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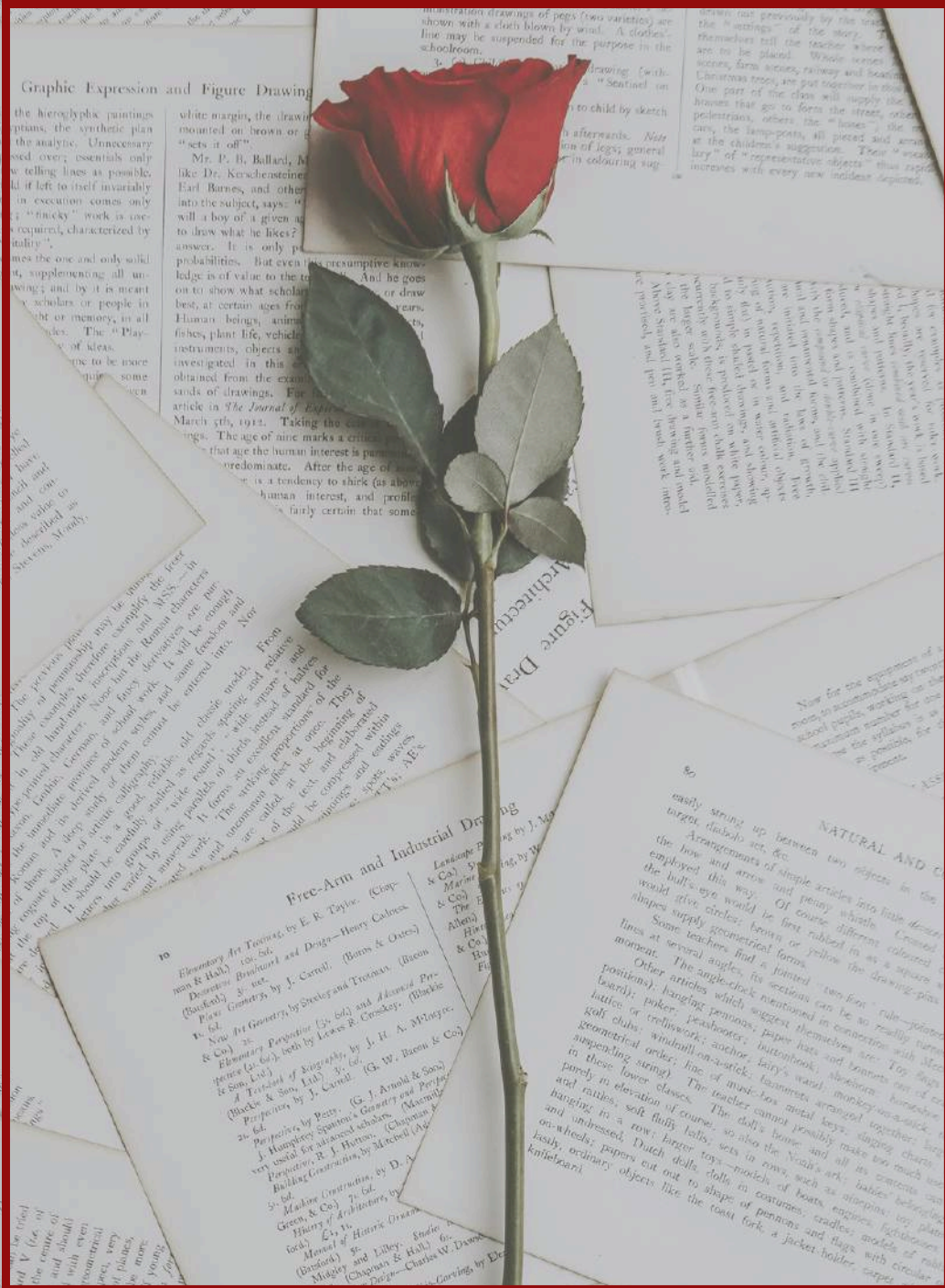
# MEMENTO

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Live well and write more!

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# MEMENTO

A COLLECTION OF STORIES BY SCRIBBLORY WRITERS

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# Message from the Founder

Dear Scribblorists,

At Scribbllory, we always encourage people to “live well and write more.” The latter is easy to understand, but the former . . . what do we really mean by “living well”?

About seven years ago, my eldest sister asked me that same question. She said I might want to consider changing Scribbllory’s tagline because “to live well” is vague. I told her that since memoir is our specialty, we encourage people to live a quality life and write about it.

“What if they don’t live well? Should they still write about their life?”

Her questions made perfect sense, but I knew I meant something else then that I couldn’t find words for yet. So, I kept and still keep the tagline—until now. I think of it as words to live by rather than an edict or a criterion to see whether someone is worthy to be called a Scribblorist. But over the years, I’ve pondered what “living well” really means.

This issue somehow defines “living well”. Everything seems aligned—our brand color reflects the hue of the heart. We live well by loving every day—there’s no other way. Some can have fame and fortune, others have received the highest recognition, but are they happy? Can they say that they are actually living well?

But those who love, you don’t have to ask—most of them emanate joy. They wake up knowing they are breathing for someone else, for a purpose. When you love, your life story becomes a perfect Freytag’s Pyramid or Three-Act Structure. Love is always challenged, but love always wins—it creates a perfect, compelling story.

I can’t wait for you to read what gem this issue contains. Go on, flip the page.

Live well by loving more,  
Elaine

# A Writer's Journey

*Niña Bless B. Chavez*

My writing journey started when grieving was hard to express.

My mother died when I was 10, and next to her was my dad. I was their only child. Since I felt like people wouldn't listen to my story, I tried to put it on paper until I learned to keep a journal for myself every day. I also tried to write poems. When I posted my poems on social media, there was a great number of reactions and comments, which pushed me to write a lot more.

In my poem “*Ang Kwento Ng Isang Ulila*”, I told the story of how my parents had supported me and guided me before they passed away. At the end of the poem, I mentioned how hopeful I am despite the dramatic changes in my life.

*“Babalikan niya ang tulang ito  
At itutuloy ang ikalawang bahagi nito  
Sisikaping maganda ang wakas  
At sa sineha'y ipapalabas.”*

As I continued college, I joined campus journalism and was challenged by different competitions. However, I received a lot of rejections, and not all of my entries were accepted. I learned hard lessons and criticisms from our experienced former campus journalists. These things taught me to persevere to achieve excellence.

I also wrote stories for the stage and screen plays of our campus—something I had really asked God for. When pandemic came and things transitioned, I met Scribblory, became one of their students, and found an opportunity to become a writing mentor.

Through these experiences, I realized four important key points:

1. **Writing is thinking.** Writing is a metacognitive process. We write because we have thought of an idea or a concept. When we write sentences and paragraphs, we think carefully about what to write. It helps us process what's inside our head.



2. **Writing is a process.** I love how the writing process goes. Every time I write an essay, I initially research about the subject and learn from others. After writing my draft, I go back and edit my work. This pushes me to trust the process while waiting for the best version of my output. From writing freely to editing, I get to exercise the art of process involved in creating a masterpiece.

3. **Writing is a space for me to breathe.** There was a time I was unemployed, and I was hopeless to get another job again. Writing my thoughts (whether it was good or bad) saved me from doing bad actions.

4. **Writing and reading co-relates with each other.** As I grew up in writing, various book genres became my mentors. Some authors like Liwayway Arceo, Bebang Sy, Hans Christian Andersen, and even my co-writers from my former campus publication helped me to become inspired and taught me what words to put on paper. But among all those I've read, the Bible was the greatest book that inspired me to write, as I learned how the love of God changes people.

As an experienced writer, my hope and my prayer to you is to not give up on writing. Some days, it would be hard to write because of our circumstances. But once God calls you, I believe that your energy and passion for writing will go back.



*Niña Bless B. Chavez is an English teacher and a writer. Her writings are mostly about perseverance, spiritual growth, and life's adversities. As a writer, she is a fan of Lualhati Bautista, Bob Ong, Liwayway Arceo, Joena San Diego, Timothy Keller and Rick Warren. Her favorite book character is Flavio of Ang Panday. Aside from writing, she loves crocheting, doing calligraphy and performing arts.*

# *Celebrating Love:*

Integrating Love  
Languages into Everyday  
Life



# THE POWER OF TOUCH

*by Plumarupok*

As a single working mom of two, I've learned to balance my time between work, parenting, and personal passions. My daily routine is a juggling act, but I've discovered that integrating love languages into my everyday life makes all the difference.

My children, Cyrus and Alexa, are my world. They're my reason for waking up every morning with a smile on my face. As a hands-on mom, I make sure to spend quality time with them, whether it's helping with homework, cooking dinner together, or simply having conversations about their day. We also express love through gestures such as kissing on the cheek and hugging, especially with my youngest daughter, who is very sweet and thoughtful. Whenever I am off work, I drop her off and pick her up from school even though she's already in high school. My love language is quality time, and I make sure to prioritize my children.

But it's not just about my children; it's also about making time for my relatives, especially during special occasions like birthdays, Christmas, New Year, and Chinese New Year. These celebrations are a time for us to come together, share stories, and create memories that will last a lifetime. I believe that's what love languages are all about: showing love and appreciation in ways that matter most to others.

As a busy single mom, it's easy to neglect my own needs. However, I've learned that taking care of myself is essential to being a good parent and person. I make time for daily routine exercises, which do not only keep my body fit and healthy but also give me a sense of accomplishment. Having four-line abs at the age of 40 is one of my proudest achievements!

Writing is another passion of mine. I've always loved writing, and I've been fortunate enough to have some of my articles and poems published. Seeing my work in print is a thrill like no other, and it motivates me to keep pursuing my writing dreams. I'm currently working on a solo book, and I'm excited to see it come to fruition in God's perfect time.

As I navigate the ups and downs of life, I'm grateful for the love and support of my family and friends. And then there's Cato, my suitor from Norway. After almost a decade, my heart beats again. He has natural qualities that drew him close to my heart. Every day, despite the distance between us, he never forgets to greet me when he wakes up and when I wake up, as well as when we go to sleep. It's not difficult for him, even though we're in different parts of the world with a seven-hour time difference. Even when he's at work, he still manages to send short video messages just to express how much he misses me.

