

2001

## Legacy 2001

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### Recommended Citation

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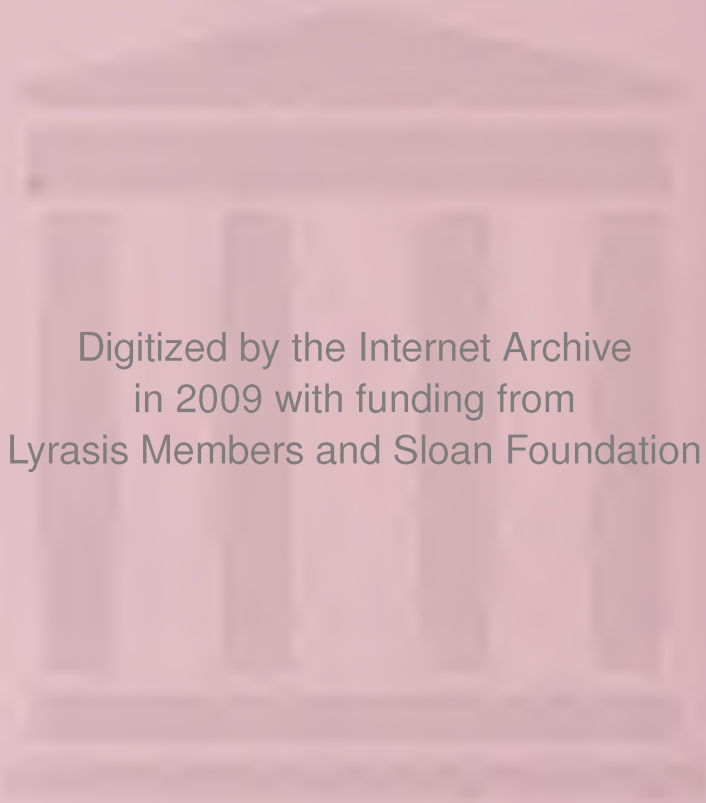
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**ledgements**

It has been a honor and pleasure assembling this year's Legacy. It never ceases to amaze me the amount of hidden talent we have among our students. The submissions have been a source of inspiration for me, and I know that the world be a better place because of these authors.

I would like to thank all those who contributed thier work. Your hearts have been spilled onto paper, which is not an easy task, and it has not gone unnoticed. I would also like to thank the judges; Dr. Haluska, Mr. and Mrs. David Warden, Ariel Childers, and Mrs. Pyke. Thank you especially, Mrs. Pyke, for continuing to support the Legacy by being its sponsor. The Legacy would not exist without you. You have been a pillar of strength during this year. May God bless you as you continue to be a model of Christ for your students.

To all that read this compilation, my aim is that you will gain as much as I did from it. I hope it wll be inspiring, uplifting, insightful, and enchanting. Enjoy the souls within.

• **Krystal Smith**  
**2001 Legacy Editor and Layout Artist**

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## **REFLECT THE SON**

The moon sits dignified and stable  
On the crisp, winter night.  
For some out in the dark,  
It is their only light.

We should help others along their way,  
By reflecting the Son as does the moon.  
For some are looking for the True Light  
Not realizing He is coming soon.

We can not give up,  
Our faith to others share.  
For through the way we act  
They will see how much God does care.

We are no different than the rest  
Unless we have the light from the Son  
Who is the One to strengthen us,  
So we can shine out and help other on.

Then when the wondrous day comes  
And everything that can be is done  
We will fade away as the moon  
And watch the glorious rise of the Son.

