

A Daring Stomach Rescue

The bedroom in Olly's house had the sounds of bustling excitement, laughter and cheer thundering from inside, with passers met with the familiar sound one would hear at a children's playground. Everett, making his weekend visit to his fiery friend's house, was met with Olly's attempts to play with his tiny pet Issak, standing at a mere 5 inches in height.

'Come on, just do it!' Olly teased, sitting atop Everett's chest as he held onto his tiny pet.

'I said no!' Everett yelled, trying to push Olly off. 'I told you I don't do that kinda stuff.'

Despite his protests, Everett attempted to hide the redness radiating from his face, averting his crystal-blue eyes from his short friend looking down at him. The avoidance only made Olly more adamant, as tiny Issak had to endure the forces against his 5inch-tall body in his giant master's flailing hand.

'Just a taste, I know you *big guy*, I can read ya like a book. Don't you remember how it felt to be on my tongue during my birthday?' Olly continued to tease, prompting Everett to pull his scarf halfway up his face.

'I d-don't know what you're talking about,' he stuttered.

'Hehe, yes you do, and I bet you've always wondered what it's like to feel a tiny person yourself.'

'Mr Everett sir,' Issak said, his quiet, thick native accent coming from Olly's open hand, 'I really don't mind. A friend of my master is mine as well.'

Everett said nothing, reaching out his hand slowly to gently tap the pad of his finger against Issak's marble-sized head. When the finger made contact, Issak shrunk to around 1inch in size, no larger than an ant. Olly looked back at Everett, squatting with disapproval.

‘Hey!’ Olly rebuked, ‘don’t just shrink my pets like that!’

Everett continued to lie against the floor, crossing his arms looking away with a pouted face.

‘All right then,’ he continued, ‘if you’re gonna be like that, then take this!’

The short flame-haired man used his free right hand to begin furiously tickling against Everett’s abdomen, causing a bout of laughter.

‘HAHAHA, s-stop, OLLY! I’m s-serio- HAHA seriously STOP!’ He yelled, squirming fiercely in protest.

Olly smiled deviously as he saw his chance, hovering his left hand above Everett’s now exposed mouth, slowly sloping his palm to allow tiny Issak to fall straight in. Like a pin dropping to the floor, gravity pulled the tiny straight down, hurtling in the dark abyss of the freckled giant’s mouth. Seconds later, Olly ceased his ticklish assault.

‘Gotcha,’ Olly said pleased with himself, ‘got the tiny in your mouth, you feel little Issak in there?’

‘God dammit Olly,’ he replied displeasingly, ‘I told you I didn’t want t-. Wait a minute...’

Everett cut himself off, motioning his tongue around his mouth. Not long after, he stared blankly wide-eyed into Olly’s eyes, with skin white as a sheet.

‘I...don’t feel him,’ Everett said softly.

The pair stood there in silence, staring at each other with Olly’s smile fading away from existence until finally, they both spoke in unison.

‘Fuck.’

‘Fuck.’

20 minutes had passed, and now the pair stood surrounded by corridors of white with masses of patients, doctors and nurses strutting about the hospital. Olly leaned in at the reception desk to gain the woman's attention, brushing his hair back with a hand and nervously smiling while Everett stood next to him stoically.

'Hey there Caroline, I see it's you on duty today, hehe,' Olly said nervously. The receptionist looked up from her computer, raising her eyebrow then blowing out a soft sigh.

'What is it you want Olly?' She asked. 'It's a busy day today and I'm working.'

'Well, you see, Ev and I kinda need to see Dr Campbell like, right now.'

'He's in with a patient, make an appointment,' she said, bringing her attention back to the computer monitor.

'Look,' Olly whispered, leaning in closer over the desk, 'Ev sorta, ate a guy so we er, really need Dr Campbell like, right now.'

Caroline's head slowly raised, looking Olly in the straight in the eyes without saying a word, then reaching for the phone beside her without looking away. The sound of her voice then amplified across the hospital corridors.

'Dr Campbell please come to reception, Dr Campbell to reception.'

As Olly stood there next to Everett, now looking more nervous and looking away towards the main lobby, Olly looked down to his feet, tapping his shoes against the floor as he waited for the Dr to turn up. Eventually, a man who looked to be in his late 40s emerged from the corridor behind the reception area, with balding grey hair, a large nose and wide, circular glasses.

