

# *Photos of Cuteness Flash Around the World*

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Owen, the rescued baby hippo, mistakes  
a giant male tortoise, Mzee, for his mom.  
Skin the same gray-black as Mzee's,

Owen nuzzles the leathery hose-neck  
while Mzee crunches thorny leaves.  
Owen hides behind Mzee, then snuggles

to him as they both nap in the sun.  
What does it matter if Mzee lacks teats  
and turns, each night, cold as stone?

"Any loss can be redeemed," we all ache  
to believe. Still, like the unwilling bachelor—  
like the wife, husband at work,

who longs for a lost rebel in torn jeans—  
like the judge who imagines holding  
high C as bailiffs roar, "Bravo!"—

like the mother-of-four who lifts a *Cosmo*  
in the checkout line, and curses  
the broad hips that served her well—

when Owen sees, in the deep pools  
of Mzee's eyes, amid brown water  
and lush green, a massive form whose skin,

though thick and tough, is warm,  
whose gold eyes gleam, he grieves.  
Like you, reader. Like me.