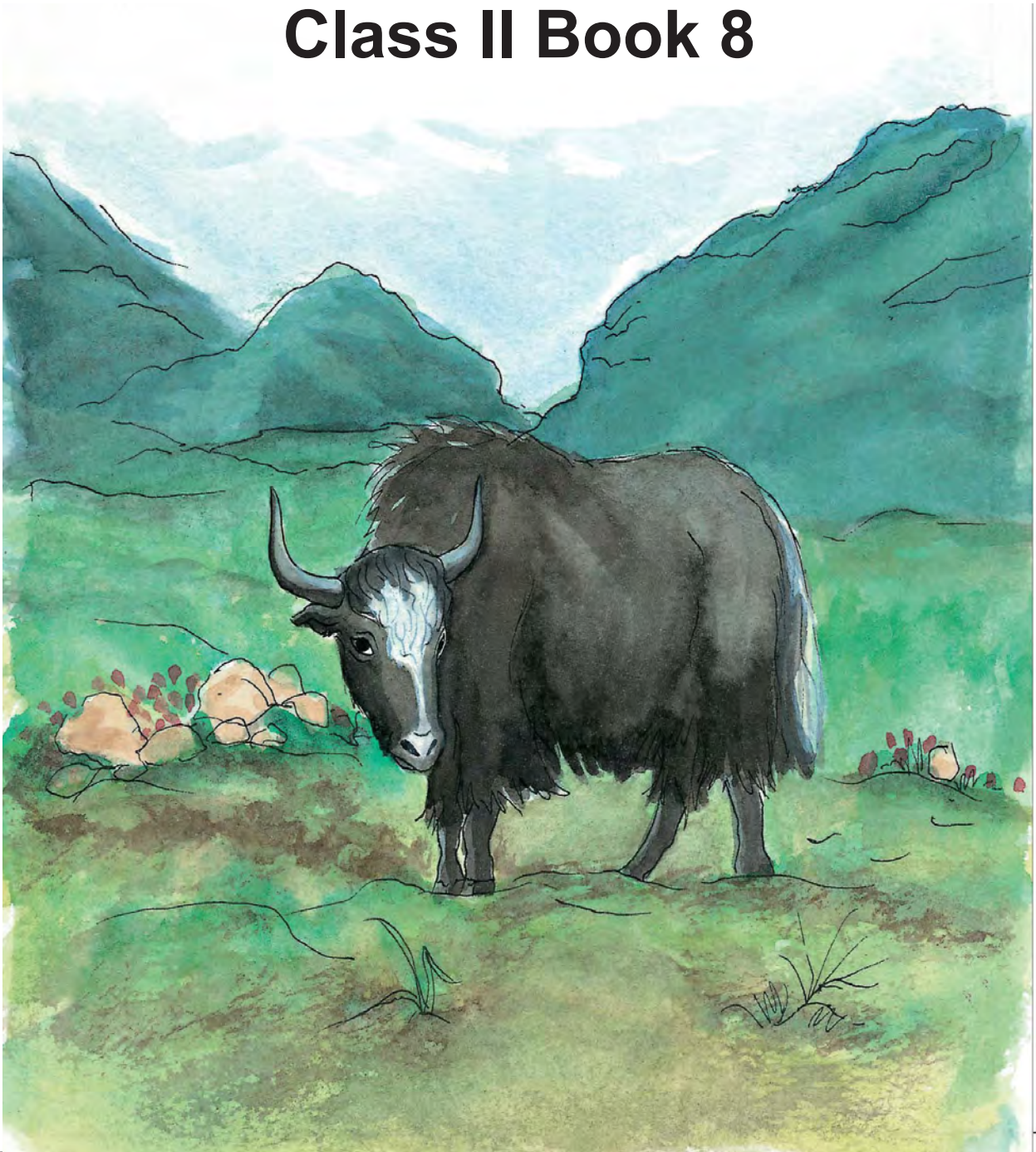
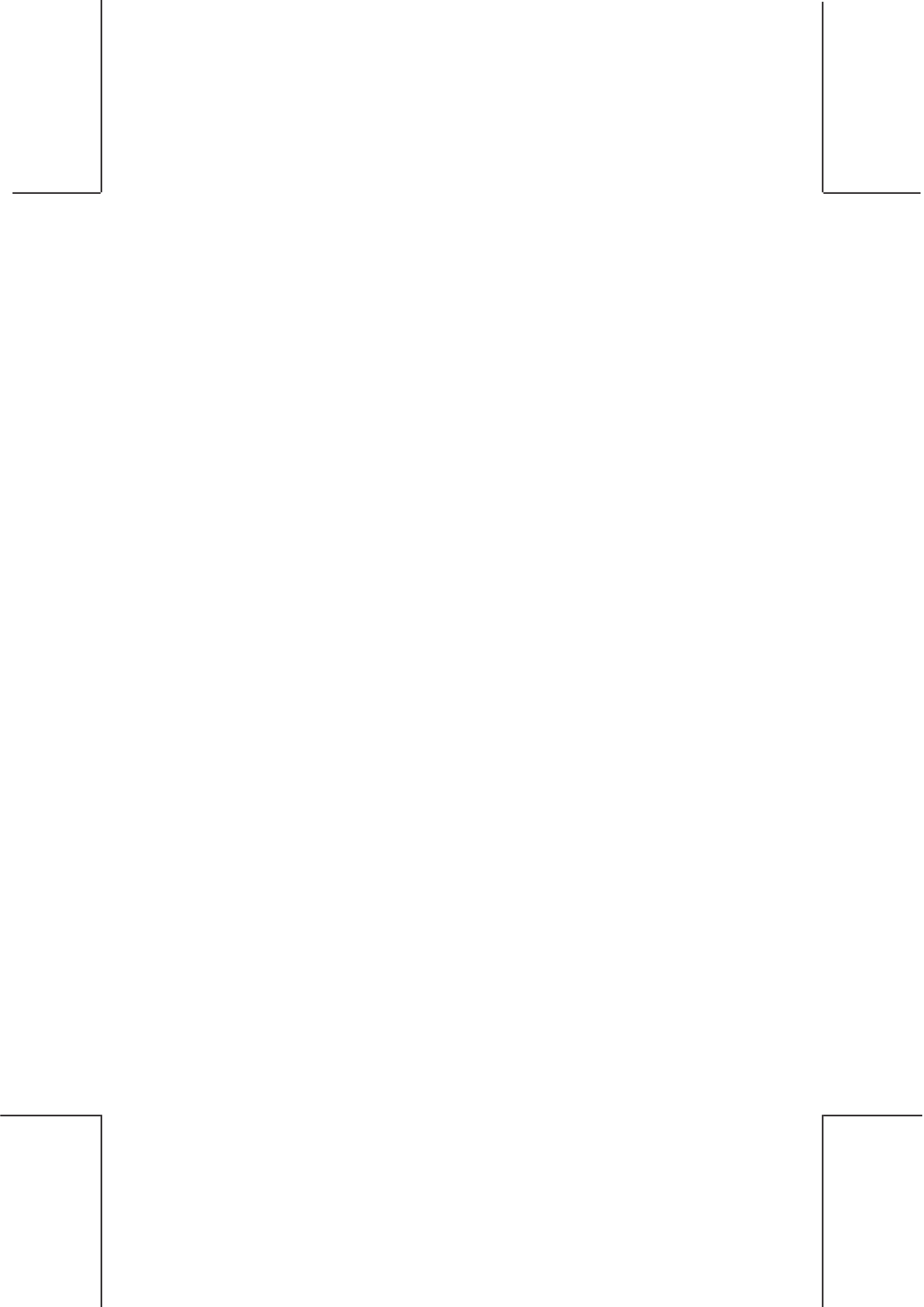


