

## 2017 Flash Fiction Contest Winners Announced

This year, the Kathryn McClatchy Flash Fiction Contest received several excellent submissions, ranging from 500 to 1,000 words in length. Held annually, the competition accepts unpublished short fiction in all genres. The contest is open to members and non-members. After the blind judging by members of the WGT Board, Leah Hinton emerged as the top contestant, winning first and second place for two of her submissions. "Spin Me, Charlie," the first prize winner, is featured in the January issue of the WGT newsletter, the Mentor. Hinton's second-place story "Dark Fog" will appear in an upcoming issue of the Mentor, along with third prize winner, "Goldie," written by Sabrina Chapman and Steve McCluer's "Tiny Steps," recognized with this year's award for honorable mention. In addition to publishing them in the WGT Mentor, the winning stories are available for download on our website, [www.wgtonline.org](http://www.wgtonline.org). The WGT Board is grateful to everyone who took part in this year's contest. Congratulations to the winners!



Steve McCluer, Sabrina Chapman, and Leah Hinton

### UPCOMING EVENTS - Mark your calendars!

**February 19 Story Structure** – Monalisa Foster examines story structure (beginnings, middles, & ends) and explains how, when built correctly, they work together to keep readers turning those pages.

**February 21 Join Critique Group** on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, and obtain valuable, constructive feedback.

**March 19 The Realities of Self-Publishing** – Barbara Wilson, a published picture book writer and illustrator, speaks on the roller-coaster ride of self-publishing.

**March 21 Join Critique Group** on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, and obtain valuable, constructive feedback.

**April 28 Spring Workshop** – watch for information in your email and follow us on Facebook for more news.

### Spin Me, Charlie by Leah Hinton

1931

Esther Strong stood with her hands on her hips as she told Charlie Farris,  
"Boys stink." Her pigtailed danced as she strode away, the Harbin sisters in tow.

"I'm going to marry her someday," Charlie said under his breath.

"You're soused. That ain't no way to think." Ralph slugged his best friend's arm in protest. But the way Charlie saw it, the heart of a ten-year-old boy's as good a place as any for true love. Maybe even a better place. It isn't weighed down yet by common sense or life experience.

"Fooled ya, Ralph." Charlie buried his hands in his pockets. Ralph slugged him once more for good measure. (continued at [www.wgtonline.org](http://www.wgtonline.org))

(Continued from page 1, *Spin Me, Charlie*)

1943

Esther's mother smiled. She was excited over her daughter's suitor. Good men were a scarce commodity since the start of the war. "You finished your flight training then?"

"Yes, Ma'am. B-17s. 8<sup>th</sup> Army Airforce."

"Charlie?" Esther called from the top of the stairs. She was a vision in a yellow and white daffodil-print dress. A satin ribbon encircled her narrow waist.

Charlie switched his weight from one foot to another and back again as he watched her skip down the stairs, stopping to pin a cheery hat atop her chestnut hair.

The thick black paint of a '41 Fleetwood Sedan glistened under gaslights at the corner. Bright lights at the Palais beamed like a beacon. The dancehall gleamed from chandelier to polished floor. Anybody who was anybody was there that night, and plenty of nobodies too.

This was the last great recreation in a war-torn world where people dreaded tomorrow and telegraph clerks worked overtime in the messy business of delivering dreams, unfulfilled.

The hall was full of young men in starched uniforms, and girls in wilted party dresses. Each one looked for a future only half would find. The happiness that hung in the air felt temporary as if the worries and doubts of the world would eat them whole. Hurried promises were made by candlelight, heartfelt, but rarely realized.

"Dance with me." He pulled her out of her seat. His hand on her hip, hers on his chest. She fiddled with the silver wings pinned to his uniform as they fell into step with the music.

"Just like the song." Esther laughed and instantly felt ridiculous for it.

"What?"

"The song playing now, 'He Wears a Pair of

Silver Wings'."

"I know the song. I just didn't know you'd think of me like that. As a boy you're proud to be with? Someone you'd miss?"

"Well, I don't..." Esther swallowed hard and her cheeks flushed pink.

He pulled her closer. She nestled her face against him and inhaled his scent. She didn't want to forget it—Castille soap, Pinaud Clubman Pomade and something unmistakably Charlie. She wanted to belong to this boy who used to tag her as "it" in the schoolyard, but these were not the days for dreaming.

The band picked up tempo. Charlie never changed their pace.

"Rays of sunshine flit around you, Esther, in a halo of all that's good and perfect in this world, casting the rotten into the shadows." They stood, stopped in the middle of the dancefloor. "I've loved you my whole life." He admitted.

"Charlie?"

He took her face into his hands.

She bit her lip, her blue eyes welled. Dancers swirled around them.

"You're the kind of girl that makes a man confused. The kind that makes him want to go off to war to prove how brave he is, yet he can't bear to leave. But I *am* leaving. You know I'm leaving for England, for Duxford, and maybe that's the only reason you said yes to coming out with me tonight. Maybe you wanted to show some poor old sap a happy day before he goes to war, but I swear I don't care the reason. Dancing with you tonight makes me the happiest man alive. If I never come home, I've had tonight."

"You love me, Charlie?"

"You haven't given me two thoughts before tonight, but I mean it when I say I've loved you my whole life. I've loved you since I was ten years old. You are my happily-ever-after. Esther Jane Strong,

(Continued from page 2, *Spin Me, Charlie*)

if you'll have me, I'm yours. Forever."

"You're right, Charlie. I haven't given two thoughts to you before tonight. I've given a thousand thoughts and probably hundreds of prayers, too. I'll have you Charlie Farris and I promise to always be your happily-ever-after and you'll always have me to come home for."

Esther cried happy tears against his chest. "Oh! Spin me, Charlie. I want to dance with you forever!"

"I'll spin you, E." He pulled her in close and for the first time set his lips on hers. He kissed her. His life depended on it. On her.

He kissed her until the room spun around them and they dissolved into another place where war didn't tear lovers apart.

When he pulled away, he looked at the flushed face and well-kissed mouth of the girl he loved. "I'm going to marry her!" he said under his breath. He kissed her again and they danced until the orange sun stole the edges of a purple night away.

2005

"Shara, this's the last room for your rounds. Each night you'll come in and see if there's anything Ms. Esther needs. She's less worry than other patients here, despite her age. Just gotta make sure she takes her pills. She's sneaky, that one. Other than that, she sits looking out that window nearly all day, every day, like she's waiting for somebody."

"Does she get many visitors?"

"Ms. Esther? Nah. She's all alone. She don't really talk to nobody, but I betcha she knows everything going on, so be sure to talk to her."

"She ain't never talkin'?"

"In all my time here, I only heard her say one thing."

"What was that?"

"One night she got to smiling, and I'd swear she said 'Spin me, Charlie.'"

## BEST-SELLING INDIVIDUAL BOOKS

These books are listed according to the highest sales estimate as reported in reliable, independent sources, ranging from 50 to 500 million sold.

*Do you know the authors and the first date published?*

1. Don Quixote
2. A Tale of Two Cities
3. The Lord of the Rings
4. Le Petit Prince (The Little Prince)
5. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone
6. The Hobbit
7. And Then There Were None
8. Dream of the Red Chamber
9. Alice in Wonderland
10. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
11. She: A History of Adventure
12. The Da Vinci Code
13. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets
14. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban
15. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
16. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
17. Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince
18. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows
19. The Alchemist
20. The Catcher in the Rye

## Writers Guild of Texas 2018 Board

President	Julie Mendel
Vice President:	Alex Elfenbein
Secretary	OPEN*
Treasurer:	Rainer Bantau
Membership Chairman:	OPEN *
Program Coordinator:	OPEN *
Communications Chairman:	Gary Bowers
Website Chairman:	David Douglas
Social Media Coordinator:	OPEN *
Critique Group Coordinator:	OPEN*

\*You can serve the WGT in one of these positions by talking to any one of the Board members. *Without a Board, the Writers Guild of Texas cannot exist.*



Flash Fiction Contest P1 / "Spin Me, Charlie" P2 / Best Selling Books P3 / Holiday Party Photos P4 /



2018



**I WRITE  
I AM A  
WRITER!**



**2017 HOLIDAY PARTY  
DECEMBER 18, 2017**

2017



**PUBLISHED!**



AUTHORS ★ WRITERS ★ INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS