

Traces

English poems
Nederlandse gedichten

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Preface

I have always been drawn towards the night and darkness. Silence, the lack of visual stimuli, provides me with an environment in which I feel comfortable. It is here, in darkness, where the relativity of space and time becomes so apparent. It is here, where I feel my experiences and views can shed light on what happens in this world.

I used to be tempted to use the light of others to find my own way, but I realised some time ago that that is a dead-end street. During a visit to the Waitomo glowworm caves in New Zealand, I looked at the worms who live in the stalactite caves for 9 months and give light during that time, so-called bioluminescence. They catch their prey by attracting them with light. Once close to the light, the prey is caught in a slimy thread from which there is no escape. I came to realise that I should not follow the light of someone or something else. Instead, I should shed my own light because it will help me view my path, rather than being blinded by other lights.

During my professional career, I have given my opinion and shared my light in discussions, project plans and scientific

papers. All seemed fine and sufficient to fulfil my life. Then, during one of the talks with a dear friend, she told me about a story she had heard. A dream in which characters of your skills surround you at the end of your life, asking you if you used them well. It got me thinking.

It was not until I lost my sister and my husband that I decided to share the fruits of my other skills, my poems. They cover a wide variety of themes and they were written in various periods of my life. The poems are traces of who I was, of what I encountered and how I perceived my environment. My hope is that these poems leave traces behind for you, dear reader. Traces of value, at a certain point in your life. May these poems allow you to shine your light.

The Netherlands, November 2023

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