

DIVERSIONS

THE STYLE INVITATIONAL

Heavy-wit bouts: Winning rap battles

BY PAT MYERS

In Week 1374 we once again paid tribute to (a.k.a. ripped off the concept of) the YouTube series Epic Rap Battles of History with this Losely rhyming trash talk between two historical, literary or, um, other figures. Lots more, including videos (Salk vs. Sabin! Pablo Escobar vs. George H.W. Bush!), at wapo.st/invite1378.

4th place:

Darth Vader vs. Luke Skywalker:

Darth: Your lame-ass rebel band is green — you're all a bunch of rookies!
Got the sprightliness of Yoda, the loquacity of Wookiees.
Just froze your pal in rock for a bounty hunter! Sad!
Frankly, I'm embarrassed to admit that I'm your dad.

Luke: Can it, you robotic, creepy Empire-loving hack!
The fire station called and they want their helmets back!
And ditch the cape, Darth Dracula!
What is this, Halloween?
And Pops, about your breathing? Try an antihistamine.
(Duncan Stevens, Vienna, Va.)

3rd place:

Kermit the Frog:

What kind of monster teaches kids to want sugar?
Cookie Monster: Me guess it not easy being color of booger.
(Jesse Frankovich, Lansing, Mich.)

2nd place and the Seattle Space Needle ringtoss snow globe:

Pierre Curie vs. Marie Curie:

Pierre: Don't confuse, you're just my muse, ain't no chauvinism,
You're my student, I'm a PhD in magnetism!
You know Curie's law? Well, it's named after me.
And the unit of measure? It's "curie," not "marie!"

Marie: So sad you think the unit's named after you,
You got one Nobel, but I'm stylin' with two!
You died in '06, run over by a carriage;
Your name would be forgotten if not for your marriage!
The more famous Curie? You best believe that I am.
Je m'appelle Marie, but they call me Ma-DAMN!
(Bill Dorner, Indianapolis)

And the winner of the Lose Cannon:

Harriet Tubman: I'm an Abolition hero, Union soldier, scout and spy!
Your face is on the twenty still — you wanna tell me why?**Andrew Jackson:** You're crazy if you think that off the twenty I'll be scoochin'!

Don't care if you've got history, 'cause I've got Steve Mnuchin!
(Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase)

Peanut Eminems: Honorable mentions

Shakespeare vs. Dr. Seuss:

Will: Thou knave who pens these "books" for youth, with talking fauna most uncouth:
Thy "doctorate"? The thought's absurd! Like elephant that hatches bird.

Doc: I would not read a word you wrote,
Not in a car or on a boat,
Your fusty works? Not worth a damn,
I would not read them, Will-I-am.
(Mark Raffman, Reston)

Jill Biden: It's 20 years now that your Skins have been slidin';
You need lines that can block like the gals from Team Biden.**Dan Snyder:** Your women on de-fense can't take any chances — They've learned by repulsing Joe's handy advances.
(Kevin Dopart, Washington)**Ivanka Trump vs. Hunter Biden:**

Ivanka: The Senate probe's just underway
But we all know what they will say:
Your "service" on that Ukraine board
Was shady, crooked and untoward.
Hunter: Oh, I'm the one who's gone off wild?
You're nepotism's poster child!
So let those fools investigate me — At least my dad don't want to date me.
(Mark Raffman)

Ahab: You bilious blob of blubber, I am the champ!
I'll chop you up for oil just to light my lamp.**Moby Dick:** Your obsession with me just makes me grin — Those kids in Freshman English

BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

New contest for Week 1378: It's (emergency) Parody Time

The Style Invitational last did a song parody contest just four months ago. But that was 2019 B.C.: Before Coronavirus. Even a matter of weeks ago, we didn't shudder involuntarily when we saw a photo of people gathering at a dinner table, chatting at the office, or even — eek! — touching.

And while the Internet has been teeming with "My Corona," "I Want to Wash My Hands," etc., the Loser Community still has a lot to work with out there.

This week: Write a song about Life in the Age of Corona, set to a familiar tune (or even one of your own, if you perform it on video). It can be about the virus itself, about living in isolation, about our leaders. The humor can be pointed but not so bitterly angry that its wit is crushed.

If you make a video, we might feature it in the online Invite, but it's the quality of the lyrics that matters most. If you do, send us a YouTube link that the Empress could share in the results.

But please: We are in the midst of a horrifying pandemic, overflowing with tragedy and fear. And anger. And helplessness. And depression. I strongly believe, with evidence I see every day on social media and simply among friends, that humor helps us face our situation, helps bring a smile, if a wistful one. But for heaven's sake: It's emphatically not the time for sick humor, for anything making light of the power of this virus and the toll it has taken on our fellow human beings.

Submit up to 25 entries (in case you're Irving Berlin) at wapo.st/enter-invite-1378 (no capitals in the Web address). Deadline is Monday, April 20 (an extra week!); results will appear May 3 in print, April 30 online.