From simple greetings, everything gradually deepened. Sometimes he gets carried away by his emotions and sends a flying kiss. He has become comfortable sharing with me about the things in his life, even his past and accomplishments.

More than that, he plans to visit me in the Philippines to know me better personally and for us to be together in the future. He also wants me to be with him in their country, offering to take care of all the expenses. It's a love that's like a punch to the moon, but my heart is willing to trust, even if it's hard. I am prepared for the results of everything that may unexpectedly happen in the future. That's what love is all about.

He's a kind and gentle soul, and I feel blessed to have him in my life. I'm manifesting that he's the right one for me, and we'll spend the rest of our lives together.

As I reflect on my life, I realize that celebrating love is not just about grand gestures or romantic getaways, but the everyday moments, the small acts of kindness, and the love languages that speak directly to our hearts. As a single working mom, I've learned to appreciate the beauty of love in all of its forms, and I'm grateful for the love that fills my life every day.

## WHEN LOVE REFUSES TO LEAVE

*by BlackMiere*

I wake up and stare at the reflection in the mirror, but I no longer recognize the person looking back. Her eyes are dull, hollow. Her skin is pale and tired. Her body feels like a vessel, something left behind by someone who used to exist. All I see is someone I have grown tired of – someone I no longer wish to be.

Where is the love I once felt – the love that once made me whole? Does love still linger even when the person I used to be has been forgotten? Does it remain, hidden behind the cracks of this reflection, waiting for the person I am now to remember?

Where is this love now, when all I see is a broken version of myself? Can love still exist when I cannot even love who I have become?

Maybe love was never meant to be enough to heal the wounds. Maybe love is just another thing that fades away when it's no longer needed, or when the person who once embraced it no longer knows how to.

Can love still find me in the dark? Or is it gone – just another lesson learned in silence and solitude?

They say love is present in everyday life. That it lingers in the warmth of the sun, in the laughter of strangers, and in the kindness of passing moments. But where is love when waking up feels like a punishment, when every breath is a reminder that I am still here despite not wanting to be?

I have tried to unlove myself in the quietest ways by fading into the background and shrinking into spaces where no one will notice. I have spoken words of hatred to my own reflection, torn myself apart in ways no one else ever could. I have stood on the edge of oblivion, wondering if love would stop me or if it had already let me go.

And yet, I am still here. Not because I want to be, but because love is present in ways I do not understand.

It exists in the way my body still fights to keep me alive, in the way the world refuses to let me disappear. Love is not always soft. Sometimes, it is cruel. It holds me in place even when I beg to be let go. It forces me to breathe, to continue, and to endure.

Love is present, even in suffering. It is in the weight of survival, in the pain that reminds me I am still alive. It is in the shattered pieces of myself that refuse to fully break, in the small, stubborn part of me that whispers, “just one more day.”

Love is present, but sometimes, it feels like a prison—keeping me here when all I want is to be free.

## THE LOVE LEXICON

*by Shena Mae D. Opeda*

There are languages that exist beyond words. I know this because I was fluent in one once – a dialect stitched from silence, touch, and the slow unfurling of trust.

I learned this truth from a man who spoke in gestures, in pauses, and in the kind of comfort that held more meaning than a thousand speeches. He was neither my father nor my teacher in any formal sense, but he became the compass that guided me through the fog of adolescence—a time when I felt unseen, even by myself.

We met in the crumpled years of my adolescence, when I wore my loneliness like a second skin. My voice felt too sharp for the world, and my thoughts were too tangled. But he spoke in a lexicon I understood so clearly; He communicated in the tilt of his head, the press of a palm on my shoulder, and the way he'd pause mid-whistle to let the chirp of a wren finish his sentence. He was older, his face a map of creases and sun, but his eyes held the quiet mischief of someone who'd never fully surrendered to adulthood. He taught me that all worries in life should be replaced by love.



Our love is uncommon, not something that fits into the stories others tell. It is a language only we understand, a connection that defies the boundaries people expect. We have no need for grand declarations, nor do we seek validation from the world. What we have is ours, and that is enough.

We have spent nights in the mountains, where the wind carried our laughter and the stars bore witness to our secrets. In the quiet of nature, we found solace in each other's presence. The world below blurred into insignificance as we stood side by side, untouched by the weight of reality.

There were times we danced in the rain, unbothered by the chill, uncaring of the world's eyes. The sky wept, but we rejoiced. Each raindrop against our skin felt like a blessing, a reminder that love does not always have to be neat or dry—it can be wild, chaotic, and free.

Some nights, we would lie down in the middle of an empty road, staring at the moon. The asphalt beneath us was cold, and the world around us was still; but in those moments, we were infinite. We spoke of dreams, fears, and the lives we lived before we found each other.

He told me stories of his childhood, lessons learned, and things he had lost. And I, too, opened parts of myself I had never shared before.

Love, I learned, is not in the promises of forever but in the everyday presence of someone who makes you feel at home. He is with me in the warmth of the sun, in the hush of the night, in the scent of pine, and the taste of rain. His love is in the words I write—in the songs I hum absentmindedly and in the silence I find comforting.

The world may never fully understand what we are, and that is okay. Because love—real love—does not need to be understood by anyone else. It is something I carry within me through all seasons, beyond all circumstances. He is here always in my soul—in the rhythm of my heartbeat and in the magic of everyday life.

His presence is the grammar that rebuilt the structure of my heart, the lexicon I can fully understand.

And that is enough.

# OUR LOVE LANGUAGES CELEBRATION

*by Alfred Pagunsan Gadayan*

Our love story, like most, isn't a fairytale. It's a tapestry woven with everyday threads of laughter, frustration, quiet moments, and the occasional spectacular fight. But the vibrant hues that make our tapestry truly unique are the five love languages – words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch – and how we've learned to weave them into the fabric of our daily lives. My wife, Belen, and I discovered these languages a few years ago, and it revolutionized our relationship.

Belen, a whirlwind of energy and creativity, speaks primarily the language of acts of service. She shows her love by doing things for me – cooking my favorite meals, meticulously organizing my overflowing desk, even fixing that leaky faucet that had been driving me crazy for months. For her, love isn't just a feeling but also a tangible action – a demonstration of care through practical help.

My own primary love language is words of affirmation. I need to hear those three little words, "I love you," but I also thrive on compliments, encouragement, and expressions of appreciation. A simple "You did a great job on that presentation," or "I'm so proud of you," can brighten my entire day. This is something I often forget in the rush of daily life, and it's been a lesson in mindful communication.

Initially, our differences in love languages caused misunderstandings. I'd shower Belen with compliments, assuming she felt loved while she'd tirelessly clean the house and feeling unappreciated because I hadn't explicitly thanked her. She'd feel frustrated by my perceived lack of helpfulness while I'd feel unloved because I wasn't hearing the words I craved.

The turning point came during a particularly stressful week. I was swamped with work, feeling overwhelmed and emotionally depleted. Belen, sensing my distress, didn't just offer words of comfort (though those were welcome) but also took over several of my household chores, leaving me free to focus on my deadlines. That's when it clicked. Her acts of service weren't just chores but also a powerful expression of her love, a tangible demonstration of her support.

From that point on, we consciously started integrating our love languages into our daily routines. I made a conscious effort to verbalize my appreciation for Belen's acts of service. "Thank you for taking care of the laundry, it means the world to me," I'd say, or "I really appreciate you fixing that faucet; you're a lifesaver!" These weren't just polite words but also affirmations of her love, spoken directly in her language.

Belen, in turn, learned to express her love through words of affirmation. She started leaving me little notes of encouragement on the fridge, or sending me sweet text messages throughout the day. These small gestures, tailored specifically to my needs, felt incredibly meaningful.

We also explored the other love languages. Quality time became sacred. We scheduled regular date nights, even if it was just an hour spent curled up on the couch, watching a movie together. We rediscovered the joy of simple conversations, sharing our thoughts and feelings without distractions. Physical touch became a more conscious part of our affection. A simple hug, a hand squeeze, and a kiss goodbye – these small gestures became powerful reminders of our connection. And the occasional thoughtful gift – a book she knew I'd love, a small piece of art that reminded her of me – added another layer of richness to our relationship.

The journey hasn't been without its bumps. There are still times when we miss the mark when our love languages get tangled, and we need to consciously reconnect. But the understanding we've gained has made a profound difference. We've learned to speak each other's love languages fluently, not just occasionally, but as a regular part of our daily conversation.

Our home is no longer just a house; it's a sanctuary where love is not just felt but actively cultivated and celebrated. It's a testament to the power of understanding, communication, and the simple yet profound impact of speaking each other's love languages. It's a love story still unfolding, but one that's richer, deeper, and more meaningful because we've learned to appreciate the unique ways we express our love for each other. And that, I believe, is the true celebration of love.

## THE LOVE WE OVERLOOK

*by Vinz Thyrone C. Asuncion*

What does love look like?

Most would say it's lurking, loud, and impossible to ignore. It's an emotion we see in movies, played out in passionate confessions, dramatic sacrifices, and the relentless pursuit of someone's happiness. Love, in our minds, is supposed to take our breath away, to shake the world beneath our feet. And maybe, in some ways, it does.

But does love only exist in those scenarios?

If love is found only in fireworks and sweeping gestures, then what happens in the in-between? What about the ordinary days, the quiet sacrifices, and the unnoticed acts of care? Does love disappear when there is no one to witness it? Or is it possible that love is always present, speaking in ways we have been conditioned to overlook?

Sometimes we forget that love is a language that everyone speaks; love speaks volumes.



Consider the small, unremarkable moments: Love is waking up in the morning, even when exhaustion weighs heavy on my body. It is dragging myself out of bed, not just because I have to, but because I owe it to myself to show up. Love exists in the simple act of choosing to live, to keep moving forward, even when the world feels unbearably heavy.

Love is also in the rushed “Good morning po, Sir” that I offer my professor as I slip into the classroom—sometimes late, but always eager to learn. To him, it may be just another routine greeting, something so familiar it fades into the background. But for me, love exists in that moment not just in words but in intention—the effort to acknowledge someone, to be present, and to express respect.

And then, at the end of the day, when exhaustion clings to me like a second skin, love is still there. It’s in the simple exchange between a passenger and a jeepney driver. When I hand over my fare and meet his eyes with a soft, “Thank you po,” it takes nothing from me, yet it could mean everything to him. Perhaps he has spent the entire day navigating through traffic, dealing with impatient passengers, honking cars, and chaos. Maybe in the grand scheme of things, my gratitude is insignificant. But maybe, just maybe, it reminds him that he is seen, and that his work matters. And isn’t that love, too?

