

## The Plumping of Prince Sterling

By: Indi

Opulent was the only word Prince Sterling, thirteenth in line to the throne of Argento, could think of to describe the carriage. The seats were plush, decorated in patterns of gold, silver, and dark blue. He sunk right into them, and had been idly running a paw over the surface just to feel it. The floor was a well-polished wood without even a single scuff mark. Red curtains with gold trim covered the windows for privacy. Crystal carvings of the sun and moon had been enchanted to give off light.

It was incredible, and the Prince had spent most of the ride furious that his own personal carriage paled in comparison. Once he was back at the palace he'd need to demand an upgrade right away. And figure out how he'd been so utterly outdone by a nobleman he'd never heard of before.

Across from the Prince was a smiling, dark green dragon. Trazer's horns were gold, and so were his eyes. He wore loose robes of dark blue and gold, and gold-rimmed glasses. The dragon had greeted Sterling at the market, and insisted on treating the Prince to a luxurious meal at his villa outside the city. Never one to turn down free food or praise, Sterling had accepted without hesitation, despite the quickly silenced concerns of his bodyguard, Chance.

"I do believe we've arrived," Trazer said.

The ride had been so smooth, Sterling hadn't even noticed they'd stopped. The carriage doors were opened, and Trazer gestured for the Prince to exit first.

Prince Sterling found himself atop a low hill surrounded by a modest forest. He could see the city in the distance, close enough for convenience but far enough for privacy. Trazer's villa sprawled across the hill behind him. It was of an older, classical style, with plenty of colonnades and a tiled roof. Sterling had expected something grander, towering and made of stone, but it was still pleasant. At least his own palace was nicer.

Chance jumped off the back of the carriage, the silver-furred wolf swiftly flanking Sterling, before he was shooed a couple feet away to give the lion space. They were terribly clingy. Trazer's own guards had been a pair of kobolds, their scales glimmering as if they'd been polished. They followed the dragon at a polite distance.

"Please, please, your Highness, this way." Trazer started towards the villa. "Your dinner awaits."

Once inside the villa, the extravagance returned. Marble floors were polished to perfection. Carved molding along the walls and ceiling were painted gold, as were the bases of columns. Nearly every piece of decor in the place seemed to be made of a precious metal or stone.

Kobolds pushed open the intricately carved doors to the dining room, and Prince Sterling went through. Of course the room was just as beautiful as all the others. A table ran down the center, covered in dozens of silver dishes. At the far end was a large, throne-like chair, oddly massive considering how lean Trazer was.

"Prince, would your guard kindly wait outside so that we may have the room to ourselves. I believe that will make dinner far more comfortable for the two of us," Trazer said.

“Of course! Wait here,” Sterling told the wolf, hushing an obvious objection with a glare. His word was always final—that was the advantage of being royalty. Chance took position by the doors, ignored by his Prince as he was shut out.

“Do take a seat at the head of the table,” Trazer said once they were alone. “It is only right that you enjoy it.”

Prince Sterling didn’t object, of course. The lion eased into the wide chair, grinning. It really *did* feel like a throne.

“The first course should arrive any moment now, Prince. But may I interest you in a cup of fine silver cider?” Trazer held up a goblet of gold, and poured a sparkling, silver liquid into it from a bottle, before passing it over.

Sterling sniffed the goblet. Its contents certainly smelled like cider, yet the drink looked like actual, molten silver. He took a gulp, the cool liquid soothing his throat and winning over his taste buds. “Wonderful!” He took another, longer drink. “I’ve never seen a cider that looks as extravagant as it tastes. I’ll need to have some kegs purchased for my cellars.”

“It’s a rare brew, but I should be able to provide you with as much as you’d like,” Trazer said with a smile.

As Sterling finished off the cider and had his goblet refilled, kobolds entered the room from behind him. Each held a large, covered platter, which were carefully arranged in front of Sterling on the table. Half a dozen of them at least, and even if the servings were small it’d still amount to a feast.

