

LOVE AND LIGHTING

By Patrick Gabridge

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PROPS

2 bicycles (or chairs will do)
2 bicycle helmets
Real or fake bottle of aspirin
Water bottle
Ring box
A ring
A small note, enclosed in the ring box
Sound effects of bicycles, thunder, an auto accident

CAST: TERRI, STAN, and MUDDD

AT RISE: Sound of bicycles on a bumpy road. Thunder rumbles in the background. TERRI and STAN may use actual bicycles, or the bike riding may be improvised while sitting in chairs.

TERRI: I'm worried, Stan.

STAN: We'll be fine, Terri.

TERRI: Those clouds are black.

STAN: Nothing to worry about.

(rumble of thunder)

TERRI: Did you hear that? That was thunder. We're riding metal bikes on a road in the middle of the prairie. We're the most attractive things to lightning for a hundred miles.

STAN: You're always worrying. We're not even going to get wet.

(more rumbling — louder now)

TERRI: That breeze is a little damp, Stan.

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STAN: So maybe we'll see some moisture. Fine. I love riding in the rain. Makes me feel alive, sets my nerves on edge.

TERRI: We're going to be struck by lightning.

STAN: Do you know what the odds are?

TERRI: Too high.

STAN: Infinitely small. As long as we keep moving, we're fine.

TERRI: Ah, we'll outsmart the storm. You're right. They always say, in case of electrical storm, just try to trick the lightning.

STAN: Just relax.

TERRI: We need shelter, Stan.

(SHE starts riding faster, pulling away.)

STAN: ***(calling out)*** Hey, wait up. Calm down, will ya'? You're not going to find shelter by riding faster, the nearest—

(HE is interrupted by an incredibly loud crash of thunder, followed by the sound of a bike clattering to the ground. Sound of another bike screeching to a halt. STAN has falls to the ground.)

TERRI: Stan? Stan? Oh my gosh!

(SHE throws down her bike and runs back to STAN.)

TERRI: Stan. Stan. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. You're dead. You're dead. This is not what I needed. We were having a fun weekend, except for that little joke with the spider. Please don't be dead. Please.

(STAN groans softly)

TERRI: Stan! Speak to me. Are you all right? Where does it hurt? You don't look so good. Let's try to get that helmet off. ***(loud, as if speaking to a deaf person)*** Would that make you feel better? Here, let me try to... Oh my. Maybe we'd better forget about the helmet. I've never seen one melt before. ***(effort as SHE tries to pry it off.)*** Let's just forget about it, okay? I'm sure the doctors will be able to cut it off. Can you hear me, Stan?

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(STAN groans louder)

TERRI: You know it's a good thing I took those assertiveness classes. This is a real chance to take control of the situation. I mean, there you are, helpless, in a state of shock, and you're relying on me to keep you alive. **(pause)** Puts a lot of pressure on me, doesn't it?

(STAN groans again)

TERRI: Now just be patient while I think of what to do, all right? I'm not good under pressure, you know that. Why did you have to get hit by lightning? I swear, you're such an idiot sometimes. I said we should find shelter, seek protection. But no. No, you needed to ride with wild abandon. Not a thing to worry about.

STAN: Shuhhh.

TERRI: What? What's the matter? Shuhhh? Shuhhh? Just spit it out, Stan.

STAN: Shuuutttt.

TERRI: Do you want something out of your backpack? Here, let me get it off. There we go. Boy, nylon really doesn't handle the heat well. I'm not sure this zipper will work. Let's see. Maybe you want some...band-aids? I'm real good with band-aids. Always loved the way they smell. Here's one. Can you smell that? Nothing smells like a fresh band-aid. But it has to be the real thing. Generic ones just don't have that same aroma of comfort.

STAN: **(weakly...barely a whisper)** Shut...Up.

TERRI: What? What did you say? I can barely hear you. You don't sound good at all. But I'm in control of the situation. Don't you worry about a thing.

STAN: Shut up!

TERRI: Oh. **(pause)** Oh. That's great. You can talk again. I think you're going to be fine, Stan. **(beat)** What do you mean, shut up?

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