

MEET THE AUTHOR

Hello Elspeth, tell us a little about yourself.

I studied drama at university and then worked for a theater newspaper in London. Later, I decided to train as an English teacher and work in Italy, my favorite country. By a strange twist¹ of fate, I got a teaching job in Istanbul in Turkey and I have lived and worked there teaching and writing ever since.

How are you inspired to write your stories?

Story ideas can come from a casual conversation, a visit to a new city or country, an article in a magazine or newspaper or, as in this case, the Internet.



Elspeth Rawston

How did you think of this story?

One day my friend, Halime, was surfing the Net for information about countries around the world. She was fascinated² by a site about a Tibetan Buddhist kingdom in the Himalayas and she showed it to me. The kingdom was Bhutan, the Kingdom of the Thunder Dragon, and when I read about it, I was inspired to write this story.

One thing that struck me when I was reading the article were the King's words: "Gross national happiness is more important than gross national product³." Happiness is more important than wealth. Those words stayed with me and inspired me to write this story.

I was also inspired by the fact that Bhutan was isolated⁴ and unaffected by the outside world for centuries. The idea formed to write about a country where there are no cars, no TV, no Coca-Cola, no McDonald's or globalization⁵. Of course, the Kingdom of the Snow Leopard is a fictional place and all the characters in it are fictional.

I hope that you will enjoy this story and will be inspired to learn about different cultures and travel to far-off magical places where all kinds of adventures can happen.

1 twist [twɪst] (n.) 轉折

2 fascinated [ˈfæsɪneɪtɪd] (a.) 著迷的

3 gross national product 國民生產總值 (GNP)

4 isolated [ˈaɪsləteɪd] (a.) 孤立的

5 globalization [ˌɡləʊbəlaɪzəʃən] (n.) 全球化

BEFORE READING

- 1 The title of the story is *The Kingdom of the Snow Leopard* and there is a legend about a snow leopard in the story. Read and listen to the information about snow leopards.

The Snow Leopard

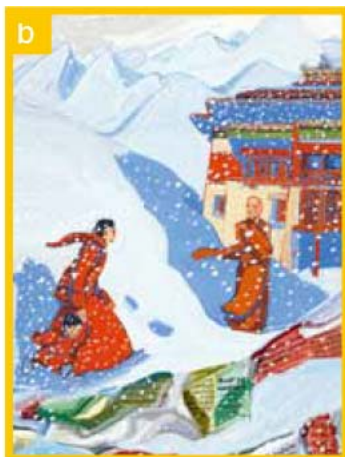
Snow leopards live in Central Asia and the Himalayan Mountains of Bhutan, India, Nepal and Tibet. They are endangered animals and there are less than 10,000 of them alive today.



2 Listen to Sarah Williams from the WWF talking about snow leopards. Then answer the questions below.

- a) Where can you find snow leopards?
- b) How long is an adult male snow leopard?
- c) Why do they need long tails?
- d) Why have they got wide noses?
- e) How do they balance on top of the snow?
- f) What do they eat?
- g) How far can a snow leopard jump?
- h) How much does a baby snow leopard weigh?

- 2** Tigers are also mentioned in the story. Do some research about tigers on the Internet and write a short paragraph about them.
- 3** Look quickly at the pictures in the book and answer the questions.
- a** Where do you think the story takes place? Tick 2 continents.
☐ America ☐ Asia ☐ Africa ☐ Europe ☐ Australia
- b** What kind of story is it? Tick.
☐ Thriller ☐ Adventure ☐ Detective Story ☐ Romance
- 4** Look at the pictures below. Discuss.



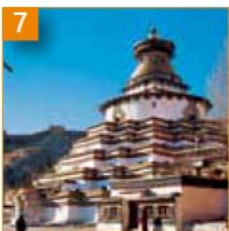
- 1** Which picture do you prefer? Give reasons.
- 2** Which place would you like to visit? Give reasons.

5 Now write short descriptions of the places mentioned above.
What do you think the two places are and where are they?

6 Match the words from the story with the pictures.

____ a cave
____ b throne
____ c mask
____ d temple

____ e gun
____ f bow
____ g arrow
____ h monks



- 7** The words are all important to the story. Can you guess how?
Use each of the words above to complete the sentences.

- a The room was full of in orange robes who were chanting.
- b The King sat down on his
- c The man was holding a to her head.
- d The whizzed through the air towards the target.
- e After climbing for an hour they came to a small
- f The man pulled off the golden dragon and laughed.
- g He was carrying a mediaeval-style helmet and his
- h When we walked into the Buddhist, there was silence.

- 8** Choose one of the sentences. Continue the story from there.





The two boys sat on a bench under a big old oak tree. There was a lawn¹ in front of them and, in front of that, the huge iron gates of the school. The two boys often came and sat here after lessons.

Tom was tall with fair hair and blue eyes. His friend, Mahir, had black hair and dark brown eyes.

Tom was excited and Mahir was smiling.

"Are you sure you want me to come?" asked Tom.

"Yes, of course. I've told you so much about my kingdom. Now I want you to see it for yourself²," replied Mahir.

