

RUN Script No. 791:

Kept on Ice

by Mandy Mutzelburg

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Keywords: Men and women, Equal rights, Ten Commandments

Props: A feather duster, a calculator (used as a phone) a sign “20th Century Museum”

Cast:

1498 A cool sexless futuristic woman

5263 A young bumbling man

Robot

Wife

Scene: Spot light on: There is a pretty woman standing centre stage... frozen. A young man, dressed in futuristic clothing comes in, humming and whistling. He is dusting everything. He starts to dust the woman, from the feet up, and does a double take when he gets to her face.

5263 (*Calls out*): “1498, 1498, quick come here and see what I found in the basement... hurry, hurry, hurry.”

(*Enter 1498 dressed also futuristically and sexlessly. She is carrying a notebook and pencil.*)

1498 What is it 5263? (*impatiently*) I’ve got so much work to catch up on.

5263 Look!

1498 (*Stops, gasps and does a little dance and squeal*) Oh my goodness! It’s a genuine – oh my goodness! - how did it get here – someone must have stored it here years ago – (*squeals and jumps up and down with delight again*) Oh 5263, this is so exciting, what a find. You are so clever.

5263 (*Looks pleased*) Gee thanks – um – what is it?

1498 (*Looks smug*) Read the label 5263.

5263 (*Picks up the label and reads*) “One genuine wife – frozen for future use” – (*looks puzzled*) a wife – but what is that?

1498 (*Surprise*) Don’t you know? Of course not The Society for Equal Sexual Rights had all mention of that terrible word struck from the history books long

before you ever went to school.

5263 So what is it?

1498 Well 5263.. Centuries ago custom was that a woman would give up all her rights for a man. She would agree to give her life over to living totally for a man. (*looks distasteful*) It was barbaric! They would have a ceremony and her father would GIVE her to a man!

5263 What's a father?

1498 That's another story. Anyway this woman would live her life for the man. She would cook, clean, iron for him. She kept his house spotless.

5263 What's a house?

1498 His living quarters silly!

5263 (*Looks interested*) Really?

1498 Not only did she do all that. Sometimes she even went to work for the man to earn more money.

5263 (*Looks more interested*) Really?

1498 Yes it was disgusting – and she even slept in the same bed as him.

5263 What's a bed?

1498 A sleeping capsule

5263 You're kidding! She couldn't have fitted in a sleeping capsule with anyone, even if she is tiny.

1498 No! No! They had big capsules in those days ... sort of flat!

5263 Really?!

(*They both walk around looking at her*)

5263 So what happened to wives?

1498 Well they became the same as men – (*said aside*) or even better!

5263 (*Circles the woman*) She became a man!

Yes – since then we women have finally achieved equal rights with men.

5263 (*Speaks very loudly*) 1498!

1498 (*Jumps*) What?!

5263 Are you a – a – a woman? (*incredulous*) The same as her (*points at woman and looks from one to the other*)

1498 (*A bit miffed*) Of course I am – but I'm liberated – she probably still believes in looking after men in cooking and cleaning for them – in listening to them – and massaging their back when they're tired - Look I've got work to do. I'm going upstairs. You finish dusting here and don't be long. (*She exits*)

5263 (*Stands a while looking at the woman*) Looks after men... cooks for him... massages his back... ooh that would be so nice... I want one of these... (*he takes the phone out of his pocket – says Pizza Hut number*) "Hulloee is that the Human Defrostation Department? – I'll have one can of defroster delivered to the basement please."

A robot in white overalls comes on stage with a spray can.

Robot You ordered this ...

5263 About time, I can't wait any longer

Robot What about a tip?

5263 Be kind to your mother

Robot But I've never had a mother

Excuse me, but do you have authority to defrost that wife? She belongs to the department. You will be in big trouble... yes sireee....

5263 Shhhhh...erase this from your memory bank... I want her – she rubs backs and prepares food and works for extra money I found her and I'm going to keep her!!! (*he starts to spray her*)

Wife stays still – they both move closer – she blinks – they both jump back and stumble against each other – she starts to move – flexes, stretches and looks around.

5263 (*Walks up*) Hulloe (*shy/embarrassed*)

Wife Who are you?

Robot Say hulloe to your new husband dearie

Wife (*Surprise*) My new husband?

5263 Well, um!

Wife (*Looks him over*) A little young aren't you. Oh well! All the better to train. (*holds out hand*) Give me some money.

5263 (*Startled*) Why?

Wife To buy some new clothes. I'm obviously 3 centuries out of date.

5263 (*A bit irritated*) I thought you would go to work and earn some money for me!

Wife And what would I work at?

5263 Well what did you do in the 20th century?

Wife I was a school teacher

All What's that?

Wife You know, someone who teaches children knowledge

Robot Our children don't go to school. They take knowledge pills (*emphasise*) AND THEY KNOW EVERYTHING.

Wife Well children certainly haven't changed much! (turns to 5263) Well, so much for sending me out to work.

5263 Well well you could wash, clean and iron for me

Wife (*Looks shocked*) What?!

Robot Silly the groubletooks do that

Wife What's a groubletook?

Robot A Robot (*proudly*) I am a groubletook

5263 I forgot that – Oh well you can massage my shoulders for me

Wife Who do you think I am buddy? This is 2296 – not 1996 – anyway, isn't it time you polished your shoes

- 5263** What do you mean (*bristling*)
- Wife** And what about the colour of that coat. You'll have to change it.
- 5263** (*They are starting to move toward the back of the stage*) What's wrong with my coat? I chose this coat.
- Wife** Well, I wouldn't be seen dead with you in it. (*she is shaking her finger at him and he at her*)
- 5263** What about you.....? (*they are arguing at the back of the stage not too loudly*)
- Robot** (*looks horrified ... he gets another freeze can out and freezes both of them then produces a tag, writes on it and places it on 5263. He reads it out loud*) "One Novice Husband frozen for future use." (*Then he places a tag on the wife and reads it out loud*) "One Nagging Wife. Defrost at your own risk"
(*They give each other the thumbs up sign.*)
(*SPOT OUT*)