

Swim Coach

by Mindsparks

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Chapter 1

I think back to my days on my swim team with a great deal of fondness. It was a magical time in my life, with the triumphs and tragedies of my years between 10 and 18 seeming to be captured by what was happening on the team. My best friends were on the team and we became young women and men during those years and experienced all the pains and all the joys of that time together. It is often only in hindsight that one can see the magic associated with a certain time in one's life and as I drove my daughter to her first day of practice I found myself experiencing a flood of memories that compelled me to write one small part of my story. Perhaps on the day when she drives her daughter to her first practice I'll share my story with her.

I discovered two of the most important things I learned as a young woman on the team. The first was that most things in life have more to do with desire than skill (providing you have at least a modicum of skill). The second thing I learned was love. So this is my story about love and I hope to tell it as truthfully as I can.

I grew up outside of Chicago, in a well-to-do suburb with a stay-at-home mom, a dad who worked long hours and tried to give us the attention we sought, but who ended up being a distant figure in my childhood. We attended a public school, a good one however, and were always busy with a million extra-curricular activities: camp in the summer, family vacations in our blue station wagon, water skiing with the neighbors on their boat. I did ballet, swimming, tennis, and a theatre group, while my brother participated in the more boyish events: football, baseball, basketball, and summer track and field. We had a dog, a cat, goldfish that died on a seemingly monthly calendar, and a nice 3-bedroom house on a tree-lined street. Nothing could have been more perfect, and in hind-sight, nothing could have been less interesting.

My father had been a swimmer at Duke in the early 60s - not a great swimmer, but good enough to make the team. It was because of his influence, or maybe a desire to gain more of his attention and love, that I'd chose to swim. I learned early and took lessons until I entered the 5th grade at age 10, and became old enough to join our community's youth swim team, "The Dolphins". My motivations for joining originally came from my desire to please my father, but I quickly internalized them after I found myself in possession of a goodly amount of talent and a keen desire for competition. I loved to win, and I loved the attention that the coaches, Sally, Matt, and Will would lavish upon me when I was doing well and trying hard.

I also loved the companionship of my teammates. While swimming is an individual sport you find yourself growing very close to people who you spend that much time with. I met my best friend (to this date!) on the team, Beth, who

swam shorter distance sprints (I specialized in the longer distances where concentration and determination could often beat a better conditioned or more skilled opponent). We spent the first few years on the team giggling like school girls and laughing at the older swimmers, the coaches, and just about anything else that struck as silly.

I was taller than Beth when we started at 10, and would always carry a few inches on her. She had a somewhat thicker, more muscular body than I did, which worked well for her in the sprints. My lanky body, long legs, and long arms worked well for swimming, but as puberty started to hammer itself into my blood and body, my thin, flat, body, broad shoulders, and boyish hips plunged my self-esteem to near hopeless lows.

Now I was never truly depressed about it - I had a great deal of love and support from my mom, Beth, and other friends. Sure, my ass-hole brother wouldn't make things easy, but much of that was retribution for the pain I'd been inflicting on him for almost a decade. My father was essentially missing in action and I rarely saw him. I would often feel pangs of longing for a better quality of male attention, but didn't have any real idea of how to find it.

I was constantly hoping that my body, wonderful for swimming, would begin to fill out, so that I might start attracting the attention of the older boys on the team who were always ready to scope out and flirt with the 16 and 17 year old high school girls who's bodies were by that age most certainly feminine. I'd watch them in the showers after practice growing less and less confident with myself as their busts increased and hips filled in. It wasn't as though I'd actually wanted the boys, more that I wanted the boys to *notice*. I was utterly naive about love and boys and had only the most basic understanding of what sex was.

I was pretty in an all-American girl way, short auburn hair, straight and simply cut. I had light green eyes, dimples, a button nose, good skin, but basically I looked like every other girl on the team. I think that my dedication to working out on the swim team, which left me with very little body fat, kept me from developing as early as most girls. Even after I filled out, I'd never have a large bust (a B-cup to this day), my waist and hips would be a better asset but I'd never be a sexy-curve woman.

My first years on the team went by quickly and my times dropped steadily so that by the time I was 15 I was ranked second in two of the four events I routinely swam. Because I swam distances I often spent a large portion of my practice alone, face down, thinking about life, or homework or the latest pop-song that Beth and I would dance to during our Friday night sleep-overs. The older I became, the more I started thinking about guys. At first it was the older boys on the team, then some of the boys closer to my age.

My interest in the swimming boys, however, waned a bit over those years as I realized how silly, insecure, and immature they were (little did I realize that non-swimmers were the same, but I just didn't see them everyday). Beth had gone out with one (she'd been first to fill out) on a pizza date and had told me all about the single-mindedness of the boy during their date at the mall "lets go make out", "why don't we kiss", "I like your butt". She described him as an octopus and we giggled to no end about his laughable attempts and needless to say she never spent another Saturday afternoon with that guy.

I had a similar experience with a boy two years older and felt completely confused by the experience. I wanted the same things he did but his clumsy, brutish attempts, forced upon me within two hours of the beginning of our first date just left me scared and down hearted. There had been no emotional connection what-so-ever.

On my 16th birthday the team threw a surprise party for me after practice. It was so wonderful to eat that cake and laugh with all of my teammates. We goofed off and ended up throwing the last half of the cake at each other while the coaches pretended not to look. The girls on the team had all pitched in and got me a very snazzy new athletic bag and a new warm-up robe, in our school color purple, to wear at meets with my name, 'Amy' sewn in block letters on the back. The boys, in all of their juvenile wisdom, got me the tiniest pale-orange-colored bikini I'd ever seen in my life - it basically consisted of 4 teeny triangles connected by thin strings. I blushed terribly after unwrapping it as the boys hooted and called on me to model it. Instead I stuffed into my new bag and flipped them off, the act that sparked the cake fight. The boys gag gift did get me to thinking that I had started filling out a bit in the last year, with small a-cup breasts and hips that were just beginning to push out past my waist.

