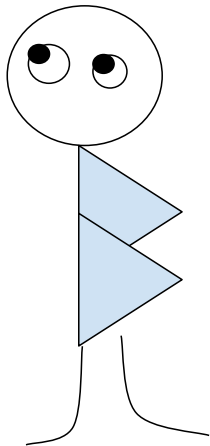


Fritz



a process of decay

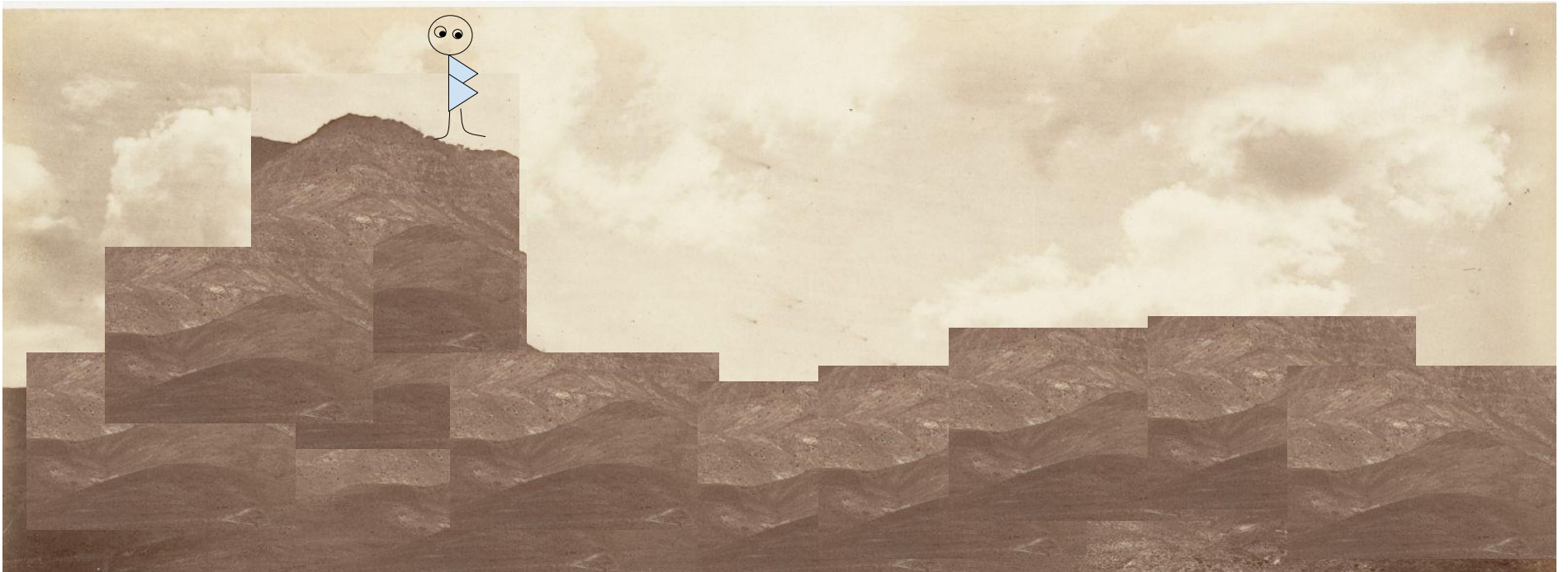
Once upon a time, a very small thing lived atop a very, very tall mountain.

The mountain was so tall that when she stretched up she could touch the clouds.

The thing was so small that when it rained she used tiny puddles as swimming pools.

She lived in a small house, using a maple leaf as her roof and twigs as her walls.

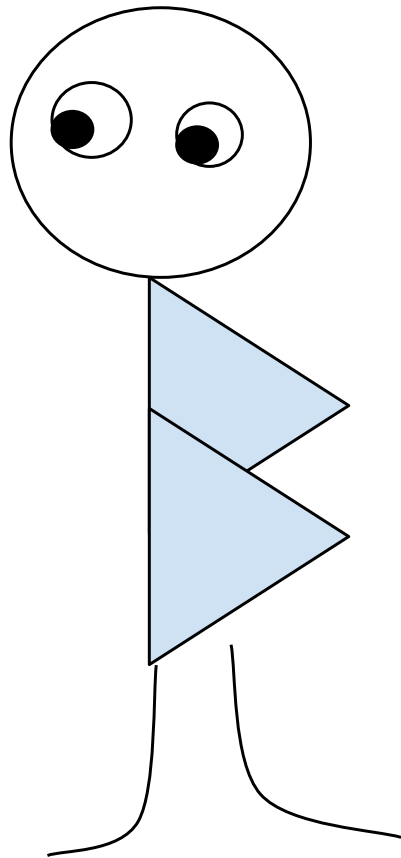
The small thing liked her tall mountain. She liked her small house.



