

Ryan's head weighed heavily on his palms as he stared hopelessly at his computer screen. How long had it been? He tried to count back the days, but it seemed as though he'd been unemployed his whole life. Laid off two months prior, the 23-year-old had searched in vain for a job, but without a degree or trade skills, he seemed to lack the qualifications for almost all of the jobs to which he applied. As a gray wolf at the end of his rope, he didn't interview well. Employers would smile nervously at him as long as he was in the room and then breathe a sigh of relief as soon as he was gone.

It wasn't a fair assessment; Ryan had never hurt anything more than a bug, and even then, he limited himself to mosquitoes, preferring to catch and release the spiders and moths that occasionally found their way into his ratty apartment—a ratty apartment from which he would be evicted in two days if he couldn't find a way to pay his rent.

At first, he'd applied for customer service jobs. Though shy, he liked helping people, and the idea of being a waiter or barista appealed to him. But, the sharpness of his canines—and the increasingly wild, desperate look in his eyes as time went on—killed his chances. Next, he switched to non-customer-facing positions—stocking, cleaning, and unloading trucks—but with the economic downturn, jobs like that had gone quickly, and there weren't any to be had. There was the occasional position for a plumber or electrician, but the employers wanted trained journeymen, not apprentices who didn't know conduit from potable water pipe.

Having exhausted his face-to-face options, he'd turned to the Internet and had scoured all the job sites, but in vain: nobody needed laborers. Desperate, he'd turned to gregslst, an online classifieds site that included the occasional legitimate job posting among hundreds of get-rich-quick schemes and sites offering to pay you for taking surveys. (What those sites failed to mention, Ryan learned, was that you made the equivalent of about thirty cents per hour, and that was *not* going to pay his \$500 rent, let alone pay for food or even the electricity to run his computer.) But, it was still more than nothing, and a full day's work was enough to buy a cheeseburger and a small order of French fries from the dollar menu, and that was better than going hungry.

Today had gone much like other days. He'd gotten up early and checked gregslst for any new posts—experience had taught him that if he didn't reply within 15 minutes of the post going live, the job would already be filled—had replied to a couple, and then had sat and refreshed the page with the dogged perseverance of the desperate. Now, fourteen hours later, his bloodshot eyes feeling like sandpaper from staring at the screen so long and his finger aching from clicking his mouse so many times, he rested his head in his hands and tried for the millionth time to think of a way out of this mess.

Sitting back, frustrated and having come up fresh out of ideas, he looked tiredly at the screen. He moved to close the window, but his finger, twitchy from so much repetitive movement, refreshed the page instead. Shaking his head, he moved the mouse to the close button but then stopped. There was a new job listing at 9 at night. Ryan's eyebrow cocked, and he clicked on the link.

The posting was for a farmhand. Ryan shook his head; he had no experience as a farmhand, but as he was about to close the window once again, his eyes caught sight of the words “entry level” and “no experience needed.” He hesitated and went back to scanning the listing. The job was outside city limits. Ryan didn't have a car, and the bus didn't go that far. After a two-hour bus ride starting at four in the morning, he'd have to walk at least 30 minutes to get to the place, and if he didn't make it back there by the time the buses stopped running at 10, he'd be walking all the way home.

Ryan sighed, his head leaning back in defeat. Even if he *could* get the job, half his day would be spent traveling. Still, he thought, it was better than nothing, and if the job worked out, maybe he could move someplace closer once his lease was up in a couple of months. Reluctantly, he continued reading. Tractor experience was desirable but not necessary. A criminal record wasn't a show-stopper, but there'd be questions. Compensation would be—

Ryan started and nearly ran his nose into his computer screen in surprise. Compensation would be \$35 an hour. The wolf did a double-take and rubbed his eyes, looking for a decimal point. Surely that was \$3.50 an hour and the person had just missed the trailing zero and the decimal point? But as much as he looked at it, even closing his eyes, looking away, and looking back at it, the number remained firmly unchanged.

Ryan picked up his phone and fumbled to dial the number, having to clear and try again several times because his fingers were trembling so hard. At last, the line began to ring, and he drummed his fingers anxiously on his laptop.

"Hello. You have reached Wilbur—"

Ryan groaned audibly and started to hang up, but something told him to leave a message. He waited for the beep.

"Um, hey, uh, my name is Ryan Belichick. I'm replying to your ad on gregslst. I, uh, don't have any experience with being a farmhand, but I'm a hard worker and desperate for a job, so, please—*please*—call me back. My number's 555-0135."

He hung up, shook his head, and closed the window. It had been a long day, and he was too discouraged to stare at the screen anymore. His burger and fries from lunch were gone, and since it wouldn't be until tomorrow that he got to eat again, he got ready to go to bed and sleep off the hunger pangs.

But, just as he was rinsing his mouth out after brushing his teeth, the phone rang. He gasped and dove for his phone, his fingers scrambling to answer.

"H-hello?" he asked. "Y—yes, this is Ryan. Oh, um, hi, Mr. Sterling. Yes, I'm *very* interested. N—no, no criminal record. Not even a speeding ticket; I don't have a car. No, that's okay; I can make it there. I just need a job—I'll make it work. Oh, well, that's very kind of you. That's right; I've never driven a tractor—but I'm happy to learn! Really? Wow, that'd be great! Yeah—yes—I'll see you tomorrow morning! Thank you—*thank* you, Mr. Sterling!"

He hung up, stunned. He stared at his phone, not believing his luck, and then slowly put it down and laid back in bed. He'd have to get up early the next morning, but it would be worth it; he was *sure* of that!

The next morning was indeed an early one, but Ryan sprang out of bed when his alarm went off at 4:30 and hurried to get ready to go. He wasn't sure how to dress for a farmhand job; somehow a suit and tie didn't seem like the right thing to wear, but on the other hand, were jeans really appropriate? He opted for something in between—khakis and a button-down shirt. He figured it was better to be over-dressed than under-dressed, and he could always switch to something more casual if Mr. Sterling would allow it. He was pretty sure wearing dress shoes was a recipe for disaster, so instead, he carried a pair of hiking boots with him but wore tennis shoes for the bus ride and long walk.

He made it to the bus stop with plenty time to board the first bus of the day, and after a couple of bus changes and an hour and a half of riding, found himself at the end of the line on the outskirts of the city. Looking behind him as the bus pulled away, he saw the city growing denser the further away he looked. Out in front of him were the last vestiges of the city—a car repair place, a gas station, and a small convenience store—but beyond that, it was nothing but fields. Slinging his boots around his neck, Ryan set out, glancing at his phone and quickening his pace. It was a few miles from the bus stop to Mr. Sterling's farm, and if he was going to make it in time, he needed to get going!

The air was cleaner and clearer this far from downtown. With all signs of the city far behind him now, he could look in any direction and see nothing but fields and the road he was traveling. There were few cars, and the only sounds he heard were the occasional trill of insects or birds chirping overhead. Ryan breathed in deeply and smiled; if this was what his commute was going to be like, maybe it wouldn't be so bad after all. Once he got comfortable with the route, he might be able to catch a bit more sleep on the bus, and then a nice walk like this one would be the perfect way to wake up.

