

**PRATHAM
BOOKS**

A Book in Every Child's Hand



This story is about an uncle named Sandy, Who likes his camera so much, he always keeps it handy. Let's rewind to when Uncle Sandy was a little boy, Unlike his friends, he never dreamt of a fancy toy.



Even in class, he never listened to his teachers. As time passed by, Uncle Sandy became a wildlife photographer, While his friends became doctors, engineers and dance choreographers.



Uncle Sandy didn't want to work in big offices, He wanted to take pictures of snakes, crocodiles and tortoises. So he decided to leave his family and friends behind, And took off to the jungles with freedom in mind. On his first expedition to the Western Ghats,

He had his first encounter with a mysterious cat. Uncle Sandy has been on its trail ever since, Hoping to click a picture of it, for evidence.



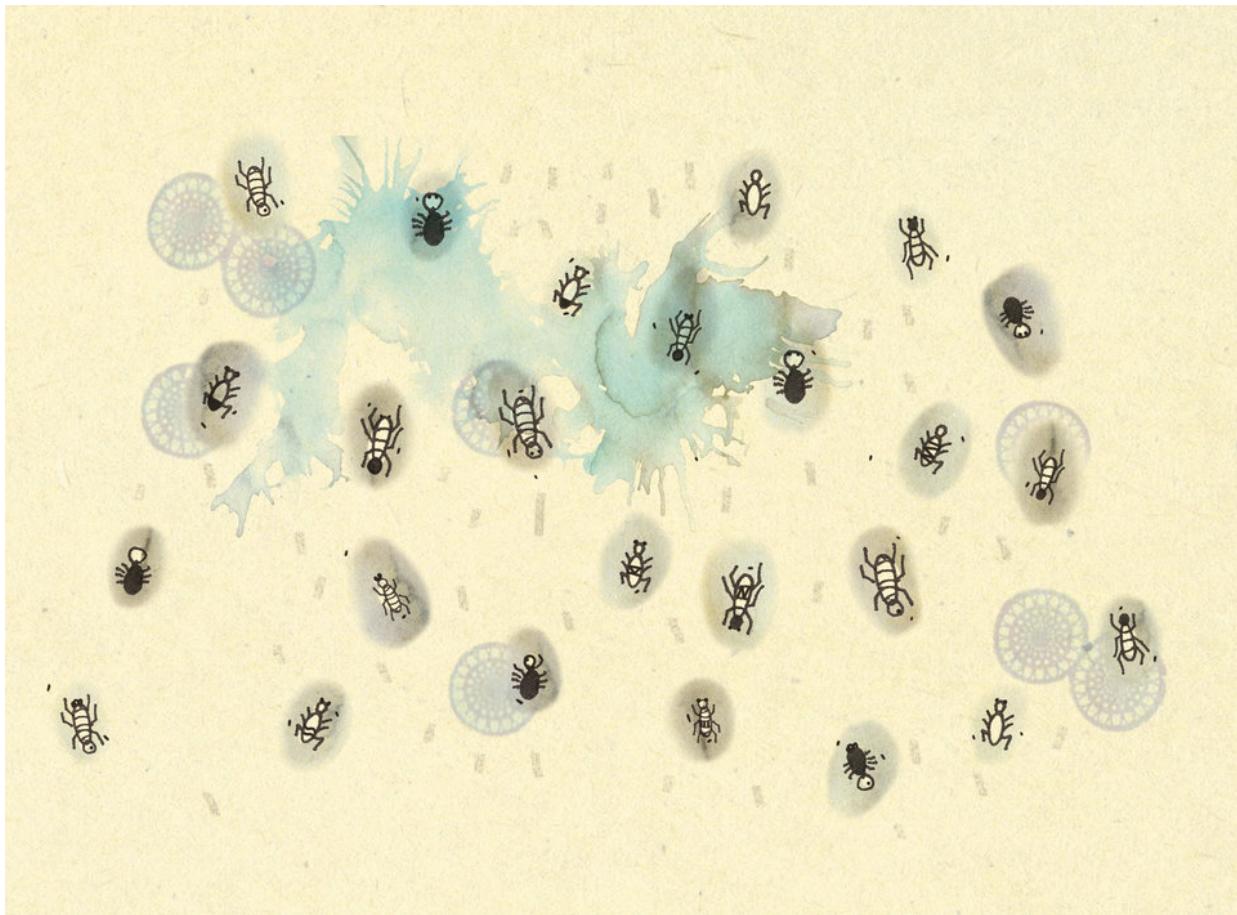
So he decided to revisit the Western Ghats, Through its spiraling path in search of the cat. The cat in the ghat! The plan was to speak to animals along the way, To get clues about this cat whose colour he knew was grey.



