

Sensitivity Training

A short story by Henry Cavanaugh



Alex was really struggling to believe what the fuck was going on. He was on the phone with the management team for the goddamn San Francisco 49ers who had a “business proposal” for him. He was just a simple guy with his own farm who played a bit of football and modelled on the side. NFL teams didn’t call up guys like him out of the blue and yet there they were talking about how his coach was supposedly cousins with a guy on the 49ers staff and had mentioned how good a fit Alex would be for what they needed. Just hearing that the 49ers had been monitoring his social media was a crazy thought, but the real stunner was when they remarked that he “seemed like a genuinely good person.” Forget everything else about the wild twist of events in his day - what the hell was that even supposed to mean?

“Hey, I’m just trying to do right by the world we live in,” he remarked in response, a sharp edge to his voice despite being aware of who he was talking to. “There’s a lot of crap going on in the world and I just want to help make things easier for folks. I don’t need to be congratulated for being a decent person, it should

be the very minimum we expect of ourselves.” Unlike some other social media influencers - and boy oh *boy* did he hate that term - Alex didn’t just talk about wanting to see a change in the world, he actively tried to make it happen. He marched in peaceful protests, he donated to bail funds when people had been unlawfully arrested in addition to his monthly charity donations, and he did his best to use his platform on social media to amplify the voices of those who needed to be heard. As a white bisexual man who could easily pass as straight, especially given he had a wife and kids, he knew that his own struggles weren’t anything close to what some people experienced and it was his job to make sure others recognised their privilege and didn’t abuse it. Apparently not everybody felt the same way.

“That’s actually what we wanted to talk to you about today,” the woman on the other end of the line announced in the calm collected tones of an individual used to making important business calls. “You see, we’ve had an issue with one of our players upsetting the other guys in the locker room. He said some rather unsavoury things and although he has apologised to them, our sponsors are concerned that it’s all talk and he hasn’t actually seen the error of his ways. We think your perspective will be really beneficial in actually making a change to his life and, in doing so, help the 49ers be a more positive institution going forth. Our image is only as good as our most scandalous player and... well, this guy needs a makeover, shall we say.”

Alex sighed heavily and furrowed his brow. "I'm really sorry ma'am, I'm just a little confused about what you're asking me to do here. You think me sitting down with this guy and having a chat with him is really gonna do all that much? That's mighty hopeful of you." Truth be told, as calm and collected as Alex kept himself on his social media profiles, he really couldn't stand bigots who thought the colour of their skin or the people they were attracted to or their family background made them better than anyone else. He wasn't necessarily a violent guy but he'd definitely gotten into fist fights with guys who all too carelessly threw around words like "faggot" and "spic". These days he tended to channel that aggression through football, it was part of what made being part of the defensive line so much fun, and was a much healthier way of processing the rage he felt at the shitshow that was his country.

"My apologies for not being clear, we're not asking you to have a conversation with him," the 49ers representative corrected, as polite as ever. "When I mentioned your perspective... we want him to quite literally see things through your eyes for a while. The solution we're proposing is a body swap with partial memory and personality imprinting, one-way of course. We can't afford to be down a player and your coach sent us through a few of your games to prove that you're the real deal. You'll be in his body playing out the season for us and he'll be in your body learning how to be a better man. It's a win-win for everybody involved, right?"

The insane ridiculous and absolutely fucking *crazy* words that he had just been told caused Alex's head to spin. There was no way he could have heard her right, was there, because *what the actual fuck*. "Is this a prank call?" he asked after several long seconds of silence, going back to his initial theory that somebody on his team was playing a prank on him. "You're playing with me, right?"

"No, sir, but we'd like you to be playing for us," came the response in clipped tones. "I appreciate that this proposal may sound crazy to you, Mr Lederman, but I assure you that it's far more common in my line of work than you might think. Athletes are notoriously hot-headed and egotistical and unfortunately can run their mouths a little too much. Imprint swaps are the best way of getting a bad seed to clean up his act and it just so happens that Mr Bosa is at serious risk of tarnishing our team's reputation and you happen to be expertly qualified to help us in this situation, as both a defensive player outside of the NFL, and as an individual with a more open-minded perspective of the world. We feel like Nick Bosa could learn a lot from being you, and in return you'll get to play a whole season of professional football and enjoy all of the luxuries that come with Mr Bosa's lifestyle for the duration of your exchange, as well as an extra pay-packet from the 49ers top brass. As I said, it's a win-win for us all. Wouldn't you agree, Mr Lederman?"

"You're asking me to switch bodies with Nick Bosa," Alex attempted to clarify, earning him a huff of frustration from his conversation partner. "I mean, I'm not dumb enough to say no, even if I'm starting to wonder if my wife slipped something into my morning oats... That's a point. What about my family? If Bosa's as unsavoury as you're suggesting, I don't want to leave them with him..." He let the thought trail off with a shake of his head and then ran his hand through his hair. They were sure asking a lot of him, but then there was no denying the uniqueness of the

request. It was the literal definition of a once in a lifetime opportunity but even looking past that it was an opportunity to help somebody see the error of their ways and make the world a better place. It was a figure in the public eye too, particularly one that had considerable influence over young impressionable men, and so much good could come from being a positive role model for them! He wouldn't just be changing one life, he'd be changing many!

“The memory and personality imprint I referred to means that while Mr Bosa is in your body he will walk, talk and act like you but will also be completely aware of his true identity. Once the football season is complete and we switch the two of you back, that imprint should have left a permanent influence on his mind that he won't be the root of any more scandal for our organisation. We would of course be telling your family as well as the team and although we'll need you focused on training camp during the week I have received reassurances that your family will be flown out on a bi-weekly basis for you to see them at the weekends. Whatever concern you might have, Mr Lederman, know that our organisation has thought of a way to resolve it and make this unique situation as painless for everyone involved as can be.”

Alex took in a couple of deep breaths and thought back to his first days in therapy. His anxiety had always spiked when he was faced with big decisions and it had crippled him throughout his teenage and early adult years. Now though, years later and with a lot more maturity than he'd had then, he didn't feel quite so panicked. In fact, the logical and ethical choice seemed incredibly clear to him. “I need to have a conversation with my wife before I sign anything, but...” he started, looking into the mirror with grim determination, “I'm in. I'll do it.”

To say that Nick Bosa was outraged would be an understatement. He wasn't sure anyone who had ever lived had experienced quite so much fury as he did when he'd been called into a meeting with a few senior members of the 49ers staff and was told that not only would he be missing out the whole next football season but he was expected to give up his body to a total nobody so he could go live on their farm and “learn to be a better person”.

