

Milarepa continues...

After my maternal uncle left, my mother closed the doors and thought things over a long while. Meanwhile, my uncles' servant who had formally worked for us heard the people conspiring to kill me and my mother. She still felt affection for my family, and so unable to bear the thought of such retribution, she sent message to my mother, reporting what they had discussed and saying that she should look out for her son's wellbeing. My mother thought, "Their plotting dashes my happiness for the time being." She sold the remaining half of her field Trepe Tenchung, receiving seven ounces of gold as payment. Since there was no one in the region she could send and no messenger from elsewhere had appeared, my mother thought she herself would come to see me in order to bring provisions and to give advice. But at that very moment, a Yogin from the region of Uu who was returning from a pilgrimage to Nepal showed up, begging for alms. My mother asked him his story in details and determined he would be a suitable messenger.

My mother gave him a rest at home and she said, "I have a son in the region of Uu Tsang and I have some news to send him, please help to deliver it." During that time she made him feel comfortable with warm hospitality. My mother then lit a butter lamp and made the following prayer: "If my wishes will be fulfilled, may the lamp remain lit for a long time, but if there is no fulfillment may the lamp quickly die out. May Thoepaga's *Lama* and the Dharma protectors make it so." The lamp lasted a whole day and night, so my mother believed her wishes would be fulfilled. She said, "Yogin, clothing and shoes are essential for traveling across the country, so you will need patches and shoe leather." She gave him leather strips for his boots, and she herself patched the worn cloak that he wore. Being unbeknownst to the Yogin, she hid the seven ounces of gold inside the back of the cloak, over which she placed a square patch of black cloth. She secured it by embroidering stars of coarse white thread in the center, resembling the form of the constellation pleiades which could not be seen from outside. She further offered the Yogin a handsome gift and gave him a sealed letter written in code, then she sent him off.

After then, my mother had running thoughts, "Since I do not know what my countrymen have conspired to do, I should adopt a menacing air." She then instructed Peta, my sister, "Inform everyone that your brother has given a letter to the Yogin who was here yesterday." My mother wrote and sealed a letter to look like it had been sent by me. It read, 'Mother and sister, I

trust you are well and that you have witnessed signs of black magic. If any of our countrymen in particular treat you with hostility, send me a letter with their family names. Using the black arts, it is easier to snuff out a man's life than it is to offer a pinch of food, so I can cut off their family line for nine generations. If the entire countryside acts hostile to you, mother and sister, should leave and come here and I will destroy the region without leaving a trace. I have not been hindered in my practice for lack of provisions, so do not worry about me.

My mother first showed the letter to my maternal uncle and friends of the family. Then she left it in her brother's hand so that everyone would see it. As a result, they talked over the content of the letter and abandoned their plan to kill her. Then they even took the field Orma Triangle from my paternal uncle and returned it to my mother. Meanwhile, the Yogin came looking for me. He heard that I was in Nup Khulung and then found me there. He reported in details the events that had transpired in my region concerning my mother and sister. Then he handed me the letter sent by my mother and I read it off to one side. It reads;

Thoepaga, I trust you are in good health. The son born to his old mother has seen her wishes fulfilled. The family line of father Mila Sherab Gyeltshen has been upheld. Signs of black magic have appeared in the region which took thirty-five people's life perished under the house that collapsed. This, however, has caused the countrymen to act less than hospitality toward your sister and me. So now cast a hailstorm, a 'nine-brick-high' storm. By then the wishes of your old mother will be completely fulfilled. The countrymen here says they will send a party to search for you, and after they have killed you they will also kill me. Hence, for both of our sake, mother and son, should watch out for yourself with care. If you are short on provisions, look in the region facing north where a black cloud hovers and the constellation Pleiades appears. Beneath them dwell seven of our relations who possess whatever provisions you desire, so take them. If you do not find them, this Yogin lives in that region so do not ask anyone else other than.

I did not understand what the letter meant. I remembered of my homeland and my mother. With my provisions coming to an end, I would soon be destitute, but I was unfamiliar with that region or those relations so I broke down in tears. I asked the Yogin, Do you know the region where my relatives live. Where is it?" It is Ngari Gungtang," he replied. " Don't you know any others? Where is your homeland?" "I know many other regions, but I do not know any where your relatives live. "Well then, stay here a bit. I will be right back." I then presented the letter to the Lama and reported what had transpired. Lama read through the letter once and said,

“Thoepaga, your mother is filled with hatred. Even after the death of so many people she has again asked you to cast a hailstorm. Who are your relation to the north?” “I have never heard that I had any relation, it is the letter that mentions about them. I asked the Yogin but he does not know either.” I replied.

The lama’s wife, who possessed the marks of a wisdom *dākinī*, read the letter once aloud and then said, “Call the Yogin inside.” I called him and she then lit a large fire to make him warm. Serving him some delicious wine, she had the cloak removed from the Yogin’s back. The Lama’s wife put it on and pranced back and forth saying, “What fun it would be to wear such a cloak and travel around the countryside.” Then, having slipped up to the roof, the lama’s wife removed the gold from inside the cloak. She reseeded the patch as before and draped the cloak over the Yogin. After serving him the meal, she took him to other quarters. Then the lama’s wife said, “Tell Thoepaga to come before the lama.” When I arrived, she handed over me the seven ounces of gold.

“Where did the gold come from?” I asked. “It was inside the Yogin’s cloak,” she replied. “Thoepaga has got a clever mother. ‘Look to the region facing north,’ which is like a place where the sun does not shine forth’ means the Yogin’s cloak where the sun does not shine. ‘A black cloud hovers’ means the square patch of black cloth sewn on it. ‘The constellation Pleiades appears’ means the light needlework of white thread. ‘The seven relations below it’ means the seven ounces of gold. ‘If you do not find them, this Yogin lives in that region so do not ask anyone else’ means if you do not understand, the gold is in the Yogin’s cloak so do not look elsewhere.” The Lama said, “They say women are canny, and it is true!” He was gently amused.

Following the discovery of gold, I gave one-tenth of an ounce of gold to the Yogin, which pleased him. I offered seven-tenth of an ounce of gold to the Lama’s wife, and offered three ounces of gold to the Lama and said to him, “Now, my old mother says that she needs a hailstorm. So please kindly think of me and give the instructions for casting hailstorm.” Lama replied, “If you need hail, go and see Yungton Throgyal.” The Lama gave me a letter together with some gifts, and once again I went to the village of Kyorphu in Yarlung.

To be continued...