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THE MYTHS OF MUSIC

How the first horn, the first drum and the first lyre came into the world

illustrated by Iris Samartzi

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INTRODUCTION

MUSIC

In the time of the rain of stars, after the great explosion which, like a breath from God, created our world out of chaos; in that time when light began to run and run and run without a pause, there sprang from the tranquil spaces of its heart the sound of music. And the music travelled onwards with the light and out beyond the light until it had spread everywhere. And all was music, light and darkness. And time went by until one day the music grew tired of running at such giddy speed and told itself it was time to take a rest. So it stopped to get its breath back on a planet whose waters were the colour of the sky. And it embraced the blue planet. And creatures sprang from that embrace: trees with green leaves, all kinds of fish imaginable and great flocks of birds: eagles, robins and low-flying nightingales. And animals and people, too.

And all was so beautiful that from then on music stayed to live there. But where it dwelt was hidden: in the subterranean forest that spreads out beneath the roots of the trees and goes on down and down into the ocean depths. Music has sealed this land with a secret door that opens only if you beat in rhythm on a drum made from a roe deer's hide, if you brush strings that seem to be woven from a girl's tight-stretched hair or if you blow a message to a mermaid into a spiral sea shell. Then music emerges from its hiding place without a moment's hesitation and sings the tale of our world from the beginning of time until this very moment, telling of its long, long journey from the time when stars rained down.