

Maestro

It was the sound. The sound that made me desperate to rip my flesh out of my heart. Every night different pieces were being played. The first night Beethoven's first symphony, The second night the second symphony, and the third night the third, and so on. How can a peaceful lullaby possibly murder an innocent human being? It was just horrifying.

January twenty third. That was when I first came into this ancient apartment to study for my university curriculum. This apartment was the cheapest in town, so I decided to live for at least two weeks. But that two weeks became two centuries. I was lost in the time zone.

January twenty fifth. I swallowed my pill. Not sure how long I've slept. After the long, demonic sleep, I got struck by insomnia. The mirror needed some face surgery because it had the most irregular shape of an oval, as if it was almost two dimensional. My hideous doppelganger was staring at me, forecasting another day of rain. The view outside was just fine, and it was a perfect day for a crime. A crime! What am I thinking of! It must be the pills. The pills are distracting my study. Why I am I thinking of murder? I decided to go out for a hot latte. Making the wooden floor creak, I slowly reached the frozen door knob greeting me. Then, a large crash. And another. The next door juvenile irritated me so much! Everyday I stepped in with stress holding the essay hot off the press, and I always heard a crash. A crash that sounded like- like a piano. It was unlike the Yamaha pianos that I heard at my school festival. It was more like a whip. Every thunderous strike on a note split my eardrums and ripped through my minute heart, inclining its constant speed of beat to a cacophony, as if it was all planned. It was always the same time. And one thing I noticed about the boy next door was that at the first night that I met him, he had no fingers...

January twenty sixth. The alarm clock was beeping, monotone. I took three pills and tried to get to sleep hoping to graduate from my God-awful dream. I got rid of the pillow cover and set up my bed when suddenly- a tinkling series of treble clef notes struck my skin layers. Goosebumps rose up in alarm. My sweat glands were exploding in rain. Tick tock. Tick tock. Every staccato, the step was getting closer. A light step of agony coming towards the number 205, my room number, as if it was seeking me. I remember, there were only four fingers? But I definitely saw. He had no finger the first day! Why is that symphony continuing next door, every single day! The crescendo of fear inside me started increase. Every measure. Every note. I reached for another emergency pill, but I couldn't reach because it was too dark. The darkness created more shots of terror towards me. Then there was a loud thump. A person shrieked. I peeked outside. It was a young woman holding a Chanel bag. And I took a glance at her hand. One of her fingers were gone.

January twenty seventh. Am I becoming insane! No it shouldn't be me. I'm never insane. I am clearly alive! I banged my head on the wall until I had a concussion. I took five pills and choked for water. I shuddered my hands on the faucet. I drank a cold gulp of water. It was probably the after effects of my pills. I took a glance at the mirror. I was pale. My face was white like a thin sheet of paper, and all I could think of was the dead women last night. Time flew by as I wrote each page of my essay. Then suddenly, at the same time from yesterday, the juvenile opened the piano with a thump. I knew this because everyday, the same process happened over and over. It torched me. My brain was paralyzed as if a series of pendulum went through my head. Then I heard a familiar sound. The first four notes. G, G, G, and an Eb. Yes! I-It was from Beethoven's fifth symphony! But my eagerness turned into frustration and fear. The dim

flashlight I was unaware of holding suddenly flickered off. Someone started toward my door. One step. Two steps. Then it stopped in front of my door. My heart started to expand. If one bumble bee stung my throat, I would be dead. Dead forever. It was just an ant away from my college degree getting submitted, and if I were to be murdered by this crazy psycho juvenile, then I would be the most unfortunate person existing on Earth. I started to become dizzy. It was the pills. Probably the pills. It made me nervous even more. I fainted and saw a white figure in front of me, barely visible. The mosaic figure disappeared, and I fell on the ground.

The calender marked January thirty first. No! No! Now I'm going to murder that kid. He's driving me crazy. I will kill that kid today. The same way he killed my heart that ran just fine on the running machine until I came on this rusty apartment. I don't know. This apartement name was strangely written. One of the staff members, fortunately alive, told me that this apartment was made after Beethoven's death. What a relationship. Those are in children fantasy fairy tales. Anyways, I'm going to kill that kid. Whether he is holding on knife or not. You shouldn't say I'm crazy 'cause it's all of the nonsense and the pills that made me crazy! The ninth or last symphony today, eh? That will be your funeral day. Just you wait.

The beeping, bloody, red numbers changed to 11:30 P.M. I held up my pocket knife and decided to check on the next door. I glimpsed at the minute hole that I poked during the drama of the seventh symphony, and I saw the piano. And the kid. Yes the kid! He was just staring at an old piece. My sweat glands started to become Yellowstone National Park. My spine straightened up with million darts of fear. Then he turned his head. Toward the door. The most blank stare glanced at me. He rose up. He lightly touched the piano, which started to play by itself. The last, the most peaceful symphony that was perfect for his lullaby. He swiftly pushed the chair. And-

disappeared for a moment. I stepped back. I gripped harder on the pocket knife. Next, he was right in front of me. He had nine fingers. His tenth finger was going to be mine. I knew it. It was him after all! All that screaming outside! How did nobody notice! It was the pill! THE PILL! I COULDN'T RESIST ANYMORE. I jumped and started toward him. Then, one slight movement of his fingers at my throat. All my energy started to fade. I used my last strength and chopped him in half. I kept slicing. Poking. Torturing him so he could suffer slowly. I killed him. Murder! Yes murder! I always wanted that. I cut off his fingers one by one so he could not play the piano. The notes faded. And now what? I looked at his cold body. I'm certainly not a psycho.

A delicate, muffled melody grazed my eardrum yet again. There I remained, shaking uncontrollably, still staring through that forsaken hole. It was just a hallucination, so why did I still feel such dread? The floor creaked. The boy stood up. I saw him, with his nine fingers, clutching a serrated knife.

He sawed through the first layer of flesh. Then every layer of bone and tissue disconnected from its origin. Blood dripped like honey, slow like my death. Before my vision blurred, I remember him grinning.