

Peer Pressure

By: IndigoRho

Collin nervously shifted his gaze between the tubby twin zebras that surrounded him, unsure of what he'd gotten himself into. The hefty goat was pledging with the Rho Mu Psi fraternity, and while he'd endured quite a few strange or questionable tasks throughout his freshman year, the request from Brett and Blaine was outright criminal.

"You...you want me to eat soda? I'm pretty sure that's shoplifting..." the goat practically whispered, despite the trio being the only ones down the aisle. He hadn't expected the snack run to Sun Mart to go this way.

Brett—the rather noticeably fatter of the twins—simply smiled and leaned in closer. "No need to make it sound so dour! Besides, you'll just be snagging some soda bottles, nothing crazy."

Blaine leaned in right after. "Yep, just a little six-pack, dude. Pledges do it all the time."

"Six of the two-liter bottles isn't *little*!" Collin hoped the brothers were simply messing with him. "I'd be noticed right away."

"You're forgetting just how well your flab hides things." Brett poked Collin's belly with a hoof, just hard enough to make it jiggle. "No one will get a good look at ya, and the employees will just assume you're a normal, gluttonous goat."

Collin lacked their confidence, but refusing the task felt impossible. "I don't know..."

Brett brought a fresh bottle right up to Collin's open mouth to silence him. "Don't worry, we'll cover ya. Now open wide, cooler."

With reluctance Collin opened his mouth, wincing as Brett practically shoved the large two liter bottle in. Collin swallowed the foul tasting product down as quickly as he could, fearful of getting caught, and groaned as it dropped into his stomach. The bulge in his gut wasn't *too* noticeable, at least. Before he had a chance to complain about the taste or the ordeal, a second bottle was brought up to his mouth, and Collin dutifully gulped it down to join the other, followed by a third, then a fourth. His belly sagged a little bit more with each new bottle, the lumps in his middle becoming more and more suspicious. Collin's gut was jutting out from under his shirt completely by the time he'd finished off the sixth bottle, and he felt like he could topple over at a moment's notice.

"See, worked like a charm!" Blaine gave Collin's middle a light slap, causing it to shake along with the bottles within.

"B-be careful! I don't want to see what happens if those bottles break open," Collin said with a frown.

"Pfft, we've done this plenty of times before, you'll be fine," Brett insisted. "Now c'mon, we've still gotta lot of junk to grab."

Brett and Blaine started down the aisle, and Collin lumbered after as fast as he comfortably could. Every step caused the soda bottles in his stomach to shift and bounce against one another, making ripples on the surface of his flabby belly. Collin had hoped their trip would be brief, but the zebra twins seemed intent on shopping at a painfully casual pace, stopping for any odd product that caught their eye and constantly forgetting what they actually needed. The goat nervously attempted to disguise his extended gut as best he could, though occasionally a passing shopper would raise an eyebrow or smirk at him. Thankfully the actual employees seemed few and far between, too preoccupied by their work to notice Collin's suspicious middle.

After what felt like an eternity, Brett and Blaine finally headed towards the registers, having loaded a basket apiece with various snacks. The twins picked up their pace now that they wanted to leave, forcing Collin to waddle faster and faster in an effort to keep up. His haste proved rather unfortunate. Collin's sneaker stepped perfectly in a slick spot on the floor, causing the poorly balanced goat to slip and fall over belly first. He let out a frantic bleat as his gut impacted the tile hard, and while his soft flab provided a bit of cushioning, it wasn't enough to protect the soda bottles within him. Half

of them cracked open on impact, the well-shaken soda rocketing out and slamming the bottles around, smashing open the remainder in the process.

Collin's whole body ached from the fall, but even as he groaned from the pain he could feel the pressure in his belly starting to grow fast. *Very* fast. Amidst a muffled chorus of fizzing the goat's gut ballooned outwards at an alarming rate, ripping his shirt at the seams while lifting him off the ground. Shoppers and employees alike halted what they were doing to watch the goat who'd suddenly started blimping up in the middle of the store. A few laughed, but most seemed confused, and the Sun Mart employees in their red-and-khaki didn't seem to have any clue as to how to respond to what they were seeing.

Collin continued bleating in terror as his white middle swelled dramatically, immobilizing him and reducing his movement to little more than wobbles. He looked over at Brett and Blaine for help, but the twins panicked and hastily abandoned the frat pledge to his fate. His hide was quickly being stretched thin from the carbonated gas filling his stomach. The fizzing and bubbling wasn't getting any quieter, his expansion wasn't slowing at all, and Collin was becoming increasingly fearful he would simply keep inflating until he burst apart in a shower of scraps and foam.

As his limbs swelled and were gradually engulfed by his balloon of a body, Collin desperately tried to belch out the gas to reduce the pressure. The few burps he managed were pitiful, doing nothing to impede his growth. Everything was happening far too fast for any bystander to intervene. Most were still trying to understand the situation by the time Collin had become nearly spherical, swollen paws and a head resting above a shaking ball of white-and-tan. He could feel his body approaching its limit, loudly creaking with every stretch. Even something as innocent as breathing seemed to put a strain on him, till he was essentially holding his breath and waiting for the end.

The initial rupture was a tiny pinprick on his side, but it raced across the horizontal circumference of his body in an instant. A rush of gas and foam erupted from the fresh hole along the goat's equator, creating a mini-shockwave that rattled shelves and violently separated the two halves of Collin. He didn't experience any pain from his abrupt popping, but his consciousness lingered far longer than he expected, and he actually felt the upper hemisphere of his body thrown upwards from the release of pressure before flailing to the floor. Collin was essentially an overstretched swathe of hide at that point, and thankfully blacked out shortly after.

Frightened shouts filled the air as soon as the goat exploded, the bystanders shielding themselves from the rain of soda and scraps that ensued. Most were startled rather than horrified, though, as popping wasn't *too* uncommon, especially considering those who did burst would re-form about a day after. Instead the customers wandered off to either continue their shopping or dry off, while the employees begrudgingly converged on the giant mess they now had to clean up. At the very least the goat hadn't shredded into confetti. Not that rolling up a soda-stained goat hide would be much better...