

Pritchard is a God

by

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Pritchard is a God.

Pritchard is also a bodybuilder.

He does not, as many do, body build to increase his mass, although it is a happily accepted bonus.

The rush. Pritchard lifts heavy things for the rush. And He lifts them very well.

6'2, his shoulders wider than a doorway, his abs like doldrums, his pectorals toned into slabs of rock. His legs are sturdier than foundation and his ass could crush beer bottles by clenching. All just an added bonus.

Even his face is muscular, if pug, as if his features are hiding behind solid folds of meat. Or trying to escape. Beady eyes, overpowered by cheekbones. Large lips, always kissing nothing. A flat nose. A tuft of blonde hair, as if by accident. Hitler's dream.

There is something about the sweat that one produces while bodybuilding. There is something about the strain, the sacrifice. The sacrifice.

Pritchard is a God.

He is also his own disciple. He worships.

He bows down to Himself. He sacrifices. Again and again. Feeling that need to lift and lift. To please the god that He is. The God.

He offers the gifts, and accepts them. Offers, accepts. Again. Again.

He is a happy God, being worshipped so.

Pritchard is no one. He is the sole God, and also his own sole worshipper.

Daily, in the local gym --

He knows Natalie, the sweet-ass receptionist. He knows Bob, the fat loser. He is friendly, for a loser. He knows Sylvain, the foreigner, who thinks that trim is good. That is, He knows these people, but He does not. Just as they know that He is Pritchard. And yet they do not know Him. But this is alright. Pritchard knows He is a God.

Pritchard knows Samantha from the grocer's, Mac at the garage, Ger and Lettie and Carla from upstairs, Mr. Hanley from across the hall. But He knows none of them. He takes joy in not knowing them. For they deny his Godliness. He does not interact with heathens. They do not deserve his presence if not in worship.

Instead, Pritchard is a solitary man.

He eats alone. He eats alone a lot. Carbohydrates, proteins, eggs, eggs, eggs.

He sleeps alone. Natalie is a sweet-ass receptionist, but he does not succumb to these urges. Heathens. Sometimes Carla from upstairs smiles that smile at Him. But He does not allow it. He must only worship.

One day, Pritchard is at worship. Dumbbells. Sixty kilos. Sixty reps. Bob is behind Him, leaning on the treadmill. Groaning.

Pritchard just breathes in, breathes out.

A new man enters. Not a big man. But acceptable.

He sees Pritchard. His mouth opens.

Later, in a new room, there are papers in front of this new man.

He says: Pritchard, I am going to make you a God.

Pritchard shakes his head: I am already a God.

The man smiles.

Pritchard signs. And everything changes for Him.

He doesn't see Bob. He doesn't see Natalie, the sweet-ass receptionist or trim Sylvain.

Instead, He walks around other people. More people. Bigger people.

Pritchard smiles more. The new man smiles more still. And always, this new man walks in front of Him. The new man doesn't stop smiling.

Pritchard stands on podiums, always side by side with other big men. But they are men, and Pritchard knows this. He doesn't give them time or attention, although He respects their evident worshipping.

It seems that other people agree with Pritchard.

Little men wearing suits, and holding papers, talk amongst themselves and point at Pritchard and the men.

But mostly at Pritchard.

And when all of the talking stops, some man lifts Pritchard's arms in the air. The people cheer.

This happens again, this time with more people, bigger men. More sweet asses.

And again, his hands are in the air. Cheering. Smiling.

This time, there are cameras pointing. It is a much larger place. Everyone is watching. Every person in the world. People, cameras, sweet asses.

This time, the men are closer to gods. Pritchard does not question Himself. He is a God. And although these men are trying, oh they are trying, they cannot be Pritchard. He smiles as they announce:

PRITCHARD!

Everyone cheers. Every person in the world. Sweet asses run to Him. People smile.

People cheer. People ask Him questions -

How does it feel? What would you say to those who idolise you? Did you ever think

this dream would come true?

And now Pritchard knows. He knows that finally, the world knows.

Pritchard is a God. And everyone knows.

Now, Pritchard embraces the people. Every person that approaches Him is happy.

Always happy. Thanks to Pritchard.

He answers his worshippers' questions. He speaks into cameras. To his worshippers.

He sees Himself on buildings and on newspaper fronts and on televisions. Appearing to his worshippers.

And he sleeps with his sweet-ass worshippers. Lots of sweet-ass worshippers.

The worshippers take up a lot of Pritchard's time. He has many people worshipping Him. They hug Him in the street. They take his hand. They take his body. They send Him letters. They ask Him to be around them. To share his Godliness with them.'

This leaves little time for Pritchard's own worship. For his sacrifice.

Pritchard makes the most of the people's awakening. He eats well. He drinks well. He sleeps well, and in good company.

People's worship of Him is constant and unerring.

After some time, a worshipper stops Pritchard in the street. A disappointing man.

Barely in shape.

It takes some time for Pritchard to recognise - and remember - Bob. Bob the fat loser from the gym. He is less of a loser now, by thirty kilos.

Like many worshippers, he thanks Pritchard for his guidance and dedication. Bob still has faith.

Bob then asks Pritchard for a favour, which worshippers often do. He requests that Pritchard return with Bob to the old gym, to worship. Just like before. Before everyone knew.

Pritchard's new man - the original new man, as there are many new men now, always

behind Pritchard - likes this idea. He tells another new man, who tells another. Suddenly, the world knows. Every person knows. And everyone likes the idea. So they follow Him.

The old gym is full of people now. Smiling men, women, children. Cameras and microphones and camcorders. People smiling. People waiting.

Pritchard prepares for worship, as He once did. Bob watches, also preparing. Pritchard sees that Bob is ready. Everyone is waiting.

His arms are ready. His legs are ready. His back, neck, buttocks, all ready. He begins. Barbell, seventy-five kilos.

But -

He cannot. His arms are ready. His body is ready. But He cannot worship. He looks, confused, to Bob who is worshipping without fail. Comfortably. The men, women, children are not smiling. Pritchard prepares again. He tries. But no.

He cannot. The people are not happy. They do not believe anymore. They do not know.

Pritchard looks at them as they leave. Disinterested.

But He is a God. He is a God.

He is not a God.

Alone, in the gym as He began. For a long time He continues.

Flex, push. No. Nothing.

In the dark, he stops.