

The Good Wife's Guide

By Darkside

SRU: The Good Wife's Guide.-----

This contains actual extracts from a Home Economics textbook printed in the early 60s. It did the rounds at work a while ago and it just begged to have a story written around it. This is my one and only sojourn into the 'Spell R Us' universe. So I hope you all like it.

As an experiment, I've deliberately left much to the imagination. This is more of a covert TG story than most. It was also an experiment in that I wrote it in a couple of hours rather than my usual 6-9 months. It's as complete as I want it to be. I write for feedback. If it's crap tell me but tell me how I can make it better. If you liked it, great, tell me. You may archive this, store this any way you wish but you may NOT charge for it.

Thanks to Vickie Tern for giving it a quick once over.

Caution: Those who like to read things forbidden to the underaged may be offended by the absence here of anything objectionable for the underaged.

(c) 1999 Darkside@nym.alias.net

"Bye Darling. I've an important meeting today, I will be back by six-thirty so have my dinner ready. There's some money on the kitchen table go and treat yourself to something," Alex called out from the lobby.

"Ok dear, have a nice day at the office," Glenda replied back again. She checked the clock on her bedside table and saw that she was running late. She had promised to spring clean the house for Alex today. After all, he loved having a tidy and orderly house, and chastised her when she had forgotten one of her duties. Still, cleanliness was next to Godliness she'd always been taught.

Glenda swung her shapely legs out of bed and put on her dressing gown. She caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror on the door and struck a pose. At 5'4 she was on the small side, but as Alex insisted on telling her, perfectly formed.

After having a shower she looked around at the state Alex had left the bathroom in. His socks were on the floor, his pants lay in the corner, and the top was off the toothpaste. A quick check downstairs revealed that he'd left his cereal bowl on the table and a half drunk cup of coffee lay cooling in the sink. She spotted a pile of 50's on the table, and a quick flick thru showed he had given her 300 dollars to spend. Glenda felt a little rebellious today and so she changed her mind and decided to go shopping before clearing up.

After drying her bleached blonde hair -- Alex had made her change it from her natural brunette -- with the dryer and slipping into her favorite Vivian Westwood, she took the money, stuffed it into her purse, and walked towards the garage containing her Mercedes SLK.

It took her an hour to negotiate the freeway and get clear of the traffic, but she eventually parked at the mall. Strangely, it was deserted even though most of the stores had sales on. This suited Glenda just fine, as she liked having the shops to herself. She had just got off the second floor escalator when she noticed a small shop, seemingly sandwiched between Sears and McDonalds.

The name of the shop caught her eye, 'Spells R Us'. Strange how she hadn't noticed it before.

She decided to go in and investigate. Although not the kind of shop she usually frequented, the name had an olde worlde ring to it. She pushed open the door and it set off a tinkling bell inside the store. She looked around the place and nearly walked out. The place was full of junk, a betamax video recorder, 8 track Hi-Fi and even one of those damn Rubik's cubes from the early 1980's.

Glenda turned to walk out of the store when she became aware of a man standing behind her. His presence made her jump and she whirled around to face him."I'm very sorry to startle you Glenda. Now what can I do for you," the man asked.

Glenda gave the man the once over. She couldn't really determine his age but if she had to guess it was greater than fifty but less than a hundred. He wore the strangest clothes. They were almost like a dressing gown but he wore them like a robe."How?" She started to say.

"I'm a wizard. I'm thinking of putting a notice up to stop people asking me that," the old man said gesturing to a blank space on a nearby wall.

Glenda didn't believe this guy was a wizard for a moment but he was quaint.

Glenda liked quaint so she decided to stick around. "Mind if I look around?" she asked.

"You may but I have just the thing you are after," the old man said with a smile.

"What's that?"

"Wait and see. Oh and don't touch anything," the old man said and vanished into a back room which Glenda could've sworn wasn't there earlier.

Glenda noticed a Barbie doll sitting on a nearby shelf and she walked over to it. She was about to pick it up when she had a strong feeling of dread and pulled her hand away. A few seconds later the old man returned carrying a thin book and a small paper bag.

"I'm glad you didn't touch Barbie. I've enough shop display mannequins to last me a century or two. Anyway these will do you just fine," he said and handed the book and two small bags to Glenda.

Glenda looked at the cover of the book. It was decorated with yellow and green flowers and showed a woman in the kitchen preparing a sumptuous meal.

The book's title was 'The Good Wife Guide 1961. "What do I want this for?" she asked.

The old man walked behind the counter and leant on it with his bony elbows. "You've been feeling trapped and very unappreciated of late, haven't you? Your husband Alex goes off to work and then comes back and expects everything to be spotless."

Glenda swallowed nervously. How did HE know?

"I don't blame you either. You've been married what, six years, and although he's dedicated his life to his career, earning his millions and by now it's effortless, he's never shown his appreciation to you. He assumes that his job is earning the money, as if he still had to work for it that is and yours is being his slave at home. Is that how you feel Glenda?"

Glenda had to admit to herself that this resentment had been growing in her over the past few months.

Glenda just nodded in reply.

The old man continued, "Then you need 'The Good Wife Guide 1961' and it comes with a free sachet of beef stock and another of max-rise cake mix." Glenda was curious how this could help her. The last thing she needed was an ancient textbook and equally ancient cooking ingredients.

"Let me ask you something. Glenda. Do you want Alex to know how you feel? Do you want him to really understand what you have to go through everyday to make him feel happy?"

Glenda paused, wondering where this would lead, but then finally said,"Yes. I do feel like that."

