

Swelling with Pride

By: IndigoRho

Beneath the shade of a thick grove of apple trees, Blithe had discovered the motherlode: a seemingly-abandoned pick-up truck filled with kegs. From the looks of the labels and pictures on them, the massive Percheron horse was convinced they all contained marshmallow, presumptively in the form of cream. He didn't know where the mystery truck had come from, nor did he really care. Trotting around the vast estate all morning in search of food, adoration, and more food had built up an appetite in the hefty hoss, whose round white gut proudly hung far closer to the ground than most other horses. A regal horse like himself deserved a feast, and the contents of the truck were rightfully his.

Taking advantage of years of consumptive experience, Blithe easily pulled the tube of the first keg out of the truck bed, then turned a nozzle with his teeth. As he'd hoped, a faint hissing noise resulted as the pressurized keg began to empty its precious marshmallow goodness through the tube, which Blithe swiftly clamped onto without wasting a drop. The sugary, fluffy cream oozed over his tastebuds, far more delicious than expected. He resisted a joyous whinny, intent on savoring his snack instead. Gallons of marshmallow cream gradually emptied into the horse's belly, causing it to swell noticeably, though not too dramatically. Blithe was used to overindulging, and paid no head to his larger gut; he'd eaten far, far more in the past, after all.

When the flow of marshmallow finally ended, Blithe was not content. He spit out the hose and moved on to the next keg, his stomach swiftly filling with cream once more. Blithe's impressive reach ensured he didn't have to move an inch to access each of the truck's kegs, which made it easy to ignore just how round his belly was growing, its soft sides increasingly pushing into his sturdy legs. The lightweight nature of the marshmallow helped hide his gluttony, too. Inevitably the gluttonous horse had drained every keg on the truck, sighing in dismay over how little there had been.

With his snack finished, Blithe begrudgingly accepted he would need to look elsewhere to satiate his noble hunger. Trotting away from the truck proved strangely awkward, though, and Blithe looked down at his middle in confusion. While the marshmallow hadn't *felt* filling, the impact on his figure was considerable. His belly hovered barely a few inches off the ground, and was so wide Blithe had to angle his legs just to avoid squeezing it between them. Rather than feel embarrassment, Blithe beamed with pride over how much he'd been able to consume, and so easily too! Any lesser horse would be passed out in the grass, unable to move, yet he could probably tackle another two or three meals and still be able to wobble back to his stable.

After adjusting to his expanded girth, Blithe decided returning to the stable was in fact a perfect plan, and began heading back at a leisurely pace. By now the sun was high in the sky, its warm rays unhindered by any cloud cover. Blithe welcomed the heat, and knew the light must be shining off his majestic mane and coat. As the horse's body warmed up, though, so did his stomach full of marshmallow. The cream within Blithe rapidly began to expand as the temperature rose, his gut ballooning outward more and more with every trot. Blithe was oblivious to his continued growth till his middle finally brushed against the ground, the grass blades tickling his belly and prompting the horse to stop in his tracks.

Once again Blithe looked down in confusion, though this time he actually was concerned. He could see his belly actively swelling—despite the fact he wasn't eating anything at all—remembering far too late that marshmallow expanded in heat. The horse looked around for the safety of shade, or even a cool pond, but the closest safe-haven was the still-distant stable. Unenthused with the prospect of becoming a big hoss blimp in clear sight of others, Blithe frantically tried to reach his stable before his gluttony immobilized him. Galloping was impossible, and Blithe's rotund middle swayed and bounced against the ground with every awkward trot, his pace dwindling fast. After a couple more minutes he was practically dragging his gut forwards, until finally his hooves could only scrape the top of the grass, not firmly settle. Blithe was stuck.

The massive horse whinnied in frustration as his hooves left the ground, his belly swelling more and more under the afternoon sun. All he could do was snort and wait. Blithe was swiftly becoming more belly than horse, a wobbling white ball with dangling hooves and a furious tail. Any significant movement threatened to send him rolling across the lawn, so Blithe did his best to remain balanced as his out-of-control growth continued. He couldn't believe his delightful snack had proven treacherous, convinced he'd been the victim of a prank or trap, a heinous plot to harm his impeccable dignity. The thought he held any responsibility for his immobility never crossed the horse's mind, as Blithe conceived of increasingly preposterous reasons for his blimping up.

Eventually the marshmallow cream reached its limits, and Blithe ceased expanding. He *did* end up bearing a passing resemblance to a blimp—much to his annoyance. The immense horse let out a grumpy snort as he realized others on the estate had finally spotted him, not eager to deal with the potential chastising or jokes heading his way. He stubbornly decided to pretend the whole debacle had been intentional. Maybe he wanted to bask in as much warmth as possible, or prove how incredible his stomach capacity was. Maybe he simply wanted a better view of the land. Whatever excuse he decided upon he'd guarantee it was accepted as fact, and anyone who inferred otherwise would end up “accidentally” rolled over on, or perhaps even turned into a massive blimp themselves...