

She showed him the way to love and to live, and inspired him to confront a trauma he had experienced fifteen years before they met. The story in this book is based on dialogues with her and with himself, and zooms in on how these dialogues helped him overcome the trauma of losing her to cancer.

Here are some extracts of the book, slightly modified:

Hi lieverd¹, Hello love,

The seven and a half months trauma that I shared with you, as you often repeated, has reshaped my life. I opened up to you quickly, something I surprised myself with. Perhaps it was the timing when our paths crossed each other, or maybe it was your loving way of asking the questions. It could simply have been dictated by our destinies! Whatever it was, it made me feel like I was reborn again, and in a way I was. Sharing my 'secret' with you helped me to find an enormous amount of energy to love, to live, and to achieve so much more in the twenty years I've had the pleasure of having you in my life.

We had had a lovely life full of love, dreams, and all that it takes to mindfully enjoy the moment. We almost forgot that life has an end for everyone, and that someday, one of us would have to continue life's journey without the other.

She had a little ornament on her make-up table in the form of an angel with the text: 'Love DEEPLY, Live with PASSION'. She became ill, she followed that motto, despite the demons of cancer until she no longer could.

One night, in the early hours of the morning, she woke up and put her hand on my arm. She was unable to speak any more, but the look in her eyes, the smile she forced out and how she touched me told me that she wanted to go. Two days later she was gone.

When you smiled I had it all
When you cried, I felt your pain
You embraced your destiny
With a love for life and for living
That will be my beacon
For the road ahead
In my battle against those demons
Until I reach my own destiny, my love.
In the abyss of life
Everything has a rhythm
In a symphony that plays on
You stood up to the demons
Your weapons were love and beauty

¹ Lieverd is a Dutch word that is the equivalent of 'honey' in English.

You were here to let me live
I will defy those demons
On the road to my own destiny, my love.

She was my partner; she was my friend, and as we grew to know each other well, we became soulmates; each one of us knew how the other one ticked. When she became ill, I was dedicated to doing everything for her to make her life a bit happier and more comfortable. She passed away, and as the months and years rushed by, I began to doubt whether I ever had her in my life and if it was just a dream. Sooner or later, this may mean unjust forgetfulness of something the world could never have too much of: **Love and how it can be a source of pleasure as well as a source of pain.**

This story is both a commemoration and a celebration of love and of life, and of how two people stood up to cancer together. She fought her battles with courage, smiles, and love for life. When the cancer demons came to take him, he picked up the torch to continue their fight. Standing up to the demons of cancer has become a major pillar in his life's purpose.