

"AS THE EARTH TURNS"

A DAILY HALF-HOUR TELEVISED SERIAL DRAMA

THE TITLE - "AS THE EARTH TURNS" - should.....

1. Suggest the underlying theme of the serial story.
2. Permit a limitless scope both as to characters and story.

UNDERLYING THEME

As the earth turns, somewhere in this world the light of dawn breaks thru the darkness of night. As the earth turns, somewhere in this world the sun dips into the distant horizon before the oncoming shadows of evening. As the earth turns, we know the bleakness of winter, the promise of spring, the fulness of summer, and the harvest of autumn. As the earth turns the cycle is completed.

What is true of the earth, nature, is true also of man. He too has his cycle.

5-4682

From the time man's experiences were first recorded on stone, there has always been the seed of what we today call the family. Man, knowingly or unknowingly, thru the many stages, growth if you will, of civilization, has attempted time and again to solidify the family unit. Today, against the backdrop of an atomic age, of the hydrogen bomb, there is a great threat to all of us; not the threat of physical annihilation, but the destruction of that something which has made us feel secure, a security that has always found its beginnings in the home, the family. Home in one form or another is the great object of life.

It would be almost ludicrous to attempt to make any comparison between the families of a generation, two generations ago and the generation of today. The world has seen many changes and undoubtedly will witness many more; and as the earth turns in our lives, with the coming of the morning and the advent of night, you and I of necessity must cope with the problems of today. This is true of people in every community in the world.

It seems needless to point out that there is no more poignant drama enacted anywhere than behind the closed doors of a home. In "AS THE EARTH TURNS" we hope to

bring to the daytime television picture the story of an identifiable family.

SCRIPT TECHNIQUE

Each half-hour episode is divided into three parts. This particular technique has been devised not only because it affords a more effective spot for the first two messages, but because it is a time saver. Recapping, which has become identifiable with most AM serials and many of the present quarter-hour TV serials, is not only unnecessary but is often dull and uninteresting. The locale of a particular script is obviously set by the picture, and the characters can dramatically establish in the first few minutes such points that are necessary to familiarize the viewer with the situation which is being currently developed. Dramatic dialog has always been more effective than narration.

This particular type of technique has been used successfully for the past nine years in the Guiding Light on radio, and for the past two and a half years on TV. In the half-hour presentation of the serial we will use the same kind of script technique as is being used in the half-hour evening television dramas.

CHARACTERS

It has not been our custom to have any one lead character thruout the life of a serial drama. If one is to be realistic, no one person is always on scene to dominate all given situations in our everyday living. Living is made up of not only your problems and mine, but those of millions of other people from every profession, from every walk of life.

As the title AS THE EARTH TURNS is limitless in scope, so should the selection and inclusion of characters be limitless.

A comparatively short distance from any cosmopolitan center are communities known as suburbs, which in many instances are independent communities within themselves, usually with their own school system, police force, fire department, et cetera. There is also the advantage of being within twenty minutes, a half-hour or an hour from the city, which gives to the individual and the family every opportunity a cosmopolitan center has to offer.

Let us for the moment walk down a street of one of these suburbs. It is more than obvious that many of the homes were designed by the same architect. Yes, there is somewhat of a sameness in design, construction;

and if you walked up the steps and could without being seen open the doors to many of these homes, you would find that they all housed families. This is not only true of the homes on Oakdale Avenue, this is true of every community everywhere.

The family we are particularly interested in.... well supposing we open the door to the home at 215 Oakdale Avenue and meet the various members of the Hughes family.

CHRISTOPHER HUGHES had as a young boy already decided on the career, the profession he would follow. At forty-three, there are times when he looks back to that boy, to that young man who received his degree in law some eighteen years ago. His father was a farmer, and his mother, who passed away five years ago, had sacrificed everything for Chris, even at the expense of their other two children.

The twins, John and Mary, ten years younger than Chris, were caught in the net of financial insecurity. During the lean years not even Chris could expect too much from his family. When the harvest was more plentiful, every penny that could be spared went toward Christopher's education.