'Caroline, what's going on?' He asked, then looking to Everett and Olly in front of the desk. 'Oh god, whatever it is you guys have done now, I don't have time for it. I'm supposed to be consulting with Mrs Gilden's for her hip replacement.'

The doctor was then handed a yellow post-it note from Caroline's extending arm. He looked down at the words written on it, then up to Everett, then back at the note. After crumpling the note into his pocket, he turned back to Caroline.

'Ask Dr Hassan to take my schedule. I'm going to need the whole afternoon,' he said sternly.

Dr Campbell paced himself towards Everett, he found his arm gripped tightly by the doctor's old, wrinkly hand. Without saying a word, he fast-walked through the corridors dragging the tall white-haired man with Olly following behind. Entering a spare patient room, he motioned Everett to sit down on the stool.

The sound of heavy wheels rolled across the floor as Dr Campbell positioned a large metal tank labelled 'O2' next to Everett, with a large tube attached to the nozzle.

'Open your mouth,' he commanded.

Everett complied, not questioning the orders given by the doctor. With his mouth wide open, Dr Campbell brought the tube and stuffed it down Everett's throat, causing an instinctive jerk of his body.

'Stay still!' Dr Campbell exclaimed, 'and don't say a word, not a peep. The poor soul down there needs to breath so it's important this oxygen gets to him.'

'So er, doctor,' Olly said nervously, 'how we gonna get him out? Could ya like, do some surgery or something?'

Dr Campbell rubbed his eyes, breathing out a deep sigh before turning towards Olly.

'Well, Olly, unfortunately I slept through the class at medical school on how to remove a shrunken person from a live human's stomach,' he snarked.

‘Oh really, why’d do that?’ Olly asked.

Dr Campbell looked at Olly blankly for a few seconds, then proceeded to ignore his response turning to Everett.

‘How small is he?’ The doctor asked, with a clearly impatient tone.

‘’Bout an inch I think,’ Olly responded. Everett nodded to confirm.

‘An inch, ok so, Everett, I’m gonna need you to grow to 468 feet,’ the doctor said.

Everett tilted his head, raising his eyebrow.

‘Yes, you heard me,’ he continued. ‘That’s around the size of the Pyramid of Giza, your stomach’s captive is gonna need to be rescued at his normal size, give or take.’

‘Why not just shrink someone to get him out?’ Olly asked.

‘Because, whoever is in there is either gonna suffocate because there’s not enough air or get digested very quickly. It’s just a theory but the increased volume of space should by some more time before his stomach starts producing some stupid Olympic-pool sized sea of acid.’

The room’s atmosphere began to feel an escalated sense of unease with every word from the doctor’s mouth. Nevertheless, every passing second of Issak’s predicament only increased Olly and Everett’s determination and resolve to rescue him.

The pair of friends separated, with Everett being driven as carefully as possible by Dr Campbell, while Olly made his way to the rescue centre to ask for specialist support. Campbell and Everett were on their way to the outskirts of the town by the mountain, where an abundance of open space was available for his growth. After a short drive, they arrived, met with fields as far as the eye could see, covered in thick blankets of pure-white snow.

Dr Campbell got out of the car and made his way around to the side Everett was on, delicately putting his arm around his shoulder and making him walk slowly to the open fields. Step by step

doing their best not to make any sudden moves, the soft layers of snow crunched beneath their feet as they walked outwards. When they got far enough, the pair waited for Olly's arrival. It didn't take long for the familiar sight of the rescue centre's mobile base to drive up. Twice as long as a normal car, the thick-armoured vehicle was made to withstand all kinds of natural disasters, all the while containing the team's built-in communication cameras, computers and microphones. It was with these tools that the rescue attempt would be made swiftly and securely.

