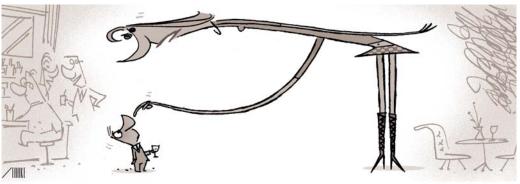
The Style Invitational

Week 608: Comeback Next Week



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

STYLE

This week's contest: Lisa Linske-O'Connell of Rockville wrote the Empress to suggest a contest "inspired by my beautiful over-6-foot-tall younger sister. Whenever men ask her, as they often rudely do, if she plays basketball, she has always wanted to respond, 'No, are you a jockey?' "Lisa wonders if the Greater Loser Community could come up with original snide retorts to various rude questions or comments. (This is actually pretty much the same contest as Week 128, "Snappy Answers to Stupid Questions," Sept. 17, 1995. But as we just said: Original. Not those.)

The winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets a super-cool six-foot-tall inflatable palm tree that the Empress bummed off the Washington Post TV writers after they'd received two of them in a promotion for some show or other.

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, if you really have to, by fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, May 9. 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 May 29. 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 Phyllis Reinhard of East Fallowfield, Pa.

Report from Week 604, our annual contest to "breed" horses culled from the list of eligible entries for this year's Triple Crown races, and name their offspring: As usual, we were deluged with several thousand entries, many from people who enter the Invitational every year for just this one contest. Some very fine entries were sent in by four or (many) more people; some of them are in the box below. Note: You just may find your very own horse name among the winners below, without your very own human name on it. It's almost inevitable with that many entries and one pair of increasingly glazed eyeballs. But look: If you're so interested in a fair shake, then why were you playing around with racehorses?

- ♦ Fourth Runner-Up: Silent Bid x Hole in the Head = Shh for Brains (Dan Seidman, Watertown, Mass.)
- ◆ Third Runner-Up: Snack x I Live for This = Raisin d'Etre (Ron Bottomly, Columbia)
- ♦ Second Runner-Up: Roman Ruler x Awesome Twist = Pontius Pilates (Jon Reiser, Hilton, N.Y.)
- ♦ First Runner-Up, winner of the handbag made out of a coconut: Texcess x Snack = Best Little Ho-Hos (Chris Doyle, Raleigh)
- ◆ And the winner of the Inker: First Word x Wrapped = Mummy (Lori Price, Leesburg)

♦ Honorable Mentions

Awesome Twist x I Live for This = DNA(Bonnie E. Hughes, Reston)

Awesome Twist + Southern Africa = Half-NelsonMandela (Beth Morgan, Palo Alto,

Biloxi Palace + War Plan = Shack Attack (Russell Beland, Springfield)

Cadillac Cruiser x Lost in the Fog = Off-

Star (Cindy Johnson, Alexandria) Cat Robber x Defer = Tom Delay (Mark

Eckenwiler, Washington) Commodity Trader x Awesome Twist =

Pork Belly Dancer (Veggo Larsen, Barboursville, Va.)

Consolidator x Giacomo = Debt in Venice (Brendan Beary, Great Mills)

Count Me In x Yes Yes Yes = What Meg's **Having** (Christina Courtney, Ocean City)

Customer x Lost in the Fog = Pay Misty for Me (Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

Defer x Ulistnintome = Deafer (Mary Lee Fox Roe. Mount Kisco. N.Y.)

Diamond Isle x Hole in the Head = BlingOutYourDead (Beth Morgan)

Distorted x Three Hour Nap = Fox Snooze (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Drum Major x Landslide = Stick in the Mud (Stephanie Thomas, Arlington)

Drum Major x So Long Birdie = Frank Perdue (Jean Sorensen, Herndon, Va.)

