

# SWIMMER'S ITCH

Created by Ashley Matt  
Returnable TV/streaming series

Series Treatment

6 x 22 live action sitcom

A Canadian story about Shauna the head lifeguard at the local underfunded, in decline rec centre. You know the one.

*Inspired by the Ashley's time spent training and working as a lifeguard.*

**MATTFILMS**

## tone

In the tradition of Canadian sitcoms like *Corner Gas*, *Letterkenny* and *Schitt's Creek* and single camera British shows like *Stath Lets Flats* and *The Office*, *SWIMMER'S ITCH* follows the life of a group of Canadians making a go of it, wading through trouble in a town full of quirky residents who clash at the rec centre. A series with heart, where everyone trusts everyone, even if they don't deserve it and are full of forgiveness, even if people don't deserve it.

A workplace comedy with intriguing pop-in characters: *SWIMMER'S ITCH* rec centre is a home away from home to the people who work there. They spend so much time together they have become one another's second family where feuds rise and fall. Everyone shares in each other's victories and failures, histories and futures.

## THE STAKES

The *SWIMMER'S ITCH* rec centre is a home away from home to the people who work there. The crew has become one another's second family where feuds rise and fall. Everyone shares in each other's victories and failures, histories and futures. Things have been rough for the last few years and the centre is at constant risk of being shut down. When people ask why the crew stay, they all say it's their home, they all depend on each other. This centre is the only one for miles that opens their doors to everyone, no membership necessary. How could they leave one another in the lurch? Anyway, what else would they do, where would they go? This place is all they know.

## OVERVIEW

It's been two years since Shauna Stamper started on anti-depressants. A year since her boyfriend committed suicide. 20 years since she broke her neck which ended her career as a star gymnast destined for Olympic glory. You'd think that'd be a downer. Sure, it was at the time. How do you sleep sitting up with a metal halo screwed into your skull? You don't. But Shauna isn't one to dwell, isn't one to complain. That may be the meds talking.

Swim trials for the local Wild Bobcat Tiger Seals swim team are three weeks away and Beatrice, Shauna's daughter, is pushing hard. Shauna is training a gaggle of new lifeguards and has her quarterly physical endurance review coming up, god damn still at 48 she has to do this shit. Beatrice has her eye on Cole, the new lifeguard and Olympic swim hopeful, and Cole has his eyes on her but neither will say it. They look each other's score numbers up and flirt by talking to each other about them.

Shauna is called back to the therapist's office when it appears that she's starting to crack. It's mandatory Joshua the teen manager says, grief counseling after such a loss only a year ago, is necessary if you're in charge of so many lives.

Old men hit on young lifeguards, patrons have to be removed for getting too familiar with the hot tub jets, poo in the pool, complaints about the showers being too cold, complaints about the showers being too hot. The office filled with more surgery snacks, baked goods and treats than a Dollarama.

It is all just a bit much sometimes. But the 12 hour days keeps Shauna focused and surrounded by her friends. It's fine, right? On top of it all Shauna has just found out the person who was responsible for her injury, who derailed her whole life, has won the lottery.

## CHARACTERS

### PROTAGONIST

**SHAUNA STAMPER** Head lifeguard and swim coach. Mother of two, divorced, bereaved but still kickin'. Telling her stories and being a helpful ear to the teen swimmers and lifeguard hopefuls that come in to her orbit. Not embarrassed about anything, open to a lot and glad to still be here. Needs a pedicure but will go get another tattoo before she let's anyone touch her feet.

### LOVE INTERESTS

**Nick** The hunky aqua-fit instructor, who is objectively not hot. But subjectively is, according to the horny women and men, young and old alike, who are starved for attention, attention that Nick gives. Nick is torn between two people, Yash the paramedic and Shauna his superior. He will be stuck in an awkward love triangle. He loves his job and can't imagine doing anything else, but part of him wants to try for something new.

