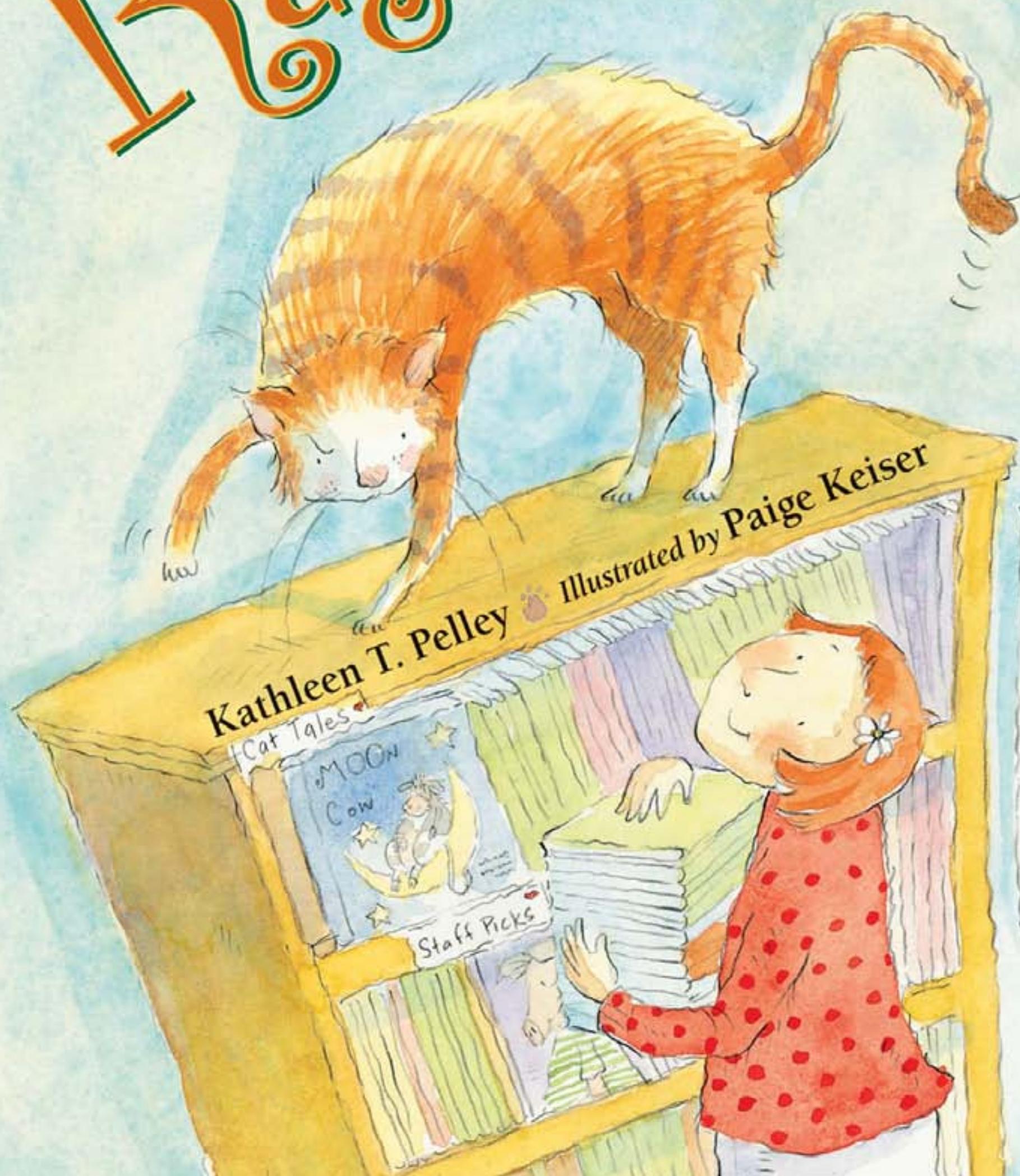


Rai the Bookstore Tiger



Kathleen T. Pelley Illustrated by Paige Keiser

Cat Tales

MOON Cow

Staff Picks

*For Shashi, Bipin, and Winnie—in memory of your sweet Yamini,
whose spirit still burns bright*

—K. T. P.

In loving memory of my best friend, Erika Cadran

—P. K.



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Summary: When a new manager brings Snowball, a grouchy cat, to the shop where Raj and his owner live and work, Snowball informs Raj that he is not the tiger everyone believes him to be.