He'd never heard such ridiculous bullshit in his life! He was a plenty good person and it was hardly his fault that there happened to be a bunch of snowflakes on the team who wanted the locker room to be their precious 'safe space' and couldn't take some goddamn jokes. What happened to the good old days where only real men played football rather than a bunch of sensitive pansies? They hadn't even called him out to his face, they'd gone behind his back and reported him to their bosses and now Nick was being punished just because a bunch of libtards had their panties in a twist. They lived in the greatest country of the world and were entitled to free speech so why the fuck should he be punished for speaking his truth?

“This is beyond bullshit,” he spat across the table at the coach. “*Beyond* bullshit! I’m going above your paygrade to tell them how fucking clueless you are, I don’t give a fuck. You’re outta your fuckin’ mind if you think you’re getting to the Super Bowl again next season without me! I’m going to the goddamn commissioner of the whole goddamn NFL and your ass is gonna be fired for even suggesting this!” Never in his life had Nick ever spoken to a coach the way he currently was, but how else was he supposed to react to the news that he was being submitted to a ‘very special’ sensitivity training that would take him out of his own body for half a year? Not only that but he’d be expected to live out that whole time on a farm playing football in a minor league for a local team and be earning not even a tenth of what he was currently on? He might as well just be thrown in prison instead; he’d probably still get better meals!



Despite being confronted by an angry two-hundred-and-sixty-six pound defensive end, the 49ers coach remained infuriatingly calm. His lips were fixed into a thin line and his arms were folded over his chest like a disappointed parent in the middle of scolding their troublesome child. “This isn’t just from me, son,” the coach remarked in an annoyingly steady tone. “All the higher ups for our team agreed to it: the general manager, the chairman, the owner. We got permission from the NFL commissioner too. It’s a done deal, Bosa. You refuse to cooperate and you’re blacklisted from professional football for good... and I’ll be honest, you’ll probably hurt your brother’s prospects too. You don’t wanna ruin Joey’s career as well as your own, do you?”

Although Nick still burned with fiery rage, the mention of his older brother did get him to stop and think for a moment. Even though he and Joey didn’t always see eye to eye and his brother was more liberal in his political views, it was true that Nick still looked up to his big brother and the thought of being responsible for damaging Joey’s career didn’t sit right with him. He was stuck between a rock and a hard place and he fucking hated it. His hands were clenched into tight fists and the blood vessels in his eyes threatened to burst from how tense he was holding himself. After moments of weighing up his options though, he finally released the tension on his muscles and visibly deflated in the office chair. He absolutely hated the proposition that had been placed in front of him but when the alternative was never playing professional football again... well, what choice did he really have? There was no way he was bowing out of the sport after a single season and he definitely wasn’t being forced into an early retirement without earning a Super Bowl ring!

“So what, you’re gonna have this guy play house in my body? Pretend to be me with my brother and the team?” Nick spat, knuckles white as his grip tightened on the arms of his chair. Every

part of his brain was freaking out, he wanted nothing more than to get up and throw the chair at the wall in a blistering display of his rage, but even he had enough sense to know that it would only make the situation even worse. “There’s no way Joey would be cool with this. My family will sue the shit outta the NFL!”

“Actually we have your family on board too,” the coach countered. “We had a meeting with your father yesterday and have his approval in writing. We’ve also already made Joey aware and he... well, it’s not my job to tell you how your brother feels about it. You’ll have the opportunity to ask him. Even though you’ll be living Mr Lederman’s life we do permit bi-weekly visits with family members after the first month, so you won’t completely be cut off from your brother for the entire duration, if that’s what you’re worried about.”

“Why only after the first month?” the 49ers defensive end asked. If looks could kill then Nick’s glare would have murdered the coach several times over already but he was having to bite his tongue for the good of his career. *If only I didn’t love football so goddamn much, I swear to god I’d have my fist smashing against the stupid face of his.* “Can’t I see him sooner?”

“According to the docs it’ll take about a month for you to get acclimated; being exposed to elements from *this* life could jeopardize everything and cost us all a lot of money. Look at it this way, Nick, we could have found you someone a whole lot worse.” Nick bristled with anger once again but before he could even open his mouth to make a sarcastic comment the coach was already continuing: “He’s got a decent body, he plays football on the weekends and you’ll get a bit of peace and quiet while you’re working on his farm. It’s not as if we’re throwing you into a fat slob with a nine-to-five office job.” *Yeah, only because you know I’d come back and make you pay for pulling that shit on me.* “So what’ll it be, Nick? Are you going to play nice and be a team player for us?”

Nick bit back every expletive that threatened to bubble forth and gave a stiff nod. “Yes, coach.”

Alex woke up feeling heavier than he had in his life. He’d always been a pretty lean guy and had only started packing on a bit more muscle in the past few years when he’d joined the minor football league but even with that extra meat on his bones he weighed little more than two-hundred-and-ten pounds. Now he was a whole two-hundred-and-sixty and all of it was firmly packed muscle without even the suggestion of body fat anywhere to be seen. It actually took him a few moments to remember how that was even possible and where he was, because the white ceiling and bright lights definitely weren’t belonging to a room in his home. *You’re in San Francisco at a private medical facility for the 49ers*, he reminded himself as he pushed himself up into a seated position. *Twenty-four hours ago you got sedated and hooked up to a*

machine that switched your body with a professional football player's. Yes, this craziness really is happening. No, no amount of pinching will help you wake up.

Even with a hand moving up the abdominals and pecs that were so much more pronounced than his own it was hard for Alex to believe that he was really waking up to his second day in the body of one Nick Bosa, a defensive end for the San Francisco 49ers. He'd been warned by both his therapist and the 49ers chief doctor that he couldn't afford to get too wrapped up in his own head about it though so he did his best to accept the sheer impossibility of his situation and get to work. He'd spent most of the first day in bed, his head throbbing with pain and his new body sore all over, but he felt surprisingly refreshed and ready to go on his second morning. The team's coach had stopped by the evening before to alert him to the day's plans: morning cardio session in the gym, running drills with a carefully selected group of Nick's teammates, then back to the gym for some weightlifting. After that he'd be in front of the chief doctor again and, all going well, would then be permitted to go back to Nick's luxury pad and properly relax away from private eyes. Alex would be lying if he said he wasn't looking forward to that. Even though he was married, he'd never been good at tearing his eyes away from a beautiful male body and the one he now found himself definitely qualified!

