

Inside Out

Imagine that you are a refugee from this specific time and place in history. You, like Ha and the real refugees we have read about, have been forced to flee your home country for your safety.

On your own, write an “inside out” free verse poem similar to Ha’s diary entries in the novel *Inside Out & Back Again*.

For this poem, consider these questions:

- What hardships did you face in your country?
- Why did you decide to flee your country?
- What was it like for you after you fled?
- Where did you go?
- Where did you find help?
- Where did you settle?
- How was your life turned “inside out”?

Use the Details in the Poetry graphic organizer to help you plan and draft your poems.



The Meaning of Life (Draft)

- My mom (name) is a high school Social science teacher.
 - Mom went to help dad because there is lack of nurse.
- My dad (name) is a military doctor.
 - Dad when to be military doctor because there is a request from the government and his friend (name).
- My grandfather used to be a farmer.
 - He is 72 years old.
- My sister still study in her 2nd year college.
 - She is 19 years old. Very educated
- My grandma is household.
 - She is 68 years old. She is a very good cook.

Why, For What?

For me:

What defines life, has passed; it CAN NEVER be returned.

What defines love, has gone; I can have ONLY ONCE.

What defines favorite, is ending; nor could it RESTART.

What defines hatred, is fueling; many lives are ASHED.

What defines me, has presented itself.

I'm seeing it right here, in my black pupil;

Strike through my CRUX.

I never perceive that those things could happen.

I never understand why it happened, and for what reasons.

I never learn that PEACE comes from papers;

I never understand why life is so sophisticated.

I don't understand!

But I still think while waiting.

I'm waiting for a piece of my domino's life:

To return back to its original place,

To complete what it should be,

To have a better result.

I only hope that one day,

I'll see them again at anywhere, at anytime.

For whatever it takes, I'll pay for the cost.

But it should never be me!

It's those who begin!

My golden lily over bows its flowers in sorrow, and dark somber.

From the bright color of hope, happiness, conflict resolve: yellow,

To the darkest green, of mournful and suffering.

Not a single drop of slimy liquid from its pedicel,

when two fingers forced each other tight.

The heaviest pressure did nothing.

So dangerous; so naughty.

Keels its stem, confessing its people.

I certainly know about that.

I look up at the sky in my all dust bed.

Putting one hand below my head as a pillow.

Cover the shame body in a white T-shirt,

and a long brown pants from nowhere to pair as a blanket.
Knowing it is impossible to grab any star in Croatia
that soon will be covered by the dark cloud;
ready to cry at any time soon.

The heavy droplets penetrate through our white fabric roof,
leaked our bed.
So, we put a metal bowl to collect the sadness.
The wooden poles that keep the fabric high from covering us,
chipped little by little.
The coldest wind and droplet weigh tons,
knock our temporary home down.
Not successfully though!

My older sister yell two meters away from my bed,
Aakil! Aakil! Aakil Vikaas Kaab!
You are only 12 but your ears are too heavy,
competing with the heavy raindrops.
Not knowing I'm dropping my tears
as the raindrops glide on the tent ceiling.
Bounce up and down, filling the dusty ground.

Get yourself up and eat the soup.
I let the last aqua sink,
not to show my weakness, and stand up.
The soup only taste sweet because there are two chunks of carrot.
Taste spicy because my older sister think it is delicious,
Which isn't good for my stomach.
Taste a little sour, might be because of the rain.
And the soup lack of salt maybe we are too far from the ocean.

After-eating-we-must-talk.
Grandfather slowly squeaks his voice,
caused me to rumble a little.
Tell us now!
I can't wait to know what it is about!
I finished the soup, left the two chunks carrot in the bowl.
My stomach started to vibrate while making the gecko sound.

On the dusty floor, there's a 15cm candle lit.
Illuminate the entire wet tent,
while battling with the darkness
which is what keeping us together.

Its light's life is shortened every second,
ready to plunge the dark bitterness at any time.

I received a letter from your mother's friend.

She is a reporter.

The light only reflected his eyes,
like a light bulb in a bucket of water.

I must say we should move on.

Move on? What do you mean?

I snapped him off as my face turn red,
eyebrows squinch,
my body shakes my moist palms.

I look at Grandma as she is closing her eyes,
her lip moves to join the conversation.

Her eyes are watering itself.

Your parents are gone!

To where?

My sister vulgarly shout to her ears,
Grandpa's, mine, and to the entire camp.

Grandparents both sit in silence,
Allowing their eyes to clean itself once again.

My parents are dead?

My sister emphasis grandparents' words,
She leans forward to grandma.

Her manner telling me that she wants to know more.

Grandparents still silence the somber,
regretting their greatest-heaviest-dreadful mistake
of letting my parents to be a military doctor
and nurse for the triangle war.
They advised ours that the islamic fighters urgently need them.

The letter says:

*the Serbs bombed the military base in Sarajevo;
where your parents healing the wounded troops.*

The letter does not say anything about the death of your parents.

But I have a feeling that I lost two immense items here.

She points to where her heart is located.

I don't believe, but I feel that Allah sent the message.

I rush to quit the conversation
by returning to my dusty bed.
One hand below my ear as a pillow.
One hand covering another ear.
Continuing my embarrass weakness.

I left my head to hurt itself
by deepening my thoughts:
why we are here leaving my parents missing?
Are my parents are the target of war?
Am I the target of war?
Are we all here the target of war?
Will this place be the target of war?
For what reasons the cruel war is brave enough to take a way my parents?
Why!

Our parents always be with us my dear!
My sister choked on her own words.
It sounds like a kilogram of rock is in her throat.
Settling from rude to polite.
War is the only reason that tore us apart.
War is the only reason that caused us to flee here,
to this refugee camp.

But what caused war, is fearing another group's religion,
And people would dominate another group.
Discrimination and rasicm between riligions and cultures,
is the reason of fearing.
I vaguely understand her conviction.
She is very good at that because she was at her 2nd year college,
before she actually experience this disaster.

We governed the country.
The Serbs stupidly attack us,
fearing we would clean them out.
The Croats as well.
For what?
Sucks, right?

We are only here because I have to protect you.
Your parents cares about your safety, my boy.
In fact, they asked us to look after you
if a catastrophe occurs.

*Our was bombed, remember?
We are homeless now!
We help ourselves to come here.
I just fulfill what they wished for you, my child.
Grandma speaks the same way as my sister talk,
not with rock, but with gold.*

I wish that my tears on the wet soil
would make my parents appear
in front of us on in the tent
to continue what it should be,
to have a better result.

I remember my father surrounded my body
in his huge warm arms,
in his white shiny doctor dress.
Meaning to surrender.

He marked me that he would see me in three months.
Now, I have waited for one years.
The triangle war is now three years.
I never heard from him, until now.
Only from his friend letter.

I remember mother put her red pale lip on my forehead,
in her white cloth.
Meaning to surrender.
Told me be a good child,
To listen to my grandparents.
Before they both leave me and my sister to them.
They both look superb, though.

Candle life has ended.
Abolish our light.
Cold wind shiverd my back.
I closed my eyes overwhelmed with salt tears.
I wish I would have put it in the soup,
So I wouldn't hear about the letter.

The End!