Yaks

Class II Book 8





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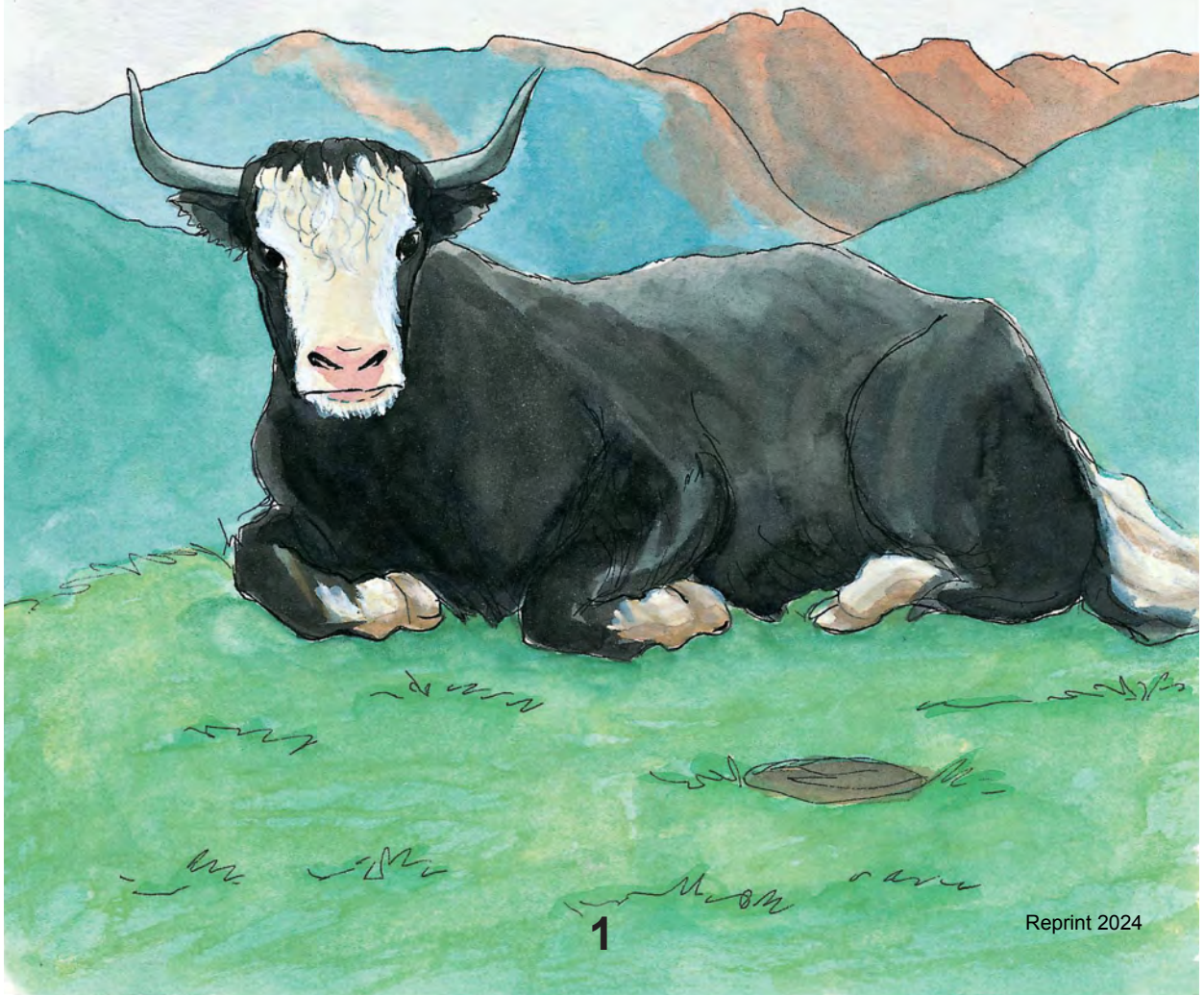
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The yak is a very big animal that looks like a hairy ox. It has short, strong legs and a bushy tail. It has long hair on its neck and sides but under its body there is a lot of short hair. It makes sound like a pig.



Wild yaks live on big mountains in Tibet. They can live in very cold places where no other animal can live. Wild yaks are always black or brown. All yaks live in big groups called herds.

