The stage is outdoors. Inside some kind of forest. There are people sitting in the branches of the trees. Maybe they're birds.

Downstage center, there’s a girl, sitting on a pile of notebooks as tall as the oaks and the firs.

She opens a new notebook, and is about to start writing... when she realizes she forgot something.

She cries. She moves on a moment later though, when she thinks to ask a question:

GIRL

Could I borrow a pen?

She waits for a response. The TIGER enters casually.

TIGER

I’ve got you.

GIRL

Thank you.

...

TIGER

Why are you here?

GIRL

(Shrugs) I’m always here.

TIGER

Not many humans are.
GIRL
I don’t know. I’ve been sitting here for a while. Just taking shit in.

TIGER
You writing?

GIRL
Yes. And writing.

TIGER
I knew a kid once...

GIRL
Really?

TIGER
You’re not the first one.

GIRL
(Polite) When?

TIGER
Couple of years ago. She didn’t write though.

GIRL
What did she do?

TIGER
She read.

GIRL
Close enough.
TIGER
No.

GIRL
Oh--

TIGER
Books are in the same family, doesn’t mean they’re the same. A house cat and I may be related, but we’re not the same.

GIRL
I get that.

TIGER
One is more powerful.

...

GIRL
I don’t know. My mom says most kids don’t write for fun.

TIGER
So you agree?

GIRL
...

TIGER
What do you write?

GIRL
Nothing specific.
TIGER
Why do you write?

GIRL
...To vent? I don’t have many other people to talk to.

TIGER
Bullied?

GIRL
Homeschooled.

TIGER
You like it?

GIRL
No.

TIGER
Why do you do it?

GIRL
Don’t have a choice. Mom thinks it's safer.

TIGER
Safer than sitting by yourself in a forest?

GIRL
Well, safer than being around people who can hurt me.

TIGER
Was she hurt?
GIRL

(Hesitant) Yes.

TIGER

What happened?

...

GIRL

I don’t really know.

TIGER

I bet she was raped.

GIRL

You don’t know that...

TIGER

Something must have happened. Must be a real bitch to make you sit in silence. It's strange that she lets you sit in the forest near all these animals.

GIRL

She doesn't let me. She doesn’t really even know.

...

TIGER

You have siblings?

GIRL

No.

TIGER

Why?
GIRL
She doesn’t want to scare me.

TIGER
Scare you?

GIRL
Hurt me.

TIGER
That seems to be a theme with you all.

GIRL
I know.

TIGER
Is that why you write? To do something not so safe?

GIRL
Maybe.

TIGER
Because, this shit is dangerous.

GIRL
I know.

TIGER
It’s powerful.

GIRL
I like that. Makes me feel a little less small.
TIGER
Well, I’m still bigger.

...

GIRL
(Apprehensive) Are you going to hurt me?

TIGER
What do you think? I'm a tiger. I crave power. It's what I do.

GIRL
I’m not sure if you’re a tiger at all.

TIGER
Maybe I’m not.

GIRL
...

This is a bench.

Her books shrink.

TIGER
Could be.

GIRL
The ground beneath me is the sidewalk.

The earth hardens.

TIGER
Maybe.
GIRL

You’re not a tiger.

TIGER

What am I?

GIRL

...

(Swallows) You’re a man.

His fangs sharpen.

TIGER

I’m more than a man.

GIRL

What are you?

TIGER

Your mother’s greatest fear.

...

GIRL

What happened to the other girl?

TIGER

I dunno.

GIRL

Oh.

TIGER

You’re going to write stories about me one day, kid.
GIRL

(A prophecy. A dreadful, godforsaken prophecy.) Piles and piles of prose.

TIGER

You bet.

GIRL

Every poem will be for you, no matter how much I resist.

TIGER

When you’re all successful and shit, you’re gonna realize you would be nothing without me.

GIRL

...

Maybe I would have slept, you know?

If you left me alone.

If I wasn’t so polite. If you never entered the jungle…

TIGER

Enter it? Bitch, I own it.

GIRL

That seems to be a theme with you.

She gets smaller as the sidewalk grows.

The birds don’t move at all. Maybe they laugh with him.

END OF PLAY.