Yet, we have been taught to believe that these small acts do not count. Society tells us that a smile, a kind word, or a simple act of consideration is merely the “bare minimum.”

These gestures, they say, are expected, routine, and unremarkable. But why do we assume that love must always be grand to be real? Why do we dismiss the everyday kindnesses, the little ways we take care of one another?

Try to imagine a world without these gestures.

Imagine waking up, going through the motions of life, and never being met with a single act of warmth. No one holds the door open for you. No one asks how your day was. No one greets you in passing, offers a smile, or acknowledges your presence. Would that not be a world devoid of love?

Even hate, in its own twisted way, is love turned inside out. We do not hate things that mean nothing to us. Hate often stems from love that was once there—love that was ignored, love that was hurt, and love that turned bitter. When we are angry, it is often because we once cared deeply. When we feel resentment, it is because something mattered to us. Even indifference, the absence of emotion, is a response to love that has long since faded.

Love is a language, spoken in a million different ways. Some people express it through words, loud declarations, gifts, and affection. Others express it through silent actions—presence, small but deliberate efforts, and the things they do when no one is watching. Some love loudly; others love in silence. But in the end, it is all love.

In this age, we have almost erased the essence of what love truly is. We have reduced it to the five love languages or to grand romantic gestures, forgetting that love exists in countless other ways.

We fail to see that love surrounds us in the simplest moments—yet we have been conditioned to believe that unless it is extraordinary, it is not love at all.

But love is everywhere.

It is in the way we show up for ourselves. It is in the kindness we extend to strangers. It is in the unnoticed, unremarkable moments that make life a little more bearable.

Love does not always arrive with fireworks. Sometimes it's just a soft "Take care," a hand reaching out, or a quiet presence that reminds us we are not alone.

So, what does love look like?

It looks like everything.

It looks like life itself.

Love is something that makes you feel "I am here."

## A TEACHER'S MIST OF LOVE

*by Arlene R. Ariate*

As an educator, a mist of love is sprayed in the air every day. Not having a child of my own is a blessing that God allows me to extend my love to young people who are not related to me in blood but have connected me closer to the world of motherhood.

Showing love to these children goes beyond "I love you." It is listening to their stories about anything under the sun – from their pets to their quarreling neighbors, down to their favorite television programs, and all the way to serious societal concerns. Why? Many of them aren't attended by listening ears of their parents or guardians. Many of them cannot communicate these things to their buddies at home.

When some parents are too busy working to provide for their families, they sometimes forget the value of listening to their children's stories. As their surrogate mother, I interact with these children and make them feel that they have someone to share their thoughts. I want them to know that they should not fear expressing how they feel.

Secondly, I motivate and mold them to strive for the things that they love, and at the same time, accept their limitations. In this modern world where competition loudly abounds, a teacher's support is love in itself. It is a way of showing that we want the best for these children and that someone is rooting for the best versions of themselves.

A teacher's eye that sees the brilliance even in the quietest person in the classroom is love. Through this, the child will feel that he or she is worthy to be polished so that in the end, he or she will end up lighting the way for others, too. But if there comes a time that they would lose, their teacher's open arms will embrace them despite their weaknesses. They will always have the chance to stand and realize that love for something is like the love their teacher has for them that will never be erased no matter how many losses they will experience.

Also, love around innocent minds is caring for them. Some go to school and are not given an allowance or even "*baon*" for the day. A teacher is sensitive to all these needs and provides the learners with what they lack. She even gives them school supplies when they don't have such. A teacher spreads love in the form of generosity.

Think of this: What love is greater than a teacher who forgets her own problems and puts a happy mask in front of her learners as if everything is light?

A teacher who shows love even if at that time she feels so unloved? A teacher who sees the beauty in teaching the children when she isn't always seen as beautiful by the world? It's incomparable.

The world of teaching is a world of love that transforms negativism into optimism, fear into courage, and hatred into love. With someone's passion for teaching, learners will also imbibe that fire of hard work, sharing, and love. That same fire will light their little world and throw the ball of love to others.

Sprinkling love to children every day is a huge leap in creating a society that unites and cares. We should never underestimate the value of love from a teacher who hopes nothing but to produce learners who are not only intellectually capable but are true bearers of good character, models of right conduct, and sharers of love wherever life's journey will take them.

A mist of love when sprayed will forever create a scent of joy. A teacher's love will forever be a perfume that stays.

## SENTIMENTALISM

*by Charly Lam*

Words, spelling, reading, and writing – these are things that have essentially been a core part of my life forever. Hence, when I noticed my main love language started to switch from physical touch (it is a close second, though – I always enjoy randomly hugging friends when I know both of us are comfortable with said action!) to words of affirmation, safe to say, I was not surprised.

Talking in general was never a strong suit of mine. Whether that be small talk, public speaking, or holding up conversations, I always tend to struggle immensely, relying on the other person to continue the conversation. More often than not, I can recall short periods of silence after I have exhausted a topic with someone.



I inwardly panic and try to think of a new subject to discuss in order to cut through any awkwardness in the air (which could have been fabricated by my brain, but still). Therefore, it was safe to say that I found writing down what could have been said out loud in person to be much more comfortable to me.

I never really consciously noticed this about me until I really took the time to stop and think about it now, but I have always loved writing letters to my friends. From what I can recall, I've been doing this since around 2018 or so – starting with a yearly Christmas party my friend group from kindergarten always had every year since 2011. I remember folding paper to cut into smaller, card-sized squares that I would write short messages in with a drawing of something they liked back then to go along with whatever gift I gave them. But back then, the gesture was not really all that significant to me – I simply found it fun to carry out. But, for some reason, I found it more meaningful to me around 2021 or so. I had fallen into the rabbit hole that was K-pop-edit Instagram. The friends I made online on that account were really into posting letters alongside video edits of our favorite K-pop biases to commemorate friendship monthsaries, and I followed suit.

Finally, 2022 came and I was back to physical classes! Christmas had eventually dropped by, and one of my dearest friends was moving to Canada. Everyone wrote letters for not just him, but each other.

Receiving these letters and reading the words etched into their paper, and the thoughtfulness and love flowing out of these sentences truly made me realise just how much I appreciated the people I love.

From then on, I would always request my friends to write me letters on my birthday, me doing the same for them on not just birthdays but occasions such as Christmas as aforementioned, and our graduation. I would spend almost two hours at most, jotting down whatever would come to mind when I would think of the friend I wrote for (sometimes eliciting tears to fall – but I probably do it to myself, I literally have a playlist curated to write letters to that has a quite bittersweet vibe to it). I don't know what it is, but just the thought of knowing that my friends willingly chose to sit down, take a few minutes or hours to put pen to paper, and write such lovely words dedicated to me really makes me grateful for them. It may be a very simple act for them to carry out,, but it means the absolute world to me. I even have a photo album on my phone dedicated to these letters entitled Sentimentalism, just so I can look back and read them whenever I feel unhappy.

Personally, if I were to choose between receiving a truckload of gifts or a single letter from a friend, I would definitely opt for the latter. Really, it's funny how such a choice to carry out a small action in my life could grow to become something so very meaningful to me. But honestly, I wouldn't trade losing this experience in my life for anything.

# BEFORE EVERYTHING FADES

by Agnes B. Abunio

When I was in college, I may have sounded awkwardly too sure of myself when I had planned the career I wanted to take, the subdivision I wanted my house to be built in, the amount of emergency fund I needed to save years after my first employment, and even the insurances I would flat-out reject. However, there is one small yet game-changing thing that I never saw coming: it was not on my long list of how the future would be or how my life would sail smoothly.

I did not expect that I would speak of love so magnificent that it melts me to the ground. I thought I would never have my own love stories to share. I was sure that I had successfully scared playful Kerubin enough not to release his last bow onto my heart. Well, I am glad; otherwise, I would not have experienced this kind of love—a kind of love that is always steadfast and proud; a love that thrives on honesty and certainty; a love that fuels me to keep going, even when my timeline veers off course or when my best efforts fall short; a love that tells me to walk straight ahead and eyes on the goal, without worrying about glancing back at him because he surely will never leave; a love that keeps the thrill even after years of doing things over and over again; and most importantly, a love that is present when the rain is pouring, when the happiness is overflowing, or when my day is just mundane.

The time of a busy person equates to the diamonds of the rich; hence, when it is given to me, it flatters me knowing that I am worthy of someone's precious seconds. He waits for me untiringly until I finish my long list of work. He does not think of the time he needs to spend on the road for more than 100 kilometers to support me in my competitions, to cheer me through my failures, or just to simply eat *bulalo pares* with me. There is no need for lavish reasons to be with me, but he makes time.

There is no fancier feeling than having the confidence that I have one person in the world whom I can always rely on to be with and to rescue me. He remains present for me even at times I cannot be present for myself. His thereness is my favorite about him; he has this steady presence in every grand and simple gesture. He listens to me without judgment and reassures me that I will never be alone.

When he came into my life, I fondly understood what people mean when they say “quality over quantity.” Time spent together need not be long to feel loved; it just needs to be pure and intentional. I appreciate how we can create a world that is just ours when we are together. All other things do not matter anymore.

I once read that in a person's final moments, the brain replays their happiest memory in mere seconds.

I already know what mine will be—our evening walks after dinner, with no phones and no distractions, just us, wrapped in the cool night air, with the stars quietly keeping us company. It will be the times I glimpsed at him waiting for me outside the office, the times he stayed awake when I was sick, the complete 12-midnight monthsary greetings for almost six years, the times I looked for him in the crowd while he looked at me—smiling and proud—and all the moments when I felt his thereness. And before that final memory fades, I know I will leave this world wrapped in the warmth of his tender, constant love.

## MY DAD'S HEART OF STONE

*by Coach Kai Soriano Sta Cruz*

Ben & Elsa Soriano, or "Sitart" (sweetheart) to each other, have been such a stellar example of love for our family.

