



## Sample Pages from Underwater

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# UNDERWATER

A DRAMA IN ONE ACT BY  
Lindsay Price



*Underwater*

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## Characters

1 M + 3 W + 8 AG + Ensemble of Enthusiasts

**MORLEY OUTSIDE:** (W) Morley Meer. A teenage competitive swimmer. Up until this moment, has always loved swimming with the goal to compete at the Olympics.

**MORLEY INSIDE:** (AG) This character represents Morley's inner thoughts. It is not necessary for this actor to resemble Morley Outside or even be the same gender. They represent the true self, which does not need to be a visual likeness.

**MOM:** (W) Morley's parent. Focused on fully supporting Morley to reach their highest potential as a competitive swimmer.

**DAD:** (M) Morley's parent. Focused on fully supporting Morley to reach their highest potential as a competitive swimmer.

**COACH:** (AG) Coach Finn. Coach of Morley's High School swim team, the Ridgeway Royals. Focused on fully supporting swimmers to their highest potential in a high school setting. A different character (but not entirely) than Club Coach.

**CLUB COACH:** (AG) Coach Riley. Coach of Morley's club team, Breakers Swim Club. Focused on fully supporting swimmers toward the Olympics without any room for anything else. A different character (but not entirely) than Coach.

**KIT:** (W) A fellow competitive swimmer. Has known Morley for a long time and even used to be friends. Bitter about Morley's success.

**TEACHER:** (AG) A drama teacher with the attitude that everyone who wants to be involved with the school musical should have the chance. It's about community, not pushing to be the best.

**THE SWIMMERS:** (AG) One, Two, Three, and Four represent the swimmers on Morley's high school swim team as well as her club program. There is no need to put them in different costumes for the two swim teams—they symbolize all teenage swimmers.

**THE ENTHUSIASTS:** (AG) A group who is enthusiastic about Morley being a competitive swimmer. In the script, this group includes Mom, Dad, Coach, Club Coach, the Teacher, and Kit, but it doesn't have to. (Technically, neither the Teacher nor Kit is *enthusiastic* about Morley being a swimmer—it

all depends on your numbers.) You can include as many Enthusiasts as your stage can handle.

## **Set**

The play blends both abstract and realistic atmospheres. Use these concepts in your set design. Rather than creating a realistic pool setting, consider incorporating white lines (such as white spike tape) running from upstage to downstage and through each cube to suggest the lanes of a pool. Designate an area for *The Enthusiasts* downstage left and an area for *Morley Inside* and *Morley Outside* downstage right. Additionally, include four cubes upstage, positioned between the two downstage areas, to represent swimmers' starting blocks.

## **Lighting & Sound**

Play with every underwater look, mood, color, light, and sound you can imagine. Shift scenes seamlessly from moody blue tones to bright, vibrant light. Incorporate realistic swim meet sounds, such as whistles and starter buzzers, to enhance the atmosphere.

*The stage is filled with blue light. An underwater atmosphere.*

*There are four cubes spaced out centre stage. Four SWIMMERS stand behind the cubes, dressed in blue sweats. They are warming up their arms, as if they are about to participate in a race. MORLEY O stands in their area, on top of a cube staring out, focused. MORLEY I stands off to the side looking up at MORLEY O.*

*Downstage left, in the dark, there is a group looking out at the audience, not at the four SWIMMERS. These are the ENTHUSIASTS.*

*There is a long whistle. All four SWIMMERS move to stand on top of the cubes. They stand upright and still. They look focused.*

ENTHUSIASTS: Take your marks.

*The four SWIMMERS do not move.*

ONE: Underwater.

TWO: There is nothing.

THREE: Smooth blueness.

FOUR: And silence.

