Friends and Appetites

By: Indigo Rho

Indi looked over the cards in his hand for the third time, before scanning the playing field yet again. The fat blue snake had caught up with his opponent, but couldn't seem to draw anything that'd give him the advantage in their game of Magic. Reggie's bear deck kept his snake deck at bay, and they'd resorted to hunkering down and poking away at each other when possible. With little else to do, he played a creature and passed the turn.

The tubby fox across from him took a long puff on his THC pen before handing it to Indi. He drew a card and struggled nearly as much to determine his turn.

The portly pair didn't mind how drawn-out the games became when they got high. Their companion didn't share such opinions.

Hash lay on one of the hotel room's beds, his legs hanging over the side and his tail swaying. The lean Geoffroy's cat was bored out of his mind and tragically sober. He sprang up and glared at his friends. "I can't believe you nerds are playing Magic at a time like this!" he seethed. "We should be checking out a floor party, or at least hitting the dance floor. What's the point of going to a con if you're not gonna hang out with everyone?" He threw up his arms in disdain.

"You're free to head out on your own," Reggie said. He began to pluck a card from his hand, then reconsidered, returning to his hazy train of thought. "We'll catch up with you after a few more games."

"No, that'd be lame," Hash replied.

Indi snorted. "Hash knows he'll get gobbled up if he wanders alone out there. Small cats don't last long at cons."

Hash's fur bristled. "That's bullshit! I'm perfectly capable of evading gluttons. They're all too fat to get me," he insisted.

"All it takes is one little slip up for a little cat to end up sliding down a big gullet," Indi said. "That or running into someone hungry enough. Reggie's stuffed his face with plenty of twinks before. The big guy slurps them up like noodles."

Reggie's ears flattened and he blushed. "It's not my fault my appetite's so demanding!"

"No one forced you to eat a dozen plates at the buffet yesterday, jumbo" Hash piped in. "Or the guy who got between you and the dessert bar."

"Your gut was so stuffed we didn't even know he was in there until you belched out his badge." Indi's thick tail slithered over to Reggie and poked the fat fox's belly, jiggling it.

Reggie batted the mischievous tail away, flustered. "Well, you ate a waiter!"

"And the dude in the elevator with us on the way down." Indi leaned back and smacked his blubbery middle. "I always eat well at cons."

Hash sighed and rolled his eyes. "We get it, you eat people. It's not like everyone can't tell just by looking at your fat ass. Or yours," Hash added when Reggie began chuckling. The fox's face twisted and he glanced over his shoulder at his ample rump. "I'd be more impressed if either of you figured out how to not balloon after every meal. I've scarfed down plenty of prey myself, yet I've stayed fit." He stretched, letting his shirt ride up to reveal the flat stomach he prided himself in.

"That's because you stick to eating twigs and spend all day at the gym ogling guys." Indi took a hit from the pen and passed it back to Reggie.

"There's nothing wrong with enjoying an invigorating workout along with some eye candy," Hash grumbled."

"And it's so much funner eating whatever and whoever I want. Getting fat's the best thing that happened to me." He massaged his massive belly with both claws.

Reggie smirked at the large snake. "You should be thanking me for that revelation. You were as skinny as Hash before you met me. Now you're outgrowing your wardrobe every few months."

Indi's face reddened. "Maybe," he said, trying not to think about how tight his shirt was.

"I'm pretty sure you two have been stuffing yourselves non-stop for as long as I've known you." Hash looked from one bulging belly to the other. "You're both bound to get snacked on sooner or later with how fat you've gotten. Two waddling buffets waiting for an even bigger glutton to bump into them."

"As if," Indi said.

"This coming from the thick noodle dish that's the main course of some ravenous pred's dreams." Hash's words earned a glare from Indi. He glanced at the grinning fox. "And who could forget the puff pastry fox they'd have for dessert!"

Reggie sucked in his belly a bit, not that it made a difference.

Hash smiled, always eager to gain an edge on the friends who could so easily belly-bully him around. "Yet another reason you'll never catch me sporting a big round gut like you two. Call me a snack all you want, at least I can flee the gluttons."

