AP NADO’S CALF
Ap Nado’s Calf

Tshering Zangmo
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
Preface

Reading is an important skill for students. Through reading, one can improve writing and speaking skills. Reading constitutes identifying and making sense of words, which helps focus students’ attention on words, their meanings, and correct pronunciation.

This story has been written to protect and nurture the snow leopard, which beautifies the mountains of Bhutan.

I have written the story with the best of intentions with unstinting support from the Bhutan Foundation and the Royal Education Council. I hope that this book will promote understanding of the snow leopard among our children.

Tshering Zangmo
Author
There once lived a man named Ap Nado in a highland village. One day, one of his female yaks gave birth to a beautiful, white calf. Ap Nado was so fond of the calf that he took every opportunity to embrace it affectionately.
One day, a snow leopard appeared out of the blue, killed the beautiful calf, and devoured more than half of its body before disappearing among the rocks. Ap Nado sat beside the dead calf with disappointment, sorrow, and anger.
Overcome with grief Ap Nado wanted to take revenge. He followed the tracks of the snow leopard and dropped the poisoned meat of the calf at three different spots.
Expecting another meal, the snow leopard that killed the calf returned to the village. At the same time, the smell of the meat drew two other snow leopards from the mountains to the village.
As soon as Ap Nado heard the news, he thumped his chest in sheer joy and gratification. “This is exactly what I wanted,” he said gleefully. “Take that, you nasty animals.” He no longer felt the sorrow of losing the calf.

That night, in a sad coincidence, the three snow leopards ate the poisoned meat from the three different spots. The following morning, the people of the village woke up to find three dead snow leopards nearby.
That night, the local deity appeared in Ap Nado’s dream and rebuked him angrily, “Ap Nado, today you have caused the disappearance of the jewels of the mountains. Beware, this will cause great harm in the village.”
Ap Nado was suddenly awakened by the dream. He sat wondering which mountain jewels he might have caused to disappear.
As time went by, the population of the blue sheep in the mountains increased year by year. Soon, the blue sheep wiped out all the grass and green herbs. They then damaged and destroyed the water sources.
Gradually, the grass died, and spring water started to dry up. Yaks and horses starved to death. The wild animals came down to the village to feed on barley and millet crops.
The villagers now had to guard their crops against wild animals, day and night. They lost most of their crops to the wild animals. Year after year, the farmers lost the source of their livelihood.
After a few years, the drinking water source for the village dried up. The villagers did not have enough water to drink, let alone water for washing clothes and bathing. They could not maintain proper hygiene.

As a result, the village saw the outbreak of diseases, which killed many villagers. Worried, the village representative called a public meeting.
Ap Nado was to seek the support of the government to bring a male and a female snow leopard from nearby, and release them in the mountains above the village.

He announced that the village was in big trouble. “Does anybody know what are the causes?” he asked. A village elder stood up and said that it all began with the disappearance of the snow leopard.

Concerned, Aum Zangmo asked if there was any solution to the problem. The villagers discussed the issue and reached a decision.
A week later, Ap Nado was able to bring a pair of snow leopards and release them in the mountains with the help of the Department of Forests. A few years later, the population of snow leopards slowly increased. Grass started growing again, and spring water started flowing. That brought happiness and peace back to the people.
About the author

Tshering Zangmo is from Beyul Kunzang village in Bongo Gewog, Chukha Dzongkhag. After graduating from the College of Language and Culture Studies, she completed a Bachelor of Dzongkha Education degree in 2011. And in 2015, Tshering completed her Post Graduate Diploma in Education.

Tshering taught Dzongkha at Chapcha Primary School for six years, and since 2017, she has been teaching in Arikha Middle Secondary School in Chukha.

During her teaching career, Tshering has written many interesting stories for youth. But *Ap Nado’s Calf* is the first story she is able to publish and distribute with support from the Bhutan Foundation and the Royal Education Council. Tshering hopes that the children will not only learn from this story but also enjoy reading it.