

Meatoberfest Gluttony

By: IndigoRho

Meat was sizzling and mugs of ale clashing together in toasts as the village of Butcher's Block embraced Meatoberfest once more. The festival was a celebration of food and booze, a time where gluttony and overindulgence were more than a little encouraged. Charr from across the continent had poured into the village to join in the revelry. While most wandering the streets and taverns bore smiles, one charr in particular amongst the crowd was permanently scowling. Raf Stormbreaker stared down at the table he was seated at, trying his best to ignore the enticing aroma of food surrounding him.

He was fairly hefty for a charr, the buttons of his vest straining to contain his flabby tan belly, his jacket too small to close anymore. His pink eyes darted from one knot in the wooden table to another as he worked to distract himself, the feline sporadically fussing with his similarly-colored mohawk as well. Raf had always had problems with overeating, made worse by the fact he was the official cook for his warband, constantly within paw's reach of food. Inevitably his glutting had earned him the nickname "Stormgorger", which was used so often even many of his friends believed it was his actual name. The frustrated charr gave up trying to correct them long ago.

"Why did we have to stay the night here again?" Raf grumbled towards his companion. "You *know* I'm not fond of this place, Vitruvius, Meatoberfest or not."

The reddish-brown furred charr sitting across from him was busy sipping an ale in his one good paw, while the rudimentary clawed prosthetic of the other idly tapped on the table. "The festival brings together a lot of merchants, so it's a great place to search for rarer alchemical ingredients without having to travel far. Just enjoy yourself."

"That's exactly what I *can't* do!" Raf practically growled.

His last visit to the village had been a complete disaster. He'd gotten a little tipsy and somehow ended up cornered by a hoard of vendors all eager to sell him their delicious wares. Raf had hoped a small purchase would make them content enough to leave him alone, but instead they'd all begun offering him more and more snacks to try. The events that unfolded were still a blur to him, though by the time the vendors had dispersed he was passed out on the ground, his stuffed belly towering above him. He'd ended up so large his warband was forced to load him onto a cart just to wheel him home, and it'd taken him months to lose the excess weight.

"Well if you're that worried about overeating, then you can field test a new elixir I've been working on." Vitruvius dug into his pack and pulled out a large glass flask filled with a bright golden liquid. "If my research is correct, a small swig of this should help you feel fuller faster, so you'll eat less than usual. In theory."

"In theory?" Raf stared at the elixir in doubt.

"Similar experiments produced similar results, and my instincts are usually good with this stuff!" Vitruvius replied, a little defensively. "What do you have to lose?"

Raf sighed and grabbed the bottle. "Alright, alright, I'll try it. This had better work." He popped out the cork and took a solid gulp, thankful to taste strong hints of honey as it poured over his tongue.

"While I'd prefer to oversee this experiment myself, there's a trader leaving tonight who supposedly has some unique berries from up north, and I don't want to miss out on them." Vitruvius finished off the last of his ale before standing. "Please try to remember as much about the experience as you can. Taste, side-effects, quantity of food before fullness kicks in, that sort of thing. I'll need to record them later."

Raf rolled his eyes. "I'll see what I can do."

The charr took one more drink of the elixir and waited a few minutes for the alleged effects to kick in. Still not convinced it would work, Raf nonetheless decided to test it out, and stood to grab food from the tavern's first floor. As he did, though, his gut caught the edge of the table, tilting it just enough to unbalance the opened elixir still on it. He was too slow to catch the bottle as it tipped over, silently

cursing as the contents gushed out over the table's edge and down through cracks in the wooden floor below. Embarrassed by his clumsiness and worried the elixir was now cascading onto someone downstairs, Raf hurried away, leaving the empty bottle behind. Fortunately for him, no tables were underneath where he'd spilt the drink, only the massive keg providing the whole tavern with ale. The liquid that fell atop it seeped further into keg itself, mixing with ale just before a wealthy businessman bought a round of drinks for the whole room. Suddenly Vitruvius had a lot more test subjects.

Raf frowned as the steps groaned under him, hoping the cause was their age and not his weight. He blushed as another patron had to sidestep passed him on the staircase just to get by. As soon as he reached the first floor an overwhelmed server handed him a full mug of ale, moving on to another group before he could reject or even question the gift. Though he feared overeating if he got drunk, Raf soon realized having a stomach filled with ale could make him feel fuller faster, at least if his friend's elixir actually worked. The nervous charr chugged the entire mug in one go while struggling to weave in between the crowd, his belly seemingly bumping into every other person.

