

88 KEYS

By JJ Jonas

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Cast: One Female

MAGGIE

It was Wednesday. Again. I walked to the bus stop early in the morning and waited for the old yellow cheese wagon to appear.

It was *Wednesday*. And it would be Wednesday all day long. All through the school day, all through my classes at Memorial Middle School, the torment of Wednesday would be upon me.

Some people called it “hump day.” (***satirically cheerful voice***) If you get past Wednesday, you can make it through the week. Once you are past Wednesday, you are over the hump! I believed that this concept was not truly tested until I started having MY Wednesdays.

Wednesdays were the ominous day of despair and despondency for me. You would think that once one Wednesday was over, I’d be relieved for the next six days. But, no. It was always there, hanging over my head. The inevitable always came full circle and Wednesday would roll around each week, so Wednesdays, you see, ruined my entire life during my otherwise destined to be blissful junior high years. I started feeling the intense foreboding on Sunday. As manic Monday and terrible Tuesday brought me closer, I would cringe and weaken with the week’s countdown.

Wednesday. A day of dread. A day of grief. A day of morbid trepidation.

For Wednesday afternoon, *every* Wednesday afternoon, I had my piano lesson with the Mrs. Winsor. My *weekly* piano lesson. *Every* Wednes-day.

My father insisted that each of his daughters, of which I was the eldest, have some musical training. But I was just *not* musically inclined.

(***as herself speaking to her father***) But, Dad, I have choir in school and at church. We learn music there. I can sight-read now and sing harmony. Why do I have to learn how to play the piano?

(as her father) Everyone needs to be able to play at least one instrument.

(as herself, to the audience) This coming from a man who played no instruments and had driven us nuts for the past year attempting to teach himself how to play the harmonica. **(imitates a blues intermezzo on harmonica, hitting many sour notes)**

(to her father) Dad, I don't have a talent for it. Joanna does. Let her take the piano lessons.

(as her father) She's already taking lessons, and doing quite well, I might add. Listen to her play! **(listens to music in the background)**

(SHE rolls eyes and then mimes an obsessed zombie playing the "Marine Hymn" about three times faster than it is normally played. Sings, "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli, we will fight our country's battles on the land and on the sea.")

(as herself; rolls eyes at sister) Joanna was my little sister. She played by ear. She would trick our piano teacher into playing a piece once so "she could see how it SHOULD sound performed WELL," flattering our teacher into letting her hear it once. Then Joanna would jump in and begin to play with her God-given auditory-to-finger talent and ability to memorize the sound. She couldn't read a note of music. She discovered early in her musical career that Dad liked lively military tunes and she practiced them incessantly. She claimed that it gave our father so much delight that she wanted him to hear it first thing upon his arrival at the ol' homestead. Frankly, I think she was just trying to drive us all crazy. The way she banged those keys, my father could hear it before he hit the driveway. He could hear it a block away! She drove us all over the edge, playing the same tune over and over and over...

(Mimes the same obsessed zombie playing the "Marine Hymn," slowly and plodding at first. Sings, "From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli, we will fight our country's battles on the land and on the sea.")

Each time she would play it faster.

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