• Kristina Bowers

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E

Imagine the power to create life from nothing  
And a frame of mind that never wanes  
Imagine being so strong no one could hurt you  
But you felt a love that caused you pain

Imagine providing everything for someone  
And then watch him stab you in the back  
Imagine the pain of watching him suffer  
And being blamed for the faith he lacks

Imagine creating a perfect world  
A world before man fell  
Imagine watching this perfect world  
Knowing it will go to hell

Imagine you saw this world  
And wanted for it to be saved  
And you had the power to save them  
But they did not want your grace

I am glad that I'm not God  
Because I tend to act in haste  
I imagine what I'd do  
I'd probably say this world's a waste

• Rob York





## THE LORD

He offers his love with open hands;  
Freely gives to all from all lands,  
Stout with mighty power, he stands.

A weary world beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his heavenly walls,  
And as a loving Savior, he falls.

• David Heinrich

E — L — A — S — T — I — C — I — T — Y

I was a rubber band  
Plain, as rubber bands go  
I had no color  
According to other rubber bands  
And being plain  
I accepted it

I was a rubber band  
With many different uses  
I was strong  
For my life was centered  
On one part of life  
Be all the rubber band I can be!

I was a rubber band  
Who encountered twists  
And ripples  
While holding others together  
Others were important  
Even if they weren't concerned about me

I was a rubber band  
Who had been stretched  
To my limit  
And finally broke  
In tiredness, in dreary tones,  
And in helplessness- I was alone.

I was a rubber band  
Who discovered that I was still of some use  
With another broken band  
The greatest rubber band ever  
Who was broken for others like me  
But survived.

• Krystal Smith

# Untitled

In the midst of night I woke  
Roused by a voice that softly spoke  
Of angels and of peace

Its words encouraged my mortal pen  
To write these words  
To fight this sin  
I've battled since my birth

I used to wish to be someone  
Who people would admire  
Who all men would desire  
But now I wish for love

When greed once took another's bread  
And hope was killed by one word said  
Without the thought of kindness  
My conscience repaid justice  
So where to go from where I stand  
I feel somewhere Another's hand  
Outstretched to hold my own  
And guide me on to heaven

• Shelley M. Chamberlain

# silent **AGREEMENT**

In upper rooms of nestered New Jerusalem,  
windows look always into outer space  
---her heights transcending the atmosphere of earth.

S-l-o-w-l-y swirling;  
view ever new,  
man's galaxy glides again  
into virgin cosmos.

Ovation stars glint  
like tears of joy.

Converted eyes catch chromatic gases  
defying the darkness---a field of depth  
vast enough to absorb every echoing thought  
into silent agreement.

• Adam Hendron



**MAGIC**

---

I'm waiting, Lord.  
It hasn't happened yet.  
That magic that you promised?  
Well, I'm watching that hat  
And I haven't yet seen the rabbit.

When will it be my turn, Lord?  
Seems like everyone has played already-  
Some three, maybe four times.  
Yet I'm still standing in line waiting to sit at the table.  
And the line doesn't seem to be getting any shorter.

Lord, is it my fault?  
Have you told the joke already,  
and I just missed the punchline?  
Did the parade pass by  
while I was watching the crowd?

I'm waiting, Lord.  
It hasn't happened yet.  
That magic that you promised?  
Well, I'm still watching that hat  
and so far no rabbit.

Maybe your wand broke.

• Alexa Merickel

# DEVOTION

He memorizes two verses  
from his worn-down Bible  
everyday.

And he says the Lord's prayer  
before sun rise seven days  
a week.

On Saturday afternoon he  
crafts cards from construction paper  
saying inside:  
"Jesus is coming soon, keep it in mind."

But during the week he  
hides, he passes people  
and doesn't even say hi.

Devotion to me is more than  
daily devotions.

• David Heinrich

# •B•L•I•N•D••T•I•M•E•S•

In the blind times  
Of the early morn  
When you feel your heart  
Empty and fill  
At a slower pace,  
And thoughts of the  
Daily gauntlet-running  
And bruises incurred  
In the way cause  
Trembling and tears,  
If but for one moment lift  
Upwards a cry to the One  
Whose heart only fills  
With thoughts of you.

• Joseph Earl

# EMPTY PLACES

Going down life's long path  
Once anxious to depart  
You now are low, but remember,  
God can fill your empty heart.

