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The Younger Generation

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What Will We Be!

The Younger Generation

by Sherry Stoddard, H. JI. 2



Forty years from now . . . an era far from the mind's eye of today, or perhaps not so far, measured on the scale of the past altogether.

Forty years from now . . . when our children, and our children's children, turn with the century to a life that is now just the workings of our imagination.

Life is "ultra." Mrs. 21st Century is a super being in a super home in a super world. She is executive of the family unit. Sound, light, and electricity are her employees.

The grating, buzzing, nerve-shattering eruption of the alarm clock has disappeared with the pioneer days of the sixties. Bright and early, about eight o'clock, one wall of the master suite slides away, uncurtaining a brilliant rush of sunlight. The warmth of the sun, the lilt of "good morning" ultra super-sonic recorded music, and the fragrance of instant breakfast automatically preheating in the kitchen gently arouse the family.

Outmoded morning routines . . . teeth-brushing, hair-combing, shoe lace tying . . . have been eliminated by an all-glass "preparation box." Ten minutes, and the sleepy night creature is transformed into a reputable 21st Century citizen.

Carpeted conveyor belts carry the family to the dining area, where breakfast is served, via automatic pilot. The meal is hearty. A strenuous day of thinking lies ahead. For Mom and Dad, steaming coffee tablets, powdered scrambled eggs (unscrambled to conserve space), pancake pills with condensed syrup, and eleven nutrient capsules, arranged by harmonizing color and alphabetized. For the youngsters, deflated doughnuts (hole eliminated to conserve space), shredded wheat germ, whole calcium tablets (for developing bones), citrus lumps, and fifteen nutrient capsules.

All food is served in disposable synthetic containers, manufactured in the kitchen. Clean-up is no problem.

After breakfast, Mr. Century and the little Centurys leave for work. (Through the wonders of speed-up hypnotic instruction, children complete their education at about the age of eight.)

Mrs. Century is now alone to her thinking. She thinks of the washing and ironing which must be done. Her family's clothes are of spun-metallic fiber, which must be sponged and then buffed to a high luster. Hanging upright for 15 minutes leaves them wrinkle free and ready to wear.

She thinks of the marketing for the day. Pills, capsules, tablets, lumps, tubes, shreds, dehydrates, and condensations are chosen by number from a catalogue, ordered over a close-circuit TV connection from the market place, and delivered by non-stop space truck.

She thinks of the day's work, which consists of dusting the automatic button panel, sorting the space mail, balancing the credit budget (money has long since become extinct), rearranging the artificial flower beds, testing the audio-visual hook-up, supervising the total operation of her electronic household, and concentrating on the general welfare of her family.

Mrs. 21st Century is a hard-working thinker. When her family return, about 3:30, she will be ready for a relaxing evening in front of the Full Sensory (color, sound, smell, taste, and touch) Superama television set. Then the carpeted conveyor will whisk the family off to bed.

Of course, the Centurys live now in the unfulfilled center of imagination. We may not have the era pegged precisely, but then, forty years from now . . .