

**KIRSTIE** from *Past Curfew*  
by Arthur M. Jolly  
Serio-comic  
F (teen)

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*Kirstie tells her friend about her mother's favorite story*

KIRSTIE

She's there, with her parents, and there's this guy standing next to them, watching the tigers. And the tigers aren't moving. They're like a rug, so this guy takes his cigarette, and he flicks it at them. Lit cigarette, bounces off the Momma tiger - and she like shrugs, gets up and walks away. The cigarette lands in this -- like a clump of dried grass, which catches fire. There's a little fire, burning inside the tiger pit. And the baby tiger comes over. And he's never seen fire before. Completely fascinated. He pats at it, and swipes at it. Like a cat playing. Mom says their paws must be real thick, because he keeps batting, and playing with this burning grass. And her Mom runs off to find a zookeeper and get the cigarette guy in trouble or whatever, and my Mom just watches the baby tiger trying to claw the burning grass. And finally he pounces, and tries to bite the flames. And that's when he gets burned. He leaps straight up in the air, yowling and screaming... and goes running off to his mother. My mom loves that story, because he goes running back to his Momma. That's like her go-to "I told you so" story...

*(A beat - a moment of discovery for Kirstie)*

It's stupid -- the whole thing. The tiger should've jumped in the moat. There was water right there. He ran the wrong way. All this time, my mom missed the whole point of the story. What's your Mom gonna do if you're on fire? Just get in the water.

END OF MONOLOGUE