



Madam Rides The Bus

(BY VALLIKKANNAN)

Prabha Verma, AT, LT,
SKS GIC Pattharkhani

About the chapter

Valli the village girl wants to go to a ride on the bus even just once. This way she picked various details about the bus journey. And she started to save money for the fare. The background of this story is typical Indian village site so she saw in her journey to town the fields of crop, trees, canal, grasslands and ditches. A curious eight year old girl fulfill her deepest desire to take a ride on the bus and how she experienced during her first journey by the bus. This story shows Valli as a careful and good planner. The students can write short paragraph about journey of a bus and planning of a journey after reading this story.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Valli or Valliammai was a girl of eight years. She was very much eager about things. She had no playmates. So standing on the door way of her house had become her favourite pastime. But she was very much fascinated for the bus ride. It was an unending joy for her. There travelled a bus between her village and a nearest town on an interval of an hour. She had collected some details about the bus-journey. The last destination of the bus was a town. It was about six miles away from her village. The fare was thirty paise for one way. The trip to the town took forty five minutes. So she planned to take the one o'clock afternoon bus so that she could return by about two forty-five.

On one afternoon, it was a fine spring day. The afternoon bus was on the point of leaving the village. Valli called 'stop the bus! Stop the bus!' The bus slowed down and the conductor peeped outside. He called to hurry up. Standing outside the bus, Valli told that she had to go to the town. She showed some coins and got into the bus. The conductor was a jolly fellow. He called her a fine madam and pointed towards a seat. It was the slack time of the day. So very few individuals were travelling in the bus. All passengers at the conductor and Valli. On hearing the whistle the bus started, the bus started.

In the way, Valli was enjoying everything through her own eyes. The road was narrow. On one side there was a canal. Beyond it there were palm trees, grasslands, mountains, Sky and green fields. To have full view, she stood on the seat. All looked very wonderful for Valli. An elderly man shouted and called Valli as 'child'. He asked her to sit down. Valli was surprised for calling her a child. The conductor told that she was a very grown-up madam as a mere girl cannot travel all alone. In an angry way, she looked towards the conductor and demanded the ticket. The conductor punched a ticket and gave her. He asked her not to stand when she had paid for a seat. The bus stopped. Some passengers got on. Valli sat down on her seat lest some passengers should sit over it.

At that time, an elderly woman got into the bus. She sat beside Valli. She questioned her if she was all alone. Valli did not like her. There were big holes in her ears. The earrings were very ugly. She was chewing the betel nut. Valli was fearing lest its juice should fall at any moment. She again interrogated Valli. In turn Valli gave a curt reply and asked to mind her own business.

It was her first journey. She had planned it very well. She had saved all her stray coins that come her way. She even resisted the temptation of buying toys and balloons etc. At the village fair too she controlled herself not to enjoy the ride in the merry-go-round. Thus she had collected enough money for her journey. Her next problems was to slip out of the house. She knew that her mother used to sleep daily after lunch. Valli decided to use these hours for her Journey. Most often she used these hours for her excursion.

The bus was rolling across the landscape. Valli was happy. She clapped her hands with glee. There came a young cow, running fast, in front of the bus. The driver sounded his horn loudly. But the animal became more and more frightened. It galloped in front of the bus. It was funny for Valli. at last the cow moved off the road. The bus came to a rail-road crossing. The train passed with utmost roar and rattle. Then the bus passed through a busy shopping street and came on a wide thoroughfare. Valli was fascinated and happy to see the displays of clothes and the big crowd. It was the last destination of the bus.

Now all the passengers got off the bus. Valli remained there in the bus. The conductor asked her if she was not ready to get off the bus. Valli replied that she would on this same bus and gave her thirty coins to the conductor. He felt surprised and questioned what the matter was. Valli replied that she only felt to have a ride in the bus and nothing else. She went on sitting till the bus resumed its journey. She got her ticket. The same wonderful sights were before her eyes.

Then she suddenly saw a young cow dead by the road side. She enquired the conductor if it was the same cow. The conductor nodded his head. Now she was overcome with sadness. Her memory haunted her. She thought that she had been a lovely animal a little while ago but all her charm was lost. It was three-forty when the bus reached the village. She stood up and told the conductor to see him again. The conductor smiled and answered, "Madam, whenever you feel like a bus-ride come and join us. And don't forget to bring your fare". Valli laughed and went running straight for her home.

