

The Ribbon Snake



Many many years ago, near a stream, there lived a variety of water loving animals. One of them was a snake who loved to swim. The snake was really good at gliding across the water. But the snake wasn't a happy snake. The reason it wasn't happy was because it had been born a bright, solid, creamy-white color. This meant that it stood out against the blue of the water and the green of the plants and predators like otters, raccoons, and snapping turtles could see it very easily. So the snake was always slithering away and hiding so it wouldn't get eaten. It could

never venture out into the stream to swim without being scared for its life!

The snake shuddered as it remembered the time it had been gliding across the stream on what seemed like a peaceful day and got lost in its own thoughts. Suddenly a dark shape appeared in the water below. The snake looked down and saw two bulging eyes and a gaping mouth swimming up towards him. He managed to dart into some plants near the waters edge, just as the mouth of a big fish broke the surface of the water. The snake had only just narrowly escaped being eaten!

So the snake was desperate to figure out a way to swim without being seen...

There was a bridge near the stream that people sometimes walked over, and one day a group of children crossed the bridge looking like they'd just come from a party. Some were holding balloons and ribbons. The children were laughing and playing as they crossed the bridge and didn't notice that they dropped a few dark colored ribbons. As soon as they dropped them the snake had an idea. It darted out to where the ribbons landed and grabbed them in its mouth. It thought, "If I could somehow attach these ribbons to my body then it would help me to camouflage!"

The first thing the snake tried was to wrap itself in the ribbons, but it soon got very tangled and nearly tied itself in a knot. It needed a better way to attach them that didn't involve wrapping.

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That's when out of nowhere something dropped on the snake's head. It was something very gooey and sticky! He looked up and realized he was underneath a pine tree that was oozing out some sap. The sap was almost like glue. "Aha!" thought the snake. It took the ribbons and stuck them to the top of its head where the drop of sap was. Then it went up the pine tree and dipped its tail in more gooey sap and stuck the other ends of the ribbons to its tail.

Now the snake looked like it had dark brown stripes running down its back, which covered up most of the creamy white. It was camouflaged! And so it put it to the test... it went to the stream and began to glide across the surface slowly and quietly. It noticed a heron at the edge and decided to try to sneak past it... As it glided past, the heron didn't even notice the snake was there! The ribbon camouflage was a total success. The snake could finally swim without being seen and it was so happy it decided to call himself by a new name... the ribbon snake.

The End