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Opening extract from  
**The Tobermory Cat**

Written by  
**Debi Giori**

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*To the people of Mull who gave this book their blessing ~ this is for you*



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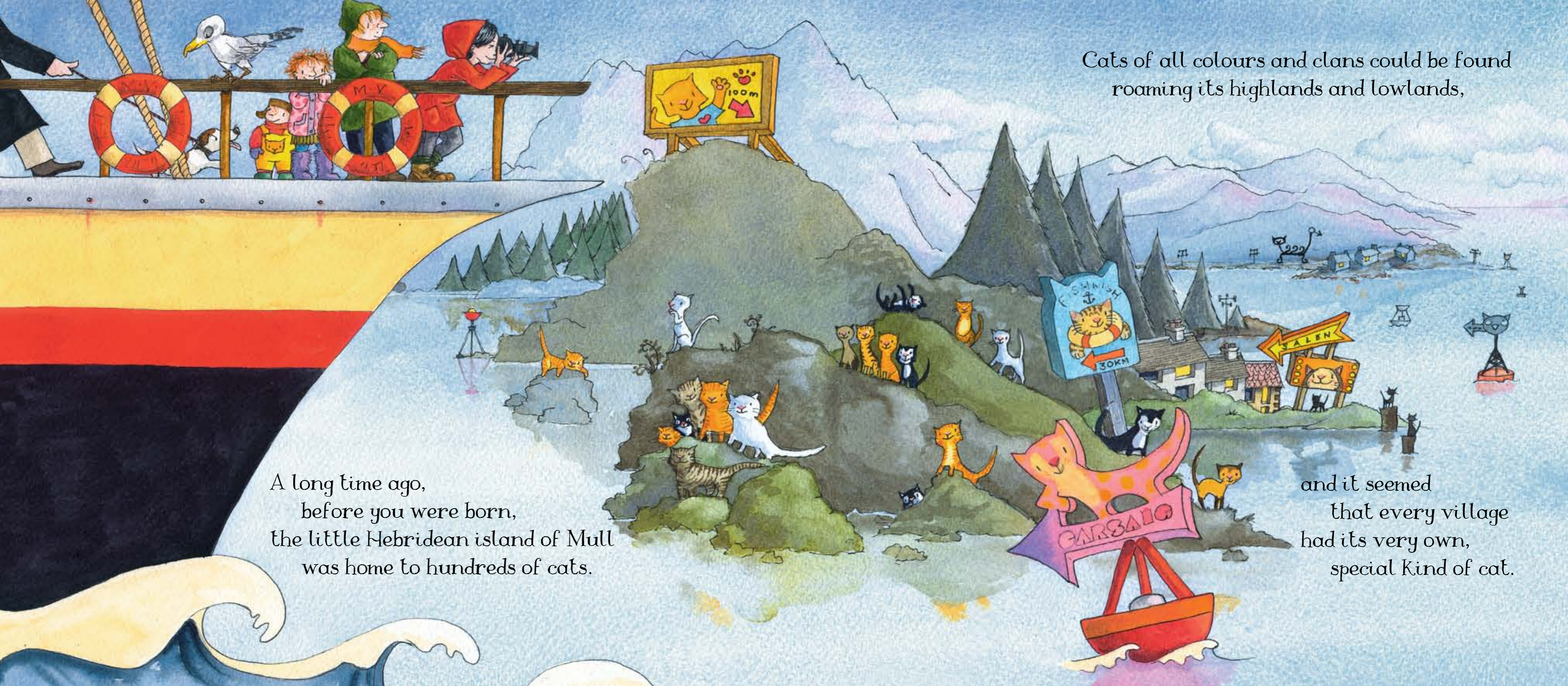
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Cats of all colours and clans could be found roaming its highlands and lowlands,

A long time ago,  
before you were born,  
the little Hebridean island of Mull  
was home to hundreds of cats.

and it seemed  
that every village  
had its very own,  
special kind of cat.



The people of Loch Ba  
were proud to tell visitors  
that there was *nothing* on earth  
as soft as the woolly cats  
of Loch Ba.



The Staffa boatman  
swore he'd never heard  
a sweeter sound  
than the song of the  
cats of Staffa.



The villagers  
of Salen boasted that  
there hadn't been  
a beastie born  
more sullen than  
the sulky cats of Salen,



and the Fishnish  
sailors said that  
there wasn't a creature  
alive, alive-o  
could hook a haddock  
like the sea-faring cats  
of Fishnish.