Hash slipped off the bed and strutted around the room, knowing neither of his friends would have the energy to do anything more than sluggishly swipe at him. Indi wished he could knock the cocky cat down a peg or two. Unfortunately, there was no chance of them ever gaining even the slightest paunch. Hash's ferocious metabolism left only the traces of pudge whenever he ate someone, and he always burned what little remained with practiced ease. Then again, there were less permanent ways to make a person rounder.

Indi took the THC pen from Reggie and smiled wide. He started taking a hit off the pen and kept inhaling. His doughy middle steadily swelled, puffing out over his lap. When it bumped against the table he scooted back, giving it plenty of room to grow.

Reggie stopped paying attention to the game and stared at Indi's bloating belly. The stunt didn't escape Hash's eye, either. Curious, the cat strolled up to Indi. He slapped the snake's taut gut like a drum, pleased to hear a hollow beat echo from within. "Know what? I bet this is how big you'll be when someone finally gorges on you. Too big and awkward to waddle away and guaranteed to beach the lucky pred for hours. Maybe I'll even get to see it in person so I can remind you who the *real* snack is." He extended his claws and tapped Indi's belly menacingly.

Indi finally stopped inhaling and grinned at Hash. The snake's tail rose behind the unsuspecting cat and pushed him forwards, right into Indi's arms. He yelped, seconds before Indi locked lips with him.

Indi blew.

Pot smoke gushed out of Indi and into Hash. His cheeks puffed out and his eyes widened. His flat middle instantly swelled out. Indi continued

exhaling with all his might, filling up his frantic, flailing friend like he would any other balloon. Weak smacks jiggled Indi as he held Hash in place. As his own middle deflated, Hash's expanded, pressing against him. When he finally released Hash, the cat had a taut belly so big he looked like he'd swallowed a large beach ball.

The massive hit left Hash's thoughts spinning. He stumbled backward, barely aware of his balloon belly. He coughed and hissed. "What the Hell was that about!" he demanded, struggling to concentrate on Indi.

"Just helping you fit in," Indi said, passing the pen to Reggie. "Now we've all got bellies."

"That's the last thing I want!" Hash's face scrunched up in fury. "I can't be seen wandering around the place looking like a balloon. It'd be humiliating!"

While the cat raged, Indi looked Reggie's way and made a blowing motion with two fingers while tilting his head at Hash. The fox blinked before a knowing smile spread across his face. He swiftly took an enormous hit of his own, swelling up as Indi had.

"I have a reputation. I won't get any action if I'm knocking over all the hunks on the dance floor. And what if some dumb lunk thinks this is fat and not smoke?" Hash demanded, wobbling his puffy middle. He shook his head, feeling the weed hit hard. "Ugh, I'm gonna be baked if I go down there now, you jerk."

"Better than getting eaten," Indi said. He nudged the side of Hash's middle with the tip of his tail, dodging the high cat's attempts to swat it away. The distraction gave Reggie plenty of time to fill up and heft himself out of his chair. The round fox snuck up on Hash and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Wha?" Hash mumbled, turning around.

Reggie snatched the confused cat in a massive bear hug and began to puff. Though Hash's squirms were more desperate than ever, he was in no condition to fend off his much heftier friend. He felt his belly balloon into Reggie, bloating bigger and bigger. Once he was dropped onto his feet, he nearly toppled over.

"Not cool!" Hash gasped, coughing up a storm. He stumbled around the room, knocking a lamp and phone off the desk and threatening the table with the Magic game on it. As he approached, Indi poked him with his tail, sending the blimped-up cat falling backward.

Hash landed on the bed with a cough. He rocked back and forth, trying to get back up, but his inflated middle got in his way. "You two are the worst!" he howled.

Indi and Reggie burst into laughter. "You look good as a balloon," Reggie said. "Think of all the attention you'll get as the center of the party?"

"And everyone loves a guy who doubles as an airbed, especially at cons," Indi added.

"Yeah, yeah, laugh while you still can, noodle!" Hash grumbled. The high had gradually begun to mellow him out against his will, dulling his justified anger into a subdued irritation. Vengeful thoughts floated lazily through his head.

With Hash placated, Indi and Reggie returned to their game. Twin growls rumbled from their stomachs only two turns later. The munchies stoked the fires of their naturally ravenous appetites, which they couldn't hope to ignore.

"We should've grabbed more snacks earlier," Reggie lamented. "Our stockpile didn't last long."

"Food never seems to last at cons," Indi said.

