

The Tallest Kid in Town

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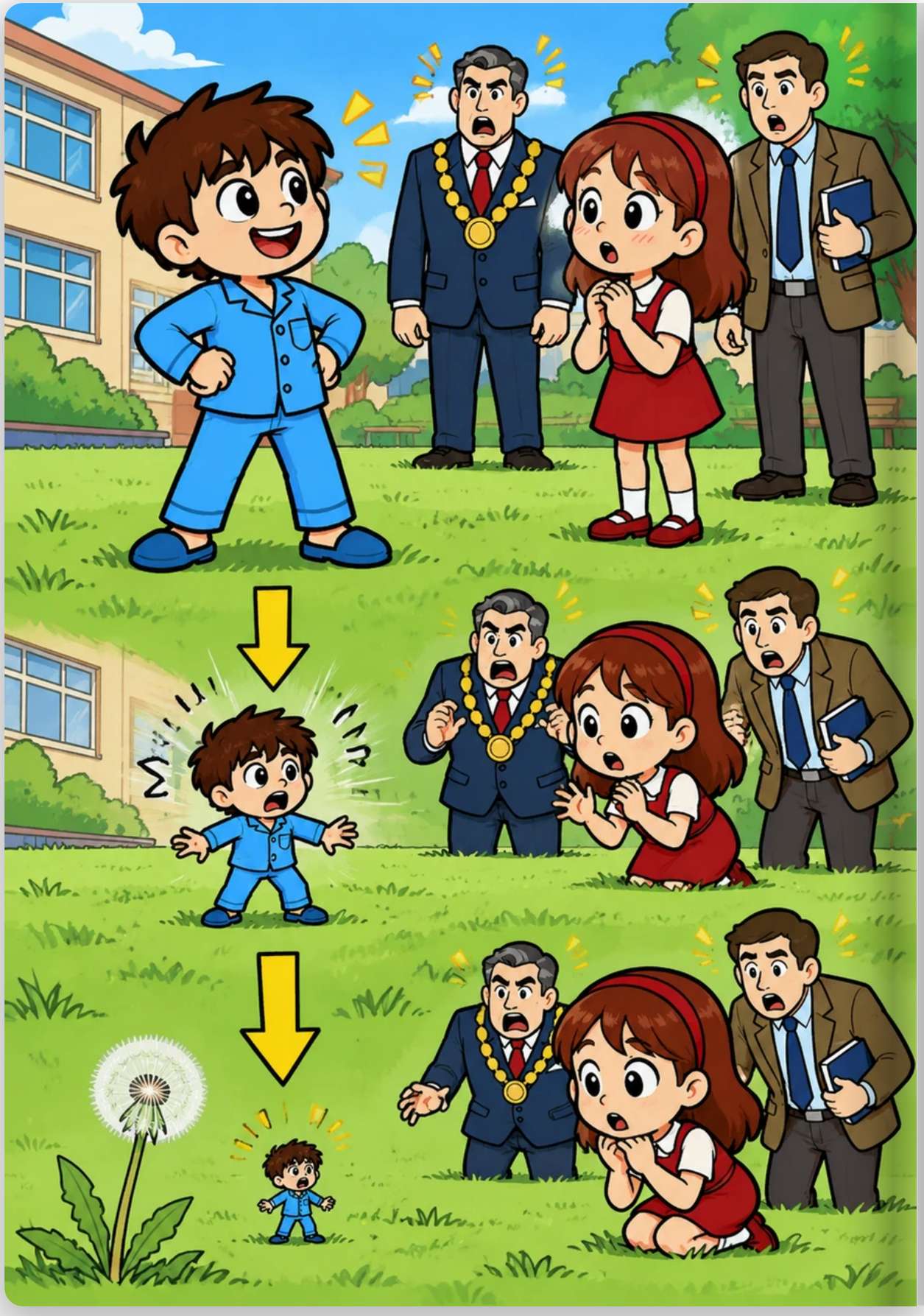
In the sun-drenched town of Verity, the buildings are tall and the people are taller, because every time someone tells the truth, they stand a little higher. The mayor is a towering seven feet, and the postman can easily peek over the rooftops to find the right chimney.



Max stands in his bright blue bedroom, looking quite small compared to his massive furniture. He tells his mum he brushed his teeth while hiding his dry toothbrush behind his back, and suddenly, his pajamas feel a little looser as he shrinks exactly one inch.



At school, the classroom is filled with giant desks for honest students, but Max is struggling to see over his notebook. He tells his teacher a wild story about a dog eating his homework, even though he doesn't own a pet, and his chair suddenly feels much bigger as he shrinks again.



During recess, Max tries to impress his crush by claiming he can perform a perfect backflip on the grass. As the lie leaves his lips, he shrinks three times in a row, leaving him standing no taller than a dandelion in the schoolyard.



By Wednesday afternoon, Max is so small that he has to jump just to reach the brass door handle of his own house. He looks up at the world with wide, worried eyes, feeling like an ant in a world of giants.



On Thursday, Max is playing on the rug when his ginger cat stalks toward him, pouncing as if he were a feathered toy. In the middle of the chase, Max shouts out that he was the one who actually spilled the milk, and he feels a sudden, magical jolt as he grows back one full inch.



Max realizes the secret to getting back to his old self is hidden in the truth, so he spends his entire weekend finding people to confess to. He stands in the living room and admits to his parents that he was the one who accidentally cracked the television screen, watching the floor get further away as he grows.



He continues his honesty marathon by admitting he ate the entire birthday cake meant for the neighbors and finally confesses that he cannot actually do a backflip. With every honest word, his limbs stretch and his clothes fit perfectly once more until he is back to his normal height.



Monday morning arrives, and the teacher stands at the front of the class asking who studied for the big history test. Every single student raises their hand with a confident smile, but a chorus of tiny squeaks fills the air as the entire class suddenly begins to shrink toward the floor.



Max is the only one left standing at his full height, looking down at his miniature classmates who are now peering up from the carpet. He smiles a genuine, honest smile, realizing that by telling the truth about not studying, he has finally become the tallest kid in town.