

11-15-2012

Hydrotherapy

Matthew Quick
Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/italics>

Recommended Citation

Quick, Matthew (2001) "Hydrotherapy," *Italics*: Vol. 2001: Iss. 1, Article 9.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/italics/vol2001/iss1/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Italics by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Hydrotherapy

MATTHEW QUICK

Lying sleepless and fetal, rest is ancillary to the excitement for what the morning brings. As the hours slough by, the mistake is more apparent—never make plans to ski the next morning. Although perverse, the anticipation of the bitter morning air calling out every goose bump is more intriguing than any nocturnal fantasy; that uncomfortable moment could not come soon enough. Life's digital metronome is seated next to the bed acting as friend and foe, taking an incre-

ment of sleep and turning it into passing of time; the ratio is one to one, extremely shrewd for the exchange, but sleep is not valued in the world of alarms and buzzers.

The passionless alarm blares, sleep must have come somewhere between expectation and anxiety. Growing uncomfortably warm, the sun streaming through the window is pounding the blue bed covering...the frigid drink awaits. In a disoriented haste the ski is swiped from the wall and tucked under an arm. Gloves, vest, and towel are bundled in a bag and drug through the cold dew of the morning. Everyone is waiting on the old plank board leading out to the boat's hoist, all is silent—in sets excitement. Not a word is spoken as each person looks over the mirrored desert. A fog climbs several feet into the chilling air sculpting the milieu of a supernal paradise. Sporadically, the sheet's surface would ripple, thus passing judgment on yet another surface dwelling delicacy. Loaded, the boat roars out of dormancy and shrieks off of the coral. The transparent body waves a good morning as the boat turns toward Elysium. On the craft's platform, bracing the transom, the bindings

slip on with a squelch; the vest is buckled, the gloves are wrapped. Now in the surrounding haze, the ski handle is grasped in foresight; soon the insomnia will pay off. The boat comes to a halt as I stretch in cruciform. In a deep breath I slide off of the platform, the cool water climbs my body as it shudders to keep warm. With the rope becoming taut, I begin to follow in the vessel's wake; now for hydrotherapy.

"Hit it!" breaks the early morning silence as the craft howls into motion. With arms straight and knees bent, my body acts as an indolent anchor as I am drug through the propeller's wash. Gradually, my legs straighten and my upper body comes to attention. The wind whispering over the humming of the engine makes the slicing of the water an undertone. I pull the handle across my body and am rocketed to the far left of the boat. Now out from the blare of the muffler I stand looking into silence. Clouds of fog breeze past as I set up for the ski course gates. Strategy is the name of this game; do not be fooled by brawn. In an ill attempt at hiding, the first orange buoy ball is spotted from underneath the haze. Gauging the opening, I point and pull trying to muster the sharpest angle possible. The ski cuts the surface with true precision, leaving salient droplets to fend for themselves in the cool surrounding cloud. The carbon blade splits the course's opening and heads for the solace of the wake's leeward side. As my weight shifts, I slide through the flat spot and round the first ball. A stunning wave of water rockets into the air, even the rival fishermen see this flag as beautiful. Without time to ponder, however, the ski rips back through the boat's froth like a pendulum hard at work.

The action is rhythmic; one could set their heart by the wake crossings. Back and forth, back and forth, absolute monotony to the onlooker, but to the skier the repetition feeds addiction. The pinnacle of adrenaline, maximum speed and cut, is only reached for a moment during each crossing. This high is the magnetism that pulls the skier to the wake and back time after time. The buoys of the course, the skier's objectives, fade after the rhythm becomes second nature. Point and pull, point and pull, as the soul sings.

In this state of rapture there is no stopping; I will not surrender to exhaustion. Nevertheless, time runs short on ecstasy—only six passes per person, Mother Nature has others to see this morning. Trying to huff the fatigue I climb onto the boat. Reaching for the first swatch of warmth, I look out over the now disturbed surface. The sun flickers over the wash as the fog clears, what a beautiful dénouement to a perfect morning; thank God for hydrotherapy.

Now back at the dock, we begin to unload. The atmosphere is silent once again as each piece of equipment is passed over the gunnel; the melancholy of facing reality sets in the closer we come to departure. Dragging myself up the lawn, my corpse can hardly climb into the hanging chair overlooking the hazel pool. With my head propped up against one armrest and legs kicked over the other I yell to the morning committee: "...how about tomorrow...?" Sleep will come later.