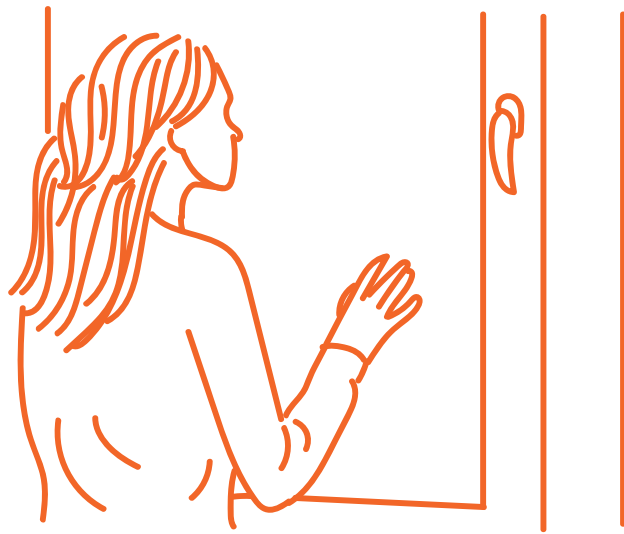




# Petal of Blood

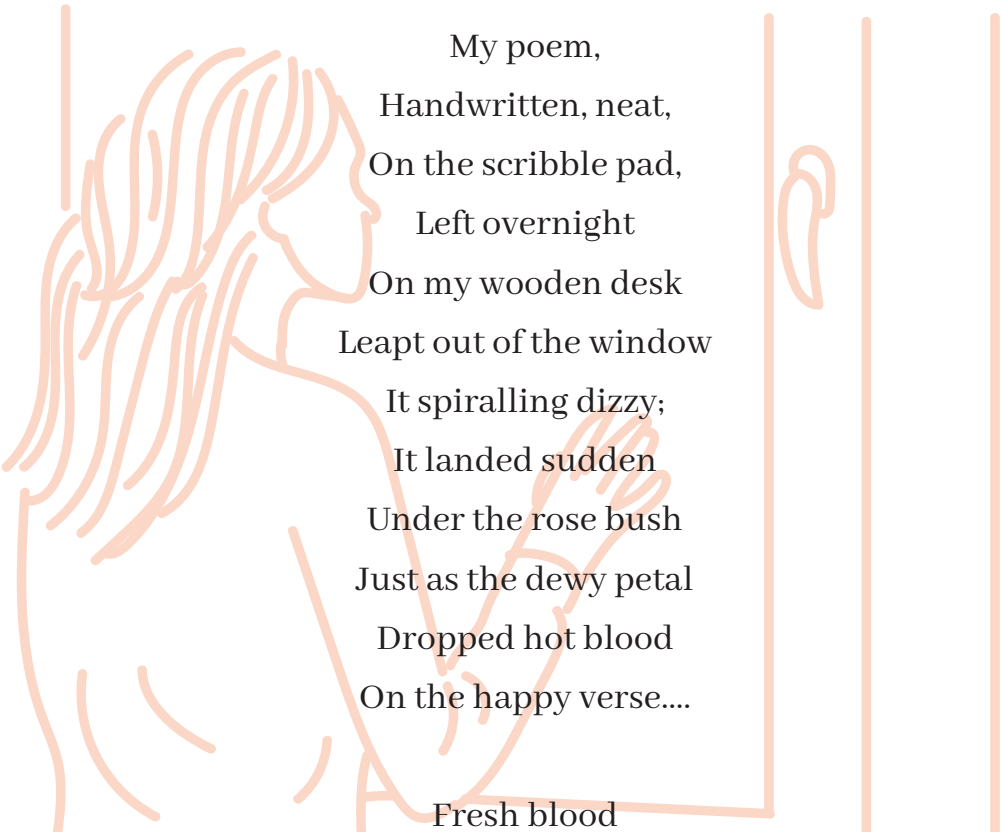
*Vasanthi Vasudev*

The sun outside my window  
Woke up with me....  
Both jolted by deafening sirens;  
It rained not waters of life  
Not snowflakes, not meteors  
But shrapnel and missiles of doom...  
Thick black clouds rose to hide  
The rosy sky  
With charcoal blotches  
Ugly, sinister, strange....



The sun hid under cover  
Along with those thousands  
Who rushed 'unthinkingly'  
Towards ghostly bunkers  
Fleeing burning buildings  
Raging scarlet and angry  
Like mechanical, automated robots,  
Before they became headless bodies....

