

**THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM**

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**PART ONE**

**Introduction.**

Dramatic scenarios occur within the video. At times they overlap or dissolve into each other. They intercut with brief segments of the following:

- a) Interviews of women who lived through the post-war transition
- b) A large variety of industrial and public television and film materials that function as illustration and counterpoint to the dramatic and interview segments. These will be used as covering visuals in post-production.

The action occurs in the following contexts:

- 1) Family interaction characterized by various configurations of the central characters: The Sandersons; Bobby (child), Dorothy and George, whose activities are interrupted by the Narrator, who either appears on set or walks into it. The Narrator provides social commentary and admonishment; is consulted as an expert; or offers solutions to their many problems. He provokes a kind of dream state, which Dorothy at times enjoys, seeks or resists. He allows Dorothy and George to engage in long reminiscences about their lives by listening to them and offering advice.

These family activities take place in the kitchen, living area and bedroom. The kitchen also has a dinette/eating area and a comfortable chair for George. It is the 1940's to the 1950's style kitchen. It is functional, with a growing number of objects as time progresses. However, it never becomes a luxury. Bobby runs through this kitchen, Dorothy cleans it constantly, the family eats and argues in this kitchen. Camera angles and shots include close-ups, long-shots, tracking shots from above Dorothy cleaning the kitchen floor and Bobby making his mess, dramatic one shots of the actors and Dorothy hard at work.

At one point, Dorothy's whist club comes over for a gossip session and they are seated at the table, where they drink whiskey, joke and play poker. In general, the kitchen is a pretty isolated room during the day, with the exception of radio in the 1940's and television by about 1953.



There are long cleaning sequences, and several homecomings. The drama has a realist tone at times, where at other times shifts into a television comedy, like a vignette without much content, and from there into fantasy. Because of this shifting sense of medium, and the need to make technological change in the home, the sets have the look and feel of sets, rather than being dressed for realism. There is a radio in the first part of the production, then later, a television appears. At times, material from the community forums is heard on the radio or appears on the television, at which point the action dissolves into the "real" event.

The bedroom has a double bed, a small dresser for Dorothy's many books, and curtains in the background. There are discussions between Dorothy and George that take place here; Bobby invades the room on a regular basis; and Dorothy lies here, during the war years, pacing, sitting at her dressing table and worrying. Fabrics will be updated as time moves on but the room remains the same. Dorothy makes it clear to George that she wants a better kitchen and "future" not a new bedroom suite. Scenes in the bedroom involve Dorothy alone, reading, sleeping, musing; Dorothy and George; Dorothy, George and Bobby. George enters the room, talks to Dorothy, sits on the bed, the two adults in bed, with their child and on the bed together.

- 2) There are a series of community forums that have taken place between the years 1945-1955. These mark the shifting nuances of women's positions, attitudes towards women, generic positions of organizations (unions, housewives and consumer groups, political parties of the right, left and centre), and social positions (academics, politicians, businessmen, government), from which the policy surrounding women's place was argued out and enacted. They are aired on radio in the 1940's and broadcast by 1953. The primary messages however, come from the "live" presentation.

The forums are debates. There is occasional outright hostility especially between the Columnist, who is quite left-leaning and the Housewife/Churchwoman, who is quite right in her keel. Dorothy listens to the debates and at times seems poised to intervene. Camera shots include long shots of the Panelists, CU of the panelists speaking, reaction shots of the other panelists, including over their shoulders. Lighting will be very dramatic, with spots on the individual speakers, separating them from one another.

Some of their comments will be shot to allow them to be "keyed" into the family interactions and Dorothy's housekeeping activities. Appropriate coloured borders will surround the characters (ie. rose for the Churchwoman) and then fabric designs will be wiped into the borders.



- 3) There is an undelineated space of advertising fantasy and idealized memory/dream. Dorothy plays with products here, dances with Bill, her wartime boyfriend, looks divine in her acetate dress while she awaits George's arrival, and fantasizes about make-overs for the entire whist club. There are short moments that will be intercut with video clips from actual ads of the era (ie. "Dorothy's Dream House"). These fantasies are performed to music from the era, such as "Rum N' Coca-Cola", as sung by the Andrew Sisters and "Little White Lies", as sung by Dick Haynes. The Narrator "sends" Dorothy to this place. Fog and wind swirl around Dorothy, and coloured lighting is keyed around her.

**Scene One:**

[Kitchen, 1944. DOROTHY, the table and the radio are spotted with a dramatic fall off of lighting intensity into the rest of the kitchen. This is a dramatic interaction between Dorothy and the outside world, as represented by the radio.]

Scene opens with Dorothy filling out a survey at the kitchen table. The kitchen is crowded and there is a cup of coffee on the table. MS without the kitchen details. She mouths questions as she answers. The radio plays music in the background. She reads aloud as the camera establishes her kitchen and her focus on the survey in hand.

DOROTHY

(reads aloud in official-type voice and then answers)

National Selective Service...Do you intend to work after the War? Of course. Would you like to keep a job in industry? They've got to be kidding. Yes! Why are you working? Answer in short sentences. (emphasizing each word...) My family needs the money.

(To camera. She is listening to the radio. Dorothy pauses as the music shifts over to "Canadian Labour Forum", which comes up softly with introductory music and the following voiceover. As she becomes more interested she leaves the survey, walks over to the radio and turns it up, standing in front of it with her arms crossed, occasionally reacting)

(The action cuts away between Dorothy listening to the radio at home and the panelists on stage)

.../...



DOROTHY

Unbelievable! (as academic speaks) I should be on that panel.

[As the NARRATOR speaks, the scene dissolves into the community hall, the stage for the forum. The Narrator is present, serving as the moderator. He provides commentary and indicates which panelists are to speak after the establishing shot. The discussion is somewhat more formal than the later discussion (the 1950's), which is more media conscious. Individuals appeal to the audience more than to each other, and often break in at will. The Narrator in this instance modelled on a variety of newspaper columnists and radio personalities, takes a crack at describing women's post-war possibilities in a glib and sex-stereotyped language.]

NARRATOR

Remember when it was the male who held the switch at every important post? Today, milady has emerged triumphant from her cozy but dull cocoon into the business world. Her single sister deserted the ordinary, everyday office job to strike out on the adventurous path of war production, so the old-war horse (laughs) the well-trained, efficient ex-office girl was coaxed back into the harness. Six years ago, the standard release of any girl who decided to be a wife. The white collar girl could either remain a Miss or say "I do", staying at home with the scrub board, the mop and the bridge circle. But with the war, the married woman was a valuable asset; she kept both the office and the home a safe refuge for her Johnnie to come marching home to. What will be her fate?

Scene Two:

ACADEMIC

Let's face it, there's pressure on the Canadian woman to return to the domestic front. And how does she feel about that? Surveys suggest, not so good. She has grown too familiar with the unionists cry for "equal pay for equal work", regardless of sex. She's ready to fight to stay out of the kitchen...apparently her male union buddies intend to help her. So our Canadian Rosie the Rivetter faces the future with trepidation.

Realistically, the era of "Rosie" has passed. The comely Miss who trekked off to work in white overalls, her hair tucked up in her snood and a tin lunch box swinging in her hand, is off to conquer other fields. Unfortunately for Miss Warworker, these may well be old and familiar ones.

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ACADEMIC

In actuality, there simply are not enough jobs to support full employment for men and women.

HOUSEWIFE/COMMITTEE WOMAN

[She is modelled on a clubwoman from the I.O.D.E., combined with Tilley Rolsten, Conservative MP during and after the War, in Vancouver.]

