoonful and blending until you like the consistency, up to ½ cup of oil. Too much oil will dissolve the crystals and you will end up with a thick goo, that's why it's important to go little by little, intentionally. The right consistency is wet sand like, not soupy.



This is a basic recipe but feel free to play around with other ingredients, for example dry flower petals or a few drops of essential oils. Since I wasn't using any aromatic herbs in the oil, I felt good about adding a little Sweet Orange EO for their uplifting properties. I'm not a big fan of how essential oils are used mainstream so just do your own research on the ones you choose and make your informed decision.

Store in an airtight container, a tin or glass jar and work with it on yourself or others (with consent) by rubbing your skin, play around with different pressures to see what serves you/ the person you're caring for best. Rinse thoroughly.

My prayer whenever I'm working with this herbal glow is to let go of the layers that are not longer serving me while nourishing the new tender skin I'm growing through the process of grieving.

Enjoy and share abundantly!







"Evanescent" by Louisa Trusso



A close-up photograph of a vibrant purple rose, with its petals showing delicate veining and texture. The rose is set against a dark, blurred background. Overlaid on the rose is white text in a serif font, arranged in a curved path following the shape of the flower. The text reads: "IN EACH MOMENT THE POSSIBILITY TO SOFTEN AND TRUST WE HAVE ALWAYS HAD THE STRENGTH".

IN EACH MOMENT  
THE POSSIBILITY  
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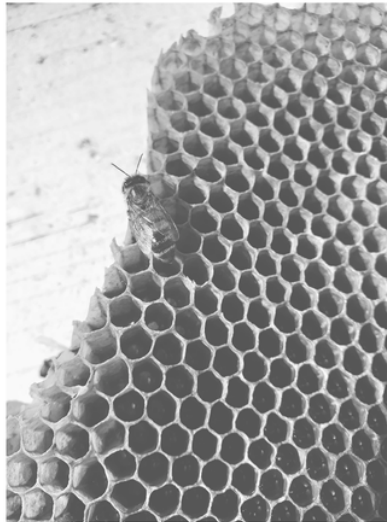
"The Possibility" by Mara June





"Plant Witch in the Garden" by Marley Myles





STANDING AT THE WATER'S EDGE WHERE THE FOG LAYS LIKE BLANKETS  
YOU SWAY GENTLE FIGURE-EIGHTS AGAINST THE WIND.  
WAVES CRASH AGAINST YOU, CURVING YOUR BODY INTO AN ANCIENT BOWL,  
A VESSEL, COLLECTING TEARS AS OFFERINGS TO BE WITNESSED, TO BE DRUNK IN.  
WE HOLD YOUR HOLY CRUCIBLE TO OUR LIPS AND LET YOUR TEACHINGS DRIP DOWN.  
YOU WHISPER TO US YOUR MANY NAMES:

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- I AM THE PRAYER BORN IN THE DRY LAND OF CREOSOTE WHOSE RESIN IS THE SCENT OF THE RAIN THAT BRINGS YOU FLOWING BACK HOME.
- I AM THE SOFT PETALS OF THE ROSE HOLDING YOU IN YOUR HOUR OF DARKNESS.
- I AM THE FOOTHILLS LINED WITH GOLDEN POPPIES, LIE DOWN AND REST FOR A WHILE.
- I AM THE DREAMS OF PASSIONFLOWER, THE BENEFRACTIONS OF THE UNFOLDING MYSTERIES.
- I AM THE MULLIN TORCH, ETERNAL FLAME, GUIDING YOU THROUGH THE LONGEST NIGHTS.
- I AM THE SPIRAL AT THE CENTER OF THE COSMOS FLOWER.
- I AM THE DANDELION'S ROOTS, BITTER ON YOUR TONGUE, FOLLOW ME DOWN INTO THE UNDERWORLD.
- I AM THE SLOW FLOWERING OF THE NIGHT BLOOMING CACTUS.
- I AM THE LOW HUM OF THE MOURNINGHIVE, MY STORY RESOUNDING ACROSS THE WAX COMB.
- I AM THE ESSENCE OF THE EPHEMERAL WINDFLOWERS, EMBODIED REMINDER TO BE HERE NOW.
- I AM THE SALVE SMEARED LIKE DARK HONEY ACROSS THE CHASM OF YOUR LONGING.
- I AM THE BLACK-WIDOW SPIDER HELD IN THE SOFT WRINKLES OF YOUR GRAMPY'S HAND - DO NOT FEAR ME.
- I AM THE SEEDS TUCKED INTO THEIR POCKETS; BODY LAID TO REST BELOW THE SAKURA TREE.
- I AM THE SWALLOWED POMEGRANATE SEEDS THAT PROMISE HER RETURN.
- I AM THE BROKEN BEADS, THE CUT HAIR FALLEN TO THE EARTH.

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WE HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN YOU, YOUR INTRINSIC AND OUROBOROS WAYS.  
GATHERED IN YOUR WISDOM, WE SING AS THEY TAKE THEIR LAST BREATHS.  
OUR SONG OF SLUMBER ECHOING BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF TIME,  
WASHING OVER THEM, THE GENTLE EBB AND FLOW.  
WE HOLD YOU IN OUR VOICES, AN OFFERING FROM DEEP WITHIN OUR BELLIES.  
THE GALE OF YOUR BREATH PULLS US UNDER...[INHALE]...THEN PROPELS US UP...[EXHALE]...AS WE TAKE TO THE WIND ON YOUR WINGS.

-HANNAH M. FULTON @hantrou-fulton





"Do not pray  
exclusively to the  
ancestors of the land,  
make room also for the  
spirits of the fault line, the  
new gods that scream  
through the cracks with  
the first musical notes of  
worlds to come."  
-Bayo Akomolafe

digital art inspired by Osha root by Adrienne Stiles



# SOFT FRONT, STRONG BACK: ROSE MEDICINE FOR GRIEF

photos + words by Mara June



I return again and again to rose medicine. Its medicine has centered me through some of my most turbulent moments. Roses remind what presence in the midst of fear and suffering feels like. Their thorns are protective, their petals are soft. Rose teaches me about the way softness and strength need each other, and has helped me understand grief's disruptive nature as medicine. Rose teaches me about slowness and softness, about breathing and opening into the places that feel most constricted and painful, & to feel the strength of the love that lives there.

In her book *Being With Dying*, Joan Halifax uses the refrain “strong back, soft front” to explain a compassionate disposition for being present with those who are dying. For me, this phrase means being able to hold your boundaries and summon a sense of protection and courage to be with pain and fear (strong back) while acting from an open hearted, loving and understanding space (a soft front). This refrain resonates strongly with the medicine of rose that I experienced.





TW: death, hospice.

Rose supported me in powerful ways while doing hospice for my father with my family several years ago. Tensions were running high in my family as we navigated feeling extremely helpless, sleep-deprived, overwhelmed, grief-stricken, and fearful in the face of my father's coming death. But rose helped me be more present with the beauty of that moment. During the weeks that I took care of my father and in those weeks that followed his passing, I took a half dropper full of rose many times throughout each day. Whenever I took the rose tincture, I felt a sense of calm and compassion that allowed me to be more present with all that my family was experiencing, and I was able to be more grounded in a loving place. I also used a rose-water mist to cool my father down when he was feverish and to clean his skin, and this felt ceremonial as well as therapeutic aromatically for us who were caregiving for him. Rose allowed me to tap into the bravery to be with the suffering and the love I was witnessing and experiencing.

I love to use rose petals and buds in teas, honeys, tinctures, baths, and sprinkled on top of food, pastries, etc. The process of making rose medicine feels like medicine itself to me. When I don't have access to rose, I sometimes spend a few moments with the refrain "strong back, soft front", or closing my eyes to think about the softness of rose petals and the sharpness of their thorns.



# *Full Moon Bourbon Rose Honey*

This bourbon rose honey is easy and lovely to make. You just need honey (preferably local, organic), bourbon of your choice, and rose.

1. Fill a jar halfway or more with dried rosa damasena buds. You can also use rosa woodsii, multiflora, or other types of rose buds and petals that you've harvested, fresh or dried. Just be sure they are free of pesticides, herbicides, and other toxins. If you don't want to use alcohol, then use dried to prevent mold from growing in your honey!

2. Mix bourbon with honey together (80% Honey, 20% Bourbon – you can estimate) and pour over the rose buds. If just using honey, pour your honey over the rose. Stir and make sure that there are no air bubbles before sealing.

3. Flip jar once a day each day for two weeks, a month, or a moon cycle, then strain (if you want, but you don't need to) and use in teas, drinks, deserts, on toast, etc.

