

Prakalpa Ranjan Bhagawati's Poem

Waiting

Whacking sounds of tender twig lashes on the disobedient arum plants by the roadside
that are bad at spelling
You played the enthralled inspector

I didn't become a school master
but an idle poet instead

In the gap of your lips particles of *Dulaler Talmishri*
The memory of the first kiss in life remained sweet

Couldn't be a successful lover either
Became a dear husband of someone else instead

Was it I who came away leaving you behind
or were it you who went away leaving me
Even now undecided that one question

Sitting on the bank of a detached stream I'm waiting
The result of waiting is sweet –they say

Is death sweet
When the waiting ends I'll know what is sweet.

**Dulaler Talmishri: A household name of a brand of palm sugar candy.*

Translated by Uttam Duorah

Prakalpa Ranjan Bhagawati is an Indian poet, writer and translator who writes in Assamese, the major language of Assam in North-East India. He has drawn wide critical attention through his first collection of poems titled *Baladharohi Aru Anyanya Kabita* (The Bullock Rider and Other Poems) published in 2021. His poems have appeared in *Modern Poetry in Translation*; *Muse India*; *Guftugu*; *Indian Cultural Forum*; *Deshabhimani Weekly*.

Uttam Duorah, the translator, retired as the HoD, English, Women's College, Tinsukia and is based in Tinsukia, Assam.