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# Spider

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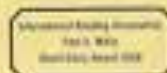
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# A Young Hero's Odyssey

by Susan Patnaik

**T**HE HOT SUMMER sun blazed over the southern shore of Japan. Eight-year-old Sho Scott wiped the sweat from his forehead. His legs were sore, but he and his father kept pedaling along the hilly coastal road. As they reached Cape Sata, their final destination, Sho stared in awe at the mighty Pacific Ocean. "We did it!" he said with a grin.

On August 30, 2009, Sho and his father, Charles, became the first known father-son pair to travel the entire length of Japan on connected bikes. It took them 67 days and approximately 2,500 miles to cycle from Cape Soya on the northern shore of Japan to Cape Sata on the southern shore.

The bike ride was a dream come true—a dream that had been growing for more than a year. Sho was only seven when his father suggested that they go on a father-son adventure. Sho's



Only 2,500 miles to go!

My tires are so pumped!

Sho and his dad at Cape Soya, the northernmost point in Japan.



eyes lit up. "Let's do something in Japan," he responded. Sho and his family live in New York City, but Sho's mother is originally from Japan, and Sho speaks Japanese. Sho's dad came up with the idea to ride connected bikes across the country.

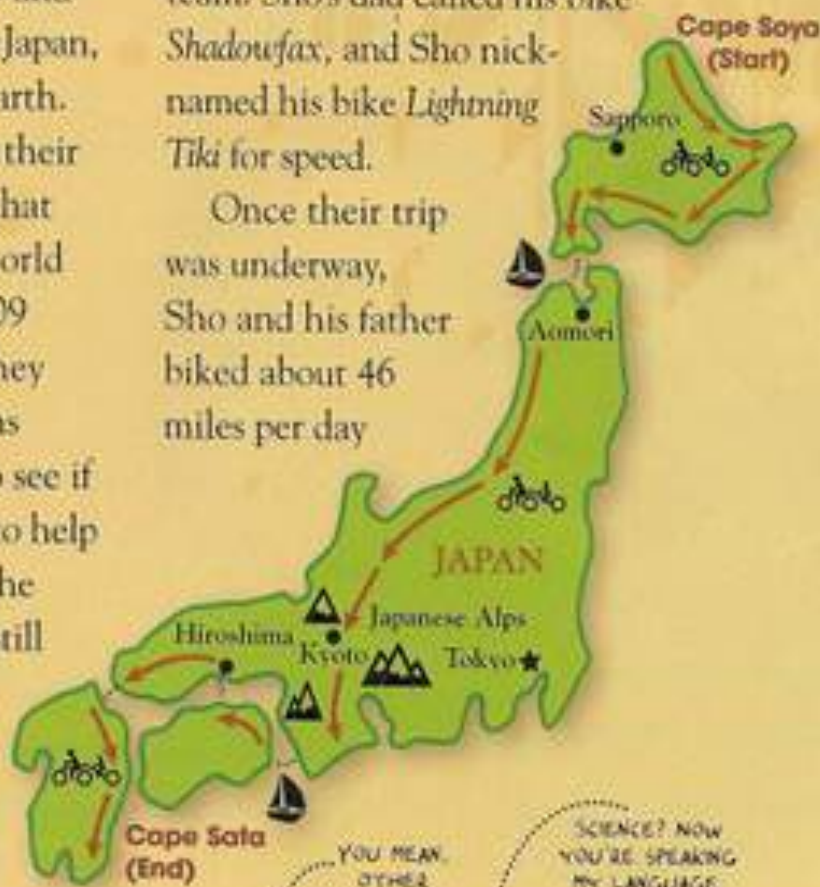
Sho was determined to dedicate their journey to a worthy cause. He had recently seen a television program on pollution, so there was no question in his mind: If he and his dad rode their bikes across Japan, it would be to help Mother Earth.

