

## ADMIRAL BOB

*Another eulogy for a departed saint,  
again in the style of that most  
immaculately hip aristocrat,  
the sainted Lord Buckley . . .*

Milords an' Ladies of the Royal Court . . .

Now we been swingin ourselves up a fine little jam session this weekend, got down tight an' right an' blew us some nice skiffy riffs—cause we all dig that skiffy—an' I heard all you cats talldn 'bout who the greatest cat in the *world* was, talkin' 'bout Dr. A the Robot Gasser, an' Compact Carlan Ellison, an' High Gee Wells, an' Teddy the Fish, an' Herb Varley on his Verb Harley, an' Steele-Drivin' Al, an' Freddy the Ten-Inch Pohl, an' Jaws, the Poul Shark, an' the Lawd knows these are all heavy cats—

—but ah'mo' put a cat on you ... that was the sweetest . . . gonest . . . *wailin'est* . . . GROOVIEST cat that ever stomped upon this swingin' sphere! He was the stone king of skiffy, an' they call dis yar cat

ADMIRAL BOB ...

That's what they called him: Admiral Bob, retired gob, he done the job an' stoned the mob. (For a change, if you dig.) He didn't invent skiffy, understand—but he's the cat that made skiffy spiffy! An' if he never blew, I wouldn't be here talkin' to you.

Like I say, he was a sailor cat in front, fig-ured to drive the battleship, an' sure as God made little green parkin' tickets he'd *of* made it, too ... but one day the Black Leather Angel come swingin' on by, sayin', "TB, or not TB?" an' Bob say, "Baby, that's a good question (COUGH!)," an' *wham*, they put him on the beach an' give him the walkin' paper: tell him to buy a rowboat an' a cannon an' go into busi-ness for himself.

But it didn't bring him down. Cat just say, "My problem is clear. I need somethin' *heavier* than a battleship. Gotta have a *really* dangerous weapon," an' he bought him a typewriter.

Now, cats an' kitties blew skiffy in them days, we're talkin nineteen-thirty-an'-leapin'-nine, an' there was some pretty heavy players in town: studs like Julie the Frog, an' High Gee Wells, an' Doc Smith, an' Cactus Jack, an' Oa funny little cat named Binder that had two heads. They was puttin' down some nice roots kinda riffs—dudes had been blowin' skiffy ever since a stud named I Owe Greenbacks opened up the first skiffy club, but you still had to go over the tracks to dig it.

Now the joint that jumped the most was called *Astounding*, on account of it was, an' the club owner was a cat they called Heavy John Campbell: very heavy cat indeed. Had dudes hitchin' a thousand miles for a chance to play for pass--the-hat, had to beat 'em off the stand with a club, an' if you couldn't blow for Heavy John, you was Square an' Nowhere.

So one night it's Open Mike Night, an' cats an' kitties are blowin' up an insane breeze, havin' a cuttin' contest, you dig, an' Heavy John sayin' (point) "Groovy," an' (point) "Later, Jackson," an' the back door bang open, an'—

*WHAM!* There stand Admiral Bob . . .

... standin' there straight as a bass an' tall as a tree, uniform got a crease on it that'd cut like a killer review, gold braid an' a sword, an' half the cats there saluted without even thinkin'.

An' he took out his ax an' begun to blow.

An' my Lords an' my Ladies, ahmo hip you: you may have heard all kinda jam sessions blowin' off, you may have heard New Orleans licks, you may have heard it Chicago Style, you may have the bebop version, you may have dug all *kind of* musical insane flips, but you studs an' stallions an' cats an' kitties never dug any session like this cat *blew!* He wailed so hard, they had to send out for the wig tappers: *everybody* flipped their wig, an' it took all night to get 'em nailed back down again—people walkin' round with the eyes buggin' out, aakin' each other, "Where do we go to surrender?"

An' when the last lick faded, of Heavy John fix Bob with the gimlet eyeball that turned so many sidemen to sushi, an' everybody get real quiet, an' Heavy John frown like a storm comin' off the water, an' he say:

"What are your orders, sir?"

Everybody *flipped!*

Admiral Bob had a miracle wig: he could work that miracle lick any time he took a notion. After he'd been blowin' over across the tracks awhile, they had to move the tracks, 'cause the trains couldn't get through the people. Cat put a man on the Moon with his own two hands, picked up plutonium in a pair of waldos, gave orgasms to computers, told a lie that was three thousand years Long, capital L, put a rap on the U.S. Congress ... an' in his *spare* time, he thought up the water bed! Admiral Bob shot craps with the Devil four times, an' won three. An' if that ain't heavy enough, dig this, Jack: he kept the same chick smilin' for forty years!

He come from Squaresville, had a general for a brother, but he could love like his buddycat Teddy the Fish. Come from the Navy, but every boat *he* wrote had *chicks* on the bridge—an' the chicks wore pants. Come on like an atheist, but when the freezer cats wanted to put his frame on ice, he said, "How do I know it wouldn't interfere with rebirth?" an' sent 'em away frameless an' bugged. Come on like a tight cat with a shekel, but he had his ear open, an' any time a skiffy cat or kitty was scoffless an' hung, he straightened 'em, quiet an' cool. He was a sci-ence cat, but he could write a poem. He was a hip square. He was a cool straight. He was a saintly old stud you didn't want to mess with.

I mean, the *sphere* owes this cat—but skiffy? Baby, if Admiral Bob ever called in all his markers, he'd *own* the mother. All us sldffs'd be *riff less*. Every bag, every groove, Big Bad Bob been there first, an' maybe you could cut him, but you better bring your lip. You don't even have to dig him, but you ain't never gonna get around him, see? 'Cause when he put it down, *SHAZAM!* it stayed there!

Far as anybody know, the cat never smoked his second reefer ... but I'll tell you this, baby: he was High'n Lyin' *all* the time!