

Fitting Punishment: The Tiger Star

By: IndigoRho

Professor Reed paced in front of his Astronomy class as he gave a lecture, his heavy steps echoing throughout the room sharply. Like most elephants he was rather large, standing well over six feet tall and sporting a large belly neatly contained by his baby-blue dress shirt. As a result Reed was naturally intimidating—especially to those much smaller than him—despite being one of the more easy-going teachers at Columbia State University. Still, he had a passion for dealing with troublemakers and under-performers, something his students tended to learn quickly the hard way. Even with plenty of warnings and examples, though, there were always a few foolish enough to test his patience.

The plump tiger passed out in the front row was just such a fool. Professor Reed had watched JD slowly nod off over the course of the lecture, the bored tiger not even bothering to take real notes, just doodling himself inflating others. He'd never put much effort into the class, being overly open about only taking it because he needed the elective while barely holding on with a low C. There was little doubt in the Professor's mind that his reluctant pupil had likely stayed up late with his frat brothers at some party or another.

Though being bored in class wasn't a crime, having the audacity to nap in the very front was a step too far. The urge to just walk right up to JD and slam a hoof on his desk was strong, but Professor Reed wasn't sure simply startling the student was enough of a punishment considering JD's track record; he'd probably just fall back asleep a few minutes later. No, instead the elephant would prolong the tiger's embarrassment in his favorite way, and maybe get him to take class more seriously in the process.

As soon as Professor Reed reached a reasonable transition point in his lecture he halted the slide show and carefully made his way right up to JD's desk. Of course the tiger remained oblivious, nose twitching as he dreamed of drunkenly blimping up a rival or something. The rest of the class gradually became aware of what was about to happen, everyone holding back laughter as they watched. Professor Reed angled his trunk towards the tiger's open mouth, gently easing it in so as not to wake him *too* early. Once the elephant was satisfied he took the deepest breath he could—buttons straining on his shirt as his lungs filled—and then blew as hard as he could.

In an instant JD's cheeks puffed up and his eyes shot open in confusion, his gut swelling so swiftly it wobbled right out from under his shirt. Before the tiger could figure out what was happening Professor Reed pumped him with air twice more, until the student's ballooning belly knocked his desk over. JD squirmed in his chair, struggling to move with such an awkward, inflated middle, eyes locked on his teacher's as he silently pleaded for leniency. Reed simply gave him a broad smile back.

“Alright class, this is a little off-topic but Mr. JD here has graciously volunteered to help me demonstrate the life cycle of a star!” Professor Reed announced, trunk still firmly wedged in the tiger's mouth. “Don't worry about taking notes, this is mainly to give all of you a breather—especially JD.”

JD's eyes widened further and his wiggles turned into actual struggles until Professor Reed pressed a hoof hard into his bloated belly to give him a taste of the pressure. While that didn't prompt the tiger to necessarily cooperate, he no longer attempted to break free as aggressively.

Professor Reed continued the demonstration. “Now JD may not be the biggest star in the sky, but over time he'll gradually expand, like so.”

Another strong breath blew into JD, and the tiger let out a muffled whimper as his massive belly swelled even more, a striped white dome large enough to make walking nearly impossible. More breaths followed, Professor Reed forced to shift to the side of his inflating student to ensure his trunk could still reach him. The rest of the class was having a good laugh at the helpless tiger's expense, thankful for both the break and the entertainment. Already whispers of whether or not JD would be filled till bursting were spreading amongst the students.

“As the star expands it'll grow brighter as well, but unfortunately I can't make JD glow with plain old air so you'll have to use your imaginations!” Professor's Reeds joke prompted a muffled growl from the tiger in question, but of course he was easily cowed by a few more rough pokes against his overstretched hide. “A star will increase in size dramatically during the course of their life cycle as they turn into a red giant; I'd have to pump JD up until he was wider than a stadium to truly show that off, though.”

The mere thought of being so preposterously huge terrified JD and amused his peers. Of course he'd pop well before achieving such a titanic size. Again and again Professor Reed emptied whole lungfuls of air into the tiger, the student's shirt tearing apart from the strain as his chest swelled up as well. Soon he was far too wide for his chair, puffy arms flailing as he slowly tipped over and rolled onto the floor, bouncing lightly. He whimpered when the legs of his tipped desk dug into his taut sides, but Professor Reed pushed it away to ensure his teaching aide remained intact.

