

# If Only

By Morri Namasté

I used to have a magic wand. I'm certain of it. I made it from a Willow branch burnt by a lightning strike during a horrible storm in the year 1965. I was eleven years old and my neighborhood, Overbrook Park, had many trees. Cherry, Ash, Walnut, Maple and Oak trees were common features in the neighborhood landscape. But there was but one Willow tree. Nobody had schooled me in the ways of wood carving so I was on my own. Though not really sure what a magic wand was I convinced myself that I needed one. Who wouldn't want one? This branch seemed very special indeed.

After some careful cleaning, carving and polishing, it came alive in my hand. It was about ten inches long with designs gently carved into it. I told no one of my prize and kept it hidden from friends and family.

The problem was that I had no idea how to wield it. Waving it around in my room and wishing things would happen didn't work. I couldn't seem to conjure up anything except, maybe, one time when I chanted a desire for Chinese food and it actually happened. But it could have been merely a once in a million, or two, shot.

Nevertheless, I did not give up hope. Roaming around the woods at the back of my neighborhood, I took out my wand, and once certain that nobody was watching, I danced around waving the wand. Pointing it at trees and rocks and a squirrel who happened by, I made my intentions known. I tried everything I could think of but nothing seemed to work. As I turned towards the path leading home a small white spotted deer suddenly appeared blocking my way. It stood

almost as tall as me. It gently pawed the ground before standing up on its hind legs and disappearing into the woods. I caught my breath and excitedly ran home. All mom would say was to be careful. She doubted my account. My friends just laughed. It was then that I realized that I had lost my magic wand. I made a beeline back to the woods desperately seeking my wand of magic, but it was gone. It was impossible to discern one branch from another. Sadly I returned home.

Today, I wish that I still had my magic wand. I can just imagine what I'd do with it.