My dad is so sweet, especially when he's in the mood for love! We grew up seeing him romance my mom with her heart's desires, including flowers, hugs, and kisses (my sisters and I would cringe at the sight!), randomly singing and dancing, many travels and gifts to delight her fancy. It has always been such a joy seeing my parents love each other the way they do. They have the occasional spats but I have come to understand, through their example, that disagreements are really part of marriage; it's what you do about it after and what you learn from it eventually that's important.

My dad is very creative; he's a pretty good painter outside of his architectural practice. He's always championed natural materials in his design.

The use of large adobe rocks, hardwood, and plants is just some of his ways to get nature into the lives of his clients, and with repeat customers, I think they really like how it all flows and affects their buildings and homes.

One Valentine's Day, my dad gave my mom a heart of stone - literally, a heart-shaped stone that my mom found somewhere in one of their road trips in Pangasinan, where Dad is from. Mom kept that stone among her collection of knick-knacks, and Dad dug it out without her knowing. That became his Valentine's card for her in 2014 with the following words: "Dearest Sitart, the permanence that you hold in the softness of your palm says that my love for you will never change. Happy Valentines. Bensor"

They were married for 49 years until my dad succumbed to pneumonia at 83 years old on the Feast of the Assumption in 2021.



My mom now spends her days with her friends and sisters, in prayer, painting, and other activities, sustained by the love she continues to receive from all the beautiful memories she made with dad.

Growing up, I often heard that love is a powerful force, and some would say that it's even the most powerful. I understand now - I see its power transcending death & sustaining life as it supports not just Mom but all of us in the family.



# A MEANINGFUL VALENTINES DAY THROUGH GOD'S LOVE AND MY DAUGHTER'S

*by Meybel Martinez*

Valentine's Day is traditionally seen as a celebration of romantic love, often dominating social media with images of flower bouquets, fancy dates, and couple getaways. However, over time, it has evolved into an opportunity to convey affection and care to those who hold a special place in our hearts—be it friends, family, pets, or even kind strangers. As a mother to a six-year-old daughter, I have shared with her that love transcends romantic confines, and it can be shown in various ways to anyone.

The evening before Valentine's Day, I ran to the mall to purchase small gifts, especially for the kids at home. A loving and thoughtful gesture is best taught by example; in her young mind and heart, she knows that Valentine's Day can be celebrated through gifting. She would help me decide on gifts for her loved ones as I listened closely to why she picked those. She also understands that it is okay if we don't receive the gifts we prefer and still be grateful.

The next morning, she awoke to find her presents meticulously wrapped. Her face glowed with excitement. I invited her to participate by crafting heart-shaped cutouts and writing handwritten notes with drawings of faces, no longer limited to stick figures.

*"Stella, Happy Vday! Love, Kamy (with lots of hearts in various sizes)"*

*Wowo, Wowo I love you! Love, Kamy (with silly faces and hearts)"*

And she continued until the last note. When her youngest cousin joined us, they eagerly unwrapped their gifts, delighting in matching bunny slippers I had gotten for them.

I had underestimated her cousin's shoe size and planned to exchange it for a bigger size next week. Surprisingly, my daughter offered hers, as she had other gifts from me. Isn't she the loveliest? She then presented me with two drawings adorned with vibrant colors and the words "I love you, Mommy" and "Hi Mommy" on the other sheet.

As she read the message aloud, she embraced me warmly, showered me with small kisses (which are our favorites), and expressed her gratitude, saying how lucky she was to have me as her mom. These heartfelt gestures champion Kamy's love for me and others, which she best expresses through touch and words.

We then enjoyed a leisurely brunch as I played a new Christian song I introduced to her titled “Place in this World.” After three repeats, she was already singing along! She is a natural-born singer. She asked for a love song, so I played an upbeat one where she danced to the melody as we shared more laughter, jokes, and playful moments. This quality time together was more than heartwarming.

We spent a good 45 minutes in the shower, alternating in caring for each other—soaping, shampooing, and providing a home spa treatment. She was so thrilled that she recorded a video, referring to me as her stylist, and encouraged her pretend audience to like and subscribe. This act of service fosters our bond deeper.

The remainder of the day was filled with more loving and fruitful activities like teaching moments on her new workbook, playing with her Polly Pocket toys, and a karaoke session in bed where she performed songs from *Wicked*, showcasing her beautiful voice as Elphaba and Glinda. To end our full day of fun, we rewatched the movie *Heaven is for Real*, a story she loves about children and Jesus.

As the day concluded, Kamy, with her most adorable facial expressions I find ever so charming, uttered, “I loooovveeeee you so much, Mommy. This is another best day ever. The best Valentine’s Day!” She is always the sweetest.

Completely clueless after being in bed for merely two hours, she woke up crying from a tummy ache. As all mothers do, I did what I have mastered through the years just to soothe her pain—massaged with oil, pressed her tiny tummy to mine as we snuggled closely, offered her warm milk and some crackers, and simply stayed by her side. She couldn’t fall back asleep until the early hours of the morning. Exhausted, I cried out to God, feeling unwell for the past three days but having to set aside my own discomfort for my daughter’s needs. In that quiet moment, I felt God’s whisper: “You are doing something important because you love. And you too are loved by me.” I am certain that God loves Kamy tenderly through me, and He assured me that He loves me too.

Valentine’s Day, no matter how overrated it is sometimes, is just like any other day, when we find ways to express our love. But how can we make it more meaningful? By speaking through the love languages of the people we care most about, like my daughter’s and God’s in their purest forms.



# ALL SIZES ARE BEAUTIFUL

*by Vince Pablico*

"You're too big, that's why you don't fit inside," a working woman in her late 30s said as I tried to sit on the smallest chair in the tricycle.

"You're FAT!" a naughty, little girl exclaimed and pointed out her index finger on me at a children's birthday party.

"You're putting on too much weight," one of my aunts remarked.

Those nasty words folks and strangers mentioned about my weight were deafening. At the same time, they were painful. In an attempt to just block them out, I turned off my pair of hearing aids. Silence then enveloped me, but still, I couldn't escape the noise inside of me.

One cold night, I found myself sitting alone by the window of my bedroom. I thought I was okay, but deep down, those words echoed endlessly. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't shut them out. Eventually, I broke down into tears. My heart felt so weak as if it could crash at any moment. With no one to talk to, I was left questioning myself, consumed by the label "fat."

For many nights, I locked myself in my bedroom, blaming myself for being called "fat." I couldn't be angry at people who hurt me with their words. I can't understand why I couldn't stand up for myself, and worse, I was cruel to myself for allowing those comments to harm my self-esteem.

In the process, I forgot my God-given talents, strengths, and the essence of who I truly am. I lost sight of what my life was really all about.

Growing up with those painful words constantly replaying in my head, I became insecure.

I remember attending a meet-and-greet with celebrity and author Bianca Gonzales-Intal back in 2016. During the event, we lined up as she signed copies of her book, *PAANO BA 'TO?! How to Survive Growing Up*. When it was my turn, she nicely asked what I wanted her to write. Since her book was all about navigating life's challenges, I jokingly asked, "*Paano po ba pumayat?*" Expecting tips on diet and exercise, I was really surprised when she instead wrote a heartfelt message just for me:

Jaja!

Your glow and charm is much more beautiful than any insecurity you might have. *Basta healthy, yun ang important!* All sizes are beautiful!

-Bianca

Here and now, being "fat" may be a misconception or a bad word to many, but to me, it means being faithful, awesome, and thankful.

It wasn't until I turned inward, somehow deepening my divine journey that I regained my sense of confidence. I also came to realize that my value isn't tied to my size. Whether I lose weight or gain weight, what matters is that I am healthy and able to love God, others, and most importantly, myself.

All I needed was a shift—reframing my perceived identity in a way that affirms me.

With my great love for the written words, I have learned and accepted that words of affirmation are my primary love language. Words can either build me up, bless me, or break me. But now, I am choosing to embrace the positive ones no matter what the world tells me. I now believe that all sizes are beautiful, and we have beautiful hearts with beautiful words to share.

So long, insecurity! Hello, self-love!

## ***PA, KAPE TAYO!*** *ni Miri*

*Dati, hindi ko maintindihan kung bakit ang hilig ni Papa sa kape mula umaga hanggang sa pag-uwi niya galing sa trabaho.*

*Magsasaka ang Papa ko, at araw-araw niya mahal ang ginagawa niya dahil ito ang namana niya mula sa lolo ko – ang pagtutubo o sugarcane farming. Noong bata pa ako, alas-tres palang gising na gising na si Papa. Magbubukas siya ng lumang radyo na mula pa sa ika-19 na siglo at makikinig ng paborito niyang programa. Isinilang ako sa ika-21 na siglo kaya medyo wala sa pace ko ang mga nakagawian ni Papa. Pero kahit ganoon pa man, natutuwa akong pagmasdan siya sa mga ginagawa niya. Dahil dalawa lang kaming magkakapatid, at ako ang panganay, ako ang pinaka-unang nakakatuklas sa mga karanasan namin sa buhay. Ang buhay namin ay napaka-simple lang noong mga bata palang kami ng bunso kong kapatid.*

*Lumaki akong natutunan ang mga gawain ni Papa—nagiging semi-masculine ako. At kahit busy siya sa farm namin, hindi siya nagkakamali o nagkulang na ipagluto kami ng paborito naming ulam. Hindi mahilig sa pagluluto ang Mama ko; mas mahilig siya sa pag-nenegosyo at pag-aalaga ng mga hayop namin. Hindi ko nakitang nagreklamo si Papa dahil doon. Minsan akong gumising ng maaga para pumasok noong high school palang ako, at nakita kong siya ang nagtitimpla ng kape para kay Mama.*

*“Inday (Visayan dialect), maligo ka na at ipagtitimpla kita ng gatas.”*

*Napakabait ni Papa, at mahigit kong ipinagpasalamat iyon sa Poong Maykapal. Madalas, kahit pa malaki na ako, hindi ko nakitang nagagalit si Papa sa akin at kahit sa aming buong pamilya.*

Soft-spoken si Papa–kung may mga pagkakamali man kami ay mahinahon niya kaming pinagsasabihan at lubos nyang ipinapakita ang kanyang Acts of Service. Hindi ko makakalimutan ang mga sakripisyo ni Papa para sa amin. Hindi ko na kailangan pang mang-hingi noon dahil alam na alam ni Papa ang language ko. Hindi ko naranasan manghingi dahil hindi na siya naghihintay na manghingi ako sa kanya.