When all seems lost  
And hope, it seems, is very hard to find,  
Just let God in, and every time,  
He'll fill your empty mind.

When you are of no help and there's  
No one on whom to depend  
God can lift you up  
So you will not have an empty hand

When you're about to give up  
And vision blurs on our only goal  
God is there to support you  
And He will fill your empty soul.

• Krystal Smith



**PRE**

•

**DISCOVERY**

I don't even know the color of his eyes.

It's funny, but when I'm with him,

I forget to look.

I can't recall his face on demand,

though I wish I could,

and every time I catch him looking my way, I gulp,

because I'd forgotten how good-looking he is.

I get so caught in his laugh that I miss his smile.

I'm so tangled in this careful hugs, I forget his arms.

I'm so intent of his gaze, I don't see his eyes.

Funny.

I can love him before I can describe him.

• Alysa Shepherd

# BANQUET : DATE

Like that last piece of cherry cheesecake at church potluck  
Or that used guitar with solid spruce to in L&M Music  
Or that silver Acura for five grand in the Auto Trader  
She was taken.

• Milo Hurley



# **BREAD OF TRUE LOVE**

Take two souls.  
Put them together in a bowl.

Whip in handfuls of impassioned violin music,  
add yeast of patience,  
a pinch of candle light,  
until you are left with extremely sticky dough.

Flour the dough with conflicts of interest.  
Knead it, pound it, knead it.  
Cover and place in a warm embrace to rise.

Grasp the flesh of dough.  
Flour with the busy schedule of the world.  
Knead it, pound it, knead it.

Bake in ardent heat until golden brown.  
Savor the resonating aroma.

Cool.  
Slice into thick pieces and devour.

• Dorothy Ann Porawski

**Un**

**titled**

Hold me like the water holds me  
Soak into my skin  
And when the breeze begins to cool me  
Make me warm again

Fill me with your laughter  
Tell me stories till I sleep  
And when I wake in morning  
You're the only dream I'll keep

**If I Go Over**

**There**

If I go over there  
He'll grab me and tickle and I'll laugh and feel happy  
For a minute  
So I go over  
And I'm right  
For a minute  
But then what?

Something green and cold  
Climbs in between  
My sternum and spine  
Only a laugh or touch or look  
Will warm it  
For a minute  
How can I keep it warm?

I know how attention whores are made.

• Emile Wilson

## What You See What You See

Your eyes paint pictures  
of sandbars between two slates of sea  
and the sky above that sea  
and me

Your eyes sketch stories  
of a peaceful, private place  
and the people in that place  
and my face

Your eyes do dances  
of me and you  
of me and you  
on waves of foamy blue

• Cassandra King

UN

TITLE

D

In a field of bitter herbs,  
I was standing.

The ground breathed and slowly spewed forth  
a bitter flower, full of loveliness.

A flower smaller than I but with grander things to say.  
Her cherry lips bit at me and her sunny eyes burned.

She hissed, "How can you let him go?"

I stammered, "It was not my choice."

The flowers words shot venom.

"It was a choice, but was it yours to make?

A seemly distant place isn't as far as you think.

All distance is emptied into a place called 'loneliness'

You don't have to linger there. Look at all he's offered you.

Love, friendship, a life long commitment. Even sunshine...

Distance or not, it is not a choice taken from you..."

I cried myself to the ground.

"What can I do?" I said as I inhaled my tears.

The flower's face melted into a million little sparrows and  
descended into light as she said,

"Love him..."

I woke up in a field of bitter herbs, shadowed by bitter tears.

• Melissa Mead

C H E R R I E S

You bought them  
for her  
I know  
but, I ate them-  
all-  
the heart shaped cherries  
whose blood  
red juice stained my  
chin.  
Will you love  
me now?

- Autumn Wurstle, First Place Poetry



..... **To A Girl** .....

