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The Time My Father Saw a Yeti

Ang Tsering Sherpa with Bob Peirce

This is about the time my father saw a yeti. It was many, many years ago -- about 11 years ago. My brother was very young and I was very young too. I was going to school in Thame. [My brother Chokoli was going to school in Kathmandu. He was a monk. There are many monasteries in Kathmandu -- in Bouddha. He was a monk there, but the Lama sent him away. They were riding bicycles, my brother and his friends, instead of reading books. They rode round and round in Kathmandu. Afterwards, the Lama said-- the Lama hit them. He hit all the monks. My brother and some other monks came to Thame. They never went back to Kathmandu.]

My father and my brother were monks at Thame monastery. At that time, my father was younger. Now he is retired, kind of retired, but he is still working. At that time we had a lot of sheep and a cow, but now we don't have them any more. All gone, all died. But then we had a lot of them and the sheep wanted to eat a lot of grass. Now we live in Thamo. But at that time we lived in Orsho. (Now Orsho is gone. There is no more place there. It was washed away in a tshoserup: lake-burst flood.)

At that time, my father went to cut grass on a hill. From Orsho, you walk down, down, down -- and cross the river from Thamo. Then up the hill and go to cut the grass. He had a basket -- a big basket -- and he took some kind of sharp hook that they have for cutting grass. It was then the middle of the day. Then he smelled a very, very bad smell -- VERY bad smell. He sniffed again, and this time, it's a very bad smell. And he's walking up the mountain and looking and he's saying, "what is going on here?" He is just looking everywhere, and then he sees the yeti. The yeti is there going up. And then he came down. But my father saw him first. The yeti was sitting on a rock. He was quite close -- from here to down there -- you see that small tree? That much far, I think.

Yetis aren't so big. They are about the size of seven-year-old people. But yetis are VERY strong. I have never seen one. My father has told me about them.

This one is sitting on a rock up on the mountain. He isn't walking, just sitting there on the rock. My father saw him before he saw my father. If the yeti had seen my father first, my father wouldn't have been able to walk. The yeti can make people so they can't walk. Then he eats them. But this time my father saw the yeti FIRST. He didn't bother about picking up his basket or his robe or that hook -- the sharp hook. He just started running, running, running. Sometime he fell down and sometimes got crushed, but he ran right home.

My Mom said, "where's your basket, and where's your everything else?"

He was a little bit angry and a little bit scared, and said, "oh, I got trouble today! I saw some kind of yeti!" My father told my mother. Then my mother and my father told us. All my family was there: my brother, my older brother and me and my older sister, everybody. They talked to all of us and told us the whole story.

Some time later -- after a few weeks -- my father went back with my older brother Nawang Wasser and also my deaf sister. My father said to them, "go to work! Go cut wood!"

This time they went the same way but to a different place. They crossed the river, then they went far, far away to cut bamboo. The first time, my father was cutting grass. This time they were cutting bamboo. (They make the bamboo flaps and use it for roofs.)

Then they heard the yeti and this time it was not close. It was very far away and was shouting, "kaaang! kaaang!" -- that's the noise they make. You can hear them from a distance about as far as from Kunde to Khumjung. But if you're close to a yeti, he's talking just like people. He says "brrrrllrr" [makes guttural noises]. He talks like that. If he's far he's shouting "kaaang! kaaang!"

This time they were cutting bamboo and the yeti shouted. My deaf sister doesn't hear anything and doesn't speak, you know? My older brother Wasser is also a little bit deaf (although he speaks well). My father heard the yeti and said "come on! quick!" They went away.