



The gift of a hand-written letter to a woman newly diagnosed with breast cancer.

## LETTER WRITING PARTY KIT With "Remember the Ladies" Book Discussion Questions

Writing letters of encouragement for Girls Love Mail is a wonderful way to empower and help women who are newly diagnosed with breast cancer. For book clubs who have read GLM founder Gina L. Mulligan's novel ***Remember the Ladies***, use this kit as a discussion guide in conjunction with letter writing. Gather your club for tea and scones and have a fun and uplifting party!

Included in this kit you have:

- ***Remember the Ladies*** Book Club Questions
- Letter writing discussion topics, Writing Tips and Prompts
- Girls Love Mail Official Letter Writing Guidelines
- Sample Letters
- Girls Love Mail Custom Stationery (optional)
- Cover Sheet for Mailing (required)

A great way to familiarize yourself with the Girls Love Mail program is to read through the FAQs page on our website. Then you can review the sample letters and use the writing prompts to help you write your letters. Work together and share your personal stories. Girls Love Mail is about inspiring the letter writer as well as the receiver. Breast cancer touches all of us, and we all have words of encouragement to share.

### Mail All Letters in One Envelope to:

Girls Love Mail  
193 Blue Ravine Road, Suite 120  
Folsom, California 95630

### GLM Contact:

Gina L. Mulligan, Founder  
[ginamulligan@girlslovemail.com](mailto:ginamulligan@girlslovemail.com)  
[www.GirlsLoveMail.com](http://www.GirlsLoveMail.com)





## **Remember the Ladies Discussion Guide**

**Remember the Ladies** is the fictional story of Amelia Cooke, a Congressional lobbyist in 1887, before women in the U.S. had the right to vote. When she's hired by the National Women's Suffrage Association to lobby on behalf of a proposed 16th Amendment granting voting rights to women, Amelia finds herself in a battle against the Old Guard and her former lover, Senator Edward Stillman.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Before reading the novel, what did you know about women's suffrage and the right to vote? What did you learn from reading the novel?
2. Amelia's mentor Sam Ward and her suitor Boyd McKenna felt Amelia needed to use her "femine wiles" to persuade the men. Do you agree? Do you believe women can and/or should use their femininity to influence men?
3. A reoccurring theme of the novel is how power is used to shape our world. The novel looks at the influence of money, sex, religion, government, and motherhood. What influences do you see in your world? How do you shape those around you? Has your influence changed over the years? How?
4. Motherhood plays a central role in Amelia's ultimate decision about what she believes give a woman a voice in the world? Were you surprised by her choice? Did you agree with Amelia's choice? What other ways do women have a voice in the world?
5. A female lobbyist was rare in 1887. Today, women are involved in every aspect of government. Do you think women have enough authority in government or are women still fighting for more rights? If so, how and in what ways?
6. In one scene, Amelia feels uncomfortable for sitting alone in a bar while waiting for Boyd McKenna. Other than for safety reasons, are there places or situations where you, as a woman, feel uncomfortable being alone? Are there still stigmas on where it's acceptable for a woman to be seen?
7. How did you react to the final letter and author's note about Febb Burn? Did you read the real letter? (Available to read at [www.GinaMulligan.com](http://www.GinaMulligan.com)). Letters were kept as historical reference throughout our history, do you write letters to members of your family? Do they write to you? Has a letter ever changed your life? How?
8. Have you posted your review of *Remember the Ladies* on Amazon, Goodreads, or other review websites? If not, your voice matters! Post your comments, good or bad, and share your opinions.



## Letter Writing Discussion Topics, Writing Tips and Prompts

### BREAST CANCER STATS

- 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.
- Each year in the U.S. there are 250,000 women diagnosed with breast cancer. By 2020, experts expect that number to rise to 450,000.
- Breast cancer has a 98% survival rate when caught early.
- Self-exams are important. Not all lumps show in a mammogram. This is especially true for women with breast dense tissue.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How has breast cancer touched your life? Share your story.
2. Think of a time when you were feeling low. Did someone say something that inspired you or changed your attitude? What did they say?
3. What are some words/phrases you find encouraging? (Ex: Stay Strong, Laugh, Thinking of you)
4. Do you have a favorite inspirational quote or poem?

### WRITING TIPS

**Begin your letter** "Dear Friend" or "Dear Sister." Sign with your first name, last initial, and where you're writing from. (Ex: Gina M. San Diego, CA)

**Think about someone** you care about as you write the letter. You can also share your personal experiences with family, friends, or neighbors.

**Start with your favorite inspirational quote or joke.** This is a great way to get something on paper right away and then elaborate. Tell why you're sharing the quote/joke and what it means to you.

