

Jac's Briefcase

By: IndigoRho

Sparks flew and tools clattered as Jac furiously worked on his latest project. The pool toy fox grinned as he focused hard, already imagining all the fun he was about to have. With a couple final tweaks Jac was finished, and a seemingly ordinary briefcase was gently closed shut.

Sleek and black, the briefcase could've blended in at any office. Rather than being filled with paperwork, though, it contained a compact propulsion and targeting system, both some of the most advanced available. A firm toss was enough to get it going, and then—at least in theory—it would spin towards its target, not stopping until it collided with them.

By itself a seeker-briefcase would be a curiosity at best, if not fairly ingenious. Of course Jac had also filled it with a powerful inflation agent, along with the means to spread it on contact. One good bonk was all it took to turn whoever the briefcase hit into a blimp.

Jac was never at a loss for ways to inflate his friends, but he certainly wasn't about to stop creating all new ones.

With the briefcase prototype complete, Jac now needed to do a field test—his favorite part.

Briefcase in tow, Jac went searching for a suitable target, which thankfully didn't take too long. He spotted a raccoon innocently minding their own business, someone Jac knew needed to be big and round. Chaotic.

Staying out of sight as best he could, Jac held the briefcase high over his head and aimed it directly at Chaotic, waiting for the ding to confirm he'd gained a target lock. As soon as he did he hurled it with glee.

The briefcase rocketed away, spinning like a bulky throwing star as it honed in on Chaotic. As hi-tech as the projectile was, it wasn't stealthy at all, and Chaotic spotted it well in advance. Confused at first, Chaotic's eyes widened once he realized the strange object was heading his way.

With a worried squeak Chaotic attempted to flee, but the raccoon was far too late. He only made it ten feet before the briefcase collided with his back with barely enough force to knock him over, before falling to the ground as well.

Right away Chaotic began to inflate, though he didn't notice until after he'd stood back up again. By then his middle was as round as a beach ball, and growing fast. He pushed and squeezed at his blimping belly to no avail, blushing as he heard faint creaks.

The raccoon tried waddling one way and then another, unable to settle on a direction or plan of action. In the meanwhile he was only getting rounder and rounder and rounder. His body was a ball, arms and legs puffed up to the point of being useless. As he swelled the pressure inside him increased, a passing distraction that steadily became impossible to ignore.

Chaotic knew he wasn't going to be able to find a way to deflate himself before he was completely immobile, and also felt he knew exactly who had decided to inflate him.

"Darn it Jac, I'm not a balloon!!" the balloon-shaped raccoon insisted in between creaks. "Deflate me right now!"

Jac winced as he was found out, despite the fact Chaotic couldn't see him in his current state. It was true that Jac was prone to inflating his friends, but he'd hoped his targets wouldn't *instantly* figure him out. Oh well, he'd worry about that later.

The fox revealed himself, approaching Chaotic and giving the raccoon a solid poke on the side that made him wobble. "I don't know, you're certainly as round as a balloon, and fill up with air just like one, and creak like one. Seems like you should be thanking me for filling you up to your natural spherical state!"

Chaotic managed to blush harder, and wobbled in protest. "*You're* the one who's always filled with air, *you* should be the balloon, not me!" The final few unseen puffs were enough to nudge the

raccoon into a partial daze, conveniently ending his complaints.

“Hmm, looks like the balloon’s not in a great mood. Maybe a little trip will fix that!”

Jac retrieved the briefcase and adjusted the settings before prodding Chaotic with it once more. The raccoon didn’t begin to swell more, but within a minute he lifted a couple inches off the ground, hovering. Slowly but surely Chaotic rose upwards, all the air within him having been converted into helium. Jac couldn’t believe he hadn’t simply gone with helium to begin with, but he accepted that the testing phase would include an oversight or two.

Weak wiggles and dazed groans were all Chaotic could manage as he floated off, his adventure as a test subject over but his journey as a carefree balloon just starting.

Unfortunately Jac didn’t have the time to enjoy seeing Chaotic off—there was still much testing to do!

The search for targets continued, and so did Jac’s luck. He barely had to wander far at all before he spotted a sabertooth wolf in a pilot’s jacket. Shinden—another friend and another perfect target for his spectacular briefcase. Adjustments were made to the loadout, the pool toy smiling.

Seconds away from launching the briefcase, Jac suddenly remembered he needed some way to make it not completely obvious he was the owner. He hastily wrote on the side with a marker and—satisfied—obtained his target lock once more.

The toss was good and the briefcase’s path true, and Shinden didn’t even see the nefarious device closing in on him.

