

Absorbing Knowledge

By: Indi

Roz hated the odd gap between their two classes that day, which ensured they couldn't do much but laze around their dorm room and wait. The pink goo snake stretched in their seat, gaining a couple feet in length in the process before reverting back to normal immediately after.

They wore pants and an open jacket, showing off a considerable amount of their goo. Plastic gauntlets and boots gave them claws to better interact with the world, but they didn't wear a full shell like many of their kind tended to. They'd found it to be too restricting, and excelled at maintaining their shape anyway. They didn't even wear a helmet, instead shaping a serpentine head so they could mimic the facial expressions of other species. It also meant they weren't mistaken for an android, which was common for goo who encased themselves in solid shells.

Of course there were other reasons why Roz preferred to not have their body restrained too much, which they were reminded of once their stomach rumbled.

At least a trip to the dining hall might help pass the time.

Roz took out their phone and gave their roommate Tycho a call. "Yo, want to grab something to eat before Stellar Physics?"

"No time," Tycho said on the other end. The lion sounded distracted. "I've still gotta finish studying for the test."

"What test?" Roz didn't think Tycho had any other classes that day, and the weekend was just about to start, so there couldn't be one tomorrow, either.

"Uh, the big midterm for Stellar Physics," Tycho said. "The one that's like a quarter of our grade."

Roz cursed. They'd forgotten all about the midterm, distracted by other classes and an RPG they'd gotten lost in for the last week.

"You didn't study, did you?" Tycho asked.

"Yeah...no," Roz admitted.

"Well you should probably at least dig through your notes right now so you won't bomb the midterm completely. The Professor might offer some extra credit to make up for it later," Tycho said, with little sympathy. Roz realized the lion had probably reminded them a few times about the midterm, apparently to no avail.

"Maybe. Well see ya, then."

"See ya."

Roz hung up their phone and groaned. Stellar Physics wasn't exactly their specialty, and they knew no amount of cram studying would be enough to prepare them for the midterm on such short notice. They were screwed. Unless...

The goo snake grinned wide. Their kind tended to have unique abilities, and they'd ended up with a particularly useful one: they could absorb memories. Of course in order to do so they had to consume the person they wanted to gain the memories from, and the memories only lasted for a few days at most. But Roz would only need them for the duration

of the midterm, and they *were* feeling hungry. It was the perfect opportunity to kill two birds with one stone.

Fortunately for Roz, one of their classmates was living in their dorm, just a couple floors up, and they were definitely the sort to study for a midterm. "Time for a filling tutoring session," Roz snickered, quickly leaving their room.

Roz was relieved to hear Clyde's voice on the other end of the dorm room door when they knocked. If he hadn't been home, they'd have needed to ambush him before class, which would've been far tougher. The Professor wasn't fond of students coming in stuffed, after all.

The door swung open, revealing a tubby, cream-colored horse. Roz admired Clyde's round middle, their stomach growling louder. They'd forgotten just how delicious the horse looked.

"Oh, hey Roz," Clyde said. "What can I help you with?"

"Well I was going through my Stellar Physics notes again before the midterm, but was having trouble with something," Roz said. "Any chance you'd be able to help me out real quick?"

"Sure." Clyde stepped aside and let Roz through, closing the door after them.

The room was the same style as Roz and Tycho's, different only in the decor that'd been put up. There were quite a few skateboarding posters, along with some boards, a couple of which probably hadn't been used in a while. Roz was under the impression both students had outgrown them that semester. It was rather easy to get fat if you liked eating people, after all, and Roz knew Clyde had an appetite to match his gut.

"So, Clyde, you're feeling pretty good about the midterm, right?" Roz asked.

"Yep!" Clyde said with enthusiasm. "Haven't done much the last couple weeks aside from study. That and eat, heh." The horse chuckled and rubbed his belly. His shirt was a little tight, his belly peeking out for Roz to ogle.

"Both are wonderful to hear," Roz said, getting closer to the horse. "You'll do nicely, then."

