

The Art of Throwing Rocks

By Henning J. Krüger

A composition of poetical philosophies as observed by a young man, and ruminated on through his talks with God, in his journey through early adulthood.

This collection aims to take some hurt out of this world, and by expressing it in rhyme, ultimately hopes to put some good back into it, through various different avenues.

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Contacting the Author

Website: www.Waldau.us

Email: Henning@waldau.us

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Some insights from the author into the composing of this book:

The Personal Aspect

I have a slightly irrational fear of one day forgetting all the simple and strange thoughts, feelings, and joys that I experience now as a young man, and instead of just keeping me from forgetting, I have decided to write them down and bind them together, so the old can remember, the young can anticipate, and both can enjoy them too.

The works in this book are by no means intended to be award-winning poems— they more-so serve a purpose to me as the author personally, as I just had to satisfy this itch of mine to release my work in some form for others to see. This book is not meant to be any claim to fame either, nor is it intended to become anything more than what it already is: a tangible archive of the fruits of my mind throughout this key part of my youth. I do have a personal goal though of publishing a new edition of this series every year, and as long as there is hurt in this world and enough words to turn them into rhyme, I will have enough material to accomplish it.

I mainly intend to use this first book as an opportunity to say thank you to everyone who has contributed to who and where I am today, no matter in how minute or sometimes even strange a way. Though I truly wish I could make a list of everyone who deserves a thank-you, and even send a book to each and every one—I do still need to leave some space for my actual poetry in this book, and also save some money to write the next one too.

I am also not a professional author, poet, philosopher, or anything else which this book might suggest, and as for what my future holds in writing I have not even considered yet, as I wouldn't want the prospects and possibilities of authoring obscuring my vision from the main focus of these poems, and likewise these books, which is to bless as I have been blessed— for now; just with thoughts, and eventually; with who knows what else. I am merely a young man who has had a tremendously interesting journey with God thus far, in the form of thousands of little conversations and events, which I hope to give a glimpse of to anyone who wishes to see, throughout this series of annual editions, and this leads us into the next part:

The Spiritual Aspect

Some of these poems have a very strong spiritual appeal to them, and this I only happened to notice once I started compiling them. In a similar way to how I could always feel the weight of my problems being removed from my shoulders in prayer, whenever I asked the Lord to take these worries over, poetry has become one of a few healthy escapes that have allowed me to rid my mind of the challenges of this world that press so hard on all our hearts, including mine.

I also realize that many people have no idea what it is like to have a relationship so close with Jesus that he becomes as an older brother to you, with his angels always around you like a group of best friends, making inside-jokes and having fun and playing silly games throughout your life, whilst trying to stay out of trouble until God as our Dad comes

back home, and perhaps even get a few chores done before then too—and so hopefully these poems can portray a little bit of this amazing journey that I have had with Him so far in this regard, too.

Now I have to absolutely, blatantly and abundantly disclaim that I am not wishing to teach anyone anything in relation to Christianity, as I am a very young believer myself, and I have seen that many times believers of any and every faith run right by each other or even bump into each other, due to some believers who might only have seen the light at the end of the tunnel from a distance, trying to explain to others who haven't even experienced that much at all, what the world looks like on the outside— which neither have ever truly even seen.

Just as unfortunately; we scare off non- believers who rightfully do what we all as humans do, and that is characterize a whole by the sum of its parts, meaning an entire faith gets stereotyped as, in the example that I aim to work at dismantling in this book: being boring, stressful, restricting, tormenting, or even depressing— whilst it is in all reality so incredibly exciting, reassuring, and fulfilling, that it honestly breaks my heart like few other things can, knowing that most people never choose to experience this life for themselves.

Nevertheless, no-one can claim innocence from merely falling to their natural tendencies of being human, and we all have a right to be young and make mistakes, whether in social circles or in spiritual matters, and we all, including me, have been young at some point, and made some rather regrettable choices while we were at it too.

The Business Aspect

While I did originally plan on establishing a non-profit organization through which I could publish this series, I am unfortunately not allowed, for visa-specific reasons, to go that route at this point in time. Instead, I have resorted to merely printing and gifting a few copies of this book, at my own expense, to everyone who has played a pivoting role in this journey of mine thus far, and publishing this free E-Book version for the convenience of anyone else who might find interest in my work as well.

I would also like to address the fact that a few poems in this book are written in my home language, Afrikaans, and they will naturally be of much more meaning to Afrikaans-speaking persons, yet I did decide not to translate them, because that would be quite the insult to this beautiful language, as I have seen in my travels abroad that there are a vast number of words and phrases which simply should not even be attempted to be translated from Afrikaans into English, as the written Afrikaans word might have an English cousin, yet the emotions behind it are of a whole other race.

Final Notes

I also want to thank you for taking the time to explore this collection, and I truly hope you'll find reason enough in this first book to anticipate the next edition in this poetical philosophy series, which ought to be due at the end of August, in 2023, Lord- willing of course.

More than that, bear in mind that with authoring, just as with anything else; a rocky start is at least a start, and that much is always the most difficult part, so per conclusion of all that I deemed necessary to say that didn't rhyme, I hope you enjoy that which does...

The Art of Throwing Rocks

Getting out of a Jar

So you want to live a full life?

Be remembered for all nine yards?

You want to do what a real man does,
not like those people,
stuck in those jars?