**Tell the truth.** It's okay to say you don't know what they are going through.

### FAMOUS QUOTES

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning to dance in the rain." -Vivian Greene

"The power of imagination makes us infinite." -John Muir

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken." -Oscar Wilde

*"Writing letters together was a blast. Our group is so much more bonded now!" - Sara H., Ohio*



## Girls Love Mail Letter Writing Guidelines

### 1. Religion, Language, and Dying

#### RELIGION

The goal is to help each recipient regardless of race, religion, age, type of treatment, or cancer stage. For this reason, please refrain from religious references and other non-inclusive wording.

#### LANGUAGE

In our modern age, there are lots of phrases that we all use and hear, especially about breast cancer. So along with banning the use of really bad words (you know the ones), **the following terms/words are also banned:**

- **Cancer Sucks** (yes, but may be offensive)
- **Kick Cancer's Butt** (being extra cautious)

#### DYING

It may be difficult for someone newly diagnosed to hear about others who have died from cancer or other diseases. You can certainly mention your loved ones without sharing the outcome. For example, "My grandmother fought breast cancer and she liked to wear a different wig every day."

### 2. Greeting, Signature, and NO Date

The best way to start your letter is with "Dear Friend" or "Dear Sister." We encourage you to sign just your first name and last initial (Gina M.). And because we don't know a distribution time frame, please **do not date** your letters or reference holidays/seasons.

### 3. Hand-Write Your Letter

You are doing more than writing a letter, you're sending a hand-made gift.

### 4. Write From the Heart

No matter how clumsy the words, if it comes from the heart you can't miss!

### 5. Your letter must fit in our GLM envelope, but you do NOT need special stationery or envelopes.

Your letter just needs to fit in the GLM envelope (4.75" x 6.5"). Otherwise, you can use any note card, stationery, or other paper of your choosing. Also, included is the custom Girls Love Mail stationery that you can photocopy and use for your letters.

### About the Recipient

What You KNOW:	What you <u>DON'T</u> Know:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Woman</li> <li>• Recently diagnosed with breast cancer.</li> <li>• Currently going through some form of cancer treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race or Religion</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Type of treatment</li> <li>• Cancer Stage</li> <li>• Prognosis</li> </ul>

# Girls Love Mail™

## Sample Girls Love Mail Letters

(Original letters were hand-written. Typed here for clarity.)

Dear Friend,  
My name is Miranda and I wanted to let you know how strong & brave I think you are. I can't begin to imagine the battle you have fought up to this point, but I want to let you know you are in my thoughts. There is a rumor that women are really catty to other women, but the people who started that don't know just how connected we all are. We laugh together. We love together. And most importantly we fight battles together. So if there is ever a time when you're feeling alone, please think back to this letter & know I'm giving you all my strength. You will beat this. And then we'll all fight until we make this horrible disease disappear. I look forward to the day that cancer becomes a memory & it is your journey that lets me know that this is not a dream, but a fact. You are my hero.

Miranda

Dear Friend,  
May the light always find you on a dreary day.  
When you need to be home, may you find your way.  
May you always have courage to take a change,  
And never find frogs in your underpants.

- An Irish Toast-

Continue to laugh!  
You are strong!  
You are fabulous!  
You are powerful!

Sincerely,  
Penny W.

Dear Sister,

When you hurt, those around you hurt. I learned how much twenty years ago.

I remember like it was yesterday, the sinking feeling when I saw the nurse in the hall point to my room and say the results weren't good.

My strength came from friends and loved ones and a doctor who never gave up on me. Now I celebrate!

CELEBRATE your anniversaries - 1 year, 5 years, 10 years - YES! 20 years! Celebrate who you are. You are stronger than you think. You mean so much to so many. Be proud of who you are. Hold your head high and "go for the ~~gold~~ pink."

Believe & Achieve  
In Sisterly Love,  
Karen V.

Dear Friend,

Next time you're having treatment or just a bad day, pretend you're looking out my window with me. My backyard is pretty fun.

We can see the bird feeder at the edge of my yard and a stretch of brush beyond. On really cold days we might see 12 cardinals at one time! Their bright red feathers decorate the trees.

We might have to tap the window if the neighbor cat comes lurking. Once I saw a cat grab a squirrel - what a tail-passing that cat got! And if we're lucky, we could see deer stirring in the brush.

The view from my window can brighten a dark day. Maybe you can visit again in your mind's eye when you need to.

Thinking of you-  
Sandy M.





### Girls Love Mail - Group Cover Sheet

Please **include this cover sheet** with your letters. Thank you in advance for your help.

Group Name/Affiliation : \_\_\_\_\_

Leader/ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Leader/Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# of Letters Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

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If others in your group would like to receive the GLM newsletter and information, please have them complete the information below.

Name	Email
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**Mail Letters to:**  
Girls Love Mail  
193 Blue Ravine Road, Suite 120  
Folsom, California 95630