When Valli entered the house, she saw her mother talking with one of her aunts. She was from South Street. She was a chatterbox. She asked Valli where she had been. Valli only smiled. Her mother only remained busy with her. Both were discussing about the things outside the world. Valli told that so many things were happening without their knowledge. Her aunt was surprised and said that Valli was talking like a grown-up lady.

Vocabulary

Mystery-	(Something secret)	—रहस्य
Curious-	(Eager)	—जिज्ञासु
Fascinating-	(Attractive)	—आकर्षित करने वाली
Gradually-	(Slowly)	—धीरे—धीरे
Scarcely-	(Hardly)	—मुश्किल से
Commandingly-	(Firmly)	—दृढ़ता पूर्वक

Gleaming-	(Shining)	—चमकती हुई
Luxurious-	(Very comfortable)	—काफी आराम दायक
Peered over-	(Looked over)	—झोंक कर देखा
Deep Ditch-	(Deep opening)	—गहरी खाई
Concerned-	(Worried)	—चिन्तित
Elaborate-	(Perfect)	—विस्तार करना
Temptation-	(Attraction)	—आकर्षण
Obstacles-	(Hurdles)	—रुकावटें
Excitement-	(With courage)	—उत्साह से
Horrible-	(Fearful)	—भयभीत करने वाली

:साराँश:

वल्ली एक आठ साल की लड़की थी। वह अपने आस-पास की घटनाओं के प्रति काफी उत्सुक रहती थी। उसके पड़ोस में उसकी उम्र के बच्चे नहीं थे। जो उसके साथ खेल सकें। इस लिए वह अपने घर के सामने वाले दरवाजे पर खड़ी होकर बाहर की घटनाओं को देखती रहती थी। यह उसका सबसे अच्छा समय बिताने का जरिया था। वह उस बस को देखती रहती थी जो उसके गाँव से शहर को जाती थी। धीरे-धीरे उसके मन में बस की सवारी करने का विचार पनपने लगा उसके प्रति वह आकर्षित होती जा रही थी।

उसके गाँव से पास के शहर को प्रत्येक घण्टे के अन्तर से एक बस जाती थी वह उस बस की यात्रा के विषय में जानकारियाँ एकत्र करने लगी। शहर उसके गाँव से छः मील की दूरी पर था और उसका एक तरफ का किराया 30 पैसे था। वहाँ पहुँचने में 45 मिनट का समय लगता था। उसने एक बजे दोपहर वाली बस में यात्रा करने का निर्णय लिया ताकि वह 2 बजकर 45 मिनट में घर पहुँच जाये। एक दो पहर को बस जब लगभग चलना शुरू हो गई

थी तो वल्ली ने पीछे से आवाज देकर बस रुकवाई तो कण्डक्टर ने उसे जल्दी आने को कहा और वह बस में सवार हो गई। कण्डक्टर मजाकिया प्रवृत्ति का था।

उसने कहा मैडम अपनी सीट गृहण कीजिये तब सभी यात्री वल्ली की तरफ देखने लगे। रास्ते में वल्ली हर दृश्य को अपनी आँखों में भर लेना चाह रही थी। सड़क पतली थी एक तरफ खाई थी और आगे जहाँ तक नजर जाती थी हरियाली ही हरियाली थी। वल्ली सब कुछ ठीक से देखने के लिए अपनी सीट पर खड़ी हो जाती है तभी बस रुकती है और एक वृद्ध महिला बस में सवार होकर वल्ली के साथ वाली सीट पर बैठ गई और उससे पूछने लगी क्या तुम अकेले यात्रा कर रही हो? क्या तुम्हें पता है शहर में कौन सी जगह जाना है? वल्ली ने रुखे स्वर में जबाब दिया कि वह अपने काम से मतलब रखे।

