

Ram Orange

By: IndigoRho

The oft-cloudy skies had cleared up some, shining light upon the green lot behind the Bleating Blimp Inn. A black ram wandered out into the lot, stretching and basking in the small bit of sun. August was a bit on the hefty side, a combination of pudge and wool peaking out in between the gaps of his vest. He'd spent all morning taking inventory of various ciders in the cellar, and had gained a rather sudden craving for something fruity.

August was just about to turn back and head to the market when he spotted something hanging from the branches of a nearby tree. To the ram's surprise they were six large, ripe oranges. He couldn't remember the tree ever bearing fruit before, but there was certainly enough latent magic in the city to bring it back to life spontaneously.

Despite the questionable origins and small numbers of the fruit, August simply couldn't resist his cravings. He snatched the first one he could reach and tossed it into his mouth whole, chomping down on it hard. A refreshing torrent of juice squirted into his mouth and down his throat. A few more chews squeezed every last drop from the orange, August swallowing the pulp whole afterward. One orange wasn't enough, though.

The ram greedily pulled off two more, chewing through them swiftly. By the time August was finally content he'd gobbled up all six oranges

Within August's belly the orange juice sloshed about, glowing unseen. The white tip of the ram's nose abruptly turned a bright orange color, steadily spreading across his snout until his entire face was orange. His dark black wool began to lighten, shifting to match the changes occurring elsewhere on his body. At first August didn't notice the changes, his clothes covering most of it and no reflective surfaces in sight. When he went to wipe the juice from his mouth with a hoof he froze, though.

August let out a confused *bahahaha* and stared in disbelief at his orange hooves. It didn't take long for him to realize they weren't all that was orange. The ram was very well aware of what tended to accompany such a change in color, and frowned as his gaze drifted down to his belly. Sure enough, his middle had started to swell.

While most fruit was perfectly innocent, it didn't take complicated magic to modify fruit to inflict berrification on any who ate it. Those afflicted were doomed to fill with juice until they became near-perfect spheres, thoroughly immobilized and helpless. Plenty of mages excelled at berry magic, capable of turning people into permaberries if they felt the urge. August certainly hoped the oranges he'd gobbled up weren't about to have any permanent effects for him to deal with.

The buttons of August's vest became strained almost right away, threads creaking as his belly ballooned outward. He bleated in frustration as two of the buttons popped off, followed shortly by all but the topmost one, which he then unbuttoned himself. Already fat to begin with, August's expanded middle was quickly becoming awkward to handle.

August didn't bother trying to flee and find an antidote or tool to dispel his transformation into an orange. Even if he had known for certain where such a thing was he'd never have made it in time, more likely to end up wedged in a narrow doorway or wobbling precariously near numerous sharp corners. Being out in the spacious lot was for the best; at least he'd be able to remain intact until someone stumbled upon him.

The ram's limbs began to puff up as juice filled them, causing his clothes to feel tighter and tighter. His pant seams tore and his belt burst off, the sleeves of his undershirt not faring any better. Little-by-little his clothes were reduced to shreds by his blimping body. August's cheeks rounded out, the taste of orange juice ever-present on his tongue.

August was mostly spherical then, gallons of orange juice splashing about within him. His limbs were gradually enveloped, his head sinking into his body. His hooves had become almost too puffy to even wiggle. As the pressure inside him intensified worries of popping crept into his thoughts.

Ending up as a massive puddle was even worse than ending up as a massive orange. He knew his body could handle expanding well, but even he had limits.

Fortunately the swelling started to slow as the creaks became more frequent. August groaned and breathed a strained sigh of relief as he felt the juice settle, trying his best to avoid falling into a pressure daze. He tended to enjoy inflating—even the berry kind—but ballooning up unwillingly could be a pain, especially since he was alone. Luckily he had a few tricks up his sleeve.

A pair of spectral hooves manifested in the air, the result of August's illusion magic. With them he could at least roll himself somewhere cozy, or maybe even manage to juice himself before the berrification became permanent. His smug grin vanished as heard laughter coming from nearby.

“Now how did you know I was looking for oranges?”

August wasn't able to turn towards the source of the voice, but he knew who it was right away. “Uh, perfect timing Rho! Mind lending a hoof?”

An orange-striped zebra walked into view, smiling as he looked August over. “You know, those oranges were supposed to be a surprise for you, something we could use to make a fun novelty cider for the berry-loving patrons.”

“They were exceptionally well-crafted. They had me creaking and sloshing in record time!” August nervously chuckled. Though Rho was his boyfriend, the zebra tended to enjoy teasing him immensely whenever he ended up round. Getting juiced right away wouldn't necessarily be a guarantee with him around. “But now I should really get to juicing myself.”

“Well, since you greedily gorged on those oranges I worked so hard to prepare, isn't it only fair you take their place?” Rho asked. “With a few little additions you'll make a wonderful orange cider keg~”

August blushed. “W-wait, Rho, what if this stuff's really potent, I might end up as a permanent orange! It takes a lot of expensive magic to undo something like that!”

“Which you should be able to easily afford with all the money we make selling ram-brewed orange cider.” Rho gave his boyfriend a playful poke. “Besides, I'm sure someone would be interested in buying orange wool as well.”

August bleated in embarrassment as Rho pushed him onto his back and began to roll him, his spectral hooves swatted away when they tried to intervene. Even the double-doors at the back of the inn almost weren't wide enough for him to squeeze through but Rho managed. He'd just need to hope the cider sold well enough to free him of his keg duties sooner rather than later...