*The starter buzzer goes off. There is a flash of bright light. The ENTHUSIASTS are now lit. The four SWIMMERS stay in place on top of their cubes and mime a slow-motion front crawl with their arms. Each of the four SWIMMERS swim as fits their personality – ONE is struggling and should struggle to swim. FOUR is distracted and their stroke shouldn't look anything like the front crawl. TWO – fast. THREE – leisurely. MORLEY O does not move, staring out with focus.*

*At the same time, the ENTHUSIASTS explode into fast action and cheering, staying in place. They cheer on whichever swimmer they are watching in the race.*

*When the ENTHUSIASTS shout, they are NOT shouting in unison, even though they are speaking at the same time. Every person should have their own text. In fact, everyone in the ENTHUSIASTS should*

*choose their own swimmer that they are cheering on. If an individual in the ENTHUSIASTS wants to shout a name as their line of text, go for it.*

*The ENTHUSIASTS should be animated, with laser focus on whichever swimmer they are following.*

ENTHUSIASTS: *(Shouting, varied, NOT in unison. DO NOT deliver these lines one at a time. Each person picks their own line to say, overlapping with others. Lines should be repeated as needed.)* Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Swim! Pull! Pull! C'mon! Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Pull! Swim! Push harder! Harder! Push! You can do this! Go! Push! Go! Go! Let's go!

*After establishing the ENTHUSIASTS (10 seconds) The lights change to blue and focus on the SWIMMERS. When that happens, the ENTHUSIASTS stop all noise and move in super slow motion, so as to not draw focus from the SWIMMERS.*

ONE: I hate this.

TWO: I love it.

THREE: It's the only place I feel safe.

FOUR: Don't think, just swim. Don't think, just swim.

THREE: Underwater, the only person I have to think about is me.

FOUR: Don't think, just swim.

ONE: I can't stop thinking about how I'm disappointing everyone.

TWO: Push harder! Push!

*The lights change to include the ENTHUSIASTS. As soon as the light hits them, they all start yelling and encouraging their swimmer.*

ENTHUSIASTS: *(as before)* Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Swim! Pull! Pull! C'mon! Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Pull! Swim! Push harder! Harder! Push! You can do this! Go! Push! Go! Go! Let's go!

*After five seconds or so, the lights change to just focusing on the SWIMMERS. When that happens, the ENTHUSIASTS stop all noise and movement. They freeze.*

THREE: Underwater, there's no chaos.

TWO: (*not yelling, said with strength*) Push! Harder! Push! Harder!

FOUR: Ugh, I should have talked to Kelsey about our project, I keep putting her off and if I don't start working on it we're going to end up doing everything at the – (*losing focus*) Oh, crap.

TWO: Push!

ONE: I should give up.

THREE: I get to eat so much after this.

FOUR: Don't think, just swim. Don't think, just swim.

ALL: Don't think, just swim.

*The lights change to include the ENTHUSIASTS. It's now the end of the race. The sound reaches a climax, at which MORLEY O pumps their fist in the air, winning their race.*

*The ENTHUSIASTS react visually and verbally. The SWIMMERS come off of their cubes and join in the noise and action.*

*MORLEY O turns to the action, smiling, still standing on the cube.*

MORLEY O: You are awesome! Every single one of you! (*everyone onstage cheers and claps*) We've been working hard this year to get here and you should be so proud. Breakers Rock on three – one, two, three!

ENTHUSIASTS & SWIMMERS: Breakers Rock!

*There is a massive cheer. Everyone crowds around MORLEY O, who moves off the cube to stand centre stage.*

VOICE: (*played by the TEACHER*) Morley Meer first place 200 Free.

ENTHUSIASTS & SWIMMERS: Morley! Morley! Mor, Mor, Mor!

KIT: (*subdued*) Congratulations.

MOM & DAD: We're so proud!

MOM: Did you stretch?

COACH: Congrats, Mor.

CLUB COACH: Well done, Meer.



SWIMMER: This is going to be the best year!

DAD: I recorded the whole thing. We can watch it tonight.

CLUB COACH: We have lots to talk about.

MOM: We got your protein shake.

SWIMMER: Congratulations.

DAD: Do you want a banana?

COACH: We have lots to talk about.

MOM: Don't forget your cherry juice. Gotta take care of those muscles!

VOICE: (*played by the TEACHER*) Morley! Tell us how you're feeling!

*Everyone stares at MORLEY O, who steps forward.*

MORLEY O: Grateful. Extremely grateful. I wouldn't be here without the help and support of so many people. My parents, Coach Finn at Ridgeway High, Coach Riley at the Breakers Swim Club, and all my fellow swimmers, pushing me to be the best I can be.