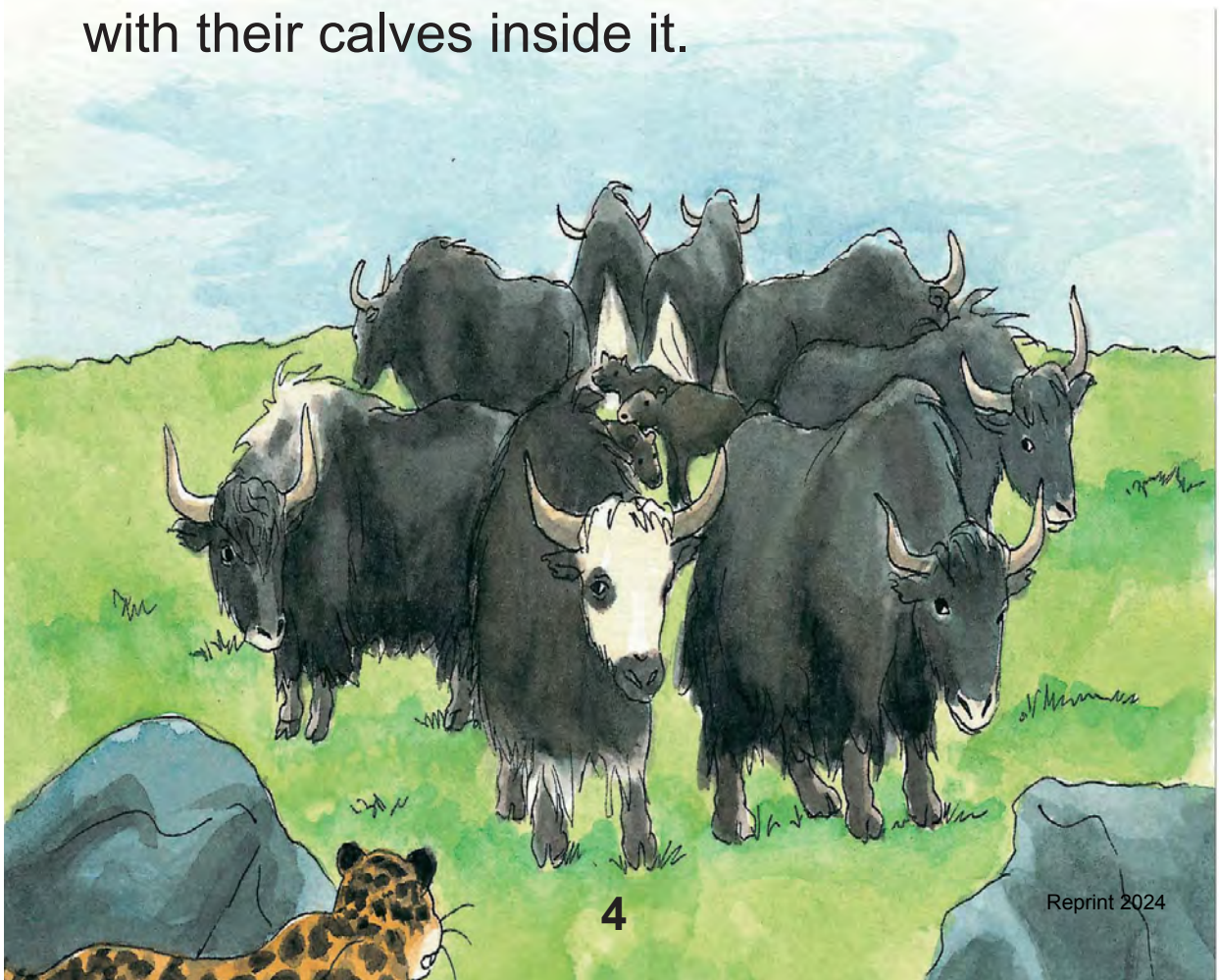


In Bhutan we have domestic yaks. They are black and white, and they are smaller than the wild ones. The people who look after domestic yaks are called yak herders.



Yaks are strong animals and have long horns. They are not frightened of many other animals. Sometimes leopards or wolves kill them.

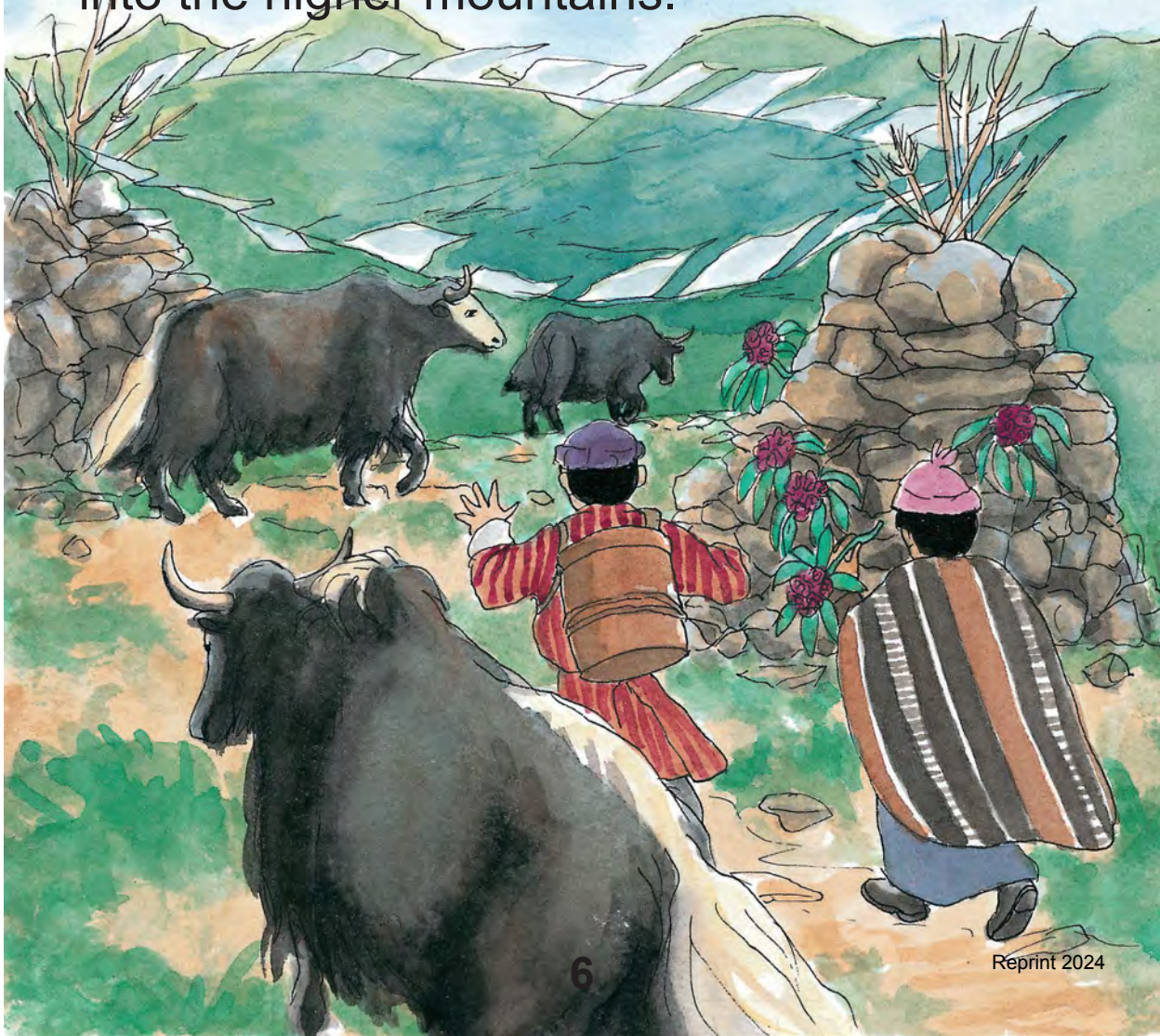
When yaks are frightened they make a circle with their calves inside it.