**I'll Never Hold** ...

For the reason that one looks into a sky  
Of sunlit clouds in their cumulation,  
Although he has no wings in which to fly-  
For the reason that one looks out to a sea  
Of waves forever fading into dawn,  
Without a sail to steer at liberty-  
For the reason that one looks up to a tree  
To watch a squirrel chatter on a limb,  
Although he dare not climb, lest it flee-  
For the reason that one looks upon a doe  
Nurturing her freckled fawns in spring,  
Although one twitch of his will make them go-  
For such a reason, if I may be bold,  
I'd gaze upon the girl I cannot hold.

• Milo Hurley

**De** **ci** **sion**

I've made the decision to forget you.  
i fell in love with nothing  
there were moments when i knew  
i knew that you loved me  
you love me

but there's no way to prove it  
you were so careful  
not to give me anything concrete  
you gave me things that looked like bonds  
Secrets  
Dreams  
Kisses  
you sang to me  
showed my your piano-playing self  
talked about what our children would be like

but you never promised anything  
Never asked when you would see me again  
Never made plans with me  
i'm always spur of the moment with you  
you call and i come

and i hate it  
because for so long i never called  
and when i finally did  
you didn't come  
and i feel like trash  
and i feel stupid  
and used  
i'm trash because i was stupid enough to  
offer myself for your use  
and then talk myself into thinking you weren't using me

i still love you  
and i think you still love me  
but not enough to stop hurting me  
and that's not enough

• Emilie Wilson

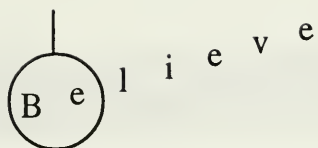
**Natural**

**In**

**stinct**

Soft, delicate, and pretty.  
She lay in a bed surrounded by green  
With no thorns on her frail body  
Her future certain  
The sun burst forth from a horizon  
Unknown to her  
Demanding every flower to open  
And bow to him  
Brilliant colors appeared as flowers gave in  
His command to their appeal  
All but one  
She refused to open herself  
To a demand  
At her refusal he beat on her  
Trying to scorch and destroy her  
But the day would not allow it  
The moon came and showed a gentle beauty  
Calling, soothing, and trying to win her appeal  
She opened and the other flowers  
Found that she alone  
Held a brilliance that no one else had  
And could only be obtained by  
Self-Worth, determination, and inner strength  
Not by force, but by discernment.

• Krystal Smith



If you believe you are defeated,  
before you have completed,  
then how can you succeed if  
you can't believe.

Believe

Succeed

Achieve

• Natalie Williamson

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I can't stop looking at the box you're in:  
Your coffin.  
Your wife wants to express her pain,  
She refrains.  
I could think about what the preacher said,  
But instead  
I look behind the clouds, the sun appears  
All my fears  
Vanish, and I know it's better this way  
I know today  
All your pain is finally gone  
I can move on

• Rob York

**My**

**Treasure**

A pitch fork  
Poking for potatoes  
Buried underneath  
Garden dirt.

My grandpa  
In his straw hat  
Holding the handle,  
Digging around the  
Edge of the potato patch

Me, with dirty knees  
Hovering over the  
Patch with big eyes  
And a burly gunny sack  
Ready to tag a hiding spud.

Grandpa never mistakes my hand  
For a potato.

• David Heinrich

R E A D

ME

Dust is on my cover  
Rarely opened  
Quickly shut  
Please read me

Dust is on my cover  
I'm masquerading worn  
Hiding the new  
Please read me

Dust is on my cover  
No newness shining  
Can you see my title?  
Please read me

Dust is on my cover  
My perfume a musty smell  
Do I make you cough?  
Please read me

Please read me  
It's all I ask  
I hold a treasure but  
Dust is on my cover

• M. Colburn

---

# Untitled

---

I watch her fingers  
Intricatel weave  
Invisible threads  
Of pattern

As her hair  
Flying like fire  
About her swaying form  
Tangles

Her feet  
Slip lightly over the earth  
In rhythm to a music  
Only audible in her mind

To some she is strange  
For her solitary dance  
Performed more out of whim than actual purpose

To me, she is beauty  
A dying ember of courage  
An interpretation of depth  
And all that I long to someday become

• Shelley M. Chamberlain



**D E C K O F C A R D S**

The cards in my hand shuffle,  
the sound fluttering the silence of the room.

