

### THE MAIDEN AND THE BIKE.

Lovely maiden,  
Presty wheel,  
'Nough to make one's senses reel;  
Swiftly gliding  
Through the park,  
Where the lads and lassies spark.

Man approaching—  
'Nother wheel—  
Maiden fear begins to feel;  
Tried to dodge him,  
All in vain,  
Rushes on as if insane.

Then together  
Wheel and wheel  
Crash with shock that wrenches steel!  
Man takes header,  
Maid a flop,  
Both together take a drop.

"Beg your pardon,"  
Says the man  
With what heart and grace he can.  
"Chummy creature,"  
Shrieks the maid,  
With a look like lemonade.

Then upspring  
Full of ire,  
And her glances flashing fire,  
Wrathful maiden,  
Droody wheel,  
Forth to other conquests steal.

—Frank B. Welch in Detroit Free Press.

### A CAPTURE.

Billy Sims was enjoying that period of rest and peace which comes to a man when his wife and family go to the seaside and leave him in possession of the house. Then a person can stay out as late as he likes. He may smoke in any room in the house. He may even go to bed with his boots on if it so pleases him.

Billy had expected to stay at the sea for a couple of weeks, but a telegram had recalled him to town after being a day or two away, and he came joyfully back, for the sea bored him, and there was nothing lively going on at the resort his family had chosen. Before he left town Billy had told the police of his suburb that the house would be closed for a fortnight, and he asked them to keep an eye on the premises. Billy's faith in the force was somewhat shaken when he unexpectedly returned, found he had left his latchkey at Marineville and was thus compelled to climb in at a window after midnight, yet no notice was taken of him. He got out in the same way next morning and telegraphed for his keys. He roamed all over the house with a lighted candle at various periods of the night, but the guardians of the peace never disturbed him, and Billy made up his mind that the next time he went away he would take out a burglar insurance and not trouble the guardians who guarded so carefully.

On Saturday afternoon Billy, having a day off, took a day on, as it were, and went for a long spin through the country on his bicycle. He had dinner at a wayside inn and got home late and tired. Putting his machine in its shed, he entered the house, poured out for himself a glass of cooling stimulants, and rested his weary body in his most comfortable armchair, sipping the gratifying mixture in accordance with the directions on the bottle.

The house was very quiet, and soon Billy dropped off to sleep. He woke up suddenly and found everything still very quiet and very dark as well, yet he had the feeling within him that he had been awakened by a noise. He listened intently, sitting still in the comfortable chair, and presently the chandelier above his head gave a slight rattle, as it was in the habit of doing when some one was walking in the room overhead. Billy did not believe in ghosts, for he was a newspaper man and could hardly be said to believe in anything. Again the chandelier jingled, yet there was no noise of a footstep overhead, and it dawned upon Billy's scarcely awakened faculties that whoever was above him was going around in his stocking feet, trying to be as silent as possible. Billy regretted that he did not own such a thing as a revolver, for he felt convinced that at last burglars were in the house. He vaguely saw himself writing an account of the incident, headed: "Desperate Encounter With a Burglar. Heroic Conduct of a Suburban Householder."

Fired by this thought, and in spite of the distinct creeping of his scalp which we exaggerate into the sensation of the hair standing on end, Billy grasped the poker that lay on the fender by his chair and cautiously crept out into the hall, making his way like a cat up the stair, fervently hoping that no step would creak.

At the landing above Billy peered into the bedroom from which the light issued and was appalled to see, not one burglar, but three. This exceeded Billy's most ardent expectations. He had been prepared for a desperate encounter with one, especially if he could have crept in on him and landed on his head with the poker before the burglar was aware that there was anybody else in the house, but a fight with three was too much of a good thing.

One of them would be certain to have a pistol, which would make things even more interesting. Glad as he would be to have an exclusive item for his paper, he had no desire to have some one else write it up and head it, "Dastardly Murder of a Reporter in Lonelyville." There are some sacrifices that a man does not care to make, even for his paper. Moderation in all things was Billy's motto.

The burglars had evidently come to the conclusion that there was no one in the house, for no guard was set. They moved about quietly, but that merely came from long practice in an arduous profession where there was much night work and little thanks from a callous public. Billy did not pause to think that these men had no Saturday night off, and that they were most industrious while other people were sound asleep. We generally think that our own particular occupation has the most drawbacks, giving little heed to the discomforts of others.

One man was holding a bag open and the other two were creeping about filling the receptacle with various articles prized by connoisseurs and collectors.

"I think we've got as much as we can

carry," whispered the man who was holding the bag.

This remark caused Billy to reflect that if he was going to do anything in the matter it was time to act about it. So he emulated the conduct of the celebrated Duke of York, who marched men up the hill and straightway marched them down again. Billy crept down the stair with the utmost poise still in his flat. He realized that if he went to the police station, which was some distance away, the burglars would be gone before help came.

Then the brilliant idea occurred to him that he might follow the thieves silently on his bicycle, mark their lair, come with an ample police force at his back and capture the whole outfit, thus earning the eternal gratitude of the entire neighborhood. Then the item would be headed, "Clever Capture of a Band of Burglars—The Silent Cycle Follows Them to Their Rendezvous."