4. (Optional) You can also heat it by putting the jar in hot water on the stove before processing, to extract more of the rose medicine, but I find it to be fine without this extra step if the honey hasn't crystallized. If you aren't using alcohol, I recommend this step to extract a little more rose medicine and flavor into your honey. I recommend watching this [instructional video](#) if you plan on heating your honey!

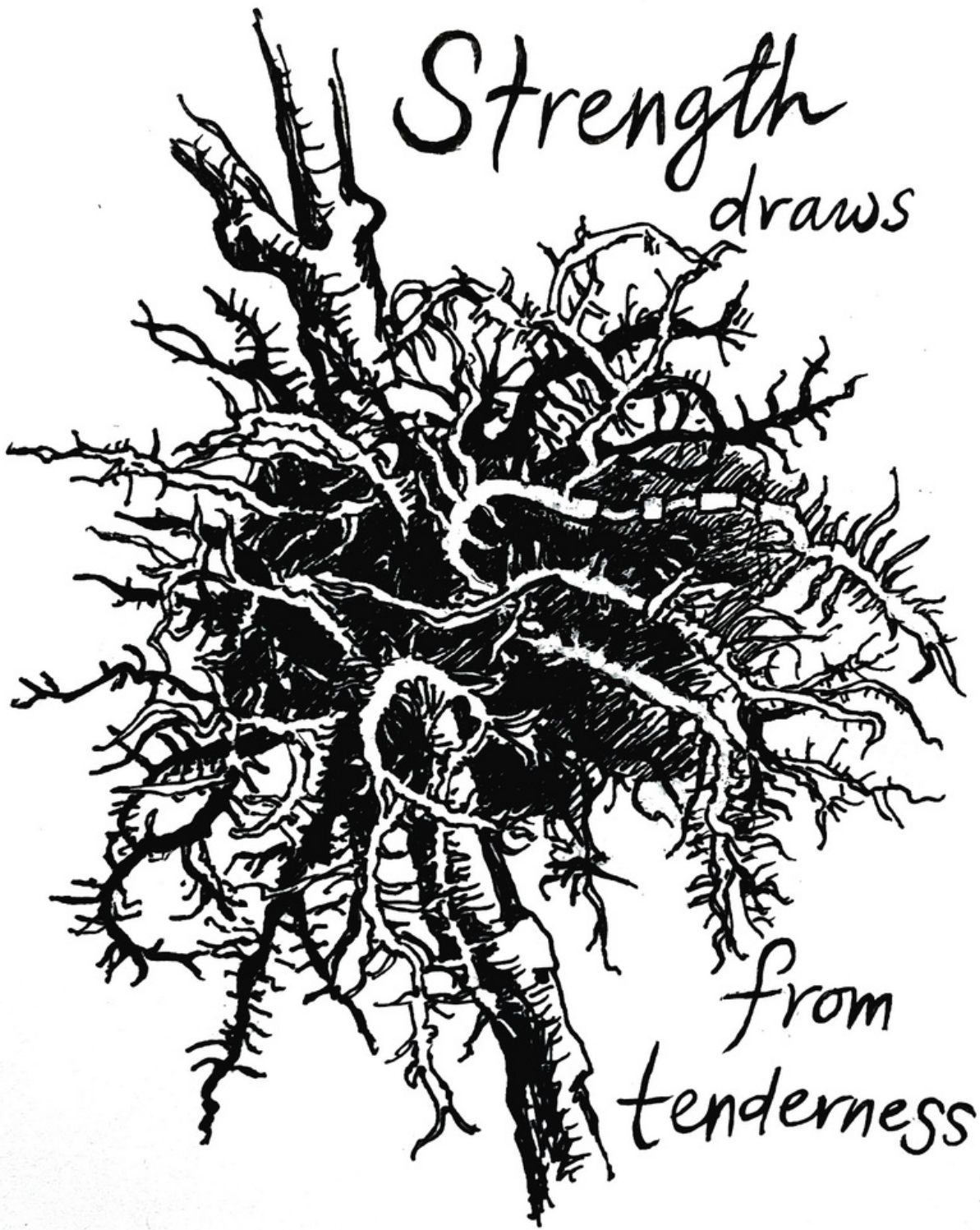
I love making and giving this honey as gifts to friends. I tell them to turn the honey upside down once a day for a moon cycle and watch the flowers slowly float through the honey to the top/bottom of the jar while holding the intention of giving some love to the honey, the bees, the roses, and themselves or whatever other intentions they may want to hold— with the idea that by the next full moon, their honey will be infused with rose medicine, their gratitude, and intentions, ready to strain and enjoy in teas, on toast, etc.



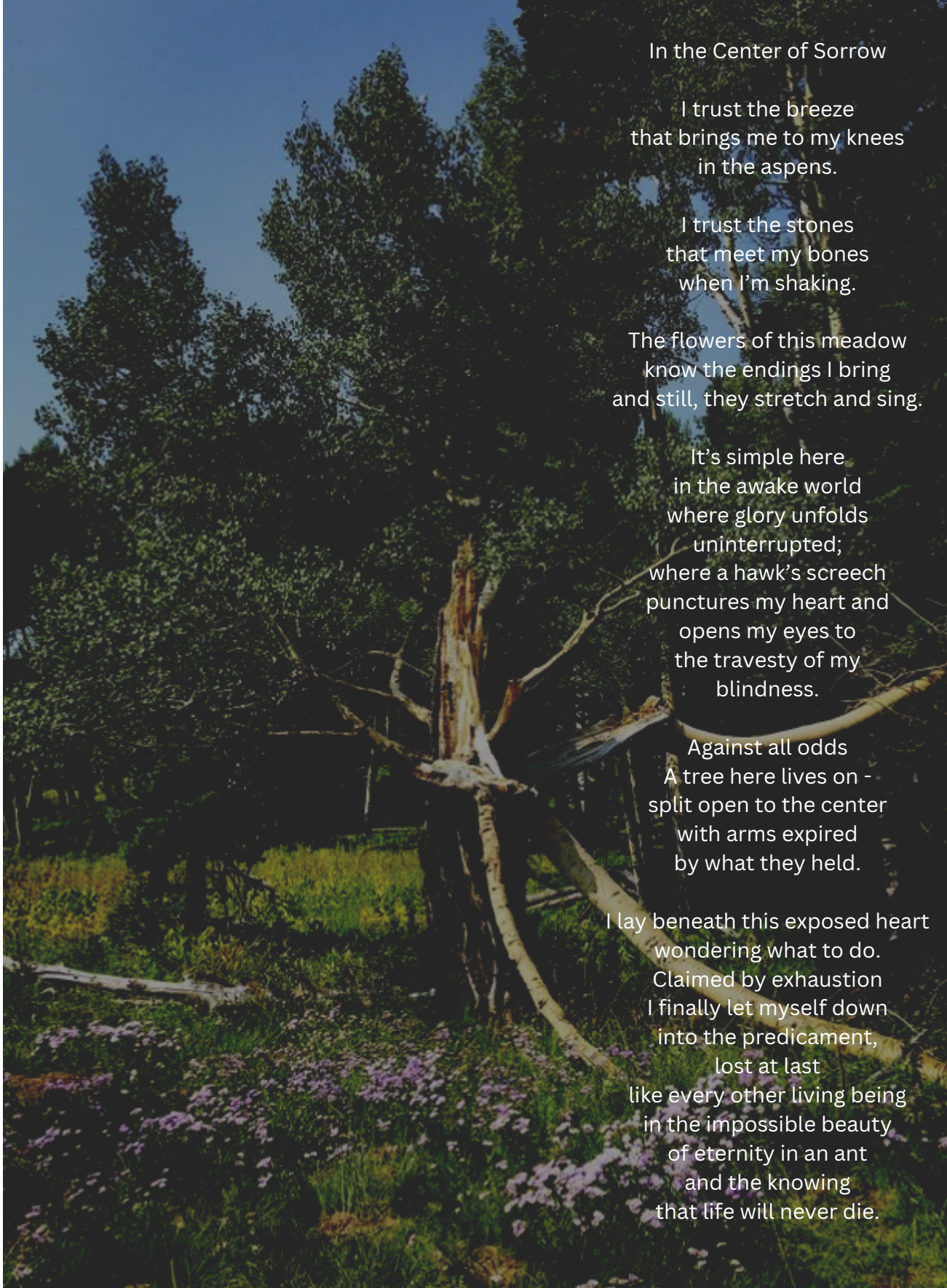


"Her Magical Realms" by Anna P.





Usnea by Dio Dimitri



In the Center of Sorrow

I trust the breeze  
that brings me to my knees  
in the aspens.

