

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



"I'm sorry, but we're currently all out of money. We need to wait for someone to make a deposit before we can cash your check."

# Gay man fends off female pal's interest

**Dear Abby:** I'm a 51-year-old gay male. I have a sweet, dear friend I'll call "Samantha" who is slightly older.

The problem is, she wants more than friendship. She insists on spending time with me and calls me daily.

She hugs me repeatedly when she goes to leave, and kisses my neck or cheek — whichever she can get to.

Samantha has touched me in a way that makes me uncomfortable. She places herself so her body touches my hand or arm.

When she does, I quickly remove it. She says I remind her of her brother, but I'm not feeling a sibling relationship here. She invites herself over and gets mad if I tell her I have other plans.

I don't think I should have to discuss my orientation with anyone — including her. It is my personal business. I have never done anything to make Samantha think I have



JEANNE PHILLIPS  
DEAR ABBY

an interest in her. I have spoken to her and made it clear that I'm not interested in a relationship with her.

I have told her not to stop by without calling first. If she calls and I don't answer, she still shows up at my door saying she called. What can I do? — *End Of My Rope in Virginia*

**Dear End Of Your Rope:** You have two choices. Because she is a "dear friend," the first would be to make an exception in Samantha's case and level with her about the fact that you're homosexual and have no interest in a close relationship with any woman.

During this truth session you should also say that her demonstrations of affection and apparent need for emotional and physical closeness make you uncomfortable. (It's surprising she hasn't picked up on it by now because of your body language.)

The alternative is to end this friendship without giving her an explanation. Either way, expect Samantha to be hurt and disappointed, but if you explain that being gay is

simply part of who you are and has no bearing on her, she may be less so.

**Dear Abby:** The year I graduated from high school I witnessed a horrific car accident that claimed the lives of five of my classmates.

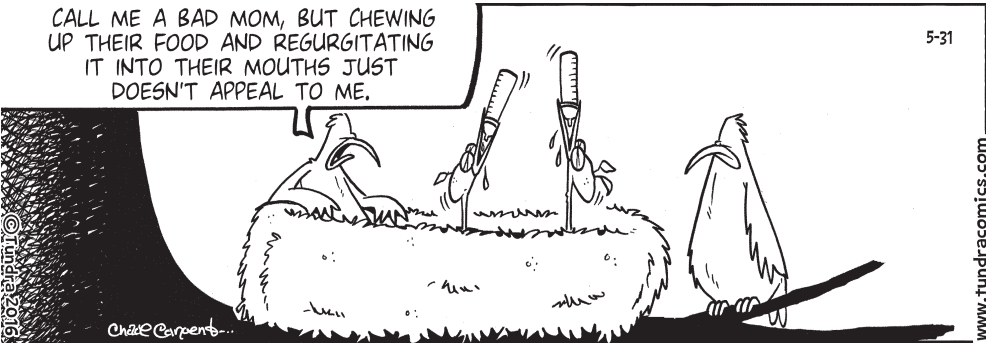
Since then, I have been involved in two accidents (I was in the passenger seat both times) and a number of close calls. This has caused me to develop extreme anxiety about driving — both as the driver and as a passenger.

I work 50 miles from where I live. Every day is stressful because of the drive. Moving is not an option. Is there anything I can do to help my anxiety? — *Too Many Close Calls*

**Dear Too Many:** Treatment for your problem is available. Consult your physician and ask for a referral to a psychologist who specializes in patients who suffer from phobias.

