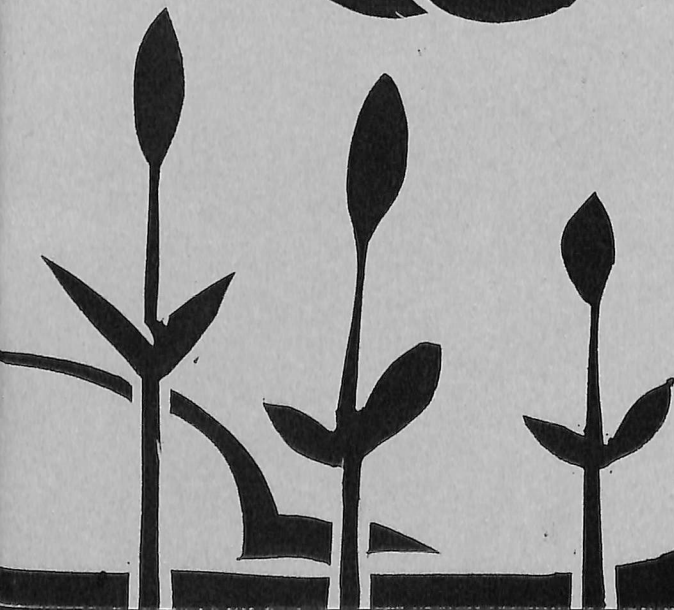


# SOWER



1956

# THE SOWER

## 1956



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Blair, Nebraska

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# THE 1956 SOWER

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## THE AWARDS

### **Langland Award**

#### **Prose**

The Red Glass Pin

#### **Poetry**

Cocytus

### **Hal Evans Cole Award for Creative Composition**

Korean Gentleman by *John D. Linahan*

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# DANISH SUMMER

Words by Poul Martin Møller

Music by Phillip A. Pagel

Roses

proudly grow in Dana's bowers, horses graze where sleep heroic dead; Bees distill the sweetness from the

flowers, Starlings scatter notes in silver showers, Children gather berries ripe and red

Friends afar in shining Danish summer Do you hail your comrade any more?

Here the tropic wind a tireless drummer, Beats against the sails, and this newcomer dreams of native fields

by Dana's shore. East or West, however far I wander, I will think of you in Danish summer

P.A. X

# Hope After Death

Margaret Schultz

The silence of the night was broken only by the sound of steps as the grief-stricken figure slowly made his way to the little country graveyard. His steps were heavy as was his heart, and his throat felt dry and tight. His eyes were dark and sorrowful, but they were not tearful. The tears had been spent in the many nights before. He passed through the gateway and on past several cold and sunken graves until he came to stand at the front of a grave that had not been there just a few days before. He knelt by the graveside and placed his hand on the mound of dirt where a beautiful face lay cold beneath. The face of his beloved Mary. He closed his eyes now and sat silently as the vision of Mary came before his eyes.

"There Don, all done. Isn't that just the cutest snowman there ever was?"

Her laughter bubbled from her and filled the cold air.

"I do hope Timmy will like it."

"Of course he will like it, Mary, don't you worry your pretty head about that."

With a playful laugh he grabbed the hand of his wife and they ran across the yard into their little home.

I guess we were both a little worried that Timmy wouldn't like it, weren't we? And a little afraid, too, that maybe Timmy wasn't the right little boy for us. Do you remember that first day at the orphanage? We were standing by the window watching the children playing.

"Don, look! There's the one I want. The little one under the tree playing by himself."

"But, Mary, he's so skinny and he doesn't look a bit like either one of us."

A look of disappointment came into your eyes, but you only said . . .

"Please, Don, couldn't we just talk to him anyway?"

So we did talk to him and you loved him as you would have loved a child of your own. Oh, Mary, if only you'd never seen this child you wouldn't be dead now. Why did it

have to happen this way? Why, God, why? She was everything to me, everything, and now I have nothing.

The tears came easily now, and he buried his head in his arms and wept bitterly.

He saw again that warm spring day. Mary was playing ball on the lawn with Timmy and he was sitting on the porch watching them. Timmy had wanted me to play too, but I didn't want to. I couldn't feel the same about him as you did and now I can never love him. Never, never!

A sob rose in his throat again but he fought to control it.

Your laughter bubbled from you more than ever as you gaily threw the ball back and forth. Then the ball was out of Timmy's hands and he ran into the street to get it. You screamed for him to come back and darted after him, but it happened too quickly. It was all over so fast, so terribly fast. There you lay, still at my feet, and I knew that you were gone forever. I heard Timmy cry, "Mommy, Mommy," but I brushed him aside and carried you away.

He arose then and stood again at the foot of the freshly dug grave, deep in sorrow for his beloved Mary, and in hatred for the boy who had caused her death.

A voice broke the stillness of the air.

"Daddy, Daddy!"

He turned and the child fell sobbing into his arms.

"Please don't make me go back to the orphanage again, Daddy, I want to stay with you and I want to be close to Mommy, too. She was the only Mommy I ever had even if it wasn't for very long, but I'm so glad God let me have her as long as He did."

He looked into the earnest face of the little boy and he realized with deep humility that he wasn't alone in his sorrow and never would be. Already the burden of sorrow he had borne felt lighter and he knew that with Timmy he could face each new day. He took the boy's hand in his own.

"Come, son, let's go home," and hand in hand, they silently retraced their steps away from the grave and back to the little home.

# Twilight of the Outside Life

Philip Pagel

Gloom.

