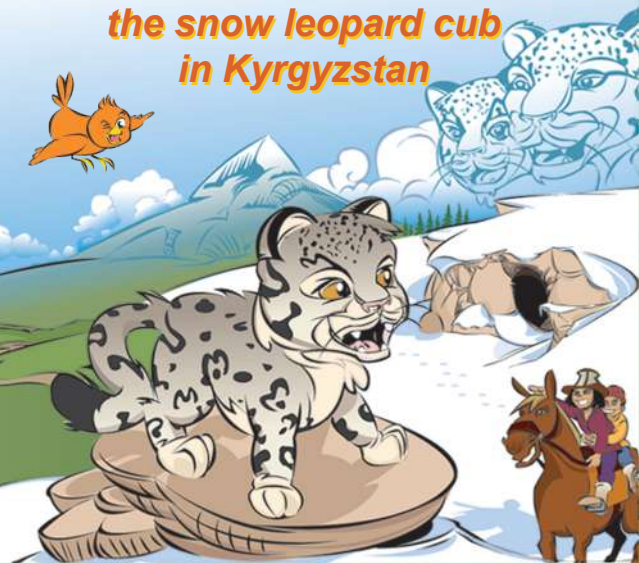


Eco-Sys Action presents

**Barz,
the snow leopard cub
in Kyrgyzstan**



"Little Heroes of the World" collection

<https://littlemuseumoftheworld.com/boopy-e/>

Boopy, our little sparrow, was traveling over the gorgeous landscape of Central Asia. He just heard that only 4,500 to 7,000 snow leopards were left in the country's mountains and wanted to find out what was happening to this majestic animal, which is uniquely adapted to one of the harshest environments on Earth.

Beautiful Kyrgyzstan is one of the 12 mountainous countries where Barz and his friends live. Kyrgyz people are very friendly and well-known for their hospitality. "Hello" in Kyrgyz language is "salam", "thank you" is



Photo: ISLT

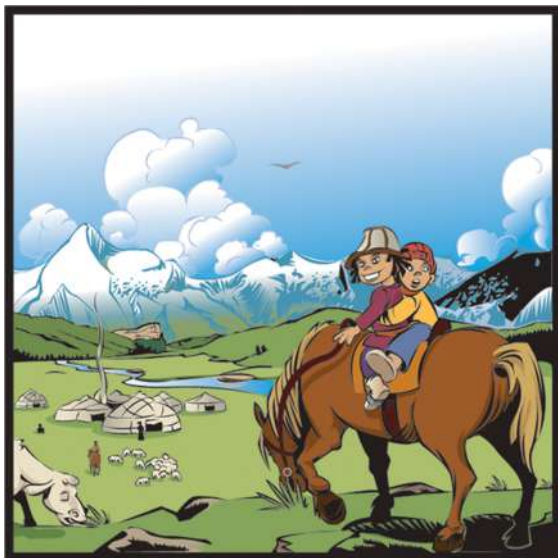
vis “ova/jok”. More than half of the population lives in the countryside and quite a lot still spend the summer in a *djailoo* (camp) like Damira’s family.

Herders treasure their freedom and outdoor way of living, but they also have a tough life and don’t earn much money. They need to go much higher up the mountain with their sheep so they can eat food normally eaten by wild sheep and other snow leopard’s prey. Less prey means more conflict because the big cats may turn to herders’ animals to find meat. This is why herders sometimes hunt them in retaliation, or to generate additional income by selling pelts and bones illegally.

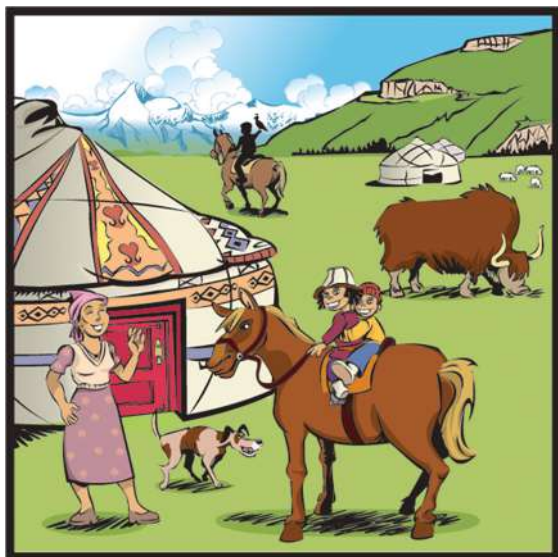
But Boopy has a wonderful story to tell you...



Photo: Chrimimages



Deep in the giant mountains of Central Asia, in a beautiful and remote country called Kyrgyzstan, two little shepherds, Damira and her little brother Djanibek, ride to their *djailoo*, a nomadic camp which changes places every spring so its people can find new grazing grounds for their livestock.



