

THE MAN FROM KATHMANDU

The other day I sauntered through
The shops on Shaftesbury Avenue
I had so many things to do
My schedule was full to the brim

I had a later rendezvous
Near Westminster, at half past two
To cut my hair, long overdue
And give my beard a little trim

My shopping list was endless too
I needed soap and nice shampoo
And thanks to lunchtime's Irish stew
I wasn't feeling all that prim

But I work night shifts at the zoo
Which doesn't leave much time for you
To do the things you need to do
Like forward sit-ups at the gym

Around the bend hove into view
My favourite cheese shop, *Fromage Bleu*
Outside it stood someone I knew
Cripes! It was my ex-girlfriend, Kim!

I swivelled round and hid from view
And as I lurked within the queue
I met a man from Kathmandu
'Excuse me, sir,' I said to him

'Hello!' he said. 'Now, who are you?'
And I replied 'I'm me, that's who.'
To which he answered 'I'm me too!'
And shook me warmly by the limb

'Dear sir,' said I, 'I'm sure that's true
Now, if you'd be so kind as to
Obscure me from that woman's view
Indulge me in this little whim.'

'I will,' he said, 'and gladly too
I've been in England but since Tuesday
Customs here are strange and new
I fear you'll think me somewhat dim.'

‘My friend!’ I said, ‘You misconstrue
This hasn’t all that much to do
With anything save me and you
The situation’s sink or swim!’

‘Fear not!’ announced my new guru
‘I shall be like the tall bamboo
And make a screen none shall see through
My friend; or else my name’s not Tim!’

But lo, his voice did strength accrue
And as its volume grew and grew
My ex-girlfriend Kim, right on cue
Looked back and recognised me. ‘Jim?’

‘There’s no Jim here!’ I cried, ‘Thank you!
Perhaps you’re suffering from flu
Or you’ve been sniffing too much glue
To lend me such a pseudonym’

‘Indeed!’ said my companion. ‘Shoo!
You artless, feckless ingénue
For I am me, and he’s me too
Therefore his name, like mine, is Tim!’

She puzzled. ‘How can it be true
that you are him, and he is you?
For in last year’s brand new Who’s Who
I’m certain that his name was Jim!’

‘Alas!’ I cried, ‘the world’s askew!
Are we one man or are we two?
I think it’s best if we withdrew
This problem’s clearly far too grim’

So I went home and made fondue
While Tim has since moved to Peru
And now at last you’ve made it through
This very, very silly hymn