

Teaching English as a Foreign Language : Practicum
Instructor : Dr. Ghazi Ghaith
Education 266
April 1998

LITERATURE

LESSON PLAN

By Nada Salem Abisamra

COVER SHEET

- Student Teacher* : *Nada Salem Abisamra*
- Regular Teacher* : *Nada Salem Abisamra*
- Coordinating Teacher* : *Mrs. NH*
- School* : *Notre-Dame*
- Class* : *First Secondary , Section 5*
- Learning Stage of Class* : *Middle to High Intermediate*
- Age Level of Class* : *15 - 16*
- Size of Class* : *35 students*
- Other Relevant Factors* : (*e.g. syllabus , class texts , examination system , degree of student motivation , reason(s) for studying English , literacy level*)
- *They study English as a third language*
 - *They study English only three hours a week*
 - *Text Books Used : * "Imagine You're English" Senior Course 1 - Belin*
 - * *"Understanding & Using English Grammar" By Betty S. Azar Prentice Hall Regents*

LESSON PLAN

Literature

Student Teacher's Name : Nada Salem Abisamra
Date of Presentation : Tuesday , May 5th , 1998
Estimated Time of Lesson : 150 minutes (3 Sessions)
Teaching Point : Short Story
Pre-assessment Activity : Students have had articles and texts to work on .
Relationship to Current Unit: None
Pre-entry Performance : Students have looked up words in the dictionary , summarized and discussed texts .

Performance Objectives :

A - Content :

- a- Students will be introduced to new vocabulary , they will guess correctly at least 70% of the words from context .
- b- Students will learn how to use titles to predict .
- c- Students will be able to identify the point of view , characters , setting , plot , line of action , tone and theme with 80% accuracy .
- d- Students will be able to reason efficiently and analyze the behavior of the main characters .

B - Process :

- a- Students will reason , analyze , explain words , discuss, predict , practice , correct and justify .
- b- Students will work in teams , interact , cooperate , teach each other , be responsible for their own learning .
- c- Students will complete worksheets and correct them .

Criterion Level : 80% of the students will perform as specified at least 80% of the time .

Materials : Blackboard , worksheets .

Procedures : Teacher and Student Activities

A - Teacher Activities : Planning the Lesson

Prepare :

a- Short Story + Author's Life

b- Worksheets and Answers

c- Handouts to explain the narrative elements .

d- Stages :

- Pre-Reading Stage :

***Vocabulary Work**

***Guiding Questions**

*** Role play (If possible)**

*** Brainstorming , Realia**

*** Poems & Songs**

*** Making Prediction**

- Factual Reading Stage :

*** Reading Assignment to figure out the Narrative Elements**

*** Oral Reading**

*** Silent Reading**

- Analytical Reading Stage

*** Group Discussion**

*** Journal Writing**

*** Figuring out Conflict**

*** Pinpointing Climax**

*** Articulating the Theme**

*** Free Writing (Thoughts & Feelings)**

- Follow-up

*** Dramatization : perform a script**

*** Written Responses : Reflecting in journals**

Practicing grammar

Summarizing

Paraphrasing

Writing Essays

B - Teacher & Student Activities : Implementing the Lesson

H.W. Assignment : Read the story

1st session : Do the Pre-Reading Stage Exercises in class

- a- Explain the words “Skimming & Scanning” (4 min)**
- b- Number the lines of the story (1- 5- 10..) (4 min)**
- c- Do Exercise 5 + Correct (15 min)**
- d- Do + Correct Exercise 1 (15 min)**
- e- Do Exercise 3 + Correct (not all) (10 min)**

Homework Assignment :

- *Establish the facts of the story : Point of view , Characters , Tone & Mood , Sequence of action + time line .*
- *Use the two given HANDOUTS :*
 - * *“Character Chart”*
 - * *“Attributes Explained”*

2nd session : Do the Factual Reading Stage & Start Discussion

- a- Continue the correction of Exercise 3 (5 min)**
- b- Do + Correct Exercise 2 (10 min)**
- c- Do orally Exercise 4 (10 min)**
- d- Oral Reading + at the same time a member of each group writes on the board what they have on one of the Narrative Elements + Discuss (20 min)**
- e- Silent reading (5 minutes) Focus on the following :**
 - Difficult words
 - Narrative Elements

Homework Assignment :

- *Give your Opinion in writing on the central question of the story : “Did the*

princess choose the lady or the tiger ?”

