**On Yer Bike**

by Dormouse

**Part 1**

Susie couldn’t resist a challenge, even one she set herself.  
  
It all started one Saturday afternoon in the summer. She had gone up to London with Cora, her best friend. Suddenly, she started.  
  
“Don’t look now,” she said, “but a naked man just rode by on a bike.”  
  
Of course, Cora had to look, despite what Susie said. Several more naked men and quite a few naked women rode past.  
  
“Oh, it’s the London Naked Bike Ride,” Cora explained. “I read about that somewhere. It happens every year.”  
  
This was when Susie set herself the challenge.  
  
  
When Susie got home, she started looking things up on the web and soon found out about the ride and how to enter. But her major problem was that not only didn’t she own a bike, she hadn’t tried to ride one since her schooldays, now nearly ten years ago. She would have to practice.  
  
So it was that some months later, Cora saw Susie cycling through the village where they both lived. Susie had told Cora about her plans but she hadn’t really believed her. She still didn’t.  
  
“You’re not really going ahead with this, are you?” she asked.  
  
“Of course I am,” insisted Susie. “I’ve been cycling several miles a day for months now. And, to get used to bare skin on saddle, I’m not wearing any knickers.” She lifted the front of her dress to demonstrate. Cora gasped in shock. “And on the back roads away from the village, I’ve done several miles without the dress too.”  
  
Cora gasped again. “Aren’t you afraid people will see you?”  
  
“Well, that’s the idea. If I’m afraid of the odd person seeing me on a country road, I’m not going to do too well in the middle of London on a Saturday afternoon. Old Mr Brown saw me by accident a few weeks ago. Now he hides behind hedges when I go past, thinking I can’t see him.”  
  
Susie and Cora had been friends since schooldays, growing up in the same village they still lived in, and chasing the same boys through school. Susie was tall with long black hair – her matching bush was still on display resting above her bike saddle – and her dress was displaying her generous cleavage. Cora suspected she wasn’t wearing a bra.  
  
Cora was shorter with short blonde hair. She was dressed less showily than Susie in jeans and a tee-shirt. While her breasts weren’t quite as prominent as Susie’s she’d had no complaints. And Cora knew she was wearing a bra – and knickers.  
  
“Anyway,” Susie continued, “the ride itself is only a few weeks away. I’m hoping I can count on your help to drive me and my bike up to London”  
  
  
Traffic in London was hardly moving. It turned out that it was the Queen’s official birthday so the traditional ceremony of Trooping the Colour had taken place that morning and many roads were still blocked off, not to mention the roads that had been blocked for the ride itself. The official start time for the ride had already gone. Susie only hoped that herding naked bike riders was as difficult as herding cats and the actual start time was yet to come.  
Still, as they approached the park in which the ride was due to start, they passed an entrance gate that was pedestrian only, and Susie made a decision.  
  
“Pull over here,” she said. “I’ll go in that way. Drive to the finish and meet me there.”  
  
She had come prepared for this eventuality. She quickly unhooked the bike from the roof of the car and then slipped off her dress and threw it on the back seat. She was wearing no underwear to make things quicker. However, she was wearing cycling shoes, as she had found it painful cycling with bare feet. But she had trimmed her usually bushy bush as she got the impression that was what would be expected. (She had again shocked Cora by asking her opinion, but Cora had been no help.)  
  
A number of passer-bys blinked in astonishment, but most had known what was happening. Many had come just to see scenes like this.  
  
Susie pushed her bike through the gate and headed to the gaggle of people she guessed was the ride. A stream of naked cyclists confirmed that the ride was just starting.  
  
“Can I take your picture, Miss?” came a voice from below her eye level. A small boy was there with a digital camera. “I’ve got all the other riders,” he added.  
  
“You’re a bit young for taking pictures like this, aren’t you?” asked Susie. “What are you, ten?”  
  
“Eleven!” said the boy indignantly. “I’m doing this for a school project.”  
  
The exhibitionist in Susie fully came to the fore and she started adopting a number of poses for the lad as he clicked away. Soon she had a crowd of photographers around her. Then, to her horror, out of the corner of her eye she saw the last of the nude cyclists leaving the road exit from the park.  
  
“Excuse me. I’ve got a ride to do,” she said, mounting her bike and heading off in the direction of the disappearing riders. By the time she got to the exit they were just visible ahead of her on the road and she raced after them.  
  
