

The Pool  
by  
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FADE IN:

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - NIGHT

A huge pool of black, tranquil water stretches from one end of a vacant indoors sports-arena to the other. Closed for the night.

Shadows flicker against the white wall-tiles and footsteps patter softly.

Intruders.

Suddenly a hand jabs a key into a keyhole in the wall, much like a nuclear arming device. The key turns and the arena is bathed in bright fluorescent light.

All but the pool itself which remains black as oil.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Come on, you pussies!

Three young boys, barely in their teens, slink along the shore of the pool.

CHARLIE, 13, a slightly muscular kid for his age, leads the raiders with dogged determination.

Behind him follows BEN, 13, a wiry-framed, debonair kid with the same dark hair and brooding eyes as Charlie. They could be brothers.

His eyes dart nervously around the place.

BEN

What about the pool-lights?

CHARLIE

It's more fun this way.

The last kid, SAM, also 13, gaits a few feet behind them. He wears a t-shirt to hide his chubby build.

SAM

Wait up!

CHARLIE

Keep up or let up, fat-ass.

They stop by the deep end and throw their towels into a couple of pool-chairs. The three kids gaze with awe at the mysterious pool of impenetrable darkness.

SAM

It kinda looks like an ocean.

BEN

The Mariana Trench.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

What?

BEN

That's the deepest place on earth. Seven miles deep. Off the Philippines. There's life down there we don't even know about.

Charlie throws him a sardonic grin.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Discovery Channel.

SAM

How long do you think is possible? To stay under there?

Charlie shrugs.

CHARLIE

World record is 8 minutes.  
(nonchalant pause)  
But I can beat that.

BEN

Oh yeah?

Sam cocks his head to the side, unconvinced.

SAM

What about Houdini?

CHARLIE

What about him?

SAM

He was under for 90 minutes once. In a cage. With, like, chains wrapped around him.

Ben smiles leniently.

BEN

That's just an urban legend, Sam. No one can be under for that long.

SAM

No, man. I saw this documentary once. He could like control his heartbeat and shit. Some people have, like, freaky powers.

Charlie laughs haughtily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLIE

Sorry to disappoint you, buddy,  
but it's all slight of hand.

He flips a quarter into the air and catches it in his palm.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Now, let's christen the waters  
and get this show on the road.

Charlie skips the coin across the surface of the pool before it inevitably sinks.

Ben pulls out an old-time stopwatch from his trunks.

BEN

Don't throw it like that. It's  
disrespectful.

CHARLIE

To who?

Ben furrows his brows.

BEN

We're supposed to be asking for  
safe passage, remember?

(pauses)

Who's first?

CHARLIE

Don't mind if I do.

Charlie rubs his hands confidently and prepares to jump.

BEN

Okay, just hold on. I gotta set  
it.

SPLASH! Charlie cannonballs into the water. Moments later he resurfaces with a cheeky smile.

CHARLIE

Sorry, I didn't catch that?

He flaps about a bit.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Fuck me, this is cold!

Sam regards the archaic contraption in Ben's hands with curiosity.

SAM

Why'd you bring that old clock  
anyway? My phone has a digital.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Ben looks reverentially at the clock.

BEN

This thing belonged to my  
grandfather. Since 1923 this  
watch hasn't even lost one  
second.

Charlie moves about in the water, impatiently.

CHARLIE

Hey, professor. Whenever you're  
ready.

Ben nods.

BEN

Okay, ready? 3, 2, 1...go!

Charlie's head disappears under the dark water as if  
sucked by some great force.

Ben looks at the clock as the second-hand ticks away.

30 seconds.

Sam carefully approaches the edge to get a better view.

SAM

I can't even see him.

60 seconds.

The water flows quiet, as if nothing's down there.

80 seconds.

Ben's eyes widen, impressed.

90 seconds.

Suddenly Charlie's head ploughs through the surface in  
a huge gasp for air.

