



The Way of Grandfather Tiger

A Story, as told by Ariel bar Tzadok

A long long time ago, before man walked the earth, in a land very very far away, on the other side of Eden, there was born a baby tiger. Baby tiger was born in the ancient forest high up in the mountains just beneath where the trees end and the snow begins.



In those long ago days there was not much for baby tiger to do other than to play with his siblings and to enjoy life. In those days of innocence all of baby tiger's needs were provided for by his parents, mother and father tiger. Baby tiger never knew of hunger, or cold or want; all he wanted, was always there, whatever he desired he never had to wait for. Life was good for baby tiger.

Years past and baby tiger saw that he was no longer was so small; he was growing up. Mother and father tiger had other smaller baby tigers and just like him, these babies had their every need met. All their wants and desires were provided for even before they could ever ask. The now young tiger saw that mother and father tiger did not have as much time for him as they once did. Life was still good and young tiger had all the time he wanted to play and to frolic with his siblings. Yet,

he quickly learned that there were new things that he wanted that his parents could not or did not provide for him.

Young tiger had developed a craving to hunt. As he grew in size, so did his appetite. He would roar for his supper, yet instead of bringing it to him right away, mother tiger said to him, that he would have to join the hunt with his older brothers from now on. Only by catching his own prey would he ever have enough to fill his ever-growing belly.

At first young tiger felt resentful. All his life mother tiger was there to fill his every need. Now, she had told him that he would have to go out with his father and brothers and hunt for his supper. Now, hunting was nothing new for young tiger, he had gone forth with his father and brothers many a time. Yet, this now was different.



In the past, the hunt was still a time to play, to frolic in the snow, to play hide and seek, and to have fun. Now the hunt was no longer a game, now he had to do something new, he had to become serious. This was a new and uncomfortable feeling for him, yet, young tiger knew that this was something expected of him and that this was how young tiger was to become strong tiger.

And strong tiger he did become. Young tiger learned quickly and well the way of the hunt. He learned focus and cunning. He learned how to sneak up on his prey, how to be still when necessary and how to, in a moment, burst from absolute stillness into blinding speed. He mastered the art of silence and the time to roar with victory. Yes, young tiger

was growing up. He had become strong; he had mastered many of the skills for which tigers are famous. Yet, strong as he was, he had not yet mastered the greatest of skills, which would earn him the name of mighty tiger. In order to accomplish this, strong tiger would have to leave his home and his family, take a mate and start his own family. Strong tiger had to become a father tiger. Only in this way would he become mighty.



And mighty tiger did he become. He found for himself a beautiful tigress that consented with great desire and love to become his wife. Soon they had baby tigers of their own. Now, mighty tiger was busy all the day, on the hunt, providing for his babies all they could want, before they could ever ask for anything. Mighty tiger would take his older boys along with him on the hunt and while they frolicked and played, he taught them when it was time to be serious and how they would have to eventually fend for themselves, even as he himself had learned not so long ago.

And so the children of mighty tiger grew and themselves became young and strong. They learned well the way of the hunt and the need to provide for themselves. The young tigers grew in strength and father

tiger, mighty as he was, now acquired an even greater attribute, he acquired wisdom. Mighty father tiger was now wise father tiger and his children each grew and became mighty father tigers of their own cubs.

Wise father tiger was now Grandfather Tiger. And as mighty as he still was, his might was now measured by his wisdom; he was master of the hunt and all knowing in the ways of the tiger. With blinding brilliance he could hunt and provide for his children and grandchildren with such ease, that his movements appeared effortless. Yet, wise Grandfather Tiger taught his family well. Learn from me, my children, and know that my skills are by no means, effortless. Although I am guided by Heaven and blessed by the power above with the wisdom of grandfathers, the beginning of wisdom is to know, that while life is given as a free gift, it is maintained only by constant effort on our parts.



At night, after the hunt, after the bellies of the babies and young tigers were filled, all the tigers would gather around together and cuddle close. Grandfather Tiger taught this to his children and family, even as he learned it from his mother and father. Stay together and stay warm, he told everyone. Each one alone cannot warm oneself, yet when together we can provide warmth to each other. This is the secret of our survival.

On those long cold winter nights, cuddled together for warmth and security, Grandfather Tiger would tell his children and grandchildren of

the days when he was a child like them and how he grew and learned to become mighty and wise. The younglings each listened and learned. They took in Grandfather Tiger's words like drinking water on a hot summer's day. Indeed, Grandfather's wisdom was as refreshing and life giving as the pure rivers waters they knew so well.

No tiger can live alone and no tiger can hunt in a pack. There is a time for solitude and there is a time for family. No tiger can have everything provided for him forever. There is a time to hunt and there is a time to play. There is a time to frolic and there is a time to eat. Wise tigers must know and understand the secret of the times and we must flow with the course of nature.



When we live in communion with time and do what we are supposed to do, when we are supposed to do it, Heaven smiles upon us and the life of the tiger becomes full and appears effortless. Yet, beware, for appearances can be deceiving. For what looks effortless indeed only comes about after years of experience.

The hunt is no fun and games, it is serious business. Indeed, the hunt is life itself. In order for us to live, our prey must die. This is the

Way and Will of Heaven. It is our way to flow in the Ways of Heaven. In this way, we live and thrive and our babies know no wants and all tummies are full.

We are warm on winter nights and sleep with fullness and peace. Yet, we must always be diligent and never allow ourselves to grow complacent and weak. The hunt requires of us to be ever alert and ready. We must master the skills of stealth. We must learn to be silent in the midst of noise and invisible even when we can be seen. We must learn to shift from absolute stillness to absolute speed in the blink of an eye. We must transcend from play mode to kill mode without a moment's hesitance.

The mighty tiger is recognized and stands out from the young. He is known by his eyes. The eyes of the mighty tiger project focus, intensity and discipline. The mighty tiger embraces the meaning of being fierce. Being fierce is defined by the eye of the tiger. Yet, being fierce is only for the moment. When the hunt is finished and the kill has been made, it is time to relax, to eat, to provide for the family, then sit back, and enjoy the moment with one's children and grandchildren.



It is at these moments that Grandfather Tiger shines with the wisdom of Heaven. For although he is master of the earth, Grandfather Tiger knows well the ways of Heaven. He lives by them and teaches them faithfully and well to the younger generations. They in turn grow strong, mighty and wise. In time, they will become the grandfathers.



And Grandfather Tiger, when his time comes, will go to his place of rest. He will ascend to Heaven and there reside with the tigers of old that came before him, and there frolic anew, with the tiger's most ancient of friends, the dragons.

Tigers and dragons complete the great cycle of creation. Yet, no tiger is a dragon and no dragon is a tiger. They meet at that place where the Earth touches the sky, at that place above the trees where the mountains meet the clouds. The dragons rule the skies and the tigers rule the earth.

Be fierce as the tiger an ancient Sage once taught us, and learn from Grandfather Tiger the ways and movements of all life under Heaven. For when the baby tigers grow up and walks in the ancient ways, as ordained by Heaven itself, they become strong, mighty and wise, even as they are destined to be.





This is the wisdom that Grandfather Tiger bestows upon his children; they drink it up like the very precious waters of life itself.

**Wisdom of living is what defines the Tiger,
knowing the ways of Heaven
and successfully bringing them down to Earth.**

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