The young law student never really understood why at seventeen his brother John left the farm to join the Navy. And his sister Mary.... that indeed is another story, the story of a girl who loved and hated the land, who was tied to it until the death of her mother. The elder Mr. Hughes tried to carry on alone. No, he didn't want to leave the farm, he didn't want to uproot; but there comes a time, and the time came when Chris and his wife Nancy convinced Grandfather Hughes that he should leave his plot of land and come to live with them.

Only twice while Chris was away from home did his father visit him - once when Chris received his degree of law, and the second time after he had been employed by the legal firm of Barnes, Lowell and Lowell.

There seems to be every reason for Chris to feel that he's had a successful association with this firm. He'd be the first to tell you that he has everything a man could want. His devoted wife, Nancy, and his three children make up his world, his home in a suburb; but a man lives in another world too, in a world of his work, his profession; and somewhere along the way Chris feels something went wrong.

Young Jim Lowell and he were classmates, and it was thru Jim that Chris was given the opportunity to in a sense become a part of his father's law firm. Nancy knows that her husband has always been interested in criminal law. She knows too that he'd never been given the opportunity to pursue that branch of the legal profession as he had planned. Why not? Well, many times Nancy blames herself. The responsibilities of a married man kept him tied to this large organization, responsibilities which kept him from saying, "I have served my apprenticeship."

Today there is Kit's college education to consider. Penny, altho she has another year and a half at high school, her future too must not be overlooked. Kenny - well he's only eleven years old. There had been another child, Susan, a girl of fourteen, who was killed in an accident six months ago. Nancy, without any bitterness, recalls the times when it was necessary for Chris to contribute part of their savings toward the upkeep of the farm which became more and more of a burden.

NANCY COLEMAN HUGHES met Chris when she was a senior at the university. She was the only child of parents of very moderate means. She specialized in education and hoped to teach after she received her degree and

passed the board examination. She and Chris went together for a year and decided to be married when Nancy was graduated.

Yes, Nancy too can look back and remember how they had planned. She would teach until such time as Chris had completed his education and was out on his own. She remembers her first trip to the farm, meeting Chris' family - their disappointment in Chris. Mrs. Hughes hoped that when Chris had established himself he would be able to contribute toward the education of the twins. Promises were made - Nancy would work, Chris would work, they would be able between them to establish a home of their own and help the family that had been so generous to the eldest child. Six months after Chris had become a clerk in the law firm, Nancy became pregnant.

Fred Hughes had accepted the news philosophically. Chris' mother, proud as she was of her eldest son, was an almost silent witness to the bitterness and disappointment that she saw in her daughter's eyes,

MARY HUGHES' frustration and bitterness became a part of her as she grew into womanhood. Her twin brother - well it was different with the boy, he could just up and leave, and he did.

Later, perhaps too late, when Chris became what his family thought successful, there were monthly checks, but these were eaten up by the farm. Five years ago, when Mrs. Hughes died, Mary left the farm. Chris gave her enough money for a course in beauty culture, and today she's a beauty operator in a downtown hotel not too far from where her brother practises law.

She's an infrequent visitor at her brother's home in the suburbs. Mary will never forget the great investment her parents made in just one of their children, nor can she quite forgive Nancy for having everything she, Mary, ever wanted - an education, marriage, a family, a home of her own.

GRANDFATHER HUGHES is from the old school of farmers, when farming wasn't the science it is today. It had been his fondest hope that at least one of his boys would work with the earth as he had, and as his father had before him. He has a great respect for the schools of agriculture which train young men in the science of farming, a great respect for the strides that have been made as man has learned to get the most out of the earth; but he knows the whims of nature. Science has not been able to overcome the floods, the long droughts, the dust storms, the false springs that bring in their wake the icy fingers of winter and the destruction of crops.

Grandfather Hughes has learned to wait, has learned not to question - he has learned to accept. Thruout his life, with its springtimes and its harvests - harvests of one kind or another - he has retained his sense of humor.

As so often happens, what a man has not found in his sons he sometimes finds in a grandson.

And so we come to the family of Christopher Hughes.

