June Cleaver Faces the Implications of the Integrated Circuit

by Angela Kubinec

I simply cannot imagine what I'm going to tell Ward when he gets home from the office. Little Beaver is going to have hell to pay. This is absolutely nothing like the afternoon he disassembled his bicycle. At least Wally could kind of hold things together while they lined up the screws, although they had to hide it in the back yard under a tarp until they could work on it bit by bit. Poor things had to drag it out for a while and then stow it again so Ward wouldn't see it. My brand new Revlon “Cherries in the Snow" manicure was ruined when I tried to help (what a silly thing to do), and I had to make up some story about assisting old Mrs. Connor down the street with some housework to explain all the chips on my usually impeccable nails. Ward made his umping humph sound from behind the paper and wondered aloud why I didn't bring my awful yellow Platex gloves along. “*June*,” he said, “that's what they're for, isn't it?”

But all that stuff I just told you was about the bicycle. I could tell you about the time The Beave took apart the Lionel train engine from his new Christmas train set, or the Saturday morning he removed the lug nuts from all the wheels of Ward's car.

This was eerily different, however. When Wally called, “Hey, Mom, you better come in here,” from the living room, I knew something was terribly wrong. His voice was unlike anything I'd heard from him before. I dried my hands on my apron, and when I got there, I found a collection of metallic rectangles, some with cleats like tiny golf shoes, others that looked like light bulbs with no screws on the bottom, just minuscule prongs. There were itty bitty words printed on a few of the rectangles, but they were all either black or white, and there was no color-coding or directions to show

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which part went where. Of course, Beaver was just his darling self, but Wally had no suggestions for helping him solve this one, and he gazed, dumbfounded as we all were, by the flat plates that seemed to be decorated with metal spaghetti.

We gaped at one another. What kind of box had we let into our home? Nothing inside it actually moves. How can that be? I don't care enough about Jack Benny to have something so other-worldly hiding behind that creepy screen. I mean, is it looking at us while we look at it? Maybe this time I'll stand up to Ward and tell him I think Beaver has done us a favor for a change. In the interim, I'm going to drag out those Tinker Toys and tell that boy to get busy in his room. I think all the parts (seems to me are called transistors) will fit in a couple of shoe boxes, and Wally can figure out where to hide them. Ward is not so hard to distract. I bet I can get him to forget the television for an evening until I convince him that he doesn't really want one. Probably a good afternoon to make a meat loaf, and bake Ward's favorite — chocolate cake.