

Waiting for Mother.

**Shapilu Rangmang Class
VIII,
APNE Library
Reader-Activist,
Wakro, Lohit
Dist. Arunachal Pradesh**

One day, the shopkeeper in our village called me. “Your Mother has sent you some things.” He gave me a packet of clothes, a sweater and a bag of rice, along with a letter.” My mother had written, “Shapi, study well and stay nicely with your sisters.” I was very touched. I sighed, “Oh, when would I see Mom again?”

My mother was from Manchhal, a remote village in the hills of Anjaw district. She had six sisters. She grew up with them very happily, and was friendly to all. My mother did not go to school, because there was no school in her village. She would always go to the field with her mother. One day, my maternal grandparents decided to fix her marriage. But my mom did not agree. “I will not marry now. I want to spend some more time with you all.” Grandma shouted, “You should obey us!” My mother began to cry. Grandpa started scolding mom. “You should marry the person we have chosen for you.” Grandma added, “All girls should get married and they should have their own family.” My mother thought for a while and said, “OK, I am ready to marry. But if anything happened to me, I will come back.” My grandma said, “As you wish.”

My mother moved to father’s home in Towang, in the plains. My paternal grandparents were dead before she came. My mom was not at all happy in her new home. Father used to drink a lot and beat mom. One day mom said angrily to father, “Because of my parents I came to you. I was forced to marry you.” Father said nothing.

When my father got drunk, mom and we children used to run to the forest near our home at

night. We slept there under a big tree. One night, my little sister lost her skirt and sweater in the forest!

Mom could not stand Papa's beating any more. One day she told us, "I'm going to my parent's home tomorrow morning. You all stay with your father." We all began to cry. "Mama, please don't leave us! We cannot live without you!" Mom also began to cry. I said softly, "Mom, please come back soon." We hugged mom. She wiped our tears and said, "Don't cry, Samays (daughters in our language), I'll come back soon to see you all.."

Mom went to her own home at Manchhal. From there, she used to support us, by sending things frequently, through some vehicles going through our village.

Many years passed. But she could not come back to see us.

And then one day one man brought a message: She was no more in this world....

Whenever I face difficulties, I remember my mother....

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