

Cat Nap:

By: IndigoRho

Ryder leaned hard into the cracked open door of his bedroom and stumbled inside, feeling completely drained. The hefty puma hadn't gotten much sleep the previous night, and of course this was the one day his classes were spread out across the entire campus. Even if he hadn't been on the pudgier side he was certain his footpaws would still be aching. He was home now, though, and ready for a nice, long nap before hanging out with friends. Ryder pulled off his sweat-stained shirt—belly jiggling as it was released—and shed his jeans, hoping to just fall right onto his bed and pass out. Unfortunately, a little fuzzball had come up with the same idea. Snoozing contently on a warm swath of sunlight was the Tau Tau Psi frat house's feral orange tabby cat, the hastily-named Ryder Jr. The selection of the house cat's name had involved a great deal of pot smoking and initially started as a joke, before quickly gaining traction and becoming permanent, much to the puma's dismay.

"Alright you, time to nap elsewhere, my bed now!" Ryder said, nudging the tabby's side.

Ryder Jr. opened his eyes and stared up at Ryder, then flopped over to continue sunbathing.

"Shoo! Shoo!" Ryder persisted, poking the cat until it finally gave in and slunk away.

Victorious, Ryder rolled onto the bed, angling himself to take full advantage of the delightful warm spot the tabby had recently enjoyed. He wanted to close his eyes and nod off then and there, but falling asleep without the proper preparations could prove disastrous. Ryder was incredibly prone to sleepwalking, which inevitably led to sleepeating. If all he did was raid the fridge every couple nights his life would be simple—frustrating, but simple. The puma ate *everything*, though. On a solid sleepwalk he could clear out the leftovers, devastate the pantry, and nibble on half the potted plants in the house. Anyone who tried to wake him—or simply got too close for that matter—was likely to find themselves filling the gluttonous puma's belly as well. Most of his friends had ended up as accidental midnight snacks once or twice, and they often referred to it as a rite of passage, even kept track of their personal tallies as a joke.

At least there were ways to limit the potential damage. Locking the bedroom door occasionally worked, but he'd busted it a couple weeks back during a particular aggressive sleepwalking bout so it currently wasn't an option. Wearing a durable muzzle would prevent him from successfully eating, but Ryder always had trouble sleeping with it on, unlike his older brother Riley, who suffered from the same condition. Ryder himself had become rather fond of a third alternative: inflation. He enjoyed being larger in general, but the temporary nature of inflation pleased him much more than the long term difficulties that accompanied stuffing himself with food. Inflation was also rather effective at immobilizing him while sleeping. Sure he might wobble around atop his bed during a bout—and had managed to roll off it a couple times—but at least the frat house's food and inhabitants would be safe.

A paw lazily groped for the hose stowed in the nearby nightstand, which Ryder slowly unfurled and slid into his open mouth, gulping down the end until he was certain it reached his stomach. Most found the plastic taste disagreeable, but Ryder had become accustomed to it over time, gaining comfort in its familiarity. Another blind reach flipped the switch of the pump attached to the hose, and Ryder grinned as he heard its quiet whir and felt the delightful tingle of cold air gushing into him. The inflation was subtle at first due to the puma's sizable belly. Ryder could spot the changes here and there, though—small rolls of pudge vanishing as his skin tightened, the flat mound of his gut rising and rounding, the odd, almost floating feeling of his flab being spread by the expanding stomach.

Soon Ryder's middle was truly ballooning outwards, exceeding his natural girth and passing the point of merely being beachball-sized. Light purring began rumbling from within the puma. He couldn't help it, inflating was just too wonderful! Ryder pressed a paw against the growing orb of his tan and white gut, feeling the skin stretching beneath it, even through the purrs. As his chest finally started rising to make room for more air, Ryder attempted his first mobility test. Ryder carefully leaned forwards—bracing himself with his elbows—applying pressure to his ball-belly as he shifted to a

successful sitting position. After drumming a bit on his expanding gut for fun, Ryder fell back—the bed creaking slightly in response. He'd been fairly certain he wasn't nearly inflated enough yet, but struggling with an inflated middle was one of his guilty pleasures.

More and more air poured into his stomach, swelling his body past the two foot mark, his limbs beginning to poof up slightly as well. Soon he'd be the perfect size, and the exhausted puma could finally nap. Just as Ryder was about to make another attempt to sit up, though, he spotted some unusual movement out of the corner of his eye. Curious, Ryder turned to face his dresser, and found himself staring up at Ryder Jr. The tabby was crouched low—paws hanging over the dresser's edge—butt wiggling as he stared intently at Ryder's massive belly; more specifically, the obvious patch of sunlight on Ryder's massive belly. Ryder's eyes went wide as he realized the cat's intentions.

“No no no! Bad kitty, bad kitty!” Ryder yelled. He tried to blow air at the out-of-reach cat's face to shoo it away, but the hose in his mouth made that impossible. “Don't you dare!”

Ryder Jr. stopped wiggling for a moment to glance at the loud puma, before quickly returning its attention to the coveted warm spot. In a flash the cat was airborne, and Ryder whined in terror as he gracefully glided over the bed, sharp claws outstretched to secure his landing on the taut puma flesh. Ryder winced as the cat's claws dug into his skin at multiple points, expecting to burst apart. There was no loud bang or sudden release of air, though. The puma looked up in disbelief, watching his belly wobble as the cat carefully settled onto its fuzzy inflated bed, the claws poking him a few more times but not puncturing his now creaking skin.

Ryder breathed a sigh of relief. He wasn't overly fond of the cat snoozing on his gut while he napped himself, but Ryder Jr. was obviously persistent. Oh well. The puma had been inflating longer than usual, and reached for the pump once more to turn it off. His arm barely budged. Concerned, Ryder turned his head and realized his forearm was swollen with air, his body having slowly begun to engulf it. A second grab and a third both failed as well, coming nowhere close to the out-of-sight pump. Pulling the hose from his throat was impossible, as his elbows simply couldn't bend anymore.

Panicking, Ryder rocked back and forth, desperately trying to right himself or slide closer to the pump. Unfortunately, all his efforts were in vain. The pressure within was building, and his body began making audible creaks and groans as he continued expanding, his flesh stretched thin. He tried biting down on the hose to stop the airflow, but the plastic was too thick, and he barely hindered his inflation at all. Ryder could feel his limbs gradually engulfed bit by bit, squeezed by the immense pressure within him, frozen in place. His head rose off the pillow as his back and butt puffed up, while the creaking wall of his blimping middle pressed into his face. The end was fast approaching.

Ryder wobbled in frustration as he thought of all his ruined plans for that night and the following morning, how he was about to lose a decent chunk of the weekend because of a silly accident. The puma was nearly spherical at that point, a twitching tan and white orb. While Ryder Jr. had stubbornly ridden out the inflation—ignoring the odd noises beneath him—Ryder's expansion eventually caused the warm ray of sunlight to shift. Annoyed, the tabby cat stood—balancing perfectly atop his quivering airbed—and padded over to the new warm spot. As he did, though, a sudden lurch in Ryder's body encouraged the cat to dig his claws into the incredibly taut skin of the puma to stay upright.

The pain was far clearer this time, and Ryder yelped as he felt the tiny little daggers puncture him in unison. With a room-shaking *Boom!* the puma tore apart, reduced to a shower of overstretched scraps that smacked into the walls and furniture, littering the bedroom. Ryder Jr. fell to the bed on all fours, his furry body poofed up in fear. He looked around nervously at the carnage until he felt safe, then spotted the warm spot beneath him. Content, the cat settled in, sprawling out across the light and purring happily.