

Lightning Strikes!

(Cartoon format with words in dialog balloons.)

Frame A

(Eric's dad's boss yelling at Eric's dad) "Can't you fix this equipment? What are you good for if you can't fix this machine?"

Frame B

(Eric's dad's boss yelling at Eric's dad) "I can't understand why I keep paying you, you are such an idiot!"

Frame C

(Eric's dad yelling at Eric) "If I have told you once I have told you a thousand times, put the milk away when you are done. Why can't you remember to do one simple thing!?!?!?"

Frame D

(Eric's dad yelling at Eric) "I can't stand it when you don't do what I tell you. I have to tell you the same thing over and over. You are such an idiot."

Frame E

(Eric yelling at Brandon) "I told you to stay away from the swing set. You hog the swings all of the time. You are such an idiot."

Frame F

(Eric yelling at Brandon) "Well, are you going to get away from here? Well?!?!?"

Frame 1

(Picture of boy angrily kicking rocks as he walks down the dirt road)
B – "I hate that darn Eric! He makes me so mad!"

Frame 2

(Grandpa sitting on the front porch of a farmhouse. Brandon picking up a stick and chasing away a dog.)

G – "Looks like you had a bad day at school today Brandon. What happened?"

B – "Eric's so mean. He started yelling at me in front of everybody and saying it was my fault the swing is broken. He is always saying that everything that happens is my fault. He yells at me to go away, that I never do anything right."

Frame 3

G – "Isn't Eric that big kid at school? He must be a lot older than you are."

B – "He is. That's what makes me so nervous around him. I never know what's going to start him yelling. I try to stay out of his way but it's a small playground. Even when I try to do things right he finds a reason to yell at me."

Frame 4

(Mom comes out on porch.)

M – "Any notes from school today?"

B – "Uh....uh...I don't think so."

Frame 5

M – “Well think again as the school just called and said you were in the principal’s office for fighting.”

B – “It is not my fault. Eric started it.”

Frame 6

M – “The fight wasn’t with Eric. It was with Jared.”

Frame 7

B – “Well, after Eric was mean to me I was so mad that when Jared walked by and muttered something at me I punched him. Then I was sent to the office....”

M – “Where you yelled at the secretary and kicked her desk.”

Frame 8

B – “It wasn’t my fault! Eric made me so mad I couldn’t stop myself!”

Frame 9

G – “Let me get this straight. Eric yelled at you. You got mad, punched Jared and kicked the secretary’s desk?”

B – “Yeah.”

Frame 10

G – “Lets go for a little walk.

Frame 11

G – “See the barn? What is on the top?”

B – “A lightning rod.”

Frame 12

G – “What do lightning rods do?”

B – “They attract the lightning to the rod instead of to the barn roof so the barn doesn’t burn down.”

Frame 13

G – “Is that all that would burn?”

B – “I guess not. By looking at it I guess if the barn burned down so would the chicken coop and the hay rack. If they burned it looks like the fire could spread to the fields.”

Frame 14

G – “One strike of lightning could spread a pretty big path of destruction.”

B – “Wow. Once it gets started it could just go and go.”

Frame 15

G – “Yep. That is why we need the lightning rod. To give the lightning a safe, harmless way to let all of that electricity and heat down to the ground where it loses its ability to start a fire.”

Frame 16

B – “I need to be like that.”

G – “Like what?”

Frame 17

B – “Like a lightning rod. I need to take all that heat I feel when Eric starts into me and instead of starting fires everywhere in the school by punching and kicking every one and everything that get in my way, I just let it pass through me to the ground. That way no one would get hurt....not even me. So I wouldn't be in trouble with the principal and mom right now.”

Frame 18

B – “The problem is that lightning strikes unexpectedly. It would be hard to be ready. Eric is unpredictable. I can do one thing and he won't get mad and do the same thing another day and he will. Sometimes he will say something that is only a little mean. Other times he can just keep yelling and yelling and saying awful things. He catches me off guard.”