A hundred thousand years of night drag by.

Light.

One star, and then a blaze.  
Crashing stones, crumbling mountains  
and the roar of rushing waters.

Pain.

Screams of women,  
low mournful sobs of men,  
innocent tears of children.

Heat.

Burning hard on sandstone cliffs,  
mountains erupting tons of foaming fuming liquid.

The earth shakes and quivers,  
pyramids of smoke billow towards heaven.  
Rivers rush and roar,  
and then, nothing.

Peace.

# Undecided Vacation

Mary Jo Andrews

Mr. Jones, a small man wearing a dark suit and a sensible tie, boarded the commuters' train, found a seat, and opened his paper. However, he did not read it. Instead he thought about how nice it was of Mr. Arnold to suggest that he take a month's vacation. Mr. J. P. Arnold had been Mr. Jones' employer for ten years.

Mr. Jones hadn't had a vacation for a long time; he really hadn't needed one. After working as a bookkeeper all day, it was relaxing just to get back to his little apartment and read a good book or play chess with Mr. Renegli, who lived across the hall. For variation, he sometimes went to a movie or a restaurant.

Now he was going on a vacation. He had enough money saved to go anywhere. But where? Mr. Jones couldn't think of any place he wanted to go.

Taking out the travel folders that Mr. Arnold had given him, he began glancing through them. Madrid, Paris, London, Hawaii—all of these were advertised as the most exciting, the most beautiful, and the most enjoyable. It was difficult to decide.

Laying the folders on his lap, Mr. Jones leaned back against the seat and watched the night get darker and darker. Out in the distance, he noticed something. There were the travel folders coming to life.

A Spanish senorita with a lace mantilla danced out. He could faintly hear the castanets keeping time; they sounded a little like the tapping of a foot.

Paris came to life with a gay, smoke-filled night club and Mr. Jones could even detect the faint odor of smoke.

In London, he could see the tall tramcars and the bobbies in blue directing traffic. He could hear the drone of the tramcar wheels and the shrill whistle of the bobbie's whistle as if he was right there.

The Hawaii folder was just opening up when Mr. Jones heard a voice.

"Wake up! Wake up! This is the end of the line!" The conductor was peering anxiously over his glasses at him.

"Thank you. I must have dozed off." Mr. Jones picked up the travel folders and put them into his inside pocket. Then he calmly got off the train and walked to the station whistling. It sounded a little like the Hawaiian song, "Aloha Oe."

# Reminiscences

Darol Valder

In August, when tides are low,  
with man and beast prostrate with heat  
looking with longing for the cool showers  
that will mark the approach of September, and autumn,  
I have seen the parched ground straining upward  
to lap at the few large drops flung at it in haughty disdain  
by the low, maddened, swirling black clouds  
sweeping across the farm from the northwest—  
while we watched their frightening forms from  
now the west window, now the south door, of the kitchen,  
or growing more bold, now from the sprinkled yard.  
Thus we grew up, inured to nature's violent moods.

Yet strange beyond all knowing are these moods.  
For why should the union of warm air and moist earth  
one day produce cumuli—mounting higher and higher,  
and higher, — rounded, billowing, towering columns of  
whiteness,  
white as no fuller on earth can white them,  
yet again conceive a spectral monster of whirling fury  
whose screaming, black-bordered form  
rends all that lies in its twisting path. Stark horror.

Still their tale is well told  
for this is the beginning—  
to stand before the mysterious in life and nature  
and acknowledge it "mystery."

# My Little Son

Catherine Mengers

My little son  
I gaze on you.  
My heart stands still;  
You hold its beating in your little hand.  
You are so helpless lying there.  
And when your finger curls around my own,  
I know how God must feel!

# Days of Shadow

Barbara Petersen

Nothingness on the horizon —  
Vast stretches of nothingness are all I see . . .  
Only bleak sky and dead white clouds.

Broken branches lie under the snow.  
Torn twigs and mouldered leaves  
Lie quiescent in dejected surrender.

Sighing wind aimlessly haunts  
Woods and fields and the heart's emptiness,  
Chanting a lament for something  
Lost and gone.

A lost cloud in a chill blue sky—  
A stranded soul amidst a throng of strangers—

Laughter and brightness are all around—  
Pretty girls and handsome  
Smiling faces  
Outside.

A broken strand  
Unwanted detachment  
Longing for something  
A thrill or a pleasure  
Something different  
Someone who wants me  
(That would be different)  
Only wishful thinking  
Inside.

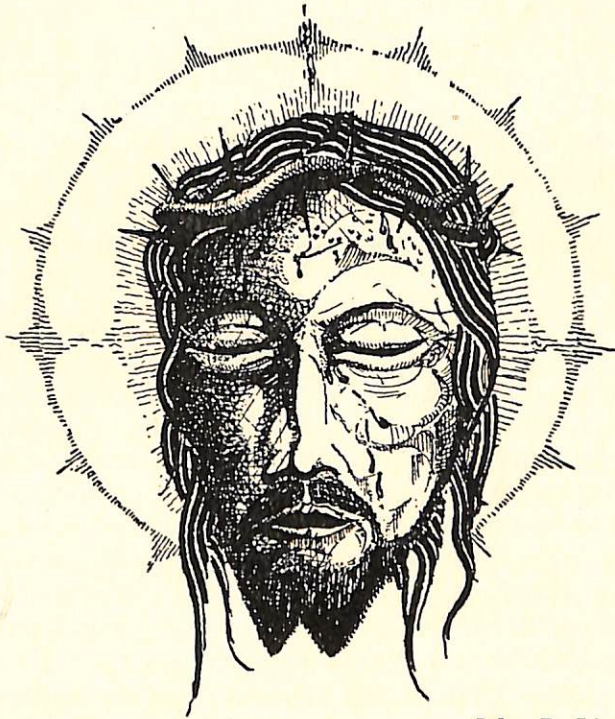
There are people all around  
People all around me  
Gay and happy laughing people

Why is it so silent here?  
I asked, but no one answered.  
Only the shuddering shadows came

Like chilly messengers of gloom.  
A hovering dimness wandered through  
The misty branches like thoughts unnumbered  
Forgotten thoughts and dim thoughts  
That will not be remembered.

