# EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

## THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF THE GIFT STRATEGY AT THE HEART OF LIVING SYSTEMS.

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**This call is dedicated to all the pioneers, philosophers, researchers, educators, practitioners, defenders, storytellers and lovers who, for decades, have devoted their time and energy in service of the living world.**
**To each of you - past, present, and yet to come- thank you.**

> This text does not unfold in a linear fashion. It is inspired by the narrative traditions of certain Amazonian tribes. It moves in circles, each time returning to the central themes, weaving new connections, opening horizons and deepening the message.

# Everything is Possible

The living world is power. A deep, timeless force that transcends time and space. An unlimited power that unfolds everywhere. From oceanic abysses to dark caves, from glaciers to the mountains of the tropics. Everywhere, the living world deploys itself in a ceaseless dance of births, transformations, and deaths. Each death enriching its environment and making it more complex. The living world relentlessly strives towards abundance.

It matters not if the stars rise and fall or if millennia crumble, shifting from solitary rock to the soil of a deep forest... It matters not: time is unaware of itself.
A puddle left in the sun on a patch of tarmac will teem with life in just a few hours. Microscopic cogs in a vast system. Creatures too small for our eyes to see are capable of adapting to anything, including our worst insanities. New fungi and bacteria emerge near the turbines of nuclear accidents, or within oceans of plastic.

The living world is a limitless laboratory of trial and error, enabling each organism to adapt through constant interactions with its surroundings. Whether plant or animal, the living world always tends towards more complexity and diversity. This is the law. More diversity, more complexity, in perpetual adaptation towards ever greater abundance.
Nothing will halt the process of the living world.

> *New Zealand. Between Picton and Kaikōura, the miles pass by and the hills roll on. Here, the timber industry reigns strong. All the native forests have been burnt or uprooted and replaced by vast pine plantations which generate a better yield, mostly for export. Pine trees - which are not native to this region - have affected the soil. Uniformity has exhausted the abundance system which had been developing leaf by leaf over millennia. After the trunks have been harvested, the hills lie bare, covered in poor yellow grass, at the tail end of spring. Over hundreds and even thousands of hectares, the hills are ravaged. The remaining arable soil is washed down the slopes, while the springs often run dry. Monoculture, genetic pool impoverishment, control and management. Everything we simplify makes us weaker.*
>
> *Yes, the timber industry is strong—But not for long.*

What is time, after all? A notion used to tally History, so we might take ourselves seriously. A calendar that shifts according to who sits on the throne and what mood they're in. A social dictator, who neatly slices days and years. Another illusion: time flows differently for a satellite than it does on Earth, and engineers must constantly recalibrate this discrepancy to keep our computers on time.
But what do urgency or weekends mean to an ant larva in metamorphosis, heir to 150 million years of adaptation, with sisters spread across the globe? What is the passage of time to a seed that will sprout and eventually turn to blossom for two days after having waited fifty years for the right rainfall vibration? Or to a tree which sprouted long before the first humans even walked the land that surrounds it?
Birth, transformation, death and, above all, ever more possibilities.
But what kind of possibilities?

## The Heart of Matter

Thanks to the engine, to the primary energy of the sun transformed into matter. Pure magic. No need for parallel worlds or artificial intelligence to feel awe -the truly extraordinary lies here, in photosynthesis.

> *Imagine a rocky soil, plagued by temperature extremes. A few lichens cling to cracks and crevices. They cycle, they die, and the tiny hollows in the rock cradle an invaluable gift: the creation of matter from almost nothing tangible. Sunlight, air particles, a little water, and time: 97 to 98% of decomposing plant mass stems from photosynthesis.*
> *This is the world's only real added value: the creation of carbon matter and thus sugar, by specialised cells. Near-pure creation: magic wherever one looks.*
> *A decomposing plant body provides the right conditions for more demanding life forms to settle. Microscopic life forms, roots, broader leaves, all enriching the humus, cycle after cycle. Centuries later, the cup is full: the rocky cradle spills into a nearby crack. A cyclone passes by. Everything is washed away. Everything must begin again. But what does it matter? Time is unaware of itself, and the living world will never stop.*

Two things to note: Firstly, the engine of both life and the visible world is powered by water and the sugar energy from plants.
By extension, photosynthesis gives rise to soil-the very earth we walk on, the breathable atmosphere- every breath we take, every single food chain-everything that sustains us.
All our civilisations depend on it- and most of them collapsed because of deforestation. Our economies are also powered by photosynthesis-from computing to petroleum and of course, agriculture. Secondly, a bare or paved soil is time during which the living world weakens. Time without added value, simplified, decomplexified, death-bound.
And just a reminder: like it or not, we are a part of the living world.

