

Writer's Corner



THE NOBLE SNAKE

By Tony Lindsay

My wife swears that any snake, no matter the size or stripe, is a shoulderless fiend lurking in ambush. Snakes without venom kill by the cruelest method of all—sheer terror.

She lays into me. "What men like you don't understand is that most fatal heart attacks occurring outdoors are caused by the slimy, slithering sadists."

"But, dear, snakes aren't slimy."

"They are, too! The only good snake is one that has been dead for a month, and I still wouldn't touch it with a stick."

"Honey, why don't snakes have a right to exist?"

"Why don't birds fly backwards? Because they don't. That's why."

"But, baby, I'm not sure you're being reasonable."

"My brother has more sense than you. He says that snakes can hear him coming, and the sight of one causes his butt to want to chew grass."

"Yeah, he's a clever guy. No doubt about it. By the way, snakes don't have ears. They don't actually hear."

"R-r-right. And frogs don't actually jump."

A wise man would get out of this conversation, but I push on. "All snakes are not evil. We owe everything, even the procreation of humans, to a venturesome snake."

"How can you say such a thing?"

"Hear me out, dear. In the beginning, Adam and Eve ran around in a lush garden called Eden. The lovely Eve was bare-butt naked, but Adam paid her no attention. A humble snake lived in Eden—a garden snake. The poor snake didn't have a pit to hiss in.

But he was big on sin. After an apple-tasting episode, Adam began to notice Eve. A jiggle here and a jiggle there and, well, ever since, we've had sin and sex, and we owe it all to that noble serpent. Snakes are just another one of God's creatures."

Her eyes narrow; she purses her lips. "That's just what they want you to think."

"Who?"

"Snakes, for heaven's sake."

"Oh, silly me."

Her voice moves up an octave. "Snakes are not the creation of God or nature."

"But, sweetie, are you sure about that?"

"Absolutely."

"I'm afraid I don't understand."

"And I'm not surprised."

Her eyes squint to mere slits. "The slithering demons fled from the nether regions of the underworld to stalk helpless women and dull, mindless men. Snakes were spawned by Satan."

Pushing my luck, I ask, "Where would we be without that original snake? Without sex we would not have had all the generations that have followed Adam and Eve. I risk a little pinch. "And you and I would not have those tender moments that we enjoy."

"That's it! You don't understand a darn thing about snakes and not much about anything else. I'm not speaking to you. And you know what I mean."

Tony Lindsay is a local author and member of Winston-Salem Writers. His first book, "Tattletale Roadhouse and Social Club," is a riotous collection of vignettes rooted in the Deep South. Tony's new book, "Lucas Lee," is a novel told in stories about the forbears and descendants of a slave at the time of emancipation. His stories have been published in World Audience Magazine, The Houston Literary Journal, Deep South Magazine, People of Few Words (England) and other periodicals. For more information, visit <https://tattletaleroadhouse.wordpress.com>.