BEN

Aw, shit! 93 seconds!

SAM

That's a new record!

Charlie splashes water around jubilantly.

CHARLIE

Whoohoo!

Ben extends his hand to help Charlie up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Thanks, man.

Charlie then pulls Ben into the water and helps himself up.

BEN

Fuck you!

CHARLIE

Dope.

Charlie eyes Sam clutching Ben's stopwatch.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Maybe George Dzundza here wants  
a shot at the title?

Sam's eyes flicker about, searching for an ample comeback.

SAM

Funny.

BEN

What's the matter, Charlie?  
Afraid I'm gonna take you?

Charlie grabs his towel from one of the pool-chairs.

CHARLIE

Horrified. Now get on with it,  
Carlsisle.

BEN

Hey, Katie's coming, right?

CHARLIE

Yeah, she said she'd be here  
around midnight. Why?

Ben grabs the ledge with a sheepish look.

BEN

'Cause I was just thinking...I  
never saw Katie in a swimsuit  
before.

CHARLIE

What are you talking about?  
Remember the Olympalooza?

BEN

Yeah, I know, I mean after  
she's...you know...developed.

Charlie smiles slyly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHARLIE

After she got boobs.

Ben smiles as well.

BEN

Yeah...

CHARLIE

So...you ever beat off to her?

Ben grimaces and kicks himself away from the edge.

BEN

No!

(simplers)

And even if I had, I wouldn't  
tell you fucks!

CHARLIE

I knew it! How about you, Sammy?  
How do you rate our Katie? On a  
10-scale?

Sam dabbles around with the watch, his eyes firmly  
fixed on the old clock.

SAM

I don't know.

CHARLIE

You don't know? What's there to  
know?

A slight blush fills Sam's cheeks as he starts to turn  
the clocks controls to reset the time.

SAM

I guess I just never thought  
about her like that.

Charlie grows more and more slack-jawed.

CHARLIE

Don't tell me you haven't  
noticed a change in sweet  
Katherine. You didn't get the  
memo? Katie's hot now.

Sam titters awkwardly.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

But don't get any ideas now,  
Sammy. It'd never work out  
between the two of you. I mean,  
your tits are bigger than hers!  
She'd get jealous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

A hurt scowl falls over Sam's face.

SAM

Shut up.

BEN

Yeah, shut up, Charlie.

Charlie, in mock surprise.

CHARLIE

What did I do now?

BEN

You were being you.

(pauses)

Ready to time me, Sam?

Sam shuffles his feet and looks up.

SAM

Nuh, I gotta take a piss. Take the clock for a minute.

He throws Charlie the stop-watch.

CHARLIE

Sure thing. Bring me back a snickers, will ya.

SAM

Funny. I gotta take a piss, fuck-off.

CHARLIE

"Fuck-off"? I swear, Sammy, your wit could power small villages.

INT. BATHROOM

Hot water gushes from the tap over the bathroom sink.

Sam stands in front of the mirror with his shirt off. He sucks his gut in and glares into the glass with contempt.

He then puts his hands over the sink and lets the water rinse through his fingers. The warm flow spreads across his skin for a few seconds.

SUDDENLY the gushing water turns sickly brown. Then black. Sam PULLS back his hands in disgust.

He watches the spill for a little while with fear in his eyes, then jabs the handle shut.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - UNDER WATER

Ben clings to the pool-wall, submerged, completely still in the water.

SUDDENLY a life-sized projectile penetrates the waters and Ben lets out pockets of air in shock.

He then recognizes the missile as a human girl in a dark swimsuit.

KATIE, 13, a petite girl with shoulder-long brown hair and green eyes. Her maturing body contrasts her childlike face.

She grins and waves to him.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA

Ben and the girl both emerge from the water as Charlie keenly rears over them.

Sam keeps his distance to the water.

KATIE

You should've seen your face!

Katie mock-mimics Ben's shocked facial expression.

