

# The Lady of the Rings

Opting for Freedom of Choice



Wim Roskam

*It is my wish to accompany you very often.  
And to find together what we are both looking for.*

*To be one.*

*Wim Roskam  
11-12-'01*

*To us... to We all*



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## **Preface**

Before you begin to read this incredible book I have something I would like to say about it, not only because I have read it myself, but also because I have gotten to know Linda so well, her spirit that is, and from her and my spirit guide, Black Elk, I have learned that I share soul energy with Linda, allowing me to tune in with her experience and the many past experiences of her soul. Her story is a very special one of huge courage, tenacity, and integrity. It is understood by my soul and accepted therein as an offering of selfless love and revelation of spiritual truths. I do not wish to tell you anything of Linda personally because this book tells all that is needed to understand, of her loving heart and powerful spirit; but I will tell you that she has not ceased to exist in her unique beauty, but with her pure intentions and deeds in the afterlife she has continued to affect this world with divine devotion to Mother Earth and all her children.

I have never lost someone as close to me as Linda was to Wim, but throughout reading this book I could 'feel' that loss, or maybe what I felt is my interpretation of it. What I did feel was awesome to be sure; it was painful, and it was joyful; it made a lot fall into place, and it increased my faith and trust in the divine, and maybe that is why Linda asked Wim to share their story in this book.

Written with authenticity, the story is very real with real passion and acceptance, pain and understanding of pain. The message is clear: choice is a god given gift. You have

free will to choose for yourself, and no matter what choices you make acceptance softens the road and allows you to trust others too. The flow of the Divine Will flows with the softness and strength of Love, through all walks of life. There is also a message of oneness: we are all connected and communication with those in the spirit world is available as well as communication to those in this world.

I believe Linda taught us to allow others to be who they are. She is still teaching us this, and also to trust in others' gifts, but not to the price of your own integrity because being you is the greatest gift you have; staying true to you, to your own unique path, will guide your choices no matter how intense they may seem. Ultimately, that will be your greatest success.

Eliza White Buffalo

*Author of the Two Roads Trilogy*

# Omens

*You ask me, where did I fall?  
I'll say I can't tell you when.  
And if you ask me when,  
I'll say it starts at the end.*

*'Somehow I'll find my way home'  
John & Vangelis*

How can you describe the woman you love so deeply?  
What do you say about her?  
Do you say her name?  
I can give you that right here and now: Linda.  
What's in a name...

Would you show her photo?  
But what does a photo tell you?  
How beautiful she is? Only, she didn't like herself.  
Can you judge someone based on a picture?  
Can you look through a picture then... read between the  
lines, see through  
the pigments?  
If so, are you psychic?

So, what *do* you write?  
How she was...? She isn't alive anymore, you see.  
Now you know this too.  
And how she was... she isn't now.  
Then how can you describe her?



Do you describe how you lived together, how much you loved each other?

But does love end in death then?

Moreover, I now live with another woman.

Does this explain to you the relationship I had with her?

You're not biased, I hope? Do you jump to conclusions already?

Or does this speak for *this* woman...? Marianne is her name.

And yes... I love her dearly too. If you understand how this can be... I'm still not quite sure you do.

So let me tell you my name too: Wim

Well then, maybe you now think you know enough, and so you can put this book away.

Linda was a woman who didn't like to speak in the past tense about someone who is deceased. And I must admit I didn't either.

But after what I've learned I dare to do so now. Certain characteristics disappear, making way for new ones. The old is gone. You grow, you change. That's why you're here, because the Earth is a school. If you don't want to change, then why are you still here? Are you're already perfect then... and happy, for sure? But anyway: she was, and remains, a very special soul.

Linda was born in Rotterdam, Netherlands, in 1954, but at 6 years of age she moved to Apeldoorn. I myself was born in 1960, and that same year I moved to Apeldoorn too, and came to live only two hundred yards from her home.

