



The Garden in the Wardrobe

Jamdani is a traditional weaving style which has existed in Bengal for hundreds of years. Amazing geometric patterns are created on a pit-loom by two weavers from memory. This is the story of the patterns, which carry memories and feelings.



The Garden in the Wardrobe
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Ma's Jamdani wardrobe is a garden where hundreds of flowers grow and thousands of stars shine.



Ma shows me the saris and tells me about the patterns. “These patterns are woven out of cotton thread by the Jamdani weavers who live in a village by the river. There, water in the air makes the cotton soft. First they make the fine thread. Then, they sit at giant looms and use their hands and feet, one thread at a time, to weave a sari from the flower patterns that grow in their minds.” “Ma, how do they remember all these flowers?” “Because it is impossible to forget something you love.”



Ma tells me what the patterns mean. “This one is a sandesh, a type of sweetmeat. And this one is a bitter gourd.” Ma points out the shapes woven onto the border of the sari. “EEEE! Why would you want bitter gourd on your sari, Ma?” “Because bitter things are good for you, my darling.”



“What is this pattern Ma?” “This one is special. It is called a chandrahara, a moon necklace. It is very precious because it took the light of many moons to make it. I wear it when I am happy with myself. This Jamdani reminds me that good things take time.”



My Ma says that many things will change as I grow up, but her love and the Jamdani garden will always stay the same. She says when I grow up, she will give me her Jamdani garden. This is my heritage, and I must keep it safe.



Note The Jamdani is one of the most complicated handwoven fabrics in the world. It is made completely by hand using only natural materials. A single sari can take weeks to finish, depending on the difficulty of the design, which is usually woven from memory. The designs are geometric forms inspired by nature. The loom is worked by two weavers, a master and an apprentice, who pass the needle back and forth as the master calls out the pattern instructions. This craft is recognized as an intangible heritage of Bangladesh.



Wonderful Wordsjamdani - a beautiful, traditional woven fabric made on a pit-loom powered by two weavers who pass the thread back and forth following patterns which the Master Weaver sings out.chandrahar - a pattern used in weaving. Jamdani weavers use this pattern to represent a necklace made of moons.

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