

Mario was spending his off day the same way he typically did: relaxing in his comfy chair and eating a nice, big plate of spaghetti. Things had been rather quiet in the Mushroom Kingdom lately. Maybe Bowser had finally given up his evil ways, or his next big plan was in the works, yet to begin carrying out. Whatever it was, the plumber was happy to have some time to relax. No parties scheduled, no races coming up, just some quiet time for the normally busy hero. He was still donning his signature red shirt and overalls, which he enjoyed doing at home. As he started to grab another forkful of spaghetti, he heard a ding at the door.

"Hmm, I don't think I was expecting anyone today," he thought to himself. "Who is it?" He yelled.

"Package for Mr. Mario Mario," a familiar high pitched voice notified him from outside. It was Mailtoad, out doing his regular rounds. Mario put down his plate to get the door. "I'll need you to sign for this," Mailtoad said as Mario opened the door.

"I don't think I ordered anything," Mario told the Mailtoad as he wrote his signature on the electronic device. "Maybe it's some fan mail."

"I can't tell you who sent it," said Mailtoad, relieved that he didn't have to keep holding the oversized box. "They listed an anonymous sender."

"That's strange. I hope it isn't one of Bowser's booby traps again," Mario giggled, hoping he hadn't jinxed himself. "Here you are."

"Thank you. Have a good day, Mr. Mario." The two waved each other off as Mailtoad walked away and Mario closed his door. Mario stared a little more at the box; there didn't seem to be anything suspicious about it. Bowser tended to brand anything of his with his red face insignia, and that was nowhere to be found.

"Luigi?"

"Yeah, bro?"

"Did you buy me a present?"

"Mm mm," Luigi shook his head. "Why do you ask?"

"I got a box from an anonymous sender, but it doesn't look like something of Bowser's. Do you have any idea what it could be?"

"Nope. I guess you'll have to open it and find out." Mario just shrugged as he started to cut into the tape. The box was surprisingly light, too light to have some kind of booby trap in it. When he broke through the layer of protective adhesive, he opened the flaps to see a mushroom in the box.

"It's just a mushroom." Mario tilted his head in slight confusion.

"It looks like a rainbow mushroom," Luigi pointed. As Mario lifted the mushroom out of the box, it was clear that the mushroom's cap had been covered in six stripes representing each color of the rainbow.

"Ooh, it looks cool," Mario said, gazing at the colorful stripes. "Do you think it's some kind of new powerup?"

"I dunno. What would it do? Make boys like you?"

"Hehe, that would be a weird powerup."

"I dunno what else it could do." The brothers both pondered possibilities for a few seconds.

"I don't really want to eat it when I don't know what it does or where it comes from," Mario hesitated.

"I'll be right here if anything bad happens to you, okay, bro?" Mario nodded shyly. He had to admit that the mushroom looked appetizing, being colorful and all, but he was only nervous about its origins.

"Okay, here goes," Mario said before he gulped. The mushroom wasn't big, so he could easily get it down in one go, but he had to get over his anxiety first. He squeezed his eyes shut and tried not to think about it as he stuffed the mushroom into his mouth. One big gulp later, it was down.

"See, that wasn't so bad, was it, bro?" Luigi reached over to put his hand on Mario's shoulder.

"Yeah, I guess not," Mario responded. "It was pretty good, even."

"I knew you could do it, bro." Luigi gently patted his brother. "I think I'm gonna go back to my room though, see you later."

"See you later, bro." Luigi's bedroom wasn't too far away, but it was far enough away that Mario wouldn't be able to see it. As Luigi went to his room, Mario returned to his chair to finish the spaghetti he had from earlier. It had started to cool off a little, but Mario didn't mind that much. He had started to daydream, not noticing that his entire body, including his clothes, had been recolored to a bright orange. His hat, shirt, gloves, overalls, boots, and even his skin had turned orange; it almost looked like he had jumped into a pool of orange juice just before.

"Mmm, mamma mia," he said to himself as he got up, not yet noticing the change. He took his now empty plate over to the kitchen sink to wash it. He reached over to turn the faucet on when he finally saw how orange he had become.

“Luigi!” Mario yelled, leaving the plate in the sink. “Luigi, something’s wrong!”

