



# The Hungry Tigress: Buddhist Myths, Legends, and Jataka Tales

*Rafe Martin*

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## **The Hungry Tigress: Buddhist Myths, Legends, and Jataka Tales** Rafe Martin

In this definitive edition, completely updated and rewritten with expanded commentaries and two new sections, Rafe Martin brings together a fascinating array of stories from the Buddhist tradition. The previous edition, published by Parallax Press, won an Anne Izard Storyteller's Choice Award, and the stories have been anthologized in collections such as *Soul Food*, *Best-Loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival*, and *Peace Tales*. Told and developed by Rafe over many years, these stories include legends of the historical Buddha's birth, life, and enlightenment as well as traditional jataka tales—stories of the Buddha in his former births, often appearing in animal form. A section of later tales contains original stories by Rafe, two of which, "Kogi, the Priest" and "Digit," can be heard in told versions on his tapes *Ghostly Tales of Japan* and *Animal Dreaming*. In many of these seemingly simple tales, wise animals teach humans important lessons about the central Buddhist principles of wisdom, heroic action, nonviolence and compassion. From the familiar legend of the Buddha's Enlightenment, to the title story of a tenderhearted prince who offers his body to a starving tigress and her cubs, to a twentieth-century tale based on the heroic act of a World War II pilot, these stories are imbued with deep interest in the natural world and empathy for all things living.

A complete section of detailed commentaries provides essential background information and analysis of each story. In addition, two thoughtful essays explore the relevance of jataka tales to us today, and how the stories can be used to teach and guide our lives. The book artfully draws together Buddhist scholarship, story-as-teaching, folktales, and myth into what is both an engaging story book and an informative resource, sure to delight and enlighten all readers.

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