He abandoned the empty mug on a table and continued on to the fires grilling meat so he could have a quick bite and leave. Along the way he managed to get handed a fresh ale two more times as the servers frantically tried to make sure everyone had their free ale before a brawl broke out. Each time Raf begrudgingly downed the whole drink just to make it go away, and by the time he reached the food his gut was bloated and sloshing, and the alcohol was already having an effect. Raf tossed a few coppers to the cook, his mouth beginning to water as he was handed two large chunks of meat.

The ale gradually boosted Raf's confidence in Vitruvius' concoction, and the hungry charr dug into the meat with abandon, not nearly as self-conscious about his weight as before. For a few brief moments his scowl turned into a satisfied grin, the meat even juicier than he'd expected. He tore at his snack bit-by-bit, eating faster and faster as his stomach growled. When both chunks had been reduced to bare bone Raf was feeling a hint of fullness, his belly on the verge of bursting a vest button. Then it rumbled.

Raf's gut suddenly started shrinking ever-so-slightly, tufts of tan fur retreating as the cracks in between buttons narrowed. At the same time, though, his whole body was growing a tiny bit softer. His belly emptied, but was still flabbier than it had been only a few minutes before, and his cheeks and butt were rounder as well. He'd essentially flash-digested everything he'd eaten and drank. While the liquor was gone, the inebriation was still there, and the tipsy charr remained unaware of the unusual effects Vitruvius' potion were having on him. Instead he only felt hungry once more.

Another pile of coppers was passed on to the cook, and Raf began gnawing at his three new chunks of meat as soon as he'd grabbed them. A fresh, abandoned mug of ale nearby was swiped to wash down his meal, then a second, and a third. His gluttony was more ferocious now, and the recent bit of pudge he'd gained ensured a button of his vest popped clean off the second he drained his last mug. He was just barely aware that he'd overindulged a little too much, the weight in his gut impossible to completely ignore, but before he could linger on the issue the potion's effects kicked in.

Once again the charr's gut shrunk a little as everything he'd eaten was converted right into fat. The seams of his clothes creaked as Raf abruptly found himself a size too large for what he'd been wearing, though the tightness was easy to overlook once his hunger returned. Fortunately Raf was not alone. Practically every patron in the tavern had drunk from the contaminated keg thanks to the round of free drinks, and the crowd of boozed-up charr had quickly found their stomachs empty but their clothes snugger. The servers and cooks were some of the few sober enough to notice the strange occurrence, catching glimpses of their customers fattening up before their very eyes as they made their rounds.

Any thought of investigating the matter ended once the onslaught of new orders and coin came in, though. The grills were loaded up with meat while the taps rarely stopped flowing. Runners were sent to bring by any food cart they could just to ensure the patrons didn't grow rowdy over the tavern's limited cooking space, while the pantry and cellar were cleared of stock that was originally meant to

last weeks. Bellies swelled and shirts tore as everyone in the tavern grew fatter and fatter. Chairs creaked as their limits were tested, breaking apart one-by-one, laughter filling the air as patrons nearby teased whoever was likely now too fat to stand. Some of the servers consumed the flash-digestion ale themselves, either on accident or through sheer curiosity, and those who did quickly found themselves adding to the swelling ranks of the tavern.

Amidst the raucous feasting was Raf, who was busy living up to his nickname. His prime position beside the grills allowed him to order more food the second he finished, sometimes even before. The buttons of his vest were long gone, his ballooning belly exposed for all to see, and the sleeves of his jacket had ripped till it was more of a cloak now. Raf's gluttony kept peaking the interest of others slipping in to gorge, some challenging him to brief impromptu eating contests while others simply ordered him free food just to see how swiftly he'd down it. He was easily the heaviest charr in the room, and the hungriest.

As an hour passed, the tavern steadily began to grow quieter. Any who sobered up before they were too blubbery to move waddled out the door and off to bed, many obviously embarrassed by their ridiculous gains. Others merely drifted into food comas, immobilized by their immense guts. The staff were utterly exhausted, having been forced to work overtime just to keep up with the bottomless stomachs of the customers. Those who hadn't succumbed to the indulgent feast themselves carefully made their way through the sea of wobbling guts covering the floor, not eager to risk waking the stuffed charr. Kegs ran dry and the embers of the grills died down. Raf was one of the last left standing, eating till there was literally nothing left to cook. Even then he grumbled about having room for plenty more before falling into a deep slumber, the belly of another serving as his pillow.

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"Raf. You awake yet Raf?"

Raf groaned as he heard his name, feeling too drained to want to wake up. He just wanted to sleep.

"I see you twitching your nose, you always do that when you're pretending to still be sleeping," Vitruvius persisted.

