

# Dorothy Becomes a Doll

For CreepyJ

By TheSpiralledEye

*When Dorothy becomes infected with a virus that shrinks her to the size of a doll she does her best to take it in stride.*

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Dorothy couldn't help but feel somewhat irritated. She had taken all the right precautions; hand sanitiser, masks, making sure to only go out when necessary, all that jazz. And yet here she was, standing before her bathroom mirror seeing irrefutable proof that she was at least a few inches shorter. She had hoped that perhaps it was just the last vestiges of sleep making her clothes feel oddly loose and fluffy but no, it was undeniable now; she'd caught the virus.

The Shrinking Virus, as it had been oh so creatively dubbed, had appeared about six months ago. People who caught it remained otherwise healthy but found themselves shrinking. The lucky ones only lost a few feet in height but most ended up the size of dolls, with the tallest of them being only half a foot tall.

There was no cure yet, and Dorothy prayed she would be one of the lucky ones who could continue life as normal, albeit a bit shorter. She pressed her lips into a thin line. She was a no nonsense southern girl after all, pouting and crying wasn't going to make her better, so she may as well get everything sorted before reaching the kitchen counter was a problem.

She called into work sick, then reported herself as infected and sat down to enjoy some tv while waiting for the care package.

"See, this isn't so bad." She told herself, "getting paid by the government to sit on my couch and watch tv while eating delivery food is a pretty good deal all things considered."

Even as those words left her lips though, she couldn't quite make herself feel good about it. Dorothy was a vibrant soul, someone who thrived in the company of others. She actually enjoyed her work as a receptionist because it meant she got to talk to people all day.

Her extroverted spirit longed for human interaction after only a few hours; all her friends were working, even those who weren't didn't have much time for chatting. It just

wasn't the same as being out and about. The four walls of her small apartment were already starting to feel claustrophobic and tight around her. The silence of her own company was suffocating.

She binge-watched movies, dove into books she'd long wanted to read, and even tried her hand at some new recipes. But found halfway through her third attempt at banana bread that she had to stand on tip toes to reach her cupboard. Her cheeks burned with humiliation; it was like being a child again and with much embarrassment she pushed one of the dining chairs over to stand on. The virus was rapidly taking hold and she swore she could feel herself getting shorter by the minute.

By the afternoon of her first day, she was already a full foot shorter and gave up on cooking to pass the time. Her arms ached from dragging the chair around trying to get at all her ingredients in the top shelves. She found herself pacing the rooms, feeling the minutes stretch into hours, yearning for the familiar faces and the bustling energy of the outside world.

With books and tv doing nothing to ease the mind numbing stillness Dorothy flopped down on the couch dramatically. What the hell was she supposed to do in a tiny apartment for so long. It was then she noticed something, a picture on the underside of her bookshelf. Normally, it would be hidden by the angle but now she was shorter she could see the underside clearly. It was a crude picture of a dragon, probably done by somebody under the age of ten. In all the years since she'd purchased it at a garage sale she'd never noticed it.

Dorothy felt her lips quirk into a smile; it was a small thing, but it was something new at least. A hidden treasure in her own apartment. What else could be hiding from her? With a new found sense of childlike excitement Dorothy began to explore her apartment from a new angle, looking for other things her new height could reveal to her. As the night went on she steadily began to shrink further and her already loose clothes became baggy.

She repeatedly had to stop to tighten the belt holding up her jeans but eventually even that wasn't enough and they slid off entirely. Forcing her to awkwardly climb up her cupboard shelves like a ladder to reach the very top, back shelves where her older clothes remained. Once again she felt like a kid playing dress up in her mothers closet, draped in clothes that were far too big for her. In the end she gave up and decided to just wear a shirt to bed.

By the next day she was half normal human size, which she discovered by tumbling out of bed and falling on her ass like a fool. For the first time Dorothy was glad she was single; at least nobody else had to witness that! The shirt she had gone to sleep in was now a dress that would surely be sweeping the floor by the end of the day. The wonder of being small was still there but it was getting smothered by irritation again.

The doorbell rang and Dorothy froze in place. On the one hand, she was still feeling starved for human contact, even a brief conversation with the mailman sounded like ambrosia right now. On the other, did she really want to be seen like this? Tiny and wearing nothing but a shirt dress? Her loneliness won out and she sprinted across the apartment, the small distance taking her twice as long as usual thanks to her stubby legs.

