

Crisis what crisis

This is a personal 'crisis'zine by Martijn. In case you would like to reach me outside of these pages, you can find me via snailmail in the xxx and via Internet at via yyy.

What is going on?

In 2003 I went to a Supertramp concert. They were heroes of my adolescent years and when they came over to Holland, I had to see them. It became the most disappointing concert I have heard up to now. About ten guys were standing on the stage and they did 'their thing'. In this case it was playing and singing as sterile as possible. There was no show, no movement, no emotions, nothing. They dropped ten grades in my appreciation list.

But for some reason, there album 'crisis what crisis' keeps on getting in my head these days. That's probably because I don't see anything happening around me. People lost theoretical money they had theoretically gained over the last years. It also might be a smart move of the socialist community because the people that lost most, probably were the wealthiest ones. I visited an old friend two weeks ago who told me had lost 50.000 euro. But he really did not loose it because he did not sell anything. This makes it confusing.

Oh, and when we came back from the concert and told the baby sitter where we'd been, she answered that she had never heard of Supertramp. We were really amazed, but their music probably does not appeal to the younger ones (although the Young Ones are now pretty old these days ☺).

Of course there is this other side of the crisis. I still don't have a job. Last time I wrote I missed out on the ideal job because they couldn't get the loans to invest in the company. I'd also run out of interviews, recruiters, networks etc. to talk to. But of course there always is

another one to talk to. So I've talked to so many other acquaintances, recruiters, I've written letters of application etc. But, nothing up to now. What I always hear is that companies do not (or seldom) fill in their vacancies or they use someone from their own organisation. It's a way of cutting down costs. I found out that having worked at a higher level in a company also sets you back in finding a new job. I've had some companies telling me that that had no suitable job for me. Even the ones where I said that I would take a lesser pay/job, rejected that idea.

So, on a personal level, there still is a crisis. The fact that this contribution is so much about others, is a sign that there is not so much happening in my life. Most of the days are spent with reading, watching something on the pc and looking for a job. The first two in the morning, the latter in the afternoon.

Why we Dutch love Belgium

A few years ago I read an article in the paper that made me laugh, but for some reason I had never written about it in Dapper. The article was called:

Oldest Belgian citizen already dead for half a century.

A woman, who should have been the oldest Belgian alive, appears to have died in 1954. Her death had never been processed by the Belgium registry office. The allegedly 109-year old Angèle Vanmeerbeek from Charleroi was announced to be the oldest Belgium alive in August 2003. When politicians came over to congratulate her, they could not find her. The women had moved to a

village near Paris in 1939 where she also had been buried in 1954

We Dutch love stories like that about our neighbours ☺.

Kids

My daughter has turned into a couch potato. Most of her time at home is spent sitting on the couch and watching television. As a girl of fifteen, she is watching all girly, playful, romantic series. Her favorites are 'One Tree Hill' and 'The Hills'. The last is a reality show from MTV, following the lives of a few young people living in Los Angeles. My daughter was a bit upset when she saw another program that showed the re- and reshooting of a scene in a restaurant. It really isn't that real at all. But she still keeps on watching as it is about beautiful, successful, young woman. She would also have wanted to see it if it had been an acted tv-series.

In a few months she will turn sixteen. Of course she wants it to be a memorable party but she can't figure out what to do yet. She watches a series on MTV that is called 'My sweet little sixteen' where girls are followed during the months before their sixteenth birthday. I really loath that series. They follow girls whose parents are wealthy beyond anything you can imagine. The sweet sixteen parties are always huge, with famous artists en hundreds of guests who all say they love the birthday girl so much and that she is the most fantastic girl in the world. One has many 'friends' when one is rich. It really feels so very superficial, so American as we Europeans tend to see them. Every episode ends when the girl gets her birthday present and every time I've seen it, it was a Mercedes. They find it so normal what their parents do and they pay everything for them. Last week I saw a girl that, amongst other things, had four horses. Her observation was: "I've got four horses. I get everything I want. I'm not spoiled, just pampered". Something really bad in me wishes for something to happen, like her getting broke around her twentieth birthday. Oh, and my daughter is not

allowed to watch this series anymore when she is with me. It is me, I really can't stand it. But, we'll find something nice for her and her five friends to do on her birthday.

My son just wants another game night with his friends, no problems there.

He still is working his way through the books of Terry Pratchett. He even sometimes reads one in a weekend. As far as I can remember, he will start with 'Interesting Times' next week, so he about halfway. I started reading 'Making Money' and I enjoy it. But the weather is still not that good so I'm not that often reading outside.

