

Style Invitational Week 1203: You've got the powers

What would you do if you had X-ray vision (or 5 other powers); plus winning 'questions for terrible people'



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By Pat Myers • Entertainment November 23

(Click [here to skip down](#) to the winning "questions for terrible people")

- Shape-shifting
- X-ray vision
- Become many times as large as you are
- Become many times as small as you are
- Having supersonic speed
- Imperviousness to heat or cold

Here's a contest we've done only once before — 19 years ago. The Empress was reminded of that one recently by Loser Christina Courtney, who happened to have won it. Back then, the E's predecessor, the Czar, asked what you would do if you had power of invisibility, ability to breathe fire, etc. **This week: Tell what you would do if you had one or more of the six magical powers listed above.** Your scenario may run as long as 50 words or it can be much shorter. For inspiration, see the results of Week 258 (March 1998) in this week's Style Conversational column at bit.ly/conv-1203, published late Wednesday, Nov. 23.



Happy faces are so Pre-November: Really, you think you have a chance to win this shirt? (Pat Myers/The Washington Post)

Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1203 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the [Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a fine T-shirt with the legend "Pessimism: It's Probably Not That Great." Donated by Probably Great Loser Jon Gearhart, and modeled here unhopefully by Valerie Holt.

Other runners-up win their choice of the yearned-for "[This Is Your Brain on Mugs](#)" [Loser mug](#) or our Grossery Bag, "[I Got a B in Punmanship](#)." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "[Magnet Dum Laude](#)" or "[Falling Jest Short](#)." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Dec. 5; results published Dec. 25, if you're not naughty (online Dec. 22). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "Whichcraft" for this week's results was suggested by both Tom Witte and Jesse Frankovich; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Jon Gearhart. 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; follow [@StyleInvite](https://twitter.com/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, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.

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

WHICHCRAFT: THE 'QUESTIONS FOR TERRIBLE PEOPLE' FROM WEEK 1199

In **Week 1999** we asked you to pose “**Questions for Terrible People**,” like those in a new book by comedian Wes Hazard — basically a way to demonstrate what a bad person you are. Of course, we were also looking for questions that were funny, and so some of the inking entries ended up ranging wider than such demonstrative badness-taggers as “When you feel resentful of high-performing co-workers, do you fantasize about them dying or getting arrested?”

4th place:

It's a rainy day downtown and you're about to lose a cab to a woman, half your age, in skinny jeans, a fur coat and spike heels, racing past you. Do you grab the back of your leg, feigning a pulled hamstring, or do you “accidentally” hip-check her to the ground? (John McCooley, Rehoboth Beach, Del.)

3rd place:

Should Metro's board meeting be held on a windy aboveground platform in January, or in a subway car with the AC broken in July? (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

2nd place

and the [toilet paper roller that plays Trump's voice](#):

Would you rather be stranded on Mars with nothing to eat but potatoes, or remain on Earth forced to follow a strict no-carb diet? (Robert Schechter, Dix Hills, N.Y.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

Would you rather be on the wrong side of a wall, or on the wrong side of history? (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)

Lesser evils: honorable mentions

You've been asked to leave the choir because, frankly, you're tone-deaf. Do you tell people that you quit over creative differences or because of the group's mediocrity? (John McCooley)

Have you ever hoped your kid's team would fail to make the playoffs so you could have your weekends back again? (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

On a transpacific flight, would you rather sit in front of a shrieking toddler who kicks your seat at odd intervals, or between two flatulent sumo wrestlers who argue loudly in Japanese? (Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Would you rather be trapped in an elevator with an excessively amorous porcupine or have a Trump-Clinton rematch in four years? (Todd DeLap, Fairfax)

Would you rather be unable to scratch an itch or unable to see what is wiggling in the bottom of your sleeping bag? (Nancy Della Rovere, Silver Spring, Md.)

My teenager is consistently surly and rude, and says he wishes I weren't his mother. Would putting him up for adoption be considered rewarding bad behavior? (Hildy Zampella, Falls Church, Va.)

For one year, your TV will only show one thing. Will it be a PBS pledge drive or reruns of "The Apprentice"? (Todd DeLap)

Have you ever faked reaching for the "Door Open" button on the elevator only to "fail" to make it work in time? (Jeff Contompasis)

If you could only choose one absurd exaggeration, would you say you are the least racist person in the world or the most respectful of women? (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

Foodies: you can either save one child from starvation, or be able to eat as much pizza and pasta as you want and never gain weight. (Think about that – it'd be like a lifelong pasta party!) (Annie Sawamura, Rochester, N.Y., a First Offender)

Would you rather make lifesaving drugs available to people at an affordable price, or make that second billion for yourself? Oh, sorry, I guess that's too easy. — M. Shkreli (Duncan Stevens)

Would you rather be Florence Foster Jenkins or her accompanist? (Steve Honley, Washington)

You're a man and your house is haunted. Would you rather have your mother's ghost watching *everything* you do, or your father's ghost, always crying out, "That's not how a man does it; be a man!" (Roger Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

For your Monday morning business meeting, would you rather have accidentally downed an Oxycodone or a Viagra? (Dan Helming, Maplewood, N.J.)

Would you rather have Donald Trump's hair or Donald Trump's skin tone? (Jesse Frankovich)

For a full minute, would you rather listen to a rant by someone with an opposite political view, or repeatedly smash your head on your desk? (Note: you are not allowed to do both.) (Jeff Contompasis)

In a bargain with Satan, the funny anecdote you submitted to Reader's Digest in 1982 will finally be published, but for the rest of your life you must shout out incorrect "Jeopardy!" answers at TV screens in airport bars. (Sandy Moran,

Santa Rosa, Calif.)

Instagram Introspection: You're posting a picture from the weekend of you and your friend. Do you choose the pre-drinking one where you have a slight double chin, or the one from later where you look excellent but your best friend has spilled beer on her shirt and looks like she's lactating? (Annie Sawamura)

Would you accept an offer to become a movie star even if you knew you would never get another role? What if the movie were "Jackass 3"? (Duncan Stevens)

A genie gives you one wish! However, he says that if he can't grant the wish, he'll do the opposite. What do you wish for (besides a different genie)? (Neal Starkman, Seattle)

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If you were trapped in a desert with your worst enemy and you had a canteen with just enough water for only one of you to survive, would you silently drink the water by yourself, out of sight, or would you do so in his face while taunting him with your decision? (Robert Schechter)

Would you rather watch the "Yanni at the Acropolis" videocassette twice in three days with your mother, or attend a book club meeting at Red Lobster with that same mother, at which the novel being discussed is "50 Shades of Grey" — but there are bottomless baskets of cheesy biscuits? (Sandy Moran)

If you could have dinner with either Hillary or Donald, why would you? (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

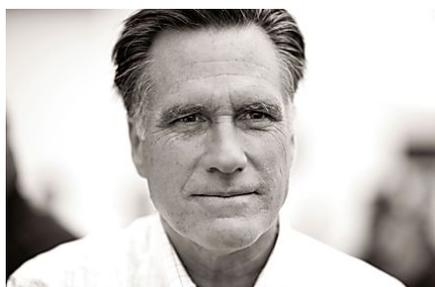
And Last: Would you make a crude joke at someone else's expense if you had an outside shot at winning a 21-cent refrigerator magnet? (Jesse Frankovich)

Still running — deadline also Dec. 5: Our contest for song parodies that express *some* kind of hope. See bit.ly/invite1202.

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