I trust the stones  
that meet my bones  
when I'm shaking.

The flowers of this meadow  
know the endings I bring  
and still, they stretch and sing.

It's simple here  
in the awake world  
where glory unfolds  
uninterrupted;  
where a hawk's screech  
punctures my heart and  
opens my eyes to  
the travesty of my  
blindness.

Against all odds  
A tree here lives on -  
split open to the center  
with arms expired  
by what they held.

I lay beneath this exposed heart  
wondering what to do.  
Claimed by exhaustion  
I finally let myself down  
into the predicament,  
lost at last  
like every other living being  
in the impossible beauty  
of eternity in an ant  
and the knowing  
that life will never die.



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in between

the lines  
of painful endings

i carve myself

a place to rest

in between these lines

to be with you  
a  
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# A CUP OF COFFEE WITH MYSELF

illustration + words by Luly Bencomo A.





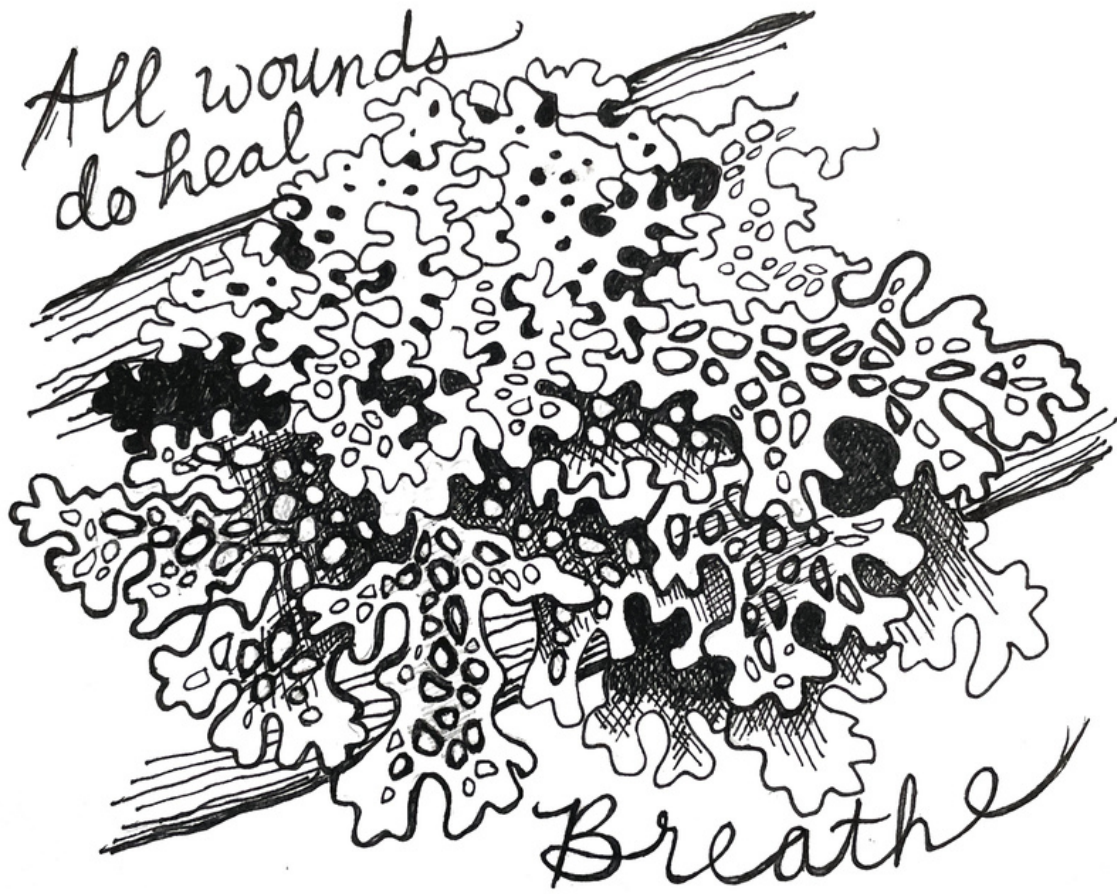
I had a cup of coffee with myself.

A drop of vanilla to soften my bitterness, a pinch of cinnamon to comfort my heart, a splash of milk to nourish my soul, strong coffee beans to lift me up in the dark, water for remain sincere with myself no matter what and a touch of sugar to sweeten my words.

With each sip, the strong bonds that held me all this time were softened. I carefully undressed my soul, took a deep breath and -after a long time full of doubts- I mustered all the necessary courage to plunge into the depths of myself.

It was then, when I finally faced my deepest fears, embracing them, consoling them, filling them with that necessary warmth after all a long period of bitterness, pain and endless grief that I carried in my heart for so many existences, gently dissipating with each sip of my drink, evaporating every tear shed on my way, leading to the sweetest part of my journey.

I opened my eyes slowly, drank last sip, the most delicious one, and then, all those scars started to harden, cracking in my soul, it gave way to tears that slowly transformed them in fertile ground to sow new dreams, new illusions, a new beginning for myself for every day of my life.



Lungwort by Dio Dimitri



# AN HERBAL INFUSION PRACTICE FOR BEING WITH GRIEF

photo and words by SG Rose

The following is a practice I use to intentionally make space to be with my body, which hosts my grief with ferocity, rage, joy, reverence, wonder, and devotion. To thank them for holding my grief, which is not an emotional experience but a physiological one made up of many emotions. And to remind them that they're a Brave Motherfucker.\*

Materials you'll need: Water, a kettle or alternative way to heat the water, your favorite herbal infusion for inviting your grief home (lavender + rose + chamomile + spearmint + elderflower are some of my favorite plant allies for this exercise), a strainer/infuser mechanism, and a mug.

1. Heat the water and prepare your strainer with a recommended 1 tbsp of herbal infusion per every 8 oz. of water you intend to use.
2. As the water heats, consider thanking the elements for supporting you in creating a safe(r) container with you in which to feel. Fire, for providing heat for the infusion. Water, for carrying the medicine to you. Earth, for growing the herbs, and Air, for the breath that holds you, even still.
3. Once your water is ready to pour over your infusion, pour it in a circular motion (clockwise). Doing so invokes a recognition of the cyclical mystery to which we all belong, of life and death, and of grief and love. The snake biting its tail. The World Card at the end of The Fool's journey. The void and the veil.
4. After about 3-5 minutes, you may pour the infusion into your mug / remove the strainer.
5. Hold the warm infusion to the part of your body you feel most bears the weight of your grief. For me, this is almost always somewhere in my chest, but it has also been in my pelvis, my hips, my forehead, and my feet.
6. While holding your mug on or near this place, waiting for it to cool, spend time exploring your infusion plant allies. Consider them your co-conspirators in your commitments to the disruptive nature of grieving. Of coming, full stop, in spite of capitalism's demands on you, to honor your loss and the body that bears it. To feel as much and as deeply and as unforgivingly as you are compelled to allow. To move slowly in the company of this most disorganized and unwieldy force. To surrender when you most want to resist, and welcome in the calming nature of lavender, or the rebellious energy of rose, or the easeful sensation brought on by chamomile.
7. As you converse, you may begin to see the contours of a story— a journey, an argument, a dance. You and your plant allies are going somewhere each time you take a sip. Where are you traveling? What does it look like there? How does it feel in your body to move in this direction?
8. Continue drinking and free write or speak the story that you created during your practice with your plant allies.

The following is a free write I did while meditating over an herbal infusion in Mara June's (aka, @motherwortandrose) Herbalism for Grief and Nervous System Support class. It is not a template. There is no right way to experience this practice, or to create in concert with it, just as there is no right way to grieve.

At the bottom of my cup, petal fragments collect and sway, forming a dimension of layers in this flat space. The color of the garden-water is a pinkish brown; it reminds me of mystic. It reminds me of adventure. It reminds me of moss. I imagine I'm diving head first into that nautical pink, traveling downward to where the dry remains collect. I am confident I will arrive, my arms outstretched in front of me, eyes fixed on the end. Light shines down from the top of the cup, the opening into the world of mouths and the people to whom they belong. The farther I travel to the bottom, the more muffled those mouths become. The backside of my body is bathed in the light of that noisy world, while the frontside of my body grows more shrouded by the amorphous nature of this fast approaching end place.