So then start off by doing some planning,
do it thoroughly and well-before.

First actions

then habits

then goals

then dreams,

you'll get them all done—

with time for more.

Second you fix your perspective,
on all that brings you joy—
connecting far-away dots,
so your mind is jolly-employed.

And if you don't feel like lying to yourself,
saying you're blessed and all-but-cursed,
at least then be honest
and admit to yourself,
that everything could always be worse.

Finally get a routine,
and dare to disturb it not,
fill it with all sorts of
productivities and desires,

then be so bloody thankful,
in 15 years time,
when your soul is at peace—
and your nights not as dire.

The Whispers in Your Ear

Oh the wonderful gamble
of comparison—
the bittersweet chance,
to win or lose,

and how it seems that we forfeit
all that we are,
at the mention of another,
who too can amuse,

and we know it's no good
and we wish it away,
yet seeping
and prying
and creeping back in,
it seems to be here to stay.

Unless you change your perspective,
because you deserve to be free,
know it's not what you look at
that matters—
it's what you choose to see:

without even comparing,
just accept your defeat—
they all flee from this place,
but it's a nice place to be,

because if you're not of notice
then you they won't call—
your relationships keep growing,
because what you don't drop,
won't fall.

No more lash-outs
or burn-outs
or deadlines to meet,

more time for yourself,
more quality sleep,

your very own schedule
your own routine,
your priorities come first
and there's no in-between.

No more breath in your neck,
or whispers in your ear,
no more "skin of your teeth,"
no more hate,
nor fear.

This is your life,
if you choose not to weigh,
your sources of blessings,
with theirs of decay,

for did Jesus debate,
or Einstein Publish,
or Mozart play
or Da Vinci write
or Ali fight—
against every common fool?

They worked and they challenged
to make a better world—
they saw their talents not as fixes,
but as gravely needed tools.

Invisible Doors, Invisible Enemies

Everybody is mad at something,
but no-one knows what.

They're throwing punches at the air,
kicking invisible doors shut.

They've been hurt and
they've got questions,
these pile up and breed frustrations,
they'd like to solve their problems,
but they'd rather just the symptoms,

they fight that invisible enemy
with their only weapon:

Escape.

Every Day is a Warzone

Every day is a warzone,
I can feel it in the air—
and I don't know what I'm fighting,

but I know that it's still there.

The Comforting Darkness

The light might hurt your eyes,
but it'll never harm your sight.

Only the comforting darkness does,
and it does so without a fight.

The Reasonable-Man Test

Have ye then not discovered,
the smallest of these joys?
And have ye then not realized,
all around you are the toys?

Have you not stopped to be thankful,
for what isn't there,
or for that which there is,
yet that you can still bear?

Just say thank you that the bad,
isn't even worse,
and that that which you don't believe in,
is not to you adverse.

Acknowledge your luck,
that you are what you are,
and admit that your faith,
is superior by far,

for I believe in a God,
who is and will do,

and you believe in a chance
so slim,

and yourself
so fortunate,

and your luck
so unfathomable—

that the reasonable man
would consider you favoured;

chosen by nothing,
created by less than that,
and maintained by an exponentially
increasing improbability.

Fortunately,
I am not reasonable,
I am religious—
and although you don't know it,
I'll bet you are too.

One Chord in Front of the Other

You can take it all back and
bring it all to an end,
all the dreams and philosophy,
all the jokes and pretend,

but before you leave me
and before I forget,
just answer me this question,
one I didn't dare to set:

what kind of a person
does not like Piano?

Does not draw near
or take rest in its sound?

Because I tell you my love,
it really saved me—
chord for chord
brought me back to my feet.

Yet to you I must admit
it seems to be causing pain.

So what then brings your joy?
To what do you,
dance in the rain?

Six Deadly Sins and a Compromise

Oh see your greed
in how you pray
for still more time with her
to spend,

see your pride
in how you think
that on you
she could depend,

oh see your sloth
in your accepting
that she's another man's
girl,

see your lust
in how you flee
when she dances
when she twirls,

and see your wrath in
how you ask the Lord,
why you aren't her
chosen drink,

see your gluttony
in how you can't omit her,
from your writings and
from your think.

Yet even the Good Lord envies,
when a commitment His bride has made,
yet does He turn away the whoring?
Or does He too come to their aid?

Dismissed Companions

Dear Operator,

where is it you have gone?

Just like the knocker on my window

I used to greet down on my lawn.

Oh Crossing-guard, oh Bell-man,

you too seem to be lost,

oh how we dismissed you,

and oh at what a cost!

Like the Vendors and Polishers,

Lamplighters and Milkmen,

like all the Conductors and Flower-girls,

when will

we see you again?

For I've gone out
into this world,
seeking my
companions of old,

yet I've found it being so empty,
so alone,
and so cold.

Nature is Having a Ball

Today I discovered
why animals don't speak,
they don't tell about their feelings,
so they never feel weak.

Today I discovered
why stars stay so far,
space is much simpler,
and close is bizarre.

Today I discovered
why trees stand so still,
making moves is risky,
it's the ultimate skill.

Today I discovered
why rocks don't have eyes,
lest they see an opportunity,
lest they go for the prize.

Yes today I discovered
why water does flow,
as it knows that settling,
could too be a woe.

And today I discovered
we're not the smartest at all—
Nature has got it all figured,
Nature is having a ball.

