## **Belchy Prey**

By: Indi

Tycho raised his full mug to his lips and steadily tilted it upward, chugging the beer within in long gulps. Some dribbled down the edge of the lion's muzzle, but for the most part he managed to drink it all.

He slammed the mug on the table and belched, grinning widely. "See! Told ya—hic—told ya I'm not a lightweight!"

Beside him his friend Lane tried not to laugh, the rotund owl instead nodding in approval. Though quite buzzed himself, he was still barely sober enough to know Tycho was completely and utterly drunk. Aside from his slight swaying and occasionally slurred speech, there was the obvious fact the fit lion was sporting a sloshing ball belly full of booze.

"I don't know, you haven't had *that* much to drink yet," Lane lied. "You've still got a couple untouched pitchers after all!" Pitchers Lane had pressured Tycho into buying. Getting the lion drunk was one of his favorite pastimes.

"I'll get to*uorrrp*—to them. *Braaaaap*." Along with getting him drunk, the cheap beer had also made Tycho excessively belchy.

"Sure." Lane let out a small burp of his own, and his stomach growled after. It took a lot to sate the appetite of an owl of his size, and his lunch had been rather pitiful. Unfortunately he remembered the food at the tavern not being the least bit appetizing.

His gaze drifted towards Tycho and his round belly.

One of Lane's *other* pastimes happened to be eating people—though his friends insisted voracious gluttony didn't count as a hobby. Of course they tended to say that from within his stomach, so Lane felt there was a bias at play. Tycho had been on the menu often in the past as Lane happened to find him rather delicious. Sure it might seem rude to eat the lion during what was supposed to be the celebration of a recently successful mission, but it also would've been rude for his friend to let him go hungry.

Lane stood, his mind made up. "Why don't I help you finish the rest of that beer, buddy?" The owl snickered, picking up both pitchers.

Tycho looked up at him obliviously. He yelped when an unseen talon tilted his chair back, but was quickly muffled by one of the pitchers emptying into his open mouth. Too drunk to both struggle and drink, Tycho chose to drink. The pitcher was dry in seconds, but the second one took its place right after, the lion only getting out a quick belch in between. His belly swelled even more, growing slightly rounder by the time Lane's ploy was through.

The chair was let go, falling forwards and causing Tycho's gut to bounce. He let out a rumbling belch that rattled the pitchers and drew the attention of other tavern patrons. Thanks to the onslaught of beer Tycho was left in a daze, helpless.

Lane chuckled and gave his friend's belly a pat. "Such a shame you aren't this round all the time—course then I'd probably eat ya twice as often!"

"Wh-whaorrrrrrp!"

"Alright Tycho, time to go into the drunk tank! Wouldn't do for a paladin like yourself to be seen stumbling back home~"

Lane gently pinned Tycho's arms to his sides, the lion not putting up a fight. Even when Tycho was looking right into the open beak and down Lane's gullet he didn't do much else but wiggle.

It took his face and mane being matted by saliva after the first couple gulps for Tycho to jolt a bit at all. He squirmed erratically, shaking his bloated belly. The beer within him sloshed and foamed, and he swelled visibly. Sliding down Lane's throat, the lion's cheeks puffed up and he burped again and again and again.

Lane was too busy scarfing his friend down with ravenous haste to notice. There were times when he enjoyed savoring a meal, but being drunk wasn't one of them. All the owl wanted was a full belly, and that required chugging Tycho as if he were just another mug of beer.

All the while the volatile beer inside Tycho was getting tossed around. When his head slid into the stomach he burped with such force Lane's middle actually inflated a little. Every swallow forced another belch out of him, unwittingly puffing Lane up in the process. Lane's belly was naturally going to balloon a bit from eating Tycho, preventing him from realizing anything odd was happening.

Belly, hips, and rump—Tycho was vanishing swiftly past Lane's beak. He moaned faintly as he felt his stomach fill with delicious lion. A talon wandered down to grope his middle, rubbing at the bulges Tycho was making. His meal was squirming just enough to feel more like a massage than indigestion.

Wiggling footpaws slid away, and then a swaying tail. At last there was just Lane—albeit with a massive belly he couldn't deny held someone.

