

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Grin Pan Alley: 'Hopeful' songs

BY PAT MYERS

Four weeks ago, in **Week 1202**, the Empress put out a rather desperate call for songs that conveyed some sense of hope. But even in the daze of her post-election state, she was clear-eyed enough to realize she wouldn't mind at least some less-than-noble hoping in the lyrics. Since only a few parodies can fit on this page, see bit.ly/invite1206 for a dozen or so equally clever honorable mentions, complete with links to the tunes.

4th place

To "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend":

A gift in their names could be so consequential — Planned Parenthood has two new friends! Black lives, gays or dames? Something environmental? Or the Bill of Rights? Help ACLU win its fights. They'll feel swell at ADL When they count up the dollars and cents. The liberal nation can make its donation In the names of Trump and Pence! (Jane Pacelli, Annandale, Va.)

3rd place

To "Be Our Guest":

Be not stressed! Be not stressed! Recent setbacks? Just a test! In the long run we'll recover, Even stronger as we're pressed. This guy Trump? Sure, he's bad, But there's reason to be glad, As a racist and a bigot, He will open up the spigot And our ranks will be swelled, For the values that we've held, In the end our cause is surely being blessed! So let's not call it crisis Over here in ISIS — Be not stressed! Be not stressed! Be not stressed! (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

2nd place and the man-shaped stress squeezer:

To "The Morning After":

We're sailing off to new adventures, Our Captain's tacking to the right, So many folks sign on to join us, So many different shades of white! Let's show the world that we mean business, Stand up, Americans, be proud! And while you're up, go close our borders, Who needs that scary foreign crowd? Once we were great, now we're just middlin', Each day brings new threats and scares. Cut the tax rate! Profits are piddlin', Let's help our poor billionaires.

This country will grow strong and prosper, Things will get better year by year. But just to keep us on the safe side, We'll double up on our meds, Then we'll start hoarding booze and beer! (Barry Koch, Catlett, Va.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

To "Smile": Smile, though you're stunned and stumbling. Smile, though your tummy's tumbling. Though there's a louse in our president's house, You can smile through the nutty raving, The puerile misbehaving. This horror could be for the best. Who guessed . . .

That the Neanderthal'd win? But, just like Alec Baldwin, We'll squeeze the sweet out of each Orange Tweet. Though the future could not be odder, Think of the Loser fodder! The Trumps will breed a bounteous pile . . . So let's just smile. (Nan Reiner, Boca Raton, Fla.)

Nigh hopes: Honorable mentions

To "YMCA": Oh, man, don't be down in the dumps Though you know, man, that the White House is Trump's. It may blow, man, to feel like you've been schlonged But it won't last all that long and . . . Hey, girl, things will turn out all right; There's a way, girl, if you're old,



BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Week 1206: Do over the do-over — enter any of the year's contests

Winner of *Week 1175*, to coin a word whose letters add up to 13 points in *Scrabble*: **DCayed: Having served in federal office too long.** (Duncan Stevens)

Winner of *Week 1163*, to spell a word backward and define the result: **QARI: A deep hole the government throws billions into.** (Ellen Ryan)

Week 1170, to "breed" two horses nominated for this year's *Kentucky Derby* and name their "foal": **Perfect Saint x Caribbean = Francis Of A C Sea** (Danielle Nowlin)

Last week, the Empress announced her annual retrospective contest, for those who missed out on (or felt robbed in) any of the previous year's contests (plus a couple). This week: the very same thing — hey, we have 53 contests to cover, and maybe you've been a tad busy at this time of year: **Enter (or re-enter) any Style Invitational contest from Week 1149 to 1202, except for Week 1152, last year's do-over contest.** You may enter more than one contest as long as you don't submit more than 25 entries in all. For contests asking you to use that week's paper, use papers and online articles dated Dec. 15-26. For the obit poems, continue to write about people who died in 2015. Yes, you may resubmit non-inking entries from earlier contests.

How to find all these contests: Go to washingtonpost.com/styleinvitational and click on each contest (click on View More if you stop seeing contests). See this week's Style Conversational column for another method. And be sure to check the results of that week's contest (usually four weeks later) to make sure your idea didn't already get ink. Be sure to give the week number of the contest you're using.