After we cleaned up and most of the others had left I asked Sally, the distance coach, if I could spend an extra half hour in the water before going home. I had a lot of energy after all that attention and my parents had told me that we would be celebrating my birthday on the weekend. Sally frowned a bit telling me I worked too hard, but told me it would be ok as the head coach, Matt, would be around for at least that long.

I quickly ran to the locker room to stow my presents. As I stuffed the locker full with my presents Beth, dressed in her sweats and ready to go home, came over and gave me hug, wishing me a happy birthday. She asked to see the bikini that the boys had gotten me. She laughed as she held it up to her sweat-covered body, telling me it was obvious that the boys had started to see me in a new light. I blushed but told her I wasn't interested in any of them. Then she suggested I put it on and see how it looked, and said that if I looked good in it

she'd get one too and we could wear them to the beach in summer, only a few months away.

So I stripped off the sleek black one-piece racer that we all wore to practice and tied on the little bikini (not without some trouble trying to figure out the top from the bottom and back from front). It stayed on by tying the thin strings together on the sides of my hips and one in back for the top. My boobs didn't really fill out the small cups, but the bottoms looked good, showing off my legs and my butt. Beth told me that I looked great and went really well with my eyes. Laughing, I did my fake model pose pushing out my hips and trying to make my lips look pouty. We both laughed at that and then I began to undo the strings to the bikini to replace it with the one-piece. Beth asked what I was doing and I told her that I was going to stay a bit longer and swim some laps - to which she asked "well why don't you just swim in that, there's nobody here besides Matt. And I bet Matt would love to see you in that!"

We both blushed at the thought. Matt, our head coach, was a former collegiate swimmer who had won a couple of championships during his senior year. He never went beyond that in competition and had been coaching and teaching ever since. All the girls on the team had a crush on him - he was cute, blonde-haired, and most importantly a warm-hearted, kind, and caring coach. He was always supportive and was there to console us when we lost, celebrate with us during our victories, and motivate us during our practices.

"He won't even notice me, he'll be in the office working on the workout schedule for next week. And you know it Beth."

Beth nodded, knowing I was right, and gave me another hug before she skipped out of the locker room. I looked down at the cold and wet one-piece and decided that I'd give the bikini a try - it wasn't like I was being timed or anything and there was little or no chance that anybody, even Matt would see me before I finished.

I stuck my head out the locker room door, making sure no boys were left at the pool, then, when the coast was clear left the locker room and immediately dove in to the nearest lane. I kicked to the surface and at the far wall stopped to make sure the flimsy thing was still on. It was, and I started to swim a 1500 free at a good pace. I don't remember how far I'd gone, I completely zoned out after awhile when I got a tap when I hit the near wall. I stopped, pushed my way to the surface and pulled down my goggles. Coach Matt was there with his Purdue sweatshirt and usual baggy pants.

"New swim suit, Amy?" he smiled.

I turned beet red. Pulling myself to the wall for some cover I replied, "I just wanted to try it out and didn't think anybody would see it. I'm sorry." I wanted to throw up.

He chuckled "Well I haven't really seen it yet so I guess you were right. Anyway," he knelt down by the lane marker, "I was talking to Sally about your progress and we both think its time for you to swim in the number one spot in the 1500 free. Its your best race and we think that the added competition may force you to turn it up a notch and we know you've got that notch and probably a few more after it. Whatcha think, kiddo?"

I was elated. The best present I could have asked for. "Really?"

"No, I'm just joshin' ya..... of course REALLY. You're a great girl and a fantastic swimmer. This is your first big chance." His eyes looked at me with such respect and kindness. I've only met one man since Matt (my husband) who could look at me like that.

I couldn't contain myself. I pushed outta the water quickly and in my excitement went to give Matt a hug. Matt was tall, at least 6'4", which made me feel short although by this time I was 5'10". The hug took him completely by surprise mostly because I was still dripping wet. I think he was embarrassed by it, because he didn't really return the hug, just kinda patted me on the back. "You and Sally are the greatest coaches, thank you so much" I said squeezing him.

"Ok, Ok, kiddo, now let me go towel myself down." he said. I stood there and must have been beaming, completely unaware of myself in the skimpy little bikini. As Matt took a step back I saw him look me up and down and that look changed my life. It was the first look I ever got as a sexual being, as a woman. And that Matt had been the one to look me over gave me a tingle I'd never felt before. Years of his respect and kindness made that glance at my body feel good and appropriate, not immature and clumsy as it felt like when the guys on the team did it. I felt my nipples harden and a pulse of energy rush into my crotch like I'd never felt before. In fact I'd never even masturbated before that time. I'd started menstruating a year earlier, but hadn't really figured out that I could pay myself some attention down there. I wondered if the 'once over' was nothing, or if Matt might have really taken an interest in me. In fact by the time I stopped paying attention to the flush of my reaction he was already most of the way back to the office.

I decided I was done swimming for the day, headed back to the locker-room, showered and dressed to go home. I combed the tangles out of my hair easily and thought about how plain-jane it looked. I decided to get a more sophisti-

cated, adult haircut this week; as a young woman I thought I deserved to start looking the part, instead of looking like an overly tall girl.

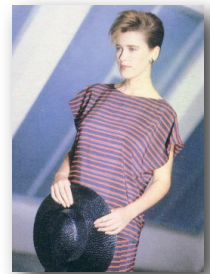
Chapter 2

I told my mom about my presents and my thoughts about getting a more adult haircut. With a wistful look on her face (that I didn't understand then, but do now) she suggested that we make an appointment at her favorite day spa in downtown Chicago and spend Saturday there together - a girl's day out as it were. I think I paused for just a second too long when considering her offer; before I could answer she suggested that if I wanted that Beth could come along as well. And so our day was planned.

We started at a trendy day-spa down town where husky Polish women gave Beth and I the first massages we ever had (but not the last by any means). Then Beth and I sat in the steam room and giggled while my mom had a mud bath, joking that if we stayed in there too long that our breasts would disappear. Mom thought Beth and I were old enough to get waxed and so we got our first taste of that painful experience. When the woman at the spa asked Beth and I if we wanted Brazilian waxing we both looked at her cluelessly. Mom stepped in and told us what that meant, and without missing a beat told the attendant that a simple bikini-line wax would be more than adequate.

