

Columbia State 9: A Friendly Contest:

By: IndigoRho

Victor took a moment to bask in the glory of the table before him. Six large pizzas in three neat stacks remained in their boxes, each loaded with extra cheese and an excess of toppings. The overweight lizard's mouth watered from their strong aromas mixing with the air. A few sides of cheesy bread and a variety of unopened chip bags complemented the pizza, while six two-liters of soda stood by to wash the whole thing down. The feast could have easily served a large party well into the night, maybe even leave some leftovers. Today, though, it would have to manage the appetites of only three. Victor worried it wouldn't be enough.

"Hmm. Adam, do you think I should've added a couple more sides to the order?" Victor asked.

His roommate, a slightly chubby raven, was kneeling in front of the television, back turned. "You know, I should be able to say 'Of course you should've, there's no way we have enough food!' and I'd laugh, and you'd laugh, and we'd enjoy our little joke," Adam answered, oozing sarcasm. "But you're not joking, and now I'm forced to legitimately consider the question myself."

Victor smiled, not that Adam could see it. "You could've just said 'no'."

"No" doesn't make you reflect on the absurdity of the situation," Adam said back. "And honestly, is all that food *really* necessary?"

"Yes, it is," Victor stated. "Marcus is taking his weight gain seriously, he really wants to make Riley happy. I think it's adorable."

Adam laughed a little. "I want to feel the same way, I do, but then I remember that half the reason he's getting fatter is so Riley doesn't accidentally eat him in his sleep."

"Aww, but that makes it romantic," Victor insisted.

"Sorry if I don't find vore all that romantic," Adam replied a little coldly.

Victor frowned and quickly dodged the subject. "Well...anyways, Marcus has apparently become the scourge of all foodkind. Eli told me he can eat for hours without stopping if you give him the chance, so the feast might be needed."

"If you say so," Adam still sounded a bit gloomy.

"I guess if there *is* too much then we'll be able to live off the leftovers for days. At least I'll try to make sure they last that long," Victor laughed sheepishly.

"Don't worry about it," Adam said a little abruptly. "I mean, you know how I am with leftovers, don't worry about rationing anything or taking too much." He seemed to have lightened up again. "So, what did the delivery guy think of your smorgasbord?"

Victor readjusted one of the pizza boxes real quick. "He didn't say anything about it, which was weird cause the delivery guy was that really fat lion again."

"Again?" Adam said. "Does Mezziano's only have like one driver or something?"

"No, I've seen a couple others before. Sam just always works Fridays."

"Sam. You're on first name basis with the delivery guy now?"

"He wears a name-tag," Victor wished Adam could see his glare. "Anyways, *Sam* wasn't in a talkative mood. He looked a little exhausted, and his belly was bloated, like really bloated. I'm pretty sure he was a day or two into digesting someone."

Adam stopped his work for a moment. "Are you sure? Like a hundred percent?"

"I...yeah, yeah," Victor wished he hadn't mentioned it. "His shirt was way too small, didn't hide his gut at all, and it was a weird shape. Definitely not inflation or a miracle weight gain. Not something I expected of him, since he always seems so nervous."

An unexpected knock at the door mercifully ended the conversation. Victor headed towards it, checking his phone for the time and any missed calls along the way. He looked through the peephole and smiled, opening the door. On the other side was a rather distracted Marcus. The zebra was fighting with his hoodie, desperately trying to force it over his large mound of a belly. Unfortunately for him the

reluctant article of clothing was obviously a size too small—along with the shirt beneath it. The tragic combination left Marcus with a considerable strip of his soft white and black striped gut exposed for all to see. Victor stifled his amusement for as long as he could manage, until Marcus suddenly became aware he had an audience.

“Oh, heh heh, hi Victor,” Marcus said, obviously embarrassed.

“Hello yourself,” Victor grinned. “I didn’t get an alert from the call-box, was the door propped open with a rock again?”

“Nope, just arrived right as this huge lion was waddling out,” Marcus replied. “He almost didn’t see me, I think I scared the crap out of him. I’ve never gotten that sort of reaction before, it was kind of surreal.”

Victor seemed rather amused by the story. “I suspect he reacts that way to a lot of people, so don’t be too proud of yourself,” he joked. “Anyways, come in, come in.”

Marcus obliged, still fidgeting ineffectively with his clothes. “Man, I didn’t even notice how poorly these fit until halfway through the bus ride. Riley never warns me,” he mumbled in dismay.

“I’m not surprised,” Victor chuckled. “Though by now shouldn’t you be better at preemptively buying larger clothing? I mean, you’ve been gaining for, like, four months now, right?”

“I know, I know. For the longest time I was able to just borrow stuff from Riley, but then I outgrew him.” Marcus replied with a definite hint of pride. “Riley *does* enjoy me wearing the smaller stuff from time to time, though.”

