

# a beautiful reckoning

**Aleyna M. Brown**

2020

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*for*

guitar, flute, alto flute, voice

(to be performed by one multi-instrumentalist or  
any combination of subgroups to fit the instrumentation)

fixed media

colored lights

### **Program Notes:**

This piece is a self-portrait. Born out of weakness, it is a reflection—a reminder—to myself and of myself, the strengths I possess. With elements of my life falling outside of my control, reaching places I had hoped never to return, I turned to my guitar—my dad’s Fender acoustic that has for the last fifteen years been my medium of processing, and healing. Replacing the pain of heartbreak and transition with the pain of broken calluses, I discovered a riff along the way—one of openness, strength, and resonance, particularly embodied by the altered dropped tuning. From there, five variations of fingerpicking patterns, hand positions, and strumming were developed into a mosaic of acoustic guitar layers. Five lines of interlacing flute and alto flute melodies and sound effects layer on top of the guitars. Two recorded vocal lines loop and combine to create moments of over a dozen harmonies. Electronic elements expand the piece in range, dynamics, and timbre. Together, my creation, born of pain, became beautiful. It was a reckoning. It was an understanding, a forgiving, a freeing work of composing and mixing. But its performance would not be complete without a live rendering of these guitar, flute, alto flute, and vocal elements. The live performance is a set of improvisatory modules that interact with the fixed media, with instrument and timbre changes enhanced by the color-changing atmosphere of the lights in the performance space. I invite the audience to engage with this piece, the music and darkness and colors, the breathing and focus, to create your own reckoning, taking something painful and making it beautiful with me.

**Performance Notes:**

To be performed by one or more performers spanning guitar, flute, alto flute, and voice

**Guitar Notes:**

Live guitar can be amplified acoustic or solid or semi-hollow bodied electric guitar

Suggested distortion levels are 'clean' to minimal distortion until approx. 7'15" when more 'lead guitar' style distortion can be added at the performer's discretion

Suggested fingerpicking method is flesh of fingertip

**Flute & Alto Flute Notes:**

Flutist can double on alto flute, or there can be separate flutists

Vibrato and articulation should blend with the recorded flute lines as best as possible

Extended technique effects should interlace with recorded flute sounds, mimic or expand upon gestures and beats presented in the recorded flute lines, and can include—

- Tongue pizz. & tongue ram

- Air sounds

- Fluttertongue

- Pitch bending

- 'Beatboxing'

- Harmonics & harmonic glissandi

**Voice Notes:**

Vocalist range should at least overlap with the range of the recorded vocal parts (B3-G5)

Sustained 'oo' vowel ('u' in IPA) should be used primarily, but gradual changes to other open vowels are acceptable

Vocal effects can include voiced inhalation and exhalation but should not include extended techniques

**Solo or Group Improvisation Notes:**

Improvisation should find its influence from the recorded parts for each instrument and the provided score prompts. Performers should mimic and expand upon gestures, beats, and motives presented in the fixed media.

Performers should listen and respond to other instruments' parts.

Performers should consciously take turns playing, with no more than two performers improvising simultaneously until the ending section at approx. 7'15" when all performers can, and should, be playing together.

The silence and blackout in the fixed media and lights (7'12"-7'15") should be matched by silence and stillness by the live performer(s).

Use the 'Light Cues' table for notable sections in the fixed media to plan instrument changes and/or subsets of performers to be playing during a given section.

**Lighting Notes:**

Lighting cues must be built by lighting engineer at given performance space

A minimum of primary color wheel lights and one moving lamp or strobe can be used, but preference is multiple color lights with variable diffusions and multiple moving lamps with patterns and/or strobing.

Lighting cues can be built in to fixed media at given timestamps provided on next page, or triggered live by lighting engineer in the mix position.

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**Light Cues**

<b>Cue</b>	<b>Timestamp</b>	<b>Lighting Design</b>	<b>Transition Notes</b>	<b>Fixed Media</b>
1	0:00	All dimmed except low blues/violets, overall very dark, no spotlight on performers	Cue in from black, performers already set on stage	Electronic arpeggiator, subtle guitar and vocal clips entering and exiting, guitar harmonics
2	1:37	Brightening	Gentle transition	Guitar, light vocals, soft
3	1:57	Greens, teal/blue	Gentle transition	Guitar, riff building
4	2:35	Greens/teal → purple	Gradual	Guitar, transitioning to vocals
5	3:13	Purples, reds	Gentle transition	Vocals
6	3:45	Purples → reds	Gradual	(vocals)
7	3:56	Reds → low reds	Gradual dim, all	Electronics (trans. to C flute)
8	4:35	Brightening, reds and purples	Gentle transition	Flutes
9	5:15	Violet, blue	Gentle transition	Flutes with more percussive effects
10	5:51	Blue and greens	Gradual	Electronics
11	6:30	Greens		Electronics, build up
12	7:12	Blackout	On cue (silence)	Silence
13	7:15	Reds and violets, moving pattern and/or strobing effect	On cue (bass drop)	All instruments, full loop, guitar added strumming, full vocal and flute layers
14	7:50	Blues, moving pattern and/or strobe continues	Gradual trans. to blues	(continued)
15	8:28	Moving pattern moves to stage (if controllable), color lights fade out leaving only moving pattern/strobe	On cue	Fade out
16	8:33	Moving pattern or strobe fades to black	On cue	(continued)

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## Recorded Components Full Score

