

I Choose Love

(Written in memory of Bell Hooks - September 25, 1952 – December 15, 2021)

“The moment we choose to love we begin to move towards freedom, to act in ways that liberate ourselves and others.” bell hooks – Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations, 1994

I choose love to guide my way

on the dangerous path away from the patterns of violence, greed, and hate

Move toward freedom that exists in open fields, night skies,

mountain peaks, tiny crevices of an ever-expanding heart

I choose love in the face of the brutal way the world inflicts pain,

disregarding skin, stripping away family, hope, love, knowledge

ignoring the fact that we are human

Rushes to the innocent to cast shadows,

push boulders in the path of those that still manage to believe in multi-colored dreams

and the real possibility that even the caged bird can sing

They think they've broken my wings, but I have discovered new ways to fly

Taught through generational layers upon layers upon layers of trauma

to not just survive but thrive

I choose love as a weapon in the revolution

that is aired in surround sound as we watch our fallen daughters and sons go down

oceans believe in our possibility so your arrows will not take us out

even with your constant weight we will not drown

Take off your white sheets and black justice gowns

instead come correct with your real truth, the makeup of a clown

with love we see right through to the actions behind your veiled speak

I choose love but will not turn the other cheek for the sake of the meek

I choose adoration of self, blood, community that allows me to stand in the wake of your hate

love fiercely because I believe that you, me, we were born to be free

I choose love as my path to liberation.

Embrace a combative heart,

a fierce fighter for all parts of me that have been damaged, controlled or beat

A heart that teaches me the way to love

so deeply that your deception, greed, racism and patriarchy

can only skip like rocks making ripples in the stream

never reaching the abundance or wisdom that lies at the bottom of the sea

For those riches belong only to those that choose love furiously

If You Only Knew

If you only knew the layers you need to pass through

to reach the ever-renewing riches in the center of my soil

Like rings on the trunk of an ancient tree,

regal, wise and ultimately free from any notions you have of me

The layers reveal the chapters in the story of how I came to be

Not the colorful leaves or moss-covered bark I let people touch and see

The deep embedded honey sticky sap that nourishes me, gives me potency,

vulnerability to birth nations through me, released through the center of me,

through my hands, my thighs, my lips, my eyes

through the top of my head and down through my legs

I was created a creator that can't be denied

If you only took the time to invest in my trinity: my beauty, my empathy and intellect

you'd find that riches really do grow on the limbs sprouting inside of me.

You'd find craters, crevices, cliffs, and mountain streams,

pass through flames that flicker, fuel my will to travel

over, around and through the minefield left for me to survive.

Kicking off my heels, fighting fierce fathoms appearing real

Somehow, I thrive

Bombs set to detonate each time I arrive in a place where I can finally stand,

step out of the shadow of some towering, overpowering man

not wiser, not stronger just blubbing about some no existent plan

or blinded by the thick fog of the world's demands.

Disguising the scars, slipping through the bars

built to hold the wandering worlds blossoming in my womb

Just as I find myself again, they shut down the matrix,

change the rules, shift the maze, cackle, poke and yell,

“You can’t win; a woman is just a joke.
Go get yourself evenly yoked
and just maybe you’ll escape the illusion of the original sin.”

Eve wasn’t even my kin.

Our first mother was hidden from us and African.

How can we get to our destiny if we don’t know where we begin?

If you only knew the potent power, healing hands,
rhythmic remedies and mystical magic that we be

Women

Understood the fierce fight, hidden gems,

wind whispering warriors spinning spells in plain sight, you see

Women

Endured the long frigid nights, days and days devoid of praise facing uncontrolled rage, we bleed

Women

Forged in a golden mold each holding secrets sew in an exquisite robe

Women

Designed to battle beasts with grace and agility, illusive and bold

Young and alert, created from earth but crowned with sparkling sky, ancient and whole

If they only knew or stopped trying to deny

that our elimination would cause the entire world to die

Our elevation would build bridges, close chasms, and bring together the ever-expanding divide

Women, if you only knew

Our freedom is the illusive key to everyone’s eternity only then will our children truly be free

Women, if we only knew