Susie had thought she had memorised the route, but there must have been a turn she hadn’t remembered. There was now no sign of the ride. She was riding through unfamiliar streets in London, to the cheers of pedestrians and the honking of car horns. Nobody was actually complaining about her, and even the odd policeman waved her on. Obviously, on this day the usual rules were being suspended. But she was now exceedingly lost. She recognised the name of the area of north London she was riding through and she knew the ride was not supposed to be anywhere near here. Besides, although she wasn’t wearing a watch, she was sure the ride must have finished hours ago. Next year, she thought to herself, I’ll fit a basket to the bike and put my clothes in there. The fact that she was already thinking of next year after the disaster that this year had become worried her slightly.  
  
“Fancy a drink, love?” shouted a voice from the pavement. She was passing a pub and there were a group of drinkers sitting at tables. Used to be, pubs didn’t have tables outside like this, she thought. Global warming has had some benefit.  
  
Cycling is thirsty work, and seeing that there were some women among the drinkers, she accepted the offer.  
  
“But don’t expect me to buy a round,” she explained. “I don’t have any money on me.” An obvious statement, and fortunately no-one offered to search her closely just to check.  
  
“You stay like that, we’ll keep buying you drinks,” came the reply.  
  
  
Several pints of real ale later, and Susie knew what she was going to do.  
  
The crowd she had fallen in with were very friendly, but they insisted they had no clothing to lend her, and besides, they had said that if she found some clothing, they’d insist she buy everyone a round. And the landlord had no objection to her drinking there, it was good for business. She had also persuaded three of the women (and one of the men) to strip off also, just so she didn’t stand out in the crowd. London needs more nude pubs, she realised.  
  
But it was getting late – not dark yet as it was June – and she was miles from home without clothing or money. The beer was giving her the confidence she needed, but slightly befuddled her thinking. It was about fifty miles from the centre of London to her village, and maybe five miles from the pub back to the centre. She knew the approximate direction she had to head in order to get home, and she had ridden that distance as an endurance test during her practice rides. If she kept off the main roads, she wouldn’t cause too much of a disturbance.  
  
The crowd around her didn’t want her to go, but she said her goodbyes, mounted the bike once more, and headed off into the twilight.

**Part 2**

The suburbs of London go out quite a way. It was now dark – maybe midnight although there was a full moon – and she was still cycling through suburbs. There was a sort of park with a lake – possibly it had been a village green back when this suburb was still a separate village – and she rode along the path as it kept her away from the main road. Ahead, she heard someone splashing in the lake. Much to her surprise, she saw two naked women playing in the water. They turned and noticed her as she approached.  
  
“Where are your clothes?” one of them asked.  
  
“I might ask you the same question,” Susie replied. There was no sign of any discarded clothing on the side of the lake.  
  
“Oh, we live locally,” came the reply. “We’re lesbians and we always come here on warm summer nights to frolic in the lake. I’m Sam, this is Jo.” At this, Sam turned to Jo and kissed her full on the mouth. Jo responded by moving her hand up between Sam’s legs. Susie was fascinated by this display of affection. Exhibitionism and now voyeurism, this is quite a night she thought.  
  
When the two girls came up for air, Jo at last spoke.  
  
“Do you want to frolic in the lake with us” she asked.  
  
“Not just now,” Susie replied. “I’m trying to get home.” And she explained how she came to be cycling through this part of London in the middle of the night without a stitch of clothing.  
  
“At least let us take some pictures,” said Sam, producing a mobile phone. Susie assumed it had been sitting on the bank. She found it amusing that women today would rather be seen without clothing than without their mobile phones. If she had thought to bring a mobile phone with her, she wouldn’t be where she was now.  
  
She posed with each of them in turn, but had to restrain Jo’s wandering hands.  
  
Please don’t touch me there,” she insisted. “I don’t let people touch me there unless they’ve taken me out for a drink first, or they’re my doctor. Although I did date a doctor once.”  
  
“Can you take a picture of the two of us together?” Sam asked. “We don’t’ usually get the chance. It’s a pity this phone can’t be set up to take pictures on a timer.”  
  
At this, Susie noticed a flash of light in a distant bush.  
  
“I think someone else is taking pictures of us,” she said.  
  
“A peeping Tom!” exclaimed Sam. “How delightful. As long as he doesn’t bother us and it keeps him happy, who cares?”  
  
A fine philosophy, thought Susie as she resumed her cycling.  
  
  
The sun rises early in June, and Susie woke up with the sun in her eyes a voice in her ears.  
  
