

Automatic

by

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“She’s a auto-matic... that means no more a grind’n gears! No siree Bob... no grinding gears, no double clutching, and no need to worry about what gear you’re in.”

“You know that for a fact?” Fred’s wife asked. “For-a-fact!”

“Yes dear.”

“You drove it?”

“Yes dear.”

The female Pine Martin looked at her husband real hard like. “Yor right eye is a’twitch’n. You know that’s why you can’t play poker.”

“All right, all right, the salesman drove it and I rode along. What he said made sense. I never drove a auto-matic a’fore so I was sure to screw it up and it drove just as smooth as ice. It was so beautiful... it was so beautiful it reminded me of you, my dear.”

Ruth scrunched up her eyes making her two eyebrows into one big one. “You done bought it already didn’t you Fred?”

“Well... not exactly bought it. All I did was give him a down payment.”

“How much did you give him?” she growled.

“Just ten percent; that’s all, I swear, just ten percent.”

She shifted her weight slightly so when she threw the punch it would carry the absolute most weight she could summon. “How much are we talk’n here?”

“A hundret dollars,” he whined. “I know it’s a lot, honey pie, but it’s a beaut... and... and...” Fred knew that look and that stance since it was the same she’d given him just before knocking him cold the day he told her he might not want to get married. This made him ‘pull out all the stops’. “I bought it for you sweetheart.”

With the words, Ruth began her clobbering punch but stopped it just after an inch of body swing using every ounce of intestinal fortitude she could summon. Coupled to this, the smile she wore

couldn't be more heart felt or spontaneous... her skinflint husband had actually bought her something other than a household utensil.

Fred opened one of the two eyes he'd closed with gritted teeth when he'd seen the wind up. Their three eyes met and fortunatly for the male Pine Martin, it wasn't his twitchy eye that was open.

"You bought it for me?" Ruth asked him softly.

"I did?" Fred responded, and quickly changed the tone of his voice from question to pronouncement. "I did! Yes... that's right, I did!"

Lowering her balled up fist, she batted her eyes and actually beamed at him. "You bought it for me?"

"Well sure I did, sweet cakes," Fred assured her, getting a paw placed over his telltale eye. "And it's the purty'est color red you're ever gonna see... red like the fur upon yor breasts dear heart."

"And an automatic," she added.

"So's you can drive it. Just imagine what all those old crones at the church are gonna say when you pull up there next Sunday morning, and thay ain't ever seen a steakbed truck like the one yur drive'n."

"Truck?!"

"And not just any truck... it's an auto-matic."

Ruth's left drove into his midrift with a pivot of her hips giving it the strength of three girlie punches. It was something her mother had taught her and that passed down from her grandmother. It was the preferred strike next to a cast iron griddle pan. This was followed close on by a roundhouse right that loosed the tobacco right from her husband's mouth, and good thing too because he was then down for the count.

Standing over him, she yelled, 'That was automatic too ya old coot! Why on God's green earth would I want to drive a truck?!'

This, of course, was when she heard the horn sound off outside and a happy sounding salesman calling out, 'Hello in the house!'

Peeking out the window, her breath caught in her throat. For once in his durned life, Fred had been right; the truck really was a beaut.