



The Tale of Two Waters

Vasanthi Vasudev

Once, not so long ago,
Was born a supple tear.
Laboured in pain and agony,
It dropped rudely
On the lap of destiny.
Yet survived...
Survived without drying up...
Sensitivity her nourishment
Sensitivity her suffering...!
A paradox
Buried in her core!




Her many siblings
Fashioned in her frame
Followed in creation.
And together, the sisters
Formed a river
Pristine in sorrow,
Pristine in grace.

The river began
Its journey
Down the bumpy course
Sometimes with a frolic,
Somestimes with a nudge,
Many a times with a fall
And a bad bad bruise.

She journeyed
Through dense forests
Of fear and of gloom;
Through scorching lands
Where tempers raged and fumed;
Through lusty gales,
Through dangerous dreams....

And then,
She tired.
She looked behind,
She looked beyond,
'Where is the sea?'
She asked...
'The sea of solace
For a lap to sleep?'



And then she, perchance,
Sighted the sea;
Vast in love,
Deep in sacrifice,
Rippling in lust,
Sparkling in wait,
Foaming pearls
That crowned
A restlessness within...
“Ah” exclaimed the sea,
“How long have I waited
For fresh waters...
My being is parched,
My insides numb,
All of me is stale
Like waters
Caught in a mushy mire.
Come little river
Come and make me new!”

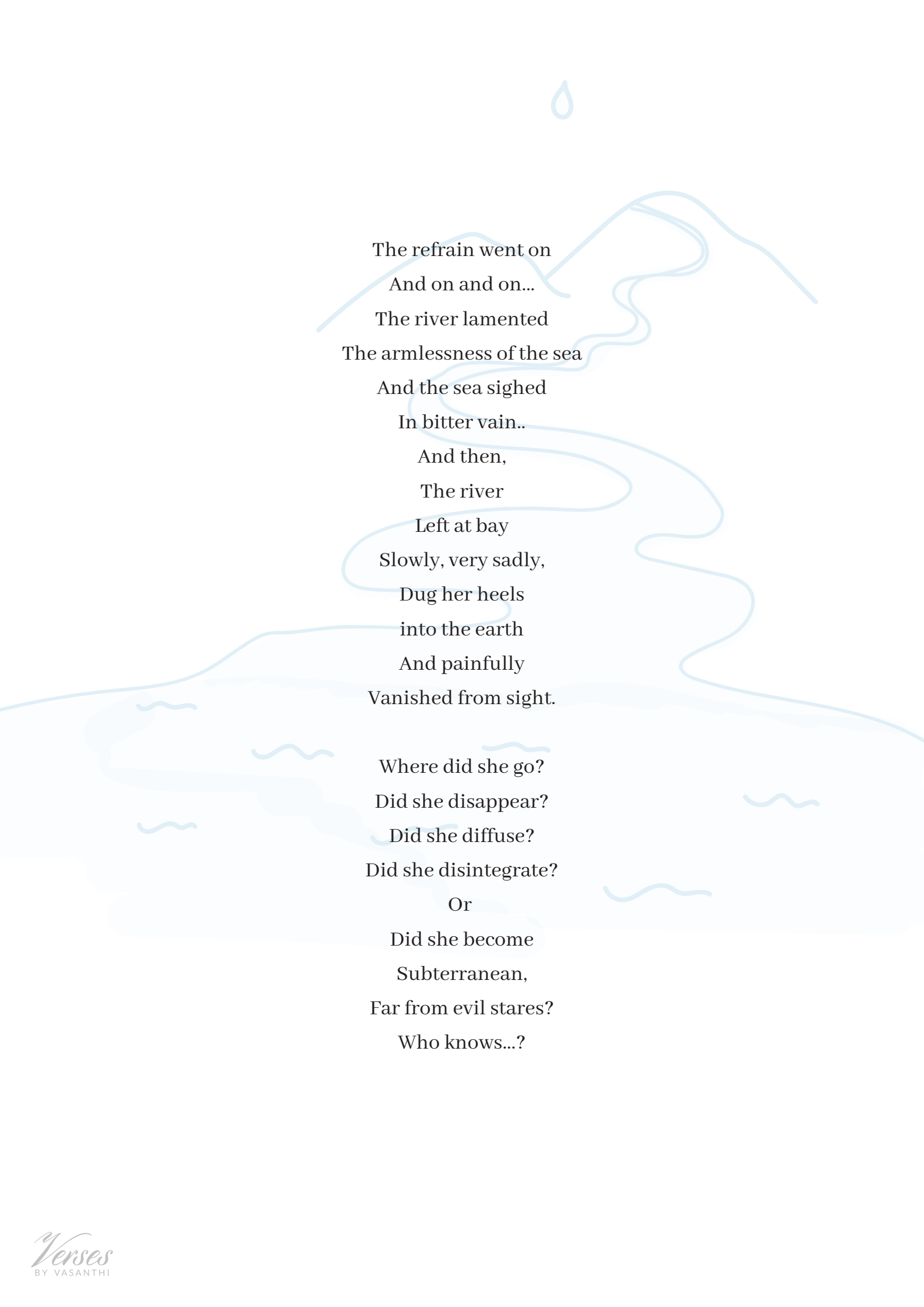
The river leaped,
Sang and danced
In skip and hope,
Rushing towards the sea
In new found life...!

But what was this?
Sand banks, mountain-like,
And rocks that cut
Like brutal glass, broken.
Rising large
All along the shore?

The river cried;
“Oh mighty sea,
Come take my hand
And help me cross
The banks between!”

The sea heaved
In unknown mystery.
“I can send
A million little waves
That will lap
Parts of you
And bring them unto me.
But I have not the arm
To cross the mound of sand
That will reach your core
And bring the whole of you.”
So cried the sea, wearily.

“But I want
To be taken whole
And not in parts...
Your waves
Kiss my wounds
But they don't
Pluck them afar.
Your waves
Wash my feet
But do not cover
My burdened head.”
Moaned the river, in grief.



The refrain went on
And on and on...
The river lamented
The armlessness of the sea
And the sea sighed
In bitter vain..
And then,
The river
Left at bay
Slowly, very sadly,
Dug her heels
into the earth
And painfully
Vanished from sight.

Where did she go?
Did she disappear?
Did she diffuse?
Did she disintegrate?

Or
Did she become
Subterranean,
Far from evil stares?
Who knows...?



The sea continued to see...
To keep vigil into the nights.
Will the river appear
Once more
Stronger than ever before?
Will the sea find an arm
As never before?
Does anyone know?
Who knows...?
But this, they all know..
That the sea waits...
Waits in love;
And that
The river loves,
This, everyone knows.

Verses
BY VASANTHI