

Healer's Brew

By: IndigoRho

The sound of the pouring rain drowned out Logan's frustrated whines as he trudged through the muddy streets of the village, the overweight husky having given up all hope of arriving at his destination anything but soaked. For the last few days he'd been scouring the nearby woodlands for various plants, ingredients that Viridian—the local apothecary—would need to make new healing elixirs. Logan knew nothing of the craft himself, but when Viridian had approached him at the tavern and offered respectable coin, he'd simply grinned and accepted the job with enthusiasm. The money would be more than enough to get him to the next stop on his journey.

With great relief Logan spotted the swaying sign of Viridian's Apothecary, his hefty middle bouncing up and down as he pushed himself to his limits just to get out of the rain a few seconds faster. By the time he pushed open the door and stumbled into the empty shop he was utterly exhausted. The husky took a couple minutes to catch his breath, water pooling around him as it dripped from his clothes, before very slowly waddling towards the stairs. Viridian tended to be in his upper level living quarters this time of night, working on the elixirs as he cooked supper. His assumption was correct.

In a spacious room well-lit by candles and glowing stones the apothecary quietly ground some herbs in a bowl at his cluttered desk. Viridian was a cheetah who lived up to his namesake, his fur a mix of dark and light green as opposed to the usual yellow and white of his species. Like Logan, he was also considerably fat. As usual, his large middle was completely exposed, jiggling noticeably as he crushed ingredients. Logan hadn't quite gotten used to the sight, but Viridian claimed being shirtless made working a bit more manageable for him, and the husky didn't care enough to question the logic. Besides, his employer was one of the few people who *didn't* mock his weight.

Viridian finally stopped his work and approached the soaked husky, accepting a bundle that Logan had managed to keep somewhat dry. "Thank you Logan, I was worried you'd run into trouble in the woods," he said, returning to his desk. "I can't begin to express just how grateful I am for what you've done."

"Oh, uh, thank you sir," Logan said. "I wandered a bit further than I'd expected while grabbing the last of the moss, and then the rain slowed me down. Just...um, doing my job."

"Don't be so humble. Thanks to you I'll have a fresh stockpile of healing elixirs by tomorrow morning, all for the group about to clear out the uncovered burial grounds." Viridian was already grinding and mixing the items Logan had returned with. "The village will be safer then, and you'll have played a vital role in that."

Logan blushed from the praise. He'd been a simple laborer his whole life, and wasn't used to having his efforts treated with such respect. "I'm glad to have been of use!" The husky's stomach growled. "Though I should head back to the inn now, I'm starving."

"I doubt they'd have anything for you to eat this late, at least nothing with taste," Viridian said. "I made a large batch of soup tonight, was supposed to have some guests but they unfortunately had more pressing matters to attend to, you're free to eat as much as you'd like. Honestly you'd be doing me a favor."

Viridian walked over to a large cauldron sitting on a sturdy table and stirred its contents. "Well, I mean if you've got excess then I'll gladly help you out," Logan said, trying to hide his enthusiasm for free food. "Can't say I'm eager to head out in this rain again so soon anyway."

Logan sat down at the table as Viridian poured him a large bowl of thick, warm soup. The husky got a good whiff of the meal well before it reached him, and his mouth began watering almost immediately. Despite the hunger pains wracking his stomach, Logan attempted restraint, taking a small sip at first. His taste buds danced. He wasn't sure if it was just his incredible hunger or the apothecary's cooking, but at that moment he was convinced he'd never eaten anything anywhere near as delicious as the soup. Logan gulped down the rest of his serving as quickly as he could manage—narrowly avoiding

spilling some onto his drenched tunic—then began licking the bowl clean.

Viridian smiled and passed a second, full bowl of soup to his guest. “Please, do have more.”

