

The College Collection

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# Woody

Georgina Jonas



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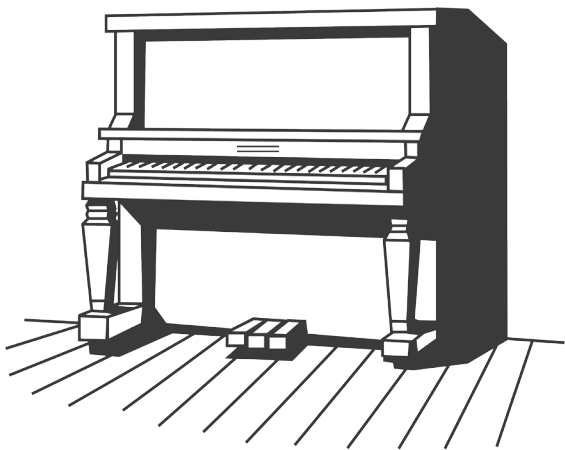
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## Chapter 1

# Talent

I love music.

I have always loved music. When I was little the piano was like a magnet to me. Almost as soon as I could walk I used to climb up onto the piano stool and start to play.

I played and played. I played notes at the top of the piano. I played notes at the bottom of the piano and I played all the notes in between.

“Woody, what are you playing?” my family would ask.

“Cold,” I’d say gravely, fixing them with an astonished stare. How could they not know?

I remember loving it. First of all, the piano looked nice. Also, it was a challenge to climb up onto the stool because it had no helpful back or arms to cling to.

Once I was up there I felt so high and I found the piano keys so easy to play. I would press one and instantly a sound came out. Just like that. No waiting and very little effort.

Another day I might choose to play 'Windy' or 'Hungry'.

My family must have got very excited that I might have a rare musical talent.

In the end it turned out that although I was very good at playing sensations, just as soon as I was given lessons and had to learn to read music and play actual pieces, my enthusiasm crumbled and faded away.

It was the same with other instruments.

I enjoyed blasting out sound on brass and wind instruments. I really loved banging away on the drums and sawing away at the strings of a violin. A guitar looked, and still looks, so good in my hands, but sadly the sound didn't ever match the picture.

You're not sure what I am talking about? Let me give you an example of what I mean.

I remember the time when my whole class had to learn to play the recorder. It was in Year 3.

Proudly, I had brought my recorder home to practise.

Schools nearly always give children recorder lessons, so I optimistically imagined that it would be easy to learn. It didn't seem to be that difficult.

You just had to put your fingers over the holes and blow. That seemed easy.

It did look easy and earlier, at school, other children seemed to be managing it. The sound that they made might have been slow and hesitant, but the tune was one that anybody could recognise as 'Three Blind Mice'.

So it was with confidence that I returned home, got my recorder out of my school bag, placed my fingers over the correct holes and began to blow.

My assembled family looked at me with horror and the dog promptly sat down and began to howl!

While the other children had made music, I was making extraordinary high-pitched whistles.

I couldn't imagine what had gone wrong.

Was the recorder broken? I inspected the instrument. It looked all right.

I tried again. Same result. More whistles than actual notes.

I was playing something, but it didn't seem to be music.

I looked around the room. Everyone was acting very strangely.

Dad had gone red in the face, my sister Bella seemed to be trying to stuff her tissue into her ears and Mum bit her lip and abruptly left the room.

Then I began to notice that every time I announced my intention to practise, someone would suddenly have a job for me to do.

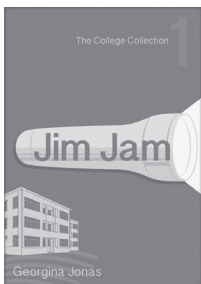
"Woody, please could you help me to lay the table?"



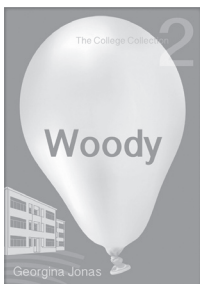
"Woody, my pen has run out of ink. Can you find the spare cartridges?"

Slowly, I was getting the message.

I had enthusiasm, but I needed more talent.



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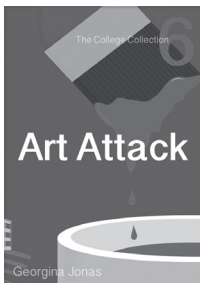
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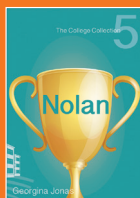
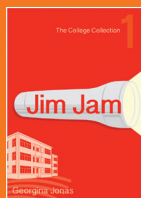
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# The College Collection

Woody loves music, but can't play an instrument – as his family's reactions make clear! Will he find his true talent?



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