

The Style Invitational

WEEK 215: SON OF A PITCH

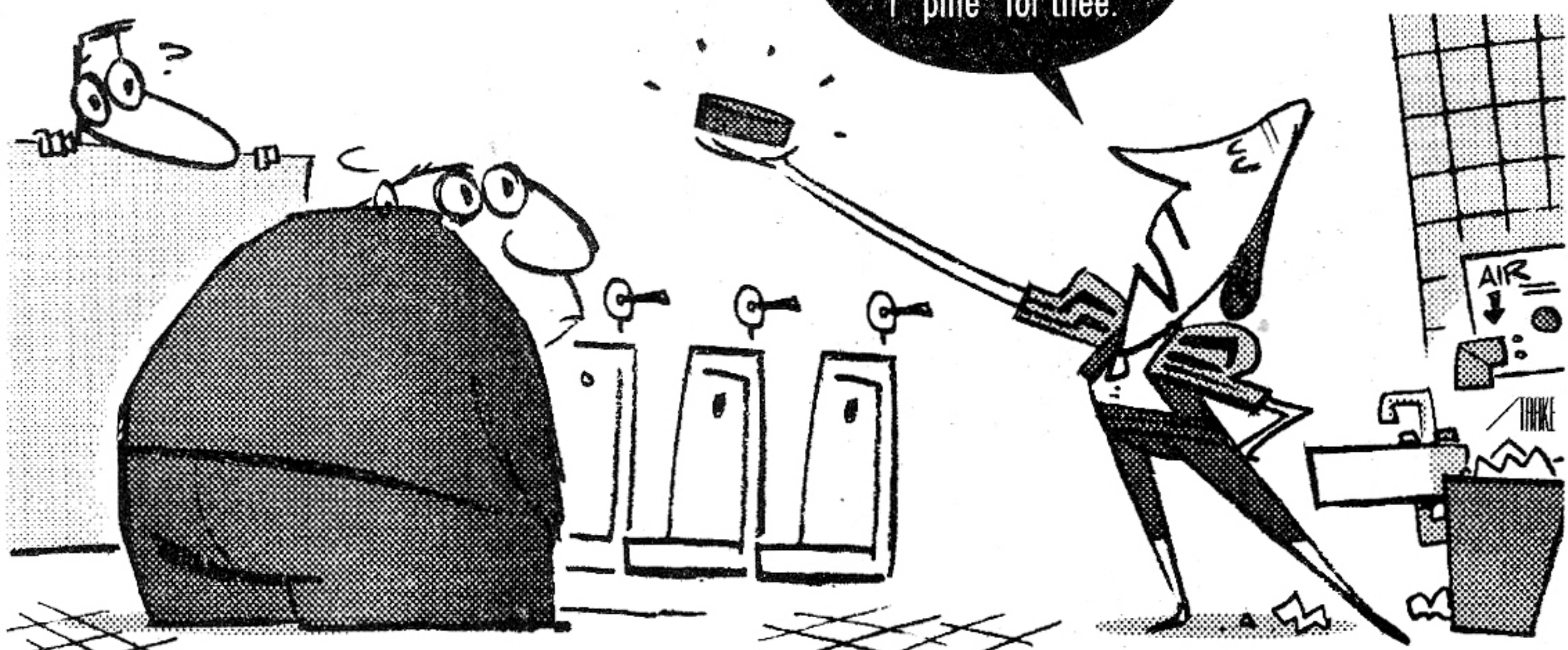
1 Blues.

The harp cuts right through the rock and roll. Soars above the guitars. Slides into notes blue enough to make a sax shout. Listen, in a poor-boy t-shirt, blue as indigo, textured as the best of riffs ...

Icy white.
O gentle orb,
so like the moon,
I "pine" for thee.

2 Memorable lines!

Shakespeare, Shaw, W.C. Fields — they all had them. So does this classic barn jacket ...



