

# The Style Invitational

## Week 521: Hyphen the Terrible



ILLUSTRATION BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

**Pow-land**—A very, very touchy and hostile Eastern European country. Capital: Warsore.  
**Virgin-liable**—Subject to the laws of statutory rape.  
**Depart-fighters**—Cowards.

**This week's contest:** You know the drill. Take the first half of any hyphenated word in today's Washington Post (or Tuesday's USA Today) and combine it with the second half of any other hyphenated word in the same story, and define the new word it produces. Make sure you tell us what story you used, and on what page it appeared. The examples above are taken from an Aug. 18 story in The Post. First-prize winner gets a George W. Bush dog squeak toy.

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. U.S. mail entries are no longer accepted. Deadline is Monday, Sept. 8. 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 Seth Brown of Williamstown, Mass.

**Report from Week 517**, in which you were asked to come up with a line to be secretly inserted into George W. Bush's teleprompter for his next State of the Union message.

Third Runner-Up: **And now if we'll bow our heads for a moment of silence on the loss of Uday and Qusay . . .** (Lisa M. Greenhill, Washington)

Second Runner-Up: **Like most college men, I did "experiment" with homosexuality . . .** (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

First Runner-Up: **America is built on the hard work of nonprofit organizations, so I would like to pay tribute to just one representative group: the Pleasant Valley Pheasant Pluckers.** (Bill Spencer, Exeter, N.H.)

And the winner of the dartboard from the "Keen Eddie" TV show: **"Green Dodge Caravan, Virginia plates, your lights are on."** (Craig A. Zimmerman, Manassas)

Honorable Mentions:

**Good night, and may God damn the United States of America.** (Ben Aronin, Pasadena, Calif.)

**I'm about to appoint an ambassador to Bimini; what am I bid?** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**Members of Congress, there are going to be some changes made because this building is now surrounded by special forces loyal only to me.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**I'd like to recognize some special people we have here as guests tonight, and what do you know, they all happen to be minority types!** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**Seriously, you're a great crowd. So, where you from? Anybody from Lubbock?** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**In addition to an Axis of Evil, I have also found an Axis of Unsavoryness, and even an Axis of Generally Poor Manners.** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

**I have not had impure thoughts about any woman, at all, at any time, and you know I'm telling the truth because if I wasn't, I'd have a big goofy smirk on my face.** (Roger and Pam Dalrymple, Gettysburg, Pa.)

**Some have asked if my tie is too tight, others have questioned my amphetamine psychosis . . .** (Don Jernigan, Shreveport, La.)

**I think of Hillary at the strangest times.** (Don Duggan, Bethesda)

**I shall make it my duty to eat a kitten for breakfast every day.** (Marc Leibert, New York)

**This State of the Union speech has been brought to you by Mirror Image Teleprompters Inc., purveyors of the most reliable public speaking equipment available today.** (Joshua Kaplowitz, Alexandria)

**I repeat my promise to personally pay for the college education of every American citizen who cannot afford it.** (Tom Kreitzberg, Silver Spring)

**In answer to my critics, I know you are, but what am I?** (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

**And so I offer my resignation as president of the United States, effective immediately.** (Richard Cheney, Washington) (Joseph Romm, Washington)

**I'm being held hostage in a White House speech-writing sweatshop—please help me.** (Martin Schulman, Herndon)

**And tonight I am departing from the usual format by asking that you not interrupt me with those annoying rounds of contrived applause (wait for applause.)** (Robin D. Grove, Pasadena, Md.)

**I wish to announce my conversion to Islam.** (Stephen Dudzik, Olney)

**What's all the whining about unemployment? All MY friends have jobs.** (Art Grinath, Takoma Park)

**If I felt that even one American was dissatisfied with the way I am running this country, I would resign immediately.** (Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**Global warming can be reversed if everyone just turned his air conditioner around.** (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

**Anyone who disagrees is welcome to come up here now and speak his piece.** (Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**But you didn't come here to listen to me blather about security and slowly take away all of your freedoms in the name of protecting them.** (Seth Brown, Williamstown, Mass.)

**Nod your head and look serious, then smile before saying the next sentence.** (Larry Phillips, Falls Church)

**Tonight, we salute three heroines of the Iraqi war: Ima Lunnason, Uffa Beech, and Ivana Runnagen.** (Charles Koebel, Houston)

