

LIFELONG LESSON
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“Are you at school”

“I need help”

“Dec please pick up”

“Please I’m scared”

The last text was the one that got Declan’s attention. He was forbidden from using his phone while driving, but managed two quick texts while he waited at a stoplight: “?????” “Almost there i’m driving”

“Okay please find me by the north stairwell” came the response. Declan wanted to reply “which direction is north” but he was already driving again, his nerves jangled. His first thought was a shooting, which as soon as he drove into the school parking lot he knew couldn’t be the case: kids were walking into the school, milling around by the doors, and generally going about their day. No one was panicking. So if it wasn’t a school-wide event, it had to be about Jack personally.

Declan Graves met Jack Gannon in Kindergarten, when they got paired up thanks to the alphabetical proximity of their last names, and the fact they were wearing the same Gap Kids t-shirt. It was friendship at first sight. They spent so much time at each other’s houses, they knew the ins and outs of the other’s family as much as their own. They each called the other’s mom “Mama G.”

They balanced each other well. Jack was blond and fair, Declan had brown hair and tanned easily. Jack was gallant and easygoing; Declan spent a lot of time in his own head, and Jack was always the one who got him to loosen up and enjoy whatever moment they were sharing. Jack was the one to whom Declan confessed, with tears streaming down his face, that he was “pretty sure” he liked boys. And Jack hadn’t cared at all, and kept that secret as Declan figured it all out. He was the best buddy a young gay guy could have. Never judging, always chill.

Which was why, if Jack was freaking out, he probably had reason to. That was what worried Declan as he jumped out of his car and walked briskly across the acre of parking lot. “Which way is north,” he grumbled under his breath, until he remembered he had a compass on his phone. He only had ten minutes before his first class and wanted to get something for breakfast, but Jack was more important.

And there he was, sitting on the bench under the stairs, elbows resting on his bouncing knees, hung head low. Declan plopped down next to Jack before he even looked up. “Hey.”

Jack looked over. His eyes were wide, his face white. “I did something stupid before zero hour.”

“Oh god, what? Did you tell Ms. Kramer about your crush on her?”

Jack’s colorless face somehow lost even more blood.

“Oh god, DID you?” Declan asked.

“No, not exactly, but I...” The bobbing of Jack’s legs doubletimed. “I went into the wishing closet and I wished to be her perfect guy.” He blurted out this sentence as one long word.

“You what?” Declan chuckled. “I mean...okay. What’s bad about that aside from it being embarra-”

“Because now I’m CHANGING,” Jack said with marked terror. He leapt up on his feet and faced Declan. “I’m taller! I’m getting taller! Look at me! I didn’t think it was real!”

“You look the exact same height...” Declan stood up. He’d always been taller than Jack...and he still was. “If you’re taller, you’re not THAT much taller.”

“I know, but my jeans grew to fit me too, it’s crazy. I’m freaking out. Like what if more stuff happens...” Jack sat back down, and Declan joined him. “I know this seems dumb, but I just needed to tell someone because I’m bugging out.”

“I’m here for you, J.”

“I know you are. Thanks.”

“You want a hug?” Declan asked half-genuinely, but it made Jack laugh.

“No, I’m okay. At least we’re together all day today.” They’d coordinated their entire schedules together except the fourth hour.

“So...the wish...”

“I don’t wanna talk about it. I’m so dumb.” Jack slumped back. “The door was open and it’s usually locked, and I was just like, ‘oh haha, this would be stupid.’ And whaddya know...now I feel stupid. So I was right. Officer Powell even saw me coming out and laughed at me.”

“That’s who I wish I was the perfect guy for,” Declan joked, thinking of the school officer’s enormous muscles. “But Ms. Kramer, man? Seriously?”

“She’s so hot, Dec,” Jack smirked. “I saw her walking in this morning and she just...mmf!” He pumped his fist and bit his lower lip, and Dec laughed at the display.

“She IS hot, I know, she’s just...she’s like 30. I think there are girls here our own age. Correct me if I’m wrong.”

“But they’re girls. She’s a *woman*.”

“Oh my god, shut *up*.” Declan rolled his eyes as he stood. “I’m gonna go get a biscuit or something before the cafeteria closes so I don’t starve to death.”

“I’ll come with you.” Jack stood up.

As they walked toward the school’s big main common space, Declan looked at Jack. “You know, you *are* a little taller...”

“Just promise to keep an eye on me today so I don’t totally lose it?”

“Sure, but you’re gonna be fine, seriously.”

Declan could tell that Jack was feeling better as they got to their first hour class. He’d bought his buddy a cookie and reassured him everything was fine. The walk to class felt normal, with Jack cracking jokes and being his usual self. They sat in their side-by-side seats right as the bell rang.

20 minutes into the class, Declan saw Jack grip his chair, face twisting back into the pale, fearful expression he’d had before. He shifted his weight back and forth, and whimpered.

Jack mouthed “Something’s wrong” and stared at his hands, turning them back and forth over his desk, wriggling his fingers.

That was until class finally ended - it felt eternal for Declan, seeing Jack all worried like that - and they stood up.

The boys stared at each other in complete shock, ignoring their classmates filing out. Jack was tall. Noticeably taller than Declan, who stood 5’10. Declan’s eyes traveled up and down Jack’s long body, trying to find proof of something that would explain how it happened. But his clothes fit, and he wasn’t standing on anything. He was just...tall.

“I grew...right?” Jack asked in a small, worried voice. “I’m taller?”

“You can’t tell?”

“I can, but it also feels normal somehow - I remember my knees suddenly hitting underneath my desk, but I also know I’m six-two and I’ve been six-two for a long time. I can’t explain it.” Jack stared down at his body. “My hands are bigger.”

“Your feet grew too, I think.”

“What’s happening to me, Dec?” Jack’s voice quavered. He sounded ready to cry.

“Don’t be scared,” Declan said, even though he could feel his own heart pounding in his chest. “We’ll figure it out.”

“I don’t know if we will,” Jack worried as they walked out of the classroom and into the crowded hallway. “Oh my god, I’m so tall. This is so weird. I’m looking down at everyone.”

“And I’m looking up at you. I don’t like that,” Declan grumbled. Then he looked down the hall and got an idea. “C’mon, let’s fix this now.”

“Huh?” Jack followed behind Declan, tripping over his bigger feet and bumping into his peers. “Sorry,” he’d mumble to each post-collision glare.

Declan walked into the supply closet, which was still unlocked. “Just come in and take the wish back.”

Jack’s face was ashen. He stood staring at the door frame, and then he whispered, “Dec? Where’d you go?”

“What do you mean? Come in here, dude.”

“I can’t see the door. I just see a wall.” Jack took a step forward and pressed his head against thin air. His breath quickened, and he said through a tightened throat, “I can’t see the room! I can’t take it back!”

“You...you really can’t...” Dec felt like a barbell had dropped into his stomach. Suddenly everything became as real and frightening to him as it was to Jack. “Okay, then I’ll do it for you-”

“NO! No!” Jack’s yell got heads turning in the hallway. Kids snickered as they walked past. “Please, Dec, please, don’t - it’ll make things worse, I know it - I don’t want you involved, please, I’m begging you, please please don’t-”

Declan stepped back into the hallway and slung his arm around Jack. “Okay, I won’t. We’ll just ride it out.”

“I’m sorry.”

“What’re you apologizing for? Oh no, you’re tall now, what a disaster.”

“You’re scared. I know you are.” Jack stared down at his feet as they walked, determined to not trip on himself.

“Of course I am. I’m always scared. But I’m trying to be brave.”

“We should try to be fast too because we’re about to be late.” The boys took off in a run down the hall as the clocks approached the 5-minute mark. Jack’s newly long legs shot him down the hall like a wildebeest, so Declan poured on the gas to keep up. They arrived, panting, just in time to hear the bell ring as they slumped into their seats. “Oh god, my nuts,” Jack said through grit teeth. “I think my nuts are bigger...”

