

# sonnet on life's dangers

*Linda Sillitoe*

cop and father, he cautioned us of more  
than boogeymen and fire. in case of snakes,  
freeze where you are, same for skunks and por-  
cupines. brave enough to tromp on cracks,  
still, protectively, he didn't tell  
the grownup side:

how at every comfort zone  
a snake must suffer silence, strain and swell  
and burst again, then nakedly slide stone.  
how, when skunkly instinct flares, you bravely turn  
in the alarm in case none else should dare —  
then find you misperceived (and befouled the air).  
or even as porcupine outshrieks his ecstasy  
he plummets backward out of the trysting tree.

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