ENTHUSIASTS & SWIMMERS: Morley! Morley! Mor, Mor, Mor!

*The SWIMMERS sit on their cubes. The ENTHUSIASTS move to their position at the side of the stage along with any individual characters. MORLEY I moves to join MORLEY O.*

MORLEY I: Hi. (*referring to MORLEY O*) As you may have guessed, this is Morley. I am also Morley. (*referring to MORLEY O*) Morley Outside. (*referring to self*) Morley Inside. Easy enough, right? (*to MORLEY O*) What's the one thing they (*the audience*) need to know about us?

MORLEY O: (*proudly*) I am a competitive swimmer.

MORLEY I: (*wryly*) I am a competitive swimmer. That's it, apparently. Actually, that's it, truthfully. That's all you need to know, because that's all I do. Every single day. Don't worry if you don't know anything about swimming. I could just as easily be a gymnast or a volleyball player or run cross country. There's someone like me in every sport.

*The ENTHUSIASTS snap to attention.*

ENTHUSIASTS: Morley's a winner! Morley's the best! Morley's number one!

*The ENTHUSIASTS return to a neutral position.*

MORLEY O: (testy) There's nothing wrong with being a competitive swimmer.

MORLEY I: (to audience) Underwater, everything is muffled. You can't really hear your own thoughts.

MORLEY O: (brightly) I love swimming. I love challenging myself, getting better with every practice. Every day I write down my goals; it's the first thing I do when I wake up. It gives me so much focus to know what I'm reaching for.

MORLEY I: (to the audience) I'm a lot.

MORLEY O: I know exactly what the next five years are leading to.

*The ENTHUSIASTS snap to attention.*

ENTHUSIASTS: Swimming! In! The Olympics! Morley! Morley! Mor, Mor, Mor!

MORLEY I: That's what I keep telling myself...

MORLEY O: Stop that!

MORLEY I: Stop what?

MORLEY O: Stop putting doubts in my head.

MORLEY I: It's *your* head, Morley. You're the one having doubts.

*MORLEY O walks away from MORLEY I to stand in front of the ENTHUSIASTS.*

MORLEY I: It's not all bad. There's a lot to love about being in the water.

*The lights change to blue.*

ONE: Underwater.

TWO: Problems don't matter.

THREE: Underwater.

FOUR: I'm not clumsy.

TWO: Underwater.

THREE: I'm at peace.

FOUR: Underwater.

ONE: Everything is calm.

TWO: Smooth.

THREE: Fluid.

FOUR: Quiet.

MORLEY I: All true. I used to see how long I could sit at the bottom of our pool.

*EVERYONE onstage breathes in as if they're about to go underwater.*

ONE: How long can you stay under?

TWO: Longer than you.

THREE: The water flows, no sound, no noise.

FOUR: Sometimes, I wish I could stay under forever.

MORLEY I: Sometimes, we wish we could stay under forever. But then we'd drown, wouldn't we?

FOUR: Well, I don't mean for real.

MORLEY I: Right. Although, you don't need water to feel like you're drowning.

*The lights change. The ENTHUSIASTS come to life, acting as MORLEY's alarm clock. They start quietly and grow in volume. MORLEY O bops to her alarm. As the ENTHUSIASTS speak, they crowd around MORLEY O. MORLEY I moves to sit in their area.*

ENTHUSIASTS: *(quietly)* Hey Morley, it's time to get up. *(a little louder)* Hey Morley, it's time to get up. *(a little louder)* Hey Morley, it's time to GET UP. *(loud)* HEY MORLEY, it's time to GET UP!

MORLEY O: *(cheerful)* It's time to get up!

*The ENTHUSIASTS cheer. MOM moves forward.*

MOM: Look at you, all ready to go.

MORLEY O: Do you have a flashlight? I have a math test I need to review for in the car.

MOM: *(calling out)* Dan! Morley needs a flashlight.

DAD: *(moving forward)* Got one right here!

MORLEY O: You're the best!

DAD: Got your shake?

MORLEY O: Got it!

DAD: Got your positive attitude?

MORLEY O: Got it!

DAD: Got your get up and go?

MORLEY O: Got it!

MOM: All right, the Morley Meer express is leaving the station.

