

Don't You Get It Now?

by Anecia Larsen

Every single year Ezra and I go on a little road trip. In reality, it takes us about two weeks to go from Michigan to South Dakota. We first started this annual tradition when we first started to date. It was right after our fifth date and Ezra decided that she wanted to go to South Dakota for some odd reason, but she didn't have anyone to go with so I offered to drive, and a few days later, we were in my 2006 Camry, bags packed and excitement flowing through our blood.

This year is going to be no different. Well, maybe the fact that we have a new car, but it's still going to be us, Ezra and Harry.

"Harry?" Ezra asks as I walk into the living room to grab the last bag that was on the couch.

"What's up?" I ask, pausing to hear what she has to say.

"Did you pack the extra bag of Doritos Cool Ranch?"

“Ezra, did you seriously just ask that?” I laugh. Since I’ve known her, she’s had this weird obsession with the nastiest chips known to man. And even though I’m married to her, I still have no idea why she loves them.

“I didn’t want you to forget, sweetie, and knowing me, I would’ve bought five bags at the store the other day.”

I roll my eyes and continue to load the remaining bags into our car. I think there’s an issue with every woman that packs bags for a short trip: they always overpack for unnecessary things. Even though this trip is only for two weeks, she packed five bags. Compared to my three bags, I have no idea what’s all in there. I know for sure clothes and hygiene stuff, but in the other three I have no clue.

When I was younger, my mom would always do the same thing for us when we would go on road trips. There would be a food bag, a dirty laundry bag (for after the trip), a bag for soaps and toothpaste, and then finally a bag for her own clothes. And that’s what Ezra does, minus the whole dirty laundry bag.

After going in and out to pack our car, we are finally on the road. I’m driving the first week and then Ezra drives the second week. It works out perfectly for us.

“Babes, what’s the hotel we’re staying at after we leave in the morning on Tuesday?” I ask her.

She puts down her book and pulls up her phone. “It’s called The Raising Sun.”

I turn to look at her briefly and we both laugh. “Sweets, you picked the hotel list this year—I had no say in it,” I tell her, shaking my head.

“Okay, you’re right, but it had great Google reviews, so excuse me,” she giggles.

Again, I shake my head and put more focus into the driving that I’m doing. As we drive for six or so hours we talk, but also I let her read whatever book she’s reading for that week. And when it comes to her driving, she lets me play my video games. But a lot of our conversations are super weird or super serious and deep.

And that’s the one thing I love about her. Ezra can go from talking about the kind of farts she gets from eating different foods to what can make her truly happy on a shitty day. It’s an amazing quality of hers that I adore. We also see a lot of farmland and billboards, too. Sometimes we laugh at the billboards that advertise the sex stores right off of exit so and so.

About three hours in we cross the border into Wisconsin. We’ve been here a couple of times, but not enough to know the area super well. But one thing that we do know about this state is how Republican it is. Ezra is extremely political. But more so about women’s rights and rights for other groups of people who are disadvantaged.

I, on the other hand, don’t see things the way she does in life. Luckily, she still decided to date me after I told her my own views. At the time, I didn’t think she would accept me. I knew a lot of guys who got rejected because of their political views, and I wasn’t one of them.

“Look at that stupid fucking billboard,” she blurts out. I slow down the car and on my right in the packed cornfield is a sign that reads, ‘Your mother didn’t kill you, so don’t kill me,’ along with a picture of a baby, more like a fetus actually.

I mentally prepare for this conversation because unlike my wife, I do want kids. I mean she does know about my desire of having her children someday, but for us it’s not an everyday kind of conversation. I respect her beliefs enough, and she does the same for me as well.

“The one with the baby?” I ask. Even though I already know how she is going to respond, the question still rolls off of my tongue.

She turns in her seat a little bit and looks at me through her studded sunglasses. “You mean the fetus, right, Harry?” Her voice isn’t playful anymore.

I take a deep breath and say yes. I hear her inhale deeply and wait for what she’s going to say next.

“I can’t believe that you said that, Harry,” she says. The air in the car is so intense right now that if I move to grab her hand or to touch her, she might explode.

“What?”

“What do you mean what? That bullshit of a sign making people believe that is even a fucking baby! It’s literally just a clump of cells!” Her voice is raised and the tension is still high.

“Sweetie, I know we disagree on some things, but I think that billboard can be little right.” I wipe the sweat off of my forehead and again wait for what she has to say. I have a small idea on what she’s going to say next, but I am terrified she’s going to go through the roof.

“Harry, I know you have your opinions and whatnot, but I don’t think you have a lot of say when it comes to what I decide with my body.”

“Even if I want all of your glorious beautiful kids who can change the world once they learn that the world is a horrible, dirty place?” I ask.

I’m still driving, but I have slowed the speed of the car down just a little bit. Even though we are on a state highway at ten in the morning, I couldn’t care less if the other cars wanted to pass my slow driving up. This is an important conversation to have between us.

“Harry,” she begins in a softer voice, “I’d think it be a great idea, but you know I have my reservations about having kids. And even abortion rights as well.”

I nod my head, and she continues on, “Do you know how scary it is to be pregnant with a child that you don’t even want with a man that raped you when you’re seventeen?”

I shake my head no.

“When I went through that my senior year, it opened my eyes to letting women getting abortions if they please or if they’re completely against it. It took me years to finally get over that horrendous pain and someday I still have trouble. And then to top it off, we have a president who wants to make abortions illegal. And even if it’s considered rape.”

When we met, she told me a little bit about what had happened to her before we met, but she never told me about the part about getting the abortion after this horrendous act was done to her. I grab her left hand and give it pecks until I get a small giggle out of her. And then I continue holding her hand, rubbing my thumb over the top part of her thumb to reassure her that I’m here for her.

“Do you get it now?” she asks a few minutes later, her voice soft almost like a whisper.

And I give her a nod, a smile and another kiss on her hand.

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