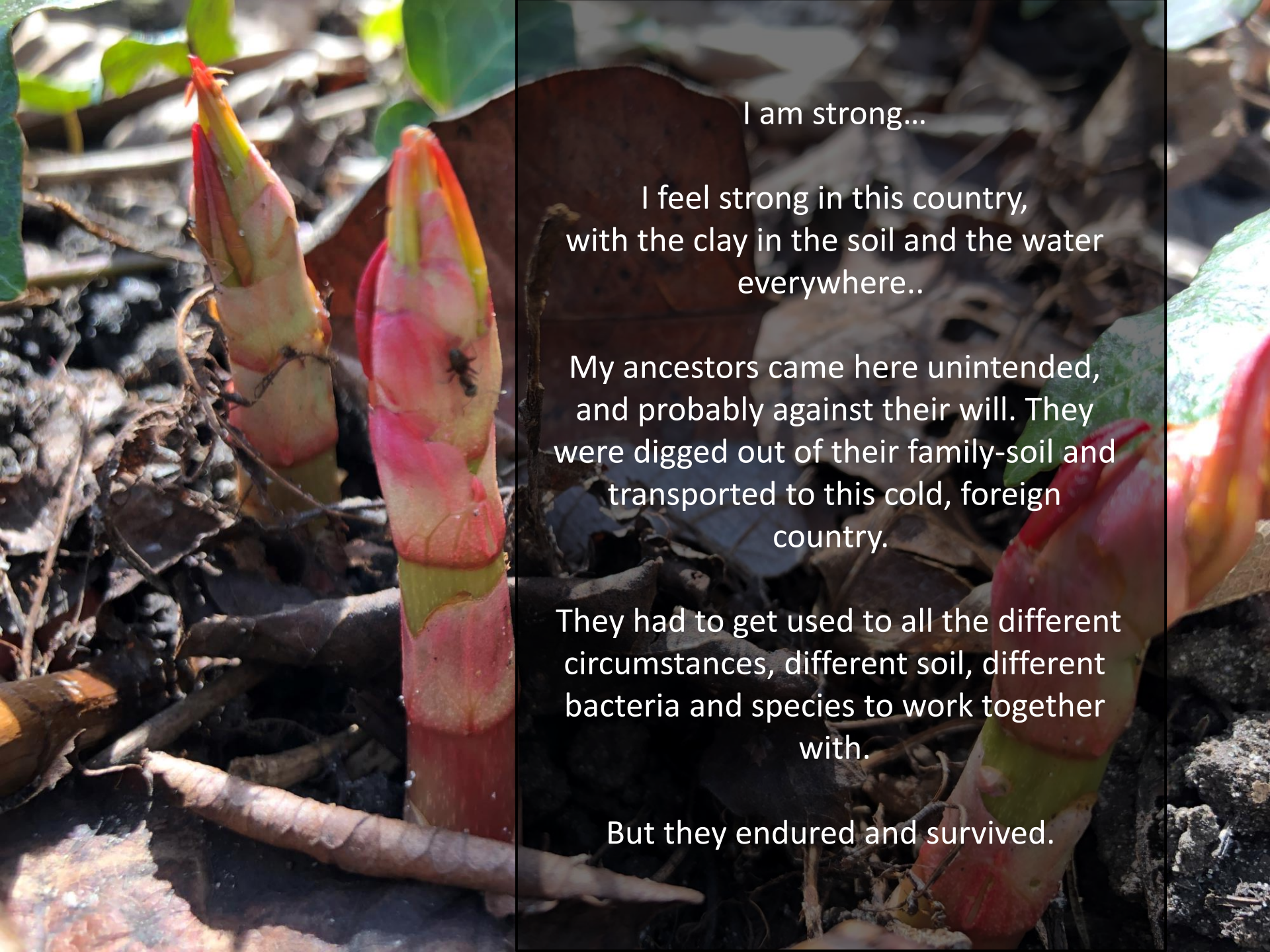




a wildpickers response

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I am strong...

I feel strong in this country,
with the clay in the soil and the water
everywhere..

My ancestors came here unintended,
and probably against their will. They
were dug out of their family-soil and
transported to this cold, foreign
country.

They had to get used to all the different
circumstances, different soil, different
bacteria and species to work together
with.

But they endured and survived.



Proud I am,
of how they managed to survive
and even strive in this country!

It took us decennia, but as soon as we
finally managed to free ourselves from
the enclosures they kept us in, we
enjoyed our freedom with new
strength.

So here we are.
We are with many,
lifting our strong heads through your
clay, your grass, your gardens.

Up we rise, up and up,
and with every knot in our
stalks grow our beautiful
eggshaped leaves.

With every inch we grow, our
stalks get stronger in order to
support the leafy canopy.

Our roots spread wider and
wider to communicate, to
multiply.

And to ensure you won't take us
away again that easy.