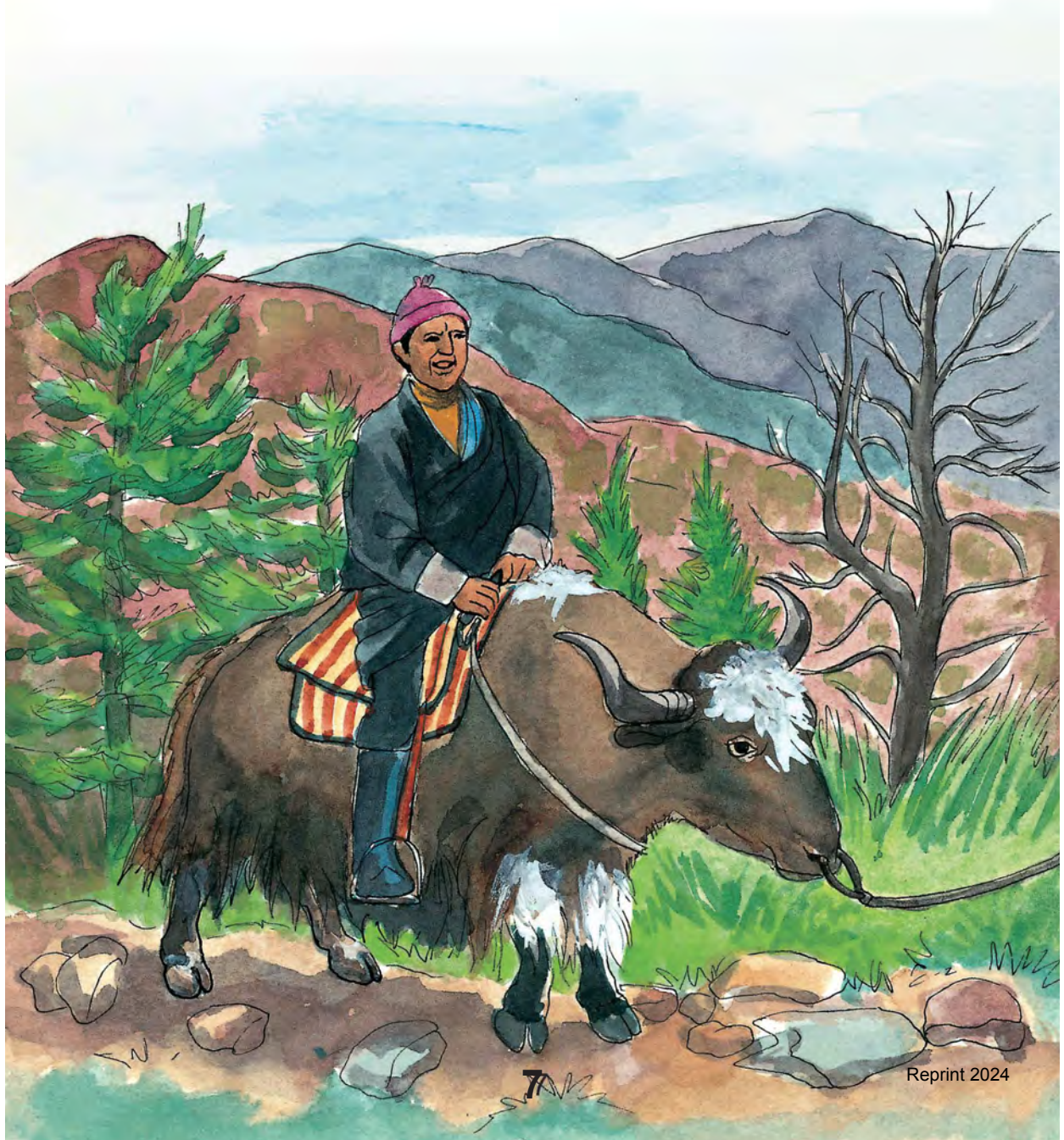
Domestic yaks become angry sometimes. An angry yak puts its tail up in the air, its eyes become red and it runs at you. Yaks can run quicker than cows. Do not go between a mother yak and its calf. It will not like it and its tail will go up.



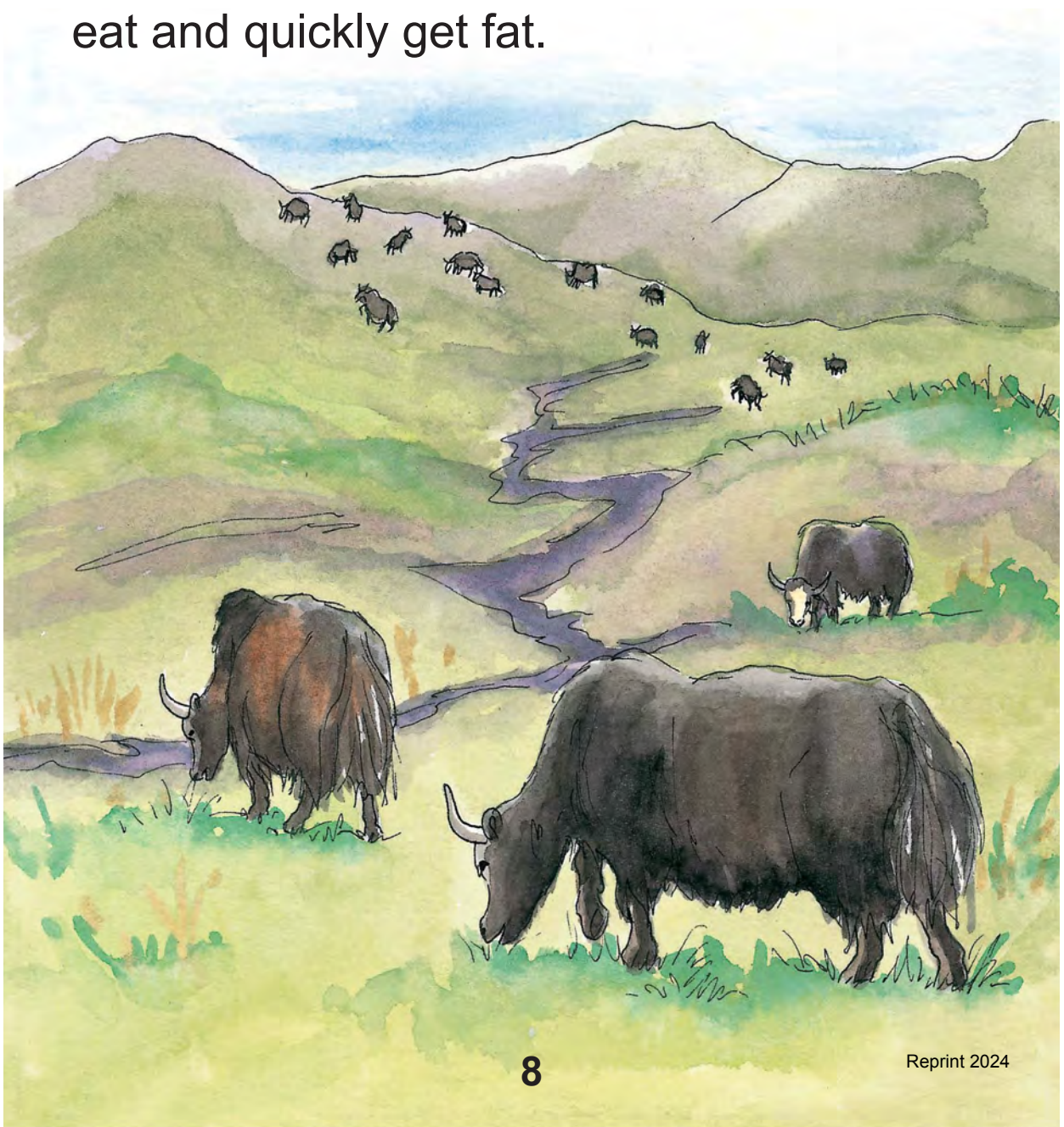
When spring comes the yaks are on the lower grasslands. Higher up, the snow melts and young grass begins to grow. The yak herders and their families drive the yaks up into the higher mountains.



The yaks climb slowly and safely and people can ride on them.



When the yaks get to the high mountains there is a lot of young grass. They begin to eat and quickly get fat.