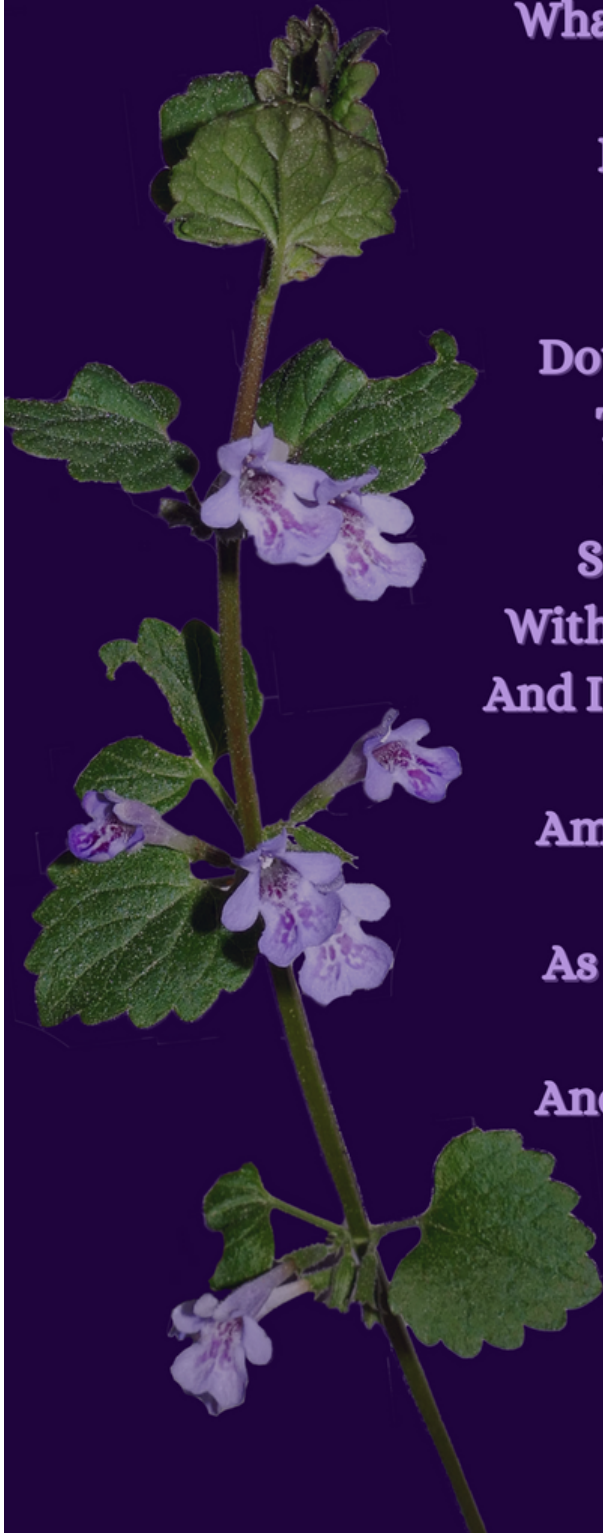
The shadows rise up from the dark of the bottom that I'm facing, gliding through the water like a cut. But the closer I get, the clearer I can see. I remember now. I know this place. I have been here before.

It is not the bottom. It is not the end. It is only the other side.



\*I mean this term in the way that Michael Staudenmaier uses it in his essay, *Brave Motherfuckers: Reflections on Past Struggles to Abolish White Supremacy*. But I also use it to describe the experience of grieving unthinkable loss, which is the most Brave Motherfucker thing I've ever done. I offer this practice in solidarity with all the Brave Motherfuckers out there.





-in the weeds-  
You learned your witchcraft young,  
What plants will kill, and what  
plants won't.

Fixated on ground ivy,  
"Common weed"  
Glechoma hederacea.  
Dotted purple in rich green.  
The harder you fight it  
The further it spreads.  
Sully the suburban lawn  
With your unplanned wildness.  
And I welcome it to grow in mine  
again.

Among the moss outside my  
mausoleum door.  
As if that would remind me,  
It is safe to root here.  
And that some things thrive  
From being cut down.

-Sara Anne Meyer

# UNCONTAINABLE NIGHT: HERBS FOR GRIEF

photos and words by Janet Kent

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on [Radicalvitalism.wordpress.com](https://radicalvitalism.wordpress.com)



Can herbs actually help mend a broken heart? How can anyone move through their grief when every day brings another chance to grieve? How can we possibly heal from the constant bereavement we experience in this world? Is healing even an appropriate goal? These are the questions that I hear most when I talk about grief and herbs that can support us with this process.

Let's be clear right from the start. Herbs do not get rid of grief, nor should they. When I was in my late teens I read a set of novels set in Alexandria, Egypt in the 1950's. One of the books described the mourning traditions of the Coptic community there. Whenever a family member died, they would cover the mirrors for an entire year. They would also break every dish in the house to signify that all had changed and the loss would never be forgotten. Even then, long before I had become intimate with grief myself, I was struck by these commemorative actions. What did we do to mark our losses? Where were our gestures of inconsolable grief?



Less than a century ago in this country, it was customary among some parts of society to wear black for up to year after a death in the family. This showed others that you were in mourning and should not be held to the usual societal expectations. Even this small outward gesture of inner turmoil is no longer with us. Today, the dominant economic culture does not allow us even a moderate time to grieve. There are many who report having been prescribed antidepressants less than two months after the death of a partner or close family member. We are expected to miss only a day or two of work or school even when we lose a parent, child, sibling or partner. This is the sign of a culture that does not value life, only productivity. If we move from a framework that values all that is undervalued in the economy, we can do better. This means moving slowly, allowing time for all the phases of grief. It means working to ease and support the process rather than suppress grief as a symptom.

As we work with herbs for support during the various stages of grief, it is imperative that we do not rush the process. Herbs are vital supports through this transition, but they do not stop the pain. They can soften the sharp edges and strengthen us over time, but they do not numb us or suppress our emotions, which is for the best. Timing when we are choosing which herbs to work with and when is important. Using herbs for integration and moving forward when the loss is fresh can be disruptive. Likewise, after extended periods of grief, we need nourishing, building herbs rather than simply turning to the calming nervines we may reach for during acute phases of grief. Just as holistic herbalists seek to treat the person, not the disease, so it is when we work to ease mental states. Grief presents differently at different points of the process. To best address the stage of grief someone is in, look at the pattern and pick the herbs to match. Keeping this in mind when you are not in extreme grief is definitely helpful, so you can remember which herbs to reach for when you need them, or when someone else needs them. Herbs are wonderful supports in times of grief, but they work best in addition to ritual, nourishment, time with our more-than-human kin, and talking to others about our loss. Ultimately time is what we need. Time to digest, time to relearn how to live, time to honor those who have passed, time for rest and time to integrate the loss. Ample time. Much more than two months.

## HERBS FOR THE PHASES OF GRIEF

Here are some differential diagnostic tools for understanding which herbs are best-suited for the stage of grief we or those we are supporting are experiencing. Remember that grief is not linear, that phases of grief come and go over time.

**Acute Grief** – this is when our grief is hot and edgy. We are agitated and we can't sleep. We feel restless, have trouble concentrating. There is often intermittent numbness as well. We experience acute grief soon after a loss for weeks to months or years. Anniversaries and reminders of those who have left this world can trigger acute episodes as well.

**Herbs that ease acute grief tend to be cooling and/or calming:** Peach leaf, Motherwort, Skullcap, Kava, Anemone, Lavender, Passionflower and Stachys are helpful for this phase. I like to add one or more of these herbs to a formula with Hawthorn as a base, as Hawthorn is helpful for many phases of grief and can work as a bridge as we move back and forth within our process. Here is a tried and true formula that has helped many, many grieverers:

**Acute Grief Formula:** Hawthorn 4 parts, Peach leaf 3 parts, Motherwort 2 parts, Kava 2 parts, Anemone 1 part. Dosage: 1-2 dropperfuls as needed.

**Shock/Difficulty Comprehending the Loss** – this tends to be a phase we experience closer to the initial time of loss, but depending on the circumstances, can recur for a year or more.

**Herbs that help us with our comprehension/assimilation of loss:** Chamomile, Catnip, Hops, Angelica and Calamus. Herbs that help us digest our food often help us digest our experiences as well. Loss must be assimilated incrementally over time. These aromatic bitter herbs can help with that process. For this category, I find tea, tincture or elixir helpful. A dropperful or two of any of these as tinctures in soda water can be a nice substitute for an alcoholic beverage as well.

**Exhaustion from Ongoing Grief:** Sleep deprivation and long term sorrow are hard on the mind and body. We can become severely depleted which can lead to long term chronic health issues if we do not address this condition.

**Herbs that ease exhaustion from grief tend to be restorative and nourishing:** Milky Oats, Shatavari, Ashwagandha, Licorice, Reishi, Hawthorn, Evening Primrose. Combining these with aromatic or bitter herbs can help support grieverers in the moment while building and nourishing their systems over time.

