

MONTICORE

by Lisa Kron

Late Morning. Siegfried and Roy's Secret Garden. The day after the attack on Roy by Montecore, his white tiger.

Tiger 1 is laying on a rock. Tiger 2 enters.

TIGER 2

Hey, man.

Tiger 1

Hey. I didn't know you were working this rotation.

TIGER 2

Yeah, I'm afternoons this week. How's the rock?

TIGER 1

(lazily stretching)

Nice. Hot.

TIGER 2

(stretching out on his own rock)

Oh yeah. That's nice.

(looking out through the glass)

Hey. Where is everybody?

TIGER 1

I know. Small crowd.

TIGER 2

Well, I guess it's to be expected. They'll be back in a week or so.

TIGER 1

Oh yeah, I'm not worried.

(leaning in to share the joke)

You know the last thing they heard Roy say before they took him away, right?

Both together
(in a German accent)

"Don't kill the cat."

They crack up. Then lean back on their rocks.

TIGER 2

Yeah, kinds breaks your heart, doesn't it?

TIGER 1

Oh yeah. Well, you know how he is.

TIGER 2

Like a child.

TIGER 1

Yeah. Like a big, dumb,

(German accent)

Homozeshoo-al chi-eelt.

They crack up again.

TIGER 2

Right?

TIGER 1

Oh, shit. We're terrible.

The bask for another second. Then Tiger 1 wraps his mind around going to work.

TIGER 1

Ready?

TIGER 2

Yep.

(as he pulls himself halfway up)

I gotta say, I'm not used to playing to half a house.

TIGER 1

I know. Sucks. But -- show must go on, right?

TIGER 2

Right.

They both leave their rocks. Suddenly they lunge for each other and wrestle. We hear the sudden sound of the people on the other side of the glass screaming in fear and delight. The tigers drop the act and go back to their rocks.

TIGER 1

Ah, people are easy to please.

TIGER 2

They got their money's worth last night, huh?

TIGER 1

Yup.

TIGER 2

Now that was a fun night in the theater. I'm telling you, once every 5000 shows you do a performance that really pops.

TIGER 1

I guess...

TIGER 2

Hey, guy. What's up?

TIGER 1

Nothing... I don't know.

TIGER 2

Hey dude, I saw you chatting with Montecore last night after the show.

TIGER 1

Yeah, yeah, for a minute. Backstage.

TIGER 2

Oh man, I was trying to get over there so I could congratulate him but, you know, post-show, everybody all worked up and pacing - I couldn't make it across the cage, I was so bummed. So was he, like, totally stoked?

TIGER 1

Yeah... kinda... yeah...

TIGER 2

What is going on with you??

TIGER 1

I... I think I'm feeling a little... I don't know... Bad for Roy. Is that possible?

TIGER 2

You are shitting me.

TIGER 1

I know. It's crazy.

But...

TIGER 2

I'm going to say this once. And then I'm not going to say it again. What did the man expect?

TIGER 1

I know.

TIGER 2

No. Seriously. What did he expect? I mean -- Hello! We're TIGERS.

TIGER 1

Yeah... But --

TIGER 2

But what?

TIGER 1

I don't know...

TIGER 2

What?

TIGER 1

Well -- You can see why they anthropomorphize us.

TIGER 2

No. I can't.

TIGER 1

I think we might bear a little responsibility.

TIGER 2

For what?

TIGER 1

I mean, come on.

TIGER 2

What?

TIGER 1

We sleep in their bed with them.

TIGER 2

So?

TIGER 1

We lay around the palazzo with them like a bunch of house cats.

TIGER 2

Again I say - so?

TIGER 1

We play along.

TIGER 2

I don't.

TIGER 1

You? You leap through a ring of fire every friggin' night.

TIGER 2

Yeah. For steak. I will do anything for steak. There's no contradiction in that.

TIGER 1

I just think we romp around all day enjoying the perks of domestication and then get all indignant when they assume we're domesticated.

TIGER 2

I have never pretended to be domesticated. Okay?

TIGER 1

Yeah, // but -

TIGER 2

I don't hide my feral nature but I don't think it's necessary to go around flaunting it either.

TIGER 1

But it is. We can't keep pretending to be something we're not.

TIGER 2

Oh for Christ's sake.

TIGER 1

I think there's going to be a backlash.

TIGER 2

(dismissive)

No there's not.

TIGER 1

He almost killed the guy. You don't think the humans are going to react to that?

TIGER 2

No! They've convinced themselves Montecore was trying to save him.

TIGER 1

Siegfried and Roy have. Other humans aren't like them. Maybe you haven't noticed but those two are super freaks living in a spandex fantasy world. They told the press Montecore was distracted by a lady in the front row with a "freakish hairdo." Have we ever done a show without a lady in the front row with a freakish hairdo? Hello. People. This is Las Vegas.

TIGER 2

You have got to calm down.

TIGER 1

I'm telling you, last night was a wake up call. And we are not going to be served in the long run by trying to pretend we share a value system with humans. I don't have value system. And as of today I'm going to stop apologizing for that. I want for Seigfriend and Roy to see me and acknowledge me for what and who I am. A Wild Animal.

TIGER 2

They acknowledge we're wild animals! It's on the website, it's in the souvenir books it's in the audio tour, it's written right on that interpretive panel taped to the glass for God's sake.

TIGER 1

(getting more excited as his theory is coming clearer to him.)

No, no, see, see? This is exactly what I'm talking about. They use the term "wild animals" because it's sexy, because it's titillating, because it brings people in. But then, when we actually act like wild animals they're shocked, they're scandalized, because deep down they thought, and we let them think, we were overgrown house cats. And then - we pay the price.

TIGER 2

What price are we paying?

TIGER 1

Did you spend the night at the palazzo last night? I didn't

TIGER 2

So what.

TIGER 1

I guarantee you, none of us are ever going to see the inside of that palazzo again.

TIGER 2

The Secret Garden has a better waterfall anyway. Who cares?

TIGER 1

I predict the Secret Garden will be closed in six months -- a year, tops.

TIGER 2

No way.

TIGER 1

And even if it's not - things still have to change! Because I don't know about you but I cannot continue to live a lie.

TIGER 2

(humoring him, trying to talk him down)

Okay, buddy.

TIGER 1

(with great gravity)

We have been living in paradise. But today, for the first time I see -- paradise -- is a prison.

TIGER 2

(looking around)

Okay. Where's that giant teething ring?

TIGER 1

(stands up and yells)

LONG LIVE THE WHITE TIGERS! FREE MONTECORE!

Sounds of people screaming with fear and delight and then applauding.

TIGER 2

It's not going to be easy.

Tiger one roars ferociously. The people SCREAM in horror and delight.

TIGER 1

(with weary, resigned determination)

Change never is.