

1.

Throughout the entirety of the foul Koopa Kingdom, it could be felt. It penetrated the dark skies and toothy mountaintops below, across vast lava moats and fiery pits to nowhere in particular, and soured the stink of brimstone and malice abroad. It could be felt in the shells of Koopa-Troopas across the land, in the bones of the Dry Bones' skeletons, and in whatever was inside of Piranha Plants. Something was terribly wrong with the kingdom, and its cruel ruler knew exactly what it was.

There was a hero on the loose.

The alarm rang out across the many interiors of Bowser's stronghold, Hammer Bros hurling their namesakes at oversized, clanging shells, Koopa-Troopas of all colors and sizes racing, as best as turtles could, to their respective posts. In hindsight, perhaps a more mobile sort of villainy might have suited the place better, but there was no time for hind, only for *now*.

"S-sir Kamek?"

The knock at the door and the Troopa's panicked yell commingled, nearly canceling one another out. A humble knock followed, and the recalculation worked; both wooded doors swung open on their own power, leaving a startled Koopa with a raised fist, and wide eyes.

"S-sir!"

A fairly small Koopa shuffled into the middle of a large, circular tower room, spell books and potions and a fairly good-shape cauldron all decoratively on display around him. Unlike the usual Koopas, with their shoes being their only humility, this one wore a full blue robe and tall cap, its point starched staunchly upright. A thick-rim set of glasses covered his eyes, leaving only a turtle muzzle and a jutting sharp tooth by which to judge any emotion. Thankfully, that muzzle slipped into an agreeable smile at sight of him.

"Weheheh, my-my!" Kamek crowed, straightening up proudly on reflex. "Well, a visitor! Come to witness a bit of magical prowess, have you? Can't say I blame you! What mighty magic might I conjure—"

"Sir Kamek!" the green-shelled Troopa interjected, his panic undeterred. "Lord B-Bowser is summoning you! M-Mario and Yoshi are breaching the castle gates as we speak!"

Even with glasses on, Kamek's expression was clear.

"G...goodness, are they!? Thank you for the warning! Ah, t-tell his majesty I am en route!"

In a sudden, and yes, impressive flash of sparkling light, a violet cloudburst of pure magic overtook him, and with a vacuum-like hiss of displaced matter, it and he were both gone.

"R-right," the loyal Troopa barked, turning to run all the way back down the high castle parapet, not seeming to stop long enough to question why he would race to inform Bowser that someone who could instantly warp was 'on root'.

“Lord Bowser, my Master,” Kamek began, through a dissipating wash of smoke, “I am appraised of the situation! Mario and his dinosaur goon are breaking in!”

As he spoke, far off at the end of the unreasonably out-sized throne hall, the Troopa stumbled in, having to lean in desperation against a high stone pillar to catch his breath. Not far away, Loyal Troopas could be heard crying out in struggle, then defeat, as a single, chilling *wahoo* overtook them.

“I know they’re here!” Bowser boomed, the far larger Lord of the Koopas leaning over in his gilded throne, very-intentionally set upon a wide flight of stairs (for general starting down purposes). He was all scales and teeth and horns, a shock of equally-angry red hair set between, as his crown. A set of gigantic spike peppered his huge green shell of a back, gouging rips in the fabric of his throne for the hundredth-thousandth time. A little magic would fix that later. “Don’t waste time telling me what I already know, Kamek! Unless you have enough time magic for everyone in that dinky wand of yours!”

For one of many moments in his existence, Kamek stifled a wince, physically and emotionally. Even the spear-carrying red-shelled Troopas guarding in line between the hallway pillars all covered at this fraction of Bowser’s wrath; yet, no more arrived. Instead, a nasty, tooth grin spread over the turtle tyrant’s muzzle, his red eyebrows arching slyly.

“Now, listen up, Wandy,” Bowser began, shifting in his throne heavily. He thumped a clawed hand against his scaly belly, a basso drumbeat that echoed down the hallway. “We’ve been through this before, right? Mario shows up, and I fight him...sometimes, you use your magic there to blow my size up to gigantic heights...but he still wins! I’ve realized since, Kamek, that it’s our own fault. Mostly yours.”

Another *wahoo*, outside. This time, louder. Closer. Despite years of self-training and experience, even now, Kamek nearly defended himself. Thankfully, he caught it on the way out, and swallowed it back down into the dungeon.

“So!” Bowser continued, making all of his Troopas snap to attention, spears all spiking upright again. “This time, I have a much better idea. No more half-measures! I’m through playing around with that runt!”

Kamek found a way to bow even lower, in response.

“Eheeheehee, excellent, s-sir! I always stand ready to serve, my liege! Your orders, then?”

Bowser’s eyes were laser-focused on Kamek, and as soon as the smaller Magikoopa noticed, he gulped, hard.

“Bwahaha, right!” Bowser roared, shaking the chamber slightly. “I know you can clone yourself, yeah? See, when you blast me bigger with that fancy magic of yours, even though it makes me big as a building, Mario beats me! I can’t stand it cheating of that level, that I didn’t do! But I got to thinking, lately...that’s from *one* spell, isn’t it? Heheh...this time...this time, I want an army of you! And every one of you is going to cast that same spell on me! Blow me up beyond huge!!”

There was only a moment's processing, before Kamek's cautious grimace curled up into a sly smile; the nod was clear and emphatic, maybe even enthusiastic.

"Of course! Weheheh! My liege...how inspired! It would be no trouble, for a Koopa of my skill! The Mushroom Kingdom will surely fall to you, in no time! Eheeheehee! Very well!"

With no more than a flick of the wrist, a flash of light emanated out from Kamek's hand, taking on the shape of a rod, before it faded out to reveal a wand in his grip. With another swirl of it and a flash of multiple purple clouds, a dozen Kameks stood in place, behind him, each one grinning the same way as their prime. One or two adjusted their glasses, but otherwise, the identical nature was flawless.

"Good...GOOD!" Bowser growled, his grin getting wider, a palpable desire surging up within him at the sight of thirteen wands all swirling once, twice, then snapping to attention, aimed squarely at him, and him alone. "All of you...I want to be huge, this time...there can be no chance for that pipsqueak to even touch me! We're doing this, this time, all the way! Make...me...HUUUUUUGE!"

At once, the small troop of Troopas chanted in unison, every single wand lighting up ominously. The guard-Troopas all gawked, unblinking, morbidly fascinated at this whole proposal. Their ruler had already gotten enormous before, so...how bad would this possibly even get?

That answer came quick, as all thirteen wands blasted out a neon trio of glowing squares, triangles and circles, all of which crowded into a singularity that impacted Bowser as he sat on his throne, trembling with anticipation.

"Eheeheehee!" all of the Kameks cheered, as Bowser grinned, the magic flood soaking into his reptilian body; just then, the throne hallways doors burst open, and in charged none other than the bane of evil himself: Mario. The aggravating little plumber tore in, astride his green dinosaur steed, both of them charging straight down the hall. With the reflex born out of countless skirmishes, the twenty guard-Troopas all charged to meet him, spears out, yelling and stomping nearer, when a vast and terrible quake shook the entire hall, hard.

The mass-spell had finished, and Bowser was glowing darkly in his throne, which in the next blink, seemed a bit too snug for his scaly bulk.

"So, the pesky plumber arrives, just in time to witness your transformation, my Lord. Observe, Mario! You're too late, this time! Weheheh! Grow, my liege! You will soon be the biggest you have *ever* been! This time, there will be no stopping you!"

Bowser growled so powerfully that dust shook from the stony castle ceiling, the pillars quaking angrily; his 10-foot body rumbled, deep inside, some alien tension causing his muscles to flex out bigger, hold, then tense even deeper, before his entire body suddenly surged up bigger, snapping the throne's golden arms apart, his backside bashing into, then through the backrest. The terrible tyrant bellowed in rising delight as everyone present watched his scaly skin stretch over bulging muscles, the Koopa King blowing up to 20 feet before them, only to hug himself and grit his teeth, closing his eyes tight, just as he doubled in size, to 40 feet! His clawed toes and feet thumped awkwardly down the stairs, getting bigger and wider across, as his rump and short tail overtook the throne entirely, snapping it into a crushed pile underbulk. At 60 feet, his head began to near the ceiling, challenging a space that Bowser's huge ego had built to be too big already; his horns spread out atop his head as the stairs

cracked, snapped then shattered, a cloud of grit blowing loose over the cloned Kameks and the stunned guards, who all watched their ruler billow up higher and higher, yet.

“YES...” Bowser huffed, snorting dominantly, as his quaking bulk blew up to 80 feet, easily as big and imposing as he had been blown up to in the past...but even Mario and Yoshi leaned away, gaping, as the rotten reptile ballooned to fill the entire back end of the hall, his chin getting forced down into his swelling pectorals, his biceps erupting uncontrollably as the magic fed him.

Only, this time...he didn't stop.

“I have seen my liege grow to prodigious heights before,” Kamek Prime gloated, a hint of shock riding the words. Perhaps, even, worry. “But I have never seen it on such a scale! How far will it take him, I wonder?”

The words had likely been designed to hurl at a startled Mario, but they were proving sincere, even for Kamek. His dozen clones all snorted and chortled confidently, following their originator's lead...but all of them were starting to inch back anxiously, as their gigantified ruler burst up to 100 feet, his surging bulk overtaking that half of the throne hall.

“BETTER,” Bowser boomed, grunting and groaning all over with pumping growth and raw, tingling power. “MUCH BETTER! KEEP IT COMING, YOU! I DIDN'T S-SAY STOP!”

Kamek openly gulped, raising his wand again in some slipping measure of trepidation.

“Y...y-yes, Lord B-Bowser! Again!”

All thirteen Kameks loosed another chanted-up volley of magic, which hit Bowser square in his gigantic belly scales, soaking in again, and again spreading a mean neon glow all over the King's quaking body. The effect was immediate, and, even for his meany minions, horrifying.

“G...GAAAAAH! T-THAT'S R-RIGHT, YOU PUNY PUH-PIPSQUEAKS!” Bowser bellowed in premature triumph, as his monstrously big body trembled harder, frantically twitching and swelling with on overstock of might, before billowing with a blasting roar to a staggering 160 feet! His growing soles smashed through the first wave of pillars with no effort, getting bigger and taller as they collided loudly with the next, cracking and straining them, making the Troopas, the Kameks, Mario and Yoshi all collectively back away in fear. His head burst up into the cracking ceiling, showering dust and sundered stonework down into a shower that tumbled across his bulging muscles, just as his feet crashed through the next pillars, then the next! “L-LET'S SEE YOU S-S-STOP ME NOW, MARIO! BWAHAHAHAHA! BIGGER, KAMEK! YOU ALL HEAR ME, DOWN THERE, YOU RUNTS!? BIGGER! BIGGER!!”

Even Mario, it turned out, could not stem the sudden tide of twenty Troopa turtles all shoving their way frantically past him, jostling himself and Yoshi, shoving them back with the rush towards the double doors, just as Bowser's bulk smothered through the ceiling, through the majority of the pillars, the crumbling stone floor and rug, everything...then ballooned *bigger*.

At the back of the fleeing crowd were thirteen increasingly surprised Kameks, who all stumbled back, at once trying to flee, yet also carry out bellowed orders. Bowser had spent ages constructing a hallway so tremendous that it would take most of his army to fill it. At the moment, it no longer fit him.

And, as their King groaned and tremble-burst even larger, his 240-foot body crushed into the walls, cracking and then bowing them out, the entire central section of the castle rumbling in terror at its growing master's transformation. And, even before they all fired again, it was only getting worse.

Still, orders were orders, and as the Troopas and Kameks all bustled out into the open, all thirteen obediently swiveled back and fired dead-center into the opened doors, immediately impacting a vast scaly belly that was nearly bulging out into the open, with them.

"I have spent...m-my entire life...witnessing his Majesty's growth," Kamek Prime mumbled, awestruck and frightened in equal measure, as they fired off their collective of spells, "but e-even I cannot believe...this level of power...would ever be possible! Such madness! Such d-divine, evil madness!"

Their spells finished, and without needing any such orders, the Kameks all turned and ran. They vaulted down, tripping and stumbling over their adorable, yet ultimately cumbersome attire, falling faster than the Troopas could run, or, incidentally, carry the struggling Mario and Yoshi.

As they did, adjoining sections of the mighty Koopa Castle all began to vacate, and violently: wings of the castle bled minions, Goombas and Troopas all cascading down flights of shaking stairs in wobbling towers as they swayed, then cracked. Winged Koopa Paratroopas took to flight messily, to the point that the castle might as well have been sneezing them out, as the entire stronghold shook worse and worse.

"Ehee...huh-huh-hee!" Kamek wheezed, trying not to trip over his own entourage of himself. "T-the world will tuh-tremble...whew, at the sight of you! Mario, pr-preapre (pardon) to bow down t-to your KING! Haha! Grow, my liege! G...oof, GROW!"

For all the frenzied fleeing going on, it only helped so much.

The central castle walls bloated out with a deep, unhappy groan of shuffling, shoving stones, thousands of stones, all bulging out in a collective, inflated sphere of threadbare containment. A singular gouge tore down the vertices of the front, rocks pinging loose like cannonballs, blowing out parapets and walkways in their passage. A vast chunk of one corner popped off, practically jumping for life, as a huge bulge of scales ballooned out into the open. The castle shook ever-worse, impossibly, and the West Wing snapped off wholly as a monstrous shape blasted forth into the dark opening, shooting out long and thick, a hand capping it beyond a vast spiky collar.

An arm. An arm, bigger than Bowser had ever grown before, had pushed out. The fist balled as the entire digit trembled, then continued to violently swell larger, and larger, just as a massive scaly elbow bashed loose on the other side, swinging free, hurling debris out far ahead. A hunk of flying rubble struck one unlucky Paratroopa, who went into a drunken freefall in the distance, all as the central section swelled one last miserable time, shook, crackled, then *exploded* apart!

"BWAHAHAHAHAAAHH!!!"

Bowser's usual roar of delight had swollen into a cataclysmic detonation of doom, openly shaking the castle as his 1,000-foot body blew out of its center, hulking beyond recognition. His neck had billowed eagerly, overfilling the large circular spiked collar he wore, his pectorals prominent and heaving out proudly over his thick, humongous belly and swollen lats. Biceps the size of buildings

flexed and twitched as one humongous clawed hand crashed down in slow-motion on one side, cracking and blowing the walkways upon which it impacted apart. Smoke blew everywhere as speck-sized minions late to the party got the boot first, and worst, flying out with stunted cries into the open.

Sitting on two massive tiers, the entirety of the upper was already consumed, lost in a sea of confusion, smoke and debris, above which only the immensely gigantic Bowser loomed, towering over his own remaining towers, rolling vastly muscled shoulders in preparation as he licked his muzzle and teeth over, then snorted out a huge plume of flame and brimstone.

“THIS...THIS IS MORE LIKE IT! HAH! READ ME AND WEEP, YOU PITIFUL PLUMBER PEST! I SHOULD’VE DONE THIS AGES AGO! THIS’LL BE CAKE NOW! BWAHAHA!”

A voice nearly too big to understand blasted the kingdom with raw decibel devastation. The remains of the lower castle tier wobbled and shook, thundering from Bowser’s laughter alone. His lower body had vanished, presumably too heavy to bear, and had bashed and sunk its way down, down into the base of the stronghold; for all intents, Bowser was practically *wearing* the place like a skirt.

Through all the chaos, as Bowser’s own airships began to swing back from their patrols and pick up the fleeing throngs of baddies, it was only one group that the colossal King still payed any mind.

“WH-WHERE...DO YOU THINK YOU’RE ALL GOING?”

He hadn’t been addressing any of the fleeing peons around the ruins of the castle. Kamek all his own all stopped, midway down the large stairs of the lower tier. They all turned back to look up, up, up, *up* at their looming behemoth of a boss, who snorted and grinned cruelly down, down, down, *down* at them.

“G-huh,” Kamek stammered, gulping again, trying to raise his voice. “N-nowhere, my Lord! Only far enough that we aren’t smothered, and c-can therefore continue to serve!”

“...FEH, GOOD ENOUGH,” the 1,000-foot god huffed, his chest swollen and wide, nearly blocking his muzzle as he tried out an errant flex of his arms. “DO IT, THEN.”

“M-my liege?”

“...SERVE. CHOP-CHOP, RUNTS. CAN’T YOU SEE I’M WAITING HERE, STUCK? IS THIS ANY WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR KING, KAMEK? ARE YOU THAT WORTHLESS?”

“Y...you mean, sire...”

Bowser’s eyes were nearly glowing to the point of volcanic, such was his lust.

“MORE. MOOOOOORE. MMMOOOOOOOOOOOORRRRRRE!!”

Down far below, at the end of the stairs to the castle, where the stronghold met the stony rock formations and the long stone bridge in, Mario and Yoshi stopped, they had pulled free from the still-escaping Troopas, and gawked up at the circling Koopa airships and the last of the fleeing denizens...and, naturally at the mountainous Koopa King, loaded with throbbing muscle, power

radiating off of his thick body in great, hot waves of energy. Then, they noticed the Kameks up on the stairs, all readying their wands, yet again, all of them starting their chant.

He looked to this faithful friend Yoshi, and for a moment, both of the heroes were truly at a loss.

The small army of Kamek clones finished their chant, and Bowser's tensing up in anticipation was so powerful at such a size that simply flexing in preparation or excitement was enough to shake the whole castle. As their combined spells shot forth again, taking a moment to make it all the way up to their towering Lord, things didn't get any better. At all.

The comparatively-tiny blast of magic still did its work, as it impacted Bowser's vast lower stomach, creating yet another ominous glow that spread all over him, making his huge eyes roll back in evil glee, before his monstrous body began to rumble worse, and worse, and worse. Dark electricity crackled and snaked, tickling through his shuddering muscles as Bowser drew inwards, his bulk ballooning tighter, bigger, stronger...the rumbling overtook the entire castle's gutted remains as stones trickled off the main structure, before the terrible King of the Koopas panted openly, gutter-growling deep, starting to rapidly swell up and up in size, exploding to even more horrible, more awesome heights!

"E...Eh...Eheehee...Eheeheeheehee!" Kamek crowed, loyally cheering, a motion which the other dozen clones snapped to follow up on. "His Majesty grows...observe, Mario, y-you little fool! Let's see you try and fling him around, at 1,100 feet...or 1,300! Weheheh! See the real extent of my power! Er, our power! H-his power, I mean! Yes! Bigger, my liege! BIGGER!"

Mario, it turned out, could only run so fast. Even saddled upon Yoshi, the pair's flight proved embarrassingly inadequate, as in the background, Bowser instantly blew up past the struggling confines of the poor, defeated castle, which blew apart in a fantastic spray of destruction as he simply stood there...and *grew*. So much of the way out was a downward slope, that even running at top speed, the heroic duo didn't make much actual headway away, and it seconds, Bowser's vast stretching belly had blown past the castle, smashed through the stairs, and crushed down on the stone bridge, that his 2,000-foot body caught up in seconds.

A great warm wall of smooth-scaled reptilian belly collided with them, sweeping them both up in the expanding crevice between two scales, carrying the shocked pair along as he continued to pump higher and wider in scope! 2,200 feet surged up hotly to 2,400 feet, then 2,600, the remaining outer shell of the castle crushed flat under his stomping feet, sending great clusters of snapping rock and stone down, down into the lava moats far below them and the remainder of the bridge. At 2,800 feet, his massive shoulders nearly blew up into several airships, making them circle back fearfully as their King aggressively ascended higher up past them. Tiny, insignificant speck-minions nearly fell off as each ship rocked and steadied in the air, each ship smaller now than one of Bowser's mighty, growing claws.

"Yes! Bigger, my Lord Bowser! B-bigger!" all the Kameks cheered, in unison, having finally thought to magically teleport much farther away. There was something genuinely...hypnotic about the sight of their Master, billowing so gigantic, so strong. The sheer power was so...overwhelming...

"YOU ALL START KNEELING, YOU MISERABLE LITTLE SPECKS!" Bowser huffed, sending out vast clouds of embers and magic sparks, as his 3,000-foot body towers so high that he could be seen across nearly a third of the Koopa Kingdom. Feet as big as smaller, more humble castles

crashed huge craters into the rock below as he simply shifted his stance some, then flexed harder, making his unfathomably-tremendous biceps surge loudly. “CAUSE ALL THIS IS GONNA BE MINE...NO...GHE...GHAH...BWAHAHAHA! NO, NO! ALL OF THIS...IS GONNA...B-BE...ME!!!”

At his stupendous size, even the turning of Bowser’s head could be heard easily, the shifting of bulging, massive muscles and tight skin rumbling out, until the titanic tyrant spotted the Kameks over on a nearby mountain. It only reached up to his chin, which made Bowser smile even wider. A vast shiver of pleasure rattled down through his bulk, shaking the landscape beneath.

“AH, THERE YOU ARE. ALRIGHT, KEEP IT COMING! AND LET’S HAVE MORE, THIS TIME! COME ON!”

“L-lord Bowser, I assure you, we are all putting everything into each spell!”

“YOU TINY NIMROD,” Bowser boom-spoke, huffing in irritation. A sky-filling set of fire-red brows descended disapprovingly at the lot of them. “MORE YOU! MORE KAMEKS! COME ON, KEEP ‘EM MULTIPLYING! I SAID WE WERE GOING ALL-OUT, DIDN’T I!? WERE YOU LITTLE MORONS NOT LISTENING!?”

Again, all thirteen Kameks winced in unison, biting back a welt of pain at the insults.

“Eheh...o-of course...of course, Lord Bowser! Yes, my mighty liege! With you at such phenomenal sizes, the world w-will truly be yours! Eheeheehee, I w-won’t let you down!”

There, among the chunks of minuscule former-castle, were Mario and Yoshi, the duo hunkered down cautiously on a whole section of stairwell that was well-lodged between scales. A gaggle of panicked Paratroopas flew by, one not noticing them as it picked up the rear, until Yoshi’s long pink tongue lashed out and caught it, swallowing the shell. With a poof of smoke, Yoshi could be seen taking to flight, his borrowed wings allowing him and Mario a chance to figure the rapidly escalating situation out, before it got any worse.

Sadly, that is exactly what happened, and fast.

“MOOOOOOOORE!!”

From over on a nearby mountaintop, a series of small violet-smoked puffs gathered, the cloud swelling wider and wider; the two flying heroes watched on as it cleared, to reveal a whopping thirty Kameks, all of whom were chanting in unison, their wands glowing eagerly to life. Pulling out a fire flower, the one tool he still had on hand, Mario activated it, and ordered Yoshi to swing back around for one desperate assault on Bowser. The problem there was, the thirty Kameks had already all fired spells, and every single one blasted directly into the growling, huffing Bowser.

What should have been, by pattern, some sort of victorious rumbling or gloating was instead replaced by a great, low, cascading moan, an earthshaking quake of raw need, as Bowser’s 3,000-foot body glowed even more furiously, then began to spasm and rumble and balloon disproportionately in mass. By the time Mario and Yoshi had managed to circle about for an attack, where his midsection had just been, was now his thighs! They both gasped, looking up and up, even from the skies, seeing Bowser’s enormity continue to feverishly expand outward, in every direction; his pectorals screamed with growth, rumbling and pulling and stretching as they inflated out farther, fully blocking sight of his

roaring muzzle. Small subdivisions of muscle boomed into greater and great definition as the heroes flew in closer, Mario peppering Bowser's bulk with tiny fireballs.