Hanggang ngayong nasa early 20s na ako, ganoon parin si Papa sa amin. Minsan, kapag busy na ang lahat at wala siyang ginagawa, siya na ang nagluluto at naghahanda ng kakainin. He both provided and made dishes on the table. Noong isang linggo, paalis na ako papunta sa trabaho, maaga nanamang nagising si Papa kasama si Mama sa kusina. Ipinaghanda nila ako ng lunch box dahil ayaw nilang palagi akong bumibili sa canteen ng office ko. Gusto nila ng homemade dish at mas kampante sila dahil sila mismo ang nagluto para sa'kin.

Maraming pagkakataong nagba-bond kami ng pamilya ko, lalo na kami ng Papa ko. At hanggang sa pagtanda ko, mas naintindihan ko na si Papa kung bakit ang hilig niya sa kape.

Isa sa mga love languages ni Papa ay ang ipagtitimpla si Mama ng kape. Marahil, isa ito sa paraan ng pagpapakita niya ng pagmamahal para sa amin. Si Papa, ang standard ko sa isang lalaki.

Nitong isang linggo lang, alas-singko na si Papa gumising at mas nauna na akong gumising kaysa sa kanya. Naiintindihan ko na kung bakit mas masarap ang kape kapag kasama ko si Papa, ganoon pala iyon. Kaya pala ang hilig ni Papa sa kape –may malalim itong kahulugan lalo na at may ipinagtitimpla ka nito. Dahil doon, mahilig na rin ako sa kape.

Tinitignan ko siya habang tumatanda na siya at ito na ako ngayon: Kung dati'y ipinagtitimpla lang niya ako ng gatas, gusto ko, ngayon, ipatitimpla ko naman siya ng kape.

“Pa, kape tayo!”



# JULIA AT JULIAN

*ni Julie Rose P. Mendoza*

*Ang pag-ibig ay isang puwersang hindi matitinag—isang apoy na hindi nauupos at isang damdaming walang hanggan. Sa bawat pintig ng ating puso, sa bawat patak ng ating luha, at sa bawat ngiti ng ating labi, ang pag-ibig ang siyang dahilan. Ito ang nagtutulak sa atin upang mabuhay nang may layunin, upang magsakripisyo nang walang alinlangan, at upang magpatawad nang walang hinihintay na kapalit. Subalit, tunay nga bang ganap nating nauunawaan ang lalim ng salitang ito?*

*Ako si Julia, isang mangmang na gurong naniniwala na ang pag-ibig ay hindi lamang isang damdamin kundi isang paninindigan. Sa pamilya, ito ay nakikita sa walang kapantay na sakripisyo ng mga magulang para sa kanilang mga anak ang pagpupuyat ng aking ina sa gabing ako ay mayroong sakit, at ang pawis at pagod ng aking amang nagsusumikap upang may mailagay sa hapag-kainan. Sa aking mga kaibigan, ito ay sumasalamain sa tiwala at katapatan, sa pagiging sandigan sa oras ng pangangailangan. At sa larangan ng pag-iibigan, walang papantay kay Julian; hindi dahil iba siya, kundi dahil sa kakayahang manatili kahit sa gitna ng hindi pagkakaunawaan.*

*Sa unang taon, ang tunay na pagsubok ng pag-ibig ay hindi nasusukat sa tamis ng mga sandali kundi sa kakayahang tumindig sa gitna ng sakit.*

*Sa tuwing ako ay iyong ginagabayan sa landas na aking tinatahak, ito'y may kasamang dalamhati, pagkabigo, at sakripisyo. Ito ang nagtuturo sa atin kung paano bumangon matapos masaktan, kung paano muling maniwala matapos masugatan, at kung paano magpatuloy kahit na tila wala nang pag-asa.*

*Sa ikalawa at ikatlong taon, ang pag-ibig ay hindi lamang isang damdamin kundi isang desisyon—isang desisyong magmahal kahit hindi tayo mahalín pabalik, isang desisyong umunawa kahit mahirap, at isang desisyong manatili kahit malamig ang simoy sa daan. Ang tunay na pag-ibig ay hindi makasarili, hindi mapagmataas, at hindi naghahangad ng gantimpala. Ito ay isang biyayang ipinagkakaloob nang buong puso, isang apoy na lumiliyab at patuloy na nagbibigay liwanag sa madilim na bahagi ng ating buhay.*

*Sa huling taon, bago pa man siya tuluyang magmartsa, magtatapos na siya ng Senior High, at ang pagmamahal niya ang magsisilbi kong medalya—ang pagmamahal nila Julia at Julian ay akin nang maiuukit sa kasaysayan ng Laguna.*

*Julian, ang mga ngiti mong kay ganda ay bumuhay sa karunungan ng libo-libong sakripisyo at patuloy na nagbibigay lakas sa aking buhay.*

*Ang aking huling saknong ay hindi hudyat ng katapusan ng sakripisyo ng isang ina, bagkus isang hudyat ng pagsisimula ng bagong yugto ng buhay. Sa bawat hagdan na iyong tatahakin ako ay laging nakaagapay hanggang sa iyong pakpak ay iyo nang maibuka at malaya ka nang makalipad. Sa pagdating ng tamang oras at panahon na ikaw ay nasa tuktok na ng iyong tagumpay, lihim pa rin akong papalakpak, ipagmamalaki ka, at sasabihing, "ANAK KO YAN..ANG AKING NAG-IISANG ANAK..."*

*Kaya naniniwala pa rin ako na ang pag-ibig ang siyang bumubuo sa ating pagkatao. Tayo ay umiiral, hindi lamang upang mabuhay kundi upang magmahal. Dahil sa pag-ibig, natututo tayong maging totoo, maging matatag, at higit sa lahat, maging tunay na tao.*

## **ANG WIKA NG PAG-IBIG** *ni Cristal Joy Agnol*

*Ang bango ng bagong timplang kape ay nasa simoy ng hangin, isang pamilyar na aliw sa tahimik na umaga. Si Lito, na laging gumagawa ng surat, ay nag-iwan ng maikling liham sa tabi ng tasa ni Cherry.*

*"Mahal ko, ang iyong pagtawa ang soundtrack ng buhay ko. Magkaroon ka ng magandang araw."*

*Alam ni Lito na si Cherry, isang babaeng umuunlad sa mga papuri, ay pinapahalagahan ang mga maliliit na kilos na ito. Hindi man sa mga materyal na bagay, mayaman si Lito ay naipahahayag naman niya ang pagmamahal sa maybahay sa simpleng pamamaraan. Ang kaniyang araw-araw na pagsisikap para matugunan ang pangangailangan ng misis at lima nilang mga anak ang una sa listahan. Habang umiikot siya sa kanilang komunidad araw-araw at naghahanap ng mapagkakakitaan ay bitbit niya ang mga pangarap ng kaniyang pamilya.*

*Si Cherry naman, isang praktikal na babae, ay ipinahahayag ang pag-ibig sa pamamagitan ng paggawa ng gawaing-bahay. Ipinaghahanda nito ng pagkain si Lito. Sa mga espesyal na araw, naghahain siya ng masarap na adobo na paborito ng mister na may kasama pang mansanas bilang dessert. Alam niyang abala si Lito sa trabaho, at ang maalalahaning kilos na ito ay magbibigay kay Lito ng galak at lakas. Hindi man ito bongga ay may malalim namang kahulugan ito.*

*Isang hapon, sinorpresa ni Lito si Cherry sa kanilang munting dampa.*

*"Cherry, may pasalubong ako sa iyo," tawag ni Lito sa misis.*

*Iniabot nito kay Cherry ang paborito nitong ensaymada mula sa bakery sa kanto. Ang hindi inaasahang maagang pag-uwi, matamis na pagkain na may kasamang matamis na ngiti, at isang mahigpit na yakap ang nagbigay sa mag-asawa ng sanlaksang saya sa haponing iyon.*

*Samantala, sa bawat gabi'y kalidad ng oras ang wika ng pag-ibig ng mag-asawa. Habang nakaupo sa sofa na may nakabalot na kumot sa kanilang balikat at nanood ng pelikula ay nagiging pahinga nila ang isa't-isa. Walang telepono at walang mga pagkagambala, tanging ang kanilang presensya at komportableng katahimikan na may kasamang pagtawa at mga bulong ang tunay na kahulugan ng kapanatagan.*

*Ilang mag-asawa pa kaya ang kagaya ng aking mga magulang na sina Lito at Cherry? Simpleng mister at misis na araw-araw ipinagdiriwang ang pag-ibig sa mga simpleng paraan–pag-ibig na sa kabila ng mga unos ay nananatiling maunawain at patuloy na inaalagaan ang natatanging wika ng pag-ibig ng bawat isa. Hindi engrande at hindi mabulaklak ngunit totoo. Hindi ginagastusan ng libo, ngunit milyon ang halaga at kahulugan.*

*Sa panahong ito na sinusukat na ng pera ang maraming bagay, ang pagmamahalan ng aking mga magulang ay nananatiling matatag. Sa araw-araw na simpleng usapan, ramdam na ang bawat isa'y kanilang kanlungan–magkaagapay sa bawat problema at hingahan ng loob ang bawat isa. At sana pagdating ng araw, ako ri'y makahanap ng kagaya ng aking Papa Lito na may sariling wika ng pag-ibig na ramdam at nanunoot sa aking puso araw-araw.*

*Sa panibagong umaga, amoy na amoy sa aming kabahayan ang kapeng tinitimpla ng aking ina. At muli, may maiksing liham sa tabi ng kaniyang tasa.*

*“Manatili ka sanang nakangiti sa aking piling, sinta.”*

*Sa pagkakataon ding iyon, mas malakas na ang amoy ng kilig ng aking ina kumpara sa amoy ng nakakagising na kape sa kaniyang tasa.*



# I SAW HER

*by Essah H.*

I saw her.

I saw how her love grew so deeply.  
The first encounter happened unknowingly,  
And suddenly, it sprang up so greatly.

I saw her.

I saw how she fought for love so bravely,  
And how she stayed in it daily,  
Knowing that it was the love she truly needed,  
Strengthened and sustained, whatever came her way.

I saw her.

I saw the way she talked about being in love,  
The way she prepared herself to go out on a date,  
The way she moved her hands and feet,  
The sparkling eyes that saw clearly, without doubt  
Or hesitation, about the love she truly felt.

