

Style Invitational

BY PAT MYERS

Report from Week 905

in which we asked for amusing — and fictional — anecdotes in response to some of the “Editor’s Query” requests in The Washington Post Magazine in past years:

**THE
WINNER
OF THE
INKER**

A time when a piece of clothing changed my life: In the jungle you make do with what’s available, so I patched my torn pants seat with a piece of bright red flannel. Had I not, I would have been spared much pain. But I might never have discovered the new species of baboon. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

Snort stories: Honorable mentions

A time when a piece of clothing changed my life:

When I found out that an invisibility cloak is not a strong defense on a charge of public nudity. (Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

It was a load off my shoulders — not that I couldn’t handle it, mind you — when I found that no one could recognize me when I wore a pair of horn-rimmed glasses. — C. Kent, Metropolis (Kevin Dopart, Washington)

Fortunately, just as the mastiff was about to pounce, Lady Gaga walked out of the theater in an amazing dress. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

My neighbor had fallen. She called

2 Winner of the medical poster depicting various ulcers:

A time I misunderstood an advertisement: The sexy guy said I could smell like him if I bought Old Spice. Now I smell like I’m on a horse. (Ward Kay, Vienna)

3 A time when I should have said yes: My wife asked me, “Is it not the case that this dress in no way fails to avoid not making my butt not look small?” (Gary Crockett)

4 The moment you knew you were in love: I was captivated by her melodic yet powerful voice as she called out. Gracefully, she sprinted away. Her beauty brought tears to my eyes — or maybe it was something in the air. Could it be it Mace? I ran after her, singing, “L is for the way you look at me . . .” (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

me, then 911. As I was standing over her, helping her up, the police arrived. They drew their weapons. As soon as they saw my pants, though, they let me go. Apparently hardened criminals don’t soil themselves. (Bird Waring, Larchmont, N.Y.)

A time when I should have said yes:

The Arizona trooper pulled me over. He looked at my out-of-state license and asked, “Are you really a resident of Virginia?” I pointed at the license and said, “See.” And now I have a file at Homeland Security. (Ward Kay)

The one time I actually wanted fries with that. (Kevin Dopart)

When the minister asked if anyone objected to the wedding taking place, I should have shouted, “Yes!” But I

just couldn’t bring myself to say it. Finally, all I ended up saying was “I do.” (Dixon Wragg, Santa Rosa, Calif.)

A time I misunderstood an advertisement:

I think I understand now. If the diaper box says “11-15 pounds,” it means the BABY can weigh 11-15 pounds. Not that the diaper can hold that much poop. (Michael Seaton, Bowie)

Please don’t turn away — the blisters will heal, mostly. You see, when the face cream ad said, “Dermatologist tested,” I thought that meant it had passed. (Gary Crockett)

The moment you knew you were in love:

There she was next to Senator McCain — sassy, brash, full of ideas. That’s when I fell in love. I turned to my wife and said, “I never really appreciated you before this.” (Edmund Conti, Raleigh)

I knew I was in love the moment my wife told me that I was in love. (Jeff Brechlin)

She said, “You’re the one in the Style Invitational? Cool.” (Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Next week: Your mug here, or Vesselmania



We’d rather offer a swaying Inker, but these aren’t bad.

THIS WEEK’S CONTEST



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 908: Recast away

“The Crying Game”: Fire Stephen Rea; hire John Boehner.
“Lost”: Fire Matthew Fox; hire Al Gore, whose character uses salvaged plane parts to get an Internet connection.

In honor of Sunday night’s Oscars, Loser and State Department officer (in that order, we’re sure) Christopher Lamora offers this ready-made contest suggestion direct from Guatemala City: “As Lindsay Lohan has proved time and again, it’s sometimes risky for a studio to hire a big-name star. Sometimes it’s necessary to fire an original cast member and hire someone else.” This week: “Fire” an actor or actress from a movie or TV show, past or present, and offer a replacement for the role, as in Christopher’s examples above. You might also note how the movie’s plot or dialogue might change.

Winner receives the Inker, the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives the lovely pair of swaying dashboard hula girls pictured here; the blue paint blobbed onto their eyes only enhances the Loserly vibe. Donated by Jeff Contompasis.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted Style Invitational Loser T-shirt or yearned-for Loser Mug. Honorable mentions a lusted-after Loser magnet. First Offenders get a smelly tree-shaped air “freshener” (Fir Stink for their First Ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, March 7; results to be published March 27 (March 25 online). Put “Week 908” in the subject line of your e-mail, or it may be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. Read the Style Invitational rules and guidelines at wapo.st/inviterules. Read this and previous contests at washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational. Follow the Empress on Twitter at PatMyersTWP. The revised title for next week’s results and this week’s honorable-mentions subhead are both by Tom Witte.



STYLE CONVERSATIONAL Have a question for the Empress or want to talk to some real Losers? Join us at washingtonpost.com/styleconversational.



ROGER DECKKER

SONIC BOOM: Lykke Li’s “Wounded Rhymes” ups the volume.

POP CD REVIEW

Lykke Li WOUNDED RHYMES



Lykke Li is a singer so popular in her native Sweden that her face recently adorned a Levi’s ad campaign that wallpapered the Stockholm subway system. Wearing heavy mascara, the wildly talented 24-year-old stared down rush-hour commuters with a ridiculous quote printed over her head: “I believe life’s too short for

compromises and bad fitting jeans.”

So what about bad-fitting songs? Because, unlike her denim, Lykke likes her songs way too big. The tunes that crowd her sophomore album, “Wounded Rhymes,” sound dense, distended and dipped in oceans of reverb deep enough to drown even her tremendous charisma. “Sadness Is a Blessing” rebuilds Phil Spector’s wall of sound for the high-definition generation, and it sounds so boomy it’s easy to miss the song’s devastatingly

simple refrain: “Sadness is my boyfriend / Oh, sadness, I’m your girl.”

Sonically, nothing is simple on “Wounded Rhymes.” Drums fire like cannons. Church organs swell into moaning tidal waves. It’s all too loud, and the elegance of Li’s lyrics and tenderness of her voice are dwarfed by the clamor. There might be a brilliant pop album hiding here, but you’ll need a couple of Advil to find it. And life’s definitely too short for that kind of compromise.

— Chris Richards