You suggest injustice to women, but there is none! Why jobs abound for receptionists, saleswomen, waitresses, hospital workers, and launderesses. National Selective Service lists over 1000 domestic placements available right now. Besides, most women prefer to return home...they don't resent the layoffs in the least!

COLUMNIST

[She is modelled on the numerous women who wrote columns and letters as well as carrying feature beats for regional and special interest papers during the war.]

I hardly agree! There's no jobs for women here! Men, not women, are hired into post-war positions. And why should women earn \$20 a month for a six day, sixty hour week as a domestic when that's a quarter of what they've been netting in industry? Canadian women would rather return home than to slave wages.

NARRATOR

Yes...what of marriage?

ACADEMIC

Looks like would-be bridegrooms may have to watch their step. No longer will they be showered with affection, their every whim catered to, their slightest frown viewed upon with apprehension. The younger generation of Vancouver war workers loved their independence. Future husbands will have to treat them with kindness and consideration to wean them from it.

COLUMNIST

I would like to see a man give up the kind of job that he was trained for, experienced in and liked doing and go live instead with a relative and ask for a dime when he wants it, and wonder what to do with himself day and night as his soul sickens. Fun boys? Yet single women are being asked to do just this. I would like to see a married man, possibly an expert in his job,

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COLUMNIST

whether it be welding or dentistry, gladly give it up to make room for some woman whose sole qualification for the job is that she IS a woman. Women don't want to take men's jobs away but they do deserve jobs in the post-war economy.

[Cut away to Dorothy at home listening to the radio]

DOROTHY

I should be on that panel!

NARRATOR

What are the economic repercussions of this change?

ACADEMIC

Some employers expect married women to voluntarily leave, but I'll tell you, business shouldn't be so eager to see them go. Women put their dollars into the retail economy while they are working. Once they're gone, how will the economy sustain demand? And, demand creates employment. Keeping women in the home could turn out to be a real waste of talent.

The real issue is what responsibility the government should take in providing jobs. Can plants be re-outfitted to make consumer goods? Can skills acquired during the war be used? What about the Canadian merchant marine?

COLUMNIST

Exactly! But instead they are returning industry to the private sector and dropping price controls. Really, we need labour's programmes: a shorter work week with no loss in pay, severance pay for service at home and abroad, and programs to build low-cost housing and public works.

HOUSEWIFE/COMMITTEE WOMAN

[In this sequence she is condescending, feminine and Flirtatious]

My goodness! What impossible rhetoric my dear! What would happen if all the women who worked during the war usurped men's rightful place in defiance? There wouldn't be full employment. Returning vets, men who fought hard for their country would be on the unemployment lines again. And if there is a post-war scramble for available jobs between war veterans and well-dressed,

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HOUSEWIFE/COMMITTEE WOMAN

well-fed, well-situated lady veterans of the assembly line, I fear that scant chivalry will be exhibited towards them.

Women will either fall or be pushed from the pedestal of popularity on which they are standing. We've been a help, we musn't become a hinderence. Our fellows need us for peaceful recovery, we must give them our 100% attention. The vets need our love.

We Canadian women must go back to our homes, where we can make a greater contribution. The natural instincts of a woman is towards husband and children. The biggest job that women can do is to raise a family of Canadian citizens with a sense of responsibility to their God, their country and their parents. If we lose sight of this, we open the floodgates of communism.

[Cut away to Dorothy at home, she is furious with the last speaker. She stares at the radio, comments, then its voice goes down and hers comes up...]

DOROTHY

Unbelievable! (She shakes her head)

[Dorothy continues with a speech as we dissolve to the panel. She is sitting at a podium, casting a shadow over the panelists and the lighting is bright upon her.]

DOROTHY

I work in industry! I know first hand what's happening out there! We girls are getting the push again, just like the last war. That old game of employment by sex not merit is back on the books again, why even government ads say, "preference to male candidates". And we want to work, why...

[Cut to the Narrator. When the shot returns to the panel, Dorothy is gone.]

NARRATOR

[He waves Dorothy away before cutting to the panel. He is interrupting, trying to get the last word in.]

Now, now, now!

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NARRATOR

Perhaps its all irrelevant because recent statistics show a shortage of men! Females are overhauling men at the rate of 1900 a year. Its a new problemm...BC has long boasted more red-blooded men, the type that opened up our wilderness.

Surely the jury remains out. Will women be willing to lay down their tools and go back to the kitchens and aprons and wait for their hubby's step around sixish, when he breaks with the boys? Plenty of people are losing sleep over it.

Still, if former war workers leap headlong into domesticity, there'll be some strange sights to see! Just imagine Rosie the Rivetter, used to pounding thousands of rivets of steel plates with ease, opening a can of tomato soup with one of those dinky little do-dads? Or the havoc when she decides to wash the fine bone china with those , no longer, delicate hands? And breaking the assembly-line mentality will be a challenge! Fitting a bolt, that hols a nut, that holds a bolt, time and time again, without conscious thought is one thing, but plunk that same little lass down on the linoleum in a frilly housefrock to make a full course meal, and she's bound to remember to put the flowers on the table and forget to put the roast in the oven. Meals will be haywire until the mother from the graveyard shift becomes acuostomed to breakfast at 8 AM, not 11 PM. Hey...maybe it would b e better to let the men take over on the fireside front and leave the gals to bring home the bacon.

Scene Three:

[While the latter comment is being made, dissolve into Dorothy in her kitchen, cooking and cleaning. She does not appear to be a bull in the china shop. These sequences of domestic work will be intercut with the panelists/narrator's commentary.

1948. Domestic scene. Dorothy in her kitchen. The kitchen is very neat, more so than when we saw it last while Dorothy was working. Knickknacks abound. There is a definite sense of restricted space and even dilapidation in the scale of housing. They are not achieving the "keeping up with the Jones's" life-style, that is discussed and presented in all the advertising materials. Rather, there is the struggle to make ends meet. Their home is cozy.]



Music comes up on Dorothy scrubbing the floor. Camera tracks around her and Bobby, who is hard at work making a mess and playing in Dorothy's path until she shoos him away. He's plating with space men or soldiers.

The Narrator starts in darkness and walks into the centre of the kitchen while Dorothy continues to clean. He leans on the counter and speaks to the camera.

NARRATOR

Let's find Dorothy and her husband George several years later. Why here they are and it looks like a typical day for this happy family of three in this great Canadian experiment. Dorothy is bustling around and George is whistling on his way home from work, while Bobby plays with his new toy truck. But wait a minute...are George and Dorothy really happy? What is it that they want from their post-war lives?

[Footage of Canadian streets 1948-50's, with men coming home from work, dissolving into a domestic scene]

DOROTHY

This floor is filthy!

NARRATOR

You can keep that floor gleaming, lustrous, mirror-smooth through many a busy day.

DOROTHY

But you don't know my family.

NARRATOR

Let them do their worst! This finish scoffs at scuff marks and day to day dirt wipes up easily. And it makes polishing easy... there's no rubbing, no buffing. You can just sit and watch it take on new brilliance. And this beauty is yours for only pennies a day.

#### Scene Four:

There is a sparkle wipe to Dorothy (like Tinkerbell) as she begins her first dream sequence. She is dressed to the hilt, in her new synthetic dress, wearing a crisp apron.