“What is it, bro?”

“Look at me! I’m...” Mario failed to get out his new color in the shock of seeing more of himself.

“Um...are you sure you didn’t just make a big mess of spaghetti sauce on you?” Luigi joked, having not yet seen his brother’s orange form.

“No, bro!” Mario’s calm and collected stature started to break down as he freaked out more. “I’m all orange!”

“Oh, um...hehe, I guess you are.” Luigi had no idea what to do or say seeing that Mario had turned into an orange.

“What do I do?”

“I dunno, let’s get you to a doctor, okay?” Mario instinctively wrapped himself around Luigi for a hug, their usual way of comforting each other.

“Okay,” Mario panicked. Luigi guided his panicking brother outside to their kart to take a trip into Toad Town. The two of them got in, Luigi taking the driver’s seat. As they started to drive to town, Mario closed his eyes in an attempt to avoid seeing himself and Luigi paid attention to the road. Neither of them noticed that Mario’s orange appearance had started to fade into magenta pink, like that of Princess Peach’s dress.

“Here we are, bro,” Luigi said before he looked over. “Let’s get - oh, um...bro?”

“What?” Mario’s mood wasn’t exactly great from the experience he was having that day.

“You’re...you’re pink now.”

“Oh no, what’s going on? What’s happening to me?” Mario nearly started to cry in his seat.

“Shh, it’s okay, we’ll find out.” Luigi helped Mario out of the kart seat and walked him into the doctor’s office. It was thankfully empty that day, besides the doctors and receptionists, saving Mario the embarrassment of being seen by total strangers. He may have been well known, but he didn’t exactly want to be seen turned into a pink version of himself.

“Is there a doctor that can see my bro?”

“Sure, name?” The receptionist asked.

“Mario Mario.”

“I would ask what the problem is, but...no offense, it looks rather obvious.” Mario scrunched his neck a little in shame.

“Mhm, I feel bad for him.”

“Just have a seat and we’ll get him in shortly.” Luigi thanked the Toad at the desk as he brought Mario to a nearby seat. “It will be okay, bro, I promise,” he whispered.

“This is so embarrassing...” Mario whimpered as he leaned on his brother’s shoulder. This wasn’t exactly his day, was it? Luigi leaned his head on Mario’s and gently rubbed his brother’s side. While the two sat silently, Mario’s pink form faded again, this time into a lime green. It would have been difficult for Luigi not to notice, but he refrained from commenting in order to save his brother the embarrassment.

“Mario?” A male voice rang from the other side of the room.

“I’ll come with you, bro, don’t worry,” Luigi whispered again. Mario silently stood up, trying to act like he was feeling better than he was.

“Come with me, you two,” the doctor said as he started to walk the other direction. The doctor, a blue Shy Guy about two thirds the height of Mario, lead the two into a nearby exam room. He pointed Mario to the exam bed as Luigi took a seat off to the side. “Well, I would ask what brings you here today, but I believe I can see it from here.” Mario grimaced in embarrassment again.

“No, no, try not to embarrass him,” Luigi defended. “He’s been having a hard time with this.”

“Oh, I’m sorry. And allow me to introduce myself. My name is Dr. Green,” the doctor said as he held out a nub to Mario. As he shook Mario’s hand, he whispered to Luigi, “I know the name fits him more than me, but try not to think about it too much.” Luigi smirked a little.

“N-Nice to meet you,” Mario stuttered. He knew in his head that even heroes have to visit the doctor sometimes, but he still was just having too much trouble getting over his embarrassment.

“Thank you, you too. Now, if I could ask, when did you turn green?” Mario blushed.

“Um...well, it was maybe half an hour ago, at home, and, um...” he trailed off.

“I see. And had you been having any other symptoms before this?” Mario simply shook his head.

“I just turned orange suddenly...”

“Orange, you say?”

“Mhm, and then I turned pink and then green...”

“Interesting...do you know how long it took you to change colors?” Mario shook his head again.

“It was a little over ten minutes, I think,” Luigi chimed in, trying to help as much as he could.

“Oh, thank you.”

“The mushroom...” Mario suddenly remembered. “I ate a rainbow mushroom that I got from a stranger...”

