

NOTES

Tiger in a Cage is a short dramatic play that could be performed as a Dramatic Interpretation or, with clever blocking, may be performed as a Duo Interpretation. As written, the play is dominated by male characters; however, the author has given permission for all genders to be changed to suit the needs of the performer. This selection, therefore, may be performed by either a male or female performer. If so desired, the performer might choose to use an accent for the various characters. A South African accent might work well; however, the play should be just as effective with the use of Standard American English. There are a myriad of emotions found within this selection. Play those moments. As with all good dramatic works of literature, play the characters with 100% honesty. Also, be sharp with the blocking. The physical transitions—popping from the child lying in a coma-induced state to the other characters surrounding the hospital bed—should be crystal clear and obvious so that the audience may easily follow the storyline.

The Tiger: *I keep having this dream. I am a tiger. I am a tiger in a cage. I am surrounded by people in variations of a uniform. Most wear long coats. I can only assume they are safari hunters. Have they just caught me? Why does one hold what looks to be a dart in his hand? Too many unanswered questions—for such a simple tiger—in a cage.*

The Nurse: Mr. Williams, you're going to have to make a decision soon.

The Father: I can't. Not yet.

The Nurse: Well, at this point in time, the vitals are consistently showing no signs of life. Usually at a time like this, the family chooses—

The Father I need more time. I just...need more time.

The Tiger: *I look at them through the steel bars that restrain me. This is a first for me—being caged. Don't they know I'm too young to be caged-up like this? Tigers are meant to be free—to roam—to explore. Don't they know tigers live for their yet-to-be-discovered adventures? These people look at me with such fear. Are they afraid of something? What could they possibly be afraid of? Could it be me? I wish them no harm. I simply want to leave this confined place and live my life! They talk amongst themselves, but of course, I do not understand anything they say.*

The Doctor: Mr. Williams? I'm Doctor Reed. I understand what a difficult time this must be for you and your family. I'm here to answer any

questions you might have. Sometimes, knowing certain facts—makes the decision process—well, it makes things easier

The Father How long...? How long can my child live like this?

The Doctor: It depends, of course. Each patient is as unique as the situation that brought them to this destination in the first place.

The Father He won't feel anything, will he?

The Doctor: No, he won't feel a thing.

The Father No pain?

The Doctor: No. No pain whatsoever. As I said, he won't feel a thing.

The Tiger: *I know I should feel anger. Tigers are known for their strength and aggressive behavior, but for some reason unknown to me—strangely—I feel weak. Perhaps I am just tired from the chase. Honestly, I do not remember being chased. That I am caged comes as a complete surprise to me. I do not remember...ever... feeling so...calm.*

The Father What do I do? Tell me, Doctor. What do I do?

The Doctor: You know I can't tell you that...

The Father My gut tells me *No!* This kid is a miracle! A miracle! Did you know that? We weren't even supposed to be able to have children, and then, *bam*—we were given the most precious child that was ever born. And he, of course, was followed by his little brother, Jacob, who we—we can't lose him, too, Doctor. We just can't lose another child... He's our pride and joy.

The Tiger: *My pride was small—consisting of my mother, my father, and my little brother.*

The Doctor: Oh, I'm sorry. I was unaware—

The Father Jacob was the meanest little fart you'd ever meet. Rebellious as the day is long. Where we used to live, there was a community pool. We'd let the kids play in the shallow end of the pool—supervised, of course. They had to have their little floatation devices on before we'd ever even let them near the water.

The Tiger: *My little brother and I would pounce about in the shallow waters near the embankment—splashing about with wild abandon.*

The Father One day, we were throwing a party—just a little neighborhood get-together. My wife and I were busy with all of the preparations, and we didn't realize Jacob had somehow snuck outside. He was at that curious stage when he really wanted to get into everything, but he had trouble figuring out how to actually do it. We didn't know he was able to unlock doors yet. I know we had the backdoor locked. I know we