

A Sonata in Z

by

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FADE IN:

INT. CABIN - DAY

The room is dark. Suddenly, QUINN, a young woman in her early 20's, athletic and exuding confidence, is breaking down the door with a small axe. As pieces of the door break apart, she looks through the hole wearing tinted goggles and a balaclava. She puts her hand through, unlocks the door, and steps through.

Her clothes are visibly worn and dirty. She is holding a pistol in one hand, a small axe in the other, and a well-worn leather satchel over one shoulder. She slowly enters and scans the room.

The cabin has been abandoned for years and the room is completely disheveled.

As she continues through the main room, she notices a nearly skeletal corpse in the room and next to it, a rifle and a stuffed animal. The back of its skull has been blown to pieces. She steps over the body and continues to look around.

INT. CABIN BEDROOM - DAY

She enters what appears to be an empty bedroom. Her gun is still drawn. It is empty. She looks around the room before turning around and leaving.

INT. CABIN - DAY

She re-enters the main room, and holsters her gun and axe. She removes her balaclava and goggles, revealing her face. She walks over to the small kitchen area and starts to open cabinets and drawers, throwing items of no use onto the floor and taking what few canned goods there are and putting them in her satchel. She finds a cell phone and tosses it onto the counter. She starts to go through the mini fridge and finds only old, moldy food. However, in the back of the fridge, she finds an unopened can of soda, and smiles.

QUINN

Yes!

She leans up against the kitchen counter, opens the soda, and takes a drink. She grabs the cell phone from the counter and pushes the power button, but it is obviously dead, so she tosses it onto back onto the counter. She starts to walk away when she pauses.

She pulls out a small solar charger from her satchel, tries a couple of different plugs, plugs in the phone, and sets it on the window sill. The charging light turns on. All of a sudden, she hears someone calling her.

NOAH  
(off, yelling)  
Quinn!

QUINN  
(yelling)  
In here!

NOAH comes through the damaged front door. He is approximately the same age as Quinn, and is dressed similarly. He is skinny, not physically intimidating, but has a goodness to him. As he enters, Quinn turns towards him and hides the soda behind her back.

NOAH  
Hey, thanks for waiting up  
for me. And by waiting up, I  
mean totally ditching me.

QUINN  
Sorry. You know, if you  
could move like your life  
depended on it sometimes,  
because it does, then maybe I  
wouldn't ditch you. And by  
sorry, I mean not sorry.

NOAH  
Whatever Quinn, you know  
hardly anyone can keep up  
with you.

QUINN

Kinda sounds like your guys' problem.

NOAH

That's not how it works  
Quinn. Don't you listen to  
anything that Monty tells...?

QUINN

(interrupting)

Yeah yeah, I've heard him  
dawdle his way through  
speeches about teamwork and  
trust and blah blah blah.

NOAH

It's what's kept us alive and  
going, Quinn.

QUINN

Whatever Noah, quit being  
such a girl.

Noah starts walking around the room.

NOAH

So, d'you find anything?

QUINN

Yeah, a few cans.

NOAH

Good, anything else?

QUINN

Nah, the other room is just  
garbage.

Noah notices the corpse.

NOAH

Geez Louise, what happened to  
that guy?

QUINN

(points at gun)  
Looks like he couldn't hack  
it.

NOAH  
Sucks to be him.

(pause)

Well, you wanna go over to  
the next cabin, see what we  
can find?

Quinn glances at the charging phone.

QUINN  
No, just go ahead, I'll catch  
up. I just gonna look around  
here a bit more, make sure I  
didn't miss anything.

NOAH  
We were told to stay  
together.

QUINN  
You'll be fine Noah. You  
don't need me to hold your  
hand all the time.

NOAH  
That's not what I meant.

QUINN  
Sure it's not.

NOAH  
You know what Quinn...

(pauses)

Nevermind, just... be careful

Noah turns and leaves.

Quinn watches him leave. Once he's gone, she grabs her soda and takes a drink, with a smile on her face.

She walks over to the phone, picks it up, and it says that it's about 15% charged. She unplugs it, puts the charger back in her satchel, and sits down on the couch.

She opens the phone and starts flipping through the screens. She randomly scrolls through the pictures, and there are pictures of a man in his thirties and his wife and young daughter, probably about 4 years old. She flips through some more pictures when she comes across a video. She clicks play and watches it.

It is a video of the man and his daughter making funny faces. She then goes through a few videos, all involving the man, the wife, and his daughter. Quinn glances over at the body, then looks back at the phone.

QUINN

Cute family. You did alright  
for yourself.