Before Clyde could ask what the goo meant, he found his arms pinned to his sides and a gooey tail pressed against his back. He whinnied in panic as Roz's maw opened wide and his head was forced into the gooey cavern.

Roz wasted no time in scarfing down the horse. Being made of goo, it was incredibly easy for them to swallow others whole, their body stretching to contain even the fattest prey. Within seconds they were lifting Clyde off the ground, the horse's legs kicking frantically. A few more gulps and the horse was in up to his belly. His face was pressed against the gooey wall of Roz's belly, and he could see himself getting swallowed, his kicks just bouncing right off. No matter how hard he pushed, he couldn't force his hooves through the thick goo.

Roz tilted their head up and opened wide, causing Clyde to plummet the rest of the way down their gooey gullet. Roz's belly rapidly ballooned out, bouncing wildly as their meal emptied into it. With a satisfied grin they slapped their bulging gut, looking down upon the

horse trapped within.

"You're exceptionally filling, Clyde," Roz said. "You might be the best lunch I've had all month!"

"I'm not food, let me out!" Clyde demanded, pushing hard against his cramped prison.

"Sorry, dude, but the only way I'm passing this midterm is if I borrow all that wonderful knowledge crammed into your head. Coincidentally absorbing you will also solve my hunger problem~" Roz wobbled their belly, watching the horse tumble about. They loved the feeling of a full gut, and having someone trapped in it was even better.

"It's not borrowing if you digest me!" Clyde whined, still struggling. "Why didn't you just study!"

Roz shrugged innocently. "It slipped my mind, sorry. And technically this won't be permanent. I mean, you can always be cloned once they realize you've vanished. And Hell, the new you won't even know I'm the one who ate ya, so there'll be no hard feelings."

"B-But it's been over a year since I got scanned last--I'll have to repeat a bunch of classes all over again!" Clyde said.

"Well that's your fault for being lazy. I'm sure your clone will be better about that, though," Roz said. "Now enjoy becoming goo."

Roz's body became more opaque, until Clyde was only just barely visible as a vague shadow. Their belly began to wobble, not from the horse's struggles, but from the process of absorption. Steadily the goo's middle began to shrink, while the rest of them grew thicker. Their meal was still putting up a fight, even as the shadow lost most of its definition and their belly had shrunk in half.

Roz gleefully rubbed their gut as they gained mass, Clyde's memories flowing into their head. The goo suddenly knew a lot about skateboarding, from the names of tricks to popular brands of gear. Games they'd never played were now familiar. Places they'd never been now had some fondness.

They knew Clyde had purposely been gaining weight, and that he sometimes fantasized about being so fat he could barely move. Clyde had even let his roommate feed him on occasion, which involved a lot of nervous teasing about turning the horse into a meal. More than ever Roz was surprised Clyde hadn't kept his clone scan up to date.

Eventually the information Roz had actually been after came through. By the time the goo's belly had ceased wobbling they were twice as heavy, and comfortably competent at stellar physics.

"You really came through, Clyde!" Roz said, slapping their gut. "Hunger's gone, and I feel like I actually paid attention in class now. Though there's still a couple gaps in my knowledge. Bet I could ace the midterm if I had it."

Roz poured through Clyde's memories. The horse's roommate was also in their class. He was a cheetah named Jet, the one with black fur and white spots. Admittedly Roz had ogled the feline quite a bit since he'd been packing on the pounds. And—at least according to Clyde—he was knowledgeable in the areas the newly-improved Roz still lacked.

Roz checked their phone. "I've still got time to swing by the dining hall for a second study session. I'm sure Jet would love getting reunited with his roommate, too." Roz snickered,

rubbing their gooey gut.

The dining hall Jet apparently frequented was fairly close to the building Stellar Physics was in, so Roz had no trouble reaching it. They kept an eye on the groups of students coming and going, looking for Jet just in case. Their caution proved useful, as they managed to spot the cheetah exiting and heading towards class.

