

## Music of the Forest

It was late into the wee hours of the night, I was just concluding my yearly sabbatical off in my hidden hermitage at the edge of the forest far beyond any roads or the trappings of modern civilization. It had been nearly a week since I had seen another living soul and I was wanting for company as my final day alone concluded and the night began to ink itself across the sky. I decided to power up my cell phone and reach out to some friends as it was the Friday night before Halloween. One of my friends answered and said he was headed to Lahaina and was going to a party there and invited me to come but after the week alone I wasn't ready for a full-on social event of enormous attendance. I decided to stay at home that night and instead take a stroll in the starlight and wander down the old dirt driveway that led to the camp I inhabited. As I walked I saw just the first glimpses behind the trees of the burgeoning moon and I began to be enthralled by its beauty and radiance. As I walked I began to hear what I thought was music, at first I thought perhaps the crickets and some other insects' sounds were creating some sort of sonic overtone that sounded musical, then I considered that the river sometimes made something that sounded vaguely like music or perhaps the wind. I began to listen for it, lending my ear and focus to locating and identifying the sound. I stood silently for a few moments and couldn't tell from whence the sound came. I began to walk and as I did I could hear the sound emanating out of the forest. I sauntered along with slight trepidation as I sought the source of the mysterious melody. I decided to go against the fairy tale rules and step off the path! I climbed through the barbed wire fence in an old spot that had rusted out and was missing a middle section. Stepping into the forest in the night made it seem far more daunting as the giants

around me stood rising into the infinity of the darkness above. I stood silently and found I could hear the music a bit clearer and as I listened I could just make out the individual instruments and even had a sense of the genre. It was some kind of bluesy, funky rock and roll and I liked it. I could tell they were having a great time and I began to wonder if somehow the music from a nearby pre halloween party was reflecting off the forest and bouncing around in the trees. I pulled out my phone and once again dialed some friends to inquire if any party was going on in the neighborhood. No one knew of anything that night and I even called a neighbor and asked them and they heard nothing. It was really strange and quite spooky and I was far too curious for my own good. I began to follow the music into the forest. I started to walk deeper and deeper barely able to see the next step in front of me and blindly following the classic rock will o the wisp that had me in its thrall. I walked a few more yards into the trees and the music became quite clear. I felt like I knew the song even and could hum bars of it yet still the lyrics were just out beyond my tongue's tip. Just then a sound came from behind me and I heard a rustling in the bushes the music seemed to dim away and suddenly I knew I wasn't alone anymore in the forest. I stood statue still and tried to look for some shadows to slide into if I needed to make a quick get away. Again I heard the sound of something rustling in the bushes and suddenly BZZZ BZZZ my phone rang giving away my position I ignored it and tried to silence it but it was too late out of the bushes jumped....my dog joey phew boy was I glad to see him, as I pet the dog and calmed myself enough to hear anything other than the sound of my beating heart pounding like thunder in my eardrums, I began to hear the groovin 70's band kick back in and it seemed like they were jamming even harder now. I figured since I now had a guide and companion in my night

vision enhanced herding dog I would explore a bit further into the forest. I spent the good portion of an hour wandering around the forest and each time I would think I had pinpointed the location of the music I would be turned to a new direction never fiddling the source. I began to wonder if it was just some audible illusion brought on by too much solitude so I pulled out my phone and stood in a spot of clear sound. I recorded a bit of the music and then played it back. Well it was certainly real music just somehow always far off in the distance. Finally some rain began to fall and I decided it was time to return to my camp. As the dog and I climbed back through the fallen moss covered logs the music seemed to get louder almost as if it was enticing us back into the forest to keep following it. Finally we were back on the old dirt road and out of the forest and the moon was high in the heavens illuminating the forests edge and glinting off my dogs eyes. The music had faded to a dull melodic wind that was barely noticeable and the frogs and crickets seemed to dominate the night with their rhythmic chanting. I walked home and as I looked down at my phone I noticed it was after midnight and I had lost over 3 hours in the forest. I found my way to my bed and dove into a cauldron full of dreams. When I awoke the next morning there was no sounds coming from the forest. Months went by and the seasons shifted and the next year for Halloween I was at a party but later that week I overheard someone talking about music coming out of the forest and I jumped into their conversation, since that time I have spoken with many people who have heard various styles of music that they can tell the instruments and hear the tune but never make out the actual name of the song nor find its location. #