

Tom in Tanzania

S.M.A. Lay Missionaries

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A Day in the Bush



I walked into the bush with two Maasai warriors, Leposso and Ndiing'a, to help a newborn calf. The calf had been born the evening before and was less than 15 hours old. We walked about 6 km which

took us about an hour and half. What did we do along the way? We talked, laughed, joked, and teased each other. A lot of fun and a good way to pass the time!



Ndiing'a

We found Baba Pendo, who is on break as headmaster at an elementary school, sitting next to the calf and its mother. The calf was alone all night and luckily was not killed and eaten by hyenas.



The calf was too weak to walk but we needed to get it back to Moita because we knew it probably not

survive another night in the bush. So the guys picked it up and carried it...all the way back to Moita Bwawani!

Leposso, who is Baba Pendo's son, and Ndiing'a did most of the work. Both of them work at the mission but on this day it was traditional work of caring for cattle. I carried the calf for only about one kilometer.



Leposso

Cattle are extremely important in Maasai culture. This calf will sleep inside a special shelter for months at Leposso's boma (compound) until it is strong enough to go out during the day with the herd into the bush for grazing.

Along the way Leposso showed me roots the Maasai are familiar with that hold water.



Chewing on these helps with hydration when there is no water available. This is one tip for surviving in the bush. Another is not to get too tired or too hot. We stopped frequently for rest in the shade of trees.

A good lesson on how to work in the heat and blazing sun of Tanzania.



Our arms would get tired from holding the calf so we would

set it down while we rested which also allowed the mother to check on it.

The bush is filled with all sorts of thorn bushes. It is inevitable that legs will get cut and scratched after walking far. Maasai like to make sandals out of motorcycle tires because the rubber is so tough it protects feet from thorns.



Maasai often travel in pairs or in small groups. It is rare to see them walking alone in the bush for long distances. This is part of their culture and the tight-



knitted life of the Maasai warriors. They support and help each other with daily work. They protect each other. They accompanying each other.

The calf is home now at Baba Pendo's boma. Leposso gave it an injection for a series of immunizations it will receive as a newborn. This is also part of today's Maasai life: being knowledgeable about current medicines for various health issues in cattle.

My day in the bush is a great experience I will never forget!

Amani ya Kristo. (Peace of Christ)

-Tom