“Sounds about right,” Victor said.

Marcus shot a glance at Victor’s waist. “I see I’m not the only one stress testing my wardrobe.”

Victor looked down at his own belly. While it was smaller than Marcus’, it still managed to noticeably strain his shirt, though not enough to expose anything. “Yeah, I’ve been digging through my old stuff recently to find clothes that fit. Fortunately I never threw anything out.”

“If you mind me asking, why did you keep all your old fat clothes?”

“Well, at first I kept them in case I ever fell off the ladder and started hunting again,” Victor sighed. “After a while, though, I started using them to remind myself of just how much I had changed, for the better.”

“Aww,” was all Marcus could think to say.

Victor smiled in return. “Yeah. Thankfully the weight is returning the good old fashioned way,” he gave his belly an exaggerated rub.

Marcus laughed.

“Man, munchies and endless leftovers are a powerful combination,” Victor said. “I swear, Adam’s almost as good at fattening people as Riley is!”

Adam had been absent from the conversation, continuing his work around the television, but stood up and turned towards Victor and Marcus with an almost anxious look on his face. “You don’t really think I’m trying to fatten you, do you Victor?”

Victor was caught off-guard by the sincerity of the question. “Huh? No, of course not, I was just joking, sorry,” he apologized. “The gains are my fault, I’m terrible at turning down free food.”

“Cooking small portions of good food is difficult, and I always forget about my leftovers till they go bad, and I don’t eat much to begin with...” Adam rambled on.

Victor knew he was telling the truth, but he also knew Adam had probably gained a solid fifty pounds in the last few months. Weight that wasn’t from simple overindulgence, but predation. Adam, who was always so vehemently opposed to vore, had himself eaten two people. The first had been in self-defense, when a predator had attacked him, but the second... Victor wasn’t sure why there had been a second time. He hoped Adam would open up about it eventually.

Marcus hadn’t noticed Victor lost in thought. “I’ve got to know, just for comparison’s sake. How much *have* you gained, Victor?” he asked.

Victor snapped back to reality. “Oh. Well, ha, about sixty pounds, I think. As goofy as it sounds,

I'm kind of thankful you've gained more weight, and faster," he admitted. "Makes me feel a little less gluttonous."

Marcus seemed fairly amused by the revelation. "I guess I'll just use that as more motivation to stay ahead!"

"Good, good! Speaking of which," Victor directed Marcus' gaze towards the table. "I believe everything here should meet your strict dietary needs. At least I pray so."

Marcus looked in awe at the arrangement of pizzas, snacks, and sodas, his face an amusing mix of anticipation and humility. "Oh wow. Victor, you didn't need to go out of your way like this for me."

"Eh, Riley sent a few ridiculous coupon codes my way. I suspect you two are a third of Mezziano's business or something!"

"Yeah..." Marcus said.

"And be warned, I'm having my fair share of this tonight, too," He rubbed his belly again. "Oh, and you're free to join in, Adam. Don't want you feeling like a third wheel here."

Adam scanned the table with relative disinterest. "I don't know, I feel like if I get between the two of you and the pizza I'll be mistaken for a slice," he replied a little humorlessly.

Marcus was about to laugh at the joke, but then noticed the odd look of concern on Victor's face. "Adam, I'd never do something like that to you. I've told you before, I'm done with that lifestyle. The only things I stalk now are fast food and bongs." He smiled, hoping for some reciprocation.

Adam remained quiet, looking somewhat remorseful but avoiding eye contact.

Marcus did his best to change the apparently awkward subject. "So, we'll be watching the matches in here, I assume?"

"Yeah," Adam said. "I just finished getting everything hooked up again on this end, we just need to wait for the stream to actually start."

"Awesome, awesome," Victor said, relieved. "Well Marcus, should we grab a little pre-show snack?"

Marcus nodded, and the pair eagerly approached the table of food. Victor decided to lead by example, grabbing a plate and loading it up with an assortment of pizza slices and topping it off with some of the cheesy bread. Accepting the open invitation for gluttony, Marcus followed suit, making sure to grab exactly one slice more than his host. He was about to open one of the two-liters and pour himself a drink, when he saw Victor simply grab an entire bottle and make for the couch. Smiling, Marcus, re-twisted the cap of his and brought the whole thing over himself. He plopped down on the opposite end of the couch from Victor, balancing his plate on the end-table beside it. Adam opted for a nearby chair, giving the two far heavier furs plenty of room to pig out.

"Adam," Marcus said in between polite nibbles of pizza, "I think we've only met once before, and we never really had a chance to talk. Have you always lived around here, like Riley?"

The worried look on Victor's face made Marcus immediately regret asking what he'd assumed was a safe, innocent question. Before he could say something else, though, Adam answered. "No, I moved here for college with an old friend of mine. I don't have a...great relationship with my parents, and we both needed an escape. Unfortunately, my friend didn't survive college, but I stuck around after."

