



# PAGE A WRITER

## FOR EVERY WORD AT STAKE

### WordFellow Shop No. 2: Writing About Your Significant Other Tulak Sulat: A Creative Writing Workshop at NinangJAtWordhouse

*“Love is not only something you feel, but it is something you do.” — David Wilkerson*

**Objective:** To explore how intimate relationships can be written with honesty, depth, and nuance, moving beyond clichés into lived, textured storytelling.

**Themes:** All About Love, Intimacy, Memory, Conflict, Tenderness, Everyday rituals, Emotional truth

#### BRAINSTORMING

- Reflective recall
- Guided questions
- Journal exercises
- Relationship Mapping

#### Part I: Questions to Ponder When Writing About a Significant Other

1. Who is this person in your story? How do you perceive their centrality? What makes them distinct from others in your life?
2. What moments define your relationship? Which scenes carry emotional weight? Are these moments dramatic, or quietly significant?
3. How does time shape your connection? How has the relationship changed across seasons? What has remained constant despite change?
4. What is said, and unsaid? What silences exist between you? What truths are difficult to articulate?
5. What is at stake? What do you risk in loving or staying? What do you fear losing, or have already lost?

#### Part II: Lessons on Craft for Intimate Narratives

1. Avoid vague statements like “we were happy.” Show happiness through action—shared meals, routines, gestures.
2. Balance between self and other. This is your story, but it involves another person. Allow them dimensionality, not just function.
3. Honesty without harm. Write truthfully, but remain mindful of dignity, yours and theirs. What is necessary to tell? What is yours to tell?
4. Use of ordinary detail. Relationships are built in repetition. Highlight habits, phrases, small rituals.
5. Emotional arc. Even small pieces can move, from distance to closeness, confusion to clarity. Let reflection emerge naturally from scene.



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### Part III: Write Your Essay – *The Shape of Us*

- BEGIN WITH the moment you realized this person mattered differently from others.
- BEGIN WITH A DESCRIPTION of a small, repeated habit between you that no one else notices.
- BEGIN BY RECALLING A SILENCE you both understood without needing explanation.
- BEGIN WITH A DISAGREEMENT that changed how you understood the relationship.
- BEGIN WITH AN ORDINARY DAY that best represents your relationship as it is now.

### YOUR OPTIONAL WRITING STRUCTURE

**Time: 15–20 minutes. Goal: Write without editing. Focus on honesty over polish.**

- a. Set the scene, where are you? What is happening?
- b. Record an interaction, what is exchanged (words, gestures, silence)?
- c. Embody this moment with detail - what specifics make this moment real?
- d. Take note of a eureka moment, what changes, even slightly?
- e. Record a reflection, what is revealed about your relationship?

### AFTER WRITING REFLECTION: reflexive reading

- Does this piece lean toward memory, confession, or observation?
- What remains unsaid that you may want to explore later?
- Could this moment expand into a longer narrative?
- What emotional truth surfaced that surprised you?

### AFTER WRITING DISCUSSION: with another reader

- What makes writing about a significant other more difficult than writing about friends or strangers?
- How do you balance truth with care when writing about someone you love?
- Which details in your piece feel most alive—and why?
- What version of yourself appears in this relationship?

Writing about your significant other is giving careful attention to memory, gesture, and language, to see the relationship not as a fixed story, but as an unfolding narrative.

In writing you are both witness and participant, shaping a story that honors complexity, embraces imperfection, and recognizes that even the subtlest connections have profound meaning.



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### RECOMMENDED READING

**A LITTLE LIFE** by Hanya Hayanigara *A deep, sometimes devastating novel about four college friends whose lives remain entangled over decades. At its core, it asks: How much can friendship hold? Explores loyalty, care, trauma, and the limits of love between friends.*

**MY BRILLIANT FRIEND** by Elena Ferrante *The first in the Neapolitan series, tracing the intense, complicated friendship between Elena and Lila from childhood onward. Captures rivalry, admiration, jealousy, and lifelong connection with remarkable honesty.*

**HOW WE KEEP EACH OTHER CLOSE** by Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman. *A nonfiction exploration of maintaining a long-term adult friendship, treating it with the seriousness often reserved for romantic relationships. Practical, reflective, and validating, especially for adult friendships.*

**THE KITE RUNNER** by Khaled Hosseini *Though often discussed as a story of guilt and redemption, it is deeply rooted in a childhood friendship shaped by inequality and betrayal. Shows how friendship can be marked by power, memory, and the need for forgiveness.*

**CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS** by Sally Rooney *A contemporary look at friendship entangled with love, identity, and emotional dependence. Captures the blurred boundaries between friendship and romance in modern life.*

**BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA** by Katherine Patterson *A children's classic that portrays a powerful, imaginative friendship between two outsiders. Simple yet profound—captures the intensity and loss within childhood friendships.*