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The Tiger King

BY KALKI

The Maharaja Sir Jilani Jung Bhadur was called "Tiger King". When he was just 10 days old he asked intelligent questions to the astrologers and was told that he would be killed by a tiger. He uttered "Let tigers beware!"

No other miracle took place, the child grew like any other Royal child drinking white cow's milk, taught by an English tutor, looked after by an English nanny and watched English films. When he was 20, he was crowned as king. It was then the prediction of his death by the tiger reached the Maharaja's ear and he in turn to save guard himself killed a tiger and being thrilled he told the astrologer who replied that he can kill 99 tigers but should be careful with the 100th. From then on he started killing tiger and none was allowed to hunt tigers.

A high-ranking British officer visited the state that was fond of hunting tiger and his wish was declined. The officer requested for getting a photograph with a tiger killed by Maharaja and this request was rejected. So to please the officer's wife he sent 50 diamond rings expecting that she would take 1 or 2 instead she kept all the rings costing 3 lakh rupees and sent 'thanks' to the Maharaja. But his state was secured. In 10 years he killed 70 tiger and didn't find any in Pratib and apuram so he decided to marry a girl from royal state which had more tigers to complete his target. Whenever he visited his in-laws he killed 5-6 tigers. So he killed 99 tigers and was feverishly anxious to kill the 100th but couldn't find. News about the presence of a tiger near a village proved disappointing.

Now the Dewan was warned of his danger so he visited 'People's Park in Madras' and brought an old tiger and placed it in the forest and informed the Maharaja. The Maharaja took great care and shot the tiger and left the place with great triumph. The bullet did not hit the tiger but out of fear the tiger had collapsed. Now the staff killed the tiger and brought it in grand procession. It was the 3rd birthday of the Maharaja's son and he wanted to buy a present from the toyshop. He bought a wooden tiger which was poorly carved.

While the Maharaja was playing with the prince a tiny sliver of the wooden tiger pierced his right hand which later on caused his death. Thus the hundredth tiger takes his final revenge upon the "Tiger King".