



The Police

"Every Breath You Take"

Synchronicity

06/1983

A&M

Summer Heat / Every Breath You Take

Stephanie Feuer

A hypnotic baseline ushered in the summer of 1983, a summer when the heat in Boston broke all the records. Broke us. It was fitting that our anthem was a breakup song.

You were caretaking a mansion behind Brattle Street during renovation. Dust and destruction made it hard to breathe. We drove up to the North Shore to escape the thick city air, and rolled up the windows of my old green Saab when we heard that catchy intro. At a picnic table at a shack of a place, we ate chubby clams, juicy and steaming under a perfect crust. They left oil stains on the paper plates.

Every breath. That voice; longing, tuneful, through speakers on the parched lawn. There was no breeze. You were different than the skinny boys in all black in more-than-decent bands I'd usually bed. Your muscles strained against the pure white tees you wore. A road manager for bands, it didn't hurt that you looked like you worked security. You said you were just passing through. At Singing Beach, you told me of suiting up in a storm to surf the swirling waters. With me folded in your arms, you whisper-sang to me. *It's you I can't replace.*

Every move. Undertow disguised by the pop guitar riff. I had a weakness for bad boys. My fourth-floor walk-up in Jamaica Plain was so hot I didn't know if it was better to keep the windows open or closed.

Every night. Your small room with an air conditioner in the window was our refuge. A string of days in the upper 90s. Endless sunlight, streets spongy from hot tar. Unrelenting heat. The exquisite edge of wanting. The pitch intensifies before the chorus. *You belong to me.* The drumbeat, marking time with increased urgency, snare and cymbal and mallets. My skin was always damp from the relentless humidity.

Every single day. The bar at Swift's, a Cambridge music club, a long basement room with low ceilings. You downed vodka like water. The backbeat of our demise. Heat rose up from the pavement in a haze that distorted. *Every single day.*

Every breath. More than once the electricity goes. Stifling. I found sweet relief with another skinny boy in an air conditioned hotel room.

My poor heart aches blasting from the speakers in your living room. An undertone of menace. *You belong to me.* We tussled. *Baby, baby, please.* You were not the only strong one. Crash, not the cymbal. Off-kilter you fell first, your ribs connecting with the edge of the speaker.

Every step. It would be another year before we both finally let go.

I'll be watching. A vow we would not break.

Every Breath. Inexorably altered, transformed by the heat. Knowing it was over is what let us fall in love.