He came at last to a mailbox that said "Sterling" on it in faded, peeling paint. Ryan turned to look and saw large pastures in front of him. In the distance were a few buildings clustered together, and off to the sides were rows and rows of crops growing in the early summer sun. He tiptoed carefully over the cattle guard and began walking down the rutted gravel driveway. After a fair bit more walking, the driveway curved slightly and made its way towards the buildings, which Ryan could now see consisted of a quaint farmhouse, a barn, a shop, and a few other outbuildings whose purpose he didn't know. But, to his surprise, in the middle of it all was a large cube-shaped structure that on closer inspection turned out to

be a wooden frame covered in chicken wire. Inside it were some hearty, verdant plants that towered above him.

Momentarily distracted by the caged-in plants, Ryan didn't notice as the farm owner walked up.

"Can I help you, son?" the grizzly asked, his eyes narrowed suspiciously and a ridiculously long grass stalk sticking out of his mouth.

Ryan's head jerked towards the speaker, and he quickly turned to face him.

"Oh, uh, are you Mr. Sterling?" Ryan asked. "I'm Ryan Belichick; we talked on the phone yesterday."

A broad smile broke out on the grizzly's face. "Ah, yes. Ryan, was it? You're a little early—I like that; it shows ambition and a good work ethic!"

Ryan smiled, and the two shook hands. "I can't thank you enough for this opportunity, Mr. Sterling," he said. "I've been out of work and just can't seem to catch a break. I *promise* you won't be sorry."

"Please, call me Wilbur," the grizzly replied, clapping a massive paw on Ryan's shoulder and adjusting his grass-stem. "What say I give you the tour, and then we'll get you put to work? You ever done any farm work before?"

Ryan shook his head and cringed. "No; that's why I was really excited to see that no experience was necessary."

"Ah, right, right. Well, don't get your nickers in a wad; it's hard work, but it's rewarding. You, uh, might be a little overdressed, though," he said, gesturing to Ryan's clothes. "It can be messy work, too, so I'd suggest you not wear anything you're afraid to get dirty. And, uh, you might consider getting some gloves, at least until your hands callus up a bit," he said with a wink.

Ryan started to say he wasn't afraid of a little hard work, but there was something disarming about Wilbur that Ryan instantly liked.

A few horses looked up curiously from a pasture on the far side of the farmhouse as Wilbur led Ryan towards it.

"This here's the farmhouse where I live. I don't reckon you'll have much reason to go in there, but if you get injured, I do have all the first aid stuff inside." He shook his head and grinned. "Back in my day, if you got yourself hurt, you wrapped your shirt around your amputated this or that and earned yourself the nickname Stumpy. You learned pretty quick back then, but these days, OSHA says I gotta give you Band-Aids and a kiss on your boo-boo, so what are ya gonna do?"

The two of them laughed, but then Ryan looked at him quizzically. "Back in your day?" he asked. "You don't look old enough to be an old-timer to me."

"All right, all right; I exaggerate a *bit*," Wilbur confessed, adjusting his grass-stalk and giving him a shamefaced look so endearing that there was no way Ryan could have stayed mad at him had he been mad in the first place. "But to answer your question, I'm 40 and change; just don't ask me to tell you how *much* change!" he said with a grin.

They turned and walked past the horses toward one of the clustered metal buildings.

"That there's the shop. If I gotta work on the tractor or the other machines, that's where it's done. Given time, you'll probably learn to maintain the equipment, too. That there's the hay barn. It's mostly empty right now, but the first cutting oughtta be coming up next week or so, so it'll start getting filled up for the winter. You can *bet* you'll be helping with that—bucking hay's hard work, but it's good for ya! Then there's the supply and storage shed, where I keep feed for the horses and cattle, and—"

"Sorry, cattle?" Ryan asked. "I saw some pastures, but there weren't any cattle."

Wilbur looked crestfallen. "Yeah, this last winter was pretty hard on them," he said, sighing. "Lost every one of them. Damn shame, too; they produced some of the best fertilizer you ever did see!"

Brightening, he turned and practically dragged Ryan to the plant cage.

“Just *look* at those tomato plants!” he beamed. “Why, they’re the biggest ones I’ve ever seen, and I’ve been growing tomatoes for years!” He leaned in conspiratorially. “The trick was to go find all the manure in the pasture I could. But, I’m fresh out now; I sure hope those tomatoes can still grow up and win the prize this year.” He shook his head, then clapped Ryan on the back. “It’s tough being a farmer,” he said. “You city-slickers don’t worry about things like if it rains or if it’s dry; we farmers gotta worry about *all* that stuff. Too windy? Can’t fertilize or spray for weeds or pests. Too hot? Plants die. Too wet? Can’t harvest. Too cold? Cattle die. I tell ya, it’s a hard life, but it builds character! At least *these* guys are still around,” he said, leading Ryan towards the horse pasture.

“What are the horses for?” Ryan asked. “Surely you don’t slaughter them?”

Wilbur gave him a shocked look. “Of course not!” he said. “Does this look like France to you?” He shook his head indignantly. “Nah, these are some of the best cattle-cutters in the industry!” he replied proudly. “Trained ‘em myself. You can learn to train ‘em, too, but you gotta know what you’re doing, or you can spoil ‘em. You can figure on doing a lot of manual labor at first and then slowly learning the ropes of everything else as time goes by.”

Ryan nodded slowly. He wasn’t afraid of hard work, and it seemed like if he stuck around long enough, he might be able to learn a *ton* of different skills: equipment maintenance, horse training... If he did end up having to switch jobs later, he might be a lot more marketable with that kind of experience under his belt.

“Let’s go see where the horses live,” said Wilbur, leading Ryan towards the barn.

Sitting just outside the door under an overhang were a variety of tools and equipment: rakes and pitchforks, some kind of engine-driven thing Ryan didn’t recognize, shovels, wheelbarrows, and other things you might expect to see around a horse barn.

The second they passed through the doorway, Ryan grimaced and covered his nose with his shirt.

“My *gosh*, what *is* that smell?” he cried.

“That?” Wilbur asked, unfazed as he chewed thoughtfully on his grass-stalk, “That’s just a little horse manure. Never hurt anybody,” he said, shrugging.

They were in an open area at the front of the barn. The stalls started about twenty feet in, and as Wilbur led Ryan down the aisle, naming various horses as they went, Ryan found himself too distracted by the smell to really pay much attention. The stalls seemed to be in good repair—at least to Ryan’s inexperienced eye—but all of them had heaps of dung in the corners that were fast encroaching on the space the horses had to lie down. Ryan wasn’t a horse expert, and he hoped that the horses were fine with this arrangement. He knew he sure as heck didn’t want to be the one to deal with all of this!

“So, I’m gonna come clean with ya,” Wilbur said, giving him that same shamefaced smile as before and adjusting his grass-stalk, “This place is...just no good. I gotta get all this horse crap moved. The last farmhand doesn’t work here anymore, and the crap’s just been piling up ever since. I probably shoulda told you upfront, but I didn’t wanna scare you off,” he admitted.

Whatever ideas Ryan had been having about the job suddenly vanished in a puff of smoke. The wolf’s mind began churning. He’d come all this way—gotten up way early in the morning—to learn about a job shoveling shit. Ryan didn’t know what he’d thought the job entailed when he agreed to come out, but this sure wasn’t it. Picking peaches, maybe. Wilbur had put him on, talking about tractor repairs and training horses and all, gotten him all excited, but for what? Had the guy led with what he needed, it might not have been so bad, but to get him all excited and then drop this on him? Ryan shook his head. Had he really sunk so low that he was willing to shovel what looked like thousands of pounds of horse shit for a living? More than that, if Wilbur had been putting him on all this time, then would he even end up doing things like tractor repairs or training horses *ever*? Somehow he doubted it, which made this an awful lot more of a dead-end job than he’d thought.

