The Coming of the Surfman

The sea is two days' drive away from the gangland urban wilderness in which this story is set but this doesn't stop the Surfman from setting up his shop on a corner and painstakingly converting a derelict factory into a wave machine. For a while, a truce holds between the gangs, and the narrator, who wants to become the Surfman's apprentice, years for it to last. This is a very haunting story. Full-page illustrations facing the lucid, conversational text radiate an atmosphere of grim sterility, fleetingly visited by surreal magic. The book's depiction of squandered redemption is one that might prove thought-provoking to readers much older than the picture book format would suggest.

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