

# Muzingo Classband



# Muzingo Island

A Musical Adventure

## Chapter 1. Saturday

Most children wake up instantly. Their eyes open and they spring out of bed like a jack-in-the-box and run around the house making as much noise and mess as it takes to wake up their parents and bring them downstairs. Dora Toogood was not one of these children.

In fact, Dora was so difficult to get out of bed that her parents had recently moved her father's piano into her bedroom. Mr Toogood began his piano practise at 8 o'clock sharp every morning. If there was one sound Dora hated more than anything else, it was piano scales. Every day, accompanied by a flurry of notes, frantic arpeggios and etudes, Dora would cover her ears, stumble out of bed, getting dressed as she lurched down the stairs, out of the door, and straight into the taxi, which was waiting to take her to school.

Mrs. Toogood was therefore quite surprised to hear a tremendous noise coming from Dora's room rather early one morning. It was to be anything but a normal day in the Toogood household.

What her parents didn't know, was that mornings were Dora's chance to hide in her own little cosy world under duvets, pillows and blankets far away from the five things that made her life a misery: school, teachers, parents, homework and most of all, piano practise. This was the time she spent with Frank, her stuffed monkey teddy and her best friend in the whole world. Together they would make up stories and songs and share the types of secrets and adventures that only best friends share. "I just *cannot* go to school today Frank", said Dora screwing up her face as she thought about the other children in her class. She stretched and thought for a minute. "Oh, I forgot," she said as a smile spread slowly across her face. "IT'S SATURDAY!!!" She jumped out of bed holding Frank, and danced gleefully around the room thinking about a day of computer games, YouTube cat videos and finishing off that secret bag of stuck-together sweets she had hidden under her pillow. . .

Meanwhile, her Mother was listening with fascination to the bumps and bangs on the ceiling. She was not sure that this was a good time to remind Dora that she had arranged three hours of extra piano lessons for today. It was after all the competition next week. Every year Mr. and Mrs. Toogood, two of the most famous musicians in the world, had to go and watch their daughter finish last in the school's annual music competition. "Darling," Mrs. Toogood finally shouted up the stairs to her daughter. "Get your piano books ready. Breakfast is on the table"

Twenty minutes later, a very, very miserable Dora sat in the taxi on the way to her piano tutor. As she pressed her face against the glass she saw children playing by the huge iron gates that guarded St. Bogey's School. They pointed and laughed at her when they saw the taxi drive through the gates.

[Song Saturday] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJ7H\\_uM9qYY&t=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJ7H_uM9qYY&t=11s)

## Chapter 2: Mrs. Keys' Saturday School

Mrs. Keys had taught piano at St. Bogey's for so long that no-one could remember exactly when she had arrived. She lived on the grounds in a forgotten corner of the school above the library. "I'm Grade Three you know" Annie explained to Luke as they sat waiting in the gloomy corridor. "Oh." Luke replied, staring at the floor. "I've got to do Grade One again, unfortunately." "Well I'm about to start Grade Ten!" said Sebastian, who had just finished his lesson. He flashed his usual superior smile. "Mrs. Keys says I'm going to win the competition again this year." Dora shoved open the doors. "Don't listen to *him*, Grade Ten doesn't even.."

"..Oh, look everyone, it's the girl who doesn't know the difference between *mezzo piano* and *mezzo forte*." Sebastian interrupted mockingly.

"Leave me alone..." Dora replied, her face like a thunderstorm.

"Oh, we'll leave you alone. When you win the competition." Annie sniggered. "But let's be honest, we all know you're going to come last... AGAIN. Your parents must be SO disappointed." Sebastian and Annie stood up and barged Dora out of the way, knocking Frank out of her hands. The heavy oak door slammed shut.

"Dumdumum..." Luke awkwardly hummed his favourite piano piece through a mouthful of crisps. "Are you going to play Fur Elise again this year? He asked innocently.

"Yes" said Dora through clenched teeth. "NEEEEXT!!!! Mrs Keys' mighty voice echoed down the corridor. "Good luck" said Luke weakly.

