

The Invitational Week 87: Get Thee to a Punnery

Change a quote slightly and credit it to someone else. Plus winning limericks.

[Pat Myers](#)

and

[Gene Weingarten](#)

Aug 29, 2024



Cher last September at age 77.

“A thing of beauty is a job forever.” — Cher

“It’s like making candy from a baby.” —Jonathan Swift

“I’m the kin of the world!” — Adam

Hello. You get the point, right?

For Invitational Week 87: Slightly change a well-known quote or saying and attribute it to someone else, as in the examples above from the last time we did this contest, an entire decade ago ([full results here](#)); they’re by Chris Doyle, Jon Gearhart, and Danielle Nowlin, respectively but not very respectfully.

Formatting this week: It's just our usual request to write each of your entries in a single line (i.e., don't push Enter in the middle of the entry). Boldface, italics, etc., don't transmit on the entry form, so don't bother prettying it up.

Deadline is Saturday, Sept. 7, 2024, at 9 p.m. ET. Results will run here in The Gene Pool on Thursday, Sept. 12. As usual, you may submit up to 25 entries for this week's contest, preferably all on the same form.

[Click here for this week's entry form.](#) or go to **tinyURL.com/inv-form-87**.

This week's winner receives a pair of Crocs. But they're an inch long and they hang from your ears. This is really the only size in which Crocs look presentable.



Warning: May clog the ears. 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.

Hy- Fives: The hu- to hy- limericks of Week 85

In our [21th annual Limerixicon](#) — our contribution to the Grand Quest to create a full English dictionary whose entries are all limericks — we asked you to create limericks featuring words beginning with “hu-” through “hy-,” the sliver of the dictionary that [OEDILF.com](#) has

finally reached. We received hundreds and hundreds of five-liners, many of which were about “humor,” not to mention the ones punning on “humerus.” Most didn’t live up to the words, but we chose a fine one of each below.

Gene is on the record here in The Gene Pool in support of running JD Vance couch jokes, even though the activity in question was entirely made up by some jokester; Gene contends it’s okay because he contends readers *know* it’s made up and because every late-night comedian — who collectively earn more money monthly than Pat and Gene will make during the remainder of their pathetic lives — thinks it’s great. But Pat, that wet blanket (so to speak), doesn’t agree that the falsity is so clear, and so she pulled the Pat card. But we agreed that this limerick was too well done and funny to ignore, so:

With a number of beers he was plied,
Leading Senator Vance to confide,
“Sure, I’ll take a brunette
If a blonde I can’t get,
But my favorite is still Naugahyde.” (*Connie Akers, Radford, Va.*)

After-publication update: It occurred to us only just now that the above limerick has no words starting with hu- or hy-! The Empress now remembers that the entry had used the capitalization NaugaHyde, which isn’t right (and wouldn’t have counted anyway), and she blithely went ahead and fixed it without noticing the omission.

Now that we’re announcing the results, feel free to submit your hu-/hy- limericks — inking or not — to OEDILF, the Omnificent English Dictionary in Limerick Form, to add to its 124,000-strong anthology.

Third runner-up:

As a flasher exposes his junk,
He believes he is truly a **hunk**.
But when giggling ensues
It induces the blues
And alarm that his prospects have shrunk.
(*Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.*)

Second runner-up:

I am certain I’ve gotten cirrhosis,
And my lungs surely have asbestosis.
But the test results show
That both answers are “no”:

Hypochondria’s my diagnosis.

(*Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.*)

First runner-up:

At afternoon tea with his boo,
A shy gentleman asked, “Could we do
You-know-what before *too* long?”
She grinned, poured some oolong,
And answered him, “One **hump** or two?”
(*Melissa Balmain, Rochester, N.Y.*)

And the winner of the matching plushie sperm and egg key chains:

My existence is **humdrum**? No chance!
I'm content, so best not look askance.
I've forgone having brats,
Hunkered down with my cats,
And I'm voting against JD Vance. — *Childless Cat Lady*
(Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

HU Else: Honorable mentions

Did you witness the pole-vaulting star
Who's among the most **hung** that there are?
Social media folks
Told a whole lot of jokes
All because he went into a bar.
(Jesse Frankovich, Laingsburg, Mich.)

