



Sammy's Chilly Splash

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Sammy the Skunk stands in front of his bedroom mirror, proudly wearing his bright red-and-white striped swim trunks. He flexes his little muscles and imagines he's a world-class Olympic swimmer ready for the big splash.



He rushes downstairs with a giant inflatable donut tucked under his arm, his tail wagging with excitement. The sun is shining through the window, making the backyard pool look like a sparkling blue oasis.



As Sammy reaches the sliding glass door, his mother, a tall and elegant skunk in a floral apron, holds up a warning paw. She points at the thermometer outside, shaking her head because the morning air is still much too chilly for a swim.



Sammy pouts and gives his mom the biggest, saddest puppy-dog eyes he can muster, hoping to change her mind. He points at his trunks and the pool, insisting that he is a brave skunk who doesn't mind a little breeze.



Mom sighs and opens the door just a crack, letting a gust of cold morning wind whistle into the warm kitchen. Sammy shivers for a brief moment but stubbornly marches out onto the patio, determined to prove he's tough.



He stands at the very edge of the pool, looking down at the crystal-clear water while his teeth begin to chatter uncontrollably. The wind ruffles his black and white fur, and he starts to realize that the sun isn't as warm as it looked from inside.



Sammy slowly dips one tiny toe into the water and immediately pulls it back with a shocked squeak. The water is ice-cold, feeling more like a melted popsicle than a refreshing summer swimming pool.



He tries to be brave and steps onto the first ladder rung, but his whole body begins to shake like a leaf in a storm. His shivering shoulders and trembling whiskers tell the story of a skunk who is definitely not ready for a dip.



Just as he's about to give up and run back inside, his mom appears in the doorway with a giant, fluffy yellow towel and a knowing smile. She doesn't say a word, but her warm presence is exactly what Sammy needs right now.



Wrapped tightly in the thick towel like a fuzzy burrito, Sammy sits safely on his mom's lap on the porch swing. They watch the pool together, waiting for the afternoon sun to finally turn the chilly water into a perfect summer treat.