



**The  
Festival  
of  
Words**

**Cultural Arts Collective, Inc.**

**IN COLLABORATION WITH THE  
ACADIANA WRITING PROJECT**

**WRITING CONTEST**

**FALL 2017**

**WINNERS' ANTHOLOGY**

Elementary division (grades 3-5)

1st place fiction

Light and Shadow in the War of Ages

By: M. Darby

Berchman's Academy

### Light and Shadow in the War of Ages

Once there was a boy named Light. He was a special boy because he was a defender of the angels. Light had to follow in the way of his father who had to fight Light's rival, Shadow's father. Light didn't want to fight. He wanted to make peace with the demons and stop this endless war. So that night, Light snuck out and went to the underworld. Light wasn't too sneaky because his little sister Spark heard him and followed him.

Then, Light found her. "What are you doing? It is too dangerous. Go home."

"But I want to come."

"Okay, just be quiet."

Then, they continued. As soon as they got to the underworld, they went to the only person they knew-Shadow. They arrived at Shadow's house and banged on the door. Light was greeted with a powerful unexpected attack. It was Shadow, and he wanted to fight! Spark quickly jumped on Light's back, and he took off.

Light remembered the first time he met Shadow when they were best friends. Light had learned that Shadow was evil. Shadow followed them just as fast. "You know I am faster than you. You know I am stronger than you," Shadow yelled. Light knew that was fake, so he just went on.

Light got home and woke up his dad. Shadow woke his dad also, and they started a war! The war went on for almost a whole day until they settled it and stopped. But, they all knew that it would happen again.

They all went to the gate that separated the two worlds, and now they live in peace. Light succeeded in making peace.

1st place poetry  
Achieve  
By: E. Landes  
Berchman's Academy

### Achieve

The smarter achieve  
The humble don't need  
Being humble is a gift  
Being smart is something to reach  
But being both is amazing

Middle School Division (grades 5-8)  
Fiction

1st place fiction  
The Bad  
By: B. Saltzman  
North Vermillion Middle School

### "The Bad"

I close my eyes thinking of the day I used to enjoy being alive. Now, I lay in bed thinking about how things could have been different and why God had to choose me. I'm Emerson, and I have Adenocarcinoma. Big words have big meanings. I call this "the bad," but the real diagnosis is a malignant tumor formed from glandular structures in epithelial tissue. It has taken over most of my lungs and all of my life. I have to carry around a heavy oxygen tank and breathe through tubes going through my nose. I can't leave the house without people staring that empathetic look which only makes me feel worse. Like, have you never seen a sick kid? Mother is always stressing over my medicine and how I'm doing. "It's 10:00 time to take your meds." One second over and I swear her head will blow off of her body. When I have a cough attack she is always running to see if I'm ok. She even had to call the ambulance, because blood came up. Scary right? Well, not for me. It happens so much that it's just a way of living. "The bad" has to be watched carefully. Very carefully, for that matter. Doctors are so interested in it, because it is very rare in 13-year-old girls. They say to have faith, but we all know I only have 4 months. I try

to cover my paleness with concealer and foundation, but I can't even find a shade to match the white skin on my face.

One day, things went south...fast. The tumor had grown, and fluid had gotten into my lungs causing my airway to close. Trying to breathe was like the last few seconds you have underwater before you run out of air, except I couldn't come back for air. I was just stuck at the bottom. I knew the doctors had put me under, but I could see everything as if

I was still awake. I think I died and came back, because I saw a light. Then, I felt a shock on my chest, and I was back to seeing the whole procedure again. Then, I heard an ear-splitting shriek, the heart rate monitor was beeping. It said that my heart rate was...you know what? If I tell you, you might get a heart attack yourself. Everyone was working so quickly and some doctors were crying. The monitor showed a flat line. All of a sudden, I see a man standing in the white light with a huge smile and welcoming arms. I then knew I would never have to suffer again, and "the bad" had been taken away by the good.

2nd place fiction

Samuel

By: K. Guillory

North Vermillion Middle School

"Samuel"

"Bam!" That's the sound of a 300-pound offensive tackle slamming into me, a 6'9" 350 pound defensive end. My name is Samuel and I am pretty good at this sport of kings. And the guy that "slammed" into me realizes he made a bad mistake when I picked him up and threw him into the hard turf. My next target was the quarterback; the tall, lanky senior from the opposite team. After hitting the quarterback, he fumbled and the d-tackle on my side ran the ball for a 55 yard winning touchdown.

