

# Will of a Prince

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*Prince died without a will . . .*

*The New York Times, April 26, 2016*

To the first song I wrote at seven years old  
on my father's forbidden piano, I leave  
the sacred key of audacity. I don't know  
who will dance their tiny hungering

fingers across their own set of onyx & ivory  
in a generation or two or three, but to all  
those millions of little hands, I offer up my wrists  
like two trunks of willows in a breeze.

To the legacy of sound, I bequeath  
these eardrums I must now take off like tantric jewels,  
lustrous & shimmering with funk. To all the Controversy  
I created in my lifetime, I leave no apologies

& 38 other albums. To the wild doves who taught me mine  
sees what blinds trapped inside a diamond  
to be preserved in passion for all of time  
like the keenness of a needle on the Great Celestial Turntable, I leave

a castle of psychedelic stained-glass windows, flung open  
 for fluttering you, even in the wintertime. To my life-  
 long relationship with God, I offer the faithful  
 dot of my naked body bowing under the great curvaceous mystery  
 of His question mark.

To Minneapolis, I leave a legion of little Northside Mozarts  
 air-guitaring their way straight up the charts  
 (& in the meantime hooping all summer with two rusty nets  
 & a long-range three-point  
 sunset).

To the greater social role some wished I'd played, I leave

my charismatic gaze & melodic sashays up & down the stage.  
 To the hipbones I nearly ground down with splits & pirouettes  
 to dust, I leave a half-acre of broken stilettos.

To my love of rock, I leave my penchant to pop like a super boss-

a nova; to my obsession with funk, my repertoire  
 of gospel & opera. To my reverence for big band jazz,  
 I leave all the instruments I never learned how to play  
 professionally or for fun,  
 which, of course, y'all know was none.

To my modesty, I don't leave shit.

To my spontaneity, I lay at your feet the lassoing curiosity of my vocal cords.

To my falsetto, you dirty little girl, I unclot my loveliest closet baritone.

To my androgynicity, you angel in a demon's dream,

I leave a glyph pointing down to both question & answer.

To Love,

I thank you, though you didn't always treat me so well,

I still love you & always will.

To the deer who fog my window just before dawn,

I leave my muse asleep at the piano.

To all the verbena, clematis & lavender in the world,

I give back with ample interest all the purple I ever borrowed.

To my race, I leave behind the pop apartheid of the '80s.

To joy, I give all my rococo beats, guitar riffs cataclysmic,

jabby synths & shiver-inducing screams. To melancholy,

I bequeath a slew of haunting coos & creamy soulful feasts.

To fate, I leave all my most buoyant bass lines funkadelic from outer space.

I never really believed in the material world, so to it, I leave

all the magic that wherever I played, I always tried to leave entire

& sizzling on stage.

To my sincerity, I bestow a pimp strut promenade.

To my swag, I offer my two-pears-in-a-plastic-bag ass cheeks,

sometimes minus the plastic bag. I know, honey I know,

in spiritual matters sometimes I had to knock on your door.

To all my pronouncements on morality, I leave a thousand free

concerts in my home, to which anyone, & I mean anyone, was always welcome.  
To my final days, I offer up a song I wrote  
but myself don't yet know how to hear, a soul  
my whole life that kept changing its composer.

To all the godfathers & godmothers  
yet to be born & bear the weight of theirs, I leave  
this cosmic, contradictory, sacrilegious chord.  
Go on, play it if you dare.

It runs right through my navel & just 4 U  
I left the door wide open.

