

Pop-up Pandamonium

Some legends begin in the light of day, while others are born in the darkest of nights. But whenever they may be, a legend is eternal. Hunger, incidentally, shares these aspects as well. Yes, hunger. That which drives us forward. To power. To glory. To good noodles at reasonable industry pricing. This is a relevant point y’see, as in this blackest night a covered wagon trundled down a moonless road. Normally this would not be an issue, if not for the fact that the reins were held by greying hands sprouting from sleeves that retreated into the covers. Now, this is a bit concerning, though I suspect the more disconcerting part is that the reins are attached to a floating yolk, with no horse or mule to be seen. And yet it moved with purpose into the Valley of Peace. What a delicious-sounding place that was. No doubt full of fat, lazy villagers. Oh, to satisfy the hunger of centuries once more~ This, was *definitely* the perfect place to set up shop.

Dawn washed through the Valley of Peace like liquid gold. And high above, soaking in the early rays was Crane, of the legendary Furious Five. His feathers flickered on a rush of warm air as he gracefully glided over the village, his gaze lazily moving from house to house until a peculiar sight outside one of the gates caught his attention. Descending graceful circle, the avian was fairly curious about this large tent that had sprung up, and also the small crowd of early-risers investigating the site.

Landing among them, Crane straightened his sedge hat as his interest melded crowds’. What seemed most intriguing was the smells wafting through the tent flaps; a smell he had never experienced, and one that seemed to match Mr. Ping’s Secret Ingredient Soup in aroma. “Know what’s happening?” he asked one of the villagers.

“It’s a pop-up restaurant” the pig villager answered.

“Clearly” Crane said dryly, noting the shabby outer appearance.

Popped up like a pimple, maybe. Still, if they were cooking now he might as well get some breakfast, if they were even servi- The curtains of the opening ruffled, and a fist made of clay pulled them open. “Hungry customers are always welcome” dulcet tones spoke from

beyond the veil. "Please dearest patrons, do come in and enjoy all the hospitality Fine Jade Dining has to offer" the voice purred.

There was an orderly (see: Rush) of villagers making their way in, while Crane remained patient at the back of the line until he too entered. And beyond there was such a fantastic sight. And... he wondered... why would he... ever... leave...?

An hour later, Monkey, Viper, and Mantis had gone for a morning walk into the village, though it wasn't just for their health. "Do you see Crane?" the snake inquired.

"No. I don't see a lot of anyone" the simian marching beside her noted.

"Strange isn't it?" the insect sitting on Monkey's head pondered. "Usually there's a morning rush for Mr. Ping's restaurant" he deduced.

"Maybe everyone is sleeping in?" Viper figured half-heartedly.

"Maybe, but it seems pretty strange that everyone is- Wait! Do you hear that?" Monkey asked, cupping his head.

In the new quiet, the trio could just make out a low, mournful groan. Followed up by one cracker of a belch. Silent agreement crossed the group, and upon bending the nearest corner, they were met with a horrific sight. It had been one of the many rabbit villagers of the Valley, but not quite at this... girth. Positively flabby in all the wrong places, her clothing was nothing but ill-fitting if not tearing at the seams. The poor lass, resting against the building, rubbed her full stomach and continued to groan loudly as more seams tore, exposing her pudgy belly. "What happened?" Viper questioned.

"Pop-up... restaurant" the rabbit moaned, her eyes opening. They shone green; entrancingly jade.

Small sparkles casted across the air, causing the eyes of the martial arts masters to sparkle jade for a second. "This is serious" the snake uttered.

It was serious yes, but also deeply unsettling. "A pop-up restaurant though?" Mantis noted. "I mean, I know some people can overindulge, but...."

"Not like this" Monkey concluded.

Silent agreement was shared, and the trio moved into a quick bolt, soon followed by some incredible acrobatic pirouettes across the rooftops. Moving from building to building, Mantis soon scouted the supposed pop-up restaurant, and in seconds they were outside it. The sheet door billowed on their approach, and soon it was opened by a clay hand. Luxurious, gourmet smells seeped through the gaps, and the martial artists soon found themselves hungry. Overpoweringly hungry. Ravenously hungry. "Three more for breakfast huh?" a soft voice spoke as the eyes of their guests gained a green hue. "Please..., welcome to Fine Jade Dining, and feel free to stay afterwards for brunch, and then lunch after that~ I believe that is a table for three? Well, do hurry on in now~"

Mr. Ping sighed despondently as he carefully peeled a radish. "I just don't understand it" he muttered. "There's usually at least ten people for breakfast minimum. Where on earth could everyone be?" the goose wondered.

But unknown to him, as he peeled, an inflated pig carting their porky belly staggered past the entrance to the restaurant, moaning pitifully as he looked for somewhere to rest. Taking to the nearest wall, his groaning peaked once he rolled back his shirt to allow his gut to air. And by good timing, the legendary Dragon Warrior himself was going to his old man's place for breakfast, had he not stopped for a portly piggy ailing against a wall. "Hey man, you okay?" Po asked, kneeling down by the villager.

"Pop-up... restaurant" the swine groaned, before falling asleep.

"Poppa wha?" the panda rambled, before noticing a couple other villagers staggering down the road, each of them as fat or even fatter than the pig. "Okay, *that's* weird" he remarked.

On some level yeah he knew some of the villagers idolized him, but did they really adore him so much they'd try to match his BMI? Something was up, so naturally, he would go to the best source of information he could find. "Hey dad, something weird is going on outside" Po said as he marched into his father's kitchen.

"You're telling me. I'm supposed to be serving customers, and instead I'm here peeling radishes" the goose sullenly complained.

"No like, suuuuper weird. There's villagers moving around like zombies, and one said "poppa restrant", or, something like that" Po reported.

"Poppa restrant?" Mr. Ping repeated, shaking his head in frustration. "Po, I don't have time for whatever new-fangled Kung Fu thing poppa restrants ar-" he began, until realization dawned on him. "Pop-up restaurant" he said in a horrified, hushed tone.

Radish and knife clattering to the floor, the goose honked loudly, scattering a cloud of feathers as he scrambled for his panda boy. Mr. Ping leapt onto his son, holding onto his vast belly for support as he looked into the panda's confused eyes. "POP-UP RESTAURANT?!" he squawked.

"Seriously dad, turn down the volume" Po complained, pulling his fingers from his ears.

"This villager. Were they... well-fed?" the goose demanded.

"Well he was uhh... yeah he was fat" the panda confirmed.

The water fowl's eyes shrank, and he lamely slid down his son's body, plopping onto the kitchen floor. "No" he said quietly. "NOOOOOOOOO!!!" he screamed while dramatically falling to his knees.

"Dad what is it?" the panda asked, grabbing his flailing father in a hold to keep him still.

“We... WE HAVE TO LEAVE! NOW! PACK UP AND GO BEFORE IT’S TOO LATE!” Mr. Ping screamed.

“Whoa dad, you seriously need to chill” Po chided as he desperately tried to keep a hold of his father.

