

Filling Fruit

By: IndigoRho

By chance a thin cloud bank slowly drifted across the sun, providing some relief from heat in the forest below. The two hunters traveling a worn game trail gave silent thanks, the white-and-gray feathered avians already wishing they were back in town with the cool ocean breeze.

"It's been getting harder and harder to find deer the last couple weeks," the taller of the pair, Lieto, said. "Alberto thinks the wolves got them all—swears he saw one as wide as a cow the other day."

"Alberto also loves to ramble on about that time he was marooned on an island that was actually a whale," Oscar, behind him, laughed. "There's no way a wolf could get that fat."

"I didn't say I *believed* him!" Lieto insisted, turning his head to look back at his friend. "But you've gotta admit how odd it is that—*aarrggh!*"

With his attention elsewhere, Lieto hadn't been able to spot the rather large object blocking his path. Flailing his wings as he lost balance, the bird ended up hitting the dirt hard. Thankfully his pride was more injured than his body.

Oscar had a good laugh at his friend's expense, though he quickly found himself far more interested in what Lieto had tripped over. It was an almost perfect sphere about two feet across, light purple in color. Strangely familiar yet plainly out-of-place in the forest, Oscar's eyes went wide once he recognized it.

"Uh, I think you tripped on a grape. A *really* big grape."

"Grapes aren't as big as boulders, maybe you should get your...eyes...checked." Finally able to get a good look at the object, Lieto came to the same conclusion Oscar had. "No way, how is that even possible." He gave it a curious poke with his wing.

"Magic? I mean it has to be magic. I remember a traveling merchant selling oversized potatoes a few years back, grown with enchanted soil or something." Oscar looked off to the side of the trail and spotted another grape in the underbrush—and another, and another. A whole bunch that seemed to have fallen or rolled from somewhere.

Lieto pulled out his knife and cut away a small chunk as big as an apple. Plenty of juice leaked out, but it was still mostly solid. "Wonder if it tastes better or worse than a regular grape?"

Without waiting for a reply from Oscar he bit down on the chunk, trying more than he'd meant to. Fortunately the taste proved to be incredible, and Lieto greedily finished off the rest of the sample he'd snagged. He tended to enjoy fruit, but the massive grape was on a whole different level, tastier than even the best cooked meat and fish he'd had.

"Damn, if I'd known magic was this good a seasoning I'd have tried it on everything!" Lieto said, already cutting off another, larger chunk from the grape. He hadn't been that hungry before the first bite, but now he was starving.

Oscar felt the urge to warn his friend about eating strange food, but Lieto's enthusiasm soon became contagious. He'd never seen him chow down on anything so aggressively before, and the need to see if the grape was really as delicious as Lieto seemed to think it was turned out to be irresistible. With apprehension he took a bite. Seconds later he was just as ravenous as Lieto.

"Have grapes always been this good?" Oscar asked in between large bites.

"Never!" Lieto answered back immediately. "I could eat this for every meal and never grow tired of it, the magic that made this is outstanding!"

Lieto and Oscar's normally-flat middles had begun to swell from overeating, but oddly so. Their bellies bulged far more than should have been possible even considering how much they'd eaten, and there was a weight to them, a sag. They'd also grown slightly softer all over. Eating the grape had made them gain weight—instantly. Neither noticed at first thanks to the intoxicating taste, the pair eating nonstop until nothing remained.

With a sigh Lieto sat back, a satisfied grin on his face. “Damn that was amazing! Can't believe I ate half that thing in one sitting.” He gave his middle a pat with both wings, and froze as he felt soft pudgy wobble under his touch.

The hunter looked down and—sure enough—a feathered gut was sticking out from beneath his shirt.

“Lieto you got fat!” Oscar snickered as he watched his friend feeling his rounder face and chunkier arms. Lieto had been thin, almost athletic, but now he was plain chubby.

“You gained just as much as me!” Lieto shot back, flustered.

Only then did Oscar realize his own middle had been jiggling faintly as he laughed at Lieto's expense, and now it was his turn to examine his freshly gained pounds.

As surprising as the gains were, both birds didn't express any real concern. Perhaps it was from shock or simply the fact that both had been victims, but becoming chubbier just didn't seem like such a big deal.

