

Poetry Series

Satis Shroff
- poems -

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Satis Shroff()

Satis Shroff received Heimatmedaille Baden-Württemberg 2018 for Literature and Heimatpflege, the Neruda Award 2017 in Crispiano, Italy on May 20, 2017 for Literature. Hi

He is a writer and poet based in Freiburg poems, fiction, non-fiction who also writes on ethno-medical, culture-ethnological themes. He is a contributing writer on

He describes himself as a mediator between western and eastern cultures and sees his future as a writer and poet. Satis Shroff was awarded the German Academic Exchange is a lecturer in Basle Switzerland.

Writing experience: Satis Shroff has written two language books on the Nepalese language for DSE Deutsche Stiftung für Entwicklungsdienst & Horlemannverlag. He has written three feature articles in the Munich-based Nelles Verlag's 'Nepal' on the Himalayan Kingdom's Gurkhas, sacred mountains and Nepalese symbols and on Hinduism in 'Nepal: Myths & Realities Book Faith India and his poem 'Mental Molotovs' was published in epd-Entwicklungsdienst Frankfurt. He has written many articles in The Rising Nepal, The Christian Science Monitor, the Independent, the Fryburger, Swatantra Biswa USIS publication, Himal Asia, 3Journal Freiburg. Also read his poems, articles in & e search under: satis shroff. His books are published on:

What others have said about the author:

Satis Shroff writes political poetry—about the war in Nepal, the sad fate of the Nepalese people, the emergence of neo-fascism in Germany. His bicultural perspective makes his poems rich, full of awe and at the same time heartbreakingly sad. In writing 'home,' he not only returns to his country of origin time and again, he also carries the fate of his people to readers in the West, and his task of writing thus is also a very important one in political terms. His true gift is to invent Nepalese metaphors and make them accessible to the West through his poetry. Sandra Sigel, poetess, Germany. His books 'Through Nepalese Eyes,' 'Im Schatten des Himalaya' and 'Kathmandu, Kathmandu' are available on

'Die Schilderungen von Satis Shroff in 'Through Nepalese Eyes' sind faszinierend und geben uns die Möglichkeit, unsere Welt mit neuen Augen zu sehen.' Alice Grünfelder von Unionsverlag / Limmat Verlag, Zürich.

'Since 1974 I have been living on and off in Nepal, writing articles and publishing books about Nepal- this beautiful Himalayan country. Even before I knew Satis Shroff personally later I was deeply impressed by his articles, which helped me very much to deepen my knowledge about Nepal. Satis Shroff is one of the very few Nepalese writers being able to compare ecology, development and modernisation in the 'Third' and 'First' World. He is doing this with great enthusiasm, competence and intelligence, showing his great concern for the development of his own country.' Ludmilla Tüting, journalist and publisher, Berlin.

'Due to his very pleasant personality and in-depth experience in both South Asian, as well as Western workstyles and living, Satis Shroff brings with him a cultural sensitivity that is refined. His writings have always reflected the positive attributes of optimism, tolerance, and a need to explain and to describe without looking down on either his subject or his reader.' Kanak Mani Dixit, Himal Southasia, Kathmandu

'Satis Shroff writes with intelligence, wit and grace.' Bruce Dobler, Associate Professor in Creative Writing, MFA University of Iowa.

satisshroff@

A Disrupted Life (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

I bought some buns and bread at the local bakery
And met our elderly neighbour Frau Nelles
She looked well-dressed and walked with a careful gait,
Up the Pochgasse having done her errands.
She greeted in German with 'Guten morgen.'
Sighed and said, 'Wissen Sie,
I feel a wave of sadness sweep over me'
'Why?' I asked.
'Today is our wedding anniversary.'

'Is it that bad?' I whispered.

'Yes,' she replied.
'My husband just stares at me and says nothing,
And has that blank expression on his face.
This isn't the optimistic, respected philology professor
I married thirty years ago.

He forgets everything.
Our birthdays, the anniversaries of our children, the seasons.
My husband has Alzheimer.
Es tut so weh!
Our double bed isn't a bed of roses anymore,
It's a bed of thorny roses.
I snatch a couple of hours of sleep,
When I can.

I don't have a husband now,
I have a child,
That needs caring day and night.
I've become apprehensive.
I'm concerned when he coughs
Or when he stops to breathe.
He snores again,
And keeps me awake.
Has prostrate problems,
And is fragile.
Like Shakespeare aptly said:
Care keeps his watch in every old (wo) man's eye,

And where care lodges, sleep will never lie.

Neither can I live with myself,
Nor can I bring him to a home.

Satis Shroff

A Lass From A Volcano Isle

A Lass from a Volcano Isle (Satis Shroff)

I come from a volcano isle on the Atlantic
She said softly with smiling blue eyes.
You're from the north so you're good natured,
Or do you flare up like southerners?
I don't explode but Eyjafallajökull does.
She meant the volcano glacier.

We also have a lot of glaciers, I replied.
We haven't harnessed them.
Oh, we have geothermic spas and plants
Where I come from we eat linseed and rice.
We eat Ha'karl, shark and whale meat.
We prefer yak sukuti, dried meat.

Are you your father's daughter?
Yes, I'm Stina Johannsdottir,
And threw up her blonde hair back.
I gazed and gazed,
Amazed.
The days of wine and roses are long over,
Only the happy memories remain,
Of a lass from a volcano isle.

Satis Shroff

A Waltz With You

A WALTZ WITH YOU (Satis Shroff)

Ah, the sound of Vienna begins.

I execute a perfect circular waltz,

With you in a gown

And I in tails,

After the pre-ball sekt.

It's amazing how even teenagers

Go voluntarily to learn

How to waltz,

And how to kiss a lady's hands,

Impeccably.

I learned it at socials

Organised by the nuns of St. Helen's

And the Christian Brothers of Ireland.

When the 'ladies choice' was announced

By the Master of Ceremonies,

You could feel the adrelanin

Surging in your young blood.

It helps to develop your self-confidence,
In a society where balls are a way of life.

But a waltz in Vienna,
Is a legacy of Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph.

Strauss and Mozart rule the dancing floors.

In palaces, concert halls, posh hotels,

The 19th century Sofiensaal.

You dance in your polished best,

For the Viennese or your society.

The art of formal greeting,

Bowing, hand-kissing,

How to ask for a dance,

And how to introduce people.

Correct Viennese etiquette is well-seen:

Küss die Hand gnädige Frau,

You look so lovely tonight.

The ambient, the rustling silk clothes,

The moving violins, the pricking sekt,

And the swirls whirl you

To another baroque world.

Satis Shroff

Alpine Gratitude

ALPINE GRATITUDE (Satis Shroff)

The hamlets are scattered,
Tucked away in the side valleys and spurs
Of the Black Forest,
Which was once dark and foreboding.
A forest that once conjured myths, legends
And fairy tales.
Under the hay and homesteads,
You find men and mice,
Good natured maids and children,
Healthy and happy cows, goats,
Sheep and swines.
The Schwarzwald farmers paid low taxes,
For Nature punished them enough.
They couldn't get rich on the craggy soil,
The high elevation and the long, raw winter.
Yet the Black Forest forced the soil,
To yield millet in Summer,
Wheat and barley,
Buried beneath a thick mantle of snow.
Ah, it's already past the month of October,
The young calves are in the stalls,
After a colourful, traditional walk
From the higher alpine meadows.
There's corn in the chamber,
Feed for the animals in the barns.
Around Freiburg the apple trees,
Are laden heavily with apples.
Your nostrils smell apple mixed with cinnamon and sugar:
Appelkompott, apple moos, apple pancakes and pies.

* * *

Satis Shroff

Blue Allemanic Eyes (Satis Shroff)

She had short, golden hair
Tied neatly behind
With a blue satin-scarf.
And yet I saw her
Wearing a diadem
And a flowing satin gown,
Like a princess.□

A meek, submissive smile
A movement of her fair hair
Akin to a Bolshoi ballerina
In moments of embarrassment and coyness.
Her blue Allemanic eyes, sweet and honest
They knew no intrigue,
Neither treachery nor rebellion.
'I was brought up to obey, ' she whispered.

Pure bliss and love sublime,
A book you could read.
Plain and straight,
And not in-between the lines.

An openness, and yet
She's resolute and seeks
Perhaps stability
Or security?

A neglected childhood
With pain and punishment.
A legacy of the Black Forest
Nevertheless, she remained
Soft and tender,
Submissive and sincere.
Not demanding and aggressive
Ever alert and considerate.

Murmurs and sighs filled the air.
Love became stormy and frantic.
Sweat and aphrodisiac mingled,

To create a moment of magic,
To recede in moans and whispers
And a thousand kisses.

Brought to reality
By the rays of the dying sun
And the sudden noise
Of birds coming home to roost.
A tranquillity after the tumult
Within our passionate souls.

Satis Shroff

Bombay Brothel (Satis Shroff)

'You're not going to get away this time.
And you'll never ever bring a Nepalese child
To a Bombay brothel, ' I said to myself.
I'd killed a man who'd betrayed me
And sold me to an old, cunning Indian woman,
Who ran a brothel in Bombay's Upper Grant Road.

I still see the face of Lalita-bai,
Her greedy eyes gleaming
At the sight of rich Indian and Arab customers.
I hear the eternal video-music of Bollywood.