**Restorative Tonic #1:** Milky Oats 3 parts, Shatavari 3 parts, Ashwagandha 2 parts, Licorice 2 parts. Dosage: 1-2 dropperfuls 2-3 x a day.

**Restorative Tonic #2:** Ashwagandha 3 parts, Milky Oats 4 parts, Motherwort 2 parts  
Dosage: 2-3 dropperfuls 2-3 x a day



**Milky Oats Cordial:** Take a pressed tincture of Milky Oats. Add ginger, cinnamon (and any other similar spices) to taste. Macerate for 1 month, shaking daily. Strain. Add honey to taste. Dosage: ½ to 1 tsp 2-3x a day.

**Milky Oats Oxymel:** Macerate Milky Oats in vinegar, 1:2. After a month strain and add honey to taste. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 tsp 2-3 x a day.

**Lingering Long Term Grief** – there is no correct time line for grief. However, we may come to a time when we want to integrate our loss and move forward honoring those who have passed without living in continuous debilitating sorrow.

**Herbs that help with the integration of loss** tend to help us by brightening our perspectives, reminding us of joy and lifting our spirits: Hawthorn, Rose, Tulsi and Silk Tree (Mimosa), Garden Sage.

**Heart Heal:** Crataegus 3 parts, Angelica 2 parts, Mimosa 2 parts, Rose 2 parts.  
Dosage: 1-2 dropperfuls 2-3 x a day

**Heart Heal Tea Blend:** Hawthorn berries 4 parts, Rose Petals 2 parts, Peach leaf 2 parts, Linden 2 parts If possible, decoct the Hawthorn berries for 30 minutes, then turn off the heat, add the other herbs and steep for 15 minutes. Drink 4-6 ounces 2-3 x a day.

**Stuck in Despair** – Sometimes we get stuck in our process. The loss feels raw and dominates our thoughts long after we have had some time to integrate our feelings.

Years ago when I was in the depths of grief from multiple deaths, my somatic therapist explained the concept of stacked grief to me. Stacked grief is a state that emerges when one terrible event happens after another, when we do not have time to process one death or traumatic event before another occurs. These events can pile up and create a block that prevents us from moving through and assimilating our losses. Similarly, I have noticed that when we rely on substance use to dull the pain of our grief, we can create the conditions of stacked grief as well. Herbs can help us get unstuck from long term despair. They can help us move through our stacked grief.

**Herbs for stuck grief tend to be moving:** Angelica, Calamus, Garden Sage, Rose, Lavender, Lemon Balm, Tulsi. These all work well as tinctures, teas, elixirs and cordials.

**St. John's Wort** can be incredibly helpful for stuck grief as well. It is important to note that St. John's Wort is contraindicated for use alongside many pharmaceuticals as it helps the liver work more efficiently. The very medicine that helps us get unstuck can also cause our livers to process medications more quickly.

Here is a formula from Herb Pharm that is helpful for both nourishing the nervous system and getting unstuck.

**Nervous System Tonic:** Skullcap 2.5 parts, Milky oats 2.5 parts, Hypericum 2 parts, Celery 1.5 parts, Lavender 1.5 parts. Dosage: 1-3 dropperfuls 2-3 x a day

**This formula is one of my favorites for getting unstuck:**

**Invincible Summer:** Saint John's Wort 2 parts, Lemon Balm 1 part, Rose ½ part  
Dosage: 1-2 dropperfuls 2-3 x a day.

## THE BIG GRIEF

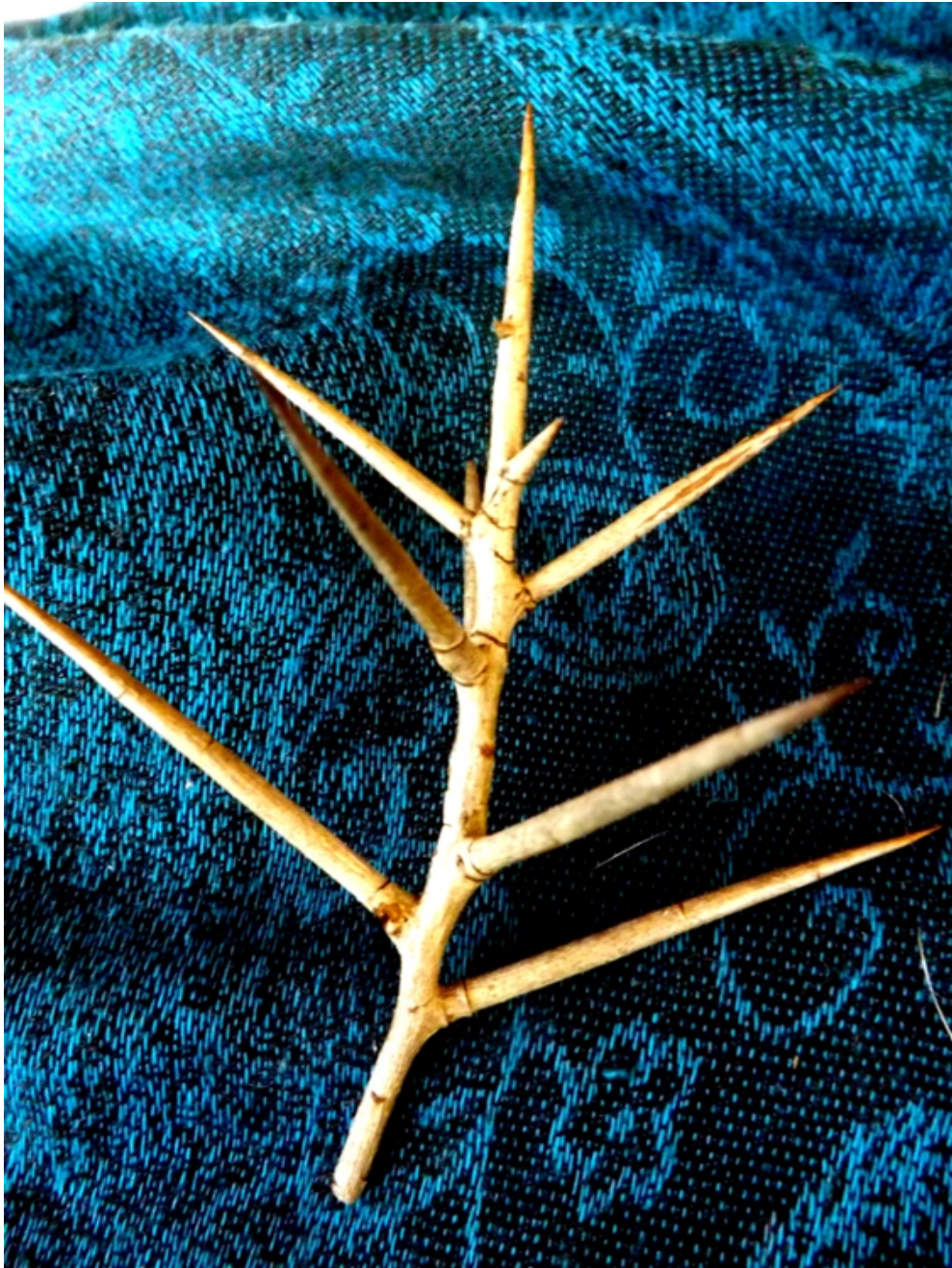
But what about grief that is ongoing, that is not tied to one individual death, but the ongoing crisis we inhabit? Time to talk about the pervasive underlying grief of this era, the grief we experience living on a planet with cascading extinctions and collapsing ecosystems, where more and more people are displaced and forced to flee to hostile countries that are currently less affected by the climate crisis. Deep sigh. To love and cherish our kin, both human and more-than human is a practice simultaneously deeply rewarding and devastating.

Here where we live, the mighty Ash trees fall under the pressure of the Emerald Ash Borer. In our short time here we will continue to see these large scale losses. Will all the birds we look forward to seeing every spring continue to return from winter migration with the increasing pressure of logging and development? How many box turtles are left? To love Earth and the impossibly rich web of life that currently inhabits it is to live with alternating tears of gratitude and sorrow.

How do I live with this awareness and appropriate grief? Reishi, both *Ganoderma lucidum* and *Ganoderma tsugae*, has been such a vital support through this ongoing process. They help ground me in the mind of the forest, reminding me that life is about connection, that life moves in cycles and that the greater process is more vast than I can fathom. Reishi is my compass, reminding me of my place in the larger web of life and of my responsibility to that web. They remind me of the large cycles of deep time, of death and rebirth. But their lesson is not one of blind acceptance and ecological bypassing. I do not get to opt out of my complicity in the life-eating system that dominates all of our lives. While providing a deep, foundational calm, Reishi still reminds me that each of us is important in the co-creation of what is to come. We have a response-ability to life. Grieve we must, but the fight is not over. Now more than ever it is time to heed the words of Mother Jones, "Mourn the dead and fight like hell for the living."

