

Audio Description Transcript:

Girl with Bicycle, Dublin, 1966

Written and read by Eleanor Margolies

A girl aged about six or seven stands astride an adult bicycle, looking towards us, on the deserted junction of two streets.

This is a colour photograph in portrait format. The central figure is in crisp focus and in glowing colour against a muted, blurred background. The girl has wavy dark gold hair cut in a short style, with two big curls on her forehead. She is wearing a lilac jumper under a grey pleated pinafore, scarlet knee-length socks and school shoes with a strap. She turns her head to look directly at us as she holds firmly onto the handlebars of a large bicycle with a black step-through frame. She stands astride the frame, one foot just touching the ground on tiptoe, the saddle coming right up to her armpit. It's possible to imagine that she's quite used to borrowing a bike from an older family member, clambering up onto the pedals and riding standing up.

The tarmac under her feet is black and damp as if it's recently rained, with patches reflecting the light from a grey sky streaked with darker clouds. To the right of the photograph, there is a wide pavement and a garden enclosed by a high, emerald green hedge on one side, and railings on the other. The gaps between the railings have been filled in with a green material, perhaps felt or wood, so that there is no view into the space beyond. This garden stands on the corner of the street, with a telegraph pole running straight up out of the frame of the photograph. Standing in front of the green hedge, turning to look across the

street, is a dog with a fluffy tail, its fur the same dark gold as the girl's hair. The angle of the photograph puts them side by side, even though they are metres apart: both seem to have paused on their journey, turning their heads to look over their shoulders, though in different directions.

Beyond, there are houses of dark maroon brick and slate roofs that seem to disappear in the mist. Over the junction, the terrace of modest brick houses continues away from us, off out to the left beyond the frame of the photograph, in the direction the girl seems about to head.