

Blueberry Hash (Popping)

By: IndigoRho

At one of the many parks in the city a lean Geoffroy's cat triumphantly sauntered up a path onto a small hill. Hash stretched and spun a bit, doing everything he could think of to exaggerate how much the long walk from lunch wasn't effecting him. A moment later a midnight-blue cheetah and a red fox stumbled up themselves, panting up a storm. Both were rather hefty—particularly when compared to Hash—with faces as round as their bellies.

“Took you two long enough!” Hash chuckled.

Indi—the cheetah—frowned. “You could've slowed down a little. The walk's killer, especially in this heat!”

The last of the trio—Reggie—had already waddled over to a nearby water fountain, eagerly gulping down cold water. “I still think we should've taken the bus.”

Hash scoffed. “Could either of you even *fit* through the bus doors? Don't wanna risk having to call the fire department to sue the jaws of life to get you free, jumbo!”

“We're not *that* big!” Indi insisted, still catching his breath

“Tell that to all the broken chairs berry-butt,” Hash continued teasing, giving his friend's gut an accusing poke. “You're just jealous I can resist ordering seconds and thirds when I eat.”

Indi and Reggie tended to be apathetic about their weight, but Hash was prone to relentlessly bullying them about it. Normally Indi would've tried to quiet the smaller chatty cat by throwing his weight around, but a more devious idea came to mind.

“Yeah, I almost forgot you can live off a stick of gum a day you twig,” Indi said as he pulled one out, the light shining off its silver wrapper. “I'd offer you this, but you might just blimp up from overindulging.”

Hash wasn't about to let Indi get the last laugh and—just as his cheetah friend had hoped—he snatched the stick of gum right out of Indi's paw and popped it into his mouth.

“I think I can afford a cheat day.” Hash grinned smugly. “Hmmpf, fruity, why am I not surprised?”

Rather than grumble or snap back, Indi simply smiled. Hash assumed it was a ploy, pretending to not be annoyed. Oh well, he could just switch to teasing Reggie about how comfy a bed his belly made, that usually got him good and flustered. He was too distracted to noticed how unusually juicy the gum was, or to pinpoint the suspicious flavor: blueberry.

Hash's pink nose abruptly turned a bright shade of blue, and his white muzzle soon followed. Reggie's eyes widened as he saw the changes. His mouth opened to warn Hash but he was swiftly silenced by a nudge from Indi, who winked at him. That was enough to tell the fox he was behind what was happening to Hash, and suddenly Reggie was smiling as well.

Little-by-little Hash's fur shifted to various shades of blue until not a single strand of fur remained his original colors. He was still dutifully chewing the blueberry gum, his full attention dedicated to trying to make his friends blush or grumble, preferably both. Then the *real* changes began.

Hash's flat middle started to gradually swell, the faint sound of sloshing echoing from within as it rounded out. His already-tight shirt soon clung to his new tiny belly. An odd look came upon Hash's face as he finally became aware that something was occurring, and the cat jumped and meowed in surprise as he looked down.

“W-w-what's happening to me!” Hash shouted in a panic, looking over his blue arms and growing gut.

“Wow Hash, you turned blue, just like a blueberry,” Indi laughed.

“Yeah, and you're starting to look as round as one too!” Reggie added.

Hash frantically pulled up his shirt so it wouldn't rip, now sporting a solid pot belly. The blueberry taste in his mouth became painfully clear, and he spat out the gum in a hurry. Unfortunately

the act was far too late. The bubbling of juice in Hash's stomach was only getting louder. He pushed at his ballooning middle in vain as if doing so might return him to normal, but of course it had no effect.

"Not cool!" Hash growled, though he didn't manage to come off as threatening at all. "Hurry up and give me an antidote before I end up as an actual berry!"

"But you look so good round!" Reggie said, prodding the swelling cat's side. "And maybe once you fill out some oompa-loompas will come along and sing a cheery song about how huge a juice ball you are now~"

Hash blushed, even more so once he felt his pants getting tighter. He was inflating frighteningly fast, his chest already swelling to join his massive beach ball of a belly.

"T-there's gotta be a public juicing station nearby, I'll just hide in there till this blows over!" Hash was trying his best to maintain control over the situation, but he was getting rounder and rounder every second.

The expanding cat began waddling off towards where he hoped a juicing station was, only to have his path blocked by Indi. When he turned to take a different route Reggie was in his way. The duo were grinning wide, not yet done having fun with their once-slim friend.

"Now now, Hash, if you go wandering off in your current state you might trip and pop yourself on something sharp, like a rock or a branch," Indi said.

"Or a fork~" There wasn't nearly as much sarcasm in Reggie's voice as Hash would've liked.

Hash was too full of juice to be nimble anymore, and was unable to evade the flabby walls that were his friends. "If I'm not juiced I might explode! L-let me through!"

By then Hash's limbs had begun swelling with juice, too, growing rigid and making movement all but impossible. The seams of Hash's pants and shirt ripped apart, falling to the ground in tatters all around him. His face flushed red. Effectively immobilized, Hash was now at the mercy of the friends he'd spent most of the afternoon teasing.

