

The bell rang and Kid the fox bolted from his seat in a hurry. He had to get to his locker just a little ways down the hall. Scurrying past the other students, Kid rushed out of the room and around the corner in spite of the hall monitor's protests to "stop running in the halls!" The short fox just barely made it ahead of the crowds of students pouring out from their classrooms, just in time to open his locker and pocket his lunch money. He might actually make it to the cafeteria before *he* showed up. But then a familiar sound froze the little fox in place, his blood running ice cold.

The crowd parted like the Red Sea leaving more than ample space for Ronan to come skateboarding down the hall, a sick guitar riff playing in his wake. He was the epitome of *cool*: leather jacket, spiked wristbands and slick sunglasses, even when it was dark outside.

He was also a big bully.

"Sup little man. You got my lunch money ready?"

Kid had no choice but to turn and face him. After all, everyone kept saying you're supposed to stand up to bullies right? Of course no one told those people that this particular raccoon bully was over twice his size. Kid had to crane his neck just to look him in the face.

"I've already told you, Ronan, it's not *your* lunch money, it's *mine*." Kid huffed, trying his best to seem brave.

"That's where you're wrong, kiddo. Now fork it over." Ronan sneered.

Kid had no choice but to make a break for it – he took off as fast as he could. At least, he tried to. Try as he might, he didn't seem to be *going anywhere* no matter how fast his legs went. That was when he realized Ronan had simply pinned his tail to the ground with one foot.

Ronan was done playing around. The raccoon snatched the little fox up off the ground by his tail and dangled him upside down.

Kid crossed his arms in frustration and grumbled.

With a hearty shake, Ronan separated Kid from his lunch money as the loose change in his pockets clattered to the floor below along with his beloved baseball cap.

"There, all paid up. Thank you for your patronage." Ronan chuckled.

With Kid's locker still ajar, Ronan couldn't pass up the opportunity for some classic bullying. With one firm thrust, the raccoon shoved Kid clear into his own locker, stuffing the little fox in the small metal storage container head over heels.

"Until next time, little baby man. And don't forget your silly hat!" Ronan let out a hearty laugh as he gingerly placed Kid's baseball cap over his snout and slammed the locker shut, plunging the little fox into darkness.

Kid waited, rather uncomfortably, for the sounds of lingering students to dissipate – no point freeing himself just to get mocked by his peers *again*. Once it was quiet, he tried his best to brace his feet against the locker door and pushed with whatever strength he could muster. His locker door,

however, seemed a touch harder to force open than usual. Kid gave another firm kick and the thin metal door rattled, but did not give way. Heaving a disgruntled sigh, Kid put all his might into it and kicked as hard as he could. To his surprise, something gave way, but instead of the door opening in front of him, the little fox fell out the back of his locker.

The little fox landed softly on his back as he found himself thrust into bright sunlight. Kid shielded his eyes and shook his head in disbelief. How on earth did he get outside?

“Well hey there, little buddy!” A deep friendly voice boomed out and a looming shadow swept over the prone fox as a huge, furry face came into view, blocking out the sun. “Why so glum?”

Kid blinked and rubbed his eyes. Surely he was seeing things. Towering over him was the biggest, friendliest looking bear he had ever seen. The little fox sat up and shook his head in disbelief. The cartoonishly jolly, tubby, overall-clad fellow before him had to be at least ten feet tall and surely had to weigh several hundred pounds by the looks of it. Stranger still was the place he found himself in. Not only was the inside of his locker apparently bright and sunny, but it also had a sprawling meadow of pillowy-soft grass studded with whimsical dancing flowers.

“So what brings a little fellow like you to a place like this? Kids like you ought to be in school ya know.”

Kid groaned. “I *was* in school, before I got stuffed in my locker by that jerk, Ronan.”

“Gosh, well that just ain't right. Tell you what, why don't ya come back to my place and tell me all about it over lunch. You seem mighty famished.”

“No thanks, I'm- uh, not hungry?” Kid tried to explain, picking up his hat and returning it to its rightful place atop his tiny fox head while attempting to avoid making eye contact with the overly-friendly bear.

Kid's tummy, however, betrayed him, by growling in protest at the thought of being denied a free meal.

“Well then, that settles it. Come on now, upsie-daisy!” The bear bent over and gingerly picked the fox up by the scruff of his neck, easily lifting kid off the ground and depositing him on his broad, fuzzy shoulder. Kid in tow, the bear waddled off towards a cozy-looking cottage nestled in the distant trees, the ground shuddering gently with each step.

The pair finally arrived at the cottage, and the bear let Kid slide down his back so the bear could squeeze through the remarkably small front door. Bending forwards, he pushed his way into the door frame but halfway through it was apparent that the bear's massive bottom had gotten stuck.

“Eh-heh, you, uh mind givin' a fellow a hand back there?” The bear nervously chuckled.

Kid shrugged and pressed his back into the bear's tail and dug his feet into the ground.

“Why- hnnng- is your door- hnnng- so small?” Kid grunted before falling backwards as the bear plunged through the tiny aperture with a crash and clatter of pots and pans immediately following.

Dusting himself off, Kid rushed inside to make sure the bear was still alright. After separating a

metal pot from the bear's head, it was apparent the big lug was just fine.