Still small, a few years later, I sat in the child's seat of my mother's bike, on the way to town. I don't remember much from this time, but one memory is very clear, and that was when we cycled past Linda's home. It was a white house with a low sloping roof and a very short little garden in front. Beside the front door sat a grown woman. Maybe she was knitting, or peeling potatoes. On the ground before her, a

little dark haired girl was playing. What struck me was the pleasant, subdued atmosphere of that girl who was playing by herself. There was something that really attracted me to her, without understanding it, and I very seriously promised myself that I would soon escape from home, walk the short distance and knock on their door. I felt very sure I could make that happen one day. For a few moments then I wasn't a little boy anymore.

Picture yourself as the mother of a little girl, seeing a tiny little thing on your doorstep, asking with a matter of fact face, for the hand of your daughter...

Now, knowing Linda's mother, I know she wouldn't be that surprised. Apart from being amused she might even have taken the matter seriously in a way, knowing that when children behave in such ways they expose their older and wiser soul.

Shortly thereafter, Linda moved to Ulft, a tiny town near the German border, while I continued to live in Apeldoorn. I've never acted according to my plan, but I've often thought about it.

When Linda was older she and her mother read books, one after the other, about reincarnation, UFO's, dowsing, Atlantis, Egypt, ghostly apparitions, contacts with unseen beings, about anything that for centuries was unspoken of, except in back rooms behind closed curtains. Linda could talk with her mother for whole evenings about the things they were interested in together.

In addition, Linda was interested in dancing. She went to ballet classes and later also assigned for jazz ballet. She would have done extremely well if there had been a musical class, but in those days there was nothing like that in the Netherlands. She had the body for it: slim and agile. Ballet dancers must pay attention to their appearance. Slightly overweight is harmful and a strict diet is a must. To keep going one needs to be disciplined, and this she could do very well: stick to a strict diet, recording every calorie she

ate. At times this looked a lot like anorexia, but not really, she knew that danger all too well.

Unfortunately she was rejected for the ballet academy because of a tiny irregularity in her back. The training she followed instead was to become a teacher in 'Childcare & Education' combined with 'Creative Arts'.

After graduating she went to Israel to work in a kibbutz. On the first day she arrived she fell in love with a Scottish boy of Italian descent. Other people warned her about him, but as it usually is in love matters, she didn't listen to them.

"Immediately, things went wrong on the first day," she said later. And everything kept going wrong; there was no end to it. Her boyfriend abused her. She earned some money in the kibbutz, but he spent it, even stole it from her if she didn't give it freely. He needed it to impress others, buy them presents, and he always needed more. But, she was in love, and because of this she was willing to condone his behaviour.

About half a year later she moved to a small apartment in Tel Aviv where she found work in a bar, mixing drinks and cocktails. Of course, her major hobby was dancing, and during her time off she spent many nights on the dance floor. These were the heydays of disco, and for many free evenings and nights she stood on the floor like a true disco queen! If someone else had the nerve to compete with her, showing off his or her own moves, then often a duel would follow to see who could get the most attention from the audience and who could dance so fast, so exciting that the other gives up? And this Linda could do, for hours if necessary.

Her boyfriend worked on a rig and stayed away for weeks in a row. She felt lonely, but then a stray dog that came to ask her for help because he was sick, joined her. She took care of the poor thing, but that meant she had to consult a vet regularly and the money she needed for this sometimes suddenly was gone.

Apparently she was not the only one her boyfriend stole money from, because at one point he was arrested and landed in an Israeli prison. Linda continued to support him, visited him in prison and after his release she took him back home, emaciated and scarred, which he refused to talk about.

After more than a year she needed to go home to the Netherlands, because her visa had run out. She wanted to take her dog with her, but the authorities had very high demands on the transportation of a dog on the plane. For this she had to buy a special dog transportation box. Then a quarantine period and several vaccinations were necessary, much paperwork and of course, money. She arranged everything, but just before leaving she was told that something was amiss. There was no time to meet the new demands, so she was forced to leave her dog behind. It wasn't her fault, but ever since she had a feeling she had left her dog in the lurch. 'I still remember how he looked at me when I left him there,' she said sometimes, with tears in her eyes.

Pain... that never went away.

Back home in the Netherlands she soon found a job as a teacher at a school in Apeldoorn. Her boyfriend came a couple of months later and immediately wanted to marry her, because then he would have the Dutch nationality. But this didn't fool her because their relationship didn't go too well.

