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Hearing and Becoming

loosely based on Mark 7:31-37
by **Ralph Milton**

Levi had been trying from as far back as he could remember.

"Talk properly!" his mother had said to him over and over again as a child. "Slow down and pronounce your words properly."

Levi tried so hard but it was never good enough for his mother or for anyone else. He wanted to do something important with his life. But he just couldn't talk properly, even though he pronounced the words exactly as he heard them.

What little he heard of them.

Sometimes Levi felt so frustrated, he lashed out in anger at his family, sometimes even at his friends. Now he was a cranky middle-aged man, with a reputation for being mean and selfish.

Levi had no idea where his brother was taking him that day. Simon had come and grabbed him by the arm and said some words that Levi could just barely hear, and the next thing Levi knew, they were looking at a man who smiled kindly at him.

Gently, the man took Levi's arm and led him away from the crowd that had gathered. The strange and gentle man put his fingers in Levi's ears, then he touched Levi's tongue.

Levi heard popping, then a rush of new sounds. Sounds he had heard only faintly before, seemed to rush into his ears. And the words the man spoke had a clarity Levi had never heard before, even when people had yelled in his ear.

"Levi," said the man. "Now you can hear well. Because you can hear you can speak. Because you can hear and speak you can learn and grow. You can do things, for yourself and others. You can become the person God intended you to be. You've known God's love, Levi. Go and show God's love to others."

Then the man and his followers went on their way. Levi walked slowly to his home, knowing that for him, life had a new beginning.

It was wonderful! It was terrifying!

Ralph Milton has written a number of books,

all of them available through Wood Lake Publishing.
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