

## POETRY

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### **Role Reversal**

This nasty critic of mine,  
Goes blah blah all the time,  
Mockery her weapon  
Her tone tough,  
She is a hard task master  
My daughter.  
Child is the father of man,  
So iterated Wordsworth,  
And I learnt by rote,  
Unquestioning, though not understanding.  
Little did I fathom,  
The meaning  
Literal and metaphorical,  
As she drills it in  
In her most austere fashion.  
As she nudges,  
Pushing me to learn,  
I trudge,  
Plodding through the lanes and bylanes,  
Of Google apps, playstore, filters and photoshops,  
Struggling, scuffling, grappling and wrestling.  
Racking for words  
To express,  
Desperation, exasperation, frustration, angst,  
JOY  
Pleasure and peace,  
As I toddle forth,  
To keep pace,  
The roles reversed.  
The relay of life goes on.

## The Bicycle

It pumps blood into my heart  
Springs life into my soul  
The Bicycle.

The pandemic brought it back into my corridor,  
My daughter's desire!

Little did I know

A glimpse every time

Triggers memories,

Reverse, revisit, relive.

Sweaty and dirty

Two little imps

Parking their bicycles.

Rewind still,

A skinny teeny weeny,

Shorts pulled up high

The apple of my eye,

His protective gear,

Dad's helmet

Doodling around,

Grinning ear to ear,

My sprightly boy,

Mounted atop.

A curly mop,

A thin lanky lass,

Ethereal, fearless,

Oblivious,

To my trepidation.

Once again,

She rides

Now with a well fitted helmet.

My heart skips a beat

Fears rush in again,

Lest she falls

Lest she gets hurt.

As I see her astride

Resolute and Dauntless,

Glide away on her own,

On the rocky terrains,

Mitigating anxiety!

In ways unknown

The lockdown unlocks.

The Bicycle!

Renews, Resurrects,

A smile, An assurance

In dark times.

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**BIO- NOTE**

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Madhuri Chawla is an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Dyal Singh Evening College, University of Delhi. She translates from Punjabi to English and has participated in several workshops organized by Sahitya Akademi, Punjabi Academy, British Council and others and her translations have been published in various Anthologies and Journals as well. She has published research articles in Journals and books, and articles of general interest in leading National Dailies. She has also presented Papers at several National and International Conferences. Her area of interest is Gender Studies and Diaspora Studies.