

The Importance of Juicing

By: IndigoRho

The sliding glass doors of a buffet opened just enough for a massive crocodragon to waddle out, his wide gut nearly getting wedged in the process. Bokra grinned as he forced himself through, belly swaying and sloshing with every step, though not exclusively due to his excessive lunch; there was quite a lot of juice in there as well. A few years back he'd had a serious allergic reaction to a rather innocent blueberry drink, and in the aftermath he'd ended up stuck as a permaberry. His body was constantly producing juice—day and night—fating Bokra to a life of daily juicings and fluctuating size.

While most would've dreaded the situation, he was indifferent about it at best. After all, Bokra was fond of indulging in a heavier lifestyle, and his ever-present internal juices only seemed to encourage his appetite and gains. He felt he could gorge more than ever before, not to mention the extra girth a belly full of juice provided. As such he tended to delay his necessary juicings. The choice put him at an increased risk of exploding, sure, but the feeling of being big was worth it as far as the crocodragon was concerned.

As Bokra's gut wobbled about, though, his recent meal caused the juice inside him to bubble and roil, an unfortunate chemical reaction taking place. The ominous noises went unheard amidst the louder sounds of the city around him, and Bokra remained oblivious when his mostly exposed belly started to swell. Little by little the crocodragon's pace slowed, walking becoming increasingly difficult for reasons he'd yet to understand. Even he knew he'd overindulged at lunch, but that didn't explain why his body seemed to be getting heavier. He didn't realize the truth until he was forced to stop a moment to catch his breath.

The crocodragon gave his gut a quick rub and found it suspiciously taut, rather than soft and doughy. A curious glance revealed his normally green scales were turning blue, and Bokra's eyes went wide; his juice production had kicked into overdrive. Now Bokra could hear the bubbling and feel his hide stretching. Heart racing, he frantically looked around for any sign of a public juicing station, knowing time was of the essence. All the while his middle was continuing to round out as the tell-tale blue of a berry spread over his body. Passersby quietly distanced themselves from him, fearful of getting caught up in a potentially contagious berry explosion.

Eventually Bokra managed to spot a juicing station down the block in a small park. He immediately began jogging in the direction of his salvation, though considering his size it was more of a power walk. The shaking of his belly only seemed to speed up the swelling, his shirt tearing at the seams as his thick chest and arms filled with juice as well. Pedestrians on the sidewalk fled before him to avoid being trampled or splashed, none making an effort to aid in the crocodragon's predicament. His shirt fell to the ground in tatters, followed shortly by his pants. The sloshing of juice was all he heard now, swirling within him, eager to escape its living container.

Bokra was still thirty feet away from the juicing station when his legs became too bloated to work, the crocodragon rolling onto his immense round middle with a distressed yelp. He wobbled about in a desperate attempt to stand back up, but he was far too gone. His limbs were sinking into his ballooning body, the tattoos on his belly stretched wide. Even his neck and cheeks puffed up further till he could barely turn his head. Bokra's thick tail was rigid, twitching ever so slightly. Loud creaks echoed outward, nearly drowned out by the splashing juice, pressure building to a dangerous degree. He knew his hide was being brought to its absolute limits, impossibly taut and running out of give. Bursting apart was no longer a matter of *if* but a matter of *when*.

The first leak sprung from his side, Bokra wincing as he was sprayed by droplets of juice. Then one appeared on his belly, and another, and another. They were too insignificant to relieve the pressure inside him, though. Every new hole caused the crocodragon's hide to weaken, each having the potential to turn into an outright tear that'd end him. The delay was becoming worse than the inevitable result. Bokra was practically a living blueberry fountain before his body finally gave in. Numerous leaks all

abruptly expanded at once, causing the crocodragon to explode in a thunderous tidal wave of juice.

Bluberry juice splattered the trees, pavement, benches, everything within a close radius of the doomed permaberry. Chunky scraps of hide and scale were scattered about as well, raining down on the park. Across the street Bokra's metal nose ring clattered over the sidewalk, narrowly avoiding a shop window. Small rivers of juice trickled outwards from the explosion's epicenter, most of it pouring into convenient drains designed just for such incidents. A city clean-up crew would be called in soon to handle the unsightly mess, though in all likelihood there'd still be a light blue juice stain left on the park's pathway, a constant reminder for permaberries to juice regularly.