

Liberation' s Garden

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or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or
dead, or actual events is purely coincidental. That being said, most of this
stuff happened, or happens on a daily basis, or will be happening in the near
future. The Earth is undergoing a multi-layered crisis, it is up to us to
drastically change the way we walk upon her surface, and we should do it before
the companies that run our government, run our children' s planet into the
ground. Fossil Corp may not be real, but there are some very real corporations
that have prioritized profit over basically everything else in the free world.
And speaking of free, this book is available for free at any retailer that
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Liberation' s Garden

*A work of fiction
from the frontline of the
socio-ecological revolution*

DJ Rankin

Also by the author:

Step One: Save the World
The Journey of a Water Protector

Uncage Eden
A Spiritual Philosophy Book about
Food, Music, and the Rewilding of Society
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Miles likes his job. He really does. It's at least interesting enough that he can pretend to enjoy it. He gets to help people. Sorta. He's there to tell them that everything'll be okay, when to them, it seems that the whole world is rigged against them. He provides damage control for those that society spits out along its never ending quest of progressing greatness. Life seems to be getting better and better for everyone lost in their ipods as they float down the mainstream, oblivious to those whose lives were washed away with the flood, and if no one else seems to be bothered by the upcoming current's event, then why should they?

Truth is, Miles fucking hates his job. It's just papers and buttons and fake smiles, and an endless charade of convincing himself that he has the mental stability required to live within the dream, captive to the illusions of a functioning global community, and a self-inflicted prisoner of the economic sanctions of life, liberty, and the everlasting pursuit of complacency. A life's time consumed by the fair market value of the human experience.

But he's gotta work. He's gotta have things. It may not be pretty, but the world is built on the broken dreams of the slaves convinced to believe in freedom. And even if the powers-that-be control the whole thing, pulling the strings that keep our hands

tied from ever making real change, what can he really do about it anyway?

He's just one dude. Nobody knows him. Nobody's listening. Nobody even knows he exists. And he's cool with that. He's happy to keep his head down and just go with the flow. Happy enough, anyway.

Besides, if he did decide to speak of his unhappiness with the way things are, voicing the opinions of his unrested monologue and putting words to his thoughts of dropping out of the game altogether, well, the system is fundamentally wired to shun all who refuse to conform to the rules of the system.

The worth of a human can be easily quantified in rational numbers, from the negotiated wage of forfeiting one's own lifetime, to the size of the mortgage acquired to prove full-blown adulthood. Money makes the world go round, and as hard as it is to convince yourself that you're alive without it, it's even harder to prove it to anyone else.

It's true, you can't survive without money, at least not in this manmade world of material girls. You gotta pay to play, you gotta pay to pray, you gotta pay for your own home and it's illegal to be homeless. You simply can't survive within this system without money, so you gotta get a job from the system to settle your debts with the system, so you gotta settle on whatever occupation you can find that vaguely resembles something that you actually care anything about.

So what's the alternative? To rebuke it all? To refuse to participate in the insanity demanded by modern society? To allow yourself to fall out of civilization's good graces and take up residence among the cracks in the sidewalk, the one that has been superimposed atop an entire world long forgotten? Nah, that's just a bunch of crazy talk.

All this and more, crossed his mind as he crossed the street to grab a coffee. He poked through the myriad of muffins and scones, compilations of homemade vegan cream pies, bluetooth headsets with their sparkle mocha lattes, venti of course, although this bookstore baristaria doesn't subscribe to the

nonsensical nomenclatures of the coffee store down both sides of the street, but our bluetoothers don' t seem to notice, or care, or be capable of anything other than reciting the regurgitations of the people farm.

Miles is good with drip, medium medium, thinks he' s clever but knows deep down that he' s just another rat in the maze. Except he at least knows that the finish line holds no escape, only a meager chunk of stale cheddar, then it' s back to the monotony of the cage. A bit of banter as she fills his cup and he thinks he might have a crush on her, but what' s new?