The people of Loch Ba,  
Staffa, Salen and Fishnish  
were only too delighted to show  
visitors round their villages  
and sell them  
their cat postcards

and cat t-shirts

and cat soap

and cat chocolates.

Everyone agreed that  
cats were a very good thing  
to bring in the visitors.





However, the little Hebridean fishing village of Tobermory on the island of Mull was *also* home to several cats.

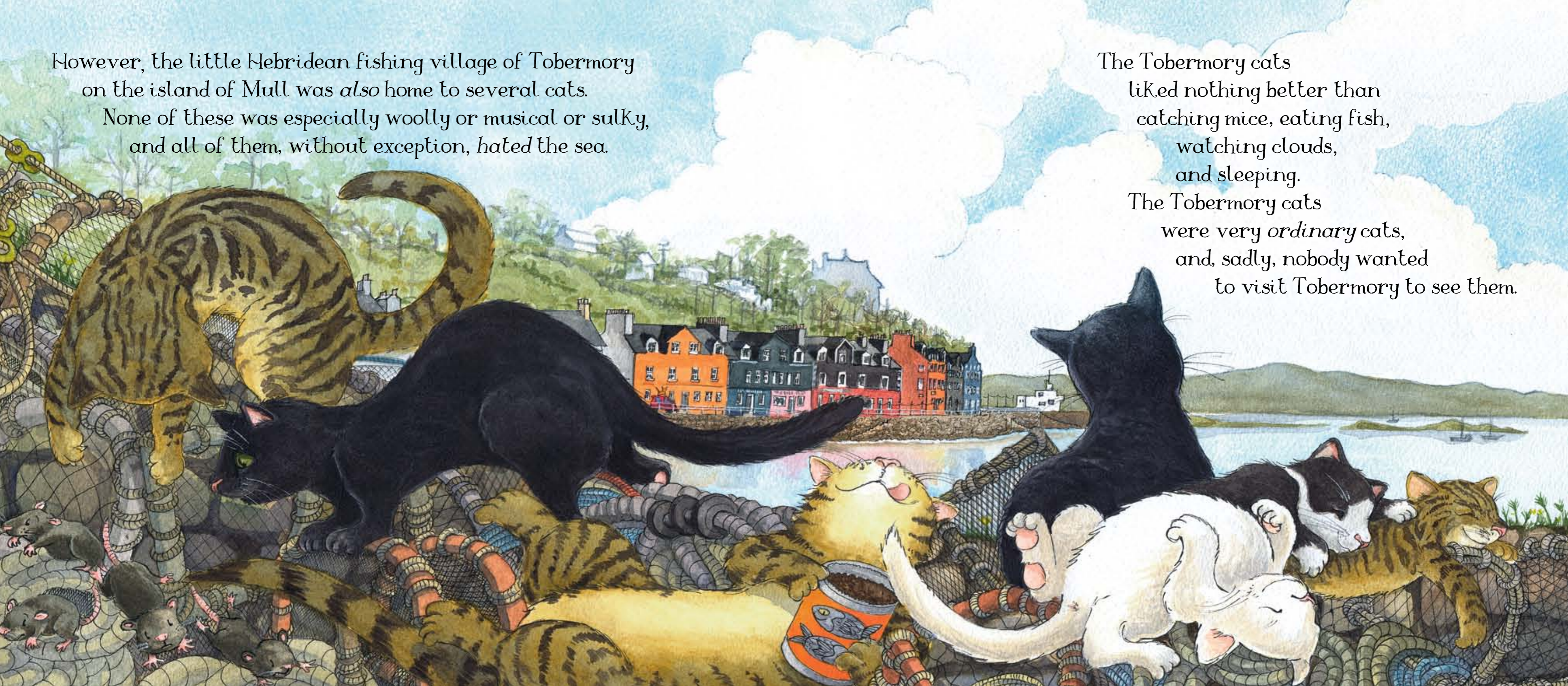
None of these was especially woolly or musical or sulky, and all of them, without exception, *hated* the sea.