The man I'd slain
Had promised to give me a job,
As a starlet in Bollywood.
I was young, naïve and full of dreams.
He took me to a shabby, cage-like room
And told me to wait.
Three thugs did the rest.
They robbed my virginity,
Which I'd wanted to save
For the man I'd marry one day.
They thrashed me, put me on drugs.
I had no control over my limbs,
My torso, my mind.
It was Hell on earth.

I was starring in a bad Bollywood film,
A lamb that had been sacrificed,
Not to the Hindu Gods,
But to Indian customers and pimps
From all walks of life.

What followed were five years of captivity,
Rape and molestation.
I pleaded with tears in my eyes
To the customers to help me out of my misery.
They just shook their heads and beat me,
Ravished me and threw dirty rupees at my face.

I never felt so ashamed, demeaned,
Maltreated in my young life.

One day a local doctor with a lab-report
Told Lalita-bai that I had aids.
From that day on I became an outcast.
I was beaten and bruised,
For a disease I hadn't asked for.

I felt broken and wretched.
I returned to Nepal, my homeland.
I lived like a recluse,
Didn't talk to anyone.
I worked in the fields,
Cut grass and gathered firewood.
I lost my weight.
I was slipping.

Till the day the man who'd ruined
My life came in search of new flesh
For Bombay's brothels.
I asked the man to spend the night
In my house.
He agreed readily.
I cooked for him,
Gave him a lot of raksi,
Till he sang and slept.

It was late at night.
I knew he'd go out to the toilet
After all that drinking.
I got up, took my naked khukri
Out of its sheath,
And followed him stealthily.
The air was fresh outside.
A mountain breeze made the leaves
Emit a soft whispering sound.
I crouched behind a bush and waited.

He murmured drunkenly 'Resam piri-ri.'
As he made his way back,
I was behind him.

I took a big step forwards with my right foot,
Swung the khukri blade
And hit him behind his neck.
I winced as I heard a crack,
Flesh and bone giving in.
A spurt of blood in the moonlight.
He fell with a thud in two parts.
His distorted head rolled to one side,
And his body to the other.

My heart was racing.
I couldn't almost breathe.
I sat hunched like all women do,
Waited to catch my breath.
The minutes seemed like hours.
I got up, went to the dhara to wash my khukri.
I never felt so relieved in my life.
I buried him that night.
But I had nightmares for the rest of my life.

Satis Shroff

Day Dreaming (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

When I lie on my couch,
Which our German grandma
Used to fondly call chaiselongue,
I drink a cup of Ilam tea.

I am so awake
That I kiss your lips,
Caress you,
Listen to you
Speak to you,
After every sip.

I talk about our children
About our house and garden
About our dear parents,
Friends, new or old.
It's a superb idyll we've created.

I'm too tired
To open my eyes
To see you and to realise
That you are not here,
In this sunlight flooded room.

Satis Shroff

Dead End (Satis Shroff)

Hans, Fritz and Bruno do their extra homework,
Meted out as a punishment by the English teacher.

Vitaly throws scissors in the classroom,
Which land with a thud on the cork wall.
Heino is doing his best to disturb the group,
With his loud MP3 music.
'Ha! Ha! Ha! Du Hurensohn!' he says,
To a fellow classmate.

A Kosovo-kid who's hyperactive,
Steals and fights at school.
The Germans send him to a Sonderschule.
His father's proud for 'sonder' means 'special.'
His son is attending an elite school, he thinks,
Only to realise later,
It was a school for difficult children.
A dead-end.

Satis Shroff

Death Of A Precious Jewel (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

A GURKHA MOTHER (Satis Shroff)

The gorkha with a khukri
But no enemy
Works for the United Nations
And yet gets shot at
In missions he doesn't comprehend.
Order is hukum, hukum is life
Johnny Gurkha still dies under foreign skies.

He never asks why
Politics isn't his style
He's fought against all and sundry:
Turks, Tibetans, Italians and Indians
Germans, Japanese, Chinese
Argentinians and Vietnamese.
Indonesians and Iraqis.
Loyalty to the utmost
Never fearing a loss.

The loss of a mother's son
From the mountains of Nepal.

Her grandpa died in Burma
For the glory of the British.
Her husband in Mesopotemia
She knows not against whom
No one did tell her.
Her brother fell in France,
Against the Teutonic hordes.
She prays to Shiva of the Snows for peace
And her son's safety.
Her joy and her hope
Farming on a terraced slope.

A son who helped wipe her tears
And ease the pain in her mother's heart.
A frugal mother who lives by the seasons
And peers down to the valleys

Year in and year out
In expectation of her soldier son.

A smart Gurkha is underway
Heard from across the hill with a shout
'It's an officer from his battalion.
A letter with a seal and a poker-face
'Your son died on duty', he says,
'Keeping peace for the country
And the United Nations'.

A world crumbles down
The Nepalese mother cannot utter a word
Gone is her son,
Her precious jewel.
Her only insurance and sunshine
In the craggy hills of Nepal.
And with him her dreams
A spartan life that kills.

Satis Shroff

Deficiency Syndrome (Satis Shroff)

Deficiency Syndrome (Satis Shroff)

The enemy surrounds him,
Laser-blades flash like lightning.
A gash and Fritz falls on the floor.
He's wounded,
But rotates his prostrate torso
With his fast working legs,
Lashes out with his sword.
He's almost killed them all.
He's a hero who never gives up.

Suddenly he hears teacher Frau Hess's voice:
'Fritz, steh auf! '
He becomes calm,
Gets up.
Gone are the warriors, Power Rangers,
And super heroes and mighty enemies.
Fritz recognises his classmates,
Hans, Joachim, Cassandra, Brunhild,
As they shake their heads.

Was it a dream?
Oh je! Frau Hess will certainly call Mom.
And tell it all.
'Scheiß ADS! ' mutters Kevin.

Glossary:

ADS: Allgemeine Deficiency Syndrome

Satis Shroff

Deleting Lives In The Cyberworld (Satis Shroff)

Deleting Lives in the Cyberworld (Satis Shroff)

The young man and his double-clicks
In a cyberworld
Of bits and bytes,
Full of elves, tough turtles, dementors,
Warriors and evil beings,
Who destroy hamlets, towns,
Civilisations,
At the command of a few clicks.

An unreal world
Where the fantasy stories
Are pre-programmed.
The elimination of farmers, slaves,
Knives and enemy warriors,
But a click away.

You are the creator,
The maker and destroyer,
You are Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma.
Thumbs up or down,
Death to you,
Delete.
Yawn!

Satis Shroff

East Bloc Kid Goes West (Satis Shroff)

A pair of heavy scissors fly
In a dark Hauptschule classroom,
Thrown by an Aussiedler school-kid,
Near Freiburg's Japanese Garden.

The scissors can slash your face,
Or mine.
You can be maimed for life,
Like Scarface,
If the sharp ends
Bury in your eyes,
Or mine.

Let there be light.
Vitaly, a boy from the former east Bloc
Comes to the West,
In search of ancestors and heritage.
What he gets is rejection but freedom.
Freedom to do as he pleases,
With pleasant negative sanctions.
'Even in jail they have TV, '
he says with a laugh.

He grows up in a ghetto,
And his anger burns.
Anger at his ageing parents,
Who forced him to come to the West,
But who are themselves lost in this new world
Of democratic, liberal values,
Luxurious and electronic consumer delights,
Where everyone cares for himself or herself,
Where the old structures of the society
They clung to in the east Bloc days
Don't exist.

A brave new world,
A Schlaraffenland,
Where economy and commerce flourishes,
Where the individual's view is important,

To himself,
To herself
And to others.

The East Bloc boy learns
To assert himself in the West,
Not with solid arguments and rhetoric
But with his two fists.
He fancies cars and their contents,
Breaks open the windows,
Takes all he wants.
Brushes with the police
At an early age.

English, Latin and French at school,
Irritates him,
He prefers to play the clown:
To dance on the table,
Make suggestive moves with his groin,
High on designer drugs,
High all the time.
Opens the classroom door,
Sees a girl from the seventh grade,
And yells at her.

His behaviour brings laughter
But he turns off the girls he admires.
He grins and insults his peers.
Rejected by youngsters,
Admonished by grown-ups,
He watches the society.

Chic clothes, streamlined cars, plastic money,
But he forgets
that there's personal performance
Behind these worldly riches.
'The rich German drives his BMW
With his head in the air.
What does he care?
What does he care? '
Thinks Vitaly.

A pair of scissors fly
In a dark classroom.
His pent-up emotions,
Let loose in a German Hauptschool,
Near the Japanese Garden.

His classmate from Croatia
Throws chairs at another.
'Aus Spass' he says.
Just for fun.
He shouts at the German Putzfrau,
Who cleans the classrooms:
'Sie Geistesgestörte! '
You mad woman.

Is the school-system to blame?
Are western culture, tradition
Social, liberal values and norms to blame?
Are his parents
who speak a conserved Deutsch
to blame?
Is his Russian mother-tongue,
And his great Russian soul to blame?

Nobody answers his questions,
Nobody cares,
Out in the West.
"Verdammt, I want to be heard! "
screams Vitaly.
The people shake their heads,
Mutter, 'Ein Spinner! '
And walk away.

A pair of sharp, long scissors
Fly in a dark classroom.
The scissors can slash your face,
Or mine.

Satis Shroff

Enchanting Schwarzwald (Satis Shroff)

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Schwarzwald Diary: Easter Scribblings (Satis Shroff)

The table is set with painted Easter eggs,

And two self baked lambs.

