

In *The Bicycle*, Maria wants to go bike riding with Hannah but she is forbidden to go anywhere while her father is at work. Jealous of Hanna's freedom, Maria is tempted to disobey her father.

“Your mom lets you ride your bike to the creek all by yourself?”

“Yep. She lets me do anything I want.”

I could not imagine the kind of freedom Hannah had. Her parents let her come and go as she pleased, and she never had to ask permission. Sometimes she did not even tell anyone where she was headed, just opened the door, and went on her way. I always had to tell Papa where I was going and when I would be home.

“Must be nice,” I said with a sinking feeling.

“You coming or not?”

“I can't. I-”

She cut me off with a huff and stomped out the door. As I watched her mount her purple bike with the colorful tassels hanging off the handlebars, I felt envy and shame. Envy that she had a freedom I would never know, and shame that I could not disobey Papa.

“The Bicycle,” *Vintage Voices: Cent' Anni: May You Live 100 Years*. Published 2009 by Redwood Writers. Editors Karen Batchelor and Catherine Bramkamp.

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