Most of all, she liked the sound of rain.



She loved the sound of rain so much that she named herself after the sound:

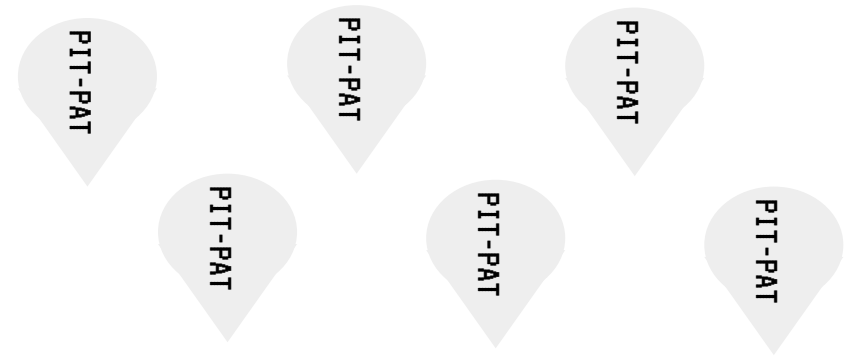


**Pit-Pat.**

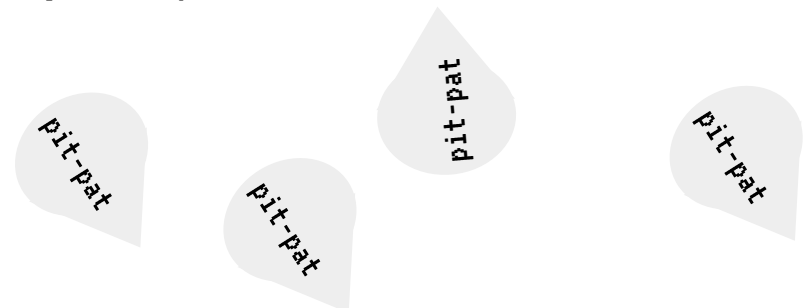
Sometimes the rain came slowly and quietly.



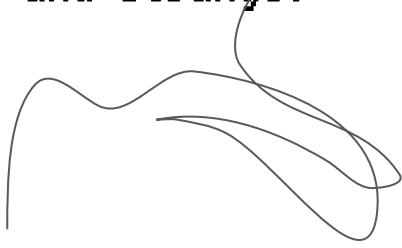
Sometimes the rain was quick and **ANGRY.**



Sometimes the rain was sideways or upside-down.



