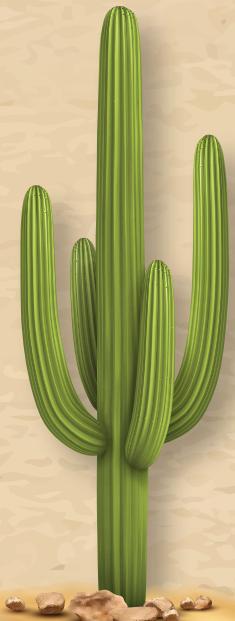


# Ring Silverbell



**C**ARL MOVED TO Arizona in December. He came from the round, green mountains of Vermont to the Sonoran Desert where the mountains were sharp, brown, and wrinkled. Instead of a jillion snowy evergreens which smelled like home, there were a few prickly cacti that reached up toward a warm, winter sun. Carl was homesick. He missed his friends, the snow, and especially Miss Veronica, his flute teacher.

Carl's new home was the town of Silverbell. Silverbell sat near a river with the same name. But there was not a drop of water in this so-called river. Its dry, rocky bed snaked through the desert to drop suddenly into a huge,



To me, this piece of music is absolutely awe-inspiring — amazing — and it deserves to be sung perfectly.



by Edward F. Petersen  
Art by Debbie Maze

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awe-inspiring crack in the earth called—you guessed it—Silverbell Canyon.

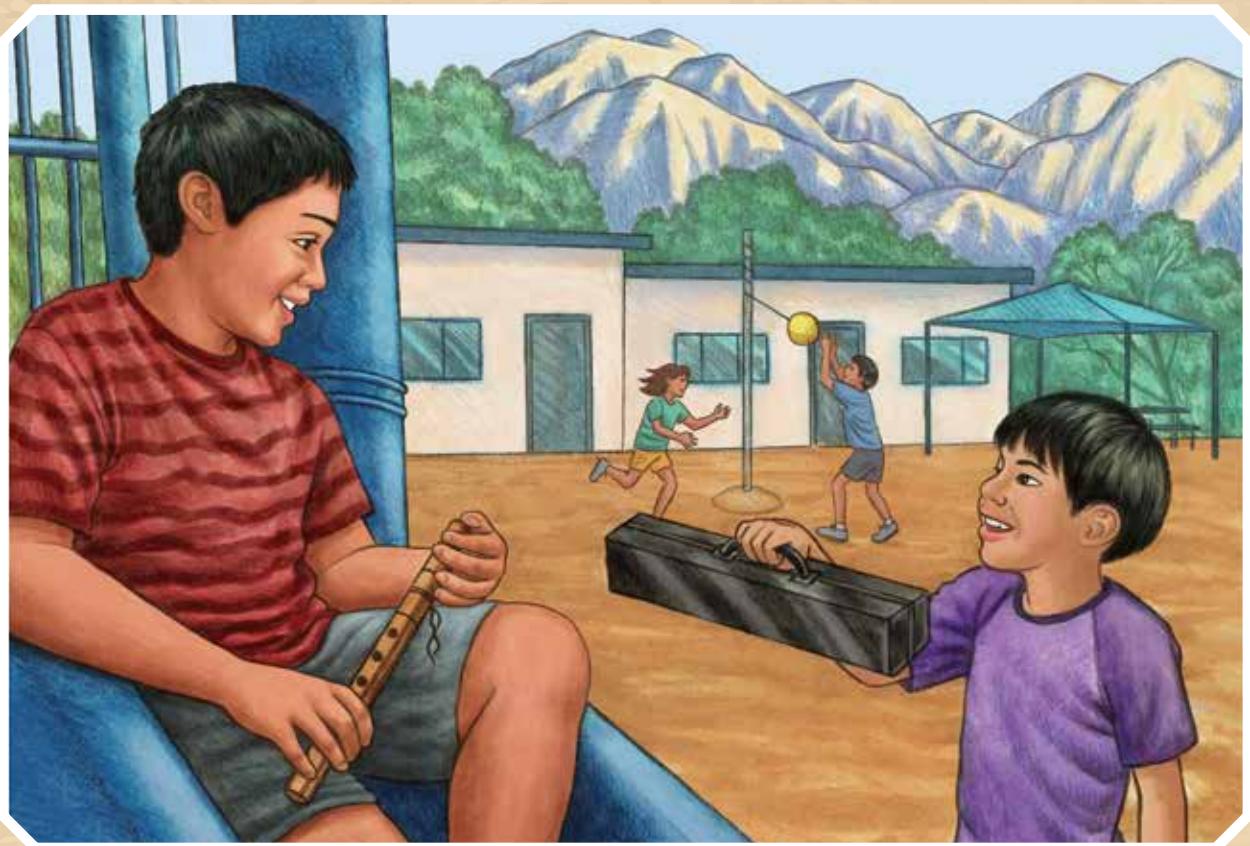
Carl hadn't made any real friends yet. He always walked home from school alone. One day, though, he heard a lonely melody floating on the breeze. It sounded wonderful and fit Carl's mood just right. He followed the music to the school-yard and found Tadio, the kid who