BEN

Thanks, Katie, I almost had him!

CHARLIE

You had nothing.

Katie grabs the ledge and lifts herself onto the ground.

KATIE

You're welcome.

Ben takes a side-long glance at her pubescent body as she pulls her self all the way up.

He snaps out of it.

BEN

I should get a re-try.

CHARLIE

Nah, it's Katie's turn. Unless tubby wants to conquer his fear of water?

Sam's nervous stare grazes Katie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATIE

You don't like the water, Sam?

SAM

No...--I mean, when I was little  
I didn't like it. But I'm way  
past it now.

BEN

Sam almost drowned when he was  
little.

Katie's brows rise.

KATIE

Really? What was it like?

Sam's eyes flicker about, uncomfortably.

SAM

It wasn't like anything. I  
just...blacked out.

CHARLIE

Come on, Sam, she wants the  
whole story.

Katie shifts between the boys, intrigued.

KATIE

What?

Ben smiles, as if telling a joke.

BEN

Sam saw a ghost.

Sam lifts his head in objection.

SAM

I didn't say it was a ghost.

Katie takes an eager step closer.

KATIE

What did you see?

Sam looks into the black waters of the swimming pool.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Come on, Sam.

SAM

A woman. In the water.

KATIE

A woman? What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Nothing happened. She just looked at me with these sad eyes. Like I'd done something to her.

An awkward silence falls over the four friends.

SAM (CONT'D)

Anyway, the doctors told me it was normal to hallucinate when your body goes into shock.

CHARLIE

Yeah, but you still don't go into the water.

Sam looks up, determined.

SAM

That's not 'cause I'm afraid.  
(to Katie)  
And I know how to swim.

Katie gives him a disarming smile.

KATIE

It's alright, Sam. You don't have to.

SAM

No, I want to. It's no big deal.

Katie nods.

KATIE

Hey, I know. We'll, like, duel.  
You and me. Last one out wins.  
How's that?

Sam's eyes widen.

SAM

Okay.

CHARLIE

Shirts off.

Sam stops dead in his tracks.

BEN

Charlie.

CHARLIE

I'm kidding. No one needs to see that.

Katie sneers at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KATIE

Jerk.

Katie jumps into the water in a beautiful swan-dive.

Sam puts down the stop-watch and moves to the basin's edge. He loses his gaze into the blackness.

CHARLIE

Come on!

He quails before the mighty, dark ocean.

KATIE

It's alright, Sam. I checked for  
creepy old ladies down there.  
We're in the clear.

Sam forces a distraught smile.

JUST THEN Charlie lands his right foot in Sam's back and shoves him into the water, screaming.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Sam!

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - UNDER WATER

Sam sinks down, arms flailing everywhere, flashbulb-eyes.

The blackness in the waters surrounds him. Sam flaps every limb to get away.

Then a hand GRABS his shoulder.

Sam turns around and faces Katie. His face grows calmer.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA

The two kids resurface. Sam's arms flail all over the place as he makes his way to the wall.

BEN

Sam, are you alright?!

Charlie towers over the pool with a slightly disconcerted look.

KATIE

Charlie, you fucking ass-hole!  
You could've killed him!

He self-consciously puts on a smug grin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE

Hey, this is what the momma-bird  
does when her young don't wanna  
fly.

KATIE

Are you okay, Sam?

Sam nods, still in shock.

BEN

You want out?

He hesitates. Looks to Katie next to him.

SAM

No. I'm fine. The water's kinda  
warm.

Sam's words feign nonchalance. His lips quiver.

CHARLIE

That's the spirit!

Katie and Ben glower at Charlie, who slouches back into  
a pool-chair.

Ben grabs a hold of the stop-watch.

BEN

Okay. Hold on. You ready?

Sam nods, seemingly enthused.

BEN (CONT'D)

3...2...-

Ben shakes the watch as if it's broken.

