



**Creative Wordshops**  
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## Writing Letter

Feb 2024

re-story, re-create, re-  
imagine you

for this letter, a weekly story and  
ongoing opportunities -  
[dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za](http://dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za)

Dear writer, storyteller, reader, lover of words, images, silences...

### Saturday Stories

*A people are as healthy and confident as the stories they tell themselves... Stories can conquer fear, you know. They can make the heart larger. (Ben Okri)*

Part of my joyous encounter with people is creating, telling and sharing a story every Saturday morning on a what's app broadcast group. Around 3 minutes. It arrives with a quotation that plays off and with the story. generating yet another conversation. During COVID it came out daily and now once a week.

I delight in the responses. Though it goes forth to some 500 people (a groupsend yet it arrives one-on-one.) Every week some 20 to 25 folk share how the story touches on and impacts on their lives. Some send images evoked. I cherish these creative responses.

So this month's letter features this communication. A story stone dropped in the pond and the ripples circle out to lap on distant shores. A touch of Rilke here:

I am circling around God,  
around the ancient tower,  
and I have been circling for a thousand years,  
and I still don't know  
if I am a falcon, or a storm, or a great song.

Here is one Saturday story (6 Jan 2024) with a scattering of intriguing responses:

### Small is Beautiful

Q: Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius — and courage — to move in the opposite direction. (Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful*)

S: As Angus grew up, people said he was an introvert. At mealtimes his plates showed a limited range of what he liked to eat. Angus liked bright colours on his plate. A favorite

aunt Grace who lived in Mauritius knew him from childhood and would read *Green Eggs and Ham* over and over till he could recite it. *I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them Sam-I-Am.*

As a teenager Angus waited in a restaurant then later was employed as a Commis junior chef for a bigger restaurant concern. But Angus wasn't happy. He struggled with the clamour, the kitchen bullying, the rush rush, the entitled patrons. So he wondered what he could do.

Grace read his frustration and called him aside one day and said, *Be your own chef. I am renting that small corner shop. That's ideal. I'll pay your rent for a year. And let's see how you go.*

*But how can I do this alone? I'll help she said. Just the two of us. Aunt Grace held up 3 fingers. Go narrow, go special, go via a tiny windowframe of time.*

And so Angus began. Grace helped in the kitchen. There were only 5 tables. He only opened from 8 to 11 every day. He served only one dish, but what a dish. There were Mauritian secrets flavoured into it... colourful yes, the four colours of the Mauritian flag as he was fascinated by Mauritian cuisine - red blue yellow green. Blue food was hard to source but he managed. Sometimes blueberries sometimes blue kale. The unexpected combinations were like a poem with surprise words in bed with other words in the same line.

Now for a restaurant name? Angus came up with *Colours Four* And soon, people came because this was the place to go for a slow breakfast. A designer dish his specialty. Based on Dhol Puree - savoury pancake, egg yellow, yellow lentils and turmeric, red chilli, green peppers. If he could not find blue food, he served the breakfast on a cobalt blue skillet with your name written on the handle.

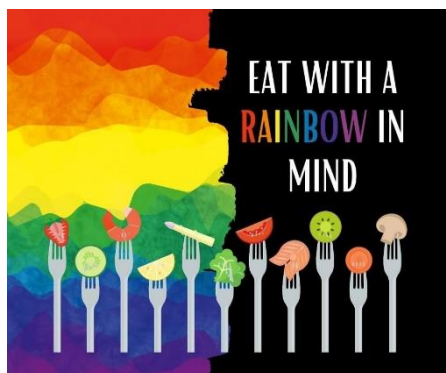
As the year passed, Angus said to his dear Aunt, *I can take over payment now because I am running on not off my feet.* And so he thrived with his four chosen colours with Mauritian secrets on every plate. People told their friends who told their friends. They queued and queued.

A story is a simultaneous instant translation into the language of every United Nations listener, present into their native tongue. Here are 5 responses:

For Bruce Copley the Schumacher, the *Small Is Beautiful* quotation was his mantra when he ran his AHA learning. He also alluded to the special bond between Angus and Grace which in First Nations wisdom is called Sacred Hoop (with one other) work. Gerrit Cloete shared he had just set intention to 'niche' his Productivity business, to narrow it since he tends to spread himself too wide. How to resist the temptation to be all things to all people.