Dora stuck her head nervously through the door and tip-toed into a musty, old room. In one dark corner lurked a giant, dusty piano, in the other, Mrs. Keys was hunched over a huge pile of piano music muttering to herself. She paid no attention to Dora, who got as far as the rug before tripping over a sleeping cat. A hissing blur of claws and teeth flew off the rug and retreated under the piano. "Such a shame!" Mrs. Keys mumbled. "Well, we can't all be as talented as my last student. SIT DOWN THEN!" she bellowed. "Beethoven's Fur Elise. BAR ONE!"

Dora opened her bag. At once, her nostrils were greeted with a damp, mouldy, rotten smell. Dora remembered with horror that she hadn't removed her costume from Monday's swimming lesson. Slowly, she pulled out her slimy piano books, wiping off the soggy remains of this week's sandwiches, which she had hidden in her bag.

Mrs Keys glared over the top of her glasses, wincing in disgust while Dora tried to read the smudged musical notes, which ran like tears down the page. She decided it might be best to close her eyes and hope for the best. She put her fingers to the piano and began to play. "THE COMPETITION IS NEXT WEEK AND YOU CAN'T PLAY A SINGLE NOTE!" Mrs. Keys exploded, jumping off her chair and leaning over Dora. "AGAIN!"

Dora began to bash out the first few notes of the piece defiantly. "You know the whole school will be watching you next week, your parents will be watching. I'm the judge you know!" Mrs Keys said with a quiet sneer. "You're the Judge!" shouted Dora, despairingly "My life is over!" "ENOUGH! SCALES! NOW!" Mrs. Keys screamed as she flicked the metronome, sending a tick-tocking sound pulsating through the room.

(Song: Go Home and Practise all Weekend) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zC\\_2sL5ZPKQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zC_2sL5ZPKQ)

## Chapter 3: Is she ready?

There was an abrupt knocking at the door. "What is it??!!" Mrs. Keys shouted.

"It's Mr. and Mrs. Toogood!" Mrs. Keys turned to Dora sharply. "You did NOT tell me your Mother and Father were coming to collect you today" she whispered with quiet fury.

Mrs. Keys beamed as she opened the door. "Ah Mr. and Mrs. Toogood! How wonderful to see you! I didn't realise you were back from your concerts in Japan! Do come in."

"Thank you so much, Mrs. Keys. We know that, under your guidance, Dora will become a wonderful pianist just like her Father".

"Yes, yes.. You certainly are one of best" said Mr. Toogood as he strode into the room "So how are we doing? All ready to win the big competition next week? He winked at Dora. Mrs. Keys laughed nervously. "Lets not get carried away Arthur," said Mrs. Toogood turning to Mrs. Keys "Is she though? Is she ready?"

"Well" stuttered Mrs. Keys, uncomfortably. "She is working quite hard, yes"

"That's not what we asked" said Mr. Toogood. "Is she ready for the competition next week?"

"Next week! Hmmm, well... she's putting in a solid effort, but..."

"IS. SHE. READY?!" Mr. and Mrs. Toogood said firmly together.

"No" gulped Mrs. Keys. "Not at all. Not even close."

Dora's parents span round and glared ferociously at their daughter.

Mr. Toogood began, "Well, you obviously haven't been practising! Mrs. Keys is one of the best.

"You certainly haven't been working hard enough." added Mrs. Toogood. "That's it, from now until the competition, you will practise every spare moment you have. No computer games, no Youtube, No TV. Nothing. Nada. Zilch." shouted Mr. Keys leaning down until his nose was virtually touching hers. "It's nothing but practise, practise, practise for you, young lady!"

Dora sat at home on the edge of her bed, she held her head in her hands and scowled intensely across the room at her father's piano. She had never felt so utterly alone and she had the strange idea that, for some reason, the piano was responsible- that it was mocking her. Dora walked across the room, her clenched fists raised above her head. In frustration, she brought them crashing down on the cold, black and white ivory. To her horror, one of the A-flat keys of her father's piano came loose in her hand.

As she held it up, Dora felt a strange sensation as though she was being lifted out of her own body somehow. She began to feel dizzy and faint as her room started to spin round and round, faster and faster, until all the colours and objects of the room had melted into bright, brilliant light. A light which eventually faded into darkness.

