

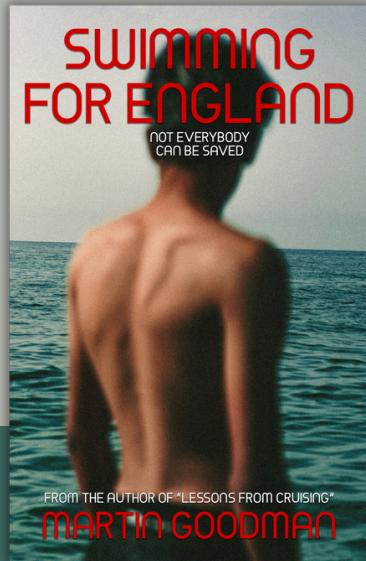
# SWIMMING FOR ENGLAND

## MARTIN GOODMAN

Published by Barbican Press in Paperback & eBook

£8.00 | US\$13.95 | CA\$18.99

June 2nd 2026



Thriller

Crime

LGBTQ+

ISBN: 9781917352123

eISBN: 9781917352130

Pages: 100

Size: 5 x 8 in



Martin Goodman set out to be a writer at the age of twelve, and has stuck with it. Born in Leicester, he started travelling the world at the age of ten. His award-winning fiction, nonfiction and plays explore the aftermath of war, shamanism, ecological crises, gay sexuality, the inner life of musicians, digital identity, and the voices of nature. He is emeritus professor at the University of Hull, and lives between London, Suffolk and France.

[martingoodman.com](http://martingoodman.com)

From the author of *Lessons from Cruising* and *The Boy on the Train* comes a darkly satirical literary thriller that will captivate readers of transgressive fiction and social critique.

**"Sinuously written, subtly subversive: will keep you on the edge of your seat"**  
Beatrice Hitchman on *The Boy on the Train*

When Faisal emerges from the English Channel after his record-breaking swim from France, Brian and Eileen Pratchett expect gratitude – after all, they rescued him from the refugee pool, fed him, trained him, transformed him. But Cameron, a young Scottish drifter, has come searching for his brother Malcolm, one of the Pratchetts' earlier 'projects'. Malcolm was going to be a tennis champion. Instead, he disappeared.

As Cameron's questions grow more pointed and Faisal's gratitude turns ambiguous, the Pratchetts' carefully maintained facade begins to crack. Behind their respectable seafront home with its immaculate rose garden lies a darker story – one of control, obsession and the terrible price of failing to meet expectations.

*Swimming for England* is a masterful psychological portrait that operates simultaneously as thriller, social satire and searing indictment. Goodman's prose is both beautiful and brutal, his imagery visceral, his characters rendered with uncomfortable intimacy. This is fiction that disturbs, provokes and lingers – perfect for book clubs seeking compact, challenging material and readers who appreciate the intersection of literary ambition and page-turning suspense.

### Key Selling Points

- Timely themes meet dark literary craft** – Explores refugee experience, toxic benevolence and English nationalism through gripping psychological thriller framework. Perfect for readers who loved *The Wasp Factory* and *We Need to Talk About Kevin*.
- Built-in controversy drives discussion** – Morally complex, unsettling subject matter guaranteed to spark passionate book club debates and social media conversation. The kind of book readers can't stop talking about.
- Crossover appeal = broader market** – Literary readers get sophisticated prose and social commentary; thriller readers get page-turning suspense and shocking revelations. Captures both audiences.
- Distinctive British voice, universal themes** – Seaside gothic setting with pitch-black humour appeals to Anglophile readers while exploring control, identity, and transformation that resonates internationally.
- Strong review and podcast potential** – Accessible to crime/thriller bloggers and podcasts (not just literary gatekeepers). Dark, discussion-worthy content ideal for the true crime podcast audience that drives contemporary thriller sales.