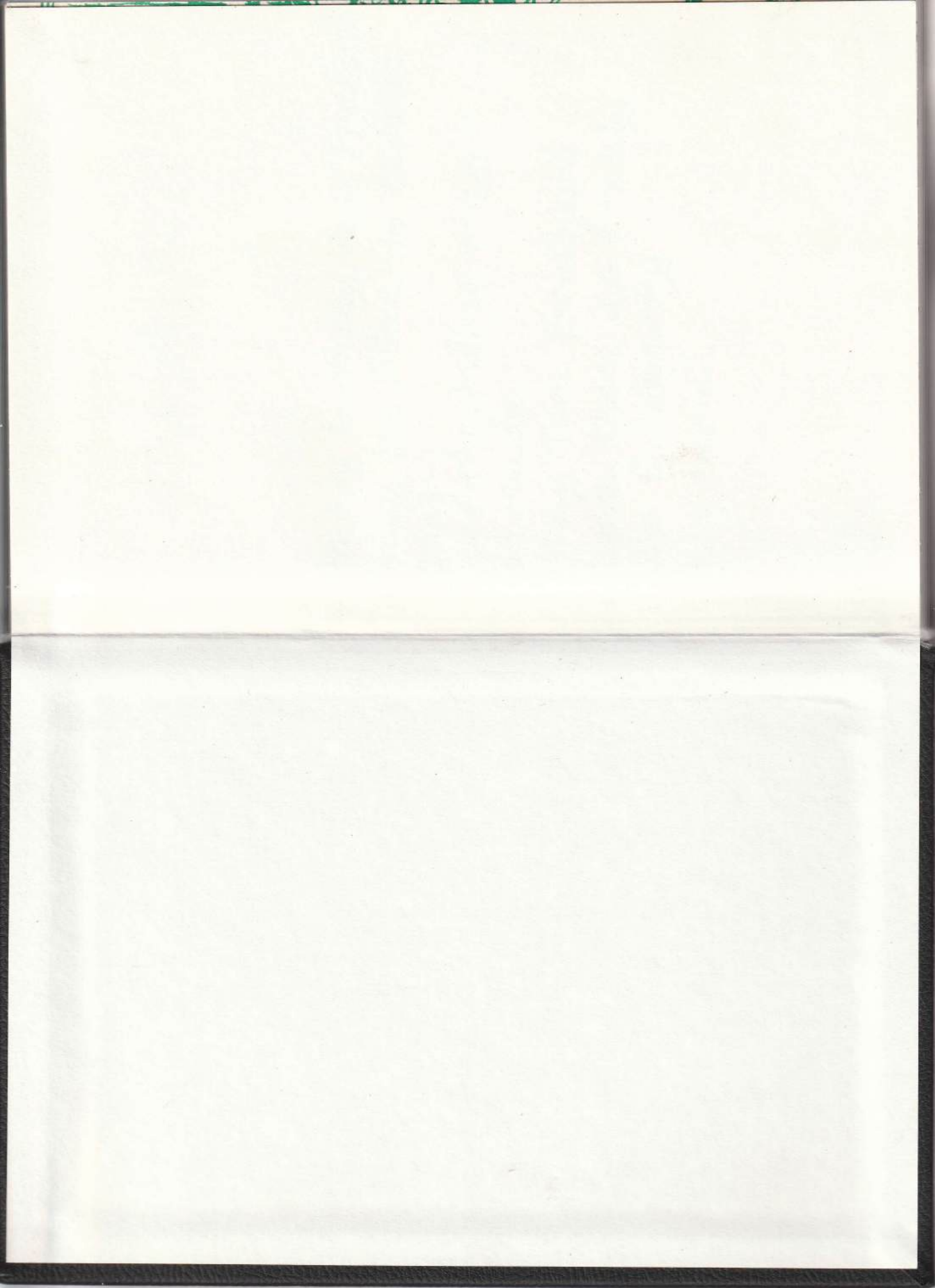


l'nenolo



Happy birthday, dear Freddie!
may the Silmarils remain
lost
and the ruling ring
unmade;
May Tom Bombadil
Love them as freely
as Goldberry
his ladie.



Kapokbos

In the time of the second government of national unity in Boesmanland, Zorro rides again.

I did not see him myself, when he first reappeared, emerging from the staff toilet and stepping upon the quad's podium to announce to four hundred teenage bushmen, on my behalf:

"Good morning children!

Mr. Kapokbos is not here today, but he asked me to tell you about something very close to his heart... he cordially invites you to the Zen Olympiad publishing house for young writers and artists."

Some few nights later I,
Edvard van Delft, had a dream-
oh, see how this started storm
pages! - I saw my disciple,
the Star of Mafikeng, laid
on his back - oh, hear Freddie's
piano back-track -
next an exposed treasure chest
and, I guess you can guess
the rest...

Oh, perfect among the sages
was it for people like Her and
you, that I traversed the
seven Stages?

Yet on the high watermark
of my messenger's bow
where stood the freak, Zorro,
that old wind, Change
began to blow...

And before you know it
was time to go, away,
away from Distrik Groot Marico
followed discretely by my
favourite Superhero.

The last time I'd glimpsed him
on public show, reflected -
like in a toilet mirror -
was in the Cape and mask
of swashbuckling young Terry-
in Greenside under the plum
aiding another little Zorro.
Or in the bewildered stare
of gorgeous Commander Raymond
built out of the thin air
on Leva's roof.

Those were the Olympian days
of the first Unity Government -
a moment like Woodstock -
when, the world over
the walls came down in
our need for one another.

Those were the bright halcyon days
that felt endless, when Emma,
friend of the people
at the blue sky would gaze.
While in the lounge - Mom turned
the radio, to translate
from Setswana on the T.V. the

feats of "his truly" - the knight of the bright countenance, masked, with sea-song eyes and tawny mane - Magnificent Zorro, who rides again.

A generation before, young Freddie, my father, would go with his brothers and pals to the Bioscope Show... And would you know - they lived for what was screened before this main show - oh, give it a go - another thrilling episode of the story of this very name: Zorro Rides Again.

Our Freddie tells of Bartholomew Dias, the Portuguese explorer who rounded the Cape in his ship but turned back near Mossel Bay when his crew threatened mutiny, fearing they'd reached World's end.

Was it on a day like this of rain-soaked gales when the very Atlantic seems in our midst that Bartholomew's crew refused to continue?

Yet I'll eagerly go on singing my mad-glad song. For in this clearwater Revival I find no blemish I can call 'wrong'. For here at World's End, I'm starting again and again - I'm thus gone.

Of course, in Olifantshoek it was a rather different story after a night of soaking rains when I felt a chilling worry that my Volk's Wagon would stick

after being stuck in Marico
for near on a moon!
But the Goddess of good luck,
Athena - wash me, oh thou
glorious tempest! - appeared
in the guise of a curious young
boy, whose innocent queries
helped me employ faith while
loading the Wagon.
And Fear, that trecherous
decoy, was unnecessary, as
usual, for Basie, my mechanic
had fixed Volkse after all."
after all these years of toil.
"Nee wat, ry hom," said Basie,
who assured me that once
going, Volkse would not stop;
it was merely a carburetor
issue, minor, he'd not had time
to redress, when healing
the rest of the mess.