The old man lowered his voice, "If you want to show him what it's like to be you, then mix this beef stock into his favorite meal. After he has eaten it you will switch places. He will become you and you will become him. After he's learnt his lesson you both must eat a cake baked from the cake mix. You won't switch back until you do."

Glenda laughed out loud, "What a preposterous idea. Even if it were true why would I want to be man?"

"To see what an easy time he has of it. More to the point, do you want him to know what it's like for you? You can switch back anytime by eating the cake mix, so where's the harm?"

Glenda was still skeptical but the idea did appeal to her. To see Alex's face when he looked down to see that he now had breasts, that would be a priceless moment, "I don't believe you, but hey I'll give it a go."

The old man smiled, "I knew you would. That'll be 50 dollars."

"Fifty bucks!" Glenda exclaimed.

"A small price to pay for your freedom. Besides You can afford full price," the old man retorted.

That was true enough. Glenda reached into her purse and pulled out a fifty.

She handed it over to the old man who then stuffed it into his robe somewhere. He popped the book and sachets into a brown paper bag and handed them over to Glenda, "I know you'll use them in the best way for you and Alex, so I'll waive the usual 'be careful' speech. Please call again."

Glenda looked down at the paper bag containing the book and sachet and smiled. If it all went to plan this would work out just fine and perfect.

She then had an even better idea, and she gave a wry smile. She looked up to thank the old man but he had vanished, along with the back room. Deciding to abandon the rest of the shopping trip, she walked back to the car and drove home. She decided to stop off at the supermarket on the way back, and brought enough ingredients to make a spectacular roast dinner.

After arriving home some time later Glenda carefully unwrapped her latest purchase. She laid it to one side and started to prepare Alex's favorite dish. When the meat was in the oven and all the vegetables were peeled and sliced she picked up the book and started to read out loud. The main heading was called, "Rules for a good wife."

'1. Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal ready on time for his return home from work. This is a way of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs.'

She carefully mixed the fine powder into Alex's thick beef gravy. It briefly took on a greenish tinge, but then to her relief further mixing slowly turned the mixture back to its normal light brown. Glenda moved on to the next rule.

'2. Most men are hungry when they come home and the prospect of a good meal (especially his favorite dish) is part of the warm welcome needed. Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to rest so you will be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh looking.'

She gave a smile, his roast was simmering away in the stove and it would be ready in time for when he returned. She decided to take the advice of the book and she went upstairs to freshen up. She wanted to look nice for Alex's big day so she chose her chic lavender Calvin Klein number and the black heels. She then walked into the bathroom and spent the next hour perfecting her hair and makeup. When she was finished she stared at herself in the mirror. The transformation from dowdy housewife to stunning model was complete. She just hoped Alex would like it when he came home and ate his dinner. What next did the book say?

'3. He has just been with a lot of work weary people. Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it. Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives. Gather up schoolbooks, toys, papers, etc. and run a dust cloth over the tables. Over the cooler months of the year you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order and it will give you a lift too.'

The usage of the word 'gay' caught her eye. It opened up all kinds of possibilities. A thought struck her, in her haste to prepare for Alex's return she'd forgotten all about the cleaning, but what to do? She'd spent ages getting ready and looking beautiful for him. She decided that it didn't really matter if it wasn't too tidy. He'd have plenty of time to clear up himself when the time came. She did however gives the shelves and surfaces a quick dust down.

'4. Minimise all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer or vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet. Be happy to see him. Greet him with a warm smile and show sincerity in your desire to please him.'

Glenda walked around the house, dimmed the lights and ensured that the curtains were drawn. She continued to read.

'5. Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first, remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours. Make the evening his. Never complain if he comes home late or goes out to dinner or to other places of entertainment without you.'

I'll make sure to try that one, Glenda thought with a wicked smile. Time for the next rule.

'6. Instead, try to understand his world of strain and pressure and his very real need to be at home and relax.'

Glenda smiled as she read the last paragraph. If it all went to plan then she'd understand his work pressures very well indeed. Her eyes caught the next rule.

'7. Your goal: Try to make sure your home is a place of peace, order and tranquility where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit.'

Hopefully this would be the case. She thought.

'8. Don't greet him with complaints and problems. Don't complain if he's home late for dinner, or even stays out all night. Count this as minor compared to what he might have gone through that day.'

Images of herself slaving away to Alex's every whim sprang into her mind. She'd never grumbled or complained at anything he'd asked of her.

'9. Make him comfortable. Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or have him lie down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him. Arrange the pillow and offer to take off his shoes.'

'10. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice.'

She'd have to remember that one. Alex would need soothing afterwards.

'11. Don't ask him questions about his actions or question his judgement or integrity. Remember, he is the master of the house and as such will always exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness.'

Glenda laughed out loud. She was now feeling much more angry than before about the way she'd been treated. She'd given up much to pander to his every whim and all he did was take her for granted. For six years she'd put up with this 'woman's place is in the home' crap and now it was pay back time.

'After all, catering for his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.'

Very true, she thought. The potion in Alex's food would give her immense satisfaction. Over time, she hoped it would do the same for Alex. She checked her watch -- 6:28pm, Alex would be home in two minutes. She quickly served Alex's wonderfully cooked roast dinner out on a nice hot plate, just as he liked it. She'd just finished pouring the thick, brown gravy over the beef when Alex's voice called out, "Honey, I'm home. Did you cook me my favorite? How sweet of you. I'll have to go out in about an hour but I'll have time to eat this first."

Glenda gave a relaxed sigh, and flushed the sachet of cake mix down the sink.

---- END ----