

The Style Invitational

Week 577: Teledubbies



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Six Feet Udder: Animal Planet joins the makeover-show craze, with plastic surgeons doing an augmentation on a cow.
The O'Really Factor: Noted skeptics dispute the rantings of TV hosts.

This week's contest, suggested by Phyllis Reinhard of East Fallowfield, Pa.: Slightly change the title of a TV show, past or present, and describe it. (We're deliberately being vague on what "slightly" means, but an alteration of a single letter, as in the examples above, is often the cleverest.) First-prize winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational Trophy. First runner-up wins a delightfully tacky table lamp whose shade is composed of glass strips featuring pictures of deer. Best of all, there seems to be no mechanism for turning on its three bulbs. There's no way that we will risk putting this invaluable item in the mail, so the prize will go to the highest-placing entrant who is willing to fetch it at the Post building downtown. (Please indicate said willingness on your entry.)

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable mentions get one of the lusted-after Style Invitational Magnets. One prize per entrant per week. Send your entries by e-mail to losers@washpost.com or by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, Oct. 4. Put the week number in the subject line of your e-mail, or it risks being ignored as spam. Include your name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Contests are

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 Oct. 24. 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 Jon Reiser of Hilton, N.Y.

Here's an odd idea, but a perversely intriguing one, pitched to the Empress all summer long by Russell Beland of Springfield: Why not, Russ suggests, print an occasional "Anti-Invitational" entry along with the regular results? By this he means an entry that would be directly opposite what was asked for in the contest. For example, for the "product placement" contest below, you could have sent in one that *takes out* the name of the product, e.g., "She said, son, you're gonna drive me to drinkin' if you don't stop driving that hot rod American luxury sedan." So all right, feel free to send in such entries if they seem to fit that week's contest. Some weeks, they just aren't going to work: How would you do an anti-limerick?

Report from Week 573, in which we asked you to insert product placements into biblical and other literary passages. Invitational contests sometimes take a tack we hadn't had in mind; in this case a number of Losers gave us ad slogans that were takeoffs on some line from literature. But as long as the entries were funny, only a chronic complainer would object to such a variation—and this week, even *he* sent in some ad slogans.

♦ **Third runner-up: Kunta Kinte, you old African! I finally found you—by using the Verizon Yellow Pages.** (Gary Patishnock, Laurel)

♦ **Second runner-up: Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a Q-tip for?** (Dot Yufer, Newton, W.Va.)

♦ **First runner-up, winner of the bathing-elephant ceramic toothbrush holder: And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the amazing Ginsu knife to slay his son, and the angel of the Lord called out, "But wait, there's more!"** (Russell Beland, Springfield)

♦ **And the winner of the Inker: Between the idea and the reality, between the motion and the act, there's Trojans™.** (Peter Metrinko, Plymouth, Minn.)

♦ **Honorable Mentions: And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, for there is good news: the Lord saveth a bunch of money on His car insurance by switching to Geico.** (David Iscoe, Washington; Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

Because I could not stop for death, I went to Meineke. (Peter Metrinko)

And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the Camel. And Rebekah said: "Lo, surely that was worth a mile's walk." (Scott Campisi, Wake Village, Tex.)

The Owl and the Pussycat went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat, They took some honey, and plenty of money—but they didn't take American Express. (Mary Ann Henningsen, Hayward, Calif.)

And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself seven days for his Tucks® Pre-Moistened Pads, and shall be clean. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

The vice presidency isn't worth a pitcher of warm Mountain Dew. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

If you prick us, do we not require a Band-Aid brand adhesive bandage? (Jon Reiser, Hilton, N.Y.)

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary Over yet another eerie puddle on the kitchen floor, Suddenly the door was rappin'. 'Twas the men with my new Tappan, Frost-free, ice-dispensin' Tappan. Buy Amana? Nevermore. (Chris Doyle, Forsyth, Mo.)

His wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of Morton's; as it is said: When it raineth, it poureth. (Jane Auerbach, Los Angeles)

The lark's on the wing; the snail's on the thorn; God's in his heaven; and we're going to Disney World! (Chris J. Strolin, Belleville, Ill.)

To dust thou shall return—unless thou dost secure a weekly service plan with Merry Maids™. (Marty McCullen, Gettysburg, Pa.)

Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; for behold, Wisk shall wash it away, yea, even the dirtiest rings. (Kyle Hendrickson, Dunkirk; Roy Ashley, Washington)

Honor shall uphold the humble; but if that faileth, thou shouldst consider Viagra. (Mel Loftus, Holmen, Wis.)

It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done. Thanks, Ex-Lax! (Russell Beland)

Let me enlighten you and show you which way to go; let me offer counsel; my eye is on you. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, or as the dummy who doth not watch "Dr. Phil's Primetime Special," tonight on CBS. (Jane Auerbach)

At BASF, we didn't start the fire . . . (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

For oft when on my couch I lie In vacant or in pensive mood They flash upon that inward eye That is the bliss of solitude, And then my heart with pleasure fills And dances with the Prozac pills. (Dan Nooter, Washington)

Ich bin ein Berlitzer. (Russell Beland)
And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass . . . that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother; yet it was no match for Bounty paper towels . . . (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village)

Oh the shark bites with his teeth, dear, And he keeps them Rembrandt white. Aris Light gloves wears old Macheath, dear, But they don't fit—they're too tight. (Brendan Beary)

The mystic chords of our memories' Stratocaster stretch from every battlefield and patriot grave . . . (Russell Beland)

This is the way the world ends, With loud bangs from Patriot missiles made by Raytheon. (Roy Ashley)

MISS MANNERS

Judith Martin

The Face of Resentment

"But what about me?" is not a thought that can be easily held while maintaining a socially presentable facial expression.

The lower lip ventures out and the eyes narrow. This is a peculiarly unpleasant combination, lacking both the pathos of sorrow and the strength of anger.

And it overcomes some people just when their faces are supposed to be glowing with vicarious pleasure in someone else's good fortune. A friend or a relative gets engaged or promoted, or receives an honor or expects a baby. Others are making a great fuss about it. In their midst, however, one who seemed fine before this, or at least reconciled to fate, and who is supposed to be joining the rejoicing, is nursing a sense of the injustice of the world.

It can even be ill fortune that leads to this reaction, if that has garnered flurries of sympathy. In that case, "Why did this happen to him and not to me?" is replaced with "Why are they making so much over his problem when I have suffered so much worse?"

Or it can focus on a more immediate claim to injustice: "Why is she getting all the attention when I contributed, too?"

This condition is reported to Miss Manners by the people who find it welling up in them—yet they suspect that it is not quite nice. They may have made an effort to conceal how they felt. Still, it rankles, and they are hoping that Miss Manners can tell them a polite way of calling attention to the injustice they perceive.

A lady who feels "insignificant" because her husband's school friends refer to "John's wedding" and "John's house" proposes saying, "with a smile and a laugh, 'I was at the wedding, too, and I put too much planning and money into it not to have my name attached to it' or 'Well, I think I live here, too,'" but acknowledges that she might sound curt.

A gentleman whose wife alone received flowers after the birth of their baby, from the office

where they both work, asks if he has to "grin and bear it, or is some subtle polite way of letting them know that I was offended" available, because although "she was the one who did most of the work, I feel like I deserve some of the credit for the creation of our beautiful daughter."

A lady whose in-laws proposed giving her husband a surprise 40th birthday party with no mention of her own 40th birthday, three days earlier, is afraid that she will have "to plaster a smile on my face and not say anything, because I don't want to start a big fight and spoil my husband's party."

