

DISCARDED

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Dear Dupatta!
For years you upheld
the identity of a State,
were a harbinger of a gender
a symbol for covering shame,
you covered bare heads
before they bowed in front of God.
were a necessity of a generation,
compulsion of a religion,
must for a wardrobe.

You should be indebted,
to history, for giving you a place,
to time, for hours were spent on drying you on terraces and clothes line,
to lyricists, for capturing you in songs,
to dyers, for giving you rainbow colours,
to women, for making you an inseparable part of their identity.

Today you are
on the priority list of politicians,
who declared you as a safety weapon against rape
but can your mere presence curb pervert thoughts
and barbarous acts.

Today you are
labelled unnecessary by a city girl,
a burden on a teens pocket,
unmanageable in jostling local train crowds,
a hindrance for bike riders,
an unnecessary garment,
a loser against comfy western wear,
Alas! your history has been curtailed.

Your absence on the body
is a mark of protest against repressive male ideas,
you have been ungendered, unsymbolised,
today you stand rejected and discarded,
Oh dear! Dupatta.