



Why these chronicles?

Track down that place. Look into your own eyes and let your heart salute what it sees. Follow your heart in there. It will take you to a space of honesty and truth within you. For many, this is unfamiliar territory. Often dark and scary, and to be avoided at all costs. I sidestepped my own eyes for many years. But then, I looked, truly observed. And now ... there is no turning back!

I found that there are two ways to see yourself. You either look at your own outer reflection in a mirror, or you may scan your own inward self through your own eyes – piercing deep into your soul.

For as long as I can remember, I preferred the mirror. The perfectly groomed picture you parade to the world – a great escape! This is a comfortable place to be, so ardently busying yourself with insignificant bits of truth. Mastering the changing shape of your body over the years. Lightening the fine lines that take permanent residence on your face ever more persistently. Flashing a freshly bleached smile on an even-toned face. Dressed to kill and decorated like nobody ... all in pursuit of a new record number of likes for your latest Facebook profile pic ... Nice. LOL.

But is this a true reflection of the real you? Of your soul?

The only way to see the real you is through your own eyes – so aptly

referred to as the windows of your soul. But what if you looked inside and found nothing? Nothing but darkness and a void? Because if your soul hides away, her light is dimmed. In that case, there is nothing to see, not for you and especially not for anyone else. If there is nothing to see, there is nothing to confront. Nothing to uphold.

For many years, I left my soul in the dark – refusing to switch on the lights. I had no desire to look, no desire to know. Because once you look, you become real. Suddenly, the reflection in the mirror becomes a narrative ... presented in words and feelings; told in desires and needs, wishes and hopes. Then what? It is a whole lot easier to keep the lights dimmed. To rather live with a mild self-awareness that also limits what others can read from you. In this way, you remain safe. You remain hidden and you can continue to exist without too much distress.

That was until one day, when I switched on the lights. And they were piercingly bright!

Thus, there I was. Looking. That single moment ignited a conversation that is burning to this very day. At first, it told a story of sorrow. Of a barren being, desperately surviving on empty surfaces. Crying out for revival. I was confronted by a number of skeletons, signifying historic desires and needs that I must have agreed to kill off and bury over the years. I had to face my own cruelty towards myself. Miserably failed to address and nourish any of my needs. Instead, I allowed misery and a subtle sadness to take residence within – to become my silent companions. Pain, disappointments, hurt, feelings of betrayal, sadness ...

This is what happened to me during the almost 24 year journey of married life. This is the context. The story my eyes told whilst I chose to linger and listen, was one of utter disbelief. A disbelief in my worthiness of needing and wanting more. This is a story of a young girl, and later a woman, who disciplined herself so harshly to be completely satisfied with the messy morsels others had to offer. It is a story of self-denial, where wholehearted joys of creating splendid and glorious memories and exceeding wonderful moments were afforded minimum weight. Instead, she believed she simply had to ‘make the best of it’ and be ‘satisfied because the

grass is never greener on the other side'. In such instances, you 'never ever quit'.

These were all lies. The grass can be green anywhere. Sometimes, you try your damndest to make the best of matters, but what if that is simply not enough? Why must people just be satisfied anyway? Why can you not be ecstatic and genuinely happy? Besides, sometimes it is imperative to know when to quit or to give up, especially if your life depends on it and if 'holding on' continues to threaten your very existence. You have to 'read the signs' and 'remain in tune' with your inner and outer world in sync.

This chronicle of personal stories, poems and prose is a collection of lamentations I wrote to reconnect after experiencing a highly controlled emotional breakdown. This was after I realised how desperately unhappy I had been for many years – being married to a man who ultimately destroyed my soul. He had no intention of destruction, but his own insecurity and failures in life over the years caused tremendous pain, which escalated and multiplied over the years. And, as I became stronger as a woman, he became more aggressive. As I grew older and more confident, he became more insecure and emotionally as well as verbally abusive toward me.

Make no mistake! It is an act of sheer bravery to invite you to enter into the 'en suite' of my heart and allow you access to my soul – being vulnerable is still an experience that I need to get used to. I am the psychologist, remember ... I do not usually do the sharing. I am supposed to have it all figured out.

But maybe, just maybe, some of your own emotions and realities are reflected in what I wrote. Words whispering softly (and sometimes shouting out loud!) that you are not alone. That you too will see this through.

I hope that these lamentations will nourish your soul and perhaps move you away from your mirror, towards an awakening of your own inner truth. To that space where you will discover yourself as your own best friend.