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This week's contest was suggested by Jennifer Hart of Arlington, who wins an iron-on Elvis tattoo. The above two paragraphs were taken verbatim from the Coldwater Creek catalogue, one of a number of highbrow, pseudo-literary mail order offerings filling our mailboxes with overheated non-descriptions of perfectly ordinary items. Item 1, above, is a blue T-shirt for \$34. Item 2 is a stone-washed denim jacket for \$98. Jennifer suggests that you write similar lavish blurbs in 50 words or fewer so some sucker will want to pay a lot of money for any of the following: **a wadded-up**

Kleenex, a slice of leftover pizza, a dead goldfish, a Q-Tip, a urinal deodorant cake or the head gasket from a 1977 Chevy Nova. First-prize winner gets a gigantic, lead-weighted antique lapel button, apparently manufactured behind the Iron Curtain, that reads as follows: "Why did Russia send two men in space? So one would not land in the United States" We are pretty certain this was an attempt at humor. We think it is a joke about commies defecting to the West. But we are not sure. Anyway, it is unseemly to question the meaning of art. We think it is worth about \$40.

Runners-up, as always, receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser's T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 215, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, May 5. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced three weeks from today. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. The Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads wishes to thank Jonathan Paul of Garrett Park for today's Ear No One Reads and acknowledge that the "And Last" entry came from Tom Witte of Gaithersburg. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 212,

in which we asked you to come up with stupid crimes. Several people suggested counterfeiting pennies, or blackmailing Ellen DeGeneres over her sexual orientation. Also, someone sent in a story from a suburban newspaper reporting that a man was recently arrested at the local Wal-Mart because he attempted to switch the price tags on two items to get a lower cost. He was caught at the checkout counter. He had allegedly removed a \$1,700 tag from a home computer and replaced it with a tag from an item costing \$10.95. Police said they searched him and found drugs.

- ◆ Seventh Runner-Up: **Rustling British cattle.** (Charlie Myers, Laurel)
- ◆ Sixth Runner-Up: **Leaping onto the ice to steal the Stanley Cup from the winning team.** (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)
- ◆ Fifth Runner-Up: **Stealing moon rocks and selling them as pieces of the Berlin Wall.** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)
- ◆ Fourth Runner-Up: **Lying about your address to get your kids into D.C. public schools.** (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)
- ◆ Third Runner-Up: **Altering the printed value on a Metro Farecard.** (Allan Grady, Alexandria)
- ◆ Second Runner-Up: **Successfully bailing out of a hijacked plane with hundreds of thousands dollars of ransom money and assuming a new identity, only to blow your cover years later by joking about it in a newspaper humor contest in the hopes of winning a T-shirt.** (Michael J. Hammer, Washington)
- ◆ First Runner-Up: **Stealing LoJack systems.** (Sarah Worcester, Bowie; John Kammer, Herndon)
- ◆ *And the winner of the lapel pin:*
Zamboni-by shootings. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Getting back at your ex-wife by having her wake up and find your severed head in bed next to her. (Sue Lin Chong, Washington)

Holding up a gun store with a knife. (Steven Liu, New Haven, Conn.)

Stealing Dan Quayle's intellectual property. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

An extortion attempt that begins: "Dear Morton, today I found a live slug in a box of your salt ..." (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Breaking into a clinic to get drugs ... the Betty Ford clinic. (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Standing up at the back of a crowded theater at Gallaudet University and signing "Fire!" (Sandra Hull, Arlington)

Doing a smash-and-grab at the National Aquarium. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Kidnapping yourself for a large ransom. After you raise the money and pay yourself off, turn yourself in for the reward and that way, you get paid twice. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Trying to sell Jimmy "The Weasel" Fratianno "house insurance," cause it's a nice place he's got here, it'd be a real shame if it were to burn down. But accidents do happen. Ooops, like this ashtray, see what I mean? (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Scalping tickets to a Sri Chinmoy concert. (Jessica Steinhice, Riverdale)

Jaywalking at the Indy 500. (William F. Waters, Washington)

Bribing Chicago Cubs players to throw games. (Joseph Romm, Washington)

Pilfering hand-grenade pins. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Stealing the formula for making Zima malt beverage. (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

Threatening the homeless that if they don't do your bidding you will "ruin them." (Bill Szymanski, Vienna)

Vandalizing a Jackson Pollock with spray paint. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Plagiarizing the Gettysburg Address. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Embezzling from the American Association of Certified Public Accountants. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Fishing without a license in the Anacostia. (Barry Blyveis, Columbia)

Traveling under a stolen Salman Rushdie passport. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Breaking and entering Al Capone's vault. (Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Selling pirated Milli Vanilli tapes. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)

◆ And Last:

Entering the Style Invitational under an obvious pseudonym. (W. Jefferson Clinton, Washington)

Next Week: **A Sin of the Times**