Life is a game  
a challenge  
one that I must master to win.

Gain the points  
Find the ace  
Beat the opponent  
And never, never lose your poker face.

The game gets easier as I play,  
and my hands fly over the smooth surfaces.

Every move is planned  
every tactic thought out.

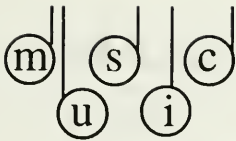
I have become a master.

The game is me  
I am the game

But as I look at my silent opponents, I realize

I have become Solitaire.

• Alysa Shepherd



## BOXES

When I was little  
Grandpa bought me pretty music boxes  
with twirling ballerinas in pink leotards  
dancing bears with tall top hats  
figurines who came alive  
when I chose to wind the shiny metal knob  
and set the gears in motion  
when I chose to make the life-songs play  
their light repetitions, repetitions  
to break through the silence  
for a time.

But no matter how far  
I turned those shiny knobs  
no matter how fast  
those ballerinas twirled  
those bears danced  
those gears turned  
at first,  
the dance and songs  
would always get slower  
and slower  
and  
slower  
and  
stop.

• Cassandra King, Honorable Mention

# SKIPPING

# CLASS

I accidentally skipped class-  
again.  
Oddly,  
I don't care  
except for  
a mild sadness  
that Mommy and Daddy  
will be disappointed.

There's also a fog of an idea that my grade is suffering.

But what's a mild, sad fog  
compared to harsh, scraping  
memory swords  
that make me crave unconsciousness just to escape them?

• Emilie Wilson

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## LESSONS

**LIFE**

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•

At birth we are born human,  
Just life put into place.  
With no choice on religion,  
Color, creed, or race.

While still held by our parents,  
They lock us in a name.  
As if throughout our lifetime  
We'll remain the same.

Then without an option  
They shove us off to school.  
Teaching us to obey  
Their every senseless rule.

Going on in teenage years  
It's then we want to be free  
But adults don't break our bonds  
Not seeing how it could be.

So seeing our pre-set path  
Just dripping in a sink.  
If adults really wanted us to achieve  
They'd leave us alone to think.

• Krystal Smith

# Dream

A dream can form from many a theme.  
Plan and seek and you'll reach your dream.

Dreams are driven. They move and glide.  
It is clear.  
Not a storm in sight.

So whenever someone tries to drive you to doubt.  
Tell them to get out.  
This is my ride.  
So move aside.

• Natalie Willamson

**Alas**

**Loss**

**for the**

Alone and aghast, I stand shamed.

The fearful waves

Lunge forward in attack,

Sand my only defense.

Remanded by screaming gulls,

And the thund'ring riptides.

The sun, unable to look

On my face any longer,

Enraged!

Casts itself into the sea.

Alas for the loss of my friend!

Winch now my soul and his together,

Destroy, thou heart, both

Lever and fulcrum you placed

Between the earth and he and I!

This distance more than I can bear.

• Joseph Earl

**Awake**

**ning**

Flickering shadow  
Across a floor of dead leaves:  
Yellow Butterfly!

• Milo Hurley, Honorable Mention

**D** **r** **i** **f** **t** — **ing**

A man upon a wind-tossed ocean,  
Lost in thought, no sense of motion.  
A red leaf floating down a stream;  
Gossamer wisp of a dream.

