Truth be told, it is an unusual thing to find something in the forest. So, Alathea was simply startled when she found a lost boy in the Eon Forest. There he was: like sadness itself, alone and confused. She knelt down to look into his eyes, and he in hers, and told him with not-so-many words that she could be trusted – and somehow these words he understood.

“What is your name?”, she asked with a gentle help up.

“Adam”, he said.

“Well, Adam, I am Alathea and I am wondering how you came to be in such an ancient and dense wood all by yourself.”

“I dunno”, said Adam.

“Are you lost, then?”, she asked.

“I dunno”, he repeated.

She couldn’t bear to continue asking such questions, for they seemed to be frightening him at each new realization that he was, *in fact*, lost. She spritely took his hand and said, “Well, Adam, as long as you are here, let me show you around. There is so much to see and hear in my country that it will cheer you right up.

As the girl guided him from valley to vale, he seemed to be warmed by her words and explanations. His senses and imagination began to be filled with wonderful sights and smells.

“What are those?”, Adam asked about a cluster of flowers in a way that children ask when they are at ease and inquiring of someone they trust.

Alathea beamed, “That’s freesia – it’s my favorite. It smells like candy tastes, at least the candy my Father makes.”

Dumbfounded, Adam sheepishly asked, “What’s candy?”

“Oh, I have so much to show you!”, she shrieked with delight. Before she could begin, though, Adam’s face grew dim and almost ashamed as he asked one more question – or what you might call a half-question.

“Father? . .”

Alathea began to understand and pulled the child close and held him tight until he peacefully melted into her arms and began to cry. This moved Alathea deeply, but as we all know of children, a deep cry can swell and seep away with the same speed – and such was with Adam. It was the sound of Song- the music that the forest seemed to breathe that gripped him and drew him to his tip-toes, for the sounds seemed familiar, they seemed like home.

Noticing his change and interest, Alathea grabbed his hand and they shot off like an arrow giggling all the way to the village of WayCross at the edge of the wood. The city brimmed with activity and music- lots of music. Adam went from performer to performer and listened so intently. There was a troubadour, a master of the viola, a marimba player in a purple vest and a short fat man who squinted his eyes as he played his guitar. It was the guitar that Adam listened to the longest, even though he was a bit put off by the man and his squinty eyes.

It was a glorious day for Adam and a beginning of a life-long friendship with Alathea. It must be said though, that there was something else going on in WayCross that day. You see, as the music lifted from the dancing fingers and ebbed through the alleys and corridors of the city, the echoes that came back seemed changed somehow – dark sounds, perversions of the music they repeated – almost sinister. Adam heard them, but just stayed close to Alathea and tried not to worry.

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Some years later, Adam sat under a sprawling birch that trembled and shed tiny pieces of bark from shaggy limbs that seemed to stretch miles into the sky. He liked it here because the sound that the wind made through the thousands of rippled leaves on the tree as it swisted through them. While he sat below, embraced by its shade, he played his guitar. The once lost and confused boy was now what anyone would have called a vibrant friend of Life. He delighted in so many things – especially music. Music seemed to speak to him. It was a brother and yet a new friend. Its voice told of a Land that would be if all the lands were one Land, and if all the seas were one Sea. Alathea had taught him so much by now and he was so grateful for her friendship. He wasn’t sure Who he was grateful to, nor was he sure where she had really come from on that day in the Eon Forest, those years earlier. But, that didn’t matter – she was his friend, he loved life, and fattened on his music – he was happy.

Well, I should mention that he was happy, *as long* as he could put the sounds of the echoes out of his mind. He didn’t understand it. The music that came from his instrument and the birch tree alike seemed so clean and pure. It seemed to elevate him effortlessly to the sky where he would fly to lands and horizons as far as the mind can see. But when the sound bounced off the land, or the buildings the villagers had built – it changed, always – just like it had on that first day he had arrived in the land.

Just then, a voice broke through his thoughts and almost caused home to jump right into the trunk of the tree.

“Hullo, lad” said a sweet, but brogued voice from around the tree. He looked up half-dazed by the sunlight that bled through the branches and made her a silhouette above him.

