

Stories

of

Jah Lemon

part thirteen

The Citrus Surprise

A Celebration of Lemonade

Natty Mark Samuels

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Dedication

to

Simon Palma

in recognition of his support for the Stories of Jah Lemon
encouraging the daily intake of citrus

The Citrus Surprise

And the one whose nickname carries that of a grapefruit, is out picking blackberries, to make a drink with lemons.

Ruby Red, daughter of Jah Lemon, is on a mission to surprise her dad's mentee, Cindy Citrus, who has become like a big sister to her. Staying at their house for the weekend and knowing that she'll be out of the house most of the day - as her dad's teaching assistant at a workshop - Ruby Red steps out of the house also. On a day of no rush, she walks along the easy-flowing river, to the bushes where the blackberries congregate. A buzzard floats above, in his time of effortless motion: going with the flow of the air current. The world is quieter here, because humanity is elsewhere, so the dominant sound is birdsong: and the warmth of the sun permeates everything.

Looking up, from where she is immersed in the purple community, she sees and is amazed by the quick blue flash of a kingfisher. Grinning, she resumes her interaction with dark purple. After picking what she thinks is the desired quantity and taken a dozen or so leaves, she makes her way back. But on a day like this, when words like tranquility and halcyon come to mind - and knowing that time is on her side, she sits by the water, with her back against a tree. This is a specially chosen spot, as a bit further down, she can see a heron, relaxing in the rushes; standing and surveying the same panorama of beauty that she is. She came to collect blackberries and gets the full blessings of Creation. Feeling good and eager to start preparing the little surprise, she raises herself from the perfect spot; humming to herself, Ruby Red takes a slow stroll home.

Entering her home, the first thing to do when entering the kitchen, is to put some water to boil. After the boiling, she covers the blackberry leaves with the hot water and leaves it to steep for ten minutes. After the steeping, the straining; then the keeping of the liquid and discarding of the leaves. The blender then receives the berries and the result of the interaction is juice. Following this, there is the coming together of the blackberry juice, the leaf infusion, input from maple syrup and the juice from lemon. She stirs the mixture, adores the taste of it and places it in the fridge. Part one of the surprise is complete!

Going to her bedroom, she sits at the table, looking out on her back garden. You see, Ruby Red is planning a little citrus festivity, for Cindy Citrus. Because she admires the way she wants to share what she knows. She respects the way she researches, takes it in, then shares it around. The love of knowledge that her Dad has, has been passed on to her. Ruby Red loves to sit and listen to her mementos from her Citrus Pilgrimage – and the fundraising she undertook, to pay for the journeys. Looking out the window, her mind begins to wander, back to the reason for sitting there; to finish the last draft of the Lemonade Chant; taking out a word here, adding another there...

As well as the taste,
Its good for your health,
Anti-inflammatory.
Add some lemon peel,
And a little honey,
To make lemonade from barley.

Bring the pitcher and the water,
Nor forgetting
Pestle and mortar.
Lime and lemon juice,
And lashings of ice,
Cilantro and Jalapeno Pepper.

Did you ever try a version,
Made from the herb basil,
And a seeded watermelon?
Imagine that combination
With a little sugar too,
Combined with the juice from lemon.

Someone bought peaches,
Cut into wedges,
To be put though the sieve.
On a sweltering day,
When total heat surrounds,
What a perfect present to give.

Combine Thai chilli
With sprig and leaf of mint,
Alongside Mexican lime.
After the first glass,
You'll be going back,
Time after time after time.

Or take pomegranates,
Little red remedy,
Used in prevention of cancer.
A little sugar syrup,
A sprig of thyme
Addition of soda water.

Member of the mint family,
So go and take a bud,
Or a selection of its flowers.
Add sugar and water,
And you will soon have yourself,
A lemonade of lavender.

Satisfied with what has appeared on paper, she puts the pen down, stretches, looks out the window for a few moments, then rises, to complete the rest of the preparations.

First, with the aid of a chair and small ladder and using tacks, she hangs and drapes orange, green and yellow material, from the tops of the walls, which she purchased from local Asian and charity shops.

After the décor has been taken care of, she next sets about creating aroma. Firstly, she fills her stashed collection of jars, with either thick slices of lime and lemon plus vanilla extract, or of lemon, lime and orange; and each jar has a sprig or two of rosemary also. Putting two either end of the table, two on the book shelves and one on the window sill, she then makes her way to the kitchen. Cutting some oranges wedge size, she places them in a pot on the stove. Into this pot also goes cranberries, cinnamon, cloves: all covered by water. She boils the concoction, then turns it down and lets it simmer, leaving the fumes of fragrance, to perform their most loveliest of dances.

As well as the citrus-centred meal that her dad has "commissioned", she begins to prepare a Grapefruit, Orange and Pineapple Salad. Her dad said he's got the dessert covered also!

And the range of lemonade is astounding! Lemon goes with everything! Rhubarb, blueberry, rosemary, kiwi, strawberry, mint, orange, cucumber and so on. She thinks that when Creator gave us the lemon, he gave us a gem of compatibility: everyone gets on with lemon. Partly for its fresh local source, but also for the walk along the river to get to the source, she opted for Blackberry Lemonade. Two of the great soldiers of our internal wars, fighting alongside each other, while giving us pleasure. Both full of vitamins and minerals, so we heal as we eat.

She gives thanks to the ancestor, Citron, for giving us the lemon, as the sailors on the olden day ships, also gave thanks for *citrus limon*.

In Brazil, a country of limes – *limao* - rather than of lemons, they make a limeade called Limonada Suissa.

Stepping out of her musing, remembering they'll be back soon, she lights the little night lights dotted here and there and turns on the little table lamp. The lights play on the fabrics above her head and the aroma in the room and the one coming from the kitchen, set the scene perfectly. The little jembe is close at hand, which she'll use to accompany herself on the Lemonade Chant, that was given its final draft earlier. Cindy Citrus told her that at all the citrus festivities she attended, there was always live music: this one, though much, much smaller, shall have live music also.

Globally, where ever there is lemon, there will be lemonade. Every day, all over the world, friends, families and the solitary drinker, are enjoying the goodness of it. With cherry, pineapple, rosewater, green tea, mango, raspberry, prickly pear cactus, coconut, apricot, and so on: we are connected in a celebration of lemonade.

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