The butterfly image is Gerrit's, taken in Kirstenbosch where he often listens to the weekly story. (story as Butterfly effect?) He also sent a video clip of a water drop spreading in circles.



Peter Fox sent an image of a bagel and beverage restaurant, Chelsea Kitchen in Wynberg, modelled on the principle in the story. Waltraud Mixa sent it to a Mauritian friend, whose Island ChiGong Retreat she had attended.

Wini Hartzenberg commented on the four colours. Synchronously her daughter, Dr Karen Hartzenberg, who happens to live in Mauritius, had sent an article based on this image of hers.

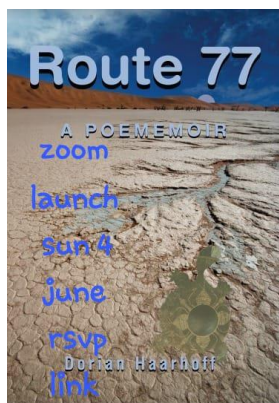
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/XRaBkFgierrajJ6n/?mibextid=WC7FNe...>

And so the ripples of an under 200 seconds story spread.

I wonder how this story reaches the inner and outer you? How it resonates in your chest caresses your heart, sets your bones humming. Enjoy the audio version on podcast [dorianhaahoffblog.co.za](http://dorianhaahoffblog.co.za)

Dorian

PS Thank you for those who subscribe to the monthly letter (R240 per annum) I cherish your support. The letter remains open to all.



Igno van Niekerk and Tina Konstant (story mates) kindly recorded the zoom launch. Here tis.

[https://mega.nz/file/rg9xhDJa#TTfWT8w-HttuLtfFbUGH\\_in-8\\_LXl8fIBtzE3dDajil](https://mega.nz/file/rg9xhDJa#TTfWT8w-HttuLtfFbUGH_in-8_LXl8fIBtzE3dDajil)

# Writing Retreat Radar Summer-Autumn 2023/4

detailed flyers on request

## 1. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)

Our ongoing last Wed of the month writeaway  
a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers.  
Limited to 12 places (waiting list)

## 2 Write your Life Story: a Beginners Guide (U3A members only)

1 8 15 Feb 10.00-13.00

## 3. Writeaway in Pringle Bay

2-4 Feb only 4 of 9 places left R990 (includes 3 meals)  
Are words and ideas stuck in your head? Need inspiration and writing company? Create a piece  
or craft one in process. So come away to Pringle Bay to write away.

## 4a. Namibian visit 1-23 March

Training carers, counsellors therapists, teachers in the art of story-telling so they can  
pass this skill on to children at risk. Courtesy of Carl Schlettwein Foundation.

## 4b. Memories are made of this... A lifestory workshop

Windhoek Sat 2 March 14.00 - 18.00 R380

*It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards (Alice in Wonderland)*

We love stories because we are walking talking stories. This workshop is about how to  
share in words those moments that tango and tangle with us.

## 5. Word Brush and Being

### a Creative Retreat for Poets, Writers and Painters

Fri 26 (17.30) - Mon 29 April (10.00) 7/16 places filled already  
discover the writer / artist inside you  
Join Dorian and Buster @Temenos (a spiritual oasis)

## 6a. ZenPen Retreat Writing, Being & Meditation (Groot Marico)

10 -12 May 2024 (Fri 17.00 - Sun 13.00)

<https://tararokpacentre.co.za> 014 503 8901

Writing, being and breath bring alive and expand the present moment. time to write...attend to  
stories... be present in bushveld, wooded valley, perennial streams... .. breathe...

## 6b. A Stream of Words

12 -15 May 2024 Sun 17.00 - Wed 13.00.

Need inspiration and writing company? Befriend words/let words befriend you? Then this extended time is for you. Create a piece or craft one in process. You'll find encouragement and safe support. Be energised. Connect.

### **7. Mentoring: ongoing one-on-one attention**

*You help me to sound like myself (numerous clients)*

Like a pair of sandals we walk this road together. Taking in the view. Mentoring involves finding out where you want to go with your writing/story telling/work/life and encouraging you get there

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