

Mosey Dawdle and the Great Snake

Reg Down
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Mosey Dawdle went awandering. He crawled through the brush until he met a highway. He gazed up and down the sinewy street, aghast at its length.

“Oh, Great Snake,” cried Mosey Dawdle, “whither goest thou?”

But all the highway said was ‘whoosh, whoosh, whoosh’ as the cars swept by.

Mosey Dawdle followed the highway, he lumbered for a long, long time. Mosey Dawdle went a long way for a tortoise, but not so far for the highway.

“O, Great Snake,” said Mosey Dawdle, “thou art so long. Surely you are as wise as you are long. Tell me, where are you heading?”

‘Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh,’ said the highway and that is all it spake.

Mosey Dawdle trundled along, along he trundled, trundling along until night fell. The highway began to glow. Red, white and blue lights flowed past; sometimes flashing, sometimes not, they lit the night.

“O, Great Snake,” said Mosey Dawdle, “your lights are so bright! Where are they heading in the night? Are they going to the stars? They sound to me like rushing cars!”

But the highway only whoosh-whoosh-whooshed, its lights snaking on and on through the darkness.

For weeks Mosey Dawdle followed the highway. Finally it turned into a dirt road, then a track, then a path that petered out among the forest trees. The trees were tall and straight. They said ‘hush-hush-hush’ when the wind swayed their tops. They spoke and whispered to each other.

"Your tail," said Mosey Dawdle. "O Snake, I have found your tail. That is not whither thou goest."

Mosey Dawdle turned around. He crawled back down the trail to the dirt road to the highway that said 'whoosh-whoosh-whoosh'. He lumbered for weeks until the highway became a freeway and the freeway ran into a city. The buildings towered over Mosey Dawdle. The skyscrapers blocked the sky. The noise was incredible. The freeway leaped a river. It changed into a boulevard. It stopped in front of a white building. It had a dome and columns. A great crowd was gathered before the building. Mosey Dawdle pushed his way through. People stepped on him. People tripped on him and cursed him. One child sat on him and laughed. Finally Mosey Dawdle came to the front of the crowd. A loud cheer went up. A man walked onto a balcony of the white house and waved. Mosey Dawdle stared. He stared and stared and stared. Finally the penny dropped in Mosey Dawdle's slow head.

"O Great Snake, you lead from nature to the human being," said Mosey Dawdle. "Your tail lies in the forest, while a man lives in your head. But, Great Snake, I still don't know whither thou goest?"

The Snake did not hear his question. All around the white house the people were raising their voices. They shouted, and no matter how loud, or how many the voices, Mosey Dawdle didn't hear the answer to the question: 'Where are you going, O Great Snake?'