She holds a new electric broom or floor washer. She dances with it in a cloud of swirling fog as wind blows softly through her hair. It is clear that Dorothy is suffused with feeling for this appliance. The music playing will be romantic (ie. Sentimental Journey or Love Is Many A Splendoured Thing).

[Choreography between Dorothy and appliance, as directed by Karin Konoval in studio]

### Scene Five:

Abrupt cut or dissolve back to Dorothy, and out of the fantasy into her kitchen...it's reality and she is back on bended knee. Dorothy, although distracted, grabs Bobby as he goes flying by her. She rights an almost spilt bucket. The Narrator resumes his role as "social commentator". He stands in front of the kitchen and then wals to lean on the counter. He has a bad tendency to check for dust, wiping his finger across Dorothy's newly cleaned surfaces, peering into the fridge on occasion and taking other Good Housekeeping liberties.

### NARRATOR

Yes, it's 1948 and the babies are booming. In ten years there will be 5 million new Canadians. Why here's Dad now, right on time from a hard day on the job. You know...not so long ago he was in a different kind of uniform, fighting for Canada's freedom, a freedom that may yet be challenged by the forces of Soviet destruction overseas.

[Dissolve out of Narrator and into Medium shot of Housewife on hands and knees picking up toys that Bobby has strewn on the floor. She is preparing for George's return. She sprays perfume on her neck and behind her knees...suddenly she sees the pail with water in it and quickly goes to pick it up, only knocking it and getting her hands wet.

George enters with lunch bucket in hand. Dorothy gets up, wipes her hands and runs to kiss George on the cheek. He avoids her wet hands. He is decidedly grumpy. Bobby also rushes forward and gets a distracted response. Dorothy takes George's things from him].



DOROTHY

Hello darling, how was your day?

GEORGE

Why its funny that you ask me that.

DOROTHY

(Taking him literally)

No it isn't, I ask you that everyday when you come home.

GEORGE

For God's sake Dorothy, you know what I mean. I ran into BILL CARTER and he mentioned that he knew you. (Muses) I'm sure I never introduced you to him...the guy's a notorious womanizer. He went into "rapturous detail" about your face and went on about that blue dress I sent you from Paris and (imitating Bill) "that scent of Lily of the Valley that wafts on the air as you drift through the room" (Glares at Dorothy) I could swear he was trying to tell me something.

[Dorothy takes George's jacket and gives him a vest. She watches him as he walks across the clean floor, upset and off guard]

DOROTHY

(Suddenly light and evasive)

Well, what could that nasty man mean? (Serious) I met him briefly at one of those war work-do's...Why darling, you just need to relax. Want a beer? Put on your slippers, and here's your pipe and you just sit right here and read about that big world out there. You're so suspicious!

[She kisses him on the nose. He pulls away, still disgruntled].

[George has settled into his paternal-type chair at the edge of the dinette].

NARRATOR

[Standing in kitchen, he winks at George and thus at the camera]

A word to husbands, woman is at best a contradiction.



BOBBY

[Dorothy fusses, George reads, Bobby repeats this word annoyingly]  
Psychiatrist...psychiatrist...psychiatrist.

[He is trying out the word and only stops when admonished].

DOROTHY

(Shocked)

Where did you pick up that word?

GEORGE

(Looks at Dorothy)

What have you done to that kid! or what are you putting into that kid's head?

(Frowns and returns to paper)

BOBBY

(Comes over to George and looks beseechingly at him)

Daddy, daddy play with me. Can we play with my train?

[George relents, gets up and goes to the middle area of the apartment. Dorothy, anxious to see the evening improve, grabs the train set. The camera follows and then looks down at them playing with the train. This is a moment where George's feelings towards his son need to emerge. He is engaged with the child and warm. The Narrator observes them with interest before he interrupts].

GEORGE

(playing with Bobby and pointing his finger towards a toy bridge)

Let's burn our bridges behind us...

NARRATOR

(Dragnet/Twilight Zone style: setting up the character and situation. While Narrator talks, the camera cuts away to him. Details George and Bobby playing with bridges while explosives are discussed.)

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NARRATOR

That's it George, play with your son. He knows as little about you as you do about him. (Pauses, finger to chin) Now, let's see...twenty-eight. Explosives expert. Fought overseas for four years. (To camera) Just like logging, except then he did his darndest not to kill people and in the army he did his best to blow them up. He's a little worried that he won't remember which is which, now that the damn thing's over.

Let's interrupt George for a moment and see what his life has been like since he returned from the home front.

[Directs the following comment to George]

Did you get a new car George?

GEORGE

[George looks to camera and answers. He's on the floor, diminished. He crashes elements of the rail set for punctuation. After each answer he re-engages with Bobby and then is pulled back into conversation.]

Nope. I made a couple of investments when I came home.

NARRATOR

What about the new house?

GEORGE

Housing for vets!? You've got to be kidding! You had to know someone. Or be someone. So you could evict someone! (Laughs)

NARRATOR

Well, what about your job?

GEORGE

I tried for retraining but I didn't have enough school. They said I was good at what I did already. Of course Dorothy doesn't like it...she's sure I'll blow myself up. (Laughs bitterly and shrugs shoulders)

NARRATOR

What about Dorothy? Has she changed?



GEORGE

You know it's funny. That's the one thing I wanted to stay the same...but I feel I'm married to a totally different woman.

[Dorothy bends down and touches both of them on the shoulder]

DOROTHY

Dinner!

[Dissolve to...]

**Scene Six:**

This scene involves two "True Confessions" by George and Dorothy. They interweave but will be shot as full statements by each character and then inter-cut in post-production.

[George's scene in the kitchen cuts into Dorothy in the bedroom, lying down, and then writing at her dressing table. She looks into the mirror and the scene dissolves into either reconstructions or historical footage. It then comes back to her writing. This dialogue is the conversation that George and Dorothy need to have, but cannot. We will do sleep cutaways and writing cutaways.]

George is asleep in his chair with paper in lap. His slippers are on and he is somewhat disarrayed, in his T-shirt and casual pants. In his dream, the Narrator is there; a friend he can speak to...

The Narrator creeps in, suit jacket over shoulder, looks at George and shakes his head sadly. Gets a beer for himself and George, slams the fridge door to wake up George who is very groggy when handed his beer...the Narrator pulls up a kitchen chair.]

NARRATOR

As you were saying, before we were interrupted...

GEORGE

Why is it so darn hard to say what I really feel?



(George offers a cigarette to the Narrator. Camera cuts between M/S of George and C/U's and reaction shots of the Narrator after initial action.)

NARRATOR

Perhaps you feel that nobody listens to you. Well I'm here George and I'm listening. Go on...

GEORGE

I met Dorothy when she was a waitress working on the skid row in Vancouver. It was in '38. I was down for fire season, staying at an old hotel and hanging out with all the odd sods...ya know, burnt out old wobblies, unemployed guys and lots of loggers in for the weekend. I noticed her at the Trocedero...she was sweet, real honest, not like a lot of the broads that were around there.

[Narrator, engaged, rolls up his sleeves.]

She caught my interest. She was always spouting off about the "greater good". Real cute in a woman. Those old organizers sure loved her. I liked to watch her. She had class, the way that she would slip them an extra large piece of pie and a wink.

I'll never forget the one time Frank, my buddy, had been trying to get into her pants for months. Dorothy was his pet project and the more he tried, the more she hated his guts. But she never said anything. Finally, one day, composed as all hell and wearing that polite little smile, she poured a big pitcher of ice-water in his lap and said, "That should cool you off". She didn't skip a beat, just went on and took our orders, "Now boys, what would YOU like?" You should have seen Frank's face...what a study!

