

The Water and Me

Splash! The cool water engulfed me as I dove into the pool for my morning swim. I could feel my hair surrendering to the liquid all around me, the only pressure in my body being the strap of my goggles and the skin-tight swimmers wrapped around me. All sound was blocked out, all people were forgotten. It was just me and the water. The water and me. Then suddenly it wasn't. A thought was creeping in, and then, ever so slowly, it turned into a daydream.

The muffled cheers of fans from every corner of the world filled my ears, although they were droned out by the chlorinated mass between us. This is what I had been working towards my entire life. Sport was relentless - composed of the impossibly early mornings, exhausting training sessions and endless sacrifices, but it was also rewarding. So rewarding. Because as soon as you're in the pool, you know that thousands of people are watching you, rooting for you. That feeling is absolutely exhilarating.

"Campbell! Campbell! Campbell!" The crowd roared, followed by "Let's go Bronte, let's go!"

I was second. One swimmer was between me and the wall. And that swimmer was Katie Ledecky, the only person predicted to beat me. But I was determined to win. As I took a breath, I saw Katie slowing down. I kicked my legs harder, pumped my arms more, until suddenly, my fingertips reached the wall. I straightened and looked up the screen, my mouth curling into a disbelieving smile. *Bronte Campbell* danced across the screen, wedged between *1st* and *Aus*. I had done it.

"That's our sister!" My younger siblings yelled to the stadium. Then two new voices hollered "That's our daughter!"

My parents had the biggest grins I had ever seen plastered across their faces, but more than that, radiating all around them, was pride. I had achieved my ultimate goal. Not receiving a gold medal, rather repaying my Mum and Dad for everything they've done for me. For both of us - Cate too. Without them, I would be lost.

If my sister hadn't come to collect Cate and I from the pool, I could have stayed in those thoughts for ever and ever. Instead Abi was dragging me onto the sandstone lining the water, desperate to get out of the so-called 'freezing torture zone'. She preferred ball sports, where you didn't have to get up quite so early. I wondered if I should tell her about my daydream, but she won't understand. Only Cate would get it, so I'll tell her later. I wonder if it will become a reality...?