“Daddy, why are you an idiot?”
That came out of our son James’ mouth as we drove down the road Monday afternoon.
My husband Jason raised his eyebrow and looked over at me in the passenger seat.
“I’m not an idiot,” Jason responded. “Why would you say that?”
“Well, Momma said you were,” James said.
I had good reason to say that during our little afternoon drive. Earlier, we had left the house with smiling children, a clean truck and a happy attitude.
We were now riding down Fletcher’s Chapel Road with concerned children, a muddy truck that was now making noises and a mother with a snappy attitude.
Jason wanted to check on something on his uncle’s land that afternoon. Thinking I could unload some garbage and pay a visit to some people, I suggested that we all load up in the truck and take off on a little excursion.
The weather was perfect. Birds were chirping. The sun was shining.
Our daughter Elsie was in good spirits for an outing. James grabbed a toy to take along for the ride. Jason was in a good mood because he got a lot accomplished at work that day. And I was just excited to take advantage of a nice day.
And then it dawned on me right before we approached the entrance of our uncle’s land.
“You know, it’s rained a lot over the past few days,” I said. “You don’t think it’s too muddy in that field for my truck.”
Before Jason could answer, he took a hard right turn onto the land.
“I’ve got this under control,” Jason said.
The next thing you know, I heard my tires spinning against slippery mud. Jason’s was steering violently as the truck slid down the hill.
Our afternoon drive had transformed into a wild water ride similar to those at Disney World.
“We’re sliding,” Jason said, applying the brake.
And there was a small ditch right in front of us. I felt like Thelma and Louise about to go over the edge.
Almost turning sideways, the truck finally came to a stop. The ditch was only a few feet away.
And like most men, Jason tried to get the truck out of the mud pit that had been created.
It was no use. We were stuck.
“Are you serious,” I asked, snatching my sunglasses off. “Didn’t I tell you it would be muddy? You just had to come on in.”
“Now, settle down,” Jason said. “There is no sense in getting hysterical. You’re scaring the children.”

I'm scaring the children? He takes us on a nosedive into a mud pit and sends us sliding down a hill, but I am the one who is scaring the children?
"Fix it," I said, slamming the truck door.
Jason then takes off walking to his mother's house a mile down the road to get the four-wheel drive truck to pull us out of our situation.
Grabbing baby Elsie and getting James out of the truck, we make our way across the pasture to his aunt's house. I see her car in the driveway, and I figured the kids could sit in her house while we got my truck out.
Stomping through mud, James fell down in a few puddles along the way. We had to cross a barbed wire fence. And then the family dog jumped on us to greet us. The whole time, I am carrying a 20-pound baby on one hip with a four-year-old clinging to my other one.
Knocking on the door, I took a sigh of relief.
But there was no answer. She wasn't at home.
Turning around, we made our way back through the obstacle course to get back to the truck. The whole time, I am ranting and raving. I think it was about this time that I did call Jason an idiot.
Jason finally came back to us in the big truck. Hooking up the back of my truck, we tried unsuccessfully to get my truck out of the trap.
Both kids began to cry as the yanking of our truck echoed through the wind.
"We're gonna be stuck here forever," James cried, with his eyes closed and his head held back.

Hearing his children in an emotional state must have done something to Jason.
He quickly unhooked the chain, told me to step aside and got inside my truck to get us out of this mess.
Jason somehow got the truck out of the mudhole, but he had to speed through the field at a high rate of speed to make it back to the main road. It looked like the Little Yazoo Dirt Races in that pasture when he was done.
I guess he expected me to run into arms and call him my hero because he got out of my truck with a grin from ear to ear.
I pushed past him, said a few choice words and got in my truck. There was mud everywhere.
Our afternoon outing was over. Taking the farm truck back to his Momma's house, we headed back home. I didn't even have to ask, but Jason began washing my truck immediately.
It took me a couple of hours to blow my steam off. But I eventually settled down.
We even heard from our aunt later that evening.
"Yeah, I thought I would go down to the pond and relax," she said. "And then I kept hearing all these loud noises."
That something was a Ford Explorer barrelling through a mud course, a wife venting at her husband, a husband trying to calm everybody down, and two children crying.
Jason explained to his aunt what had happened. She even got a laugh out of it.
"Jamie still hasn't gotten adjusted to the Patterson lifestyle," I heard Jason say in the other room.
I just rolled my eyes and popped a headache pill.
I do realize how they do things...I just don't understand it.