

The Style Invitational

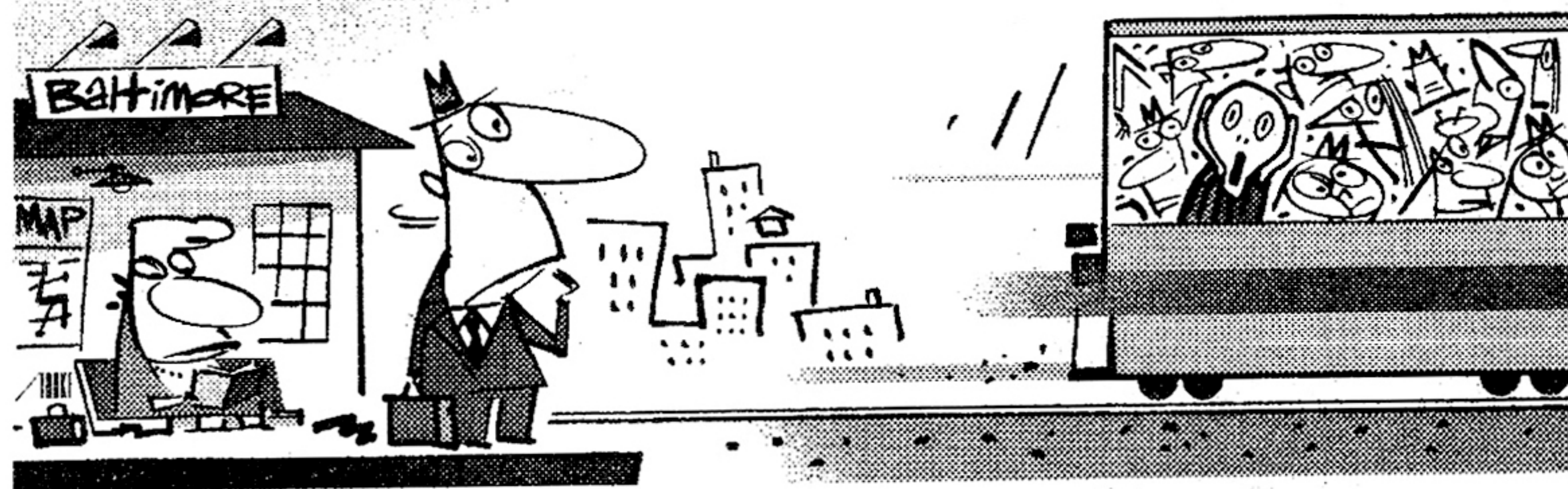
WEEK 206: HYPHEN THE TERRIBLE II

Suspen-fort: *n.* A medieval battlement made entirely of vines hanging from trees, lashed together with chewing gum. Very, very ineffective.

Dis-ful: *adj.* Extremely rude.

Snarl-putes: *v.* Operates a computer in a fashion inconsistent with optimal results, producing incomprehensible but terrifying error messages such as 'cancel, retry, abort?'

Passen-ful: *adj.* Describes the overstuffing of persons into a public conveyance. 'The Metroliner from D.C. to New York was so passen-ful, 12 people died of asphyxiation.'



BY BOB STANKOVIC FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Today's contest: Create a new word by combining the first half of any hyphenated word in today's newspaper with the second half of any other hyphenated word elsewhere in the same story, and supply a definition. You may

give a sample sentence, but it is not required. The examples above are derived from today's Miss Manners column. First-prize winner gets a genuine fencer's mask, a value of \$30. Runners-up, as always, receive the coveted Style Invitational Loser's T-shirt. Honorable Mentions get the mildly sought-after Style Invitational bumper sticker. Winners will be selected on the basis of humor and originality. Mail your entries to The Style Invitational, Week 206, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071, fax them to 202-334-4312 or submit them via Internet to this address: losers@access.digex.net. Internet users: Please indicate the week number in the "subject" field. Entries must be received on or before Monday, March 3. Please include your address and phone number. Winners will be announced three weeks from today. Editors reserve the right to alter entries for taste, humor or appropriateness. No purchase necessary. The Faerie of the Fine Print & the Ear No One Reads wishes to thank Elden Carnahan of Laurel for today's Ear No One Reads. Employees of The Washington Post and their immediate families are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK 203,

in which you were asked to write awful poetry. Some of you submitted rather clever poetic parodies. These were too good to win. The truly horrible poem is of banal or inappropriate subject matter, oversentimentalized, filled with the clunkiest verbiage and infantile observations. Or, as Roy Jacobstein of Washington put it:

Remember these very basic rules / Ever your syntax make dreadful, / Stretch metaphoric rubber bands, smoke Kools, / Keep your rhymes simple and painful.

