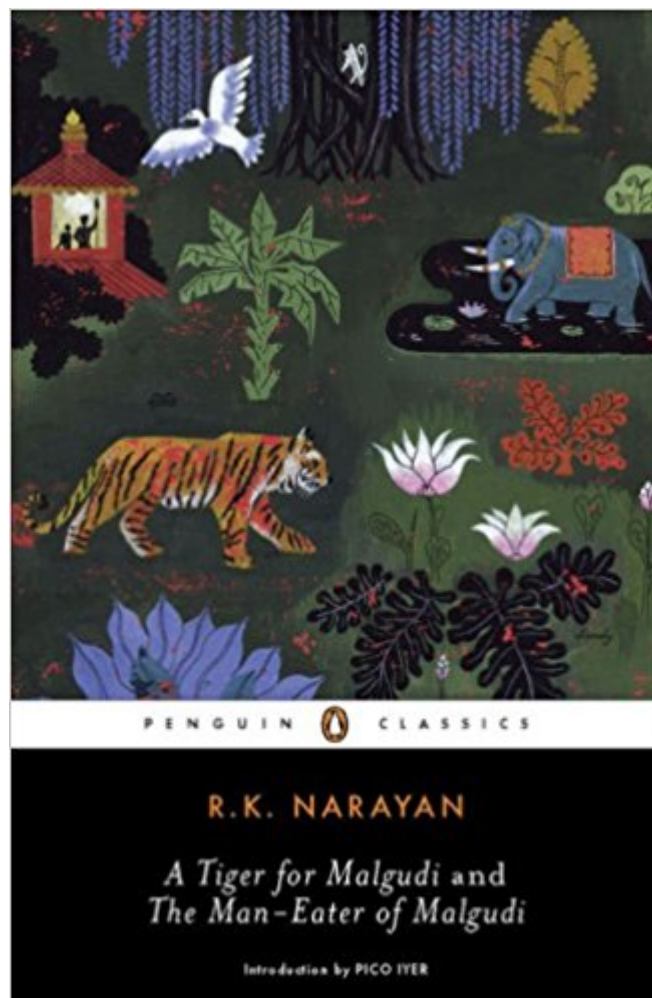




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# A Tiger For Malgudi And The Man-Eater Of Malgudi (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

Two comic gems from the father of modern Indian fiction- available in one volume for the first time. These two novels show R. K. Narayan at his best, offering enchanting tales of human absurdity that are also skillfully woven parables infused with Hindu mysticism. *A Tiger for Malgudi* is told from the point of view of the tiger Raja, now old and toothless, who looks back on his life in the circus and in films, and on his dramatic bid to escape the brutish human world in a quest for freedom. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is the story of Nataraj, a mild-mannered printer who stands up to Vasu, a pugnacious taxidermist, when Vasu begins to covet the beloved temple elephant for his collection. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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## Customer Reviews

"Narayan's comedy . . . is classical art, profound in feeling and delicate in control."-The New York Times Book Review "Narayan is a first-rate storyteller." -The New Yorker

R. K. Narayan (1906–2001), born and educated in India, was the author of fourteen

novels, numerous short stories and essays, a memoir, and three retold myths. His work, championed by Graham Greene, who became a close friend, was often compared to that of Dickens, Chekhov, Faulkner, and Flannery O'Connor, among others.

