

A Gift To Grow Into

In New York, it is no surprise that the streets were busy to no end. Sometimes it is like the only place you can find some peace and quiet would be underground in the sewers-

HOOONK

-if not for a certain group of turtles who called the sewers of NYC home. Sliding around a corner, a modified subway car—the aptly named “Shellraiser”—came to a screeching halt, just a hair away from colliding into equipment that took so much time and effort to get. Settling back from the momentum, the car gave a loud creak as one of the doors quickly slid open. “OH, THANK WHOEVER YOU ARE IN THE SKY!” Out of the car flew two humanoid turtles, one wearing a red mask and the other purple. They fell to the ground, kissing the stable surface and apologizing for taking it for granted.

As the two sang their praises to the floor, an orange-masked turtle hopped out of the driver side. “Oh, come on, guys! It wasn’t that bad! I’m sure after a bit more practice, I’ll be the best driver here!~” As he twirled the keys on one of his fingers, another hand snatched them from him.

“No more practice, Mikey...” Leonardo sighed deeply as he set the keys down on one of the work benches that lined the wall. “Not for a while...” He kept his composure pretty well, but he was feeling a lot like his brothers, Raphael and Donatello.

With his heartrate finally at a rested level, Raphael looked up from the ground he just finished praising to see a small, loosely wrapped package in front of him with a little tag that said, “Leo” on it. “Hey, Leo! You expecting something?”

“Not really, why?” Raphael held up the package for him to take. He silently read the label, but it was hard to read his face to guess what it could have said. Then, adding to the mystery, he simply turned away and walked to his bedroom. The door closed and locked gently as the other Turtles watched in confusion.

“Well...?” Michelangelo broke the silence, “Did we get anything, too?!”

Leonardo paced back and forth, clutching the package in his hands as he read the note attached over and over. ““For my **BIGGEST** rival, ❤️ Karai’...S-she put a heart!! What is she trying to say?? Am I just a rival; am I more than a rival?? Am I reading too much into this or not enough?! What even is it?!” He finally began to tear at the wrapping paper, eager to see what the gift was, and his heart nearly stopped seeing the black jewelry box that was now in his hands. The thought of what is usually in these things broadcasted throughout his head as he nervously opened it to see...a necklace. Just a simple necklace, aside from the brilliant jade stone that was strung on it. Leonardo picked it up to inspect it; he could see that it was carved to look like a little round man. “Uhh...why would she send me this? I mean...I’m not exactly an accessorizing kind of guy, and even if I was, I don’t know if I’d pick something like-“

Before he could finish his thought, an imaginary Karai appeared in his head. “Oh...you didn’t like my gift? N-no, it’s fine...It’s not like my feelings are severely hurt because of it...” Then, without another thought, Leonardo took the necklace and put it on. He walked over to his mirror, seeing how it looked on him. The jade stone must have caught the light for a second, because he could have sworn that he saw it flash brilliantly. Turning it in his hand, he could not find that magic spot again, so he quickly moved on. He was not really sure why he was fiddling around with it in the first place, anyway. He has had that necklace for quite a while, so it was not like he was going to find something new to admire about it.

His gaze in the mirror moved away from his necklace and to his body as a whole. He was rather lean and lightly muscled all around—very appropriate for a ninja. If it were not for all the training they did, all that

pizza they eat would probably do some real damage. ***grrMMBle*** Speaking of. The thought of pizza had Leo feeling a bit peckish. Luckily, there was some sitting on his bedside table ready to snack on. He quickly ate a slice as a knock at his door grabbed his attention.

Mikey was peeking around the doorway, trying to get his bro's attention. "Yo, Leo, you almost done in there?"

"Yeah, just having a quick snack." Leo wiped the grease from his mouth as he grabbed another slice of pizza.

"Alright, man, we'll wait for ya in the dojo, then! We're about to start some new training regiment I think." Mikey stood so that more of his body was visible through the door, and to Leo, it almost looked as though there *was* more of his body. It was slight, but Mikey's little belly was still noticeable.

"You look like you could use some training. Getting a little soft there, aren't you?" Leo pointed at the slight bit of flab, prompting a scoff from the orange masked turtle.

"Heh, you're one to talk, big guy. Anyway, dojo-time!" Mikey zoomed out of view, but just as quickly popped his head back around the corner. "Oh! I almost forgot.~" His head then disappeared with his butt appearing instead. Before Leo could ask him what he was doing, a trumpet of gas escaped the turtles rear, running off with a laugh.

"That's disgusting, Mikey!" Leo plopped down onto his bed, knocking back his fifth slice of pizza. After swallowing the slice, another rumble came from his middle. The rumbling grew in volume before stopping suddenly. Leo had a contemplative look on his face before leaning to the side. ***FRRRRRRRT*** "Heh, that's how you do it.~" Leo gave his chubby gut a congratulatory pat as he grabbed another slice. Keeping a big turtle like him fed did not come without its 'drawbacks', but it was not like his brothers were different. It is pretty common to catch the turtles having little 'contests' to see who could let out the loudest blasts when their master was not around.

Double fisting the last two slices of pizza in the box, Leo finished off his 'light snack' with a sigh which got cut off with a bombastic ***buuAARRRRP***. Rubbing his belly contentedly, the turtle remembered that training was about to begin. With some effort, he heaved himself off of his bed, his breath heavy from the task. As he began to waddle out of his bedroom, he stopped to look at the mirror. Turning to fully face it, he chuckled at the fact that his sides far exceeded the space the mirror reflected. He could barely even imagine the possibility of being thin in any sense of the word.

There was just so much of him to admire, he imagined that if he was thin, he would not spend as much time in front of the mirror. He was very proud of the body he has crafted for himself: his soft chest which bounced as he walked; his round, globular gut that would sometimes brush doorways on both sides as he walked through; his thighs that would rub together and spread out as he sat. Turning around, he could see one of his crowning achievements: his massive rear. He could not wait to get down to the stable and pin Mikey underneath him to show him how a real turtle lets it rip.~ Eager to start the training, he quickly waddled out of his bedroom, briefly getting stuck at the door which only drove his thoughts more to becoming the biggest turtle he can be.

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