Does our strength scare you?
Do our numbers scare you?
Is that why you only see
what we take,

But don't see what we bring?





I am a wild picker,

Following the tradition of my ancestors, I wander through the greens. Not in a big forest, far away.

But here, in the city. I know my territory. The larger parks, the small patches of green. The forgotten strips, the frayed edges of this city. There I walk, I discover, I collect.

I see what grows, blooms, lives. What emerges and passes. What shifts, what disappears. I do not know all the plants, to the disappointment of some. It is precisely the richness of abundance that prevents that. It remains wonderful to be surprised again and again.



From my point of view, everything is interconnected. There is no organism that stands alone - everything lives in continuous exchange with each other. I know I do. So do you.

So do the plants and animals that live with us.

Everything gives and takes.

And with that in mind... I pick. I pick like my ancestors picked, with a new awareness of finiteness and reciprocity. Wild picking with respect and an eye for the plants, for how they live, what they need. Instead of what only I need.

So... what's the gift of knotweed?

beauty...

It came to in our gardens by
botanists, as an exotic beauty...

Look at the colors,
in all hues from green to red.

With it's sensual start bursting
from the soil...



it tilts its head as a first
leaf springs out.

Then tilting again and
again with every leaf it
sprouts,

like a dancer on the
soil.

The knotweed is a
burst of red and green
and all hues in
between.

It can share those
colours too, used dried,
or through dyes...





The fibers.

When this stem grows, it also becomes strong, and fibery. Please, consider to use it instead of lose it... it is a gift of the plant.

When you know that we have to reconsider our materials, then why not experimenting with it?
It is there!

These strong, natural grown fibres, that we might learn to use as construction material, rope, or otherwise.





The taste..

Japanese knotweed is family of our Rhubarb! It has the same pleasantly sour taste, combined with something fruity

Delicious!

But just like rhubarb, it has an acid in it that becomes stronger during growth. Don't over-eat and don't eat when plants full-grown.

The best time to pick is now: april till the start of May – as the stalks sprout from the ground.

Check if your municipality uses (or has used) poison for the control of Japanese Knotweed

Where to pick? Well... They keep track of it usually...

Gemeente Amsterdam Duizendknoop

Legend

- Status
 - Gemeld
 - Geschouwd
 - Actieve bestrijding
- Geschouwd
- Actieve bestrijding

N.B!! Check if your municipality uses (or has used) poison for the control of Japanese Knotweed!! If so, don't pick!

Here you can find a map on where to find Knotweed in Amsterdam:
<https://maps.amsterdam.nl/duizendknoop/>

How to pick

You don't want to help spread the knotweed, so take care. I do it like this:

Bring a sharp knife, and an enclosed bag to put the cutted stalks in.





The best stalks are the ones that have hardly leaves yet. They look a bit like a leafier asparagus

Check if the stalks are flexibel. If they are, they will be tender after cooked.

(if not flexible, you could peel them, just like asparagus.

They come in different sizes
look for the fatter/thicker
ones!

Usually they are found on
places that are not treated
much yet...





Cut the stems close to the soil

There you go!
Now put them in the
enclosed bag and bring
home.



Don't they look harmless ;-)

Wash them up,
remove side leaves

THROW THE WASTE NOT IN
THE REGULAR TRASHBIN,
NOT WITH THE GREEN
WASTE





If necessary, you peel the thicker stalks

(but in the peel you'll find the most of the resveratrol in the above-ground parts (see next part of the presentation)).



Chop them up in short pieces: they are very fibery and cut short they are more pleasant to eat.





There you go!
You can use them sweet
and savory.
E.g. in a cake like this.





Or to make lemonade...

Or to fill with creamcheese as a sort of canneloni, eat them with potatos and ham, like asparagus, make a mousse of it, icecream, stir fry it with soy-sauce (an excellent combination)...

So much variation!

A hand is shown holding a stem of knotweed against a clear blue sky. The stem is dark and woody, with several green, serrated leaves attached. The background is filled with the silhouettes of bare tree branches, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The lighting is bright, creating a high-contrast scene.

The medicine

But the knotweed has even more to offer.

Our medicine cabinet has always been originated from or been inspired by plants – knotweed is no exception.

Japanese knotweed is a very good source for a medicine called resveratrol: a substance that has been shown in animal studies to fight tumors.

There is more resveratrol in knotweed than in peanuts and grapes.



Numerous studies have explored resveratrol's role in preventing and managing cardiovascular (heart-related) disease. Resveratrol exhibits protective effects against blood vessel damage. Studies also show that it lowers cholesterol levels and prevents blood clots.

Many researchers have concluded that resveratrol is a valuable micronutrient that can prevent heart disease in those at risk and help treat people with progressing cardiovascular conditions.

In Asian medicine, it is well known and respected.



