

Key Change

His hands float over the keyboard, always beginning

with an invitation: fluid cheery *happy*
birthday, which could modulate to spooky

spooky birthday, mock dirge birthday, birthday

dirge on pause while the tired ramshackle circus
train goes rumbling by. From time to time

my father played at an old movie house, accompanying

silent films. Not silent! The music was always
changing, the current carrying you along

into the parlor or over the cliff, but always

in it together. After he died, the piano
was not silent. I sat at the keyboard

and it was not silent. I leaned into the keys

and laid my hands gently down. *Now play,*
said the keys, *the way you are moved to play.*