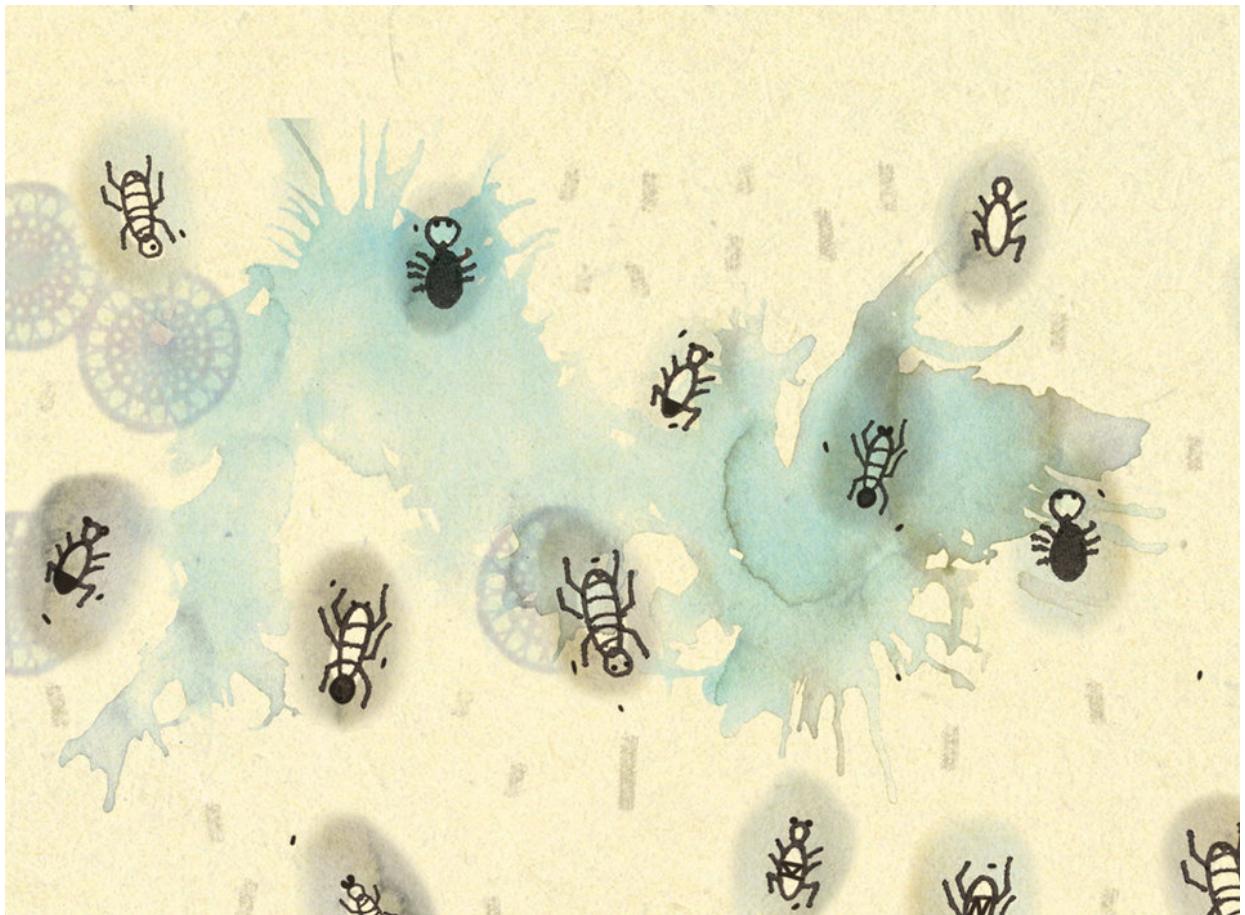
He began his journey at the foothills
of the Ghats, With the summer sun so
hot, Uncle Sandy needed a hat. “Let’s
look for waterholes,” he said to
himself, He knew that’s where the
animals would tread.



