

The Technician's Masterpiece by Yvonne Marts
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Day after day the crafter worked
To bring to life once more
Accordions of all names and styles
Which were carried to his door.
He tightened screws and straightened keys,
He brushed away the lint,
The dust was blown away from reeds,
He listened for a hint
Of missing leathers, detuned tongues,
Of dried or loosened wax.
So he would know which of his skills
He next would have to tax.
The bass machine was checked for rust,
For rods and pegs in line,
For floating dirt and greasy film
That builds up over time.
He played each key in every shift
To hear if all was true,
He played the chords that test the bass
To check that tuning, too.
To be air-tight the bellows tape,
And corners, gaskets, pins,
Each in their special way be fast
To keep air pressure in.

Each customer who came to him
Brought his greatest treasure,
To be renewed, perhaps restored,
Its value had no measure.
He'd tell them, then, just what would be
The charge for all he's do
If he would fix that accordion
To be as good as new.
"But surely it can't cost that much
To do all that you say,
Why this accordion was working...
I played just yesterday!
Gosh, it's just an old accordion,
It's never been abused.
It's been in Grandpa's closet,
It's seldom even used!"
Then with a silent sigh he'd choose
To make the customer boss:
He'd do the necessary work
And he would "eat the cost."

He pulled the curtain, locked the door,
And closed up for the day,
But in his mind a thought began
And would NOT go away!
It wove throughout his dreams that night,
Developed to a plan,
And was complete at morning's light,
He spoke aloud, "I can!"

He didn't open up his shop
That day, nor many more.
He cut and sawed and drilled and glued
Behind his shuttered door.
He only left his prison-shop
To buy some more supplies,
Then back he'd go behind the lock,
Away from prying eyes.

Some townfolk said he'd lost his buttons
Or had one squeeze too few,
But what they didn't know was that
He was building something new.
He tested woods from many trees,
Made "m's" of various weights,
He sculptured steel and leather strips
To fit aluminum plates,
Keys black and white were shaped just so
To fit their special homes,
And lifted pallets off the pan
Allowing clear crisp tones.
He chose the metals for their strength
To stand an axle's stress,
To shape into a button rod,
He had the best: no less.

You may have guessed the reason for
His "blood and sweat and tears:"
He would build an accordion
To last one thousand years!
He used his mathematics skill
And scientific fact
To build a perfect instrument
With each piece so intact
With stress upon each part the same
As stress upon the rest,
No piece would wear more than another,
Each section was made best.
He felt akin to Christian Buschmann,
With Wheatstone he was one:
His mind was filled with Demian's thoughts:
"I've built an accordion."

Upon his knee, beneath his chin,
He played a simple tune,
But glorious and harmonic tones
Completely filled the room.
He knew Diero would be proud,
Frosini would shake his hand,
This was the finest instrument
In all his native land.
He polished all the fingerprints
And specks of dust away,
Then he swept the workroom floor
And opened shop that day.

In the window of his shop
There stood but one machine,
And by its side there was this sign:
"A Repair Technician's Dream."

They say he never worked again,
He only charged a fee
For virtuosos who would like to play
And those who came to see.

EPILOGUE: 2994 A.D.

The technician, of course, is dead, long gone,
But somewhere in heaven he must
Be aware that the product, "The best of his craft,"
Today just crumbled to dust.