She opened her door to disappointment; the delivery man was already gone but there was a large brown package with a government seal stamped atop it on her front step. With some difficulty, she pushed it inside and began wrestling with the thick tape that kept it shut. Ripping it wouldn't have been a problem a few days ago but now with her shrinking stature came a serious decrease in strength.

After an embarrassingly long time, she finally managed to rip it open to reveal a government care package; the kind sent out to all infected. Inside were clothes of various, ever smaller sizes, as well as a pamphlet on the virus and what to expect. It was nice but Dorothy couldn't help but wish they'd thought to send her some everyday items. The idea of using her own hair brush right now was daunting.

She was right to be worried. After changing into a new outfit made up of a shirt and overalls she set to work trying to regain some sense of normalcy. However, the mundane tasks she took for granted now posed colossal obstacles.

Brushing her hair resembled scaling a mountain as she manoeuvred the giant bristles of her hairbrush, each stroke feeling like a herculean effort. She had to take breaks between each stroke to rest her sore arms; it was like trying to lift an oar and scrape it over her head. Dorothy's tiny hands struggled to grip the enormous handle, her hair tangling in the bristles as if they were tree trunks. Fortunately, with the brush covering so much space she only needed a few strokes to finish the job.

She was shrinking rapidly now, brushing her hair had taken longer than usual but even she was surprised by just how much smaller she had gotten in that time. Her new clothes were already starting to feel loose.

Breakfast presented an entirely new set of hurdles. The once-familiar cutlery now resembled oversized tools. Her spoon and fork, once easily wielded, now required two hands to properly use as the metal utensils were twice the weight of her plastic hairbrush. Dorothy climbed onto her chair, almost like ascending a mountain, and hoisted herself onto the table. The box of cereal took a Herculean effort to move and she cursed herself for all that cooking yesterday; there was no way she'd eat it all before it went off.

"At least I'll save more money on food now." She sighed glumly, trying in vain to finish her cereal without spilling any of the milk down her front while wielding the spoon.

If she got much smaller she wasn't sure she'd even be able to pour the milk at all. A gallon bottle may as well have been a cask of wine. It was so heavy.

How the hell was she supposed to live like this? Just then, she remembered Rebecca; she had been her fellow receptionist at the doctors surgery when she got infected and had to leave. They had never been particularly close, she'd been a very reserved young woman that clashed with Dorothy's own extroverted nature but now perhaps they would have something to talk about.

With a great deal of effort Dorothy made her way back to her bedroom and found her phone, punching in the numbers awkwardly. Luckily, she never deleted a number and she had a habit of adding everybody she worked with just in case. The screen was black for a moment as the video connected but then Rebecca's surprised face appeared and to Dorothy's shock, her surroundings looked as if they were scaled to her!

"Oh!" She blushed awkwardly, "I thought you'd caught the shrinking virus."

Dorothy felt like slapping herself; who started a conversation like that? Apparently Rebecca agreed because she scrunched up her nose in offence a little before her eyes darted around, clearly taking in Dorothy's surroundings.

"You caught it too!" She cried with understanding, "Wanting some advice I assume. I have to admit I was a little confused as to why you'd want to call me."

"I guess I am just looking for some advice, I can't even reach my kitchen counters anymore." Dorothy said, "but your house looks...normal sized? Did you get better?"

Rebecca laughed.

"Oh no, I am living in a new place the government set up for infected people with everything scaled down." She explained, "Didn't you read the pamphlet they sent you?"

Dorothy blushed.

"...No."

"Well, I would recommend reading that and making yourself a list of all the things you want to put in storage. They'll probably come pick you up soon. If you get under a foot tall

they basically force you to move for your own safety so you don't end up squashed by a chair or something.”

What a way to go; Dorothy could see the headlines now.

“Alright, thanks Rebecca.”

“No problem, and if you get put in Village Beta, I am at 103 Strate Street okay? Feel free to come visit.”

A little knot Dorothy hadn't realised was building in her chest seemed to loosen a little. The idea of her whole life being upended, being forced to move into a miniature city was daunting but at least she'd have a friend. Dorothy hung up and made her way back to the box, she was forced to climb up the side and cried out as she lost her balance and ended up falling into the packing peanuts.

Eventually she located the brochure and dragged it out, forcing it open so she could read it properly. Apparently, she was to report her size, or best estimation, each night on a special app, those who reach one foot or less would be relocated and all their possessions put in storage until means could be found for a cure or to shrink them to the proper size.

Once again, Dorothy looked down at herself, the small clothes already too big. That was definitely going to be her fate; she had to get ready. She refused to let this virus get her down, she was stronger than that dammit.

