

5400

USA

Conrad Tolby The Long-Haul Trucker

ONE DAY'S FOOD

IN SEPTEMBER

BREAKFAST *Bon Sole* glazed honey bun, 5.3 oz • Coffee, 1 qt

LUNCH AT MCDONALD'S *McDonald's* double cheeseburger (2), 11.6 oz • *McDonald's* french fries, supersized, 3.5 oz (not including the half he shares with his dog Fancy Pants)

DINNER FROM FLYING J TRUCK STOP CONVENIENCE STORE Salad of lettuce, ham, egg, cheese, and black olives, 15.2 oz; with buttermilk ranch dressing, 1.5 oz • Fried chicken wings, 1 lb • Deep-fried egg rolls, pork (2), 5.7 oz

SNACKS AND OTHER *M&M's*, peanut, 7.3 oz • *Jack Link's* beef sticks (2), 2.7 oz • *Starbucks Doubleshot Espresso & Cream* coffee drink, 6.5 fl oz • *Starbucks Frappuccino* coffee drink, mocha, 13.7 fl oz • *Lipton PureLeaf* iced tea, unsweetened (4), 64 fl oz • *Marlboro Medium* cigarettes, 2 packs

CALORIES 5,400

Age: 54 • Height: 6'2" • Weight: 260 pounds

EFFINGHAM, ILLINOIS • Independent trucker Conrad Tolby and his cab companion, Fancy, have stopped for the night when we meet them at a truck stop in Effingham, Illinois. Their plan, as it is most nights, is to eat in the cab—their home on the road. Fancy—or Imperial Fancy Pants, as he's introduced to us—is a five-year-old shar pei, and Conrad's best friend. "He rides with me everywhere I go," says the onetime Bandido biker. Conrad had the passenger seat removed because the dog refused to sit in it. "Won't even look out of the window," he says.

Conrad's meals on the road haven't changed much over the years—truck stop and fast-food fare, heavy on the grease—despite warnings from his doctor. He has more reason than most to watch his diet, as he's already suffered two heart attacks—both in the cab of his truck.

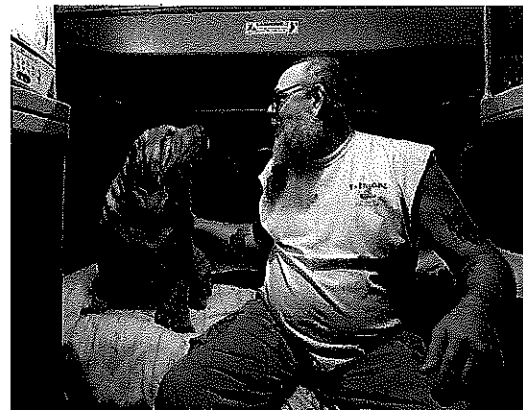
He wasn't driving either time, but each time he wasn't expected to live. And his family health history should be sufficient warning for anyone. "Everyone on my daddy's side died of a brain aneurysm or exploding arteries, all before the age of 45," explains Conrad. "Within six months of my forty-fifth birthday, I had my first heart attack."