BEN (CONT'D)

Hold on, I think it's...1, go!

Katie smiles and eagerly pushes herself under. A  
second's hesitance and Sam follows suit.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - UNDER WATER

The two bodies plummet 10-12 feet under.

Sam clings to a groove in the pool-wall as he looks to  
Katie.

They exchange an innocent smile.

As Katie looks away, Sam's eyes stay on her. Glide down  
her breasts, stomach, thighs, all the way to her feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Katie suddenly turns as if she feels his stare. Sam immediately looks away.

An awkward smile forms at the side of her mouth. She knows what he was looking at.

After a few seconds she exhales into the water and rises to the surface.

Sam then looks frustrated down his trunks.

Then SUDDENLY something moves behind him.

Sam wheels around in the water. Nothing. Only darkness.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA

Sam surfaces and grabs a hold of the pool's edge.

Charlie glows in mock excitement.

CHARLIE

Wow, all of 40 seconds for the both of you. See any dead people?

Sam and Katie both look away.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Too bad. Now get outta there, tubster. You're on stop-watch duty.

Sam hesitates. Charlie claps his hands goadingly.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This side of winter, Tessio.

SAM

You know what, do it yourself, Charlie.

CHARLIE

It's your turn. Hence "get out of the pool, fat-ass".

Sam averts his eyes, embarrassed.

SAM

I said, do it yourself.

Charlie furrows his brow.

CHARLIE

What the hell's wrong with you? You don't even like the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAM

I like it fine.

Charlie's eyes shift to Katie and his expression changes to an acidic smile.

CHARLIE

Oh my God, you popped a boner,  
didn't you? Tubby got a hard on!  
Katie, you dirty girl!

SAM

No, I didn't!

Katie looks embarrassed into the water.

CHARLIE

Wow, there must be something in  
the water. You didn't come, did  
you?

SAM

Shut up! I didn't pop a boner!

BEN

Yeah, shut the fuck up, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Honestly, I'm as surprised as  
you are. Didn't even know you  
had a pecker under there.

Sam explodes. He pounds his fists into the water.

SAMMY

Shut the fuck up, ass-hole!  
I'll kick your ass!

Charlie laughs.

CHARLIE

Whoa! Careful with your choice  
of words there, buddy.

KATIE

Christ, Charlie, just leave him  
alone...

Sam turns, all flushed and fiery.

SAM

Shut up, Katie. I don't need  
your help! You know, just 'cause  
you suddenly got boobs, doesn't  
mean you give every guy in the  
world a hard-on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Katie shields her arms across her chest and looks humiliated away.

Sam looks at Charlie, full of rage.

SAM (CONT'D)  
And I ain't afraid of you,  
Charlie.

CHARLIE  
Is that right...Lard-ass?

Charlie nudges Sam hard on the head with his foot.

SAM  
I dare you to do that again.

Charlie grins to the others.

BEN  
You don't know when to quit,  
Charlie.

He extends his foot for another try. But this time Sam grabs his ankle and pulls.

Sam rips Charlie into the water with a hysterical war-cry.

CHARLIE  
Wow, Sammy, I didn't think you  
had it in ya.

The two boys behold each other like enemies. Charlie dons a vicious smile and fixes on Sam's body.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
But then again, you've got room  
for a lot.

SAM  
I told you to shut up!

Sam furiously splashes water against him again.

CHARLIE  
That's true, you did. Now what  
are you gonna do about it?

Charlie suddenly dives down, below the surface.

Sam twists and turns in the water, as if scanning for sharks.

Just then Charlie appears behind Sam and puts him in a headlock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Say you're sorry.

SAM

No!

Charlie pulls Sam under.

BEN

Jesus Christ, let go of him  
Charlie!

Sam resurfaces, gasping for air.

CHARLIE

Say it!

Sam starts to wrestle his captor back and forth.

SAM

No!

