

A parable of marriage

by [Steve Wilson](#) in the [August 21, 2007](#) issue

Disregarding the heat, we settled down to it:
clearing a path through the elmwood and oak.
It's slow going—an all-day job. Stones fat

as watermelons. Quick, gray blades of limestone
layered into the ground a foot or more.
We rooted them out with crowbars, a shovel,

or dug them free by hand, then tossed
the rocks into a wheelbarrow. Tomorrow,
they'll be put to use: load by load we'll haul them

up the hill for a border, follow
our new trail straight on to the high west
pasture. Where late in the day sun breaks

against shade, burns whitest fronting the treeline
of the woods—light upon shadow—we
stopped work for the night. Passing you

the last drink of water from the canteen,
I nodded toward home, and we traced the way
back down in silence, the only sounds

a locust, the snap of twigs, our workboots
scraping over rock shards and dust.
We kept close to ourselves, listening.