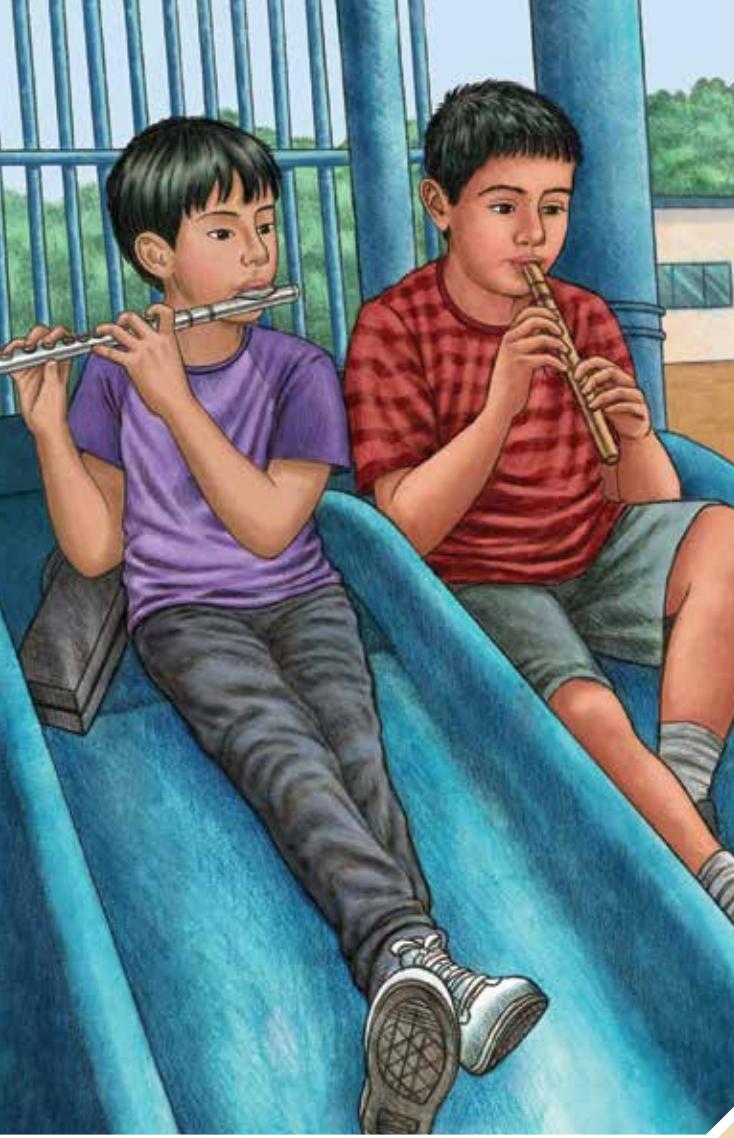
always sat by himself in the lunchroom. He was perched on top of the slide playing a wooden flute.

"That song is awesome!" Carl said.

Tadio looked down at him. "Thank you," he said with a bright, sunny smile.

"I'm Carl. I play, too." He held up the case which held his own silver flute.





"Ah, my name is Tadio. Let's play a duet."

Carl joined Tadio on the slide. They played "Ode to Joy" by Ludwig van Beethoven, a piece that they both knew by heart. The two got along so well that Carl felt comfortable confessing his homesickness to Tadio.

Araña and Miro sound pretty good.



"It just doesn't feel like winter around here," Carl said. "I don't think it ever will again. It's too hot."

"Hmm," Tadio said. "It feels like winter to me, but I've lived in Silverbell my whole life."

"So, why is it called Silverbell anyway?" asked Carl.

