DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Laugh racks: ScrabbleGrams finds

BY PAT MYERS

Week 1428 was the eighth installment of The Tile Invitational, in which we supply a list of sevenletter "racks" from the ScrabbleGrams syndicated word game, and ask you to make new words and phrases of five, six or seven letters. So many Losers looked at AAGHRSW and saw HAR SWAG, which of course is a pile of Loser Magnets, mugs, bags, disembodied clown heads, etc.

4th place:

ACELNPU > UNCLAP: To sheepishly stop applauding when you realize no one else is, then look around to see who the "idiot" was. (Eric Nelkin, Silver Spring)

3rd place:

AENPRRT > **REPANT:** What one should do immediately after succumbing to sins of the flesh especially if there's a sound at the door. (Deanna Busick, Nashville)

2nd place and the 'You're Invited' podcast coffee mug:

CEIPRST > CREPIT: Not fallen apart yet. "Oh, no, Grandma's very crepit. 'Arrhythmia' is just the name of her dance team." (Frank Osen, Pasadena, Calif.)

And the winner of the **Clowning Achievement:**

AAEPPRT > **PAP ART:** My OB/GYN is so skilled, she doesn't just make a "smear" . . . (Danielle Nowlin, Fairfax Station)

EEHMORT > MEH: Honorable mentions

AABCELN > ABC LANE: That's how you get to Sesame Street. (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

AABGINT > BANGIT: When you can't decide between "damnit" and "it," this'll do. (Jamie Martindale, Samut Prakan, Thailand)

AABGINT > ANTIBAG: Someone who'll carry 20 items out of the supermarket in his hands rather than paying the nickel. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn: Bill Dorner, Indianapolis; Tanja Cilia, Santa Venera,



ΕZ

EE

New contest for Week 1432: Turn tale and run with it

To sabotage giants, to truly defeat them, don't waste your time planting some magic legumes

just stir them (like I did) with salsa and eat them, then jet through the sky on the power of fumes.

This week's contest was inspired by a typically devilishly delightful new book by the poet, humorist and 174-time Style Invitational Loser Melissa Balmain. In "The Witch Demands a Retraction: Fairy Tale Reboots for Adults," published by Humorist Books, Melissa serves up a host of fresh, wry, often adults-only perspectives on your classic folk tales in such poems as "Pinocchio Runs for Office," "Not So Snow White" and, above, "Jack Admits There Was No Beanstalk." **This** week: Offer a new angle on a folk tale, nursery rhyme, children's song, etc., with a short poem, mini-story (under 100 words) or song parody.

Submit up to 25 entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1432 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, April 26; results appear May 16 in print, May 13 online.

Winner gets the Clowning Achievement, our new Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a copy of "The Witch Demands a Retraction," which Melissa will sign and send to you.

Other runners-up win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "No 'Bility" or "Punderachiever." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at *wapo.st/ InvRules*. The headline "Laugh Racks" is by Chris Doyle; Dave Prevar wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at *on.fb.me/invdev*; "like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at *bit.ly/inkofday*; and follow @StyleInvite on Twitter. The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly

line column discusses each new contest and set of

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

Malta

AAEGNPT > PANGATE: An allencompassing scandal engulfing an entire administration. (Sorry, I can't think of an example.) (Jeff Contompasis)

AAEGNPT > NAPGATE: A leaked photo of the president nodding off at his desk will be remembered as the biggest scandal of the Biden administration. (Jamie Martindale; Bill Dorner)

AAEGNPT > **NEATGAP:** The difference in tidiness between you and your significant other. "With my ex, the neatgap was a chasm lined with dirty socks." (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

AAEGPSS > **GPaSs:** The guy who insists that his phone knows better than you do how to get to your house. (Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

AAEGPSS > AGE PASS: What you give to Great-Aunt Erma with a sigh when she starts with the cutting comments. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf)

AAEPPRT > **PEATRAP:** Just like a piehole, but daintier. (Richard Franklin, Alexandria)

AAEPPRT > **PRE-TAPA:** The Big Mac you eat before going for small plates. (Jim Derby, Gettysburg, Pa.)

AALNSTY > ANTSY AL: Nervous Nellie's significant other. (Jeff Loren, Seattle)

AALNSTY > LA NASTY: You've heard of "Boston Strong"? Well . . . (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

AALNSTY > **SATANLY:** What you might answer if someone asked if you wanted those new Lil Nas X black and red sneakers. (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

AALNSTY> ANALYST: A professional who can explain why the first thing vou saw in this ScrabbleGram was ANAL STY (Kate Baughman, Arlington, a First Offender)

ABDGINW > WINBAG: Someone who can't stop talking about the election that was "stolen" from him. (Lawrence McGuire, Jesse Frankovich)

ACELNPU> UNCLE PA: Villainous character in "Hamlet of the Ozarks." (Mark Raffman, Reston)

ACLOOPR > LOCO APR: What the car dealership offered on its "Crazy Cinco de Mayo Sales Event!!" (Dave Silberstein, College Park)

ACLOOPR > POOL ARC: The

results. See this week's at **wapo.st/conv1432**. The "You're Invited" podcast: A dozen half-hour episodes, including dish from the Empress and the Czar, and tips from top Losers. See bit.ly/invite-podcast.

