

# Meena Devi Baruah's Poems

## Once the sky was blue

The pages of the book  
Glow with  
The sky azure,  
She looks above and feels confused;  
The sky is blurred  
To the farthest end of her vision,  
Where has the blue quietly disappeared?

She pesters her mother  
With questions  
And comes to know  
The sky was once blue.

The smoke from the chimneys  
Spreads the sky,  
The satellites whiz around,  
The cannons roar  
And the azure fades away.

Mother says—  
The azure still adorns  
The sky in the village,  
The stream murmurs  
The river embraces the sky  
And flows towards the sea.

The flowers stop blossoming,  
The cries of the trees,  
The weeping of the birds  
Mingle  
And descend on the earth,  
The sky sheds  
Fiery tears.

The rivers dry up,  
The hills lose their pride.  
The wind stops howling  
The nahar ceases to bloom,  
To herald the Spring.  
The kopou stops sprouting  
To titilate the bohag  
The tagar ceases to bloom  
The kuli loses its rhythm.  
A section of people  
Plays a double game,  
And scoffs at the future  
In a wild frenzy.

The dear planet gets alarmed

The pages of the book  
Will be engraved with the line

Once the sky was blue.

### **May the sky descend this way**

It goes back to the time  
When we had little burden to carry on our back;  
The happiness bloomed as flowers,  
The flowers smiled  
And glowed in the eyes.

The touch of the soil  
Thrilled our feet,  
And the grandma's tales  
Lulled us to sleep.

It was a golden time.  
The water  
On the roof  
Turned into river,  
The paper boat  
Transformed into waves  
And the banana leaf  
Mutated into an umbrella,  
Rojai hukum dise  
Edin Sedim Bai

We carry the burden on our back,  
The smile ceases to glow  
In the eyes,  
The legs become stiff  
The tiny hearts tremble in fear,  
Happiness eludes us.

The burden accumulates,  
The digital world  
Sprinkles happiness

Happiness increases,  
Swells in the purses,  
The virtual world  
Floating in the air  
Paves the way for happiness.

This happiness  
Is illusory  
The back bends with  
A world of burden,  
The eyes rove  
For smile desperate.

The mind  
Pines for solace  
Under the bokul tree,  
O sky! Will the swarms of herons  
Come down flying?  
There is fragrance of bokul  
In the bouquet.

*Translated by* **Nayanjyoti Hazarika**

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