

# Eric and Scotty

*by andlat*

What do you do with a long summer and nothing to do? Go  
swim at the rec center, of course!

The Costume Box

2026

*Chapter 1*

## Eric and Scotty - Chapter 1: Pool

“Here we are!” Eric said cheerfully, smiling back at his brother Scotty, who had dragged his feet for all six blocks of their walk to the community center by their new house.

“C'mon, squirt!”

“Mom told you not to call me that.” Scotty said sullenly. Eric had been taller than him for a few years now, but his latest growth spurt had put him more than a foot ahead of him. Being reminded of it was one of the most annoying things in Scotty's life.

“Why are you so glum?” Eric asked. Scotty just grunted. He was irritated because mom had gone above and beyond praising Eric for doing simple things like packing their bags to go swimming and calling ahead to reserve them passes for the community center. He would have done those things, if she had only asked. Eric just had to be a little goody two shoes and did it without even being asked. “How about we go inside?” Eric pulled open the shiny glass door and Scotty stepped into the air conditioned entryway.

“Hello!” The woman behind the welcome counter said breezily. “I'm Brenda, you must be the new members. Eric and Scotty, right?” She pointed to each boy in turn.

“That's right!” Eric said cheerfully. Scotty groaned. Two chipper people made it even worse. Brenda emerged from behind the desk and came up to Scotty, bending down to look

him right in the eye.

“And you must be Scotty.” Scotty nodded tersely. He hated when people drew focus to his size, especially strangers.

“Don't be rude.”

“Oh, it's okay. I know it's tough meeting new people.” Brenda smiled at him. “You must be what? Six?” Scotty bristled! He was used to people guessing he was a bit younger than fourteen, but six?

“That's right!” Eric said with a huge grin.

“No, I'm not!” Scotty wished more than anything that his voice would deepen right then.

“Oh, that's right. He's six and a half.” Eric said, emphasizing the last three words in that way that adults did when indulging a child. Scotty tried to argue, but he felt Eric squeeze his shoulder as Brenda hurried back over to her desk. “I'll explain in a minute.” Eric mumbled, giving him a stare. Scotty glared up at him, but knew that Eric could make his life a living hell if he did not cooperate with whatever scheme he had going. His vastly superior strength let him do basically whatever he wanted.

Just a week earlier, Scotty had been just finishing up brushing his teeth in the bathroom in just his underwear, like he always did. Eric came in, startling Scotty to the point that he knocked a glass off of the sink.

“Oh, my god!” Eric exclaimed. Quick as a flash, he scooped

Scotty up, cradling the older boy in his arms. “Don’t want you to cut your feet!”

“Let me go!” Scotty exclaimed, squirming.

“I better tell mom.” Eric said, hardly even noticing the squirming boy as he carried him to the living room, where their mom had a couple neighbors over already. “Hey, mom. Scotty broke a glass in the bathroom.” The teenager was mortified. Here he was, in his brother’s arms, in front of the neighbors in just his underwear!

“Thank you, Eric.” She said, trying her hardest not to laugh at the unorthodox tableau. “Why don’t you clean it up? And let poor Scotty go. The neighbors don’t need to see him in just his tighty whities.” Eric gasped.

“Oh! I’m sorry, Scotty!” He put the boy down and Scotty ran for cover as fast as he could.

“Scotty?” Eric's voice pulled him back into the present. “C'mon, Brenda's got our wristbands.”

“Green for Eric, and a fun rainbow for little Scotty.” Brenda said. “Hold out your wrist, kiddo.” Scotty obeyed, all too aware that she had given Eric his to put on himself. “There you go! You two are going swimming, right?” Scotty nodded, figuring anyone who talked to him like a little kid did not deserve verbal responses. “Looks like you’re all set. Keep an eye on your brother for me, okay?” She patted Scotty’s back.

“Come on, bud.” Eric said, leading the way toward the changing rooms. “Excited to swim?”

“I guess.” Scotty said hesitantly. “What’s with the wristbands?” Eric looked over his shoulder, confused.

“What do you mean? Oh! Um, it was cheaper to get an under eight pass.”

“But”

“You didn’t pay.”

“Neither did you.”

“Inside voice” was all Eric said as they walked into the men’s changing room. Scotty huffed, refusing to let it go.

“And what was that with that lady?”

“Brenda.”

“Whatever. Don’t dodge the question. You told her I’m six.”

“And a half, which you’re acting like right now, I think.” Eric put the bag down on the polished wooden bench before sitting.

“Am not.” Eric just smiled and gestured for Scotty to come over.

“Let’s go, buddy, time to get undressed.”

“Huh?”

“I said, let’s go.” Eric grabbed Scotty’s wrist and pulled him over, lifting his shirt over his head in seemingly the same action.

“What are you doing?”

“You can't swim in your clothes, silly. Are these my shorts?”  
He undid the snap and unzipped them. “Tighty whities ho!”  
He exclaimed with a smile.

“Not so loud.”

“We're alone in here, Scotty. Now down comes the undies  
and out comes Scotty's dinky!”

“That's creepy.” Scotty said, covering himself. Eric smiled. A  
real big brother would do something more than fuss, so it  
only proved to him more that Scotty was his little brother.

“Everyone in here has a dinky just like yours. You're not  
hiding anything special, champ.” Eric moved Scotty's hands  
away. “I'll have you in your swim undies in no time anyway.”

“You mean my swimsuit? What even are sw- swim undies?”  
All he knew was that he did not like the sound of it.

“These go under your swimsuit. Swim. Undies. Get it?” He  
tousled Scotty's hair. “Of course you do.” Scotty sighed. He  
hated when Eric got in one of these moods where he teased  
him instead of just saying what he meant.

“Can I see them?”

“What?”

“The swim undies or whatever you called them.”

“You're going to love them. They have Nemo and Dory on  
them!” Eric dug around in the bag and pulled out a blue item.

“That’s a swim diaper!” Scotty exclaimed, scandalized. “I am not wearing a diaper!”

“Keep your voice down unless you want the whole pool to know.” Eric said calmly. “It’s not a swim diaper. They’re swim undies, silly. They’re so that the mesh lining of your trunks doesn’t rub up against your little dinky or bum-bum.”

“Why are you talking like that?”

“Would you prefer to swim naked?” Eric unfolded the Little Swimmers. “See, just like your undies.”

“I am not”

“Say not one more time and you’ll be getting a spanking.” Eric said. Setting the Little Swimmers aside, he pulled Scotty over his lap. “Do you want a spanking?”

“No.”

“Do you want to put your swim undies on?” Scotty muttered something about swim undies, but how could Eric know if it was a yes? He smacked the boy’s naked bottom. “Use your big boy words, Scotty.”

“I’ll put them on, okay?” Eric smiled and kept Scotty across his lap, slipping the swim diaper up his slender legs. He rubbed Scotty’s thigh. It had been a few years since his own leg had been hairless, but Scotty’s still were. Eric could not believe he had ever seen Scotty as a big brother.

“That’s you taken care of.” Eric said, letting Scotty stand. “Now for my swimsuit.”

“Wait, I’m not wearing only this, am i?” Eric laughed.

“Of course not, kiddo! But you can hang out in the locker room in just your swim undies for a minute, can’t you?”

“Could you stop calling them that?”

“Do you really want me to start saying swim diaper?” Eric asked, dropping his shorts and pondering for a moment making Scotty aware of just how different their bodies were. Standing there in his t-shirt and boxers, he looked almost like the dad of the little boy standing opposite him in nothing but a swim diaper. He smiled and turned his back for a moment to tug down his boxers and replace them with a pair of black swim trunks. “Alright,” he said, ignoring Scotty’s whimpers about how differently attired they were. “Let’s go rinse off real quick.”

Eric pulled off his shirt and immediately picked Scotty up, pressing him against his bare chest. He carried him across the changing room, feeling the boy’s swim diaper against him. He smiled contently as he turned on the shower.

“Too cold?” He asked as it rained down on them. Scotty remained silent, squirming every now and again as if to remind Eric that he still held the tiny teenager in his arms.

It felt weird to even acknowledge that Scotty was a teenager. Some of Eric’s friends’ little brothers seemed far more mature than the itty bitty fourteen year old in his arms. None of them would have thrown a fit like Scotty had when their parents had come home with new underwear for the both of them for

the summer. Scotty insisted that as a teenager, he should get boxers, not tighty whities. Both Eric and their parents had tried to explain that he had always worn briefs, so why should it change? Things only got worse when he discovered hand me downs from their little cousin Gavin in his dresser. He had insisted that he could not wear the clothes of a kindergartener, even after mom made him do an impromptu fashion show of a veritable rainbow of primary color superhero shirts with matching elastic band shorts. All the same, he had spent the whole day yesterday in a lime green Spongebob t-shirt and matching shorts.

Satisfied, Eric carried Scotty back over to their things and set him down on the bench. He smiled and tapped the boy's nose.

“Ready to swim?”

“You said”

“I know. We've just got a couple more things first.” He reached into the bag again and pulled out a strange belt like apparatus. “Your arms go through here.” Eric pulled the confused boy's arms through two loops.

“What is this thing?”

“Your floaties.” Eric said, buckling it behind his back. A bar crossed the boy's chest and his arms were in matching inflated loops.

“I don't”

“Hush. Mom told me to bring it. She said that if it fits you,

you should wear it.”

“But”

“That spanking is still on the table, Scotty.” Eric said. A man walked into the changing room and Scotty whimpered. Here he was, in just floaties and a swim diaper, right in front of strangers. “Ready for your trunks?”

“Yes.” Scotty breathed a sigh of relief. At least that sounded normal.

He only frowned a little when Eric revealed a pair of blue trunks with Spider-Man on them. At least it was better than the swim diaper. He sighed as it sunk in that he really, truly was wearing a swim diaper. How was it even possible that it fit him? He knew he was a bit smaller than average, but this was ridiculous. Eric must have gotten some novelty ones that were extra large or something.

“Ready?” Scotty nodded, stepping into the trunks while Eric held them for him. “Up they come!” He pulled the trunks up his legs, smiling as his hands brushed against the plastic of his swim diaper. He could not even believe that he had managed to get Scotty into a swim diaper with so little fuss. He wondered if he would bring it up to mom and dad. Eric knew he could figure out some way to turn them to his side, if it was necessary. Maybe he could even manipulate Scotty into telling them. He smiled, imagining it backfiring on Scotty to the point that Scotty was ordered to wear a swim diaper every time he swam.