Yes, but even the quality of these laughs, grins and smiles frightens Miss Manners. She could propose jokes ("It was a great wedding, and I was so happy to be able to be there"; "I couldn't have done this without her"; "I'm so glad you're no longer too young for me"), but knows that pouters will not be able to pull them off.

Relief lies only in learning to enjoy other people's pleasure, most especially when the other people are spouses. As for the generalists who feel slighted when anyone at all has a wedding, birthday or baby, their only hope is to realize that the amount of happiness in the world is not finite. Other people's happiness does not detract from theirs, it only adds to the amount of happiness in the world.

Dear Miss Manners:
I'm hoping that you will be able to tell me if it is ever okay to tell someone they are being rude?

No, because that would be rude. OOOOPS!

Feeling incorrect? E-mail your etiquette questions to Miss Manners (who is distraught that she cannot reply personally) at MissManners@unitedmedia.com or mail to United Media, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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DEAR ABBY

Dear Abby:

I was recently at a youth sporting event. Later that evening, one of the coaches and several of the parents were sitting around the hotel pool talking. Some joking sexual comments were made. The coach told one of the other fathers that he had a picture of himself as a youth. He pulled it out of his wallet, and it was passed around the group. It was a picture of a 7- to 10-year-old boy, completely naked, that had been "altered" to exaggerate the size of the boy's you-know-what.

Not a single parent voiced any objection to this picture. The coach later handed the picture to me (after one of the other parents laughingly told him he should show it to me). When I expressed disgust ("I really don't appreciate you showing this picture"), the coach made me out to be the bad guy.

Do you think this picture is appropriate for a coach of adolescent boys to carry in his wallet and show to others? It struck me as child porn.

Amazed and Disgusted Dad in Michigan

The incident should be reported to the league authorities. For the coach to have shown the picture was a juvenile display of bad taste and poor judgment. For that reason I am not sure he is responsible enough to be supervising young boys.

Dear Abby:

I have known "Edgar" for four years. At first, he'd see me twice a week, but only for sex. He stood me up a lot and was secretive about his life. I grew tired of it and started seeing other men. When Edgar found out, we had a big fight and broke up.

A week later Edgar was back, begging to start over. He promised to change and even moved in with me for three months. Then he reverted to his old ways. I was helping him to pay his bills

because I earned more than he did. When I lost my job and could no longer help him, he pulled away from me.

I now have another well-paying job. Edgar is back once or twice a week, but on weekends he's gone again. He claims his 16-year-old son is visiting and his ex doesn't want me around. Yet he accuses me of cheating, which is not true. I let Edgar know where I am at all times. I just want to be happy and have a real relationship. Please tell me what to do.

In Love and Alone

A man who had sincere feelings for you would not have disappeared the minute you were out of a job. It appears that Edgar will stay only if you pay. There's a word for it, and the word isn't "love." If you want a real relationship, you will lose this loser. It shouldn't be difficult. Tell Edgar you've been laid off, and I guarantee he'll vanish.

Dear Abby:
Can you please tell me what "cemetery etiquette" is?

Pearl in Manteca, Calif.

It is behaving with respect for the people who are buried there, and being sensitive to the feelings of visitors who might be mourning. It includes: speaking quietly, dressing conservatively and refraining from littering, stepping on the graves or blocking cars in the funeral procession on their way to the grave site (or cutting in front of them). It also means the car stereo isn't blasting so loudly it will distract other visitors or wake the dead.

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.

N-S vulnerable

NORTH

♠ K Q J 4

♥ A 4

♦ 7 4 3 2

♣ 9 4 3

WEST (D)

♠ 8 6

♥ Q J 10 7 6 3 2

♦ 8

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EAST

♠ A 10 9 7

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♦ J 10 9 6

♣ J 6 2

SOUTH

♠ 5 3 2

♥ K 5

♦ A K Q 5

♣ A K Q 10

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
3 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 ♦	Pass	6 NT

All Pass

Opening lead: ♥ Q

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