

Camp #7

by Jack Swenson

"Swan Lake, Camp #7" it says on the sign. I've been invited to stay for a few days by my friend Phil. "Well, la dee da!" my mother says when I tell her. No peasants need apply.

Everybody at the camp is a doctor or a lawyer. Phil's mom is a Baker or a Wright, I forget which. That's why they got voted in.

We kids horse around in the water most of the day. Swim, skip stones, get a suntan.

Phil's little brothers play on the shore with tin buckets and shovels. Phil and I swim. We throw rocks in the water and dive for them. See how long we can hold our breath.

One afternoon the kids from next door come over. Marion is our age, Jimmy a year younger. Marion's pretty. I can't even look at her. Her laugh is full of sunshine.

Phil splashes water on Marion, and Marion yips and splashes him back. I'm standing in waist deep water, and Jim sneaks in behind me and tugs down my swimming trunks. I quick pull my trunks up and duck Jim's head under water. He comes up spluttering. He's mad as a wet hen. "We don't do that sort of thing out here!" he screeches.

When Jim and Marion are gone, I explain to Phil's mom what happened. It's all right, she says.

I feel awful. I want to go home. I look around, and I no longer recognize the place.

