

Filling Intruders

By: IndigoRho

In a distant corridor aboard the Columbia Space Station an otter leaned over a keypad to an access hatch, a cable connecting it to a computer on his wrist. His paws were shaking as his eyes darted from one display to the other, ears twitching at every phantom sound. Looming over him were a hefty pair of deer twins whose bulk did a wonderful job of concealing their slim friend. While one focused intently on either end of the corridor, the other deer couldn't help but constantly glance over to see the otter's progress, not that he knew anything about hacking; he was more of an appraiser.

"How much longer, Owen?" the curious deer whispered.

As quiet as the question had been, the otter still jumped slightly at the sound. "Almost got it, Clark, I can't rush forcing a door open"

Two rapid beeps suddenly rang out from the keypad, the door sliding open. Clark silently celebrated, eager to get their task done and over with. "Ok, just like planned then. You and me will blitz through the ship and snag anything of value, and Clyde here will stand watch. Should be our easiest haul in a while."

"Yeah yeah we remember, just get in there!" Clyde hissed. They'd almost been caught during their last break-in, and Clark had actually had to eat a witness. The close call had left him far more on edge than usual.

Clark wasn't nearly as spooked as his twin, having considered the surprise meal of the last job to be a nice consolation prize considering they'd failed. "See ya in a few bro."

As the deer and otter hurried inside the small docked ship and Clyde began his watch, another set of eyes were on them. Rho, the overweight orange-striped zebra who owned the ship the trio were targeting, had been returning to grab something when he'd spotted the burglary in action. Calling station security wouldn't do him much good—the thieves would be long gone by the time they arrived—but fortunately Rho was hungry enough to handle the situation on his own. After hiding around the corner again he brought up a holographic display on his gray bodysuit and navigated his way through menus, chuckling as he confirmed a selection.

A cold tingling sensation pulsed throughout the zebra's entire body. His hide began to take on a sleek shine, almost as if he were being soaked with water. Rho poked his belly and watched it ripple like the surface of a lake. Long ago he'd upgraded his bodysuit with some transformation features—mainly for pleasure—and his absolute favorite was the option to essentially turn himself into liquid. He could control his form however he pleased, becoming a calm pool, a racing stream, and everything in between. With a simple thought he melted into a puddle, slithering into a nearby vent and out of sight.

Back at the entrance to the ship, Clyde wasn't any less stressed. No one had any reason to be in that area of the station at this time, and no relevant alerts had been sent along the security channel he'd tapped into, but as far as he was concerned everything could fall apart at a moment's notice. On high alert, a faint echoing splash within the nearby wall immediately caught his attention, his heart racing. For a second his imagination ran wild as to what the source of the sound was. Only with great effort was he able to calm himself down, until a second, much clearer noise rang out above.

Clyde stared upwards, his eyes widening as a mass of orange and white poured from a vent in the ceiling directly onto him. He didn't even have a chance to cry out in terror before most of his body was engulfed, the deer knocked to the ground by the impact. The liquid zebra swirled around his prey, forcing him into a fetal position as he worked to ensure not a single bit of Clyde was left exposed. Once he was satisfied the deer was contained, Rho began reverting back to his usual shape while still retaining his fluidity. The would-be thief had been shifted to his attacker's greatly distended belly, the imprints of his struggles within visible from the outside with unnerving clarity while the zebra wasn't rigid.

Rho gleefully pressed down at the panicked bulges on his gut, amused by their useless intensity,

and a fairly accurate face-shot of Clyde appeared on his bodysuit. All the punching and kicking in the world wouldn't be enough to break through the surface of his goo form, and even Clyde's sharp antlers did little more than tickle Rho. While toying with the deer for a while longer would've been enjoyable, Rho still had another thief to deal with, and lugging around such a massive, feisty meal wasn't ideal for hunting. Fortunately his suit could help with that as well. More messing with the holographic display activated a rarely-used flash digestion option, guaranteed to process Clyde into zebra mass horrifically fast. Clyde appeared immediately aware that his situation had gotten worse, his struggles intensifying dramatically along with his barely audible shouts for help.

A progress bar joined the picture of Clyde on the bodysuit, reducing the living being in Rho's gut to a mere infographic. As the seconds passed the bulges made by the deer became less and less defined. Clyde remained conscious throughout his absorption, well aware his hopes for rescue were fleeting. Rho slapped and wobbled his gut the entire time, feeling his prey becoming malleable, waiting for that inevitable moment the struggles would cease entirely. The surface of his middle gradually smoothed out completely, until a final bounce signaled Clyde's official merger with Rho.