“Ha ha.”

“No seriously, man, my balls-”

“I don’t think this is the time to discuss those,” said a deep, smooth voice behind them, as their teacher glided past on his way to the front of the classroom.

“Sorry, Mr. CaRUso,” Jack said, his voice cracking mid-sentence. He rubbed his throat with one hand and his crotch with the other, an expression of concern fixed on his face. Declan felt bad for him.

Their teacher Dante Caruso was a fucking stud. Men that hot weren’t supposed to be teachers. From his stubble to his smile to his big muscles that never quite fit inside his shirts, he was a fantasy. Focusing was always an uphill battle, and today it was all the harder because Declan kept hearing stifled groans next to him.

Jack was having trouble. His hand was planted firmly on his crotch, and his cheeks were pink. Every few minutes he’d try to adjust something, and his throat would make a noisy spasm that made him blush. He kept rubbing his Adam’s apple, which is how Declan noticed the stubble.

Did Jack always have stubble?

It was light, but it was definitely there, all over his cheeks and chin and neck. His eyebrows looked thicker, too. More expressive, which made his muffled misery all the more pathetic. Jack shut his eyes and exhaled a low, long breath, and Declan swore he saw his buddy’s scruff get heavier. It looked good on Jack, which sent a pang of jealousy through Declan that he quickly suppressed. To avoid that feeling, Declan stared at the button struggling to hold over Mr. Caruso’s chest. It threatened to pop off every time the teacher twisted to write something on the board, and it gapped enough to give Declan a peek of Mr. Caruso’s pecs.

Jack gave up trying to adjust himself and plopped a notebook in his lap instead. The way the notebook angled upward told Declan that his friend had a wicked boner under there. He wanted to laugh at it, but to his annoyance, he found it hot. Jack could never know that.

Except, Jack was kind of looking hot too. He was trying desperately to focus on Mr. Caruso, staring straight ahead, so Declan had a perfect view of his friend’s side profile. Jack’s nose looked straighter, his chin more projected, while his peach fuzz had blossomed into full-blown

designer stubble several shades darker than his blond hair. He was starting to look like...well, a man.

That motherfucker, Declan seethed.

Jack turned and looked at Declan for a moment with a small smile on his face, and all of Declan's jealousy dissipated. That was his best friend. He was going to help Jack through whatever was happening, just like Jack would do for him.

By the end of class, the notebook in Jack's lap was lying flat. He'd gotten control of himself, so his breathing was back to normal too. The bell rang and both boys gathered their items, Declan keeping one eye trained on Jack just to be sure he was okay. He wanted to bring up the five o'clock shadow, but when he heard Jack say "Thanks, Mr. Caruso" to their teacher as they walked out, a new subject took precedence.

"Your *voice*," Declan said, rushing to keep up pace with Jack. "Say something to me. Anything."

"Uhhhh...'hey, Declan'?"

"Your voice changed," Declan gasped.

"Did it?" Jack rubbed his neck, but when he touched his stubble, his hands wandered up to his jawline to feel the bristles instead. "Oooh..." He tilted his head back and a sleepy grin crept over his face. "Ooh, wow..."

"Jack." Declan noticed the boner tenting Jack's jeans, and held his backpack over it. "JACK. HEY."

"Sorry," Jack panted, looking down at Declan. "I just...I wasn't expecting the whiskers. They feel good."

"They look good, too," Declan admitted begrudgingly. "You really can't tell your voice is deeper?"

"No, I sorta can, but again, it just feels normal to me. But then it's new and exciting too. I'm so confused by it all. And I like it. I feel like a man. I like my voice like this. And my height..." Jack looked down, then at Declan. "I like it all."

Declan's whole face curled up. "Ew. Chill." That made Jack laugh. Were his teeth whiter? Declan thought so but wasn't positive. Maybe they just looked that way because of his dark beard shadow. "It's weird seeing you with facial hair."

"Do you think it's hot?" Jack teased.

“Yes, but let’s not talk about that. Let’s talk about how it grew in...I dunno what the word is...shaped? Like a barber did it.”

“I just do it at home,” Jack said as they walked, his sexy voice drawing stares from girls walking by. “My whiskers are so black that you can see them even right after I shave, so I just save myself the trouble and do the permanent five o’clock shadow thing and line the cheeks and neck up.”

“What are you talking about? You’ve never had whiskers before. I literally just saw them appear in class.”

“That doesn’t make sense. It took a long time for my beard to fully connect. Facial hair doesn’t grow in an hour.”

Declan felt a chill go down his spine. “It’s because of your dumb wish, idiot! Remember?!”

“My...oh, shit, right...” Jack’s voice turned quiet. “Why did I forget about that for a second...”

“I’m getting worried about you, man. I mean, I already was, but...now I’m more worried.”

“Me too,” Jack said softly. “Let’s just get through gym and then we can go out for lunch. I wanna get out of here for a little bit.”

Declan hadn’t realized their next class was gym. Something about that worried him, but he reasoned it might just be the jealousy talking - Jack looked more athletic now, and Declan was competitive enough already without having to keep up with Jack’s new height. They started talking about movies that were about to come out, and the new Marvel trailer that just dropped, but it was a half-hearted conversation forced as a distraction. Declan almost mentioned that Jack was walking weird, but then he realized it was likely because Jack’s bulge was too big for his jeans, and that wasn’t a conversation he felt like having. Nor, he knew, did Jack.

Their gym teacher Mr. Magnussen was a grizzled blond bodybuilder with an affinity for Under Armour polo shirts and a deep love of free weights. Most classes involved weight training of some kind, which the girls hated for the most part - “it won’t make you ladies look like me, calm down!” Magnussen always barked - but the guys didn’t mind. Declan and Jack both agreed it was better than running until you felt like you were gonna puke. “Gannon! Why the hell you walkin’ like that?” Mr. Magnussen said loudly, displaying his usual subtlety and tact.

“Pants are too tight,” Jack responded feebly, reddening as heads turned his way. He scuttled into the locker room before their teacher could formulate a response, and Declan followed behind him. He was glad he did, because Jack could not get his pants off. They looked painted onto him. “I know this is awkward, but...can you help...” Jack said through grit teeth as he tried to shimmy the denim down his thighs.

“Yep,” Declan nodded, pulling on the bottoms of the jeans as Jack lay back on a bench and pushed on the waist. After considerable effort, the jeans snapped off, inverting like a dishwashing glove and knocking Declan back onto an opposite bench. They were still in his hands when Taren Adams snickered, “Knew you two gaylords were gonna go at it eventually” from across the locker room.

“HEY!” Jack was on his feet so fast that it made Declan jump in surprise. He thrust his index finger toward Taren and growled in his deep voice, “None of that shit in here. You understand?”

“Yes. Sorry,” Taren said, turning his head and going back to changing clothes without another word. Declan stared up at Jack in shock, and Jack looked down at him with the same surprised expression. They didn’t need to say it: neither of them had ever seen, or expected, that sort of effortless authority coming from Jack. He’d defused the situation before it was a situation at all. And he’d done it while standing in his underwear.

Jack extended his hand to Declan and pulled him up to his feet, and they walked to their lockers in shocked silence.

“Where did that-”

“I don’t know,” Jack said quickly, his voice a whisper. “I don’t know. I just did it.”

“Well...thanks,” Declan said, peeling off his t-shirt and putting on his gym one.

“I don’t want anyone making fun of you,” Jack said. “I don’t care if they make fun of me, but they better not make fun of you.” He pulled on his gym shorts quickly to cover his underwear, then laced up his sneakers. Declan waited for him to finish getting dressed, then they walked out together.

Rows of mats were lined up on the basketball court, and Jack wrinkled his nose. “Yoga? Just a second.” He jogged over to Mr. Magnussen and whispered something to him that Declan couldn’t hear. Then they had a quick conversation, both of them laughing like old buddies, before Jack walked back to Declan’s side. “He’s gonna let us go lift in the training gym, c’mon.”

