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Hey There! Thanks for joining me for episode 17 of Busy Kids Love Music, a podcast for music-loving families. I'm Carly Seifert, the creator of Busy Kids Do Piano and I'm thrilled to have you along with me for musical discoveries today.

Have you ever played a prank on someone? Maybe on April 1st -- or should I say, April Fool's Day? -- you played a joke on someone, or perhaps someone else played a joke on you. There was a musical composer who loved to play pranks -- Franz Joseph Haydn -- a composer who lived and wrote music in the classical period. We talked about him a little bit a few episodes ago in our episode about symphonies, because Haydn is also considered the Father of the Symphony. (And if you missed that episode, I'll link to it in my show notes.)

Haydn isn't just famous for his symphonies, but also for his pranks. He managed to get kicked out of school after cutting off the ponytail of a fellow choir member. And while I'm sure there are many other such pranks that are part of his story, let's learn more about how he incorporated these jokes and humor into some of his musical compositions.

Prince Esterhazy was Haydn's patron -- which means he hired Haydn to compose music for him. The prince had brought all his musicians to his favorite summer palace in rural Hungary. The prince kept them there for longer than expected and requested they stay even longer to perform a new symphony. The musicians were missing their wives and families back at home and begged Haydn to do something. Rather than ask the Prince, Haydn put their request in the final piece of the Farewell Symphony. During the final movement, each musician stops playing, blows out the candle on his music stand, and leaves the stage. In the end, there

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are just two violinists left on stage, playing quietly on their instruments. The prince got the message, and the next day let everyone return home to their families. Orchestras still perform the piece this way -- snuffing out their candles and leaving the stage, one by one.

Listen to this joke in one of Haydn's most famous pieces -- the Andante movement of the "Surprise" Symphony.(

Did you hear the joke? The music is super quiet -- you might even have had to strain your ears to hear it. And then -- BOOM -- the loud chord the musicians play startles you out of your seat! I bet you can guess how this symphony got the nickname -- "Surprise" Symphony. You certainly wouldn't have been able to sneak a nap in during a performance like that!

Listen now to another one of Haydn's famous musical jokes, from his D-major Symphony.

The music is soft and gentle, soothing to your soul. Then you hear a booming bassoon play a low bass note. Haydn meant for this note to sound like...well...flatulence. (fade music)One of Haydn's string quartets --- which is actually nicknamed "The Joke", played a joke on the audience. The music would fade and pause -- making the audience believe the piece was over. But no -- it's not over! The musicians are playing again. They've stopped -- okay now clap. Oh wait, it's not over yet! Let's have a listen to it.

If you ever thought classical composers were boring, hopefully this episode has helped you to realize that they were real, living people with interesting personalities and even a sense of humor -- especially in the case of Franz Joseph Haydn.

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Head over to my website for this episode's listening calendar, which will provide you with a suggested piece to listen to each day over the next 2 weeks until our next episode of Busy Kids Love Music airs. The music in this listening calendar is all joke - themed, and I think you'll really enjoy listening through these pieces. You'll find the calendar at busykidsdopiano.com/podcast/17 Thanks for joining me today on Busy Kids Love Music -- I'll see you again in 2 weeks!