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MAIN RIFF

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Guitar 3

Guitar 4

Guitar 5

Flute 1

Flute 2

Flute 3

Alto Flute 1

Alto Flute 2

Voice 1

Voice 2

Pull-Off Variation

Descending Variation

Chord Voicing

Strumming Variation

*sim.*

8

Gr. 1

Gr. 2

Gr. 3

Gr. 4

Gr. 5

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

A. Fl. 1

A. Fl. 2

Vox 1

Vox 2

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score, page 8, featuring guitar and woodwind parts. The guitar section (Gr. 1-5) is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Gr. 1 and 2 have a 2/4 time signature. Gr. 3 has a 3/4 time signature. Gr. 4 and 5 have a 4/4 time signature. Gr. 1 and 2 include fret numbers (0, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12) and a '120' marking. Gr. 3 includes fret numbers (6, 7, 9, 11, 12). Gr. 4 includes fret numbers (2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11). Gr. 5 consists of a dense chordal texture. The woodwind section includes three flutes (Fl. 1, 2, 3) and two alto flutes (A. Fl. 1, 2). Fl. 1 and 2 have a 2/4 time signature, while Fl. 3, A. Fl. 1, and A. Fl. 2 have a 4/4 time signature. The woodwinds play melodic lines with various articulations like accents and slurs. The vocal parts (Vox 1 and 2) are in a 4/4 time signature and feature long, sustained notes with some melodic movement.

15

Gr. 1

Gr. 2

Gr. 3

Gr. 4

Gr. 5

Fl. 1

Fl. 2

Fl. 3

A. Fl. 1

A. Fl. 2

Vox 1

Vox 2

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 15 through 20. It features six guitar parts (Gr. 1-6) and five woodwind parts (Fl. 1-3, A. Fl. 1-2). The guitar parts include fret numbers and melodic lines. The woodwind parts show complex rhythmic patterns with slurs and accents. The vocal parts (Vox 1 and 2) are mostly rests with some notes in the final measure. The score is in a key with two sharps (D major or F# minor) and a common time signature.

# Guitar Improvisatory Modules

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1

Guitar

TAB

0	0	0	0
7	5	7	11

Acoustic Guitar

2

Gtr.

7 7 7	9 11 7	5 5 5 5 5 5	5 5 5 5 5 4	7 7 7	9 11 7	5 5 5 5 5 5	5 5 5 5 5 0
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Ac.Gtr.

3

Gtr.

Ac.Gtr.

4

Gtr.

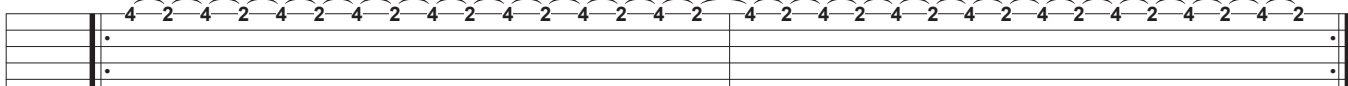
P 7 0 0	P 9 0 0	P 11 0 0	12	P 7 0	P 7 0	P 9 0	P 11 0	5
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Ac.Gtr.



5

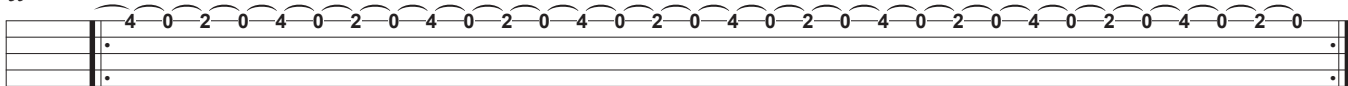
Gtr. RH LH RH LH RH LH RH  
H H H H H H H *sim.*  
4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2 4 2



Ac.Gtr. 33



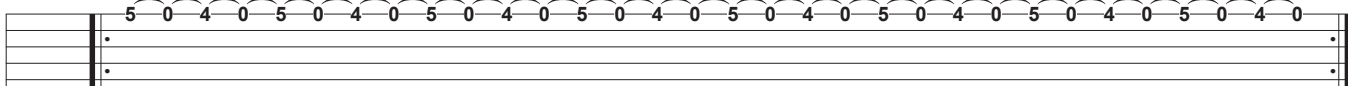
Gtr. RH LH RH LH  
H P H P H P H P *sim.*  
4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0



Ac.Gtr. 35



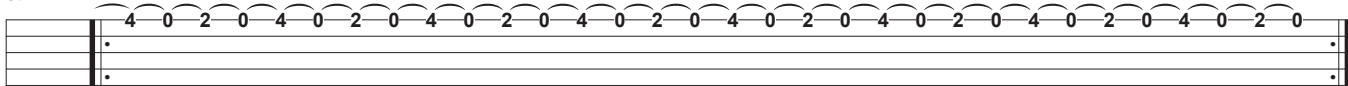
Gtr. 36  
5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0 5 0 4 0



Ac.Gtr. 36



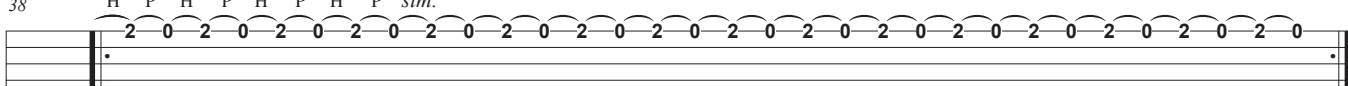
Gtr. 37  
4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0 4 0 2 0



Ac.Gtr. 37



Gtr. RH LH RH LH  
H P H P H P H P *sim.*  
2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 2 0



Ac.Gtr. 38