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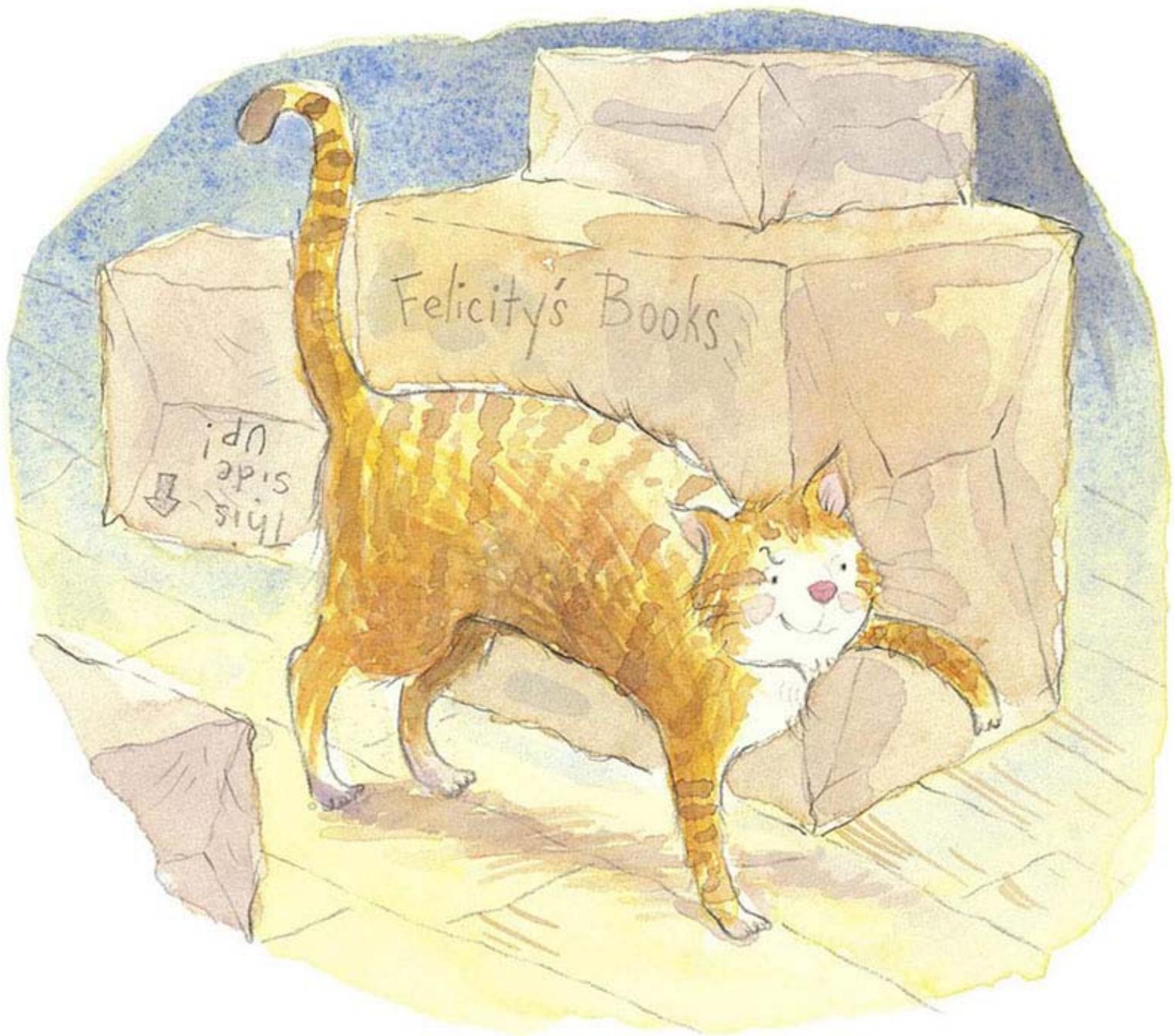
Raj was a tiger. Not a jungle tiger or an Indian tiger, but a tiger all the same. That's what Felicity Fotheringham had called him the day she brought him home to her attic above the bookstore she owned.



“What a tiger!” Felicity had gasped as she held him up to the sun. “Look at that gorgeous golden coat! And those beautiful chocolate stripes! Only a real tiger’s name is good enough for you. I will call you Raj.”

Being a bookstore tiger was hard work. Mornings began with a patrol of the storerooms, followed by sun basking in the front window. And if a passerby rattled the window, Raj never flinched. He just chimed to himself,

“I’m a tiger! I’m a tiger! I’m a tiger!”





Then, after a face wash and a snooze, it was time to greet the customers with a leg rub or a hearty meow.