While their father is out hunting with his eagle, their mother greets them.

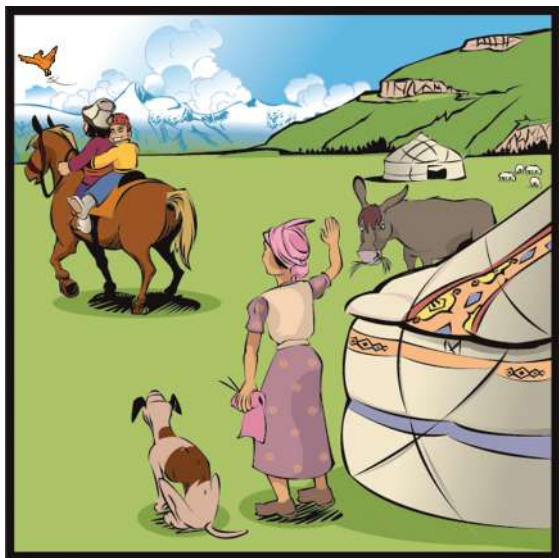
“Come into the yurt, kids!” she calls. “I have some delicious yak milk for you.”

“Oh wow! That’s great, Mom!” Damira cheers. “We’re so thirsty after looking after the sheep all morning.”



Damira and her family are sitting on the carpet in their home, called a yurt. It's like a huge tent with wooden poles and is decorated with colourful wool carpets and beautiful painted wood.

Suddenly, Boopy the little sparrow appears. "Come quick!" Boopy shouts. "A little snow leopard cub is lost down the mountain!"



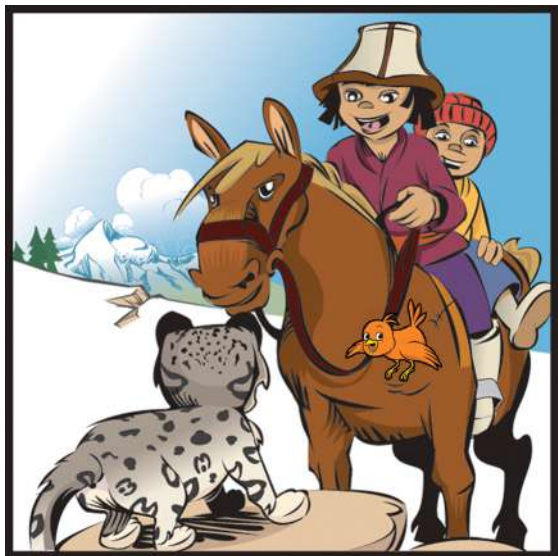
With their mother telling them to hurry, Damira and Djanibek rush off to help the poor animal.

“Take care, kids,” calls their mother. “And do your best to save that little baby leopard. Show it the way home! We need to keep those animals alive. By protecting them, we can sell our traditional handicrafts, so we can earn much needed income.”



The baby is exactly where Boopy said, lost with nowhere to go, just at the edge of a rocky and hazardous cliff where peaks rise to over 7,000 meters (23,000 feet) and where temperatures drop dangerously low.

“Hello there! My name is Barz. I wandered away from my mom and now I’m seriously lost. Can you please help me?”

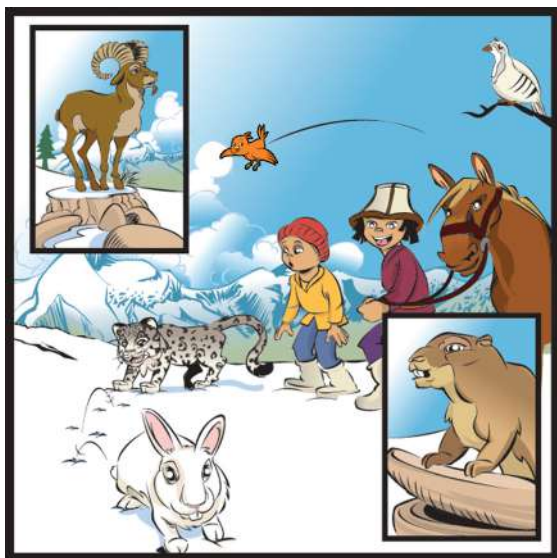


Damira and Djanibek are amazed by this gorgeous animal. It's their first encounter with a snow leopard. Very few people are lucky enough to see it because it lives very high in the mountains, up to 6,000 meters (20,000 ft), much higher than bears or wolves.

"Don't worry. My friends will help you!" Boopy says reassuringly.



Barz starts telling them about his mom. “She’s magnificent, you know. Her fur is so thick and she has this huge super-long tail which protects her nose during winter. Her paws are gigantic and act like snowshoes. You won’t believe it, but she can leap 10 meters (30 feet)! I have a twin sister called Chituwa.”



