

Blaker

“Every Woman’s”

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Word Count 595
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"Every Woman's Dream?"

by Kimberly Blaker

I'm one of those lucky women whose husband helps around the house. However, I still remember trying to entice my husband the first few years of our marriage when our children were little and I was working full-time.

I was so desperate that one day I calculated the total time expended daily for every little task. Changing diapers – forty-five minutes; laundry - an hour; picking up the house - two hours twenty minutes; errands – an hour and a half; feeding our newborn - three hours; and so on. By the time I completed the list, I was exhausted just thinking about it. But this list brought about a miraculous change.

Suddenly, my couch potato was buying groceries, folding clothes, and many other household duties the perfect Mr. Mom would do. Of course, I had *no* clue what I was getting into. Our grocery bill quickly doubled; every meal was a full-blown buffet. My 5-year old daughter was soon asking why *my* shirts were hanging in *her* closet. As for the kitchen, it became unrecognizable. I now had my very own Chef De' la Clutz.

One day upon entering the kitchen, I instantly froze from the cyclone that had hit. The entire kitchen was coated with dry pancake mix as if the box had exploded. While immobilized from the sight, I learned the secrets to my husband's gourmet meals. He'd grab the handle of the

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frying pan, and with a quick upward jerk, 10 sausages were doing acrobats through the air as their oily perspiration splattered the kitchen walls.

Next, preparing the pancakes, I almost mistook my husband for my five-year-old learning how to pour, as I glimpsed the batter spilling over the edges of the skillet. I continued to watch in awe, finally catching a breath of relief as my husband began to clean up.

The relief, however, was only temporary. He grabbed the dishcloth, ran it under cold water, and began mopping the counter; I guess his mother never taught him to ring out the dishcloth. As he sloshed the water around the counter, it ran down the cabinets. Not to worry though, our brand new carpet would absorb the overflow.

Finally, I could watch no more. I offered my help to finish cleaning the mess, and my husband eagerly obliged. He then rinsed his hands under the faucet and shook them over the soon-to-be-eaten meal. I suppose it would have been too much to ask to use one of the seven dishtowels he had strewn about the kitchen.

As he left the wreckage, I wiped the perspiration from my forehead. Following dinner, I spent no less than an hour cleaning the disaster zone. This led to more calculations. If I had prepared the meal, it would have taken 30 minutes and the cleaning another 15. I’d have completed the task in a record time of 45 minutes. How was it possible to have enlisted his help and then have to spend *more* time in the kitchen?

Luckily, he finally seems to be catching on. Or maybe I just don’t allow him do as much while closing my eyes to the rest. Still, I try to keep in mind that it’s the sincerity behind his helpfulness that matters most. By the time our kids are grown, he’ll probably have the housework techniques that I take for granted skillfully mastered.

In the meantime, while it’s important he share in the housework, there’s a small part of me that can only feel relief that he doesn’t insist on lending a hand more than he already does.

The End

PULL QUOTE: How was it possible to have enlisted his help and then have to spend *more* time in the kitchen?

PULL QUOTE: I now had my very own Chef De' la Clutz.

Kimberly Blaker of Michigan writes for parenting and women's magazines around the country.

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