



Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1329: Shakespeare + Thee: A tailgater contest

Plus readers' jokes for the White House Correspondents' Association dinner



One of two new Loser Magnets for honorable mentions, continuing the annual tradition we began in 2004. Bruce Carlson's "Too-Weak Notice" is from an earlier contest. The Empress will start sending these out in a few weeks. (Slogan by Bruce Carlson; illustrated and designed by Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By **Pat Myers**

April 25 at 10:13 AM

(Click [here](#) to [skip down](#) to the winning jokes for the White House Correspondents' Association dinner)

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears! (*William Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar"*)

My Bluetooth headphones haven't worked for years. (*Duncan Stevens*)

My bounty is as boundless as the sea. (*"Romeo and Juliet"*)

That's all the storm relief you'll get from me. — D.J.T.,
Washington (*Duncan Stevens*)

Who will believe my verse, in time to come, (*Sonnet 17*)

Was used for something so completely dumb? (*Brian Allgar, Style Invitational Week 970*)

They're called tailgaters: You choose a line from a famous poem, then write a second, rhyming line yourself. The Empress ran a tailgater



Most Read Entertainment

contest back in Week 970 (2012) as well as one in Week 1171 (2016) in which the first line was from a song. Serious Recidivist Loser Duncan Stevens suggests a Bardic spinoff. **This week: Select any line from a work by Shakespeare (poetry or prose) and pair it with your own line to create a humorous rhyming couplet**, as in the examples above. Your line may be either the first or second line in the tailgater (if it runs first, should we call it a hooder?). You may add or change punctuation at the end of a line.

OpenSourceShakespeare.org has Will's whole output. Please include the name of the work that contains the line you're using.

Submit entries at wapo.st/enter-invite-1329 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the [Lose Cannon](#), our Style Invitational trophy.

Second place receives a pack of [Shakespearean Insult Gum](#) — a set of seven eensy-weensy book-shaped boxes, each containing two mini-gumballs and a different Shakespearean insult printed inside each box ("Bless me, what a fry of fornication is at the door," from "King Henry VIII"). Donated by Loser Nan Reiner in approximately 1612.

Other runners-up win our "[You Gotta Play to Lose](#)" Loser Mug or our "[Whole Fools](#)" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "[We've Seen Better](#)" or "[IDiot Card](#)," or quite possibly one of the new models. First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink).

Deadline is Monday night, May 6; results published May 26 in print, May 23 online. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "Har Pressed" was submitted by both Kevin Dopart and William Kennard; Chris Doyle wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" the Ink of the Day at bit.ly/inkofday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

The Style Conversational The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter this week's contest, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.






[And from The Style Invitational four weeks ago . . .](#)

HAR PRESSED: JOKES FOR THE WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS' DINNER

In [Week 1325](#) we asked for jokes that might have been told at the April 27 White House Correspondents' Association dinner, had there been the usual comic roasting the president and guests. (President Trump refused to attend yet again.) The Empress got a big pile of one-liners — or whole-paragraphers — for this contest, but . . . let's say comedy is hard.

4th place:

So President Trump says he considered nominating Ivanka to head the World Bank, said she's "[very good with numbers](#)." I don't know about that, but I know her dad is really good at division. (Lawrence McGuire, Waldorf, Md.)

- 1 Taylor Swift finally released new music after a much-hyped countdown. Here's everything to know. 
- 2 What it's like to lose to unstoppable 'Jeopardy!' champion James Holzhauer 
- 3 **Perspective** Her 'God Bless America' is a classic. Her two racist songs, a scandal. Should Kate Smith be banned from the ballpark? 
- 4 What to expect in 'Game of Thrones' Season 8, Episode 3 
- 5 **Review** For years, one reporter investigated allegations against Bill Cosby — even when no one was listening 

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And then there were 20: Biden (finally) enters the race

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Our other 2019-20 magnet. The Empress will start sending these when the current supply runs out sometime in the next few weeks. They're currently being printed. (Magnet designed and drawn by Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

3rd place:

You know, I can't say people have become overly sensitive to everything that people used to find funny. I can't say it because I know someone will be offended. (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

2nd place and the book "Collected Speeches of Spiro Agnew":

The president couldn't be here tonight because he's hard at work in the Oval Office — there are a *lot* of Democratic candidates who need childish nicknames. (Howard Walderman, Columbia, Md.)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:



This week's apt second prize: 14 mini-gumballs, 7 insults.

