

Angry, abusive stepmother is impossible to deal with



DEAR ABBY: I'm having a problem with my husband's judgmental and narcissistic stepmom. She wasn't nice to him or his siblings while they were growing up. My hubby recently had a heart attack. After I called to tell his dad and emailed his siblings, she got very upset with me because I didn't give her the details first so she could disseminate the information. She also demanded to visit immediately after

his surgery and got nasty with me on the phone when I told her she couldn't come in with Dad because the hospital allowed only two visitors at a time. Now she won't speak to me or answer emails.

This isn't the first time she has done this. She always looks for the worst and gives no grace. You can't discuss anything with her because she gaslights and takes no responsibility. This affects my husband's relationship with his elderly father, whom she poisons with her vitriol, especially regarding his children by his first wife. She does this with the entire family. She even sends nasty emails to her own children. I'm exhausted from all her drama. What

do I do? — **EXHAUSTED IN KENTUCKY**
DEAR EXHAUSTED: Don't you think it's time to disengage with this unpleasant, controlling woman? If she won't speak with you or answer your emails, thank your higher power and concentrate on the rest of the family. If they're experiencing the same treatment you are, they, too, may be glad to focus on relationships they find rewarding and let her continue to isolate herself.

You cannot fix what's wrong with her, and it may be too late to help your father-in-law, who has tolerated this for years. If another relative can give him important information about your husband, let that person get the message to him if you can't get past his

nightmare of a wife.

DEAR ABBY: I have been seeing a man I'll call "Ken" for six months. We are both widowed. It has been two years for him and three for me. My husband was my childhood sweetheart, and I cherished the ground he walked on. We treated each other like royalty. Ken is a wonderful man who treats me like a queen.

Neither of us wants to live together. I never ask him for anything, but he buys gifts for me and surprises me with them. I love his taste. The problem is, he's falling for me faster than I am for him. He has told me he loves me, but I just can't say it back. I don't know what's keeping me from doing it. Maybe I'm still mourning my husband. What is wrong

with me? — **PERPLEXED IN THE SOUTH**

DEAR PERPLEXED: Nothing is "wrong" with you. Yes, you may still be mourning the loss of your husband and the life you had together. In fact, it may continue to some degree for the rest of your life. Ken sounds like a wonderful man, but after only six months, you two are still getting to know each other. "I love you" implies a commitment you aren't ready to make. Stop second-guessing yourself and let this relationship play out in its own time.

■ *Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

Recalling memories that cling, both sweet and sad



The weather is changing. There is snow on Mount Emily, my personal gauge.

But, it was a warm October day full of sunshine as I wrote from my easy chair by the window. My mind was drawn to the hill beyond where once I lived.

The earth was warm although the ground showed light-brown invading the grasses that struggled to survive along the roadway between the hill of my house and the barn.

My mind strolled the upward incline of that inner road toward where the fruit trees grew in order that I might pick a ripe pear from one tree, a prune from another, and yet a third from the winter apple tree once planted so many years ago by my family.

There was no wind to rattle the branches of the bushes or sway the tops of the over 100-year-old pine trees as I

saw myself reclining on my home's porch from the rocking bench my husband had built so many years ago, too. From there I now watched nature go by.

Sally, our cat, had stretched out on the narrow sill of the barn window high above the ground and I wondered how she got there. I had to picture her placing her paws carefully, stepping one pace at a time from rafter to rafter, climbing higher until her goal was sought and reached for sunbathing, but I had no desire to join her there. Kris, our white Samoyed dog, smiled up at me and then slept at my feet.

The pear in my hands drew

my mouth to it and the juice giving way to pressure filled my mouth with remembrance of its planting and tending to deliver such fruit. Along with it came the thought of gathering such pears, prunes, and apples for later enjoyment after hours of plucking, canning, and later serving when snow would cover the earth and leaves buried to warm their snowy cover towards springtime and all to begin over again.

The prune tasted different against the sweetness of the pear as I nibbled at its goodness and pictured the like clusters in jars on the shelf, all for later enjoyment as we had

done the early cherries.

But, it was the apple that drew me to it, finally, as the mainstay. In the cellar it could last until spring, eaten fresh and crisp. Made into sauce, it showed its versatility, and, yet, it had others as well from jam to pie filling to candied apples or squeezed into cider, remembered as recently consumed with doughnuts at Halloween.