KENNY, the youngest, is approaching that in-between age - the threshold of adolescence. Unlike his older brother and sister, he has found complete security in his little world. He feels rather than knows the love of his mother and father. Communication between Kenny and his parents is something that just is.

When Grandfather Hughes came to live with the family, there was no denying the bond that grew between the young boy and the elderly man. If we were to look out of the window in the breakfast nook of the Hughes home right now, we'd find the two "boys", grandfather and grandson, examining the earth.

PENNY HUGHES, a copper-haired young girl of sixteen, upstairs in her room picks up a bracelet, not her own, puts it on her wrist, then takes it off and puts it away. She's done this many times in the past few weeks. No, she doesn't dare wear the bracelet because

of her mother. You see, the bracelet belonged to her sister Susan, who only a little over six months ago dove into the pool at high school, struck her head, and died of a concussion.

Penny, when she permits herself to think of her sister, has a deep sense of guilt - and resentment too. It seemed to Penny that her fourteen-year-old sister had always been the center of the family's attention. Friends said she was a pocket edition of Nancy Hughes. There was no reason why Penny should have been jealous, not really; it was just that Susan always seemed to be Mom's favorite, and Mom never knew, nor does she know today, the reason for her sixteen-year-old daughter's antagonism - Penny on the threshold of maturity, Penny loving and hating her mother, Penny with the problems not only in the home but in her relationships with the world outside of the home.

There's one person to whom she's devoted, really devoted, and that is her brother Kit, or Christopher Junior. There's a real bond between these two young people, one that might soon be broken.

KIT, in his senior year at high school, has his sights on the future, but what to do about that future? An honor student, the young man, who

undoubtedly might be eligible for a scholarship in several universities, reads the headlines in the evening paper night after night with but one thought in mind: "I'm going to have to get this army business over with before I can think of my future." I guess you might say that Kit is another Christopher Hughes Senior.

These then comprise the family unit - the people who will provide the main storyline of... "AS THE EARTH TURNS".

STORYLINE

Nancy Hughes never needed an alarm clock to awaken her - there had always been the children. More and more she attempts to recapture the early morning sounds of little children, babies. Yes, her family is growing up. Of course there is always Kenny, who has reached the point in his eleven years, of insisting upon being called Ken, who still bounces into the bedroom at the slightest provocation with a "Hi, Mom" and a "Hi, Dad". And somewhere in the distance there's the sound of a victrola, with the same record over and over and over again - that's Penny getting up to music. Then there's the sound of a tuneless whistle - that's Kit finishing up some homework he hadn't done last night because of a not so old argument that had gone on and on. And in the other twin bed is Chris, who always looks so boyish in the morning. Yes, it's morning, and time to start another day.

We can live with problems day in and day out and not consciously recognize them as such - until one day a problem becomes a crisis. Like many parents, Nancy and Chris have paid little attention until recently to a problem which faces all young men at this time. Kit had tried to discuss what he felt he had to do before his sister Susan died;

after her death he somehow hadn't the heart to bring the matter to his parents' attention until - well it was about six weeks ago. He has plans. At seventeen it seems that one should have a lot of time to plan for the future.

What can parents tell a boy? "Get your education, you don't have to go into the Army now, wait until you're older." But Kit doesn't want to wait, he wants to get his training now, he wants to enlist. He has his own reasons - to him they're logical, reasonable. Graduation is right around the corner, his problem is going to have to be solved; and if it's Kit's way, what about his future? To his mother he's still a boy, but a boy of seventeen today has to be a man. Kit's problem and the solving of it is something that is being faced in so many homes today.

As you prepare breakfast, Nancy, you wonder about Kit. Upstairs Chris, who has showered and shaved, is also wondering about Kit - Kit and Penny - wondering about his father, and his sister Mary - Nancy and Ken too. All of them are bound up in a decision that has to be made. Chris has gone to bed with this particular problem for the past ten days, and has awakened with it.

You might wonder why an offer from another law firm, and a pretty good one at that, should present a problem to a man like Christopher Hughes. No, there wouldn't be as much money to start with, but there would be the opportunity to become a real trial attorney, an opportunity to practise his kind of law.

