

The Dispelling Test

By: Indi

The gray deer looked over his class of mage students, making sure all twenty were there. Professor August had been curious if any would abruptly drop out before the test that day, but no one was missing. A sign—he hoped—that they'd all taken it seriously and studied.

"Alright, I assume none of you have forgotten, but just in case: your first test of the semester will be today." There were a few frowns, but no shocked looks. "You will be tested on the basics of dispelling enchantments, which we've gone over for nearly a whole month now. Very simple stuff, so I'd expect all of you to be capable of passing as long as you bothered studying."

August raised an arm. Around his wrist was a gray band with bright blue runes painted on it. They glowed, and a wisp of blue mana rose from the band. In the air before him a spectral hoof appeared. He reached into a pocket and pulled out a tiny wooden box, three inches to a side. He tossed it towards the hoof, which effortlessly caught it.

"Each of you will attempt to dispel the enchantment on a box like this one. If you fail, the enchantment will counter with a light hypnosis spell. And if you get hypnotized, then I'll eat you on the spot." August grinned as he watched the nervous looks multiply. "Of course I'm being rather generous, and anyone I eat *will* be re-formed—but not until the end of the semester. So if you mess this test up, you'll be failing my class, and any others you happen to be a part of." A harsh prospect, but the professor needed to make sure everyone was putting their best effort in from the get-go. But he couldn't deny wanting an excuse to snack on at least a couple students without getting chastised about it by the Archmage.

The spectral hoof gently placed the box on a podium set up at the front of class.

"First up will be Brian."

The wolf stood up from his desk and approached the podium. He didn't appear to be entirely confident with his abilities, and being in front of the class likely wasn't helping. He held his paws over the box. A mumbled incantation came out of his mouth, and the box began to glow. Suddenly a mist erupted from it, pelting Brian right in the nose. The wolf shook his head and coughed, before his eyes narrowed and glazed over.

"And we already have our first failure, oh well." August shrugged. "Brian, you're deer food today, so head on over here and get into my stomach."

Brian turned to August and sluggishly walked towards the deer. As he neared, four spectral hooves manifested and grabbed a hold of the wolf at different points, lifting him off the ground. They carefully turned the confused but compliant student, and guided him feet-first towards August's open maw.

August's neck bulged as he began swallowing Brian. The wolf didn't put up even a hint of a fight, calmly allowing himself to be gulped down. Gradually the deer's flat middle ballooned outward, his vest nudged further open.

The rest of the class watched with mixed emotions as their peer was swallowed whole. There was some amusement, and even jealousy from those feeling voracious themselves. But there was also a good deal of uncertainty. After all, if they failed the test, they'd end up following right after Brian.

With half of Brian swallowed, August tilted his head up and took over for the spectral hooves he'd created. Brian was easy to swallow, the lean wolf swiftly slipping away inch-by-inch. Chest and shoulders vanished, then his neck. His head slid into the deer's maw, surrounded by warm breath. August let him linger for a moment so the class could watch, then gulped and gently closed his mouth,

sealing his student away.

The Professor's belly wobbled as Brian finished emptying into it, swaying softly from side-to-side. He shifted around within just enough to get into a comfortable position, but otherwise remained calm.

August rubbed his bulging belly with both hooves, running them along the curves made by the wolf. "Few things as tasty *asurrrrrrrrrp*—as wolf. Excuse me. I hope the rest of you fare better—though I certainly don't mind the filling meal." He smiled. "Nell, you're *urrrrrrrp* next."

A plump horse stood up from the seat next to Brian's empty one. The box Brian had failed to disenchant was tossed aside by a spectral hoof, and a fresh one put in its place. Nell seemed less nervous than Brian, despite getting the chance to see the bulge he'd become only a few feet away. His own method involved placing his hooves on either side of the box and silently concentrating.

The mist from the box was sudden, Nell barely having time to whinny in shock before he zoned out, hypnotized.

"Not off to a good start, are we," August said. He'd thought Nell had had a good chance of passing, but his desire to gobble up the plump horse was greater than his disappointment. "Time to be my second course, Nell. Giddy up!"

Nell trotted over, his middle jiggling a little on the way. Just like Brian, he was intercepted by spectral hooves so August could lazily feed. He went head-first, his tail swatting about.

August's belly bulged out further as Nell was steadily added to it, sagging past his knees and towards the floor. He widened his stance to stay balanced, and started swallowing faster, eager to be stuffed more. Soon Nell's hooves were gulped down, and August's stomach was home to two students.

The spectral hooves rubbed and kneaded the deer's immense middle, some helping to hold the bulk up. His magic had always enabled his gluttony.

"Alright Rob, try not to disappoint me," the Professor told the thin hare in the front row.

Rob eagerly got up, no fear or doubt on his face. He was one of the most skilled mages in class, and had likely known a bit about dispelling things before he'd even arrived. As soon as a fresh box was on the podium Rob manifested a globe of water with his paw, and enveloped the box in it. The water gently swirled and glowed.

There was an audible gasp when the water globe popped like a balloon and mist shot out. Rob swayed and groaned, then slumped a little. He'd failed.

