

Voiceover: Music. As a species, it is perhaps our greatest legacy. If the world were to end tomorrow, and aliens visited our desolate planet many years from now, they would discover our music and consider us gods. They would hear the songs that united us as nations, as friends, and as...lovers. But...just as music has brought us together, it's also illustrated some of mankind's darkest machinations. Our music tells tales of how we broke one another's hearts. How we sought revenge. And...how we got away with murder. And sometimes, it tells a tale like the one you're about to hear now, where a song is played to ward off our world's very own annihilation.

I bring to you now the goosebump-inducing tale of The Music of Derrick Zugg!

(Stupid old-timey music plays)

Narrator: The story I'm about to tell you is not an easy one to confess, for it involves an admission about the nature of my very own sanity. I've spent these many long years trying to relocate the house on South Miller Avenue, where I boarded for a short time while studying nursing at the Rosemary Home. It remains so very odd that the house in which I stayed was but two blocks from where I schooled, and yet I'm unable to come upon it again, or find anyone who knows where it might be. So, you can see why my sanity comes into question any time I think upon that house, and whether I'd ever stayed there or not, and if I'd actually ever heard the strange music...of Derrick Zugg...

(Children laughing on the streets, dogs barking, lawnmowers going)

Kid: Hey, mister! Give me my ball back!

Narrator: Oh ho ho, be careful on these streets, young rascal! You wouldn't want to end up as a horse's shoe, now would you?

Kid: ...What?

Narrator: Say there scoundrel, you wouldn't happen to know where to find this house, now would you? Here's the address, I've written it in my scroll. Have a look.

Kid: Why do you keep calling me weird names?

Narrator: What names might those be, you little miscreant?

Kid: Dad! This guy's talking weird!

Narrator: Well you look weird!

(mean gene) Father: What the heck is going on out here? Why are you harassing my little Timmy?

Narrator: Forgive me, sir. I don't mean to tarry. I'm simply looking for the whereabouts of a house. You see, I am to stay there while studying my nursing at the Rosemary Home. I have very little money in my purse, and the kind gentleman who keeps the place has offered me a very agreeable rate to--

Father: What's the stinkin' address already?

Narrator: Oh, yes. I have it on this scroll here--

Father: Ah...THAT place...well...I haven't heard of anyone staying there since I was my boy's age, to be quite frank. If I remember right, I think...yeah, I think you'll want to go up one block and take a left, and it'll be right at the end of the road there.

Narrator: Thank you, my good man! Thank you indeed!

Father: No problem. Best of luck. Oh, and...if you ever talk to little Timmy again, I'm calling the cops!

Narrator: And that's how I came upon the house at the end of South Miller Avenue. 'Twas an odd building. It was very tall, yet appeared quite empty, and it overlooked a small grove of trees that led into a quaint little baseball field where it appeared a grandmother was playing with her grandchildren. Of course, these things I wouldn't learn until I entered the lodging and spoke with the keep, a silly-looking bearded gentleman named Howard.

Howard: Welcome, welcome.

Narrator: Howard was paralyzed from the waist down and, as I'd come to learn, often forgot to wear pants.

(rocco modern life) Howard: Oh, well would you look at that. I forgot my pants again. Just a second.

(Puts on pants and zips up)

Howard: There there, that's much better.

Narrator: Howard put me in a room on the third floor, which was the least expensive floor of his lodging; quite appealed to a poor student such as I. As I took my key and was about to make my way for the stair, he offered me a dire warning.

Howard: Whatever noises you hear at night...you just ignore them. You hear me? Do not try and follow them. Just...pretend they aren't there.

Narrator: Noises? What noises do you mean, you silly bastard?

Howard: It's an old house. Could be the pipes, or bats in the attic. Just remember to pay them no attention. You'll be sorry if you do...now where did I put those pants?

Narrator: At that moment I had no idea why the old boy was trying to strike such dread within me. I'm deaf in one ear, and I sleep like a log, and therefore would likely have not heard the sounds at all if he hadn't brought it up. But because of his warnings, and my own terribly curious nature, I made it a point to stay up late that night with my good ear listening closely.

###BREAK###

(Sounds of floorboards creaking, doors shutting, pipes rattling, mice squeaking.)

Narrator: I heard many noises that night, my friends, all of which were indeed the sounds of the old house settling. Yet, through it all, something else came to me that night. Something that sounded quite... unnatural, seeping through the ceiling of my room. And though that sad little paralyzed man with the odd smell who ran the lodging warned me not to follow...follow I did. I walked up the stair to the fourth floor, where there was but one door from which the odd music played behind. Unable to stand it any longer, I knocked.