**Yash** The straight forward and cheerful paramedic who continually looks on the bright side, even when he loses a patient – it happens, it's part of the job. Knows the rec centre team well, he's been on nearly every call for EMS they've ever made. Yash makes sure of it, any chance to see Shauna. Loves TV and will ask if you've see the latest program on that streaming service you don't subscribe to or have time for.

## MENTOR

**Anna** 80 year old lifeguard who once rescued the guitarist from the 60s Quebec pop group Les Mégatones, who was drowning in a lake. Anna says look them up, they're pretty hip. Anna worked at the rec centre for thirty years and gave the job up to Shauna when she retired a decade ago. She comes in every other day for a swim and to play with the babies during aqua-tots. Offers advice, sometimes dated, to Shauna when she's feeling overwhelmed.

## ALLIES

**Tina** The funky aqua-fit instructor. 60-odd, always asks how you are but doesn't really want to know if it's bad news. See that purple streak of hair running through her big quiff, that's inspired by her coming out. Two grown kids, an ex-husband and a new lover named Tammy with her own kids. The best group you'd ever meet. Took up instructing after getting fit in the pool only four years ago. She'd been depressed then, but not now!

**Joshua** The teen manager who spends more time than he'd like trying to convince guards to take unclaimed shifts. We close at 9 then you can go party! He wears crisp patterned button down shirts, untucked of course and like a maniac carries lifesaving equipment in his car. That means he's responsible for saving someone if they are in a car crash, he knows.

**Beatrice** Swim team Wild Bobcat Tiger Seals star swimmer and Shauna's daughter, lifeguards at the beach. Her first day on the job she had to do CPR on a dead guy. She's falling for a swimmer named Cole who's going to Olympic trials but can't let herself, she has her school and swimming to focus on.

**Thomas** Ex-mayor, long time patron of the rec centre, has been coming here since the building opened when he was a kid. His kids trained here, his grandkids come here. But he never learned to swim! Spent most of his time on the ice rink. Not happy that he was booted off town council, replaced by new blood, but has decided to put his time and energy in to restoring the rec centre, but only if Shauna teaches him how to swim.

**Sheila** Tattooed maintenance woman and muscle for when patrons get out of hand. An out-of-towner who is still getting to know life in this little city that still thinks it's a small town. Spends all day bouncing from one repair to the next.

## ANTAGONISTS

**Jocelyn** The overly chipper career lifeguard from the rival pool *Spaaaah* and first aid pro. Her grandma flew herself to the hospital after having her leg cut off in the woods, that's why

Jocelyn loves first-aid! She spends her extra time running first-aid courses, acting as examiner of the certification and re-certification lifeguard programs, doing triathlons and the Lifesaving Olympics (that's where all the diehard lifesavers do extreme contests like who can swim the fastest and farthest with a 25 pound weight on their chest.) Jocelyn will be the one to preside over Shauna's endurance testing and recertification.

**Bruce** The rec centre Zamboni driver for the ice rink next door. A high school rival of Shauna's. Bruce bullied Shauna then and still tries to now. Best taunt yet, he thinks, is when he poured a bag of old popcorn in the pool. Turns out he's made fun of by the rink managers, probably why he tries to make Shauna's life trouble.

## SERIES ONE ARC

The rec centre is crumbling and major renovations are needed. Thomas, the ex-mayor and wealthy local business owner/philanthropist has offered to pay for the much needed revamp of the building and facilities. But he's asking for something strange in return. He never learned how to swim. He needs lessons and wants undivided attention from Shauna. Shauna has been asking for a raise each year for the last 10 years and she's not getting it. She has to take this private lesson for the extra cash (and obviously to save the centre). Her new goal for the year: get that raise, oh an also pass her recertification endurance test.

A LinkedIn anniversary pops up on Shauna's computer, the one she barely uses because she's a people person, not a computer person. **It's been five years since you connected with Ronnie.** Ronnie was Shauna's boyfriend, the one who killed himself. Nice reminder that he's not here anymore. Looks like whoever handled taking his Facebook down postmortem didn't seem to have his LinkedIn password. Same day she gets a bank statement that says her account is in overdraft.

