

CLOSE TO HOME by John McPherson



Geek tattoos.

Husband needs help moving past abuse

Dear Abby: My husband recently disclosed to me that he was sexually abused by his cousin, who was the same age, when he was in high school. She blackmailed him by threatening to tell everyone he had raped her. She used this power over him to coax sexual favors but never intercourse.



JEANNE PHILLIPS
DEAR ABBY

After a year of looking for help, he confided in his mother, but she ended up getting drunk and telling the whole family about the situation. Luckily, he was able to convince most of them it was "just the alcohol talking." At that point, his cousin finally found a boyfriend and stopped blackmailing him.

This all happened five years ago. He hasn't lived in the same state as his mom or the abuser in three years. I can tell that by confiding in me he feels much better, but I'm worried that he blames himself for his mother's alcoholism and his ruined relationships. I'm also not sure whether or not we can bring his abuser to justice. — *Concerned Spouse*

Dear Concerned Spouse: Encourage you husband to talk to a licensed psychotherapist about what was done to him. Victims sometimes blame themselves. I seriously doubt that his mother's alcohol abuse had anything to do with him. That she betrayed his confidence instead of helping him was terrible. A therapist can explain all this to him, and help him to see things clearly so he can decide how to proceed.

Dear Abby: I'm planning on getting married this year, but I have cold feet. One day I want to be married; the next day I don't. My fiancée is my best friend, and we have been dating for more than four years. Is there any way to get over wedding jitters and live life to the fullest? — *Cold Feet in Oklahoma*

Dear Cold Feet: An intelligent way to work through your jitters would be to talk them through. Consider premarital counseling with your fiancée. A number of subjects will be raised during the sessions, including both of your feelings regarding handling money, having children (and raising them), and even the fact that such a big step gives you butterflies.

Please let me know if this helps. I wish you and your fiancée a long and happy union.

Dear Abby: I'm a 15-year-old bisexual girl, and I have a big problem with relationships. They make me feel awkward. I don't like holding hands and the mushy-gushy stuff hurts my soul. I'm asking for help to come out to my parents and also what I should do about not liking relationships. Am I the only one like this? I told my friend once, and she was really confused. — *Awkward Teen in Texas*

Dear Awkward: I do not think you should come out to your family until you are sure of exactly who you are. From the tone of your letter, you appear to be still trying to figure that out — which is completely normal for someone your age.

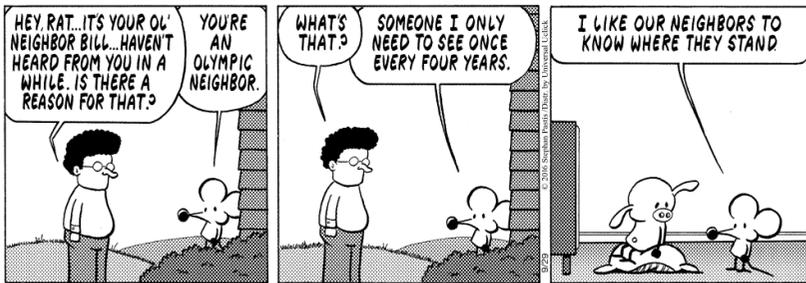
Please do not put any labels on yourself right now. Concentrate on school, friends, things you enjoy. Give it time, and I predict that in a year or two, when you are more clear about things, you will know what to do.

Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

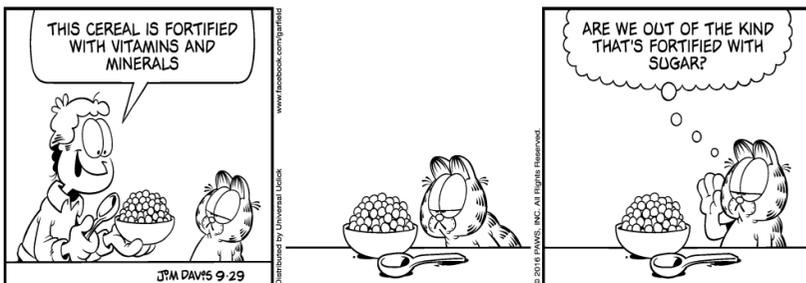
TUNDRA by Chad Carpenter



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FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE by Lynn Johnston



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Daily Horoscope

ARIES (March 21-April 19). On the journey to new horizons, don't let negative thoughts sink your ship. Waterproof your mind against them using the leakproof qualities of laughter, levity, beauty, fun, excitement and starchy dreams.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). These are pretty straightforward times. When you do good, you'll feel good. If you do bad, you'll feel bad. There are no complications or intricacies beyond that to stop you from sailing happily forward.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Giving your best to a rather unglamorous project now will put you first in line later for a far more appealing project. You'll find that this current deal is more interesting than you might have suspected.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). Everyone knows not to burn bridges, and yet when the territorial issues are war-like, and crossing is tantamount to invasion, some bridges really must be tactically burned.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Your heart is big, and it radiates a generosity of spirit that makes everyone around you feel important, loved and as beautiful as you behold them. For these reasons and more, you are so lovely.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The future will come soon enough. If you live there now, you'll ruin the surprise of it! Also, you'll miss the surprise of today, which is an opportunity nestled

inside an emotional little vignette just waiting to be observed.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). If you want to know who the smartest people are around you today, they are the ones saying, "I don't know." Those who claim to know everything and are very sure about it will be the first to eat crow later.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Those who pay no mind to the risks involved in an action are not as brave as the ones who consider the possible dangers and move forward anyway. Stay aware of what you might be getting into.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You're careful to make sure that others get credited for their contributions, but when it's your turn to hang your name on something, you don't care as much. Get the credit anyway. It will be important later.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). The power players have no more talent than you have. The only difference right now is access to resources. So how can you get better access to more of what you need?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You'd trade places with your loved one if suffering of this kind were something that could be reassigned. Alas, the best you can do in this regard is show up and hold this person's hand. You'll be great at that!

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Don't be swayed by immature and petty demands. Stay strong in your stance, or you'll train the world to pester you until you eventually cave to its requests.



HOLIDAY MATHIS