

In June, 1933, after winning the Wanamaker Foundation Awards with her Symphony in E minor (premiered by the Chicago Symphony), Florence Price became the first black female composer to have her work performed by a major orchestra. She graduated in 1906 with honors from the New England Conservatory, where she majored in piano and organ. She later became the head of the music department in Clark Atlanta University, before finally settling down in Chicago. She worked extensively with African-American poet and writer, Langston Hughes, and was a teacher and a friend of fellow female composer, Margaret Bonds.

The spirit of this arrangement is in line with Price's original poem for "Resignation":

"My life is a pathway of sorrow;
I've struggled and toiled in the sun
with hope that the dawn of tomorrow
would break on a work that is done.
[...]
For ever the woe that it caused
I'm tired and want to go home.
My mother and sister are there;
They're waiting for me to come
Where mansions are bright and fair."

Allow me to build upon Price's spirit with my own poem, which also serves as a road map for this transcription.

In my journey, I have seen arrays of chaos;
My body has been washed,
By invisible scars.
My soul is stuck,
Underneath malicious rocks and crooked trees;
Anxious to get somewhere else;
aching to fly.
I see the clear skies; I feel the carefree winds;
I smell the earth, and I can almost touch the shining stars.
Give us a little more time and we will reach;
Serene.

Chi-Wei Lo