Shauna's cracking and Joshua notices. He says she has to see a therapist. No time or money she reminds Joshua. He figures doing an emotional stability quiz with her should be just as good. He finds something online and reminds Shauna of her recertification, as if she'd be able to forget. She's dreading it but says she's fine. She loves her job, remember?! Time to go test the new lifeguard hopefuls, she's had that on her calendar for a month and almost forgot they were all coming to the pool this week.

Until Thomas learns to swim, fear of the centre shutting down will continue. In order to keep working, keep people in the pool, keep Beatrice and Cole training, Shauna and Joshua have to ask for help from the rival private pool, *Spaaaah*. They need chlorine, replacement flutter boards, first aid supplies, a pace clock that actually runs and for God's sake can they at least get

a new member of staff? They need a certified lifeguard to cover the evening shift and there is just no one available. *Spaaaaah* has surplus everything. They even have three pools, fancy ones that pulled a lot of the regulars away from the old rec centre.

But instead of asking for help like Joshua normally would have done, he goes rogue and plans to steal instead. He normally has a very clear head on his shoulders and would never think to do this but today he got a text from his boyfriend who says he wants to break up. To put salt in the wound, later while rolling up the lane ropes one of them snapped and flung up, knocking a tooth out. Screw this, he's mad. He's not asking. He's taking.

Shauna is trying to manage the new feelings that are coming after seeing Yash rescue a stray cat from the pool. Has he always been this cute? At the same time she thinks she's making progress with Thomas. He recently unlocked some blocked memory that was stopping him from being able to enter the deep end. Maybe there is hope for him yet.

The Wild Bobcat Tiger Seals' scores and numbers are climbing. They may just be able to beat their rivals this season, the neighbouring city Splasher Sea Monkey Foxes who are always a joke but somehow really, really good. Rumor has it that everyone on that team is sleeping with each other, drinking during meets and the coach got fired a few years back for sexual misconduct. Shauna hasn't seen that coach since it happened. They were friends. Weird.

Turns out Beatrice and Cole got it on in the pool maintenance closet before her team won the last swim competition. Now Beatrice can't train in any other pool but the rec centre one. Some kind of sports superstition thing.

Nick has been flirting with Yash and Shauna starts to get jealous despite her better judgments. The results are back from the emotional stability quiz. Inconclusive. There is no oversight though so Joshua just files the paperwork and everything goes back to normal. Joshua does however offer some advice gleaned from a podcast he just listened to about mindfulness. Maybe Shauna has been living in a reactionary state for too long. Perhaps it's time to start being proactive. Some deep breathing may be in order.

Jocelyn pays a visit to the rec centre when she suspects *Spaaaaah* has been burgled. She discovers the stolen material and confronts Joshua who tells Jocelyn to go fly a kite, oh and see you later for the recertification for Shauna. Jocelyn leaves in a huff and tells a passing lifeguard they could always come work for her, immediate \$9 raise she coaxes.

Shauna is relieved when she passes her recertification but smooth sailing isn't in the cards. Shauna is reunited with someone she really doesn't want to see. Julian, the man who caused the end of her career as a gymnast (Shauna's family still thinks she should have sued him after he did a trick off a high block and landed directly on Shauna's head) and he has some news.

Julian's won the lottery and wants to make amends. But Shauna is feeling too proud to accept support. He says the money could save the rec centre, but Shauna says she's got it covered with Thomas. Julian wants to help some other way, but Shauna thinks he just wants to alleviate his conscious. Thomas has almost completed his lessons and Shauna is really proud of him. Just as she's about to tell Thomas he's got what it takes to swim without her, he has a heart attack and all hope of fixing the building gets clogged just like money man's arteries.

## SERIES TWO BRIEF

The rec centre hires a new manager who has big plans for the facility. Bigger, better, fancier! Local celebrities will come! The new manager spends all the money they had in reserve on new equipment no one will ever use while the tiles on the pool deck are still cracked and cutting people's feet. The new manager is discarded by end of season two and Joshua is back in the manager's chair.

## MOOD IMAGES





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