

1990

Pita Ji (Grandfather)

Kamaljit K. Bagga

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Pita Ji (Grandfather)

staring out the window
 searching for the green sign
 Metro Airport--10 miles.

inside he finally arrives
 white turban tied
 handsome in his Nehru suit.

hugging me after years
 giving his blessing,
 "Live long, my child.
 India was so far.

finding the worn, black suitcase
 driving home.

next morning, he awakes
 beginning his summer ritual
 without sound, taking a cold bath.

tiptoeing to our prayer room
 reading our holy script Guru Granth Sahib
 not appearing again until begged
 to eat his lunch
 one roti (bread) and lentils.

too weak to stand for long
 Pita Ji sits on a lawn chair
 rolling a soccer ball across the patio
 with my brother, Aman

remembering how I used to play
 when I was little
 teaching him the a,b,c's
 diligently he took notes
 patient with his foreign language.

now I can only make his breakfast
 raisin toast and peach jam
 I am little no longer.

Kamaljit K. Bagga