



Creative Wordshops

Dorian Haarhoff

082 873 6802

dorianhaa@gmail.com

www.dorianhaarhoff.com

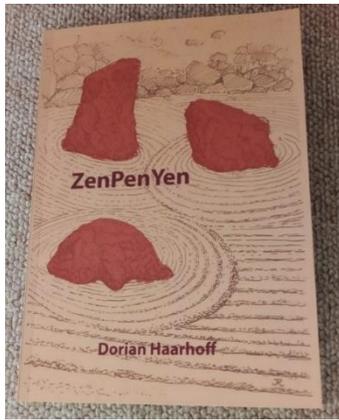
storyteller facilitator speaker writing-coach poet

Writing Letter

July 2022

re-story, re-create,
re-imagine yourself, your
work, your relationships

for this letter, a weekly story and ongoing opportunities -
dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za



Stop press: *ZenPenYen* poetry collection

Orders R150 plus postage R40 - e book available on Amazon
plus print version. Voiced text on its way

I invite you to see the zoom version of the launch, courtesy
of Igno van Niekerk, friend, writer and photographer.

<https://adilo.bigcommand.com/watch/h1EulWxu>

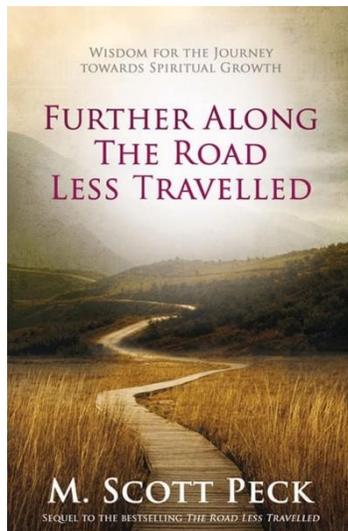
A Fork in the Road

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.* (Robert Frost 1874- 1960)

How is it that some texts date, culturally bound to time and place while others cycle through seasons and centuries, speaking anew to each generation? Take Robert Frost's *The Road Not Taken* for example (1915). This poem has been quoted, misquoted, referenced and anthologised for more than a century. In many surveys the poem tops the popularity pops. So many of us can quote the mantra of the last three lines. It has even been used (misused?) for a New Zealand ad for Ford (2008).

The road is a universal symbol. Is it that we are intrigued by the theme of individual choice and the risk of unknown and unexpected paths? Is it the

nostalgic pastoral setting in a wood (Frost farmed for a decade) and the simple rhythm that suggests it could be sung? It is also narrative for those who love stories.



Scott Peck, the psychiatrist, borrowed it for three of his titles. (Some suggest the titles sold the books.)

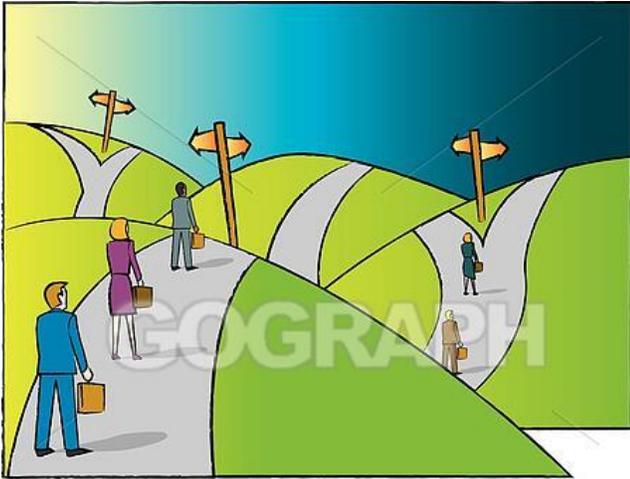
Though poems stand alone, I am intrigued by the origins of this one. Written partly as a personal response to fellow poet, Edward Thomas, a hiking companion and friend. Frost's road led him away from the war to America while Thomas enlisted and was killed in 1917. Some suggest the poem was partially responsible for him enlisting. (Their banter was that Thomas was indecisive.) Here is the poem:

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



gg58115884 www.gograph.com

The poem is of course, open to interpretation. A close reading reveals complexity within simplicity. Not as simple as it looks. Does the middle of the poem suggest that either road is valid? Why the sigh? At the end Frost does not say whether the difference was beneficent or malevolent. Or in-between.

