

A Blimpy Snack

By: Indi

August leaned back in his bean bag chair, happy to be doing nothing at all. It was late on a Saturday night and the lights in the small living room of the townhouse were dimmed. The slim, gray snake could hear music playing but wasn't giving it much attention. His two roommates were sitting on their own bean bag chairs nearby.

Tycho—a plump horse—held up a bottle of cider and grinned. “You sure you can handle this stuff, Vex?”

The silver fox across from him laughed. “When has booze ever given me trouble?”

“Regular booze hasn't, but this'll have you creaking in no time.”

“And when has inflation ever given me trouble, either?” the fox asked back.

“Already forgotten about that little incident with the helium tank a couple of months ago?” Tycho asked. “If I hadn't grabbed ya you'd have floated off to your embarrassing doom~”

“Fair,” Vex said. “But what about you and that air pump last year? If I hadn't turned it off in time you'd have become a pile of embarrassing scraps.”

August rolled his eyes but smiled. “Sounds like both of you have some pretty bad luck while blimping up. Maybe you should skip out on the Swell Cider tonight.”

The horse and fox snorted in unison. Tycho shook his head. “I'm not gonna let a little tiny slip up scare me away from a good, relaxing swell.” He flicked the cap off the bottle and chugged the entire thing in one go. “*Bwoooooooooooooooooooooo!* Damn, that always hits the spot!”

Vex picked up a bottle himself and drained it just as swiftly as Tycho had. He held a paw to his snout to muffle the resulting belch. “It's good for what it is.” The fox turned towards August. “Still not gonna join in?”

“Not really in the mood to be a balloon tonight,” August said. He liked inflating but didn't feel the cider was safe enough to indulge in. He was eager to remain in one piece.

“Suit yourself*ooooooooooooooooooooo!*” Tycho belched. The horse's soft middle had grown taut and round since guzzling the cider. He burped again, his belly blimping out noticeably. The vest he wore immediately became strained, buttons struggling to keep together.

“*Braaaaap!*” Vex hadn't quite been able to catch his latest belch and excused himself. The fox's flat middle swelled outward, giving him a modest ball gut. His shirt rode up, far too small to handle his temporary gut. “Just means more cider for us.”

“Just remember, it only takes two of those things to inflate you fully,” August said.

“Not the first time I've had these, *Professor.*” The horse snickered as he opened a

second bottle. He guzzled it down as well, his belly swelling faster.

August put on a fake frown. He'd expressed an interest in teaching *once* and his friends were still teasing him about it.

"He's just being nice, Tycho, don't give him a hard time," Vex said. The fox followed the horse's lead, chugging his second cider as well.

August watched his roommates inflate with glee. The pair were growing rounder and rounder by the second. Buttons burst and seams ripped as bellies fought to be free. Tycho was a little bit bigger, but the horse was actively smacking his gut to shake the cider and speed the process up. He performed a drum roll on his belly, burping with every smack. The swell that followed shredded what remained of his shirt and vest and tipped him onto his back. He whinnied in surprise, then belched. Sitting back up proved impossible.

Vex carefully stood up, grasping his ballooning belly in both paws as he grew. "Should've paced yourself, blimp," the fox said. His limbs had begun to puff up.

"Nothing wrong with—*uworrrrp*—this position!" Tycho insisted. His body was getting spherical, limbs vanishing as they were enveloped.

"Yeah, you'll both be orbs in a minute or two, anyway," August said. He drank some regular beer, looking to get a small buzz as his roommates blimped.

"I'll be an orb; Vex will be scraps!" Tycho laughed, wobbling back-and-forth.

"Don't make me accidentally poke you with a claw," Vex said. The fox shuffled closer to his helpless friend and wiggled his paw menacingly. There was no way he could've reached Tycho in his current state, but that didn't stop the drunk horse from swaying nervously.

Amidst a chorus of belches, the horse and fox ballooned into nearly perfect spheres. Their limbs sunk in until only their paws and hooves jutted out, mobile but useless. Their heads sat atop the curve of their round bodies, round cheeks pressing into their taut hide. Both creaked lightly but had stopped swelling. No one would be bursting due to bad cider, at least.

August pushed himself out of the bean bag chair and strolled over to his round roommates. "Congratulations you two, you've attained your ideal forms. Maybe you'll stay that way forever."

The snake pressed a claw against Tycho's side and gave a slight squeeze. Tycho creaked and whinnied. Few things were more fun than teasing blimps, and August now had two of them. While his claws were busy gently testing the durability of Tycho, his tail began poking and prodding Vex, forcing a few belching yips out of the fox.

"B-Be careful—*buh-urrrrrrrrp!*" Tycho demanded, wobbling angrily.

"Oh don't worry, you'll be fine," August insisted. "I've toyed with enough balloons to know how to avoid popping them." The skill had required quite a lot of trial and error at parties, though.

Vex blushed as August's tail bopped him. "You could always just join in and be a

balloon as well instead of, ya know, terrorizing us.”

“And where would the fun in that be?” August asked. He shifted his focus to Vex as punishment.

For an hour August played with his roommates, never giving them a moment’s rest. He nudged and squeezed them. Rolled and spun them. Even bounced both a couple of times. He was still drinking beer, grabbing new bottles with his tail whenever he finished old ones. Gradually the snake went from tipsy to downright drunk. But he was also getting hungry.