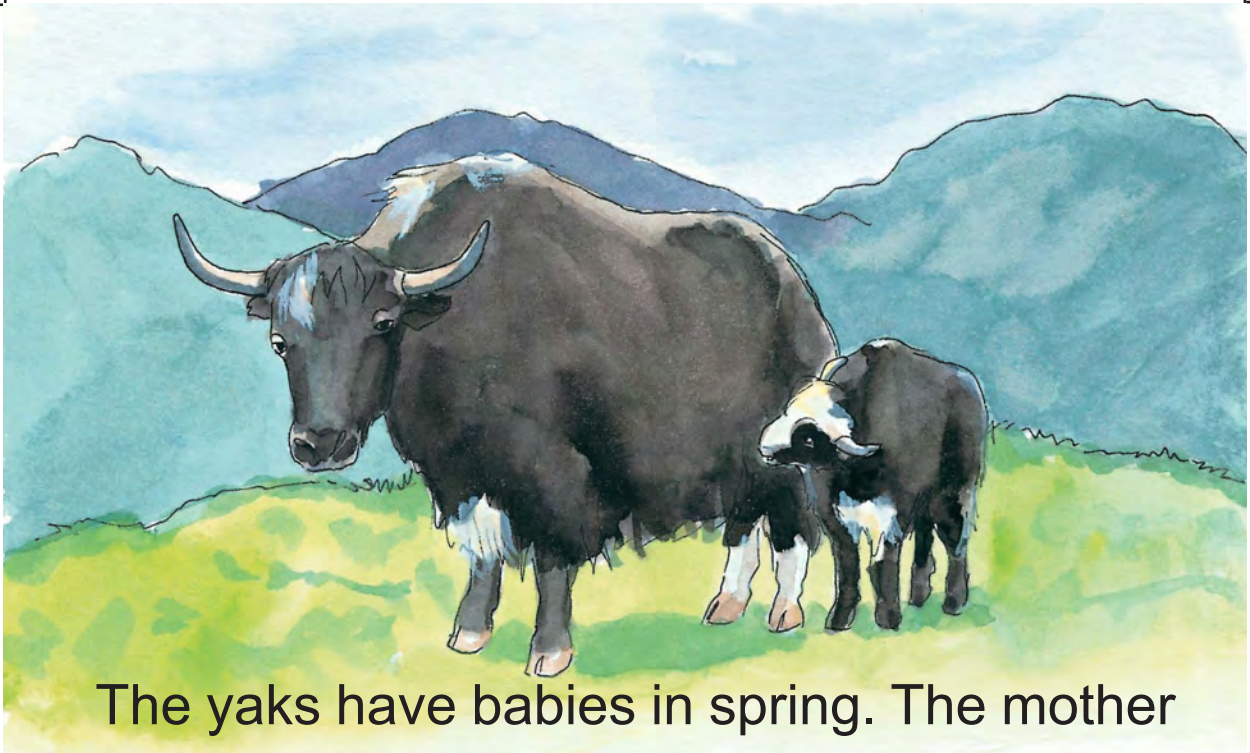


The yak herders go to the same place every year. They find their house and put the roof on. Then, they cut wood and make a fire. It is cold on the mountains.

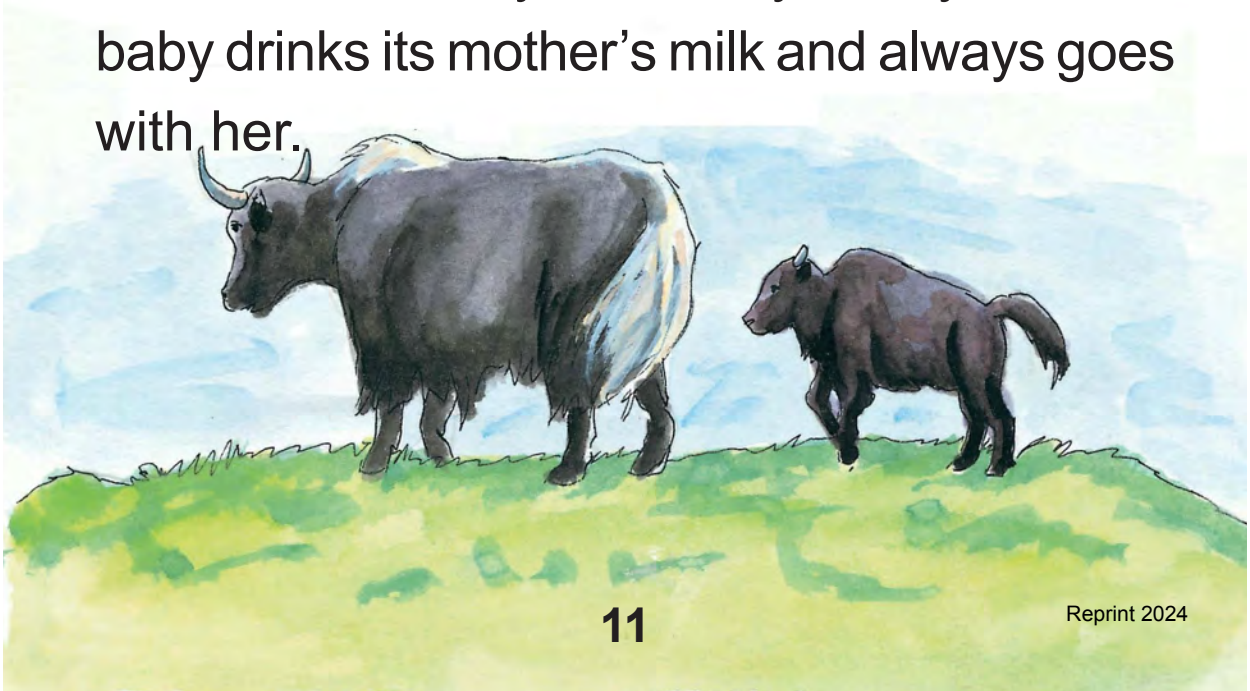


In the spring, the yak herders cut the hair off the yaks. They use the short hair from under the yak's body (belly) to make cloth. This cloth is black, white and brown. These are the same colours as the yak's hair. Yak herders use the long hair from the yak's sides to make rope.



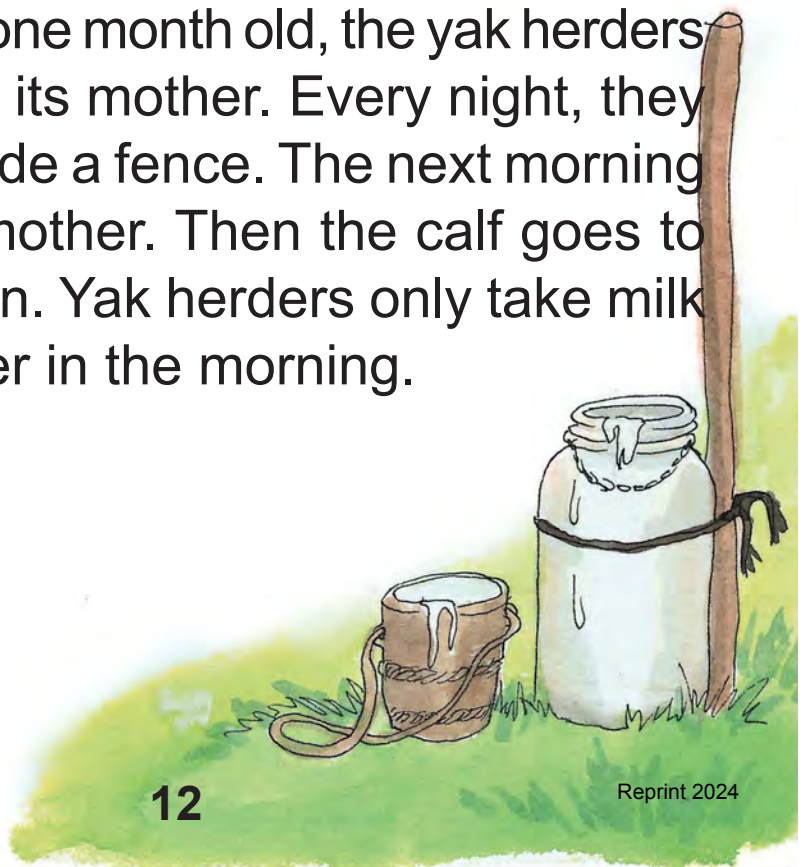


The yaks have babies in spring. The mother yak has her first baby when she is four years old. She has only one baby in a year. The baby drinks its mother's milk and always goes with her.

