

The Pool Toy Vampire

By: IndigoRho

The sounds of squeaking plastic echoed throughout the cargo bay of the Zephyr, along with plenty of grumbling.

August—a normally lithe black-and-white goat—was looking rather puffy at the moment, an understandable side effect of being a living pool toy. He was struggling to help carry a large metal crate, his stubby air-filled hooves barely able to maintain a grip even with the magnetic strips he'd attached to them.

“*Baahaha*—this is ridiculous!” he bleated in frustration as he tried to keep his end of the crate somewhat steady. “Pool toys weren't meant to handle stuff like this, at least not without proper equipment!”

On the other side of the crate was a much rounder, blue cheetah pool toy who was obviously having an even rougher time. “How do you think I feel, my paws are way puffier than yours! Plus my belly keeps getting in the way.”

“Well Indi it's *your* fault everyone's like this, so you can deal!” August replied, taking a moment to glare at his crew mate. “I can't believe you kept poking at that weird console after we all told you to stop. Ancient Allagi tech *loves* to transform anyone trying to access it without authorization!” While he genuinely enjoyed being a pool toy on most occasions, being changed into one against his will without an easy way to return to normal was just obnoxious.

“I-it could've been worse!” Indi insisted. “We're still animate.”

As much as August wanted to snap at the clumsy cheetah he realized arguing with the now literal airhead wouldn't get him anywhere. Unfortunately the brief spat was enough of a distraction to cause the goat's grip to loosen. His hoof slid right through the handle, Indi letting out a surprised chirp as the weight of the crate brought him to his knees and made him bounce a little on the floor. On impact the latches on the crate cracked and the lid flew open, launching some of its contents out. August winced at both the loud crash and the feeling of multiple objects deflecting off his shiny hide.

With an exasperated sigh he looked upon the mess he'd been responsible for, hoping nothing had broken in the process. Everything in the crate was from the ruins they'd suffered their transformation accident at, and losing even a single potentially valuable artifact could mean the difference between turning back within days or within weeks. Professional treatments could be rather expensive, after all.

August awkwardly lowered himself to the floor, scrambling to return everything to the crate. Indi helped as well once he managed to roll off his rotund middle, though a snide remark shortly after brought a return to the bickering. Soon they were more focused on petty insults than the cleanup effort. Less caution was taken, and inevitably August accidentally prodded an unassuming amulet in just the right way.

A line of silver light briefly appeared on the glossy black artifact's surface, followed by a sharp shock that was somehow able to surge through the pool toy goat's entire plastic body. He felt a wave of dizziness along with numbness in his mouth, and for a few moments all August could do was sit on the ground, unable to think straight. Indi hadn't seen his crew mate getting stunned, initially assuming he was being given the silent treatment as he put away the last of the items that'd escaped the crate. When he finally did notice something was odd about August he was somewhat reluctant to question him.

“You alright?” Indi relented, half expecting to get yelled at again.

“Huh? Um, yeah I'm just...just hungry, I think,” August mumbled as he shook his head.

Indi gave him a confused look. “Uh, pool toys don't get hungry, dude. Unless you're craving an air tank.”

By then August had gotten back on his inflated hooves, his gaze locked onto Indi. Despite all the irritation he'd been feeling towards the cheetah since the accident, all he could suddenly think about

was just how much air the other pool toy contained within him. Indi was naturally a fairly obese feline, so of course he'd ended up being rather bloated once transformed. A sensation August could only describe as intense hunger gradually began to overwhelm him. He needed to be filled, *needed* to have more air, and regular old gas from an air tank wasn't going to satisfy him.

With a devilish grin on August's face he lunged at Indi, the cheetah chirping in terror as the slightly more agile goat grabbed a hold of him, jaws clamping around his neck. A pair of sharp needles had sprouted within August's mouth after being shocked, and they pierced the plastic hide of Indi with ease. Indi squirmed as he felt himself punctured, not in pain but incredibly confused. There was a hissing noise as August started to inhale, sucking the air right out of Indi through his two new "fangs".