The Witch Demands a Retraction



HUMORIST BOOKS

This contest's inspiration and second prize all in one.

trajectory of your backyard investment from family novelty to neighborhood gathering spot to scum-green frog-breeding pond/ money pit. (Lawrence McGuire)

ADINSTT > **STANDIT:** The most difficult part of a job: If you can't, you quit. (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

AEEINTV > AIEE-TV: 24 hours of horror movies, bungee jumping and roller coasters. (Ken Gallant. Sequim, Wash.; Leif Picoult, Rockville)

AEGMNRT > GRAMNET: What your kids call Facebook. (Milo Sauer, Fairfax; Mark Raffman)

AENPRRT > ENTARP: What to do when "entomb" is not immediately feasible. (Deanna Busick)

AENPRRT > PERTNAR: Almost. "I'm pertnar through putting up with yer lip." (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

AENPRRT > **PRATNER:** Stan, to Ollie. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

AOPRSTW > WAP-O's: The hot new cereal endorsed by Cardi B & Megan Thee Stallion. (Jamie Martindale)

AOPRSTW > AWSPORT: Kindergarten soccer, or the Puppy Bowl. (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

BELMORT > BRO-MELT: A "grilled" cheese sandwich that's heated up in the "press" of an armpit. (Chris Damm, Charles Town, W.Va.)

CEOPRTT > PET ROT: An extremely fleeting novelty toy consisting of googly eyes pasted on a ball of garbage. (Duncan Stevens)

DGIOPRY > DIG-PRY: A nosy question that also manages to be an insult. "So what did you pay for that interesting, um - I guess that's a purse?" (Ellen Ryan, Rockville)

DGIOPRY > GOD-PRY: "So tell me: Have you been saved?" (Roy Ashley, Washington)

DGIOPRY > **PODIGY:** An amazing remote-schooled student who actually learned something during the pandemic. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

DGIOPRY > GOD-RIP: You know how when you were a kid they told you that thunder is the sound of the Lord bowling? Well, it's not. (Danielle Nowlin)

DGLNOUY > **UNDOGLY:** Frustratingly untrainable, like a cat. (Adie Peña, Makati, Philippines)

EEHMORT > METR'OH! Abbreviation for "I knew I should have just driven to work today!" (Mark Raffman)

EEILNNT > ENLINT: What my dryer does to my socks. (George Thompson, Springfield)

EFHIRSY > **HEIRSY:** A belief that appalls your parents. "George Jr. was written out of the will after admitting the heirsy of voting for him in 2016 AND 2020." (Richard Franklin)

ILMNOOT > LOIN-TO: A love shack. (Tom Witte)

ILMNOOT > MILTOON: "Paradise Lost," the Classics Illustrated version. (Jim Derby: Rob Huffman. Fredericksburg)

And Last: ACLOOPR > CORPOLA: Useless items emblazoned with advertising. "She calls them 'limited-edition Bob Staake artwork,' but aren't those magnets really just cheap corpola with the Washington Post logo on them?" (Jon Gearhart)

And Even Laster, by too many people to credit: ACELNPU > **PUNACLE:** What Invite contestants strive to reach.

Still running – deadline Monday night, April 19: Our contest about what will change postpandemic. See wapo.st/ invite1431.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) Get the ball rolling with plans for a

BY MADALYN ASLAN

family reunion. Arrange a Zoom call with relatives to brainstorm about the arrangements. You yearn to spend more time with people who know you like a book.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) Take your time reading the Sunday paper and watching news shows. Go for a walk on a path you don't usually follow. Chat with neighbors with whom you have more in common than you think.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You made a professional breakthrough for which you didn't receive credit. Reward yourself. Buy something a bit indulgent for yourself that is not too pricey. Ask a friend for suggestions and shop online together.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) Use your winning smile to get the attention of someone you admire. Stand by a decision you made even if it goes against what others think. Turn on the charm, and others will see things your way.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Your vibrant personality often belies your need for peace and quietude. Claim a bit of time today to meditate or ponder a problem that's been playing out in your mind. An old memory brings a smile.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Your desire to make the world a better place will guide you today. When you think about what is best for everyone involved, you perform a noble service to your community. A friendship arises from common goals.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Enthusiasm for your work could cause you to lose track of time. Family and friends will alert you

when you need to come up for air. Delegate responsibilities and you'll get things accomplished and smell the roses.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Try your best to explain a complex set of ideas in simple terms. You'll arouse curiosity and cultivate the desire to learn more. Move around more to escape overthinking things.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) Take the time to really listen to someone who wants your opinion. You might not think you have a solution, but something you say could resonate and provide someone with exactly what's needed.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Look for people who make life

easier A home-improvement whiz

or a sharp assistant will take excess burdens off your shoulders. It's a good day to call on someone you consider to be your best friend.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Organize your space so you spend less time searching for items you need at a moment's notice. Don't be stubborn. Let people you love offer advice and help you get started. Exercise outdoors and you'll feel fabulous.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Let your imagination run wild today, and you could stumble upon the solution to a long-term problem. When your creative juices begin to flow, magic happens. Share a funny story with a child or grandchild. Giggle freely.

Answers to last week's puzzle.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY | April 18: Original, insistent and inventive, your approach to life is filled with constant activity.

impression on those who matter. Financial rewards will provide security and allay doubts and fears. If single, don't

be afraid to make the first move. If attached, discover more activities you love doing together. Virgo pampers you.

This year, you will be successful through sheer force of will. You reaffirm your confidence and will make an