Pulling himself from his thoughts, he admired the image in front of him. His older brother stood there in Spider-Man swim trunks that sat just beneath the waistband of his Little Swimmers, a toddler life vest across his chest. Some people might not even believe he was as old as six and a half and that suited Eric just fine.

“I think we're all set.” Eric said, standing up and stretching his back a bit to emphasize the size difference between him and Scotty before quickly stashing everything in a locker. The key for it was on an elastic band he put on the same wrist that held his lime green teen pass. “Hold my hand.”

“No.”

“Suit yourself.” Eric said, not even hesitating to pick Scotty up and carry the whining boy toward the pool. Whining only made him look more like a little boy who needed his big brother to carry him after all. As they emerged out into the pool area, Scotty watched the various families nervously, terribly worried that someone would realize that he was a fourteen year old being carried by his little brother. Eric knew that there was no chance of that whatsoever, holding Scotty tight as they crossed the room.

Eric only put him down when they reached a table where he could put their towels. “Don’t run off yet, kiddo. Your trunks are slipping.” Sure enough, there was now a good inch of swim diaper showing above the elastic waistband of Scotty’s swim trunks. Eric quickly pulled them up, batting away Scotty’s efforts to do it himself as he tied the draw strings. He

smiled to himself as he took care to leave the swim diaper peeking out in the back, just enough for him, and maybe a few eagle eyed others, to notice. “We don’t need you flashing your diaper to everyone at the pool, now do we?”

“Finished?” Scotty asked irritably, which only encouraged Eric to tickle his tummy a bit.

“Sure am, cutie.” He said as Scotty glared at him. “What should we do?”

“I want to go down the water slide.” Scotty pointed to the enormous structure that fed out into the deep end of the pool, a genuine note of excitement in his voice.

“Alright.” Eric said with a smile. “But no running. We don’t want to get in trouble with the lifeguards, do we?” Scotty had a sneaking suspicion Eric would try to carry him again if he was not careful, so he set off toward the stairs to the water slide with a deliberate pace, but not one that could be mistaken for running. Eric followed, noticing a lifeguard in red board shorts at the base of the stairs. This could be interesting.

“Afternoon” the lifeguard said as Scotty and Eric approached. Scotty ignored him and headed for the stairs, but the lifeguard stepped in his way. “Whoa, sorry buddy. Gotta be over eight to use the big slide.”

“I am over eight.” Scotty said indignantly. Eric quickly swooped in.

“Sorry, Scotty. Maybe when you’re older.” He said, grabbing

the boy's hand. He smiled apologetically at the lifeguard and led Scotty away.

“Eric, let me go!”

“Scotty, remember your wristband? It marks you as under eight.”

“I'll take it off then!”

“If you do that, we'll have to go home and you better believe you'll have a sore little bum-bum if that happens.” Scotty glared up at Eric defiantly, but he knew better than to call the bigger boy's bluff.

“Whatever, let's go swim.” He stormed over to the pool, but Eric once again intervened.

“How about we ease ourselves in and not jump in over your head?” Scotty scoffed, so Eric took a more drastic measure. He picked Scotty up and carried him over to the shallow end. “Three feet should be a good place to start.”

“Three feet?” Scotty practically snarled.

“Just humor me, okay?” Eric could tell that this would be a long day.

Scotty stood at the edge of the pool for a moment before jumping in. He hit the water with a big splash, but the floats on his arms and chest interfered and he emerged a moment later, coughing. Eric effortlessly slipped into the shallow water, rubbing and patting Scotty's back.

“You’re not supposed to drink the pool, silly!” He said, making sure the boy was okay. “I think we’ll have to do something a little different for your next jump.” He pointed to the steps nearby. “Go out and come back to the edge.” Still coughing slightly, Scotty complied. Eric smiled up at the boy, adorable in his floaties and toddler trunks. “Now jump right here.” He pointed to the space between his arms. “I promise I’ll catch you.”

“Don’t need help.” Scotty mumbled.

“Oh, are you done swimming?”

“No”

“Then you better get into the pool, don’t you think? You can’t swim up there!” Eric laughed at his own joke. Scotty rolled his eyes and jumped, somehow not realizing that Eric could move to catch him, no matter where he landed. Eric held on to him, bouncing him up and down in the water. Scotty was always pretty light, but the water made him especially so. Finally, Scotty’s squirming became enough and Eric let him go. The frustrated teen splashed him and Eric laughed. “So it’s a splash war you want, is it?”

The two splashed back and forth for a bit, but Eric saw Scotty sneaking glances at the water slide. He had been genuinely excited to go down it. There had to be something Eric could do. He was the big brother, after all.

“I have an idea.” Eric said, taking a full wave of water to the face. “Truce, truce!” Eric made a T with his hands. “I see a

slide you can definitely go down, Scotty.” Scotty turned to look where Eric was pointing and his nose wrinkled.

“But that’s a baby slide.” He said, looking at the bright red plastic slide that led into the other end of the shallow end they were in.

“I bet it’ll be more fun than you realize.” Eric said. “Why don’t you climb out and give it a try? Don’t run now.”

“Eric”

“Go on!” Scotty sighed, but obeyed just as Eric was considering giving him a swat on the bottom to get him motivated. As Scotty made his way along the outside of the pool, Eric crossed the pool to take his place at the bottom of the slide. He smiled to see that Scotty’s trunks had slipped down just a bit, more than enough for him to spy the boy’s swim diaper. He loved that his brother had taken so readily to wearing it. He wondered if he even remembered he had it on. “I’m right here at the bottom!” Eric called as Scotty stood at the ladder of the little plastic slide.

“This is dumb” he heard Scotty mumble.

“It’ll be fun!” He called. He grinned mischievously as he added “be brave like a big boy!” loud enough for pretty much anyone else at the pool to hear. He snickered as he heard Scotty’s annoyed groan. “I’m standing right here, slide down into big brother’s arms!” Scotty grumbled, but slid down. Eric caught him and hugged the boy, the pool tugging down on his trunks to expose the top half of his swim diaper. Eric

pretended not to notice, spinning Scotty around and around playfully. Scotty tried to reach back, but could not reach in his current position.

“Eric” Scotty said, trying to get his attention. Eric just smiled and bobbed the boy up and down. A nearby mother noticed Scotty’s predicament and came over.

“There you go, little guy.” She said, pulling up his trunks.

“These darn strings just keep coming loose.” Eric said.

“Thank the nice lady, Scotty.”

“Thank you.” Scotty mumbled, not even caring that in his humiliation, he looked every bit a little boy hiding his face in his brother’s shoulder.

“Don’t be shy, sweetie. My nephew still wears Little Swimmers and he’s bigger than you!” Before Scotty could ask his age, she had returned to her own kids.

“Put me down.” Scotty said as firmly as he could. Eric complied.

“Do you want to go down the slide again?” He asked, noticing the look on Scotty’s face that said he was on the edge of an angry outburst.

“Sure.” Scotty said through gritted teeth. He marched toward the steps out of the pool, but rather than turn toward the slide, he kept storming off. Eric watched him go and shrugged. He would be back once he learned just what it meant to have an under 8 pass on his wrist.

Scotty could not say where he was going exactly. All he knew was that he had to get away from Eric. Eric had lost his mind! Scotty growled in frustration as he felt the trunk slip down his slender frame. They were for a baby, why were they so loose on him? He did not know the answer, but he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was Eric's fault somehow.

“If I had a phone, I'd call mom and dad.” He muttered, deciding to head back toward the locker rooms. He would change and then make a game plan from there. Maybe, he thought reluctantly, he could find and use Eric's phone. He had almost made it to the entrance to the locker room before he remembered that Eric had locked everything up. “Great” he muttered, turning around to go back to Eric and demand the key. Where had he gone?

“Hey there, buddy.” Scotty spun around to see a lifeguard standing there, his hands on his knees as he bent forward to be more at Scotty's level. “Are you lost?”

“No, just looking for my brother.”

“Ah, well, how about you come with me and we'll look together?”

“Um no thanks?” The lifeguard could only have been three or four years older than him, but he was talking as if they were completely different ages. He blushed as he remembered that he was dressed like a toddler.

“Sorry, bud, but we can't have you running around unsupervised. Were you trying to go potty?”

“No”

“Alright then, let’s go.” The lifeguard held out his hand. Scotty stared at it and begrudgingly grabbed it, his hands enveloped by the lifeguard’s. “What’s your name, champ?”

“Scott.”

“Nice to meet you, Scotty. My name’s Lifeguard Brian.” He began to walk along, smiling down at Scotty as they went. Scotty did his best to ignore him, keeping an eye out for Eric. It was as if he had disappeared into thin air. “Oops!” Brian said as Scotty nearly walked into a pool chair. “Here, how about we do this?” Without even asking, he lifted Scotty into the air, setting the blushing teen against his shoulder as he carried him over to the lifeguard station. “What’s your brother’s name, Scotty?”

“Eric.” Scotty replied, wishing that there was some little kid version of Eric’s name that he could give.

“Do you know your last name?”

“Michaels.” Scotty muttered. Brian nodded as they reached their destination.

“Alright, you hang out right here.” He set Scotty down in an area that was fenced off. It felt a bit too much like a playpen to the teen, complete with some plastic toys. “You can play with those if you want, but I bet Eric will come running right over once he hears that we’ve found you.”

“You’re not supposed to run by the pool.” Scotty muttered

mockingly.

“That’s right.” Brian said with a chuckle, apparently completely missing the boy’s tone. “I’ll be sure to tell him to walk.” He winked at Scotty before dialing a nearby phone.

“Eric Michaels, your baby brother is at the lifeguard station. Eric Michaels to the lifeguard station.” Brian looked at Scotty with a smile. “Oh, and your baby brother wants us to remind you to walk, not run.” Scotty felt as if his face was redder than the lifeguards’ shorts as he heard chuckles echo throughout the pool. “I’m sure he’ll be here soon, Scotty.” Brian said cheerfully. “Let me know if you need to potty or anything.”

Scotty fumed. The only clock he could see was an analog one, which he did not know how to read, but he could tell that it had been at least fifteen minutes since Brian had called Eric over the intercom and he still had not shown up.

“Where is he?” He muttered, glaring at the plastic toys nearby as if it was somehow their fault. As if by magic, he spotted Eric approaching. “There!” The word escaped Scotty’s lips and he realized he had even jumped to his feet.

“Hi,” Eric said to Brian. “I think you have something of mine.”

“Hey, you look familiar.” Brian said. “You go to Van Buren?” Scotty knew that Eric did not. He was still in middle school! Eric simply nodded and looked at Scotty in the fenced off area with a smirk.

