

The Waterfall of Eternity

Once upon a time there was a village next to an enormous waterfall of unimaginable beauty and power. It roared ceaselessly, sending mists into the air that nourished the forests and painted rainbows across the sky. The villagers who lived nearby spoke of its magnificence with pride, for they believed it was a gift from the Divine, a constant reminder of the Ineffable One's magnificent presence.

At first, when the village was young, the people marveled at the waterfall's sound. They heard its thundering roar as a song — a thunderous melody so profound that it seemed to contain all the wisdom of the heavens. Elders would say, "This is the voice of the One, calling to us from eternity."

They would gather in the evenings to listen together, sitting in silence as the sound filled the valley. Some said it resonated in their very bones, vibrating with a power that was both humbling and exhilarating. Children, too young to grasp the deeper meaning, still found themselves hushed in awe, their games forgotten as its glorious song enveloped them.

But as years turned to decades, the villagers grew used to the sound. The waterfall became background noise to their lives. It was no longer a song to their ears but a hum they barely noticed. Children played games near its edge without hearing its rhythm. Workers toiled, scarcely glancing at the rainbows that arched above them. It was just there, constant and unchanging.

One day, a traveler came to the village. She had journeyed far, drawn by stories of the great waterfall. As she approached, she stopped and gasped, for its song was like nothing she had ever heard — deafening, yes, but also beautiful. It was as if the entire universe had gathered to sing in one endless, resounding chord.

She hurried into the village, eager to share her wonder. "How can you live beside such glory?" she asked. "Do you hear it? It's as if the Divine is speaking directly to you!"

The villagers exchanged puzzled glances. "Hear what?" one of them replied.

"The music!" said the traveler. "The waterfall — it sings!"

The villagers shook their heads. "That old thing? We don't hear it anymore," another said. "It's been there forever. You get used to it."

The traveler was stunned. "How can you not hear it?" she whispered.

Later, an old man, who had lived in the village all his life, spoke with her privately and said, "When you live so close to something so vast, it becomes too familiar. The sound fades, though it never stops." He sighed. "It is the great paradox of the Ineffable One. The closer we are to Her Radiance, the harder it is to see. We dwell in Her light but cannot look upon it."

The traveler stayed for many days, listening to the waterfall. She tried to teach the villagers to hear its song again, to marvel at the rainbows, to feel the cool mist on their faces as though

for the first time. Some began to listen, tilting their heads and closing their eyes, and faintly, faintly, they began to hear the music they had forgotten.

One evening, the traveler gathered the villagers by the edge of the waterfall. The sky above was streaked with the colors of sunset, and the thunder of the falls seemed to harmonize with the stillness of the twilight. She began to speak, her voice soft but steady. “The Ineffable One speaks through all things,” she said. “Not just through this waterfall, but through every leaf, every stone, every breath of wind. Her song is infinite, but we must learn to listen. For if we forget, the Radiance will still blaze, but we will walk in darkness.”

A young boy raised his hand hesitantly. “But how do we listen?” he asked. “The sound is always there, but I don’t know how to hear it anymore.”

The traveler smiled gently. “Close your eyes,” she said. “Feel the ground beneath your feet, the breeze on your skin. Listen not just with your ears, but with your heart.”

The boy obeyed, his small face scrunching in concentration. For a moment, he was still, and then his eyes flew open. “I hear it!” he cried. “It’s like... it’s like it’s inside me, too!”

The villagers murmured among themselves, intrigued. Some began to close their eyes, following the traveler’s instructions. One by one, their faces changed — softening, brightening — as they began to reconnect with the sound they had long forgotten.

An old woman stepped forward. Tears glistened in his eyes as he said, “I remember now. When I was a child, my father brought me here to listen. He told me it was the voice of the One. I had forgotten... but now I hear it again.”

The traveler placed a hand on her shoulder. “The One’s song is always with us,” she said. “But we must choose to hear it. It is not the song that changes, but us. The more we open ourselves to wonder, the more we will hear.”

That night, the traveler lit a fire near the waterfall and invited the villagers to sit with her. She told them stories from her journeys — of mountains that seemed to hum with ancient wisdom, of forests that whispered secrets in the wind. Each story was a reminder that the Divine’s presence was not confined to any one place or form, but flowed through all of creation.

As the fire crackled and the stars appeared in the sky, the villagers found themselves listening not just to the traveler, but to the waterfall, to the wind, to the quiet sounds of the night. For the first time in years, they truly heard.

When the traveler prepared to leave, the villagers gathered to thank her. “You have given us back something precious,” the old man said. “You have helped us remember.”

The traveler smiled. “The song was always yours,” she said. “I merely reminded you to listen.”

Before she departed, she left them with one final thought. “The Divine speaks not only through the grand and the powerful, but also through the small and the quiet. A single drop of water, a blade of grass, a whispered word, a baby’s breath — all these carry Her

voice. If you can hear the roar of the waterfall, you can also learn to hear the whisper of the breeze. Both are Her song.”

The villagers watched as she disappeared over the hill. And though many returned to their daily lives, some stood still for a long time, hearing — truly hearing — the endless song of the waterfall.

From that day forward, the village began to change. The people made time to sit by the falls, to close their eyes and listen. They taught their children to hear the thunderous music and to see the rainbows. And though the sound of the waterfall never changed, it became, once again, the voice of the Ineffable One, calling to them from eternity.

— *William Zeitler*
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