“Look, I appreciate the offer,” he said, interrupting Wilbur, who had been talking the whole time, “But I just—I can’t see myself moving horse dung for a living,” he said.

“But I thought you needed a job?” Wilbur asked. “Surely this is better than *nothing*?”

Ryan hesitated. It had been months without a solid job lead; Wilbur had a bit of a point.

"And besides, for \$35 an hour, I'd shovel shit until my eyes turned brown! What's a little waste relocation if you're getting paid good money for it? Hell, there are accountants and other hoity-toity jobs that take a college degree to do that don't pay \$35 an hour! For an entry-level position, this is awful good pay, wouldn't you say?"

Ryan sighed. Wilbur was definitely right about that.

"It might not be the most fun, but it's honest work," Wilbur pressed. "I need the job done; you need money. If it makes you feel better, just think that every two minutes, you're making another dollar. Less than two minutes, even!"

Ryan caved. That was a lot of money, and as Wilbur had said, there were an awful lot of things he'd do for \$35 an hour. Heck, he'd have his rent in the bag in just a couple of days, and by the end of the first week, he wouldn't be in any financial trouble at all.

"Okay, okay, you're right," he said hurriedly. "But, why *are* you paying so much an hour?"

Wilbur shrugged. "I need the work done," he said, "And nobody seems to be paying attention to my ads; I've been posting them for weeks. I figured I'd get people's attention!"

Ryan couldn't help but think that committing to such a high hourly rate was perhaps not the most sensible way to attract applicants, but he had to admit that it had worked on him, and maybe the overall-wearing grizzly had more money lying about than his country bumpkin appearance let on. Either way, he was about to make a butt-ton of money, and he was not about to jeopardize that with more probing questions.

"All right," he said, nodding. "What do I have to do?"

Wilbur grinned and clapped him on the shoulder again. "That's the spirit! I like a good work ethic." He handed him a large shovel and pointed to a two-wheeled wheelbarrow. "Start in any stall you like and just shovel everything into the wheelbarrow, then take it out back and dump it," he said.

Leading Ryan to the far end of the barn and out the big sliding door, he pointed along the fence line.

"Just don't dump it against the building," he cautioned. "The stuff'll get into the wood and mess it up. But, anywhere along the fence is fine. That'll get it out of the barn and hopefully keep it far enough away from the middle of the pasture that the flies don't bother the horses too much."

Ryan nodded, and Wilbur clapped him on the shoulder again. "I'll leave you to it," he said. "If you need anything, I'll be in the shop; otherwise, just get the job done. How late you staying?"

Ryan started, suddenly remembering that he still had to leave in time to catch the bus home, "I'll have to leave no later than six."

Wilbur nodded. "That oughtta give you plenty of time to make a dent in those piles," he said. "I'll come check on your progress in a few hours. Just one thing: I *am* paying you good money, so please don't repay my kindness by dorking around. Stay focused and be a good worker, and I'll be a good employer. Sound fair?"

Ryan nodded, then he and Wilbur shook hands again, and the grizzly left him standing there in the middle of the barn. Ryan pursed his lips. With over two dozen stalls, there was so much work to be done!

He decided to start at one of the far stalls to get a feel for how the work would go with the shortest path to the dumping site, and then once he'd gotten the hang of it, he'd start at the front end and work backwards. That way, he reasoned, as he tired during the day, his trips would be shorter. With a plan in mind, he grabbed the wheelbarrow and carted it and the shovel over to the furthest stall.

On getting there, he shuddered. The pile of manure had started in the corner, and over what must have been weeks or months, had slowly grown to take over half the stall. It was nearly chest-high at its highest point, and Ryan was certain that just a few more days would have it spilling over into the next stall. Flies buzzed about, and Ryan instinctively slapped at one that landed on his hand. He looked from the pile to his wheelbarrow and back and shook his head. It was going to take a dozen trips or more just to empty this one stall!

"Better get started," he muttered to himself, shoving the wheelbarrow partway into the stall and slipping in beside it.

He inexpertly shoved the shovel into the pile towards the top. The dung-heap was a weird combination of sticky, mushy, and powdery, and it resisted his shovel going in. Grimacing and straining, Ryan pushed harder against the shovel and only managed to get a few roughly spherical fecal balls to roll into it.

"Oh, come on!" he grumbled.

He started to take a step forward for a better stance but caught himself just as he was about to sink his sneaker into the ordure-mound. Putting the shovel down, he stepped out of the stall and quickly changed out of his tennis shoes and into his boots. The thought occurred to him that he might ought to leave his boots here—if Wilbur would let him—so that he didn't stink up the bus on the way home.

Picking up his shovel once more, he shoved it into the pile, and with far more effort than it should have taken, managed to get it half-full and dumped it into the wheelbarrow. The tiny amount of crap in the bottom of the wheelbarrow was disheartening, to say the least. Those dozens of wheelbarrow loads were going to take scores of shovelfuls each!

Ryan shook his head and resigned himself to wresting the mound into the wheelbarrow, no matter what it took. His soles quickly became caked with horse crap as he stuck the shovel into the mound time and time again. After an hour of work, he finally managed to get the first wheelbarrow load full. Sweating and covered with a fine layer of manure dust, he wiped his forehead with the back of his sleeve and struggled to get the heavy wheelbarrow to move. He grunted, lifted hard, and managed to get the feet off the ground. Staggering backwards, he dragged the wheelbarrow out into the aisle, turned it, and got it moving towards the back door.

Horses looked up at him, their ears pricking forward as they paused chewing and sized him up for a bit before returning to their grazing. Ryan struggled forward, the wheelbarrow lurching this way and that over the uneven ground towards the fence. But, at last, he got it up to the fence and lifted hard. The first road apple rolled off the top, hit the ground, and rolled a little ways past the fence, followed by many more, greatly lightening the load. Ryan lifted the wheelbarrow up and completely upended it, then walked it backwards and let its contents empty.

"Whoo," he said as he lowered it down to its wheels, "One down, a bajillion to go."

It wasn't until his third load that he finally started getting the hang of it, learning that it was easier to slip the shovel in along the ground and let it fill itself rather than trying to jam it into the pile halfway up. He got better at placing the wheelbarrow, too, so that he could make a more fluid movement from filling to unloading the shovel, and by the time he started his fourth load, he was actually beginning to make good progress on the pile. It wasn't fun work—that was for certain—but at least the smell wasn't bothering him as much now, and Wilbur's advice to focus on the money he was making had been good, too: he was averaging somewhere between \$10 and \$20 a load, and every time he dumped one out, he made a quiet "cha-ching" noise to himself.

As he wheeled the wheelbarrow in to start his fifth load, he thought to himself that he'd already made enough to cover both his electric and water bills, and if he could make it the whole day, he'd have earned about half of his rent. He made a mental note to contact his landlord and tell her that he had a job and would pay his rent that Friday, just as soon as he got his paycheck.

The hair on the back of his neck bristled, but before he could turn to look, a sharp blow to the back of his head knocked him unconscious. He crumpled and landed face-first in the dung-heap.

A chilly breeze startled him awake. He gasped and whipped his head to the side to look. Everything was on its side—the barn door, the stalls, the tools—and Ryan quickly realized he was lying down. He looked straight ahead and found himself staring at the ceiling.

Wh—what happened? he wondered, wincing as his head began to ache.