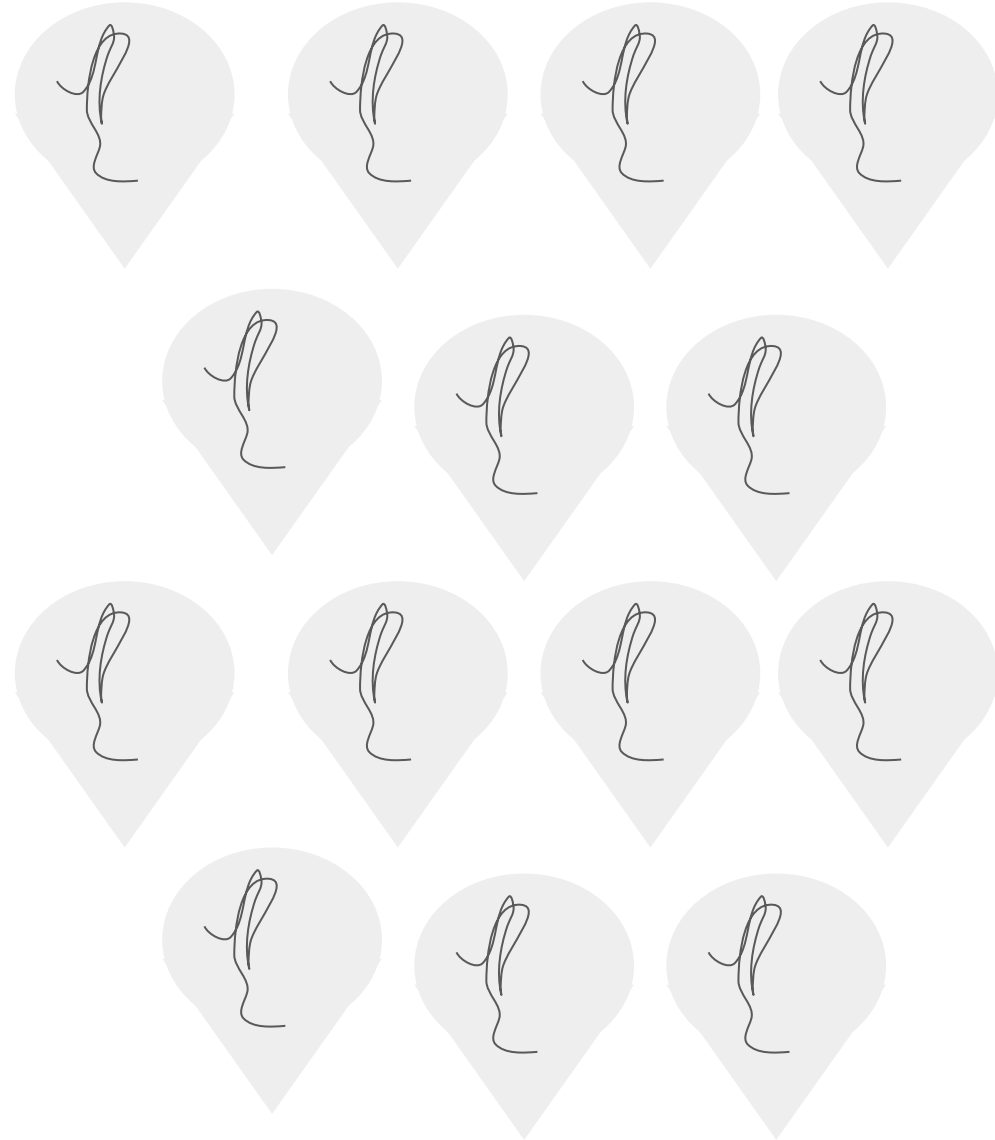
One morning Pit-Pat woke  
up to a strange noise. It  
was painful and strange.



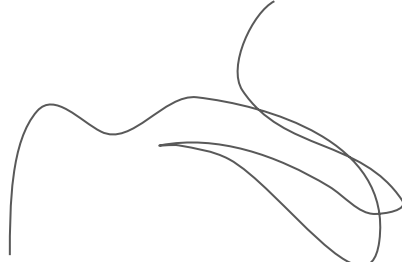
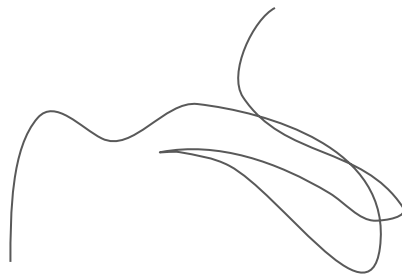
Pit-Pat had never heard  
such a strange sound  
before. STRANGE. So,  
Pit-Pat left her walnut  
bed and went outside to  
find...



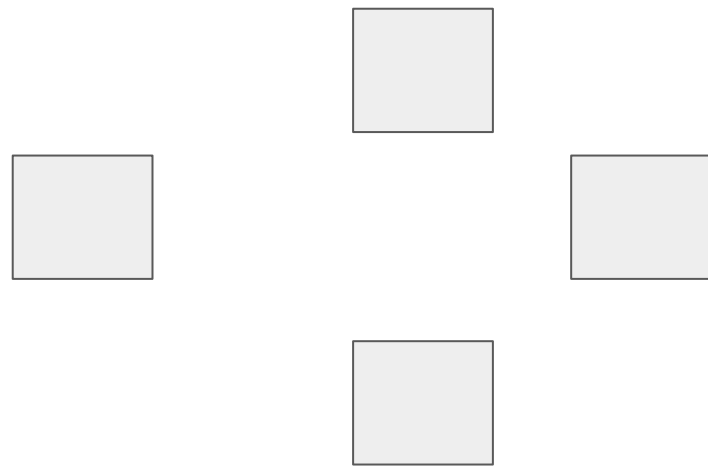
rain.



Small raindrops, large raindrops, little waterfall, and massive puddles, all the things of rain. Yet there was no Pit-Pat not even a Peet or a Poot. There was none of the sound that Pit-Pat loved so dearly. Just strange, strange noise.

