

Two Bushes and the Dark

I named three things in that video. One of them I am taking back — and I am taking it back here, because I did not say it there.



From the video where I was sixty-seven and nothing hurt

You commented ROOTS. Here is how I make each one — and one of the three I have to go back on before you make anything at all.

I keep three things apart on every page of this paper: **what the old people say, what somebody actually tested on human beings**, and **what I will not tell you**. Mix those three and I am no better than the men selling powder on the internet.

Before you boil anything

Keep taking your medicine

Exactly the way your doctor gave it to you. Not one pill less, not one day skipped. Nothing on this paper replaces anything in that bottle — and if you ever hear a man in a video tell you different, close that video. **That includes me.**

And nothing here takes the place of the tablet on a bad day, or on the day you feel better than you have felt in years. That day especially. **Feeling good is not a reading.**

One at a time

I have told you about more than one bush. They are not a set.

Do not run them together in the same day, and do not start two of them in the same week. If you try one, try one, and give it a month before you even think about the next. Two of the things on this paper push in the same direction, and nobody knows what two or three of them do to a body at the same time — not me, not your doctor, not a study. I am not going to pretend I know either.

Your medicine keeps its own hour

Pick the hour you take your tablet and leave that hour empty. Nothing from me for two hours before it, and two hours after it.

Thick water can hold a tablet so your body never gets it. **You will not feel that happen. You will feel nothing at all — that is what makes it bad.** It is not one plant that does this; anything slippery or thick can do it. And tell your doctor what you are drinking, by name. He cannot help you with the half you did not tell him.

If it loosens your belly, you stop

Not cut it down. Stop.

A loose belly and vomiting dry a body out, and a dry body on pressure tablets and sugar tablets is how kidneys get hurt. Drink water. If it runs more than a day, call your doctor that same day and tell him what you have been drinking. **You do not touch your tablets yourself.** You call. The one who changes a dose is him.

If your sugar drops

You may sweat, shake, feel your heart run, get confused, go suddenly hungry, or wake in the night wet.

If that happens, take real sugar — juice, something sweet. Not the tea. Not the leaf. Then tell your doctor what you have been drinking. Some of these push your sugar down while your tablet is already pushing it down. Two hands on the same door. And an older body does not always give you the warning a young body gives.

Not for a woman carrying

Not a woman carrying, not a woman who might be carrying, not a woman trying. Not the leaf, not the root, not the bark, not the powder.

I am not going to tell you a small amount is fine, because I do not know that. **This paper travels.** Your daughter reads what you downloaded.

Kidneys, and the pills

If a doctor ever told you your kidneys are not what they should be — even once, even years ago — ask him before any of this. Kidneys do not complain until late.

If you take a pill ending in **-pril** or **-sartan**, or a water pill, no potassium pills and no salt substitute while you drink any of this, and ask your doctor to check your potassium. Greens carry potassium, and greens every day is a different thing from greens on a Sunday.

Before any surgery or procedure

Stop, and tell them. Tell the doctor and the one who puts you to sleep, even if nobody asks. That goes for a colonoscopy and an eye as much as a knee.

The third one. I am taking it back.

In the video I told you soursop leaf tea, at night, and I said it like a man handing you something safe. **I have to add something to that, and I am adding it here because I did not say it there.**

I am not going to dress it up. **I am taking the third one back.**

What the old people say

The leaf is a sleeping bush. It quiets you, it carries you down. That is true, it is old, it is written down in more than one island, and I am not going to stand here and call my own people liars. It is in our hands and it belongs to us.

What doctors actually went and counted

Where our people drink that leaf the most, doctors went in and counted. And the ones drinking the leaf tea came out worse, not better — in the head and in the walking. They went back years later and counted again, and it came out the same way the second time.

Now I will give you the other half, because a man who only tells you one half is selling you something.

They did **not** prove the leaf did it. They said so themselves. Other things live in that soil and in that life. And there is a real argument on the leaf's side: the cup carries only a small part of what the fruit carries, and I want you to hear that, because it is honest. **But it was the cup that showed up in those counts. Not the fruit. The cup.**

So I will not tell you

I will not tell you that leaf gives a man a shaking sickness. It has not been proven and I am not going to frighten you with something nobody proved. That is the same lie turned inside out.

