

Paul sat there, noticing that the room had transformed to match his new perceived age group. Toys were sprawled around on the ground, kids were sitting at coloring stations, and cubbies with squiggly lines adorned them. However, one peculiar observation caught his eye –half of his classmates were no longer wearing pants; instead, they sported diapers and training pants. This prompted Paul to check the bulky undergarment he now felt upon himself. Pulling the front of his pants outward to inspect, he found himself in the midst of potty training, a new yet familiar experience he would now be forced to endure.

Upon this realization, he made a face of disgust and frustration. A teacher turned caregiver noticed his reaction and asked, "What's wrong, little buddy? Did you have an accident?" Paul looked on in horror as the caregiver reached for his training pants, intending to perform a wetness check. In a rush to prevent this embarrassment, Paul hastily responded, "Nuh-

uh, I'm a big boy. I don't need a change."

Uncertain of what else to say, he gave it his best shot.

The caregiver gave him a skeptical look but proceeded to check regardless, understanding how potty-training kids can sometimes be untruthful about accidents. Paul sat there with a red face as she examined his pants quickly. She determined that he was, in fact, dry and said, "Well, good job, buddy. But don't forget that if you feel the need to potty, let one of the grown-ups know so we can help you to a potty." Paul nodded and watched her walk away to assist other children.

As he sat there, Paul wondered if these unusual shifts in his reality would continue or if they would eventually fade into the past. This thought lingered in his mind as he contemplated what it would be like if this transformation kept happening until he could no longer recognize it. However, just as he pondered this, the caregiver called out, "Okay, kids, all the potty training boys

and girls, come and try your hand at potty time." Half of the class responded with an affirmative "okay," and many of them gathered at the front of the room, ready to be led two at a time into the bathroom where they would encounter potty stations.

Paul observed the other children heading towards the potties but knew he didn't need to go at the moment. So, he decided to skip this round. After all, he had maintained his skills and seemed more advanced than the kids who had regressed. He could handle math and reading assignments, and this didn't appear any different to him. He intended to use the potty when necessary, but not a moment sooner.

The same caregiver from earlier noticed Paul not joining the rest of the potty-training kids and approached him, asking, "Hey there, Paul, didn't you want to try using the potty?" Irritated by the question, Paul replied, "I don't have to go right now." However, she persisted, explaining, "Well, you might not feel the need right now, but that's

not a guarantee that you won't soon. Going now can prevent accidents later." Paul remained steadfast in his decision not to go, so she allowed him to skip potty time.

The rest of the training pants-clad children finished up, and Paul engaged in various activities. He colored for a while and even found himself enjoying playing with blocks. Eventually, the caregiver announced that it was story time, so all the kids gathered around her. Paul, not particularly interested in the story, went along with the group to blend in. He sat on the floor with the other kids as story time commenced.

The story wasn't particularly lengthy, and Paul quickly began daydreaming. He wondered how his room would look when he got home and whether it would be filled with toddler items, even though he was still the size of a five-year-old. Thoughts of an oversized toddler bed or a big playpen crossed his mind. His daydreaming was interrupted by a peculiar sensation that came and went, leaving him puzzled but

brushing it off to focus on the story.

The story continued to bore him, leading him to ponder what it would be like if he did end up in diapers the next day. He was convinced he wouldn't actually need them, thinking it wasn't rocket science to use the potty. However, he halted his thoughts, realizing he wasn't entirely sure how the potty worked beyond the basic concept of sitting on it without pants. This uncertainty bothered him, but before he could dwell on it further, he heard the caretaker announce, "And the end." The children around him applauded the story, following the expected etiquette, while Paul rolled his eyes, feeling superior as he remained indifferent to the tale.

Paul waited in anticipation for what would come next, sitting quietly as the other kids chatted amongst themselves about the story. He then noticed the caregiver putting the book back on the shelf and making her way around to each of the children to check their diapers and training pants.

As she approached Paul, he felt a sense of smugness when she asked if he was all dry. With a hint of arrogance, he replied, "Yeah, I am. I'm a big boy, after all." She responded, "I'm sure you are," and bent down to check his pull-up, only to discover that it was soaked. She scolded him, saying, "You really shouldn't lie; you're soaked, mister." Paul tried to argue, insisting that he didn't even feel the need to go, but he pouted in frustration as the caregiver picked him up and brought him to one of the oversized changing tables.

She removed his soiled pull-up and cleaned him up. Throughout the process, Paul crossed his arms and wore a pouty expression on his face. She then placed a diaper under him, and Paul protested, saying, "I don't need a diaper!" She responded by expressing doubt that Paul was ready for training pants, given his previous accident. This made Paul blush, and he ceased arguing.

The caregiver mentioned that naptime was approaching and that it would be safer for him to wear the diaper. Paul remained silent, not wanting to further embarrass himself. She finished diapering him, and while it resembled a regular diaper, it was noticeably oversized to fit the class of five-year-olds in the midst of a reality warp that treated them like toddlers. Despite its size, it bore playful designs, and Paul even recognized a character on it.

After the change, Paul expected to have his pants returned to him but was informed that it would be easier for them to check his diaper if he didn't put his pants back on. He was left with just a diaper and a solid blue shirt, which frustrated and embarrassed him even more. The caregiver noticed his growing annoyance and remarked that naptime had come just in time, suggesting that someone seemed a bit cranky.

Paul couldn't contain himself and exclaimed, "I'm not cranky! I'm not, I'm not, I'm not!" She comfortingly patted his back and said, "Of

course, you're not, sweetheart. It's okay. Let's get you down for a nap, and you'll feel a lot better afterward, okay?" She took him by the hand and led him to a row of mats where some of his classmates were already lying down. He was given a blanket and a pillow, and Paul laid down, falling asleep almost instantly.