Because you never see fish cry
or the Sun stop shining,
the wind has no regrets
and the hills are never whining,

as they've given up on love,
it's taboo and it's no more—
but then again;
they're all going to ruins,
while Love gave us eternity,
to explore.

Changing the Definition of Beauty

What if black was white and
right was wrong and
up was down and
smiles were frowns—

would you then reconsider?

And if I were you and
you were me and
you told me and
I said no,

then I wouldn't want you to be bitter.

Though I still am crazy about you,
I admire you every day,
I've moved on for the better,
I will not force a stay.

Now I wrote this poem about you,
quite some time ago,
and I thought I'd like to share it,
as I'm sure you'd like to know:

what if someone changed
the definition of beauty,
in every dictionary ever implored?
Would that mean that all whom ever were,
suddenly are no more?

Well allow me a chance to answer,
as I know a girl who had,
she defied my idea of "beauty,"
and likewise that of "mad,"

see I can answer that question,
because that's just what she did,
when she ignored everything
I ever sought,

she danced right in with that
awkwardly-funny,
talking-thinking-running,
couldn't-care-less-what-you-thought,
slightly-on-edge
type of joke—

and I just couldn't believe that I laughed.

And I thank the Lord every day,
for lending me a lady,
this much out of the box,

and every day I pray for her,
for her ship is too
bouncing off the rocks.

Now I'll end my poem as it started;
with a vague and weird idea.

In hindsight I honestly must admit,
that pretty much sums up
our whole year.

With the Lord as her friend,
I know that one day greatness she will see,

because let's be
real honest
real humble
real quick here—

you've got to be extraordinary,
to say no to me.

Shortcut to Closure

Can I tell to you a secret?

Lay it down relatively true?

En-route to closure,

I truly was—

when I stopped hurting myself,

because of you.

An Eternal Dustbin

I am thoroughly convinced that
the secret to eternity and
the purpose of life
is vaguely connected to the fact that
Humans are the only animals that hide
away upon rejection,

but whenever I get out of this dustbin
I'll investigate further.

Liewe Satan

Ek weet nie mooi hoe om met jou
in kontak te kom nie,
jy antwoord ook nie die emails
wat ek stuur,
so ek skryf maar vir jou 'n gediggie,
want ek reken jy's ook
'n dier van kultuur;

ek het 'n hel se klomp vrae vir jou,
maar ek trek almal sommer
in één bymekaar:

het die meisies in die hemel ook
elke tweede ou gevry,

toe vlug jy ook maar van daar?

War Decides

Sitting in the only dry corner
of a freshly burned farmhouse,
the sun just about to set,
yet the skies already dark as far as
the eye can see,

with thick, tall, dark clouds,
thunder and lightning right above,
and rain pouring down like debris—
a last few birds that accompany me,
with nowhere else to flee.

My uniform warm and my body sore,
a little fire for my warm meal.
My rifle and Bible beside me,
with neither yet both to heal.

This the warzone
that many despise,
but I wish I could have seen.

For here you knew the enemy
by their clothes and their accents,
and the fight was tough but
it was a fair, simple and good fight,
You could rest at night and
at march and at base,
for there was a base
and there was a march
and a time to fight and a time to not,
and your body was done,
but your mind was at ease,
for the lightning and thunder
kept you humble,
and death was so close and so certain
that you made peace with it,

and you knew paradise,
was just a choice away.

For I would pick this war
over what we have today—
any day if I could.

But I can't.

So today I fight what we have:

a battlefield so peaceful,
so indecisive,
the enemy disguised
in the call of a friend.

Sunny skies,

fluent lies

blatant murder yet smiles abound,
birds held captive by their freedom,
surrounded by silence which
breeds arrogance,
death so far it has lost its respect,

and this fight is easy
because the people don't know,
it's so strategized, manipulative and fun
that your mind never rests,
as if a fight between the divine,

and there's no march or base or night,
and you know not when or how to fight,
and death is so uncertain and
paradise still so far away
and it's not your choice anymore.

My rifle and Bible to heal,
with neither yet both beside me.

I despise this peacetime,
for the sun has only just risen.

I want war.

For war concludes.

And war decides.

A Rainbow of Black

You've got Carbon-black,

Super-black,

Vanta-black alike,

Coal-black,

Red-black,

Midnight and Graphite,

Charleston-green,

Onyx—

Jet and Outer-space,

yet still you choose a rainbow,

and I alone,

see in that

disgrace.

Didn't Miss a Thing

This is going to be a silly poem,
it won't make any sense,
yet you'll still try and make it.

There's no structure,
purpose,
or rational thought,
it's childish and a waste of time,
but you just didn't want to believe that
when you were told.

Now you are sad and mad
and disappointed in everything.

This was actually a love poem—
and I didn't miss a thing.

Poor-Grade Idolaters

And they say;
they don't drink because they want to,
they drink to the occasion,
they can seize whenever they choose to—
yet they don't want to.

They say
they don't drink to get drunk,
they drink to enjoy it—
yet they love being drunk,

and they say
things that they never would,
and do things that they never should,
and they change their faces,
voices,
priorities and choices—

and the wine becomes their master,
and they its worshippers.

It leads them to repent of their old ways
and become completely new beings,
yet not uniform or oath-lain beings,
but whatever they want to be,
just for the night.

And the truth is
they don't like themselves
or their lives,
and they want to be changed.

