Blood Roses

Fall 2018 update: This was originally posted in August of 2015 at crazyherbalist.com. Since sharing this potion I have received emails sharing that it has helped support 6 divorces, 9 job changes, at least 7 breakups and some quite pleasurable experiences as well. AWESOMENESS :)

Most Of My Potions Teach Me Something New.
I would love to say that I totally understand my formulations before I make them and that they are specifically made for 'such and such'. I usually formulate that way when I do custom formulations after consultations. But, for magical and non-planned potions, when I get that pull to put some plants together, it usually begins with a silence that takes over my mind. My awareness drops from the thinking self, through my heart, through the bright light of my gut and into the warmth of my womb. Then I usually begin to humm as I pull the plants together. I listen.

That's how it was with this potion. I knew it had a specific relationship with the heart, with fierceness: feminine and receptive and bright... It began with me sitting on my little deck, in 90-degree weather eating the sweet organic cherries you can only find this time of year. I saw the juice as blood on my hands and it sent me into a place of introspection. About being flesh. About sacrifice. About birth and death....and I got up and began blending plants, humming an unremembered tune.

I knew it was going to be special. I could feel it. But I really didn't know what it was going to teach me. Something about blood. Something about movement and resistance and power. And so I waited. I listened carefully after the usual 2 weeks passed and it said, "not yet. Not ready yet." It was on the 21st day it said, "I'm ready." And I got a taste.
Often, when we work with plant medicines, whether internally, or sitting next to the plants, the sacred text of what they are teaching can be found by watching where our mind wanders: where our thoughts go, what images arrive, what daydreams show up? What urges develop? What desires make themselves known? Discovering this potion's teachings was no different. It has been timely, showing up just as I needed it. Just as I had the day previous made a declaration at my altar to no longer be serving agreements which ask me to be smaller.

blood roses, blood roses......back on the street now.....
I tasted and re-tasted this potion. Listened to it. Paced. And then the music began, initially in the back of my head, until it was so loud I could do nothing but pull up youtube and play, over and over, a song that had been an integral part of my life, many, many moons ago. And I sang it. Over and over. (My poor neighbors.)
It was on maybe the 4th replay that my personal attachments to the song made themselves known. I began to see clearly a few beliefs I have internalized that are erroneous. I re-embodied the way I felt disempowered and let the anger wash through me. I realized that beneath the righteous anger was a boiling desire to be free. To be released from a pattern which asked me to be smaller in order to be safer. FUCK THAT.
This potion has a lot to say about all the times we tone ourselves down to fit in or be safer: in relationships, roles, cultural standards...all the places we play small for whatever reasons and how often that leaves us wanting, lonely and angry. It wants to help us engage our deeper desires and the emotions around being asked to conform to standards which are not our own in order to be safer. Cause that is happening.
To those **who practice earth magic**. To **people of color/women of color/transfolk/indigenous communities/neurodivergent folks/survivors/children & Earth herself. Between intimate partners.**

The resistance is happening as well. It's building. It invites our ever deeper participation.

when chickens get a taste of your meat girl, when chickens get a taste of your meat, yes.....

There are many reasons we may play small. We may let pieces of us go unseen by those we love or hide parts of ourselves from our communities. Maybe we learned when we were younger to not shine 'too bright', be 'too smart', desire 'too much attention'. Maybe we learned to receive love by being smaller, nicer, cuter, good enough, more 'normal'. Maybe we have internalized the oppressive norms of white-male-hetero-capitalist-able bodied-'normal functioning'-reductive cultural standards because who/what we are is dangerous to all that. So we have learned to temper our sexuality, gender expression, skin color, spiritual expression by putting extra energy into fitting in or finding ways to draw less attention to ourselves.

Maybe we simply were never exposed during our developing years to someone who stood in their power and showed us, through example or proximity, that it can be done. That it is worth doing. That it feels good to experience the fullness of our self despite those who seek to take it away from us. That the most sacred of all relationships is with your own deep experience of ourselves in our fullness.

you gave [them] your blood and your warm little diamond.....

And so we have these moments where we are compromised. Giving pieces of ourselves away or having them taken by force. Minimizing our grand complexity and power. Sometimes it is because we don't know there are options available to us. Sometimes it is for
emotional and physical safety/survival. **We may do it to others, asking them to be smaller around us to indulge our comfort zones.** This can become a dangerous feedback loop in a relationship, especially if one partner has unrecognized expectations and greater socio-cultural privileges.

All relationships are a dance of communication and power and desire. All of us bring the parts of us that soar and the parts that struggle. But when we settle into a pattern of giving parts of ourselves away or hiding ourselves to appease another or to receive social acceptance/safety......we bleed. **It's painful, that pattern. Eventually, we grow angry, lonely, numb because the need to see and be seen is a healthy desire. It is an essential part of our personal and collective growth. It brings us joy. It is our birthright.**

Without the ability to be seen and safe we may turn our anger outwards where we are able (road rage!) and/or turn it inwards on ourselves (most likely). We may begin to ask others to perform the same sacrifices of self that we are performing for someone else so that we can feed on their sacrifice. I grew up in that pattern.

