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Search

- [Home](#)
- [Sheila Wee](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Storytelling](#)
- [Workshops](#)
  - [Intro' to Storytelling – Nov 2012](#)
  - [Prop Stories – Dec 2012](#)
  - [Participation Stories – Dec 2012](#)
  - [Did I Hear You Write?](#)
- [Resources](#)
  - [Book Recommendations](#)
  - [Sheila's Videos](#)
  - [Other Videos](#)
  - [Powerpoint Presentations](#)
  - [LINKS](#)
- [Stories](#)
- [Bookings](#)
  - [Cart](#)
  - [Checkout](#)
  - [Your Orders](#)
- [Contact](#)

## The Ungrateful Tiger

August 31, 2009

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Like 3

### A Korean Folktale

#### [Audio: The Ungrateful Tiger](#)

There was once a small Korean village that was being plagued by a fearsome tiger. The attacks became so bad that the villagers were too scared to leave their houses, even in the daytime. The village elders got together to work out what to do, because something had to be done.

After a night of discussion, argument and disagreement, they finally came to a decision. They would set traps for the tiger by digging deep holes around the perimeter of the village, fill each hole with a bit of red meat, and cover them up with branches and leaves.

The whole village set to work, each family providing whatever red meat they could spare. Then they waited in their houses. Waited for the tiger to come lurking.

The next morning, the nephew of the village chief, who had come from the city, arrived on foot. As he approached the village he heard an almighty roar. Cautiously, he approached and at the bottom of a pit was a miserable tiger.

“Oh, please please help me get out of here. I’m trapped and I’ll die if you don’t help me. If you help me, I would be eternally in your debt. Forever...”

The young man was confused. “ You promise you wont eat me?”

“Promise, cross my heart!”

The young man looked around and found a long branch sturdy enough for the tiger to grip onto. He lowered it into the pit and the tiger hauled himself up.

The tiger breathed a sigh of relief, then licked his lips, “Why thank you little snack, you’re just in time for tea.”

“But, but, but, you said you’d be eternally grateful! Forever! You promised not to eat me!”

“Everyone knows that you can’t trust the promise of a hungry tiger. And tigers are ALWAYS hungry.”

Just as he was about to pounce, the young man yelled, “WAIT! Lets ask that cow over there if you should keep your promise and NOT eat me.”

The tiger liked games, it made his kill so much more interesting, so he agreed to ask the cow.

The glum looking cow yawned. “Man makes me work hard in the field, then, when I’m too old to work, they make food and shoes out of me. Tiger, go ahead and eat him.”

The tiger prepared to attack, “STOOOOP!” yelled the young man. “I think we need a second opinion, lets ask that little rabbit over there.”

“This is your last chance juicy young man...”

The young man anxiously explained the situation to the little brown rabbit.

The rabbit had a little think then said. “Before I make my decision, I need to see exactly what happened.”

When they arrived at the deep pit, the rabbit said, “Now, show me exactly where you were when this young man passed by.”

The hungry tiger, impatient for his meal, leapt into the pit. “Well, I was in this deep pit, and I started roaring because I was stuck. I was stuck....in this deep, deep pit. I’m stuck! Again!” The tiger began roaring with rage.

The little brown rabbit quickly told the young man to go on his way, and to think next time before he decided to rescue another hungry tiger.

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