Drum Major x Sweet Catomine = Tympan Alley Cat (Chris Doyle)

First Word x What's Up Dude = Yo (Dave

Prevar, Annapolis) Giacomo x Wrapped = Giac Strap (Harvey

Smith, McLean)

Giacomo x Premium Tap = Nationala

Boheme (Dave Prevar) Golden Shine x Roman Ruler = Orange Ju-

lius (Jan Stanley, Reston) Golden Shine x Hole in the Head = Flash in

Trepan (Chris Doyle) **High Fly x Closing Argument = XYZ** (Pam

Sweeney, Germantown)

I'm Bluffing x Bluff = I'm Not Bluffing (Russell Beland)

In Excelsis + Exit Left = Sic Transit

Gloria (Pam Sweeney)

Kansas City Boy x Customer = Missouri **Loves Co.** (Brendan Beary)

Landslide x Tales Not Told = Victorious **Secret** (Dave Prevar)

Landslide x Mr. Congeniality = Have a **Gneiss Day** (Meg Sullivan)

Magna Graduate x Drum Major = Juilliard Honors (Russell Beland)

Monarch Lane x Single Mon = Napoleon

Solo (Stephen Dudzik, Olney) Monarch Lane x Mr. Congeniality =

Social Butterfly (Pam Sweeney)

Never at Dusk x Devil at Sea = Nights InWetSatan (Dennis Lindsay, Seabrook)

Noble Causeway x In Excelsis = Highway

to Heaven (Tacey Mullen, Olathe, Kan.) Premium Tap x Closing Argument =

Lager Heads (Pam Sweeney)

Proud Accolade x High Fly = Braggin' Wrights (Marian Phelps, Vail, Colo.)

Proud Accolade & Defer = Not to Knight (Russell Beland)

Roman Ruler x High Fly = Pilate's License (John O'Byrne, Dublin)

Roman Ruler x Straight Line = XII Inches (Milt Eisner, McLean; Carol Ostrow, Laurel)

Roman Ruler x Apprentice = Nearo (Bonnie Jacob, Alexandria)

Roman Ruler x What's Up Dude = Pope **Keanu I** (Mary Ann Henningsen, Hayward,

So Long Birdie x Apprentice = Sink the

Sort It Out x Closing Argument =

Romantic Snuggle (Mike Cisneros, Centreville)

Southern Africa & Greater Good = Apartheid (P.W. Botha, Cape Town) (Russell Beland)

Straight Line x Masquerader = Vector/ Victoria (Tom Witte, Montgomery Village) Sun King x Dances With Ravens = Ra Lewis (Eric Fulton, Bethesda)

Sun King x Fast Exit = Me Gotta Go (Donna Vervena, Oakton)

Sun King x Straight Line = Tan Gent (Steve Shapiro, Alexandria)

Sweet Catomine X Kansas City Boy = Sweet Catamite (Andrea Kelly, Brookeville)

Sweet Catomine + Defer = Another Hairball (Peter Metrinko, Chantilly)

Tetrahedron x Gone Wild = Four Score (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Texcess x Southern Africa = JimBobwe (John and Ellen Godfrey, Kensington; Joe Bar-

rett, Rockville) Texcess x Hole in the Head = American

Addle (Maggie Lawrence, Culpeper, Va.) Unbridled Energy x Bluff = Raging Bull

(David J. Rawlinson, Leonardtown)

Uncle Whiskers x By Sunday = Santa

Domingo (Beverley Sharp, Washington) Uncle Whiskers x So Long Birdie = Par for the Coarse (Howard Walderman,

War Plan x Texcess = DubyaMD (David McCreedy, Alexandria)

Columbia)

War Plan x Yes Yes Yes = Bloomsday Scenario (Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

War Plan x In Excelsis = Tactical Missal (Russell Beland)

Roman Ruler x Wilko = X-IV Good Buddy (Meg Sullivan)

Yes Yes Yes x I'm Bluffing = Lyin' Ayes (Jan Stanley, Reston)

Yes Yes X Consolidator = Come **Together** (Laura Bennett Peterson, Washington)

Great Ideas but Not Unique Ones:

WEST In Excelsis x Jolly Mon = Day-O Tetrahedron x Commodity Trader = **Pyramid Scheme**

More Than Somewhat x Lost in the Fog = Dubya Yes Yes Yes x Consolidator = Yes Single Mon x Jolly Mon = No Woman No Cry Galloping Grocer x In Excelsis = Lettuce Pray General Jumbo x Awesome Twist =

Tales Not Told x Call the Marines = Don't Ask

Next Week: Truly Stupendous Ideas, or Public Initial Offerings

MISS MANNERS

Judith Martin

Veil of Tears

eddings still make people cry, Miss Manners has discovered. But not, it seems, for the traditional reasons.

