

**The Difference**

The cold deep water on your skin.  
Smelling chlorine in the air.  
The feel of a close win.  
Putting a fastskin on without a tear.  
That is swimming.

Having goggle tan lines,  
and breaking your cap.  
Hitting the lane line.  
Always being ready for a nap.  
That is swimming.

Stepping up to the block,  
and taking your mark.  
Knowing this is no time to walk.  
This is just the start.  
That is swimming.

Hitting your hand against the wall.  
Slipping into a false start.  
Waiting for a meet to be called.  
Praying your goggles don't break apart.  
That is swimming.

Giving all you can in a race;  
crying and tearing yourself apart.  
Maybe it wasn't the right pace,  
or maybe it was a rough start  
That is swimming.

Looking out at a pool at the end of a meet.  
Feeling like this is where you belong.  
You hear the words your coach preached.  
As the lights play a flickering song.  
That is love.

Watching the dark clouds roll pass  
as the lanes are put away.  
Seeing the lane from your first class.  
Knowing part of your heat is here to stay.  
That is love.

Locking the gate,  
and leaving what is known.  
Staring through bars, just to wait.  
For nine years this has been your home.  
That is love.

Looking out the window on the ride home.  
Even if you are across the state or Earth.  
The lessons you have known;  
has helped determine your worth.  
That is love.

Many years pass away.  
You haven't swum in years like a fool,  
but you long for where your heart stays  
At home, at the pool.  
That is love.