

Morning Commute Snack

By: Indi

“Damn it,” Decker grumbled under his breath. The rattlesnake knew having a light breakfast would be risky, but he’d needed more time to go over the marketing deal he’d be overseeing that morning. It wasn’t an especially major deal—or a smart one in his opinion, not that the execs above him would listen—but Decker didn’t like slacking off. While he felt confident going into the meeting now, his stomach was protesting the fact it’d only gotten toast for breakfast.

The ride on the train would take another twenty minutes, followed by ten to get to work. The lines at every fast food joint and food stall were bound to be long. Something from a vending machine might be enough to hold him over until the meeting, but Decker didn’t want to deal with hunger pains for another half-hour. His only other option was a tad bit extreme, though.

Decker began eyeing up the few others in the train car with him. Swallowing a person whole would be far more than a mere snack, but it’d be guaranteed to satisfy his stomach. He scowled. Would the meal be worth the weight he’d gain? Or having to lug a full belly around the office all day? It might actually help him in the meeting since company culture had been all about voracious appetites lately. The fact gluttony was trendy made him want to roll his eyes, even if he was more than guilty of having a live meal on occasion. At least he didn’t stuff himself with interns like half his peers.

Another rumble from the rattlesnake’s stomach ended the internal argument. A ferret had just gotten on the train, dressed in a designer brand suit and chatting away on his phone. He was somewhat short, with a chubby middle. Not too fattening, then.

Decker lifted his tail, careful not to make any noise with his rattle. He angled it at the ferret, who had their back turned to him. With a snap his tail wrapped tight around the ferret, who was yanked backward and onto Decker’s lap. Decker didn’t offer a snarky remark or excuse. He just opened his mouth and began swallowing his breakfast.

The strike caught the attention of the other passengers, but only briefly. Some distanced themselves from others just in case Decker’s hunger provoked copy cats. None were still looking after a minute.

Decker’s jaws stretched around the ferret’s shoulders with ease, quick gulps pulling more and more of the unlucky passenger down his gullet. His tail would loosen, push the prey upward, then tighten to prevent struggling. It made eating people comically easy, just as long as he caught them off-guard.

The bulge made by the ferret traveled down Decker’s neck and loosened his tie. The collar and buttons of his dress shirt stretched, made of a material designed for those with voracious appetites like Decker. His suit jacket was of the same material, but Decker unbuttoned it right before his belly began to swell out, simply to reduce the pressure.

Decker lifted the ferret and widened his jaws, causing his meal to plunge down his gullet faster. His gut ballooned in short bursts, wobbling in his lap as the ferret fought inevitability. No attempt was made to savor or tease the prey; Decker just wanted to sate his hunger and be done with it. Still, he let out a satisfied sigh after he pushed the ferret’s paws

into his mouth and swallowed.

“I really need to stop thinking I can skip meals like this,” Decker said. He adjusted his tie and jacket before looking down at his belly. His dress shirt was still neatly tucked in, despite the constant wiggling of the ferret. A hard punch from within provoked a belch from Decker, which he muffled with a claw. “At least I still look good full.”

Decker spent the rest of the ride going over the meeting in his head, one claw idly rubbing his rowdy gut. Upon arriving at his stop, the rattlesnake pulled himself up, belly bouncing and swaying. The weight of it was a hassle, but a manageable one. He waddled out of the car and through the station, other commuters passing around him at a much faster pace. There were a few like him, of course, holding up swollen bellies of various sizes. Some were still shaking, others merely jiggling.

By the time Decker entered the lobby at work, he was panting. His breakfast had calmed down some, providing only a token amount of resistance. They were still a pain to carry around.

Decker squeezed into the elevator. A plump, cream-colored horse joined him just before the doors closed, hitting the button for a few floors past Decker’s destination.

Decker leaned against the wall, bracing himself on the rails. He saw the horse giving him nervous looks and hugging the opposite wall. He frowned, tail rattling briefly. “I’m not planning on gorging myself, so no need to have a panic attack,” he said. Accidentally intimidating people always made him feel awkward.

The horse nodded in acknowledgment but didn’t show any relief until Decker waddled out of the elevator.

Phone calls and the clacking of keyboards echoed through the office, mixed with sparse chatter from cubicles. With everyone at their desks, Decker was able to hurry towards his office without too many eyes noticing his wobbling gut. He wouldn’t be able to hide his meal forever, but he didn’t want the whole office talking about it rather than doing their work.

“Morning Seth,” Decker said to his assistant. The sheep was startled by his boss’ belly, barely managing a hello in return before the snake squeezed into his office and shut the door.

Decker plopped down at his desk and sighed. He rested his claws on his belly and began gently drumming on it. A small smile formed. Having a big meal on occasion *was* fun, he couldn’t deny that. It was the only time the lean snake got to feel big, his lifestyle far too active for him to gain weight. In the privacy of his office, he allowed himself to enjoy the indulgence, if only for a short while.

“You were wonderfully filling, but it’s gonna be a real pain finding more time to hit the gym this month,” Decker said, rubbing and squeezing his belly. “Can’t let myself get fat, though. I’m not in the mood to spend every meeting trying to figure out if a boss or client thinks I’d make a good lunch or not. And of course I don’t want my weekend hikes to get harder, either. At least you only chubby.”

The phone began to ring, and Decker glanced over. He picked it up, one claw still on his gut. “Yes, Seth?”

“I have someone from Bronson Bakeries on the line for you. They need to reschedule today’s meeting; sounds like they believe their rep got eaten on the way over.”

Decker rolled his eyes, but before he could respond his cheeks puffed up and he let loose a loud *braaaaaaaaaaaaaaap*. Something flat and plastic launched from his mouth and bounced off his computer monitor, landing on his keyboard. He frowned and picked the item up so it wouldn't drip digestive juices all over the keyboard. It was an I.D. card, with the ferret's smiling face and name. At the top, in bold lettering, were the words "Bronson Bakeries".

Decker's face twisted. "God. Damn it!" the rattlesnake fumed. Of all the people to eat, he'd somehow gobbled up the person he was supposed to be having a meeting with. He didn't even want to think of the odds.

"Um...should I connect them to you?" Seth asked.

The ferret was moving around in Decker's stomach. There was still time to let him out. But nothing soured a potential deal quite like almost getting eaten. Decker knew there'd be lots of yelling and cursing. His bosses would chastise him and congratulate him at the same time, and he might miss out on future deals. Digesting the ferret was the only way to avoid a hassle.

Besides, he'd have to find breakfast again if he let the ferret free.

"Yes, put them through," Decker said, before tossing the ferret's I.D. into the trash and stifling another burp. At least with his schedule that day suddenly open he'd have time to hit the gym.