

OVERFLOW

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

April 4th
Dear Sirs:

I am not interested in buying a walk-in bathtub. I can't imagine what gave you the idea that I was. This morning, I received yet another e-mail asking if I am "ready" for a walk-in bathtub. As I e-mailed the folks who have been e-mailing me about a six-day all-inclu-

ventional medicine." (I myself have no such credentials, since I have decided not to pursue the advice of the people who regularly e-mail me about how easy it is to become a licensed veterinarian's assistant.)

I'll admit that at some point during your blizzard of e-mails I began wondering what a walk-in bathtub is. I assume



sive package vacation in Cancún, one of these days I actually might need a six-day all-inclusive package vacation in Cancún—preferably in a hotel with no Internet hookup—if I keep getting asked if I'm ready for a walk-in bathtub.

It might interest you to know, by the way, that just yesterday I received an e-mail that offered to put me in contact with "beautiful women from an exotic land looking for love." Does that sound like someone who is ready for a walk-in bathtub?

April 13th
Dear Sirs:

I remain deeply uninterested in purchasing a walk-in bathtub. Yet your e-mails continue to arrive. I've had to consider availing myself of the advice offered in the e-mails I receive at least once a week about how to lower my blood pressure without drugs, diets, or the care of anyone who is suspected of being licensed in any aspect of "con-

that it's the bather who does the walking in, rather than the tub itself. I assume that the bather opens doors on the side of the empty bathtub to enter, and, after closing the doors, sits quietly—or somewhat embarrassingly, if someone's watching, since there's not much for a bather to do without water—as the tub slowly fills. Otherwise, how would the bather get into the tub without causing a flood? At first, I imagined a sort of sling contraption, but that would presumably be called a sling-in bathtub. Please do not e-mail me with an explanation or a diagram. The more I think of it, the more I'd rather not know.

May 4th
Dear Sirs:

I am not—I repeat: not—in the market for a walk-in bathtub. Or, to put it in the language of your latest e-mail, I am not "looking for the peace of mind that comes with a walk-in bathtub." What makes you think that I don't have

peace of mind as it is? As it happens, I received an e-mail today offering yacht charters "for all budgets." Until I received that e-mail, it had never occurred to me that yacht chartering was within my means. Just last week, I received an e-mail offer to reveal my credit rating while consolidating my debts. But this e-mail definitely said "all budgets." You can't imagine the peace of mind it gives me to think of myself as someone who could, if he so desired, charter a yacht. That peace of mind was not even threatened by the information, provided by a friend of mine whose name need not come into this, that the "exotic land" referred to in the e-mail about beautiful women looking for love was Canada.

But that same peace of mind is threatened by the very thought of sitting in a walk-in bathtub after my bath, wondering how long I'm going to have to wait there, shivering, before the water drains from the tub and I can safely open the doors. Given the fact that the bather is soaking wet while the water drains out, exiting the tub must be an even more dreaded exercise than entering the tub. Your decision not to refer to your contraption as a walk-out bathtub leads me to believe that you are aware of that.

May 10th
Dear Sirs:

Why can't you people get it through your heads that I am not interested in buying a walk-in bathtub? I wasn't going to say anything about this, because it seems rather personal, but I finally see no other course: I don't take baths; I take showers. As you may know—even though your e-mails don't reflect it—showers use less water. (As I explained in an e-mail declining an offer to deliver cases of water in plastic bottles to my door monthly, I like to think of myself as, if not exactly a friend of the earth, at least a longtime acquaintance.) My bathroom has a shower stall that is separate from the bathtub. It is, by its very nature, walk-in.

May 14th
Dear Sirs:

I am not interested in buying a non-slip, waterproof chair for my shower. I can't imagine what gave you the idea that I was. ♦