

Paul sat in his second-grade classroom and sensed something was off. He noticed that the walls and other decorations in the room had changed. Gone were the familiar equations like  $1+1=2$  and words associated with animals scattered around the room. Instead, the numbers ranged from 1 to 10, and he spotted an alphabet chart displaying lowercase and uppercase letters bordering the front of the room. It struck him as odd, but as he observed these changes, the teacher emerged and announced it was time to work on today's letter. She pointed to the chalkboard, where the letter 'e' appeared in both lowercase and uppercase forms, instructing the students to find this letter in their alphabet books.

Paul looked around and noticed kids retrieving their books from inside their desk cubbies. To his surprise, he found a book in his cubby as well. He turned to the page and followed the teacher's instructions. She tasked them with writing the letter repeatedly until the page was filled. It took Paul only a few minutes to

complete this simple task, and once he was finished, he started doodling in the book for fun, sketching whatever came to mind to pass the time.

Soon enough, the teacher went around to check on everyone's progress, and when she reached Paul, she commended him, saying, "Wow, Paul, good job on your letters! But you know better than to doodle in your alphabet book. Next time, remember to let me know when you're finished, okay?" Paul nodded and replied, "Sorry, I will next time." The teacher asked him to wait a moment and returned with two sheets of paper, allowing him to color them now that he had completed his writing task. Paul examined the sheets, one featuring an eagle and the other an elephant, with a prominent 'E' next to each picture. He checked his cubby for crayons and enthusiastically began coloring the sheets.

Paul did a decent job coloring the pictures but was daydreaming as he did, causing much of the

drawing to go outside the lines. Despite this, he still did a better job than most in the class, making it look somewhat neat. After he finished, he spent the rest of the day learning how to count, which wasn't an issue for him. He could tell that his other classmates seemed mentally reduced, as none appeared advanced for these lessons. In fact, most of the class seemed to struggle not only with counting but also with paying attention in general.

Paul sat there, waiting for the ending bell to ring, eager to leave this place, somewhat freaked out by the current predicament. The bell eventually rang, allowing the students to leave, but they couldn't just walk out. Instead, the teacher gave them graded sheets, supposedly from yesterday when they had colored sheets of dogs and dinosaurs. When Paul received his sheet, it looked sloppier than the one he had done today.

Then the teacher led all the students to the buses and the parent pick-up areas, depending on where they were meant to be. Paul was left

with the parent pick-up group and met up with his mother, who patiently waited for him. Paul was happy to see her and began telling her about the strange occurrences, but he wondered if it would even matter, as she hadn't noticed anything wrong yesterday or this morning with the changes. More than likely, it would be the same now.

Once she led him back to the car, she ushered him into the back to be buckled into his car booster seat. She secured him in, got in the driver's seat, and asked him if he had fun at school once they got on the road. Paul wasn't sure what he should say but decided to tell her what happened. So Paul said, "So when I got to school, I went to second grade, but sometime after lunch, it turned into a kindergarten class," desperation in his eyes. His mother, thinking that her son was having an overactive imagination, said, "Oh, that's strange. How did that happen?" Paul, thinking that his mother actually believed him, continued, "I have no clue. One minute, I'm being taught addition and subtraction, and the

next, I'm learning the alphabet and how to count to 10." Paul then realized that his mother didn't believe him when she asked, "So did you learn how to today?" So Paul asked, "Learn how to what?" His mother then said, "Your alphabet and how to count to ten?" Paul, feeling dejected, simply said, "Yeah, I did," giving up on convincing her of his story. They made their way home, continuing to talk about each other's day, with Paul playing along, having no real way of convincing her of his claims.

Once home, his mom asked him if he needed to use the potty before she began working on dinner. Paul, embarrassed by the question, realized he indeed needed to go to the bathroom, so he nodded, somewhat red. She unexpectedly took his hand and led him to the bathroom. Unlike this morning when he had some privacy, this time she came in with him. He assumed it was another effect of this shift in reality he seemed to be dealing with all by himself. She stood in there and waited, at least giving him the courtesy of turning around while

he went. After he finished up, she praised him for doing such a good job and then helped him wash his hands. Once potty time was finished, she told him he could watch some cartoons while she got dinner ready. So he did as he was told, but she followed and put on the Nick Jr. channel, leaving him there to watch baby shows while she cooked.