Outside you can hear the feathered friends

Tweeting and chirping joyously.

The festival of resurrection has become

An avian feast in the Schwarzwald.

The dawn goddess Eosire has brought us blessings.

Two gold finches appeared looking for tidbits.

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The wooden nest on the backyard is frequented by big and small birds.

A shy woodpecker is busy gathering corns.

A pair of noisy magpies come by.

A jay dashes to plunder the nest.

Two blackbirds are waiting patiently in the bush,

As blue tits flutter to have their share;

Followed by a curious green tit and a finch.

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After lunch a bullfinch appears on the hillside,

Only to be frightened by a pair of obnoxious crows.

'It's our revier, ' they seem to assert.

High in the sky a kite and two buzzards

Are carrying out sorties languidly.

The bushes begin to shake with sparrows

Chirping incessantly.

A young chaffinch rolls a pine cone with its small beak.

* * *

Satis Shroff

Groggy In The Afternoon (Satis Shroff)

Groggy from the Cyberworld at home,
Fritz goes to school.
He's tired of school,
And is restless.
Retalin doesn't seem to work today.
The lessons are irrelevant,
He sees not the classmates.
He sees the goblins, Power Rangers,
Sword-fighting Ninjas,
Scores of other figures
With terrifying grimaces.
Fritz also makes a grimace.
He is now a monster in his thoughts,
Has to strike the others
With his laser-sword.

Satis Shroff

Grow With Love (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

Love yourself
Accept yourself,
For self-love and self-respect
Are the basis of joy, emotion
And spiritual well being.

Watch your feelings,
Study your thoughts
And your beliefs,
For your existence
Is unique and beautiful.

You came to the world alone
And you go back alone.
But while you breathe
You are near
To your fellow human beings,
Families, friends and strangers
As long as you are receptive.

Open yourself to lust and joy,
To the wonders of daily life and Nature.
Don't close your door to love.
If you remain superficial,
You'll never reach its depth.

Love is more than a feeling.
Love is also passion and devotion.

Grow with love and tenderness.

Satis Shroff

Hauptschool Kids (Satis Shroff)

The grey-haired gardener in charge comes,
Tells the Hauptschule boys to behave
And goes.
Boredom in the afternoon.
The boys don't want to play soccer,
Handball or basketball.
Sitting around, criticising, irritating each other,
Is cool.

Creative workshops: music, songs, essays, own movies?
Nothing interests them.
Killing time together,
Cursing at each other,
Getting a kick provoking passersby,
This is the Hauptschule in Germany today.
The clever kids go to the Gymnasium,
After the fourth class.

Satis Shroff

Hooked To Bits And Bytes (Satis Shroff)

Your're short of amphetamines.
It's a long way to the apothecary.
More clicks,
More tiredness,
You're falling asleep.
Drowsy bits and bytes,
You haven't taken a bite.
Your inner man is growling,
But you have no time,
For bodily needs.
You're hooked
To your bits and bytes.
Oh, it bites.

Satis Shroff

I Saw Love (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

One wintry evening I saw love.
She wore thin glasses
At the university dancing classes.
We danced fox-trot, cha-cha
Then came the rumba.

I looked deep into her sky blue eyes.
Eyes so blue, without a hint of a cloud.
Clear blue eyes,
Like the waters of the Maldives.

A joyous feeling overcame me.
My hormones were out of control.
My cardiac status said 'tachycardie.'
My lungs began to over-function.
Hyperventilation.
My knees were sagging.
By Jove, I'd fallen in love.

Satis Shroff

Kathmandu Is Nepal (Satis Shroff)

There were two young men, brothers
Who left their homes
In the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas.
The older one, for his father had barked at him,
"Go to Nepal and never come home again."
The younger, for he couldn't bear the beatings
At the hands of his old man.

The older brother sobbed and stifled his sorrow and anger
For Nepal was in fact Kathmandu,
With its colleges, universities, Education Ministry,
Temples, Rana-palaces and golden pagodas
And also its share of hippies, hashish, tourists,
Rising prices and expensive rooms to rent.

The younger brother went to Dharan,
And enlisted in the British Army depot
To become a Gurkha,
A soldier in King Edwards Own Gurkha Rifles.
He came home the day he became a recruit,
With a bald head, as though his father had died.
He looked forward to the parades and hardships
That went under the guise of physical exercises.
He thought of stern, merciless sergeants and corporals
Of soccer games and regimental drills
A young man's thrill of war-films and scotch and Gurkha-rum evenings.
He'd heard it all from the Gurkhas who's returned in the Dasain festivals.
There was Kunjo Lama his maternal cousin,
Who boasted of his judo-prowess and showed photos of his British gal,
A pale blonde from Chichester in an English living-room.

It was a glorious sunset,
The clouds blazing in scarlet and orange hues,
As the young man, riding on the back of a lorry,
Sacks full of rice and salt,
Stared at the Siwaliks and Mahabharat mountains
Dwindling behind him.
As the sun set in the Himalayas,
The shadows grew longer in the vales.

The young man saw the golden moon,
Shining from a cloudy sky.
The same moon he'd seen on a poster in his uncle's kitchen
As he ate cross-legged his dal-bhat-shikar after the hand-washing ritual.
Was the moon a metaphor?
Was it his fate to travel to Kathmandu,
Leaving behind his childhood friends and relatives in the hills,
Who were struggling for their very existence,
In the foothills of the Kanchenjunga,
Where the peaks were not summits to be scaled,
With or without oxygen,
With or without amphetamines,
But the abodes of the Gods and Goddesses.
A realm where bhuts and prets,
Boksas and boksis,
Demons and dakinis prevailed.

Satis Shroff

Like Prometheus And Icarus(Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

Up and up we flew exultantly
Towards the Himalayas.
Kathmandu, Bhadgaon and Lalitpur
With their palaces, pagodas, shrines,
Brick houses and hotels,
Lush green fields in the outskirts
Of the valley,
Were becoming smaller and greener.

For a moment in my mind
I was the dragon that rides over the clouds.
I was Prometheus,
The saviour of mankind,
Who gave mortals fire.
I was Icarus,
Flying away from Crete.

As I peered at the majestic silvery Himalayas,
I felt my insignificance in the vastness that unfurled below me.
How many climbers from the West and East,
How many Sherpas and other ethnic porters
Still lie in the crevasses and Himalayan glaciers?
My thoughts went to Reinhold Messner,
Who went to the Snows for years
With a guilty conscience and an obsession,
Searching for the remains of his dear brother,
Buried in a white out.
Till one day he held his brother's femur
And proclaimed to the world,
'It's my brother's remains.
I've found him at last.'

The earth is below us,
And receives us.
I have a feeling of smallness,
Humility, as I alight from the jet.
I've seen and felt the spell of the mighty Himalayas,
And what's beyond the clouds in the sky.
A strong, deep, religious experience,

For I had trespassed the Abode of Snow,
Himalaya,
The Home of the Gods.

Satis Shroff

Lost Friendships

LOST FRIENDSHIPS (Satis Shroff)

When old friends

Go asunder,

What remains

Are memories,

Of moments

In tranquility.

When world tremble

And words shiver,

When lips vibrate

And nothing comes out

Of your larynx.

Just the uneasy

Breath from your nostrils.

The silence and solitude

That prevails,

When friendships

Have lost their meanings.

Encounters,

Wiedersehen,

Become embarrassing.

And words become superfluous.

The old wounds bleed again,

Causing pain,

That come like sea waves,

Incessantly,

Stab and go.

* * *

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Satis Shroff

Matsuyama Blues (Satis Shroff)

The trouble-makers, aggressive alpha-wolves
And clowns remain in the Hauptschule.
An ironical name for a school,
For Haupt means the 'main'
Comprising the lower class of the society:
Kids of foreigners, ethnic Germans from the East Bloc,
Who hope to make it somehow,
As apprentices for hair salons, car repair garages,
Kebab shops, Italian restaurants, Balkan kitchens,
Roofers and masons.

The Japanese Garden, a present from Matsuyama
To the people of Freiburg,
With truncated shrubs and rounded trees.
A waterfall and quiet niches,
A place for contemplation and solitude.

For the Hauptschule kids,
A place to get together,
Be loud, grunt, fight with fists, shove, scratch,
Slap, spit everywhere,
And play the gangsta.
"At night they throw empty alcohol bottles
Where ever they like, " says an elderly lady
From the neighbourhood.
Wonder how the kids are in Matsuyama?

Satis Shroff

Music Is In The Air (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

As the Breisgau-train dashes in the Black Forest,
Between Elztal and Freiburg,
I am with my thoughts in South Asia.

I hear the melodious cry of the vendors:
'Pan, bidi, cigarette, '
Interspersed with 'garam chai! Garam chai! '
The sound of sambosas bubbling in vegetable oil,
The rat-ta-tat of onions, garlic and salad
Being rhythmically chopped in the kitchen,
Mingled with the ritual songs of the Hindus.
The voices of uncles, aunts, cousins
Debating, discussing, gesticulating, grimacing
In Nepali, English, Newari, Hindi and Sindhi.

I head for Swayambhu,
The hill of the Self-Existent One.
Om mane pame hum stirs in the air,
As a lama passes by.
I'm greeted by cries of Rhesus monkeys,
Pigeons, mynahs, crows,
And the cracks of automatic guns of the Royal Army.

