

Patukhangnga.

1 Once upon a time there lived a husband and wife called Empfangad and Empfangachon.

2 This couple still only had one child when his father and mother were both killed.

3 Empfangad and Empfangachon had many ricefields and jars and gongs and other possessions stored in their house.

4 When their sole child, Patukhangnga, was still not grown up, his relatives said, <<We could take some of Empfangad and Empfangachon's things.>>

5 So his father's relatives came and, even though Patukhangnga their nephew was there, they took the things they wanted, saying, <<We have to take these gongs because your father got one from us before.>>

6 Poor Patukhangnga kept crying.

7 They took his fields as well.

8 His relatives went there and planted their rice.

9 They grew their food in Patukhangnga's fields.

10 So the result was that Patukhangnga didn't have any fields.

11 He had to eat their left over rice.

12 So Patukhangnga was growing up but his family were ill-treating him.

13 When there was a social gathering, like a wake or a wedding ceremony, if Patukhangnga went along, they wouldn't let him join them, so he had to go last.

14 They even blew their noses onto the path where he would walk.

15 Patukhangnga said to himself, <<This is a miserable way to live.>>

16 So he set off to return to their house.

17 He was thinking and kept crying.

18 <<This is unbearable so I'm going to see where father and mother have gone. Even when I want to go somewhere, they won't let me join them.>>

19 So he began to strip rice.

20 He stripped three bundles and then took the time to pound it all.

21 When he had finished pounding it that day, he winnowed it and put it in his bag.

22 He took his father's backpack, put the rice in it and a pot, and his blanket and flint.

23 Next day, he went out into the yard and stood there.

24 He said to himself, <<How can I know what direction father and mother went?>>

25 Then he thought, <<I'll try going upstream by the river and I'll see what happens.>>

26 So he set off and kept going.

27 By noon time, Patukhangnga was hungry.

28 So he stopped to cook at the side of the river.

29 When he had finished eating, he put his backpack on again.

30 And he set off and kept going.

31 Later, he came to a mountain and the river came to an end.

32 He started to climb and saw a village.

33 He was saying, <<Patupatukhangnga, his father and mother left him.>>

34 The people heard him and they said, <<We don't know your father. So keep going on.>>

35 So Patukhangnga set off and kept climbing higher.

36 On his way, he came to another mountain going down.

37 He said again, <<Patupatukhangnga, his father and mother left him.>>

38 So he set off again.

39 He kept on and on going and he came to another long ascent.

40 And he said, <<This is a very long climb up.>>

41 It was becoming dark, so he said, <<I'll have to spend the night here because it's getting dark and I can't see my way.>>

42 So he stopped there.

43 He saw a stony place where he put down his backpack, got the things he needed and made a fire.

44 Then he cooked there.

45 He ate there and just slept on that stone.

46 When daylight came, he woke up and ate his leftover food.

47 After Patukhangnga had eaten, he said to himself, <<I must continue climbing. I'll try climbing this long ascent and I'll see what I find.>>

48 So he kept going up the mountain until he came to a plateau.

49 Then he saw some isolated houses.

50 But the houses were strange in that they had no roof, and there was no noise. The people were just silent.

51 Patukhangnga went over and came to the first house.

52 He stood in front of the house.

53 Then he said, <<Patupatukhangnga, his father and mother left him.

54 A certain man heard him and came out.

55 When Patukhangnga looked at the man, his head was a pumpkin shell!

56 His eyes were hollow like a skeleton.

57 Patukhangnga was afraid but he gathered his courage.

He said, <<I want to speak to you.>>

59 The man said, <<Why have you come here? You have to die before you come here. So why have you, a child, come here?>>

60 He said, <<I see. It's like this. I have been ill treated since I was very young when my father and mother died, and my father's relatives treated me badly. My life is miserable so I am looking for my father and mother.>>