**Reishi Elixir:** Reishi double extraction 5 parts. Add Cinnamon and Cacao powder and honey to taste. Dosage: 1/2 to 1 tsp 2-3 times a day.





*Hawthorn Thorn, carried as a Talisman to ward off despair in the Middle Ages in Europe*

## GRIEF AS IDENTITY

There is an aspect of grief I rarely see mentioned, which is the act of identifying with our grief, moving from a process of grief to a state of being. Certain losses change us forever, but this identification reflects more than that change. It becomes all-encompassing, as we can struggle to see ourselves outside of our grief. Who are we outside this loss?

Years ago, when I had spent a few years in the trenches of despair, my best friend said, “you have become your grief.” How I needed to hear this reflection, after so much time stuck in my process. So many beloved friends had died so young and here I was squandering whatever time I had left. I think I had become attached to my grief because to move forward felt like a betrayal.

Now, with the weight of the Big Grief so many of us hold, I recognize this feeling in myself and others. We sometimes act as if to feel joy or pleasure is to betray all the plants and animals and peoples whose lives are devoured by the ever-expanding economy. We forget the responsibilities of the living.

At one of the many funerals from the time I am referring to, a friend said “we have to live for the dead.” I would add to this that we also need to live for those who remain but need our help, which is most of life on Earth. To be laid low by grief is an appropriate response to the state of the world. But if we are incapacitated by grief, we cannot fight and we cannot shape the world to come.

We can hold our grief alongside our joy. We can nourish our hearts and spirits while honoring our dead and dying.

#### TIME – FOR – HAWTHORN

Another layer of feeling the sorrows of the world deeply, is when we begin to take pride in the depths of our despair. How can a thinking, feeling person look around and fail to be laid low by the ongoing pain and loss? Isn't the absence of empathy foundational to the mess this civilization is making of the world? We may be heartbroken, but at least we are not numb or callous about the devastation around us. We see our grief as necessary work.

And yes, this work is important. This world needs people who see the ongoing pain and destruction and feel it personally. Those who do are charged with bearing witness. We are called to speak up, draw attention and inspire action. But sometimes, our grief is debilitating. It keeps us from speaking or acting. Our grief comes to define what is possible and all we see is loss and limitation. This level of despair does not help us or the plants, animals and cultures devoured by the ever-expanding economy.

So what is to be done? Is to feel less to be even more complicit in the destruction of life on Earth? How do we feel less despair without feeling numb?



This is when we call on Hawthorn. Hawthorn, that nourishing, protective medicine for those who feel deeply. Hawthorn strengthens the heart without toughening us. They thicken our skins without making us callous. Hawthorn is for the overwhelm of seeing just how bad things are, for holding the sorrows of the world. For feeling and seeing clearly while still having the capacity to work for change.

There is a Hawthorn grove on the mountain top above my house. These trees are the descendants of trees who were here before humans climbed these mountains. They evolved with thorns to protect them from the megafauna who once roamed this land. Some say they are overbuilt, that their defenses are no longer necessary. I say they keep their thorns to remind us of their age, their wisdom and their medicine. And to be prepared for whatever comes next.

Both Hawthorn berries and flowers are powerful medicines, as teas and as tinctures. Hawthorn cordials are delicious as they nourish the heart and sweeten the spirit.

**Hawthorn Elixir:** Fill a jar about half way full with dry or fresh Hawthorn berries. Add cinnamon or other mulling spices to taste. Fill the jar with brandy or bourbon. Let macerate for a month shaking daily. Strain. Add honey to taste. Dosage: 1tsp 2-3 x a day.

**Other Preparations:** Tincture of fresh flowers 1:2 at 95%. Tincture of fresh berries 1:2 at 95%, 1:5 at 50%. Combination of the flowers and berries : all three forms at 30 – 90 drops up to 4x a day. The flowers don't keep well, but the tea is nice, 2-4 oz to 3x a day. Standard decoction of dried berries is a stronger tea: 2-4 oz to 3x day, cold infusion 1-2 oz to 3x day.



*Bowlful of Hawthorn berries*

**Hawthorn Berry Syrup:** Decoct berries for at least an hour. Strain. To make a shelf stable syrup, add 2 pound of sugar to every pint of liquid. Yes it is a lot sugar. You will have to add another preservative, either tincture or brandy to preserve the syrup if you want to use less sugar. You can use only 1 1/4 pounds of sugar if you add 10-15% alcohol to the syrup. Dosage is the same as the tincture.

## RELATIONSHIP IS KEY

Having spent a long time as a student of grief, one truth that emerges over and over is that the connection to others, all the many kinds of kin, is key to moving through the various phases of the process. Again, grief is not linear, especially when the causes of our grief are ever-present and multiplying. When I feel the pain and loss of these times most greatly, I go to ground. I lie on the forest floor or the grass of a park or lawn and feel the Earth hold me. I look up through the dappled light coming through the trees and feel the Air surround me as I contemplate the wonder of the exchange of gases between me and the plants. We feed each other. Some of that medicine, the literally grounding influence that is direct contact with the Earth and the medicine of connection we receive when we connect with our plant kin comes to us when we work with the herbs who support us through our phases of grief. And no, they do not make us feel numb or care less about the world. They help us know we are not alone, that we are connected to a vast and rich web of other beings, and that they need us as well. We who feel the loss strongly know intimately what is at stake. They open us to a deeper understanding while charging us with action. Supporting ourselves through our grief is essential if we are to participate in the co-creation of the world to come.

*Quiet friend who has come so far,*

*feel how your breathing makes more space around you.*

*Let this darkness be a bell tower*

*and you the bell. As you ring,*

*what batters you becomes your strength.*

*Move back and forth into the change.*

*What is it like, such intensity of pain?*

*If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.*

*In this uncontainable night,*

*be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,*

*the meaning discovered there.*

*And if the world has ceased to hear you,*

*say to the silent earth: I flow.*

*To the rushing water, speak: I am.*

From Rainer Maria Rilke

Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29



HAWTHORN TREE

YOUR FIVE-POINTED FLOWERS  
OF GENTLE FRAGRANCE  
BECOMES THE SPACE  
THAT BEARS ABUNDANT FRUITS  
IN AUTUMN'S GRACE

AS I ASK TO JOIN  
IN YOUR MEDICINE  
WITH MY HANDS  
I CONNECT  
TO FEEL YOUR BARK SKIN

BRIGHT RED, ROUND BERRIES  
CONTRAST AGAINST GREEN LEAVES  
DELICATELY COVERING  
THE SHARP THORNS OF YOUR BRANCHES  
IN GRATITUDE  
I ADMIRE

