

The Adventures of Red Dog & Bat Devil



20. Cucumber Cafe

"Where should we go?" asked Bat. "Somewhere no one will find us" said Dog, still reeling in the wake of the stolen Beemer. Bat seized the opportunity and said "The Cucumber Cafe isn't far from here." "Dare I ask what we will find at the Cucumber Cafe?" asked Devil. "It's a Big Thing, like the Big Banana, only they grow cucumbers" said Bat. "You've got to be kidding?" said Devil. "They even have a camp site" Bat continued, "no one will find us there." Reluctantly, Red conceded, "he's right." Dog was zoned out on anxiety and said "just lead me to a quiet place, where I can drink beer, and no one will bother me."

When they arrived, the Cucumber Cafe was in darkness and it was only 9pm. Not even a flicker of light could be seen from a cabin window. Everyone was asleep. The only activity seemed to be a puff of smoke from the aromatherapy laboratory which had "do not enter" written deliberately across the door. On the office noticeboard was a little note which said "Dear late comers, please do not disturb, I'll see you in the morning!" "Bat, you sure know how to pick 'em" said Devil. Bat was having trouble hiding his excitement and said "Let's just set up camp behind the Cucumber Cabins. All will be revealed in the morning!" So while Red, Bat and Devil struggled, in the darkness, with the tent poles, Dog sat in the shadow of his lantern, drinking Lizard Lager, with a delirious smile on his face and said "Bat's right, no one will find me here!"

The following morning, when they emerged from their sleeping bags, Bat was nowhere to be seen. In a jovial mood, Bat had been to the office, paid

every one's camping fees, and was sitting in the alfresco dining area, indulging in the Cucumber Cafe's Big Breakfast. "Everything on the menu's made of cucumbers!" said Dog. "Unbelievable, even the toast is green" said Red. Devil wasn't in the mood and said "One day I'm going to set up a joint called The Big Turd." "Flavouring the confectionary could prove a challenge" said Dog. Everyone laughed, except Bat who took another swig of cucumber tea and ignored the banter altogether.

Red bought a newspaper and skimmed to the motoring section. On page three a headline read, "BMW suspend test rides until F800GS recovered." The article made no mention of the boys or did it lay any blame in their direction. "Hey Dog" said Red, "You owe that BMW sales guy a big favour." "I won't be giving any favours in that direction" said Dog, and then he turned his attention to acquiring the taste of Cucumber Beer.

By 10am there were kids everywhere. They were climbing the Big Cucumber, at \$5 a pop, and begging their parents for an advance on next week's pocket money so they could spend more in the Cafe's souvenir shop. Women were intoxicated with the fragrant assortment of soaps, facial scrubs and scented candles. Most of the Dads spent their time counting the extra brownie points they were earning by bringing their families to The Big Cucumber!

When Devil heard that a Slim Dusty tribute band would be performing from 4pm he said "I've gotta get out of here." Before they left, Bat

Cucumber Cafe

By Jane Laws

It was the drought of ninety six, to save his family and his pride,
A young Mat turned to cucumbers, not quite sure the reason why.
Could have been he liked the colour green, were they easier to grow?
Still that's when the story began and this is how it goes.

He travelled to good old Queensland for ideas on what to do,
And stumbled across the Giant Pineapple and the Big Banana too.
So he built a giant cucumber, it was fifty feet or more,
And imported tacky trinkets to sell at the door.

Would you like a ruler, a pencil, rubber, a stencil, cuddly cucumber toy,
Big ones, little ones, fat ones, thin ones, sure to bring you joy.

It didn't take him long to use the good old Aussie cue,
In jams and fudge and chocolate and cheese and the odd relish or two.
And he created something special that was sure to make 'em pay,
A slice of a monster cue made from prehistoric DNA.

He opened up a cafe by the summer of ninety nine,
With much todo and fan fare and a fine cucumber wine.
And they came from far and wide to visit the Cucumber Cafe,
And farmer Mat would greet them and this is what he'd say.

Would you like 'em pickled or fried or poached or dried, fresh, pressed, green is best.
Cucumber tea with scones and cream, anyway you please.

Now things were running well but there was still more to do,
The aromatherapy qualities of the good old Aussie Cue.
So he set to work in his tin shed and by the time it was Y2K,
There were lotions, potions, soaps and creams at the Cucumber Cafe.

Old Farmer Mat gained fortune from his Cucumber Cafe,
With Princes, Paupers, Presidents and Queens all coming to stay.
From Darwin to the Alice and from Rio to Timbuktu,
You'll find signposts reading 'This way to The Big Aussie Cue'.



insisted they met the owner, Farmer Mat. Mat had an insatiable appetite for making money out of cucumbers and said, "Thanks for coming. What do you think of the place?" Bat was too busy scoffing down another cucumber muffin to answer. After a long silence Devil said, while thumbing through a rack of green T Shirts with extra large cucumbers printed on the front, "it's amazing how you get people to buy this stuff." Farmer Mat looked from the Harley watch on Dogs wrist, to the rings on Devils fingers, from

the cap on Bat's head to the shirt on Red's back and said "Yes, it's true; the punters have an unbelievable appetite for buying crap." Then he paused for effect, and with a wry smile went straight for the jugular and said "anyway, you guys should know, you all ride Harley's!"

Stay Cool
The Skink



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