The image is a vertical photograph of tall grasses in silhouette against a bright, hazy sky. The sun is positioned in the lower-left quadrant, creating a strong backlighting effect. The grasses are thin and elongated, with some showing seed heads. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# Mindful and aimless

Henk de Kruyff



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by  
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## Author's preface

I have thought long and hard about the form of some of the following pieces. Some are without rhyme, some only achieve rhythm when mulled over a bit. The worries that plagued me had their roots in a lack of self confidence. Reading biographies on writers and reading Tolstoy cured this, for a writer, fatal defect. Writers that conform to pre-set forms may find initial success but lasting meaning is found in those that dare to free themselves.

The pieces, I hesitate to call them poems, that follow are expressions of feelings and ideas. They are written much as they came to me. Of course a lot of labour has gone into them after writing the first drafts but their forms have stayed as they presented themselves to me. As one of the pieces (first line: "Writing, is it craft or art?") explains, it is hard enough to translate one's thoughts to that constricted medium that is the written word. To worry about generally accepted form, when purity has so much worth seems, although mindful, in the end, aimless.

HK

Bennekom, 5-2009



A leaf playing sailboat in the pond  
The wind directs movement  
There is no planning involved  
The only drawback,  
Popping the bubble of content,  
Is confinement by the edges of the pond

Words flow  
From head to paper  
Moods high and low  
Reflected in a paper mirror

Like a tram on the tracks  
Life flows from A to Z  
Without point or goal  
A want we compensate by inventing soul

Like the tram on its tracks  
There is an illusion of moving ahead  
But no matter how long we stay on  
The terminus is inevitably journey's end

Some believe in fate  
Others in freedom of choice  
Where they all go wrong  
Is in believing it matters a damn

Systems and rules to live by  
Ideologies that compel  
That's where I disconnect  
That's where I spot the lie

My thoughts need no rules to live by  
They roam unhindered  
They accept no bonds  
In my thoughts I am the most high

The country of my mind  
Is inhabited by citizens  
That look like wisps of fog  
Thoughts that amble slowly past  
And like fog they often obscure  
That which is regarded real  
But unlike fog's cold and damp  
Thoughts are a warm-blooded cast

On studying my shadow

The shadow cast by me

Is as unreal as the body throwing it

A man's biggest mistake is to think

His shadow greater than the light he can't see

The mind that wanders  
Is the mind that doesn't fit  
The mind that wonders  
Is the mind that stays fit

In my head resides a world  
Full of questions, full of ire  
A world where the only answers  
Involve sulphur and purifying fire

If my mind could rule the world  
It would not be a world like this  
Mankind would not be  
Or at least not as it is

Intelligence is overrated  
A burden and as such obsolete  
I would keep our heads for chewing  
And move our brains into our feet

Something old, something new  
An old sorrow and something untrue  
The mind, that hallowed place  
Plays tricks we fail to spot

Convinced of our personal truths  
We disdain other thinking minds  
When confronted with a contrary view  
We make something old out of something new

Where my mind wanders  
Only a wanderer knows  
What my eyes observe  
Requires a drifters nerve

Squiggly handwriting in a notepad  
Thoughts that hint at an active mind  
Expressions of annoyance and rage  
At everyday life intruding  
Those squiggly lines  
Tell a story on every page

The moon is not full  
Nothing as romantic as that  
It is half a moon that lights my path

To get halfway to happiness  
Says the optimist pessimistically met  
Means half a life to live less

To aim at the sun  
Is to aim at gaseous destruction  
To aim at the moon  
Is to aim at a more solid construction  
Some mimic the moth  
That will never learn:  
To fly into the flame  
Only results in a momentary brilliant burn

What is the value of thought?  
It's quality is vapourous  
It's span is momentary  
The brain that wrought  
Only capable of roughly expressing  
That which is immediately legendary

Aimless are my thoughts  
They can not change  
The path the universe is on  
A path without destination  
Mindful and aimless  
Two concepts in a forced relation

On studying my burning cigar

The orange glow

Gently releasing scent

Smoke disperses in random wisps

Taking care the process is slow

Grey ash marking a transforming event

Perpetuated and doomed by my silent lips

What my eyes see  
Is not what my nerves perceive  
The light by my eyes trapped  
My brain does not accept  
All is translated into  
A skeleton construction  
That by a penetrating inner view  
With frightening clarity  
Is seen right through

Only in the second line  
Will I say I'm fine

Bound by a theme  
Dictated by thought  
Inhabited by ideas  
A world is born  
Imaginary, yet real  
As if awake in a dream

A river flows  
Instead of water  
Something ethereal glitters  
It feeds a glade  
Dark blue grass in the wind titters  
The glade is called 'the glade of woes'

On every journey's stage  
The river leads  
We follow, as inevitable as Styx  
From the mountain of youth  
Through the glade of woes  
To the sea of old age

Beyond the sea lies  
Only stillness  
The oblivion of not being  
The emptiness of not existing  
The silence of the unuttered  
The folly of the wise