“Well sorry about that, little buddy. Guess I've put on a few pounds lately. But you know how it is, gotta keep the tummy satisfied.” The bear chuckled heartily, patting his expansive belly, causing it to jiggle gently. “Now, about that lunch I promised you.”

“No, it's fine, really.” Kid tried to reassure the bear, but his belly grumbled loudly to insist otherwise.

“Well I can't just let you leave without you trying one of my delicious signature sandwiches! Besides, you look like you could use a little meat on your bones!”

The bear rummaged through their cupboards and hastily assembled a sizable sandwich with all the fixings and plopped it down right in the middle of his small, wooden table. True to his word, it did look quite delicious, and Kid *was* really hungry.

Kid hopped up on a little wooden chair and pulled the sandwich closer. It didn't seem remotely suspicious at all. Picking up the rather hefty meal, Kid chowed down with gusto. The little fox stopped briefly every now and then to tell the amiable bear about himself. He ate and ate, putting away the entire sandwich in a matter of minutes before leaning back in his chair and relaxing contently.

“I'll be, Kid! You sure eat like a champ, little man! How about another one, huh? I'll bet a fellow like you's still hungry.”

The little fox was about to turn down the offer for seconds when his tummy let out another angry growl. Somehow he was still famished, despite the entire sandwich he'd just scarfed down.

“I'll take that as a yes! My cooking is irresistible, if I do say so myself.” The bear grinned from ear to ear and tugged on his overall straps proudly before letting them snap back into place and returning to the kitchen counter to whip up another sandwich, this one even bigger.

Kid couldn't help himself – it just looked so tasty and he was still so *hungry*. The little fox wolfed down the entire thing without giving it a second thought, finishing it off with a hearty belch before patting his bloated tummy in satisfaction.

Wait, was his tummy always that big? It was starting to poke out from under his t-shirt.

Kid scratched his head in confusion, but before he could put one and two together, the bear interrupted his train of thought.

“Delicious, huh? And I'll bet you're still hungry for more.” The bear gave a hearty laugh and slammed another sandwich down in front of Kid. This one was even bigger than the last two, and was packed with twice as many layers of fixings.

“Well I couldn't possibly let it go to waste.” Kid replied with a startlingly deep chuckle.

Kid wrapped his paws around the sandwich and chowed down, polishing off the entire meal with little effort. As he leaned back, his chair creaked dangerously and the table gently tilted upwards as it rested against Kid's tummy which was now definitely *much* bigger than he remembered it.

“One good meal deserves another, I always say, guh-huh!” The bear let out a rather goofy laugh as he hefted the largest sandwich Kid had ever seen in his entire life onto the table which struggled to support its sheer massiveness!

Kid found himself letting out an involuntary laugh alongside the bear, a dumb grin spreading across his face. He was feeling somewhat lightheaded – it was harder and harder to think straight or focus. But he didn't have to think much to decide that the sandwich in front of him looked like the tastiest thing he'd ever seen.

It took a while, but Kid somehow managed to reduce the entire sandwich to nothing more than a few bread crumbs and a glob or two of condiments stuck to his thick, brown furry claws. He couldn't let those tasty morsels go to waste, so he eagerly licked them clean one by one. Satisfied, Kid once again leaned back in his tiny wooden chair which was struggling to support him.

With the sound of splintering wood, the chair gave up the fight and shattered underneath Kid's now-massive behind. Kid landed on the cottage floor with a sound not unlike a timpani going *BOING*, sending a ripple traveling up and down his jiggly belly which was not even remotely covered by his tiny shirt which only barely fit him now.

The bear and Kid shared a hearty laugh as the former helped the latter onto his feet.

“Well, Kid, you sure eat like a bear if ever I saw one, guh-huh!” A cuckoo clock hanging from the far wall sounded off the time, interrupting the bear's laughter. “Would ya look at the time. You'd better get back to school now. Don't be afraid to drop by for lunch again some day, ya hear?”

Kid chuckled and squeezed his oversized backside through the front door, needing only a slight shove from his friend to get through. He waved goodbye and waddled his way back towards the meadow where a dark floating rectangle hovered in midair – the inside of his locker. Kid tried his best to *squeeeeeeze* his way back into the tiny space. His new friend, seeing this, waddled over to lend a hand, giving him a hearty shove.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the thin metal door, Ronan, accompanied by yet another sick guitar riff, had returned for the little fox's after-lunch bullying session. No sooner than raccoon had opened the locker door did Kid come spilling out, landing atop the bully with yet another *KER-BOING!* Ronan suddenly found himself buried underneath several hundred pounds of bear tummy sprawled on top of him.

Kid stood up and scratched his head.

“Well shucks, are you alright?” He asked in remarkably friendly, very bassy voice.

Ronan, who was now flattened and plastered to the oversized bear's belly could only groan in response.

Kid peeled the would-be bully off of himself and shook him out, letting the paper-thin raccoon dangle helplessly from his broad bear claws.

“Gosh, you look a little thin there, buddy. I know just the person you should see!” With a dumb grin, Kid carefully rolled up the floppy raccoon and passed him through the locker into the sunny meadow

on the other side. Satisfied, Kid lumbered off to his next class, the windows rattling with every step. He was happier than usual – but most of all, he was excited for what supper would bring.