



Creative Wordshops

Dorian Haarhoff

082 873 6802

dorianhaa@gmail.com

www.dorianhaarhoff.com

storyteller facilitator speaker writing-coach poet

Writing Letter

Sept 2024

re-story, re-create, re-
imagine you

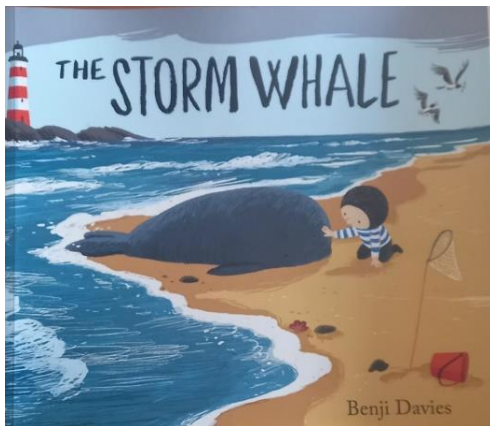
for this letter, a weekly story
and ongoing opportunities -
dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za

Dear writer, storyteller, reader, lover of words, images, silences...

Thank you for those who subscribe to the monthly letter and/or who receive the weekly Sat story. While the letter and story remain open as a gift to all, for those who wish, I'd appreciate any voluntary donation for the year (Aug 2024- July 2025.) Dr R D Haarhoff Standard Bank Current account 0828 59 248

Mother whales lie dreaming suckling their whale-tender young and dreaming with strange whale eyes wide open in the waters of the beginning and the end. (D H Lawrence)

The Storm Whale by Benji Davies (2013 - both text and illustrations)



This month I'm offering two versions of this children's story - the original and my adaptation. I connected to the original then amplified it, keeping the phrases I loved while substituting what I needed to enter the story. Some of these choices were conscious, others unconscious which you may well discover as these may relate to your

journey.

Obviously, there are no illustrations (the original is rich in them) so I transmuted some of the pictures into visual words. I added the Lawrence quotation which anticipates the end of the story. As an exercise you might like to compare the two versions. What would you include/add/emphasise?

The original

Noi lived with his dad and six cats by the sea. Everyday Noi's dad left early for a long day's work on his fishing boat. He wouldn't be home again until dark. One night, a great storm had raged round their house. In the morning Noi went down to the beach to see what had been left behind. As he walked along the shore, he spotted something in the distance. As he got closer, Noi could not believe his eyes. It was a little whale washed up on the sand. Noi wondered what he should do. He knew that it wasn't good for a whale to be out of the water. *I must be quick!* he thought. (Illustration: calf in tub)



Noi did everything he could to make the whale feel at home. He told stories about life on the island. The whale was an excellent listener. The night was drawing in and it was growing dark. Noi was worried that his dad would be angry about having a whale in the bath. Somehow Noi kept his secret safe all evening. He even managed to sneak some supper for his whale, but he knew it couldn't last.



Noi's dad wasn't angry. He had been so busy he hadn't noticed that Noi was lonely, but he said they must take the whale back to the sea where it belonged. Noi knew it was the right thing to do, but it was hard to say goodbye. He was glad his dad was there with him. Noi often thought about the storm whale. He hoped that one day, soon he would see his friend again. (Illustration: Dad & Noi picnicking, seeing a large and small tail fin out at sea.)

My adaptation

Noi lived with his grandfather with six cats in a flotsam and jetsam house made of salvaged wrecks. There's was the only hut for miles along a rocky coast. Rocks sharp as a pirate's cutlass.

Every dawn, grandfather left for a day's fishing out in his boat. He only came home after sunset. One night, a mighty storm raged around the house. In the morning, after grandfather had left, Noi went down to the beach, and in the distance, spotted something, a shape. He ran as fast as he could, to find a dwarf pilot baby whale washed up on the sand. What to do? The low Neap tide lapped far below the rocky barrier. A whale could not live out of the water.

He ran back to the hut, fetched a trolley, and rolled the calf into it. Two fishermen helped. They hauled the trolley, Noi pulling with all his might, then tipped the calf into an old bathtub outside the hut. Noi ran down to the beach, hauling bucket after bucket of sea water until the calf was floating in the tub.

How could he make his guest feel at home? He told the calf the story of Jonah and the whale. How the whale deposited Jonah on a distant shore. The calf was a first-class listener. Even the cats came to listen. with their nine lives. Night was drawing in. All evening Noi kept his secret, sneaking supper from grandfather's catch.

Early morning, when grandfather was about to set out, he peeked into the bath and muttered *Oh dear, I've been so busy I haven't noticed that my boy is lonely.* So he sat with Noi and said, *Today we're going to take the calf back to the sea where she belongs.* And so back into the cart she went. They tipped the baby whale into the boat, and then rowed out to sea at high tide. It was hard to say goodbye, so Noi was glad that his grandfather was there with him.