He steps out to roll one while he burns the roof of his mouth, and their eyes lock. Not the barista, it' s this barefoot beauty, short dark hair, olive skin, and eyes that could tell a story, better than our author anyway. And oh yeah, a dress she' d been wearing for the better part of a week, and maybe the worst parts of it too. She could spot a mark from a mile away and her eyes started talking before he was even in earshot.

“Hey brother, if you' re looking for real anarchy, you' re not gonna find it in a book.”

1

And with that, she turned and started walking out of his life before she had even properly entered it. Or improperly. Yet she had struck a nerve. He had tasted her discontent with the content that society was convincing everyone else to swallow, smelled her comfort of unconformity in the face of a faceless state-maintained delusion of authority, or maybe it was just the dress.

Either way, he knew that he probably wouldn't sleep soundly again until he dove head first into her slippery stream of consciousness, fully engulfing himself in her ebbs and flows, and only once he'd pried his clinging fingers from their last grasp at the straws dangled by the banks, would he be free enough to float through the treacherous waters of trepidation, and arrive at whichever oceanfront utopia this sparkling angel of anarchy had surely been crafted by the gods.

On top of the dress, or under it maybe, she wore a peculiar mystique that had driven a piton directly through the sore spot of his crumbling identity, and now as she climbed into his memories, he was frozen in a tangle of bewilderment. Her essence seemed to be a blend of extremes, a sophisticated simplicity, so stripped down that at first glance she appeared inseparable from the streets she was traversing. But a second glance revealed something much deeper, an insatiable intrigue, a complexity beyond compare with anyone who existed within the borders of our patriotic indoctrination.

She knew things, she had lived, like really lived, and her experience wasn't passed off as just another notch on her ego's bedpost, it was held close, held sacred, and anyone lucky enough to truly explore the depths of her wisdom, would certainly unlock a few mysteries of the universe along the way.

She was half a block along her own way, when she turned around and flashed a mischievous smile, "Well, are you coming or what?"

It took about a third of a second for him to rsvp and another third to catch up. He had no idea where they were going, yet he felt no hesitation, he only knew that if he let her fade away from his story, he'd feel the sting of regret with every breath left in his miserable excuse of an existence.

"Bout time, you know I was only gonna wait another third of a second or so. As much as you're meant to be there beside me, the revolution waits for no one."

"Sorry I'm late, so where's this revolution of yours happening?"

"Oh, here and there."

"Ah, and over a couple rainbows I'd imagine."

"Under them actually, but first is here."

She ducked into the corner Seven Eleven, walked past the assortment of subpar food items, that for a couple of bucks, are the only option for their povertous clientele to feign any attempt at nutritional intake, and made a beeline for the coffee station.

She circled her prey, carefully perusing the collection of caffeine, landed on a near empty carafe, half filled her worn out travel mug and exclaimed, "Oh drat, you guys are always out of the one I like, no worries though, guess I'll just walk a few blocks to the other one."

As they reentered the bustling street scene, Miles pointed out that there had been a full canister of her most desired *house blend* right next to the empty.

"Yeah, which means they were getting ready to dump this out, and they verify their inventory by the amount of styrofoam cups they unleash into the world, so by my account, I've done everyone involved a huge favor."

"Interesting thought process, doubt that Mr Eleven would tend to agree."

"Who? That old geezer? The one profiting off the backs of the vulnerable, as he perpetuates the illusion of convenience for the sheep? I think he'll be just fine without my half cup of sacred energy poured down his drain."

"Illusion of convenience?"

“You know it brother. It’s all a charade, a sham, a scam, it’s damn near a pyramid scheme, where the only way to get ahead is to push down those who society has glued to the bottom rung.

Let’s take your little froufrou coffee trash to-go, certainly seems more convenient to grab a freshy everyday, than to lug around this old clunker like I do. Of course, you’ll need a few hundred cups to power an entire year of spinning your wheels, and so will millions of other convenience snobs, and now we’re left with an Earth cluttered by the collateral damage of the convenience war.”

Miles couldn’t find the words to contribute, especially as he looked down to see the steaming gun in his hands, but luckily she had a few more rattles to shake off, as she unraveled the narrative woven into the threadbare fabric of the American dream.