As Indi's form became less taut he started to panic, but his frantic wiggling failed to dislodge the goat intent on draining him. August's flat middle swelled with the influx of stolen air, getting rounder and rounder with every greedy inhale. The duo stumbled about the cargo hold as the struggle continued, Indi growing weaker as he was deflated. His once-rigid arms were flopping about, and his legs were no longer capable of holding up the rest of his body, ensuring he remained at August's mercy. Meanwhile the goat was only growing bigger. August's middle was a large ball now, and his limbs had puffed up as well. However, no matter how much air he took his hunger didn't wane.

Indi found his thoughts drifting once he'd lost more than half his air, his whines turning to incoherent mumbling. He faded in and out of consciousness until eventually everything went dark, the cheetah going completely dormant. With glee August squeezed his squeaky victim to force the last bit of air from him, literally folding him up until he was flat and empty. The gluttonous goat sighed and tossed aside the motionless heap of plastic before patting his immense belly. August was just as wide as Indi had been, some of the cheetah's precious air lost during the confrontation. Still, the hunger persisted, and August knew a second course was in order. Fortunately for him, there were two other delicious pool toys in the ship who'd be woefully unaware of his intentions.

Quickly adjusting to his new bulk thanks to past experiences overinflated, August waddled out of the cargo hold in search of his next meal. As the Zephyr was fairly small, he didn't have to wait long. Within minutes a hefty, orange-striped zebra pool toy bumped right into him as he turned a corner, staggering backwards but narrowly avoiding falling over. The zebra instinctively tried to adjust the glasses that were now merely painted marks on his plastic face, snorting once he realized the uselessness of the effort.

"Indi I forgot how stealthy you are as a pool toy, I almost...wait, August?" The zebra looked over the goat to make sure his eyes weren't playing tricks on him. "You weren't messing with an air tank instead of putting away the haul, were you?"

"Nah Rho, I made sure that was handled *before* snacking," August grinned. Rho was his boyfriend, but August wasn't about to let a little fact like that get in between him and the trove of mouthwatering air within the zebra.

Rho showed no signs of concern as August closed in, just rolling his eyes instead. "You're starting to sound like Indi. Speaking of whom, where'd he end up?"

August happily slapped his bloated belly with both hooves, a hollow drum-like noise echoing out. "Most of him's sealed away in here! You should join him."

Before the baffled zebra could make sense of what his boyfriend was saying August pinned him against the wall with his enormous plastic gut. Rho gasped as his seams creaked from the pressure, the nozzle in his navel twitching. At first he thought the goat was just aggressively teasing him, until August opened his mouth to reveal the two glistening needle fangs inside. He twitched as he felt the punctures in his neck, followed by the loud hissing and the undeniable sensation of his air being siphoned away.

Rho slid an arm free and pushed at his attacker to no avail, unable to get any leverage against the much larger pool toy. With horror he watched as wrinkles appeared in the plastic of his arm, his strikes rapidly losing force as he lost more air. He could *feel* August's middle expanding into him,

forcing more air through the tiny pinprick holes in his neck. Nothing about the situation made sense to him, but his shouts and pleas fell on deaf ears, August not once halting his feast.

Steadily Rho was enveloped by the expanding goat, falling unconscious as the whole lower part of his body became floppy. Smaller than Indi, the ambushed zebra took far less time to deflate, and when August finally waddled backwards a crumpled hunk of plastic slid down the wall to the floor. Even larger than before, August took a moment to admire how much thicker he'd become. His limbs were bulk and his belly a wrecking ball, while his face and cheeks were delightfully round. Despite sucking two pool toys dry the insatiable goat remained hungry. At least he'd left the best for last.

The only other crew member left inflated in the ship was Raf, a grumpy obese hyena who was a good deal bigger than Indi had been. Of the four he'd complained the most about their predicament—though he was fond of complaining in general—and had nearly managed to get himself stuck in the ship's entry hatch upon returning. After that embarrassment he'd wandered off to sulk somewhere, one of the main reasons August had originally been tasked with helping carry the crate with Indi in the first place. Then again, Raf likely wouldn't have been able to handle the job at all considering how much space he took up.

