

## Bouncing on the Slopes

By: IndigoRho

A fresh layer of snow had graced the Cascade Pass Resort the previous night, and with the skies mostly clear many had flocked to the slopes to enjoy themselves during the beautiful weekend. August was no different. The goat adored skiing—and the outdoors in general—so of course he'd headed up to the pass almost first thing in the morning, dragging his boyfriend along as well. After warming up together on a few of the more leisurely runs August had rode to a higher slope alone for some more fast-paced indulgence. No one else appeared to be there yet, which wasn't surprising considering the specialized nature of the route, and August was excited to be the first one to break-in the slope that day.

Unwilling to wait another second, August pulled himself forwards and started downhill. The initial incline was rather shallow, allowing the goat plenty time to zig-zag around, sun shining off his bright yellow-and-gray jacket and pants. He steadily picked up speed over time, angling for a branch of the slope flanked by large warning signs depicting a sheer cliff with a person flying off. The mountain abruptly grew steeper, more and more signs littering the sides along with plenty of flatter areas to divert to. August knew they were merely there to warn anyone who strayed down on accident without the proper equipment, though. As he turned a gradual corner the tree line vanished, the slope ahead ending with a sheer ramp and then air.

August veered straight towards the ramp. His heart raced faster and faster as he neared, a wide grin growing on his face. Seconds later he felt his skies leaving solid ground. Before him was an incredible view of the surrounding pass and pristine peaks, the whole resort visible at the foot of the mountain. While the scene was breathtaking, August didn't have time to be completely distracted. As soon as the goat was airborne he bit hard into his mouthguard, a cool liquid squirting down his throat as a result.

Almost immediately August felt a familiar tingling sensation surge through his body. The goat's flat stomach started to round out in an instant, his jacket stretching dutifully to match. Rounder and rounder his middle grew, from a basketball to a beach ball to an exercise ball within seconds. There wasn't any air within the goat, just a rapidly expanding light-weight foam produced by the liquid he'd ingested. His hide creaked in protest from being stretched so quickly, but August was experienced enough with inflation to not worry; if anything the sounds and feeling made him feel *more* excited.

Soon August's chest and hips were swelling as well, enveloped by his increasingly-spherical body. His limbs grew rigid as they puffed up, poles and skis now frozen in position as he soared through the air, no longer necessary. To the casual observer on the ground August temporarily resembled a big yellow balloon, perhaps a mascot that'd blown away on a particularly strong gust. As the pressure inside August built and he became more spherical he blushed. Few things in life gave the goat as much joy as becoming a blimp. The size, the shape, the sheer feeling of going from his usual slim self to a ball as wide as he was tall—all were just a few of the aspects of inflation August adored. Growing huge in public was simply icing on the cake.

The goat's limbs were now domes atop his swollen body, hooves almost too puffed up to hold onto his poles. August's snow boots were especially made to handle drastic growth, holding tight but not painfully so. Not even half a minute had passed since August first bit into the mouthguard, but he was already completely round and filled with foam. With considerable effort he managed to nudge himself forwards, slowly spinning in the air as he started to descend. Anything fancier would've been exceedingly difficult—at least for August—though he was rather content just rolling in the sky, an errant ball fast-approaching the ground.

August braced himself as he sensed the end of his fall coming. Even then he still winced on impact, his spherical form distorting slightly. Despite and onslaught of long, ominous creaks he held together, launching right back into the air and kicking up a small cloud of snow in the process. The spinning increased as August proceeded to bounce down the shallow slope, letting out a mix of grunts

and gleeful hollers the entire time. Eventually his momentum slowed as he reached flatter ground, rolling to a gentle stop against heavy-duty netting that'd been put in place for just such occasions.

For a couple minutes after August merely worked to catch his breath and wait for his head to stop spinning. Of course even after recovering the bloated goat was incapable of little aside from wobbling in place.

"Well look what we have here, a skiing balloon! Don't see that every day."

Though August couldn't see the source of the voice he recognized it right away, and smiled. "I'd think you'd be used to seeing me bounce around the slopes by now, Rho."

An orange-striped zebra strolled into view, giving August a teasing poke with a hoof. He was a bit on the larger side, sporting a doughy belly beneath his gray jacket. "Honestly at this point it's weirder seeing you *not* big and round. Maybe we should just permanently keep you inflated so I can claim I'm dating a blimp."

August's face flushed red from the suggestion. He wasn't so certain Rho was completely joking, just as he wasn't certain he'd be against such an extreme proposition. "Y-You wouldn't dare!" the goat laughed.