As he tried to put his hand to his throbbing temple, he realized he couldn't move his arms. Something was tied around his wrists, preventing them from moving. Beginning to panic, he discovered that his ankles were likewise bound. Attempting to flail and break free, he heard a crinkling noise and froze.

The crinkling stopped.

"Help!" he called, thrashing again. "Somebody, please help me!"

But something wasn't right; he couldn't close his mouth! Feeling around with his tongue, he felt a cold chill go down his spine as his tongue probed something hard and round wedged between his incisors. He tried to spit it out, but some kind of strap in his mouth that pulled his cheeks back into a tight grimace held it in place. He couldn't get it out without his hands, and he couldn't get them free.

His heart pounding, he began to thrash again, desperately trying to get free of his restraints. The crinkling started anew, and he whipped his head around to look for the source, holding his breath and listening desperately.

After a few seconds, he let out a beleaguered sigh and let his legs sag.

The crinkle sounded again, somewhere in the direction of his feet. He lifted his head and gasped. Only then did he realize he was naked, that the reason it felt so chilly was because he had no clothes on—except for one thing.

The diaper between his legs crinkled a greeting, and Ryan stared at it in disbelief.

"What the hell?" he asked, bewildered. "This has got to be some kind of bad dream. Please! Wilbur—Mr. Sterling! Help me!"

"Oh, you're awake. Be right there!" a voice crackled over a baby monitor behind Ryan's head.

The wolf, unable to move his head enough to see the baby monitor, stared straight ahead, stunned and at a loss for words. Had Wilbur done this to him?!

The grizzly hurried in, snapping one of his suspenders in place on his overalls as he did. Ryan whipped his head to face him and looked at his employer with a mixture of incredulity and bafflement.

Wilbur cringed and shifted his grass-stalk—much shorter now than it had been before—as that same shamefaced look came over him.

"I, eh-heh—I *might* not have been totally honest with you about the real reason you're here," he admitted. "See, you'd have left the moment I told you if I'd told you the truth, and the fact is, there's *nobody* who'd answer a job ad for what I really need, even for \$100 an hour. The, um...the good news is that you don't have to shovel any more manure." He offered a sheepish smile. "The *bad* news"—he hesitated—"is that you're gonna have to eat it instead."

Maybe it was being well-rested after his enforced nap. Maybe it was the fact he was tied up and on edge. Whatever the reason, those words hit Ryan like a hot iron, and he began thrashing violently, trying to get free.

"Now, now, now," Wilbur said, putting his hands up in an effort to pacify the unhappy wolf, "It's win-win, see? No more shoveling, right?" he added weakly.

He sighed and shook his head, then stepped into a storage closet Ryan hadn't noticed and pulled out a mess of clear tubes an inch or so in diameter. How many there were, Ryan couldn't have counted even with a clear head, but Wilbur began untangling the mess and reeling the tubes out, running the length of the aisle.

"The horses are great and all, but they just don't process the grass enough," Wilbur muttered as he strung out another one of the tubes. "The fertilizer's all right, but it could be a *lot* better. The cows—the cows knew how to process grass! Digesting it multiple times and all...mm, mm! The horses, though? Just one and done. That's where you come in. They'll process the grass, and then you're gonna process their manure, and that's gonna make some grade-A fertilizer. Nothing beats it, let me tell ya!"

“Are you insane?!” Ryan tried to say as he began to rock side-to-side, trying to knock the bale over and maybe be able to get to his feet. What came out instead was, “Ah oo inhain?!”

Wilbur stopped, his lips pursed as if seriously considering the question. After a moment’s reflection, he shrugged. “Could be,” he said. “Heaven knows, I’m *crazy* about my tomatoes! We’re gonna win this year; I just *know* it, especially with you helping to fertilize them! That’s, uh, what the diaper’s for,” he added. “Once that stuff starts coming out of you—and believe me, that laxative and stool softener I fed you while you were out will *definitely* help with that—there’s not gonna be much chance to stick buckets under you or anything.”

Having finished laying out the tubes, he gave one of the horses a slap on the ass in passing. Despite his predicament, Ryan noticed that almost all of the stalls had horses in them. Some part of him must have wondered how long he was out and how deeply he must have been sleeping to have missed the horses all coming in.

“They sure appreciate you mucking out their stalls, though,” Wilbur said, gesturing over his shoulder as he strode towards Ryan from the far end of the aisle. “Thunder over there was so excited, she dropped a couple of loads off the second she got into her stall!”

He walked out the front door and disappeared from sight. There were a few muttered curses, and then a diesel engine roared to life.

Is he gonna leave me here?! Ryan thought. After all that, he starts his truck and—

Wilbur strode back in, grabbed the hose-ends nearest him, and dragged them out the door.

What the fuck...?

“Waugh!”

Ryan had thrashed enough that he knocked the hay bale over on its side, but doing so didn’t free him. Now stuck helplessly staring at the doorway, he could do little but wait for Wilbur to come back.

The grizzly did eventually return some minutes later, uncoiling a single hose behind him as he did. He did a double-take on seeing Ryan, then chuckled and put the hose down.

“Went and got yerself all catawampus, did ya?” he laughed, reaching down and flipping Ryan right-side up shockingly effortlessly. “You don’t wanna do that, or all that shit’ll be going in between your legs here pretty soon. At least like this it can hang down between ‘em.”

He finished unrolling the hose and held the end in his hand. “And this part goes right here,” he said, taking the hose and shoving it through the hole in the ring gag that held Ryan’s mouth open. It was a snug fit, and Ryan couldn’t help but wince as the grizzly put his weight into forcing the tube into his mouth, stopping just short of the back of his throat.

Ryan’s eye twitched, and his eyes flicked over to glare daggers at Wilbur.

“Aww, it won’t be so bad,” the bear replied, patting him on the head, “All you gotta do is swallow. I’ll make sure it goes slow enough that it doesn’t suffocate you. How’s that sound?”

If it was possible, Ryan glared harder.

Nonplussed, Wilbur walked back into the storage room and came back with a mess of leather something-or-others slung over his shoulder. Striding down the aisle, he took the longest of the hoses and walked into the stall of the furthest horse. Ryan couldn’t see what was going on from where he was, but after a few minutes, Wilbur stepped out of the stall, took another hose, and entered another stall. Over the course of the next thirty or so minutes, he worked his way up to where Ryan could see what was going on. The wolf’s heart sank on seeing it.

Wilbur entered the nearest stall carrying one of the shortest of the tubes, patted his way along the stall’s occupant, and brushed his fingers up under her tail. The horse immediately pinned her ears and glared at him.

"Now, Missy," Wilbur growled, putting a hand firmly on her flank, "We've been through this before. I don't particularly like this job any more 'n you, so the sooner you cooperate, the sooner we both get on with our nights."

The horse turned and twisted several times and feigned a couple of kicks, getting rewarded with a sharp slap to the hindquarters for her troubles.

"We can do this the hard way or the easy way," Wilbur said in a voice that almost dared her to choose the hard way.

As if picking up on that, the mare blustered to voice her disapproval but relented, standing still as Wilbur lifted her tail up out of the way, spat on the end of the tube and rubbed his saliva around a bit with his fingers, then pressed it against her donut. The horse squealed in annoyance, but Wilbur held his ground, gently but firmly pressing the tube up inside. Almost instantly, the end of it filled with a greenish-brown material somewhere between a liquid and a solid. Ryan's eyes bulged on realizing what was happening and darted to look at the other tubes. Sure enough, each of them had bits of the greenish-brown stuff inching forward bit by bit. Ryan yelled in protest, but his cries were mostly muffled by the tube in his mouth, a tube that he was certain would inevitably be conveying that nasty stuff right into his mouth. Meanwhile, Wilbur seemed oblivious to Ryan's distress and strapped a harness of sorts around the mare's waist and around her legs, slipped the tubing through some kind of rubber grommet designed to keep it from slipping, and fastened the whole thing up under the mare's tail.