The first cover was lifted, revealing a dozen donuts coated in gold and silver. Initially Sterling thought they were solid metal. But then he saw the heat rising off them, and smelled the freshly-baked dough. He knew edible gold and silver existed, but he’d never seen pastries coated in it before.

The lion plucked the first golden donut and took a large bite, then another, and another. Within seconds he’d finished it off, and was licking gold frosting off his fingers and lips. He immediately grabbed a silver one next, devouring it with just as much haste. As a Prince, he’d gotten to indulge in a plethora of sweets created by the most skilled bakers in the land, and yet the donuts were easily the best he’d ever eaten. He was certain the precious metal coatings were the secret. After all, what wasn’t made better by gold or silver?

“This trip has been worth it for the donuts alone!” Sterling declared, continuing to glut on the donuts. He was downing them with large swallows of the cider, sometimes draining half his goblet in one go. Fortunately a kobold was dutifully refilling his goblet after every gulp, so he was never in fear of running dry.

“I’m overjoyed it meets your standards. And it’s only the beginning.” The dragon hadn’t taken a seat, his gaze lowered towards his royal guest’s middle. When Sterling had sat down he’d been slim, lacking even the slightest hint of a belly. But after a few donuts and goblets of cider he was positively chubby. His robes clung to his paunch, not nearly as flowing as they were before. His face was a bit rounder, his arms thicker. Every pastry made his middle swell.

Without interruption the Prince gobbled up every last donut on the platter, leaving only a few scattered specks of gold and silver behind. The platter was swiftly taken away, and another moved into place, the lid removed to reveal cupcakes with golden frosting.

Sterling salivated at the sight of them, but when he reached for one he finally felt how tight his robes were. He yelped as he looked down and saw how plump he'd become. "What happened to me!" the lion whined, squeezing his belly with both paws to see if it were real. The squish was undeniable.

"Do not fear, my plump Prince, this is perfectly normal," Trazer said.

"But I've...I've gotten fat!" He'd moved on to feeling his chubby cheeks, and even slid a paw behind to check out his rump.

"All the best foods in life are fattening—the donuts and cider wouldn't taste a fraction as delicious if they weren't packed full of calories," Trazer said. "Though you should know you're looking more princely with every pound."

"I am?" Sterling asked.

"Of course! Maintaining heft requires constant feasting, and constant feasting requires mountains of food, and mountains of food require considerably deep coffers," Trazer said. "Any lowly commoner could don fake jewelry and imitation clothes to trick others into thinking they're of higher status, but no one can fake a belly that comes from a rich and overindulgent diet. Old bread and cold stew certainly didn't create your princely paunch." The dragon gave the Prince's middle a gentle poke, causing the lion to blush.

"I'd never considered that." Sterling was in awe, as if he'd borne witness to an incredible revelation. "But deep down, I must've known it was true. I always ask for seconds and extra snacks, but the dour advisers I'm stuck with always refuse!"

"Such a shame they've denied you greatness for so long. But beneath my roof, you are free to eat as much as you'd like. Embrace the gluttony you so rightfully deserve!" Trazer declared. "And do not worry about your robes struggling to keep up with your glorious girth." The dragon pointed a claw at Sterling and swiftly muttered a spell. A ripple spread through the Prince's clothes, which suddenly loosened until they were a perfect fit once more.

Sterling looked down on his new, small belly with pride rather than fear now. He was starting to look forward to how royally rotund Trazer's feast would make him. With glee he began gobbling up the cupcakes, his swelling renewed.

Chance stood rigid as he guarded the entrance to the dining room, expression dour and eyes darting all over the place in search of threats. He wasn't pleased to have a closed door in between him and the Prince. If any suspicious noise came through he was prepared to charge right in. It was his duty as royal bodyguard—even if the Prince was prone to shrugging him off and never thanked him.

Kobolds were going about their duties, but all had been ignoring the wolf. None seemed particularly threatening. Chance was convinced he could easily deal with them if required, and kept his eyes open for real threats.

