Winner: MeloBird

Prompt: Justin encounters a hose. He would probably be surprised to see the hose. Hose is filled with water. End up on back.

The air was chilly, but Justin managed to work up a sweat anyways. Miles and miles away from civilization, the young hyena slowly but steadily climbed the steep incline of the mountain side, his quads burning with every step. He had been warned this mountain was a dozy of a hike, as evidenced by his sweat-covered shirt, but he was determined to make it to the top. He had been told the view was simply out of this world, a view of an enormous gorge covered in beautiful chrysanthemums that spread on for hundreds of miles, and that wasn’t something he wanted to miss while on vacation. Justin loved the outdoors, the feeling of escaping the mundane lifestyle he had grown all too bored of. Out here in the woods, he didn’t have to worry about scraping together enough money for rent, or if he was looking his best out in public. While he could live without the feeling of his legs about to snap in two at any second (seriously, how tall *is* this mountain?) the hyena was certainly in his element.

A harsh cool wind blew in front of him, rattling his necklace chain. Even with his overheated body, the hyena felt himself shivering at the sudden change in temperature, a smile creeping along his spotted muzzle. “At last…should be almost there,” he muttered hoarsely, suddenly aware of how parched his lips were. He had been climbing uphill for the past few hours now, naturally he would be rather thirsty. Pausing for a break, the brown canine stopped to unsling his backpack, only to go wide-eyed when there was no backpack to unsling. “No…please don’t tell me I left it back at the lodge!” Justin gulped nervously, painfully aware of how dry his throat was. He was in real trouble now; any experienced hiker could tell you how dangerous it is to hike for miles without bottled water on hand. He had to go back, or risk passing out on the side of a mountain, a rather steep mountain at that. But…he looked towards the peak once more, a steady whimper emanating from his muzzle. He was so close, to get a once in a life time sight of a beautiful scene that he would cherish for years on end! Besides, he still had saliva he could swallow, right? And maybe he could find another hiker nearby and ask for a sip of their spare water.

Gulping once again, Justin strode forward, making sure to breathe through his nose this time. He came here to enjoy himself, not to worry. Step by step he rose higher, the trees thinning out to reveal a clear sight of the peak. “Almost there,” he muttered to himself, imagining the rows upon rows of brilliant yellow and red flowers, flowing like a river of gold in between hills of green. The hyena’s eyes widened as he got closer and closer, his heart pounding with anticipation, forcing himself to ignore his rising thirst.

That is, until he heard the sound of water running.

Justin halted in his tracks and swiveled around, his round ears raised. The noise of water dripping onto the ground was too high pitched to belong to a stream or river, which meant it most likely belonged to someone else dumping water! He was too thirsty to wonder why this person was spilling the precious liquid; instead, he turned away from the path and shuffled into the woods. Hopefully this *was* water he was hearing, and not another hiker stopping for a bathroom break. But, if there was another hiker, they most likely carried bottle water with them, and all he needed was a few gulps to keep himself going the rest of the hike. Further and further the hyena went, keeping track of where the path was in the back of his mind as he searched for the elusive hiker. Imagine his surprise when, instead of a person, he stumbled upon a hose leaking water.

A hose dangling from the sky, no less.

Justin had to wipe his eyes to make sure he wasn’t suddenly delirious. “This can’t be real,” the hyena thought out loud, craning his head back as far as he could to search for the end of the hose. But there was no end, just miles of rubber that tethered from somewhere beyond the thick grey clouds above. Looking back down, the hyena saw that the water was actually falling onto a field of small chrysanthemums, and suddenly it all made sense to him. Someone was growing flowers, of course! Maybe there was another mountain above the clouds that housed a facility for these kind of things.

Proud of his deduction, Justin grabbed the end of the hose and raised it higher, lapping at the stream. Cool and refreshing, as if it was the stream of a melting glacier. The taste of it alone made the hyena realize just how thirsty he was. Maybe it was his dehydrated-induced dizziness that caused him to throw caution to the wind, or perhaps he just *really* liked the taste of water, but whatever the case the hyena plugged the hose into his mouth and drank away.

Immediate relief spread throughout his overheated body as the water coursed down his throat, filling up his stomach and then some. Justin sighed through his nose and closed his eyes, resting his paws on his middle. In a matter of minutes, he could feel his abdomen start to gradually swell with water, his once hollow middle starting to pooch out a bit into a beerless beer belly. Never again would he take the cool, refreshing deliciousness of glacier water for granted. It really was a shame he didn’t bring his backpack with him; he’d have love to fill up any empty bottles with this.

Sadly, all great things must come to an end, as Justin noticed he was starting to become quite bloated. Folding his ears, he reached forward to grab the end of the hose to pull it off.

A big mistake.

The moment his paws were in contact, an electric current coursed through the apparently-nonrubber material, zapping Justin in place. The electricity was weak, not enough to hurt him (although it did send his fur standing on end), but it was obvious that whoever sent the current had different motives than to harm the hyena. Eyes wide with literal shock, the spotted canine tried to pry his paws off of the hose but to no avail; he was soundly stuck drinking from the hose!