“Or like that shirt you’re wearing, and I’m not trying to pick on you, it’s most of the shirts that most people wear, you’re just the only one on the fringe enough to even be able to hear me. Or want to, at least.

It’s way convenient to walk into that store over there and grab some garb to freshen up your friday night attire. Much easier than the effort it took to replace an ecosystem with a poisonous cotton field, but luckily our nation’s capital was built on the blood, sweat, and tears of those enslaved as prisoners of the war, which seemed rather convenient to anyone who was allowed to vote on another human’s life worth.

But that’s all in the history books now, which were written by the kings of convenience, and as the victors spun the white web of justification, the spinning wheel was exported to an underpaid, underprivileged, and underage workforce, who were way less American than three fifths of those sold on our own black market.

So now our shops are built on the sweat of an even more worthless breed of human being, and I’d be willing to wager that they manage to bleed and cry a bit too, but darn it if it’s just not so convenient to live a comfortable life blinded to the discomfort involved in the exportation of exploitation. Convenient for us, anyway.

And so' s the half-assed attempt at processing the human spirit through an over-packaged and under-nutritioned food supply. It ' s super convenient for the caged cattle that never have to worry about the other side of the fence. And for the caged consumer, who will undoubtedly contract one of the many diseases cultivated through agrinomics, but conveniently, the government subsidized drug cartels also own the monsanto mafia. A one stop shop of convenience alright, and the masses eat it up, as their own mass increases, because it' s infinitely more convenient to sit around and watch a TV dinner, than to stand up and do a damn thing about anything.

But it *is* pretty convenient to lounge around the comfort of an oil powered lifestyle, beats splitting wood to warm yourself up, though now you have to drive across town to sacrifice your own energy just to keep the lights on. Gotta take your place among the traffic jam of slaves to the system, car beats bus, bus beats walking, and planes top them all, and as we top off the tank, we see that the farther you climb the corporate ladder of convenience, there' s an equal and opposite depletion of life quality for those too forgotten to ever scroll across the bottom of your in-flight news programming.

Birds covered in oil, water filled with oil, reservations stolen for oil, and even some good old white folk suffer, as their family farm is now in the incineration zone of what has been conveniently labeled as *natural gas*.

And naturally we buy into it, because the alternative sounds like entirely too much work, so we pass the dependence on the buck down to our children, who will be the ones to face the wrath of our collapsing global equilibrium. Dirty oceans are rising and fueling unnaturally massive disasters, wet places are dry, dry places are flooded, temperature shifts are growing more sporadic, and record breaking blizzards pushed down from the high pressures of a melting arctic, are just enough proof that there' s no way it' ll get as hot as those silly scientists are saying.

People would much prefer to believe in the storyline that supports their convenient way of life, the one told by the political prisoners of corporately subsidized campaign finance violations, and they' ve made a career of telling people what they

want to hear, so all those listening intently have no intent on lightening the load they impress upon our worn out planet.

Impressive indeed, that they could spin an authentically manmade yarn of human supremacy, that even as hundreds of species are becoming extinct every single day and the conditions required to sustain human life are fading from the landscape even faster, somehow they' ve convinced everyone that the solution to pollution is to simply add more fuel to the fire, to trust that multinational conglomerations of businessmen will discover the holy grail of convenience, and we' ll be able to save the human race from self-destruction without ever having to lift a finger, except maybe to let Netflix know that we' re still watching.”

2

Miles was spinning as he hung onto every word. He knew all this stuff already, but he'd never heard it connected so eloquently, so ferociously unapologetic, so spot on and to the point that he couldn't even remember what it was that he thought about the world before this moment. It all seemed so obvious now, how could anyone be so oblivious to the true nature of things that they simply close their eyes and let the current push them towards certain disaster?

Convenience. It's far more convenient to jump on board with someone else's muddy flow, than to break away and carve your own path through untamed territory. Now he could see it all around him, couldn't escape it if he tried. Convenience consumed every corner of the market and littered the streets, with both plastic, and the souls of those unwilling to conform to the cookie cutters of the human factory.