(Song: Odd One Out fits here) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAPW83y4i7I>

## Chapter 4 - Welcome to Muzingo.

Dora woke up gently, as though she had slept for a hundred years. She yawned, stretched and felt for Frank but couldn't find him with her fingers. She slowly opened her eyes and paused, holding her breath in amazement. Dora was not lying in her bed. Stretched out in front of her was a beach of brilliant warm, white, soft sand. Strange plants of every shape and colour dotted the landscape and the most perfect, emerald sea imaginable faded into the horizon. What struck her most, though was the sound. Everything around her seemed to hum, chime and vibrate. Dora heard a rustling noise above her head. "Babady ba ba boom!" "She turned around and froze. "Frank!? But y-y-you're...". "Of course I am!" replied Frank- "and you c-c-can..." "Talk? You betcha!" interrupted the monkey, which was identical to her teddy in every way but bigger and more chatty. "Welcome to Muzingo Island!" said Frank, with a huge, cheeky smile. "What!? How did I get here? Where am I, and what on earth am I doing here!?" "You're here to learn the musical secrets of Muzingo and become a *fantabulous* musician." "A musical island? What? Is this some sort of punishment? Are my parents behind this?" "Punishment? Nooo! You just get to play music all the time!" said Frank, dancing around while trying to balance a coconut on his head. "ALL THE TIME!?" Dora groaned. "I feel sick. Take me home Frank! ... Frank?" Frank and his coconut had disappeared. "FRAAANK!?"

As if on cue, a sound reached her ears, and it was a sound quite unlike anything she had ever heard before. It seemed to be coming from the thick undergrowth surrounding the beach -as though the trees themselves were calling to her. Dora realised she had no choice but to follow them and discover their source. Pushing back thorny branches and rubbery leaves, climbing over huge roots and rocks of cool, polished purple, she followed the tangled melodies as they echoed and bounced around the forest. She began to hear the voices of children. They were singing and playing the most magical music, but she couldn't understand a word they were saying.

Dora peaked down into a forest clearing through a gap between two huge leaves shaped like elephant ears. Below her, a group of children sat in a circle. Some were playing instruments, some were singing and dancing. Some were playing rocks, toadstools and tree trunks as if the Island and everything on it was one big musical instrument. "What do you think?" She turned and saw Frank standing next to her. "They're amazing!" she whispered, wide eyed. "Have fun!" said Frank, "and mind your feet." Dora looked down, hitting her head on a branch. As she took a step backwards in pain, she realised that Frank had tied her shoelaces together. Dora wobbled and tried to steady herself, but it was too late. The wobbles grew into wiggles and the wiggles grew into shakes. She crashed through the bushes, down the steep slope and landed in the middle of the circle. The music stopped. Dora, covered in scratches, with soil in her ears and twigs in her hair slowly got to her feet. Suddenly they shouted together "Yeeeeeey!! New Muzingo! New Muzingo!" One by one they introduced themselves: Jackson, Kiri, Curly, Blue, Chloe, Xander, and Kitt. "Come on everybody!" said Jackson "Let's give Dora a real Muzingo welcome! Dora stood rooted to the ground in shock while the Muzingo's sang and danced around her. (Song: Welcome to Muzingo) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7BaGZIZcdI>

## Chapter 5: The Campfire

"It's been a long day, Dora." said Blue, when they had finished. "It's getting dark, let's take her to the campfire."

"You're going to love the campfire", said Xander. "It's when the Spirit of music really comes out to play."

"The Spirit of Music???" said Dora. "Sounds like a load of rubbish to me!"

The group guided Dora, who was by now completely numb with tiredness, through the forest until the trees above them gradually thinned. The dark sky, strewn with countless stars, seemed to grow until it swallowed them all. They sat down and clapped their hands in a strange rhythm and a fire immediately sprung to life; not a normal fire of yellows and oranges, but a rainbow of colours, shapes and patterns which sputtered and giggled with sparks. And so, under the stars, and warmed by dancing flames and some scrumptious food, the Muzingos explained many things to Dora about her new home. They told her about musical spirits, her mysterious (and very naughty) teddy, *Frank Sonata* and many other secrets which we don't quite have time to go into just now. Besides, until you visit Muzingo yourself, you won't really understand anyway.

Dora was beginning to feel a lot better about things when Chloe, the youngest of the group, suddenly let out a scream. "W-w-what is that?" She pointed a shaking finger towards Dora's shirt pocket. "What? This?" She pulled out the broken key of her father's piano, which she had forgotten all about. They all immediately stood up and took a step backwards.