“I... I NEED TO CHILL?! DO YOU NOT KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING?!”

“No, because you won’t *tell* me” the panda pointed out.

“We have to go, it’s not safe for us Pings now. It’s not safe for anyone!”

“Who is it? Cause if it’s a threat me and the Furious Five can handle it” Po promised.

“No” the goose sighed as he settled down. “No. This is beyond your Kung Fu” he lamented.

“WHO dad?” the panda asked desperately, releasing his father.

Mr. Ping sighed as he looked off distantly. “I thought it would never happen, not to us. Either they found us, or it was just bad luck. But we have to leave and start again in some other village” he said cryptically. “Maybe... maybe this time I’ll start a tofu bar, with noodles on the side this time....”

“WHY?!”

The goose turned, a haunted look on his face. “Because, son... Jìngsài is here” he uttered in hollow tones.

It seemed crazy that Pops would be so wound up over a pop-up restaurant, and yet, Po didn’t doubt a single word he had said. Whatever “Jìngsài” was, it has clearly gotten his

feathers ruffled. And dad didn't ruffle easily. Well, aside from when somebody doesn't tip, anyways. And a few other times, actually. But aside from that, something clearly was up, and so the funkalicious Dragon Warrior was on the case. And the trail was icy hot- No, it was boiling cold- No! Look, it was a big clue, as all Po had to do was follow the line of ailing villagers all the way out to a big impressive tent. And by ducking behind a tree, he could see people go in skinny, and come out fat. The strangest thing was the green glow, which he was pretty sure wasn't your typical restaurant feature. Getting closer, the panda wasn't really getting a better view of things, but was now picking up some delicious smells an- **GUUUOOOOUUUUURRRRRGGGGLLLLLEEEEE!!!** "Shhh" Po hissed to his rumbling belly.

That was some tasty smelling food, and the panda was forced to dig his heels into the grass to keep his stomach from dragging him out of cover. "Of all the times to skip breakfast" he whined as it took all his willpower to keep himself from joining the rest.

And as if needing an example, Crane staggered out of the tent. And for a normally trim bird, he was now a shadow of his former self. Or, his former self would've been a shadow for his newer self? Anyways he was a festively stuffed bird walking on legs that looked like pool noodles. "Oh Master Crane?" a voice spoke from the tent, catching the ailing bird's attention.

The bird turned around, and Po's eyes widened as he caught the green glow dominating Crane's own. "Brunch is about to begin. Why not stay for a bite?" the sweet voice asked.

"Mmmkay" the avian mumbled, staggering back into the tent.

"That's messed up" the panda muttered, feeling almost sickened by the sight.

He wanted to go in, do some flashy moves, save the day. But if Crane and the villagers were in there, well, the term "collateral damage" was one he was all too familiar with. And with no recourse, Po retreated back to the village. Master Shifu and whoever was left had to know what was going on he thought as he ducked and weaved past many more zombie-like villagers. And as he zipped past his father's noodle shack, Mr. Ping was still packing up supplies and items. Grabbing this, and that, and some more stuff, he was getting everything he could into some sacks and crates. And among all the "this" and "that" was a picture of him and his father, working the noodle shop. His feathery fingers gently caressed the glass. His beak muscles tightened as he found another picture, one of him and a young Po cooking noodles together. Memories. So many were intertwined into the shop. Could he just

"Like, y'know, it's all weeeeeiiiiirrrddd. People go into it looking normal, but then they come out all weeeeeiiiiirrrddd" Po elucidated.

"Weird how?" Shifu sighed, gently massaging his temples.

"You know, like, weird" the panda explained, drawing a circle with his hands. The two masters stared at him in utter bafflement. "Fat okay? They come out fat!" Po erupted. "I didn't wanna say it, y'know? Cause I'm not into body shaming. But everyone's coming out all fatty boombalati."

"They come out fat?" Tigress repeated.

"Well, that's not atypical for restaurants" Shifu supposed.

"Not like this guys. I saw Crane come out and he was all" Po rambled, puffing himself up as much as possible and drawing a large gut in front of him. "He went out, then someone said it was brunch and he went back in."

"It has Crane? And... the others haven't come back either" Tigress realized.

"That is concerning" the red panda conceded.

"Concerning? Oh, you don't know the half of it!"

Turning to the entrance, the masters were greeted by one very agitated Mr. Ping. "Dad?" Po gasped.

"You know what's going on?" Shifu queried.

"Do I know it? My family *lived it!*" the goose quacked.

"Riiiiiiight yeah! What did you call it? Junshi?" Po guessed.

“No, he was a baker in the northern province. He wasn’t very good. What I speak of is a much fouler creature” Mr. Ping warned, an awkward silence filling the air as the deranged goose held his wings up mystically.

“Yes?” Shifu asked.

“Oh, right” the fowl nodded, waving his wings some more. “There is a legend that restauranting families have shared for countless generations. I would have shared it with you Po, but you weren’t quite ready before this whole Kung Fu business began, since you were still having trouble getting over the boogey man stuff” Mr. Ping said.

His son laughed awkwardly, his cheeks turning red as Tigress gave him an amused look. “Ah heh heh, go on dad” Po chuckled bashfully.

“Right. Now, this is a creature restauranteurs can only utter in hushed words, for fear that saying its name aloud will invite it to your village. This creature is known only as Jìngsài, or, the Competition” the goose revealed in mystical tones.

“The Competition?” the Dragon Warrior snorted.

“Do not take it so lightly son. That vile creature has been the death of countless restaurants across China, including that of my great-great-great-great-great grandfather Xuan Ping’s noodle business. It always seemed so crazy: How could a pop-up restaurant compete with a well-established name? Well it does! It’s a siren that lures the weak-minded with fine dining, kitschy aesthetic, and meals well below standard industry pricing!” Mr. Ping seethed.

“Wait” Tigress spoke up. “This thing took out a business from over a hundred years ago?” she observed.

“Countless businesses, and it hasn’t just been a century. This vile creature has been active for far longer than that” the fowl assured her.

“So whatever has appeared in the Valley of Peace... is a supernatural entity with a grudge against restaurants?” Shifu figured.

“Grudge? It holds nothing but malice for those of our noble arts. It twists cooking. Perverts it! Uses it as little more than a means to satisfy its own parasitic hunger” Mr. Ping explained.

“Wait wait? Parasitic? Like, this thing *feeds* on people?” Po gasped.

“It fattens them up like livestock, and then devours their prey by the hundreds. It’s a leech! A parasite!” the goose shrieked.

“If it feeds on people...” Tigress began.

“And lives for so long...” Shifu added.

“Then it must keep its eternal youth by eating people” Po concluded, wrongly.

“Or Jìngsài is a vampire” Tigress corrected him.

“Or that, yeah” the panda nodded.

“A Jiangshi” Shifu uttered. “I had heard tales of them, but never have I thought one could ever exist” he said, looking to Mr. Ping. “So this Jìngsài that wiped out your ancestor’s village was a vampire?”

