

My stained skirt

by Deeksha Sharma

I wore a skirt today morning
Pretty light grey skirt, flowing merrily
Like breeze flowing on a cloudy day, expecting
Some rain showers today, heavily

I got my period a day before
My period date, but that's normal
And I quickly wore a sanitary pad
Adjusting it neatly and proper

But I was so much in love
With my new skirt - light grey
That I was so determined to wear it
And not wear something dark during the day

I went outside to buy some groceries and then
Walked through the park in my view
The breeze was flowing like my skirt
And, there were some showers too

Showers! from my vagina
Not from the rain
Not its soothing water droplets
But painful red blood, this month again

I could feel the green grass around me dancing
Noticing my uterus bounce and shake
So, I sat on a bench for a while
Feeling my blood vessels break

I pressed my belly and wished I could
Teleport myself back home
Oh! this slimy-thick blood
Moving gently like an earthworm

I stood up and glanced at my skirt behind
Damn, a red stain on my skirt
Conscious and insecure I felt
Hoping no one sees this, but there's no dearth

No dearth of people staring my skirt
Like something they've never seen
What's the matter if there's a stain?
I'll go home and clean

I kept walking swiftly like a car
That lost its brakes in muddy dirt
And I can notice people
Noticing me, my stained skirt

If I close my eyes to the world
The world can still see me
Oh! I need to rush home
I need to pee

And I reached home
My light grey skirt has a new design
Of two big red polka dots
Imprinted so fine

I washed myself, and
Changed my stained skirt
Walking across the room
I opened my cupboard

Thinking now what I should wear, maybe
Something dark to hide any stain
Smiling at myself, I blinked an eye
I took out a pant, it was white again

Deeksha Sharma is a development sector professional, currently working as an Associate Consultant with a Research Consultancy (based in the UK) that is working to end modern slavery. She holds a master's degree in Gender and Development from the Institute of Development Studies, UK, and is passionate about finding creative ways to lead social change and create more happy, conscious, and inclusive communities. Her goal is to raise awareness around pressing development issues and to help create more effective policies that have better outcomes for the individuals as well as for society in general.

Her poem highlights that ending period stigma can lead to improved physical and mental wellbeing. Reproductive health rights are human rights and by upholding these rights, we can help create an environment that is free from shame, fear, and insecurities. Deeksha loves creative writing and poetry and has her personal blog youinverse.org.