ENTHUSIASTS: (*simulating a train whistle*) Woo, woووو!

*MOM, DAD and MORLEY O make the motion of a train leaving the station.*

MORLEY I: A day in the life of a competitive swimmer.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

MOM: I got your oatmeal in the car!

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

CLUB COACH: (*moving forward*) Warm-up is the drill of your choice for 300, check the sheet. We're going to work on pacing, 10 x 100 free all at the same pace. Look alive, people!

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

COACH: (*moving forward*) So, how did it go?

MORLEY O: They talked about a full scholarship!

COACH: That's amazing!

*COACH and MORLEY O hug in excitement at that news.*

COACH: See? I told you you were on their radar!

MORLEY O: My dad's not so sure. He doesn't like their times.

COACH: This is just the beginning.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

KIT: (*moving forward*) Why are you taking drama?

MORLEY O: I need an arts credit. Sounds like fun.

KIT: Ugh. (*smugly*) I got the call from the coach at Smithon.

MORLEY O: That's great!

KIT: I know. Don't get your hopes up. There are only so many full rides to go around. (*moves away*)

MORLEY I: Why do you let her talk to you like that?

MORLEY O: (*sincerely*) She doesn't mean it.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

CLUB COACH: Kick set. When you hear the whistle, sprint. When you hear the whistle twice, moderate pace. Go!

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

DAD: What do you want to eat?

MORLEY O: Chicken and pasta!

DAD: With... (*does a drum roll sound*)

MORLEY O: Guess!

DAD: With... kale!

MORLEY O: Kale it is!

MOM: How much homework do you have?

MORLEY O: Just a couple of hours. I'll be in bed by midnight.

MOM & DAD: We're so proud of you.

SWIMMERS & ENTHUSIASTS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep!

*The lights change to blue. The ENTHUSIASTS move back to their position. The SWIMMERS stand on the cubes. MORLEY O stands in front of the SWIMMERS with eyes closed, and arms tightly wrapped around their body.*

MORLEY O: (*to the self*) You're the best, you're the best, you can't be the best if you don't do your best.

ENTHUSIASTS: (*quietly*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up. (*quietly*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up.

SWIMMERS: (*quietly*) You're the best, you're the best, you can't be the best if you don't do your best.

MORLEY I: (*stands on cube*) It never stops. You go to sleep and the next second there's another practice. You finish a meet, there's another practice. You finish the season with the high school team and you have to show up for club the very next morning.

ENTHUSIASTS: (*quietly*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up. (*a little louder*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up.

MORLEY O & SWIMMERS: You're the best, you're the best, you can't be the best if you don't do your best.

MORLEY I: There's only so long before the rope frays.

ENTHUSIASTS: (*a little louder*) Hey Morley, it's time to GET UP. (*loud*) HEY MORLEY, it's time to GET UP!

MORLEY O: It's time to get up. (*moves to sit in the MORLEY area*)

CLUB COACH: All right, endurance ladders starting with 200 and a 15 second rest. Let's go!

*EVERYONE onstage moves in a slow motion swimming style. All use different swimming strokes.*

ONE: So cold. This water is so cold.

TWO: This water is so cold. I can't feel my fingers.

THREE: I can't feel my fingers. I can't feel my brain.

FOUR: I can't feel my brain. Three, two, one.

CLUB COACH: 400 and a 30 second rest. Go!

ONE: My breath,

TWO: Fluid, clear.

THREE: My breath,

FOUR: Tranquil as I flow.

ONE: Three, two, one.

*EVERYONE drops their movements. Lights change.*

MORLEY I: And it doesn't end in the pool.

*MOM and DAD move forward.*

DAD: Mona! Do you have the facilities spreadsheet?

MOM: Got it! (*proud, to the audience*) We've got spreadsheets on all the different programs and their event times.

DAD: Morley wants fast.

MOM: Spreadsheets for academics, big school or small, how far away from home...

DAD: Morley wants the best.

MOM: Spreadsheets for team environment, team philosophy, team facilities. It's a lot to manage. But we're here to support Morley one hundred percent.

DAD: A thousand percent! Both Mona and I come from sports backgrounds. We know the life.