“Like music doo ya?”

After an awkward second or two, Adam game to himself and said, “Why, yes . . . I’m Adam. Do I know you?”

“Iee’m Evangelia, buot yoo can call me Evie. If yoo like music, I rreckin’ yoo’ve haird the Savior’s Song, then? Rrigheet?”

“Um, no”, said Adam. “I would really like to, though.” Adam had heard of Evie before from his aunt Sophia (Alathea’s older sister). He didn’t remember much, but he knew that she should be listened to and trusted.

“Weell lad, Iee’ve got goood news for yoo! Iee know da waya to da Savior. We shood go noew, though. We can herre Him soon enough, ya?!?”

“Yes, please. But, why is He called a ‘Savior’?”, asked Adam.

“Youoo’ll know weyll enough wehen we git thearre, lad. Coome along!”

The journey was honestly a bit harsh. It seemed that Adam kept having to leave things from out of his day-pack behind to follow Evie up ahead. He listened intently as she spoke of the Savior – in fact, *only* of the Savior. She spoke of Him as not only a Person, but a Purpose. He seemed ancient, yet alive in her words. The things she said were sweet to his ears and truly were words of Good News.

Before he knew it, Adam had rounded a bend and found himself face-to-face with the Savior, Himself. He thought later that he must have seemed rude to Evie when they arrived, for he completely forgot about her, and frankly everything else, when he was in the presence of the Savior. But, somehow he just knew that she didn’t mind.

Then the Savior spoke.

Instantly, Adam was enraptured in both delight and horror at the same time, for now he remembered all that he was and *who* he was before Alathea had found him in the wood. He remembered a dim history of when he had known Alathea’s Father and even the Savior, although they seemed to almost be the same person in his returning memory. He remembered that he had been prideful and left the Father and when he did, he forgot and found himself lost. This brought back that look of shame to his face, only now it was washed away by tears of joy, for as the Savior sang Adam knew that He would forgive him and allow him to remember and be with the Father again. He knew that the horror he once was, would be no more and now he was alive in the Savior’s Song.

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From that day forward, everything changed for Adam. The once lost and confused boy was now what anyone would have called a vibrant friend of Life – only now Life was *really* vibrant. Colors were actually colorful; fruit was sweet; the wind was soft and friendly; and the music – oh, the music. He heard sounds he had never even dreamed of. He played tunes that not only spoke, but spoke like Alathea had when she helped him out of the wood – true and comforting. Oh, how he delighted in music now that he was alive in the Savior’s Song.

Well, I should mention that even though he delighted in the new vibrancy and lucidity of the music, he could still hear the echoes. They, themselves, even seemed more pronounced and clear now. Even though they didn’t frighten him as they had before meeting the Savior, they still seemed to strive at ruining the joys of life itself – almost making Adam feel as though it were all meaningless at times.

Then, that gift of remembering served Adam well and he remembered that when he had heard the Savior’s Song, there were no echoes. His voice seemed to penetrate the walls and trees and hills and valleys, like a sun bath through a shallow pool. He remembered that the Saviors Song didn’t just *feel like* home as the other music had, but that somehow he knew it *was* home. He remembered that it was that Song that made all the rest of life as vibrant as life can be and then he remembered that he had left that Song behind to delight in all of the wonderful things that the Song had made rich to behold and experience. He had drunk deeply from the blessings that flowed from the Saviors Spring of Life, but had now traded the blessings for the Spring and found them wanting without it.

Adam now knew all that his friends had tried to teach him through the years. He understood that all the good in life was good because it had come from the Savior and His Song. His Music had spoken all into existence and also breathed life into it. He understood that the villages were full of others like him who had been prideful and left the Father, as he had and that their villages and lands seemed to bend and twist the Savior’s Song, as it danced through their streets, even though the very streets themselves were still a part of that Song. Adam understood that the Purpose that was spoken of by Evie was not given *by* the Savior, but that it *IS* the Savior.

Adam returned that day to the presence of the Savior and although he still enjoyed the abundant life the Savior had given him, it was only the Savior’s Song in that Life and all of the living of it that he delighted in from then on.