Fading creatures glide down hidden chambers  
Hidden sullen chambers  
Full of brooding loneliness haunting  
The melancholy watches of the soul.

## Christ of Sorrows



—John D. Linahan

## Bathroom Antics

Joyce Arnold

The alarm went off at six, jangling noisily, and abruptly jolted me out of a quiet slumber. In a stupor I turned over, stilled the disturbance and burrowed still deeper under the covers. It was no use. I pulled back the covers and hung one leg listlessly over the side of the bed. I knew what I had to do but I prolonged it as long as possible. Soon my other leg followed the first and then I was in a sitting position. Groggily looking down at the inviting white covers, I began to teeter and was in dire danger of falling back upon them into utter unconsciousness. I tried to collect my numbed wits, however, and stepped out on to the cold floor. Gingerly, I made my way over to the dresser, pulled out my soap and towel and stumbled toward the bathroom.

The halls were grey and shadowy and I could see other dim figures making their way in the same direction with the same unsure, trudging step. It was much harder, during these dark winter mornings, to revive the senses enough to face the day ahead. I opened the door and was met by a blinding flash that nearly knocked me to the floor. Somehow I just can't seem to take 750 watts that early in the morning, particularly when they are coming from five different lights at once. I covered my eyes with my hands and groped around until I found what I thought was an empty sink. I put down my towel and soap and promptly stuck my hand into a pile of wet clothes someone had removed from the washing machine. Too tired to argue or have words with the moist heap of annoyance, I blindly moved on to the next sink and so on to the next and the next down the line only to find all of them in use. Trying to decide if this struggle was worth it all, I pondered on the unfairness of life. I knew, however, that it was another thing that had to be done so I leaned against a drying rack and awaited the first vacancy.

By this time I was almost fully awake and accustomed to the glaring lights. There were others, though, who were not. They seemed to be in the same condition I had been in only a few minutes before. The first one came straggling in the door with her hand over her eyes in Indian fashion. She appeared to be looking over the situation, but this, of course, was impossible because her eyes weren't open yet. When she did finally open them, her face fell as she saw there were no sinks available. Instead of invading the front line, she evidently thought another time would do as well and giving the impression of a revolving door, mechanically turned and walked out.

The next to enter, completely scorned convention. She came in bright-eyed and cheerful. She was fully dressed and the ruddy glow on her cheeks told the story of a recent excursion outside. This was the floor's early-bird-eager-beaver, who got up at five to practice piano. We all looked on her as sort of a heroine and respectfully stepped aside to allow her to pass. She walked over to the pile of wet clothes in the first sink and began hanging them up on the drying rack.

I watched her progress for awhile and then turned around to discover that there were two sinks now that were not being used. Feeling drunk with the richness of choice I went to a preferred one and commenced washing.

Finishing this first order of the day, I left the room of bright lights and zombie-like inhabitants. I wondered if ever there would come a time when we of the dorm wouldn't hate the thought of getting up on a dreary wintry morning for a 7:50 class—perhaps in the spring. It's a ray of hope.

# Lullaby

Darol Valder

The sun shines warmly in the August sky;  
the child plays within the cool shadow of the barn;  
it's the harvest season.

With a piece of disk-harrow, his make-believe threshing  
machine,  
the child piles the fine, sifted dirt in conical stacks.

But why is the moment chill this warm summer day?  
And whose is the shiny, black car?

Youth is a season; childhood an evening.

Are you afraid child?

Afraid of what? No, I am not afraid;  
yet sometimes at night, before sleep comes, I am afraid  
because I cannot understand.

I am but a child.

We are alone now, my daddy, my sisters, my brother, and I.  
Mother is sick.

She's in town in the hospital.

I saw her this morning, with my daddy.

She talked so strangely—like she couldn't catch her breath.

Outside the hospital it was bright and sunny.

Why did you cry, Daddy? Why did you cry?

It's the doctor's car, his new Ford. It has red wheels.

Mother wants a 1935 Ford, too, with red wheels;  
only she wants a tan one, and with four doors.

Are you going so soon, doctor?

What did you do to my daddy, doctor, that makes him cry?

Don't cry, Daddy; big men don't cry.

Hello, Mrs. Corvall. Why have you come?

You never visit at our place.

Are your eyes red from weeping? Why should you weep?

I'll pretend not to notice.

Do you understand that I do not understand?

Thank you for the basket you have brought us.

Why is the wind cold? It almost frightens me.

I will run to the house and find my daddy.

Daddy! Daddy! Where are you?

What is wrong? I don't like to see you crying.

Why do you cry, Daddy? Why do you cry?