"Not bad for a farm guy," Wilbur said, grinning to Ryan and gesturing to the harness. "No matter what she does now, that tube ain't coming out. She can turn around, lie down, even roll over, and it'll stay put.

His eyes followed Ryan's horrified gaze to the foot-long stream of sludge that had appeared in the tubing. He smiled and shook his head. "You ready for dinner already? Aren't you an eager farmhand! I knew you were desperate for money, but I didn't realize you weren't even feeding yourself! Well, you just wait a bit longer, guy; that pump outside's helping the horses do their business, but it's kinda like knocking up a cow: you can get all the bulls in the pen you like, and you can let 'em go to town on her, but it won't make a calf slip out of her bloody, sloppy pussy any faster. Nature's gotta have time to take its course, and it's the same with these guys."

He patted Missy affectionately on the ass, and she glared over her shoulder at him as he left her stall and went across the aisle to hook up the last of the horses.

"Easy, Daisy," he said, and this horse seemed much more content to just let him do his thing.

A minute later, he was wiping his hands on his overalls and looking pretty satisfied with himself. Seeing Ryan, he gave him a sheepish grin and shifted his grass-stalk. "I, uh, *might* not have been quite honest about you having to wait for dinner," he said. "See, there's a valve outside that lets the pump actually start pumping, and the pump's just been idling all this time—lets it warm up, you know?—but as soon as I open that valve, all these horses are gonna act a little funny, but their halfway-processed grass is gonna start moving towards you a lot quicker. I, uh, didn't want to spook you before, you see. Oops, hang on."

As if everything he'd experienced so far wasn't bad enough, Ryan now had to endure it as Wilbur grabbed his head, pulled a set of leather straps around his neck and behind his ears, and snapped them into place around the tubing.

"The, uh, pressure can get pretty intense before you figure out that it's easiest to just swallow, and we wouldn't want that tube pushing itself out!"

Ryan let out a whimper as the bear turned and disappeared out the door. Struggling in vain, he felt his eyes sweeping over to watch the tubes and their contents.

The roar of the engine suddenly intensified, and Ryan nearly choked on the tube as he watched two dozen streams of horse ordure suddenly start rushing towards him. The horses all whinnied in surprise and then went back about their business. The wolf's eyes bulged, and he kicked and screamed into the tube as the tubes' fetid contents raced out the door. There was a breathless pause. Ryan could see the tubes pulsing lightly as their contents continued to flow out the door, but though he watched the lone returning tube fearfully, it remained clear for several moments.

His attention was so focused on that tube that the first hint of what was to come snuck up on him unannounced. As he watched the tube, his heart pounding and his breathing shallow and forced, he didn't register the hint at first, a slight mustiness that he smelled more when he exhaled than when he inhaled. The mustiness intensified and then became earthy, quickly taking on a sour-earth note, like the bitter, slightly flatulent stench of bog-mud. Suddenly becoming aware of the smell, he grimaced and looked around. Certainly there was nothing in the tube as of yet—he could see that it was still clear all the way to the door—yet that smell became so strong that the began to taste it: slightly bitter, nausea-inducing, and faintly reminiscent of rotten eggs.

Ryan began to shake his head and exhale sharply, but the tube put up a bit of resistance as he tried to blow into it, and he ended up blowing more of the malodorous air out through his nostrils, intensifying the stench and making his eyes begin to water. Feeling queasy and overwhelmed, he did the only other thing he could think of and held his breath, hoping that the air would clear and he'd be able to breathe freely again. But as he tested the air, taking in little sips, it seemed it was only getting *worse*. He coughed and retched, and then, his lungs burning, sucked in a gasping lungful. The stench was even worse. Moaning and feebly thrashing, Ryan caught sight of the tube, gasped, and then began struggling even harder.

The lumpy mass of feces had passed through the tube into the barn and was now moving resolutely towards him. It had already cleared the first five feet by the time Ryan noticed it, and in the blink of an eye, it had cleared three more. With only ten or so more feet to go, Ryan didn't have long. He strained against his restraints for all he was worth, screaming into the tube, but the bad air coming from it was quickly building in pressure as the tube's nearly solid payload drew nearer and nearer.

Less than ten feet left. The green sludge was halfway across the room.

Seven feet.

Four feet. The shit slurry was even with the bottom of Ryan's diaper. The wolf yelled hoarsely, begging Wilbur to stop, but to no avail.

Two feet. The weight of the sludge began to pull on the tubing. Tears came to Ryan's eyes as the stench and taste of his imminent meal began to overwhelm his senses.

One foot. The horses' waste perched at the bend in the tube. Half an inch more, and they'd be in free-fall, right into his mouth. Ryan began to sob uncontrollably.

Like an inch-worm, the tube's contents wriggled themselves forward, and then like an ill-informed lemming documentary, plummeted over the edge. Ryan screamed, but too late. The powerfully bitter taste hit his tongue, the buttery texture quickly smearing itself all over the back of his throat while the bits of liquid juices that traveled with it began to run down his throat. Ryan coughed and sputtered, only prevented from doubling over by the restraints that held him fast.

"Now, now, a little shit won't hurt you," Wilbur said, breezing in to watch the progress. "Well, at least I don't *think* it will..."

But Ryan wasn't listening. Tears streamed down his face and his body heaved, trying to throw up as the tube's fetid contents began to pack their way into his mouth.

"Better relax and swallow, or you're gonna suffocate," the bear warned. "I've got it set up to go slowly enough to let you catch a breath here and there, but if you get behind..."

The wolf's cheeks bulged, bits of undigested grass mixing with the bitter, sulfurous, sticky mess and mushing in between his teeth. His lips began to stretch so tightly that he cried out in pain.

"Gotta swallow; that's the only way you're gonna get any relief," Wilbur said patiently. "The first swallow's the worst—or so I'm told. You make it through that, and it's all easy from there."

There was nothing Ryan wanted less than to swallow the growing, disgusting mass in his mouth. It had filled every nook and cranny, gotten between his teeth, lips, and cheeks, crowded in all around his tongue, pressed itself against his palate, and just that instant, with nowhere else to go, began pressing up into his sinuses. Now unable to breathe, Ryan began to panic, but his options were now limited; his tongue was trapped on all sides by the increasingly bitter, increasingly nauseating shit, and with the tube

where it was, swallowing would have been hard even if it had been something delicious and wholesome flooding his mouth.

DO SOMETHING!!!

Ryan's whole body lurched and his neck straightened out just as an intact, spherical turd slipped out of the tube, pressed against his straightened-out throat, and slid down. Ryan's mind swam, feeling greener than the shit he was eating as it stretched his throat on its way down, landing in his gut with an air of finality.

Wilbur had been right. Though Ryan's body was already beginning to reject the unwelcome invader, that first turd had made all his salivary glands go into overdrive, and with his maw practically drowning him in drool, the mushed-together mass of shit in his mouth suddenly had nothing to cling to and began to slide towards his throat. With his neck outstretched and his mind still focused on gasping for air, he couldn't even stop the onslaught as the feces mushed into a bullet shape and then began sliding down his throat. He gagged more than once as the overcrowded space desperately evacuated his mouth, but at last, his mouth was clear—well, save for plenty bits clinging to his teeth, stuck to the roof of his mouth, or irritating the underside of his tongue.

