

Paul's Birthday Surprise

by Elizabeth Trach

Paul woke up feeling very happy. Today was his birthday. Paul was now five years old.

At breakfast, Dad poured Paul some cereal into a bowl. Then he added a little milk. "See you later, Paul," Dad said. Dad grabbed his lunch and ran out the door.

Paul ate a bite of cereal. He felt sad. Dad always made him a special pancake for his birthday. He made them with chocolate chips. Did Dad forget his birthday?

Paul looked across the table at his baby brother. Chip was only one year old. He needed help to do everything. Chip banged on the table and laughed. Mom put another spoonful of baby food in his mouth.

"Mom, can we go to the park today?" Paul asked.

Mom looked over Chip's head to look out the kitchen window. "I don't think so," she said. "It looks like it will rain."

Paul frowned. He wanted his birthday to be special. It was not turning out that way.

After breakfast, Mom had to give Chip a bath. Chip was a messy eater. Mom put him in the bath tub and began to scrub. She reached for the shampoo, but it was empty. "Paul, please come here!"

Paul got to the bathroom and Mom handed him Chip's favorite rubber duck. "Please play with your brother until I can get a new shampoo bottle."

Paul handed Chip the toy. Chip threw it down in the water so it would make a big splash. The duck bounced out of the tub and on to the floor.

Paul picked it up and gave it back to Chip. Chip threw it again. He laughed.

Paul knew Chip was having fun, but he didn't think this was a very good game. Chip was getting everything wet. Mom came back to the bathroom with the new bottle and an extra towel.

"Thank you for helping, Paul," she said. She handed him the towel.

Paul turned to leave. Chip started to cry. "Pau! Pau!"

Paul looked at Mom. "Did he just say my name?"

"Pau!" cried Chip.

Mom laughed. "Well, I guess your name is his first word," she said. "That's a pretty special birthday present!"

Paul smiled. His birthday was turning out to be a wonderful day after all.