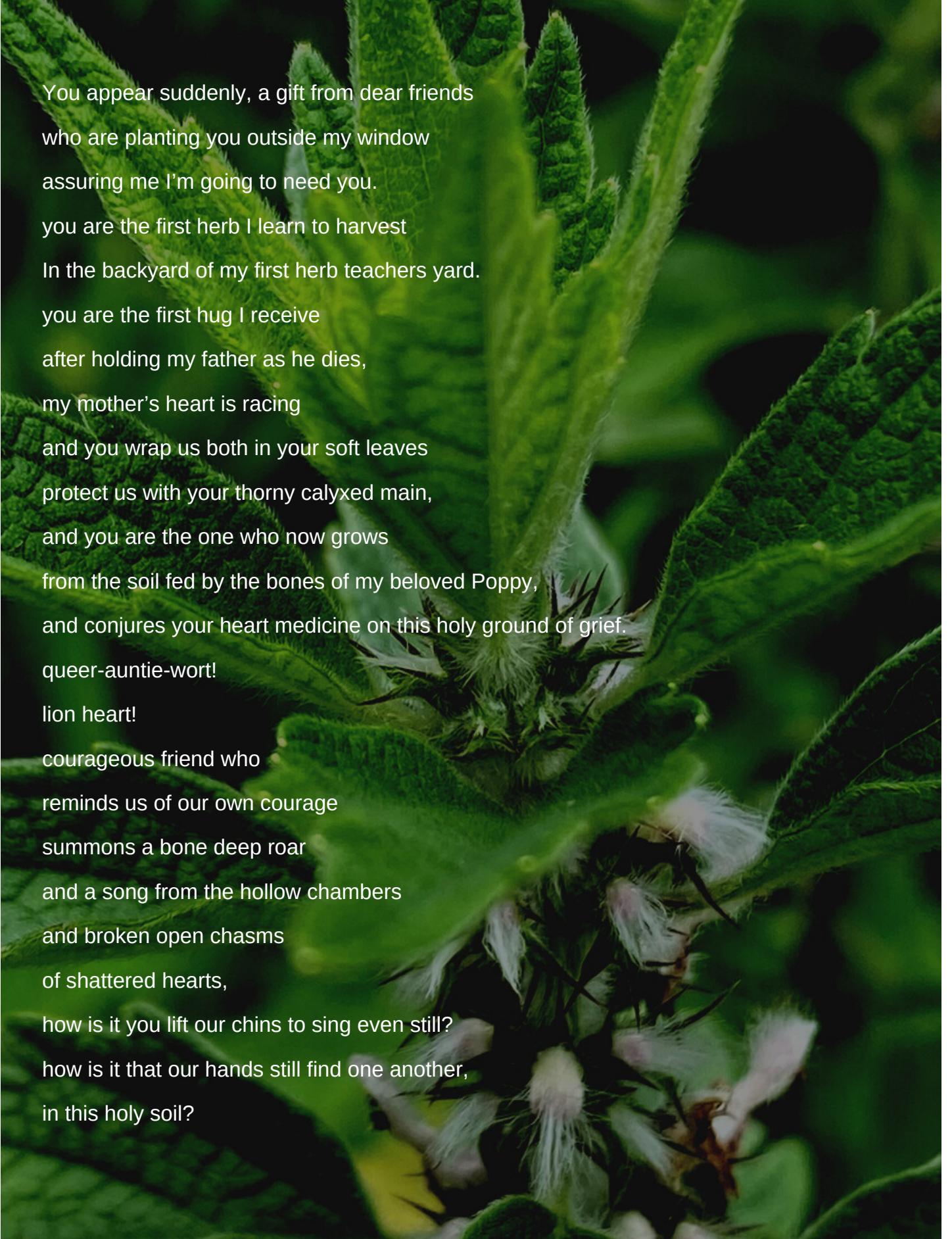
I ASK IF YOU CAN TEACH ME SOMETHING  
AND YOU SHARE  
THE LESSON HAS ALREADY BEGUN

THE DEEPENING  
IN OUR RELATING  
IS HAPPENING  
THROUGH THE CEREMONY  
OF CONSENSUAL EXCHANGE

I FEEL OUR JOY  
IN BEHOLDING  
ONE ANOTHER  
THIS PRECIOUS MOMENT  
FINDING WHOLENESS  
IN CONNECTION


AS I TURN AWAY  
RETURNING TO MY SELF  
TAKING STEPS HOMEWARD  
FEELING MY HEART SPACE  
RELEASING THE GRIEF OF ISOLATION  
AND OPENING TO THIS WOVEN WEB





You appear suddenly, a gift from dear friends  
who are planting you outside my window  
assuring me I'm going to need you.  
you are the first herb I learn to harvest  
In the backyard of my first herb teachers yard.  
you are the first hug I receive  
after holding my father as he dies,  
my mother's heart is racing  
and you wrap us both in your soft leaves  
protect us with your thorny calyxed main,  
and you are the one who now grows  
from the soil fed by the bones of my beloved Poppy,  
and conjures your heart medicine on this holy ground of grief.  
queer-auntie-wort!  
lion heart!  
courageous friend who  
reminds us of our own courage  
summons a bone deep roar  
and a song from the hollow chambers  
and broken open chasms  
of shattered hearts,  
how is it you lift our chins to sing even still?  
how is it that our hands still find one another,  
in this holy soil?





Lammas, the first harvest  
Honey scented yarrow  
coats my lungs. Gentle  
blooms, pollination,  
vindication. Thick with  
presence. Binding to the  
gifts of the forest to give  
hope in creation, grief  
transmutes it's pain in  
silence.

By Nicole Belvill  
Erebus Soteria

Yarrow the thousand  
leaved one blankets over  
me. To guide me through,  
to show my worth. Even at  
my lowest, showing  
internal, beneath the  
surface a warrior  
observing, learning,  
growing.



Yarrow by Dio Dimitri



your garden sits just behind  
everything i imagine for myself,  
how i can carry out my life  
in my peripheral, even 60 years from now  
i'll set my dreams by you

i want to name the flowers like you could, though  
i'm afraid                   afraid?  
i can't connect  
everything you knew would sit on top of my mind, never  
seeping into the soil  
i can't imagine you are not in / near / around the garden, right now  
i can let myself imagine,  
i can't  
i was there in the room

hopes for myself grew from your love for me,  
it's not been possible to feel my roots grow anywhere  
since i cannot ask you where i should place them.

yesterday i saw burning trees mirrored on the water  
i could take a picture for you, for painting  
add to the stacks of pictures you will paint, collecting  
possibilities of creation,  
as i notice myself doing the same  
piles of your yarn in knots behind my bedroom door.  
if not for you - for me, the picture, the sight of it  
i have no reason to hold onto it.

"i will know i have made it, found peace, when i have a garden to look out on"  
look out on \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_  
you left no names! i listened, or so i thought  
and forgot  
i know sunflowers, and anything blue is you  
(if god so loves)

basil and parsley grow in my kitchen now  
by no effort of mine. i feed them water through a tube, they drink themselves  
alive  
they grow unaware, past the light that turns on and off  
at the same time every day.  
they go into the food i cook to give them something to do.  
i promised i would do better, attend  
better, take care.  
it seems i've given up  
and they grow nonetheless

by Julia Clarke

# MY SPIRITS ARE LOW: NERVINES IN APPALACHIAN FOLK MEDICINE

by Rebecca Beyer

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on [bloodandspicebush.com](http://bloodandspicebush.com)

Grief comes in waves. Our bodies are not resigned to be able to hold one feeling all the time, and they must come and go, regardless of how we feel about them.

Sometimes with each new global catastrophe or ever far right reaching Supreme Court decision at home, our bodies are subject to the anxiety and depression that late stage capitalism brings. Humans have always faced trauma and challenge, and always sought ways to mitigate it with plants.

+Nervines in Appalachian Folk Medicine+

“I have that run down feeling”. “My spirits of low”. “I have trouble with the nerves”. All of these terms were used to describe mild depression or anxiety in Appalachia.

Influential Edinburgh physician Willian Cullen, said that neuroses or nervous diseases as, “all those preternatural affections of sense and motion which are without pyrexia.” The disorders that fell under this heading were wide, many diseases were seen as under the dominion of nerves, such as apoplexy, paralysis, fainting, indigestion, epilepsy, hypochondriasis, vapors, low spirits, tetanus, palpitation of the heart, hysteria, mania, and melancholia.

Fundamentally, treating nerves in Appalachian folk medicine focused on tonics and strengthening the weak system. The Western European tradition of medicine provided the groundwork with which African and Indigenous medicine traditions would augment it in the mountains. Historically, treating nerves focused on other drugs carefully delivered to the specific constitution of the patient.

Narcotics: opium, belladonna, hyoscyamine, nicotine, laurocerasus, and sweet almond. Sedatives were also incorporated with purging and blood letting, many of them had strong orders, such as asofeotida. Appalachian folk medicine was informed by popular medicine of the day in the 19th century, and the combination of tonics, blood purifier, exercise, specific herbal sedatives and nervines all tailored to the specific constitution of the patient.



Bitters were commonly thought to be a first step towards treating nerves as a whole system approach was utilized. Bitters like Yellowroot (*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Gentian (*Gentiana spp.*), and Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*). Tommie Bass used two ounces of the following: Angelico (Boarhog root) (*Ligusticum canadense*), Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), Wild cherry bark (*Prunus serotina*), and yellow root. He combined these and boiled them in a gallon of water for one hour. He would then add one tablespoon of cayenne pepper, and on occasion Dandelion or Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) were added. He recommended one tablespoon three times a day.

Medicines like Catnip, Sage and Peppermint (*Mentha spp.*) were considered nervines due to 19th century ideas about the stomach connections with nerve disorders. Tommie Bass had a tonic to calm the nerves which contained Maypop (*Passiflora incarnata*), Sage (*Salvia officinalis*), Peppermint, Skullcap (*Scutellaria spp.*), and Peach leaves (*Prunus persica*). Many tonics involved water or vinegar as a menstruum, but whiskey was an oft used ingredient. Noted folklorist Doug Elliott writes that some mountaineers used alcohol tonics as a means of getting around temperance.