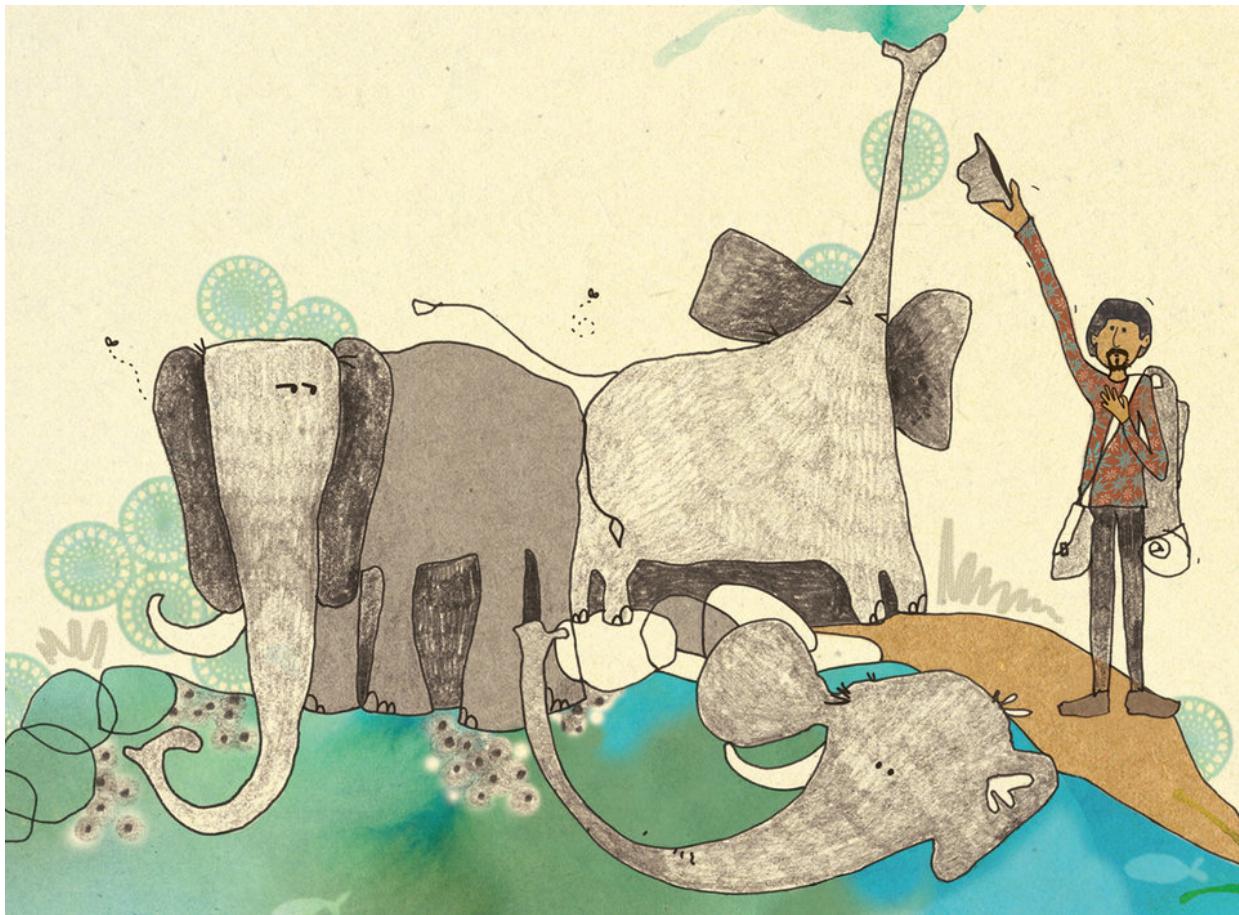
And guess who he got to meet, The
top cat himself, Mr. Tiger to greet.
“Oh mighty tiger,” he said, “would
you have seen a cat? It is tall, swift
and the colour of my hat.” The tiger
didn’t have much to say, He roared
and looked the other way.