And in those moments that we play smaller than we want to, when we 'dumb ourselves down,' let someone else's standard of us rule, get forced into a cultural standard that is not our own, we feel it. You know it by the feeling of having taken a step back outside of yourself energetically, while outwardly you smile or agree. You know it when your stomach falls low into your gut and you feel alone, nodding affirmatively outwardly anyways. You feel it when you lose yourself in a moment of self-expression and the lens through which the other looks at you deflates your balloon. You know it when fire shoots across your chest and you do not dare to express your hurt or disempowerment. You know it when you wear something different, walk a different path, remain silent, etc. in order to increase your safety.
I shaved every place where you been boy, I said I shaved every place where you been yes....

**These compromises cause a profound level of suffering.** It can create unconscious agreements and we begin to bargain. Normalize.

_I guess I have to be _____ in order to get ______. I have to give _____ in order to experience _______. I am worth _____ if I do/be _______._

We may begin to accept the blood loss. We become the sacrifice someone or something else feeds from. This is how privilege works. This is how capitalism ultimately works. This is how disempowering/abusive relationships work. They enforce the sacrifices of self, of complexity, of diversity and multiplicity to the to feed powers which do not serve us. FUCK THAT.

**At least when you cry now, [they] can't even hear...**

This is a potion for that place. Those moments. Those injustices. This is a potion which will ask you where you are making those choices and if you wish to continue to. **It will ask you what you have left to sacrifice.** It can not guarantee safety when leaving these patterns behind. It does however, inspire self-love and movement. It is an ally in the process of reclaiming the fullness of your expression, the depth of your desires and the ability to name your experience. It can help spark movement. Initiate your transformation. **It is a witnessing of your sacrifice.** It can be the blood you offer instead of the precious pieces of yourself. It can help connect you to the sacrifices of others.

**ROSE** shows up to open the heart and increase the depth of our spiritual intimacy with self, helps strengthen our defense systems. **MEADOWSWEET** blossoms help invoke Blouddewedd's daring and call for inner love and intimacy. **HEATHER** blossoms help with the fertility of our desires and are initiatory to the self who wishes to be congruent and in harmony. **SCHISANDRA** berries remind us we can enjoy ourselves and help us find a new
balance of power. **AMLA** reminds us to be cool and nourished, to approach changes and surges of power with clear intention so as not to burn or harm needlessly. **HAWTHORN** berries increase our heart's strength and ability to speak the truths within our hearts and help us grant death to things which no longer serve should we ask for help. **SHATAVARI** helps us go easy on ourselves. **HIBISCUS** invites us to remember the pleasure of lust and brightness of satisfaction. **VANILLA** bean to help restore the energy and joy in doing powerful work. **CHIPOTLE** pepper to rev our fires and help move our desires from being tightly wound in our core, out into the tips of our tongues and fingers and into the world. **CHERRIES** to remind us of the flesh that all moves through.


**Carry it with you to prepare for moments you will engage the struggle. Take it internally or over your heart as you journal about your desires to be known and seen.**

**To live in communities that are safe. Use magically as you meditate, visualize or will into existence a new opportunity to manifest your highest, biggest self. Share in meetings with allies engaging the struggle against oppression. Take in moments you are nervous to express your needs, your desires (as long as you are not in danger of violence or abuse). Take as a part of mourning the violations of oppression. Let it help remind you how sacred our resistance is.**

**come on, come on , come on come on........**

**You don't need this potion to do any of that by the way. ☺**

This potion is a tool, a prayer to the plants for them to help fortify us on our path. But we always already have within us the ability to call in help from our guides, ancestors, deities, nature Herself. Should you want to work with uncovering and changing the agreements you no longer feel serve you, try a version of this that suits you:
Read from the list of plants above and pick one or more that resonates with you and that you have access too. Or another herb you have a relationship with. You can also work with the receptive qualities of pure water. Brew a cup of tea with it/them. Sit in a quiet space, possibly under a tree or at your altar space. Invite any guides or helpers you wish to be a part of this process with you. Initially, you may be connected to the emotional pain or struggle of the places you have been compromised. Let those emotions flow freely, whether water form your eyes of fire through your belly, let whatever needs to be released or seen move through you. Begin breathing in the steam from the water or tea. Breath deep, holding the cup close. Inhale support from these beings: the water elements, the herbs. Exhale tension and resistance. As you begin to relax, as you can begin to feel the support showing up to help you, begin to visualize yourself growing larger. Growing more solid. Allow yourself to be seen, wholly by your own divine self. Whatever has been asking you to be smaller, be less than, feel it growing smaller. Farther away. Go as deep into this process as you need to. As you reach a place of joyful empowerment, big and bold and solid and whole, inhale deeply, and exhale thanking your guides. Sip your tea, bringing in the cleansing and strengthening powers of the water and the plants. Offer any prayers or sentiments which come from the heart.

I visit this exercise often while I’m transforming a difficult pattern or relationship or doing activist work which asks me to hold a vision for our community which is not yet present. Remember that we are never solely accountable for all that we experience: the myth that we are separate from our surroundings, each other and Earth is inaccurate. We are always in a dance with creation. What we must remember is that we are partner, we are co-creators on the dance floor. So if you need to, change it up. Try a new move. Pick a new partner or song. Join a band. Do the running man. Or the cabbage patch. Or make your dance more
ceremonial. Just keep dancing your vision and your desires into being. Don't look back or judge your previous steps, just keep dancing your divine self into fuller being. ♥

**sending you big, green, uncompromised plant love♥**

gwynniebird