MOM: We're up at the same time every morning, we're at every meet, we'd go to every practice if we could!

DAD: We can't.

MOM: We were discouraged.

DAD: This is what we've always wanted. (*beat*) This is what Morley has always wanted.

TWO: Three, two, one.

CLUB COACH: 800 and a 1 minute rest. Go!

*On their lines, each of the SWIMMERS moves off of their cube and sits.*

ONE: "Meditation and water –

TWO: – are wedded forever." (*Herman Melville, Moby-Dick*)

THREE: "The water with movement –

FOUR: – calms the emotions. (*Basho*)

KIT: (*moving to MORLEY O*) You need to do better if you want to keep up with me. Your pace sucks today.

MORLEY O: (*sighing*) You're right. I'll do better next time. (*yawning*)

KIT: What's the matter with you?

MORLEY O: (*perking up*) I'm fine. Everything's fine. (*moves to MORLEY I*)

KIT: I'm never tired. (*moves back*)

MORLEY I: (*sitting with MORLEY O*) You're not fine.

MORLEY O: (*brightly*) Why wouldn't I be? Today was a great day. What time is it?

MORLEY I: Nine.

MORLEY O: Nine. I have homework. And a test. That I haven't started studying for.

MORLEY I: It's too much.

MORLEY O: I can do it. I am doing it.

MORLEY I: You're not fooling me.

MORLEY O: It's not forever.

MORLEY I: I'm telling you. I'm telling us. It's too much.

MORLEY O: Why are you even here? I don't need you to speak for me. I am perfectly capable of speaking for myself. I'm telling you and I'm telling you (*the audience*) that I am fine. More than fine. I'm great. Everything is on track.

MORLEY I: For how long?

MORLEY O: For as long as it takes. There's only one more year of high school, there's college, and...

MORLEY I: That's a long time to do something you hate.

MORLEY O: I don't hate it! Stop saying that!

MORLEY I: You don't love it. I don't.

MORLEY O: I do.

MORLEY I: Morley.

MORLEY O: I did. I loved it for a long time. I can love it again. It's just been a lot all at once. Things are going to calm down and... (*shaking head*) No! I love swimming, I'm going to get a scholarship, I'm going to the Olympics. I'm going to do it all. Do you understand me?

MORLEY I: Why did you take drama class?

MORLEY O: No reason. I need an arts credit.

MORLEY I: Ok.



MORLEY O: I love swimming and I always have. Why don't you tell them (*the audience*) about that?

MORLEY I: Ok. I have loved swimming. And, it wasn't always like this.

*The lights change. MORLEY O rushes to centre stage and KIT bursts forward. They are both seven years old.*

KIT: Hi!

MORLEY O: Hi!

KIT: I'm Kit.

MORLEY O: Morley Meer.

KIT: I'm 7. You joining?

MORLEY O: Yeah. Is it good?

KIT: This club is the best! I love swimming.

MORLEY O: Me too.

KIT: I'm going to the Olympics.

MORLEY O: Oh yeah? Cool!

*The two hi-five. Lights pulse. A whistle blows. KIT and MORLEY O yawn and lean against each other. They are now eleven years old.*

CLUB COACH: All right, alternating pull sets and race pace. Let's go, tadpoles, the competitive team is showing you up!

KIT: I can't do it.

MORLEY O: You can.

KIT: I don't want to swim at 6 am.

MORLEY O: You can do it.

KIT: You know in high school, it's like every morning. EVERY morning.

MORLEY O: Not every morning.

KIT: It's almost every morning. I'm going to fall asleep in my cornflakes.

MORLEY O: My dad says I should start eating oatmeal for breakfast.

KIT: I hate oatmeal. And I hate mornings.

MORLEY O: You can do it. We'll do it together.

*The two high five. The lights pulse. A whistle blows.  
CLUB COACH moves forward.*

CLUB COACH: (*warmly*) Nice work, Meer!

MORLEY O: Thanks, Coach.

KIT: How did I do, Coach?

CLUB COACH: You're raising your head too high when you breathe.  
How many times do I have to tell you? (*moves back*)

MORLEY O: (*to KIT*) You're doing a lot better.

KIT: Why doesn't Coach talk to me the same way he talks to you?