Winner gets the Lose Cannon, our Style Invitational trophy. Second place receives a very special, very timely prize: 34-time Loser Pete Morelewicz, who's an artist and graphic designer, has a hobby of creating posters and such on an old-fashioned letterpress, with raised wooden letters imprinting the text on the paper. Pete donated, for the Invite cause, a limited-edition poster reading "Thou Shalt Not Covid Thy Neighbor's Spouse. — *Fauci 3:16.*" Perfect for framing over the bathroom sink.

Other runners-up win their choice of our "For Best Results, Pour Into Top End" Loser Mug or our "Whole Fools" Grossery Bag. Honorable mentions get one of our lusted-after Loser magnets, "Too-Weak Notice" or "Certificate of (de) Merit." First Offenders receive only a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" (FirStink for their first ink). See general contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline "Heavy-Wit Bouts" is by Tom Witte; Gary Crockett wrote the honorable-mentions subhead. Join the Devotees group on Facebook at [on.fb.me/invdev](https://www.facebook.com/on.fb.me/invdev).

The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column reviews each new contest and set of results. Especially if you're thinking of writing a parody, check it out at wapo.st/conv1378.



PETE MORELEWICZ

Hot off the old-fashioned letterpress: This week's second prize.

know who'll win! (Beverly Sharp, Montgomery, Ala.)

Samuel Beckett: I wrote a groundbreaking play about men wasting their lives,
You talked smack about Windsor and some merry old wives.**Shakespeare:** O these cuts, though unkind, have so wounded me — not!
Perchance you're still mad 'bout bein' stiffed by Go-dot?
(Frank Mann, Washington)**Mrs. Sprat:** Consuming fat is where it's at, and that is that. I'm ultra-keto;
Only blubber is my grubber. You're a lout to doubt my credo.**Jack Sprat:** "Here's the skinny: you're a ninny. Fat impacts your tracts with plaque,
And passion flops (libido drops) with all the glops of lard you pack.**Mrs. Sprat:** "Like you control the passion — LOL! You're not King Cole, and I'm not Frito-Lay, and who is Jack-ass you to lecture me about libido?"**Jack Sprat:** "Ho, I'd veto any keto-eating credo. You can yak, but fat

is wack. I'd rather snack on ipecac. You don't know Jack!"
(Alex Steelsmith, Kailua, Hawaii)

French Chef vs. Swedish Chef:

Julia Child: My food's *la bombe* and yours is flawed.
In Stockholm I'm the Smorgas-Broad.
Swedish Chef: Ah svenska yom eh spoon i fork,
Orm desh, dee born desh, de umn bærk!
(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn)

Joe Biden: You're a socialist nut with a thing for Castro!
You'll steal from the rich like a sign-swipin' Astro!**Bernie Sanders:** I've been fightin' for the workin' class all of my life,
And at least I can tell my sister from my wife!
(Jesse Frankovich)

Michelangelo: I'm lookin' at your paintings and I gotta say I see no Real difference from the scribbles of a one-armed bambino.
Picasso: Your stuff is well known (for a ceiling-painting hack)
And just like your mama, you work on your back.
(Kevin Dopart)

The Czar: I'm the king of the ink, I'm the champ of the choosers,
The man in the lead of a legion of Losers!

The Empress: It's time for the Czar to say sayonara — There's a new judge in town, and she's rockin' a tiara.
(Jesse Frankovich)

More honorable mentions in the online Invite at wapo.st/invite1378.

Still running — deadline Monday night, April 6: Our contest for ideas of games, activities, etc., you can do/make with things around the house. See wapo.st/invite1377.

L.A. TIMES SUNDAY PUZZLE

EDITED BY RICH NORRIS AND JOYCE NICHOLS LEWIS

"THE OTHER HALF" By PAUL COULTER**ACROSS**

1 Haunt

7 Mountain geography

10 Calypso offshoot

13 Pond buildup

18 Arrive onshore, perhaps

19 Slate or Salon

21 Plop or plunk

22 Nobelist Bohr

23 Pasta on the barbie?

26 Bill with billions

27 Brother of Andrew the Apostle

28 Detective's aid

29 Chilled

30 Churchill's "so few": Abbr.

32 Like the club that Sinatra, Zappa and Capra belonged to?

35 Like Stout's Wolfe

40 Buxom

42 Hawaiian for "long"

43 Some summer shows

45 Each

46 Defense gp. since 1943

47 Give or take, say

51 "Don't forget we're having omelets"?

55 Sea of troubles

56 On the job, for short

57 Havens

58 Au pair's subj. How early LPs were recorded

61 Roswell sightings, briefly

63 Johnson of "Laugh-In"

64 Peke or Pom

65 Angry reaction

68 Town group that decides what kinds of laws are allowed?

73 Legal claims

74 Court contest

76 Ravel's "Gaspard de la nuit"

77 Banned fruit spray

79 Kiwi or rhea

80 "Anderson Cooper 360" channel

81 Facebook option

84 "The Gold-Bug" monogram

87 School near Windsor

88 Unexpected eccentric skydiver?

93 Basic video game

94 "Saving Private Ryan" craft: Abbr.