3rd session : Do the Analytical Reading Stage

- **Formulate a line of argument : The Lady or the Tiger ? → do corresponding exercise + Read several opinions (cf. H.W.) and try to reach a unanimous decision (15 minutes)**
- **Plot + Pinpoint Climax + Debate choices (10 minutes)**
- **Articulate the Theme + Discuss (5 minutes)**
- **Questions about the story (Group Discussion) (20 minutes)**

Homework Assignment : [Follow-up]

Story Writing

or

Choose one of the questions in Exercise 4 p.11 and write about it in around 200 words .

Comment/Self-Evaluation :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

SHORT STORY

“The Lady , or the Tiger ?”

By Frank Stockton

I - PRE-READING STAGE : SKIMMING

Exercise 1 : Here is a list of vocabulary words taken from the text .
Try to understand them from the context , match each one with its corresponding definition given below then use them in new sentences of your own .

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Bland (1.5)- | Hitch (1.6)- | Crooked (1.7)- | Doleful (1.27)- |
| To Wail (1.27)- | Mourner(1.27) | To Wend (29)- | Retribution (1.36) |
| Chorister(1.38) | To Strew (1.41) | Slaughter (1.52)- | Hilarious (1.53)- |
| To Waver (1.65) | To Throng (1.84) | To Crouch 124)- | Parapet (133)- |
| Fang (1.148)- | To Gnash (1.150) | Rapturous (1.150)- | Shriek (1.158) |

Definitions :

- 1- A member of a choir _ which is a company of persons trained to sing together .
.....
- 2- Gentle or polite in manner or talk
.....
- 3- To scatter something over a surface
.....
- 4- A deserved punishment ; inflicted or coming as a penalty for wrongdoing
.....
- 5- To cry or complain in a loud voice . (n. lament)
.....
- 6- Killing of people or animals (esp. in large numbers)
.....

- 7- Not straightforward , dishonest .
.....
- 8- Mournful , sorrowful , sad
.....
- 9- Person who shows sorrow , who grieves for/over someone's death
.....
- 10- To crowd .To be present in large numbers .
.....
- 11- Noisily merry , cheerful .
.....
- 12- Hesitate , move uncertainly .
.....
- 13- To cause the teeth to strike together .
.....
- 14- Temporary stoppage , difficulty .
.....
- 15- Long , sharp tooth .
.....
- 16- Shrill / sharp / piercing scream
.....
- 17- Lower the body with the limbs(legs , arms or wings) together ready to spring
.....
- 18- Protective wall at the edge of a flat roof .
.....
- 19- Inspiring or expressing ecstatic delight , extreme happiness .
.....
- 20- To direct one's course , to travel , to proceed on (one's way)
.....

Exercise 2 : Fill in the blanks with the missing word .

Choose from the following list :

Exuberant (1.1)	Refined (1.9)	Assert (1.10)	Sprang (1.25)
Rim (1.28)	Imperious (1.58)	Relentless (1.73)	Deeds (1.77)
Disposed of (1.81)	Fervid (1.96)	Latch (1.106)	Grievous (1.149)
Kindled (1.153)	Presumed (1.166)		

- 1- This boy's manners have become so Who taught him how to get rid of everything that was coarse and vulgar in him ?
- 2- How could you have given her to drink in that cup ? Its was full of lipstick !
- 3- The dictator all his opponents by putting them in prison .
- 4- I would like to reward Tony for his good They are much better than words when people are in need of help .
- 5- Our king is so ; he's without pity . How could he have his own nephew hanged ?
- 6- This is such a accident ; it has caused so many injuries , so much suffering !
- 7- This door won't properly , we ought to lock it .
- 8- Cynthia has an imagination ; she keeps on inventing stories .
- 9- I don't like this princess ; she is so and domineering ; her gestures are haughty and arrogant !
- 10- The guilty man tried to his innocence .
- 11- An accused person isto be innocent until (s)he is proved guilty .
- 12- He to his feet the moment he saw his boss entering the room .
- 13- Melissa is a admirer of Sampras ; she is so passionately in love with him .
- 14- Marcel's eyes with excitement when he saw the gift I had bought him .

Exercise 3 : Analyzing words and phrases

Try to explain the following words taken from the reading . Use the context to help you .

