

# Boats

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I remember the time when I fell off my boat and I tried to figure out how it happened. It was also the first time I really felt fear. I was 9 years old and it was a warm summer evening. The sun was close to setting and it was quite enjoyable.

I was at my boat which was a 38' carver, a nice sized yacht. We were at our marina, Mac'n'rays. It is located on Lake St. Clair which is up north. At the time, I had just finished playing volleyball with one of my friends from a couple boats down. I was having lots of fun diving for the ball, bumping it over the net, and it was a good time overall. My friend had to leave so I decided to go in as well.

Since I was all sandy, I knew I had to wash off. So I walked over to the hose and washed off the sand on my legs. Little did I know that I was going to get a good washing soon. The water from the hose was cold. I wished it could have been warm. As I washed the sand off of my legs, I began to shiver. Not a violent shiver, just a little one.

The type of ones you get when something cold touches you just for a minute or so. After I was done, I proceeded to walk down to my boat, which was conveniently only two slips (boat parking spots) away. I noticed that after I was done washing off, I began to warm up, which was a nice thing for me. My bare feet felt good on the slightly warmer concrete. I got to the dock and started my walk down towards my boat.

When I got to my boat, still dripping wet, I attempted to get on the boat. I put one foot down and I never made it with the second. I slipped backwards, hit my arm on the boat and plunged towards the water. I got about halfway

to the water before I realized what was happening. I hit the water at about a 45 degree angle and went straight to the bottom. Being underwater suddenly is not pleasant.

One moment, you're dry or in my case sorta dry, and the next you're drenched and can't breathe. You feel helpless. Afraid. Scared. Alone. Things you wouldn't expect to happen.

The only other time that I even came close to this feeling was when I ran into a gate. I ran into a metal gate and scratched my eye. I was scared and didn't know how to feel. Back to this moment, I felt my feet sink into the cold, mucky sand. It almost felt as if it grabbed me and pulled me in.

This is very odd feeling I thought. But I broke free, and I swam to the surface. I broke the surface and gasped for air. I attempted to analyze the situation but I just couldn't. " Help! I've fallen in" I yelled out loud. After I yelled that out loud, I saw my dad leap into the water.

He hit the water and tried to start swimming towards the back of my boat. I was very tired so I couldn't swim that far. I had resurfaced about halfway between the front and back of the boat. When he surfaced, I was about two feet away from him. He swam over to me and asked " Are you ok?" " Yeah" I said in a gasping voice.

Him and I worked our way towards the back of the boat. I was struggling to swim, but managing. I never knew true fear until now. It was real. This was happening. At this point, my mom had realized that we were in the water and not on the boat and had got a gaft.

A gaft is a hooked pole used to grab docks or for pushing away from docks. In this case, my mom thought I could reach up and grab it. Unfortunately, the gaft did not have the reach to get close to me. I was able to muster the strength to swim to the brown wooden platform on the back and pull myself up. I looked back at the dock and the side of the boat, thinking about what just happened.

I shuddered. This time, it was a violent one. Like a geez what just happened I hope I'm ok type shudder. A shudder that I will remember and look back on even to this day. My family comforted me once I got onto the boat.

"Are you ok?" my family asked me. "Just fine" I said. As I think about this now, I know what real fear feels like and I relate back to this moment in my life currently. This experience has changed me as an individual. It has made me a better person and has shaped me. Now, when I see events that involve terror, I think of this moment.

I see things differently now. I know true fear from this moment.