Well...I went back to logging, but Dorothy was in my head. When I came back down to Vancouver, I went right back to that cafe. I wasn't sure she knew I even existed. But when our eyes met, she kind of tripped on her coffee pot and her face lit up like a brushfire. So, I asked her out. We had a great time; she could sure get me talking. Every time I was in Vancouver, I saw her. Corny as it may sound, I couldn't imagine being without her. So I asked her to marry me. (Shrugs)

(Shifts to a more dejective attitude; more distanced)

Anyhow...we move up North, Dorothy gets pregnant and I find myself thinking about the war in Europe all the time.

[Narrator nods in agreement]

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GEORGE

It fueled my sense of injustice. My buddies were all signing up and I had this feeling in my gut of being trapped...married, a kid on the way and the biggest event in world history happening all around me.

[Narrator nods/shakes his head]

I couldn't put it into words, but I had to get the hell over there. It was uncanny the way Dorothy read my mind. She fought me tooth and nail about enlisting.

[Looks at hands and image dissolves to memory: Scene 7. Then back to George]

Dorothy sure was feisty! I loved her way with words...I guess I loved the way she adored me even more, but at the same time, I felt like I was suffocating. I wasn't sure if I liked this marriage bit.

[Narrator shakes his head]

Anyhow, I got pissed one day, went into Duncan and enlisted.

[George's monologue will intercut with Dorothy's...here]

GEORGE

The guys were always speculating about their wives and wondering what they were up to. But Dorothy wrote all the time, chatty letters about Bobby and the war effort at home. (Shakes his head and...pauses) I found it hard to write, to tell her how much I missed her. I could sense her frustration with me through the black marks of the Army censor. (Pauses..remembers, embarrassed). Oh yeah, once, in a rage, I wrote her to get the hell out of Boeings and stay home with the kid. (Salutes, then slaps his thigh in frustration). Yes sir! I sent her my orders! (Laughs bitterly) As though she'd listen to me, across two continents and as many years.

(Pauses...and shifts down) We were stationed in Paris. I had seen enough war. My two closest buddies had been shot up. It' was all disgusting. I quit feeling anything. All I wanted was to sleep in clean linen, a solid meal, some semblance of safety and to get laid. I managed all but the clean linen.

[Narrator chortles]

.../...



continued...

[Dorothy's monologue]

GEORGE

The other guys tortured themselves with jealousy day and night. But I trusted Dorothy. I trusted her the whole time I was there. (Pauses and says quietly) I was weird...it wasn't until I'd been back for a long time that I really didn't know anymore.

**Scene Seven:**

George is sitting at the kitchen table, stewing. He's got a bottle of beer and a cigarette burning beside him. Dorothy is there, looking concerned. She goes over and starts to rub his neck. He brushes her away. She jumps back a bit, stung by his rejection. The scene is a memory which happens in the early 1940's. It's important that the kitchen space is not defined as such, so the lighting needs to be subdued surrounding the table, where the drama occurs...Dorothy is pregnant...

DOROTHY

What's eating you honey? (She seems alarmed) Are you sick? Did something happen at work?

GEORGE

(Sharp...as he shakes off her hands) I'm O.K.

[Dorothy sees the paper lying beside him. It's the Lumberworker or the Colonist and it spells out wartime concerns. She becomes very distressed as she delivers her next lines. He looks up, leans back in his chair and gives her a hearing...skeptically.]

DOROTHY

You're not thinking about enlisting again, are you? Our baby's not even born and you want to make me a widow. I can't stand the idea of you going. Maybe it's selfish...but darling, you're working in an essential industry. There's no need for you to go overseas in order to help the war effort.

[George shakes his head. She continues]

Nobody's going to make you fight except yourself. Your job's frozen. Believe me, if they need you, they'll conscript you!

.../...



continued...

[He just stares at her vacantly. Shrugs]

DOROTHY

(Having had enough, her anger is apparent) I can't stand it when you get like this, will you talk to me?

(Long pause...then she shifts tone, supressing the anger. Changes course completely. She knows its completely unacceptable, socially, to say what she has just said and to nag at this early stage in their marriage.)

Sweetheart, Anna told me the funniest story the other day. Remember when you guys were on strike in '36? Well apparently, her Ole had just got married and Anna was anything but a union supporter. And Ole had already lost one job for organizing the miners. So she made him promise that he would never organize again. So, he's working at this logging company, see, in town. And she's making him sandwiches everyday and coffee for his thermos, packing him off to work. And it turns out that all this time, he was walking the picket line, not going to work...she was so mad... (Dorothy's voice comes down and his comes up...)

**Scene Eight:**

[Dorothy lies on her bed, restless, wearing a housecoat, she has fallen asleep, characteristically with a book beside her. Lights are on and there is brandy on the bedside...her arm is flung over her eyes. She slowly moves her arm to the pillow beside her. When her hand makes contact, there is noone there. She sits up anguished. She looks at her photo of George and pours a drink. She gets up from the bed, walks to the dressing table and sits down. Her image is seen, reflected in the mirror. She opens the drawer and takes out a pen and writing paper.

During this monologue, there are moments when she looks up and we see her reflected in the mirror. She starts to write a letter and think...she peers into the mirror as the scene dissolves into footage and fantasies. Sometimes we see reflections of the Narrator evesdropping in her bedroom...we certainly see him first as a reflection of Dorothy in the mirror. Narrator again acts confident and wanders the room with Dorothy. There are two-shots of them and many C/U's, MC/U's and statics of Dorothy and her reactions to the Narrator.]

DOROTHY

Dear Doctor Dix,

.../...



continued...

DOROTHY

I guess my story is the same as so many other girls, I don't even know why I'm writing. I didn't know if he would come back and if he did come back, who would he be. After all, he did leave me in the first place, and I never quite got over it. George was so damn quiet, you never knew if your cooking gave him indigestion or if you did. I was so angry at him for enlisting; for wanting to enlist. I understood the importance of it...a war against fascism! But I was going to wage a war on the home-front too! (She looks into the mirror as camera zooms in)

(Quietly...she gets up and pours a drink) Well...I lost. There I was with a two-month old kid and he's gone. We came down to Vancouver first, of course. I spent time with my girlfriends and our baby carriages, strolling up and down Hastings street, and spending hours in the park.

(Picks up a picture) God I missed George. We had been together for almost two years and married for some of that. I wanted him to see Bobby, how he changed in little ways, that moment when you first knew he was his own person. I was used to George's absences when he was logging, a week or two at the most...but this was something else...Indefinite...infinite. (Sets picture by mirror)

(Moves to easy chair and leans forward) George's army allowance was small and I was struggling to make ends meet. I guess it was late '42 that the big push for women into the war plants started. It just made sense to work again. What if something happened to George, what if he didn't want us when he came back? At least I'd have some money, some future I could count on. And if I worked eight hours a day, I couldn't be spending all of my time worrying about my life. It was that simple.

Of course childcare wasn't simple. My mother agreed to babysit Bobby. I would pay her and she would stop doing other people's housework and do mine. (With commitment) I was determined to spend time with my kid if it meant I never slept. I was young, and strong...I could handle it. Of course I didn't mention my son in my interview with Boeings; just my soldier husband. I was hired.

[Narrator pours her a drink]

I was part of a riveting team...we made planes. It was fast, exciting work, with a wild social scene. There was even a sit-down strike for rest breaks. My son seemed alright, however guilty I felt about my mother.

