

Poetry by Walt Whitman
Excerpts from "Song of Myself" from Leaves of Grass

I.

Agonies are one of my changes of garments,
I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded person,
My hurts turn livid upon me as I lean on a cane and observe.

I am the mash'd fireman with breast-bone broken,
Tumbling walls buried me in their debris,
Heat and smoke I inspired, I heard the yelling shouts of my comrades,
I heard the distant click of their picks and shovels,
They have clear'd the beams away, they tenderly lift me forth.

I lie in the night air in my red shirt, the pervading hush is for my sake,
Painless after all I lie exhausted but not so unhappy,
White and beautiful are the faces around me, the heads are bared of their fire-caps,
The kneeling crowd fades with the light of the torches.

II.

Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds of the day and night,
Talkative young ones to those that like them, the loud laugh of work-people at their meals,
The angry base of disjointed friendship, the faint tones of the sick,
The judge with hands tight to his desk, his pallid lips pronouncing a death-sentence...
The ring of alarm-bells, the cry of fire, the whirr of swift-streaking engines and hose-carts
with premonitory tinkles and color'd lights,
The steam-whistle, the sordid roll of the train of approaching cars,
The slow march play'd at the head of the association marching two and two...

I hear the violoncello, ('tis the young man's heart's complaint,)
I hear the key'd cornet, it glides quickly in through my ears,
It shakes mad-sweet pangs through my belly and breast.

I hear the chorus, it is a grand opera,
Ah this indeed is music -- this suits me.

World Premiere at Saint Peter's College, April 17, 2002.
Megan Friar, mezzo-soprano, Virginia Brewer, oboe and English horn, James Adler piano.

The composer wishes to acknowledge and thank the following for helping bring this piece to life:
Jean de Paul, Peter T. Daniels, Jean Lyman Goetz, David Grossberg,
Scott Oaks, Sue Sinclair, Leon Van Dyke, and Maxim Gershunoff.

Duration: 9:00

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Commissioned by and Dedicated to Jean de Paul

Reflections upon a September morn

for mezzo-soprano, oboe/English horn, and piano

Poetry by Walt Whitman
from "Song of Myself"

Music by James Adler
3/11/2002

I. Agonies are one of my changes of garments

Very Slow, Somber (M.M. ♩=56-60)

The musical score is written for Mezzo-Soprano, English Horn (Concert Pitch), and Piano. It begins with a tempo marking of "Very Slow, Somber" and a metronome marking of ♩=56-60. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major/D-flat minor) and the time signature is 4/4. The Mezzo-Soprano part has a rest for the first three measures. The English Horn and Piano parts begin in the first measure. The piano accompaniment features a series of chords in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. Dynamics include *fz*, *p*, *simile*, *f*, and *mf*. The Mezzo-Soprano part enters in measure 4 with the lyrics "Ag - o - nies are one of my chang-es of gar - ments." The tempo changes to *poco rubato* and then *a tempo*. The English Horn part features a triplet and a sextuplet. The piano accompaniment includes a *dim.* marking and a *mf* dynamic.

7 *mp* *>* *mf*

Mez. I do not ask the wound - ed per - son how he feels, how he

EH

Pno. *fzp* *mp* *cresc.* *mf*

10 *mp*

Mez. feels, I my - self be - come the wound - ed, the wound - ed

EH

Pno. *mp cantabile* *p* *mp* *p* *mf* *mp* *3* *8^{vb}*

13 *p* *rfz* *mp*

Mez. per - son, My hurts turn liv - id up - on me as I lean, I

EH *p* *al niente*

Pno. *p* *3* *mp* *rfz* *mp* *8^{vb}*

16 *p*
 Mez. *3* *3*
 lean on a cane and ob-serve.

EH *fz* *mp* *mf*
3

Pno. *p* *fz* *mp* *mf*
3

19 *mp* *fz* *mf* *f*
 Mez. I am the mash'd fire-man with breast-bone brok-en,

EH *p*

Pno. *mp* *fz* *mp*

22 *mf* *poco ritenuto* *a tempo* *mf*
 Mez. brok-en, Tum-bling walls, tum-bling walls bur-ied me in their de-

EH

Pno. *mf* *poco ritenuto* *a tempo* *mp* *mf*
6 *3* *3* *3*

25 *rfz* *a piacere*

Mez. *bris,*

EH *cantabile* *p* *mp*

Pno. *rfz* *p* *mp*

28 Sharp Rhythmically *fz*

Mez. Heat and smoke I in - spired, I heard

EH *mf* *f* *fz*

Pno. *mf* *fz*

31 *ff* *mf*

Mez. yell - ing shouts, yell - ing shouts of my com - rades, I heard the

EH *ff* *f* *cantabile* *mp*

Pno. *ff* *f*

34 *fzp* *rfz*

Mez. dis - tant click of their picks, dis - tant click of their shov-els, _____

EH *p* *pp* *fp*

Pno. *p subito* *molto espressione e legato* *mp*

37 *a piacere* 7

Mez. They have cleared the beams a - way, _____

EH *ppp* *mf* *poco rubato*

Pno. *poco cresc.* *mf*

39 *p* *mp*

Mez. they ten - der - ly left me forth, ten - der - ly

EH *p* *mp*

Pno. *p*

41 *rfz* \wedge *dim. a piacere* *mp*

Mez. *forth.* I lie in the night air

EH

Pno. *fz* *mp* *f* *p* *fzp* *pp*

rfz *meno* *mp*

44 *ad libitum* *pp* *stringendo mf*

Mez. — in my red shirt, the per-vad-ing hush is for my sake, Pain-less af-ter all I lie

EH

Pno. *ad libitum* *pp* *stringendo*

47 *rall. e dim.* *a tempo* *p* (*quasi whispering*)