Each one sputtered uselessly against ever-surging mounds of bulk, over and over.

Down far below, Bowser's 400-foot feet rose ponderously, before slamming down into the cracked firmament, splitting open great swaths of seeping magma as he began to callously stomp forth, indifferent to the laughable little pelting fireballs. By the time the other foot slammed down farther off, it was 500 feet across, each step leaving a greater and deeper depression as the truly-unstoppable Koopa-God thundered uncaringly along. The terrain of his own kingdom toppled and rattled and swayed with every blasting step, quaking from his sheer weight, as Bowser shuddered and blew up to 3,600 feet, his thighs ballooning absurdly large to accommodate such fantastic weight.

"MORE, I SAID!" Bowser rattle-boomed, snarling back over his huge shoulders and vast spiky shell, speaking to the party of Kameks behind him. "I'VE GOT THAT MISERABLE ANT ON THE ROPES, CAN'T YOU SEE THAT!? MORE, MORE!! I'M TAKING N-NO CHANCES!! MAKE...ME...BIIIIIGGGERRRR!!"

Kamek yelped, they all did. All thirty looked to one another, shrugging fearfully, before another vast cloud overtook them, and they vanished from the mountainside. When they reappeared, it was just shy of Bowser's gargantuan clawed feet, just safe enough as they grew and grew over the slammed landscape. This time, however, over 100 Kameks had appeared, and all were blasting away, at will, chanting on and on together, trying to watch their step as they fed their hulking boss more, and more, and more, and more, and more, blowing him up past 4,000 feet in height!

They followed along like a small rug of blue and yellow, more and more spells peppering Bowser's vast, swelling thighs and ankles, the spiked collars all blowing up larger along with them as the enormous King billowed up to 4,400 feet, then 4,700 right after.

It was clear, no matter how many fireballs he spat out at his foe. Mario was doing no damage, this time. He might as well have been tasked with punching out a mountain. That was on the move. And getting *bigger*.

"Look!" some minions cried, from the relative safety of the Koopa airships, which only reached as high up as Bowser's elbows. "Mario, he...he's losing!"

The gasps of fear and shock at the way their whole evening had gone melted into awe, then laughter, openly mocking the lone plumber and his increasingly-tired steed.

"He can't even touch Lord Bowser!" One Troopa cackled. Incidentally, it was one of the fleeing throne guards. "He can't even touch him!"

The sudden swells of laughter overtook the air, surrounding Mario as he looked the airships over, then looked up and up and up at Bowser, who answered back by growling and shudder-bursting up past 5,000 feet. His growth was so powerful that even the spurts were displacing enough air to shove the poor duo back, like flies. Less than flies, at that size.

“See?” Kamek all cried, in unison. “This is my power! Weheheh! Mario, you’re no match! Not anymore! You pushed us too far, and now Lord Bowser is going to push back...against the entire Mushroom Kingdom! Bigger, my liege! BIGGER!!”

Among the laughing baddies were several particular underlings, each one to their own ship. On one such ship, a series of heavy thumps rose up from the interior, until a larger-than-usual Koopa stormed out sourly, slamming the door to his quarters open. As it happens, this Koopa was a Koopa Kid, one of Bowser’s own offspring. 2nd in command, and a royal brat bad enough to back it up.

“Hey! What’s all dis’ slackin’ off, over here!? Youse lunks better have a great reason fer wakin’ me up before da scheduled beatings!”

Roy Koopa adjusted his pointed shades angrily, the thick, bulky Bowser-son adding a little snarl for measure. Of the Koopa Kids, he was generally regarded as the biggest, meanest, bulliest-est of the bunch, hence his current command of the skies. Well, his portion, anyhow. He furrowed his brow, his yellow muzzle contrasting his pink dome of a head, behind the reddish-pink glasses and purple shell.

“Well, c’mon, you louses! Explain ho–WHOA,” Roy went on, until he shoved his way far enough through the crowd of refugees to reach the bow of his airship, and see the sky-consuming spectacle of his father, overmuscled, heaving with power, and standing quite literally a full mile tall. “W-what in the...how the...D-Dad!? Dad’s...HUGE!!”

“Eheeheeheehee!! We’re actually...we’re actually winning!” Kamek Prime shouted, a note of true glee erupting among his over hundred clones as they marched, keeping just far enough to avoid Bowser’s growing feet, in effect spreading the carpet of them out a little wider. “My army! Let us see if we can spur Bowser to become even BIGGER! W-we hardly want to be crushed, correct?”

A triple-digit armada of Kameks all answered with a nervous volley of over a hundred spells, each one impacting Bowser’s now-vast feet, making his building-crushing toes dig in hungrily, before they all cried out and moved away from each swelling wall of his feet’s sides. Up above in the airships, their perceived safety was again challenged, as yet again Bowser rumbled and blew up even greater, his hulking forearms swelling out into their flight path, making everyone toss about and cling for dear life as the ship canted away, then tried desperately to right itself. As fearful as everyone on board resumed being, Roy was watching intently. There was no fear to his staring. Just *hunger*.

“Oh, heck yeah!” Roy growled, suddenly very much awake and blatantly lusting. “Dad finally went nutso wit’ them growth spells! So dat’s what it is! Oho, well, I ain’t passin’ dis up! Lookit all dem Kameks down dere, blastin’ him huge-like! Yeah, boy, I’mma get me some of dat, pronto! Haha! Hey, youse idiots! We’re goin’ lower! C’mon, hop to! Yeah, youse!”

“What’s he up to, over there?” Larry Koopa wondered, furrowing a brow of his own. The blue shock of hair atop the smaller Koopa Kid’s head wavered as he watched Roy’s ship start to descend, from the side of his own airship. He glared a moment, thinking, putting attention away from the sight of the 6,000-foot colossus his Dad had blown up into, nearby. He thought, and thought. “Wait...”

He looked further down at the army of Kameks, then looked back up, but not much. The airship was clearly heading right for them.

“He wouldn’t!”

As if in reply, Larry could see Roy’s Troopas aiming a cannon down, and blasting out a purple-shelled, spiky cannonball; the airship righted itself at the last moment, swinging away just before Bowser’s 800-foot soles slammed catastrophically down where they had just been, not caring if they had been crushed, or whatever-may-be. Roy blasted straight down into the small sea of Kamek clones, getting struck once, then twice, before landing down among them all, and momentarily vanishing from Larry’s sight.

“Gah, that crazy idiot!” Larry hissed, before his own airship rocked to the stern, lurching away as Bowser thoomed down too close, shuddered hard, then blew up to 6,700 feet, the growth spurt channeling down into the splitting ground in a percussive blow-back burst. Bowser’s shoulders broadened relentlessly, his biceps exploding against his own pectorals, his lats ballooning up into his humongous, swollen triceps, his neck stretching bigger and thicker against his collar as it worked to magically keep pace with his exploding size. “It’s not like you can take on Dad, Roy, so why...”

“Eheehheeh!” Kamek cheered, gaining more confidence as he and his swelling army of 200 Kameks continued along, multiplying, chanting, blasting away. There had been enough of him at this point that he hadn’t even noticed Roy’s crash landing at the back of the troupe. “More, everyone! More!! His Majesty must become bigger! As big as he can possibly ever get! Bigger! BIGGER!! We must seize the momentum, wheheheh! BIGGGGERRRR!!”

Defeated in the moment, Mario and a bedraggled Yoshi continued to flap away, too small to even be paid attention, as they tried with increasing futility to fully escape Bowser. His growth spurts were getting too violent, too powerful, and he was blowing up larger in larger bursts, making his stride larger, making whatever ground (or air) they covered pointless. Just behind them, an 8,000-foot leviathan of pure muscle and size thundered along, glaring hot and smug as he slammed down over the ruined slopes and valleys and crags of his own dark kingdom, one tremendous foot after the other.

“RUNNING AWAY, ALREADY, MARIO?” he god-blasted, each word, each syllable an explosion of vocal superiority. “YOU BETTER RUN FASTER, INSECT! BWAHAHAHAHA!! THIS’S WHAT YOU GET, TINY! WHEN I GET OVER TO THE MUSHROOM KINGDOM, I’LL HARDLY BE ABLE TO SET FOOT IN IT! MAYBE I CAN MANAGE *ONE*, BY THAT POINT! GWAHAHAHAHA! THIS IS GREAT!! MOOOOOOOORE!! I NEED...MOOOOOOOOOORE!!”

“O-of course, Lord Bowser!” Kamek Prime panted, trying to keep pace. “Everyone, we must expand our numbers, quick—”

Right then, a deep rumble overtook the back of the Kamek army, making them all look back to the rear in confusion. A great mound of purple suddenly blew up among the ranks, spreading them out, their jostled bodies and wands sending more and more misdirected spells into it, feeding it, pumping it up bigger still. Vast yellow spikes towered higher and higher from it as Roy Koopa emerged from within, standing with a few heavy thuds to a full height of 50 feet, putting him well above the Kameks!

“W...Roy!?” Kamek shouted, gulping, stumbling back. The massive Koopa Kid eagerly engaged every Kamek he could manage, reaching out with a wide clawed hand to grab a loosed spell or three, blowing him up to 120 feet, allowing him to scoop down and hug 40 Kameks to his swelling chest,

letting them all blast away at his scaly, glowing body. Even through his growing shades, Roy was clearly shutting his eyes tight as he cackled, feeling himself glow more and more, trembling worse and worse, carrying the trapped Kameks up with him as he rattle-quaked and boomed *bigger*, surging hotly up to 400 feet in size; he took the hostage Kameks in one much larger arm, and scooped even more still up in the other, carrying nearly 90 Kameks. “What is the meaning of this, Roy!?”

“Shaddup, youse little toadie!” The 600-foot tall Roy bellowed, snarling down, down at him, and the rest of the cowering Kameks. “I outrank ya, so’s I order youse all to start firin’ on me, bigtime, and right now! Can’t let Pops have it all! Dat’s *my* job!”

To his instant chagrin, the catch-22 presented itself: he was right. He couldn’t defy any orders on that level, ever. He wasn’t just below Bowser, he was below all his rotten kids, too. Grudgingly, Kamek and the remaining army of clones all gulped, turned to him, and blasted away, pummeling the greedy Koopa with spell upon spell upon spell upon spell. Chants to multiply had already begun by that point, meaning the assigned Kameks surrounding the army quickly poofed and multiplied, leaving over 500 Kameks in a massive sea of Magikoopas...and all of them obeyed, blasting Roy with so much power that he couldn’t finish his evil laughter.

“H...H-HUAAAA...HHHAAAAAAAAAAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAH!!”

The 700-foot Roy would have already been beyond impressive, not one hour earlier. He would have loomed over his own Dad, even when he was in giant form to battle Mario, in the past. That thought wasn’t what drove Roy Koopa wild, however...it was that he was getting much...*much bigger*.

The landscape shook at two defined points, though Bowser hadn’t yet noticed. At 9,000 feet in height, nearly the size of a small mountain, he was lost in clouds all his own. That didn’t last so terribly long, however, as Roy was kind enough to not bother masking his ascension down below.

700 feet almost instantly departed to 1,200 feet, so many spells hammering into the growing Koopa’s increasingly-muscular body that he blew up in awkward, thrillingly electric bursts, not so much rolling bigger as exploding at random. His chest blew out uncontrollably in front of him as he gasped, hissing through growing teeth, and burst erratically up even larger, spurting and trembling and rumbling up to 2,000 feet...2,400 feet! His heels and claws plowed through the newly-swollen ranks of the Kamek army, sending them all about as the rest continued to blast away, making Roy’s back swell wider, his thighs and calves erupting bigger, pushing him up to 3,000 feet!

Roy’s shoulder, most likely, the culprit, must have shoved out and up wide enough to finally bump into Bowser, up above, because the air shook with the force of some rather shocked fatherly words:

“BWUH? ROY...ROY!?”

The towering giant openly balked, glaring daggers down at his enlarged offspring, the 9,000-foot King stumbling back with wide eyes. The entire realm danced and pitched angrily, so forceful and heavy that even the sky-bound airships shook slightly. The two regarded each other, even as Roy snorted dumbly, then shook hard, grit his teeth, and billowed up to 5,000 feet, over half Bowser’s size.

“...YOU...HEH...HEHEH...BWAAAAHAHAHAHAHA!! YOU GREEDY, ROTTEN LITTLE LOUSE! HAH! I LOVE IT!! BAAAAHAHAHAHAHA!! THAT’S MY BOY!!”

Roy shudders again, ballooning up with a stretching, cascading boom-groan to over 6,000 feet, and Bowser wipes away something from his colossal eye, putting a humongous hand on his huge boy's shoulder.

“NOT BAD, ROY! NOT BAD AT ALL!”

“FEH, I AIN'T DONE, OLD MAN!” Roy growled, smacking that gigantic hand away. “JUS' YOU WATCH ME GROW! I'LL SHOW YOUSE WHAT A REAL KING SHOULD BE!”

Down below, farther below than ever before, all the Kameks kept blasting away, except for one; the original Kamek stood there, watching, looking up, up and up, and suddenly, more than any point in his service, in his time, in his life, he felt it. That shadow. He had always been loomed over, figuratively, sure. Who hadn't? But this...this was the first time, despite his fear, his loyalty, even his joy in their victory, that a new emotion finally, *finally* wriggled through. The whole time he had been enlarging his mighty King, it had been there. Every time he had grown Bowser before, it had been there. And now, it was uncontrollable. It was blasphemy, heresy, the wrong kind of wrong. But he just couldn't hold it back. Suddenly, here it was.

Envy. Raw, undiluted, selfish *want*. He had always had an answer ready for every time part of him asked *why*; this time, there was still an answer...but it wasn't for Bowser. It was for him.

He pushed it down, far, far down, gulping, raising his wand back up, when a roar overtook his thoughts, sending everything back into the usual fearful jumble:

“OKAY, ROY, THAT'S ENOUGH, REALLY...”

Bowser was laughing less as he spoke. The supergiant Koopa King had leveled out at long last to an even, stunning 10,000 feet, nearly two miles tall. Yet, the rapid growth of his son was starting to clearly close the comfortable gap between them, and the threat was growing along with. The hand that had been reassuringly patting Roy's bulging shoulder was now visibly pushing down, as if to force Roy's growth to slow down, to stop. But Roy just grinned wide, his spell-soaked body raging bigger, his muscles growing to nearly match his vast father's as he billowed madly to 7,000 feet, then 8,000.

“KEEP D-DREAMIN', YOU OL' LOSER,” Roy boomed, seething out huge clouds of magic as he snarled and grew even bigger. His pectorals clammed and dragged upward against Bowser's as the two of them nearly evened out, making Bowser clasp his huge hands to Roy's, putting the two immense gods into a sudden grapple for power.

“KAMEK, STOP IT DOWN THERE!” Bowser roared, nearly splitting the skies with his raw anger. “WHAT KIND OF AN IDIOT ARE YOU, BLASTING HIM BIGGER!? STOP!”

At that, Kamek stammered out an order, and the 500 other Kameks all finally ceased their chanting, leaving Roy at a mean 9,000 feet tall, just a head or two shorter than the mighty Bowser. Kamek turned anxiously back up, up to his looming liege, ready for the verbal abuse to commence.

“YOU REALLY ARE MORONIC! FOCUS, KAMEK! I'M CLEARLY IN CHARGE HERE! DID YOU FORGET!? HUH!? LOOKS LIKE I GOTTA KNOCK SOME HEADS AROUND HERE, AND REMIND EVERYONE WHO RUNS THE CIRCUS! NOW, GET ME BIGGER, ALREADY!”

YOU HEAR ME, DOWN THERE, YOU LEGION OF LOSERS!? WHAT DO I NOT PAY YOU FOR!?"

The last normal vestiges of tolerance snapped, inside of Kamek, one by one.

"Y-yes, of course, King—"

"DON'T WASTE TIME SNIVELING, YOU SNIVELING FOOL! YOU WANT TO UNDO EVERYTHING YOU'VE WORKED FOR ME FOR!? COME ON, GET BLASTING, EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU NOBODIES! YOU HEAR ME ALL THE WAY DOWN THERE, YOU SPECKS!? YOU'RE NOT THE BIG BAD, HERE, I AM! SO, MAKE WITH THE GROWTH!! I'M NOWHERE NEAR DONE! BIGGER, I SAID!! BIIIIIIIGGGGGGGERRRR!!!"

Two words pinged out from the crop, bouncing around irresistibly in Kamek's mind:

Big bad.

He wasn't the big bad. Well, he knew that. That had been made agonizingly, humiliatingly clear, over and over, throughout his enforced tenure among the Koopas. He wasn't big. He wasn't bad.

But what if he was?

"GET ME BIGGER, DOWN THERE, OR I'LL SMASH YOUR WORTHLESS CLONES AND PUNT YOU INTO SPACE, YOU LITTLE TWERP!!!"

The last shuddering, taut string of obedience snapped, violently, and suddenly Kamek's wand rose up, nice and high. He cleared his throat, and all 500 Kameks turned to him, suddenly understanding. They all aimed their wands, and Bowser snorted angrily.

"THAT'S RIGHT," he growled, before shooting a look back at Roy, who was still struggling, (thankfully) still overpowered by Bowser's strength. "NOW, WHEN I GET REALLY BIG, YOU'RE GONNA LEARN A THING OR TWO," he continued on, through grit teeth, "AND YOU *KNOW* I HATE TEACHING!!!"

Far down below, as the rest of the kingdom and its airships all watched, the unattended Kamek army poofed to double its masses...then poofed again, spreading out, leaving a field of blue, over 2,000 Kameks there, all aiming their wands. And every single wand was aimed...

At Kamek.

2.

"LOOK HERE, YOU LITTLE PUNK," Bowser growled, visibly fuming, as he grabbed Roy and hefted him up some by the rim of his huge shell. That a 9,000-foot behemoth could even be budged off of the crackling terrain lent some credence to the notion that, just maybe, Roy might not have been A-number-one here. "I'M NOT KEEN ON BEING IN COMPETITION WITH MY OWN BRAT,

UNDERSTAND? YOU CAN GET BIG, FINE—BUT NOTHING ABOVE HALF MY SIZE, YOU HEAR?"

Roy cut a glare so hard it might have sliced his shades clear off his muzzle. Yet, against the 10,000-foot tall Koopa King, even it wilted on impact. Still, the only thing worse than accepting a brow-beating at normal size, was accepting one at over a mile tall.

"YEAH, I WAS GETTIN' TOO STRONG FER YOUSE, POPS, SO WHAT? YOU CAN'T HANDLE A CHALLENGE, S'AT IT? SOME LEADER!"

As both powerhouse parties argued away, far off enough to avoid detection, Kamek smiled; it was a new, unhinged sort of grin, which only went so crooked because he had never tried wearing it before. The wily Magikoopa spun about to his many, many acolytes (if clones counted as such), his glasses gleaming, his arms spread receptively wide open.

2,000 wands all lit up, flickering into a magic frenzy of many glowing shapes as an army of chants welled up to join them; unable to help it, Kamek closed his eyes, braced tight, and let every single spell blast forth, pummeling his little body with mad, unfathomable power. The instant it connected, even the first spell, it was an overwhelming battery on his small senses; then, the other 1,999 impacted, one after the other, after the other, and the Magikoopa's body was already rumbling catastrophically.

I-incre-redible...incredible!

Kamek's plain blue robe suddenly choked against a great surge of stretching bulk; the stripe plating of his belly swelled out, two mounded pectorals blowing up, then out, forcing his robe to pull painfully tight against the violent rush of pressurized bliss exploding within. His clawed feet dug in with a hard clench, his soles bulging out over the dirt they had just disturbed. Raw, blinding power erupted within, hammering without, the wise old koopa's mind suddenly submerged under an entire ocean of delicious, overwhelming joy!

"H...h-h-eeee...eeheehheheeeee! Yes! I'm doing it! I-it's wuh-working...it's happening! I'm growing bigger! Me! *I'm* the one guh-growing BIGGER! Weheheh!"

On and on the magic flowed, firing heedlessly into Kamek's body, heaving it up taller, wider and bulkier by the second. On and on his body expanded, struggling to maintain itself as nearly intolerable pleasure rocketed through his form, swelling his arms and thighs into a dawning definition. The suggestion of muscle grew into a demand as Kamek's 30-foot body erupted with tidal bursts of bulk, biceps flooding his blue sleeves, forcing the white rims backward as too much hulking forearm existed for its own good. At 50 feet, his knees knocked, humongous thighs slapping so hard together that both muscles made a splitting crack, followed by another heavy *boom* of growth.

"Me," Kamek huffed, the words fighting loose from a body wracked with change. "Me!! I am the biggest! For once, me! Wahahahahahah, more...moooooore!!!"

Whether any time dilation had occurred or not, it hardly mattered. In less than an actual second, Kamek had billowed violently up, up to over 100 feet, then with a heated shudder, 200! The great Kamek army sank lower and lower as he felt his pectorals boom out uncontrollably bigger, stretching

his robe, pulling tighter, nearly cutting into his expanding trunk of a neck as the robe's lower lip rose up past his thighs, then up to his lower belly, the growing koopa blowing up to 500 feet...600 feet...

"AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, PIPSQUEAK?" Bowser boomed, flames coiling from his vast maw. as he jabbed a thick finger right at Roy's huge, swollen chest plates. "WHAT KIND OF FOLLOWER ARE YOU? DISLOYALTY IS FINE, WHEN IT'S TO SOMEONE ELSE!"

Kamek gulped, trying to simply breath, as he rumbled and winced and shot up to a staggering 1,000 feet in height, growing up to Bowser's looming ankles. The spells kept battering his swollen muscles and shaking mass, and by the third second, Kamek was roaring up past 2,500 feet...

"WELL, I AIN'T INTERESTED IN WORKIN' UNDER A WHINER, POPS!"

Bowser' voice dropped a devastating amplified octave. Everything about Bowser dropped lower, as he leaned hard into Roy, who just managed to gather his courage in time to push back, muzzle-to angled muzzle:

"WHO EVER ACCUSED *YOU* OF WORKING!?"

By the time the world-shaking words were growled out, Kamek was as high up as Bowser's rear and tail, the spells continuing to soak into his bulk as he surged faster, passing 4,000 feet, then 5,500; his back muscles strained against the confines of his poor robe, stretched skin-tight against an armada of overfed, swelling muscles. His glasses remained, thankfully, but they were fogged something terrible, and the heat was rising, as he glowed brighter, shook deeper, and rocketed bigger...

"SAYS THE ONE WITH AN ARMY OF UNPAID LABORERS!"

"I REPAY THEM IN EXPERIENCE, YOU BIG TWERP!"

"WELL, YOUSE OUGHTA—"

In a disturbing twist, Roy lost whatever words his normally loud mouth had ready. It wasn't that there was something behind Bowser (surely, enough of an impossibility, already); it was that whatever was that big was looming up bigger, behind him. Even in a land of ominous shadows, there was an especially bad one starting to envelope them *both*.

"WHAT?" Bowser huffed, becoming a different type of annoyed.

Roy gulped, stepping heavily back with a rattle of the landscape, casting tremors out. He pointed up, but it was only when a sudden looming darkness overtook his brat that Bowser finally took to turning around—and regretted it.

