From "Dust Tracks on a Road"

Zora Neale Hurston

[F]or a long time I gloated over the happy secret that when I played outdoors in the moonlight, the moon followed me, whichever way I ran. The moon was so happy when I came out to play that it ran shining and shouting after me like a pretty puppy dog. The other children didn’t count.

But I was rudely shaken out of this when I confided my happy secret to Carrie Roberts, my chum. It was cruel. She not only scorned my claim, she said that the moon was paying me no mind at all. The moon, my own happy private-playing moon, was out in its play yard to race and play with her.

We disputed the matter with hot jealousy, and nothing would do but we must run a race to prove which one the moon was loving. First, we both ran a race side by side, but that proved nothing because we both contended that the moon was going that way on account of us. I just knew that the moon was there to be with me, but Carrie kept on saying that it was herself that the moon preferred. So then it came to me that we ought to run in opposite directions so that Carrie could come to her senses and realize the moon was mine. So we both stood with our backs to our gate, counted three and tore out in opposite directions.

“Look! Look, Carrie!” I cried exultantly. “You see the moon is following me!”

“Aw, youse a tale-teller! You know it’s chasing me.”

So Carrie and I parted company, mad as we could be with each other. When the other children found out what the quarrel was about, they laughed it off. They told me the moon always followed them. The unfaithfulness of the moon hurt me deeply. My moon followed Carrie Roberts. My moon followed Mathilda Clarke and Julia Mosely, and Oscar and Teedy Miller. But after a while, I ceased to ache over the moon’s many loves. I found comfort in the fact that though I was not the moon’s exclusive friend, I was still among those who showed the moon which way to go. That was my earliest conscious hint that the world didn’t tilt under my footfalls, nor careen over one-sided just to make me glad.