

What a fantastic day to be out and about on such a nice spring day. The sun was beaming down, making the fresh air pleasantly warm. Mika had gone pet shopping with his friend Russ. The two were enjoying seeing all the dogs scamper around playing with each other. Russ had always wanted to get a canine companion, but always lacked the confidence of picking out the right pet. That's where Mika came in. Together they would most certainly pick out the right pet. Or so he had thought. They had spent a good couple of hours together petting and looking at each of the options available. Most of the available breeds in the store were either very energetic or too big. Each dog had its merit, but none was the right fit for Russ. The blue bear sighed as he brushed off loose fur from his black t-shirt. He walked away from the play area. He had grown frustrated with himself, being unable to come to a decision already. Mika, the hyena quickly followed behind.

"Aww come on Russ, we'll find the perfect pet for you! I promise. Picking a right dog takes time." Mika reassured as he followed his friend down the pet supplies aisle. Russ shrugged.

"Well, what kind of dog do you have in mind? Are you looking for a specific breed or a personality?" Mika continued. Russ gave it some consideration.

"Well, I've been really wanting to get a corgi lately. I really love that breed and—" Although Russ's attention was caught by the collars that Mika was standing behind. Russ couldn't help but chuckle a bit at the words "Small dogs" written display pointing down at the oblivious Mika. Russ tried to stifle his laughter, as Mika's eyebrow raised.

"What's so funny?" He looked around, trying to find out why his friend was laughing.

"Sorry, sorry! It's the sign above you." Russ laughed as Mika looked up. He took one look at the sign and rolled his eyes.

“Who are you calling a short dog?” He tried to put on his best scowl but it was obvious to tell he was faking it.

“Now now, no need to be upset!” Russ taunted. The two had a good chuckle as the bear picked up one of the collars, holding it up to be level with Mika’s neck.

“Actually, it looks like it’s the perfect size for you!” Russ commented, holding it up near the hyena’s neck. Mika opened his mouth to disagree, but the more he looked at the collar. The more he seemed his friend was right. It was good to see his friend being their normal goofy self again. Russ’s eyes lit up.

“Well, go on then! Put it on!” Russ urged as he placed the collar into his friend’s hand. The bear watched in anticipation, watching the hyena look at the collar. He had picked that collar out especially. The nylon’s blue color was an exact match to the hyena’s blue paw pads. In the amusement of both himself and for his friend, Mika put the collar around his neck. The buckle clicked audibly. It was a pleasant fit. It was a snug and comfortable fit against his neck. There was just the perfect amount of slack for it to be comfortable. Mika couldn’t help but feel a powerful sense of joy and excitement spread through him from the collar. His tail began twitching around a bit, being unable to contain the emotions. The strong feeling began to subside but didn’t quite disappear entirely. He adjusted the collar on his neck so it was centered. Russ was overjoyed seeing his excited friend. He gave Mika a teasing pat on the head. Mika began to open his mouth to pant, but quickly closed it and recomposed himself. Okay, the joke was funny, but it was time to take it off. Mika raised his hands behind his neck to take the collar off, feeling the collar’s buckle in his grasp. Try as he might, he couldn’t bring himself to unlatch it. The emotional buzz was still there. Mika felt so full of energy and joy. The more he thought about it, the more he wanted to keep it on. Mika blushed a bit with a guilty smile.

“I think I’ll buy the collar and wear it out. You want to meet me at the entrance?” Mika pointed over to the cash registers. It seemed like Russ had been caught in the middle of a thought as he was startled.

“Oh yeah, okay. I’ll meet you there soon!” Russ waved as Mika went on ahead.

While waiting at the checkout, Mika was fixated on his collar. He considered taking it off. It would be much too awkward explaining why he was wearing something meant for a dog. Although he couldn’t bare the thought of taking it off either. Luckily the others in the checkout either didn’t notice or didn’t mind. Everyone was acting like everything was normal. Right before approaching checkout he straightened the collar again like one would a tie; making sure it looked the best on him. The checker was quite confused, not seeing anything on the belt to be purchased. Mika gulped and tucked his tail between his legs nervously before pointing to the collar. He stood in dread, waiting for the cashier to give him grief for wearing a collar meant for pets. Quite the opposite happened. The cashier scanned the collar around his neck and proceeded like it was normal. Mika at least expected an odd look or be asked to take it off.

“Good dog!” The cashier cheerfully thanked Mika as he paid for his collar. A shiver of excitement went down his back at those words. Surprisingly it hadn’t been said in an ironic or in a mocking way. They had said it like one would praise a dog. It was a tad embarrassing. Quickly recomposing himself, he grabbed his change and hurried to the stores exit.

Mika waited by the entrance, checking his watch. He had agreed to meet Russ here after he bought his collar, though the bear was nowhere to be seen. He checked his watch again. It had only

been a couple minute wait in line. He was about to pull out his cellphone to give a call, when Russ finally stepped through the sliding glass doorway. He was carrying a plastic bag in his hand.

