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LVERY DOG HAS HIS
DAY, AND TODAY HAS BEEN
A VERY SPECIAL ONE FOR BO.
AS THE OFFICIAL MASCOT
FOR JUNIOR'S "BO BRUMMEL"
CLUB, BO'S BEEN THE CENTER
OF ATTRACTION AT A PARTY
MRS. GREEN THREW FOR THE
CLUB IN THEIR BACK YARD.





























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A QUIET SATURDAY NIGHT

WHOLE TROUBLE is my dad's lungs are too powerful. When he begins yelling, pictures fall off walls all over town—and then everybody knows he's lecturing me again. A fellow doesn't mind being lectured to every once in a while—but I sure wish dad could turn down his volume.

Take last Saturday afternoon. All I did was ask dad if I could have some dough to take my bike to the repairman.

"WHAT?" yelled dad.

"Money," I said. "You know-the crinkly stuff you get in your pay envelope. You know -that little brown envelope mother never lets you open yourself. If you could spare some, I'd be very grateful. After all with the brake in that condition, my bike's a hazard to every old lady in town."

"Merton Muddle," yelled dad. "All week long you smell up the house with your chemistry experiments. Every other day you come up with a new crazy invention—and NOW when your bike needs a little fixing, do you mean to say you have to take it to a repairman? Why, when I was a boy—"

I knew that 'when I was a boy' routine. Once he got started on that, it would be Monday morning before he was thru—and he'd have a sore throat and I'd have a broken eardrum.

So I gave up gracefully: "I'll do it myself," I said, "and bill you later."

Dad was still spluttering when I went out to the garage and began working on the bike. A few quick turns with the pliers, and the brake-chock was off. But before I could do anything else, mom called me to the phone.

Mom glared as I picked up the phone, and I noticed that my hands were still smeared with grease. "Merton Muddle speaking," I said, wiping one hand on a curtain, "inventor extraordinary."

"Hey Merton-"

It was Calories Casey talking. And I could tell by the sob in his voice that something had gone wrong.

"Merton, I can't get my dad's car for tonight!"

I heard those words-and my heart sank

lower than a crushed straw at the bottom of an ice cream soda. Calories and I had a big date coming up. The dance was all the way over at Lakeview High. We'd promised the girls we'd call for them in a car. If we showed up on foot, it would be worse than treason.

"Merton-will YOU ask YOUR dad?"
I swallowed twice, gulped: "yes," and hung

I swallowed twice, gulped: "yes," and hung up.

Dad was on the parlor couch, his head under a tented newspaper, when I found him. Every time he snored, the WEATHER FORECAST fluttered. "Fair and warmer," said the forecast. "No wind."

I guess I should've let dad sleep a little longer—but gosh, that date was important. I pulled off the newspaper and tapped him on the chest. And he let out a blast that shook the windows.

"WHAT DO YOU WANT NOW?!"

"Just your car, dad. O.K. if I use the car tonight?"

I got just what I'd expected—a lecture about when he was a boy. There hadn't even been a car in the family... And besides, the car was HIS car. Did HE ever ask me for MY bike? His last words were, "Absolutely not!" Only the way he said them, they sounded stronger than that.

Just then mom ran into the room. She ran right over to dad and shook him by the shoulders. "Don't tell me you've forgotten all about the masquerade party we're going to tonight," she said. "They're giving a lovely prize for the best costumes, and I'd do anything to win that prize."

Dad groaned. "What're we going as this time?" he asked weakly.

Mom really loved masquerade parties. She was very serious about them, and spent lots of time dreaming up costumes. Last year, she and dad had gone as Samson and Delilah. And the year before as Napoleon and Josephine.

"Tonight," she said dreamily, "I'll be dressed as a cute little girl, and you as a little boy. You'll wear velvet shorts and an Eaton collar. And your old patent leather dancing slippers."

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Before dad could groan again, mom had bustled him off to get dressed.

As you know by now, I am a bit of an inventive genius. My mind works so fast, that on tests I have been known to come up with the wrong answer before the teacher wrote the question on the board. And what mom had just said, had set my little old brain whizzing faster than an eggbeater...

I followed mom into the kitchen. There I gave her, absolutely free of charge, a sure-fire way of making a splash entrance at the masquerade party. Mom's eyes lit up as she listened—and she ran right off to tell dad. A few minutes later, dad walked sheepishly toward me.

"Merton," he said, "your mother wants me to ride her to the party on the handlebar of your bike,"

"Gosh, dad," I said, "Td love to lend you the bike. But remember what you just said about the car being yours and the bike being mine..."

After making a face and some choking noises, dad gave me the keys to the car.

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It was dark out now. Jo Ann was sitting next to me in the front of the car, and Marcia was with Calories in the back. We were cruising along slowly, giving everybody a chance to see us—when all of a sudden Calories yelled, "What's THAT?"

I took a quick look, then grinned. Dad, his hairy legs pumping hard, was riding mom on the handlebar of my bike.

"He doesn't look too steady," said Jo Ann.
"I hope he has no trouble on Pike's Hill."

"Oh," I began to say, "there's nothing to worry abo—" but then I gulped.

I'd just remembered—the brake-chock was off the bike! Calories had called me just as I had uncrewed it, and I'd forgotten to put it back on again. Pike's Hill was steep—and without brakes, mom and dad would crash up for sure, maybe be killed...

"Merton, what's the matter? You're white as a ghost!" cried Io Ann.

I was scared, but my inventor's brain was whizzing again. A second later I stepped hard on the gas. The car lurched forward. We got to the bottom of Pike's Hill in two seconds flat.

The road curved at the bottom. In back of the curve was the Fendrick Farm. Off to the right, was Malone's Drug Store. There was a big haystack behind the curve, but in front of the haystack was a fence. If dad hit that fence, he and mom would be goners for sure.

I parked the car in front of the fence, and dragged Calories with me into Malone's. We knocked over only two people while pulling the duckboard out from behind the soda counter. Fast as we could, we leaned the duckboard against the car.

Dad and mom were in sight now. The bike was wobbling, picking up speed. Mom was screaming. Inside our car, Jo Ann and Marcia were whimpering with fright.

But then the bike hit the duckboard, climbed right up and sailed over the car, landing with all hands safe right in the soft plump haystack...

You'd think a father would appreciate genius in a son-wouldn't you?

Well, at first dad did. He picked himself and mother up from the hay, and congratulated me on one of the slickest pieces of fast thinking he'd ever been privileged to witness.

But when I explained all the details, mentioning casually the brake-chock I'd forgotten to replace-dad's lungs began working again.

He chased me halfway thru town, yelling so loud that the street lamps kept swaying.

If Officer Tulliver hadn't pulled him in for disturbing the police, he might've been chasing me yet.

As it was, we were only twenty-seven minutes late for the dance.









MEETS
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SPOILED
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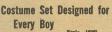
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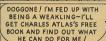
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