“Wow, amazing,” Declan admired as they walked up a set of stairs and entered the school’s training facilities. “Since when do you get special treatment in gym class?”

“Mr. M thinks I’m cool,” Jack shrugged.

“I...did not know you guys had ever spoken,” Declan said suspiciously, but he found yoga boring and also occasionally painful, thanks to his inflexibility, so he wasn’t about to push it further. He wasn’t a weightlifting kind of guy either, but he did like the pacing of it: fifteen seconds of actual lifting, followed by ‘two minutes’ of rest that was usually more like five.

"I'm gonna deadlift," Jack said, heading toward the podium.

"Happy for you. I am not going to deadlift. You'd have to push me around in a wheelchair for the rest of the week," Declan laughed, heading to the dumbbells.

"That's what friends are for!" Jack said over his shoulder as he racked plates onto the bar. His noisy grunt as he hoisted it off the ground - "HYUNGH!" - made Declan roll his eyes during his dumbbell curls. Since the gym only had two mirrors - rumor was it had more once upon a time, but an errant overhead press smashed them and they never got replaced - Declan couldn't see Jack's deadlifts. He just heard their rhythm: a grunt followed by the clink of the weights against the ground, repeated 5-10 times per set. Then the sliding sound of a barbell clip, Jack's footsteps to get more plates, and the new plates getting put on. This went on for over fifteen minutes before Declan finally finished his curls and turned around.

"Jesus CHRIST, dude." Jack was deadlifting ten plates on the bar, five on each side. Muscles bulged out of his back like a tortoise's shell. Declan did the math as he watched. "You're doing like 500 pounds!"

The bar crashed into the ground and Jack smiled proudly. "Pretty strong huh?" His long limbs were lean but defined, like an Olympic sprinter.

"*PRETTY* strong? That's like...shit. Did you do that for one rep?"

"No, six."

"Six?!"

"Two sets of six, yeah."

"*TWO* sets?! That bar must be ready to snap in two."

"I hope so!" Jack grinned, waggling his eyebrows. He began to unrack the weights, and Declan walked over to help him. "Thanks man." Jack grabbed two plates and turned to put them away.

Declan gaped at the sight of Jack's ass. It was big and round and pert, like a prize-winning pumpkin stuffed down the back of his shorts. "*Fuck, your BUTT.*"

"You wish."

"No seriously, your...what the hell, J, that thing is solid steel."

"I lift a lot," Jack said, putting more plates away.

"I didn't know you lifted *THAT* much. It sticks out like a table."

Jack laughed, a deep musical laugh that made Declan's heart flutter. "I dunno what else I should do today. I do want to bench, I guess. The rest I'll just do free weight stuff." He scrolled through his phone to find a workout.

"I'll just follow your lead, I guess, because with a booty like that you clearly know what you're doing." Declan put on the Beast Mode playlist so they'd have some music to lift to.

They started with pushups and then worked their shoulders - front raises and Arnold presses, which Jack taught Declan how to do. Then back rows, tricep extensions, and Jack needed to do bicep curls still, so he worked his way through some sets while Declan rested and admired him. Jack always looked so good. The stubble, the smile, and those beautiful muscles. He had the best body in their class. Broad, straight shoulders that always made him appear poised - elegant, even. A wide back tapering down into a tightly defined waist composed from eight symmetrical abs that girls were always dying to touch. The ass, of course. And those long, rippling legs. He was gorgeous. And he just kept getting bigger and stronger.

Jack peeled off his t-shirt and revealed his tank top, translucent from his sweat. With the lights shining overhead, he looked like an angel descended from heaven. For a few moments, he just stood there. Basking in himself. Celebrating his beauty. His nipples were hard. His dick was too. Declan stared in wonder.

"Chest...bench press?" Jack murmured, his eyes wandering sleepily around the room until they locked onto the unit in question. He moved as if entranced, and so did Declan, both of them shuffling over and loading up weight in silence. Jack went first, then Declan at the same weight but fewer reps. They added more weight, repeated the process. Again. Declan tired out after four sets, but Jack powered through two more on his own. He was pouring sweat, grunting - moaning, really. His dick pointed straight up between his legs, tenting his shorts.

With one final groan he hit his last rep and guided the bar back into place with Declan's help. Jack sat up, eyes glassy, mouth hanging open. He just sat there, playing with his nipples and breathing heavily. "Mmmm..."

Declan stood behind the bench, looking at Jack's wide, powerful back. "J? You good?"

"Mmmmmmmmm..." Jack worked his nipples free from his tank top. His breaths got louder, more desperate. He rolled his shoulders back. "Unnnnhhh...UNNNHHHH..."

POP.

The arrival of Jack's pecs was audible in the room. One moment, he had a flat torso; the next, the seams of his tank ripped from the force of two perfect pecs erupting forth out of him, gifting him with a fantasy chest. Jack, moaning and struggling to breathe, ripped his tank off like it was old tissue paper. His nipples were pushed outward by the dense slabs of muscles behind them,

pointing down to his lap. It was a chest that would never - *could* never - be hidden. It would show in every shirt. It would be the focal point in every photo.

Seeing such glorious pectorals on his friend shocked Declan back to reality. Jack wasn't supposed to be beautiful. He wasn't supposed to have an insane physique. He wasn't supposed to turn himself on. This wasn't right - none of this was right --

Jack had fallen back onto the bench, splattering sweat all around him, inhaling the scent of his own sex as he fondled his perfect muscle tits. His breathing was jagged and horny.

"Jack."

"Mmmm...fuck..." Jack moaned, rolling his hips on the bench and feeling his buff ass bounce under him. "*FUCK...*"

"Jack, please..." Declan bent down next to his friend and shook him. "Jack! Earth to Jack!"

"Unnnhhh...fuh...fuuuck..." Jack's eyes fluttered open. "Dec?"

"Jack..." Declan was having a hard time forming words. Jack's body was unrecognizable. A masterpiece.

"What's wrong?" Jack said sleepily, looking at Dec's worried expression. "Lemme just-" he started to say, rolling to sit upright. Then he caught sight of his hands gripping the bench. Strong, thick, muscled hands. Jack's eyes widened. "Just...my...m-my-" His head snapped up, and suddenly he was alert. "Dec?!"

"I'm here."

Jack patted his body. He staggered onto his feet, sending sweat flying as he looked at himself. "Oh my god...oh my g-god! Dec! Wh-what happened to me?!" He wriggled his fingers and touched his chest, gasping at its fullness. "What did I do?!"

"You lost control and you just...morphed."

"LOOK at me! Holy fuck!" Jack flexed his arm, and the biggest bicep in school swelled out of it. Thick, veiny, and gorgeous. "Holy shit, Dec! LOOK AT ME!"

"I'm looking." Declan couldn't not look. His friend was an Adonis. All muscle. Rippling, carved, gorgeous muscle.

"Huh-HUH-UNH!" Jack jolted - his muscles spasmed - and he visibly thickened, his big muscles swelling with more size and mass. He stumbled forward into Declan's arms. "Wh-what's happening--"

"I got you," Declan squeaked out, as scared as Jack. "God, you're sweaty-"

"HUNH!" Another spasm. More muscle. Bits of clothing fell around their feet. Declan felt Jack's powerful fingers digging into his back. "Dec!"

"I'm here buddy-"

"NNGH!" Jack's chest pushed harder against Declan's body, giving them both raging boners. Jack was a full-on bodybuilder chiseled out of marble. A form of indescribable perfection. And that body was leaning on Declan in a valiant effort to stay upright. Jack buried his head in Declan's shoulder and wrapped his arms tightly around his friend. Declan returned the hug, terrified but unable to let go even if he wanted to.

They held the position for two minutes, Jack holding firm while Declan stroked his hair and told him it was going to be okay. Finally, confident that the changes were past, they broke the embrace. Jack stepped back.

Declan gasped.

