

Mosey Dawdle makes the World

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Mosey Dawdle was in a quandary. He wanted to go for a walk, but was too huge. He was so huge – for this was in the very beginning, the very, very beginning – that he had nothing at all to walk on. And the reason he had nothing to walk on was because he was as big as the world. In fact, Mosey Dawdle was the world, floating around the sun. But as beautiful as he found the sun he really needed to go for a walk.

“Maybe I shall meet someone if I go a-wandering,” thought Mosey Dawdle. “I am tired of being alone with the sun shining in my face all day.”

So Mosey Dawdle shook himself. He shook and shoved and grunted. Out flew all the rocks of the world into a great pile. Mosey Dawdle kept only a small part of the rocks to make himself some bones and a shell. Then he went for a-wandering. He walked and walked and walked. Eventually he traveled round the whole earth, but it was all a bit boring. The only thing he saw were rocks.

“Rocks, rocks, rocks! Nothing but rocks,” grumbled Mosey Dawdle, disappointed.

So he started to shake again. He shivered and shook and grunted. Soon he had tossed all the plants of the world out of himself. Now Mosey Dawdle was even smaller than before. He went for a walk. He walked among the trees, across meadows and pastures—he even nibbled on lettuce. This was the first time Mosey Dawdle had ever felt hungry and the first time he’d ever eaten a meal.

But Mosey Dawdle was still not satisfied. While things were better, he still had not met anyone to talk to. So after his meal of lettuce, he shook and shoved and grunted. He grunted and shook and one by one the animals crawled out from under his shell. Out they came, two by two, monkeys and lions and kangaroos. When he was done Mosey Dawdle was small. Much smaller than he’d been before – but he was still bigger than the lion, he was still taller than the giraffe, he was even greater than a whale in the sea.

Mosey Dawdle wandered. He had a good wander around the earth and wondered greatly at all the animals that had come out from under his shell.

“Oh, but none of them can speak,” said Mosey Dawdle, dissatisfied. “The buffalo bellows because he is full of himself, the monkey chatters but never makes sense, and the parrot squawks in my ear and drives me deaf.”

On and on Mosey Dawdle complained about having no one to talk to. But when at last he’d finished he felt something stir inside him. He felt the top of his shell being lifted like a lid. Out climbed a hoard of two legged, naked creatures. They had neither hide nor hair—except for a mop that sat on top of their funny round heads. Some of these creatures were pink and some were black; some were golden brown. They poured out from under Mosey Dawdle’s shell. They were extraordinary. They ran around blushing and making clothes at a furious pace—some even grabbed fig leaves and made do with that!

“There, that’s better,” the creatures declared as soon as they were clothed. “But who are we?” they asked. “What shall we call ourselves?” They were a ragtag bunch. They were not at all like the animals. None of them looked alike, and all of them dressed differently. But no one knew the answer to the question. So they called themselves ‘Whomans’, for they didn’t really know who they were.

Mosey Dawdle looked up at the Whomans. He’d shrunk so much when they left his shell that he was smaller than them by far. But that didn’t bother Mosey Dawdle, for all of them could speak! “Wonderful,” he thought. “Now I can have a decent conversation.”

Mosey Dawdle tried to go to the Whomans, but they were always rushing around, busy-busy-busy. His shell so heavy, that all he could do was plod along inch by inch trying to catch up with them. But at last, after many, many years, Mosey Dawdle came upon a Whoman sitting on the ground. She looked wise and intelligent. She had questions dancing in her eyes. Around her stood her followers.

“O, Tortoise,” cried the Whoman as Mosey Dawdle approached her. “You look old and wise. Tell me, how was the world made? Tell me, how did the rocks, the trees, the animals and us Whomans come to be on the earth?”

Mosey Dawdle nodded his head sagely. Here at last was someone intelligent to talk to. He opened his mouth to speak ... but all that came out was a sigh, a great deep sigh that went back to the beginning of the world. He tried speaking again, and again, but he only sighed like the wind in the trees.

“See,” said the Whoman to her followers as she walked away. “That one looks old and ancient, but he knows nothing. He cannot even speak! There’s definitely no wisdom in him.”