



Chasing Water: Elegy of an Olympian

Anthony Ervin, Constantine Markides

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"Here Ervin and swim trainer and journalist Markides combine talents to create a biography that is part first-hand narrative by Ervin, with Markides filling in the details and providing context. The formula works, pulling readers into Ervin's experience of the thrill of victory and search for meaning....Featuring more depth, breadth, truth, and the effects of reckless choices than found in traditional athlete biographies, this gripping account is just in time for the gear up to the Rio 2016 Olympics. Readers will understand the psyche and life of elite athletes as never before, then cheer Ervin on in his attempt to make another Olympic team."

--*Library Journal*

"A celebrated Olympian recounts how he rose to the top of his sport, crashed, and found redemption....This book, which tells his story through a narrative that interweaves the former gold medalist's memories with commentary by his friend and colleague Markides, reveals the extreme highs and lows that characterized Ervin's remarkable life and career....The author never flinches at revealing his less-than-perfect past, and the humility he demonstrates at coming to terms with his own egotism and personal shortcomings makes the book frequently compelling. A provocative and refreshingly honest redemption memoir."

--*Kirkus Reviews*

"Markides smartly combines his own journalistic account with a parallel narrative in which Ervin...explains his life and style. Some talents simply defy explanation, however, and Ervin may be in that category....The story of his comeback at 31 (ancient for a swimmer) is rendered more amazing by the contrast with what went before."

--*Booklist*

"Most memoirs from Olympians are puff pieces, ghost-written so blandly you fall asleep trying to make it to the end of the first chapter. *Chasing Water* is the opposite of that, an intimate, visceral experience you will appreciate."

--*SwimSwam*

Every four years in the Olympic cycle the surge of national interest in swimming grows, and with it a desire to be captivated by its stars. This book tells the dramatic, surprising, and sometimes provocative path that Anthony Ervin has taken to become one of those captivating Olympic heroes. Not your typical sports memoir, *Chasing Water* also contains arresting black-and-white drawings and a graphic story extra, as well as an inventive and mercurial narrative style that morphs chapter by chapter to reflect Ervin's restless, multifaceted life.

Ervin won a gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games at the age of nineteen. He is an athlete branded with a slew of titles including being the first US Olympic swimmer of African American descent, along with Jewish heritage, who also grew up with Tourette's syndrome. He shocked the sporting world by retiring soon after claiming two world titles following the 2000 Olympics. Auctioning off his gold medal for charity, he set off on a part spiritual quest, part self-destructive bender that involved Zen temples, fast motorcycles, tattoo parlors, and rock 'n' roll bands. Then Ervin resurfaced in 2012 to not only make the US Olympic team twelve years after his first appearance, but to continue his career by swimming faster than ever before, and faster than anyone else. He is currently training for the 2016 Olympics in Rio.

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