

**LEARNING TO LEAD**  
**by Aardvark**  
[linktr.ee/aardvarkia](https://linktr.ee/aardvarkia)

The email came in at 7pm on Sunday evening.

*Dear Bowen Carpenter (Student #810381),*

*We hope this email finds you well and looking forward to the upcoming week.*

*At Brookside High, we pride ourselves on instilling our students with leadership qualities. In this pursuit, be advised that you will be helping teach United States History tomorrow.*

*Though this may feel like a major change, we are confident it will come naturally to you.*

*Invenire realis vobis,  
Brookside High School*

Bowen initially skimmed the email and forgot all about it until bed, when he noticed it again on his phone. He wondered what it meant. It couldn't be that big a deal considering they'd given him almost no notice. At least he liked history and was good at it, so he wouldn't look stupid, but he'd definitely get made fun of. Not that that was anything new.

He popped in his retainers and rolled onto his side, thinking about the last time he'd been mocked in history class. It was for answering all the questions, like he always did. Wasn't his fault no one else raised their hand fast enough. A naturally competitive featherweight had to find outlets other than sports; Bowen's was imparting his knowledge as quickly as he could. If he was helping the teacher, it'd be interesting to see who else in his class was willing to speak up. Who was the second smartest? Bowen wondered this as he drifted off to sleep.

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Bowen forgot about the email by the time he woke up the next morning. He had a weird dream about Quiz Bowl where the prize was a bundle of cartoon dynamite, and he still had to do a double-check for any typos on his English paper. He always set his alarm as late as he possibly could, so between proofreading and eating his two daily Pop-Tarts, he didn't give a thought to American History. It wasn't until he walked in through the office and the secretary told him to report to the history classroom that Bowen remembered.

"I don't have it until fifth hour," he said, but she insisted he go. Bowen's heartbeat accelerated as he walked to the classroom. He didn't know whether he was already excused from his first hour class or if he needed to tell the teacher himself, and he didn't get why Brookside was so dead set on him helping out with history today.

All the rooms had signs on their door with the class times and school seal. Bowen stopped and read the one at the history classroom before he walked in.

## **AMERICAN HISTORY**

### **Mr. Bowen Carpenter**

Bowen took a picture to post later and walked inside expecting to see the teacher and get his marching orders. He figured he'd be helping grade papers or something. But then the bell rang, and the room began to fill with freshmen, and still no adult walked in. The whole class was chattering as the late bell chimed, the last stragglers sneaked in, and Bowen remained glued behind the desk, staring hopefully at the door.

"Scuse me..." he said, drowned out by the din of the freshmen. He didn't have a loud voice, nor did he ever need to raise it. "Scuse..."

From the second row, a big guy Bowen had never seen before bellowed "QUIET!" The room immediately hushed. "There you go," he said to Bowen.

"Thanks, Alex," Bowen said sheepishly. Alex...he must've seen the guy at some point, even though he couldn't place him. But his name was definitely Alex, and he seemed to be the token loud kid in every class.

"Thought you could use the help," Alex said, before taking a swig from a gallon jug of water he'd placed on the floor next to his desk.

Bowen nodded, ignoring the water, which puzzled him. "Uh, hey, I'm Bowen..." He said, doing his best to broadcast his voice over the class. "I was just asked to help out today but the teacher isn't here, so I don't really know what to do. What were you guys working on, or reading..." He looked around, but no one said anything. Apparently this hour was just like Bowen's own class: lazy. "...is anything due?"

One girl in the front shook her head no.

"Maybe we can just like, watch something." Bowen rummaged under the desk, through papers and folders, and finally found a DVD of Ken Burns' Civil War series. "I'll just put this on and you guys can do whatever long as I don't get in trouble."

The class was pretty well behaved, to Bowen's relief. It dawned on him midway through that he had no idea how to send people to the office if they were misbehaving...was there, like, a form he had to fill out or something? A few kids in the back whispered to each other throughout the documentary, and most of the kids were working on homework instead of watching, but as long as no fistfights broke out Bowen was calling it a win.

The next two hours went surprisingly fine as well. Bowen dealt with a lot of questions about why he was running the class, but once he answered honestly - "No freaking clue" - his peers

seemed to be on his side and didn't want to cause him more grief. Plus, no one was going to complain about watching stuff.

If there was one thing Bowen learned, it was how much teachers had to talk in a day. He'd never given it a thought. His voice was already fried by lunch, and his meal of chicken tenders, fruit salad, and two cartons of milk didn't help his throat. By fourth hour, he was taking a drink of water each time he had to saying something.

"Dude, you sound like Shredder from TMNT," his friend Levi said after fifth hour.

"I do not," Bowen said reactively, but when he heard the words gurgle out of his chest, he had to admit, "Okay, maybe I kind of do. I feel like I have gravel in my throat."

"It's dumb you had to run class. Is the school so broke that they're making the kids teach?" Levi snarked. "I was going to ask a question but I guess I won't."

Bowen crossed his arms and stood up to his full five-foot-five, mocking a grown-up posture. "What's your question, kid?" he asked, pitching his raspy voice as low as it could go.

Levi laughed. "Don't make fun of me, but I couldn't sleep last night so I watched YouTube for like seven hours and I wanted to know if the moon landing was faked. Or if there's a chance it was."

"Definitely," Bowen said, arms still crossed. "Government lies about everything right?"

"That answer already makes you the coolest teacher in school," Levi said.

Bowen made a face. "I'm not a teacher. Today sucked. I just wanna go home and watch 'Picard' until I forget all about this crap." He unzipped his hoodie and stuffed it into his backpack, revealing a t-shirt underneath that bore a picture of Patrick Star and the words 'You Do Care.' "Thanks for not making fun of me today. I'm sure everyone else is gonna."

"Um, no, it's cool." Levi said. "I WANT to be a teacher, so you're basically living my dream. Wait... 'Picard'! It's good but it's so slow, and I can't believe they killed the hottest--"

Bowen covered his ears and 'la la la la'ed loudly. "I said I was GOING to watch it! No spoilers!"

"You haven't watched it at all?!" Levi's nasal voice escalated into a screech that nearly made Bowen cover his ears again. "That's why you said you couldn't come over for DnD last time!"

"It WAS, and then the password didn't work and I got in trouble for swearing, remember?" Bowen slung his backpack over his shoulder. "I'll watch tonight and we can talk about it during lunch tomorrow."