"That's what happens when you stuff your face all day," Hash groaned. Indi frowned at Hash. His eyes lingered on the curve of the inflated cat's belly. A devious thought flickered in the back of his mind. "Hey Reggie, we do have one last snack left over there on the bed. And he's a filling one, too."

Hash's tail stopped wagging. "Real funny."

"I'm being serious. Reggie, we've talked about how tasty Hash looks." Indi leaned across the table and raised a brow at the fox.

Reggie rapidly looked between the snake and the helpless cat. "But that was a joke. Kind of."

"Kind of?!" Hash hissed.

"Only hypothetically!" Reggie was quick to add. "It's totally normal to comment on how delicious certain people might be."

"But we're friends!"

Reggie scratched the back of his head in embarrassment, but Indi's

grin grew wider. "Friendship doesn't make a person any less tasty. Some of my best meals have been wonderful friends." He licked his lips, remembering a plethora of past prey he'd added to his blubbery waistline.

"And sometimes it's incredibly difficult to resist your hunger," Reggie said. "A guy can't be blamed for getting hungry now and then."

"Then go eat a stranger you damn gluttons!" Hash wobbled as he renewed his efforts to sit up. He only managed to exhaust himself, impeded by his round middle.

"But we're hungry now and you're right here," Indi insisted. His tail climbed the bed and wrapped around Hash's ankle.

"Wait wait!" Hash exclaimed. "There's two of you but only one of me. You can't both eat me!" He hoped the fact would get the treacherous hungry pair to ignore him and argue amongst themselves. The tactic had saved his hide numerous times before when cornered by preds at parties. Half the time, they ended up eating one another while he strolled away.

"He's right, Indi," Reggie said, staring at his friend's sneaky tail.

Indi sighed and released Hash. "Technically. But we could always bet our game on him. Whoever wins eats Hash. Deal?"

"That sounds great to me!" Reggie said, looking over his cards again.

"Oh come on!" Hash slammed his fists on the bed in frustration.

"This'll be the lamest way to get eaten, you can't do this to me!"

"It was your turn, right?" Indi asked Reggie, ignoring Hash's complaints.

"I do believe it was," Reggie answered, his attention back on the game.

The came continued at a brisker pace than before, both players intent on winning the filling prize that was Hash. Hash whined and growled, trying everything from guilt-tripping to blackmail to convince his friends to not gobble him up. Nothing worked. His panic waned as the pot smoke that filled him settled in, trapping him in a daze. He knew in the back of his mind that something wasn't right, but he lacked the energy to care. He only knew that Indi and Reggie were being fat jerks and that he wasn't simply food, no matter what everyone said.

The game to determine who would get to sate their hunger and pack away Hash remained neck and neck until the very end, when Indi pulled off

a narrow victory.

Indi rose from his chair so fast his gut nearly flipped over the table. "Free dinner!" the snake cheered.

Reggie leaned back in his chair and crossed his arms over his round middle. "Damn, I really wanted to see what he tastes like."

"Wow, I'm so glad that's what you're bummed out about," Hash fussed. "Not that your wonderful, loyal buddy Hash is about to become snake fat forever. Have fun getting your own donuts from now on!" He should've been angrier, or at least terrified as he lay on the bed like a puffed-up Thanksgiving turkey, but his addled mind couldn't firmly grasp the dire extent of his situation.

Indi tipped the helpless cat from side to side with his tail, relentlessly poking and prodding them. "Don't worry, Hash, you'll have an honored place on my belly. I can't promise your addition will be all that noticeable, but hey, some of us make a more subtle impact than others," he snickered.

Fending off the devious tail proved futile. Hash dug a paw into his pocket and pulled out his wallet. "Dude, I'll give you twenty bucks to not eat me!"

"Twenty bucks?" Indi laughed so hard he started coughing. "Don't undervalue yourself, Hash."

"Forty bucks, final offer!" Hash waved the wallet at him.

Indi snatched the wallet. "Making a meal out of a friend is priceless. Though I've never been tipped by dinner before. Thanks, buddy."

"Can't you give me a pass just this once? I swear I'll make it worth—woah woah woah!"