Billy got his machine out from its shed, noiselessly unlocked the back gate, closed it again as silently as he had opened it and waited in the shadow of a tree across the way. In a very few moments the burglars came out, each carrying a bag. They peered up and down the deserted street, and then slipped out, walking rapidly away together. Billy had no difficulty in following them. His only trouble was the street lamps, which he avoided as well as he could by weaving on the opposite side of the road from them. He hoped he would meet a policeman, so that he might give the alarm, and his wish was gratified. The officer stopped unexpectedly out from behind a tree, and he grasped Billy by the arm.

"Why are you cycling out at this time of night without your lamp lit?" "My lamp lit, you fool!" gasped Billy, taken by surprise, and therefore not having time to choose his language with the care a man should use when addressing so important a personage as a policeman. "How the— could I chase burglars with a lit lamp?"

"That's all very fine," said the officer. "I've heard that kind of a story before. A man doesn't get up and dress himself in a full bicycling suit to chase burglars at 2 in the morning."

"But I slept in my bicycling suit, you ass!" protested Billy, feeling, as he said it, that it sounded rather thin and unbelievable in the keen morning air.

"I'll report the language you are using to the magistrate," said the policeman calmly, knowing the whole machinery of the law was with him.

"My house has been burglarized," cried Billy. "The three thieves passed you with their swag, and I don't suppose you ever saw them. Precious lot of good you idiots are, not only letting the rascals slip, but arresting a man who is robbed and who is trying to do the work you are paid for doing."

"Come and tell all this to the officer on duty at the station. You're bicycling without a lamp at night, and that's all I have to deal with, and I'm going to deal with it."

Billy broke into language that was both deplorable and indefensible, but the policeman merely noted it down and took the unfortunate man to the station. Billy speedily convinced the night man at the police station that a mistake had been made, and two of the force were sent to investigate. They reported that the house had been burglarized with neatness and dispatch, but the burgling birds had flown.

The magistrate told Billy next morning that if he had been more moderate in his talk his miscarriage of justice might not have happened. He should not use such language, the magistrate said, and when Billy asked what else he could have used, seeing that he had no club with him, the magistrate remarked that he would fine him for contempt of court if he tried his siffnancy on the bench.

So the item appeared as "Burglary at Lonelyville," and another paragraph stated that Billy Sims, a well known journalist, had been fined for riding about the streets at 2 in the morning on a bicycle with an unlit lamp, and that Billy was supposed to have been intoxicated at the time, whereas the truth was that the magistrate let Billy off with the reprimand aforementioned.

As the police have not yet succeeded in capturing the thieves, although they are always coming on a new and gratifying clew, Billy thinks this is a hard world.—Luke Sharp in Detroit Free Press.

**Foraging in India.**  
All the captured cattle were penned into the houses, and filled them all, so the troops and officers had to pass the night in the open with no bedding and no food. It was bitterly cold, and beyond green wood, which would not burn, no fuel was obtainable. It was amusing to see the officers trying to cook some mutton for themselves, as one of the sheep was killed for dinner, but what with the green wood, its smoke, no cooking pots, etc., and the impossibility of obtaining any hot water, the meat dinner had to be given up. Some one said pea soup would be excellent. So, procuring a small brass pot, he proceeded to soak some of the mules' gram, but this also was left, as not even a fuelbox could be utilized with success to make soup.

Milk from the Waziri cow was the next suggestion, so three specially selected officers were deputed to try to tame a cow. After many trials and heroic efforts, and many bays and kicks, a cow was caught and tied; but, alas, she was dry. Goats were the same. Finally hunger conquered, and pieces of mutton stuck on to a stick and roasted over the smoking fire had to be accepted as the evening meal. The cold at night was very trying, and sleep was denied to all, for one's feet grew so cold that every hour a sharp walk was imperative to keep one's circulation up. Added to these, there were a rowdy camel and a vicious horse careering about most of the night, and last, but not least, an army of rats, who would insist on running over one's face and body.—Blackwood's Magazine.

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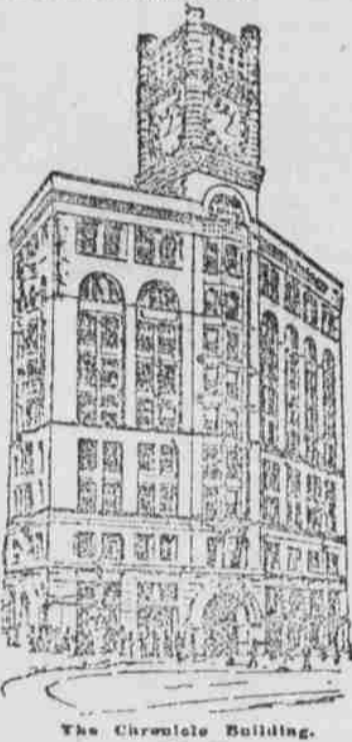
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