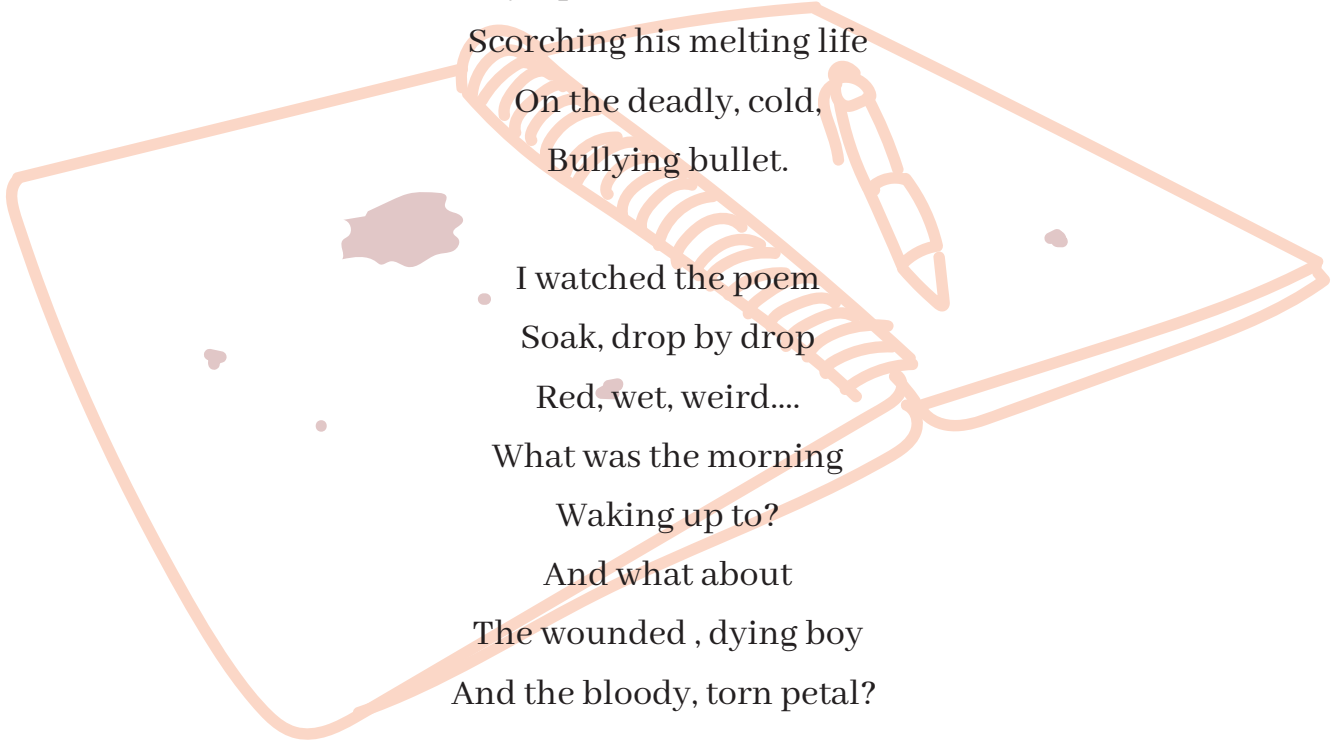




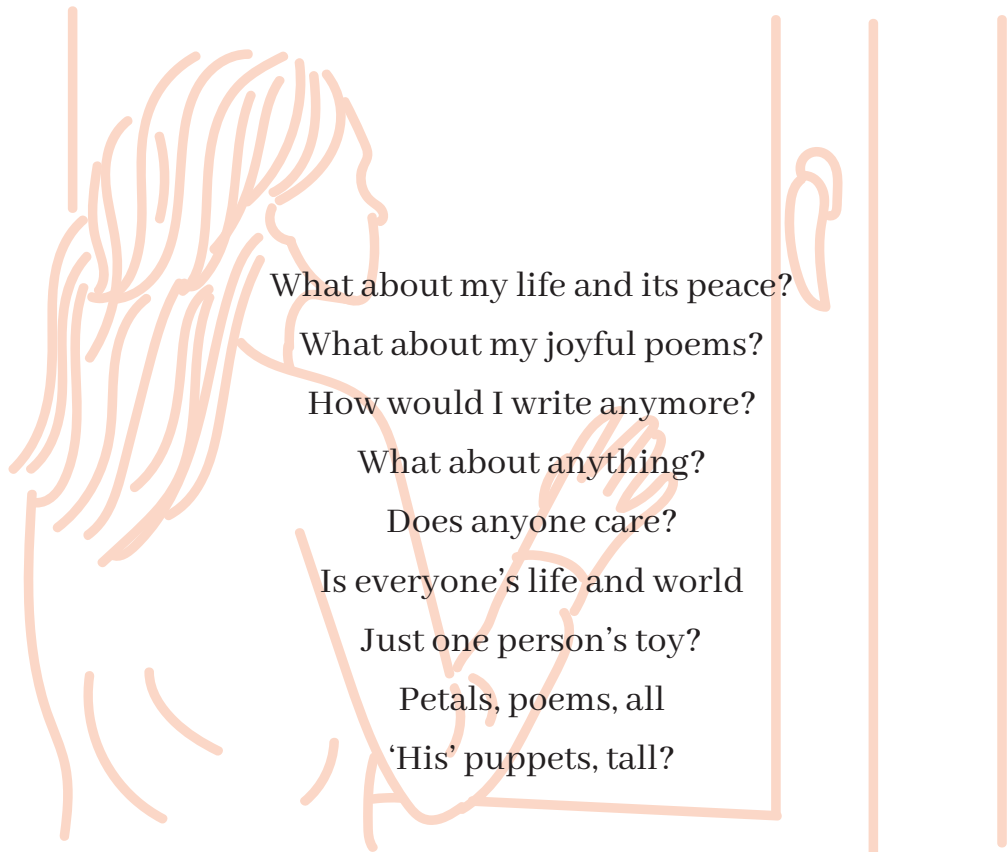
My poem,  
Handwritten, neat,  
On the scribble pad,  
Left overnight  
On my wooden desk  
Leapt out of the window  
It spiralling dizzy;  
It landed sudden  
Under the rose bush  
Just as the dewy petal  
Dropped hot blood  
On the happy verse....

Fresh blood  
That spewed off  