Two weeks later, Mrs. Johnson is making us write an essay in English class. I'm frustrated, and I'm shaking for lack of ideas. It feels like a category five earthquake is happening outside. Until my classmates and I realize that this disturbance is coming from me, but we all still have to evacuate because this is Louisiana. No earthquakes usually happen here; that is until I happened. Now each time I cannot control my center of balance the outside feels the turbulence emanating from my inside. Pablo questions, "Why are your eyes glowing red?"

"My eyes are glowing red?" I questioned in return.

"Yeah, dude, it's different than the time your eyes glowed yellow," Pablo responded anxiously remembering the time I roared like a lion and pounced upon the whole offensive line and took them down without much help our eighth grade year.

Pablo still does not know everything about the beasts that reside in me. For some reason, I am able to channel unnatural strength that comes from natural phenomena like animals and

Mother Nature herself. Unfortunately, this time I can't seem to get control of this force I have unleashed.

We all run to the middle of the practice football field not completely sure of what we need to do. Just knowing we have to get away from the buildings. As I begin to smell the familiar turf, I begin to calm down. No longer is there the rumbling of stomach muscles, the quickening of my heartbeat, the pounding of blood through my ears nor the insatiable thirst to hit something. I am calm again. At least for now that is.

When the shaking completely stops, the principal tells Mrs. Johnson and the other teachers we can return to get our stuff. The adults are shaking their heads because they are flabbergasted while many of my classmates who have been with me since kindergarten are looking at me. Somehow, they know it's my fault although Pablo is the only one who knows for sure.

Later that day, the fire department comes by to see the damage, but the majority of the building has been spared, but Ms. Johnson's classroom has been totaled along with the senior hall. My mom named me Samuel, because she wanted it to mean strength like Samson in the Bible, but the difference between me and him is that my strength comes from myself.

3rd place fiction

Rein's Foolishness

By: M. Gerard

Broussard Middle School

### Rein's Foolishness

I sluggishly made it up the hill as Cori followed behind, tired as I was climbing up this steep hill. Cori and I were sent by the queen to retrieve one of the four guardian's treasures. The first treasure was on top of the hill in a temple, The Wishing Key. Whoever managed to get the key, hold it up in the moonlight, It would grant them three wishes.

As we made it to the top, Cori groaned and fell face first as I sat down, catching my breath. He turned to me on his back, Grabbing my satchel. He dug through the bag pulling out two stones, A onyx and a howlite, They were both ginormous.

"What's with the stones...?" Asking, closing the flap to my satchel. Cori stood up and helped me up, " To open the door, Rein. It says to find a stone pitch black as night and one white as snow, Both of these stones can be found around the temple growing." Cori said as he headed to the door.

The door was a big stone slab, beside it were two sconces, torches in it burning. They had pedestals where it looked like where statues once stood, but they had giant claw marks running

across them. I looked back at the door to see lines running to two caved in holes, Must be where the stones are placed. Cori placed the howlite in one and the onyx in the other, soon the door cracked as it slowly opened.

We both coughed as dirt blew in our faces, Soon the door fully opened as I grabbed a torch. The tiles in the floor were out of the ground, some broken while others were out of their spot from roots growing under them. As we walked through, The walls were covered with drawings, showing a two headed beast as Cori stopped at one.

“ Look...” He said, I stopped in my tracks and looked at the writing. “ What the heck does that say, Cori- I can’t read spirit writing...” I snapped, He hit me in the back of the head as he turned back to the wall. “ It says to heed with caution, For the treasure is guarded by a two headed beast. They go by Kin and Kai, Like Yin and Yang.”

“ Come on- Let us just get the key before we wake them up..” I said, Pulling out my sword as Cori whipped out his wand. The whole place was like a maze, Designed to get people lost. Soon we found an open area that looked like an arena. The stands empty and in front of us, The key hanging on a black hook.

“ Yes! The key!” Saying as I bolted across the arena, soon grabbing the key. “ REIN NO-DON’T GRAB THE KEY!” He yelled. Soon acid started to fall on my skin, Soon my vision started to get blurry, falling to my knees as all I heard was Cori’s cry.

4th place fiction

Dream Journals and Reality

By: M. Trahan

North Vermillion Middle School

“Dream Journals and Reality”

March 8, 2012

Dear Diary,

Today is the day that they think that Lending Hearts in Abbeville, Michigan on 8th Street, found my family! Well, not my real family, but a family that wants a daughter! This morning, Ms. Vanessa got my blue knee-length, polka dotted dress on my bed.