August looked upon his helpless friends and smiled. “I think it’s about time I had second dinner,” he said.

“Why don’t you stuff yourself until you’re too full to be a jerk!” Tycho snorted.

“Oh, that’s the plan. But I’m not sure you’ll be happy with my choice of meal.” The snake’s tongue flicked out.

“What, gonna swipe the leftover pizza?” Vex said. He was already thinking of shuffling away once August was distracted.

“Nothing so small.” August placed one claw on Tycho and the other on Vex, then squeezed. “No, I was thinking of something big and round and maybe a little creaky.”

“Haha, real funny,” Tycho said. The horse was on his back, able to hear but not see August.

Vex, on the other hand, was upright, and could see how serious the snake was. “Or—and just hear me out—you can use my card to buy yourself some nice takeout. All the takeout you want. You can even have the delivery driver.”

“But that’ll take so *long*,” August hissed. “Much easier to just enjoy the blimpy bounty I’ve been blessed with tonight. Shame I can only choose one.”

Tycho was beginning to understand the seriousness of the situation. “Fox has always been one of your favorite foods; go with the fox!”

“Traitor!” Vex scowled. He’d been perfectly willing to dissuade August from gorging on either of them, but now he was ready and willing to throw Tycho under the bus. “Tycho’s fatter than me, so he’s definitely tastier. And clearly you’re hungry enough to eat a horse!”

August glanced from Vex to Tycho. “Horses *do* tend to be more filling,” he said.

“But we’re the same size!” Tycho insisted.

“Sorry, my mind’s made up,” August said. “I always knew I’d eat you eventually.” He spun the spherical horse on his back until he was staring at his bottom.

“Damn it, this blows!” Tycho protested, wobbling as much as he could. “I just wanted to drink a little and blimp!”

“Well you did both, so it’s my turn to have fun.” August grabbed hold of Tycho and opened his mouth wide. The snake’s jaws pressed against the horse and stretched. Little-by-little August began to pull his spherical prey into his maw. Progress was slow but steady.

Vex watched from nearby with a mix of relief and fascination. He knew eating a fully inflated person wasn't impossible, but he'd never seen it done personally. The fact the prey was his friend didn't bother him much at all. It was unfortunate, but at least he wasn't the one about to see just how cramped August's stomach could be.

August inched forwards, working his way over the massive curve that was Tycho's body. The horse's squirms weren't enough to dislodge him from his friend's maw. He cursed and grumbled, helpless to prevent his consumption. He was beginning to regret not snacking on August when he'd had the chance in the past.

Once August's jaws passed the half-way mark, there was no stopping him. His slim form was swelling as he gulped down the round horse, slowly becoming spherical as well. Swallowing Tycho was a pain, but the reward of a full belly would be worth it.

"M-Maybe he'll pop before he can eat me!" Tycho said. He could feel the snake's jaws closing around him, inching towards the end.

"Dude, that's never gonna happen, he's too stretchy," Vex said. "Just accept that you're gonna be dinner."

"As if!" Tycho snorted. "I didn't dodge frat boys all through college to get scarfed down as a balloon!"

"Looking like you did, actually," Vex giggled. He knew he shouldn't have been laughing, but Tycho's refusal to admit the inevitable amused him.

"Can't you bump into him with your claws and burst him or something?" Tycho asked.

Vex shook his head, then realized Tycho couldn't see him. "No, and even if I could, I'd pop you in the process, too."

"Oh, yeah. Well damn." August's jaws had reached Tycho's head, seconds away from closing over it. "Well then...well then...ah shit."

August closed his maw and gulped, sealing the spherical horse for good. He grunted and groaned as Tycho settled in. From a casual glance, it didn't even seem like he'd eaten anybody. The snake just looked inflated. Faint bulges and the muffled complaints of Tycho were the only hints of the truth.

"That really hit the—*braaaaap*—spot," August moaned, wobbling in place. "Thanks for recommending the horse."

"Don't mention it," Vex said, letting out a sigh of relief. August thankfully didn't have room for a second course—at least not an inflated one.

"A good friend would let me out!" Tycho shouted, his voice barely echoing out of August.

"A good friend would settle down and become snake pudge~" August snickered.

"Want us to just tell everyone you got gulped at work or something?" Vex asked.

"Please do! Or let me out. I kind of prefer the second option!"

"Denied; on both counts," August said.

"Oh come on! If you're gonna eat me then at least don't let everyone know this is

how I went out.” Tycho whined.

Vex almost felt bad for the horse. Getting eaten or popped were perfectly normal fates in life, but getting swallowed whole while inflated was much rarer. And, in a way, much sillier. It was the sort of story you told friends when you wanted to make them laugh, not solemnly reminisce. Maybe Tycho would get lucky and August would have a change of heart in the morning. Vex might even encourage him to lie, just to be nice. It all depended on how hungry the snake was at the time.

“Guess we should start looking for a new roommate tomorrow,” Vex said. Not something he was looking forward to.

“We’ve got plenty of time,” August said, grinning wide as his friend-turned-meal wobbled within him. “Let’s just make sure they’re as tasty as their predecessor~”

Vex laughed and Tycho whined. It’d been a good night, for the most part. In the end, only Tycho could complain...and not for long.