• Joseph Earl

**The**

**Spanish**

**Man**

Today we have a Spanish test.  
'Estar' and 'Ser' and all the rest,

To get an "A", that is our goal.  
So we can speak in Es-pan-ol.

But Sr. Parra, our pro-fes-or,  
A Caramba! Es un dolor.

The section which he calls "oral,"  
Is very hard. Es muy mal.

The test itself is not too short.  
Y mas temprano, we must abort!

But Rob and I, we try our best  
"Por"y "Para" are on this test.

We have prepared the best we can  
To face our foe: The Spanish Man.

• Kristin Stagg





**P**

**ROSE**

# Why I Love My Dad

Growing up on the farm, I was used to being surrounded by animals. Some were just animals we bought and sold like any other piece of property. But some of them I felt a bond with. I've always enjoyed having pets, and when you have a pet, you give a piece of your soul to the animal. The problem is the animal will die before you do, and when it dies, you lose that piece of your soul.

My family kept chickens on the farm that I grew up on. Most chickens are impossible to consider pets. Most of them don't have endearing traits, like the dog that licks your face when you come home from school, or the cat that rubs against your leg while you're watching TV. Most chickens are not the kind of animals people lose any sleep over.

But Jerry was different. I selected Jerry not long after his hatching to be my special chick. Why, I don't know. When I was 7 I must have been going through a paternal stage. I kept Jerry in a little plastic pail and carried him around. I fed him, I petted him, and I bonded with him. Unlike most chickens, I could feel something about Jerry that made him my pet.

There were a few roosters among our flock of chickens. Most of the chickens were hens, because we wanted eggs: that was the whole point of us having chickens in the first place. But a few roosters were necessary to see that eggs were being manufactured.

Roosters are territorial, and can be violent for no reason. I remember once reading a poem, probably written by some dirty hippie, downing the human race for being the only animal that abused its children. That dirty hippie never raised chickens.

This one particular rooster was especially violent. I can remember him always attacking the hens, the chicks...he probably would have attacked the dogs if he'd had any real chance of surviving. I can always remember getting mad at this rooster because I thought he was being mean to the hens by jumping on their backs...when I was older I realized what he was actually doing, but that's another story.

Anyway, I can remember one day, one Saturday afternoon, I believe, I ran outside to find Jerry. The rooster had found him first. In one of his violent fits, the rooster attacked Jerry, and

Jerry was mortally wounded. Not only had a piece of my young soul died, it had been violently murdered, and I would never be the same. Mom would have to hold me real close and told me that I would feel better tomorrow. But Mom was not there that afternoon. Dad was.

Dad stepped outside, probably just to throw out some garbage into our garden, where he saw me. I had Jerry's lifeless body in the pail. I was inconsolable. Dad asked what had gone on, and I told him that the evil rooster had killed my Jerry. Dad isn't much on sensitivity, isn't much on empathy, really isn't much on words in general. Dad is a man of action. Dad knew that there was one thing he could do that would make me feel better, much to the chagrin of dirty hippies everywhere.

While I'm beside the barn burying Jerry, I hear a shot. I looked across back at the house just in time to see Dad on the back porch, stepping back inside the house with one of the many guns in his collection. Not too far away, I see the rooster going through its death throes, leaping about uncontrollably, dying by the sword it had lived by.

I went over to where the rooster lay when he stopped moving. I looked at it for a moment, before running inside the house. There was Dad at the kitchen table, drinking water like always, reading the newspaper like nothing had happened. In the face of such wanton and callous violence I could only think of one thing to say:

"I love you, Dad."

• Rob York

## A Lesson in Grammer

Most of you are no doubt familiar with nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives and such. However, here are some less common things your English teachers may have neglected to tell you.

