

Dear Abby

Alcoholic Husband's Cruelty Extends Even to Family Cat

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by Abigail Van Buren

DEAR ABBY: My husband drinks a lot. When he does, his personality changes to the point that I don't want to be around him. He's aware of this, but he continues to drink.

Recently I caught him sneaking alcohol, so I hid the bottle. When he realized what I had done, he retaliated by letting our cat out after dark, which we don't do because of the coyotes in our area. (We recently lost a cat to them after dark.) After he did it, "Joe" nonchalantly let me know the cat was outside. He didn't say why he did it, but I figured it out.

I know he's an alcoholic, but isn't this evil? It feels evil. Or is it the stunted, vindictive mind of an alcoholic? -- LET THE CAT OUT

DEAR LET THE CAT OUT: Whether your husband's mind is stunted, I can't say. But what he did was, indeed, vindictive. It was also cruel. As your letter shows, alcoholism is a disease that affects not only the alcoholic, but also the people who are close to them.

Whether you can continue living this way is for you to decide, but before making up your mind, you would be wise to visit some Al-Anon meetings. To find one near you, visit al-anon.alateen.org or call 1-888-4-ALANON. Please don't wait.