

## Water Weight and Fruit Juice, Part 2

A Story in Arvos

by Cerine Hero

“Come on, get up! I'm ready to go!”

Cerine cracked one sleepy eye open and mumbled. From what she could see from underneath the overhang of rock, the sky was still a rosy pink. The glow of sunshine still hadn't swallowed up all of the stars. Mito wasn't anywhere nearby, probably climbing one of the nearby trees. Yawning, the vixen leaned backwards, feeling a solid wall of muscle and scales behind her. Zaress gripped her tighter, her gently stroking – and jiggling – her belly.

“Already,” Cerine murmured under her breath.

“You wanted her, she's your problem,” Zaress replied. The drake kissed the nude fox on the neck and slid her hand upwards, cupping her fingers around a full, soft breast. In fact, the vixen's boob overflowed Zaress's hand, something the drake immediately noticed. She gripped it softly, feeling the fox's muscles tense all down her thicker back and legs.

“Well, that's a way to wake me up,” Cerine teased, beginning to stretch.

Zaress sat up, herself, looking the fox over from chin to thigh. She laid a hand on Cerine's leg and squeezed gently, feeling only soft, supple chubbiness instead of toned muscle. “Ceri... you're fat.”

“Huh?” Cerine twisted about to look at Zaress and then sat upright. Looking down, she saw a round swell of fur pushing outwards past her swollen breasts and her eyes lit up. She'd gained a lot in the last couple months, sure, but not enough to really be “fat” – but she'd gained it all over again overnight. A pair of plump and heavy breasts weighed down the rotund tummy sitting on her lap, and her hips were significantly wider. She reached up, pressing her palms against her face. There was a distinct squish of chubbiness to her cheeks and muzzle, and the double-chin that was forming underneath her jaw was now well on its way. After another round of confused squeezes and jiggles from head to tummy, the fox squeaked, “Wha- how?!”

“Are you allergic to tema?” Zaress offered. She placed her hands on the fox's hips, rubbing her thumbs on the fuller love handles she found. Cerine seemed resistant, so she pulled her hands back.

“I've had tema before,” the fox said, her voice tightening. She turned around and jiggled her belly with one paw at the drake. “This isn't bloating, though. This is just fat.”

Zaress nodded along, unsure what she could do to help. Her thoughts the afternoon before were confirmed, however: The fox really was getting fatter, and quickly. Zaress stood and extended her hands, helping Cerine up to her feet. Pink and white fur wobbled around her as she gained her feet, and she was a little unsteady as she walked, not used to the slosh of her bigger belly or her thighs rubbing together. Zaress had seen Cerine fattened before, as a result of her potionwork. The fox would never stay big for long enough to get used to it, so previous experience was no help to her now.

“Did one of your potion bottles break?” the drake asked. Cerine tried to pick up her alchemy satchel. Zaress caught her before she fell over. The drake scooped up the satchel and handed it to her.

“Doesn't look like it...” Cerine said. “I don't think I had any of those elixirs on hand, anyways. They keep... disappearing. And none of the ingredients I have would've done it, either. Especially not *this* much. Still, I've got two doses of fission with me. I'll try one.”

The fox took out a small glass vial with thumb-sized amount of silvery liquid rolling around the bottom. Pulling the cork out with her thumb, Cerine poured the liquid onto her tongue and then swallowed. She and Zaress watched, looking down at her belly in anticipation. Nothing happened. Zaress brushed the back of her hand across the fox's face and lifted her gaze upwards.

“You look beautiful,” she told her, but Cerine rolled her eyes.

“I know you think so,” she replied. “You say that no matter what shape I'm in.”

Zaress just shrugged, pulling her in for a kiss. Cerine returned it, placing her paws on the drake's strong shoulders. The drake ran a hand through her long, slightly messy and unkempt hair.

“Because you are-”

“Whoa! Cerine, you're fat.”

Mito hopped down from a low-hanging branch and walked onto the flat terrace of rock where they'd made their camp. The marten was already fully dressed, her jacket and boots on, and her hair tied up in her customary ponytail. The blue streak in her bangs hung down slightly over her face, as usual. As the marten walked over, Zaress grumbled and walked away, crossing her arms underneath her chest. Cerine raised an eyebrow at the drake, but then turned to face Mito. The marten poked her in the tummy and grinned. “What did you do? Having a little fun?”

“I have no idea,” Cerine replied. She held up the fission bottle still in her paw. “It's not from a potion or anything. I don't know if I'll be able to figure it out without my lab equipment, either way.”

“We've still got three days of walking ahead of us,” Zaress said, pulling on her regular traveling clothes at the edge of the terrace. She glanced back at Cerine's belly. “Think you can make it like that?”

“I'll have to,” the fox replied, shrugging.

Mito helped Cerine attempt to fit back into her adventuring clothes. They were already a bit too small before now, with some pudgy white and pink fur spilling out between the gray top and the leggings, but now the stiff top barely hid any of her burgeoning gut. Mito “helpfully” tried to jiggle the fox's tummy into the top to no avail, and they left it as it was. At least it was keeping her bigger boobs pinned in nicely, even if it left her a touch short of breath. The leggings, however, did not do so well as Cerine and Mito tugged them upwards. The seat split with a *shrrriip* once the fox's tubby hindquarters was stuffed into them. Cerine looked over her shoulder at the marten's blushing, grinning face and rolled her eyes. Again, it'd have to do. At least her footwraps fit, mostly. The fox wiggled her toes and pulled her alchemy satchel on over one shoulder. The strap rubbed against her bust and over her belly and back fur annoyingly, and slapped against her thicker hips when she walked.