Charlie pulls Sam under for a few seconds again.

KATIE

Charlie, you fucking coward. Let  
him go!

Charlie grabs a hold of Sam's left breast and guffaws triumphantly.

CHARLIE

I got his tit! I got his tit!

Ben jumps into the water and tries to pull Charlie off him.

Sam starts to wrestle even harder now. He tries to elbow Charlie.

SAM

No! Leave me alone!

Suddenly Charlie lets go and one of Sam's elbows socks Ben right in the face. His head snaps back, stunned.

Then silence falls over the pool.

Blood trickles from Ben's nose. Sam clings to the ledge, facing the wall. His furious panting wanes.

SAM (CONT'D)

Leave me alone, Ben.

BEN

I was trying to help you.

Katie shifts an empathetic look to Ben.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

KATIE

Ben, are you alright?

Ben nods and climbs out of the pool. Katie puts her hands around his face and tends to his wound.

Sam glowers enviously at the two.

Charlie averts his eyes as he quietly pulls himself out of the pool.

Sam looks into water, trying to find his reflection in the murky waters.

SAM

Time me again.

Ben sighs and looks down, slightly abashed.

CHARLIE

The game's over.

SAM

You time me, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Are you deaf? I said it's over-

SAM

Please.

Charlie locks on Sam's pleading eyes. Like a wounded animal begging for its life.

He pauses for a moment. Then nods, sympathetically.

CHARLIE

Alright.

He picks up the stop-watch from the floor and puts it around his neck.

Katie and Ben watch with tense, strange anticipation. Unsure of the grave look in both boys' eyes.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Whenever you're ready.

There's nothing cocky over Charlie now. He's a bit timid.

SAM

I'm ready.

Sam stares blindly into the air. Determined.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

CHARLIE

I'll start the clock when you're under.

SAM

Yeah.

A long silence. Nothing moves. No one speaks.

Sam draws one last breath and submerges himself into blackness. Disappears.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - UNDER WATER

Sam falls through the water, deeper and deeper, until he finally reaches the bottom.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA

Katie and Ben move closer to Charlie to watch his time.

20 seconds. 30 seconds.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA - UNDER WATER

Sam holds on to the groove in the wall. He's facing away from it. Anticipating something.

He glares into the dark waters with wide-open eyes.

SUDDENLY his face contorts in shock. He sees something.

Then a strange calmness comes over him.

He closes his eyes.

INT. SWIMMING ARENA

Ben stares confused at Charlie.

60 seconds. 70 seconds.

BEN

Something's wrong.

CHARLIE

No.

Charlie's arm holds Ben back. His voice is different. Distant.

80 seconds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Katie finds Ben's hand and they clutch each other tightly.

90 seconds. 100 seconds.

Fear is painted across Katie's face. Ben notices.

BEN  
Something's wrong, Charlie!

CHARLIE  
No! Let him finish...

His words are quiet. Mad.

KATIE  
Charlie, he's drowning!

Ben wrestles loose of Charlie and jumps in the water.

CHARLIE  
No! Don't!

120 seconds. 130 seconds.

Katie holds her breath and clutches her throat nervously.

After a little while Ben surfaces alone. All composure gone.

BEN  
I can't find him!

KATIE  
What?

BEN  
He's not down there!

KATIE  
What do you mean? Maybe he swam to the other side?

Ben just looks at her, petrified, and shakes his head.

Katie jumps into the water and dives down. Ben follows.

Charlie just gazes, spellbound to the clock. His eyes are calm. Deranged.

Katie re-appears in the water, pale and flustered.

KATIE (CONT'D)  
He's gone! Get help, Charlie!

Charlie doesn't even hear her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KATIE (CONT'D)

Charlie!

He looks with awe to the stopwatch. The second-hand passes 200.

CHARLIE

200...

Katie's frustrated cries echo off the ceramic walls for a while and then eventually die out.

FADE OUT.

THE END