

FOUR POEMS *of* NIKITA GILL

Melissa Dunphy



for mezzo(s) and piano

12 min

2018

Commissioned by Dr. Carol Lines
through a Juliet Hardtner Endowed Professorship
McNeese State University

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Cover art by Abby Markov

I. Sorcery

for Lindsey Bower

Every day I magic myself alive again
from the near death experience of trauma.
I swallow my heart back from
the lump it has become in my throat.
I taste my own memories
without the flavour of blood but as poetry.
I learn how to whisper my name
without it sounding like a curse.
I murmur spells to the parts of me
others have found too dangerous to love.
And after this morning ritual
I finally smile at the woman in my mirror.
Tell me again,
how healing is not a magical thing.
Tell me again,
how I am not made of sorcery.

II. From The Ashes She Became

for Lara Connally

Before she became fire, she was water.
Quenching the thirst of every dying creature.
She gave and she gave
until she turned from sea to desert.
But instead of dying of the heat,
the sadness, the heartache,
she took all of her pain
and from her own ashes became fire.

III. You Have Become a Forest

for Emily Lancon

One day when you wake up, you will find that you
have become a forest. You have grown roots and
found strength in them that no one thought you
had. You have become stronger and more beautiful,
full of life giving qualities. You have learned to take
all the negativity around you and turn it into
oxygen for easy breathing. A host of wild creatures
live inside you and you call them stories. A variety
of beautiful birds rest inside your mind and you call
them memories. You have become an incredible self
sustaining thing of epic proportions. And you
should be so proud of yourself, of how far you have
come from the seeds of who you used to be.

IV. Me Too

This is our riot act,
our manifesto,
our revolution:
because the ones
who did this know
we are talking about
their monstrous actions.
It's time for them
to have the nightmares,
for them to suffer
for what happened,
for them to fear being
named by the same
voices they silenced.
I hope they are
forever haunted
by these two words:
"Me too"



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I. Sorcery

for Lindsey

Poetry by Nikita Gill

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Moderato misterioso $\text{♩}=38$ *p* *tranquillo*

Ev' - ry day ___ I

mag - ic ___ my self ___ a - live ___ a - gain

Ev' - ry day ___ I mag - ic ___ my self ___ a - live ___ a -

pp 8va

mp so

10

mf molto espress.

gain from the near death ex - per - ience of

13

p

trau - ma. The near death ex -

(♩=♩)

16

per - ience of trau - ma.

19

Poco piu mosso ♩=80

mf

Poco piu mosso ♩=80 I swal-low my heart back from the lump it has be-come in my throat.

24

I taste my own mem - or - ies with - out the flav - our of blood

mp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 24 through 27. The vocal line features a 7/8 time signature and includes two triplet markings over the words 'mem-or-ies' and 'flav-our'. The piano accompaniment is in a 7/8 time signature, with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic marking. The key signature has two flats.

28

but as poet - ry, as poet - ry.

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28 through 31. The vocal line begins with a fermata over the first measure and features a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment also features a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The key signature has two flats.

32

I learn to whis - per my name with - out it sound - ing like a

p

bell-like

8va

Detailed description: This system contains measures 32 through 35. The vocal line starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The piano accompaniment includes a piano (*p*) dynamic marking and an 8va (octave up) marking. A dashed line indicates a melodic line for the piano that is an octave higher than the written notes, labeled 'bell-like'. The key signature has two flats.

36

curse. I mur - mur spells to the parts of me

Detailed description: This system contains measures 36 through 39. The vocal line begins with a fermata over the first measure, which is marked with a circled '8' and a dashed line. The piano accompaniment features a circled '8' marking. The key signature has two flats.

41

oth-ers have found too dan-ger-ous to love, _____ to

45

love. _____ And af - ter this morn-ing

poco rit. *a tempo*

poco rit. *a tempo*

50

rit - ual I fin' lly smile at the wo - man, the wo - man

55

_____ in my mir - ror. _____

rit. *rit.*

60 **Tempo primo** $\text{♩} = 38$

Musical score for measures 60-62. The vocal line begins with a rest in measure 60, followed by the lyrics "Tell me a - gain__ how" in measure 61. The piano accompaniment features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The tempo is marked "Tempo primo" with a quarter note equal to 38 beats. The key signature has two flats, and the time signature is 3/2. Dynamics include a piano (*p*) marking in measure 61.

63

Musical score for measures 63-65. The vocal line has the lyrics "heal - ing is not a mag - ic-al thing..." in measure 63. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar melodic texture. A piano (*p*) marking is present in measure 63, and a pianissimo (*pp*) marking appears in measure 65. The bass line includes an 8va⁷ marking in measure 65.

66

Musical score for measures 66-68. The vocal line has the lyrics "Tell me a - gain__ how I am not made of sor - cer-y," in measure 66. The piano accompaniment features a more active bass line with chords. A mezzo-piano (*mp*) marking is present in measure 66.