“Rise n’ shine, Clementine!” Ms. Vanessa said.

“FOR THE TENTH TIME...MY NAME IS NOT CLEMENTINE!” Avery exclaimed.

“Its an expression, Avery.” Ms. Vanessa said with a sigh.

I looked out my window. Maybe, I'll get out of this dump and go to greater things. Avery is the dumbest person I've ever met. She gets angry about anything and everything. I peeked through the crack in the door before going into the lobby. I heard a man's voice.

"Why, yes. I am here to see about Nicole Knowles," he replied.

"Ok, um... I'll need you to sign here, here, here, and here," Ms. Vanessa said.

The noise of the pen is the only thing I could hear. Ms. Vanessa looked at me and squinted. "Oh... here she is now!" She took my hand and walked out of the book keeper's room. I looked like the seven-year-old that I used to be, even though five years have passed.

All of a sudden, I woke up. Although my insides twisted with disappointment at the fact that it was a dream, I smiled at the fulfillment it brought momentarily.

Ms. Vanessa came in and said a man would like to see me. "Come with me, a relative would like to meet you." "Hello, Nicole. I am your Dad." Knots unraveled as I learned that dreams really do come true.

Middle School Division (grades 5-8)

Poetry

1st place poetry

March to the Sea

By: R. Meaux

North Vermillion Middle School

"March to the Sea"

by my side,  
it was good for a while,  
hands intertwined,  
you holding my heart,  
in your warm shirt pocket,  
little did i know;  
it had a hole at the bottom.

now,  
emptiness in my bones,  
bad memories drown me,  
draining my lungs of my happiness,

i am the captain of my ship,  
the ship of my problems,  
and i'm going down with it.

too late for apologies,  
too early for affection,  
loneliness taking over,  
ripping my insides to shreds,  
for nothing but a blood stew lies,  
heart shards floating,  
like a boat across the pacific,  
Raindrops tearing gashes in the sail.

not being able to look into your eyes,  
the greens and blues,  
like the sea rocking back and forth,  
with waves of compassion,  
slamming into the shores of mine,

our love was a beautiful beach,  
with a sunset of baby blues and lilacs,  
what a shame a hurricane took over,  
when we were walking along the coast.

2nd place poetry

Our Universe

By: B. Orr

North Vermillion Middle School

“Our Universe”

Dark, cold, silent.  
Another place we have yet to search  
Another mystery to solve  
Our universe

Galaxies, planets, and stars  
Asteroids, black holes, and moons  
All spinning in a beautiful, cosmic dance

Blinding light radiating from stars  
The forceful, gravitational pull from planets  
The beauty masked by silence and mystery

Our universe, gorgeous and serene  
A peaceful silence, yet a dangerous place

3rd place poetry

Leaves

By: C. Tucker

L.J. Alleman Middle School

Leaves

We are all leaves from the same tree,  
although very different, also the same

When we fall off the tree, we land softly  
to the ground, and have to figure out  
everything on our own

We never get a warning, we just fall very  
gracefully and slowly with all of the other  
leaves

When all of the leaves are gone, new  
ones form from the same tree, to fall  
once again to the ground

High School Division (grades 9-12)

Fiction

1st place fiction

Victim

By: V. Matte

Lafayette High School

### Victim

Before school, Aspen was thinking about all the times he got teased and harassed, by the same two people, about the same thing. His weight. Aspen didn't think he was that overweight. The teasing really didn't bother him at first. It was just little laughs and pointings in his direction. But then it progressed to getting his locker vandalized or him getting his books knocked out of his hands and papers flying everywhere. When he tried to tell the teachers, they didn't take it serious. One of his teachers told him, "Be a man and speak up." Another said, "Stop being a wimp." He didn't want to bother his mom with it because he didn't want to get the same reply that he got from the teachers, so he just let it continue. Aspen didn't have anyone to open up to, the only friend he had just moved out of state and didn't have a phone.

One day, the teasing and bullying was really bad. Gerad and his friend, Booker, broke all of his pencils, threw his binder and his books in the toilet, and called him an elephant. The teachers didn't believe him, of course, and no one saw them do it so he couldn't do anything else about it. He left school 3 hours before he was supposed to and 4 hours before his mom or brother got home. He was crying before he even walked into his house. He has had enough. He went into his mom's medicine cabinet in her bathroom and grabbed the medicine that had the most milligrams and the most pills in them. He ran to the kitchen for a glass of water. Then upstairs to his room and locked the door. He cried and walked around his room for the next 3 and a half hours, then sat on the bed, opened the bottle of pills, and took all of them. He then layed down and closed his eyes.