# Korean Gentleman

John D. Linahan



# Whiskers

Barbara Petersen

Whiskers meandered around the house to the sun-warmed cement by the basement window. He stretched his furry feline body, then curled up into a tight little ball with his tiny chin resting on his paws. He always took his nap in the early afternoon, because he knew that the neighbor children wouldn't bother him then. It wasn't that Whiskers didn't like attention. He did when he was in the mood for it; but he didn't trust the neighbor children. He hadn't minded when they had petted him and babied him, but when they had started to carry him around by the tail he had called it quits.

When Aunt Agatha, who lived a celibate life, would come for her annual visit Whiskers would go A.W.O.L. Why must she gush over me? thought Whiskers, I'm not that charming.

The truth was that he was a very particular little kitten. He would accept attention or not, just as he chose. The family was accustomed to the comings and goings and likes and dislikes of the independent Whiskers.

Whiskers slept half the afternoon away; then he rose, stretched, yawned an enormous yawn, and flexed the little claws between his footpads. It was time to be going, because the neighbor kids would soon be coming home from school. He padded softly through the grass and around the house.

Presently he went into the house and into the living room. The family was having company, so there were quite a few people in the room. After awhile Whiskers discovered one man who made no overtures to him, so he sat and eyed him carefully. Whiskers had noticed that it was usually the women, rather than the men, who smothered him with excessive attention. He had no idea what "Oh you sweet little thing!" and "Isn't he a darling!" meant, but he was tired of hearing them.

Whiskers sat there, fascinated. He could tell that the man was watching him; yet he left him alone. This was quite different; Whiskers felt a growing admiration for him. Here was a person who respected his wish to make his own friends! Whiskers sat there for a while longer; then he jumped into the man's lap.

# The Red Glass Pin

Larry Jorgensen

"Aw shut up! You ain't nothin' like we are. We're havin' roast turkey so tender you won't have to use a knife to cut it. Then we're havin' mashed potatoes and real good gravy, 'sides that we get cranberries, corn, and real Italian wine. So there; you guys ain't gettin' nothin' compared to that."

As Alan turned to go up the narrow, dirty stairway one of his friends called, "Ya can't fool us, we know your ole man's a jailbird!"

Alan felt a wave of hot anger run through his body. Could he help it 'cause his pop got caught? If he was here now things would be different—he knew they would be.

"Just wait—he'll lick your dad any day," he called out as he stomped the snow from his feet and started up the dimly lit stairs.

He knew they wouldn't have any dinner like the one he said they would. In fact, his mother hadn't been home since yesterday morning and it was almost dark. As he sat down to do his homework he couldn't help but wonder where his mother was. He knew she had been drinking more and more ever since his dad had been sent to prison, but lately she was drunk all the time.

He looked out the window to see if he could spot her coming, but all he saw was a pure white quilt of flakes covering everything except the open sewer from which foul-smelling steam emerged to melt the snow. The clanging of the garbage cans as they were being emptied made a lonesome, weary music typical of the squalor in the surrounding tenements.

"Oh hell!" he thought, "what do I care if she never comes home. I don't miss her—I know where the money is."

Even though he said it aloud he couldn't convince himself, and a great lump began to rise in his throat.

"Come on you idiot, quit bawlin'. There's no sense in that. You know she took all the money, because you looked yesterday," he said as he got up to go into the bedroom to see if she had come in.

He looked on the unmade bed. "Nothin', nothin' at all. Oh God, why did I ever have to be born? Why couldn't it have been someone else? I wish I were dead." He cried as he sank to the bed.

There were several empty bottles in various parts of the room. Some of them weren't quite empty and their odor just added to the stench of the room. A pair of dirty nylons were hung on the closet door knob. It looked as if someone had forgotten to clean during the past year.

When he awoke a couple hours later it was dark and windy outside, but the snow kept falling steadily.

On the cluttered dresser was a picture of Alan. Pop had taken that picture a couple of years ago.

He remembered how proud he was of his new navy blue suit and shiny black shoes. Mom said the suit contrasted with his ash-blond hair and steel blue eyes. Even Alan had to admit he didn't look too bad. Those were the happy days when he always had lots of games and spending money. That was before Pop got caught.

Mom used to be a lot prettier, too. He remembered how Pop always used to whistle at her whenever she came in the door. Mom was really pretty. She used to have long blond hair and eyes just like Alan's. She wasn't real skinny either, but she wasn't real fat. She was just right—anyway, that's what Dad always said. He used to be so much fun. He played football with the guys—'course he couldn't tackle them and somehow they always managed to beat him by one touchdown.

Mom always said Alan looked just like his father with his dark complexion and oval face. His shoulders were broad, just like his dad's. Some day he would be just as big as his father, too, then they had better watch what they say about his Pop.

Alan turned to go into the grimy little kitchenette to try to scrape up something to eat for supper. There wasn't much left, so he had a couple of carrots and a sausage sandwich. Even this tastes good when you're hungry. After he finished he took the box containing the Christmas decorations into the living room. They hadn't been used for the two years Dad had been gone. He would soon be out—in less than three months now.

Alan was happy decorating the scrawny little tree he had borrowed from the guy on the corner lot. He was sure the man would never miss the little tree, and after all it was Christmas.

As Alan stepped back to survey his work he suddenly realized how much he was missing out on. He used to go to Sun-

day school but now Mom was always sleeping off a drunk so he never went.

He slipped into his threadbare coat and cap, and headed for the beer parlor where his mother usually went. Alan decided right then that she was going to spend Christmas Eve with him, and charged down the steps into the windy biting night.

