



Light and Shade by Lucy Masterson

(Finalist, 11 – 14 years category, Janis Clark Short Story Competition)

You don't need to look down. You know your way around the keys, and your hands just glide effortlessly along them, as people stare in amazement. But after playing for so long, the piece is easy now. First, third, sharpened seventh. You know all the notes, but most importantly, you know the patterns. The position of every black and white key; you know them all. Every black and white sound is stored in your memory.

The two different colours are very important to you; the light and the shade.

Somewhere in the audience, you know your parents will have come to see you. And maybe even the person that taught you how to play the piano in the first place. Your piano teacher taught you all the techniques and all the notes, but that wasn't important. The most important part was what he gave you- your soul and passion for doing this. So you will dedicate this piece to him.

You end the first piece and move onto another. This piece includes more black notes than white, unlike the piece dedicated to your teacher. This piece will be dedicated to your best friend. Your best friend was always there for you and they always kept you in a good mood. But, when you weren't in a good mood they would stay by your side. It was your best friend along with your parents who encouraged you to get out there and do big things with your music. You might not be on this stage without them.

That is why your second piece is for them.

Next up is your soul mate. The one you love. They are always in the crowd watching you. And they promised that they'll never not be. They are what keeps you going in the hardest pieces; the ones that cause your hands to shake.

This piece is the most beautiful one, the one that uses a whole range of notes- a variety of black and white and low and high. Therefore, this piece is for them.

Not to forget, of course, your mum and dad. They encouraged you to learn your instrument and they helped you through your most difficult times, related to music and not. They deserve your hardest piece, to make them proud.

They deserve to feel pride after all they have done for you, and so you let your hands fly up and down, up and down the keys. You keep it going for as long as you can, as long as you can is how much you will love them.

Your final piece. This piece you will dedicate to your most prized possession. You will dedicate it to your piano.

The piano gave you your heart and spirit, it showed you an amazing way to look at the world. It showed you to look at the world as beautiful as it is- that both light and shade are equal, and as the piano demonstrated for you, are most beautiful together.