

The Keyboard

My fingertips slide across the bumps and valleys of an old computer keyboard located on the bottom shelf of the electronics section at Neat Repeat, our local thrift store. Each key jiggles slightly as its touched, making an almost inaudible clicking noise. A smile spreads across my face. I like this type of movement: subtle but evident. My hand reaches the end of the row and I slowly draw it back again, following a similar but slightly different path to the starting point. Eyes closed, my hands assume their typing position with robotic precision.

H-E-L-L-O-space-M-Y-space-N-A-M-E-space-I-S-space-D-A-R-R-E-N-space-K-E-N-T-N
-E-R-space-A-N-D-space-I-space-A-M-space-8-space-Y-E-A-R-S-space-O-L-D-.

There is no screen, no computer. My words have been mechanically processed but sent nowhere. Was my typing accurate? How fast was my speed? None of it matters in this moment, sitting on the floor while Mom looks for jeans five aisles over. The smile lingers and my eyes open with delight. This is clearly a great keyboard, and I must have it.