“If this whole outfit doesn't burst before we get back to the city, I'd be shocked,” Cerine muttered.

She shouldn't have said anything.

They followed Zaress through the forest until they were able to pick up on a traveling path alongside a burbling stream. Mito strode alongside the fat vixen, staff extended in her left paw while she kept her right free to help the encumbered fox across difficult terrain in their path. Cerine couldn't see her feet past her belly now, so she relied – and weighed – heavily on the marten to help guide her. Until the pathway was particularly clear, Cerine had trouble wobbling over all the tree roots and rocks.

The path they followed ran alongside a burbling stream on the right-hand side. Clear water from the mountains ran down alongside them, twisting its way along smooth stones to get to the secluded pool where they'd slept, and then on to the lake. As they walked, the blue pendant Cerine still had around her neck began to shimmer and glisten, as if it was inexplicably wet. When she walked past small pools of water on the edge of the stream, the water level would mysteriously bubble and drop. The rip on the back of Cerine's leggings then immediately split wider. Her black smallclothes hung out of the leggings even further, as another inch of rippling, soft fox ass spilled through the gap. Cerine tugged at her top, as well, trying to adjust her breasts more comfortably. It felt like she was suffocating under the tough fabric of her jerkin, not realizing it was actually her boobs swelling in size and applying pressure against her ribs. Her leggings split in another place after her thighs rubbed them together for a few hours, weakening the fabric enough so that they split, and the white fur of her inner thighs spilled free.

“Why did this happen to just me?” Cerine whined, trying to adjust her rapidly-shrinking garments. “You were both in the water, too, right? And we all slept in the same spot. Zaress, is this a dragon curse or something?”

“Dragons lost their magic,” Zaress answered from up ahead. “And when have you ever seen me be fat?”

Cerine huffed and shook her head, her white hair flying wildly around her. She looked over at

Mito and raised her eyebrow. “Did you notice anything weird before sunrise with you? Or were you asleep?”

“I was awake,” Mito replied. She rubbed her flat tummy with her free paw. “But no, I didn't feel anything weird. Definitely didn't get any bigger.” The marten glanced down at Cerine's free-hanging belly, noticing that it was starting to fold over the top of her leggings, and her love handles were bouncing more heavily with every step. She tried flashing Cerine a placating smile. “Not for nothing, but you know I'd happily trade with you. I think it'd be a lot of fun to get fatter and fatter and then start over...”

“What do you mean *fatter*?” Cerine asked.

“Um... you're getting bigger.” Mito's eyes flicked between the fox and drake. “Am I the only one who noticed that...?”

Zaress stopped and turned about, looking at Cerine. Her reptilian eyes went wide instantly. The fox also tried peeking down at herself, but from her angle she couldn't tell much difference. She certainly *felt* heavier, but she'd felt heavier all day and wasn't sure whether that was from this morning or more recent. The fox reached down and felt her belly, sliding her paws over the ridiculous amount of exposed fur. A heavy, jiggling roll of fat was spilling past her waist now, and she swore she *sloshed* when she bounced it. She was used to getting a little round from her potions, but she was beginning to get bigger than that, with no signs of stopping. A small whirlpool formed in the stream nearby, but all the attention was focused on the obese fox.

The drake took three steps back towards the others when a sudden noise shook the forest. Wingbeats rattled the sky and a shadow passed across the woods. A massive, four-winged beast wheeled around in the air, roaring mightily. Its copper scales were caked with verdigris and moss, but where there was no growth or tarnishing, the scales shimmered in the morning light. The woods seemed to come to life in response to the dragon as small animals, unseen in the brush, scattered from the roar of the dragon.

Zaress halted and looked up. The vertical slits of her eyes opened into wide ovals. “They're angry.”

“You said he wouldn't wake up for a while!” Mito hissed. Her fur was poofed up along her neck in fright.

“I've also never run into a dragon for real,” the drake admitted. “We need to get to heavier cover. Our vision doesn't go through-” she gestured vaguely towards all of the forest around them “-stuff.”

“Thick woods, gotcha.” Mito collapsed her staff and stuck it in its holster underneath her coat and spun about. She pointed towards the darkest portion of woods off of the path and then sprinted into them, leaping over branches and fallen logs. “Come on!”

Cerine frowned, glancing between the sky and the deep woods. “I'm not sure I can-” But she didn't get to finish. Strong, thick arms suddenly wrapped halfway around her middle and her feet left the dirt path. Zaress hefted the obese fox up into her grip with little effort and bolted into the woods after Mito.

It only took a few moments before the forest became a trackless expanse of trees in every direction. The path behind them was long gone. As Cerine looked about, jostled and jiggling in Zaress's arms, she could barely see the flicker of the marten's tail between the trunks ahead of them. Despite being a city girl, Mito was well at home in woodlands. Zaress's breath puffed against Cerine's exposed flank as she panted.