While all of this was going down, Justin’s belly proceeded to pooch out from beneath his shirt, now exposed to the frigid air. By the time he realized he was trap, the button to his shorts sprung out, sending his sloshing gut surging forward nearly half a foot. From there, Justin could do little more than watch as his shirt rose higher and higher, his entire midsection now swelling with water. Amazing how quickly he went from dehydrated to overhydrated, he thought to himself amidst the obvious panic he was feeling.

The hyena shuddered as he felt his stomach automatically send the excess water throughout his entire body in an attempt to better store it. The resulting osmosis left Justin feeling more than just a little sloshy, his spotted hide stretching to make room for the liquid. Instead of lifting his shirt, Justin was filling it out with his broader chest and torso, whimpering as he felt a tear form around the sleeves. The same could be said for his shorts, which were filled past maximum occupancy with his broad, tube-like thighs. Much to his embarrassment, his shorts starting ripping not along his legs, but by his rear, exposing his expanding rump to the entire mountain side.

“This has to stop!” Justin mentally screamed, frantically trying to get a response from his paralyzed muscles. His arms and legs simply wouldn’t move, and it seemed less likely that they would anytime soon as they swelled into thick tubes of jiggling fur. Turning his head was a no-go as well, his cheeks having stretched to accommodate for the rush of water, turning them into brown, rippling water balloons. With a growl, the canine realized his only course of option was to fall onto his rump and hope the force would be enough to jolt the hose out of his mouth. At least the landing would be soft.

Closing his eyes, the pear-shaped hyena leaned back and fell, not just on his butt, but onto his broad back with an intense *FLUMP* that sent dust into the air. From his new perspective, Justin could see just how far his gut spilled in front of him, a miniature hill of fur and liquid, but he finally had his arms free of the hose, laying spread eagle on his back.

Unfortunately, the hose was still in his muzzle, and Justin was too bloated to do anything about it.

He whined and tried reaching for it, but his chest was simply too broad and full to even reach his breast. To make matters worse, laying on his back somehow sped up the flow of water, causing him to noticeably grow even faster than before! The canine whined, forced to drink and watch his belly swell past the bushes, past the boulder, even past the trees! His burdened limbs were swallowed up by the all-encompassing middle, leaving only a fraction of the canine’s chubby head visible beneath himself. Many of his features expanded and molded into each other, leaving him a singular blob that swelled out 20 feet in all directions! Justin’s eyes started to close as he felt himself start to drift off due to his overwhelming fullness, watching as his vision was slowly filled with himself…himself, and a blinding blue light!

Justin couldn’t hear much other than the sloshing of his own stomach, but he was certain he felt the presence of two beings beside him just then! He moaned, grunted, snorted, made all manner of noises that weren’t just jiggling in an attempt to grab their attention, to say that yes, there was a hyena attached to this water tank. Much to his relief, he did manage to hear voices from them, but they were unlike any other voices he had heard before, for they were speaking directly inside his mind, using his voice!

“What a peculiar observation. Make sure to inscribe that the need for dihydrogen monoxide isn’t exclusive to this planet’s native fauna. It appears this other organic being was attracted to our outlet and has unknowingly became a subject of experimentation.”

What the hell was happening?! Justin couldn’t move his neck to look at the two figures, but he knew they were quite literally unworldly! They were literally holding a conversation in his brain at this very moment, even borrowing his voice to do it!

“Indeed, I shall take note of it immediately. However, this creature appears to have gorged itself into a state of immobility. Perhaps it plans on entering a state of hibernation once it finishes its consumption. I must say, the elasticity of its skin is quite remarkable. Not even the Kel-Morians of Sector 7 were able to inflate themselves to such a size!”

No! He wasn’t doing this intentionally! Justin whimpered softly, feeling his bulk pressing and morphing heavily against the surrounding forest. Did the aliens not know that it was the electric current that kept him stuck to the hose, and that he was still drinking because he couldn’t reach it anymore?!

“Quite so. Should we move on now? There are still several other areas we were stationed to douse with this H2O substance before we can return to the mothership.”

Yes! Oh god, please leave and take this hose out! The hyena tried pleading loudly with his thoughts if these creatures were telekinetic, telling them how his species weren’t meant to be knocking over trees with their bulk.

“We should…later. It seems there are still we do not know about these Earthlings, such as their limits. I propose we wait until it finishes consuming the liquid before moving on.”

“Proposal accepted.”

Justin didn’t even have the energy to whine at this point. This was what he wanted, wasn’t it? To be a part of nature, even if it meant literally overtaking nature with his water-filled bulk? He had enough to drink at least, even if it was enough to not only completely cover the peak of the mountain, but to gradually spill into the gorge below, overtaking the miles of beautiful, untouched land with his own body over the course of dozens of hours.

And that is the story of how Justin replaced the gorge as the town’s #1 tourist attraction.