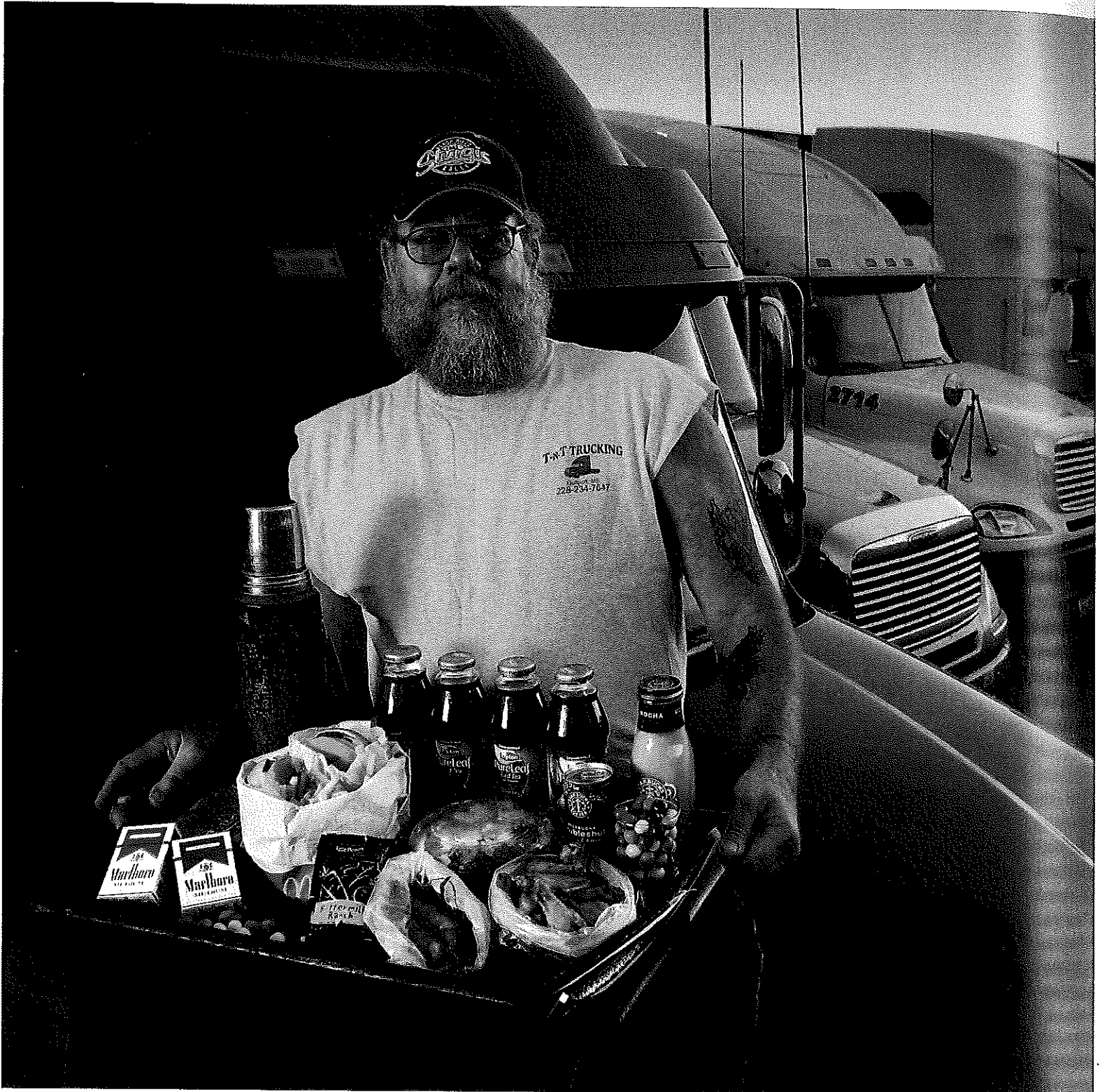
Although he has made some changes—cutting back from 300 days on the road each year to 200, his daily fare while working is still

limited to what he can find near the highway: "I find that the hot wings, especially the ones from Flying J, are not too bad, grease-wise. I don't eat Kentucky Fried or Popeyes 'cause that plays heavy on an old man's tummy."

Road snacks like beef sticks are shared by man and beast, and lunch is oftentimes McDonald's. "We split the fries, and he gets his own hamburger," says Conrad.

When he's home in Mississippi, the trucker prepares foods he never gets in truck stops. "The secret to good french toast," he says, "is fresh grated nutmeg and flavored nondairy creamer." Amaretto, French vanilla, and hazelnut are his favorites. "And barbecue. I love a good barbecue," he says.





Conrad Tolby, a long-distance truck driver and ex-biker, on the cab hood of his semi at the Flying J truck stop, with his typical day's worth of food. "Those big trucks on the road with all the lights on them? Those are chicken haulers," says Conrad. "I used to be on the road 24-7, 300 days a year, hauling fresh-killed chickens packed in ice. I'd leave Mississippi and haul ass to California. You've only got so much time to deliver or you get fined big time." After two heart attacks, both of them in the cab of his truck, and a divorce back in Mississippi, Conrad now travels with his best friend and constant companion, a five-year-old shar pei, named Imperial Fancy Pants (at right), who gets his own McDonald's burger and splits the fries with Conrad.