There's a brodelndes Miteinander,
Different sounds, natural sounds,
Musical sounds.
I hear Papa listening to classical ragas.
We, his sons and daughters,
Dancing the twist, rock n' roll, jive to Cool Britannia,
The afternoon programme of the BBC.
Catchy Bollywood wechsel rhythms,
Sung by Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle,
Rafi, Mukesh and Kishor Kumar.
In the evenings after Radio Nepal's External Service,
Radio Colombo's light Anglo-American melodies:
Dean Martin's drunken schmaltz,
Billy Fury, Cliff Richards, Rickey Nelson,
And Sir Swivel-hip, Elvis Presley
Wailing 'You ain't nothin' but a hound dog.'

Out in the streets the songs of the beggars,
'Amai, paisa deo,
Babai khanu chaina, '
Overwhelmed by the cacaphony
Of the obligatory marriage brass-band,
Wearing shocking green and red uniforms.
A tourist wired for sound walks by,
With a tortured smile on his face,
An acoustic agitation for an i-Pod listener,
Who prefers his own canned music.

From a side street you discern the tune
Of 'Rajamati kumati' rendered by a group
Of Jyapoo traditional musicians,
After a hard day's work,
In the wet paddy fields of Kathmandu.
Near the Mahabaoudha temple you see
Young Sherpas, Thakalis, Tamangs, Newars
Listening, hip-hopping and break-dancing
To their imported ghetto-blasters:
Michel Jackson's catchy tunes,
Eminem,2 Pac, Madonna,5 Cents.

Everyone hears music, everyone makes music,
With or without music instruments,
Humming the latest Bollywood tunes,
Drumming on the tables, wooden walls,
Boxes, crates, thalis, saucers and pans.
Everyone's engaged in singing and dancing.
The older people chanting bhajans and vedic songs,
Buddhist monks reciting from the sutras in sonorous voices,
When someone dies in the neighbourhood.
Entire nights of prayers for the departed soul.

The whole world is full of music,
Making it, feasting on it,
Dancing and nodding to it.
I remember the old village dalit,
From the caste of the untouchables,
Who'd come and beat his big drum,
Before he proclaimed the decision of the five village elders,

The panchayat.

I remember the beautiful music from the streets of Bombay,
Where I spent the winters during my school-days.
Or was it musical noise?
Unruhe, panic and flight for some,
It was the music of life for me in that tumultuous, exciting city.
When the sea of humanity was too much for me,
I could escape by train to the Marine Drive,
And see and hear the music of the breakers,
The waves of the Arabian Sea splashing and thrashing
Along the coast of Mumbai.
Your muscles flex, the nerves flatter, the heart gallops,
As you feel how puny you are,
Among all those incessant and powerful waves.

Music has left its cultural confines.
You hear the strings of a sitar
Mingling with big band sounds.
Percussions from Africa
Accompanying ragas from Nepal.
A never-ending performance of musicians
From all over the world.
Bollywood dancing workshops at Lörrach,
Slam poetry at Freiburg's Atlantic inn.
A didgeridoo accompanying Japanese drums
At the Zeltmusik festival.
Tabla and tanpura involved in a musical dialogue,
With trumpet and saxophone,
Argentinian tango and Caribbean salsa,
Fiery Flamenco dancers dancing
With classical Bharata Natyam dancers,
Mani Rimdu masked-dancers accompanied
By a Tibetan monastery orchestra,
And shrill Swiss piccolo flute tunes and drummers.

I reach my destination
With the green and white Breisgaubahn,
Get off at Zähringen-Freiburg.
The Black Forest looks ravishing,
For it's Springtime.

As I walk past the Café Bueb, the Metzgerei,
The St. Blasius church bells begin to chime.
I see Annette's tiny garden with red, yellow and white tulips,
'Hallochen!' she says with a broad, blonde smile.
I walk on and admire Frau Bender's cherry-blossom tree,
Her pensioned husband nods back at me.
And in the distance, a view of the Schwarzwald.

As I approach my residence at the end of the Pochgasse,
I hear the sound of Schumann's sonata number 3,
Played by Vladimir Horowitz.
That's harmony for the heart.

I know
I'm home abroad.

Satis Shroff

My Nightmare (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

I dream of a land far away.
A land where the father cuts wood
From sunrise till sunset,
And brings home a few rupees.
A land where the innocent children
Stretch their right hands,
And are rewarded with dollars.
A land where a woman gathers
White, red, yellow and crimson tablets and pills,
From altruistic world tourists who come her way.
Most aren't doctors or nurses,
But they distribute the pills,
With no second thoughts about the side-effects.

The Nepalese woman possesses an arsenal,
Of potent pharmaceuticals.
She can't read the finely printed instructions,
In German, French, English, Czech,
Japanese, Chinese, Italian and Spanish.
What does she care?
Black alphabets appear meaningless to her.
She can neither read nor write.

The very thought of her giving the bright pills and tablets
To another ill Nepalese child or mother,
Torments my soul.
How ghastly this thoughtless world
Of educated trekkers, who give medical alms and play
The macabre role of physicians,
In the amphitheatre of the Himalayas.

Satis Shroff

Only Sagarmatha Knows (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

The Sherpa trudges in the snow
Wheezes and struggles
And paves the way
With fix-ropes, ladders
Crampons, hooks and spikes
And says: 'Follow me, Sir.'

Last season it was a Tiroler, a Tokyoter
And a gentleman from Vienna.
This time it's a sahib from Bologna.
Insured for heath and life
Armed with credits cards and pride
Storming the Himalayan summits
With the help of the Nepalis.

Hillary took Tenzing's photo
Alas the times have changed.
For the sahib it's pure vanity
For the sherpa it's sheer existence.

By stormy weather and the trusty sherpa's
Competence and toil the previous day,
The sahib takes a stealthy whiff of oxygen.
And thinks: 'After all, the Sherpa cannot communicate
He's illiterate to the outside world.'
And so the sahib feigns sickness and descends
Only to make a solo ascent the next day,
Stoned with amphetamine.

And so the legend grows
Of the sahib on the summit
A photo goes around the world.
Sans Sherpa,
Sans Sauerstoff.

Was it by fair means?
Only Sagarmatha knows
Only Sagarmatha knows.

Quo Vadis, My Nepal? (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

My Nepal, what has become of you?
Your features have changed with time.
The innocent face of the Kumari
Has changed to the blood-thirsty countenance of Kal Bhairab,
From development to destruction,
From bikas to binas.
A crown prince fell in love,
But couldn't assert himself,
In a palace where ancient traditions still prevail.
Despite Eton college and a liberal education,
He chose guns instead of rhetoric,
And ended his young life,
As well as those of his parents and other royal members.
An aunt from London aptly remarked,
'He was like the terminator.'
Another bloodshed in a Gorkha palace,
Recalling the Kot massacre under Jung Bahadur Rana.

You're no longer the same
There's insurrection and turmoil
Against the government and the police.
Your sons and daughters are at war,
With the Gurkhas again.

Maobadis with revolutionary flair,
With ideologies from across the Tibetan Plateau and Peru.
Ideologies that have been discredited elsewhere,
Flourish in the Himalayas.
Demanding a revolutionary-tax from tourists and Nepalis
With brazen, bloody attacks
Fighting for their own rights
And the rights of the bewildered common man.

Well-trained government troops at the orders
Of politicians safe in Kathmandu.
Leaders, who despise talks and compromises,
Flex their tongues and muscles,
And let the imported automatic salves speak their deaths.
Ill-armed guerrillas against well-armed Royal Gurkhas

In the foothills of the Himalayas.

Nepali children have no chance, but to take sides
To take to arms not knowing the reason and against whom.
The child-soldier gets orders from grown-ups
And the hapless souls open fire.
Hukum is order, the child-soldier cannot reason why.
Shedding precious human blood,
For causes they both hold high.
Ach, this massacre in the shadow of the Himalayas.
Nepalis look out of their ornate windows,
In the west, east, north and south Nepal
And think:
How long will this krieg go on?
How much do we have to suffer?
How many money-lenders, businessmen, civil servants,
Policemen and gurkhas do the Maobadis want to kill
Or be killed?
How many men, women, boys and girls have to be mortally injured
Till Kal Bhairab is pacified by the Sleeping Vishnu?
How many towns and villages in the seventy five districts
Do the Maobadis want to free from capitalism?
When the missionaries close their schools,
Must the Hindus and Buddhists shut their temples and shrines?
Shall atheism be the order of the day?
Not in Nepal.

It breaks my heart, as I hear over the radio:
Nepal's not safe for visitors.
Visitors who leave their money behind,
In the pockets of travel agencies, rug dealers, currency and drug dealers,
And hordes of ill-paid honest Sherpas and Tamang porters.
Sweat beads trickling from their sun-burnt faces,
In the dizzy heights of the Dolpo, Annapurna ranges
And the Khumbu glaciers.
Eking out a living and facing the treacherous
Icy crevasses, snow-outs, precipices
And a thousand deaths.

Beyond the beaten trekking paths
Live the poorer families of Nepal.
No roads, no schools,

Sans drinking water and sans hospitals,
Where aids and children's work prevail.

Lichhavis, Thakuris and Mallas have made you eternal
Man Deva inscribed his title on the pillar of Changu,
After great victories over neighbouring states.
Amshu Verma was a warrior and mastered the Lichavi Code.
He gave his daughter in marriage to Srong Began Sgam Po,
The ruler of Tibet, who also married a Chinese princess.
Jayastathi Malla ruled long and introduced the system of the caste,
A system based on the family occupation,
That became rigid with the tide of time.
Yaksha Malla the ruler of Kathmandu Valley,
Divided it into Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon for his three sons.