**Write Dear Abby at** [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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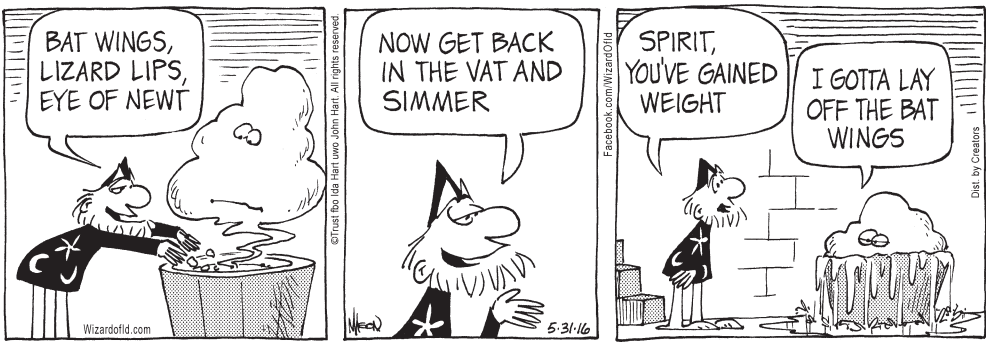
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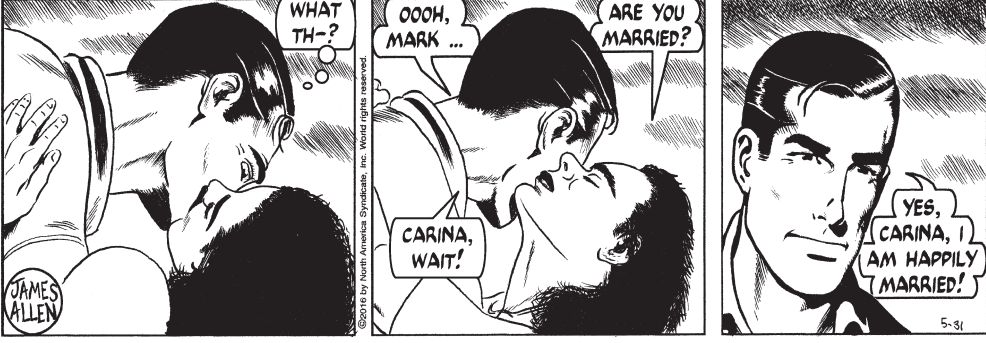
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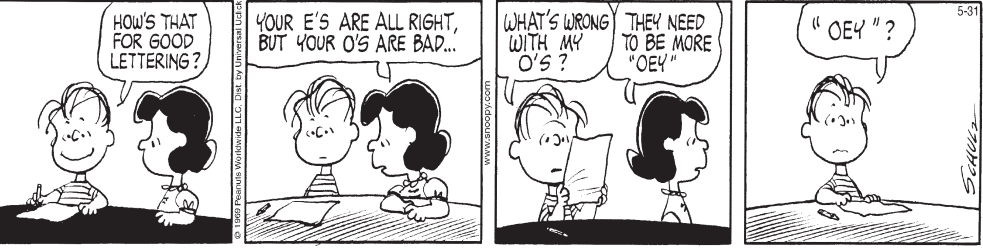
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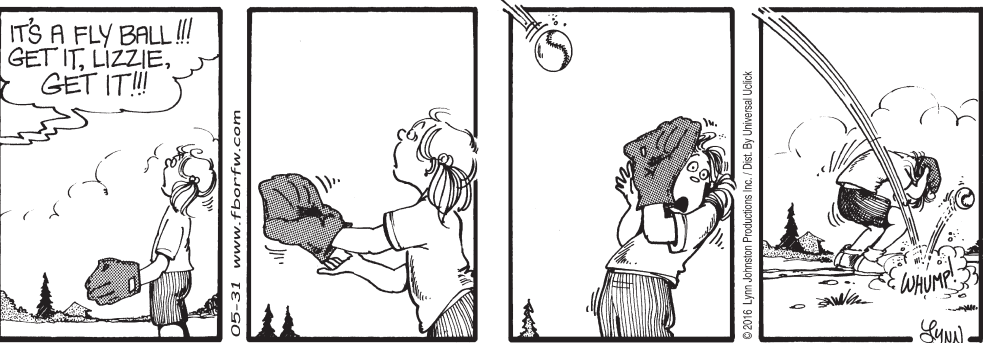
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## Daily Horoscope

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Push on with the herculean effort. You'll go faster and you'll finish stronger if you allow things to be stupendously imperfect, at least for now. You can always go back later and clean it up.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** Stand behind your decisions. There is no room for doubt, no reason to change things up, no need to quickly come up with something new. Hold your head up high, and deliver what you created.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You're the power in your life. No one is going to charge your battery; you have to do it yourself. One thing, though: Avoid the charging station that worked last time. Diversify. Spread out. Find one in a different part of town.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Partnerships will need to be hashed out verbally. Stay on track, especially if you have a less-than-pleasant history with someone. Don't let the issue switch from the original subject to one of personal rivalry.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** One study suggests that a typical college student will pull two all-nighters per school year, resulting in better academic performance for only a meager fraction of students. As for you, early-to-bed will bring no regrets.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** In the past you developed this whole style of coping that worked

so well you're still using a lot of it today. The question is: Is this still necessary, or does it unreasonably limit you?

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Sometimes you give compliments because you're nice and you like to make people feel good. Today you're a little more calculating, though, and your compliments are aimed at getting someone to lower his or her defenses.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** If you have to talk about your problem, do it in personal terms, describing how it affects your life and expressing all of the feelings that come up around it. There's strength in honest vulnerability.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** As you get older you care less and less about being liked. However, there's nothing to gain from behaving in an unlikeable fashion. Today, the more they like you, the better your position will be.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** There's a tall order with your name on it. With the right attitude you'll finish the job before Friday. Avoid negative thinkers, and rewire your own thought processes. Relentless optimism is called for.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** What you're trying to do is no small feat. This is going to take time and persistence. Today will be majorly productive if you put your critical mind aside.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** The difference between dishing the dirt and mudslinging is only a few drops of water. This is an excellent time to stay away from gossip altogether. The thrills are cheap, and the damage is costly.



HOLIDAY MATHIS