"Because of the canyon. My grandfather says at special times, one can hear her ring like a silver bell . . . if she is asked in the proper way."

"Oh, Tadio," Carl said, "that sounds impossible!"

"This whole world is impossible, Carl," Tadio said. "Yet here we are."

Carl closed his eyes for a few long minutes and then said, "I wish I could hear that. I wish I could hear the canyon ringing like her name."

Tadio looked up to the sky. "Ah, I would love to hear that, too."

Then Carl complained about Principal Ramirez's request for his flute solo at tomorrow's winter concert. The principal had explained that every year on the first day of winter,

Yes, but it's not a duet — piece of music for two performers.  
It requires many voices.





the whole town walks in a procession which ends at the school with a concert by all of the students. "I don't want to play all by myself in front of everybody."

"Ah, you are shy, but you play very well. Let's meet tomorrow before the concert to practice. Maybe that will help ease your fear. I know a spot beside the canyon where I often go to play. Sometimes, her echo sounds like she's singing with me."

"I don't think the canyon would

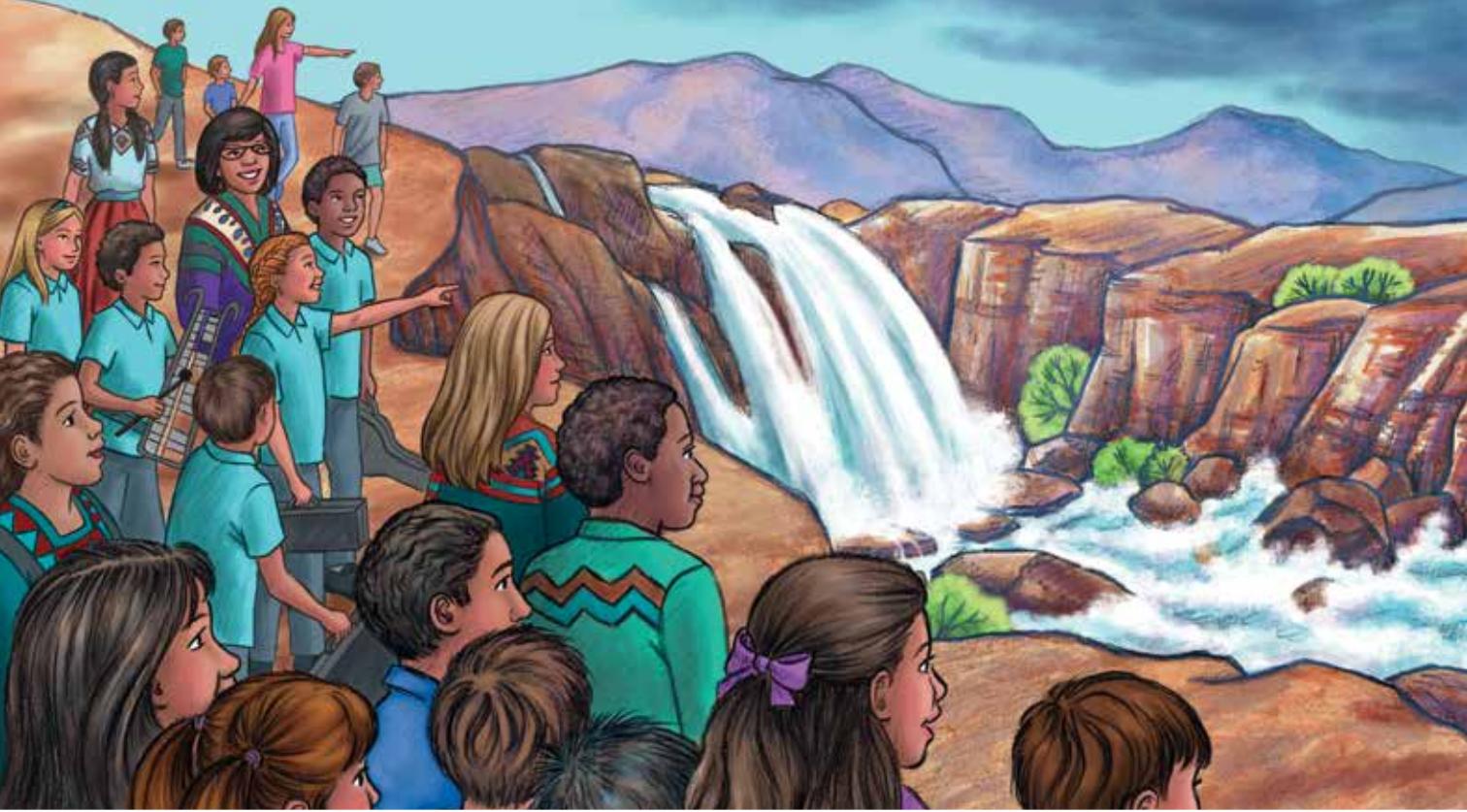
want to sing with a homesick kid from Vermont," Carl said.

