

The Pool Is For Everybody at Lakeview Commons

On a hot summer weekend it is choking with people. Kids, mostly, in the water, but all around stretched out on the lounge chairs, baking in the sun, are moms and dads. Babysitters for the kids whose parents have to work weekend jobs. Every now and then when it gets too hot, they lumber up from their chairs and take quick dips, but they don't stay long with all the thrashing and splashing and howling going on.

He stays under as much as he can. There is nothing but blue light and a maze of legs and torsos and no faces. And only the heavy sounds down hear, an indecipherable alien language. He can't hear if Chris Cummings is calling him Planet Blob or if someone's dad is saying, "Christ, would you look at the tits on that boy." In the brief moments when he comes up for air, it is only a blast of bright noise and sun and then he is under again. He can find it and hold onto it down here. They call him a whale but that's not quite right. He's bigger, more horrible. If he wanted to he could suck up all this chlorine-and-piss water, take these tiny bodies with it and blow everything out against the sides of the buildings. Kids smashed like mosquitoes on the apartment windows. He could grab all the tanning moms and dads and run them through the spikes that line his back. Leave them there like ornaments until they rot and turn to leather in the sun. He's growing. It's only a matter of time before he learns to exist outside this pool. Before he becomes what he was always meant to be.

Jake Ruiter