*Lights pulse. A school bell rings. The four SWIMMERS  
stand. They're all looking at their phones. COACH  
steps forward.*

COACH: Thank you all for trying out. The turnout has been amazing.  
But I'm not surprised. The Ridgeway Royals are the best, number  
one in the state (*province, region, whatever works for you*). We work  
as a team to be the best. And when it comes to new swimmers,  
we only take the best. There will be cuts. If you want to talk to  
me about why you were cut, my door is always open. The final  
list will be posted on the site at 4:00. Good luck. (*moves back*)

KIT: You want to swim for your high school team? Why?

MORLEY O: Because I want to. It'll be fun.

KIT: You can't be serious. Coach will never let you.

MORLEY O: I've already talked to him (*her, them*). It'll be fine.

KIT: That's delusional. You can't miss club.

MORLEY O: Do you want to grab something to eat after practice? Get  
some pizza?

KIT: I can't. Maybe some other time.

MORLEY O: (*brightly*) Sure.

*When ONE starts talking MORLEY joins the  
SWIMMERS and KIT watches.*

ONE: He said he would post at 4:00. It's 4:01. It's 4:01, what does that  
mean?

MORLEY O: Did you see? Did we make it?

TWO: You've been doing club for years. You're a lock.

MORLEY O: Nothing's for sure.

FOUR: I didn't make it. I'm the one who didn't make it.

TWO: Probably.

THREE: Jerk.

TWO: What?

ONE: Aren't you a little bit nervous?

TWO: Why would I be? I made the team.

THREE: If you're so sure, then why are you standing around?

TWO: So I can see the disappointment on your faces.

THREE: You're such a jerk.

ONE: *(swiping on phone screen)* Refresh, refresh.

FOUR: It's bad news, right? That's why he's taking so long.

THREE: I can't look.

MORLEY O: I hope we all make it.

TWO: Unlikely.

ONE: Refresh, refresh, re – *(the list is up)*

MORLEY O: What?

ONE: We made it! We made it!

*The SWIMMERS cheer and hug.*

TWO: Yes!

THREE: Me too! Screw you and your "disappointment face!"

ONE: *(to FOUR)* You made it!

FOUR: No way!

ONE: This is going to be the best!

SWIMMERS: We're number one! We're number one!

*KIT moves away.*

MORLEY I: Everything was fun for a while.

MORLEY O: *(steps up on a cube)* Royals, huddle up!

*The SWIMMERS all huddle together.*

MORLEY O: *(talking to the SWIMMERS)* Remember, it's a swim meet, just like any other. Head down, focus on your race, focus on your breathing. You got this. We got this. We're all in this together. No one swimmer can win a meet, we do it together as a team. Royals Rock on three. One, two, three!

SWIMMERS: Royals Rock!

*The SWIMMERS gather together, warming up, chatting. MORLEY O moves off the cube to talk to ONE, off to the side.*

MORLEY I: *(to audience)* How is it I can be so positive on the outside? I don't even recognize myself.

MORLEY O: *(to ONE)* What's up?

ONE: I'm not good enough.

MORLEY O: Don't say that.

ONE: Everyone else is better than me. I don't know why I'm here.

MORLEY O: Everyone else is not your competition. It's you and the clock. Say it.

ONE: Me and the clock.

MORLEY O: That's it. Keep saying it to yourself. Ok?

ONE: Thanks, Morley.

*Lights change to blue. There is a long whistle. At the whistle, all four SWIMMERS move to stand on top of the cubes. They stand upright and still, laser-focused. MORLEY O stands in front of the SWIMMERS. MORLEY I stands off to the side, watching.*

ENTHUSIASTS: Take your marks.

MOM: You're a winner, Morley.

DAD: You can go all the way.

COACH: You're a winner, Morley.

CLUB COACH: You're the most focused swimmer I've seen in a long time.

KIT: (*sarcastic*) You're a winner, Morley.

MOM: You're so focused.

DAD: You're the best.

COACH: You're so fast.

CLUB COACH: You're a winner, Morley.

KIT: I'm a winner, too. I'm a winner.