Then Hermes, the Wind, blowing
my dogs and I down Bushmanland
took care of the rest.





A monk asked the Buddha, "Is there a promised Land, or is there not?"
The Buddha replied, "Promises can be broken, but faith is not dependent upon belief."

Before the Count of Monte Christo became a count he was a political prisoner within the stone-towers of Chateau Diep, overlooking, extending sea cliffs.

When he escaped he followed his teacher's map, and it led him to chests of treasure, in the bosom of a bay.

When Venkataraman Iyer was a mere boy he went his own way, to the holy mountain Arunachala, arriving forever to stay.

But me-I, with my head fool
of the world's stories of
prophets and profits set out,
like Don Quixote, in search
of adventures, liberation,
a promised land that had
not been promised. (Toemaaf,
my biographers will fill u in.)
(See, I'm famous, I feel,
when you hit me with "Likes".
And who doesn't love loves,
when his wacky tea's been
spiked? :))

As well, if it's in the unwitting
name of rain making then
such games are all right.
I mean, I'm clearly making
some more tonight, though
I... hey, you should see the
Vlei, it's as full as a bae,
ou Fred had said, "Look to

North-East, if you want to
see a sight."
I looked at the koppie, huh,
then my heart took flight
as I saw the shining white
light of water.
Before I was Pope, I was a
pauper. But strip me again,
I'll still be a bushman.
Taste the freedom found in
Ramakrishna's Zen.
Freddie related what I'm
revealing in feather-pen:
a dop of brandewyn was
offered to Ramakrishna once
by a visitor, but our man got
intoxicated merely from
taking a whiff!
This anecdote stoned me:
all I need is the love of home
here in Redelinghuys
other side Wittekrans!

The Other Side

The rain falls while going about in the form of a formless Lion, I, Edward Kapokbos van Delf, sage enchanter in the Marico Bosveld, in and or after or out of the manner of renowned dreamer errants such as Miguel Cervantes De Saavedra, sage enchanter of Don Quixote, met, taught and learned from many myriad bright stars, including a star that, being a sublime hunter, emitted a spectrum of coloured light, the Dawn's Heart Star born in Mahikeng, the Apostle of... God, Thomas - Dawn Thomas. Even the luminous Moon, who makes you wonder, even though you know and tell yourself it's lunacy, when she appears to be cascading across Heaven with the stars, if Einstein's

Relativity theory can allow for this spectacle to be as real - or as absurd - as the wonder of clouds fleeting luminously by across the darkling sky; even the Moon, who rises and dies and rises again and again, will tell you that the Dawn's Heart is the arrow of Zeus, the child sage among the Seers, the Inspiration of Saints, the water after the rains, the ancient Pokémon Moltres spotted in flight, goldenly, far-near, by Ash Ketchum on the day he sets out to become what he already is; the regality of Green-eyed Goku transformed at last, the hilarity of Cuthbert Calculus, and the Sword of Justice in Love, Magnificent Zorro, reflection.

Reflection

by Dawn Thomas Koshy

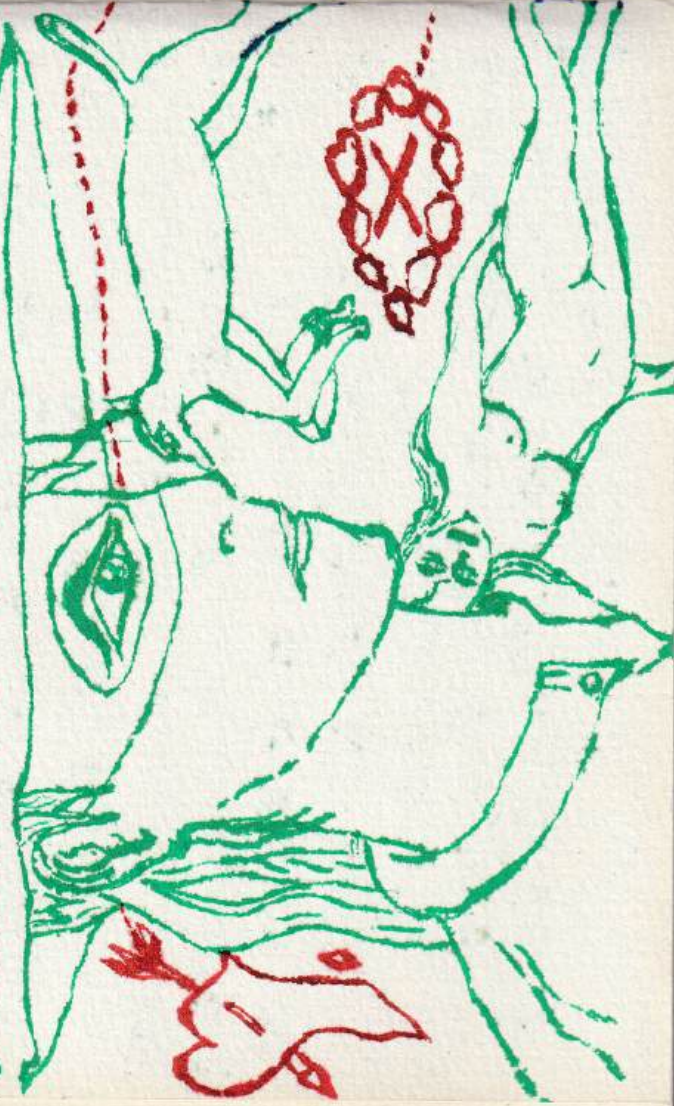
The truthful, the honest, the
rude but real. ^a

The bane to many lives but
the reason for mine. ^b

A person's outlook depends
on how they feel ^a

For others, you may have
crossed the line. ^b

For me, well my opinion
doesn't matter ^c



If I had to choose between
one or the other, I'd rather
not be the latter ^c
We are inseparable like
wood and twine. ^b

We are different but the
same as we both keel ^a
from the internal pain
burrowing deeper into
my spine. ^b

But at the end we are
still different, aren't we
my friend in teal? ^a



Kapokbos school of Creativity

My Great-Great grandfather, Eduard, arose in Holland and fell in Natal during the Battle of Elandsagte during the South African War (1899-1902). That was some after the time he and his brother Arrie had left the Cape - to which their father had originally escorted them - in search of fortune in the Transvaal, where Eduard had practised as a lawyer before he joined the Boer forces in their campaign against British imperial hegemony. Just over a hundred years later, at the end of 2003, my parents, Annie and Frederik, my sister Emma and myself, followed the still-fresh footsteps of my maternal grandmother Patricia, to the Cape.

