

YOUTH XL

written by

John Coleman

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John Coleman
(509) 255-3260
j@clmn.me
<http://clmn.me/youth-xl/>

INT. CAR - DAY

A boy with chubby cheeks leans against a car window, looking out. The look on his face is one of sad dejection. He stares out the car window, melancholy visible on his face. He sighs.

Middle aged female driver in soft blur. The ride is quiet, making their way through the streets of their town.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

SCOTT, a chubby 10 year old boy sits alone in a department store dressing room, looking down at the small pile of new clothes next to him. Four pairs of pants on top of two shirts.

Muzak is audible as is the gentle whirring of air through the store's heating system. Scott is just sitting there, staring at the floor, then back at the clothes.

Just lingering there, he rubs his hands together. Scott turns his head again to ponder the small pile of new pants.

Minutes seem to peel by, this is taking too long.

CUT TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE BOY'S SECTION - DAY

MOM is browsing among the racks, pulling out more options. She feels the fabric, holds the garment up, checks the price. Puts it back and continues looking.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Back in the dressing room. Scott's hunched over a bit, elbows on his knees, chin on his hands, staring at the floor. The lack of action stretches on for a beat. Finally, Scott sits up, takes a deep breath, and gets down to it.

He stands, starts undressing. Shirt first, then pants. He catch's the view of himself, in just his tighty whiteys, in the full-length mirror. A look of dismay washes over his face as he quickly tries to avert his gaze.

Scott grabs the first pair of pants. 'Youth XL' is visible on the tag.

Scott carefully removes the pins that were keeping them neatly folded.

He unfurls the pants in front of him, letting the overly long legs unspool slightly across the floor. Scott pushes his thumbs inside the waistband to see how wide they go. These are going to be tight. Scott looks down at the pant legs that are at least six inches longer than his own.

Scott sits down on the bench. One leg in, then the other. OK, so far so good. Scott stands up, gets them all the way up and goes to fasten them. The legs are long enough that he's standing on about four inches of fabric.

The button is about two inches short. Scott sucks in his gut and tries harder. He can almost get the two to meet.

He struggles and strains to get them buttoned. He focuses all of his attention and does a huge suck in of his gut. Feverishly trying to get the two to meet enough to button, Scott is holding his breath, turning red, his already chubby cheeks inflated even more, desperately trying not to breathe.

It's no use. These just won't button. Scott sees himself in the mirror again. He sees himself, standing there with unbuttoned, unzipped, too small, yet too long, pants.

Scott's eyes dart around, looking at the other pants. He sees they are all the same size, Youth XL.

Scott is still alone in the dressing room, standing on the pant legs of jeans that are hanging open, belly spilling over the waist.

Scott looks down and sees the shirts, he grabs one.

This fits better. Scott buttons it up with the buttons only pulling apart slightly. He leaves it untucked, it hangs below his waist quite a bit. Scott sucks in again and attempts to zip the jeans up as high as I can. About half way is the best he can do.

Scott leaves the shirt untucked and covering the unbuttoned button. He pulls the pant legs up to at least get them past his feet. One last look in the mirror, and he opens the door and heads out.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE BOY'S SECTION - DAY

Scott emerges from the dressing room area only slightly into the store. He scans the store, doesn't see MOM at first. A few other shoppers are browsing around, mostly other moms.

Scott makes brief, accidental eye contact with the tall, slender, elegant asian sales lady at the counter. She gives him a half smile.

Scott is standing there, not wanting to move another inch into the store. Scanning, he finally sees mom. She looks up and makes eye contact with him.

MOM

Oh good!

Her face lights up and she quickly walks over with an assortment of other clothes to try draped over her arm.

MOM (CONT'D)

Everything alright in there? You were in there a long time.

SCOTT

Yup, everything's fine.

MOM

How do these feel, do they fit OK?

Mom analyzes the pants, takes a step back and takes them in. Takes a step forward.

SCOTT

Yeah, they seem fine.

MOM

Do you like them?

Mom is feeling the fabric, pulling at the legs to see how long they are.

SCOTT

Sure.

MOM

Sure? Are you sure they fit, how's the waist?

Mom pulls Scott's shirt up and exposes the unbuttoned button to the whole store. Scott's face flashes ghost white on its way to beet red.

MOM (CONT'D)

What's going on here? Honey, these aren't even fastened.

Mom kneels, sets the clothes down that she was holding, and tries to button the button.

Scott closes his eyes tight, winces slightly. Mom is straining away trying to get them buttoned.

MOM (CONT'D)
I thought you said these were fine?
Honey, these don't fit.

Mom turns over her shoulder to the sales lady.

MOM (CONT'D)
(to sales lady)
Do you have these in a bigger size?