We ended our trip to the spa with facials, pedicures, manicures, and a trip to the hair stylists. On a day of so many firsts, it came as no surprise that it would also be the first time that a coiffure would come at the hands of a gay man. His name was Lance and he was such a parody of gay men that to this day Beth and I use the term Lance as code for a gay guy, 'the concierge is *such a Lance*'. Beth's hair ended up changing a lot - she loved to keep her long curly auburn locks and Lance had agreed that the locks should stay. He said that just before he cut off most of those locks and left Beth with a Betty Paige style that made her look so much more sophisticated than her 16 years would suggest. Lance's contribution to my head felt radical. I ended up with an almost boyish cut, parted on the side, long on top and in front but very short on the sides and back ("buzzed" as my brother would tease me for weeks).

Beth and I were in heaven for the rest of the weekend. We both felt like Princess Di after our pampering at the spa. My parents took me out to dinner that night and when we got home my present was sitting in the driveway! It was the cutest little blue Toyota - one that I'd mentioned on a number of occasions when we'd see one on the road. It was used but in great shape and they said that they'd gotten a deal on it because the inside had a strong odor of pipe-tobacco in it. At first the smell gave me a bit of a headache, but eventually it became more favorable. I didn't know how to drive yet, but would get my license soon.



The next week I began swimming in the number one spot for the 1500, which meant that during practice I had to lead half of the workouts, while the other top distance swimmer, Mary, lead the other half. It actually wasn't so bad, and even Mary who I'd expected to give me a lot of crap (she was older and I was taking her spot on the 1500) was at least not much of a bitch to me.

The haircut actually ended up getting me a lot of attention - the boys, it would seem, liked the new do's that Beth and I were sporting. Richard, one of the captains on the guy's team, an 18-year-old senior dreamboat, stopped me after practice on Wednesday of that week after most of the others had already gone to the locker room. He was wearing his sweat-bottoms and had a towel around his neck and curved over his well-muscled shoulders.

"Hey Amy, nice haircut" he said standing beside me while I returned my kick-board and pull-bouys to their bins, still dripping in my one-piece after the workout. Unconsciously I ran my fingers under the leg opening of the suit, pulling it out of my butt, and while I did this I noticed Richard's eyes following my fingers quite closely.

I paused awkwardly, half expected a pie in the face or some other juvenile prank but he actually seemed to be straight with me. I blushed - I was self-conscious and my slowly changing body and new hair cut were getting me attention of a sort that I had no experience with. "errrr... thanks" I said as he not-so-subtly looked me up and down. I was beginning to realize that men, unlike boys, spent a lot more time with their eyes on my body. My bust (such as it was) and hips appeared to draw their eyes as if I had breasts of that were made of spinning, color-changing lights that occasionally shot off a firework or announced the winner of a million dollar prize.

"So I was wondering if you'd be interested in catching a movie this Friday?" his smiling face drawing me in. *****END EDITED *****

Almost without thinking I said, "Yeah, I think Beth and I would be up for that, who else is going?" Like I said, my naiveté was all too thick. I turned and started to walk over to the bleachers where our bags and noticed coach Matt sitting in his office looking out at Richard and me. I'd just gotten to my bag when Richard placed a hand on my shoulder. I turned and looked back to him.

"Uhhh Amy, I ummm, meant just you and me. You know... a date sorta?" now he blushed a bit at having to step outside of his well-rehearsed pickup.

The proposal truly caught me off-guard. Richard was a great looking guy, a successful swimmer, and not so much of a jock to be repulsive. The butterflies that had erupted into my stomach completely distracted me. "Ummm... I don't

know Richard" I squeaked. My 'dates' - all two of them - to this point had been with guys in my class at school and had mostly evolved from a group of people hanging out together, and ending up with me and a guy at the movies or a burger joint alone. I'd never dealt with a straight on ask-me-out kinda date.

"Come on Amy, you know I'm a cool guy and I won't do you wrong. I was thinking something fun like the A&W then a movie - you can even pick it." His blue eyes were intoxicating and I honestly felt a little dizzy looking into them.

"I'd have to be home by 11. My parents are a pain in the ass about my curfew." My God, had I really said that? Was I going to go out with this guy?

"11 is fine. You live on Elm right? Can I pick you up at 7 on Friday then?" his confidence growing even faster than his dick would on Friday.

"errr... yeah" I said wondering about all of this.

I nearly fled into the locker room where Beth was getting dressed after her shower. I told her all about Richard's invite and she ate up every word. "Oh my God, I can't believe it. He's such a hound - you know that, don't you Amy?" she said.

"Hound? You mean he dates a lot of girls?" I started to feel dejected.

"I don't know about a lot, but I know that he's gone out with Deb and Sam on the team, and a couple of girls in his own class. And you know that Deb is such a slut." Deb and Sam were Juniors and blondes (which seemed to attract all the boys). They were nice to me but we didn't hang out with them a lot.

"Well what else do you know about him?" I asked feeling those butterflies starting to flap again.

"You know, I don't know too much Amy. I haven't heard anything bad if that helps. And I think he's a total hottie. Do you like him?" asked Beth.

I thought about this for a second. I didn't have a crush on any guys at the moment. The things that seemed to attract me were hard to find in they guys I knew: honesty, maturity, tenderness. I was around guys with incredible and mostly naked bodies every day so I never even thought in those terms about guys. I didn't know Richard that well and was attracted enough by the idea of an actual *date* that I was beginning to think that going out with him would be great - in only for the sake of 'going out'. "You know... I don't know, but a date sounds fun so I think I'll go for it."

"You know I expect a phone call at 11:05pm?" Beth's mischievous eyes twinkling.

"You kidding? I'll call at 11:03!"

On my way out of practice Coach Matt stopped me at his office. "Hey Amy, how's swimming #1 working for you?" a look of genuine curiosity in his baby blue eyes as he leaned back in his office chair amongst cluttered piles of old catalogs, meet schedules, rule books, and broken buoys and lane markers. His golden retriever, Sadie, was curled into a sleeping ball in the corner on her bed. I don't think Matt was ever without her.