Last time I wrote a bit about My son's endeavors in table tennis land and his quest for a higher license. In February he managed to win a C-level national license tournament. Next to a small cup, the price is a B-license. His rank at the Dutch national list is now about 140, which makes him a sub sub topplayer in Holland.

I went to watch him play last weekend and just then he lost his first match since December 14th. I'll not do it again. His team had won the first five matches, but lost this one. A team has three players and they all play each other and they play one double. My son won almost every match (lost once), one teammate wins half of his games and one loses almost everything. So with a bit of bad luck, they will not be promoted to the next higher national level (one below the absolute top) because his teammate is not up to it. On the national level the teams are not promoted because of the fact they become champion, but also if all players can handle the higher level. It would be a pity for My son as he probably is good enough to play on the next and probably even the highest level. If his team does not win this competition (they are now two points behind the leader and four matches to go, so everything is possible), he might consider to go to another club where he can play on that higher level. But he doesn't want to leave the club as all his friends are playing there. A difficult

dilemma. So we're hoping they will get the promotion anyway.

He now really has become a 'non visible' adolescent. He comes over on Friday around four o'clock and leaves at a quarter to six for his table tennis training. He gets back around nine o'clock and goes to sleep around ten. The next morning, he is away at ten o'clock to the match and back around six. In the evening he often goes to his room to read. Sunday mornings he is downstairs and Sunday afternoon he is doing homework. I see him again at dinner. Sunday afternoons I often feel that the family should go outside to have a walk (or something like that). He doesn't feel like joining us, but I sometimes make him come along.

Art revisited

In # 100 I wrote a bit about the English artist David Hensel who found out that his sculpture's empty plinth and wooden base were displayed and awarded. We Dutch also know our way in the world of art. A few months ago a concert of a famous group called Rowwen Hèze was cancelled and the building evacuated because of an explosive on the roof of the museum next door. The first night the police already discovered that it was a fake bomb. The next day they found out that the contraption consisting of an army-green rucksack, flashing lights and cut plastic flowerpots was an object of art. Although I probably wouldn't have considered it to be a bomb, I certainly wouldn't have considered it to be art.

Mailcoms

103

OE

It must have been more than fifteen years since we've voted for some change in the rules & regulations. I remember vivid discussions on topics that are no longer an issue (like waitlisters).

You have a 'yes' from me. In those years at least seven Dapperites visited the SF-pub in The Hague and probably there are only two left (not including me, I only join once a year). So, to give you some formal slack, I fully agree. As you stated, it is already your usual business.

Nico and Kya have made them self visible in some mails, so with a bit of luck we keep on doing what we like: writing and reading. We do have to look out for the moment the first one of us passes away of old age ☺.

Engel

Hi there stranger. We meet again and again. It's been more than twenty years since we first met and I probably still won't recognise you when we pass each other in the street. We have to look each other in the eye some time. A convention perhaps?

I also did notice the almost absence of footnotes in the latest books of Terry Pratchett. I do regret it as they absolutely made me laugh. It must be one of his trademarks. The NESFA fan edition of his short works (the title is a reference to the phrase "once more with feeling" and to his frequent use of footnotes in his books). For some strange reason the book itself actually contains very few footnotes. NESFA's working title for the book was "Oh Bugger, by Wosname".

Terry Pratchett
ONCE MORE*



**with footnotes*

I've just visited the NESFA site again and it still is out of print. There have been three editions (of 2500 books) and I'm a lucky one with a first edition. It was \$25 (including shipping costs to Holland) a few years ago and I still think it's one of my better buys. If you ever can lay your hand on one, you should buy it. It might be the only chance you will get.

Added later..... I was wondering if somebody would be selling it on Ebay so I looked it up. There were two. Both had fixed price of \$ 860. I choked. If it had been evening right now, I would have treated myself to a glass of whisky. As it is around noon, I will treat myself to a glass of milk ☺. I remember telling in Dapper about the book and suggesting to all Dapperites to buy it also. Now I really do hope some of you did.

I do not program anymore (since the Commodore 64) and haven't played a game on a computer since 'Lemmings'.

I also should buy the DVD's with 'Farscape' some time (or download them). I've heard so many good stories about this series. Of those you mention, probably 'Babylon 5' and 'Twin Peaks (series 1)' are my favourite series.

Linda/Speedywild

Hello and welcome of course. We really live nearby and that's a newbie. But, if we pass each other on a Saturday afternoon in the 'Stadshart', we would probably walk straight on. But we did meet last convention, so there still is a chance we might wave at each other.

Should I call you Linda or Speedywild? And if it's the last name, I'm curious why you would rather be known by an alias than your given name.

