

Author Enablers

E-mail your inquiries about writing and publishing, or mail to: "Don't Quit Your Day Job" Productions, PMB #120, 236 West Portal Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94127.

Advice for aspiring writers

BY KATHI KAMEN GOLDMARK AND SAM BARRY

The Author Enablers are here to answer your questions about writing and publishing. Together, Kathi and Sam have more than 25 years of experience in book publishing. Kathi is an author, radio producer and former publicist; Sam is a marketing manager at a major publishing company and a freelance editor. They are also proud members of the Rock Bottom Remainers, the all-author rock band founded by Kathi in 1992.



And the winner is . . .

We are pleased to announce the winners of our contest seeking a first paragraph for the imaginary novel *When the Sparrow Cries Wolf*. Big thanks to our celebrity judges, authors Roy Blount Jr. and Jason Headley. Without them, none of this would have been possible. Well, not really. But we do thank them. We also want to thank the authors of all the worthy entries we received. Although the judges' decisions are final, you can feel free to blame us (especially Jason and Roy, who aren't here right now) if you disagree.

First prize is an autographed Rock Bottom Remainers T-shirt; second and third prizes are copies of Kathi's novel *And My Shoes Keep Walking Back to You*. Each runner-up gets the "lit-rock" CD *Stranger than Fiction*, and youth winners get *Rage Against the Mundane*, a CD of comedy music by Dr. Demento favorite Tony Goldmark.

The envelope, please...

First place winner: Paula Blackwell of Durham, North Carolina
Mr. Pipper Lawrence did not like children. Never had, I was told. I wondered, while watching him brush strains of his dirty blond hair from his expressionless face, if he ever was a child himself. But my Mom thought he was the answer to a life of missed chances and bad choices. I have yet to figure out which area I fell into for her. Whatever she considered me, one thing was clear as she put her suitcases in his car. I was not part of the solution.

Second place winner: Susanna Holstein of Sandyville, West Virginia

I did not intend to show up naked at my son's wedding. I had selected the perfect dress for the occasion, deep blue silk with a low-cut neckline that was both demure and sexy. I had planned my arrival perfectly. I knew precisely how I would look that day. I knew how I would walk down the aisle—slowly, swinging my hips just enough to make men notice their nicely rounded shape. Beneath the smooth silk, my breasts would bounce gently, showing off their fullness. My curvy legs would be displayed to full advantage in expensive stockings and stiletto heels. I would look coolly at my ex-husband sitting in the front pew on the right-hand side of the aisle with his new, young wife. I intended to make him pant. I had never forgotten the day he called me "sparrow-legs" and said I resembled a plucked chicken. He was going to rue the day he left me for that bony bleached-out bimbo. That old, graying wolf would see what he'd given up so quickly. That is what I planned and plotted for months before our son's wedding day. I never envisioned that I would walk down the aisle without a stitch of clothing on my body. But that was exactly what happened.

Third place winner: Gary Smith, New Orleans, Louisiana

Janie was so unpopular that she actually feared for her life. Although nearly a senior in high school, she had the physique of a child, and while this normally would make for quite an unintimidating—even unnoticeable—persona, it wasn't so with Janie. She was so renowned that threats were made to her almost daily. Compared with others in the small Appalachian community, she had perhaps the largest IQ in her school—perhaps in the entire town. As such, she analyzed everything with such an intense introspection that even if you weren't speaking to her—which you probably weren't—her analytical gaze was unsettling. But Janie was determined to break the curse of emotional torture she endured regularly—even if by the most ingenious yet perilous means conjured by someone of her intellect.

Honorable Mentions (in alphabetical order): Joe Barr of Kenosha, Wisconsin; Lee Bellavance of Portland, Maine; Brian Crawford of San Anselmo, California; Jan Linton of Ponchatoula, Louisiana; Susan Rosenthal of Oakland Parks, Florida; D.T. Whitworth of Nashville, Tennessee; and Suzanne Rorhus of Battle Creek, Michigan, who gets "exceptional first sentence" points for: *Personally, I preferred birds after they've been sautéed in garlic and oil, or roasted to a delicate perfection.*

We'd also like to call your attention to our "youth division," **Kiersten Newkirk and Rachel Lynn Sanders**, both of whom sent paragraphs revealing talent and wisdom beyond their years.

Next month we're back to our regular column, so please send all your questions about writing and publishing our way at AuthorEnabler@aol.com.