

Excerpt from *A Run in the Dark*

By Matthew Taylor

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I'd been confronted with skinny dipping before and from that experience quickly devised myself a fool-proof plan for success. (Any time someone feels compelled to use the word "fool-proof" a good rule of thumb is to insert the word "not" before it.)

My fool-proof plan was simple. Be first.

This philosophy works on several levels. By stripping down and charging in first you appear to be a brave, wild, risk-taking, first-in kind of guy everybody wants to associate with. Far more importantly, you are in front of everybody. Meaning everybody is viewing this brave, wild, risk-taking, first-in kind of guy from the rear. This affords what I best describe as a plain buttock view. The obvious benefit to this is, buttocks are buttocks – similar to both men and women.

Also, there is simply less buttock talk in general. It is with less frequency you hear people marvel at one another's buttocks. Another valuable point in being first is: you are quickly below the waterline, and basically, fully clothed again – albeit in a chilly, watery gown. You can yell encouragement to the others from the safety of your harbor and even engage in a little viewing, if that's your ilk. First in is definitely the way to go.

With this in mind I gave a glance toward my fellow skinny-dippers and to my horror, realized I was dealing with professionals. After the brief pause at the waterline everybody had decided the "me first" principle was in order. Most people already had a considerable head-start on me in the clothes removal department.

As I raced to catch up, I could not help but notice that the woman of my dreams was right next to me and seemed to be effortlessly removing clothing at high speed. I had to yank, tug and rip at every article in my attempt to persuade them leave my body. I had to be first. I was sure my future relationship depended on it.

Suddenly, we were both naked and headed for the water in a dead heat, stride for stride. Down the gently sloping sand we galloped, picking up speed we hit the shallows with enough momentum to carry us into the deep water within seconds. Still neck and neck we raced through the shallow water. It was only a matter of time before the deep water engulfed us both. But how much time?

We'd been running now for ten seconds, which, it turns out, is a very long time when you're naked. And we were still in only eight inches of water. I increased my pace, but at 25 seconds into the sprint and a good thirty feet from the shore, we were still only shin deep.

It was at this point a sick and desperate feeling swept over me. I had worked it out. I continued to run, but knew to my horror that we were running on an inconveniently placed sand bar...

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