I was getting ready for school and I didn't feel right. I felt like today was going to be different. I didn't really think much of it. I got onto the bus and went to school. When I got there, I put my book bag down, and went to the bathroom. When I walked into the classroom I saw Gerad and Booker. I knew they did something because they were walking away from my things. I walked to my desk and saw that they broke my pencils and my binder and all my books were missing. When I asked them where my things were they told me to go look in the bathroom. I went and found my books and binder in the toilet. I went to my teacher, Mrs. Carter, and she didn't believe me. When I walked back into the class and passed Gerad and Booker, They said, "How are your books, elephant?" I've never felt so bad in my life. I grabbed my book bag and walked out the door. I ran home as fast as humanly possible and went to the living room. I stayed

there until my mom came home. When she walked in, she saw I was crying. I told her everything that happened today and everything that has happened before. I thought she would not take it serious and tell me things like my teachers did but she didn't. She actually said that she would help me get through it by calling the principal, the counselor, and the bullies' moms.

After she called everyone and Gerard and Booker's punishment was over, in school suspension for 2 months, I went back to school and they never picked on me again. They actually apologized for everything they did to me and payed for my books. When I go to school there is no one who picks on me and I have really good days. My mom checks on me everyday and my teachers take bullying serious now.

When Aspen woke from his coma 3 weeks later he was in a hospital bed with his mom by his feet and his brother in the chair next to him. His mom felt him moving and looked at him. As soon as she seen that his eyes were open she yelled for the doctors. They all rushed in and started talking at once. The doctor started taking his vital signs, the nurse was looking at the monitor, and his mom was calling everyone she knew. His brother was standing on the side of the room with no one bothering him and crying to himself.

A few months later Aspen returned to school. Gerard and Booker were expelled and Aspen continued going to school without any bullying. His mom checks on him everyday after school. Aspen is going to grow up to change other young kids lives and stop bullying worldwide.

2nd place fiction

I Want to Join

By: G. Novasad

Lafayette High School

### I Want To Join

Jeff was sitting in his house and he was watching tv. He got up to go and get the mail. In the mail, he got a card about joining the military. He goes back in the house and tosses it up onto the counter. Then, he went to lay down on his bed to think about joining the military. He wondered about all of the possibilities of all the good things and the bad things that could happen to him while he would be in the military.

Jeff exclaims "I'm ready."

When the training begins, the instructor comes out and introduces himself. After that, the training begins.

Jeff gets into the exercises and thinks to himself, "This is actually pretty hard." He gets past the jumping jacks and the push-ups, but once the sit-ups come along, Jeff can feel the intense burn in his abs. He thinks to himself, "I don't know if I can do these exercises anymore." He has to stop on his twenty-sixth sit-up because the intense burn is so bad. Then, he notices that not a lot of people are getting much farther than he did.

Actually, only one person got farther than him. Next, the instructor goes over the results. Jeff can feel the sharp pain in his abs.

“The only person that completed all of the exercises was Omar Brown. In the second place, Jeff Smith, almost finished with only eighty-four situps left to go. Lastly, in third place is Thomas O’Neil almost finishing with only three more push ups and one hundred situps left. Good job people. On the way out, you will get a slip about if you made it or not.”

Three days later, Jeff, Omar and Thomas are all at the airport ready to go to Iraq. After they all board a military plane, they all fall asleep on the plane ride there. Eight more long hours pass and they have arrived at a military base in Iraq. They start a practice operation where they are trying to save a hostage. When they go into the building, Jeff goes in first, then Omar, then Thomas. Jeff walks around a corner looking for any dummies, knocks one down, then two, and grabs the hostage. He takes him outside and safely gets him out to the helicopter.

“Great job, Jeff, Omar and Thomas!” their instructor preaches.

Everyone is all packed up and ready to go in the helicopter and they take off. Jeff has had enough of all of this fighting and battle. He wants to quit it all and go home. So, that is exactly what he does. He buys a plane ticket, calls his Mom, and flies home.

“Hey, Mom.” Jeff frantically says.

“What happened to you?” she questions him.

“I got shot while rescuing someone.” Jeff says.

“Let’s get you home.” she says.