Of all the R.K. Narayan books I own, "A Tiger for Malgundi and the Man-Eater of Malgundi" is my favorite. When I'm in the mood for short stories, his book of short stories, "Malgundi Days" which is a snapshot of all the characters in the imaginary Indian village of Malgundi, also does an amazing trick! R.K. Narayan's stories are a visual journey. He also exchanged letters with the author Graham Greene, who was a friend to him and helped R.K. Narayan's work to reach publishers & gain popularity all over the world. The writing is not translated. He wrote his stories directly into English & there is simply no other author who comes close to using the pure strength of juicy, vibrant, colorful, vivacious words to weave a visual story that comes alive in the reader's imagination. You can literally smell the temple incense, crushed jasmine, the smell of the tropical heat, the coolness of the Hindu temple's crevices, you can literally taste the sweet vendor's sugary jaggery, the intrusive hulking sweaty aggression of the town's "bully" and literally be able to transplant your imagination into the center of a busy Indian village. He's just an amazing story teller and I wish he had written more about the unique denizens of the fictitious village of Malgundi. Everytime I re-read Narayan's works, I want to start sketching and illustrating scenes from each story--I want to put the colors and textures on paper---as a shoebox diorama or a pop-up book----not many books make you want to explode with creativity as Narayan's wordcrafting skillfully persuades this reader to. Narayan's stories also don't really preach discourse of social issues although he gives the issues to you as they are. Yet, you are exposed to all the day-to-day cultural, religious, and social class/gender/poverty/wealth/country bumpkin/city dweller/academic versus field worker and all the mystical dynamics of an Indian village during Narayan's time. His stories are a breath of sultry, tropical heat for a snowy winter reading, as much as a welcoming treat when you read it in the summer, sweltering under a shady tree on a picnic blanket. More over, they're fun and mischievous; without the heavier loss of childhood/innocence/death/loss/poverty/greed and other spectrum of the human's vices and merits themes that equally excellent Indian authors like Rabindranath Tagore are superb for (but sometimes, one's brain wants something a little lighter and lyrical). "A Tiger for Malgundi and The Man-Eater of Malgundi" is amazing--it's two stories in one. One is told from the perspective of a "retired" aging circus performer tiger about his life starting from a young cub and how he comes to pass his "retirement" near the denizens of Malgundi. In the second segment, story centers around Nataraj, a mild mannered printer and his serene life with his circle of friends (all

depicting different facets of Indian life--reporters, writers, merchants, shop keepers, etc.). His serene village life is shattered by the arrival of Vasu, a brusque, boorish, hulking bully, who decides to live in Nataraj's attic (which was "packed" with a lot of junk), while Najarat is unable to stand up and say "no" to anything Vasu the bully imposes on him, including causing massive destruction and obstruction to Najarat's life and home downstairs as he decides he wants to set up a taxidermy shop. Vasu spends weeks illegally poaching animals in the jungles surrounding Malgundi (perhaps this is where the tiger comes in?), and drags poor Najarat off on expeditions then leaves him stranded in a whole different part of the country, causing the cowardly Najarat to take on much more adventures beyond his normal tolerance for drama. Meanwhile, Vasu is also absolutely destroying the village--not to mention that using Najarat's home to cure his illegally poached animal carcasses and leave taxidermy creatures all over is causing the entire village to become increasingly furious at Najarat, because no one is willing to confront Vasu the bully. Bear in mind, Vasu is also the worst tenant ever!--he's not paying for rent, he's constantly borrowing money from Najarat, staggering home intoxicated and causing a ruckus, etc.) The story takes a turn when Vasu decides he wants to illegally kill the beloved temple elephant which resides in the village temple. The elephant is considered a sacred, holy beast---and not just that--this particular elephant is the mildest, sweetest, and most beloved elephant--adored by village children and adults alike. The mild mannered Najarat finally decides to take a stand against Vasu and hence, the remainder of "The Man Eater of Malgundi" focuses on how Najarat (with the support of his friends and local villagers), try to gather up the courage and develop a plan to stop Vasu the bully from killing the temple elephant and to evict him from town to prevent him from illegally poaching all the animals in the jungle near Malgundi. Get it! Read it when you want to purely immerse yourself in every single word on the paper. This is definitely something to savor---like chocolate cake or sipping really decadent hot cocoa while the power and heat is out and a hurricane is gusting outside your windowpanes. If you don't have time, get "Malgundi Days" for a bigger taste of Malgundi's many citizens but with shorter stories containing character sketches that give the reader a delicious peak into the day in the life of the sweet vendor or the teashop owner, city dwellers in town as visiting pilgrims, or the local Swami.

Awesome for exploring the relationship between humans and animals and the blurry social distinctions that divide them. Intriguing and fascinating with an enjoyable story.

Outstanding book from a world famous author...so far one of my favorites of his.

Having lived in South India for years, reading Narayan vividly brings to life all the atmosphere with his exquisite but simple stories.

An average book

It was suggested by a friend. It was all right. Not the best piece of literature out there, but worth reading.

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