

Chapter 1

PAD THE BEAVER

LEARNS TO SWIM

Pad the Beaver was afraid of the water. His mother tried and tried to get Pad into the water to teach him how to swim. But, as hard as she tried, Pad was just too afraid. One day, Pad's mother was teaching his sister, Paddle, to swim. Pad sat on top of their lodge and watched. Cheek the Chipmunk was passing by when he noticed Pad sitting on his home and crying.

"What's the matter, Pad?" asked Cheek.

"I'm afraid of the water!" replied Pad.

"Why are you afraid?" asked Cheek. "Look at your twin sister. She is swimming like a fish!"

"I know! She is not afraid of the water, but I am terrified. I am scared I will sink!"

"Have you even given it a try?" Cheek asked.

"No," said Pad. "I am too fearful!"

Cheek then inquired, "Have you ever touched the water?"

"No, Cheek, I am scared!"

"But, if you never touch the water, how will you ever know if you're afraid of it?" uttered Cheek.

Pad thought about that for a minute and exclaimed, "I guess I will never know!"

Just then, Musky the Muskrat swam up to them and inquired, "What is going on here, why do you look so sad, Pad?"

"Oh, Musky, I am afraid of the water!"

"There is nothing to it, Pad!" countered Musky. "Look at me. I use my tail to help me swim. You will never sink, Pad. You have a huge and beautiful flat tail. You just need to learn how to use it. My tail is thin and short and it helps me to swim just fine. Let's go over to the shallow end of the pond, and I will teach you how to swim. But first you need to ask your mother for permission."

Pad hollered to his mother, and she quickly swam over to him. Pad was surprised at how fast his mother swam to him.

"Mom, is it alright if I go with Cheek and Musky?"

"Why? What are you three up to!" asked mother beaver.

"Cheek and Musky are going to teach me how to swim."

Mother beaver responded, "I think that is a good idea! I will be close by if you need me."

So, the three friends headed off. Once they got to the edge of the shallow side of the pond, Musky jumped in. Cheek looked at Pad and said, "Ok, Pad, you can do it!"

Pad cried, "I can't do this! I feel like I am going to throw up!"

Suddenly, a fish by the name of Fin stuck his head out of the water. "How is everyone doing on this fine day?" exclaimed Fin. "I just saw Pad's mother and she told me you were teaching Pad how to swim. How is he doing?"

"He hasn't even gotten a toenail wet yet!" said Musky.

"He is afraid of the water!" added Cheek.

"Afraid of the water!" exclaimed Fin.

Pad murmured, "Yes, I am so afraid."

Fin encouragingly replied with, "Well, if I had a tail like yours, Pad, I would never be afraid to swim."

"Really, do you think so?" Pad said.

"I know so!" stated Fin. "You can do it, Pad! I will be right here beside you. I won't let you sink!"

Pad then stuck his feet into the water. Fin wiggled his tail to encourage Pad. Cheek and Musky also put their feet into the water, offering more support.

"What do you think, Pad, are you ready?" asked Fin.

"I am ready!" Pad excitedly shouted.

"Let's do it!" bellowed Musky.

Pad slowly moved into the water. Fin and Musky continued to encourage Pad and showed him how to move his tail in such a way to stay afloat. Pad realizes that he truly won't sink as he begins

to propel himself through the water. A glow of confidence appears on his face and he exclaims, "I did it! I did it!"

Mother beaver looked on with pride as her son took his first spin around the pond. Pad was now a swimmer. Around and around the pond Pad swam.

Finally, Pad swam toward the shore and whacked his tail with joy on the pond's surface.

"Yippee! Yahoo!" he yelled. "I am a swimmer!"