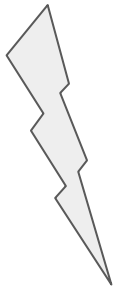


She went back to bed, hoping that this was just a special rain with a special sound. The next time it rained Pit-Pat listened through the day and the night. She listened on her tip-toes and low to the ground. She listened in ever way she could think of, but still no pit or pat. Just that sound. Pit-Pat sat and thought. Then she sat and thought some more. But, no matter how long she sat or thought, Pit-Pat could not figure out why the rain had changed. It looked the same, felt the same, even tasted the same. Only its sound, that lovely sound, had changed.



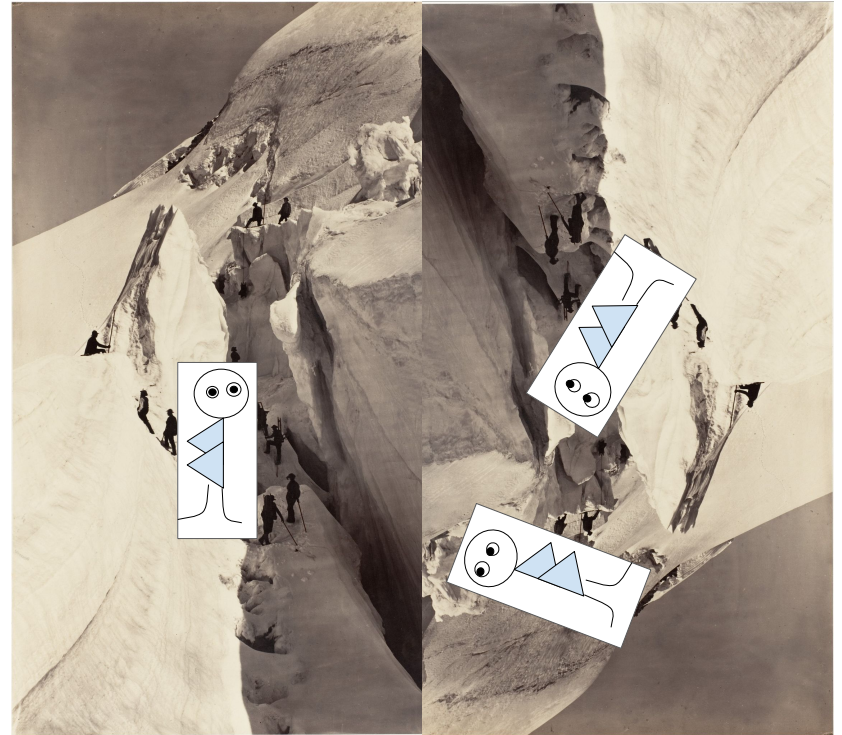
Oh, her head hurt! She hated thinking so much. But what else could she do? What else could little Pit-Pat do?

She sat down, then suddenly had a big think, like a tiny bolt of lightning hit her head. The Mountain! Pit-Pat had never left the top of the mountain. It was so tall, there must be an answer somewhere below.

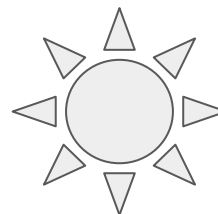


Wrapping a particularly large walnut in a blade of grass, Pit-Pat began her journey down the mountain.

There were no trails in this great, tall, mountain, so Pit-Pat ducked under roots and clambered over pebbles. Sometimes, Pit-Pat wasn't sure if she was going up or down the mountain.



The sun burned her during the day and the moon froze her at night, but little Pit-Pat kept on walking.



Eventually she came to the mouth of a cave. The cave looked tall and dark, a cold wind whistling through it. Pit-Pat did not know where this cave led, but, out of great curiosity, entered it.



The cave was dark on the inside, but occasionally a firefly would buzz by, shake its butt, and illuminate a patch of rocks or moss. Following this path of light, Pit-Pat found her way to a great, big rock. This rock was so large that Pit-Pat couldn't find a way around it. Sighing, Pit-Pat sat down on a small rock beside her. Pit-Pat unwrapped her walnut and began to chew on it, wondering what to do.

"That walnut looks a mighty tasty"

"Why thank you," replied Pit Pat.



"Would you like some?" asked Pit-pat.

"Oh no, I am much too full," said the small rock she was sitting on.

Do rocks talk? Up at the peak, none of the rocks talked. But Pit-Pat was below the peak now, and she was sitting on a rock, and it was most certainly talking. So, Pit-Pat decided, some rocks do talk.

Standing up and facing the rock, Pit-Pat asked, "Do you know why the sound of the rain changed?"

