

ROCK

MYRTLE & MARPY

BY MARPY BUMBAK

The two girls became friends out at Rockview.

The name was appropriate for the friendship that would follow. Rockview was a bowly, kelp-ridden piece-of-crap wave you surfed if you wanted to surf alone. Her real name was Steph, but she was always known as Myrtle the Turtle. They became fast friends. Myrtle was a goofy-footer, had a good wetsuit and a real board and got her waves. The other one wasn't quite there yet.

The other one didn't live with her parents, she lived in a hot-water-heater shed 100 metres from the Point that she rented for \$100/month. A runaway. Myrtle lived around the corner, but her parents were always stoned out of their gourd, so they didn't count, anyway.

The girls did what they wanted. One was 13, the other 15.

They bought bulk oatmeal and cooked it with raisins and nuts. They surfed a lot, and goofed

around even more. They did their best to go to school. They worked at a Hare Krishna restaurant called Govinda's, serving meals in those efficient metal bowls placed on metal plates. They loved the subjis and cheese samosas.

Sometimes they surfed at night to the full moon in the Santa Cruz cold, and as the girls were bellying in at 5.00am, dudes were paddling out. They would saunter home, eat oatmeal and sleep for 14 hours. School was often for Tuesday, or Wednesday, or another day.

They loved mushrooms. They read Tom Wolfe's *The Electric KoolAid Acid Test* and they wondered if they couldn't do the same by their own means?

They were saddened by the fact that they had missed the original bus. What would happen if you dropped three grams of mushies every day for a month instead?

The mushroom test began. What happened

was that those chickies fell in love with rocks. The coastline was lined with cliff-protecting boulder dumps. When the 'shrooms kicked in, they would walk 5km to the rivermouth and start climbing the rocks, horizontally, back to their farcical abodes. Often, the girls brought paint – not spray cans – real paint and brushes, and when they found the right rock that they loved, they would determine its character and paint it, by flashlight.

Who doesn't get a giggle out of a newly painted bright yellow boulder with an enormous smiley face when you crack it at dawn? Or a cosmic rainbow spanning the granite blocks? Or a purple dolphin? Or a mermaid singing her song of siren? Stars, clouds, octopi, fish, butterflies? These girls could surprise and astonish you with a new marker to line up with, overnight.

They conversed with the foot-long rats that lived in those rocks, they could feel the power of the

high-tide pounders that those rocks had absorbed. They would fit themselves against the heat of the day that had accumulated in those rocks – at 4.00am, shivering with cold.

After a fortnight, the 'shrooms no longer held effect. They had become immune and decided to arrest the investigation, fearful for their livers. Their eyes had gone a bit yellow.

Lucky for them, trimming season was right behind the Mushroom Test, so there was loads of shake to spare around. They put the leaves in a lowest-heat oven with three kilos of margarine and let it macerate several days until it was thick and black with THC.

Their brownies were the best in the world.

Folks came from far and wide for the girls' delectable treats.

Reinspired, they went back to loving rocks.

SHARK

HAOLE

BY MARA WOLFORD

She's flying out that afternoon.

The swell is mounting fast according to the buoy reports – she has to get out there at dawn and back in by 10.00am to avoid getting hammered. She pulls up at Lani's at the first hint of light and hears it pounding on the reef.

The beach has been taken over by lean-tos and tents. Beer cans and bonfire rubbish litter the sand. Fishing gear thrown about like forgotten props on a set. There are many bloody buckets strewn around, and this may have been a point of note, if she had known to take note of it. Pairs of huge, flat, dark, natural-looking human feet stick out of each temporary abode. Last night must've been a good one.

She checks it quickly from the sea wall and thinks, "Six to eight already, I've got two hours not four". She sees that a friend is already out at Holton's and she decides to join him, throwing

herself into the current.

She's quickly equal to the Lani's reef in the channel. The sun pops over the Mauka and the water lights up around her. At this very moment, a one-metre-in-diameter and four-metres-in-length tiger-striped bronze and brown entity brushes and bumps the right side of her being and plunges. She knows what it is and she knows what comes next.

Bethany had lost her arm that very month, and the tigers are sick, suffering from some sort of rabies that's making them come in too close to shore for their size, seeking weaker prey. She knows she's next. It feels as if her lungs have stuck together. Her vocal cords make noises that she's never heard before: sucking, whimpering, desperate. This is what fear feels like. She realises she had only thought she knew it before.

In a perfect instance of primal human survival thinking, she heads for the bowl on the left at

Lani's. It's only five metres away and her sole option. The left at Lani's is near-dry reef. It will save her. She paddles up on to the reef and at that very moment, the first real set of the swell hits. This is a benediction and a curse. She takes 14 triple-overhead waves in three feet of water.

The moment she gets far enough in to belly-ride is the moment she sees five townies on bodyboards heading towards the channel. She screams at them. They think she's hurt. She gets to shore and recounts her travails.

The six of them dump their gear among the debris of last evening's shindig and run up on the sea-wall. Her friend is still out at Holton's alone. They motion to him to paddle quickly across to Lani's and get one in ASAP. He does what they want, although they don't know how he understands. They watch the shadow of the beast circle in the channel. She hadn't imagined a thing.

When her friend comes in, he says that he knew something was up because the two turtles that normally live in the channel feeding off plankton borne from the fresh-water spring had stuck to him like glue, following him in on waves and escorting him back out to the lineup. Safety in numbers, working the odds.

She goes to Haleiwa and tells the Coast Guard what had just happened. They send a boat up to Lani's. It returns with a massive tiger dragging behind it. She boards the flight later in the day. She leaves with mixed sentiments.

On her next visit, she asks respected local surfer Louis Ferreira if he's afraid of sharks. He replies that Hawaiians aren't afraid because sharks are part of the *Ohana*, the family, which implied she would never be anything other than a Haole.