Elphonium Artwork by Boris Indrikov.

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had passed.

They awoke after dawn, under the pear tree, still naked, not another soul in sight. Their horses nickered standing at the edge of the clearing. They rode. It seemed like only minutes and they were back at the castle. The king's subjects shouted "Hurrah! the king is back! Hurrah!"

They were lucky. Only a year the king is back! Hurrah!

elves, the elphin princess, and the horn.
As the moon set the faeries danced off. The wine was finally gone. The music wound down.

ensorceled.

And what a night it was dancing naked in the clearing with the facries. It was better than the hunt. Better than battle. Better than life itself. Just the music, the dancing, the facries, the

speak.
The sun set. The moon rose. The king joined the dance. The moon, high in the sky, looked down on the three of them dancing with the faeries, thoroughly

elphin princess. The King, his fool, and his groom stood their entranced. Slowly sipping wine. Captured by the music.

And then the faeries came. A dozen, then a hundred, dancing his fool, and his groom were surrounded by hundreds of faeries arknowled to make a raunchy fool wanted to make a raunchy from the his mouth wouldn't make faeries are not be sounds. His lips wouldn't make fool wanted to make a raunchy fool wanted to make a raunchy fool wanted to make a raunchy from the sounds. His lips wouldn't make fool wanted to make a raunchy from the sounds. His lips wouldn't make fool wanted to make a raunchy fool wanted to make a r

bells. The music became denser with bass patterns underlying harmonies underlying the ever changing melodies played by the

by sip, the wine enhancing their senses, carrying them deeper and deeper into the music.

Other elves appeared, charming the elphin princess. The King noticed other mouthpieces on the horn. Soon the other elves were mouthpiece. Each on their own countermelodies out of one of the countermelodies out of one of the countermelodies out of one of the

The groom brought a sack of wine from his saddlebags and they all three drank and listened to the music. But they didn't get drunk. They drank so slowly, sip by sip, the wine enhancing their

They dismounted and the groom tended the horses, He didn't have to tie them. They weren't going anywhere. They came to a clearing and under a pear tree standing alone they saw an elfin princess blowing a horn beyond description. Not a horn with one sound. Many bells. Each with it's own sound. And the horn was not separate from the elfin princess. Somehow it grew right out of her. And the music flowed right out of her. The missis of the contract of the most of the contract flowed right out of her. The missis flowed right out of her the missis flowed right out of her the missis flowed right out of the missis flowed right out of the contract flowed right out of the missis flowed right out out of the missis flowed right out of the missis flowed right

It was Like nothing they had ever heard before. A sweet plaintive sound, sometimes like a flute but always changing. Music without thought, apparently without direction. But somehow it always seemed to get there. The phrases morphing into each other, one after the other, drawing them in

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Elphonium by Larry Heyl



The King was bored. The King was restless. Peaceful times were great for his Kingdom. His subjects were happy and hearty.

Trade flourished. But the King ... was bored.

He thought of calling his musicians with their lyres and flutes but lately all their tunes sounded the same. Even his fool's raunchy jokes failed to amuse. He would rather saddle his horse and ride.

That's it. He would ride. A real ride. Just the King, his fool, and his groom. Not a ride to somewhere. Just a ride. He had purpose. A purposeless ride.

The King moved. "Come Fool.", he bawled, "We ride."

Somehow the groom already knew. Gossip in the castle travels faster than thought. When the King and his fool arrived at the stables the groom was ready. Three good horses saddled and prancing. They were a sight for sore eyes. The King, his fool, and his groom mounted and rode.

They stepped lightly across the drawbridge and quickly broke into a canter, the King in the lead. He hadn't gone a quarter mile before he veered off onto a lightly used path into the woods. They slowed and the King let his horse pick the trail. Sometimes the path disappeared but his horse had a sense of direction beyond human abilities. When the trail forked his horse knew which way to go. The fool and the groom followed behind without effort. Their horses followed the King's horse. The King gave his horse his head.

The forest changed. It was now more open. Lighter. Brighter. The leaves on the trees shimmered. The grass waved in the breeze as if begging to be trod on. The horses slowed to a walk, a slow walk, somehow barely moving. And then they heard the music.