How long can you entertain such an offer, not as much money to start with? Even if Kit should enlist, it's difficult to save very much these days. It's a wonderful opportunity, but what would you gain, Chris? You're forty-three, you've been with Barnes, Lowell and Lowell ever since you've been out of law school, perhaps you're in line for a partnership; but you've been thinking that same thing for the past three years. If only.... But the offer from the new law firm didn't include a partnership either. Then what would you lose if you accepted the offer? Well, there is the company insurance, quite a few benefits - the old strings, invisible, that tie a man down. Do you take a chance at forty-three? Not when you have a family dependent upon you, not when you have a deep sense of responsibility, not when you're sensitive, really sensitive to the needs of others.

You haven't told Nancy about this offer, have you. Are you going to? And if you do, do you know what

she'll say, Chris? "We'll get along on less; we've gotten along on less before, we can again; this is what you've been waiting for, Chris, for eighteen years this is what you've been waiting for, you can't afford to turn this offer down; there are thousands of families getting along on less; what about Penny? So she'll have a few less clothes." Nancy would override every one of Chris' arguments, which she's going to do just as soon as Chris tells her. A man has to place a value on himself, because if he doesn't the next person won't. Nancy makes it sound reasonable and logical. Yes, Nancy will push and Nancy will argue, but for the time being at least Chris Hughes can't break the little invisible strings that tie him to the yesterdays and will very likely tie him to the tomorrows.

There's another problem that Chris has not discussed with his wife, one that's going to have to be worked out, and soon. The old farm is eating up money, and Grandfather Hughes - well they're going to have to uproot him. It's not going to be easy, bringing Fred Hughes to live with them, it's going to be much easier on the family than on Grandfather Hughes. Chris and Nancy both know that to give up his so-called independence is one thing, but to give up the farm,

even tho it hadn't always been too kind to him and his family, would be literally uprooting a man of the soil. But today is a day of uprooting. We're living in an era of constant change. Grandfather Hughes comes to live with his son and his family, and brings to this home in the suburbs a true realization of a kind of security which this generation has lost sight of.

The adolescent years are turbulent at best. The unconscious changes that go on within a girl or boy are rarely understood by them, and too often not understood by their parents. This should not have been true of Nancy and Chris Hughes. After all Nancy had received her degree in Education, she had studied Child Psychology, and Chris is more than a little aware of today's adolescent.

Neither of them has thought of Penny as a problem, but Penny is a problem, first of all to herself, and she will soon be one to her family. She's an attractive youngster. No, I don't suppose we should say youngster; she's going to be seventeen. Her problem had its beginning in the rivalry that existed between her fourteen-year-old sister and herself.

We've all heard fathers and mothers alike make the fallacious statement, "We have no favorites in our family." That's not really true, you know - and

the first to sense the fallacy is the child. Jealousy is an accepted, normal emotion; "He's a little jealous of her, she's a little jealous of him."

Penny never realized how jealous she was of her sister Susan. At the death of the fourteen-year-old girl Penny felt a sense of release; and yet when her mother turns to her, much as the girl wants to rush to her mother, something always stops her. Someday this something will become articulate, and Penny will know that the memory of Susan stands between her mother and herself.

If you can't go to your mother where do you go, to whom do you go? That's Penny's story, poignant and tragic in its early aspects. It's almost unbelievable and yet natural for this young girl to turn to the one woman who hates her mother, her aunt Mary. This child, this young woman, has sensed that in her aunt she will find an ally; and one day Nancy will open her eyes and see, and Chris will see, what has happened without their having recognized it.

How do you go about solidifying a family when a boy is about to be inducted into the Army, when a girl is turning to another rather than to her own?

Chris and Nancy know that the only answer lies within their four walls, that the problems must be met and

solved there in the home before the young woman and the young man can begin to go into that other world as well-adjusted individuals, able to cope with reality.

