

The Rattlesnake

A slight movement from the bottom of the dark pit suddenly attracted my attention; a deadly rattlesnake had slightly rearranged its coils as my shadow had passed over it. Trying to keep my terrified breaths even and calm, I began to back slowly away from the venomous monstrosity. I was too late: it had me in its sight...

With tremendous speed, the angular head whipped round - allowing the viper's unblinking eyes to trap me in their malevolent stare. Holding its head completely still, the roughly-scaled camouflaged coils began to steadily unfurl, revealing the disturbing characteristic tail with its alternating black and white stripes. Purposefully, it began to shake. The chilling rattle filled the air. The snake's neck began to arch as it raised it into a striking position.

Slowly, in an almost leisurely fashion – as if it were relishing my fear – the thin lips opened and a cavernous, glistening pink mouth gaped open. The yawn revealed long, tubular fangs, already dripping with venom in anticipation of its strike. My body eventually awakened from its horrified stupor and allowed me to stumble backwards to the edge of the hole. I leaped upwards and hauled myself out to safety. I had escaped my first encounter.