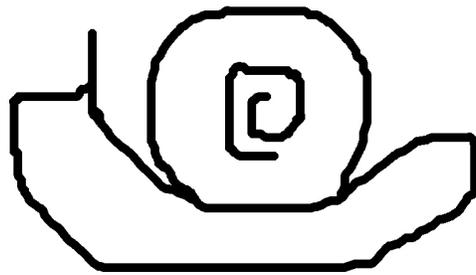


The  
Snail  
Twins



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BY

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# The Snail Twins

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There were once two twin boys, who, like boys do, loved to play with small creatures. Pushing each other further and further, they spent hours pulling the legs off spiders and - their favourite pastime of all on misty summer mornings - squashing crunchy snails beneath their feet.

Years later, feeling remorse for their earlier deeds, the twins went in search of their own truth.

One twin, who left to discover the world, met on his travels a native Indian who, amongst other things, taught him respect for his fellow creatures. Finding self-forgiveness for his earlier deeds, the twin spent the rest of his days, enjoying life and roaming the globe, taking pleasure in the beauty of the natural world.

The second twin, not at all impressed with his brother's shallow absolution, chose to spend his life in penitence. Working for the welfare of animals and, at moments of weariness, reminding himself of his earlier deeds, which spurred him to work longer and harder for his sacrament.

Many years later, finding themselves approaching the pearly gates, they were met by an Angel. Opening the doors to heaven, she gestured for the travelling twin to pass through.

Perturbed at the unflinching gesture, the second twin exclaimed: "I have spent my whole life working for the welfare of animals. How is it fair that he should enter the kingdom of heaven so easily?"

The Angel smiled at the twin and replied simply; "Because forgiveness, especially for one's self, is the highest form of love there is," adding, "And, truly, there is nowhere else to go."

The twin frowned. "But what of eternal damnation?" he protested. "I have spent a life of penance, working off my youthful sins in preparation for this moment."

The angel took his hand and walked with him in through the gates of heaven, whilst gently replying; "Yes, I know. It must have been hell."