Probably all present and former Dapperites are wannabee writers. Some have published the most horrible but enjoyable stories in Dapper, other have become famous writers in the Netherlands or even over the world. We even have the odd example of an already famous writer who joined us for some time. So you're in good company.

I myself write a lot, but it's been twenty years since I've written a story. The fanzines of today ask for a level that I can't meet. Your boyfriend used to accept any story that was handed to him, but his fanzines also vanished about twenty years ago.

If you get this boyfriend of yours to come back to Dapper, it will probably encourage others to write some more stories in dapper. Reading Engel's description of what kind of stories he likes, it will be a hit for him. And I miss him too.

Irene

Good trip to Florida, bad cold. It's always the same when you're having fun ☺.

I've only been to Florida once, just for two nights on a business trip. I think it was November and the weather was hot, hot, moist, a bit hot, more water, moist and so on. We were in a Disney hotel (don't ask me why, we did not go to a park). I found out that they had taken an extra \$ 50 from my credit account because: "visitors always use things in our hotel and we already billed you up

front for the first \$ 50. If you don't use it, we'll put it back on your credit account". That became a problem for me as I had paid with my company credit card. The spending is subtracted from my salary. If I've got a receipt I can claim the expenses and if everything is balanced, the claim and the salary subtraction are the same. But, of course there was no receipt for the \$ 50 so they took it from my salary. The hotel returned the \$ 50 on the (company) credit card account where it was stuck. Because if I used it, the company would see it as credit card use en deduct it from my salary again. It took me six months before HRM and Finance agreed that I would get the \$50 back. It was that same HRM that, a few years before had denied the tip part of my claims of my visit to the States. Their opinion: In Holland tips are included in the price, so if you want to tip, it is an over tip and that is of your own money. They had never heard of the fact that the system in America is different. Only when a board member got back from the States and got the same problem, they changed their opinion and I got my money after all.

And I learned one more thing of hotels over there. When I check into a room, I tend to check out what's in the mini refrigerator. I took some bottles out and put them back. At hotel check out I told them I had not drunk anything. But a few weeks later, they credited my credit card for a few drinks. It seemed that those mini refrigerators operate fully automated. If you take anything out, you will be charged automatically. The system does not take into account that you might put it back. This probably is because (American) tourists put empty bottles back in the fridge. It's probably part of the same reason why they take \$ 50 in advance. It took me a call to the States to find out what had happened and then I made sure that the payment was reversed. Maybe I'm not welcome anymore over there.

When I travel to the USA for business, it is always business class. So we were amongst the first to get out of the plane and I learned to hasten myself to

immigration. But, of course there was always one of our colleagues last in line.

The first time for me, we had flown to Canada first for a visit to Toronto. After a few days we flew to San Francisco to visit HP. We almost didn't make it into the States. The immigration man began a discussion 'Why the people from HP couldn't come to us in The Netherlands instead of us coming over to The States'. It took us half an hour to convince him to let us in. I also learned not to get mad or ironic at American officials. They are deprived of any sense of humour. It was a 'good start' of my first visit to that country.

Enjoy Kaiserslautern. It probably has more to offer when you dive into it.

Gefeliciteerd met je alles dat je al hebt geleerd van de Nederlandse taal. Weet je al waar je het voor gaat gebruiken of is het echt alleen hobby?

At first reading I took your heroine for a heroin addict. It made me wonder how a heroin addict could make it to be a forensic anthropologist. But the second book by her made me see my mistake 😊.

You're wondering if we are interested in soccer (yes) and the German team (no of course). Isn't there a book that describes the lowlights of German soccer? That might be interesting 😊. There are a lot of books about Dutch soccer on that subject. We are a bit too harsh on ourselves.

RE: YCTM. I emailed the CEO how things were working out, but I never heard back from her. The company was sold last December to a competitor (Centric). Probably Ordina had to pay a few millions to make it acceptable for Centric.

My motorbike is being repaired as we speak. The insurance will pay up to € 1500 euro and I've made a deal with the repairmen that the costs will be lower than that. I really can't imagine why the insurance company pays. The bike must officially be total loss.

I also had the choice to have my insurance pay for the lawyer costs, but in that case the insurance would have picked my lawyer for me. I wouldn't have had a choice of anyone I wanted and I wanted this specific lawyer as she had 'fought' with my employer before. So I took the chance of having to pay it myself. I also used to have a friend that worked as a lawyer at an insurance company and she told me once that all they had to do was to make sure the costs for the insurance company were as low as possible. So I do not really trust them.

Thank you for your explanation about 2010. That's completely different from any rule or regulation I know in Holland. I would have loved to have a regulation like that.

