

The Seal's Penguin Friend



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On a bright icy shore, where the sea sparkled like crushed glass, a little penguin named Pip marched along the snow. Pip wore a small red scarf with white stripes, and one feather tuft bounced on top of his head. He loved to explore. "What will I find today?" Pip chirped, hopping over a crackly puddle of ice.



Near the water's edge, a young seal pup poked his whiskery nose out of the waves. His name was Splash, and his silver-grey fur was speckled with darker spots. He carried a tiny blue satchel across his body. "Hello up there!" Splash called. "Is the ice nice for walking today?" Pip grinned down at him. "Come and see!"



Splash hauled himself onto the icy shore with a soft flop. His big brown eyes went wide. The snow stretched far and white, and the sky was huge and blue. "I have never climbed this far up the shore," he said. Pip wiggled his orange feet. "Then let's go on an adventure together!" he said. "We can explore!"



Off they went, side by side. Pip waddled quickly, his little flipper wings held out for balance. Splash shuffled along on his short front flippers, leaving a smooth trail behind him. They passed towers of blue ice that glittered in the sun. "Look at that one!" said Pip. "It looks like a castle!"



At the ice castle, Splash found a small pool of open water. He slipped in with a happy splash and swam in a circle. "The water is lovely and clear," he said. Pip stood on a ledge and peered down. "I can see pebbles on the bottom!" he said. "This is the best adventure ever!"



They traveled farther than either had ever gone before. Pip chatted about everything he saw, and Splash told funny stories about the fish he had met. The sun climbed higher, and the ice began to shine and soften. Neither friend noticed how far they had wandered. Then Pip stopped. "Where is the shore we started from?"



Splash looked around. Every direction looked the same: white, blue, and glittering. His whiskers drooped a little. "I am not sure," he said quietly. "Maybe it's a bit tricky to find the way back." Pip patted his friend's flipper. "Don't worry," he said bravely. "We will find a safe route together. We just need to look."



They came to a place where the ice was cracked and broken into wobbly pieces. Splash took one careful step, and the ice groaned under him. "This way looks unsafe," he said. Pip nodded. "I am too small to test it," he said. "But I have an idea! I can climb up high and look around. I am good at climbing!"



Pip scrambled up a tall icy bank, digging in with his orange webbed feet. His red scarf flapped in the wind. At the top, he stood on his tiptoes. "I can see a lot from here!" he called down. "There is a calm, sheltered channel of water behind those ice hills. It looks smooth and quiet!"



"That is wonderful!" said Splash. "But I need to check the water before we go. I am the swimmer, and I should scout ahead." He slipped into the sea with a quiet splash. Under the waves, he looked left and right, watching for rocks and checking how the current moved. It felt gentle and calm.



Splash lifted his head out of the water. "It is safe!" he called. "The channel is clear, and the water is not rough at all." Pip slid down the icy bank on his white belly, landing with a bump and a giggle. "Then follow me!" said Splash. "I will swim and you can walk along the edge beside me."



Pip waddled along the icy shore while Splash paddled in the water beside him. When Pip came to a slippery gap, Splash showed him a flatter path. When Splash could not see past a jutting rock, Pip climbed a little hummock and pointed the way. "Teamwork!" Pip sang out. "We make a great team!"



At last they rounded the ice hills and found the sheltered channel. The water was as smooth as glass, and a warm glow of sunlight lay across it. "This is the safe route home!" said Pip. "We found it by helping each other." Splash smiled his calm, friendly smile. "We did," he said. "You look high, and I look deep."



The way back felt quick and happy. Pip pointed out each turn from the top of a little icy hummock, and Splash swam ahead to check every pool. Soon they came around the last bend. There was the shore where they had first met, shining in the afternoon light. "We made it!" Pip cheered. "We are home safe!"



Splash climbed up beside his friend. "Adventures are better together," he said. "When we share what we are good at, we keep each other safe." Pip nodded, and his feather tuft bounced. "You are a wonderful swimmer and a wonderful friend," he said. "And you are a wonderful climber and lookout," said Splash.



They settled down on the bright icy shore as the sun began to sink low. Pip snuggled into his red striped scarf, and Splash rested his whiskery chin on his flippers. "Same time tomorrow?" asked Pip. "Same time tomorrow," said Splash. And the two friends watched the sea sparkle, knowing every adventure is safer and sweeter with a friend beside you.