

Bursting Buffet Haunt

By: IndigoRho

On Halloween night a lone ghost hovered over the street, scowling. The spectral orc was solidly built, fairly ripped with a small muscle gut. A tattered chef's apron hung around his neck. His ire was directed towards a specific restaurant, Garrain's All-You-Can-Eat Buffet.

In life the ghost had been known as Borjak, known for being cheerful and laid back. Cooking was his passion, and opening a family friendly buffet had been a dream come true. For a long while business was well, and every customer left with a smile on their face and a full belly.

Then a year ago to the day he'd met his untimely end there. Three employees he'd considered nothing but loyal had abruptly turned on him, eager to implement a brand new "vision" for the buffet. They'd pinned him down and force-fed him all the wonderful food he'd put his soul into cooking, his belly swelling out of control. Despite his attempts to struggle and break free he'd ended up grounded by the weight of his massive gut.

The pantries, fridges, and juice bar were all emptied into him until his middle was a massive creaking orb as taut as a drum. Finally the ringleader of the trio—a goat named Garrain—had slipped a single cookie past his lips. The treat had pushed the orc over the edge, causing him to explode in a shower of hide scraps and food. In a flash he'd lost consciousness—only to wake up later as a ghost.

For months Borjak had wandered aimlessly, distraught and bitter. He'd frequently return to his old restaurant, which had been completely rebranded with Garrain as the new owner. Once a place of happiness, the three instigators had transformed the buffet into a land of enforced gluttony, a twisted shadow of its former self.

Customers quickly discovered the staff believed that "all-you-can-eat" was a directive rather than an option. They would be ruthlessly stuffed, usually to the point of being unable to leave on their own power. Many met similar fates to Borjak, fed against their will until they popped. For Borjak, sorrow gradually turned to fury.

The ghost had decided he couldn't let his old restaurant be fouled any longer, and had plotted revenge. Borjak was going to give the three who'd stuffed and burst him a taste of their own medicine. With a sinister grin the ghost faded from sight.

The buffet had just closed for the night. At the juice bar a heavy green crocodile was busy mopping up a spill, all that remained of another "satisfied" customer. Shugoth *hated* seeing people miss out on the free refills of freshly-squeezed juice offered at the bar, and was insistent that every glass remained full—and every customer. He'd put on a fake sweet demeanor to begin with, at least until his unlucky target was sporting too big a sloshing belly to resist. Often he wouldn't stop filling them until they were a puddle.

Borjak remembered well the gallons upon gallons of juice he'd been forced to sample thanks to Shugoth. Now it was the crocodile's turn.

While Shugoth mopped, the line of juice taps at the bar behind him rattled. The Blueberry Blast tap suddenly slithered out, slinking towards the unsuspecting crocodile. Like a predator stalking its prey the hose waited, until Shugoth finally turned around. He gasped in surprise at the odd sight, giving the tap the perfect opportunity to strike. In a flash the hose dove into Shugoth's mouth and down his throat.

Shugoth winced as cold juice began to gush into his stomach. It filled almost immediately—and then started to expand. A look of horror came upon him as he watched his doughy belly getting rounder, firmer. Eventually he shook himself from the confused daze and tried to fight back. Shugoth pulled and pulled at the hose with all his might, but it simply wouldn't budge. Meanwhile his gut was only growing bigger and sloshier.

More hoses rose from the juice bar. Two wrapped around Shugoth's thick arms and pulled them away, essentially rendering him defenseless. Two others forced their way into the crocodile's maw,

tripling the flow of juice. Shugoth's middle was now rapidly ballooning outward.

Shugoth thrashed and let out muffled shouts of distress, only to be silenced by a vaguely familiar cackling.

“Can't handle a little juice, Shugoth?” Borjak chuckled.

Borjak manifested before Shugoth, whose eyes widened at the sight. The ghost gave Shugoth's bloating belly a menacing squeeze.

“I hired you because you seemed so kind, and it was a shame to learn that was all an act.” Borjak squeezed harder. “Maybe turning you into a massive crocoberry will make you sweeter.”

Shugoth's struggles intensified, but escape was impossible. His shirt had ridden up his chest, revealing his many belly tattoos stretched and warped. The crocodile's round moobs were merging with his increasingly spherical body, scales loudly separating as he continued to expand. Juice had started filling his limbs, puffing them up and making them rigid yet sloshy. The seams of his clothes ripped as he outgrew them, reduced to shreds.

The crocodile's hide was stretched horribly thin, juice leaking from the gaps in his scales, colorful waterfalls forming a pool beneath him on the floor. He'd ceased struggling, worried that any excess movement would cause him to burst apart. Shugoth's gaze darted around the buffet, desperate for rescue. Unfortunately all he saw was the ghost of his old, vengeful boss.

Leaks were springing up across the almost spherical crocodile's body, spouts and trickles of juice that threatened to erupt at a moment's notice. When Shugoth's eyes bulged Borjak knew the end was at hand.

The countless leaks turned into tears, a tidal wave of juice spraying in every direction as Shugoth exploded. Hide and juice alike passed right through Borjak, instead pelting the bar, tables, chairs, and even lights. The hoses clattered to the floor, the flow of juice stopping on its own.

A surge of satisfaction came over Borjak, the first happy moment he'd experienced since becoming a ghost. *One down, two to go.*

Elsewhere in the restaurant, a hefty rat padded out of the kitchen, patting his partially exposed belly. Macca had been indulging on a snack when he'd heard a loud noise. It *sounded* like someone popping—not an uncommon occurrence at the buffet—but he was certain all the customers were gone already.