Indi's tail slithered under Hash and coiled around him, giving his blimpy middle a teasing squeeze. Hash wiggled and meowed. An adrenaline rush brought him to the edge of his senses, but the high proved too powerful to fully fend off. Indi carefully uncoiled Hash, rotating the cat in the process and leaving him stranded atop his puffed-up belly.

With his dinner in position, Indi started with their feet. Hash felt jaws stretch over his ankles and work their way up his legs. Reality was catching up with him fast. He thought of all the times he'd escaped the clutches of greedy preds and the pitiful prey he'd consumed himself. He'd survived college, work, and bars all over the country, only to face doom in the form

of a friend with the munchies who couldn't be bothered to order room service. It wasn't fair!

Claws groped the sides of Hash's taut middle and dragged him deeper into the jaws of the voracious snake. Few things satisfied Indi quite like a good meal, and the wiggling kind were the best. He liked Hash, he really did. They were fun to hang out with and had brought him some fine prey in the past. But permanently adding the cat to his waistline was too good to pass up, and he was starving. Once he got hungry enough, any friend of his began to look more like food.

Hash hissed as Indi started swallowing his round middle. On his own, he had no hope of escape, but there was still one more friend in the room. "Reggie, you know this isn't right. Friends don't eat friends. They help friends and feed friends and maybe sometimes tease friends innocently about their weight, but they don't eat them, right?"

Reggie leaned over in his chair, splitting his attention between the slowly vanishing Hash and Indi's slowly swelling belly. He seemed keener on the latter than the former. "Didn't you eat your last college roommate?"

"That was different, it was a Superbowl bet!" One he'd actually lost. But Hash had moved quicker, and his drunk roommate hadn't expected the tables to be turned on them, so they'd ended up as a few measly pounds he'd worked off in a week. He briefly smirked, before remembering how close he was to becoming a few pounds himself. "Please, Reggie, this isn't right. You gotta save me!"

"But Indi won fair and square. Maybe if I'd destroyed a different creature I'd have won, and then you'd be gliding down my throat right now instead." A delighted grin formed on the fox's face.

"I mean it's not right that I'm being treated like a damn trophy! It should've been winner eats loser, not winner eats me!" His shoulders slid into Indi's mouth. Most of him was in the doughy snake's stomach, kicking up a storm.

The fat tip of Indi's tail covered Hash's face, silencing his futile attempts to solicit aid. Nudges and gulps pushed him deeper and deeper. Darkness came over him as his head slipped into Indi's cavernous maw. His eyes bulged as their jaws slowly shut and he saw the light of the outside world fade.

Indi swallowed, and felt the last of the scrumptious cat glide down his throat. His swollen belly bounced up and down, forcing him to prop it up with his thick tail. "Oh yeah, he really hit the spot," Indi moaned. He gripped the side of his rowdy gut and squeezed it, much to Hash's annoyance. "Who'd have guessed that a few solid puffs would make him as filling as the game store nerds we usually glut on."

"You mean the nerds *you* glut on," Reggie said, his eyes following every bulge in Indi's middle.

"Strange, I seem to remember rolling you into the back of an Uber less than a month ago after you beat two dough ball cheetahs at Magic," Indi smirked. The imprint of Hash's paws bulged from the side of his belly, and he casually pressed them back down.

"We'd had a bit too much to drink and bets were made and I'd forgotten to eat lunch." Reggie's stomach rumbled.

Indi lifted his belly and waddled over to a chair, fighting his boisterous gut the whole way. Hash refused to be an easy meal. Indi plopped down on the chair, which creaked beneath him. The furniture in the room was made with preds in mind, though Indi was a tad bit bulkier than most. "Just embrace the heft already, Reggie. If anyone makes fun of how fat you are, just eat them. Hell, eat them even when they compliment you. If we weren't meant to glut on everyone in sight, we wouldn't be able to wrap our jaws around them!"

"Or you could think with your brain and not with your stomach!" Hash's muffled voice barely made it past Indi's inches of blubber. "Let me out!"

"No."

"Oh come on!"

Reggie wandered over to get a closer look at Indi's bloated belly. The giant blue mass filled the snake's lap. Light shined off the scales. Every imprint Hash made was vague, muted by layers of fat. He felt a tinge of guilt for letting his friend get swallowed whole, but the regret of not getting to eat them stung worse, which flustered him.

"He really did round you out," Reggie muttered. He poked Indi's middle, feeling the vibrations of the squirming meal within.

