

Bise Nagarchi's Account

by Shrawan Mukarung

Master!
Here in this Gorkha kingdom
After 250 years I've gone mad!
My head is spinning,
The ground is the sky,
The sky is the earth,
And as my eyes are dazzled
I see you with ten heads.
Oh, where are my feet?
Where is Bise Nagarchi?
Master! I've gone mad!

I should serve Maharaj,
To protect history
I should touch the feet of the Gorkhali,
Remain true to my salt;
After 250 years what has happened to me?
This Bise is in a bad way Master!
I've gone mad.

Worthless was my wife who was killed,
Worthless the daughter who was raped,
Worthless Bise's hut that was burned down,
Should Bise be provoked by such trifles?
Stupid Bise.....!
I've gone mad Master.
I've gone mad.

My arm was broken,
Now I cannot sew jackets
For your courtiers;
I cannot blow the narsinga or play the shenai,
Nor can I sing any festive song
Or funeral dirge;
My legs are broken,
Now I cannot guard your kingdom,
My very brain is not right,
Now I cannot speak properly.
Master! I've gone mad.

Master!
Those high hills that yesterday
Stood before the Gorkha Kingdom
How are they suddenly low today?
The people of this place, unbroken and supple yesterday,
How are they bloody and bent today?
Why do I see the Daraundi turning around to flow uphill?

Why do I see the palace looking like a ruin?
I've gone mad Master, I've gone mad.

Master!
Does your sword chop heads now, or flowers?
I've been deluded.
Does your rifle shoot down thoughts, or people?
I've been deluded.
Did the subjects make this kingdom, or the king?
I've been deluded.
I've been in front of you now for 250 years,
Master!
How can I be a terrorist?

I've just gone mad, Master. Mad.

It's true, I may not have upheld Master's *Dibya Upadesh*,
I may have drunk raksi and declared
That I too won this country,
I may have called my sewing needle
The equal of Bhanubhakta's songs;
I may have shown my naked body
To those who wear the clean clothes I have tailored;
After I went mad I may even
Have insulted my own Lord.
Master!
Once a man has gone mad he makes excuses
Even to himself;
Where have they gone,
My offspring, the ones I laced into rags
For 250 years?
I may have wanted to search for them.
The pins that pricked my hands
And the blood that ran from them
Provoked me,
I may have decided that the realm I threaded together
Was greater than that won by the sword.
Master!
I am in your nation,
Along with the history of this soil,
How can I be a non-national?
I have gone truly mad Master!
Truly mad.

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The ground is the sky,
The sky is the earth,
And as my eyes are dazzled
I see you with ten heads.
Oh, where are my feet?

Where is Bise Nagarchi?
Master! I've gone mad!

Original title *Bise Nagarchiko Bayan*. Translated by Michael Hutt.