

The Style Invitational

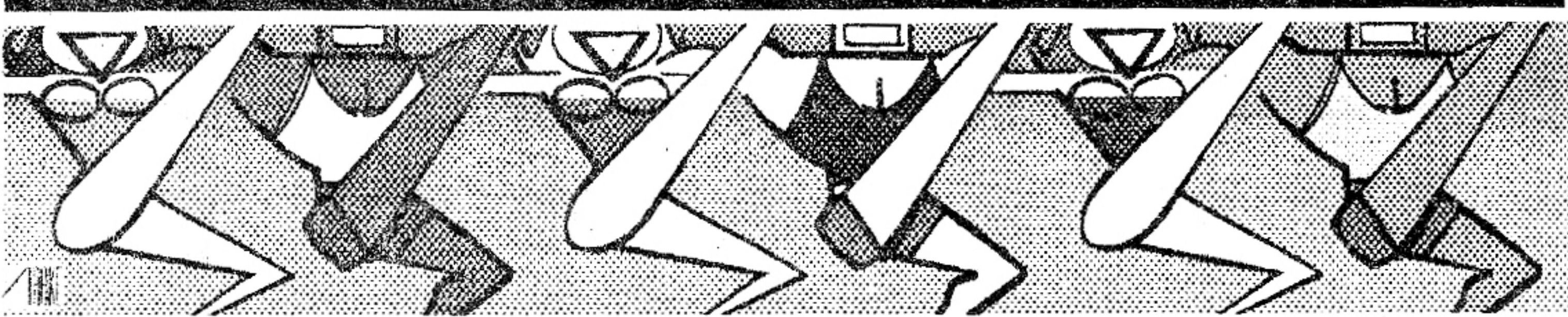
WEEK 277: LIFE IN THE BLURBS

The Wizard of Oz: A girl is transported into a surreal universe, and kills the first woman she sees. Teaming up with two cyborgs and a huge feral cat ...

A Tale of Two Cities: Headless corpses terrorize a city ...

Gone With the Wind: Sexy teen temptress marries a succession of older men, each of whom dies under mysterious circumstances ...

A Chorus Line: Thirteen young persons with excellent bodies cavort in leotards ...



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

This Week's Contest was suggested by Jeffrey Ehrlich of Arlington, who wins "What Bird Did That?" a guide to identifying windshield poop. Jeffrey suggests that you come up with a simple plot summary to help attract the modern audience to any classic work of fiction—book, play or movie. The blurb may emphasize whatever plot details you wish,

and may interpret them liberally, but it must be literally true and defensible. First-prize winner gets an antique velour rug celebrating the moon landing, in which Edwin Aldrin appears to be brandishing one of those wand-type metal detectors used by old men on Florida beaches in flip-flops and Bermuda shorts. This is worth \$30.

First runner-up gets the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser 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 277, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20071; fax them to 202-334-4312; or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@washpost.com. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Also, please do not append "attachments," which tend not to be read. Entries must be received on or before Monday, July 13. Important: Please include your postal 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. Today's Sign No One Heeds was written by Jean Sorensen of Herndon. Employees of The Washington Post and members of their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 274,

in which we asked you to pose as the comics editor of the New Yorker, and explain why these six inscrutable cartoons were funny.

◆ Second Runner-Up: (Cartoon E)—



"You're just in time.
We're having vegetarian chili tonight."

This is funny because the people in the cartoon are ludicrously nouveau riche, which is evidenced by the fact that the painting in the background is hung upside down! (John Kammer, Herndon)