Marcus knew Adam's tone meant the friend had been eaten. Well, that explained Victor's reaction to the question. "I'm...I'm sorry," Marcus apologized. "I shouldn't have brought it up."

"No, no. It's not your fault," Adam said, somber. "That happened a long time ago, I've made my peace." Victor's frown seemed to hint otherwise.

"So, uh, I know you work at Horizons, with Victor," Marcus desperately attempted to salvage the conversation. "Do you handle the inflation stuff there, too?"

Adam perked up. "Yeah, inflation's the main reason I got a job there in the first place. It's my favorite hobby, helps me relieve stress."

"Cool." Marcus was thankful he'd stumbled upon a positive subject. "Victor introduced me to it

recently, and I admit I've been growing fond of it.”

“Ooh, how many times have you inflated?” Adam asked, eagerly.

“Just a couple. Actually got Riley to join me last time.”

“And what have you tried?”

Adam's passion was almost jarring to Marcus, considering how he'd been acting earlier. “Uh, just air and helium so far, full bodied.”

“I love helium inflation, it's just so wonderful!” Adam said with a genuine smile. “There's a dedicated inflation club downtown called Zephyr, they have a tower especially for helium inflation. Floating five stories in the air...it's incredible.”

The experience did sound fun, at least to Marcus. “I'll definitely have to look into it.”

“And you said Riley finally tried inflation?” Marcus nodded. “Good, I've been hoping he would. I know he suffers from that sleep eating problem, and inflation could help with that.”

Victor appeared pleased that Adam's mood had markedly improved. “I owe so much to inflation, I honestly don't know if I would have been able to quit vore otherwise. It just fulfills that urge to be full so well, as odd as it sounds.”

“Definitely feels strange,” Marcus agreed.

“I never want to go back to that life, it's just too...painful. To myself and others.” Victor looked towards Adam, hopeful, but the raven had become solemn again, avoiding eye contact with him.

Marcus recognized the renewed tension and stepped in once more. “I'll talk to Riley about inflation again. He's just so used to everything failing that he's been reluctant to really try inflation therapy. I'm sure I can convince him, though.”

“Thank you Marcus,” Adam said. “Riley's lucky to have someone taking such a proactive role in helping him kick his habit. I wish more people had that attitude.” Marcus swore he noticed the raven giving an accusing glance towards Victor.

“Alright,” Victor interrupted. “The pizza's cooling and the stream probably has another half-hour of montages and interviews before a match actually starts. I say we test the results of Riley's handiwork.”

Marcus seemed intrigued. “And how are you planning to do that?”

“Eating contest!” Victor declared.

“Ha! Now that just wouldn't be fair. Besides all my experience, I've got a bit of weight advantage on ya,” Marcus motioned towards his partially exposed stomach.

“Don't count me out, I can blitz through a meal pretty damn well myself. Adam can attest to that!” Adam nodded in agreement. “And I've got an equalizer.”

Victor stood back up, quickly rushing over to what Marcus assumed was his bedroom. A minute later he returned, carrying a long, inflated bag filled with something hazy. “A strong puff of this should motivate my appetite *and* give me a bit more capacity to work with,” He said, before putting his lips over the mouthpiece.

Victor began breathing in deeply and, to Marcus' surprise, didn't stop. His soft belly slowly rounded out more, stretching his already small shirt to its limits. Unfortunately, it attempted to hold out, refusing to rise up with Victor's increasing girth, and the lizard was too engrossed in his attempt to show off to notice. With a humorous “*riiiiip*” the seams along the sides of his shirt tore to make room for his belly. Marcus and Adam both had a good laugh, and Victor ceased inflating, surprised by the noise. A small cloud of smoke poured from his open mouth as he coughed, looking down on the damage.

“Woops,” Victor said, smiling. “Been a while since that's happened. Oh well, I should be in good fighting condition now.”

Indeed, Victor had managed to inflate his stomach just enough to match Marcus' size. He pulled off the remains of his shirt, tossing them at the foot of the couch, and glanced at the still relatively full vaporizer bag. “Hey Adam, why don't you join in?” He waved the bag. “It'll be fun!”

"I don't know about that." Adam didn't seem convinced. "I'm a total lightweight compared to you two, inflated or not."

"Oh well." Victor had a sly look in his eye. "If you can't handle a little expansion..."

Adam glared at Victor, but then stood up, taking off his own shirt. He walked over to Victor, grabbing the bag by the mouthpiece and wandering back to the chair with it. "You know me a little too well," he mumbled quietly, and began to inhale.

