

Author Nicole Krauss writes in her book, *The History Love*:

“So many words get lost. They leave the mouth and lose their courage,
wandering aimlessly until they are swept into the gutter like dead leaves.
On rainy days, you can hear their chorus rushing past:
IwasabeautifulgirlPleasedon'tgoItoobelievemybodyismadeofglass-
I'veneverlovedanyoneIthinkofmyselfasfunnyForgiveme....

There was a time when it wasn't uncommon to use a piece of string to guide words that otherwise might falter on the way to their destinations. Shy people carried a little bunch of string in their pockets, but people considered loudmouths had no less need for it, since those used to being overheard by everyone were often at a loss for how to make themselves heard by someone. The physical distance between two people using a string was often small; sometimes the smaller the distance, the greater the need for the string.

The practice of attaching cups to the ends of string came much later. Some say it is related to the irrepressible urge to press shells to our ears, to hear the still-surviving echo of the world's first expression. Others say it was started by a man who held the end of a string that was unraveled across the ocean by a girl who left for America.

When the world grew bigger, and there wasn't enough string to keep the things people wanted to say from disappearing into the vastness, the telephone was invented.

Sometimes no length of string is long enough to say the thing that needs to be said. In such cases all the string can do, in whatever its form, is conduct a person's silence.”