It is conceivable that thousands upon thousands of families have a Mary Hughes. I think even Chris himself would admit that his sister Mary had been deprived of a great many things she should have had because of what his parents gave him. Yes, she could have married a farmer; but Mary wanted something very different from what her mother had had, from what she had had.

Mary is quite attractive at thirty-one. Anyone might say "I wonder why she never married." That's been said of many attractive young women, and there's always a reason. Mr. Right hasn't come along? That's rather stupid, isn't it. Mr. Right seldom has anything to do with it. What about the girl, what about the woman? The girl had been deprived of so much - and the girl came to hate the symbol of a man because it was a man, her brother, who was given all, who took all, and left nothing for her.

Mary Hughes today has a philosophy which she's going to make work, a philosophy that Penny will be exposed to: Take all and give nothing.

Fourteen years ago Mary's twin, John, ran away from home and joined the Navy. Thru the years every now and then Grandfather Hughes has heard from his son. John had been notified when his mother was taken critically ill, but he didn't even come home for the funeral. No one has heard from him during the past five years. Sometime in the near future John Hughes looks up his family.... and some day Chris will go before a jury and plead for the life of his brother.

This, then, is the broad base of our storyline. We would like to stress the point that "AS THE EARTH TURNS" is not a melodrama. It is the story of people. It might well be said that the life of each one of us is a serial story. Heredity and environment shape our destinies. As it is true of us, so it is true of the Hughes family. The experiences of these people are as predictable as the changing seasons, and as unpredictable as nature itself. What happens to them happens to so many of us who are subject to the many influences, pressures, of everyday living in this particular era - an era that is breeding insecurity, fear, almost futility. But as long as there is a springtime and a harvest, as long as the earth turns, nothing is futile.

"AS THE EARTH TURNS"

STORYLINE

What is the beginning of a story about real people, a story that is life? Can we trace it to the first indignant cry of a newborn child?..Even that is not the beginning. For a child is merely a link between the past and the future. A thread stretching from those who called him into being, those who will shape his life - and the world in which he will make his place and contribution in the years to come....And so it is with our story and the people it concerns. We enter their home and their lives, not at the beginning, but on a day like many that has preceded it. On a day when personal and family problems are intensifying. When the warp and woof of love and conflict are growing taut on the loom of life.

Add it is thru the visual medium and the metier of the half-hour serial, that such a story can be told. A story whose drama is advanced not just thru rapid, melodramatic action and dialogue, but a story that unfolds thru characters, thru a word which says one thing and an expression which tells us so much more.... This is the way to tell a story on the terms which an audience understands, utilizing the third dimension which is the heart.

Like women the earth over, Nancy Hughes doesn't need an alarm clock to awaken her, she has her children. But her family is growing up now and more and more she steals a few moments each morning, after she first opens her eyes, to try to recapture the sounds of little children and babies, the sounds that used to begin the day. But then the present intrudes itself into her reverie...She hears Kenny calling out the window to his dog - and soon he will bounce into their room with a "Hi, Mom, hi, Dad." Kenny, her baby, and he's growing up too. Only eleven and yet he is already insisting that he be called Ken, particularly in front of his young friends...Then across the morning the sound of a victrola reaches Nancy - that'd Penny getting up to music, the same record over and over again. And above the music, the sound of a tuneless whistle. That's Kit, ~~finis~~ finishing up the homework he left last night when they got into that

same argument again. And suddenly, with the remembering, Nancy's face is etched with lines of concern and a certain undefinable fear. Her hands clench the edges of the comforter and her eyes stare thru a ray of sunlight to an unforeseeable future. Then a slight movement in the bed next to hers makes Nancy turn and look at man ~~slowly emerging~~ who is slowly emerging from a deep plateau of sleep. Even at forty-three, Chris looks so boyish in the mornings with his hair rumpled and his face in repose. So boyish and so vulnerable. And in that moment the years between wash away and Nancy is standing at a dormitory window, watching a vital, handsome youth walk across the college campus to call for her. Oh, the dreams they dreamed and the plans they made. Dreams and plans that had to be altered in the living. But it's been a good, a wonderful life all the same, because they've had each other, and Nancy wouldn't trade places with any other woman in the world....Then Chris opens sleepy eyes and reaches for the clock on the night table, hoping perhaps- -...But Nancy answers the question for him. "Time to get up, darling."