If I knew the question  
I would have a chance at the answer  
If I knew the answer  
The question would have had to be asked  
If I knew the way  
A goal had to be  
But there is no goal  
The road never converges into a point  
The horizon is never met  
Ever out of grasp  
Ever equally far away  
The journey never ends there  
Because it never ends  
Those that believe  
In an arrival with a new departure  
That somehow one can journey beyond  
The horizon's line  
Deny that which is certain  
They un hinge the fabric of existence  
Take a chance on an answer  
To which the question can not be asked

When in a brooding mood

On a scale of one to ten

I rate life

A meagre five

On a scale of one to five

I rate death

The same as life

Knowledge does not grant wisdom  
Insight does  
Teaching does not grant wisdom  
Discovery does  
Setting goals does not grant wisdom  
Roaming does

That most elusive of qualities  
Requires a mind that is free  
Ears that listen  
And eyes that see

My mind penetrates  
That which others can not see  
Forever bereft of wonder  
All is clear to me  
Though without haste or invitation  
Death would not come unwelcomed  
The scythe may swing  
Now or later  
It will not cut early  
or overdue  
For me it will be  
Like a setting free  
It will end that  
Which already ended  
The moment my mind  
penetrated that  
Which most refuse to see

Sometimes the darkness  
Feels too heavy to lift  
Lacking in energy to mess  
With the gears that shift  
The obscuring veil  
The weight of which seems rather unfair  
And those days I can only fail  
For a moment I stare  
Into eye-less sockets  
But then decide  
That life's secret pockets  
May still have some treasure to hide

Lately more often  
I find it hard to soften  
The loathing that rises  
When observing the guises  
In which, we robots,  
Stick to our slots  
Resigned in convention  
Afraid of invention  
Attaching great value  
To what is not true  
I watch aghast  
What must be humanity's last  
Blind with greed  
Armageddon has sprouted from its seed  
The reckoning, that will be swift  
Shall cause a needful shift  
In who's on top  
And it is us for the drop  
The hangman grins  
He knows all our sins  
Justified, he pulls the handle  
The rope stretches, we dangle  
Justice is done  
Not surprised that nature has won  
Lately more often  
I find it hard to soften

A beast travels the universe  
It devours souls  
And crushes matter  
Its food: stars and black holes  
Slowly the beast grows fatter  
All that is, succumbs to this curse

The beast moves on  
What it leaves behind  
Is deep light-less void  
Its excrement of a kind  
That emptiness soiled  
The beast assures: what is will be gone

A bench just outside Wageningen  
A stone structure with a wooden seat  
How many people have sat here?  
But none as free

Gazing over the wetlands towards the Rhine  
A multitude of birds  
A few cows and unseen critters in the grass  
They laze, graze and chase

Chimney stacks of now dormant brick  
Industrial monuments out of work  
Showing a commercial past  
Commerce the Rhine still serves, even more vast

An occasional cyclist pedals the dike  
Which serves as ring road for the slow  
Or protection for the town  
When Swiss melt compels the river to overflow

It is a peaceful Monday morning  
Sunny and all are at work  
Different from the weekends  
When all parade and stroll

Now just a solitary writer  
Sitting on the bench  
Observing and absorbing  
Conforming to a different rhythm

Flowing, like the river  
Flooding when over full  
But never again constrained  
By corporate trim or bureaucratic whim

Decided to be free  
Like the river  
Flowing  
From source to sea



How did this happen  
This change in me  
This looking at existence  
With eyes that are able to see  
Inside the construct  
Of all there is  
The view that causes  
Freedom and paralysis  
All has become significantly empty  
Devoid of significance  
No goal, no aim  
The old priorities, a picture without frame

The party is over  
Still chatting to those that linger  
A few bottles remain  
A few crisps and crackers  
A bit of camembert and pate  
We slowly crash  
On the floor or the sofa  
The bed, up the stairs, only for the brave  
Senses dulled  
To drunk now to talk  
Silence reigns, we're all gravity's slave  
Only soft snoring  
Distinguishes the now dark room  
From a solemn grave  
The party is over  
I lay staring in the dark  
Thinking about life without aim  
And feel pretty relieved  
That a few bottles remain