“Is this your grown-up, Scotty?” Brian asked. Scotty sighed and nodded.

“That’s my brother Eric.” Brian lifted Scotty out and handed him to Eric.

“Thank you.” Eric said. “I went to the bathroom real quick and he somehow got away from me.” Brian nodded.

“You be good and stay with big brother, okay buddy?” Brian said, shaking his finger at Scotty with mock severity.

“Okay.” Scotty mumbled, eager for this to all be over.

“You done swimming, kiddo?” Eric asked as he carried Scotty along. “Let’s grab our towels.” He only put Scotty down when they reached their towels. “Can’t believe you got yourself in baby jail.”

“It wasn’t baby jail!”

“Did you wet your diaper?” Eric teased. Scotty growled and busied himself with drying off, not that he was all that wet anymore after his prolonged time at the lifeguard station. “Let’s go change, hmm?”

To Scotty’s relief, Eric allowed him to walk back to the locker room, but the moment that they were alone, Eric pulled him in and stripped him down to his swim diaper in no time. He refused to give up on trying to do it himself, but quietly reminded himself that he would be dressed again soon.

“Oh, shoot. We forgot my flip flops out by the pool.” Eric said, staring down at his feet. “I was so distracted by your

situation”

“Go grab them.”

“Remember, you can’t be alone, so you’ll have to come with.”

“Can I get dressed first?” Scotty asked irritably.

“I don’t want someone to steal them. Wear your towel or something if you’re that worried about people seeing your diaper.” Scotty practically snarled, wrapping his beach towel around his waist. It dragged on the floor, which slowed them down, but they soon had retrieved Eric’s flip flops.

“Let’s go.” Scotty mumbled, concerned that someone would see his diaper through the towel. He turned to go back toward the locker room, but trod on his towel. He caught himself before he fell, but he was not so lucky with the towel. It fell to the floor, exposing his swim diaper completely.

“Oh, shoot!” Eric swooped in to cover the boy again, but the damage had been done and Scotty felt tears welling up in his eyes. “C’mon, let’s go.” He picked Scotty up and hurried back into the safety of the locker room. “It’s okay. No one saw, Scotty.”

“Yes, they did.” Scotty sniffled. “I wanted to get dressed and you wouldn’t let me.”

“It’s over now.” Eric said reassuringly.

“I shouldn’t even be wearing this dumb thing.”

“I know, I know.” Eric unlocked their things and began to get

dressed, giving Scotty a moment to calm down. Once he had, Scotty busied himself digging his clothes out of the bag.

“Hey, Eric. Where’s my clothes?”

“In the bag.” Eric said, standing over by a mirror to check his hair.

“No, they aren’t.” Eric came over.

“You threw everything everywhere.” He observed.

“Yeah, I’m trying to find my stuff!”

“Calm down. It has to be here somewhere.”

“It isn’t.”

“Maybe I forgot to put them in the bag?” Eric checked the locker. Nothing. “How about the lost and found?” The two of them checked everywhere in the locker room, Scotty hardly even noticing he wore nothing but a swim diaper in his urgency.

“Where are they?”

“I think we’re going to have to improvise.” Eric said. “Hmm... your swimsuit’s still wet and already packed up anyway” he tapped his chin. “Alright, we need to find you a shirt.”

“But” Eric dug into the bag and pulled out a plain white t-shirt.

“Good thing I brought a spare.” He bunched it in his hands

and looked at Scotty expectantly. “Arms up, kiddo.” Scotty bashfully complied and the shirt came down over his head. The neck was quite loose and the shirt fell past his knees. “There, all covered up.”

“But”

“You’ll just have to wear your diaper, but I don’t think anyone will see.” Eric said mildly. “It’s just what six blocks to home?”

“I can’t. You can’t.” Scotty said breathlessly.

“I know it’s not ideal, but it’s a short walk.” Eric slung the bag on his back. “You can either walk or I can carry you. Your choice.”

“But”

“Ooh, I have an idea. What if you wore the backpack and I gave you a piggyback ride? That’d be fun!”

“No way.” Scotty said.

“What’ll it be then? Carried or walk?”

“Walk.” Scotty muttered through his grimace. He looked down at the shirt and sighed. “Let’s hurry.” Eric thought about mentioning that carrying him would be faster, but held his tongue for once. After all, these were summer-long passes. They would be back to the pool. And soon.

## *Chapter 2*

# Eric and Scotty - Chapter 2: Baby

"Hurry up." Scotty muttered, sitting on the bench, head in his hands, elbows resting on his thighs. The bright lights of the rec center locker room only made things worse. "I feel so exposed."

"I thought you'd be glad to finally be out of tighty whities." Eric remarked, pulling his shirt on over his head. He smirked at his brother, sitting there in just his Pokémon Underoos, Pikachu and Squirtle smiling up at him from Scotty's crotch.

"Not like these." Scotty grumbled. It had taken Eric longer than he cared to admit to put the pieces together. If Scotty still fit in the pajamas of a first grader, something they had only learned thanks to the bags of donation clothes, why would underwear be any different? He had been a little annoyed by how many boxer briefs there were at the store for six year olds, but he had finally found some Pokémon and Spongebob briefs for his brother. He had not been sure which would have been more childish in Scotty's eyes, but he soon learned that Scotty actually preferred plain white over brightly colored Underoos. Well, brightly colored Underoos were all he had now, thanks to Eric. "Where are my clothes?"

"Arms up." Eric ordered, gathering Scotty's t-shirt in his hands. He playfully ran a hand along Scott's underarm, smirking. Three years older than him and still not a bit of hair under there. "Keep grumbling." He said as he pulled the shirt

over Scotty's head. "And you're going home on the bus without pants again." Scotty muttered something. "What was that, Scotty? That sounded like a bad word."

"I just said ok."

"I'm sure. But let's try that a bit better. What's the more polite way to say it?"

"Ok, big brother."

"Very good, Scotty." Eric praised. "Now, lie down on the bench so I can put your shorts on you." In Eric's eyes, there was something so childish about Scotty's t-shirt and shorts matching, so that was almost all Scotty ever wore for his outdoor clothes. Today was a lime green t-shirt and shorts set with a smiling yellow sun on the chest. Eric had seen a three year old wearing the same outfit and it made his heart melt to know that his fourteen year old brother dressed like that. "Bye bye, Pikachu!" Eric teased. He scooped Scotty up, setting him against his shoulder. Even over the scent of pool chlorine in the air, Scotty could smell Eric's deodorant and something else, something that reminded him of their dad. He could not say what it was exactly, his train of thought disrupted by Eric supporting his bottom.

"Can't I walk?"

"Your flippy floppies are at the bottom of the bag. I'll just carry you. Your flip flops fall off when I carry you anyway. That was a fun swim, hmm?" Scotty did not answer, but Eric knew he was still embarrassed about wearing a swim diaper

and floaties, even if it was quickly becoming a habit for Eric to put him in them.

They left the rec center and Eric boarded the bus, only putting Scotty down when they reached their seat. Getting situated, he pulled Scotty onto his lap, holding a finger to his lips when he complained.

"So fussy." Eric remarked softly. "Maybe we should see about changing your bedtime."

"Mom and dad just moved it back!"

"I know and I think it's much too late for my baby brother." Pulling out his phone, arms wrapped protectively around Scotty, his chin resting on his head, Eric did an internet search for 'bedtime for 4 year olds', gently shushing Scotty when he whimpered. "Most preschoolers are ready for bed around 7 pm," Eric read softly, loving every word. "Especially if they've had a big day at preschool."

"I'm not in preschool!" Scotty protested.

"I know, but the rec center has a daycare, doesn't it?"

"You wouldn't dare." Eric chuckled and lifted Scotty back up to his chest as they exited the bus. Scotty pouted the whole walk to their house, whimpering. It amazed Eric just how often Scotty thought acting like a toddler would make him think he was not one.

He cheered up once they got home, not even fussing when Eric stripped him of his outside clothes. He gave his briefs a

playful little snap before touseling his hair.

"You go run and play." Eric said, smiling at his tiny brother in just the very same Pokémon undies that had made him pout so much after swimming. "I won't bother you until I need you for something."

"Ok, big brother." Scotty intoned when Eric held his hand before he could run off.

"If you get chilly, come find me and we'll put you in your jammies, okay?" Scotty nodded and Eric let him run off. That was the rule that Eric had set.

When home or even in the backyard, Scotty had two choices: underwear only or pajamas, regardless of the time of day. They were not Scotty's choice of course. Eric got to decide and he usually picked jammies. After all, there was something about a little boy in jammies around the clock, as if he might be put to bed at any moment. Plus, jammies always did that matching top to bottom thing that Eric loved on Scotty.

"God, are we sure he'll be fifteen in October?" Eric mused as he went to do his chores. Sure, Scotty occasionally resisted, but a light swat to the bottom and he fell in line. What self-respecting teenager allowed himself to be put in Little Swimmers and floaties each and every time they went to the pool? What teen would only whimper and whine when he saw his little brother figuring out what time four year olds go to bed with the clear goal of making him do that, starting tonight?

As Eric did his laundry, a silly idea came to mind. What if Scotty's fifteenth birthday was more of a fifth birthday? They could just lie and say the one numeral candle broke, so they just have the five. Sure, he would notice the bright decorations and the cake, but by that point, he might even think of himself as a five year old. "He's six and a half at the rec center, but I guess that doesn't really matter, does it?" Eric said with a chuckle. He wondered for a moment if he could even bring it up at the rec center.

"Excuse me, my brother's birth year is wrong. Sorry, I must've mistyped it. Can we get it fixed?" Eric tried it out and smiled to himself. Maybe that would work. That was for another time though. He had his plan for tonight and that did not require leaving the house.

True to his word, Eric left Scotty alone until quarter after six that night. They had eaten, which meant it was time to put the plan into motion.

"Alright, Scotty. Time for your bath."

"What? I showered at the rec center." In spite of himself, Eric snorted. He had carried Scotty into the shower after their swim, Eric in his trunks, Scotty in just his Finding Nemo swim diaper.

"Yes, that was to rinse the chlorine off." Eric explained. "But now you need your nightly bath."

"I'll shower in the morning." Eric just shrugged.

"Alright, we'll do it the baby way then." He grabbed Scotty

and carried the arguing boy to the bathroom. “How do you always forget that I am so much bigger and stronger than you, baby?” He asked, pulling down Scotty’s underwear and giving his bottom a swat.

“Ow!”

“Well, behave.” Eric said. “Listen to me very closely. From now on, you’ll be getting a bath before your new bedtime of seven o’clock, do you understand?”

