

The Story of Sound

By Olivia Smith

Once upon a time, there was no sound in the entire world. Everyone could only use signs or gestures to communicate, but they had many problems. Princesses tied to rocks couldn't scream for a hero to rescue them from sea monsters. Sirens couldn't lure sailors with singing. Lightning didn't thunder, and epics went untold.

One queen saw the problem more clearly than anyone else. Her king and prince had both drowned only a short distance from the shore because no one saw them signing for help. The queen sat vigil all night long, and in the morning she sent heralds with large signs in every language to all the humans, elves, dwarves, fairies, leprechauns, and even a dragon. She plead with all to find something that would let creatures communicate without signs or gestures when they couldn't see each other. She promised she would give whatever was in her power to whoever could accomplish this.

Many heroes and heroines went on quests to find a hidden treasure that could do as the queen asked. They found goblins, giants, trolls, and demons, but nothing that allowed them to communicate without sight. Others tried to find a supernatural solution. Witches and wizards cast mighty spells. Shamans made magic sacrifices to gods and goddesses. Sorcerers gestured secret incantations, but they couldn't drum up a magic solution.

Then one oracle had a vision. She managed to scrawl these words before she passed into the afterworld: "Ears are the key to sound." The queen puzzled long and hard over this riddle and finally traveled far to the most powerful sorceress in the town of Noise. The queen showed the sorceress the words of the oracle and asked if she could do anything them. The sorceress wrote she would try, and she locked herself into

her tower for many days. The townspeople could only see the storm clouds gathered around and the lightning bolts that touched the tower.

Finally, the sorceress came back to the queen. In a box she held the creation she had worked so hard to make. She showed the queen two shell-like circles of skin. She fastened them to the side of her head and the Queen's head. "These are the answer to your problem," the sorceress said, and the queen heard. "I will show everyone how to make and use them, and then they will all hear sound."

The queen could only gasp her thanks and ask what the sorceress wanted as a reward. The sorceress asked that her town of Noise be given credit for the making of ears and be made famous throughout the land. The queen promised she would do so.

And so the name of Noise was preserved immortal. Everyone now has two ears in memory of the first two made, and everyone can hear sound. However, sometimes sound can become too much. Then people can only curse that Noise.