But Bowen didn't watch that night. He meant to, but he got distracted when he sat down at the TV and absentmindedly scrolled through the channel listings instead of logging into the streaming service. Before he realized he was in the wrong menu, he saw something that sent a surge of excitement through him: ESPN Classic, Eagles vs. 49ers, September 1989. Bowen scooted all the way forward to the edge of the couch and turned the game on, invested in every play as if it were happening live. He knew Montana scored four TDs in the last minutes of the game, but getting to that point was half the fun. Plus, he'd never watched a football game in his life, so it was good to start with one of the great ones. He got so wrapped up that the game ending felt like a spell being broken. He had to watch more football. He dug deep into the DVR and found another epic game, this time college, the Iron Bowl where Auburn won with no time on the clock. Bowen started from the beginning. He missed dinner for the game - only taking one break to piss - and totally forgot about his homework. Football mattered more. It mattered so much that Bowen took leave of his senses, and when Chris Davis ran the football back the length of the field to win the game, Bowen was up on his feet bellowing "FUCK YEAH!" and "FUCK YOU, BAMA!"

He was immediately punished for swearing and was sent to bed early. As he crawled under the covers, marveling that he'd somehow spent six hours watching a sport he didn't care about, he checked his phone. Levi was texting him about someone named Picard, and there was an email from the school...

*Dear Boen Carpenter (Student #810381),*

*We hope today's classes were invigorating and challenging for you. The feedback has been positive!*

*For your classes tomorrow, please dress according to the staff code of conduct. This will set an example for your fellow students and encourage them to treat you with respect. Male teachers are required to wear a collared shirt and long pants.*

*Invenire realis vobis,  
Brookside High School*

Boen's brow furrowed. They wanted him to run class again tomorrow? Maybe his parents could get him out of it this time...but he couldn't go back downstairs tonight. He'd ask in the morning. Instead, he got up and walked to his closet, flicking through all the hanging sweatshirts in hopes he'd find something suitable to wear. He owned one suit, which he'd got for his cousin's wedding, but there was no way he was wearing that to school. The shirt and pants would look fine though, so at least he had something and could rest easy. It made him feel a little better as he hopped back into bed.

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“UNNNGHHH...”

Boen moaned himself awake and shot upright. What in the...what was he dreaming about? He couldn't remember, but he was hard as a rock down there. He fondled himself for a bit before checking the time: twenty minutes earlier than his alarm, but that was fine, he'd just have a bigger breakfast. He was starving anyway. Even after six eggs and two waffles, he was still a little hungry, but he had to shower and get dressed.

His heart leapt when he saw wispy peach fuzz above his upper lip as he brushed his teeth. He'd never grown anything before! It looked terrible, and was so fine that it shaved off dry without leaving a burn, but it was still new and exciting. His nipples looked kind of big too - usually they were small, like dimes, but today they were more like quarters. Boen chortled at himself for being so self-conscious that he was obsessing over something unimportant like his nipple size, but it stuck in his mind as he walked to his room to get dressed. They'd been learning in health class about...what was it called...secondary sex characteristics. Basically, visible things that showed that you were fully grown and could attract mates. Like a lion's mane. Boen thought of himself as being pretty grown up - he was in high school, after all - but as he looked over his smooth, bony frame, he wondered if he wasn't there yet.

He'd already grabbed a hoodie from his closet when he remembered he was supposed to dress nicer, so he hung it back up with a sigh and reached for the shirt he'd worn to his cousin's wedding. But right behind it was a shirt he didn't remember having; a polo, bright white and collared, but less formal than a dress shirt. It was made of athletic material, silky and comfortable, with an Under Armour logo on the left breast. Boen checked the size: Medium, a bit too big, but the polo had enough tailoring to not just hang on him like a sack.

Right behind the polo shirt hung a pair of tan dress pants which Boen also didn't recognize. They were 28x30, so the legs were a little long when he put them on, but he was happy to have found middle ground between jeans and suit pants. When he sized himself up in the mirror, he looked like he was wearing his dad's golf gear. He smoothed down the front, hoping to minimize the protrusion of his nipples, but they still poked out and lifted the fabric. Oh well.

It wasn't until the bell had rung and the classroom was filling up with freshmen that Boen remembered he'd meant to contest being assigned to teach another day. He didn't want to be doing any of this, he was a student! But he'd totally forgotten overnight, and on the drive over he'd been listening to sports talk radio about the NFL preseason. He'd even parked in the teacher's lot without thinking. Shoot, hopefully they didn't tow his car...

“Alright, settle down everyone,” Boen said, ending the sentence with an abrupt, loud cough. It was the first time he'd spoken that morning, and he'd once again forgotten how messed up his voice got yesterday. Turned out it was still messed up. Deep and raspy, though it thankfully didn't hurt to speak. Just sounded funny. He kept talking just to hear how it sounded, and found

himself lecturing about the Civil War...he'd liked studying this stuff when he was a freshman, so it was fun to realize how much he'd retained. And if he placed his voice lower in his chest, he noticed the kids listened more closely, because his bass was so low it was a little hard to hear. Whenever he caught a student's attention wandering, he'd bark a question at them, playing up the natural harshness of his voice. Once he did it a couple times, no one else tried to sneak a text for the rest of class. It really got the kids in line, so he employed the tactic again in his second and third hours.

Lunchtime dinged Boen's growing confidence. He couldn't find a place to sit. Kids avoided eye contact as he passed by, and the DnD table grew so visibly nervous at his approach that he kept walking and pretended it wasn't where he'd been headed. He finally sat down alone at a small corner table, digging sadly into one of the four main dishes he'd bought. He was really hungry today.

A shadow cast over his tray, and he looked up to see..."Levi?"

"I was looking at you but you walked right past me!" Levi grinned.

"I didn't recognize...why are you wearing a wig?"

"A wig?" Levi shook his shoulder-length blond hair and giggled as he plopped down across from Boen. "I'm not wearin' a wig!"

"Yeah you are. Your hair's short. I'm the one with longer hair." Boen ran his fingers through his chin-length shag.

"Uh, no, my hair's always been long." Truth be told, it was an impressive look for Levi. His hair was shiny and thick, something out of a shampoo commercial. The wavy tendrils looked fresh from the surf, spilling perfectly over one side of his forehead. It reminded Boen of a lion's mane. The issue was that Levi was pale and small, and his impressive head of hair swallowed him up.

Boen didn't want to argue. "Looks good," he grunted, tearing into a hamburger.

"You in a bad mood today?"

"Nah. Feelings are kinda hurt, I guess. No one wanted to sit with me."

"Yeah, well, you're inta...enta...what's that word? Intama..."

"Intimidating?"

"Yeah! You're intimidating sometimes."

“Me?” Boen snorted. “No one’s scared of me. They avoid me cause I’m a nerd. Not like you, pretty boy.”

Levi grinned and repeated his airy laugh, a sound Boen never heard him make before today. It was almost like a hiccup. “I’m a nerd too,” he said. “You teachin’ later today?”

“Yeah. I’ve been lecturing today. Can’t you hear it in my voice?” At the mention of it, Boen cleared his throat and drank some water.

“I wasn’t gonna say anything, but yeah, you sound like Saruman.”

Boen didn’t know who that was. Probably something nerdy he was supposed to know. Nerdy... “Aw man, I forgot to watch...shit, what was that show called? The one we were talking about yesterday...”