“But”

“Yes, your butt will be bathed along with the rest of you.” Eric teased. “Now, I want you to stand right here like a good little boy while I fill the tub.”

“But”

“One more word and you’ll be sucking on soap. Is that what you want?”

“No.” To his delight, Scotty covered his mouth with his hands.

“Don’t worry. I won’t count that.” Eric said reassuringly. “Look, we have your teddy towel here and everything.” Scotty stared at the brown hooded towel. He had never seen it before in his life. In fact, Eric had found it in the donated clothes they had received. Normally, his mom or dad would donate things like that, figuring their sons were both too old for such things, but Eric had laid claim to it, on Scotty’s behalf.

Scotty remained silent even as Eric had him climb into the

warm bath, watching as Eric wet the washcloth.

“Keep your hands up on the sides, okay? Maybe we can get you some bath toys for next time, but for now, just sit back and let big brother bathe you.”

“Can I talk yet?” Eric was a little surprised by the irritation in his tone. Was Scotty about to stand up for himself?

“Of course.”

“Can I wash myself?”

“No.”

“I can do it myself.”

“I know, but it’ll go quicker if you let me do it.”

“Everywhere?” Scotty asked nervously.

“Head to toe.” Eric replied. “Which reminds me, we need to talk about your vocabulary. The words you use.”

“I know what it means!”

“You know what bad words are right, but do you know what the good words are?” He washed Scotty’s skinny arms, smiling as he thought.

“Like please and thank you?”

“Those are good words, yes. Words you could use a lot more often, honestly. But do you want to know what some other good words are?”

“Sure.” Scotty shrugged.

“Well, mommy and daddy are good words. Big brother is a good word.”

“Oh.”

“And then there’s things like undies, jammies.”

“Baby words.”

“I use a lot of those words too, so no, not baby words.” Eric explained. “Lean forward a bit so I can do your back.” He washed his brother’s back. “You’re being so good for me.” He smiled. “Some other good words that’ll come up during this bath? Tushie and dinky. Can you point to your dinky for me?” He snickered as Scotty bashfully obeyed. “Very good. There are a lot of words for your dinky, but that’s the only one you should use, understand?”

“Yeah.”

“Good boy.” Eric praised. “Oh, that reminds me. So we have mommy and daddy and big brother, what about you? Who are you?”

“Scott. Scotty.”

“Yes, but what’s your title? Your role in the family?”

“I dunno”

“Sure you do.”

“Little brother?” He groaned.

“Close. You wear swim diapers, you get carried a lot, big brother gives you baths and helps dress you.”

“I don’t want to do any of those things!”

“Exactly, but they need to be done. They’re necessities, aren’t they?” Scotty looked at him, confused and pretty sure Eric had taken it a different way than he had meant. “So, in a lot of ways, you’re really little. You’re a baby.”

“So what?” Scotty asked, annoyed. “You want me to say I’m the baby brother?”

“Not quite.” Eric replied mildly, surprising Scotty once again. “You’re my brother, but what about with mommy and daddy, hmm? You’re not their brother, are you?”

“Baby son?” Eric laughed.

“It would be adorable to hear you refer to yourself like that, but” he smiled as Scotty squirmed as he washed his sensitive little feet. “I think just baby would be fine.” Scotty moaned in frustration.

“But I’m not a baby!”

“Shh, your voice echoes in the bathroom a lot, remember?” Eric smiled and rubbed his back. “If we want to be technically, you’re a baby in some ways and big in other ways, but” he paused. “Move a bit so I can wash your tushie. There we go. Good little boy.” He gently squeezed and then started to wipe his bottom, smiling at the suds that clung to it. “A bubble butt baby boy.” He said, more to himself than to

Scotty. “So, it’d be a mouthful to always say ‘I’m a baby in these ways and a big boy in these ways’, so to keep it simple, you’ll just say that you’re a baby. Understand?”

“Why can’t I say I’m a big boy! I’m fourteen!”

“That would confuse people. You’ve seen how many hundreds of times mom and dad have had to explain that even though I’m so obviously bigger, you’re actually older? This will save a lot of time.”

“But Eric!”

“Shh, quiet, remember? Alright, I’m going to be washing what now? Do you remember?”

“My... my dinky.”

“Very good! Now hold still. It won’t take that long since it’s just a baby’s dinky.” Scotty sniffled and Eric knew he was on the verge of tears, so he fell silent until it was time to rinse Scotty off. It did not matter that Scotty was having trouble accepting that he was a baby. It was a simple fact and Eric would ease him into it. Like he had said, Scotty was a big boy in some ways, but the fact of the matter was, he was still a baby in so, so many others.

*Chapter 3*

## Eric and Scotty - Chapter 3: Scotty's Sprinkler

"Isn't this great, Scotty?"

"It's Scott." Scotty mumbled, making sure to say it as quietly as he could. If Eric heard him, he would be in big trouble.

"We're both gonna be lifeguards!" Eric said, grinning down at his brother. "What was that you muttered?"

"Nothing." Scotty blushed as he felt Eric lift his chin so that he met his eyes. Why was an eleven year old this tall? Mom insisted he was only a foot taller, but it might as well have been a mile with how high Eric's head seemed to be.

"You don't have secrets from me, Scotty." Eric said. "So, whatever it is you said, you deserve what?"

"I dunno."

"Pow pows on the bum-bum."

"Do you have to call it that?" Eric ignored him, swatting Scotty's bottom three times in rapid succession. It was not a hard spanking, just enough to remind the tiny fourteen year old who was in charge. "Now are you excited with me, Scotty?"

"Yeah." Scotty said through gritted teeth.

"You get to be a big boy lifeguard." That was what did not

make sense to Scotty. Much as he hated to admit it, in the eyes of the rec center, he was a little kid, barely over six years old. Why had they agreed to let him be a lifeguard? He knew in his gut that Eric had some sort of trickery planned, but how could he stop it from happening? Eric had so much control over him. “Unless you don’t want to be a big boy lifeguard?”

“I do.” Said Scotty with a sigh.

“Do what?”

“Want to be a big boy lifeguard.” Eric grinned. He had Scotty so well trained, it was difficult to even remember when he had thought of him as the big brother.

“We’d better get you dressed then, shouldn’t” he pulled his phone out of his pocket as it chirped. Scotty sighed. Their parents had decided that they should have a phone for the summer in case they needed to be contacted. It was theirs to share and only for emergencies, but Eric had immediately decided it was exclusively his phone. What made it worse was that mom and dad did not even seem to care that Eric had broken their rules about it being for emergency use only.

“At least we know it won’t get lost like that video game we got you” was all his dad had said. Scotty had retorted that it was not lost, it was in his room somewhere, but that had only made his dad chuckle and stand by Eric’s decision to monopolize the phone.

“Well,” Eric’s voice pulled Scotty from his thoughts. “I guess the pool’s closed for emergency cleaning, so lifeguard class is

postponed until tomorrow.”

“Emergency cleaning?”

“That’s right, buddy! Someone puked in the pool, I bet.” Scotty nodded, not really paying attention to Eric’s speculation. He was relieved that he would be spared from whatever humiliation Eric had planned for him.

“Ok then” Scotty said when he got the sense that Eric was waiting for him to say something.

“Don’t look so blue, bud. I have a plan for what we can do instead.”

“Oh, god” Scotty muttered, which earned him another swat to the bottom. “Ow! Stop!”

“Sorry, forgot how delicate my baby brother is.”

“Eric. Stop.” Eric grinned cheekily, but listened for once.

“I need to go to the garage to do something for dad. Can I trust you to be a good little boy while I’m gone?” Scotty tried and failed to hide his delight at being trusted to be a lone, a rarity ever since Eric had taken control. The taller boy smiled, but said nothing.

“Yeah.” Scotty said.

“Hmm, I’m not sure if I believe you. Promise me?”

“I promise”

“To?”

“To be a good boy.”

“A good little boy, Scotty. Say it right.” Eric knew his brother well enough to know what the impish grin growing on his face meant before he even opened his mouth.

“It right.”

“Brat.” Eric could not help but grin at his brother’s goofy wit. “Behave. I’ll be back in ten minutes.” He bent over and kissed Scotty’s forehead. “Can you show me ten?” Scotty came dangerously close to swearing at Eric, but knew that that would be possibly the worst thing he could do. He half-heartedly raised his hands. “Very good. Ok. Be back in a jiffy!” Scotty breathed a sigh of relief as Eric finally left him alone.

He knew better than to try and lock his door or even close it. Eric had threatened more than once to move Scotty into his room if he tried to keep him out. It was infuriating that mom and dad never seemed to be around when Eric said things like that. It was terrifying to think that they might side with him if they did overhear. They wouldn’t, would they?

Scotty was fairly certain they did not believe half of what Scotty had told them Eric had done. A few careful words from Eric and their parents accepted that Scotty was just being overly dramatic. How could they not notice how weird it was that Eric had switched him to brightly colored underoos and usually talked to him as if he was a toddler? How had they not noticed that the rec center kept sending them fliers about activities for kindergarteners? It was so

frustrating!

Scotty sighed as he realized ten minutes had already passed and all he had done was bemoan his hopeless situation. He heard Eric coming back. The nice thing about Eric being so big was that he could not sneak up on him. The stairs creaked with each step he took.

“Good news, buddy!” Eric announced. “Found a way for you to cool off.”

“What is it?” He asked apprehensively. “We’re not still going to the rec center, are we?”

“Nope. It’s a special surprise. Let’s get you dressed for swimming.”

Knowing all too well that there was no point in resisting, Scotty pulled his shirt over his head, barely holding back a yelp as he felt Eric eagerly tug down his shorts and underwear all at once. At the rec center, he usually got to stay in his underwear, but Eric had no such reservations at home, getting Scotty naked as quickly as he possibly could.

“Let’s get your swim diaper on, kiddo.” Scotty simply grunted. “You always wear your swim diaper.” It was crazy how quickly something that Eric had only started making him do a few weeks ago had become something he always did. “How about you lie on your bed and I’ll put it on you?”

“Why can’t I ow!” Eric chuckled at the sound of his hand on Scotty’s bare bottom.

“Hmm” he said.

“Hmm?” Scotty fought giving Eric the satisfaction of seeing him rubbing his stinky bottom.

“I think we should start doing all your swats on your bare bottom, don’t you?”

“What?” Scotty was taken aback. “Why?”

“Oh, let me translate into little boy. All your pow-pows will be on your bare baby bumbum now.” The way Scotty squirmed made Eric feel all warm inside.

“Why?”

