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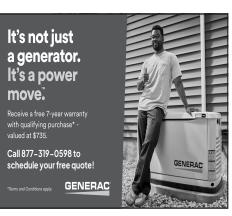












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The **Postscript**

By Carrie Classon



"Clean Ankles"

I don't normally tackle controversial issues, but today I'm going out on a limb.

Baths are better than showers.

I don't care what my husband, Peter, or my mother and father have to say on the subject. I don't care about those people who take samples of bathwater and look at them under microscopes and tell you that you are bathing in miniscule amounts of dirt and microorganisms. They are all wrong, and I will tell you how I know.

I looked at my ankles.

When Peter and I stay in Mexico, I do not have a bathtub. I will admit, when the sun is shining and we are eating outside in February surrounded by the friendly staff at our hotel, I am not exactly hankering to get back to the gloom of the Midwest. I can go for days without being under a cloud, wearing shorts and sandals and eating fresh avocados every day. If it wasn't for missing my family, I'd be happy just to stay, and I can't honestly say I would miss much—except for my bathtub.

I love a hot bath. And baths are better. I have proof. The proof is on my

When I get home after a long stay in Mexico, I sit in the bathtub and give myself a good scrub, and the things that need scrubbing the most are my ankles. It would be only a slight exaggeration to say that they are filthy. And this is no surprise.

Anyone who has tried to properly scrub their ankles while standing in a shower should save their skills and become a yoga instructor. Or a stork. It is not physically possible. There are creative ways to get one's feet clean, but the ankles suffer in a shower. And before anyone tells me it doesn't matter because ankles are covered by socks, I'd like to point out that this could apply to a lot of other body parts. It's a slippery slope. If we're going to be OK with dirty ankles, what's next?

Baths are also much more relaxing. I don't have to be worried about how much water is running down the drain while I wash. I can be concerned about the environment and the cleanliness of my ankles and my need to relax all at the same time. I can simply lie still in hot water and enjoy the sensation of nothing to do (other than wash my ankles, of course) and breathe in steamy air. It is the perfect way to relax after a long day. I get out of the bathtub, and I am never cold or rushed or bothered by the microscopic organisms I hear are rumored to be clinging to me. I am at peace. I have never felt truly peaceful getting out of a shower. (But then, how could I with dirty ankles?)

I realize I will not win this debate. There are houses that don't even have bathtubs these days. I hear people say they are dangerous and take up space and no one has the time.

My feeling is that, if I run out of time for a hot bath, I need to reorder my schedule. I will always have time for a hot bath. I will have time on good days and bad. I will have time when I'm actually dirty and on days when I just need to feel warm and relaxed. I take a bath and feel as if I get out ready for a new beginning, each and every time. And I have remarkably clean ankles.

Till next time, Carrie

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