While he had never been terribly disappointed in his own body's performance during physical activity he soon realised that Nick's body was on a whole other level. The powerful legs carried him through a thunderous sprint and he was able to match Bosa's bench press combine score of twenty-nine reps at two-hundred-and-twenty pounds, leaving him pumped up and ready to rumble. He'd never experienced a workout quite so thrilling before and that was only the start! Getting onto the practice field and meeting a handful of his future teammates - the QB Jimmy Garoppolo, FB Kyle Juszczyk and RB Tevin Coleman - was like stepping into the Twilight Zone but the moment they started running drills Alex was in the zone and proving that he he was worthy of being a starter on the team.

By the end of the two-hour session all four men were drenched in sweat and Alex was being clapped on the back like he'd been friends with the professional players for years. Kyle had even called him Nick at one point before correcting his mistake, although Alex insisted that it was fine. They'd have to call him Nick when they were out in public anyway so he needed to get used to his new name sooner or later.

"Let's have a chat while you've got a minute," Jimmy suggested as Alex took a drink break before he was scheduled to test Nick's body out in the weights room. Apparently the stereotype of the Quarterback getting whatever they wanted was true because



Alex's experimental glance towards the doctor who was studying him was met with a nod of approval. "I just wanted to thank you for what you're doing for our team. It's going to be good having you around."

Truthfully Alex's head was still spinning from the fact that somebody he had seen countless times on the television was currently talking to him and being so polite about it too, but he had enough awareness to hold back from a starstruck expression and instead offer a small smile in response. "I'll try not to screw things up or you. This guy's quite the player," he remarked, patting his chest, "The real Nick Bosa, I mean. Second overall draft pick in 2019? Those are some pretty big shoes to fill, man. I don't why your staff thinks I'm the guy to fill them." Was Alex beginning to feel the pressure? Yeah, he sure as hell was, and it was only going to get worse when preseason started and then worse again when the actual season started. *What have you gotten yourself into now, Lederman?*

"Nick's a good player, sure," Jimmy agreed with a gentle shrug of his slender shoulders, "And he's not a terrible guy. Sure, he buys into his hype too much and maybe some of his views don't exactly line up with the rest of the team's but he's a dumb kid really. Spending a bit of time in your shoes is going to do him the world of good, I know it." He clapped a hand down on Alex's bulky trap muscle and flashed him a gorgeous smile with those perfect pearly whites. "As for you... I don't think you need to get worked up about anything. You did good out there and once the whole team's in practice together you'll only feel more comfortable. You're a 49er now, dude. I know it's a football cliché but I really mean it when I say we're a family and that includes you."

"I appreciate that, man. I really do." To a guy like Alex, family was everything. He supposed that was at least one thing he and the real Nick Bosa had in common, even if the kid apparently hadn't known when he was pissing off his work family. Supposedly he had a good relationship with his older brother though and that left Alex feeling a little anxious considering he was scheduled to meet the LA Chargers player the next day. *"The Bosa boys always do press events together outside of season,"* the coach had explained. *"Before the season starts there's some parties Nick's on the guestlist for and Joey's expected to be there with you."* Meeting Nick's teammates was one thing but his actual brother was a whole other hurdle he was going to have to get over.

The rest of the day passed by as little more than a blur and Alex was thrilled to hear that he had the all clear to leave the facility and return to Nick's apartment. Jimmy even drove him there, the Quarterback filling him in with an assorted collection of details about the rest of the team, as well as how Nick had managed to piss off half of the locker room. "Reassuring to know I can't possibly do a worse job, so thanks," Alex joked, even though he did feel a little bit sorry for the guy he was temporarily replacing. From what Jimmy had said it wasn't as if Nick was a bad guy, he was just ignorant of his own privilege and sadly misguided. Putting his own excitement to play football at a professional level aside, Alex really did hope that the other's time on his farm helped him become a more open-minded and well-rounded individual.

Once they had arrived at the apartment block and Alex had located his keys from the bag of things he had been given upon leaving the facility earlier that day, he thanked the other man and promised to see him at the training facility again the following evening. He was experiencing such a cauldron of emotions that he wasn't sure anything could possibly overwhelm him even more, but he hadn't been able to anticipate just what he would find behind the locked door.

If Alex was to compile a list of differences between the family home he shared with his wife and children and the city apartment that Nick lived in, he'd probably spend the whole football season scribbling away at it. In just a few seconds he'd been able to establish that Nick was the kind of guy who threw money around like candy on Halloween and found pleasure in material things. It was a kind of opulence that Alex wasn't used to and, truth be told, it actually made him feel a little queasy. Almost half of the furnishings in his own home he had made himself and much of the rest was recycled but it was evidently the complete opposite for Nick - even something as little as his cutlery drawer was probably worth more money than most of the things Alex owned!

Although Alex had already established some strong feelings about how Nick chose to spend his money and decorate his living space, his gut twisted even further when he risked a glance into the walk-in closet and saw a familiar cap resting on a shelf. It was bright red and a simple four letter phrase was stitched onto it in white: *Make America Great Again*.

Every part of his brain went into immediate revolt and although Alex generally considered himself to be a peaceful and rational guy, a fiery urge to grab that cap and throw it right out of the window of his top-floor apartment sprung up inside of him. Knowing that he was in the body of somebody who had voted for a man that stood for everything he personally loathed made Alex's skin crawl - well, *Nick's* skin crawl. When he looked at the cap he could only see its connotations of oppression and inequality and of the evil that hid behind the false promise of making their country great 'again'. *As if we've ever been great*, he thought bitterly as he grabbed the cap and threw it into the nearest trash can.

After that alarming discovery, he was almost too nervous to continue looking around, lest he find any more conservative propaganda to make him feel physically ill...

Nick couldn't stop staring at the tattoo on his left pectoral: *be nice*. Those six letters and the period felt like they were mocking him. They were a constant reminder that his free will was being limited and that he couldn't speak his own mind because whatever crazy voodoo the NFL doctors had done to him, he was compelled to act like some sensitive dude with small-town dreams who couldn't help but shake his hips along to cheesy pop songs and fuss over the various animals on the farm as if they were members of his own family.



Family. As if he needed the reminder. Nick felt safe in saying that one day he wanted a wife and kids - ideally sons, of course, who would go into football like him and his brother - but he was only twenty-two and being forced into the role of a father to two kids. He even had to play make-pretend husband without any of the benefits; Alex's wife made him sleep in a different room and the most risque he got to be was pressing a gentle kiss on her cheek or her temple. Nick was unbelievably horny and he was glad that whatever magic was on him didn't stop him from accessing porn on his cell phone so he could relieve himself with a bit of self-loving. He didn't feel great about the prospect of touching another guy's dick but desperate times called for desperate measures and all that, right?