We had been living in Jo'burg, where all five of us had grown up, before moving to Cape Town at that moment in the resplendant tapestry of mythological History. Well before I entered primary school I had shown a knack for drawing and painting, which my parents encouraged and facilitated. My dad, a bonafide artist in practise, led the way with his 'en plein air' watercolour landscapes of vacation visions we would periodically travel to, such as the lush South Coast of Natal - which we survived - the temples of the Cedarberge, or the nostalgic Marico bosveld. These early forays into the mystic-veiled of the Southern African Bushmanland infused me with a learning that straight lines and times cannot teach. Another form of expression that

I suspect really deepened my imaginative capabilities was the art of storytelling, initially in the ancient oracular form of being read to at bed-time by my folks, and later, strongly supplemented by the pleasure of reading, which, as a soothing analytical meditation, is one of the best medicines I am aware of. To the not yet initiated, reading may appear difficult to digest, but great muthi is often bitter... that is, uncomfortable... before it turns sweet.

Learning to be with experiences, pleasant and uncomfortable, is the purpose of meditation, which brings us back into the body, and the portal into the present moment, our birthright and the authentic wellspring of Life, forever new, issuing forth with ceaseless creativity.

So the fundamental question, to be explored by the sweet child in time is, "Are you here while you are here?" The potential of Education, still rather untapped as yet, in guiding a person towards a never-ending discovery of their miraculous Presence, cannot be overstated. For in the revelations of Presence we find health, holiness, non-duality which is Love, and the discovery of intuition and the faith-mind, which dispell the darkness of doubt.

The Bushman, who were parents par excellence, used to pose a synonymous question in the form of a warm greeting: "Hello! Are your eyes nicely open?" Ironically but appropriately too, my eyes opened nicely to these

deeper existential questions one day shortly after matric, on a beach in Plettenberg Bay, with a handful of besties, during the 'Plett Rage' end-of-school vacation celebrations. Verily, truth in a person grows and unfolds organically, like a plant. The role of a teacher is to make the conditions for such growth, sustainable. (keeping in mind, as Oom Egbert of Groot Marico once wrote, that 'Nature is the only thing that actually works'). With my eyes nicely open to the possibility of keeping open, I set about looking for clues to the riddle of being in a world that so often felt haphazard and out of balance. I embarked upon an odyssey into Being wherein I increasingly attuned to the wholeness of presence, which enables our innate capacities for creativity and

emotional equanimity, to shine. Furthermore, through a reflected physical journey that took me into faeryland, I mean, the Lowveld and then the Marico bosveld, where I lived and worked as teacher and artist, and then back home - to my surprise and relief - to my family's side in Redelinghuys, Weskus, I have integrated my inner child.

Now, kindled with a flame to continue integrating along the twin paths of Education and art, I propose the Kapokbos School of Creativity! I call upon, that is, I reach out to parents who wish for an education par excellence for their children, to enroll them in this unprecedented initiative in education.

We intend to set out as an intimate class in the coming school year, inclusive of a variety of ages, based in the peaceful village of Redelinghuys, whilst utilising the connectiveness of internet communication to augment and support the learning process, and make it more widely accessible.

As we are concerned with the holistic development of children, sport and culture, together with academics, comprise the three legs of our African potjie of learning. Thus, in addition to dynamic academic exploration in the morning in a variety of subjects whose creative potentials we shall unlock in the afternoon we'll stretch our legs and play, engaging in

fulfilling and enriching sporting and cultural activities such as chess, music, tennis, cross-country, storytelling (including drama) and visual art. Hiking and veldstappe, on non-school days, will add an important element to our school's life, as will sustainability in gardening. May the spirit of the tranquil Verlorenvlei Vallei, whose centre is the nourishing waters of the mystic vlei, and whose apex, the leopard-graced Rante, are adorned with rock art of ages, bless the upliftment of one and all!

Zorro writes again

True Lolita,

I'm such a lazibones, writing poetry on an ebbing Sunday morning after over-sleeping, when I ought to be lawning the mo, at the mo, of the neglected grass jungle outside, or attending to the toilet's empty cistern, or figuring out how the stove in the gypsey caravan works, or picking my...teeth.

Yet instead I'm sitting on my arse, again, within the harmonious curve of a Rondavel-tent, telling stories that I'll roll up and pop into a green bottle, and post into the sea. While we sea whether a

lonely green bottle cast from a green-white coast, containing windswept post to my Bonnie who lies over the ocean, my Bonnie there over the sea, even contains poetry.

And I'll stand there awhile, gazing wistfully, like into an old story, forever, maybe. Yet one day you may send to me, the same glimmering bottle, worn silty-coarse and opaque, enclosing your ocean deep, and time-worn reply.

And I'll breathe a sigh, and maybe later I'll kiss the sky.

Yet thou, whose time is like the stars up there, natural, true and relative, teach that silence is also an answer.

yet into your silent valley,
where Cape leopards prowl
across the abyss of the
land of dreams, I stalk once
more to tell you something
new, softening my growl
to a sing-song melody, a
plaintive sonnet, old as the
sea, sung beneath your
cave, by a contemporary
Don Quixote.

"Clouds fly past underneath
a blue blue sky...
I've found new meaning in
this life...

I've been away too long
and everyday I've missed you
more and more and more...
you don't look older only
prettier

and everyday I've missed
you more.

En het is een nacht..."

yet faith, in what's unconditionally
meant to be, is what sets me free.

A divine morning as I resume
this letter after a cycle of
days brimming with boldness
in which, like the Count of
Monte Christo, I stepped
into good fortune in moving
in to my own Monte Bliss,
that very same holy place
on the lush expanse of the
Verlorenelei I told you of,
where, finding geraniums
growing wild among the
beach sands of the encroaching
lei, I dropped to my knees
and kissed the Earth.

That early moment of
rapture in Redefiningways has
grown or deepened with the
passing moons, with their
passing boons (blessings)
with my latest leap of faith

being to move here into
'Kapokbos' as I call this
gorgeous natural retreat,
a name that refers to an
intoxically fragrant bush,
not unlike geranium scent
but intenser and more herby,
that grows wild in the
sandveld, and which my dad
has cultivated in my parent's
place next door, the old Cape
church house built like a
rock in the sea - "Is your
Love strong enough?" - where
I took solace and refuge,
holily, these past moons.
(Circular writing is a written
rhythmical equivalent of
circular breathing...)

My dog-children, Bele and
Leila, who have been with me
every step of the way, are
sprayed out on their blankets
in the rondavel beside me

where I sit at my desk, and
they send warm greetings
to you.

With the seasons now in
transition they are starting
to get frisky, and before long
I expect they'll be totally
enamoured with each
other, high as heaven, and
for a week or more I'd be
a fool to take them on our
regular afternoon short-
hike into the veld behind
the village - which is coming
alive with colourful flower
after all the rains. Yes,
especially since the Cape
cobras will also be
enamoured with each
other, then.

And I too will be dreaming
of getting frisky with you...

