

Christian Life

Part 1 of 13 sections—March 5, 2017

The Piano

by Ruth O'Neil



LORI sat at the piano in their living room. Her thoughts escaped to memories of years ago when she had first received the piano. She lovingly touched the keys as her mind went back to that day.

Lori had returned home after a day of work. She stuck the key into the door of their tiny apartment. Her arms were full of books, and she was pregnant with their first little boy. Piano lessons at school had been hectic that day, to say the least. She was hurrying to get home so that she could spend time with her beloved husband.

Once she had the door unlocked and was inside the apartment, she used her foot to close the door while dropping her books on the table at the same time. But then she noticed something was strange. The apartment was too quiet. By this time, her husband, Peter, was usually home, watching TV to relax a little bit. But that day she heard nothing.

With an uneasy feeling, she walked through the apartment and into the dining room. She just stopped and stood there. It was as if time stood still. Against the wall was

the most beautiful baby grand piano she had ever seen!

"Where did this come from?" she asked out loud. She walked over to the piano and noticed a note stuck to it. There were musical symbols drawn all over the note. She smiled, recognizing her husband's handwriting. "Happy first anniversary! All my love, Peter."

Lori had no idea in the world how he could have afforded such a gift. Their apartment was full of second-hand furniture, either passed down to them from other family members or bought at the thrift store.

As fast as Lori could walk in her condition, she went to the bedroom to see whether Peter was hiding in there. As soon as she saw his smiling face, she began to cry and ran to hug him.

"How did you afford this?" were the only words she could get out.

Peter bobbed his head from side to side and shrugged his shoulders. "I just put small amounts of money away when I had it. All those hours I've been working overtime weren't for nothing. I know how important playing the piano is to you, and I didn't want you to have to live without one. I figured I'd do whatever it took to make you happy."

Lori felt incredibly blessed that God had given her such a man to

marry. Peter knew her in the depths of her soul. He worked hard to provide for her.

"I'll never be able to thank you enough for this gift," Lori said as she hugged him a little harder.

Bringing herself to the present, Lori looked at the box on the mantle. The note Peter had given her so many years ago was carefully kept in there.

Lori thought about the many years of their marriage and was only now realizing just how many lives her music had touched. She smiled, remembering that their neighbors in that first apartment building had called her "the piano lady." For the longest time, she had no idea anyone could even hear her playing music.

Many nights she had played softly to help soothe her restless babies to sleep. She had even been able to play for some of her grandchildren. She felt very blessed.

She thought of the hundreds of piano students she had taught over the years who had left their fingerprints on the keys. They had allowed her to teach them a talent they could use for God throughout their lives. Not all of them had played beautifully. That did not matter, for Lori knew that making a joyful noise included playing an instrument as well as singing.

Lori remembered one student in particular. That student certainly put all her effort into practicing. Sadly, she was never quite able to learn the technique to play beautiful music. For years, Lori had tried to teach her. For years, the student had given her all, but not much ever came of her playing.

That student alone made Lori realize that her talent was a gift from God, not simply something that everyone could pick up easily. Lori always made sure to thank God for

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