

## Gateway to adventure (Book Review)

Writing a book is an adventure, and no one knows it better than young author/illustrator Tara Goswami. Tara's book *The Bogoli Phut Days – Pitki's Adventures in Assam* not only journeys to the recent past of the author's childhood, but dives into the heart of timeless tales penned by the doyen of Assamese literature, Lakshminath Bezbarua. Pitki's actual childhood of car journeys between Shillong and Sekoni TE, doting grandparents, wide vistas of emerald fields, tea gardens and ponds filled with fish are woven seamlessly into evocative descriptions of Bihu and hilarious tales like that of the purblind son-in-law. The lively artwork and the spare prose gives the narrative a quick pace and immediacy that is refreshing as well as stimulating. A visit to the Orang National Park not only acquaints Pitki and her brother Dondi to the denizens of the jungle, but also the quaint tale of the *toon tooni* bird. Factual details have been incorporated and give a clear picture of Assam, and the blend of facts and stories has given it a traveloguesque character.

The book came about in the form of her dissertation project for the Shristi School of Art Design and Technology, Delhi. Tara studied different styles of drawing and executing an idea. Researching on graphic novels and children's books, she realised she wanted to create rich, layered images. So, creating a huge archive of textures by using a technique like mono-printing. computer skills enabled her to collage textures, pictures, etc.

The five stories of Lakshminath Bezbarua's iconic *Burhi Air Sadhu* were translated by Tara, her mother Roshmi Goswami and friend Priyasree. She is hopeful that books like this will present folk tales and Assamese culture in a more exciting light to children of the region and beyond. She has been inspired by Enid Blyton, Roald Dahl and illustrations of Quentin Blake, Sara Fanelli, etc.

As the author herself says: "Being exposed to folklore, colloquial phrases, dialogue and expressions that are so integral to every culture gave me a sense of looking to Assam even though I have never actually lived there. I hope books like these will be able to instil a similar sense, at a time when modernism has set in and families have become increasingly nuclear."

### **The Bogoli Phut Days – Pitki's adventures in Assam**

Tara Goswami  
Harper Collins,