



### Norman, Speak!

Written by Caroline Adderson

Illustrated by Qin Leng

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*“But after a few days with Norman, we knew the truth. He just wasn’t very smart” (n.p).*

Norman is a stray dog that has been dropped off at the animal shelter, but one day a family, who is intent on finding “the saddest dog” at the shelter to adopt, select Norman because he has been at the shelter for the longest time. Norman isn’t sad, however. He wags his stump of a tail, an action that is described lovingly as “a hula dance of happiness.” And while Norman is a very loving and happy dog, he just doesn’t do “dog” things. He doesn’t sit, come, or speak. The family is concerned that he has forgotten his name or that he wasn’t trained properly. They eventually decide that Norman just isn’t very smart, but the family loves him anyway. Norman is funny and friendly, and best of all is his dance when he greets the family at the door.

One day, the family discovers, however, that Norman is much smarter than they first thought. Going to the park, the family notices a new dog with its owner. Norman likes the new park participant, and when that black dog is called by its owner, Norman runs over, too. When the black dog sits, so does Norman. Befuddled, the family approaches the two dogs that are intently listening to the man. They also listen to discover they don’t understand a thing the man is saying. Norman doesn’t understand English, but he certainly understands Chinese!

What the family does with this new information makes for a charming and meaningful picture book that will delight readers of all ages. A wonderful addition to a text set on understanding how differences make a much more interesting world, it would pair nicely with books such as *From There to Here* (Laurel Croza, 2014), *The Geese March in Step* (Jean-Francois Dumont, 2014) or *Cuckoo!* (Fiona Robertson, 2014). A lovely picture book with illustrations done in ink on paper and then colored digitally, *Speak, Norman!* is available in both paper and electronic formatting.

Caroline Adderson lives in Vancouver, Canada with her family and dog. She has written numerous award-winning books for adults and children. *Speak, Norman!* is her first picture book. One of her award-winning books, *Middle of Nowhere*, was written for middle school readers and won the Sheila A. Egoff Children’s Literature prize. More information about Adderson can be found on her website (<http://www.carolineadderson.com/>).

Qin Leng is a designer and illustrator who lives in Toronto, Canada. She has published a number of picture books that can be found across the world, including *Hana Hashimoto*, *Sixth Violin* (2014) and *Kamik: An Inuit Puppy Story* (2013). More information about Leng can be found on this site (<http://qinleng.tumblr.com/>).

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