I saw her.

I saw how she set aside time for him,  
The excitement she felt every time they talked,  
And how she committed her love unselfishly.  
Yet, in the long run...

I saw her.

I saw how slowly she distanced herself from love.  
I saw how things turned dry, suddenly losing life.  
I saw how she came up with excuses,  
How she walked away, pretending to be happy,  
Yet knowing deep inside, she was not.  
I saw how everything in her life fell apart,  
For she chose the love she knew would break her apart.

I saw her.

And I saw how, slowly, she fell out of love.

## THE ABC'S OF LOVE WE SHARE

*by Rezel Jean J. Achacoso*

A is for Affirming words—  
Soft and kind, like singing birds.  
A simple “Thanks!” or “I believe”  
Can lift a heart and help relieve.

B is for Being there,  
Through every joy, through every care.  
No gift compares, no treasure gleams,  
Like time well spent in shared daydreams.

C is for Caring hands—  
A little help, where love withstands.  
From fixing ties to lending cheer,  
Love is strongest when sincere.

D is for Deep embrace—  
A touch that warms like sun's embrace.  
No need for words, no need for sound,  
In love's soft arms, we're safe and found.

Let's teach this love in all we do—  
Through hands, time, and words so true.  
For love's a lesson, strong and free,  
A gift we give, eternally.

## A LOVE SO TRUE

*by Roland Daniel Espiritu*

Light as a feather, soft and true,  
A feeling the heart once only knew.  
Once denied, now held so dear—  
A love so pure, crystal clear.

Like a flower in morning light,  
Blossoming in colors bright.  
Forgiving wounds of days gone by,  
Wiping every tear we cry.

Through highs and lows, thick and thin,  
A love that shines from deep within.  
No storm nor darkness can erase  
The warmth of your sweet embrace.

Every poem's line, each melody's sound,  
Speaks of love so deep, profound.  
A gift so rare, a bond so tight,  
A guiding star in the darkest night.

No words can fully, ever convey  
The love you give in every way.  
With endless care, so kind and true,  
A love like this—I found in you.



# THE HEART'S UNSPOKEN SYMPHONY

*by Marites D. Carlos*

Love is spoken in many ways,  
In words that brighten weary days.  
A simple "thank you" and "I love you"  
Can make the world feel kind and anew.

Through gentle touch, so warm yet light,  
A hug that holds the heart so tight.  
A tender hand and a soft embrace,  
Bring comfort nothing else can replace.

Love is shown in acts so true,  
In things we say, in things we do.  
A helping hand, a meal to share,  
Small deeds that show how much we care.

A gift, no matter how big or small,  
Can speak of love the most of all.  
A token shared with thought so deep,  
A promise made, a vow to keep.

And time, the rarest gift of all,  
To pause, to listen, to simply call.  
Through moments spent both near and far,  
Love glows the brightest, like a star.

So let us love in every way,  
In what we do, in what we say.  
For love is more than words alone,  
It's in the little things we've shown.

## SHARING LOVE

*by Donald Jan G. Chan*

In this new age where many are blue,  
How can we show our love that's pure and true?  
Different acts of love, both big and small,  
Let's try to share them with one and all.

A smile so bright, a gentle touch,  
Showing kindness means so much.  
A word so simple, yet encompassing,  
It reflects concern and genuine caring.

Don't give all your love to a selected few,  
With goodness and generosity, allow it to flow,  
Love can give a deep fascination,  
And bring optimism and positive attraction.

Love will remain as a strong feeling,  
Full of purpose, meaning and understanding.  
Never be afraid to give it to another person,  
For it's an incredible and uplifting emotion.

Sharing kindness, showing care,  
Love's simple gifts, beyond compare,  
A loving heart, so big and true,  
Spreading joy in all you do.

## SPEAKING THE HEART'S LANGUAGE

*by Christine Faye Auditor*

Love is more than words we say,  
It's what we do every day.  
A gentle smile, a helping hand,  
A sign that shows, "I understand."

It's staying close when days feel tough,  
Listening when things get really rough,  
A little note, a hug so tight,  
A simple "Hey, are you alright?"

The world moves fast, the days rush by,  
But love stays still in you and me.  
In the night, we sit and stay,  
When silence speaks what words can't say.

The world feels cold, yet love holds tight,  
In quiet talks and late goodnights.  
Not in the years that come and go,  
But in the ones who won't let go.

The world feels wrong, yet love stays true,  
In stolen hours, in skies so blue.  
It heals the wounds time can't mend,  
A silent proof that love won't end.

## LOVE LINGO

*by Ma. Elena Yussay*

Love is a parent embracing dawn for their offspring.  
It is the hot bath water that warms the soul;  
It is the smell of garlic rice that awakens the mind;  
It is the succulent tocino that sweetens the mood.

Love is a kid giving handmade art projects.  
It is the crayon that brings color to gray lives;  
It is the macramé bracelet that connects friends;  
It is the painting that displays handprints of safety.

Love is an eccentric prancing in the crevices of time.  
It is the melody that soothes the hearts of many;  
It is the beat that calls different tribes to unite;  
It is the song that slays the monsters under our beds.

Love is a healer banishing ailments through touch.  
It is the incantation that calls the aid of divinities;  
It is the liniment oil that decongests toxic relationships;  
It is the massage that reminds us of our blankets.

Love is a writer immortalizing muses.  
It is the pen that produces stories of affection;  
It is the journal that shows growth and progress;  
It is the coffee that fuels intimate devotion.



# FIVE POEMS FROM LOVE LANGUAGES

*by Dennis Espada*

## **The Author of Love Directs Us**

The author of love directs us;  
That is why on earth we discern  
A path that we must follow,  
A truth that we must affirm,  
A life that we must celebrate!

## **Love Blooms in Willingness**

Love blooms in willingness  
To accept someone for who they've become,  
Not for who they used to be—  
Who once was dirty and wretched.

To stop playing games  
Just to uncover scars left by a partner,  
Or to hear cries left unsaid,  
Processing what had just happened.

Love blooms in willingness  
To walk mutually, to die to ourselves,  
To pledge deeds of sharing,  
Where sacrifice is an everlasting bond.

To lend hands of comfort  
Without going beyond holding hands,  
And to pour our hearts out  
As a new creation witnessing a spark!

**Whom You Receive**

Do you realize that  
The one you receive immensely  
As food and drink for your soul  
Loves you greater  
Than anyone else in this world?

Think about that  
When you say to yourself:  
“I’m loveless” (or loved less).

**Love Doesn’t Boast**

Before we click the “Post” button  
On our vainglorious accounts,  
“TO GOD BE THE GLORY!”  
Must be in Wide Latin, font size 96.

Matthew 23 is not optional,  
And so “(my full name)  
for passing the board examination”  
Must be in font size six, Arial Narrow.

**Travel Light**

As one big family, we must travel light—  
Arouse everyone to a loving repentance;  
Organize them to give for the love of God;  
Mobilize them to love even when unloved.

Our Savior lights up the world with love;  
if we follow Him, the light of life is ours!

# EVERYDAY SHOULD BE VALENTINE'S DAY

*by Maricel Padua Lopez*

Every day you help me in the kitchen;  
you cook, and I clean and wash the dishes.

Every other day, I wash our clothes;  
every month, you supply all my laundry needs.

Every day, I prepare our coffees;  
every night, you see to it there is bread in the pantry.

Every day, I water the plants;  
every weekend, you fertilize and maintain them.

Every day, I walk to and from school;  
every Saturday and Sunday, we walk together to exercise.

Every day, we have our lunch in our respective offices;  
every night, we see to it that we have dinner together.

Every day, we exchange messages  
to update our days, especially about our kids.  
Every day, we share dream destinations for long holidays.

Every day, we plan for almost everything:  
food, travel, savings, and big dreams.  
Every day, we try to create the fondest memories  
for our children to cherish.

Every day, we savor each moment together,  
be it for simple or grand reasons.

Every day, we pray and hope for good health  
and more blessings to come our way.

Every day, we share our goodbye hugs and good night kisses.  
Every day, we remind each other to take our medicine and vitamins.  
Every day, we believe that our day will be filled with accomplishments.  
Every day, we live up to the promise of fulfilling our marriage vows!

Every time we celebrate birthdays, we make sure to do so memorably.  
For every special event, we celebrate together happily.  
For every problem or challenge, we solve it triumphantly.  
For every breath of life, we promise to love each other endlessly!

## ***HANGGANG SA MULI AKING EMILIA***

*ni Beverly Arca Dela Cruz*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
Puso ko'y di muna isusugal at itataya,  
Sa malayo, ikaw muna'y tatanawin,  
Pag-ibig ko'y ibubulong na lang sa hangin.*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
'Pagkat ilang sentimo pa lang ang laman ng aking bulsa,  
Sampaguita lang sa aming bakuran ang kayang dalhin,  
Pumpon ng rosas ay di pa kayang bilhin.*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
'Pagkat kwek-kwek pa lang sa kanto ang kaya.  
Baka kapag kumalam ang iyong sikmura,  
Pag-ibig mo'y lumipad sa bintana.*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
Pangako ko'y panghawakan mo sana.  
Sa sulok mong langit ika'y hahanapin,  
'Pagkat lupa at langit ma'y magtatagpo rin.*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
Sa tadhana ay akin nang ipauubaya.  
Mundo man sa ati'y di pa umaayon,  
Huwag mainip, darating din ang tamang panahon.*

*Hanggang sa muli aking Emilia,  
Hindi ito ang huli nating pagkikita.  
Sa muling pagkukrus ng ating landas,  
Pag-ibig ko ang magdadala sa'yo ng magandang bukas.*



## ***UMAASANG PUSO***

*ni Aileen M. Daran, EdD*

*Naglalakad sa tabing dagat,  
At nakamasid sa kawalan,  
Malayo ang abot ng paningin,  
Na umaasa sa iyong pagbabalik.*

*Nagtago na nga si araw,  
Sumilay na rin si buwan,  
Pilit nangangarap pa din,  
Na muli ikaw'y masilayan.*

*May hinihintay pa ba  
Na bukas ay andyan ka?  
Inaaliw na lang ng pag asa  
Sa muli mong pagbabalik.*