"Rain?" replied the rock, "I haven't a clue what that is. If you have strange questions you should ask woman-in-a-jar."

"Woman in a jar?"

"Yes, woman-in-a-jar. I visited her once, when I was a young thing. She lives past this cave, through the teeter-totter cliffs and below the great waterfall"

"That sounds like a lovely adventure" said Pit-Pat, "But I can't even get past this big rock in front of me."

"Granddad? Oh, he's just a silly big thing. Make him laugh and you will be able to pass through".

So, facing the very large rock she tried to make it laugh. She told jokes, made funny faces, but nothing seemed to make Grandpa Rock laugh. Hoping to find a new idea, Pit-Pat turned upside-down with her hands on the floor and feet in the air.

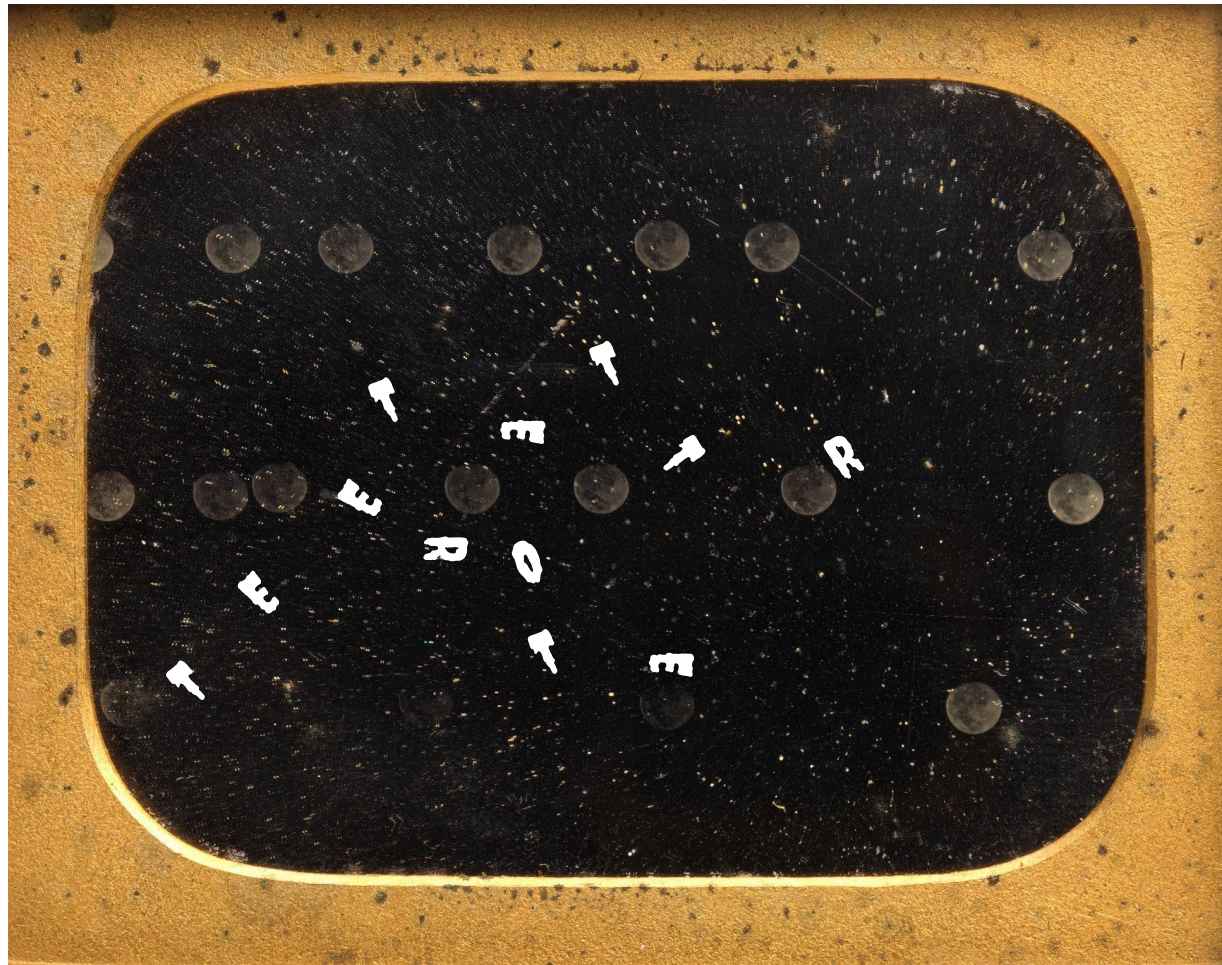
While she was like this, trying to think of new thinks, the ground started to rumble, and the path was clear! Grandpa Rock was laughing so hard, the whole cave shook.