"Well, this explains a lot!" said Jackson. "This must be why the Spirit of Music brought you here."

"The Spirit of Music lives inside every musical instrument, you know!" Added Curly.

"But how could you do that to an instrument. Do you not like music???" said Xander, anxiously.

"Calm down everybody," said Jackson. "Things have not been easy for Dora. That's why she is here with us, so we can help her!" Kiri came and sat down next to Dora. "Dora, can we please hear your story."

And so Dora, nervously and quietly at first, began to tell them about a distant memory. This was a memory she had forgotten long ago but it had stirred within her as she had listened to the Muzingos play. Her memory grew clearer and clearer as though the fire was reaching into her and kindling it, transforming it and bringing it to life. And (as always happens in front of campfires) a story combined with emotion, always magically becomes a song.

Dora was suddenly, re-living experiences from years and years ago. The flames danced and sang her musical story and the Muzingos, (who had always known this was going to happen) joined in and played along. When the song finished and the flames calmed down they all clapped, smiled and cheered. "Well, now we all know one thing" said Xander. "You *definitely* need a new piano teacher!"

They all laughed. "But don't worry, I hope you've already realised you've got so much music inside you." "We're going to help you find it, so you can follow your own musical path, not your parents, not your teachers." said Jackson. "Time for bed" said Blue "we've got so much music to play for you tomorrow." And so they all went to their hammocks high in the swaying trees and dreamt the sweetest musical dreams. Song: My Little Song (Attached)

## Chapter 6: A Guide to Joining In.

“Psssst!” Her hammock shook. Dora felt a familiar furry arm as Frank leapt up the tree and dangled down right in front of her face. “Did they tell you about the first challenge yet?’ He said, his eyes wide awake and glowing in the fiery sunrise.” Dora sat up. “What challenge?”

“The three challenges! You can’t get home until you complete them.”

“I don’t care about any stupid challenges.” She said turning over.

“Oh?” Said Frank, “So I guess you don’t wanna see your X-box again? I bet your parents are putting all your favourite games in the bin right now, after you broke that piano!”

“Well.... no that’s not exactly what I meant.” Dora said sheepishly.

Frank continued “You’ve got to complete the challenges, ain’t no getting out of here without them! Firstly you’ve gotta learn to just.. join in! There’s no room for spectators on Muzingo. If you’re here, you’re a musician- you gotta play!!!”

“Play!?” replied Dora “I’ve not seen a single piano here!”

“You don’t need an instrument to make music on Muzingo. Besides- you want your own instrument? You’ve gotta earn it!! Once you start joining in -singing, dancing, having fun - you know - all that musical stuff -any instrument you can imagine will appear right in front of you!”

A melody floated up to them. The Muzingos were singing that strange language again. “Frank, what are they singing? I can’t understand what they are saying.”

“They’re singing Muzingo-lingo.” said Frank. “It’s how they learn all the notes together. And that means... They’re learning a new song!!! Let’s get down there and check it out. Remember. Just join in and everything will start to make sense.”

Dora approached the group, again drawn irresistibly towards the sound of the music. As she got closer, however, she felt all the confidence from the night before drain away. There were so many things going on at the same time. The other children were talking in music- one would start a musical sentence the other would answer. Suddenly, instruments of every colour and type were popping up in front of the other children. They shared their instruments with her and she began to copy them. New melodies and rhythms, new dance moves and songs began to seep into her soul like water through layers of porous rock. Dora started relax, to enjoy herself even.

We would love to tell you that Dora instantly became the best musician in the world, but music doesn’t quite work like this- even on a magical musical island. What actually happened was much more interesting. Firstly, Dora started to enjoy herself. Over the next few days and weeks, as the Muzingos helped her on her adventure, this enjoyment grew into a passion. As everyone knows, when something becomes a passion it automatically becomes ten times easier. One day an instrument magically appeared in front of her and everyone stopped and cheered. Dora knew that, not only had she completed her first challenge on the island, but she had achieved something much more important- something she had never imagined happening. She had made a group of friends. She felt like she belonged.