She couldn't decide to separate from him and defended him by saying that in his youth he had been badly damaged. One day he was gone for days in a row. By word of mouth she found out about his whereabouts and she looked him up in an apartment in Amsterdam where he was living together with a boyfriend in the homo scene. He let her in, and to please him she cleaned the house and did all

the laundry. Then he told her dryly that his boyfriend was coming home soon and that she shouldn't be around.

At home her mother asked her: "Do you want to continue this for the rest of your life? Is this really your idea of a relationship?"

That was just the nudge she needed to finally put an end to it.

Together with her mother she consulted a psychic lady, who predicted she would soon be in a relationship with someone else: a boy with a beard and wild curly hair over his forehead.

But she wasn't at all ready for this, she said. She was far from recovered from the failure of her 'marriage', as she called it, which then had lasted about seven years.

# Fatigue

In 1983 I met her during one of the folk dance evenings where we both participated. After one such lesson, I would go with her to her apartment, and in less than two months these incidental visits evolved into a permanent cohabitation. For me, an insecure young man, six years younger than she was, and not used to being on my own, it was a very bold step that said a lot about the attraction between us, which I had already felt as a toddler.

Many years later Linda asked me at one point: “What on Earth did you do? How did you do it? I wasn’t ready for a new relationship! You just came in and stayed.”

It must have been predestination. However, my looks didn’t match the prediction of the clairvoyant woman’s description of the new partner Linda was about to meet. But such can be arranged, and within two months I had a beard and with hair styling products it was no problem at all to provide me with curly hair above my forehead. Linda’s smile was questionable when she remarked: “Well, this meets the forecast, and now I can take you home to meet my parents.”

My own parents and my sister weren’t as quite affected by my sudden departure and complete metamorphosis, but I felt that I was rapidly growing in harmony with myself. By the way... I’ve never since changed my hairstyle.

Linda and I got along together very well, but there was one feeling that I never completely could get rid of. I was always very afraid of losing her. “What does she really see in me?” I asked myself at times, because she was very self-aware where I was very uncertain, and also much younger. It was

an inexplicable feeling that I never lost. She didn't cause it, because she did everything for me.

What struck me most were her eyes. Apart from me really being impressed by them, I saw a lot of hidden grief in them and I decided to never abandon her.

She did her job as a teacher very well and the students loved her. She could educate her kids in ways that is rarely seen. She was just, with a sharp memory and good hearing, not easily fooled, not by any of them. If a ringleader student really tried pushing the limits she would embarrass him or her. But the student would have asked for it, and afterwards, would silently admit that it had been quite right. Thus the worst students sometimes became her biggest fans. "Finally, a teacher who can handle me!" Classes that colleagues had the greatest difficulty with, she could handle just fine, and she did things that others never thought possible. A loose way of teaching was her speciality. For her it worked.

Lessons could turn into talking and sharing thoughts, but in her profession this was not a problem. Childcare & Education implies that issues such as drug use, smoking, sexuality, unwanted pregnancies, etc. are discussed, which are very sensitive issues for girls in the adolescent age. If such lessons are dealt with the wrong way these classes can turn into an outright failure and a major missed opportunity, but this never happened in Linda's classes. Sometimes students thought that they had only been talking about their problems, desires and friends, and about sex, condoms and the pill. But clever as she was, Linda led them exactly where she wanted them to go, and at the end of the lesson she gave them a stencil summarizing the topic of the day in great detail.

The students put her on a pedestal, and it was no surprise that at one point they proclaimed her as 'Teacher of the Year', and that was meaningful on a school with more than a hundred teachers!

“Finally, justice,” she said at home, with that suspect grin on her face.

Her apartment was soon too small for the both of us, so we moved to a family house next to a park a small distance away. She let me know that she didn't want to marry and that she didn't want any children either. I had no problem with that at all, because I had the same view. We didn't need it. But what we also thought unnecessary was to give each other a ring. We loved each other, so what's the point in proving that with a metal ring?