- 1- Semi-barbaric (1.1) : -----
- 2- Self-communing (1.3) : -----
- 3- In its appointed course (1.5) : -----
- 4- Impartial (1.13) : -----
- 5- Incorruptible (1.13) : -----
- 6- Aforementioned (1.23) : -----
- 7- Downcast (1.29) : -----
- 8- Homeward (1.29) : -----
- 9- He merited so dire a fate (1.30): -----
- 10- The bells rang their merry peals (1.40) : -----

- 11- This element lent an interest to the occasion (1.53): -----

- 12- As blooming as his most rosy fancies (1.57) : -----

- 13- Apple of his eyes (1.58) : -----
- 14- Her soul at a white heat (1.143) : -----

Exercise 4 : Guiding Questions

- 1- Do you wish you were governed by a king ? Why ?
- 2- What do you think of absolute power ? Capital punishment or death penalty ?
- 3- Which are , in your opinion , the qualities a king or any leader should have ?
- 4- Do you think that love between two persons who don't belong to the same class could last ? What kind of problems might these two persons have ? How can they overcome them ?
- 5- What is love to you ? What is Sacrifice ? Who do we love more , ourselves or the person with whom we are "in love" ?
- 6- What does "being realistic" mean ?

Exercise 5 : Making Predictions

By skimming the first half (→ line 56) and looking at the title , what can you find out or guess about :

- 1- The setting : where and when ?
- 2- The main character : kind or cruel; humble or arrogant ?
- 3- The plot : what do you think the story talks about ?

II - FACTUAL READING STAGE :

Establishing the Facts of the Story

1- The Point of View: Who is the narrator ?

We should remember that someone is always between the reader and the action of the story , that someone is telling the story from his or her own point of view. This angle of vision, the point of view from which the people, events, and details of a story are viewed, is important to consider .

TYPES of Point of View :

A- First Person

1- He is recognizable by use of first person pronoun, generally "I" but sometimes "we"

2- He offers a singularity of perspective

When reading stories in the first person, we need to realize that what the narrator is recounting might not be the objective truth. We should question the trustworthiness of the accounting.

B- Third Person

An outside force without any clear identity tells the story [described elsewhere as like the eye of God]

1- **Omniscient**: narrator moves freely about in time and space and into characters' thoughts and feelings . He knows everything about them , interprets and comments on their behavior, and even comments on the significance or meaning of the story.

2- **Limited omniscient**: Like omniscient, the story is told in third person, but the author tells it from the viewpoint of only one character. The author looks at events through the eyes, mind and emotions of that one character. The writer moves inside and outside the character and knows what that character sees, hears, feels, and thinks. However, nothing is revealed about the other characters except for what his chosen character knows or infers. This point of view is closer to the conditions of real life and may serve to unify the story since all details are seen through the eyes and experience of one person.

3- **Objective** : narrator refrains from any editorial commentary . He can go anywhere, but can only record what is seen and heard . He tells what happens without stating more than can be inferred from the story's action and dialogue. He never discloses anything about what the characters think or feel, remaining a detached observer.

2- Characters : Who are they ?

**What do you know about them ?
How can you describe them
physically and morally ?
Which character do you like
the most ?**

Characters are either major or minor .

In most pieces of fiction, one or two characters predominate and the action revolves around them ; they are called the **major characters** , and among them lies the central character or the **protagonist**.

The essential nature of major characters, and particularly that of the protagonist, is often emphasized through the use of character foils.

A **character foil** is any character whose nature, actions, or motivations serve to emphasize or highlight the nature, actions, or motivations of another character.

As for **Minor characters** , they often play an important role in stories, a role that should not be overlooked because it may serve as an important key to discovering the themes that the novel is exploring.

Readers can learn about characters in many ways, including:

Physical traits , Dialogue , Actions , Attire , Opinions , Points of view

To determine the nature of a character we should consider the following questions :

- 1- How does the character behave? What does the character choose to do, choose not to do, or fail to do?
- 2- What motivates a character?
- 3- If a character changes, why?
- 4- Who or what are the antagonists (the forces seeking to prevent the protagonist from achieving his or her goal)? How does the protagonist deal with the antagonists?
- 5- What internal conflicts, if any, does the protagonist experience?

