Author's note

My poem titled "Stay" draws inspiration from the prevalent issue of suicides. I did not immediately decide on this social issue from the start. Originally, I intended to write a piece that dealt with mental health disorders and widespread depression, something which is said to be very common amongst people with a creative temperament. I meant to write something about either van Gogh's life, or about Kut Cobain's (lead guitarist of Nirvana) life: both highly talented people with very unfortunate life stories. But after a brief conversation with a friend, I decided to write not *about* a person contemplating suicide, but from the point of view of the person who had thought about it, and finally decided to do it.
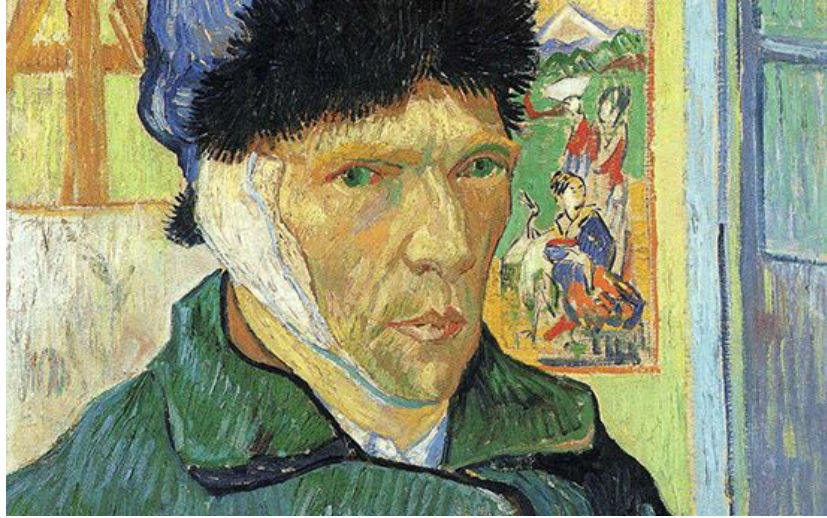
Suicide is a horrifying problem that society has to deal with, and far more widespread than it should be. Studies say that suicides are usually common amongst young people usually between the ages of 15 to 30, and amongst elderly people above the age of 70. The motivation behind taking one's life varies widely from person to person, but the root of the problems is usually either stress, mental disorders, financial difficulties, relationship problems, or addiction.

Whatever the reason behind comitting suicide may be, it is rarely ever the solution. It never solves the problem, it just passes it on to close family and friends of the person who took their own life. And sometimes, like in the case of Vincent van Gogh, by the time the person realises that they don't want to take their life and continue living after all, it is already too late to undo their actions. This was the social issue I tried to highlight in my poem.

The poem doesn't adhere to any particular rhyming scheme or structure - it is primarily free verse and follows a flow of thought. Some stanzas, however, have their own theme. For example, the last two paragraphs are about the narrator reminiscing about seemingly insignificant events from their past and about simple desires. The third stanza describes how and why the narrator feels tired, and so on.

My poem is an ekphrasis. This was the element of found poetry I included in my poem. The pictures and paintings which inspired me to write the poem however, aren't very straight forward. There were two pictures which led to the final product: the first one is a self portrait of van Gogh with a bandaged ear.

This picture always immediately reminds me of his bipolar disorder and other mental illnesses, and it inevitably leads me to think about how unfortunate and regretful his death was. He was a mind too creative for the world in his times: no one knew how to handle it.

The second picture that was the direct inspiration for the poem was a picture I came across a while ago while scrolling through my Pinterest.

This picture, though very aesthetic to look at, has something inherently sad about it. The sky changing colour from an orange glow to dark seemed to signify the sun setting metaphorically, and everything going dark. Also, the girl's slumped shoulders also seem to send out the

message that she is unhappy: like she is capable of acknowledging that the world is beautiful, but doesn't know how to enjoy or appreciate it.

References:
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide
- https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/avant-garde-france/post-impressionism/a/van-gogh-self-portrait-with-bandaged-ear
- https://in.pinterest.com/nain0175/alone_/