That night Noi dreamt about the storm whale. A day later, he and grandfather were picnicking on a sand dune. Grandfather was now taking a day off each week to spend with Noi. They saw a whale tail and another tiny tail flip in the water as if to wave goodbye. Then they were gone.

Noi turned to his grandfather, *It seems that like in the story of Jonah, I'm inside the whale now, the whale is inside me. Grandfather smiled, Loy, you have just explained, as few adults can, what love is and how it lasts.*

How did you connect to the original? Which endings spoke to you?

Dorian

Writing Retreat Radar –Spring 2024

detailed flyers on request

- 1. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)**
last Wed of the month writeaway
a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers (full)
- 2. Writeaway in Pringle Bay 23-25 Aug (full)**
Next Pringle retreat 15-17 Nov (10 places)

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**POST FFC FESTIVAL
CRAFT YOUR
WRITING
WORDSHOP**

with
Dorian
Haarhoff

WED 28 Aug
14.00-16.30
Som West

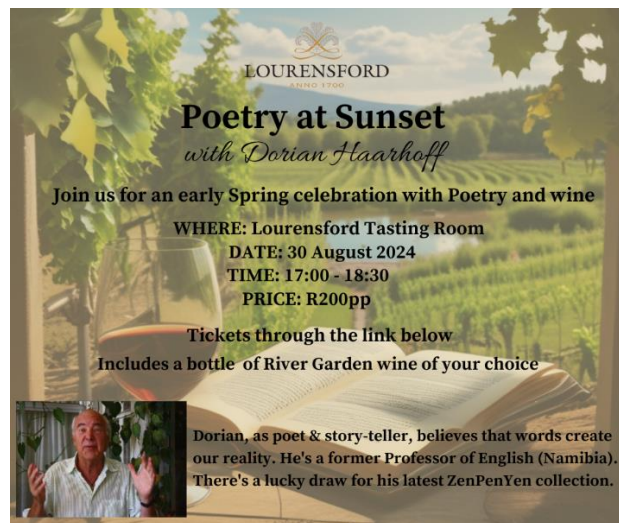
R290

12 places

082 873 6802

FRINGE FIRESIDE CHATS
INDIE AUTHORS RISE UP

4



LOURENSFORD
ESTABLISHED 1862

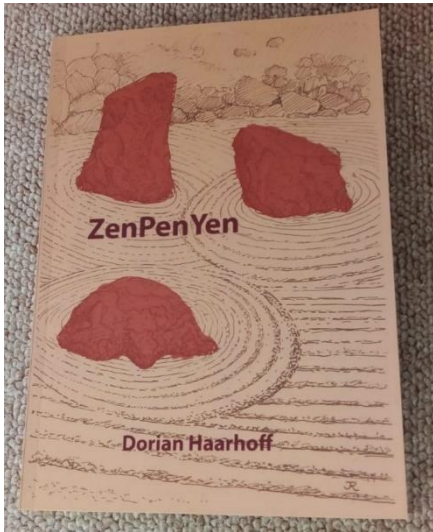
Poetry at Sunset
with Dorian Haarhoff

Join us for an early Spring celebration with Poetry and wine

WHERE: Lourensford Tasting Room
DATE: 30 August 2024
TIME: 17:00 - 18:30
PRICE: R200pp

Tickets through the link below
Includes a bottle of River Garden wine of your choice

Dorian, as poet & story-teller, believes that words create our reality. He's a former Professor of English (Namibia). There's a lucky draw for his latest ZenPenYen collection.



5. Buddhist Retreats Ixopo Sept
(bookings via <https://www.brcixopo.co.za/>)
082 579 3037

Thoughts, Words, Breath and Blood Fri 13-Sun 15

How do thoughts and words affect our body? How does the body in a meditative state help us choose the thoughts and words that nourish us? Come and explore how a consciousness of story can help us to choose a path of grace.

Write away at the BRC Sun 15 -Tues 17

*A word is dead when said, some say. I say it just begins to live that day.
(Emily Dickinson)*

Are words and ideas stuck in your head? Need inspiration and writing company? Create a word space? Befriend words/let words befriend you? Then this retreat is for you.

6. ZenPen Retreat (Groot Marico)
20-25 Oct 2024 **Writing, Being & Meditation**

<https://tararokpacentre.co.za/event/zenpen-writing-being-and-meditation/>

014 503 8901

7. Mentoring: ongoing one-on-one attention

You help me to sound like myself (numerous clients)

Like a pair of sandals we walk this road together. Taking in the view. Mentoring involves finding out where you want to go with your writing/story telling/work/life and encouraging you get to there.

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