"Fantastic³," said Tom. "I'd love to come. I'll have to ask my mum and dad, of course. But I'm sure they'll be fine about it."

"Tom," said Mahir. His voice was serious now. "You've been a really good friend. You stood up for⁴ me when the others picked on⁵ me. They made fun of my accent⁶ and appearance⁷. But you didn't. I hated this school at the beginning and I hated this country and all the people in it. But your friendship changed everything. And I'll always appreciate⁸ that. Thanks."

"There's no need to thank me, Mahir. I was on my own⁹ too. And you were fun, and interesting."

"Thanks, anyway. I'm really happy here now."

"Good," said Tom. "Now, let's talk about more important things."

"Such as . . .?"

1 lawn [lɔ:n] (n.) 草坪；草地

2 see it for yourself 親自去看看

3 fantastic [fæn'tæstɪk] (a.) (口)
太好了

4 stand up for sb 維護某人

5 pick on sb 找某人的碴

6 accent [ˈæksənt] (n.) 口音；腔調

7 appearance [ə'piərəns] (n.) 外貌

8 appreciate [ə'pri:ʃi,et] (v.) 感激

9 on my own 自己一個人



"My visit to the coolest country in the world," said Tom. "Do I need a visa¹ to go there?"

"Yes, you do. All foreigners need a visa. Only 5,000 tourists² are allowed to come every year. My father, the King doesn't want our country to lose its culture³. He is afraid that tourists will change the country," said Mahir.

"So it's no Coca-Cola and no McDonald's for a month, then," said Tom.

"Correct," said Mahir and he laughed. "Do you think you can live without them?"

"I think I can—but can you?" laughed Tom.

Suddenly Tom saw a tiny⁴ flash⁵ of light. "Hey, what was that?"

"It looked like a camera flash," said Mahir.

"I think there's someone down there by the gate!" said Tom and he stood up quickly.

There was another flash. Mahir and Tom ran towards the gate. Tom was sure it was a camera. "Who are you?" he shouted. "What are the photographs for?"

The man didn't answer. He turned and ran away. He was tall and thin. He was bald⁶ and had brown eyes. His face was not very memorable⁷ except for the long scar⁸ that ran from the corner of his left eye down to the corner of his mouth.

"Why do you think he was taking photographs of you?" asked Tom.

1 visa ['vɪzə] (n.) 簽證

2 tourist ['tʊrɪst] (n.) 觀光客

3 culture ['kʌltʃə] (n.) 文化

4 tiny ['taɪnɪ] (a.) 微小的

5 flash [flæʃ] (n.) 閃光

6 bald [bɔːld] (a.) 禿頭的

7 memorable ['mɛmərəbl̩] (a.) 顯著的

8 scar [skɑː] (n.) 疤

9 concern [kən'sɜːn] (v.) 擔心

10 bodyguard ['bɒdɪˌɡɑːd] (n.) 保鏢

11 scared [skɛəd] (a.) 嚇壞的

12 murderer ['mɜːdəɪə] (n.) 殺手

13 thriller ['θrɪlə] (n.) 驚悚片

14 opponent [ə'pɒnənt] (n.) 對手



"I don't know," said Mahir.

"What if he's dangerous? I think we should tell one of the teachers about him," said Tom.

"No, I don't want to do that," said Mahir quickly.

"Well, I think you should tell your father then," said Tom, concerned⁹.

"No, he'll only worry about me and then he'll send me more bodyguards¹⁰. I don't want that," said Mahir.

"But aren't you scared¹¹? That man might be a murderer¹²! He might try to kill you," said Tom.

"Oh yeah! I think you've seen too many thrillers¹³," said Mahir.

"I can look after myself. You know that, Tom."

Then Mahir took Tom's arm and with one quick move, he threw him over his back to the ground.

"Okay, okay, I know," said Tom. "You can look after yourself. That throw was perfect. It didn't hurt at all."

"You should never hurt your opponent¹⁴. You should only block¹⁵ him," said Mahir. "Those are the rules of combat¹⁶ in my country. Now, stand up."

"You know, I can't," said Tom.

He couldn't move his arms or legs. They felt very heavy. He couldn't even move a finger. It was amazing¹⁷! Mahir walked slowly over to Tom. He laid his hand on his shoulder and pressed¹⁸ with his thumb. "Now, get up," he said calmly. And Tom got up.

"How do you do it?" asked Tom.

"I practice," said Mahir. "Remember, 'practice makes perfect.' Now you try."

¹⁵ block [blɒk] (v.) 阻止

¹⁷ amazing [ə'meɪzɪŋ] (a.) 驚人的

¹⁶ combat ['kʌmbæt] (n.) 格鬥

¹⁸ press [pres] (v.) 按壓

AFTER READING

A Characters

- 1 The adjectives describing the characters below are not the correct ones. Replace them with their opposites in the box.

wise
brave
strong
calm
fair
friendly
kind
adventurous



FALSE
excitable
weak

TRUE

.....

.....



FALSE
unadventurous
unkind

TRUE

.....

.....