Character's Personality Traits :

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1.) OUTGOING | 19.) FORCEFUL |
| 2.) ORGANIZED | 20.) IMPULSIVE |
| 3.) HONEST | 21.) CALM / QUIET |
| 4.) UNDERSTANDING | 22.) DETERMINED |
| 5.) TALKATIVE | 23.) DEMANDING |
| 6.) AGGRESSIVE | 24.) NEAT |
| 7.) SENSITIVE | 25.) PERSUASIVE |
| 8.) CONVENTIONAL | 26.) ALERT |
| 9.) BOLD | 27.) CHARISMATIC |
| 10.) CHARMING | 28.) SLY |
| 11.) CAREFUL | 29.) MANIPULATIVE |
| 12.) CONVINCING | 30.) PERCEPTIVE |
| 13.) SOCIABLE | 31.) INTELLIGENT |
| 14.) RELAXED | 32.) SELF-CONTROLLED |
| 15.) CAUTIOUS | 33.) COURAGEOUS |
| 16.) PERSISTENT | 34.) DEXTEROUS (Skillful in Handling things) |
| 17.) COMPETITIVE | 35.) ENERGETIC |
| 18.) PLEASANT | 36.) STRONG/WEAK-WILLED |

3- The Setting :

When and where a story takes place is called the setting.

- Time : When did this story take place ?

Identify any dates or time clues mentioned in the story .

Try to determine how much time passes in the story .

- Place : Where did this story take place ?

Identify evidence which pertains to the specific places mentioned .

4- The Tone & Mood : How can you describe

the Tone and Mood in this story ?

Tone = Style or Manner of expression in speech or writing .

Mood = Atmosphere , State of mind .

Some Adjectives to Describe :

1- **Tone** : Formal , Informal , Serious , Humorous , Angry , Playful ,
Conciliatory , Gloomy , Sad , cheerful , Ironic , Clear , Detailed ...

2- **Mood** : Fictional , Imaginary , Fanciful , Idealistic , Romantic , Realistic ,
Optimistic , Pessimistic , Gloomy , Melancholic , Mournful ,
Sorrowful ,

**5- Sequence of Action : Draw up the Time
line of events in the story ;
↔ Recapitulate the Events**

**6- Silent Reading : Read the story silently in
order to refresh your memories
about the point of view , setting ,
tone & mood and sequence of
action .**

III - ANALYTICAL READING STAGE :

**Developing own attitudes toward the characters ,
values , and conflicts within the story .
➔ Addressing Why questions .**

Exercise 1 : Identifying Support for Hypotheses

**What do you think was behind the door – the Lady or the Tiger ?
Why ?**

**Some parts of the story support one hypothesis and some support
the other .**

**Check either “lady” or “tiger” for each of the following
statements to show which hypothesis it supports .**

Be prepared to explain your choice .

**(If you think a statement supports neither or both , put a 0 in
front of each or check both .)**

- 1- “This semi-barbaric king had a daughter as blooming as his most rosy
fancies, *and with a soul as fervent and imperious as his own.*”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 2- “This royal maiden was *well satisfied with her lover*, for he was handsome
and brave to a degree unsurpassed in all this kingdom; and *she loved him
with an ardor that had enough of barbarism in it to make it exceedingly
warm and strong.*”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 3- “It was one of the *fairest and loveliest* of the damsels of the court who had
been selected as the reward of the accused youth, and *the princess
hated her .*”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 4- “*Often had she seen*, or imagined that she had seen, *this fair creature
throwing glances of admiration upon the person of her lover*, and
sometimes she thought *these glances were perceived and even
returned.*”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 5- “When her lover turned and looked at her, and his eye met hers as she sat
there *paler and whiter* than anyone in the vast ocean of anxious faces....”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 6- “He understood her nature, and his soul was assured that she would never rest until she had made plain to herself this thing, hidden to all other lookers-on.....”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 7- “Without the slightest hesitation , he went to the door on the right and opened it .”

----- lady

----- tiger

- 8- “But how much oftener had she seen him at the other door! How in her grievous reveries had she gnashed her teeth, and torn her hair, when she saw his start of rapturous delight as he opened the door of the lady!

----- lady

----- tiger

Exercise 2 : *THE PLOT*

Which are the different parts of the plot in this story ?
Identify Who is and What is in conflict and Pinpoint the
Climax on the basis of textual support .

What Goes into a Plot?

1. Exposition : It is the information needed to understand a story.
2. Complication / Rising Point : It is the catalyst that begins the major conflict.
3. Climax : It is the turning point in the story that occurs when characters try to resolve the complication.
4. Resolution and Falling Point : It is the set of events that bring the story to a close.

