

Sex talk not on his agenda

Dear Annie: My husband and I have been married for three years and lived together for 15 years before that. Sex has always been difficult. Last week, I found him masturbating outside in the backyard.

What should I do? Should I consult a doctor? My husband refuses to talk about it at all. — *I Need Help*

Dear Need: If sex has been an issue for the past 18 years, there is more going on. Your letter doesn't provide many details. Is he masturbating because you aren't interested in sex? In that case, please talk to your doctor and see what can be done. Does he prefer self-gratification to being with you? That could indicate that he has an idealized version of the female body due to excessive pornography viewing. Or he could be gay and still in the closet. Or he might have issues being physically close. For this, counseling could be useful, but only if your husband is willing to seek help, and apparently, he is not.

As for masturbating in the backyard, well, that holds entirely different possibilities. Is he an exhibitionist? Was he hoping someone would see him? That could get

Annie's Mailbox

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him arrested. Your choice is to decide how important this is to you compared to the more positive things your husband brings to the marriage. Can you accept it and still have a happy marriage? Does it merit a divorce? Sometimes, counseling for the person most affected (you) can be helpful in working through a problem and coming to a decision. Please consider it.

Dear Annie: I had a strong reaction to the letter from "Missing It," whose husband had a prostatectomy. I am a prostate cancer survivor who had a prostatectomy, and my experience has been nothing like her husband's. No one who is facing prostate cancer should take her husband's story as typical.

Did her husband faithfully do his physical therapy exercises

to prevent incontinence? I did, at least three times a day. I've had complete control for years. I worked with my urologist on sexual activity, and we experimented with various therapies because there are many options. I had to do my part, but my sex life is now as satisfactory as it was prior to the surgery.

To other men with a prostate cancer diagnosis who choose the prostatectomy route, if you do your part, there is every reason to hope for complete recovery and a fully normal and satisfying life. — *Not Missing Anything*

Dear Not Missing: Thank you for pointing out that there are individual responses to prostate surgery, and a great deal depends upon how dedicated one is to doing the necessary exercises and therapies. There are also other options besides prostatectomy. For all men facing this, it is important to find a physician who knows what treatments are available and can discuss them clearly, along with the potential outcomes. And if the doctor isn't doing that, get a second opinion or find another doctor. This is your future. You need to be your own best advocate.

Tomorrow's horoscope

By Holiday Mathis, Creators Syndicate Inc.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). A social situation is overwrought with complications. Lately it's getting harder and harder to choose the right words to say. A wise man once said nothing.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You're no marionette controlled by the hand of fate. You move freely where you want to go. Then again, every once in a while you ask for a lift, and sometimes (like now) the asking makes it happen.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You'll look back and wonder whether you made the right decision. It was the decision that, at the time, had to be made. You would do it again were you back there. Don't let the pretty colors of nostalgia change your view.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Items, habits and thoughts that you carry along with you have a way of becoming who you are. This is your chance to emotionally strip down and choose carefully what you want to put back on.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your instincts are like knives: They need to be sharpened by rubbing them against the ridged steel or, in today's case, the tricky problem. Solving this one will help you cut to the chase later in the week.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Glamour creates attraction, attraction creates opportunities, and opportunities create income. That's why you'll take the time to gloss up a presentation until it's slick.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If you don't quite know what you want today, at least you know what you don't want. You'll witness a person in a state of being that you do not wish to have as your own, and this will in-

spire your behavior. **SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Lift the stipulations, amend the rules, knock out the obstacles that limit the ways in which you allow yourself to experience happiness. Decide to be happy no matter what happens, and you will be.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Don't leave the bad feelings trapped inside of you, or they'll fester and spoil your internal system. A pinprick of acknowledgement may be all that's necessary to let out the tension.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're a sincere person, and you respond to others who share this quality. You also have an internal alarm that goes off when you hear stories or marketing pitches that don't add up. Listen to and save the information.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Money might not be the biggest thing at stake. It's the life energy you put into making money that gives it the charge, and that is the true exchange in the purchase and sale of goods and services.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You can think of past instances when people have been kind to you who didn't have to be, and it's part of the reason you extend yourself with such a generous heart today.

WEDNESDAY'S BIRTHDAY (April 1). This month your mind will fill with profound insight, and you'll need an outlet to express it. You could touch the lives of others through art, writing, public speaking or teaching. In June, you'll be paid for the good you do and sent on a mission. August brings heart-filling developments and passionate pursuit. Aries and Sagittarius people adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 12, 1, 44, 17 and 38.