A noun, you know is “A word used to name a person, place, thing, quality, or action” (The American Heritage Dictionary). A proper noun therefore is a person, place, thing, quality, or action which is considered to be good and proper, such as church and kindness. An improper noun is a noun which is considered to be in itself improper, such as deception. Proper nouns may also include any person, place, or to particular people, but not others and improper nouns include any person, place, thing, quality, or action that is inappropriate in a particular situation, time, place, or to particular people. A good example of this is laughter. Although proper in many situations, it is improper during funerals. Proper nouns also include words signifying a person, place, thing, quality, or action which it is improper to use in a given situation. This is especially important for writers to understand. For example, if you are writing an historical novel set about one hundred fifty years ago, you will most likely want to avoid using the term “leg” as respectable people did not use that word at that time. It is much more acceptable to say “One of the table *limbs* is broken.”

Proper and improper verbs follow much the same rules as proper and improper nouns. Murder and slander are good examples of improper verbs.

A helping noun is what you use when you cannot think of the name of the person, place, thing, quality, or action that you need. “We went *over there* and they gave us the *things*. They were ruined. I have never before experienced such, *you know*.” They also include such words as *dodad*, *whatchamacallit*, and *do flotchymajigger*.

In addition to declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences, there are inflammatory sentences. It is important to know what they are in order to avoid making them. Inflammatory sentences are those intended to “arouse strong emotion, as passion or anger” (“inflammatory”, AHD)

An independent clause is a clause that “functions...as an independent unit,” whereas a subordinate, or dependent, clause functions as “a dependent unit” (Hodges Harbrace Handbook) That is, it is dependent on something else in order to make sense. Independent and dependent sentences work much the same way. A dependent sentence is a complete sentence but is basically meaningless on its own. “The dog ran.” is a good example. No one cares that the dog ran unless they know the rest of the story. An independent clause stands on its own and is meaningful even in the absence of the sentences surrounding it. It may be a long sentence, but it doesn’t have to be. It may in fact be quite short: “Words without thought never to heaven go” (Shakespeare)

To verbalize means to turn something into a verb, or to use a lot of verbs. For example, “She walked very quickly and extremely excitedly to the store. She carefully and deliberately made her selections before impatiently and hurriedly making her way to the check out.” This is not a good thing to do. (To *adverbalize* is therefore, an improper verb.) (Note to future English teachers: As a teacher, you will no doubt encounter students who are adverbialists. Their vocabulary will consist solely of verbs such as walk. Their characters will walk slowly, walk very slowly, walk very slowly and deliberately, but they would not dare stroll or amble. If you turn their “walked very slowly” into “strolled” they may wonder what has happened to their lovely adverbs. The technical term for what has happened to this is *verbatim*.)

- Tina Huffman, Honorable Mention

## **The Ladybug**

This is me-cute, small, generally unobtrusive. I dart through the days, chasing hours from place to place, from building to building, a colorful distraction in this busy universe. Every morning I race to conquer a thousand empty tasks. Maybe I'll stop someday on a warm windowsill to rest and watch the sun go down. And in the morning, they'll find my shell there, with dozens of lifeless others who finally stopped darting and chasing and racing to rest on the windowsill and watch the sun go down.

- Jolene Harrell

## **The Line She Didn't Read**

The telegram from Jimmy read, "war over stop headed for Dallas stop sorry stop." Elaine tossed it on her bed in disgust. Why did he even bother? At one time they had been in love, or so she thought. A future with Jimmy had seemed natural. Then came the war, but before that the argument. It had been heated, but silly. They hadn't spoken with each other since. They hadn't even corresponded during the war.

The smell of roast beef baking in the oven reminded her that dinner would soon be ready. She should help Mama with the preparations. There would be time later to cry over her failed relationship with Jimmy.

As Elaine entered the kitchen, the sounds of the 6:00 train reached her ears. Trains didn't stop for long in small Pennsylvania towns. She soon heard the whistle blow again signaling the train's departure. Setting the last plate on the table, she wondered if Jimmy was on that train.

Entering her room to freshen up before dinner, she glanced at the telegram on her bed. Picking it up, she read the last line. "meet 6:00 train if you love me stop will stay stop."

