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Milk Thistle

Aurora Levíns Morales

Milk Thistle teaches guerrilla warfare. Adaptogen milagrosa, Milk Thistle works with what is here, the yellow layers of toxins, the charcoal grit, the green bile slow as crude oil pooling in the liver's reservoirs waiting to learn to flow. Milk Thistle says take what you are and use it.

She's a junkyard artist, crafting beauty out of the broken. She's a magician, melting scar tissue into silk. She's a miner, fingering greasy lumps of river clay for emeralds. She can enter the damaged cells of your life and recreate your liver from a memory of health. She can pass her hands over this torn and stained tapestry of memory and show us beauty, make the threads gleam with the promise of something precious gained.

She will not flinch from anything you have done to keep yourself alive. Give it to me, she will say. I will make it into something new. She will show you your courage, hammered to a dappled sheen by use. She will remind you that you took yourself over and over to the edge of what you knew. She will remind you that the world placed limits on your powers. That you were not omnipotent. That some of the choices you made were not choices. Use what you are, she says again and again, insistent. You are every step of your journey, you are everything that has touched you, you are organic and unexpected. Use what you are.