"*WHAT!?*"

A low, demonic stretch of scales and heaving muscle answered as they both gawked at a 13,000-foot tall hulk of a koopa. A blue robe stretched and ripped at the low hems, struggling against unending eruptions of muscle and growing claws. High up above two vast, trembling mounds, there was a growing set of glasses, a pointy blue had, and a muzzle, wide open, panting away heedlessly as the

great beast shook and blew up higher! Bowser step-thoomed back, bumping the startled Roy, both of them backing off in the shadow of a 15,000-foot colossus...no, 17,000!

"NO," Bowser slowly started, a nasty thought crashing up against the locked gates of his brain. He tore his gawking away and spied the terrain below, seeing thousands of speck-sized Kameks, where once there had been a few hundred—and all of them were blasting the towering god that, he now understood, was his underling. "KAMEK!?"

"EEEHEEHEE!" the 20,000-foot supergiant bellowed, without even trying. Airships were less than gnats to Kamek now, about as worrisome to the Magikoopa as a grain of pepper caught in a draft. His feet were hills with claws, cracking the turf with their sheer, unthinkable weight. The horde of Kameks were less than a sheet of yellow and blue that swirled adoringly around him, cheering and calling in victory to their prime. "YES, LORD BOWSER! SO IT WOULD APPEAR!"

Roy was backing further away, yet, his monstrous feet crash-crashing away as he stared in muted panic at Kamek's vast, bulky body. Bowser, with all the reflex of years of uncontested abuse, planted his feet, drew up a stance, and snarled indignantly.

"WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA, KAMEK!? I TURN AWAY TO COMPLETELY IGNORE YOU, AND THIS IS WHAT I COME BACK TO, WHEN I FELT LIKE IT? SHRINK, RIGHT NOW!"

"...NO."

The word no one ever said to Bowser was not only said aloud, but *boomed*. The entire Southern end of the Koopa Kingdom quaked from the force, lingering aftershocks making the landscape grumble out for miles. Bowser went sickly pale, but not from fear. He opened his flaming maw to really tear into him, when Kamek interjected:

"BOW DOWN."

"WH...YOU WANT...HUH...HAH...HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

To his due credit, Bowser's size was still such that his bellowing laughter sent the realm into a terrible fit, shaking mountains and rumbling up, up into the cloud-smothered skies. Roy almost started up a reciprocal support laugh, but he made the wise mistake of looking back up, and taking in sight of the 20,000-foot god.

"WEHEHEHE...ALL OF YOU. BOW DOWN, TO ME!"

"NOT HAPPENING, TINY!" Bowser bellowed, jamming a thumb as obstinately as possible at himself. "YOU LISTEN GOOD, TWERP! I'M NOT HAVING REBELLIONS, GET IT!? I'M IN CHARGE! YOU FALL IN LINE, RIGHT NOW!"

"WHAT REBELLION, 'LORD'?" Kamek shot back, snorting, his huge chin tucking partially down into the vast walls of his pectorals as he looked down on Bowser. "THIS IS AN OVERDUE RESTRUCTURING! I...AM IN CHARGE, NOW! WHEHEHEHE! SO, KNEEL! ALL OF YOU!!"

With that, Kamek finally raised a single massive arm over his tiny army below, signaling. Even that simple motion made his prominent bicep and shoulder swell enormously, putting another rip in his

sleeve as it bulged out against the pleading fabric. In time with the gesture, every one of the 2,000 clones down below chanted; with a vast poof, a thin blanket of purple cloud rose and faded, leaving a 4,000-strong army of clones.

"STOP AND THINK, LORD," Kamek bellowed, his vast chest rising and bobbling, "IN ALL MY YEARS OF SERVITUDE, I HAVE WIELDED SUCH POWER. YET, I DEFERRED TO YOU. THANKS TO YOUR OWN GREED...YOU HAVE AWAKENED A DEEP HUNGER! WEHEHE! YES, YES! I SUPPOSE I OUGHT TO THANK YOU, REALLY...I THINK IT'S ONLY FAIR TO RETURN THE FAVOR, AND NOT CRUSH YOU FLAT! YOU CAN JUST SWEAR FEALTY TO ME, FROM NOW ON!"

With a snap of two very, very large fingers high overhead, the entire Kamek army began to chant, 4,000 spells blazing bright on 4,000 wands.

"I OVERTOOK YOU IN LESS THAN A MINUTE. THINK WHAT *THIS* WILL DO TO ME, BEFORE YOU THINK TO DEFY ME FURTHER! EHEEHEE, I ALMOST WANT YOU TO RESIST ME, THINKING ON IT! WEHEHEHE!"

"W-WAIT, DAD," Roy stammered, uncharacteristically, the huge Koopaling edging closer to them both once more. His massive hands were out, extended in surrender. "LOOK, IT'S KINNA A HARD PILL, HERE...BUT CLEARLY, KAMEK, HE'S DA BIGGEST, YEAH? WE MIGHT AS WELL HEAR HIM OUT. YEAH, UH, Y'KNOW, I GOTTA ADMIT...THAT, UH, S'A PRETTY GOOD LOOK FOR YOUSE, KAMEK!"

Even Kamek's god-like strength couldn't manage to keep the smile from his muzzle. Clearly, he was just sucking up, it was obvious enough. But it was just so amusing, so...satisfying...that it seemed more than apropos to humor it.

"OH? YOU, OF ALL KOOPAS, HAVE NO FIGHT IN YOU, THEN, ROY?"

"H-HEY, THERE'S FIGHTIN', AND THERE'S JUS' STUPID. I AIN'T STUPID."

"WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT DISLOYALTY!?" Bowser raged, openly incensed. Roy just kept moving by, closer to the mountainous Kamek. He took a gigantic knee before Kamek, and the remains of the castle and bridge all shook to a final sad tumble.

"I JUST KNOW WHO'S DA STRONGEST, POP, AND IT AIN'T US."

"EXCELLENT, THEN. YOU MADE THE SMART CHOICE, ROY. SURVIVAL BEATS PRIDE, AFTER ALL. I'VE KNOWN THAT FOR YEARS, AND YEARS. BUT I'M BIGGER NOW. BIGGER THAN YOU, LORD BOWSER, BY A WIDE MARGIN! SURRENDER, OR SEE HOW MUCH GREATER THAN YOU I BECOME!"

Roy remained kneeling, his teeth clearly grit, given his sheer scale. Despite his blatant distaste, the 9,000-foot Koopaling swallowed it down with a nervous gulp. Bowser, however was in so such state. The now-debatable Koopa King charged, roaring in abject fury, his huge body slamming into Kamek; yet, the even greater wall of robed muscle won out, and soon Bowser found himself bear-hugging, quite uselessly, against the unflinching bulk of Kamek.

"YOU...YOU ROTTEN LITTLE TRAITOR!" he boomed, struggling. "I...I'LL--"

"YOU'LL *WHAT?*"

Bowser strained harder still, putting untold muscles to work; yet, with a far less-concerned flex of his abs, Kamek nearly sent his former Lord flying back to the ground. The merest flex only served to bulge the Magikoopa's mass out that much bigger, pushing Bowser off without the bother of moving.

"YOU SEEM TO BE LABORING UNDER OLD NOTIONS," Kamek snorted, beaming up wide underneath his enlarged glasses. "WEHEHEH...MAYBE YOU'VE JUST BEEN BIGGEST FOR TOO LONG! YOU CAN'T BEAT ME, LORD BOWSER! NO ONE CAN!"

"YEAH?" Bowser fumed, shaking with anger. At his size, it was still enough to send rocks dancing in place for a half a mile in every direction. "YOU CAN'T REALLY BELIEVE THAT! YOU'RE STILL CALLING ME 'LORD'—WHAT'S THAT SAY?"

"I IMAGINE IT SAYS I'M **BIGGER** THAN A MERE *LORD*."

Roy's monstrous figure stayed planted so close to the ruined ground that he might as well have been growing a garden of himself. There was no telling from Kamek's towering vantage what kind of expression the Koopaling had, and for a moment he might have been willing to lose some height, just to get close enough to check. Kamek flexed untold tons of swollen-out muscle, his pectorals heaving out as he brought both colossally bulky arms up, and cracked his knuckles with booming echoes. He opened his muzzle to add to the burn, when—

"ROY, NOW!!!"

Bowser's sudden shout sent a flicker of confusion through Kamek, the massive behemoth cocking one generous brow. His open mouth reformed to equip a question, when Roy, maintaining his stooped posture, started to swipe and slash, his enormous bulky arms and open, clawed hands shearing through the nearby masses of Kamek clones. One-third of the whole army went flying off with a thousand little cries as Roy smashed, swatted and flicked more and more of Kamek-Prime's support team away, K.O. after K.O., all as Bowser sneered smugly up at him.

"OF COURSE YOU WOULD!" Kamek huffed, a very real note of annoyance slipping loose. "OF COURSE, YOU WOULD BETRAY ME...IN THE MOST *IRRITATING* MANNER POSSIBLE!"

In a blink, Bowser was back at it, having slammed his over-muscled bulk into Kamek's walled abs, his nearly 2-mile mass more than enough to actually rock Kamek's nearly 4-mile brawn, *slightly*.

"I'M TAKING...YOU...DOWN," Bowser panted, visibly straining to even move him.

"YOU THOUGHT THAT WOULD DO IT?" Kamek sighed, his pecs swelling even bigger. "AN ANNOYANCE IS WHAT I EXPECTED, AND THAT'S WHAT I GOT. SO BE IT!"

A simple snap of Kamek's fingers was like an explosion overhead. All the fuss stopped below, even in the air, as dozens of Koopa airships stalled out. Even Roy stopped his assault, having taken out over half of the great Kamek army, as the remaining clones all vanished in a collective valley of purple

smoke. Roy coughed, still low enough to be near it, and as it was waved away, the gargantuan Koopaling jolted back in fear and shock. Mostly fear.

"AWW, NO WAY!"

Where he had nearly reduced them to about 2,000, there were now at least 8,000 clones, a moving landscape of them, surrounding Roy with just enough bodies to do the job. That ring of clones shifted, moving away from Roy, as if disinterested or bored. It was almost hurtful.

"SHOW THEM!" Kamek huffed, clearly trembling with anticipation, his thick muscles tensing loudly, stretching as he readied himself. 8,000 beams of magic flashed forth, sailing in a glimmering arc right over Bowser's head, peppering Kamek's exposed abs, just shy of the torn rims of his robe. Immediately, the effect hit, and it was absolutely terrifying.

From one particular airship, Larry Koopa started barking overdue orders to pull back, to retreat the fleet as far as they could, as quick as reason would allow. Farther back, an airship watched on, the only ship that wasn't beginning to flee from what was sure to be a monstrous growth spurt. That particular ship belonged to Iggy Koopa, and anyone noticing his holding position when everyone else fled wouldn't have been a shock.

Iggy, after all, was practically insane.

"S-sir, we need to move!" A panicked Dry Bones whimpered, as the vibrations from Kamek's spell-soaked body started to reach them, rattling even the air. "H-he's getting too strong!"

"He is, isn't he," Iggy hummed, thinking something. The unusually tall, lanky Koopaling adjusted his thick rimmed glasses, his wild eyes belying a strange but exceeding intellect. A shock of hair kept upright atop his head, like the head of a carrot, as though permanently electrified straight by too many mad thoughts.

The Dry Bones, knowing who Iggy was, and knowing what he was like, simply sighed, turned around, and faked orders to the crew to move.

Kamek looked to the smoldering dark clouds overhead and grinned toothily, his hat staying on as his neck began to balloon wider. His shoulders billowed hungrily out, his biceps booming loudly bigger, straining his snapping sleeves, yellow turtle muscles bursting at erratic angles out from every new tear. The vibrations worsened as the spells all compounded within him, and with a sudden, godly bellow, Kamek *grew*. His chest inflated madly, smothering up hotly against his own chin as he panted and roared in approval; his lats blew up and out, snapping the tears and widening them angrily as his robe stretched and split up higher, his abs booming forth against Bowser, who gasped and grunted as he tried to keep a hold.

"NO...NO, NO," the Koopa King snarled, his massive and bulky arms spreading wider and wider, unable to even get around the waistline of the swelling leviathan. In that one lurch, Kamek had heaved meanly up to 23,000 feet, before he shuddered harder, bit his lip, and smiled, blowing up to 26,000 feet, closing his eyes behind his growing glasses as he shook worse still, and groaned up to 30,000 feet! Even the great Bowser's huge feet lost purchase of the firmament, the reptile's bear hug not

a desperate hug-hug, keeping tight to Kamek's abdominal bulk as it surged ceaselessly bigger, and bigger. Less than half an hour ago, he had been a virtual god; now, Bowser was having trouble even *staying* against Kamek, let alone remaining comparable. Try as he might, the stubborn tyrant's grips slipped and gave out, and the 10,000-foot Koopa tumbled like a hefty meteor to the ground.

The crash was so fantastic that even Kamek wobbled and pitched, as Bowser slammed belly-first into the clone army, only momentarily reducing its mighty ranks. Among the billowing rim of smoke his landing kicked up, even more explosions of clone smoke arose, patches of purple mingling with the brown soot, and as it rolled away, just as many clones were back in place.

"YOU UNDERS-STAND NOW?" Kamek boomed, the 35,000-foot pillar of muscle groaning and stretching even larger, even fuller with raw, tingling power. "EHEEHEEHEE, YOU SEE W-WHAT I CAN DO, NOW? D-DO I HAVE YOUR AWE, AT LUH-LAST?"

Roy still had yet to resume standing, such was his fear. The brash bully of a Koopaling, even at 9,000 feet, had been reduced to an ongoing crouch of submission; as Bowser shook off his landing, even as Kamek swelled higher and higher, his feet blowing up wider and larger before them, he could see Roy grudgingly creeping over to his foe, bowing in earnest at last.

"DO YOU U-UNDERSTAND, NOW? YOU...CANNOT...S-S...STOP...ME!!!"

Kamek flexed, and the desolation of the Koopa Kingdom shuddered. The 40,000-foot monstrosity's physique exploded outward, humbling Bowser, dwarfing even with it had been a minute earlier. The Magikoopa huffed and snorted in fitful delight, straining bigger, sponging mad torrents of pure energy; his pectorals erupted out, ripping his robe further, pushing all the way out to as far as his huge hands could reach, as his biceps boomed bigger, with volcanic vigor. His vast shoulders inflated to tremendous scope against his stretched-out blue fabric, his thighs heaving out to contain his own stupendous and staggering weight.

At 45,000 feet tall, eight-and-a-half miles in height, Bowser hardly would have made it up to Kamek's knees. And the panting Magikoopa was shaking worse and worse as the spells continued on, pumping his up more, and more, his shadow spilling over them all, over the remains of the castle, over the mountain strongholds and the craggy valleys, over everything! 53,000 feet...60,000 feet...even from the farther reaches of the Kingdom, more and more gawking minions can see a huge mass surging skyward, higher and higher, something yellow and blue, something roaring in complete and utter victory.

As the proud Koopa airfleet fled one way, a single ship veered off above them. No minions below bothered to notice as it darted right in the skies, and steered directly into a huge green warp pipe.

For all the chaotic fuss and doom Bowser's backfiring scheme had caused, one wouldn't know it in the Mushroom Kingdom. In fact, for all intents and purposes, it wasn't a half bad day. The sun was out, the grass was green, and coins were aplenty. The denizens of the Kingdom shuffled about on various chores or daily huggings, when out from a nearby warp pipe, their hero and frequent savior Mario appeared, atop everyone's favorite dinosaur, Yoshi.

Everyone stopped to wave and cheer, as was the customary pre-victory victory rite, before they started to really notice them properly. Mario was quiet, bedraggled and weary, looking like he had

returned as intact as possible from a terrible war. Yoshi hobbled along, faithful but tattered, and all Mario could do was pat his head in solidarity. The two strode past the streets of the Kingdom, making a blunt beeline for Princess Peach's castle.

Defeat. Even though a hero ought to know humility, there was something so personally damaging about the word. Thoughts of everyone else's eventual safety spurred the plumber on, to be sure...but it was *losing* that truly stung the deepest.

No time for that, though. It wasn't over yet! He...

He...was overshadowed, all too suddenly. A great blot of darkness stretched over him, and for one moment of terror, he feared that Bowser had stormed at max-size, all the way after them. The world wasn't that small; and yet...

The droning whine of propellers cut through his wonderings, and Mario looked back to see the silhouetted mass of an approaching airship; had one actually left the Koopa Kingdom? *How much worse had things gotten?*

There was no time, and he was too worn out to run away. The castle was too far off, as well, leaving Mario and Yoshi right in the middle of two potentialities. If this was an attack, there just wasn't much either of them could do about it...

From beyond the rail of the bow, there came no weapons, no fireballs, Bullet Bills, etc. There was no attack at all. It was a moment before a lone figure peered over, waving a clawed hand with a spike bracelet about the wrist.

"Yo, Mario!" Iggy Koopa called out, the sunlight glinting momentarily off of his glasses. "Hey! Come on, look! We...gah, we need...your help! Don't make me say it twice, just climb on!"

Yoshi looked to Mario; they both gazed at the castle. Both of them turned, glumly but clearly, back to the hovering airship, and as the citizens of the kingdom watched in confusion, the airship received them, lifted higher, and circled right back around in the direction of that which they had just escaped from.

In his time under his service, Bowser had always loomed over Kamek. It was as iron as breathing or eating, or hating plumbers, as certain as reality itself. But reality wasn't reality, anymore. And Kamek felt a *lot* stronger than iron. The 110,000-foot god of a koopa towered so thoroughly over Bowser, over the still-groveling Roy, and over the landscape itself, that he nearly fainted from the sensory overload. Yet, his muscles were so prodigious, so swollen and overpowered, that he could have likely fainted dead, and stayed standing. No one would have been able to tell. No one could tell how much he was smiling, all sight blocked beyond his incredible pectorals.

At nearly 21 miles tall, it would have taken a day for a regular minion to scale him, to even get high enough to see his expression; even if they made it there, it would be like trying to see how a mountain or canyon was holding up. Though thoughts made his head swirl in a frenzy, his clawed feet digging happily into the smashed ground below. Somewhere under his extended pectorals, Roy remained kneeling. Bowser had yet to, Kamek could tell...but the fact that no further frontal had been

attempted told him enough: now, the Koopa King understood. He smiled, took a breath, and felt the air itself rush in, swelling his muscles one extra bit against his tormented robe.

"...ROY."

There was a pause. It may well have been that the 9,000-foot Roy was too small to easily hear, and the thought was electric to him.

"Y...YEAH."

"NO TRICKS, THIS TIME?"

"...NO."

"GOOD. BEST SAVE YOUR LIMITED BRAIN FOR MORE BENEFICIAL THINGS, WEHEHEH. YOU SWEAR LOYALTY TO ME? BE HONEST, UNLESS YOU WANT TO SEE THE CONSEQUENCE, FIRSTHAND. I WILL GROW SO HUGE, YOU WON'T MAKE IT OUT FROM UNDER MY FOOT! UNDERSTAND?"

"MN...Y-YEAH. ER, YES."

"YOU SHOULD KNOW, IN THE SPIRIT OF THIS NEWFOUND HONESTY, THAT I WON'T MISTREAT YOU, ROY. I TAKE CARE OF MY UNDERLINGS! NOW, WHAT...WOULD YOU LIKE?"

He imagined it, and wasn't far off the mark: Roy gasped to himself, his brows knitting behind his shades. He finally looked up, as Bowser stayed back, wearing a different kind of surprise as he watched on.

"LIKE?"

"REWARD FEEDS LOYALTY, ROY. I CAN BE A FAR BETTER LEADER TO YOU! WHAT DO YOU WANT? TELL ME WHAT YOU WISH. I GOT MY WISH, EHEEHEE! WHY NOT SPREAD THE POWER AROUND?"

Roy's labored brows lifted, and his toothy jaw went slack.

"WHAT I WANT?" he repeated, just to try it on. "I, UH...I W...I WANNA BE BIGGER. BIGGER THAN MY DAD! WAY, *WAY* BIGGER!"

Well, that was easy. Of course, he was going to.

"OH?" Kamek mused, feigning shock. "BIGGER THAN BOWSER? THE ONE WHO'S LOOMED OVER YOU FOR YEARS AND YEARS, THROWING HIS WEIGHT AROUND? DON'T TELL ME YOU...WISH TO EMBARRASS HIM? TAKE HIM DOWN A PEG?"

"YOU NO-GOOD RUNT!" Bowser roared, already stomping the ground into ruins. "DON'T YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!"

"I WANT IT!" Roy shouted, his yell and Bowser's roars and stomps making the Koopa Kingdom an increasingly unstable base upon which to stand. Thousands and thousands of minions all pitched and fell, crying out and huddling together, as the three sky-high giants hollered and raged. "MAKE ME HUGE! M-MAKE ME UNBELIEVABLY BIG! PUH...ugh...P...PUH-PLEASE!"

A Koopaling saying the *p-word* shocked even Kamek, momentarily. In his manipulation, perhaps, he had struck a deep nerve. A moment's genuine sympathy rose up and took roost.

"VERY WELL. IT'S YOURS!"

Roy started the slightest bit as the living carpet of Kamek clones, all 8,000 of them, turned in unison to face him. The same number of tiny white wands rose toward him, registering as the most minuscule of movements (by his size). Thousands of points lit up neon, and behind those massive shades, Roy's eyes were almost painfully wide.

A whole legion of spells hammered against the huge Koopaling's body and shell, and with a deepening groan Roy began to grow, and grow, and grow; the rumble of power building within his body swelled into a horrible quake as his bulk boomed out against his pulling hide, his head rising higher, his shoulders blowing out wider. In a moment, he had already surpassed Bowser's colossal size by a humiliating margin, and the enraged father could only watch as his son ballooned up to double his own size. The sides of Roy's feet bulged outward, nonstop, bowling into the casting clone army, scattering them back like grains.

"Y...YEEEEEEAAH..." Roy murmured, even the slightest of mutterings a vast blast of sound.

Bowser turned, at long, unhappy last, to stomp away, storming off toward the nearby remains of the castle, cursing out blasts of flame to himself. All the while, Roy's towering figure shuddered and blew up even higher, stronger, thicker; 20,000 feet erupted to 40,000 as Roy's biceps and forearms and calves all billowed uncontrollably in scope. His chest swelled out in big, ugly heaves, the lateral slats of his chest scales pulling wider, tighter, straining in delight as his muscles grew out ahead of his 60,000 foot form.

"H...HUAAAAAH," Roy huffed, visibly shaking with overload, and visibly yearning for it to get both better and worse. "MUH...MUH-MOOOOOORE..."

Kamek smirked knowingly, letting the barrage of spells continue on. Why not let him feel it a bit longer? Why not butter up his new underling some more? Why not further rub it all in Bowser's rotten face?

The vast Koopaling's body blocked out more and more of the horizon as Larry stared out from the newly-retreated comfort of his airship, watching as his brother boomed, bulged and blew up past 80,000 feet, then a whopping 100,000! The airship hardly even reached Roy's hips, as Roy's oceanic pectorals rumbled and boomed even bigger, colliding hotly with Kamek's chest, making the huge Magikoopa laugh.

"STILL TAKING IN MORE, ROY?" Kamek chuckled, pressing pecs tightly, as Roy evened out with his staggering 110,000-foot bulk. Two 20-mile koopa gods bulged tight and warm together, Roy still shaking with need. "REMEMBER THIS GENEROSITY! HAVE ALL THE 'MORE' YOU CAN!"

