



## The Magic Bike!

The bike Ellie received on her eighth birthday looked perfectly ordinary. It was black with a large, shiny silver bell. At first she had been very disappointed because she had so wanted a pony. But when Ellie looked more closely, she found a little cluster of golden stars just under the saddle. They made it rather special.

Ellie asked her mum where she had bought it.

"That funny little shop at the end of the High Street," her mum replied.

Ellie knew the shop. It was full of gold and dusty second-hand bikes that made hers look smart by comparison.

"It was a bargain!" Said Mum. "It looks almost new but was ridiculously cheap."

"Hmmm," thought Ellie. "Strange."  
But she couldn't wait to try it out.

She decided to ride down the hill to the village on it. She checked out the brakes before she set out, put on her safety gear and set off for Steeplechase Hill.





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The hill was very steep and scary, with a sharp bend at the bottom. As Ellie went whizzing down it at top speed, she squeezed on the brake handles - but nothing happened! Faster and faster went the bike, with Ellie hanging on grimly.

When they reached the bottom, something extraordinary happened: the bike gave a little buck - and leaped right across the bend to where the road straightened out again!

"Wow!" Thought Ellie. "That was neat."

She patted her bike absent mindedly as though it were a pony. It certainly acted like one. As she rode down towards the village it kept giving excited little bucks and tossing its handlebars. Ellie even thought she could hear it whinnying.

Back home she looked again at the little stars under the saddle and saw they were horseshoe-shaped. She hadn't noticed that before. "I bet I'm the only person in the world with a pony-bike," thought Ellie.

Everyday Ellie took her bike for a canter. Sometimes they went across the fields and vaulted the hedges. Sometimes they climbed the downs. She was sure that if she treated her bike just like a pony for long enough, then one day it might turn into one.

Curiously, Ellie was seen to be riding a neat little bay pony in the village last week - so perhaps it did...