So when a ruby red kobold approached with a bundle in his claws, he was only given the faintest bit of attention from Chance.

"I bear a gift from Lord Trazer to our illustrious guest," the kobold said.

Chance looked at the bundle with suspicion. It seemed to be a bag of some sort, short and made of leather with a single strap.

"I'll pick it up on my way out," Chance said.

"Oh, but we would much appreciate it if you accepted it now," the kobold said, smiling. "It's a wonderful gift, I know you'll love it.

"My mission is to guard the Prince, not enjoy myself," Chance said.

"Then you'll appreciate my gift even more," the kobold said. "It'll ensure no one will ever squeeze past you to reach the Prince."

"And how could it possibly—*mmmmph!*"

Chance's question was interrupted by something being forced over his snout in a flash. His paws raised and he tugged hard on what he assumed was a muzzle, but it wouldn't budge. He scratched and pulled and twisted to no avail. In the chaos he'd forgotten about the kobold, but their laughter drew his attention.

"You can tug all you want, but the enchantments on that feedbag mean it's not coming off until the feast is over," the kobold said with glee.

Something thick and sweet suddenly began to pour into Chance's mouth and down his throat in a torrent. Within seconds his breastplate was feeling tighter as his middle swelled outward. The wolf winced and looked down, seeing the straps of his armor digging hard into his rounding belly, creaking loudly as they were pushed to their limits. The pressure was worsening; Chance could barely focus on clawing at the magic feedbag that'd been forced onto him.

A single strap snapped, and Chance's gut wobbled as it pushed out further. The rest didn't last long, tearing all at once and sending his breastplate clattering to the floor. His eyes narrowed at the relief in pressure. He was still swelling out of control, though.

Chance gave up on the feedbag, realizing he was wasting time trying to remove it himself. His best bet was to beat up the kobold who'd brought it and get them to help. The wolf unsheathed his sword and swung at the kobold in one fluid movement, his belly wobbling. The kobold easily dodged the strike, and the ones that swiftly followed.

"Your swordsmanship is impressive, but I wonder if you'll be able to retain it once you've doubled in size? What about tripled?" the kobold teased.

Chance wished he could growl, but all he could do was angrily guzzle what he assumed was cream of some kind. It didn't matter if he had a gut, he was still an expert sword fighter, and he'd make sure the kobold learned that the hard way.

As he continued attacking the kobold, though, he felt his clothing tightening in new places, while his belly seemed to stop growing. He stopped to catch his breath, and when he looked down he saw a seam on his pants rip. His thighs had gotten thicker. And so had his chest. And his arms. The wolf was fatter all over.

"Finally noticed?" the kobold said, still showing no signs of tiring from all the evading. "A proper feast requires food that swiftly digests so you can eat even more right away. And before you start hoping that feedbag will run out any time soon, you should know it's bottomless. Eventually your blubbery cheeks would snap it off so you won't grow forever, but by then you'd be big enough to be added as a permanent landmark to maps. Fortunately for

you, Lord Trazer wishes you to be a more manageable size.”

Chance’s predicament was only getting worse and worse. He feared the Prince was in similar danger, and if he didn’t act fast, they’d both be doomed to a blubbery fate. He renewed his attack, fighting with all his might before he lost the ability to fight at all.

To Chance’s credit, the kobold was forced to stay on the defensive constantly, only able to sneak in a few teases here and there as he ducked and jumped out of the way of sword strikes and punches. But with each passing second the wolf was getting fatter and fatter. His swings were slowing down, and more seams were shredding. He felt himself jiggling, his belly ballooning into a ball of dough he struggled to maneuver with. His lunges were shorter, and his thrusts were brushing against his soft sides more often than not.

In mere minutes, the once fit wolf had ballooned into a butterball. Even as his attacks became slow and awkward, he kept fighting. He stumbled frequently, unused to being so heavy. The clothes left on him were in tatters, every bit of the fattening wolf having burst out of them. His breathing was strained from exhaustion.

