



This conversation took place “in a dive-bar on the edge of the Earth in an emerging nation” not long after the miraculous rescue of South African surfer Brett Archibald, lost overboard for 27 hours in the Mentawais, April 2013.

Sometimes, small lies must be employed to take an 10-year-old to new realms.

Parental lie #1

Parental lie #2

Mother and son embark on their journey.

They arrive at the reef.

HOW?

TONY ELTHERINGTON
AND
MARA WOLFORD

What happened?
Well, after 24 hours, we’d given up. Y’know we’d cross-graphed the entire sector.
So what’d ya do?
I went up to the roof of the boat, lit 11 sticks of incense and prayed to my sister. You know she was my best friend, right?
Yep.
Well, she came to me, and showed me a bird’s-eye view of the guy, still alive and still swimming. But he wasn’t where we thought he’d be. I motored 10 minutes in the opposite direction and picked him up. ¶

MUUUUUM!

JOSON MATIEU WOLFORD
AND
MARA WOLFORD

Let’s get out to the reef, it’s small and perfect.
But it’s reeeeeally far.
Nah it’s not. It takes 10 minutes. It’s like four lengths of the pool at Taman Segara.
Okay. But are there sharks out there?
No, they’re on holidays. They all left to the Bahamas two weeks ago.
Where’s that?
Like four oceans away from here or something.
...
Just paddle. I said, “Just paddle!”
But the water’s splashing in my face.
Time your strokes with the rhythm of the swell. Try and flow with it. And close your fingers up while you’re at it, you’re spinning your wheels.
Muum, my arms hurt.
Stop whining! Look how far we’ve come.
But Muuuuuummm...
Grab my leash and keep the nose up.
...
We’re gonna cop it a bit, but it’s no big deal, the current’s gonna suck us across the bowl,

but we’ll be right.
Muuuu-uuuum!
Oh and kiddo, there’s no other 10-year old that’s paddled the 900m out from the beach. Be proud of yourself. It’s actually 18 lengths of the pool at Taman Segara. I lied. But how cool is this?
I hate you, Mum... I mean, I love you, Mum.
...
Turn on this one, I’m right there with ya.
Muuuuuum, it’s biiiig!
So what? GO! I’m right here with ya. ¶

OCCY* *NOT THAT OCCY
CHEYENNE SCHWARZ
AND
MARA WOLFORD

I have a question.
What’s that?
Do octopuses have bums?
Do octopi have bums?
Yep
Good question. How do we quantify that?
To have a bum, you need to have a spine and a pelvis, and octopi are invertebrates, so the answer’s no: They don’t have bums.
Cool. In that case, I’ll eat the legs as well as the head. I just didn’t want to eat a bum.

SHADOW
SKEET DERHAM
AND
MARA WOLFORD

Come over here, lemme see your eyes.
Wha?
They’re dilated black. You really got smashed.
Yep.
Concussion.
Why the fuck did you go and do that for?
Why did you shake your head? Call me off it?
Um, ‘cause you were gonna get hammered.
Well, don’t fuckin’ do that. I don’t want the shadow of doubt in my mind that I won’t stick it.
When was the last time you gave a shit about what I thought anyway? ¶

A suitable wave approaches.

(Not a lie.)

“Out for dinner in a Balinese restaurant my neighbour’s daughter Cheyenne asks an interesting question.” – Mara.

Question is asked as Cheyenne chews off the head of a baby octopus, the legs dangling from her maw.

This exchange occurred in the impact zone of serious Nias, after Skeet took off late on a 10-footer.

She paddles to him and they move out to the fringe of the impact zone.

Angrily.

“Post-surf beer at Lakey Peak in Sumbawa with the Cornish crew. I’d just told a story about a bloke paddling out at big Dreamland that looked like a cross between Super Mario and Merv Hughes, wearing red budgie smugglers and riding a Camo spray Gerry Lopez gun.”

– Gary Young

All, in unison.

All, in unison, insistently.

All in unison.

All, quietly.

