

Military Life

A Bradbury Publication

Incorporating The Best Of **Male Call**

For The Serviceman Overseas

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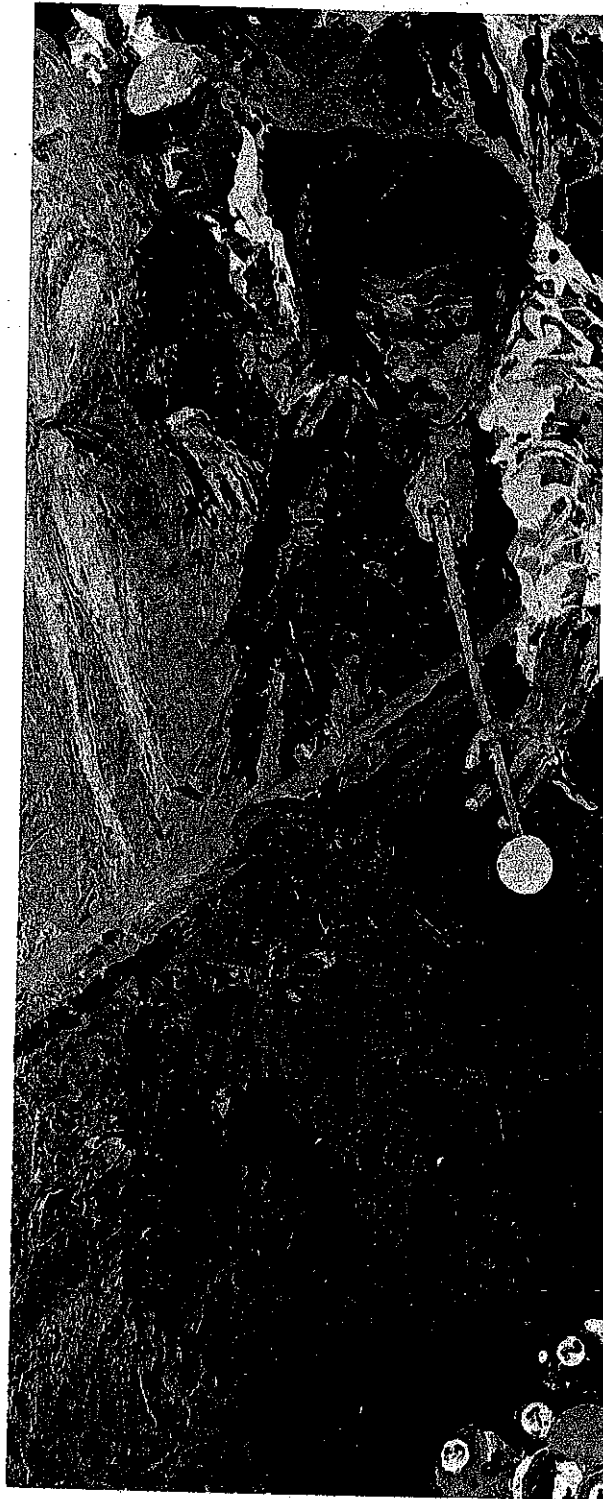
From Master
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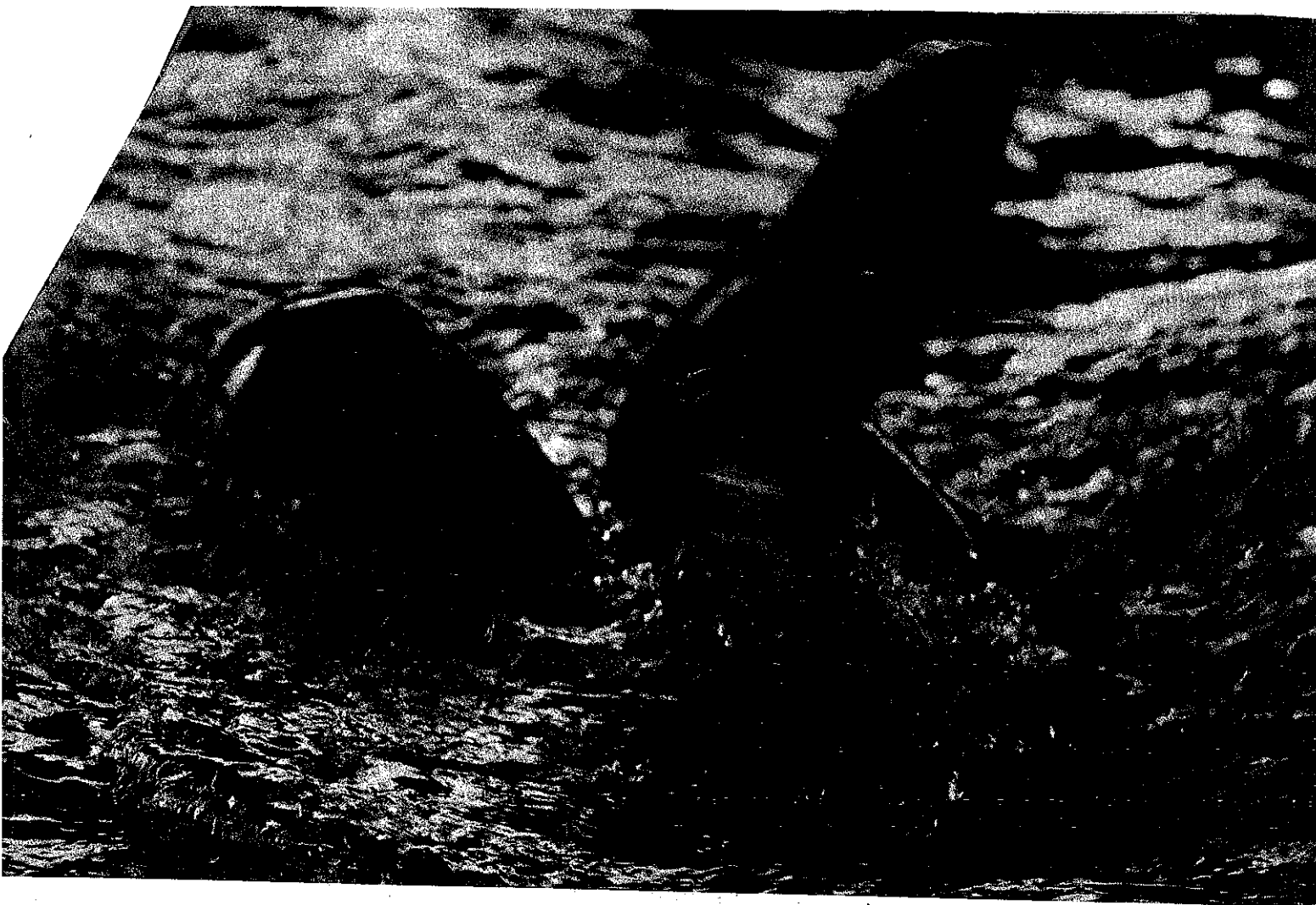
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In the Swim with Diana Nyad