“Sorry about the wait! The line was pretty long in there” Russ apologized. Mika was certainly confused. He hadn’t seen Russ get in line behind him, although he had been focused on his collar. He must have stepped in line when he rushed out.

“I thought you weren’t going to get anything yet until you found a pet dog.” Mika questioned as he looked at the bag curious as to what his friend had picked out. Russ brushed the question off.

“Hey, want to go to the park today? Figured the nice weather makes it a perfect day to go for a walk!” Mika got a rush of excitement at the suggestion.

“Yeah, that sounds great! Let’s go!” His tail twitched in eagerness before hastily leading the way.

The sidewalks were relatively quiet and peaceful as the two walked towards the park. Despite Mika’s hurry. He had fallen behind in his lead. He had to keep a brisk pace to keep up with Russ. It was strange. Normally they walked together at such a leisurely pace. Now, he was having to put in a little bit of effort to keep up. Unbeknownst to Mika, his arms and legs had begun to shrink down. His frame was starting to look stout. Buildings, people walking about, and even the sidewalk itself appeared bigger as he followed along behind Russ. Inch by inch Mika shrunk down, having to walk that much faster on his stubby legs. Mika had never been so happy to stop at a crosswalk. He looked up at his friend Russ, glad to be by his side again and not walking behind playing catch up. A strange thought passed through his head as he looked up. Russ looked different. Though that couldn’t be the case. People don’t change in a day. That was impossible. The longer he looked up at his friend, the more he swore something was off. Russ appeared so much bigger now than he did earlier today. Not only was Mika having to tilt his neck

upward to look at him, but Russ appeared a bit heavier. It was as if he had packed on some pounds during their walk. Russ took notice of his friend staring up at him.

“Oops, sorry. Forgot my legs are longer than yours!” Russ smiled. Mika felt a bit of relief. Not only for the slower pace, but of ease of his doubts. That’s right, he had always been shorter than his friend. Russ would have mentioned if something was amiss. Maybe he had stood on something to be at eye level earlier. Russ began walking a bit slower allowing Mika walk at a much easier stride for his short legs. The sound of metal clinking caught Mika’s ear. He stopped to listen. His ears twitched as he listened for the sound. It had stopped. Although as he began walking again, the sound continued. The tips of Mika’s ears began to stretch out, growing longer and pointing upward. His new tall canine-like ears twitched, listening for where the metal noise was coming from. His ears finally honed-in on where the sound was coming from. It was coming from his collar. He reached up and felt around his collar. His hand came across a metal dog tag in the shape of a dog bone. His fingers moved across the metallic surface, feeling at the engravings etched in. Strange. He didn’t remember buying a tag with the collar. Something seemed off, though the longer he tried to rationalize it, the more it seemed to fade from his mind. What was wrong again? He had just been thinking about something, but the worry had faded completely. Mika shrugged. It was probably nothing.

Mika wasn’t the only one experiencing changes. Russ was starting to look heavier as pounds were slowly added to his frame. His jeans hugged tightly across his waist. His shirt was lifting itself up slightly, letting a small glimpse of his round belly peak out. He stopped in place to tuck in his shirt. It had fit perfectly fine a moment ago. He paused a moment to look down at his long-sleeved shirt. He could have sworn he put on a regular t-shirt. Russ was a bit more oblivious to the changes happening around him. His mind having an easier time filling in the gaps of discrepancy. The reason his shirt had a pocket

was he had chosen to wear his dress shirt today. Although he was starting to regret dressing up as nicely in his long-sleeved shirt. The shirt was rather warm, and it didn't exactly hide his muffin top he now sported. Russ rolled up his long sleeves and fanned himself off. The combination of his growing gut and shirt was making him feel warm in the sunny weather. Mika looked up at Russ, watching them fan themselves. Something about this whole situation seemed off somehow, but he couldn't quite put his finger on what it could even be.

"Hey Russ?" Mika reached up and tugged at his friend's shirt to grab their attention. The bear looked down at Mika with a smile.

"What's up Shorty?" Russ teased as he knelt to be more at eye level with his friend. He knew Mika always got embarrassed by that nickname. Although Mika's tail began wagging a bit exposing his secret enjoyment from the nickname. As his tail twitched it began shrinking down inch by inch. It resembled a stubby nub than a long tail he had once had.

"Does anything seem off to you? I can't help but feel something is different." Mika voicing his suspicion. Russ gave it some thought. Looking carefully at his friend. Nothing seemed to be off or strange. Mika was still his normal self. His corgi friend had always been of short stature. Russ ruffled the hair on the pint-sized anthro corgi. His fingers had plumped up, becoming big and fatty.

