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**GATHER.COM ANNOUNCES FIRST SHORT FICTION
COMPETITION WINNER**

*“The Bright-Lights Game Machine” to be
Reviewed by Houghton Mifflin Senior Editor*

BOSTON, MASS., Feb. 1, 2006 – Gather.com™, the place to share and find the best user-generated content online, today announced its first short fiction competition winner, Katherine Gustafson for her entry “**The Bright-Lights Game Machine**”. The contest, announced in November shortly after the launch of Gather.com, received over 400 entries that were then narrowed to twenty. Katherine’s story was chosen by the two guest judges, citing it as beautifully crafted and praising both the unique content, as well as her use of a personal tone and style that draws in the reader. This is the first short fiction contest offered on Gather.com.

“Gather.com has established a platform where the collective voices of new and aspiring authors can be heard,” said Carl Rosendorf, Gather.com President and former Barnes & Noble executive (carl.gather.com). “Gather.com adds a new and relevant dimension to the publishing industry, connecting authors and publishers with an engaged and informed audience in real time.”

Judging this competition were best-selling author David Vann and Chris Steib, the founder and editor in chief of VoidMagazine.com, along with the Gather editorial team.

“There were many extraordinary submissions in this contest, which I attribute to the articulate, educated audience that Gather is reaching,” commented David Vann, “In the end, though, **The Bright-Lights Game Machine** was the clear and unanimous winner. Katherine Gustafson’s content-rich prose and characterization, along with the fact that she’s taking risks make her work a pleasure to read.”

Katherine, who was notified today that she was selected as the winner will receive \$500 in cash and her story will be reviewed by Heidi Pitlor, Houghton Mifflin's Senior in-house Editor of The Best American Short Stories.

Upon notification by Gather that she had won first place, Katherine states, “I couldn't have asked for a better fiction debut.” Previous non-fiction works by Katherine have been published in The Christian Science Monitor and Transitions Abroad Magazine. She pursues her writing career when she is not encased in her daytime clothes working for the U.S. Agency for International Development in Washington D.C. An article announcing all of the short fiction contest winners was posted today on Gather.com. [View Full Announcement.](#)

Gather’s plans include future contests where writers, photographers and videographers will have an opportunity to showcase their professional talents on the Gather site. Future contests will be listed at www.gather.com.

About Gather

Gather.com (www.gather.com) is the space for the public radio crowd to share their passions and perspectives, or “beat” online. Gather.com members are rewarded for their participation with Gather Points™, or even cash for top contributors. Gather.com is led by an all-star team of industry veterans with extensive experience in building highly successful, Internet-based companies and creating relevant content. The Gather.com site was named the winner of the Media/Portal category in the Massachusetts Innovation & Technology Exchange (MITX), 2005 annual awards – the largest awards competition in the country that recognizes achievements in the development and implementation of interactive technologies. Gather.com is a privately held, privately funded company headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts.

For more information, visit www.gather.com or call (617) 720-4000, x1010.

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