Phew! That was close, he thought,
Just as he was drenched by giant rain
drops. Along with the shower came a
swarm of termites, Who were sadly
eaten by ants, at first sight.



Waterfalls become rivers and that's how there's water for all. So, if we need water to drink, Protecting the Western Ghats is the link.



What Uncle Sandy saw next filled him with glee, A family of elephants bathing in a pond, yippee! They were making the most of the pre-monsoon showers, Some were kicking grass, others showing off their powers. “Excuse me you all,” said Uncle

Sandy, waving his hat, “Would you have seen a big grey cat?”



“No, no, no,” they all went in chorus,
“We haven’t seen him around here,
we promise.” Uncle Sandy found
himself in the rainforest soon, “The
second level of the Western
Ghats,” he crooned. “Bark!” came a
reply through the forest dense. “Oh

that's a Barking Deer I hear, it means no offence.”



Up in the trees chomping through a jackfruit, He saw a lion-faced monkey, brute. A Lion-tailed Macaque is what it is, he knew, He'd looked through an encyclopedia of animals, woohoo! "Help me find a grey cat, will you?" said Uncle

Sandy.“Okay,” said the feasting monkey.



“Walk straight through the tall green trees Till you find one with a giant hive of bees.” “Under that tree lives a frog so rare It lives underground, hiding from the sun’s glare.” “He’s a clever frog I’m told, Knows the whole jungle inside out and two-fold.” Uncle

Sandy was so eager to look for the froggy He left without saying thank you to the monkey.



Left, right, left, right, Uncle Sandy
marched, Walking through a row of
trees that were arched. Then he saw a
tree very tall With a big beehive that
was just about to fall.



But Uncle Sandy could not see it through the fog. “Oh you’re the man who comes in search of a cat, I heard about you from a clever little bat.” Said Uncle Sandy, “Please will you tell me where he is? I’ll give you an exotic flower, an Iris.”



The frog was purple in colour, He's
the only one of his kind in
India, Nasika batracus. The frog told
him that he'd meet a tribesman,
Who'd know where the cat lived, and
would guide him. Uncle Sandy

nodded, still in shock, He had just seen the most extraordinary frog.



As he went further into the forests so thick, He saw that the trees were getting fewer very quick. “People cut trees,” he said, “to make products very cheap, And the poor animals, they have no place to sleep.” “These jungles are their homes you see, just

like our houses back in the city.” Sad and disheartened by the state of affairs, Uncle Sandy decided to say a silent prayer.



“Protect these forests, oh dear God,
please, Save them so the animals can
live in peace.” Saying so he carried
on, the high altitude grasslands
waiting, And that’s where he’d find
the cat from its hiding.



The grasslands so green, Uncle Sandy
just sat. Staring at the miracle of
creation and the beauty of this place,
This, he felt, was really his land of
fairy tales. Pat came a tap on his back,
He turned to see a face painted black.



“Who are you, Sir?” Uncle Sandy questioned “I am a tribesman who lives here unquestioned.” “Oh but sir, will you be as kind To answer one question I have on my mind? “Where can I find the special cat I’m looking for? I’ve seen it only once before.”