RFK's **hypothalamus** may
Hold what's left of a larva that lay
There for years and would lead
To a visceral need
For the taste of dead-bear-cub pâté.
(Chris Doyle, Denton, Tex.)

They pretend to promote our democracy,
While they're flirting with outright autocracy.
Here's the slogan I see
For today's GOP:

"Make America safe for **hypocrisy**."
(Jonathan Jensen, Baltimore)

A **husband** and wife found a phrase
To ensure that their happiness stays:
"We will not go to bed
If we're mad," they both said.
So far, they've been up for three days. (Jesse Frankovich)

To ensure the ideal **humectation**
You can hawk to provide salivation.
When your boyfriend is randy
But you're feeling just handy,
He'll go wild for that TikTok sensation.
(Kevin Dopart, Washington, D.C.)

Forgive me a bit while I vent
'Bout the SUV money she spent:
I'd requested a **hummer** —
My first of the summer —
But that's not at all what I meant.
(Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

When your forearm you bang at its base,
Sure it's rude the doc laughs in your face
While in pain you are shrieking —
But, medically speaking,
He's right: It's a **humerus** case.

(Daniel Galef, Cincinnati)

How come, when our fortunes have tumbled,
And hopes, dreams, and cookies have crumbled,
There's a word we don't use,
Though it's just what we choose
Every time we're on top? (Yes, it's "**humbled.**") *(Melissa Balmain)*

The **hunchback** from old Notre Dame
Lost his life to a bell tower bomb.

His death was quite gory:
Go read the whole story
Online at DeadRinger.com. *(Craig Dykstra)*

When the Great Dane goes out for a stroll,
The passersby find it quite droll,
'Cause he's needing to go,
But the **hydrant's** too low!

So he looks for a telephone pole.
(Beverley Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

It's a "witch **hunt**"? Please, give us a break!
How much more of this crap must we take?

It's a **hustle**, a smear,
There's no witchiness here,
Save his preference for "burned-at-the-steak." *(Mark Raffman)*

In a clear case of **hyperinflation**,
Her new cup size was quite the sensation!
With acclaim quite befitting
(Although he was sitting)
He gave her a standing ovation. *(Craig Dykstra)*

This limerick needs no critiquing!
Just give it the ink that I'm seeking!
It is clearly the best
Entry EVER expressed!

(Well, at least **hyperbolically** speaking.)
(Jesse Frankovich)

I am colorblind, so it is true
That I cannot distinguish each **hue**.
This glitch with my eyes
Came as quite a surprise—
It was totally out of the orange. *(Jesse Frankovich)*

An unworthy trait of **humanity**

Is how we embolden insanity

And so idolize

A broadcaster of lies —

I'm talking 'bout you, Mister Hannity.

(Rob Cohen, Potomac, Md.)

They tell me that **humor's** subjective,

But families do share a perspective.

As Dad racks up ink,

I'm starting to think

That maybe a gene is defective.

(52-time Loser Brian Cohen, Winston-Salem, N.C., son of 172-time Loser Rob Cohen)

As a limerick writer I suck.

With weak rhyme and meter I'm stuck.

My **hubris** will show

'Cause my entries all blow

But I'll still shrug and say, "What the hey, I'm a paying subscriber, I should enter more often,"

(Terri Berg Smith, Rockville, Md.)

And Last:

I am neither a person who flirts

With rebellion, nor someone who skirts

The instructions, but I

Cannot stop at hy-

Due to inborn avoidance: it **Hz**.

(David Franks, Washington County, Ark.)

The headline "Hy- Fives" was submitted by both Kevin Dopart and Craig Dykstra; Jesse Frankovich wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. The headline "Get Thee to a Punnery," by Chris Doyle, appeared in the results of our 2014 contest.

Still running — deadline 9 p.m. ET Saturday, Aug. 31: our Week 86 contest for creative names for various pets. Click on the link below.