

# ***The Cyclebury Tales***

***By Stephen Schulman***

***(Your modest, faithful servant and bard)***

Now when March arriveth with its blossoming flowers,  
'Tis with joy in our hearts we welcome the long hours,  
With hands on the bars, our bottoms on saddles we rest,  
Helmeted, UV protected, attired in our gaudy best,  
Joyously, we expose our hides to welcome rays of the sun,  
And set off on two wheeled pilgrimage on the paths of Sharon.

So it happened one Sabbath, Your Faithful Servant,  
Wise in his ways, lavish with praise and forever observant,  
Filled with abnegation and aware of his lowly station,  
This modest scribe duly recorded the situation.

Joyous and privileged to ride with a hallowed happy band,  
Bantered, jested with and observed at first hand,  
With ears most pricked and eyes that could all see,  
He wrote down all that transpired in that jolly companee.

There was the Dame Ingride, face obscured by a modest wimple,  
Her mount being dappled but far from simple,  
A carbon fiber Trek with dual suspension,  
Could surmount all in its way without any apprehension.  
On single tracks and down- hills she could not be undone,  
Shimano XTR gruppo gleaming brightly in the sun.  
Her good man, the knight Sir David, of skills he did not lack,  
The much gifted leader of the sweetly perspiring pack.  
Being modest in demeanor as you can rightly guess,  
He was verily no mean hand in manipulating a GPS.

There at the back rode the knight, Earl Ted of the Antipodes,  
Straight of the back and strong of the knees,  
So ably versed in the cycling graces,  
Aiding the direly distressed in the most difficult places.  
His steed he bestrode was but of the very best,  
A fine triumph of carbon, an example to us rest.  
Born a gifted raconteur, a fine story he could tell,  
All of us were riveted by the exploits of Eskimo Nell.  
Alongside pedaled his better half: the grand Lady Dina,  
Cutting a graceful figure, surely no one could be finer,  
On single tracks, oh so skillful and so very pliant,  
Riding sedately astride upon her top class Giant.

Lest we forget, our noble Grand Duke Spencer Sir Big John,  
Of whom it was truly said: of rivals he had none.  
On his scarlet Specialized and clad in jet black breeches,  
His peripatetic pedaling had taken him to the furthest reaches,  
Of Low Country's hamlets, towns and rivers,  
Accorded his due deference from all HAT barge fleet skippers.

Though there were innumerable others in this fine Cyclenix band,  
Only some shall I mention while writing down first hand,  
So, good fellows take not umbrage if your names have been omitted,  
Since in such crowded verse, only a few could be truly fitted.  
There was the fair Yochee who earned much admiration,  
For her fervent pedaling and her dignified station.  
And our sweet young Michal for her impetuous part,  
In forsaking us for roadies had broken Duke John's heart.  
But enough my dear readers of this verbal dilly dallying,

I shall now regale you of when we went forth sallying!  
Ye shall not be bored by stale recounts that surely addle,  
But delighted shall be with tales straight from the saddle!

So here began the telling of our great story  
As we set forth with the sun high in its morning glory,  
Leading the way, our Sir David was indeed in fine fettle,  
Seated on his mount: a fine frame of prime alloy metal.  
All veteran pedallers from the first until the last,  
We traversed many muddy patches along a single path.  
Skimming down the inclines and roaring up the hills,  
Sandy stretches posed no hindrance to our knowledge and our skills.  
Ruts and gullies were dealt with, with the greatest of aplomb  
As through the Plains of Sharon our phalanx sailed along.  
Peerless Sir David at our head, we into the wind did bend,  
With Fearless Ted of the Antipodes riding sweeper at the end.  
Wafting along, in the heart a song, past verdant winter fields,  
We flattened all and every obstacle under our spinning wheels.

At the hamlet Udim we encountered a pleasant wayside inn,  
Helmets doffed, steeds dismounted, we walked happily in,  
Hospitality was most cordial, I hereby wish to stress,  
Extended by mine host and a comely young waitress.  
Placing fine chairs as soon as we were able,  
We ensconced ourselves around a long wood table,  
And unlike at Buckingham where nobility imbibe sherry,  
With coffee and sandwiches our goodly band made merry.  
Seated alongside the table and munching our whole wheat bread,  
Sagacity dispensed by our Duke Spencer, seated at the head.  
And as is done in cultured company we did not merely sit,

For the air was soon filled with our jesting, songs and wit.  
We were exceedingly jolly as the other guests could tell,  
The dining hall was duly ringing with a rendition of *Eskimo Nell*.  
Soon followed with a lusty ditty *The Good Ship Venus*,  
Encore: *The Maid of the Mountain* – you really should have seen us!  
All too soon the sundial indicated that it was getting late,  
Bidding fond farewells to innkeeper, we went out through the gate  
And checking our hourglasses, we dutifully made the reckoning,  
That the long ride home was indeed, truly beckoning.

There is an age old adage: All good things come to an end,  
With thoughts of approaching workweek, on our way we wend  
At way past noon, we sadly took the homeward path.  
And dispersed one and all to happy home and to hearth,  
Dust streaked with travelling we tiredly tramped right in,  
To be clasped to the bosom of our loving kith and kin.

Thus ends my tale of the Cyclenix Sabbath stout hearted,  
From whom your humble servant has most sadly departed.  
Now having regretfully read my doggerel and taken it to heart,  
Dear reader, 'tis indeed thy own fault for having let me start!