

## A NEW SONG

They covered ground quickly. Sunset was approaching. Gradually they were climbing in height. A new mountain was ahead. Surprisingly, though the path was getting steeper, Aaron hardly felt the difference except for a few really tough places.

A lot of birds were around them singing away. This puzzled Aaron. These birds should be nesting for the night, but yet they were acting as if it were morning time. And such sounds and melodies going back and forth! Beautiful new songs and delightful sounds he'd never heard before. Some sounds reminded him of his visit to a big city zoo.

Then there were other sounds. Different ones. Mostly pleasant, yet others were awkward or funny. Aaron wondered and finally asked his friend.

"These are songs from a few of the animals who live around and on this mountain. For they too have sounds to share with others. Some tell stories. Others are a way of talking with the rest of the beasts and creatures. And mostly it's a form of pleasure for them whether alone or along with the others."

He continued by pointing out to Aaron each distinct song, each creature, and what it meant. Amazed, Aaron listened intently. The higher they climbed the sweeter and purer the sounds and the more of them. The wind sang through the trees. The streams sang down the mountainside. Even the stars above seemed to twinkle their notes down. The whole mountain world became a place of joyful sounds.

Then, suddenly every voice was hushed. Aaron stood still looking at his friend and then all around—silence! Silence except for a very faint single flute that started a beautiful, gentle melody. With each footstep in the final climb to the upper meadow of this mountain, the flute grew louder and more beautiful. When they came to this place not far from the summit, a huge open area filled with what looked like trees dancing about by the light of a bonfire, the source of the flute playing came hopping from behind a rock. He was a peculiar

little man, colorfully dressed and with a big smile. After bowing formally he began another solo which was richer and finer than the first.

After a while a variety of other instruments joined in wondrously. There were all sorts of drums and horns and strings including small harps and lyres; there were bells and chimes and cymbals and more that blended into a delicious song that went on and on until Aaron's mouth began to ache from smiling so hard. The melodies and rhythms and harmonies flowed together like streams of water lifting off the earth and making their way up into the highest heavens. All the while the flames of the bonfire splashed light all around revealing the trees swaying, musicians dancing crazily about while thousands of pairs of eyes peered in from the edges.

It was a celebration. It was a performance. It was worship. It was the total passage of joy and happiness played out openly before anyone and everyone. Aaron was thrilled by the jubilation. His friend was very pleased as well, sitting on a rock, nobly watching the festive display. Aaron dance crazily along with all the little people who were belt high even to him.

Finally after a timelessness, the music, after roaring for what must have been hours down the mountainside and up into the heavens, quieted slowly, slowly until once more the lone flutist softly entered into a restful hushing song that caused eyelids to become heavy. Having danced through the night, Aaron finally laid his head on a pillow made out of grass and slept soundly. He never even felt the blanket placed on him.

Even the food brought to them was done in step with songs. Music and song to this people, to this place of freedom was their joy, their language. Each note a letter. Each song a conversation. Eyes danced. Hearts were vibrantly alive. Joy was the common expression. So much was said in a wonderfully clear way. Any confusion was swept out. Understanding was kept simple. Total acceptance covered you with its mantle. Time and time again refreshment poured from the heart where freedom of song like seeds were planted and allowed to grow, the language of hearts where joy is sown.

Aaron woke up to another melody flowing from a place beyond his sight.

He looked quickly for the little friends but saw none. Maybe it was all a wonderful dream? Maybe he had imagined it all! Then he saw a breakfast of eggs and fruit and a sweet drink was ready for him. It was a final friendship offering from the dancing, color splashing people.

The stranger was now his good friend. He was just returning from the wooded area and strode across the back end of the pasture towards Aaron. His step seemed ever so strong and sure. He rippled with confidence and gave off waves of encouragement. They sat together and laughed about all of the fun the night before, the joy of the mountain people. Their kindness, their message given without any words spoken.

They quietly said farewell to this land of music and song where even the stars at night and the sun in the day spoke clearly. Brightly and with streaming refreshment the sun warmed and renewed with its pure and simple song. A daily rebirth so freely given.

As they followed a path on down the other side of the mountain, music followed them as a sweet good-bye. The birds without number! The wind in the trees. The sun above showering light like seed sown upon the earth. Aaron stood filled with awe, the afterglow of his previous day's enlightenment, the infilling of goodness. From that day on, the songs of birds carry messages reminding like tiny distant echoes.

"Have you been to visit the little mountain people before?" Aaron asked his guide.

"As often as I can," was the answer. "Though, somehow I hear their songs wherever I go. They've in a sense given a part of themselves to me as a gift which I always enjoy especially while on one of my many journeys. Aaron, what did you like most about these people?"

Aaron thought for a moment. Then his face lit up and he declared, "Their happiness; the way they played their music and danced around."

"Did you notice anything about the way they talked?"

Aaron paused with a funny look on his face. "Well, they didn't. They never said a word. The whole time. I just realized it. Not one word."

"But you understood their happiness! Their great freedom to be who they are and to enjoy it without having to say a lot of words?"

"Yes," Aaron answered. "They were happy being who they were. They

Their words were musical and easy to understand."

"That's right. For many others as well as these special people, music and songs speak for themselves saying whatever the people want them to say. And when the music comes from the heart, one that's free, the message is one of happy acceptance of the life given to them. Having a song always in your heart is more important than a lot of words that try to say what you know and who you are. Those who share good songs share an inner knowing of goodness. Those who have no song or inner knowing of goodness, only need to quiet their tongues and listen."

The early melody of the flute began to dance inside of Aaron. It was a light and joyful, playful song. One that carried pure and simple meanings. He now knew that understanding meant more than the words he or others could speak. Songs gave light to somber worlds just as the sun to our outer world. Personal inner worlds need light too. Words that need to be spoken should come out like the melody of a song. In that way it flowed easily, smoothly as long as they were from the good song within you. Aaron thought of his own stuttering speech and suddenly realized for the first time his own words were coming out freely and confidently; they had been ever since the first morning on the mountain when he met his special friend!