“Yes” the goose nodded. “I would never have believed it myself, had the Proof Pudding not been made to preserve the memory of that calamity.”

“Proof Pudding?” Tigress whispered to Po, who shrugged in equal confusion.

The red panda sighed deeply as he massaged his temples. "This is very serious" Shifu announced. "We cannot allow that creature to feed on the villagers, or any of the other Masters."

"And you think your martial arts can stop them? No, you too will be dragged in by the seductive call of their unearthly cooking, just like everyone else who tried to stop them" Mr. Ping said dismissively.

"Aww come on dad, with the Furious Five" Po began, but then realized a few Furious Absences. "Well, with the Furious One, the Legendary Dragon Warrior, and Master Shifu, we can't be beat!" he optimistically declared.

"If you insist on going, then I will go with you" the goose announced. "You may know your way around bandits and escaped convicts and tyrannical peacocks, but cooking is my domain, and I will be needed to keep you safe from the evils of kitsch."

"Your assistance is... greatly appreciated" Shifu nodded, albeit half-heartedly.

"If that is all, we must return to the noodle house, so that I may arm you with the proper utensils" Mr. Ping declared.

Now if this were a movie, this would be the dramatic scene of everyone gearing up to prepare for the final fight. Armor would be worn, weapons sharpened, war paint... painted. Unfortunately, Mr. Ping's kitchen had none of these things. But what it did have was- "Garlic?" Tigress questioned, holding up a bulb and some string.

"Yes. The smell of garlic, with its fragrant aroma, should counteract the over-spiced stench of Fine Jade Dining" Mr. Ping explained while tying a bulb to his beak.

"Okay, but why precisely do I have to wear a skillet on my head?" Shifu pressed, clearly asking the right questions here. "Because when you said utensils, I did not think you meant it literally."

“Dad, my cutting board isn’t big enough” Po complained as he tried to cover his vast torso with a single large cutting board. A big ask, if you ask me.

“ENOUGH!” the goose quacked. “While you complain and bicker-”

“We aren’t bickering” the red panda interjected as he tied garlic to his face.

“While we all are disagreeing on proper protection from vampires, to which the garlic provides an extra layer of protection, Jingsai’s web continues to fill with victims. Now, we march!” Mr. Ping roared as he armed himself with a rolling pin and a basket helmet.

To the surprise of no one (except perhaps Mr. Ping), their accoutrements were highly unnecessarily, as they made it to the tent without a single random encounter. They were, however, making sure to breathe in their garlic as they approached the tent, the curtain drawn via a clay hand. “A Terracotta Soldier” Shifu whispered, spying the vaguely humanoid clay soldier that had let them in. “They stopped making those over two centuries ago” he said in awe.

Beyond that, the quartet let out gasps at the sight within. The inside of the tent, which clearly appeared to be way, WAY bigger than its exterior, was lavishly decorated with fine silk banners, ancient wooden tables with pristine table clothes, and some very fine dining ware. “So many relics” the red panda said in awe. “Some of these antiques are over five centuries old!”

“Cease falling for the kitsch. They are but vile sirens luring you into the spider’s web” Mr. Ping warned.

“Yes, right” Shifu coughed awkwardly, feeling a little ashamed for admiring the scenery.

And what scenery it was, really. A wonderful, decadent place filled with at least half the village; all gorging themselves stupid on stacked plates of food. Probably should have led with that. Po swallowed nervously at all the eating, his inner glutton screaming out as the pain of a missed breakfast, brunch, and lunch, caused a hunger unseen since that time he

tried fasting for an hour. "So many people" Tigress uttered as she scanned the tables. "Look!" she declared, pointing in a certain direction. "There's the others!"

And she was very much right, for across the tent were Crane, Monkey, Mantis, and Viper; all seated and overindulging themselves in a manner that made Po look positively civilized. So carefully maneuvering through the diners, Po made it first to the Flabby Four, and he grabbed Monkey by the shoulder. "Monkey" he hissed.

The simian grunted loudly, and shrugged him off as he gorged more on a rich soup. But years of bull-headed perseverance wouldn't be stopped, so the panda grabbed both of Monkey's shoulders and shook him as violently as he could. "MONKEY!"

"Grrraaaaa PO!" the ape snapped, coming to as the strange jade light in his eyes faded.

"Monkey!" Tigress said in relief.

"Tigress? Master Shifu? Mr. Ping? What are you... doing... doing..." Monkey droned as the green light returned, and he resumed eating.

"Now now friends, that is no way to treat my guest" a pleasant voice chided.

This was soon followed by its owner, who appeared from another curtain, no doubt the one leading to the kitchen. They were a ferret with ashen fur and sharp teeth, wearing a round Chinese cap that had a spell tag hanging across the left side of its face. They wore clothing of an ancient design, and though faded, it still maintained its jade and gold styling, with long bell-shaped sleeves that hung off its raised arms. A belt was wrapped tightly around its trim waist, with an ancient symbol inscribed on the buckle. Truly, they were a haunting figure. So, naturally, the effect was ruined entirely by the Jiangshi hopping towards them in a manner that was anything but menacing. "My-my, truly what an honor it is to have the legendary Master Shifu and the last remaining member of the "Furious Five" to be dining here today" Jìngsài purred dulcetly, though there was snark inside those air quotes.

"What have you done to the others?" Tigress demanded while dutifully pressing the garlic to her nose.

Dining has to offer? Believe me: Living in bliss will make your final days far more comfortable” the ferret assured them.

“Puh-lease. All we need is a little KAPOW and a couple SKADOOSHES and you’ll be crying home to your undead mommy” Po taunted.

“Po” Shifu spoke up as the party began to feel some secondhand embarrassment.

“Oh no, a kapow and a skadoosh?” Jìngsài said in feign horror. “Whatever will I do? Perhaps you will also try a “bla-ping” as well?” they trembled.

“Uhh, earth to crusty mummy guy, “bla-ping” isn’t a Kung Fu move. It’s a kind of interpretative dance” the panda corrected him.

There was an awkward silence as the vampire calmly thought about what he was going to say next. “Well it wouldn’t have worked anyways” he finally said, though even he knew it was lame. “And I’m not a mummy” he muttered to himself.

“Well we can still kapow and skadoosh you” Po declared, his bravado waning.

“We can’t, not with all these civilians around” Tigress warned.

“Yes Dragon Warrior, do heed the advice of your friend. After all, it would be a tragedy for something to happen to my meals before I even get to sample their life force” Jìngsài smirked. “So, as I said: Take a seat. Table for four, yes? Well, one has just opened up” the demon said, snapping his decrepit fingers. It didn’t just feel like a table had opened up, but the entire world as it seemed to rotate, resulting in everyone forcefully placed into empty chairs at a well-decorated table. “Now then, please take a menu, and I will return to take your order shortly.”