FALSE
unfriendly
cowardly

TRUE

.....

.....



FALSE
foolish
unfair

TRUE

.....

.....

- 2 Which is your favorite character? Fill in a fact file for him/her.

Name

.....

Age

.....

Nationality

.....

Hair color

.....

Interests

.....

Likes

.....

Dislikes

.....

Good at

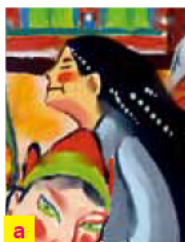
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3 Write the names of the characters beside the sentences.

- _____ (a) He is English and he goes to a boys' boarding school in the south of England.
- _____ (b) He stayed in a monastery for seven years and he learnt to be strong and brave.
- _____ (c) She was the youngest competitor in the archery competition that year.
- _____ (d) She was wise and brave and she was rescued by a snow leopard.
- _____ (e) He is an American journalist and he lost his job.
- _____ (f) They symbolize the peace and happiness of their country.



4 Listen and number the pictures.



5 Imagine you are a journalist. What questions would you ask the King? Ask and answer with a partner.

作者簡介

Elsbeth，你好，跟我們介紹一下你自己吧。

我大學是讀戲劇的，曾在倫敦一家戲劇報社工作過，後來決定去接受師資訓練，擔任英語教師。我之後去了義大利工作，那是我最嚮往的國家。不過在命運奇妙的安排下，我在伊斯坦堡謀得一份教職，從此就一直居住在伊斯坦堡，從事教書和寫作的工作。

你的故事靈感大都是怎麼來的？

一場不經意的談話、去陌生的城市或國家旅遊、報章雜誌上的文章，都可能是我故事感靈的來源，或者像是本篇故事的靈感，是來自於網路。

你是如何發想這篇故事的？

有一天，我的朋友荷萊在網路上搜尋世界各個國家的資訊，結果被一個網頁所吸引，上面講了一個喜馬拉雅山的藏傳佛教王國，她於是把網頁轉給我看。這個王國就是不丹，又稱為「雷龍王國」，我讀著資料，就產生了寫這篇故事的靈感。

當時讓我深受衝擊的，是國王的這番話：「國民幸福總值，比國民生產總值重要。」快樂遠的確遠比財富重要多了，他的話縈繞在我心頭，也給了我寫這篇故事的靈感。

不丹遺世獨立，未受到外面世界的影響，這一點也給了我靈感，讓我想寫出一個沒有汽車、電視、可口可樂、麥當勞或全球化的國家。當然，雪豹王國是一個想像出來的國家，裡面的角色也都是虛構的。

衷心期盼讀者能夠喜歡這篇故事，對學習不同的文化產生興趣，去各種遙遠而神祕的地方旅遊，嘗試各種不可思議的體驗。



P.11

一棵大橡樹下，只見兩個男孩坐在長凳上。他們前方有一片草地，再往前去，就是學校的大鐵門。這兩個男孩經常在下課後跑來這裡坐。

其中那個金髮碧眼的高個子叫作湯姆，他的朋友馬希爾則是一頭黑髮，有一雙深棕色的眼睛。

湯姆顯得很興奮，馬希爾一臉笑嘻嘻的。

「你真的希望我去？」湯姆問道。

「當然啦。我跟你說了那麼多我們王國的事，現在我希望你可以親自去看看。」馬希爾回答道。

「太棒啦，我很想去。當然啦，我得先問過我爸媽，不過我想他們會答應的。」湯姆說。

「湯姆，你真的很夠朋友，」馬希爾的聲音忽然嚴肅起來，「在別人欺負我的時候，你都是會站出來挺我。他們取笑我的口音和長相，但你不會。剛開始的時候，我討厭這個學校，討厭這個國家，討厭這裡所有的人，不過，你的友

情改變了這一切，我一輩子都會感激在心的，謝啦。」

「馬希爾，其實你也不用感謝我，我自己也是孤伶伶的，而且你這個人這麼好玩有趣。」

「總之我還是要謝謝你，我現在在這裡過得很快樂。」

「這太好啊。」湯姆說：「我們現在言歸正傳。」

「什麼事？」

P.12

「我準備去全世界最寒冷的國家，是不是需要簽證才能去？」湯姆說。

「對，你需要簽證，外國人都需要簽證，而且每年只有五千名觀光客可以入境。我的父王不希望我們的國家失去自己的文化，他擔心觀光客會讓我們國家產生變化。」馬希爾說。

「那也就是說，我有一個月喝不到可口可樂、吃不到麥當勞？」湯姆說。

「沒錯。」馬希爾笑了起來，「要是沒有這些東西，你想你活得下去嗎？」

「我想我還可以，那你能嗎？」湯姆笑道。

這時，湯姆瞥見一道小小的閃光，

「嘿，那是什麼？」

「看起來像是照相機的閃光燈。」馬希爾回答。

「我想那個人就站在校門那邊！」湯姆說完，很快站了起來。

接著又出現另一道閃光，馬希爾和湯姆立刻朝校門跑去。湯姆確定那是照相機，他大聲叫道：「你是誰？在照什麼？」