

Crocodiles and Tigers

by [Christopher Fried](#) (January 2025)



The Tiger (Franz Marc, 1912)

Crocodiles and Tigers

It is the inalienable right of every man, woman, and child to wear khaki. –The Official Preppy Handbook

Proud crocodiles and tigers on the prowl
head to the beach, pacing to beat the stir
of early crowds with heads held high, their towels
draped over shoulders, and game mused as sure.

Bold crocodiles and tigers spring their hunt
for what appeals to their swift eyes, the barest
of flesh that poses and struts oceanfront
boardwalks: the darkened, the browned, and the fairest.

These leering crocodiles and tigers weigh
their choice and stride away from the boardwalk,
but while they chase, there's nothing to allay
lured carnivores who sniff the crowded dock.

And if these crocodiles and tigers schmooze
their prey aboard moored yachts, what then? The chase
returns as they pop collars, down their booze,
begin their practiced chats, then play straight-faced.

Sly crocodiles and tigers slip their smiles
amidst sophomoric scenes aped on the sea,
and yet these hunts will go on as cheap wiles
of cads tempt targets—this they'll guarantee.

Imagination Questing

More than a boy's adventure, going back
beyond these cynical times, those days pointed
to no end of rough play, staged cul-de-sac-
placed action scenes rehearsed, and whips anointed

with blood by accident. Feigned punches didn't connect, but to tense mothers there's bare dangers and rules not always said, with jests forbidden by parents shushing down raised party clangor.

At bedtime, tired but keen, my father voiced known Bible stories: welcome tales of swords, sweet frankincense, and how Israel rejoiced—the Ark revealed the presence of the Lord!

And though the Ark is gone, still stands the credence that mocked joys bring angelic intercedence.

Golden Streets

The early morning flight across
the States was not the worst or awful
at all as turbulence just tossed
a little, and the food, not offal
that's normally rolled out on trays,
did much to settle scabrous nerves
left thrilled by this westbound airway
set course to L.A.'s relaxed verve,
and as I'm cruising steadily
north to The Moment Hotel, time
of day was stressed, but what's to see
but homeless tents and scenic grime.
With windows up, it's not that there's
some smell or any fears that crooks
will violently wake and stare,
but just this is where my eyes look,
and even the starred Walk of Fame
won't scintillate as bright as streams
of urination that are aimed

at tourists on these streets that teem
with manners left to be desired,
and still youths come, believing stars
can still be found and those admired
will not be thought of as bizarre.

Nagel Ladies

Chromatic models pop from every page,
entice with Deco smiles while coal-black hair
and voguish bleach-white skin are posed, assuage
his appetite for something debonair.

It's wild that man can turn the drawn 2D
to visualized 3D as angles shaped
to bounding curves that settle down as draped,
transforming print into reality.

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Christopher Fried lives in Richmond, VA and works as an ocean shipping logistics analyst. A poetry collection, *All Aboard the Timesphere*, was published in 2013 by Alabaster Leaves/Kelsay Books. His novel, *Whole Lot of Hullabaloo: A Twenty-First Century Campus Phantasmagoria*, was published in 2020. Recently, he was an advisor on the 1980s science fiction film documentary *In Search of Tomorrow* (2022). His recent poetry has been published in *Society of Classical Poets*, *Snakeskin*, and *WestWard Quarterly*, and a new collection,

Analog Synthesis, is planned for publication by White Violet Press/Kelsay Books in Spring 2025.

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