

The Snake Trying

W W E Ross

The Summary

In this poem, a harmless green - coloured snake tries to save itself from being hit by a person who is chasing it with a stick to kill it. The poet says that the snake is harmless even to children. People fear snakes and when they see one, they try to kill it with a stick. The snake tries to save itself and hides behind the green - coloured bushes of marshy plants growing in the water. It hides in the ripples of the water body in order to save itself. The snake disappears behind the marshy plants.

Literary devices

- 1. Rhyme scheme is absent. The poem is written in free verse.*
- 2. Transferred epithet: the adjective used with a noun refers to a noun other than the one with which it is used.*
Pursuing stick - pursuing refers to the person who is holding the stick and not the stick itself.
- 3. Alliteration: the repetition of a consonant sound in 2 or more consecutive words.*
He is harmless - 'h'

Short questions

1. What is the snake trying to escape from?
2. Is it a harmful snake? Describe the snake.
3. What does the poet wish for the snake?
4. Where was the snake before anyone saw it and chased it away?
5. How is the snake able to save himself?

Long questions

1. The poet loves animals, then who could have thrown the stick? What does the poet say and feel about the snake?
2. In the poem, 'The Snake Trying' what is the snake trying? Is he successful? What does the poet tell us about him?

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1. "The snake trying.....graceful are his shapes!"
 - A. What is the snake trying to escape from?
 - B. How does the poet describe the body of the snake?
 - C. How does the poet find the shapes of the snake?
 - D. What does 'pursuing' mean?
2. "He glides..... harmless even to children."
 - A. Where and why does the snake glide through?
 - B. Where does the poet wish for the snake to hide?
 - C. Is the snake harmful? What is its colour?
 - D. What are 'reeds'?
3. "Along the sand.....the green slim reeds"
 - A. Whom does 'he' refer to?
 - B. Why was the snake chased away?
4. "O let him go.....he is harmless even to children."
 - A. Name the poem and poet of these lines.
 - B. Why does the poet want him to go?