Roy openly roared at last, rumbling and booming up even bigger. His pectorals starting to swell out around Kamek's muzzle, momentarily burying it in pressure as Roy bit his lip and growled, then surged up to 130,000 feet...150,000...

That's right, grow, Kamek thought, awash in confidence and Roy's chest. Your petty competition with Bowser makes you such an easy pawn to control! Eheeheehee, it's not like you can still best me, so fine. That just leaves me with an even more powerful tank at my command! And if you try and rebel, or pull any tricks...heheh...

"GAHAHAHA! DAT'S RIGHT! LOOKIT ME N-NOW, POPS! GIMME...GIMME IT ALL!"

The familiar and unwanted rush of sulfur and darkness returned as Iggy's airship exited the massive warp pipe, Mario and Yoshi once again returned to the Koopa Kingdom. The chaos and panic of their last encounter, the plumber noted, was a calm afternoon stroll, compared to how it was now. A stray Mamma Mia escaped, drowned out over the sheer din of Roy's rumbling. Bowser seemed nowhere in sight, which would normally be expected from that far away...but Bowser had been nearly 2 miles tall when he left, making his disappearance all the more ominous.

Now, there was only the sight of Roy and Kamek combined, both of their masses rendered soft through the smoky haze of atmosphere between them and the airship. Even Iggy gulped at the sight.

"R...right," the tall Koopaling muttered, turning back to the two heroes. "So, like I said, Dad blew up huge, and all that...but then Kamek snapped and rebelled! And uh, as you can see, Roy's blown up even bigger than Kamek! See down there? That army of Kamek clones? He's been turning all that power on himself! See why we need a truce?"

Mario glumly nodded, as he and Yoshi watched Roy frantically expand in size.

Bowser's monstrous hand clawed down at the ruined bits of his exploded former castle, still grouching sourly, putting his fantastic bulk to use as he cleared rubble away, revealing a tiny stone slab embedded in the ground...well, in what was formerly his own basement.

"LOUSY, NO GOOD—"

His claw wedged in, carefully, his enormous strength easily forcing the heavy slab to move open. Given the slab was several hundred feet long, the old Bowser would never have been able to remotely budge it; now, it was cake. His finger shoved down through the aperture, cracking the opening, before his hand punched clear through, handily widening everything as the ground split around it from entry. He fumbled around, his massive tongue poking out, until he grinned evilly.

"HAH! THERE WE GO! I KNEW IT HAD SOME!"

Bowser's hand returned, and when it did, several mega mushrooms were there, albeit fairly lost in the center of his vast scaly palm. He slapped them right up into his opened maw, and gulped. The rumble began to fill his huge body, cascading out, as he laughed, then began to blow up bigger, crushing the already-crushed rubble of his old home into absolute dust...

At 175,000 feet, Roy finally stopped growing, the utter immensity of the 33-mile tall Koopaling still glowing with the aftereffects of so many spells. In Mario's old world, his feet would have taken up an entire downtown city, his feet alone many times higher than skyscrapers. His knees would have met the highest reaches of the troposphere, clouds playing about his lower legs. In the Koopa Kingdom, that put the darkened clouds somewhere around his elbows, and further more still loomed overhead, as if angrily rebuking Roy's size, unwilling to be surpassed in height.

Down below, but only by so much, Kamek snickered, patting Roy's stupendous belly scales approvingly. Bulk-to-bulk, Roy was easily bigger, as well as taller, but Kamek was still beyond godly with overblown muscle and glory.

"GOOD, ROY...VERY GOOD! WEHEHEH! NOW, YOU'RE FREE TO HANDLE BOWSER, HOWEVER YOU DESIRE!"

Up, up above, Roy blast-spoke down, rattling the landscape underneath his feet, shaking entire mountains and cracking the turf as magma rippled and spat in protest:

"YEAH, YEAH! FIRST THING'S FIRST..."

A set of bulging arms hugged around Kamek, hoisting even his tremendous size up off of the ground. Kamek grunted, the massive girth of his body actually able to feel the sheer pressure and force Roy's bigger bulk constituted. He rose higher, dragged rudely up against the walls of chest muscle and scales, cloud banks passing by and parting, until Roy's titanic muzzle was revealed overhead.

"YER GONNA GIVE ME MORE. WAY, WAY MORE!"

Before any argument could ensue, Roy squeezed, and squeezed *hard*. Even Kamek suddenly felt the constriction, and all those humongous muscles could only pad him so well as Roy's immense biceps swelled out with strain.

"Y...YOU'RE MAKING A MIST-TAKE," Kamek growled. "I CAN GET BIGGER THAN Y-YOU, EASILY!"

"YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW DAT," Roy huffed, drunk on power. "JUST GET TO ORDERIN' DEM TO BLAST YOUSE, ALREADY!"

The simplicity of Roy's plan became very clear, and Kamek swore to himself. It was so stupidly smart, he hadn't even bothered to account for its existence. If they all fired on Kamek in retaliation, but Kamek was being blocked by Roy's bulk...Roy would intercept every one of them first!

Warp away, he thought, frantically calculating his chances. *Just warp away, then grow!*

The first syllables to escape Kamek's mouth were for his warp spell, but Roy's vast pectorals flexed tight, and suddenly the Magikoopa's entire muzzle was engulfed in bulk, pinching it tight.

"KMPPGH!?"

"NAH-AH, NO YOUSE DON'T!" Roy boomed. "I KNOW DAT AIN'T THE COMMAND!"

At last, a hint of fear emerged in Kamek, as the koopa sorcerer found himself unable to extricate his muzzle from Roy's muscles. No incantation, no spell. No spell, no escape. No speaking, no ordering! Fists bigger than Bowser's castle slammed against Roy's huge chest, but it only yielded a pleasantly deep drumbeat of force, rippling through too much muffling muscle.

"WHAT, ARE YOUSE TRYIN' TO BEAT ME DOWN?" Roy laughed, making his muscles quake deep, making even Kamek tremble against their raw power and size. 'DAT'S ADORABLE! GEHEHEH! HEY, A LITTLE TO DA RIGHT, WOUDLYA?"

White hot anger built, mingling with the deep reds of embarrassment, as Kamek's overconfidence colliding with his ego, cracking it. This couldn't be it. No. NO!

"I'LL RELEASE YAS, BUT ONLY IF YOU ORDER MORE SPELLS! DA RIGHT ONES! C'MON, ALREADY, BLOW ME UP BIGGER! I WANNA BE ABLE T'CARRY DIS KINGDOM IN MY HAND! GAHAHAHA!"

Somewhere around Roy's hips, Iggy's airship pulled in close as it could. At such proximity, the risk was catastrophically high: one stray move in their direction, and Roy's towering bulk would knock them to oblivion. Even the massive air currents made by his movements could have the same result.

"Okay, Mario, Yoshi," Iggy sighed, as though he had been doing all the work, even though his faithful Koopa Troopas were the ones hustling to move enormous wooden crates around on the deck. "We should have collected enough of these to do the job...I hope. We were going for overkill, to be sure, but at their new sizes...I dunno what'll happen! Hehe! Kind of exciting, isn't it?"

Mario chose to look back at the crates, instead of dignifying the idea with a response. The mass of crates were loaded to the breaking point with purple mushrooms—poison mushrooms, specifically. A few overfilled crates jostled as the ship moved through the air, making one or two of them tumble loose. One stuck a Troopa, making him cry out pitifully as he suddenly shrank down, down, until he was only as large as another Troopa's booted foot.

"Everyone, get those cannons loaded!" Iggy shouted, clapping his clawed hands. Despite it all, he was beaming with excitement, as though he had played along with the terror of it all, just to allow a very fun experiment to commence. "Get every single one full, and fire at will! I know Roy's bigger...but Kamek is priority one, understand? Once you get a better shot, focus most on him!"

At long last, Kamek sighed, and Roy felt the warmth between his chest.

"OKAY?" Roy asked, in the most un-asking way possible. "READY TO COMPLY?"

He felt a blushing nod burning against his pectorals. The fantastic pressure against Kamek finally lessened, just a little, and Roy's huge pectorals unclenched. Kamek cleared his throat, mustering what dignity he could. Down far, far, far below, the army of clones waited about around Roy's gigantic feet, wands at the ready. There was only a moment's pause, before Kamek opened his mouth to chant the command, when it happened: Roy rumbled all over...then shrank. His bulk heave back inward, retreating against Kamek, and the Magikoopa's open mouth slipped into a balk of surprise as Roy slipped back down to 150,000 feet, his bulk deflating from insane to fairly nuts.

"W-WHAT DA..." Roy sputtered, looking himself over, as he trembled, grimaced, and slipped even further down, lowering to about 130,000 feet...leaving him only a big larger than Kamek, whose huge feet slammed back down to the firmament, kicking up great clouds. "WHAT'D YOUSE DO!?"

Even though the airship could only make it up to Roy's hips, it didn't stop the cannons from all firing at once, blasting Roy's enormity with hundreds and hundreds of poison mushrooms. Each one impacted with a little puff, vanishing into Roy, making him groan unhappily as he dwindled to 110,000 feet, leaving him just as big as Kamek. The old Magikoopa was already glaring daggers at Roy, despite the eyes of both parties being obscured.

"UNLUCKY FOR YOU!" Kamek sneered, shoving Roy off of him with his unaltered, monstrous strength. Roy stumbled back, caught so very off guard, and he crashed back onto a mountain range, trembling all over, then deflating further down to 80,000 feet...60,000 feet..."THAT WASN'T ME, AT ALL! PERHAPS KARMA DID IT!"

"NO W-WAY," Roy miserably moaned, backing destructively over the entire range, crushing the mountains under his 50,000-foot body. Kamek snorted angrily, flexing all over in a show of force, making his tight robe rip even higher up against his overflowing chest and surging arms. "S-STOP!"

"I TOLD YOU, IT WASN'T..."

Kamek suddenly trembled, and his anger faded to a confusion all its own. He looked himself over, then suddenly lurched lower, as well, shrinking rapidly in size; his muscles sank in steadily, diminishing down to something that still would have yielded wild envy from anyone else. To him, it was unacceptable, terribly so.

Roy watched, blinking, as Kamek also lessened down, slipping unwillingly to 90,000 feet, then 80,000. His torn robe finally felt relief as his physique crept smaller, and smaller. The still-huge sorcerer looked this way, then that, in a blind panic, trying to source the interference. At their sizes, neither one noticed the speck that was Iggy's ship, flying about at erratic angles, pummeling Kamek with more and more poison mushrooms.

"Iggy, sir!" one Goomba shouted, across the deck of the airship. "We're running out of mushrooms, here!"

"Rats," Iggy huffed, thinking rapidly. "That was all that we could muster, in such a short time...they aren't fully shrunk yet, we still would be no match for them like this..."

It was actually Mario that stepped over, whispering something to Iggy. The Koopaling listened, blinking...then smiled wide.

"Heh...hehehehe! HEEHEEHEE! Oh, yes! How diabolically clever! Not bad, plumber!"

At 40,000 feet, Kamek gave in to full panic, and swiped pointlessly at the air. He nearly struck Iggy's airship three times, but the Koopaling prided himself on his choice in pilots; it was that very pilot he ordered to pull into a full retreat, once they were down to their last crate.

At 30,000 feet, quite suddenly, the shrinking stopped. Kamek stopped flailing his thick arms, then looked around one last time, on reflex, before checking himself over. Relief flooded in, until a series of thundering steps neared him, and he looked up.

"SPEAKIN' OF KARMA..."

Roy rolled his boulder-shoulders meanly, a nasty smile etched onto his muzzle. The 50,000-foot Koopa-spawn stood nearly twice Kamek's height, out-muscling him by a fair bit. It wasn't what it had been minutes earlier, but for Roy, it would do. For Kamek, it simply wouldn't at all.

"N-NOW WAIT, ROY," Kamek stammered, scouring visually for him brethren clones. In a second, Roy was on Kamek, throttling him with no quarter.

"OH, AM I GONNA ENJOY DIS!"

Roy had a custom-made fist, just for him, and it was raising high, high up. Kamek resumed his panic, despite remaining so gigantic, even shrunk down. Unable to see his army anywhere, he relegated the matter to animal instinct, and shouted:

"B-BROTHERS! TO ARMS, QUICKLY! I...W-WE ARE UNDER ATTACK! GROW ME, GROW ME NOW! NOW!!!"

At last, Kamek could see his army; it had been scattered to the winds, too small to easily notice, until Roy had been on top of him. Thousands of knocked-out Magikoopa duplicates littered the devastated land of the kingdom, unresponsive, out cold. Which was what he was about to be. Only a few Magikoopas remained stand, limping over to his huge self, wands raising shakily.

Wuh-oh.

A batter ram of a fist descended, bashing Kamek square in the muzzle, and though there were suddenly many flashing lights, none of them were from spells.

"Y'LIKE DAT!?" Roy bellowed, bringing a huge elbow down hard on Kamek's chest bulk.

"B-BELAY T-THAT ORDER!" Kamek wailed, between coughs. "D...DUPLICATE! REMAKE T-THE ARMY...THEN FIRE AT MEEEEEE!!!"

Roy was too angry to care about what nonsense Kamek was whimpering, or that the obedient clones were starting to poof back up into greater numbers beside them. Five became fifty, fifty became 300, 300 became 1,000, in less than ten seconds. Of course, that was still 10 more seconds of Kamek's face getting rearranged by an uncaring sculptor.

The Kamek army poofed and poofed, each one's energy ample enough to cast another duplication spell. The masses swelled exponentially, and within one minute of suffering, they had ballooned from five to over 18,000 strong!

"FUH...F-FIRE ON MEEEE!" Kamek sputtered, only able to bring his huge arms up enough to block half of Roy's punches. "EVERYONE, FIRE! DON'T S-STOP UNTIL I SAY TO!!!"

As if possessed of magic all its own, his command yielded an unexpected boon: Roy lifted up off of him, as if whisked away. The pressure was off, but it wasn't because Kamek was any bigger. If anything, the glow of spells flickering to life was still in his periphery, as the greater-than-ever army chanted them. Then what...

He looked up to see Roy, hovering a few relative feet off of the ground. He wasn't levitating, but rather had been hoisted up in full...by a massive, overwhelmingly bulky set of arms. Familiar arms. Horribly, horribly familiar.

"BWAHAHAHAHAHA! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!" Bowser roared, his voice a massive explosion of force. His chest surged out against Roy as his father bear-hugged him tight—so tight, that Roy was having trouble breathing. "YOU IDIOTS GOT YOURSELVES SRHUNKEN DOWN JUST ENOUGH TO MAKE THIS WORK!"

Bowser stood taller than either of them, twice as tall as Roy...which had to have put him at roughly 100,000 feet! Even if Kamek had never shrunk any, it still would have been to close a height for comfort. At 30,000 feet, it was terrifying.

"L-LORD BOWSER!?" Kamek gulped, backing away, as the Kamek army's spells all coalesced to fullness. "B-BUT HOW!?"

"FEH! YOU THINK I WOULDN'T KEEP A FEW FALLBACKS IN STORAGE? I HAD MEGA MUSHROOMS AS A CONTINGENCY! THEY WON'T LAST SO LONG, SURE...BUT IT'S LONG ENOUGH FOR THIS!"

At that, Bowser simply threw Roy aside, casting the choked-out Koopaling into the ruins of the mountain range he had crushed moments before. He stomped devastatingly over to Kamek, picked him up, and held him close.

"WAIT!" Kamek shouted, just as the spells fired off from down below.

Bowser smiled cruelly, turning his back to the army, and the army's dutifully-aimed shots were all completely absorbed...by Bowser.

"YOU THINK...I DIDN'T SEE...WHAT MY STUPID KID WAS TRYING...T-TO..."

Bowser couldn't even finish, the pleasure was too immense to forego. Instead, the huge tyrant snorted out a cloud of smoke, shook terribly all over, tensed tight...and *exploded*.

Iggy's airship could only dodge so fast, as the unparalleled growth spurt blew Bowser's spiky back shell directly towards it, forcing it to cant to the left fast. The empty crates all tumbled off the deck as it tilted deep, and only the remaining crate, which was being secured in a large net, managed to stay onboard. Mario, Yoshi, and the entire crew held tight on the rail, but Iggy, of all present, was too busy laughing madly, and didn't bother to. As a result, he was the only one to fall off. The cackling Koopaling sailed down through the skies, farther and farther, and as he held his glasses on, he saw the Kamek army firing away...right under him. Instead of crying out for screaming, he just laughed even harder.

"Weheheheheheeee! Plan B, it is, then!" he shouted, as he was struck by several blasting spells, starting to rumble and swell bigger, and bigger, and bigger in the air. By the time he hit ground, Iggy was already 300 feet tall, and more and more spells kept pelting his growing body, all as Bowser swelled and swelled tremendously up in the skies above. On and on they all fired, simply doing their jobs, as Kamek struggled sadly against Bowser's ever-growing arms.

"YESSSSS," Bowser huffed, his body expanding aggressively up past 150,000 feet, then 210,000, each lurching hiccup of growth more violent, more explosive, more wonderful! "YEEEEEEEEEESSSSSSS!"

"NO! NOOOOOOOO!" Kamek moaned, as he tried to get free once again from another overpowering Koopa. He had to order a stop, a ceasefire, right away!

"AND AS FOR YOU, YOU TRAITOROUS TWERP," Bowser growled, cutting off Kamek's thought process with a huge snort, billowing up to 250,000 feet. "I KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH YOU! AS SOON AS I'M LARGE ENOUGH, YOU'RE GOING RIGHT DOWN MY GULLET! THEN, LET'S SEE YOU STOP THEM FROM TRYING TO BLAST YOU! THINK...H-HOW BIG IT...WILL MAKE ME GROOOOOW!"

Kamek tried to speak, but Bowser was crushing in too hard on him, far too hard. Thinking became more and more difficult as the terrible tyrant's escalating size crushed him more and more and more against surging walls of warm muscle. For all of his wrath, Bowser was clearly losing out to bliss, as he throbbed and shook and grunted, exploding even bigger, shaking the entire kingdom as he ballooned up to 500,000 feet! Over 94 miles of muscle and claws loomed high and mighty, his feet alone big enough to cover the entire Southern region! Their sides rolling against entire mountains, cracking them with no effort as he continually trembled and swelled, still gaining, still growing!

"MOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOORE!!!"

His boom-speak deepened massively, his laughter going from godly to abyssal as he grew out of all control. The airship soon found the rest of the meager armada, pulling in closer to Larry's ship, the crew making sure that the last crate of poison mushrooms stayed secure in its net. When Larry drew close to his side rail of his ship, he looked it over, then gawked.

"M-mario!? Yoshi!? What are you doing on Iggy's ship!?"

Kamek's struggles grew more desperate, more violent, as Bowser grew bigger against him. His head and muzzle flattened slightly, dimpling into the mounting curvature of the 600,000-foot Koopa King's thick pectorals, making it harder still to even breathe.

"LORD B...BOWSER...YOU'RE C...C-CRUSHING...ME..."

"THAT'S THE IDEA," Bowser callously growled, shuddering and billow-bursting up to 750,000 feet in size. Clouds scattered about his vast toe claws as they vibrated and swelled even larger, steamrolling the great rocky plains and volcanoes and steppes alike under-sole. "GUESS YOU HAD BETTER TELL YOUR EQUALL-PATHETIC ARMY TO STOP FIRING...IF YOU CAN!"

"S...STOP..." Kamek almost managed to wheeze, as the growing behemoth's muscles increased dramatically, smothering against him.

"SPEAK UP, KAMEK!" Bowser snarled smugly, as the tremors of growth worsened, and Bowser's magic-glowing body blew up to a stunning, unthinkable 1,000,000 feet tall. A million whole feet of muscle, scales and teeth, overflowing with power. A baddie standing at nearly 190 miles. Bowser could have laid down and spanned the gap between entire cities. Where minutes ago he could have hugged Roy's massive bulk, he could have now done to an *entire city*.

And the spells kept coming, kept battering his stretching scales. Over thirty times Kamek's current size, Bowser was nearing half the size of his entire kingdom, spilling bigger and stronger in all directions, bloating out with erupting waves of tight muscle upon muscle. The fleeing hordes of germ-sized underlings found it harder and harder to manage it, as Bowser's growth swelled faster than they could run. Entire regions, turfs, hangouts all vanished under their Lord's growing claws as his booming laughter swelled to fill everywhere, shaking everything.

"S...STOOOOOOP FIIIRIIIIING!" Kamek managed to croak, hoarse and exhausted, from within Bowser's pectorals. Even that simple command took an unimaginable strain to execute, leaving Kamek drained and semi-limp against Bowser's expansive belly and flared-out chest.

Still, the clones did stop. It only did so much good, however, as that left the 30,000-foot titan against a 1,500,000-foot *god*. Bowser had been a good three or four times Kamek's height, all the time, in the past. For all his efforts today, for all the madness ensuing since, his boss was now 50 whopping times bigger than him. *Fifty*. One hand was enough to hold him now, with no trouble. One claw-tip could have managed it, and the old humiliation came back, tenfold.

"THANKS TO YOU, KAMEK, I'M STRONGER THAN EVER!" Bowser bellowed, rumbling with raw size. "GUESS YOU DIDN'T GET THE RESULTS YOU WANTED! NOW...LET'S RUN WITH MY IDIOT KID'S IDEA...HAVE THEM MAKE ME EVEN...BIGGER!"

"B...B-BUT," Kamek panted, so tired. "THERE'S NO POINT TO BEING ANY LARGER...YOU'VE...YOU'VE WON..."

"HAVE I?" Bowser huffed, indignant. "I HAVE THE MEANS TO GET EVEN BIGGER THAN I ALREADY AM, YOU FOOL. YOU THINK I WON'T TAKE AND TAKE? I THOUGHT YOU UNDERSTOOD ME BETTER! IT ISN'T ABOUT HAVING, YOU TINY FOOL! IT'S ABOUT...HAVING...MOOOOOOOOOORE!!!"

Mario, Yoshi, Larry, and untold thousands of cronies all watched as the godly Bowser bullied Kamek further, with no end in sight. Only the swelling Iggy down below ignored it all, as his blown-up 3,000-foot body towered over the clones, the mad Koopaling trying to figure out how to get them firing again.

Meanwhile, Kamek's mind swam. There...had to be a way out of this. There *had* to...

3.

As fast as Bowser grew, Kamek thought, or tried to. It proved harder and harder, the larger his Lord's bulk pressed and bullied out against him, crushing out his reason and rhyme. Even the sounds were against him, as the Magikoopa was assaulted by swells of great, stretching mass. Scales pulled tighter over mounting muscles, the rumble of the landscape rearranging unhappily under feet as big as cities; the air vibrated with growth, all sensation forfeit to the sheer presence of Bowser.

Even as the spurt finally ceased, the last of the spells having died off below, the aftereffects rumbled on in Kamek's head, and rebuilding the damage proved embarrassingly trying.

"HMM?" Bowser eventually grunted, his lidded eyes going wide and dumb again. "WHAT, IS IT OVER, ALREADY? HEY!"

At 300 miles in height, practically as big as a state, even the mighty Kamek was a mere speck against Bowser—a *bug*, more aptly. All that ruckus the sorcerer had been resisting suddenly seemed pleasant, compared to the volcanic eruption of Bowser's griping. Everything shook, rattling Kamek so hard that he forgot his own name.