MILITARY LIFE: We don't hear too much about professional swimming. What made you turn pro?

DIANA NYAD: Actually, I can't stand swimming. It's very boring. It is the most boring thing I can think of. But after all the time I have put into swimming, I felt it should pay off in some way.

ML: Now that you have turned professional, would you ever give up swimming?

DIANA: Well, I did give up swimming once. I didn't make the 1968 Olympic team and I resented it because I worked so diligently for so many years. I became a fanatic about it. I was in the 400 individual medley. When I got on the "block" for 1968, for the Olympic trial, I knew I was going to make it because that's the coaching philosophy, "where there's a will,

there's a way." They trained you and they psyched you up. By the time you're isolated on the platform, if you don't believe 100 per cent, that you're going to win, then you won't. I became a total recluse for almost eight months after I lost. It was a psychological shock for me. I came in fifth. I was only 600ths of a second behind third place. I was a poor sport. I packed my bag and took off for India for a month.

ML: What started you on swimming in the beginning?

DIANA: It was something my parents wanted. They sent me to Pine Crest School, one of the best swimming schools in the country.

ML: How did you get into the long distance swimming?

DIANA: Buck Dawson, who is the

director of the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, first got me interested. It is a sport that takes a tremendous amount of concentration and self-discipline. The training is really strenuous. When I have ten swims in a summer, I get myself psyched up. I get excited because I want to do them and do them well. Each swim is a new experience.

ML: An experience?

DIANA: Yes. Somebody once said that anyone can swim a short distance and either win or lose it, and it's over. But with a long distance swim, it's an experience. So many swimmers drop out, it's something just to finish a marathon.

ML: What's the longest distance you have ever swum?