"Wouldn't I?" Rho smirked back, gently rolling his helpless boyfriend around in the snow. Despite a few bleats in protest August was obviously enjoying the treatment. "Not like it'd be hard to simply 'forget' to deflate you one day. After that it's just a matter of regularly refilling you and hiding you from curious guests."

"How much though have you put into keeping me as a balloon?" August teased, swatting at the zebra with his poles to "fend" him off.

Rho responded by disarming August and poking at his taut sides with the poles just to make him bleat some more. "There's a slight chance I've been thinking about it ever since our first date. You'd make a lovely bed, though shoving you through the door to our bedroom might take effort. Would definitely be worth it in the end."

August bit his lip and tried not to blush so hard, a losing battle. "Hey now, if you keep saying stuff like that I may have to turn *you* into the permanent blimp first in self defense!"

"I'd certainly like to see you try inflating anyone with those poofy hooves of yours," Rho said, still relentlessly teasing the defenseless goat. "Besides, what's stopping me from just keeping you a sphere from now on? Foams just as comfy as air, after all."

"T-That's—*baahahahahaha*—cheating!" August insisted, face contorting from bleating mid-sentence. "You wouldn't be able to get me off the mountain like this anyway."

"I could just bust out the bungee cords from the trunk and tie you to the roof." Rho shifted August a bit and then started rolling him, slowly heading away from the slope. "Of course until then I'll need to store you in our cabin."

The goat wiggled a bit more than before now that he knew he was being taken somewhere. "Hey now, give me the foam solvent first so I can deflate!"

"Hon, I *said* it was time for you to be a full-time goat balloon, deflating you defeats the purpose!" Rho's voice lacked sarcasm, filled with eagerness instead. "Just think of all the fun new nicknames you'll have: blimp, jumbo, beach ball, mattress."

August was almost too flustered to speak. He was completely at the mercy of Rho, and in theory the zebra could keep him inflated for as long as he desired. Maybe it'd be for a few hours, maybe the night, maybe a whole week. There was always the slim chance Rho really *would* just keep him a sphere forever, and the realization made his heart skip a beat in the best possible way. Being overjoyed would only encourage the zebra's antics, though, so August still made sure to protest.

"You'd get bored of having a blimp boyfriend, you wouldn't be able to take me anywhere!" August tried calling Rho's bluff.

"Well that's not true at all. You'd be a hit at the water park and the beach, not to mention rolls through the park," Rho mused. "If I got a pick-up truck transporting you around would be a breeze!"

As the couple got closer to the main lodge they started getting plenty of looks from the other visitors. Thanks to his yellow jacket and considerable size August stood out like a beacon, a magnet for phones and laughter. August had been inflated in public quite often in the past—and usually on his own accord—and his excitement caused him to blush in embarrassment. He doubted anyone would try to interfere or rescue him even if he started asking for help. For all they new he was just the victim of a harmless prank, definitely not in danger of being kept spherical for the foreseeable future, so why would they stop Rho?

Rho himself made sure to actively play up his boyfriend's helplessness, patting his sides like a drum and occasionally leaning into him. He used every trick he could think of to make the round goat bleat, snickering as the sound echoed off the walls and caught the attentions of new gawkers. Any time someone asked for a picture he'd stop the procession and pose, ensuring the relatively short trip back to the cabin turned into a long, meandering journey. Inevitably they did arrive at their destination, though, and Rho rolled August up to the back porch and its wide, sliding glass door.

The first push thoroughly wedged August in the entryway, the goat squirming from the slight increase in pressure. Inch-by-inch Rho wiggled his massive boyfriend through the space, mixing in plenty of teasing about how August was now the big one in the relationship. After a few minutes August was finally dislodged, rolling into the cabin and bumping into the couch. He was woefully aware of his immobility, reduced to wobbling and out-of-control rolling, an awkward ball of a goat.

More maneuvering brought August into the center of the little living room of the cabin. Rho stood triumphantly before his boyfriend, practically patting himself on the back for a job well done. “Ok hon, rolling your big butt all the way here was a tad bit tiring, so I'm gonna go take a nap. Don't get into trouble while I'm gone.”

August stared at Rho in silence as the zebra started walking away before finding his words. “H- Hey, don't leave me in here like this! C'mon, deflate me!”

Rho pretended to ignore his boyfriend's pleas, happily humming to himself as he walked into the cabin's bedroom and closed the door behind him. The light underneath the doorway soon went out as the zebra indeed went to sleep. August rocked back and forth, his emotions rapidly switching between frustration and glee. He couldn't believe Rho had actually abandoned him fully inflated, like a toy not properly put away. All the swollen goat could do was wait for his boyfriend's return—and wonder when he'd be mobile once more...