

Woodburn

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ERIC, a man in his late 20's early 30's, sits at a table in the basement, burning a picture into a block with a wood burning kit.

ENTER MEGAN, his wife of about the same age. She is dressed for bed.

MEGAN:
Here you are, I should have guessed.

ERIC:
Here I am.

MEGAN:
What are you doing?

ERIC:
What does it look like?

MEGAN:
I can't see from here.

ERIC:
Well guess. Maybe you'll be two for two.

MEGAN:
It's almost midnight Eric, you should be in bed.

ERIC:
I should be a lot of things.

MEGAN:
Please, don't start on that again.

ERIC:
Just let me finish this block and I'll come up.

MEGAN:
That's what you said last night. You didn't get into bed until 3.

ERIC:

I was in the middle of a very detailed project.

MEGAN:

It could have waited till tonight.

ERIC:

Well I guess I'm just a failure all around then, aren't I?

MEGAN:

I didn't say that. Please don't put words in my mouth. Just- come to bed Eric.

ERIC:

(yawn) I'm not tired.

MEGAN:

Fine.

MEGAN pulls a chair up to the table next to ERIC

ERIC:

Go to bed Meg.

MEGAN:

I'm not tired either. (yawn)

ERIC:

I'll be up in a minute, I'm just finishing the shading on the hills.

MEGAN:

Then I won't have to be down here very long.

ERIC:

You should go to sleep. The bed should get Some use.

MEGAN:

The Bed Is for Two. We agreed on that six years ago.

ERIC:

(lifting pen and pointing at block) Son-of-a-

MEGAN:

What?

ERIC:

Look how thick I made this line. This whole block is ruined. An entire night.

MEGAN:

Eric, I can't even tell. Can't you just fix it?

ERIC:

I can tell. And you can't just fix it, it's burned into wood. You can't undo something like this.

MEGAN:

But the rest of it is great. Look, you have hills and a stream and- is that a deer? Eric, you can't just throw the whole thing away because of one line.

ERIC:

I can't? Watch me.

ERIC shoves block into trashcan.

MEGAN:

Fine.

MEGAN bends down and unplug wood burning pen, placing the cord on the table.

ERIC:

Do you mind plugging that back in?

MEGAN:

I will. Tomorrow. You just said you were done with this block, so you might as well come to bed.

ERIC:

(growing agitated) Would you just plug it back in, please?

MEGAN:

No. Eric, this is ridiculous.

ERIC:

Great, first I'm a failure as a husband and now my wife says I'm ridiculous as a man. Or is it the other way around?

MEGAN:

You're not ridiculous, This is ridiculous. Three nights now, ever since we came back from the clinic you have done nothing but hole up in the basement with your wood burning kit. You only come upstairs to eat and even then I might as well be eating by myself for all you say to me. This isn't healthy for you and it isn't healthy for us.

ERIC:

A lot of women would be happy to have their husbands out of their hair all day.

MEGAN:

Well I'm not a lot of women. I didn't marry you to just share a paycheck and a garage.

ERIC:

And there's the problem.

MEGAN:

That's not what I meant and you know it. You're overreacting.

ERIC:

(overreacting) Overreacting?? Overreacting?!? The doctor basically said-

MEGAN:

He said nothing of the sort Eric, I was sitting right there the entire time. He specifically said not to-

ERIC:

I know what he said, but what he meant was "this is your fault Mr. Scott. This is 100% your fault."

MEGAN:

So you're going to prove him wrong by making a wood effigy and throwing it in the garbage?

ERIC:

(building to a yell) I'm glad you find this so hilarious. I just found out I'm a failure as a man. My entire life is falling apart!

MEGAN:

(yelling) I'm supposed to be your entire life!

ERIC:

And how long until you leave!?

Stunned silence as the two stare at each other. Eric afraid, Megan hurt.

MEGAN:
(softly) I can't believe you just said that.

ERIC:
(quickly) I'm sorry.

MEGAN:
(emotionless) I'm going to bed.

EXIT MEGAN. ERIC sits at the table for a moment before plugging the cord back in. He grabs a new block of wood from a pile, then looks towards the stairs.

ERIC:
You just can't stop screwing up, can you Eric?

ERIC grabs the pen by the hot metal part, burning himself.

ERIC:
Ow! Holy Hell Damn it!

MEGAN:
(off stage) Are you all right down there?

ERIC:
I'm fine!

MEGAN:
Are you sure?

ERIC:
(softly) No.

ENTER MEGAN with a cup of water

ERIC:
I said I'm fine.

MEGAN:
I know. Did you burn yourself?

ERIC:
(sheepishly) Yes.

MEGAN:
Put your hand in here.

ERIC places his hand in the cup, breathing a sigh

ERIC:
Thank you. I'm sorry that I said-

MEGAN:
What if it's me.

ERIC:
(dismissive) It's not.

MEGAN:
But what if it was. How soon till you leave me?

ERIC:
Don't be silly, Megan.

MEGAN:
I'm not being silly. I'm being serious.

ERIC:
I don't care about that. I love you, I'm not going to leave you just- just because.

MEGAN:
And do you think that I love you any less? Do you think I was just saying words at the altar? I am going to love you forever Eric, all of you. Whether you want me to or not.

PAUSE

ERIC:
My dad gave me this kit when I was 10.

MEGAN:
I know.

ERIC:
I used to burn my hand on it all the time when I was a kid. But I'd come home every night and I'd practice. I'd practice and practice and then one day, I was good. I put in the time

and I saw a result. We've been trying for two years now.

MEGAN:

It's not the same thing.

ERIC:

I wish it was. (pause) I'd never leave you.

MEGAN:

I wouldn't either. Let me see.

MEGAN examines his hand, then kisses it softly.

MEGAN:

Come up to bed?

ERIC:

I'm not tired.

MEGAN:

(softly suggestive) Neither am I.

THEY KISS. They begin to exit before ERIC turns back.

ERIC:

Just a second.

MEGAN:

Eric-

ERIC:

Honestly this time.

EXIT MEGAN. ERIC goes to the table and unplugs the pen. He then reaches into the garbage can and pulls out the "ruined" block, setting it back on the table. EXIT ERIC