



Creative Wordshops

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storyteller facilitator speaker writing-coach poet

Writing Letter

April 2026

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

for this letter, a weekly story
and ongoing opportunities -
dorianhaarhoffblog.co.za

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

Thank you to subscribers of the monthly letter and/or the fortnightly Sat story.

While these are gifts, for those who wish, voluntary donations are welcome.

Dr R D Haarhoff Standard Bank Current account 0828 59 248

Sounds of Silence

Whoever is silent touches the roots of speech (Rilke)

Are words silent when not spoken? There they lie these unwhispered shapes with gaps between them. In music, these are grace notes. Perhaps like the nuanced Inuit words for snow, or the 96 Sanskrit words for love, strange we own one word for the many kinds of silences that vary from hostile to silence when contemplating the divine, (Wordsworth's 'the holy time is quiet as a nun, breathless with adoration'). to the silence of being alone in nature and listening to the sounds.

Then listening to the subliminal sounds of the blood coursing through, rising at pulse points, The beat of the heart, the sound of the breath. The Buddhist koan (riddle) 'What is the sound of one the hand clapping?' Cicero's 'Silence is one of the great arts of conversation.' Rumi's 'Sing to me in the silence of your heart and I will rise up to hear your triumphant song.'



As stories go, this month my laptop bag with laptop, diary, items and Stephen Bachelor's book, *The Art of Solitude* was stolen. I had planned to devote this letter to the book. What fingerprints thumb it? Or in what wind-swept silent bush lies the book? A rescued remnant:

'Solitude is good for great minds but bad for small ones. It troubles brains that it does not illuminate.' Yet Victor Hugo was unable to go as far as his older English contemporary William Wordsworth, for whom solitude was a "bliss" that filled the heart with joy. Largely

avoiding its extremes of hell and bliss, here I will explore the middle ground of solitude, which I consider a site of autonomy, wonder, contemplation, imagination, inspiration, and care.'

Many poets have wandered into the realm of silence. Rumi, Emily Dickinson, Maya Angelou. Here's Billy Collins and Margaret Atwood:

Silence Billy Collins

There is the sudden silence of the crowd
above a player not moving on the field,
and the silence of the orchid.

The silence of the falling vase
before it strikes the floor,
the silence of the belt when it is not striking the child.

The stillness of the cup and the water in it,
the silence of the moon
and the quiet of the day far from the roar of the sun.

The silence when I hold you to my chest,
the silence of the window above us,
and the silence when you rise and turn away.

And there is the silence of this morning
which I have broken with my pen,
a silence that had piled up all night
like snow falling in the darkness of the house—
the silence before I wrote a word
and the poorer silence now.

Silent Poem Margaret Atwood

Speak to me in your silence
when the words you have cannot
reach the distance between us.

Speak to me in your silence
when the pain you feel
cannot be assuaged by sound.

Speak to me in your silence
when the love you have
is too great for mere words.

Speak to me in your silence
and I will listen,
with a heart that hears
all that is unsaid.



And so how do we listen to silence
with the third ear? And I'm thinking
of the depth of the writing, in a
silent retreat, when we allow that
communal silence and what arises in
us. Whoever is silent touches the
roots of words.
Dorian

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Writing Retreat Radar – Autumn 2025

detailed flyers on request

1. Mentoring: ongoing one-on-one attention

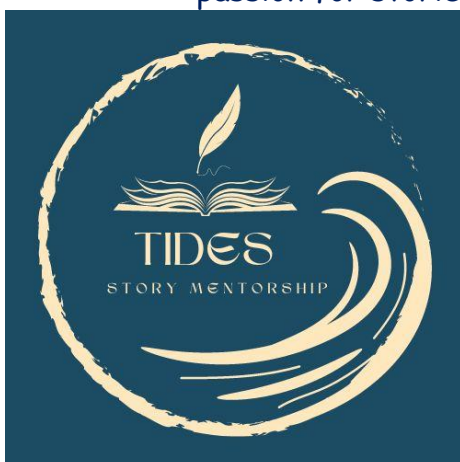
You help me to sound like myself (numerous clients)

Like a pair of sandals we walk this road together.

2. Story Apprenticeship

An Invitation to the Heartbeat of the Tale

Would you like to join Tides our **zoom story mentoring course**? We share our passion for stories and open to their subtle teaching.



The structured course offers story companionship, craft and competency. We engage interactively. The course includes a set of readings, audio recordings of each session with rich WhatsApp conversations between sessions.

Igno van Niekerk and Tina Konstant co-facilitate, offering their story passion, experience plus technical support.

only **6\10** places left.

Sessions and Dates a twice a month commitment 6 sessions of 2 hours each

Sundays 3.30 - 5.30 pm SA Time 12 & 26 April 10 & 24 May 7 & 21 June

3. Garden of Words & Images a Day for Writing

Pringle Bay

Sat 18 April 10.00 - 16.00 R480

4 Windhoek



THE GARDEN
OF THE BELOVED
A WRITING
WORDSHOP

with mentor/writer/story-teller
Dorian Haarhoff

the garden becomes a
metaphor as we seed, water,
prune, cultivate & harvest
our words.
beginners welcome

Sat 9 May 2-6pm
R400 (cash please)
susanalexander@afol.com.na
081 272 0459 for flyer
venue: Elisenheim Whk

5. Magic Carpet Writers (Somerset West)

last Wed of the month writeaway -
a fun-loving supportive thinking/being group of aspirant writers

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