

# The Style Invitational

Week XCI: Osama Chanted Evening



Higgledy piggledy  
Osama the terrorist  
Hides in a cave with a  
Price on his head.

Find him and Dubya  
Will out-and-out lubya  
Hyperfinancially—  
Living or dead.

**This Week's Contest** was suggested by Charlie Bryant of Gaithersburg, who points out that the best way to confront evil is not to demonize it but to contemptuously trivialize it. Accordingly, we seek poems about Osama bin Laden. You may use any poetic form: sonnet, limerick, haiku, couplet, double dactyl, as in the above example Charlie wrote, or any other. First-prize winner gets an antique box of cloth sweaters for soft-drink glasses. We are not exactly sure who thought this was a good idea, or why, but this may be the only surviving item of its kind. It is worth \$50.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions

get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312 or by e-mail to [losers@washpost.com](mailto:losers@washpost.com).

NO LETTERS OR POSTCARDS AT ALL. NONE. WE WON'T OPEN LETTERS OR READ POSTCARDS FOR THIS CONTEST NO WAY SO DON'T SEND THEM.

Deadline is Monday, Oct. 29. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and telephone number. E-mail entries must include the week number in the subject field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post.

Entries may be edited for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes. Pseudonymous entries will be disqualified. The revised title for next week's contest is by Russell Beland of Springfield.

Before we get to the remarkable Week LXXXVII, we dispense with some old business. You know how you all are always complaining that The Czar chooses the wrong winners? To test this theory against the alternative theory that you are all whining idiots, The Czar graciously withheld his winning choices in a recent contest. He published all 25 finalists, unranked, then invited you to submit your choices for winner and four runners-up. The results: You agree that The Czar is wrong. Unfortunately, you haven't figured out precisely what he is wrong about. Of the 25 possibilities, our hundreds of respondents declared that the single best entry was obviously . . . 24 of them! Every finalist but one was chosen by at least one person as the winner of the entire contest. (And no, you couldn't vote for yourself.) You were all over the map, with nearly insignificant point spreads separating the winners from most of the Honorable Mentions. Possibly this judging thing isn't as easy as you think.

The contest was to come up with nasty rhetorical questions after the model "Is that your face or did your neck just puke?"

The readers' choices: ♦ Fourth Runner-Up: **Is that your boyfriend, or does your pimp drive a Geo?** (Russell Beland, Springfield). ♦ Third Runner-Up: **Is that your nose, or are you just glad to smell me?** (Paul Kocak, Syracuse). ♦ Second Runner-Up: **Is that your car, or is this the day you leave your recycling at the curb?** (David Kleinbard, Jersey City). ♦ First Runner-Up: **Is that your president, or did the Supreme Court just puke?** (Tom Campbell, Chicago). ♦ And the winner: **Is that your carefully considered position on the inconclusiveness of the scientific evidence of global warming and the dwindling supply of petroleum reserves, or your SUV?** (John Muehl, Springfield)

And now The Czar's choices, made before the contest was published. These are the ones that count:

♦ Fourth Runner-Up: **The president—puke.**

♦ Third Runner-Up: **Carefully considered position—SUV.**

♦ Second Runner-Up: **Is that your final answer, or are you still holding out hope that a brain will suddenly grow at the end of your spinal cord?** (Mike Connaghan, Alexandria)

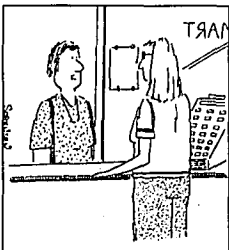
♦ First Runner-Up: **Is that your actual weight or did you fill out your driver's license form while tethered to a blimp?** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

♦ And the Winner of the 1954 George Washington University Medical School yearbook, the Speculum: **Is that your nose, or are you just glad to smell me?** (Paul Kocak, Syracuse)

## ON TO WEEK LXXXVII.

During the least funny week in anyone's memory, we asked you simply to make us laugh. No further instructions. Predictably, your 175 entries constituted the smallest response in the history of this contest. We empathize with all who chose to stay silent but salute all who did not: Your entries were wildly different but shared a certain thrilling pugnacity. Thanks for the laughs. All entries below win T-shirts. Winner of the Prince George's County Police Department bell is the last entry on the page.

**There is one huge problem with the guarantee of 70 virgins for each martyr in Paradise. What can one do with six dozen women? The guarantors eit her don't know Paradise or don't know women.** (Howard Walderman, Columbia)



"I'm looking for diet pills that look like eclairs." (Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

**If wives were meant to enjoy sex, God would've made husbands good at it.** (Judith Cottrill, New York)

**Bad choice of tough language for the Taliban to use: "Oh yeah? You and what army?"** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**This is a real excerpt from the news shortly after the WTC and Pentagon were attacked. The interview took place at a blood donation site: "At times like this, people come together. We have come together here to give blood. Many people didn't know they had it in them."** (Judy Freedman, Rockville)

**A tornado tore through the Gaithersburg Home Depot yesterday, leaving in its wake 12 newly fashioned houses, three toolsheds, a gazebo, and a new deck added onto a nearby home.** (Paul Kondis, Alexandria)

**I keep waiting for our president to say something like: "We are not at war with Islam, and we certainly don't wish to offend the many good Muslim Americans. Our enemies are the terrorists and those nations that have become a Mecca for terrorist behavior."** (Hang Xia-Ti, Arlington)

**As I write this, I am at work and not wearing pants! A clown has just thrown a pie in my face! Also, poopy-doodly!** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

**Okay, here's a trick. Think of a number between 1 and 10. Now multiply it by the number of decades you have been alive. Okay? Now subtract the day of the month you were born. Okay? Now picture J. Edgar Hoover in a Dallas Cowboys cheerleader costume.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Next Week: Staked Against Us



## ANN LANDERS

Dear Ann:

I am a 45-year-old man, semi-retired and well off financially. I prefer to live modestly. No one would guess I have money. I buy my suits off the rack, have a small apartment, and my car is 3 years old.

