

The Tiger and the Gold Bangle
From Hitopadesh. Edited by Anuradha Chakravarthy

Once an old tiger found a gold bangle by the side of a marshy pool. He was too old to hunt so he thought he will use the bangle as a bait to catch a prey, a human. Just then an old traveler was passing by on the opposite bank. The tiger spotted him and decided to have him for his dinner.

The tiger called the traveler and asked him to take the gold bangle as he has no use for it. The traveler got tempted for such an offer but next moment he suspected that this may be a bait put by the tiger to get him.

"How can I trust you?" shouted the traveler.

The tiger replied, "Don't you see I am old! My teeth are practically gone. My claws are also blunt, I cannot use them. I have now become a vegetarian and given up meat. Don't worry come and get the gold bangle as my gift."

The traveler with half a mind to get the gold bangle said, "When I get close, my smell may change your mind."

"Don't be silly, have no fear. I am now leading the life of an ascetic. You are safe with me."

The traveler's love for gold overcame his natural fear of the tiger.

"I think he is telling the truth" the traveler said to himself. "I will wade across the pool and get the gold bangle. He is a nice tiger."

As he started to wade through the marshy pool he got stuck in the quick sand and began to sink. The tiger shouted with a smiling face, "Wait there, I am coming to rescue you."

Finally the tiger pounced upon at the traveler and killed him.

That night the tiger had the greatest feast of his life.

Beware of whom you choose as your friend.