

**BOMBASTES FURIOSO** One hot sultry afternoon in June, the population of the little town of San Rosario in the Peruvian Andes was struck with sudden amazement at the sight of a motor-bicycle clattering its way through the main street with some risk to the dogs, poultry, and small boys who had been lazily disporting themselves there. It was not the bicycle itself that evoked their wonder: that was an object familiar enough. Nor was it the youth seated in the saddle, and steering it deftly past all obstacles. It was a second figure, mounted uneasily on the carrier behind: a rotund and portly figure, which shook and quivered with the vibration of the machine as it jolted over the ill-paved road, maintaining its equilibrium with obvious difficulty. Children and women shrieked; the men leaning against the walls took their cigars from their lips and gasped; and the noise of the engine was almost smothered by the mingled din of barking dogs and screaming fowls. It was the figure of the gobernador himself: land-owner, chief magistrate, and father of a family. The wondering populace might have supposed that the gentleman had taken leave of his senses--for surely no one of his mature years and serious responsibilities would have risked so much if he had been sane--had it not been plain to them that he was in desperate distress. His head was bare; his swarthy cheeks were shining with perspiration; his eyes rolled with fright; and his fat hands were clasped about the waist of the boy in the saddle with the convulsive grip of a man clinging for dear life. The face of the boy was, on the contrary, beaming with delight. His lips were parted in a wide smile; his blue eyes were dancing; and his mop of tow-coloured hair waved joyously in the breeze that the motion of the vehicle created.

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