Still, it was embarrassing changing her outfit only to find the only items that fit her were literally dolls clothes. The dress was made from a scratching, polka dotted material, the kind she'd seen little girls dress their dolls in at the park. Actually, she would be about the same size now. That only made things more embarrassing. It didn't help that there were no undergarments at all; no tiny bra or panties for her to wear so she was forced to go commando under the doll dress. Even though she was tiny, she still had the body of a full grown woman and walking around without any support for her curves felt...wrong to say the least.

Despite the overwhelming odds, Lily persisted. She refused to let her newfound diminutive size dampen her spirit. She set about preparing to move, trying a pencil to her hip and making her way around the apartment to list everything she wanted stored and protected. She fashioned makeshift tools from everyday objects, turning chopsticks into a makeshift ladder and using dental floss as a rope to climb her way around. It was almost like a game and a strange smile found its way onto her face as she swung around like Tarzan, an old earring made for the perfect grappling hook.

At the end of the day she used a ruler to measure herself, eleven inches tall.

Despite her good attitude she couldn't help but sigh in defeat as she awkwardly signed into the app and registered her height. A confirmation alert warning her of her immediate removal coming in soon after. Without any better ideas, she clambered up onto the couch and jumped on the remote, half watching the tv while she waited to be collected. It wasn't as if she could pack; even if she could take things with her she couldn't lift most of them.

The news showed more and more people were becoming infected; to the point that every major city now had one or two miniature ones being constructed to house them all comfortably.

When the doorbell rang she called out rather than making the arduous trek across the room to the door and two men in hazmat suits walked in, one of them held a small cage, like the kind kids put their hamsters in. It even had a towel lining the bottom.

"That's not for me is it?" She squeaked.

"Sorry ma'am, but we need to be careful, "We need to stem the rate of infection or at this rate half the country will be the size of dolls."

She blushed at the mention of dolls, a blush that seemed to double in intensity as the man delicately picked her up by her torso. His whole hand covers most of her chest, she could feel his thumb pressing against her breasts through the thin fabric and even though she knew he was being nothing but professional she couldn't help but feel a little embarrassed.

"Hey, at least you don't have to pay rent for a bit now." The man smiled as he held her up.

"Can you just put me down please?" Dorothy asked indignantly, "this feels humiliating."

To her utter horror the man patted her on the head, like a child stroking a Barbie's hair and then began to lower her toward the cage. Feeling utterly patronised and embarrassed Dorothy curled up on the towel with her arms around her legs. She was being treated like a living toy!

“Dorothy Gatten.” The man read off his tablet, “hey, your name is literally Dolly, that’s at least kinda cute.”

“...If you are trying to make me feel better it’s not working.”

“Aw, come on Dolly, cheer up. Tell you what, why don’t we find you something more comfortable to wear.”

He rummaged in his backpack before lowering down a new dress. It was literally a barbie dress, with a short skirt and fitted bodice with lacing up the front. She was going to look like something out of a princess movie! Dorothy thought about refusing but then she saw how much shape the bodice had; her chest was aching from the lack of support in the polka dot dress, even if it didn’t come with underwear at least this new dress would get her a small amount of support.

The men closed her small cage and began to walk, taking her list with them. Despite their best efforts to keep her level it was hard to change with her floor constantly rocking and moving. With no small amount of difficulty she managed to strip herself naked just in time for her removalists to step outside. The clear glass of the cage gave her no privacy and she hurried to put on her pretty pink new dress, relieved to discover it did in fact support her.

They placed her cage in a car with several other tiny people and drove. The trip felt like it took an age but eventually, she was gently picked up once more and placed before a tiny door in a wall along with the others, each of them handed a small piece of paper with an address; their new home.

The crowd was nervous, one woman in a blue barbie style ball gown was even crying. Dorothy took a deep breath and stepped forward; she would be the first one to face their new reality.

“No time for tears.” She told the small gathering of people, “that won’t solve anything, let’s make the most of this. It’s a new opportunity!”

With that she turned on her heels and pushed open the door to reveal a quaint little neighbourhood. The houses were all scaled to their new small size, bonsai trees in place of real ones lined the street and there were even a number of what appeared to be remote control cars parked in some of the driveways.

Dorothy nodded, she could live with this. She looked down at her slip and saw her new address was on Strate street, the same place as Rebecca and she smiled. Holding her tiny head high, she stepped forward to face her new life as a tiny, living doll.