But they are poor-grade idolaters—
for not even to the bottle,
do they pray every day.

Sin as an Art

All the pictures are hanging skew,
and it bothers not a soul,
because they've given up
on what they want,
and they trust not in a bigger goal,

so they either ignore it,
or they call it art—

like the former they do with their future,
and through the latter,
with their sins they part.

A Completely Different World

Now tell me of a time,
when young boys could still be naughty,
when girls were childish about them,
and these were as if,
from a completely different world.

And tell me of a time when sins,
were a clear and solid line away—
and robbers had manners
and gamblers were honest
and change was little but real—

as if from a completely different world.

Then also tell me of a time,
when soldiers fought with regret—
drunkards turned sober,
cursers had tact,
and beggars wanted jobs—

as if they knew the ways of a
completely different world,

so please tell me of a time,
anytime,
a pastime,
whether nighttime or daytime,
just some time,
like a playtime
not a wartime
or a long time,
but a short time—
like Springtime—
yes a peacetime.

For I fear that we have created a paradigm
nothing like that gone-time of mine,
but a dark-time—

taking us into a,
completely—
different
world.

His Excellency

Mister Chairperson,
Through the chair,
By the people and of the people,
The right honourable
President for life,
Doctor,
Lord of all the beasts of the earth
And fishes of the sea,
Conqueror of the empires,
Official uncrowned king,
Dear supreme leader,
Guide of the revolution,
Father of development
And saviour from perdition—

What voices is it that you hear,
and what is it that they say?

What beings do you see,
and how is it they behave?

For since you are complete,
I fear that I am not,
for silence here surrounds me
and faces I see naught.

Now forgive me oh Sir,
but this I must know:
have they ever informed you,
where past death you will go?

A Faith Good Enough for the Best

Tell me how do you wake in the mornings,
and make your way to the streets?
How do you saddle your horse,
or even pick between meats?

For I hear by your speaking
that Sir you cannot see,
and furthermore I wonder,
how did you come to be?

“Was the holy Lamb of God
On England’s pleasant pastures seen?”
And what then troubled the author,
of God Save the Queen?

And forgot ye that
“Conquer we must,
When our cause is just,
And this be our motto:
In God is our trust?”

Or even:
“Op U almag was vertrouend
Het ons vadere gebou,”

“In Godes vrees te leven
Heb ick altyt betracht,”

or did you then not know?

That this faith which you so
easily dismiss—
was the cornerstone of nations,
which today still exist?

Dreaming Inside the Lines

Tell me all you've ever seen
and tell me not where you have not been,
but tell to me all that you've ever dreamed,
and tell me for sacrifices
what you have deemed,

for this life is too short to just sit around,
and this life's way too long
to do so with a frown.

So I'm battling my tears
with jokes and with fun,
I'd like to get settled,
yet I'm ready to run,

I'm looking for a friend
like the love of my life,
but I'm wasting my time
and I'm hoarding up strife,

as I only see half
and dream the rest in,
then I'm stuck with a tail and
a want-to-need to sin.

Yet I'm holding my breath and
going back to square one—

I'm not living too fast—
I'm just having my fun.

One Page at a Time

Another day without my Bible,
another page unread,
another chance to meet the Lord,
wasted off and shed.

Another morning tired and lazy,
another evening awake in bed,
restless and empty,
fruitless and misled,

so give me back my routine,
my schedule and planning for this strife,
and add to that my energy,
because I'm taking back my life!

Vriend sê my jy Verstaan Nie

Soek ek vir 'n meisie?

Wag ek vir 'n vrou?

Here, Here lei my,

hoor U my nou?

Energiek en snaaks,

alleen en slim gegee,

vriend sê my jy verstaan nie,

dan is ons darem nou al twee.

Operator, Operator

Operator, Operator,
are you there?

Operator, Operator,
I'm alone and scared.

Tell me that you're coming,
that you're already on your way,
tell me you won't leave again,
say you're here to stay.

Come save me from these people,
take for me back home,
give me a place to sit and sleep,
because I'm not made to roam,

Operator, Operator,
are you still there?

Operator, Operator,
aren't you alone?
Aren't you scared?

'n Singhek en my Pa

Duikertjie waar is jy,
hoekom hop jy nie meer saam?
Jakkalsie waar rus jy,
hoekom hoor ek nie jou traan?

Bos se Luis waar lê jy,
hoekom vrees ek jou nie meer?
Bobbejaan wat het jy,
as nie ék om meer te steur?

Sonnetjie wie roep jy,
as die late oggend kom?
Wie kruip nou uit sy bedrol,
so skuins-geslaap en krom?

Suiderkruis wie lei jy nou,
huistoe middernags?
'n Ruiter in gebed,
of 'n boef so lag-lag snags?

Witgatjie wat huisves jy,
in jou trommel dik van leemte?
Erdvarkgat hoe gaan dit daar,
in jou wêreldtjie van vreemdte?

Donnerstorm, Sinkdam,
Singhek en Ou Uil,
geniet jul nog as jul donkermaan,
kindertjies maak huil?

O vat my terug na die
rowwe-rowwe,
Afrika-Bosveld.
Waar gebed en lag en traan en hoop,
in eensaamheid saam smelt.