"You know, its harder than I thought it'd be, coach. Setting the pace isn't something that comes naturally to me I guess."

"Well Amy, Sally told me that you've been doing a fine job of it, though she did mention that your turns are a bit rushed and your form is falling apart." Not a hint of upset or anger in his voice, all support and concern.

Blushing "yeah, she's been trying to work with me on them. The thing of it is that I'm getting so flustered pacing things that I forget to work my turns. They used to be a lot smoother" I said.

"Hmmm. That's a pretty common problem when swimmers transition from pack dogs to alphas" said Matt, who loved dog analogies and used them whenever possible. "Why don't you hang out after practice tomorrow and I'll go over them with you?"

"Sure thing, I'd like that. Our first meet isn't too far off, is it? I want to do well Coach Matt." I never felt self-conscious around Matt - he was so easy to talk to.

"It sure is Amy, and don't worry about doing anything but your best, ok?" I felt like his eyes could liquify my innards sometimes.

Smiling, I realized what I wanted to really ask him, "Coach, can I ask you a question that isn't about swimming, at least not directly about swimming?"

This might have caught him off guard because he went from leaning back in his chair to sitting upright in a quick and awkward movement that almost ejected him from the chair. I giggled and he said, "Sure Amy, anything you want. You ok?"

"Richard just asked me out." Was that a note of disappointment in Coach's eyes? I couldn't be sure and in hindsight wouldn't have been looking for him to *BE* disappointed. "I think he's nice but I don't really know him, and he's a sen-

ior, and I'm just a Sophomore, and its kinda weird for me to ask you I know and its just that you know him and you know me and you are a smart guy and probably know all sorts of things about dates and..."

Matt cut me off with a laugh and a 'slow-down' wave of his hands, "Amy. Breathe." I did so taking in a long almost gasping breath and in my embarrassment blushing again. "Richard is a good guy, he likes girls a lot more than he likes swimming or the books though so he loses his focus. I think you'll be ok with him. Just remember that you have all the right in the world to say 'no' if he asks you to do something that you don't want to do."

"Oh yeah, sure, thats good advice Coach. I 'll see you tomorrow then. I smiled at Matt and he returned a goofy, genuine, heart-melting smile in return. As I walked away I felt as though I could feel the gaze of his eyes on me, on my neck, my back, my legs and ass. I think that women get that sense when they hit puberty and mine was starting to raise its protective head. Though I felt his gaze I didn't realize how it made me feel then.

The next day at practice Richard made a point of talking to me before and after our workouts. He was, in hindsight, very slick and polished. As long as I didn't derail him from his little scripts he would exude a self-confidence that was so appealing to me - a self-conscious, insecure-in-her-new-body, woman/girl that wanted to be older that she was.

After Richard's flirtations Coach Matt came up and asked if I was ready to work on my turns. We started by sitting on the bleachers and just talking about what was going through my head when I was swimming and how I approached my turns. He gave me some pointers about that, telling me to stop over-thinking them - he actually suggested I focus on a something almost irrelevant, and with a sarcastic little smirk suggested Richard. I must have turned beet red, the blood rushing to my freckled cheeks so quickly that it felt like they were burning. He quickly backed out of it though by adding something about my math or history homework.

He then asked me to stand up which I did. "I've noticed that you also don't tuck your head very well at the beginning of the turn and don't really roll your back as much as you could either. Are you stiff or sore?" he asked.

"No, I don't think so... you know I've always just kinda turned. Haven't given it much though coach."

"Ok... hmmm... is it ok if I touch your back and neck, Amy?"

I almost laughed at this, why would he ask? “Uhh, sure coach, why wouldn’t I let you?”

“Well you can’t be too careful these days. I wouldn’t want you to get the wrong idea or anything. So when you come into the turn I need you roll your head into your chest like this.” I felt his strong hands guide my head down. “Then when you are ready to flip I want you to bend your back so that you feel each vertebrae in your back flex over - like you are the peel on a banana.” I felt his hands trace lines down either side of my spine, starting at the base of my neck all the way down to the small of my back.

My reaction to his firm touch completely took me by surprise, so much so that I actually felt betrayed by my body. I felt my chest flush and my nipples harden as his hands had traced down my back. A warm slippery glow tingled in my vagina that I’d never ever experienced before. I was overwhelmed by Matt’s touch and my reaction to it. He was continuing to explain things but I honestly didn’t hear a word he said. After what seemed like an hour, but was probably only a few seconds, the first thing that I thought about was the embarrassment of my nipples poking through my suit. Had I thought about it, I would have realized that he would simply attribute that to being cold, but because I knew why they were behaving like that I was completely flummoxed. I quickly and rather awkwardly crossed my arms over my chest and returned my attention to Matt.

“You ok champ - you look all flushed?” he asked. “You need to puke or something?”

Oh god! Puke? I look like I want to puke? Hardly. “Uhhh, no. Sorry, coach. Just a bit tired after practice, you know?”

“Yeah, sure, I know.” He went over to my bag and grabbed my towel, brought it back to me and wrapped it around my shoulders, giving them a squeeze as he stood there in front of me. I looked up and our eyes met for just a moment... and that same feeling flooded into my chest, my mouth, my vagina. My knees and legs turned to rubber. What in the hell was wrong with me?

“I was going to work out now” said Matt. “Why don’t you just watch me do a few turns and then you can take off.

I nodded, not trusting my voice. Not wanting to say ‘can you touch me again.’

Matt stripped off his sweats after kicking off his flip-flops. It is odd to see a teacher in a speedo, and even more odd to find yourself wondering what was going on under the speedo. I’d never seen Matt swim before, thus had never seen him like this before. His body was so appealing to me. He was in great

shape - the muscles in his belly and chest nicely defined although he wasn't as lean as the high school boys, but that softness actually made him more appealing, more huggable. His chest was covered in a not-too-thick patch of blonde hair - it was a man's chest nothing like the boys on our team. His shoulders and arms looked strong. His legs were long and tanned, rising up into a butt that looked perfectly rounded, as if he had posed for Michelangelo's David. And despite myself I looked at the front of his speedos and found myself amazed. Unlike the boys who sported rounded pouches about the size of a racquetball, the bulge in his suit was tennis-ball sized at least and I could see the contour of his dick (as I thought of it then) shifted off and lying to the left of his balls. I had no frame of reference but it looked so big, almost scary.