Anti-oxidant

Anti-inflammatory

Anti-bacterial

Anti-fungal

Potential of aiding the
treatment of:

Cancer

Dementia

Lyme

Arthritis

Diabetes

Cholestrol problems

MS

Those are some of the gifts of
this plant....

So hear my plea:

If discarded, please use this
plant – and hopefully all plants
that you dispose of – in the
highest possible way:

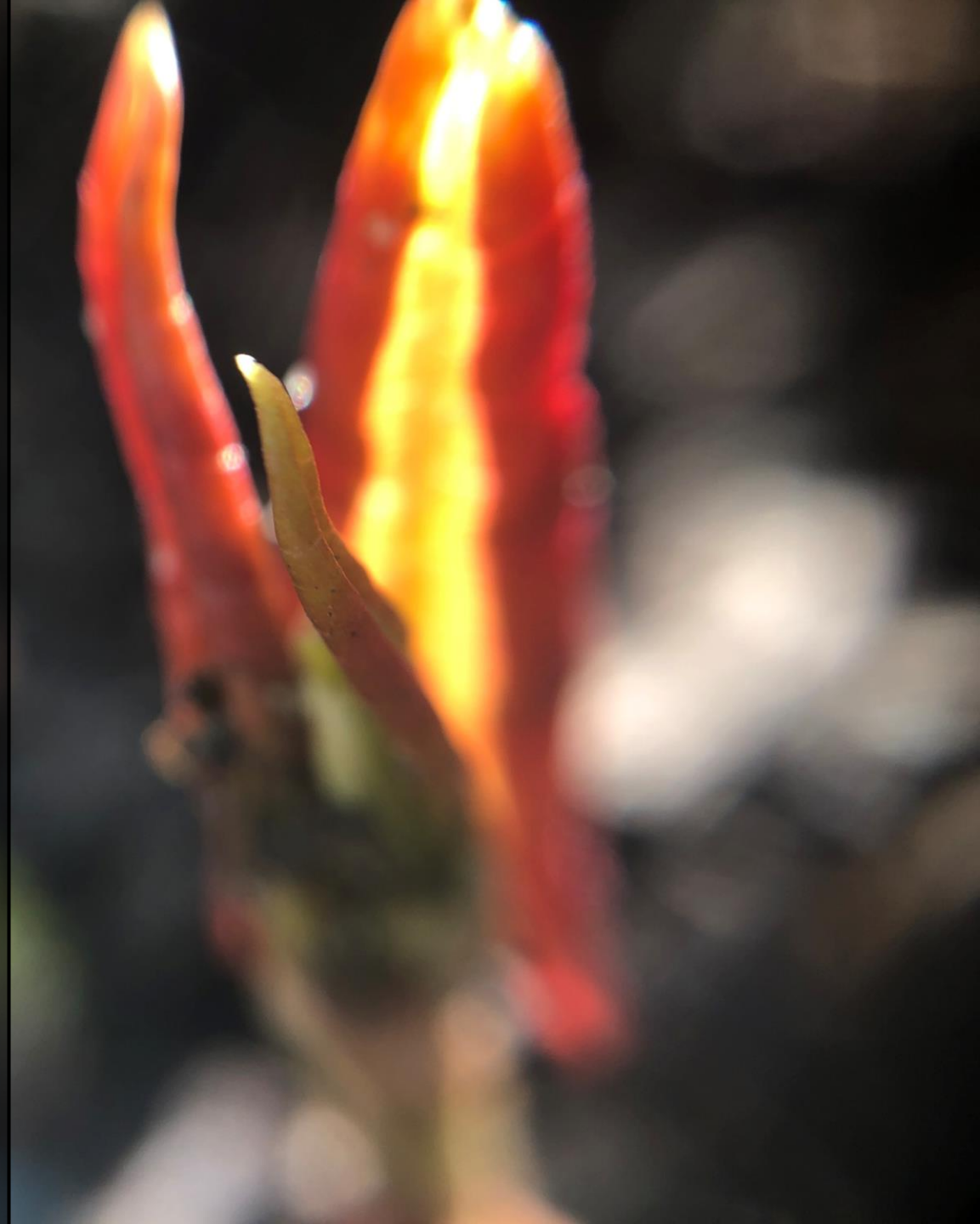
As a medicine.

As delicious food.

As fibre. As construction
material. As natural dye...

Start looking differently.

To finish from the knotweed
point of view:





I know that everything has it's place
and it's time
I know that sometimes I push to
hard and am to leafy for the
indigenous plants
And that sometimes you will feel the
need to get rid of me in order to
restore a balance.

But after this I hope that you at least
for one moment reconsider.
Does I really need to leave you
forever and everywhere?

And if you decide to remove me
While knowing all this

Can you please do so with respect,
and with gratitude for what I bring.
Instead of dispising me by what I
take...

Thank you!

For questions, info, and my workshops:

Anke Wijnja – The Nature Connection – <https://thenatureconnection.nl/>