- Lori Astleford, Honorable Mention

# Captain Spectacular

Shawn struggled to put on the costume. It was a costume his mom had bought for him down at K-mart earlier that day. He begged, he pleaded, and he promised to do all his chores. He just had to have it. She caved in to his pleas, and bought him his own Captain Spectacular costume.

Captain Spectacular was Shawn's hero. The huge muscles, the gleaming smile, the never-say-die attitude, and, of course, the Photon Stun Cannon. Captain Spectacular shot the villain with it in every episode, and they always said "Augggggghhhh!" and fell to the ground unconscious. Captain Spectacular always saved the day.

Every hero needs a villain. Captain Spectacular had Dr. Diablo. Dr. Diablo always tried to trap Captain Spectacular, to get the hero out of the way so Dr. Diablo could take over the world. But Captain Spectacular always outsmarted him, rescued the Innocent Hostage, and shot Dr. Diablo. with the Photon Stun Cannon in the end. Every episode of Captain Spectacular ended with Dr. Diablo saying "Augggggghhhh!" and falling to the ground unconscious. He always lost, but Dr. Diablo was a good villain.

Shawn had his own villain in the next room. He had Dad. And Dad was making an Innocent Hostage out of mom. "You bought him a stupid costume? If you weren't so easy on that boy he wouldn't be watching that stupid show everyday! That's why his grades are so bad!" In between his mom's shrieks and cries, and Dad's swearing and threatening. Shawn could hear the sound of glass breaking, fists pounding on the table, and Dad hurting Mom. The villain won almost everyday in Shawn's house.

But today would be different. The other kids made fun of Shawn for loving Captain Spectacular, but they didn't understand. They didn't know how Captain Spectacular rescued Shawn every day, took him away from a life of angry Dads, and showed him a world where the good guys always won. Shawn was sure that the power of Captain Spectacular was real.

But Shawn sometimes wondered why Captain Spectacular hadn't rescued Shawn and his mom. He was more powerful than Dr. Diablo, so maybe Captain Spectacular was even more powerful



than Dad. But then it occurred to Shawn, Captain Spectacular had an alter ego. An alter ego who was just a normal guy. If that normal guy could be Captain Spectacular, then so could Shawn. First, he needed a suit. He had that now, so all he needed was a Photon Stun Cannon...

“Get in the kitchen and make dinner now!” Dad shouted. “I didn’t work all day keeping us out of poverty to come home to no supper! Get in that kitchen before I break your face!” Dad grabbed his fourth or fifth beer out of the refrigerator, began to chug it and continued yelling.

Suddenly, out leapt his son, wearing a Captain Spectacular costume, holding Dad’s 16-gauge shotgun. “Freeze, villian! Your reign of terror ends today!” He then pointed the gun at Dad and proclaimed, “Let the lady go or taste the Photon Stun Cannon!”

Had Dad not been drunk, he might have tried to reason with Shawn, to get him to put down the gun. But being drunk and used to getting his way through force, Dad took another course of action. “Give me that gun, you little brat, before I shove it down your throat.” Shawn shook, his lower lip quivered, and he began to lower the gun. But then he raised it again, because he was Captain Spectacular, and he was fearless.

“I siad put down the gun, you little...” before Dad could finish his threat, Shawn pulled the trigger. The recoil knocked Shawn onto his back, his ears ringing, and the wind knocked out of him. When Shawn looked up, Dad was lying on his back, not moving. Mom was still crouched in the corner, bruised and crying. She was in shock over what she had just seen and would not move.

Shawn looked at teh villain for a moment, then jumped up on the kitchen table and proudly exclaimed, “Captain Spectacular saves the day again!” He puffed out his chest and began singing the TV show’s theme music.

Then Shawn looked at Dad, lying on the floor. Something was wrong. Dr. Diablo never bled when he got shot with the Photon Stun Cannon.

• Rob York, FIRST PLACE PROSE





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