◆ Fourth Runner-Up:
Remember the great Louis Pasteur, who saved
mankind from the diseases
Which lurked in bacteria infecting milk and
cheeses.
He also found a vaccine for rabies caused by
the bite of rabid curs,
So when you think of great achievements,
remember Louis Pasteur's.
(Miles D. Moore, Alexandria)

◆ Third Runner-Up:
My heart has pled guilty to loving you
Irregardless of your orientation
I will orientate to your situation
I literally worship the ground you tread
And hang upon your lips, till myself be dead.
(Lissa Davis, Somerville)

◆ And the winner of the Eva Gabor wig:
The world's great mathematicians assembled for a lecture
To hear a rising star prove the Taniyama Conjecture
And the young man astounded those who did hear him
By also casually proving Fermat's Last Theorem!
And for this achievement, everlasting glory and acclaim
Will forever go to, y'know, whatsizname.
(Charlie Steinhice, Chattanooga)

◆ Honorable Mentions:
Robert Frost was the first poet to read at a
presidential inauguration,
Which was an occasion for widespread
celebration.
Maya Angelou and Miller Williams soon also
were asked to read,
And to them all America paid heed.
So though the fortunes of all poets be
tempest-toss'd,
Americans should honor the efforts of poets
such as Angelou, Williams and Frost,
And spare them all censoriousness
When they praise American presidents in all
their gloriousness.
(Miles D. Moore, Alexandria)

My verse flies up on wings inspired,
And, hoo boy, are my metaphors tired.
(Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

The sanctity of life should never ever
be violated.
War is bad because so many people
get annihilated.
We should all be thankful for the decline in
murders of New Yorkers,
And be grateful there are no more
Jack Kevorkians ...
(Joseph Romm, Washington)

Little Girl Scouts come knocking at my door
To sell me a cookie such as the Samoa,
Just remember that these young women
today selling Thin Mints
May be tomorrow's governors or
astronauts or presidents!
(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

O heartburn,
Brown vapor of agony,
Silent eunuch of the colon ...
(Jeanne O'Meara, Alexandria)

'Twas a time when
Fore'er apostroph'd,
Poetic words 'twere writ'n oft'n.
Ne'er more.
(Jean Sorensen, Herndon)

O Atlantic, cry I.
So big!
So wet!
(David K. Ronka, Bradford, Mass.)

◆ Second Runner-Up:
Madeleine Albright
You're alright!
To the women of the world
You're a symbol of hope,
Even though you will never be pope ...
(Frank and Cindy Curry, Richmond)

◆ First Runner-Up:
I walk through the woods.
Nature's howling wind speaks to me.
"Stop cutting my trees!"
"Stop polluting!" nature says.
It starts to rain.
Nature is crying.
It's our fault.
I cry also.
(Philip Vitale, Arlington)

The orb hangs o'er the dampy sea,
The far-off moon like an oaten fruit
In meadows where horse whisperings
Mingle with strains of the sackbut's toot,
Bends the bloated bow to me.
Under such an orby thing did Diogenes long ago
With his lamp the wide world wander,
Its broad corpulent expanse makes me ponder
and think of you,
And not that scrawny tramp,
Luann Beauregard McGrew.
(Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Ode to the Manatee
... Ho, sea cow great!
Keeper of the silent smile
Watcher of the endless mile,
Like Mona, of Lisa fame,
Or poet, of forgotten name.
(Walt Wiley, Richmond)

If the glove don't fit
you must acquit.
(J. Cochran, Los Angeles; Paul Styrene, Olney)

... With the passion that young girls used to
have for Bobby Vinton,
I love you, only child of President Bill and
Hillary Rodham Clinton.
(Joseph Romm, Washington)

The sea anemone asserts preeminent
hegemony,
Extending toxic tentacles to enervate its
enemies;
Phlegmatic clown fish, unconcerned,
anomalously coexist,
Their mucus gives immunity from venomous
nematocysts.
(Dudley Thompson, Silver Spring)

As she struggled to give birth,
The woman labored for all her worth,
Though o'ertaken by pain,
By nightfall, motherhood would be her gain.
And though the cost would be in sweat
and blood,
She would lift a new soul from the
primordial mud.
Through the many hours she tried to
endure all,
But finally she had to have an epidural.
(Beth Blevens, Greenbelt)