“Because. I know they hurt more, but you’re a big boy and you can handle it. Aren’t you?” Scotty’s mouth opened and closed, but he could not think of anything to say. Eric tousled his hair playfully.

“Go on, Scotty. Lie down on your bed so we can get your swim diaper on.”

Eric had quickly done away with the phrase Little Swimmers, choosing to call them swim diapers exclusively. Nothing shut Scotty up more quickly when he was in one of his moods than reminding him that he still wore diapers sometime, even if they were swim diapers. If and when they went on vacation, Eric would expand the types of diapers that Scotty wore, but that was not something he needed to trouble his baby brother with right now.

“Look, Scotty! Nemo and Dory!” He grinned. “Remember

when we saw those Nemo undies at the store? Why didn't we get those for you?"

"Cuz." Scotty muttered, watching Eric very slowly slide the swim diaper up his legs.

"Cuz why? Don't you remember?"

"Weren't they the wrong size?"

"Nope. They were the exact same size as your Pikachu undies." He held them up as if Scotty had forgotten. "C'mon, Scotty. I know you remember. It'll be more embarrassing if you make me say it, don't you think?"

"Cuz they were boxers," Scotty mumbled. Eric patted his brother's thigh as he finally got his Little Swimmers situated.

"That's right, Scotty! And Scotty doesn't like wearing boxer briefs, does he? Nope! Just baby boy briefs for Scotty!" Eric admired his brother lying there, upset but still reasonably docile in nothing but his swim diaper. He loved that the blue diaper even had a little drawstring decal, as if it wanted nothing more than to be a real swimsuit all by itself. "Well, it will be today."

"What?"

"C'mon, buddy." Eric said, ignoring Scotty's questions as he picked him up and set the small boy against his shoulder. He would not be able to carry him down the stairs, but he could at least take his squirming brother \*to \*the stairs. "Down we go. Hold on to the railing."

“I know.” Eric watched his brother go down the stairs, grateful that he was not too fussy about moving through the house in nothing but a skimpy swim diaper. It covered what needed covering. “You said we’re going to the backyard?” Judging by his tone, he was clearly upset.

“We need to swing by the bathroom first. Someone needs some sunscreen!” Taking Scotty’s hand, he pulled him along, taking advantage of his longer legs to force the small boy to hurry along beside him, bare feet slapping on the floor. “Now where did that sunscreen go?”

“I don’t need sunscreen.”

“I’m not putting up with a grouchy little boy who’s all sunburnt.” Eric said. “Sunscreen or we don’t go outside.”

“Fine. Let’s stay inside.”

“Hush. Oh! I know why you’re all fussy.” He smiled down at Scotty. ‘It’s because I’ve been calling you little boy, haven’t I? Silly me. Remind me what you are.’

“No”

“C’mon, Scotty. We’ve gone over this a lot. You’re a big boy in some ways, a what in others?”

“I won’t say it!” Eric was amazed that Scotty could deny it even sitting there in just a diaper.

“Say it or you’ll get pow pows.”

“Baby.”

“What was that? Say it or else.”

“I’m a baby!”

“That’s more like it!” He grinned. “Now I need to find that sunscreen or we’ll have to stay inside.”

I want to”

“Now you’re just being silly, Scotty.” Eric said, talking over his brother. “Here it is! Sit still while I get you all set for outside time.”

“What are we even doing out there?” Scotty knew he would not like the answer.

“Let’s look at the facts. What are you wearing?” Scotty held his lips tightly shut, which only made him look more like a little boy who was not getting his way. Eric rubbed sunscreen into his shoulders, giving him a moment to see if he would give in without further prodding. “Well, baby?” Scotty mumbled something. “It’s easier to be understood when you open your mouth, buddy boo. Come on. What do babies like you call your Little Swimmers?”

“My swim diaper.”

“That’s right, baby! You always wear that when you’re swimming, so…”

“We don’t have a pool in the backyard.” All at once, Scotty knew what was waiting for him. “No. No way.”

“What?” Eric asked with a smile. “Sit down on top of the

potty so I can do your legs.”

“I feel all greasy!”

“That’s how we know you’re safe.” Eric replied, kissing the top of Scotty’s head. “Just think, if you didn’t wear your sunscreen, you might get tan lines around your diaper!” He chuckled. “And then there’d be no way to deny that you’re a baby.”

“I’m not”

“I know.” Eric said indulgently. “You’re only a baby in some ways and a big boy in others, right?”

“Well”

“Of course right.” Eric interjected. “You’ve been wearing your swim diaper all summer and the rec center even sent you that fun coloring page, remember?” Scotty groaned. Eric had insisted he color it in immediately and, somehow, their parents had thought it was perfectly normal to have their teenage son’s coloring on the fridge. “Alright, I think we’ll all set.”

“I don’t want to go outside like... like this.”

“You’re just saying that because you’re overheated. Once you cool off in the sprinkler” There it was: confirmation of what Scotty had feared. Eric had dug out the old sprinkler and it was waiting for him in the backyard. “You’ll feel much better.”

Scotty knew it was pointless to resist as long as Eric had his

hands on him. He felt so greasy from the ridiculous amount of sunscreen that Eric had put on him that he was amazed he was even able to hold his hand as tightly as he was.

“You love holding big brother’s hand, don’t you, baby?” Scotty only grunted. “Well, you always pick it at the store over sitting in the cart, don’t you?” That much was true. Of course, Eric did not always give him a choice. Sometimes, he ended up in the cart no matter how he protested. Worse, that gave Eric free reign to buy Scotty whatever he wanted, once again somehow not raising any red flags with their parents. That was how Scotty ended up with the soft blocks that he could see in the living room as Eric took him past on their way to the backyard.

Scotty remembered when Eric had gotten the sprinkler for his third birthday. It was a bright cherry red fire hydrant with a smiling face and three foam-covered hoses that waved around, blasting water everywhere. Scotty had felt too big to be playing in it by the time he turned seven, but now seven years later, he knew he would soon be playing in it again.

“Are we forgetting anything?” Eric asked, grinning down at Scotty. Here he was, in the backyard wearing nothing but a swim diaper. Everything was going perfectly, he thought, as Scotty shaded his eyes with his free hand. “Hmm... a hat.”

“What?”

“We’ll have to get you one next time we go to the store, hmm? Maybe one of those Cookie Monster caps?” Eric shrugged. “Probably too mature for my baby brother.”

“Shuddup.” Scotty mumbled.

“None of that, baby.” Eric said. “Let’s get the sprinkler on.”

“But... won’t I slip in the grass?” Eric smiled. Scotty must be desperate if he was appealing to his desire to protect him.

“Not if you’re very careful.” He squatted down the fourteen inches or so that separated them so that he could look Scotty right in the eyes. “Can you promise to be careful for me?” He could almost hear the sigh growing inside Scotty, so he preempted it with a belly tickle. Scotty was so helplessly ticklish that even the lightest brush of Eric’s fingers made him giggle. How could a fourteen year old be so irredeemably babyish in so very many ways? “Promise me?”

“I promise.” Scotty forced out from among his giggles.

“Not good enough.” Eric said in a sing-song voice. He loved tickling Scotty while making him say things to his exacting specifications. It really drove home to Scotty how powerless he was, just the baby plaything of his brother. “Promise you’ll be careful.”

“I promise” Scotty tried to squirm away from the renewed tickling from his brother. He tried so hard to catch his breath. “I promise be careful.” Eric grinned. It was so wonderful when Scotty skipped words and sounded even more like a little boy who did not quite get sentences yet.

“Promise you’ll be a careful baby.”

“But”

“We’ve been over this, Scotty. We’d be here all day if you had to promise to be a careful baby in some ways and a careful big boy in other ways. Don’t you want to play in your fun sprinkler?” He kissed Scotty’s cheek. “Go on. Promise to be a careful baby.”

“I promise to be a careful baby.”

“Mumbled bashfully just like a baby.” Eric praised. “Now, how about you ask me nicely to turn on your sprinkler for you?” He could tell Scotty was getting very annoyed. Would he act out? Would Eric have to spank him out here in the yard? Eric could not decide if he wanted to do that or not.

“Can you please turn on the sprinkler?” Scotty’s tone made it clear that he hoped Eric would finally relent after all this torment. It almost made Eric want to show Scotty just how bad it could be.

“Of course I can.” He could make Scotty regret getting annoyed over the smallest things later, he thought. Eric turned the spigot and turned to smile at Scotty. “Well, go ahead, buddy. I’ll be right here in case you slip and get a booboo. A little baby booboo.”

Scotty sighed and looked at the fire hydrant as its hoses began to wave back and forth. Even a short distance away, it had enough reach to hit his bare feet, his toes curling in the grass as they recoiled from the frigid water. The sun was hot against his back, but that did not mean he wanted to run through the sprinkler. How long did Eric expect him to stay out here, making a fool of himself anyway?

“What am I supposed to do?” He asked, more to the air than to Eric.

“Run through the sprinkler. Have fun.” Eric said, sitting down on a patio chair. It was only a matter of time before Scotty would let down his guard and play. He was sure of it. Then he could pull out his phone and record it to show their parents. The more ‘proof’ he had that Scotty liked his treatment, the easier it would be to regress him further without their parents objecting. They already saw him as the mature one. Why else would they give him a phone? Sure, they had told Scotty it was for the both of them and only for emergencies, but Eric knew the truth. It was his.

Scotty was still standing there, so Eric decided he needed some prodding. He thought for a moment.

“How about you try to jump over it without getting wet?”

“That’s not possible.”

“Bet you could if you jumped high enough!” He stealthily took a photo of Scotty standing there in just his Finding Nemo swim diaper. That picture alone was worth all of this. Scotty sighed.

“Fine. I’ll try.” He knew he was bound to fail, but if it would get Eric off of his back, he was willing to try. “Can you not record this?” He nodded to the phone in Eric’s hand.

“Not a chance.”

“Then I won’t do it.”

“I’m going to record you even if I say I’m not, so isn’t it better just to see me openly doing it?” Scotty sighed. “Cute little baby sighs.” Eric cooed. Scotty rolled his eyes and muttered something distinctly unbabylike under his breath.

“Here I go. I guess.” He said, running forward. The way that the hoses waved around all directions convinced him that his best hope was just to stay as dry as possible. He would get wet. There was no doubt about that.

Scotty charged forward and leaped, his feet slipping in the wet grass just as he left the ground, causing him to wave his arms and kick his legs in an ungainly manner as he flew over the hydrant, the sound of water against the plastic of his swim diaper as loud as thunder to his ears. He grimaced as he landed, Eric’s laughter echoing in his ears just as much as the plastic sound had.

