

Score

2020

Spencer A. Roberts

I am.

Adomus Publications

Performance Notes

The form of this piece is literally centered around the sum of its parts; there are three distinct styles of text: italicized words, bolded words, and underlined words. The first vocal part (Voice 1) is the first to perform from the text and reads only the italicized words within the poem. The second part (Voice 2) is the second to perform from the text and reads only the bolded words within the poem. In the third and final section, both vocal parts are to read their designated text style from before as well as the underlined words, all in order from the beginning to the end of the text. Grammar should still be observed; however, the flow of the wording is up to the unique individual taste of each performer. As each vocal part performs their portion of the text, the other is tasked with simultaneously performing a specific pitch on a wine glass, beginning just before and sustaining throughout the duration of the speech.

Each “section” is denoted by the style of text that is displayed in the score. There are three sections in the music, marked solely by the visual appearance of the words within that section. “Section 1” is first and is to be performed by reading only the italicized words from the full text from the beginning to the end. Then comes “Section 2”, which is to be performed by only reading the bolded words from the full text. Last is “Section 3”, which is to be performed by both voices in tandem; Voice 1 is to read the italicized words and Voice 2 is to read the bolded words as before, except this time the full text is to be read in order from top to bottom with each vocal part contributing during its specific moments in real time.

During “Section 1”, while Voice 1 is to read only the italicized words within the full text, Voice 2 is to simultaneously play a single wine glass in the background (*pitch to be specified later) setting the aural mood for section 1. The wine glass should begin sounding approximately five seconds prior to the beginning of the speech for this section by Voice 1.

During “Section 2”, while Voice 2 is to read only the bolded words within the full text, Voice 1 is to simultaneously play a single wine glass in the background (*pitch to be specified later) setting the aural mood for section 2. The wine glass should begin sounding approximately five seconds prior to the beginning of the speech for this section by Voice 2.

During “Section 3”, both Voice 1 and Voice 2 are to read their designated parts within the full text, in order, from the beginning to the end. Additionally, both voice parts are to read all underlined words when they appear in context. In addition, both voices are to play their specific wine glasses from the previous sections in the background simultaneously, setting the aural mood for section 3. The wine glasses should begin sounding staggered from one another (whichever sounds first is at the discretion of the individual performers) and should sound for a composite of approximately five seconds prior to the beginning of the speech for this section by Voices 1 and 2.

*Wine glass for Voice 1 is to be tuned to: Ab5

*Wine glass for Voice 2 is to be tuned to: E5

*When playing the wine glass, press down on the base of the wine glass with one hand, wet the index or middle finger of the other hand with liquid from the glass and rub around the rim of the glass for a sustained pitch. If the rubbing finger becomes dry and the sound dissipates, rewet that finger and continue the pitch.

Each voice part should be read by two voices that are fundamental different in timbre and pitch; Voice 1 should be of Caucasian decent, whereas Voice 2 should be of African or African American decent. Dress for performance should reflect the tone of the text specific to each voice part; in line with this parameter, specific attire is at the discretion of each performer.

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I am.

Today, I am **Black.**

I contribute to a society that imprisons us,
devalues us,
hates us.

It's amazing how visceral human emotion can be;

FOR PERUSAL ONLY!!!

And in spite of my best effort evil remains triumphant,
laughing in my face;

me,

a grown man,

made to look weak,

my ego whispering sweet nothings to me

working in tandem with this bitch.

Today, I am **White.**

White with fear,

as I watch my kin being discarded

like a faulty appliance,

like a plastic bottle

destined to decompose slowly,

all the while remembering what used to be.

Fear is like a vampire

sucking the hope out of my dreams

feasting on my insecurities and my shortcomings,

leaving me but a husk-less shell of my former self.

Now, I am just "white."

FOR PERUSAL ONLY!!!

Green like the Earth

But filled with deceit and envy.

I want what I don't have,

need what I can't have

and admire everything that they have.

In what reality is forgiveness earned

when summoned by greed?

How can we accept so much of this?

This is my least favorite version of myself.

"Mr. Green," the "Mean Green,"

coming for your hopes and dreams

so that mine can flourish

at your expense.

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With rage, I seek vengeance for my soul.

Look what you have done,

What you have created!

My destiny is to embody these horrible truths.

Now I look around me and see nothing but red

A potent, scarlet red

Illuminating my thoughts, actions, experiences,

An all-encompassing,

relentless,

viscous,

unbearable,

red.

And yet, isn't this the nature of our kind,

walking around with **blood in our veins that is as red as our minds?**

Maybe we are what we are;

parasites, predators, the true scum of the Earth.

This green, green Earth.

I guess if I want to find peace

I am the real lunatic.

It's funny how that works,

realizing that your idea of the world is false

it leaves a taste in your mouth that never quite dissipates.

Maybe the true meaning of life is but four colors;

not an equation or an algorithm,

not a higher purpose,

not even existing for the sake of existence.

Just four distinct colors.

I am Black.

I am White.

I am Green.

I am Red.

FOR PERUSAL ONLY!!!

But what will I be tomorrow?