Downtown he stopped long enough to buy a small ruby pin for his mother. They weren't really rubies, just colored glass, but Mom would never know.

As he neared the tavern he got a little excited. She just had to be there.

"Oh, God, things will be different, won't they?" In his heart Alan knew they would.

Suddenly there was a loud screeching of tires and blaring of a horn. Alan looked up in time to see two large, glaring headlights bearing down on him.

When the police arrived all they saw was the crumpled body of a youngster, old before his time, and in his hand was a broken pin made of red colored glass.

## Cocytus

Darol Valder

We cruise near the edge of infinity;  
there is a beginning and an ending  
but not for us.

The beginning has long been forgotten;  
the ending—  
much too far away.

Morning and evening—  
there is no difference;  
we are suspended here.

We have known a place where breezes blow softly,  
where gardens blossom—  
but that was long ago in childhood.

Here is the thin piping of terns  
flying over soiled, frozen, plains—  
grey, drear, endless.

Clouds drop their colorless refuse  
as they pass overhead.

# Baby's First Step

Jim Clemon

A thin, icy wind moaned about the eaves and cornices of the ancient laboratory building like the keening of a lost spirit. The night outside had the eerie, almost tangible quality of complete vacuity. It was almost as if the rambling old building was the only object in a world of inky night, and the restless wind was angry with it, trying to wear it away so that the emptiness of the night would be complete.

One light showed in the blank side of the building—the sterile, washed-out light of a battery of strong fluorescent lamps. In the lighted room, a medical student stood at a lab sink, washing the marks and stains of a night of chemical work from his hands. He turned with a tired sigh to a long, low table that stretched along one side of the laboratory. The top of the table was a jumbled litter of wires, gauges, switches, chemical apparatus and large glass tanks. Closer scrutiny revealed a definite pattern in the jumble—the wires all converged in the tanks, and the gauges and switches formed a complete series of electrical circuits. In each tank was an inanimate blob of protoplasm—embryos; rabbit embryos, pig embryos, chicken embryos, even the minute, delicately-formed embryo of a tiny field mouse. The largest tank, filled like the rest with a murky nutrient solution, held a partially developed human embryo about six inches long. The student bent over this tank and prodded the embryo with a glass stirring rod. Wires attached to its head and neck led out of the tank and were connected to similar wires attached to the other embryos and in turn to a control console at one end of the table.

After checking a clock on the wall, the student turned a knob on the control console and consulted a clip-board hanging by the table. Sketching in an extension of an upward-sloping graph on the clip-board, he threw a second and then a third switch on the panel and bent over the tanks again. As current flowed through the tanks, the nutrient solutions were slightly agitated and the embryos trembled and throbbed with electricity.

Satisfied with his work, the student shrugged on a top-coat and walked out of the room, closing the door behind him. He walked down one long corridor to the stairs and went down to the ground floor landing. He paused at the

door and lit a cigarette, then stepped out into the night.

He stood quietly, the wind whipping the cigarette smoke off into the blackness of the winter night. Above him, the stars wheeled by on their infinite course through eternity, seeming even farther away in the bottomless night.

Somewhere in the sleeping city a clock tolled three times. He tossed the cigaret into the wind and went back into the building.

He mounted the stairs to the fourth floor of the building and strode down the corridor. The metallic ring of his footsteps seemed the only sound in a dead universe. Nearing the laboratory, he paused momentarily—the door was slightly ajar and the laboratory was dark. He quickened his steps and pushed the door open.

In the dim half-light that filtered through the laboratory windows, he could see that the place was a shambles. Bits of glass and parts of the electrical system littered the floor. Tubes and beakers lay broken where they had been standing in their racks. Wall cabinets had been ripped down, their contents spilled in crazy confusion all over the floor. A locked door leading to an outer staircase had been smashed to kindling, and a ghastly stench pervaded the entire laboratory. All that remained in the embryo tanks were mingled shreds of flesh and bone. The human embryo tank had been smashed to bits, and the table around it was dry, where it logically should have been covered with a pool of the nutrient solution.

Baby had taken his first step . . .



—John D. Linahan

# The Picture

Phillip Pagel

The afternoon was warm and bright, but I couldn't think of anything except getting off that horrible bus. I bounced and jugged in the seat with every turn we made; not only that, but every time we turned a sharp corner, I braced myself trying not to press against the woman sitting next to me. She was an unusually large person, and when the bus turned a corner in the opposite direction, she came rolling over against me. She was humming bits of a tune, stopping frequently to look out the window at the pigs sunning themselves. The humming was an irritating happy sound that set my foot tapping nervously. I tried giving her a look of annoyance, but she only grinned and kept on humming.

"Like that?" "M'boy does, 'always like to hear you sing Ma,' that's what he used to say." She was waiting for an answer; I turned up the corner of my mouth hoping that would be enough.

She shifted her weight from the window to face me. "Nice day ain't it? Did ye ever see such fine looking pigs?—I like pigs, but my boy doesn't. Don't know why either because his pa always liked pigs; at least I think it was his pa." She giggled and began humming again.

"Ya shoulda seen him, he was big and handsome and he always said I didn't have much up here," she pointed to her head and kept on talking, "but you got a nice face, and that ain't all." She nudged me with her elbow and gave me a sly look. I moved closer to the outside of the seat.

"He wasn't only good looking, but he was smart too," she said. "He went to some big school out West. So does my boy—I mean so does my boy go to college." She grinned again and said, "You'd like my boy, he's real handsome like his pa, and smart too. Wanna see his picture?" I made no reply, but she opened her purse and took out a creased yellow snapshot.