Time to get up, time to put on the coffee and make the hot chocolate. Time to get her family started on their days. Time to make beds, wash dishes, dust and vacuum. Time to sort clothes, ~~make~~ plan meals and sew on buttons. And along with it all, there must be time to meet, to face, to try and solve the problems. ~~Her own~~ Her own problems as well as others.

Like many parents, Nancy and Chris have paid little attention until recently to a problem which faces all young men at this time. Kit had tried to discuss what he felt he had to do before his sister Susan died; after her death, he kept postponing it, not having the heart to bring the matter to his parents' attention. But about six weeks ago he knew it had to be done. He had to tell them of his plans. At seventeen it seems that one should have a lot of time to plan for the future.

What can parents tell a boy? "Get your education first, you don't have to go into the Army now, wait until you're older."? Of course that's what you say at first and you're talking to a stone wall, you find. Because Kit doesn't

want to wait, he wants to get his training now, he wants to enlist. Having the universal impatience of youth, Kit cannot sit down and think about what he wants to do with his future life or the education needed to prepare for it until he has his Army training out of the way. These reasons are logical and reasonable to him. And Nancy and Chris are realistic enough to know that we can give our children many things - but never our own experience. They are so sure they know what is best for him, and so sure they can't say it in those words/ Graduation is right around the corner and the problem has to be solved. To Nancy he's still such a boy, but a boy of seventeen today is a man tomorrow.

Only a year ago they seemed such a secure family unit, so serene and untroubled, and then- -. Yes, it's true, whether it just happened that way or not. It was after Susan's death that the problems seemed to mushroom around them. As if it weren't problem enough to get thru the day with that empty ache in the part of her heart which was always Susan's alone. "But that is my problem", Nancy thinks, "I mustn't inflict it on the others".

But you are wrong, Nancy, for in a family all problems mesh and stem from each other. The worries you have over your teen-aged daughter, Penny - how surprised you would be to know what's really at the base of them. Perhaps Nancy and Chris should understand. Nancy received her degree in Education, she studied Child Psychology, and Chris is aware of the turbulence of adolescent years. But sometimes we cannot see the forest for the trees...We've all heard fathers and mothers make the statement, "We have no favorites in our family". And maybe they believe this because they want to. But it's rarely true - and the first to sense the fallacy is the child. Jealousy is an accepted, normal emotion, in its daily, give-and-take outlet....But when her fourteen-year-old ~~sister~~ sister died, Penny had to bottle up that jealousy along with a sense of guilt at the feeling of release. And now these emotions are are simmering beneath the surface, manifesting themselves in small recalcitrant ways which will soon become open defiance.

Sixteen is a very crucial age for a girl. She longs to be understood without in the slightest understanding herself. Inarticulate herself, her parents need almost to be clairvoyant to meet her needs. And when, after Susan's death, Nancy turns to Penny - as much as the girl wants to rush to her mother - this inner guilt and bottled jealousy stops her. And she projects her failure, her anger and frustration to her mother. And following thru on the same line, it is normal - within the abnormal situation - for Penny to turn to the ~~man~~ one woman who has a bitter hatred of her mother - her Aunt Edith. This girl who is half-child, half-woman, has sensed that in her aunt she will find an ally. A person who will help her hide the truth from herself and blame the emotional failure solely on her mother...Of course these inner things are always manifested in a sixteen year old's terms - a dress Nancy doesn't approve of that Edith buys for her, a hat, a pair of very high heeled shoes. Edith becomes the arbiter for ~~Raggy~~ Penny, the one who has her confidence and her adulation....And one day, when Penny has become a little more woman than child, Nancy will open her eyes and see, as Chris must also see, what has actually happened to their daughter....What is there for a mother to do when she is forced to say to her daughter, "You lied to me, didn't you, Penny?" and is met with a cold stare and the answer, "So What?"....No, this is far from Nancy's tragedy alone. Much more it is Penny's tragedy, who is projecting her self-hatred to her mother. Who, in line with the hatred of herself, is ~~perpetrator~~ pursuing a path of self-destruction as fast as she can....This is, of course, a much later development of the problem in story-time, but the audience will see and feel it coming - and will share it, as surely as audiences have shared the great tragedies of life since the days of the Greek theatre.

