

Will of a Prince

ED BOK LEE

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.

