

Me and My Bike



Merwin

Me: “Grandpa, why do you wipe that teapot everyday?”

Grandpa: “This isn’t a teapot. It’s a magic lamp.”

Me: “Aladdin’s lamp?”

Grandpa: “Well, whatever! It’s the kind where you make three wishes.”

Me: “You’re kidding.”

Grandpa: “When has Grandpa ever lied to you?!”



Me: “So what do you wish for?”

Grandpa: “It only works for children.”

Me: “So what did you wish for when you were a kid?”

Grandpa: “I wished I would grow up really fast — and just look at me now!”

I took Grandpa’s magic lamp.
He couldn’t use it, anyhow.



I was afraid that the genie in the lamp might make a mistake, so I drew a picture.



My first wish was to get a bike just like this one.



My second wish was to get it very soon. My third wish... I decided to save that one for later. I needed some time to think first.

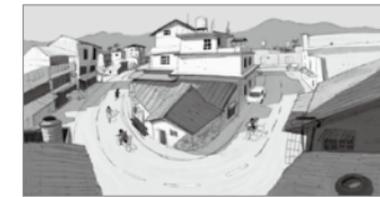
When I go bike riding with my friends, my mother always tells me not to ride too fast.



I don't ride fast at all. I'm always last. It's not because I'm a slow rider. It's because my bike is too big.



Even though they invited me, it feels like my friends are making fun of me.



They pedal extra fast so
I can't catch up...



And then they have to stop
and wait for me.



They all worry that their
bikes will get stolen. I'm
the only one who doesn't
have a lock.



My parents say how great it is
that I can ride such a big bike...
then they ask me to carry stuff
for them.



This genie is pretty slow. Why
don't I have a new bike yet?



Why am I still on my
grandpa's bike?



Why hasn't my wish come true?



I dream of my new bike, even during the day.



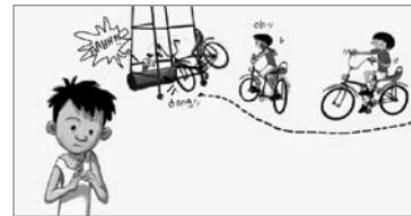
The worst thing happened. My best friend bought the bike. He must have used the



magic lamp the last time he was at my house. I should never have told him about it.



Don't get the wrong idea. I didn't make him fall off the bike — he just doesn't know how to ride it yet...



My teacher said, we should be happy to help others. Since my



friend can't ride very well, I'll be his driver.



The magic lamp really works. We ride together and play together. Both of our wishes have come true...



This bike is great. It's not only fast — it can be a trail bike, too!



Bang!!



My parents won't let me ride my friend's bike anymore.



My mom comforts me. She says, if I get all A's on my next report card, she'll buy me a bike, too.



Should I use my third wish?



I usually don't even get B's.
This time I study extra hard...
and get straight A's!



I'm afraid my mom will
change her mind. I run all the
way home.



Mom looks at my report card
and is just as excited as me! But
when I mention the bike, her smile
disappears. She begins to tell me
a story. She says, when she was
small, she had no shoes. This
really embarrassed her, until one
day, she saw a beggar who didn't
even have any legs. Then she knew
how lucky she was to be able to go
around barefoot.



I don't know if the story is real or not. But I do know that Mom works really hard, often until late at night.



I make a decision that amazes even myself: I decide that, instead of a bike, I'll just get some new crayons.



My old bike still works perfectly fine. If I just give it a new color, it'll look brand new...



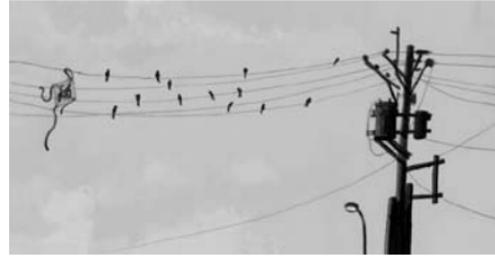
And so, now I've got new crayons and a new bike!



Ok, I'm ready to make my third wish:



I want to grow up fast...
but not get old too soon.



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