Exercise 3 : *EXPLORATION of STYLE*

and

Identify images , symbols , patterns alliterations

metaphors to discover how the writer conveys meaning .

Exercise 4 : *The THEME*

Identify the theme(s) of the story to reinforce understanding and encourage further levels of appreciation beyond the limits of the story itself .

- Identify the topics that the story touches upon**
- Write a statement about the story including one of those topics .**

Answering the following Questions will Help us to uncover the theme in a story:

- 1- What does the title tell us ?
Sometimes it tells us a lot about the theme.*
- 2- What do the repeating patterns and symbols show us ?
Sometimes these lead us to the theme.*
- 3- What allusions are made throughout the story?*
- 4- What are the details and particulars in the story?
What greater meaning may they have?*

Exercise 5 : *TALKING it OVER*

In small groups , discuss the following questions :

1- What do you think of the king's method of administering justice ?

The author states that by it the minds of the people were "refined and cultured" and that "its perfect fairness is obvious" . Does he really mean this ?

2- In your opinion , are there some advantages to living in a kingdom like the one described ?

Do you think that most of the king's subjects probably lead fairly happy lives or not ? Why ?

3- Do any leaders in the world today have characters and governments similar to the king's ? Explain .

**4- How would you describe the character of the princess ?
Is she like her father or not ?**

Exercise 6 : *STORY WRITING*

Write a story similar to this one

First Secondary Classes : 2 - 5

The Lady , or the Tiger ?

BY FRANK STOCKTON

IN THE very olden time, there lived a semi-barbaric king, who was a man of exuberant fancy, and of an authority so irresistible that, at his will, he turned his varied fancies into facts. He was greatly given to self-communing; and, when he and himself agreed upon any thing, the thing was done. When every member of his domestic and political systems moved smoothly in its appointed course, his nature was bland and genial; but whenever there was a little hitch, he was blander and more genial still, for nothing pleased him so much as to make the crooked straight, and crush down uneven places.

Among his borrowed notions was that of the public arena, in which, by exhibitions of manly and beastly valor, the minds of his subjects were refined and cultured.

But even here the exuberant and barbaric fancy asserted itself. The arena of the king , this vast amphitheatre, with its encircling galleries, its mysterious vaults, and its unseen passages, was an agent of poetic justice, in which crime was punished , or virtue rewarded, by the decrees of an impartial and incorruptible chance.

When a subject was accused of a crime of sufficient importance to interest the king, public notice was given that on an appointed day the fate of the accused person would be decided in the king's arena .

When all the people had assembled in the galleries, and the king, surrounded by his court, sat high up on his throne of royal state on one side of the arena, he gave a signal, a door beneath him opened, and the accused subject stepped out into the amphitheatre. Directly opposite him, on the other side of the enclosed space, were two doors, exactly alike and side by side. It was the duty and the privilege of the person on trial, to walk directly to these doors and open one of them. He could open either door he pleased: he was subject to no guidance or influence but that of the aforementioned impartial and incorruptible chance. If he opened the one, there came out of it a hungry tiger, the fiercest and most cruel that could be procured, which immediately sprang upon him, and tore him to pieces, as a punishment for his guilt. The moment that the case of the criminal was thus decided, doleful iron bells were clanged, great wails went up from the hired mourners posted on the outer rim of the arena, and the vast audience, with bowed heads and

downcast hearts, wended slowly their homeward way, mourning greatly that one so young and fair, or so old and respected, should have merited so dire a fate.

But, if the accused person opened the other door, there came forth from it a lady, the most suitable to his years and station that His Majesty could select among his fair subjects; and to this lady he was immediately married, as a reward of his innocence. It mattered not that he might already possess a wife and family, or that his affections might be engaged upon an object of his own selection: the king allowed no such arrangements to interfere with his great scheme of retribution and reward. The exercises, as in the other instance, took place immediately, and in the arena. Another door opened beneath the king, and a priest, followed by a band of choristers, and dancing maidens blowing joyous airs on golden horns, advanced to where the pair stood side by side, and the wedding was promptly and cheerily solemnized. Then the gay brass bells rang forth their merry peals, the people shouted glad hurrahs, and the innocent man, preceded by children strewing flowers on his path, led his bride to his home.