I don't think he noticed me checking him out as he stretched, but in any case he dove in quickly and started to demonstrate his turn technique. And despite the damp patch in my suit, and my almost painfully hard nipples I actually did pick up some good ideas about how to turn faster by watching him. I thanked him and quickly left for the locker room.

Chapter 3

My date with Richard, quite predictably, turned out to be a nightmare. We had started off at the local A&W which went well despite long periods of awkward silences. He then took me to the movies, choosing a horror film in an attempt to get me to cling to him. It actually worked until he started 'clinging' back and I wiggled out and left the theatre after being groped one too many times. There were a few tears as I left the movie, but to his credit Richard caught up to me and calmed me down, apologizing for his groping and took me home.

My phone call to Beth was (rather sadly) early and full of disappointment on my end. She was supportive but I think she had known more about Richard than she had previously let on and saw the ending to the date as something of a for-gone conclusion. We talked for quite some time that night, and eventually the conversation turned toward Matt.

"So you know Matt helped me after practice with my turns. He's sooo cool about helping me out. He thinks I could do really well this year and thinks that the team might have a shot at winning the state title!" I said.

"Oh my gawd!" came Beth's reply, "he is soooo fine. Its so great that he is our coach - I mean he isn't at all tough or a hard-ass or anything but we still kick ass, you know. Plus when he's sitting in his office its all I can do to not go in there and totally like ask him to rip my suit off!" as she giggled I cringed a bit at the thought that I was competing for his affections with my best friend before realizing that we weren't competing and that neither of us could win this race.

"Ok... so you know how he was helping me with my turns? Well he was touching my neck, trying to show me how to tuck it or something, and I got this really weird feeling! It was like I went all rubbery in my legs and my head started to spin." I confessed. "What do you think that was all about?"

More giggles from the phone line, "I think you got a bit juiced for him Amy, you know like when you touch yourself."

"Touch myself?"

"uhhh yeah... touch yourself!"

"I'm not sure what you mean, Beth."

"Amy, don't you ever touch yourself? You know, masturbate?" asked Beth rather matter-of-factly. Beth's parents had been west-coast hippies back in the day and a copy of "Our Bodies, Ourselves" was prominently displayed on her mother's bookshelf.

"Ummm, no. I don't. At least I don't think I do. I mean I know what that means, I just never tried or really even know what to try." My friendship with Beth was so deep that even a discussion as intimate as this one left no trace of embarrassment.

"Amy you gotta try it. Just let your fingers walk around down there and think about some guy you are hot for - like Matt!" laughter at what she thought was a joke. "You'll find your way around and you may just like what you find."

I laughed nervously and the call ended soon after that. As I got into bed that night so many things were racing through my head. The dreadful date with Richard, the thoughts and feelings I'd experienced with Matt, Beth's admonition to start exploring my sexuality. I was really wired and found myself wide awake as midnight came around.

I was thinking about Matt and the way his touch had felt when I let my hand wander down, under the covers to the thin white cotton of my panties. I was picturing the way he looked as he stood there in front of me in his speedos as I slipped the terribly unsexy undies over my hips and kicked them off at the foot of the bed. I pushed my fingers through the soft, fine reddish hair that sparsely covered my mons but hid nothing and the tingles that I'd felt with Matt began to return. I spread my legs just a bit as my fingers ran over the folds of my sex. The feeling was so... amplified. I'd touched myself down there a thousand times but it had never felt like this! I pushed the sheets and blankets off with my feet and cool spring air drifted over my body.

I continued to let my fingers explore the unexplored. I spread my labia apart and felt the warm wet slickness that had been seeping into my vagina since I started thinking about Matt's chest. My fingers soon discovered just how many interesting sensations they could generate as they moved nearer my clitoris. I felt my nipples grow almost painfully hard and instinctively moved one hand to my breast, feeling the hard nub of skin under my palm. My clit was similarly hard and pushing forth from between the hairless, wet folds. My hands moved of their own accord across my body - as if my brain had largely lost control and was only privy to the sensations that were now flooding in to in from my pussy, breasts, and fingers. I became aware of a warm, quickly building pulse that seemed to begin deep inside of my virgin sex took me utterly by surprise in its competition with a million other new sensations. As my first orgasm approached, my hand cupped and mashed down on to my labia to find a soaking gush of warm, slippery, cum flowing from the nether reaches of my virginity. My head spun as though I'd run headfirst into the wall and my disorientation was almost as great as I cried out far more loudly than I'd have ever judged appropriate. (To this day my husband will often bury my face in a pillow when its 'that' time so as not to frighten the children or neighbors!)

In the darkness as I lay in utter confusion about what happened. My body was tingling all over and my head spun as moonlight illuminated a square on my bed that just about framed my torso. By breasts lay flat upon my chest, the small pink nipples breaking the smooth surface of my belly and chest like twin devil's towers on the Wyoming prairie. My thighs came together, slick with my cum that soaked into the sheets and scented the air with my smell. I didn't know what to think and was very confused by the fact that Matt's image in my mind had driven the feelings I'd just experienced. As I drifted into a deep, dream-filled sleep the last thought I had was of Matt's touch on me.

Thankfully Richard never asked me out again and never really took notice of me again though I did catch him and a bunch of seniors looking and laughing in my direction once soon after the date. I didn't really mind as my opinion of him had been largely set in concrete and dumped in deepest part of Lake Michigan.

