



Blooming victory!!

Plants that give a 'flower show' during the harsh days of Winter get my vote any day of the week! I have some dotted around my garden and they always bring a smile to my face. Some push their pretty, delicate faces through hard soil, but there is one particular beauty that gives a show worthy of RHS, Chelsea. (A magnificent U.K. annual display of all things horticultural with Royal patronage.)

The radiant Hellebores is more commonly known as the Winter, Christmas or Lenten Rose; curious, as it is not part of the rose family at all! Its pure white flowers in the depth of winter change to pink as the season progresses; a sign that nectar production is underway. This hardy evergreen perennial plant produces nectar laden petals.

What a picture of persistent pushing into a destiny far exceeding decorative appeal. Its ultimate destiny is not in displaying aesthetic beauty, but in bearing life-laden seeds in perpetuity! The longer the petals remain on the stem, although fading in beauty, the greater the quality of seed is produced ... perpetuity guaranteed.

'Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and Your dominion endures throughout all generations' (Psalms 145:15 AMP)

Winter blooms are a parable of sorts; here is mine. 'A certain genus of plant one summers day, was plunged into humus-infused soil in a patio pot. The diligent gardener tended this anticipated show-stopper! There it sat and gained strength evidenced by a dark-veined succulent, showy splendour of leaves; a fitting backdrop to magnificent white blooms. No effort was spared by the plant in order to produce the best blooms of its genus...no frost, no water logged pot, no frozen roots or snow laden days would hinder the journey upwards to a sure destiny marked out by its designer. Close communion of a certain kind!

My hellebores - WINTER MOONSHINE - blooms with majesty and victory, as well it might. It has discovered and realised its pure destiny; to delight the onlooker and grace the environment of a mere human being! Its decorative allure for me is twofold - winter cheer and its evergreen quality. It is always displaying something, its presence cannot be hidden at any time of the year; a real champion!

'... And this is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith' (1 John 5:4 NIV)

Although its toxic reputation, particularly encased in mythological stories, could prevent its inclusion in a garden, my parable alludes to the tenacity and beauty of this plant. Through extreme adversity its blushed blooms delight a sparse winter garden. Powers of resistance to external, unwelcome forces vindicates a beauty shown in courage and fortitude which withstands adversity. This plant blooms at the chilliest of times and thrives and flourishes wearing a glorious 'crown'.

Endurance, tribulation even suffering can give way to exuberant joy in ostentatious blooms..the bloom of spiritual communion...makes the face glow! The parable of my 'Winter Moonshine', reminds me to engage my potential and push on toward my true eternal destiny.

'The flower that blooms in adversity is the rarest and most beautiful of all.' (from *Mulan*, the Walt Disney movie) *In the bleak mid winter of your life, think of the champion hellebore blooms and remember - victory is entirely possible.*

'Where flowers bloom, so does hope (Lady Bird Johnson)

Isn't it thoughtful of God to give us flowers? The bloom of spiritual communion is a blooming victory!!

Affectionately,

Judith