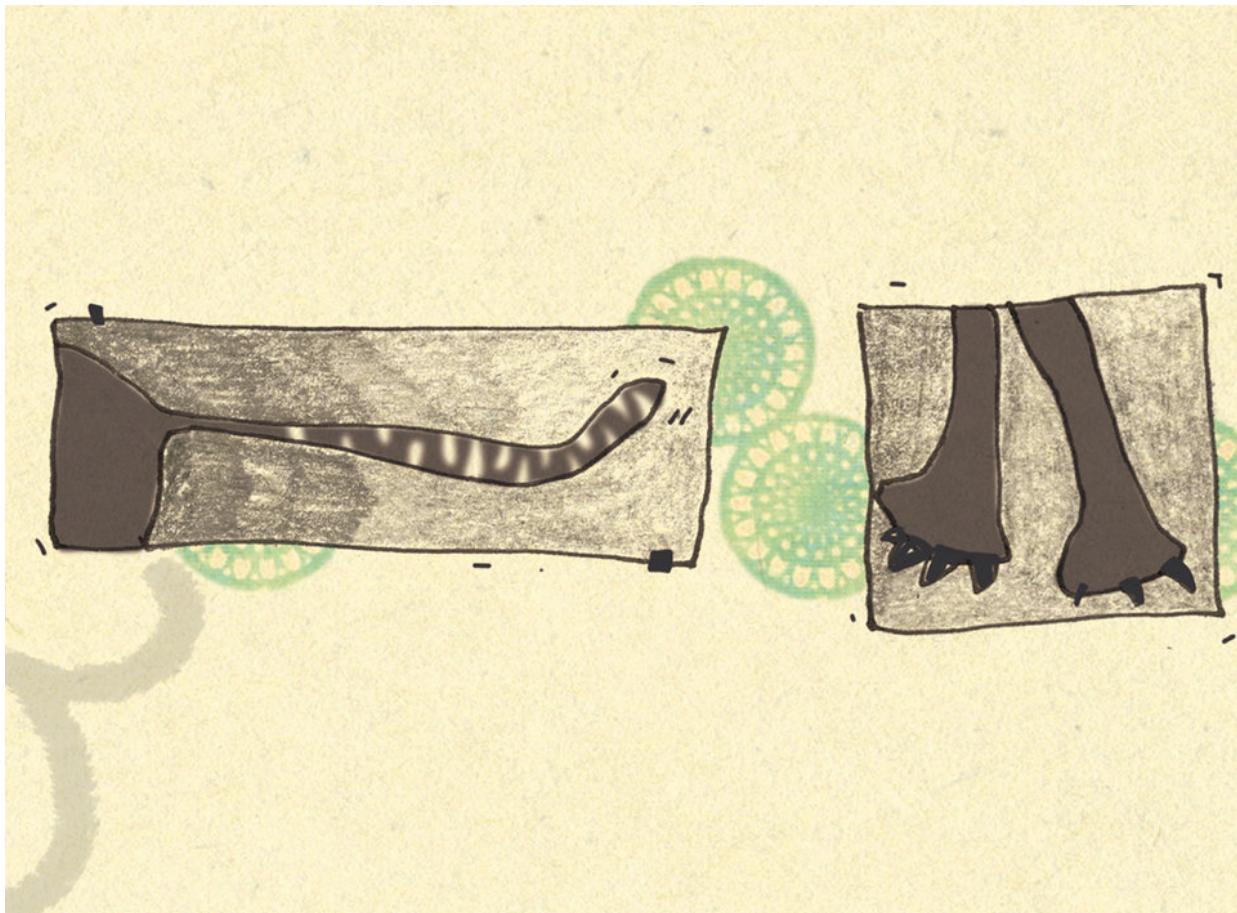
“Are you talking about Pogeyan?” he said. Uncle Sandy wasn’t sure what he meant. “The cat that comes and goes as the mist, Are you referring to that elusive cat that exists?” “Yes Sir, that’s the one,” Uncle Sandy affirmed. He was so happy he could’ve

drummed and hummed. “Aha!” said the tribesman, pointing to the mountains higher up, “I’ve seen the cat over there, all of three times in close-up.”