The joy of remembrance in making the cider with family and friends gathered around twinged my heartbeat for a moment and my vision disappeared, knowing I would

never pass this way again.

No one wanders my hill with me today. Does anyone visit the trees for their goodness? Sally disappeared from the high-up barn window from drowsing in the sunshine and I find myself in the same easy chair by a foreign window and know that life travels on with a changing scene, never to repeat itself.

Even Kris of the past is no longer here to smile at me and keep me company.

Cats of various colors are now daring to cross the street against the fast traffic dangers

of the city. Only speeding cars and trucks pass my window now, the cats in the yard being feral and untouchable, and the scene clouds with my tears.

The weather is changing from fall to winter and so will my view of things, but memory still tries to cling.

The clock my husband made ticks on, my stomach chiming noon.

Where is my lunch? Who's to answer?

■ *Dorothy Swart Fleshman is the author of Dory's Diary occasionally published in The Observer and Baker City Herald. She is a resident of La Grande.*

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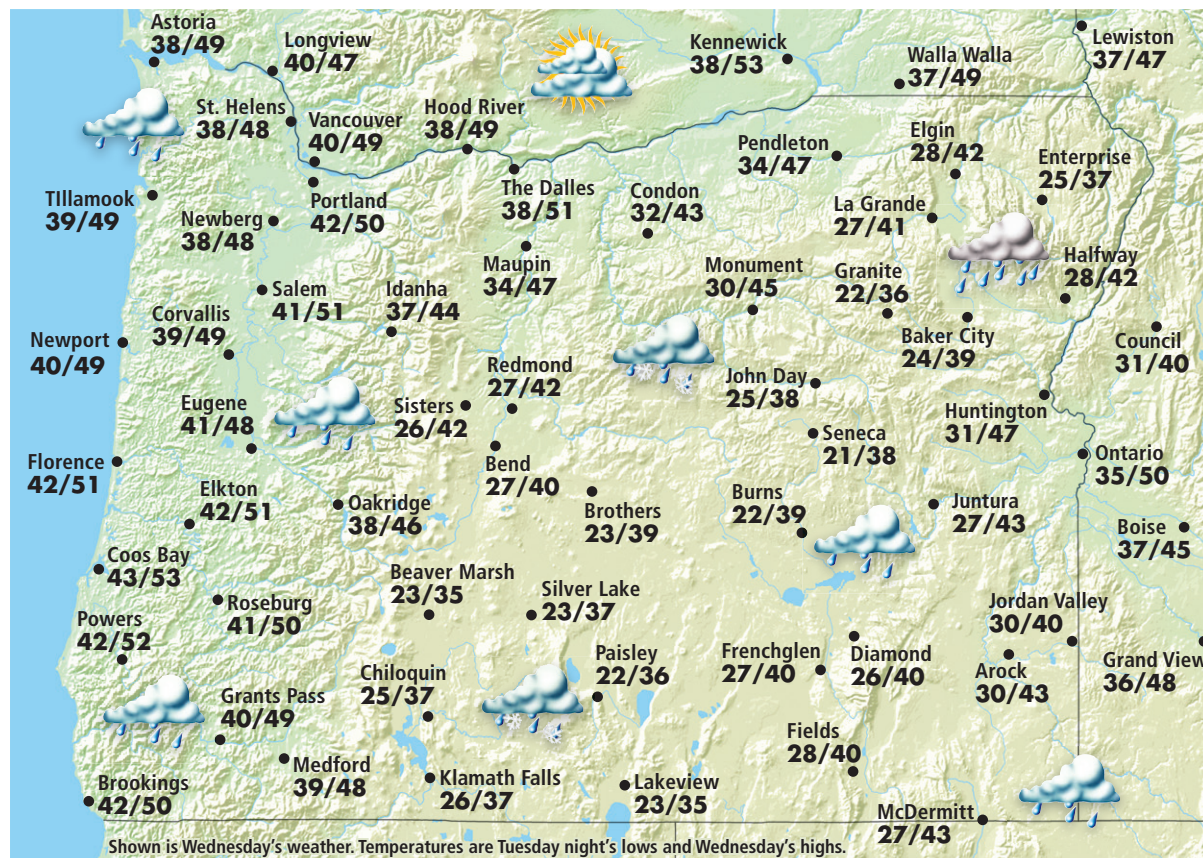
TONIGHT Colder; an evening shower	WED A morning shower	THU Cold with clouds and sun	FRI Rain and drizzle; chilly	SAT Cloudy, showers around
Baker City 24 Comfort Index™ 0	39 18 0	40 21 0	40 31 0	44 28 0
La Grande 27 Comfort Index™ 0	41 26 1	40 27 1	43 37 0	47 27 0
Enterprise 25 Comfort Index™ 0	37 25 0	36 24 1	41 36 1	44 20 0

° Comfort Index takes into account how the weather will feel based on a combination of factors. A rating of 10 feels very comfortable while a rating of 0 feels very uncomfortable.

