

Story #353 (Collected orally and then in written form; not taped.)

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The Nightingale's Voice

One day all the birds gathered in the forest to choose the bird with the best voice, the one which could sing most beautifully. Each bird was to write on a piece of paper the name of the bird she thought had the best voice.

Except for the nightingale, each bird wrote her own name on the ballot. The nightingale was too kind-hearted, too considerate, to make a choice among her friends, so she did not write any name at all. All the other birds scorned her and said of course she would not write anything because she had the worst voice and she was jealous of the others.

That night after everybody else had gone to sleep and the forest was silent, the nightingale felt very lonely, and she began to sing sadly with her touching voice.

From then on, nightingales have sung every night, and they are known as the sweetest-voiced singers.