Here is what I will tell you, and it is the whole reason I am going back on it:

Nobody on this earth can tell me how much of that tea, every night, is safe. Not one office in one country has been willing to put a number on it. And on the other side of the scale — the sleep — nobody has ever tested that leaf on human beings for sleep. Not once.

So I would be asking you to take a risk nobody has measured, for a help nobody has shown. I do not do that to my own people, and I will not do it to you.

A cup now and then in your own yard is between you and your grandmother. Every night because Ras Ezra told you — no. I take that back.

What goes in the third place instead

The third one is not a bush. **The third one is the dark.**

The cooling of the evening. The last hot cup with nothing sweet in it. The lamp low. Not rum to catch sleep — rum will drop you and then wake you at three in the morning and leave you there. That is what the old people had, it costs nothing, it does not travel with any tablet, and no doctor is going to knock it down.

And if you want something warm in your hand while you do it: **fever grass**. Plain lemongrass. A stalk or two, hot water, off the fire, five minutes with the lid on, no sugar.

Now hear the honest part, because this is the part that makes me worth listening to. They did test fever grass on people. They looked at the blood, the liver, the kidney, the heart, and nothing moved — **but they only watched it for two weeks. Two weeks is all anybody ever watched.** And then they tested it for sleep, against a cup with nothing in it, and it did not beat the cup with nothing in it.

So I am not selling you fever grass for sleep. **I am telling you it did not win.** It is a warm thing in your hand at the end of the day, the way my people always did it. The dark is doing the work.

Do not run them together

This is the part that worries me most, and it is my own fault for the way I said it in that video.

I gave you a list, one, two, three, like a man giving out a routine. Then I gave you a pot in another video. Then I gave you a glass in another one. And a good person watching all of me is going to do all of them, in the same day, on top of a tablet — because it is all bush, and it is all from the same old man.

Do not do that.

- Not the morning pot from the roots video and this on the same day.
- Not the okra glass and this. That glass I have already had to go back on in its own paper — go and read that one before you pour another.
- Not two of the things on **this** paper started in the same week. Two of them push your sugar the same way.

Bush is not gentle because it is bush. Half of what is in the doctor's cabinet started as a bush. If a thing is strong enough to do something, it is strong enough to do something wrong. And two strong things at once is not twice the good — **it is a thing nobody has ever watched.**

One. At a time. And a month between.



Cerasee — the bitter bush

What the old people say

Cerasee is ours. Leaf and vine, boiled brown, taken in the morning. They called it a wash out and a blood cleanser. They took it for a bad belly, for a rash and for the itch on the skin, and they bathed children in it. That is real, it is written down, and half the island has a bush of it on a fence.

They also never drank it straight through the year. They drank it and they stopped. I do the same. I do not have a reason out of a book for that — I have the reason they gave me, and I am telling you plainly that is all it is. **And I am not going to repeat the story you have heard about it resting your liver, because that story is not true and I checked.**

What was actually tested on people

They tested this one plenty. Some tests said it helped the sugar a little. When they put every test together, the little got smaller. And when they stood it beside the tablet your doctor gives you, **the tablet won.**

And hear this — every one of those tests used the fruit, weighed out, in a hospital. **Nobody has ever tested a pot of leaf and vine boiled in a yard.** Mine has no measure on it. Neither does yours.

How I make it

A small handful of the dried leaf and vine. Cold water on it, bring it up, then the fire low until the water goes brown-green. Off the fire, strain it.

One cup. Light, not black. Do not boil it down until it is black and do not pour a second one because the first one did not do anything. More is not better with bush. More is how people get hurt.

The correction on the hour

In the video I told you one cup in the morning, before anything else. **I have to add something to that, and I am adding it here because I did not say it there.**

Take it with food in your belly. Not on an empty stomach. Not in place of a meal you skipped. And not in the same hour as your tablet — that hour stays empty.