Our love for each other was rooted very deep, but there was also a deep sadness in her that she couldn't talk about. Sometimes this sorrow surfaced during intimate moments, when she would suddenly begin to cry; tears she could express only during happy and safe moments. I felt that something was blocked up inside her, but I could never figure out what was bothering her so much that it hurt. It had to do with that sadness I had seen in her eyes the very first time we met. I would like to know her at every level and free her from this sadness, but it was so deep that even she herself couldn't fathom its origin.

I came to know her as an energetic person who could easily work on for half the night if she felt that something had to be finished; a real night owl. I too had no problem with this, but I had to get used to this kind of energy that I knew from no one else. She was practically able to do everything at once and still pay attention to the details of everything that she did.

But a few years later, this abruptly changed. In 1985 she drove home from school during a particularly violent thunderstorm. It rained so hard that she could see almost nothing, so she was forced to open her side window to see where she was. At that moment a giant bolt of lightning struck the road, or more likely her car. There was a pillar of fire, as she described it, deafening her ears. It was a rare,



massive blow that startled the entire city, even me while I was miles away. A fire was started in the car dealership next to the road. Linda's car was blown sideways on the street. In large parts of Apeldoorn all electricity was cut down, and for weeks all television was offline. People told her that she had been completely safe because of the Faraday's Cage construction of her car, which electro-magnetic fields cannot penetrate. But they couldn't explain why for months after she felt a strange numbness in her entire left half of her body.

"That's the moment," she said later, "when my fatigue started." Before that time she was sprightly and active, but since then she had lost that zest for life and she's never been the same again, always feeling tired. When she came home from work, she increasingly needed to sleep on the couch while I cooked dinner. She managed to keep doing all homework for school, but that was it. Her fatigue became so serious that even during holidays she wasn't able to recharge her battery. But she never accepted that her work would suffer under the circumstances. Her students would receive the maximum quality education, and she demanded from herself that her work was done at all times. Luckily I could assist her with making and discussing stencils, papers and checking digits. No matter how much she suffered her chronic fatigue, she managed to continue doing her work.

It would take many years before we found out what had happened there and then that caused her to be so tired, and why there was absolutely no cure against it. Due to the extremely strong electromagnetic field of that lightning bolt, something had changed in her body, a situation that certain therapists nowadays call 'electron spin inversion', a change at the atomic level which causes the aura, which is the energy field of the body that filters or blocks all external stimuli, to be insufficiently energized. The aura becomes thin or tenuous and allows more stimuli to pass than is

desirable. The long-term effects are mostly chronic fatigue and increased sensitivity. But this we weren't aware of back then. We only experienced the consequences.

Halfway through the nineties Linda's younger brother, Arjen got cancer. He went through the whole rigmarole: examinations, surgery, chemotherapy and all the misery that goes with it. Eventually, after a final operation, he was declared 'cancer free', but a few days later he got terrible headaches. He died about one week later. Linda had a very difficult time handling this, and felt confirmed in her already reluctant attitude towards mainstream healthcare and pharmaceuticals. She didn't like doctors, pills and white coats. She only used 'the pill', which she found a very convenient invention for women, and in very rare cases she used Paracetamol, a mild painkiller, but that was it.

Arjen's illness marked the start of a period of serious difficulties in Linda's family. Her beloved grandmother and aunt passed away; her parents ended up in hospital several times and needed lots of help, help that Linda was willing to give. Despite her busy job and her eternal tiredness we visited them two, sometimes three times a week for help and support. Linda pushed things far beyond her limits, but she forced herself to go on. Her colleagues advised her to work less, but it took a long time before she gave in. After several discussions with the school's medical department she finally got the opportunity to work less. So she got one day a week off, but she used these spare days to visit and support her parents. They needed her help now more than ever, she thought.

In the late eighties, we had taken two cats into our home. First a Holy Birman, a beautiful, regal cat named Liselle Soraya des Quatres Montagnes who, with such a name, expected to be treated accordingly. And one year later, an ordinary black cat with white whiskers: Charonna Nefertete, with a less regal typical Dutch name: 'van Dike'. The two cats could get along very well and gave us lots of

entertainment and distraction. They were our kids and were really spoiled, but cats, of course, have no problem at all with that.

