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684 Words

CADENCE

BY MELODI CODA LAINE

If you ask me my favorite cadence, I answer, “Andalusian.” If you ask me my favorite cadence, I’m already in love with you. I’m in love with you so I desperately want to hear what yours is, so I ask you back. And I ask you why. While you respond, I listen and I nod—whether I understand what you say or not. When your speech slows, I know you’re wrapping up your response, and I can feel myself trying to back away, trying to run from the question I don’t want to be asked back. But my feet don’t move, and I hear you say, “Why Andalusian?” Hm. Why Andalusian? If I had enough time to think, maybe I’d answer that it’s more perfect than the perfect cadence. It’s sad and satisfying. Raw and real. And at the right moment in the right song it transcends and brings forth emotions so strong. But I don’t say that because there’s not enough time to think of that in between my thoughts of you. I look at you. And I look at you. And, God, I see that I want to be with you. An image so vivid, I can taste you on my tongue. An image so real, I can feel that we fit. An image so hot, so steeped in your sweat, it has me wet and begging to never be dry again. What I manage to say is, “I don’t know... It just sounds—I don’t know... It’s beautiful.”

I can see it in your eyes that you think I’m shy. I’m not shy, I’m just a terrible musician. A terrible musician who doesn’t know what she’s talking about, but one good enough to know that I want to be with one. A good one. A musician who plays better than me, knows more than me. One who could compose a piece for me, a piece to me. And I sit next to you at these keys. I hear you play. I pretend these notes were composed by you for me. Listening isn’t enough, so I say, “Teach me how to play it.” And you do. *Adagietto* and diligently in the golden light of the sun. Your fingers are so precise, and mine less so. You reposition yourself further back on the bench. You ask that I come sit in the space you made for me. My fingers get even less precise, as I am distracted by your scent that caresses me. And you tell me to start over politely, but in my

head it sounds like you're begging me to do it again. "Relax," you say. "It's okay," you say. "Why are you shaking?" you say. But is it not obvious? Every syllable you speak—every syllable you speak with your mellifluous voice—it penetrates my ears and with every syllable I'm losing some control. "Once more," you say. And now I'm so weak, but I do as you say. I position my fingers and I listen to you count. Into my ear, you whisper, "One. Two. Three. Four. One—And—Two—And—Three—And—Four—And." I play the notes. I play more notes. And I get to G. F. E-flat. And the half-step down to D just undoes me. And I know you heard the whimper, I know you felt the shudder because you lean into me. Your mass attracts me. Like gravity. I lean into you.

And as I lean into you, I know that you are the one. And soon you look me in the eyes. Soon, I feel your lips on mine. Soon, your hands are on me and my hands are on you. The straps of my dress tickle my thighs. The denim of your jeans is rough against my skin. Soon, I am unable to quiet my breath because everything you do is so passionate yet *piano*, precisely how I imagined you'd be. And I plead to you, "Don't stop," I beg of you. And you don't. You give me what I want. And we go on creating a duet unlike either of us have ever composed. And the piano is forgotten.

For now.