3rd place fiction

Breakthrough

By: K. Prejean

Carencro High School

### Breakthrough

The air was like poisoned dread suffocating all the doctors in the room. They chattered curiously about the unconscious patient before them. "Will the chip self implode?" Doctor Carolson inquired "I think the persona board is more important. what if it malfunctions?" Doctor Mythin replied.

"Don't be daft. we'll deal with it if it even happens," Doctor Carolson stated rolling his eyes. They looked over the statistics on their clipboards highlighting the important information when The patient began to twitch. The doctors watched curiously. The moment they have been

waiting for had perhaps come. A moment later the lights flickered out. The doctors didn't panic immediately but as the time ticked by the chance that it was just a power outage decreased. Panic began to stir as the atmosphere in the room became very dark and grim.

The doctors stood, waiting for the fear to subside and hoping the lights would come on. They felt something breathing contently on their necks. Blindly they turned and felt for the creature. A small and hollow laugh crept throughout the room. The creature evaded them with amusement. Everything seemed to stop in silence for a few seconds.

The lights flickered on. The once immaculate hospital room was destroyed. "But...but how?" Doctor Carlson stuttered. The bed was torn and looked frayed, the heart monitor and all the machines had their screens smashed in and wires violently pulled out. Someone cleared their throat. They spun around to see the patient. The teenage boy smiled. An intercom beeped and yelled "GET HIM!" The two doctors wasted no time lunging at him, but he dodged them with unnatural ease. Doctor Carlson, the doctor with a fat bulbous head, snarled at the patient and chased after him. The doctor grinned baring his yellow teeth as he was fixing to corner the patient. The patient ran towards the wall, fully aware of what the fat doctor was trying to do, he jumped while kicking the wall causing him to do a graceful backflip over his attacker. He landed and smirked at the surprised doctor. The other doctor, Doctor Mythin, a thin man with a repulsive face that closely resembled a rat, charged throwing back his skinny arm as if to throw a punch. All the patient did was simply step out of the way and giggled as the doctor crashed into the opposing wall. Thinking it was time to leave, his imprisonment the patient leaned forward and whispered a statement he has held in for 6 torturous years, "It's not nice to steal." The lights flickered out.

High School Division (grades 9-12)

Poetry

1st place poetry

Bookworm

By: CJ Choate

Lafayette High School

Bookworm

She once made the promise to save me when all along

We should've been saving her from herself.

Books were her only escape.

The fresh smell of ink on the pages soothed her soul,

And led her away from the cruel world she inhabited.

The library was her sanctuary.

Everywhere else was a battlefield,

A battlefield of judgement and lies.

Whispers behind her back, rumors spreading like wildfire.

A mental illness mistaken for wanting attention.

The books were her comfort.

When she had no one to turn to,

She would sculpt some friends out of 12 pt Times New Roman.

And she would let them take her to places undiscovered.

Places that only existed in the privacy of her own mind.

Society always knocking on the door,

Always trying to poison her.

And winning in the end.

The pills were in the cabinet.

Temptation too strong to resist.

Looks like books weren't her only escape.

2nd place poetry  
Something Somewhere Fell  
By: A. Malcombe  
Lafayette High School

something somewhere fell

once had,

cheeks bursting with love

and lips parted cherries.

you told me I held you –

all your heart,

*beat ingbeat ingbeat,*

your fullness of feeling.

but these words

(we do not say

or be sorry)

they caught up and now

we are a fallen empire,

an emperor gone,

dead then decayed,

ravaged by time

and forgotten by his people.

we are a monument of memories:

so sorrowful, so anguished, so

truly largely hugely

l o n e l y.

3rd place poetry

The Day that I Felt Nothing

By: A. Richard

Carencro High School

The day that I felt nothing

The day that I felt nothing,

It suddenly hit me again.

The demons had come back for me

To bring me to my end.

They grabbed me from behind

And dragged me through the grave,

Laughing and smiling and grinning and such

At all my broken pain.

I hear a voice cry out to me

From somewhere deep inside

Yelling that it's too late for me

That I'm too far past the line.

I scream in anger and fear and hate.

I long to get away.

But the demons just keep coming back

Never lending me but a day.

Why do I let them take me back

Through all this pain and fear?

I feel my heart is breaking fast

I feel the end is near

In the darkness of this valley  
I see a bright light  
But it's red and hot and steamy  
And it takes me by the night

I breathe in the eternal fire  
That is dancing on my lips  
Wondering if my pain up there  
Was worth even half of this.

I kick and I scream and curse and yell  
Longing to go home  
But there's no escape from here I fear  
From the place that's down below.