## SONG LOVE CATS

## RY MARPY RIMBAK

## We move like cagey tigers.

We couldn't get closer than this...

Played somewhere on an FM radio in the shack. Bowdy, Iman and Siri had come back from the beach at 26th Ave obliterated, having spent the most part of the afternoon eating watermelon imbimbed with vodka overnight so that the cops wouldn't know they were consuming large amounts of alcohol underage and in public. It's a classic California gig, and it was Memorial Day, a national holiday of beach BBQs, revelry and beer.

The way we walk, The way we talk, The way we stalk, The way we kiss...

No-one can remember who had the idea to go back to her sheback-shack behind the beach: a soon-to-be condemned, ramshackle abode that only a teenage runaway girl would consider inhabiting.

They don't know exactly what they had in mind to do once they got there, but this was Santa Cruz in the early '80s. Anything went, and they had certain fogged and drunken ideas.

We slip through the streets. While everyone sleeps,

Getting bigger and sleeker and wider and brighter...

Bikinis were untied, trunks loosened, jokes, giggles and kisses flew. They weren't sure they wanted to do this - it felt awkward and prohibited and dangerous - but they were loose enough to get the task done. They were best friends and the lineup at First Peak was their playground. They rode cruisers around and acted like arseholes. They had a whistling symphony that practised out on the Peak between sets. They whistled AI Di Meola.

We bite and scratch and scream all night...

Then, in a sort of unsaid capitulation to the fact that they weren't mature enough to deal with what was about to happen, the heated and groping action was replaced in the blink of an eye with a U-turn towards the utterly ridiculous. A roll of duct tape came out, a wrestling match of monumental proportions took place, and in the wink of an eye, Siri was duct-taped to a kitchen chair, naked.

Iman's beater of a blue pick-up was in the

driveway. The chair with the girl taped upon it was hoisted into the flat-bed and the engine started. The driver and passengers headed directly to East Cliff Drive, the oceanfront drive that hugs the cliff in front of Pleasure Point, called so because it was where all the brothels and moonshine bars could be found for the visiting sailors coming off the boats that had docked in the Steamer Lane, always enjoying a rough and tumble reputation. These kids simply continued the raucous legacy in leaky, colorful. 3mm wetsuits.

The cliffs were packed with holiday-makers. They saw the naked surfer girl taped to a chair in the back of a pick-up and could only laugh. Siri's uncontrollable laughter made her think that she would pass out - gagged and nose-taped resembling some sort of sadomasochistic joke gone very awry: The Gimp from Pulp Fiction minus the rubber suit.

Let's go and throw all the songs we know...

The third go-around, the sheriff finally stopped them. Maybe a decent citizen had alerted help.

The cop climbed into the back of the truck and pulled the duct tape off her face. A good part of her shaggy blonde hair and suntan came with it. He asked if she was being held against her will. Her friends were old enough for this to be problematic if she answered incorrectly. She was laughing too hysterically to reply at all. Onlookers could only chortle to themselves. Taped naked to a kitchen chair on the back of a truck. Kids these days.

Into the sea. You and me. All these years and no-one heard...

The boys took her home in the front cab, where they found some acetone to remove the tape residue from her face and members. Then she got dressed and they headed back down to the beach for a body-whomping session and a few sunset beers.

Then curl up by the fire, And sleep for a while, It's the grooviest thing, It's the perfect dream...

## THE HUNT FOR WHITE NOVEMBER

BY ROB REYNOLDS

When I can't sleep, I think about surfing a particular break, which puts all the clutter in my head aside into a little ball. It's not a break I've surfed, it's one that was described to me by someone else. Five-hundred-metre righthanders with only three guys out and they're all Germans who can't surf for shit. It's a conveyor belt of pure pleasure and I'm never sure why backhand, but why not, it's my borrowed fantasy and it just keeps rolling in and I paddle past the Germans with a grin and they're sitting at 250 metres anyway so it's totally irrelevant whether they want more waves, but the water temperature is like summer honey and it's a clear sandy bottom, no-one around as though it's some kind of other-planet dream.

What if the cheque doesn't come in time? How'm I gonna pay for everything? The scaffolding. The brick saw. I'll have to cancel. Better call the brickie. First thing. Then the gyprockers. If they start another job I won't get them back. Then what? Fuck!!!

Waves. Righthanders, wrapping around the point like a Chinese fan, arriving in sweet succession to sweep me up, each one as good as the others, can't pick a bad one, looping from the drop with effortless speed and lolling down the line, whooping past the Germans, water so clear you can see sun through the lip, salty like the tears of a beautiful woman, warm like a mother's hug. If I ever fell off it would be soft and forgiving, but the waves are so good it just never happens, wave after wave after wave...

Shit!!! I forgot the beam. Did I order gal? What if I didn't? Two more weeks. The brickie's gonna freak. Charge me for travel time. In his friggin' Land Rover. Three miles to the gallon. Better check the emails. Surely I said gal. Or did I? I'm sure I did.

Stay in bed and go surfing, those Germans

are funny, screaming Achtung every time they go over the falls on their SUPs and never sure which way's up, they're having fun so who gives

I can feel my tired arms plopping in the water paddling back out, too many waves but too good to stop, plop plop, just keep turning them over, they're a machine designed to transport legs back to the take-off spot. Is the fun of surfing in the legs or the head, sure as hell isn't in these burning shoulders, smoulders, boulders? I'm just standing in trim now, my hands held together behind my back, pretending I'm history, hold that line for as long as I can, feel the rail in the wall, look back to the wake of my fishtail spreading a white highway in my immediate past then up and over with the lip, almost went with it, get a bead on the future I'm trying to suture, pull all my evasive fragments of energy together for a big, swooping bottom turn and up she goes, the view from the top is a whole sea full of fun...

What if the brickie talks to the gyprocker? Before I get to them? Shit. What were the dates? If that beam isn't ready. That cheque better come. To pay for the beam. So the brickie can start. So the gyprockers don't split. So the whole job doesn't turn into a dirty nappy. Faaark!

Waves. Warm, smooth, effortless, mine, all mine, off the bottom, off the top, hold back a moment, get critical, turn on the speed, hear the fins whistle and the rocker sizzle, all the juice you could ever need, a face so smooth you could lick it, a lip so chumpy you could carve it, arc over the top into still, resume the paddle, find a rogue SUP and start pushing it back to Germany, back to the waves, sumptuous waves, golden waves, esoteric waves, intellectual waves, humorous waves,