

## Massive Plans

By: IndigoRho

The Pact Commander looked around his rather empty office, once again wondering if he'd made the right decision. For the last four years the charr had been on the front lines, battling the Elder Dragons and their minions, always personally in the thick of things. Now, though, the rest of The Pact leadership were insisting he take a safer, less hands-on role, at least until some important positions were filled. Every instinct had told him to refuse, or even step-down entirely, but in the end he decided to do what was best for The Pact. After all, a brief month-long stint at their headquarters in Lion's Arch wouldn't be *so* bad.

A heavy knock at the door broke him free of his train of thought, and eventually his personal assistant nudged his way through, a large basket of food in each claw. The Commander hadn't requested lunch yet, confused by the ridiculous bounty.

His assistant dropped both on the Commander's desk. "Uh, a welcoming gift sent by some of the city's merchants, sir. Can't remember their names, but I'm sure they left a note in the baskets somewhere."

"I'll need to send them my thanks," the Commander muttered, glancing over the wide collection of cheeses, fruits, and cured meats he'd abruptly gained. He'd feared getting swamped in random gifts or bribes now that he was no longer on the move, but a little free food wouldn't hurt him.

"Understood, sir." His assistant was still a bit...inconsistently formal at times. "There are also new supply orders and organization correspondences for you to review."

Just what the Commander *didn't* want to deal with. "Good, good. Just bring them in."

The assistant saluted, then left to retrieve the Commander's new busy work, while he in turn sat at his desk and sighed. More bored than hungry, the Commander broke off a small chunk of cheese and nibbled at it as his assistant returned with giant stacks of paperwork. Thankfully the food was delicious enough to save his mood. As he begrudgingly went over the seemingly endless pile of papers, his paw unconsciously drifted back to the food baskets over and over again. Soon he was spending more time eating than working. In the middle of a particularly dense report on helm shortages, the Commander suddenly found his paw clawing at a basket's bottom. Curious, he pulled his eyes away from the reports and discovered the once overflowing baskets of food had been reduced to crumbs.

The Commander didn't know what to think at first, though the longer he stared at the decimated baskets, the more aware he became of how tight his vest was. He looked down nervously, and realized his once flat stomach was bulging noticeably from his gluttony. Had he really been *that* hungry? Frowning, the charr promised himself he'd be more diligent about his grazing in the future, not eager to get fat while away from the field. At least the temptation was gone.

Another knock came at the door, the assistant again entering with a basket of food. "Sorry sir, this was supposed to be with the first two but got separated in--" He stopped as he noticed the other baskets were already empty.

The Commander blushed for a moment, embarrassed his rare act of gluttony had been witnessed. "J-just leave it on my desk. Lots of urgent work for me to deal with right now!"

His assistant quickly dropped off the food and left. In desperate need of a distraction, the Commander shifted to writing a thank you letter to the merchants who'd sent the gift baskets, a paw already inching towards the fresh arrival's contents...

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Almost out of breath, the Pact Commander waddled through the door to his office and quickly closed it behind him. A month of sedentary work had taken its toll on the once-fit charr, who's weight had ballooned dramatically in the brief time period. He now sported a considerable gut, and his casual

wear always seemed on the verge of being a little too tight. As a mesmer skilled in creating illusions, the Commander had tried disguising his gut with magic early on, though that'd quickly proven too tiring and only increased his hunger. Other Pact members in the office had been too nervous to bring up the issue of their Commander's weight, instead going out of their way to dodge any questions he brought up. While being stuck—recently sometimes literally—at a desk all day had played a role in his gains, the biggest culprit was the now endless stream of food gift baskets he was receiving.

Apparently the merchants who'd sent the first three had boasted of the thanks they'd gotten from the Commander, prompting others to send their own food gifts in kind. The more thank yous the Commander sent out the more word spread, and both the quality and quantity of food had been increasing each week. He'd overlooked the initial changes in his weight at first, shrugging them off or claiming it was bloating, but his appetite grew along with his waistline, prompting the charr to stuff himself more and more throughout his busy shifts in the office. Inevitably he'd managed to break a chair during a staff meeting.