61 So the man said, <<I see. What is your name?>>

62 He answered, <<Well I am Patukhangnga.>>

63 The man said, <<Who was your father?>>

64 Patukhangnga told him his father's name.

65 Then the man said, <<Who was your mother?>>

66 He told him his mother's name too.

67 Then the man said, <<It's me then. I am your father! But see ...>>

68 But Patukhangnga said, <<So you are my father?>>

69 He said, <<Yes, I am.>>

70 Patukhangnga said, <<Why don't you have a head? Your head wasn't like that. And your face wasn't like that.>>

71 The man answered, <<Yes, that's because I went with a headhunting party and our enemies took off my head and ran off with it, so I am using a pumpkin shell for a head.>>

72 Then his father asked, <<How did you manage to walk here?>>

73 Patukhangnga told him the story, saying, <<I spent the night on the road and I arrived here.>>

74 His father said, <<I see, so you mustn't stay here long. Aren't you afraid of dying now you have come here? So despite what you said, you must return to the earth.>>

75 But Patukhangnga said, <<I don't want to. I don't want to because your relatives might kill me.>>

76 The man said, <<You go back anyway and I will follow so that I will tell them to return all the things they took.>>

77 Patukhangnga said, <<Alright, but I came a very long way.>>

78 The man said, <<Don't worry, we'll just go to the yard over there.>>

79 He took his spear and drove it into the edge of the yard and the child took hold of it.

80 He closed his eyes and immediately, he was standing in their yard.

81 He began to collect the many shells people had thrown around their house.

82 Because the neighbours had taken advantage of his absence, and some of them behaved vindictively, and littered the house with trash and shells, and they threw mud on the house.

83 He was just putting up the ladder and there was his father who had followed.

84 He stood there and said, <<So that's how it is.>>

85 His father kept saying, <<This is what my relatives have done then.>>

86 He called out loudly, saying, <<Where are you, neighbours? Gather here if you please.>>

87 Then all the neighbours peeped out at him.

88 <<What's this? Who is that man who has come and is speaking with a voice like Empfangachon's?>>

88 They all came hesitantly to the house of Patukhangnga's family.

89 Their neighbours came and gathered round.

90 Empfangachon was angry of course and said, <<How come, since I died, you have done this to our house, dropping trash and throwing mud on it? Come and pick up all this rubbish. Clear it all up and then wash the dirt off. And tell my relatives that they should all come.>>

91 They called his relatives and the neighbours were gathering up all the rubbish.

92 They were afraid because when they looked at his face, it was like a dead body on display.

93 So they hurried to clean up the mud.

94 Not long after, his relatives arrived, coming slowly.

95 Empfangngachon was shouting, saying, <<What were you thinking of that, as soon as I died, you grabbed our fields and other things?>>

96 So they said, <<It's alright, we'll return them.>>

97 They returned them, each one bringing the jars and gongs and other things, even winnowing baskets that they had taken away.

98 But at that time, they returned them all.

99 They said, <<Please be kind and don't take revenge on us.>>

100 His relatives said, <<We will return all your things and we won't mistreat your child. We'll treat him like our own child now.>>

101 He said, <<That's right, because I'll be watching what you are doing and I'll come to take revenge.>>

102 But they said, <<You won't need to.>>

103 They returned those things and they said, <<Patukhangnga, we'll really count you as one of us now, so don't be afraid of us now. You can consider us your parents.>>

104 Patukhangnga said, <<That's good because my father and mother are no longer here so you are the ones who will love me and you are the ones I will come to like my parents.>>

105 Then they said, <<Yes.>>

106 Then his father Empfangngachon said, <<Well I am going now.>>

107 He went to go and suddenly he was out of sight.

108 From then, they looked after Patukhangnga.

109 And Patukhangnga's house is said to be in Pfitaor which is part of Chumang.

110 Now there were fine jars which Patukhangnga's father gave him saying, <<Here, take these to our house as a remembrance of me.>>

111 And even now, they say you can still find those fine jars in Pfitaor where they use them as rice wine containers.

112 And that's where their house is.

113 The end.