

## Requiem An Familie

**March 15, 1945**

I am a piano. Not just any piano, I am a Rud. Ibach Sohn Grand. My siblings have been owned and played by illustrious composers such as Wagner and Strauss in concert halls around the globe. I was born in 1936, lovingly brought into this world by the expert craftsmen at Wuppertal-Barmen, Germany. Shortly thereafter I spent a period of time in a building with several other pianos. One day my future master David Ariel Hauptmann arrived and casually roamed about the room. He eventually came to where I stood and examined me carefully. He adjusted my lid, sat on the bench in front of me and began gently tapping my keys. My body began to vibrate with the most beautiful sensations I had yet to experience. The notes emanating from my soundboard were heavenly and I was so happy. Then he left.

I remained with the other pianos for a time until one day I was moved to this room in the home of my Master David. When I arrived it looked so much different than it does now. At that time the room was dappled with light and color, paintings adorned the walls, it was warm...inviting. Best of all, my Master visited every day and we melded into a consortium of harmony as if from another world. Once a week his wife Esther and their children Amos, Daniel, Dina, Uri and Golda would visit the room and Master David would play me for them. Sometimes Amos would sit on my bench with his father and tinkle my keys in most unusual ways. One day Master placed a piece of blue tape next to my middle C, and the musings of Amos began to improve in beauty and skill. This was my life for a considerable period of time. I was so happy.

One day strange men wearing unusual apparel arrived and scurried around the room. They soon left and numerous, loud and confusing sounds drifted in from other places in the home. The next day Master David did not come to me. Or the next, or the next. I was alone for a long time. Eventually, the men in the peculiar clothes came back. They took the paintings from the walls and moved other curious items into the room. Someone closed my lid and I was used as a desk. Smoking sticks were crushed onto my surface and I soon became very scarred. Sometimes one of the men would pound on my keys creating such a cacophony I felt close to breaking. But, I didn't.

A time arrived when the strange men did not come anymore. Then many days went by until some other people appeared and removed everything in the room, even the paper from the walls. But, they did not take me. I was alone again for a very long time. I thought often about Master David and his family and the beautiful music we made together, and I waited.

Then today Master David came into the room. He did not look the same, his hair was white and he was very skinny, but I recognized him right away. Master stood for several moments and stared at me. I was so happy. My heart strings trembled in anticipation of the marvelous moments to come. Finally, he haltingly walked over. He raised my lid and sat on my bench. His hand moved to the patch of blue tape and he massaged it slowly with his fingers. He gazed at my keyboard and I waited anxiously. And waited. Master David sighed and slowly raised his hands over my keys and then he began to play me.

It was dreadful. The sounds flowing from my soul could not be mine, they were foreign, broken...defective. I was horrified. I was embarrassed. Master David stopped playing immediately. He shook his head and a plaintive moan escaped his lips. His hands reached up and covered his eyes, water seeped through his fingers. I thought he was going to hurt me...and he should have. He should disassemble me for creating such a tragic noise! But, instead he reached over and gently touched the blue tape once more. Then he left.