The woods grew dark and close around them, but they didn't stop. The dragon's roar still shook the air overhead. Zaress stumbled over things underfoot, barely able to see where she was going with a few hundred pounds of fox blocking her view. Mito came back and helped as best she could, and together they jumped down into a depressed hollow beneath a thick oak where they couldn't see any of the sky through the canopy and they were shielded by high banks of earth. Zaress set Cerine down.

Despite being near noon, it was dark beneath the oak. The woods around them felt older and quieter than the path beside the brook. Cerine reached into her satchel and took out an alchemical torch-stone, activating it and holding it up. The glow almost seemed to be swallowed up in the gloom of the deep woods. She could barely see Mito and Zaress a few feet away from her.

“Are we safe?” the fox asked, using her free paw to stuff her fat back into her clothes. A roar from above answered her.

“I can't see him,” Zaress said, peering upwards at the canopy. “So... probably.”

Mito wandered the little hollow, glancing around. There were vines covering near-everything here, from the treetops down to the ground. The marten knelt down. The ground felt hard under her toes; too hard to be earth. Gripping some of the coiling vines in her claws, she tugged back the vines and exposed worked stone bricks. Mito tilted her head, glancing up and around. Now that she was looking, the hollow's floor was mostly flat, except where it was upturned by tree roots or vines. There were walls, too, in a roughly square shape, but two of them had been flattened by the growing tree over what was probably centuries.

“Hey, this was a basement,” she announced. Cerine sat on one of the thicker tree roots and looked around, noticing the shape of the hollow, too. Zaress kept her focus upwards on the sky. Mito kept exploring, walking over to one of the walls. “Was there a city here a long time ago?”

“Not one I've heard of,” Cerine replied. “But I wouldn't be the best one to ask.”

Mito ran her paw across the wall, feeling the stonework. Her fingers slipped through the vines and into an empty space. Curious, she tugged the vines away and peeked her nose into a small cubby built into the wall. It was a little wider than her head, not very deep, and a long, flat piece of stone was placed along the bottom to be a shelf. On the shelf rest an oblong fruit – no, a gourd, with several holes cut out of it. Mito picked up the gourd and looked it over. She had some familiarity with musical instruments, being a player herself. The gourd could've been an ocarina, but the hole placement wasn't right, and the stem hadn't been cut or shaped to blow into at all.

She walked over to Cerine and sat down on the root beside the fat vixen. “Look at this thing,” she said, holding it up.

The fox looked it over, brow furrowed. “What is it?”

“No clue. But I found it on the shelf over there. Had to be important to somebody at some point.” Mito tried to peek into the holes, but it was too dark to see. She put it down on the root beside her. “Oh well. How long are we going to wait for the dragon to go away?”

“All day,” Zaress said, “if we have to.”

“Ugh! We barely got anywhere today.” Mito sighed and settled in, leaning herself against Cerine's weight. Looking down, she reached out one paw and squeezed the fox's big belly. Cerine purred despite herself and blushed, but let the marten jiggle her excess weight. “You stopped getting bigger.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. While we were walking along the stream, you were getting heavier, but now you've stopped. Weird.”

Cerine shrugged her heavy shoulders, and it made her top pop up enough to expose the rest of her belly. “I have no idea what's happening. At least you two are amused by it.”

“I wouldn't say amused...”

Zaress snorted loudly. “I don't hear the dragon anymore,” she announced, turning and looking at the others. “Come on. It should be safe to head back to the path.”

She extended a hand to Cerine and the fox took it, using Zaress's strength to pull her fat body upwards. Mito popped up right behind her, but then she remembered her gourd and turned around to pick it up. Her paw came to rest on empty root. Where'd it go? She leaned all around the root, looking on every side, even underneath, but the gourd was gone.

“What are you doing?” Zaress asked, furrowing her brow. “I need you to help me lift Cerine

back out of here.”

“Hey!”

Mito scratched her scalp in confusion. “My little instrument thingy is gone,” she explained. Pouting, she put both paws on her hips. “I wanted to take it back to the city and see what it- oh, there it is!” She pointed over in the corner, where the gourd had rolled off to and was resting. Upright. Mito walked over to it and knelt down, reaching out one paw towards it. “Come back here, you-”

The gourd suddenly spun in her direction, with three of the holes facing towards her. Two of them suddenly contracted, and the third spread open in an elongated scowl. The marten squealed in shock and tumbled backwards onto her rump, limbs flailing as she scampered away from the animated fruit husk. From the other holes on the sides of the gourd, twisted vines emerged in a facsimile of arms and legs. One “hand” gripped a braided length of stiff vine like a spear, tipped with a barbed stinger from some manner of insect that gleamed grimly with venom. It thrust the spear in Mito's direction, forcing her to tuck her legs in under her to avoid getting poked.

Zaress and Cerine turned to look at the animated gourd, and then their attention was turned upwards, to the rim of the hollow where they stood. More of the gourd-creatures were gathering along the rim of the ruins, wielding a motley of various weapons: poisoned spears, knobbly branches, and short bows. The gourds were different shapes and colors, from palm-sized to much larger, but all had the same arrangement of eye holes, mouths, and multiple vine-limbs on their sides. They were eerily silent, their bodies making little to no sound, and only a hissing susurrus whistling between them.

“Ceri,” Zaress whispered, stepping back and shielding the fat fox with her body, “what are these things?”

“I don't know,” Cerine said back, slowly sliding her paw into her bag to try to find something that might be of use. She had a couple smoke bombs.