CALLUM

GROGS

SHOLTO

MATT

AND

GARY YOUNG

G: Sounds a bit like Callum dunnit, Sholt?
S:Christ! What’s Callum up to these days?

M: Same as ever. He still comes in the shop, spends ages hanging around and never buys anything. The tourists love him though.

GY: Who’s Callum? The local legend?

Fuckin’ right he is. He’s got a restraining order against him from Hulk Hogan.

Fuck off!

No! It’s true!

Not just Hulk Hogan, but another famous celebrity too. Who’s the other one, Grogs?

I can’t remember, she lives next-door to Hulk Hogan though, proper famous like.

Fuck off!

No! It’s true! 100 per cent!

What the hell does he do in Perranporth!? He doesn’t need to do anything, he’s loaded.

Well, his parents are loaded.

He rides around on his bike in the summer wiv a fighter-pilot’s helmet on with the visor down and the oxygen mask and everyfing, in his speedos!

His pushbike?

No! His motorbike!

Everyone knows him. He’s pretty funny, quick-witted and harmless. He’s always hanging around all tanned and sunbleached hair. He’s getting on a bit now don’t you reckon?

He’s gotta be in his 50s. We get tourists that come back year after year in the season and they always ask after him.

He ain’t so funny when he don’t take his pills though is he. ’Member when he left his Porsche at the beach carpark wiv all the doors open and a trail of his clothes to the beach. They had all the bloody rescue services out that day. I remember going down the beach wiv me dogs and the police wouldn’t let me on. I reckon they thought they was gonna find a body that time. Helicopter, lifeboat, police, coastguard, you name it. And there he was on the rocks at Droskyn stark bollock naked and having a bad one ’cos he didn’t take his pills.

Poor bastard.

Fuckin legend though innee. ¶

ACTION MAN

AL MITCHELL

AND

WHITE HORSES

WH: Reckon old mate’s got enough boards?

AM: Haha. Reminds me of ACTION MAN. Action Man?

This fella back home. Nice enough guy, but delusional about being a waterman.

Hang on, I’m gonna record this.

Right, speak to me of Action Man.

OK, he’s got more boards in his car than *Base* have in their showroom. He’s got these spoon-hull things, handplanes, absurdly pinny boards for the mushy nonsense we get back home.

SUPS? Alaias?

Definitely Alaias. SUPS, I’m not sure.

So ... Action Man, always sorted eh.

Yeah, but thing is he *always* chooses the wrong gear. There was a time at this spot that only breaks on big swells, there’s rocks all over the place, dead of winter, force 9 gale. Me and a mate are in the car park wishing we had bigger boards, and the next thing we know good ol’ Action Man bounds past us with a fucken’ handplane.

And how’d he go?

Flogged, but he kept sitting inside us.

Does he ever surf, like, a standard shortie?

If he does I’ve never seen him surf it. There’s this spot called Perelle, it’s a small rock island with a left and a right and a bommie, bit of a hike at low tide, you gotta wade it on high tide. It’s a mission. You always see Action Man striding out to the island with two COMPLETELY different boards – like one’ll be a 5’ spoon and the other will be a really gunny 6’8”. You can see the wave from the car park before the walk out so, y’know, surely he can work out which end of the spectrum he should be choosing his equipment from.

Just no sense of moderation hey.

Those spoons go well in mushy surf, but he likes to take ’em out when its pumping overhead and slide around like he’s on a greased-up biscuit tin.

I love Action Man. What’s he like, say if you run into him at the supermarket?

Never happened. I’ve never seen him anywhere but the beach. I didn’t even know his real name until recently. Only ever known him as Action Man

Maybe he’s imaginary. Or ... is he ... YOU?

Could be. My inner loathing of the surf I have to endure in Guernsey. ¶

While on the subject of unique Englishmen, Guernsey correspondent Al Mitchell tells us about ... Action Man!

Pointing to man walking down beach track with two new boards underarm.

Gets out iPhone and engages voice memo function.