May you look freely into your own soul and fall completely in love with what you see because you know that you may own your own life.

Someone asked me what these writings have meant to me.

It was like this: The moment I decided that I had reached the end of what I was willing to endure and the decision was made to put an end to it I entered into a room where I saw all the bleeding skeletons of my own life. Words were ripped from these skeletons and as they found a place in a poem, the words turned into raindrops, which returned to my bones, nourishing and reviving them again ... back into life. In this sense, these writings have breathed life back into me and the pain was treated with the best medicine ever – words.

I gladly share these words with you. May they serve as medicine for you as well. If you have no need for medicine, read them anyway. Perhaps you will understand what a friend may be going through or how another woman might feel who is suffering the pain of divorce. Maybe some of these writings will simply bless your heart and serve as a beautiful fragrance to enhance your day.



A prayer

Lord, my heart cries out to You
Holy Father, what am I to do?
inside of me, a void and an empty space
dead ...

if it was not for Your grace

It is Your love, Lord, that I seek
though I am weary and weak
invigorating fountains calling my name
and for that Lord, I am not to blame

I gave each breath, I offered my entire life
too many tears have fallen, too much envy, too much strife
and with this tone, it has to end
for he is neither my lover, nor my friend

On board the ship, it sails away
at Your mercy throne I wait, each and every day
my breath on hold, eyes turned toward the sky
on Your wings, my Lord, I will fly ... I will fly

So take me into Your loving arms
away from empty words and noisy charms
ignite my soul with Your divine plan
with You by my side, I can be revived

I know I can





Die vlinder weer gevind

Ek kon daardie aand nie ophou huil nie. My hart was seer en rou. Vir myself, maar ook vir soveel ander vroue wat die pyn van 'n stukkende huwelik of verhouding ken. Pyn wat jy nie veroorsaak het nie. 'n Wonderlike vrou soos jy wat alles ingeploeg het. Jou hart, siel, lyf, geld, tyd, ore en begrip. Maar steeds was dit nie genoeg nie. Jare lank het jy jouself belê in 'n verhouding wat jou uiteindelik verwoes het. Want jou pogings en die harde werk wat jy ingesit het, is met aggressie, jaloesie en onvergenoegdheid beloon. Niks wat jy kon sê of doen het dinge beter gemaak nie ...

So sit ek en my trane toe. My siel flenters. Hoe sou ek ooit weer 'n reënboog kon bou met die gryns ashoop om my? Hoe sou ek weer myself kon vind? Hoe sou die wonde wat die waarheid weerspieël het, weer genees?

Skielik sien ek 'n vlinder in my geestesoog. Is dit ek? Wat is die storie wat die vlinder my wil vertel?

Waar het alles dan begin? Die onskuldige vlinder wat saggies fladder, met hoop om hoër hoogtes te vind sonder om te veel seer te kry. Dit was tyd. Woorde het binne my gemoed opgeklank. Die beelde het lewe gekry ... en stukkie van my hart was meer en meer stukkend. Ek het dit neergeskryf.

Toe ek die stukke agterna lees, het die trane weer begin loop. Dit gaan 'n pynlike proses wees, het ek besef. Tog was dit iets wat eenvoudig moes gebeur. My eerste woorde op papier vertel die storie van 'n huwelik wat meestal onstuimig was. 'n Verhouding wat my ontsettend ongelukkig gemaak het. Hy het seker ook sy eie redes gehad, maar ek was gedurig onder die "roede" van woorde wat sny. Hy was meestal ongelukkig en daarom het hy gesukkel om stilye te vind. Dit was asof hy my met woorde wou vernietig, asof hy op 'n manier "krag" daaruit kon kry, of daardeur beter wou voel. Vir 'n oomblik. Ek was sy *fix* vir 'n beter gevoel. My trane het hom laat voel asof hy magtig was. Hy wou nie ophou voordat ek heeltemal in stukkie voor hom gebreek het nie.

Ons het te veel baklei. Daar was te veel harde woorde en te min sagte omgee. Natuurlik het ek gevra, gesmeek dat hy anders met my moet praat. Minder kwaad moet wees. Ek het honderde briewe geskryf. Maar dit het net aangehou en aangehou. Hy was soos 'n stoomroller, 'n leeu wat my vleis van my liggaam wou wegskeur. Soos 'n buffel wat my net wou vertrap tot ek heeltemal inmeakaarsak. Dit is hoe ek hom ervaar het. Hy mag nooit sê dat hy dit nie besef het nie. Ek het hom gewaarsku. Ek het vir hom vertel hoe hy my laat voel. Maar sy liefde was nie opreg nie. Hy het meer oor sy eie onsekerhede en ongelukkigheid omgeege as wat hy ooit sal bely. Ek was eenvoudig die slaansak en die een wat aanhoudend afgebreek is – in ons privaatheid natuurlik.