5600

TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION, CHINA

Karsal The Yak Herder

ONE DAY'S FOOD

IN JUNE

BREAKFAST Barley flour cake: toasted barley flour, 4.7 oz; butter tea (brick tea, butter made from fermented milk, and salt), 1 fl oz; butter made from fermented milk, 3 oz; dried cheese curds, 1.6 oz; sugar, 2 tsp (not in picture) • Yogurt, 10.2 oz; with sugar, 2 tsp

LUNCH Dried mutton, 4.6 oz • Balep korkun (fried wheat flour bread), 9.4 oz

DINNER Soup of dried mutton, 4.2 oz; wheat flour noodles (flour is pictured), 8.6 oz; bok choy, 4.4 oz; and green onion, 1.7 oz; in a salty broth, 24.3 fl oz

THROUGHOUT THE DAY Butter tea, 2.6 qt • Cigarettes 1.5 packs

CALORIES 5,600

Age: 30 • Height: 5'6" • Weight: 135 pounds

Tibetans laugh when they hear English speakers refer to all of the stout-bodied, long-haired animals they see grazing on Tibet's high plateau as yaks. For them, there is no such animal as a female yak; the male of the species is the yak and the female is called a dri. Crossbreeding with other bovines creates a dizzying array of other gender-specific names, including the dzomo—a female yak-cow hybrid. Whatever they're called, the animals are the lifeblood of Tibet's nomadic herders as they eke out their existence on the arid, cold, non-arable grasslands of the Tibetan plateau.

THE TIBETAN PLATEAU • Fifty shaggy-haired beasts and their babies lumber down the mountainside in the late afternoon, persuaded by six-year-old Nyima Dun Drup and his handful of rocks. The boy's mother, Phurba, calls the dris and dzomos by name as she stakes them out for milking. She gives each a handful of salt from a hand-stitched leather pouch and lets the calves suckle for a moment to start the flow of milk before drawing the family share.

Phurba and her husband, Karsal, are semi-nomadic pastoralists on the Tibetan plateau

Karsal, a nomadic yak herder, inside the family's yak-wool tent with his typical day's worth of food. A pile of yak dung, used for fuel, looms in the background. At right: Karsal's son wrangles the calves so that Phurba can milk their mothers.

100 miles east of Lhasa, the capital. They live for half the year—spring and summer—in a yak-wool tent woven by Phurba, grazing their animals on the surrounding grasslands.