The gourd-creatures parted and allowed a large, rotund member made from a pumpkin gourd to step forward. A crown of vines decorated their head, and a cloak of torn fabric was draped across their... body. The pumpkin-king looked down on the three adventurers with empty pit eyes that betrayed little emotion.

“Why have furfolk come back to the woods?” he said, in perfect speech despite lacking lips, teeth, or lungs. The voice was high-pitched but sternly questioning. The gourd's eyes turned to Zaress. “You bring a dragon here! A dragon!”

“I'm not a dragon!” Zaress snarled. “More fey...”

Mito looked up. “Like those faeries? Not big fans of dragons, huh?”

“Dragons stole the world-magic!” the pumpkin-king shouted, shaking both of its fists. “And now you bring Vellinax to the skies, furfolk. Why have you done this?”

“We didn't mean to!” Cerine offered. “And we mean you no harm. We just want to pass through on our way back to our home.”

The pumpkin-king pointed at them. “You consort with dragons, furfolk, and there is a smell of world-magic about you. Explain this, quickly!”

Cerine looked about and swallowed. “First, Zaress is not a dragon. She's a drake. They are the enemies of dragons, just like you. And second... I don't know what you mean by world-magic. I'm an alchemist, but none of that is magical. The only magical thing I have is my ring, but that was mage-crafted.”

The pumpkin-king was quiet for a moment, and then he jumped down into the hollow with them. The other gourds gripped their weapons tighter as they looked on, watching as the king walked right up to the adventurers. He barely came up to Cerine or Zaress's knees, and yet stared upwards at them imperiously. He pointed a vine at the fox. “You! Lean down.”

Cerine cut her eyes towards the others and then did as asked, pressing her bare belly against her thighs as she leaned over. The blue stone necklace around her neck slipped out of her ill-fitting top and handled down, and the pumpkin-king seized it in his vine-limb. He looked at it closely, his empty,

round eye holes seeming to constrict thoughtfully. Then he let it go.

“Take the ripened one! Subdue the others.”

Zaress roared and lunged for the pumpkin, but she was struck a dozen times with tiny arrows that left pinpricks in the exposed skin on her forearms, chest, and stomach. They were poisoned, and the effect was instant. The drake's eyes went unfocused, and she felt face-first onto the stones, snoring heavily. Mito tried to dodge the arrows, but she got jabbed by a few of the tiny twigs, too. The effect was slower on her, as if the poison was formulated more for dragon-kin than mustelo. Still, she got wobbly on her feet and fell into Cerine's arms. The last thing she thought was how nice the fox's soft figure felt against her cheek before falling completely asleep.

They were called leshies, as Cerine discovered, and they were a lot stronger than they looked, if they worked together. About a dozen of them hefted up Zaress's prone form and carried her, while half a dozen lifted up Mito. They attempted to lift Cerine, but she agreed to simply walk, surrounded by a retinue of marching leshies with spears on their shoulders like little soldiers.

They didn't seem all that bad, she thought, if she could just talk to them. Then again, they were fey, and she already knew from experience how difficult it could be to see eye-to-eye with fey. The immortal creatures could be playful one moment or darkly dangerous the next, even without meaning to be. Their demeanor seemed to change abruptly as soon as Zaress was asleep. They started chattering amongst themselves, though Cerine couldn't understand their words.

She was led even further into the woods, following behind the pumpkin-king at the head of the entourage. Zaress was carried next, then Mito, and the group around Cerine brought up the rear. The vixen panted and wiped her forehead from all the walking she was having to do. It was unclear at this point whether she'd get any rounder or shed some of the excess weight by the time they got back to the city.

The vixen had no idea what the leshy king wanted with her. He was interested in the blue stone. She'd have happily given it up, given the opportunity, and assuming it would free her friends, but he wanted her, too. He claimed she had world-magic. She had no idea if the two were connected. Even more interesting, they knew the dragon's name. Maybe that wasn't so surprising, though. They were neighbors, essentially.

They traveled into the deepest part of the woods, and before Cerine knew it, the entourage passed through a gate in a stone wall so overgrown and covered by the forest that it was practically impossible to see. Suddenly, there was a change in the woods around them. It was more open on this side of the wall, and natural energy crackled throughout Cerine's fur. The trees here intermingled with an ancient city, the stones held up only by their connection to the massive oaks – if the trees hadn't completely toppled the buildings instead. More leshies peeked at the group from high in tree branches or through the holes in the stonework of buildings. The vixen marveled at the ruins, but she soon found herself nudged with the shafts of spears to begin walking up some moss-caked stairs towards a large building atop a plateau. It was reminiscent of the pyramid she and Mito had poked into earlier. They were probably built by the same people a long time ago. Probably not the leshies; they didn't strike Cerine as much of builders.

Zaress and Mito were carried somewhere else in the ruined city. Cerine bit her lip and watched them get taken away. She paused in her walking for a moment and found her chubby thighs and calves nudged by several small weapons until she picked up the pace again. The vixen swallowed hard, rubbing her belly. She wanted to make sure her friends were okay, but she didn't have a lot of options. Best thing to do, she thought, was go wherever the king was leading her, and then try to talk to him and explain.

