

Act Your Age at the Mall

Hunter whimpered as his mom led him into the family restroom by the paw. Thanks to his insistence that she allow him to wear a t-shirt and shorts over his Barney onesie, he looked for all the world like a normal twelve-year-old being led toward the changing tables. Both the Scooby-Doo t-shirt and shorts were hand-me-downs from Koda, even though Koda was four years younger than him.

“Mommy, I really can wait until we get home.” He whispered, hoping not to draw the attention of the moms changing their cubs.

“I am not letting you stay in a messy diaper until we get home.” The lioness replied at a normal volume, but it was far too loud in Hunter’s opinion. “Now, hop up on the changing table.” Hunter complied, grateful that no one had really noticed the sheer size of the cub that his mom had on the changing table. “You’re too old to be whining.” The lioness said. “How old are you again?”

“Twelve.” Hunter mumbled.

“What was that?”

“Twelve.” That caused a few ears to rise around the room and Hunter whimpered.

“Mommy will be quick.” The lioness promised. She tugged down Hunter’s shorts, completely removing them, to his embarrassment. As long as she put them back on after, everything would be fine. “Do you want your pacifier?”

“No, thanks.” Hunter figured that remembering his manners was his best bet to avoid an embarrassing prolongment of the change. His mom considered whether or not to give it to him anyway.

“Alright, but any more whining and it’s going in.”

“Yes, mommy.” Hunter said, entirely a demure little boy. She undid his onesie and yanked both it and the Scooby-Doo t-shirt he wore over it all the way up to his armpits, giving her easy access to his drooping Pampers Cruisers. To his ears, the rip of the tapes was as loud as thunder, but as Mommy began to clean him, his thoughts wandered. As much as he hated to admit it, in the week since Koda had made him into a big baby bedwetter, Hunter had had so many diaper changes, he had lost count. Unless something went wrong, he just let happen what needed to happen.

“Uh-oh.” Mommy said. Hunter looked at her. Even though she had said it calmly, that was never a good thing to hear when your entire lower half was up in the air.

“What?” He asked.

“Oh, Mommy was silly and accidentally packed your nini diapies instead of your daytime ones.” She said with a smile. “Well, a diaper’s a diaper.”

“But they’re so thick!”

“Maybe you can go a couple hours without needing a change then, hmm?” She tickled his belly.

“Mommy!” The lioness smacked his thigh.

“Hunter, I’ll give you one more chance to stop the whining or it’ll be paci time!” Hunter grumbled, but did not say anything else as she resumed his change. He wiggled as he always did when she rubbed baby powder into his weewee. He rolled his eyes. A few nights ago, Mommy had started a new game at bath time. She would ask Hunter to point out body parts of his. She would ask him where his tummy or tushie or weewee or toesy poesies were and he’d have to

point and loudly announce the body part. Koda clearly loved seeing his mom insist that his big brother use toddler terms. It had gotten to the point where Hunter thought in those terms as well.

“Mommy’s all done!” She said as she taped the diaper around his waist. She checked to make sure he was leakproof, taking the opportunity to realign his onesie and button it over the puffy mass around his waist. The onesie was easily stretchy enough to fit over it, but whereas his Pampers Cruisers had only left a slight puff that you would only notice if you looked for it, this diaper seemed to loudly proclaim his baby status. “Let’s see about getting your shorts back on.” Mommy said, easing them up Hunter’s legs. He knew before she even reached his knees that there was no hope, but what would they do? To her credit, Mommy tried four or five times before giving up.

“They don’t fit!” Hunter moaned. “But I need my shorts.”

“You’ll just have to go without them, kiddo.” Mommy said.

“But Mommy!” Fast as a gunslinger, Mommy whipped out the pacifier and got it into Hunter’s mouth.

“I warned you about whining. Now, it’s not that far to the car. No one will mind if you’re not wearing pants.” Sitting him up, she removed his t-shirt, revealing Barney’s smiling face to the world. Seeing her son’s face, she kissed his nose. “It would’ve looked silly to have two shirts on and no pants.” The twelve-year-old gnawed on the pacifier bulb.

She helped him off of the changing table, Hunter’s body naturally assuming a bow-legged stance to accommodate the thick diaper. He hated how, after only a week, his body seemed totally accustomed to being diapered. His mom kissed the top of his head.

“Can Mommy’s little helper throw his icky stinky diaper away?” She handed it to him without waiting for a response. Looking around, Hunter saw a trash bin right next to the

changing table, but it had a big red and white sign that said Out of Order. The only other one was clear across the room. With an angry mutter, he began to waddle toward it, trying not to look at his reflection in every mirror that he passed. He knew even without looking that he had lost all twelve-year-old appearances and had become nothing more than an oversized toddler.

Perhaps it was the nature of the spell that Koda had cast, but no one seemed to question the twelve-year-old waddling in their midst. All the comments he heard were exclamations about how adorable he was and what a big boy he was for helping his mommy throw away his yucky diaper. Seeing his grouchy expression, Mommy kneeled down the moment he returned to her and checked his diaper.

“The way you’re glaring, I thought you were messy again already!” She said, patting his diapered bottom. “Let’s get going.” She took his paw and began to walk, moving nice and slowly to accommodate her son’s wide waddle. “We’re parked on the far side of the mall, but Mommy’s in no hurry, sweetie.” She said, smiling.