

The Invitational Week 82: Taylorgaters

Take a line from a 'Tortured Poets' lyric and rhyme it with one of your own. Plus winning list-linkers.

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*Now I'm running with my dress unbuttoned,
At Olive Garden I should not have gluttoned.*

*I was a functioning alcoholic till nobody noticed my new aesthetic
These lines I write will gross a ton, but man, they ain't poetic.*

Hello. Today's contest was occasioned by an email we got from a Millennial named Jesse Rifkin, who oh so politely suggested that we might want to consider — you, know, just throwing it out there — running a “tailgater” contest that does not betray the fact that, combined, the Czar and Empress are 137 years old. Something with Taylor Swift, perhaps. Mr. Rifkin is 32, two years younger than Ms. Swift, and he dryly pointed out that our previous such contests were on lyrics from the Beatles, Bob Dylan, and Shakespeare.

Okay, punk, you want new? We got new.

For Invitational Week 82: Choose any line from any of the 31 songs in Taylor Swift's new, unbelievably popular album [“The Tortured Poets Department”](#) (see below how to find the lyrics) and add a rhyming line to it — either atop it or after it — for comedic effect, as in our two examples above. (They're from “But Daddy I Love Him” and “Fortnight,” respectively.) Even if Tay-Tay didn't rhyme the line in her own song, *you* must. Your couplet doesn't have to be singable to the original tune, though.

A generous Swifty who goes by the name mountangoatscheese on Reddit shared a link to a homemade compilation of Taylor lyrics dating back to 2006; [Click here for the lyrics of the “Tortured Poets” songs](#) — fourteen of which occupied the top fourteen slots on the Billboard Hot 100 a couple of months ago (ignore the links on that page to all the older material). Pleeeeeeze tell us the title of the song your line comes from.

[Click here for this week's entry form](#), or go to tinyURL.com/inv-form-82. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form. **Formatting: Please write each couplet as a single line**

divided with a slash, rather than on two separate lines; we'll restore them to proper couplet-hood on this end.

Deadline is Saturday, Aug. 3, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Aug. 8.

This week's winner gets a truly adorable pair of dainty earrings in a classy toilet paper motif. They're so convenient, too: Say your pet cockroach feels the call of nature *right now* — just pull one of these babies off your lobe and wipe him up. And most important of all: You can hang them with the edge of the toilet paper on either side!



Aren't they the most charmin little earrings? This week's prize.

Runners-up get autographed fake money featuring the Czar or Empress, in one of [eight nifty designs](#). Honorable mentions get bupkis, except for a personal email from the E, plus the [Fir Stink for First Ink](#) for First Offenders.

Ink-Comparable Humor: Like/unlike winners from Week 80

In Invitational [Week 80](#), we once again posted a list of 17 random noun phrases — “an outie bellybutton,” “cargo shorts” etc. — and asked how any two of them were similar or different. A lot of you, as we did, took “6-3” to mean the right/left divide of the current Supreme Court — and the tally of so many of its decisions — but others saw it equally validly as a work shift, someone's height, or a sports score. Alert: The results are unusually risqué, even for us; it was the option of “The Hawk Tuah Girl” that is responsible.

Third runner-up:

[Commander Biden](#) pisses on the White House;
The Alitos' flagpole pisses off the White House. (*Kevin Dopart, Naxos, Greece*)

Second runner-up:

Commander Biden and [the Hawk Tuah Girl](#): One bites and the other sucks. (*Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.*)

First runner-up:

A mask you still have from 2020: A pandemic reminder.

6-3: A Dem panic reminder. (*Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.*)

And the winner of [Dave Prevar's kidney](#):

The Alitos' flagpole: “Stop the steal!”

6-3: The steal. (*Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore*)

Lack-alikes: Honorable mentions

Steve Bannon's cellmate vs. a Chat GPT love letter: One's with a guy who loves deep fakes; the other's from a guy who fakes deep love. (*Leif Picoult, Rockville, Md.*)

A tube of Crest vs. Steve Bannon's cellmate: Only the cellmate is likely to be found in the vicinity of Steve Bannon. (*Sam Mertens, Silver Spring, Md.*)

An outie bellybutton reflects your connection to your mother. [Rizz](#) reflects my connection to your mama. (*Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.*)

The Hawk Tuah Girl: Oh, feel gal spit a lot! **The Alitos' flagpole:** An anagram of that. (*Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.*)

A ChatGPT love letter and **the Hawk Tuah Girl** both involve spitting out something that isn't exactly romantic. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

A mask you still have from 2020 and **the Hawk Tuah Girl:** You might come upon either one in the back seat of your car. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

6-3: Someone's working and getting out early. **Steve Bannon's cellmate:** Someone working on getting out early. (*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

A runny nose and **that one ear hair that keeps growing back:** They both became the least of Marie Antoinette's problems. (*Jon Ketzner, Cumberland, Md.*)

A mask you still have from 2020: Now it's not on your face. **A runny nose:** Now it's snot on your face. (*Jesse Frankovich*)

A tube of Crest and **6-3:** Both are apt to make things a whole lot whiter. (*Mark Raffman; Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.*)

6-3 vs. rizz: Money can't buy you rizz. (*Steve Smith, Potomac, Md.*)

A runny nose and the Hawk Tuah Girl: The runny nose might come in handy on occasions when her mouth is dry. *(Tom Witte, Montgomery Village, Md.)*

A tube of Crest and A Chat GPT love letter: Both contain artificial sweeteners. *(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)*

A tube of Crest and Commander Biden: Foaming at the mouth is acceptable from only one of these. *(Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)*

A tube of Crest gives people fresh breath. People give **Commander Biden** flesh breath. *(Chris Doyle)*

Cargo shorts: They keep your junk handy. **The Hawk Tuah Girl:** Is handy with your junk. *(Jonathan Jensen)*

6-3: An undesirable hearing outcome. **That one ear hair that keeps growing back:** An undesirable earring outcome. *(Judy Freed, Deerfield Beach, Fla.)*

Commander Biden vs. the Hawk Tuah Girl: Vicious vs. viscous. *(Tom Witte; Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)*

Shrinkflation vs. the Hawk Tuah girl: Only with the first does your package get smaller. *(Mike Gips; Steve Smith)*

The Alitos' flagpole vs. Earth's molten core: With the core, you know you can't go any lower. *(Diana Oertel, San Francisco)*

The Alitos' flagpole and a runny nose: With either one, people might be disgusted by what's hanging there. *(Judy Freed)*

You know who'd be great as **Steve Bannon's cellmate? Commander Biden.** *(Jon Ketzner)*

The headline "Ink-Comparable Humor" is by Tom Witte; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, July 27: our Week 81 caption contest — choose from seven images. Click on the link below.