

The Wind In My Hair
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Once upon a time in a far off land, in a time not yet remembered, lived a race of people.

In most ways they were like any other people in the greater Universe and it's suburbs. They had good times, they had bad times. They had children running around making happy sounds punctuated by occasional cries of pain from falls and playing with pointy insects.

A visitor to these people would notice one unique thing right away... Their hair, or what passed for it. Instead of normal flowing hair on their heads, they had a thick band of spines or quills growing from ear to ear. When relaxed these would lay flat against the head, but when the owner of this magnificent plumage wanted, they could make them stand straight out from their heads like a brush or broom that traveled from ear to ear.

Aside from giving them a mildly fearsome look (they were otherwise very gentle people), when the wind blew these spines would vibrate producing various tones depending on the length and thickness of each spine.

For longer than anyone could remember, these people trimmed their spines to make specific tones and practiced from childhood in raising groups of them to produce pleasant tunes while they worked in the fields or were just walking down the path to the next village. Occasionally several people would get together and practice working together to make a small concert to entertain the others of the village.

Now, being a natural part of their being, there were good and bad points to these spines. They grew slowly like hair throughout their lives so you had to regularly retrim them to keep them in tune. But if your tastes changed you could always let some grow out and retrim for different sounds.

The other thing was seasons. In the hot, dry summers the spines dried and produced higher pitched sounds with a bit of a sharp edge to them. In the fall and spring rains, they became much softer and sometimes it was hard to get any sound out of them at all. In rainy weather people would exclaim "I just can't do anything with my hair, it's a bad day for it."

In the dry, cold winter the spines would generate static electricity resulting in crackling sounds added to their music. At night they could put on a light show that was accompanied by the music of the spines.

All in all a truly marvelous people. A visitor would have to come back every season just to get a taste of the variations, but to truly appreciate their music you would have to stay several cycles of seasons and watch the young grow and learn to control their spines while the elders learned to live with some of their spines falling out. While the loss of your spines was sad in a way, it also showed you were now an elder, charged with minding and teaching the young while their parents worked in the fields.

I must say having the opportunity to live with them for a year was most rewarding, I recommend it to anyone who can manage it.

It is with sadness that I have to leave them to explore other realms, but at the same time I realize there are untold wonders yet to discover.

With that I say farewell to my friends and leave in search of new friends and adventures.

This is Jerry, standing on the Edge of Reality with an arm around my wonderful wife and partner, Sharon.

It is time we once again step off the edge and travel to our next adventure.