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The following speech was written by **Louis de Villiers** to be read at the book launch of 'Enter'. You can read a report of the book launch [here](#). You can view Joshua Mentz referencing Louis' speech [here](#). You can gain a sense of the presentations seen as a whole [here](#).

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Launching *ENTER* | 7 May 2016

You can fight entropy, or swim in it.

Kerry Howley: The Cage of you

Granta Summer 2015 No 132

I first met Hendrik Mentz probably about 15 years ago? Ragel (Greeff) and Ken Barris will remember: it was the year in which they both had been finalists in the Caine Prize for African Writing and Ken and Anri had invited us to dinner. Also at the table was this tall, very thin and clearly very worried man. Because of his intense interest, the way he would sit and deeply scrutinise someone talking and frown as he considered what they meant and problematized it and how he would passionately engage in the debate, we quickly became friends. A friendship which has grown over the years and continues to be very close even since my coming to Perth more than 4 years ago.

I got to know Hendrik as someone who thinks most intensely about things. A man who spent 17 years in deep therapy and really worked hard at it. Out of which came Enter, his story of what he learned in his process of therapy and felt the need to share with a broader audience. Something that I have found amusing is how, when his intensity becomes too much and in an attempt to lighten the mood you'd make a flippant comment. Weeks later Hendrik would come back to you with a response having thought very deeply about your remark. Hendrik searches single-mindedly for the truth, right to the core. In getting to the truth, he is undaunted in going through the depths of Hell and back. Fearlessly confronting and slaying Minotaurs, Sauron or whatever he finds in the way.

He takes intergenerational trauma most seriously and seeks to confront the original hurt in order to overcome the damage to enable us to move forward and to grow. As he says: to become alive. As someone who tends to shoot from the hip, I appreciate how deeply Hendrik thinks about an issue before responding. Even as he has truly tried to move beyond the rational and embrace the emotional.

In *Enter* he recounts the story of how he gave a street child some money and, when he connected and looked into her eyes, he realised she was not a boy but a girl. And how deeply moved he was. He was moved because he dropped the usual societal façade. Because he connected. Because he dared where most would not go. And that is the point. Few will be able to follow Hendrik's example, never mind do in daily life.

I salute a brave man and wish his book well. If it touches one person and breaks the rock for the tears to flow, it will be worth it. It will speak to those who take the trouble to engage with it.