

Beating the Heat

By: IndigoRho

The sun was out, clouds were sparse, and Columbia City was experiencing its worst heat wave of the year. At the Zeta Nu Delta fraternity, the normally dry pool had been hastily cleaned and filled to give the frat members some reprieve from the unusual weather. Even that wasn't enough for some, though. Lojh, an obese blue crocodile/chameleon hybrid, had attempted to hang out by the pool earlier and quickly retreated after spending more time sweating than relaxing. His friends had laughed at and taunted his inability to handle the heat, prompting the crocameleon to think of a solution so he could put them in their place. All it took was a few minutes of wild thinking to settle on transforming himself into a pool toy for the afternoon. Fortunately his vague memories of being resistant to warmth the last time he'd transformed were accurate, and Lojh triumphantly stood in the backyard once more, albeit far squeakier than before.

As a pool toy Lojh was a fair bit lighter than usual, though still as wide as ever. The dark blue of his chest and stripes was almost translucent, while the light blue of the rest of his body reflected the sunlight. While the weight difference was always a little disorienting, Lojh was least fond of his tail being permanently curled up while transformed. Lojh's tail was far more prehensile than a normal crocodile's—a delightful benefit of his chameleon heritage—and he put that ability to good use when hunting other furs. Plenty of tasty meals had been caught off-guard because they didn't expect a massive crocodile to be hanging from the trees above them. Despite that, he was still confident he could hunt effectively. Especially considering the mobility of his friends.

Lojh's rubbery steps made an audible *squirk* sound as he walked towards the pool, easily drawing the attention of some frat members hanging out beneath the shade of a rather worn umbrella. His friend Rai, a green-and-white eastern dragon who was easily the slimmest member of the fraternity, smirked the moment he saw him.

“Dude, you look ridiculous!” Rai laughed. “You planning on being someone's floatie?”

“In a way,” Lojh replied with a devious grin. “And laugh all you want noodle, but at least I can enjoy the weather without melting.”

The blubbery blue zebra sitting beneath the umbrella took a brief break from guzzling water to speak. “I wish I'd thought of that, I'm not built for this heat.”

A smaller—though still overweight—jade green cheetah besides him rolled his eyes. “Indi there's a pool right over there, just dunk yourself in and cool off tubbo.”

“Shut it Viri, it's dangerous in there!” Indi glared. “Dimitri's using it as a buffet again.”

“Bro, Dimitri's literally a beached whale right now. You'd have to crawl into his maw to get eaten,” Viri insisted.

Rai decided to preemptively end the brothers' argument. “Indi, don't worry about Dimitri. He's as likely to eat you as rubber croc over here,” he smiled and pointed towards Lojh without looking at him.

Lojh decided he finally had a perfect opportunity for his first meal of the afternoon. Rai had completely disregarded him as a threat, and Lojh was going to have fun making him regret that. Just as Rai turned back around, Lojh's tongue shot out from his mouth and smacked the dragon in his bare chest. Within seconds the tongue was retracting back into Lojh's mouth at horrendous speed, dragging Rai along with it. His head and shoulders flew into the crocameleon's maw in a single gulp, and Lojh's puffy arms wrapped around him tightly, still strong enough to lock the dragon in place. Rai squirmed frantically once his claws left the ground, his shouts for help echoing out with every gulp.

Indi watched on with fear while Viri simply laughed, neither making an attempt to aid their friend. They could see Rai's face pressed against the clear plastic of Lojh's throat, his shouts muffled and obviously angry. Of course, even if they wanted, there was no way for the brothers to rescue Rai in time. As a pool toy, Lojh could swallow others with reckless abandon. He didn't have to worry about

taking breaths in between gulps or wait for his maw and throat to slowly stretch around a meal, and the lack of taste buds on his plastic tongue meant he didn't drag the experience on savoring the dragon. After a few swift swallows Rai dropped into the large hollow belly of Lojh.

Rai punched and kicked the transparent walls of his prison, though all he managed was to temporarily distort them. "Let me out you gluttonous tarp!"

Lojh shook his middle from side to side, laughing as he watched Rai bounce around within him. "Damn, I forgot how awesome it was actually being able to see your prey inside you! I'm like a walking trophy case."

"When I get out I'm gonna deflate you and cram you in the closet till next Summer!" Rai's threats were rather ineffectual while he was tumbling around in a pool toy.

"Heat must be making you cranky, perhaps a dip in the pool will help?" Lojh teased.

Instead of heading to the pool, though, Lojh waddled over to the wall of the frat house, where a hose was messily coiled up. Rai was confused at first, until Lojh rested the hose's end in his maw and turned the faucet on full blast. The dragon squirmed and yelped as a torrent of freezing cold water cascaded onto his head and started pooling beneath him. Lojh happily hummed to himself as he felt his belly fill with water, occasionally glancing down to see both its progress and the anger on Rai's face. He readjusted his gait to handle the added weight of the water, his thick hollow legs still managing to hold up the new "bulk". Once Rai was up to his neck in water he finally turned the faucet off, spitting out the hose.

"There ya go, you've got your own private indoor pool now!" Lojh grinned. "That or I've got my own personal aquarium. I think it's win-win either way."

"I hope your seams tear you jerk!" Rai shouted, almost taking in a mouthful of water in the process.

"Well having an attitude isn't getting you out any sooner," Lojh said.

Having had his fun, Lojh decided some relaxation was in order. With heavy, squeaking steps he lumbered over to a lounge chair beside the pool, the rest of the frat getting a good laugh out of Rai's imprisonment. The dragon cursed and kicked as he was tossed around within Lojh once the pool toy lay down. Lojh gave his water-logged middle a happy slap with his rubbery claws, along with a gentle shake.

"This really is the best way to enjoy a warm day."