

#FICTION

# It doesn't rain in Shukhno Gram

*In a forgotten railway station where the rain never falls, a solitary station master's routine is upended by an unexpected visitor in blue. It's a quiet tale of chance, connection, and longing as the romantic story unfolds.*

When studying economics back in DU, I never imagined that I would end up working at an old, rundown railway station in a desolate, remote village. But here I was: a station master in charge of possibly the least active railway stop in the country.

It is called Shukhno Gram Rail Station, named after the village, although the locals call it Hoogna Geram. Why shukno, hoogna, or dry? Because it does not rain around here! Now in my mid-30s, I have been posted at this station for almost a decade — and not a raindrop in my career.

My job has its perks, of course. No corporate politics, no Excel sheets; just minor interactions, basic record-keeping, etc.

But no exciting stories either. I have become as dry as this village.

## **An unexpected visitor**

On a warm May afternoon, a train stopped at my station. I frowned. The first and last train of the day had left several hours ago. A train would stop now only if someone pulled the emergency handle.

A minute later — a grunt, followed by a heavy luggage being tossed out, followed by a woman in a blue saree.

**"Excuse me! How can I go to Dhaka from here?"** the lady in blue asked, rubbing off beads of sweat below her nose while the train disappeared.

I was dumbfounded. There was no easy answer to her question. She had to take muddy roads, trawlers, and local buses to get to the nearest city.

After I explained all that, she yearned, "When is the next train?"

"Tomorrow noon," I replied helplessly.

Then, after dragging the luggage to the waiting room, she fell on one of the benches, shut her eyes, and began to rest.

