

The Surfer Buys the Perfect Wave

A Ten Minute Comedy

By Matthew Moore

Characters

The Surfer

Pip, A Deity In Charge of Waves

Setting: *A Beach, Morning*

“Surfing is out of this world.”

~ Gidget

“The Surfer Buys the Perfect Wave”

(THE SURFER is standing on the beach holding a surfboard. PIP is sitting on a blanket having a sandwich.)

SURFER

You know I’m good for it.

PIP

What do you think ‘*Good for it*’ means to me?

SURFER

It means ‘*good for it.*’ It means--you can count on me for it. It--

PIP

You’re trying to buy a wave on *credit*.

SURFER

Yeah, I--

PIP

And not just any wave. The *perfect* wave.

SURFER

I know.

PIP

No, you don’t know. You *don’t* know, because all you’ve been surfing up to now are kiddie waves. Chump waves. Puddles with some oomph behind them. You don’t know what a perfect wave is. You’ve never even *seen* one, I bet. Have you ever *seen* one?

SURFER

No.

PIP

See? I would have won that bet.

SURFER

Pip, I don’t ask for things.

PIP

And?

SURFER

And--And Fitz is here every weekend asking you for a wave.

PIP

And Fitz can pay.

SURFER

Yeah, because Daddy bankrolls him.

PIP

You think I care how he gets his money? It's none of my business how he gets his money. All that matters is that he gets it and gives it to me. It's not my problem if Fitz is rich and you're not.

SURFER

What about the dignity of the sport?

(PIP laughs.)

PIP

The dignity of the--The what? *The what?*

SURFER

The dignity of the--

PIP

There are some who don't even believe that what you all do out there *is* a *sport*. Do you know that?

SURFER

Yeah, but--

PIP

I have no opinion on the matter either way, because it's not my job to have an opinion. I manage the waves. That's my job. Your job is to surf. Granted, you don't get paid for it, but--

SURFER

How am I supposed to surf if I don't get good waves?

PIP

You could let nature take its course.

SURFER

You know it doesn't work that way.

PIP

Hey, is that *attitude*? Are you giving me *attitude*?

SURFER

No, I--No.

(A moment.)

PIP

I can cut the price in half for a Kahuna. Not a big one, just a regular one.

SURFER

You want me to pay half and all I get is a Kahuna?

PIP

You could use a few Kahunas before you go riding the perfect wave.

SURFER

I've done Kahunas. I've done *dozens* of them.

PIP

And your technique is still sloppy. There's no art to your balance.

SURFER

So you know about surfing now? Before you only knew about waves.

PIP

I still have eyes, don't I?

(A beat. THE SURFER sets down their board and sits next to PIP.)

SURFER

So I'm no good?

PIP

Did I say that?

SURFER

You--

PIP

Did I *say* you're no good?

(A beat.)

SURFER

No.

PIP

You think it's all about numbers. Picasso didn't care how many paintings he painted and Beethoven didn't care about how many symphonies he wrote, but the surfers all think that it's about how many waves they put under their board shorts.

SURFER

You're the one who said I needed more Kahunas.

PIP

You need *better* Kahunas. The ones with a good cut. Then a couple of Gidgets. Once you handle a Gidget with finesse, then I would come back here and ask for a perfect wave. Provided you have the cash.

SURFER

What about the Gidget I got last Saturday?

PIP

What about it?

SURFER

That was a beaut. I got applause for that one.

PIP

You took everybody by surprise. Good for you. But you couldn't do it again if your life depended on it. We both know that.

SURFER

So?

PIP

So? So you should be able to do it the same over and over again. Gidget after Gidget if you have to. Until you can't do it wrong.

SURFER

I can't afford that many Gidgets and they don't just show up willy nilly and even when they do, you have to be the one to claim them. I had to elbow my way past Pizarro to get the last one.

PIP

Keep elbowing. That's my advice.

SURFER

You do know there's a limit to all this, right? It's not like I'm going to be out there on my board when I'm fifty.

PIP

You don't know that. It's not the Olympics. There's nothing to say that youth is in your favor aside from the fact that youth is usually *always* in the favor of the one who has it.

SURFER

How old are you?

PIP

Three thousand years old. Give or take.

SURFER

And were you always in charge of waves?

PIP

No. I used to be in charge of seaweed. That was a rough century.