As the Scotts prepared for their big adventure, they learned that countries from all over the world would meet in December 2009 to discuss climate change. They contacted the United Nations Environmental Programme to see if they could use their bike ride to help promote positive change for the environment. (Sho was—and still is—a student at the United Nations International School in New York City.) For their efforts, the United Nations

designated Sho and his father as two of the organization's official Climate Heroes.

Sho and his dad named their bike ride "UNite to Combat Climate Change—Ride Japan" and helped raise money for the United Nations' Billion Tree Campaign. Before the trip, the father-son duo spent many hours training on their bikes and becoming comfortable working as a team. Sho's dad called his bike *Shadowfax*, and Sho nicknamed his bike *Lightning Tiki* for speed.

Once their trip was underway, Sho and his father biked about 46 miles per day



SO I READ ABOUT THIS SCIENTIFIC THEORY THAT OUR WORLD MAY HAVE EXTRA DIMENSIONS.

EGG-STRAW DEE-MINT-SHINS?

YOU MEAN OTHER WORLDS?

SCIENCE? NOW YOU'RE SPEAKING MY LANGUAGE.





for more than two months straight. Rain or shine, the bikers pressed on and overcame difficulties such as flat tires, empty stomachs, aching muscles, and an encounter with a poisonous snake. Their greatest physical challenge was biking up—and then riding down—the steep mountains of the Japanese Alps.



ZZZZZZ

ZZZZZZ

Sho chills at the campsite. (Sleeping bikes not pictured.)

The pair carried everything they needed—a tent, sleeping pads and bags, clothing, a repair kit, a small computer, a cell phone, a GPS, packaged food, and three water bottles—in just five bags. They spent most nights huddled together in their two-man tent at a campground or rest stop. They also stayed in *minshuku* (traditional Japanese inns) or *ryokan* (bed-and-breakfast inns). When biking left them hot, sweaty, and exhausted, they stopped at *sentō* and *onsen* (public bath houses) along the way to clean up and relax. On a few lucky occasions, they were invited into private homes as guests and treated to fine Japanese hospitality.

Overall, Sho and his father agree that the best part of their journey was the support from Japanese locals. At every stop along the way, smiling strangers came out of their homes and shops with offers of food, gifts, assistance, and hugs. “*Ganbare!*” they cheered for the heroes. “Way to go!”

YES, OTHER WORLDS THAT EXIST TOGETHER. MARVIN HAS A WORLD, AND WE HAVE A WORLD. DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS! DIFFERENT MAGAZINES!



IF THERE ARE MANY ISSUES WITH THAT THEORY.



At one point in their journey, Sho and his dad attended a sumo festival in a small mountain village. Most kids would be glad to stand back and watch the giant men wrestle, but Sho didn't think twice about stepping into the ring to take on a 250-pound local champion. Like many other times in his life, he welcomed the challenge. 🐛



Hey, this hero has moves!

The complete story of Sho Scott's 2009 odyssey can be found in the book *Rising Son: A Father and Son's Bike Adventure Across Japan*. Sho has since embarked on two more adventures. In 2011, he was once again named an official Climate Hero. Sho, his father, and his younger sister cycled around Iceland to raise money for the United Nations' Billion Tree Campaign and to record the impact of climate change on Iceland's glaciers and animals. In the summer of 2013, the Scott trio biked along 1,700 miles of the Lewis & Clark Trail, gathering data for a project with Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation. The Scotts shared this information with several states' Departments of Transportation in an effort to reduce the impact of roads on wildlife. This trip was featured in both *National Geographic* and *The New York Times*. Sho and his family are currently dreaming up their next adventure.



SO, IN MARVIN'S MAGAZINE, HE IS MUCH BIGGER THAN A BUG. BUT HERE, HE'S BUG-SIZED.



WELL, THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY I'D HAVE TO LEARN SUUMO, A JAPANESE FORM OF WRESTLING, TO EAT THAT ACORN THERE.



BUT HOW DO WE SWAP SPIDER AND MARVIN BACK TO WHERE THEY BELONG?



Learn Sho's tips for keeping our planet healthy at [spidermagkids.com/fr/y11e](http://spidermagkids.com/fr/y11e)