



Swim That Rock

John Rocco , Jay Primiano

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A young working-class teen fights to save his family's diner after his father is lost in a fishing-boat accident.

When his dad goes missing in a fishing-boat accident, fourteen-year-old Jake refuses to think he may have lost his father forever. But suddenly, nothing seems certain in Jake's future, and now his family's diner may be repossessed by loan sharks. In Narragansett Bay, scrabbling out a living as a quahogger isn't easy, but with the help of some local clammers, Jake is determined to work hard and earn enough money to ensure his family's security and save the diner in time. Told with cinematic suspense and a true compassion for the characters, *Swim That Rock* is a fast-paced coming-of-age story that beautifully and evocatively captures the essence of coastal Rhode Island life, the struggles of blue-collar family dynamics, and the dreams of one boy to come into his own.

Swim That Rock Details

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From Reader Review **Swim That Rock** for online ebook

Rick Riordan says

I got to read an advance copy of the novel some months ago. Honestly, I started reading it just as a favor to a friend. That lasted about a page. Then I was hooked and I devoured the manuscript just because I wanted to. The story is full of adventure, emotion, humor, great characters, heartbreakingly dilemmas . . . well, pretty much anything you could want in a book.

Swim That Rock tells the story of fourteen-year-old Jake, whose dad was lost at sea, and whose family diner is on the verge of getting repossessed by loan sharks. Jake desperately needs to raise money to help his mom, but his options are slim. He can try to go 'quahogging,' hoping to bring in enough clams from Narragansett Bay to pay the bills, or he can join up with a shady mysterious character who has his own not-exactly-legal ways of making money, and who might know something about the death of Jake's father. That's the basic plot, but there is way more to the book. It's one of those you just *have* to read.

Garrett Gaudin says

Jake doesn't think that his dad is gone, But everyone else does. With the restaurant his family runs is going down and his father is lost or maybe dead out at sea Jake needs to make quick money even if it means stealing for a stranger. Thats how Jake met the man. He found a knife with his dads initials in his fence with a 50 dollar bill and a note. This man may know something about Jakes dad and Jake needed to found out. Will he find his dad and keep the Riptide restaurant afloat or have they both drowned already.

I think that this was a great book and that many people would love to read it. I like how it has some mystery with a lot of action and would give this book a 4/5 stars over all.

Liz Overberg says

This review was published in the March 2014 issue of *School Library Journal*.

After growing eight inches in only a year, 14-year-old Jake Cole has a knack for tripping over himself. Since his dad has gone missing—presumed dead in a fishing accident—it's not only Jake's body that feels out of control. If he and his mom can't come up with \$10,000 in two weeks, they will lose their diner on Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island, and will be forced to move in with Jake's grandmother in Arizona. Determined not to leave his father behind, Jake takes matters into his own hands, working any job he can get that will bring him closer to paying off his family's debt. During the day, this means quahogging with the local clammers. At night, Jake takes riskier jobs, working for a gritty and mysterious stranger known only as "Captain." On the water, Jake is anything but uncoordinated. He can bring in more quahogs than almost any clammer in the Bay, but will it be enough to save the diner? This fast-paced coming-of-age tale follows a predictable plotline that readers have seen before, but the rich imagery of life in a fishing town, combined with action that primarily revolves around intense quahogging expeditions, makes this a refreshingly unique read. The beginning feels harried, throwing readers into the middle of a confusing action sequence, but the authors soon find their rhythm. Although somewhat light on character development, this feel-good story illustrates the value of hard work and determination.

Eve Martineau says

I thought this book was ok. The beginning was a little confusing because it just jumped right into the action without a lot of background information. But I liked how at the end him and his friends came together to save the diner. Jakes friends saved him from doing some questionable things that could have got him into a lot of trouble. Jake learned the value of friendship from them.

Nat says

This is a good read, particularly if you like adventures, strong settings, and coming-of-age tales. As someone who grew up by the ocean, I felt like I knew the characters right away, even the secondary fisherman who are regulars at the diner (in fact, The Riptide in my mind *was* Causeway Cafe, and both restaurants shared the very same leather-tanned waitresses, ambiance, and salty-sweet smells from my childhood). Deducted two stars because I got tangled in the fishing lingo, and the action of the book did not grip me the way I had expected... but three stars for (1) Jake, the protagonist, who I was rooting for from the first page, (2) for the setting and making me feel immersed in Jake's very specific Rhode Island world, and (3) for a book that would leave any adventure-loving reader with sea legs longing for summer.

Carla A says

Who could have guessed that clamping could be so exciting?

