

Columbia State Short: Never Hunt Alone

By: IndigoRho

The sun had finally set and the campus of Columbia State was practically deserted, most students retreating to the relative safety of their dorms or apartments to avoid the nocturnal preds who roamed in the dark. Two stragglers—a lanky meerkat and his stout toad friend—were happily chatting away beneath a lamppost, oblivious to the eyes that watched them. A midnight blue cheetah crouched low to the ground at the corner of a building, blending into the night as best he could with his dark-gray hoodie, waiting for an opportunity to present itself. The cheetah was Ryan, a member of the Zeta Nu Delta fraternity. His stomach growled and his mouth watered as he spied on the pair, imagining their taste and the bulges they'd make in his belly, not to mention the lovely layer of fat they'd leave behind.

Only one of them would be entering his stomach tonight, though, and the lucky meal would unfortunately be up to chance. The stalked pair finally ended their conversation and said their goodbyes, the toad walking off in the opposite direction while the meerkat lingered, messing with his phone for a long couple of minutes before heading off himself. Ryan quietly grumbled under his breath as the less fattening option became his likely target, the meerkat strolling along the path past him without noticing a thing. How someone could be so careless on a campus like this was anyone's guess. Using his years of hunting experience, Ryan stealthily followed his prey at a distance, keeping to the shadows and hiding behind whatever he could find.

The meerkat's attention wandered again, and he abruptly stopped to check his phone where the walkway overlooked a sprawling botanical garden, eyes glued to the glow of the screen. Ryan saw the opening and swiftly moved in, inching closer and closer to the unsuspecting fur. His prey pocketed the phone right before his legs were pulled out from under him, the meerkat's face smashing into the pavement hard. He cried out in pain and rushed his paws to his throbbing nose as the first tiny trickles of blood leaked out. The sting of the injury masked the feeling of his shoes being pulled off and the moisture spreading over his ankles, but the claws digging into his legs snapped him back to reality.

With a bit of effort the meerkat turned his head to figure out what was happening, and yelped in horror as he saw the jaws of a cheetah slowly working their way past his knees. He frantically clawed at the pavement, trying in vain to gain traction and drag himself from the predator's maw as more and more of his body was devoured. Ryan began to purr loudly when he felt his belly bulge a bit as the meerkat's footpaws entered his stomach. He needed a meal in him, needed to be bigger, needed to feel his gut sagging from the weight of prey. Wiggling legs slid deeper into his throat and he grabbed a hold of the meerkat's sides, pulling his waist into his mouth. The cool concrete chilled the cheetah's swelling middle as it spread over the ground, writhing.

Ryan braced himself as he gulped down a little more of his meal's chest, carefully shifting onto his knees and then standing up completely, head held high. The meerkat felt himself sliding down the gullet even faster than before now that gravity was working against him, and hopelessly attempted to hold onto the cheetah's jaws and halt his demise.

"No! Nooooo!" the meerkat screamed in despair. "Help! Somebody, please help! Floyd! Floyd!"

The meerkat's grip failed him, and his paws slipped into Ryan's warm mouth, sealing his fate. He could see the bulges his legs were making in the cheetah's exposed swollen belly, watching as his body steadily filled it more and more, tears welling in his eyes. His shoulders vanished into the maw and Ryan's paws pressed callously into his bruised snout, pushing his head into the terrible moist cavern. A final sob of sorrow was quickly muffled as Ryan shut his jaws and gulped hard, sending the rest of the meerkat down his throat and into his stomach with a wonderful shake and wobble.

Ryan simply grinned in joyful satisfaction at the completion of his meal, purring like a kitten. His belly bounced and swayed as the meerkat punched and kicked away, Ryan poking the sporadic imprints of paws and snout appearing on the light blue fur of his middle. This was a game to him, hunting and eating others, a passionate hobby that had filled his belly and defined his relationships

since middle school, when he'd nearly been eaten himself. A leopard friend had abruptly gotten into vore on the urging of his brother, and quickly became obsessed with it, going on a month-long binge in their neighborhood. Eventually he'd turned his sights on Ryan, attempting to convince the cheetah to be swallowed—temporarily of course. The proposal had made Ryan understandably uneasy and he'd refused. His friend had dropped the act entirely then and chased after him, cornering him in a park and rambling on about how delicious the cheetah looked. If it hadn't been for the timely intervention of another friend—Lojh—Ryan would have been devoured and digested, turned into a layer of fat before ever reaching high school.

Of course, as Ryan poked Lojh's swollen belly and listened to the leopard's pleas and cries for mercy, he'd become interested in vore himself. Barely a week later he was enjoying a squirming gut of his own for the first time, and Lojh and him turned into avid hunters. Joining a vore fraternity had been one of the easiest decisions of their lives, the pair breezing through the pledge process during freshman year. Now sophomores, they were free to hunt as they pleased, and college life was proving to be everything they'd ever dreamed of.

The meerkat had settled down a good deal as Ryan daydreamed, prompting the cheetah to shake his belly a bit to force some more wonderful wiggles. He giggled to himself before turning around to leave, immediately bumping into a very angry looking toad. Ryan wobbled backwards in surprise and put on a nervous smile.

“Uh, hey dude, nice night, isn't it?” Ryan said.

The toad continued glaring. “Throw the meerkat up furball!”

“M-meerkat, what meerkat?” Ryan stammered as he slowly backed up into the short ledge that separated the pathway and the embankment to the garden, his prey's struggles rejuvenated. He couldn't believe the toad had shown up, he should've been long gone by now!

