

A Can't Miss (or you're dead) Summertime Read

By Carl Nelson

"If you see a tiger for one second, he has been watching you for one hour."

~Udege proverb

Like the author, you might want to read this book with your backside to a large rock or a tree. This well-written, non-fiction account of hunting the marauding Indian Tiger of one century ago is a fascinating look both into the qualities of intelligence, compassion, courage and skill which marked one of the great white hunters of colonial India, and of the terror such a man-eater could induce in a village. Tigers are big, fast and strong, commonly carrying off their human prey to devour at leisure, as if your housecat carrying off its mouse. Forget African big game hunting, these terrors would make Hemingway pee in his trousers.

From the book:

"The tigress, for such the animal turned out to be, had arrived in Kumaon as a full-fledged man-eater, from Nepal, from whence she had been driven out by a body of armed Nepalese after she had killed two hundred human beings, and during the four years she had been operating in Kumaon had added two hundred and thirty-four to this number." – Jim Corbett

Note that these were all individual kills. It follows that these man-eating tigers are notoriously hard both to locate and to put down. Also, unlike leopards, these man-eaters, once

they have begun their ravages, are unafraid of humans and so will hunt them in the daytime because that is when the village dwellers are out and about. When a man-eater was on the loose, whole villages would be afraid to go out, would leave the crops to fail or spoil, and remain huddled in their homes slowly starving to death. These terrors had to be found and killed.

And when few were left up to the challenge, the authorities often appealed to our author, Jim Corbett. He reads like a great guy. He leads a heroic life. [Man-Eaters of Kumaon by Jim Corbett.](#)

This is just the book to hunt up, purchase, carry off and devour at your own leisure this summer while on the beach or by the pool.

As recommended by Armando Simón in Six Very Brief Reviews of Historical Works [here.](#)