His sight wobbled wild as, far, far overhead, beyond the horizon of his huge pectorals, Bowser's face loomed. In fact, it was practically the entire sky. And the sky was *ticked*.

"COME ON, COME ON," Bowser boomed, furrowing incalculable brows. "I KNOW YOU'RE DOWN THERE, KAMEK! GET YOUR FLUNKIES BLASTING ME EVEN BIGGER, BEFORE I CRUSH YOU TO MAGIC POWDER! THEY DO WHAT YOU SAY, SO GIVE THE ORDER!"

At long last, something shot through the haze, and struck Kamek back to his senses.

They do what you say. Yes...yes, they do, don't they?

Of course! He has to let you speak, to get what he wants. He can't stop you before you command them, he expects you to do what he says! I bet he can't even hear, all the way up there, beyond the atmosphere. And I know what to say. I know just what to say!

"EHEE-HEE," Kamek snorted, unable to help chuckling. It could work. It *would* work! "FELLOW KAMEKS, OF THE KAMEK ARMY! HEED ME!"

So, so far down on the crushed, snapped ground, over 50,000 clones all shot back to attention, looking up in full attention. The order followed suit:

"PICK A CLONE...AND MAKE HIM ABSOLUTELY GARGANTUAN! BIGGER THAN EVER, AND STRONGER THAN EVER! QUICKLY! MAXIMUM-POWER SPELLS!"

High up in the reaches of early space, Bowser waited, unsuccessfully. His grimace broke here and there, showing titanic teeth as he started up a sour grumble.

"I *KNOW* HE HEARD ME..."

Tens of thousands of Kameks all turned to a single humble clone, who blushed under his glasses and nodded knowingly—perhaps, even, enthusiastically. He cleared his throat and squared up in preparation, as thousands upon thousands of wands took aim at him, beginning to glow brighter and brighter still. Even being a separate part of Kamek, the clone-elect must have withheld some autonomy, because for one moment, as the spells blasted forth at him, he winced. Such fledgling fears dissolved in an abrupt, explosive eruption of growth; not even the clone's gasp could escape as he instantly inflated out against his robe, stretching, ripping, pulling it with him. A great hand seemed to yank him straight up, his revealing belly surging skyward, its vertical reach exploding out with fantastic ridges and cords, muscles growing into landscapes as his sleeves tore and tugged and exploded.

More and more spells battered his body as it instantly roared up from 3 feet to over 300. His clawed turtle feet swelled like wildfire in fast-forward, shoving into the clone masses, scattering them dominantly as his calves blew out in heft, his thighs exploding up bigger, then his midsection and inflating lats, his pectorals billowing angrily out before him! He grit his growing teeth as his neck doubled its circumference, then doubled that, his back muscles booming in time with his chest, his yellow biceps screaming and bulging as they *boom-boom-boomed* too big for his sleeves!

That same caught breath held deep as the selected clone billowed uncontrollably past 700 feet, then 1,200, blowing past the thousand-marker in less than two seconds; the growth only grew worse as his shoulders swelled out massively, rolling with hard, heavy bulk, power flowing off of the half-mile behemoth as he shook, panted just once, and burst past 2 miles, then 6! The mighty Kamek army held on doggedly, riding the increasing feet and swelling toes with cheers and spells, firing away nonstop, encouraging their ascending brother on and on, past 10 miles, then 30—by second five, the clone was already considerably bigger than the Prime Kamek, and his growth was rising even faster!

Down below, caught between the clone's monstrous growing legs, stood the stunned Iggy; the massive 3,000-foot Koopaling was agog, looking up for about five seconds, taking in the development, before he glanced intently back down to the paper-thin sheet of the army.

"Well!" Iggy huffed, grinning slyly. "They don't even acknowledge me...how perfect!"

With that, he reached up into his shock of hair, felt about, and with one hand pulled out several Super Mushrooms. To him, they were quite small, but to anyone else of normal size, each one would have outsized a building, and healthily.

"Who would have thought a shrunken-down emergency batch would lead to getting bigger than ever! Huahahah!"

Smugly, Iggy lowered his hand to the ground, scattering more of the uncaring Kamek army, who kept blasting up, up, and up at their comrade's surging feet; one stray spell was intercepted by Iggy's reach, and immediately the Super Mushrooms rumbled ominously, then boomed up bigger, starting to rapidly fill his massive palm. Then, another hit, and another, and the Mushrooms eagerly and noisily swelled, getting hug-sized, even to the titanic Koopa Kid...

From the escaped fleet of remaining airships, Mario, Yoshi and Larry watched on, too busy seeing the unforeseeable, in action. One the Kamek clones was billowing up so big that, by the time they had all rubbed their collective eyes and gawked, he was already blowing up past them, higher and

higher in the distance. Between himself and Bowser, they were consuming more and more space, and were very nearly as big as the terrible Koopa Kingdom.

The clone shuddered, pumping onward in mass, spilling bigger, blasting up past Bowser's middle, then up past his huge elbow, over 110 miles in size, and still growing at an alarming rate.

"DID THEY START, KAMEK!?" Bowser growled, shaking the entire kingdom with just his voice. "FOR YOUR SAKE, THEY BETTER HAVE! BECAUSE, EITHER WAY..."

An immense scaly hand descended, blotting out Kamek-Prime's view of the world. He must have detected the minimal little bump Kamek's body would have constituted, because that massive palm curled up after covering him, and the ensuing fist rose and rose and rose, all the way up to a maw that the Magikoopa had trouble even conceiving of.

"YOU'RE GOING TO THE BEST DUNGEON I HAVE, ON HAND!"

"OH, N...N-NO," Kamek groaned, hoping beyond all hope that his brethren had heard his command. Had he been a bit less covered, by city-spanning hands, he might have better detected the rising shadow spilling up over everything, over the ruined kingdom, over the cracked and smashed valleys and flattened mountains and toppled peaks and cloud banks and airships. Even Bowser was suddenly lost in a penumbra—and not one of the good ones.

"WAIT," Bowser muttered, the enlarged light bulb flickering at its usual functionality, despite the ludicrous size increase. "WAITAMINUTE, WHAT..."

He turned slowly, his shifting feet like doomsday on the crumbling turf. The barrage of spells far below must have finally ceased, because what loomed behind Bowser was no longer growing. It didn't really need to.

"GWAH!?"

The Koopa King jolted in place at the sight of another Kamek, blown up to a stunning 500 miles. Over two-and-a-half-million feet of pure, twitching, over-inflated turtle muscle towered over even him, his pectorals so blown out in scope that their smooth curves nearly bulged right over Bowser's head, crowning it mockingly.

"K-K-KAMEK BETA, BROTHER KAMEK!" the clone respectfully stammered, the delivery somehow as cute as it was awesome. "A-AWAITING ORDERS!"

"B...BETA?" Bowser gasped, blinking. He looked down to his opened palm, already blazing-mad. "WHAT DID YOU TRY, YOU LITTLE RUNT!? YOU'RE GOING DOWN FOR THI—"

Before Bowser could swallow him up, Kamek practically screeched:

"ATTTTAAAAAACK! INCAPACITATE LORD BOWSER!"

Once again, in the face of such godly power and size, Bowser went pale. Kamek-Beta smiled wide, threw both unthinkably bulging, over-muscled arms wide, and grabbed the terrible tyrant by both

arms. It wasn't until the fingers dug into even Bowser's overpowered muscles like they were clay that the Koopa King finally gulped. It wasn't to swallow Kamek. He hadn't gotten the chance.

"L-LORD BOWSER," the titanic clone said, also quite respectfully. "IT-IT'S A PLEASURE TO FINALLY SUBDUE YOU, MY LORD!"

His Lord wasn't paying much attention to the gesture, as he was too preoccupied with being lifted up off of his enormous feet, the clone's overwhelmingly huge muscles utterly dwarfing his own.

Roy Koopa remained limp, lying prostrate among the shattered mountain ranges of the kingdom's outer regions. There wasn't much kingdom left, but Roy had found his own cozy plot as he slumbered on, the 9-mile colossus out cold.

"What else can we do, here?" Larry Koopa sighed, wracking his brain, as Mario and Yoshi exchanged weary glances. Even from so high up in the skies, their best airship view was now only up to about the shins of both monumental super-giants. "We're totally outclassed! I never thought a Koopa would undo the great Koopa Kingdom...well, not like *this*..."

He thought a little more, biting his lip, before whipping back around to Mario.

"Okay, we have no resources left here, they're outgrowing the entire region," he went on, rubbing his blue hair unhappily. "What's in the Mushroom Kingdom, that we can use? Anything at all?"

No matter how Bowser struggled (and he certainly was trying), the massive Kamek clone's grip was iron atop iron, overkill. His envy nearly did him in first.

"WEHEHEHEH, W-WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?" Kamek-Beta asked, sincerely. Being so very much smaller than either of them, Kamek resolved to stand upon Bowser's vast snout, still having to look far up ahead to see his precious clone.

"SIMPLE," Kamek-Prime replied, dusting his tattered robe's stretched-out remains as they clung to his muscle. "I'LL TELL YOU IN A MOMENT, EHEEHEE!"

With a wave of his hand, his relative-sized wand poofed forth, and he took it with both hands. He waved said wand in a big, theatrical circle, and poofed away, leaving Bowser cross-eyed at the clearing little speck of dispersing cloud.

"H-HEY," Bowser said, suddenly nervous. "HEY! WHERE'RE YOU GOING!?"

Kamek poofed in the middle of the entire army, all smiles, his dignity rebuilt.

"MY BROTHERS," Kamek spoke, pointing to himself with his own wand. "NO MORE MISTAKES, AND NO MORE HALF-MEASURES! NO MORE PETTY GLOATING, AND PLAYING AROUND! THIS TIME...THIS TIME, NO ONE WILL BE BIGGER...THAN ME!!!"

The army cheered like it was electrified, as the masses of Kamek clones poofed to double their numbers, then double that, spreading like a fungus of blue robes and yellow scales, smothering the remains of the sundered kingdom as they became 72,000 strong, then 144,000.

An ocean of Kameks still only constituted less than a puddle to the super-clone, as well as to the still-struggling Bowser, who redoubled his efforts. In that ocean was Iggy, the comparatively-tiny Koopaling still monstrously huge by any other sane metric. The surging tides of clones swelled along around his big feet as he watched, otherwise busy keeping his bulky arms around three Super Mushrooms that were so big, they each were a veritable house, to *him*. He held them so, but didn't activate them, not yet.

"Oho," Iggy said, laughing so hard he hissed it out. "Perfect, perfect! Let's just see what we can do about this situation!"

Any idiot could see where this all was about to go: right to Kamek. Rather than interfere pointlessly, Iggy just watched, as over half a million Kameks all took aim with their boosted, maximum-power spells. Kamek threw his massive yellow arms up, and every aiming wand fired away. Iggy took to shoving at the towering Super Mushrooms, edging them closer to the far rim of the army, letting the few stray spells impact them. Even at his size, Iggy began to feel them swelling so massively that they shoved even his bulky girth back, and back, and back.

"So much power," Iggy giggled, rubbing happy circles on the Super Mushrooms' smooth curves as they swelled larger and larger, still. He was already calculating the proper beats; if they got any bigger, he would lose his grip on them all...he would have to take one to boost himself big enough to handle the others, and increase them even larger as they sponged up power...

So many spells volleyed forth through the air that, to Kamek, they formed a wall, a spreading dome of sparkling growth spells, netted together by proximity, mingling as they streaked, getting bigger and stronger as they all joined in mad harmony. When it impacted, the 30,000-foot tall Kamek didn't just grow. Not this time. This time, the reaction was *apocalyptic*.

"L-LEMME GO!" Bowser ordered, as pleadingly as he could, without pleading outright. "I O-ORDER YOU! RIGHT N-NOW! COME ON!!"

"IT'S STARTING," the Beta Kamek chirped, full of dark glee. "IT'S S-STARTING!! WEHEHEHEHE!! WE'LL B-BE IN CHARGE, FOREVERMORE! US! IT'S WHAT HE DESERVES! WHAT WE DESERVE!! AND NON OF THIS WOULD HAVE GOTTEN SO OUT OF CONTROL, HAD YOU SIMPLY CEDED TO US, AND NOT PUSHED BACK! HOW IRONIC!"

"Y-YOU IDIOTS! YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW BIG KAMEK IS ABOUT TO GET!"

The sounds of unceasing spells hammering away caught up to Bowser, and his heart sank down past his stomach. The rumbling that followed was of such panic-inducing ferocity that even the mighty Koopa King started to huff anxiously. He looked up to the super-clone, but found that to be a bad mistake. The clone was utterly ecstatic.

"ON THE CONTRARY, MY LORD," the clone growled happily, as the rumbling grew even worse below, shaking even the two of them more and more and more. "I KNOW *EXACTLY* HOW BIG HE WILL GET! EHEEHEEHEE!!"

A terrible, nearly demonic groan replied, filling the air. Bowser felt the rumbling deepen into a vision-blurring quake of force as something nearby swelled like a great balloon, and before he could so much as blink, the tyrant saw Kamek's head rising up, up past him, surging bigger. It sailed right by, almost dismissively outpacing him, the growing Magikoopa's head and widening neck pushing right up past the Beta clone, who whooped and cheered in joy. Even as Kamek-Prime's humongous shoulder bumped both him and Bowser, heaving broader and taller against them, the clone remained fanatically devoted to the cause.

"GROW," the clone gasped, his huge glasses fogging as he huffed happily. "GROW!!"

Bowser's wails were just as easily shoved back by Kamek's raging growth as his body. His muzzle was rammed back, more and more shoulder cramming up past it, followed by the bump-bump of his huge yellow triceps as the sorcerer's arm swelled higher and higher up over him. The clone practically nuzzled into it, with Bowser in between, as the true Kamek exploded to unparalleled, dizzying sizes.

Even blowing up past 700 miles, Kamek kept growing. More and more spells peppered his surging, towering toe claws, the tips alone so enormous that the undersides still managed to curve up higher and higher over the army.

Iggy, seeing the endgame coming, finally activated the first Super Mushroom. The 18,000-foot object vanished, and in its place, Iggy boomed into view, lurching and shuddering fast, blowing up and up; his magically-swollen physique outgrew the rest of him, detonating to hulking scope as he laughed madly; his gambit paid off, as the severely amplified power up sent him rocketing up from 3,000 feet to 30,000, then 80,000, his size fervently exploding, the other two Super Mushrooms quickly becoming normal-sized again, relative to himself...

Even at 800 miles, Kamek grew bigger. His biceps stretched in agonized bliss, an ongoing gasp of delight his only form of expression as his mind reeled with power. He was a thimble holding a waterfall, and *winning*. In fact, he hardly cared if that waterfall consumed him. All that mattered was *more*.

"Y...YYYYEEEEEEEESSSSSSSS..."

Iggy shook and panted violently, smiling a crazed smile as he felt his bulk blowing up in between Kamek's massive feet, his shell swelling out, the spikes lengthening meanly, his neck and traps bloated warmly, as his sides ballooned under his bursting triceps, all at once, a rush upon a rush...

Even at 900 miles, Kamek's body kept climbing, his height pushing up and up into the reaches of space around their world. His chest expanded out feverishly, dual mounds stretching out past his

own reach; it hardly deterred him from feeling them, however, as he performed avid research on himself, observing, shaking, and grinning darkly as he only blew up *bigger*.

"We...we need to go," Larry moaned, motioning for his crew to steer farther away, even if it meant exiting the kingdom itself. Between the set of feet shared by the clone and Kamek, even the Koopa Kingdom was becoming an increasingly inadequate platform on which to balance, as the monstrous Beta snuggled his support into Kamek's swollen, inflating hips. "We can't stay here!"

"W-where should we plot our course, sir?" a frantic Koopa Troopa asked. already at the wheel of the ship, partly just to keep himself upright.

"Higher ground," Larry answered, turning away from the sky-filling view before them. "We need to get as high up as we can, to buy some time! Plot a course for Nimbus Land! Now! Mario, I don't care how you do it...but get all the help in the Mushroom Kingdom that you can!"

Kamek's clone was less than half the size of his leader, and rapidly dwindling down lower and lower, as the spell battery went on and on. Millions of spells at maximum potency soaked into his ever-growing body, which began to loom high enough that other kingdoms and realms beyond could see a tremendous mass billowing bigger and bigger, taking up more and more space on the Mushroom World itself. Where Bowser was a state...Kamek was becoming a full-blown country, at over 1,200 miles in size! Over six million feet of god-bulk raged out in all directions, Kamek's body so overflowing with energy that his pectorals ballooned up insistently into his chin, cradling his jawline, making him blush, despite himself. Entire city streets could have occupied the crevices between his scales as they strained wider and wider over even more muscle, his thick abs guiding down, down, down to his adoring clone, who could only manage to hug into a thick upper thigh as Kamek grunted and blew up to 1,600 miles!

"NO M-MORE...REVERSALS..." Kamek thundered, shaking the entire hemisphere ominously. "NO MORE CHALLENGING...MY...RUUUUUULE!"

Nearly nine million staggering feet of muscle and power loomed over the curvature of the globe, and even Kamek proved unable to resist the urge to flex a monstrous arm. Its yellow bicep surged impossibly huge, stretching his skin tight, before booming up bigger, still, growing with the rest of him as Kamek exploded up 2,000 miles!

The airship in flight (both kinds) was so small, so utterly minuscule that, compared to even Bowser, it hardly existed at all. Compared to Kamek, they were virtually microscopic. The only piddling positive to the situation was, it was very easy to go undetected. And *go* they did, as the retreat went from partial to full, to completely panicked. Larry's airship full-bore sped into the correct warp pipe, just before Kamek's massive, horizon-sized heel grew into it, instantly crushing it against its landscape-smothering mass.

With only slivers of landmass remaining, the million-strong Kamek army took to climbing and scaling their vast leader, stopping their spells just long enough to get up off of the terrain as it crumbled and cracked and tumbled in defeat into the ocean. Among the hordes hugging into Kamek-Prime's immensity was Iggy; the one Super Mushroom he had experimented with had swollen him up a

stunning hundred times in size—a rousing success! Yet, the 300,000-foot Koopalings' 56-mile height remained laughable, compared to Kamek's, and he knew it well. Given that he was hugging tight to just one of Kamek's scales with one hand (the other gripping the two remaining mushrooms), such comparisons were inevitable.

"MORE TO LOOK FORWARD TO," Iggy rumbled, wide-eyed. The math presented itself to a captive audience, as Iggy began to figure the rest out fast:

Another mushroom as it currently was would likely yield the same results...he would easily grow up to a near-planetary size...and with another mushroom...

A giddy shiver overtook his formidable bulk as he played with the idea a little more, riding Kamek's ongoing growth with the other uninterested clones all around him. *Specks to him, who was himself still a speck to Kamek! How fun!*

Yet, a greater thing persisted, dominating the course of his plotting: Greed.

Better to wait. Load these Super Mushrooms even further! Get a bigger return! It won't be enough to try and outclass Kamek by a narrow margin, especially if he keeps on growing...if you give him that margin, this could all still fall apart. No...wait for the right time! Wehehehe!

As he had already noticed, the million clones were busy with scaling their great leader, meaning the the spells had taken a pause. As such, he had only to wait for them to get into a solid position again, and start firing away once more! At his size, Kamek wouldn't even notice his interference until it was much too late! It was perfect! Soon, even Kamek would bow down to—

"GIMME!"

A familiar voice sliced through his reverie, making Iggy turn in confusion, just as something big climbed up his shell, gripping up spike by spike.

"ROY!?"

At 50,000 feet, Roy was still big enough to force his bulky way up over Iggy's gargantuan shoulder, reaching down for...*the mushrooms!*

"HAND 'EM OVER, YOUSE! C'MON, IGGY! I SAW 'EM SECOND!"

Roy's ambitions seemed impervious to the reality that 56 miles trumped 9 pretty easily. Iggy sneered and swatted a bodybuilder's arm up, flinging Roy off with little real effort. Still, Roy caught the back spikes as he fell, held fast, and righted himself once again, climbing right back up.

"THESE AREN'T YOURS, ROY," Iggy sighed, more put-off than threatened. "YOU COULDN'T EVEN TAKE THE THRONE, DON'T ACT TOUGH NOW!"

"YOU'RE WASTIN' DESE, IGGY! HAND ME 'EM, I SHOW YAS HOW IT'S DONE!"

"WHAT, *LOSING?*"

The two brothers squabbled on, but in the end, it was a hard, thick headlock that put Roy in place proper. Where words failed, brute force did not. Sibling-hood was a good teacher.

As the torrent of growth spells wore down, the effects did not, not even remotely. Kamek stood 2,200 miles tall, over eleven million feet high, with feet easily over one million feet long. He could have stepped on Bowser. His heels could have been at the beginning of one kingdom, and stretched to its opposing border. His scales outclassed lakes. And he was still...*still...growing!*

"MORE," the immense reptile huffed, his thighs twitching happily as they swelled outward. **"MOOOORE! EHEEHHE!! I WON'T BE CHALLENGED AGAIN! EVEN IF I HAVE TO SIT ATOP THE ENTIRE WORLD, TO MAKE MY POINT!"**

His own booming words echoed out and around, until they came back to him, a suggestion from seconds ago returning to its owner.

Why not?

That same thought process that had brought him to such stupendous power now conjured an image so immensely entertaining, so gratifying, that he simply had to make it so. Kamek looked that entire half of the planet over thoughtfully, before bringing up incredibly thick arm; one clawed fingertip met another, and with a simple snap his wand reappeared, scaled up to match his rising height. It even continued growing with him as he surged hotly past 2,400 miles, then 2,600.

"NOW...TO MAKE THINGS MUCH MORE OFFICIAL! WHEHEHE! OBSERVE!"

Kamek pointed the vast wand to the firmament, creeping with thin sheets of clouds. The tip blazed bright neon as another spell began, and with a quick chant, he sent the tip up toward space, and massive craggy slats shot forth, the rock and mineral of the very Mushroom World jutting up into vast spires, meeting, joining and melding, folds overlapping. The planet groaned uncomfortably as the allocated materials fed up and up into a chair of sorts, only one so unfathomably big that the mountains and clouds hardly even rose up to surpass its base. To those so far below on the planet's surface, perhaps, the whole thing was a disruptive mystery.

To Kamek, it was a *throne*.

Iggy easily kept Roy back, but at his lesser size, Roy didn't quite have to be stronger; he just had to be slipperier. The shades he wore obscured his intentions, the much bigger Iggy having a time trying to guess where his smaller brother was darting or weaving. On top of that, Iggy's far bigger musculature actually impeded things, somewhat, as moving an arm as thick as his brother was wide proved slightly taxing. Roy wriggled his way under said arm as Iggy raised it to push him away, his smaller arms lashing out for one or both of the enlarged Super Mushrooms.

"NO, I SAID!" Iggy growled, moving them away with his other huge arm. **'QUIT INTERFERING! YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE! YOU HAD AN EMBARRASSMENT OF THEM!'**

"THIRD TIME'S DA CHARM!" Roy panted, pushing in against Iggy's thick chest and stomach, trying to wedge himself in closer to the opposing arm.