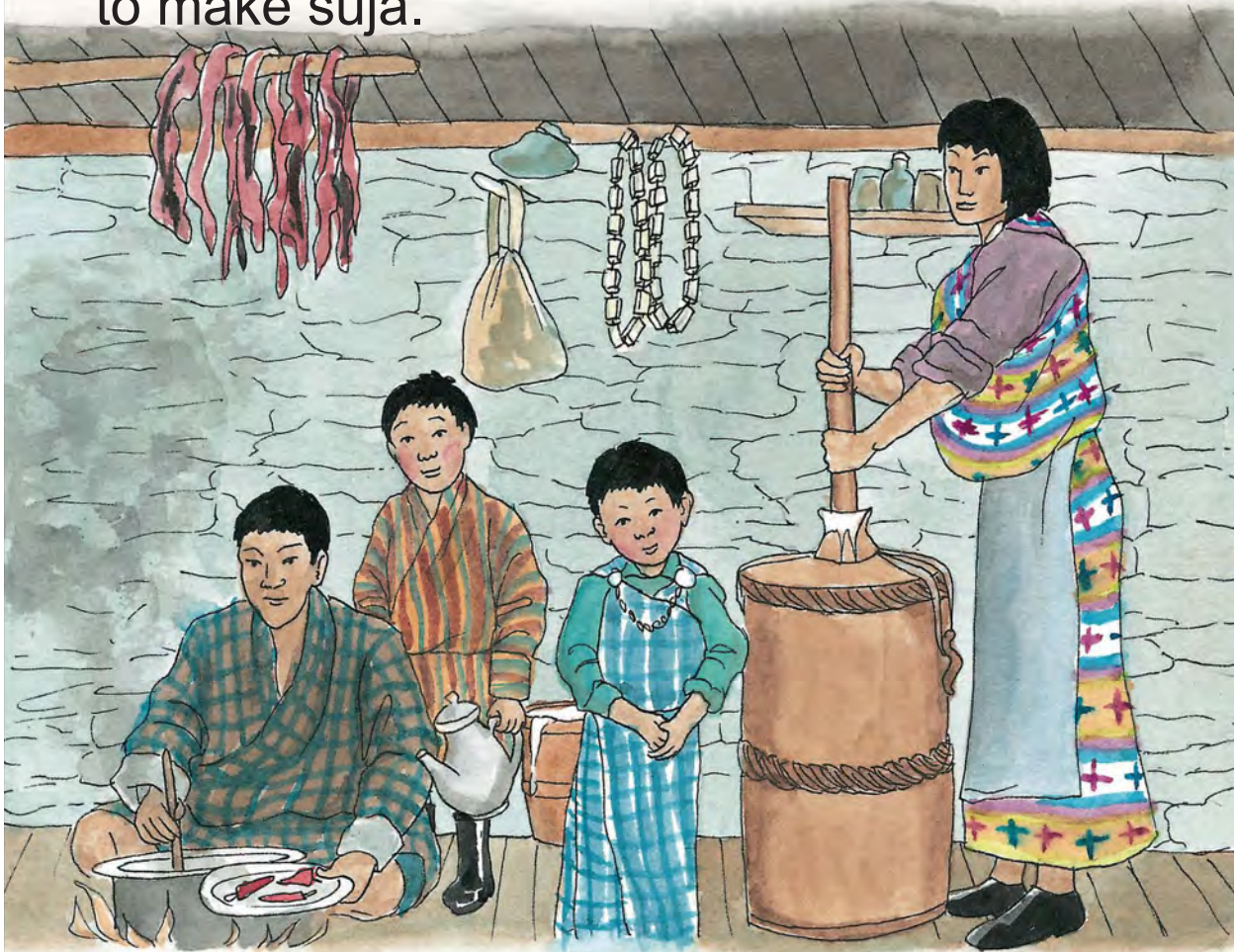




When a calf is one month old, the yak herders take milk from its mother. Every night, they put the calf inside a fence. The next morning they milk the mother. Then the calf goes to its mother again. Yak herders only take milk from the mother in the morning.



Yak's milk is very good to drink. You can use it to make tea. The yak herders also make butter and cheese from it. They use the butter to make suja.



Do you like the hard cheese made from yak's milk? Yak herders cut it into cubes and dry it on a string. Can you see it in the picture?

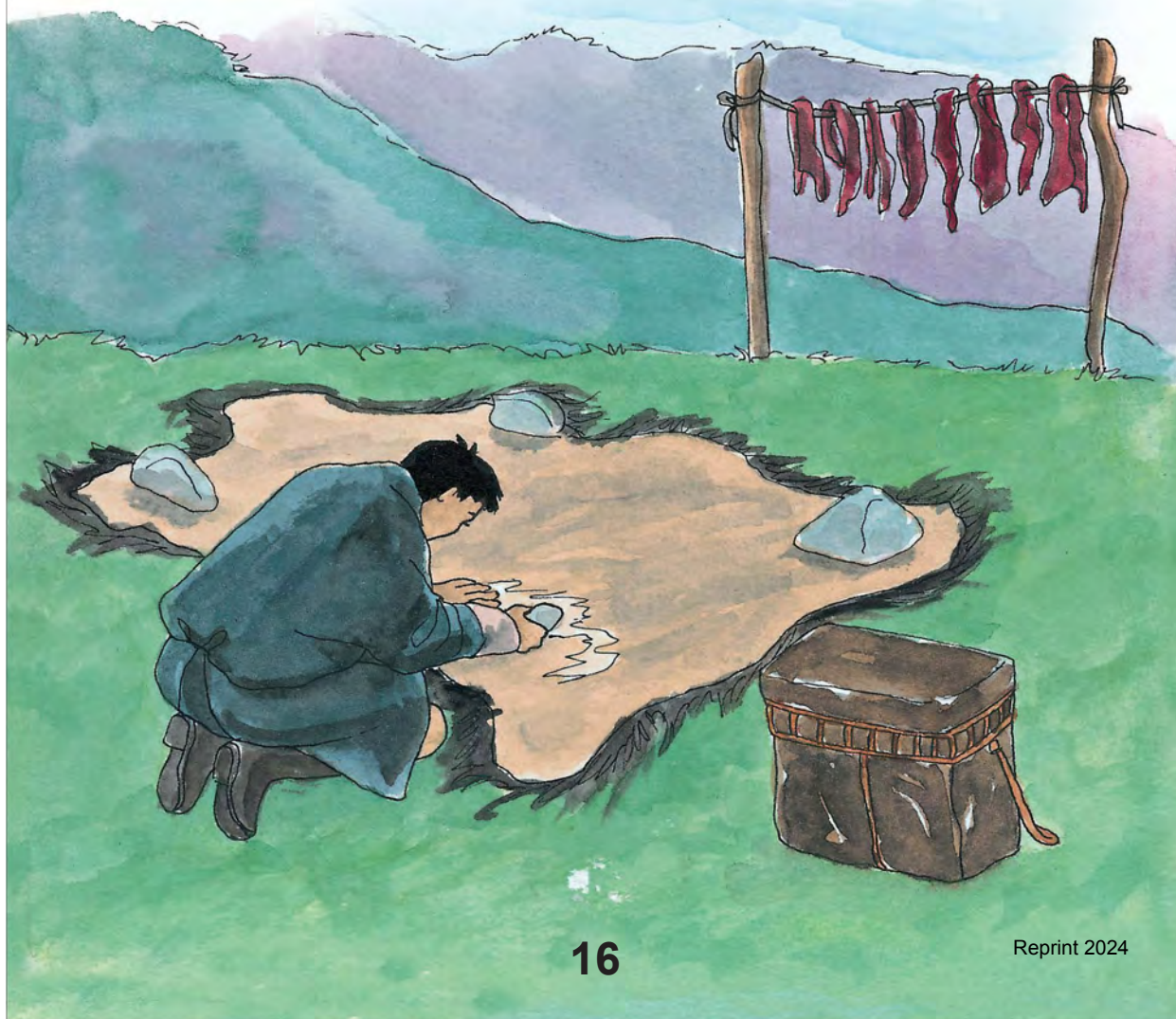
All yaks need salt. Wild yaks in Tibet eat salt from the ground. Here in Bhutan the yak herders must give them salt. Every month they put salt into an old yak horn. Then they use this to put the salt into the yak's mouth.



