

The Need To Argue

Increasing tension building under his skin until it bursts—like a volcano—fierce heat under the surface, earth tremors, erupting in an outpouring of fiery lava, smoke filling the air, rising dark into the sky, obscuring the clouds until he cannot not see the sun.

Ethan never found release in the fiery outbursts (though they *were* exhilarating in the moment.) Dark clouds then hung over him, painful, powered by regret, trying to figure out how to repair the damage, resolve his guilt. He did get angrier than most people, frustrated at his difficulty in finding satisfaction in his job. He was angrier with himself than anyone else. For Ethan, it was an endless, awful cycle.

It was his problem to solve. And, given he felt his current life was impossible, Ethan became determined to solve it. So, over two years, utilizing his unused skills as a talented neurobiophysicist (he worked as a lab tech, often arguing with lab colleagues) Ethan created a unique device. It would eliminate anger and arguments. He had ongoing faith in technology to solve problems. Then came his moment of decision.

Should he use the device on himself, to control his anger?

Or should he use it on his colleagues?

He set it for them. Ethan knew it was revenge—a result of arguing (more reason to use the device, though more guilt.) Yet, despite his guilt, after he pushed the red button life in the lab was sweet. Ethan no longer suffered through arguments but had decent discussions instead. He was thrilled. He then applied the device to everyone around him. Living rooms were far more peaceful but Ethan was no longer thrilled. Life was now placid—no anger, no questioning anything. No progress. Ethan was shocked as he watched his friends and colleagues wilt. Denied anger they were like flowers denied the sun.

Ethan desperately tried to reverse the effect. The device refused. Unable to change the programming, Ethan was troubled. Nothing was getting done, his lab's research was stagnant, everyone was without purpose. He had always seen anger as destructive. Now he realized it was elemental, driving people forward. It was peaceful but at a cost. Was it worth it?

Ethan had quite the argument with himself about it.