

## Still They Believe

*The conquerors arrived with heavy boots,  
Claiming they'd bring the tools to till the soil.  
They dug the mines and pulled up all the roots,  
While locals gave their lives in honest toil.  
The promised schools were never built at all,  
Yet still they bowed and waited for the call.*

*The office lights stay on past eight o'clock,  
Where tired men trade sleep for rising debt.  
They watch the digits climb upon the stock,  
While falling through a wide and fraying net.  
The bonus goes to those who hold the pen,  
But "work harder" is the hope of common men.*

*The banners wave with promises of gold,  
Of silver roads and hunger cast aside.  
But once the final ballot has been cast,  
The masters turn their faces, filled with pride.  
The ink is dry, the voices fade to black,  
While voters wait for help that won't come back.*

*The forest falls to feed the furnace fire,  
The silent beast is hounded from its home.  
We take the life that nature did inspire,  
And leave a desert where the rivers foam.  
Though earth provides the breath and fruit we need,  
She bears the scars of our ungrateful greed.*

*No hand will reach to pull us from the knee;  
The only ones to set us firm are we.*

Author's Note: ARNOB BACHHAR

Still They Believe is an exploration of the enduring, often tragic, nature of human faith in authority. Through four distinct stages—colonial history, modern economic struggle, political disillusionment, and environmental exploitation—the poem examines how power structures consistently rely on the labor and trust of those they ultimately neglect. The closing couplet serves as a call to action, suggesting that true progress only begins when we stop waiting for saviors and recognize our own collective strength.

### The Edited Sonnet: Still They Believe

*The heavy boots arrive to claim the soil,  
With promises of tools and future gain.  
The locals give their lives in honest toil,  
While mines are dug and roots are pulled in vain.*

*The office lights burn late to pay the debt,  
As tired men watch climbing digits glow.  
They fall through holes within a fraying net,  
While "working hard" is all the hope they know.*

*The banners wave with roads of silver light,  
But masters turn away once votes are cast.  
The forest falls to feed the furnace night,  
And leaves a desert where the stream once passed.*

*No hand will reach to pull us from the knee;  
The only ones to set us firm are we.*