And away to the kitchen the ferret hopped, leaving the would-be heroes in an unpleasant spot. “This has already gone well off the rails” Shifu sighed, taking a cautionary sniff of garlic and removing the skillet from his head.

"You see? Oooohhh, this is why I should have fled! There is no way we can remove the leech now that it's taken root" Mr. Ping lamented.

"It's not over yet dad. There's still a way we can beat this monster" Po said hopefully, taking up a menu. "Wow! You weren't wrong dad. These are really cheap prices!"

"Below. Industry. *Standard*" the goose seethed.

"But if martial arts are out, then how can we beat Jìngsài?" Tigress chimed in, correcting the course of this discussion.

"Perhaps it could be bested at its own game?" Shifu offered.

"You mean we out-cook it?" Tigress queried.

"It's possible. After all, while not much of a fighter, we do have the greatest chef the valley has to offer" the red panda said towards the goose.

"No" Po stated. "Not happening."

"What?!" Mr. Ping quacked.

"He's going to cheat dad" the panda asserted. "No way will he play fair with his magic voodoo cooking."

"Or do you simply think I wouldn't be able to match him like your martial arts can?" the goose countered.

"What? Dad, your food's amazing. But Jìngsài is totally a cheater and he'd cheat to win. I mean, look around! He's gotta do funky stuff to people to even get them here" Po pointed out.

“But he’s still our best shot” Tigress cut in.

“Perhaps fighting food against food may discourage Jìngsài from staying” Shifu theorized.

“I highly doubt that” the Jiangshi intoned as he seemingly materialized behind Po.

“Whoa dude” the panda jumped. “Don’t *DO* that!” he grumbled.

“A cook-off you were plotting? What an amusing idea, and I mean that sincerely. None have had the courage to try and face me head on, though not without good reason” the ferret chortled.

“Then know that for the first time today, a Ping fights back. My family has had eight generations to prepare for this, and now it’s time you were put in your place” Mr. Ping boldly declared.

“That is precious, but there is little reason for me to fight you little goose. After all, your entire village, or at least most of it, are now in my thrall. All I must do is wait and watch you lament as for the second time in history, a Ping loses their business” Jìngsài darkly intoned.

“Then you’re just scared of losing, oh fearsome “competition”. In fact, if you want to sweeten the deal I’ll bet my business that I beat you” the goose declared.

“Dad!” Po gasped.

“Oh yes, how tempting” the Jiangshi sarcastically said as he hopped around the table, planting his hands on the fowl’s chair. “Bet upon a business that will go down anyways should I choose not to play. Well, if it is any consolation to you Ping, at least once you lose your business, you could definitely turn towards your talents in comedy!”

“ENOUGH!” Po shouted, slamming the table and pushing his chair back.

“Po!” Mr. Ping gasped.

"Got something to say Dragon Warrior? Do you wish to bet the Jade Palace too?" the ferret smirked.

"No. And my dad's not betting his shop either, cause he's not fighting you" the panda declared.

"Well, that was already a given" the Jiangshi pointed out.

"No, it's because you're going to cheat" Po stated.

"And you base that on...?" Jingsai questioned, tilting his head curiously.

"Look around! Everyone here is under some evil spell making them shovel food in their faces and then walk around like zombies!"

"Good cooking leaves anyone in mindless bliss" the vampire said defensively.

"So that's why it's going to be a fair fight. You. Me. Outside" the panda demanded.

"Fight you?" the Jiangshi guffawed. "Me? Fight the Dragon Warrior? Now that simply would not be a fair fight!"

"Yeah, cause you just know I'd-"

"For *you*."

"Pfft, you're just a big chicken. Cheep cheep cheep" Po jeered, wiggling his arms like a chicken.

"Now that's just offensive" Mr. Ping said to himself.

“Hardly. In case you forget, this is MY restaurant, and therefore, if there are to be any challenges here, I get to decide” the ferret asserted with a noticeable deepness to his voice.

“So you’ll take me on?” the Dragon Warrior asked.

“Take US on” his father spoke up boldly.

Jìngsài stared blankly at the goose, before addressing Po. “Well, I care little for challenges, but the Dragon Warrior? The prestige from destroying you would make me famous in all of China!” they smirked. “And also some parts of Mongolia and a good deal of India.”

“Then name your challenge you bag of bones, and I’ll beat you at *any* of them” Po boasted.

“Tempting, oh so very tempting” the Jiangshi melodiously sang. “And consider me tempted. Very well! I know exactly the challenge that will cater to both of us. So tell me, Dragon Warrior, what food tempts you the most?”

“Well, since you can’t make my dad’s famous Secret Ingredient Soup, that’s out. So for your level of skill, how about dumplings?” the panda snarked.

“Dumplings eh?” Jìngsài pondered. “Very well. I shall make sure they're the last you will ever eat. Ah ha ha ha ha ha! Ha ha ha ha ha! HA HA HA HA HA HAAAA!” the vampire laughed as they backed towards the kitchen.

This would have been a truly dramatic effect, if not for the effect being completely ruined by the fact that the villain was hopping backwards as they laughed maniacally. “Well, that was” Shifu began, only for Jìngsài to poke his head out of the curtain to give one more “Ha!”

It vanished into the kitchen, and for some reason everyone felt very awkward. “Po! How could you do this to me?!” Mr. Ping shrieked.

“Because he wasn’t going to fight you!” Po retorted. “And, y’know, I don’t wanna be mean but, he was right. He had no reason to fight you, and betting the shop wasn’t going to tempt him.”

“But now you risk yourself instead” the red panda pointed out.

“Hey, I might be the awesome and legendary Dragon Warrior, but I’m also a Ping. Awesomeness and broth runs through my veins, and I can’t let some creep ruin food for everyone” the panda solemnly swore. “Or let them put my dad out of business” he added.

His father’s beak opened slowly, and tears welled up in his small eyes. “I am so proud of you Po” he said, his necks muscles trying to hold back a sob. “Yes, I was so worried about Jìngsài I forgot that there are two noodle masters being threatened. So please Po, for me and for everyone whose businesses that monster ruined, you KICK HIS VAMPIRE BUTT!” he cheered while jumping onto the table.

“YEAH!” Po cried, rising off his chair with his arm raised to the ceiling. “Now... how is he going to make dumplings evil?” he wondered.

“That would be rather poor hospitality on my part to fill my dumplings with evil” Jìngsài remarked as he appeared behind the Dragon Warrior’s chair, causing the panda to jump in shock.

“STOP DOING THAT!” Po squealed.

“So, the Dragon Warrior and a chef huh? Two sets of pride I get to break in one go, how wonderful!” the ferret chuckled as he nodded to his left. Heavy footsteps stomped across the tent as several Terracotta Soldiers marched towards the tables. “Now, if you would be so kind as to be manhandled by my soldiers, the challenge can begin” the Jiangshi stated.

“What?! No way are they going to be manhandled by your clay toys” Po asserted, only to see that Shifu, Tigress, and Mr. Ping were currently being manhandled. “Seriously?”

“We have to play his game Po, for now” Shifu explained.