## Interdependence

A seedling unfurling its leaves is the heir to millions of years of continuous transformation and interactions. It is the sum and the continuation of the living world's impermanence. Always in motion. Always changing. The soil between its roots is the cumulative result of every lichen, every sprout, every plant, bacterium and animal life cycle that came before it. We are constantly walking upon the greatest gift the living world gives to itself: the death and transformation of all the parts and all the life cycles that constitute it.

The living systems' fundamental laws are impermanence and the continual striving towards more diversity, complexity and abundance. And the truest form of abundance is found where we least expect it —far from the cliché of the survival of the fittest.

The living world has chosen the gift strategy. A near-absolute gift. For every organism, plant or animal, leaves its environment richer when it dies.

It is remarkable to notice that a species always prepares the conditions for those yet to come. By the end of a season or a century, its own descendants will no longer be suited to its environment due to the richness it left behind. They will move on, carrying tools and functions which are perfectly adapted to another place or soil.

Because the soil always expresses what it needs in order to move towards abundance. Every root trait, every plant function or tool has a role to play. There are no such things as weeds—only this wild drive towards ever more richness and variety.

> *Like nearly all trees, oaks were born in the tropics, before spreading everywhere.*

*Imagine the amount of energy, adaptation, genes and sugars stored in a single acorn and generated day after day through the seasons. A concentrate of possibilities.*
*And each autumn, thousands are cast into the unknown.*
*Between one and five million acorns may fall during an oak's lifetime, for only one to five mature trees to grow in its place. Madness.*
*And this is not waste — this is the living world's strategy, which biology explains as:*

***Life first.***
***Species second.***
***The individual last***

Most seeds will be nibbled, eaten, composted, or their shoots grazed the moment they emerge. So what? If life grows richer, if thousands of animals, insects and fungi thrive on this bed of acorns, if dozens of plant species add their potential to the humus. This network of interactions, robustness, randomness and dynamic resilience creates just the right conditions for a few acorns to thrive. Two centuries later, a descendant will stretch its branches. The mother tree's wood, leaves and roots, which are made of air, sunlight, and time, will have returned to the Earth almost entirely. And the Earth will be made richer for it.

Ever richer.
Unless we invent agriculture.

## Builders of the Dust to Come

We have built gigantic and magnificent civilisations, designed to last forever. The empires of China, Africa, the Middle East, the Inca, Greek or Roman peoples and the colonial empires. All of them were founded upon a single curse: you shall cultivate the land and the Earth shall grow poorer for it.

Beginning about 12,000 years ago, the desire to control yields has been continuously defying the fundamental laws of the living world and we have worn ourselves out in the process, by simplifying, by de-complexifying, through endless weeding, ploughing, burning and monoculture. In twelve millennia, we have lost 92% of soil fertility and created the world's greatest deserts. Two-thirds of the Earth's landmass is undergoing desertification and the rest is collapsing. The oceans are dying, suffocating beneath our waste, and growing emptier with every trawler or whaler that passes. Either dammed, polluted or diverted, fresh water cycles are exhausted, desperately searching for common sense.

You already know all of this. But we can do better than being chief destroyers. We can be co- creators of abundance. Today. We can change the world, transform our thinking, protect the ocean from ourselves, and plant a garden. And in time, perhaps even inspire our neighbours.

Today -just today- everything is possible.

*Let us take, at random, one of these empires carved for eternity and now returned to dust and ruins: the Roman Empire. Like all the others, it began small and fed off the lands around it. Fields that grew a little poorer each year, until they were left fallow—a pause during which the living world regained its rights, moving towards abundance, before the farmers and land clearers returned.*

*Then came more people, more needs, less space and less rest for the land. Animal and human manure was used. Slavery and poverty were justified through divine and political decrees. And when the land could no longer satisfy neither bellies nor ambition, colonies and conquests were justified by arrogance and a claim to superiority. In short, an Empire was built. At the height of the Roman Empire, Italian peasants could scarcely feed themselves and daily bread depended on the grain of the Nile and the Middle East.*

Control, simplify, deplete, then colonise. Always the same refrain. No empire, no society, can foster anything but fear of scarcity and greed, violence and destruction, if it does not respect the fundamental laws of the living world.