One day when they were about five or six years of age Liselle walked to the back of the garden because she wanted to check out something in the bushes. Suddenly we heard a huge outcry and Liselle came running from under the bushes in a wild rush, but was confronted with Charonna accidentally standing in her way. Liselle was in a state of acting blindly on survival instinct, and seemingly for no reason at all; they were in a terrible fight with shrieking and yelling sounds.

Now cats can fight like maniacs, but Birmans, once engaged as temple guards in Burma, have it in their genes to go completely nuts in such cases, so this wasn't a normal fight, and it looked like Charonna was fighting for her life. We all yelled, trying to get them to back off. Where Linda got the nerves from I really didn't understand, but she did what I dared not; she jumped into the middle of the fight and desperately covered Liselle with her own body, trying to separate her from Charonna. Instantly her arms and legs were covered in bleeding scratches (those would play an important role in the future), but that didn't stop her.

Liselle escaped once again and the fight continued. So, I threw a sleeping bag over the fighting cats, and while Linda pinned down Charonna under it, I was able to force Liselle inside the house.

After that fight I leaned against the doorpost and I had this rare feeling of standing at a crossroads. "This will have far reaching consequences," was my thought. And that was because the trust between the cats was permanently damaged. We couldn't make the decision to get rid of one of the cats, an attitude cat lovers can well understand, because which of your equally loved ones should you put away? But that meant that we couldn't go on vacation any

more, and in Linda's case a holiday abroad could have given her that extra boost of energy she needed so much.

Her fatigue continued. She would work, sleep, and eat, take care of parents, and for relaxation, one night we did Argentine tango dancing, or occasionally an afternoon shopping in a nearby city. Even in the long summer vacations she no longer managed to recover. Usually it took a couple of weeks and then she was more or less herself again and she got spunk to do something. But in recent years this was not enough, and what she really wanted, which was to be happy, never came about.

"With *you* I'm happy," she assured me, "and with our cats, though they can't get along together very well."

But something was wrong. Our love for each other should have been enough to overcome this, to make her really happy? But how?

## The Lonely Road

In December 1999 she was invited for a Pap smear in the public Health Care screening program. "Nothing special," she said. "I'll just go to the doctor, do the smear and await the outcome." It was no reason to worry. She never responded to such calls, but because recently she had small amounts of excretion she thought this would be a good opportunity for getting it seen to.

Sometimes she would ask me, "Do I love you enough?" That was so sweet, because she actually told me that, in actual fact, she loved me very much, but that she had a notion she would fail in love. What could I have said to that? Frankly, I always had a fear that our relationship could come to an end, that maybe she would love me no longer; or was it that I found myself not good enough for her? It was an inexplicable feeling of losing, a feeling that I never really lost. I replied with something along the lines of: "I know you love me. Don't worry." I wanted to reassure her and let her know that it was fine, that she need not worry about this.

A few days after the examination, the doctor phoned to say that the outcome of the investigation was not good; they had found restless cells. But that message didn't seem to bother Linda in any way. She was even surprised that I was worried about this. It was as if she couldn't imagine that something serious could be wrong with her health. Of course a follow-up investigation was next on the agenda; to begin with, an appointment with the gynaecologist in the hospital. A couple of days later we went there.

And so, picture yourself in a big hospital, sitting on hard chairs in a protected area of the corridor on the first floor,

waiting. People walk by, some quickly, some slowly, some talking, some retired into them selves. Some are doctors in white collars, some passing by in a wheelchair. You wait, you look around, staring at the clock, trying to read something, but you can't keep your attention on the text.

In the waiting area of the gynaecology department we waited amidst pregnant women. They had come for a routine check. One of the women said something to us, expecting that a very young-looking couple like us would be sitting there for a happy reason. I didn't want to worry her, so I gave an evasive answer and smiled vaguely. Linda said nothing.

At five o'clock it was our turn. The most difficult cases were saved for last. We were told what we already knew, troubled cells. There exists a table describing what stage the 'process', the clinical word they obviously preferred, is in ie. PAP1 to PAP5. PAP5 means cervical cancer without any doubt. Linda was diagnosed with PAP4. More numbers were presented to us, but at a time like that it's hard to remember much of the conversation.