At that moment the kobold charged, giving Chance a hard shove in the gut. The wolf lost his balance and fell onto his soft butt before falling onto his back. By the time he’d recovered and attempted to sit up, he found the act impossible. He was simply too tired and fat to get back up on his own. Chance wobbled in rage as he continued to blimp up, hundreds of pounds piling onto the wolf. His massive belly pressed against his chin, rising high like a pudgy hill. He cursed himself for failing the Prince, even as he continued to grow fatter and fatter.

While his bodyguard fought, Sterling gorged. He’d gone from plump to just plain fat, his cheeks as round as his belly. The chair that had seemed oversized before now felt comfy, and his belly was starting to press against it. The lion was stuffing himself without hesitation, accepting anything and everything his host provided. It was all so wonderful, so delicious, so decadent. There’d been pastries that looked like gold bars, candies that could be mistaken for silver coins, and white chocolate pie with frosting that sparkled like diamonds. Each new dish became his favorite.

Platters of large gummies shaped like jewels arrived, and the Prince gobbled them up in giant bites. His rump filled out the chair and his gut pressed against the table. His arms were doughy, and his face jiggled faintly as he chewed. The enchanted robes continued to stretch to fit his expanding girth, but they still clung to his curves, doing nothing to disguise how much weight he was gaining.

Gradually Sterling filled out his chair to the point it felt too small. After he finished gulping a goblet of golden cider he leaned back and gave his large belly a satisfied pat. He was astonished by how fat he’d grown, but Trazer’s words of encouragement were still fresh in his mind. He truly believed his size now matched his standing in society. Finally he’d get the respect a prince deserved.

“Your feast was incredible!” Sterling declared, stifling a belch. “You’ll need to pass along

your recipes to my chefs so I can enjoy these dishes more often.”

“I assure you, my Prince, you’ll be feasting on them daily from now on. But you’ve yet to have any dessert,” the dragon said.

None of that was dessert?” the Prince asked.

“Oh no, it wasn’t *nearly* indulgent enough to be dessert.” The table was cleared just in time for more platters to arrive. Each held what appeared to be a giant glob of glittering golden goo. An enticing citrus aroma drifted off them, and they continued wobbling in place long after they were left on the table.

“I’m sure they’re wonderful, but I’ve already had so much,” the Prince said, his eyes locked on the nearest goo. “If I get any fatter I’ll need to replace all the chairs in my palace.”

“A small price to pay for good taste. But please, my Prince, at least try one. I promise you won’t regret it.”

With how amazing everything else had been, Prince Sterling couldn’t resist a final bite. He reached for the glob and swallowed it all down whole. The taste was better than anything that’d come before, and left him moaning in delight. “I never knew goo could be so incredible—*urrrrrrrp!*” The Prince blushed as he burped, but was soon more distracted by a considerable swelling of his belly that wobbled his entire body. All the food had been fattening, but the Prince couldn’t remember any individual dish adding so much weight so fast.

“Ready for more, Prince?” Trazer asked, nudging a platter closer.

“I...I really can’t. The first one was rather fattening,” the Prince said.

“That just means it’ll add more to your grand figure,” Trazer said. “They were delicious, right?”

“Yes, but if I ate all those I’d be huge!” He imagined himself a foot wider, the servants having to squeeze him through doorways. While the heft might give him respect, he wasn’t sure the inconveniences would be worth it.

“Ah but my Prince, that’s the point.” Trazer snapped his fingers, and the glob on the plate launched itself right into Sterling’s mouth. The lion wobbled in surprise as he was forced to swallow the goo. His belly swelled after, pushing hard against the arms of his chair. Before the lion could demand answers, another glob fed itself to him. The rest were jiggling his way, forming a line to stuff themselves into him.

Each golden goo added dozens of pounds to the Prince, whose increasing bulk was straining the chair considerably. It creaked and groaned, struggling to handle the doughy lion, until finally the legs snapped and it collapsed. Sterling yelped and moaned as he landed, his butt aching. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t sit up anymore.