Let us go further. A society that is truly beneficial to those within it can only be built upon the unshakeable foundation of the living world's fundamental laws. And from there, everything is possible.

## Raw Material

So then, photosynthesis — the only true added value in the world, the primary engine of abundance?

Take a log, for example. Between 97 and 98% of its dry mass is produced from just a little water, sunlight, and the air's components. Matter created from almost nothing tangible. 98% of pure magic. Play around with these figures and attempt complex calculations: try to imagine the total weight of all living organisms on Earth, oceans included. 82% of that mass is solely made up of greenery.
Over eight tenths of the living world's weight consists of plants...
Humans, by contrast, make up 0.01% of the total mass.

The gift system begins right from the start, long before our eyes can even perceive abundance. Lichen on a bed of rock, or clinging to the tiniest crack in an old wall. The conditions are harsh. And the harsher the conditions, the more complete the gift.
Lichen is the union of a fungus and an alga, two distinct organisms that joined forces in order to create something greater, more complex, and more resilient. We've only identified 18,800 species of lichen (out of an estimated 250,000) – a testament to creative madness and the dissolution of boundaries.

## Disturbance

*Creaks and cracks throughout the day, from the treetops to the forest floor.*
*Birds, monkeys, insects, herbivores of all sizes — all feeding themselves and living through chewing, snapping, cutting grasses, branches, and leaves. A constant and targeted disturbance of their surroundings, according to their needs. Pruning, cutting, or digesting greenery, along with weather related disturbances, is the living world's strategy to generate ever more abundance.*
*Organic matter returns to the ground to form humus. The remaining plants gain better access to light. A simple and direct message travels through the pruned plant and to its neighbours via its roots: "Gotta grow!". Photosynthesis kicks off again with renewed vigour, making the plant more resilient to insects and disease.*
*Disturbance always leads to more green, more added value.*

The larger the animal, the more its disturbance amplifies photosynthesis, the more richness it generates. A herd composed of thousands of bison or gazelle, or a dozen diplodocus, need more than a few lettuce leaves for dinner.

Their interactions and the disturbance they cause in their environment throughout their lives, followed by the decomposition of their bodies after death, leads to ever more abundance.
It cannot be said often enough: every plant or animal organism leaves its environment richer when it dies. Another reminder: we are amongst the large animals. We need rich and complex systems in order to feed ourselves. To live. With or without supermarkets.

Animal disturbance is essential. But here's the thing, agriculture isn't our greatest flaw. Long before we invented the plough, armed only with flint tools and campfires, we had already altered rainfall cycles through slash-and-burn practices and wiped out many of the giant mammals with whom we once shared the land.

Megafauna, with its six-metre-tall sloths, kangaroos three times the size of those we know today, sabre-toothed tigers and multi-tonne herbivores, were so profoundly impacted by our ancestors that they simply failed to survive; bearing in mind the human population at the time equalled about half the population of London today.

Furthermore, it is estimated that human activity has destroyed 85% of animal biomass, along with all its associated disturbances... And just like that, another lever of abundance is lost!

Of the animal biomass that still remains on Earth, the vast majority of mammals live in overgrazed pastures controlled by humans, or in feedlots and thus entirely cut off from any positive reciprocal relationships. Whenever we observe one of these "ungrounded" animals, restricted and incapable of generating richness in their environment through their interactions, we consistently see one thing: a huge amount of suffering — not to mention the pollution this generates.

## The Pyramid is a Circle

The trophic cascade is another lever of abundance.
Imagine keystone species in the living world's architecture — wolves, whales, lions, beavers, otters, to name just a few. Species whose presence regulates others and enables the creation of ecological niches as well as immense biodiversity. It may feel unusual to think of it this way, but a lion depends on the vitality of the grasslands grazed by gazelles. Every "predator" ultimately relies on photosynthesis and through the dynamic balance its presence imposes, it is also its guardian. There is no pyramid — only circles of reciprocity woven from complex interactions.

Kill the apex predators (such as wolves), or the regulators (for their fur, for example) and an entire system collapses. In order to understand this logic, we must let go of this habit of imposing value pyramids onto everything we observe. It's too easy to go from seeing the "predator" comfortably settled at the top of the food chain, to the human species, self-proclaimed at the peak of evolution.