The innocent, budding boy  
Who lay squashed and shrivelled...

Scorching his melting life  
On the deadly, cold,  
Bullying bullet.



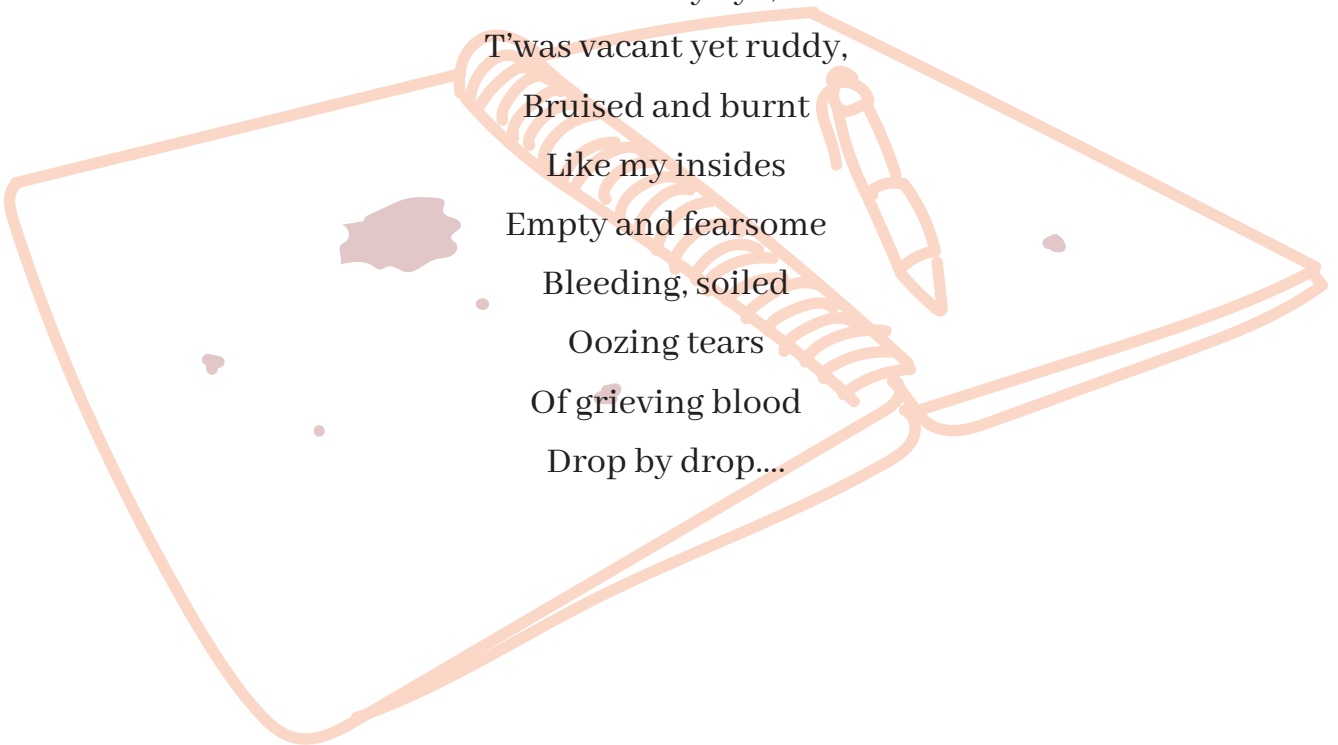
I watched the poem  
Soak, drop by drop  
Red, wet, weird....  
What was the morning  
Waking up to?  
And what about  
The wounded , dying boy  
And the bloody, torn petal?