From the vehicle emerged Olly and the rescue worker operating the mobile hub, Jordan. A familiar face to Everett from his years working closely with the mountain rescuers, he waved at him with a nervous smile from a distance, as it was not the situation he wanted to meet with close friends or colleagues. Jordan himself, who was a young rescuer in his mid-20s, with short brown hair and a slim face and body, was always excitable whenever around Everett. With the rescue centre used to his size-shifting powers by that point, it was never quite something everyone got used to, and despite the precariousness of this dangerous situation, Jordan found this no less exciting than all the other adventurous moments he'd have up in the mountain. After revealing themselves, the young rescue worker took from the vehicle an orange item of clothing that looked like a hazmat suit, attached to two small oxygen cylinders.

'Whoah whoah whoah, what'd think you're doing?' Olly exclaimed.

'I'm putting the rescue suit on, what does it look like?' Jordan replied.

'No no, this is my screwup, I'm going in there, not you!' Olly retorted.

Jordan turned to Dr Campbell, silently shrugging his shoulders. The doctor shrugged back.

'Uh, fine,' Jordan said, rolling his eyes.

As Olly worked on putting the rescue gear on, Dr Campbell approached him to give a brief on this dangerous endeavour.

'All right Olly, listen up,' Dr Campbell said sternly, 'this suit will protect you from anything harmful inside Everett's body, so for the love of god, don't take it off.'

‘Harmful? Like what? Will there be monsters like inside the giant space worm in Star Wars?’ Olly asked.

Jordan looked to the doctor with a concerned look.

‘Are you sure I shouldn’t be doing this doctor?’ Jordan asked worryingly, prompting Olly to look up and directly into Jordan’s eyes.

‘No,’ Olly said, ‘I will be the one to rescue him.’ The two looked into each other’s eyes in silence for a few seconds, until Jordan backed down after seeing the flame in Olly’s eyes.

‘You two done?’ The doctor said irritably, ‘Good, and no Olly, no monsters, just harmful enzymes in the saliva and powerful hydrochloric acid in the stomach.’

Olly stared blankly into the doctor’s eyes, tilting his head with a raised eyebrow. The doctor sighed then repeated himself more understandably.

‘No suit, Olly goes bye bye.’

‘Ohhh, gotcha,’ Olly said.

‘Hey Everett, catch!’ Jordan shouted, throwing a small earpiece to where he stood. Still trying not to use his body too much, he put the earpiece in and gave a thumbs up.

Not long after, Olly was prepped in the thick, orange protective suit, with oxygen cylinders attached to his back and a long thick rope for mountain climbing secured tightly around his waist, leading all the way back to the long metal vehicle. The signal was finally given for Everett to grow, expanding himself to almost 470 feet tall, making the small people below him the equivalent of around 1 mm.

Everett extended his now-massive hand to where Olly stood, scooping him into his massive, pale-white palm. Bringing him up to his mouth, Everett spoke softly under his breath.

'I hope you know what you're doing.' He said. Olly craned his neck to see the crystal-blue eyes looking back at him. With a toothy grin, he gave a thumbs up.

'Who'd think you're talkin' to?' He said gleefully through the microphone inside his helmet. Everett closed his eyes and smiled softly, appreciating his smaller friend making him feel reassured.

Soon after, the large mouth in front of Olly opened, like the entrance to a magical cave's walls parting before his eyes.

'Open sesame,' he whispered to himself with a slightly trembled voice.

After the mouth opened, a waft of warm air penetrated the suit overwhelming the cold outdoor air. What lied before him was a small, pink wet landscape of muscle leading to a pitch-black end at the back. Blood began to rush through Olly's body, as he took the first step on his dangerous path to rescue Issak.

The thick rubber boot made contact with the extending tongue just outside the mouth. The thousands of tastebuds formed a strange alien landscape that was soft yet firm under the thick rubber boots of Olly's feet. After planting both feet on the tongue, it wasn't long before Olly tripped on the uneven surface, falling directly onto his front.

'Ow, watch it!' He shouted. Everett wanted to apologise, trying to keep his tongue as stable as possible, but dared not try to speak while Olly was in his mouth. He kept the mouth open wide to allow as much light and air in as possible, letting the small rescuer preserve his flashlight's battery. Every step left a loud audible squelch echoing throughout the fleshy walls of the warm cave.

'Oh man, Ev, you do brush your teeth right?' Olly teased.