Hash's arms and legs steadily sunk into his expanding body along with his head, faint creaks emanating from the blueberry cat as his hide was stretched far more than normal. He winced at every one despite knowing he could end up as round as a ball and still hold together. Indi and Reggie were prodding him constantly from every direction, and in plain sight of strangers at the park.

"Getting nice and ripe there Hash." Reggie pressed a paw firmly against Hash's hide, treating him like fruit. "You know, you're basically Indi's doppelganger right now!"

Indi got a good laugh out of the joke. "I don't know about that Reggie, he's way too enormous to get mistaken for me! Though they might think he's my bigger bro or something."

"Please guys, I need to get to a juicing station!" Hash practically begged.

With his head partially sunk into his massive body talking took some effort. His flailing paws and tail were the only other things left sticking out of the berry he'd become. While the pressure inside him was enough to be uncomfortable the juice had thankfully stopped flowing; at least he wasn't going to keep swelling till he burst.

"I've never had the pleasure of seeing you so wide Hash, I'm sure we can hold off on the juicing for a *little* while at least~" Indi gave Hash a solid push, enough to cause the cat berry to roll onto his back.

Hash whined and meowed, flailing even more as the juices within him sloshed about loudly. Without warning Indi pressed both paws against Hash's taut side and gave him another push, rolling the cat across the grass in Reggie's direction. Reggie braced himself, but still let out a small *oof* as he stopped Hash.

"You're so heavy now Hash! I think Indi and I have started rubbing off on ya." Reggie gave Hash a teasing pat. "Hey Indi, now that I've gotten a better look at him, I think maybe we should consider entering Hash into the county fair. I'm sure he'd be guaranteed a few blue ribbons for biggest berry. Or juiciest~"

Hash's attempt to disagree was interrupted as he was rolled back to Indi, leaving the cat dizzy.

“Sounds like a swell plan to me! He'll be the hit of the fair circuit, the most award winning fruit in history.” Indi was leaning against Hash, much to the blimped up cat's dismay.

“You can't leave me like this for that long, it could become permanent!” Hash yelped.

Reggie waddled over, leaning into Hash as well and adding to the pressure. “I've always wanted a berry friend. A great source of free juice, fun for playing with at parties, a decent bed if they don't burst at the seams while you're sitting on them...”

Hash swore his two tormenters put even more of their weight into him after that, his hide creaking in protest.

“He might need to move into a place with wider doors and hallways, though,” Indi laughed. “Would have to cushion all the sharp corners, too. Can't have our good friend Hashberry ending up as a puddle of juice after all.”

“J-jokes over guys, I'm sorry I made fun of you for being fat, don't let me permanently transform into a berry!” Hash said in desperation.

The cat's pleas were promptly ignored, and Indi and Reggie returned to rolling their friend back and forth. They were gradually getting more daring—shoving Hash a little harder, drumming on his taut body, gripping him with less care. Hash winced and wobbled and whined but still his friends continued to tease and terrorize him.

Inevitably Indi pushed Hash with much more force than before, Hash rolling and sloshing at an angle that was impossible for Reggie to safely intercept. Rather than feel the fox's paws pressing against his hide, Hash felt himself roll right over the lip of the hill they'd been on.

Hash's meows grew more panicked as he realized what had happened. The giant berry cat picked up speed swiftly, tumbling and bouncing out of control down the hill and towards uncertainty. His view was just an indistinguishable spiral, but he knew there were a dozen different ways for him to end up as scraps and a puddle in the park. Picnic tables, trees, barbecues, rocks, anyone lazing around on the grass with horns. The sheer inevitability of it drove him mad.

The cat fidgeted and whimpered as the pressure within him spiked with every bounce, his hide being put to the test. The juice was being tossed around along with him, and Hash wondered if perhaps a wave would manage to strike him hard enough to actually pop him.

While Hash's route was surprisingly clear for quite a ways his luck couldn't hold out forever. A small cement building stood ahead of him, the public juicing station he'd been so eager to track down just a short while earlier. As he slammed right into it his whole body rippled and warped, Hash's eyes widening in concern as he felt himself bursting apart.

In a flash the berry cat became a wave of blueberry juice and a barrage of hide scraps. Juice soaked the walls and grass as cat confetti rained down upon park benches and water fountains. Hash's sneakers were tossed in opposite directions, with one actually hurled up in a nearby tree. Fortunately no one was caught in Hash's explosion.

Back atop the hill, Indi and Reggie winced as they saw Hash pop in the distance. “Oh, uh, oops,” Indi said.

“I was really getting excited about that juice bar, too,” Reggie frowned.

“Well then you should've tried to catch him!”

“And risk getting flattened? No way!” Reggie shook his head. “Good thing I've still got a cheetah berry as a backup plan~”

Indi glared. “Keep saying that and *you're* the one who's gonna end up big and sloshy!”

With Hash already forgotten, Indi and Reggie wandered off, each plotting to turn the other into a berry permanently for various reasons...