ALMANAC	SUNDAY EXTREMES
TEMPERATURES High Sunday: 55° Low Sunday: 20°	NATION (for the 48 contiguous states) High: 92° Low: 4° Wettest: 2.81"
PRECIPITATION (inches) Sunday: 0.00 Month to date: 0.33	OREGON High: 67° Low: 18° Wettest: 0.11"
RESERVOIR STORAGE (through midnight Monday)	WEATHER HISTORY On Nov. 1, 1861, a hurricane battered the Union fleet as it tried to attack ports in the Carolinas. On Nov. 1, 1946, a tropical storm drenched Naples, Fla., with almost 8 inches of rain.

AGRICULTURAL INFO. DAY INFORMATION WEDNESDAY Lowest relative humidity: 50% Afternoon wind: S at 4 to 8 mph Hours of sunshine: 0.0 Evapotranspiration: 0.04	SUN & MOON TUE. WED. Sunrise: 7:31 a.m. 7:33 a.m. Sunset: 5:40 p.m. 5:38 p.m. Moonrise: 3:05 p.m. 3:33 p.m. Moonset: none 12:35 a.m.
RESERVOIR STORAGE (through midnight Monday)	MOON PHASES Full Last New First Nov 8 Nov 16 Nov 23 Nov 30
STREAM FLOWS (through midnight Sunday)	

AROUND OREGON AND THE REGION



REGIONAL CITIES	RECREATION FORECAST WEDNESDAY
WED. THU. WED. THU.	ANTHONY LAKES A snow shower 25 11
City Hi/Lo/W Hi/Lo/W City Hi/Lo/W Hi/Lo/W	MT. EMILY REC. A bit of a.m. snow 33 23
Astoria 49/35/pc 52/48/c Lewiston 47/32/sh 45/36/c	EAGLE CAP WILD. A snow shower 27 9
Bend 40/17/c 40/25/pc Longview 47/38/pc 48/45/c	WALLOWA LAKE Cloudy, a shower 37 23
Boise 45/26/sh 45/27/pc Meacham 39/22/c 38/24/pc	THIEF VALLEY RES. A shower; cold 39 18
Brookings 50/38/sh 54/45/pc Medford 48/32/sh 49/34/pc	PHILLIPS LAKE A shower; cold 38 18
Burns 39/17/pc 40/18/c Newport 49/39/sh 51/47/c	BROWNLEE RES. Cold with a shower 42 23
Coos Bay 53/39/sh 54/45/c Olympia 48/34/pc 49/43/c	EMIGRANT ST. PARK A morning shower 37 19
Corvallis 49/33/sh 50/42/c Ontario 50/29/c 50/26/c	MCKAY RESERVOIR A stray shower 46 30
Council 40/20/c 39/19/c Pasco 53/29/pc 51/39/pc	RED BRIDGE ST. PARK A morning shower 41 26
Elgin 42/28/c 41/29/c Pendleton 47/31/c 46/36/pc	
Eugene 48/35/sh 52/40/c Portland 50/40/pc 50/44/c	
Hermiston 52/31/pc 50/37/pc Powers 52/36/sh 54/43/pc	
Hood River 49/35/pc 50/41/c Redmond 42/18/c 41/27/c	
Imnaha 46/28/sh 43/28/c Roseburg 50/36/sh 52/41/c	
John Day 38/21/c 39/20/pc Salem 51/35/c 50/42/c	
Joseph 37/23/c 36/23/pc Spokane 43/27/c 41/33/pc	
Kennewick 53/30/pc 49/40/pc The Dalles 51/33/pc 52/41/c	
Klamath Falls 37/12/c 39/18/pc Ukiah 38/21/c 36/24/c	
Lakeview 35/14/c 33/16/pc Walla Walla 49/35/c 49/40/pc	

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