(Door knocking. Footsteps on the other side of the door. It opens.)

Derrick: Yeah? Whaddya want?

Narrator: I apologize sir, but I heard some odd music from behind your door and, being the curious individual that I am, I thought to track down its source and see from whence--

Derrick: You bring any beer?

Narrator: Beer?

Derrick: Yeah. All this music playing's got me thirsty. Hey, why are you dressed in that sissy nightgown?

Narrator: I apologize, for I did not bring anything with which to imbibe, my good man. I only came up from my room to see how it is you were making the very sounds I heard while laying in bed...

Derrick: You wanna hear what I was playing?

Narrator: Yes, my dear sir, if it's not too much trouble...

Derrick: Ehh...I don't think you want to hear that.

Narrator: Excuse me? And why not? You were only just playing it but a moment ago...

Derrick: Nah, you...you really don't wanna hear it. It's not for your type.

Narrator: My...type?

Derrick: Yeah. I can tell just by lookin' at you. Here, let me play something else.

Narrator: And at that moment, the odd gentleman with such wild hair and even wilder eyes let me into his abode. It was quite the sight, if I do say so myself. There was only but a mattress on the floor for him to sleep. On it was four open jars of mustard, with another three unopened. There was also some strange doll creation that appeared to be filled with air, its mouth stuck in a permanent horrified gasp. It was clear to me then that this man only cared for one thing--not his appearance, nor the squalor in which he lived--but only his music, which he agreed to play for me then.

(Sweet violin music plays)

Narrator: It was among the most beautiful compositions I'd ever heard during my time on earth...yet one thing still puzzled me. It wasn't the same sound that I'd heard from my bed.

Derrick: What's wrong with ya? You don't like it, you jerk?

Narrator: I do sir, oh but I do indeed! It's just that...well...it's quite different from what I heard only a few moments ago from my room.

Derrick: I told you, I ain't going to play that.

Narrator: And why not, my good man?

Derrick: Just trust me. You don't want to be around when I have to play that song.

Narrator: At that moment, a wild torrent of wind blew against the window pane. I saw then the lights of the the baseball field glowing brightly. I moved nearer to the window to get a closer look, when--

Derrick: Get away from there!

Narrator: Dear sir, I don't mean to offend, I was only--

Derrick: I said get away! Don't look out the window!

Narrator: I apologize, it's just that I don't get this kind of view from my--

Derrick: You need to leave. NOW.

Narrator: Leave? But my good man, I only just arrived...

Derrick: Go. You must GOOOOOO!

(Loud thunder. Sound of lights fizzling out. Wind blowing.)

Narrator: And there, in the darkness of the man's room, is when I first saw it...the strange, hazy abyss that grew on the other side of his window. And I knew then why he played his music...it wasn't for his own enjoyment, or the enjoyment of others, but perhaps to keep something evil and monstrous, a beast from the very fringes of our own universe, away from our fragile world...

(COMMERCIAL)

Narrator: It turns out this Zugg fellow had requested I move to a room on the second floor, and even offered to pay the difference in the rate. Yet ever since I heard that sound from his room that first night, there was nothing I could do to escape it. It affected my nursing studies and conversations with others around town. I broached the topic with Howard, but he would have none of it.

Howard: I'll have none of this!

Narrator: But my good man, don't you see? His music is affecting my nursing studies and conversations with others around town.

Howard: Yeah yeah, I know. You said that already!

Narrator: Is it not affecting you as well?

Howard: No...well...not really. Not all the time...Sometimes, maybe. Quite often, actually. Pretty much every night, TO BE HONEST!

Narrator: And do you not wish for it to stop? Or to at least learn why he's playing such a haunting tune?

Howard: You're right. I can't listen to it anymore. The sound itself breaks my very heart each time.

Narrator: I could see how deeply he was bothered then, and got to wondering what he'd meant about a broken heart, and if maybe the sound was behind his current state of paralysis, or his proclivity for forgetting his pants. And so one night, I decided to pay dear old Derrick Zugg another visit to find my answers.

(Walks up stairs. It's silent.)

Narrator: I heard nothing for a long while, and was just about to rap on his door to announce my presence, when suddenly it came, the music I had once so longed to hear. It was as clear and as terrifying as if the sky itself was being rent apart. The sound was unearthly and deeply unsettling. No instrument that I'd ever heard during my time on earth could possibly have made such a grotesque, horrifying sound.

(Slide whistle)

Narrator: The sound shook my to my very bones. It was so powerful, so encompassing, that I found myself unable to breathe!