Growing Musical

## Chapter 7: Learning to Listen

One day, after a long day of music, the group sat in the tranquil, glow of a beautiful sunset. “Dora?” Curly said, “Have you ever played music for a whole day before? Isn’t it just the best!!?” Dora smiled shyly. “Well, it’s easy here! At home, I used to have to play this rubbish Beethoven piece” she said scrunching up her nose as she remembered the smell of her mouldy, old book. “Beethoven!” Kiri cried. “But he’s one of our favourites!” “Now *there’s* a musician who followed his own path.” Said Jackson. He changed music forever you know, even though he was deaf!” chipped in Kitt. Dora blushed. “I’m sorry- I didn’t know.” “You need to understand a little more about the Spirit of Music.” explained Xander. “You see, every note that has ever been played, becomes part of this place.” ‘You’ll see tomorrow,’ said Jackson. “We’ve got a really special adventure planned for you!”

The next morning while the others were still snoring in harmony, an excited Dora ran down to her favourite lagoon and dived deep into the crystal waters. As she returned to camp, shivering she heard something remarkable. Pure, brilliant silence. The Muzingos had gone. “BOO!” Frank dropped down in front of her. Dora screamed and turned an angry shade of red. Frank laughed so hard he fell out of the tree. “It’s time for your second challenge! So far on Muzingo, your bandmates have taught you ev-e-ry single thing.” Dora sulked, pretending not to be interested. “Your challenge is to learn to listen.” He said pointing to his round velvety ears. “Being able to *really* listen is like having your own musical super power- you’ll be able to teach yourself anything! Just find the music, play along and it will lead you to your friends” And with that, Frank disappeared leaving Dora standing alone with only a puzzled expression for company.

Unfortunately, the Island- which normally croaked and crawled with rhythms and melodies- had decided to take a day off and Dora could hear absolutely nothing. Eventually she gave up and sat by the embers of last night’s campfire. In the ashes, she saw someone had scratched a picture of an ear. Next to it, a charcoal arrow was stuck in the ground. Dora cupped her ear and pressed it to the earth. She began to hear a faint beating sound, as though a giant was beating a colossal drum somewhere deep beneath her feet. As she followed the beating sound, beautiful melodies began to crescendo towards her. Dora remembered what Frank had said and conjured her guitar. She listened carefully to each melody and worked it out note by note. Once she could play it, it transformed like a chameleon into a new tune leading her further on her journey. Dora began to find music everywhere, hiding under muddy rocks, in babbling streams and in the sighing breeze. She passed magical waterfalls and shimmering rainbows with only her ears to guide her. Eventually the music led her to a cave shaped like an ear. Musical notes were pouring from it like a mighty river of sound. She saw the Muzingos sitting on rocks at the cave’s entrance. They were smiling proudly.

Song: Put your ear to the Ground

## Interlude: Dora makes a friend in Random Note cave

“So, I passed the challenge?” Said Dora breathlessly as she finally reached the group.

“Not yet” said Blue. “This is random note cave. Down here is how we get to the really old layers of music.” Jackson placed a violin under his chin and poised his bow at the ready. “Do you want to visit Beethoven? He said, a twinkle flashed in his eyes.

“Now, I may not know much about Music” Dora said confidently “but I know that Beethoven is most definitely dead.” Jackson replied. “Yes, but his music *most definitely* alive, come on we’ll show you.” A familiar song sprang from the violin strings into the mouth of the cave. The cave groaned, and a huge gust of wind sucked them into blackness.

They all fell into a thick, cauldron of sound. Whole worlds, whole lifetimes of music whizzed past them and Dora’s senses sharpened in the darkness. Slowly, the chaos of melodies, and rhythms played on a million different instruments organised themselves into the melody of Fur Elise. Glowing in the darkness, a piano keyboard appeared floating before them. An A-flat key was missing.

The group found themselves in a dim, candlelit chamber. “Dora, it’s time for you to conquer this piece of music once and for all.” Blue told her.

Dora sat down and gulped. A cold breeze ruffled her hair and seemed to pass right through her. For the first time she really listened to Beethoven’s beautiful old tune. She let the music carry her, possess her fingers, her mind and her heart. When opened her eyes again, her bandmates were cheering. Dora realised that, not only had she been playing the music herself, but this piece that she had hated for so long was now a part of her forever.

Xander produced the broken key of her Father’s piano and put it back in place between the two black keys. The piano glowed contentedly and disappeared. “I think Beethoven would have enjoyed that very much.”

“ And I think you’ve deserved a nice float down the river Lento.” Said Kitt.

