



Wool Unbounded

Siddharth Arora

Dharam Singh sat in a dimly lit room, with big holes in the curtains, like a flash blinding the walls, and the room came under the scanner of light. He rubbed his ashen eyes with his sweaty palms and opened Guru Granth Saheb. He had to start a new verse, and he read-

‘This world is a drama, staged in a dream.’

Dream! Drama! What kind of dream? What kind of drama? What kind of a test is it God? Why did it happen to me? What did I do to face such a thing? I was just so young back then, I was pure, Yes, I was! Why didn't I die? I should have! To face such, Such a thing! I didn't want to! I was forced. To see people, die, and to see my loved ones killed, and even to kill my loved ones!

“My Tiger, my dear boy, you have to do it. It is for their benefit, you know she won't listen to me. You have to bring her out of her room, these Kafirs will rape her and then kill her, you know it is for her benefit, you don't know poor little son, you don't know anything!”

“What all things she might have to face. No one else objected! She is little, she is scared! She doesn't know anything! I have seen the world, Trust me

“Well father, I tell you, I have seen people, I have seen many people but never a monster like you! And what you did was the worst possible thing ever. I have not seen anything even equivalent to it, You even killed Ma! God will punish you in hell, I remember the night. Oh yes, I do, as if it happened yesterday, all the ladies and girls were killed in our village. Can I tell you something? I can still smell the blood. Those people haunt me, you made us all do it. It was not for God, I tell you. I pray for you to go to hell! I pray! I pray for that!” Dharam whispered it to himself, but it came out just too loud, as if he stood right in that moment! He faced that horror in the night again, and he wanted to revolt that day and wished he could have died, and had luck favoured him he would have run away, and if God would have helped

him, he would have run away with his sister!

“Urrraaa, come out! They are all gone! I will rescue you. I will protect you from everybody, Let’s leave before the sunrise, before Muslims come! Urrraaa, you know, I won’t lie to you.” A volley of tear blurred the words on the page, and they seemed to have died. They looked like black dots, devoid of, bereft of meaning.

His hands trembled again. He didn’t have the power to stop them from shaking. He never seemed to have power! That day he could have, but he didn’t, and since then he had never been able to hope for any better.

“No Veer Ji (My dear brother), no!”

“Please Veer Ji! Please!”

Her last words had remained to be a part of him. Strangely, this was the only memory of her that remained with him. Everything had dried under the scorching heat of time, even her face had faded away but these words, were no longer hers, but his.

Dharam started reading again-

‘This world is a drama...’

Drama! Does it mean it is not real? Then what is real? If this is what I see is not real, then what is? Ummmm, may be the lines are trying to suggest this is all destined! But if it is destined then why do we have the power to choose, the power to do certain things! And what then is real? If we have the power to do things then we are not prisoners to our fate and then it is not destined and

then this, all this is not a drama EEEHHHhhhhhh....

NO, no, no, don't think like that, remember what doctor told, accept the reality, and there is only one reality and that is this moment. But...

He continued brooding.

He folded his Guru Granth Sahib, said Wahe Guru Ji, da Khalsa, Wahe Guru Ji di Fateh, and stretched his limbs. His legs were aching, his bones tired, his eyes darted across the corners of the room and then to the door. The door opened on the hinges, and he saw his wife stitching the curtains of the drawing room. He wondered why was that she always mended the curtains of the drawing room, and not the ones hanging in his room. It was perhaps because of the size of the hole in his room curtain was just too big to repair or because no one was allowed in his room. People only visited the drawing room. I should tell her someday to mend the curtain in my room too! It becomes so hot in June these days. But will she do it? Why not? I am her husband! I have the authority. Yes, she will have to, will have to...?

"You have finished already! Are you okay?", enquired his wife.

"Arey what's with you? What are you thinking? Go, get ready, we have to go to Minty's!" said his wife

"I am not feeling well; you go with-Asha" replied Dharam.

"What happened?"

"I am not feeling well. I am going to sleep for some time"

"Okay, then let me also cancel, but eat something, before you sleep. You know already, how your stomach rebels, you must eat properly, otherwise I will take you to the Doctor. You listen only to him. Asha! Come here See what has happened to Papa. Sukhi, Bring a glass of water! Listen! Asha's papa listen, listen Pray do! Listen!"