The cheetah was even fatter than Clyde had been, and so stuffed his belly hung out in plain view. Clyde's memories told Roz that Jet had never been fat before, but that his appetite had gotten ridiculous after blimping up some from eating a couple guys at a party. Roz was sure they'd know Jet's feelings on the matter even better once they'd absorbed the snack full of calories and knowledge.

Roz hurried ahead, then backtracked so it didn't look like they'd been stalking their prey. "Yo, Jet! Ready for the midterm?"

Jet stopped in his tracks, his belly jiggling some. "Uh, yeah, I guess." He was typing away on his phone. "Sorry, been trying to get a hold of Clyde to make sure he didn't sleep in, but he's not replying to my texts. I really don't want to have to run back to the dorm just to drag him into class."

"Oh don't worry, Clyde's not napping," Roz said. "In fact, he was just helping me study."

"He was?" Jet asked. "Then where's he now?"

"Let me show you," Roz said with a mischievous grin.

Jet didn't even get out a yelp as he was jumped by the hefty goo snake. Other students gave the pair a wide berth to avoid getting involved in the meal, merely throwing casual glances as the cheetah was rapidly consumed by the goo. It took only a couple minutes for Jet to end up as a wobbling bulge in Roz's gut, his struggles on display for the rest of campus to witness.

The cheetah put up a fiercer fight than Clyde, which only pleased Roz. "What the Hell, let me out!" Jet growled.

"Oh quit complaining. Just relax and join Clyde as goo so I can ace this midterm," Roz said, their belly turning opaque.

"I can't believe you ate Clyde!" Jet whined in distress.

"Ugh, I hope both your clones are more chill," Roz said, before allowing absorption to begin. It was a shame they didn't have the time to keep their meal around for a bit longer. Slow absorption was always funner. Perhaps they'd celebrate with a day-long meal after they aced the midterm.

Tycho stood near the door to class, the pudgy lion wondering what was taking Roz so long to get there. There was always a chance the goo snake had given up and decided to drop the

class, or lost track of time studying. Still, he thought it more likely they'd stumble in, unprepared but at least on time. He was just about to pull out his phone to call when he saw Roz waddling down the hall.

"Uh, weren't you pretty lean the other day?" Tycho asked, shocked by the sheer heft of the massive goo snake.

"Yeah. I just snuck in a couple hearty study sessions before class, though." Roz slapped their belly with both claws, causing it to wobble.

Tycho rolled his eyes. "Studying like a normal person would've done you a lot more good, you know that, right? Who'd you even eat?"

"Just Clyde and Jet," Roz said, momentarily avoiding eye contact with Tycho.

"What the Hell!" Tycho said, nearly growling. "I'm *friends* with Clyde!"

"Well you know how to make tasty friends," Roz said. They'd known it might be a sore spot with Tycho.

Tycho stared at the shiny, pink belly of Roz and frowned. He gave it a prod, watching it jiggle. "Couldn't you have just eaten Jet?"

"Clyde was the first one I found, and he was way smarter. Real brain food." Roz snickered, earning them a smack from Tycho. "Oh come on, he'll get cloned. Why are you so worked up about me eating him?"

"Because I know for a fact Clyde hadn't updated his scan in a while—since *before* we'd become friends," Tycho said. "What if I don't connect with the next Clyde?"

"Just show New Clyde your message history or pics or whatever and I'm sure he'll just accept it," Roz said.

"Yeah, sure. Should I have to worry about you turning me into a study snack eventually as well?" Tycho grumbled.

"Don't worry, I'll save you for our finals." Roz's joke earned them another smack. "I'm kidding, I'm kidding! Will it make you feel better if I tell you Clyde was thinking about eating you soon?"

"He what!" Tycho exclaimed.

The pair waddled into class as Roz happily told Tycho about Clyde's various schemes to stuff and eat him. All the while he resisted the urge to scarf the lion down...for the sake of his grade, of course.