

The Style Invitational

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 666: Bedevil Us

Are we so deaf to the tongue of Satan, who speaketh always in riddles, that we do not know his handiwork when it is plainly before us? Liquid Crystal Display. LCD. Lucifer, Cursed one, Devil. Repent, before it is too late, specifically 11:34. Hold the cursed object upside down and see where you shall dwell for eternity!

We couldn't let this week go by without doing a contest pegged to this week number, especially since the Empress had been alerted to its impending arrival for about the past 30 weeks by agitated Losers, including Mark Eckenwiler of Washington, who suggested this contest: **Give a mini-sermon (75 words or fewer) explaining how some innocuous object or event signals the End of Days**, as in the example above, contributed by Washington Post columnist and anti-digital-watch activist Gene Weingarten.

Winner gets the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. First runner-up gets four tins of Atone Mints ("for each of your sins"), plus some Mensa pencils with the phone number 1-800-666[M]ENSA, all donated by Loser Ed Gordon of Hollywood, Fla.

Other runners-up win a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt. Honorable Mentions (or whatever they're called this week) 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, June 19. Put "Week 666" 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 July 9. 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 Douglas Frank of Crosby, Tex. The Honorable Mentions name is by Mark Eckenwiler.

REPORT FROM WEEK 662

In which we gave the assignment to "humiliate yourself for ink." That could consist of sucking up to the Empress or just embarrassing yourself in general in front of your neighbors and a million-plus other readers of *The Washington Post*. Some Losers thought they could get by with Rodney Dangerfield-type self-deprecating but fictional one-liners, like this one (well, we assume it's fictional) from Kyle Hendrickson of Frederick: "Once I got excited at a public pool while wearing nothing but a Speedo. And nobody could tell." These all fail — they're not humiliating until they're used as facts in your obituary.

3 The winner in the embarrassing-anecdote category: **When my daughter was a toddler, our family went to the beach. Dressed in a bright red bathing suit with Snoopy on the front and her hair in a ponytail, she ran away from me as fast as she could go. As I started off to catch her, a woman called out: "What a beautiful child! She must be adopted."** (Rochelle Zohn, McLean)

2 The winner in the Suck Up to the Empress category, winner of the bottle of HydroDog dog water:

To My Empress
To just say I'm your servant leaves a lot to be desired: Please use me as your gelding when your darling feet get tired. I'll buy you jewels, I'll scrub your floors — the things that good slaves do. I'll chew the Dentyne for your mouth (or underneath your shoe). And while you eat your chocolate truffles, supine on your couch, I'll stand at rapt attention wearing nothing but a pouch. And, so you know for sure that of my pride there is no trace, Please put your five-inch high heels on, and tap-dance on my face. I'd love to wash your dishes, ma'am, while on your throne you sit. I'd eagerly lick forks and spoons for traces of your spit. So, tell me I am worthless, I am ugly, that I stink. Hell, call me a Republican! Please, ANYTHING for Ink! (G. Smith, Reston)

AND THE WINNER OF THE INKER
Looking Down Toward My Feet (Fred Dawson, Beltsville)



THE IG-NOMINEES

For a 1989 physical, I collected, um, fecal samples, put the strip up on top of a bookshelf to dry, and forgot about it for 12 years. On my 43rd birthday, I rediscovered the sample — mounted in a frame, as a gift from my wife. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

I still have every pair of eyeglasses I have ever owned, going back to the first set from 1962. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel)

When we moved into our house, a billing mix-up led to our gas being shut off for a few days. We took sponge baths from bowls of water heated in the microwave. When the serviceman came to turn the gas back on, he looked at me and said: "Uh, ma'am, that's an electric water heater." (Jennifer LaFleur, Rosemont, Tex.)