Unlike his counterpart Nick hadn't been excessively briefed on all the ins and outs of Alex's life prior to their exchange. That didn't seem to matter too much as his body worked on autopilot as he made his way around the farm doing his daily chores and then spent some

time in the shed crafting a new toybox, something he certainly didn't have the knowledge to do himself. As such, he was hardly surprised when the unexpected happened, but the sudden realisation as he was halfway through a clip of a bimbo getting her pussy plowed that he was also checking out the dude and all of his hot rippling muscles hit him like a freighter. *He's into dudes as well? Oh fuck no*, Nick thought in horror, although it did little to quell the hard length in his hands that was already leaking pre-cum. His eyes moved between the two stars of the video, each of them beautiful in their nudity and, as much as he hated it, Nick realised that he would have happily been in either of their places. *No, no, no, this can't--*

His pleading thoughts of misery were cut off by the point of climax that had him shooting out his full load over his hairy chest and letting out a noise that was somewhere between a growl and a whimper. He hadn't been aware of just how badly he needed an orgasm until that very moment and even though he felt downright dirty he was still glad to experience a little bit of pleasure in what had otherwise been a stressful few weeks. Of course he hadn't been able to express any of his frustrations because his body worked on autopilot whenever he felt like saying what he was thinking. He couldn't even swear properly! Every time he tried to say the word 'faggot' it became 'fudgesticks' and 'whore' became 'homeskillet', like he was some sort of self-censoring dweeb. What the ever-loving heck was that about? He was a grown man, for crying out loud!

Nick was actively counting down the days until his first full month under the guise of Alex Lederman was over because even though it would still be another six months at least (not counting on if the 49ers made the playoffs and the Super Bowl for the second year running, which he doubted without him on the team) he would finally have the opportunity to catch up

with his brother. Even though he and Joey didn't always see eye-to-eye on everything they had always been tight and Nick only hoped that the voodoo on him didn't stop him from being honest with at least his brother. They had to give him something, right? He was certain that if he told Joey about how often he had to clean up animal dung and baby vomit then his brother would for sure find a way to help him back into his body. He couldn't help but think back to his meeting with the coach though - *"it's not my job to tell you how your brother feels about it"* - because what the hell was that supposed to mean? There was no way Joey agreed with what they were doing to him, was there?

In Alex's body Nick was only an inch shorter than he should have been but he never felt more aware of that extra inch until he was face to face with his older brother and forced to look up a little more than he would have liked. At six-foot-three Alex wasn't exactly a slouch but Joey was a full six-foot-five and almost eighty pounds heavier than him too, which Nick was increasingly aware of as his brother's meaty hand slapped down on his shoulder and the impact hurt more than he would care to admit. "Dude, this is so frickin' weird," the older Bosa brother declared, wearing a dopey grin on his face. "Can't believe it's really you in there, bro!"

"Believe me, most days neither can I," Nick muttered in response, even as he pulled his brother in for a tight embrace. His heart thundered in his chest and there were even tears in his eyes, although Nick wasn't quite sure why. He wasn't the kind of guy to show his emotions freely and yet he was totally overwhelmed by the brotherly reunion that he just couldn't help himself. *Of course this dweeb would be the sensitive sort*, Nick thought bitterly as he pulled out of the hug and quickly wiped at his eyes to try and quell any fears his brother might have about him going soft. "Some days I wake up thinking it's all over but nope, I'm still living this nightmare."

Joey's smile slipped slightly in response to the comment. "Come on bro, it can't be that bad. They're telling me you still get to play football," the LA Chargers defensive end pointed out in his typical glass-half-full type way. While the brothers were pretty similar most of the time, that was one area they definitely differed on: Joey always liked seeing the positive in everything and everyone. Personally Nick thought that line of thought was naive and that he was the one with the more realistic approach to life, but he'd also learned a long time ago that there was no talking sense into Joey. They'd only wear themselves out arguing.

"Yeah, at the *weekends* with the *minor leagues*," Nick huffed in response, bristling from the sheer insult of the situation. "Last season I played in the Super Bowl and this year I'm not even playing preseason games!" He was the second goddamn pick overall in his draft year and he was being relegated to playing with losers who only saw football as a hobby. They didn't live and breathe it like Nick and Joey always had; football was their birthright and he was being denied it by a bunch of over-sensitive snowflakes.

Crying about it isn't going to help fix things either, a voice in Nick's head pitched in - a voice that sounded frustratingly like Alex, like a piece of him had remained behind after the switch just to torment Nick with torturous thoughts of rainbows and fluffy unicorns.

"If it's the Super Bowl you're worried about then don't worry bro, it's the Chargers' time this year and I'll make sure there's a seat in the VIP lounge for you," Joey fired back, the annoying grin back on his face. It was just typical Joey: he didn't take anything seriously and somehow managed to make everything in life look so goddamn easy.

Nick could only scoff in response to the comment. "Such a good brother. What would I do without you?" Joey deserved better than the LA Chargers, he just wouldn't admit it. There was no way in hell they were making it to the Super Bowl. His team, the 49ers though? Yeah, that was a little more likely and if they did then Nick would be forced to watch as a stranger filled in his shoes. Truth be told, he selfishly hoped they didn't make the playoffs at all just so he wouldn't have to see that.

"I don't think you've got anything to worry about with him, dude," his brother announced after a brief moment of hesitation. The larger man shifted in his seat, tracing the ring of his coffee cup with the tip of his index finger, notably avoiding eye contact with his body-swapped brother. "From what I've seen, he's got the talent, he's got the drive, and Jimmy says he's been getting on well with the team--"

"Have you been hanging out with him?" Nick cut in, eyes narrowed in suspicion. He didn't even need a vocal response, the guilt flashing across Joey's face gave his answer away instantly. "Dude, what the fuck?! You're supposed to be on my side! You're *my* brother, not his!" A molotov cocktail of emotions had sparked up inside of Nick and he felt ready to explode. "What's next, you gonna say you like him more than me?"

Joey remained infuriatingly quiet for a few moments longer, still not meeting Nick's eyes. "I get that you're upset, dude, but you're talking crazy. I know you're my brother and I'm not gonna forget that any time soon. I also happen to know though that you can be a real jackass and maybe being taught a lesson like this might smarten you up." The older brother's eyes finally rose and the piteous look was a sharp contrast to Nick's own fiery glare. "I really think you're gonna come out of this as a better man and I think in the long run you'll be happier for it too."

Don't say something you'll end up regretting, that intrusive voice in Nick's head advised him as he attempted to digest what his brother - his *best friend*, the guy who was supposed to always have his back - had just said to him. Being betrayed by his coach and his team was one thing, but his brother? *This is all just too much*. "I think you should go now," he croaked out, his throat suddenly dry and the tears returning to his eyes. As his lip began to shake he sharply turned his head away in a desperate attempt to hide the display of vulnerability. "Go. Now. Please!"