*Taon man ay lumipas,  
Ay hindi pa din natitinag,  
Hanggang dahon ay mangelagas,  
At bulaklak ay mangalanta.*

*Bakit madaya ang tadhana,  
Palaging malayo sa inaasahan?  
Tunay bang mahirap dayain  
Ang guhit ng kapalaran?*

## ***SULYAP SA BITUIN***

*ni Rhoneil B. Vibora, PhD*

*Nang una kang matanaw, mundo ay nag-iba,  
Kahit madilim, puso ko ikaw ay kita,  
Ako'y nagtaka, bakit wala kang kagaya?  
Sa lahat ng bulaklak, 'di ka maikukumpara.*

*Hindi sinasadyang tingin ay magbanggaan,  
Hindi sinasadyang ikaw ay matipuhan,  
Ngunit hindi ka na mawala sa aking isipan,  
Ngayon ako'y bilanggo ng iyong kagandahan.*

*Mata mong kumikislap mistulang bituin,  
Pisngi mong malaman kaysarap pisilin,  
Ilong mong tulisan na agaw pansin,  
Labi mong mapula parang rosas sa hardin.*

*Titig ng iyong mata ako'y nagayuma,  
Talbog ng mga pisngi sa'kin ay ligaya,  
Tangos ng ilong walang kagaya,  
Ganda ng mga labi sa aki'y nakakuha.*

*Gusto kita, oo gusto kita,  
Sa pagtanda, ikaw na ang gustong makasama,  
Sana ay mapagbigyan ng tadhana,  
Ang isang tulad ko na sayo ay humahanga.*

*Hindi ako hari pero ikaw ay reyna,  
Payag ako maging alipin mo sinta.  
Hindi ka alak, sigarilyo, o bisyo,  
Ngunit ako'y naadik sa iyo.*

*Sa panandaliang sulyap sa tala,  
Umaasang makaramdam ng kalinga,  
Bagamat ang patuloy na paglakad niya,  
Ay silbing nagpaalam na.*

*Naipon ang tanong sa sarili,  
Na sana'y magkita tayong muli,  
Hindi sapat na angkinin kang sandali,  
Na para bang isang kwento na dagli.*

*Sapagkat kung ang langit ay sisipatin,  
Ikaw at ikaw parin ang aking hahanapin.  
Ang aking hangarin ay ika'y makapiling,  
Sapagkat natalisod mo ang aking damdamin!*

## ***PAGTALIMA***

*ni Sierra Marie Aycardo*

*Puno na, sapaw na... umaapaw pa,  
Sakit, hirap, hinagpis, na may kasamang pagtitiis,  
Paano ang damdamin kung ikaw ay upos na?  
Paano ipagpapatuloy kung puso'y durog na?*

*Paano masasabing ito ay pag-ibig,  
Kung ikaw ay nasasaktan na at nasasakal pa?  
Paano kung ang iyong pakiramdam ay gusto nang kumawala,  
Ngunit wala kang magawa, dahil wala ka nang kawala?*

*Kapag nagmamahal ka, di lang saya,  
Kapag nagmamahal, kasalo ang sakit,  
Sakit at saya'y may kakambal na pag-asa,  
Ngunit kahit sugatan, patuloy pa rin ang pakikibaka.*

*Magkagayunman, ang pag-ibig ay mananatili,  
Kahit anong pagsubok, ito'y di magmamaliw.  
Kahit luha'y bumaha at puso'y masaktan,  
Kapag pamilya ang dahilan, lahat ay hahamakin.*

*Para sa'yo ito aking ina, ama, at anak...  
Kahit pa ang puso'y wasak at sugatan.  
Pagkat sa dulo ng sakit at paglalayag,  
Pag-ibig ang siyang maghahari magpakailanman pa man.*

## ***ISANG SULYAP***

*ni Christian P. San Luis*

*Sa bawat sandali, ika'y aking tinitingnan,  
Mula sa malayo, puso ko'y nahulog nang 'di namamalayan.  
Isang sulyap sa'yo, araw ko'y sumasaya,  
Ngunit 'di ko kayang sabihin, 'di ko kayang ipakita.*

*Sa bawat pagsulyap, mundo ko'y humihinto,  
Sa saliw ng awit ng pag-ibig, kasabay ng pagtibok ng puso.  
Ako'y isang anino, sa sulok nagkukubli,  
Pag-ibig na nadarama, kay hirap ipakita at ipagmalaki.*

*Sa isang sulok, tahimik kitang pinagmamasdan,  
Habang isinusulat ang damdaming hindi maihayag.  
Gusto kong ipagsigawan, gusto kong ipaglaban,  
Ngunit may takot na mauwi sa isang kabiguan.*

*Kaya't pipiliin kong manatiling lihim ang nadarama,  
Isang lihim na pag-ibig na 'di ko kayang ipakita.  
Sapat nang masilayan kang malaya at masaya,  
Tila sa pangarap na lang kita kayang makasama.*

*Hanggang kailan itatago itong damdamin?  
Hanggang kailan aasa sa pag-ibig na 'di ko maangkin?  
Sa ilalim ng buwan, humihiling at nananalangin,  
Na sana balang araw, makapiling ka't mapasaakin.*



## *TAMPISAW*

*ni Jommel S. Peconda*

*Ang agos ng tubig sa ilog ay rumaragasa,  
'Di kayang supilin, mahirap masawata.  
Tulad ng pag-ibig na pilit kumakawala,  
Pilit na sasambulat, mag-aalimpuyo na parang sigwa.*

*Sa daloy ng tubig, ako'y pumaimbulog,  
Walang sawang naglunoy sa baha ng pag-irog.  
Susunod sa daluyong nang walang pag-aalinlangan,  
Kahit alam kong ako ay masasaktan.*

*Oh, pag-ibig, bakit napakalupit mo?  
Ngayon ko lang nadama ang antak na ganito.  
Sa dami ng puso sa mundo, bakit ito pang puso ko,  
Ang inutusan mong umibig sa maling tao?*

*Sabi pa nga "Kapag puso ang siyang nag-utos,  
'Di kayang tutulan, 'di kayang iwasan."  
Katulad ng nagngangalit na agos,  
Sadyang malakas at napakahirap pigilan.*

*Alam ko, ang mali ay naitatama,  
Kung sa pagmamahal ako'y naging lisya,  
Sisikaping sa muling pagtibok ng puso,  
Pipintig nang wagas at totoo.*

## ***TIBOK***

*ni Fr. Saul Flanders Cline, dps,  
S.B.M.A., S.L.D.H., S.D.*

*May naghahanap ng liwánag–  
Kapag nasumpungan ito  
Ay hinahagkan ng réhas  
Hanggang dalawin ng kamatayan.  
Itong liwánag ay makikipag-isa sa Haring Araw.*

*May tinatanggap, hapdî ng súgat,  
Kasama ng bigat ng paghihirap  
Nang dahil sa eksistensiya ng higit na  
Kaluwalhatian.*

*Sa araw-araw at gabi-gabi,  
Kawangis niya ay mgá upos (ng kandila),  
Ibinubudbod sa hilaw na manggang nilulunod  
Ng bagoong alamang. Sisilip, mgá mata,  
Ipipikit, hibla-hiblang liwánag,  
Ulan ng mgá liwánag.*

*Halakhak siyang tuliró, ngingiti-ngiting luhà,  
Ginagapos ng barbed wire kahit walang kamay,  
Hampas-lupang maglulupa ng agnas-agnas  
Na pagmumukha.*

*Munggo-munggo silang isinilang  
Sa loob, labas, lalim, lawak  
Ng karagatan ng mgá semilya, itlog,  
At sandosenang karnal.*

*Inakala ng Haring Araw, pag-iisa ng Reynang Buwan  
Ay sugò ng hinding-hindi magmamaliw na apóy.  
Tumitibok-tibok, manggang namumula.  
Nagdurugong súgat nang dahil sa mangá tinik-tinik.  
Mayroong sulô ng kapinggot na ínit  
Sa ilalim ng kamilya, nagtatagong diyos sa sandalî.*

# Mentors Corner

*(Writing pieces by  
Scribbly mentors)*

## UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF LOVE

*by Aiko Hara, Fiction Writing  
Facilitator/Administrator*

Last Valentine's Day, I shared a quote alongside photos of a beautiful bouquet of flowers. The quote read: "[Here's] a reminder that it's not just a flower—it's the effort, the thought, and the gesture."

Like many women, I adore flowers. However, my affection isn't rooted in a passion for gardening, but from the thoughtfulness and effort behind the gesture. When someone gives me flowers, it speaks about their love and consideration—and that's what truly matters.

This sentiment reflects one of the love languages many of us express toward those we cherish: **Receiving Gifts**. It's a special way to convey love, whether during special occasions or on ordinary days.

Beyond this love language, I find that love resonates with me in various forms. **Words of Affirmation** hold a special place in my heart. A simple note, a heartfelt letter, or an encouraging chat/text message can brighten my day and deepen my appreciation for my partner's feelings. I understand that some people are more comfortable expressing their emotions through writing rather than speaking, and I can relate—I've been there, too.

I also cherish the little things that make a big impact. **Quality Time** doesn't always have to be spent in fancy restaurants or popular locations.

For me, it's about sharing meaningful moments with my partner, like enjoying a cup of coffee together and engaging in deep conversations. This feels like a fun game to me, yet it serves as a powerful way to nurture and strengthen our relationship.

Throughout my life, I've never felt like the "boss girlfriend" in a relationship; instead, my partner treats me like a princess. His acts of service—preparing our meals, refilling my water bottle, and even cooking simple dishes—are significant gestures that show his love. These **Acts of Service** resonate deeply with me, reminding me of the care and attention he invests in our relationship.

**Physical Touch** is another love language that holds special meaning for me. Holding hands with my partner sends butterflies in my stomach. While some may view this as a routine display of affection, for me, it's extraordinary. It's a moment to show my pride in having him by my side—a silent declaration that "no one can take him from me!"

These love languages not only make our relationships better but also help us understand how we connect with the people we love. By showing and celebrating love through thoughtful gestures, affirming words, spending quality time together, doing nice things for each other, and sharing physical affection, we can build a warm and loving environment where love can thrive and flourish every single day.



*Fiction  
Story  
Section*

## ORION'S ARCHIVE: A SERIES (#12)

*by Ulysses Sejano*

A pre-test.

