Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

Swim the Fly

Written by

Don Calame

Published by

Templar Publishing

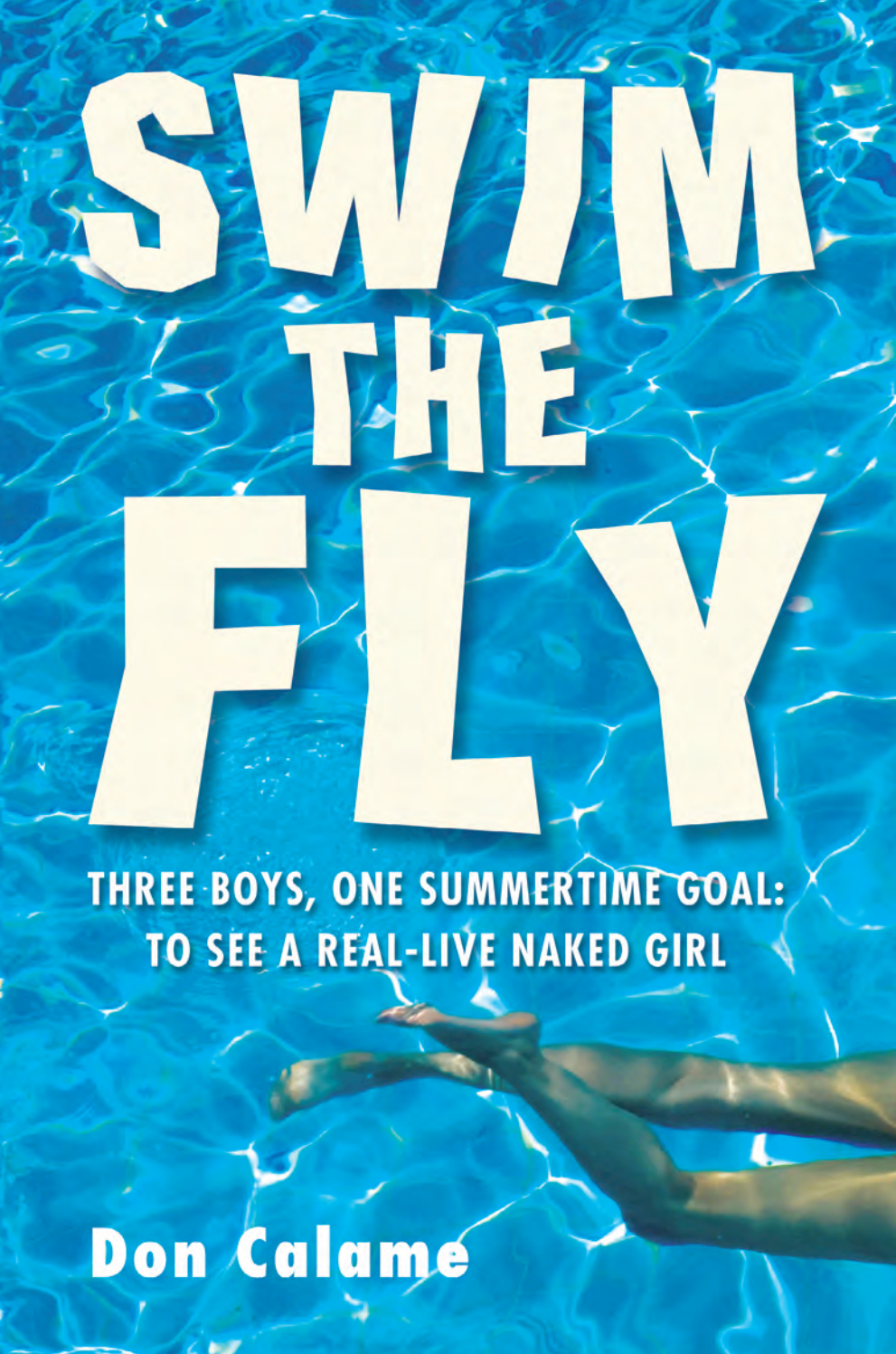
All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk

SWIM THE FLY

THREE BOYS, ONE SUMMERTIME GOAL:
TO SEE A REAL-LIVE NAKED GIRL



Don Calame

PRAISE FOR

SWIM THE FLY

'*Swim the Fly* is a great breath of fresh air in teen publishing. There is not a supernatural being in sight and it will have you laughing so much you'll cry.'
★★★★★ Waterstones online bookseller review

'Don Calame, a screenwriter, serves up jokes and gross-outs in the style of filmmakers like Judd Apatow… boys will probably love it. This one did.'
The New York Times Book Review

'Of all the hilariously raucous scenes that stuff its pages, the most outrageous involves a bet (or is it blackmail?), cross-dressing and laxatives… it has an audacity in the humour and a sweetness in the conclusion that set it apart.'
Los Angeles Times

'…this boisterous and unexpectedly sweet read will be a word-of-mouth hit.'
Kirkus Reviews

To my wife, 'bossy boots' – thank you for insisting I write this book.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or, if real, are used fictitiously.

A TEMPLAR BOOK

First published in 2009 by Candlewick Press First published in the UK in 2011 by Templar Publishing, an imprint of the Templar Company Limited, The Granary, North Street, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1DN, UK
www.templarco.co.uk

Copyright © 2009 by Don Calame

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

All rights reserved

ISBN 978-1-84877-453-7

Printed in the UK

SWIM THE FLY

★ ★ ★

DON CALAME



templar

CHAPTER ONE

SWIM TEAM

"Movies don't count," Cooper says. "The Internet doesn't count. Magazines don't count. A real, live naked girl. That's the deal. That's our goal for this summer."

"Been there, done that," Sean says.

"Taking baths with your sister doesn't count, either, Sean," Cooper snorts.

"Screw you, meat stain. I haven't done that since I was, like, two, okay. And that's not what I was talking about," Sean says.

We're walking up to the pool. Cooper, Sean and me. Bare feet tucked into untied sneakers, ragged towels draped around our necks. It's our first day of swim practice, which means that summer's really started. We've been friends since kindergarten.

We've been on swim team since third grade. The Rockville Swimming Association. Six years as Lower Rockville Razorbacks.

"He's talking about Tina Everstone's left boob," I say as we turn on to Maple Drive and walk along the kerb.

"Oh, please. Not that again." Cooper rolls his eyes.

"It's true. I saw the whole thing when she was taking off her sweatshirt during gym. Her T-shirt came up just enough–"

"And she wasn't wearing a bra and her left one popped out and you saw the entire thing, nipple and all, and even if I didn't think you were lying to us, it still wouldn't count," Cooper says. "I'm talking *totally* naked. Not a quick flash, okay?"

"Whatever." Sean shrugs and looks off at the run-down ranch houses like he doesn't care what we think.

"How are we supposed to see a live naked girl?" I say. "Maybe we better set a more realistic goal for the summer. Like finding Atlantis."

"Matt, Matt, Matt." Cooper puts his arm around me like he's my wise uncle. "That kind of attitude will get you nowhere in life. Don't you get it? You have to follow the natural way of things. It's like that picture in our bio textbook. First there's the monkey. Then there's the caveman. Then there's the human. It's the same with sex. First there's Internet porn, then there's seeing your first real naked girl,

and finally it's the dirty deed. You do want to have sex someday, don't you, Matt?"

Every summer there is a goal. It's tradition. I don't remember when it started or why. But as long as I can remember, we've always come up with something we had to accomplish before the start of the new school year. When we were ten, it was riding our bikes fifteen miles away to Perry Lake and skinny-dipping. When we were twelve, it was going to the Fern Creek Golf Course every day until we collected a thousand golf balls. Over the past few years, the goals have become more centred around girls and sex. Two years ago, each of us had to get our hands on a *Playboy* and show it to the others. Last year the ante was upped to finding an illegal password for a porn site. And now, Cooper's challenge for this summer. Which I can't see ever happening.

Maybe if we were even a little bit cool, or had any chance of getting girlfriends. But that's just not the case. By the time you're fifteen, you've either had a girlfriend – maybe even had sex – or, like Coop, Sean and me, you haven't even mustered the courage to ask a girl out. There's also a third group, I guess. Guys who say they've had girlfriends but who nobody really believes. Which just means they're liars who fit into the second category.