.../...



continued...

DOROTHY

Occasionally there would be a precious letter first when George was in training in Eastern Canada, then in England, formidably far away, then Europe, further still.

(Dorothy at the end of her bed) By the end of '43, he had been gone almost two years.. Bobby would be two. I had a nest egg in the bank and a long memory of the depression. I'd lie in bed and try to conjure George up. I'd think about them in the trenches and bombed out old buildings, of men without arms and legs, coming home men unable to work. Somehow I'd get stuck on this image of George curled up, innocent, asleep like a baby. Then I'd get scared. What if it was a premonition? What if he was dead, and not asleep?

I would rework newsreel footage in my head. Once I could have sworn I saw him get out of a landing boat. I stood up in the theatre and screamed.

[Cut to newsreel footage from the front]

Mostly I wondered if he would forget me but sometimes I wondered whether I could endure the reconciliation after those years of absence. It became harder to remember the details of his face, what it felt like when he'd hold me in his arms. I would try to relive our conversations...they would drift by me.

[At this point, we pick up again on George's story]

(Dorothy lies teen-style across her bed...the Narrator is still seated on the easy chair, pouring another drink)

Something had to change and it did. The next year was so exciting. I became a shop steward and wrote about what the future would hold for women, in the union newspaper. My marriage seemed a thousand years away.

You see, that's how I got into hot water. I was sent to a big reconstruction convention by the union. And Bill, an old logging buddy of my husband's who I'd never really met, singled me out. It never entered my thick skull that this guy was hung up on me. I had been faithful to George...I hadn't looked at another guy...well that's not true, I looked, but that's all.

.../...



continued...

DOROTHY

(Toasts George...She seems a bit drunk and quite distressed.)

To faithful George who writes seldom and causes me more damn headaches. To George...of the unknown future, from a distant past.

[Dorothy's voice-over introduces the dance sequence]

**Scene Eight (a):**

Dorothy and Bill are dancing in the mist. They are waltzing. Partytime voices mix with soft music which plays in the background. The other voices come down and the music continues and rises. The couple slows...Bill bends down and whispers in Dorothy's ear. She laughs coquetteishly, he touched her face. She begins to dance again. They slow, stop. Bill touches her face...

[Music: LITTLE WHITE LIES, as sung by Dick Haynes]

**Scene Eight continued...**

DOROTHY

I was an adult with Bill, in a way I'd never been with George. We talked like equals. He convinced me to dance with him and he was a good dancer. (Short pause...she sits up and arranges her nightgown properly) I was afraid of gossip so we left the Hall.

[Insert Dorothy and Bill dancing in the mist]

DOROTHY

(Narrator is unsympathetic) One thing led to another...my defenses were down, what can I say?

One night turned into an affair and then into a relationship. My son began to think that Bill was his father. We'd stay with him and on weekend mornings all three of us would cuddle up in bed, Bobby was a regular warm little lump, the only piece of security facing the post-war future with me.

.../...



continued...

DOROTHY

(Dorothy returns to the mirror and we shoot her reflection and then zoom in to conclude...)

George is coming back and what can I do? Do I give Bill, the sweetest man in the world, his walking papers? Do I leave a husband who's been on the battlefield for four years? And if I've spent the last six months with another man, what the hell has my husband been doing in Europe? And how will he feel about this new working woman (stares at herself) about a wife who yapped her mouth off on the radio?

(Pauses...with some sense of entrapment in her voice.)

I just have to have my independence! (Looks at her writing paper and writes the end...) Yours In Hot Water...

[Cutaways of Dorothy writing]

[Continues with George's monologue]

NARRATOR

(Smarmy) Dear Hot Water...

Every man that comes home from the front tells us that <sup>what</sup> breaks down the morale is not the war effort itself, and the hardships that they've faced but their fear that their wives and sweet-hearts are not being faithful; it fills their thoughts, paralyses their energies, saps their courage and drives them half-mad with suspicion.

[Cutaway to Dorothy and Bill dancing]

If there is ever a time that a woman should prove herself to her husband that he is the only man...it is now. Before you tell him about your affair, sit down quietly and try to figure out the cost. Not only the loss of a good husband and your child, but the respect of all who know you, your place in society and probably your new man as well. The "stroll down lover's lane" will become a forced retreat when he finds out he must support his lady love. Your full throttle down the track, out of control, and headed for a crash. Ease up on the steam Hot Water!

Your doctor, Dix.

.../...



(Narrator gets up and moves over to the chair where Dorothy is sitting for the final part of this conversation or afterwards and possibly placing his hands on her shoulders, in a paternal manner)

**Scene Nine:**

[Bedroom. We dissolve out of the past into about 1946, in the couple's bedroom. Bobby is asleep in the bed on Dorothy's side. George and Dorothy discuss in stage whispers, while the Narrator sits by.]

GEORGE

Jesus, Dorothy, it's not healthy that kid sleeping in here with us, every night.

DOROTHY

I know honey, just give it time.

GEORGE

It's been six months.

DOROTHY

We missed you so much...and he was afraid. And you know how cold this apartment is in the winter.

GEORGE

There you go blaming me again. (Wakes Bobby up)  
Come on Junior...back to your own cot. Your mom and I have serious business to discuss. You trust us together, don't you? (Winks). (To Dorothy) Get him out of here!

DOROTHY

How could you wake him up...Come on Bobby, give daddy more room. (Picks him up. To George: double message) You don't give a damn about this kid, do you. He's yours afterall.

.../...



GEORGE

(Teasing) Is he now?

DOROTHY

(Takes this the wrong way...very defensive) Well, he looks like you, (whispers) bastard.

GEORGE

I'm not the bastard.

[Bobby is awake by now and very sleepy, but distressed by the parental dispute. He rubs his eyes, fusses. Dorothy holds him waiting for the situation to break. We cut. George curls up and goes to sleep. The cut to the Narrator, who has been watching this scene develop. He is in a psychiatrist's coat seated in a chair beside their bed.]

NARRATOR

George and Dorothy's problems with their son are shared by many a post-war family. But Bobby's future may be in danger and sadly the responsibility lies with mom. The overprotected boy will be called a sissy by others. He will be excluded from the gang, so he'll cling even more to his mother's apron strings. This will slow down his normal development and hurt his adult relationships. He needs to join the rough and tumble world of dad. Instead of guarding the gate more closely, mothers must open the doors and windows of experience for their children.

What will the Age of Insecurity hold for our little atomic family? Will George and Dorothy finally find a frank formula for a happy marriage in the fifties? Will George's purchasing power parallel Dorothy's penchant for appliances? And will Dorothy ever really want to do the washing and not the welding? For answers to these and other burning questions, stay tuned to the next episode of...

The Lull Before The Storm!

## PART TWO

### Scene Ten:

[Kitchen. Four years later and both have aged while the kitchen has had minor improvements. Dorothy and George have a fight about plans. It is night and Bobby is in bed.

.../...



continued...

At times they subdue each other's voices in order not to wake him or cause distress.]

[George is angrier during this fight, although he starts out reasonable. It is an old fight. They start relaxed and with some physical contact, which prompts Dorothy to speak. Conversation starts out comedic and then disintegrates to the point where George loses it, in his last line.

Dorothy is daring. George is reading. The Narrator is in front of them and introduces the scenario. The Narrator picks up on the responsibilities of women from where he left off in the last scene.]

