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The Lords of Time

The Lords of Time skim over the earth on their bicycles, occasionally stopping to grease, clean, or flex the chainlinks and drivetrain cogs of temporality. So long as each rides alone, the minutes trip predictably, and the other indications too—the alternation of light and dark, the passage of blood from the left ventricle into the pulmonary artery, and the separation of heat from light. It is conjectured that by studying their fixed gears one might gain the secret of immortality. On the other hand, their fingers are permanently poised to brake, for on the rare occasions that they meet in passing, the Lords of Time argue. Their shins are pocked with chain scars and pedal scars, their forearms bruised with handlebar bruises, but more disastrous than this, their fights tip time on its side like a capsized boat. Some grow old while others grow young. The occasional mushroom disgorges duff while bacteria reconstruct the dead.

You think you would recognize one when you see them—for who stands outside time and doesn't show the ravages of the sun?—but their own time renders them invisible. You stand, precious slave, within the strictures of time and space. As for themselves, they (they push their pedals) they are the Lords of Time.