



Local Writing: '1%' by Jacob Schapiro



Jacob Schapiro performs his winning poem. COURTESY BILL SOLOMON

The Montclair Literary Festival is presented by [Succeed2gether](#), an afterschool tutoring program for students in grades K through 12. The slam — spoken word poetry — included students from Montclair High School and the town’s middle schools.

We’re interested in hearing from you as well — please send us your published or performed student writing from literary magazines and other school and neighborhood organizations!

For inquiries write to culture@montclairlocal.news.

READ: 'THE BOYS WHO PLAY SPORTS' BY BEN WHITE

READ: 'BECAUSE I'M BLACK' BY KHAILYN HUGHES-SELLERS

"1%" by then-junior Jacob Schapiro co-won third place in last spring's high school section of the slam.

Inspiration struck me —
and it hurt
She tapped my back, slapped my face... then it hit me
the fist, that is
Started writing, hoping to shake her,
make her stop
But on came the punching and pinching, all in a rage
as I inched thru a page
Beating me harder, I go faster, tapping the keys, typing like a Fury
"Hurry! Hurry!" she harries
Fingers dance the tarantella, feats of gymnastics, acrobatics, in a seizure
My stomach rumbles, dreaming, pleading for food:
Spiced curry, mozzarella, pizza
As my belly nearly caves, she screams,
"You're doing a helluva job, keep going, stay strong!"
I long to kick her in the knee but I'm not a fighter
Well, aren't I? Isn't this a war of ink, of battling blank pages with incredible feats?
A war that can be won only by a writer
CRACK
Knee shatters from her attack, bringing me back
Yet I go on, a thousand words a minute,
stretching autocorrect past its limits
Then the worst realization: I'm enjoying this!
Oh god, am I a masochist?
Pains me to admit I've mastered pain, pain of the pen
And then she's gone,
leaving a blood-stained keyboard and a full page,
as the only remains of her vicious campaign
So I type my last line, muttering,
"See you next time."