NARRATOR

Yes, it's hard for mother to resist her protective instincts. Nature has insured that the bearer of the children is more resistant to disease and deterioration than her male counterpart. Women have more sex hormones, more nitrogen, more calcium and more stamina than men. They can handle frustrations and incapacities better. Man is under constant strain to protect his ego, to save face. Any cracks in the facade of the building and he's sure the entire structure will come tumbling down. Man is an extremist in all things, an all-or-nothing sort of person. This characteristic produces great geniuses, but it also produces more criminals, more suicides and more illnesses leading to death. More men land on the psychiatrists' couch than women.

Woman is a much better compromiser. With her greater equanimity she takes crises in her stride. She is more placid, cautious, and patient. This makes her stronger. Let's join our model Canadians, several years later and see how this happy balance is working for their little family.

DOROTHY

(Flirtatious and sweet) Oh, George darling. There's something that I need to talk to you about.

GEORGE

And what could that be?

.../...



DOROTHY

Weeeeell...I don't think we're being completely honest with each other.

GEORGE

Time for some straight shooting, eh? Fire away honey, looks like I'm up for target practice.

DOROTHY

Now promise you won't get mad.

GEORGE

Uh, oh! (Sarcastic and on the defensive) Blitzkreig time!

[The camera cuts between them. Dorothy moves closer.]

DOROTHY

It's like this. I'm so wound up about money I can hardly sleep at night, and Bobby's sprouting up at the same time that this old sink has sprung a leak. We need money for his education but the linoleum is cracked. I'm scrimping on the nutrition a growing child needs to build strong bones, just to pay BC Electric.

GEORGE

(Relieved that this is the problem) Everybody's got money problems these days. Even the banks. (Points to the paper) Its the dollar shortage. (Clears his throat) They say we need more trade with the Americans. (Pulls paper back up)

DOROTHY

Oh sure, that will help! (She pauses...remobilizes her argument) Now listen to me George Sanderson. We need the money right now, whatever the government says or does. We can't wait forever for the dollar to drop or for a tax break. It's time I went back to work.

GEORGE

I don't want my wife working.

.../...



DOROTHY

(Quietly) Oh, come on.  
(Gestures to the kitchen with her dishrag)

GEORGE

Sweetheart, you do enough. We've been through this before. No wife of mine is going to be forced to support her family.

DOROTHY

But I want to go back to work! (Changing tactics. Teasing)  
George, you sound like those old guys at Boeings who were scared out of their wits when we started to work there, like we would poison the air or something. They got over it. So will you! We can get a new stove that works, Bobby could get his teeth fixed and we could save for a new car.

GEORGE

Ah, gee, Dorothy. All I thought about while I was overseas was you and the kid. You don't know what it was like. I wanted so damn much to come back to a family; to you. To things that were simple and normal.

(She looks at him with disbelief)

DOROTHY

But the world isn't simple anymore. We have to provide for our future.

GEORGE

It's not the world that I fought for! All I hear from you is that nothing is good enough. (Bemused more than angry) I don't know what's eating you, but you're sure not the girl I left behind me.

DOROTHY

Quiet...Bobby will hear you...Aw, honey, I just got used to taking care of myself again. I got used to having my own money. And you never talk to me...

.../...



GEORGE

(Interrupts. He speaks the following like a litany. He's not really listening to Dorothy, but rather, his own angst) Nag, nag, nag...That's all you do! My jobs' not good enough for you, working six days a week, outside, in the goddamn cold and rain, with some jerk who didn't go overseas so they made him a foreman, breathing down your neck with his stinking breath. The house is falling apart, the streets' not good enough for you, or the neighbourhood, or the goddamn stove, the fridge, nothing! (He escalates as he points to the things on his list...till he's very angry) And my kid still treats me like I killed his best friend.

[Bobby's voice is heard from offstage]

BOBBY

I can't sleep.

DOROTHY

Don't be scared sweetie. We love you.

BOBBY

I'm not scared! I'm not a baby you know.

DOROTHY

We know you're not, honey. Nighty, night.

(She pauses...then speaks quietly, with the kind of intonation that you don't know if it's fear, a change of heart or sarcasm) Gosh George, I didn't realize that you felt so strongly...I mean about me working. What ever you want, darling, it's fine with me. We'll just give it time. You'll see, everything will be just fine.

(This would be a good moment for reconciliation...a hug and George relents. Dorothy continues to darn and George reads)

NARRATOR

(Walking into the background, first addresses Dorothy and George and then quickly turns his attention to the camera) Yes, Dorothy, marriage isn't always fifty-fifty. (to camera)

.../...



continued...

NARRATOR

Be glad to give more than your share. An unappreciative wife may hasten her own widowhood. Afterall, is it worth killing one of the Sandersons to keep up with the Joneses?

**Scene Eleven:**

[ Dorothy is cleaning obsessively, dinner is on and in the oven for George, who is late. Bobby is in bed. Things are not working: the stove is missing an element, etc. She has dishes from cooking to wash. She goes to the sink and there is no water.]

DOROTHY

Darn! No water. The pipes must be frozen again. Nothing ever works around here.

NARRATOR

Don't despair. What you need is a wringer washer!

DOROTHY

But I'm trying to do my dishes! Anyway, with my luck I'd probably lose an arm.

NARRATOR

(Launching into yet another schtick...this time Dorothy is rebellious, she's had enough.)

That's why you need insurance. You can't break up the muskox family circle because when danger approaches, the herd surrounds the young with lowered heads to defy attack. When the older members of the community become too slow or are injured they join the community in the centre and enjoy the protection that they, as elder statesmen have earned...

DOROTHY

(In a foul mood) That's enough out of you! (pauses, looks at her watch) Where is that darn senior muskox anyway?

.../...



Later that evening...

DOROTHY

(To herself) Why am I so miserable? (Looks at her watch)  
Where is that man? He's been doing a lot of double shifts lately.

PART THREE

**Scene Twelve:**

[M/C/U of a gloved-hand reaching into the mist and waving a package.]

NARRATOR

Yooohooo...

[Dorothy drifts into the fog, takes it and looks delighted]

NARRATOR

It's thrilling having your husband pick something out for you. It's a wonderful compliment and proves he's thinking about you., and trying to find something to express your personality. Men enjoy buying feminine fripperies for their wives. You may be amazed by their first selections, but be brave.

Dorothy begins to open it and coloured tissue paper drifts about her. Her reaction moves from delight to horror as she unveils a significantly sexy lingerie. There is a note in it from George. Dorothy is wearing a cotton nighty...and she is defin itely a cotton nighty kind of gal. Slowly she holds up the negligé and considers its possibilities as the Narrator talks her through them...Dance ala red silk stockings.]

NARRATOR

Now, Dorothy, Don't discard that delightful little dalliance so lightly. Why not use feminine finesse to play the femme fatale to George's fantasy. Hold that fabric to you face, feel the soft satin on your skin.

.../...



continued...

(Dorothy complies)

NARRATOR

Imagine, Dorothy. Imagine slinking along into the sultry night, dancing slow, seductive circles around old George there. Isn't it time to wake up your marriage? Afterall, he gave it to you...he must welcome the siren influence in your boudoir...

[Tango comes up and dissolve to Dorothy dancing with nightgown.]

NARRATOR

And a word to husbands: If you adorn her, you must adorn her. There lies the essence of a happy marriage.

[Hard cut to...]

### Scene Thirteen:

[Bedroom. Dorothy has fallen asleep with her glasses on her nose. She's been reading either Dorothy Parker or the Feminine Mystique. George enters and sits on the bed. He pulls his pants & sweater off, balls them up and dumps them in a corner. He sits on her side of the bed.]

