

Raf's Filling Day: Part I

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Raf did his best to glare a hole into the door of the elevator. Outside, the sky was clear, the sun was out, and the temperature just warm enough to be comfortable but not irritating. Unfortunately, prior engagements had Raf trapped indoors, and the overweight hyena did a poor job of hiding his disdain for the situation. Not that anyone who knew him would have noticed the difference. Raf had always had a reputation for his rough people skills, never smiling and always giving off an imposing vibe, thanks partially to his bulk. To put it simply, though, he didn't care. He didn't care that most assumed he was perpetually angry or eager to pick fights, didn't care about his weight being made fun of behind his back, didn't care how anyone felt about his fondness for neon colors. He didn't care...but it still irritated the Hell out of him. In general, though, Raf went out of his way to avoid confrontation. Which was the main reason he was standing in the slowest elevator in the world, on his way to tutor a classmate.

To the surprise of most, Raf had an innate talent when it came to math. He had helped a single student next to him in class one day, which had snowballed into full tutoring. Then word of his skill got out. Raf didn't necessarily enjoy the idea of teaching, but he also didn't want to deal with turning down the few requests he got. Besides, he begrudgingly appreciated anyone willing to put the extra effort in to succeed in class, and only had to put up with his "students" for an hour or two at a time. A low gurgle erupted from his middle, loud enough to make him cringe. The hyena glared at the dome of his covered belly, thankful no one else had been in the elevator to hear the noise, then gave it an annoyed poke with a claw.

He'd had a respectable breakfast that morning, and it should have held him over till well after his first tutoring session of the day. It'd barely lasted an hour. Raf's appetite—and thus his waistline—had gradually increased throughout high school and college. To make matters worse, he was rather prone to grazing on whatever happened to be at hand, not realizing how much he'd eaten until his shirts suddenly felt snugger or someone had the nerve to point it out. Attempts at exercise were short-lived, usually only occurring when he was on the verge of going up a pant or shirt size. His clothing preferences tended to emphasize his weight, too.

Raf always wore a nice dress shirt, his odd personal way of rebelling against the dress-code his private school had enforced. He kept it untucked, rolled the sleeves up unevenly, didn't always button the collar, let the pink tie hang loose...everything he'd been banned from doing while actually attending the private school. Still, even untucked the shirt did little to disguise his pudgy belly, and the plaid button-up he wore over it had the same issue, though often worse. It was always obvious when he'd overindulged during a meal, the buttons of both shirts straining, tan fur poking through the gaps. He'd also popped a button or two on more occasions than he'd liked to remember. Regardless, it was the outfit that made him most comfortable, and he wasn't about to let the judgment of others ruin that for him. Hell, whenever someone *did* try to guilt him about his eating habits or clothes he simply acted over-proud of them just to spite the offender.

The elevator door screeched open, freeing Raf from annoying self-reflection. He headed a short distance down the hallway until he arrived at the right apartment, pounding a couple times hard on the door and making no effort to pretend he was happy. He did take the time to straighten out the dyed, neon pink tuft of fur that ran from the top of his head down the back of his neck, though. The answer was thankfully swift, and a click of the deadbolt heralded the door's opening, revealing a cheerful red panda even fatter than Raf.

"Hey Raf, how ya doing?" the red panda asked with a smile.

"Fine Liam, let's get started," Raf answered with a noticeable lack of enthusiasm as he entered the apartment, just barely able to slip past his hefty classmate.

Raf led himself to the large table in the living room where all their previous sessions had been held at, Liam waddling after him. To the hyena's disdain he saw the table almost completely covered in

boxes of sweets and numerous 2-liters of soda, an unreasonable amount even considering the obese fur who lived there. At the very least the red panda's obnoxious arctic fox boyfriend didn't seem to be around. He had a tendency to distract Liam whenever possible, and Raf had once had him banished from the apartment for the duration of a tutoring session.

Liam finally caught up, a look of embarrassment on his face. "S-sorry about this Raf. My mom's been going overboard on the care packages lately. She started sending them for my boyfriend, Julian, too, and my bro Leo abandoned his here for some reason."

"I know. He kept trying to give his to me, so I told him to get rid of it or I'd make sure he ate it all himself," Raf said.

"Hehe, yeah, that sounds like Leo," Liam said with a hint of nervousness. "I, um, I was gonna say you were free to eat some if you wanted, but I'm guessing..."

Raf cut him off swiftly. "Whatever, maybe if I get hungry or something," he replied, sitting down near an open space of the table and digging out a math textbook from his messenger bag.

Liam grabbed his own textbook from the nearby counter and pushed away some boxes to make room for himself across from Raf. The pair were still flipping to the right chapter when Raf's stomach let out a loud gurgle, which Liam aggressively pretended not to hear. Raf looked down at his belly and bared his fangs, letting out a faint growl before tearing open the nearest box of snack cakes with utter disdain. He began munching on the small pastries, attempting to merely nibble away at them at first, but eventually downing them in single bites without even realizing it. Liam was one of the easier classmates to tutor, simply needing a bit of direction and the occasional explanation of complex formulas. In all honesty, the only reason Raf was still tutoring the red panda was so he wouldn't get stuck helping someone more annoying.

Unfortunately, Liam's independence meant Raf had little to do besides stare at his pupil...and eat. For generic, store-bought junk food the pastries were surprisingly delicious, though Raf had a terrible weakness for sweets in general. He loved the smoothness of the creamy filling and the way the frosted coating flaked apart on his tongue. Despite the great joy he was experiencing, Raf maintained his irate outwards expression, much to Liam's confusion. The red panda dared glances at his tutor only rarely—not wanting to be accused of slacking off—and as far as he could tell Raf was devouring a large portion of the care package while seemingly not enjoying it. Not that he would ever question the act openly. Instead, he allowed the hyena to continue unconsciously glutting. And glut he did.

