

## "Memories of Light in The Black Forest"

The days are warm and lingering, recalling the lost days of childhood when it seemed that the sun shone for a year in one single day. Lazy days like a soft white pillow filled with bright sunlight and poppies dancing in cornfields. Breezes carrying the scent of pine. Pines, that darken the forest with hushed liquid shadows. The sky, chinked, a lattice-work of blue, ever changing as the rough knotty branches nod obeying the breezes. Pine needles, brown and flaxen, carpet the meandering paths that disappear through soft gold green woods that have never been swept. Paths trodden by unknown pilgrims spreading the gospel of life. Paths leading to ancient forest villages, arteries of life for the wood-carving forest folk, sewing their lives with delicate threads. Shrines, couched in sleepy forests and attended by woodland wet anemones, standing in silent witness as the wayfarer passes by. Shrines that know the cold swish of wind and the pattered drip of rain. Lonely sentinels in dark green forests where the wind whispers about them in the night. The forest like a dark curtain hiding them from the chaste caresses of the moon and the white cataract of stars.

One such pilgrim stumbles from the shadowy paths into a forest clearing that is bathed in sunlight and alive with tall blue-green grass, glistening, swaying. There stands amongst a profusion of flowers a shrine that has been lovingly erected. It invites the traveller, no matter what his race or creed, to tarry and read the faint Gothic writing on a weathered board that has cracked with age and is nailed beneath a figure of Christ.

Its message.....

My friend,  
If you want to know the science of God  
Then look to the trees and the sky,  
If you want to know the beauty of God  
Then look at the flowers about you,  
And if you want to know the love of God  
Then look at the cross.....

The wayfarer stands for a solitary moment, in silent tribute, whilst the distant pines sway as they are kissed by the breeze and then he walks away into the forest and its cool calm gallery of trees, reminded of the strange inquietude of its hidden life, where, away from wind tossed valleys time has no meaning.

MANDYROS