

Jamie Brooke - The Tiger in the Drawing

When I was seven years old, a drawing appeared on our living room wall. Framed in white, the drawing portrayed eight living creatures; four human and four animal faces. On the right side of the drawing, the smallest of the four humans was an eerily accurate depiction of me. My lips parted slightly, my mouth upturned into a smile, the highlights in my hair represented by the shadowing effect of the drawing pencil.

Above me was a tiger, stoically staring down at me. She wasn't staring at the depiction of me in the photo like I was her meal, but rather she stared at me from where I stood in real life. I would stare back for hours, mesmerised by this beautiful animal, her stripes a badge of honour and the gentle enduring tilt of her head. "I am a fighter. I am here on purpose. And I am proud of who I am," she would whisper to me.

Later I asked my Mom what this drawing was.

'An intuitive artist drew this sketch based on a photo I gave to him of our family. He saw an animal in each of us, perhaps from another life, or perhaps from what's inside of us,' she said as she gazed at the dolphin above her drawn face.

I quietly took in my Mom's words. Later that day, I went back to the painting on my own and sat with the tiger. My tiger.

'I am a fighter. I am here on purpose. And I am proud of who I am,' I whispered back.