Snow Leopard and Norbu the Cat
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Tshering Dorji
Foreword

Bhutan’s identity, beauty, and wealth are the predators, wild beasts, birds, and other living beings thriving in its great hills and mountains. Added to these are the abundant plants and minerals. Their existence upholds one of the four pillars of Gross National Happiness (GNH): environmental conservation.

To further uphold the conservation pillar of GNH and to conserve the snow leopard, the Bhutan Foundation and Royal Education Council have jointly brought together a group of experienced teachers who wrote three books on the endangered big cat. The books are *Who Am I?*, *Ap Nado’s Calf*, and *Snow Leopard and Norbu the Cat*.

The three books will not only greatly help the conservation of snow leopards but also improve the general perception of the big cat.

The Bhutan Foundation will print the books and distribute them for free to the schools in the highlands. The Royal Education Council would like to put on record our appreciation and acknowledgement in the hope that the books will be of great interest and benefit to our students.

Kinga Dakpa
Director General
Royal Education Council
Interest in reading is the basis for wholesome education. Therefore, *Snow Leopard and Norbu the Cat* has been written to promote learning among Bhutan’s young children.

This storybook describes how the snow leopard living in the mountains of Bhutan looks, what it eats, how it behaves, and why it is important. To make it interesting to children, the book uses colourful illustrations and words that meet the primary school standard.

However, owing to my limited education, the book may contain errors for which I beg the pardon of esteemed readers.

I sincerely thank the Royal Education Council and the Bhutan Foundation for the opportunity to write the story. I hope the story greatly appeals to students and other readers.

*Tshering Dorji*

Author
Snow Leopard walked across the village, its body radiant and glowing, yowling, “Eooo, eooo.” From a tree branch, Norbu the Cat saw the leopard pass by. With her ears upright, the cat asked, “Meow, meow, who are you?”
Snow Leopard was surprised to see Norbu the Cat. It stood there with its fur puffed up.
Norbu the Cat came down from the tree. She sniffed at the leopard and walked around it once. Then she asked, “Hey friend, you look exactly like me, but you are much bigger. Who are you?”
Snow Leopard casually glanced at the cat and replied, “I am Snow Leopard. I’ve come around for a stroll. Where do you live?”
“I live in that house,” Norbu answered. “Come follow me.”

“There are many people and animals,” the leopard said, surprised.
“I feel nervous,” the leopard said. “I’m not used to many people.” It dropped its tail on the ground, pulled back its ears, and prepared to hide behind a tree.
“Don’t you worry,” Norbu reassured the leopard. “Follow me.”

The cat led the leopard along without being seen by the humans and other animals.
Inside Norbu’s home, the leopard was seated in a corner. “Your place is stuffy,” the leopard complained. “Is this where you live every day?”

“Where could I live? The humans occupy all the good places,” Norbu replied.
“I’m rather hungry. Do you have anything to eat?” the leopard asked.

Norbu dragged the butter dish containing her leftover food before the leopard.

“Yuck! It’s smelly,” the leopard exclaimed and refused to eat the food.

The cat ate the food herself with great enjoyment.
The leopard was disappointed and wanted to go back home. Norbu wanted to go outside, so she followed the leopard.
After walking for a while, Norbu shook her head and said she could not walk anymore. “We are almost there. Do not give up,” the leopard said reassuringly. And soon, they were in the leopard’s territory.
“Wow! This area is beautiful,” Norbu said in excitement. “Where is your home?”

The leopard replied, “The whole of this area is my home. You can stay wherever you like. If you are hungry, catch one of those blue sheep for food. I keep the population of these animals under control.”
The cat licked the face of the leopard and said, “Wow, you look small, but you can kill animals bigger than yourself for a meal. You are truly strong!” She put her paw on the leopard’s nose as a mark of appreciation.
Norbu said, “Your home is chilly. I might catch a cold. Give me something to eat.”

The leopard placed a leg of a blue sheep before the cat.
“I don’t eat meat this way,” Norbu said. “My master cooks it for me. Please cook it for me.”

The leopard burst out laughing without saying anything.
The cat was happy at the leopard’s place, but she returned to her home.

She said to her human family members that they should be grateful to the snow leopard for keeping blue sheep populations under control. That, in turn, keeps more grass for yaks, and protects clean drinking water in the mountains.
About the author

Tshering Dorji is from Yonphula village in Kanglung, Trashigang. He joined the Institute of Language and Culture Studies in Semtokha in 1989 and graduated from the Institute in 1995. Starting in 1996, Tshering underwent teacher training for two years at the National Institute of Education in Paro.

From 1997 to 2010, Tshering taught in Dungmin Primary School in Pemagatshel. Currently, he serves as the Principal of Beta Primary School in Gangtey Gewog, Wangdue Dzongkhag.

Tshering has always been interested in story and creative writing, but he never had a platform to show his interest. Tshering is thankful to the support of Royal Education Council and Bhutan Foundation to write and publish his story *Snow Leopard and Norbu the Cat*. 