That wasn't Jack. That was a god. A literal fucking god. It couldn't be Jack. It just couldn't be. All he had on was a pair of briefs that didn't fit his fat cock. He'd shredded everything else. Jack held his hand up in front of his face and inspected it, enraptured. He touched his chest, his nipples, his abs, his thighs.

"I've changed, Dec..." That deep, rumbling voice drove the words home.

"I know."

"What am I gonna do?"

"Just..." Declan trailed off, looking into Jack's wide eyes. "...just keep going."

The bell rang, and both boys jumped in shock. "Oh no," Jack groaned, looking at his near nakedness. "My clothes..."

"I'll go get you some and come back," Declan said. "Stay right here."

Jack plopped onto the bench and nodded. "Nowhere else I can go anyway."

Declan bounded down the stairs and into the boys locker room. He opened his own locker out of habit first, then remembered Jack's locker was to the left, so he took a step over and opened that one. "Uh..."

Jack's clothes were gone, but the locker wasn't empty. There were two hangers inside, one with a blue knit polo and the other holding a pair of gray chinos, draped neatly, with a belt pre-looped through. In between the hangers were shiny brown loafers with no-show socks stuffed inside. Declan grabbed all the items, stopping for a moment to look at the tag of the polo: "Cotton/silk blend," it said. No wonder it felt so nice.

Intent on avoiding conversation with any of his other peers, Declan turned back around and left quickly before the rest of the class straggled in from yoga. He stopped at the top of the stairs. "Fuck, you grew AGAIN." Jack was a bodybuilder, there was no denying it - not one of the freaky ones, but one of the pretty ones, with every muscle perfectly carved with the goal of harmonious symmetry. His big body sat hunched on the bench, anxiety making his chiseled form twitch and ripple even at rest.

"I did?" Jack looked down at his perfect form. His chest jutted out so far that he couldn't see his own abs. "I thought I'd held it back...I could feel it but I thought I had it under control..."

"Here. This is what was in your locker. Guess this is how you dress now." Declan handed Jack the polo, and Jack pulled it on.

"Thank god it's stretchy," Jack grumbled, flicking at his protruding nipples. "I do like it, though."

"It looks really good."

Jack's face brightened. "Thanks man." He slid on the pants and tucked his shirt in, belting the look together before he slid his feet into the socks and shoes. "How do I look?"

Declan's dick chubbed up again. Fuck. "You look amazing. But you look too grown up."

"I know," Jack said, admiring himself and casually flexing to feel his muscles press against his nice clothes. "Let's get food."

"You're staring at me."

"I can't help it," Declan groaned. "I'm gay and you're hot."

Jack smirked as he drove, his muscled arm draped casually over the steering wheel. His crossbody seatbelt was swallowed up between his pecs, and his lap sported an unmissable bulge. He was prettier every time Declan looked at him, so now Declan just stared. Everyone else had too as they left school. Most notably, Ms. Kramer, who'd walked by in a cute dress and said hi to Declan and Jack.

"Hi, Ms. Kramer," Declan said.

“Hey there,” Jack said suavely, pitching his voice as low as he could. And then, as he’d flashed a handsome smile her way, his polo’s buttons all popped off, one at a time, his chest growing bigger at the sight of her. The fabric slightly tore from the new size and weight of his chest.

Jack’s embarrassment certainly sped up the walk to his car.

They pulled into their favorite burger place and walked inside. It was perfect for their short lunch periods: two minutes from the school, quick service, and affordable. Declan ordered his usual, but Jack deviated and got a grilled chicken sandwich and water. “I’m just craving chicken today,” he said, seeing Declan’s suspicious glare.

“Good to see you, John!” the owner said from the back. Jack waved, then turned around with a grimace. Declan knew he didn’t like being called John. It was his real name, but he’d always been Jack.

“You know him?”

“No,” Jack said. “He must know my brother or something.”

“Your brother?” Declan cocked his head. Jack didn’t have a brother.

“I mean my—” Jack looked awkwardly at the ground. “I was thinking of my dad. Why did I think my dad was my older brother...”

“That’d be a crazy age difference,” Declan joked in an attempt to ease the tension, but he was worried too.

“Heh, yeah.” Jack’s worried expression didn’t falter.

“You okay?”

Jack’s answer was briefly interrupted by the arrival of their food. They had about twenty minutes left to eat, but they’d gotten good at shoveling it in. When they sat down, Declan asked again.

“Honestly? I feel amazing,” Jack said hesitantly, thinking his words through. “I feel like a god, Dec. Everyone’s looking at me, everyone’s admiring me - I take up so much space. I’m so heavy. In a good way. My clothes are tight, and like...I can feel my muscles when I move. Even if I’m not touching them, I feel them. It’s incredible. I love it. I love myself. I know that’s probably not what you want to hear, but...it’s the truth. Even when I talk, and I feel this voice rumbling out of me...I love it.”

Declan’s jealousy flared up again. “Good,” he said, purposely short and curt. Then he bit into his burger.

“Don’t be mad at me. You know I didn’t mean toooounnghhh...” Jack flopped forward, huffing out labored breaths.

“Jack?”

“Oh *fuck*—” Jack reared up, fondling his nipples through his shirt. If they’d protruded any harder they would’ve torn right through. “I th-think I just grew some more—”

“I think you did too...and you—”

“*Fuck*,” Jack scratched at his arms. His body hair had come in - nothing extreme, but more visible than before thanks to its black color. His arms were dusted with it, and a few short bristles were visible in his polo collar. “Let’s eat in the car.”

“Yeah—”

“And walk in front of me. I’m fucking hard,” Jack said sheepishly.

They gathered their stuff and all but ran to Jack’s car. He did, indeed, have a very visible erection, and he sat in his seat groaning and touching his body instead of eating.

“What is your DEAL?” Declan asked, watching the scene.

“I think... *hungh*...” Jack kneaded at his crotch. “I think I’m...I dunno how to say it...sexually maturing? Is that the right...*unh!* Oh fuck...I can just ffeel my balls, my cock- It’s like someone just dumped a barrel of testosterone in me.”

“NOW? Isn’t that what happened a couple hours ago?!”

“Yeah, but now...I wanna *fuck*.” Jack slumped back, exhausted. “I wanna fuck so bad. I’m so horny...” His stubble was heavier, and his features had sharpened. Declan could see new angles as Jack shut his eyes and caught his breath.

“You’re scaring me.”

“I’m sorry, D. Let’s just go back to school.”

“I feel like you should go home.”

“Then I’d be alone. I don’t want to be alone.”

“Because you want to fuck?”

“No.” Jack rolled his eyes and laughed. He exhaled and turned the car on. “I’m feeling better. Next hour’s gonna suck without you, but at least I’ll see you in fifth.”

“Yeah, just don’t nut all over the place in fourth hour when you realize everyone’s staring at you and you should be fine. Who do you have again? I can never remember.”

Jack started whistling innocently as he drove, ignoring the question.

Declan snapped his head to the left when it dawned on him. “DO YOU HAVE KRAMER?”

Jack grimaced comically. “...maybe.”

“Aw man. You’re screwed. What’s the world record for loads in an hour? You’re gonna beat it.”

“Stooopppp, you’re gonna make me blow one NOW.”

“Just don’t stare at her boobs and you’ll be fine,” Declan joked.

“Then I’d just look at her face instead,” Jack sighed dreamily. “Or how long her legs are. Did you know she modeled in college?”

“Give it a rest.”

Jack groaned as he pulled into a parking space and wolfed down the rest of his food in record time. Right when he was about to get out of the car, Declan grabbed his hand. “Hm?”

Declan took a Sharpie from the cupholder and scrawled ‘DEC’ on the inside of Jack’s palm. “Just in case.”

Jack took one step into Ms. Kramer’s classroom before he heard her voice. “Hi, Jack.”