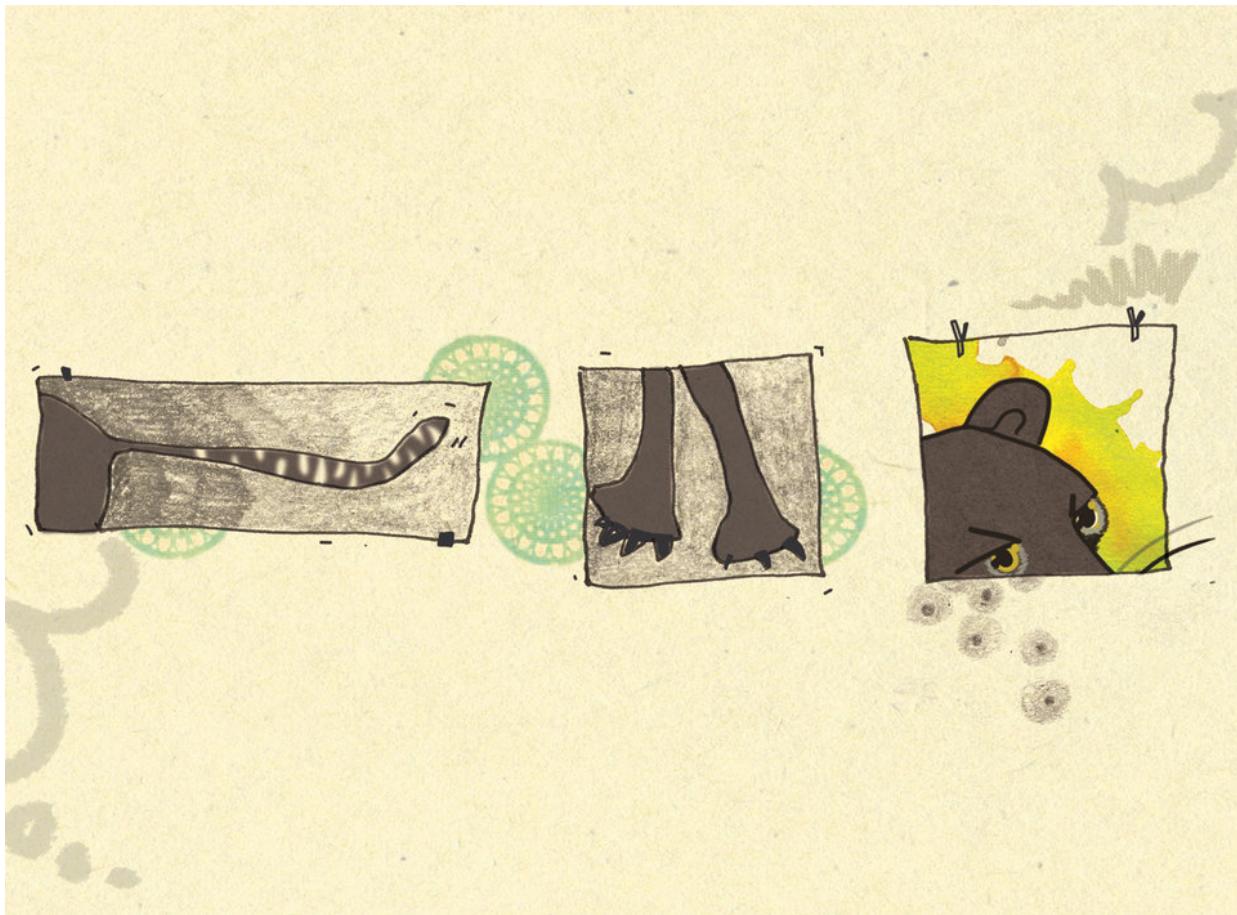
Uncle Sandy was feeling extremely blessed. He did a somersault that left the tribesman perplexed. Uncle Sandy was whistling to himself, and climbing When he saw two male Nilgiri Tahrs head-butting. Looking at how well they'd adapted to the terrain,

Uncle Sandy wished he too was born
on the mountains.



Sure he'd find his cat somewhere around here, Uncle Sandy decided to put camera traps all over. Then he slept a good night's sleep Under an open twinkling sky, on a hillock steep. When he woke up, he ran to his camera traps and checked. Yes, yes,

yes, there were images of his cat!!
The cat in the ghat!



Uncle Sandy was happy, ho, ho, ho!
That's when he felt a tiny snake
crawling over his feet. He was
startled, and realised he'd been
dreaming in his sleep. Uncle Sandy
prayed his dream would come

true
Hope he finds his grey cat soon,
don't you?



The Cat in the Ghat is a whimsical tale of Uncle Sandy going in search of a mysterious cat in the Western Ghats. It has been inspired by the real-life expedition by Sandesh Kadur, a National Geographic Emerging

Explorer, wildlife filmmaker and conservation photographer.

His goal is to inspire people to protect and appreciate what remains of our wilderness. He is still looking for the Pogeyan!

The Cat in the Ghat! (English)

This is a book that takes you deep into the jungles of the Western Ghats. A wildlife photographer sets out to find an elusive wild cat and meets a menagerie of fascinating creatures. Quirky illustrations pepper a funny narrative inspired by real-life adventure. What better way to invite you to join his quest!

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.