It was Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha,
Who brought you together,
As a melting pot of ethnic diversities.
With Gorkha conquests that cost the motherland
Thousands of ears, noses and Nepali blood

The Ranas usurped the royal throne
And put a prime minister after the other for 104 years.
104 years of a country in poverty and medieval existence.
It was King Tribhuvan's proclamation and the blood of the Nepalis,
Who fought against the Gorkhas under the command of the Ranas,
That ended the Rana autocracy.
His son King Mahendra saw to it that he held the septre
When Nepal entered the UNO.
The multiparty system along with the Congress party was banned.

Then came thirty years of Panchayat promises of a Hindu rule
With a system based on the five village elders,
Like the proverbial five fingers in one's hand,
That are not alike and yet functioned in harmony.
The Panchayat government was indeed an old system,
Packed and sold as a new and traditional one.
A system is just as good as the people who run it.
And Nepal didn't run.
It revived the age-old chakary,
Feudalism with its countless spies and yes-men,
Middle-men who held out their hands

For bribes, perks and amenities.
Poverty, caste-system with its divisions and conflicts,
Discrimination, injustice, bad governance
Became the nature of the day.

A big chasm appeared between the haves-and-have-nots.
The social inequality, frustrated expectations of the poor
Led to a search for an alternative pole.
The farmers were ignored, the forests and land confiscated,
Corruption and inefficiency became the rule of the day.
Even His Majesty's servants went so far as to say:
Raja ko kam, kahiley jahla gham.

The birthplace of Buddha
And the Land of Pashupati,
A land which King Birendra declared a Zone of Peace,
Through signatures of the world's leaders
Is at war today.

Bush's government paid 24 million dollars for development aid,
Another 14 million dollars for insurgency relevant spendings
5,000 M-16 rifles from the USA
5,500 machine guns from Belgium.
Guns that are aimed at Nepali men, women and children,
In the mountains of Nepal.
Alas, under the shade of the Himalayas,
This corner of the world has become volatile again.

My academic friends have changed sides,
From Mandalay to Congress
From Congress to the Maoists.
From Hinduism to Communism.
The students from Dolpo and Silgadi,
Made unforgettable by Peter Mathiessen in his quest for his inner self
And his friend George Schaller's search for the snow leopard,
Wrote Marxist verses and acquired volumes
From the embassies in Kathmandu:
Kim Il Sung's writings, Mao's red booklet,
Marx's Das Kapital and Lenin's works,
And defended socialist ideas
At His Majesty's Central Hostel in Tahachal.
I see their earnest faces, then with books in their arms

Now with guns and trigger-happy,
Boisterous and ready to fight to the end
For a cause they cherish in their frustrated and fiery hearts.

But aren't these sons of Nepal misguided and blinded
By the seemingly victories of socialism?
Even Gorbachov pleaded for Perestroika,
And Putin admires Germany, its culture and commerce.
Look at the old Soviet Union, and other East Bloc nations.
They have all swapped sides and are EU and Nato members.
Globalisation has changed the world fast,
But in Nepal time stands still
The blind beggar at the New Road gate sings:
Lata ko desh ma, gaddha tantheri.
In a land where the tongue-tied live,
The deaf desire to rule.
Oh my Nepal, quo vadis?

The only way to peace and harmony is
By laying aside the arms.
Can Nepal afford to be the bastion of a movement and a government
That rides rough-shod over the lives and rights of fellow Nepalis?
Can't we learn from the lessons of Afghanistan and Iraq?
The Maobadis must be given a chance at the polls,
Like all other democratic parties.
Time will tell us whether they can integrate
In Nepal or not.
I have hope,
For the Maobadis are bahuns and chettris,
Be they Prachanda or Baburam Bhattraai,
Leaders who are Nepalese.
The game of bagh-chal goes on,
For Vishnu no longer holds,
The executive, judiciary, legislative,
Spiritual and temporal powers
In the shadow of the Himalayas.

Satis Shroff

Schwarzwald Nature Notes

SCHWARZWALD NATURE NOTES (Satis Shroff)

A birdhouse hangs below a spire,
To feed the avian friends through winter.
The spotted woodpecker that was rescued
Comes to the garden with its mother.
The blackbird has a worm in its beak,
And dashes to feed its babies.

The lilacs look lovely,
With violet flowers in clusters;
The white flowers crown the Zierapple tree,
And even the white rhododendrons are flourishing.
A fox comes furtively over the meadow,
Followed by a deer and a doe,
Nibble rose petals and berries among the bushes.

The blackbird's melodies
Charm me in the evenings,
From the neighbour's rooftop
Or a TV antenna in a nearby house.
The Schwarzwald wind from the Vale of Hell
Sings to the leaves of the willow at dusk.

The finches, robins, wrens and titmice frequently appear
And leave with titbits in their small beaks.
The sparrows fly in formations,
Followed by Kohlmeise and Blaumeise.
Forest birds visit the garden:
Kleiber, bullfinch, jays and spotted woodpeckers.

Last year was a winter devoid of birds,
Even the blackbirds were rare visitors.
I planted bushes which bear berries,
And put up a pool for the birds.
What a delight when a blackbird
Sat in the water and enjoyed a quick bath;
The eyes moving around cautiously
For signs of danger.

In winter when the snow lies thick over the fields
It's difficult to search for food.
The titmouse, robin and finch come
To the balcony and birdhouse.
They all relish corns and seeds.
The robins and blackbirds prefer millet,
Rolled oats and dried grapes.

In the blue sky like in Monet's painting with poplars,
Eagles and hawks glide in wide circles,
Looking for field mice and other rodents.
Or one of my friend Franz Wiesler's pigeons.

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Satis Shroff

Separation (Satis Shroff)

The first day was cumbersome
For it was fresh in my memory.

The second day Florentin asked:
'Papa, where is Mama? '
I was at a loss.
How was I to explain
A two-year old,
Where Mama was?

The third day we were relieved
To get cards and descriptions:
Of cows, sheep, horses grazing
In the Norderheide meadows.
Of windmills and the howling
North Sea breeze.

Of a fishing trip in a trawler,
With North Sea fishermen,
Who spoke East Friesian dialect.

Of Husum's colourful harbour
With Yachts and fisher boats
And a Schiffahrtsmuseum.

Whitewashed houses with red rooftops
Endless blue skies over the horizon,
Interspersed with fluffy clouds.

Satis Shroff

Sonderschool (Satis Shroff)

"Halt's Maul, Du Missgeburt! "

Says one to the other.

'Halt dein Mund, Du Jude!

Ich hasse Juden, Mann! ' barks an obese Hauptschuler.

The others play football in the classroom.

The teacher says emphatically,

'It's forbidden to play soccer here! '

They reply in chorus:

'It doesn't disturb anybody.'

A grey-blond teacher barges into the room and says:

'Leben Sie hier noch? ' to his colleague.

Are you still alive?

Boris has an appointment with the police.

They nabbed him stealing a car.

Nicky quips to Suleika:

'Du hast einen fetten Arsch!

Gebärfreudige Hintern.'

Albin runs helter skelter,

Settles down on a table,

Chewing gum between his yellow teeth,

Doesn't like authority.

Satis Shroff

Sylt At Dawn

Sylt at Dawn (Satis Shroff)

You hear the waves
As they splash onto the shore.
You haven't opened your eyes,
But you discern the cries of sea gulls,
As you slowly let the sunlight
Into your eyes.

Ah, the reassuring rays caress your face,
As you proceed to the balcony,
Stretch yourself
And let out cha-cha-cha,
Pa-pa-pa sounds between your teeth,
That you've learned
While singing in your choir.

A seagull with a fish in its beak
Flutters by.
All white and airborne,
Twinkling on a blue sky.
Out in the horizon,
A turquoise blue trawler chugs by.

Satis Shroff

The Broken Poet (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

I was the president of the Nepali Literary Society
And my realm was a small kingdom
Of readers and writers in the foothills of the Himalayas.
I came a long way,
Having started as an accountant of His Majesty's government.
I was a Brahmin and married a Chettri woman,
Pretty as a Bollywood starlet.
It flattered my masculinity,
For she was a decade younger than I.
I took up writing late and managed to publish a few poems.
They said my verses were bad and received many reject slips.
By chance I ran into a gifted young man,
Who became my ghost writer.

When I was too busy doing business and juggling figures to suit my purpose,
He'd write wonderful verses and short-stories in my name.
My fame grew and in this small kingdom
I was highly decorated for my boundless creativity.
Books of verse appeared with my name.
My poems were recited at literary circles.
I became prolific and prominent.
Till my ghost-writer ran away with my young wife.
And there I was, an old, bruised, run-down old man.
Bedridden and waiting for Yamaraj to summon me,
To face the eternal destiny of life,
After a bout of liver cirrhosis.
The raksi, Gurkha rum and expensive Scotch
Got the better of me.
I kept a stiff upper-lip till the bitter end.

Satis Shroff

The Colour Of Your Eyes (Satis Shroff)

Blue is the colour of the mountain,
Blue is the colour of the sky,
Blue is the colour of our planet,
And blue is the colour of your eyes.

Blue,
You have so many names:
Blau, bleu, caerulus,
Neelo, niebes, mavi,
Sininen, sienie,
azzurro
azul
a-oj.