The embarrassment was so great he'd taken a few days off, hoping to reign in his eating and exercise. Instead he'd mostly just gorged. To make matters worse, paperwork and reports had piled up while he was away, to a point where the Commander had decided to pull an all-nighter to catch up. As the Commander finally took a moment to look around his office, though, his eyes went wide; work wasn't the only thing that'd gathered.

Nearly every flat surface of his office was covered in baskets and platters of food. There were even a couple kegs lined up against the wall. He was utterly convinced he was the victim of a prank, that one of the other Pact mesmers had conjured up illusions to either tease or terrify him. However, a sample taste from one proved it to be all too real. An excessively decorated note was attached to the largest offering, and the Commander grumpily snatched it as he made his way to his cluttered desk.

*To the illustrious, valiant, heroic Commander of the Pact.* The Commander was already rolling his eyes. *It has been an absolute honor to humbly serve and provide for the Pact in the years since its founding, ensuring your troops have had the best equipment gold can buy. Your presence in the city makes us all feel safer in these dangerous times, so please accept this bountiful donation of food, freshly selected and prepared by the some of the greatest chefs from the Homelands. May it give you the energy to complete your important work.*

*-Captain Evon Gnashblade, Black Lion Trading Company*

The Commander didn't think he'd seen a less transparent attempt to curry favor in his life. Unfortunately his stomach was falling for it. He sighed as he settled in to his new, reinforced chair, intent on digging into his overdue work. The quick taste earlier had left his taste buds begging for more, though, and the charr reluctantly grabbed a random chunk of meat from the nearest basket. Magic had kept the piece warm and juicy, as if it'd just come off the fire, and the Commander found himself grinning as he scarfed down the delicious meat in seconds. One-by-one the other chunks were devoured, the gluttonous charr only passively paying attention to the report he'd opened up.

*More.* Despite clearing out the basket of meat, the Commander felt like he was starving. He moved on to a long plate of toasted artisan breads, surrounded by a multitude of jams and butters, tearing into them all. The charr was so preoccupied with eating he couldn't be bothered to grab a drink himself, instead re-purposing a knife as a focus to create an illusionary clone. His noticeably fitter duplicate diligently hurried over to one of the kegs, filling a mug with cider and bringing it back to the Commander, who guzzled it all down in between big bites.

All he could think about was eating, it'd become an irresistible compulsion. Worries about his weight or his work were buried, replaced by the intense desire to sample everything he'd been brought. While earlier he'd seen the feast as a curse, he now saw it as an opportunity, a chance to spoil his taste buds like never before. His clone was constantly racing back-and-forth between the Commander and the kegs, barely able to keep up with its master's gorging.

With every new platter and basket cleared, the Commander's belly swelled, his vest straining

under the pressure of containing him. Seams creaked and buttons burst, until enough had torn to free his growing gut. A horde of desserts were amongst the gifts, and eventually the Commander decided to cave and try them as well, moaning in delight after the first bite of pie. Suddenly the need for more paws was real. Dominated by his appetite, the Commander summoned two more clones, ordering them to bring him *everything*. His overstuffed middle was quickly becoming a menace, knocking over emptied baskets as he moved from meal to meal. He was waddling slower with each passing minute, struggling to handle the weight from his endless eating. The white fur of his belly made it resemble an oversized snowball.

As the Commander finished annihilating a selection of cheese and crackers, he was finally felled by his massive gut. The dazed charr slid to the floor, cradling his exposed middle and craving more. Fortunately his clones were eager to comply. All three sped up their efforts, bringing their grounded master plate after plate of food, with plenty of cider to wash it down with. He only needed to open his mouth wide and accept the onslaught. With every bite and swallow his stomach spread outwards, never complaining about how much it was given, never hinting at being full. He was swiftly becoming more belly than charr.

*Eat. Eat! EAT!* No other thought crept into his mind. The Commander continued stuffing himself as if he were enjoying a mere snack, nothing out of the ordinary. A charr as wide as he was tall was anything *but* normal, though. Over time the feast began to dwindle, until the final piece of pie was gingerly dropped into the Commander's maw. He groaned, tail swishing as he gripped his boulder of a gut with both paws. There were still a few lingering whispers of hunger, but by now the charr was too stuffed to do anything about it. His eyelids grew heavy as an intense food coma poured over him, his clones shattering one-by-one into clouds of bright pink butterflies as he passed out.