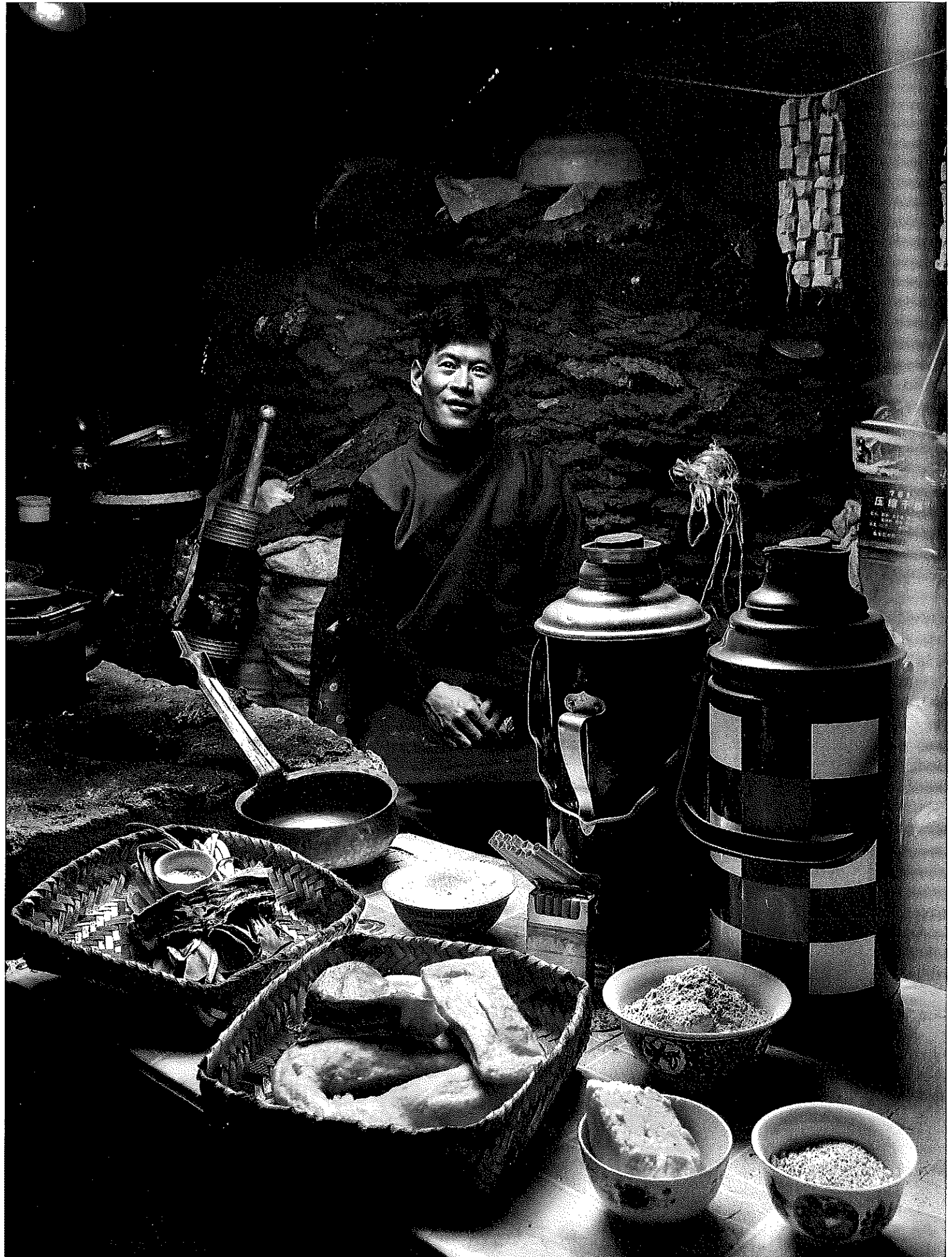
In the fall, Karsal drives the animals back to their winter corral a few miles away and the family moves into their winter home, earthen walled and with a hard roof, for the coldest part of the year. All prefer life in the tent.