This was the king's semi-barbaric method of administering justice. Its perfect fairness is obvious. The criminal could not know out of which door would come the lady: he opened either he pleased, without having the slightest idea whether, in the next instant, he was to be devoured or married. On some occasions the tiger came out of one door, and on some, out of the other. The decisions of this tribunal were not only fair, they were positively determinate: the accused person was instantly punished if he found himself guilty; and, if innocent, he was rewarded on the spot, whether he liked it or not. There was no escape from the judgments or the king's arena.

The institution was a very popular one. When the people gathered together on one of the great trial days, they never knew whether they were to witness a bloody slaughter or a hilarious wedding. This element of uncertainty lent an interest to the occasion which it could not otherwise have attained. Thus, the masses were entertained and pleased, and the thinking part of the community could bring no charge of unfairness against this plan; for did not the accused person have the whole matter in his own hands?

This semi-barbaric king had a daughter as blooming as his most rosy fancies, and with a soul as fervent and imperious as his own. As is usual in such cases, she was the apple of his eye, and was loved by him above all humanity. Among his courtiers was a young man of that fineness of blood and lowness of station common to the conventional heroes of romance who love royal maidens. This royal maiden was well satisfied with her lover, for he was handsome and brave to a degree unsurpassed in all this kingdom; and she loved him with an ardor that had enough of barbarism in it to make it exceedingly warm and strong. This love affair moved on happily for many months, until one day the king happened to discover its existence. He did not hesitate nor waver in regard to his duty. The youth was immediately cast into prison, and a day was appointed for his trial in the king's arena. This, of course, was an especially important occasion; and His Majesty, as well as all the people, was greatly interested in the workings and development of this trial.

Never before had such a case occurred; never before had a subject dared to love the daughter of a king. In after-years such things became commonplace enough; but then they were, in no slight degree, novel and startling.

The tiger-cages of the kingdom were searched for the most savage and relentless beasts, from which the fiercest monster might be selected for the arena; and the ranks of maiden youth and beauty throughout the land were carefully surveyed by competent judges, in order that the young man might have a fitting bride in case fate did not determine for him a different destiny. Of course, everybody knew that the deed with which the accused was charged had been done. He had loved the princess, and neither he, she, nor any one else thought of denying the fact; but the king would not think of allowing any fact of this kind to interfere with the workings of the tribunal, in which he took such great delight and satisfaction. No matter how the affair turned out, the youth would be disposed of; and the king would take pleasure in watching the course of events, which would determine whether or not the young man had done wrong in allowing himself to love the princess.

The appointed day arrived. From far and near the people gathered, and thronged the great galleries of the arena; and crowds, unable to gain admittance, massed themselves against its outside walls. The king and his court were in their places, opposite the twin doors,-- those fateful portals, so terrible in their similarity !

All was ready. The signal was given. A door beneath the royal party opened, and the lover of the princess walked into the arena. Tall, beautiful, fair, his appearance was greeted with a low hum of admiration and anxiety. Half the audience had not known so grand a youth had lived among them. No wonder the princess loved him! What a terrible thing for him to be there!

As the youth advanced into the arena, he turned, as the custom was, to bow to the king; but he did not think at all of that royal personage; his eyes were fixed upon the princess, who sat to the right of her father. Had it not been for the barbarism in her nature, it is probable that lady would not have been there; but her intense and fervid soul would not allow her to be absent on an occasion in which she was so terribly interested. From the moment that the decree had gone forth, that her lover would decide his fate in the king's arena, she had thought of nothing, night or day, but this great event and the various subjects connected with it. Possessed of more power, influence, and force of character than anyone who had ever before been interested in such a case, she had done what no other person had done,--she had possessed herself of the secret of the doors. She knew in which of the two rooms, that lay behind those doors, stood the cage of the tiger, with its open front, and in which waited the lady. Through these thick doors, heavily curtained with skins on the inside, it was impossible that any noise or suggestion should come from within to the person who should approach to raise the latch of one of them; but gold, and the power of a woman's will, had brought the secret to the princess.

And not only did she know in which room stood the lady ready to emerge, all blushing and radiant, should her door be opened, but she knew who the lady was. It was one of the fairest and loveliest of the damsels of the court who had been selected as the reward of the accused youth, should he be proved innocent of the crime of aspiring to one so far above him; and the princess hated her. Often had she seen, or imagined that she had seen, this fair creature throwing glances of admiration upon the person of her lover, and sometimes she thought these glances were perceived and even returned.