Levi’s stupid laugh bubbled out of him. “I’ve never heard you swear before!”

That comment prompted the anecdote from Boen about being sent to bed early, which devolved into a bitching session about their parents instead of ‘Picard.’ Then they stuffed their faces more, and Boen realized he needed to go back to his classroom to prep for his next hour. “See you in fifth, Levin?”

“For sure!” Levin grinned, extending his fist for Boen to bump. “You keep teachin’ and I’m gonna have to start calling you Mr. Carpenter!”

“Heh. I like that,” Boen said. “‘Mr. Carpenter.’ Heh.”

Fourth hour went well, but fifth started with one of the students coming in and snarking, “Jeez Boen, you cold?”

Having already been self-conscious about his nipples throughout the day, this was enough to put Boen over the edge. He drew himself up to his full five-foot-seven and put his hands on his hips. “That’s Mr. Carpenter to you, and no, I am not. Are you? Should I call maintenance, get the thermostat checked? Maybe send you home to your mommy?”

“No, sir,” the kid said, chastened as he sat down. Boen couldn’t believe he’d successfully told someone off. That had never happened before, and it was so effortless! It felt so weird that all his peers were going along with him lecturing, but he wasn’t going to question it. And it was hilarious to hear people his own age calling him Mr. Carpenter.

He was relieved to get home, though he had a nagging feeling that he was forgetting about something important after school. It made him uneasy, but no one called him, so he tried to put it out of his mind as he ran his errands. He bought groceries - it shocked him how expensive they



were - and took them home, then changed into his workout clothes and headed to the gym for back and biceps. He'd never worked out at the gym - or at all - before, but guys he didn't recognize kept saying hi to him. Big guys, some twice his size, tall and jacked, acting like they were buddies. Boen didn't know anyone like these guys, and he was confused why so many of them thought they knew him. There must've been another short, skinny guy who worked out there a lot.

Even though it was mistaken, the social interaction still made Boen feel good, especially after the kids at school avoided him. Everyone was super friendly at this gym, encouraging him to lift more, telling him he looked good. He'd definitely be back. The lift even brought back the peach fuzz above his lip, which he grinned at for his drive home.

The evening sped by. He made himself a dinner of steak and potatoes, watched another football game on ESPN Classic, and did some lesson plans. When he realized he hadn't checked his phone in hours, he grabbed it, and the top email got his attention:

*Dear Mr. Blen Carpenter,*

*Thank you for your contribution to Brookside and your willingness to adhere to the staff dress code. Be sure to iron and press your clothes tomorrow, and also refer to page 3 for guidelines on men's hair.*

*Per the same code, be advised that teachers should not be having lunch with their students as it sets a bad precedent. Feel free to use the teachers lounge if you would like a change of scenery from your classroom.*

*We continue to be impressed by your ability to adapt quickly. Don't be afraid to change further if necessary.*

*Invenire realis vobis,  
Brookside High School*

Blen frowned. He couldn't have lunch with his friends? That was unfair. He wasn't even being paid to help out with class, and now they were isolating him even more from his peers. He also didn't think he had another shirt he could wear tomorrow, but that was the school's problem for not giving him any notice, and if they gave him trouble about it he'd push back.

He wanted to play video games, but he was beat, so he did the dishes and headed up to bed. He made sure to whisk off the baby hairs around his mouth before he brushed his teeth and went to sleep.

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“Mmmmmmgggg...” He woke up hornier than ever, blankets tenting over his erection. He fondled himself for a bit before checking the time: forty-five minutes earlier than his alarm, but that was fine, he’d just have a bigger breakfast. He was starving anyway. Even after an entire carton of egg whites and a heaping bowl of oatmeal with berries, he was still a little hungry, but he had to shower and get dressed.

“Whoa.” The peach fuzz was back, but it wasn’t so fuzzy anymore, and there was more of it. The hairs poked back against his fingers, wiry bristles that reminded him of a toothbrush. There was a patch on his chin, too, and when he tried to shave it off with only water, it hurt. Blen coated his face with far more shaving cream than was needed, but it excited him that he needed it. He had a few dark hairs around his nipples too, but he was unsure about shaving that area because the skin was so sensitive, so he left it.

He remembered the previous night’s email just as he opened his closet. When had he gotten so many polos? There were at least ten hanging in there, all Under Armour, along with a bunch of dress khakis. His mom had to have bought him this stuff since he didn’t even like wearing polo shirts. At least he had some on hand for this week.

Blen selected a vibrant red polo and took it to the laundry room to press it. He was cautious with the iron since he’d never used one before, but it got the wrinkles out admirably, and he had to admit it looked way better than the wrinkly shirt he’d worn yesterday. Blen checked the size: Large, a bit too big, though when he put it on it fit him surprisingly well. He wore it while he ironed his pants, then checked their size. 30x31. Just right. Blen slid them on his legs and tucked his polo in, belting the pants tightly so they’d hold the shirt taut and keep it from wrinkling. “Lookin’ good,” he rumbled at himself in the mirror, ignoring that his nipples were protruding even more aggressively than the day prior.

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“Morning, Mr. Carver!” Alex the big freshman said as he walked into class, toting his big plastic gallon of water. Blen almost corrected him, but noticed the sign on the door did indeed say ‘AMERICAN HISTORY, Mr. Blen Carver,’ so he let it slide.

“Morning, Alexander,” he said with a small smile. “Staying hydrated?”

“Sure am!” Alex took a swig of his jug as he sat down.

“Good boy.” Probably a football thing, drinking all that water. Blen knew Alex was on the team, and of course the guys worked out so much, it was essential to replenish their fluids. “You do your reading for today?”

The look on Alex’s face was enough to tell Blen that, no, he had not done the reading. Blen just chuckled and went back to greeting the rest of the students as they walked in.

“Good morning, everyone,” he said to the class.

The response was a pathetically low muffle of voices.

“NOPE,” Blen bellowed, making the two students closest to him jump. “We’re gonna try that again. Good morning, everyone!”

“Good morning, Mr. Carver!”

“Muuuuch better. I hope you all are awake this morning. I lectured so much yesterday that it changed my voice,” he chuckled, clearing his throat. “So today, I’d like to have a conversation about the reading, and then we’ll huddle up in small groups for a quick project.”

Getting the kids to talk about the reading was like pulling teeth, but Blen was determined to make these little freshmen think. He was really beginning to enjoy teaching. It brought out new parts of his personality and forced him to be confident, because no one else was going to lead if he didn’t. He felt almost grateful for this odd assignment of running history class, though the sheer confusion it generated was enough to make him partially resent it.

