BENJAMIN

Eve and Sarah came biking down Meadow Drive on their way home from the club. They were a little late, so they had not much time for talking--all their energy was used on biking. The sun was setting, coloring the sky yellow and pink in the west. The trees stood like silhouettes towards the beautiful light, and the last birds were signing. The street was quiet. Most of the people were watching TV. There was only Old James to be seen, cutting his fence. He almost lived in his garden in the summertime. In winter you did not even see his shadow.

But the quietness disappeared as soon as the two girls biked around the corner. A whole gathering of young people stood near the big stone. Eve sighed, "Oh God, not again!"

"It's Benjamin," Sarah said. "Why has he not been sent to a desolated island yet?"

They went on, but could not pass the big gathering. Obviously all young people from the streets had turned up.

"He put up bills this afternoon," Sven said. "We couldn't help going down there."

"Is it the same topic?" Eve asked. They knew from school.

"The protest against wind mills," Sarah said.

"Oh God, no," answered Sven. "He is a renewed man!"

They stopped and put their bikes near the tree. They saw Benjamin stand lecturing from a homemade platform. "He's insane," said Sarah.

"He is gonna be king one day," Eve laughed. "The king of Meadow Drive."

"Let's hear what he has to say," Sarah said.

"We're late. I'll get in trouble!"

"So am I. Only five minutes!"

"Okay--let's go closer."

They went closer and saw Benjamin talking from his platform, using his arms violently and nod in an affirmative way. The question is--Oh, I welcome you, my ladies--you have heard the rumor--or you possibly saw my bills. You are more than welcome!"

"Braggert," Eve hissed.

"What a beautiful word," Benjamin continued. "You see for thousands of years Man has been tyrannized by Nature. That's the way it is! Nature has been confirming everything--everything nature did was right and marvellous and so on. I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, this is stupidity! The first to see that there was something wrong was of course the men. The women have not discovered anything yet."

"Oh God," said Sarah. "I won't use my strength on shouting at him!"

"What would you shout if you really bothered?"

"A word my dad doesn't even know, that I know!"

They both laughed, and Benjamin felt really disturbed. That was why he turned up his voice, "We must free ourselves from the tyranny of Nature! Nature must stop stunting us--she must stop fooling us--we are the real rulers! Man must live his life independent from Nature. We have to live following our own needs and our own free will. Our will has for too long a time been clipped like a bird's wing. We have been treated so bad, taht we must take our revenge!"

"What does his dad do?" Sarah asked.

"Don't know," Even grinned. "Director of a bank maybe."

"Or a substitute for a prince, who never came, where he really belonged."

They laughed, and Benjamin got worried. He shouted, "If we don't put our will forward now, we shall never get it. Now is the time--now or never. The intention with Man is that He shall rule over Nature. We all know that!!!"

Now Sarah could not resist anymore, "Where have you read that stuff--Donald Duck?"

"Or Garfield," Eve shouted.

The young people began to laugh. Benjamin got confused, and Sarah went on, "Are you the only one to speak from the platform?"

"It's my private platform."

"Nonsense," Sarah said. "You are not the owner of anything. None of us is--we just borrow everything."

"Logic for sparrows," Benjamin said arrogantly.

Eve got furious, "I do tell you, that I would rather be a sparrow than a Benjamin!!"

"It has more brains and more feelings," Sarah shouted. "And it can lay eggs--a Benjamin cannot!"

Everybody laughed and shouted, "Let Sarah have a word!"

And there she stood! For a moment she did not know what to say. Then she found Eve's twinkling eyes, and words came, "If Man has to use his free will, He must use it to protect NATURE!"

"Good!" Eve danced from joy. "Go on!"

"No," Sarah said, looking at the whole gathering. "I have only one statement: I go in for sparrows! What do you say, friends?" Everybody shouted in chorus, "We go in for sparrows! We go in for sparrows!"

And then they lifted Benjamin in their strong arms, put him on his bike and pushed him miles down Meadow Drive.

"We go in for sparrows!!!"

Linda Clay
Courtesy of SK-Forlag, Denmark