

Beach Ball Cat

By: IndigoRho

Ceejay had to shield his eyes for a moment as he walked out into the hotel's pool area, the cat eager to finally relax in the water and escape the summer heat. His round belly quickly warmed up as he made his way through the rows of lounge chairs that surrounded the main pool, eyes darting to and fro as he tried to find a good spot to take a dip away from others. Unfortunately he didn't pay enough attention to where he was actually going, and accidentally walked right into someone.

With a surprised *meow* Ceejay fell backwards onto his butt, ego as bruised as his rear. Standing before him was an athletic deer who'd proved sturdy enough to withstand the heavier cat's bumping him. Rather than look annoyed, though, the deer actually looked happy, as if stumbling across Ceejay had made his day.

"You ok cat dude?" the deer asked, extending a hoof and helping Ceejay get back up.

"Oh, y-yeah. Sorry, I should've been looking where I was going," Ceejay said, embarrassed but thankful the deer wasn't yelling at him.

"No prob! Hey, why don't you have a quick drink to help ya catch your breath."

Ceejay hadn't noticed the energy drink bottle before, filled with a bright blue liquid that caught the sunlight. Without really thinking he accepted the offer and took a long drink, delighted to feel the refreshing liquid rush down his throat. The cool sensation lingered even as it reached his stomach, something he'd never experienced before.

The cold gradually radiated outwards throughout his body. Ceejay shivered briefly, then stumbled as a dizzy spell swept over him. Something was obviously very, *very* wrong.

"What was...what was in that thing?" Ceejay mumbled, bumping into chairs and the deer.

"Just a little pick me up, something that'll leave you feeling swell." The deer wrapped an arm around the struggling cat, guiding him around a corner where no one else could see them.

Ceejay's belly abruptly started to swell, slowly at first but picking up speed in time. He was only vaguely aware he was inflating, even once his middle was bigger than a beach ball. The deer gripped Ceejay's middle in both hooves as he blimped up so he could feel the cat expand beneath his touch, nodding and gently squeezing as if he were examining a ripe fruit.

"Good, good, good, you're gonna make a great ball," the deer mumbled, mainly to himself. "Way bigger than our last one, and hopefully more durable!"

Ceejay managed to meow in dismay as the deer revealed his intentions. His growing, wobbling gut made fleeing close to impossible, and the deer was easily able to keep him cornered against a wall as well, blocking off any routes for escape. Of course the overwhelming feeling of being lightheaded wasn't helping him much, either.

Soon the cat's ball gut swelled to envelop his chest and hips, limbs bloated and useless. His body was rapidly gaining a sheen, fur turning into thick plastic. He felt stiffer and stiffer the larger he got, unable to move his head or look in any direction but straight-ahead. The scent of beach balls and pool toys filled his nostrils while the sound of creaking plastic pelted his ears. All the while the deer simply watched impatiently, eager to return to the pool with his new toy.

As Ceejay became fully spherical his paws and tail began to sink right into the rest of his body, vanishing from sight. The indents left behind quickly smoothed out until they were gone completely. Jaw clenched shut, Ceejay let out muffled meows as his head started to sink, too, the cat getting one last glimpse of the deer before everything went black.

The ball that had been Ceejay wobbled faintly for a few more seconds, its colors shifting. Slowly but surely a pattern mimicking the cat's face appeared on the surface of the enormous beach ball, grinning widely with the faintest hint of concern in the eyes. Ceejay's sight gradually returned to him, but he wasn't able to move, talk, or exert any control over his new form; all he could do was hope the effects weren't permanent.

The deer picked up the new beach ball and gave it a few test bounces and rolls. Apparently satisfied with the results, he carried Ceejay off to the pool where a number of other deer awaited.

“Found us a new ball!” The deer's declaration was met with whoops and hollers.

He tossed Ceejay into the pool before cannon-balling in himself. The silently distressed cat was forced to endure the deers' rowdy treatment, pushed and bounced and lobbed with reckless abandon. At times his painted-on eyes would line up with the pointy antlers of his tormentors, and he was growing increasingly worried of how durable his taut hide actually was.

Of course the deer didn't think about that at all, and inevitably Ceejay was put to the test. After a particularly strong throw hurled him high into the air, multiple swimmers bunched together in a rush to bounce the ball back. They focused more on shoving each other than reaching up towards their prize, and in the end Ceejay landed directly on a pair of antlers. The sharp points dug into the beach ball's plastic in multiple areas, ensuring at least one puncture.

With a loud *bang!* the beach ball popped, startling the deer and sending an overstretched hunk of plastic falling into the pool. First the deer groaned, and then they argued, all blaming each other for the loss of their only ball. As they worked to decide who would be forced to find a replacement, the plastic remains went ignored. Ceejay was still silently conscious, uncomfortably aware that he'd been burst an abandoned. Forced to gaze into the bright blue sky, the cat-turned-ball wondered if anyone would remember to return him to normal...or if he was just bound for a garbage can...