Having been found out, Raf reluctantly opened his eyes. Vitruvius was kneeling over him, though the other charr's eyes seemed to be constantly darting about, as if he were examining him. Raf shifted about, surprised by how overwhelmingly sluggish he felt, not to mention how uncomfortable his bed was. Inevitably he realized he was laying on the floor, and that's when his gaze finally settled on the immense dome of his belly. He let out a distressed grunt, paws flying to examine his unbelievably larger middle. His arms, even his fingers were thicker, pudgier. Waking up stuffed would have been infuriating, but not unexpected; waking up considerably fatter just didn't make any sense at all.

"W-w-what happened to me!" Raf whined, becoming aware of his near nudity as well.

"Well, my current hypothesis is that my original hypothesis about the new elixir was incorrect," Vitruvius said. "The potion caused your body to rapidly convert anything you consumed into fat, which means my suspicions of accidentally mixing in a quickness elixir were true."

Raf clenched his teeth shut, fuming. "You had me drink something when you didn't even know what was in it!"

"I was certain what was in well over ninety percent of the elixir, and didn't expect the quickness solution to react in that manner if it *were* included." Vitruvius was getting a little defensive. "Honestly I thought it'd give you an energy boost if anything."

"Your mistake made me a hundred pounds fatter, probably more!" Raf desperately wanted to throttle his oblivious friend, but hadn't adjusted to his new weight yet.

"That's partially on you. None of the other afflicted patrons gained as much, so perhaps you should've showed some restraint when ordering your food," Vitruvius countered.

Only then did Raf take a look around the rest of the bar, watching guards hard at work lifting the dozens of fattened charr off the floor so they could head home. Knowing he wasn't the only victim of Vitruvius' elixir marginally improved his mood. Still, Raf grumbled to himself and pouted, too angry to argue further with his friend.

“Don't feel too down, this is the perfect opportunity to try out a weight-loss elixir I put together as well!” Vitruvius said with a smile. “That one's actually got some confirmed success, though it's unfortunately not nearly as, uh, instant as the weight-gain one.”

“So *you're* the one responsible for this exciting little obesity epidemic.” A new, unfamiliar voice joined the conversation.

Vitruvius flinched, having assumed there wasn't anyone close enough to overhear them. He nervously turned to see the newcomer, a charr dressed in rather expensive-looking finery, more likely a merchant than a guard. Thankfully. “I...well, uh, it wasn't on purpose. Just an unfortunate series of accidents.”

The stranger grinned. “I always try to see the silver lining in situations like these. An elixir that encourages weight-gain could sell well if it were used to fatten livestock, and one that helps you lose weight has obvious potential on the market.”

“I guess so,” Vitruvius replied, still uneasy about the merchant. He'd never put much effort into selling the new elixirs he brewed up, treating them more as experiments than product.

“I know so. Evon Gnashblade, owner of the Black Lion Trading Company. I assume you've heard of me,” Evon offered a handshake, which Vitruvius accepted. “I'd love to order a few cases of both elixirs from you, for a very good price of course.”

Vitruvius *had* heard of Evon, who's business served the entire continent, and couldn't believe he was interested in buying his simple concoctions in bulk. While mass producing them wouldn't be easy, the profits could fund the purchase of rarer ingredients and better quality equipment. Saying no wasn't an option.

“D-definitely! It'll take time, but once I've got my workshop set-up to handle larger quantities, I can get you all the elixir you need!” Vitruvius said with sudden enthusiasm.

“Excellent. We can discuss the details later at my office here in town.” Evon looked down at Raf, who was finally managing to simply sit back up. “I'm excited to see how well your other elixir works on your plump friend here. Regular check-ins on his progress may be in order.”

After a few nods and final pleasantries Evon made his leave of the pair, and Vitruvius helped Raf back onto his footpaws. The charr wasn't at all fond of unwittingly being used as a sales pitch, though at the moment his immediate concern was his size. His gut felt even larger now that he was standing, the tan mass sagging and jiggling any time he made even the slightest movement. He swore he could feel his double chins whenever he so much as glanced downwards, too. Losing the weight he'd gained overnight seemed like an impossible undertaking, and Raf feared he'd never be able to shed all of it, even with Vitruvius' mystery elixir.

Raf lifted his belly a little with both paws before letting go, frowning as it bounced around for far too long. “Your potion better work!” he growled.

“Don't worry bud, we'll get you back to your slightly less blubbery self in no time!” Vitruvius said. “No guarantees it'll get you thinner than that, though.”

After another grumble the two charr slowly made their way out of the tavern, with Vitruvius having to squeeze the extra-wide Raf through the doorway. Raf was gonna have to get used to getting stuck in things for a while...