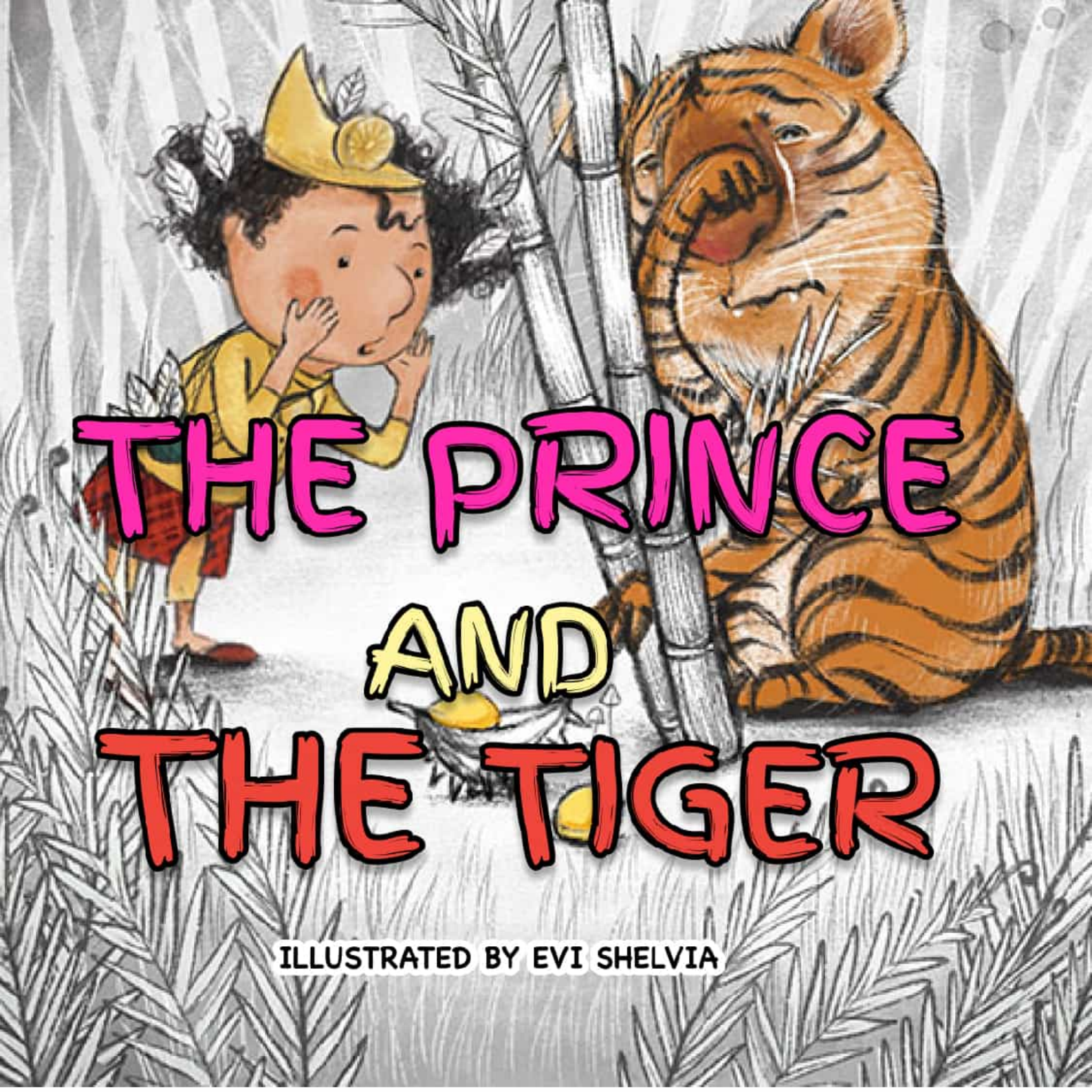


A colorful illustration of a young prince with dark curly hair, wearing a yellow tunic and a red skirt, looking surprised with his hands near his face. He is standing next to a large, orange and black striped tiger that is sitting and looking at him. They are in a jungle setting with bamboo stalks and tall grass. The title 'THE PRINCE AND THE TIGER' is written in large, stylized letters across the middle. The word 'THE' is pink, 'PRINCE' is pink, 'AND' is yellow, and 'THE TIGER' is red. The background is a light gray with white lines representing bamboo and grass.