Cerine ascended the steps, panting heavily once she was at the top and led into the shadows of the pyramid's top dome. The room within was a large, open space, where a crowd could be gathered. A hole at the top of the dome was situated directly above a wide, shallow pool. There was likely a bowl or

caldera built into the top of the dome, where it could catch rainwater and fill the pool. Sunlight was also streaming down in a narrow, bright column, as well. A long time ago, when the pool's stonework had been better maintained and water-tight, the inside of this room probably shimmered beautifully with sunlight striking the water. She was vaguely aware of ancient canin rituals of spiritual purification in water. Maybe that's what this chamber was for.

The pumpkin-king stopped in front of the edge of the dry pool basin, his ratty cloak dragging on the stonework behind him. With a gesture, he ordered the others to push Cerine towards it. There were, fortunately, some steps leading into the pool, and the obese fox stumbled down them, barely able to see where she was stepping. Cerine then turned around, roughly eye-to-eye-sockets with the pumpkin-king.

"I've complied with your wishes so far," she said, her voice measured despite the trepidation she felt. "So I believe I deserve at least an explanation for, well... everything. Is this your city?"

The pumpkin-king stared at her for a moment before flexing the vines of his legs and raising himself up, as if he was puffing out his chest in the way an animal creature would. "Not by our hands is it ours. We leshies are the reclaimers of nature. When furfolk build, furfolk abandon. This city was left long ago. It belongs to us now. One day the stones will fall and jumble to nothing. By then, your home will be the new leshy-home and furfolk will build anew."

Cerine nodded. Cycles of creation and destruction – or maybe the leshies saw what they were doing as a different kind of creation, restoring nature's place. "Then what do you want with me and my friends? Is it because we trespassed? Or because of the dragon?"

"You smell like Vellinax, ripe furfolk," the king replied, "and your friend is dragon-kin and cannot be trusted, no matter your words." He paused for a moment before pointing a vine towards her chest. "And you have a treasure from Vellinax's hoard."

Cerine lifted up the pendant in her fingers. "This? Yes, you're right. It came from the dragon's hoard. I don't even know what it is. My friend sto- er, recovered it. If it belongs to you, I will happily return it, but only on the condition that I and my friends can leave in peace. Or else I'll, uh... I'll..." Cerine quickly dug in the satchel at her fatty side and grabbed for something useful. Her paw wrapped around a thick glass bottle with a matching glass topper and she pulled it out. The top had a spur of polished glass that could be gripped between two fingers when lifting it, because the bottle was full of acid. Pulling away the rubber brace around the stopper with her teeth, Cerine held the acid bottle up next to the stone. "I'll melt the stone. I'm sorry, but my friends are more important to me than a pretty rock."

"Do so."

Cerine glanced left and right, her tail hanging down below her big rump. "What?"

"Melt the stone." The pumpkin-king's face normally had little emotion to it, but now it was as stone-faced as a dried fruit rind could get.

"It... won't do anything, will it?"

"The stone is infused with world-magic," the king told her. "Stolen many, many ages ago by the dragons and hoarded inside of their bodies as well as magical trinkets to bestow upon favored kin. World-magic may have been recovered from dragons, but trinkets remain."

"It was the drakes who took that world-magic away from the dragons, you know."

"So the dragon-kin say."

Cerine exhaled through her nose sharply in frustration. She put the stopper back on the acid bottle and sealed it. "If you want the stone back, then I will give it to you. No trades, no bargains. It is yours. I only request of you, please, to let me and my friends leave."

The pumpkin-king made a motion in the air and there was suddenly activity around the pool. Leshies of all shapes and colors began to appear around the rim of the pool. Some carried large, bulbous fruits with thin rinds and practically sloshing with juices. Others carried clay bowls in groups of three, also filled to their brim with juice.

Cerine folded her tall, black ears down to her head. "Ah... I would personally pass on getting a

bath, thank you. I actually just washed up yesterday.”

“What you have is a water-stone,” the pumpkin-king said, ignoring the fox's protest. “It contains the trapped essence of world-magic that controls water, drawing it in to the receptacle that it is placed with.”

Cerine looked down at the belly bulging in front of her. She pat it with her paws, making it jiggle heavily. Water weight, indeed! At least now she knew why she was getting so fat, and why it affected her mostly by the waterfall and the stream. Her eyes darted around the pool, noticing all the leshies with fruit and bowls of juice once again. “Wait... what do you want?”

“We do not want the stone,” the king said. “We want to release the stolen world-magic. To do this, we will help you ripen and use you as a vessel to free the world-magic.” He raised his vines. “Begin!”

The leshies poured the bowls into the pool. Golden-orange liquid spilled onto the dry stones. It would take a lot more than that to even begin filling it, but even more of the small fey creatures were bringing full bowls to replace the first. The other leshies holding the fruit burst them open, spilling the juices down the sides of the pool.

Cerine watched as the fruit juice in the pool slowly evaporated. The water-stone on her chest glimmered once again like it was wet, and the fox's clothes stretched around her fattening body as she gained more weight. Creaking from her overstretched top filled the air as more rips split her leggings, popping open over pudgy rolls of pink fur. Her expanding backside ripped the leggings completely open, and her smallclothes were wedged deep into the soft cleft of her enormous buttocks. Even more juice was poured into the pool, and the fox grabbed at her fur-tight jerkin as it compressed her growing boobs. Her paws were thick, the black fur stretched around sausage-sized fingers and plump palms.

