

SNAKES!



By
Robert Prins

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August 2023

His eyes boggled as he stared around him. From a thousand different places, eyes seemed to stare back at him. Cold, unblinking eyes. It was as if they had watched him walk into their domain. He could feel the pull, drawn in almost involuntarily. They were mesmerizing, practically hypnotic.

He eyed a giant green crocodile. It stared straight back at him, it's jaws slightly open, waiting for him to make the first move. Around the green crocodile, there seemed to be hundreds of other crocodiles, some sitting by themselves and others piled up on top of each other.

Fitzroy broke the stare, but as he looked away, another sight bewitched him. He shuddered. Worms. Not your usual worms. Bright, fat, neon-coloured worms that compelled him to stare. He shuddered. Worms gave him the creeps.

A feeling of being watched made Fitzroy spin around. The googly eyes of a hundred multi-coloured frogs stared at him from behind. Fitzroy gasped. He could almost hear them croaking his name.

Where should he look? Everywhere there were creatures staring at him, trying to entice him, casting their spells over him. Spiders, dinosaurs, penguins, wild

animals, fish, eyeballs. He knew he should walk out, but he couldn't.

Then he saw the snakes. Their piercing eyes hypnotised him. His tongue wet his lips. Captured, he walked slowly toward them like a zombie with a mission. Drawn inescapably toward the snakes, Fitzroy took the first steps that would begin to seal his fate. His tongue moved in and out of his mouth as he moved as if tasting the air. Another two steps and he stood before them, his tongue out. A drop of saliva hit the floor.

As if on cue, a voice woke him from his trance. "What do you want, Sonny?"

Fitzroy jumped. He stared up at the stubbled face above him.

"Well, what would you like?"

"S-s-s-snakes please." Stammered Fitzroy.

A gloved hand reached into the glass compartment right down among the snakes and picked up a cluster of the long and toxic creatures. It dropped them all at once into a bag.

"Can I have a green one too?" asked Fitzroy.

The hand returned into the snake pit and singled out two bright green snakes, quickly pulling them out and dropping them into the bag with the others.

Fitzroy watched as the big man with the gloved hand reached over the counter.

"Two dollars fifty, please."

Fitzroy counted the coins from his pocket and handed them over to the man.

The gloved hand returned with the bag. Fitzroy's eyes grew big. Had he really just bought a bag of snakes? He reached upward toward the bulging paper bag and smiled to himself. He would have to eat them all on the way home. He would never have been allowed in the sweet shop if his mother had been with him.

SNAKES!

Eyes everywhere.

Drawn in by their hypnotic pull, will Fitzroy be able to pull away from the forces that have bewitched him?



Published by

Thinky Things

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