

A Float in the Park

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Chaotic dove behind a large statue as screams and shouts filled the air, his heart racing. The raccoon had been enjoying a nice stroll through the park when the infamous super villain Swell Magus had spontaneously appeared and begun casting spells at bystanders indiscriminately. Any who were unfortunate enough to get caught in his blasts rapidly filled with helium, which served as the villain's calling card. A nervous peek from Chaotic's hiding spot revealed there was already a dozen or so bloated furs helplessly floating into air, and even more desperately holding onto whatever they could in an attempt to avoid a similar fate.

Swell Magus himself was slowly hovering in his direction, casting spells at anyone caught in the open; Chaotic knew he'd be next if he remained. After building up some courage the raccoon dashed away from his hiding spot, hoping to reach one of the many stores bordering the park and find safety. Magic bolts were flying all around him, and Chaotic winced as he saw a pair of nearby foxes get struck simultaneously. Their middles were already swelling as they stumbled to the ground. He resisted the urge to look back and see if either had been able to stand back up before the helium got the best of them, still in danger himself.

The park gate was in clear sight when Chaotic felt himself shoved by an unseen force, a brief chill surging through his body. He braced himself well enough, but as he shook off the fall he realized with horror his light-gray middle was rounding out; he'd been hit. Chaotic pushed down on his growing belly with both paws in an attempt to stop the inflation, to no avail. The raccoon frantically looked in every direction for some kind of salvation, but all there was to potentially grab onto were flimsy benches and trees full of sharp branches. With no options left, Chaotic forced himself back onto his paws and began sprinting once more for the exit, hoping there was still time.

Chaotic could sense his belly ballooning outward with every step, the sway and size gradually interfering with his pace. Despite expanding he didn't feel heavier, instead feeling lighter and lighter as the seconds passed. His hide was stretching as the pressure within him increased, a faint hissing echoing outward as the spell did its work. Running quickly turned into jogging, then into panicked waddling. The raccoon's gaze kept shifting between the gate and his growing belly, a dome of gray threatening to be his doom.

Once the inflation spread to his limbs his fate was practically sealed. His puffed up arms were sticking out from his sides, the round raccoon clumsily wobbling towards the exit that was so painfully close. Light creaks accompanied the swelling now, yet another ominous sensation to distract him. Unfortunately the dirt path he'd been fleeing on dealt the final blow to his escape attempt. Chaotic's puffy paw stumbled over an unseen rock, causing him to roll over onto his massive belly.

The terrified raccoon flailed and cried out for help as others ran by, none bothering to stop and aid the stricken stranger. As his spherical body began to engulf his bloating limbs he felt himself gently lift off the ground. Weightlessness was unnerving, especially considering there was nothing to stop him from floating upwards helplessly. He'd been barely ten feet away from the park entrance, something he could've held onto, something that might've protected him. Chaotic motioned towards it with a bloated paw, so close yet so painfully far. The purple bandana around his neck loosened as it swelled, until finally untying and falling to the dirt below.

His rise into the air was horribly slow, giving the raccoon plenty of false hope he'd be rescued at the last second by a good samaritan, or that the spell would wear off, anything. He would have no such luck today. Chaotic's frantic movements caused him to slowly rotate as he floated, giving him a wide look at his surroundings. He could see the countless others sharing his predicament, balloons of sorts rising higher and higher above him. Swell Magus was still actively adding to the bunch, and many of the early victims were losing their grips and lifting off.

The hissing ceased, at least giving Chaotic the assurance he wouldn't pop, but that did little to

alleviate his fears. He was merely a fragile raccoon balloon now, completely at the whims of the breeze, drifting further and further from safety. All he could do was wait and hope for a miracle. At least his view would be lovely...