

## THE TIGER AND THE BUTTERFLY

The faint salty breezes of the Arabian Sea drift over the Mangalore forests.

In the lush greenery of a tall mango tree a striped Bengal tiger is lounging.

The great tiger was licking clean his enormous orange paws with his large pink tongue.

The tiger had just eaten an enjoyable meal for lunch and was looking forward to a light nap and then an evening swim in the nearby stream.

He stalked himself down from his mango tree and sprawled out in a patch of wild ginger for his nap, lazing away the afternoon.

Life in the Mangalore forest has many twists and turns, as the tiger well knew. In a twist he found himself turning in a great deal of trouble.

And that trouble, as it turns out, was a yellow and cornflower-blue butterfly that fluttered onto his black-speckled nose.

As endearing as this was, the tiger found it rather annoying.

The butterfly tickled his nose when it landed and tickled more when it flapped its wings.

The tiger blew at the yellow and cornflower-blue butterfly hoping it might glide away.

He blew at it again hoping it might find someplace else more interesting than his nose.

The great tiger batted, brushed and even snapped at the tiny butterfly.

But the butterfly kept flickering back, landing right on his nose.

The butterfly folded his black arms crossly and looked into the tiger's eyes as if trying to tell him something.

But the tiger didn't want to know and decided it was time to find another place to lounge and groom.

He got up and hopped to another spot far away from his wild ginger patch, the mango tree and the butterfly.

He lay down nearby under a slender cinnamon tree.

The tiger heard a commotion. Looking up he spotted a group of hunters gathering.

Men with guns were bending down, feeling the spot where he had just been laying. They knew they had just missed out on finding a tiger.

Had he not moved to get away from the butterfly, the hunters would have marked him.

He might not have had time to get away. He might not have had his evening swim.

The tiger scratched his pointy ear and thought more kindly on the little butterfly.

He promised to repay this act of kindness if he could. It was only a week later that he did.

While on a prowl, the tiger spotted his friend the butterfly trapped in a spider's web.

Struggling with very little luck, the butterfly wiggled and writhed trying to get free.

As the tiger walked by he nodded politely to the silken-red spider in the silvery web.

With a flick of his striped tail, he ripped open the web and the butterfly flew off into the fleeting distance.

The faint salty breezes of the Arabian Sea drift over the Mangalore forests.

In the lush greenery of a tall mango tree a striped Bengal tiger is lounging. On his nose sits a yellow and cornflower-blue butterfly.