

## Berry Bear Professor

By: Indi

Professor Fisher checked his watch again as he hurried towards his classroom, hoping time would somehow be running slower. The hefty black bear was about to be late for his class, and it was all thanks to the silliest bit of bad luck. A permaberry rabbit had mismanaged his juicing schedule and ended up wedged as a large orange in the main entrance of his department.

Once Fisher had realized it was going to take a while to dislodge the embarrassed rabbit he'd trekked to a rear exit, but gotten caught up in the slow-moving crowds of others doing the same. What should've been a casual stroll back from his office was now a frustrated rush. Oh well, at least he hadn't been delayed by other berries since.

There were still a few students drifting into the lecture hall as Professor Fisher arrived, the bear trying his best not to barrel through anyone. At his size that was always a challenge. He dropped his bag on his desk and was half-way through setting up his laptop for the lecture when he finally saw the box of donuts. Four donuts remained, solid and probably filled with a cream of some sort. On the lid there was a note.

*Please eat these so I don't have to. -Raf.*

Fisher chuckled. Raf was one of his fellow professors, a hyena with an appetite as uncontrollable as he was massive. It was surprising he'd managed to leave any of the donuts behind at all. And that his writing was so...fancy. Fisher swore Raf had a bit of a rougher style, with far less flourishes. Perhaps he'd had a student write it for him?

Not in the mood to fuss over a note of all things, Professor Fisher quickly finished setting up for his presentation. He grabbed the remote for the projector in one paw, and two of the donuts in the other. When he chomped down on the first he discovered the filling was actually jelly, blueberry if he was correct. The taste was pleasant enough, and soon both donuts were devoured and fingers licked. Hopefully they'd give him the energy to get through the day.

The lecture barely had a chance to begin before something strange occurred.

As Professor Fisher talked, the fur of his face steadily shifted from solid black to dark blue. Even his tongue seemed to have changed color. The students in the first few rows were the first to notice, the realization they weren't imagining things hitting one after the other. They saw the professor's paws change as well, guessing his whole body beneath his suit was now blue.

No one said a word, silenced by a mix of fear and curiosity. Every one of them knew what tended to happen when a person turned blue—or any other strange color for that matter.

In anticipation the collective gaze of the class turned towards Professor Fisher's belly. As expected, it soon began to expand.

The difference was hard to spot at first because the professor was bulky to begin with. His middle grew rounder, taking on a more definite ball shape than before.

Fisher's suit stretched with ease to handle his increasingly larger belly, being made of the exceptionally durable expandex material usually worn by permaberries who didn't want to burst out of everything they owned. That Fisher had bothered to make such an expensive purchase revealed to the class he actually enjoyed inflating regularly.

It'd been assumed, but the new evidence peaked the interest of some in attendance.

Of course with his outfit not growing tighter, Professor Fisher had an even harder time feeling his own expansion.

As more and more juice filled the bear, the heavy sloshing within his stomach became harder to ignore. A particularly sharp turn caused a muffled *slorsh* to echo out, and suddenly Professor Fisher stopped talking. He casually glanced down at his middle, already able to guess what might be happening. His bulging belly was proof enough, and a quick look at his undeniably blue paw only cemented the obvious.

The professor didn't act shocked or angry, though. He simply shook his head and adjusted his glasses, turning his attention towards the class.

With Fisher now aware of his steady berrification, a few students were willing to risk chuckles or clear expressions of amusement. Plenty tried to hide it, not that the professor would've punished anyone for such displays. He still remembered his days as a college student, how often he'd laughed at students and professors swelling up unexpectedly.

No, he was far more interested in figuring out if the culprit behind the prank was in attendance. As he slowly scanned the room, his eyes settled on a slim white tiger sitting in the very front row. Vel.

Vel was a fairly average student grade-wise. But it was also an open secret that he had a fondness for turning others into berries—whether they liked it or not. He rarely sat in the front row, usually hiding in the middle where he thought he wouldn't be noticed watching videos rather than taking notes. He was also being exceptionally smug today.

There was little doubt in Professor Fisher's mind that Vel had been behind his in progress berrification. Fortunately he knew just how to handle the troublemaker.

The bear's gut sloshed and swayed as he waddled over to his desk and picked up the last two donuts. “These things are a lot stronger than what I'm used to!” Fisher chuckled, smiling even as his cheeks rounded out. “Deceptively filling!”