The company I mentioned is (at this moment) just for parking my money and making a profit. The profit is the interest I get from my bank. If I had Equens pay the money directly to me last year, I would have paid 52% tax. Equens now put the money in a company of which I own all the shares. A company does not pay tax over the money in the company, only over the profit. Usually the profit out of interest is at such a level you do not have to pay taxes over it. The idea is that this company will start paying me money after I stop working and, as my earning will be less, probably my tax level will be lower by then. Even if it would pay me money now, it would be 10% less taxes as my social security benefit isn't that high (to be specific, only 25% of my former earnings).

On the torture issue, I agree with you that women will turn to psychological torture as they do not have the physical power. I also do believe that women are psychological stronger than men. It must be an evolutionary thing. Men needed strength to hunt; women needed more psychological power to run their households. As we say in Holland: "If you're not strong, you have to be smart". The issue is, that if you're not strong, you have to use anything available to win. For me personally these fights are very difficult. The thing I hate most is

being treated unfairly and that is often the case in these kind of discussions. The best thing to do is to walk away I think, but I'm very bad at that ☺.

Kirsti

Every small contribution is a joy for the eye (and it also counts as a contribution). I'll be waiting for a full page this time ☺.

Good to hear you're picking up your normal life again. There is so much joy outside of your working life. On the other hand, you sound happy with your job so you might get enough energy out of it.

Will you be trained as a project manager also? Maybe you should try to get certified. I see more and more vacancies where an IPMA certification is an advantage. As there are four levels, you can start easily at the bottom (D-level) and work your way up. All the information is on www.ipma-nl.nl.

George

We've been writing on and off the last few months, so I know what you were doing. I do hope everything works out in Sweden. Please smile at every lady for me that is passing you. I've always heard that ladies in Sweden are wonderful and I've never really had the opportunity to find out for myself. I've only been there once for a day and that day was packed with business talks.

I hope I'll be hearing from you soon how the treatment is working out for you.

Jan

I agree with you that wet water coating is for people who don't mind taking lots of risks like being run over by a ten year old who is not looking out and not able to steer his/her legs. But I did make a wonderful walk on a lake in Berlin. We had our 'nevenement' (the five grandsons of our grandfather coming together once a year to celebrate him) in Berlin in January. It was cold, but the sun was shining and walking on water can be fun. Amongst other things we

went to walk on one of the Berlin lakes. Berlin is a large city, so I want be able to tell you where we went. I probably even won't be able to pinpoint on a map where my brother lives. As I feel ashamed by this I will look it up after I finish writing. The picture below shows the lake and the fun people can have on it without skating. Almost no one was skating on the lake. Everyone was just walking. And, as you can see, there is also some room to walk around.



In Holland the most important thing around water is to make sure that you're not hit by something else that is also on or in the water.

And yes, we also visited lots of tourist places in this beautiful town. Of course we went to see the Jewish monument. Thinking back, I still can feel something of the loneliness you feel while wandering around between the stones. You can feel a bit lost in the heart of Berlin.

After your front page in #101 I wondered if I could make a Dapper Wiki-page. So I looked into Wikipedia and found a few pages about specific apa's. I started writing a Wiki entry, but according to rules, I cannot make a Wiki-page about Dapper because I'm a living member. Maybe I'll continue writing it and ask some of you some input. When I'm finished I'll have to find some way of getting it in Wikipedia. I also need quotations of some sort. If any of you know something that is related to Dapper and is visible in an article, book, magazine etc, please write me. I already know I can use the different writers we had in Dapper. Of course I might put in

references to the 'Dapper place' and the 'Dapper market' which are both located in Amsterdam.



Getting back on a question you posed in # 99: the word I missed was 'cufflinks'. Now you see how I work. The words I do not know, I fill up with points and I look them up later on. Somehow I missed that one and I missed it again when I reread it.

RE:YCTM. You are right that especially unemployed managers are having troubles to find a new job. Recruiters tell me that most management vacancies are either not being filled in, or are being filled in by an internal (someone already employed). It's better to be a specialist these days. But, I keep my head up high. I also found out that having had a higher level job also brings another disadvantage. I've spoken to some smaller companies and usually their answer is one like: "We are too small and can't afford to have you", "We do not believe you are willing to earn less", "We are too small to give you a suitable job". I've had them all. So I'm back to the bigger companies.

The bad thing about being unemployed and Dapper is that I keep on postponing writing my contribution because I keep on telling myself that I have enough time. The good thing is that I indeed have enough time just before the deadline. E.g. this is written on March 30th.

And do not get me talking about the twins; I will keep on talking and smiling.

And, as always, I won't leave you without a small thought:

*Smiling is
contagious; just
smile at someone
and see their
reaction.*