Remember, Beloved Lolita,
those winds of change of
which I told you, blowing
across the Vlei from the
North East at the onset
of Winter, heralding the
coming rains? That was
on the eve of South Africa's
general elections, and
shortly before the outcome
of a government of national
Unity for this breathtaking
bushmanland, was decided
upon.

And my five marico artworks
on exhibition at the Sandvells
gallery, pictures of which
I'll attach with this letter,
seemed to me like a living
flag of Bushmanland, an
emblem of homecoming.

Winds of another order of change
are a-blowing these past two
days of leisurely pleasure at
Kapokbos, on the ebb or wane
of Winter's last major, most
emphatic wave, when Jack
Frost prowled after another
spell of rain that saluted us
with a double-miracle: musing
with Freddie in his garden, I
suddenly spotted cream
splashed upon the distant
mountains of the "Swartland",
and when we scaled the steps
to our house's loft to see more
clearly, we noticed that the
Verlorenvlei, bloated and
saturated by two consecutive
winters of "the best rains in
twenty years", was in flood
once again.
Rain is essentially a spiritual
phenomenon; a blessing and
a playful labour of love.

"Change," runs a proverb,
"is as good as a holiday."
And if change involves coming
home to your destiny, then it
feels like a holiday too, or a
holy day, everyday.

Such change, being a new
awakening, has taken me
deeper into the Presence of
holy life, illuminating moments
with fantastic realistic joy.

The Marico is a Teacher
that took me deeper
yet in Verlorenvlei by the Sea
I've felt and feel so free.

Shortly after your birthday
I dropped the habit of smoking,
due to health concerns. Since
I value the medicinal effects
of cannabis, I brew it in a
milk-rich tea some evenings
when the mood takes me,
and I find that this approach
is an infinitely more balanced
means, for me, of partaking

of the plant.

I also benefit, health-wise,
from afternoon veld-walks
with my dog-friends, who
breast the reed and herb
bushes of the sandveld like
crests of waves through
which the ecstatically swim,
pausing sometimes to burrow
down a mole hole. And they
love the sea!

Walking helps me shake off
the dust of a morning's
studies - I'm over halfway
through the TEFL course. I
mentioned (Teaching English
as a foreign language) and
am learning lots of helpful
theory about contemporary
education and learner-
centred teaching. As bonus,
I'm doing really well in the
course so far. Woops!
Speaking of teaching, I've
been tutoring young Sophia,

daughter of a sculptor, Van, who has exhibited art with my dad, who paints and grows indigenous flora and plays piano.

Sophia is in grade 3, and I've helping her with extra lessons in foundation subjects like maths, English and Afrikaans. She's a bright girl who merely needs to learn how to effectively wield the keys to language, numeracy and learning. Yet her imagination is top notch - She draws and paints expressively, has built a computer (on paper) and transformed our classroom - her and her younger twin brother's bedroom - by inviting her favourite teddy bears - none of whom are bears - but rabbits, a monkey, an Orca, a unicorn, amongst

other friends, to be members of our class. It turns private tutoring into a fun game, though the look that some of my "Students" give me sometimes when I speak to them, makes me wonder if the game is make-believe or... make-make-believe...

I usually sit for a bit with Van at (or by) his hearth, sharing the moment and contemplating the forking orange tongues of his cosy "bushman television" while Sophia and her brothers career animatedly around the kitchen, as if as Van shrewdly remarked, he is working with drunk people. (I could say the same for my dogs, sometimes, though they might point out in reply, "What about those evenings

when your rice-less water is boiling away on the stove and the onions are starting to char, and you're jiving like a Marico Tswana to the sounds of Carlos Santana?) Yet life is the Unexpected, and even a chained treasure chest in a remote bay is not secure forever. Vani's a good man, with a good clan, and I offer my support and comfort to him and his young fam.

Through Vani's storytelling I was approached by another very cool family - Andre, his wife Elani and their two young boys Wilder and Dante - to help show the boys the wonders of creative artforms I'm well versed in, such as art, tennis, music, chess and hiking. We're going to start

with classes soon, possibly during this moon. Andre is an organic farmer who uses ideas from the permaculture movement, and I look forward to learning from him and his family.

Next door to me on the right (my dad's on the left, my uncle Rod after that) is Julian, a conservationist and strongman (he used to run a security company), who usually wears a wide-brimmed blue hat and reminds me of Chuck Norris, who is so strong he can see me writing this - hey Chuck! And next to Julian is Ben, who has several cows and bulls, and one spring buck, grazing his lucern field, which is adjoined by a series of agricultural tunnels, some of which are rumoured to contain cannabis. And here at Kapokbos there's

loads of space to encourage indigenous nature to express herself. I've got several cuttings, including Kapokbos, on the go, quite a few of which I collected on a recent hike with Freddie, Sage of the Sandveld.

That was on the nearby ranche of the Verlorenvallei, visible from Voortrekker Street, and falling within the property of Ou Gysbert van Lill, without whom a survey of local planters would not be complete. Nor without his son Riaan, who has helped to diversify the old family farm from primarily potato-growing, into rooibos too and has built a scenic chalet in the ranche for hikers to camp at. And nor without ou Dirk van Zyl, who recalls the

terrible drought of the 1980's, when the potatoes baked underground during remorseless stretches of simmering aridity (it can get very hot here). Om Egbert of Groot Marico remembers, for that matter, how during the eighties in Marico the baboon women would breastfeed their young for extended periods as a natural means of contraceptive. "Ja," the Om reflected wistfully, "I was out in the veld a lot in those years."

Paul Myburgh, anthropologist, was too - in the Kalahari, living with a band of Gwíkwé boesmans - who also breastfed their young for extended periods - and there he learned, first hand, how little

Water, a human can get by on. (Speaking of liquid nourishment, it'll soon be time to grind my coffee...) In fact the eighties, as a time-cycle, were a spiritually dry period across the world (or am I over-generalising?), the fast being symbolically broken when various walls of separation came tumbling down.

We need to be mindful of history (I am the world) as past trauma is reflected in the present, and either integrated or perpetuated, depending on whether we contain and respond, or react and disturb.

In any case, we're thankful for the abundant rains that have blessed Southern Africa in recent cycles.

To appreciate the Spirit of Place endows us with authentic care for the community in which we live, which includes the full spectrum of visible and invisible beings in the environment. This insight I learnt at the feet of masters such as Tannie Santa, company in Groot Marico, Cradle of Consciousness, where company means companionship - the way of being with all of life, "in the middle of the muddle", as Dom Egbert puts it in a poem. This is the Tao of Unconditionality, the Middle Way beyond the extremes and opposites of chasing comfort and rejecting discomfort."

Then let me submit my will, which includes and is included, to the Spirit of the Valley; let the Valley build a Sandcastle for me dreams, and let the tide come in.

