

## Tater Tots

By HungryOnMain

Jed and Oct spend a few minutes stuck in a cobra's gullet.

---

The two men stood, backs together. Jedediah faced a growling cat, hairless and gargantuan; Octavius, a cobra, tormenting him with false strikes.

"I never thought we'd go out as a bite-sized snack for two Egyptian housepets," Octavius trembled. Another strike, and a swipe from the feline.

"If we're gonna be tater tots, maybe yer fancy armor'll-

Jedediah was cut off by a sharp scream. Horror in his eyes, he watched as the cobra grabbed Octavius by the leg, tossing him into the air.

It was only an instant more before the beast snapped its jaws shut around the Roman.

Jedediah felt sick as he watched the bulge slip further down the beast's body.

"Octavius!"

Rage overcame the cowboy, and he reached for his lasso. With a vengeful yell, he tossed the noose-end towards the serpent's jaws, attempting to cause it to choke. It wrapped around its head, pulled taut in an instant.

Angrily, he slammed the beast's head to the floor.

"Spit him out, ya damn reptile!"

Jedediah undid his lasso from the beast's head, believing he'd won.

He believed incorrectly.

A hiss, and his vision was eclipsed by fangs, then flesh, then darkness.

In the darkness of flesh, it was oddly cool. Cold-blooded creature, cold interiors.

Jedediah coughed in the tight space, all his air getting squeezed out.

"Jede... Jedediah!"

He could hear Octavius calling him from deeper in.

"Tavius!"

He reached out a hand, peristalsis eventually connecting the two of them. He knew it was Octavius when he felt wet feathers and cold bronze against his ungloved hands.

"You're alive?!"

"Seems so, kemosabe."

He felt Octavius move against his hand, and knew that even in this dark space, he had to look Jedediah in the face to talk to him.

"You were not bitten?"

"Nah, ain't happen. You?"

"I am unscathed."

Jedediah tried to wiggle for more room, but the cobra's guts were unflinching in their vice grip.

"Damn reptile's got us good, huh?"

"Someone has trained this beast well, to hunt small animals."

"Who's really keepin' these things as pets?!"

A horrid lurch dragged them deeper in. The area gave way to a less restrictive part of the snake. The stomach. It stank to high hell, like venom and old meat.

"Ugh, it reeks in here," Jedediah complained.

"Any ideas on how we should escape?" Octavius wriggled a bit in the only slightly looser space.

Jedediah took a moment to think.

"...You still got your sword?"

Octavius tried to wriggle it into his hands.

"Yes, I do."

"Good," Jedediah curled himself into the fetal position. "Because you gotta use it."

He stretched himself out, perpendicular to Octavius, holding the space open enough for him to grab his sword.

"Gut this damn thing!" Jedediah hollered, straining to hold the organ open.

With a battle cry, Octavius stabbed his sword into the fleshy wall.

Blood seeped out from the organ as he carved the beast open. Its hisses echoed from above, feeling an agony unimaginable as the gladius sliced it open.

The light from outside hurt their eyes as the wall gave way to the outside. The cobra finally perished, the walls of the stomach losing their grip, letting Jedediah fall on his back.

"Come on, then; let's not waste time," Octavius held out a hand to help Jedediah to his feet.

The air was fresh and beautiful as they emerged from the serpent.

A shadow came over the two. Instinctively, they held onto one another.

"Uh-oh."

A low growl came from the sphinx cat, as it approached them.

The men flinched, awaiting the end.

A terrible scratching came up each of their faces as the cat licked off the blood and stomach acid.

"Ugh! Yer tongue is like a cactus!" Jedediah complained.

Octavius retched a little. "And you could *really* use a mint."