

The Change of Life

My wife has been tremendously happy for thirty-two years of married life but recently she became a trifle dissatisfied after reading a book on women's liberation. We had a violent argument last week when my wife objected to how easy a husband has it, and how totally miserable is the lot of a wife. I remained calm throughout the argument (although I did throw a brick through our television set) and I remarked that women lived a life of ease while men are dropping like flies from various duties and obligations.

My wife said, "Amos, you couldn't live the life of a woman for one week. You wouldn't have the physical stamina or the moral strength."

"And you could live the life of a man?" I asked.

"I could" screamed my wife, "live YOUR life. What is there to writing? An idiot can write. A three year old kid can write. But I would like to see you perform MY duties. The ironing, washing, sewing, and all the other tedious things I have to do."

My friends, I was so mad my nose began bleeding. I calmed myself with great effort, and said, "Look pimplebrain, you are dead wrong. And I would like to prove it. Starting Monday I want you to do the writing. All you have

Country Philosopher

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to do is provide a Country Philosopher column for two newspapers, a column about the volunteer firemen, a column about our veterans organizations, and material for the Southern Marylander magazine. While you are doing this I will manage the house. I will live the part of the wife. I will do all the chores associated with womanhood. Now then, bigmouth, will you agree to this arrangement."

My wife agreed, and on Monday I became a woman. I gathered up the laundry and I drove to the Laundromat in town. The place contained eight million people. Little screaming kids were running around kicking over

laundry baskets. I put my clothes into three different washers while hundreds of women glared at me in silent disapproval. Two of my machines overflowed and the third died of a heart attack in the middle of its first cycle. I gathered up my wet, soapy clothes and drove home.

On Tuesday I began ironing. I took my wife's new blouse and spread it over the ironing board. I pressed the button on the iron to release a small spray of steam and eight tons of rusty water poured out. I scorched my best pants, the leg on the ironing board broke, and the iron caught fire.

On Wednesday I did the dishes. I grabbed a skillet that had been used to fry chicken and there were

bits of carbonized material clinging to the bottom of that skillet. And that carbonized material courageously resisted removal. I used scouring pads, a steel brush, a stick of dynamite, and I just couldn't get that skillet clean. With every bone in my body aching, with my lungs thirsting for air, I threw that skillet out the kitchen window.

On Thursday I scrubbed the floors. I got a pail of water and I added a detergent that was advertised as "the most powerful detergent in the world." And it was. When I mixed that detergent with the water it bubbled and smoked, and when I dipped into the mixture it ate my hand off.

On Friday, I read a few columns my wife had written and they were simply perfect. The girl really had a way with words. I tried to do a little sewing but I couldn't thread the needle.

I was beginning to see that women DO have it tougher than men. I had been a woman for one entire week and it hadn't been all that easy. But all the disasters I had experienced couldn't equal what happened to me on Saturday. My doctor called and told me that I had played the part of a woman a little too realistically. He told me I was pregnant.

Gosh! I hope it's a girl.

For my wife's sake.