Absorbing Clyde had added a good deal of heft to Rho. He looked at his rounder gut with awe, already imagining how much bigger he'd be once he consumed the others. Sure the otter didn't look like much, but the other deer looked even doughy than the first, and would make amazing zebra pudge. With a devious grin Rho reverted to a pool and fled back into the vents in search of his soon-to-be meals.

In the brief time since Clark and Owen had entered, they'd found nothing. The ship was surprisingly barren considering it was supposed to belong to some successful writer, but they hoped the zebra's personal quarters hold something of value—or at least access to his bank account. Clark busied himself with drawers and shelves, digging through everything with zero finesse. Meanwhile Owen had become convinced a duct in the ceiling might be hiding a secret safe or stash. He'd managed to pull off the grate to it easily enough, which was proof in his mind he was on the right track.

“Ugh, this better not be another bust man!” Clark pouted as he slammed another drawer shut. “Otherwise I might need to eat away the frustration, and otter's looking pretty good about now.”

Owen had just poked his head into the duct to get a better view, his voice echoing down. “Dude you're too fat to catch me, that's a fact! And stop whining, we'll definitely find something good—huh, I think I see something.”

All of a sudden the otter squeaked in fear, a loud banging coming from the duct. Clark spun around just in time to see Owen hanging from the ceiling, legs swinging wildly as he started rising upward. Confused and afraid, Clark forced himself to stumble over and grab his friend before he vanished entirely. The otter wasn't screaming, just letting out some kind of garbled noise, as if his head was buried or submerged. Despite Clark's best efforts nothing he did seemed to reverse Owen's course, his grip loosening as *something* pulled at him.

Clark ended up losing his hold on the otter and falling onto his butt, exhausted. He looked up in horror as Owen was sucked into the duct completely, praying he was just the victim of a really stupid prank. A low groaning from the vents above dashed the delusion swiftly. Worried whatever had snatched Owen would come for him next, Clark fled the room and towards the ship's exit—and the assumed safety of his twin. The deer was gasping for breath by the time he turned the corner that should've led him to safety, but instead of his brother he saw only a closed hatch. How could the door be closed at a time like this!

Clark practically barreled into the door, one hoof pounding on it while the other frantically poked at the controls; to his dismay he was locked out. “Clyde, open up! Open up! Something got Owen!”

“Clyde and Owen, huh? Always nice to put a name to a meal.” Rho casually strolled around the corner, blubbery gut wobbling with every step.

At first Clark's fears actually subsided some upon seeing the zebra, the phantom beast now

revealed to have a rather mundane form. He temporarily put on his best look of intimidation, only to have it shatter as soon as he saw the familiar face shots on the zebra's bodysuit; the fear returned with a vengeance.

“Ooh, you look just like my first course, he must've been your twin!” Rho said with glee, rubbing his belly. “I love adding matching pairs to my internal databank.”

The last thief was too terrified to even entertain the possibility Rho was lying, seeing him only as an overwhelming threat he couldn't handle. After all, Clyde and Owen hadn't seemed to put a dent in him. He was still trying to open the door as the voracious zebra waddled his way.

“Yeah, without my code that thing isn't budging, so try not to scratch up the console in the process.” Rho could see that he'd all but won, his final prey already broken. “Alright, I think it's time you joined your brother and friend.”

Clark whimpered as Rho reached him...and then continued walking forwards. The zebra's massive belly oozed over the deer like a slow-motion wave. He attempted to push Rho away but only ended up sinking further into his mass, unable to pull himself out as well. After a point Rho crashed over his prey entirely, forcing him into the corner and encasing him in a prison of orange and white. Rho wasted little time absorbing Clark, the deer starting to digest the second he was engulfed. The gooey orb he was trapped in rocked violently as he desperately tried in vain to claw his way out, the impression of his distraught face jutting out from a side. Just like the others, though, Clark was powerless to avoid his fate.

The ball of goo grew calmer and calmer as time passed, bulges less defined and weaker. Soon the motion stopped altogether. A third face appeared besides the others, almost indistinguishable from the one left by Clyde. The mass slowly stretched its way back into the shape of Rho, whose face was rounder and body thicker from Clark's addition. Of course he welcomed the new weight, delighted to discover he'd gained over a hundred pounds dealing with his minor intruder problem. With the thieves gone he could enjoy his fresh girth in peace, the liquid zebra cheerfully wobbling off to his room.