There was rarely a moment Raf's paw *wasn't* holding some kind of pastry. He settled into a routine, fidgeting with his pencil in one paw as his other opened wrappers and popped sweets into his open maw, any garbage shoved callously back into the box they'd come from. Every time a box was cleared he'd brush it aside and move on to the next, the evidence of his overindulgence removed from his field of view. He didn't bother grabbing a glass when he opened the first 2-liter, spinning the cap right off, and greedily took long chugs to wash down all the free food he was unwittingly consuming. His belly gradually swelled as the session continued, the wrinkles of his button-up smoothing out as it tightened around his middle more and more. Gaps appeared between the increasingly strained buttons, revealing the white dress shirt underneath that was fairing only slightly better. Raf dismissed the growing pressure as a side-effect of sitting for too long and kept eating.

Two hours into the tutoring session the call of nature abruptly hit Raf, and the hyena wandered off towards the bathroom while Liam diligently continued to work on practice problems. It was while washing his paws that Raf chanced a glance at his belly, doing a double-take as he finally noticed the effects of his binging. Raf's plaid button-up was just barely holding on, its stripes curved and contorted around his bloated gut, his pink tie doing a poor job of hiding the fact the lower buttons were on the verge of popping right off. Both shirts had also rode up on his middle a bit, exposing a small strip of furry pudge. Readjusting his clothing proved to be a temporary solution at best, as only the slightest movements were necessary to uncover portions of his belly. He didn't want to believe he'd let himself gorge so much again. Maybe he was just having an allergic reaction to something in the pastries, or had

a bad case of gas, or accidentally grabbed a smaller shirt or two that morning.

Frustrated, Raf huffed back to the table, and nearly growled when he spotted the messy evidence of his gluttony: a neat, wide stack of empty snack boxes, along with a completely drained 2-liter. He slumped back into his chair—hastily pulling down his shirts afterward—and hoped his stomach was content. A muffled gurgle and deep tinge of hunger dashed that hope right away. Within minutes a new box was opened and more pastries were making their way into Raf's already fairly stuffed belly, along with a torrent of soda. The hyena's gut began to push into the edge of the table, most of it forced beneath and out of site, though he scooted his chair back any time the pressure became noticeable. Only a half hour after his revelation in the bathroom, Raf's button-up clung to his stomach like ceramwrap, the thread of its lowest button at its limit.

Raf's belly jiggled as the first button popped off, his tie muffling the sound and deflecting it harmlessly back into him before it slid to the floor. Neither Liam nor Raf heard the incident. The loss of a button released some pressure on the shirt, but not enough to last. A new package of frosted cookies dealt the death blow to button number two, which was also suppressed by the tie. Obsessively chugging the last bit of a 2-liter caused a surge of carbonation in his gut, though, wrecking two more buttons in quick succession, one bouncing off the table leg while the other skidded across the floor. Raf was made painfully aware of the newest losses by a wobble in his belly and the echoing clatter, gritting his teeth in irritation. Liam froze when he heard the events unfold, but made the right decision to keep his eyes glued to his paper and textbook, trying to hide his sympathetic embarrassment for his tutor.

The awkward silence between the two was broken by the sound of the front door unlocking and swinging open, though neither seemed particularly thankful for the interruption. An overweight arctic fox sauntered into the apartment, humming happily to himself as he tossed a backpack against the wall. Liam turned around in his chair to face him, while Raf merely glared. The fox gave both a cheerful wave. "Miss me poofball?" the fox asked.

Liam gave a nervous grin back. "Hey Julian, you're home early."

"Yeah, decided I didn't want to deal with all the roadwork and cut my trip short," Julian replied, wrapping his arms around the still-sitting red panda and giving him a kiss on the cheek. "You still studying?"

An alarm from Raf's phone answered the question for him. "Not anymore, time's up. I've got another session to head to," Raf said, slamming his textbook shut and gathering up what little he'd taken out.

Liam seemed somewhat relieved, until Julian spoke up again. "Oh Raf, you're free to take home as much of the leftover snacks as you want, probably not a good idea for Liam and I to deal with it ourselves. Hard enough keeping our weights in check as it is!"

Liam cringed hard, while Raf let out a long, loud sigh. "Whatever, I'll take what I can," he said, to Liam's surprise. Raf knew agreeing was the fastest way to escape the apartment.

Raf slid out of his chair, only two buttons of his plaid shirt still remaining, dress shirt clinging tightly to his overfilled, partially exposed belly. He roughly undid the last few buttons and adjusted his shirt till it looked somewhat presentable. Julian handed him a spare re-usable bag, which the hyena proceeded to fill completely with cookies, pastries, and a spare 2-liter. In Raf's mind, the more he grabbed, the less likely he'd have to deal with a conversation urging him to take more and the sooner he could leave. Once finished, Raf hefted his messenger bag over his shoulder and nabbed the bag of junk-food and quickly made his way to the door, barely acknowledging Liam and Julian.

"See ya in class," was all Raf said as he hurried away, a hint of a waddle in his step.

"Y-yeah, thanks again Raf!" Liam replied right before the door slammed shut, breathing a sigh of relief after. He was genuinely thankful for all the help Raf provided him, and his grades had been improving because of it, but the tutoring sessions were always a bit stressful. Still, they were worth it for those rare glimpses of the hyena's adorable belly.