

# Matthew Sweet's love turns sour on *Girlfriend*

*Girlfriend is a nineties look at the New Wave of the seventies*

by Brad Kane  
The Collegian

Back in that dark age of high fashion known as the late 70's, the punk explosion in Britain gave rise to another burgeoning young movement known as New Wave.

A small faction of New Wave artists, such as Elvis Costello, Big Star and Squeeze, specialized in what was known as power pop - hook laden, catchy, intelligent songwriting that straddled the boundary between the mainstream and the underground.

With time, power pop's influence on the music world lessened as each year went by. Costello now records sporadically, Squeeze has changed its style altogether, Big Star is

potential levels, he's shattered them.

Filled to the brim with 15 tracks, *Girlfriend* is an ingenious, insightful, sometimes witty look at modern love. More often than not, it's a cynical look, but Sweet's not here to give a joyous, idealized view of the most powerful of emotions.

In true subversive fashion, Sweet looks at love from the downside looking up. Coupled with intricate pop melodies, Sweet turns into a master craftsman, weaving lyrics and instrumentation into an enjoyable hybrid.

No more is his cynicism evident on tracks such as "Nothing Lasts" and "I Thought I Knew You." Both rely on the interplay between acoustic and

Usually, songwriters get personal, but rarely do they get this involved and obsessive in their work. Sweet cuts to the chase on the title track singing: "I want to love somebody, I hear you need somebody to love, I want to love somebody, I hear you're looking for somebody to love."

If that doesn't eventually work, then "Looking At The Sun" might. A bouncy, upbeat track that turns amazingly cynical in the end - "For oh, looking at the sun, Waiting for you to appear, Watched you getting nearer, Like I knew it in my heart, 'Til the damage was already done, Looking at the sun, Burned my eyes out, And I'm blind now."

Sting may have consummated

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no more. But earlier this year, Matthew Sweet released his fourth album, *Girlfriend*, in what has to be viewed as a revitalization of the power pop genre.

Depending on driving, 70's influenced, Rickenbacker guitar work, Sweet has crafted a gem in true best-of-both-worlds style. It may be hard to classify his work in stylistic terms, but at least we can tell where Sweet's coming from.

Having never realized his true potential, Sweet released his first three albums on three separate labels. Now on the relatively new Zoo Entertainment label, Sweet has not only reached those

electric guitars minus drums to create an interesting and effective creative tension.

On the former, Sweet keeps the mood downbeat and introspective; on the latter he drives through the track with a biting edge, adding flavor to the typical boy-gets-duped-by-girl story.

A little more hopeful, but surprisingly more emotional, is the title track (and lead single), "Girlfriend" and "Evangeline," which both rely on those choppy, hazy rifts that made the 70's famous. So gushing and honest is "Girlfriend" that it makes for a hard listen the first few times through.

80's style obsession on "Every Breath You Take," but Sweet's taking it in a new direction in the 90's - a little more hopeful at the outset, but ultimately less appealing.

No matter what point of view you take when listening to *Girlfriend*, it's easy to see that Sweet's got a winner. Without a doubt, help from the master of cynical pop himself, Lloyd Cole, and assistance from Lou Reed henchman Fred Maher helped Sweet enormously this time out.

Now that he's firmly established a base, Matthew Sweet could become a huge influence on pop music for years to come.

# Sleepwalkers

*King's latest nightmare*

by Susan Kass  
The Collegian

*Sleepwalkers* is the most recent Stephen King horror movie which revolves around a new monster.

A handsome, polite and friendly high school student moves into town with a protective mother. This seemingly harmless boy and his mother are sleepwalkers: monsters that feed off of the soul of a pure virgin. The sleepwalkers are to cats as sunlight is to vampires.

The sweet, friendly and virginal Tanya (Madchen Amick, Shelley from *Twin Peaks*) is attracted to the flirtatious John Brady (Brian Krause). It's not until their first date that Tanya realizes John doesn't have the most innocent of intentions towards her.

King said that he based this story on serial killers such as Ted Bundy. Bundy was good looking and popular, "the only ones to see that monstrous side are the victims."

These sleepwalkers also have superhuman strength and various visual powers. They don't hesitate to kill anyone in their way but, remember, they are terrified of cats. Cats see through the sleepwalker powers. One cat in particular, Clovis, is a hero who inspires any viewer to get a cat including me and I'm allergic to them.

The sleepwalkers themselves, John and his mother Mary are very, very strange. First of all, they have an incestuous relationship. This is not implied but shown repeatedly. They act like lovers and seem trapped in an unending cycle of dependency.

John gets the victim, they move somewhere else and continue; always alone having nobody except each other.

Their relationship is the most important thing in the film not only because it is freakish and stirs a curiosity, but because it is sad, desperate and lonely. The incest is supposed to shock the audience, stressing that they're not normal, but at the same time it gives an understanding of the amount of commitment between them.

The unusual thing about this Stephen King movie is that it is not adapted from a book. Instead he wrote the original screenplay. I was hoping this change would be an improvement from most King movies and it is one of the better ones.

Most King movies have trouble translating his imaginative stories to the screen. Movies like *Carrie*, *Christine* and *The Shining* lacked in comparison with the books. King himself has usually been disappointed except with *Rob Reiners' Stand By Me* and *Misery*. *Sleepwalkers* is different

from the rest because he has no problem translating his ideas to the screen. But on the other hand this is a very simple story.

King is known for his originality and imagination but this movie is very similar to many vampire movies. That is why it is so predictable. But King still remains the best storyteller alive. He made the story exciting with a style that is all his own.

This is a good horror movie, but not the best. You will see blood, grotesque monstrous figures, a hand or two snapped off arms and dead cats. Sometimes I wanted to squirm but many times it was funny and good humored.

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