It was only when the landscape they were on shifted, that both brothers finally halted, and looked up. Kamek was moving, and that much was easy for both parties to suss out, as the colossal calf to which Iggy clung flexed bigger, tensing and straining, as Kamek moved his 2,800-mile tall body in surreal slow motion, the rest of the titanic turtle fading into the haze of the atmosphere. Now, both of them pressed in tight to that moving muscle as Kamek turned his godly form around, settled his weight over the continent, then took a massive, planet-quaking seat on his impossible throne. The shockwaves rolled long and deep as he impacted, growing even bigger, filling his throne out even more.

"BETTER," Kamek chuckled, as he looked out over the curve of the planet itself.

It...it was real. It had really happened. In less than one day, after a lifetime of bullying and abuse, he, Kamek, was in charge. Considerably. He was no longer merely 'big'. Nothing about him was 'mere', anymore! Nothing!

"GREETINGS, WORLD," the all-powerful Magikoopa boomed, grinning crookedly to himself. **"THIS IS YOUR NEW LORD AND RULER, TALKING! WEHEHEHE!"**

The strain of its hard flight was clear the moment Larry's airship sputtered out of the warp pipe, stalling and dipping through the air. It struggled just to make it to a landing atop one of the lower cloud banks of Nimbus Land. The ship seemed to sag in ragged surrender on the cloud-scape underneath, the very land upon which the ship's crew began to disembark.

"We still don't have a lot of time," Larry sighed, hurriedly shoving an item box at Mario, just as hurriedly shooing him and Yoshi off of the deck. "You two, get down to the Mushroom Kingdom, and do what you do. Come back when you've got something! Go, go!"

Just as they abandoned ship onto the clouds, nearby the magically sprouted jungles and hills, they all turned to see how bad things had gotten. Larry nearly stumbled back onto his shell when he did.

"Yo-you've gotta be kidding!"

Even Mario and Yoshi shared the same sentiment, staring off of a literal cloud, and only being able to see something looming over their entire horizon. The confusion gave way to terror after a moment's sleuthing, and a lifetime of regret.

It was a toe. Specifically, a toe-claw. Just one. Just the absolute tip. That tip was bigger than the islands around it, far out over the sea, beyond the Mushroom Kingdom. It was Kamek's toe, and that made Kamek so utterly vast that, even up in their heavenly perch, they were less than the height of a carpet fiber, to him. The discouragement was so heavy that it was a wonder they didn't all sink right through the bottom of Nimbus Land, on the spot. Then, it got bad.

The sound waves that rolled out crushed all thought, sending the planet's wide surface into a aural assault, decibels bigger than cities booming out loud. The sound was too big to even fully hear, it registered more as a vibration-attack, the words they formed more *felt* than heard:

"GREETINGS, WORLD! THIS IS YOUR NEW LORD AND RULER, TALKING! WEHEHEHE!"

Two million Kameks all cheered in unison, overjoyed. From between boundlessly big scales, they all leapt and called out and waved their wands in victory, each one so much smaller than Kamek-Prime that they just conceded to the idea of being a tiny part of a greater whole. Much, much greater.

"FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, ALL KINGDOMS, ALL PEOPLES OF THIS PLANET ARE NOW UNDER MY RULE!" Kamek crowed, his monstrous chest swelling even larger, his bulk still creeping bigger and stronger against his creaking throne. **"I ANTICIPATE NO BACKTALK ON THE MATTER, WEHEHE! IF ANYONE EVEN ATTEMPTS TO USURP ME, I...I PROMISE, I WILL PUNISH YOU ALL! SHOULD ANYONE OPPOSE ME, THEY WILL ONLY GUARANTEE ONE THING: I'LL BECOME EVEN BIGGER! IF YOU UNDERSTAND, DOWN THERE, THEN SET OFF FIREWORKS! LET'S SEE IT!"**

Perhaps it was no real surprise, the lack of debate or process that followed. A 3,000-mile being with a body that shamed the strongest of creatures demanding something, anything, did tend to get what it wanted. After all that Kamek had put up with in life, it seemed plenty fair to him.

Sure enough, it was only about a minute before the first little blast of fireworks went off, in Nimbus Land, of all places. Another followed suit, down in Bean Valley, near to it. Chocolate Island followed after that, then Pedalburg, then from Tall Tall Mountain, one after another, after another.

Kamek had to look with more focus than usual, as he kept swelling larger, making the view harder and harder to discern easily. After a moment's effort, however, he smiled wide.

"THAT'S RIGHT...EHEEHEE, GOOD, GOOD!"

Kamek did a short little wave of his wand, and the Beta-clone poofed onto his vast lap, as big as a small dog compared to him. Bowser remained trapped in his grip, pitifully tired and panting from strain. The clone looked up, in awe.

"Y-YES, BROTHER KAMEK?"

"EXCELLENT WORK, DOWN THERE," Kamek said, grinning. **"I WANT YOU TO RELEASE BOWSER TO ME. THEN, YOU ARE TO TAKE A PORTION OF THE ARMY, AND BEGIN PATROLLING THE PLANET! NO ONE WILL GET AWAY WITH TRYING ANYTHING AGAINST ME!"**

"WEHEHEHEE, ABSOLUTELY, BROTHER, IT SHALL BE SO..."

Easily, the Beta clone released Bowser, and the exhausted tyrant thumped down hard onto Kamek's lap. The once mighty Koopa King wobbled, looking up and up and up, not even able to fully take Kamek's sheer size in. Bowser opened his maw to make some rebuke or nasty comment, but his passing out from exertion finally got in the way. That was one way to get him to shut up.

"ONE FINAL THING," Kamek-Prime mused, grinning. **"I'M GOING TO MAKE ONE IMPORTANT LITTLE UPGRADE TO YOU, AND YOU ALONE! WEHEHEHEHE!"**

With one last chant, a soft glow covered the Beta-Kamek, who nodded approvingly, then disappeared in a cloud of dissipating violet smoke, tens of thousands of tiny clones vanishing from around Kamek's humongous legs right after that.

"I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO RULE A WORLD, FOR REAL," Kamek muttered, contemptuously glaring down over his swollen chest bulk at his former Master.

In any other circumstance, Larry would have been delighted to see those bursts of fireworks near and far, submissions to the great Koopa clan; watching it unfold from the wrong side ultimately proved far less endearing, as the Koopaling saw one territory after another capitulate to the looming Magikoopa deity so high above. The oddity of a child of a family of conquerors being conquered was matched only by the sting of seeing it done so much better. Perhaps, surpassed.

"I wish this hadn't happened," Larry sighed, sitting there glumly, despite being literally in the clouds. "How could Kamek possibly be that powerful? Did he overextend his magic? He must have had limits before...was our family seriously sitting on this much power, the whole time, and wasting it?"

A tired but determined *wahoo* answered, nearby, and Larry turned to see Mario astride Yoshi, returning from his excursion—and not empty handed.

"Good, you're back," the Koopaling muttered quickly, dusting some cloud off as he stood. "What'd you find?"

Mario raised an item in his hand, and suddenly, Larry lit up.

"No way...the Mushroom Kingdom had *this*, on hand!?"

The item in question was none other than the Star Rod! The pride and joy of Star Haven and its Spirits! It offered the one thing that could counter how insanely powerful Kamek was growing, unchecked: *a wish*.

"Okay, let's use this thing, pronto," Larry laughed, grinning slyly. He reached for the wand out of habit, only to have Mario pull back cautiously. "What? Give me it, Mario! Hurry up!"

Larry advanced, insistent. Yoshi stepped back further, not even needing to be told by Mario.

"What's the holdup!? We're working together for now, much as it pains me, so give! All I need to do is wish to go back before all this happened! Dad overstepped, sure, he does that—"

Mario explained, calmly. Astonishingly, Larry listened. Perhaps the threat of total subjugation was enough of an incentive to do so.

"Well, yeah," Larry grumbled, "he could just blow himself up jumbo-ultra again...if he wanted...so, now that we know Kamek's really that strong, we can't set him off again. We'd have to keep him on our side, butter him up. Or, steal his wand? I mean, he needs it, right? I never asked..."

Wahoo

"Okay, alright! I get it! Hand it over, so I can make the wish, then, let's move!"

Mario still hesitated. He surely saw how trustworthy the Koopas were, even in dire straights. This was further justified when a Goomba leapt up from behind Yoshi, headbutting the Star Rod right out of Mario's hand. It flew high, arced, then landed right in Larry's turtle paw.

"Ehehehehe! Okay, better!" the Koopa Kid said, triumphantly. "Sorry, plumber, but we don't have time to argue semantics or strategy. You understand."

With that, Larry turned back, held the Star Rod high overhead, and before Mario could stop him, made a wish:

"I wish...*that I was a million times—*"

A terrible tumult interrupted, one so big that its tremors reached Nimbus Land, throwing Larry, his minions, the downed ship, Mario, Yoshi, and the forests and kingdom beyond into a thunderous rattle. The great commotion bled into a singular, deafening *BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM...*

Something dark tan and a lighter beige shot up so big, so fast, that they met in the middle of the atmosphere, smothering out the sliver of Kamek they could still make out over the planet's curve. Both pressed in at a point, creating a kind of wall of two halves, and both halves were still getting bigger!

"Wh-what the—"

Again, Larry proved unable to finish, as the world-quake shook even harder. The Star Rod skidded from his clawed hand as he stumbled over his shell, crying out, sending Mario and Yoshi into a wild scramble to collect it first. As Larry and his minions all dogpiled around them, the growing masses continued to bulge higher and wider, consuming more and more of the hemisphere...

Kamek Adjusted his massive, country-sized glasses, swelling out with pride as the innumerable growth spells' effects continued to work through his body, shuddering up to 3,400 miles, then 3,500. It was just going on and on, though slower than it had been during the actual barrage, and for the first time ever, the deified Magikoopa felt...right. Complete.

Perhaps he would seal Bowser away in his wand, so the fool-tyrant could see his failure up close, for all of time! Eheehhe! Maybe he would take Bowser's size away, and make him the smallest minion in his army! How deviously clever and cruel!

"THERE'S TIME TO FIGURE IT OUT, NOW, WEHEH," Kamek hummed, beyond pleased with himself. **"WITH NO CONCEIVABLE THREATS REMAINING, I CAN TAKE--"**

A boom of sorts made itself known, and by the time Kamek could cock one brow up beyond his glasses, a thick wall of muscle and swollen-out scale plating exploded forth, buffeting at top-speed into him, pushing so big and so hard that it drove his great mass back into his throne, cracking it. His muffled cries fell silent against the tonal chaos of so much growing stretching bulk inflating up against him, then over him!

"KHMMMFP!?"

"YOU IDIOT, ROY! THAT WAS MY MUSHROOM!" a cataclysmal voice blared, so big that it shook the entire planet this time, rattling every kingdom on it. It even shook Kamek. **"THAT WASN'T FOR SHARING! NOW I CAN'T TELL WHERE THE OTHER ONE WENT!"**

"SHADDUP!" another voice maliciously snapped. That the voice was easier to even understand meant it was a good deal smaller...which only made it mind-bendingly huge.

A 5-million-foot Roy Koopa loomed to a stand atop the planet, nearly 950 miles tall; looming up angrily over even him, however, was Iggy—and Iggy was *ENORMOUS*.

"GRAH, THINK HOW MUCH LARGER I COULD HAVE GOTTEN THOSE LAST TWO, IF YOU HADN'T INTERFERED! I'M ONLY SO MUCH BIGGER THAN KAMEK, NOW! HE CAN STILL FIGHT BACK, IF WE STAY SLOPPY! UNDERSTAND!?"

"YEAH, YEAH," Roy grumbled, already slamming his vast knees and massive open hands down over the landscape and oceans, searching for the last Super Mushroom. Iggy was on him in an instant, hoisting his smaller mega-brother up brusquely.

"OH NO, NO, YOU AREN'T GETTING THAT LAST ONE!"

A poof of smoke as big as the moon cut them both off, and Iggy tumbled in sideways against a giant throne of rock and metals; he shook his huge head and looked it over, confused. It had no occupant, now...had he been growing up against something, or someone?

"WHAT IS THIS?" Iggy pondered, his usual curiosity piqued, when another great blast of purple smoke overtook them.

"IT...IS THE THRONE... OF THIS PLANET'S RIGHTFUL RULER!"

The smoke cleared to reveal Kamek, in all his glory, radiating power and size. His constitution had expanded to such a size that, even though Iggy towered over him at 5,680 miles, Kamek's physique was actually more impressive. And considering Iggy's pectorals nearly blocked his own view atop a titanic neck, that was saying something. The entire planet struggled to hold Iggy and Kamek together, their combined mass nearly equal to it, putting them both into a balancing act. Kamek managed to barely stand, while Iggy simply hugged the entire side of the Mushroom World, belly plates as wide as entire countries pressing warm and tight into the nations and oceans and islands below.

Iggy, wasting no time in accessing the trouble, said only one thing:

"REALLY."

"EHEEHEEHEE, YES! YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE NEW GO-ACK!"

The simplest route had worked; he had gotten Kamek to open his mouth. Iggy's gigantic fist lashed out, a massive clawed finger stuffing into Kamek's opened, bragging maw, filling it. The claw was of stuff sturdy enough that the enraged Magikoopa's reflexive biting didn't hurt one bit.

"AH-AH, NO MORE SPELLS OUT OF YOU!" Iggy hummed, turning his vast head to Roy, who was, of course, back to trying to find that last Super Mushroom. Even blown up as big as it was, against their newfound scale, it was like trying to find a microbe in a haystack. **"HEY, ROY!"**

"WHAT? I'M BUSY, HERE!"

"WHILE DAD TRIED TO PLANT YOU INTO THAT MOUNTAIN RANGE, KAMEK WENT AND BLEW ONE OF THE CLONES UP TO SUPER-SIZE...YOU'RE BIGGER THAN HIM NOW, SO GO TAKE HIM OUT! WE DON'T NEED LOOSE ENDS!"

"YEAH, WHATEVER, ALRIGHT," Roy boomed, gruffly. **"IT AIN'T LIKE 'DAT MUSHROOM IS AROUND HERE, NO MORE, ANYHOW..."**

Being nearly a thousand miles tall, it wasn't like the search would take him so long; Iggy understood that much just fine. All the while, Kamek thumped against Iggy's fantastic mass, fists and wand slamming into his huge forearm and bicep, to only modest effect.

"KRRRRMPH!"

"CUT THAT OUT, KAMEK," Iggy sighed, his vast chest swelling from the merest effort. **"YOU DID EXCELLENTLY, FOR THE RECORD...BUT IN THE END, IT LOOKS LIKE MY SCIENCE HAS OUT-THOUGHT YOUR MAGIC! HUEHEHEHE!"**

Just beyond the curve of the Mushroom World, the Beta-clone watched. He silently held out a massive hand, and his equally-big wand poofed into it. He softly started the same growth spell chant, aiming the tip at his mighty leader, just as the chant finished and the wand's tip glowed its brightest, the spell about to fire off, a bigger set of arms snatched him up off of the ocean, lifting him with a startled cry; his wand tilted up at the last moment, the spell blasting off into space.

"BWAHAHAHA! YEAH, THOUGHT YOU WAS CLEVER, EH?" Roy growled, putting the mighty Beta-clone into the biggest Half-Nelson ever. His bigger bulk pressed all that yellow muscle and torn robe down, grinding him into the ocean with no trouble. **"LOOKS LIKE DERE'S NO SUPPORT, DIS TIME! YER GONNA...HUH? WUH-OH..."**

Kamek's struggles eventually decreased to a kind of angry standstill, the Magikoopa instead trying to jerk his head back, before stopping that, as well, then finally sighing and stopping altogether. Iggy let him go through the motions.

"THAT'S BETTER," the Koopaling said, at length. Kamek had continued growing, throughout, but not enough to close the gap between them, meaning Iggy was still certainly in charge. **"NOW, BELIEVE IT OR NOT...I WANT TO BREAK A DEAL WITH YOU. HEAR ME OUT!"**

Behind his vast glasses, Kamek's brows went from glaring to cocked high.

"YOU BE MY UNDERLING, AND WE BOTH RULE. JUST...YOU, LESS-SO. I CAN SEE WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF, UNLIKE BOWSER. SO, WORK WITH ME. THIS IS TOO THRILLING AN IDEA TO PASS UP! IMAGINE...WEHEHE, YOUR MAGIC, COMBINING WITH MY BRILLIANT EXPERIMENTS! THINK OF IT!"

...Underling

Truth be told, the idea was interesting. Kamek didn't entirely mistrust Iggy, he was too crazy to be a full-blown liar.

Underling

The word kept echoing, and the more it did, the less reasonable he wanted to be. The more he thought of it, of working under anyone, ever again, after all his power and his efforts...

UNDERLING

Just as Kamek's brows sank back down into a glare, his entire body jolted upright, almost like a full-blown hiccup had passed through him. He blinked, trying to look himself over, even with Iggy's finger stuck in his mouth. Iggy also cocked his head, squinting.

"WHAT?" he ventured, narrowing his eyes. In response, Kamek began to shake with a frantic violence, all over, up and down. He looked up, suddenly, over Kamek's pointy hat, to see Roy in the distance, pinning the smaller super-clone to the planet's surface. With his huge free arm, he was waving feverishly, in a clear panic. He pointed to Kamek, and just as Iggy looked down again, Kamek's muscles were suddenly doubling out grossly in mass, shaking and groaning, about to explode. Roy mouthed out the last word anyone wanted to hear, or to read: *mushroom*.

Two and two married, and had four. Iggy gulped.

"OH, N—"

Kamek bellowed, and bellowed hard. Even with Iggy's claw in his mouth, it could be heard, as Kamek's overloaded physique trembled all over. His pectorals, neck, traps and shoulders all had blown out so large that his head was adrift among them, his biceps billowing tight on either side. With a harsh gulp and a deepening tremor, Kamek's muscles doubled, again, pushing do far out that they collided hotly with Iggy, and before the startled reptile could pull back successfully, it happened.

Way over in Nimbus Land, the full-blown battle for the Star Rod stopped, as Kamek's back muscles surged furiously larger, bulging out around his shaking shell, detonating even bigger, then bigger, and bigger, bursting right toward them as Kamek's body went nuclear, and blew up so big, so fast, so aggressively, that there was no time to process it. He was roughly 4,000 miles tall a split second

ago, and in that next fraction of a moment, there was only a sheer wall of yellow, blasting through everything, slamming Nimbus Land, obliterating everything there and crushing what was down below.

Kamek roared pure thunder as his bulk erupted so large that the planet was suddenly only the size of one pectoral, putting the hulking Kamek at over 50,000 miles in size, which trembled deep and blasted up to 110,000 miles—no, no, 180,000! The planet itself, including Iggy, Roy and the clone, were all summarily shoved farther and father back through space, as Kamek's chest outsized it handsomely, shook, and swelled again! The pandemonium only grew with him as those fighting on Nimbus Land were practically welded to Kamek's surging hide and stretching scales by the velocity-force of his growth as the exploded up to 230,000 miles!

His neck bulged out into a vast ocean of its own, his head in the center, his pectorals blowing further in mass, stretching his swollen skin in wave upon wave of burning bliss. The entire time he continually bellowed and boomed, writhing against his own power as his thighs tripled in mass, blasting bigger against each other, as his biceps and triceps quadrupled in scope, his muscles competing hungrily as the planet shrank to a tiny ball, then a marble!

The neighboring planets in the galaxy all watched in utter shock as Kamek continued to blast bigger, throwing out cosmic waves of heat and pressure as he pulsed past 300,000 miles, his tattered robe's remains stretching painfully, digging into vast plains of smooth yellow girth as they blew up against them, demanding freedom! His godly body trembled and heaved one last, jaw-dropping time, swelling with a final, percussive *BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM*, to over 350,000 miles!

Even Kamek had to stop and drift there, in space, openly panting, huffing and shaking from the wracking his body had just taken. The transformation complete, the last Super Mushroom having blown him up to nearly two billion feet high, he took a last breath, held it, and released a vast cloud of violet smoke and sparkling magic, before finally composing himself.

"HUUUH...HEH...HEHE..."

Kamek looked himself over, shoulders bigger than the mid-tier planets nearby, his pectorals so far out that he had trouble seeing where they began to slope into curves. He flexed, tight, and the planets all sailed back, nudged off balance by it. He was so strong, that just flexing had blown them all back a few relative degrees.

"EH...EHEE...EHEEEHEEHEEHEEHEEEEEEEE!"

The marble-sized Mushroom World floated by, so tiny, so powerless, and the moment he saw it, Kamek erupted in mad, cackling laughter. Doing just that made his bulk swell even thicker, as everything flexed against his poor robe's remains. Every planet in the galaxy shook, and the winner of the day's escalating madness seemed horribly, horribly clear.

Without saying a thing, Kamek brought a cosmic-sized hand up, his golden bicep swelling happily, and his wand poofed into king-sized view, right underneath the poor planet. The wand itself had scaled to such a staggering size that its tip came up underneath the Mushroom World, and cupped it right up, a pink magic rim solidifying underneath it, forming into a huge cushion, upon which it sat.

A jewel. That was what it was. A crown jewel, atop a god's scepter.

"MINE," Kamek boomed, grinning smugly. His muzzle alone was too vast for anyone left there on the planet to make out properly. It was just a wall of golden-yellow with two cavernous nostril slits. **"YOU'RE ALL...MINE! EHEEHEEHEEHEEHEEE!!"**

The other pertinent parties having been collected onto Kamek's infinite scales, that left only Roy, the Beta-clone and Iggy, topside. The three colossi gawked up into space itself, which by their take was all Kamek. The clone laughed, cheering wildly, even as the vast Roy weighed him down.

"W-WHAT DO WE DO?" Roy asked Iggy, legitimate terror on his face. **"WASN'T DAT DE LAST MUSHROOM!?"**

Before he could answer proper, Iggy saw a bright rim of blue magic swelling up all around the vast cushion onto which the planet and themselves had been placed. His confusion melted into fear, as the blue rim started to gradually rise up and curve, forming a dome slowly around them, bit by magical bit. In less than a minute, the seal would be made.

"WHADDA WE DO, IGGY? C'MON!"

Iggy's Koopa brain fired away fast, as the dome continually slow-formed all around them, around the Mushroom Planet, as Kamek watched on, smiling...

4.

Out in the beyond, it moved—a single, streaking tail of light. Solemn and silent, it made its steady way through the heavens, unerring and aimless, off to no-one-knows where.

Until it changed course.

The Comet Observatory's path through the stars broke, the tail of the comet its flight created snapping a hard left, then careening away. Within, a warning klaxon tattled and wailed, as something so bizarre appeared onscreen that no one understood what to make of it—other than that it was big. Exceedingly, monstrously *big*. So much so, that the view-screen couldn't fit it without some serious zooming out, until a vast circle merely hogged the majority of the monitor.

"Plotting new course," a small floating creature said, looking akin to an animated cartoon star. "We should be at the point of contact in minutes."

Other star-like beings wandered around various consoles, abuzz; they still politely parted way as a tall human female stepped up to the screen, lips pursed in trepidation. Despite the large swoop of blonde hair arching down over one eye, she saw things clear as day.

"This is certainly unusual," she muttered, crossing her arms. The crown and pale blue dress she wore belied her nature, as she carried herself more like a level-headed captain than a princess. "Not

only did something gigantic come up onscreen, but it did so in an area well-known. Everything should be accounted for, on a cosmic scale...planets don't just appear."

"If it is, it's a really *big* planet," another star spoke, cautiously hovering near her bare shoulders.