Submit entries at this website: bit.ly/enter-invite-1206 (all lowercase).

Winner gets the Inkin' Memorial, the Lincoln statue bobblehead that is the official Style Invitational trophy. Second place gets a genuine wineglass with the Trump Vineyards logo — just in time for the Inauguration. Toast to the new regime, smash it into the fire, we don't care. Donated by The Post's Patricia Howard. **Other runners-up** win the yearned-for "This Is Your Brain on Mugs" Loser mug or our Grossery Bag, "I Got a B in Punmanship." Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "Magnet Dum Laude" or "Falling Jest Short." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). Deadline is Monday night, Dec. 26; results published Jan. 15 (online Jan. 12). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Chris Doyle; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Tom Witte. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday; follow @StyleInvite on Twitter.

THE STYLE CONVERSATIONAL The Empress's weekly online column discusses each new contest and results. Especially if you plan to enter, see wapo.st/styleconv.

male and white
And if you're not, you can still dry those tears
'Cause he's only here for four years.
We'll vote again when it's 2-0-2-0, Bring someone new in when it's 2-0-2-0.
So don't whine and moan, put aside all that bull
'Cause our glass is always half full . . . (Brad Kelly, Bethesda, whose last Invite ink was in 1998; a longer version of this song is online)

To "Be Our Guest": There'll be mess! There'll be mess! My prediction — just a guess — is that this administration will malfunction under stress. Ethics fails, petty feuds, Donald's grudges, whims and moods Will derail the Trump agenda, send Hair Fuhrer on a benda, Hard to make this land "great" with a gang that can't shoot straight And a leader who'll antagonize the press; There'll be no time for plund'ring when there's so much blund'ring; There'll be mess! There'll be mess! There'll be mess! (Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

To "Tonight" from "West Side Story": Election Day! The thrill that went away! We saw our world collapsing by 9. And yet, we stay, though Canada might say, "Come and join us and you will be fine." We'll try to hide the brimming tears, and wait through four more years

And hope that we're okay. Perhaps he'll try to be a better guy, anyway. Let's pray!

We mourn, alas, this thing that's come to pass And wonder what our new world may hold. As panic grows, we strike a yoga pose While we're watching our future unfold. Before we take an angry stance now, let's give the man a chance now To bring a better day: He may not fail; calm voices will prevail. come what may — Let's pray! (Rhoda Feigenbaum, Oakton, Va., a First Offender)

And Last: To "Smile": Style when the world is warring, Style when your job is boring; When you are down, you should try the SI Read in Style if you're melancholy; Style, and you'll feel more jolly — We've got a pun regarding poo for you.

Light up your face with humor; Hide every trace of gloom or Fear things severe may be ever so near. That's the time for a rhyme amusing; Style — laugh through all your losing. You'll find that life is still worthwhile If you just Style. (Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

More honorable mentions in the online [Invite at bit.ly/invite1206](http://Invite.at/bit.ly/invite1206).

SUNDAY CHALLENGE

BY BRUCE VENZKE © 2016 CROSSYNERGY SYNDICATE LLC

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Israeli notable	1 Modern pictograph
5 Wows	2 Supply for a plastic surgeon
15 Dermatologist's concern	3 Do some camber work
16 Most curve-laden	4 They might attract workers
17 Concerning the ear	5 "It may come _____ surprise ..."
18 Far northern American port	6 Totally busted
19 Slow equine gait	7 Retro golf wear
21 Object with multiple heads	8 Pundit's page
22 Slangy negative	9 Close
23 Futures dealers?	10 Handle poorly
24 Conservative strongholds	11 "Lady and the Tramp" cat breed
30 Paints delicately	12 1946 Literature Nobelist
33 Race start?	13 Glacial soil deposit
34 Simplicity	14 ERA and RBI, say
38 Early outcast	20 Bar or bakery order
39 Represent falsely	25 Put on the shelf
40 Chicken _____	26 Delmonico, e.g.
41 Onetime VHS rival	27 Wing alternative
	28 Non-Latino, maybe
	29 Printer powder
	30 Society newcomer, briefly
	31 Schubert's "_____ Maria"
	32 Track action
	35 Anthropoid
	36 Perseus, to Zeus
	37 Strait's "All My _____ Live in Texas"
	42 Those who worship
	44 With brevity
	46 Pops up
	47 Milk source
	48 Bank employee
	49 Showy annual
	50 Montana mining center
	52 Children, in legalese
	53 Savage
	54 Disciple's query
	56 LAX approximations
	57 MacFarlane of "Family Guy"
	58 _____ Reader (eclectic digest)
	59 Ship's records
	61 God, in Italian