“Just focus on winning” Tigress added.

“And you better not charge Po for those dumplings Jìngsài!” the goose warned.

“I would not dream of it, as this challenge is on the house” the vampire explained, and nodded again.

More soldiers cleared away the cutlery from the table, to provide room for a large and highly unusual wooden disc to be placed upon it. “What’s this?” Po asked as he took a seat at one end of the table.

“It’s a rotating plate to be placed upon a table, allowing convenient access of meals by rotating them about” Jìngsài explained as he took a seat opposite to Po. “I felt it would be useful for this challenge” he purred as another soldier approached.

Held in its clay hands was an enormous bowl stacked impossibly high with dumplings. They steamed in such a satisfying way, and the pastry was so fine it looked as if each one had been filled with sunlight. Po’s jaw hung open, his tongue flopping out with drool leaking off of it as the bowl orbited at the vampire’s side. “Hungry, Dragon Warrior? I sense you have yet to fill your aching belly all day. Well, I must warn you that these dumplings are special. A secret menu item, if you will” the ferret laughed.

“So what, am I supposed to try and eat these all?” Po figured.

“Of course not. Then it would not be a proper challenge would it? No-no, this challenge is something far simpler” Jìngsài alluded as the bowl was placed on his side of the spinning plate. “Quite simply we are to eat a dumpling, and then have the opponent match or exceed them. We continue until one of us no longer stands.”

“Good luck beating my son!” Mr. Ping scowled from his terracotta prison. “When he was a baby he ate all my imported bamboo furniture! He’ll beat you and then ask **ME** for seconds afterwards!”

“Do shut him up” the Jiangshi sighed.

The soldier holding the goose raised a hand slowly, and clamped it over his beak. “Not cool!” Po scolded.

“His family has always been loudmouths. I remember Xuan now, and he was just as boastful. What a pity the family is like cockroaches. You think you have stomped them all, but somehow some survived under the armoire” the ferret sneered.

“Watch it buddy, you’re talking to a Ping right now” the panda warned.

“Yes, of course” Jìngsài said wearily with a roll of his eyes. “Now, since you seem so irrationally concerned about my non-existent plot to cheat, I will take the first bite.”

Pinching one radiant dumpling between his clawed nails, the vampire gently held it above his mouth. “Wait!” Po suddenly declared.

“Hmm?” the ferret grumbled, his pupil moving onto the panda. “Yes, what is it?”

“I want a proper promise from you that you’ll see this challenge to the end, no changing your mind” the panda demanded.

“Ugh” Jìngsài groaned, unable to even attempt to put on a façade for this. “Fine, whatever, it will not make a difference anyways.”

“I want you to say it, on a pinkie promise” the chubby warrior added, holding out his chubby pinkie.

“A what? Ugh, you truly are a Ping” the ferret sneered. “Stubborn and tedious to the last- Fine, I solemnly bound myself to the challenge, and will not leave until one of us loses. Happy, Dragon Warrior?” he growled.

“Then we shake” Po explained, leaning over the table to extend his arm.

The Jiangshi held aloft an arm that stretched out to meet the chubby black pinkie, and they shook. "Now then, just to further dispel any other frankly paranoid issues of my being dishonest, observe" he purred, releasing the dumpling into his maw. He didn't even chew, just allowed it to fall all the way down to his throat. "See?" he said with a broad smile. "I bear no ill-intent here" he said sweetly as he rotated the vast bowl over to Po's aside.

The panda swallowed hard as he was presented with such a vast quantity of such... delicious... smelling... good... good good. Oh man he just wanted to eat them all! **GRRRRRMMMMBBBBLLLLL!!!** "Hungry Dragon Warrior? Please, eat your fill. You will find *MY* dumplings to be just that" Jìngsài smirked. "Now the minimum is one, and I suggest you follow it. Temper your appetite, as it were."

Narrowing his eyes in suspicion, and armed with a pair of chopsticks, Po took exactly one golden dumpling from the pile. The shine. And oh man the smell. The panda's lips tightened and yet drool still flowed from the corners of his mouth. "*This better not turn me evil or a vampire or something*" the Dragon Warrior thought as shoved it into his mouth, and chewed.

His eyes immediately lit up, and his already fertile imagination lit up with an explosion of colours and flavours. It was literally insane how good it tasted! He wanted it to remain in his mouth forever, and yet, he had already swallowed it. "Tastes good?" the vampire smirked.

"Yeah, well, it was alright" Po shrugged. "Now then, it's your-"

BAWOMPH!

The good guys were aghast as Po's body continued to jiggle, having just spontaneously grown an inch fatter all round. His cheeks were slightly plumper, but there was noticeably more belly than before. "What on earth?" Shifu gasped.

"What the heck you bag of bones?" the panda growled as he steadied his plusher self.

"Oh, dear me, it seems in my eternal age I forgot to mention what makes these dumplings so special" Jìngsài tittered triumphantly. "Naturally, one such as I is most skilled in the arts

of cooking... and alchemy. And these ever-so-special dumplings are little calorific bombs! Just one is enough to fatten you up like the pig you are. Granted, you are already quite large so it does not surprise me too much as to how little you were actually affected."

"Then why didn't it affect you when you're so skinny? I saw you eat one!" Po insisted.

"Me?! HA! It would take many of these to affect me Dragon Warrior. I have the hunger of centuries, and just one of these would never be enough to satiate my needs" the Jiangshi boasted.

"I knew you were going to cheat!"

"Using one's own natural gifts is hardly cheating Dragon Warrior, and like you could talk with your clearly freakish metabolism. Now then, I believe it was my turn?" Jingsai said.

The panda glared as he spun the disc, bringing the bowl round before the cheater cheating cheat vampire. "This could possibly become concerning" Shifu said quietly.

"Do you think Po can handle it?" Tigress asked back.

"I'm not sure. Kung Fu is useful against mortal foes, but a supernatural entity like this could prove an insurmountable challenge for the Dragon Warrior, even when in his own element" the red panda whispered as the ferret smirked while devouring another dumpling whole, this time with a viscerally wet swallow sound.

The smile never left his face as he, unaffected by the insidious dumplings, rotated the disc back toward his foe. "Po, you don't have to do this" Mr. Ping declared, having somehow gotten his beak out of the soldier's grip.

"How did you do that?" the vampire uttered.

"I gotta do this dad" the panda asserted as he took another dumpling.

“It’s just a noodle shop, you don’t have to do this” the goose begged, but was silenced as his son partook of the challenge.

Chewing slowly, and trying hard not to drool, Po swallowed the dumpling. A vibration was felt throughout his body, and it was followed by warmth as he could feel the fat piling on. All over the Dragon Warrior went from XXXL to XXXXL, thickening with more luxurious lard that made it all the more tighter around his pants. A slight cleft formed along his chest, with a slight raising along his normally flattish chest. “That’s two each” the panda said calmly, wiping some drool from his newly born second chin and rotating the bowl back around.

