

The sweetness in experiencing a life event as it recurs in a changed circumstance is often missed out in the hustle and bustle of daily life. In this poem, I have tried to express the ripple effect that was formed in my heart, when I got a chance to observe such an event.

To School, Again

Edasseri

Like dawn giving splendour
To the blooming lotus bud,
My daughter dolled up
My little son with fervour.
Added sheen to his face,
Brimming with pride and zest.
His first day of school; she
Brought him in front of me.
By sheer beauty of recurrence
This evokes interest in me!

Fifty years have passed since
That incident, but then ...
The sister had a golden nose-ring
On her sesame-flower-like nose;
Brother's face did not have
The sheen of talcum powder.
Perplexity brimming in the two little eyes,
The prolific affection in the other two eyes;
Were neither less nor more!

Carrying new books and a slate,
And wearing a new dress, my son
Holding hand, you will bring home today,
That bright and enchanting bride, *Vidya**.
An irrepressible, mischievous smile,
Rises from sister's lips, may be reflecting;
How old the alluring bride is; a grandma!
As a father, I grieve with concern, today
About you, my dear little friend;
There stands the *Alari*, **
Relishing the morning golden rays,
Scattering flowers in the sandy court yard;

A home for the beautiful butterflies.
The little birds perching on its twigs,
Are waiting as usual for you to come.
Most beloved they are; say bye to them,
You both understand each other's natter!
By the time you are back after schooling,
You must have forgotten each other!
We mug up some grammar, return in a daze;
The language that regaled all Beings
For sure, would have left us by then.

Those who played fascinating games
Among themselves fifty years back,
Book-learning set them apart
As, son-of-man and the lesser beings;
Added an accursed sense of nobility,
In the loner with human intellect.
Oh! Dear little one, with bowed head
you stand before me seeking blessings.
In the journey you embark on;
The journey in pursuit of Knowledge,
The so-called restlessness of the soul; Ah!
Alacrity for growth, longing for perfection;
What blessings can I, an unerudite, offer!

That event fifty years distant
Still, I keep afresh in my mind;
Little birds perched restive
On the *Alari* in the courtyard.
Measuring the lengthening shadow of the sun
Set by the lower eaves of the house,
Sister prodded me in a hurrying tone
'Getting late, Getting late'
Mother who knows my innermost secrets,
Wraps with love; in a mellifluous tone,
My inspirations for going to school.
Father who aged; his words never faltering
Gave his son this blessing, rather this order;
'Learn to write neatly!'
So unmindful was he, when he
moulded that beautiful concept;
Whether a bush of thorny shrubs,
Or a bed covered with jasmine flowers!
He was only suggesting
An unfettered straight path.
That concept was good; And I
Fold my hands before his sacred feet;
For, my burdensome days traverse
Along that hard path even today!

In this era, my little child
Life is a little more complex.
Inadequate in far sightedness,
Little can I construe my dear,
Of the weapons, most suited
For you, in your battle in life.

Whatever you want to be, you be.
Let that bud bloom from within.
You have a secured heart
And a healthy tender body.
What I wish for you is this;
Even after gaining abundance of knowledge,
Let it remain unceasingly in you;
The brilliance of mind and a healthy body!

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* As per Hindu mythology, Goddess of vidya, Saraswathy is extremely beautiful. Vidya means Knowledge, and as we all know, was born even before man was born!

** *Alari* is a flowering plant that grows up to 8 to 10 feet and produces long seed packs, which parrots and other little birds like to eat.