I was a member of the Duke men's lacrosse team. The 1957 team, but still. Plus, we went 2-7. (Howard Walderman, Columbia)



For ink I'll stitch my Style Invitational prize magnets into a loincloth and parade before the gathered Losers. Don't worry about anything showing, though: I'll have you know that I already have three magnets. (Wilson Varga, Alexandria)

If you Google "poop" and "dopart," four of the six hits are by me. The others are (1) a typo and (2) in Dutch. (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

When I agree with what's coming out of his mouth, I find Dubya kinda sexy! (Christina Courtney, Ocean City)

As the sixth-place finisher in the 1974 National Spelling Bee, I got to meet Pat Nixon at the White House. It only looks as if I'm ogling the national assets. (Mark Eckenwiler, Washington)

I have been a writer all my life. I was teaching journalism at a major university when the Empress was still working on her high school paper, and the only time I can get my damn name in *The Washington Post* is in this stinking column. (Ira Allen, Bethesda)



FROM THE TULSA TRIBUNE

My college application essay was about winning Rookie of the Year in *The Style Invitational*. (Beth Baniszewski, Somerville, Mass.)

Every single week, I send in my Style Invitational entries with an e-mail beginning "O Empress, My Empress," followed by a rhyming poem begging for ink, like this one in Week 660: "After all these pretty rhymes / And many wonderful times / With you I willingly flirt / Just for a loser T-Shirt..."

(Drew Bennett, Alexandria) [This is true — and they're always that bad.]

Years ago at a party, I used the hallway bathroom just off the crowded living room. When I turned around while zipping up, I saw that the door had swung halfway open. There was only minor applause. (Dave Prevar, Annapolis)

I sent in an entry calling the Empress "a whore" and later I met her in person and she asked me about it. (Elliott Schiff, Allentown, Pa.)

Inspired by the selfless heroism of David Blaine, I will immerse myself alive in the bathtub for eight days. I'm just sad I have to pretend to humiliate myself just to get a little publicity for this amazing feat, especially since I am doing it as a plea for world peace and an end to hunger. (Cecil J. Clark, Asheville, N.C.)



Humiliation has to be public. My private hell — 114 failed attempts to get ink from the Empress — is private, so it doesn't count. (Ross Elliffe, Picton, New Zealand)

Next Week: Worth at Least a Dozen Words, or Litter of the Pics

ASK AMY

Dear Amy:
My boyfriend and I have been going out for almost two years.

He loves me more than anything in the world — maybe too much, if that is possible.

After two years, my love for him has slowly started to fade. I am not as willing to be physical with him, and I do not look forward to seeing him as much as I used to. I'm starting to have more fun with my friends than I do with him.

He is unhappy, and so am I. When I suggested the possibility of breaking up, he fell apart.

Although it has gotten to the point where he loves me more than I love him, I still care about him, and I burst into tears to see how hurt he is. We decided to have time apart to think about things.

I know that having someone who loves me as much as he does is one of the best things in the world. I should be grateful, but at times I can't help longing to get away from him. Does that make me a terrible person? It makes me feel terrible and selfish. I also believe it is unfair for him to have to put up with me when I am not returning his love. If I leave him, he will feel so terrible and hurt, and that would make me feel awful.

If I do build up the courage to break up with him, I'm worried that I may end up being alone and regretting leaving the one person who loved me.

Stuck

Here's what will happen if you stay in this lopsided relationship: You'll gradually grow more and more distant, and he'll gradually grow more and more needy until he is so utterly unattractive to you that you will no longer even feel sorry for him. Then you'll be mean to him in large and small ways, hoping that he'll give up on you. Then, if you still lack the courage to break up with him, you'll do something stupid such as have an affair, just to prove how unworthy you are of his affection.

It hurts to leave a relationship, especially when the other person hasn't done anything wrong. But you need to have the courage to face his upset and anger because you haven't

done anything wrong, either. Sometimes things just don't work out, and as the song says, "That's just the way love goes."

There are no guarantees that you won't regret breaking up with him. The possibility of your regret is a tiny morsel of satisfaction that he gets to carry in his pocket as he goes through this experience.

Dear Amy:
I am afraid you missed the mark regarding "Ignored in Racine's" Mother's Day concerns.

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, this holiday is about honoring mothers, not just our own.

My wife and her mother exchange Mother's Day gifts through the mail; they both seem quite pleased with this arrangement. Gifts and sentiments flow in only one direction to my mother, and my wife's feelings are hurt each year this happens.

Think of the moms who, on a daily basis, might be nursing, changing diapers, adjudicating "who did it," administering timeouts, checking homework, bandaging skinned knees and reading the same Dr. Seuss book for the fifth time in two hours.