The resentment grew as he sat alone in his classroom at lunch, eating a chicken sandwich he’d made the night before. Everyone else got a break to hang out with their friends, while he was singled out and forced to act like a teacher even though he wasn’t one. It wasn’t fair. “This is a bunch of bullshit,” he growled between bites, enjoying the resonant depth of his voice. He wiped his mouth with a napkin he found in his desk, and the sandpaper skritch that resulted made him pause. He brushed his fingers over his lips and felt bristly barbs poking out of his skin - not only in his moustache area, but also his chin and the sides of his mouth. Did facial hair really grow that fast? And could it really turn from peach fuzz to fully formed whiskers in a day? It was a question that gnawed at him as he taught the rest of the day, and he intermittently checked his face throughout classes, finding more five o’clock shadow on his cheeks and jaw every time.

It was the first thing Levin mentioned after class when he saw Blen. “Damn Mr. Carver, you’re turning into a man right in front of me!” he teased, punctuating it with his hiccup-giggle.

“It’s growing really fast, I can’t figure it...out...” Blen looked at Levin. “And you...what’d you do, spray paint yourself gold?”

Levin’s smile was blindingly white against his rich tan. His long blond hair made a glowing halo around his angelic face. “Nah, I was just outside a lot yesterday! Guess I caught some sun. Where were you?”

“Where was I?”

“Yeah, during practice.”

“Practice for what?”

“Football, bro!” Levin laughed.

“You play football?”

“Uh, DUH. Earth to Mr. Carver? You should come today to see me, I’m good!”

“I’m sure you are. I’ll...I’ll swing by.”

“Cool man! Hey, I didn’t mean to make you like...self-conscience about the face fuzz. It looks good. Is that the right word? Self-conscience?”

“‘Self-conscious’, Lavin.” Blen smiled at the boy’s earnestness.

“Right, that! Funny you said it’s growing really fast ‘cause I was thinking the same thing about myself today.” Lavin leaned forward and lowered his voice. “My muscles are kinda, like...growing.”

“Well, that happens with boys your age. Our age.”

“Yeah, but like, in a day? I sweeeeeaaarr my shoulders widened while I was sleeping.” Lavin shrugged them, and Blen agreed, they did look broader. “But oh well! Not complaining. Honestly I hope it keeps up.” He slung his backpack over his shoulder, bicep flexing big enough to fill his sleeve.

“See you at practice?”

“See you there.”

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Blen spent his drive to the barbershop thinking about the football practice he’d just left. It felt like an out-of-body experience. He’d only planned to swing by quickly to support his little nerdy buddy Lavin, but the moment he’d walked over the hill to the practice fields, he was mobbed by football players he didn’t know, asking him questions he didn’t understand. He’d needed to yell at them just to get them in line and calm them down, like they were a bunch of fucking puppies.

If they were puppies, Lavin was the golden retriever, bounding happily up and down the field catching footballs and bringing them back, just like a dog with a frisbee. He was constantly stealing looks over at Blen to make sure he was watching, and to get the nod of approval he so

desperately wanted. Blen didn't know why Lavin suddenly cared about his feedback so much - Lavin always picked fights over the dumbest, nerdiest stuff - but now, every word Blen said was law. When he'd walked over after practice and clapped the young man on the shoulder pads, giving him a "good job today, Layin, real good job," Layin practically collapsed with excitement.

Blen had needed to reach up to pat Layin. He always thought of Layin as being small...he could even remember his friend getting teased for it a lot. But he was not small anymore, not by a long shot. Blen was once taller than Layin, but now he was five-nine while Layin was at least six-one, maybe taller, and likely to grow more. His long legs shot him down the field like a gazelle, long hair trailing behind him. Blen was proud of him. It was gratifying to see a nervous, dorky kid grow into a handsome and confident young man.

Maybe he too would feel more handsome and confident after this damn haircut, Blen thought, looking at his long black hair. He liked when it was a length he could tuck behind his ears or part to the side, so he didn't have any desire to cut it, but between all the strands spilling into his eyes and the stubble that had grown in thick and gritty, he had to admit he looked unkempt. Time to tidy up and set an example.

"Well well well, look who it is!" the barber, who Blen didn't think he'd ever met before, said as Blen walked in. "My celebrity client!"

"How ya doin'," Blen rumbled, voice even rougher from all the yelling at practice.

"Looks like you haven't had a haircut in a while. Haven't seen you with a beard before either!"

"Um...same, actually," Blen chuckled, running his fingers over the whiskers. "I want to shave it."

"We'll get to that. Sit down, sit down," the barber said, ignoring another man in the reception area who'd been waiting already. "What're we doing today?"

Blen stared at himself in the mirror, still stroking his hairy chin. He couldn't believe that was him. He looked so different...didn't he? "Well, I'm teaching at Brookside this week, so they told me my hair needs to be within dress code. I dunno what that means, but I assume you do."

"Sure thing. We'll do the usual then."

The haircut started off with football chatter, which Blen didn't believe to be his best subject, but he'd consumed enough ESPN and sports radio over the previous days to fake it. Eventually, the conversation wilted as the barber focused on the haircut and Blen zoned out and tried to relax. Aside from lunch and the car, it was the first time he'd sat down all day, and it emphasized how tired he was. Teachers worked damn hard. He'd never appreciated it before...

"Whoops, don't nod off on me."

Blen's chin had dipped. "Sorry," he mumbled. "Really tired."

"Those kids running you ragged?"

"Totally ragged. Good kids, real good kids. Just a lot of 'em," Blen chuckled. "Nice to talk to another adult for a bit." He felt the clippers run across his scalp like a lawnmower, and it dawned on him if he could feel them, he was about to have short hair. His stomach flipped, but he kept composed. Hair grew back, he told himself.

"And you want to take the beard off?"

"Yes, please, the usual."

The barber changed the clipper guard before starting work on Blen's facial hair. Blen felt immediately better knowing his face was going to be smooth and familiar again. It had been weird having a beard - it didn't belong on him.

"Please don't move," the barber cautioned, running a straight razor against the foam on Blen's cheek. He stood between Blen and the mirror, brow furrowed as he swiped the instrument back and forth. And then after a towel, some aftershave, and a little gel, he stepped away.

Blen stared at himself in surprise. The haircut made him look so different. His black hair was tightly cropped against his head - half-inch on top, sides fading to skin - bringing attention to his features instead of hiding them. His eyebrows were straighter and bushier than he remembered, and instead of the smooth jaw he expected, he sported an expertly shaped goatee. It was a box around his mouth, with a mustache running down both sides of his lips to meet the square patch of whiskers on his chin and create an unbroken circle of hair. Blen looked at it, touched it, and loved it immediately. "It looks...lighter!"

"Yes, it usually does when it's short for the first time in a while."

Blen kept glancing at his hair in the rearview mirror on his drive home. The sunset breaking through his windows showed his short follicles as chocolate brown. His goatee was still black, as were his eyebrows. And by the time he was home and preparing his nightly steak, his hair was the color of caramel. It didn't worry him, but it was a curious occurrence. Every time he felt a pang of worry, he'd touch his goatee and let the bristles poke his fingers. He loved it. Made him feel like such a man, and men kept calm.