'Vlinder, spreid jou vlerke' is die gedig wat die waarheid oor my bykans 24-jaar lange huwelik vertel.



Vlinder, sprei jou vlerke

Die klanke van die blokfluit
 weerklink in die skadu's van die dag en in die stiltes van die nag
 die vlinder hoor die klanke en sprei haar vlerke
 die kleure 'n soete vermenging van helder en pastel

Van boom tot tak tot grashalpie, fladder haar pragtige onskuld en
 skoonheid met haar mee

sy is op soek na die ritmes van die liefde
 haar soeke lei haar – groot vlaktes wink haar nader
 sy begin te dans
 sweef na links, en dan na regs

Haar vlerke word tot stilstand geroep
 beloftes van 'n toekoms uitgestal,
 maar dit was bloot op 'n stoep

Voor sy haar kon kry, is sy koningin van 'n byekorf
 maar dit is die stem van slegs een by
 wat die geraas van 'n hele swerm maak
 sy verbeel haar sy is tuis. Die by haar metgesel
 terwyl hy die helder kleure van haar vlerke min

Die helder kleure verdof, die sagte pastel verdwyn
 haar vlerke word wit en swart, effe grys wat soms verskyn
 alles op die maat van die gezoem van die by

Maar hy min steeds haar vlerke en verbeel hom hy sien die kleur
 maar geleenthede wat haar vlerke laat blink, het hy telkemale verbeur

Die byekorf lyk mooi; sy het alles reg rangskik
en almal wat stihou kom hulle so saam-saam bewonder
op die oog af, iets heeltemal besonder
die vlinder en haar by, dog alles net 'n strik

Met sy angel bewapen hy homself, want sy vlinder word groot
hy sit eerder graag onder haar vlerk en kruip weg van al die nood
wanneer sy durf om haar vlerke te spreid, hou sy angel haar op haar plek
die vlinder moet die heuning ook maak, hy rus heerlijk onder haar vlerk

Jaar in en jaar uit; die vlinder 'n gevangene van haar eie hart
sy aanvaar haar dowwe grys vlerke
maar poeier dit graag wanneer die korf vol bewonderaars raak

Van orals, noord en suid, begroet die blokfluit haar weer
dit roep haar hart en sy wil ophou treur
maar sy is vas; haar by, die metgesel, hou haar op haar plek
die angel se byt is eers later in haar lewe 'n dodende realiteit

Tot sy daar lê, versmoor en in as
Haar drome 'n rookskerm van hoop
wat uiteindelik net ydel en leë beloftes was
gif pols in haar are
alles tevergeefs na al die jare

Die vlinder sterf.

Maar die by min steeds haar vlerke ...
haar nou deurskynende vlerke



'n Brief aan jou, my man

En só het ons aan die einde
van ons pad saam gekom
jy het lankal ophou liefhê
en ek het lankal ophou blom

Jou woorde het uiteindelik
my asem van my af weggesteel
en hier lê ek nou verlep
soos 'n pêrel, 'n verpoeierde juweel

Ek wou met jou lag
maar jy wou eerder raas
Ek wou met jou dans
maar jy was dans se baas
Ek wou met jou spring
maar jy wou eerder sit
Ek wou met jou praat
maar jy wou nooit luister nie – wat was die nut?

Ek wou so graag mooi woorde
gefluister in my ore hoor
maar jy was voortdurend op verdediging
jy het jou woorde binne jousef opgestoor

Een ding het jy wel
sonder huiwering van my begeer
my lyf, net seks
al het my oë getreur

Maar ek treur nie meer nie
my oë vind weer hul lag
die stukkie van my gebroke hart
word beter dag na dag

Jy het my nou verloor
ek was 'n goeie vrou
in alles en veel meer
was ek ten volle getrou

Jy kyk na my, ek kyk na jou
leë vlaktes van verwydering
ek verander die koers van my lewe en groet vir jou
ek sê nee vir verdere teistering

Dit lyk vir my of jy niks verstaan nie
jy hou maar net die fort
maar so baie pyn en soveel seer woorde
ek het net te veel trane gestort

En dit blyk of jy net niks verstaan nie
hoe is dit f*kken moontlik!