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Evon Gnashblade sat at his desk, fangs on full display as he grinned from one pair of ears to the other. The merchant had been eagerly expecting a visit from the Pact Commander ever since sending his "gift", and couldn't wait to see how his fellow charr had fared. His office door swung open, revealing the plainly displeased, obese Commander.

"Commander! It's an honor to have you, please come right in," Evon said.

"You've got a lot of explaining to—umph!" The Commander abruptly stopped midway through the door. His face flushed red as he appeared to wiggle forwards, despite there seemingly being a good gap between the hefty charr's sides and the frame.

Evon suspected the truth almost right away, holding back a laugh as the Commander finally managed to enter the office and shut the door behind him. "I was about to ask if you'd received my welcome gift, but you very obviously have."

The Commander's entire body shimmered for a moment as he dropped the illusion, every bit of him growing wider. His belly was massive, a blubbery sphere that appeared barely contained by his outfit. A merely out of shape charr would've had trouble dealing with the smaller doorways of Lion's Arch, so it was no wonder the immense Commander had gotten stuck entering. His neck was thick, the rolls sticking out from his shirt collar, his face soft and round. Evon doubted the Commander was even recognizable to most of his own subordinates anymore.

"Explain yourself, Evon," The Commander growled.

"Commander?" Evon asked, his words seeping of fake innocence. "I don't understand, I simply thought you'd enjoy some delicacies from our homeland. I guess I might have gotten a little carried away, but I couldn't settle on one thing and just had to go with it all. You appear to have had similar sentiments."

The Commander shook in rage, his gut jiggling in the process. "The food you sent was cursed, or spiked, or something! I took one bite, and then woke up the next morning looking like a stuffed

hog!” His face contorted a bit and he blushed. “I had to spend a whole day hiding behind illusions in my office till I was able to move again, and the rest of my staff is bound to find out about...about *this...*” he squeezed his belly with both paws “...eventually. I'll be humiliated!”

“Now Commander, I can assure you this was all an unfortunate accident. I'd heard the food made by the infamous Gut Warband could be addicting, but I never for a moment believed that a specific combination could lead to such compulsive, uncontrollable gorging.” Evon gave the least sympathetic smile ever.

“What's your game, Evon!” The Commander shouted. “And don't be coy or I'll portal you right out of your office and into the harbor!”

“No game Commander, I swear. Coincidentally, though, I've just received the first shipment of a revolutionary new elixir that helps with weight loss.” Evon opened a drawer and pulled out a small vial. “Proven to shed pounds in a fraction of the time as normal exercise or dieting. Expensive, but honestly I think we can all agree that good health is priceless. I can give you the first vial free, as an apology for what happened. If anything it's great advertising, being able to say even the Commander of the Pact uses our product.”

The Commander was dumbstruck. “Advertising. You fattened me up as a damn advertising campaign!”

“*You* ate all that food on your own accord, Commander,” Evon said, twirling the vial in his paw. “No one's going to believe you if you claim your weight gain's part of a conspiracy, some might even believe you're snapping under the pressure of your job. Now, I've got a successful business to run, and you've got some flab to handle, best of luck to you.”

Evon grinned and held out the vial. The Commander tried to come up with another insult or comeback, but he was too furious to think straight, grabbing the weight-loss elixir and reapplying his illusion of less heft. His attempt to angrily storm out of the office was foiled as he got wedged in the doorway once more, the frustrated charr growling and cursing as he finally unwedged himself, accidentally belly-bumping a clerk along the way.

Evon waited a solid minute before bursting into laughter. His scheme had been absolutely farfetched, even he couldn't deny that, but somehow it was working. A few well-placed rumors would ensure the whole city knew the Pact Commander was using *his* product to shed weight, providing the kind of name recognition no amount of gold could buy. Profits would likely be slow at first, though Evon was certain that would change once he'd established a few dozen new food stalls selling his special brand of authentic charr cuisine. Considering how well the Commander had taken to the test batch of food, Lion's Arch was guaranteed to start getting much, much wider in the coming months, and fortunately he'd have just the right solution for the massive masses. Sometimes the best profit was found in the oddest of places.