Edith Hughes has always been a peripheral problem to Chris and Nancy, but now, as she comes to play such an important part in Penny's life, Edith's own problem and her own story takes sharp focus....No one in life is all black or all white and neither is Edith Hughes. Hate her, distrust her, blame her all you will, there are always reasons for what we are. Somewhere along the line,

something must have happened to tip the scale when you see a personality as warped as Edith Hughes'. (If this isn't true of characters then they're only made of cardboard.)...The groundwork was laid, of course, in the fact that to Chris went the spoils. He got the education, his were the advantages. And for a girl who hated life on a farm and who had a girl friend in high school who was going on to college and all the excitement it spells to the young, this was a very bitter pill to take. Edith was an avid reader of movie magazines. She escaped from her humdrum existence into an imaginary tabloid world, vicariously sharing the lives of the queens of the Silver Screen. She fed on this until she was convinced that her life would eventually have an ending as happy as a Claudette Colbert movie.

During the Second World War an Air Corps training base was built not far from the Hughes farm. Because they needed the money, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes had no arguments to offer when Edith got a job for herself as a switchboard operator at the base, and when she met Lt. Frank Rice, Edith knew her happy ending was not far off. Not that they would have a wealthy, luxurious existence, but a good one, away from the farm. In civilian life Frank was a construction engineer and the position would be waiting for him when he got out of the service. Frank seemed to love Edith as deeply and genuinely as she loved him and the six months of their romance was a happy, wonderful time. The only marring element was that Edith could not persuade Frank that they should be married before he went overseas. His reasons were logically and wholly unselfish. He said he would like ~~xxx~~ to marry her and he meant it, but suppose something should happen to him?... No, it wasn't fair to her. No matter how she pleaded, he was not going to do that to her.

He gave her an engagement ring and flew with his ~~squadron~~ squadron to the European theatre. But eight months later, Edith got a letter - - he was sorry, he hated to hurt her, but he guessed it just wasn't the real thing between them; he had married an English girl.

Edith Hughes has never loved another man, she wouldn't expose herself to

being hurt that way again, for to her all men are Frank Rice. Instead she now has an unconscious desire to hurt others. And her bitter hatred of Nancy is based on the question: "Why does she have it? Why don't I?" And her answer to that is because Chris and Nancy took everything, took their happiness when it meant the rest of the Hughes family had to give up so much. For of course Edith must rationalize that if she had had more advantages she would have held Frank. He would have loved her more and married her rather than some one else....And so, with a philosophy of take all and give nothing, Edith meets the world. She is very attractive - because she has taught herself to be - and she can be charming and winning when she wants to be. But she only wants to be when there is a purpose - and in keeping with her philosophy.

Some of Edith's background will be laced thru episodes via the flashback technique because, aside from making for good drama, it will explain more fully the complexities of this woman. And then will come the day when a super highway is to be built on the outskirts of the community and Frank and Sylvia Rice come there to live. Sylvia and Nancy become good friends and Frank, complacently married, thinks the past is a forgotten chapter. But to Edith - tho she is smart enough never to let it be too obvious - this heaps untold fuel to her bitterness. She associates Nancy with Sylvia, Chris with Frank, and is goaded more than ever to hurt them. It is at this point that Edith coldly and deliberately ~~succumbs~~ becomes involved with an older, senior member of Chris' firm.

But to go back to story present, Chris has a problem he must ponder while he shaves this morning which he has not even told Nancy about yet. He must make a decision which will, as always, affect his whole family....You might wonder why an offer from another law firm, and a pretty good one at that, should present a problem to a man like Christopher Hughes. No, there wouldn't be as much money to start with, but there would be the opportunity to become a real trial attorney, an opportunity to practice the kind of law Chris knows in his heart he's cut out for.

