



Spell of the Tiger: The Man-Eaters of Sundarbans

By Sy Montgomery



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Spell of the Tiger: The Man-Eaters of Sundarbans By Sy Montgomery

From the author of *The Soul of an Octopus* and bestselling memoir *The Good Good Pig*, a book that earned Sy Montgomery her status as one of the most celebrated wildlife writers of our time, *Spell of the Tiger* brings readers to the Sundarbans, a vast tangle of mangrove swamp and tidal delta that lies between India and Bangladesh. It is the only spot on earth where tigers routinely eat people?swimming silently behind small boats at night to drag away fishermen, snatching honey collectors and woodcutters from the forest. But, unlike in other parts of Asia where tigers are rapidly being hunted to extinction, tigers in the Sundarbans are revered. With the skill of a naturalist and the spirit of a mystic, Montgomery reveals the delicate balance of Sundarbans life, explores the mix of worship and fear that offers tigers unique protection there, and unlocks some surprising answers about why people at risk of becoming prey might consider their predator a god.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Nature writer Montgomery traveled to the tidal forest between India and Bangladesh for this study of an area where tigers routinely hunt humans and found that the population regards tigers as magic beings.

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From [Booklist](#)

Tigers have always been associated with magic and other manifestations of the divine, but nowhere on earth do tigers make their power felt more tangibly than in Sundarbans, the world's largest tidal delta and mangrove swamp on the Bay of Bengal. Here, in this mysterious, amphibious realm, tigers hunt men, killing dozens, even hundreds a year. Montgomery, author of *Walking with the Great Apes* (1991) and other nature-related works, traveled to Sundarbans to try to understand this baffling, terrifying, and inexplicably tolerated relationship between man and beast. Her quest proved maddeningly difficult. She could barely communicate with her guides, and the tigers were as elusive as their reputation dictates. But as she spent day after day floating down tributaries and creeks and staring into the forest, Montgomery began to absorb the unique and surprisingly cosmic dynamic of the delta. Thus the hair-raising stories she tells about tigers stalking and killing men as they fish or collect wood and honey stand in curious counterpoint to her deeply moving explanations of the spiritual attitude the people of Sundarbans express toward their mighty foe, a mix of fear, respect, and worship. After all, there can be no revelation more humbling than the recognition that we, like other animals, are meat. *Donna Seaman*

Review

"Clear, emotionally telling and always right to the point, her accounts of the other forms of life are without peer."--**Farley Mowat, author of *Never Cry Wolf***

Users Review

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