

iii -- *The little Dinosaur and his big sister.*

Two little dinosaurs one day  
set out on a journey side by side.  
One was timid and dreamy-eyed  
and he raised his head in a hopeful way:

*Will you (th)ing me a (th)ong?*

She looked down – quite at a loss  
for words and terribly cross:

*What are you (t')inkin' of? Don't be a fool.  
We never (th)ing (th)ong(th) on the way to (th)chool!*

With a keenly felt and tragic pout  
his nethermost lip came curling out,  
but sister swiftly took firm charge  
her pointed finger looming large:

*If you (th)tart making an unholy show,  
the bigger boy(th) will give you hell  
and I will have you know  
(d)ey'll be blackguardin' me a(th) well!*

The little fellow turned his head;  
he sadly gazed and quietly said:

*- Would (d)ey be (th)ayin' bad (t')ing(th) to you?*

*- You'd better believe it boy. (D)ey would too!*

With head held high and lip uncurled  
he was ready for a brave new world  
and long before the day was out  
he was able to push and shove and shout.

Now his sister had warned from the very start  
that snakes were mean and smiley and smart,  
but he wasn't prepared for the venomous glee  
of a villainous snake,  
who jeered at the Dinosaur family  
one day near the end of break.

Little brother called for an honest fight,  
but the snake lashed out with fearsome guile  
and then, with a curious smile,  
drew back to inspect

every delicate effect  
of his well-placed bite.

The little fellow fell to the ground  
and the cowardly snake, with sickening skill,  
got ready for the kill.  
Then, as from a distant heavenly shore,  
he heard big sister's thundering roar:

*Beat hi(th) dirty little hide  
and leave no(tt)in' in(th)ide!*

The devious and gloating snake  
had lowered his guard - a stupid mistake -  
and little brother gave him a clatter on the head  
and his eyes went black and his nostrils bled  
and the whole school started to rejoice  
as he went home howling at the top of his voice.

\* \* \*

Years and decades lumbered by  
but big sister never forgot  
the day when she saw him swiftly fly  
like an arrow to hit the spot.

It was better by far than the glorious day  
when, with frowning resolute flair,  
he took the slitter in mid-air  
and sent it curving sweetly under the bar.

Each year, when his family came to stay  
they drove in a smart but reliable car  
and the children saluted passers by  
with a wave of the hand and a hesitant 'hi.'

They listened with bemused respect  
as their aunt would brazenly connect  
her rough-hewn world to theirs:

*In (th)pite of his wife with her elegant air(th)  
and his hou(th)e with the glorious(th) view  
of he (th)ea on Merrion Avenue,  
I'll alway[th] remember that day when he (th)parred  
with a (th)ilppery devil in the old (th)chool yard.  
He'(th) come a long way but, tru(t') to tell,  
he'(th) (th)ill fightin' (th)nakes and he'(th) fightin' well.*

On hearing this enchanted lore  
from an ancient far off place  
they were eager to find out more  
on the journey home,  
but all their curiosity  
broke like crashing foam  
along the silent dignity  
of dad's determined face.

They retreated to the soft refrain  
of tyres swishing in the rain,  
and window wipers waving their hands in the night -  
right, left, right, left, right.