Listen to Fur Elise by Ludwig Van Beethoven while you float down the River Lento.

## Chapter 8: The Music Within

The group floated gently down the river Lento in the Moonlight on giant Lilly pads. Eventually they pulled up onto a mossy bank. "We'll camp here tonight." Said Xander.

"Hopefully today you've realised just how powerful the Spirit of Music is." said Jackson. Dora nodded. "It was the Spirit of Music that brought you here, Dora and it brought you here for a reason." Blue continued. "You see, when music is shared, when people play music together, the Spirit of Music gets stronger."

"And when they stop, it get's weaker." Said Kitt. "Not so long ago, the whole world used to be like Muzingo Island. Everyone used to play music all the time."

"But so many people have stopped playing that the island is slowly disappearing" added Zander quietly. He pointed to a dark shape far away which hung over the island like a huge ghost in the brilliant moonlight. "That's Mount Rumbles. It used to erupt all day, pouring out the most wonderful bass notes like a giant tuba." said Jackson "Do you remember how the entire island used to shake."

"Oooooh Yess!!! Until it got covered in the silent mist." said Kiri. They all started talking at once. "The mists keep growing and growing, and they have already covered most of the island."

"Birds keep forgetting their songs and are so bored they fly away."

Jackson clapped five times- blocking the view of the mountain with a wall of flame. "Ok, thank you everyone" he continued "Think of Muzingo Island like this fire, burning, keeping the Spirit of Music alive. If that last spark goes out"- like a conductor, he brought the flames down with his hands - "we'll never be able to light the fire again." he whispered. "Can you imagine a world with no Music?" said Chloe.

"But how can I help?" Dora whimpered. "I come last in the school competition every year"

"Don't you see? Said Jackson, staring at her intensely. "If we can help transform one person from hating music to loving it, do you know how powerful that is? Do you know how many people you could inspire?"

"Dora, it's time to tell you about your final challenge." Said Xander. "You won't be coming home with us tomorrow." They all looked sadly down at the floor.

Blue spoke at last. "It's time for you to find the music within, Dora. You've experienced so much here, but it's only by discovering the music within, that you will be able to truly find your own path." The Muzingos explained that this was the only part of the adventure that they wouldn't be able to help her with. Dora would head out into the Muzingo wilderness alone, past the sleeping Mount Rumbles and into the silent mists. "You will have a choice." Said Jackson. "You can let yourself be consumed by the grey stillness:- If this happens, you will go back to your old life. You'll wake up at home and forget you've ever been here." Curly continued "Or you can use what you've learned and discover the music within. With this gift you'll be able to play and create any music you can imagine in your mind and pass it on to others!"

The next morning the Muzingos walked with Dora far as they could until the sounds of the Island started to fade into nothingness. They said their goodbyes. "Please, please come back to us!" cried Chloe sadly as Dora disappeared, swallowed by the silent mists.

The Music Within. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H7ur-4kQdY>

## Chapter 9: Every Day

The Muzingos waited like they had waited so many times before. So many children had come and disappeared into the silent mists only to wake up in their beds and forget all about their adventures. They managed as a group by of course by playing music, achingly beautiful tunes passed amongst the children. They played for countless time.

One afternoon, during a particularly long afternoon nap, their hammocks began to sway wildly. The children jumped out of bed and felt the earth shaking beneath them with bass tones. Curly screamed first. "Mount Rumbles! It's beginning to stir!! It must be. . . let's get to the forest clearing!"

Through the leaves they could see Dora standing in the circle with the largest grin there had ever been on her face. The trees seemed to be swaying in time to her movements, the air buzzed with magic energy. The children rushed to her and gave her a big hug.

"Guys, I've written you a song inspired by Muzingo. I realised that, since being here, I've played music every single day. And it's changed my life. Come and sit down and I'll teach it to you." Everyone gathered round and the air was soon dancing with Muzingo-lingo. Everyone had their own part perfectly arranged for their favourite instrument. Of course, the Muzingos added their own beautiful twists, variations and improvisations of pure joy.

Over the campfire that night, Dora told them about the unbelievable adventures and the many things that had happened on her musical journey.

The Muzingos listened wide-eyed until even the stars above them grew tired.

The air was full of both happy and sad thoughts because, as they all knew, it was Dora's final night on Muzingo Island.