But the saddest part, were those who had been successfully homogenized, lost in the convenience of forgetting the world as their phones become more aware than they are. Retaining just enough sentience to sidestep the pile of people in need of basic human rights. Ignoring the plea to pay attention to what's becoming of our self-absorbed species. Escaping any personal responsibility for the future of humanity, because, *"Sorry, I don't carry any cash,"* yet simultaneously ordering Amazon's latest acquisition before the fad fades away, and all while the actual Amazon is burning to death.

He couldn't go back to the version of the world that he had learned to halfway exist in, so his feet didn't miss a beat, though his heart may have skipped a couple. He yearned for more of her unfiltered perspective, her knowledge, her answers, her questions, her unphased ability to see the truths of the world and to somehow remain upbeat about it all. He craved to know her, and he was pretty sure it wasn't the dress this time. Well, maybe a little.

Just as he was trying not to ponder what exactly made the dingy dress sparkle in the morning sun, it whirled through the air as she spun a one eighty and stopped him dead in his tracks.

“Hey, you think I could get a little pinch of your tobacco? I musta left mine back at my place.”

He reached for his pouch as he contemplated the location of *her place*. He hadn't even considered that she might have managed to eke out more stability than he'd been pretending to. Most folks he met on this street carried their lives on their backs, stripped down to the bare necessities of survival, which packed its own sense of freedom as their home truly was wherever their heart decided to be. All those others who fed the obsession of accumulating worthless things, were tightly tied down to the machine, as it extracted every last drop of their human sovereignty.

He already knew enough that he couldn't picture her giving up a single drop of herself, not to any machine anyway. She was so incredibly comfortable in her own skin, which looked quite comfortable from his perspective, though he couldn't imagine whatever sanctuary she must climb into each frigid night. An outsider to any conventional way of life, but seemed only a visitor to these streets that the others had escaped to. Could she be the only one?

Couldn't be. She wasn't one to run off and hide from the world in solitary confinement. She was a people person, though most of the people out here hardly saw her as a person, and she certainly had no online profile to prove it. No, she was not nearly as alone as he had felt for years, which could only mean that there was some kind of underground community of consciousness, a breeding ground for actual thoughts to come into this world, and a collection of free spirits to carry them out to it. He had to know this place. He had to know her. He had to know himself. He knew that he could no longer remain incomplete while there was a magical utopia out there waiting for him.

He tried to formulate the right words to uncover more of her mythical backstory, but before he could even decide which W to begin with, she disappeared into the shrubs bordering the

sidewalk, presumably to never again be seen in this particular plane of existence.

A moment later, she emerged from her transdimensional travel with a souvenir box of perfectly chilled pepperoni and cheese, two slices, but she quickly shut the box before Miles could decline the secondhand snackatizer.

“Check it out, perfectly chilled pepperoni and cheese, just like from the fridge, but dare I say that this was far more convenient and way less toxic to the Earth?”

“Might be hard to get the *inside people* to sign up.”

“Oh brother, you’ re telling me. Do you think the convenience snobs who won’ t eat their farm fresh favorites unless they’ re wrapped in plastic, are ever gonna eat something that’ s been in the big and scary great outdoors?”

Heck no, they’ d prefer to gas a greenhouse and skip to the next season, or just order-in off of some brown person’ s menu from a country obviously of lesser value than America, we’ re the greatest. We have skyscrapers filled with luxury apartments and restaurants lining the block, of course, we also have an insanely large population of the homeless and hungry. But don’ t worry, we’ ll get the cops down here and clear the sidewalk before your paying customers ever show up, they’ re definitely not gonna wanna have to look at this.

And so they don’ t. And when they end their fancy night out, all a chitter chatter and tipsy on the way to the warm car, and the warm house, and the warm bed with four thousand thread count egyptian satin sheets, they don’ t even think that someone here and now might appreciate their still warm styrofoam doggie bag, so they cram it into the back of the fridge for next month’ s episode of *Food or Trash*.