Unfortunately, no one was around to see the unamused squinting eyes of the giant man who couldn't respond, though he knew Olly would be able to easily imagine the look of disapproval. The smell wasn't too bad for the tiny man in his protective gear, though it did leave him with mixed feelings being surrounded by the powerful scent and air of his huge best friend. He also became flustered at how something as simple as a tongue was easily large enough for him to walk on.

Meanwhile, Dr Campbell and Jordan observed through the small body camera inside the mobile hub, though there wasn't much for them to look at the pitch-black far-back of Everett's throat. The doctor turned to Jordan, who was sweating and visibly read as he watched the monitor, jittering and biting the nail of his thumb.

'Are you ok son?' The doctor asked.

'Huh?' Jordan replied, looking to the doctor as if he snapped out of a trance. 'Oh, yea I'm good. Just kinda wish I was the one down there ya know.'

Jordan scratched the back of his head nervously, then slightly flushed after realising what he just said. The doctor didn't say anything, instead of pushing up his glasses then sighing deeply, before turning his attention back to the monitor.

'All right Olly,', the doctor said through the microphone, 'it looks like you're nearing the back, now I need you to carefu-'

'GERONIMO!'

'Wait Olly STOP!' The doctor shouted.

'OOF!' Olly yelped, as Everett tugged onto the rope coming out of his mouth to stop Olly's descent.

The doctor and Jordan sighed in relief as they saw Olly dangling midair with the dark pit of Everett's oesophagus

'Olly you dumbass, you just tried to jump down the oesophagus full of dangerous contracting muscles. We don't know what that would do to your gear,' the doctor said furiously.

'But if Issak could survive th-', Olly said getting interrupted.

‘There’s also two pathways. You could have gone down the windpipe and into Everett’s lungs. If you want to do this then follow my instructions!’

‘S-sorry doc,’ Olly said apologetically.

The doctor took a deep breath to calm himself.

‘Right then, descend very slowly, and make sure to go down the tunnel at the back, not the front. And Everett, for the love of god please don’t swallow. All those powerful muscle contractions could really screw up the equipment, and possibly Olly with it.’

‘Yes, sir,’ Olly said childishly like he was part of some game.

Everett finally felt it safe to let go of the rope, letting Olly back in control. He ended up mentally compiling the things he wanted to say when the tiny man returned, knowing he had to focus on the mission at hand.

He finally took out the flashlight from the belt around his waist, gripping it tightly in his rubber gloves to observe the path ahead. As Olly made his descent, he ended up sliding against the oesophageal wall, scraping along a thick wet goo covering his body.

‘Ew, what is this stuff?’ He asked.

‘That’s the mucus lining of Everett’s food pipe. Helps to move things along like food and annoying short people.’ The doctor said.

‘Jeez, I said I was sorry. But damn, this place is so long.’

He shined the light downwards to see how far he had left. In the distance, he saw an opening made up of powerful, fleshy muscular folds.

‘Hey, I think I found an entrance to somewhere. Where does that go?’ He asked.

‘Oh I don’t know Olly, you’re inside a giant food pipe so it must be an inter-dimensional wormhole to another univ-‘.

‘Ahem!’ Jordan said, interrupting the doctor’s impatient ranting.

‘The stomach Olly, you’re almost at the stomach,’ The doctor continued.

‘Ah, gotcha,’ Olly said.

Olly planted his feet on the throbbing muscles as Everett tried with all his might not to swallow the tiniest bit. When the man descended into the massive hole, he felt a mix of thrill and overwhelming unease as he dangled mid-air in the entrance of the stomach. It was like being trapped deep inside a lifeless mountain devoid of light or hope. He shined the light all around him, taking in the awe-inspiring sight of the massive stomach around him. All around him where the light clashed, were dozens of large folds of stomach muscles, made to pulverise and churn down any food mercilessly.

‘Ok Olly, I need to you shine the line below you and look down,’ the doctor commanded.

Doing as he was told, Olly looked down to the bottom of the stomach. Bits of old chewed up cinnamon buns and a very small pool of a greenish liquid gurgled on the ground far below him.

‘Ah good,’ the doctor said, ‘it looks like not much acid has been produced yet.’

‘Hey Ev, you been visiting Mrs Gilden for her fresh buns and you didn’t bring me back any?’ Olly said.