Pit-Pat thanked the little rock for its help and Grandpa Rock was laughing (though she still didn't know why he laughed), and she went on her way to see the woman-in-a-jar

The exit of the cave was almost as dark as the inside. Everything was covered in a thick fog. Pit-Pat felt like she was swimming through air.

The cliffs were balanced atop each other like gymnasts, wiggling with every breath of wind. Pit-Pat walked along a small path between the cliffs, watching the big rocks above lean to-and-fro.

Pit-Pat didn't know the path to the teeter-totter cliffs, but she knew that they would be teetering and tottering. So she walked teeter for a couple steps, then walked totter for a couple steps. She hopped a teeter and skipped a totter. The special trick to going teeter-totter is to always do something different.



"Please don't fall on me Mr. and Mrs. Rock," said Pit-Pat.

The cliffs didn't respond. Pit-Pat hoped she hadn't offended them.

Halfway through the cliffs, thinking that her feet were starting to hurt, Pit-Pat heard a voice above her.

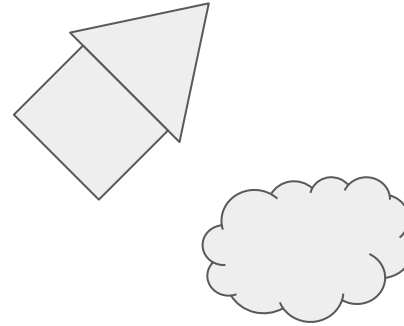
All dizzy with totter-teeter, Pit-Pat reached the teeter-totter cliffs, bright and blunt, the sun high in the sky.

"Are you lost my little love?"

“No,” said Pit-Pat. “I don’t think so. I’m looking for the woman-in-a-jar who lives just past the teeter-totter cliffs below the great waterfall”

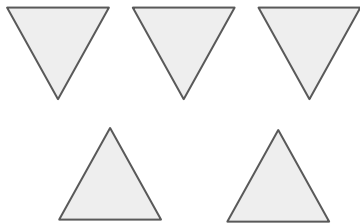


“Do you have a horn like a rhinoceros, or breathe fire like a dragon?”



“Certainly not,” said Pit-Pat, who patted her head and breathed a big breath just to make sure.

“Oh,” said the voice, sweet and slow like honey “then you are certainly lost. There is no waterfall where you are walking. Tell me, do you have poison in your teeth?”



“No,” said Pit-Pat, who had no poison in her teeth.

“Are you secretly quite big and quite scary?”

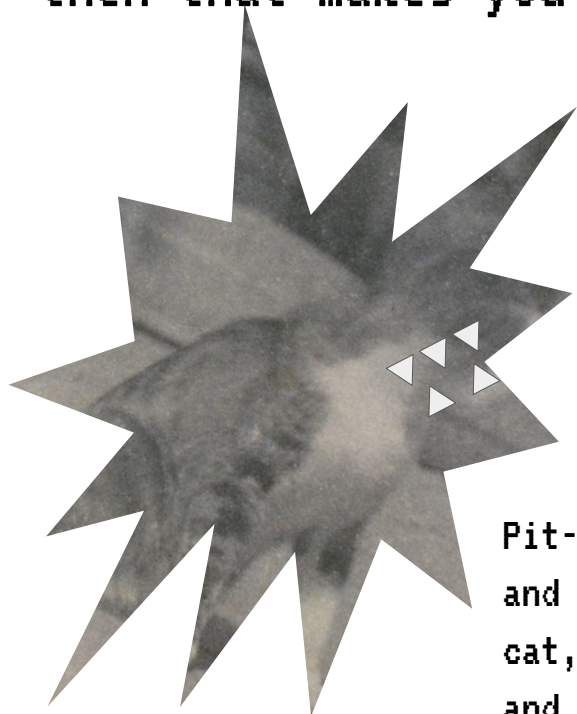


“No,” said Pit-Pat for the third time, “I am quite small and quite nice.”

"Oh," said the voice, "Well, if you are quite nice and quite small, without horns or poison or fire--" the voice grew closer, until it was right behind her,



"then that makes you lunch"



Pit-Pat turned around and saw an enormous cat, with long whiskers and silky fur.

