

# My brother's cheerleader



That's me, about 10-years-old, fully dressed in my cheerleading uniform for the mighty Huntington Beach Tritons. The Tritons were the Pop Warner team of my older brother, Randall.

The cheerleading squads were made up of the sisters of the football players. We were a mixed bag of trunk-legged fourteen-year-old, weepy six-year-olds, and future high school cheerleaders, who saw this as their opportunity to start bossing us future high school yearbook editors around.

I really, really wanted to be a cheerleader, but my fear of competition and inability to master the kick ball change kept me from ever going any further than the afternoon football fields of Huntington Beach that one season.

Truth is, I mostly just liked the uniforms—pom-poms, blue vans tennis shoes, handmade, pleated skirt. I have had a lifetime habit of choosing a sport by its uniform. It has served me well, because now, the only “sport” I participate in is walking my dogs (for which I wear flip flops and jeans).



That's my brother Randall. He didn't look like much of a threat on the football field, mostly because of his pretty hair. Even when it was covered with a helmet, his cute, sweaty blonde strands were still just precious sticking out the bottom.

At thirteen, Randall was already struggling to learn the delicate balance of being honest and sensitive—something most grown men still haven't mastered. I asked him one night after a game if our cheering helped him while he was on the field.

"No, we can't really even hear you," he said casually as he took a bite of his sloppy joe.

Me, with a jittery, pre-cry voice which is recognizable to anyone who knows me, barely got out, "Oh."

I clearly remember Randall looking at me from across our family dinner table and I know he understood that he had thrown a dagger at my inner-cheerleader.

In a clever move, way beyond his years, he recovered quickly by adding, "But we can **SEE** you out there, and that really helps. Just to **SEE** you there."

Nice one.

More Randall you say:

Happy Birthday Randall

"Every picture tells a story don't it?"