

The Shriek

Once when the artist was working as a teacher, the townspeople sent her a female aide. This woman had a particular spirit that caused her to share her every thought in a loud and obnoxious manner. She was provided a little money for her “help”, because she needed it to take care of her family. The town had tried to find work for her in many other places, but eventually brought her to the artist because they did not know what to do with her.

The woman, known to some as the “Shriek”, followed the teacher around, shouting her thoughts. She kept this up for many days. Finally the teacher became so annoyed that she turned around and said to the aide, “Please Hush!” But the spirit never left the woman, and so it was shared among all those who were in the classroom.

The artist tried to find ways in which the aide could actually help the children, instead of shrieking at them and scaring them. It turns out that she was a bit useful with the handicapped children, and so the artist tried to get the most out of that for her kids.

The teacher’s coworkers understood the problem, but they knew that they simply could not work with the woman at all. They pushed the Shriek on the artist because she was the only one around who was “good” enough to stand the woman without totally exploding. As it was, the artist had to find a place (generally up on the mountain¹) to hide so that she could have a moment or two of peace. How wonderful it would have been if someone could have cast this spirit out!

The artist finally decided that this was just something that she was not going to be able to control. She would just have to wait it out, and prayerfully try to help the aide to become more productive and less troublesome. Personally, I wondered who would be the first to crack.

The artist would never complain about her situation, but a co-worker eventually understood how disruptive the aid was and got the message to the right people. The aide was finally reassigned, and the artist, much relieved, was able to teach again. The spirit was cast out, after all.

1. Jesus often went into the mountain to pray, see Matthew 14:23, for instance

The Shriek!: (boogedey boogedey! Loudest thing on two feet; from Ray Stevens song); the words are really “Look at that! Look at that!”

Shirley, dumped on Soozie because she is perceived as the only one at school who was “good” enough to stand her without exploding;

Woman who followed Peter or Paul shrieking, frustration to the point of breaking and casting an evil spirit out; similarities; cast out; peace once she is gone;

Acts 16

16 Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. 17 She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” 18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.

19 When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. 20 They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar 21 by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.” [the fellow teacher cheer instead of attack]

22 The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. 23 After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. 24 When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.