Song: Every Day: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRbSSJSJhng>

## Chapter 9: The Return

Mr. and Mrs. Toogood sat in their front room sharing an awkward silence. Deep down they knew their daughter was not interested in music and that grounding her would not help at all.

Suddenly, a mighty crash erupted from Dora's room. It sounded like a piano being hit by a hammer. The whole house began to shudder and shake. Mrs. Toogood's tea began to dance in her teacup. Mr. Toogood leapt to his feet and charged up the stairs.

He returned a few minutes later, his face in complete shock. "Dora has gone!" he said quietly "She has run away and.. she's broken my piano." He put his head in his hands. "Get up Arthur" Said Mrs.Toogood, seizing control of the situation. Together they ran outside and spent a long afternoon searching streets, calling neighbours and parents of other children but Dora had completely vanished.

When they returned, they noticed Dora's favourite teddy on the mantelpiece. He appeared to be playing a small guitar. "Darling, would Dora really have left without Frank?" said Mrs.Toogood. Just as she went to pick him up. The house again began to shake. Windows rattled in their frames, floorboards creaked and a chiming sound filled the air. As the thunderous noise built to a climax, Dora leapt off the bottom stair and landed directly in front of them. Mr. Toogood's newspaper dropped out of his hands knocking Mrs. Toogood's cup of tea all over their favourite rug but neither of them noticed.

"Hey Mum and Dad!" said Dora- a huge smile spread across her face. "What an earth?" gasped Mrs. Toogood eventually. "Mum and Dad, there's something I need to tell you." She said softly, sitting between them. "I really don't want to do this competition." Mrs. Toogood put her arm around her daughter. "I think we gathered that darling" Dora continued. "INSTEAD I want to play something for you with other children..... like a band. . I've written an amazing song you know!" "That's, erm wonderful darling" said Mrs Toogood.

"Really?" said Dora. One eye was still closed- as though she was bracing herself for an avalanche of words.

"Of course! Said Mrs. Toogood. All we really want is for you to enjoy music. Isn't that right dear?" She said turning to her husband.

"Erm, yes of course..." said Mr. Toogood tripping over his words. "So strange though, I used to love competitions. The prizes, the tears on the other children's faces when I beat them! So, who's in your band?" he asked.

"Err, I've not got that far yet." said Dora. "In fact, I'd better get a move on. What day is it?"

"Why Darling, it's Saturday of course!" her parents said in unison. They were very confused.

"Great, I've got a whole week. Bye!!" In a blur, she grabbed a guitar and was gone.

Mr. Toogood went upstairs to inspect his piano. Of course, it was in perfect condition and he had the curious feeling that it was grinning at him.

As Dora approached Sebastian, Annie and Luke in the park, Sebastian stood up. "Well, look who it is. It's the girl who can't even play a single..."

“Look, I need your help.” said Dora. Annie screwed up her face as though she’d eaten a poisonous slug. “What? Why would we want to help you?”

“Because” said Dora “It will be the most fun you’ve thing you’ve ever done! Trust me! Dora began to tell them enthusiastically how much she had grown to love music. The three children obviously thought she was completely mad until she pulled out a guitar and played for them. Somehow, they all magically found themselves in a practise room playing music and having fun together.

## Chapter 10: A Guy Called Beethoven

Mrs Keys stood on the stage of the Great Hall. Under the spotlight was a huge grand piano as old as the room itself. “Ladies and Gentlemen”, she bellowed heartily. “Welcome to the Headmasters Music Competition which has been taking place at St. Bogey’s for many, many generations.” The entire school and their parents looked on silently. “Each child will play a piece that they have worked *very* hard on, and then I will judge which one was performed most accurately.”

Dora, Sebastian, Annie and Luke crept onto the stage behind Mrs. Keys carrying various instruments. Dora had a guitar around her neck.

Mr. and Mrs. Toogood, who were both sat on the front row, covered their faces with their hands. “Ahem,” Dora announced, “Well actually, we’ve decided to make an amendment. We’re going to play a piece together that I’ve written. “It’s called...”

“...Over my dead body. You disrespectful, insolent little wretch!” screamed Mrs. Keys. She was trembling violently and sweating. “This Competition has been a tradition here since 1840.” She strode over to the blackboard with the performance schedule written upon it in chalk. “This programme says Fur Elise, so Fur Elise is what you shall play!!!” She thundered emphasising each syllable by stamping her heels on the wooden stage.