69

Musical score for measures 69-71. The vocal line has the lyrics "sor - cer - y, sor - cer - y." in measure 69. The piano accompaniment features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. A pianissimo (*pp*) marking is present in measure 70.

II. From the Ashes She Became

for Lara

Poetry by Nikita Gill

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Andante quasi rubato ♩=76

Andante quasi rubato ♩=76

f Be - fore she be - came

Andante quasi rubato ♩=76

ff *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

10 *ff* *f* *rit.* *ff* *p* **a tempo** ♩=76

fire, Be - fore she be - came fire, she was wat - er.

rit. **a tempo** ♩=76

ffp *pp* *pp*

17 *p*

Quench - ing the thirst of ev' - ry dy - ing

21

creat - ure. Quench - ing the thirst of ev - ry dy - ing

25

creat - ure. She gave and she gave and she gave and she gave un - til she

mf *ff* *mp*

31

turned from sea to de sert. Quench - ing the thirst of

p

36

ev' - ry dy - ing creat - ure. Quench - ing the thirst of

40 *mp* *p*

ev - ry dy - ing creat - ure. She gave and she gave and she gave and she gave un

46 *p*

til she turned from sea to des-ert. But in stead of dy-ing of the heat, the sad -

55

ness, the heart - ache, she took all of her pain and from her own

63

ash-es be came fire.

III. You Have Become a Forest

for Emily

Poetry by Nikita Gill

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Allegro moderato ♩=100

Allegro moderato ♩=100

mp

9 *mp espress.*

One day when you wake up, you will find that you have be-come a

p espress.

15 *mp*

for - est. You have grown roots and found strength in them that no - one

mp

22

mp

thought you had. _____ You have be - come _____

mf

27

strong - er and more beaut - i - ful, full _____ of life giv - ing qual - it - ies.

32

p

You have learned _____ to take all that neg - at - iv - it - y a - round you and

p

37

f **poco rit.** **a tempo** *p*

turn it in-to ox - y-gen for eas - y breath-ing. Hmm, _____

f **poco rit.** **a tempo** *mp*

44

hmm, _____ hmm, _____ A host of wild creat-ures lives in-

51

side you and you call them

56

stor - ies. A var - iet - - y of beaut - i - ful

60

birds rests in - side your mind and you call them mem'-ries.

65 **a tempo**

mf warmly

You have be - come an in - cred - i - ble self sus-tain-ing

70

thing of ep - ic pro-port - ions. And you should be so proud of your-self, of

78

rit.

mp

how far you have come from the seeds of who you

84

used to be.

IV. Me Too

Unaccompanied trio

Poetry by Nikita Gill

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Moderato ♩=112

This is our ri - ot act, this is our man - i - fest - o,
 This is our ri - ot act, this is our man - i - fest - o,
 This is our ri - ot act, this is our man - i - fest - o,

5

this is our ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion: be - cause the ones who
 this is our ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion, be - cause the ones who
 this is our ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion, This is our

10

did this know we are talk - ing a - bout their mons - trous act - ions. It's time for
 did this know we are talk - ing a - bout their mons - trous act - ions. This is our
 ri - ot act, this is our man - i - fest - o, It's time for

14

them to have the night-mares, for them to suf-fer for what hap-pened. It's time, it's

ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion. Time, it's

them to have the night-mares, for them to suf-fer for what hap-pened. It's time, it's

18

time for them to have the night - mares, it's time for

time for them to have the night - mares, it's time, it's time,

time for them to have the night - mares, it's time, it's

22

them to suf - fer for what hap - pened. It's time, it's

it's time, it's time. This is our ri - ot act,

time to suf - fer for what hap - pened. It's time, it's

27 *ff*

time, _____ it's time, _____ it's time, rev - ol - u - tion!

ff

this is our man - i - fest - o. Time, _____ it's time, rev - ol - u - tion!

ff *mf*

time, _____ This is our ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion! It's

33 *mf*

It's time for_ them to

mf

It's time for_ them to fear_ be - ing named_ by the

time for_ them to fear_ be - ing named_ by the same voic - es they sil - ended,

38

fear_ be - ing named_ by the same voic - es they sil - ended,

same voic - es they sil - ended, sil - ended. I hope they_ are for -

sil - ended. I hope they_ are for - ev - er haunt - ed by these two_

42 *f*

sil - enced. I hope they are for - ev - er haunt-ed by these two_ words: Me too, me

ev - er haunt-ed by these two_ words: Me too, me too, me too, me

words: Me too, me too, me too, me too, me too, me

48 *mp*

too, me too, me too. This is our ri - ot act, this is our

too me too, me too. It's time, it's time,

too, me too, me too, me too, me too, me too, me

54 *rit.*

man - i - fest - o, this is our ri - ot act, this is our rev - ol - u - tion.

it's time, it's time.

too, me too, me too, me too, me too, me too.