

You're Not You When You're Hungry

By: IndigoRho

As Raf shifted on the couch he felt the buttons of his white dress shirt strain, and the apathetic expression on his face turned into a scowl. At a bit over three hundred and fifty pounds there was no denying the young man was fat, and no one knew that more than Raf himself. Four years of college had devastated his waistline. Dorm food, snacking during study sessions, a part-time job at the local bakery—they were only a few of the things that had conspired to cause his weight to balloon out of control. Sure his friends and family weren't mean about his struggles, but that didn't stop Raf from being embarrassed by every burst button, ripped pants, and broken chair that'd plagued him in recent years. His best friends being twigs didn't exactly help, either.

By chance one of them—August—caught Raf looking down at his round gut in disdain and attempted to cheer him up. “You being grumpy about food again? There's nothing wrong about enjoying a hearty meal now and then.”

“There is when you gain a pound just looking at food,” Raf grumbled back, blowing a loose strand of hair from his pink mohawk out of his eye. He lifted the side of his belly with a hand and let it drop, frowning at the feeling of his whole middle bouncing as a result. “And you can literally eat anything and never gain an ounce!”

August had indeed been blessed with a fast metabolism that even poor eating habits couldn't overcome. He also led a very active lifestyle, a trait he'd shared with Raf until the latter's size had begun to interfere with their preferred outings. “Well I still think you'd slim down a little if you joined me for jogs again. I'm sure we'd get you back into 2XLs in no time!”

There was a brief snicker on the couch, and Raf turned to glare at the source, his other friend Kai. Kai flashed a quick look of guilt. “Sorry, sorry. Aug's right though, jogging really kick started my weight loss after I got fat.”

“You didn't get *that* big, dude,” Raf insisted. While it was true Kai hadn't gotten to Raf's size he *had* gained far more than the usual freshman fifteen, and Raf was admittedly jealous of his friend's successful losses. “Why don't we talk about anything *besides* my weight?” He stopped fussing with his ill-fitting shirt and messed with his pink mohawk instead, pretending it needed attention.

Not wanting to sour the mood in the apartment August eagerly changed the subject. “Well fortunately we've got a relaxing night of hot dogs and movies to distract ourselves with.”

As if out of spite Raf's stomach chose that moment to let out an especially loud growl, prompting him to blush at the betrayal. “Ugh I need to...I'm using the bathroom.”

Raf rose from the couch—belly jiggling the whole time—and hurried off past August to the apartment's bathroom. August sighed and gave an accusatory glance towards Kai, who simply shrugged and got up himself.

“I should probably check on the dogs,” Kai said, heading through the sliding glass door that led to their back porch and the grill.

In the bathroom Raf closed the door behind him and looked into the mirror, mumbling under his breath. He was frustrated he'd gotten short with his friends because of his dumb hunger, something that'd become increasingly common as he grew larger. Raf cradled his middle in both hands and stared at it, trying to remember a time when he didn't have moobs or a sagging gut. Once he'd had a defined chin rather than a round face and flabby cheeks. Buying a whole new wardrobe wasn't an annual event, his clothes had always been somewhat loose, and his butt never tested the limits of his shorts. He was already dreading another potential clothing run, as his favorite blue plaid shirt no longer closed completely, the buttons threatening to pop off if he breathed in too deep.

Again Raf's stomach growled, though the associated hunger pains were much more intense than before. His mind immediately went to the promised hot dogs, but thinking about food only increased his irritation. More than anything else he wanted a *normal* appetite, not one that felt animalistic and

overly demanding. August liked to joke that he wasn't himself when he was hungry, and Raf was beginning to feel like there was more truth to that than he wanted to admit. The next bout of pain was accompanied by dizziness, Raf forced to brace himself on the counter as he cursed. Something wasn't right.

While Raf groaned his body started to change. Tan and brown fur sprouted from his skin, short at first but growing into a full coat over time. His hands widened, contorting into paws as his fingernails became claws. Raf's face slowly stretched forwards, forming a muzzle. The light-headedness and aches meant Raf's eyes were clenched shut, his transformation unwitnessed even as he felt a strange tingling sensation throughout his body. Seams on his shirts and pants creaked as Raf grew thicker all over, tufts of fur poking through the numerous tears. A tail pushed out from his pants, the new extension swaying erratically. One-by-one the buttons of his dress shirt popped off, clattering around the bathroom as his belly celebrated freedom by bouncing about.

The more Raf transformed the hungrier he got, to the point he felt like he hadn't eaten in days. He clutched his middle, the presence of fur not even registering in his mind, and tried recalling if there were any snacks left in the kitchen for him to dig into while he waited for dinner to be made. Long, rumbling gurgles echoed out from his stomach, louder than anything he'd ever been capable of. Inevitably Raf's eyes begrudgingly opened, and the sight awaiting him in the mirror left him frozen in shock; instead of his regular human self there was an anthropomorphic hyena.

Raf nervously waved an arm to make sure he wasn't hallucinating things, or the victim of an incredibly elaborate prank. Unfortunately the hyena in the mirror matched his every move. As the initial surprise wore off his gaze settled on his exposed belly, which looked even larger thanks to his new coat of fur. He fumed and grumbled for a solid minute until the hunger pains regained his attention. Regardless of how he now looked, Raf *needed* to get something into his stomach, and fast.

With a considerable degree of clumsiness Raf stumbled from the bathroom, trudging back to the living room. August had moved over to the couch by then, lazily skimming through the selection of a streaming service as he waited for the others to return. He heard his friend's heavy footsteps but didn't look away from the TV quite yet.

"So I'm thinking we should start with something light, I think they added something recently that—" August was left speechless as he turned to talk with Raf. Initially he staid perfectly still, not believing his own eyes as the giant hyena approached. The outfit worn by the creature was undeniably that of Raf, as was his pink mohawk and, well, waistline. "R-Raf?"

