

Early Morning Ride

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by

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Some call me nuts for riding my bike at 3 a.m. Statistically, though, with the number of cars on the road at the time, I have less risk of being struck than any other time of the day. I get up, ask Google, "Hey Google, is it going to rain?" "There's less than a 10% chance of rain this morning." Put on my helmet, add my bright LED lights, and start zooming through the empty streets at the highest speed I can. Approximately halfway through my bike ride, the skies open up, and it begins to pour, not just any pour, a torrential downpour with thunder and lightning. I take shelter under a gazebo in a small park; another man is also looking for shelter. As we begin to chat, he reveals that he was heading to a house where his girlfriend was sleeping with another man and was going to burn it to the ground with them inside. The man she's sleeping with is married and has children, with the wife is on a business trip my girlfriend decides to play mom. He opens his backpack to reveal

kerosene, lighters, and other flammable material. This
guy is dangerous, but why is he telling me, does he
want me to stop him? I could call the police; maybe
I'll try to reason with him, the rain is letting up,
not much time left.

I was used to waking up early for my bike rides, but 3 a.m. was pushing it even for me. Still, I had my reasons. Statistically, with fewer cars on the road at that time, my risk of being hit by a car was lower than at any other time of day. Plus, the quiet, empty streets were a nice change from the hustle and bustle of the daytime.

I quickly got dressed and grabbed my helmet and LED lights. Before heading out, I asked Google if it was going to rain. "There's less than a 10% chance of rain this morning," the robotic voice replied. That was good enough for me. I set off on my bike, pushing myself to go as fast as I could.

Halfway through my ride, the skies suddenly opened up. It wasn't just a light drizzle either; it was a full-on downpour, complete with thunder and lightning. I was completely drenched in seconds. I looked around for somewhere to take shelter, but all the stores and buildings were closed at this hour.

Just when I was about to give up and ride home, I spotted a small gazebo in a nearby park. I pedaled over and gratefully took cover under its roof. As I stood there, shivering and trying to wring out the water from my clothes, I noticed that someone else was also seeking shelter. It was a man, around my age, who looked just as bedraggled as I felt.

We struck up a conversation, and it wasn't long before he started telling me his problems. Apparently, his

girlfriend was cheating on him with another man, and he was planning to burn down the house where they were sleeping together. He opened his backpack to show me the kerosene, lighters, and other flammable materials he had brought with him.

I was shocked. This guy was dangerous and clearly not in his right mind. But why was he telling me all this? Did he want me to stop him? I considered calling the police, but I was hesitant to get involved in such a dangerous situation. Maybe I could try to reason with him instead.

The rain was starting to let up, so I knew I didn't have much time. I tried to talk him out of his plan, pointing out that it was a terrible idea and that he would only end up getting hurt or in trouble. But he was too blinded by anger and jealousy to listen to me.

Just as I was running out of ideas, I heard the sound of sirens in the distance. The man panicked and ran off, leaving his backpack behind. I quickly called the police and told them what had happened. They arrived a few minutes later and took the backpack as evidence.

I never saw the man again, but I couldn't shake the feeling that I had narrowly avoided being caught up in something really dangerous. From now on, I decided, I would stick to my bike rides during the daytime. Some might call me nuts for riding at 3 a.m., but I had learned the hard way that it wasn't always worth the risk.