A scale of value justifies a scale of power and the violence that comes with it. A structural violence that is found everywhere: in language, in the concept of ownership, in the history and formation of societies, in slavery and the extraction of "resources", in gender, education, and skin colour. We cannot escape these structures without transforming the fundamentals — that is, how we drink, eat, sleep under shelter and interact, while leaving our environment richer and more diverse than before.

The good news is that balance can still be restored at the edge of the precipice. The bad news is we'll need to evolve - just a little bit.

Let's start with the garden.

## A Jungle of Abundance

> *A heatwave summer somewhere in France. This vegetable garden began two winters ago on a plot of land composed of rubble, clay and couch grass. Through syntropic gardening – that is, with more complexity, more photosynthesis, more disturbance, and by considering the plants' needs for shade and sunlight – the magic took hold. In just a few months, the plot became a several metre high jungle, which required very little watering and ended up generating an incredible harvest. The soil has been transformed, it is teeming with life. Every action always generates more. It feels good to be here. Beauty is always present in a place of abundance.*

Three years on and we are still following syntropic principles. The fruit trees and soft fruit shrubs have been self-sufficient in biomass since the very first spring. Just one watering session in each of the first two summers. Everything is green, buzzing, and lush. The trees have grown twice as fast as they would have in a simplified system.

A happy market gardener (a very happy one) might achieve 8% of organic matter in their soil. This black matter stores nutrients, water and carbon. The average soil in France contains less than 2%. To increase that from 2% to 8% would require 44 lorryloads of compost per hectare – which means heavy machinery, petrol and the depletion of another ecosystem. Green "waste" is a treasure, but imagine if we wanted to regenerate all the farmland in the country; even all the cities combined wouldn't be capable of producing enough. Especially if each growing season continues to impoverish the soil…

> *In three years of syntropic practice after planting in the future orchard, not a single wheelbarrow of manure or straw was brought in. Instead, a dense photosynthesis, plants at every stratum and disturbance. And nine percentage points of organic matter gained in three years. We are animals of the abundance system: the declared aim is to raise this "black gold" content to 25%.*

No pyramid of violence here. Only cycles of interdependence and positive feedback loops, along with the disturbances which are inherent to life's cycles.

## Everything is Connected…

Take an organism, a system, or a climate zone. Each one is made up of parts of other organisms and systems. Observe a body, a cell, a tree, or a forest. Map out all the tributaries of a river, or explore the entire marine ecosystem surrounding a jellyfish or a shark. These are all organism-systems in constant interaction and transformation. Each is composed of countless other organisms, which themselves are components of larger living systems.

Between the DNA combinations inside a hen's womb and the laying of an egg, between the development of the embryo, the chick, and the ageing cockerel eaten by a fox a few years later—its food, shape, size, learning and interactions all evolve continuously. The same applies to your own body, to an oak tree, to a species over millions of years, or to the composition and currents of an entire ocean.

What is an organism or a system? A multidimensional, fractal puzzle, both composed of and component of, evolving across time and space. As simple as that.

You'd have to be mad, or an economist, to imagine a species or an individual as separate from the billions of interactions they are woven from, or from all those they come from. To believe they are independent, fixed, or nearly immortal.

Composed of, component of and connected to all living systems for billions of years, each species and organism use their tools (their morphological characteristics) to fulfil their functions (their roles and impacts within the living web), continuously striving towards more abundance. In order to remain healthy and dynamic, an individual, system, or cell constantly enriches its environment and in doing so, places itself in service of the living world.

An organism is always interdependent on the health of those that compose it, and on the larger organisms of which it is a component.

For us, as human systems and organisms, this opens up a deep and intimate relationship with the rest of the living world. A resonance we must learn again.

## …Obviously.

The law of the fittest is a human invention, used to justify barbarity, but it is neither "natural" nor logical from a biological or systems-thinking perspective. The interdependence of every organism within the vast weave of the living systems allows none to dominate the others or to opt out of the movement towards abundance and diversity. Each has its roles, its functions, its place.

The survival of the greatest predators and that of their descendants, depends on a subtle, dynamic equilibrium, unconsciously shaped through co-evolution with their environment. Apex predators, like the sea monsters of the Late Cretaceous or the great herds of wild reindeer, are interdependent with photosynthesis. Ignoring the laws of the living world is to enter a cycle of destruction and depletion. To consider oneself superior is to weaken oneself.