‘Shu’ up Oyee and find ishak’ Everett said, trying his best to keep his mouth open.

Despite speaking quietly, the vibrations from Everett’s words shook the world around Olly.

‘Both of you behave!’ The doctor shouted. ‘Now listen closely, if we wait too long then the new stomach’s size will start producing litres of acid. So whatever you do, don’t stimulate the stomach walls too much. Judging by how much acid there is, if Issak landed in any, he would have been able

to get out before it did any serious damage. Check the folds on the side for him.'

The thought of Issak getting digested produced haunting images in Olly and Everett's minds, reminding them of their mission and resolve to see this through. The rescuer had himself lowered just enough to hover around the exposed layers of wet, fleshy folds outside the pool of acid. The loud ominous gurgling was almost distracting, nevertheless, he continued his search.

After a few minutes had passed, Olly began to more nervous but did his best not to show it in his voice. The eerie silence over the comms and the lack of snarky, teasing comments made Everett feel the unease that panicked his smaller friend.

'Wait, stop, what was that!?' Jordan exclaimed, observing the more closely to the monitor.

'Where?' Olly asked with bated breath.

'Shine it back to your left,' Jordan said.

As Olly did so, a glimpse of brown, out of place with the contrast of the pink, slimy stomach walls caught his eyes. He lowered the rope so his feet met with the soft, even surface, rushing towards the spot he thought he saw Issak. The closer he got, the more he felt relieved as the familiar shape of his friend began to form.

'Issak! Issak! Wake up man!' Olly yelled, shaking the taller male in front of him.

'Olly what do you think you're doing! I told you not to mess with the stomach, you're gonna get that place filled with acid soon!' The doctor shouted furiously.

'It's all right, I got him. We'll be outta here in no time, don't worry doc. And Ev, relax, I can feel your heart beating from here.'

Olly took a small oxygen mask from his belt, attaching it to Issak's face. The condensation of the breath clashing with the transparent mask's sides gave Olly a wave of reassurance. Soon the deep brown eyes of Issak opened, squinting at the bright light directed at him.

‘Issak, oh thank god. Issak I’m so sor-.’ Before Olly could finish, he stopped mid-sentence as he heard a chuckle, and saw a gentle smile through the mask.

‘Knew you’d come, young master,’ Issak said with a soft cracked voice.

The small rescuer wrapped his arms around the taller man, embracing him tightly against his thick, rubber suit. But as the gurgling grew louder, it signalled that it was time for them to leave.

‘All right buddy, hang on tight behind me.’ Olly said.

They both got to their feet, with Issak’s body trembling slightly after being unconscious. Wrapping his long brown arms around his smaller master’s body, Olly gave the go-ahead to lift them both up.

‘AHHH, wait, wait, stop!’ Olly yelled, feeling the crushing weight of Issak’s almost 7ft tall body pushing down on his 5ft5 form. ‘God, it’s so much easier handling you when you’re tiny.’

‘Olly,’ Jordan’s voice said through the comms, ‘you’ll need to swap the gear with Issak so he can carry you.’

‘Wha- no, I can do this!’

‘Oyee, thish ish no kime ko ke kukkorn’, Everett said, sending more vibrations throughout his body.

‘Er what?’ Olly asked.

‘He said this is no time to be stubborn,’ Jordan answered.

‘Ugh, fine, fine!’

Swapping with Issak, he took the belt off with the rope attached, placing it around Issak’s waist. Olly kept the helmet on for communication, while the rest of the suit had to be thrown to the side, due to it being too small for Issak.

‘Sorry Ev, looks like you’re having rubber for lunch.’ Olly snickered.

Olly found his joy quickly dissipating as he climbed onto his taller servant’s back, with his legs secured and hooked with Issak’s arms. The thought of falling and not having a rope secured to him caused the smaller man to close his eyes, gripping tightly around Issak’s neck. As they ascended above the stomach’s entrance, they found themselves being squished in a warm hug against the contracting muscles of the oesophagus’ exit. Continuing through the long fleshy tunnel, now with the suit gone, Olly and Issak found themselves covered in the thick slime and goo of the throat’s mucus and saliva. While they were assured there wasn’t any serious harm, they could feel their exposed flesh experiencing a powerful tingle sensation, as if millions of tiny microbes were squirming and eating away at their tiny bodies.

