



Swimming in the Sink: An Episode of the Heart

Lynne Cox

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From an inspired and inspiring open water swimmer, a supreme athlete who swims without a wetsuit, able to endure cold water temperatures that would kill others, author of *Swimming to Antarctica* ("Riveting"--*Sports Illustrated*), *Grayson* ("Moving, mystical" --*People*), and *Open Water Swimming Manual* ("Exceptional" --*The Independent*)--a powerful book about super athleticism and human frailty, about invincibility and the sudden (mind-altering) repercussions of illness, and about the triumph of spirit, surrender, and love against it all.

Lynne Cox was a super athlete who broke many world records, among them swimming the English Channel at 15, being the first woman to swim across Cook Strait (15.2 miles) between the North and South Islands of New Zealand, and the first to swim off Antarctica in 32-degree water--for 25 minutes!--all without a wetsuit. And that's where *Swimming in the Sink* begins--at a laboratory at the University of London, with Cox's hand in cold water, hooked up to thermocouples and probes, with three scientists trying to make sense of her extraordinary human capabilities of athleticism. The test results paved the way for new medical and life-saving practices. As an athlete, Cox had put her heart into everything she'd ever accomplished. In turn her heart gave her great physical strength and endurance.

In the midst of becoming the embodiment of a supreme endurance athlete, Cox had taken care of her elderly parents, both of whom passed away in quick succession followed by the death of her beloved Labrador retriever, leaving Lynne in shock from loss and loneliness and soon, literally, suffering from the debilitating effects of a broken heart.

On the edge of a precipice, Cox was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (Afib). As the prognosis went from bad to worse, Cox was in fear of living out a lesser life as an invalid with a pacemaker, hooked up to a defibrillator . . . for the first time, the very real possibility of her own death was before her.

Cox writes of her full surrender to her increasing physical frailty, to her illness, her treatment, her slow pull toward recovery. In *Swimming in the Sink* we see her finding her way, writing about her transformative journey that led her away from her illness back toward health, and slowly making her way toward the one aspect of her life that meant everything to her--freedom; mastery; transcendence--back to open waters, and the surprise that she never saw coming: falling in love.

From the Hardcover edition.

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