There was no ESPN tonight. After running through his lesson plans for the next day and setting his alarm for - ugh - 5:30am so he'd be on time for freshman football practice, Blen checked his email as the last stop before bed.

*Dear Mr. Blen Savage,*

*Your progress this week has been impressive to say the least. We truly hope you are enjoying your new role.*

*Remember to embody the academic and social ideals of Brookside High School at all times. Among these, one of the most important attributes is school spirit. When a student sees a teacher displaying our signature Brookside Pride, they themselves will feel the same way.*

*You are expected to participate in tomorrow's Pep Rally - please dress in school colors!*

*Invenire realis vobis,  
Brookside High School*

Blen rolled his eyes. He'd always thought school spirit was corny. At least in high school. He understood it a little more in college, because you chose to go there and it was a bigger deal over all, but for high school you got shuffled to whatever school's district you were in, with whatever kids lived around you. What was to get excited about?

As he undressed for bed, Blen noticed the few hairs around his nipples had grown new friends across the base of his chest. His nose wrinkled up as he tugged on two of the black curls, but they were firmly rooted and didn't pull free. He'd shave them tomorrow, he decided as he drifted off to sleep.

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For the first time in days, Blen didn't beat his alarm. The dissonant blare roused him from deep slumber, and his first thought was that it was a mistake and he could go back to sleep. But even though it was still dark outside, it was time to get up. He wanted to beat off but didn't have the time, despite his boner pressing up between his thigh and the mattress. It bobbed out into the open air as he got out of bed and stepped on the shorts he'd kicked off in the night.

"Mmgruh," he groaned, smashing off the alarm. His feet barely left the ground as he lurched to the bathroom for his morning piss. He turned the light on then immediately back off, grunting at how bright it was. Eyes needed to adjust to being awake first, though as he walked past the sink to the toilet, he noticed an odd glow around his head in the dark bathroom.

"Ahhhh." Peeing woke him up ever so slightly, enough to put his weight in his feet and enable him to think clearly. Once done, he flushed and turned on the bathroom light.

Blen's mouth dropped open. What the fu...what had that barber done to him?! His hair was GRAY. He leaned forward, forehead almost to the mirror, looking for signs of dye. But there was none. The color was natural, pure steel with strands of white mixed in. His goatee was

salt-and-pepper, with a fraction more black whiskers than white. And in the night, his chest hair had spread up to his collarbone, silver and white strands mixing in with the black. Blen ran his hands through it and his boner popped back up. "Least it's manly," he mumbled, scratching the wooly pubes that had doubled in number overnight. "Must still be dreamin'..."

After he rinsed off in the shower, he grabbed a pair of clean white briefs and pulled them up his legs, adjusting his bulge to sit in the pouch. Felt bigger than he was used to, but he wasn't gonna complain there. Then he opened his closet - all Under Armour polos from one end to the other, in various color combos, size XL. That was slightly too big for him, but Large was too tight, so he'd make do. As instructed, he selected one with school colors: vivid, bright blue, with a light gray stripe across the base of the chest, and a gray collar. He made sure the tan dress pants he selected were the sight size - 33x32 - and ironed the outfit before he put it on, securing the tight tuck of his shirt with a brown leather belt. He buttoned two of the polo's three buttons so that his chest hair was covered, since he didn't have time to shave it. He was glad the blue fabric hid the shadow underneath - hair could be seen through white polos - though his nipples were as obvious as the buttons.

After his usual breakfast - oatmeal, toast, a protein shake, an entire carton of egg whites, and a cup of coffee - Blen grabbed an apple and refilled his Brookside thermos with the rest of his coffee, then headed to the car. He'd almost forgotten about his gray hair until he saw it in the rearview mirror and flinched all over again. What kind of high schooler had gray hair? And a salt-and-pepper goatee for that matter. Up close, he noticed how much sun he'd gotten at practice the day before - his normally pale skin bore a rich, deep tan. It made his teeth and the whites of his eyes pop, so it was likely making his hair look lighter too. That had to be it. He didn't actually have gray hair, it just LOOKED gray.

He turned on the radio just in time to hear the host saying "-really excited to see what the Brookside team has in store for this year-" and Blen whooped, "Brookside Pride!" as he backed out of the driveway for the short drive to school. He'd never thought about it, but he was lucky to work...to GO to a school like Brookside. Well-funded, nice neighborhood, good kids, good staff. Excellent sports teams and arts programs, too. He reminded himself to tap into that feeling later in the day when he was at the pep rally. Why did they keep making him help with shit? He just wanted to do his homework and prepare for Quiz Bowl, and here they had him teaching and coaching. For the pep rally, he reasoned they wanted to include him because of his voice, which was the deepest and most resonant in the school - a point of pride for him. But Blen really hoped they weren't going to make him speak.

His nerves got pushed to the back of his mind when Layin flagged him down on the walk into school. "Hey Coach!"

"How are you this morning, Layn?" Blen asked, holding the door for the kid.



"I'm good! Woke up excited for the pep rally!" Layn did a goofy little dance through the open door and into school. He was dressed different from his usual style: a bright pink polo shirt and white shorts, like he was getting off a boat in Nantucket.

"I'm glad," Blen smiled, about to clap his friend on the shoulder before remembering if he was teaching, he probably shouldn't touch students. "Did you get your assignment done for my class?"

"I sure did!" Layn said with a smile that didn't quite reach his eyes.

Blen chuckled. Kid was probably trying to remember which assignment was even being talked about. "Hey, Layn, let me ask you something," Blen said, scratching his goatee. "Do I seem...different to you?"

"Different?" Blen could see the gears moving laboriously in Layn's head.

"Maybe I should say, do I look different? Sometimes I look in the mirror and it shocks me."

"Nah, Coach!" Layn grinned. "You're a good looking guy. I know some girls who've got crushes on you!"

Blen laughed at that. Not exactly the point of the question, but a nice little ego boost all the same. "Thanks, kid. You here this early cause you're working out?"

"Yes sir!" Layn said. "I'm kinda getting into bodybuilding and stuff. But don't worry, I won't get too big for football!"

"Good boy. Once you're old like me you can get as big as you want." Blen didn't know why he said it - he and Layn were the same age - but Layn's silly laugh reassured him.

The remark came back into Blen's head later, though, when he went to the bathroom after running the freshmen through their practice. "Shit," he grunted. He had bags under his eyes, and the tips of his mouth drooped into a naturally occurring frown. "You look tired, old man," he said to his reflection, forcing a small smile that showed off a dozen tiny wrinkles around it. And he WAS tired - he liked sleeping in until noon, not getting up before the sun. So he chugged the rest of his thermos then refilled it in the teacher's lounge, making small talk with some of the staff and feeling grateful that they didn't ask why he, a student, was in there. The idea crossed his mind that maybe they thought he was an actual teacher, which made him pretty proud. He was getting good at walking the walk and talking the talk. He noticed his peers regarding him with respect now, and everyone called him Coach Savage without needing to be asked.