The gift is the hidden key in plain sight — the key at the heart of all living systems.

We must, and we can, leave gardens, forests, and steppes richer, more vibrant, and more complex at the end of each season and after every harvest. We now have the knowledge and tools to create so much abundance that we can fully embrace this gift logic while still abundantly meeting our own needs. And in the very short term, we have no other choice.

> *The soil is almost non-existent. Just a few tufts of dry grass and dust, scorched by the sun and from where rain evaporates as fast as it falls. But all that is about to change. The livestock are moved in herds each day from one spot to another, just like predators used to force them to group together for protection. They graze and thus disturb the prairie, leaving behind a mulch mixed with urine and dung that fertilises the soil. A few years later, thanks to targeted animal disturbance, the savannah is green with tall grasses; trees and shrubs have grown, and streams that were once dry now flow all year round. The work of one man's life — Holistic Management — has restored abundance to over 37 million hectares across five continents and in semi-arid zones. Once again, everything is possible, provided we are willing to shift our perspective.*

Wild herds — and Holistic Management — leave the land more fertile, more alive and more resilient. In order to "fight climate change", some countries have decided to tax cow flatulence. Yet when placed within a system of positive, interactive disturbance, those same cows help store large amounts of carbon in the soil. Feedlots in the United States sit beside near-deserts. The solution stands right beside the problem. Ireland is even planning to cull tens of thousands of cows. The animals are not the problem — it's the way we raise them that is wrong.

The same logic applies in the oceans. The largest living beings play a vital role in regulating the climate on a scale that geoengineering cannot even begin to imagine. It's rather counterproductive to kill whales and 80 million sharks a year… if we wish to slow down climate disruption.

Is it really necessary to destroy the power of life's equilibrium out of stupidity and greed? Our needs are not so vast.

## In the Movement of the World

It's not simply about producing for humans. Producing? The one who "produces" can claim ownership over what has been produced. Yet it is the seed that grows into a tree or a plant, the ewe that carries the lamb.

Our vocabulary allows us to override the deep intelligence of the living world — to imagine ourselves as wise managers and rightful owners. While we may influence the conditions that yield certain results, we are by no means creator gods. In all that we believe to "produce", the wild weave of the living world leaves its mark everywhere — from ever-present bacteria to the microorganisms that allow soil to exist and to nourish; from the legacy of millions of years of interaction that have shaped the grain and roughness of a tree's bark, to the subtle dance of pollination by wind and insects. Nothing comes out of a magic hat. We are constantly indebted to biological systems. Our very lives depend on them.

We will never be creators and therefore never be "producers". However, we can do everything in our power to allow the dynamic web and its myriad interactions to unfold towards a given intention. While simultaneously being incapable of understanding or controlling everything. And that's a good thing. A little humility never hurt anyone. It is about shifting from a destructive, dependent relationship to one of reciprocity.

Thus, we cannot rely on the Earth solely for human needs. We can temper our deadly greed and still welcome greater harvests, from less land, while leaving the environment richer and more diverse with each passing season, all the while tending as much to human relationships as to local food resilience.

How can we possibly claim to produce, manage, control, or protect systems and dynamics of unspeakable complexity? They have both made us and shaped us as biological beings. To claim to be the intelligent managers of this planet is arrogant, misplaced — and completely false. We must make space for the wild, for our humility and above all, we must accept it. To accept its presence within us, around us and grant it far more room in our ways of thinking.

Millennia of trial and error have developed tools of astonishing sophistication for every living organism. These countless technologies — beaks and roots, chemical balance, gliding flight and branching patterns, specialised cells, sight, hearing, touch, smell, the mathematical precision in the arrangement of buds on a tree — these extraordinary marvels are in constant adaptation. Each has its function in the unfathomable web of relationships between living beings. Each has its role to play.

The diversity of wild life ensures our own food security, our own health. It constantly sustains our capacity for resilience as biological organisms and it guarantees the long-term survival of our species. We must let it move and unfold, without acting as if we are superior. We must give it space to heal the world we have broken.

The living world is powerful and strives towards abundance. We are a part of the living world. We can start to listen again. We can become apprentices once more.

## A Dynamic Balance

And, logically enough, no organism has any interest in sabotaging itself. None will suffer from pests if it is healthy.

