



Evesham Festival of Words Short Story Competition 2023

Judge's Note:

I am very grateful to all the entrants for offering windows on so many fictional worlds. The variety, from quiet personal struggles to futuristic drama, made for an interesting range of reading experiences.

What stood out in the third-place story was the writer's ability to do so much with a simple walk up the aisle of a church, filling out the picture of a dilemma with each step, and then resolving the dilemma in the story's own special way. For me, there is no story in a short story if no one undergoes a change in it.

The second-place story stood out for its extraordinarily successful range of points of view in just a few pages. Short stories feel less well-suited than novels for the thoughts and voices of many characters, but this one managed it with aplomb.

And why did the winning story win? The dialogue was cracking, there was a huge amount at stake, and the main character did not know if she would be changed, or if her mother would, until the last few lines. It made my heart pound.

Alison Jean Lester