She watches a few more videos before she tosses the phone onto the couch. As she stands up and starts to go, she hears the phone.

MAN

Quinn...

Quinn is stopped dead in her tracks, her eyes as big as dinner plates.

MAN

Quinn, I'm sorry.

Quinn rushes over to the couch and grabs the phone. She quickly rewinds the video to the beginning.

The video is of the man, in the very cabin that she is in, sometime at night. He is recording himself.

MAN

Quinn... Quinn, I'm sorry. I'm  
sorry to do this to...

Just then, the phone flashes "low battery" and dies.

Quinn frantically tries to get her charger back out.

QUINN

Shit! No, no, no, no, no, no..

She plugs the phone back into the charger and tries to turn it on, only to get the message that the phone needs to charge more before turning on.

She slams the phone on the window sill and starts pacing and mumbling to herself.

QUINN

What the hell was that?

As she's pacing, she is constantly checking the phone. Then she glances at the dead body. She goes over and carefully starts going through his pockets. She finds a picture of him, his wife, and his child, which she tosses aside. She finds his wallet and she pulls out his ID, which reads "Robert Davies". She rushes back over to the phone and tries to turn it on. To her delight, it turns back on. She hurriedly goes back to the video.

MAN

Quinn... Quinn, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry to do this to you. Please know that I don't want it to be this way, but I have to do what's best for you.

The man in the video, ROBERT, then picks up the phone and carries it over to the bedroom. We see a YOUNG GIRL in one bed, and another family: BRIAN, CLAIRE, and two young BOYS in the other, all sleeping.

ROBERT

You're so, so beautiful. I could watch you sleep all night. And I'm sorry about the cut on your arm. One of those monsters got their

hands on you, but I was able  
to get him off you.

Robert lifts up the bandage. There is a large cut on her  
arm, although cleaned up.

ROBERT

I gave you some antibiotics  
and put you down for the  
night.

Quinn pauses the video and looks at the cut on the girl's  
arm and rushes over to a mirror. She wipes the dirt off  
and pulls up her sleeve to reveal a large scar on her arm.  
She is holding the phone and comparing the two scars. They  
are identical.

She looks down at the phone and slowly presses play.

The video is showing Robert going back into the main room  
and sitting back down.

ROBERT

By the time we realized what  
was happening, it was too  
late. We knew we had to get  
to the air force base. Our  
neighbors, Brian and Claire  
and their boys, came with us,  
since we had an SUV, but we  
ran out of gas. We saw this  
little cabin a ways off the  
road and figured that'd be  
the safest spot to spend the  
night. I told your  
mother...(cont.)

Robert pauses, fists clenched, then wipes the tears from  
his face.

(cont.) I told her I would  
carry you, and that we all  
needed to stay close.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Robert is holding YOUNG QUINN. They are are in a group with Quinns mother JESS, Brian, Claire, and the two boys and they are hurriedly going through the field toward the cabin. Suddenly, several INFECTED attack the group. The group fights them off. One of the infected grab young Quinn as Robert knocks it away leaving a large scratch on her arm. They manage to kill most of them, but as they are about to get away, an infected grabs Jess. Robert tries to help, but gets bit and she is killed. Robert screams.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Quinn is watching the video on the phone

ROBERT

Those things snuck right up  
on us, and your mother..

Robert breaks down crying.

As Robert is crying, he reaches toward the phone as the video ends.

With her hands trembling, Quinn sets the phone down. She scrambles and finds the picture she tossed earlier of the three of them and studies it.

She sets the picture on the coffee table, and presses play on the next video.

Robert is again sitting on the couch recording himself, paler than when he started, not crying, but still wiping the tears away.

ROBERT

Sorry about that sweetie.  
Your mother died fighting  
those things off. I tried to  
help and managed to get  
myself bit in the process.

Robert shows his fresh bite wound to the camera.

Quinn is taken aback.

ROBERT

It seems like we ran forever,  
but we made it to the cabin.  
We found some gas in the shed  
out back and Brian and Claire  
agreed to take you with them.  
Their boy, Noah, is about  
your age.

I'm sorry I can't go with  
you. Once you get bit, you  
have about a day before you  
become a mindless killer like  
them. I have no idea what I  
would've done if they weren't  
here to take you.

Quinn pauses the video. She stands up and takes a deep  
breath and rubs her teary eyes.

She then sits back down and presses play on the video.

ROBERT

I don't have time to tell you  
everything, and I'm sorry I  
can't be there to help you as  
you grow up. Just know that  
you had a father and mother  
who loved you very  
much, (cont)

INT. CABIN - DAWN

Robert is sitting on the couch recording the video on his  
phone.

