The cave networks carved out by the waters running into Lake Hylia were a winding, almost endless maze. Link had wandered into the cave in his wolf form while following a scent trail, and he was now deep within the dripping darkness. His animal eyes helped him see through the night, but the floor was slippery and the terrain uneven. His paws occasionally skittered across the floor, making him growl, especially when Midna teased him from the surrounding shadows.

"Come on mutt, keep a steady footing! You're the one who wanted to come sniffing around in here for... I'm not sure what since all you do is bark at me," Midna said in her impish, teasing voice. Link rolled his eyes and tossed his mane. "Yeah yeah I know. Wait... Do you hear that?"

She went quiet, and Link turned his ears around to try and listen. There was a sound like the water flowing, but not quite. It was rhythmic, thicker... His ears went upright. Chus! He jumped backwards as globs of sentient slime fell from the ceiling and hit the floor with a series of splats. He counted three splats, average size. Easy. He crouched down, snarled, and pounced with claws and fangs. He bit down on the nearest Chu.

Instead of splattering into lifeless jelly, it clung to his muzzle and pushed until it parted his teeth. The entire glob of goop slithered in slowly, forcing itself down the canine's throat. It caught him off guard, stunning him, and he only managed to skitter back a couple of steps. His hesitation made the mess worse, as the other two slimes joined the first, and the entire mass of slime slid down his throat, making his belly sag between his legs. He struggled to stay standing as the weight threatened to slide his feet apart on the wet ground.

"Geeze, what was that?" Midna piped up again. "Hungry after all this spelunking? I've never seen you do that before." Her voice was teasing, but concerned. "Weird Chus too. Maybe we should get out of here," she suggested.

Wolf Link nodded and he turned, his stomach swaying as he did so, and began to waddle off through the network of caves. He was able to sniff his way out, but he was still deep, and slower now that he had three Chus worth of jelly wobbling around in his middle. He crept over the rocky terrain, occasionally sliding as he misstepped from underestimating his weight. Every stumble made the irritable wolf growl.

Despite his struggles he pushed onwards, sniffing out the wisps of fresh air that led back to the outside. After several minutes of walking with a swaying belly he adjusted to it, just in time to catch the sound of more Chus approaching. He stopped, hesitant, and listened for them. They were coming from ahead, and behind, and he couldn't quite tell how many there were. At least as many as last time, probably more.

He got ready to try and get past them without a fight, not wanting to risk chomping down on them if they were the kind from earlier. He crouched, listening, waiting for them to get close... He jumped! Unfortunately, he was heavier than he was used to, and he didn't get enough air clearance. The slimes reached up and grabbed at his back legs and dragged him to the ground. He fell with a bark, and his belly squashed on impact. He tried to wiggle away, but the Chus

were flowing around his body and up towards his mouth. He clawed the ground with his front legs, but there was no getting away.

The Chus pushed against his muzzle from both sides, making his cheeks stretch a bit before pumping down his throat. He tried to growl, and his fur prickled, and the wolf tried chomping down on the monsters to try and injure them, but the blobs of goo were unphased. He was helpless in his prone position as his stomach swelled up between his four legs and slowly lifted him up. He staggered to his feet and struggled to move forwards, wading through slime that was halfway up his legs. His increasing weight and the growing size of his middle only added to how cumbersome moving was, especially as his stomach started to push out against his legs.



His limbs started to bloat up too as his overfilled stomach found other places to push the incoming slime. He could feel his legs getting heavier, and their thickness made it harder to bend them at the joints. He whined as his mobility was stolen from him little by little. Everything from the weight of his body, to the squish of his bloated joints, to the friction of his stomach against the ground; it was worrying for the adventurous dog.

He grew almost too heavy to stay standing, but before his legs gave out, his stomach hit the stone ground. His ears stood up and he snapped to attention, stopping all struggling at the

strange feeling of his stomach spreading on the ground while he was standing on all fours. In that moment of surprise, the last of the slime leaped down his throat. He swallowed with a bark, and shook himself once he was free of the slimes he had been forced to swallow. Small globs of leftover goo flew from his fur and stuck to the sides of the cave walls.