Joey lingered for only a moment longer before wisely getting up and departing wordlessly, leaving the younger brother to once again stew in his own bitterness. The conversation had left him in such a foul mood that even a text from Alex's wife reminding him that he had to clean up the chicken pens felt like a welcome distraction. At least the farm animals wouldn't be able to stab him in the back.

Alex's suggestion that he reach out and check in personally with Nick was met with immediate disapproval from the coach, the chief doctor and Nick's brother. Joey had informed them all about Nick's behaviour during their first post-swap reunion and it had left a sour twisting in the bottom of Alex's gut. He didn't feel happy about being the reason for anyone's misery, even somebody who he knew would hate him even if they met under different circumstances. The only thing they really had in common was football - well, that and they were both experiencing the incredibly unique situation of living another man's life. Still, all three of the people he had made his suggestion to informed him that it would be a bad idea and likely only offset any progress Nick had actually made during that first month.

At the very least Alex was glad that he had training camp to throw himself into. He'd met the entire Niners roster and had been welcomed more warmly than he could have possibly anticipated. He couldn't say that training as a professional football player was a dream come true because it was never a dream he'd dared to have, but it was certainly the most thrilling experience of his life. Every time he managed to sack Jimmy during their practice games he couldn't help but let out an almighty roar and flex his extraordinary muscles. Football had always left him pumped up with adrenaline but never to such extremes before, although that seemed to be a running theme with his temporary life as Nick Bosa. Everything was heightened, more intense, faster paced. Alex didn't actually hate it though, he enjoyed rising to the challenge and proving that despite the crazy circumstances he truly belonged among the rest of them.

The first preseason game was right around the corner though and the nerves were finally beginning to creep in. Alex had done his best to avoid getting up in his own head about it but he knew it had been inevitable. Thankfully he had new friends that were right there to keep him level-headed: Garopollo, Juszczyk, and weirdly, Joey Bosa. The four of them were in a local sports bar, each nursing a beer, when Alex decided to finally ask a question that had been on his mind for a while: "What was the tipping point?" When his only responses were confused expressions, he sighed. "With Nick. He's been an ass to folks for a while, right? What was the tipping point that convinced management to step in and organise... *this*." He placed a hand on his muscular chest, as if that totally clarified everything.



“He, uh, called one of the locker room attendants some pretty unsavoury things when he thought the poor guy was flirting with him,” Jimmy confessed in a tight voice. “I don’t wanna be presumptuous but things might have gotten nastier if the coach hadn’t walked in on them.” Beside Jimmy, Joey took a long swig out of his beer bottle and avoided looking in Alex’s directions. He couldn’t exactly blame him, it must have been especially weird to see a family member and knowing that the person looking out through those familiar eyes wasn’t really them.

“Let’s just hope that imprint thing the doc mentioned has done its job by the end of the season,” Kyle remarked, cutting through the uncomfortable silence that had settled over their table. “Then we can all be singing Nick’s praises instead.” The optimism brought a smile to both Alex and Joey’s faces. The group clinked their bottles together, all muttering a quiet “Amen”.

Nick was at war with himself. Never in his life had he been to a protest, his personal opinion was that they achieved nothing other than to allow a bunch of crybabies to pat themselves on the back for being ‘woke’, but there he was amidst the throng of people all chanting together in unison. Alex was of course the kind of guy to march for anything or anyone who had a sob story, but when Alex’s wife had asked if he wanted to march with her to show support for women’s reproductive rights Nick’s quick response of a simple “yes” had slipped out without him having to think about it. He wanted to believe that it was just his body operating on what he had coined ‘Alex Autopilot’ again, but it was starting to seem like more than that - like maybe there was even a part of Nick that was starting to *care* about these things.

It had been small at first. He’d stopped attempting to use slurs as muttered curse words. Then he’d started reading articles about inequality in the workplace. He even found himself getting irate whenever he settled down to watch the news, and the admiration he’d had for their President had certainly waned over the three months he’d spent in Alex’s body. *I guess a lot really does change in a hundred days*, he mused, although his emotions felt more muddled and chaotic than ever. There were times when rebelling against his ‘Alex Autopilot’ was simply too exhausting so he just sat back and allowed it to control his choices. The shame he felt whenever he jerked off to the sight of a hot guy in whatever porn clip he was watching that evening had even died down considerably. He should have been frightened by that... but he wasn’t. It felt good to let the shame and bitterness go.

Staring at all of the people around him, Nick was in awe. He no longer saw them as an army of whiners who were too fragile to accept the reality of life, instead he saw them all as heroes fighting for a good cause. Why shouldn’t a woman have the right to decide what became of her body and what grew inside of it? As he looked at Alex’s wife he saw a strong woman who



deserved to be able to make that choice and although he knew he wasn't really her husband, he wanted her voice to be heard. He wanted to make a stand for her!

The only time Nick felt acutely aware of how much he disliked the situation he was forced into was when he happened to catch news of the Niners on ESPN. The preseason had started and Nick Bosa was supposedly already racking up notoriety for his speed and strength. He was becoming every quarterback's worst nightmare and the real Nick was forced to watch as highlight reels of *his body* were played on loop. Thankfully he could channel that pent up frustration during his own weekly football games, although the crowds were notably smaller and Alex's body wasn't quite as spry as his own and he was always left with throbbing muscles from overexertion after particularly intense games, which he supposed was a side effect of being in an older body. Still, he was glad he hadn't lost football entirely and he felt a strange sense of pride when he saw Alex's family cheering him on from the crowd.

It was after their team had scored a shutout victory that Nick experienced his first kiss with another guy. Josiah, the team's tight end, had grabbed him and smashed their lips together in the locker room and then walked off as if it was no big deal and he hadn't just turned Nick's whole world upside down. Just a few months ago and he would have threatened to beat the guy senseless - or actually gone through with it - but instead he stood there with his whole body humming and a strange tightness in his pants. Against his better judgment he relayed the story to Alex's wife because apparently honesty was another thing the real Alex got super hung up on, and his cheeks burned when she just giggled and gave him her blessing to "have a little fun" because "it's not as if you're actually my husband."

That was just about the worst thing she could have said though because Nick was certain he didn't want to "have fun" with another guy, even one who was tall and well-built and had a gorgeous face like Josiah... did he?

One thing led to another at the post-game party though and the next thing Nick knew he was being pressed up against the wall by a six-foot-six wall of muscle with beautiful brown skin. As pained as he was to admit it, Nick was captivated by the other man's beauty: the hazel eyes, the thick black beard, the way his shirt stretched across the broadness of his pecs. The realization put the defensive end at such a loss that he completely froze up and only regained the ability to move when Josiah's lips were once again crashing against his own and the other man's tongue was requesting entry. The shorter man melted in Josiah's arms, his hands finding their way to the other man's thick neck just to hold him in close as Nick savoured every foreign taste of his

mouth. The disgust he had expected to feel towards himself wasn't even present, washed away by an all-consuming wave of arousal that had him thinking like he never had before.