Blue is the colour
Of your balanced character:
Unshakeable and constant,
Peace-loving and distanced,
Where there's conflict,
You shy away.

Blue is the colour
Of your responsibility,
Your astonishment
And helpfulness,
Towards your fellow beings.

Blue is the colour of flexibility,
Tender feelings and faithfulness.
Perhaps that's why
I love you.

Blue is not alone light,
It carries a bit of darkness
With it.
The colour of your eyes
Have an unspoken effect on me.
I feel an ambivalence
When you look at me.

Ultramarine blue is deep,
The endlessness of the mind.
Your cool blue eyes are distant,
Like an open ocean.
Stimulus and silence,
Annäherung,
Vermeidung.
Sometimes,
I understand you,
At other times,
I don't.
Am I day dreaming?

Glossary:

Blau: German

Bleu: French

Caerulus: Latin

Neelo: Nepali

Niebes: Polish

Mavi: Turkish

Sininen: Finnish

sienie: Russian

azzurro: Italian

azul: Spanish, Portugese

a-oi: Japanese

Annäherung: to draw close to

Vermeidung: shun, avoid

Satis Shroff

The Dance Of The Demons (Satis Shroff)

'I have danced
The Dance of the Demons, '
Said the attractive woman.
A negative energy
Gets the better of me at times.

In my childhood my father mishandled me.
My grandpa did the same
With a cousin of mine.
Even I was on the verge of mishandling
A female cousin of mine.

I threw my son from my lap
When I wanted to fight
With my partner.
Another time I thrashed my son
With his teddy bear,
A dozen times.
My aggression gets the better of me.
I get wild when I'm angry
And turn to a fury.

To me Tantra is a cocktail
Of love, sexuality and meditation.
I haven't embraced the inner child in me.
I'm still working on the polarity
Of my yin and yang.

Satis Shroff

The Flaw (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

I constantly live in fear.
Angst to be unmasked.
My spouse knows it.
My daughter knows it.
But no one else does.

I feel like a failure in life,
Because I have this flaw.
My parents had no time.
They worked and slaved
To earn our daily bread.
Father came often with a bad breath
From the taverns and inns.
He beat us and mother.
My teacher thrashed me too.
I had concentration problems.

As a child I had to work
With a wooden hoe and a bull,
For terraced farming wasn't easy,
And my father was a farmer.

I felt ignored by my parents.
My mother would have helped me
Were she not perpetually tired
And at her wits' end.
I cheated at school
But didn't pass the school exam.

I grew up as a man
Without reading
Without writing.
I had the gift of the gab though
Throughout my life,
And even bluffed some
Quite a few sometimes.

Satis Shroff

The Harvest Festival

THE HARVEST FESTIVAL (Satis Shroff)

Erntedank is the harvest festival,
The German Thanksgiving,
Celebrated on the first Sunday of October.
The richness of Nature is depicted
By bread, fruits and flowers.

The ladies wear lovely silk costumes,
Displaying their exquisite stitching and sewing creations:
Jewellery, pompom hats and headgear with pearls,
Expressing their gratitude
To the church, God and Mother Nature.
The Alemannic bread of Kaiserstuhl is legendary,
A procession of bakers and vereine
Ends the Alemannic Bread Market in Endingen.
Neighbouring France is known for cheese,
Germany excels with 300 sorts of bread.
It's such a delight to watch the calves and cows,
Mooing with their big collar bells,
Moving languidly down to the Erlenbacher meadows,
Over the golden, russet, brown fallen and withered leaves,
Lain by the wind like a rich carpet.
Around the Goldberg Hall and the cloister,
The alpine air is filled with cow bells,
The clash of beer glass and oompa music
Of the red-cheeked village musicians.
A homeland that has grown
Withe the centuries,
Thanks to the word of farmers,
Beautiful undulating landscapes,
Shaped by dextrous human hands,
From Erlenbach upto Feldberg.

Fresh air and lush green grass in the summer months,
Followed by stacks of hay and tangled hedges in autumn and winter.
In the vale below,
The local Ganter brewery opens

A keg of beer in the Goldenberg Hall,
The Old Timer Bulldog parade begins,
Followed by music of the brass band from Oberried.
The visitors relish the Badische cuisine:
Schweinebrated, wüerst, schnitzel, spätzle and salad,
And round it up with self-baked Schwarzwäldertorte,
Cheese cakes and wash it down with warm coffee.
The country women and farmers
Show and sell their creative wares,
Mr. Müller gathers alms for the church and cloister.
In the priest's hall there's a Kasperle theatre,
A puppet show staged by the Kindergarden of Oberried.
Frau Julia Lauby delivers a speech
On the assets and different races of the Black Forest cattle.
The birch trees have golden leaves on their boughs.
In the evening you sit,
Swinging with your neighbours
In an Alemannic Schoof.
The Goldberg Hall moves to and fro,
To the sound of 'Schwarzwald Sound.'
I take a swig of the brew,
And head for Kappel in the Dreisam Valley below,
Before the mirth and fun grow fast and furious,
As Robert Burns adminished
In Tam o' Shanter.
* * *

Satis Shroff

The Holy Cows Of Kathmandu (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

Holy cow! The mayor of Kathmandu
Has done it.
Since ancient times a taboo
The free, nonchalant cows
Of Kathmandu were rounded up
In a rodeo by the Nepalese police.
Was it Nandi, Shiva's bull?
Or holy cows?
'They're cattle still', said the mayor.
'Straying cattle are not wanted'.

Eighty-eight holy cows
Were auctioned
Not at Sotheby's
But in Kathmandu.
The auction yielded 64,460 rupees
Said the mayor of Kathmandu.

Cows that were a nuisance
To pedestrians and tourists at Thamel.
Cows that provided dung
And four other products:
Milk, yoghurt, butter and urine
For many a hearth.
Cows that gave urine
That the Hindus collected.
Cows that were sacred
And worshipped as the cow-mother.
Cows that were donated
And set free by Brahmins and Chettris
To set themselves free from sins.
Cows that marked the Gaijatra,
An eight-day homage to the dead.

It was a king, according to legend,
Who ordered cows to be set free
By families in mourning
In the streets of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur.
To share the bereaved pain of

The death of a beloved prince
And a sad mother and queen.

The children disguised themselves
As grotesque cows and motley figures
And danced to Nepalese music
To make the queen laugh,
And forget her tears.

Even today the bereaved
Families drive their cows
Through the streets of Kathmandu
On the day of Gaijatra:
The festival of the cows.
Despite the ecological control
On the cows of Kathmandu,
Lalitpur and Bhaktapur.

From ancient times
Kings, noblemen, pedestrians
Cyclists, pullcarts, cars,
Scooters and rickshaws,
The traffic snaked around the holy cows.

The umwelt-conscious mayor
Has made up his mind:
The cattle are obstructing the traffic
Long-haired Nepalese youth need a crew-cut
Horse-pulled carts and rickshaws must go.
They worsen sanitation
And environmental problems.
But the carpets and cars must stay.

Elephant-rides remain for the tourists
After all, we've developed
A yen for dollars, francs and marks.
Kathmandu is catching up
With the rest of the world.

The Japanese Garden (Satis Shroff)

Nine Hauptschule kids in their teens,
Sit on benches in the Japanese Garden,
Near the placid, torquoise lake.

The homework is done sloppily.
Who cares?
The boys are bursting with hormones,
As they tease the only blonde from Siberia.

A fat guy named Heino likes the blonde,
But she doesn't fancy him.
Annäherung, Vermeidung:
A conflict develops.

The teacher tells him in no uncertain terms:
"Lass Sie bitte in Ruhe! "
But Heino with the MP3 doesn't care
And carries on:
Grasping her breasts,
Caressing her groin.
She puts up a fight to no avail.

Heino is stronger, impertinent,
And full of street rhetoric.
Meanwhile, the other teenies
Are climbing, kicking the Japanese pavilion,
Spitting, cursing shouting
At all and sundry in German.

Satis Shroff

The Lure Of The Himalayas (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

500 years ago near the town of Kashgar,
I, a stranger in local clothes was captured
By the sturdy riders of Vali Khan.
What was a stranger
With fair skin and blue eyes,
Looking for in Vali Khan's terrain?
I, the stranger spoke a strange tongue.
'He's a spy sent by China.
Behead him, ' barked the Khan's officer.
I pleaded and tried to explain
My mission in their country.
It was all in vain.

On August 26,1857
I, Adolph Schlagintweit,
a German traveller, an adventurer,
Was beheaded as a spy,
Without a trial.

I was a German who set out on the footsteps
Of the illustrious Alexander von Humboldt,
With my two brothers Hermann and Robert,
From Southhampton on September 20,1854
To see India, the Himalayas and Higher Asia.
The mission of the 29000km journey
Was to make an exact cartography
Of the little known countries,
Sans invitation, I must admit.

In Kamet we reached a 6785m peak,
An elevation record in those days.
We measured the altitudes,
Gathered magnetic, meteorological,
And anthropological data.
We even collected extensive
Botanical, zoological and ethnographic gems.

Hermann and I made 751 sketches,
Drawings, water-colour and oil paintings.

