

The Quiet Victor

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Author's Note: In loving memory of my mother, Veronica Bernadette Jaramillo (1957-2024).

The proverb whispers, old and true:
Vincit qui se vincit.
A war is waged inside of you—
Who truly wins it?

Not he who shouts or draws a sword,
Or boasts of battles fought,
But he who master is his own word
And tames his raging thought.

The student, stung by lettered grade,
Who holds his anger back,
Whose calm request is humbly made,
Who stays upon the track.

The worker, seeing praise mislaid,
Who shuns the public fight,
But in a quiet, private way
Brings shadowed truth to light.

The voice that trembles, asking “more,”
Yet comes with proof in hand,
Who manages the nerves of war
And makes a worthy stand.

The spirit met with sharp critique
That does not break or bend,
But finds the lesson critics speak
And treats it as a friend.

This is the conqueror, defined—
The one who rules the self.
The strongest will you will ever find
Is not in power or wealth.

It is the soul that stills its fear,
That tempers its own fire.
He conquers who, it is rendered clear,
Controls his own desire.