“Oh, I see, that helps quite a lot, actually.”

“Can we do anything to fix it?” Luigi asked.

“Yes, but you’ll have to do some running around, if you don’t have a few things already.”

“Oh no...” Mario dreaded the thought of being seen by even more people.

“As cliché as it may sound, you’ll need to find three things to mix together.”

“What are they?”

“You’ll need a 1-up Mushroom, a drop of poison from the jungle, and Dr. Toadbert’s stomach medicine, just in case.” The two brothers got a little nervous at the sound of the second item on the list.

“P-Poison? Why would we need that?” Luigi asked.

“The poison will hopefully kill any traces of whatever rogue mushroom you had. The 1-up is in case it takes one of his lives, which it hopefully shouldn’t.”

“What about the stomach medicine?”

“You wouldn’t want to have a bellyache after you respawned, would you?” Luigi shook his head as Mario continued to stay silent. “Come back here when you have all those so I can make sure you do it safely, okay?” The doctor handed Luigi a small eyedropper. “This is to keep the poison in until you get back here.”

“It won’t hurt to put it in the river?” The doctor shook his head. “Then I guess we’ll be back,” Luigi said, turning his head to the now-dark blue Mario, who now matched the robe of the Shy Guy doctor.

"I'll be here," the doctor said as he waved the two off. "Good luck." Mario and Luigi left the exam room and walked through the waiting room, back outside to their kart.

"We'll get you everything you need to go back to normal, okay, bro?" Luigi encouraged as he turned the kart back on.

"I hope so, bro...I wanna be me again..."

"I know you do, bro. I promise everything will be okay." Luigi patted his brother on the back before he started to drive off. As the younger of the brothers drove them out to the jungle, Mario could only hope that no one would look at the kart driving by and see a solid blue Mario in the passenger seat. He closed his eyes again, knowing that seeing anyone on the side of the road would make him more ashamed of himself.

"I wish I knew who sent me that mushroom," Mario thought to himself. "I wanna get back at them for this...thing they did. Is it some kind of prank? Does someone just not like me and want to see me look ridiculous?" More thoughts like this crossed Mario's mind as the ride went on. It felt like an eternity before they exited the busy Toad Town and made their way into the jungle. Mario had turned bright yellow, almost like the coins he was so used to collecting.

"We made it, bro. And there isn't even anyone around to make fun of you." Mario looked around. Despite that he was currently solid yellow, his vision had stayed completely normal. He saw a few Piranha Plants in the distance, but they were far enough away that they couldn't pose a threat to him.

"So...what do we do now?"

"I think we just have to get some of this out of the river. Do you have that thing the doctor gave us?"

"Oh yeah, here it is." Mario handed the dropper over to his brother. It was probably better that Luigi get the poison out of the river, seeing as he was the more careful of the two. He very slowly inched his hand down toward the big purple river, making sure not to drop the eyedropper in.

"Just a little of this, and...there. All done." The purple liquid was sealed into the dropper, and wouldn't be going anywhere until it was told. With the first mission accomplished, it was time to go looking for a 1-up Mushroom. Despite what some people believed, it was quite difficult to find a 1-up Mushroom without having to pay a severe markup, which Mario and Luigi tried to avoid doing whenever they could. "Where do you think we could find a 1-up Mushroom though?"

"Hmm..." Mario thought for a few seconds. "There's a hidden stash on top of Peach's Castle."

“Ooh, yeah, let’s go there.” Luigi put the dropper with the poison on the floor under his legs, making sure it wouldn’t somehow fly out and be lost. As Mario got into the kart, he changed again, this time to a purple similar to the poison river they were about to leave. Luigi started his kart again and set off toward Peach’s Castle. Luigi knew his way around the Mushroom Kingdom and made sure to get to the castle as fast as he could.

“Can you go get those mushrooms for me, bro?” Mario asked timidly. “I really don’t wanna get out of the car and be seen...”

“Mhm, I even know a shortcut. Be right back.” Luigi got out of the kart and ran over to a nearby hill. Peach’s Castle was nestled right between a couple of hills; the one opposite to where Luigi had parked had a large waterfall that ran fresh water into the moat around the castle. The waterfall was not any of Luigi’s concern right now, however, as he stood up next to a steep hill. With a few precise jumps, he had managed to land at the top of the hill, and adjusted himself to start sliding down the other way. One more big jump and he had grabbed the ledge of the castle roof.