The Tobermory cats

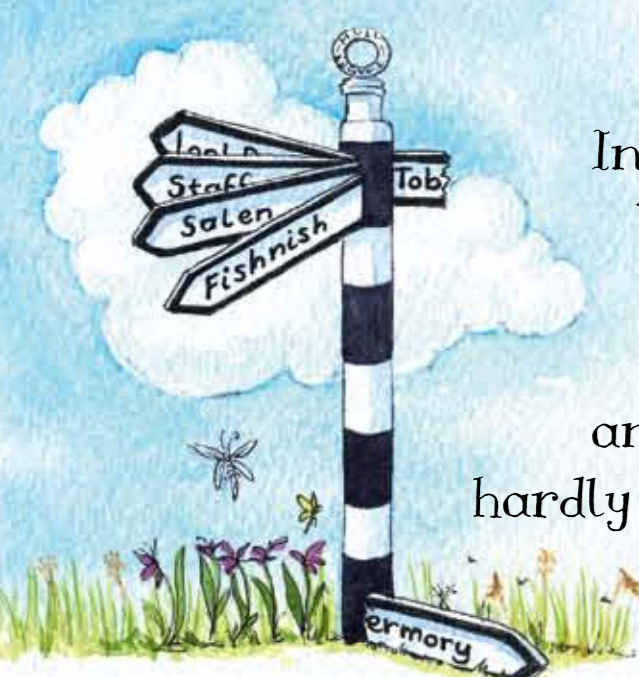
liked nothing better than catching mice, eating fish, watching clouds, and sleeping.

The Tobermory cats

were very *ordinary* cats, and, sadly, nobody wanted to visit Tobermory to see them.