The pumpkin-king raised his vine-arms and cheered. “Yes! Ripen the furfolk! Make her ready so the world-magic can burst forth back into the world!”

“Ack!” Cerine squealed, just as her top finally burst open. She found the jerkin falling off and her arms were suddenly full of jiggling, fat boobies. “We don't get ripe! I'm just *fat*! This isn't how furfolk work!”

The pumpkin-king was past the point of listening to her, however. He was directing the other leshies to bring more juice, which they did with aplomb. Cerine absorbed all of the juice thrown into the pool with her, feeling her body expand and slosh. She was growing enormous, with heavy breasts hanging over a pendulous belly that would soon be touching the stonework below her. She felt her neck fatten up and begin to cradle her head, and the string holding the water-stone sank underneath a fat roll.

In true fey fashion, the serious and threatening pumpkin-king was dancing and chanting now, pleased with his plan to make the vixen into an over-large fruit. Cerine gulped, getting fatter and fatter every second as she was at the leshies' mercy...

In another part of the ruined city, Zaress and Mito were thrown into a pit dug out of the basement of a building, at least ten feet down below the surface. The sleeping poison they were injected with was enough that even landing roughly on the soft earth didn't rouse them.

But eventually the marten suddenly jerked upright, blinking and looking around. “What the- Where are we?” she asked, hopping to her feet in a flash. It was like she'd never been poisoned. She took stock of the earthy hole she was in and saw Zaress laying on the ground beside her, snoring. Cerine was nowhere to be seen. The little ocarina monsters must have had her! Mito slung one leg over the top of the prone drake and sat on her belly, grabbing her by the collar of her garment and shaking as hard as she could. “Zaress! Wake up! Cerine's in trouble!”

No luck. The drake was as asleep as she could be. Wriggling her nose, Mito raised her paw up behind her shoulder and slapped the drake across the cheek as hard as she possibly could. It didn't wake her. It just hurt the marten's hand, even if it was a little cathartic. Zaress was down for the count, so she'd have to go find Cerine herself.



Mito stood up and checked her gear. Her staff was still in its holster on her back, and she had her belt with her tools. The fey hadn't actually taken anything. Inhaling deep, the marten put some spring into her legs and leapt up onto the wall, gripping exposed roots and firmly-set rocks to climb her way out of the pit. There weren't any guards around, so she climbed up into the building and peeked her head outside. There were plenty of the little fey monsters about, chattering excitedly amongst themselves. She couldn't understand what they were saying, but one of them pat their vines against the rind of their gourd body and then pantomimed growing larger. Then they all ran off.

The marten slipped outside. The sun was rising in the sky in the east, creating long shadows for her to hide in between the buildings. There was lots of activity around the big, pyramid-y building in the middle of the city, and Mito scrambled up the side of the plateau it was on. Many of the little creatures were running in and out of the big doors. Most of them were carrying large, orange fruits while others had clay bowls. Something interesting was happening inside the pyramid. Maybe there was a way in from the upper tiers, like the one the dragon had been sleeping in.

Mito scaled the side of the pyramid. The mortar on the old stonework had crumbled away in many places, making it easy for her to grip her claws into the gaps. She ascended vertically almost as quickly as she could along the ground, zipping upwards in hops and starts. Soon she reached the highest portion of the pyramid, which was a rounded depression carved into the highest tier. At the bottom of the bowl was a sculpted hole, about as big around as her head and shoulders. Mito slid down the side of the bowl and leaned her head over the hole, peering down into the pyramid chamber.

Her breath instantly caught in her throat and her mismatched eyes bulged out of her head. Down below her was the fattest living thing she'd ever seen – and it was Cerine! She honestly could only tell by the pink and white fur holding in a mountain of blubber. The fox's head sat on top of her titanic body, with her white hair spilling over her swollen roll of neck fat. Her arms were twin wheels of lard just past her butter-bloated shoulders, and her legs were nowhere to be seen. Black paws barely protruded from the immense rolls on her sides, and her middle was so massive it almost completely filled the rectangular basin she sat in.

The little gourd creatures were steadily bringing in more fruit and bowls, pouring juice into the pool with the fox. The liquid disappeared almost instantly, and the fantastically obese fox jiggled slightly rounder and wider. Her breasts were bigger than wagons, and they spilled across her gigantic belly. Mito was transfixed, her jaw hanging open as she watched the vixen inflate even larger with each bowl of juice offered to her. She had *no* idea what was happening, but if she didn't do something, it was obvious that Cerine was going to gain a few *more* tons.

The marten scrambled back down the pyramid, half-running and half-sneaking back to the ruined building where they'd been taken. Along the way, she saw more of the fey waddling by along the overgrown paths with more of the bright orange fruit. She needed one of those. Mito paused, watching where they were coming from, and traced the path backwards. It led her to an open garden where a creature with a white, wrinkled gourd body was chanting and swaying in the midst of several trees. Green energy flowed out from the fey's body and along its vine limbs before jumping to the trees themselves, and more of the orange fruit developed on the branches astonishingly quickly. More creatures collected the grown fruits and happily carried them off to fatten up the vixen even more. As another group came to pick the fruit from the next “harvest,” they came up one short on their count, barely registering the rustle of the grass nearby.