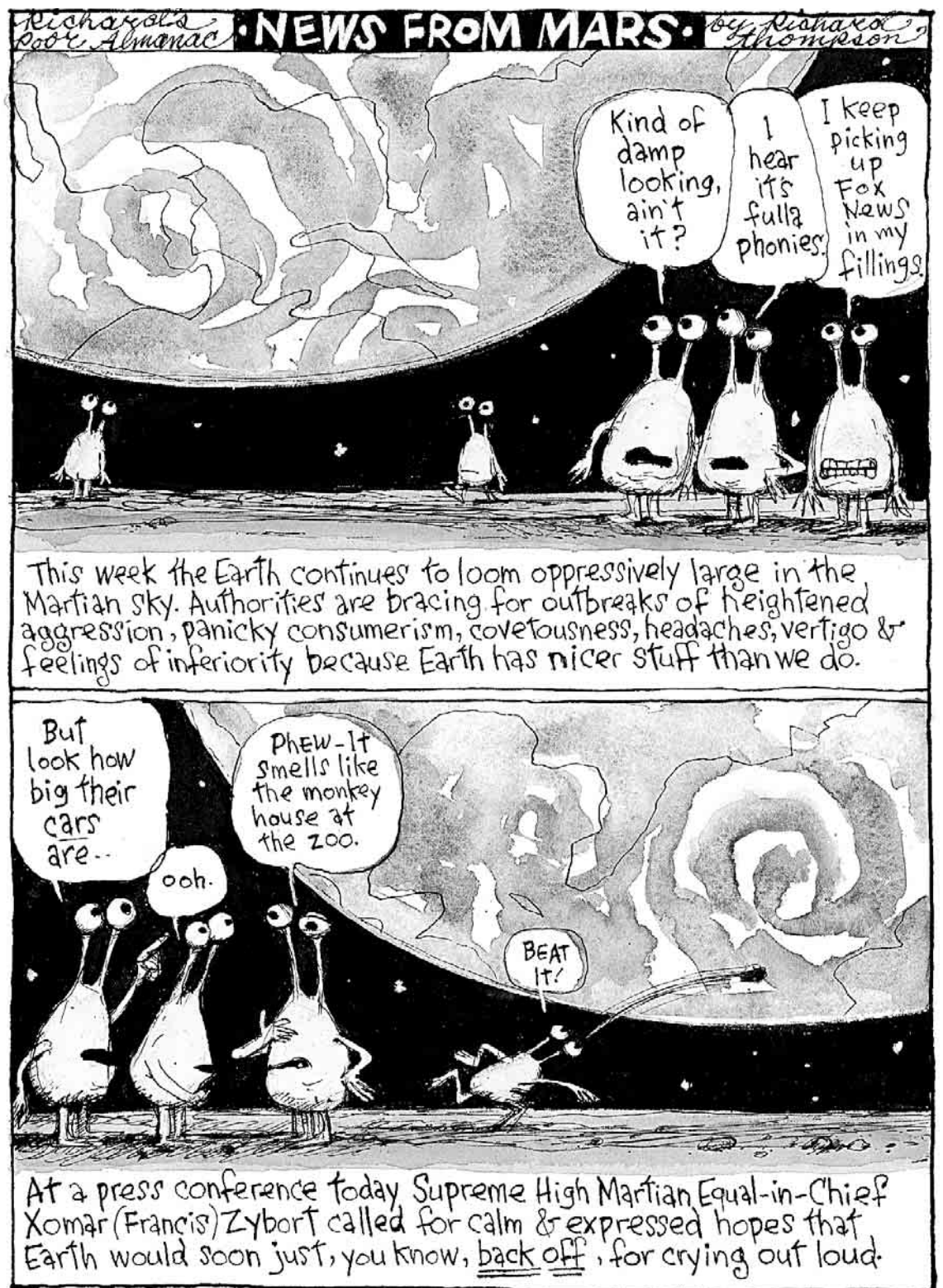
**In addition to finding out about their uranium, we also have credible evidence that it was Iraq who let the dogs out.** (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

**Senator Kennedy, is something funny? Perhaps you'd like to share it with the rest of the room.** (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

Next Week: Tempus Fudgeit

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The Washington Post



### DEAR ABBY

Dear Abby:

Last year, my husband, "Rick," and I were asked to host an exchange student from Sweden. When Rick saw "Inga" for the first time at the airport, he told me he felt an "instant bond." He now wants to help her with all her goals and objectives. Those goals include Inga never returning to Sweden. Rick is talking about letting her live with us while she finishes high school and community college.

Rick spends many hours helping Inga perfect her English and do homework. He takes time off from work to take her on day trips to see our local "points of interest." He comes home early from work to watch her compete in swim meets and volleyball.

I am jealous that Rick is giving Inga all this attention because he has never done it for our daughter or me. When I comment about how much time he spends with her, he pouts. One minute he says he wishes he had never met her; the next he's talking about Inga living with us permanently and sponsoring her citizenship. I think he's obsessed with her. What do you think?

*Feeling Forgotten in Florida*

I think it's time to call the organization that sent Inga to you, tell them it's not working out, and arrange for her transfer to other lodgings. The girl is underage and the situation is explosive. Do it to save your marriage—and the girl's and your husband's reputations. Then insist on marriage counseling.

P.S. If your husband isn't willing to go along with this, tell him you're going to exchange *him* for a more responsible role model.

Dear Abby:

I'm at my wit's end. Five years ago my daughter, "Julie," moved in with me. Later her boyfriend, "Rick," moved in and then Julie's adult daughter, "Lisa" (Julie and Rick are now married.) Between them, they give me about \$300 for rent each month.

Things were okay until about 18 months ago. Rick's attitude toward me changed and so did Julie's. They

have control of my whole house, Abby. Lisa sleeps in a room they set up for her in my attic. Last month, Julie and Rick decided we should have a "family meeting." Lisa was included. (Lisa has a job and contributes about \$100 a month for her share of the rent.)

They announced that they will no longer buy food, cleaning or toilet supplies for the house—just for themselves. They now put their names on everything. I feel like I'm in jail in my own home. I pay the mortgage, the utility bills and the taxes. They pay two-thirds of the water bill.

They moved out once but couldn't make it on their own, and I foolishly allowed them to move back in. Now Rick is the boss of my house and Julie goes along with everything he says. I don't know what to do. I'm considering moving out. It's hurtful that they'd treat me like this. I'm not a youngster—I'm over 60.

Can you help me?

*Emotionally Abandoned in Maryland*

If your daughter and her husband are putting their names on your house, your car or other property, pick up the phone and call a lawyer. If you don't have one, get a referral from a trusted friend or your local bar association. The lawyer can also explain your rights in your home so that your family can't take advantage of you any longer.

Under no circumstances should you leave your home. If anyone goes, it must be your daughter and her family. You are being emotionally abused.

Once you have talked to your attorney, offer your "family" the option of family counseling. No one should feel like a prisoner in her own home, so please do not tolerate it for one more day.

Let me hear from you when you have followed my advice. I'm concerned about your welfare.

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069.*

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