“I’m amused by your fortitude, but likewise having nothing but pity for your waxing figure. Stubbornness gets you nowhere in life Dragon Warrior; just ask your ancestor Xuan Ping about that” Jingsai warned as he took another dumpling and devoured it whole like the rest. “Your turn” he purred, bring the bowl back around.

Breathing in the heavenly aroma, Po carefully took one dumpling with his chopsticks, and then another. The vampire’s brows rose as two perfect dumplings rested in the Dragon Warrior’s paw, before he scarfed them all down. Jingsai was mildly intrigued by this, even as his foe never broke his cold stare. Not even as a volatile **RUMBLE** quaked through him, followed quickly by a **GORGE!** With rapid affair Po continued to get fatter, his sizeable gut spreading against the table, a tuck rising over the top while his considerable chest sprouted a supple pair of a-cup moobs. There was an upheaval of lard around his shoulders, with a slight ring of black fur tucking underneath his second and third chins. And even his thick fingers thickened, feeling a little less dexterous as waves of fat weighed at his arms and his clubbish legs. A loud “UUUURRRRRPPPPP!” roared from his gullet, and thus Po did wipe away more drool as he rubbed at his ponderous (and squishier) belly. “Your turn” was all he said, sending the bowl back to the vampire jerk.

Jingsai stared at the bowl, and then at the panda. “I am impressed, Dragon Warrior” he admitted. “It usually takes far longer for my opponents to escalate of their own volition.”

“That’s because you’ve never met me before” the panda smirked; an effect ruined by another trail of drool dribbling down his face.

“Nor have you met me” the ferret asserted, taking three from the bowl and eating them with nary a care.

Well, some care. That was seven already, and it had only just begun. Still, he wasn't going to just show that as he turned the table back around. Po took four dumplings, and basked in how they still maintained their warmth as if they had only just been steamed. "Then we're both like my dad's Secret Ingredient Soup. Special because we make it so" he said wisely and devoured the lot.

And yet his gaze didn't leave his foe as he felt the rumble, and the warmth, and the growing weight. Perhaps it was a cumulative effect, or just from the sheer calories overwhelming his metabolism, but Po seemed to get even fatter than before. Lard spilled out over his straining shorts, his gut like a hefty black and white apron that rested heavily on the table and under it. The panda's love handles were more like a love railing, with ample folds for an entire ballet company to hang onto. There was a deep breathy sigh while Po's moobs filled in, their cleft deepening and growing more noticeable as his boobers hung off him with enough mass to be highly squeezable. And yet he carried himself well, despite the ring of fat around his neck growing larger, and his limbs growing ever heavier as the Dragon Warrior's Dragon Butt spread and spilled over the seat he was on, the fragile furniture **creaking** under his ever widening derriere that had begun to poke out the top of his shorts. Po grunted as he tried to get comfortable, but honestly the chair was actually feeling a little small for such a wide behind, especially with a vast crease appearing in the seat. "Uhh, look, not to be rude and all, but could you uhhhh...?"

"Someone get the Dragon Warrior another chair" the ferret sighed to hide his growing worry. This was getting a little absurd. Most wipe out after a few, and yet here is the Dragon Warrior still glaring at him and already escalating to four as if daring him to eat more.

"Thanks dude" Po said to the Terracotta Soldier that brought him a second chair; one for each of his Dragon Butt Cheeks. "Now Jìngsài, I think it's your turn yeah?" he preened, swiveling the table disc back around.

The vampire swallowed hard, and yet he still took up four dumplings... or should it be five? Surely he hadn't hit any kind of threshold yet, but five might cause the panda to slow down and rethink things? Wait, was he second-guessing himself? The Competition was second-guessing himself. "Hey skinny, my dumplings are getting cold" the very fat panda jeered.

Casting aside doubt, the Jiangshi took the four and ate them all. Thankfully, he wasn't feeling full yet, but no one had ever come this far, and there is a limit to all things... even him. "It is your move... Dragon Warrior" he said icily, returning the bowl to Po's side.

The vast panda chuckled as he rubbed his hands together and took another four, and gobbled them up all the same. The vampire just sat in disbelief as the black and white ball continued to balloon. His vast gut began to round out, gaining a boulder-like shape as it hung below his swelling moobs, each one a cozy cushion in their own right. The hard and heavy table before him rumbled forwards, pushed by the force of his immense and mighty belly. His face sunk an inch into his fattened neck, with folds forming along his doughy shoulder-line. And yet this barely seemed to affect him at all, even as his arms continued to grow heavy and fat, his legs like a pair of thick trunks. "Mmm, yummy" he exclaimed, feeling ever satisfied by the creep's food as he licked his fingers clean. "Man, wish I could eat these all, but, you deserve some too" he said smugly, giving control back to Jingsài.

The ferret clenched his teeth. How DARE this tub of lard goad him like that; who the hell did he think he is? "I will wipe that smug look off your face soon enough" he hissed, taking up six and cramming them into his face, finally chewing for once and slamming them all down.

A shiver ran through him, followed by an uncomfortable feeling in his belly. No, it was impossible, he hadn't fed for so long. He couldn't be getting full now. He REFUSED to do so. "It is your move Dragon Warrior. Let us see how cocky you are after six more dumplings to add to your mountainous figure" he snarled.

"Hoo hoo" Po giggled eagerly, grabbing one, two, three, four and so on until.... "Eight?!" everyone gasped.

"Heh, getting serious now Po?" Mr. Ping smirked with pride. "Oh you're in for it now Competition. When he gets on eight after all that, you're in trouble" he bragged, only to get silenced again by the Soldier's hand.

"Enough of you goose!" Jingsài growled, but already he was losing confidence as the Dragon Warrior stuffed his face. How could he do that? HOW!?

"Mmm" the panda moaned, each little calorie bomb exploding on his tongue and filling him up with joy. "Mmm-mmm" he sighed, rubbing his expanding self with glee.

He was a large thing yes, but Po was positively exploding with girth, his tremendous gut pushing the table forward enough that it slammed against the floor, and continued to spreading like a highly inquisitive hill. The panda sighed again in satisfaction, his massive arms resting atop his pillowy moobs and slowly sinking into their tremendous girth. There

was a said of stretching elastic as his shorts fought against him, the fabric doing its best to contain his gargantuan hips, and even bigger butt. Almost a foot of his crack was exposed from behind, a sight his allies did not relish one bit. And below them the ancient chairs creaked, attempting to survive under the rising weight of the One-Tonne Dragon Warrior. Fissures spread through the well-lived wood, with one leg close to buckling to contain his tremendous mass.

Po wiggled about a bit, trying to get comfortable as his massive legs slowly moved upwards, their weight density growing too vast for them to sit downwards anymore as his feet looked positively puny compared to his thighs and calves; each one capable of starting fires from friction alone. "Are... are you enjoying this?!" the Jiangshi asked in disbelief.