“Whoa, how did you do that?” Mario whispered to himself. He had heard there was a way to get on top of the roof without having to shoot there in a cannon, but he had never seen it in action. He looked on in amazement as he turned solid Boo white, while Luigi ran over to a group of three 1-up Mushrooms sitting behind one of the tall pillars. He could have also grabbed a Wing Cap out of a red box, but he didn’t need one of those right now. With the three mushrooms in his arms, he ran back to the ledge, jumped off the side, and slid down the hill to make a safe landing.

“See, bro, record time,” Luigi said, feeling quite proud that he had pulled off the trick successfully and easily.

“I didn’t know you could get up there that way.”

“Hehe. And look, I even brought all three just in case.”

“Thanks, bro.” The two brothers only had one more stop: back in Toad Town at the pharmacy to pick up some stomach medicine. Luigi revved up his kart again and took off. He, too, thought his brother looked a lot more ghostly with his new color, but that was what they were trying to fix.

“You know, bro,” Mario started to think, “as scary as it is to turn a bunch of different colors, I think I look cool when I do.”

“Hehe, I guess you do a little. It’s like that time a long time ago when everyone in the Mushroom Kingdom got sprayed with red or blue paint.”

“Oh yeah, I forgot about that.” Luigi was referring to an event several years ago when Bowser’s troops had covered the citizens of the Mushroom Kingdom in red or blue, causing a large fight

to break out between the two colors; Mario and Luigi had been hit with two different colors, causing a short rift in their relationship.

“Besides, don’t you like colorful things?”

“Mhm. I still don’t get how Bowser likes his castle being all gray and dark.”

“Me neither, but I think being colorful like this is a good look on you.”

“Hehe, thanks, bro,” Mario giggled. He was still sure he wanted to get rid of whatever effect the mysterious mushroom had on him, but maybe he would have it again another time if he could bring it back at will. The drive to Toad Town was over before Mario even knew it, and Luigi had pulled up to a small store labeled “Dr. Toadbert’s Pharmacy.” As Luigi got out of the kart, he was surprised to see Mario coming with him.

“What are you doing, bro? I thought you didn’t wanna be seen.”

“I don’t think I mind anymore. I’m still me, I’m just colorful now.” Almost on cue, Mario’s ghost white form turned to a more characteristic red; Mario wasn’t going to complain about this since he was normally red anyway, but he just had to get used to his boots, gloves, and face being red too.

“Hehe, that’s my bro,” Luigi encouraged. He knew Mario was always confident in himself no matter what, even during some of the toughest boss fights they had been through. Mario didn’t even need Luigi to walk him inside this time as he felt confident enough to do it himself.

“Good day, brothers, good to see you,” greeted a blue capped Toad with rather silly looking circular glasses. This was Dr. Toadbert, the most well known medical scientist in Toad Town. He had gained a lot of attention for curing the outbreak of Blorbs several years back, with the help of Mario and Luigi. “You’re looking a little different today, Mario.”

“Hehe, don’t I look cool?”

“I suppose you do,” replied the friendly doctor. “What can I help you with?”

“Can we get some stomach medicine?” Luigi asked.

“Yeah, it’s supposed to help make this go away somehow.” Mario wasn’t entirely sure what it was for, but the Shy Guy doctor had asked for it, and he wasn’t going to skip out on any doctor’s orders.

“Of course,” Dr. Toadbert said, reaching under his counter. The doctor had just about anything sitting under there, just waiting for someone to ask for it. “Here you are, and it’s on the house today.”

"Whoa, really?" Luigi seemed shocked at the gift.

"Sure. I'm not going to make heroes pay to get rid of their bellyaches, especially not after everything you've done for us."

"Thanks, Dr. Toadbert," Luigi said as he grabbed the small bottle from the counter.

"You're very welcome. Is there anything else I can help you with today?" Luigi shook his head and thanked the doctor a second time. He started back outside, but stopped when he noticed that Mario wasn't coming with him.

"Aren't you coming, bro? We gotta get this stuff back to that Shy Guy."