Every summer many yak herders come together in the same place in the mountains. Sometimes lamas come and bless them.



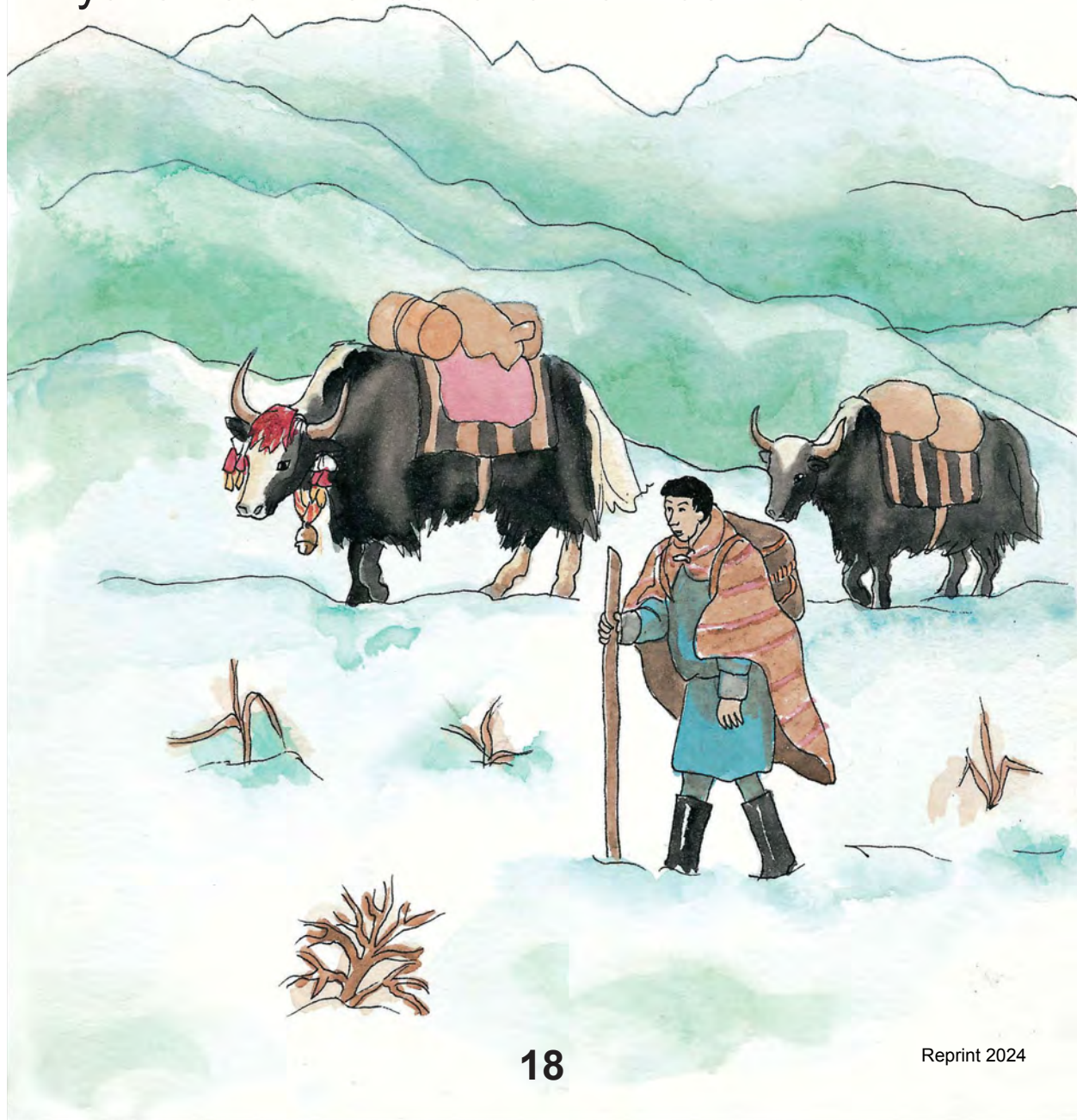
When autumn comes there is not a lot of grass for the yaks. Yak herders kill some yaks and sell their meat. They dry the yak's skin in the sun and put oil on it. This makes the skin soft. They use the skin to make bags, rope and other things.



