

# SONIC DESCRIPTION

## ≡ BREATH TAKING: ON BLACK BEAUTY AND OTHER NECESSARY INDETERMINACIES BY TORKWASE DYSON WRITTEN BY HANNAH CATHERINE JONES

A soft song, fragile femme, vulnerable voice moves through the space, reciting the gently ascending-descending, meandering melody:

*Some say love, it is a river... that drowns... the tender reed...  
Some say love it is a razor, that leaves... your soul to bleed...*

Echoey, untrained voice... authentically off-pitch... (artificially tuned down?) ever so slightly out of time, out of tune, and yet, in tune with the essence of, the timbre of, the spirit of the voice itself... wisdom-innocence...

*...it's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance  
it's the dream, afraid of waking that never takes the chance...*



The tempo is erratic... wandering... playful, childlike, but sensitive to the words... This voice is coming from a much larger space than we are in... this voice was conjured to reverberate...

*...just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snows,  
Lies the (sea?) seed that with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.*

HARD CUT.

We've been transported to a new space, a new place.

Three sharp breaths.

One more.

Many more. Artificially cut, arranged in a space-time-line, chopped up and spat out deliberately for us, here, now...

Interrupted... drum-like... processed... pump-like... this breath is not guaranteed.

The voice of a black North American femme tells us, in a staggered, repeated start that her father was an extreme lover of music, that he loved all kinds, he liked semi-classical, he liked jazz, he liked operatic kinds of music. This must be where she got it from, but the singing came much later in her life...

SNATCHED.

The sharp staggered rhythmical processed gasps return: an extremely short exhale before a longer inhale, hard cut in the chest, in the editing suite, in the timeline...

(followed by)

Smoother exhalations...



*T(uh) t(uh) t(uh)*

Ambient scuffling, shufflings... Somebody is writing, scribbling...

Smoother exhalations create cyclical patterns...

Layered upon layered upon layered upon one another...

Tap-tap-tap (knock-knock-knock?)... keeping time, accelerating time...

Tongue-rolled textured trills...

Improvised exploratory semi-operatic scats, scales, sequences!

Chromatic, chronological... “Hee hee hee.... hee hee heeeee!”

A piano scale flourish! Escalates... and is cut off.

The piano scale re-enters! Escalates further...

There’s an audience present, gleefully appreciating these skilful scat squeals with hand-claps and chortles of joy... Is it Ella? It must be Ella. It is Ella Fitzgerald.

The scribbling and breathing continues.

That sweet non-sense that was pure sense, powered by exquisite inhalation.

“That’s all you get!” she says, but continues regardless... the virtuoso vocalisations flowing...

“Quack, quack!”

She taunts us... and then...

A new, low vibration... at the pace of a very slow walk, perhaps at the



speed of the ticking clock... Four keys being struck, perhaps a piano, perhaps its synthesiser sibling, perhaps the keys of a computer, unlocking this new mood...

Ella's words remind us of the importance of impromptu improvisation, as she fades away...

The low keys come and go... and come again, stronger.

The breath, shallow, and scribbling, subtle, continue... the tapping, ticking, knocking prevails...

Double time?

Big inhalation...

Matched exhalation...

In, 2-3-4...

Out, 2-3-4...

Ominous keys walk a sequence of 4 levels, 4 steps, 4 stages... non-linear polyrhythms.

Still, the scribbling continues... something is being created... scrawled, slower... then faster, as the breath slows further

Now the tap-tick-tock pace accelerates...

Taps, scribbles, breaths orbit one another...

Are these footsteps? We are moving into a different space...

In the distance, an audience applauds, the faint reverberations of new keys, new stages, new levels (take me to church (organs still



breathing... fluent, seamless))...

The breaths broaden, in length, in spatial dimension... Our breaths have found a collaborative rhythm.

We are travelling into the archive, into the archive of memory, of imagination...

This rhythmic unity, this melodic harmony... the choir... the gospel choir...

*Mary, don't weep...!*

*Oh, Ma-ry don't you weep!*

These syllables are the pace of time ticking...

This is the unmistakable aura of Aretha, whose inhalations allow for Pharaoh's army to be conjured, to be summoned, to be transmitted... into and through the transformative elements... in this realm and beyond, into others...

*Tell your sister, don't moan*

*Tell Martha, don't you moan*

The sense of the church comes into focus... the calls, the responses, the collective power of Aretha, of choir, of audience...

*Pharaoh's Army*

*Pharaoh's army*

*All of them men got drowned in the sea one day*

*Drowned in the Red Sea!*

We are synchronised... we can be synchronised 2-3-4...



We can expand 2-3-4-5-6-7-8....

*My my my my my my my my my my sweet love!*  
*Oh, Ma-ry don't you weep!*

Elergy energy accelerates... the collective claps, now double-time!

*Pharaoh's army, they got drowned*  
*Drowned in the Red Sea*  
*Oh Mary, don't you weep*  
*Mary, don't weep*  
*Don't weep*  
*Mary*  
*Tell Martha, don't you moan...*

Huge pause... dwelling in, living in... living for, these last words...  
Huge applause! Gradually disintegrating, dying away, exposing the  
final breath, dissipating... for now...

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