The motifs were Himalayan panoramas,
Single summits, glacier formations,
Himalayan rivers and houses of the natives.
Padam valley, near the old moraine
Of the main glacier at Zanskar in pencil and pen.
A view from Gunshankar peak 6023 metres,
From the Trans-Sutlej chain in aquarelle.
A European female in oriental dress in Calcutta 1855.
Brahmin, Rajput and Sudra women draped in saris.
Kristo Prasad, a 35 year old Rajput
Photographed in Benaras.
An old Hindu fakir with knee-long rasta braids,

Bhot women from Ladakh, snapped in Simla.
Kahars, Palki-porters from Bihar,
Hindus of the Sudra caste.
A Lepcha armed with bow and arrows,
In traditional dress up to his calves
And a hat with plume.
Kistositta, a 25 year old Brahmin from Bengal,
Combing the hair of Mungia,
A 43 year old Vaisa woman.
A wandering Muslim minstrel Manglu at Agra,
With his sarangi.
A 31 year old Ram Singh, a Sudra from Benaras,
Playing his Kolebassen flute.
The monsoon,
And thatched Khasi houses at Cherrapunji

The precious documents of our long journey
Can be seen at the Alpine Museum Munich.
Even a letter,
Sent by Robert to our sister Matilde,
Written on November 2, 1866 from Srinagar:
'We travelled a 200 English mile route,
Without seeing a human being,
Who didn't belong to our caravan.
Besides our horses, we had camels,
The right ones with two humps,
Which you don't find in India.
We crossed high glacier passes at 5500m
And crossed treacherous mountain streams.'

My fascination for the Himalayas
Got the better of me.
I had breathed the rare Himalayan air,
And felt like Icarus.
I wanted to fly higher and higher,
Forgetting where I was.
My brothers Hermann and Robert left India
By ship and reached Berlin in June,1857.

I wanted to traverse the continent
Disregarding the dangers,
For von Humboldt was my hero.
Instead of honour and fame,
My body was dragged by wild riders in the dust,
Although I had long left the world.

A Persian traveller, a Muslim with a heart
Found my headless body.
He brought my remains all the way to India,
Where he handed it to a British colonial officer.

It was a fatal fascination,
But had I the chance,
I'd do it again.

Satis Shroff

The Professor's Wife (Satis Shroff)

'My husband is mad
Er spinnt
Er ist verrückt! '
Says Frau Fleckenstein, my landlady,
As she staggers down the steps,
In her blue satin negligée.

She arrests her swaying
With a hiccup
And says: 'Entschuldigen Sie'
And throws up her misery,
Discontent, melancholy and agony.
The pent-up emotions,
Of a forty year married life.

Her husband is a high-brow,
An honourable man
A professor with a young blonde mistress.
And she has her bottles:
Red wine, white wine
Burgunder, Tokay and Ruländer
Schnaps, Whiskey,
Kirschwasser and Feuerwasser
The harder the better.

She defends herself
She offends herself
With bitterness and eagerness.
Her looks are gone
Once her asset, now a liability.
A leathery skin, and bags under the eyes
Her hair unkempt, and a pot belly.
A bad liver and a surplus of spleen,
A fairy turned a grumbler.

Tension charges the air
Pots and pans flying everywhere
Fury and frustration
Tumult and verbal terror

Rage and rancour
Of a marriage gone asunder.
And what remains is a façade,
Of a professor and his spouse
Grown grey and 'grausam.'
Faces that say: Guten Tag
When it's cloudy, stormy, hurricane.

To forgive and forget
That's human folly.
'I will bear my grudges, ' says milady.
And my landlord is indeed a lord.
A lord over his wealth, wife and wretched life
A merciless, remorseless, pitiless existence
In the winter of their lives.
Too old to divorce
And too young to die.
What remains is only the lie.

Satis Shroff

The Sea Swells (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

The sea shells on the sea shore
Suddenly the sea swells.
Ring the church and temple bells.
All is not well.
The sea has gone back.

Brown-burnt Tarzans and Janes
From different continents,
Wonder what's going on.
A man from Sweden
Is immersed in his thriller under the palms.
A mother and daughter from Germany
Frolic on the white sunny beach.

Even the sea-gulls stop and listen
To the foreboding silence.

The sea swells,
Comes back
And brings an apocalyptic destruction:
Sweeping humans, huts and hotels,
Boats, billboards and debris.
Cries for help are stifled by the roaring waves.

The sea goes back.
Leaving behind lost souls,
Caught in suspended animation.
I close my eyes.
Everything dies.
Tsunami. Tsunami.
Shanti. Om shanti.

Satis Shroff

The Tantric Woman (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

An eruption of scarlet flush
On her cheeks, throat
And between her breasts
Became visible.
She wore a silvery satin top.
Her breast heaved as she inhaled
And said in a throaty voice:
'I have a vision that all
Men and women are brothers and sisters.
I am a woman with power,
And possess female energy.
I have done Zen meditation with my guru.

Lately I had tantric-sex with my partner.
I felt our energies mingling
As they rose from our groins,
Along the chakras to our heads
And back again.
Wonderful moments of bliss
And fulfilment.

Through tantra I have realised
How wonderful I am.
I feel enriched and strong,
My sexuality has grown.
I had a male admirer for erotic relationships.
Tantric-sex is reserved for my boy-friend,
Whom I regard as my spiritual partner.
Through the healing power of self-love,
I have experienced healing and sexuality.
To love means to let a man be a man
And a woman a woman.

I've combed and tied my hair behind.
I'm wearing loose woollen clothes
To distract the youngsters and other males
And hide my curves,
When I work as a social worker.
They all want to have

Body contact with me.
I try to look unappealing,
Though I'm in love
With my body, heart and soul.

I feel like a wise woman,
And I have visions.

Satis Shroff

To Santa Fe (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

A German professor wooed me
And said I could still do my creative writing work
If, and when, I married him.
I said 'Ja' and gave birth to five children,
And had no time to write.
I was forever changing napkins,
Applying creams on the baby's bottom,
Cooking meals for seven family members,
Washing the piles of cups and plates,
Forks, spoons, knives
And clothes.

Dusting the many windows of a three-storied house,
Feeding and nursing the small ones,
Praising and caressing the bigger ones.
It was a full time job.

I had snatches of thoughts for my writing.
But since I didn't have time to jot them down,
They evaporated into thin air.
Lost were my intellectual gems,
Between sunrise and sunset.

I became too tired of it all.
I was glad if I could get a good night's sleep.
Sleep, Nature's balm, soothed me to bear the hardships.
The family was too much with me.

One day I left for Santa Fe,
The one place where I felt free.
Free to think and sort out my thoughts,
And watch them grow in my laptop.

Satis Shroff

Wenn Ein Kind/ If A Child...(Anon)

Wenn ein Kind kritisiert wird,
lernt es zu verurteilen.

Wenn ein Kind angefeindet wird,
lernt es zu kämpfen.

Wenn ein Kind verspottet wird,
lernt es schüchtern zu sein.

Wenn ein Kind beschämt wird,
lernt es sich schuldig zu sein.

Wenn ein Kind verstanden und toleriert wird,
lernt es geduldig zu sein.

Wenn ein Kind ermutigt wird,
lernt es sich selbst zu vertrauen.

Wenn ein Kind gelobt wird,
lernt es sich selbst zu schätzen.

Wenn ein Kind gerecht behandelt wird,
lernt es sich gerecht zu sein.

Wenn ein Kind geborgen lebt,
lernt es zu vertrauen.

Wenn ein Kind anerkannt wird,
lernt es sich selbst zu mögen.

Wenn ein Kind in Freundschaft angenommen wird,
lernt es in der Welt Liebe zu finden.

(Text über dem Eingang einer tibetischen Schule)

Satis Shroff

Why Do I Love You? (Satis Shroff)

Why do I love you?
Because you love me.

I love you,
And no one else.

I have to love you.
I cannot do otherwise.

And you?
Do you love me,
Because you have to love me,
And no one else?

Perhaps you love me
For I am, the way I am.
And I love you
Because you are
The way you are.

Now we love our children,
And the children love us,
And we love each other.

Perhaps it was our destiny
To love each other,
As destiny goes.

About the Author:

Satis Shroff is a writer and poet based in Freiburg (poems, fiction, non-fiction) who also writes on ethno-medical, culture-ethnological themes. He has studied Zoology and Botany in Nepal, Medicine and Social Science in Germany and Creative Writing in Freiburg and Manchester. He describes himself as a mediator between western and eastern cultures and sees his future as a writer and poet. Satis Shroff was awarded the German Academic Exchange Prize for 1998.

What others have said about the author:

Wonderful clarity and good details. (Sharon Mc Cartney, Fiddlehead Poetry Journal)

Satis Shroff writes with intelligence, wit and grace. (Bruce Dobler, Senior Fulbright Professor in Creative Writing, University of Pittsburgh) .

Since 1974 I have been living on and off in Nepal, writing articles and publishing books about Nepal- this beautiful Himalayan country. Even before I knew Satis Shroff personally (later) I was deeply impressed by his articles, which helped me very much to deepen my knowledge about Nepal. Satis Shroff is one of the very few Nepalese writers being able to compare ecology, development and modernisation in the 'Third' and 'First' World. He is doing this with great enthusiasm, competence and intelligence, showing his great concern for the development of his own country. (Ludmilla Tüting, journalist and publisher, Berlin) .

Due to his very pleasant personality and in-depth experience in both South Asian, as well as Western work-styles and living, Satis Shroff brings with him a cultural sensitivity that is refined. His writings have always reflected the positive attributes of optimism, tolerance, and a need to explain and to describe without looking down on either his subject or his reader. (Kanak Mani Dixit, Himal Southasia, Kathmandu) .