Jaag my net vir een dag meer
die dood se skrik aan lyf,
en gee my net vir een lag meer
'n storie om te skryf,

want dis hier waar ek
soos God kan voel—
die pa van alles óm my,

dis hier waar Hy mý
soos 'n kind maak voel—
as ek en my pa so stry.

The Wisdom of a Polo-Horse

And so I was talking to this Polo-horse
one morning—
after a tournament—
asking if they won.

And I realized
that I've officially gone crazy—
because they were never competing
in anyways.

The Man in an Animal

And I saw so much man in these animals,
and so much animal in these men,
and I thought to myself;
they probably know something we don't.

As Die Kortpad Régtig Korter Is

Here, Here,
wat maak ek tog hier?
Het ék die plek gekies,
of het U my gestuur?

Ek voel rigtingloos,
ek voel alleen.
Mis ék U nabyheid,
of mis ek net die reën?

Gee my net 'n werk
of 'n doel of 'n roeping,
vat tog net die tydmors,
die vrae,
die beproefing.

Of Here vat my net huistoe,

want Here ek is klaar—

of immers Heer stel my nét terus,

lei hierdie pad

ook tot Daar?

A King you Best Want to Be

It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
to wine drink,
and cigars draw.

Lest they drink of that wine,
and draw of that smoke,
and go and forget the law.

And it is not for kings,
you devoted to God,
to visit many girls' houses to see,

for when that trumpet blows,
and that kingdom comes,

a king you best want to be.

Each and Every None

Each with music in his ears,
each the star of his own show,
each the center of attention,
yet none who dare to know.

Ad-Ven-Tur-Er

What makes you an adventurer is not the
months-long,
world-renowned,
ten-thousand-dollar,
trips you do—

but the fact that upon every encounter
with the unbeaten path—

that is the path you choose.

Have you Then Nothing to Show?

And then I sit myself down,
begging for no turns,
asking for nothing but truth,

and I say why is it,
we have all this challenge,
why is it we do what we do?

When mornings we rise early,
at nighttime labour late,
with our bodies on the line in
our daily dodge of fate?

I tell myself,
“There are better ways,”
to go about this world.

With more rush and more fun
and more chance to take,
and girls to impress in their pearls.

Yet then I gather myself up,
and silence that old voice,
that I hear
as I pass all those astray,

and I listen to their anthems,
imagine being them,
and again realize that
“There’s no other way.”

But to travel in the wind,
work in the rain, and
go to sleep at night in the cold,

but to bite off the pain,
rid of the hunger,

and still keep our peace ahold,

for a word is but nothing,

if a man cannot do,

then how will he and God,

and the people then know?

How else will he justify himself,

if that Day were to come,

and They ask,

“Have you then nothing to show?”

So listen carefully my body,

for this is the plan,

and I'll remind you as many or as few:

we show up,

we shut up,

we do the job right—

that's just what we ranchers do.

Death as a Friend

Don't you think
that I miss my grandma,
her hugs and kisses and
loving-joking words?

Don't you think that I wish,
that she could but once
play with my kids,
or that I could be one myself again,
in her warm old house again,
where her calling voice to us,
could be heard?

Oh how her loving-kindness,
childlikeness, and
life-long sacrifice
make me tear,

yet I still wouldn't bring her back,
even if I could,
and you might not understand this,
my friend,
this I fear.

For what good is there
in wishing for a bygone,
and losing your day and
also your morrow?

What sense would it make,
even if we could,
to bring her back to this
Stress, Angst and Sorrow?

For have you still not admitted,
that you've got no other source,
of peace-health-love and hope?

That the Good Lord who made you
gave you all that you have?
Is this really too far-off to grope?

For at the very least,
ANY god,
to help you go to bed
and stand up from the night,

for one thing I can't
but think of the folly in that man,
who has Paradise at his hands,
yet gambles it away
without a fight.

So I'll leave her where she is,
prepare myself for the same,
and not as much as think
about having her back again,

for I really believe that
she has more than we can know,

and so suddenly,
Death is my friend.

A Familiar Voice

Come a time,
where you can't seem to say—
whether the voices in your head,
are yours,
God's, or
neither.

Yet fortunately—
you'll always remember—
the sound
of the voice
of your father.

The Stab to Doubt the Hug

I sometimes wonder,
if there were no unseen fight—
what would this world then look like,
would there still be wrong or right?

If there were no voices in our heads,
or weights pressing on our hearts—
would history books then be any bigger,
or would we then still be
at their starts?

If there were no demons on lampposts,
or angels outside of our door,

would Susan still do
the dishes for Mom,
or would Rufus still muddy the floor?

Would we know what meant “war,”

or “rebel” and “deceive?”

Would we ever feel love,

could we ever believe?

For if nothing was ever missing,

how would you know that it's there?

Or if there were no blindness,

then who could say they see?

If we never felt pain,

how would we transition to joy,

if we've never been slaves,

how can we claim we're free?

For if there was no smile
to catch the tear,
wouldn't then crying
become our source of fun?

And if we had no stab
to make us doubt the hug,
then wouldn't welcomes make
us all scream and run?

Now see I do not know,
and so I can only imagine—
a world void of hope and regret.

But for now I thank the Lord
for giving us all this choice—
so that I can compare,
and know where my heart is set.

The Favour in the Fight

A thousand-yard stare,
a clearing of the throat,
and an,
un-distracted eye.

A stiff-neck and
angled-up cheek,

take your chance on this statue of a man,

do him a favour and
find out if he's weak.

