**Introductions**

**Salvation**

I was saved from sin when I was going on thirteen. But not really saved. It happened like this. There was a big revival at my Auntie Reed's church. Every night for weeks there had been much preaching, singing, praying, and shouting, and some very hardened sinners had been brought to Christ, and the membership of the church had grown by leaps and bounds. Then just before the revival ended, they held a special meeting for children, "to bring the young lambs to the fold." My aunt spoke of it for days ahead. That night I was escorted to the front row and placed on the mourners' bench with all the other young sinners, who had not yet been brought to Jesus.

**The Proof**

My dad can be a jerk. He’s mostly selfish, arrogant, and, in some instances, narcissistic. He’s constantly pestering me about my school work. “To get into Kenyon means you have to sacrifice spending time with your friends and work your ass off” is one of his favorite lines.

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**The Philosopher**

He presented himself to us by throwing a rock on the floor; we gazed at him curiously. He threw the American flag on the floor; we all reacted with a little yelp. This first encounter with Mr. Kilbourn, freshman year at Mr. Kilbourn's activity period Philosophy Club, was not to be my last. At first, I did not know what to expect from this bizarre way of teaching.

**Even Homeowners need Heroes**

I am having a hard time adjusting to being a homeowner. I find myself doing things I used to laugh at my father for doing: raking every single leaf off the lawn, maniacally clipping every blade that escapes my lawn mower, picking up stray beer cans and McDonald's bags while shaking my head and muttering, ''Kids.''

**Conclusions**

**Salvation**

That night, for the first time in my life but one for I was a big boy twelve years old - I cried. I cried, in bed alone, and couldn't stop. I buried my head under the quilts, but my aunt heard me. She woke up and told my uncle I was crying because the Holy Ghost had come into my life, and because I had seen Jesus. But I was really crying because I couldn't bear to tell her that I had lied, that I had deceived everybody in the church, that I hadn't seen Jesus, and that now I didn't believe there was a Jesus anymore, since he didn't come to help me.

**The Proof**

My father may be a jerk. And it may be that I hear his insults more often than I do his I-love-you’s, but I am determined to prove him wrong. Even if, as I suspect, it makes him right all along.

**The Philosopher**

Now I am in his English IV class taking it all in. I have definitely made a statement that enables him to see my creativity and mental capacity. I realize now that maybe I too can be a wee bit extraordinary. Like the man performing the handstand, I am now able to turn upside down and see ideas from a different perspective. No longer do I get blank stares from Mr. Kilbourn, but I get looks of understanding and appreciation, for I have taken a stand.

**Even Homeowners Need Heroes**

I think of Mr. Harden, as I work in the yard or paint the house, wondering if we would laugh if we saw me now. Especially though, I think of him late at night, when a car drives by too fast on our quiet street. I thought of him late last night, as I flew out the front door after a careless speeder. In the beam of my flashlight, I saw a red Maverick receding from view. I thought I saw a thin dark head, hair a little longer on top, and dark rimmed glasses. I thought, ''Could it be...'' No, I won't believe it until I see those little squiggles for knees.