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## The Eternally Caged

Christina Alex

Pitter-patter I hear the raindrops fall,  
I can feel its aura engulfing me

From far away I hear a familiar call,  
Of a voice that sounds so trivial yet free.

I lean forward and stare for a while,

With longing eyes so meek and lined,  
At the wondrous shower from the heavens,  
Where is the one whom I seek?

I close my eyes and see her afore me,  
Running and dancing in the rain,  
Laughter so deep, erupts from her lips,

Shunning heaven's thunderous rage.

Joyous and lively like a bird,  
Tripping and splashing, mother's summons unheard,

She sings and laughs and sways,  
As the showers float over her face.

She is no beauty, no bewitching star,

But hers is the voice that calls me from far.  
Once upon a time, not that long ago,

Hers is the face I used to see,  
With huge eyes full of dreams,  
In the mirror starring back at me.

With one swift sway life's course changed,  
Declared 'grown-up', I was caged.  
Not by parents, not by school,  
But by society who dictated rules.

Young women don't do this and that,  
Walk like a lady, don't be a brat,

You are not a child anymore,  
Men's gaze shall be upon you forevermore.

That girl inside me is caged,  
I feel years older than my age,

The clogged up emotions in me pains,  
I can't break free from these chains.

My dear heart yearns for those days,

When I won't have to live in this endless maze.  
Dictated by the ways of the land,

Reluctantly offering a stranger my hand.

The poem "The Eternally Caged" speaks of the feelings every teenage girl has when she is confronted with the sudden change in the attitude of everyone towards her. She is forced to recoil into a shell because of the numerous gazes and rules that are imposed abruptly upon her one fine day

### **Biography:**

Ms. Christina Alex is a lecturer in the Department of Languages at Bishop Vayalil Memorial Holy Cross College, Cherpunkal, an institution affiliated to the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala. She completed her MA in English from Christ University, Bangalore. Christina is a literature enthusiast who lives with the dictum that words and ideas can indeed change the world. She has been writing poetry since her school days and is passionate about teaching and the English language. She writes of her experiences that touch her deeply and stands by Wordsworth when he says that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions.