

Spare Floatie

By: Indi

As soon as Otis got out of the truck he stretched. The trip to the lake had only taken an hour but the lean hare was ready to relax and enjoy the water. He walked around and opened the back of the truck just as the passenger door slammed shut. His boyfriend Oats yawned, having napped the whole way over. The short, black-and-white donkey's plump middle was peeking out from under his tank-top. Otis glanced at it as he started digging out their gear from the back.

"Sleep well?" Otis asked.

"Gotta pass the time somehow," Oats said.

"Could have done that by keeping me company." It'd been a boring ride, especially with the music almost muted so Oats could sleep.

"Is my presence not enough~" Oats puffed up his chest, causing his tank-top to ride up his middle further.

Otis snorted. "I guess. Now, why don't you make yourself useful and help me unload? The rest of the guys are already on the lake, and I just want to float and be lazy for the rest of the day."

His boyfriend trotted over. The first thing out was the cooler, loaded with beer and a few sodas. After that were the snacks, which Oats eyed eagerly. Otis pulled out the bag with the towels and the big air pump, but couldn't seem to find the beat-up box with his inner-tube in it. Or the beach balls. Or the umbrella. There weren't many places for things to hide in the back of the truck; it took only a couple minutes to check it all and confirm a lot of their gear was missing.

"Uh, Oats, dude. Where'd you put the stuff?" Otis asked.

"What stuff?"

"*The* stuff. My inner-tube, the umbrella—all the junk for the lake you promised you'd load up while I was packing the cooler." While the back seat had enough room for the missing items, Otis hadn't noticed anything there on the ride over.

The donkey was silent, his eyes looking at everywhere *but* Otis. "Oh...yeah."

"Yeah what?"

"I think I might've forgotten to do that." Oats smiled, sheepishly.

Otis sighed. "Dude, that was literally your only task. I even piled it all next to the couch while you were gaming so you'd remember."

"Well yeah, but I was having a really good run and kind of lost track of time. Oops?" The donkey clasped his hooves together and gave the saddest smile he could. Most of the time the act worked. Most of the time.

"Floating around is like half the reason I wanted to come out here!" Otis fumed.

Oats' ears flattened in response. "Maybe one of the guys will have a spare?"

Doubtful. The rest of their friends tended to sit in chairs by the water or try their luck fishing. Otis couldn't believe Oats had messed up so badly. Well, he could, but he didn't want to. And he'd just bought a new air pump for the trip, too. A real powerful one that could

inflate anything in a minute or two with ease. It wouldn't be pumping anything up that day, though.

Otis raised a brow. But perhaps it could pump up *someone* instead.

A smile replaced the hare's frown. He casually reached for the air pump, moving it to the edge of the truck and unraveling its hose. "Actually, I just realized I've got a spare floatie here."

"You do?" Oats asked.

"Yep. And it's an extra-large one, too."

Otis shoved the end of the hose into the mouth of his confused boyfriend and flipped on the switch to the pump in one smooth movement.

In an instant, Oats' ears shot up and his cheeks puffed out. He reached up to grab the hose, but Otis forced it in deeper and held it in place. Oat's eyes darted from the hose to Otis, then down to his middle. His belly rapidly ballooned outward, reaching the size of a small beach ball in seconds. The white and black patterns stretched as he expanded, Oats growing rounder and rounder before his very eyes.

Otis' grin widened. He hadn't expected the pump to work quite so well, but his boyfriend was already well on his way to becoming a blimp. Once his middle passed two feet in width the rest of him began puffing up. His shorts ripped down the seams while his tank-top was torn to shreds. The arms swatting at the hose swelled until they were too stiff to move, leaving Oats helpless.

The donkey's body took on a spherical shape, steadily enveloping his blimped up arms and legs. He took a clumsy step back, only for Otis to tug him forward with the hose and wag a finger at him. "Oh no, we're not hitting the lake until you've been properly pumped, and you're not even creaking yet!"

A muffled protest and a hiss of air escaped Oats' mouth. He grew so round his feet left the ground and his body wobbled in place. Only his hooves and head remained sticking out from his spherical body. The pressure within him was growing and he heard his hide creak. He swore he was going to pop.

A single, hard yank removed the hose, and Oats gasped for air.

Otis thumped on the taut side of his inflated boyfriend. "Might be a bit awkward laying on you, seeing as you're a donkey orb now. I think I'll manage, though."

"I messed up, I'm sorry! Please deflate me, dude." Again Oats put on his saddest expression.

"I know you're sorry. Which is why you're gonna make it up to me by being my floatie for the day. If you behave I might even deflate you *before* the ride home, rather than strap you to the roof of the truck~" Otis nudged Oats, causing the donkey to rock back-and-forth.

Oats let out a whine. "You'll let me have beer at least, right?"

"I *guess* you can," Otis said.

"And snacks?"

"Don't push your luck, blimp. With how much you're creaking you've gotta be nearing capacity, and I don't want to fish scraps out of the lake to avoid a littering fine." Otis gave Oats a firm poke, the donkey wobbling and blushing in response. "Now let's go have fun!"

Otis lifted his boyfriend high above his head and started towards the lake. He had a feeling the day would be a blast. Though hopefully not literally for Oats. And he realized he rather liked the way the donkey looked as a round balloon, how the literal chorus of creaks accompanied even the slightest prod. Perhaps he'd leave Oats like that for more than just a day. With a few puffs now and then to keep him taut, he could probably stay a blimp for a week...or longer.

The mischievous hare grinned, his inflated boyfriend unaware of the increasingly long-term plans in store for him.