

## Her Kind Poem Contest Winners

### Ages 8-12

1<sup>st</sup>

Jenna Crowell, Salina OK

### Ages 13-17

1<sup>st</sup>

Michael Austin Smith, Bixby OK

2<sup>nd</sup>

Jenna Koehn, Bixby OK

3<sup>rd</sup>

Logan Mauldin, Grove OK

### Ages 18 and up

1<sup>st</sup>

Whitney Schmidt, Broken Arrow OK

2<sup>nd</sup>

Helen Patterson, Broken Arrow OK

3<sup>rd</sup>

Sydney Aerin, Oklahoma City OK

1<sup>st</sup> Place, Ages 8-12

### The Tale of the Little Witch

Little Dorcas Good was doing  
Witchcraft with her mother  
Who she loved like no other.  
One day they were found,  
And now they are bound,  
Several years in jail.  
Her dad won't pay her bail.  
Prison left her insane,  
So she remained in pain.  
She was unthrilled  
That her mother was killed.  
Never confess to being a witch  
Or else you will have a guilty itch.

--Jenna Crowell  
Salina OK

1<sup>st</sup> Place, Ages 13-17

The Medicine Woman

Her knuckles curl and crack  
Her face a field of canyons, dry and wrinkled  
Plains crumbled and culled  
Her eyes yet gentle, calm, and warm  
Fire ashes, dawn fallen to dusk  
A knee felled  
An arm bowed  
She brings out the alloy, mixing it with secrets and honey  
Shimmering gold  
Gentle breeze  
She bends down to the child's knee  
Red and raw  
Her hands a forlorn mercy  
She sings the words, old and new  
Each verse a sway of the hips, a washing of hands, a mashing of maize  
A story  
She places her hands on the child  
His sorrow stops  
She is an angel  
No hag or terror  
As the strange is often called  
Her magic works in ways unknown  
A sorceress in the ways taught her by her mother  
Taught to her by her mother  
And her mother before  
The child's fear taken  
Held away in a forgotten place  
She is kind  
Witch, mystic to her grandchild  
Magic, in his eyes

--Michael Austin Smith  
Bixby OK

2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Ages 13-17

### The Witch's Cottage

She hangs herbs from my rafters  
Stacks salves and tinctures on my shelves  
Paints sigils on my walls  
Hangs a horseshoe above my door

She doesn't know that I watch over her  
That her magic gave me life  
I don't need her praise  
I'd still protect her without complaint

The villagers come by the night  
Torches and pitchforks march through the night  
Stones flying through the air  
Only to bounce off my stonework harmlessly

She storms out of my walls  
A spell on her lips  
But the mob swarms her  
And I can do nothing but watch

Her garden is overgrown  
My rafters covered in cobwebs  
All alone in these woods  
I patiently wait for her return.

--Jenna Koehn  
Bixby OK

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Ages 13-17

### Witches in the Night

Witches in the night,  
Flying high on their broomsticks,  
Searching for something.

Witches in the night,  
Searching for ingredients  
For potion brewing.

Witches in the night,  
Their cauldrons flow with magic,  
Ready for potions.

Witches in the night,  
Their cauldrons reek of strange herbs,  
Potions nearly done.

Witches in the night,  
Caught kidnapping young townsfolk  
For testing potions.

Witches in the night,  
To be consumed by the flames,  
Burning at the stake.

Witches in the night,  
Consumed by an inferno,  
Cursing all around.

--Logan Mauldin  
Grove OK

1<sup>st</sup> Place, Ages 18 and up

## Disguises

In the photograph, I clutch a plastic jack o'lantern  
and a toy broom. Under the black pointy hat  
a wig streaked with silvery gray rests on my shoulders.  
The dress, black with orange lining and tattered hems,  
has been sewn by my aunt or grandmother, a skill  
my mother never learns. Someone tells me what to say.  
A camera snaps mid-word. Lipsticked mouth open,  
my five-year-old face splits in a silent vowel,  
green pancake makeup cracking into crow's feet  
around my eyes, blacked with shadow.

Days after Halloween, Child Protective Services knocks  
its own Trick or Treat. A neighbor has called  
about the little witch's brother, who has only one  
black eye. An accident. He's a regular Houdini, that kid.  
Tried to climb out of his crib and bumped his noggin.  
They ask again about my dislocated shoulder  
from their first visit when I was two. An accident.  
Could happen to anyone. She tried to run away,  
Mother had to grab her. To keep her safe. I do not know  
whether I was home after Halloween to echo these tales.

Perhaps that was the day I missed recess to explain  
why I'd crayoned the carpet in red and told my classmates  
it was blood. Perhaps I'd already transferred to Montessori  
kindergarten where I was fed Ritalin in spoonfuls of honey,  
where I cried with hands covered in paste for papier-mâché.  
Or perhaps I was home. Perhaps by then I knew her kind,  
women with clipboards and questions, witches in disguise,  
like the Witch of the West who pretends to be a grieving sister,  
like the Evil Grizelda who steals toys I don't pick up  
by bedtime, who pretends to be my mother.

--Whitney Schmidt  
Broken Arrow OK

2<sup>nd</sup> Place, Ages 18 and up

### Burn the Witch

Widow in the woods--an easy scapegoat:  
Her worn hands grind poultices  
Brew bitter teas  
Her gray eyes look straight ahead  
Never flicker down  
Her tempting wealth of land  
What right has a crone to outlive her husband and sons?

They come--armed with muskets and the Good Book:  
Her house has no chicken feet to carry her to safety  
Her pestle and mortar sit silent in the corner  
Her black cat, no familiar,  
Bleeds and dies  
Like any mortal beast  
The mob drags her away.

They bind her to the stake and call it righteousness.  
In her screams  
They hear dark incantations  
In the sour stink of burning skin  
They smell purification  
Her overbold eyes  
Dribble down her ruined face  
The fire renders her down to fat, ashes, bone.

The next Sunday, hands scrubbed clean,  
They sit smugly on frigid pews,  
Mimicking Godliness.

--Helen Patterson  
Broken Arrow OK

3<sup>rd</sup> Place, Ages 18 and up

### I've Been Burned Before

From the age of 15,  
Men have been afraid of me  
The blood that comes from my body  
The words that come from my mouth  
The ideas that come from my mind

Men call me weak and try to make it so  
Try to convince me that it is true  
They fault me for being childless and single  
Fault me for being stubborn and strong  
Fault me for being female and me

Men call me 'witch' like it is a bad thing  
To know my power and to use it  
To be alone and enjoy it  
Burn me at the stake of their ignorance  
For the sake of their ignorance

But I've been burned before, so my wick is longer now  
I have my coven of fellow witches  
My black dog familiars  
My muchness and my magic  
My power and my pride

I control my present and my future  
I will right their wrongs but writing new endings for them  
I will restore power to its rightful place  
I will brew self-love potions for all  
Cast a spell of enchantment over the world

I will remind men that Glenda is a good witch  
That magic and equality are meant for all  
That we are more powerful together  
I am monster, myth, legend, lore  
I am worthy, witch, and woman.

--Sydney Aerin  
Oklahoma City OK