“Adorable!” Eric exclaimed. “That was great, baby!”

“I am not a baby!” Scotty seethed.

“Whatever.” Eric said. “Now that you’re wet, why don’t you” he paused. “Careful, Scotty! There’s a bee by you!” Scotty froze. Eric stood up from his chair and walked slowly toward Scotty. “I think you should be okay. He’s just buzzing around. Move closer to the sprinkler and I think it’ll be okay.” Scotty nodded. Sure, he hated Eric being bossy, but his life could be at stake!

Eric smiled as Scotty inched toward the sprinkler. There was not really a bee, but he did not mind using Scotty’s sheer

terror of being stung by a bee to his advantage. Just last summer, at their old house, Scotty had been stung and sobbed uncontrollably for most of the afternoon. Thinking back, it amazed Eric that he had not realized right then and there how much of a baby Scotty really was. He had even called him Scott back then, a thought that seemed entirely foreign now. Scotty was a baby, a baby named Scotty who played in the sprinkler in nothing but his Finding Nemo diaper.

“I think you’re safe.” Eric said. “Just stay in the sprinkler and the bee won’t bother you, baby.” He settled into his chair, smiling at the cute picture before him as Scotty kept nervously looking for bees, hiding in the safety of the sprinkler.

Nervous as he was, Scotty had to admit that the cool water from the sprinkler felt good on his shoulders and back. Before long, he forgot himself and began to just have fun. He kept trying to jump over the sprinkler, then dodge around the jets. He knew that Eric was probably having the time of his life watching him and he soon came down to earth. He looked over to the green plastic chair. Eric was gone!

He looked around before he saw Eric standing over by the fence that divided the back yard from the side of the house. Who was he talking to? Eric laughed and shifted slightly, allowing Scotty to see the girl he was talking to. Oh, god! A girl and here he was, playing in the sprinkler in nothing but a freaking swim diaper!

Scotty’s heart pounded. He had to get inside. Now. He headed

toward the house, but Eric spotted him.

“Scotty, come over and say hi to Daisy.” Scotty froze. At least Eric had called him his name instead of baby. He seethed as he realized that was good news to him. “Scotty, come here. Don’t be rude.” With a groan, Scotty walked over. There wasn’t even a towel for him to wrap around himself.

The girl, Daisy, smiled as she watched the small boy immodestly in just a swim diaper shuffle over.

“And who is this little cutie?”

“Say hi, Scotty.”

“Hi.”

“Scotty, huh? Your baby brother?”

“What gave it away?” Eric asked with a chuckle. “He’s just trying to beat the heat with his favorite sprinkler.”

“Very cute.” Daisy smiled down at him. She looked to be about his age, but he could tell that she fully bought into the idea that he was a little kid. His current outfit did not help.

“Can I go inside now?”

“We’ll go inside in a sec, baby.” Eric said. Scotty’s cheeks burned as Daisy cooed.

“He’s not a baby. He’s a big boy.” She said just about as patronizingly as she could. “Aren’t you?” Scotty felt as if he could not blush any deeper than he already was as he nodded meekly, fighting back the tears of embarrassment welling up

in his eyes. Eric almost preternaturally sensed Scotty's rapidly developing tantrum, kneeling down and hugging Scotty. After all, what better way to impress this attractive girl than playing up the part of the caring big brother?

"I think I'd better get little Scotty inside."

"Oh, ok." She smiled and waved down at the boy. "Buh-bye, Scotty! It was nice meeting you." She glanced at Eric, her warm smile taking on a different meaning. "And I'll definitely text you." Eric grinned up at her. "Once you're done babysitting."

## *Chapter 4*

# Eric and Scotty - Chapter 4: Tadpoles

“Are you excited for lifeguard class this afternoon?” Eric asked as he folded the last pair of Scotty’s underwear, placing it on the neat stack in front of him. He loved saving Scotty’s underwear for last so that it sat right on top of the pile, all brightly colored, even compared to their six year old cousin Gavin’s hand-me-downs that made up the vast majority of Scotty’s wardrobe. Scotty did not answer, still feeling terribly cautious. Did Eric actually plan to let him take lifeguard class with him? He had to have something planned, right? “Are you listening? Earth to baby Scotty!” That proved it. There was no way he was going to get to be a normal lifeguard. Was there something where they would have to practice rescuing someone? Maybe Eric had pulled strings and gotten Scotty enrolled as the practice victim?

Eric chuckled and pulled Scotty into his lap before cradling him in his arms. Sure, Scotty was a little lanky for cradling, but he was so light and it amused Eric to no end that he could hold a boy three years older than him so easily.

“Whatcha thinking about, bud?” He asked, smiling down at Scotty in his LEGO Ninjago t-shirt and matching red shorts. Somehow, it made him seem more like a toddler than spending the day in nothing but his Spongebob briefs.

“Uh, lifeguard class.” It technically was not a lie, right?

“I knew you were excited! Me and my baby brother, learning

all sorts of fun things!” He saw Scotty’s nose wrinkle. “You know what I mean. Don’t you?” Scotty nodded begrudgingly, his soft annoyed sighs always reminding Eric of a cute little puppy. “Well, tell me.”

“I’m your brother who’s still a baby in”

“In so very very many ways.” Eric said with a chuckle, kissing Scotty’s cheek. “But we need to get our laundry put away first, don’t we? Do you want to carry it up to our room?” Eric watched as a mischievous grin grew on his brother’s face. What was Scotty up to?

“I can’t. I’m just a baby.” He said. At first, Eric could not help but admire his gall. A mischievous grin of his own began to develop. Two could play at that game.

“What was that? I couldn’t quite hear it.” Eric wondered if Scotty had the nerve to actually say it again.

“I can’t carry the laundry. I’m just a baby.” Eric’s eyebrows rose, impressed. Maybe all of this had finally gotten through to Scotty and he was finally accepting his role? No, this was clearly the old lazy Scotty coming through in a new, undeniably clever way. The Scotty who went days without changing his underwear, who rarely showered and never made his bed. The Scotty who walked around with untied shoes no matter how many times he tripped. The Scotty who, whether he knew it or not, was clearly a baby begging to be taken care of.

“I see.” Eric said. “Well, in that case, I guess I have to figure

out some way to carry both the laundry and the baby to our room, don't I?"

"Huh?"

"Babies can't walk." Eric replied simply. He stood up, shifting Scotty so that he rested against his shoulder, and gave his bottom a pat as he tried to figure out how to do this. He felt the lines of Scotty's briefs and grinned as he remembered that he had dressed the tiny fourteen year old in Spongebob undies today. The baby blue elastic on the legs and waist, in addition to Spongebob and Patrick all over the body of the briefs had screamed baby brother, so of course Scotty had been put in them. For a moment, Eric pondered asking Scotty if he remembered the last time he put his own underwear on.

"Where are we going?"

"Shh, I'm just finding that baby carrier we got in one of the donation boxes."

"What? No!"

"If you were big, I'd scold you to remind you to use your inside voice, but babies don't know any better, do they?" Eric cooed.

"Eric, seriously. I was just joking."

"No, no." Eric said. "You were clearly telling the truth. It was my mistake to treat you like a big boy when you're obviously a baby."

"I am not!"

“Don’t argue, baby. We both heard what you said.” Eric shifted Scotty slightly. “Found it! Let’s get you into your carrier.”

“Eric, please.”

“It’s about time you learn some manners, but it won’t stop me from getting you all snug and cozy in your carrier.”

“Eric, please. No.”

“Sorry, but baby Scotty’s gotta be all safe and snug.”

“I” he stammered. “I won’t fit!”

“Then what are you so afraid of? Tell you what, if you don’t fit, I’ll put you down and you can be a big boy again.”

“Really?” Eric laughed.

“You’ll still be my baby brother, but you’ll walk like a big boy.”

“Oh.” Scotty said in a small voice. He had thought... but that was clearly crazy. Eric would never let him grow up and it was foolish to think otherwise.

Scotty’s heart fell again when he realized that he did fit in the carrier. It was a tight fit, but not so much so that he might have to be cut out of it. How was it possible? Eric always made a big deal out of how short and small he was, but most of that was exaggeration. He was so baffled by it that he barely even reacted as Eric put the carrier on, Scotty’s feet dangling just above the floor.

“Can’t wear it all day, but I think it’ll do while we’re getting chores done.” Eric said. “Good thing big brother’s so strong, huh, baby?” The humiliated teen stayed silent. This was impossible.

He mulled it over while Eric took their laundry to their room. How could he fit in the baby carrier? Obviously, he was too tall for it since his feet only just barely missed the floor and it made his shorts ride up to the point where he felt like he had a permanent wedgie, but here he was, being carried in a baby carrier by his little brother.

It felt almost defiant to think of Eric as his little brother with how much he had been insisting Scotty was really the baby. He knew that if he told his parents, they would never believe half of the things Eric did to him. The few things they did believe, they would assume were just Eric teasing and Scotty being melodramatic, like always. Still, it was worth it. It would be nice to hear them say he was just exaggerating like teenagers do because it would prove to Eric, his little brother, that he was a teenager.

"Alright, ready to come out?" Eric asked.

"Yes."

"Baby, what's the magic word?"

"Yes, please."

"Good." Eric grinned, pleased Scotty had immediately responded to 'baby'. "Just one last thing. What's your favorite thing about being a baby?"

"I'm not a baby, Eric!"

"Alright, how about you think about it while I'm getting you out of your baby Scotty carrier?" Scotty grumbled and looked away, blushing as Eric lifted him out of the baby carrier. At least he was free, he thought as he adjusted his shorts.

"Do you got it yet, squirt? Your favorite thing about being a baby?"

"No." With surprising speed, Eric whipped Scotty's t-shirt off. He shivered as he stood there now shirtless. "What was that?"

"What's your favorite thing about being a baby?" Eric asked gently.

"I am not a baby!" He said insistently even as his shorts went down. He yelped and covered his Spongebob briefs rather than try to retrieve his shorts from Eric's clutches.

"Buddy, every time you mumble instead of answering clearly, you lose an article of clothing. Well, you're down to just your cute little undies, so if you don't want to be nakee, a nakee little baby, it's time to answer clearly. What's your favorite thing about being a baby?" Scotty had no idea. He knew Eric would never let it go, so he had to think of something. Anything.

"Uh... having you take care of me?" He regretted it immediately when he saw how Eric's face lit up. Eric was genuinely touched.

"Aw, thanks, buddy." He hugged Scotty, completely

unperturbed by his brother being in nothing but his Spongebob undies still. “We should get ready to go, hmm? We’re gonna be the best two lifeguards the community center’s ever seen!”