(Slide whistle)

Narrator: It was as if hell itself had split in two, and from it every demon arose screaming and cackling into the night!

(Slide whistle)

Narrator: Or, as an even more heart-stopping thought, it was the voice of the Lord of Flies himself, Beelzebub!!

(Slide whistle)

Narrator: Thankfully, the cacophony paused. Yet it appeared he must've known I was there, listening on the other side of his door, for once the sound resumed, it became more frantic as if the scoundrel was trying to drive me mad himself!

(Lots of slide whistling)

Narrator: Then, all at once, it stopped, and it became clear to me then that he wasn't playing for me after all, but for something that dwelled in the room with him. I heard the poor man's cry.

Derrick (muffled, other side of door): Get the heck off me will ya?!

Narrator: I burst into his room to save his wretched soul.

###BREAK###

(Door busted down. Sounds of a struggle.)

Howard: Give me my slide whistle back! That's mine and you know it!

Derrick: Never! You don't even know how to play it!

Narrator: At last, I knew why the sound had broken the poor paralyzed man's heart...I'd apparently walked in on a decades-long struggle over that damnable instrument. I had to intervene.

Narrator: Give me the damnable thing! If you both can't agree on who's to use it, neither of you shall have it.

Derrick: Hey! Give that back, man! That's mine!

Howard: No, it's mine!

Narrator: Men! Get a hold of yourselves!

Howard: Don't tell ME to get a hold of MYself! This S.O.B. stole it from me, and then he beat me with it until I couldn't walk anymore!

Derrick: That's because you weren't playing it right! We would've all been doomed if I let you keep it!

Narrator: Boys! Boys! Until you can both behave like adults, it shall remain mine.

Narrator: An odd sort of curiosity struck me then. Something about holding that whistle in my hands compelled me to play it. And though I knew very little about the history of this ungodly music-maker that I held to my mouth, I puckered up anyway and blew with as much power as my lungs would allow.

(Slide whistle. Sounds of a low rumbling.)

Derrick: Oh, well now you've done it.

Narrator: Done what, my good man?

Howard: You've unleashed...armageddon!

(Sounds of cosmic wind, house being torn apart, growling noises.)

Narrator: We were all standing then at the precipice of the end of the world. I had always known that, at some point in my life, I'd be present for the last days, though I couldn't have predicted it would've been alongside such faithful comrades as the ones I had that day.

Howard: Oh no! Someone, please, help me back into my wheelchair!

Derrick: Do it yourself! I'm getting the heck out of here!

Narrator: Somehow we emerged from that room with our lives. Well, I did at least. Poor Howard suffered a horrifying death after an ungodly, indescribable force tore him in half. Derrick Zugg managed to survive, though I wouldn't say he escaped with what could be called his life, for he'd been driven so mad that he went running down the street, screaming unintelligible language at an ice cream vendor before stealing a cone for himself and running off. I informed the local authorities of the events from that night, yet they would not believe my tale, for we could no longer find the house. They thought I was mad as well, as mad as my dear friend Zugg who stole their police wagon and drove it into a lake... but I do know for certain what I saw...and what I heard. The end times did not destroy all of mankind that night, though it came close...closer than anyone will ever know.

Kid: But Grandpa, how come the world didn't end?

Narrator: Well you see, young lad, it turns out I'd played the song incorrectly at first. Upon trying one more time, I managed to play the correct tune, sending the beasts of hell back to the inferno.

Kid: What's the correct tune?

Narrator: Well, my boy, I wasn't going to teach you until you were much, much older, but since you asked, I suppose... *ack* ...oh no... *ack* ...heart attack!!!

Kid: Grandpa! Grandpa, no! You haven't taught me the song yet!!

Narrator: My boy...there isn't time...here, take my whistle...you must play it!

(Sounds of storms)

Kid: But Grandpa, I don't know it!

Narrator: Just... *ack* ...just play something! Anything!

(Slide whistle plays incorrectly. Hell tears open.)

Kid: No!! They're here!

Demon: Ah, the flesh of a child, that's music...to my ears!

(Sounds of slicing, child screaming)

Voiceover: Ah, well, that was quite the performance, was it not? Such rapturous melodies, such engaging performances! It's a good thing it was all only a story...or was it? Could there really be a magical melody man turning back the minute hand on the doomsday clock? Perhaps there's even a strange old man somewhere, telling stories of the...unexpected variety...to keep the end times at bay... Join me again, won't you? Together we can write the songs that make the whole world...scream!! I don't fucking know.