Miriam says

Three stars because I learned a fair amount about the techniques of quahoggers and the lives they lead on the coast of Rhode Island. Other than that, this was a pleasant story about a fourteen-year-old boy trying to stave off the loss of his family's diner after his father's unexplained disappearance. The close-knit community of fishermen and the staff of the diner provide support as Jake endeavors to earn ten thousand dollars in a matter of weeks to pay off the debt on the diner. A little romance and a lot of clamping keep the plot moving along. There are a number of loose ends involving the DEM and a somewhat piratical old family friend, but by and large, the book is satisfying.

Lisa Fabiano says

After Jake's Dad has gone missing at sea, he is determined to save his family's diner and avoid having to move. To raise money, he assists several local clammers but one might get him into more trouble than he would like. Will he be able to succeed? This touching novel sheds light on life in a seaside community.

Sebastian says

Swim that rock is an excellent book and is one of the best that I have ever read. The knowledge of the quahogging techniques adds great detail to the story. The plot itself is also great. As a teenager myself I can relate to some of the story but it has enough mystery and intrigue for it not to be just a story about some teenagers life. The story also touches on some of the tough times that Rhode Island has experienced. This story has all of the elements to be a great story and a future bestseller. It is the perfect book for any teenager !

Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says

This review can also be found at Carole's Random Life

In the interest of full disclosure, I received an advance reader edition of this book from Candlewick Press and Net Galley for the purpose of an honest review.

4 Stars

I enjoyed this book and felt that it would be a perfect book for young teens. It may have a stronger appeal for boys with the strong male protagonist. I would rate this book a solid 4 out of 5 stars.

Jake Cole lives with his mother in an apartment above their diner. His father is presumed dead but Jake still holds out hope that his father may someday return. Jake lives in a fishing town and the diner caters to the fishermen who work the waters. Jake works with his father's friend, Gene, clamming or quahogging. He finds out that the diner owes \$10,000 to loan sharks. This debt has to be paid by the end of the month or they will lose the diner. Jake is determined to come up with the money to save the diner. Gene offers to use all the money they can make to pay back the loan. Unfortunately, Gene is injured and unable to work shortly after the agreement is made. Jake spends time working with "captain" earning money in questionable ways.

An area is being opened for clamming, that has been long closed and all of the local fishermen cannot wait. Since Gene is injured, Jake decides to take his boat and go out by himself. On this fishing trip, Jake learns who his true friends are and how tough he can be when needed. He also proves that he is willing to help others even when there is nothing in it for him. His friends and family work together on an event at the diner to help raise money. In the end, Jake's good deed saves the diner.

This story was very well written. The characters were all very likeable. I found myself hoping that Jake could find a way to save the diner. The supporting characters were wonderful: Tommy and Darcy were both flawed but genuine. This is a great coming of age story where we see a boy struggling to come to terms with his father's loss who refuses to give up on his home and livelihood. We see a true friendship with Tommy and Jake and with Darcy and Jake. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a realistic coming of age story.

Diane says

I found this on the summer reading list for high school students while at the library.

This novel is about a 14 year old boy living in RI who is struggling to help his mother save their diner after his father was lost after a fishing accident.

I didn't realize that it was written by an author who lives in Rhode Island.

Anna Ciummo says

Fun book! Not my favorite, but still bright in every sense of the word. I connected with the characters easily. It was very readable. Lots of action and a good but not overwhelming amount of emotion. I don't normally read "coming of age" books or books that take place near the ocean, but this one was fun for a change.

I retained a star because it was hard for me to grasp the concepts of the ocean. There were a lot of terms that I didn't completely understand, and a lot of the scenes that take place on the sea were a little hard to visualize.

Michelle Domangue says

First off, I need to say that I got this book from the GoodReads Giveaways offer. This book had a good story line but I wasn't thrilled with the writing style. Some parts had tons of unnecessary detail and other parts went super fast while leaving out key details. Maybe the reason I had a hard time with this book is because I am an adult. I feel like it would be an excellent book for 11-15 year old boys who are fishermen/hunters and have a hard time finding a book to keep their interest. I highly recommend this book for any youth readers!

Kelly says

To be fair, I read the pre-edited version of this and might not be an impartial judge since I know the authors. Regardless, it is a quick read and held my attention till the end. Can't wait for the "real" release!

Daniel Roman says

This is a really good book Jake thinks his dad will come back but he was dead in a boat accident. Jake's mom owes money to the loan shark if they don't pay them they will take away the dinner. So Jake wants to help his mom by working. He goes to the Captain and they do stuff together so Jake can get money. What Jake doesn't know is that Captain was Jake's father's best man he found out when his mom told him because she found out that Jake goes with him at night. She tells him to not go with him because he makes bad decisions.
