

Mana Berry Zebra

By: IndigoRho

Rho double and triple checked his bag, and once again everything appeared to be order. Not that he needed to bring much for this particular trip. The plump orange-striped zebra always liked to play it safe with such things, though.

“Alright August, I'm good. Are you all set aside from what got sent to the boat earlier?”

A slim, gray lion strolled up to Rho. “Yep! All that's left is to fill up my adorable mana bottle~” August gave his boyfriend's belly a teasing poke, prompting a faint blush from Rho.

“Well then let's get started.”

Dozens of potion bottles filled the nearby shelves, all product of Rho's bustling alchemy business. Standing out amongst them was one filled with a brightly glowing, blue liquid. It was a volatile form of pure mana that August had discovered while exploring, which caused any who drank it to transform into a massive, spherical mana berry.

Being swollen with such an absurd amount of mana increased a mage's power tenfold, but most weren't willing to put up with the immobility and awkward size that came with it. When distilled properly, though, the elixir would retain a respectable amount of potency while also not causing the user to swell—as much.

Of course the easiest way to produce more of the elixir was to turn someone into a berry with the pure form. It was also coincidentally the easiest way to transport it in bulk. Rho had graciously volunteered to be the bottle on the couple's journey to sell some of the elixir, and had needed little convincing from August.

August grabbed the bottle and passed it along to Rho, who eagerly pulled out the stopper. The zebra breathed in the strong, fruity aroma, then started chugging it. Within seconds the bottle was drained, the lingering taste of blueberry on Rho's tongue and a delightful chill in his belly.

Unlike most people, Rho rather enjoyed inflating, and wasn't one to turn down an opportunity to become a berry. The sensation of being huge, of swelling up, of simply taking up so much space—all were incredible to him. Even the increased internal pressure that accompanied inflation was a positive in his mind. Remaining fully inflated for days was something Rho had wanted to do for a long time, and serving as a living mana bottle was the perfect excuse for it.

The elixir only took a few seconds to kick in. All at once Rho's hide began to turn from orange and white to different shades of blue. He grinned as he watched his hooves change, August sharing his enthusiasm. When the last hints of his usual coloration had vanished, the *real* transformation began.

A sudden, muffled *glrrrrrrbbble* echoed out from Rho's middle, which wobbled gently and started ballooning outward. The zebra shivered some as he felt his stomach filling rapidly with cool liquid mana. Even with all his experience it was an odd sensation, as if he were chugging a drink without getting a single drop on his tongue or throat.

Rho's belly was always doughy, but the bubbling torrent of mana caused it to round out further until it became a taut ball. Despite his expansion his tunic stretched dutifully, having been preemptively enchanted so it wouldn't be torn to shreds. Some modesty was in order considering he'd be rolled around in public.

The zebra gripped his bloating belly in both hooves, giving it a gentle shake just so he could feel the mana slosh about. The rest of his body was beginning to swell slightly as well, the mana just as greedy to fill Rho as he himself was. His arms and legs puffed up, as did his cheeks and sides. Rho was swiftly taking on a mostly spherical shape, resembling an inflating balloon. He'd also begun to glow, fainter than the original elixir but growing brighter the bigger he got.

August couldn't stand idly by. He gave his blimping boyfriend plenty of pokes and prods, taking advantage of Rho's increasing inability to swat him away.

“Wow Rho, you're getting ripe real fast. It's like you were *meant* to be a berry!”

“That's just because this stuff knows I'm a container without equal!” Rho boasted. He was forced to widen his stance, his limbs swelling into domes as his round body grew and grew. “Course I'm sure you've been tempted to keep me like this permanently. Just your own personal, helpless source of mana~”

August's face turned red, the lion flustered at the thought. “Well you're certainly at your best while spherical, but I doubt you'd be completely helpless. I'd just end up having to roll you around all day.”

Rho's hooves gently lifted off the floor as his round body continued expanding. The pressure of the mana pushing against his overstretched hide had left him permanently blushy, a smile always on his face. He was creaking faintly, but those noises would go away once his body adjusted to its new size. The swelling was dwindling, the zebra now a taut mana berry with puffy hooves and head sticking out.

August placed his ear against Rho's side and listened carefully; there was the occasional slosh but no more bubbling. The transformation was complete.

The lion grabbed their bags before returning to his berry of a boyfriend. “Just imagine it Rho, it might be a good two or three weeks until you're fully drained. *If* you can be drained. After a week the chances of permanency will be considerable, your body constantly producing more mana to replace any that's lost. There are ways to reverse such a condition, of course, but they take time. And with how potent this mana potion is, it could very well take months to cure you~”

“So in other words I'll be enjoying a nice, lazy vacation soon while you watch the shop,” Rho smirked, his round cheeks wobbling.

“W-wait, that's not how this is supposed to go!” August frowned. He'd spent so much time thinking about all the ways he'd be able to tease his boyfriend that he forgot how easy it would be to end up as his servant instead. No wonder Rho had so readily agreed to be the bottle. He gave the zebra a frustrated shake, prompting plenty of moans.

“Oh don't worry August, it'll be fun! Now let's get rolling—securing me in the ship's hold will quite some time and pushing.”

August was forced to concede victory to Rho, though he silently vowed to tease the zebra berry twice as much as previously planned to make up for it.

With a thought multiple spectral paws came into being, illusions created by August. The danced around Rho, patting and rubbing the zebra frequently. A pair even squeezed Rho's massive cheeks and poked him on the nose. Eventually they stopped playing with the berry and carefully pushed him onto his side. The pool of mana inside him warped his spherical body slightly as it crashed around with a loud *kersplassssssh*.

The paws arranged themselves behind Rho in pairs and started rolling him forwards. August took the lead, if only to feel a bit more in control of the situation. The couple headed out of the shop, Rho getting momentarily wedged in the front doors. Rho merely laughed the incident off, happily wiggling his hooves as he was rolled down the street, content with his potentially extensive adventure as a sloshy zebra berry...