An Expert on all That's a Grin

I see them everyday around me,
falling over their own feet—
each onto his own cloud,

I see them sporting each other,
as if honourably discharged
from loneliness—
smiling and playing and proud.

And I wonder,
“How long have you sought,”
and what was the price that you paid?

How much have you laboured,
how long was your wait,
before you deemed yourself
a partner made?

For I hope I don't cross envious,
as I joy myself like you,
at the sight of two pilgrims,
who wrote their name in stone—

but then I look at them again,
and I see myself as I was before,
and then I ask myself again,
are they not heading
for that pain that I've known?

For who can stay standing,
and who can be sure,
who can call himself expert
on all that's a grin?

In this place of plunder and purge,
home to silence and secrets and sores,
where just walking to class
already feels like a sin?

So I hear you my friend,
when you claim love
won't just hit me
against my head,

yet I then ask you once,
where'd you find the rulebook of love,

and I'll ask you again,
how much have you read?

A Life Won in the Lottery

How long has the Sun been chasing,
how long has it stuck to its route?

Sleeping,
then waking,
then toiling all day?

How long has been its journey,
in trying to shift its place,
yet it still rises,
and sets,
all the same.

So what then makes you so special?

Where are you heading?

How long will it be?

For I fear my friend,
lest you mistake like the Sun,
that you spend your life being seen,
yet you don't see.

Now it just doesn't make any sense
to my few brain cells,
your life if it is how you view.

As you say,
“All is by chance,”
“None is for sure!”
Yet you live your life,
as if you had two.

For you sicken your body—
smile as it goes to waste—
and take chances
as one sure of his fate.
And you drag every day,

and wish them along,
as if your time
was for you to create.

Now forgive me for prying,
but you're more religious than you say,
entitled and sure to be blessed!

Forgetting all that you have
and warring-on for more,
you're every little thing but stressed.

Not as if you're the only one
in charge of your health—
or your finances and safety too,

not as if this life
you have won in the lottery,
is of any pound of value to you.

If Today Lord

And if today Lord,
You won't be my doctor,
then I'll leave You
with a thanking tip-and-nod,

for I know that You were
yesterday my preacher—
and tomorrow,
You'll still be my God.

Like a Roaring Lion

These people are falling apart Lord,

I see their pieces

and I hear their distress.

Better yet,

these people are being torn apart Lord,

oh Lord-

this is quite the mess.

How a Flag is Woven

My answer to this question
which I so often get,
“How do you do so alone?”
And many might see,
and many might not,
yet consider yourself to be shown.

See I fold my shopping-bag pyramids,
and over-pronounce my words—
just like my grandma used to do.
I sweep a floor every day,
and pack my breakfast neatly out—
just like my grandpa grew to know.

I buy quality,
and I buy once—
as my father always vowed,

I read,
and I work,
and wake early—
just like my mother showed me how.

I swear on the inside,
and make on-the-edge jokes—
that's where my brother
rubbed off on me,
I touch cars so softly
and put play before pay,
like my uncles taught me to be.

And so I've got thousands
of other small things,
that I carry around—
and sometimes even drag,
that I've picked up from
everyone who's touched me,

and I hold onto them,
as they weave my flag.

So ask please not again,
how I can function so alone—
how one man,
can do what I do.

For I carry all my people
on my shoulders,
and some days,
they carry me too,

I can wave and hang tight
through the storms—

as I am not just a person—
I am a people now too.

How Fine That Line

The fine line
between talk and rhyme,
that we so often crave to cross,

yes that fine line
between never and ever,
that many have waived and tossed.

Oh that fine line,
between right and wrong,
that so quickly,
becomes a field,

which God-himself,
just had to come see—
when crossed,
never seizes to yield.

Playing With Holy Fire

Now you might think it's funny,
you might not think it's true,
but I'll hate myself in twenty years,
if I don't share this with you.

I'm seeing places
that I've seen before,
yet I just can't remember where.

I'm meeting folks,
that I've met before,
yet they are not aware.

It happened once and
I thought it was cool,
it happened again
and call me a fool;

then it happened
again and again and again,
and I knew something
was fishy here.

Yet the funny thing is
that I've never once doubted,
and never has it
brought me to fear.

Now I know that what I'm doing,
I've done before in my dreams—
and I know that it happened
quite a ways back—
back home,
it honestly seems.

And I'm not complaining,
and this is not my help-me cry—
I do not know what I am feeling,
but I know that I should try,

to note of my sleep,
and compare with my days—
as I might one day pin one down,
and maybe change some ways.

Now see;
I've been praying for wisdom and insight,
blindly and foolishly
wishing them about,

and I then got
just what I asked for,
yet not through
the expected route.

So I reckon this is somewhat similar,
to how I too asked for signs in slumber—
so I'll work to decipher them each and all,
down to letter and number.

And no more will I ask,
for five loaves of bread,
without planning for
ten-thousand fishes in return.

Lest I dare to play,
with holy fire again,
and marvel
at why I got burned.

Half-day Sir

Well good morning Sir,
and how are you today Sir?
Is there anything else
you'd like me to do for you Sir?

No let me get that Sir,
please may I Sir,
oh my apologies Sir,
yes excuse me Sir.

I'll figure it out for you Sir,
or I'll make it work for you Sir,
so don't you worry about it Sir,
because of course Sir,
for it's all my pleasure Sir.