Answer to last week

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HOROSCOPE

BY JACQUELINE BIGAR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Dec. 18: This year your spontaneous side emerges and throws you into some fun situations. At other times, you are overly cautious and worried. You will learn to juggle these diverse emotions, and you'll become less dependent on others as a result. If you are single, you could meet someone very different, perhaps while traveling. If you are attached, the two of you fulfill a long-discussed goal. Sometimes you need to give each other space, as too much togetherness will cause you to fight. Virgo's fussiness annoys you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Go along with spontaneity, but don't be surprised if you quickly lose interest in what you are doing. Getting involved in a project or stopping at the gym could help to recharge your batteries.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

You could be in a situation that might cause a problem or two if you don't handle it properly. Tap into your ingenuity to come up with the right solution.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Use the morning to make calls to friends and loved ones whom you rarely get to see. You could be taken back by some of what you hear, yet delighted by other parts.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

Reach out to someone at a distance. You might decide that a phone call is the best present you can give yourself. Be careful if you encounter an argumentative situation. Harsh words said now might not be forgiven by Christmas.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Use the daylight hours for important matters. Others will react to your strong charisma; thus, you are likely to get a "yes." Be more in touch with your needs in a relationship.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You could be a little down in the morning, but by the afternoon you'll feel like a different person. Some of you might get an earful from a loved one. This person wouldn't be so upset if they didn't care.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Use the morning to join a friend. Why not opt to head to brunch together? Afterward, you might need some personal time. Don't hesitate to take a nap, if need be. You will need to keep your energy high for the coming holidays.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

A responsibility involving a parent or older person demands your attention; be sure to clear it out quickly. You will want the evening for yourself or for finishing up some holiday errands.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Make calls early. You also might want to make dinner reservations or buy a concert ticket. Later on, you will need to be available for a loved one.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

A loved one will want to spend some special time with you before the hectic holiday pace takes over. Indulge this person by setting aside a few hours for them. In the afternoon, do some planning for a post-holiday get-together.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Be prepared to politely turn down an invitation, and then reschedule being with that person later. You'll be all smiles as you see how rewarding it is to be so open-minded. Keep any last-minute spending to a minimum.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Make it okay to demand some time with a close friend or loved one. Be careful about a difference of opinion, and refuse to let it blow up into something more.

Grandmother's joy pains her friend

Ask Amy

AMY DICKINSON

she is hurt because I don't ask for frequent updates on her grandchild. Quite honestly, I am happy for her, but the anecdotes and updates from a delighted grandparent remind me of what we may never have (but thought and hoped we would).

I asked my friend if she could share news with other grandparents, but she feels I am not being a good friend and should keep grandchild updates as a regular part of our conversations.

Do I have to?
Old Friend

Old Friend: You don't "have to" do anything you don't want to do, but the kindest thing is for you to acknowledge and tolerate your friend's life news, just as she should kindly acknowledge and tolerate yours.

I am not unhappy and choose not to dwell on lost possibilities. Life is unexpected, and there are many ways to include children in your life, but neither my daughter nor I is ready for that just now.

My friend recently told me

of her life completely private. It is very challenging to be hitting a rough patch just as others seem to be sailing. I hope you and your old friend can privately, honestly and compassionately come to an understanding about your respective needs.

Dear Amy: "Deeply Disappointed" described a very tough situation with his 23-year-old stepson, who had already been jailed for DWI. Nobody mentioned if this young man was enrolled in a 12-step program to deal with his drinking. I feel this is necessary for his recovery.

Worried

Worried: I agree. Sobriety is a daily triumph. Twelve-step programs can help.

Amy's column appears seven days a week at washingtonpost.com/advice. Write to askamy@amydickinson.com or Amy Dickinson, Tribune Content Agency, 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, Tex. 75001. You can also follow her @askingamy.

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