

Billy Blackman Gets a Bike

*“Oh Woah!
The Race Rocket rides down the street,
Every kid has one, man they’re so neat,
When mom says to go out and play,
There’s only one bike good enough I say,
The Race Rocket, The Race Rocket yay!”*

By now little Billy Blackman had memorized that jingle, but the entire commercial, even the part at the end that said, “The Race Rocket Bicycle, now only \$59.95, come to your local sporting goods store and pick up yours today.”

He was sitting on the couch with his mother inside their small, three room apartment watching Saturday morning cartoons.

“Did you see it mommy? How cool is that?”

“Yes Billy I saw it, but how many times do I have to tell you, no more bikes for you until you learn to wear a helmet mister!”

“Awww, come on, everyone at school has one.”

“I don’t care about anyone else at school Billy, I just care about you. Now wash up, your grandparents are coming over for lunch.”

“Dad would’ve gotten me one,” Billy muttered, regretting his words as soon as they came out.

His mother sighed deeply and wiped the tears from her eyes. She pretended not to hear him.

Billy’s father, Bobby, was always buying Billy presents he even got him his first bike when Billy was six. On Billy’s 7th birthday, his father died in a terrible car accident. The doctors told Billy’s mother that he could have survived if he had worn his seatbelt.

No, five years later, Billy’s mother had turned into a full-out safety freak, and it was driving him crazy. No longer was Billy allowed to walk to school, he had to be driven by his mother, in fear that he might get kidnapped. He was no longer allowed to go to the amusement parks with his friends, because his mother believed that he could fall out of a roller coaster. Just last month Billy’s mother had taken away his bicycle when she caught him riding around his own driveway without a helmet. Billy pleaded that it wasn’t a big deal and that he was just testing out his new

tires, but his mother had none of it, she returned it to the shop the very next day.

Billy sat in his room that morning trying to figure out ways to convince his mother to trust him to wear a helmet from now on. He thought long and hard, but by the time his grandparents arrived, he still had nothing.

After a splendid lunch featuring Billy's favorite grilled cheese and tomato soup, Billy's mom and Grandma were washing the dishes while Billy and his Papa played cards in the living room. They stopped playing after awhile and Billy's Pap reclined his chair back and asked him what was going on in his life.

"The usual," said Billy. "Lots of schoolwork, oh, and I have baseball tryouts next week."

Billy's Papa nodded, "Anything else you want to talk about, buddy?"

Billy smiled inside, "Good old Papa, he always knows when something's on my mind."

"Well there is one thing..." Billy went on to tell his Papa the whole ordeal about wanting the Race Rocket Bicycle more than anything in the world, and how his mother did not trust him to wear his helmet, even though he promised her that he would never forget again!

Billy's Papa smiled and nodded his head throughout Billy's story, when he had finished his Papa patted him on the knee and said, "Come on Billy, let's go and have a talk with that mother of yours."

They walked into the kitchen and sat down with Billy's Mom and Grandma. Papa spoke first. "Marie darling, I think you should reconsider letting Billy have that bike. He has promised that he will wear his helmet and I think it is time you trusted him again."

Billy's mom looked at him. She was annoyed and said, "Dad he's my son and I said no!"

"Do you remember when you were a little girl and loved to surf?" Papa asked her.

"That has nothing to do with this Dad", Mom responded.

“Oh, it doesn’t?” He exclaimed. “What about the time that little girl from our town drowned while she was surfing? What about how your mother and I begged you to stop surfing, but you told us you had to keep surfing because it was what you loved doing. Now I let you keep surfing and I think it’s only fair that you let your son continue to ride a bike.”

“But he’s my little boy and he is all I have left!” She said sadly.

“Marie accidents happen every day, but that doesn’t mean you can allow this boy to grow up in a straight jacket his whole life. You have to let go a little and trust him. He’s already promised you that he’ll make every precaution necessary to make sure that he’s safe.”

Billy’s mom smiled at him, she as crying once again, “Okay, fine, but there are a few conditions...!”

The wind felt good on Billy’s face as he sped down the hill on his new Race Rocket Bicycle. He looked over at his mother who was riding her old mountain bike. They had been riding all morning and that afternoon his mother had promised to teach him how to surf. They pulled into their driveway and hopped off their bikes.

“Come on inside Billy,” Mom said. “You can’t surf on an empty stomach!”

“Coming,” he yelled. “I just have to take off my helmet, arm pads, knee pads, chest protector, and mouth guard!”

The End.