The spectacle of an innocent young couple inspired by love to leave the homes and protection of their respective parents and create an irrevocable bond used to set off the sensitive souls among their guests. When people of experience emerge from their own home to create a negotiable bond subject to cancellation, it may still be touching, but perhaps not to a tear-jerking extent.

However, among the people associated with modern weddings, there are still plenty on the verge of tears:

The bride, because she has spent a year planning this wedding, and has discovered that the flowers for the table are a deeper pink than she ordered and don't match the sashes on the bridesmaids' dresses

The bridegroom, because he's had a lonely year and is not sure the solution to it is that executivelevel event planner who has been ordering him around.

The mother of the bride, because she has been told that she didn't put enough money into the wedding to entitle her to have any opinions about how it should be conducted.

The father of the bride, because he has been told that he couldn't bring his second wife, who is home

The mother of the bridegroom, because she has been forced to wear a dress in a color she hates. The father of the bridegroom, because he paid for his daughter's wedding in its entirety and has now been told that tradition demands that at his son's wedding, he pay for a dinner party for the en-

being consumed during several days of festivities. The bridesmaids, because their time, money and patience has been freely consumed for events, clothes and demands to which they never consent-

tire guest list the night before and for all the liquor

The groomsmen, because they've had too much beer all week. (The bridesmaids have had just as much, but they hold it better. Or get to the restroom faster.)

The guests, because they realize they have blown their vacation time, as well as great sums of money for transportation, hotels and several rounds of presents, in a place and with a crowd they haven't chosen, only to stand around doing nothing while the wedding pictures are being tak-

The bride's colleagues, because they had to chip in to give her a shower, and they weren't even invited to the wedding.

So who, exactly, is enjoying this ordeal?

Miss Manners still believes in happy weddings, and has been to more than a few. But she is beginning to understand why observers of the wedding scene — other than those who are there for love or money — assert that there is an inverse relationship between the elaborateness of the wedding festivities and the success of the marriage. A number of sociologists, divorce lawyers and members of the clergy have been quoted remarking that the more lavish, complicated and prolonged the arrangements, the more likely the marriage is to end

Here is what makes her teary: The spectacle of a couple — perhaps not so young and not so innocent but nevertheless in love — who feel obliged to devote untold amounts of time and money to producing an elaborate festival that is beyond their experience and capacity and leaves everyone cranky.

Dear Miss Manners:

If one is in the shower or bathtub when a visitor knocks at the door, is it permissible to don a bath towel to let them in? What if the visitor happens to be a relative?

Forgive Miss Manners for asking, but, ah were you expecting anyone?

If not, do you really want to open the door to a stranger when you have no clothes on? But if you were expecting someone, why aren't you dressed

yet? The only relatives who would qualify for an exception are those who shout, "Honey, I'm home! Let me in! I forgot my key," or those to whom you plead, "Ma, please, I keep asking you to call and tell me when you're coming.'

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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ASK AMY

Dear Amy:

I am the oldest of three children. My youngest

brother, "Jim," and I have never gotten along. I had to watch as he manipulated my mother, stole from everyone he met and essentially became a pathological liar.

About three years ago, when he was 18, he and my mother had a painful blowup and he left the house to mooch off of friends. Within months, they eventually called my father. My father helped him manipulate the system so that my brother could live off the state. This worked for a year or so, but then my brother got bored and moved to Canada to live with a girlfriend.