◆ First Runner-Up: (Cartoon D)—

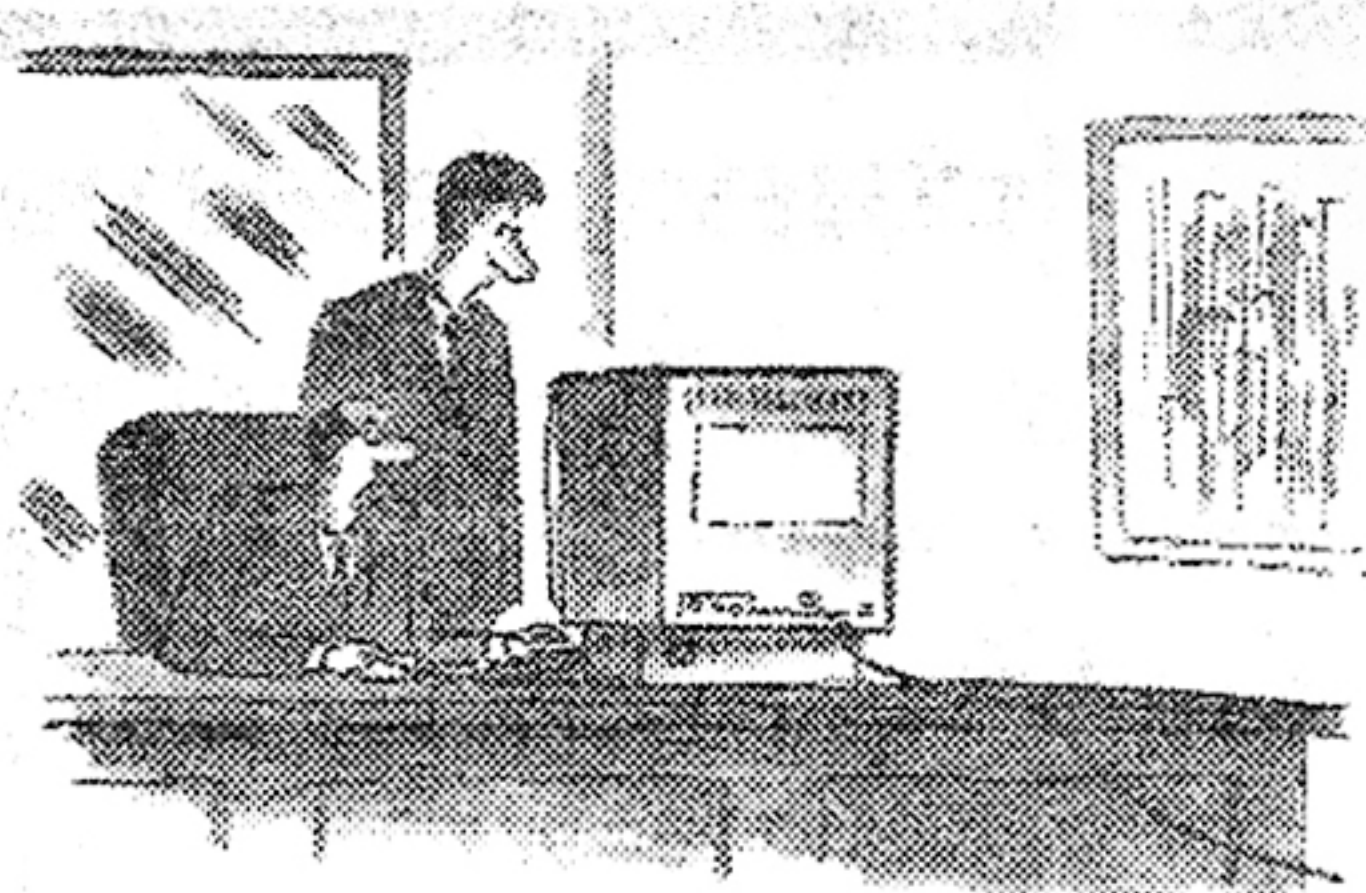


"Apparently, it has something to do with el Niño."

How could it be El Niño's fault that the woman is drinking red wine from a glass intended for white Bordeaux?? (Russ Beland, Springfield; Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

◆ And the winner of the Economic Report of the President, 1979-1990:

(Cartoon A) This is a beguiling visual pun. The computer technician patiently explains that any video display is composed of tiny dots, but the businessman does not grasp this concept because he is, as usual, pixilated. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)



"I'd just as soon it wasn't cut into those funny little pieces. If you don't mind."

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Cartoon A:

This is funny because we New Yorkers never say "if you don't mind." Quite frankly, we don't care if you do mind, because you are of no consequence. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)



"I'd just as soon it wasn't cut into those funny little pieces. If you don't mind."

Cartoon B:

This is amusing because the trees as drawn are not indigenous to the area. (John Kammer, Herndon)

New York has alternate side of the street parking. This sign is for alternative lifestyle side of the street parking. This is extremely clever. (Paul Kocak, Syracuse)



"Bear in mind we just bought string bikinis."

Cartoon C:

The reading lamp is so estranged from the chair, it tickles one's sense of aesthetics. As such, this is a wry comment on form and function. (Jennifer Hart, Arlington)



"Cell phones! Get your cell phones here! Cell phones!"

Here we have classic comic juxtaposition, namely the modern yuppie technology, represented by cell phones, with life in a trailer park, represented by the gunshot holes in the wall. (John Kammer, Herndon)

The irony is risible: Advertising cell phones by shouting is like advertising radio shows on TV. (Russ Beland, Springfield)

By offering "cell" phones, the lady is mockingly imploring her husband to call an exterminator to get rid of the bees that are all over the walls. The other "woman" is a queen. (David Genser, Arlington)

Cartoon D:

Ça ne fait rien de quoi il parle. On a blâmé El Niño pour autant de choses que l'invocation simple est devenu amusant. (Sarah Worcester, Bowie)



"Apparently, it has something to do with el Niño."

In an upscale restaurant, it would be much too gauche to bellow out something like, "Hey, did somebody sit on a duck?" so the pregnant pause that occurs after someone commits a social indiscretion must be addressed in a more polite manner. (John Kammer, Herndon)

This is a statement about appearances, sexuality and the amusing lengths to which declassé women will go to please men. In an effort to simulate cleavage, the woman has drawn a "V" on her chest with a magic marker! (Niels Hoven, Silver Spring)

Cartoon E:

"Vegetarian Chili" is SoHo Rhyiming Slang for "Milli Vanilli," a hilarious indictment of a hollowly pretentious occasion. (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

This one evidences a measure of verbal mischief. The man shows mild displeasure because he does not like to "meat" people at art galleries. (David Kleinbard, Silver Spring)



"You're just in time. We're having vegetarian chili tonight."

Cartoon F:

Okay, I admit it. This was a playful gibe at ourselves. Since the cartoon isn't funny, we made the caption an anagram for "Little Weak." (Russ Beland, Springfield)



"We'll take it."

A television in a room with an arched doorway? Please. (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

The joke is based on the fact that the television is not cable-ready. (Roy Ashley, Washington)

Next Week: There Once Was a Contest From Nantucket ...