

CLOTHES LINE

CAST:

Husband
Wife

PROPS: Lawn chairs, table.

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PROPS: Lawn chairs, table.

HUSBAND SITS IN LAWN CHAIR BESIDE A TABLE AS WIFE APPROACHES. ON THE TABLE IS A PACKAGE OF COTTON CLOTHES LINE ROPE (FOR USE LATER).

WIFE: Honey... are you busy?

HUSBAND: Well, I'm going to mow the lawn in a few minutes.

WIFE: I've decided that we should do our part to reduce our carbon footprint... so I'd like to put up a clothes line.

HUSBAND: Clothes line? Okay. That sounds good.

WIFE: I'll be out running some errands, okay?

HUSBAND: Okay.

QUICK PECK ON THE CHEEK AND WIFE EXITS.

HUSBAND: (standing) It sounds simple, doesn't it? It always does. Clothes line. But, what a husband has in mind when his wife says "clothes line" and what the wife has in mind, may be the difference between sleeping in marital bliss and sleeping on the sofa. Can't get much simpler than clothes line. Two posts, one line. Clothes line. (a beat) What a simple project. (pantomimes) I went to the home center, got a couple of posts, coupla

horizontal cross members, they even make a clothes line brace for the cross-members; couple bags of sakrete, and (picking up cotton clothes line from the table) clothes line! A very simple "honey do" project for a guy like me. (a beat) So, I picked the sunniest spot so the clothes would dry quickly.(pantomimes) Measured it out. Stepped it off. Dug the holes. Planted the posts - made sure they were level and perfectly perpendicular... want 'em to look nice in our backyard, y'know! Put on the cross-members and was sitting back admiring the simple, clean linearity of it all when my beloved returned from her errands.

WIFE APPROACHES AT A FAST PACE.

WIFE: (concerned) Honey...!

HUSBAND: Hi! (proudly) How do you like the clothes line?

WIFE: Oh, honey... why'd you put it HERE?

HUSBAND: Oh, geez... I dunno? Sunshine?

WIFE: But, honey, the neighbors can see it HERE. I don't want the neighbors to see my panties or your underwear blowing in the breeze!

HUSBAND: Look... it's a clothes line!

WIFE: But, why didn't you ask me where I wanted the clothes line?

HUSBAND: Ask you? Why? It's simple. Sunshine? Posts, cross-members, rope? Clothes line!

WIFE: But there are options! There are always options! (pointing) I wanted it over THERE.

HUSBAND: (walks over THERE and looks around. Then he walks over HERE and looks around.) I think there's more space HERE.

WIFE: Oh, honey, it's wide open, but when you consider the fence line, the roof line, the trees, the plantings, our shrubs, the flowers, the patio, over THERE is much better! And, it doesn't have to be just two un-beautiful posts! (walks over THERE and folds her arms.) This doesn't work for me!

HUSBAND: (WIFE FREEZES - Husband walks to her and addresses audience) I've seen this gesture before. This is the "when hell freezes over" gesture my wife adopts just before I make a terrible mistake and disagree with her. Isn't she wonderful? Look at that defiant chin! The steely gaze! The arms crossed protecting her bosom! I don't know why I make this mistake, but I make

this mistake over and over again. (husband walks back to starting point) Usually I put my hands in my back pockets and say something like... Well...

WIFE: (HUSBAND FREEZES - Wife walks to him and addresses audience) Well! Well? He permanently affixes posts into my backyard with concrete and he says 'Well...' Look at the gesture! This is the gesture he always assumes! Hands in his pockets protecting his buns! Well, I'd protect my ass too if I did something so stupid! (wife walks back to starting point) (sweetly) Honey? May I show you a clothes line?

WIFE EXITS AT A BRISK PACE AND RETURNS AT EQUALLY A FAST PACE WITH A GIANT STACK OF MAGAZINES WITH POST-IT NOTES STICKING OUT OF MOST OF THE PAGES. SHE DROPS THE MAGAZINES ONTO THE TABLE WITH A LOUD "THUD".

WIFE: (flipping through the top magazine then stopping at the post it note and pointing) Here, dear... here's what a real clothes line looks like! Clothes lines of Paris! How romantic is that! Paris! Look...! Look...! Monmart! Clothes lines of Monmart! When will I ever get to Paris? Never! But, perhaps I could have a clothes line like they have in Paris! Look at the couples in the

photo... why, you can see what a clothes line has meant to their relationship!

(another magazine)

Clothes lines... in the Bahamas. Bahamas! White sands. Bright sun. Blue, blue water. Will I ever get to the Bahamas? Ummm... I doubt it. But my undies could be flapping in the breeze in our back yard on something that looks like it belongs right next to that beautiful, beautiful beach!

LOOKS OVER AT LOCATION OF HUSBAND'S CLOTHES LINE

Sheesh! (shakes her head)

(another magazine)

Clothes lines of Monet... Monet! Right next to the garden... you can almost see the water lilies. Not some stupid post and concrete! Geez!

(quickly flips page in same magazine) Oh, look here - the clothes line of Vincent van Gogh!

Again, not some stupid post and concrete!

(another magazine)

Clothes lines of the Vatican! Plain, reverant but oh, so inspirational!

(another magazine)

Martha Stewart... Martha Stewart for god's sakes!

How does hers compare to yours?

THEY LOOK AT MAGAZINE AND THEN IN DIRECTION OF HUSBAND'S CLOTHES LINE

(final small pamphlet)

See! Here's a pamphlet on the spirituality of clothes lines - the Feng Shui of clothes lines...!

(flips pamphlet onto stack)

(picking up a very thick book)

I've even specially ordered the book... "More Creative Clothes Lines: Expandable, Collapsible, Multi-Function"... and it even says right here on the cover, "step-by-step photographs for professional looking results every time!" (a beat) professional looking results... every... time!

(a beat)

Now do you understand at least a little bit about what a clothes line can truly mean to the quality of our lives and our environment?

SILENCE FROM THE HUSBAND WHO ROCKS BACK AND FORTH WITH HIS HANDS IN HIS POCKET. WIFE REACHES OVER AND PICKS UP THE COTTON ROPE.

WIFE: (pitying look, shaking her head) Cotton rope?

(long pause) You're going to hang our clothes on cotton rope?

LONG BEAT

HUSBAND: You know, it sounds like this clothes line is real important to you and you've put a lot of thought into it...

WIFE: (explodes) No shit, Sherlock! What were you thinking?

HUSBAND: Well, I was thinking you could take the cotton rope and tie me to the post of your choice and then burn me like Joan of Arc.

WIFE: That would not help reduce our carbon footprint...

HUSBAND: Okay... I'll just turn 'em into bird feeders. (a beat) Do you have some suggestions about where to put the clothes line?

BLACKOUT.