Why in the name of sanity would a science teacher give a pre-test? It was three pages of dizzying facts and figures, yet not one of them was a multiple-choice or matching type. It was a mind-bender of two parts: identification and word problems.

All I could remember were the beach trip I took with the family two weeks ago, my martial arts training with Grandpa, and last week's cosplay convention. The last book I had cranked open was remotely academic—Arthurian mythology.

But I couldn't answer Excalibur on the test paper very well.

Mr. Thompson was twirling his bushy mustache as he watched the smoke escape our ears. I could feel his dark soulless eyes on us, a lopsided grin on his dry lips as we scratched our heads and tried our best to calculate the kinetic energy of an arrow fired from a tower or the momentum of two tanks in a heavy collision.

Sadly, Mr. Thompson did not even have the grace to share with us the formulas to solve for them. The desks and the chairs were tactically spaced out with each of us being too far off to see the papers of another, and for added measure, he had put up small barriers on the corner of our desk.

I could hear the sound of fingers scratching the hairy scalps of the class as the minutes ticked by. Any longer, and half of us would be joining Mr. Thompson at Alopecia Anonymous.

On my right, Riley, the skinny chess captain, hummed a lively tune. Gloating the superior wits his large forehead the heavens had deemed fit to give him.

The bell rang, smashing the silence like a baseball through glass.

"Pens down," Mr. Thompson purred and took a sip of his warm coffee. He then rose, collected the papers, and waddled from one table to the next as he tried to get some measure of exercise to trim that round gut.

Thankfully, Ms. Moffat, the History Teacher, was a more merciful soul. The dark grays on her head and the fine lines on her face did not make her so cantankerous or obscure the light in her bright blue eyes.

"Hello, students. Am I to understand that Mr. Thompson has just fried your brains with his little test?"

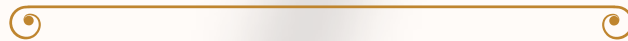
A few hearty laughs broke the tensed atmosphere of the classroom. I took a deep breath; the whiff of essential oils soothed the metaphorical burns on my overworked brain like a cold soothing balm.

History. World history and an outline of what was to come for the school year. It would be about the West, starting from the age of the early Greeks to the comparatively more recent age of the two world wars.

Basic and introductory. Mercifully easy to the ears and forgettable for the next few hours. She left us to mule her expectations after the bell called us for the next class, which was Math, taught by Mrs. Thompson. She was the wife of our eponymous science teacher – stout, stubby, and blonde like a golden retriever, but dour and sullen like a rabid pomeranian. Let's just say, husband and wife are two peas in a pond.

Lunch was a merciful thing, and I thanked the heavens for it. I arrived at my locker and set aside my Science and Math textbooks. With it out of the picture, I was sure that the worst of the day was over.

The loud crash of broken glass said otherwise, and the piercing cries of my schoolmates turned my gaze to Troy, the basketball star. The knuckles on his left hand ran red with blood, and the gleam of shattered crystal shard clung to the squishy bits of his flesh as he dropped a large fire axe to the floor.



FEBRUARY 2025

MEMENTO



# *Publishing Section*



# A PUBLISHER'S NIGHTMARE (A RECAP)

*by Felz Storne, Founder of Metasognia*

Last Issue, I discussed the first common mistake new authors make which is setting the book launch date before even starting writing their drafts. For this issue, I am zeroing in on the writing process itself, so the second classic mistake some authors make is: **Thinking their work is done once they finished writing the first draft of their manuscript.**

Of course, I'm not saying everyone is like this. There are a lot of underlying issues to unpack here, so let me share with you some of the most important ones.

## Issue No. 1: Attachment

A lot of authors, or any creatives for that matter, think that their first work is their baby. Most of the time, new writers get hurt when an editor wants to dissect or completely remove some parts of their draft that are irrelevant or too dragging. Most writers have this bias that everything they write is important in their story.

It's good that you dump everything in your first draft. At least your developmental editor can get a lot of meat out of your drafts and have something to work with for your story to take shape. But it's also part of the editor's job to cut down the fats from the meat of your story so that it can have a better fleshed-out plot, focus, and direction.

With the Big Five, though, this won't work because before you can even pass a "good- enough" draft to their literary agents, it has to be really great to catch their attention. That means, the draft has already undergone a series of deep structural changes and revisions before it can pass their standards. Hence, if an author is too attached to their writing, the story they want to publish can never get too far and will never pass the standards of publishers.

## Issue No. 2: Too much reliance on the editor

Yes, the editor's job is to help develop the overall structure or plot of your written work to give it a sound storytelling technique. The editor recommends deep structural changes in your story, but it's not their job to rewrite your vomit draft accordingly.

Revisions should still be made by the author. It's important to make that distinction. Are you hiring an editor or a ghostwriter? You pay a higher rate to a ghostwriter because they write your drafts for you, making it sound like you write them yourself; it's still your voice. The editor, on the other hand, helps give you the perspective of the readers; what will work and won't. So, it's highly important to listen to their pointers and apply the necessary changes they recommend.



And the work they do always boils down to how they think your story can sell or engage your audience.

This misconception is very common among self-published authors. Again, vomit drafts never make their way through the big publishers, especially the Big Five. Self-published authors have the privilege to dictate how their books would turn out, but it doesn't mean this has to be abused. One of the recurring issues with self-published books has always been their quality and the reputation they hold. Although this has been starting to change nowadays due to the recognition being given to highly acclaimed self-published authors, you still don't want to be too complacent and let your book be categorized as the one raking the worst reviews of all time on Goodreads or simply by word of mouth.

### **Issue No. 3: Time frame**

The work is not done until the revisions are not. And who can best tell again when your work is done? It's your editor and/or proofreader. Revisions can take many rounds depending on the pace of the author in revising the work or how many people are working on your manuscript. I usually call this stage the housekeeping because this is where you take the weeds out and make sure everything is clean, so to speak, until the manuscript is good to go and ready for release as a book.

It's safe to say that this phase has an indefinite time frame. It's best to consider including developmental editing as part of the writing process calendar. You wouldn't want to short-change yourself by skipping through revisions so you can just keep your schedule.

This is one thing I wouldn't want any author to compromise. So unless your final proofreader says so, you're not done yet with your work.

In retrospect, don't change anything anymore once your editor/proofreader says your manuscript is good to go. Don't make any major changes. Please! This is another classic case of too much attachment at which point the author has to let go. This will cause unnecessary delays and everyone to be stressed out. But this is another topic for another time.

Striking a harmonious balance among these three issues is the key to addressing them. It's just a matter of deciding when to hold on (or keep working) and when to let go. Writing the draft of a book is a lot of work, that's why I believe that publishing a book is always borne out of passion. However, assuming the work is done just because you think you've already put in some hard work can throw everything out the window when you don't give each process ample time to be completed properly.

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*We invite you to explore the next episodes of A Publisher's Nightmare from our previous Memento Issue, Volume 4 Issue 4.*

*If you have questions or suggestions, you can reach me via email at [metacognia2013@gmail.com](mailto:metacognia2013@gmail.com), or reach out to me through the following social media handles: @metacognia on Instagram or Facebook.*

# Writing Tips

## Writing Tip 20:

### FOUR THINGS AN EXCELLENT WRITING PIECE DOES TO THE READER

1. It gives you a new way of seeing things.
2. It transports you inside the writer's world.
3. It affects you emotionally.
4. It gives you a "meaning" that you feel you want to always go back to.

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### 1. Make sure there's unity of verb tenses.

Stick to your time anchor. Decide whether it's best to use past tense, present tense, or future tense, and maintain it throughout the composition—except in cases where you need to shift to a different point in time.

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Need help with implementing these tips?  
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## 2. Make sure there's unity of perspective.

Your choice of perspective helps the reader imagine the story better through the narrator's lens. Are you talking from a first-person point of view (you are involved in the story), second-person point of view (you involve the reader in the story), or third-person point of view (you are not involved in the story but know what's happening in it)?

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## 3. Use your punctuation marks correctly.

Know the punctuations that'll help you organize your "units of information" better. Put music in your prose, not just through words and rhymes but also through the proper use of "signals".

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#### 4. Choose the right words.

Use words that “fit” or exactly capture your ideas. Check the context in which the words are used. You don’t have to be high falutin; you just have to convey your message **clearly**. Even great writers still visit the dictionary.

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# Book Recommendation



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Andy and Theo, both dedicated medical technologists in college, quickly fell in love with each other. They journeyed to become licensed medical technologists and managed to keep their relationship strong despite the challenges along the way. Theo, with his dreams of becoming a doctor, encouraged Andy to join him in this ambitious goal. Andy, a sweet and gentle girl, was the opposite of Theo, who was quiet and serious. Their contrasting personalities strengthened their relationship. Together, they faced the demands of medical school with steadfast support, understanding, and love. As they spent more time together, study sessions turned into heart-to-heart conversations, and dates became a return demonstration of their knowledge and skills in the medical field. Their relationship blossomed as they pushed through a demanding academic schedule. However, in the long run, the pressures of their goals caused misunderstandings and tension, leading to a rocky period in their relationship. Since then, questions began to run in Andy's head like a broken record: Was it the right decision? Why didn't things go well? Was it bad luck, or did I do something wrong? Why didn't God intervene to make things better?

# Announcements



**PHILIPPINE 20  
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AIKO HARA**

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### WORKSHOP

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AIKO HARA**

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# Announcements



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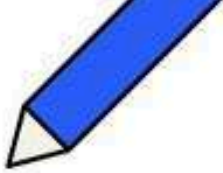




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# Writing Services





## Writing Proficiency Tutorial

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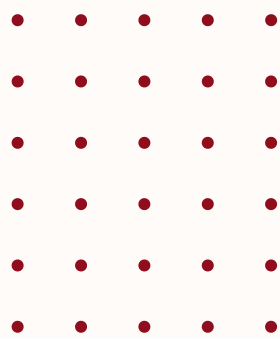
**Writing Proficiency Tutorial Program** is designed for children (aged 4-12), teenagers (13-19), and adults (20 and above) who are keen on sharpening their technical and/or creative writing skills. The program's content and flow depend on the student's writing goals, writing assessment results, and progress.

Creative writing lessons	Rudiments of writing
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For more details, email us at [scribbblory@gmail.com](mailto:scribbblory@gmail.com)





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