

Calling in Sick to Work

Calling in sick to work makes me uncomfortable because, no matter how legitimate my illness, I always sense that my boss thinks I am lying.

On one occasion, I had a valid reason but lied anyway because the truth was too humiliating to reveal. I simply mentioned that I had sustained a head injury, and I hoped that I would feel up to coming in the next day. By then, I could think up a doozy to explain the bandage on my crown.

In this case, the truth hurt. I mean it really hurt in the place men feel the most pain. The accident occurred mainly because I conceded to my wife's wishes to adopt a cute little kitty.

As the daily routine prescribes, I was taking my shower after breakfast when I heard my wife, Deb, call out to me from the kitchen. "Ed," she hearkened, "the garbage disposal is dead. Come reset it."

"You know where the button is," I protested through the shower(pitter-patter). "Reset it yourself!"

"I am scared," she pleaded. "What if it starts going and sucks me in?" (Pause) "C'mon, it'll only take a second."

No logical assurance about how a disposal can't start itself will calm the fears of a person who suffers from "Big-ol-scary-machine-phobia," a condition brought on by watching too many Stephen King movies.

It is futile to argue or explain, kind of like telling Lloyd Benson that Americans are over-taxed. And if a poltergeist did, in fact, possess the disposal, and she was ground into round, I'd have to live with that for the rest of my life.

So out I came, dripping wet and buck naked, hoping to make a statement about how her cowardly behavior was not without consequence, but it was I who would suffer.

I crouched down and stuck my head under the sink to find the button. It is the last action that I remember performing. It struck without warning, without respect to my circumstances. Nay, it wasn't a hexed disposal, drawing me into its gnashing metal teeth. It was our new kitty, clawing playfully at the dangling objects she spied between my legs.

She ("Buttons" aka "the Grater") had been poised around the corner and stalked me as I took

the bait under the sink. At precisely the second that I was most vulnerable, she leapt at the toys I unwittingly offered and snagged them with her needle-like claws.

Now, when men feel pain or even sense danger anywhere close to their masculine region, they lose all rational thought to control orderly bodily movements. Instinctively, their nerves compel the body to contort inwardly, while rising upwardly at a violent rate of speed.

Not even a well-trained monk could calmly stand with his groin supporting the full weight of a kitten and rectify the situation in a step-by-step procedure. Wild animals are sometimes faced with a "fight or flight" syndrome; men, in this predicament, choose only the "flight" option.

Fleeing straight up, I knew at that moment how a cat feels when it is alarmed. It was a dismal irony. But, whereas cats seek great heights to escape, I never made it that far. The sink and cabinet bluntly impeded my ascent; the impact knocked me out cold.

When I awoke, my wife and the paramedics stood over me. Having been fully briefed by my wife, the paramedics snorted as they tried to conduct their work while suppressing their hysterical laughter. My wife told me that I should be flattered.

At the office, colleagues tried to coax an explanation out of me. I kept silent, claiming it was too painful to talk. "What's the matter, cat got your tongue?"

If they had only known!!

- Author Unknown.