

## A Tiger In The House

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One day, the narrator's grandfather was walking down the forest path. His party was at a distance. He found a little tiger and brought him home. Grandfather was the only successful member of the hunting party. The narrator's grandmother named the tiger cub, Timothy. She brought him up on bottle-milk. Later he was put on a diet of raw mutton and cod liver oil. Afterwards, he was put on the diet of pigeons and rabbits also.

Toto, the monkey pulled the cub's tail. Toto climbed up the curtain when Timothy lost his temper. He and a mongrel puppy were Timothy's companions. When the narrator came to live with Grandfather, he became one of the tiger's favourites. Initially, Timothy was afraid of the puppy. But finally the puppy was allowed to crawl and rest on his back. Timothy's favourite amusement was to stalk his playmate. He also made a dash at the narrator's feet. He pretended to bite his ankles.

After sometime, he was of full size. Sometimes he pulled hard at his chain. The narrator kept up with him with great difficulty. He reclined on a long sofa in the drawing-room. He snarled at everybody. He had clean habits. He would scrub his face with his paws like a cat. He slept in the cook's quarters. He preferred to be taken out in the morning for a walk. He grew less friendly when he became six months old. He also started eating small animals.

A change came over him. He became less friendly, in fact more dangerous. Then the grandfather took him to Lucknow. Timothy and grandfather travelled in a first class compartment. In Lucknow the grandfather presented him to the 200. After six months the grandfather went to see Timothy. He stroked the tiger's forehead, tickled his ears and smacked him across the mouth. The tiger licked Grandfather's hands. It sprang away only when a leopard in the next cage snarled at him. Many people watched the scene. A keeper of the zoo called the tiger bad tempered. He had no knowledge about the owner of the tiger. Grandfather wished the tiger to be transferred to some other cage. A leopard in the next cage would constantly rush at Timothy. However, he could not meet the superintendent.

The Grandfather returned to the tiger's cage. To say goodbye, he stroked and slapped the tiger. Another keeper observed him with alarm. He also recognised

the Grandfather. He informed the Grandfather about Timothy's death of pneumonia. He also informed the Grandfather that the dangerous tiger was trapped only last month. The tiger was still licking Grandfather's arm. He was smelling fresh food. Grandfather somehow withdrew his hand from the cage. He gave the keeper a scornful look and bade the tiger "Goodnight".