

Eugene Delacroix, *Tiger and Snake*, 1858



****First Question First****

What is *your* immediate reaction to this artwork?

Trust it. Write about it. Use the guide sheet for help.

Continue reading for another perspective and journal questions.

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Excerpt from my journal:

A good cry. Fierce grief has been quietly building for how long now. After a lifetime of eating my emotions down you'd think I'd catch on quicker; well, maybe 5-6 days isn't so long. I could hardly make it to my seat before I realized what was necessary, what was exerting itself: a good cry. Missing Daddy so deeply. And not allowing myself to really go there as often as perhaps needed. I don't know. The relentless sadnesses now, George Floyd's murder tearing the scab off of what's been true and terrifying all along, Covid-19 killing 1000 people in this country everyday while the white house just pretends it's over, daily life constricted. So Daddy no longer living gets nudged to the side. Until it doesn't. Then the tiger clinches, guards against any perceived threat. What snake is really there/here though? A painful loss, a world without Daddy here in body. A snake bite of grief making its way through me. The good cry has softened my heart a bit, now feeling the fatigue of it. The fierce stance of the tiger feels true. By the time the pain in my heart makes itself so obvious that I can't ignore it anymore, it has veiled itself in irritation, edginess, territorialness, exaggerated internal dramas. I catch it before there's actual striking out, thank god, and sequester myself away, Kleenex box in reach. It's a start today, an unleashing of the fight/flight response. Feel/feel instead. And then there's nothing to clean up except soaked Kleenex. Fierce grief rising, asking for nothing more than a good cry.

Q.) The physical release of "a good cry" has been given to us all, a natural reaction to life's overwhelmingly sad moments. How do you feel when you keep yourself from crying? How do you feel when you give yourself the gift of a good cry?