The Barnacle

By A.E. Stallings

The barnacle is rather odd —
   It’s not related to the clam
   Or limpet. It’s an arthropod,
   Though one that doesn’t give a damn.

Cousin to the crab and shrimp,
   When larval, it can twitch and swim,
   And make decisions — tiny imp
   That flits according to its whim.

Once grown, with nothing more to prove
   It hunkers down, and will remain
   Stuck fast. And once it does not move,
   Has no more purpose for a brain.

Its one boast is, it will not budge,
   Cemented where it chanced to sink,
   Sclerotic, stubborn as a grudge.
   Settled, it does not need to think.

Source: *Poetry* (November 2015)