FRANK AND ERNEST



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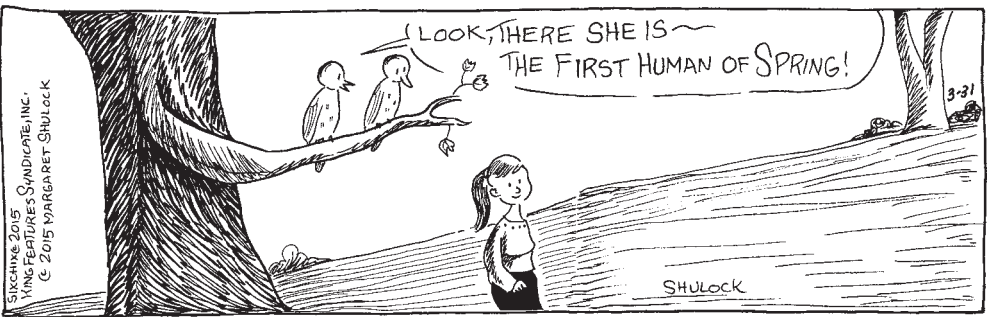
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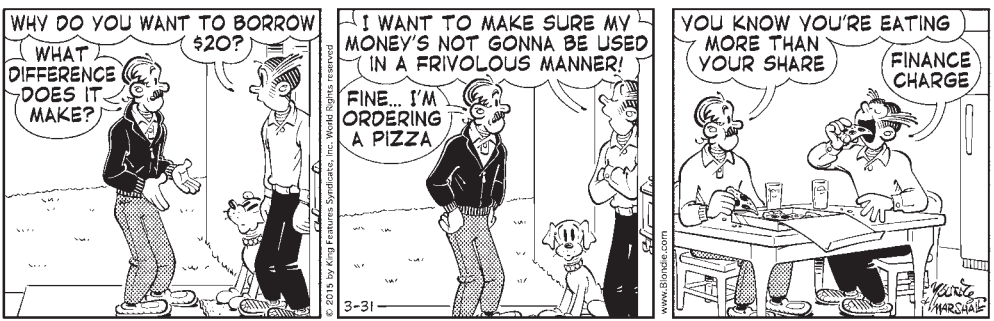
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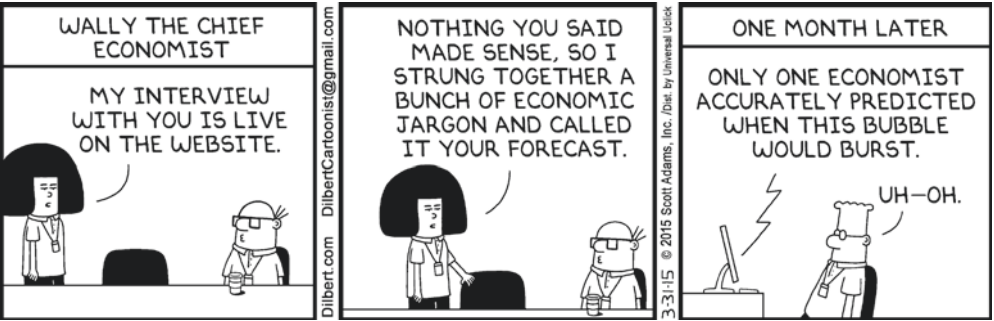
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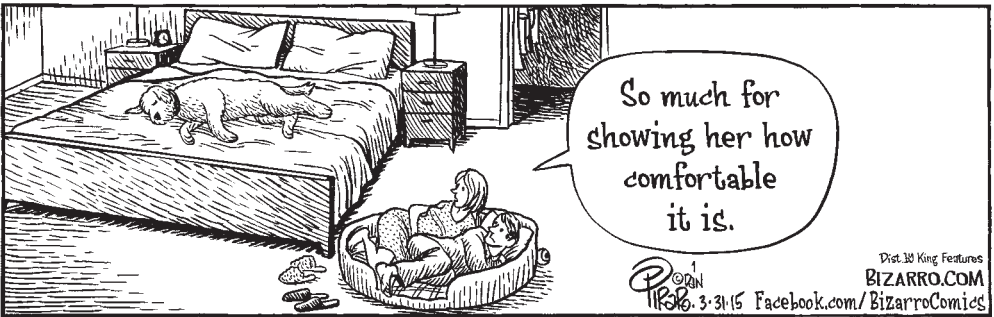
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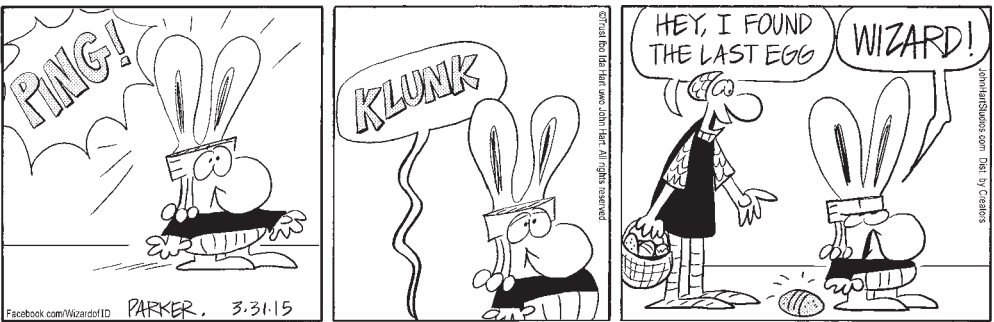
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