Tara Singh Bains is one of those rare people who sees the hand of God in every facet of his life. A man of strong convictions, he has consistently refused to compromise his own truth. *The Four Quarters of the Night* is as much the story of his faith as of his life.

Identifying himself as both an Indian and a Canadian but first and foremost a Sikh, Tara Singh has shuttled back and forth between Canada and India, finding personal harmony while incorporating two very different countries and cultures into his life. He was raised within an amritdhari, or baptised, Sikh tradition in a small village in Punjab, India; his values and identity are firmly rooted in Punjab Sikh culture.

Sponsored by his sister, Tara Singh emigrated to Canada in the early 1950s and settled in British Columbia. He came alone, without his wife and children, as most Punjabis did. His greatest initial shock in Canada was his experience with racism, and its impact on his relatives, who tried to persuade him to shave his beard and abandon his turban – two sacred symbols of the Sikh. Refusing to betray his beliefs, he resisted his family, just as he later fought against the exploitation of immigrants in the saw mills where he worked. Throughout the years he has been active in fighting for immigrant rights and speaking out for the Sikh faith in Canada.

*The Four Quarters of the Night* is more than one man’s life story: his single voice reveals much about the collective experience of immigrants. Tara Singh’s compelling narrative presents an evocative picture of a newcomer’s experiences in a land of foreign customs, culture, and religious beliefs. Hugh Johnston, to whom Tara Singh told his story, has created a unique and invaluable document on immigration and ethnic history.

TARA SINGH BAINS is an Indian army veteran and a retired lumber worker and farmer who lives part of the year in Richmond, BC, and part in Punjab, India.

HUGH JOHNSTON is professor of history, Simon Fraser University.
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    Tara Singh Bains and Hugh Johnston
To the memory of my parents
Stafford and Jean Johnston