यह वल्ली की पहली बस यात्रा थी उसने इसकी बहुत अच्छी तरह से योजना बना रखी थी उसने अपनी बहुत सी इच्छाओं पर संयम रख कर बस के किराये के लिए पैसा बचाया था। उसकी दूसरी परेसानी घर से बाहर निकलने की थी वह जानती थी कि उसकी माँ हर रोज दोपहर के खाने के बाद सोती है। वल्ली ने निर्णय लिया कि इसी समय का उपयोग वह अपनी यात्रा के लिए करेगी ताकि घर में उसकी यात्रा के विषय में पता ना लगे। अब बस खाली भूखण्ड से गुजर रही थी। वल्ली खुशी से ताली बजा रही थी। तभी एक गाय आई और बस के आगे तेजी से दौड़ने लगी। चालक ने हॉर्न बजाया लेकिन गाय और अधिक कूदते हुए भागने लगी। अन्त में मुस्किल से गाय किनारे गई। तेजी से चलती हुई बस ने अब एक व्यस्त बाजार में प्रवेश किया। वल्ली दुकानों तथा उसमें सजे सामान से काफी प्रभावित हुई। यह बस का अन्तिम पड़ाव था।

अब सारे यात्री बस से नीचे उतर गये। केवल वल्ली ही बस में बैठी थी कण्डक्टर ने पूछा क्या वह बस से नीचे नहीं उतरेगी? वल्ली ने कहा कि वह इसी बस से वापस गाँव लौटेगी तथा अपने किराये के तीस पैसे भी दे दिये। कण्डक्टर को आश्चर्य हुआ तो वल्ली ने बताया कि मैं केवल बस की यात्रा करना चाह रही थी बस और कोई बात नहीं है।

बस शहर से गाँव की तरफ वापस जाने लगी वल्ली फिर से खिड़की से बाहर के नजारे देखने लगी। अचानक उसने देखा कि जो गाय शहर जाते समय उनकी बस के सामने दौड़ रही थी वह सड़क के किनारे मृत पड़ी थी। उसे किसी गाड़ी ने टक्कर मार दी थी। उसकी सारी खूबसूरती अब भयानकता में बदल चुकी थी। उसके चारों ओर खून ही खून था। गाय को ऐसी स्थिति में देखकर वल्ली बहुत दुखी हो जाती है तथा वह चुपचाप अपनी सीट में बैठ जाती है।

जब बस वल्ली के गाँव पहुँचती है वह बस से उतरकर सीधे अपने घर में प्रवेश करती है। उस समय उसकी माँ उसकी मौसी से बात कर रही थी। वह साउथ ब्लॉक से उनके यहाँ आई थी वह वल्ली से पूछती है तुम कहाँ थी? वल्ली केवल मुस्करा देती है। उसकी माँ उनसे बात करने में व्यस्त थी। दोनों बाहर दुनियाँ की चीजों के बारे में बात कर रहे थे तब वल्ली बोल उठती है बाहर ऐसी बहुत सी घटनाओं होती हैं। जिसकी हमें जानकारी नहीं होती है। उसकी मौसी वल्ली की ऐसी बात सुनकर आश्चर्य चकित हो जाती है और कहती है कैसे बड़ों की तरह बातें करती है।

Read the following extracts and answer the questions:

Passage 1

Day after day she watched the bus, and gradually a tiny wish crept into her head and grew there: she wanted to ride on that bus, even just once. This wish became stronger and stronger, until it was an overwhelming desire. Valli would stare wistfully at the people who got on or off the bus when it stopped at the street corner. Their faces would kindle in her longings, dreams and hopes. If one of her friends happened to ride the bus and tried to describe the sights of her town to her, Valli would be too jealous to listen and would shout, in English: "Proud! Proud!"

Questions::

Q-1. Who is 'she' in the first sentence?

Ans- 'She' in the first sentence is Valli.

Q-2. How did she develop a longing for the bus ride?

Ans- As she looked at the bus daily, a tiny wish took birth in her mind, it grew into a desire and then into a longing to ride the bus.

Q-3. Why did she look sadly and longingly at the passengers of the bus?

Ans- She looked at them so because she wanted to be one of them who enjoyed the bus ride.

Q-4. When did she say, "Proud! Proud!" in English?

Ans- When one of her friends who happened to visit the town on bus and described her the sights of town, out of jealousy she would say "Proud! Proud!".

Q-5. Which word in the passage means 'to set alight feelings'?

Ans- The word '**kindle**' means '**to set alight feelings**'.

Passage 2

The memory of the dead cow haunted her, dampening her enthusiasm. She no longer wanted to look out the window.

She sat thus, glued to her seat, until the bus reached her village at three forty. She stood up and stretched herself. Then she turned to the conductor and said, "well sir, I hope to see you again".

