

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 them, as his crown. A set of gigantic spikes 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 cowered at this fraction of Bowser’s wrath; yet, no more arrived. Instead, a nasty 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, making 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, where all self-respect belonged.

“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 under-bulk. 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-prepare (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. MMMOOOOOOOOOOOOORRRRRRE!!”

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.

"MOOOOOOORE!!"

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 along, uncaring. 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, over-muscled, 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..."

"Eheeheehee!" 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, who was (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.