We make it to Rockville Avenue Pool just in time

to hear Ms Luntz, our swim coach, calling the team over for a meeting. Ms Luntz is a gourd-shaped woman who wears her blue-and-white Speedo stretched to capacity underneath denim short-pants overalls. Her legs are thick and pockmarked, and purple worm veins bubble up beneath the see-through skin on her thighs. She doesn't make things much better for herself with her Campbell's Soup Kid haircut and gigantic pink-tinted glasses. You could almost feel sorry for her, if she wasn't so nasty to everyone.

"Hurry up, people," Ms Luntz squawks. "Let's go, let's go. Before winter comes. We've got important business to discuss."

Cooper, Sean and me make our way around 'the toilet' – a shallow, oval kiddie pool that's always suspiciously body-temperature warm. My mom says it's warm because there's less water in there and the sun can heat it up faster, but nobody's buying that. Last year, Cooper bet Sean ten bucks he wouldn't bob for a Life Saver over the painted picture of Elmo, which is where most of the little kids hang out, and Sean did it without blinking an eye. It was pretty sick. Sean kept saying how they put chemicals in the pool for a reason, but there's no way I could have done that. I feel my stomach lurch now just thinking about it.

We walk along the edge of the adult pool towards the deep end where the diving boards are. I breathe in the sharp chlorine smell and watch the swimmers stringing the swim lane dividers, and it's like "Yeah, I know this" mixed with "Oh, God, not this again."

We hang back at the edge of the crowd that forms around Ms Luntz. It's all the same people from last year. A sea of blue and white Lycra. Guys and girls from seven to seventeen. All of them serious about swim team.

It's different for Coop, Sean and me. We do swim team because we've always done swim team. Between the three of us, I bet that we have the largest collection of green fifth-place ribbons in the entire league. It's not like we try to lose. It's just that we happen to be the three least athletic kids on the team. Maybe even in all of Rockville.

"Okay, so, welcome back and all that crap," Ms Luntz says, tapping her pen on her clipboard. "It's another summer, which means another chance to make a run for gold. Our first meet is in three weeks. I want us to set the bar high right away. I want us to take first in this year's relay challenge."

Coop leans over to me and whispers, "Yeah, and I want to take a whipped-cream bath with Miss October. Which will happen way sooner than us placing first."

"I thought you had the hots for Webcam Pam."

"You've got me confused with Sean," Coop says. "He likes the chunky girls."

"Hey, she's not fat," Sean says. "That's the wide-angle lens on the webcam."

"Right." Coop smirks. "Besides, I've got enough plump stuff for me and Miss October both." Coop puffs out his soft belly, making it large and round. He puts his two hands on either side and jiggles it. "Ho, ho, ho," he says.

"That's sick, dude." I look away, back towards Ms Luntz.

"We've got most of our team back this year," Ms Luntz says. "Just one addition, which we are very excited about. Kelly West from the Dowling Dolphins will be joining us this summer."

I look over and see a girl standing in between Reena Higgins and Gordon Burrows. I don't know how I missed her before. She rolls a Tootsie Pop around in her mouth and waves at everyone. She is beyond hot. Short brown hair, bright green eyes, small round breasts. I feel my tongue and throat go dry.

"Kelly's family just moved to Lower Rockville last month," Ms Luntz says. "She's a gold-medal-winning backstroker, so we are very lucky to have her swimming for us."

"That's not the only reason we're lucky to have her." Sean stifles a laugh.

I can't wrap my mind around this. I remember Kelly West from last summer's swim meets. She's a skinny girl with freckles and greasy hair and braces, not this hottie who's standing by Reena and Gordon.

"From Slim Jim to goddess in under a year," Coop says. "That's why you shouldn't slag the ugly ones. You never know when one of them will spring from her cocoon looking like a supermodel."

I haven't blinked since I spotted her. My head feels funny. My chest feels heavy. It's hard to breathe.

All of a sudden, everything's changed.