‘Ugh,’ Olly said in fake disgust, ‘could you think of a worse fate than getting eaten and absorbed by Everett?’

‘Indeed,’ Issak agreed, ‘I’d have much rather experienced being inside you, young master.’ Olly blushed, hiding his face against Issak’s back.

‘Shaddap,’ he said with a muffled voice.

‘I guess they don’t realise we can still hear them, eh doc?’ Jordan said. The doctor just stood there, looking at the monitor in silence. ‘Er, doc, you good?’

‘I don’t get paid enough for this. A small town they said. Peaceful rural living they said’ He said.

‘Ummm, doc?’ Jordan said.

‘Ignore me son,’ the doctor replied.

Olly was finally able to turn his flashlight off as light from above began to shine through, as Olly and Issak passed the windpipe, and the warm sauna-like atmosphere started to clash and mix with

the fresh cold breeze from outside Everett's mouth. As the natural light grew in intensity, the pair shouted to the top of their lungs with glee.

'WOOOOOOOOHHHHHH, FREEEEEEEEDOM!' They both shouted

When they reached the end of the tongue, Everett wasted no time in tilting his head forward, letting the collection of thick saliva sweep them out onto the cold thick layers of snow. A loud audible gulp came from Everett as he inhaled deeply out of relief, especially now that he could move his body around without restriction.

He looked down at the tiny pair below him, trying to throw off the saliva encasing them. Olly looked up to see the serious, disapproving eyes glaring down into his soul. He felt he had no words or joking comments that would thaw the cold stare. Before he knew it, Everett's giant hand scooped up the pair from the ground, raising them just below his face without saying a word.

'S-so Ev, er, I guess I kinda owe you, an apology?' Olly said with a trembling voice.

Everett said nothing, continuing to stare back. As he was trying to think of what to say, his balance was thrown off as the hand moved into Everett's body. Issak and Olly were not sandwiched between the warm soft palm and the thick cotton scarf around Everett's neck, as they were embraced in a tight hug.

'Thank god, thank god you're both ok,' Everett said with a shook voice.

Normally Olly would protest against being handled when Everett was bigger, but at this moment he let things be, closing his eyes and pressing himself against the warm cotton wall and hand behind him.

Later that day, Olly, Everett and Jordan were in Issak's hospital room as he was treated for minor skin burns by Dr Campbell. Issak made sure to stay in good cheer, keeping up his infectious smile and recounting the events before like a fun adventure. That was until they were interrupted by the hospital room's door slamming open so suddenly.

'I'M HERE NOW, WHERE'S OLLY AND ISSAK, ILL SAVE THEM RIGHT NOW!' A familiar voice boomed across the hospital room. As the group turned to the entrance, they saw Eric, who now looked back at them cluelessly.

'Erm, yea you're a bit late bud,' Jordan said. 'Olly got Issak out and they're all fine, save for a few burns.'

'O-oh,' Eric said calmly. 'Well, uh, carry on then.'

As Eric turned to exit, Olly walked up to him, dragging him back to the hospital bed.

'You're here now, might as well stay.' Olly said in a high-spirited voice. 'Whole gang is here, ain't that great?' Eric looked away, covering his blushing face.

'S-stupid, I was worried you know. Don't do something stupid like that again, ok?' Eric said.

'Got it, thanks for looking out for me, you're so loyal hehe,' Olly said as Eric put him in a headlock.

'Ah, Dr Campbell,' Jordan said as the doctor walked in, 'the hospital got one of those old TVs so we could watch a movie together or something?'

The doctor laughed. 'Yea, sure, after all, we are a part-time hotel. Would you like a foot massage too? How about I ring up the kitchen and bring you up some gourmet burgers,' he mocked.

'Oh wow, can we really?' Olly asked.

The room stood silently as everyone looked at the short man, who looked around himself in confusion.

'I'm sure there's an old VHS TV in the storage room,' the doctor said before leaving.

Despite the emotional rollercoaster they went through, the gang spent the night with Issak, ending the day in laughter and cheer as they all watched a movie and filled the room with the smell of

popcorn, and many more big and small adventures to await them in the coming days.

The end