"I am the teeter-totter cat, the hungriest and most beautiful cat of the mountain"

Pit-Pat was scared. She did not want to be lunch.

So, she ran as fast as she could, making her feet hurt all that much more. She ran and ran, until she saw in front of her the exit out of the teeter-totter cliffs. She heard the sound of water falling.



But, right before she exited the cliffs, the teeter-totter cat jumped in front of her,



grinning a **mean** grin.



“Too slow my little lunch”

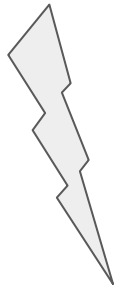
The cat opened her mouth wide and walked right over to Pit-Pat. Pit-Pat was too tired to run the other way, too tired to think of anything else, so she started to cry.

tired

tired

so tired

The teeter-totter cat stopped and jumped away, her fur sticking out in every direction as if struck by lightning.



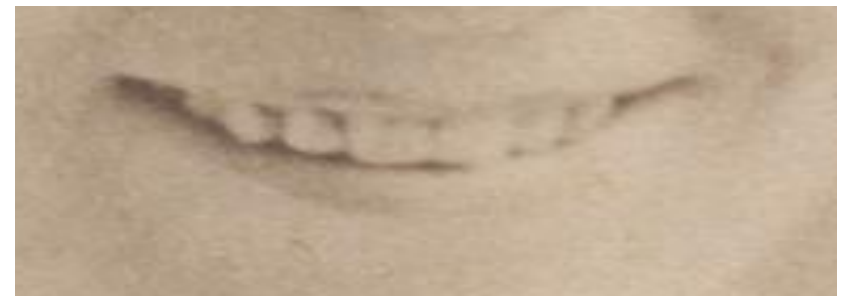
“What-what are those?” asked the cat

“My tears,” said Pit-Pat, “I’m crying”

“Tears,” repeated the cat, who had never heard or seen such a thing, “are those scary? Do they hurt?”

so tired

Pit-Pat looked up at the cat. Her little brain had a little think, and a grin grew on her face.



“Oh yes,” said Pit-Pat, “They burn like fire, and hurt like horns”

The cat slowly began to back up.

“ They scratch like claws, scream like ghosts, and skitter like spiders. Tears are very mean and very, terribly scary”

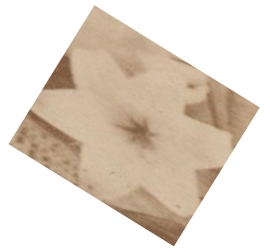
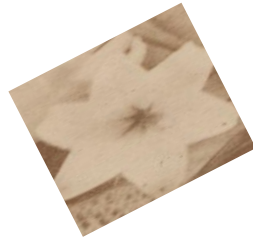
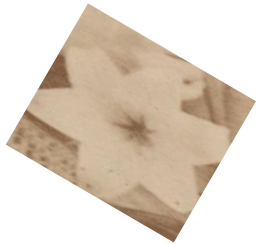
“Oh no! Oh no, oh no, oh no,” said the cat who ran up the cliffs as quick as she could, away from dear Pit-Pat, “I shan’t ever be near anything scary or mean”

Pit-Pat sighed from relief. She was still tired, but happy that she wasn’t going to be lunch.

Finally, Pit-Pat exited the cliffs and reached the great waterfall. The waterfall made a loud noise, louder than anything else Pit-Pat had every heard. She couldn’t see the top of the waterfall, it was so tall and great. And below the waterfall was a beautiful pool, with purple lily pads and green flowers growing every which way.

so scary





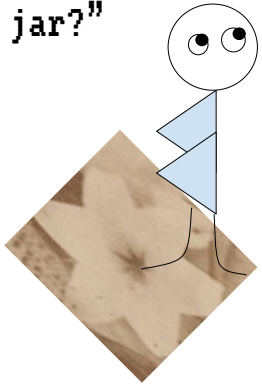


In the middle of the pool was  
a jar, with a woman halfway  
inside it, washing her hair.



“Are you the woman-in-a-jar?” asked Pit-Pat.

The waterfall was too loud and swallowed Pit-Pat’s voice. So, ever-so-carefully, Pit-Pat jumped across the lily pads and flowers, which didn’t bend even a little bit under her weight. She stood right under the woman’s jar, which was decorated with shark teeth and tadpole hearts, and asked again, “Are you the woman-in a jar?”



The woman-in-a-jar looked down and smiled.