And, to top it off, another well-formed turd slipped out of the tube and down his throat.

Finally able to catch his breath, Ryan's next battle was to overcome the intense nausea that he felt on realizing that he'd just swallowed a mouthful of horse crap and then some. It was a battle he couldn't win. His guts immediately churned, and he would have clutched his stomach if he'd been able as the whole load of horse shit—now soggy with stomach acid—began to come back up. It met the next turd on its way out of the tube. For a second, the pressure from Ryan's guts and the pressure in the tube stood at a stalemate, but then the next turd joined the first, and together, they forced Ryan's shit-filled vomit back into his stomach. Ryan's limbs trembled from straining against the leather that held him to the hay bale as he felt his urge to purge—second only to coughing and sneezing in the body's violence against itself—beaten into retreat.

As if to put a point on the matter, another turd, accompanied by a wet gush of bitter, grassy rotten eggs, slipped down his throat.

Ryan's body, too exhausted to fight anymore, collapsed limply on the hay bale.

"There it is," Wilbur said, patting the wolf's head again. "See? Not so bad now, is it?" He gave an embarrassed look. "Well...until it starts coming out the other end, that is."

But Wilbur was wrong. The next horror Ryan would get to face was the feeling of all that shit packing itself into his gut. While Wilbur had it going fairly slowly—about the *only* thing he'd been honest about—the feces were still packing their way into Ryan's gut faster than the wolf could digest, and his belly was beginning to swell. It started out as mild discomfort, like having slightly overeaten at a buffet. But, as his stomach acid broke down the little shit-balls and exposed their contents, it released noxious gases that made Ryan whimper in pain as they chose one way or the other to go. Some took the shorter route, sneaking their way past new turds on their way in and erupting into Ryan's mouth like a mixed fart-belch that could best be described as a mouthful of skunk spray.

While that burned his nose and made his eyes water even more, that was tame in comparison to the gas that chose the long route. Ryan writhed on the bale as the gases coursed their way through his intestines, occasionally lingering and building up to elicit a sharp pain before squiggling their way a bit further along. The earliest of the turds, now a liquid, putrid slurry, followed along behind, helped along by the cocktail Wilbur had given Ryan while he was out. When he wasn't trying to double over in pain, the wolf was cringing and shuddering as he felt little jets of effluent noisily squirting around inside his intestines.

But things weren't moving fast enough, and although Ryan was vaguely aware that if he didn't do something, it wouldn't be long before that foul mess started to spray out his ass, his more immediate concern was the painful stretch he felt in his gut. The little turd-balls were still coming one by one, and his stomach had stretched to accommodate his oversized meal. But, Ryan was a fairly lean guy and didn't have much space for his distended stomach to go. It pressed against his lungs, making breathing even

harder than it already was between force-fed boluses of horse manure, and stretched his skin painfully tight.

“Oo-wee, you’re blowin’ up like a balloon, ain’t ya?” Wilbur said, feeling of Ryan’s pregnant stomach before turning and pressing his ear to it. “Mm, mm, you’ve got some nice digestion going on in there,” he said, patting Ryan’s gut like a watermelon. “That’s gonna be some grade-A fertilizer once it comes out!”

As if on cue, Ryan suddenly felt and heard the accumulated gas in his bowels pass into his large intestine, make the three right turns into his sigmoid colon, and press up against his anus. The wolf tried to grit his teeth around the tube, clenching his ass tightly closed. He didn’t *want* to be a manure processor. He didn’t want to give Wilbur the satisfaction. Mostly, though, he didn’t want to lose control of his bowels and soil himself—especially with someone watching—*especially* when that someone was Wilbur!

But the gas in his gut had hurt every time it stayed still for long, and this was no exception. As more gas joined the frontrunner at his anus and the much slower slurry began to squirt into his large intestine, Ryan moaned in pain.

“Gotta let it out, buddy,” Wilbur said, gently massaging Ryan’s gut through his diaper and making the wolf groan louder. “Just like when it went in: you start letting it out, and it’ll all go easily from there.” When Ryan remained unmoved, the bear shrugged. “Or, you can keep trying to fight it,” he said. “I’ve got all night, and as I told Missy over there: you can do this the easy way or the hard way. *Either* way, you’re gonna shit that diaper. I won’t judge ya—hell, I’m *countin’* on you to do it—so you might as well just get ‘er done. Your choice, though.”

An unexpected burst of liquid horse diarrhea spluttered into Ryan’s mouth, painting his tonsils sickly green before sliding down his throat. But, the shock of it had made Ryan lose his focus, and a piercing fart shattered the relative quiet inside the barn, terminating with a wet, slippery finish.

Ryan squeezed his eyes closed and his legs, too, as best he could with the restraints. The feeling of burning, hot shit between his legs and under his tail made his face burn in humiliation.

“Hoo-ee!” Wilbur said, fanning his face. “Boy, I said I wouldn’t poke fun, but *damn*, son! What *have* you been eating?” he asked, grinning broadly.

Perhaps mercifully, Ryan wasn’t listening. He’d managed to squeeze his anus closed before too much of the double-digested roughage could seep out, but everything was flowing through his system so quickly that his colon really didn’t have time to absorb the water out of it that it should have, and the now very liquid shit inside him was beginning to pressurize. The wolf began to pant between mouthfuls of horse shit, and his fur was matted all over with sweat as he struggled to hold back what would soon be a tsunami under his tail. His buttock quivered, beginning to give in under the relentless pressure. He clamped his tail tightly down to reinforce it and immediately regretted having done so as he felt his accidental wet fart’s products squidge against his tail and embed in his fur.

Ryan huffed in despair. When he got out of here, it would take him *forever* to pick all the shit out of his little tail hairs.

But then his stomach growled loudly, and his ass gave way. A mixture of liquid and soft-serve shit squigged out around his tail, and Ryan screamed into the tube as he tried to squeeze his ass closed again, but it was no use. He was exhausted, and his anus had given up the fight. He went limp—including his tail—and the thick, squishy paste flowed out of him unchecked, intermittently hissing, burbling, and farting as it steamed into the diaper.

At first it wasn’t so bad. It was gross, but Ryan could at least relax; for the last hour or more, he’d been straining to figure out where he was, straining against the impending doom of being force-fed shit, straining against throwing up, straining against distending, and straining against soiling himself. Now, his whole body packed from mouth to anus with horse shit, there was really nothing he could do. He was a passive observer of his body’s digestive processes, and although it was uncomfortable and *unquestionably* disgusting, he was just too tired to fight anymore. So, relaxing at last, the wolf was able to fall into a somewhat trancelike state, doing his best not to think about what was happening and *especially*

doing his best not to think about the turd that slipped effortlessly down his throat like a stallion's invading penis getting sloppy fiftieths on a tied-up mare.

But then a new sense began to invade Ryan's dissociated psyche, subtle at first but quickly turning sharp and piercing. It was the smell of shit, but it was no herbivore's manure he smelled. Ryan shuddered on realizing he was smelling his own feces escaping the diaper. Wilbur took a different attitude towards it.

"Ah, ha, there it is," the bear said, nodding. "Smells like the process is finally primed and ready to take care of itself."

To test his theory, he pressed his paws against the bottom of the diaper, feeling of the mess Ryan had made, smearing it up against the wolf's ass, and matting even more of it into his fur and tail. Ryan cringed.