Paul began to enjoy the cartoons. He wasn't sure if it was his body taking dominance or just his immature taste, but he ended up enjoying himself nonetheless. Soon enough, his mom came into the kitchen and declared dinner was ready. Paul got up and headed to the kitchen, where again his mom helped him wash his hands. He was then led over to the table, where he was placed in a booster seat to reach the table with ease, even if he felt he didn't really need it. Dinner was finished relatively quickly, and Paul was allowed to leave the table. His mother permitted him to continue watching TV while she cleaned up the table.

Once the table was cleared, she informed Paul that it was time for his bath. When he heard that, he wasn't particularly pleased with where this was going. She led him to his room, where his mom picked out a set of pajamas and a pair of underwear for him to wear afterward. Paul, while upset, seemed unsure of what he should or should not do in this situation, so he ended up just going along with her demands.

Before he knew it, he found himself naked and being bathed by his mother as if he were five years old. The bath itself, he actually found fun, as he was allowed to play with bath toys while his mother did all the work to ensure he was cleaned up properly. Before long, his mother declared that bath time was over, picked him out of the tub, and unplugged the drain. Paul watched as the water spiraled down, and his mom asked if he needed to go potty before bed. Paul thought about it and said, "No, I'm good." His mother asked if he was sure, but again, Paul claimed not to need to go. His mother didn't push the issue any further and began to get Paul

dressed in his nighttime clothes.

She then got Paul into bed and offered to read him a story. Paul got hung up on the fact that it was only 7 pm, but he figured that this was his new bedtime to which he was forced to resign. Since he liked the cartoons, he thought a story might also be pretty entertaining, and at least it meant he could stay up a bit later. So, he asked for the story. His mother nodded and went to a little bookshelf in his newly designed room, clearly meant for a 5-year-old. She came back and started reading it to him, and before Paul even realized he was tired, he was already asleep. His mother gave him a kiss on the head and left his room, making sure his nightlight was on before she left.

Morning came, and Paul woke up to his mom waking him up. The first thing he noticed, though, was an odd feeling of being cold and damp. It wasn't until he sat up that he realized he'd wet the bed. His mom felt bad since she shouldn't have let him go to bed without making



him at least try to go potty the night before. He also noticed that he'd shrunk even more, now the size of a five-year-old, the way people around him had been treating him.

His mother, seeing the wet sheets, began to help him out of bed and got him undressed while stripping the bed of the sheets. She then had him wait in the bathroom in just his birthday suit, meeting him there a bit later after discarding the sheets into the laundry room. She then told Paul to sit on the potty, no longer asking since it seemed more like an order this time. Paul just followed it. He sat there on it as he went, and his mother watched to make sure he went. Once that was finished, she gave him a quick cleanup in the shower and got him dressed in his school clothes. She then led him back downstairs and into the kitchen, where she made him a bowl of cereal.

Breakfast ended up being a bit awkward for him after such an embarrassing situation, so he ate in silence. Once the food was finished, she got

herself ready, and they made their way to the car. Again, Paul was hoisted into his booster seat and secured in. The ride began, and his mom put on some little kid songs like "Wheels on the Bus" and the like. Paul wasn't much of a fan of these but didn't want to talk, so he figured it would be better than that, so he didn't say anything about it.

Once at school, he was brought by his mother into an actual kindergarten class where his newfound peers all looked fresh out of diapers from his perspective. Again, his day went much like the afternoon the day before, up until around midday when he felt another shift occur. This one was much more distressing as the room transformed from a class of desks and learning into a room of little tables, toys strewn about, and kids coloring. It resembled what you'd find in any daycare or nursery school.

Paul could feel that his clothes had changed, but the oddest feeling he got was that his underwear had become puffy. He didn't quite register what

had happened until he looked down and checked to see if his suspicion was true. As Paul gave his new underwear a peek, he realized he was half right. He was not quite in diapers as he assumed, but he found that he was now back at the transition known as potty training. He gave his pull-up a poke, but as he did, the teacher, now turned daycare worker, asked if he needed a change. Paul looked on in horror as she reached for his pull-up.