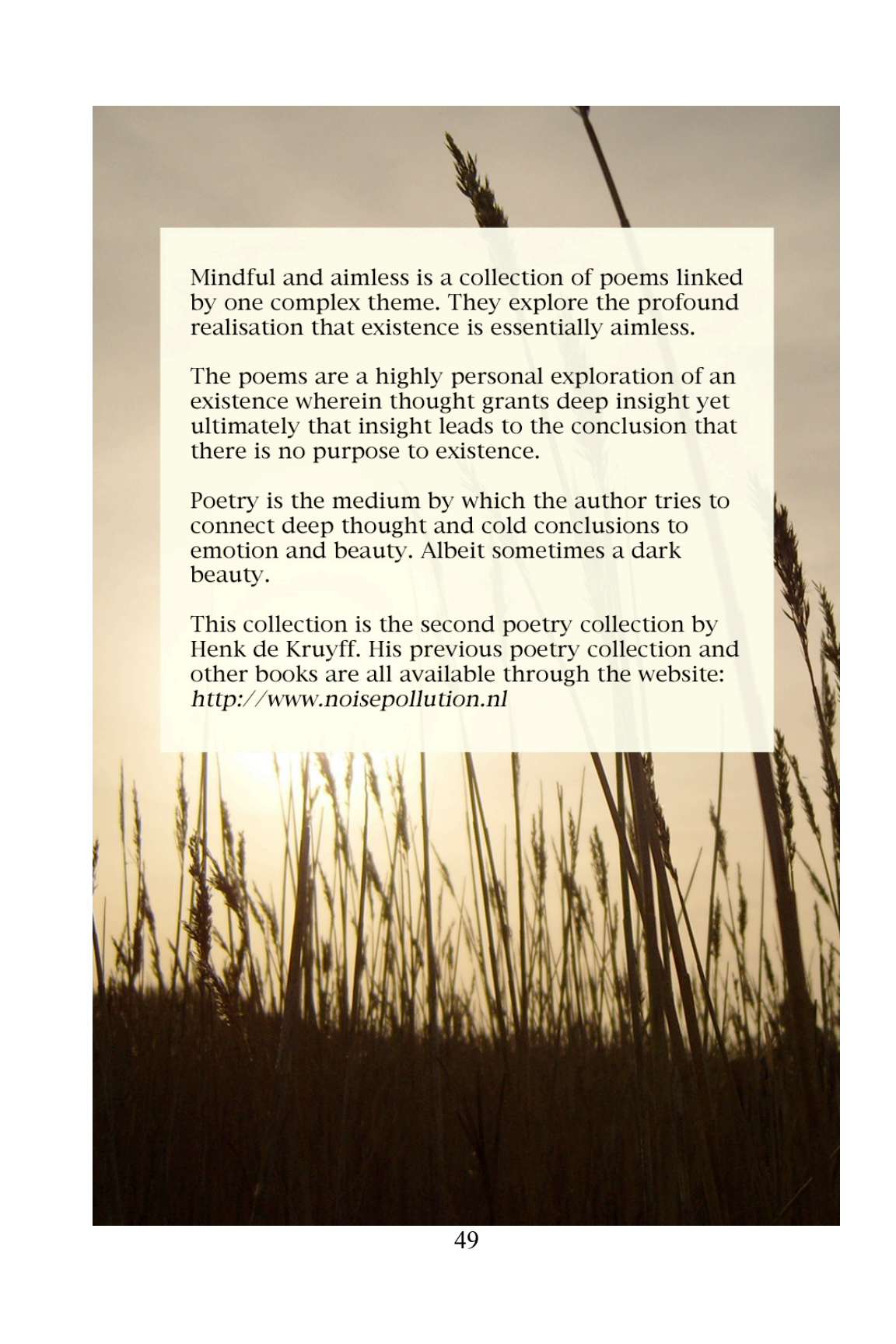
The trees stand  
Proudly reaching  
For the distant skies  
Like an outstretched hand  
Beseeching  
To stop the lies  
We tell them while raping the land  
Humanity greedily leeching  
While deaf to the wise  
Grabbing what we can't  
Ignoring our own dull teaching  
Oblivious to the cries  
From the trees that stand  
Proudly reaching  
For the ever more distant skies

The old terrier is basking in the sun  
His geriatric bones appreciate the heat  
I wonder about what goes on in his little bun  
Do ideas develop during this sun filled treat?

I very much doubt it  
Though not stupid by a long mile  
The aimlessness of life doesn't bother him one bit  
Even though his span is such a little while

I break my head on grand ideas  
Thoughts, the not having of he does not miss  
He looks at me and nodding, agrees  
Ignorance is certainly a prerequisite for bliss

I will not go to heaven  
Nor do I wish to  
I will not be presented with seventy-two virgins  
Nor would I know what with them to do  
That existence ends  
I hold for universally true  
But the end is the end  
Not the beginning of something new  
At least not for me, my spirit or ghost  
Just my elements, those measly few  
Will form fresh alliance  
Bonded by forceful glue  
Bonds that one day just as certainly unbind  
In the eternal recycling out of which I grew



Mindful and aimless is a collection of poems linked by one complex theme. They explore the profound realisation that existence is essentially aimless.

The poems are a highly personal exploration of an existence wherein thought grants deep insight yet ultimately that insight leads to the conclusion that there is no purpose to existence.

Poetry is the medium by which the author tries to connect deep thought and cold conclusions to emotion and beauty. Albeit sometimes a dark beauty.

This collection is the second poetry collection by Henk de Kruijff. His previous poetry collection and other books are all available through the website: <http://www.noisepollution.nl>