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The driver of the police car got out, opened the passenger door, told me to get in. My father rode up front beside the driver.

The police car went slowly down the lane. The whole lane was unpaved back then, just wide enough for one car at a time, a puddly, **precipitous**, bumpy way, with flints sticking up

Dictionary X-Ray Wikipedia

pre-cip-i-tous /pri'sipitəs/

* *adj.*

1 dangerously high or steep: the precipitous cliffs of the North Atlantic coast.

<SPECIAL USAGE> [of a change to a worse situation or condition] sudden and dramatic: the end of the war led to a precipitous decline in exports.

2 [of an action] done suddenly and without careful consideration: precipitous intervention.

<DERIVATIVES> pre-cip-i-tous-ly *adv.*

pre-cip-i-tous-ness *n.*

<ORIGIN> mid 17th cent.: from obsolete French

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