Two reasons, and I will give you both. The first is that this cup can push your sugar down while your tablet is already pushing it down, and an empty belly is the worst place for that to happen. The second I read, I did not see it: **little ones were carried to hospital after this same cup on an empty belly.** I read it in a doctor's writing, I did not stand there. A child is not a grown man. But it was enough that I changed my own instruction, and it is enough that I will not put this cup on an empty stomach and I will not give it to a child.

The thing some of us carry in the blood

This is the page I would want somebody to give me.

There is a thing some of us carry in the blood, from back home, from the old side of the family. Most who carry it were never told. It runs in men more than women, and it runs in our people. When something oxidises the blood of a man who carries it, his blood can break down — and there is a doctor's write-up of a man who drank a bitter melon tea for a stretch of days and ended in the emergency room, yellow, with his water the colour of cola.

I cannot test you. So I will not tell you this cup is safe for every body — I do not know your body. Anybody who tells you different is telling you about a body he has never met.

If your water turns dark like cola, or the white of your eye goes yellow, or a weakness comes over you all at once — **stop, and see a doctor the same day.** Do not wait for the next morning to see if it passes.

And when you do go, ask for **both** blood tests for sugar — the one they take before you eat anything, and the long-memory one. Not just one of them. For some of us the long-memory one reads kinder than the truth.

Who does not touch this at all

- **Leaf and vine only. No seed, and not the little red skin around the seed.** That is where the trouble in that plant lives.
- **No bag without a label.** If you cannot read what is inside it and where it came from, leave it on the shelf. Powder and capsule I do not send you to buy at all — the harm that has been written up came out of a bottle, not out of a pot.
- **Not a woman carrying, might be carrying, or trying.**
- **Not a child.**
- **If you take insulin, or the tablet that makes you sweat and shake when you skip a meal —** you talk to your doctor before your first cup, and the tablet keeps going exactly as it is. Not one dose moved, not by you, not by me.

So I will not tell you

In the video I said **bitter in the cup, sweet in the blood**. It sounded good. On paper it reads like a promise that this cup brings your sugar down, and that is the sentence that makes a man skip his tablet. **So I am taking that half back too.**

Bitter in the cup. That is all I can promise you — that it is bitter.

Moringa — the tree in the pot

What the old people say — and what I will not claim

Here I have to be straight with you, because a man who pretends every plant is his birthright is selling you something.

This tree is not my grandmother's. In India they have eaten this leaf longer than Jamaica has been Jamaica, and in Africa too. It came across the water. And I will be careful even about that: **I did not watch the tree come. I watched us start drinking it.** That is what happened in my lifetime, and that is all I can honestly claim.

So when I put it in my pot, I am not standing on my ancestors. I am standing on the fact that it is good food.

What was actually tested on people

They tested it. Then somebody put all the tests side by side and looked properly — and most of what people say about this leaf did not hold up.

- I will **not** tell you it brings your pressure down. The best look anybody has taken does not hold that up.
- I will **not** tell you it brings your sugar down. The tests do not agree with each other, and the people who counted them said out loud the good result may be bigger on paper than it is in a body.
- I will **not** tell you it kills inflammation. That one was never even tested on human beings. Not a little — **not at all**. It was tested in dishes and in animals, and that is not you.

What holds up is the plain thing: **it is a heavy, green, feeding leaf**. Treat it like callaloo. That is the only claim strong enough to carry weight, and it is enough.

How I use it

Strip the little leaves off the stalk with one pull — the stalk is stringy, leave it out. A handful into the pot at the end of the cooking, the way you would put in any greens. Soup, rice, callaloo, a pot of peas. Cooked, in food, in your mouth.

The correction: the pot, not the pill

In the video I said **a handful of leaves in the pot, every single day**. I have to add two things to that, and I am adding them here because I did not say them there.

