

# "Medicine" of Epicurus: Removing Fear and Finding Freedom

Post by "Kalosyni" of June 1, 2022 at 8:11 AM

After this last post by [Don](#), just remembered this Zen story:

Quote

A man was walking across a field when he saw a tiger. Fearing for his life, the man fled, but the tiger gave chase. The man reached the edge of a cliff, and just as he thought the tiger would get him, he spotted a vine growing over the edge of the cliff. Grabbing on to it, he swung himself over the edge to safety.

The tiger came to the edge and snarled at him from above. While precariously perched like this, the man saw another tiger growling at him from below. Trembling, he held on to the thin vine that was keeping him from being dinner for the tigers. What could be worse than this, he wondered.

Just then, two mice scampered out and began gnawing at the vine. As they chewed and the man pondered over his fate, he saw a juicy, red strawberry on a ledge next to him. Grasping the vine with one hand, he plucked the strawberry with the other. Ah, how sweet it tasted!

This Zen story always struck me as very different than most Zen stories, as it points toward a sensual pleasure of taste. It is also a kind of contemplation on mortality. For further reading on this koan [click here](#).

I would say this is a very Epicurean way to deal with death.