Mito ran back to the building with the pit and skidded to a halt with her toes right at the edge of the hole. Zaress was still laying at the bottom of it, sound asleep. The marten jumped in, landing on her feet. There was a sharp twitch in her ankles after such a long drop, but she'd be fine.

“Alright, let's wake you up,” she said, holding the fruit in both paws. It jiggled with excess juice, barely held in by the skin. Grown for a specific purpose, obviously. Mito sank her claws into the fruit and twisted, bursting the skin and spilling a shower of golden-orange juice onto Zaress's face.

The drake gagged and sputtered as juice went up her nose. She rolled onto her side, still groggy

and lethargic, but she coughed and snorted the juice out of her throat and nose. Mito tossed the rest of the fruit away and knelt down by the drake.

“Zaress! Cerine's in trouble!”

“I feel like I'm on fire...” she grumbled, getting shaking hands underneath her and pushing herself upwards. “How long was I asleep...?”

“I don't know.” Mito shrugged, but then she remembered the sun. “I think we were out for the whole day; the poison would've worn off on me at sunrise.”

Zaress sat up. Her pupils were at two different dilations. “Cerine will have some antivenom.”

“Uh, yeah... we have to do something about that.”

Mito explained what she saw at the temple, with Cerine being fattened up to an unbelievable size by pouring fruit juices on or next to her. Zaress listened with a furrowed brow. It was clear she was mentally alert but the physical effects of the poison were still keeping her from waking up completely. Once the drake was alert enough, she grabbed the marten's shoulder and pulled herself up to her feet, only swaying a little.

“Okay, here's what we do...”

Cerine couldn't believe what was happening. They'd been pouring juice into the pool the entire night without stopping. She hadn't even slept, too overwhelmed with emotion. The immediate fear dissolved hours ago, because she'd managed to double in size multiple times over with nothing especially bad happening. She just kept getting bigger and rounder and softer. The leshies were convinced that she'd “release” the world-magic eventually, but a few tons of fat later, with the fox continuing to get even larger, suggested otherwise.

Now she just felt wonderment at the sensation of continuing to grow endlessly, and a creeping sense of dread that she'd be in this room for the rest of time. The leshies weren't about to stop fattening her, but there'd be a limit at some point... right? She couldn't just continue to gain juice-weight forever.

If she ignored that sentiment, then the feeling of being so enormously fat, and growing even larger still, was unbelievable. She'd never even attempted to get a fraction this big with her potions, usually stopping before her belly touched her thighs. Now her belly touched everything, and nearly filled the pool in front of her while her rump and thighs swelled over the stones behind her. She couldn't see much of herself anymore, though – just her neck roll and two distant curves she assumed were her boobs.

The idea of having such ridiculously large boobs excited her for some reason. She'd toyed with some breast-enlarging potions before, but... hm. Maybe.

Before that thought could really take purchase, however, a loud noise rent the air. It was a dragon's roar, and Cerine felt the shiver of vibration through her butter-soft body. Immediately, the leshies dropped what they were doing and turned to look. The pumpkin-king ceased his endless dancing and shifted back to the serious, imperious demeanor in a flash.

“Vellinax has come! He has found our home!” The pumpkin-king issued orders and ran out of the building with all the other leshies, leaving the immobile vixen unguarded. Cerine felt anxious sweat bead on her forehead. What was she going to do if the dragon found her?! Just because she was dragon-sized now didn't mean she could fight back!

A few moments later, the light above the vixen flickered. She looked up as best she could, squishing down her neck fat. A figure slipped through the hole in the roof and dropped down, landing on a mattress of jiggly, blubbery fox. Mito rolled down her belly, but then caught herself by grabbing two pawfuls of fur, and then hauled herself back up to where Cerine could see here.

“Mito!” Cerine gasped. Her immense figure shivered and sloshed in delight at seeing her friend. Mito pressed her lips against Cerine's and the fox whimpered lightly as she returned it. “You have to get out of here. The dragon's coming!”

“It's just Zaress,” Mito told her, and Cerine's fluttering heart finally slowed down a little. “She's

distracting the little critters so I can figure out how to get you out of here.” Mito pushed her paws into the fox's furry, tender fat and cleared her throat. “I'm... open to suggestions, honestly.”

“The thing making me fat is the blue stone you gave me,” Cerine told her. “It's some kind of magic artifact, absorbing liquids into me and storing them as fat.”

“Okay. Where is it?”

“...What do you mean? It's a necklace.”

“I don't see it.”

“U-under my neck?”

Mito leaned down and tried to lift Cerine's neck roll, but it was easily a few dozen pounds of fat just on its own. She slid a paw into the fold between her neck and chest and felt around, eventually laying fingers on the rock. The marten pulled it out. The stone, once blue and feeling and looking wet when activated, was now gray and dull, as if it had lost all its power.

“It changed colors,” Mito said, holding it up by the snapped string so Cerine could see. “Now what?”

“I... don't know. Getting rid of it might stop me from getting bigger, but...”

There was a commotion down below as Zaress stumbled into the temple, out of breath. Her face looked drawn and haggard, and she gulped for air to try to fight against the lingering poison in her system. Mito's ears went up and she jumped down from Cerine's blubbery bulk to land in front of the drake.