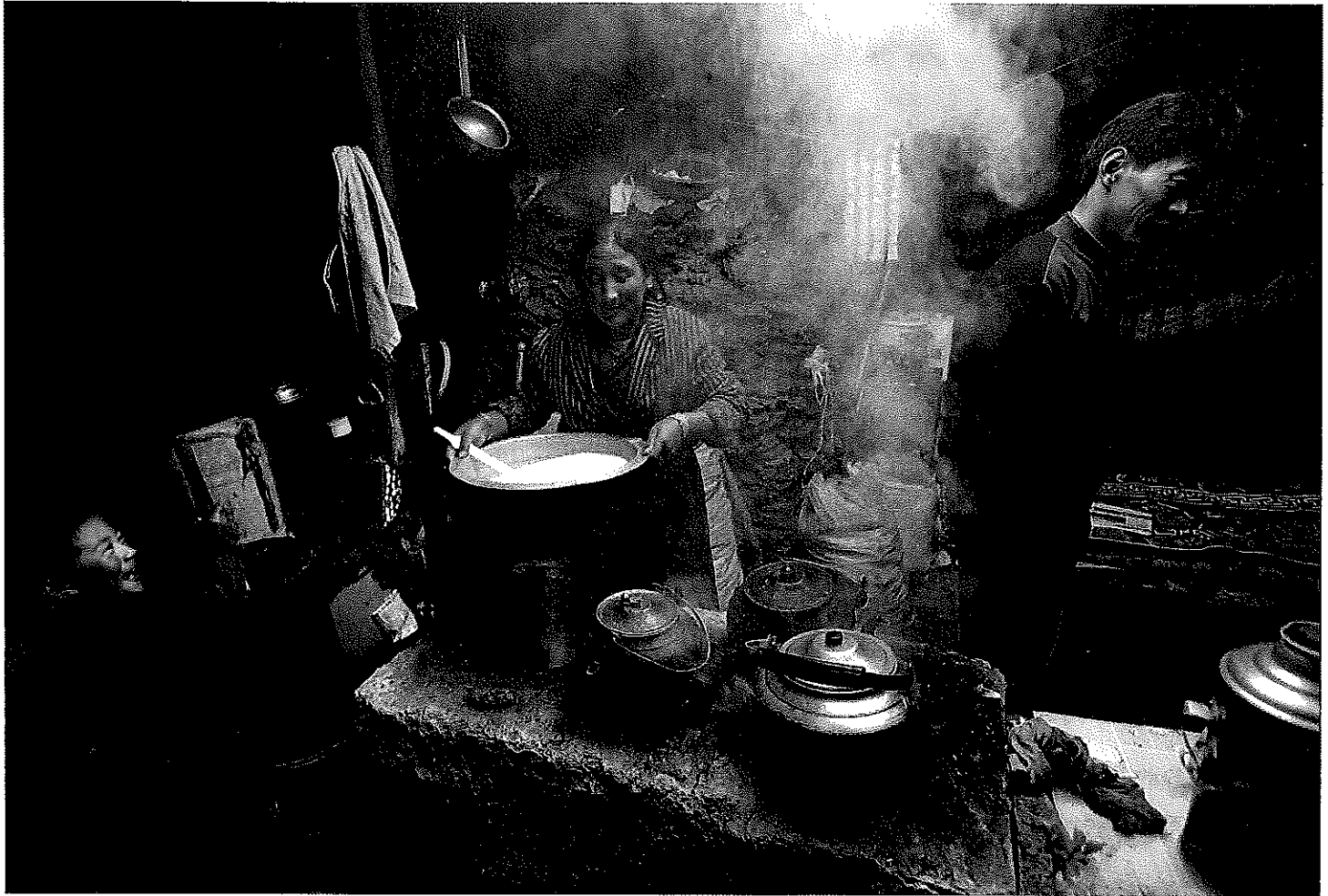
As Phurba milks, her son heads off animals that stray toward the nearby road. The family rarely eats the yaks, dris, and dzomos, which provide them with milk, wool, and cook-

ing fuel in the form of dried dung. Instead, they eat dried mutton from the flock of sheep they own together with their extended family and sell two or three yaks or dzomos a year to buy barley