“Hi, Ms. Kramer,” Jack purred, and his shirt ripped all the way down his chest as he broadened further, pecs hardening into solid granite boulders dusted with black chest hair. He didn’t realize what had happened til he sat down at his desk and felt his shirt flapping open. “Oh no,” he mumbled, holding it together with one hand, but then he felt buttons in his grip and looked down to see there was no tear at all, just a longer button placket than usual. That was a relief.

Two of his friends greeted Jack as the class straggled in, but Jack didn’t hear them. He was just staring at Ms. Kramer. He’d always known she was hot, but ‘hot’ didn’t do her justice. She was exquisite. A face that looked designed by a painter’s brush; long, lustrous hair straight out of a shampoo commercial. He wanted to run his fingers through it and kiss her, move his hands down her body...lift her skirt...

Jack's jaw went slack. His tongue rolled around his teeth. What would it be like to eat pussy, he wondered. Specifically, Ms. Kramer's...to make her feel so good, and to create that association between his mouth and her pleasure...how would she taste? Amazing, he knew.

A gentle warmth in his hands got him looking at them. They were bigger, he was pretty sure. Stronger. A man's hands. Capable of power, control, guidance. He imagined them around her small waist, or one on her hip and one caressing her neck, lightly tipping her head up so he could kiss her. Just dreaming about it made him feel more like a man. He sat up tall, felt his chest swell, and heard another button go. His legs spread wider under the desk and he planted his feet confidently. He was a man. A handsome, sexual, virile man.

When Ms. Kramer looked his way, that was what he wanted her to see.

Fourth hour crawled by for Declan. It always did, because it was right after lunch when he was getting sleepy, and he didn't have Jack next to him to slap his shoulder when he nodded off. Plus Mrs. Parker was just...SO boring. She was droning on and on today, sending Declan's thoughts elsewhere. His worries about Jack were compounding in his head. He hoped Jack wasn't embarrassing himself. All that fucking moaning during lunch - sure, it had to be a crazy feeling, getting shoved through puberty at lightspeed, but there had to be a way to control it. Jack seemed so different now, but somehow still completely himself too.

Declan sneaked a text to Jack while Mrs. Parker's back was turned. "You good?" Then he got distracted by Mrs. Parker making him read, and it took ten minutes to realize Jack hadn't texted back. As Mrs. Parker accused Violet Munro of stealing the bathroom pass, Declan sent another text. "Yo. answer"

But Jack didn't. And when he didn't respond once class ended and everyone was walking the halls to their next room, Declan couldn't fight off the growing sense of dread. Something was off. Something was different. He just couldn't tell what.

He crashed into his fifth hour desk and locked his eyes onto the door, waiting for Jack to walk through it. Two minutes passed. Three. No Jack.

Callie Richmond sat down next to Declan. "That's Jack's seat," Declan said to her.

"Huh?"

Declan was too worried to fight with her. Once Jack showed up, they'd figure it out.

Their teacher arrived right at the sound of the bell, looking uncharacteristically flustered. Not that he didn't look good. It was impossible for Mr. Gannon to not look good. Declan had a king-sized

crush on him. He'd had wet dreams about the man. He was unbelievably gorgeous. Thick black hair and hypnotizing eyes like a Husky's, icy blue. His cheekbones and jawline looked carved by a scythe. He always rocked the perfect amount of black stubble, neatly maintained.

And then, of course, there was the body. A man as handsome as that didn't have to be buff, yet Mr. Gannon had built his body to Muscle & Fitness coverboy status. Like Mr. Caruso, he had considerable muscle mass but managed to not appear bulky - instead, he was broad and sleek and moved with a natural grace. He was clearly proud of his physique and dressed to show it off. Today he was wearing a white dress shirt that clung to his muscles, paired with a striped tie that was slightly wedged between his pectorals and gray chinos that cupped his magnificent ass. His shirt collar was unbuttoned, the tie knot slightly loose to showcase his muscular neck. The GPA of a young gay guy in his class didn't stand a chance because it was impossible to focus. He was too fucking hot. So fucking jacked. Just a—

...jacked.

JACK.

MR. GANNON WAS JACK!

“OH!” The realization erupted out of Declan in the form of a guttural shout. Every head turned his way - including his teacher's, who was interrupted by it mid-sentence.

“Declan?” Mr. Gannon said, looking straight into Declan's soul with those baby blue eyes. “You okay?”

Declan was clearly not okay. His hands were cupped over his mouth, and his eyes were bulging from their sockets. He was frozen in sheer horror, white as a sheet, struck mute. He shook his head no. It was all he could do.

“What's wrong?” Mr. Gannon walked up the aisle and crouched down next to Declan, who could only whimper at the sight of the man. He was so astounding. And he was so not Jack. “Are you having a panic attack? Do you need water?” Mr. Gannon raised his voice. “Anyone have water?”

Callie handed an unopened water bottle over from her backpack, and Mr. Gannon handed it to Declan, who managed to peel his hands off his face and open it for a long gulp. He couldn't look away from Mr. Gannon. Jack. That was Jack...

“Do you need to go out in the hall for a few minutes? Just shut your eyes and catch your breath. Why don't you do that,” Mr. Gannon said gently. He was a great teacher. Thoughtful, kind, firm, approachable. Never intimidating but always in control. “Come back inside whenever you're ready.”

Declan shuffled into the hall and collapsed to the floor once he was around the corner from the room. He buried his face in his hands and tried to think. He didn't know what to do. He could hear Mr. Gannon's deep, smooth voice wafting through the door, broadcasting a firm grasp on its subject. It was so distracting.

This couldn't be happening. This couldn't be real. This was a nightmare. Declan pinched himself and slapped his cheek, but he wasn't waking up. He could remember Jack. He could remember Mr. Gannon. Them being the same person made absolutely no sense, and yet, he knew they were. He couldn't understand anything.

Just shut your eyes and catch your breath. He could hear Mr. Gannon saying it and saw his kind smile. That...that was actually very Jack. Jack always made him chill out. Jack always brought him back. And now, it was up to him to bring back Jack.

Filled with resolve, Declan stood up and walked back into the classroom. He spent the next twenty minutes staring intently at the confident stud in front of him. At one point, Mr. Gannon took his tie off and pulled open the next button on his shirt, and Declan felt his penis puff up at the glorious sight. It annoyed him, but he couldn't deny how gorgeous Jack had become. Declan wondered if there was a tipping point where Jack gave in and let himself become Mr. Gannon. If there was, it was hard to blame him-

"Feeling better?" came the smooth whisper, and Declan looked up to see Mr. Gannon standing over him.

"Oh, um...yes, yeah, thanks," Declan stammered.

"Good."

The interaction lasted five seconds, but Declan thought about it for the rest of class. The bell jolted him into action again, and he stuffed his papers into his backpack and stood up as quick as he could. He couldn't miss his shot.

"Mr. Gannon, can I talk to you?"

"Now? Sure, but we can meet after school if you don't want to be late to your next-"

"No, it has to be now," Declan interrupted, his heart racing. He walked over and shut the door to the classroom, leaving the two of them alone.

Mr. Gannon's eyes narrowed. "What's going on, Declan? Everything okay?"

"No, I...I'm sorry I panicked in class, it was because I realized...I don't know how to say it." Declan paused, looking at Mr. Gannon standing in front of him. His arms were crossed across

his broad chest, biceps ready to burst through his sleeves. The buttons of his shirt strained over his pecs. He was so distracting. "H-how do you feel today?" Declan finally said.

"Fine as ever," Mr. Gannon said, "but something is clearly up with you. I'm a little worried. Let's talk about it."

"You don't feel different? You don't feel like something's changed?"

Mr. Gannon cocked his head. "I don't follow."

"You changed today," Declan said desperately, his voice rising. "You transformed. You went to last hour and you came back like...like...this! Grown up! I'm just trying to make you remember - you have to remember, Jack!"

"Jack? Wow, only my family calls me that. If you're not going to call me Mr. Gannon, please at least call me John." Mr. Gannon's eyebrows were raised in confusion.

"No, you hate being called John!"

