



The Tiger in The Traffic

It is hard to miss the fascinating paintings on the backs and hoods of rickshaws. Bright colours, animals, heroes and heroines can be spotted. Rickshaw art has become an integral part of Dhaka traffic - the setting of this story.



The Tiger in The Traffic
HerStory Foundation

Let's Read



The Asia Foundation



My father drives a museum. It is colorful and loud. In normal museums you can't touch things, but you can sit in and even ride in my Baba's museum. It's a rickshaw!



The hood of my father's rickshaw is covered with white stars. When he pulls it down, his passengers see a starry sky even in the daytime. Anything is possible in my father's rickshaw.



Baba loves telling people about the drawings on his rickshaw. “This is a painting of how rickshaws are made in the workshop. Look, here the monkey is busy making plastic flowers to decorate the curtain. And there, the tiger is hammering the seat together. And see, the wolf is serving hot tea while the lion, the king of the workshop, watches.”



When my father is waiting in traffic, he shows his riders fantastic things. “Our traffic jam is like a garden - look at all the flowers! Where else can you sit so close to stars? Not in Bollywood! Not in Hollywood! But look - there is Jashim, and Anju Ghosh and the great Ilias Kanchan. Right next to us in traffic!” The riders laugh as they count the movie stars and flowers painted on the buses, trucks, and rickshaws.



Sometimes, when Baba is thinking about Ma, he shows his passengers the love stories in the traffic. "See the hero and the heroine dancing in the mouth of a gigantic watersnake? And look - in the distance a horse is waiting for them to finish their dance."



When Baba comes home after he closes the museum, he brings me traffic treasures and tells me of his adventures. "Reetu, today I counted 20 roses with no thorns, 15 silver crescents, and one very lovely heart, all for you. I had to escape tigers, villains, and beasts in the traffic but Mayer Doa brought me home."



Note There are many tales told on the tail ends of the cycle rickshaws that jingle down every road of Bangladesh. These moving museums are decorated with bright flowers, patterns, and paintings to attract and entertain riders. The fantastic fantasy world of rickshaw art transports us to lands of great adventures and fantastic beasts.



Wonderful WordsMayer Doa - Means "Mother's Blessings." This is written on the backs of most vehicles in Bangladesh.

Brought to you by

Let's Read is an initiative of The Asia Foundation's Books for Asia program that fosters young readers in Asia and the Pacific.

booksforasia.org To read more books like this and get further information, visit letsreadasia.org.

Original Story [खिलखिली खिलखिली खिलखिली](#) (The Tiger in The Traffic),

Author: HerStory Foundation. Illustrator: Auntora Mehrukh Azad.

Published by The Asia Foundation - Let's Read,

<https://www.letsreadasia.org> © The Asia Foundation - Let's Read.

Released under CC-BY-NC-4.0.

This work is a modified version of the original story. © The Asia Foundation, 2021. Some rights reserved. Released under CC-BY-NC-4.0.

For full terms of use and attribution,

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>

Contributing translators: Ritica Lacoul