



The dark bedroom has a deafening silence to it. It's always that way the morning after game-day. With all those damn people screaming their heads off while he works, it takes at least 36 hours for his head to feel right. Which isn't fair, to be honest. It isn't like he goes to some strangers office and yells at the top of his lungs while they're doing their job. It's distracting frankly, and a little rude.

The alarm clock starts screaming at precisely 5:00 AM. That's not descriptive writing, by the way. He rigged his alarm clock so he could wake up to a blood curdling scream every morning. When he first set it up, he told his wife it was the only thing that could shake him from his dreams. If he was being honest though, he just wanted to start each day with an audible example of his thought-process. Some people do yoga to start the day. Those people are ass-holes.

He didn't need the alarm clock this particular morning. He had been sitting up, staring at the digital numbers as they went through their 60 second routine. At 5:01, he grunted and begrudgingly got out of bed. Might as well get this day over with. The sooner he did that, the sooner he could come home, eat his porridge and watch reruns of *Cops*. Nothing better than a warm meal in your stomach while watching justice flex its muscle.

He eats a small breakfast before a quick shower and shave. He doesn't touch the mustache with his razor though. That would be insanity. A mustache to a man is like a set of testicles to a gorilla -- the bigger it is, the more respect you get. That was the first thing his father taught him, and that's why he only recruited young offensive lineman with a promising upper-lip. His mustache is the foundation of his career, family and friendships. Always has been, always will be.

The drive to the Woody Hayes Athletic Center is therapeutic. It used to take him 35 minutes to get to work, but he found this great shortcut that cut his drive in half. Who cares if he's ruining someones cornfield, it's not like America needs more vegetables. In his opinion, he's doing the country a favor.

For the fourth week in a row, someone has changed the numbered access-code to the WHAC. All the other staffers say they received an email updating them on the change, but he never gets them. He suspects this is an intentional gesture towards him, and he's almost certain Coach Vrabel, that crazy son of a bitch, is the one who does this. He hasn't had one conversation with Vrabel that didn't end with a threat against himself, his children or his beloved dog, *Iso*.

After 30 minutes of waiting outside, one of the assistants came out and let him in. He headed straight for his office and shut the door. His Sunday morning routine consisted of checking and returning emails, followed by an evaluation of the game-film his assistant puts together for him. After deleting 68 hate-messages from random fans and a very drunk Eddie George, he flipped on his television and started the film.

For some reason, the film started with Joe Bauserman's first play after Braxton's injury against Nebraska. That's unusual -- his assistant usually puts together every drive from the first quarter through the end of the game. He made a mental note to check on that when the huddle broke. He remembers calling a pass play for Bauserman to get him comfortable. After the ball was thrown with what can only be described as a violent inaccuracy, Mike Vrabel's voice boomed from the speakers on his television.



*"Oh hey, nice call walrus. Let sir-chucks a lot hit some poor fan in the head with a heated missile. It's not like our running backs have been dick-punching these guys all game."*

Son of a bitch, Vrabel got a hold of his game-film. He thought about muting it, but he needed to hear the play-call interaction for his notes.

As the film continued, Vrabel's voice grew more and more irritated. The verbal assaults became

increasingly aggressive, with comments like, “*Yes, please, let Bauserman drop back again. His chances of completing this pass are about as great as your chances of having the same job next year,*” and, “*Sure, give Captain over-throw more pass plays in four and a half drives than you did Braxton in nearly three quarters of play*.”

There was a comment that made him angry, “*You probably poop standing up because nothing you do makes sense,*”

and one that stung the worst, “*Iso is the dumbest dog name I have ever heard*”

He couldn't finish it. He decided to take a stroll past the weight room to see if any of his players were showing extra motivation after the loss by doing some unscheduled lifting. He took a left out of his office to avoid walking past Vrabel's office, but he couldn't escape at least one more verbal punch from the maniac.

“I hear you breathing and it sounds like a pregnant walrus with aids,” Vrabel screamed from his office.

There was only one person in the weight room, walking on a treadmill at a slow pace. He could tell by the music (Simon and Garfunkel) that it was Joe Bauserman. This only confirms what he already knew, that Joe was the hardest working guy on the team. That's why he liked Joe. No one else was in here, working to get better.

“Hey Joe, how you feelin' today?”

Joe looks back at him and smiles, “Not too bad coach. The rain always messes with me, makes my hips hurt. Thought I'd come in and work through it.”

“Atta-boy Joe, keep up the hard work. Hey, can you toss me one of those water bottles there?” Joe reaches over to the bucket next to the treadmill, grabs a bottle, and tosses it 30 yards over his head. The bottle hits the fire alarm and sets off the protective water-system that hangs from the ceiling. “Hey don't worry about that. I'll hit up the vending machine.”

It's getting late in the day, his afternoon nap ran a little long, so he packs up and heads out. He reaches the parking lot and sees that someone has let the air out of his tires. Again. After the first few times, he realized he needed to keep an air-pump in his trunk.

When he gets home, he discovers that his wife has not prepared the porridge he had been looking forward to all day, and she forgot to set the DVR to record *Cops*. Grumpy as hell, he decided to call it a day and head for bed. As he rested his head, he chuckles to himself as he remembers something Jim Tressel used to say.

*The two toughest jobs in Ohio are Governor and being the quarterback at Ohio State.*

*My ass*, Jim Bollman thought as he fell asleep.

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