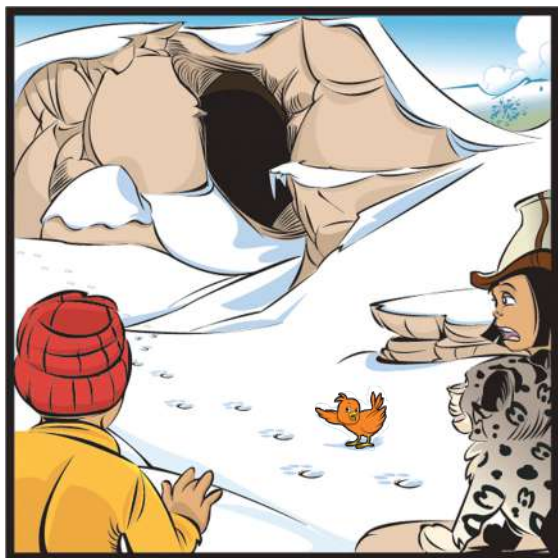
Showing them its claws, Barz proudly boasts, "Soon, I will be the best hunter in all of the mountains. Partridges, hares, marmots, and wild sheep, beware!"

"That's great and all, but for now, even this little rabbit can outrun you!" laughs Damira.



Despite the reassurances, Barz is still worried. “What if my Mom was trapped or poisoned because of me? Lots of men hunt us for our fur and also because we sometimes attack their livestock when we can’t find anything to eat. Hunters might get her!”

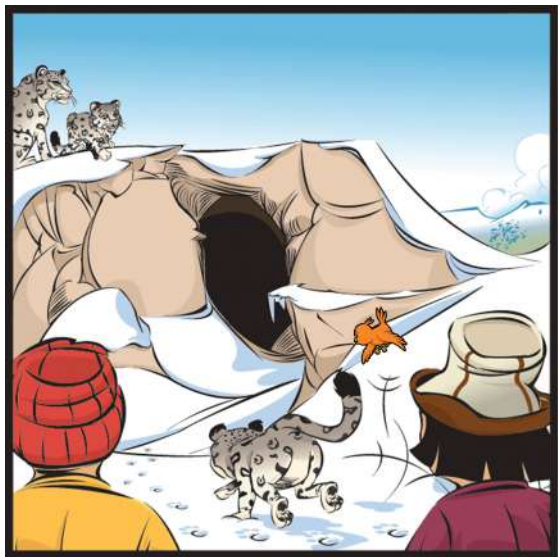
Damira comforts poor Barz. “Don’t worry, Barz. My Mom protects the snow leopards and forbids my father to hunt them.”



Just then, the ever-observant Boopy spots a clue.

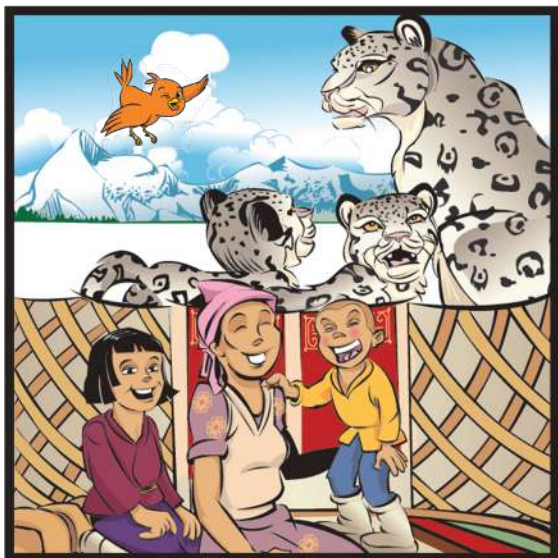
“Look!” Boopy points. “Here are some big cat’s tracks! They lead up there behind the den!”

“Quick! Let’s go!” shouts an excited Djanibek.



Suddenly, Barz spots two familiar shadows.

“Mom, Chituwa!” he yowls loudly, scrambling up the rocks as fast as he can. “I was so afraid I’d never see you again!”



That night, so much happiness was felt inside the yurt and way up in the snow-capped mountains. By helping Barz find his Mom, Damira and Djanibek not only felt proud, but they also felt happy knowing they helped their village live in harmony with nature, instead of destroying it. So, if we learn from them, we too can love and protect animals...otherwise Boopy won't be happy at all!

While looking for more ways to help, Boopy came across the Snow Leopard Trust (ISLT), a great foundation that helps increase the income of people like Damira's mother through handicraft production (baby booties made with felt, for instance) in return for the protection of snow leopards and their prey.

ISLT also conducts scientific research in five countries and explains to children how they can protect the environment through eco-camps focusing on snow leopard conservation.

To find out more on how to save Barz, you can visit ISLT at www.ecosysfun.com.



Photo: Chripimages







Boopy Edition

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