"Hmm?" the Dragon Warrior murmured from his cushy ring of neck fat. "Hey man, you're the one who said your food was good. I mean not as good as my dad's, but still pretty good" he chuckled, before notice a **cracking** sound. "Hey, isn't that- WHOA!"

SLAM!

The entire pop-up restaurant seemed to shake as Po hit the ground, chunks of wood disappearing underneath his gargantuan rump. "Man, your furniture is junk" he complained, reaching to the side for a bit of wood, then tossing it aside.

"Those chairs... were over a century old..." Jìngsài wheezed.

"Now they're day old wood chips" Mr. Ping cackled, somehow having gotten free again, and then was silenced, again.

"SILENCE!" the vampire shrieked, a terrifying shadow surrounding him. "THOSE CHAIRS WERE WORTH MORE THAN YOUR ENTIRE MISERABLE SHOP!"

"Then why did you let me use them knowing I would crush them?" Po pointed out.

"Because" the Jiangshi stammered, a little lost for words. "Because I did not expect you to be such a monster" he admitted, his shadow fading away.

“It seems hypocritical for you to call other people monsters” Tigress commented.

“Bite your tongue woman, or I will have my soldiers silence you all” the ferret threatened.

“I wasn’t even doing anything” Shifu grumbled.

“Then remain that way” the vampire growled.

“Hey man, earth to spooky dead guy, it’s your turn” Po called out, catching his foe’s attention. “Now, you gotta spin the wheel, cause I can’t reach it anymore” he chuckled, his blubber jiggling merrily.

Jingsai glared intensely as he purposefully moved the bowl back around to his side. There was a noticeable dent in the pile, something that shouldn’t even be possible. But nonetheless he took eight, and with noticeable slowness, he ate them one by one. It felt like it was getting harder to swallow now, but he couldn’t show weakness in front of the Dragon Warrior. There was no way, AT ALL, he was going to lose at his own game. And yet, he was still reticent to swallow the final dumpling. “See? You can’t win Dragon Warrior” the Jiangshi hissed, but, there was something amiss.

Slowly, his very flat middle rose, straining at his tight belt as he filled out noticeably with quite the pot belly. “Can’t I?” Po preened, finally seeing the chink in Jingsai’s armour as the monster hastily loosened his belt.

“This means nothing when you are vastly ahead of me in girth” the ferret scowled.

“Then get your little clay figurines over here with the bowl, cause if girth’s the game then I’m winning by a landslide” the panda cheered.

“Do it” the vampire commanded.

A Terracotta Soldier took up the bowl and marched it over to Po, who took it in his greedy fat paws. "Thanks dude" he said cheerfully, before upending the bowl to his cavernous maw.

Jìngsàì's jaw hit the table as countless dumplings tumbled into the Dragon Warrior's obscene gullet. Meanwhile, Shifu could only shake his head in dismay. "Po please, show some dignity when engaged in combat" he chided.

"Sowwrf Mafta Shifoof" the panda said through a mouthful of dumplings.

"Impossible" the Jiangshi said in disbelief as his foe somehow managed to chew on an obscene amount of something nobody should even be able to eat an obscene amount of. "How many even is...?" he fretted, a hand dragging down his cheek in shock.

The Dragon Warrior shrugged as he swallowed a thick meaty wad all in one go, his belly **RUMBLING** loud enough to wake the dead. Fine and heady **gurgles** and **BURBLES** ran through him, his body attempting to process so many calories. "Whoa!" he gasped, rising upwards on his gigantifying rear.

It was impossible to even say how big it was, nor how his little shorts were still managing to stretch so far that they managed to canvass half his mighty cheeks, with the rest of his flabby can spreading over the waistband like an avalanche. His tail, though originally short, was nowhere to be seen in the immense recesses of his fat folds. But that could be considered a good thing, as all the junk in his trunk helped counterbalance his chest of drawers in the front. His smooth, round gut was so massive it would have dwarfed his original size, and it was only getting bigger and bigger, spreading across the floor and rising up in front of him like black and white alpine field. Small child could easily roll down it with ease, or get stuck in one of his deep flabby folds. One or the other. Speaking of deep, his fat face was sinking into the vast field of neck, shoulder, and torso fat, of which the most weight went to his panda boobs, which would make any woman around feel envious of such size. He was truly one big blob of panda, with his tiny feet and mammothine legs only barely poking out the sides of his belly blubber. Po had truly reach such an absurdity in size, and as the **RUMBLES** slowly abated, and he settled into himself, he could only put on a cocky smile. "Your go dude" he declared cheerfully.

The ferret saw the bowl return to in front of him, and he could only gape at the mountainous Dragon Warrior. "Ho-how many even was that?" he uttered in horror.

“Dunno. Guess you’ll have to eat a bunch until you think you should stop. Now I should tell ya, I got a big mouth, so it’s gotta be more than twenty” Po warned.

Swallowing helplessly, and very much aware of his promise, Jìngsài took up a dumpling and swallowed it. He grimaced as his fullness grew more apparent, and he had to undo his belt another few notches to account for his greater girth. He then ate another, and his skinny limbs swelled to a healthier size. But then he took another, and became a bit of an unhealthier size. In part, it was kinda horrific to the Jade Palace Team to watch the Jiangshi slowly inflate in size, clearly not used to it like Po was. And yet, he forced himself to keep going, his ancient clothes tearing at the seams, his ashen fur spilling out of the hole as he grew larger, and larger still. He had only reached the panda’s original size, and if he could cry, he would have done as he continued to eat. It was almost pathetic to see the ferret like this, almost suffering as he ate food that should have brought him joy. In truth, a part of the Dragon Warrior wanted to stop this, to end this now. But... Jìngsài not only promised to see this through to the end, he’s also hurt so many people for so long. It had to end at the table, it was the only way to make him pay for everything he’s done, including what he did to Xuan Ping. “Huff.... Huff...” the Jiangshi gurgled, some dry spittle dripping from his mouth.

The ferret, once thing, now looked like an inflated balloon animal version of himself. His fat arms filled up his empty sleeves until they were tight around them, and his gorgeous ancient clothing had torn, allowing his own belly fat to spill out the front in its grey state. “I... I do not understand” he blubbered, his trembling fingers losing his grip on a dumpling. “HOW?!?!” he screamed. “I... I have the hunger of centuries! A hunger only a thousand souls could satisfy! How am I losing to you?! You are just a panda!”

In silence, sans some noticeable **sloshing**, Po did the single most horrifying thing he could do: He stood up. This literal blob of panda, somehow balancing on his teeny tiny toes. His rump, which could squash a person, hung half a foot from the floor, while his belly was close to brushing it. And he took a step forward, and then another. The vampire gasped in horror as the Dragon Warrior, who by all rights should be dead, was walking towards him. “There’s something you clearly don’t know about pandas Mister Fatty Fat Fat Fat” Po said through blubbery cheeks as he crawled onto the table, which buckled under his weight.