In all this time, I have refused to speak with him unless he grew up and took responsibility for himself. Our family is better at sweeping things under the rug than any family I have ever met, but at least when it comes to my brother I have never

hesitated to say how I feel. Now, not quite a year after moving in with this girl, I am told that his girlfriend is six months pregnant and that they are getting married. I know I have a lot of issues when it comes to my brother. I am still upset with him, but I don't want to punish the child. Would it be wrong to send a small gift without a card? I don't think I can honestly support Jim's decisions and don't even

know what I would say to him. This is the first time I will be an auntie and while I do not want to let my brother back in my life so he can step all over me, I don't want to

ignore this baby, either.

Confused Auntie

Now I'm confused. A gift without a card? I gather from your letter that you think you could continue your "I'm not talking to you" streak by

sending a cardless gift. I applaud your instincts to welcome this baby into the world, and I think you should do so in a way that most reflects you as a person. Do not let your prickly relationship with your brother dom-

inate this situation. I think you should send a gift along with a note or card that says something along the lines of, "I hear there's a new member of the family on the way. I look forward to meeting your wife and ba-

I believe you can continue to be uncompromis-

ing toward your brother's manipulations while still being gracious. You might have to back off in terms of refusing to speak to him, because in order to be a decent auntie you are going to have to be on speaking terms with the child's parents.

Dear Amv:

I had to write about the "Confused Sister" who held a Mother's Day brunch and apparently card on the occasion. I understand your point about doing what's necessary to help others feel good. That's great, but something is way out of whack when their mother says the sister "doesn't have anybody" on Mother's Day. Hello! She has her mother.

What is Mother's Day anyway? Does anyone on that day say, "Look at me, I'm a mother," or "Look at you, you're not a mother"? No. On Mother's Dav my husband and children give me cards and gifts, many of which are homemade, sweet and wonderful, but I am not thinking of myself, I am thinking of my mother and honoring her on that day. Apparently, the offended sister forgot what Mother's Day is all about.

This year's Mother's Day would go much more smoothly if all the sisters in this family got together and said, "What can we do this year to honor our mother on Mother's Day?"

My Two Cents Worth

I heard from many readers who hated my advice that this woman should appease her sister on Mother's Day, just because that would make her feel good. One reader said, "I suppose you think that siblings should be given gifts on one another's birthday?" (Ouch. No I don't, by the

Your point is the best, however. Mother's Day is for mothers. Women who don't have children have mothers or know mothers, and that's the point of the day. I get it and I completely agree.

Ask Amy is written by Amy Dickinson, a journalist who has worked for NBC News, Time magazine and National Public Radio. Write to her at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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BRIDGE | Frank Stewart

Both sides vulnerable

NORTH (D) ♠ AQ43

♥ A K 9 ♦ Q 10 8 4

4 10 8 **EAST ♠** J9 **♠** 108652 **♥** 10843 **¥** 2 ♦ AJ7632 **♦**95 ♣ K Q J 3 **4** 65 **SOUTH**

> **♥**QJ765 ♣ A 9 7 4 2

The bidding: North East South West Pass Pass 2

Pass 1♦ 1 Pass 2♥ 4 **Y** Pass All Pass **Opening lead:** • 6

ome of the claim forms sent to auto insurers have unique explanations of how accidents occurred. Here are a few classics:

"In my attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole." "An invisible car came out of no-

where, struck my car and vanished." And my favorite: "I'd been driving for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel."

In today's deal from a team event, both Souths were snoozing. The play at each table was the same: South took the ace of clubs and hurried to try for a diamond discard on the spades. He cashed the king and ace and led the queen. East ruffed with the deuce of trumps, and South threw his diamond.

East then cashed the queen of clubs and led a low diamond. South

ruffed; ruffed a club, on which West pitched his last diamond; and carelessly ruffed another diamond with a low trump. West overruffed and led a trump, and South was finished: He had two low clubs left to ruff, but dummy had only one trump. Down

It's hard to believe both Souths went down by neglecting to count winners. Ten were easily available: five trumps, three spades, one diamond and one club. After South won the first trick, he could simply draw trumps and lead the king of diamonds, losing two clubs and one diamond.

You'd think the deal arose in a beginners' game. It's actually from a 1983 Bermuda Bowl match, Brazil vs. Sweden. Even world-class experts can fall asleep at the wheel.

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