Within living systems, being healthy means that a given organism is using its tools to fulfil its functions, in a continuous movement towards abundance. The energy generated by photosynthesis is precious. If a plant or system stops contributing to that movement, its energy is recycled and reallocated. No pretence, no excuses, no escape. If a plant is in the right place, at the right time, in a context where its interactions benefit the whole, it will not be harmed.

Since all the elements depend on each other, there can be no such thing as "pests". Destructive species or diseases are signals that systems are damaged or in the process of rebalancing themselves. These "pests" are not the problem — they are teachers, indicators. While some systems can recover balance relatively quickly, it can sometimes take millennia after a collision between ecosystems or a mass extinction event.

Because everything depends on the whole, the notions of “nature” and “resources” become meaningless. These words can be cast out of our bodies and daily lives — concerns for the weekend, perhaps. The living world is constantly imposing itself. It is non-negotiable. It also implies that there are no “resources” to be “exploited”, for if we are intrinsically part of the living world, how can we possibly rip out parts of ourselves or the vitality of that which we are bound to?

## Living

As a sentient being, each of my cells and every part of my body is the unique sum of the totality of the living world’s interactions since the beginning of the world. The atoms that make me are as old as the universe itself. Like all other beings, I am a child of the alliance between life’s two great powers: water and photosynthesis. They nourish me day after day, offering air to my lungs, shade in summer, warmth in winter, water every day of the year.

Everything that defines me — through language, culture and the identity shaped by History — flows from the primal force of photosynthesis; it all stems from it. How could I not make each step on this Earth a conscious one, in harmony with her and the billions of living beings that make her up?

As the Indian proverb says: It is the way we walk on the earth that makes the earth sacred.

If giving is the first movement of this world, then gratitude is the second. A wild gratitude, a “thank you for everything” which remains the first intention of each day.
Thank you.

Gratitude is love’s younger sister. We can sow, prune, become aware and in turn, leave the world richer and more alive than the day the Earth first carried us.
Thank you.

The garden is a space of sowing and harvesting, of planning and playing. It is a space of possibilities and unknown — a space of gratitude. A joyful temple, impermanent, interdependent and composed - partly of the gardener. The garden, but also the wild living world that makes us who we are and of which we are just a tiny cog. Greed and destruction need not frighten us. They must be slowed down, certainly, but they are destined for self-destruction and meaninglessness.

When they become the norm of a civilisation, it begins to fade. History repeats itself once again. They have no place in a world shaped by giving. No one can thank their mother for the life she gave them, while holding greed in their heart and weapons in their hands.

## Everything That Simplifies Makes Us Weaker

We believe in control and management. However, they systematically lead us to simplification and into a dead end of chemicals, pollution, organised waste and depletion. These beliefs lead us towards the diversion of all water cycles. They lead us to create and even defend soul-destroying jobs, endless suffering along all production chains, as well as institutional violence. They bind us to food that is bland and so poor in nutrients and antioxidants that our overfed societies suffer from malnutrition. Our diet should be our first form of medicine — not one of the leading causes of illness and death. It may well be that how we grow our food is our greatest remedy.

The list of questions becomes inevitable: Why poison ourselves?
How can we speak of a nation's sovereignty if there is no food sovereignty? Call ourselves a democracy if we are not able to feed our own people? In that case, who truly holds the reins of power — the state, or the agri-food, pharmaceutical and financial industries?
Can we truly feel safe if our very survival remains in the hands of the agribusiness? And above all: what can we do?

## The Power of being Just

Why not simply reclaim the knowledge around how to live and grow food? Roll up our sleeves. Learn and keep learning. And return to the garden. This isn't some vague utopia — history has shown that individuals can produce up to half of a nation's food supply. During the Second World War, in both England and the United States, tens of thousands of private gardens helped sustain the war effort and feed families. It's about rising from that slumped-in-despair-on-the-sofa state and taking charge of our lives once more. Becoming active again — but this time without the urge to dominate.

It's about finding, as human beings, a rightful and beneficial place that tends towards abundance and the living world.

Because a garden is a political act in the most noble sense of the word: it is about caring for the community of the living — plants, animals, and humans alike. It is about reclaiming power over certain fundamentals: feeding ourselves, healing, caring. If we understand the logic of the living world and that of abundance — and apply it — something deeper quietly begins to emerge. To receive is to learn how to give. It's about being less afraid of the unknown and of change.

Generosity and the act of welcoming are part of the garden. The living world does not exclude — it includes, it diversifies, it accepts. Abundance teaches us how to give, but also how to receive.