Nick was most certainly glad that Josiah's apartment was close to the bar they had all ended at because he was so overwhelmed by the strange emotions he was feeling that he couldn't promise he wouldn't do something indecent to the other man in public. Josiah's hand didn't leave Nick's ass the whole way, squeezing the pert globes to provoke excited yelps from his smaller companion. Thankfully it wasn't long until they were in the privacy of four enclosed walls and were stripping out of their clothes, Nick feeling mediocre in front of the huge muscular man which made his physique - Alex's physique - look subpar at best. Just looking at the other prompted a hunger to stir deep inside of him and sent his mind aflutter until he was guided right to the other's chest and began to pepper the strong muscles with sloppy desperate kisses.

When Josiah's thick eight-inch cock was right in front of Nick's face, he could do little more than gaze at it in amazement and awe like it was a monument to the gods. "Well, are you just gonna stare at it all night long?" Josiah asked in his deep voice dripping with desire. "Don't tell me this is your first time with another guy..." The other pulled back slightly and the thought of losing the moment snapped Nick back to consciousness.

"No!" he gasped, his face aflush. "It... it's not my first time. I was just... admiring. You're big." Desperate to prove himself to the other, Nick wrapped his hand around the thick length and gave it a few experimental strokes. "So big... and so hot." Fuelled by experimental fire, Nick leaned in and wrapped his lips around the head of the other's cock. He was immediately rewarded by a groan of relief from the other and the knowledge that he had pleased Josiah made Nick even more bold as he began to take more of the length between his lips. The taste was certainly like nothing he had experienced before but it wasn't unpleasant and the concept of bringing somebody else pleasure rather than focus on his own was actually turning Nick on even more and he casually reached down to tug on his own length - notably smaller than Josiah's, but still good - as he began to bob his head back and forth until he had built up a steady rhythm and the action no longer felt quite so alien to him.

The night hours flew by in mere minutes from Nick's perspective as he brought Josiah to climax once with his lips and then again by riding him like a stallion. Just like sucking his first cock, having another guy inside of him for the first time was a strange sensation but when Josiah hit the sweet spot and sent pleasure rippling throughout his body Nick was quite content to confess that he loved it and felt no shame at the thought of being fucked. Josiah's strong hands had kept a steady grip on his thighs and Nick was so turned on by the experience that he shot his load right over the other man's glorious eight-pack abs. Needless to say, Nick's previous conservative views towards homosexuality had been fucked right out of him - although he was still fairly certain that he was sexually attracted to women too, he could finally see why so many guys loved having gay sex and felt the need to tell the world about it!

Of course, he wasn't ever going to let it happen again and especially not once the football season was over and he was back to his body... right?



Alex was in a pretty frustrating position when it came to sex. He was a married man after all, and a faithful one at that, so he wasn't prepared to cheat on his wife, but they had also agreed that while he was in another man's body it would be too strange for them to sleep together, and so Alex was faced with the prospect of going nearly a full eight months without getting laid. That was bothering him a whole lot more than he actually cared to admit. He was in a young athletic man's body and constantly pumped with adrenaline but there was nothing he could do about it other than jerk off whenever he got a rare moment of privacy. He longed for the touch of another human being and the fact that he was regularly in a locker room with a bunch of partially naked handsome men on an almost daily basis really wasn't helping him quell his near-constant arousal. No, in more ways than one, it made things a whole lot *harder*.

Receiving invitations to hang out with the other guys on the team was hardly an uncommon thing and Alex was a pretty social creature anyway so when the Niners fullback Kyle Juszczyk asked if he wanted to hang out at his apartment on their mid-season bye week Alex of course agreed. What he hadn't expected was to find that he was the only one invited and for his teammate to confess that he had noted Alex's "issue" and wanted to help him out. "Just being a good bro, you know," the other said with a casual shrug, "There's nothing more to it. We'll get some porn on the flatscreen, jerk each other off and then have some beers. We don't even have to kiss. Is it dumb if I say *no homo*?"

Alex let out a short chuckle and rolled his eyes. His initial instinct had been to decline but the more he thought about it, the more he found himself rationalising it. From what he understood about locker room culture it wasn't too terribly uncommon for guys that were on the road to help each other out and they still considered themselves straight. Couldn't he do the same and still consider himself married? There wasn't anything romantic or even really that sexual about it, it was just a bro helping him out with a basic need!

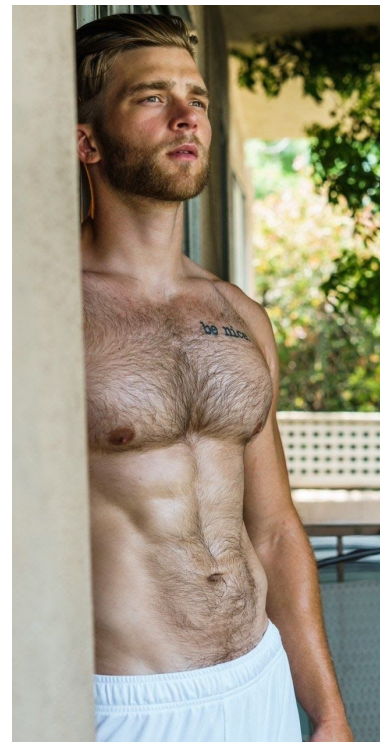
Kyle kept to his word, right down to getting them both some beers once they'd cleaned themselves up, and the two young athletes spent the next few hours shooting the shit while replays of their most recent games played on the thirty-inch screen in front of them. Even

though he had been in Nick's body for almost four months already Alex still wasn't used to the luxuries that came with it. In fact he'd been paying out chunks of his monthly income to various charities around San Francisco, particularly those that worked to get homeless LGBTQ+ teens off the streets. Nick had the platform to do some serious good, especially with the money he earned, but had only ever thought about himself. Alex only hoped that once their arrangement was over Nick wouldn't go back to that selfish behaviour. Had he never experienced the warm glow inside that came from helping somebody just because it was the right thing to do?