"Nothing new, besides that cute new collar your wearing Shorty!" He laughed as he stood back up. This seemed to fade Mika's concern. His friend would have known if something was wrong. He began feeling more at ease. Everything was as it should be. It was all his mind playing tricks on him. As Russ stood up from kneeling, the light must have caught him just at the right angle but seemed like there were a couple of white hairs in the bear's scruffy muzzle. Mika pushed the observation out of his mind. It was as Russ said. Nothing was different.

The two friends enjoyed their stroll through the park. Though Russ was looking forward to reclining on a shaded bench in the park. Putting his feet up sounded so great right now. His paws were starting to ache under his heavy weight. Mika had a much easier time staying ahead during their walk despite his small legs. The corgi, was filled with energy; excited to be out on their walk. Russ's muzzle had gotten quite bristly, appearing as if he had a mustache. His blue fur color had dulled, now having a slight grey tone to it. It wasn't just his body that had aged. His outfit had aged as well. What started out as a simple black t-shirt had turned into white button up shirt. The belt had become a pair of suspenders keeping up his tan dress pants. Russ, who had started out a young adult bear earlier today more resembled a middle-aged dad. Despite such a rapid change, neither bear nor dog noticed. For in a sense, nothing had changed for them. It was as if reality was rewriting itself, so this was how things were and always have been. Mika was never a hyena; he was a corgi like he always had been. A rather portly shaped one at that too. Russ had always been a big bear, although through the years it seemed to add more weight to him. He had grown quite hefty and rotund. Though despite the bulkier frame, the weight wore well.

Russ let out a loud sigh as he stretched his legs out as he rested on the park bench. His dress shirt's buttons bowed out while trying to contain his round gut. He wiggled his toes, enjoying the relief of burden on his paws. It felt good to rest a bit. Perhaps he overdid it today with that long of a walk. Mika swung his legs back and forth, his feet unable to reach the ground while sitting. Russ took notice of the corgi's restlessness. He reached into the shopping bag and pulled out a bright red brand new frisbee. Mika eagerly hopped down off the bench, his butt wagging excitedly along with its short tail.

"I suppose someone wants to play catch, huh?" Russ said as he slowly pushed himself off the bench. The corgi had already run a good distance, eagerly awaiting the toss. Russ teased a couple of

tosses, not letting go of the frisbee much to the chagrin of Mika. Each time they teasingly tossed it, he would hold his breath in anticipation. Finally, after enough taunting, Russ finally threw it. Mika's eyes went wide in excitement. He was going to catch it! He watched it carefully, seeing it soar over his head. He quickly chased after it, bound determined to get that frisbee. When it was finally within reach, Mika reached up and tried to grab it. For whatever reason his fingers weren't working right as the disk merely bounced off his hand, fumbling down on the ground.

Feeling frustrated at his failed catch, he reached down to pick the frisbee up. His paw merely slid along the plastic surface, unable to grasp it. His fingers didn't seem to work quite right. It was as if nearly all dexterity had left his hands. Curiously, he looked down at his hands wondering what the cause was. That's when he noticed; What had once been fingers were short, useless, and clumsy paws. He could barely wiggle his degraded digits. As Mika stared at his new paws, a strange dizziness enveloped his mind. His hind legs began feeling weaker, getting harder to stand on his feet. Even with the struggle to stay upward, Mika fell over and landed on his front paws. He tried to push himself back up, but despite the effort, they couldn't get very far. Wondering what was going on with his legs he turned his head back to see. His hips were now starting to resemble hindquarters, making them more suited for scampering around on all fours. Kicking his legs around only confirmed that they no longer bent in the way they had been before, keeping him stuck on the ground. His feet had changed too, having changed to be digitigrade and more suited to the new posture. The last thing Mika noticed as his torso; It was rounding and elongating out. He could just about feel the grass touch his rather stout torso. He had become a feral corgi. His mind felt like it was in a strange fog, only knowing something was wrong. Mika opened his mouth, calling out for Russ. Surely now he would see something was wrong. Although the only thing that came out of his muzzle was a couple of barks. Russ slowly walked up to the corgi, using his cane to help him walk in the grass.



“Aww come now Shorty, just because you missed the frisbee doesn’t mean you need to go into a barking fit!” The old bear laughed. Mika could feel the bear’s paw gently scratch behind his ear. All the anxiety melted away. He closed his eyes, taking in the scratches. It felt so good for the back of his ears to be rubbed. Mika panted and wagged his butt, enjoying the moment.

“Yeaah, that’s a good dog! Know how into playing fetch you get short stuff!” The greying bear reassured. The corgi looked up happily at his elderly master. The years had given him quite the bushy muzzle and brows. although for Mika the large soft bear was the same as he ever was. Russ clipped the lead back onto Mika’s collar, and with a bit of effort and help from his walking stick, pushed himself standing again. The portly corgi grabbed his frisbee in their mouth and packed it around.

“Come on boy, lets go home. Think Ol’ Russ has had plenty of walkies today!” Russ gave a hearty laugh. He was quite ready for a nap in his chair with his favorite pet corgi on his lap.