I spoke with Beth about what happened that night in the library during the next week. She sat across from me with a big smile on her face as she questioned me about it. She wasn't really surprised when I confided that Matt's image had been foremost on my mind that night. She told me again that he was hot but wasn't nearly as cute as Mike, the guy she was now dating. As the afternoon wore away as we 'researched' our history papers in the library she confided to me that Mike and her had gotten to third base and that she had found the experience to be 'totally awesome'. The prom was coming up and she was convinced that he was going to take her someplace nice afterwards for their first time. She was honestly glowing as she talked about her love and I felt both happy for her and jealous at the same time. My longing for Matt had only grown but his age and position as my coach seemed to be insurmountable barriers to the idea of us ever being together.

I think that Beth was confused by my feelings for Matt that she was gradually becoming more and more aware of. When we discussed this time later in our lives she told me that she was torn between wanting me to be happy and get what I wanted (or at least thought I wanted) and protecting me from being hurt, either by a socially unacceptable affair with Matt, or by not having a socially unacceptable affair with him.

During the next month I worked very hard during practices and ended up winning races in the first few meets of the season. During practice I made a point of avoiding Matt whenever possible. I'm sure he could tell that something was wrong though, because he caught me at least once or twice a week staring at him from across the pool or while he was sitting at his desk in the office. I'd look at him and remember his touch, then remember that night lying in my bed (a situation which I'd repeated several more times, once so loudly that my father

knocked on the door asking me if I was ok!). He was quite distracting for me so I'd make every effort to not look which just seemed to make me want to look more often.

I'd gotten most of my coaching from Sally during that time but as the end of the season started to come closer and the significance of the meets became greater she kept suggesting I talk to Matt about some of the problems that had been creeping up for me. I balked and delayed until I lost a race by just a body length in the fifth meet of the season. I was really hurt by the loss and was sitting up high in the bleachers watching the meet through tear-filled eyes when Matt sat beside me.

"Hey kiddo" he said, looking out at the meet, "looks like superwoman ran into some kryptonite today. You doing ok?"

I didn't feel like I was doing ok. I'd gotten so sure of myself and had won my last races by such large margins that I'd gotten too sure of myself, and this loss had hurt not just because I didn't win, but because through it I realized that I'd grown a bit cocky and never had thought of myself as being that way. "I don't know. Losing sucks, Matt." I wiped my eyes free of tears. "I think I learned two things today though."

"And what were those things Amy?"

"Well, I guess that I got too cocky and maybe slacked off a bit in the race. I've never really been good at anything... well not as good at anything as I am at swimming and I don't really know what I'm doing." I was still trying to look down at the meet and avoid meeting his eyes. I felt vulnerable after the loss and didn't want to deal with the feelings that were sure to happen if I met his gaze.

"Hmmm. Yeah Amy. That is a hard one to handle. And all good swimmers go through it at some point and I guess that this is your time. I had to deal with it and it's hard to be proud of yourself and self confident and not become cocky and slack off or show off when you are just wiping out the other swimmers like you've done." He put his hand on my back as I sat there with my head down. "You know, I think it was good for you to lose today. You are a very intelligent young woman Amy and the fact that you are sitting up here hurt and a bit confused tells me that you'll solve this one on your own. Probably already have. If you hadn't lost you wouldn't have learned this until maybe it was too late, like at the championships." He scooted in closer and put his right arm behind my neck and pulled me in a bit closer to him - an utterly platonic gesture between a coach and a dejected athlete. A hug that was probably given a hundred times that afternoon in the naditorium between coaches and their athletes. "Just don't relearn the lesson again, got it?"

His one-armed hug was so reassuring to me. I didn't feel turned on by his touch like I had before, just warmed, strengthened, and cared for. In the space of a just a couple minutes he had said and done all the right things for me and it was almost as though I could feel my confidence wash back into me, though this time it lacked the sharp edge of arrogance that had made it so self-destructive.

"So what else did you learn today - that sitting back on your butt at the start is a really crap way of trying to win a race?"

The serious moment melted away - Matt's social skills are probably the best I've ever observed. Laughing at his utterly true but jestfully-worded jab I slapped him playfully on his shoulder. "NO!!! I didn't learn that! I guess you did though when you were checking out my butt?" I stuck out my tongue out at him, then kicked myself mentally as I did so for the unsophisticated quality of the act.

Matt's reaction was, in hindsight, almost comical. He turned beet-red and quickly drew his arm back from my shoulders. He tried so stammer out a denial but it would have been apparent to anybody that he was flustered by the truth of the jokingly-made accusation. Of course his reaction wasn't apparent to me in my naivete.

"No Coach, but I guess I've got to work on that this week, eh?" I replied still smiling at what I'd thought was nothing but a joke. I looked up at him, forgetting about the power of those blue eyes. "I think that I figured out that I ..." our eyes had locked together across two feet of chlorine-saturated, hot, humid air and I felt head swoon in almost exactly the same way it had when I'd had my first orgasm thinking about him. I felt naked in his gaze, felt like I wanted to be naked in his gaze, naked in his arms. Losing track of what I'd said and what I'd meant to say I tried not to stammer to a stop.

"I want you."

What was really odd about saying that was that I didn't realize what I'd said until I heard my words coming back through my ears. Now it was my turn to turn beet-red and stumble through an explanation. "I mean I want you to help me more often I mean. With my swimming... you know? Like my starts and turns and stuff." I blurted out. Ugghhh I thought to myself thinking about how silly I was for this crush - how could this beautiful man possibly even notice a gangly, awkward, little girl with no boobs, no curves, and seemingly no intelligence?!

Matt sat back a bit and looked confused, the wheels in his head seeming to spin faster and faster. "Well of course I can help you out. I've noticed that you haven't been coming to me lately for help, which is ok, but I was a bit worried that

I'd done something wrong." He was looking at me with a worried and serious expression on his face. "Is anything wrong Amy?"

I considered what to say. If we hadn't been sitting on the edge of a crowded bleacher in the midst of a swim meet I might have told him that yes, something was wrong. That I loved him (or thought I did anyway) and wanted to touch him, to have him touch me, to laugh with him and hold his hand at the movies and eat burgers and soggy fries at the Greasy Cluck, and ... and ... and ... Lucky for both of us prudence finally kicked me (in the head - with a steel-toed boot probably to get through a rather thick skull) and I answered a bit more diplomatically. "No, Coach, nothings wrong. Not with you fer sure." I smiled and sighed. "I guess I'm just going through one of those phases that my mom always talks about. And I'm a bit, errr, confused I guess. Its really not a problem I think. Just one of those situations where you want something you can't have, you know?" I tilted my head to the side and turned to look at him.