Satis Shroff

Without Words (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

We speak with each other
A wonderful feeling overcomes me
And I'm touched to the roots of my existence.
As though it was a doubling of my existence.
It becomes a passion
To speak with each other.

Our lives filled with togetherness:
With ourselves and our children.
I discover myself in you
And you in me.
Where one is at home
In the company of the other
And vice versa.

Where you can be the way you are
Where I can be the way I am.
Our tolerance for each other is crucial
There are moments when one forgets time.
We speak to each other without words.
It's not sung,
It's not instrumental chords.

Just our hearts understanding each other.
In tact with each other.
Our eyes speak volumes
And a nod is enough,
Ishara bhaye huncha.

Satis Shroff

Without You, My Love (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

Without you, my love,
Life is nothing
Only the silence,
Die Stille.

Without you
I cannot enjoy
The flowers in the garden.

Without you
There's no joy
In this world.

Without you,
A success or victory
Is nothing.

Without you
I'm dumbfounded
For it is your countenance,
Your sparkling azure eyes
Your sympathetic smile
That make me speak.

Only then do my words
Have a meaning.

Without you
I speak only
With myself,
Or with our small Florentin.
Little Flori longs for you,
And so do I.

You are the queen of our hearts,
Our Mama,
Our Seelenstück,
Who loves us
And now needs repose.

So relax.
Be happy and contented
With the other children.
It's true that we all need you
And love you,
The way you love us
Without bounds.

Glossary:

Die Stille: silence

Seelenstück: soul

Satis Shroff

You In My Thoughts (Satis Shroff, Freiburg)

To think about you
To long for you
To see you and to love you,
The way you are.

A beautiful blonde face
With well-chiselled Allemanic features
Eyes as blue as the sky,
That look at me
And smile
That disarming
Sympathetic smile.

The closeness that I have felt
The wonderful children we have,
Each with its own character and personality
As they fill the rooms of our home
And our lives
With music from flutes, violins,
Piano and kids' laptops.

Laughter and tears,
Screams and hurrahs.
Oh, I miss everything
When you are not here.

Satis Shroff

Zeitgeistlyrik: Aurora Borealis (Satis Shroff)

The sky was bathed
In fantastic hues:
Yellow, orange, scarlet
Mauve and cobalt blue.
Buto dancing,
In this surreal light,
On the stage,
Was magnificent.
Your heart pounds higher,
Your feet become light,
Your body sways
To the rhythm
And Nordic lights
Of the Aurora borealis.

Akin to the creation
Of the planet we live in.
And here was I,
Anzu Furukawa.
Once a small ballet dancer,
Now a full grown woman:
A choreographer, performer,
Ballet and modern dancer, studio pianist.
'The Pina Bausch of Tokyo'
Wrote a German critic
In Der Tagesspiegel.

Success was my name,
In Japan, Germany, Italy,
Finnland and Ghana:
Anzu's Animal Atlas,
Cells of Apple,
Faust II,
Rent-a-body,
The Detective of China,
A Diamond as big as the Ritz.

I was a professor
Of performing arts in Germany.

But Buto became my passion.
Buto was born amid upheavals in Japan,
When students took to the streets,
With performance acts and agit props.
Buto, this new violent dance of anarchy,
Cut off from the traditions
Of Japanese dance.

Ach, the Kuopio Music et Dance festival
Praised my L'Arrache-coer, '
The Heart Snatcher.
A touching praise
To human imagination,
And the human ability
To feel even the most surprising emotions

I lived my life with dignity,
But the doctors said
I was very, very sick.
I had terminal tongue cancer.
I'd been sleeping over thirty hours,
And stopped breathing
In peace,
With my two lovely children
Holding my hands.
I'd danced at the Freiburg New Dance Festival
Only twenty days ago.
I saw the curtain falling,
As we took our bows.

I bow to you my audience,
I hear your applause.
The sound of your applause
Accompanies me
Whereever my soul goes.

I'm still a little girl
In an oversized dress.
I ran through you all
In such a hurry.

Zeitgeistlyrik: Between Prometheus And Surgery (Satis Shroff)

Preacher: Break your bread with the hungry,
Speak a word with the dumb,
Sing with the sad,
Share your house with the lonely.
Fire is important to us.
I have come to ignite a fire,
Within us,
A fire that'll remain burning.

But an open fire is dangerous,
For small children in Nepal.
Today we have a guest from Nepal.
A woman who has a big heart,
For the children of Nepal.

Christa: Namaskar!
I greet the Godliness in you.
I've worked twelve years in Nepal,
As a hospital manager.
The role of a woman,
Is different in rural Nepal.
The women and children have to work hard.
I went to many Nepalese farmers
And their families.
In the farmsteads there's always an open fire,
Which is the central point.
Children creep on their fours to the fire,
Fascinated,
Attracted,
By the licking flames.

Bahun: What to you is fire,
Is Agni in our eyes.
Agni is the God of Fire.
We need Agni's presence,
In Vedic rituals.
It is also a sacrificial fire.

The Nepalese home fire
Has to burn all the time.
Wedding celebrations and nuptial knots
Are tied around the open fire,
When a priest recites vedic prayers
Gives butter to Agni to make it bigger.
The funeral rites
At the burning ghats on riversides,
Are performed with fire.

Every step in life
Is manifested by rituals around Agni.
Fire is one of the most ancient
Sacred objects of Hindu worship.
Even today it plays
An honourable role
In sacrifices.
The Nepali kitchen-fire was always open.

Christa: People come with burns and deformities,
Hare-lips, polydactylia,
Injuries and infected wounds
From the decade-long krieg
In the Himalayas.
Maoists versus the royal forces.
12,000 surgical operations were performed
On 9000 patients in ten years.
The wounded Maoist patients
Couldn't be quartered
Near injured soldiers or policemen.
A clash of ideologies,
A struggle for rights,
Repression against freedom,
Leftists against rightists.
Today, there's a 50 bed hospital,
Built with the help of other nations.

In my western world,
It was Prometheus who stole fire from Heaven.
We are thankful to him for the precious flames.
The Nepalese houses are built traditionally,
But they have no chimneys.

The dwellings are full of smoke,
Emanating from the open fire.
Smoke gets in the eyes of the Ama,
The children's bronchioles are clogged.
This leads to heavy lung damage:
Chronic pulmonary inflammation,
Cases of choking,
Massive blood circulation problems.
Year after year 500 patients came,
With burns caused by open open hearth fires.
Most of the victims are small children,
Who've fallen into the fire,
Or have crabbled to the hearth.
Small innocent hands
That clutch the fury of the fire,
For there's nobody to mind them.
Keine Aufsichtspflicht.

There are no qualified healers in the hamlets.
This leads to disabilities
For the rest of their lives.
I have seen so much misery and poverty.
The modern kerosene cookers explode,
And women burn themselves,
From the lips to their navels.
Mothers come with their charges
And say: 'My baby fell into the fire.'
Stones are used outdoors to make a fire,
Or cookers with three legs at home.

Bahun: 'Your surgeons are doing a good job.'

Christa: Plastic Surgery is good
But it's important to prevent burns.
We even tried building a bamboo-fence
Around the fire.
It didn't work.

O Bahun!
Kriya means 'to do something' in Sanskrit.

Bahun: Yes, the performing of vedic rituals

At the right time,
As written in the Gita,
To attain a balance.

Christa: Would it not be better,
To prevent a child from burning
Or a mother from suffocating,
By using a new kind of oven?

Bahun: Righteous doing is without interest.

Christa: An oven that banishes the smoke
Out of the kitchen,
To the back of the house.
The origin of evil is thus eliminated.
Finally we made an oven with a chimney,
To be used by the Nepali mother.
The smoke-free oven costs only 8 euros.
For us in the west it's little money,
But for a farmer it's an enormous sum.
We gather money for the 'Die Offenmacherverein'
To finance the smoke-free kitchen oven,
See to it that it's used in Nepal,
And organise the training
For oven-builders.

Bahun: Datta, dayadhvam, damyata
Shanti! Peace be with you.
Peace which passeth understanding.
Christa: Yes, Frieden sei mit Dir.

Glossary of words & organisations:

Ama: Nepali mother

Gita: is the Bhagavad Gita

Datta: means you give alms to the needy

Dayadhvam: show compassion

Damyata: tells you to practice self-control

Satis Shroff

Zeitgeistlyrik: Winter Blues (Satis Shroff)

Winter blues,
Go away!
Season of short daylight,
Coughs and rheuma,
Wet, cold days.
Misty towns,
Snowbound Schwarzwald,
Season depression,
Winter blues.

This cold seasonal change
Influences your hormones.
The lack of sunlight,
Its warm and reassuring rays,
Reduces the endorphine
In your blood vessels.

Serotonin, which regulates
Our happy mental state,
Is sparingly there,
When we need it.
Daylight is the best cure,
For light seasonal depression.

You go for a walk,
Even when the weather
Is misty and wet.
You keep a balanced diet:
Fruits and vegetables,
To create good feelings,
And to avert colds.

But for those have
Endogenic depression?
Low appetite,
Weight loss,
Sleepless nights,
Increased melatonin,
Caused by a lack

Of sunshine,
Makes you tired:
Your activities are at a low.

If walks in the misty countryside
Or city parks don't help,
You have antidepressiva
As a last resort.
Ach, winter blues

Satis Shroff