Dora paused and thought for a moment. “You’ve just given me the most wonderful idea, Mrs. Keys!” Dora approached to the front of stage and addressed the audience. “I would like to dedicate this performance to the great Ludwig Van Beethoven, an inspiration to millions and a man who was brave enough to follow his own path.”

“Now that’s more like it!” Said Mrs. Keys taking her seat at the judge’s table.

“Take it away Sebastian!” Dora shouted, and Sebastian played the most beautiful rendition of the beginning of the famous Beethoven piece. Then something amazing happened. Dora took the melody of Fur Elise and transformed it on her guitar. Musically, she juggled it, and jiggled it changing the rhythm, the tempo and the entire feeling of the piece. The infectious sounds spread magically from one musician to another like a wildfire. Children who not were scheduled to play in the competition for another half an hour started appearing on the stage and joining in. There was singing, there was dancing. The audience, at first completely stunned, started to embrace the musical spirit in the room and the great hall echoed with the loudest, most joyous sounds ever heard in its long history.

Mrs. Keys was surveying the room in utter disbelief when the headmaster suddenly marched up to her shaking with anger. “You are fired!! Pack your bags and leave my school AT ONCE!! You

had ONE job, Mrs. Keys, ONE JOB!!!” He screamed at the top of his voice. Unfortunately, his tirade started just as the music suddenly stopped dead on a stabbed final note. He was left red-faced and breathless facing the audience who by now were quite intrigued by what he had to say. “Oh and what JOB was that, Sir?” said Mrs. Keys, flashing a knowing smile.

“Your job was to make sure HE won!” He said, looking to over Sebastian. “Uncle Horace, no!!” Sebastian screamed. The audience, who had not expected such an entertaining afternoon, sat back in their seats watching the spectacle unfold before them. “And even more importantly- to make sure SHE lost.” the Headmaster hissed, pointing a quivering finger at Dora.

“Now, wait just a minute.” boomed the voice of Dora’s father over the gossiping crowd.

“Quiet Toogood!! Do you know what it’s like to come last? In every single competition? Every year as a child you used to beat me and laugh at me!” Dora’s father stood rooted to the spot, stunned. “And how is that Dora’s fault? Shouted Mrs. Toogood marching over to the Headmaster. “No wonder she hated Music!”

Just as the whole hall was about to explode into chaos. They heard a sound. Luke began to play his favourite tune, conducted by Dora. “Dumdumdumum”. The riff grew and grew, and when Mr. and Mrs. Toogood climbed onto the stage to join in. The Headmaster, realising he was utterly defeated, ran out of the hall.

The children were informed in assembly on monday morning that Horace Baxter would *not* be coming back to St. Bogey’s. According to legend, the sounds continued to reverberate around the Great Hall until far later than expected that night. It is said that one of the children managed to find the keys to the school kitchen, while the parents discovered Horace Baxter’s personal wine cellar. Apparently, even Mrs. Keys was seen onstage at some point during the evening.

The “Headteacher’s Party” is now a firm tradition at St. Bogey’s and the highlight of the social calendar.

Song: A Guy Called Beethoven: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRz56EigU\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRz56EigU_s)

## Epilogue: Another Saturday.

Dora woke up. “Good morning Frank.” she said stretching. “Oh yes. I forgot. “It’s a Saturday!” There was a knock at the door. “Darling it’s time for your lesson.”

“Yes Mum” she said getting out of bed and dragging Frank along the floor. She made her way downstairs to the family piano, where her Father was waiting for her. “Good morning darling” he said, holding a cup of coffee. “Did you sleep well?”

“Yes Dad!” Dora sat down. “There was a musical volcano. It filled my dream with the most wonderful bass notes.” she said. “Which scale would you like to hear first, Dad?”

“Oh, not just yet, I want to hear a bit more about this Volcano first. Which tune was it playing?” Dora played a stirring melody in her left hand, imagining the notes pouring out of Mount Rumbles.

She stopped suddenly. Mum and Dad “Do you think, I could play with you onstage when you next go away on tour?”

“Darling”, her mother said. “When it comes to music, I think you can do anything you want.”