

Early Morning Trek

“These yaks look small,” he ventures. “Yaks not big, but strong,” Drupthob says, and smiles.

“Wow. I guess you have done this before.” “Yes. We like to go around the holy mountain.” They load the instruments on the yaks. When all is loaded, Mark says, “Looks good, Drupthob, thanks. So, let us go.”

Drupthob and the porters put their palms together and nod. As they depart up the trail, Drupthob and porters chant in time to the rhythm of their feet.

“Om Om Shiva Om, Om Charanagni, Om. Mark treks in front leading a yak.

A wild snarl interrupts the chant. Looking a little alarmed, Mark remarks, “that sounds like a bear.” “Not bear,” Drupthob assures Mark. “Snow leopard. He warns us this is his land. He is the spirit lord of our shining mountains.” Drupthob asks, “why do you study earthquakes?”. “To understand what makes them.” “God makes earthquakes.” “Well, yes, of course. God is the source of all things.” “God gave us a great teacher, Kusoom, to tell us, it is time for the great being to be born.” “A great being?” “Great being will soon be born from under holy mountain.” Mark nods condescendingly and makes no comment. They reach an overhanging glacier. Mark is puffing steam as he climbs the glacier. He experiences happy pain, being on the trail in the highest mountains on Earth. “We camp here,” Drupthob decides. “You are a good trekker, Mr. Mark.”