“Durf!” Shinden staggered in confusion as he felt something bump his side, a loud clattering drawing his attention to a briefcase that’d seemingly appeared from thin air.

Shinden picked up the briefcase and looked it over curiously, his middle starting to stealthily swell. On the side was written “Chaotic” in large, barely legible print. More confusion followed.

“I don’t remember Chaotic having a briefcase,” Shinden pondered, too distracted to notice the round, blimping belly he’d grown. “And I swear I just saw him floating by. Hmm, I bet this is a trap, and if I open it I’ll turn into a blimp or something!” He chuckled the treacherous briefcase aside, smugly grinning in premature triumph at having avoided getting inflated. “Heh, it’ll take a lot more than that to get the better of me.”

As Shinden’s arms returned to rest at his sides he realized they were round—*really* round. He let out a much more concerned *durf* as he looked down and finally saw he was inflating.

The wolf was swelling more rapidly than even Chaotic had, jacket and pants tightening as his belly peeked out. His expressions shifted between surprise, exasperation, and worry. Shinden had been filled with air on plenty of occasions, but rarely with such haste. He barely had enough time to consider the impossibility of deflating before he was mostly spherical, and he swore he was growing wider in every direction.

Bigger and bigger and bigger Shinden grew, his hide creaking like a balloon as he swelled out of control. His field of view increased along with his girth, until he spotted a very familiar, poorly hidden pool toy.

“Durf! I see you down there Jac!” Shinden glared as best he could, though puffy cheeks made it difficult to look menacing. “I’m gonna make you twice as round when I can get my paws on an air tank or twenty!”

Jac didn’t seem too worried as he strolled up to the blimp of a wolf. A hard shove caused Shinden to bob back and forth a little, but wasn’t enough to send him rolling. “Well in that case maybe I should send you up to join Chaotic as the Shindenberg. Could be fun having another moon in the sky for a bit.” The pool toy cackled.

“I’m supposed to be flying planes, not *being* them—durf!” Shinden’s inflation was slowing down, but by then the wolf was too massive to do anything aside from wobble and grump. He didn’t dare try shuffling around lest he simply topple forwards and roll away.

“I *guess* I’ll let you stay grounded this time,” Jac said, picking up the briefcase. He neglected to

mention his decision was solely based on the fact he didn't have enough helium to lift Shinden off. Increased capacity would be another priority, then. "Well have a swell rest of your day, Shinden, and happy travels!"

"What do you mean—whoa whoa whoa!"

Shinden was interrupted by a much harder shove from Jac, and suddenly the blimped up wolf found himself rolling. A long string of dwindling durfs followed the wolf as he rolled and bounced into distance, Jac waving goodbye.

As far as Jac was concerned his test was an astounding success, one worthy of a relaxing break and a good meal. He tossed the briefcase from paw to paw, attempting fancier tricks to amuse himself. Eventually he tossed the briefcase just a little too hard, and instead of falling straight back down it activated, spinning further up.

Jac looked up in confusion as he watched the briefcase abruptly turn around—and head straight for him. Without a set target the briefcase had locked on to the first person it detected, which of course was Jac himself.

"Meep!"

Jac began to flee as fast as he could, the whirl of the briefcase right on his tail. He frantically scanned the area for cover but nothing was close enough.

The inevitable impact of the briefcase on Jac's back sent the pool toy tumbling, the air filled with squeaks and meeps. He hadn't changed the settings since striking Shinden, and as Jac came to a stop on his back he realized his middle already resembled an over inflated beach ball.

Back-and-forth the fox rocked as he attempted to get back up, letting out a chorus of creaks as he swelled. He got frustratingly close to succeeding once or twice but wasn't able to keep up with the rapid inflation. The briefcase had proved *too* effective.

Rounder and rounder, creakier and creakier. Jac's paws and tail and face all puffed up with air, no part of the pool toy safe from blimping out. He continued to wiggle and wobble, unwilling to accept he was about to end up massive himself. He wasn't supposed to be the test subject!

Just like Shinden, Jac continued to grow even after becoming a sphere, vinyl stretched to ridiculous lengths. The creaking was constant, filling his ears with a reverberating *creeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeak*. And then there as the pressure, just enough to cloud his thoughts so he couldn't forget just how immense he was.

Even when Jac inevitably ceased swelling the creaking persisted, accompanying every slight movement the round pool toy made.

Jac meeped and sighed. Programming the briefcase to *not* target himself was now at the top of his to-do list.

Unbeknownst to Jac, he'd swelled right up against the briefcase, and one wobble too many caused him to bump back into it. His eyes widened as he felt the distance touch, followed by renewed stretching. It appeared the experiment was about to turn into a stress test...