The gynaecologist examined Linda using a viewing device and she wasn't very positive about what she saw. We could clearly see her distressed reaction. She pulled in another gynaecologist, a tall, very authoritarian man. They were talking about various types of cells, using technical names and scientific terms. But it was not quite that clear cut. It was obvious that more research was necessary. First of all, Linda had to give some blood, followed by a MRI scan, an ultrasound, a CT scan, a chest x-ray... "At least," he said, looking at Linda, "that's if you agree to that."

Well... it made sense, would you agree? There was reason enough to do those tests and the appropriate treatment plan can only be determined with sufficient data.

It was Christmas 1999, just before the Millennium. Such news is of course never convenient, but this was very bad timing indeed. Christmas Day was Linda's brother Rob's

birthday, a very pleasant day, on which her family was almost always completely present. As always, we were looking forward to it, but now this overshadowed it. Linda had wanted to keep the news secret until after the birthday; however, her wishes came to nothing because she began to cry after a certain remark and eventually couldn't help but to tell everyone what was going on.

The tests began immediately after the Christmas holidays, and Linda went along with it all, seemingly taking it all in her stride, but after two weeks she stood on the scales and had lost fifteen pounds, purely from the stress. Her normal weight was one hundred and fifteen pounds, which left her then about one hundred. She had always hated hospitals, and even though it appeared she was not able to cope with it all, it didn't show; she presented herself as big, tough and strong.

On New Years Eve, on the millennium change, we were at home, and when the clock hit twelve we kissed and wished each other many happy years together, but it was with a deep undercurrent of despair. We were both very scared of what the New Year would bring. Dance music began to play on the television and Linda broke through our sadness, pulling me up to dance. Of course, she did a few of her spectacular dance steps, but then she cried, "This is the last time I can dance. After I have surgery, I can't anymore."

Even during the tests period, we went looking for alternative ways to support the regular treatment. We received several tips from friends and family, and so we came in contact with a number of alternative therapists that we expected to complement each other well, because relying on the hospital expertise alone was something we couldn't, and also didn't want to do.

So we learned about electro-acupuncture. Roberto, a naturopath in Arnhem, made use of this therapy among others. He was highly recommended because of his

experience and expertise. The first thing he did was iridology, the study and mapping of the iris by a simple stereomicroscope. Using this, he could obtain a medical history within minutes, without the need for blood tests and x-rays. Obviously he had mastered this technique very well, because to our surprise, he listed one medical fact after another that perfectly matched Linda's case, even in terms of timing.

Next he started measuring using electro-acupuncture. Utilizing a sensor, he measured several meridian points of Linda's hands and feet. Because these meridian points are connected to corresponding organs, it can thus be deduced which parts of the body are well balanced and which are not. At the same time, it's possible to figure out what medication is needed to restore the balance. It seemed a very precise way of diagnosing, which surprised us and had us wondering why this technique wasn't used in the general medical practise. The results Roberto came up with gave an enormous deepening of knowledge into Linda's illness, and they were given in no time and with hardly any hassle. The measurements revealed that several of Linda's organs were totally out-of-balance and that her body was fighting very hard to regain health. She got various medications to help with this.

We also made arrangements with a therapeutic centre in Eindhoven in the south of the Netherlands, where a man, Jacob, had restructured his home into a practice. He worked with a wide range of electromagnetic resonance equipment, capable of destroying pathogenic factors such as bacteria and viruses by frequencies, while the immune system was strengthened at the same time. Most of his patients had serious illnesses, especially cancer.

We learned a lot in a short time about the latest developments in alternative health care, which had mostly to do with complex and harmonic frequencies with which the body can be diagnosed and treated. Given the



complicated and very expensive equipment this wasn't 'just' an additional therapy outside the traditional system.

A man who impressed us very much was an English speaking Tibetan healer, Lobsang Tsultrim. This man had no equipment at all, but worked from his secular background and prescribed compressed mixtures of herbal medicines. His whole way of thinking about the human body was based on ancient insights that regarded every human as a whole of body and soul together. This man wasn't just one of many healers; his father had been the personal physician of the Dalai Lama. And speaking in terms of education and experience, he was in no way inferior to the highest trained regular specialists.