Hell I'll be here Sir,
I only have one other reservation Sir,
for on the day of the Rapture Sir,
I only plan on working half-day Sir,

for I'm planning on leaving Sir,
with my other Boss you see Sir,
and if he doesn't take me Sir—

then I'm going to the pub.

SINALOA

For the human zebra couldn't do more,
to make himself stand out from nature,
he couldn't try harder
to invite his own death,

but the secret of the human zebra,
is the safety of his crowd,
he'll never stand alone
whilst he's lacking that Breath.

U is Seker ook nie Ernstig Nie?

Dan kyk ek na die mense óm my,
en ek luister na hul woorde,
en na hul planne,
en hul drome—

en dan luister ek weer net so bietjie,

en ek sê:

“Here,”

“U is seker ook nie ernstig nie?”

A Restroom for Your Brain

Oh how many times
a restroom has saved me—
how many times it has brought me to ease,

their genius design, saying:

“Welcome on in,”

“How could I be of service?”

“How could I please?”

For there’s no other quiet,
so care-free and simple—
no other place to take a try-again breath,

no place on campus,
at work or at home,
where there’s no pondering over
life or death.

Where you'll leave and then go,
as a humble thankful man,
with new energy
to fight till the last,

and the Good Lord knows
this is the only place,
where you can escape all the girls—

although this too,
is changing quite fast.

In Laws And Medicine We Trust

Now remember this my dear,
as you take off on your leave,
I've packed it in a coat of rhyme,
to easily retrieve.

Round every bend and corner,
you'll see some trashcan-fires.
In every single alleyway,
you'll find a job that hires.

A rusty-old shovel
in every yard,
a hole in every tree,

glasses and hats, acting as chains,
in the not-so-much
Land of the Free.

Now don't go to their churches—
that's where they'll get you.
Don't dare ask for help from the Feds.

Stay out of the courtyards,
away from the commons,
know they pray
to laws and to meds.

Sinning in Your Sleep

“Now tell me older brother,
I have a question here for you,
would I lose points in the End,
if I fall to sin in my sleep?”

“I’ll ask you younger me,
I then have a question for you too—
if not ALL your heart and soul and mind,
you reckon your rewards you’ll reap?”

Twenty-Seven Written Out

I thank you Lord,
for sending me one,
so I can know they're still to be found,

and I thank you Lord,
for helping me see,
what they look like
and how they sound.

Now I ask of you Lord,
to send me my own,
to help guide me up through
to Heaven,

but this time play fair Lord,
provide patience and perspective.
This time just not
twenty-seven.

A Naughty Little Art

Why is it I write so funny?

With a blend of cursive,

and a blend of block?

With my S's so low,

my F's so strange,

each sentence its own little mock?

Why do I press so hard,

and why are my words

so far apart?

Well I'll tell you mate,

what you so dread,

I call a naughty little art.

See this is my way,
of rebelling against school,
my way of making
this language my own.

For is this not
how this language was founded?
Each author daring to
use the unknown?

And more than that,
in this writing;
I'm the main character,
and in my mind,
though I wish I didn't have to be—
it won't be of much value
in any other way,
and this too I'm sure that you'll find.

So consider yourself inspired,
to put to rhyme
all the voices in your head,

Know this language is yours for using,
this ink and paper too,

then clear your shoulders,
and take a deep breath,
knowing no feelings were left unsaid.

The Art of Throwing Rocks

So that's all good
and well Boss,
yet I have one more question,
if I may:

how does one become anything,
like a country-boy per se?

“I'll tell you Son,
it's pretty plain,
and it counts for all
you'll want to be:

to be a country-boy and
prove it too,
just do what he does, and
soon you will see.

Dress yourself humbly and
look up when you walk,
chew a pick between your teeth
and give answers when you talk.

Choose to sit on fences and
spit on the ground,
say Miss and Ma'am and Sir,
then let your boots make their sound.

Daily drink a beer,
get dirty when at work,
always offer help,
even to the jerks.

Kick rocks as you go,
know how to throw them too,
shut up and just smile,
if it's too hard to be true.

Be greedy in taking blame,
shy when there's rewards.
Let your experience and your tongue,
be your first choice of swords.

Always play with dogs,
flirt just a little with all the girls,
don't stay too long at any one dance,
yet know some jargon
and know some twirls.

And similarly such,
when a fireman you want to be,
just go and put out fires,
for that asks no degree.

Or to a teacher you aspire,
so start sharing what's in need!
For you need not be a prodigy,
to bend down,
and plant a seed.

And so my time is up
and now I'll have to go,
but this too,
you'll hear through the leaves:

when asking of yourself,
look at those amongst you too,

for it's not what we call ourselves
that makes us,

it is our reputations,
it is our deeds.”

A Rebel as a Rung

In this world of lies
and deceit and pretense,
there's only but one way
to be sure of what's true—

test it and trial it and
give it all the hell you've got,
and you'll know it's good
when it rebels against you.

On my Head in the Sand

And He wrote it in the sand,
and He wrote it with His hand,
and I wonder if
He changed the whole game.

And would He not have predicted it,
or seen it coming far away –
and did the angels not think He's insane?

Or maybe it's true,
that all is about sex,
yet sex is all about power,

but then why did it all start,
and how will it all end,
and what was then changed
in that special hour?

