

Earth Explorer

Magical Mountains



IETS Publications



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Meet my uncle

My uncle stays with us once or twice a year on holiday.
He sleeps for hours at a stretch.
He eats humongous amounts.
I don't know where they go. He is skinny.

He "hangs up his boots for a while" as he says.
His boots, I must tell you, are thick and ugly.
"The better to climb with, my dear," he says.

My uncle has a large, bursting-at-the-seams rucksack.
"My trusted and loyal travelling companion," he calls it.
It has on it, a thick loop of rope, a chewed up
water-canteen, and a long ice pick.



My uncle climbs mountains, just for fun.
My uncle has a job. He is a wild life photographer.
So he climbs mountains and takes photographs.
"It's the best job," he says. "It makes me feel on top of
the world - quite literally!"

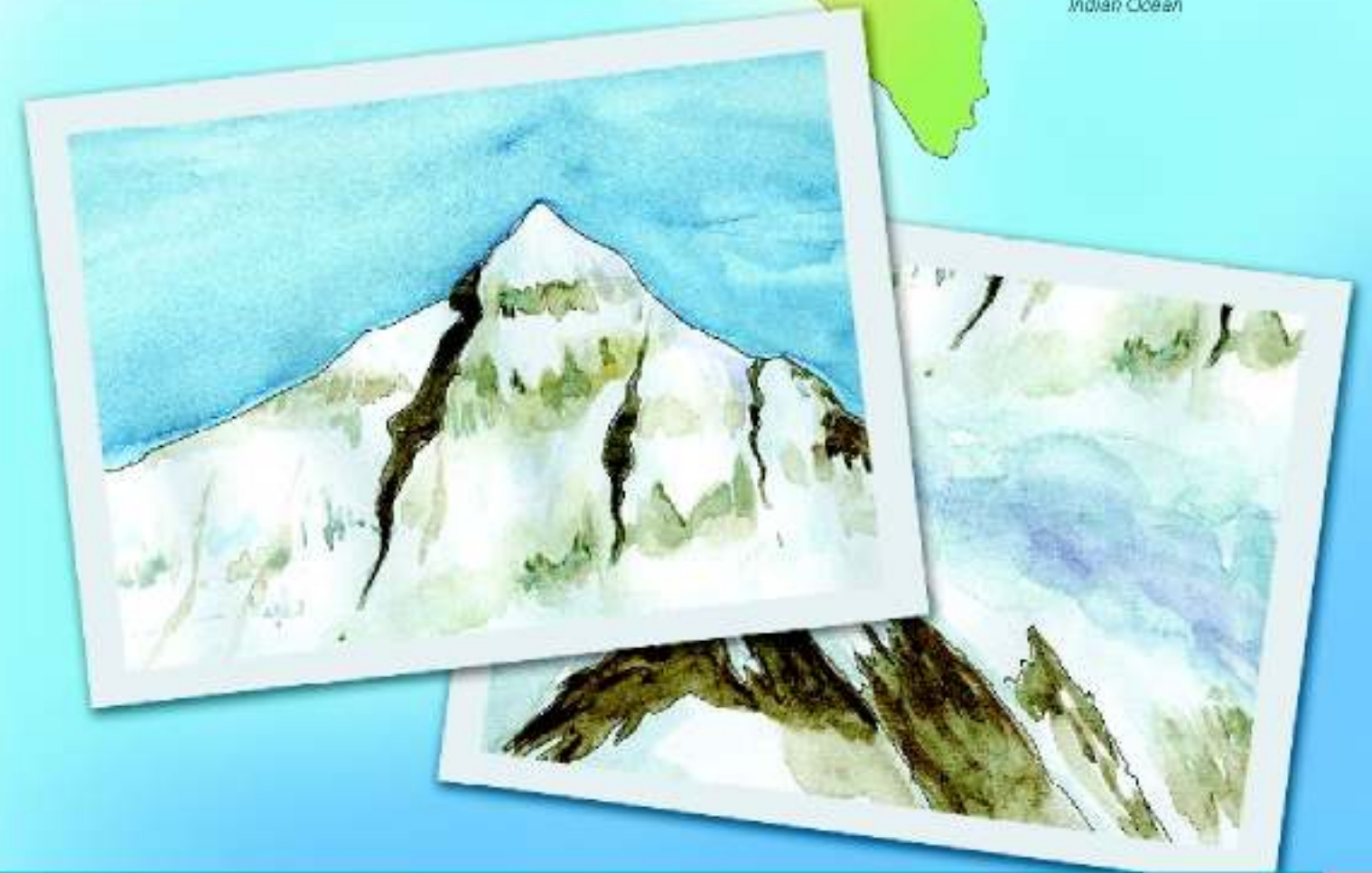
My uncle wears baggy shorts and a shirt.
The thing I like best about them is, they have hundreds
of pockets!

My uncle has spindly, knobbly legs, poking out of
those shorts.

They make me giggle!



Uncle atop Asia



Abode of snow - the Himalayas



"I'm on top of the world looking down on creation..." warbles my uncle, as he pokes his head around the door. "Uncle, you're back," I yell in glee. "And from the top of the world? You mean the highest bit of land in the world? That's Mount Everest!! You made it to the top! All 8848 metres!" I jump up and down. "Good show little one! Yes. I am back from the abode of snow, the Himalayas," smiles uncle.

"Hmm," says uncle looking me up and down. "You are growing taller too. Like the Himalayas!"

"What?" exclaim I

"Well... deep down in the earth the Indian peninsula is pressing against the Eurasian plate and pushing the Himalayas upwards. So the Himalayas are still growing!" uncle explains.

"And now," says uncle, smiling mysteriously, "what have I got especially for you? Where have I put it?"



Uncle pats the hundreds of pockets on his shorts and shirt. In a minute, out comes something turning and tinkling

"A baby's rattle?" I ask confused, drawing myself up to my full height.

"It's a Tibetan prayer wheel, to be precise," uncle grunts.

Uncle closes his eyes, rotates the prayer wheel and chants. "Truly, Mount Everest is *Chomolungma* - Goddess Mother of the snow! It is *Sagar Matba*, forehead of the ocean. No wonder it is believed in India, that the mountains are the home of gods and goddesses."

Oh-oh, uncle's got that lost look. His head is in the snow.

I decide to show off loudly, "The Himalayas are part of six regions: India, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and Afghanistan. I am studying this at school."

"Well, well! Let us see how much you know," exclaims uncle quite pleased.

"Er... well... er," I mumble hesitantly. I don't feel too clever right now!

Ignoring me, uncle proceeds.