"Now, see, ain't he good looking?"

I spoke for the first time. "Yes, he's very handsome." I held the picture for a moment staring at his young face, but somehow he looked so old.

"I knew you'd like him," she said admiring the picture again. "He's really a good boy too, always brought his ole ma a present on her birthday." She patted a very expensive looking pin on her dress. "He always used to bring me a basket of groceries every Saturday too, he hadda job in town so he was purty lucky. Dont know just where it was, but he musta got paid purty good huh?"

She leaned back in the seat and closed her eyes. "Yeah, he was always good to me, never talked bad to me or nothin." She raised up suddenly in the seat and said angrily, "They made him cry once, said he didn't have no pa." "But they sure didn't know much did they, mister?" She grinned and nudged me again.

"We're gettin close to the college now. I ride by here every week just to see where my boy's going to school." She looked admiringly at the yellow photograph in her hand. "Some-day I'm gonna stop in an see him, I really ain't supposed to though—some kinda rules they got about visitors."

"There it is," she cried, "there's my boy's college."

I looked out the window and there set back from the road I could see a group of large, grey buildings. There were men standing inside the gates and the windows were barred. I looked down at the picture she held tightly in her hand; her son, a good boy.

# Substitute's Chance

Arnette Thim

The Fairview cheering section was chanting "We want a basket; we want a basket." Whistles and cheers filled the gym as Terry Lake, Fairview's captain, dumped a basket, putting the Pirates ahead by 4 points.

Even though confidence and hopes soared over the Fairview crowd, a cloud of tension and nervousness had settled over the players' bench.

Jim Craig sat on the bench, thankful for once that he wasn't playing. He shuddered to think of what would happen if one of their men should foul. If Fairview beat Oakdale in this game they could go on to Sub-state. But it would be the last game of the season if they were defeated.

Jim glanced at the clock—4 minutes, 15 seconds left—Fairview 64—Oakdale 60. Those 4 points didn't mean much in a game like this, The score had teetered back and forth the whole game; and anything could happen in 4 minutes.

A ref's whistle quieted the frenzied crowds. Jim held his breath. "Foul on Number 21-black!" shouted the referee.

"Oh, no, what'll we do," muttered Jim. That was the fifth foul on Terry. As Terry slowly walked to the bench the players of both teams ran and congratulated him for his fine performance.

Jim glanced at Coach Allison. Coach remained perfectly still and looked stunned. Then he said, "OK Jim, go in for Terry and do your best."

Jim fumbled with the buttons on his sweat jacket. As he walked to the free-throw circle he heard voices ringing in his ears, "Do your best, Jim," "Come on, Jim, you can do it," "Rebound—let's win this game."

Stillness came over the gym as everyone held his breath. "One and one, boys," said the ref.

The opponent stood at the line, bounced the ball four times, aimed and tossed it toward the basket. The muscles in Jim's legs were taut, ready to spring for the rebound, but the ball went into the basket.

"OK, Jim, let's get the rebound," said Kelly, the center. Jim nodded and watched the ball arch and bounce off the rim. Jim leaped, but not quite high enough.

"Jump," signaled the referee. A continuous roar pounded in Jim's ears. The crowd was on edge and the tension was felt more than ever by the players.

Jim measured his opponent. "You can out jump him; now do it," thought Jim as the ref tossed up the ball. Jim went up in the air and tipped it to Kelly.

Kelly dribbled down the floor and passed to another Pirate. The ball was returned to Kelly. As Jim cut past Kelly, he received the ball and went up for a layup. But his opponent made a neat block and knocked the ball out of bounds. "Black out," shouted the ref.

Jim ran back into position Kelly threw the ball in. The Pirates passed the ball around. It was hard to get rid of the ball. Oakdale had a full press on and it was hard to get away from your man. Jim tossed the ball to Kelly. Kelly turned, jump, and shot. The ball rolled around and around on the rim and finally fell through the hoop.

"Two," yelled the ref toward the scorekeeper. Jim glanced at the clock. Fairview 66—Oakdale 61; 2 minutes—52 seconds left in the game.

Jim kept sort of a loose guard on his man. "Don't foul," he thought. Just then his man whizzed past, catching Jim off balance.

"I've got him," shouted Kelly.

Before Jim could check off on Kelly's man, he had made a hook shot.

66-63.

The butterflies in Jim's stomach had grown to birds. The blood rushed to his head and he thought sure he would burst. "Only 3 points—they'll beat us," thought Jim desperately.

"OK, Jim, let's settle down. You can do it," Coach Allison's voice carried across the floor.

Kelly was bringing the ball down the court. He passed off and went to his place.

1 minute—28 seconds left.

Jim dribbled and then bounced the ball to Kelly. Kelly faked and hooked a shot. It rolled around again and again but this time luck was with Oakdale.

Oakdale came down with the rebound. Jim raced down the floor. His man wasn't going to get away this time. The Pirates made it to the back court in time to stop Oakdale's fast break.

Oakdale passed the ball out to the front court. They kept the ball there for a few seconds, then snapped it into the center. Oakdale's center dribbled under the basket and with a neat underhand, tipped it in.

Fairview 66—Oakdale 65, 28 seconds left.

"Keep cool," thought Jim. He looped the ball into Kelly. Kelly, unable to get a shot away, tossed the ball to another Pirate.