“Help me up!” the Prince demanded, his stern expression looking comical thanks to his round cheeks. “Once I’m home the entire royal family will hear about this insulting treatment!”

“Silly Prince, *this* is your new home now,” Trazer said.

“What...what do you mean?”

“Well, Prince, I—like most dragons—happen to have a passion for hoarding things,” Trazer said. “I admit my particular interests are rather basic. I have a soft spot for silver, gold,

and other precious materials. But I'm also fond of things that merely resemble them—hence my beautiful glimmering kobolds and my sparkling food and drink.”

“What does any of that have to do with me?” The Prince had given up on getting up, not used to exerting himself while thin let alone fat.

“Everything, my richly stuffed golden prince. You'll make a lovely addition to my hoard once your prepping's been completed.” More kobolds entered, lifting the hefty Prince off the ground and above their heads. His flailing did little more than wobble his belly.

“Chance, help! I'm being kidnapped!” Sterling yelled at the top of his lungs.

Trazer laughed. “I'm afraid your wonderful bodyguard has already been added to my hoard.”

The kobolds dutifully marched their captive towards a door in the back, deeper into the villa.

“Wait, I can offer you riches, just let me go!” Prince Sterling begged. “You can even keep Chance!”

“Riches won't fill a lion-shaped void in my hoard, Prince~” Trazer said. “I must say, you've already progressed along so nicely. But to reach perfection you'll need to resemble a giant mound of gold. I'd say you'll be as wide as you are tall, but even that'll be far too small. And thanks to my magic, those pounds will never fade.”

Sterling's eyes widened at the mere idea of being so preposterously and permanently huge. “You can't do this—I'm a Prince, not a blob!”

“You'll be both very, very soon.” They'd traveled down corridors and stairs, far away from any views of the outside world. “You'll be so round and soft, and my kobolds will keep your golden fur shimmering and your belly full on a diet of only the richest foods. In time you'll grow to love it—or at least accept it.

A hallway opened up into an expansive room lined with columns. Neat piles of treasures were everywhere, sparkling in the light. The little Sterling glimpsed was a fortune, more than he'd ever seen. And the dragon merely had it on display. He was carried through more rooms just like it, while Trazer rambled on about how fat he'd be, how he'd eventually forget what it felt like to ever be thin, to do simple things like walk or stand or move. It was enough to make the lion whimper non-stop.

Eventually he was brought into a room lacking the usual treasures. There were lavish carpets and cushions on the mosaic floor, all of which depicted enormously fat and pampered characters. Fountains and pools of water made it feel like a spa at times. But what stood out most to Prince Sterling was the massive blob of silver fur on one side of the room. He gasped when he realized it was Chance.

The immobile wolf had a feedbag strapped on, his bulk steadily growing. His eyes seemed lost, as if he were in a daze. He didn't seem to notice the Prince, and ignored a few frantic attempts to call his name.

“I was truly blessed to find both a gold *and* a silver mound to add to my hoard today,” Trazer said. “Such luck!”

A mound of cushions was at the end of the room, arranged like a throne. Prince Sterling was gently arranged atop them, where he renewed his futile wiggling. To his horror, more

kobolds were arriving, each carrying massive platters with the incredibly fattening golden goo. Trazer hadn't been lying when he claimed he'd turn him into a blob. The exquisite feast heading his way would mean an end to his mobility, possibly forever. He trembled, but a small part of him was already eagerly anticipating a chance to taste the wonderful goo again.

Trazer stood back, and watched his loyal kobolds get to work. The Prince squirmed up a storm as he was stuffed and fattened, rapidly blimping up as he gained hundreds of pounds with ease. The enchantment he'd placed on the Prince's robes failed, and the lion burst out of them, giving him a wonderful view of Sterling's golden growing gut. Sterling was going to be the pride and joy of his hoard for a long, long while, he just knew it. Perhaps he'd find the portly Prince a crown to wear, to enhance his position as the blobby ruler of the hoard. Trazer would have only the best for his treasures, after all.