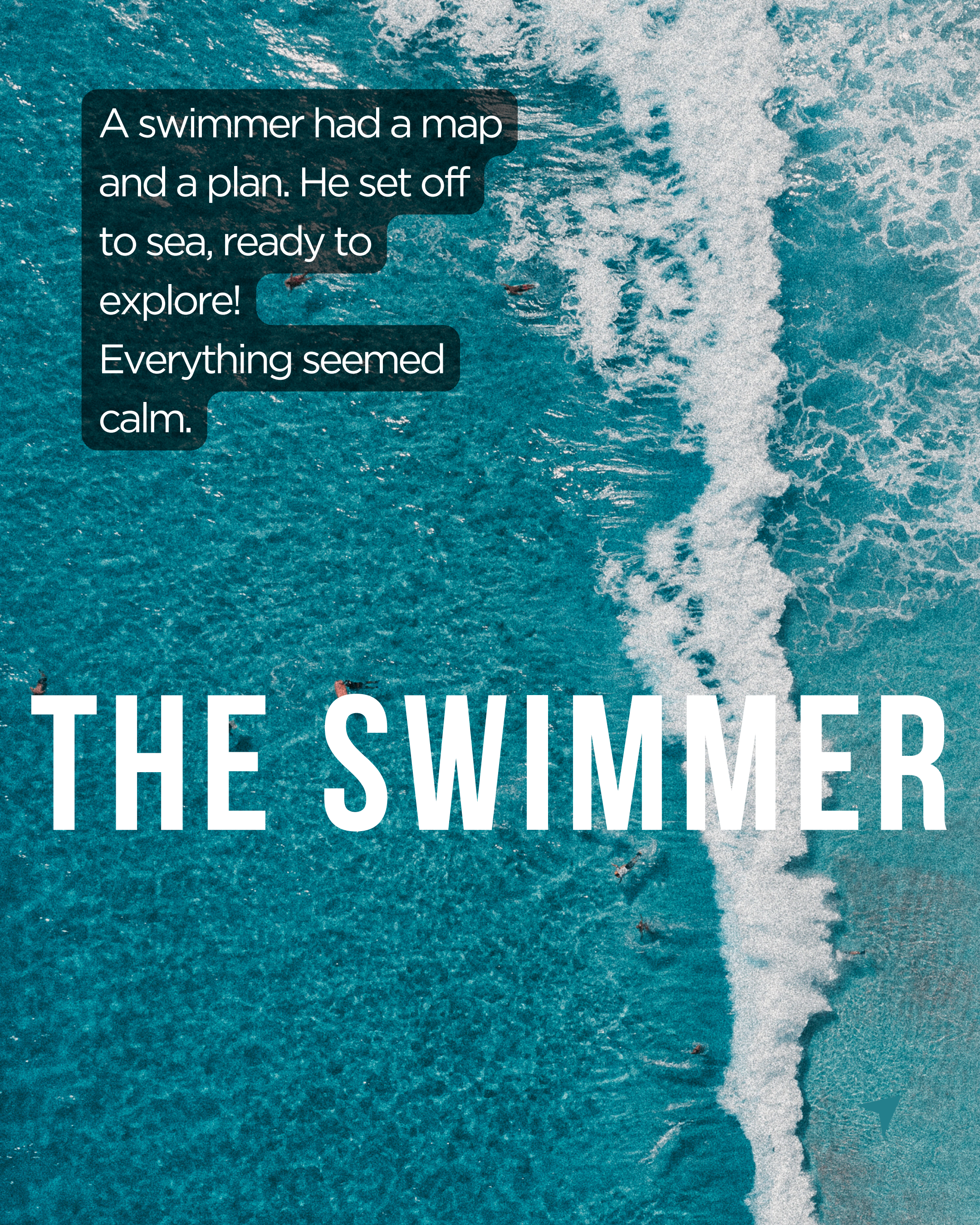
An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, with white foam from waves crashing against dark, jagged rocks. Patches of green vegetation are scattered across the rocky terrain. In the lower right, a small flag with horizontal stripes of blue, white, and red flies from a pole on a rock. The overall scene is dynamic and visually striking.

THE SWIMMER, THE WHALE, AND THE SEA

Objective: To explore power dynamics, culture, and communication patterns within teams.

An aerial photograph of a beach with turquoise water and white surf. Several people are visible swimming in the water. The text is overlaid on the top left in a dark, semi-transparent box.

A swimmer had a map
and a plan. He set off
to sea, ready to
explore!

Everything seemed
calm.

THE SWIMMER

The whale wasn't mean.
Just hungry.
He saw the man.
He opened his mouth...
GULP.

THE WHALE



An aerial photograph of a beach. The left side shows dark, pebbly sand, while the right side shows lighter, sandy beach with white foam from waves crashing. The ocean is a deep blue-green color.

“Oh no!” cried the people.

“Why did the whale do that?”

“Why didn’t the man swim faster?”

But someone else asked:

“If the sea made the way for the whale, isn’t it the sea’s fault?”

THE SEA

Let's pause.

Sounds a bit dramatic, but this happens in the office too.

Someone gets ignored, interrupted.
Overwhelmed.

While they're caught off guard, someone else... takes up all the space.

And the "sea"?

It just... watches. Enables.



**Every team has
its whales.**

The dominant
force, often loud,
influential, or just
unaware of their
size.

Examples: A
senior leader, a
pushy team
member, or a
long-standing
habit that
overshadows
others.



Every team has its swimmers.

Those navigating, adapting, trying to be heard.

Examples: New hires, quieter voices, or anyone caught in the current.





**And every team has
its sea.**

The culture that
enables what's
allowed, what's
ignored, what flows
beneath the surface.

Examples: Meeting
norms, leadership
tone, feedback
culture, people in
survival mode.



Who feels safe to speak up?

Who gets heard the most?

What quiet currents shape the culture?

If I asked your team, would they say you're the whale or the swimmer?

And what kind of "sea" are you helping to shape?

Bottom Line:

Every team has swimmers, whales, and a sea.

The real story is about the environment we create. Will we let the same patterns play out, or choose to make space for everyone?

Culture is a choice.