"Not since I was in high school-"

"Which you were this morning! Please! Please, Jack, please!"

"Declan," Mr. Gannon said firmly. "Sit down. Breathe. I don't know what's going on, but we're going to figure it out, okay? You're okay. You're going to be okay."

"I can't sit down. I have to make you remember." Declan looked up into Mr. Gannon's concerned eyes. "What's my sexuality?"

"What?"

"My sexuality. Am I straight, gay, asexual, bisexual - what am I? I know you know."

"Declan, I'm not comfortable with-"

"Say it! You have my permission. Anything that comes to mind, just say it. I won't care."

"You're gay," Mr. Gannon said.

"You're right. And how did you know that? I've only told one person ever."

"No, you...you must have told me. I don't know how else I'd know."

“Because you’re my best friend, Jack Gannon. We tell each other everything. And you remember. Part of you remembers. Look at your palms. What’s that one say?”

Mr. Gannon turned his hands over and looked at an inky smudge on one of them. “Oh, my wife wanted me to book the tickets to our in-laws’ for Christmas now, because there’s a fare sale - so I wrote ‘DEC’ on my palm, for December-”

“NO! I wrote Dec on your palm. Dec for Declan, so you wouldn’t forget me. You’re my best friend. You can’t forget me. You can turn into Ms. Kramer’s husband because I guess that’s what you want, but you can’t forget me. I won’t let you. You were scared, so I promised you...”

Mr. Gannon was staring at his palm. He looked at Declan, then back down, then back again. He stared directly into Declan’s eyes, analyzing them, and Declan wanted to flinch but refused to back down. He stared right back as Mr. Gannon’s eyebrows knit together. “You...but we...you’re a student and I’m a teacher, how could we be-”

“Because you got older. It made you older and turned you into this, and I have to admit, I don’t blame you - you’re amazing - but just be Jack, at least for me, please. Please.” Declan’s lip trembled. “I need you.”

Mr. Gannon’s eyebrows raised. His eyes were as big as Declan had ever seen them. “...Declan?” he whispered.

“Please. Please.” Declan’s eyes welled up with tears. “Remember how you call my mom Mama G. And how we always joked she likes you more than she likes me, because at least she can-”

“-give me back.” Mr. Gannon’s eyes started welling up too.

“You remember! It’s all right there, Jack! C’mon, please-”

“D-Dec?”

That was all Declan needed to hear. He launched himself forward and threw his arms around Jack so aggressively, it nearly knocked the strapping stud over. Jack leaned back and held Declan’s face in his hands, staring at it. “You’re so *young*...”

“No, you’re old!”

“I am not *OLD*, I’m 35!”

“That’s old to me. You really remember, Jack?”

“Bits and pieces. I’m trying. But I remember you. I remember that I trust you so much - I’d trust you with my life.”

"I can't live without you. Please don't make me live without you. I know, you'll say that's gay, but-

"I wasn't going to say that."

"You *have* grown up," Declan joked. It felt good to joke. Then he remembered he was mad. He shoved Jack straight in the chest - an expression of frustration, but also a chance to feel the amazing hardness of his pecs.

"Hey!"

"Why'd you make that stupid wish, idiot?!" Declan seethed. "We were gonna go to college together and have fun and be crazy and you messed it all up!"

"I didn't think it was REAL," Jack said angrily. "You can't blame me for that, who would ever think THIS-" he said, gesturing wildly at his own body, "-would happen?! And you can't shove me, I'm a teacher!"

"Yeah, well, you can't *touch* me, I'm a student!"

Jack's face became hilariously petulant. He stretched his arm out and poked a single finger into Declan's shoulder. "Touch."

"Oooh, I'm gonna get you *fired*."

"No don't!"

Declan's expression softened. "I wouldn't ever do that to you, dude, c'mon." They smiled at each other, and Declan continued. "But what the hell happened to you last hour?!"

"I don't...I don't really remember. Well, I sort of do...I remember feeling like every time she looked at me, it was like I got bigger. Maybe I got older too. I must have. And I remember one more thing, when I looked down and saw my wedding ring and I wondered why I was sitting in Meredith's class." Jack ran his thumb over the band on his finger. "I still don't know."

"Because you started as a student and turned into a teacher right there."

"That...that IS why, isn't it. This is so surreal." Jack sat back on his desk. "I don't want to talk about this here. This is my job. Come by my house in a couple hours."

"Omg, Mr. Gannon is inviting innocent students over to his house'," Declan mocked with a grin.

"Stoppsss," Jack said, rolling his eyes. "I'll text you my address."

“I know where you live, dude.”

“You’re thinking of my old house. I have my own now, with my own family.”

“You live with Ms. Kramer?”

“She’s Mrs. Gannon now,” Jack said, puffing up his chest with comical pride. It pulled the buttons over his pecs open, which he didn’t notice, though Declan certainly did. “I have sex with her!”

Declan burst out laughing. Jack soon did too. “I didn’t mean for that to be funny, but fine, it is,” Jack admitted between giggles.

“Is it fun?” Declan asked.

“It’s the best, man. Sex with your smoking hot wife? The absolute best.” Jack’s sculpted cheeks turned pink. “But I shouldn’t be talking about this with you.”

“Don’t do that,” Declan chided. “You’re Jack with me, not Mr. Gannon.”

“Right. You’re right. But let’s talk at home, not at school.”

Declan switched his brain off as he drove to Jack’s house. The events of the day, despite being smoothed over by the waves of wishing magic that he kept staving off, were still overwhelming his mental state. So he zoned out and followed Siri’s directions until he pulled up to the house, an adorable blue Craftsman with white trim. It looked straight out of HGTV. Of course Jack and his wife would have the perfect little home.

Declan didn’t notice Jack was on the front porch until he was walking up the steps. Jack was still in his school clothes, no tie, his sleeves rolled up and his shirt half-buttoned to emphasize his stylish handsomeness. He’d added one thing: a little chocolate-haired boy sitting under his arm, looking at a picture book.

“Hey, Boyd, can you say hi to Uncle Declan?”

The little boy looked up - he had distinctive ice-blue eyes like Jack’s. “Hi,” he said shyly, then he went back to his reading.

“We’re going through a *big* Max & Ruby phase and he won’t let you distract him,” Jack smirked. “Even if he can’t read yet.”

“He’s...he’s...”

“My son, yeah. My older one.”

“You’re a dad? Why didn’t you tell me at school?”

“I didn’t want to overwhelm you any more back there.”

“Well, that’s fair. I am overwhelmed. Aren’t you?”

“Yeah. But it feels normal too. Like I woke up, spooned with Meredith, worked out, woke up the boys, took them to daycare, and had a normal day at school.” Jack exhaled. “It’s a weird headspace.”

“I’m glad you still remember me. I was driving over worried that I’d have to remind you again.” Declan crouched down and looked at the toddler snuggled up with his dad. “He’s so cute, man.”

“Thanks. He looks a bit more like his mama. Holt, our 1-year-old - he’s my little clone.”

“Boyd and Holt, huh? Couple of little cowboys.”

Boyd hopped off the porch swing. “Can I have a freezie?”

“Ask Mom,” Jack smiled. “Say bye to Uncle Declan before you go inside.”

“Bye Uncca Fella.” Boyd rocketed inside. They could hear him yelling for his mom through the door.

“He looooooves freeze pops,” Jack chuckled. He stayed on the swing and returned Declan’s stare. “What?”

“You’re such a man. Like, you’re...grown up. ‘Ask Mom.’ ‘Mr. Gannon.’ You were a teenager this morning and I thought you were overreacting about the wish thing...and now...you’re a man.” Declan sat down in the swing next to Jack, whose arm remained extended out as it had when Boyd sat in the same spot. Just like Boyd, Declan leaned against Jack’s body, and Jack wrapped his arm around Declan’s shoulders to hold him tightly. “Things are different now, and it happened so fast, but it also feels like it all happened normally, that you just went to school and grew up and got married and had kids. But I know it didn’t...I just...” Declan sniffled and began to sob, his tears dampening Jack’s brilliant white shirt.