Other than his charitable donations it was otherwise business as usual for Nick Bosa, as far as Alex was aware. On the days when the Niners didn't have a game he was at the training complex with the rest of the team running drills and practising plays. Those were fun but the fire was really lit up underneath him when he entered a stadium of roaring football fans and got to help pave the way for the San Francisco 49ers to reach the Super Bowl for the second year running. They were seven games into the season and he had sacked a quarterback at least once in every single one of them - the coach had even said that if he kept it up then he'd be getting Nick's name written into the history books! Alex wasn't proud of it, but something about that comment stung. It was *him* doing all the work and yet Nick would be the one getting all the credit. *Don't get caught up in your own head, Lederman*, he told himself. *You're already winning just by playing at a professional level. You aren't entitled to anything more than that.*

Late night fuck sessions became a post-game ritual for Nick and Josiah. He just couldn't stop himself from climbing the taller man like a tree and letting the other grab at his ass or tug at his hair. Josiah was a physical lover - more physical than anyone Nick had ever been with - and their sex was a whole workout in itself. It was nothing short of incredible, even if the Niners defensive end was always left feeling a little sore for a few days afterwards.

When he wasn't with Josiah though, Nick was fully investing himself in Alex's life. He was being a husband to the guy's wife and a father to his kids. He was looking after the farm: milking the cows, cleaning out the pig stys, caring for the newborn baby lamb. He was working out on a daily basis to sculpt Alex's body further until he could see the outline of his abs and his pecs were more pronounced. He'd been to two more protests since that first one and bought into every word he and the crowd were chanting. He was even getting to enjoy Alex's side career as a model, particularly the experience of showing off the body he was feeling increasingly more comfortable in and the thirst comments that



came whenever he posted the photos on Alex's Instagram page. It was nice to know that no matter what body was in he still had some killer sex appeal and the plus side was that he didn't even mind anymore when guys were the ones hitting on him in the comments!

Alex was going to be playing in the Super Bowl.

Hell must have frozen over or something because he, a small-town nobody, was going to be playing in the biggest football game of the year after a season where he had already broken a number of franchise and NFL records as a member of the 49ers roster. He was well aware that he was in his last week as Nick Bosa but he had every intention of making the most out of every single moment and while he was sure that every other player on his team and their opponents come Sunday had drive and determination, none of them had his unique situation and that was going to push him to be the very best player on the field. The Niners would be winning this year, there was no other alternative.

In a way it wasn't just the high pressure of Sunday's game that was making Alex feel nervous though. The following week he would be returning to his body and living his own life for the first time in eight whole months and that honestly felt more daunting than he had expected it to be.



Despite the weekly video calls with his wife filling him in on what Nick was doing and how he was acting, as well as how their kids were, he felt uncertain about how he would feel going back to a life of normality. Was he still capable of being a good father and a good husband, when he hadn't really done either of those things for the better part of a year. What if he was suddenly terrible at them or worse, no longer found them as rewarding as he once had? What if working on his farm felt like a downgrade and only left him bitter and resentful? It seemed only logical that he was going to miss playing professional football - he'd have to be a fool not to, especially after the record-setting season he'd had. The modest crowds that gathered for his hometown games could never give him the same thrill that tens of thousands of Niners fans chanting "Bosa! Bosa! Bosa!" for him after a successful sack could.

It wasn't just the sport that Alex would miss though he realised as he sat with a handful of his teammates and Nick's brother in a Las Vegas hotel bar one evening. It was no secret that Alex was the kind of guy who felt things deeply and he'd bonded with each of the guys during his time as Nick. Losing those friendships once it was all over, or even just being distanced from them, was upsetting to think about even if he knew it was unfortunately unavoidable. Nick needed his body back and Alex needed to go home and get back to living his life, even if he was sure that his mind would wander back to his "jerking bros" sessions with Kyle, or his competitive workouts with Jimmy, or playing brothers in public with Joey. He only hoped that when Nick took it all back he wouldn't take those relationships for granted.

A heavy hand clapped down on Alex's back, startling him out of his thoughts, and he turned his head to find Joey staring at him with a surprising amount of intensity. "You do us Bosa boys proud on Sunday, yeah?" he remarked in a low voice, his tone making it quite clear that it wasn't exactly a question. "Nick or not, you're my brother now too and I'm gonna be there to cheer you on. Not Nick, *you*. You've got this, man."

Alex was glad that Kyle and Jimmy arrived back at the table with a fresh tray of drinks at that moment because he was pretty sure that he was going to end up crying if Joey kept it up and nobody needed to see Nick Bosa bawling like a baby in a hotel bar!

It was the week after the 49ers had won the Super Bowl and "Nick Bosa" had been named the MVP of the game with four sacks to his name. The real Nick had been right there in the crowd with Alex's family to watch it and was strangely lacking in bitterness as he celebrated his replacement's success. There were even tears in his eyes as he saw his own body being hoisted up onto the shoulders of his teammates to the approving roars of the crowd. It was a moment Nick had wanted since he was a boy but he felt strangely calm considering experiencing it from an outsider's perspective.

Just a week later and he was summoned to the Niners training facility to finally switch back with the man who had managed to change the way Nick viewed the world around him. He no longer scoffed when people pointed out the flaws in their government or got angry when minority groups campaigned to have their basic human rights respected. In the past eight months he had finally learned to listen to those voices and to empathise with their struggles. He'd marched with them and he knew that he would do it again, even when he was back in his body and had so much to make up for. That would only be the start.

By far the biggest change though was his attitude towards the LGBTQ+ society. Nick had always viewed them as a perversion of God's plan for humanity but after experiencing the better part of a year as a bisexual man and learning first hand just how pleasurable sex with another

man could be he knew that he would never again view same-sex relationships with the same disgust he once had. He had a noted history as a bigot, sure, but he wasn't a hypocrite. His time as Alex had helped him see the danger of his words and actions and he wanted to rectify that once he got the opportunity to.

Before they were both ushered into the private alb at the back of the facility Nick finally had the opportunity to come face-to-face with his counterpart and Nick's heart thundered in his chest as the two men clasped hands in greeting. "I can't thank you enough, man," he began, feeling strangely choked up at the prospect of leaving behind a body and life he had become increasingly comfortable with. "Not just for the Super Bowl MVP, although that was definitely neat. You - your life - has taught me so much, man. I promise I'm not gonna fuck this up."

The friendly punch to the shoulder that he received in response was a harsh reminder of his own body's strength, although it was accompanied by a proud smile from the other man. "Yeah, you'd better not or you might end up sitting out for another whole season," Alex teased before pulling his own body in for a tight embrace.