“You've got Keith in that bloated stomach of yours, and I'm more than willing to smash your head into the concrete if that's what it takes to pull him out of you!” The toad threatened, stepping forward.

Ryan stumbled, falling backward onto the ledge. “W-wait, don't be so hasty! This is all a terrible misunderstanding, let's just talk this through...”

The toad kicked Ryan hard in the shin. “Not in the mood to deal with your shit, start heaving, now!”

A loud snapping noise behind Ryan caught the toad's attention, and he quickly leaned over the ledge to look for the source. At first, the toad didn't see anything out of the ordinary on the poorly lit slope, only grass and small shrubs. Then he noticed the pair of yellow eyes that seemed to be hovering in midair less than ten feet away. They blinked once before a large, black hole appeared beneath them, a pink tongue shooting out from it with frightening speed. With a wet slap the sticky tip of the tongue impacted right below the toad's neck, retracting almost immediately before he had any time to react at all. The toad was dragged over the ledge and down the embankment straight into the apparently floating, wide open mouth.

The force of the retrieval had been so great that the toad was already swallowed past his shoulders before the first gulp ever occurred. Colorful scales began to fade into view as the hidden predator relaxed his natural camouflage, revealing a pudgy crocodile whose back half was bright cyan and front half bright yellow, the end of his flexible tail curling into a spiral as he greedily devoured the plump toad. He lazily made his way up the embankment and over the ledge—his flabby belly ballooning outward as more and more of the toad emptied into it—stopping momentarily at one point to pluck a cell phone from his prey's pocket. His snout closed around the toad's kicking feet just as he hopped onto the pathway.

Ryan looked at the hybrid crocodile's massive gut with awe and gave it a playful pat, feeling the toad struggling under his paw. “Took you long enough, Lojh,” he teased. “Usually you can't wait to scarf down your prey.”

“Yeah, well usually my prey don't go sprinting off in the opposite direction right when they're about to walk into range!” Lojh replied, holding up the toad's phone and flipping through it with a claw. “Thought so. Indigo, you freakin' forgot to snag the meerkat's phone off him when you ate him, he texted for help!”

“Oh c'mon, you've done that plenty of times yourself, Fat Ryan,” Ryan pouted, resorting to one of his friend's many nicknames. The cheetah and crocodile were both named Ryan, and over the years they'd settled in to using a variety of nicknames to avoid confusion. For the most part, cheetah Ryan was referred to by Indigo—for the color of his fur—while crocodile Ryan went by Lojh—his go-to username online. Of course, their acquaintances had added their own variations to the mix on occasion: Fat Ryan, Furry Ryan, Less Fat Ryan, Sneaky Ryan...

“Excuse me for not wanting to see you digesting away in some random toad,” Lojh said, typing a message on the stolen phone. “Keith in there's probably wondering why his knight in shining armor hasn't freed him yet, gonna get him up to speed on things real quick.”

A muffled message alert went off in Indigo's stomach, which soon came back to life with a flurry of struggles and shouts. “Ooh, that got his attention,” Indigo said, enjoying the ruckus in his belly.

“Alright, let's head back to the House, don't need your dinner calling in anymore backup,” Lojh said.

“Sounds good to me.” Indigo heaved himself off the ledge, his gut swaying to and fro as he returned to his paws. The hunting duo began waddling away, their hungers satiated.

Lojh was still messing with the toad's phone. “Hmm, wonder if he's got any tasty looking friends,” Lojh muttered, scouring the phone's photos, contacts, and whatever social media sites were still logged into. After some quick searching a grin grew on his snout. “Awesome, toad's got two roommates—a raccoon and a lizard—and they look plump as fuck!”

Indigo leaned over to see for himself, delighted by a picture of the three roommates shirtless at the local waterpark, a soft round belly on each. “We've got to pay them a visit sometime. Wait, are any of them preds? They might be even fatter now if they are!”

A minute more of searching found the answer. “Lizard definitely is, there's a pic of him passed out on a couch with a bulging gut, wouldn't be surprised if they all were then.”

“Awesome, awesome, awesome!” Indigo said with glee, imagining his next meal before his current one had even begun to digest. “The meerkat was so scrawny, need me some blubbery prey so I can get big again!”

“You just want to get that jaguar's attention, don't you?” Lojh teased.

“That's not the only reason! I mean, sure he's probably into fat, considering how much he's plumped up lately, but I've always liked gaining weight!” Indigo insisted.

Lojh snorted. “Just talk to him already, you're too damn shy for your own good! You've obviously got some shit in common.”

“It's not that easy! Besides, he's with Tau Tau Psi, dating someone from a rival frat would be awkward.” Indigo said.

“Why? Jonas seems to have a mancrush on their chapter president, and it's not like we're at war with them or anything.” Lojh countered. “Just ask him if he wants to go on a hunt some time. Nothing more romantic than stuffing yourselves.”

“I don't know, maybe,” Indigo said, nervously drumming on his squirming belly as he thought the suggestion over. “Maybe at the Predmoot, there's usually some inter-frat mingling there, it'd feel more natural than just asking him in class out of the blue.”

Lojh resisted making a bad color joke at their expense. “Whatever works for ya, man.”

The pair continued walking in the quiet night, the struggles and pleas in their stomachs gradually fading away until there was nothing left but light gurgling. Another successful hunt completed, another meal stewing away, another day over without ending up in the belly of someone

else.