He looked at Linda, examined the urine she brought with her, stirred in it, smelled it, and then felt her wrists for a long time, using three fingers simultaneously, studying her heartbeat. An experienced practitioner of this technique can deduct a wealth of information from this.

He spoke little, asked a question every now and then and finally sat down, his thoughts focused, almost meditating. Then, still without speaking, he took Linda's patient card and began writing in a language that we could make nothing of. Finally he looked up at us and started to tell us about his findings. He said he had no X-ray vision and no expensive instruments he could use, but he noted that Linda had inflamed growths in her stomach. Whether these growths were tumours or not he didn't say and we got the impression that in *his* eyes this wasn't even important. It was not the term 'cancer' that was important, but what was going on with Linda as a whole. He prescribed various herbs and advised her to meditate. He also found rest for her very important. Stress was no good. He looked at me as he said this, giving me a task to ensure she rested. He was friendly and we both liked him very much.

Then we wrote to a clairvoyant woman living in Colombia, South America. Twice a year she came to the Netherlands to treat hundreds of people. Her way of working was that she went into a trance and during this time an already deceased doctor took over her body to treat patients. This medium wasn't new to us. In recent years we had consulted this woman often. The consultation price was a monetary gift for an orphanage in Colombia. Everything was presided over by the Roman Catholic faith. We had heard good reports from various people. Also, Linda's and my parents had consulted her for years, so we thought that she was genuine, honest and trustworthy.

What we wondered was why the deceased physician, 'Dottore' as he was called, hadn't told Linda earlier that she had cervical cancer. After all, we had visited him months ago, in October, and Linda had mentioned to him about the abnormal secretion. We put it down to the language barrier, because the psychic spoke Spanish and her words had to be translated into Dutch by a translator. We wrote to the translator living in Curacao, and explained Linda's situation to her. She then contacted the psychic in Colombia with our query. The short answer came a few days later: 'Do what the doctors tell you and I will be there.'

That was not very helpful, because which doctors did Dottore mean: the traditional ones or the alternative ones? We had contact with both. Later, when asked in person, he told us that he meant the alternative doctors. Anyway, we had to rely on our own gut instincts with that and hope that we would make the right decisions, but it wasn't as simple as it seemed.

At the start of the New Year the medical results came in. As expected, a tumour was detected, and although it was not very big, it was unfortunately in the wrong place. It sat just at the transition between the cervical and vaginal tissue. The oncologist proposed that Linda should receive radiation

therapy. But to be thorough, he suggested that Linda should get a second opinion in another hospital in Amsterdam. That was... if we personally took the photographs and reports with us to that hospital.

The specialist in the AMC (Amsterdam Medical Centre) that we consulted accepted the folder of data, but without even opening it he remarked that he didn't need it. He was a surgeon, so he said, and his fingers could tell him exactly what he wanted to know. He would execute an internal investigation and would, just like the Tibetan healer, rely on his sensitive fingers to tell him what he needed to know. He quickly came to the same conclusion: a small tumour just at the edge of the cervix. He introduced a colleague who repeated the internal investigation and after a brief exchange of remarks they came to the conclusion that it needed surgery. Irradiation alone would be insufficient, they said.

The surgery they proposed was drastic. Therefore, after surgery there would be a 'small' risk of permanent disability and a high likelihood of impaired bladder control and bowel functions. The hospitalization would take about six weeks and the rehabilitation time was expected to be one year. Moreover, depending on what they would find, maybe radiation at a later stage might still be needed. And the consequence of that would be a 'belly that would feel like concrete'.

The specialists told us that right after the consultation we should go the appointment desk to plan in the surgery date.

At this point, we thought something strange was happening. This research was still a second opinion wasn't it? In other words, after this examination we would still go back to Apeldoorn and then hear from the gynaecologist there what would be the best option? After all, the diagnosis was exactly the same, only the suggested treatment was a different one. I said this to the consultants, but they told us

that the treatment was their responsibility now and that it made no sense to discuss the results with Apeldoorn first. This took us by surprise and I asked if we could think about it first, but the response was: “Why would you think this over? Here the only option is surgery. It’s a big operation and we don’t do it by half.”

