

- Madam Rides The Bus Summary

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"Madam Rides The Bus" is a story by Vallikkannan about an eight-year-old girl named Valliammai, affectionately called Valli, who is filled with curiosity and a desire to explore beyond her small village. She longs to travel on the bus that runs between her village and the nearby town. After saving enough money, Valli takes her first solo bus ride. The conductor, surprised to see a young girl traveling alone, jokingly calls her "Madam" and offers her the front seat. Valli keenly observes the journey, noticing the trees, animals, and the sights of the town. Despite the conductor's invitation to explore the town and enjoy a cold drink, Valli declines, stating she came only for the bus ride. On the return trip, she sees a dead cow by the roadside, which saddens her deeply. Upon reaching home, Valli keeps her adventure secretive, smiling quietly when asked about her whereabouts.

Key Elements

- **Character:** Valli, a curious and strong-willed young girl.
- **Setting:** A small village and the nearby town connected by a bus route.
- **Plot:** Valli's first bus ride and her observations during the journey.
- **Themes:** Childhood curiosity, exploration, innocence, and the realities of life.

Textual Evidence

"The conductor was surprised to see a young girl travelling by herself but jokingly called her 'Madam' and offered her the front seat."

"Valli observed everything very carefully, e.g., the trees that seemed to be running towards them, a cow that suddenly moved in front of the bus and so on."

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is Valli and what does she want to do?
- Why did the conductor call Valli 'Madam'?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Describe Valli's feelings during her bus ride.
- Why did Valli refuse to get down and explore the town?

Level 3 – Challenging

- Explain the significance of the dead cow in the story.
- Discuss how Valli's character reflects the theme of childhood curiosity and innocence.

Answer Key

- **Who is Valli and what does she want to do?** Valli is an eight-year-old girl who wants to travel on the bus from her village to the town.
- **Why did the conductor call Valli 'Madam'?** Because he was surprised to see a young girl traveling alone and jokingly called her 'Madam'.
- **Describe Valli's feelings during her bus ride.** Valli was excited and curious, observing everything carefully and enjoying the new experience.
- **Why did Valli refuse to get down and explore the town?** She said she had come only for the bus ride and was not interested in exploring the town.

- **Explain the significance of the dead cow in the story.** The dead cow symbolizes the harsh realities of life that contrast with Valli's innocent excitement.
- **Discuss how Valli's character reflects the theme of childhood curiosity and innocence.** Valli's eagerness to explore and her simple joy in the bus ride show her innocent curiosity about the world.

Quick Reference

- **Valli:** The protagonist, a curious young girl.
- **Conductor:** The bus conductor who calls Valli 'Madam'.
- **Bus Ride:** Represents Valli's journey of exploration.
- **Dead Cow:** Symbolizes reality and loss of innocence.

Glossary

- **Longed:** Had a strong desire or wish.
- **Haunted:** Tormented or disturbed.
- **Secretively:** Hiding feelings, thoughts, or actions from others.