"Small cats seem to blimp up the biggest when given the chance," Indi

chuckled. The joke got him a string of curses from Hash and a kick that only tickled him. "Heh, I think Hash is the biggest edible I've ever eaten. I'm gonna sleep extra well tonight." He smiled as his belly bounced around in his lap.

Reggie's stomach rumbled louder. He bit his lip. Watching Indi gorge on Hash had only intensified his hunger, transforming it into an unbearable pain. He couldn't take his eyes off Indi's immense belly. "I'm still starving," he admitted.

"You can try your luck with delivery. I'm not sure any places are willing to risk sending someone here, though, not with the con in full swing. If the drivers don't get gobbled up, they'll waddle back too stuffed to do their job." Indi had ambushed them in the past. Preds drunk on success made great meals.

"I don't want to wait for delivery, though." Reggie shifted from poking Indi's middle to kneading it, like a baker would dough. He craved something big, a meal that'd keep the hunger pains away the rest of the night.

"Then snag someone in the halls. There's bound to be a drunk or two passed out just asking to be fox chow." Indi remained oblivious to the way Reggie eyed him up like a fresh order of donuts. He only cared about teasing Hash before the cat ended up as a few anonymous pounds on his waistline forever.

"Too much effort. Hey Indi, remember when Hash called you a thick noodle dish?" Reggie pressed down hard on the snake's gut, forcing him to belch.

"Pfft, yeah. Not the first time I've been called that. Not the first time I've eaten the person who called me that, either," Indi snickered.

"Has anyone ever called you that while you were engorged and barely able to move?" Reggie asked. A sly grin pinched the fox's round cheeks.

Indi shrugged. "Not that I remember. But I'm smart about not leaving myself vulnerable around gluttons."

"You seem to have forgotten about one glutton in particular, noodle." Reggie squeezed Indi's gut and gave a toothy grin. He looked upon Indi and didn't see a friend, only food. Delicious, fattening, food.

Indi finally saw the hunger in Reggie's eyes. He gulped. "Uh, hey, why don't we order some room service? It's pricey, but it'll be my treat." He

smiled and nodded.

Reggie shook his head. "Too long." He ran his paws over the shifting dome of Indi's belly. "You really have ballooned over the years, Indi. And all that weight went straight to your gut, butterball. I've been so good about holding back, but I've just *gotta* see how you taste. Sorry." He smirked and patted Indi's belly.

"Wait, Reggie, it's rude to eat a helpless friend!" Indi blurted out.

"That didn't stop you, jerk!" Hash protested. Hearing the exchange on the outside hadn't made him any less grumpy about being doomed. Indi and Reggie could eat each other for all he cared, but they should've left him out of it.

Reggie knelt down and started eating Indi feet first, ignoring the snake's hypocritical pleas. He was far too ravenous to take his time, thinking only of the joy he'd get when Indi was secure in his stomach.

Indi frantically smacked Reggie with his tail, trying to fend the voracious fox off, but Reggie proved too sturdy and too determined. The tail bounced off Reggie's doughy sides and rump, merely jiggling him. Inevitably, he caught the tail in his fat paw and scooped it into his maw.

Indi dug his claws into the arms of the chair and pushed, to no avail. Gravity and gluttony were on Reggie's side. He couldn't believe the tables had turned on him so quickly. He'd never dreamed that Reggie would eat him, yet he was waist-deep in the fox and losing ground fast. If not for the bloated bratty cat in his belly, he might have been able to escape Reggie's jaws and scarf them down in turn.

But hindsight never saved a prey from becoming a meal.

"Wait, Reggie, think this through! You'll have to pay for the room all by yourself! You'll have one less friend to play Magic with! It's my birthday next month, you can't eat me!" Indi's confidence had scattered to the wind.

"You literally tried to eat me on my birthday!" Hash howled. His prison was rapidly becoming more cramped as Reggie swallowed.

"I was joking!"

"You dangled me over your maw and only stopped when you got startled by a party popper!"

Indi was beginning to regret not eating the cat then. The party would've been ruined, but at least he wouldn't be sliding into Reggie's jaws.