The husky took the offering without question and practically chugged it, moaning as he felt the liquid rush down his throat and warm his belly. Two more servings were waiting for him by then, and they were downed just as swiftly. His tunic clung tighter to his gut, but Logan's hunger hadn't been quelled at all; it'd somehow increased. Logan clinched his teeth as he felt his stomach growl as if it were empty, as if it'd had nothing for days, demanding to be filled. All his willpower was necessary to stop him from simply diving at the cauldron and guzzling it's contents. Viridian saw this, and his grin only grew.

“You must be famished, hiking through the woods all day, hunting ingredients, dealing with the horrible rain.” Viridian pushed the cauldron right up to his guest. “Please, eat as much as you want. I insist.”

Logan was on the cauldron in a heartbeat. He leaned over and dunked his bowl into the brew, slurping it dry before filling it again, and again, and again. With every gulp his middle swelled a little further and his hunger grew a lot stronger. A line of soft, white pudge poked out from under the husky's tunic and rapidly expanded, exposing more and more of his belly. The growth went completely unnoticed, even as his flab spilled onto the table. All Logan cared about was satisfying his out of control hunger, and draining the cauldron of its fantastic contents was the only way he knew how.

Viridian simply stood by patiently and admired the events unfolding before him. He had a great fondness for fat—though he made a habit of not being too open about it—and watching Logan slowly swell before his eyes was absolutely delightful. The apothecary had witnessed similar scenes many times in the past, some involving individuals far larger than the husky, but they never lost their charm. Logan practically had his head buried in the cauldron by now, desperate to reduce the time it took for the soup to reach his mouth, even if only by a few seconds.

Inevitably the sound of the wooden bowl scratching the cauldron's empty bottom echoed around, and after a few pitiful attempts to acquire the last few drops of soup, Logan slumped backwards. The wooden chair creaked in pain as the bloated husky fell onto it, but managed to withstand the weight. Logan was in a daze, nearly too full to move yet still feeling the lingering hints of hunger. He stared down at his swollen belly in confusion, cautiously poking it with his paws to make sure it was actually real. His gut was still warm, and initially felt horribly taut, his hide stretched far further than ever before. As he continued exploring the surface of his middle, though, it began growing softer, until the pressure subsided and his paws sunk in. Logan nervously shook his belly and confirmed what should have been impossible: it was pure fat.

Viridian stepped up to Logan and gave the husky a gentle pat on the belly. “Excellent, the main ingredient for the elixirs is finally ready.”

Before Logan could question the odd statement, Viridian lifted him off the chair and held him close, their guts pressing into each other. With a toothy grin Viridian licked his lips and opened his mouth wide, before shoving the husky's face in. Logan squirmed as his head was forced into the saliva-soaked maw of the cheetah, and let out a muffled cry of terror as he felt Viridian begin to swallow. His frantic attempts to escape only made Viridian tighten his grip. A loud, horrible gulp echoed in Logan's ears as he slipped into the throat, Viridian's lips stretching around his shoulders with ease. The gullet was dark and damp, and Viridian's sporadic breaths assaulted his nostrils with foul air. Logan had seen furs swallowed whole before, usually the result of chaotic drunken brawls or unsettling cult practices, but he'd never imagined he'd fall victim to such a fate.

Light purrs began to rumble from within Viridian. He carefully guided the struggling husky into his mouth, moaning in joy as his tongue explored the flab of his meal's chest and then gut. Viridian didn't know why he loved the taste of others so much, though he greatly appreciated that he did; he wouldn't have the same passion for his work otherwise. A few more swallows forced Logan's head into the cheetah's stomach, and Viridian chuckled as he felt his large belly balloon outwards even more.

Logan's soft butt slipped past Viridian's lips, ending any hope the husky had of escaping doom, but his struggles persisted. He twisted within the dark stomach of the cheetah, screaming for help while elbowing the walls of his gradually expanding prison. Every horrible swallow caused a bit more of him to slide into the stomach, which was vibrating from the increasingly louder purrs of the gluttonous apothecary. At times Logan could actually feel his legs press against the parts of him deep within Viridian's gut.

