

Runaway

It was an average summer day for Celina. As a matter of fact, the sun was shining and the birds sang, so no, it wasn't average, it was perfect. Celina and her friend Emmy were changing out of their runners because track practice was finally over.

"So, have you decided what you're going to wish for? You know...like when you blow out your candles?" said Emmy curiously.

Celina hadn't thought of her wish. There were so many things to ask for, yet Celina knew it had to be perfect.

"I'm not sure... Your birthday was a few weeks ago, what did you wish for Emmy?" Celina asked in hopes for an idea.

"Silly! You can't ask for somebody else's wish! If I told you, it would not come true."

That night after Celina's sister tucked her in, Celina decided that things would fall into place and worrying would be of no use. Celina didn't know she had a big adventure ahead of her. The next morning, Celina woke up to the usual gust of warm wind, but her dog, Waffle, was nowhere to be found. It was a tradition to meet with her off-white Pomeranian in the morning. "Where is he?" said Celina.

The next second, loud noises came from the kitchen.

That morning, Waffle had run away during her walk. Celina's wish was now clear, clearer than ever. A few hours later, the time had come. After blowing out her candles, she recited the wish.

"I wish to find Waffle," she told herself.

There was nothing in the world Celina wanted more.

Waking up to a new morning at the new age of 11, Celina felt different.

“Don’t you get bigger as you get older?” she thought.

Looking down at her sheets, something had changed. Suddenly, her face – her *muzzle* turned into the shape of an 'O'. As she leapt out of bed in realization, Celina screamed...or tried to. What came out wasn't English. Celina was *barking*. Looking into the mirror, Celina couldn't believe her eyes. Only wish magic was capable of such a transformation, yet nothing made sense.

"My wish was to find Waffle, not to become him!" Celina pondered.

She wasn't even sure if there was a way back to her human body. Questions flooded her head, amongst them, an idea arose.

"I'm going to find Waffle myself. How hard could it be?" said Celina.

Venturing out into the world was fun at first. Celina saw the world differently. She was much shorter, and she noticed things she hadn't before. For example, puddles were huge, and many mice roamed the streets of downtown. Suddenly, big problems revealed themselves. For starters, there was no food, water, or shelter. She was a stray. If Celina wanted to find Waffle, she had better do it soon.

Night dawned over the city, and so did the chills of darkness. The city ran cold, and Celina was left disappointed. She wanted to get her best friend back, and the odds weren't in her favor. The next morning was undoubtedly a picture-perfect day. Sunlight glimmered upon the old wooden bench Celina had rested on, flooding her fur with warmth. As her eyes began to blink awake, she bolted up.

"Is that... Waffle?" Celina thought as an off-white fluffy tail wagged around into an alley behind a bakery.

Just as she was about to leap off the bench, a snarling growl came from a beautiful fuchsia azalea bush. She was hungry, restless, and missed her family very much. What Celina didn't know, was that her adventure had only just started, and it was about to get worse.

One growl turned into two, and two turned into four. Coyotes!

"Come on guys!! Go find someone else to chase!" She barked as loud as she could in hopes that the coyotes would come to their senses. They didn't.

"They're gaining on me." Celina said to herself.

She took a sharp turn, past a busy corner, but they kept persisting. She tucked behind a shrub in the city park, but the coyotes were determined. Finally, Celina bounced into an alley way, where it looked safe. She looked behind her, no coyotes. With a sigh of relief, at last, Celina was safe, at least, she thought she was.

With a smirk in their eyes and drool streaming down, nothing in her life had been scarier. They had found her, once again. Celina discovered a whole new level of fear,

"Any last words?" The biggest coyote snarled.

"Yes!" with hesitation, Celina began to share her story.

"Yesterday was my birthday. On that day, I lost my best friend." she said, tearing up.

"Maybe we should help her...?" The smallest coyote whispered under her breath. Just as the biggest one was about to pounce, the light grey coyote jumped in front of Celina in an attempt to save her.

"I don't want to eat her. I want to help. If you want to eat, you can leave Kato."

The light grey one said calmly to the biggest coyote (whom Celina assumed was Kato) and he did, along with another beaten-up coyote. The youngest one spoke up.

"I saw your friend in the suburbs." That sentence was all Celina needed to find Waffle and regain hope.

She went past the busy corner, past the bench and the bushes, and past the huge puddles and mice until she made it home. Once she returned home, she saw Waffle happily prancing his way through the sidewalks and through the track until she showed up on the front doorstep of 206 Seaside Avenue. Celina's mission was complete, and her wish was fulfilled. Perhaps this adventure was the best birthday gift of all.

The next morning, Celina woke up in her bed to the warm sun and a happy-as-ever off-white Pomeranian, along with her family by her side. Her sister, Chloe, held a big cake, and her father held a banner.

"Happy birthday kiddo! Ready to blow out your candles and *make a wish*?"