

## Learning Life at 50

By Katie Morris, Daniel Woody, Will Newbill, and Kaylee Koepke

1 – page treatment of the main story

ACT I (scene 1- 5) Ashley Smith is a former American Gladiator, Napalm, now living a less than glamorous bachelor life in Newark, New Jersey. His social life is limited and he is set in his routines until he wakes up one afternoon to a voicemail explaining that his ex-wife, Jenna, is in a coma and he needs to take in his two teenage children, Amy and Scott, despite the fact that he has not had custody for 10 years. He tries to deny the responsibility, but after talking to his boss, Tony, Ashley is convinced that caring for the children is the right thing. The next day Ashley picks up Amy and Scott, and an awkward car ride home sets the stage for a complete life change.

ACT II (6-8) The relationship between Ashley and his children is pretty rocky. They can't take him seriously as a father figure and are too wrapped up in texting friends or playing video games to really get to know him. Soon after moving in, the kids ask to visit Jenna at the hospital. Ashley fails to make it a priority, and after some time Scott loses his temper, leading to their first confrontation as father and son. Other events like Scott carelessly letting Ashley's hamster loose and Amy not inviting Ashley to a father-daughter dance lead to more problems and opportunities to grow. Just as Ashley realizes he has finally found what he's been missing, he receives news that his ex-wife is being released from the hospital and is able to take the kids back. Ashley realizes he isn't happy with his life once the kids are missing. He takes Jenna to court for a custody battle that turns ugly as every detail of Ashley's life is scrutinized.

ACT III (9-12) After a nerve-wracking battle, Ashley is not rewarded with custody, though Amy and Scott acknowledge their appreciation of him as their father. He has no choice but to return to his old life, which feels void without Scott and Amy. With some prompting from Amy, Jenna comes to see that the kids miss Ashley too. She finally reaches out to Ashley, allowing him to have joint custody of the children. Amy and Scott then visit Ashley, cementing Ashley's status as their father. This story will mostly take place on the Internet, as described on the next page.

### Protagonist/Antagonist Characters

- Ashley Smith (hero) - A former American Gladiator and steroid abuser whose family left him during his glory days. He lost contact with his children and lived for himself until he is called to take care of them and forced to finally become the father he never was.
- Amy Smith (heroine) – Ashley's 15-year-old daughter. She is a typical teenager and questions Ashley's abilities to provide as a father, but becomes a friend as they find a common interest.
- Scott Smith (anti-hero/threshold guardian) – Ashley's 17-year-old son who considers himself the man of the house. He struggles to gain respect for Ashley, but as he watches Ashley change, his respect for him grows.
- Jenna Smith (antagonist) – Ashley's ex-wife who wants him out of their kids' lives. She is a protective mother who only wants the best for her kids, and realizes that Ashley may be that.
- Rick Smith (shape shifter)– Ashley's father's poor examples and lack of affection negatively impacted Ashley's life and his ability to be a good father. As he sees that Ashley changed he admits his mistakes and offers to help.
- Hector O'Conner (shadow) – A corrupt doctor who supplied Ashley with steroids. He gets arrested as he testifies about Ashley's steroid usage, implicating himself as a dealer.

### Other Main Characters

- Martin Williams (herald) – Ashley's therapist who watches him grow and learns to trust him.
- Tony Russo (mentor) – Ashley's boss and mentor who opens up as a friend to Ashley.
- Joseph Brown (trickster) – Skeptical diner worker who ends up supporting Ashley.