



The Tiger and the Dried Persimmon (Korean Folk Tales)

By Janie Jaehyun Park

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In this Korean folktale, a hungry tiger plots to steal an ox from the village. Outside a small cottage, the tiger overhears a mother calming her baby with the offer of a dried persimmon. The tiger mistakenly assumes that a dried persimmon is the wildest and fiercest beast in the world — because the mere mention of it quiets the child instantly. When a thief jumps on the tiger's back, the terrified tiger runs off to his mountain convinced the fierce persimmon is after him. Park's brilliant color illustrations, modern adaptations of the Korean artistic tradition, bring to life the humor and wit of this tale that she first heard from her grandmother.

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Editorial Review

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K-Gr. 3. A sparkling incarnation of a Korean folk tale. A very hungry tiger finds an ox ready for the taking. He's stopped cold, however, by the howling of a baby inside the farmhouse. The mother tries to shush the child, telling him he might wake a bear or tiger, but the tiger notes the baby is not deterred. When the mother offers a piece of dried persimmon, the child instantly stops crying, so Tiger figures "dried persimmon" must be a fearsome beast indeed. Just as he is trying to sneak away, a thief who has also come to steal the ox leaps upon him, thinking the tiger is the ox. The tiger, thinking the thief is the feared persimmon, runs away, trying to shake him off. Finally the thief frees himself by grabbing onto a tree limb, and promises no more thieving. The tiger never goes near the village again. Park's energetic illustrations employ acrylics over textured gesso, and the oranges, blacks, and deep greens vibrate with intensity. The tiger is a wonderful comic creature: puffed with self-importance or slithering into a coiled calligraphic mass of fear, its every expression and gesture deliciously exaggerated. *GraceAnne DeCandido*

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Users Review

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