*The starter buzzer goes off. There is a flash of bright light. The ENTHUSIASTS are now lit. The four SWIMMERS mime a front crawl arm motion, moving in slow motion. Each of the four SWIMMERS swim as fits their personality – ONE is struggling and should struggle to swim. FOUR is distracted and their stroke shouldn't look anything like the front crawl. TWO – fast. THREE – leisurely. MORLEY O walks slowly downstage.*

*At the same time, the ENTHUSIASTS explode into fast action and cheering, staying in place. They cheer on whichever swimmer they are watching in the race.*

ENTHUSIASTS: (*Shouting, varied, NOT in unison. DO NOT deliver these lines one at a time. Each person picks their own line to say, overlapping with others. Lines should be repeated as needed.*) Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Swim! Pull! Pull! C'mon! Don't breathe! Go! Go! Let's go! Faster! Pull! Swim! Push harder! Harder! Push! You can do this! Go! Push! Go! Go! Let's go!

*After five seconds, the lights change. Everyone freezes. The TEACHER steps forward. During the following, the SWIMMERS slowly (so they don't draw focus) drop their arms. One at a time, they step off their cube to stand behind it. The ENTHUSIASTS slowly return to neutral.*

TEACHER: (*approaching*) Morley?

MORLEY O: (*turning*) Hi...

TEACHER: Hey there. Is there something I can help you with? You did a great job with your monologue this week.

MORLEY O: I wanted...never mind. It's not going to work out. It's never going to work out. Forget I said anything.

TEACHER: (*with a kind smile*) Well, you haven't said anything yet. What's up?

MORLEY O: You're doing a musical in the spring.

TEACHER: We are. Were you thinking of auditioning?

MORLEY O: Ha! Me? No. That's ridiculous. I don't sing.

TEACHER: Oh, don't let that stop you. I have seen many actors start out not being able to hit one note and they fit in just fine.

MORLEY O: But isn't it about being the best?

TEACHER: At being in a musical? Maybe. For some. I think they're a good time and that's what I like to focus on.

MORLEY O: Oh. It doesn't matter anyway. There's no way I could be in the show. I could never get out of practice. When would I have the time? There is no time.

TEACHER: Let's put aside the matter of time. Do you want to audition?

MORLEY O: I can't.

TEACHER: Forget about what you can or can't do. Do you want to?

*MORLEY O stands there for a moment. Then gives the smallest of nods.*

TEACHER: That's wonderful. I wouldn't have thought. Well, there's going to be a huge ensemble so –

MORLEY O: You don't understand! (*pause*) I can't. I'm going to the Olympics.

TEACHER: Do you want to go to the Olympics?

*MORLEY I steps forward. TEACHER moves away.*

MORLEY I: Why did I take drama? Sure, I needed an arts credit. Let's tell everyone that's why I took it. Let's not talk about the deep down thought.

MORLEY O: (*moving to MORLEY I*) Don't you say it.

MORLEY I: I'm not saying anything.

MORLEY O: (*ramping up*) Of course I want to go to the Olympics. My entire life has been built up to me going to the Olympics. I'm a swimmer, I always have been, there's nothing else I want more than to be a swimmer, to be the best and make everyone proud. Everyone who has supported me, and sacrificed for me, stood by my side and given so much so that I could excel (*the truth bursts out*) and I am sick to death of swimming!

*The last bit is a shock to MORLEY O, who gasps and covers her mouth.*

MORLEY I: You said it.

MORLEY O: I didn't mean it.

MORLEY I: I do mean it.

MORLEY O: I'm just tired.

MORLEY I: You need to tell them.

MORLEY O: I can't.

MORLEY I: I want to tell them.

MORLEY O: I can't let them down.

MORLEY I: How about me? How about letting us down?

MORLEY O: I have practice. (*starts to move and then looks back*) I'll be fine. You'll see.

*MORLEY O goes to stand in front of the ENTHUSIASTS.*

ENTHUSIASTS: (*quietly*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up. (*a little louder*) Hey Morley, it's time to get up. (*a little louder*) Hey Morley, it's time to GET UP. (*loud*) HEY MORLEY, it's time to GET UP!

MORLEY I: A day in the life of a competitive swimmer.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

MOM: Let's go, Morley! I got your oatmeal in the car. Did you make your protein shake?

