A Globophobiac's Nightmare

The sun shone in through the window into the colorful room. The room itself was an ordinary boys room. There was a wardrobe,dresser, a desk and an older model tv. The floors were littered with toys and plushies, In a corner of the room stood a pretty standard kids bed. In said bed lay a fox. This was Tera and he was 6 years old just about to turn 7. And this is the story of his 7th birthday.

Tera yawned as he sat up in bed. He rubbed the sleep from his eyes with his paws. Still half asleep he stood up from the bed and started to get dressed. The green t-shirt went on first and then he pulled on his blue shorts over his cartoon underwear. He opened the door and walked out into the hall. He could hear a puffing sound but ignored it and went into the bathroom. He looked at himself in the mirror for a while inspecting his brown and white fur and blue eyes. He thought that he looked older than he did but this was probably just his imagination because he was turning 7 today. He went about doing his business and then washed his paws before exiting the bathroom. There it was again, that whooshing sound. Continuing to ignore it he started to walk down the stairs to the ground floor. As he descended the final steps down into the living room he saw what had been causing the whooshing sound. In the middle of the living room stood his mother Jen. She was a beautiful fox about 165cm with brown and white fur and red hair. The puffing sound was the sound of her blowing up balloons. When she saw Tera she tied off the last balloon and then she did spoke

“Good morning sweetie”

“G-good morning mom” Tera stuttered, feeling very nervous as he saw the amount of balloons there was in the room.

Tera had a very unusual fear. He had a fear of balloons and his mother knew this. But she hoped that he had grown out of it since he was now 7 years old.

“Hurry up and eat your breakfast before your friends get here.” Jen said.

At her command Tera hurried into the kitchen only to discover even more balloons decorating the ceiling. Very nervous he navigated the kitchen, avoiding as many balloons as he could, before making it to the fridge and getting out the milk and then navigating over to the cupboard, where they kept the bowls and cereal. Lastly he sat down at the table and made himself some cereal. His eyes darted around the room as he ate his breakfast.Frightened that the balloons would pop. Wondering if - no when it would happen. They would pop. He was sure of it. He would just prefer it if he was nowhere near them when it happened.He looked at the clock which read 12:00 and then heard the doorbell ring.

“Can you get the door sweetie?” He heard his mother yell from the living room.

“Alright mom.” He responded as he walked over to the sink with his empty bowl.

His mom had been busy that morning There were even more balloons decorating the hall and the inside of the front door. He slowly opened the door and was greeted by a group of kids from his school and their parents and even some of their siblings.

“Happy birthday!” They cheered in chorus.

“Thanks,” Tera responded meekly as he let them into the house.

Soon the house was filled with the sound of kids laughing and yelling. Most of the kids had been invited because they were in the same grade as Tera, even if he wasn’t really friends with them. He knew their names of course, but there were only a few he knew more personally. His closest friends were there of course. There was Jessica. She was a snow white bunny that he had known since kindergarten. Bradley, a gray wolf that he had met in first grade. And Winston, a shy and timid dog.

As Tera scanned the room he also spotted a familiar shape. A small squirrel that wasn’t older than 1, He wasn’t really sure why she had been invited but his mom had invited her friends and their kids as well.

Suddenly Tera felt something hit him in the shoulder and he winced. He then heard a very familiar laugh. It was James the school bully. Now Tera was very confused as to why he had been invited, He had told his mother several times about James bullying him, but apparently she had not listened.

It was within about 10 minutes of the guests arriving that it happened. Tera was talking to Jessica and Bradley and all of a sudden...

\*BANG\*

Tera visibly winced out of fear.

“Are you okay?” Jessica asked puzzled.

“Ye-yeah It just took me by surprise is all.” Not wanting to admit to his fear he tried to play it cool.

Every now and then there would be an audible bang and Tera would jump a bit more each time. Not too long after the guests had arrived they had eaten cake, he opened the presents. There had been some cool games and toys in the presents. And every time that a balloon popped, James had seen that Tera would visibly tense up and he had managed to put two and two together. The grown ups had now moved into the kitchen, so that they could talk and have some coffee while the kids were playing. Tera was sitting around talking to his friends when he heard his name called out.

“Hey Tera!” It was James calling out to him. In his paws he held a big red balloon and before Tera could even react, James popped it.

“ What’s wrong, scared of balloons?” He taunted as he stomped down and popped another one.

“N-no” Tera whimpered with tears in his eyes

Before he knew it the rest of the kids joined in, popping every balloon they could find. Tera tried to run, but James caught up to him and pinned him to the ground.

“Please stop! Please! Please! Please!” Tera begged, tears streaming down his face. James just laughed at the poor fox who was starting to hyperventilate.

“Stop it you bully!” Jessica shouted at James.

“Or what?” James said nonchalantly.

“Can’t you see he is having an anxiety attack?”

“So? It’s his fault for being scared of stupid balloons.

The kids continued popping every balloon they could find, laughing at the poor helpless fox. Jessica set off running to the kitchen to get an adult.

When Jen finally entered the living room again, she could see Tera on the floor bawling his eyes out and almost unable to breath.

“Alright kids that’s enough!” She went over and picked up Tera and carried him to his room.

Once in his room she sat him down on his bed.

“Thank you mom.” Tera sniffled.

“I thought you were over this silly stuff.” Jen began.

“You’re 7 years old for fox sake. You're too old to be scared of a little bang.”

“But I can’t help it!” Tera cried out, not believing what his mother was saying.

“You wait here while I take care of some things.”

His mother then left the room and told the guests politely that the party was over. 10 minutes later she returned to his room with her hands behind her back.

“Now I’m going to teach you to not be such a scaredy cat.” She produced a big yellow balloon and a pin.

“Noooo!” Whimpered Tera.

\*BANG\*

He started crying again.

“Now since you’re being such a baby,I’m going to have you pop every single balloon that is left. Maybe after that you won’t be so scared anymore.”

“I-I won’t. I won’t do it!” Tera said defiantly

“Well either you do it or I’m gonna do it while you watch. It’s up to you.”

And so Tera popped every single balloon that was left in the house. Sobbing whilst doing so. When he was finally done, he went back to his room and cried himself to sleep. This had been the worst birthday yet and he dreaded his next one even more, knowing that he was not over his fear.