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ISBN 9798276411200

Front cover and interior illustrations by Farisa Addin

Independently published and printed by Amazon KDP (Kindle Direct Publishing)

First published 2026

rebeccagivens.com

**THE
UNDERWATER
CLUB**



Chapter 1

Wild Around Water

I'm looking at the pool below me. It's SUCH a long way down. But there's no doubt about it, I'm DEFINITELY going to jump!

Have you ever done something that you KNEW deep down was KIND OF BAD, but you did it anyway?!

I KNOW I shouldn't sneak away from swim practice where Coach can't see me. I KNOW I shouldn't go through the gate with the OUT OF BOUNDS sign. But I just HAD TO. Now, I'm balancing on the super-high-up-FORBIDDEN-diving-board. I've never been up this high. Suddenly, the pool looks very, VERY far away.

I'll be SUPER honest with you, today is NOT the first time I've done something KIND OF BAD. It's not even the first time I've done something KIND OF BAD at the lido. Mum is always saying that I am 'wild around water'.

My BEST EVER 'wild-around-water incidents' (mum says they're 'incidents'):

- *Getting in the sting ray tank at the aquarium on Sophia's birthday*
- *Trying to run through the car wash to cool myself down (it was a hot day!)*
- *Swimming in the fountain at Aunt Helen's wedding (and 'ruining my dress')*
- *Jumping off Grandad's boat in Scotland to look for Nessie (it's not like I GOT 'hypothermia', whatever that*

even means)

Adults make SUCH a big deal out of not very important things, don't they? But I can't help it! If WATER is around, I just HAVE to be in it! Being underwater, it's like discovering a different planet. Time moves SLOWLY and anything you're worried about just washes away. It's the BEST place to be. That's why, at swim squad, I can't help but swim as deep as I can!

Anyway, back to this MONSTER dive.

My toes are peeking over the edge. I bend my knees and the board wobbles. Everything below looks REALLY tiny. Suddenly, I hear Coach yell from across the lido, 'Amber! NO!'

It's now or never.

My heels leave the diving board, I thrust my bum in the air and...

'WOOHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!'

Down

down

down

I go.

SPLASH!

I whack the water like a humpback whale. Waves crash over my body and I plunge to the bottom of the pool.

I float down there for a moment. It's cool, it's calm, it's quiet. It's like everything and everyone has DISAPPEARED. It's just me and the water.

Finally, I'm back in my natural habitat!



I am in so much trouble.