(cont) and that you were the  
most precious thing in the  
world to us. We will always  
be with you and watch over  
you. Love you, forever and  
always, your Mommy and Daddy.

Robert reaches and stops recording on the video. He sits back. The other family walks out of the bedroom, with Brian carrying young Quinn. She is sound asleep, holding her stuffed animal.

ROBERT

I can never thank you enough  
for what you're doing.

BRIAN

Do you wanna wake her up and  
say goodbye?

ROBERT

I can't... Just... Just let her  
sleep.

Brian nods and hands Robert a hunting rifle.

BRIAN

I found it in the bedroom. I  
could only find one bullet  
for it though. I'm sorry.

Robert nods and takes the rifle.

The family and Robert move toward the door. Robert starts to hand him his phone.

ROBERT

Just do me a favor, and show  
her th...

Robert is interrupted mid-sentence by a SCREAM. As he was talking, Claire opened the door to an infected standing in the doorway and it falls upon her. The Claire and the boys scream. The scream wakes up young Quinn, who drops her stuffed animal on the floor.

YOUNG QUINN

(groggily)

Daddy?

Robert springs into action, and he drops the phone on the floor as he pulls the infected from Claire before she is bit.

ROBERT

GO! RUN!

The family starts to run. The infected falls on top of Robert and takes a bite out of his shoulder as he screams in pain.

Young Quinn sees her dad on the floor and starts screaming and crying for him.

YOUNG QUINN

DADDY!

Robert manages to get on top of the infected, grab the rifle, and shoot it. He hobbles to the door, but the family is already quite a distance away, running, and he watches as his daughter is taken away from him forever.

ROBERT

Goodbye Quinn.

Robert picks up the phone and sits back down on the couch. He is much paler. He sets the phone on the table and starts recording.

ROBERT

I don't know why I'm recording this, since you'll probably never see it. I guess, that, I'm just hoping that fate will bring you back here someday. The battery is almost dead, so here it goes.

Quinn Davies, please don't ever forget how special you are.

Things aren't always going to go your way in this world, and you have to accept that

that's ok. What's not ok, is to quit. Don't lower your standards, don't let boys be mean to you, and don't ever quit fighting for what's important. And if the world pushes you, then by God, you push back harder.

I know it's gonna be hard, but try your best to find the beauty in the world. Don't forget to sing and dance and laugh. Walk through a stream barefoot. Make up bad jokes. Be the love and the light that you want to see in the world. But most of all, be happy. There's not a lot you can do about your circumstances sometimes, but you can always control how you react to them. (cont.)

INT. CABIN - DAY

Quinn is sitting on the couch watching the video in tears

(cont.) You are my greatest love and the only worthwhile thing I have ever done. My life my joys, begin with you. Quinn, I love you so m...

Just then, the video ends. Quinn's entire body is trembling, tears streaming down her face.

INT. CABIN - MORNING

Robert is sitting on the couch. He is extremely pale at this point. His phone flashes "No Battery" and shuts off. He puts his head in his hands.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Quinn is sitting on the couch, head in her arms.

INT. CABIN - MORNING

Robert, with gritted teeth, starts smashing and turning over the furniture.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Quinn starts smashing up and throwing the furniture while screaming.

INT. CABIN - MORNING

Robert calms down, puts the phone in the cabinet, and picks up Quinns toy. Among the mess, he notices another bullet on the floor. He grabs the rifle, loads the bullet, sits on the floor, and closes his eyes.

Off screen, we hear a BANG.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Quinn is leaning against the wall, her back to the door, looking at the corpse, quietly sobbing. Noah comes in.

NOAH

C'mon Quinn, what's taking...

He notices the cabin in shambles.

NOAH

Holy moly, what happened?

QUINN

That's um... That's my dad.

NOAH

What? ... How?

Quinn hands Noah the phone and he watches the videos.

NOAH

Quinn, I'm so sorry. I, I never knew. My parents never

said anything before they died.

QUINN  
I know Noah, it's ok.

NOAH  
How about you?

QUINN  
Yeah... Yeah I'll be ok...

NOAH  
So what do you want to do?

Quinn thinks for a moment.

QUINN  
Grab that shovel.

EXT CABIN - DAY

There is a mound of freshly dug dirt with a crudely made cross at its head with the stuffed animal tied to it. Quinn and Noah are standing next to it and she has the picture of her parents in her back pocket. As they are staring at the grave, Quinn reaches over and grabs Noah's hand. Neither of them look at each other.

QUINN  
C'mon, let's go.

They both walk away and we see the inscription on the cross: "Robert Davies: My life, my joys, begin with you".

The End