“I know,” Jack said, his smooth voice reassuring. He stroked Declan’s hair and held him as he wept. “I know, Dec. I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to. I promise I didn’t. Can you forgive me?”

Declan nodded and felt Jack's head rest against his. Still friends, but with their dynamic forever altered. "I'm glad you didn't forget me but god, I want things to go back to how they were! You didn't have to have the job and the house and the wife and the kids just yet."

"But what about the muscles and the whiskers? You seem to like those," Jack teased, and it made Declan laugh.

"I dooooo," Declan groaned, rolling his eyes and sitting up. "Does your WIFE? Because you're a MARRIED MAN? With a WIFE?"

"My WIFE loves being married to a bodybuilder, she makes me flex for her, and yes, she loves my stubble too, thank you very much." Jack leaned over to Declan and lowered his voice to a sultry growl. "When we're in bed, and the kids are asleep...she loves when I whisper in her ear like this...rub my stubble against her skin...kiss her all over..."

Shivers vibrated through Declan from top to bottom. He reminded himself that though Jack was a sex god with a fantasy body, he was still dumbass Jack inside, only with a few more years of life experience. Declan shoved him away with a laugh. "STOP that." He turned sad again as he looked at Jack. Handsome, mature...adult. "I'm never gonna get to see you anymore. You have a job and a family, you'll never have any time for us now. And then I'll leave for school and we'll grow apart-"

"We're never going to grow apart, don't say that."

"But won't we? You're 35 with two kids, and I'm about to go to college. What's there for us to do together? What do we talk about?"

"It might seem weird now, but in a few years, when you're done with school, we'll both just be working men. Then the age difference won't matter quite so much." Jack paused. "I know the next few months are going to feel strange-"

"See, I don't even like you talking like that. You sound like a teacher, all formal. 'Feel strange.' Yeah, *JOHN*, they're gonna fucking suck, because my best friend is now a bodybuilder with a teaching hobby."

Jack laughed. "Sorry, fine, Jeeeesus. I was just gonna say, it'll be early, but you could come work out with me in the mornings before school? I could train you. Even though I know they just grew onto me, I still know how to get these guns." Jack popped a flex. His sleeve nearly ripped from the immense muscle within. "And it would be only us."

"I'm bad with mornings, but...we'd get to hang out almost every day..." Declan mused. "I could give it a shot."

"I'd like that."

“Me too,” Declan said, leaning back and staring at his friend.

The workouts were strange for Declan at first. There was a gulf between him and Jack that he couldn't bridge. Jack had a mortgage. Jack would roll in exhausted because one of his sons was up sick all night. Jack would talk about date nights with his wife, the wife who'd prompted the wish that changed everything.

But as the weeks went on, they both adjusted to each other. Jack got better at talking to Declan about his teenage anxieties, becoming an invaluable sounding board: someone with an adult's viewpoint, but who could also tap right into the fresh high school memories. Once they got their story straight about their families being longtime friends - “John has known Declan since Declan was a little kid, and Declan remembers John as a teenager,” both of which were true statements - Declan was able to hang out at Jack's house and heal the resentment he felt toward Jack's new family. Meredith was charming, the boys were irresistibly cute, and seeing Jack as a doting dad started feeling normal.

Boyd couldn't say ‘Declan’ - it came out like ‘fella,’ which made Declan ‘Uncle Fella,’ and soon little Holt picked it up too. They loved Uncle Fella. They would dash down the hall when he arrived and give him hugs and make him read to them. It didn't take long for Uncle Fella to love them too. And he loved watching them grow. Jack would send Declan updates at college - pictures the boys had drawn, cute things they'd said, and photos of them playing with toys Declan had bought them.

The boys weren't the only people growing. Declan noticed he was getting bigger at the same time everyone else did. It was when the football guys made comments about his arms making his sleeves too tight, or his chest looking broader, that Declan felt the bite of the bodybuilding bug. Once the handsome guys he desired started complimenting him, the gym stopped being an excuse to hang out with Jack. He looked forward to waking up at 5am, spending 90 minutes with his best friend, and throwing around some iron. When he went off to college, he worked out on his own, sending Jack progress pics and asking what he could do better. He began outgrowing old clothes. He grew another inch. And he was so fucking hungry. It felt like he was starving 24/7, because Jack was making him lift heavy, and it burned so many calories. So he'd go to the dorm cafeteria and just inhale everything in sight. His metabolism was a raging inferno, and it made Jack jealous, which Declan found supremely satisfying.

Everything changed after Declan lost his virginity sophomore year. He'd met a hot football bro at a campus party that wound up being lame, so they went back to Declan's room to play video games, but then the conversation turned horny and Declan figured out that the guy was on the down low. Clothes came off, bodies were touched, mouths met, and suddenly Declan had his dick sheathed in a condom and a sweaty, muscular frame under him. After that, sex was all Declan wanted. He loved it. And he wanted muscular men - REALLY muscular men - and they

were much easier to get if he was muscular too. So he started lifting even heavier, eating even more, and structuring his evenings so he could go to bed early and get a ton of sleep. His body started changing dramatically. Bigger. Harder.

Jack's eyes bugged out when Declan came back that summer. His body shape was completely altered: wide chest, broad shoulders, small waist, pert ass. And all Declan wanted to do was work out and eat and talk about bodybuilding. He wanted to change so badly. He wanted to be like Jack. Jack would show up in the mornings in his stringer and tight shorts, displaying every inch of his body with unabashed masculine pride, and Declan would drink in the sight and tell himself he was going to get that big, and even bigger.

It was a shock to everyone when Declan dropped out of school. He'd figured out what he wanted to do and didn't see the point in shelling out tons of money for a degree he wasn't sure he'd ever use. He wanted to work in fitness, surround himself with bodybuilders, and become one himself. So he got a job at a gym, worked toward his PT certification, and moved into Jack and Meredith's basement that had a separate entrance and functioned as its own apartment. He paid them rent, could come and go as he pleased, and got to work out with Jack and see the boys all the time. It was heaven for Declan.

And it transformed him.

Some of the changes couldn't be foreseen. Maybe it was all the sex he was having, or the excitement at feeling more like a man by the day, but Declan sprouted chest hair practically overnight, and his stubble thickened noticeably. It went nicely with the changes in his physique, as he filled out with bulky mass brought on under Jack's watchful eye. Even though it felt agonizingly slow to Declan, by the end of the year his progress pics showed the true story: he was starting to look like a bodybuilder. Like Jack.

When Declan plateaued, he went on his first cycle to kick him over the hump. The changes in his body accelerated, and his libido shot through the roof. The newfound sensitivity of his nipples made sex even more pleasurable, as did the swirls of chest hair he now sported. He loved being a hairy man - it was a twist he hadn't seen coming. He had a dusting of dark bristles on his shoulders and upper back, thick patches covering his arms, and a heavy bush that spilled over the top of his underwear waistband. His pecs bloated into big jugs that filled his shirts to the brink. His back spread wide and thick. His abdomen pushed out round and firm. At a visit to his parents, they pointed out that he now waddled when he walked. He'd never noticed. Once he was aware of it, he couldn't *not* think about it without getting turned on.

He was turning into a big man. That was what Jack started calling him when he'd lumber in for their morning workouts: "Hey big man!" Jack's beautiful face and sexy voice saying it made it all the sweeter. They'd reached a blend that worked for them: Jack loved watching Declan grow and mature, as a father would; Declan respected Jack and listened to him like he was an older brother; they chattered between sets like the lifelong best friends they were. "Look in the mirror,"

Jack said one day, as Declan grunted his way through a set of cable flies. “Look at that big man. That’s you. You grew up. It’s so awesome, Dec. You’re a fucking bodybuilder.”