It all seemed rather strange to us and we asked ourselves: surely, it can’t be crazy to ask for time to think this over?

I tried again, but they weren’t keen on that idea, not even for a week. It felt like we were committing an offence just suggesting it. Here was one of those important moments in your life where decisions are made that affect your whole life, and we were expected to agree with something so drastic. What difference would a couple of days make anyway? In such situations, it is normal that you first consider all options before making a decision, but here we were given no choice. We even were told that there *wasn’t* any choice: the *only choice* is surgery.

But Linda and I were in tune with each other’s thoughts and together we withstood the specialists. Eventually, with obvious reluctance, they allowed us a short break in the waiting room to talk it over after which we could go to the reception for planning in the surgery date.

Stunned, we left the room. It had just been thrust upon us “They make it seem as if it’s nothing!” I said.

“We don’t do things by half!” Linda echoed the doctor’s words.

“Why don’t they give us a week to think?” I asked loudly, “Does one week really matter that much?”

We were rebellious. Actually we were just angry. That’s not the way to treat patients! Why didn’t the opinion of Apeldoorn count anymore? They had done a mass of research and they had talked about radiation. In our ears this made a quite a difference. These men hadn’t even looked at the scans and results, and on the basis of one minute feeling with their fingertips they concluded that a

huge operation was needed for a tiny tumour of which only the location was unfortunate. It seemed like they knew beforehand what the next step would be and that this examination, the feeling with the fingertips, was nothing more than a formality.

What we didn't know at this point was that there was an internal miscommunication. I had opened the envelope that we had been given to pass on to the AMC, copied the data and thus had read the correspondence. In retrospect one *could* conclude that the specialist in Apeldoorn suggested transfer of treatment to the AMC. The words 'second-opinion' were not used at all. Not intentionally so we thought, but to us this was not communicated.

This 'minor' misunderstanding would have major consequences.

These doctors abided by the rules that were established by the hospital, the pharmacy or whoever it was who had written the rules or protocols. In their eyes, they acted in the interest of Linda's health, and so our response was incomprehensible to them. However, what they didn't take into account was that there are people who truly take responsibility for their own lives; people who you don't just force into something, who wish to make their own decisions based on the available data in combination with their inner voice. That's freedom of choice, isn't it?

Due to past experiences with her brother, Linda was already very disappointed in hospitals, and now it appeared, partly because of this, that she wasn't at all stress-resistant to hospitals, just as her rapid weight loss had indicated.

It was only years later while writing this book that I started to realize that this was a significant factor in deciding the road we were to go, as if it was meant to be.

We didn't talk for a long time. We decided to take matters into our own hands, and at the desk we said that we would

go home and then decide what we would do. We said that we would inform them about our decision after one week.

What exactly caused us to make our decision I don't recall, but while talking about it we both felt: "We don't want this." That feeling grew in strength and by the time we entered the outskirts of Apeldoorn we were both convinced: "We won't do this." Not this devastating operation, the outcome of which was far from certain. What was the long term forecast by the way? Maybe we could talk to people who had undergone the same thing. We became increasingly combative.

In the days following that we did indeed contact a woman who had had the exact same surgery more than a year ago. She was still in a wheelchair. Meanwhile, we had found a number of therapists, who were, in our opinion, highly skilled, and we were convinced that now we had some very good cards in our hand, for Linda's healing. We decided to temporarily abandon the operation. We didn't even need to think about it for one week. We knew it already. Our sense of relief was very great. Instead of letting ourselves be pulled to the execution as convicts we chose to take the reins in our hands and go our own way. At one point Linda emphasized her choice with these words: "At home I can fight. In the hospital I can't."

Unfortunately, we then made an important mistake; we didn't call back to the hospital in Amsterdam but kept quiet. "They ought to have treated us better," we justified to each other, but to be honest, the real reason was our hesitation to face another confrontation with these rigid doctors.

Stupid, stupid, stupid!

Of course, the gynaecologist in Apeldoorn wasn't fobbed of this way. He wanted to know why Linda refused the surgery and now even refused the radiation-therapy. He tried to convince Linda that in the alternative healthcare world we would find no salvation and that we had made a very bad choice. When that failed he tried to convince *me*,