

NONFICTION

A global journalist turns her attention to her family again

Hildeke

LIEVE JORIS

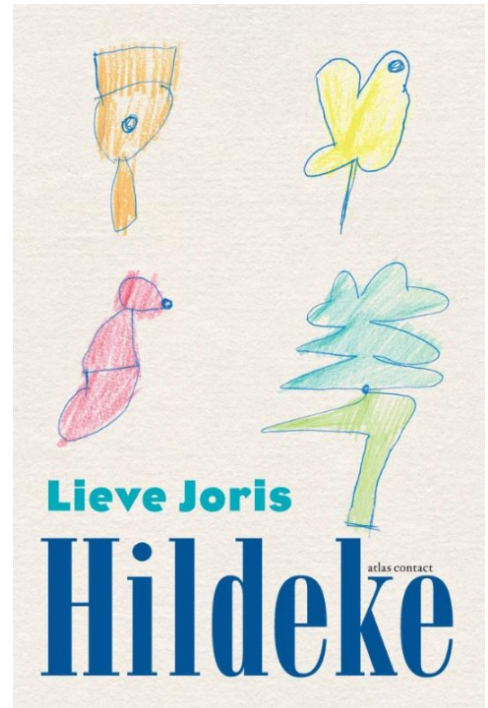
Lieve Joris is an internationally renowned writer of non-fiction books about the Arab world, Africa, Eastern Europe and China. After writing about her much-admired and maligned brother Fonny in 'Return to Neerpelt', she revisits her family history in 'Hildeke'. Her parents' growing care needs pull her back to the Flanders of her youth: the mother she barely knew and the difficult father who was preoccupied with his prodigal son and who goes by the nickname 'The Creator'.

And then there's Hildeke, 'the other extreme on the spectrum of human shortcomings', who is taken under the wing of her brothers and sisters after the death of their parents. Hildeke has a heart of gold, which makes her well-loved by all, as well as an acute sense of good and evil. She has Down's Syndrome and is often an enigma, but at the same time she teaches those around her to be more observant of others: "Laughing and crying are never far apart in Hildeke; in between lies a mysterious landscape that we're constantly trying to access."

In this delicate memoir, Lieve Joris vividly evokes her much-loved sister with Down's syndrome. And with that the nest that Joris fled.

DE MORGEN

Lieve Joris portrays her Flemish background with love and humour. While the guilt over her long absence eats away at her, tensions within the family rear their head. But gradually she comes to terms with the world she fled at the age of nineteen. With her sharp eye, which was honed abroad, Lieve Joris pays tribute to her father and her sister Hildeke in this book. It's never sentimental, but always emotional and moving.



AUTHOR



Lieve Joris (b. 1953) has built an international reputation as a writer of nonfiction, with books about the Middle East, Africa and Hungary. She emerges as an engaged observer, able to convey the atmosphere of postcolonial Africa with great authenticity. She has the astonishing gift of being able to unite the broad picture with its details, somehow managing to combine analysis and storytelling without ever losing the thread of either. *Photo © Atlas Contact*

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