Despite Scotty’s whines, Eric made a point of getting them completely ready to go, including taking everything to the front door, before finally dressing Scotty. There was something so fun about being shadowed all through the house by his brother in nothing but brightly colored Spongebob briefs, so different from the underwear Eric had worn for years now. How had he or anyone ever seen Scotty as anything other than a little boy who was barely out of babyhood? He knew it was technically called infancy, but babyhood just sounded better.

“Alright, I think we are all set.” His gaze fell on Scotty and he gasped melodramatically. “Buddy! you can’t go to the rec center in your Spongebob undies!” Eric teased. “I thought you wanted to be a lifeguard!” Scotty remained silent. He knew deep down that there was more chance of him sprouting wings than him actually becoming a lifeguard. Every time they had gone to swim at the rec center, Eric had insisted on him wearing those stupid floaties and a swim diaper. He would be the laughingstock of the whole class! His eyes widened as realization struck. That. That was it. That had to be Eric’s game. But how would he get out of it?

“Um, I don’t feel good.”

“Don’t you start with that, Scotty. I would have noticed if you

had a fever.”

“Not a fever. My stomach’s kind of” his voice trailed off. Eric had to know he was lying.

“Hey, squirt,” Eric said. “You don’t need to worry. I’m nervous about lifeguard classes too, but we’ll be taking them together.” His voice was so sincere, Scotty found himself actually believing in the lifeguard classes, if only for a moment. “So be brave for me and we’ll do great. Together.”

“Okay.” Scotty mumbled, a bit taken aback by how earnest Eric seemed. Eric smiled and gave him a hug.

“Ready to go?” Scotty nodded and Eric dressed him without incident, other than a playful snap or two of the waistband of the boy’s colorful underwear. “We’re gonna take the bus today, remember?” The bus had been the solution to Scotty’s attempt to escape their frequent trips to the community center by whining about the long walk. Eric had considered a stroller, but figured that bus fares were much cheaper. At least, for now.

“Here’s our bus!” Eric announced, picking Scotty up and carrying him up the steps. He paid their fare, even if it was really only his as the bus drivers all seemed to understand that Scotty was small enough that he rode for free, and took them to a seat, only then setting Scotty down. He was so cute that Eric had to resist the urge to tickle him the whole short ride to the community center.

“Are you texting that Daisy girl again?” Scotty asked,

unaware of his brother's thoughts.

"Naw." Eric replied. "I'm too busy babysitting to try and get with her." He smiled down at Scotty. "Maybe once my baby brother's a little more able to take care of himself." In truth, Eric was not sure about dating a girl yet. Sure, Daisy was pretty and she had looked good when they had met, but Eric still was not sure he really wanted to date yet. As mature as he seemed compared to the baby beside him, Eric was only eleven, after all. Scotty needed him anyway and made for a convenient excuse when Daisy had invited him to the movies. Scotty made a sound almost like a whimper, but restrained himself.

"We're here for class." Eric said at the front counter. "Oh, but real quick, can I check Scotty's birthday in the system? I saw you have surprises for members!" He leaned over and looked at the screen. "Six and a half?" He chuckled. "No, he's turning five later this summer."

"Oh, let me fix that!" The receptionist said, matching Eric's soft tone.

Scotty barely paid attention to the check-in at the reception area. He was so focused on trying to figure out Eric's angle, he missed that he had just lost eighteen months at the front counter. He rolled his eyes as Eric pulled his wrist to the scanner to scan his under eight wristband.

"Put me down." He tried to make it sound more like a command than a whine as Eric picked him up. It still sounded whiny to him, but the important thing was, it worked. Eric set

him down and smiled.

“Alright, but you’ll need to be careful on the stairs down to the pool locker rooms.” It was not until they reached the concrete stairs that Scotty realized just what Eric meant. “Stop right there, Scotty.” He froze. He was holding the railing, wasn’t he? “Since you were so eager to say you’re a baby earlier, you need to go down the stairs like a baby.”

“And what’s that mean?”

“Ask nicely.”

“What’s that mean, please?”

“Someone’s snarky today.” Eric laughed. “But I don’t want us to be late for lifeguard class.” Scotty rolled his eyes. He was still pretending like they were going to a normal lifeguard class? What was his game? “So I’ll help you. Ask me to please tell you how to go down stairs like a baby.” Scotty groaned.

“Come on.”

“Here.” Eric crouched down to his level. “Whisper in my ear. Nice and clear.” Scotty obeyed with a healthy dose of sarcasm. “Alright, well there are two ways. Way number one is to ask me to carry you down. Way number two is to crawl backwards. We already know you don’t want to be carried, so…” Eric jogged down the short staircase, not even touching the railing. “Come on. Down you come, baby Scotty!” There was no one around, but that did not make it any less humiliating for Scotty to crawl down them, looking over his

shoulder. Eric scooped him up the moment he reached the bottom, carrying him into the locker room.

Scotty gasped as he saw the locker room busier than it had ever been. There were a good half dozen guys around his age getting changed into their trunks for swimming. Or lifeguard class, he realized. Eric set him down a short distance away, hardly even glancing over at the others as he summarily stripped his squirming brother down to his underwear. Scotty looked away as he realized that he was the same age as them, but the only one in the whole room in briefs of any sort.

“Can we hurry up?” He mumbled, but he knew Eric never deviated from their system and definitely would not with an audience a short distance away. Scotty always had to sit there in nothing but his Underoos until Eric was completely ready. Only then would he turn his attention on dressing Scotty the rest of the way.

“Hey! You here for the lifeguard class?” One of the teens said, walking over.

“Sure am.” Eric said, grinning. “I’m Eric.”

“I’m Trent. And who’s this?” He looked down at Scotty.

“Oh, this is Scotty, my baby brother.”

“Eric!” Trent laughed at Scotty’s immediate reaction.

“C’mon, man. He’s not a baby. Look at his cool undies! Spongebob’s awesome, right?” The humiliated Scotty could only nod. “High five, buddy!” He held up his hand

expectantly until Scotty smacked it, his hand dwarfed by Trent's. "I better get out there. See you in a bit, Eric! Scotty!"

"Alright, squirt. Undies off, diaper on." Eric said. Scotty looked over in panic. There was no way Trent didn't hear that!

It felt like an eternity before Eric finally decreed Scotty ready. He had seen the floaties in the bag, but thankfully, Eric had not insisted on him wearing them. Scotty would have bet a week of wearing those floaties around the clock that he was not actually going to lifeguard class, but the last thing he needed was for all those teenagers, who had definitely seen his Little Swimmers, to see him in that ridiculous get-up.

"Alright, squirt, hold my hand and let's get going." Scotty complied, looking down at the tiled floor between his octopus flip flops as they made their way through the locker room and out into the pool area.

Scotty heard voices and he looked up to see that they were heading over to a group of little kids. This was it then. Scotty stopped walking.

"No."

"Yes." Eric said. "It's perfect. It's at the same time as lifeguard classes and it's age appropriate."

"Eric!" Scotty whispered. "You know it's not. I am your big" Eric dropped down enough to look Scotty in the eyes, gripping his chin gently to make sure he could not look away.

"You are not my big brother. You are, and I quote you

yourself, a baby in some ways and a big boy in others. A baby. Babies don't get to go to lifeguard class. Do you know what they do get to do?"

"What?" Scotty looked away, fighting back tears desperately.

"Babies go to daycare. Big boys go to Tadpoles swimming. Which do you want to do?"

"But Eric"

"That's your choice, squirt. Make your pick." Scotty groaned and stomped his foot.

"Fine. Swimming."

"Ask nicely."

"Eric!"

"Ask nicely or you know what we'll do? We'll go back into the locker room and you can go to Tadpoles in your floaties and diaper. Just your floaties and diaper." Scotty knew Eric was serious.

"Please let me do Tadpoles. Uh, big brother."

"That's much more like it. Yes, you can do Tadpoles." He hugged Scotty, carefully adjusting his swim trunks to expose just the slightest hint of his Little Swimmers.

"Well, hello there!" An effervescent girl said, running over. She wore the red swimsuit of a lifeguard and looked as if she might be in college. She smiled down at Scotty. "What's your name, buddy?" Eric squeezed Scotty's shoulder.

“Scotty.”

“Yep, you’re one of mine! My name’s Jacquie and we’re going to be swimming together. Aren’t you excited?” Scotty shrugged. “I bet you like Spider-Man, don’t you?” She laughed as Scotty looked confused. “Don’t worry, I’m used to the shy ones. We’ll get Scotty talking in no time.”

“Sounds good!” Eric grinned and tousled Scotty’s hair. “I gotta hurry over to lifeguard class.”

“Oh, yeah. Mr. Travers is a hard” Jacquie stopped and glanced down at Scotty. “Hardbutt.” Eric and Jacquie laughed as if they had successfully fooled the diminutive fourteen year old between them.

“Bye-bye, Scotty. Can you give big brother a bye-bye kiss?”

“Kiss?” Eric laughed and kissed both of Scotty’s cheeks.

“We’ll work on it later. Be a good boy for Jacquie.” He smoothly took Scotty’s hand and gave it to Jacquie so she could lead him over to the group.

She chatted animatedly, but every word washed over Scotty as he could not believe what had happened. Judging by the kids around him, he was in the absolute youngest group. There could not be a kid over five years old here. Well, other than him. He knew that Eric had registered him in the rec center system as younger than eight, but how had this been allowed?

"This mat is going to be our home base." Jacquie said.

"Whenever I say 'home base', I want all my little Tadpoles to come over here, but don't run. We don't run by the pool, okay?"

"Okay." Everyone except Scotty said in unison.

"My name is Lifeguard Jacquie. Can you all say hi, Miss Jacquie?"

"Oh, god." Scotty muttered. He was going to lose his mind from boredom within the next five minutes. He just knew it.

"Hi, Miss Jacquie!" Everyone else said cheerfully.

"Now, the first rule of swimming for us Tadpoles is be safe around the pool and listen to Lifeguard Julie, kay?"

"Okay!"

"Second rule, we're all friends here and we want to have fun, don't we?"

"Yes!" A hand went up.

"Oh, a question already? What's your name, sweetie?"

"Jamie." The little boy said, suddenly struck with nervousness.

"What's your question?"

"I have a dog." Scotty snorted, but no one seemed to notice.

"That's nice, but let's focus on swimming, hmm? Do you know how to swim, Jamie?" The little boy shook his head. Scotty scoffed. He knew how to swim. He did not belong

here. The second they hit the water, he would prove it.