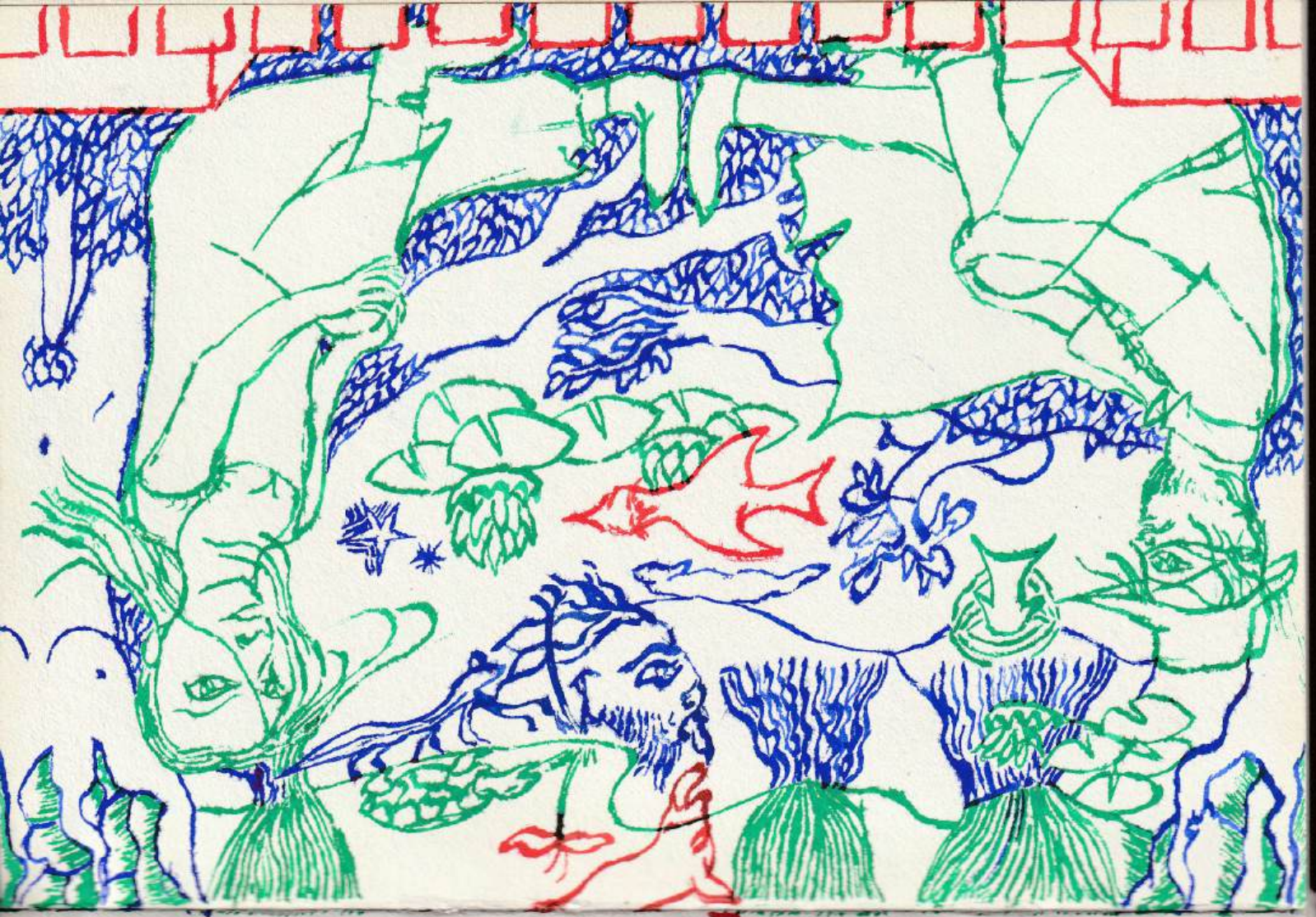
While I hope and play - to help
at, say the laërskool, among
those most in need of upliftment
and recognition - the descendants
of the San (our ancient ancestors
in Europe were bushmen too) -
and to nurture and cradle the
Kapokbos Art Centre - and
see what the Valley sends
my way. "Let all things," says
Shiva to Devi, his lover, in an
ancient Vedic poem, "be included."

Who is Zorro? is an implicit
question posed in my present
new book, Zorro Rides Again,
of which this letter to you,
true Lolita, is the most recent,
and current, short story.
As you will have noticed, I've
given you a new nickname
to protect your modesty, and I
hope it's some relief to you
that I'm keeping my story
short this time...

Zorro rides again, but who
is he or she? The dog leila,
with her mask-like facial
markings of black and gold,
wild princess Africanus? Or
her Lover Bele, the golden
phantom-prince? Or is he
Freddie, at his piano, playing
notes of newness?
Is she Sophia, Little Zorro,
creating worlds in a moment?
Is Zorro not then anyone
who Remembers, through
being here and now, the
inspiring sparks of the
creative, Eternal Present fire?
And can remain for the wane
of the flame and the afterglow
of ashes, in faith in love that
"I shall rise again."

May my Love be Yours,

Z



Sterre en Planete en Gees

My infinite names follow, trail closely behind me in the ether-stories in the wind: leeu Ganka, Man-man, Edward, or even... Kobayashi (Look it up).

My employer - sorry, I just had to say that - my friend and representative, I mean, Zorro, was walking in the newly blooming veld with Elder Zorro Abraxes, in the rante above Grootdrif, looking for plants, rock art and who knows what else. Nou ja, luster mooi en goed nou na wat ek gaan sê, en dijs sal kan verstaan; Volg die klanke net, just follow the sounds...

Ou Over Zorro se nek was seer, toe kon ons nie ver-staap-pie. Ons het darem teen daai tyd

'n paar vetplantjies en
blommeties versamel-ek
bedoel, ons soos in hulle,
want dit voel asof ek by
was, so goed het Zorro die
storie aan my vertel -
dus was Zorro tevrede om
terug te keer - hy moes in
elke geval gaan dop hou in
Redies (ek bedoel nie dat hy
hou van dop nie, behalwe
miskien mampoeer of dalk
koringabeer vir outaas, of
quagga-tee vanaand, jong.)
Né, jong, hulle was tevrede
om te draai, maar op pad af
wou Zorro eers gou'n grot
of 'n ding aanskou, want dit het
vir hom gelyken asof daar kon
iets anders binne wies.
To stap hy binne die vertrek in,
wat was deel van die klipprante,
waan hol en oop, behalwe vir
een groot klip in die middel

van die vloer, soos 'n eettafel.
En toe sien die Zorro, wat 'n
"warm gevoel" daai dag gehad
het, 'n prentjie-oppie linkermuur
van bokke... baie vry en netjies
geskilder - vry horings en
pote en so aan - 'n bul en
sy vrou, asook 'n trop in 'n lyn
bo hulle, dalk Elande, want
die wit van die koppe en pote
was lankal afgeveer, en dan
'n alleenloper heel onder almal,
in voorkoms soos die bul en koeie,
maar ekke karnie-raai watse
soort bokkies was hulle nou nie,
soos 'n "bokkies-raaisel", lol.
Ja wat, en dit was 'n pragtige
oomblik vir Zorrotjie, met 'n
gevoel van onverwagte ont-
dekking in sy reis deur die
Kosmos. Die eerste eie prentjie
wat hy gevind het, saam met
handmerke van koi-koi wat hy
vroer die dag gesien het in 'n