flour, wheat flour, tea, mustard oil, green onions, and sugar. As Buddhists, they don't kill and butcher their own animals—others do this work.

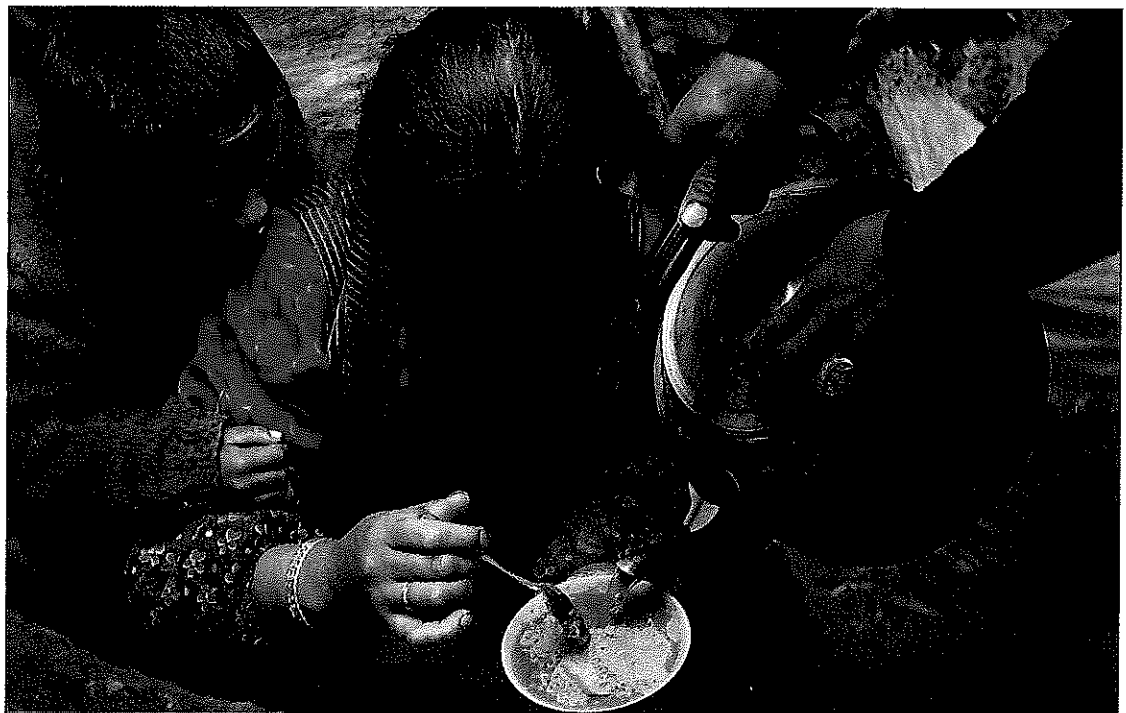
Even in a cold spring rain, the gauzy black tent is warm and dry. Smoke from an earthen stove in the center of the room curls upward through a flap in the roof. At this 15,000-foot elevation, trees and firewood are nonexistent,