After that point Professor Reed spent more time pumping than “teaching”. JD's limbs grew rigid as they filled with air, compressed into domes as his now-spherical body started expanding into them. Every long puff caused the tiger's hide to creak and groan, JD whining a little as he felt his hide tingling from the strain. He'd grown so massive he was pressing up against desks and chairs in all directions, their rough sides and corners teasing and menacing him, threats to his fragile balloon of a body.

In between breaths the Professor diligently tested his pupil's hide, until finally there was almost no give at all. Only then did he finally remove his trunk from the tiger's mouth. “And there we have it, a delightfully expanded tiger star,” he said, before lifting JD a few inches off the ground and then gently bouncing him. “Much lighter of course, but that'll make him easier to pass around so you can all get a better look.”

Professor Reed lifted JD again, this time high into the air until he was above everyone's heads, his back pressing against the ceiling. He wiggled in protest, but being an overinflated balloon put him in no position to effectively resist. With obnoxious ease the tiger was passed from one student to the next, Professor Reed following along so he could help when necessary. The class was actively encouraged to poke their blimped peer, JD's face permanently flushed red as he endured the embarrassment of being publicly teased. On a couple occasions he was actually tossed from one student to another like a giant beach ball, letting out low yelps as he did.

The torment lasted until the very last minute of class, when Professor Reed finally retrieved JD and carried him up to the front of the room and dropped him from up high. Laughter filled the air as the tiger whimpered and bounced. Professor Reed rested his arms atop JD and leaned against him like a desk, prompting a few creaks. “Now hopefully that was an informative lesson. I'd like to thank everyone for being so attentive, and JD for being such a wonderful model for you all! Next time we'll be having a short quiz covering the last month of lessons so study up, class dismissed!”

The students quickly packed and left, few able to resist the temptation to poke fun at their blimped up classmate on the way out. JD was prodded, patted, and wobbled, helpless to stop them and too flustered to even properly threaten anyone. He did his best to remember the faces of the bolder ones, already plotting to track them down later and return the favor ten-fold.

As the last student walked out the door Professor Reed turned to JD. “I guess I should deflate you so you don't have to be rolled back to the frat house,” he laughed and gave the tiger a nudge.

Frustration and anger were abundant in JD, but fear over being at the near bursting point forced him to be humble. “Y-yes please!”

With little forewarning Professor Reed leaned into JD's spherical form and began squeezing him, causing a cacophony of creaks. The tiger's eyes bulged and a loud *uorrrrrrrrrrrp* soon erupted from his mouth as he belched out some of the air bottled within him. Unfortunately he wasn't able to enjoy the reduction in pressure as his professor immediately squeezed him again. Every forced belch made the tiger shrink a little more, the creaks fading as he deflated. His arms and legs were gradually

returned to normal, capable of moving on their own as the air retreated.

Just as abruptly as the deflation had begun, though, it stopped. JD was still rather round, unable to stand on his own thanks to his bloated belly. At first he wondered if Professor Reed was simply taking a quick break, but there was something in the elephant's grin that made his worries resurface.

"Excellent, you should be *just* mobile enough to waddle around now," Professor Reed said, lifting JD upright and back onto his paws.

The tiger stumbled, not used to having a middle so awkwardly big. Sure enough he could waddle a little, though definitely not well, and he still felt very much like a balloon. JD tried pressing down on his own belly to force more air out but found the effort surprisingly difficult, barely able to let out the tiniest of burps. "I-I can't wander around campus like this, I'd look ridiculous and it'll take me forever to get back to the frat house!"

"Oh you'll be fine. I'm sure most of your peers have seen rounder tigers at some point, so you'll only stand out a little." Professor Reed laughed and poked JD's belly, almost toppling the student. "Though if you'd prefer I can always re-inflate you and roll you home myself; no promises I won't stop to give some free lectures along the way, though."

JD gulped, cowering once more. "N-never mind, this'll be fine, I'm fine!"

"Excellent. Now don't forget to study for the quiz and get more sleep," Professor Reed said, sternly. "Or else I'll have to borrow you for more demonstrations."

JD simply nodded and frantically retrieved his things, struggling for a few minutes to grab everything while still heavily inflated. Professor Reed smiled as the tiger awkwardly waddled out the door, temporarily getting stuck before a slipping through. He was certain the student would resent him for the embarrassing ordeal he was forced to endure, but the Professor didn't care. After all, now JD would behave lest he get turned into a balloon again. Satisfied and amused, Professor Reed packed up and headed off to prepare for his next class, secretly hoping there'd be another troublemaker for him to pump up.