

How the Grinch Stole the Sharp Lab

Every Sharpie in the Sharp Lab liked science a lot
But the Grinch, who worked not far from the Sharp Lab,
did not.
The Grinch hated the Sharpies, the whole vast
enterprise!
Please don't ask for answers, no one quite knows just
why.

It could be that Phil once butchered his name
Or elbowed him during a basketball game.
Perhaps Phil's small talk gave him a head ache,
Or maybe it was Phil's famous dead fish hand shake.

Whatever the reason, over time grew his rage,
'gainst Phillip A. Sharp, our sexagenarian sage.

"Thirty years?!" scoffed the Grinch, "all they've done is
get lucky.
They're nothing but fools, led by a hick from Kentucky!
They'd be better off at a bar, drinking Budweiser and
Schlitz.
Real scientists do genetics, like that worm guy Bob
(Weinberg) Horvitz."

"So much P-32, it practically drips from their hands!
But still they squint at autorads, praying for bands!
Why, they once assayed transcription with the nuclei
intact!
And splicing, let's be real, its an EM artifact!
Then there's this new thing, a novel incoherence;
I'll believe in the tooth fairy before RNA interference."

"How to quiet them?" asked the Grinch, his face curled in
a smirk.
"Maybe I'll radiolabel their heads" (an idea thieved from
Arnie Berk).
No, killing them won't do, the Grinch mused in his mind.
They all breed like rabbits, there'll be more in no time!

But then the Grinch came up with a plan oh so clever
To put an end to the Sharp lab, once and forever.
"I'll kidnap a Sharpie, and then by taking his place
I'll ruin it from the inside, leaving Phil in disgrace.
But which one do I pick? These are boys, not real men
All mere foot soldiers, for that behemoth, Biogen."

"Tom Tuschl with his plaid socks pulled up knee-high?
Or Rich Carthew with his ego reaching up to the sky?

One of the indistinguishable Moores, Melissa or Claire?
Myles Brown would work, if I shaved off my hair.
James Manley, perhaps, of middle name Not So
Andy Fire would work, if I let myself go."

But then the Grinch realized that the person to be
Was not a Sharpie per se, but a friend of MIT.
Someone quite quite familiar, a face from days of yore;
So the Grinch found himself a costume, David Baltimore

Dressed up as a Laureate he snuck through the halls
Maneuvering 'round wires sticking out of walls
Past the ethidium that had pooled in the sink
And the water fountain with gray liquid no human should
drink.

His first stop was the cold room to swipe the fraction
collectors
And he nabbed, from Burtowski's desk, pocket protectors
He took Hristo's ES cells, he stole Alla's worms
He moved right past Chris's bench (it looked covered in
germs).

But then the Grinch heard a noise, some very small
squeeks,
And he turned around to find two programming geeks!
Chris Burge and Lee Lim had been asleep at their bay
From working all night, to avoid the light of day.

"Dr. Baltimore, why, why are you here in this place?"
Asked this army of two, stupefied looks on their face.

The Grinch--that sly devil--came up with a story:
"Why, the NIH sent me, to view your laboratory
They're giving Phil a prize, a plaque, a commendation!
For making his lab a model, of... organization."

The small lie fooled the two, and they went back to their
screens
Staring at sequences, looking for genes.

The Grinch returned to his duties, stealing all their stuff
"And now," sneered the Grinch, "it's time to get tough!"
For the ultimate blow, to make them finally shut up,
The last thing he took was everyone's coffee cup.

So the very next day the Grinch waited 'round to hear
The sounds of the Sharp Lab crying in its beer.

But he didn't hear sadness or even some woe
They had gathered around Phil, and these words he did
bestow:

"You see, my little Sharpies, science isn't done with your
hands
Brain power and reason is what success demands
Why, all I did was think for my PhD
Actually doing experiments just wasn't for me."

"But I see that times have changed and what I did, well,
you can't.
So I sharpened my best crayon and wrote us a new
grant.
All of our stuff will be back in a matter of weeks...
Hmmm, in the meantime, we'll all learn new techniques!
And to make you feel better, I'll buy each of you a
Porsche
Besides, the lab was dirty, and needed a good wash."

Welcome Sharpies, as we celebrate Phil's laurels
Gathering from 'round the world, or across the Charles.
Science you see, will always be here
Mixing hard work, with fun and good cheer.
The future seems boundless, all our dreams we'll fulfill
As long as our recommendations carry a signature from
Phil.

Postscript

What happened to the Grinch? I hear you ask, my dear
friend.
Well after stealing the Sharp lab his anger came to an
end.
But, where to go, such a creature of vile perversity?
...He got a tenured position at Harvard University.