"I dunno, I kinda want a way to be colorful whenever I want."

"Oh," Dr. Toadbert interjected, "I can help with that."

"Whoa, you can?" Mario knew he probably shouldn't have been surprised, but it still came as a small shock to him.

"Let me get some potion from the back." Mario tilted his head in curiosity as Dr. Toadbert exited through a door behind the counter. Not more than three minutes later, he returned with several bottles of differently colored liquids. "Here you are. They're made of nothing but rainbow mushroom extract, water, and a little bit of dye."

"Rainbow mushroom extract?" Mario asked, getting a little nervous that he would have to go through the entire process of poisoning himself.

"Yes, of course," Dr. Toadbert insisted as he watched Mario turn from red to cyan. "As soon as I saw you when you came in, I recognized the rainbow mushroom effect."

"Oh, okay. But how do I make it go away if I have one of these?"

"They're only temporary. They last an hour or two and then you'll be right back to normal."

"That sounds good to me," Mario affirmed.

"I'll need you to pay for these ones, though," Dr. Toadbert said in a descending pitch. Luigi had already left the building to go out and get some coins. He always kept them on him just in case he gave into an impulse. "I see your brother is willing to help out."

"Hehe, he's always helpful." Mario didn't know it, but Luigi enjoyed helping his brother out as a sort of repayment for all the nice things Mario had done for him in his life.

"How many coins do you need?"

"Ten should do fine." Luigi pulled out a large coin with a number 10 on it and set it down. "Thank you. Come back anytime."

"Thank you, doctor," Mario said as he picked up the bottles of potion. "Oh, um...I think I need a bag for all these."

"Right." The doctor pulled out a small bag and put the bottles inside, making it easier for Mario to carry them. Mario and Luigi both waved as they left the building. "Have a good rest of your day, you two," Dr. Toadbert said as one final cordiality. As the brothers got back in their kart to make one more stop, Luigi put everything for Mario's cure in the back seat. He put the mushrooms in first, then put the stomach medicine and poison dropper into Mario's potion bag and put it in the back behind them.

"Are you ready to turn back, bro?" Luigi asked, not knowing what answer to expect.

"I think I am. It's been kinda fun to change at random but I wanna be me again."

"That's okay, I understand." Luigi had to admit that seeing his brother in all kinds of colors had grown on him too. Seeing the same red outfit on him all the time had started to get a little boring, and Luigi was never one for boring. He liked changes of pace in his life, and this was a perfect way to have that.

"I think I'll do it more though," Mario said as he glanced behind him at the paper bag. Dr. Toadbert may be a good salesman, but Mario knew he was a doctor first, and he wouldn't do anything to hurt Mario.

"Maybe I can try it too," Luigi mentioned.

"Hehe, do you think you would like it?"

"It looks fun. And it doesn't seem like it hurts or anything."

"Nope, I feel totally fine." Mario's typical perky mood had returned after the original shock of changing colors. The two pulled up at their final stop and both got out. The same receptionist Toad greeted them as they walked in. Mario was a lot less phased by his sudden change from cyan to deep black, even if it made him look more like Shadow Mario than himself.

"Is Dr. Green still here?" Mario asked the Toad at the desk.

"He is, are you seeing him again?" Mario just nodded. "I'll bring him right out, then." As the brothers sat down, they noticed a young Yoshi walking over to them.

"Are you the real Mario Bros?" the purple Yoshi asked. He was no more than 13 years old and a little small for his age.

"Mhm, that's us."

"Whoa, cool!" The Yoshi jumped on Luigi to give him a tackle hug.

"Hehe, nice to meet you too," Luigi said, a little exhausted from having the wind knocked out of him. The Yoshi had clearly always wanted to meet the two brothers, and even if Mario didn't look exactly how he had thought, it was still his lucky day.

"Can you take a picture with me?" The Yoshi asked, pulling out a phone. The waiting room of a doctor's office may not have been the ideal backdrop, but he was going to take any chance he could. He opened the phone camera and handed it to Luigi as he reached out to Mario for another hug. Mario pulled the Yoshi up and held him up higher so he didn't look so small in the picture. Luigi held out the screen and took a picture, making the Yoshi bounce in excitement.

