

# Lucy Organizes a Bike Trip



“Mum?” Lucy asked one beautiful Saturday morning.

“What is it?” Mum glanced at Lucy.

“Do we have any bikes?”

“Yes, we do,” Mum said and looked at Dad, as if having a hunch that something bad was about to follow.

“Anyways, Cathy from next door is always going on bike trips with her family. And they also hold picnics.”



“Count me in!” Andy was up for it right away.

“But Lucy,” Mum scratched her chin. “Dad just bought bikes for me and himself, and I’m afraid we should have some practice beforehand. See, we haven’t ridden a bike for almost twenty years.”

“But why not!” Dad interfered. “I have prepared a seat for Madeline and all. Let’s get ready and make a short trip.”

“I don’t know about that...” Mum hesitated. “You smoke like a chimney and could drop dead in a couple of kilometres.”

“Oh, it isn’t that bad,” Dad argued. “Get everyone dressed and let’s go.” Mum gave it some thought and eventually agreed.



“Alright, if you really want to, let’s do it.” She prepared a picnic basket and checked that everyone got dressed. Lucy put on her pink helmet and they were ready to go.

It took them twenty-five minutes to get out of town. Then they rode past the endless rows of private suburban houses. Once they got to the countryside, Dad stopped.



“Let’s take a short break,” he suggested and got off the bike. When he was walking back and forth on the side of the road, his legs seemed to be strangely stiff and a little bit wide apart.

“You see,” Dad explained. “It’s hard if you haven’t biked for years!” Mum was also a little pink in her face, but she gave no sign of feeling tired. Little Madeline had even taken a short nap while rocking in her seat; in any case she looked very pleased.

“I will ride ahead of you, up to this forest grove,” said Andy, pointing ahead. “I’ll find us a nice place for picnic.”

“Go on” Dad figured. “There is no way we can compete with the youth.”

Luckily the road went downhill and for a moment, Dad even started humming a song.

“I’m beginning to like this thing,” he declared out loud and Madeline was singing along with him from her seat. Lucy was too tired to sing by now. She felt that riding long kilometres on the road was different from making circles around her home yard. Tiredness fell heavily on her like a sack, and soon she asked for a break.



“Pee break!” she called out loud and pretended to go take a pee in the ditch. Actually she lay down on the edge of the ditch and looked at the clouds for a long time.



“Can you go on?” Mum was worried when Lucy came out of the ditch.

“Me? I’m the best bike hiker in the whole world!” declared Lucy and quickly got on the saddle. “Let’s go!” she pointed her hand towards the forest and they rode on.

By the forest, Andy was waiting for them.

“I found an awesome place for picnic!” he announced proudly. “And there are mushrooms here as well!”



Mum laid down the picnic blanket and everyone sat down at the edges. They took their time, munching on the cottage cheese pie that Mum had baked and drinking lemonade.

“And nightingales were singing and the moon was up high...” Dad hummed.

“And where can you see the moon, silly?” Mum teased him.

“Look, a mushroom!” cried Madeline.



“Hold on, I will cut it properly.” Mum took her knife and a large boletus found its way into their picnic basket.



“Look, there are more of them!” Lucy pointed under a big fir tree.

“Alright then,” said Dad, getting up. “Let’s pick some mushrooms!” He gave everyone a plastic knife and a small plastic bag. Soon enough, they were scattered all over the forest.

“Hello!” Mum shouted every once in a while and children answered her in a high voice:

“Hurray!”

When they finally got back to their bikes, the basket was almost full of mushrooms.

“Will we be heading back home now?” Dad asked.

“No, not yet!” Andy argued. “Let’s go on a little bit, there’s a really cool hill coming up. It will be really fast coming down.”



Dad sighed but there was no way he could be worse than his son. So their small bike caravan pedalled on, towards the horizon, going up silently and coming down howling. After they had passed several hills, meanwhile taking short breaks, Dad felt pain when sitting. First he paid no attention to it but after a while, the pain didn’t let him cycle properly. He stopped and waited for Mum and Lucy who had been riding behind him.