Chapter 4

At practice the next Tuesday Sally told us that the next meet was the biggest one before the state championships and that we would be swimming against the two best teams in the northern half of the state. Our performances at the meet would be used as qualifying times for the state meet and a poor performance could mean a poor seed or even the possibility of not qualifying for a race. Beth squeezed my hand as we listened to Sally, and then to Matt discuss the week's training schedule and suggested diet strategies. She was as nervous as I was and although her season hadn't been going as well as mine she'd managed to come in second in a lot of big races and had a very good chance of qualifying for the state meet.

After the talk the team slowly moved to their lanes and began to practice. Coach Matt stopped me as I was walking to my lane. "Amy, I'd like to work with you on your starts today after you finish the workout - will you have time?"

"Yep Coach, I'll have plenty of time and would love to get some help." The words came out much more smoothly than the sudden rush of adrenaline should have allowed. God, I hoped he'd put his hands on me again.

The promise of a private practice session with Matt kept me swimming so well during my laps. I felt like I was positively floating and that the lengths were over before they began. In fact I kinda lost count of where I was at in my workout when I felt somebody tap me when I came into a turn. I stopped and as I pulled off my goggles I looked up to see Matt crouching at the edge of the pool. "Hey kiddo, you about done? Everybody else is showering or already gone!"

Crap! I looked around and I was the only one left in the pool. I'd been completely absorbed in my workout and hadn't even noticed the others leaving. "D'ohhh." I exclaimed, copying the rant of a character on a new TV show. "I completely got zoned into my swim coach. Sorry. I'm totally ready for some starting help though."

Smiling down at me Matt said, "OK then, get outta there and I'll get your towel. We'll work off the blocks in lane 3." He padded off in his flip-flops and sweats towards the towels. I pulled off my cap and quickly submerged letting the water cool and refresh my head after its time under the hot rubber cap. I walked over to lane 3 and turned to see Matt coming behind me, a couple of towels in his hand and his eyes fixed on my butt! Turning back quickly so that he wouldn't notice that I'd seen him I continued to walk to the blocks almost beaming that he was taking notice of me. When I got to the blocks I decided to give him a bit

of a present - I ran my fingers inside the back of my suit like some many swimmers do, but instead of pulling them out and down I helped them slip a bit up and in revealing more of the alabaster-white curve of my well-muscled rear.

"OK kiddo, the first thing I want you to think about is your attitude before you get onto those blocks. You should have a little ritual of things that you think about before you stand up there and it should put your head in the same place every time you start. I always tell myself that I'm sure of myself, then I visualize my legs as steel springs that will fling me far down my lane, and then when I hit the water I'll move as effortlessly as a dolphin. Sounds corny, huh?" Matt smiled at me as he handed me a towel.

"No Coach, that's cool." I smile at him. "You won your races so I think that's great. I'll work on that this week." I was feeling strangely confident in his presence though for what reason I couldn't guess. What was interesting to me is that the the feeling of being just a girl with a crush, while still present, was crippling me.

"Good. Let me know if you need help with it, but everybody I know comes up with their own." Matt began to take off his sweats. "I think that I'll do some starts to show you some stuff as we work today."

The sight of his chest sent a rush through me. I honestly couldn't believe that he couldn't see my passions for him as easily as he could have read today's headlines.

"So when you get up on the blocks try to clear your mind and focus only on the gun. Nothing else! The gun is all that exists for you once you get up there" he said as he stepped aside indicating that I should get up on the blocks. "So lets see what you look like up there."

I climbed up onto the blocks and stood with my toes curled over the forward edge of the block, then bent over grasping the front of the blocks with my hands placed just outside my feet. Now I felt a bit awkward. I couldn't possibly look good like this as the blood rushed into my head and my ass hung out for all to see.

"Ok... you are doing it again. Your weight is too far back on the blocks - it'll take you and extra half a second to shift the weight forward to the point where it can work for you. So pull yourself forward till I say stop, ok? And remember that you won't have to hold this position for long - it isn't supposed to be comfortable, got it?" He said standing back and looking at my body which probably was nothing more than legs, arms, and a jutting butt.

I pulled myself forward on the blocks, feeling the weight shift gradually from my heels more onto the balls of my feet, and then, without any notice, onto my toes which had no ability at all to support weight as they were curled around the front of the blocks. Realizing the inevitability of the situation I pushed off and knifed into the still water. Returning to the edge of the pool I was greeted by Matt's hand lowered down to me which I grasped and he helped pull me out.

"That was great! You were right on it for just a split second!" He smiled. "Now I'll show you one more thing that you haven't been doing and we should be in for a much better start come Saturday." He got up onto the blocks, and unselfconsciously stretched a bit as most swimmers do. As he swung his arms above his head and bent backwards I looked down across his chest, to his tight, tanned abs, and then to the bulge in his shorts. My gaze caught there for an instant before I heard him say "You need to lower your center of gravity just a bit more while you are in your crouch."

I looked up to see him looking down at me, and knew for certain, that he had seen me checking him out. Then our eyes met again and that animal lust feeling that had overwhelmed me before enveloped me again and I felt my body ready itself for a coupling that it desperately wanted but wouldn't get. The difference this time is that I saw something in Matt change too. The look in his eyes as our gaze met was aware of the mutual attraction and that gaze seemed to say 'I want you' as clearly as words could have - more clearly perhaps. This time I broke the gaze, almost afraid of the power that he held over me as my body signals betrayed any innocence that I could have professed in the matter. My nipples stood rigid against the tight fabric of my suit - lighthouses warning those in the vicinity of turbulent, dangerous waters. But this time I noticed as my gaze fell that Matt's body seemed to have betrayed him as well. The bulge in his shorts appearing significantly larger and more defined than it had just a minute ago.

