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The following speech was delivered by **Ken Barris** at the book launch of 'Enter'. You can read a report of the book launch [here](#). You can view Ken's speech [here](#). You can gain a sense of the presentations seen as a whole [here](#).

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Penny, thank you for being shorter than Josh. Broeders en suster. *Oom Hendrik het my gevra om die verringtinge (???) to open met 'n skriflesing maar hy het ongelukkig vergeet om my aan die begin van die program te plaas, maar Hennie en gaan nie aanstoot neem nie – vergifnis is alles.* (Brothers and sisters. Uncle Hendrik asked me to open the evening with a scripture reading. But unfortunately he forgot to place at the start of the programme. But Hennie I shan't be offended. Forgiveness is all) [*laughter*]. I turn to the Book of Job chapter 1 verse 8: you'll have to bear with me, it's quite long, but it's a dream narrative, it goes straight to the point: 'And the Lord said unto Satan ... and they are dead and only I alone am escaped to tell thee'. So, I learn from Wikipedia that it's an 8000 year document that is going into the same space, to question the very fundamentals of being and if you construct that psychologically: you know Satan and God are out there, of course they are qualities of the self so the self interrogates the principles of light and darkness and everything is taken away from Job and - you'll have to read the book yourself to get the ending [*Laughter*].

And I think Hendrik is going into that same space, now, for Hendrik, it is mind or intelligence or consciousness, for Job it is the Lord out there and Satan out there – the dualities he criticises.

I think that in reading Hennie's book – I found it a tough read and a very interesting and a fascinating read, and there were two problems – let me say two challenges that came up for me. I am an argumentative person and wanted to argue and the one thing was about, let's say how do you think and the other argument was who you are.

As to the 'how do you think' part, Hennie has a very broad perspective and he pulls together things that I'm not sure are connected, maybe because I can't see the connections. In fact I had a huge fight with Hennie when I visited him in Suurbraak about the very thing and, um, so and then I saw them later in the book and I was fascinated. But then there's the Wits Scholar, Sarah Nuttall, who talks about the concept entanglement and she says:

Entanglement is an idea which signals largely unexplored terranes [????] of mutuality brought from a common temporality of past, present and future. One which points away from a time of resistance towards a more ambivalent moment in which the time and te potential but latent and actively surfacing in South Africa, exists in complex tandem with new kinds of closure and opposition

And Eva Hunter talking about that - and that brings it down more specifically to Hendrik's book, she says:

From writers and readers the idea of entanglement demands strenuously responsive eyes to see, ears to hear, courage to confront unpleasant truths and the imaginative exploration of the nuances of relations between characters – fictional and actual in the text as well as between the reader and the text

And I think this is very much what *Enter* is about, and you'll see that Hennie sometimes does go into the fictional as he comments in one his footnotes.

The other argument that I had with the book is the 'who you are' part. And I think, as Hendrik himself has said in the book, you really don't write from the head or you don't be from the head. You're being who you are. Who is your personality, who are you, what are you? And I think that - and the word 'temperament' pops into my mind and I feel I'm more optimistic than Hendrik. But hold with that thought [*laughter*]. But hold with that thought [*more laughter*] I'm amazed that you guys have noticed this as well.

Now here's an interesting thing, on page 58 Hendrik says - he's talking about us:

A species whose very existence is defined as separation has no way to reconnect with world-in-itself because then it would cease being what it is. This is why I need to understand that I am the nature of the problem.

Now are we a species that is designed to be separate, because if I look around here, this is a community. And I don't know if the email went to everyone, but Hendrik sent out an email saying he would like some snacks, he would like some of this, he would like some wine, give a talk and he trusts on so and so and so to do it. That's community. And we're not separate, we're here. We're together, so, that is my one thought. And then my other thought: I was reading this part on page 15 a bit late at night, and I read this. Oh yes, page 15. He's talking about his father's reaction - was it oom Dawie, his uncle? Your (as in Hendrik's) uncle - oom Dawie's suicide, his father feels very responsible for it:

... a sense of responsibility that, in my father's case, was most likely brought home to him by Dawie's suicide while my father and his new wife were farming and living off the grid with their newborn son.

And I thought, no that's wrong: it's his son and his wife and his newborn child who are living off the grid in Suurbraak and I had to read it again and I worked it out.

So that's transgenerational something. It's a move - what is that to go into the wilderness, off grid? That's creativity, that's adventure, that's life and I think there is so much of that in oom Hendrik over there, so Hennie I think you also have to look into the heart of lightness as well as the heart of darkness. That what I want to say. Thank you.