"There you go, little guy," Luigi said.

"Thank you thank you thank you!" The little Yoshi had never been happier in his life. "You're the best!"

"Aww, you don't have to say that," Mario responded.

"Mario?" The two brothers recognized the Shy Guy doctor's voice.

"Oh, I think we have to go," Luigi said. "But one more hug for good measure." He reached down and gave the Yoshi a nice, tight hug before the two of them left for the exam room again.

"I see you met a fan of yours, eh?" The Shy Guy doctor asked as the three of them took the same seats they had been in earlier.

"Hehe, we always like doing that," Luigi answered.

"Good for you two. Now, did you bring everything?" Mario pulled most of the items out of the bag, leaving the two spare 1-up Mushrooms and the potions inside. "Good, good, now just lay back for me." The doctor took the dropper from Mario. "Open wide for me." Mario obliged.

"Can I hold his hand?" Luigi said, a little nervous about his brother about to be poisoned.

"Of course. Just make sure you have a mushroom on standby." Luigi nodded, grabbing one of Mario's hands with his right hand and a mushroom with the other.

"This shouldn't hurt at all, it might just feel like you're going to sleep, okay?" Mario also nodded, his mouth still wide open. The doctor held out the dropper over Mario's mouth. "One, two, three." The purple liquid was surprisingly cold, but it went down without a problem. Mario didn't really notice much at first, but he became drowsy rather suddenly before his eyes closed.

"Mario? Mario, what happened?" Luigi started to panic. "Should I give him the mushroom?"

"Go ahead," the doctor answered as Luigi stuffed an entire mushroom into Mario's mouth. It took some effort, but it eventually went down and Mario opened his eyes. The layer of solid black had started to disappear, as Mario's normal red and blue outfit came back into view. "There you go, all better."

"Thanks, doctor," Luigi said happily as Mario woke up from a glorified nap. Mario wasn't all there mentally, but he was awake enough to know that he had gone back to normal.

"You two are very welcome. Feel free to come see me if you need me, okay?" Both of the brothers nodded as Mario tried to stand up. He nearly tipped over, causing Luigi to hurriedly grab him before he could do any damage to the office.

"I think I had better carry you," Luigi said to his woozy brother, picking him up by the underarms. "Thanks again, and have a nice day."

"You too, Luigi." The younger of the two brothers carried Mario, who was still half asleep, outside to the kart to drive them home. It had been a pretty long day for Mario, and based on how sleepy he was now, he could definitely use a real nap.

Back at home, while Mario was taking a nice, long nap, Luigi peeked into the bag, curious about the potions Mario had gotten from Dr. Toadbert earlier in the day. There were so many colorful potions in the different bottles, to the point that Luigi was struggling to pick one. He decided to reach in and pull out whichever one he happened to grab first; as he felt around, he pulled out a bottle of bright pink liquid. "Ooh, I'll probably look pretty being pink," he thought to himself.

He brought the potion bottle into the bathroom so he could look in the mirror as he changed. The bottle was quite small, so he opened it and drank it all in one gulp. He put the cover back on to see that the liquid had reappeared - one of Dr. Toadbert's science tricks, surely. A few seconds later, he noticed his face turning bright pink, including his eyes and mustache. His entire body was turning pink too, but he could only see it on his face. His green hat and shirt turned pink as well, followed by his gloves, overalls, and boots. He looked in the mirror in amazement before looking down at himself. He had turned solid pink too, just like his brother did.

"I think Mario will like this, hehe," he giggled to himself. He wandered over to Mario's room and peeked in, seeing him still fast asleep. Luigi had to admit that he was tempted to take another potion and pour it down his sleeping brother's throat, but he resisted the temptation.

“Hehe, being colorful sure is fun,” he thought to himself. He went to the kitchen to make himself a plate of spaghetti; he earned it after the day he had. Even while he was making himself the same dish that Mario was having earlier in the day before everything started, he could only dream about how much fun it would be for him and Mario to be colorful.

“Wuh...Luigi?” Mario nearly had to do a double take when he saw his younger brother turned solid pink.

“Hehe, what do you think?”

“You’re...really cute, hehe.” If Luigi wanted a fun change in his life, this was certainly it.