

ENGLISH

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

~Summary~

PART- I

Evelyn Glennie Listens to Sound Without Hearing it

-by Deborah Cowley

Evelyn Lost her Hearing at a Young Age

This part is about a Scottish girl named Evelyn. She was very fond of music and wanted to make it her life slowly. Evelyn's lost her sense of hearing. It was first noticed when she was eight years old. By eleven year, she was completely deaf due to nerve damage.

Evelyn didn't Give up Hope and Never Looked Back

She was determined to lead a normal life and pursue her interest in music. One day, she noticed a girl playing a xylophone and decided that she wanted to play it too. Most of the teachers discouraged her but percussionist (a person who plays tabla or drum) Ron Forbes encouraged her. He began by tuning two large drums to different notes. Evelyn could feel the different notes of the drum in her body.

The rest was sheer determination and hard work. She travelled the United Kingdom with a youth orchestra and by the time she was sixteen, she had decided to make music her life. She auditioned for the Royal Academy of Music and scored one of the highest marks in the history of the academy. She gradually left the orchestral work and started giving solo performances. At the end of her three year course, she had received most of the top awards.

Evelyn Senses Music

She explains that music flows through every part of her body. It tingles in the skin, her cheekbones and even in her hair. When she plays the xylophone, she can sense the sound passing up the stick into her fingertips.

By leaning against the drums, she can feel the resonances (sounds) flowing into her body. On a wooden platform, she removes her shoes so that the vibrations pass through her bare feet and up her legs.

Evelyn: An Inspiration

Evelyn is a perfect example that disability can not stop a person to achieve if he/she is determined and works hard towards it. Evelyn earned many awards and rewards. She has given enormous pleasure to millions.

PART- II

The Shehnai of Bismillah Khan

Pungi was Banned and then Revived

Emperor Aurangzeb had banned the playing of a musical instrument called pungi in the royal residence, as it had a shrill and unpleasant sound. A barber of a family of professional musicians decided to improve the tonal quality of the pungi. He played the improved instrument before royalty and everyone was impressed. The instrument had to be given a new name. As the story goes, since it was first played in the Shah's chambers and was played by a nai (barber), the instrument was named the 'shehnai'.

Ustad Bismillah Khan Brought Shehnai to the Classical Stage

The sound of the shehnai began to be considered auspicious. And for this reason, it is still played in temples and is an indispensable component (important part) of any North Indian wedding. In the past, the shehnai was part of the naubat or traditional ensemble (group) of nine instruments found at royal courts. The credit for bringing this instrument onto the classical stage goes to Ustad Bismillah Khan.

Music was in Bismillah Khan's Blood

Bismillah belongs to a well-known family of musicians from Bihar. His grandfather, father and other paternal ancestors were also great shehnai players.

Bismillah was fascinated at watching his uncles practise the shehnai. He started accompanying his uncle Ali Bux and slowly, he started getting lessons in playing the instrument and would sit practising throughout the day. The flowing waters of the Ganga inspired him to put together and create ragas that were earlier considered to be beyond that range of the shehnai.

The Bright Future of Bismillah Khan

With the opening of the All-India Radio in Lucknow in 1938 came Bismillah's big break. He soon became an often-heard shehnai player on radio. When India gained independence on 15th August 1947, Bismillah Khan became the first Indian to greet the nation with his shehnai.

Film director Vijay Bhatt was so impressed after hearing him play at a festival that he named a film after the instrument called 'Gunj Uthi Shehnai'.

A Renowned Musician and a True Indian

Bismillah Khan became the first Indian to be invited to perform at the prestigious Lincoln Centre Hall in the United States of America. National awards like the Padmashri, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Vibhushan were conferred on him.

In 2001, Ustad Bismillah Khan was awarded India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna. Despite travelling to many countries, he was exceedingly fond of Benaras and Dumraon and they remain for him the most wonderful towns of the world.

He even refused a position in America saying that he cannot find the Ganga there. Whenever, he was travelling abroad his heart kept aching for his homeland.

Conclusion of The Sound of Music

In the chapter – The Sound of Music illustrates how music binds people and is not limited to one person only. Music is a universal language that is loved and adored by people of different caste, creed, colour or race.