
Country Philosopher

One small imperfection

BY AMOS ARTHUR HOLMES

There is nothing in this life more precious to me than my wife. She is possibly God's greatest work of art. I am constantly amazed at her disposition and the bountiful love she showers so magnificently on those she meets. She has grasped that fragile truth, so elusive for most of us, that love is giving. And she gives of herself, always, with a warm tenderness and complete unselfishness.

If there is one thing that falls short of perfection it would be her cooking. There is only one word to describe her culinary artistry.

UGH!

When we buy a chicken at the store, wrapped in its cellophane package, we are aware that the chicken is dead. My wife doesn't believe this. When she gets the chicken home she takes it out of the package, beats it with a baseball bat, stabs it with daggers, and chokes it violently with her bare hands. Finally deciding that the chicken is dead (she listens for heartbeats) she places the battered bird in the frying pan and

begins cooking. She reaches up into the cabinet where she keeps her spices and uses everything her hand comes in contact with. Rosemary, cloves, chili powder, and if somebody has inadvertently left a can of Lysol in the cabinet..well..she uses that also.

When the chicken is done, it resembles a huge charcoal briquet. To eat it, instead of using the usual knives and forks, we use jackhammers and small sticks of dynamite.

She has a special dish that she serves only when we have friends over. This will show you why we do not have any more friends. She sautees, in butter, cut up onions, peppers, and mushrooms. Doesn't that sound succulent? Then she adds small tender pieces of beef. The aroma arising from the stove is heavenly and you begin to think that the cook is quite clever. You think of fine French cuisine or exotic oriental delicacies. But her next move ruins everything. She takes a dead possum (please do not get sick on my picture) and she puts that possum in with the peppers, onions, mushrooms, and beef. She claims that wild game is

tremendously beneficial to health and happiness. She simmers this entire mess for about three hours and then calls the family to dinner. She gets downright ornery when my daughter and myself refuse to eat, and she swears that she is going to run away from home. But she never keeps her promise.

Have you ever eaten pickled bananas? Of course you haven't. But we have pickled bananas on the average of six times a week. You just wouldn't believe the things she brings out of that kitchen. Doughnuts with red pepper topping. Vegetable soup where you search for one single vegetable, and celery sticks stuffed with raw fish roe.

You would think my wife would notice that I have gone from 180 pounds down to 26 pounds, and that she would somehow connect my great loss of weight to her lousy cooking. But she never seems to notice.

One of the most puzzling aspects of this deadly comedy is her happiness in the kitchen. She sings, dances, and is completely unaware that she is



whipping up a concoction that could very easily kill her daughter and her husband.

My father came to visit us recently and my wife served him fried cabbage mixed liberally with whipped cream. My father has been in the hospital ever since. He is out of his straightjacket now but he still screams whenever my wife's name is mentioned.

I am beginning to think that my wife has some psychological quirk or that she has suffered a mental breakdown. Surely no one could cook that badly without having ulterior motives.

I sincerely hope that someday she will realize that a kitchen is not a place to conjure up poisonous dishes. I sincerely hope that she will attain that degree of humanitarianism which will allow her to take a few cooking lessons.

And I sincerely hope she doesn't read this column.