20 seconds—19—18—17—16—

"Keep control of the ball," yelled Kelly. Just then Jim caught his man off balance and dashed for the basket. Instead of shooting he passed off to Kelly, who hooked one. The ball bounced off the rim and a scramble took place.

9—8—7—6—

A Pirate came up with the ball and passed to Jim who was open. Jim jumped and tipped the ball in.

3—2—1.

## Prelude

Darol Valder

The trees wait expectantly,  
their bows raised.  
The audience of brown, brown grasses  
nods to the last-minute whisperings.  
The spot focusses and fades;  
the house lights dim.  
There is a rustle of anticipation,  
then contented waiting.  
A baton is lifted and the crystal notes  
drift slowly downward.

# It's A Ball

Joan Allen

"6393?" asked the operator.

"Yes," I replied.

"I have a call for you from New York."

I was thrilled when a voice at the other end of the line said, "Hello, Joanie, how are you, dear?"

"Just fine, Mother," I answered as I vigorously blew my red nose and tried to hide my cough.

"Darling, we're having a ball! I'm calling from the Stork Club. Are you having lots of fun?"

"Sure, Mother, it's really great!" I said, trying not to look at the stacks of dirty dishes in the sink or at the floor which was in great need of mopping.

A week before, my parents had suddenly decided to pack up bag and baggage and take a little junket to New York. They had called me at school to let me know that they were leaving that night, and that I was to run the ranch and take care of my little sister, Sue.

All this sounded very reasonable when I heard Mother say it, but somehow when I told it to my would-have-been date he didn't think it was a very good excuse. He just flipped his hand and said, "Some other time," in that tone of voice that seems to add, "not if I can help it."

Breaking a date didn't prove to be half the difficult task that cooking dinner was. The potatoes were really my downfall. I looked in all the places where one would usually find such things, but they weren't there. They were hidden down in the fruit cellar. To get to this spider trap you must wind your way down slippery broken stairs, which are the favorite hiding place for homeless mice. I had achieved half the scary journey when my flashlight suddenly refused to work. Mice might be afraid of the light, but you should see how brave they are in the dark. I am just the opposite. I rushed down—fell down the remaining stairs.

I returned to the kitchen with three bruised potatoes, the remains of two rat's nests, one nameless bug, and several weird looking spiders.

Have you ever tried to peel a potato? Don't! I warn you. They taste better with the skins on, you get more vitamins,

and it is far less bloody. You can't peel them with a dull knife and with a sharp one all you can peel is yourself. Even all my efforts would not have been in vain if I hadn't burned these now marble-sized potatoes.

I thought, well I can always cover them with gravy and no one will know the difference. This would have been an excellent idea if I hadn't gotten mixed up in my recipe. The gravy turned into a jelly-like mass which couldn't cover one potato even if it could have been broken into pieces.

Keeping a large antiquated house clean is not very easy. By the time I got the last part done the first part was dirty again. I learned to go about my work carrying a broom in one hand, a towel over my shoulder, a dust cloth in my pocket, and a mop head on one shoe; this left one hand free to pick up, wash, put-under-the-rug, or do what ever else was necessary.

Now I am back at school and I have only one thing to say, "I've had a ball?"

## Song

Darol Valder

Spring  
the winter's snows have melted,  
the rivulets run down;  
the heart is free.  
Spring  
and summer waits in the wings.  
Waking blossoms scatter  
with wanton prolixity  
their esoteric, exotic fragrances.  
Awake  
dark soul that has slumbered.  
Come to the light and the warmth.  
See what has come with the  
spring.

# Unforgettable

Sue Jorgensen

Carol sat on her bed while the radio played out the strains of "Unforgettable, that's what you are." Her brown eyes were filled with tears. Her long blond hair was tied in a pony tail, showing her tear streaked face. All she could think of was Mark—his voice, his smile, and his kiss. Why did she have to be so silly? It had been a week since she had seen Mark and every day had been just like today.

Carol and her girl friend, Janice, had been at a school convention in Lincoln last weekend. The first person she noticed when she walked into the room was Mark—tall and handsome. His smile went all the way down to her toes. She had to wiggle them to cool them off.

"Hi girls, I'm Mark Lamson. What are your names?"

"Carol Palmer."

"Janice Hanson."

"Glad you came Carol and Janice. Here let me take your coats."

Mark showed them through his school and helped them get acquainted with some of the other kids.

That night Carol hardly slept a wink. She kept thinking about Mark's hand on her shoulder and his voice that made shivers run down her spine.

The next day was Saturday. Carol and Janice walked into the meeting and who should be leading it but Mark. He talked on segregation and the words seemed to flow out of him. After the meeting Carol went up to talk to him.

"Thank you so much, Mark. I certainly got a lot out of it."

"Well, you brought up some good points too. Say, how about a tour of the city this afternoon."

"Oh, I'd love to. It isn't very often I get to a big city."

"We'll leave right after dinner then."

Dinner seemed like an eternity to Carol but at last they were in his little '37 "Chevy" driving through the city. They visited the capital and drove through the university campus. They learned a lot about each other. Mark was planning on becoming a doctor. He wanted to specialize in cancer because his father had died of it two years before. Carol wanted to teach in the slums of a large city and help those underprivileged.

"How about dinner and a show tonight, Carol."

"Fine with me. That food we get at the school isn't the best."

Carol saw little of the show and heard less. Her mind seemed to keep wandering. She kept thinking tonight is the last. She would never see him again.

When he took her home they sat and talked again. Finally Carol just couldn't hold her feelings within herself any longer.