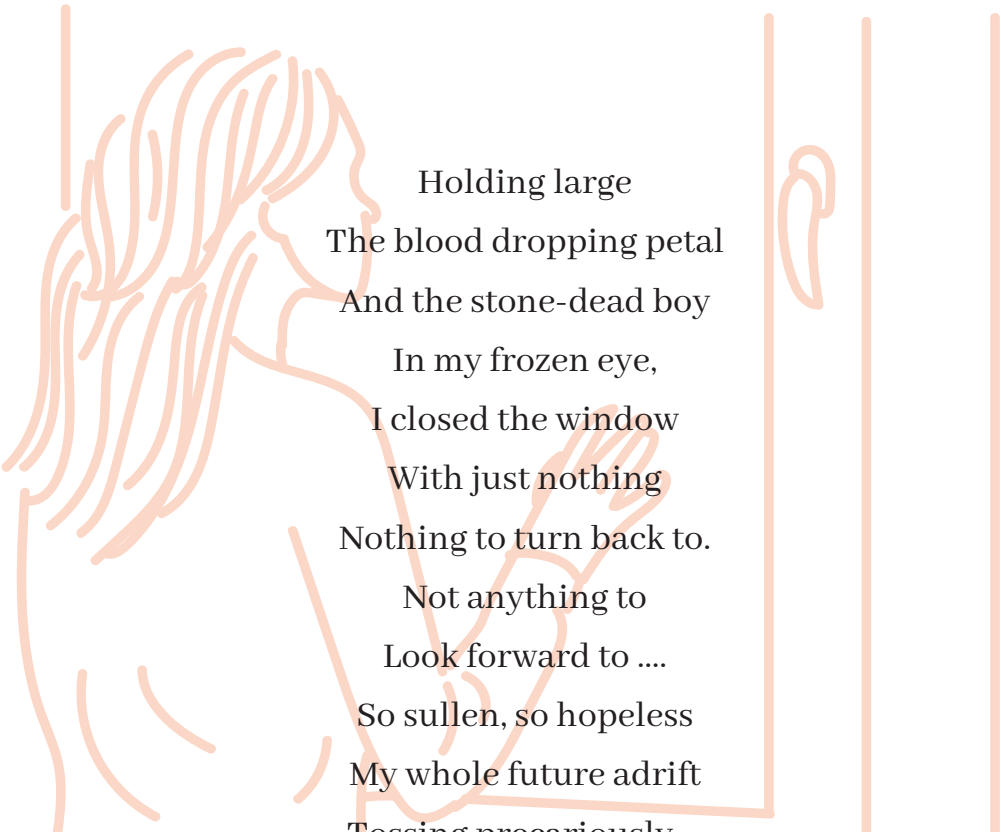


What about my life and its peace?  
What about my joyful poems?  
How would I write anymore?  
What about anything?  
Does anyone care?  
Is everyone's life and world  
Just one person's toy?  
Petals, poems, all  
'His' puppets, tall?

The scribble pad  
On my desk  
Gored my eye,

T'was vacant yet ruddy,  
Bruised and burnt  
Like my insides  
Empty and fearsome  
Bleeding, soiled  
Oozing tears  
Of grieving blood  
Drop by drop....





Holding large  
The blood dropping petal  
And the stone-dead boy  
In my frozen eye,  
I closed the window  
With just nothing  
Nothing to turn back to.  
Not anything to  
Look forward to ....  
So sullen, so hopeless  
My whole future adrift  
Tossing precariously....

Had nothing to write about,  
Save a prayer to say

To save

My land;

Save to cry

Cry aloud: 'Oh! beloved country

May you be safe for ever !'



*Verses*  
BY VASANTHI