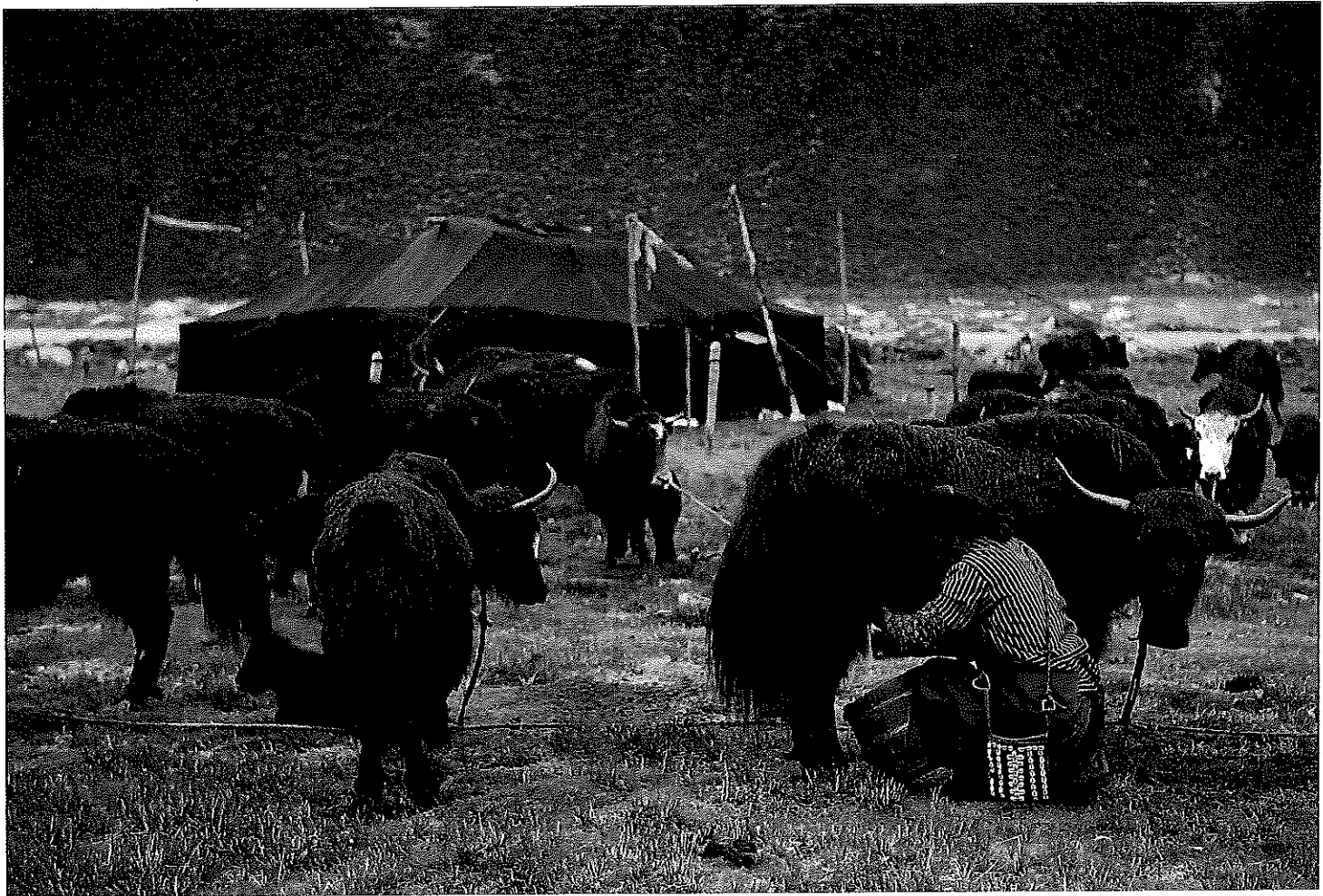






Karsal's wife, Phurba, milks one of the dris in the early morning (top right). The male yaks remain free at night, grazing at higher elevations, and the dris and their calves are tethered close to the tent to make milking in the morning convenient. Top left: Six-year-old Nylma Dun Drup takes a turn at the butter chum as Phurba puts a pot of milk on the fire and Karsal talks to a neighbor. At right: Karsal pours steaming butter tea into Phurba's breakfast bowl of porridge.





so they burn dried yak dung for cooking and heating—about 35 pounds of it each day. Flat dried rounds of yak dung are stacked near the stove, towering almost to the ceiling, and a credenza-sized wall of patties does double duty as a shelf.

Phurba gathers steaming piles of fresh yak dung in the morning after milking and shapes it into patties with her bare hands. Bright-colored homemaker's cuffs protect her clothes as she works, and afterward she cleans up in the icy stream.

The women in Tibet's nomadic families handle most of the day-to-day household chores. Does Karsal ever make the patties? Phurba laughs at the thought—it just isn't done. When we ask her to be a subject in our book, she resists, saying she is too shy—and too busy. She offers Karsal, who agrees.

A red and gold wooden chest painted with pink flowers sits on the floor next to the earthen stove, between comfortable cushioned platforms that are beds by night and seating by day. Thick yak-wool blankets, made by

Phurba as her winter occupation, are draped around the room, and men from neighboring tents lounge against them as they play cards and drink endless cups of salty butter tea. Most Tibetans drink an astonishing amount of the brew, which is a blend of brick tea boiled for hours, liberally dosed with hand-churned butter and salt.

Meat and purchased barley flour figure prominently in the family's diet, but dairy is the cornerstone, and much of Phurba's day is consumed by producing butter, yogurt, and cheese. Each day she heats the fresh raw milk she draws, then adds some of yesterday's yogurt and sets it aside to sour. Some of the thickened soured milk is eaten plain, but Phurba churns most of it. She works for an hour each morning to turn out a two-pound ball of tany butter.

After churning, she boils the buttermilk—the liquid that remains after the butter is made—and makes cheese from the soft curds that form. She also makes a dry cheese that she cuts into 1-inch squares, threads

on string, boils in milk, and then smokes by the fire until rock hard. They eat this cheese themselves as a snack and sell it, 12 blocks to a string, to passersby.

The butter tea is also mixed with *tsampa* (barley flour), and still more butter, to make a porridge. Many eat a soupier version, called *tsamtuk*, made by adding extra butter tea. Karsal and Phurba's morning meal is more like a paste, and they add cheese—and sugar if they have it.

For lunch they slice pieces of mutton from a smoked dry leg hanging in the corner and eat it cold with porridge or *balep korkun*, a flat wheat flour bread fried in mustard oil that Phurba makes every day. Dinner is sometimes porridge again, or broth with dried mutton, green onion, salt, and wheat flour noodles.

Karsal and Phurba bring care packages of *balep korkun* to their daughter Choe Ney Drukar, 11, who boards at a district school and eats instant noodles most of the week. On each visit to town, their son angles for a bottle of Coca-Cola, and pouts if he doesn't get it.