One thing you have to say about the president: **He's really an excellent golfer.** That's why so many people call him "Putts." (Jesse Frankovich, Grand Ledge, Mich.)

Mic droppings: Honorable

mentions

I heard **Joe Biden was so upset** when he heard allegations that Senator Klobuchar [abused her staffers](#), he flew straight to Minnesota and gave them each a big, long hug. (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

David Bernhardt and Andy Wheeler, our new Interior and EPA chiefs, can't be with us tonight — they didn't want to miss the first day of drilling season at Yellowstone. (Allen Haywood, Washington, a First Offender)

We invited the CEO of Boeing to be here tonight, but he said it was too far of a drive from Seattle. (Jerry Lugar, Hampton, Va.)

Angela Merkel wants the E.U. to get along better with the Trump administration. So I hear she's thinking of [assassinating her half brother](#), and threatening to nuke California. (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

And is Joe Biden here? There you are. I hope you're okay with the seating arrangement, Joe. We had to make sure that all the people in front of you were guys. Bald guys. [Bald guys without shoulders](#). (Neal Starkman, Seattle)

So tonight, while we were eating, **Mitch McConnell just confirmed** the entire young Republican club of Yale Law to lifetime judgeships. Congratulations, kids! (Ward Kay, Vienna, Va.)

I see **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has achieved something rare** these days with her Green New Deal, and that's bipartisanship. Of

course, it's bipartisan *opposition*, but still . . (Jeff Contompasis)

This new Democratic Congress is **serious about its green initiatives** — they plan to save 5,000 trees a month by sending all subpoenas to the White House electronically. (John Hutchins, Silver Spring, Md.)

The president couldn't be here tonight because he's on a tour of **Brazil, Argentina, and Chile**, or, as Fox News calls them, [Mexico](#). (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

Mar-a-Lago memberships cost \$200,000 plus \$28,000 for two years' dues. That's steep, but it's cost us taxpayers 150 times that for President Trump to go there — and he owns the place. That's like paying a President Colonel Sanders \$3,000 to get him a bucket of his own chicken! And that would cost us less, because the Colonel couldn't eat 29 Family Fill-ups every day. Not even Donald Trump can do that! (Connie Akers, Radford, Va.)

Unfortunately, President Trump couldn't be here this evening; but he sends his regards. Really, **he loves the White House correspondents** — in fact, he worships the quicksand you walk on. (Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.)

Congratulations to the **University of Virginia men's basketball team**, which just won the championship after last year's inexplicable, humiliating loss to an inferior opponent. Unfortunately, that's giving Hillary Clinton ideas. (Duncan Stevens)

I'm not saying the president **has it in for Speaker Pelosi**, but he recently offered a new option for her government travel — a 737 Max. (Jeff Contompasis)

You gotta love Fox News, always asking the president the really hard-hitting questions, you know, like what **his favorite animal** is. Speaking of which, I'm gonna guess that he'd pick barnacles, because there are fine ones on boat sides. (Jesse Frankovich)

Security at Mar-a-Lago is so lax, seems they just let in a Chinese spy! No harm done, but the Russian spies no longer feel quite as special. (Mark Raffman)

Jeff Bezos will be coming late, but I just got a text that he's nine stops away and will be here no later than 9 p.m. (Bruce Alter, Fairfax Station, Va.)

Still running — deadline Monday night, April 29: Our contest to retell a bit of literature as someone else would have written it. See [wapo.st/invite1328](#).

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Pat Myers



Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. Follow [🐦](#)