Frame 19

G – “It is the same with lightning. You can see the clouds roll in and the skies begin to get darker. Sometimes the whole storm rolls over us. Other times we see lightning striking over and over all around us. However, most of the time there are ways to tell that a lightning strike could occur. You can probably tell by the way Eric walks toward you that he is going to say or do something to make you mad.”

Frame 20

B – “Yeah. He doesn't always say mean things to me. But when he has a certain look on his face then I know it is coming. When it does there is nothing for me to do to get out of the way.”
G – “What do you think you can do?”

Frame 21

B – “Well, for starters.....I can think like a lightning rod. I can just stand still and be ready for it. Then when he starts saying mean things or yelling at me I can see myself as a lightning rod and let everything he says just go through me to the ground.”

Frame 22

G – “That is going to be hard. Is there something you can do to remind you of thinking like a lightning rod? When you're upset you don't always think of the best thing to do.”
B – “I think I will practice putting my hand on top of my head when he starts in on me. That will remind me to think like a lightning rod. Lightning rods don't get upset. They don't go looking for lightning so they are not disappointed when it doesn't hit or glad when it does. They just let the electricity pass through them to the ground.”

Frame 23

G – “Be careful doing that. If you move too suddenly he may think you are going to hit him.”
B – “Not if I hold my face still and just look as if I am going to scratch my head.”

Frame 24

G – “Well, it sounds like a plan worth trying. Good luck on that.”

Frame 25

(Eric yelling at Brandon) "I told you to stay away from the swing set. You hog the swings all of the time. You are such an idiot."

Frame 26

(Eric yelling while Brandon has his hand on his head.) "Well, are you going to get away from here? Well?!?!?!?"

Frame 27

(Eric's dad yelling at Eric) "If I have told you once I have told you a thousand times, put the milk away when you are done. Why can't you remember to do one simple thing?!?!?!"

Frame 28

(Eric's dad yelling at Eric while Eric has his hand on his head.) "I can't stand it when you don't do what I tell you. I have to tell you the same thing over and over. You are such an idiot."

Frame 29

(Eric's dad's boss yelling at Eric's dad) "Can't you fix this equipment? What are you good for if you can't fix this machine?"

Frame 30

(Eric's dad's boss yelling at Eric's dad while he has his hand on his head.) "I can't understand why I keep paying you, you are such an idiot!"

Frame 31

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(Picture book format)

Page 1

(Picture of boy angrily kicking rocks as he walks down the dirt road)

B – “I hate that darn Eric! He makes me so mad!”

Page 2

(Grandpa sitting on the front porch of a farmhouse. Brandon picking up a stick and chasing away a dog.)

Grandpa watches Brandon wearily climb the porch steps and remarks, “Looks like you had a bad day at school today Brandon. What happened?”

Brandon could not stop his angry answer. “Eric’s so mean. He started yelling at me in front of everybody and saying it was my fault the swing is broken. He is always saying that everything that happens is my fault. He yells at me to go away, that I never do anything right.”

Page 3

“Isn’t Eric that big kid at school?” Grandpa asked. “He must be a lot older than you are.”

“He is.” Brandon replied. “That’s what makes me so nervous around him. I never know what’s going to start him yelling. I try to stay out of his way but it’s a small playground.

Even when I try to do things right he finds a reason to yell at me.”

Page 4

(Mom comes out on porch.)

Smelling of cut onions Mom comes onto the porch and pointedly asks, “Brandon, any notes from school today?”

Not wanting to speak up, Brandon hems and haws, “Uh....uh...I don’t think so.”

Sighing, Mom responds, “Well think again as the school just called and said you were in the principal’s office for fighting.”

“It is not my fault, Mom. Eric started it.” Brandon cried.

“Brandon”, Mom severely states, “The fight wasn’t with Eric. It was with Jared.”