Oscar reluctantly shrugged, blushing some himself. “Oh whatever, that grape was worth it for a few pounds. And if they're really magic than I'm sure it's good fat. I'm probably healthier now!”

“Honestly if it was magic you'd think it'd have been more filling. I'm still hungry even after all that.” Lieto's gaze was drifting to the other grapes nearby. Just eying them made his stomach rumble and his mouth water.

“Well we hadn't eaten since breakfast, of course our appetites are more demanding than usual.” Oscar was also staring at the grapes. “Hiking on an empty stomach is reckless, so having our fill is the responsible thing to do.”

Lieto agreed by heading over to the nearest grape and digging into. Oscar followed suit shortly after.

Conversation died out for the most part as the two birds focused on eating...and eating...and eating. The unbeatable taste of the first grape wasn't merely a fluke, the others proving utterly irresistible. Consuming the fruit was easy, Lieto and Oscar barely taking the time to chew at all.

Every bite made the birds a little bit plumper, and with how swiftly they were glutting they were practically inflating with fat. Shirts and pants grew tight, small tears appearing in the seams. Chubby middles became pot bellies and then ball guts. Their cheeks rounded out, neck thickened. Neither was oblivious to the dramatic gains they were experiencing—they just ignored it. It was something to be dealt with later, once they'd enjoyed the delicious grapes to their heart's content.

One-by-one the grapes vanished down the throats of Lieto and Oscar, who were eventually waddling from one to another, round bellies bouncing as they went. The bounty was as endless as their appetites—and waistlines. Any word spoken between the two was either praise of their meal or the claiming of their next feast. There was also the occasional teasing as they became more and more comfortable with their heft.

By the time the bunch of grapes had been completely devoured, Lieto and Oscar didn't see any real reason to want to slim down again.

Lieto belched as he slapped his enormous gut, which was a solid mass of soft, doughy fat. His outfit was tattered, reduced to scraps that barely clung to his body. He'd tripled in size, unrecognizable compared to the lithe bird that'd walked into the forest in search of deer. Oscar looked even rounder, if only due to his shorter frame. He was still seated, idly rubbing his middle and moaning.

“*Mmmph*, I'm stuffed!” Oscar said with pride. “So this is what it's like to indulge for once!”

“Yeah I don't think I could eat another bite. I sure *wish* I could, though!”

Oscar nodded before attempted to stand back up. However, the bird hadn't adjusted to his increased girth yet, and only managed to wobble comically on the ground. “Oops. Uh, little help?”

His friend waddled over and reached down, pulling at Oscar's wings with all his might. “Damn you're heavy dude!”

After considerable effort Oscar was pulled up. He gave his friend's belly a prod in thanks. “Not

much heavier than you I bet!”

There was a barrage of pokes and counter-pokes as the friends teased one another, along with more than a couple firm squeezes of bird belly.

“Oh man, it's probably a good thing we're both stuffed.” Lieto pointed behind Oscar. “We'd be rolling back to town otherwise!”

Oscar followed the direction of Lieto's wing, and his grin grew wider. Dozens and dozens of massive grape bunches littered the forest floor, along with plenty of other similarly-sized fruits. Apples, oranges, pears, berries—it looked like something out of a dream. Amidst the gargantuan grove were some immobilized wildlife who'd obviously enjoyed the bounty just as much as Lieto and Oscar had.

“Huh, maybe Alberto wasn't lying about the butterball wolf if *that's* the kind of prey they've had access to recently!” Oscar shook his head, amused their acquaintance might not have been embellishing a story for once.

Lieto found the smallest grape he could and lifted it up. It was light enough to not be a burden.

“Since we're not in the best condition to chase after a regular deer *or* drag back any well-fed ones, we might as well share our discover with the rest of town,” Lieto said. “Once everyone knows how amazing this stuff is they'll definitely come back with a few wagons so we can enjoy it for every meal!”

Oscar had been thinking the exact same thing himself, almost like a compulsion. He wanted all his friends to try a bite of the wonderful fruit, every stranger too. It needed to be shared. Sure, some might be reluctant to eat the fruit if they knew how fattening it was, but they'd get over it once they tasted it themselves. After all, a couple hundred pounds was a small price to pay for an amazing meal.

Once Oscar had grabbed a grape of his own the two blubbery hunters headed off back towards home, overeager to share their find—and their gains...