In the coming decades, fire and water — in excess or in scarcity — will reshape global human movements. Will we be welcoming climate refugees, or will we become them? The unknown opens the door to possibilities, but we might as well head into that uncertain future with pockets full of seeds and knowledge, along with resilient, abundant gardens on every street corner. Today -just today- everything is possible.

## The Frankenstein Syndrome

We hold the rules of the game within our hands. And they are simple to state.
A near-absolute gift, a continuous movement towards abundance and a level of interconnectedness so deep that it becomes impossible to tell where one system or organism ends and another begins. And of course, we must leave the environment richer after each cycle — in the garden, but also in business, in our relationships and in every one of our actions. An entire system to rethink, with so many possibilities to imagine.

We can pretend not to understand, refuse this clarity, and continue mutilating living systems — and in doing so, destroy humanity's own chances of survival.
Refusing to play by the rules of the game, despite knowing them, becomes a serious pathology. A self-destructive one. A monstrous Frankenstein syndrome, which could be defined as follows:

> Any industrial, extractive, artificial farming or livestock activity that fails to respect the fundamental laws of the living world. Any activity that does not take as its foundation the gift strategy - like thoseplants that depend on systems of abundance, yet which are forced to grow in depleted soils, or monoculture tree plantations, established after clear-cutting rich and diverse forests, or the raising of animals in ways that prevent beneficial disturbance cycles and the formation of social balance, or genetic impoverishment and manipulation. But also, any production that depletes the soil, weakens interactions between living beings, pollutes, or generates waste.

## The Ocean at the Beginning and at the Centre of the World

We live on a planet that is mostly made up of seas, with only 30% of its surface above water. Our most distant ancestors emerged from saltwater millions of years ago, and the delicate balance within our own bodies still bears its imprint. The land lives and thrives thanks to the quiet, unspoken blessing of these vast, living, inhabited bodies of water.

There is no garden, no possibility, without a deep respect for the balance of the abysses and the underwater valleys. There is no complex, diverse life on land without the infinite interactions between species beneath the forest of waves. Even those living far from the coast are connected to it. The cycles of streams and underground springs, the slow breath of trees that calls in the rain and the journey of rivers. And the water that flows through us: everything is precious.

This water that carries us towards birth, that makes us and sustains us day by day — this water comes from the beginning of the world. It has slept in glaciers, hollowed out caves drop by drop, passed through all our ancestors and an unfathomable number of lives. This water has made every storm and every morning's dew — 100,000 years ago, ten centuries ago, today and tomorrow — it endlessly spreads life.

The ocean is vast, but it cannot absorb everything. Pollution, contempt, waste and chemicals are not acceptable responses to the gift of life.

Gratitude is not a box to tick. Gratitude is a deep force. Recognition is the seed of love. Gratitude, recognition and love are the only adequate responses to life. We are constantly receiving and we can also give.

# We are Family

Scientific research tells us that all life on Earth — in every form — descends from a single original life form: L.U.C.A., the Last Universal Common Ancestor. Thus, we share at least 30% of our genes with the entire living world. From beetroot to polar bears, from plankton to tomatoes, biology has made us cousins down to the deepest layers of our DNA. It inscribes this profound interdependence within our very flesh. We are all relatives, all connected in a gigantic, impermanent, composite meta- super-organism, that is constantly striving for abundance.

We are sailing into the unknown, but the unknown opens up space and possibilities. We must reinvent and reshape everything, while respecting the laws biology has laid before us. The path that leads to love is not so complicated. It runs through recognition, creativity and joy. Far beyond the next seven generations, we must begin to act and think today, for the next 3,000 years.

The living world is power.
We are a part of this living world and everything is possible.

Back Cover (Blurb)

**At the very heart of matter lies an extraordinary secret:**
**the absolute gift of the living world,**
**always moving towards greater abundance and diversity.**
**Today, we have all the keys we need to return to this state.**
**We are only missing one thing:**
**A total paradigm shift.**
**To understand the fundamental laws of the living world, to apply them and to transform the world for the next 3,000 years.**

**Today — just today — everything is possible.**

**The autor, Anaëlle Théry.** Field practitioner, instructor, author of children's books as well as *Welcome to Syntropy: A Garden of Abundance from Principles to Practice*,(Terre vivante)
She is passionate about education, resilient adaptation to climate change and by the search for how humans can find a just and beneficial place within living systems.

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