"Okay, madam," he answered her, smiling. "Whenever you feel like a bus ride, come and join us. And don't forget to bring your fare."

Questions:

Q-1. Why did she not look out the window?

Ans- She did not look out the window because the memory of the dead cow was haunting her.

Q-2. What did she do until the bus reached the village?

Ans- With her damp enthusiasm she glued to her seat, until the bus reached the village.

Q-3. What contrast do you find in her disposition while her leaving the bus?

Ans- The change of surroundings changes the disposition of a person. The sadness over the death of the cow is forgotten as she leaves the bus for her home.

Q-4. Find a word in the passage which means the same as 'returned repeatedly in her mind'.

Ans- The word **'haunted'** means **'returned repeatedly in her mind'**.

Questions of the Chapter:

Ques1. What was Valli's favourite pastime?

Ans- Valli was a Tamil girl. She had no playmates. It was her favourite pastime to stand in the doorway of her house. Thus she was able to watch all that was going on there. In a way she had attained too many unusual experiences.

Ques2. What did Valli find out about the bus journey? How did she find out these details?

Ans- Valli found out the smallest of the details about the bus journey. She knew that one way fare of the bus was thirty paise. The distance from the village to the town was six miles and it took Forty five minutes to reach the town and another forty five minutes to get back home. She gathered these details by listening

carefully the talks of her neighbour and the people who had taken the ride of the bus and also by asking a few questions from here and there.

Ques3. Why did Valli stand up on the seat? What does she see now?

Ans- Valli wanted to see the outside view but the canvas blind attached to the lower side of the window was obstructing her view. Therefore she stood on the seat to see the canal, palm trees, grassland, distant mountains, and the blue sky.

Ques4. What does Valli tell the elderly man when he calls her a child ?

Ans- Valli told him that she was not a child and she has paid the same amount of the bus ticket as everyone else had paid.

Ques5. How did Valli save up money for her first journey? was it easy for her?

Ans- Valli was a very wise girl. She saved her every penny to have a ride in the bus. She resisted every temptation to buy balloons, toys, peppermints and so on. She even controlled herself to have a ride on the merry go round in the village fair. It was rather troublesome for her.

Ques6. Why did she not get off the bus at the bus station?

Ans- She didn't get off the bus at the bus station because she was afraid to get down. Moreover, She only wanted to take the bus ride and did not have enough money to buy something from the market.

Ques7. What was Valli's deepest desire? Find the words and phrases in the story that tell you this?

Ans- Valli's deepest desire was to take a ride on a bus. She had never been on any journey ever before. The following words and phrases tell us about this:

1. The most fascinating thing of all was the bus that travelled between her village and the nearest town.
2. The sight of bus, was a source of unending joy for Valli.
3. Gradually a tiny wish crept into her head. She wanted to ride on that bus, just once.

Ques8. Why does the conductor refer to Valli as 'Madam'?

Ans- The conductor was a jolly fellow. He had judged the temperament of this small child. It was only to please her, he called Valli 'madam'.

Ques9. Why does Valli refuse to look out of the window on her way back?

Ans- While on her way back, Valli saw a young cow lying dead by the road side. This scene was horrible and frightening. There was a fixed stare in her lifeless eyes with blood all over. It haunted her very much. She lost all her enthusiasm and excitement. She no longer wanted to look out the window.

Ques10. What did Valli find out about the bus journey?

Ans- Valli found out the following things about the bus journey:

1. Money- She needs to have more money than the bus fare.

2. People- She met different passengers. Some of them belittled her importance and treated her as child. She had to sit with a women she did not like at all.

3. New experiences- Bus journey means having new experiences- some may be good and others, bad. Valli enjoyed the sights of nature, waiting for a coming train at the crossing she saw a view of beautiful shops while crossing the streets in the town.

4. Pleasure and Sorrow- Running of a young cow in front of the bus gave her pleasure. But on her return journey the death of the same cow and its blood spread on the road gave her sorrow.

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS-

Ques1. What was Valli's deepest desire?

Ques2. Write the character sketch of Valli?

Ques3. What did Valli experienced during her first journey by bus?

Ques4. What did Valli find out about the bus journey?

REFERENCES : Collected from the following sources for ICT works and broadcast without fee-

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2. Computer Hardware Software.