For it got us all here,
makes a chunk of that Good Book,
and brought some of the greatest
of men to their knees,

yet I'll keep on my feet,
rest on my head if I must,
for there's too much that He,
but not I,
sees.

Thoughts That Rhyme

Oh how simple are poems,
and how they make you free.

They're actually just thoughts,
that rhyme,
don't you see?

And all of us have thoughts,
and even birds can make good sound,
so don't you have a minute,
to share in this treasure I have found?

For in this ever-shrinking world,
every day becoming less wide—
it is ever-the-more important,
to have nothing more to hide.

A Spaceship and a few Bunnies

Dig for me a coalmine,
send me lost at sea,
drop me in the jungle,
for alone I need to be.

Or give me my own desert,
an island or a star.

Then I'd never have to wonder—

where is she?

Or still,

how far?

Tired, Sick, and Done

I feel like a soldier.

Waiting for orders.

Ready to go.

I feel tired of talk.

Sick of the fake.

Pretty much

done with the show.

A Crown of Thorns

Sawn in half.

Decapitated.

Crucified.

Upside,

down.

Burned alive,

fed to lions,

died in their sleep.

Oh that

painfully-joyous

crown.

Snags is Alle Katte Skisoïede

Ek's redelik seker sy hoor stemme—

ek's redelik seker—

haar beste vriend

is 'n spook.

En ek wonder of sy besef—

ek,

en myne is—

ook.

Rainrise

A rainy night,
in a lantern-lit tent,
with a big campfire right outside,

lots of pillows,
liquored coffee,
and woods so far and wide,

with good old books,
little handmade art,
and too much time to devise,

a cute puppy-dog,
a lady just my type—
and it's still raining
come sunrise.

Stepping on Your own Toes

I wonder sometimes;
if I were to meet myself,
would I even like me at all?

And I think to myself,
if we were roommates perhaps,
who would make whom look small?

Would I step on my toes,
outsmart myself,
and steal my own lady-friends?

Or would we be like brothers,
with inside-jokes all day?
Well I reckon it all depends.

Who would be the leader,
who would take the blame,
would I become wiser,
would I become insane?

Could the people take one more,
would my angels stick around,

would we argue all day
and sing all night,
or would we ever even make a sound?

Oh how I wish I were two,
and had a best friend just like me,
what a painful type of blessing,
we wouldn't just be.

But for now Lord,
you'll agree,

that one,
is plenty enough.

For if I'm having trouble
understanding one I,

how could I ever
then manage a We?

A lot of Place for Hate

This is a poem of what I hate,
and it starts with those
stupid goodbyes,

how they choke all your air out,
and fill you with tears,
and their only cure
is lies.

And even more I hate,
when couples break up,
or people just fall
apart.

And even more I hate,
how people make war,
and they make it,
like it is an art.

And then too I hate,
when children leave,
or when old people get so close,

but then too I hate,
when animals get hurt,
and they least
deserve it the most.

Now this is a lot of hate,
for a poem of this size—

yet a poem on what I love,
would fill the deep and skies.

Come Sing Along!

A bird and his song,
saying, "Come sing along!"
Amongst tall old trees so green,

a beautiful waving flag,
under dark stormy clouds—

the peace in this library,
you have not seen.

If My Calling was a Laugh

What if my life calling,
as simple as it sounds,
was to make all the pretty girls smile?

One way or another,
each would have their laugh,
if not for school—

wasting my while.

One Poem Memoir

“He was a man who invited God
into everything in his life,
and that’s why he did everything he did—
and he did do everything—
with pure passion and boldness.

He stopped competing with others,
and so—
no-one could compete with him.”

Lighter Poems

We're all just kids.

Some of us have just been kids

for longer.

I've found that
holding your peace,
is one of the best ways,
to lose it completely.

I can never seem to remember,
whether alcohol or violence,
is the answer—

but I'm pretty sure;
it could be both.

It's all about rounding off and finesse—

none of us want a

plumber,

barber,

or prostitute—

that can't finish a job properly.



Amen.

Even though we know,

this is not

The End.

About the Author

Born in the capital of The Land that God Made out of Anger, Henning started his ranching career on his third birthday, with two donkeys named B and P. Since then, growing up helping his father run his livestock-operation has led to his first love irrevocably becoming anything and everything that resembled an animal or plant. Having had quite a tough time throughout school pinpointing exactly what he wanted to do one day; he had always been sure that nature would form an integral part of it.

Throughout his schooling career, Henning made the most of his sport, leadership, and academic gifts, in order to pave a way to a place where he would one-day have the opportunity to live out all his wildest dreams, without compromise. Today he is doing just that, having the time of his life studying a B.Sc. in Ecological Restoration, with a minor in B.A. German Language, at Colorado State University (CSU) in Fort Collins, Colorado, USA.

Whenever he is not occupied with his studies, Henning is “unofficially” studying western horsemanship and American country-life. He currently works at the CSU Equine Training and Research Centre, and helps out on local ranches whenever he gets a break. If you can track him down, he can most likely be found mugging at brandings, training wild mustangs, road- tripping across the States, or even touching up on his piano skills too, all when he is not busy writing new poems for the second edition of his poetical philosophy series.

He also does some volunteer-work on the side, trying to do his part in making this world a bit more of a livable place.

And of course,

he is always working at mastering—

The Art of Throwing Rocks.