GEORGE

Move over baby, come on. Little Lily of the Valley.

DOROTHY

(She moans. Wakes up with a start and looks at the clock, George, and then flops back with frustration onto the pillow. Waves away fumes from George's alcohol.)

George you're on the wrong side of the bed! And you've been drinking again! It's so late...where were you?

GEORGE

With the guys from work. I didn't do anything wrong, I promise. (Moves towards Dorothy. She flips him onto his side of the bed. He starts nuzzling her. She can't decide whether to be affectionate or angry.)



DOROTHY

I would, but George, you're drunk! (long pause) I wish you would call when you're not coming home. I worry.

[Narrator enters in front of the couple, causing George nausea. He wields a golf club, which he uses at the beginning and at the end of his remarks, as punctuation mostly.]

NARRATOR

Well Canadians, here's a frank formula for a happy marriage. Wedlock provides mutual help in the appeasement of the passions. Ladies, marital relations are a duty but they can be enjoyed. Remember, either spouse is free to seek union at any time, no matter what the circumstances. A married couple should indulge five to eight times per month...for a home without children is filled with unhappiness. This is so true today when in every class of society a campaign is being waged against children...birth control.

**Scene Fourteen:**

[Dorothy is frustrated. She puts away her floor polisher, looks out the window and has an idea.]

DOROTHY

I know...I'll have the girls over for a game of cards.

[She flops into George's chair and picks up the receiver to the telephone and dials.]

**Scene Fifteen:**

[opens with the four women giggling or the sounds of them giggling.]

SUSAN

I decided to go out and get a job the other day. So I looked in the want ads. And I find this ad: HELP WANTED. It lists all these qualities: honest, a good writer, conversationalist, can take responsibility for organizing daily routine, able to make decisions on own...I thought it sounded great...no typing requirements.

.../...



continued...

SUSAN

I called. It was a DOMESTIC position for twenty dollars a month. I was sure charged up over it. I guess I'll just stay a housewife.

[Narrator enters the scene. He points at the housewives, who he considers to be complacent and frumpy. They are the essence of the problem he speaks about.]

NARRATOR

Wife dressing is many things: an art, a science, a labour of love. A means of self-expression. And above all, a contributing factor to a happy marriage.

The first principle of wife dressing is: complete femininity. The most dangerous threat to wife dressing is the triumphant cry: "I'm married...the battle is won!"

SEE APPENDIX FOR SCENE 15(a)...

Scene Sixteen:

[Dorothy is serving George and Bobby dinner. She is singing "Little White Lies", Bobby is banging on cutlery, and acting like Elvis. There is a programme on the radio about women and post-war life.]

GEORGE

I'm sick of eating meatloaf every Thursday night.

DOROTHY

(She is wounded) You've always loved my meatloaf.

GEORGE

And you leave the skins on the potatoes.

BOBBY

(After eating some bread) Here we go...

.../...



GEORGE

Don't talk with your mouth full.

[Bobby is making bread balls and tossing them]

And don't play with your food.

[Dorothy pouts. They listen to more of the programme. Finally she explodes.]

BOBBY

I don't want any.

GEORGE

I paid for that food now eat it.

DOROTHY

I can't believe I'm pouting over meatloaf.  
(She leaves the table upset)

**Scene seventeen:**

[George and Bobby are in front of the television set with T.V. trays and food. Dorothy comes into the kitchen in a waitress outfit and gets ready to leave. As she puts her coat on, Bobby asks her for some money. The programme on T.V. can be seen over George and Bobby's shoulders. It is the 1950's panel (shot in October) Dialogue intercuts with drama.

BOBBY

Mom...

(Dorothy gets her purse and hands him some money. She kisses them both perfunctorily good night.)

DOROTHY

Bye...my shift starts at six. George...

.../...



continued...

(In chorus with Dorothy)

DOROTHY/GEORGE

want him in bed by nine...

[They are left with the T.V. Over the shoulder zoom into programme and then cut into programme.]

**Scene Eighteen:**

[Community Hall. 1955]

NARRATOR

Perhaps men are jealous because they can't have children.

COLUMNIST

Yes, and its not just a theory. Anthropologists learn it from their study of primitive societies, psychoanalysts learn this from the couch. In some societies the husband goes to bed during the woman's confinement.

ACADEMIC

I have a few of those clients too!

HOUSEWIFE

Surely we are discussing an abnormal curiosity, this desire to participate in the birth of a child. Besides, the husband is the bread winner...I doubt that men need the biological ability to bear children to be fulfilled.

COLUMNIST

Ah, but men are jealous! Women have progressed so much and men are still stuck. A common scenario: a brilliant woman married to a mediocre man...she surpasses him professionally, earns more than him and has received more recognition than him. Because of jealousy, he frequently belittles her in private and in public. What can she do? Humour him and learn to despise him? Downplay her own achievements and become an unhappy failure with no guarantee in any case, of his love? Point out his weaknesses and

.../...



continued...

COLUMNIST

failures and break his pride? Leave him and face life alone at mid-age?

NARRATOR

It's a bleak picture that you paint! But surely women are happier now? (To Academic...)

ACADEMIC

A great deal happier! They may be in a state of turmoil, asking for significant change...but until recently they weren't even permitted to be in a state of turmoil!

COLUMNIST

The average woman is not at peace with herself. She has instincts thousands of years old that tell her to conform, to take a subservient place in society, as a woman. Woman's path was just recently destined from cradle to grave. Freedom has a great disadvantage when you enter it, you have to make choices.

HOUSEWIFE

The contest to be happy, worries me. It sets up false expectations. Women have more education now. Then they enter family life, a more restricted world. They need to learn to adjust their expectations accordingly.

COLUMNIST

I'm concerned that women are in retreat. Too many are moving back into the home and out of community life.

HOUSEWIFE

(Snaps!) Women are not in retreat when they choose to stay home!

NARRATOR

Do women work harder than men?



ACADEMIC

Men always complain how hard they work. But could they work the 16 hour day of a young mother? A man simply would not last. Men already die six years before women. If a man were forced to do housewifely duties, his life span would be even less.

HOUSEWIFE

I blame women for the inefficiency of the home. Why seven out of ten men are forced to assist with housework. It's unfair. Women need to learn more efficient habits, like laying out their tools before cooking. They need work stations and a routine.

ACADEMIC

Labour saving devises may be an asset to women, but we have higher expectations about a woman's role in child development. Your electric vacuum still won't babysit your pre-schooler.

NARRATOR

That's in the home. Let's consider the workforce. Is there still employment discrimination against women?

COLUMNIST

It's a very hard time for women who work. We earn just over half of the male wage. The argument that women will get married and quit is not viable. Women excel, but do they get promotions? Women are in a bind. If they are assertive, they are seen as undermining. Men won't work under them. Other women are the worst offenders, they think other women play favourites.

ACADEMIC

Its the "harem mentality". Your security depended on pleasing the Lord master. No wonder you spent hours tearing each other apart. It must be hard to bestir women who have been given the idea by society that they are in bondage.

You can't convince me that most women won't leave work for family life at least for a five year period. Besides, we shouldn't encourage young mothers to leave their children with babysitters or worse, farm them out to boarding homes where they will be abused and neglected.



HOUSEWIFE

I agree! We women must accept our true destiny of training people in the principles and practices of living together. Why not accept the responsibility of creating a lasting peace through self-development and a sound home.

