Beware of Snakes
by fish_from_murderland

Summary

One of the lesser-known eccentricities of A.Z. Fell & Co. is that it is likely to find a very large and very threatening-looking black snake lounging in the shop. It became one of the better-known eccentricities of the book shop when a large sign reading “Beware of snake” appeared above the doors.

Notes

This is inspired by a comment on my other fic Of Bookshops, Pesky Customers and Large Snakes but it is not necessary to have read that to understand this

I'm a dumbass and still haven't figured out how to do the footnotes sorry

See the end of the work for more notes

One of the lesser-known eccentricities of A.Z. Fell & Co. is that, especially during the winter months, it is likely to find a very large and very threatening-looking black snake lounging somewhere in the shop. It became one of the better-known eccentricities of the book shop, when, sometime mid-November, a large sign reading “Beware of snake” appeared\(^1\) above the doors.

The sign, however, did not mention that the snake could often be found wrapped completely around the bookshop owner, or that it will appear out of nowhere at the most ill-opportune time to hiss at you. It also did not warn people of the risks of a large snake falling from the ceiling and landing on your head if you so much as think about buying a book. After all, there is only so much...
Within a week of the sign’s appearance, quite a number of people had come to the bookshop just to see the snake, and at least thirteen Karens had threatened to call pest control. The bookshop owner, as it seemed, finally learnt what a selfie is, from a couple of teenagers excited to be able to be in close enough proximity with a very large snake and be not-terrified enough to take a picture with it.

Ophidiophobic people have learned, very quickly, to avoid the radiator in cold weather, because there is guaranteed to a snake close enough to it to hiss right in your ear but not so close that you can see it. On slightly warmer days, sensible people have learned to avoid any sunny patches as well the radiator, because the snake will there, and you will trip over it and hit somewhere unfortunate.

The sign was quite safe from vandalism, but there was this one time, when three young men, fooling around, decided to steal the sign as a practical joke. A large black snake had turned up in their shared flat soon after. The sign reappeared the next morning.

The snake was quite happy about the attention he was receiving. Making customers fly into bookshelves is always a great leisurely activity, and, even though he would never admit that under threat of discorporation, he does like having children around. And the children most certainly love having a snake around.

Fin

Footnotes

1 It did, in fact, simply appear one day, but no humans were there to witness it.

2 However, if you are intelligent enough, and the correct type of intelligent, you should be able to read all of that in the subtext and leave the books alone.

3 Miraculously, all of them seemed to have forgotten about it.

4 This time, it did not, in fact, pop up from the ether. Three terrified-looking young men had left it there, along with a lengthy but anonymous apology letter.

5 Not that it would make any difference.

6 Technically, he is not a snake, but “snake” is less of a mouthful than “occult/infernal being with
End Notes

I did not write this instead of sleeping be proud of me.

And yes I did in fact Google what the phobia of snakes is called. And no I can’t pronounce it. I can’t pronounce a lot of English words.

My Tumblr is here.

If you leave a kudos, comment or bookmark on my work, I will literally die for you.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!