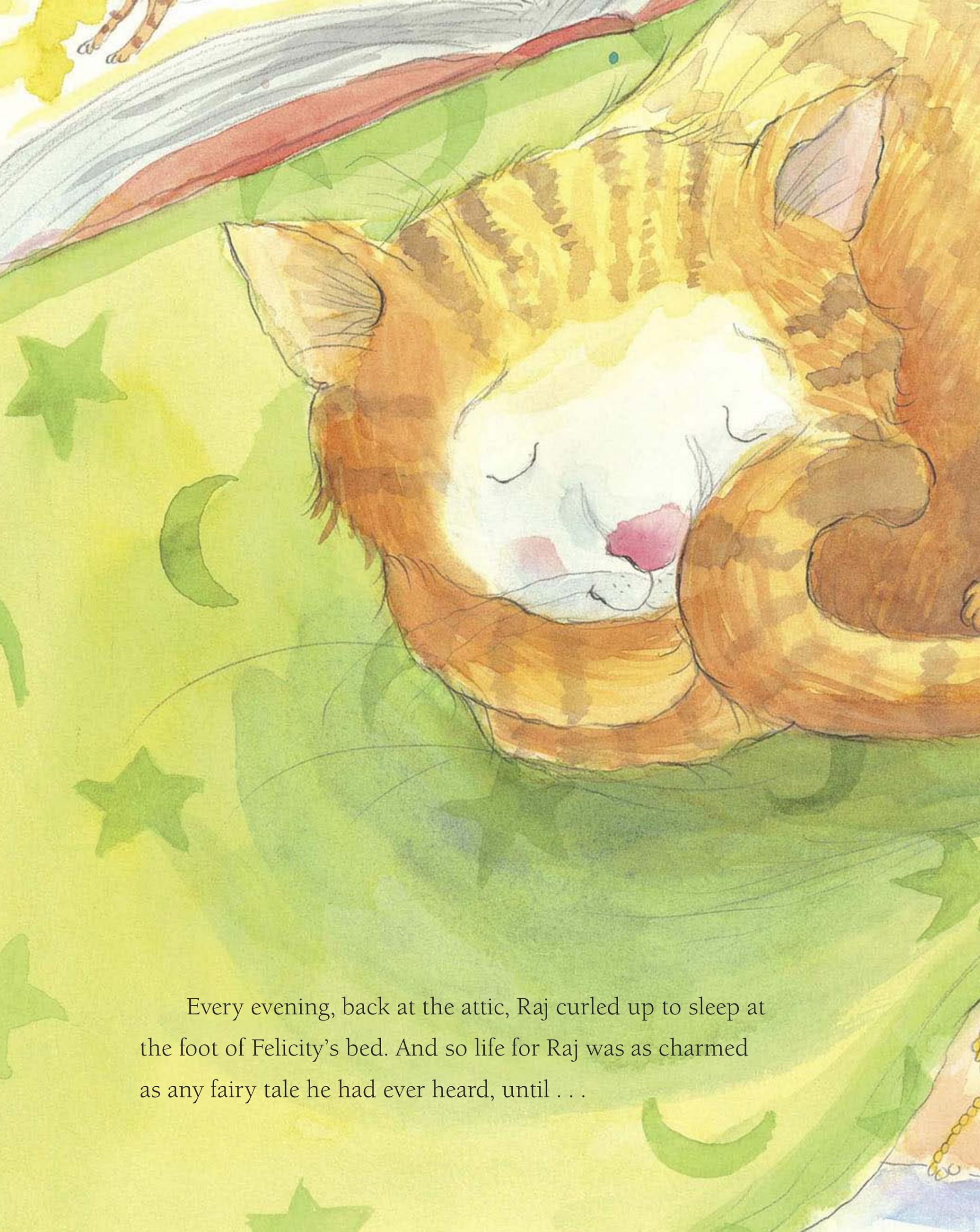
But it was the afternoon story time that Raj loved best. After Felicity had gathered the children, she would announce, “Now let’s welcome a special guest—Raj, our very own bookstore tiger.” That was Raj’s signal to strut forward, eyes flashing and tail swishing, as he chanted to himself,

“I’m a tiger!”



I'm a tiger! I'm a tiger!"

“Look!” the children squealed. “It’s a little tiger!”
Then they tickled his chin, scratched his ears, and argued
over whose lap he would share.



Every evening, back at the attic, Raj curled up to sleep at the foot of Felicity's bed. And so life for Raj was as charmed as any fairy tale he had ever heard, until . . .



One day the new manager, Christopher Cuthbert, told Felicity that he was having problems with his cat, Snowball. “Ever since we got our Labrador puppy, Snowball has turned mean and cranky,” he said. “My poor wife is at her wits’ end.”



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