



Corrie and Chris IN LOVE

One day, we received an e-mail from someone who wanted to share something with us. In the attachment we found a series of photographs of a Dutch couple, Corrie and Chris Bakker. Each was a photo one had taken of the other.



Corrie and Chris lived in Amsterdam. They married in 1954.







Corrie and Chris photographed each other with a Kodak Instamatic, the camera that the Hipstamatic app is based on.





"Like a girl and a boy of
sixteen—that's how much they
would tease each other"

A cigar box full of pairs of photos: this was what Cornely Theunissen inherited from Chris and Corrie Bakker. Theunissen never knew Chris, but she did know Corrie.

"Corrie was a friend of my grandparents, and she was like an aunt to me," Theunissen explains. "My grandparents ran an inn in the Veluwe [a national forest in the Netherlands] where Corrie often stayed, on her doctor's advice. She struggled with depression, and she found peace and tranquility there. Corrie had a very pleasant relationship with my grandparents, and when they passed away, my parents kind of took care of her. They did her gardening and fixed up her house a little when they came to visit.

"I would go along on these visits. Chris was no longer alive, and I knew Corrie mostly as a somewhat somber lady who had been a widow for several years. Until the cigar box with the pictures landed on my lap, that is. When I saw them for the first time, it made me so happy. I'd always thought 'What a sad lady,' but through the pictures I suddenly saw a completely different person."

ALWAYS LOOKING AT EACH OTHER

Cornelia van Breevoort (Corrie), born in 1919, met Christiaan Bakker (Chris), born in 1911, somewhat late in life. "Chris was a boatman, and all of his possessions could fit into a single wooden chest," says Theunissen. "They got married in 1954, and Chris stopped

working on boats and went to work in a factory. The couple lived in Amsterdam Oost (the eastern neighborhood) and later moved into a little house in Amsterdam Noord (the north), where Corrie remained after Chris passed away in 1972.

"When I look at the pictures, I see a girl and a boy of sixteen—that's how much they would tease each other," she continues. "The power of the images, of course, is that they photographed each other. Why they did that, I have no idea. You can imagine doing it on vacation: one photo each, in front of the sights. But Chris and Corrie photographed each other in the living room, for example—literally in the same spot—and at places like the laundromat, and this makes you think: Why? Chris and Corrie also seem slightly like a comedic duo: she is the heavy-set one and he looks a little like Stan from Laurel and Hardy, who gets her to laugh.

"You need to guess a lot with these photos: Where it is and when it is and also, why did they take it? But that's just what I like about them. The photos would have been taken during the eighteen years that they were together. You can see Corrie's posture change sometimes. Essentially, they are looking at each other through the camera. There is a lot of love in some of the pictures: I think they had a good eighteen years together." ●