95 "I, Claudius" role

96 "You left me no choice"

97 Mag man with a mansion

98 Square

100 Condition

101 Lucky one at the dairy raffle?

107 Splitting target

108 Opposite of love

110 Yours, to Yvette

111 Largest of the Balearic Islands

117 Lush

118 Sniffing the jalapeños?

122 Makes less unruly

123 Atlanta-based channel

124 Ad headline

125 Biblical miracle units

126 In check

127 Approx.

128 Nintendo's Super

129 Suppressed anger

DOWN

1 Assns.

2 Diamond used as an abrasive

3 Tongue trouble?

4 W competitor

5 Bank deposit

6 Contemptuous look

7 Beauty

8 Doc bloc

9 _-12

10 "Cheers!"

11 Martial art with bamboo swords

12 "Exodus" hero

13 Sweater

14 Jungle climber

15 Arrive

16 Smart follower

17 Saint-Saëns trio

20 Walk clumsily, like the Jabberwock slayer

24 Blah

25 Bank (on)

31 Features of beer and sponges

32 Pays

33 June 14 honoree

34 Fuddy-duddy

35 Uranus, e.g.

36 Ernie's pal

37 Obama attorney

38 Getting too many rays

39 Coll. major

41 WWI battleship

44 "Beat it!"

46 Leering sort

47 Colonial bloodsucker

48 Wear down

49 Wouldn't stop talking

50 Modern sources of reflections

52 Brewer's oven

53 Architect

54 This, in Toledo

60 Kiarra's mother in "The Lion King"

62 Dart

63 NYC dance troupe

65 Throat problem

66 "Cool beans!"

67 Austrian composer

69 Full-length

70 "Babe" in the 1995 film, e.g.

71 Dry Spanish sherry

72 Slicker in a bar

75 Undercoat

78 Mormon prophet, or the Utah city named for him

81 One in a roundup

82 Pedestrian stalker

83 In conflict with, with "of"

85 "Crimes and Misdemeanors" actor

86 Short stroke

89 Brief warning about the links?

90 Shows for the first time

91 "How's that again?" words

92 Help-wanted ad abbr.

97 Luther's crime, per the Diet of Worms

98 Carbon compound

99 Splendor

101 It's enough for Juan

102 WWII sub

103 Hitching aid

104 Where mariners go

105 Poetic feet

106 Bikini blast

108 Iona College athletes

112 Asian genre influenced by The Beatles

113 Australian export

114 Debussy's dream

115 Hudson Bay nation

116 NBA part: Abbr.

118 Canonized Mlle.

119 "At Seventeen" singer Janis

120 2019 MLB World Series champs' division

121 Some appliances

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121 Some appliances

4/5/20 xwordeditor@aol.com

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Answers to last week's puzzle below.

HOROSCOPE

BY MADALYN ASLAN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY | April 5: This year, you communicate exceptionally well, winning over the hearts and minds of others with your eloquence. You accomplish a long-held dream. A co-worker will have a personal situation that impacts your daily schedule. Be flexible and adapt to changes, as you are so good at doing. If single, there will be a change of status regarding a liaison. It might get serious. If attached, you have genuinely good fortune regarding romantic bliss. Capricorn is your greatest cheerleader.

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
Service to others is the theme of the day. You offer advice and support. A domestic adjustment works out for the best. Be understanding and avoid confrontations. Clear out your closets and the clutter from your desk and you will feel rejuvenated.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
In love there's greater emotional depth to a relationship today. Be yourself and emotionally honest. You're deeply in touch with your creative side and might want to jot down the brilliant ideas you get today.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
You feel close to your roots. Spend time with your family and loved ones and stick close to home. A parent plays a role. Also take time to retreat to a private place for meditation. Security is key.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)
You get your ideas across today, especially when you are talking to family members, siblings and neighbors. You might be taking one or more short trips. Drive carefully and take time to check up on your mother.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
You might gain a financial boost that feels like a jolt of energy. Help comes through friends. A partner or lover also plays a role. Focus on your motivation and direction. Settle your accounts to ready yourself for the new upcoming week.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
It is all about your health and emotional self and how you feel about yourself. Your feelings will fluctuate today. You might spend time either procrastinating or changing your plans. You focus on how the public relates to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
Your decisions are based on emotions rather than logic today. It is a good time to confide in a close friend whom you trust. Avoid self-destructive behavior. Events from the past play a role today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
It is all about opportunities that come your way today through friends or a social group. The opportunities come suddenly and without warning, so try to act quickly on them. They relate directly to your wishes and goals.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
Variety is the spice of life today. Think freedom and no restrictions. Release old structures and gain a new point of view. Promote new ideas and follow your curiosity. You can overcome obstacles with ease.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan 19)
Foreigners or a foreign country play a role in your day. It is a good time to plan a journey or discuss worldviews, ideas or philosophy. Publicity and advertising are emphasized. Catch up with old friends and family members.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
Be aware of decisions made behind closed doors today. Your psychic abilities will be heightened, so this will not be a problem. In romance your persistence pays off. You are building a foundation for your future.