



Twelve-year-old Rob Horton has recently moved with his father from Jacksonville to a seedy motel in Lister, Florida. Ever since his mother's death, Rob has shut up his feelings in a big "suitcase" and clamped it down tight. He is determined that nothing will make him cry again – not the bullies who torment him at his new school, not the ugly rash on his legs, and especially not missing his mother, whom he is very skilled at not thinking about.

But then two extraordinary things happen: Rob discovers a real-life tiger, pacing back and forth in a cage near the motel where he lives. On that same day, he meets Sistine Bailey, a feisty, independent-minded girl who lets out her feelings as readily as he holds his in. As Rob and Sistine learn to trust each other and, ultimately, to be friends, they prove that some things – like memories, and heartache, and tigers – can't be locked up forever.