“Why are you sleeping in a haystack?” the voice asked.  
  
Memories had started to come back to Susie. Having left the suburbs behind, she had seen a haystack in a field and buried herself in it to keep warm. Now a small boy was standing in the field interrogating her.  
  
“I was lost and I needed somewhere to sleep,” Susie explained. “What’s it to you, anyway?”  
  
“This is my dad’s farm and his haystack,” said the youth. “He doesn’t like it when tramps sleep in his field.”  
  
“I’m not a tramp,” protested Susie. She sat up and straw fell away from her breasts. The boy’s eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.  
  
“Nice tits!” he exclaimed. Susie continued to climb out of the straw. “And nice…” Susie interrupted him before he could complete the sentence.  
  
“Yes, it is,” she agreed, pulling pieces of straw out of the part of her anatomy in question.  
  
Susie had to explain what she was doing here naked in a field early on a Sunday morning. The lad finally let her go on her way, but only after he’d pulled out the obligatory mobile phone to take some pictures.  
  
“I have to show these to my friends at school tomorrow,” he said.  
  
“You don’t have a cousin who was in London yesterday, do you?” asked Susie.  
  
  
Susie continued in the general direction of home, trying to keep of the main roads. She saw a couple, a man and a woman, walking along ahead of her and was somewhat surprised to see that these people were also naked.  
  
“Good morning,” said the woman. “Another recruit for our congregation I see.” The couple were middle aged, tanned all over, and looked like they were used to going around naked.  
  
“Pardon,” said Susie, “I don’t understand what you’re talking about.”  
  
“You’re not going to church?” asked the woman. “But you’re dressed for it! This is the naked church,” she continued in response to Susie’s raised eyebrow. “Oh, we’re proper C of E, but our vicar is a naturist and he’s attracted a like-minded congregation. There he is.”  
  
They had rounded a corned and there was a small country church, complete with graveyard. Standing outside was a man wearing just a clerical collar greeting people as they entered. Strangely, many of the women entering the church were wearing hats. How typically British, Susie thought.  
Susie did stop to say hello to the vicar, as she considered it the polite thing to do (and she’d never seen a naked vicar before) but she explained that her religious affiliations were elsewhere and continued on her way.  
  
  
Some miles further on, Susie saw another naked woman, this one walking a large dog.  
  
“You’re one of those dreadful god-botherers,” said the woman. She appeared to be about sixty but her breasts were still firm. Her bush was grey, as was the hair poking out from under a sun hat. She was well built and looked in very good condition. Her skin was tanned almost to leather.  
  
“No, I saw them back down the road,” Susie answered. “I take it you don’t approve of them?”  
  
“As long as they keep off my land, I have nothing to do with them. So where are your clothes?”  
  
Why do naked people keep on asking me that, wondered Susie. She quickly explained what had happened to the woman and asked why she too was naked.  
  
“This is my land,” she said. “This estate has been in my family for generations. I can do what I bloody well like on my own land. Well, if you’re not going to try and convert me you can keep going. Are you hungry? Come up to the house and I’ll feed you. The name’s Vera”  
  
They approached a large rambling house with outbuildings around it. It looked like it had seen better days.  
  
“Used to live here with a companion,” Vera explained, “but she’s gone now.”  
  
“I’m sorry to hear that,” said Susie.  
  
“After ten years together, she ran off with a TV journalist in London. Never watch the news now.”  
  
Susie realised she was famished and wolfed down the food offered. She saw Vera was sizing up her body with her eyes and wondered if she was considering her as a replacement for the departed companion. Anxious not to offend if Vera started making advances, Susie quickly got up and explained she really did need to get home and it wasn’t far now. She didn’t even think of asking Vera if she had any clothes she could borrow. She’d got this far, and she’d set herself another challenge.

**Part 3**

Still, it was the middle of the afternoon when she finally reached the outskirts of the village. She did consider trying to circle round the village to avoid going through the centre to get to her house, but after nearly twenty-four hours, she just wanted to get home and by now didn’t care who saw her. Her reputation in the village as an eccentric would just get bigger.  
  
She nearly changed her mind when she saw there seemed to be some sort of celebration going on on the village green. Then she saw the banner erected on two poles:  
  
WELCOME HOME SUSIE  
  
Everyone in the village seemed to be chanting her name as she rode up. Cora was there with a big grin on her face, beckoning her to join her. A man she recognised as the chairman of the Parish Council was standing there and shook her hand before turning to the assembled crowd to make a speech.  
  
