

Flamingo Chapter-3

Deep Water

The story talks about how the terrifying memories of the childhood haunt even the adult mind and the shadow of these frightening experiences continue to lurk in the mind and rob one of all the confidences. It is imperative to make deliberate planned efforts to get over that fear which otherwise can lead to a lifelong complex.

William O. Douglas had a desire to learn swimming since childhood. At the age of three or four, he was knocked down and buried by a wave at a beach in California. He developed a great aversion to water. At the age of ten or eleven he decided to learn to swim with water wings at the Y.M.C.A pool since it was safe at the shallow end.

A misadventure: - while sitting alone and waiting for others to come at the Y.M.C.A pool, a big boy came and threw Douglas into deep end of the pool. Douglas swallowed water and went straight down to the bottom of the pool. While going down he planned to make a big jump upwards but came up slowly. Stark terror seized him.

Tried to shout but could not..... As he went down the pool for the second time, he tried to jump upwards but it was sheer waste of energy. Terror held him deeper and deeper. During the third trial, he sucked water instead of air.

Light was going out and there was no more panic. So, he ceased all efforts and he became unconscious. He crossed to oblivion. When revived, he found himself vomiting beside the pool. He was in the grip of fear of water and it deprived him of the joys of canoeing, boating, swimming and fishing. Later, to overcome his phobia for water, he hired an instructor to learn swimming.

The instructor taught him swimming piece by piece. He went to different lakes to swim and found tiny vestiges of fear still gripped him. He challenged the fear and swam. Swimming up and down the Warm Lake he finally overcame his fear of water. He realized that in death there is peace and there is terror only in fear of death. Will to live is stronger than fear of death.

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