Wolf Link was having even more trouble moving now than he was before. His stomach pushed his thickened legs out to the side, making his stance uncomfortably wide. His legs were splayed out, and so heavy that he could hardly lift his paws. They hit the stone floor with heavy *plops* that sent shockwaves of wobbles across his body. On top of that, he was having to drag his own belly along the floor. He was making progress... but only a couple of inches a minute. He was panting with the effort of lugging around his slime-belly while fighting the thickness-induced stiffness of his own limbs.



"Geeze, this is no good. We'll be in here all day at this rate." Midna sighed. "You okay though? You don't look too roughed up." Her wolf nodded, indicating that he was alright. "Good. So this is really just a big annoyance for us both then huh? Emphasis on big." She couldn't help but giggle. "Well, keep going! We've gotta be more than halfway."

Wolf Link shook himself and pushed onwards, dragging himself through the caves one inch at a time. The trek was harder than the way in, and every upward shift in the incline of the rock made him pause as he mentally prepared himself to slide his body up the slickened slopes.

Steps were the worst. He had once so easily bounded down natural stone steps, but now they all taunted him like the boss monsters of nasty dungeons. His belly would press against the step before his feet did. Getting his front paws up was easy enough, but then came the task of getting the rest of his body up. It sloshed as he rolled his middle side to side. Dragging it was out of the question, and the rolling was the only way he could creep forward up those daunting, two inch rises in the floor. He squished and sloshed his way over until his back

feet were dangling off the ground, unable to touch it, forcing him to claw forward with his front legs until his back legs cleared the step. He needed a breather after each one he cleared. He was drained by the time he reached a passage in the cave he recognized by sight.

He ducked down and wiggled his head and front legs through a narrower passage, and got part way through before getting stuck. He pushed with his back legs, but the stone floor was just wet enough that he couldn't get any traction. He struggled and barked, trying to get free until he tired himself out and was left panting.



"Stuck? Really?" Midna went through the effort of manifesting herself. It was a tough feat in the light realm, but the cave was dark enough to make it easier on her. "Ugh, fine. Well I won't get anywhere on my quest if you don't get out of here. I'll give you a push, tubby, and then you better hoof it!" She moved around to the back of the wolf, and she rolled her eyes at the sight of a pair of hind legs splayed out by a large belly. "I swear." She moved close, and the hand that she manifested from her helmet shoved against Wolf Link's rear. He yelped, but the hard shove from the large, magical hand helped him pop through the opening. He slid on his face across the ground, his stomach wobbling and sloshing until he stopped. "There. Now get up and get a move on."

The wolf huffed and adjusted himself so that his feet were on the ground again, and he resumed the long process of trying to escape the cave of bizarre Chus. He traveled long, but didn't make it far before he heard the now familiar sound of more approaching jelly monsters. He strained to pick up speed, but all of his effort failed to grant him a faster pace, and before he could wobble another inch forward, he felt cool, slimy Chus sliding against his fur.

He tried to keep going even as they grabbed his paws and climbed up his belly, their viscosity and weight bringing him to a full halt. Panting, he was too heavy and tired to try and fight as they dove into his mouth once more. The extra slime was just too much for the wolf. His leg splayed farther apart as his stomach pushed on them, and his paws lifted until they could no longer touch the floor. His limbs swelled with more slime until what little little bend they still had was gone, and all he could do was wiggle his toes. His neck swelled into a thick inner tube of fur around his head, making it hard for him to look around with more than his eyes.



He felt like he had swallowed a boulder as he laid atop his belly, and he felt like he was wearing two pairs of Iron Boots. He couldn't touch the floor anymore, and even if he could his legs were all too bloated to move in any useful way. Still he stretched, another couple inches adding to his middle before the Chus were all swallowed down again. The filling left the wobbling wolf dazed.

With the coast clear, Midna popped up from the shadows again. "You just had to go sniffing around in caves, didn't you mutt? Now look at you! How are we supposed to collect the Fused Shadows when you can't move an inch!" She huffed and crossed her arms, floating in a slow circle around her now bloated wolf. "Fine. If we stay here you're probably just gonna get bigger, so I guess the *real* hero of this story is going to need to save you. Just don't whine." She moved behind him again and pushed her manifested hand against his backside. She began to shove the heavy wolf, sliding him along the wet stone ground.

Wolf Link didn't whimper or whine, he just huffed as Midna pushed him along the ground. It was bad enough being stuck as a wolf, but now he was stuck *and* a wolf. He only hoped that Chus were low in calories, or this was just the beginning of his heroic mobility troubles.