

WITH LEAD IN THE SHOES

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Whatever he tried, he kept bouncing like a float on the surface. When he pushed his head into the water, his feet came up. Feet under, head up. Why couldn't he dive? Fred could help him, but Fred was gone. Where was Fred?

With great difficulty, he was able to climb out of the water. Once out, he saw his friend coming to him with a heavily loaded cart. The wheels sank into the ground. What was he carrying?

"Do you remember Archimedes?", shouted Fred.

Skubba thought deeply, but apart from knowing that Archimedes was a clever Greek, he couldn't remember what he was known to have done or said.

"The glass in the sink," said Fred.

"The glass in...", yes, now he remembered. The glass did not want to go under. Only by hanging a weight on the glass, could it sink to the bottom. The weight had to be equal to the weight of water that you could pour in the glass. "Yes, Archimedes!"

"Indeed. This law applies not only to your diving bucket but also to you in the bag."

"And that's why you brought all that lead?"

"Yes, I'm going to add weight to you and make you heavy."

Skubba had to stand up straight while Fred placed an oversized shoe with lead in it, over Skubba's left foot. Then he did the same thing with his right foot. The bag Skubba was wearing, looked like a pair of oversized overalls.

Skubba then had two heavy lead plates put over his shoulders. The weight almost toppled him over. The more Fred worked, the heavier Skubba became. Until finally, the cart was empty.

"OK, that should now be enough. Let's get you into the water."

With lead in his shoes, every step required a big effort. Skubba could not imagine being able to dive for a long time like this. But, once he reached the water, he felt himself becoming gradually lighter. It worked!

When he was in the water up to his shoulders, the weight seemed to have almost gone. That was it!

Unfortunately the plastic bag tore before he could dive. Cold water poured in and in no time, Skubba was completely soaked through and freezing cold.

Once home, his mother smiled upon seeing the wet clothes piled on top of the cart filled with lead blocks and the ripped bag.

"Wet again?"

"Yes, the bag tore."

"There's something in the garage for you. You will appreciate it."

Skubba thought it would be a set of dry clothes or tape, but instead, Fred discovered a black, rubbery suit.

"Unbelievable, a real neoprene diving suit."

"A neosuit?", asked Skubba surprised.

"No, a diving suit made of rubber with bubbles trapped in it. Those bubbles will keep you warm in the water. Man, now you can really dive."

"Thank you, mom!"

