

I spent way too much time this forenoon looking for a picture. I finally did find it and one more that brought a particular day back to me. This was all because of yesterday's solar eclipse—not total here, but the 91 percent coverage made it quite spectacular.

We were busy castrating and docking lambs yesterday afternoon. When we finished, I headed for the mailbox, thinking that we were still too early for any viewing of the eclipse. But, then, something that seemed quite curious at the time made me realize that the hours had flown by a little more quickly than we had thought.

The moment I walked out of the hay barn—lambing shed this time of year—I was nearly brought up short by the entire environment. At that minute, I wasn't even thinking about the eclipse. I just planned to get the mail so that we would have time to look at the newspaper before "eclipse time." But, as I left the hay barn, it seemed as if the whole world changed. The sun was shining, the sky was blue—no surprises there. It had been just like that when we went to the barn earlier. No, though, it was *not* the same. Everything looked different.

Almost immediately, I realized that we had been at our job longer than I had thought and that the eclipse was underway. So, instead of going to the mailbox, I stopped in the workshop and picked up Runo's welding helmet. Only after putting that on did I glance up at the sun. It was beautiful, probably a quarter covered by the shadow of the moon. I went on home, and we took turns with the eye protection, keeping track of the progress of the solar eclipse.

The house actually became quite dark, about like evening at dusk. Even at ten per cent less than totality as we were here, it was an experience we will not forget.

But, it did make me think back to a partial eclipse during the winter in perhaps the 1980s or 1990s. I found the pictures, but I do not know the dates. Runo was plowing snow, keeping my aunt's driveway open while she was gone, and I had walked down the road that afternoon, and I had taken some pictures. What I remembered was verified by the pictures. On that frigid winter day, with snow piled high along every road and fields and meadows solid white, the sky turned a dark, dark blue. The pictures I had taken reinforced my memory.

Runo tells the story of the partial solar eclipse he experienced in Sweden when he was a young boy. It was about ninety percent coverage on a June day, and as the day grew darker than normal and the temperature fell, cows began to groom each other—a common twilight habit—and birds and chickens went to roost.

We are all governed by the wonders of the Universe.