THE PRINCE AND THE TIGER

ILLUSTRATED BY EVI SHELVIA

One day, Prince Din decided to leave the palace on an important mission.

He loved to play with a special kind of ball made from lots of leaves folded together, and wants his to be bigger.

But the leaves in the palace grounds were too old and gnarled to be used.

'The best leaves to make this ball bigger are in the wild forest,' Prince Din says to his guards.

But the guards were afraid to take the prince into the forest, as that is where wild and dangerous creatures lived.



Prince Din still insisted he be taken to the wild forest.
'Nobody has ever seen one of these dangerous creatures
in all of my father's reign as king!' he declared.
But no sooner than he said this, there was a rustle from
the bushes.
A big, fierce tiger came out, roaring so loud the ground
shook and the leaves fell from their branches!
'Until now,' said Prince Din, backing away quickly.





The guards are so scared, they run off in all different directions!

'Please don't eat us, king of the wild forest!' one of them yells, trying to make his way back to the palace.

In the confusion, they were no longer paying any attention to Prince Din.

'While they are busy running from that tiger and ignoring me, I will go deeper in this forest and find the best leaves!' he said to himself.

He thought that the tiger would chase after the guards, but he was wrong.



Prince Din marched deeper into the forest in search of the perfect leaves to make into a ball.

But it was not long before he started to forget the direction he had come from.

'Uh oh,' he said to himself, gnashing his teeth in frustration.

'Have I taken a wrong turn somewhere?'

The tiger followed behind, taking care not to be seen.



Soon, Prince Din began to feel a little scared.

It seemed he was all alone in the giant wild forest, with no path to take him home.

Just then, he saw a flash of orange between the trees.

It was the tiger, and it was coming slowly towards him!

Prince Din pulled himself together and ran the other way.



He had run a little ways before he came to a fork between two stands of trees.

'Oh no, which way should I go?' said Prince Din in a frightened voice.

Just then, the tiger jumped out of the trees, blocking one of the paths in the fork!

'Looks like it's the other way, then!' said the Prince, and ran that way.

The tiger grinned and followed him.



It was not long before Prince Din was lost again.

But all of a sudden, he saw a trail of pieces of fruit leading in one direction through the forest.

'Is this a sign? Should I follow this for a way out?' he asked himself.

What Prince Din did not know was that the tiger was the one dropping the fruit!

Where on earth was the tiger leading him?

It took a while, but Prince Din eventually recognised what the tiger was doing. It was leading him on the way home! 'How is this possible?' he asked. 'This tiger isn't trying to eat me, it's trying to help me!' Prince Din was very surprised.





Prince Din turned one last corner,
and there it was!

The edge of the forest gave way to
the town and the palace.

He was out of the confusing forest
at last!

But all of a sudden, he heard a
pained cry behind him.

The young prince turned around.

The tiger had caught one of his paws
between two gnarled stands of bamboo!
Prince Din felt sorry for the tiger.
But he was almost home, and getting
close to the tiger could be dangerous.
Was he really going to help this fierce
animal?
Or would it be smarter to just run back
to the palace?





'I must stay and help,' Prince Din said, with some dignity in his voice.

'This tiger helped me, so I shall help it!' he declared.

With some effort, the young prince set to work freeing the tiger's paw from the bamboo.

It took a while, but the tiger was finally free!

But the prince heard a shout, and turned around to find palace guards running towards him!



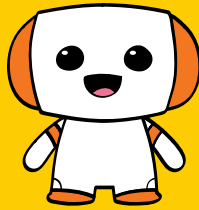
It was the king, who had come to find his son in the forest!

'Father, please don't hurt this tiger, he helped me through the forest!' the prince said.

The tiger looked scared, but stood proud next to the prince.

'Why would I?' the king smiled at the tiger. 'After all, it is thanks to this tiger you are no longer lost.'

'From now on, we will stay away from this forest and live side by side with the tiger as friends!'



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