Some laughter rang out from the class as the professor joked about his predicament. Vel was among them—at least until Fisher headed right for him. Suddenly the white tiger was trying to look away, an impossibility with how big his professor was getting.

Professor Fisher rested his bloating belly atop Vel's desk, mostly covering a notebook with barely anything written in it. What little was there was written in a familiar, elegant script, though.

“Would you like a donut or two, Vel? I can vouch for how delicious and juicy they are.”

Vel watched the massive gut swelling towards him, able to faintly hear the juice splashing inside. “Uh, n-no thanks Professor!”

“But I'd hate to let them go to waste, and I'm certain you'd love them! I mean, you're the one who picked them out, after all.”

With his prank found out, Vel did a poor job of hiding his guilt. “I don't know what you're—*mmmmmph!!*”

Professor Fisher had shoved a whole donut into Vel's open mouth, and the tiger only got a couple chews in before the second was forced in as well. With a large blue bear paw clamped over his mouth he had no choice but to gulp down the donuts, despite knowing what they'd do to him.

The rest of the classroom watched Vel intently, waiting for the inevitable to begin.

All the white on Vel's face turned blue in a wave, his black stripes left untouched. He looked at his paws as they changed, then to his middle when a gurgling, bubbling sound started. A second later he was filling with juice.

Unlike the professor, Vel was wearing normal clothes that had no chance of containing the berry he was about to become. His shirt tightened quickly, the seams slowly ripping as he gradually gained a round balloon belly. He was blushing.

“Hmm, not wasting any time swelling up, are we Vel?” Professor Fisher said. His own body was rather spherical, limbs puffing up some as the juice reached them. “Usually means you've got past experience turning into a berry. *Lots* of past experience.”

Vel blushed even harder, thankful he couldn't see the reactions of his classmates. He was a bit less vocal about how much he enjoyed being a berry from time to time himself.

“Of course if that's true then you should know exactly where the closest juicing station is. Might be smart to head there before you're too big to reach it.”

Getting caught had prevented Vel from even remembering there as a way to reverse the process. His first attempt to stand ended in comedic failure as he wobbled and only lifted a couple inches at best before falling back down, gut bouncing. He was too used to being slim and fit—aside from his private

berry ventures—and the extra weight threw him off. His second attempt was a success, though now the whole class had a good look at his round, blimping middle.

Vel awkwardly started waddling towards the main aisle. He was forced to squeeze past his classmates, a task that only seemed to be getting harder and harder as he grew rounder. At times he was afraid he'd get stuck.

“Having trouble, Vel?” The ball of a bear sloshed as he laughed. “With some practice it's actually not that hard to move around, even when you're a giant round berry!”

Sure enough, Professor Fisher was able to wobble around with apparent ease. It was as if being spherical was his natural form. The expertly fitting suit only aided in the illusion.

Vel, meanwhile, was far less graceful. The tiger's clothing had been reduced to tatters by the time he reached the aisle. He was round, limbs somewhat stiff. Waddling up the stairs to the exit was quickly proving to be a herculean task, made worse by the stares and laughter of an entire classroom. Pictures were being taken and footage recorded. Half the campus probably knew about the berry tiger already.

Every step was tougher than the last, the juice inside Vel sloshing wildly. His pace slowed to a crawl. As he swelled into a near perfect sphere, paws sunken into his taut body, Vel's journey forwards ended—and his journey backwards began.

There was a panicked yelp from Vel as he felt himself losing balance. He rolled backwards, paws flailing as he bounced right down the stairs. The world was spinning, Vel shouting as he coughed up spurts of blueberry juice, leaving a trail behind him. He continued rolling as he reached the floor, coming to a stop only after bouncing against the whiteboard.

A brief geyser of juice spewed from Vel's mouth, the humiliated tiger groaning as he settled onto his round middle.

Professor Fisher watched the spectacle with glee, and after having a good laugh he slowly turned towards the rest of the class. “Alright, now that we've had a little fun, it's time to return to the lecture. Don't think turning me into a berry will end class early!”

There were some moans of disappointment, but they relented quickly. With projector remote still firmly in puffy paw Professor Fisher continued on with his lecture as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened. The only difference was the persistent, low sound of sloshing as the large blueberry bear taunted. It was something the professor thought he could potentially get used to...