

<div style="text-align: center;"></div> <p class="MsoNormal"></p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;"><strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">◆Look Mommy, look at the funny people!◆◆ But Mommy only sighs ◆Yes dear◆ and stays engrossed in her Woman & Home, so little Johnny turns to me ◆Look Mister, what funny people! Do you think it◆s a film, or maybe aliens?◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">We are the only occupants of the observation car at the end of the train, and little Johnny, precocious little Johnny, has been commenting non-stop about the passing scenery. But something is definitely going on - the train is stopping and actually reversing. So I put down my ◆Illustrated Fairways of the World◆ and step out onto the open-air platform, Johnny close on my heels.</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: center;"></p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">And there they are, <strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">a group of shuffling creatures, very hairy, almost like in Planet of the Apes, but much more human, definitely human. <strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">And they speak!◆◆Howzit◆, in chorus. But I did not see any lips move. Johnny and I answer in unison: ◆We are on a journey to <strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">@paradise#, you know where everybody is always happy, and we would be grateful for any directions you can give us.◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">Their leader, an impressively sculpted individual with beautiful beetling brows and a fine◆ line in personal fragrance, ponders and then finally pronounces: ◆There may be a place like that which you can reach <strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">after going inward, and then outward. It can be as close as the song of an orchid in bloom, and far as the scent of the moon.◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">

font-size: 14pt;">Whilst I am trying to digest this, Johnny goes direct: <strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;">◆Well Mister, how many miles is it and on what compass bearing?◆<strong style="mso-bidi-font-weight: normal;"></p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">Old Beetle Brows isn't fazed: ◆Wrong questions, young man.No journey worthy of the name can be described with miles and bearings,but maybe those are your names for hope and vision? Like I said, you must first go inward, and then◆◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">Mommy, a school teacher at all times, even when travelling, cannot contain herself: ◆My dear Mr Shaggy, don't be ridiculous. Ever since the Pharaohs invented numbers and maths five thousand years ago◆ for assessing taxes on properties which had been altered by the yearly flooding of the Nile, our civilizations have gone from strength to strength. Do not tell us that numbers are not good to define a journey!"</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">There is muttering amongst the Hairy ones, and even without seeing any lip movements I understand the gist of it:◆We◆ve had none of these numbers for ever (actually one hundred thousand years) and still we are plenty strong enough to go and sort out the pesky Neanderthals up in the Cold Country. If numbers are so great, why do they want to go to this happy paradise place? Do they really believe numbers will take them there?◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal" style="text-align: justify;">But before I can tell them that without numbers we would never<span

style="color: #646464; font-size: 14pt;">◆have◆achieved car petrol◆consumptions below 6 liter/100km, nor increased productivity to the point◆where (in South◆◆Africa) all our needs are produced by only 60% of the workforce, the train starts up again,◆and◆◆it is little Johnny who has the last word: I don't think they are so smart. Without numbers,◆how would we know when we are better off?"◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">◆</p> <p class="MsoNormal">◆</p> <p>{loadposition funnypeople}</p>