It is my old-fashioned conviction that young, unmarried women should be discouraged from following business careers. Establishing wage differentials between women and men is one way of doing this. Most Canadians agree, women don't belong in the business world. They are undisciplined and weaker.

COLUMNIST

This idea is not only old-fashioned...its prehistoric. What kind of vacuum can she live in that she thinks that parents can afford to support their unmarried daughters until Prince Charming comes along?

HOUSEWIFE

I believe that women can work wonders from their homes. Canada's housewife bears no resemblance to the vacuum brained club woman of yore. As consumers, we have a great deal of power...we do 90% of this country's purchasing. Mothers are the makers of humanity. There's an old saying that because God couldn't be everywhere, he made mothers, yet society gives the least recognition to the most important job.

COLUMNIST

Let's face it: the dice are loaded for half the population. Men want to hog everything. They want all the gravy, the gravy boat and the silver ladle. What's more, women invent and then men take over their ideas. Men are afraid of women...they think like an old farmer, "give them an acre and they'll take the whole farm", Sounds more like men to me. After the war, women pilots were told to go home and tend to their babies! They were refused domestic pilot licenses. Noone would ever tell a man to go home and tend his kids!

HOUSEWIFE

Juvenile delinquency is on the rise and who is to blame?

.../...



continued...

HOUSEWIFE

It all comes down to neglectful mothering. Children begin to read horror comics and watch crime television while mom's out at work. And its often compounded by the same irresponsible parents guzzling beer, or cheating on income tax, or worse, each other.

NARRATOR

(Jumps in to disrupt their argument) Whooa...ladies. Let's hear a male perspective on this issue. (To Academic...)

ACADEMIC

Let's face it, by the time boy children can talk they're already cheering for the winning team. Even as a man I must admit that often, women do all the work, while men provide the fornt. The world is full of grand ol' men who could go on a two year cruise without being missed as long as their secretaries are on the job to look after things. Ladies...don't let men make clothes horses out of you to demonstrate their economic prowess. Don't let advertisers make you into props for their products.

Women's values are being destroyed by too much emphasis on sex. Nearly everyone hammers at them to be desireable sex objects. They have to use one product to get a man, and another to keep him.

HOUSEWIFE

Again, I couldn't agree more. Television is bringing a corrupting influence into our home. Canadian media are far too liberal.

We can gain inspiration from the minute women of the United States. They have spearheaded the banning of 600 books from public libraries in San Antonio, Los Angeles and Denver. and had a number of communist teachers removed from their positions. This brave group of housewives hunt out communism and immorality in high places. They wear all kinds of disguises when they investigate, like worn out shoes and men's shirts. Some girls even change their hair colour. They travel in groups of four, play drunk and get into environments where communists might be, gather evidence and denounce them.

Our own organization here stands for the motto: "One flag, one throne, one empire." We lead students in patriotic prayer.



COLUMNIST

You are also notorious for your attacks on the freedom of speech. And for teaching us all the perfect recitation of the Royal Toast. (Laughs)

HOUSEWIFE

You could regret mocking us! We report communists to their employers.

As daughters of the empire, we must be on alert against the communistic forces trying to influence the youth of this country. It is a threat to all we value, denying God's laws and spreading lies, deceit and murder.

NARRATOR

(Interrupts, again) Perhaps we should move onto another topic, our final one. What does the future hold for this most mysterious sex?

ACADEMIC

Western civilization will be made over by women's achievements in freedom. Unfortunately, most men are still bitterly opposed to their wives working. Women will have to make the changes anyhow, and educate their men. Perhaps they need a Bill of Rights?

HOUSEWIFE

Women will be freed by automation. They will all be able to stay home and do the most creative job that there is, raising children.

COLUMNIST

Women don't have the time to be subtle anymore. We must say, "Listen meatball...this is the way it should be done!" We women decide unimportant things: like buying homes, cars, clothes, and food. You guys decide...umm..oh...yeah, like who gets elected! We women are tired of acting like we're expected to.

NARRATOR

What will the future hold for Dorothy, George and Bobby? Will the cybernetics revolution make them all redundant as so many fear? Will the new working Dorothy, without equal pay or equal work, fare better than her homebound self? And will George accept starting to do the dishes? For the answer to these and other burning questions...Stay tuned to the next episode of...  
THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM...



APPENDIX:

Scene Fifteen (a):

Narrator discusses the women and high fashion, a miracle occurs. With Dorothy's assistance, each undergoes a complete transformation. The camera zooms in first on Dorothy and then the other women. As the zoom takes place, there is a dissolve of each woman becoming the epitomy of chic., a category that will be considered ad nauseum by the Narrator.

NARRATOR

Chic is bearing...the way you walk, sit and move.

[Dorothy leaves]

Chic is doing something for clothes rather than expecting them to do something for you.

[Vanessa pauses]

Chic does not depend on money, but it helps.

[Nicola pins on a diamond earring]

Chic is a custom made look concocted from the assembly line of fashion.

[Susan profiles her cigarette holder]

Chic is instinct plus impulse plus individuality.

[Group shot of the women picking up their glasses]

Chic may be looking different or looking the same as everyone else

[The women toast and murmur affectionately]

The women pose in their chicness. They are served cocktails by Dorothy. They all have purses and paper shopping bags from establishments such as Creeds, Holt Renfrew, Birks, etc. They take turns pulling out their things, driven by the narration, oohing and aahing over each other's items. These include: a fur stole, a pink hat to go with matching dress, a scarf, a stuffed poodle with a leash, and a paste necklace.

.../...



continued...

NARRATOR

[To Vanessa]

That touch of mink, is more chic than an inexpensive fur coat because you are more aware of the sensual fur carressing your body and therefore, more likely to act appropriately. When you throw back your stole on the chair or drape it around your shoulders, you are silhouetted against a backdrop of luxury.

Ladies we are in the era of courage and discretion.

[The ladies all make little fists]

[To Nicola]

If you have a pet colour, a certain line of pink, a radiant salmon tone for example, use it, wear it, insinuate it into your wardrobe. Reach the point where your husbands and friends will give it to you automatically. It will be your personal trademark. Trademarks are a good example of courage and discretion because they express individuality yet avoiding being outlandish.

[To Susan]

Avoid the outlandish. A two foot cigarette holder. (The ladies put their hands over their mouths) or a leopard on a leash is a bit hard to take even once, much less as a permanent accessory.

[To Dorothy]

Courage and discretion have much to do with your powers of omission. Don't obscure beautiful necklines with beads or adornments. You must have the courage to accept into your wardrobe items that need special care and the discretion to reject those that are unsuitable or adapt them to suit you. (He pauses slightly for emphasis) In other words...have the courage of your convictions and the discretion of your experience as a wife...

[The women kick their stuff under the table]

Clothes play an important part in emotional control. Good taste is not straight-laced.

[Women get up as the music: "RUM N' COCA COLA", starts to play]

.../...



continued...

NARRATOR

There should be a little madness too...as long as its quixotic and not psychotic.

[Finally, on his instruction, they pose for a photograph]

(Interrupts) Come on ladies, How about a picture? It's worth a thousand words. Now line up. And remember, with your new fashion outlook, you can be queen for the day, everyday.

[Little plastic tiaras appear on their heads after the edit. Over the freeze-frame, the Narrator says...]

NARRATOR

And a final word to husbands:as Frederich Neitzche said, "Has a woman who knew she was well-dressed ever caught cold? No!"

[Back to the kitchen...]