As the pep rally approached, though, Blen's anxiety steadily grew. He forced himself to take another pee before it just so he had one less thing to worry about while he was sitting with the

teachers. "JEEZ louse," he rumbled at the sight of his face. His forehead was creased with deep wrinkles now, along with a permanent furrow between his bushy eyebrows, which, combined with his downturned mouth, made him look like he was glaring with disapproval. He splashed some cold water on his face to wake himself up, noticing that his skin felt tough and leathery instead of smooth like it always did. Needed to put on more sunscreen before practice. If he kept this up, he'd look more like a teacher than a student. He already had gray hair and a big build, he didn't need any more help.

Then he heard the bell, and the sound of hundreds of chattering teens in the halls. It was time for the rally. Blen gulped and walked out, fist-bumping a couple of the football jocks on the way. He put on a brave front, but inside he was hoping that he didn't get called on.

There was a semicircle of chairs set up on the basketball court in front of the bleachers. Blen walked past them as he headed to sit with the students, then - when he started getting weird looks from his peers - realized he was probably supposed to sit on the court with the teachers. His cheeks turned pink as he walked back down the steps to sit with the adults. He didn't like the feeling of hundreds of teens staring at him.

There were some announcements from the principal, a performance by the pom squad, and then recognition for some student athletes who had signed letters of intent. The marching band played the alma mater and everyone sang along. And then, just as he was beginning to think he was out of the woods, the principal said: "And we wouldn't be having this rally at all today if it weren't for the hard work of our football team and Coach Blen Savage, so please give it up for the man himself!"

The students whooped and hollered, and Blen stood nervously, ambling over and taking the mic. "Uhhh...I'm not much for talkin' at these things," he said. "I like my guys to do the talking for me on the field."

"You're doing great, Coach!" someone shouted from the stands.

Blen smiled. "Thanks. I just gotta say, uh...this has been a strange week for me, but I've really loved watching these fellas practice, and seeing how hard they work - maybe even making them work harder, I dunno, you can ask them if they feel like I'm kicking their butts."

The football players shouted back in affirmation, and Blen grinned. The buttons burst off the back pockets of his slacks as his ass swelled. He slyly reached behind himself to pick out the resulting wedgie as he continued. "I'm real proud of these guys, real proud of this school. The head coach of the other team tomorrow night - I'm sure he's a nice guy - said he wasn't worried about us. I read that in the paper. Anyone else read that in the paper?" Blen raised his arm up along with half the student section, and his lat made its way through a fraying seam on the side of his polo shirt.

“He should be worried about YOU, Coach!” a football player yelled.

Blen’s pecs shoved outward and snapped off one of the buttons on his polo as he laughed. There was a low crackle as his shoulders widened. “I told ya, I let my guys do the talking for me!” Blen said, voice a bit lower. “But I think that team has plenty to worry about with Brookside. Don’t you?!”

The crowd yelled. Blen’s back broadened with a pop, suddenly rendering him as wide as the two teachers next to him put together. “I said, don’t you?!”

“YEAH!” the crowd screamed. Blen shot up another inch in height as his sleeves strained to hold his growing arms.

“I think Brookside is the best school on earth, and I think I got the best players on earth, and I can’t wait to see them kick BUTT tomorrow night on the field! Who’s with me?!”

The crowd bellowed back at him.

Blen’s chest barreled outward, bursting the last button and starting to rip between his pecs. “WHAT DO WE GOT?”

“BROOKSIDE PRIDE!”

Blen sprouted another inch and his arms swelled big enough to shove his sleeves up over his rapidly expanding delts. “WHAT DO WE GOT?”

“BROOKSIDE PRIDE!”

Blen’s beefy thighs pressed together, his slacks like sausage casings around their mass. “WHAT DO WE GOT?!”

“BROOKSIDE PRIDE!”

“Now let’s go get ‘em!!” Blen pumped his fist above his head, each thrust making him slightly taller, slightly bigger...an extremely muscular man. His breaths were constrained by the tightness of his shirt, which threatened to burst apart at any second.

The sleeves gave way during fifth hour, when a particularly aggressive gesture toward the whiteboard sent bits of blue fabric flying everywhere. Blen didn’t like his students snickering, so he put his hands on his hips and glared at them until they quieted down, unaware that he was now nearly as wide as the whiteboard and in possession of biceps that measured 22 inches. It was these massive muscles that Layn gripped after class.

“Easy, kid,” Blen grunted, jerking away. “You ain’t s’posed to touch me. Or, well...I’m not supposed to touch you. But either way, hands off.”

“Sorry Coach,” Layn blushed, and Blen noticed how big the boy was - were his clothes that tight that morning? The pink polo had lost its buttons and was riding up over Layn’s abs. He’d added a lot of mass recently. Just muscles on muscles... “I actually had a question for you,” Layn continued with a shake of his lustrous hair.

“Oh?”

“Well, I just wanted to ask...like...if you would help me with bodybuilding, sometime.”

“Now young man, I don’t want you getting too big for your position.”

“I won’t Coach! I promise. I know I’ve put on a lot of size but it’s good size, I can still run, like, really super fast. But someday I wanna be as big as you. Y’know, when I’m-”

“Don’t say old,” Blen chuckled, each shake of his pecs layering more size onto them. “Sure, I’ll help ya, Layne. Just remember, football comes first until you graduate.”

“Totally, Coach!”

“What did you need help with anyway? You look like you know what you’re doing.”

Layne’s muscles seemed to grow a bit at the compliment. “Thanks! I just mean, like, with food...and contests and stuff...I dunno how all of that works. Right now I’m just workin’ out and eating a lot.”

“Sure, sure. That’s the most important thing. Now wait...” Blen’s eyes narrowed as they looked directly into Layne’s. “Did you get shorter?”

“No sir. I think you got taller.”

“Taller! Nah, I haven’t grown in years,” Blen laughed. “But I appreciate the compliment.”

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By the time football practice was over, Blen looked ridiculous. His longer legs had to swing around each other thanks to the new meatiness of his thighs, which turned his steps into a combination of a waddle and a strut. His hairy chest was fully on view, heaving out through the destroyed neck of his polo shirt, which barely even covered his nipples. The absence of sleeves gave an unimpeded look at the shocking size of his arms.

He was really happy to get home, and the first thing he did was take off his ruined clothes and throw them away, strutting around his house stark naked. He used every mirrored surface to flex for himself, and by the end of dinner the sight of his own muscles had made him nut twice. "Dirty fucker," he chuckled as he loaded the dishwasher, navigating plates around his erection. Then he sat down on the couch - legs wide, balls free - and watched game footage for two hours, taking copious notes.