“Yes, my little Pit-Pat. And you are here to ask about the rain”

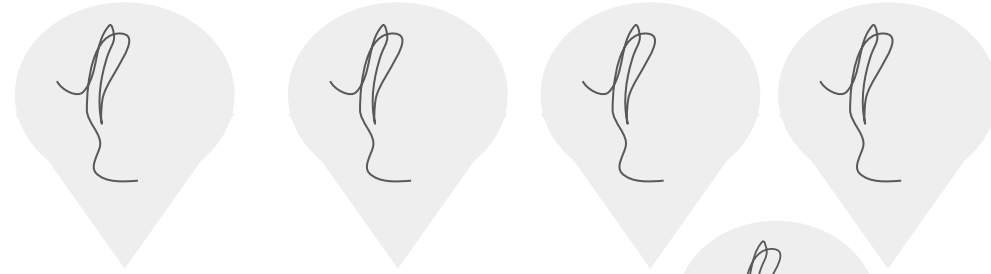
Pit-Pat was shocked. “How did you know that I wanted to ask about the rain?”

“This waterfall has every secret and whisper of this mountain. That’s why it’s so tall and great. Every morning I wash my hair and my from my hair I hear the secrets of this mountain. But, my little Pit-Pat, I am afraid that there is no secret, not within this entire pool, which can answer your question”

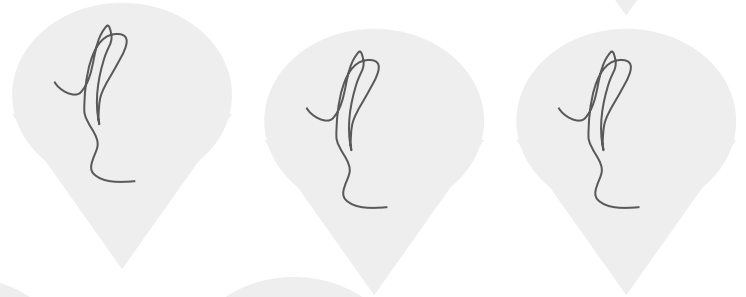


“How can that be?” asked Pit-Pat, “If not you, then who can tell me why the sound of the rain has changed? Why it sounds so nasty and strange?”

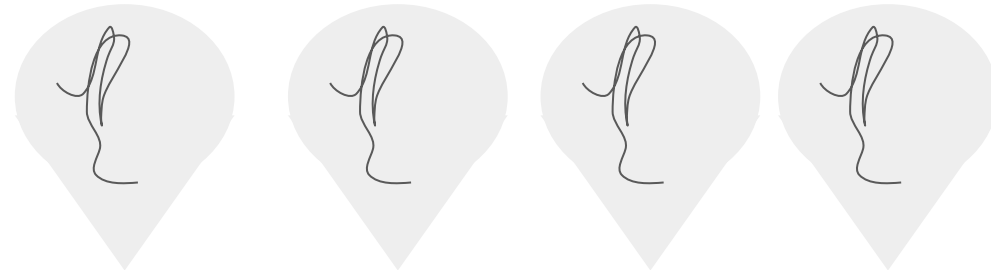
and it rained.



and pit-pat listened



and listened



“Only you,” said the woman-in-a-jar, “can answer that question”



“But I don’t have an answer,” said Pit-Pat, about to cry again.

“It is about to rain,” said the woman-in-a-jar, “listen closely”



and pit-pat had the  
strange thought

that the rain  
sounded

as it always had

and pit-pat felt a  
little

sadder

and a little

older

and a little

bigger

“I think I know,” said Pit-Pat to the woman-in-a-jar, “Why the rain sounds different.”

Pit-Pat wandered  
away, without any  
clear direction.

Hoping one day she  
might find something  
she would love as  
much as the sound of  
rain.

And as she wandered  
she sang a little  
song.

Some say that if you  
listen close on rainy  
days, you can hear  
her song.

Because she sings it  
extra loud on rainy  
days.

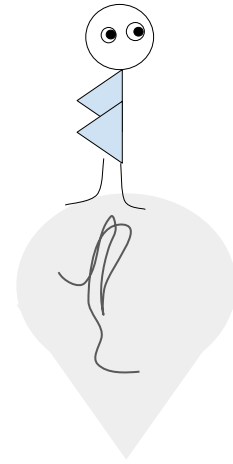
The song sounds a  
little something like  
this:

Pit-Pat, Pit-Pat,

Pit-Pat, Pit-Pat,

Pit-Pat, Pit-Pat,

Pit-Pat



the end