# Mobius I

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**E. Jane Luzar**

No one remembers who gave us the rowboat. It appeared one summer at the edge of the pond near the house. Summers on the farm in the mid 1960's were long and hot. I decided to adopt the rowboat and spent much of my time caulking it and painting it a deep navy blue.

I was deep into my science fiction reading days, so I decided to christen it Mobius I Rowboat of the Future. Mobius strips fascinated me as they had no beginning and no end, much like summer on the farm. I called it Mobius for short.

After days of work on Mobius, it was finally time to take her on her first voyage. My younger brother, Jim, was about seven and had shadowed me throughout the renovation process. It only seemed fair to take him out with me on that voyage. We had been raised by my parents to fear the giant snapping turtles that supposedly lived in the spring fed pond, hoping every day to catch a small child brave enough to venture in.

By then, I was past my fear of the giant snapping turtles but because we never ventured in, I had no idea how deep the pond was. I told Jim to just hold onto the side of the boat in case of any sort of accident. I had proudly passed Red Cross Beginning Swimming at Girl Scout Camp and Jim had some swimming lessons, so I wasn't worried.

We launched Mobius and were quickly enjoying a smooth voyage. Suddenly, my brother Pat appeared on the hill by the pond yelling that he was a sea monster. He jumped into the pond and swam out to us and grabbed the railing on Mobius. He pulled down trying to board us. Before we could rebalance our weight in Mobius, it flipped over and sank like a rock.

We surfaced in water much deeper than I had imagined. Our priority was Jim, who started screaming and wildly thrashing around in the water. Somehow, we coordinated our rescue. Pat would grab Jim and throw him toward the shore while I swam a bit. Then, while Pat was catching his breath, I would grab Jim and throw him toward the shore.

Our improvised rescue plan worked but took far longer than necessary. We didn't realize that we were disoriented and were mistakenly heading toward the far shore. Jim fought us the whole way and by the time we made it safely to the shore, we were all exhausted. Jim was clearly traumatized by the rescue. Pat and I were lying on our backs on the muddy shore catching our breath. Although safely on shore, Jim was still thrashing around wildly, screaming "I'm a dead monkey" over and over.

Our Mom finally heard us and came running from the house to the hill overlooking the pond. She yelled, asking us if we were all right. Pat and I calmly yelled back that we were fine and just playing with Jim. She seemed satisfied and returned to the house. Jim finally stopped screaming and we cleaned him up a little and headed back to the house.

Much like earlier pond adventures, the less said the better. Many times, when my parents were not around, we asked him about the Dead Monkey. He claimed to have no memory of it. Years later, one of us could whisper “I’m a dead monkey” to him and he would visibly twitch.

Mobius sank into deep water so there was no way to salvage her. Almost every time I look at that area of the pond, I think of Mobius I, Rowboat of the Future, and dead monkeys. Her first voyage was brief but Mobius I created a lifetime of memories for three farm kids.