

SYNOPSIS of “The Golden Cage” - by Deborah Henson-Conant



The “Golden Cage” is a two-character, single-set play – A Mythical Musical Fable about a Bird-Person, **BORIS**, who’s spent a lifetime flying the world, on a quest in search of the legendary Golden Cage, “the sweet illusive glory of a place where you belong - the place where all the life you’ve lost is found”

When Boris finally discovers the cage, 500,000-feet in the air on the edge of a sheer granite cliff, the glorious cage is exactly as the legends described. Except for one thing: there’s a grumpy, reclusive Diva trapped inside it, **ALPHEA**, who claims to be a prisoner and that the cage is made of cement and iron.

Furious to have come so far only to have this delusional Diva stand in the way of a life’s - crowning achievement, Boris decides that if Alpea is living an illusion, it’s only right to use illusions to shatter it, and rightfully claim the cage.

To do that, Boris spins an intoxicating tale of beauty and freedom “on the outside,” convinces Alpea that the power to fly comes *after* you take the leap, then rips the bars from the cage, and coaxes Alpea to edge of the cliff. Terrified and exhilarated, Alpea begs Boris “Push me! Push me! Let me take the leap of believing!” So Boris gives a little push – and suddenly Alpea’s gone and the sound of crashes and screams echoes down the mountain.

Boris is horrified – “Did I push?? No! No! Alpea leapt!” But then suddenly Boris realizes, ‘It’s MINE!’ and, racing back into the cage, sets each bar back in place. *A safe home at long last!*

But is it?

Sickeningly, the cage slowly transforms into cement and iron. Now it’s Boris who’s trapped – and, wings shrivelling and disappearing, sinks into bitterness and guilt.

But what is that cry in the distance?? It’s Alpea soaring towards the cage with a glorious pair of golden wings, and a reawakened memory from childhood – the childhood of a Bird-person, with a father who told tales of a mythical Golden Cage, tales that inflamed Alpea’s heart and led to a lifelong quest to find the Cage. Only to be trapped, to lose those glorious wings and to forget how it all even happened.

“But the cage is not the trap” Alpea tells Boris “The trap is when you lock yourself inside. And the key is when someone reaches in ... and you reach back.”

And with these words Alpea releases Boris, who steps, trembling, to the edge of the cliff and whispers “Push me...” - and Alpea does.