Yes, this is what he's always wanted to do, but he can't consider only himself. Even if Kit should enlist, it's difficult to save very much these days. A wonderful opportunity, but what would you gain, Chris? You're forty-three, you've been with Barnes, Lowell and Lowell ever since you've been out of law school. You should be in line for a partnership soon now....But you've been thinking that for three years, haven't you? - and there's no sign of it yet. And that Banks fellow they took in six years ago seems to be the fair-haired boy more and more. If only....But the offer from the new law firm didn't include a partnership either. Still, what do you really have to lose? ~~Why~~ don't you go ahead and accept the offer?...Well, there is the company insurance, quite a few other benefits - and the pension plan, you'd miss out on that entirely switching to a new company at this stage of the game. All the old strings, invisible, that tie a man down. Do you take a chance at forty-three? Not when you have a family dependent upon you, not when you have a deep sense of responsibility, not when you're sensitive, really sensitive to the needs of others.

No, you haven't told Nancy about this, are you going to? Well, you know what she'll say, ~~anyway~~. "We'll get along on less; we've gotten along on less before, we can again. This is what you've been waiting for, Chris, for ~~eighteen~~ eighteen years this is what you've been waiting for. You can't afford to turn it down. There are thousands of families getting along on less...So what about Penny? She'll have a few less clothes, that's all. It isn't as if you were taking ~~fix~~ food out of her mouth."....^AYes, Nancy would override every one of Chris' arguments - - and that is what she does do when he tells her. A man has to place a value on himself, because if he doesn't, the next person won't. Nancy makes it sound reasonable and logical. Yes, Nancy will plead and Nancy will argue, but for the time being at least, Chris Hughes can't break the little invisible strings that tie him to the yesterdays and will very likely tie him to the tomorrows.

There's another problem that Chris has not discussed with his wife, one that's going to have to be worked out - and soon. The old farm is eating up money, too much money. Chris wants to be fair with his father but he cannot to it to the detriment of his own children. Grandfather Hughes will have to be uprooted from the land he loves so well. It's not going to be easy, bringing Fred Hughes to live with them - some things and people defy transplanting. It's going to be much easier on the family than on Grandfather Hughes. Chris and Nancy both know that to give up his so-called independence is one thing, but to give up the farm, that's like giving up his life, for it's the only life he's ever known. But today is a day of uprooting. It must be so even for this man of the soil. We're living in an era of constant change and so Grandfather Hughes comes to live with his son and his family and brings to this home in the suburbs a true realization of a kind of security which this generation has lost sight of. The security that one can absorb from the cycles and rhythms of Nature.

During all the story unfolding which we have touched on but briefly here, little is heard of ~~from~~ Edith's twin, John, who ran away from home and joined the Navy fourteen years ago. Every now and then Grandfather Hughes has gotten a card from him, very occasionally a letter, with never the same postmark, but nothing that really seems to make him a member of the family. John had been notified when his mother was taken critically ill but he didn't even come home for the funeral. And no one has heard from him during the past five years...But sometime in the near future John Hughes looks up his family...and some day Chris will go before a jury and plead for the life of his brother.

This, then, is the broad base of our storyline. We would like to stress again the point that "AS THE EARTH TURNS" is not a melodrama. It is the story of people. It might ~~hex~~ well be said that the life of each one of us is a serial story. Heredity and environment shape our destinies and when we look back

to what we were, what our lives were, ten, fifteen years ago - are we not amazed at how much has happened? How much "story" there has been in our lives?

And as it is true of us, so it is true of the Hughes family. The experiences of these people are as predictable as the changing seasons, and as unpredictable as Nature itself. Nature with its soothing laws - and its violent, destructive aberrations.

What happens to the Hughes family and those close to them, happens to so many of us who are subject to the many influences, pressures, of everyday living in this particular era - an era that is breeding insecurity, fear, almost a sense of futility. This is what we must fight against, and we will. For as long as there is a springtime and a harvest, as long as the earth turns, nothing is futile.