August considered hailing Raf on the comm system in order to pinpoint his location, but decided against it so he could maintain the element of surprise. Gorging on Indi and Rho's air hadn't made the pool toy goat any more agile, and he wanted to keep every advantage he could against Raf, regardless of how sluggish the hyena would be as well. As August padded through the empty corridors and peeked into dark rooms he couldn't help but daydream about all the wonderful, delicious air bottled up inside Raf. Draining the hyena would certainly leave him immobile, but August felt the overindulgent feast would be more than worth it.

The search wasn't a long one. August eventually heard the distant sounds of grumbling and squeaking, and recognized them right away as belonging to Raf; when he did come across the hyena he couldn't help but laugh. Wedged in a reasonably-wide doorway was Raf, the massive pool toy wiggling futilely with a large scowl on his face, cursing and growling as he tried to get free. He briefly flashed an embarrassed frown and his reflective cheeks flushed red once he spotted August further down the hall, the hyena having obviously hoped he'd somehow escape his predicament without anyone else in the crew discovering him.

"Stuck?" August smirked as he waddled in the defenseless hyena's direction, not believing his luck.

"I'm not...I mean...ugh, it's nothing," Raf said, unconvincingly as he continued to wobble. "Just taking a break!"

"Sure, taking a break in the middle of a doorway you got your blimp of a middle jammed in. Sounds about right." August gave the hyena's taut belly a teasing poke, barely able to disguise his hunger.

Raf didn't bother coming up with another excuse or comeback, he simply pouted and avoided eye contact with his crew mate. "I guess some help getting out would be nice."

"Thought you'd never ask!" August declared. "Fortunately for you I've got the perfect way to fix your little girth problem."

August let Raf get a good glimpse of his fangs before plunging them into the hyena's puffy neck and leaning right into him. The goat moaned as he felt the rush of air pouring from Raf and into himself, every part of his pool toy body creaking as he began to expand once again. Raf had no way of properly fighting back, a chorus of squeaks filling the corridor as he frantically squirmed in place. Once he'd deflated enough to be dislodged he was distraught to discover he was still stuck atop his own treacherous gut.

Hisses and creaks rang out as the unwilling transfer of air continued. August was delighted to feel his ballooning belly press against the floor, knowing he'd managed to reach the point of no return in regards to his mobility; keeping Raf in place was now the utmost priority. Raf flailed and whined as

his own movements slowly became sluggish from the deflation, forced to watch August swell and fill the corridor from the air being taken from him. He was as confused by the goat's inexplicable attack as the others had been, but soon he'd be in no condition to get answers.

The plastic body of Raf sagged to the ground as his mind became a blur. His struggles ceased entirely and his limbs grew limp, unable to maintain their form anymore. Even as August's bloated sides pressed into the walls he still ravenously sucked what little air remained in the inanimate Raf, obsessed with sating his hunger to the utmost. Though his body groaned from the expansion his seams held strong, and inevitably there was nothing left to drain from the flattened pool toy hyena.

With an echoing *uorrrrp* August tossed aside Raf and smiled in pure joy. He'd grown ridiculously huge after stealing all of Raf's air, completely blocking off the hall in a manner his grumpy crew mate normally did. Of course, even if August had been in the spacious cargo hold he wouldn't have been mobile. His middle was a towering beach ball and his legs far too puffy to be of any practical use, his face just as incredibly round. August was all smiles, though, the mysterious hunger finally gone.

He wasn't sure how he was going to return to a reasonable size and at the moment he simply didn't want to, content to enjoy his girth and all the wonderful air he'd hoarded within him. The bloated pool toy goat would worry about such minor things after the ship's autopilot brought them to dock. Meanwhile the Zephyr continued on its way, now crewed by a single immobile goat and three deflated pool toys in need of patching...