"Eyuh, I'd say you're well on your way," Wilbur continued, taking his paw off the diaper and smelling his hand before pressing it to Ryan's face. "Smell that? That's *all* you, boy! Doing a great job getting that horse manure reprocessed. I'll leave you to it for a bit. Time to go get myself some dinner."

Ryan just groaned because at that moment, an unexpected squirt of diarrhea slipped out of him, tickling and itching against his ass as it went. He grimaced and did his best to scratch his ass with his tail, but the best he could do was smear some feces against it.

Ryan had lost track of time. He couldn't sleep for discomfort and the fear of suffocating if the shit got backed up again, but he wasn't fully conscious of what was going on, either. He'd gotten somewhat used to the smell, the drone of the pump, the chronic taste of shit in his mouth, the ache and stretch of his guts, and the nearly constant extrusion of feces out of his anus that slowly grew out between his legs and tail. But, as Wilbur strode in, Ryan realized he had been out of it for quite some time. He and Wilbur gasped at the same time on seeing his diaper, which had swollen so large that it was nearly double Ryan's circumference and stretched so thin that it had turned a sickly green-brown.

"Hoo, boy, that is one big-ass diaper!" the bear crowed. "I tell ya, that thing looks just about ready to burst. Looks like those drugs I gave ya are working just fine!" He nodded, satisfied. "I reckon with that, I'm gonna leave you to it for the night; I just wanted to check in before I hit the hay myself—heh, heh, you know, since you're already *on* the hay?" He grinned, shook his head, and slapped his knee. "Aww, I crack myself up. We'll see ya in the morning, bright 'n early. And hey, once I get that diaper off of ya, I might even feed ya breakfast—eggs, bacon, pancakes—that'd be something nice to look forward to, wouldn't it?"

The thought of eating *anything* besides shit sounded good to Ryan at that moment, but maybe not *right* then; his gut was still distended, and he'd abruptly become acutely aware of a new sensation: the feeling of his diaper's contents escaping between the overstretched leg gathers and his legs. Worse than that was the itching and burning sensation he felt where the fetid matter had pressed up against his skin too long. Ryan couldn't remember having a diaper rash as a puppy, but he was certain that's what he was feeling now: on his thighs, on his scrotum, between his legs, and worst of all, under his tail. He winced and hissed around the tube in his mouth as he tried to ignore the discomfort and wait for morning.

Forget breakfast, he thought. I just want out of this damn diaper!

Ryan didn't remember falling asleep, but as he awoke in the morning, his first thought was what a *terrible* dream he'd had! He'd thought to himself that it served as a good warning not to let his desperation make him gullible. Deciding that was a good lesson to take away from it, he started to turn his head, and then gasped.

The tube was still in his mouth. Worse, he'd apparently fallen asleep, and the tube's contents had crusted up on his face.

All at once, the events of the previous day flooded back into his head, along with the implacable taste of stale feces, somehow made worse by absorbing all his saliva. Morning halitosis combined with old shit

had parched his mouth and left it almost numb from the bitter, earthy taste. It was like Ryan had taken the mud from the bottom of a stagnant lake, dried it, and then tried to do a cinnamon challenge with it.

Although he'd made these few observations abruptly, it took a while for him to notice *other* things about his predicament. For instance, the pump had stopped sometime in the night, and part of the reason he was parched was because there wasn't anything else going down his throat—edible or otherwise. For another, once the pump had stopped, his gut had finally had the chance—working in overdrive—to get caught up and had slowly shrank back to its normal size by the time he awoke. But, *most* importantly, the feces completing reprocessing had caused his diaper to bulge even more, to the point that it was visibly stretching the plastic lining in places and threatening to burst. Ryan would have welcomed that because what he'd thought was diaper rash the night before was *undoubtedly* so now. His thighs, legs, ass, taint, and balls itched furiously, and with no place to go, the feces were sitting there against his skin, moist, festering, and irritating his already-tender skin even worse.

"Oh, come on; where is Wilbur?" Ryan moaned through the tube. "He needs to come let me out! Ugh, when I get out of here, I'm getting into a *vat* of diaper rash cream!"

Faintly remembering the sound of the baby monitor behind him the night before, he began shouting at Wilbur to come free him.

Little did he know that Wilbur was still sprawled in his bed, the stub of yesterday's grass-stem still poking out of his mouth and lying in a puddle of drool on the grizzly's pillow.

Getting increasingly frustrated, Ryan began feebly thrashing at his restraints again, hoping that maybe they'd loosened up overnight and might finally let him free. He was mid-thrash when a black head popped in the door of the barn, startling him. He stopped and stared as a black horse cautiously crept in, sniffing the air and eyeing Ryan suspiciously. The mares in the stalls whickered greetings at the newcomer, who seemed to take heart and stepped inside. Ryan frowned, wondering why the horse hadn't been caught and brought in with the others the day before. But, his thoughts were quickly pulled back into the present as the horse stepped up to him and sniffed him curiously. Ryan froze; he'd never really been *this* close to a horse before, and certainly not in as helpless a position as he found himself just then. The idea of a sudden movement making the horse bite him—or worse, whip around and kick him—made the wolf hold very still indeed. The horse's whiskers tickled over Ryan's neck and made his ears twitch nervously.

"Hey, now," he said nervously around the tube, "Those aren't carrots for you to nibble."

A motion out of the corner of his eye caught his attention.

"Uhh..."

He trailed off, not sure what to say as a penis poked out of the horse's sheath—right in front of a pair of surprisingly large testicles—and began to unfurl. Frowning and grimacing, still not quite sure what to make of this very unusual horse, Ryan tried to keep his eyes off the stallion's member, but with nothing else in particular going on and it happening so close to him, he found his attention returned over and over as the stallion's penis grew.

And *grew!*

It had started out tucked neatly away, but before Ryan's eyes, the horse's dong had grown to a foot long, then two, then three, and it was still growing. Its girth had increased even faster, starting out an inch or so in diameter and quickly growing past two, four, and even five inches. As Ryan stared, spellbound, the horse began to rhythmically flex and relax his dick, making it swing forward to slap the stallion's belly...and grow some more. Ryan couldn't help but wish *he* had a dick like that: a proud four-foot long, six-inch-diameter tool. He had no idea what he'd *do* with something that big, but he was pretty sure that was a problem he was willing to endure.

First things first: I need to get out of here, and then I can fantasize about having a big dick, Ryan reminded himself.

Unfortunately for him, it turned out the stallion had an idea of *exactly* what to do with a dick that big. Dancing around excitedly and squealing with excitement, the stallion stepped up between Ryan's legs. The wolf, not quite putting two and two together, watched, perplexed, and it only dawned on him what

was happening as the stallion leapt forward. Ryan started to struggle, seeing where the massive rod was heading, but just then, the stallion's hooves came down on either side of his head, so close that Ryan could feel them graze the fur on his cheeks as they came down. A terrified squeak escaped into the tube, and Ryan held deathly still, petrified with fear.

But the stallion hadn't done all this just for show; he was horny, and he had in his mind the perfect way to take care of it. The mares were all in tight stalls; there'd be no easy way to get to them. But *here* was something about the right height that he was certain he could sink his dick into! With that in mind, he began to thrust hard into the overstuffed diaper, roughly spurting out bits of crusted shit all over Ryan's legs and up the back and front of the diaper onto the wolf's back and torso.

