

MAY 4TH - DOWN TO LOBUCHÉ

I RADIOED THE DISCOVERY CAMP TO SEE HOW ANDREW WAS DOING AND WHAT WAS WRONG WITH HIM AND SPOKE TO DAVE. HE SAID THAT BASICALLY THE WHOLE DISCOVERY CAMP HAD A STOMACH VIRUS AS HAD A FEW OTHER PEOPLE AROUND BASECAMP. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WERE HEADED DOWN VALLEY UNTIL 8TH MAY, THEN LISA, PLERN AND MYSELF LEFT FOR GORAK SHEP. LISA HAD A SPLITTING ALTITUDE HEADACHE AND WE STOPPED SPORADICALLY TO LIE ON ROCKS EN ROUTE TO GORAK SHEP. WE WERE WITH LISAS GUIDE WHO SEEMED TO BE SOBER TODAY, AND THE PLAN WAS PERTEMBA WAS GOING TO MEET US IN GORAK SHEP AND TAKE CHARGE OF THE GIRLS.

AS WE APPROACHED GORAK SHEP I NOTICED TWO GUYS STARING AT MY HAT (OR AT LEAST I THOUGHT IT WAS MY HAT!) IT TURNS OUT THE GUYS WERE FROM SANTIAGO, CHILE AND WERE COMING TO SEE US AT BASECAMP, UNFORTUNATELY NOT THE BEST TIMING AS THE WHOLE TEAM WAS COMING DOWN. WE ALL HAVE BANCO DE CHILE BASEBALL HATS WITH THE CHILEAN FLAG ON IT AND OUR NAMES, SO THE FLAG HAD CAUGHT THEIR ATTENTION NOT ME UNFORTUNATELY! IT TURNS OUT THAT ONE OF THE GUYS WAS A STUDENT OF ERNESTO'S AND HE STAYED BACK TO CHAT TO HIM.

LISA, PLERN AND I COLLAPSED IN A LODGE DRINKING TEA AND EATING GLUCOSE BISCUITS, WHEN I SPIED PERTEMBA AND ANDRONICO THROUGH THE WINDOW OF THE LODGE. I FLEW OUT TO GET THEM AND TOLD PERTEMBA THAT LISA WAS FEELING TERRIBLE AND WE MAY NEED A HORSE OR A YAK TO TAKE HER DOWN!! PERTEMBA TOOK CHARGE OF LISA AND THEY LEFT FOR LOBUCHÉ AND ANDRONICO HELD COURT WITH THE TWO GUYS FROM CHILE. WE THEN ALL HEADED TOWARDS LOBUCHÉ, LISA HAD MADE A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY UNDER PERTEMBAS EAGER EYE AND WE ALL FOLLOWED BEHIND THEM TO LOBUCHÉ. WE ARRIVED AT LOBUCHÉ AND THE TWO DISCIPLINARIANS THAT RUN THE LODGE ARE NOW OUR BEST FRIENDS - ANDRONIO HAD SOMEHOW CHANGED THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS US!! WE HAD A BIG LUNCH AND WE WERE JOINED BY NICO THE GREEK (ANDRONICOS FRIEND FROM ANTARCTICA) AND VISILY HIS PARTNER IN CRIME - WHOM I FOUND OUT HAD ONLY PROMISED TO KEEP NICO COMPANY IN NEPAL ON THE CONDITION THERE WOULD BE A STOP IN THAILAND - SO FAR NO STOP!!

I WAS SO SAD SAYING GOODBYE TO THE GIRLS WHO WERE GOING DOWN TO PERICHE TO GET THE HELICOPTER BACK TO KATHMANDU " PERTEMBAS ANGELS" AS I CALLED THEM WERE PLANNING MASSAGES, MANICURES AND PLERN WAS EVEN HAVING THEM MET OFF THE PLANE TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY WERE ALLOWED INTO BANKOK - SHE THOUGHT THEY MIGHT LOOK TOO SCRUFFY AND WASNT TAKING ANY CHANCES!! YOU WILL SEE FROM MY PICTURES ON THE WEBSITE THAT THEY LOOKED GREAT!

ANDRONICO AND I CHATTED TO VISILY, NICO AND A GUY CALLED RUPERT WHO IS CLIMBING EVEREST ON HIS OWN. RUPERT HAD JUST RETURNED FROM THE COTE D'AZUR AS HE CALLS IT - DENGBOCHE WHERE ANATOLI BOUKREEV USED TO GO PRIOR TO A SUMMIT ATTEMPT. WE GOSSIPED ABOUT WHO WAS GOING TO TRY AND SUMMIT WHEN ANDD WE WAITED FOR THE REST OF THE GROUP TO SHOW UP WHICH THEY DID AROUND 6.30PM.

WE HAD DINNER AND I MISSED NOT HAVING THE 2 GIRLS WITH ME, AND THEN WE ALL HEADED TO BED, I WAS TIRED IVE BEEN HANGING AROUND BASECAMP A WEEK SO THAT WAS THE FIRST BIG WALK I HAD DONE IN A WHILE (NOT INCLUDING MY DAY TRIP TO GORAK SHEP WITH ANDRONICO) THE WINDS ARE STILL 80MPH UP HIGH ON EVEREST AND WE THINK WE MAY HAVE LOST A TENT AT CAMP 3 DUE TO THE HIGH WINDS.