"Empty-nesters" should be commemorated for having done all of this; "full-nesters" should be indulged and given a break from all tasks — including entertaining mothers-in-law.

Supportive Husband

Many readers took issue with my idea that Mother's Day is a time where the love should mainly flow to the previous generation — the idea being that you and I honor our mothers while our children honor us.

Father's Day is around the corner, giving all of us another chance to get it right.

Write to Amy Dickinson at askamy@tribune.com or Ask Amy, Chicago Tribune, TT500, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

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Filipinos Step Out Of the Shadows

GALA, From D1

definitely Asian, which makes Filipinos so distinct — and nearly invisible. Numbering 2.4 million, Filipino Americans make up the second-largest group of Asian Americans — behind only Chinese Americans, at 2.7 million. But as a group they're the invisible minority, relatively unknown compared to Indian Americans, Korean Americans and Japanese Americans. There are more than 34,000 people of Filipino heritage in the Washington area, scattered around Northern Virginia and Maryland, especially in Prince George's County and Fort Washington. At St. Columba Catholic Church in Oxon Hill, Mass is offered in Tagalog and English.

This is a busy month for the area's Pinoys, as Filipinos call themselves. Last week, hundreds crowded Pennsylvania Avenue for the annual Philippine Fair and Parade. Saturday in Georgetown, there's another gala with the fashion designer J. "Pitoy" Moreno, the Oscar de la Renta of the Philippines, showing off his collection. And the traveling exhibition "Singgalot (Ties That Bind): Filipinos in America" is on display on the Mall, in the concourse of the S. Dillon Ripley Center, chronicling the Pinoy story after the annexation of the Philippines as a U.S. colony in 1898.

"As a people, Filipinos have assimilated so well in this country that we almost work in the shadows," said Jon Melegrito, a longtime activist who hosted last night's event. "It's almost like we carry an inferiority complex. Not because there's something wrong with our culture — we're industrious people. It's because we have this colonialist mentality of being a guest in this country, when we've been here for many, many years."

Every people has a story. And the story of Pinoys cannot be divorced from those of Spain and the United States, which for hundreds of years ruled over the Philippines. The country of 7,000-plus islands was under Spanish colonial rule for more than 300 years before being annexed by the United States at the turn of



PHOTOS BY BILL O'LEARY — THE WASHINGTON POST

The Northern Virginia Rondalla band's Kenneth Paredes, 16, right, and other musicians playing for arriving guests.



Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, outgoing archbishop of Washington, is greeted by Bing Branigan, right, and Ruby Barbosa as he arrives for the gala.

the 20th century.

"It was 300 years in the convent and 50 years in Hollywood," as Dean Alegado, who chairs the ethnic studies department at the University of Hawaii, explained. That's why the Philippines, a predominantly Christian country, is perhaps the most Americanized of all Asian countries, where "Pinoy Idol" is a closely watched as "American Idol."

In 1906, the first significant

group of manongs — "older brothers" — arrived in Hawaii to work on the sugar and pineapple plantations, with many more coming as migrant workers in California farms and Alaska canneries. The end of World War II, with many Filipino soldiers fighting under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, brought more immigrants to the United States. Following that, the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act paved the way for Filipino

professionals — people who saw America as a possibility, a promise, a home away from home.

One of them, Vienna cardiologist Jun Quion, who came to America in 1989 to study medicine, was at last night's gala. Wearing a barong tagalog, of course.

It was an all-Filipino night for sure — a Pinoy band belted out classics like "Paano?" ("How?") — though dinner was decidedly American: beef filet and sea bass. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the outgoing archbishop of Washington, gave the opening remarks, and was followed by Rep. Michael M. Honda (D-Calif.), who chairs the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, and Alberto del Rosario, the Philippine ambassador to Washington. At the opening reception, a group of high-schoolers, all members of the Northern Virginia Rondalla, played traditional Philippine instruments.

Working the room at the reception, passing out fliers in a simple black dress, was Kris Valderrama. "I really need to buy a Maria Clara," the 35-year-old said. Her father, David Valderrama, became the first Filipino American elected to a state legislature on the mainland United States. The young Valderrama is hoping to follow in her father's footsteps.