He quickly realized that that would not be happening soon. After Miss Jacquie finished going over the rules, she had them all get into a circle for introductions. Scotty did not understand how it was possible for a bunch of five and six year olds to be the same height as him. Miss Jacquie must have arranged them by height or something, he thought. Either that or the boy standing next to him with the same trunks was stuck in the same situation as him.

“And what’s your name?” Miss Jacquie asked, pointing to Scotty. With all the eyes on him, Scotty tugged up on his swim trunks to try to keep his swim diaper from peeking. Swim undies, he corrected himself, despite Eric not calling them that since the very first time he had been put in them. God, why did his brother do these things to him? “What’s your name, buddy?” Miss Jacquie repeated, no stranger to shy kids. There was a reason why she always requested the Tadpole group.

“Uh, Scott.” He mumbled.

“Kids, this is Scotty. And what’s a fun fact about you, Scotty?” He just shrugged, not wanting to play along at all. “There must be something fun about you. We know you like Spider-man, so...” she smiled. “Got it. Scotty’s big brother Eric is learning how to be a lifeguard, isn’t that right?” Scotty nodded. “I bet you think your big brother’s so cool, huh?” Scotty did not even nod. “Well, I bet you’ll grow up to be big and strong just like him. High five, Scotty!” He blushed and

complied.

“My name’s Paul.” The boy next to him said when it was his turn. “And I have a little brother named Scotty too.” Scotty felt his face burn again. What were the odds of that? Matching swimsuits and his little brother had Scotty’s name. I’m Scott though, he thought, even if he had not been called that all summer.

Scotty tuned out of the rest of the introductions. What did he care? As soon as they hit the water, he would prove he was an accomplished swimmer. Eric would regret not confining him to the floaties that had made him unable to do much more than bounce along the floor of the shallowest end of the pool.

“Alright, kiddorinos!” Jacquie said. “Let’s go over to the pool, but make sure you walk!” The kids moved as a mass and Scotty followed suit, though he glanced enviously over to the lifeguard students at the other pool. Could he slip away? Hiding in the locker room had to be at least a million times better than participating in a swimming class for four and five year olds. “C’mon, Scotty. No need to be scared! It’s like a big bathtub!”

She took him by the hand and Scotty found himself too distracted by how appealingly soft her skin was to really care that she led him over to the kids, who all sat on the edge of the pool with their feet in the water. In fact, Jacquie did look pretty nice in her swimsuit, Scotty thought. Just wish I wasn’t in Spider-Man trunks and a freaking swim diaper!

“Dammit, Eric.” He muttered as he took his place. Was this

all they were going to do, he wondered as Jacquie got them started on kicking.

They did end up doing more by the end of class, though none of it seemed to Scotty to be actual swimming. They played Simon Says, and then, gripping the edge of the pool at the shallow end, practiced blowing bubbles and coming up for air.

“Aren’t we gonna learn how to swim?” Paul asked, conveying Scotty’s impatience perfectly.

“We have to cover the fundamentals first.” Jacquie said cheerfully. “Let’s all go – walk – to our home base and we can finish for the day.” Scotty fumed. Now, in the chaos of kids climbing the stairs out of the pool, this was his chance to prove he was too skilled to be in the baby class!

Scotty launched himself off of the wall and began to swim toward the deep end, confident in his teenage arrogance that Jacquie would be unable to deny that he was clearly too skilled – and too old – to be in this class.

He had not even made it to the midpoint of the pool before hands grabbed him and lifted him up.

"No, no, Scotty sweetie." Jacquie said gently as she took him back toward the stairs at the shallow end. "We're taking it slow. The first pool rule is what?" Scotty remained silent. He refused to play her game! Had she not even noticed how well he had been swimming? "Kids, let's try and help Scotty remember the first pool rule. What is it?"

"Be safe and listen to Miss Jacquie!" The kids said in high-

pitched, overly exuberant unison.

"That's right. Scotty, how about you go sit next to Paul since you two have matching trunks. Isn't that fun?" Scotty groaned, but complied. He had been so close to proving his real age!

Jacque made them all repeat the rules of the pool twice before saying good-bye to them with a cheerful wave and a promise that they would have even more fun next week.

"Now stay sitting on the mat until you see your grown-up." Scotty watched as the other students were led away by their parents for a bit until he saw Eric strolling over. "Is that your grown-up, Eric?" She had seen him, what? An hour ago?

"He's my brother."

"Your big brother." Eric said with a laugh. "Looks like you had a lot of fun today, huh?" Scotty remained silent as he carried him into the locker room. Most of the other Tadpoles had left with their parents rather than change, so the locker room was all but annoyed. "What was that boy's name that had the same trunks as you?"

"Paul. Let me guess," Scotty muttered in irritation. "You're gonna see if Paul can babysit me." Eric laughed.

"He's like five, squirt." He had Scotty stand on the bench and pulled down his trunks so that Scotty wore nothing but his Finding Nemo diaper. "I don't think he'll be allowed to babysit you."

“There’s a dumb eleven year old babysitting me.” Scotty said under his breath.

“Well, it’s different when we’re brothers, squirt.” Eric said, fighting back the Scotty-like urge to add that he was almost twelve. “Besides, you obviously need me to take care of you. And why’s that?”

“I’m a baby in some ways and a big boy in others.” He muttered.

“A baby in a lot of ways, but you still get big boy undies, don’t you?” He held up Scotty’s Spongebob briefs. Scotty grunted. “They’re more of big boy undies than your swim diaper, aren’t they?” Scotty grunted again. “Someone’s fussy. Maybe Paul is big enough to babysit you.”

“Eric!”

“I’m just joking, though maybe we should set up a playdate. How’s that sound?”

“Playdate?”

“Mhm!” Eric laughed and dressed Scotty, patting his head. “Your hair’s wet, so you must have done some real swimming today, huh?”

“Yeah, right.” Eric picked Scotty up.

“Ok, we gotta rush so I don’t miss more of my class.”

“Your class isn’t done yet?”

“Yep. Lifeguard class lasts three hours, so” he carried the

squirming Scotty out of the locker room. “But I’ve got a great plan to keep you busy for the next couple hours.” Scotty saw the sign on the door and snarled.

“Daycare?” Scotty tried to get out of Eric’s arms, but he kept him snug against his chlorine-scented chest.

“Yep. It’ll keep you out of trouble. Now, use your inside voice.”

“But Eric! Daycare’s for”

“Baby brothers who just got done with Tadpoles?” Eric remarked with a knowing smile. Scotty growled.

“Eric. Seriously! You can’t do this!”

“It’s only until I’m done with lifeguard class.”

“But... every week?”

“Smart baby.” Eric said. “Yes, every week, you’ll get to play in daycare while I’m learning to swim. Now, do I tell them you’re a baby or a big boy?”

“Eric, this isn’t fair.”

“Baby then?” Scotty sighed.

“Big boy.”

“Well, hello there, Scotty. How about you go play over on the carpet there while I get your details squared away with your brother?” Scotty groaned, but wandered over to the toddler toys on the carpet, listening carefully as Eric ran down the

details.

“He’ll only be here for a few hours, so I don’t think he needs a nap, no.”

“What about the potty?”

“Oh, he can definitely do that.” Eric laughed, glancing over at Scotty. “He wears Little Swimmers, but that’s more just in case. He’ll be turning five later this summer.” Scotty felt like his face could not possibly turn any redder. “He was just talking about his big boy undies earlier.”

“Ah, of course. We’ll let you know if there are any problems, but it sounds like he’ll be an easy one.”

Sure enough, daycare proved to go smoothly. Sure, Scotty grumbled about having to color a picture of a turtle and eat a snack of a graham cracker and a carton of milk, but it was not like he was bottlefed or anything. The only other kid in daycare was a three year old named AJ, who decided that anything Scotty did, he needed to do too.

“Alright, I think your big brother might be a little late coming to pick you up, kiddo.” Sarah, the woman running the daycare, said. “So I guess you’ll join AJ for naptime.”

“What?”

“C’mon, Scotty.” Sarah said. “It’ll be easier if he sees you taking a nap too. Besides, aren’t you tired from swimming earlier?”

“Not really.” All the same, Sarah took him by the hand and

led him over to the mats she had laid out for him and AJ.

“Isn’t that cute?” She mused as she removed his shoes.

“What is?”

“You two have the same size feet!” She playfully put his foot next to AJ’s. His was obviously bigger, but not as much as they should have been, he thought sourly. “Alright, let’s lie down, boys, and try to nap.” Just then, the door opened. Was it Eric? A woman walked in.

“Oh, look at that perfect timing!” She said, smiling at the boys on the floor.

“Mommy!” AJ jumped up and into the woman’s arms.

“I missed you too, kiddo. Spin class got canceled. Again.” She said to Sarah, rolling her eyes. “So I figured AJ can nap on the way home.” She reached out to take AJ’s shoes from Sarah. “Oops, those aren’t his!”

“Oh, sorry.” She handed the correct shoes to AJ’s mom before waving goodbye. “Just you and me now, Scotty!”

“This means I don’t have to nap, right?”

“You’re already all settled, so why don’t you try to nap until your big brother gets here?” She smiled and pulled the blanket back up to his chin. “Sweet dreams, Scotty!”

“Yeah, I guess we should.” Scotty’s eyes opened at the sound of Eric’s voice, even though he was whispering. He sat up and saw both Eric and Sarah watching him.

“Welcome back from dreamland!” Sarah said. “Guess I was right about a nap being a good idea, huh?” Eric chuckled as he tucked Scotty’s clogs into his backpack.

“Ready to go, buddy? You’ll be back to daycare next week.” He picked Scotty up, setting him against his hip. “Oh, you know what? Let’s go potty real quick.”

“Right through that door.” Sarah said with a smile. Eric carried Scotty in and, tugging down his shorts and underwear in one motion, sat him down on the toilet.

“Go peepee, Scotty.”

“Eric!” He said in warning.

“What? You spent three hours at daycare and you even told me earlier your favorite part about being my baby was me taking care of you. Do you really think Sarah sees you as a big kid? Or Jacquie?” He brushed Scotty’s cheek. “You are a baby and you need to get used to people seeing you as a baby.”

“I am not a baby!”

“Don’t mumble, Scotty.” Eric said. “Now, go peepee before we go.” Scotty thought about holding it and wetting himself on the bus since he knew Eric would make him ride in his lap again, but knew that would only make things so much worse for him. Trying his best to forget about Eric right there, he peed. “Good baby!” Eric praised. Scotty sighed and wondered if he would ever be able to be big again.