“You know, there’s some sort of a pimple on

my butt,” he scratched his bottom. “Or someone must have bitten me.”

“Let’s have a look!” Mum commanded and pulled Dad’s pants down.

“Oh boy!” Mum sighed.

“You’ve got a huge abscess here.”

“What’s an abscess?” Lucy asked.

“It’s a blister full of pus,” Mum explained and sighed deeply. “There is no way you’ll be riding back to town with this.” They all looked towards the town, and indeed, the TV tower was as tiny as a match. They had ridden very far from the town, without even noticing.



“What are we going to do now?” Lucy looked

at the setting sun. “We’ll get caught in the dark like that!”

They lay down on the ditch bank and stared at the sky. Everyone except for Andy and Madeline were dog-tired. It didn’t take long until Dad started to snore quietly. Lucy had also closed her eyes; she was too tired to even look at the clouds.

Mum let them have some time to rest and finally said:

“I was wondering that maybe we could ask your friend Nick to pick us up.” Dad opened his eyes and couldn’t even figure out where he was at first. He got to his feet and looked around, then announcing:

“There is no way that I will ride back to town from here, with my butt all heating up.”

The children were standing by the side of the road, looking worried, and listening to what Mum and Dad were planning.

“That’s what I’m saying. Let’s call your friend Nick. He has the Ford minivan; we can fit all in with bikes.”

“It’s too embarrassing,” Dad admitted.

“Well, order a large taxi then,” Mum teased him.

“Oh, alright then,” Dad finally got his mobile

out of his chest pocket and dialled the number.

“Hi, Nick. Listen, I’ve got this funny situation here…” And Dad described Nick exactly what had happen, even about the huge pimple on his butt and how small the TV tower looked from the distance.

“Nick will come and take us home,” Dad finally said, in a calming voice, and everyone felt an enormous relief.

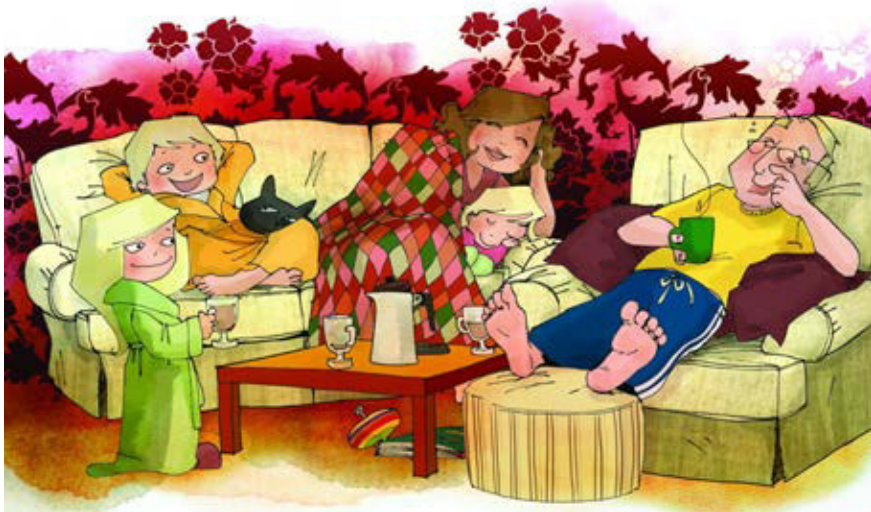
Lucy was so tired that she didn’t say a word on their way back. Madeline tried to comfort her and stroked her head but this didn’t really help.

Once they finally got off the car in front of their house, they all dragged their feet up the stairs.

“Next time let’s take a shorter trip,” Mum figured and burst out laughing when looking at Dad. The children laughed along loud and finally even Dad himself couldn’t help but laugh.

“Hurray to bike trips!” he chuckled, wiping a tear of laughter from the corner of his eye and sighed:

“Whatever!”



**THE END**