Page 5

Brandon began to argue, “Well, after Eric was mean to me I was so mad that when Jared walked by and muttered something at me I punched him. Then I was sent to the office....”

Mom interrupted him, “Where you yelled at the secretary and kicked her desk.”

“Mom”, Brandon argued more loudly, “It wasn’t my fault! Eric made me so mad I couldn’t stop myself!”

“Let me get this straight.” Grandpa intervened. “Eric yelled at you. You got mad, punched Jared and kicked the secretary’s desk? Is that what happened?”

“Yeah.” Brandon muttered defiantly.

“Well,” Said Grandpa, “Lets go for a little walk.”

Page 6

They left the porch and began walking across the barnyard. Grandpa asked, “See the barn? What is on the top?”

Dully, Brandon replied, “A lightning rod.”

“Right,” Grandpa responded. “And what do lightning rods do?”

Confused, Brandon began, "Well, they attract the lightning to the rod instead of to the barn roof so the barn doesn't burn down."

Grandpa kept asking, "Is that all that would burn?"

Page 7

Looking intently at the top of the barn and then around the farm Brandon said, "I guess not. By looking at it I guess if the barn burned down so would the chicken coop and the hay rack. If they burned it looks like the fire could spread to the fields."

"Right," Grandpa stated. "One strike of lightning could spread a pretty big path of destruction."

Brandon was impressed with the thought. "Wow. Once it gets started it could just go and go."

"Yep." Grandpa said slowly. "That is why we need the lightning rod. To give the lightning a safe, harmless way to let all of that electricity and heat down to the ground where it loses its ability to start a fire."

Page 8

Brandon stood absorbed in thought then slowly said, "I need to be like that."

"Like what?" Grandpa asked.

"Like a lightning rod." Brandon answered. "I need to take all that heat I feel when Eric starts into me and instead of starting fires everywhere in the school by punching and kicking every one and everything that get in my way, I just let it pass through me to the ground. That way no one would get hurt....not even me. So I wouldn't be in trouble with the principal and mom right now."

"The problem is that lightning strikes unexpectedly," Brandon continued. "It would be hard to be ready. Eric is unpredictable. I can do one thing and he won't get mad and do the same thing another day and he will. Sometimes he will say something that is only a little mean. Other times he can just keep yelling and yelling and saying awful things. He catches me off guard."

Page 9

"It is the same with lightning," Grandpa offered. "You can see the clouds roll in and the skies begin to get darker. Sometimes the whole storm rolls over us. Other times we see lightning striking over and over all around us. However, most of the time there are ways to tell that a lightning strike could occur. You can probably tell by the way Eric walks toward you that he is going to say or do something to make you mad."

Brandon jumped in, "Oh, yeah. He doesn't always say mean things to me. But when he has a certain look on his face then I know it is coming. When it does there is nothing for me to do to get out of the way."

Stopping in his tracks Grandpa said, "This is going to be a problem. What do you think you can do?"

"Well, for starters...." Brandon hesitated in answering. "I can think like a lightning rod. I can just stand still and be ready for it. Then when he starts saying mean things or yelling at me I can see myself as a lightning rod and let everything he says just go through me to the ground."

Page 10

Grandpa suggested, "That is going to be hard. Is there something you can do to remind you of thinking like a lightning rod? When you're upset you don't always think of the best thing to do."

“You’re right, Grandpa,” Brandon said. “I think I will practice putting my hand on top of my head when he starts in on me. That will remind me to think like a lightning rod. Lightning rods don’t get upset. They don’t go looking for lightning so they are not disappointed when it doesn’t hit or glad when it does. They just let the electricity pass through them to the ground.”

“Be careful doing that, Brandon,” Grandpa quickly responded. “If you move too suddenly he may think you are going to hit him.”

Brandon thought for a minute. “Not if I hold my face still and just look as if I am going to scratch my head.”

“Well, Brandon, it sounds like a plan worth trying,” Grandpa said. “Good luck on that.”

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