kleiner notsskeiling. Die eerste
man op die maan gevoel - al
gaan klomp afgesterwes elke
liewer maand op 'n "kaal safari"
reis in die holte van nie maar,
van lat die dag dat ou Haas die
maan teengesê het, en die maan,
wat die skoer van //Kaggen, die
Mantis, is, die dood en dood-
opstaan siklus in die wêreld
gebringet, as fornis.
Nou ja maar toe, die blare
van nie Kaap geelhout boom het
effens geëlvister in nie lla,
terwyl Over Zorro op 'n klip
in nie son gesit het en 'n
lemoer van Citrusdal afskil,
voordeet Zorro vir hom sy
ontdekking vertel het.
Maar dit was nog nie die laaste
groot ontdekking van aai daggie.
Want op pad berg-af, na hulle
nog 'n paar plantjies - of liever
vet plantjie blaartjies - geëes het,

het Zorro en ou Over Zorro
Abraxas verby die ou huisies
van 'n Span Boesmans gestap.
Nou vroër die dag, toe Zorro
en Over Zorro deur die groot
drif deur die vlei gery, en by
die plaas se werf aankom,
was daar 'n glimlaggende siel
voor die hek gestaan met
die naam Piet, wat se neus
lekker dik was, en breed, soos
sy glimlag, en wat se manier
van oorsienlikheid en
spraaksaamheid het Over
Zorro laat herinner aan aai
spaced-out fotojornalis in die
flick "Apocalypse Now", wat
iewerskielik uit die donker-
oortoud verskyn om Marlow-
hulle te verwelkom na die
skeiling van die reëgade
Col. Kurtz, aa diep in nie
toegegroiede oortoud langs
die rivier.

Yussterday, maar ek was kop-af
met lag oor daai joernalis se
maniere... "American! I'm an
American! Hi Yanks!" het hy hulle
gegroet, terwyl hy giggel met
bo-natuurlike betekenis, muskier
as gevolg van die gebruik of
misbruik van sekere medisyne.
'n bietjie later het hy hulle
ingelig oor die toestand en dade
van die vreesagtig maar amper
mistikus Kurtz: "The man's
enlarged my mind, man... he
writes poetry, but he's mad...
you don't speak to him, man, you
listen." Onthou jy dit?!

En later het hy reageer op 'n
eenvoudige kommentaar van Marlow
met - en dit was toe ek het
begin kop-af lag: "You can't
travel, you can't go out into
space or fractions, man. What
are you gonna land on? Two-
thirds? Three eighths? That's
dialectic physics."

In elke geval. Dié Piet was
'n bietjie soos daardie-snaakse
joernalis; "nie heeltemaal daar-
nie" het Over-Zorro later opmerk-
of tenminstens baie spraaksaam,
kan jy sê. Maar wie was dan
die Col. Kurtz innie vergelyking,
wat Piet wou aan die Zorros
bekend stel? Wel, vroër die dag,
toe Zorro en Over-Zorro berg-
op was, op 'n stofpaadjie, het
twee manne op 'n trekker
verby gery (dra een was Piet,
die ander ou was 'n plaas-
voorman, Arnouldus. Hulle het
onse Zorros uitgevra oor
waarheen op pad hulle was, en
of hulle toestemming gekry het
om daar te stap. Zorro het
geantwoord dat hy voorheen
met die hoof-voorman sy stap
gerêel het. Toe ontspan Piet
en die jonger Arnouldus, en die
vier het bietjie twak gepraat
oor Khoisan erfenis en goeters-

gelukkig vir Zorro moes Over Zorro'n gesprek met die opwindende Piet alleen voer, terwyl hy met Arnoldus praat. Innig loop vannie gesprek het Over Zorro gevra van'n ou man, 'n sekerre "Tapper", wat oppie plaas Grootdriif lankal gewerk het, en wat blykbaar in hele klomp boesman-kuns in grotte en rotsseilings in die Rante geken het.

"Tapper is oorlede. Oom," het Arnoldus gesê. "Ja, hy's oorlede!" het die vrywillige Piet bygevoeg. Over Zorro het meer as twee djarre terug van Tapper, wat klaar in sy tagtigs was, gehoor, en dit het nou geblyk dat hy te lank gevat het om die man op te spoor.

Maar hy't geweet dat Tapper net'n seun gehad, en later, toe hy en jonger Zorro op pad berg-af was, en het. Verby voor

die kaapse plaaswysies van'n span Khoisan plaaswerkers daar oppie voete vannie rant, is'n gesin op een wettie-besig met Kvier en haarkappery in die gemak van'n saterdagoggend. "Hier is hy!" sê Piet met'n groot glimlag terwyl hy'n gryse-ige ouer man met lewendige bruin oë, nader bring, "Hier is Tapper se seun!" 'n aantrekklike jong vrou het nader gestaan en luister terwyl Tapper se seun, met'n vertroude-lik, warm en kalm manier homself bekendstel as Niklaas.

There was something about the presence of Niklaas that made him charming and dignified. He switched easily between English and Afrikaans; and he spoke with authority about bushman presence in the Verlorenlei in the old days. He answered when Zorro asked where did the

bushmen sleep, that they slept in the caves. He also described a line ("n lyn, ja") that wove its way through the rante, which the bushmen would follow when visiting each other, bearing gifts of food and water. And Zorro later reflected that such a line may well have been akin to the songlines of the Australian Aborigines. Niklaas spoke warmly and astutely with Zorro and Elder Zorro, who did not have their masks on that day, and though he was a merry man, and coughed in a way that hinted at a penchant for tobacco or dagga or both, his breath and wit did not carry the fragrance of alcohol. Rather, there was something very much alive and awake in his manner, and in his merry brown eyes. And while Piet flitted between

the attentive Zorros, like a miggie, trying to add his two cents - at which Niklaas calmly said, even stroking his arm, "Asseblief Oom Piet, ek wil net klaarpraat hierso," - while the young lady, who had changed her shirt, and the rest of the family, attended in the background, Niklaas said a singular thing, very similar to what Oom Johannes Willemse, ~~was~~ the brilliant Griqua bossiedokter of Theefontein, said to his future student, Antoinette Pienaar, when first she sought him. For he had foreseen that a certain lady would one day come looking for him, to learn, long ago in a dream.

**A bushman prayer addressed
to the young moon**

In loving remembrance of my
friend Johann Moolman
Dictated, in 1875, in the Katkop
Dialect, to W. Bleek and L. Lloyd,
by Diä!kwāin.

