



A MAN AND HIS TIGER FRIEND

As told by Morris B., Addie G., Cecile G., Robert L., Ahmad S., and Gary W. on 1/15/09

Who do we have here? It's a man and an animal--a cat-like animal, maybe a lion. No, it's a tiger--look at his markings. The man's name is Harry. He's 24 years old and he's hugging a tiger! Gee, that's a friendly and brave thing to do. Or just plain stupid! Harry must be an animal lover and trusting, too, to get that close to a tiger. Bob thinks he's nuts.

So, how did Harry come to be hugging a tiger? We have a few theories about that. Bob thinks Harry was out hunting and the tiger saw the gun and raised his paws in surrender--so Harry hugged him. Mo thinks Harry is an animal trainer. Others think perhaps the tiger is Harry's pet even though none of us want a tiger for a pet. No way! Mo says if somebody offered him a tiger, he wouldn't take it because tigers can be vicious. Addie states she'd decline the offer because she just doesn't think she could handle it. All agree it would be difficult to feed a tiger—you'd have to bring in lots of meat and other animals for it to eat. And it very definitely would not be a good idea to let your pet tiger stay in your bedroom 'cause he might get mad.

Harry probably gave this tiger a name. Maybe he calls it Meow...or Henry...or Pussy. It's hard to tell how old this tiger is. Bob guesses he's 10 years old; Mo, however, is of the opinion that the tiger is middle-aged.

Ahmad thinks the tiger is looking for food. Mo thinks the tiger looks very friendly. Gary gets the impression that the tiger is thinking, "Chase him!" Cecile has no idea what the tiger is thinking because she is no expert on tigers. Addie says she would give the tiger a quick squeeze to see if he likes it. Ahmad figures the man wants to run away but the tiger won't let him go.

How would you react if a tiger came up to hug you? Gary would turn and run a way and so would Ahmad and Mo. Addie would quickly look around for help or something to feed it. Bob says he would see that the tiger's friendly and hug him back. Cecile says she'd try to steer clear of him altogether.

Looking at this picture puzzles Mo, makes him try to figure out "What is this guy trying to do?" Addie gets a warm feeling about loving animals. Cecile had no emotional reaction initially, but now she feels the tiger is an interesting animal and she's curious to get to know him better. Bob says it's an odd picture and he feels odd looking at it. Gary states he doesn't relate to this picture at all; he even tried flipping the page over to see if the answer's on the other side!

This picture evokes memories. For example, Addie is reminded that she has a whole collection of photos of children. She says that her photos are even more important to her now than when she took them because they help her remember people and places from her past. Bob remembers he used to enjoy going to the zoo. Mo used to like walking in the woods. Gary has had pets his entire life and he always likes to hug them.

What's going to happen after Harry and the tiger are through hugging? Bob guesses they'll just shake hands and say goodbye. Addie thinks they'll hug again or maybe Harry will give the tiger some food to eat. Cecile figures they might start playing together. Mo states they're going to kiss and say goodbye and go on their merry way.

In closing, Addie offers a sage piece of advice: It's not a good idea to try to teach algebra to a tiger the first thing in the morning.