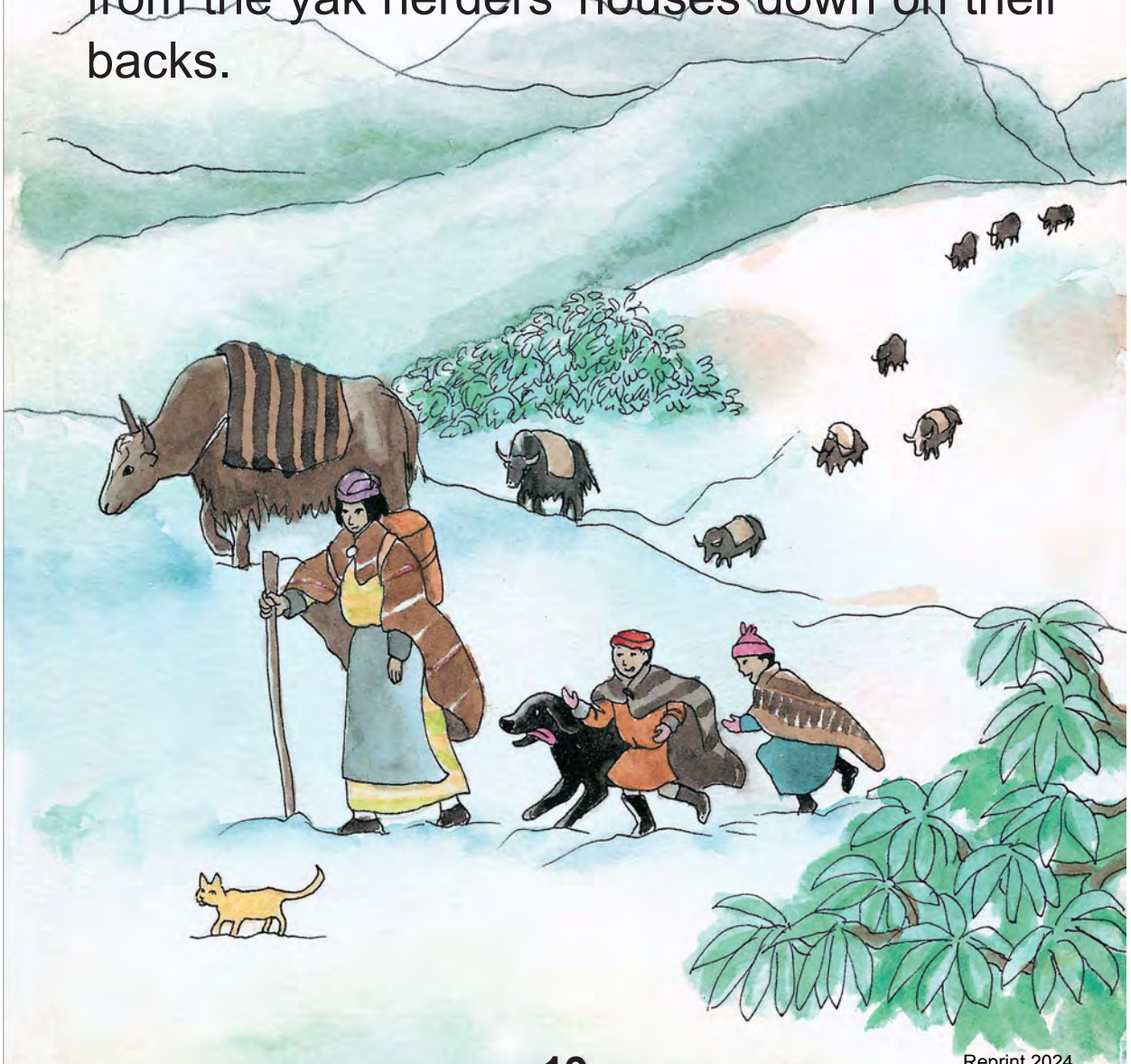
In October the first snow falls on the mountains. There is no more grass to eat. The yak herders take down the roofs of their houses and put the wood inside. It is time to go down from the mountains.



One big yak walks in front of the other yaks. It has bells on its neck. The other yaks hear the bell and walk behind it.

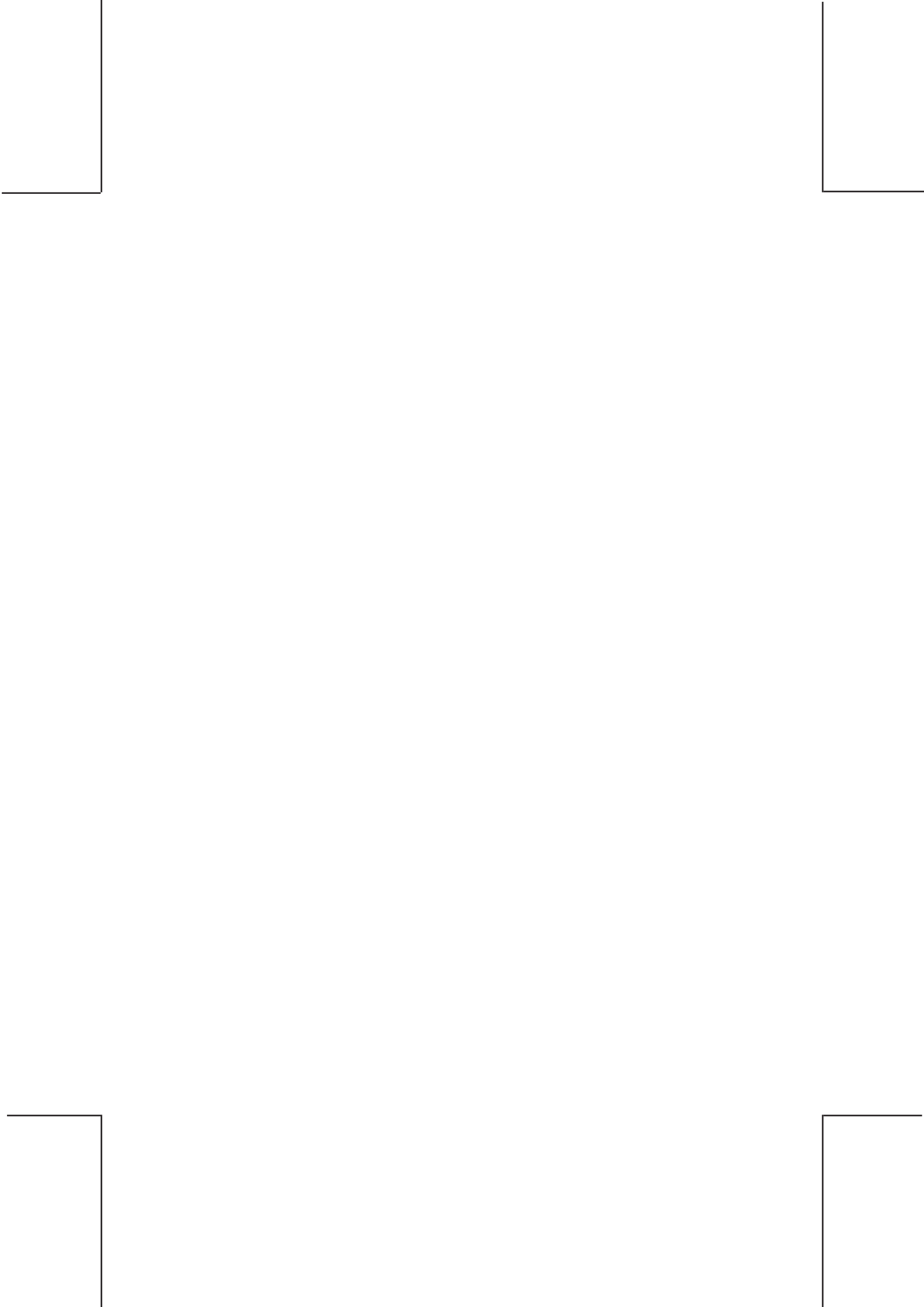


They do not stop when it snows. Slowly they move down to their winter grasslands. They are strong animals and carry all the things from the yak herders' houses down on their backs.





Here is a dance in the Tshechu. Can you see the dancer? He is wearing a black yak's tail on his head. In some Dzongkhags, during Tshechu, they present a Yak-cham (Yak dance)



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