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Let Me Tell You What It's Like To Swim

So, you're standing up on that platform,
 The one with the number '3' on it, with plastics bars that are separated by spaces,
 Which slightly irritates the soles of your feet as the word 'nervous' runs
 Down your legs, into your feet, and throughout the holes in that diving board,
 Pouring down into the pool as if you might reacquire it after you dive in.
 And, as you're standing there, you adjust your goggles just right,
 As if you're a professional, and you glance briefly up into the crowds,
 Attempting to ignore the size of the audience, simply wanting to pretend
 As though you noticed your friends and family, without actually having
 To meet their gaze with your own eyes.
 Maybe that's why you're already wearing your goggles.

You're looking down at the pool now, the rippling water from the last race,
 And the last contestant wades right below you, he's tired, exhausted,
 But he's also done. You can't remember where he placed, and that's good,
 Because it probably means he didn't place last, but you're not quite sure,
 That you'll be that lucky, because it is all luck, as far as you're currently convinced.
 He's hanging onto the edge of the pool, waiting for the buzzer, waiting
 For you to take your chance in the lottery, to begin charging away, so that
 He can safely exit the pool and escape the scene before you embarrass yourself.

Until then, you can't help but notice the other divers, they're all ready, they look like
 Bugs with their black goggles and green caps, and you can't help but feel
 Intimidated by the guy proudly displaying his chest hair, like a
 Brown bear standing up on its hind legs, ready to plunge into the water,
 Ready to send waves flying throughout the pool area, and all you can do
 Is act thankful that this isn't a full contact sport.

And the 'white-jackets' are getting ready, they're lining the pool, they're waiting,
 They can't wait, and if you were them, you'd be just as anxious as them to begin
 The judgment.

They'll be watching you, they'll be waiting, they'll be looking for that one mistake.
 And, then that's it, the yellow card goes up over your lane, everyone becomes
 Aware of your failure, the opportunity to even place last is lost,
 And you're disqualified, removed from the competition before you even know it.

That's because, you won't know it, and you could be disqualified right at the start,

(No Stanza Break)

But you won't be told until you climb out several minutes later, because
They're going to take pleasure in writing you off and then,
Enjoying the futility of your wasted energy, all for
Nothing much aside from your potential to challenge the other swimmers
Who still have a chance to survive.

And now, the guy with the megaphone is breaking your thoughts,
And to be honest, you kind of feel bad for him, they're a different
Kind of 'white-jacket', a less devilish, but a more mechanical overseer.
That's because all day, they stand, they watch, and they shout through
The blaring device, and you can probably assume, that at the end of it all,
They're probably going to lose their voice to the chlorine and humidity.

And then the call, and without thinking, like a subconscious reaction,
You're leaning forward with your clammy hands grasping the front of the platform,
And for what it's worth, you're praying that you'll have the same response when it all begins.

And then the silence, the moment of truth, once you're in it'll be another world,
But until then you're still overcome by the fears and worries that are causing your wet
Body to shake violently upon the platform while you await the heart-stirring buzzer
That'll either send you into the next world, or leave you in a state of embarrassment
For the next few minutes. Because, there are so many ways to fail the buzzer, the worst being
If you jumped too early. But you could slip, you could dive late, you could mess up
The angle in which you fly, and then the shock of the events would surely cause you to
Lose, just because it's about perfection. Everyone starts on the same level, and only
The minor details in how you perform will place you where you belong.

“NOW”

Or, at least that's how you think it sounds. It's less of an initiation, and
More of an indication that at that particular moment, as soon as the buzzer goes,
You're responsible for beginning to act out some part of your life that involves
Flinging yourself carelessly off the platform and disappearing below the water
Into the next world.

So, you're flying, no one else exists anymore, it's just you and air.
Air is nice, it's cool, but not cold, and it almost seems as though,
It's purifying your body of that outside world, just because
You're almost there, just moments away from
Freedom.

“PLSHOOH”

It's a subtle song, like blowing bubbles in a pond, but you diving
In is like entering a portal, just because your body is engulfed

(No Stanza Break)

With the comforting feeling of familiarity and all the
Sound of the outside world is discarded in exchange for
Silence.

And then you're going, just going, all those
Fears and worries are gone, because they don't matter anymore.
All you know is that you've got a destination to get to, and you can't
Remember why, but you know you've got to go quickly, and swiftly,
But you'll take your time and enjoy the experience.
You can't survive in this world for long, so occasionally you'll have to
Breathe in the outside world, hear the whistles of the 'white-jackets' and the
Screaming of the audience, but it's okay, because then you're back in the
Silence and the tranquility and you're just going along with only care for your
Sanity.

And, you're flipping now, feeling your whole body swirl in a world where,
Despite the lack of gravity, you're still floating freely, willingly. At any moment
You could sink, but you choose not to, just because you've still got to keep going,
Wherever it is you were once afraid of heading to.

You're reaching your hands ahead of you, grasping nothing, pushing nothing,
But still moving, as if you were in a dream, and you are, because
This is all too good to be real. The world around you is endless, and the world below,
The location where you're staring the hardest, is nothing more than a simple blue line,
A line that seems to be there just to remind you where you need to go,
Just in case you get distracted in the watery world.

And then, it's red, the line, this is it, this is where,
Everything must go.
Because, for whatever reason, you realize that now you must deposit all of your energy,
That for some reason, you have to squeeze all of your soul from your body and leave it behind,
Because it's almost over, and it'd be a shame to bring back your entirety to the outside world.
So, you'll have to get the most enjoyment out, you'll have to hit the limits of your ability.
And when you do this, time slows down, and the last moments in this world seem to
Last a life time, because you can notice each individual stroke, and as you pull
Nothing, and push nothing, you're becoming aware of why you're here, and now you're
Remembering the outside world, and you're turning your head to see the other swimmers,
And they are right beside you,
Having the same epiphany.

Time returns to normal, and you're blasting towards the wall with all your strength,
And you're surging through the water, and you can't feel your legs anymore, but they're
Likely flailing in the same manner that your arms seem to be reacting to your mind's
Commands to divert all your potential to your ability to move, and then
You've crashed.

(Stanza Break)

But, it's okay, because it's the pad on the wall that signifies your victory.
You already unofficially exited the watery world, but now you're actually
Lifting your head from the silence and realizing that you have succeeded.
Perhaps, you did not win, and perhaps, you did not beat any personal achievements.
But, that's not what it was about, that's not the space that your fears and worries occupied.
As you sit there, clinging to the wall in an attempt to prevent your body from falling into
Obscurity, you turn your exhausted gaze up towards the swimmer standing above you,
Realizing that their platform is also shaking, and coming to grips with the alleviating feeling that
Like those who came before you, somehow, somehow, you managed to survive.