Raf's stomach growled, and the hyena growled right back at it. "Fuck, I'm so hungry right now," he mumbled, not considering for a moment that his odd appearance would be of any concern to his friend.

August got up and began circling Raf, as if a closer look would somehow dispel an illusion or a hologram and return him to normal. "How is this...how is this even possible?"

While August worried Raf found his eyes following the human's every move, his stomach rumbling, demanding. In his food-deprived state Raf wondered if anything in the pantry could actually sate his hunger...or if there was a filling meal right in front of him. Without warning Raf placed both paws on August's shoulders and opened his maw wide, giving his friend a clear view of the cavernous interior. In a flash August's head was completely engulfed, and it didn't take long for him to panic. Raf no longer saw August as one of his closest friends, but as food, and there was no way he was going to let his dinner escape.

A strong second gulp pulled August's face right into Raf's slick gullet. He gagged and wiggled as his head was coated in saliva and pelted by hot breath, jaws stretching impossibly wide over his shoulders. The betrayal was as unexpected as Raf's transformation, but blindly struggling wasn't doing him any good. Soon August felt his feet leave the ground as he was pressed right against Raf's doughy, furry body, every swallow sending him closer to the stomach below. His senses were hindered by the tight walls of the throat, and pushing into the stomach provided little relief. After a short coughing fit

he started shouting at Raf to stop, though he wasn't sure he could even be heard.

Though muffled, August's pleas were audible enough to Raf, he was simply ignoring them. As his belly swelled outward from his frantic friend Raf picked up his pace, eager to cram the live meal into his belly as swiftly as possible to make the hunger pains go away. He didn't care about savoring August, only consuming him, and made no effort to strip him of his bland clothing despite certainly having the means and strength to do so. Being slim made August a surprisingly easy meal. Barely a minute had passed yet his butt was already slipping passed Raf's lips, gravity starting to aid August's descent in the worst way.

Raf arched his head upwards till his dinner's legs were nearly vertical, taking massive gulps to scarf what was left of August down frighteningly fast. The pair of legs became a pair of twitching feet, and with a satisfied sigh Raf closed his jaws around the last free bit of August and swallowed, sealing his friend away entirely. Low moans escaped the hyena as he gently held his distended belly, Raf having never been so happy to gorge in his whole life. August was thumping wildly against the stomach walls, but the many layers of pudge in between him and the outside world cushioned his blows.

"That hit the—*uorrrrrrrrrrp*—spot," Raf said in a daze, seemingly not aware that he'd just swallowed his friend whole.

The engorged hyena was still blankly staring at his wobbling middle when the back door slid open and Kai walked into the room, focused obsessively on his phone. "August, saying 'Raf ate me' isn't going to make the hot dogs cook any faster ya...know."

Just like August before him, Kai froze upon seeing what Raf had become, though the shifting lump of his massive gut was far more unsettling. Raf didn't even bother saying a word, he simply saw his second course and made a move. Kai quickly found himself pinned against the wall by Raf's immense belly, able to feel every struggle and hear every shout from August within. Faced with a situation that couldn't possibly be real, Kai merely shook his head in terror as the wide hyena maw plunged him into darkness.

Eating an entire person hadn't calmed Raf's hunger much, and the now experienced predator scarfed Kai down with even greater haste than August. His swallows were deep and harsh, meant to handle his latest meal as efficiently as possible. Kai's hair was matted over his eyes thanks to the plentiful amount of saliva, not that he had any light to see with. When he entered the stomach he was greeted by August's panicked cries, which only became less coherent once he realized his best chance at rescue was in the process of joining him in the dark pit. Raf's belly swayed and jostled as it continued expanding, a giant misshapen mass that constantly threatened to topple the voracious hyena.

As Raf finished off his second live meal of the night he slowly stumbled towards the couch, cradling his boulder of a gut in both paws to maintain balance. He was greedily slurping up Kai's legs as he lowered himself down, the couch groaning beneath his concentrated weight but holding up. Within minutes Kai had been reduced to a bulge traveling down Raf's throat, having put up even less of a fight than his friend.

The hunger pains that'd plagued Raf were finally gone, and the stuffed hyena lay back on the couch, content. Utterly full, the odd tingling sensation and dizziness from earlier returned. Steadily the fur he'd acquired began to recede, along with his tail and snout. Paws reverted to hands and ears rounded out, Raf's usual features returned to him in time. The joy from overeating faded as Raf transformed back into a human, replaced by his usual persistent frustration of giving in to gluttony. A long, messy belch heralded the completion of his transformation, August's soaked cell phone soaring out and bouncing along the carpet.

Raf looked down upon his enormous, bouncing gut in disdain as his two friends struggled and demanded to be freed. Not sure he'd actually be able to throw the rowdy pair up, there was only one thing on Raf's mind. "Man, you guys are gonna make me huge!"

"Then let us out you fat jerk!" Kai yelled, doing his best to elbow the stomach wall.

“Easier said than done!” Raf fumed, pressing down on a bulge he hoped belonged to Kai. “I can't believe neither of you were able to run away, this is such a pain.”

“Well I can't believe you fucking ate us! Kai was hoping to find the entrance to Raf's throat, but being pressed up against August in the dark wasn't doing him any favors.

August groaned and tried to avoid getting hit by Kai. “Arguing isn't going to prevent us from being digested guys, so why don't we wait to play the blame game until *after* we're safely out of Raf's gut?”

The grumbling eased but didn't end entirely, the trio of friends continuing to bicker even as ominous gurgling echoed from Raf's stomach. A rough night awaited them, though it'd be far rougher if they failed to cooperate...