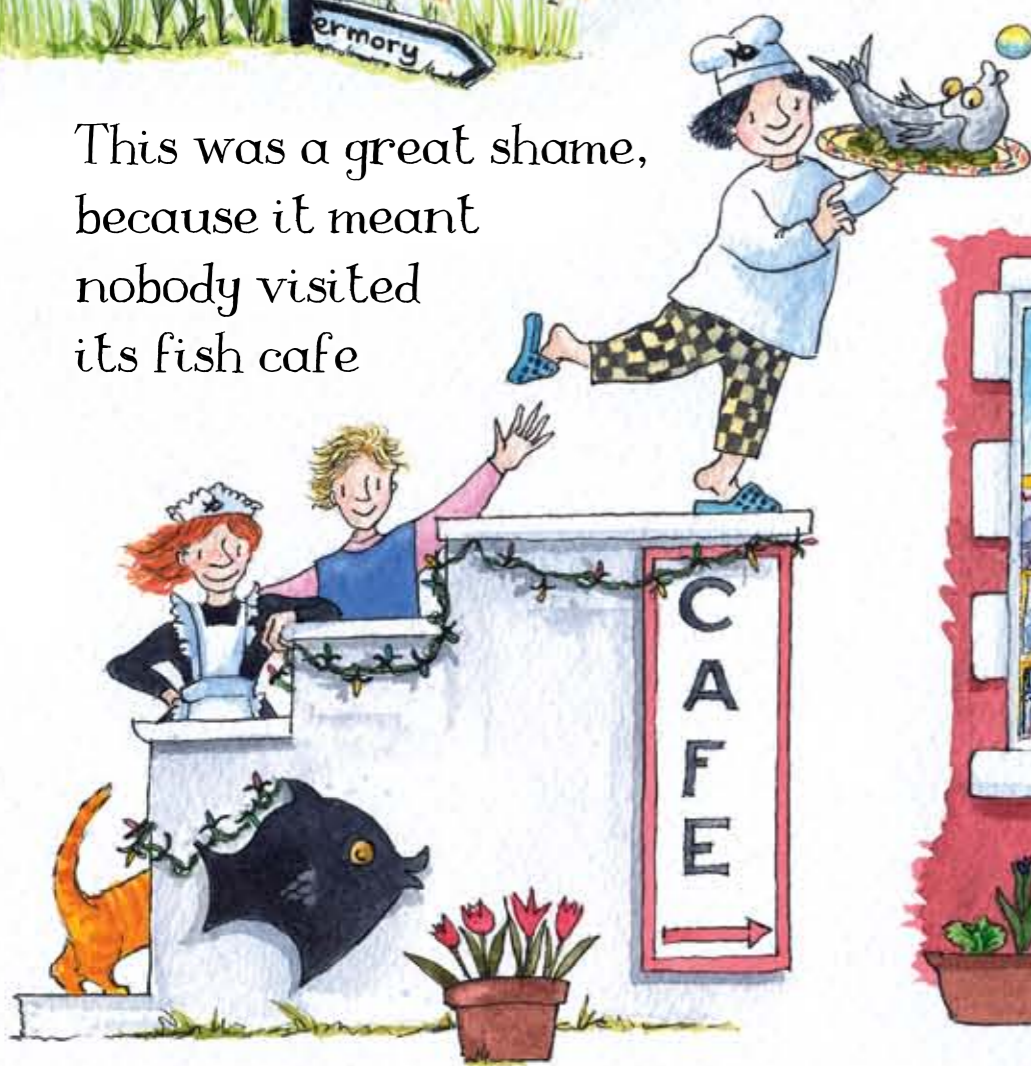




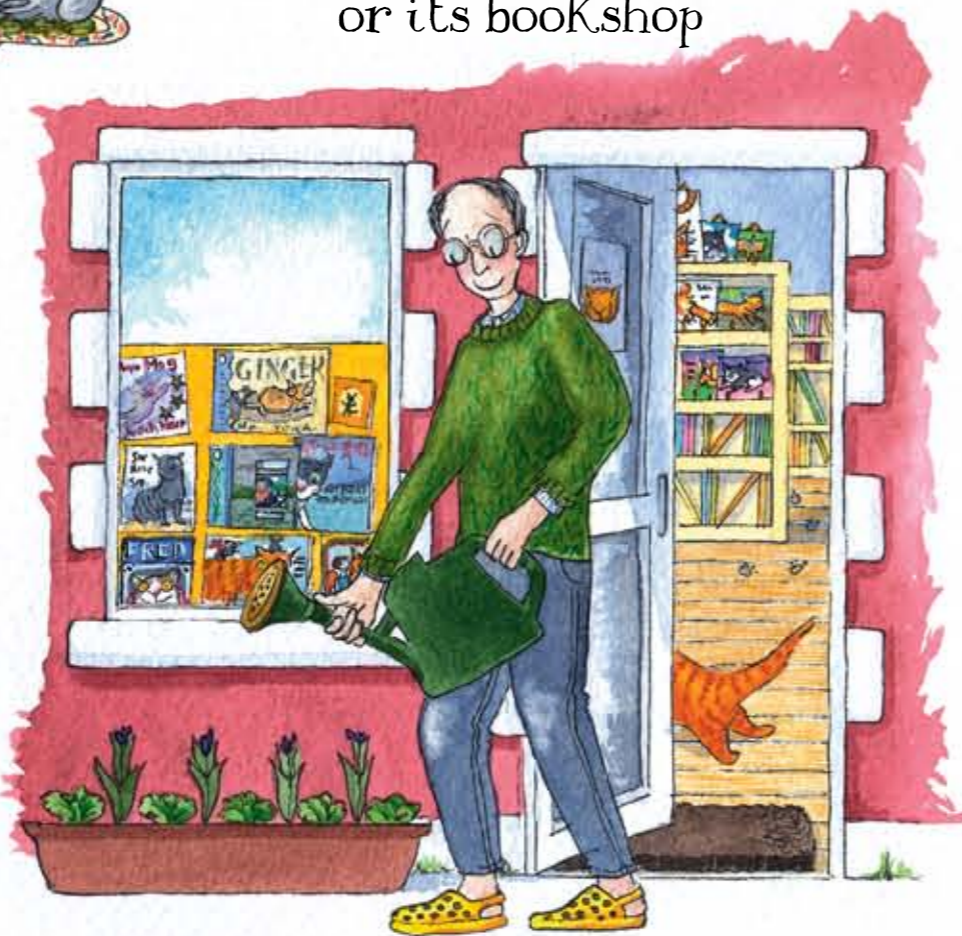


In fact, what with  
the famously woolly Ba-Ba Cats,  
the Singing Cat Choir of Staffa,  
the Snotty Cats of Salen  
and the Fishing Felines of Fishnish,  
hardly *anybody* bothered to visit Tobermory anymore.