He forced himself to grade tests for a bit, but when his yawns became too regular to ignore, he decided it was time for bed. A quick shower gave him a perfect opportunity to beat off, his giant body bucking with orgasm as he splattered his hot cum against the shower tiles. The feeling of being encased in dense, hairy muscle got him so turned on he thought he'd never stop cumming.

An email was waiting on his phone as he got out and toweled off.

*Dear Coach Glen Savage,*

*You have stepped up in unprecedented ways this week, effortlessly shouldering responsibilities without complaint. It has been a joy to see you mature. You are a true role model, the embodiment of Brookside values, and an example for all students, especially our young men. You will take Brookside to new heights.*

*In addition to your history classes and coaching responsibilities, you will now be teaching weights classes. This will be a natural fit for a bodybuilder such as yourself, and your compensation will be increased accordingly.*

*As you coach tomorrow night's football game, take pride in the fact that you are admired by your students and respected by the community. You are an accomplished and exceptional man, and your behavior should properly reflect your age and status at all times. You are leading dozens of impressionable young men; do not squander this great responsibility.*

*Invenire realis vobis,  
Brookside High School*

"Preachy," Glen grunted, tossing his phone to the side. And what was with that crack about his age? He certainly looked older than his classmates - craggy features and gray hair tended to do that - and he was the biggest guy in school, but that didn't mean he couldn't act like a kid anymore...

He lumbered to his bed and flopped in with a quiet groan, grateful for the soft sheets and heavy duvet. He was so sore and tight, and he needed his sleep. Couldn't bounce back from a hard workout as easily anymore, not like...when he was...

Glen dozed off before he thought the word 'young.'

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Glen woke up with all the covers kicked off and an urgent need to pee, though he forced himself to lay on the cool sheets for a second longer just because they felt so goddamn good. It was pitch black outside, but Glen was wide awake. It was Friday, his favorite day of the week, and he'd just had a sexy dream that someone was force-feeding him testosterone.

He rolled up to his feet with a grunt, rubbing his stiff neck and shaking off delirium. "You fucking old man," he groaned, stretching out. For a few moments, he sat and dazedly played with his big nipples. He loved how they peeked out from his heavy chest hair. But then, his bladder raised its cry again, so he shuffled over to the bathroom to take a leak. The lights remained off, so he didn't see his penis lengthening across the inside of his palm as he relieved himself, nor his balls hanging lower from their new weight. But he certainly felt his meat bounding between his legs as he walked back to his bedroom, which brought a wicked grin to his face. A girthy, long shaft and giant hairy balls that garnered gasps of admiration in the gym locker room.

He had special Under Armour polos for game day: they were bright blue with gray paneling on the shoulders, made from shiny material that rippled in harmony with the muscles beneath. The buttons barely connected, and they all snapped open moments later when Glen took a deep breath. He was surprised how tight the polo shirt was; an XXL stretched like cellophane over his mountainous muscles, becoming all the tighter when he tucked it into his game day khakis. He was thinking 36x34 was too big of a pant size for him, but it was just right, especially after his ass swelled with muscle and fat to gift him with two basketball-sized glutes. Coach Savage's butt was the stuff of school legend, and it was balanced by overdeveloped abs that rounded out over his big belt buckle. The shape of his ab gut pushed firmly against the fabric of his shirt, filling it to the brink. He cradled it fondly, then goosed one of his pecs, the one that had "Coach Savage" embroidered over it. Then he adjusted his giant bulge - didn't want to get in trouble in school again.

Anxiety crept in during breakfast as he read the paper and wolfed down oatmeal and toast. The football team was supposed to be a state contender this year, and the multiple articles about it made Glen realize he was really going to coach a football game tonight. He was obsessed with football, it was his favorite thing in the whole world, but coaching it - coaching his peers, no less - was intimidating. He wanted to set a good example for his guys, but he also didn't want the pressure. He was just a student. People only thought he was older because he was tall, gray-haired, and jacked.

He reached for his carton of egg whites and paused. His hand was gigantic. A man's hand. Knotted with muscle, covered with hair. It curled around the carton as Glen thought about his dream. He'd do anything for his players, and today they needed him to be a great coach. So as he drank down his liquid egg whites, he imagined it was liquid testosterone flooding his system.

Tonight, he was a fearless general leading his troops into battle, the prime example of manhood for these young men. He imagined his voice getting even deeper, his muscles even bigger, his body even hairier. And his face, older and stronger, like it was made with a hammer and chisel.

By the time he'd drunk the carton dry, there was certainly more chest hair on view through his straining collar than before. Glen's little mental trick worked. He already felt more mature...more like a man. Even the simple act of calling himself a man seemed odd before, but now he liked it. "I'm a full grown man," he rumbled, rolling his shoulders back into a big stretch that displayed the terrifying power of his muscles.

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Glen resolved on the drive to school that he'd spend the day being the best leader and role model he could be. He couldn't think of the students in the school as his peers. They were his charges, young people who needed a guiding hand. And that meant he couldn't be a student either. Today, he was a teacher and a coach. An authority figure. He liked the sound of that. It felt like a past life that he'd been a scrawny self-declared nerd. Now he was a fearsome bodybuilder. "I'm a full grown man," he said, his bass vibrating in his ears. "I'm a fifty-year-old full grown man." The second sentence made him laugh. Imagine, being fifty...

Glen got the day's first chance for authority only seconds after he parked. He was getting out of his car when he heard that happy voice: "Hey Coach!"

He knew it was Layne before he turned around, but his eyes still made him doubt. His nerdy buddy was now the sexiest, sleekest jock Glen had ever seen. Six-four and perfectly formed, every muscle toned and primed. His skin was so tanned it was nearly brown, and his mane of blond hair was like a superhero's cape around his shoulders. Layne's facial features had morphed into a model's, chiseled and sultry, with pouty lips and a square jaw.

"Morning, pretty boy," Glen said, noticing that Layne's white dress shirt was fully open save for the last button. "This won't do."

"Hm?" Layne's huge eyes looked at Glen worshipfully.

"Stand up straight, Zayne," Glen barked, yanking the sides of Zayne's shirt together and buttoning them himself. The shirt was too small for the jock's bulging muscles.

"That's really tight, sir-" Zayne said pathetically, as Glen buttoned his collar. "*You* get to show off *your* chest."

"That's because I'm the coach," Glen said. "You better have a tie, kid. Just because you're my star tight end doesn't mean you're exempt from game day dress code."

"I have a tie." Zayne started rummaging through his bag.

"I have a tie, sir," Glen corrected.

"I have a tie, sir. Coach. Sir," Zayne said, producing a silk tie with school colors.

"Better have a hair tie, too. Your hair is longer than that girl's I see trying to sneak out of your car."