Reggie's belly swelled against the floor, propping him up as he gulped down Indi. Even crammed with half a snake, the fox's greedy stomach continued to growl and demand more. He didn't hear a single word Indi said, thinking only of his need to consume. His tail flicked back and forth in delight as his jaws stretched over Indi's enormous belly. It was softer than he'd imagined, and he couldn't resist a gentle nibble here and there.

His paws reached up and grabbed Indi's shoulders, pulling the snake in deep. The snake's glasses toppled off, leaving golden eyes staring right at him. He didn't hesitate. He simply kept swallowing.

Seconds shy of oblivion, Indi hoped for a miracle. He wished he'd be too big for the fox to handle, but he'd never seen Reggie not finish a meal before. "Shit," he hissed, before vanishing from sight.

Reggie moaned when he made the final swallow, sealing Indi away in his stomach. He collapsed onto his immense middle, exhausted, but satiated. Every twitch of his meal made him groan. He felt like one more bite or stiff kick could pop him. The strain jumbled with the pleasure in his mind, rapidly shifting his mood.

He gazed upon the boulder of a belly below him and smiled groggily. Eating a friend stuffed with a friend was beyond excessive, even for him. Concern needled the back of his head but again, it was buried by the bliss of a filling meal. "That was—buworrrrrrrrp—so good," he mumbled, licking his lips.

"R-Reggie, let me out!" Indi sounded so distant, as if he were shouting from another room. "I'm gonna give you a stomach ache, you don't want that!" He was so easy to ignore. "Is this because I ate Hash? I'll let him out. You can eat him instead!"

Reggie yawned and shifted into as comfortable a position as he could. He always enjoyed having a nice, long nap after a big meal.

"Reggie? Wait, don't fall asleep! Reggie! Reggie!!"

* * *

Reggie pulled the shirt over his head and tugged it down. As he'd feared, it barely covered half his massive gut, leaving a thick strip of pudgy fox middle exposed, along with his sizable love handles. At least they fit better than the

sweatpants that dug into his waistline and clung to his thick thighs and rump like leggings. A gluttonous pred couldn't exactly be picky once they'd gone on a feeding frenzy.

To call Reggie blubbery would've been an understatement. His middle jutted out like a fluffy wrecking ball while his ass had widened to the point of brushing against the sides of doorways. His soft cheeks wobbled whenever he turned his head, and he felt his double chins push back whenever he tried to look down. He was incredibly soft, like a fox sculpted from a mound of cookie dough.

Reggie caught a glimpse of his portly profile in the mirror and blushed. He guessed he probably weighed more than most elephants.

The night before remained somewhat of a blur to the fox. He remembered playing Magic and Hash puffing up on pot. Then Indi had eaten him for some reason, maybe related to the game? Not that the snake had ever needed a reason to eat anyone. Then he'd eaten Indi in turn.

Memories of Indi's taste lingered, much to his joy. They'd been delicious, if a bit overwhelming. And, of course, absurdly fattening. A better meal than he'd ever imagined. He blushed, grateful no one was around to see him smile about eating a friend. Two, technically. Hash was somewhere in his vast middle as well.

Naturally, Reggie had ballooned out of the clothing he'd packed for the con. All the seams of the outfit he'd passed out in had torn apart as he fattened up in his sleep, leaving him exposed atop the shredded remnants. Indi had been bigger, though, so Reggie had immediately scoured his luggage in search of something to wear. While not perfect, it'd allow Reggie to maintain some degree of dignity as he bought a new wardrobe.

A small grumble escaped Reggie's stomach. "Hungry already?" He squeezed his gut and frowned. "I really hope the breakfast buffet can tide me over. The last thing I need is to eat someone at the big and tall store. Or the airport." He sighed. "I might need to buy an extra seat on the way back."

He took a few deep breaths and pushed the concerns away for later. He still had one more day at the con, and plenty of friends to hang out with. Explaining where Indi and Hash had disappeared might be awkward, though. He glanced at the nearby desk, where their con badges were still laid out. A thought came to him, and he smiled.

Reggie snatched the badges and put them around his neck, adding them to his own. One look at the collection of badges and his enormous belly would be enough to tell anyone exactly what had happened the night before. Or at least discourage them from asking any questions.

Reggie's stomach growled a little louder. He decided to delay clothes shopping for a day, just in case temptation got the better of him. Quite a few of his other friends were plump, after all. The massive fox waddled out of the room, looking as forward to breakfast as meeting his friends.