Something about the circle, as simple and unknowable as it was, troubled Rosalina deeply. The star circled about her anxiously as the comet-streak of energy around the Observatory sped toward the problem. She turned from the monitor, and walked out to the terrace, able to see space gliding by through the contrails of energy around them.

"Hopefully there is a simple explanation. Try not to worry, Luma."

The star followed along, and though he still exuded worry, it was more for her.

"R...Rosalina!" another Luma called, from inside. "You have to see this!"

In seconds, she was back at the monitor, and what came onscreen was so odd that she visibly recoiled from it. In the extreme foreground were some planets, known ones, drifting out of orbit through...it wasn't space...no. No, it was all yellow.

"What could this..."

As if seizing upon the gap her trailing off made, a terrible rumble overtook space, jolting and jangling even the Comet Observatory, itself. Rosalina kept from falling as the interior pitched, but it did make her egress out onto the terrace considerably harder. She held fast to the railing as she exited, and as the Observatory righted itself and came to a stop, she saw it. They were still far enough away, just enough so, as to better understand what was before them. Oceanic stretches of yellow cords flexed and shifted, all of space seeming to move behind whole planets. Vast ridges suggested scales meeting one another, though of impossible scope, stretched tight over what could only be...*muscles*.

"Goodness!" Rosalina gasped, as it fully struck her.

It was a Koopa. Just one. A tremendous, mind-splittingly immense Koopa.

Nearly two billion feet of Kamek bulged and twitched, out in space, and every inch of it was trembling in absolute triumph. Biceps bigger than a dozen planets clustered together peaked tight as the godly Magikoopa's every errant flex sent shockwaves of power out far and wide. The fragile remnants of a robe clung in trembling scraps, forcing pockets of bulk to pump forth around them as he sighed in delight, smiled wide, and glanced through massive glasses at his wand.

"ENJOY YOURSELVES DOWN THERE, EHEEHEE!" Kamek gloated, his voice shaking space, the tremors traveling through his massive forearms, through his clutching hand, and up into the towering wand and its prize. The entire Mushroom World sat imprisoned on a boundless cushion atop the scepter, and the magical dome over it closed tight, all as the three biggest baddies on the planet remained...well, on the planet. **"BECAUSE YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE THERE, AGAIN! THAT'S ANOTHER SET OF WOULD-BE USURPERS, DEALT WITH! WEHEHE!"**

"GAH, WE CAN HEAR YOUSE, ALREADY!" Roy grumbled uselessly, as the planet shuddered from the sheer decibel force of Kamek's words. He covered his ear holes, not that it did any good. **"WE'RE STUCK IN HERE, NOW, IGGY! DAT'S GREAT, DAT'S JUST GREAT!"**

"FOR ONCE, ROY, YOU'RE RIGHT," Iggy chuckled, adding a little snort. The 5,680-mile tall Koopaling behemoth grinned smugly, looming well-over his 950-mile brother; taking up the majority of the planet with his bulk, Iggy luxuriated there a moment, stretching against the curve of the world, before he adjusted his huge glasses and cracked his knuckles confidently.

"HEH?" Roy balked, taken aback.

"I MEAN, IT *IS* GREAT. WHERE DO YOU THINK WE ARE, RIGHT NOW?"

"DA WORLD."

"YES, AND WHAT'S *DA WORLD* SITTING ON?"

"...WAND?"

"BINGO! OBSERVE..."

At that, Iggy cleared his throat, further vibrating all of the islands and countries and kingdoms stuck under his plated body and swollen muscle. It still didn't dawn on Roy, just what was happening, until something terribly familiar tumbled out of Iggy's mouth: the growth spell invocation!

As soon as it finished, both of them glanced down to the planet—more specifically, the cushion on which it sat. They awaited any sign that a giga-sized growth spell was about to rise up and hit them, but the only disruption to follow was from Kamek's booming voice:

"WEHEHEHE! DIDN'T THINK I HAD ALREADY THOUGHT OF THAT, DID YOU? SPEAK THE CHANT ALL YOU LIKE! THAT CONTAINMENT SPHERE CANCELS OUT THE SPELL! DID YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE I WOULD LEAVE YOU IN THERE, WITH THAT EASY OF AN OUT? FEH!"

There, within the sphere, even Iggy's mad bravado finally withered. He and Roy looked each other over, and deflated, sagging heavily onto a complaining world below.

"THIS IS EXACTLY WHY BETTER MANAGEMENT IS NEEDED, YOU SEE," the mighty Magikoopa continued, craning a neck so huge and thick that its movement could be felt for hundreds of AU as he looked up. **"WE'LL TAKE ALL THIS CHAOS AND UNIFY IT...PLANET BY PLANET...UNDER ONE RULE! WEHEHE!"**

He aimed his bespectacled sights on the neighboring planets. Some were softballs compared to him, while others actually rivaled his own mass; but they would all be his, just the same!

Would an 'underling' be able to accomplish all this? No! And why stop here? Why not make the galaxies themselves his own? This was how it always should have been! This was right!

"EHEEHEE, NOW, EVERYONE WILL ACKNOWLEDGE ME!"

The deeper Kamek's blossoming ambitions grew, the darker his aura became, until a glowing violet miasma began to subtly line his form, glowing softly against the darkness of space...

Nearly two dozen minions lay there, poleaxed, on the ground that was Kamek's scale. Among them, stuck to the supergiant's gravity well, was Mario. The battered plumber rose to a wobble, shook the haze off, and looked around; Kamek was so massive that even the one scale was its own world, going on and on in all directions. He couldn't even find the slope where its edge might meet another.

A soft bump on his back alerted him to Yoshi, who nudged him in relief that he was okay. They pair reunited, and the new quest began: find the Star Rod, and undo everything back to normal.

Even with his dinosaur steed, traversing the scale took some real time. Adding to the surreality of it all, hundreds of items from across the Mushroom World had gravitated onto Kamek's mass, same as they all had. Item blocks, warp pipes, coins—this almost could have been an undiscovered area, all its own. A great quake shook underneath, rattling up into Yoshi, as Kamek's every twitch and shift could be felt, like the end of the world. At the eventual end of the scale, at long last, Mario caught sight of what looked like a blue river, but nearer to it, he could see split frays and ends of fabric, on a monster scale.

A strip of overtaxed tatters, from his robe, surely, stretched out over Kamek's bulk. It was certainly bigger than any river back home. He motioned for Yoshi to move on, when a soft metallic glint snatched his attention, not to far off. It gleamed and winked from withing a patch of the fabric's thread-work, presumably caught there.

He squinted, then gasped. The Star Rod! Finally!

Something crawled up over the strip of blue, on the other side, closer to the rod, and again, Mario gasped. It was Larry! The Koopaling saw Mario, frowned, then changed his expression to dull confusion as he saw Mario's concern. The traced what Mario was staring at to the nearby Star Rod, and gasped, as well. This was particularly bad.

Mario's heels thumped harmlessly against Yoshi's thick hide, and his faithful friend knew what to do: *charge*.

Larry yelped, then hustled toward the artifact, scrambling to get there first.

As Kamek gloated on, lost in his own dark reverie, Iggy, Roy and the Beta-clone could only sigh and watch on, defeated. Well, the Beta was quite the opposite. Bowser was nowhere to be seen, the Mushroom World was trapped, and they were on the Mushroom World. So.

"GRAH, ALLA DIS POWER, AND WE'RE STILL JUST CHUMPS," Roy moaned, having taken a heavy seat on the planet's curve. **"IT JUST AIN'T RIGHT!"**

Iggy, however, was thinking away, looking up, up high at Kamek's vast pectorals, over which the crowing Koopa's muzzle could barely be seen. His eyes went wide, behind his huge glasses, and he opened his mouth to say something, when a light so bright that everything went white flashed, filling everything and everywhere.

"BWU-AWW, NOW WHAT!?" Roy balked, trying to shield his eyes with his massive arms.

When the almost-holy light faded, a smaller one remained, out there in space, hovering near Kamek in the form of an intense orb. It was a speck beside the Magikoopa, but such was its luminescence that even he noticed it, after a moment. It was a bit challenging for him to see down past his chest, after all.

"Koopa," a soft, serene voice called out, feminine, and powerful. "You occupy space that is not meant to be occupied by anyone. Please, explain yourself."

Kamek canted his head, listening. A brow cocked out over the rims of his glasses.

"I AM NO MERE KOOPA," he snorted, a flicker of irritation coming and going. **"I AM KAMEK, WEHEHE! THE RIGHTFUL MASTER OF WORLDS!"**

"Kamek, you infringe upon powers you cannot possibly fathom," the voice answered, from within the tiny glowing orb of light. "Desist, and surrender it. Consider this a fair and friendly warning."

"GEH! I DON'T THINK YOU HEARD ME," Kamek snorted, his enormous bulk flexing out a bit bigger, yet, filling with a swell of dark power. **"OTHERWISE, YOU WOULD KNOW THAT A MASTER TAKES NO ORDERS! I DIDN'T MAKE IT THIS FAR, TO BE COWED BY SOME OBNOXIOUS LITTLE SPACE GNAT! SHOO! BE OFF, OR I'LL MAKE SURE YOU PAY!"**

"If you've no intention of stopping, then prepare to *be* stopped."

Kamek's laughter boomed out, derisive and all-consuming; that laughter left, when the light glowed brighter still, and a series of falling stars streaked through the cosmos, blazing white-hot as they all slammed into his tremendously huge body, pelting and peppering his scaly muscles with innumerable little explosions. They were in such numbers that the little pops began to merge and blossom into a wall of white fire, making even the 350,000-mile god bellow in shock and anger.

Having no ground to stand upon, Kamek instead drifted back, his backside pushing several smaller, head-sized planets away from their respective orbits; the volley continued on, hammering now, driving the colossus back through space, slowly but surely.

"HUAAAAH!" Kamek roared, shaking the entire galaxy's quadrant with his returning rage. A monstrously thick arms swatted out, knocking some falling stars away, but mostly just absorbing the brunt of the onslaught. The purple miasma around him grew as his huge teeth fixed into a snarl.
"YOU PUSILLANIMOUS PIXIE! YOU, TRYING TO SWAT ME!?"

Iggy, Roy, the clone, and every nation on the Mushroom World screamed in surprise as Kamek swung his wand, and swung *hard*. Nearly 60,000 miles of material curved towards the Observatory, which lit up its comet tail anew as it zipped away—being less than a fly compared to the vast wand, it proved easy enough.

"YOU WILL LEARN! YOU WILL *ALL* LEARN!"

That same massive wand did prove capable of sweeping wide through space, interrupting, then scattering away the falling star showers. His robe ripped even further from the strain of his bulk as it flexed in anger, so that only a few trembling threads managed to hold against his heaving pectorals and boomed-out shoulders. He wound up for another swing, and it became clear that his sole intention had been to destroy the Observatory; stopping the star-fall had only been incidental, punctuating just how ineffective the mighty attack had been against Kamek.

"No impact, no damage," Luma cried out, nearly glued to a readout on the big monitor. "He just shrugged it off!"

"Goodness, this is serious," Rosalina murmured, her visible eye wide. "What else can we throw at him, to make him stop this insanity? What else might I...wait!"

Yoshi was about as fast as they came, and Larry scrambled harder for the Star Rod, well-aware he was about as outmatched as a tethered Chain Chomp against a greased Bullet Bill. That was where minions came in handy.

"Stop them!" Larry shouted, the Koopaling waving frantically to his rousing underlings. "Quit laying around, and stop them! Now!"

Koopa Troopas scattered in formation, rushing the plumber and his steed at top speed. Yoshi jumped over a Troopa that had been nearer to start, and leapt in from the side. He skidded past, and the horde trampled over him in their quest. One Goomba jumped onto a Troopa, making him slip out of his red shell, in effect sending the shell careening out like a shot.

Astonishingly, the shell hit true, and blew Mario and Yoshi off their feet, into a mean tumble over the curve of Kamek's vast scale.

"Yes!" Larry hollered, pouncing on the Star Rod at last. He rolled with it, then popped up unscathed, if panting furiously. "Hah! Take that, Mario! That's where expendables get me!"

Wahoo!

As Larry caught his breath and raised the Star Rod, he paused, giving Mario one moment to speak out of magnanimity (and exhaustion). He sputtered and laughed.

"Are you out of your plumbing mind!?" he guffawed, sneering at the two. "You really thought I would make the better call, and undo everything? That's so stupid! You should've wished your wish as soon as you got a hold of this, instead of bringing it to me! I'm rotten, what did you *think* I would do with such temptation? The *right* thing!? You know what, Mario, this is on you! That's even sweeter!"

Even as Larry rubbed it in, Mario glanced around. If he could just find an item...

As his minions gathered, also out of breath, Larry re-raised the Star Rod high. Just as he did so, his minions all turned around, seeing something coming, and after a moment, Larry saw it too: the remainder of the Kamek army had found them, in the commotion! All of them glared through their broken glasses and scuffed robes, some fixing their tilted pointy hats, others readying their wands.

Larry was smart enough to know what was coming. That's why he spoke, and fast:

"I wish I was a million times stronger than Kamek!!"

The Star Rod glowed brightly, then flashed a radiance both awesome and horrible, as if taxed by such a mad demand, even for its power. That sinister glow overtook Larry, who started to laugh ominously, then rumble and twitch all over. All present watched, even the hundreds of thousands of gathering Kamek clones, as Larry's body suddenly ballooned up twice as big; his plated belly and chest burst out over him, spreading with an explosive bulge of growth that forced his arms to swell into broadening columns of bulk, his shell stretching away behind loudly inflating back muscles. His thighs erupted wider, and wider, expanding frantically as he trembled and shook and doubled in size again, and again! 4 feet blew up to an impressive 8, which rattled and groaned up to 16 feet, in roughly a second's time. The same way a balloon might initially resist the flow of air, Larry's body seemed to struggle to accommodate the growth spurt, only for the next second's increase to be far smoother, and far, far, *far* bigger.

"Haaaaah," Larry began, spasms of hot growth pumping in waves throughout his 100-foot body, which rocketed up over the minions, over Mario and Yoshi, over the shocked army around them all, blowing up to 300 feet in a booming heartbeat's time. Mario mounted Yoshi, and the two bolted off faster than the minions could react, leaving them to suddenly be scooped up and bowled over by the growing Koopalings' clawed feet. Their cries rose up as they came to, the awestruck masses bowled over as they pair ran and ran. Behind them, flashes of magic from the entire Kamek Army rose up and blasted away, hammering the still-growing Larry with useless attacks, watching and screaming as he boom-laughed, trembled hard, then blew up to a staggering 600 feet! The shaking only grew worse as the inner rungs of the army were also bowled back by surging scaly soles and enlarging claws, forcing the rest of the army to scramble and flee as he rocketed up past 2,000 feet, then 5,000.

The single scale that Mario and Yoshi worked so hard to traverse, the entire valley it formed, was summarily consumed within less than ten very scary seconds. They slid down its sloping borders,

sinking just low enough that they were simply covered by Larry's growing feet, rather than impacted by them. Still, it left them momentarily caged between the seams of two huge scales, Larry's growing pushing him past 14,000 feet, then 30,000, nearly 6 miles tall.

That was fifteen seconds. Faster and stronger than any other giant thus far.

By twenty seconds, Larry was over 600 miles tall, constituting less than a speck to Kamek. By twenty-five seconds, however, Larry was a whopping tenth of his size, at 35,000 miles, already so much bigger than the Mushroom World, bigger than Iggy or Roy or the Beta-clone. He had emerged somewhere in the Western region of Kamek's elbow, and by thirty seconds, he was suddenly much, *much* bigger, still! *Too big! Too fast!*

"I WILL TOLERATE NO...MORE...CHALLENGES!"

Kamek's anger continued to spike, as the tiny dot of light zoomed easily around his wand. His great victory remained, of course, yet the insult to it was getting more and more infuriating by the second, and the God-Koopa's patience was well-past gone. In the midst of his fury, the little light stopped in place, then began to glow brighter, and brighter still. Kamek was certainly aware, as he grit his teeth, raised the wand and its dizzy occupants high overhead, and then brought it sailing down in a final strike. Yet, that light's intensity swelled so much that even the bespectacled turtle had to wince and blink, missing his shot.

When that light cleared, Kamek shook his colossal head, then saw what was antagonizing him full and proper. It hadn't been some fairy, but rather, a fairy godmother. The human female before him must have been nearly as big as his pinky finger; to him, it was laughable. To anyone else, it would have made her nearly 15,000 miles tall. Even she seemed astonished for a moment—first, at her own size, then much more so, at his.

"My," Rosalina gasped, for both reasons. **"I've never been this big, ever...that must have taken all the power stars' help we had on hand..."**

"SO," Kamek snorted, brows furrowed all the way in. **"YOU'RE THE BOTHERSOME GNAT, BOTHERING ME! EHEEHEE, NOT BAD! NOT BAD AT ALL! BUT REALLY...YOU MUST SEE IT. YOU MUST SEE THE POWER DIFFERENCE, BETWEEN US!"**

"B...be that as it may, Kamek, I cannot allow you to continue this wild abuse of power!"

He flowing blue robe seemed to tense along with Rosalina as she concentrated, gathering stardust and light toward her from seemingly everywhere.

"OH, A LIGHT SHOW, EH?" Kamek growled, mocking. Before he could finish his godly burn, Rosalina threw her arms out, and a prismatic circle formed instantly; it solidified into a clear bubble, not around herself—but around Kamek. The huge Magikoopa looked it over, then balked. **"HUMPH! SUCH PALTRY TRICKS! I WILL SHOW YOU REAL POWER!"**

WEHEHE! ARISE, MY MIGHTY ARMY! I KNOW YOU ARE HERE, WITH ME! EHEEHEE, IT IS TIME...TO GROW...EVEN BIGGER!"

"Army?" the massive Rosalina repeated, cocking her head in confusion. "What army?"

Kamek smiled evilly, waiting, certain she would understand better once millions of growth spells started hitting him, once again. He continued to wait.

"HMM? ARMY? THIS IS ALPHA KAMEK, YOUR PRIME LEADER! CAN YOU NOT HEAR ME? MORE SPELLS! PLEASE!"

Again, nothing. Just as a flicker of annoyance resumed across his muzzle, a sudden bulge of yellow blew up against him, roughly as big as his elbow; before he could react, it blew up just as large as he was, the twin masses colliding and swelling to fill the bubble, stretching it out painfully as it inflated wider, and wider. Rosalina, every bit as shocked, went into a strain trying to force the bubble to hold, as it billowed uncontrollably bigger.

"W...what is this!?" Rosalina gasped, stretching both colossal arms and opened hands out ahead of her, redoubling her concentration. The bubble was already twice as big, meaning the mass within was easily 700,000 miles in size; in fact, the differently-toned yellow belonging to Kamek seemed overwhelmed, more and more.

When the bubble trembled its defeated last, and stretched that one iota bigger, it burst away, sending Rosalina and the tiny Observatory flying back through the void. When she looked back up, she saw another Koopa, similar enough to Kamek, save for a brighter yellow and a shock of blue mohawk. This new arrival, however, was possessed of such a scope that he unfurled at a stunning, incomprehensible 750,000 miles tall— nearly four billion feet of pure, quaking, swollen scaly muscle. From beyond two vast plains of plated pectorals, a monstrous grin loomed, all triumph and teeth.

"WELL! GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, KAMEK! AND AT THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE, TOO!"

Kamek recovered enough from being just as blown back as Rosalina, and when he looked up, and up, even he gulped. Just over twice his massive, cosmic size, towered Larry Koopa. The sorcerer's mind reeled, trying in vain to figure out, as instantly as possible, just how this madness had happened.

"WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!?" Kamek thundered, his bafflement eroding directly into white-hot rage. **"I...I WON'T HAVE THIS!? YOU HEAR ME, LARRY! I HAVE WORKED FAR TOO HARD—"**

"PLEASE!" Larry thundered back, even bigger, even stronger and deeper. **"I SAW EVERYTHING BACK ON-WORLD! YOUR ARMY DID ALL**

**THE LIFTING FOR YOU! BUT I ALREADY FIRED THEM,
SO I SUPPOSE THIS PART WILL HAVE TO BE JUST YOU!"**

Kamek gulped, without meaning to, and Larry saw. At last, Kamek found himself backing away, just by degrees. Several smaller planets bumped against his back, parting out of their orbits silently, as each world's denizens hung on for the ride.

What came next was wordless, but telling. Kamek's wand shot out, aimed right at Larry's unbelievably huge chest. The Koopaling just snorted, and flexed, blowing them up even larger, stretching the plating intentionally loud. Kamek tensed, and Larry simply patted his huge muscles happily, grinning wider.

"HEH. DO IT."

"D...DON'T YOU MOCK ME!" Kamek bellowed, still humongous enough to shake space once more with his voice. In contrast, Larry shrugged dismissively, and Kamek's anger grew tenfold, until he was nearly blind behind his glasses. The wand glowed brightly, and Iggy and Roy both hustled to push themselves and the entire Mushroom World off of the cushion, hiding behind it, just as a violent bolt of purple blasted out through the top, slamming through space into Larry. The even-bigger Koopa chuckled and let it happen, and as Kamek watched in horror, the blast only soaked deep into Larry, pumping him up to 900,000 miles. He cut the beam off immediately, leaving Larry to huff out with a happy shudder.

"ANOTHER WOULD BE NICE," Larry practically purred. Kamek's teeth grit so tight they hurt, but the wizard still knew enough to lower his wand. **"UNDERSTAND, NOW, KAMEK? I'M MUCH STRONGER THAN YOU. YOU'RE OUTCLASSED, AGAIN. SO."**

With that, Larry loomed forward, and poked Kamek hard in the chest. Even one thick finger was enough to push the vast Magikoopa far back.

"GET USED TO SERVING, LIKE YOU WERE MEANT TO...UNDERLING."

Rosalina and countless worlds across the galaxy all watched as Kamek digested the words, then began to shake all over, worse, and worse and worse. His cheeks burned dark tan, nearing a muddied pink, fists big enough to hold multiple planets clenching tighter and tighter.

"DON'T YOU CALL ME THAT," Kamek growled, as the dark miasma began to creep back over his bulky body once again. In seconds, it was darker and thicker than ever before, and only Rosalina seemed to notice. The sight of it made her gasp in absolute fear.

"Oh, no..."

"I'LL CALL YOU WORSE," Larry sneered, poking Kamek harder.
"WORSE THAN MY DAD EVER DID. HE ONLY KEPT YOU AROUND FOR YOUR POWER. HE JUST LIKED TO GET HUGE AND SHOW OFF, LIKE AN IDIOT. HE WAS A BUFFOON, SURE, BUT THAT WAS THE EXTENT OF IT. I AM NOT A BUFFOON. I WILL GRIND YOU INTO DUST IF YOU DON'T GET IT IN GEAR, AND BEHAVE! YOU UNDERSTAND, YOU PUNY SPECK?"

Kamek started the chant to clone himself again; it was perhaps the last sensible, clear-headed thing he did, and even that failed, as Larry's huge fingers catch his muzzle, and pinched it closed. With his other hand, Larry relieved him of his wand, with a few bullying tugs.

"YOU GIVE ME ANY EXCUSE TO, AND I WON'T BOTHER WITH KEEPING YOU ON STAFF! YOU GOT THAT, UNDERLING!?"