Zayne's beautiful face went red, but he grinned. "I have a hair tie, sir--*hnk*," he choked as Glen shoved the knot of his tie up to his Adam's apple and flipped his collar back down. "She was wishing me luck for the game tonight."

"I'm sure she was. Good thing your collar covers the hickies on your neck. I want you focused today, son."

"I will be, Coach! I promise!" Zayne's pecs bounced excitedly inside his shirt. He was going to be an amazing bodybuilder after high school, Glen knew.

"Good boy. Now run to class. No more makin' whoopee in your car til after the game. And wear a condom, you're not ready to have a kid."

"Yes sir!"

"And tie up your goddamn hair."

"Yes sir!" Zayne produced a hair tie from his wrist and pulled his hair back into a sleek ponytail. It trailed behind him as he sailed into the school.

Glen puffed up like a proud papa as he watched Zayne go. He'd watched that kid transform into a jock under his tutelage. He was capable of being a leader after all! "I CAN be a coach," he said to himself as he strutted toward the school. "I'm a fifty-year-old full grown football coach."

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Glen was pleased with his improvement over the day. No longer did he second-guess himself. He spoke with conviction and moved with purpose, and sank effortlessly into the role of an authority figure. He didn't appreciate when students gave him shit, and he only had to tell them once. Being stern and commanding came easily to him. He clomped through the halls like a drill sergeant and let his broad shoulders and authoritarian bearing clear the way for him. Not only was he bigger than any student, he was bigger than any teacher. That excited him the most, that he now passed as an authority to the authorities. Now his peers were the adults, not the



students. That meant he was an adult too. It was becoming very easy to think of himself as a fully grown man. He felt like one. He looked like one. And now he acted like one.

He even had an office of his own now in addition to his classroom, which was a great place to eat lunch and do some grading. There was also a game day polo stashed away for him in there, identical to his current one except for being a size larger. He ran through an old posing routine after he stripped the XXL polo off, flexing his muscles and admiring his chest hair before he pulled on the 3XL. It was nice to be able to breathe without worrying about tearing his shirt open.

There were lots of plaques and trophies in the room, but the one that most caught Glen's attention was the "Brookside Man of the Year" award from the year prior. "For being a shining example to thousands of young men during his storied tenure" read the engraved description. Glen was so proud of that. He was no-nonsense but he cared about every one of his guys, even the benchwarmers. All he asked of them was that they get better. They didn't have to be superstars. They just had to want to improve as players and as people.

Glen's pride from his award buoyed him through the rest of the day. It helped him further slide into his role as head football coach, too. From students straightening up as they walked past him, to barking at his players to tuck in their shirts and tighten their ties, it was a part he enjoyed playing.

He positioned himself outside the locker room two hours before kickoff as his players arrived - he didn't do it for every game, but certainly for season openers. "Hey Coach!" his players would shout in their freshly changed voices - he remembered all of them back when they were scared little JV freshmen. He greeted each of them by last name - "Mr. Krogh!", "Mr. Hatcher!" - and gave them a fist bump or a handshake. One of the first to arrive was Zayne, so excited to play that he could barely get the words out. Glen had such an affection for the kid. He wasn't the brightest bulb, but nobody worked harder. And even though Zayne had such natural good looks and charisma, Glen swore he could recall when neither of those things came easily to the handsome tight end.

Two of Glen's assistants ran the team through some quick drills on the field, just to acclimate them to the cleats on their feet, then a half hour later the team was back - this time in full uniform for their warmups. Glen looked at the sea of players across the field in awe. These were *his* players. He watched them with his hands clasped behind him, his chest out, and his mouth in a tight line, but inside he was emotional. Brookside had entrusted its football program to some nerdy kid, and the responsibility was transforming him. Glen was loving the process. He didn't miss any of the things he'd left behind at the start of the week - actually, he couldn't remember what they even were. There was nothing he loved more than coaching football now.

The passion was building up as he stormed back to the locker room with his players for the pre-game speech. This was his big moment to fire his guys up. He wondered if any of them

remembered how nervous and ill-equipped he'd been at the start of the week. He hoped not. Now he had all the confidence in the world - a man's confidence. It was emanating out of him as he stepped to the front of the locker room and his guys took a knee. The room stank of testosterone. The old Glen - what was his name again... - would've found it petrifying. Now it was his favorite thing on Earth. That was because he'd become a man.

Glen surveyed his domain with his hands on his hips. He clenched his jaw, and it became squarer. His muscles rippled as the second button on his polo pulled open. "Look at all these fine young men," he rumbled. "Whether this is your first game with me or your fortieth, I want you to know what a privilege it is to lead you. To grow with you. I may be an old man now, but I'm still growing too!" The group laughed with Glen as the third button on his shirt snapped off, his nipples suddenly straining against the silky fabric.

"In here, and out on that field, you're men. I know a lot of you may not feel like men yet. You live with your folks, your mama still makes you do chores, your teachers boss you around. And that's all natural, fellas. No one just turns into a man overnight!"

Glen's biceps expanded larger to strain his sleeves - and then he sprouted another inch in height.

"But I will always address you as men. That is my promise to you. And the measure of a man is not how big these are," - Glen raised his right arm and flexed it - "or how handsome this is," he said, pointing to his face, then arching an eyebrow at Zayne, who sported a panty-melting grin. "It's how big this is." He patted his chest and heard a couple snickers. "Where else did ya think I was gonna point?"

The team laughed.

"It's the size of your HEART, you perverts," Glen barked with a wry smile. "And I know this team's got heart. You've got more heart than those other guys, I know that for a fact. More talent and more drive, too. I'm proud of you guys. You've worked your asses off and now you're gonna reap the rewards. Coaching you is an honor." Glen puffed out his chest and his pecs swelled to monstrous size, bursting the last button off his now-skintight polo. Copious chest hair curled into view. His voice dropped further in pitch. "My goal is to make the next generation of good, hard-working men, and when I look around this room, I know I've done my job. You make me proud! You fill me with Brookside Pride! Do you have it too? Zayne, you got it?"

Zayne bounced up to his feet and hooted at his teammates, "WHAT DO WE GOT?"

"BROOKSIDE PRIDE!" The team roared back, as their coach's muscles finished hardening and growing. Glen stood resplendent before them, his transformation nearing completion as his team's voices swirled around him and carried him into his manhood. It was all meant to be...

“Now get out there and kick some ass!” Glen shouted, and the team leapt up and followed his charge out to the field.

In every male’s life, there comes a time when he willingly leaves his boyhood behind. Coach Glen Savage’s moment came as his sneakers hit the AstroTurf, fully maturing him into the stern, solid example of an All-American high school football coach. Any insecurities melted away into vascular muscle, and he no longer found humor in calling himself a grown man - at age 50, with decades of coaching experience under his belt, that was exactly what he was. And it was what he wanted to be - what he was *born* to be. A firm, steadfast, and confident leader.