

# GIRL WITH RED BICYCLE

By Gypsee Yo (Jonida Beqo)

The girl with the red limping bicycle  
and scraped knees and hands wipes  
tears with the hem of her dress, sore alone.

By now she knows boys  
will always push her out  
of the way, rather than lose  
to a girl who is good at everything.

Boys, brothers, cousins, and friends  
immune to the spell of blooming flowers  
on summer frocks, unimpressed  
with quick tongue and wit, tell her  
the likes of her all die alone.

No man would chain his heart to hers,  
an anchor diving too deep to rescue.

The strap of her torn sandal,  
unstitched like her pride, tugs her  
ankle by the reins on the long way  
home, that humbling walk across hot  
pavement soft as bruised flesh.

Across the rooster yard of boyhood cacophony  
the bicycle chain drags on the ground like a white flag.

But she squeezes her fists until knuckle-white  
hands become walls her pride can lean on.

*Let them sweat trying to catch  
my hair in the wind. I will ride.*

*I don't care if their feet never leave the shore.  
I will always dive, headfirst and unafraid.*

*No matter how deep the anchor plunges  
I will always rescue myself.*