The bowl of dumplings flew high into the air, and with incredible finesse, Po caught it and each individual dumpling with absolute precision. The Jiangshi huffed loudly, and for the first time in a century he remembered what it felt like to sweat. “Huh... wah?” he babbled.

“See, you might have the hunger of centuries, but I eat decades for breakfast” the panda bragged as he got back up.

“Po,” Shifu sighed, “a decade’s not as long as-”

“Quiet!” Mr. Ping silenced him. “Do not interrupt his divine crusade.”

“I.... You...” Jìngsài stammered.

“Now if I remember right, you only ate nineteen yeah? Then I’m pretty sure that makes it still *your turn*” Po declared, taking a dumpling and pressing it into the ferret’s open maw. “Skadoosh” he whispered, forcing it in.

The vampire swallowed wetly, and everything seemed fine, until. “NGH! GRF! GIYAAAAAHHHH!”

Jìngsài started to inflate rapidly, tearing spreading across not just his clothes but himself, ancient energy escaping him like lightning bolts as he rounded out, his face widening like it was being pulled at like gum. “NIYAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!” he screamed, his ancient being tearing itself apart.

BANG!

There was an explosion of dust, as well as tatters of old clothing and the Jiangshi’s spell tag. The Dragon Warrior cough loudly as he was caught in the cloud, while his friends were released as the Terracotta Soldiers fell apart. “Ew! Ew ew ew!” the panda fretted. “I breathed in dead guy dust” he whined, waving at his nostrils.

And as he flailed, Shifu and Tigress noticed the patrons were waking up, the green glow in their eyes fading as did the environment. The pop-up restaurant disappeared like haze, along with the furniture and the soldiers, leaving only the occupants behind. “Oh man,” Monkey groaned as he rubbed his pot belly, “what happened?”

“Monkey!” Tigress cried in relief, bounding over to him and the other members of the Furious Five.

“Oh geez, I was having this weird dream where we all turned into Po” Mantis complained.

“I don’t think that was a dream Mantis” Crane grimaced, noting everyone’s gains.

“Oh man, look at me. I don’t think I’ll be able to eat for a year” Viper exclaimed while stiffly moving her chunky, anaconda-sized body.

“At this rate, I might have you all not eating for a year” Shifu added as he slow-walked to them. “But, I am glad you are alright... mostly” he added kindly, while regarding his supersized students, and then Po.

“Eww, dead guy dust” the panda continued to complain, only to be suddenly shaken by something. “Huh?”

“It’s me, down here” his father said from somewhere below his hips. “I’m hugging you” he added for clarification.

“Aww thanks dad” Po chuckled.

“No, thank *YOU* Po. After all this time, our family has finally been avenged” the goose declared with glee, a tear rolling down his face.

“It was my duty to stop him dad. Both for the family, and for the valley.”

“To think you had to eat that maniac’s cooking to do it too. He... wasn’t better than me, was he?” Mr. Ping asked with suspicion.

“What? No way! Your dumplings are the best dad!” the Dragon Warrior declared.

“Good. Just as well. At least now Jìngsài won’t be able to poison people with his below industry standard food” the goose smirked with triumph.

“Indeed” Shifu spoke up as he picked up Jìngsài’s spell tag. “I hear some Jiangshi could return if their spell tag remains safe.”

“So just rip it up” Mantis suggested. “Bring it here and I’ll slice it in two!”

“Were it that easy Mantis. It’ll take special measures to destroy it, but I know a Master who can deal with it. So we will keep it secure until it can be sent to them” the red panda explained.

“Also, in the meantime, my dear Po?” Mr. Ping spoke up.

“Yeah dad?” the panda returned with a smile.

“You’re going on a diet... right now” the goose declared.

“WHAT?!”

“What do you mean “what?!” Look at you! People want to be seen with the Dragon Warrior, not the Lard Warrior. No now don’t give me that face! The family recipes have a few diet options that’ll help you slim down in a few... months... years.... And no, slimming down won’t include dumplings young man!” Mr. Ping asserted.

“Aw come on!” Po complained.

“No arguing with your father Po. Now, you can play with your friends a little longer, but I better see you back home soon so we can sort out your diet. Heavens above know I can’t feed you forever if you remain at this size” the goose uttered as he waddled off.

“Uhh, Master Shifu?” a random villager spoke up, reminding the group they were there.

"It's alright everyone. You were all under the spell of a Jiangshi, but you are safe now. Please return to your homes and rest up" the red panda declared.

"That sounds good" Monkey said, stretching his squishy arms. "I think I could go for a nap myself."

"Unless of course, you feel like training some of the weight off?" Tigress suggested.

"Leave them be Tigress, I dare say we've all suffered enough for today" Shifu said as he led the rest of the Furious Five home, leaving just Tigress and a very large Po as the rest of the village milled away.

"So, be honest here," she began, "were those dumplings better than your father's?"

"Oh my gosh they were amazing!" Po said excitedly. "Oh they were so meaty and so flavourful and the spices were so good" he rambled with a noticeable trail of drool down his maw.

"You've still got the bowl" the tiger noted.

"Do I?" the panda remarked, noting the empty bowl in his hand. "Aww, I guess they disappeared when Jingsai disappeared. Man, I was hoping to try one more, for the road" he whined.

"It's best you didn't. We can't afford to waste more days helping you put off what you put on" Tigress said. "Still, we should catch up with the others. Do you need help?"

"What? No, I got this. See?" Po said, taking a rumbling step forward. "You go ahead and help the others, I'll be fine."

“Very well. You did well today. Thanks to you the village is safe once again; in perhaps the strangest way, but it’s the thought that counts” the feline declared, and then followed after the others.

“All in a day’s work for the Dragon Warrior” the panda boasted loudly, keeping a haughty appearance until everyone was way ahead.

Sighing loudly, Po giggled to himself as he lifted up one of his moobs, and caught a small array of golden dumplings that poured out. “A few more for the road shouldn’t hurt” he said, albeit a little guiltily, and he downed the all.

Oh those flavours again. So good. It was a pity he couldn’t express it more during the duel, but it was so worth it now to enjoy them just for a little longer until he swallowed them. He exhaled slowly, then inhaled as he enjoyed the warmth one last time, before his blubber spread out several more inches, piling on to an already massive dumpster of a pile. The bottom of his belly finally reached the ground, and it gently caressed the grass below as his pants dug into his blubber. His dumpster-sized ass bloated some more, only for there to be a sudden **RIP!**, and his tremendous cheeks spilled out of the tear in the seat of his pants. There was so much booty in there, and the flood of blubber spread the seam even wider, until all the rump it once contained was all out there. “Ooops” Po seethed, feeling a little embarrassed as a cool wind blew on his exposed cheeks. “Ehh, I’m sure that can be fixed” he said with a nervous chuckle.

Now more eager to get home than ever, he took one cantankerous step forward, his foot sinking into the soft earth a good inch or two. “Yeah, probably not the best idea” the Dragon Warrior conceded as he began to slow and arduous waddle home, each foot sinking deep into the soil of what was a very long strip of grassy field.