So, this brings me to the writing fork in the road. Sometimes people I mentor confess to writer's block. There is no such thing. Perhaps the problem with writers is that sometimes we squint too far down the road, trying to read around the bend. Rather focus instead on the immediate step -like the little rudder on an ocean liner that turns the big rudder that turns the ship. If we could direct our attention to the next possible move, the story could open up because whatever route you choose, there are possibilities and there are other forks. In writing, there are nuances that arrive through the choice of which road to travel by.



True too to how we choose to live our daily round. I was due to fly to in early June to teach at Emoyeni Retreat Centre. One day before the flight, the airline withdrew all services. So I arrive at a fork. Do I try another airline or postpone? I try another airline. The price horrendous. So we agree to postpone to late August. And so it goes....

Is it possible that in the imagination, we could take the other path? If we are many selves imagining where that might lead?

Once in wordshop I gave a twin exercise prompt where people considered the options that their imaginary twin had taken. When they turned right, the twin

turned left. They divided the page via a horizontal line. A woman after plotting the lived story above the line and the imagined one below, responded. "My twin and I have arrived at the same place. Only she got here five years ago."

There is the story of a monk, celibate by a day, who every night enjoyed a serial dream. He was married to an Italian mamma with a tribe of children. So by day, one life by night, another story.

May your 'way lead on to way.'

Dorian

000

Writing Retreat Radar July / August 2022

detailed flyers on request

1. The Library Inside: Leaving a Legacy, Leaving a Gift - Writing & Storyshop

Sat 25 June 10,00 -16.00 R580 Venue: Pringle Bay

The communication of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living. (T. S. Eliot)



A wise elder once told me, "The graveyard's an interesting place. Full of untold stories. Make sure that by the time you die, you have shared yours." Every death is a double death for when we die, the library inside our head and the stories in our heart die too. Come and share your stories.

Beginners are welcome. I create a space that is safe and supportive.



2. From One Picture to Many Words: 3 Zoom Collage Workshops

10 & 31 July & 28 Aug – 15.30 -17.30 SA time
R250 each or R720 for 3

A picture can release a thousand words. In these zoom workshops we absorb, describe and respond to magazine images/photos then watch how the words rise off the page. They fly like birds.

3. Magaliesberg, Emoyeni Buddhist Retreat Centre -book @ emoyeni.org.za

3a. Healing the Family Tree: An Ancestor and Us writing retreat

Fri 26- Sun 28 Aug

The songs of our ancestors are also the songs of our children



Our stories are gifts we give each other and gifts we leave behind us. For one day we too will be ancestors. In this retreat we write our stories and place them next to those of our family, immediate, extended and chosen. The idea of family can include not only blood but our spiritual tradition, culture and the line of those who share our passions.

3b. Between First In-breath and Last Out-breath: The Art of Story-telling

Sun 28 Tues 30 Aug

Ever since I heard my first love story I have been looking for you (Rumi)



Who is the who that Rumi alludes to? There is something deeply fictional about us human beings. We are the stories we tell about ourselves. Rediscover the lost art of story-telling. Experience the joy, presence, mindfulness and transformation that arrive when we engage with a tale, learn how to craft it and inhabit it.

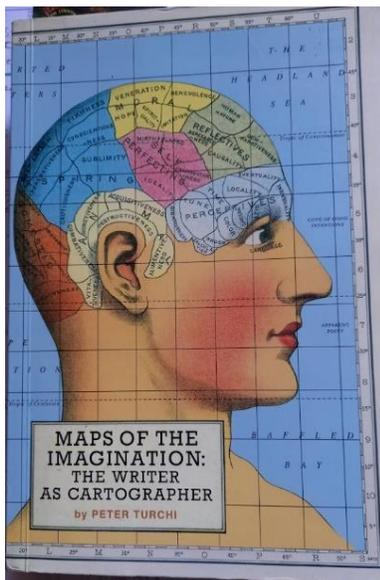
All you need do is change the name and it's about YOU, this story' (Horace)



4. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)

Our ongoing monthly writeaway

Need to be part of a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers?



Writing exercises, conversation, energy, soup and wine. Beginners are welcome... make writing friends

Our first half of 2022 theme? see book title:

Next session Wed 22 June
6,30-9.30

And in between, **one-on-one mentoring**. You wearing one sandal, I the other.