“I’m - rrrngh - not - grrraahh - yet.” Declan could almost see it, but not quite. He knew he was a lot bigger. But he also had further to go. More to prove. He wanted to be a big man, the kind of muscleheads he’d lusted after his whole life. He’d shoot loads in the shower thinking about them and about his body changing.

He stopped cutting his hair and let it drape across his big shoulders, then he grew a beard and was thrilled to discover it was fully connected. He felt like fucking Thor. Jack and Meredith got him a beard grooming kit for Christmas, which fascinated Boyd and Holt; Declan explained to them that one day they’d grow hair out of their faces too, just like Daddy and Uncle Fella did. Holt thought that was awesome, Boyd wasn’t fully sold. But they both loved having a larger Uncle Fella - they could say ‘Declan’ now, but it was too late, the name was stuck - and would climb all over him when he babysat. Holt somehow identified that Declan looked like a wrestler, and begged to learn some moves; Declan, never an athlete before weights, stayed up watching YouTube tutorials so that he could teach Holt effectively. It wound up being a great way to tire Holt out on babysitting nights. They’d roll around, Declan pretending he’d been pinned, then Declan would sit on the couch and the boys would snuggle up on either side of him so he could read to them. He couldn’t believe how much he cared about them. Growing up, Declan and Jack weren’t the guys who talked about their future children. But now, he couldn’t imagine Jack not having kids, and he couldn’t imagine his life without them either.

But he wasn’t ready for his own yet. He was having way too much fun playing the field. He’d go out to bars and guys would be all over him, losing their minds for his body. He recognized one pretty boy from high school and let the guy flirt with him before he revealed who he was. The guy couldn’t believe the bearded hulk in the half-open dress shirt showing off his hairy roid jugs was Declan Graves. “What the hell have you been eating, dude? Cows whole?” Declan kissed him hard for that comment. Went back to the guy’s place and fucked him senseless. Slept over and got worshipped the next morning, along with some great nipple sucking. “God I love this hairy chest,” the guy slobbered, burying his face between Declan’s pecs. He looked up in awe at Declan, who smirked back at him. “And your beard...I can’t believe you’re Declan from high school! How did you do it, man? What happened to you?”

“I grew up,” Declan rumbled. “Got muscles on Dec.”

That became a mantra for Declan and Jack: “MUSCLES ON DECK!” Declan would boom it in his bass voice as he strutted into the gym; Jack would yell it at him whenever he was struggling in a set. Declan almost got a tattoo of it until Jack talked him out of it, not wanting to ruin symmetry. He was getting ready for a real contest, chiseling out his back and burning off fat, revealing the X-frame he’d been dutifully building. He was a real fucking bodybuilder. When the caloric deficit became hard to bear, Declan stayed indoors like a werewolf, avoiding the temptation of the outside world. His face leaned out so dramatically that the Gannon boys

noticed and asked why he looked so bony. Razor sharp cheekbones and a chiseled jaw were further emphasized when Declan shaved his beard off before he got tanned.

He got second at the contest, which he was happy with, but he wanted to win and graduate into the big leagues. So he spent another year working out, eating, cycling. He'd waddle into the gym in the morning to train with Jack and then stay all day with his own clients. Some nights he'd go out after, others he'd go back home and crash, and he always tried to have dinner once a month with the Gannons. Boyd was starting to shoot up and Declan wanted to enjoy time with the boys while they were still boys. Plus, he was loving watching Jack settle into middle age. That beautiful face was broader, atop a meatier body - Jack just kept getting better looking. His face had a few more creases and his hair had some grays, but they made him look experienced and mature. Jack at the gym was goofy and one of the boys. Jack at home was a stern, loving dad bulging out of his dress shirts. Declan couldn't decide which was hotter.

"Do you ever feel young anymore?" Declan asked Jack once.

Jack thought about it for a moment. "When I work out with you, yeah." It dawned on Declan that although it felt like Jack was doing him a favor by turning him into a bodybuilder, Jack benefitted too: he got to maintain that connection to his lost youth, and grow up vicariously through Declan. Every night when Jack got home, he still had to be on: supporting his wife, parenting his children, taking care of his house. He loved it, but Declan could tell it drained him. When Jack was with Declan, he could let loose. There, he was Jack. Not John, Mr. Gannon, or Dad.

And Jack was so proud of Declan. Like a dad would be. Nearly every workout there'd be a moment where he'd tell Declan to look in the mirror and appreciate his body and how he'd transformed himself. All those giant, rippling muscles. The beard. The hair. The pelt on his chest was coming in thicker and curlier than ever, which he loved to show off with skimpy tank tops and unbuttoned shirts. When it came time to shave it off, he was sad to see it go.

He hit two contests, came in conditioned perfectly, and won them both. The pro card was his. He sat in the car with the Gannons after he got it, just holding it in his hands and staring at it. He was finally the champion muscleman he'd dreamt of being, and he couldn't believe it. The internet started taking notice of him. His social media followers tripled overnight. Being openly gay seemed to help, too - he got so many messages about how inspiring he was. Along with unsolicited dick and hole pics.

It was backstage at the Richmond Pro where one of those messages found him in person. "Wow, Declan Graves - I just wanted you to know you showed me I could do this." Declan looked at the man speaking to him. Full lips, thick auburn hair, bright green eyes, and a square jaw. Gorgeous. And that was just the face.

"Do what?" Declan asked innocently, putting his hands on his hips and shoving his poser down just the tiniest bit.

“Compete as a gay man.”

Declan instantly wanted to fuck him. “That’s so great,” he said, extending his hand. “I’m honored.”

“And I’m Scott Raines.”

“If you don’t mind me saying so, you’re very handsome.”

“If you don’t mind *me* saying so, I was hoping you’d think I was,” Scott smiled.

They got dinner that night. And the next night. And the next. They held hands with their fingers interlocked and couldn’t keep their mouths off each other. But three dates in three days were followed by the first kiss goodbye when Scott had to fly back home.

“I like him,” Declan grunted to Jack during sets. “He’s so funny...and smart...and...*hnnnggh!*...hot as hell.”

“I’m happy for you, Dec.”

“You’re jealous!”

“A little,” Jack grinned. “But I want you to have what I have.”

“It’s only been a few dates and we have to do long distance. I don’t know if it’ll go anywhere.”

Two years later, Declan was marrying Scott on the beach, two bodybuilders stuffed into white linen shirts and tight white trousers. Jack was the best man; his sons groomsmen. Declan stood up there in front of all his friends and family and looked down the row at the men in his life. Scott, his husband, the fantasy man with the spirit even more beautiful than his body. The man he’d raise a family with. Jack, his lifelong best friend despite their 17 year age difference, a renowned teacher and bodybuilding expert, and an inspiration to Declan in every way. Boyd, a six foot tall broad-shouldered baseball player, who was turning into a man so quickly. He loved to work out with his father and uncle. And Holt, just entering his teens and looking more like his father by the day, with his entire exciting life stretching before him. Declan loved them all so much. He couldn’t believe how lucky he was.

One night on their honeymoon, Declan was in bed with Scott, who’d already fallen asleep after a long day of sunbathing and fucking. Declan lay on his pillow and looked at Scott’s peaceful face. Here he was at a five-star resort in the tropics with his handsome husband, madly in love, a successful bodybuilder. It was all so perfect that Declan had to wonder if he’d achieved it on his own. Maybe he’d gone into the wishing room just yesterday in a desperate attempt to reconnect with Jack, and here was the outcome of his wish. He could imagine it: chest hair bursting out of the top of his shirt just before his new pecs shredded through it; his frightened moans growing

deeper and hornier as his voice changed and his sexual maturity crept in; his body bulking outward into this Herculean physique. Maybe that had happened, and all the memories of the last few years were just an adjustment so the universe fit Declan's new form.

But as Declan looked at the man of his dreams, he realized he didn't care. It was real either way, because the outcome was the same. And the outcome made him happy. He snuggled up with Scott, kissed his husband's shoulder, and shut his eyes to go to sleep.

He was so, so happy.