

Country Philosopher



by Amos Arthur Holmes

You people know what I think of my wife. She does so many things that are pleasant to me. I honestly can't picture my life without her.

But she certainly isn't perfect.

I have already mentioned how deadly she is in the kitchen. I don't believe I have ever encountered another human being who could ruin something as simple as a cup of tea. But my wife manages this chore magnificently. She boils a quart of water (she does this without error) but then she adds to that water four hundred tea bags. She lets this combination steep for three days and when she serves it the tea is bubbling, and churning, and looks like a cauldron of acid. One tiny sip of that tea does something incurable to your vital organs. When my wife isn't looking I take that tea and I place it in a spray can and use it as an insecticide. Lordy, it kills roaches, ants, crickets, and owls.

I am not entirely satisfied with my wife if we consider my romantic desires. When I was a young man I managed to conjure up romantic

desires every five minutes. Now that I am fifty-five I find those same romantic desires infiltrate every Tuesday of the third week of every month. And every Tuesday of the third week of every month my good wife (voluntarily) is occupying the spare bedroom with our three grandchildren. And no matter how you hack it...that is cruelty to animals.

I am a firm believer that marriage should not take away my wife's freedom. She should be able to think her own thoughts, do her own thing, and even have lunch with a handsome gentleman without my turning blue with jealousy. I didn't even object when she subscribed to *Playgirl* magazine. If her mind leaped merrily along the path of obscenity, well, that was her business. But I do think I have a right to protest what she does with that magazine. Each month she cuts out the centerfold and places that unbelievable display of crudeness on various walls in my house. I can assure you (as I have often tried to assure my wife) that those photos are touched up. Hell! I could look like that if I were touched up. My grandfather could look like that if he were touched up. I think that everyone is aware of my progressive thinking. I had my own private sexual revolution thirty

The Glass Slipper

years ago. But, really, isn't there something wrong when I have to look at a nude Bert Reynolds each morning as I brush my teeth? Why, when I am trying to create something beautiful, should I have an unclothed Clint Eastwood staring at me from the wall of my den?

But nothing my wife has ever done could compare to the indignity she heaped upon me this afternoon. I was planting some petunias in our front yard when this handsome guy, on a prancing white horse, rode up to my house. When he dismounted I saw that he was wearing purple velvet pants and had tiny golden sandals on his feet. In his hand he held what looked like a glass slipper.

"Good Morning," he says, "My name is Prince Charming. Last night at the Elk's Lodge I was dancing with this beautiful, inebriated female. We were kissing and having a hell of a good time. . . when . . . at the stroke of twelve. . . this beautiful doll ran away. In her rapid exit she left this glass slipper. Now I am trying to find the girl this slipper will fit . . . and when I find her I will carry her away to my castle. Are there any females living here?"

"Only my wife" I replied.

"Do you mind" says the Prince, "If I try the slipper on your wife?"

I thought he was presuming quite a lot but I didn't want to be stuffy about this. It was all quite funny, especially when I noticed the glass slipper was a size six and I knew my wife wore a size fourteen.

I smiled, "Go right in. My wife is in the kitchen."

The Prince went charging into my house and in about three minutes he came out carrying my wife in his arms. I was thunderstruck! Amazed! Immobilized! And on my wife's right foot (I thought it quite an imperfect fit) was the glass slipper.

The Prince hoisted my wife onto the horse's back, leaped into the saddle, and I'll be damned if they didn't go riding off into the sunset.

I stood there in my yard and I don't think I have ever felt a dejection that severe. All those years of being the perfect husband. Of scrubbing floors and making pineapple upside-down cake. And after all this. . . my wife runs away with a Prince without so much as a goodbye kiss.

But I know she'll be back. You see. . . my wife is a pretty earthy woman and it isn't going to take her long to find out that a man who wears purple velvet pants and tiny golden sandals just isn't going to measure up. Then she'll come running home, fall on her knees, and beg my forgiveness.

And I think I'll play hard to get.