We,
when the Moon has newly
returned alive, when another
person has shown us the Moon,
we look towards the place
at which the other has shown
us the Moon, and, when we look
thither, we perceive the Moon,
and when we perceive it, we
shut our eyes with our hands,
we exclaim: "Ikābhi-ā yonder!
Take my face yonder! Thou
shalt give me thy face yonder!
Thou shalt take my face yonder!
That which does not feel
Pleasant, Thou shalt give me
thy face, with which thou,

when thou hast died, thou dost
again, living return, when
we did not perceive thee, thou
dost again lying down come,
that I may also resemble
thee. For, the joy yonder, thou
dost always possess it
yonder, that is, that thou art
wont again to return alive,
when we did not perceive thee,
while the hare told thee
about it, that thou shouldst
do thus. Thou didst formerly
say, that we should also
again return alive, when
we died."

Full moon,
18 September 2024

You can leave your hat on

It is said of the bushmen of old that they could shapeshift, and could help to make it rain. Now I won't deny that I was present at an art and music class recently facilitated by Zorro for a group of children, nor that I was wearing a mask. Nor, for that matter, that a magical spring rain began falling that evening, as I, too, blissed-out to be in any sort of a hurry, was about to head next door to Kapokbos and my darlings, after a throat-smacking Thai curry with Freddie and the Others, that is, the Spirits. But there is no evidence to prove that I, your mild-mannered friend Edward, assumed the identity of Zorro, who wears

a black hat, mask and cape and a white flannel shirt, usually, when all that I can be seen wearing in the photos taken by the hostess, Naomi - Van's sister - is a black mask and woolen black jersey. Yet this feature of my dashing facade barely signifies, considering that the very theme of the class was masks, specifically animal masks and the myth of shapeshifting, and that the children were wearing masks that they made, too. Sophia's striking mask, for example, was the visage of an Owl, symbol of insight, foresight and wisdom, which is what "Sophia" means while either Dante or Wilder was changed into a Kameel,

which in English is called giraffe.

For the record, anything you might hear about that class, that somehow links me to my mad associate, is nothing more than an ephemeral and unprovable story and myth.

Moreover, let it be clear that those children are my students, and that just because I may sign a love-letter with a "Z", doesn't mean or prove that it stands for what Others may think it may stand for, okay?

But come, gentle listener, let us review together, in a hearty, non-linear fashion, salient facts of that auspicious occurrence, that happy time, to show

you still more clearly the lucid strength of bushman magic, and how dextrously Zorro wields it.

Yours truly, Edward 'Kapokbos' van Delft, eligible fun-loving bachelor of Redelinghuys, Wes-kaap, began my day, I think, with a cup of rooibos tea at my plasie; after waking up on the so-called 'wrong side of the bed', with a tooth ache exacerbated by my having used my black jersey as a pillow because of a flea concern in respect of my regular pillow and winter-spring divet. Thereafter I went, that is, I strode across to my parent's house, where a breakfast of pap and milk, made by Freddie, was waiting hungrily for me. After greeting and eating I returned to Kapokbos to fetch my Volks' Wagon, with

which I was to transport music and art equipment to Naomi's place.

While I am still at Kapokos, a person enters Freddie's house, while the latter is in his garden. The latter, entering, is cognisant of a presence, whom he takes to be me, who has his back turned, over which he is hurriedly trying to fasten a black cape that complements the black, round-brimmed "physed" hat on his kop.

Still half-struggling with his cape - (The Cape only appears to be a struggle) - he whirls around awkwardly and from the dark recesses of a black teardrop mask, roughly cut from cloth, offers or should I say emits a guilty "Hello." "Hello Zorro," replies Freddie smoothly, playing it cool, but

inwardly taken aback. Zorro, also taken aback - for the magic of a mask is that it enchants its wearers as much as its beholders - enquires of Freddie whether he thinks Zorro should drive to Naomi's in his masked guise, especially as he will pass the police station (What did he have to hide from them?) Fred, doing his best to humour our mercurial hero, says, "Why not? People wore masks publically during Covid." "Do I have the balls for this?" asks Zorro rhetorically to himself in the misty mirror. Deciding in the positive, he swings a bag onto his shoulders and moves toward the door, whereupon Freddie the ever-resourceful, with a conjurer's presence of mind whisks off

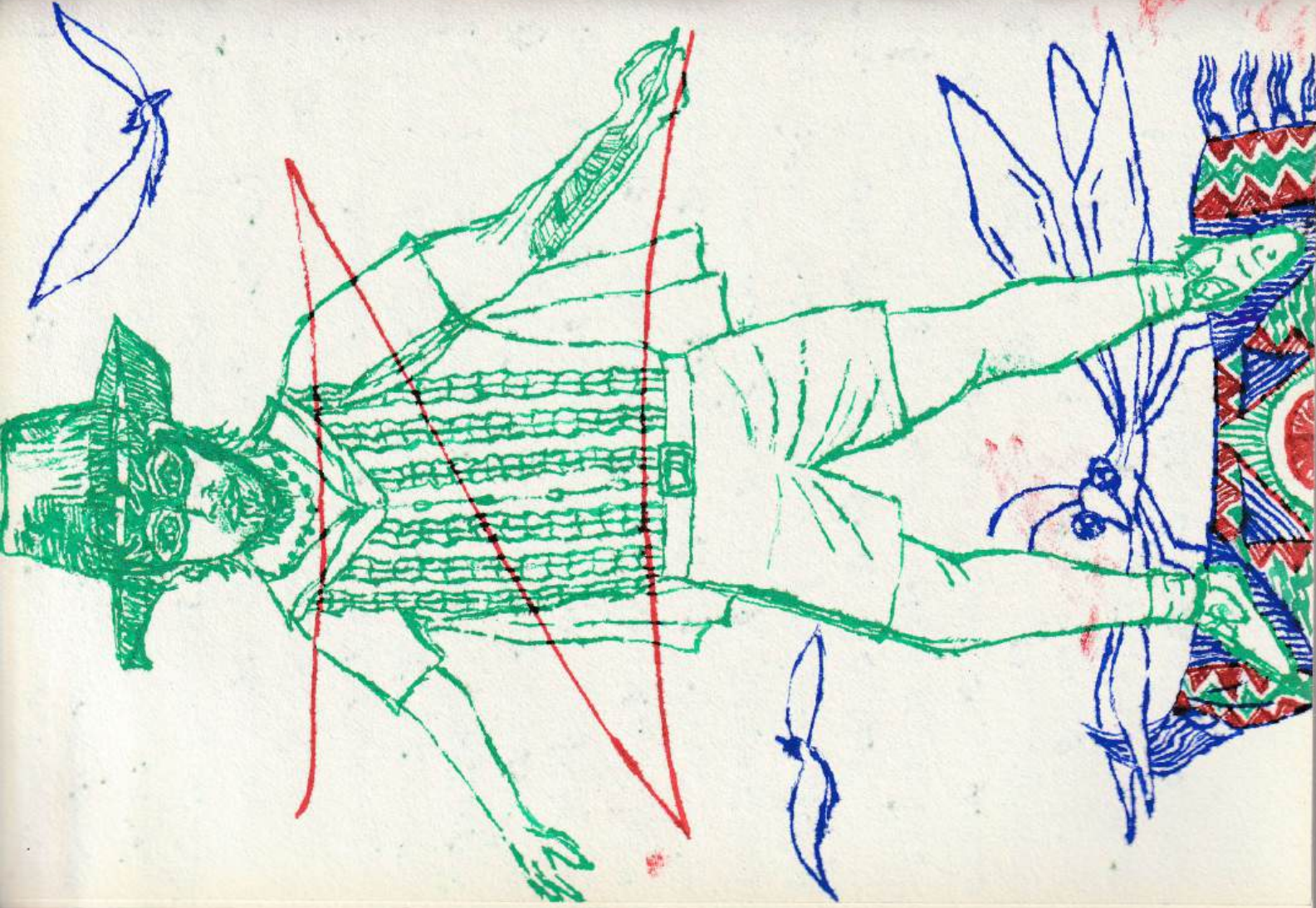
the door hangs a black felt hat, round-brimmed and straight, which he suggests Zorro could wear in place of the cricket hat on his head. Zozzie tries on the felt hat, glances in the mirror, and finds this attenuated look eminently suitable, except that the fit feels a bit loose simply because, as he later realised, he does not know to tuck it down over his ears. How do I know all this, you may be wondering. Because Zorro, whose true identity is seen as the hammerkop bird, looking within waters from her perch upon her nest, perceives revelations, told me so.