While being held within those strong arms Nick couldn't help but think back to the nights he had spent with Josiah in a similar situation and his cock twitched in delight both at the memory and the thought of being treated to similar fun with his own body. *Apparently the narcissism is still there then*, he joked to himself as he pulled out of the embrace and took a moment to really admire the muscular beauty that was Nick Bosa. *Goddamn.*

Waking up the following morning in his own body for the first time in eight months was nothing short of bizarre. The sudden increase in weight left him feeling like a deadweight as he pulled himself out of bed and he almost dropped right down to his knees as he reintroduced his mind to the concept of moving in a taller and heavier body. Finally seeing his own face reflected back at him in the mirror made the rough start worth it though and tears of joy sprung into Nick's eyes as his newly discovered sensitive side truly appreciated the long awaited reunion. He was finally himself again, the one and only Nick Bosa! Things could finally start getting back to normal, albeit with his more liberal outlook on the world around him.

After a few days though Nick realised that it wasn't just his outlook that had changed. During his late night jerk-off sessions he was surprised to discover that he hadn't reverted to only watching the hot chicks, even though he definitely still appreciated the beauty of their supple skin and perky tits. No, the guys also continued to capture his attention with their big thick cocks and beautiful strong muscles...

Nick couldn't help but think back to how good it had felt being with Josiah and, as shocking as it was, he knew that he still wanted it. That was quite the crazy thought to swallow. He, the previously straight and proud Nick Bosa, wanted another guy to fuck him. Even better, he was pretty sure that he knew somebody who would be more than happy to.

Returning to the Niners facility, he was able to locate the person who had ultimately been responsible for getting him in trouble: the locker room attendant he had called a "disgusting fag who probably sniffed all their dirty jockstraps after practice". Did Nick regret saying that? Yeah, he certainly did now, but he also knew that it would be helpful in helping him get what he wanted from the other. The locker room attendant was older but considerably slighter in build - he couldn't have weighed more than one-seventy and stood several inches shorter than Nick too. Fear had flashed in the other man's eyes as Nick approached but the Niners player held up his hands in an attempted sign of peace.

"Look, dude... I'm sorry. What I said to you was absolutely un-fucking-acceptable and I'm not just saying that because it cost me the season. I mean it, dude. I was out of line and I'm so fucking sorry," Nick apologised. His skin crawled with shame but he forced himself to maintain eye contact and took a step forward. "I had a lot of time to think though and... and *experiment* and I, uh... I want you to fuck me." It was so strange to hear those words spoken by his own voice but Nick knew they were true - it was all he had been craving since his last night with Josiah and he couldn't wait anymore.

The locker room attendant's eyes bulged. "Is this a prank?" he asked in a wavering voice but before he'd even finished the question Nick was shaking his head, grabbing the other's wrist and forcing his hand against the football player's crotch. Colour flushed through the smaller man's cheeks and he stood frozen for several moments before finding his voice again. "You don't have to do this just to make it up to me, you know. The apology was enough."

"I'm not," Nick assured him, closing the distance between them even more, until their chests were pressed together. His pants were really starting to get tight as his cock reacted in delight from the hand being pressed against his bulge. "I want this. I want you to fuck me. *Please*. I've never been more certain about anything in my life." There was no more denying it: his time in Alex had left him with a sexual attraction to men and he was already thinking about how much good it could do for a football player popular with mainstream audiences like himself to come out as a bisexual man. It was a risky career move for sure and would certainly alienate his conservative fanbase but it was the right thing to do and that's all Nick cared about anymore!

As their lips finally pressed together in an aggressive kiss the defensive end finally felt like everything in his life was falling into place. He couldn't wait to have another man ravish him and

even get a bit rough with him in revenge for what Nick had said. He was a tough guy, he could take it. In fact, he welcomed the idea of being punished for being a bad boy. It seemed like his time in Alex had even helped him develop a few kinks too...



Alex was happy to be reunited with his wife and family and working back on his farm but he would be lying if he said that he didn't miss the daily grind that came with being a professional football player. He'd had just a small taste of an incredible life and it had awoken a hunger inside of him that he hadn't expected. His Saturday night football games with the local team and the small crowds they attracted were no longer enough, he wanted to be back in the big leagues! As much as he tried to bottle up that impossible need, it continued to burn deep inside his gut. He wanted to fight his way back up to the top of the mountain again.

Seeing the news story that Nick Bosa had decided to open up about being a bisexual man, Alex felt both bemused and proud of the other for taking such a bold step. Of course, he couldn't help but wonder if his actions in Nick's body with his handsome teammate had anything to do with that, but his wife had also informed him about the sexual relationship Nick had developed with one of his own teammates. Explaining to Josiah that their sex marathons could no longer continue wasn't a fun conversation but it wasn't as if the other man would have believed him if he attempted to tell the truth. At the very least he was able to remain friends with the other,

although Alex still occasionally caught himself checking the dark-skinned man out in their communal showers after practice sessions.

Text messages from the friends he had made during his time as Nick continued to flood in even as he settled back into the flow of his everyday life. Kyle was spending the first few weeks of the offseason catching up on the video games he'd been too tired to play during the season, while Jimmy was planning a romantic trip with his lady friend and Joey had been scouted to be the face of a new line of athleticwear. He even received a few texts from Nick himself, mostly detailing his new relationship with a member of the Niners staff and asking for advice on navigating life as a newly out bisexual man. He appreciated that he hadn't been completely shut out, even if every time they text he found himself longing to be back in the Niners locker room or celebrating a shut-out victory with them in a hotel bar somewhere halfway across the country.

After a month back in his life and feeling progressively antsy with how *ordinary* everything was, an idea struck Alex and, feeling emboldened, he phoned the number that the Niners coach had used to call him almost a year previously. Almost as soon as the coach picked up the call the words began spilling out of Alex's mouth like an avalanche: "Hey coach, it's Nick-- I mean, it's *Alex*." He'd gotten so used to introducing himself as the other man for the better part of the previous year that he was still managing to slip up and that was definitely going to cause some embarrassment down the line. "I just wanted to say that if you - or any coach for that matter - has similar issues with a player like you did with Nick then I'd love to help you guys out again."

A gentle chuckle met him from the other end of the line. "It's hard to let go of the pro football rush, isn't it?" the coach remarked, not sounding surprised in the slightest. "You were one hell of a player this season, Lederman. Straight up exceeded my expectations. Hell, you probably did better than Bosa would have done had we not switched the two of you out, but unfortunately policy dictates I can't keep you in his body even if it would probably be the best thing for the team." Alex beamed at the compliment even though the coach couldn't see him. Truthfully, if he'd been offered the opportunity to stay in Nick's body for the entire off-season and play the following season too, he wasn't sure what he would have said. Would he really have been able to turn that down? *Maybe for the best that it's against policy.*

The coach continued: "That said, you might be onto something with that offer of yours, and you've definitely proved yourself to me at least. There are plenty of guys in the league who could use a re-education like you gave Nick." The line went quiet for a few moments. "In fact, I think I might know a guy..."