Mez. — ex-haus-ted but not so un-hap-py,

EH *pp* *mp* *fzp*

Pno. *rall. e dim.* *a tempo* *pp* *3* *3* *fzp*

51 *p* molto espress. *mf* *p*

Mez. White and beau - ti - ful are the fa - ces, beau - ti - ful fa - ces a - round me,

EH *p* *mf* *p*

Pno. *p* molto espress. *rfz* *mp* *p*

54 Broaden *mf* *dim.* *p* *ppp*

Mez. the heads are bared of their fire - caps, The kneel - ing crowd fades with the

EH *p* *cresc.* *mp* *pp*

Pno. Broaden *mf* *mp < mf* *legato* *mp* 5 *dim.*

57 *mp* *al niente*

Mez. light, with the light of the torch - es. [oo]*

EH *ppp* *mp* *pp* *mp* *pppp*

Pno. *pp* *rfz* 5 *mp e dim. sempre* *pppp*

*[oo] is optional.

II. Sounds of the city

Very Slow, bluesy (M.M. ♩=60)

p a piacere

Mez. Sounds of the cit-y and sounds out of the cit - y, Sounds of the cit-y, sounds

Ob.

Pno.

Very Slow, bluesy (M.M. ♩=60)

4

Mez. *rit. molto* of the day and night, *mp* 3 Talk-a-tive young ones

Ob.

Pno. *rit. molto* More rapidly! (M.M. ♩=72) *p* *mp*

7

Mez. *mf* to those that like them, *f* the loud *mf* laugh of work peo - ple at their meals,

Ob.

Pno. *fz* *mp* *fz* *p* *cresc.* *f* *mf*

10 *p* \langle \rangle *p* \langle *mf* *mp* \rangle

Mez. The an - gry base of dis - joint - ed friend - ship, the

Ob. *mf* *mp* *legato* *rfz e dim.* *p*

Pno. *sempre dim.* *mf* *dim.*

13 *sost.* *p*

Mez. faint tones of the sick,

Ob. *mp* *pp* *fzp* *fzp*

Pno. *pp* *cresc.* *rfz*

16 *legato* *mp*

Mez. The judge with hands tight to the desk,

Ob. *mp* *p* *mp*

Pno. *p* *mp*

18 *mf* *p*

Mez. the judge, hands tight, his pal - lid lips pro - nounc - ing

Ob. *rfz* *dim. molto* *col mezzo* *p* *sfzp*

Pno. *poco dim.* *p* *mf*

20 *fz* *mf* *Anguished*

Mez. a death sen - tence,

Ob. *fz* *p* *rubato* *fz* 5

Pno. *pp* *secco* *sfz* *secco* *rfz* *Anguished* 5

> Ped.^* [catch-pedal]

23 *Rapidly* (M.M. ♩=68 - 72) *mf* *ff*

Mez. The ring of a - larm bells, the cry of fire,

Ob. *cantabile* *mp* *f*

Pno. *Rapidly* (M.M. ♩=68 - 72) *mp e cresc.* *f*

26 *f e dim.*

Mez. *f* *tr* (#) *sfzmf* *p*

the whirr of swift streak - ing en - gines and hose - carts

Ob. *mf* *sfzmf* *p*

Pno. *dim.* *mf* *p* *mf*

28 *mf* *dim.* *mp*

Mez. *mf* *col mezzo* *dim.* *mp* *pp*

with pre-mon-i-to-ry tink-les and col-or'd lights, The steam - whis-tle, the

Ob. *f* *mf* *3 dim.* *mp* *pp*

Pno. *rfz* *pp* *mp*

31 *cresc3* *mf* *mp*

Mez. *cresc.* *3* *mf* *mp*

sol - id roll of the train of ap - proach - ing cars,

Ob. *cresc.* *3* *mf* *p*

Pno. *cresc.* *mf* *rfz* *mp*

34 *cresc.* *mf*

Mez. The slow march play'd at the head of the as - so - ci - a - tion march - ing -

Ob. *mf*

Pno. *cantabile* *cresc.* *rfz* 5

37 *ritard*

Mez. — two and two,

Ob. *rfz* *fz* *col piano* 3 *p*

Pno. *fz* *mf* *dim.* *p* 3 *mf* 5

More Resolute (M.M. ♩=60)

39 *mf* *mp* *molto accel.*

Mez. I hear the vio - lon - cel - lo, ('tis the young man's heart's complaint,)

Ob. *mf* *mp*

More Resolute (M.M. ♩=60)

39 *p subito* *pp* *pp* *pp* *cresc. sempre* *molto accel.*

Pno.

41 Moving *f* *mf*

Mez. I hear the key'd cor-net, it glides quick-ly in through my ears, It

Ob. *f* *mf* *p*

Pno. *f* (sharp rhythm) *mp* *p*

43 *mp* *mf*

Mez. shakes mad - sweet pangs through my bel - ly and breast. I

Ob. *fz* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Pno. *mf* *mp* *rfz* *mp*

45 *ff*

Mez. hear the chor-us, it is a grand op - era, a grand op - era,

Ob. *cresc.* *mf* *fz*

Pno. *mf* *ffz*

48 *mf* 3 *rfz*
 Mez. Ah this in - deed is mus - ic, is mu - sic,

Ob. *mp* > *p*

Pno. *fz* *mf* 3 *cresc.* 3 *rfz*

50 *mf* 3 *cresc.* 3
 Mez. this suits me, this suits

Ob. 3 *mf* 3 *mp e cresc.*

Pno. 50 *mp* *mf* 3 3 *sfz* *f* 5

52 *fff*
 Mez. me.

Ob. *rfz* *f* *fff*

Pno. 52 *mf* 3 *cresc.* 3 *fz* *fff*