The squirms and whimpers did little to slow down the inevitable, and eventually a final gulp sent Logan's paws right past Viridian's lips and down his throat, the cheetah's belly bouncing heavily as his meal fully entered his stomach. Viridian took a short moment to adjust to his increased bulk before carefully waddling over to a more comfortable—and far sturdier—chair nearby, easing himself into it as his gut shook from Logan's futile struggles. He looked over the bulging, light-green dome of his middle with pure delight, unable to resist kneading it with his paws, his purrs nearly a roar at that point. Being larger brought him great joy, as did having another living being trapped within his gut.

“P-please, sir, let me out, don't digest me!” Logan's muffled plea was barely audible.

Viridian laughed, shaking his belly even more. “Silly husky, I'm not going to digest you. Well, not most of you, at least.” He let out a small belch that squeezed his stomach tighter around Logan. “You're going to become a hefty batch of healing elixir.”

“W-what?” Logan whimpered.

“My talent is gastromancy—an obscure art here but very, very common in my homeland. I brew elixirs within my stomach using ingredients I consume,” Viridian said. “Living creatures just happen to make the most potent batches.”

“B-but, all those plants you had me gather, they were supposed to be for the potions!” Logan exclaimed in shock.

Viridian gently patted the belly bulge he assumed was Logan's head. “No, those were for something else. I brewed those while you were away, turned them into the concoction that inspired your hunger and intense desire to gulp down an entire cauldron of soup,” he said. “It also converted that soup into fat once it settled in your gut. I needed you as big as possible, after all. I'll get more elixir that way.”

A strange tingling sensation spread across Logan's entire body, and for a brief moment he was convinced digestive juices had begun pouring in. Then his fur started to glow. The entire stomach dimly lit up, and as Logan tried to stretch out and create more room he realized his body was feeling...softer. He balled his paw into a fist and barely felt a bone. When he opened it back up he saw the fur was matted together and oozing off, as if he were melting. Logan yelped at the sight, watching in terror as his belly shrunk and a gray and white pool slowly formed in the pit of the stomach. The husky felt no pain—just a growing numbness.

Viridian could feel his captive's struggles growing less firm. “I honestly wasn't sure I'd be able to complete the order in time, my stocks were near empty and they were asking for so many elixirs,” he said kneading his gut. “Then I saw you in the tavern. A lone traveler no one knew who was already big and fat. One good feeding and you'd be just the right size for the batch.”

Logan had melted to the point of no longer being able to beg, merely gurgle in horror. He was waist-deep in a lake of himself, and felt like his entire body could collapse at a moment's notice.

“You really should be proud, though. Your sacrifice will save lives, don't you think that's worth it?” Viridian grinned as he watched his gut slowly smoothing out. He could also feel himself growing softer, though in a very different way than Logan. While most of the husky would be converted into elixir, some would turn into a new layer of fat on the cheetah's large frame. A delightful perk of his magic.

Viridian's words did little to comfort Logan. With a guttural whimper he finally fell apart, the vaguely husky-shaped mass dispersing with a splash and leaving behind a thick light-gray soup. The apothecary's purrs intensified as he felt Logan dissolve completely into elixir, happily massaging his

sloshing gut. Logan had been one of his largest “ingredients”, and Viridian couldn't help but spend some time playing with his massive belly as it churned with valuable, restorative formula. He'd have to let his trusted apprentice watch over the shop for a week while he worked off some of the pudge he'd gained from Logan. Only a select few townsfolk knew of Viridian's true elixir brewing methods, and gaining nearly forty pounds in a night would lead to unwanted rumors and questions. They were better off not knowing, anyways.

He did his best to mostly target travelers or troublemakers, and the rest...well the rest should have been honored to provide for the continued health of their friends and loved ones. Content, Viridian lifted himself off the chair and sluggishly waddled towards the stairs. He'd need to bottle the Logan elixir before he went to sleep, and ensure it was properly dyed to resemble more traditional potions. Couldn't have anyone realizing that every time someone disappeared his shop would suddenly start selling elixirs in their color.