

Two Poems by Nripen Goswami

Dust

Breath rests in the veil of dust
Formed by dust alone

It's a poem only till it remains
Pushing the veil of dust

When with the dust
Mingles a bloated stain
Would it be let off by the dust

Dust knows not
The colours of spring
Hence the leafy world
Gets blown by the wind

Dust you are
Dust I am

Dust defines life by name
With no wind dust never gets blown

When dust gets blown
Its whereabouts no longer remains

With none of us there
Neither you nor I

Song of the Crossroads

Nowadays youngsters don't gather
At the crossroads squares
The evening odour of the crossroads
Merged with the air to fade away

Now at the crossroads
The abuses look for some motor-mouth
From the main house

In the gossips at the crossroads
A fear dwelt in those days

Now those old fears
Chidings and rebukes keep wafting
In the open air of the fields

At times of trouble junkies transmit the news
Of every mishap at the bend of the road

Now not a soul can be found at the crossroads
For a little help during cremations

For the resolutions at the crossroads
Forums-organizations mushroomed
Eventually
Immigrants grew plump occupying the place

In the past no stranger
Dared to light a fag

Now every word gores the body
Sometimes with regard to mothers
Sometimes with regard to the mother-tongue

And at other times while taking stock of the ethnic crisis

Let the crossroads return to those days of the past
Let a shriek or two drift apprehensively

Let them hear
We're alive with the odour of the crossroads
In our clasps

Translated by **Krishna Dulal Barua**

Nripen Goswami is an Assamese poet based in Doomdooma, Assam.