"This is crazy. We've known each other only 24 hours and it seems like I've known you for years. And now we'll never see each other again."

"It isn't silly. We just happened to hit it off right. I'll write to you, Carol."

He kissed her and she practically floated into the house.

Now it was a week later and still no letter. Carol knew down deep in her heart that there never would be one. Just then the telephone rang.

"Hello."

"Hello, Carol, this is Bob."

Bob—the cutest boy in school. He had the neatest car and clothes that looked just perfect on his athletic body.

"Hello, Carol, are you there? How about a movie tonight?"

"Sounds swell, Bob."

"Good, see you at 7:30 then."

Carol came home that night walking on air. She went to bed with the radio playing softly, "Unforgettable, that's what you are."

## The Bottle of Joy

Darol Valder

At heart man is eternally a boy and at the Christmas season the boy gains the ascendancy. But when the holiday boy forms a union with the boy in love his degree of exuberance is imaginable only to another boy similarly afflicted.

Intoxicated by the season, spurred on by the animation of being in love, he possesses incredible power of mind which he exhibits in verse, letters, notes, and ideas in gifts. The latter was my forte.

All this started some years ago when I became enamored of an intensely personable young lady in Jersey on the

East Coast. I was removed from her by the space of some five hundred miles at the time, and while the mind at that distance tends to complete any lacking detail of person, I remember my mind had a particularly easy time of it. Some attributes of woman fire a man more than others. I was fired.

It was the short, fleeting week before Christmas and this gift had to be the expression **parfait**. Not huge and bulky like a solid gold Cadillac, mind you, but a casual-appearing, in expensive taste sort of thing like a ring. But it wasn't the time for rings, so that was out. It so happens that by nature I'm of the flowers, candy, perfume, sort. For the present exigency I deleted candy. Flowers are delightful, but for the gift **le plus bon**, hardly suitable. Perfumes—**mais oui!** A scent can say anything one wishes—words are often so crude.

And it's pleasant to shop for perfumes! To describe the peculiar rapture of a man on such a venture is very difficult—but it must approach that of a knight astride Pegasus.

I happen to be of the singular opinion that there is an almost perfect perfume—a kind of absolute. But it's nice to tempt myself by sampling other fragrances nonetheless. So along the display counter I float; Faberge, D'Orsay, Corday; perhaps Caron . . . **mais non**, Patou! Thy **Joy** is yet Supreme! I clutch the precious vial, empty my pockets of cash, and in sweet delirium reel out into the street.

The bracing pre-Christmas air of the Jersey Coast and my depleted pocketbook have a sudden strangely sobering effect. Slowly I realize the girl no longer matches the gift. The climax of a gift-giving ceremony should be when the presented gift is opened. I had passed the climax.

To present it now would be a sacrilege; yet not to give it, in view of the effort and emotional energy expended, would be a more grievous error. I presented it.

Vive la femme!

#### **ABOUT THE AWARDS—**

The Langland Awards for outstanding selections in prose and poetry have been a feature of the **Sower** since 1948. The awards are given by Joseph Langland, associate professor of English at the University of Wyoming and former professor at Dana.

Poetry by Langland has appeared in **New Yorker**, **Saturday Review**, and is soon to appear in **The London Magazine** and **Poets of Today III**. He was the recipient of the Amy Lowell

travelling poetry award in 1955 and has spent the past year studying and writing in Italy.

Hal Evans Cole was killed in an auto tragedy in 1951. The award which bears his name is a memorial and is given to the outstanding creative composition in the arts.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHORS—**

Senior JIM CLEMON insists that his science-fiction story is the "product of a diseased imagination."

JOHN DANIEL PATRICK LINAHAN, art editor, is proud to have his ancestral roots in County Cork rather than Copenhagen. He has a clear record of nine top honors in nine consecutive art contests.

MRS. CATHERINE MENGERS is carrying on a fine family tradition. Her son Gunnar was editor of last year's **Sower**. She is enrolled as a special student.

ARNETTE THIM, a freshman from Graettinger, Iowa, has been active in W. A. A. and is an officer of the freshman class. She was Mrs. Bradman in the play, "Blithe Spirit."

MARGARET SCHULTZ has been in W. A. A., choir, band, and LSA, among other activities. She is from Flaxton, North Dakota, and is taking an elementary teaching course.

JOYCE ARNOLD, a freshman from Neenah, Wisconsin, has been active in W. A. A. and choir. Joyce is pre-med.

JOAN ALLEN, from Blair, won plaudits as Ruth in "Blithe Spirit." She has also been active in Pep Club and Young Republicans' Club.

SUSAN JORGENSEN, a Milltown, Wisconsin, freshman has been in choir, band, Pep Club, and Home ec club.

LARRY JORGENSEN is a freshman from Omaha. A dramatics major, Larry was the moving force behind the freshman talent show and Mayfest.

PHILLIP PAGEL wrote the music for "Danish Summer" for last year's "Hans Christian Anderson Festival"; he is a senior from Poy Sippi, Wisconsin; he was student director of "Blithe Spirit."

BARBARA PETERSEN, from Farmington, Minnesota, a **magna cum laude** senior, has been active on both the **Hermes** and **Sower** staff, as well as in the tour choir, W. A. A., a Young Republicans' Club. She is going into graduate work at the University of Minnesota.

MARY JO ANDREWS, **Sower** associate editor, is from Blair, and a freshman. Mary Jo has also won top honors for her art work this year.

**Sower** editor VALDER likes California.