“I’m sure I speak for everyone,” he started, “in welcoming Susan back to our little village after her great adventure and her great feat of cycling. We’d like to thank her for the fame she has brought to our community and we’d like to honour her with this celebration. Our thanks to Mr Parsons from the Duck and Ferret for providing refreshments, and we’ve granted an extension to his licence so you can continue drinking on the green until midnight. Thank you.”  
  
A big cheer went up from the crowd. Susie was perplexed and embarrassed. Nobody had called her Susan since her school days. Cora took her to one side.  
  
“When you didn’t get to the finish line, I started to get worried, but then someone had a laptop there and people were putting up pictures of you on the web as you cycled across London, so we knew you were OK. We assumed you were going to get help from someone eventually, so rather than trying to track you down, I came home to wait for you. And when you hadn’t turned up this morning, I looked on the web again, and there’s a whole site devoted to you and your journey. Seems you have quite a following. Then word started to get round the village, and you’ve become quite the celebrity, so the council thought the least you could do for the publicity was give you a civic reception.”  
  
Cora pointed to screens that were set up around the green which showed pages from the web, both still photographs and videos of Susie cycling through London, drinking at the pub, and all the various people she’d met on her adventures. She wondered who had taken some of the pictures, because she didn’t remember seeing anyone around for some of the locations.  
  
There was even a local TV team there to report. The young female reporter seemed to be very interested in Susie and she did wonder if this was the TV journalist who had run off with Vera’s former companion.  
  
At this point, Susie really wanted to get home, have a bath, get some sleep, maybe even put on some clothes, but it seemed churlish to actually leave a celebration in her honour. And besides, people were thrusting drinks and food into her hands.  
  
Being the only one naked made her the centre of attention, but after a while things changed. She saw one of the lads going around trying to persuade other women to strip off to show solidarity with Susie. Finally two young women complied.  
  
“We will if you will,” one of them said.  
  
No sooner said than done. Of came the guy’s clothes and he pirouetted for everyone to see. The women giggled, but kept their side of the bargain, and their clothes soon joined his in a pile on the grass.  
  
The floodgates were opened. Soon about half the village, mostly the younger ones, were dancing around naked on the village green.  
  
Cora was still clothed when she came over to give Susie some more news. BBC3 wanted to speak to her about fronting a travelogue programme on the channel provisionally called Naked Girl on a Bike. Each week she’d cycle around some beauty spot in the UK and they’d film her. Susie wasn’t sure she wanted such national celebrity yet, but Cora insisted that she should at least talk to them.  
  
“OK,” said Susie, “but I want you to do something for me. I’ve been like this now for over a day, by my reckoning. Now it’s your turn.”  
  
“W-what, you mean you want me to strip off?” Cora stammered. “I couldn’t!”  
  
“Come on, it’s easy. Start with the shirt and keep going.”  
  
Cora was flustered. She wasn’t the exhibitionist Susie was, but her best friend had been parading around in her birthday suit for over twenty-four hours now, and she felt a sense of honour that she ought to respect her wishes. Finally she relented, but as the final piece of clothing fell to the ground she tensed up.  
  
“Relax,” said Susie, soothingly. “You’ve nothing to be ashamed of. You’ve as good a body as many on display tonight.”  
  
At first, this worked, but after a few minutes, Cora let out a shriek. Susie asked what the problem was now.  
  
“Ken’s over there,” wailed Cora. “He’s seen me naked!”  
  
Ken wasn’t exactly Cora’s boyfriend, but they’d been circling each other for some months now, each waiting for the other to make the next move. Susie decided to play Cupid.  
  
“You think he’s going to like you less for having seen you naked?” Susie asked. “He’ll like you even more, I sure. Go over and talk to him. Pretend is the most natural thing in the world to walk around au naturel. Belief me, it works. I’ve had lots of practice the past day. You could even try and persuade him to join you in the nude.”  
  
Maybe it was the alcohol she’d drunk, maybe it was the nudity giving her confidence, but Cora went over to where Ken was with his mates, and said mates dropped back to leave them on their own. Next time Susie looked, Ken and Cora had both disappeared, presumably to find somewhere more private.  
  
  
As the long summer evening drew to an end and darkness fell on the village, Susie quietly slipped away from the continuing revelry on the village green and found her way back to her house. She was so tired by then that it was all she could do to climb the stairs and fall on her bed and fall asleep without even climbing under the covers.