He quickly turned on the blocks and crouched, toes and fingers hooked over the front edge. "Watch me." (Like I'd have watched anything else at this moment!). "My knees are bent and my weight is farther down... like a cat waiting to spring." With that he launched himself into the air, seeming to fly down the lane and gracefully arcing into the water with the tiniest splash as he managed to slip only a few inches under the water before quickly surfacing. Turning back he said, "not bad for an old man, eh?"

I giggled my little girl giggle and got up on the blocks as he stood in neck-deep water under the flags about 1/4 of the way down the lane. "Well I'll give it a try and this young girl may just kick your butt, Coach." I ran my hands through my hair, then quickly thought of a cat springing before I stepped onto the blocks.

"When you get up, don't think Amy, ok? Just do it." He encouraged from the pool.

I stepped up, bent down and placed pink toes over the pale blue fiberglass of the blocks, then grasped the block, readied my knees and legs and...

LAUNCHED.

I honestly thought I'd learned to fly. The distance between Matt and I disappeared in an instant and I felt myself slip, not plunge, into the water. My arms, stretched in front of me rammed into his chest, instantly stopping my momentum and pushing him back a bit in the water. The surprise of this encounter - I'd never gone that far out on a start - took both of us by surprise as I could tell by the look on his face which was not a foot away from me.

"Hell yeah!" I exclaimed taking a phrase from the boys on the team. "That rocked!" And in my enthusiasm I wrapped my long arms around Matt's neck without thinking and pulled myself into him in a hug that started out as girlish enthusiasm. "I thought I was flying Matt... I mean Coach" I said as I released the hug to hold him on his shoulders as I couldn't quite touch bottom here.

"Amy, that, that was incredible. You amaze me." His eyes are smiling as he looks into the very core of who I am in my moment of unguarded joy.

I pulled myself into him, "Coach.... Matt?"

I felt the absurdly powerful muscles in his shoulder ripple as his arms reach out under water.

"Yes, Amy?"

"I..." pull myself in to him, our eyes never breaking the lock they have and as my lips meet his and I feel his hands on my waist. The fullness of his lips press back against me and as he returned the kiss I feel his hands clutch at my waist as if he doesn't trust them to stay there. And before I could really begin to appreciate the moment those same hands pushed me away hard and fast. I moved back through the water, propelled by the force of his thrust.

"Amy... what was... I ... you ... you can't do that! I can't do that. WE can't do that!" the emphatic pleading desperation in his voice sobered me instantly. "I don't know what just happened there but it wasn't right. I'm your coach. You are 16. That can't happen."

I stood there in the water, my heat draining into the cold water and my shame and embarrassment filling the void it left. I didn't know what to think or say, let alone to do. I think I had been as shocked by what had just happened as Matt

had been, even if I had been the one to initiate it. "... I..." Tears flooded into my eyes as I turned to the wall, took a few steps and quickly pulled myself out of the water. I almost ran to the locker room, only diverting to grab my bag and never turning to look at Matt. I was terrified by the consequences of what had happened - not that I had any idea what they might be. So I assumed the worst: getting kicked off the team, suspended or even expelled from school, my parents thinking me a whore, my friends abandoning me.

When I got to the locker room I found myself alone dreading the thought of having to leave with the possibility of seeing Matt a serious concern. I sat shivering in front of my locker for a long while before the cold air compelled action. I stripped off my suit and walked into the showers, a large communal space with no thought for privacy. I went to the back and turned on a couple of shower heads so that they would stream steaming water onto me from two angles and just stood in the spray letting the heat sink in to my skin and begin to take the edge off of my nerves. Perhaps I was overreacting, after-all wasn't it possible that Matt might feel just as guilty and nervous as I did? He had kissed me back, of that I was certain, and the way he had put his hands on my waist.

So despite all the guilt and confusion I was feeling, or perhaps because of it all, my body responded to what had just happened by focusing in on the feelings of his hands and lips on me. He had kissed me, he had touched me, hadn't he wanted me too? My head only raced faster through a million thoughts as I thought of this new realization. I no longer felt the steaming water running through my hair and over my skin. All my senses were wrapped up into the tingles and sparks I was feeling in my nipples, in my chest, and deep inside my vagina. My hands moved gently across the landscape of my body, over nipples that were almost aglow in bright red. Across my petite breasts, down the flat, pale stretch of my abdomen, through the thin, almost non-existent patch of pubic hair. I turned to let the water rush down my back and butt. I opened my eyes, I don't know why, perhaps I sensed something, and Matt was there.

He was standing in the doorway to the shower area in his suit, a towel around his neck, looking directly at me. I was fully exposed to him and despite all my girlish insecurities I didn't attempt to cover myself as I almost instantly realized that his presence could mean only one thing. He was looking at me as though I was the only person left on earth, his eyes were wide, clear, bright. Then our eyes met through the steam and so much was said in the ensuing silent conversation that I felt we had no more secrets by the time that he turned back to the door and left.

The confused, dissonant energy I'd felt in the aftermath of the kiss quickly rekindled into desire for him. I ended my shower and bursting with energy quickly got dressed. I was able to walk out of the locker room not as I had feared earlier - in

shame and worry - but with a self-possessed air of confidence that in hindsight, I really had no business wearing. But teenagers, especially those in the throws of first love, aren't known for their keen insight and rational decisions and I was certainly no exception. Although I did begin to feel the nerves creep back into my belly I walked towards Matt's office as though our love was a forgone conclusion and that within the week we would be showing up to school events holding hands, hickeys on my neck and his letterman's jacket over my shoulders. When I reached his office I was disappointed to find the lights out and the door locked. A note with my name on it had been taped to the door.

Amy,

I need to think about what happened today. Please forgive me for leaving early - we'll talk about things soon, I promise.

Coach Matt

Not much in the way of a love letter, but he had at least left me something. I took the note, slipped it into the back pocket of my jeans and left for home. On my way I debated whether or not I should call Beth and tell her what had happened. I saw many reasons to do so, but many reasons not to do so as well. I decided not to in the end after I thought about what Matt had said in the pool. If he was 'caught' with me I knew that he would be in very deep trouble and I felt the need to protect him in much the same way that I felt he would help me.