

BRTSON 'GRUS

Klu thar rgyal ལུ་ཐར་རྒྱལ།

Every time I went home and left for school, Brtson 'grus and my mother were always the first to come greet me, and the last to see me off when I left. Brtson 'grus was my family's watchdog, a job he had had for fifteen years.

When I returned home this last summer holiday, I suddenly realized both Mother and Brtson 'grus were aging...

Brtson 'grus first came to my home one cold winter. Father brought him from one of my relatives when he was old enough to eat by himself. He was very small and we thought he would be unable to bear the cold weather and would freeze. My community never brings dogs inside a room where people live. But finally he passed that hard time in a small doghouse we built for him near our house.

We then named him Brtson 'grus 'Conquer Death'. Soon he became my faithful companion and I took him with me wherever I went. I fed him more than five times a day. Mother often reminded me not to feed him too much or his belly would burst.

I had been frightened of dogs since Mother was attacked and bitten by a wild dog one day on her way home after she escorted me to primary school. But it was different with Brtson 'grus. I was never scared of him. He had almost become a family member.

Time went by and as much as a year would pass before I saw him. Nevertheless, he always recognized me. He would jump up with the chain around his neck when he saw me. I think he recognized me from my eyes.

He became a real mastiff that we kept tied during the day and set free at night. It was not respectful to others if we did not tie him during the day. My dreams were never disturbed by thieves or wolves at night after Brtson 'grus came to my home.

When we camped on the summer pasture with our livestock, Brtson 'grus would run around the tent and livestock to make sure that we were all safe. My parents were used to Brtson 'grus' barks.

Mother never forgot to feed Brtson 'grus regularly and he trusted her.

Brtson 'grus did not eat any food that Father offered while Mother was away on pilgrimage one summer for a few days. Maybe Brtson 'grus thought Father was too unfamiliar. He never ate any food from strangers, or maybe he was showing his unhappiness with Father, who had never made time to feed him before.

Brtson 'grus lost the use of his hind legs last June. Mother supposed Brtson 'grus had been intentionally injured by a thief. Brtson 'grus could then only crawl with his front feet. We treated his wounds and he slowly got better.

We did not feel secure without Brtson 'grus' presence and worried wolves would attack our livestock at night. This was different than in previous years when other families enjoyed camping near our tent on the summer pasture, because we were all confident Brtson 'grus would protect us.

One morning Mother found Brtson 'grus near our tent. He had been terribly injured and could hardly move. By the time Mother got near him, he had closed his eyes for the last time.

We found wolf hair between his teeth.

NON-ENGLISH TERMS

brtson 'grus བརྩོན་འགྲུས།
klu thar rgyal ལྷ་མཚན་རྒྱལ།