“Zaress, what are you doing?” she asked, coming closer. “You were going to lead the critters away. What hap-”

“Shut up,” Zaress wheezed, holding her chest. “I was going to... ugh, fuck. The roar wasn't-”

The front of the pyramid was covered in shadow for half a second before exploding. The powerful figure of a full-grown dragon, covered in copper scales, came bursting through the stones. Boulder-sized stones came tumbling down onto the ground, narrowly missing Mito and Zaress and falling a bit short of the vixen's enormous belly.

Vellinax drew himself up to his full height inside the pyramid chamber, four glowing green eyes fixated on the mountain of fox in front of him. He spread two pairs of fingers, revealing his total, mossy majesty. Cerine tried her best to try to sink her head down into the girth of her neck and hide. Down below, Zaress struggled to stand up, but a huge dragon paw shoved her back down onto the floor and pinned her. She didn't have the strength to fight back, and even if she did, she was outclassed in size and power by the dragon. Mito sat on her rump, leaning back on her paws, too stunned to even think.

The dragon raised its other forepaw towards Cerine, speaking a bass, resonant tongue that she couldn't understand. As he did, she began to feel a tug inside her body, like her weight was being pulled by magic upwards and towards the dragon. Her rolls jiggled from ass to neck, and her breasts lifted slightly off her belly and wobbled. She began to feel lighter as the weight of her tons of fat rose up, and she momentarily became weightless.

Bluish energy began to leak through her fur, almost like water but misty and insubstantial. The wisps of magic gathered together into a solid stream of ephemeral liquid that flowed from Cerine's fat to the dragon's outstretched paw, connecting them. The ghostly energy wrapped around Vellinax's fingers and forearm before absorbing into his scales. His eyes grew brighter and the caked millennia of moss and verdigris fell from his body, revealing shimmering, beautiful scales. The membranes of his wings regained their vitality and he spread them even wider.

As the dragon recovered, Cerine shrank, losing hundreds of pounds of blubber by the second. She deflated quickly as the bluish energy of the water world-magic flowed from her body and into the dragon. Her belly slipped off the rim of the pool and slapped hard onto the bottom of it, making her jiggle all over. Pretty soon, Cerine could see past her neck, looking down at the immensity of her breasts and belly with a blush.

The naked vixen shrank until she was merely more than double her original size, still heavily obese and soft, but sitting relatively tiny and vulnerable under the rejuvenated dragon. Vellinax roared once more, flexing his wings. He spoke once again in the unknown dragon-tongue and then spun about, leaping back through the hole he'd created in the wall and taking flight. The dragon beat his bigger wings to gain altitude while the smaller pair were angled for stability.

Zaress sat up, watching as the dragon left with his prize. She turned to Mito, who was still reclining on the floor, flabbergasted. Then she looked at the pudgy, fat vixen in the middle of the pool, now a far more manageable size. Her somewhat-flattened alchemy satchel and scraps of clothing rest in the pool around her.

"I think we should leave," she offered.

They fashioned a makeshift harness out of whatever was available and Zaress literally carried Cerine out of the city on her back. A quick drink of antivenom, and the drake had her full strength back in minutes. No leshies came out to accost them, as they'd scattered into the forest at the sound of the dragon. Cerine had words she wanted to share with the pumpkin-king, but there'd be no point. They'd just put themselves back in danger once again. While she had time to think, she wondered what might come of what happened here, and how much they were really responsible for. They found the gem, but the leshies' attempt to extract the world-magic was what allowed Vellinax to take it. Cerine put it out of her mind. Everyone was safe, and that's what mattered the most to her.

The obese fox jiggled and wobbled with every step on the way home. They covered her with whatever was available, wrapping cloth around her breasts and hips for the rest of the journey.

A few days after returning home, Cerine sat in her lab, wearing new clothes that hugged her bigger figure closely. Her new, heavier rump was spanned across two stools now, and even then she spilled over them. The fox sat hunched over her writing desk, scribbling out several possible alchemical formula with a slender charcoal pen.

Strong hands slid along the fox's sides, drifting underneath her long shirt. The hands felt the fox's heavier love handles as Cerine sat up, purring softly.

"I didn't hear you come in," she said, smiling.

"I was quiet," Zaress whispered, leaning her body against Cerine's back. She looked over the obese fox's shoulder at her work. "Still trying to figure it out?"

"Yeah," Cerine replied, tapping a claw on the papers. "I think I've almost got it. I'm listing out new formulas to try, at least. But I also need more ingredients for *gaining* potions so I can test the new ones on Mito. Can't rightly figure out if she's actually losing any weight if there's none to lose."

"I'll ask Gray if he wants to go get some more tomorrow," Zaress told her as she slid her hands forward onto Cerine's belly, her thumbs teasing the obese fox's fat breasts. "He may or may not. He's been weird about it when I ask recently."

"Huh." Cerine leaned back against the drake and purred, taking the hint. "I guess I could use a break."

Zaress lifted the fat fox off of her seats and into her arms, kissing her firmly. Cerine smiled and returned it, wiggling so she settled into the drake's grip.

"You've been a lot more cuddly recently," she said as the drake carried her out of the lab. "What gives?"

"I had a talk with the stray," the drake replied. "Thought about a... few things that had been bothering me."

"I'm glad you two are getting along better."

"Do not get too excited."

Cerine snickered. "Of course. And this excess of cuddliness has *nothing* do with me ballooning up to being almost bed-sized, does it?"

Zaress just grinned.

\* \* \* \* \*

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