

## WHEN HUMPF-SKUNK WAS A BABY

When H-S was a baby, he was a big baby. At the hospital, all of the other babies had to be moved out of the nursery to make room for H-S. When he cried for food, or to have his diaper changed, or to be held, all of the patients in the hospital had to put cotton in their ears. Nobody was strong enough to hold him all by themselves; a whole team of the youngest and biggest nurses had to hold him together. They didn't try to burp him after he ate because once they did and he blew out all of the windows – so they didn't try that again.

When H-S was taken home from the hospital, already he didn't fit into the family car. They had to use a truck. Special crews of workers had to hold up higher the street signal lights as the big truck went underneath. Everybody was happy to see that no accident happened on the way from the hospital to his house, if you don't count knocking over a couple of trees by the truck and scaring a couple of old ladies who didn't believe their own eyes.

H-S didn't fit onto the biggest bed in the house. They had to use two beds laid end to end and every couple of days, they had to add another bed. One aunt was kept busy sewing blankets together so they would fit over him and then adding more blankets every couple of days. When his blankets were washed, they had to be taken out to the football field and laid out so that a carpet cleaner could be used. His parents didn't want to ask the aunt to take apart the blankets each time so that they could be washed separately – she was already tired and talking a little goofy.

It took a whole dairy, working full time, to keep supplying enough milk for H-S. The milkmen kept bringing milk in truckloads as fast as the cows could make the milk. Soon, he wanted more to eat. His daddy took a hose and washed down the street in front of the house and then hired a large steamroller to mash the potatoes and vegetables so that he could load them up on a wheelbarrow and bring them in the house and feed them to H-S with a large scoop shovel. One time, someone left his car by the curb and it got mashed up with the potatoes. H-S didn't like any lumps in his potatoes and so he spit it out and knocked down one of the walls of the house.