Ryan was too afraid to be disgusted. Panting around the tube and wide-eyed, he found himself grateful for the *only* time in his life that he was wearing a diaper that could protect his ass. Yet the diaper was stretched *awfully* thin. Ryan and silently prayed it would hold out.

A sharp jab of the horse's dick right into Ryan's balls through the diaper took the wolf's breath away. Seeing stars, he moaned loudly into the tube and began to struggle, desperately trying to get away from the repeated beating his balls and perineum were taking from the randy horse. He tried to curl up and protect himself, tried to move his tail to bear the brunt of the stallion's onslaught, but at that moment, a stomach-turning *rip* shattered the relative stillness of the barn, and the stallion whinnied for joy as his penis shoved itself down into the sloppy, warm contents of the diaper.

Ryan began to panic. He'd lost his only protection, and it was now just a matter of time before the stallion hit home. As hard as the horse was thrusting, there was no question what would happen as soon as he hit the only spot on Ryan's backside that had any give.

Without the diaper and its squishy contents to soften the blows, the stallion's penis struck with even more force than before, and each blow left Ryan seeing stars. He couldn't even think straight enough to thrash or even move his tail into a protective position because every blow also took his breath away.

Yet in the back of his mind, Ryan knew what was coming. A thrust particularly close to his ass had him screaming in terror, only to be followed by a blow further away that merely hurt. The stallion's penis seemed to hit without any pattern to its targets, yet every strike was one fewer Ryan had left before the worst happened. Stuck, panicked, and crying out in terror, he could do nothing but endure the onslaught and count down until the stallion hit his mark.

The stallion hit again, just barely above Ryan's ass. The wolf howled in pain, feeling as though he was going to get ripped in two, but the stallion backed off and positioned for another strike.

The stallion rammed forward. Ryan's battered balls turned a darker shade of black-and-blue. The horse backed up.

Bullseye.

Ryan's voice caught in his throat, his eyes bulged, and the stallion's penis, driven by half a ton of horny animal, ripped through Ryan's fragile anus. There was a brief flash of blinding, impossible pain, and then the stallion's penis was inside of him.

The stallion screamed in triumph, chorusing with an agonized shriek from Ryan, who could feel the stallion's glans trying to straighten out his sigmoid.

Over the baby monitor, the commotion reached Wilbur's sleepy ears, and he lifted his head, frowning and trying to figure out what those sounds might mean.

"Oh, shit!" he yelled.

Scrambling to his feet, he tripped over his overalls and nearly ate the side of the bed as he fumbled to get dressed.

"Oh, fuck it!" he roared, tripping and sprinting out the door in his underwear.

The volume and pitch of Ryan's screams had increased to the point that dogs were barking two farms over. The stallion, finding its dick inside a warm, wet hole, had redoubled his efforts, and by the time Wilbur burst in with a hastily-grabbed stalk of grass hanging out of his mouth, had buried two feet of its enormous cock in Ryan's ass. Wilbur surveyed the scene just as Ryan puked into the tube, and as his eyes darted from stallion to wolf to stallion's blood-stained dick to Ryan's bleeding, battered ass, he sighed and shook his head.

"Well, shucks, son," he said over Ryan's hoarse screams, "I'm afraid old Piston here likes you. I probably ought to have brought him in with the others last night, but ya see, he's kinda feral, and I can't really make him do anything. He seems to like you, though." He shook his head again. "Damn shame, though; that's how the last guy went, too."

Ryan's eyes snapped to him, and Wilbur adjusted his grass-stalk. "Aww, come on, don't look at me like that," he said, sitting down heavily next to Ryan's head. "You know I couldn't o' told you that. What good would it have done for you to be freaking out about it?"

Had Ryan not been in excruciating pain, the thought might have crossed his mind that he would have known to shoo the horse away on first seeing it, to make loud, sudden movements as soon as it stuck its head in the door, or maybe even to tell Wilbur to close the door on his way out. But, Ryan was in excruciating pain, and he'd just learned that the person he'd replaced had *died* from the events that were happening to him right that very minute.

When I get out of here I...

Through the brutal onslaught and the sickening feeling of his guts being pushed around, Ryan swallowed.

I'm...not getting out of here.

New tears came to the wolf's eyes.

All I wanted was to pay my bills. Why? Why...

The stallion shoved forward roughly. His balls slapped against Ryan's tail. His penis ruptured the wolf's organs and punctured his lung. Ryan vomited into the tube, crimson streaks clashing with the green-brown remnants from the night before.

Wilbur saw that and shook his head. "Rough way to go, son," he said, patting the heaving wolf's shoulder. "Won't be long now."

The stallion screamed, his tail flagged, and his balls fired up into the wolf's hollowed-out insides. Streaks of white shot up the tube to crisscross the red ones over the green background.

"It's beginning to look a bit like Christmas. I'm sorry to do this, son, but it's just the kindest thing I can do for you right now," Wilbur said, rising and trudging towards the doorway.

He disappeared from sight as the stallion pulled out, stringing shit, cum, and entrails, and Ryan wheezed weakly, his one remaining lung desperately trying to pick up the slack for its ruptured brother. The sound of the engine made Ryan close his eyes hopelessly.

How can he possibly want me to make more fertilizer now? he thought. I need a hospital. It hurts...so badly.

His body began to shake uncontrollably as shock overtook him, and he began to feel darkness closing in on him.

Maybe it won't be so bad. Maybe it won't hurt anymore, Ryan told himself, trying to calm the abject terror he felt at knowing his death was at hand.

A green mass raced through the tube, startling the wolf back into consciousness before bursting into his mouth. A stream of feces raced after it moving ten times faster than the night before. Ryan's eyes bulged, and he tried to relax his throat, but there was *no* way to keep up with the stream. Feces piled into his mouth, backed up into his sinuses, and then, with nowhere else to go, went down his windpipe.

Ryan's good lung burned. His brain told him he *had* to breathe. His weak lung fluttered helplessly. His heart began to beat faster and faster, and he tried to bring his hands to this throat, but his wrists were, terminally, bound. His body shook in a desperate last attempt to survive.

I can't—I can't breathe. Why can't I breathe? I need to breathe!

Darkness closed in.

I can't breathe... I... I can't...

The wolf's body went limp, and excess feces came out his nose, burst out around his cheeks, and fell, blood-soaked, out of his ass. The engine stopped, and Wilbur stepped back inside, looking shamefaced. Adjusting his grass-stalk, he sighed. "Well, shucks, buddy. A little horse shit never hurt anybody, but a *lot*...now, that's a different story." He sighed, looking crestfallen. "You know I couldn't o' told you what was about to happen 'cause if you'd survived, you'd o' sic'd the police on me. But, I promise, I'll come clean now."

He pulled the tube out of Ryan's mouth and checked to make sure the wolf was really dead, then tossed the tube aside and undid the straps holding Ryan's wrists together. Tight ligatures had developed around the wolf's limbs, and Wilbur mussed his fur a bit to make them look less telltale.

"Ya see," the bear said, loading Ryan and his well-destroyed diaper into a wheelbarrow, "The *best* fertilizer comes from decomposing, shit-filled farmhands." He brightened as he pushed the wheelbarrow out of the barn towards the chicken-wire cage. "By golly," he said as he sat the wheelbarrow down and opened the door, "I'm gonna win first prize in the tomato contest for sure this year!" He slapped his leg. "Eyh, those'll be the biggest damn tomatoes they've ever seen!"

With that, he flopped Ryan's body next to the decomposing corpse of the wolf's predecessor, lightly covered it with dirt, and then went back to clean up the barn.