Kamek's shaking deepened from a vibration to a relative earthquake, his yellow hide starting to darken along with his miasma. Untold power remained coursing through him, and that power was building. Larry might as well have stuck his finger into a steam pipe, because the pressure was growing to horrific levels. Rosalina motioned for the Observatory to go full comet, and fly as far away as possible, as the view-filling Koopas continued on. All the repressed rage within Kamek kept bubbling higher up, surging in angry, sinister waves, until his skin dropped from a darkening yellow to brown, then...nearly black.

No. NO. NO, NO, NO, NOOOOOOOO

Even Larry cocked a brow as Kamek's trembling muscles darkened to black. From within that darkness, internal sparks swelled bright and red, glowing evilly from within his flared nostrils and out around the corners of his snarling mouth. Those hellish embers suddenly exploded, at long last, and outright fire erupted from Kamek's mouth, knocking Larry back, sending a pillar of brilliant, brutal flames up into space, a great spire of power and hate. Even the release of it did nothing to stop his quaking, as Kamek's entire blackened body shook, rumbled...and *grew*.

"GAH," Larry grunted, waving his ember-covered claws cool, drifting back as he saw Kamek there before him...but twice his size. And growing. A lot.

"R...RRRRGGGGGRRRAAAAAAAGH!"

"H...HEY, WAIT. DON'T YOU TRY ANYTHING! I'M FAR STRONGER THAN YOU, REMEMBER!? WATCH THIS!"

Larry's huge arms rose up before him, making his even larger pectorals mash in tight, as the wand he had stolen from Kamek flared bright at the tip; Iggy and Roy wisely kept themselves and the world hidden behind the cushion as Larry chanted away, and a huge beam of blue energy shot forth and battered into Kamek. The growing Magikooopa's roar only continued on, uncaring, relentless, getting lower and deeper as he grew bigger and bigger and bigger.

Larry flinched, watching, as the blue beam deflected off of Kamek's swelling black scales, spikes shoving out longer and thicker behind him as his biceps and shoulders utterly detonated in size. His triceps billowed hungrily down into his expanding wings, the two surfaces meeting and swelling bigger and bulkier into each other, as Kamek bellowed on, bursting up past 4,000,000 miles, then 12,000,000. With every throbbing second, he pulsed out even thicker, stronger, surging up messily as more and more flame shot from his muzzle.

"He's lost it," Rosalina said, putting her hands up to her lip in shock. **"Whatever semblance of reason he possessed before...it's been wiped away by pure fury!"**

Now more than 13 times smaller than Kamek, Larry started to back away, then back away faster, as the Devil-Kooopa kept aggressively swelling larger across all of space. Whole clusters of neighboring planets dotted his ebony hide like tiny sparkling dots, spreading apart from one another as they wedged between scales, and those shining scales grew wider and wider. At over 20,000,000 miles in size, Fury Kamek flexed hard, and his biceps exploded higher, his thighs bloating hotly, his chest volcanic in its booming spurts. As big and thick as Kamek had become, his physique managed to grow more and more hulking, more bestial and tough, and at 30,000,000 miles, he might as well have been armageddon itself.

"UH, WHAT..." Larry muttered nervously, seeing Kamek's belly swell to fill even his vision, his pecs towering high overhead. **"I, UH...WHAT DO I DO...GUH, S-STOP! I COMMAND YOU! I'M IN CH-CHARGE! WHY CAN'T I...STOP HIM? I WISHED TO BE WAY STRONGER, SO...WHY? WAS IT..."**

A look of complete horror and embarrassment overtook him, as a singular spark sailed lower and lower toward him, through space, too small to be noticed. It seemed on a trajectory for his head.

"B-BECAUSE I WISHED...TO BE STRONGER THAN HIM...AT THAT POINT IN TIME? I...I TOOK OUT HIS ARMY FIRST! THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE AS BIG AND STRONG AS HE COULD GET! N-NO...NO!! I--"

Just like that, Larry shut up, closed his huge eyes, and went limp, sagging there in space. Despite being nearly a million miles tall, he was already nothing compared to Fury Kamek. The background filled with black, glossy scales and tumbling embers, each bigger than planets, against the 50,000,000-mile tall Magikoopa beast.

The wand hung limp in his hands, and Iggy and Roy and the clone all peered out from behind the cushion, up at Larry. Rosalina watched on, unblinking, before Larry suddenly gasped back to life, wide-eyed and awake. And mustached. An immensely gargantuan red cap appeared, having grown to fit his head, and on it two massive, cartoonish eye blinked to life. They looked space over, at the same time as Larry's eyes, which looked softer, more like a certain plumber's did.

"GOOD GRIEF," Larry huffed, looking himself over, poking his own monstrously huge, tight muscles with a testing claw tip. **"WE'RE TOO LATE! I GUESS NIETHER LARRY NOR I KNEW HE COULD GET ANY STRONGER OR BIGGER, SHOOT. THAT'S-A PROBLEM."**

Rosalina put the pieces together, and zoomed through space, up, up, up, up, up towards the towering reptile's vast head and ultra-gigantic red cap.

"Mario?" she asked, cautiously. **"Cappy? That's you two, right?"**

The immense Koopaling cocked to attention, looking left and right.

"THAT-A VOICE...ROSALINA?"

Having that speech booming out of Larry's mouth was beyond strange, but more welcome than the real deal ever could be. She smiled in some measure of relief, though it was brief.

"It is, yes! I was combating Kamek, when this other...well, you, appeared and angered him so badly that he...changed..."

Larry-Mario grimaced, looking back at the still-growing Kamek, whose body was swelling out of control, over 100,000,000 miles of quaking muscle and flame exploding bigger throughout the galaxy, steadily filling more and more of it with his heaving girth.

"OOF, YEAH...I WAS A-GONNA USE CAPPY TO PUT AN END TO ALLA THIS FAST, SINCE I FIGURED LARRY WOULD-A GET GREEDY...BUT NOW, WE'RE GONNA HAVE-A TO GET CREATIVE..."

"You planned to use him?" Rosalina murmured, thinking. **"Wishes? You knowingly...let him wish for this? But..."**

Wasting no further time, the immense possessed Koopaling flexed unthinkable muscles, stretching the scales tight, before launching himself through space, right towards Kamek's 130,000,000-mile form, leaving Rosalina behind.

"...Why didn't you just...wish this all undone, before having to bother?"

The closer Larry-Mario rocketed, the more frightening Kamek became. He had been easily viewable from across the entire quadrant of the galaxy, but seeing less and less of him as a whole, simply due to how big he really was, was quickly becoming unnerving.

Don't lose heart, Mario!

Cappy cheered him on, the living hat providing moral support at the drop of a...well, him. Larry-Mario grunted, then nodded, steeling his resolve.

Larry went so overboard with his wish, it still leaves you with tons and tons of powers, like Kamek must have had. We saw him using magic against Kamek on our way to his head, after all! There must be something we can do, with all that power!

As they thought, Larry-Mario arrived. All that ponderous muscle now went into stopping, desiring considerable inertia at the sight of Kamek's dark pectorals swelling nearer to them. The Magikoopa wasn't moving, so much as he was free-floating in space, and ballooning in every direction. Over 300,000,000 miles of raw power and rage loomed overhead, far below, and on both sides, and all Larry-Mario would think to do was charge.

"WAHOOOOOOOOOO!"

All that muscle and godly power slammed hard into Kamek's belly, mid-way, and the ever-growing titan didn't budge on single relative inch back. If anything, his scales rumbled, then reactively ballooned even bigger, faster!

Fury Kamek blasted off an even wider burst of raging fire as he doom-roared in anger; he must have vaguely felt the attack, because the dark energies surrounding his body swelled, and then he did too, replying with a detonating, eruptive growth spurt, pushing his tremendous body to sizes so fantastic that Larry-Mario could do nothing but cling tight to swelling turtle belly plates as they

expanded out and out and out and out around him. Half a billion miles of blackened muscle, fire and spikes were the answer to his charge, and soon the possessed Koopaling found himself stuck to Fury Kamek's bulk, by sheer gravity.

He stood up, dusted himself off, then sighed, looking around for bearings, then regretting it when he got them. Where Fury Kamek had started several times bigger, the 900,000-mile Larry-Mario was now, quite literally, hundreds and hundreds of times smaller. He paced and paced, his huge feet thudding with deep bass against Fury Kamek's growing scales.

I didn't mean, brute force, Mario. More like a spell!

"RIGHT-A, RIGHT, OKEE-DOKEY..."

At that, Larry-Mario raised the wand, somewhat small in his vast grip. He thought, and thought hard, over the sounds of Fury Kamek's uncontrollable growth...

NO, NO, NOOOOO, NOOOOOOOO! NEVER AGAIN! NEVER, EVER!

Fury Kamek's mind was afire, panicked in its own all-consuming hate. He was a God! An underling!? No! NO! NO!!

The enormity of the Magikoopa was such that it was actually becoming lost on entire worlds, as he swelled into them, pushing them back, adding to the collective sparkles along his inflating hide. All anyone knew was, one moment they were fine, the next, wham, a great wall of total black, and waves of heat. The billion-mile Koopa's growth climbed feverishly, his head and furnace-mouth lost in a sea of twitching bulk and swollen scales. More power than he had ever wished for poured off of his muscles in raging waves, yet in his unbridled, burning rage, he hardly noticed it. He could be measure in astronomical units at this point, he was so massive, so huge—over 10 of them, in fact.

Yet, his rage only built, and the pressure of it ballooned him up to 40 AU, in one booming beat of his fiery heart. Hundreds of planets stuck to his bulk now, others starting to drift nearer from the ever-expanding demands of his own gravity well.

As his anger only grew and grew, it perhaps didn't help any, when a bright little blue flash came and went somewhere on his belly, followed by another, then another, and another. After the fifth of seventh little cloudburst, an entire group of them popped up next, more than twenty. Then again, an ever wider crowd of little blue puffs overtook that section of Fury Kamek, until even the vast growth-god suddenly felt it. A monstrous black hand slammed thoughtlessly down on his belly, but a hundred more blue puffs tickled to life around it, and when he brought said hand back up, it was swarmed with unbelievably tiny little things.

"RRRRRRRRRR!?"

Fury Kamek's red eyes narrowed in animal puzzlement, and still some measure of anger, at the dotting waves of ants covering his hand. They went wide, when he realized they were all Larry. *That foul, contemptible Larry!*

More and more Larry-Mario clones burst to life, each one nearly a million miles tall...yet they all paled in comparison to him; they were less than insects. They were closer to germs. But enough germs could still do damage, and so they kept multiplying away.

This, counter-productively, only made Fury Kamek even angrier, and the mountainous hand and belly they tried to cover violently trembled, then exploded twice as huge, his whole body roaring larger, along with his terrible, fire-blasting bellows far, far up above.

I know, I know, Mario, but keep it up! They all have clone-wands, right?

Larry-Mario stopped multiply-chanting enough to see that the nearest ones did. Whether or not each one's tip had its own planet and captives, there was no telling, and no time. Instead, Larry-Mario ordered a new, more important command:

"EVERYBODY...LET'S A-GROW!"

Trillions upon trillions of Larry-Mario clones all turned, nodded, and blasted Larry-Mario prime with so many growth spells that he nearly passed out. His growth blasted up so hard, so fast and violently, that his vision blurred and warped, as he surged up from the armada of magical blue blasts, blowing up, and up, and up, so fast that even Fury Kamek's growth spurt began to slowly but surely even out, then lose out to the speed of his own, wherein he finally began to appear to become larger, on his body.

By the time he was 50 AU in size, and blown up to ridiculous levels of bulk, Larry-Mario prime found himself floating in front of a 100 AU Fury Kamek, who glared daggers at him, his red-ember eyes narrowing to accusing slits.

"NOOOOO"

Even half as big as the cosmos-sized Magikoopa, Larry-Mario still shook from the raw blast of his voice, as some part of him quested for articulation. Fury Kamek's maw opened wide, and a terrible ocean of fire blew out at him, leaving Larry-Mario time enough for one reflexive chant. A wall of blue shot up around him, Kamek's fire hammering away at it right after it formed.

I guess he isn't up to talking, Cappy mused.

The spells from his tinier clone comrades kept on coming, blowing Larry-Mario prime up to nearly Fury Kamek's size. Planets didn't even register anymore, to either of them; they wouldn't have to his clones, even. Only stars were remotely large enough to be seen, and those were the bigger types. Otherwise, it was a great sea of darkness—and Kamek was darker, still.

There had to be something, some way to stop this. All of this had started, because Bowser had gotten so greedy, and things had broken down and snowballed from there.

Was it, though?

The question hit, and Larry-Mario let it. What was that supposed to mean?

Kamek got to like being bigger, sure, so did the other Koopas, and Bowser...but why? Why, Kamek? His growth was a bi-product, and the madder he got, the...

The madder he got at being called an underling. The madder he got, being put down.

Despite all of the powers and items and power ups and wishes that had been flung around in the day's chaos, one thing had never even occurred to him, to use. As he thought, and as Fury Kamek resumed angrily swatting himself to clear off the clone-gnats, Larry-Mario finally, finally knew what would do it. He knew the one thing that could stop this.

His hijacked wish-born powers were drawn upon, and the towering Larry-Mario prime chanted off a spell. A fairly simple one. At first, nothing seemed to happen, just a poof appearing next to him that was so small, it was invisible.

Another chant, and a whoosh of growth, and suddenly Bowser was there, blown up to unutterable size...he loomed at a mighty, whopping 100 astronomical units...leaving him less than a fraction of their size. But still, as he blinked in shock and awe, the Koopa King was there, and was just visible enough to interact with.

"**WHAT IN THE,**" Bowser squeaked, looking back at his son, Larry...who was looming over him by a huge margin, in space...with a mustache and cap that looked...like...**"NO...NO!"**

"I'M-A NOT GONNA WASTE TIME," Larry-Mario huffed, his huge scaly chest stretching out with magic power. **"TELL KAMEK HOW GREAT HE IS, ANNA APOLOGIZE, NOW."**

Bowser stared blankly up at him. He looked back at Fury Kamek, still expanding, still heaving bigger, roaring and blasting flame throughout the galaxy. He looked back at Larry-Mario, his face unchanged.

"NO."

Before anything else could happen, Larry-Mario's hand loom-closed around the tinier Bowser, grasping him into a huge, impatient fist. That fist escalated him up, up, up, up, up, all the way to Larry's view-consuming muzzle, and a very knitted brow.

"IT'S-A ONLY GONNA GET WORSE."

Bowser's teeth poked out as he bit his lip, blushing and sore. He snorted, steeled himself, and shook his head stubbornly. The fist tightened, and Bowser held the words in, anyway. It kept tightening, as Fury Kamek could be heard swelling and bulging in the distance. Still, Bowser angrily resisted, even as he held his breath until his face started to turn more of a pink-blue, somehow.

Larry-Mario sighed, before he looked to the side, thinking. He smiled.

Fury Kamek had swollen to over a full light year in size, his body a great mountain of spikes, muscles and scales. Black spires rose endlessly from his back, his rolling shoulders so heavy that even the mighty Magikoopa was slow in moving them around as they shifted and blew up and out in mass. In the heights of he next roar, to even his bestial surprise, a familiar voice intruded, and it was as loud and stupid and brassy as ever:

"BWAHAHAHA! LOOKIT YOU! AH, I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD IT IN YOU, HEH! I WAS FINALLY WRONG ABOUT SOMETHING!"

Fury Kamek's anger rose, and sharply. He knew that voice, even now.

Bowser floated up into view, a constant barrage of clone spells forcing him bigger and bigger, frantically enlarging him enough to stay at least visible to the ever-expanding Kamek. Billions of miles poured into Bowser, making him bigger than he had ever, ever conceived of, even at the heights of his greed...and yet, he was still piddling, compared to Fury Kamek. By a lot.

"I WAS HOPING THIS WOULD HAPPEN, YOU KNOW, DEEP DOWN," Bowser continued, despite his blatant worrying, and the shifting sizes making him lurch larger and warble his changing voice. **"BUT YOU DID IT, HEHE! YOU TRULY SURPRISED ME, KAMEK! WHEN I PUSHED YOU, YOU SHOWED ME WHAT YOU WERE M-MADE OF! IT'S ALMOST AS IMPRESSIVE AS I AM, BWAHAHA! NOT BAD, AT ALL!"**

Kamek's furnace-nostrils flared, and his terrifying growth spurt finally, finally began to slow.

"BUT HEY, YOU PROVED THE POINT I WAS SECRETLY HOPING YOU WOULD MAKE, ALL ALONG! I...I'M...P...YOU SEE, AS EXPECT A LOT FROM MY U...P-PARTNERS IN ARMS! YES! HEH, AND YOU DELIVERED! I, EH...I'M P...PR...GUH, PUH-P...GAH! I'MPROUDOFYOU! WAYTOGOANDREPRESENTKOOPADOM!"

Bowser looked as though he had eaten a plate full of poison mushrooms, or worse, wheat. He shuddered, his body convulsing at having to be appreciative out loud. Fury Kamek's terrible aura flickered out, resurfaced...then faded away. Those red beast-eyes blinked at last, and when they opened the glasses before them were blue and calm again. Though he remained monstrous and thick and darkened so, Kamek was back.

"Y..." Kamek started, catching something in his huge throat. **"YOU MEAN...YOU KNEW? ALL THIS TIME?"**

"YOU THINK I DIDN'T? PAH! THINGS WERE GETTING STALE, FRANKLY. N...NOT YOUR FAULT. WE WERE GETTING

COMPLACENT, NEEDED A CHANGE! A GOOD BOSS KNOWS THESE THINGS! YOU AH, WERE A PRETTY GOOD BOSS, YOURSELF!"

Kamek's chest swelled out, but he wasn't growing any larger.

"YOU REALLY MEAN THAT?"

Bowser slouched slightly, begrudging.

"...YEAH. YEAH, I GUESS I DO."

On either horizon, an immense arm appeared, and closed in at frightening speed. Even Bowser's blown-up composure nearly cracked as he was summarily scooped into a great, deep hug, buried in between Kamek's boundless pectorals. It only lasted a moment, before even Kamek cleared his throat, and released the far tinier Bowser.

"V-VERY GOOD THEN, BOWSER...MY LORD."

The Koopa King's elation at hearing his favorite title again almost showed, as he cleared his throat, too, and nodded briskly.

"R-RIGHT. SURE. WELL, WE HAVE A KINGDOM TO REBUILD, THEN, DON'T WE?"

Larry-Mario grinned, as he stayed well-out of it.

"YES, SIRE, CONSIDER IT ALREADY DONE."

"...HEH?"

With a mere snap of his claws, just like that, it all seemed undone.

Mario and Yoshi stepped into the main hall of Peach's castle, and Peach was already there to greet them. Rosalina and royalty from multiple kingdoms were in attendance, as well, and all of them looked pleased to see them. Bowser, of course, was not in attendance.

"Oh, Mario," Peach sighed, putting a gloved hand to her chest. "You did it again! The Mushroom Kingdom is safe, once more!"

"Though it did get somewhat out of hand," Rosalina added, giving Mario a worried expression. The plumber grabbed his hat, which was still Cappy, and they both looked up bashfully at to the two princesses. "Tell me, please—when you got the Star Rod from Nimbus Land, why in the world didn't you just wish everything back to normal, when you had the chance?"

Even Princess Peach looked at a loss for words, hearing this.

"Mario, is this true?"

Mario made to answer, when one among the attending royalty stepped forward.

"Oh, I can answer that," Prince Mallow chirped, the small cloud-shaped comrade coming between them all. "To be blunt, he *did* try. As soon as he arrived in Nimbus Land, amid all that chaos, it was the first thing he asked for. He wanted the Star Rod we had on loan, so he could wish to undo things back to where they were, *before* he entered Bowser's stronghold."

This didn't seem to settle anything. If anything, Rosalina looked even more confounded.

"You're saying, it didn't work?"

"It wasn't powerful enough to undo what Kamek's powers had grown to. He was practically a god, after all, even that early on. We realized there was no undoing it, so he hatched this insane plan instead. We both figured that Kamek was so strong, that only he could undo it, himself. The initial plan was to let one of the Koopalings get their hands on the Star Rod, to wish for even more power, because of course they would...then, swoop in with Cappy and take control of them. Then, either Kamek would be forced to undo everything, or by possessing an even stronger magic, maybe we could have undone it, ourselves...only Kamek got even *stronger*, so we were back to having to convince him to do it, himself."

Peach's head was swimming, at this point. Rosalina understood fine, but her fingers were still up at her temples.

"That...well. I am very glad that it worked. Barely."

"All it took was a little respect, of all things," Mallow said, nodding. Well, he seemed to be trying to, what with him having no neck. "I imagine that was all he really wanted, for a long time."

"And Bowser will have to stay that way, if he knows what's good for him," Cappy added.

To this, Mario only had one thing to add:

Wahoo.

There were no renovations on Bowser's castle, simply because it had been rendered moot by Kamek's power. Bricks were back in place, as slapdash as ever, pillar stood, robes draped and arced, and the throne Bowser's growth spurts had destroyed rested anew.

Koopa Troopas marched as evilly as possible through long, echoing halls, torches blazing in a nice balance against too much darkness, and all was well.

"Hey, you," Bowser commanded, snapping his fingers at a passing Troopa, who hustled back to him and his throne.

"Lord!"

"My rotten kids already have the edict, yeah? They know?"

"Sir, yes! The decree is out, across the Koopa Kingdom! They've all sworn to it."

Bowser withheld a growl of annoyance, and made it past.

"Alright, alright, then, beat it."

The Troopa saluted, then turned and marched off. There was a pregnant moment, before Bowser worked himself back up to snuff, then clapped his hands.

"Kamek!"

With a poof of violet smoke, the great hall was suddenly very, very, very full. The rows of guard-Troopas all held their breath and put up with it, as a vast wall of blue robed bulk smothered them, pressing both sides into the pillars and walls, as Kamek pressed into everything, easily over fifty feet in size. His blue fabric strained perfectly tight against his remaining bulk, as the towering Magikoopa nodded dutifully, and creaked the floor with a gracious bow.

"Lord Bowser," Kamek boomed, humbly. "I am at your service, sire! What can I do for you, wehehe?"

"I, uh, just wanted to...thank you, again, for the castle and repairing the...entire kingdom, and stuff. G-good job."

Kamek practically glowed with satisfaction, blushing underneath his glasses. The guards could swear he swelled even bigger against them.

"T-thank you, my Lord!"

"Yeah, yeah. Now, to business. That creep Mario shouldn't stand a chance, now that you're more powerful than ever before...just ah, how much bigger...do you think you can make me, this time?"

Kamek thought it over, genuinely.

"Oh, utterly immeasurable, sire, eheeheehee! Easily!"

At this, Bowser smiled even wider. Now, he meant it.

"Good. You and I should have quality giant time! Nice and equal, with me bigger. Er, just a bit, geheh."

Kamek swelled even larger, until the pillars and walls started to crack against his warm bulk, before he nodded happily, then puffed away, vanishing in violet mist.

Back in his creaking, magically-enlarged tower, Kamek reappeared, knocking his knuckles together in abject joy. It didn't matter that he was still growing bigger, stuffing his enlarged chambers to the brim, shoving cauldrons back, ripping his tight robe, or his head and pointy hat heaving up bigger and bigger into the ceiling. There was just one thing on his mind.

"...Equal," Kamek repeated, letting it out, keeping it, savoring the word.

It made sense. After all, it was the first sweet thing he had ever had in his life.