Professor August frowned in confusion. Had Rob gotten cocky and messed up his disenchantment in haste? It was the only way the hare could've failed a test that should've been a breeze. August guessed it was better the student learned the dangers of overconfidence early, when the stakes weren't as high. After all, he wasn't about to turn down a free meal.

"Remember everyone, if you're full of yourself, someone else may end up full of you. Down the hatch, Rob."

Spectral hooves carried the hare over to August, and stuffed him into the Professor. Though Rob was slim, he still swelled the deer's belly up well, leaving it hovering barely an inch off the floor. More hooves were summoned, used to prop up his enormous gut so he didn't fall over.

August stifled a moan as he felt his stomach shift; someone was getting pushed into the second chamber. From the size, he guessed it was Nell. Horse must've been right near the entrance and gotten sucked in. His belly didn't shrink at all, but it'd now started the long process of digesting his prey. Nell had a couple more chambers to go before he ended up as goop, though.

"*Braaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaap!*" August was too slow to cover his mouth, his belch echoing throughout the classroom. "Okay Hutch. I'd wish you luck, but honestly you're looking mighty tasty

right now.”

A hefty panther frowned. He pulled himself out of his seat, his soft middle jiggling. He was a perfectly average mage, but notoriously ravenous. Professor August was also well aware that Hutch loved using weight-gain spells on potential meals. The panther was guaranteed to double or triple in weight by the time he graduated.

There was hesitation in Hutch’s voice as he rambled off his incantation, but it still sounded competent enough to August. But in the end, mist spewed forth and the panther got dopey.

“Did anyone here study, anyone at all?” August asked aloud in exasperation. He sent some spectral hooves to lift up Hutch, but the panther was a tad too heavy. Two more were needed before the doughy feline was secured.

August preemptively leaned over and rolled atop his massive belly. If he were going to gorge, he would do so comfortably. Eating Hutch took time, even with the deer greedily gulping the panther down. His gut wobbled and swelled, raising him up higher. Someone else was pushed into the second chamber of his stomach, and then into the third.

As obnoxious as it was to have four students in a row fail his test, the sensation of being so stuffed was euphoric. He looked across the nervous faces in the room, all eyes on his mountain of a middle. He could already tell a lot more were going to end up gliding down his throat, if only out of fear.

“Someone’s bound to succeed—*uworrrrrrrrrrrp*—eventually. Next!”

Professor August groaned as he finished slurping up the lizard tail. It was his twentieth meal of the day. Against the odds, not a single student had managed to pass the test. His best pupils had performed just as poorly as his worst. He’d never eaten an entire class before—well, at least not because of a test. Before that day, his “record” for such things was ten, and he’d later learned that was because most of the students had spent the previous night drinking and weren’t exactly in the best shape to cast magic.

Spectral hooves were darting around, massaging August’s towering belly. It was an incredible feeling, but eating twenty people had also tired him out immensely. The fourth chamber of his stomach was gurgling loudly, but churning away the class would take time. Time best spent snoozing. The deer let himself relax, and fell into a deep, fattening sleep.

It took a day to digest his obscene feast. In that time, his belly had shrunk from the size of a hill down to merely a mound. Though it was still a mound nearly as high as he was tall.

Over time August had rolled onto his back, his eyes lazily looking up at the curve of his massive gut. It was round and soft, wobbling with every slight movement. He waved a few spectral hooves over to it, each one pressing against his blubber and sinking in. The pressure made him blush. Until he slipped into some enchanted compression clothing he was going to be immobile. Thankfully he had his magic to help lighten the load, so he would still be able to awkwardly waddle back home. Or, if he were feeling adventurous, he could just have the hooves roll him. It wasn’t the most graceful way to travel, but he got a kick out of it.

Being blubbery was fantastic, but Professor August still couldn’t help but be confused by the catastrophic failure of the test. At the very least a couple should’ve passed. They couldn’t have all

failed to study, or come in exhausted, or messed up due to fear of being crammed into their professor's crowded stomach. He snickered as he remembered the seagull who definitely had been, though.

A couple spectral hooves retrieved a fresh test. August channeled a disenchantment spell through them, one he'd done thousands of times in the past. Though he couldn't see the box, he heard the sound of the mist being released, and frowned.

"Hmm, maybe I should take my own advice and not be cocky."

He had the hooves grab another test, and tried again. More mist. Three more times he attempted the test, and all three times he was met with failure. It didn't matter which disenchantment spell he used, or how slowly he went.

"Now that can't be right," the blob of a deer mumbled. One more test was located, but this time August concentrated on identifying the enchantment. It wasn't long before his eyes widened. The box wasn't enchanted—it was *hexed*. "Oh...oops. I must've grabbed the wrong test boxes from the storage room. Of course the dispelling they were taught wouldn't work on something like a hex, those are two completely different kinds of magic."

The Professor laughed, and his massive belly wobbled. "Eh, we all make mistakes—right guys?" He gave his gut a teasing slap. "I'll make sure to double check the tests next semester. Though now that I know which ones of you taste the best, perhaps a few hexed ones will get mixed in again. By *accident*, of course."

The doughy deer lay back, his mood improved now that he knew his teaching hadn't been to blame for the test going bad. After all, he took almost as much pride in his ability to teach mages as he did his ability to eat them...*almost*.