Now and then she had seen them talking together; it was but for a moment or two, but much can be said in a brief space; it may have been on most unimportant topics, but how could she know that? The girl was lovely, but she had dared to raise her eyes to the loved one of the princess; and, with all the intensity of the savage blood transmitted to her through long lines of wholly barbaric ancestors, she hated the woman who blushed and trembled behind that silent door.

When her lover turned and looked at her, and his eye met hers as she sat there paler and whiter than anyone in the vast ocean of anxious faces about her, he saw, by that power of quick perception which is given to those whose souls are one, that she knew behind which door crouched the tiger, and behind which stood the lady. He had expected her to know it. He understood her nature, and his soul was assured that she would never rest until she had made plain to herself this thing, hidden to all other lookers-on, even to the king. The only hope for the youth in which there was any element of certainty was based upon the success of the princess in discovering this mystery; and the moment he looked upon her, he saw she had succeeded, as in his soul he knew she would succeed.

Then it was that his quick and anxious glance asked the question: "Which?" It was as plain to her as if he shouted it from where he stood. There was not an instant to be lost. The question was asked in a flash; it must be answered in another.

Her right arm lay on the cushioned parapet before her. She raised her hand, and made a slight, quick movement toward the right. No one but her lover saw her. Every eye but his was fixed on the man in the arena.

He turned, and with a firm and rapid step he walked across the empty space. Every heart stopped beating, every breath was held, every eye was fixed immovably upon that man. Without the slightest hesitation, he went to the door on the right, and opened it.

Now, the point of the story is this: Did the tiger come out of that door, or did the lady?

The more we reflect upon this question, the harder it is to answer. It involves a study of the human heart which leads us through roundabout pathways of passion, out of which it is difficult to find our way. Think of it, fair reader, not as if the decision of the question depended upon yourself, but upon that hot-blooded, semi-barbaric princess, her soul at a white heat beneath the combined fires of despair and jealousy. She had lost him, but who should have him?

How often, in her waking hours and in her dreams, had she started in wild horror, and covered her face with her hands, as she thought of her lover opening the door on the other side of which waited the cruel fangs of the tiger!

But how much oftener had she seen him at the other door! How in her grievous reveries had she gnashed her teeth, and torn her hair, when she saw his start of rapturous delight as he opened the door of the lady! How her soul had burned in agony when she had seen him rush to meet that woman, with her flushing cheek and sparkling eye of triumph; when she had seen him lead her forth, his whole frame kindled with the joy of recovered life; when she had heard the glad shouts from the multitude, and the wild ringing of the happy bells; when she had seen the priest, with his joyous followers, advance to the couple, and make them man and wife before her very eyes; and when she had seen them walk away together upon their path of flowers, followed by the tremendous shouts of the hilarious multitude, in which her one despairing shriek was lost and drowned!

Would it not be better for him to die at once, and go to wait for her in the blessed regions of semi-barbaric futurity?

And yet, that awful tiger, those shrieks, that blood!

Her decision had been indicated in an instant, but it had been made after days and nights of anguished deliberation. She had known she would be asked, she had decided what she would answer, and, without the slightest hesitation, she had moved her hand to the right.

The question of her decision is one not to be lightly considered, and it is not for me to presume to set myself up as the one person able to answer it. And so I leave it with all of you: Which came out of the opened door,--**the lady, or the tiger?**

Frank Stockton

1834-1902

FRANCIS RICHARD STOCKTON, dean of American humorists of the Brownstone Age, was descended from an old family that settled in America in the middle seventeenth century, and one of his ancestors was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. In New York he was an editor on The Century Magazine and for eight years edited St. Nicholas. But most of his writing life was passed quietly in Nutley, New Jersey, where he dictated from a hammock.

Stockton was lame and never in good health, but always equable of temper. A very witty man, with a fund of good stories, he was excellent company and had many friends. He wrote several children's books, but the novels that made him famous were Rudder Grange, about a servant girl on a houseboat, and The Casting Away of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine, about two widows shipwrecked on an island in the Pacific. Like so many funny men, Stockton wrote slowly and painfully, often laboring as long as an hour for the right word. His humor stemmed from personal individuality and did not depend on dialect or colloquialism. A story of his, "The Lady or the Tiger?" caused a sensation when it came out in 1882, and was later made into a musical comedy. But "The Griffin and the Minor Canon" is much more typical of his best work.