"She just might," Tadio said. He tapped Carl lightly on his leg with his wooden flute and slid down the slide.

The next day was sunny and warm, of course. The desert glowed as if it were the Fourth of July. After school, the two boys spread out a blanket beside Silverbell Canyon and took out their flutes. Tadio played a haunting tune and invited Carl to join in. Together, they



Right! Everybuggy, start the procession — line or group moving in a formal way.



played their hearts out, stopping only when they heard the sound of distant thunder. They watched dark clouds gather way over above the mountains, even though the sun still shined on them.

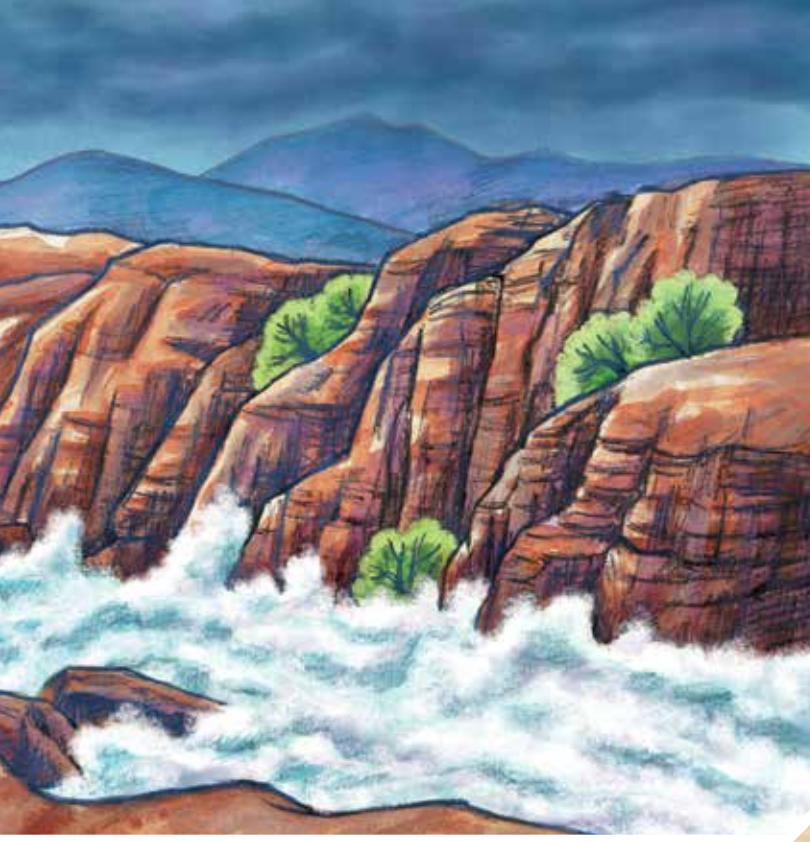
It had started raining in those far off mountains. Raining hard. The rainwater pounded down the mountainside and gushed into the Silverbell River's dry bed. It crashed into boulders, tumbled over stones, and raced toward a headlong plunge into Silverbell

Canyon. Today, the Silverbell became a real river . . . a wild and reckless one.

Men, women, and children dressed up in their most colorful shirts and dresses enjoyed the spicy evening smell of the desert and marveled at the sunset. As the winter procession passed beside the canyon, they were all delighted by something amazing. The temporary river had created a breathtaking waterfall into the canyon. As the torrent struck the thin, flat rocks at the bottom, they

Welp, this is it. My tears shall fall in a...  
torrent — rush of water or other liquid,  
such as a flood. I will be absolutely...





gonged like wind chimes. The clamor echoed back and forth, and it sounded as if the whole canyon was ringing like a giant silver bell.

Carl was flabbergasted. He and Tadio joined the other students for the concert. Carl played his requested solo perfectly, and with every note, Carl felt a little more welcomed by the desert. It was just starting to feel like home. 