Scott's eyes roll upward slightly, staring at the ceiling. He digs his hands into his pants.

The sales lady walks over.

SALES LADY
What size are they?

Mom lifts up the shirt in the back to see the tag. Scott winces again.

MOM
Youth, extra large

Sales lady looks at Scott, gives a forced smile, looks down at the pants.

SALES LADY
Umm, I'm sorry, that's the biggest size we carry. Perhaps something in the men's department might fit a little better?

MOM
Men's department?! He's 10 years old! Maybe this is just a weird brand. Honey, why don't you try the others?

Despondent, Scott silently nods his head and makes the walk of shame back to the dressing room, walking on the ends of his pant legs.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Back in the dressing room, Scott takes the shirt and pants off, tossing them in the corner. Scott looks at himself in the mirror again. It's too much. Scott closes his eyes and turns away. He grabs another pair of pants.

These Scott actually gets buttoned, although just barely. His belly is spilling over the waistband all the way around. The zipper is pulling enough to be splaying apart at the very top.

Scott puts the other shirt on and head backs out there.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE BOY'S SECTION - DAY

This time my mom is waiting right outside, hands on her hips.

MOM

OK, those look better. How do they feel?

SCOTT

Fine.

Mom has a not too convinced look on her face.

MOM

Well, let's have a look.

The shirt gets pulled up again. Scott looks to the side and tries to just focus on the middle distance.

MOM (CONT'D)

I don't like the look of this waist, it seems pretty tight. Does it feel tight to you?

SCOTT

Yeah, a little.

MOM

Hmm. Well, shoot, maybe this is another weird brand. Why don't you try the others?

SCOTT

The others are the same brand. They'll just fit the same.

Mom's brow furrows, arms cross.

MOM

Boy, I don't know what they're doing with kids clothes these days. This used to be a nice store. What do you think of the shirt?

SCOTT

It's fine.

MOM
Your not helping, Scott. Do you
like it or not?

SCOTT
I like it. It's fine.

MOM
(getting annoyed)
Ugh, you are so difficult. Why do
you have to make shopping so hard?
You've been putting me off for two
months and now when we finally go,
all I get from you is '*it's fine*'.

Scott looks down.

SCOTT
Sorry, mom.

Mom shoots Scott a stern look.

MOM
You make this so hard. Getting
clothes is a good thing. I used to
love to go shopping with my mom.

Scott keeps his head down, staring at the tips of his socks
sticking out of the huge pant legs.

SCOTT
Sorry, mom.

Mom scans Scott up and down one more time.

MOM
Well, I guess, get your other
clothes on and we'll just go
somewhere else.

The sales lady walks up.

SALES LADY
Everything OK over here?

MOM
No, none of these pants fit. Are
you sure you don't have any other
sizes? My boy is having trouble
fitting into anything.

Sales lady looks at boy, her careful searching for tact is
visible on her face.

SALES LADY

I'm sorry ma'am, youth extra large is the biggest we carry. Perhaps the men's department would have something that could be tailored, or perhaps you could go down to the mall, they may have more options for, um, husky youth-

MOM

Husky? My boy isn't 'husky', he's a healthy 10 year old! Let me tell you, I've been shopping in this store for decades and we have never had a problem finding quality clothes until now.

Scott has a look on his face like he wants to turn invisible. He closes his eyes in a tight grimace. The indignity of this day just keeps going and going.

SALES LADY

I'm sorry, ma'am, I didn't mean to imply anything. Were any of the shirts to the young man's liking?

MOM

We didn't even get to the shirts. And, besides, if I have to go to two stores as it is, no sense getting anything here.

SALES LADY

I'm sorry we weren't able to assist you, ma-am. Would you like me to call our men's department? I am sure I could have someone come down to help find some better options.

MOM

No, we'll just go. Scott, go in and put your clothes back on and bring everything back out here so we can go.

A heavy sigh, Scott turns and trudges back to the dressing room again.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Scott takes off the pants and shirt. He sees myself in the mirror again. He takes a long look.

Just standing there in his tighty whiteys, Scott drinks it all in.

Scott turns to the side, then to the other side. He puts his hands on his stomach and jiggles it. He turns back and faces the mirror.

He takes it all in. He looks down and the POV of the camera just sees his belly and the ends of his feet in white socks. He looks back into the mirror, into his own eyes. A subtle, but despairing sadness is present in his gaze. He stares for a beat. Scott grimaces and looks away.

INT. CAR - DAY

The ride from the store is a quiet one. Mom is driving, Scott is looking out the window, wistfully.

Car ride continues, focus on Scott's face leaning against the window. Mom's just focusing on driving, softly out of focus. Credits and credit music come up.

FADE OUT.

THE END