

# An August of waiting

*It began with nothing unusual—just a light August rain and conversations about the next day. By morning, the rain had turned relentless. Thunder shook the hills, electricity went out, and soon even our phones went silent. The world shrank quickly when there was no power, no network, and no way to tell our families we were safe.*

*Somewhere beyond our darkened rooms, news channels were running nonstop reports of the Ravi River overflowing, flash floods tearing through valleys, and cloudbursts triggering landslides across the region. Our families watched all of it unfold on their screens, fearing the worst, while we remained cut off, unaware of what they were seeing or feeling.*

*Days blurred into each other. Phone batteries died, power banks followed, and communication became a luxury measured in minutes. Once, the network returned just long enough to hear worried voices from home asking if we were alright. Before we could explain anything, the signal disappeared again.*

*With nowhere to go, we invented small distractions. We drew on each other's hands, played with clay, solved puzzles, and walked outside only to be stopped by fresh landslides.*



At night, thunder roared without pause. News slowly reached us that people had died in a nearby village, buried under mud and stone. Fear settled quietly among us.

Food ran low. Milk spoiled, vegetables vanished, and survival meant letting go of preferences. We ate by candlelight, grateful for the new LPG connection we had once taken for granted. One afternoon, a rainbow appeared after days of grey, and for a moment, hope felt possible. When electricity returned briefly, we learned the roads had been washed away. We rationed meals, skipped breakfasts, and waited. Once, we rescued a pigeon from a flooded drain—an unexpected reminder that life, fragile as it was, still needed care.

When we finally stepped out for supplies, we narrowly escaped two landslides. We returned with little, but enough. And when the sun finally came out days later, power restored and silence broken, survival itself felt like a quiet victory—one we would carry with us long after the rain had stopped.

Lakshay Tyagi  
Himalayan Restoration Project

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