Adam, like Victor, decided to take in the bag's contents in one go. His much smaller belly started filling out right away, ruffling its black feathers in the process. He had to inflate a considerable amount more than Victor to make up for his smaller size, but never stopped for a breath. When he finally sucked the bag dry, Adam's gut was wonderfully round, and looked a bit comical compared to the rest of his body. He released the remaining smoke from his mouth rather elegantly, managing to form a couple rings. Content with his size, Adam headed over to the table to fill up a plate of his own, grabbing two of the remaining sodas instead of one.

Victor watched the scene with admiration, obviously fond of Adam being both shirtless and inflated. "I think we might have a wildcard on our hands, Marcus," he laughed, and sat back down on the couch. "Oh, and you should probably ditch the shirt. Don't want it getting in the way of your feasting now, do we?"

The thought of removing his shirt instinctively made Marcus nervous. He quickly shook away the feeling, though, reminding himself that he was definitely somewhere his weight would be appreciated. Besides, his shirt wasn't doing that great a job of covering him to begin with. Marcus stripped off the offending piece of clothing and gently lowered it to the floor, exposing fully his flabby striped belly. While the zebra had been even fatter when he was younger, the speed of his recent gains still left him surprised by his own girth. Not that he minded. He'd taken a liking to the new weight, especially with how much joy it brought his boyfriend, Riley.

"Alright," Victor spoke up. "Let's keep this simple. If you stop eating you lose, winner's the last fur still gorging. The grand prize is the satisfaction that you can eat far more than is considered reasonable. Coincidentally, that's also the prize for second and third. Begin!"

All three competitors began digging into their previously neglected plates. The first few slices of pizza and cheesy bread were easy, sent piece by piece into empty stomachs. Victor was treating it like an actual contest, shoving food into his mouth and barely taking the time to chew. Instead, he periodically washed the mess down with swigs of his soda. Marcus was eating at a more leisurely pace, taking some time to enjoy the taste, but consuming a considerable amount nonetheless. He knew he would likely outlast the other two. Adam was surprisingly into it, wolfing down pizza just as swiftly as Victor. The jab about his capacity had worked, much to Victor's delight.

Victor and Adam finished their plates almost simultaneously, though Victor looked noticeably more winded. The pair quickly rose and headed to the table for more. Victor piled another half of a pizza onto his plate, only to be stunned as Adam grabbed an entire box. For a moment he considered doing the same, but decided against it. He wasn't really sure what his limit was. Marcus was just arriving as they left, and the zebra selected a full box of his own, along with another bottle of soda and some cheesy bread.

The gorging continued. Victor was the first to feel the initial signs of fullness, despite his inflation. In a misguided effort to stay in the competition he began swallowing slices whole, which only made him fuller faster. He chugged the remainder of his two-liter after gobbling down the last slice on his plate, and attempted to stand up for more. Instead, the movement caused him to release a larger-than-expected belch, forcing most of the air and smoke from his stomach and shrinking it considerably. His equalizer vanquished, Victor sunk back into the couch, too stuffed to move.

Meanwhile, the other two competitors were finishing off their boxes, though Adam had resorted to guzzling down larger and larger amounts of soda to keep up. Again Adam and Marcus stood to resupply, both carefully waddling to and from the table, a box and two-liter in hand. Victor watched on

in a daze, rubbing the tight scales of his belly to soothe the pain. The minutes passed, and Adam's eating was slowing to a crawl, while Marcus' was as steady as ever. Adam groaned, feeling the pressure growing in his gut. He had managed to avoid burping up smoke for the most part, but he was still approaching his limit. After reluctantly chewing on a shred of crust for what seemed like ages, Adam finally threw in the towel.

“Ugh...I give up!” Adam said, leaning back in his chair with a pained expression.

Victor managed an exhausted laugh. “I guess it was inevitable, but you win Marcus! I fear Riley's created a monster.”

Marcus looked up from his current slice of pizza, a bit surprised. “It's over already?”

“Real funny you bottomless pit. Don't make me ban you from the remaining food!” Victor threatened sarcastically.

Marcus gave a look of mock horror before laughing. “Sorry, sorry. You both put up a good fight. Honestly didn't expect you two to eat as much as you did.” He continued digging into the pizza.

Adam had been a tad bit overzealous during the competition, and looked ready to pass out. With some effort, Victor lifted himself off the couch and waddled over to his roommate. He began gently rubbing the raven's bloated belly to ease his pain. At first, Adam seemed to be enjoying the experience, moaning happily and grinning. Then he abruptly composed himself, a look of embarrassment on his face, blushing deeply.

“Don't worry about me. I'll...I'll be fine. Just a little full.” Adam said.

Victor removed his hand, disappointed. He considered saying something, wanted to open up, but decided against it. Now wasn't the time for that, not with Marcus over. Maybe later, if he could finally muster the courage. Instead, Victor returned to the couch. Marcus had been too busy with food to notice the event, showing no sign of stopping any time soon. On the television, the first match of the night was finally about to start. Victor turned the volume on. He needed the distraction.