SURFER

And in all that time, you never cut anybody a break?

PIP

You want to talk breaks? You'd break your neck on the perfect wave.

SURFER

I have to try. I don't have much time.

PIP

Do you know something I don't? Did somebody diagnose you with some terminal illness and you want one big one before you meet your maker?

SURFER

No, I just--

PIP

What?

(A moment.)

SURFER

I had a vision.

PIP

You? You had a *vision*?

SURFER

Yes.

PIP

Then you should go see a doctor.

SURFER

Why can't I have a vision?

PIP

Because you're a mortal. A *mortal* surfer. Mortals don't have visions. You're lucky the gods let you have toes.

SURFER

Maybe the gods *wanted* me to have a vision.

PIP

Tell me about this vision you had.

SURFER

In the vision, I was riding the perfect wave.

PIP

Do you die in this vision?

SURFER

No.

PIP

Then it sounds like more of a daydream.

SURFER

I don't die. I don't die, because the experience of riding the perfect wave helps me understand things about surfing that I could never otherwise understand. I transcend.

PIP

You *transcend*?

SURFER

Yes.

PIP

You're saying you *fly*?

SURFER

No. I mean--*spiritually* speaking. I transcend.

PIP

And you ride the wave?

SURFER

And I ride the wave, and it's--It's glorious. It really is.

PIP

Are you making this up?

SURFER

No.

PIP

Are you making this up so I'll give you a perfect wave?

SURFER

I don't want you to give me anything. I'll *pay* for it.

PIP

At a *very* discounted rate though, right?

SURFER

Well--Yeah.

PIP

Listen--

SURFER

No, you listen to me. Please. I see everything you're telling me in the vision. I see my balance adjusted by the majesty of the wave. I see my head alignment coinciding with the space between water molecules within the spray. I see the hand of Poseidon resting on the small of my back keeping me upright on the board as it cuts down the center of the wave all the way to shore. From that point on, I can afford any kind of wave I want, because I'm a legend. I'm a somebody. I go from nobody to somebody all in the span of one wave, Pip. You just gotta give me the first one.

(A beat.)

PIP

I cut someone a break once. Early on. When the boards were still mostly splinters. I gave a kid a little younger than you a nice, smooth wave. Nothing too crazy, but more than they could afford. I cut them a deal,

because I thought they had potential. I actually thought they had even more potential than *you* to be honest. I gave them the wave. It was a lovely day outside. Sun couldn't have gotten any higher. The wave came. The board started to cut. They lost their balance. They went under the water. They never came back up.

SURFER

How?

PIP

The ocean is not your friend. The ocean very much wants to kill you. Every wave is a soldier in the ocean's army against mankind. The wave I gave that kid was a small soldier, but even small soldiers carry working guns and even a bad shot can hit its target. Now, a perfect wave? That's a perfect soldier. That's what you're asking for, and I don't feel like knowing I'm the reason somebody went underwater and didn't come back up. That's why I don't want to cut you any slack here.

SURFER

But you will?

PIP

But I will.

(A beat. SURFER smiles.)

SURFER

Because of the vision?

PIP

No. Lots of surfers have visions of riding the perfect wave. Fitz has them twice a night in between dreaming of how much money he's going to inherit once Daddy kicks the bucket.

SURFER

Then why--

PIP

Because I'm going to give you a Kahuna.

SURFER

I told you, I don't--

PIP

And then I'm going to give you another one, and another one, and--

SURFER

You're--

PIP

And once you're done with those--to my satisfaction--I will give you a Gidget. And then another Gidget, and then another.

SURFER

And they'll be mine?

PIP

They'll be yours. They'll be all yours.

SURFER

But why--

PIP

You're going to tell everybody that you won the lottery. Or you discovered some buried treasure. Or a golden goose. I don't care what you tell them, but tell them something, because I can't be looked at as being generous. I may be a mysterious, mythological semi-deity, but I still need to make money. I am, however, of the belief that given *a lot* of practice, you could, potentially, really have--well, *potential*.

SURFER

Thank you, Pip.

PIP

Oh, don't thank me just yet. You're about to spend a lot of time falling headfirst into piles of seaweed, and I can tell you from experience, it's not as fun as it sounds.

(THE SURFER laughs. PIP laughs too. Lights fade as MUSIC plays--hopefully something by The Beach Boys.)