

# *Speedy Weedy, Mosey Dawdle and Roger Dodger's Fingers and Toes*

*Reg Down*  
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**S**peedy Weedy Hare was boasting again. "I am this and I am that," he declared, and this and that were always the best and grandest things in the world: the fastest, the sleekest, the smartest, the handsomest, the bestest and most brilliantest. That's who Speedy Weedy thought he was. Finally the animals had enough.

"Speedy Weedy, you are full of hot air," said the animals. "You boast and brag, but you can't even beat Mosey Dawdle Tortoise at a race. How can that be?"

"Mosey Dawdle can't beat me in a race," said Speedy Weedy, puffing himself up and sticking out his chest. "I am far faster. Much faster. I'll even give him a head start."

"What kind of head start?" asked the animals.

"We'll race to yonder tree," said Speedy Weedy. "It's not very far at all. I'll be there in just a second or two. After ready-set-go you can count the fingers and toes of Roger-Dodger Raccoon. Only then will I start to race."

To this the animals agreed.

So Mosey Dawdle and Speedy Weedy lined up behind Slinky Slanky Snake who agreed to lay himself straight on the ground as a starting line.

"You call ready-set-go," said Speedy Weedy to Mosey Dawdle. "That will give you another advantage over me. Then you'll really know that I am the fastest, the speediest, the swiftest and lissomest creature in the whole wide world."

"Fine," said Mosey Dawdle, and cried: "Ready? Set? GO!" and off he raced towards the tree as slowly as can be.

"One! Two! Three!" shouted the animals, standing around Roger-Dodger and counting his fingers. "Four! Five! Six!"

By six Mosey Dawdle had crawled half way across Slinky Slanky Snake and Slinky Slanky was thinking that this would be the last time he'd agree to be a starting line.

"Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!" shouted the animals.

Now Mosey Dawdle was past Slinky Slanky Snake and speeding as slowly as possible towards the tree. Speedy Weedy sat behind the line and grinned. He puffed up his chest and chuckled to himself.

"Eleven! Seventeen! Fourteen!" shouted the animals.

"No, no, no," said Hungry Coyote, "you guys can't count at all! Twelve comes after ten, not thirteen."

"That's not true," said Bunny-Wunny. "Fifteen comes after ten. That's what my mother told me."

"What a load of crock," said Foxy Woxy. "I am the cleverest and I should know. Nineteen comes after ten and sixteen after fourteen."

"That's bull," snorted Billy Bull, pawing the ground. "What kind of smarty pants are you, Foxy Woxy? Fourteen comes after ten."

"This is all too impossible," said Weasel-Diesel. He was so annoyed that he nipped Billy Bull on the foot and Billy Bull chased him around for a while until they got tired and came back to the other animals.

"Hurry up and count," said Speedy Weedy. He was getting nervous because Mosey Dawdle was more than half way to the tree.

"Let's count his toes first," said Ribbet Dibbet Toad. "We have already counted his fingers so maybe it'll be easier."

So the animals started counting Roger Dodger's toes.

"One! Two! Three! Four! Five! Six! Seven! Eight! Nine! Ten!" they shouted.

By now Mosey Dawdle was getting close to the tree.

"Eleven! Twelve! Thirteen! Fourteen! Fifteen!" counted the animals on Roger Dodger's fingers.

Speedy Weedy got ready to race. He hunkered down and dug his toes into the ground to get a better grip.

"Sixteen! Seventeen! Eighteen! Nineteen!" cried the animals. Then they stopped. They didn't know what came after nineteen. "Mosey Dawdle! Mosey Dawdle! What comes after nineteen?" they shouted.

"Twenty," cried Mosey Dawdle, touching the tree.