This was a great shame,  
because it meant  
nobody visited  
its fish cafe



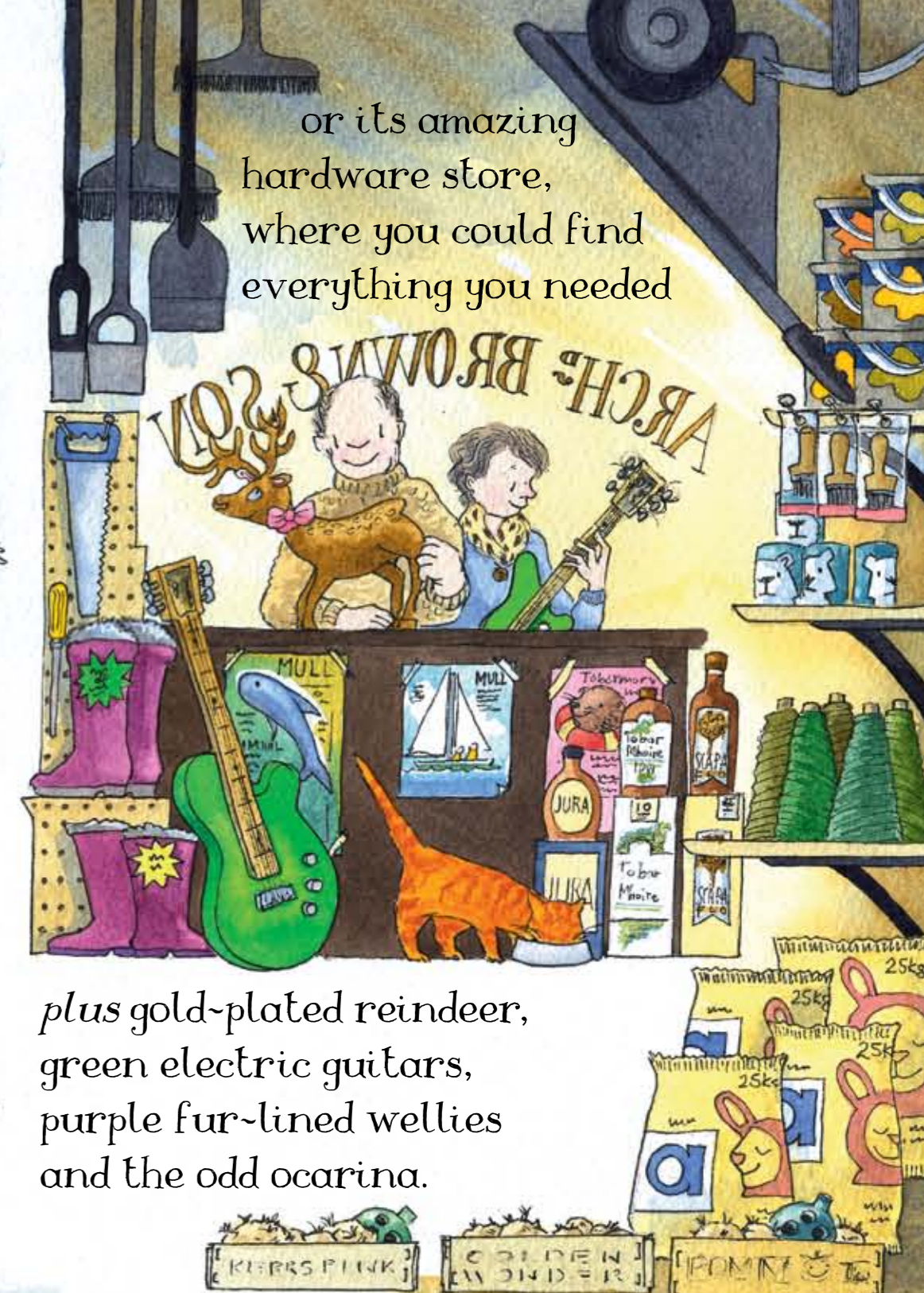
or its bookshop



or its beautiful  
laundrette



or its amazing  
hardware store,  
where you could find  
everything you needed



plus gold-plated reindeer,  
green electric guitars,  
purple fur-lined wellies  
and the odd ocarina.



Without visitors,  
the people of Tobermory grew desperate.  
They had a meeting in the village hall.

Our fish  
are  
floundering.

Our books  
are  
mouldering.

Our  
laundrette  
is  
folding.

Our reindeer, guitars,  
wellies and ocarinas are  
becoming antiques.

I know.

Something *had* to be done.  
'I Know,' said a very small  
person, 'let's teach *our* cats  
how to be special.'

