

LESSON 4

A King in Danger

瀕危的王者

Tiger, tiger, burning bright

In the forests of the night ...

These are the opening lines of an English **poem**¹ that was written over 200 years ago. It describes the great power and beauty of the tiger. This amazing animal can **weigh**² **up to** 360 **kilograms**⁽¹⁾ and run at over 60 kilometers an hour. Its **roar**³ can be heard three kilometers away, yet it can be **as** quiet **as** a mouse. Tigers are **skillful**⁴ hunters, so why are there so few of them now? More than 100,000 tigers lived in the forests, mountains, and **marshes**⁽²⁾ of Asia when this poem was written. **At present**, there are only about 3,900 in the wild.

Human behavior, of course, is what has put tigers on the list of **endangered**⁵ animals. People have caused tiger numbers to decrease⁶ through hunting and **destruction**⁷ of their natural **habitats**⁸. Killing tigers is **no longer legal**⁹, but it still occurs. Their beautiful **coats**⁽³⁾ are highly **valued**¹⁰ on some black **markets**⁽⁴⁾, and their body parts are used to make traditional medicine. What's more, as human **populations**¹¹ have grown, tigers have been **forced**¹² out of their habitats. Where they now live covers a much smaller area. In fact, it is just seven percent¹³ of what it was 100 years ago.

Conservation⁽⁵⁾ organizations¹⁴ have been trying hard to protect tigers. Most countries where tigers are found have established nature **reserves**¹⁵, and the **World Wildlife Fund**⁽⁶⁾ has set a goal of **doubling**¹⁶ the number of tigers in the wild by 2022. The tiger is still in danger of **extinction**⁽⁷⁾, however. In fact, ordinary people can help by **donating**¹⁷ money and **refusing**¹⁸ to buy their body parts. We must all **contribute**¹⁹ what we can if we want this **glorious**²⁰ king of the forest to **carry on** "burning bright" in the future.

老虎！老虎！熊熊地燃燒

在黑夜的森林裡……

這是在兩百多年前寫的一首英文詩開頭。它描述了老虎的力與美。這種令人驚豔的動物可以重達三百六十公斤，奔跑的時速超過六十公里。牠的吼聲可以在三公里外聽到，卻也可以安靜得像老鼠一樣。老虎是狩獵高手，那麼為什麼現有的數

量卻如此之少？寫這首詩時，有超過十萬隻老虎生活在森林、山嶺和亞洲的沼澤地區。目前，野外只剩下大約三千九百隻老虎。

老虎名列瀕危動物的榜單，人類的行為當然是罪魁禍首。人們經由獵捕和破壞自然棲息地，造成老虎的數量減少。獵殺老虎不再合法，但仍時而發生。牠們美麗的毛皮在一些黑市售價不菲，而其身體部位被用來製作傳統藥材。更重要的是，隨著人口數不斷成長，老虎已經被迫離開牠們的棲息地了。牠們現在生活的涵蓋面積小了許多。事實上，只有一百年前的百分之七。

保育組織一直致力於保護老虎。大多數可以發現老虎的國家都設立了自然保護區，此外世界自然基金會設定目標，要在二〇二二年讓野生老虎的數量增加一倍。然而，老虎仍然面臨滅絕的危險。其實，一般人可以捐款並拒絕購買老虎的身體部位來協助老虎復育。如果我們希望這美麗的森林之王未來能持續閃耀「熊熊的光芒」，我們就必須盡己所能。