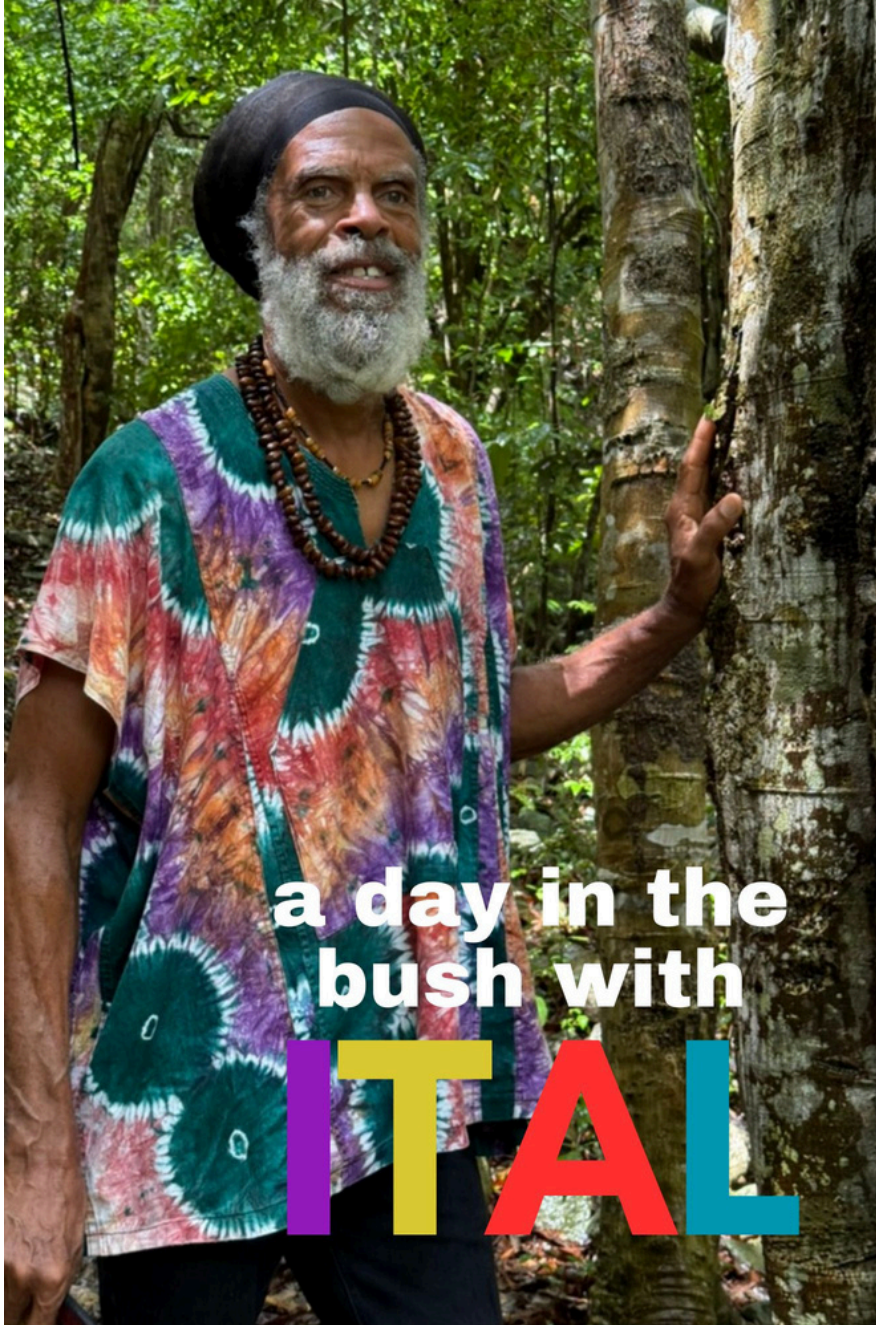


**Extract from *A Day
In The Bush With Ital***

The Sun's Embrace

The morning sun begins its slow ascent, casting a golden hue over the expanse of the bush. Each beam of sunlight dances upon the dew-kissed leaves, awakening the world with a gentle nudge. The air is crisp, carrying the earthy aroma of damp soil and the sweet aroma of frangipani. This island favorite is used for landscaping and its fragrant petals used as perfumes and oils.

ITAL pauses on a narrow, winding path; his senses attuned to the subtle symphony of the bush. The colors of the bush come alive under the sun's tender touch, revealing a kaleidoscope of greens, yellows, browns and black.

The path ahead is flanked by towering genip trees, their silver-grey bark shimmering in the sunlight. ITAL's ancestors used wood from the genip for furniture and its leaves and bark became traditional medicinal applications. Their leaves rustle softly, creating a soothing rhythm that accompanies ITAL's footsteps. As he walks, he marvels at the intricate patterns etched into their bark, each one telling a story of adaptation and survival.



A gentle warmth spreads across ITAL's skin with the presence of the rising sun. It is a comforting embrace, one that envelopes him in a tranquil consciousness of place. The light filters through the leaves, casting shadows that dance at his feet, inviting him to join their playful waltz.

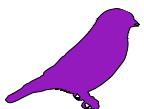
ITAL veers off the path drawn to the sound and finds himself at the old ruins he had discovered as a boy growing up on the island. He kneels down and reflects on his ancestors that walked these very same grounds before him, feeling the past and present become one.

Nearby, a family of deer graze lazily, their fur catching the sunlight in a soft golden glow. They move with a languid grace unperturbed by ITAL's presence. He watches as a baby deer peeks from behind a nearby tree eyes wide with curiosity, a testament to the innocence and wonder of St. John.

The sun climbs higher, its warmth intensifying. The morning chill now gone. ITAL, sheds his jacket, feels the sun's rays seep into his skin, rejuvenating him. The energy of the bush pulses around him, vibrant and alive, a living entity in its own right.

As ITAL continues his exploration, he encounters a field of aromatic bay trees. The sun catches on their delicate petals creating a dazzling display of light and color. Bees flit from flower to flower, their industrious hum adding to the bush's symphony.

Time stretches and bends under the sun's watchful eye, each moment a perfect harmony of light, sound, and sensation. ITAL feels a deep connection to the land, a sense of belonging that transcends words. The bush, with its sunlit beauty and vibrant life, is a sanctuary, a place where the soul can find solace and the heart can find peace. In this radiant embrace, ITAL feels truly alive, a part of something greater than himself. He revels in the reality that there is a greater power than the power of I.



Journal Prompt: Write about standing on the top of a hill and looked over the treetops. Write about how the colors and the smells make you feel. Was someone with you sharing the experience?

Ital Delroy Anthony is a Cultural Ambassador, artisan, teacher, and co-founder of the cultural band, the Echo People. In *A Day In The Bush With Ital*, he invites you to join him on a journey into the heart of the bush on his beloved St. John, where art, culture, and nature converge, and the spirits of the ancestors whisper secrets to those who listen. For anyone wishing to use Ital's celebration of his island home to record their experiences on St. John or explore their own path, journal prompts have been added at the end of each section.

A Day In The Bush With Ital is a project in the Friends of Virgin Islands National Park Artist-In-Residence program that aims to help Virgin Islanders explore and develop their creative talents. It connects people and community with their park, the island's natural resources, and their cultural heritage. More information can be found on the Friends website at www.friendsvinp.org.