+Please consult an herbalist before taking any of these remedies. For historical research only+

Tommie Basses Nerve Tonic: 2 cups peach tree leaves, 2 cups passionflower, one cup bugleweed, a cup catnip, a cup mullein. Boil 20 min. 4 quarts of water. Take 2 tbsp 3-5 times a day Or as often as needed.

One of Tommie's popular mixtures was catnip, maypop leaves, skullcap, sage and peach tree leaves and sometimes bay laurel leaves which he used specifically for nervous headaches, rattled nerves, and sleep potion for stubborn insomnia.

+Bay Laurel (*Magnolia virginiana*):

Magnolia used in southern herbalism as a tonic, digestive, bitter, anti-anxiety, for chest complaints. Tommie Bass used 3 dried leaves to 1 cup boiling water, steep 10 minutes and strain. Used for sleep time tea that is good for the nerves and stomach.

+Black cohosh (*Cimifuga racemosa*):

It was used to treat nerves, among many things, and taught to settlers by indigenous people. Also known as Black Snakeroot. Though best known as a women's medicine historically, it was also used to help restless babies sleep. Use 20- 40 drops tincture (1:2 fresh, 1:5 dried root 60 % alcohol) three times a day for acute symptoms, three times daily for tonic. Avoid large doses as these can cause headaches and vomiting.

+Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*):

This classic remedy has calmed fussy babies for centuries. It is considered an old standby for anxious children. It helps the stomach aspects of anxiety. If one gets upset stomach from anxiety, Catnip is for you.

+Heal All (*Prunella vulgaris*):

Best combined with peach leaf, skull cap, bay laurel, for frazzled nerves, not as sedating as other mints. Cold its used for tonic and hot for nerves and diaphoretic. Avoid use in pregnancy and overly using it with children.

+Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*):

This Native plant was used by the Cherokee for a wide variety of ailments from crushed roots for boils to eating the cooked leaves and fruits with cornmeal. In modern herbal practice the leaf and flower are used as nervines for acute cases of anxiety. Passionflower helps with tension headaches and tight muscles caused by nervousness, as well as insomnia and restlessness. Tommie Bass used it for high blood pressure due to stress as well. When tension causes chest tightness, heart palpitations or vascular constrictions, it is also helpful. Small, frequent doses are best, 20-50 drops of tincture (1:2 fresh, 1:5 dried in 40% alcohol), or infusion 1 tsp dried or 2 tsp fresh flowers and leaves.

+Peach Leaf (*Prunus persica*):

Peach is a native of central Asia, but is widely cultivated in temperate climates throughout the world. It was used as an old European folk remedy, yet upon with the colonization of North America, it was eagerly adopted by the indigenous people as a food and medicine, and is still considered a part of traditional Cherokee medicine. Peach kernal, leaf, and twigs all contain acids and cyanogens which are considered constitutionally cooling. Combined peach leaf with red clover tops and passionflower it is a great sleepy time remedy. Avoid using the kernel and wilted leaves for cyanide levels are high and toxicity becomes a danger.

+Sage (*Salvia officinalis*):

Promotes sleep and rest as warm tea.

+Skull cap (*Scutellaria lateriflora* and other sp.):

Old nervine, not as strong as lobelia, but safer. Used in conjunction with passionflower, peach leaves, sage and bay leaves which all calm the nerves and aid one in falling asleep.



+Rabbit Tobacco (*Gnaphalium obtusifolium*):

Also known as life everlasting, smoked to relieve nervousness. Tommie Bass combined it for a quick acting nervine with mountain mint, sage, and peach leaves.

+Sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*):

The bark tea was used to relieve anxiety.



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"Hawthorn" by Dio Dimitri





digital art inspired by Osha root by Adrienne Stiles

# Contributors

## **Adrienne Stiles, @awaken.ultraviolet**

I work in the realm of ai art, and created these images to visualize my relationship with the Osha root. I have used sustainably harvested Osha root from time I spent in New Mexico. I have been told that it can be used to deal with grief, and I am working through some cultural grief and processing the emotions around coming from European cultures with broken lineages and colonial histories. My aspiration with Awaken Ultraviolet is to make spiritual visions, experiences, and dreams feel more tangible. It's so sad to me that our experience of the magical or sacred in the every day is lost to many of us, and I want to create a visual bridge to the feelings of sacredness within us to ignite and strengthen that experience in others.

## **Anna P., @vanillefraise\_**

I get lost drawing shapes and colours and observing all the wondrous creatures, plants and environments that are created without me consciously creating them.

## **Damiana Calvario, @laluneria**

Damiana Calvario (ella/ she/ her) is a mixed woman of color, daughter, sister, partner, survivor, first generation immigrant, community member, caregiver. Her practice blends her mixed upbringing, traditional food as medicine, gardening, Curanderismo studies, Indigenous full spectrum doula training and western herbalism training. Deeply rooted in service, mutual aid, care and anti oppression work.

## **Dio Dmitri, @diodmitri + @dio.dmitri.tattoo**

Dio Dmitri is a jack of all trades with a background in herbalism, ritual arts, and social justice. They are passionate about ecology, climate justice, land restoration, ending racism and all oppressions, celebrating queerness, healing the human heart, re-making belonging, and living in right relationship. They are currently tattooing in Portland OR and see this as a great vehicle for exploring these topics that are rich with emotion and complexity.

## **Hannah Fulton**

## **Janet Kent, @radicalvitalism**

## **Julia Clarke, @juliaclearke**

Julia is a psychotherapist from Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland) who has been translating emotions into poetry since the early grief that is eighth grade.

## **Kate Belew, @K8belew**

Kate Belew is a Brooklyn-based Writer, Poet, Storyteller, and Witch from the Midwest. Her work spans genres and spaces: poetry, nonprofits, immersive theatre, health & wellness, herbalism, witchcraft, and the psychedelic. She has an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College in Poetry and has studied (and will always continue to study) Herbalism, Astrology, and Witchcraft.

## **Kristopher Drummond, @permissionbringer**

## **Mara June, @motherwortandrose**

Mara June is an educator, community weaver, writer, death doula, and community herbalist who is excited about plant magic, story-telling, art making, shapeshifting, and dreaming together.



# Contributors

## **Marley Myles, @marleymyles\_art**

Marley is an artist from what is now called Australia, residing on unceded Bundjalung Country. This illustration depicts a Plant Witch gathering herbs for tending and nourishing. It speaks of the grounding and nurturing energy of being with plants.

## **Mila Roeder, @spiritdirt**

I'm Mila (they/them), an animist and death worker with a passion for traversing the unknown. I strive to share art, medicine, and ritual with others so it may deepen the human experience and make people a little more comfortable with their own mortality. I am devoted to the Appalachian mountains and work closely with the plants that live here, especially those classified as poisonous, invasive, or have a misguided reputation. I also write and teach on the intersection of plants and death.

## **Myriam, @mimsrey**

Myriam (she/her) is a French-Syrian visual artist based in London.

## **naomi lynne woodward, @moonstar\_herbalism**

Walking slow and close to the land to hear it's wisdoms and stories brings me deep connection and grounds me in love. This mystical experience is quite the gift that we all can receive, and I enjoy expressing the creativity that pours out from my own uniquely intertwined nature with it all.

## **Nicole Belvil, @erebus\_soteria**

Nicole Belvill (she/her) is a herbalist and healing practitioner from Colorado. She enjoys nature and wildlife photography, poetry, working as a licenced massage therapist and tending to the garden and witnessing the process of life, death and rebirth within the soil and within self. Learning and appreciating the ways plant medicine helps people through transitions, through community, connection and helping sit with grief; as well as finding ways to empower herself and others on her path. She is a scorpio sun, sagittarius rising, gemini moon and devotee of Hekate.

## **Louisa Trusso, @Swamp.saint**

## **Luly Bencomo A., @Looleepop**

## **Rebecca Beyer, @bloodandspicebush**

## **Sara Anne Meyer, insta & tiktok @a.modern.victorian.ghost**

Sara Anne Meyer is a multidisciplinary poet and performer based out of St. John's, Newfoundland. She refers to herself as a "life-long griever" and views her writing practice as a way to create space for deeper connections to loss. Meyer's love of folklore, plant magics and what lies beyond the veil has heavily informed her poetic voice, which is noted to be both whimsical and heartbreaking.

## **Sg (they/them)**

I am a death apprentice, writer, and water dancer. I also apprentice to my friends, music, queer and polyamorous community, and my fears- living and Dead, human and more than human, and all those troublesome shapeshifting in betweeners. I am an anarchist who relates to herbalism as a people's medicine and to grief as a God. I am hopelessly in love with this world, and so, too, I am always grieving.