Feeling charged with supernatural adrenaline akin to the moment he resurfaced,

in the Groot Marico, after a sleeping Beauty or Rip van Winkle-style hibernation, yet a touch awkward about the loose fit of his new hat, Zorro steps across the threshold of our doorway that is presided over, on the left, by ancient photograph of my bearded ancestor Edward, in warrior attire, and on the right, by equally ancient picture of the bushman //Kabbo, storyteller, hunter and rainmaker, -and departs the house. He then enters my white country Volks Wagon, which I have meantime packed with painting equipment - and musical instruments - including magic Bantu drums - and drives away.

da Mancha

Edvard Kapokbos celebrated his lost wisdom with his outa Frederik over scrumptuos helpings of pesto pasta and salad. While I, who am now, looked on lovingly, with the Others, out of the all-pervading ether. "I don't know whether you consider that fortunate or" not, but well done all the same, offered generous Frederik, who had raised the anti-toast. "I can't really take the credit for it," answered Edvard. "It's essentially an act of Grace, and so really quite beyond me." Frederik nodded sharply in assent while Edvard mused upon the benevolent Grace that permeated his new life in Redelinghuys, which simply happened to him.



Much earlier in the day, as if earlier in a rich lifetime, the two enchanters had set off to the mega-village of Piketberg in Freddie's maroon pick-up wagon, in an ethereal climate already bristling with the young, still heat, so that the wagon's open windows displaced the breath of intricate conversation, replacing the air of frivolous chatter with that of deep, blustery meditation, whose indistinct theme seemed to be the mystic rapture of the landscape.

That they were hurtling along - "rattling along, rattling along" interjects Waggan - in a modern wagon, past veiled vineyards twinkling with lush growth through the suppressed and suppressing netting of

Director Amaxingophephymate, the tragic King of artificial and external Measurement - was really quite incidental, and eclipsed by effulgent presence of the eternal bushman and around them: the softly-pulsing vlei in the centre of a valley alive with cosmic life, wherein "game practice" is our theory-in-practice; see how nature plays even as it kills, that forms may shape-shift into new constituencies, at the appointed moment. See how the looming mountains, a play with leopard-men and their prey (who, though they know, do not say), annointed with winding fountains, look forth serenely from their abode of divine rest. Yes, my hearts, this is Africa at its best!

Though they were indeed in the South-Western Cape of Africa, Edward and his pops both beheld, as they entered Pikeberg on an upper street passing opulent houses on the mountainside, a villa called, as displayed on the gate, "La Mancha", in reference to the home village in Spain, of the famous knight Don Quixote de la Mancha, and his dotting squire, Sancho Panza.

Next to the signwriting was an image-sketch of the stoically gaunt knight upon his equally gaunt beast of burden, Rocinante. A key theme of this (I mean, that) hilarious, epic and profound story by the sage enchanter Cervantes - being the sanity of home, Edward burst out laughing upon seeing such

an artful display of home-spun wisdom, just when he was on the point of opulently critiquing the opulent character of the houses on the slopes.

Edward had (and has) good sense to laugh at himself, since the game of life is fundamentally a love-affair fraught with paradox, mystery and magic. Moreover, he, who philosophically considers the Stone Age to be the high-water mark of our human expression in life, was about to see a tooth fairy in this, same Stoned Age. I might add that Eddie had not been to see this kind of fairy for a long time. Not counting (but not discounting) his initial visit of the previous week, of which this was the follow-up and main event. Doctor Saskia was adorned in a blue mask that veiled her

beaming smile but not her smiling brown eyes as she entered her office-theatre and greeted the Teacher, who was seated on the sloping toothfairy-chair, in cordial Afrikaans, while a San assistant, also masked, stood behind him. Edward wondered whether he'd be able to articulate intricacies of his inner mouth in Afrikaans, his second language, but it wasn't long before he was unable to articulate much in any language, though Saskia had switched to English by then. Because by then, what with injected anaesthetic numbing his lower right morth and brave Reality barking his being, our mutual friend could do little more than wince, nod and laugh. Like when Saskia was telling about a bar in the Klein Karoo forpie of Van Wyks-

dorp, which Edward knew well - I mean, the dorp - where, since the bar didn't have a liquor licence, you could perhaps donate some money to the barman, and he'd maybe donate a drink in return... Then, perceiving that Edward's mouth was comfortably numb, Dr. Saskia informed him she was going in, brandishing I suppose some sort of tongs, with which she proceeded to wiggle-pull pitilessly, at Ed's farthest tooth on the lower right jaw, known colloquially as a 'wisdom tooth' - while at that very moment, in the worship song playing along - the life loves to play along - the singer was singing, "Your Love defends me." With a faintly perceptible though living tug the root gave way and the tooth came out.

The Shift...

... Swirls forth like runes on stone as an old song, in rapture, enlight's my new bones. Lo, the smart grandfather clock from deep stillness chimes in in virtuous gonging tones. Rory Gallagher's voice and rhythm is arranging splendidly this thai green curry chicken for whose zing we thank the powers that be.

Freddie and me, yours truly, sit on entranced, prayerfully, as Dollar Brand takes us, pilgrims, on a sound journey. This life is 'L Africa Fiesta', and my love-song is 'Lolita'. Freddie the witty, one-time joked that my New York-bound plane took ages, in Ghana, to refuel, cos the guy was pumping manually.

Yet I smiled on, as my vision appeared to lift: it only changes in tone, when you're there for the Shift.

l'nenolo