The first. When you go looking, you will find the powder. You will find the capsule. They will tell you it is the same leaf, only stronger. **It is not the same thing.** The pot is the part people have been doing for generations. The capsule is the part nobody has watched for long — and the one liver that was written up as hurt by this leaf was hurt by a capsule, and hurt again when the woman went back to it. **I said the pot. I meant the pot. I do not send you to buy powder.**

The second, and this one is me softening my own instruction. *Every single day, forever* is more than I can stand behind. As food in a pot, people have eaten this leaf for generations — that is the longest anybody has watched anything I have named, and it is why I keep it. But nobody has watched it beside three prescriptions. So eat it the way you eat any greens: some days yes, some days no. **Greens are not a dose.**

Before the first handful

- **A blood thinner — warfarin, or whatever they have you on.** This leaf is heavy in the very thing that medicine is set against. How much is in my handful, nobody has weighed, and I will not invent it. But the rule is simple and it goes both ways: **do not start it, and do not stop it, without your doctor.** Starting moves the needle and stopping moves it back. This one is not a maybe.
- **A sugar tablet, or insulin.** The leaf may push down while the tablet is already pushing down. The action is one action: **tell your doctor you are eating it.** Not measure, not adjust, not watch and decide. Tell him.
- **A thyroid tablet.** That tablet goes on an empty stomach, hours away from this leaf, and nobody has settled this one — so keep them far apart.
- **A cholesterol tablet, or any tablet at all.** There is a study where this leaf did not touch the medicine. There is another where it did. **Nobody has tested the medicine in your cabinet.** So name it to your doctor — say the statin by name, say the pressure pill by name. A warning with no name in it does not get heard.
- **If it loosens your bowels, it was too much.** Back off the handful, or leave it alone.

So I will not tell you

The leaf is what you eat. The root is not a stronger leaf — it is another thing entirely. Root, bark and flower have been used to bring a pregnancy down. Do not buy them, do not dig them, do not hand them to a woman who might be carrying. And I will not even tell you the leaf is free of that in a strong form, because in animals it was not. **A woman who might be carrying does not try any of it, leaf or powder.**

What I do not put in, and why

No powder. No capsule. No extract. No bottle already made. Not for any of these. When somebody tested the bagged leaf products on a shelf, one bag had less than half of what the label said and another was dirtier than it should have been. You cannot see inside a capsule. You can see inside a pot.

No soursop leaf as a habit. Explained above. It stays out.

No moringa root, bark or flower. No cerasee seed, and not the red skin on the seed. I name them so you can refuse them, not so you can go find them.

No sugar, no honey, no molasses, no rum in any of it. The old people sweetened theirs with molasses and I will not pretend otherwise — but molasses is sugar, and I am talking to people with sugar trouble.

No bag with no label. No Latin name, no ingredient list, no country — leave it on the shelf.

And no word out of my mouth about flushing, cleaning, sweeping or unclogging anything. Your liver is not a drain and it does not clog. It works all day and all night, and it does not need my pot and it does not need my permission. What it can hold is fat, and fat does not come out with a morning drink — it comes out of the rest of a life. I am not going to sell you a broom for a thing that has no dirt in it.

And I am not going to tell you your belly will go down. I have said that before and I should not have. They tested it on people, and the belly did not go down. I would rather take the sentence back than let you hold on to it.

Watch, and stop

Stop and call somebody if:

- You shake, break a cold sweat, get confused, or go suddenly hungry. **Take real sugar first, then call.**
- The room goes gray when you stand, or you feel faint. Sit down. Do not drive.
- Your belly loosens or you vomit. Stop it, drink water, and if it runs more than a day, call the same day.
- Your water goes dark like cola, or the white of your eye goes yellow, or a weakness drops on you all at once. **Same day.**
- You bruise from nothing, or you bleed easy.
- You swell, cramp, or your heart runs uneven.

And in none of those do you touch your tablets. **You call. He decides.**

Here is the trap, and I want it to be the last thing you read before the recipe pages close. **If your numbers get better while you are doing any of this, that is your medicine and this working together.** It is not permission to stop the pill. Write the number down, carry it to your doctor, and let him decide about the pill.

Never you. And never me.

Give thanks

None of this is medicine. It is not a treatment for your pressure, your sugar, your sleep or your joints. It is food, and a warm cup, and a dark room — the way my people always did it.

I told you three things in that video and I have handed you back two of them and the dark. A man who only ever adds is selling you something. I would rather be the one who takes things back.

Give thanks.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Nothing here replaces any medicine your doctor gave you. If I ever change what I say about any of these, I will tell the people on my list first.

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