“Hey Shugoth, isn't it a bit late to be making a mess!” Macca bellowed as he looked around.

There was no response. As he reached the large soft serve machine he spotted an odd piece of fabric on the floor and leaned over to pick it up. Quietly the machine turned on. The fabric was soaked, juice dripping from it, and Macca gradually realized it was part of Shugoth's shirt. As was a scrap of crocodile hide nearby.

Soft serve had begun to swirl out of every nozzle on the machine, defying gravity to arc towards the rat like tendrils. They all merged together, a multicolored serpent of soft serve.

Macca was still coming to the conclusion that Shugoth was the one who'd popped when Borjak's specter appeared before him without warning. Instinct took over the rat, who turned to flee, only to find his route blocked by the haunted soft serve machine.

“N-no way—*ooooooooomph!*” Macca's panicked shout was cut short as the soft serve tendril pushed its way into his open mouth.

Borjak grabbed Macca by the arms from behind and held him in place. “Oh Macca, didn't you always like to boast about being stronger than me? I never liked that attitude, and your tendency of challenging customers to eating contests they couldn't hope to win.”

Macca couldn't respond, the rat's gut swelling with soft serve.

“Speaking of which, I noticed the new eating challenge you introduced after I left. Something about free meals for a whole year if you can drain the machine without bursting?” Borjak grinned. “Course they don't realize the soft serve tank can hold enough to burst someone a half-dozen times over. But hey, maybe you'll be the one to finally beat it!”

The frantic Macca began to squirm, already feeling terribly stuffed. His cheeks were round, belly wobbling as it expanded and sagged past his knees. The weight wasn't too bad, but he knew his gut would never be able to stretch enough to contain all the soft serve. His usual bolster was gone, whittled away as he filled up.

Once Macca's middle had become horrendously unwieldy, Borjak released him. The rat tried to run, but he could barely waddle. The soft serve tendril kept pace with him as he slowly headed towards the back office. Borjak watched with glee as Macca's arms and legs plumped up, inevitably causing the rat to trip and fall on his bloated gut just short of the door.

Macca groaned and wobbled, unable to get back up. Higher and higher he rose atop his belly, a brown creaking orb. Unlike Shugoth there were no leaks to herald Macca's end, just a quick spasm.

With a thunderous boom Macca popped, sending globs of soft serve flying all over. The goop covered the back office door and ran down the walls, bits of rat scraps mixed in. Macca's torn vest hung from a light fixture, swaying gently.

There was stomping from within the back office, the door swinging open. A massive brown goat—Garrain—was on the verge of cursing out his employees for making a raucous when he stepped in the mess Macca had made. He barely had time to comprehend what had happened when Borjak made his presence known.

“Garrain! My wonderful, sleazy, conniving former manager.”

Garrain attempted to flee, only to find his limbs frozen in place after only a couple steps. “B-Borjak, I can explain!”

“Don't be afraid, I'm just here to treat you to a hearty meal—the same one you gave me.”

Garrain's legs moved on their own, Borjak controlling the goat like a puppet. A plethora of pleas were ignored as Garrain was brought to the nearest food station. A burger was grabbed and tossed into his forced-open mouth, then another, and another. Garrain chewed and swallowed against his will, not stopping until every last burger had been eaten. Then he was moved to the next station.

“Leading by example is important,” Borjak said as Garrain continued to stuff himself, belly growing and pushing against the buffet. “As the new owner, it only makes sense that you should follow your own motto of all-you-can-eat!”

Hot dogs, pizza, pasta—all were wiped out, crammed into Garrain's swelling gut. The goat could feel the growing weight and pressure. Out of the corner of his eye he spotted Shugoth's juice puddle, and realized Borjak's intentions. His triumph over the orc had seemed so perfect, but he'd never expected Borjak to return as a vengeful spirit.

Sandwiches, pies, burritos. Garrain *should've* been immobile, but Borjak's possession ensured the goat continued wobbling from one course to the next, gluttony incarnate.

“Looking kind of full there, Garrain, yet there's still so much!” Borjak laughed.

Garrain was so stuffed he could barely think straight. Food had started floating right into his mouth since he was too fat to reach it himself, his belly touching the floor. He kept hoping he'd somehow reach the end of the buffet intact, but the food seemed infinite. The goat was doomed to blow.

Borjak constantly prodded Garrain to test his tautness, eventually deeming him “ready”. The ghost picked up a single cookie and waved it in front of Garrain's face, watching the goat's eyes follow its every move.

“Garrain, I'm feeling merciful. I'll leave you in peace—once you eat this last, small cookie.”

The goat shook his head, but his mouth opened nonetheless. Borjak pushed the cookie in, and a reluctant gulp sealed Garrain's fate. He let out a pitiful bleat as he heard his hide creaking in protest, and for a split second he thought he might survive. Then came the loud, rattling *Boom!*

Whatever surfaces hadn't been coated by juice or soft serve were now splattered by a buffet-worth of food, with a scattering of goat scraps.

A smile returned to Borjak's face, the orc finally at peace. With a content sigh he faded away, avenged. In his place three new ghosts formed, Shugoth, Macca, and Garrain all huddled together,

bursting still fresh in their minds. Now they too would be forced to endure the aimless wandering Borjak had...