

*The 2006 Editors' Prize Contest Winners
Judged by Kay Murphy*

*Anne Babson
First Place*

Chorus: Hallelujah

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

—Revelation 19:6

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

—Revelation 11:15

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

—Revelation 19:16

The Bangor bouncers, the Trenton tree trimmers heard it.
The Wellfleet welders, the Boise bank clerks heard it.
The Prudhoe Paratroopers, the Ashland stage hands,
They threw the file in the air. The scissors clattered.

The Montpelier pet walkers, Birmingham hired hands,
The Tulsa Musclemen and the Hilo housewives,
The Eureka speakers and the Jackson Taxmen,
They opened the gate and let the horses run loose.

The Butte beauticians, Topeka tobacconists,
Redmond cryptographers, Tombstone stenographers,
St. Paul paleontologists, Fort Worth workers,
They ripped off the polyurethane gloves and squealed.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

The Reno receptionists, Hope interlopers,
Milwaukee turnkeys, Ann Arbor anthologists,

Florissant florists, Chicago chicken pluckers,
They hugged the guests goodbye. They sniffed back a few tears.

Toledo repomen, Lynchburg burger-flippers
Wheeling dealers, the Minot mink ranchers heard it.
Baton Rouge boatmen, Athens Mathematicians,
They fainted, opened eyes, wandered around blinking.

Biloxi boxers, Lexington lexicographers,
The Taos taco chefs and the Denver drivers,
The Omaha orthodontists, Terre Haute poets,
They discarded the shovel. They jumped in the lake.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

The Brooklyn crooks, Philadelphia deli clerks,
The Concord cartographers, Providence provosts,
The Hartford heart surgeons, the Annapolis pollsters,
They covered their mouths, and they forgave their mothers.

The Sioux Falls suit alterers, Daytona tailors,
The Charleston harlots, Chapel Hill chaplains heard it.
The Arlington Arms dealers, the Dover gophers,
They wailed, "to the Batmobile!" They spat on the floor.

They sped down Routes 1 and 66, down the
Prairie Parkway and Adventureland Drive, down old
Corn Avenue and Interstate 70, down
Kellogg Boulevard and South Lewis Avenue.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

Down Black Stockyard Road and University Street,
Lake Drive, New Jerusalem Curve, Clinton Lane,
Across Brewery Avenue and Colgate Court,
Across Gun Beach Road and up Plaza de Armas

Up the Dalton Highway and Wiamea Way,
Across Shasta Avenue and Siskiyou Road,
Microsoft Campus Drive and around Fremont Street
Down Ninth, Fourth and First Streets, up Hondo Seco Road

Across the Alameda de las Pulgas detour,
Up Appalachian Way and Temple Boulevard,
A right at Whiporwhill Lane, at Cedar Junction,
At New Heritage Court, at Toussaint Avenue,

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

A left at Crazy Horse Way and Cahaba Drive,
At Cherokee Street and Kissimmee Boulevard,
Along Sacajawea Curve and Dixie Lane.
They went straight at Reckoning and Righteousness Streets,

And at Cemetery Avenue they picked up
Hitchhikers. They drove down Lenappe and Navy Streets.
They kept going at Pembroke Road, at Madison,
And De Kalb, and Park, and Amsterdam Avenues,

And on Providence Road and Wilshire Boulevard,
And they arrived ready, if a bit out of breath,
For as it is written, we shall meet Him in Bellaire
At the unnamed race grounds they had only just constructed.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

And with them arrived every beauty queen, every
Miss in America, Miss Bowling Ball Tahoe,
Miss Calzone October, Miss Amish Cookie Dough,
Miss Greeting Card Week, Miss Power Tool Washington,
Miss Rose Parade, Miss Teenage Plastic Packaging,
Miss Sun Tan Oil Bikini, Miss Artichoke Bliss,
And they all wore their sashes and tiaras, but

In the place of bouquets, they all carried storm-proof
High-beam flashlights coordinated with their ball gowns.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

As they checked their batteries, a bright bevy of
White-clad pizza deliverymen descended
From the sky, bearing boxes with sectioned haloes.
A gaggle of white-clad Avon ladies alit,
Toting satchels overflowing with frankincense,
A truckload of white-clad fire fighters descended,
Brandishing double-edged hatchets between their teeth,
A keystone-ful of white-clad peace officers knocked,
Brandishing sharpened plowshares and Elvis rhinestones,
An administrative assistant's fantasy
Full of white-clad international couriers
Landed asking for signatures for Dead Sea Scrolls.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

While these descended, this doorbell-ringing army
Of the sky in white linen, they brought out the blond,
Longhaired emcee from Woodstock, not a day older
Than he was in 1969, and he yelled
For us one more time the truest of hippie truths,
"We must be in heaven, man! We must be in heaven!"

For surely this company was not from our states,
And the penitent American roadsters cheered.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

And then out of the smoke of the glass seen darkly,
He popped a wheelie to see us all face to face.
And then, out of His aerie in the highest height,
He floored it to reunite with His family.

And then keeping the appointment jotted in blood
He rumbled in at the right hour, on the right day.
And then out of the seventh seal broken open,
He thundered in rupturing what came before Him.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

Appearing on the crest of the Los Angeles
Smog on a white, chromed, souped-up Harley-Davidson,
He motorcrossed in, our Magnificent Stuntman!
Emblazoned on the back of his jacket in flame
Shone a fish with quarters in its mouth and the words
KING OF KINGS, for His coronation coronates,
And the words up his white leather chaps in crimson
LORD OF LORDS, for His house holds mansions within it,
And with a most holy revving he descended
Revelation-prophesied, and in front of the
Misses, all of them, He descended dropping
The kickstand in front of Miss Artichoke Bliss,
For only she kept fresh batteries for her lamp,
Now the only one lit, and at her *peau de soie*
High heels, He bowed his knee, a proposal gesture.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

She declared, stammering, losing her spokes model
Composure momentarily, "I would rather
Be baptized by you, sir. Why do you come to me?"
And The Wildest Harley Rider told her only,
"Suffer it to be so now." Miss Artichoke Bliss
Placed her own tiara on His full head of hair,
And a lone American Bald Eagle, piercing
The hush with its plaintive, endangered cry, swooped down,
Ready to taste the flesh of evil dictators
Barbequed like the rats it chases in the Rocks,
Circled to land on His superlative shoulder,

And a voice from above thundered the commandment,
"Revolution today, then Eden tomorrow,"
And The Great Harley Rider rose again. We knelt.
The Earth was silent but for His footsteps, crowned as
He was, this time not with thorns but with allegiance.

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

The age of tears, of neuroses, of breakage, of
Damage, of mismanagement, of exploiting, of
Sniveling, of groveling, of graft, of growling,
Of howling, of weeping, of creeping, of sleeping

He rules. We rule. He reigns. We reign. He rocks. We rock.

Is over forever, and now we are champions,
Now friends, now ticket holders, now frisked admitted,
Now shareholders, now valued customers, now heirs,
Now buckaroos, now Beatlemaniacs, now blessed,
Now barkeeps, now backstage groupies, now VIPs,
Now Ikettes, now Knicks City pretty dancers, now
Slick kickstand-kicking biker chicks. No longer the
Pock-marked, we are now rockers, now rockers, now rockers
Because He rules, we rule, He reigns, we reign, He rocks, we rock.
Because we must be in heaven, man! We must be in heaven!