MORLEY O: No.

MOM: Why not? Dan! She didn't make her shake!

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

CLUB COACH: You have to take this seriously.

MORLEY O: I am.

CLUB COACH: You're not trying hard enough.

MORLEY O: (*unsure*) I think I am.

CLUB COACH: Then why aren't you improving?

MORLEY O: I'll do better.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

COACH: Can you stay for a few minutes? We have to talk.

MORLEY O: I have dryland for club.

COACH: Coach Riley can wait one minute. Mrs. Duker told me you failed a math test.

MORLEY O: She said I can do a make-up on Friday.

COACH: You have to take your grades seriously.

MORLEY O: (*unsure*) I am.

COACH: Schools are looking at more than just your swimming ability, you know that.

MORLEY O: I'll do better.

COACH: They're watching you, Morley.

SWIMMERS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

KIT: You're late.

MORLEY O: But I'm here.

KIT: Everyone else is in the water.

MORLEY O: I'm right behind you.

KIT: Hurry up. We don't want to have to do extra laps because of you.

SWIMMERS & ENTHUSIASTS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

DAD: What do you want to eat?

MORLEY O: Nothing.

DAD: Chicken and pasta it is. You want kale or broccoli?



MORLEY O: I don't care. Either one.

DAD: Kale it is.

MOM: How much homework do you have to do?

MORLEY O: I don't know. Some.

SWIMMERS & ENTHUSIASTS: Sleep, eat, swim, school, swim, eat, sleep.

*MORLEY O sits with head in hands. MORLEY I sits beside.*

MORLEY I: *(to audience)* When I was little we would go up to my grandparents' cottage. I would spend all day in the water. They'd have to haul me out for meals. And I hated that they would make me wait an hour before swimming. "It's not a real thing, let me get in the water!" I'd sit on the dock and listen to the back and forth of the waves. Fingers trailing in the water going back and forth. *(to MORLEY O)* It's going to get worse.

MORLEY O: Shut up.

MORLEY I: You don't have any more to give.

MORLEY O: *(standing)* Shut up! *(beat)* What I need is a little support. *(moving away)* Kit!

MORLEY I: Morley, I don't think Kit is –

MORLEY O: She knows exactly what I'm going through.

KIT: *(moving forward)* What?

MORLEY O: What are you doing?

KIT: Going home.

MORLEY O: Do you think we could get together on Sunday? I really need to talk.

KIT: I'm busy.

MORLEY O: Oh. Ok. I was just wondering if –

KIT: Are you not getting it? I don't want to talk to you.

MORLEY O: Why?

KIT: Unbelievable. *(starts to walk away)*

MORLEY O: Kit?

KIT: I don't know what makes you so special. I have been swimming just as long as you. I have the same coach, I train as hard as you, I eat the same as you, I think I have more determination than you do and you... you're the one everyone thinks is going all the way. You get all the attention. You're the sun and the rest of us scramble for the leftovers.

MORLEY O: It's not like that.

KIT: It should be me. Why isn't it me? (*moves away*)

MORLEY I: Don't listen to her.

MORLEY O: I didn't know she felt that way... I should have known.

MORLEY I: You're not a mind reader.

MORLEY O: That's my fault. Club is different. Everyone is out for them – (*she shakes her head*) Everyone is focused on their own path. The Royals don't feel that way – I should have gone to them in the first place. We're a team. They'll support me. (*jumping on a cube and calling out*) Royals Rock on three! One, two, three!

*The SWIMMERS move to stand with MORLEY O.*

SWIMMERS: Royals Rock!

MORLEY O: (*talking to the SWIMMERS*) I wanted to take a moment –

THREE: Are we getting pizza?

ONE: I'm starving.

FOUR: Does anyone have the notes for the History midterm?

MORLEY O: Before we go, I wanted to ask if any of you are feeling –

TWO: I'm not eating pizza, my body is a temple.

THREE: So's mine. A temple that eats pizza.

MORLEY O: Is anyone listening?

FOUR: Does anyone have notes for the Algebra midterm?

THREE: Yeah, but I'm not sharing till after a double Hawaiian.

TWO: Pineapple is the worst pizza topping.

ONE: Who says?

TWO: I do.



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