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 RAG DRUG: A FAITHFUL HORSE
 

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Lcags so lhun 'grub ལུགས་སོ་ལུང་འགྲུབ། (Klu sgrub ལུ་སྐྱབ།)

My family had three horses in 2016, but when I was about five years old (2006) we had seven horses. Over time, we sold four horses to people living in other communities. We do not want to sell horses to Chinese and Muslim businessmen because Father says, "They take the horses directly to big slaughterhouses and kill them." Instead, we prefer to sell our livestock, including sheep, yaks, and goats to Tibetans, even though the payment is less.

Before I started school, I herded my family's sheep in the mountains and often rode Rag drug, a name based on his color - yellowish-brown. Rag drug was very loyal to and gentle with each of my family members. We rode him everywhere - to herd, go on journeys, participate in festivals, and for pasture transportation. None of us every had any trouble with him and all my family members were willing to give him fresh grass.

This continued until he was four years old. Unexpectedly, one of my father's friends was eager to buy Rag drug and Father finally agreed because of their friendship. We all felt regretful and missed him, though we could not say anything because it was Father's decision.

When Rag drug left, tears streaked my cheeks. Father comforted, "Don't worry! I'm sure your Rug drug will be happy and my friend promised that he wouldn't sell him to butchers!"

One early morning about twenty days later, we found Rag drug frolicking with our other horses. When he noticed smoke coming out of our home's chimney, he came over. It seemed he was checking to be sure our family members were fine.

Mother spread out some straw for him, and he nuzzled her to show how glad he was.

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Lcags so lhun 'grub. 2017. Red drug: A Faithful Horse. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 47:82-83.

We all wanted him to stay with us but Father's friend came the next day. For the next fifteen years, he periodically escaped from his new owner's home.

Last year, he was nineteen years old. Father bought him back from his friend and promised that we would never allow anyone to take him from our family again. Meanwhile, Father asked our local *bla ma* for some prayer flags for Rag drug, which we wove into his mane to protect him against evils and wolves

Today, he goes freely wherever he likes on our pastures, his protection prayer flags waving in the wind.

#### NON-ENGLISH TERMS

klu sgrub ལུ་སྐྱུབ།

lcags so lhun' grub ལྷགས་སོ་ལུན་འགྲུབ།

rag drug རག་དུག།