The owl carefully settled back down in his chair, which groaned in protest but didn't break. Lane looked upon his bulging, shifting middle with awe and glee. His tunic had ridden up, incapable of containing such a magnificent mound. He couldn't resist slapping his belly hard just to tease Tycho.

"Buddy you always hit the—*urrp*—spot!" Lane bellowed, jostling his mobile prison further. "I wonder if all lions taste this good, or all paladins. Maybe you're just inherently tasty~"

Disoriented from both darkness and insobriety, Tycho still attempted an incoherent protest. All that came out of his mouth was a wet *buh-urrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr*. The lion's gut was noisier than ever, gurgling and bubbling. Burp after burp escaped his mouth, an endless, uncontrollable stream.

The belching shook Lane's belly and expanded it steadily, much to the owl's amusement.

"I never realized the lion's roar was just a belch!" Lane grabbed his mug off the table, one talon kneading and prodding his rumbling gut. "Bottoms up!"

Guzzling the last of his beer only made Tycho squirm harder, which in turn made him belch louder—and inflate Lane faster. Teasing Tycho was far more important to Lane than some odd bloating, which he found more silly than worrying.

"Trying to burp your way free, are we? You can pretend to be a booze-fueled bellows all you want, but it'll take more than a few belches to burst this bird!" He drunkenly giggled at his own alliteration. "I'll need to write a song about that later."

The owl returned to playing with his trapped friend, though the more he blimped out the harder it was to actually poke the lion within. After only a couple of minutes Lane had inflated so much he couldn't even make out a single bulge from Tycho. His belly was perfectly round--and growing rounder still.

*Now* there was concern growing in the owl.

Lane pushed down on his belly with both talons, forcing a modest *braaaaaaaap* out of his beak. His middle deflated a miniscule amount, and seconds later he was already bigger than before.

"What the—*urrrrrp*—heck was in that bee*raaaaaaaaap!*" Lane grumbled, desperately trying to keep up with Tycho. "Quiet dow*rrrrrp* in there! Or digest—*buworrrrp*! Just stop bur*rrrrrrp*ing!!"

While Tycho very much wished he could stop, he wasn't in control either. Lane struggled to stay in his seat as Tycho slid towards the bottom of his ballooning belly. The redistribution of weight was too much for Lane, and the belching, blimping bird toppled out of his chair and onto his belly, beached.

The fall only seemed to swiften Lane's swelling. He frantically attempted to stand back up, but was forced to admit the effort was both futile and counterproductive, only provoking more powerful belches from his dinner. Burping felt like the most obvious solution to his problem. Unfortunately it proved easier said than done.

With how bloated Lane was it took a great deal of pressure just to force out a belch, and it wasn't nearly enough to counter the swelling Tycho could inflict in the same amount of time.

"C-Can I get a—*bworrp*—little hel*rrrr*p, please!" Lane pleaded to anyone who could hear him. But no one else in the tavern dared approach Lane to offer aid. Some out of concern they'd get caught in the blast radius of a volatile bird, others because they'd been eaten by him before and thought a little bursting would do him good. All were watching Lane's ordeal unfold, though.

Rising atop his wobbling, belch-inflated belly, Lane could only groan and burp.

"This is—*urrrrrp*—so uncool!!" Lane whined. His hide was beginning to creak, his round belly taut as a drum. As far as he could tell his expansion hadn't slowed down at all. Where was Tycho even getting all this belching from!

"Mrrrmmph—just gotta...gotta hold—uorrrrp—together."

Lane's head was spinning. He could feel the pressure pushing against every square inch of his enormous middle, eager to burst free. His concentration was scattered, the owl barely able to murmur or burp. By the time his hide failed he was in a deep daze.

The resulting *BOOM*! rattled the whole bar. Chairs and mugs were knocked over, and patrons pointlessly dove for cover. Feathers flew everywhere. Lane's beak became a projectile, flying right into the hearth fire and embedding on a crackling log, creating a momentary flare up.

At the ground zero of the borbsplosion was Tycho, flat on his back and covered in falling feathers. His belly was still swollen, and he groaned as he twitched. With a final *buh-urrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr* the drunk, exhausted lion passed out, unlikely to remember the unconventional way he'd avoided becoming his friend's dinner...