

The Style Invitational

Week XIV: Capital Pun-ishment



BY BOB STAAKE FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

It is a well-known fact that Mahatma Gandhi's feet were toughened from wearing no shoes, and that his ascetic lifestyle made him frail. It is less well known that, early in his life, he was a case officer for British intelligence, and that because of his spare and sometimes bizarre diet, he had bad breath, a medical condition that came to be known as: **SUPER CALLUSED FRAGILE MYSTIC EX-SPY HALITOSIS.**

Newt Gingrich accused Tipper Gore of being so stupid she cannot even remember her mother's phone number. On the campaign trail, Al Gore defended his wife, sending off an angry telegram to Gingrich:

TIPPER CAN, NEWT—AND DIAL HER, TOO.

This Week's Contest

A toughie. Take an expression, or a lyric from a song, or any recognizable line of prose, and make it the punch line of an awful pun, as in the examples above. (Also as above, the setup for the pun need not be factually accurate, or even remotely true.) Credit will be given to entries that avoid flagrantly absurd contrivances, such as "Okay, so there's this guy named Iwanta Girljust, and . . ." First-prize winner gets a pair of underpants (new) anonymously donated

to The Style Invitational. They look like your classic tidy-whitey men's briefs, except they have a size 72 waist. We attempted to imagine the person this garment would fit, and estimate that he would weigh 500 pounds. When we tried this estimate out on our boss, he nodded sagely, saying that "these would be loose on a 400-pound man." They are worth \$10.

First runner-up wins the tacky but estimable Style Invitational Loser Pen. Other runners-up win the coveted Style Invitational Loser T-Shirt. The Uncle's Pick wins the yet-to-be-designed but soon-to-be-coveted "The Uncle Loves Me" T-shirt. Send your entries via fax to 202-334-4312, or by e-mail to losers@washpost.com, or by U.S. mail to The Style Invitational, Week XIV, c/o The Washington Post, 1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071. Deadline is Monday, May 8. All entries must include the week number of the contest and your name, postal address and a daytime or evening telephone number. E-mail entries must include the week number in the message field. Contests will be judged on the basis of humor and originality. All entries become the property of The Washington Post. Editors reserve the right to edit entries for taste or content. Results will be published in four weeks. No purchase required for entry. Employees of The Washington Post, and their immediate relatives, are not eligible for prizes.

REPORT FROM WEEK X,

in which we asked you to come up with a Good, Bad, Ugly progression.

◆ Fifth Runner-Up:

Good: There is a new man in your life.
Bad: He insists on knowing where you are every minute of the day.
Ugly: He is a parole officer.
(Sandra Hull, Arlington)

◆ Fourth Runner-Up:

Good: You're appearing on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire."
Bad: You have to use your last lifeline on the \$1,000 question.
Ugly: When Regis dials your best friend's number, your wife sleepily answers the phone.
(Earl Gilbert, La Plata)

◆ Third Runner-Up:

Good: She says she won't try to change you.
Bad: You are 97 years old.
Ugly: She is your nurse.
(Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

◆ Second Runner-Up:

Good: You've struck Gold.
Bad: Harvey Gold.
Ugly: Of the law firm of Gold, Dershowitz and Scheck.
(Stephen Dudzik, Silver Spring)

◆ First Runner-Up:

Good: It's 10 o'clock and you know where your children are.
Bad: They're in Lorton.
Ugly: Visiting you.
(Joel Knanishu, Rock Island, Ill.)

◆ And the winner of the Panama Canal plate:

Good: Microsoft is found guilty of anti-competitive behavior, leveling the playing field for legit software vendors worldwide.
Bad: Microsoft appeals, miring the federal government in costly litigation while competitive innovation continues to be hindered by Microsoft's monopolistic practices.
Ugly: Bill Gates's hair.
(Teen Sheng, College Park)

◆ Honorable Mentions:

Good: You have a date.
Bad: It's a blind date.
Ugly: He blinded himself after sleeping with his mother.
(Sandra Hull, Arlington)

Good: There is an afterlife.
Bad: You find out because you are dead.
Ugly: . . . and in hell.
(Meg Sullivan, Potomac)

Good: You are at a free concert.
Bad: It's the Captain and Tennille.
Ugly: You're stuck in an elevator.
(Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Good: The fish are biting all around you.
Bad: The boat capsizes.
Ugly: The fish are piranhas.
(Chris Doyle, Burke)

Good: Your boss promises you will soon be in a corner office.
Bad: Oops. He said a "coroner's office."
Ugly: Your boss's name is Gotti.
(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Good: Your prom date drives you down lover's lane.
Bad: He says the car's run out of gas.
Ugly: The car has run out of gas.
(Jonathan Paul, Garrett Park)

Good: You are running a four-minute mile!
Bad: After your burglary job got interrupted.
Ugly: The Rottweilers behind you are running a three-minute mile.
(Jennifer Hart, Arlington)

Good: You got one of those jobs where there's a Foosball table in the office.
Bad: It's a Foosball table repair shop.
Ugly: You get paid in quarters.
(Tom Witte, Gaithersburg)

Good: You get a nice new suit.
Bad: It's for a funeral.
Ugly: Yours.
(Ryan Young, Middletown; Malcolm Visser, Clifton)

Good: You bought a copy of Hustler, and the centerfold is hot!
Bad: She's young enough to be your daughter.
Ugly: She is your daughter.
(Gary Patishnock, Laurel)

Good: Your son finally gets his driver's license.
Bad: He wrecks his car his first day out.
Ugly: By crashing into yours.
(David Moore, Bowie)

Good: You are dating a woman who sort of resembles Pamela Anderson.
Bad: But she is not quite as cute.
Ugly: And not quite as smart.
(Susan Reese, Arlington)

Good: Your wife is pregnant.
Bad: With quintuplets.
Ugly: You had a vasectomy years ago.
(Gary Patishnock, Laurel)

Good: You are scheduled to play baseball this afternoon at Shea Stadium!
Bad: You are John Rocker.
Ugly: You miss the team bus on the day of a cab strike, and have to take the subway.
(Bob Dalton, Arlington)

Good: Your wife greets you wearing a diaphanous peignoir.
Bad: You aren't in the mood.
Ugly: Because of the diaphanous peignoir.
(Chuck Smith, Woodbridge)

Good: Your kid made the football team.
Bad: Your kid never plays.
Ugly: She just "made" the football team.
(David Genser, Arlington)

◆ The Uncle's Pick:

Good: A blind date with Charlize Theron.
Bad: A blind date with Charley's Aunt.
Ugly: A blind date with Charlie's Angels.
(Alan Haerberle, Silver Spring)

(The Uncle explains: A blind date with the lovely Ms. Theron would be good for the obvious reason. A blind date with Charley's Aunt would be bad because, as anyone familiar with the play of the same name would know, it would be a date not just with someone's elderly aunt—though it should be pointed out that older women can be and often are entertaining companions—but with a man dressed in woman's clothing! And a blind date with Charlie's Angels would be awkward at the very least, for one could hardly expect to escort all three of those beautiful women at one time. One would have to choose one over the other two, which would needlessly cause hurt feelings.)

Next Week: What Kind of Foal Am I?