



Two California surfers find themselves embroiled in a world of disorganized crime.

SURF MULES

by G. Neri ALA Notable author of *Chess Rumble*

G. Neri's new teen novel, *Surf Mules*, introduces Logan Tom, a 17-year-old surf rat growing up in Hermosa Beach, California. On the surface, *Surf Mules* is an epic buddy road trip into the unknown. It's a tale of surfing and drugs, friendship and loyalty. But underneath, Logan and his dropout friend Z-boy must confront the cold hard reality of adulthood, and whether or not to abandon the surfing life in order to grow up. When offered an easy way to finance their dreams by becoming drug smugglers for a local pot dealer, they find out that nothing in life comes easy. What starts off as a summer job in disorganized crime quickly turns into a nightmare. Now Logan just hopes to make it home alive.

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Ages 14 and up

Urban fiction hits the beach in *Surf Mules* (Putnam, June 2009), the new YA novel by G. Neri, author of the award-winning free-verse novella *Chess Rumble*.

Neri writes street lit and "provocative, edgy stories for reluctant readers," he says, "especially urban boys, in hopes that these kinds of compelling tales will open minds to reading."

Neri's books deal with subjects that may make adults uncomfortable – gangs, drugs, teen violence, and sex – but these are issues teens face every day. "I try to show these topics honestly," says Neri. "So when young people encounter these situations in real life, they might have some knowledge to help them navigate the rough roads ahead. Teens are young adults and need to be treated with honesty and directness."



Surf Mules tells of a journey from adolescence to adulthood. "The choices we make in that transition," says the author, "are choices that can sometimes affect the rest of our lives. Those decisions are very real. Do we leave our adolescence behind, and the friends and lifestyles that go with them? How we do it and whether we make a true break from the past or try to hold onto our childhood can sometimes lead to missteps that can take us down the wrong path. *Surf Mules* is about these choices and the price that adolescent dreams can bring.

Writing for boys and urban teens

When teen readers voted his first book, *Chess Rumble*, on to the International Reading Association's 2009 Young Adults' Choices list, Neri knew he had found his readers. "I visit a lot of Title 1 schools and I see there is such a disconnect between these students' lives and the lives of the characters they are supposed to relate to in books. Most urban kids are shocked to see a voice they know in a book. It makes them sit up and take notice." *Chess Rumble* has been named a 2008 American Library Association (ALA) Notable Book, 2008 National Council of Teachers of English/ IRA Notable Children's Book, 2009 ALA Quick Pick for Reluctant YA Readers, and the best of the year list from Bank Street College of Education.



Advance Praise for SURF MULES:

"Like a monster wave, Neri's story rockets you through the pipeline of teenage angst, delivering a rousing and unforgettable ride."
- Paul Volponi, author of *Black & White*

"Surf Mules is sure to be a hit!" – ALAN News

G. Neri is a filmmaker, artist, and digital media producer. He's taught animation to inner city teens in Los Angeles with the ground-breaking group *Animaction*, and was also one of the founding members of *The Truth* teen anti-smoking campaign. The author of *Chess Rumble* and the upcoming graphic novel *Yummy* (Fall 2009) currently lives off the Gulf Coast of Florida. He can be found surfing the web at www.gneri.com.