No, I don’ t think most people are prepared to do what we must in order to restore equilibrium to our species, and the rest of the living planet that we are a part of. To give up an ounce of personal privilege and share it with those less fortunate, to forget the indoctrinations of the self-served individual and remember that our most basic instinct, is that of community. But there’ s a change coming, and ready or not, people are going to have to learn to become human once again.

But today we' re in luck, some kind soul felt it in their heart to share a little of themselves with the street, and for that, I thank you Unci Maka, Grandmother Earth, I thank you for showing us that we are not alone, that there are other Earth helpers out there doing their part, that people are beginning to open their eyes and hearts and wake up to the task at hand, and please help us to be inspired by all those that we meet as we share our love with every step we take, wopila tanka, aho, Mitakuye Oyasin.”

She finished that last bit up with her eyes closed, and seemed to have slipped off to another world by the end of it, or into this one. She had been praying. The pizza box was at shoulder height in one hand, the other held tightly a beaded leather pouch that hung around her neck. Miles didn' t know how he hadn' t noticed it before, didn' t know why he felt tingles all over, didn' t know the last time he' d prayed, and never to the planet itself. But he did know one thing, he was feeling pretty inspired alright, so maybe it was working already. But what was all that foreign language stuff?

Before he could gather the thought fragments she had yet to shatter, she was off again with an extra pep in her step that only pizza can provide. Or tacos. She bounced around the corner to devour the fresh kill, but when Miles caught up, he walked in on an entirely different situation.

She was kneeled down next to an old man in a wheelchair, a veteran it seemed, flying a sign that asked for pity and prayers. He heard them discussing his upcoming operation, something with his heart, and then she warmed it for him with a surprise delivery of cheesy goodness, two slices. They hugged and laughed, she motioned towards Miles and whispered something that elicited two more smiles, and then as she turned to rejoin the caravan he called out, “Thanks baby doll.”

“Anytime Henry, stay warm out there, toksa ake.”

And as she stepped back into stride she fired off a warning shot, “And for the record, don' t ever call me baby doll. Henry' s an old friend and he' s in a wheelchair, and I don' t punch people in wheelchairs, but don' t think I won' t put you in one.”

“Got it,” was all he could squeeze out, not out of fear of having to roll to the bathroom, but from the astonishment he felt for who had to be the most intelligent, compassionate, and spellbinding creature he had ever met. And there was no way he was ever gonna call her *baby doll*.

“I’ m sorry, that was pretty fierce, don’ t worry, I’ m not actually gonna beat you down. At least as long as you don’ t mess up.” A brief chuckle crept out, and then a, “But for real tho, that’ s another shift that we’ ve gotta make if we’ re gonna survive this. We have to once again hold the divine feminine energies of the world sacred, not as objects to be passed around to the highest bidder, and that begins with a complete upheaval of the patriarchal rhetoric handed down through centuries of colonial chauvinism.”

Miles was well aware of the unfair hand that women had been dealt, sentenced to stirring the pot and folding the dirty laundry of the man show, but even though he understood this and always held the women in his life with the highest esteem, he couldn’ t stop the flash of guilt that crossed from his mind to his face.

“Oh don’ t worry bud, we don’ t blame you. Or I don’ t anyway. This has been the way of developing a world since way before we wiped out thousands of indigenous languages, along with anyone who dared to speak them, which left ample room for the white man’ s words to spread absurd concepts, such as the right to free speech. Or the right to private property, as if any one species could ever commit enough deplorable acts of oppression as to deserve ownership over a planet that we are an interwoven thread of, an equal partner, which didn’ t sit too well with the first born sons of the boys club, so they just lumped their fear of the female form in with the rest of the inventory. Women were considered the property of their husbands, even in this land of liberated statues and belles, and anyone privileged enough to learn to read the language of the kings saw it plain as day, only men are created equal.

But like I said, this has been going on a long time, a long long time, like thousands and thousands of years, ever since the first king’ s son set the record straight with the laws of

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