Conventions

By Tina Raunaqe

Everyone has a website, knitters included

Before my time, on a forum these faceless talked

Of a name, of Afghan blankets

Named for being intimidations of illustrious textiles

Borrowed, never bothered; Afghani, the currency,

Swapped for the people instead, over and over

There is a war going on, they’re terrorists

Should we rename Afghans? Never mind them.

I stumbled on their conversations

I put down my yarn, looking at it gave me pain

And I struggled to look over their shoulders

Over the sameness and circular thought

I would not have been included; walked over.

You know that they think that they care while playing their game,

But you wonder if they will ever learn.

It is how many think that there’s a ‘u’ missing from my last name

Living on conventions and rigid in rules.

I am a noun, a carpet on the floor

I can see others prodded just the same

I have both worth and not, a dot

Valuable, not valued; boteh, paisley

A shaky statistic. The weight you and I feel about our own identities

How they are used should be universally felt and understood.

Bystanding is tiring

So is directing the troubles away

And thinking only in terms of what hurts you

It should matter that it is not you

It should matter that it is not me

It will; If I look directly at you and you look directly at me,

We can lift ourselves from the floor and weave our own patterns,

Weave past conventions.