After my high school sweetheart died, I never had any desire to marry.

However, several months ago, I met "Julie" and fell head over heels in love. She is divorced with two young children. After a whirlwind courtship, Julie decided she hadn't totally recovered from her divorce and felt I was rushing her. She asked me to back off, and I did. Now, she has broken it off completely.

I am devastated and wonder if I should have told her about my financial situation. It might have made a difference. Perhaps she would have felt more secure about her children's future. Do you think it's too late to tell her now? Was I wrong not to reveal my financial situation at the beginning of our relationship? Please tell me what to do. It's obvious that I don't have all the answers.

A Dallas Bachelor

Do you honestly believe the woman would have been more interested if she knew you had money? If the answer is "yes," why would you want her? Consider yourself lucky. You missed a speeding bullet.

Dear Ann:

My problem may not seem as serious as some, but it bothers me a great deal, and I'm hoping you can tell me what to do.

I recently married a beautiful, highly principled woman who has three wonderful children from a previous marriage. Her ex-husband did not pay child support at first, so she worked two jobs to make ends meet. Even so, she couldn't quite manage.

Her father, out of kindness, gave her a salaried position at his office to make up the difference. To justify her salary, she occasionally did odd jobs for him.

Her ex-husband finally got a job and now pays child support regularly, plus an additional \$100 a month toward the payments he missed. Should we be giving my father-in-law that extra \$100 to

repay his kindness? He has never treated this money as a loan, but it always seemed that way to me.

I want to be responsible for my wife's debts, but I don't want to offend anyone. What should I do?

Lafayette, Ind.

The classy thing to do is to make the offer. If he resists your attempt to repay him, thank him graciously, and congratulate yourself on having a first-rate father-in-law.

Dear Ann:

I perked up when I saw the letter from "West Texas Bubba," whose newly slim wife insisted on wearing baggy clothes. He wanted her to show off her new figure.

I have the opposite problem.

My wife, "Della," is a nice-looking woman with a major weight problem. This does not bother me, but Della is in denial about it. She wears tight-fitting clothes and stretch pants, which accentuate the extra poundage.

It's not a pretty sight. What's more surprising is that she is extremely vain about her appearance and simply does not see herself the way she really is.

When I mentioned that looser clothes might be more flattering, she didn't speak to me for three days.

Any ideas?

Enduring It in North Carolina

Take the "hint" and lay off. The woman will not do anything about her weight problem until she is good and ready. Your comments, while well-intended, are not helpful. Let's hope Della will consider seeing a nutritionist. It could be a god-send.

**Gem of the Day** (credit Bob Hope): People who throw kisses are hopelessly lazy, and they miss a lot of fun in life.

To find out more about Ann Landers and read her past columns, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).

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## BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

North-South vulnerable

NORTH		EAST (D)	
♠	10 9 7 4 2	♠	None
♥	7 4 3	♥	A K Q J 9 8
♦	A J	♦	K 9 8
♣	K J 10	♣	9 7 6 3
WEST		SOUTH	
♠	K	♠	A Q J 8 6 5 3
♥	10 5	♥	6 2
♦	Q 7 6 5 4 3 2	♦	10
♣	Q 8 4	♣	A 5 2

The bidding:

East	South	West	North
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠
4 ♥	4 ♠	All Pass	

Opening lead: ♥ 10

The only people who always find what they're looking for are the fault-finders. (Their approach is that if you can't say anything good about someone . . . let's hear it.) In today's deal, though, how often would a good declarer find the missing queen of clubs?

East took two hearts and led a third high heart, and South ruffed. West overruffed with the king and exited with a diamond. South took dummy's ace and didn't have to draw trumps since the defenders had none left. He therefore ruffed dummy's jack of diamonds and cashed a few trumps for exercise. At the end, South knew East had started with six hearts and no spades, but South couldn't be sure about the clubs and diamonds.

Finally, South decided to play East for the queen of clubs since

East had bid four hearts all by himself. South led a club to dummy's king, let the jack ride . . . and was annoyed to see West produce the queen, defeating the contract. Do you find fault with South's play?

South can't be sure who has the queen of clubs—no sure indication is available from the bidding or the defenders' plays. But South can let the defense locate the queen for him: On the third heart, South must ruff with the ace of trumps. He takes the ace of diamonds, ruffs the jack of diamonds and leads a trump.

When West takes the king, he is end-played. If West leads a club, he guesses the queen for South. If West leads anything else, South ruffs in dummy, discards a club from his hand and claims.

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