

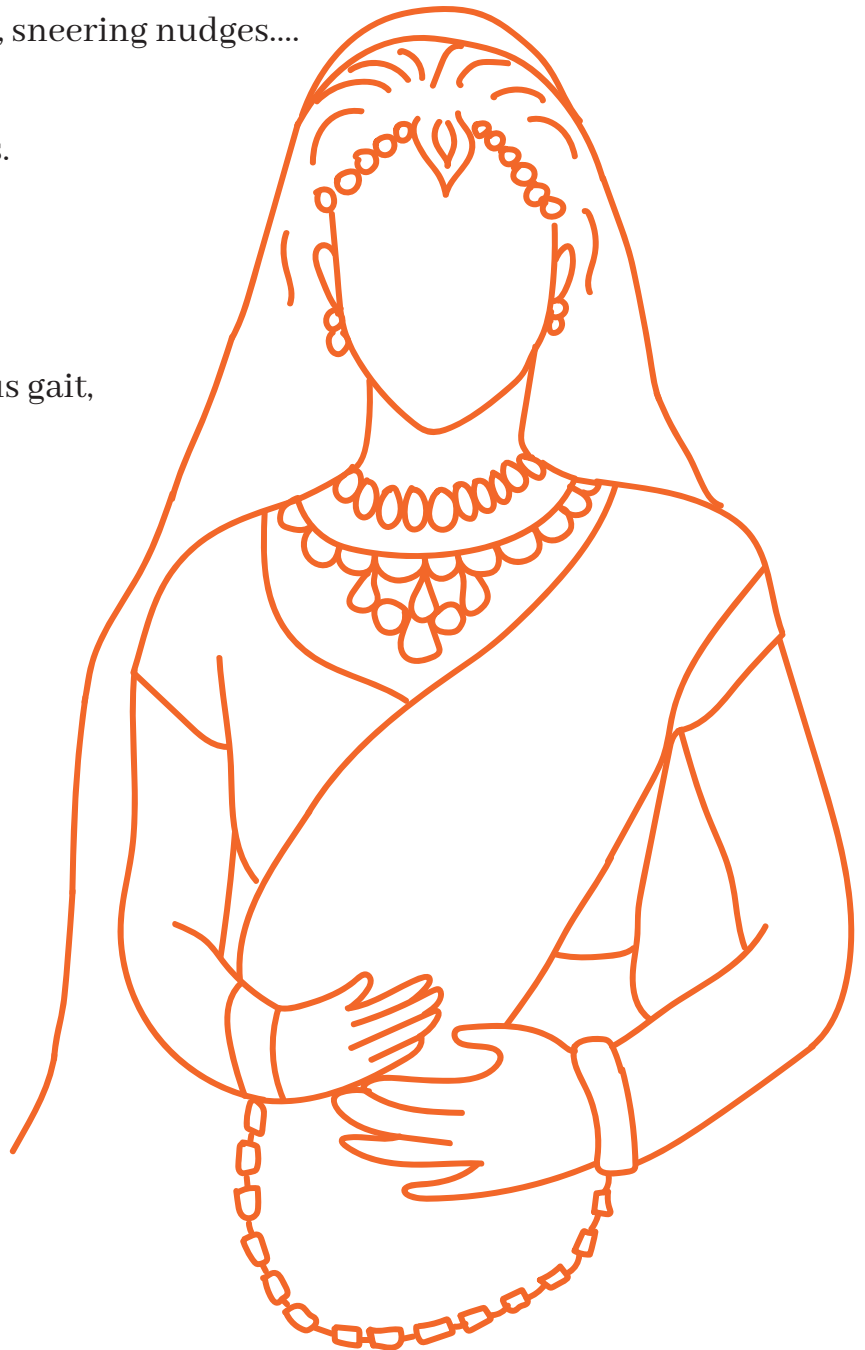


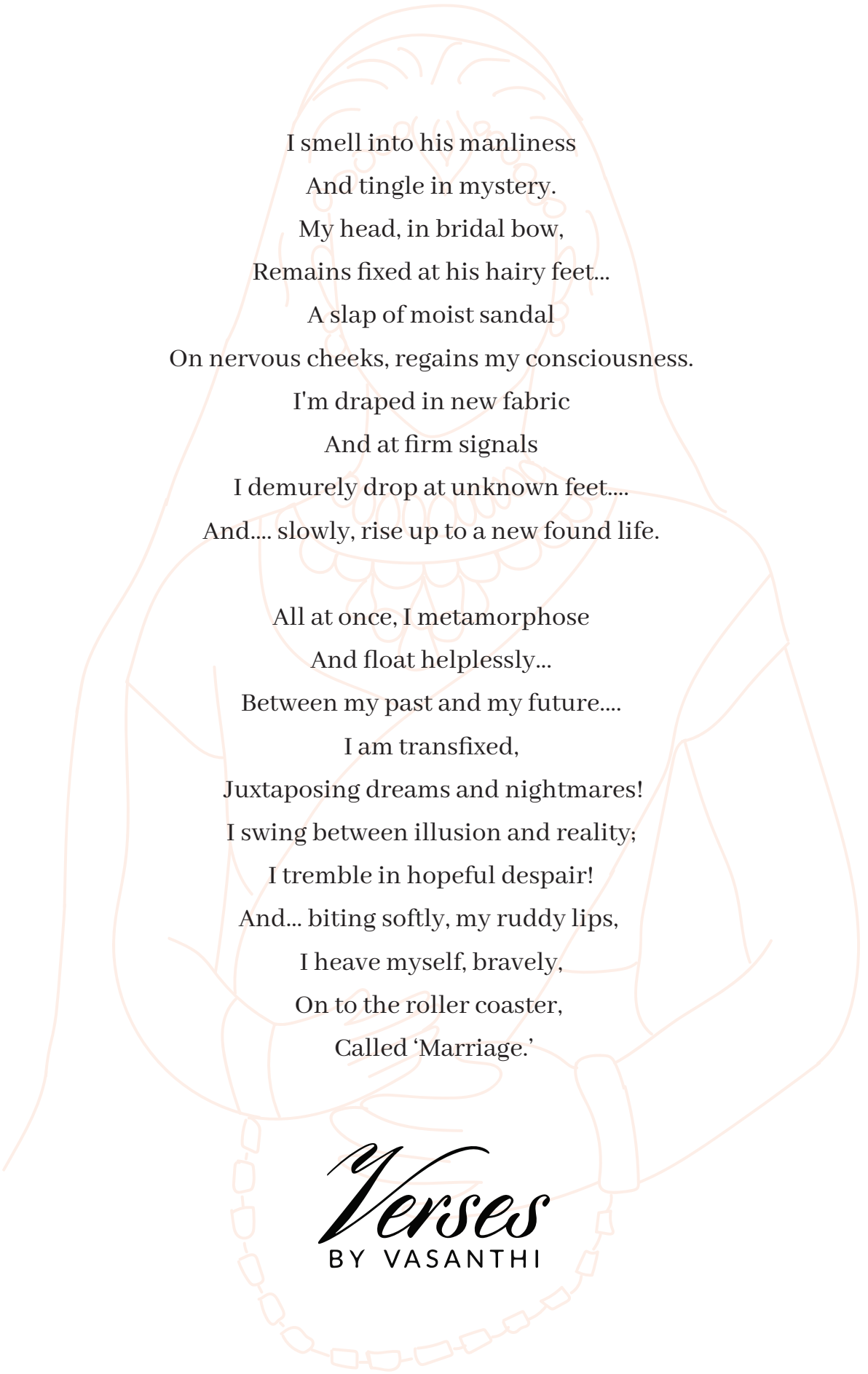
The Betrothal

Vasanthi Vasudev

Betel leaves, luscious fruits, candy sugar,
Sandal paste seeping into ornate silver...
Jasmine scent, rose garlands, rustling silks,
Bursting cacophony, gauging looks, sneering nudges....
Sombre old men all wise and prim,
Spread out fine in ghost white lines.
Deep throated pundits
Chanting to 'moneyed' times.

In comes "He" like a splash in ruckus gait,
And hijacks all lime light!
In twinkling time, I am herded
Into the thick of strange faces....
Two strong hands nail me firmly
Besides my 'future.'





I smell into his manliness
And tingle in mystery.
My head, in bridal bow,
Remains fixed at his hairy feet...
A slap of moist sandal
On nervous cheeks, regains my consciousness.
I'm draped in new fabric
And at firm signals
I demurely drop at unknown feet....
And... slowly, rise up to a new found life.

All at once, I metamorphose
And float helplessly...
Between my past and my future....
I am transfixed,
Juxtaposing dreams and nightmares!
I swing between illusion and reality;
I tremble in hopeful despair!
And... biting softly, my ruddy lips,
I heave myself, bravely,
On to the roller coaster,
Called 'Marriage.'

Verses
BY VASANTHI