



## 4th Annual Texas Short Story Contest Contestant Rules

We're looking for short fiction stories! Think you can write a winning story in 5000 words or less? Enter Bethune & Son's fourth annual Texas Short Story Competition for your chance to win \$1,000 in cash, and get your story published! Please ensure you read the rules carefully before entering the competition.

*Please Note: If you have entered our contest in the past three years, please read the directions carefully as minor details have changed to improve the user and judging process.*

### Prizes:

One first place winner will receive:

- \$1,000 in cash
- Their short story published in the Bethune & Son Fiction Anthology, *Presidio Volume IV*, sold in Bethune & Son stores
- Their story published on the Bethune & Son website

One second place winner will receive:

- \$300 in Bethune & Son store credit
- Their short story published in the Bethune & Son Fiction Anthology, *Presidio Volume IV*, sold in Bethune & Son stores
- Their story published on the Bethune & Son website

One third place winner will receive:

- \$200 in Bethune & Son store credit
- Their short story published in the Bethune & Son Fiction Anthology, *Presidio Volume IV*, sold in Bethune & Son stores
- Their story published on the Bethune & Son website

### How to Enter:

- All entries must be submitted through our contest page on Submittable.com by 11:59 p.m. on October 2, 2020.
- Double check your submission follows the "rules" listed in this document.
- Entrants may enter up to 2 stories in the competition. Entrants may not enter the same story twice to improve odds.

*Entry implies acceptance of all the rules and failure to comply may result in disqualification.*

\*If a person under the age of 18 places as a finalist, their monetary prize will be processed as a scholarship toward academic pursuits.

**Rules:**

- 5000 words or less
- Be sure of your word count! Entries exceeding the word limit will be disqualified. The title is not included in the word count. Type the exact word count in the header of your first page. Word count will also be checked by our entry platform.
- **Every entry must follow the theme of “Gulf Coast”, discuss or reference the theme of the Texas Gulf Coast in some way, shape or form, and must clearly add to the narrative of Texas life (i.e. stories about the Louisiana or Mexico gulf coast will not count). Your plot does not need to revolve around the theme, but should strongly incorporate it into your story in any way you best see fit (e.g. setting, character background, dialogue, etc.)**
- Your entry must be original, in English, unpublished and unproduced, not accepted by any other publisher or producer at the time of submission. Any discovery of publication of your story by another party will result in disqualification. Bethune & Son retains one-time non-exclusive publication rights to the winning entries. Any piece posted online, anywhere other than a personal blog, is considered published.
- Entries must be entirely the work of the entrant and by submitting you are confirming that the work is your own.
- All entries must be formatted to 8.5 x 11” or A4 paper.
- All manuscripts must be double spaced and be in 12 point font
- Entrants may enter up to 2 stories in the competition. Entrants may NOT enter the same story twice to improve odds of winning. Duplicate entries will be deleted.
- Manuscripts must NOT include name, address, phone number or other identifier of the author anywhere. This is so all manuscripts will be judged blindly. Any presence of a personal identifier will result in disqualification of entry.
- The file name must be the title of the entry and it must be in PDF format. Extensions cannot be granted for corrupt, locked or unreadable documents, so be sure to test your document before submitting.

**Receipt of Entry & Notifications:**

- An automated response will be sent upon confirmation of receiving your submission
- An email response will NOT be sent to participants notifying them of disqualification
- An email will NOT be sent to participants if their story did not make it as a finalist
- An email response will be sent ONLY to finalists notifying them of their winning placement and any future action required

- Participants curious about finalist essays may subscribe to the Bethune & Son newsletter or follow the brand on social media to see announcements at the conclusion of the contest.
- Top award winners will be notified by December 31, 2020 by email or phone.
- If you receive no notification by December 31, 2020, then your story did not place as a finalist. You are welcome to withdraw it for use in other contests, publications, etc.
- Runner-up stories may be personally contacted shortly after December 31, 2020 if their story is selected as an honorable-mention candidate for printing in Bethune & Son's anthology *Presidio Volume IV*. Authors who agree to have their stories printed in *Presidio* are subject to the same copyright as contest winners (see below).

### **Copyright:**

Worldwide copyright of each entry remains with the author, but Bethune & Son will have the unrestricted right to publish the winning short stories on the brand website and any relevant promotional material digital or printed. Entry implies acceptance of Bethune & Son's unrestricted right to publish the winning short stories.

### **Judging:**

- Judging is by a panel of independent judges. Judges are kept blind to contestants. Judges are selected based on qualifications in literature, creative writing, and Texian culture.
- Each story will be read and independently scored at least two times.
- Based on the average scores from the judges, the three stories with the highest average scores are designated as the contest finalists.
- Every entry will be read by the judges. Judge's scores are final. Scores will not be shared with the public.
- Entries must be submitted on the contest page on Submittable.com by 11:59 p.m., October 2, 2020. The link for our Submittable web page is posted publicly on bethuneandson.com.
- Winners must provide an appropriate tax form (W9 or W8BEN) in order to receive their cash awards. If the forms are not received within 60 days, cash awards will be considered forfeited.
- The following are not permitted to enter the contest:
  - Employees of Bethune & Son or Coastal Bend Retail Holdings and their immediate family members
  - Immediate family members of the contest judges
  - "Immediate family members" shall include spouses, siblings, parents, children, grandparents and grandchildren, whether as "in-laws," or by current or past marriage, remarriage, adoption, cohabitation or other familial extension.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Are there any restrictions regarding content, language, subject matter, etc.?**

Your short story must somehow touch upon this year's theme "Texas Gulf Coast". Otherwise, we do not have any restrictions or preferences

**Is it okay to have illustrations or pictures?** Please submit text only

### **Are pen names allowed?**

You may enter under a pen name. Write your pen name on all communications so there are no mistakes on credits. Please be advised that we only need your real name if you are chosen as a winner (in order to issue prizes).

### **What if I only want to submit part of my story to stay within the word limit?**

If you submit a portion of a larger work or novel it will be accepted, but please understand that it will be judged as a complete story, not as part of a larger work. It needs to read as a complete story in and of itself in order to meet judging criteria.

### **What if I am not a U.S. resident?**

Writing competitions are open to U.S. residents only.

### **Is there an age limit for entrants?**

There is no age limit for entrants. However, if a minor (under the age of 18) is a finalist, their monetary prize will be processed as an academic scholarship of the minor's choosing.

### **When will winners be notified?**

No later than December 31, 2020. Please refer to the "Judging & Notification" section for more details.

**Is there an entry fee?** There is no entry fee.

Send your additional questions to [info@bethuneandson.com](mailto:info@bethuneandson.com)