

Christoffer Schunk

# Romance, for Piano

A monodrama for a pianist/vocalist  
and electronics

*baritone version*



*This monodrama centers on dangerous relationships  
and the invisible prison of fear.  
It is an exploration of the chaos, confliction,  
and confusion that exists in human love.*

Allow the character to guide you more than this skeletal score.  
 Feel free to adapt the piece to your vocal and piano skill level.

**A**

*Sing intro like a pop singer. Start from off stage, hidden from the audience.*

*Start to walk onto the stage, incorporating awkward dance moves throughout the song as if you are singing in your bedroom.*

♩ = 60 *mf*

Voice: I want your love girl yeah I want your love\_\_ uh uu said I want your heart\_\_ girl I want all of you

Piano: [Empty staves]

Electronics: [Empty staff]

5 *f* *mf*

hoo\_\_ (you) Just be with me\_\_ and we'll paint the world yeah we'll paint it like a pain-ting girl

8 oh we'll paint it yel-low and red and blue\_\_ and green and pur- ple\_\_ pink or- ange girl yeah

11 oh we'll paint it pur-ple and blue and red co-balt um-ber ooo ma-jen-ta tur-quoise yeah all of the col-ors and no black and white yeah

14 yeah ba-by oh yeah yeah ba-by I want your love uhh I want it all\_\_ yeah I want your love\_\_ I

*Subtly and/or not too subtly imagine that you are making love with the piano. Build the intensity as time moves forth. Don't make any sounds.*

19 *Sit down at the piano* *mf* *f* *mf* *Extremely emotional With liberty Rubato, with pedal*

want it like some-thing I want real-ly bad doo doo doo doo doo doo doo doo\_\_

[Piano accompaniment with triplets and dynamics]

\* ○ Indicates falsetto until ●

23

25

27

Release a couple of high pitched sex whimpers.

Highly charged but held back. Speak roughly where the words are placed. X indicates range of speaking.

30

*mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *f*

X X X X X

Yessssuuuhhhh Yeah! Come on Come on Oh yeah!

33

Scream with a mixture of pain and pleasure.

*ff* X X X

Ahhh! Ahhh! Uhhh!

3  
35

*mf* *At this instance, hump the keys once.*

Uhh Uh Uhh Uhhh Uhh! Uhhhh

*gliss.* **3-6"** *Catch your breathe until the electronics come in.*

**B** 39 **2'20"**

Confused, slowly look up from the keys and slowly lift your foot off the pedal. SLOWly look around the room. SLOWly stand with an arched back and bent elbows, as if you are sitting at the piano. Begin to realize that you are inside a grand piano, under the strings. Take a few hesitant steps. Look behind you. Look behind you again.

Choose a corner in the room and run to it with your arms open. You reach the curved end of the piano so push yourself off it. Choose another corner and do the same thing. Strange excitement begins to enter your eyes. Jump for the wires above your head, trying to stroke them. Do it again. Do it again.

Look around the room in more detail. You begin to realize that there is no way out. Your arms start to fold across your chest and you begin to softly shiver. With your legs crossed, awkwardly side-step back to the piano and sit down. Begin playing →

Electronics

**Track 1**

**Note: If there is a question mark, then a glissando is implied.**

40  $\text{♩} = 70$

*mp* *almost speaking confused* *half whisper*

I have come and now am where are we what are did you? did did you? in-side

Vamp on these notes at the speed of 16th notes but the rhythm can accelerate and slow. The left hand should always go upwards. The pitches don't need to be played in a specific order. The notes in the parenthesis should come in occasionally.

Constant gradual crescendo

At this point, the electronics should reach the sine tones but if it hasn't, don't wait for it.

*worried* *f* *mf*

is this you? you've caged my load in your of pash my art my me? I've come in you am I?

*8va* *8vb*

\*The slashed notehead means to sing extremely restricted and scratchy. It is almost throat singing

*ff* *f* *ff*  $\text{♩} = 126$

are we? what are? you've ta-ken me? in - side have I? are where? where are? you have me? Ah! Ah! Ah!

yelling

*Jump in place for each cluster. For each cluster with a scream, your feet should land underneath your hands and you should look somewhere above the audience. Always look at the same location.*

*These are all chromatic clusters. The notes shouldn't ever be exactly the same.*

*8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>*

*f* *ff*

44  $\text{♩} = 70$  *mf* *Gorgeously operatic*

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! please don't take me my dear

*Vamp on these notes with a fluxuating tempo. The notes don't have to be played in this order and some should occasionally be left out. The left hand has to have a constant upwards motion.*

*8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>* *8<sup>ub</sup>*

*mf* *Red.*

47 *f* *mp* *mp* *mp*

I sense some vio-lence my a-ni-mal beast I've cared well. I've gift-ed mass-sage and giv - en

\* The "C" means to sing in the back of the throat and have a closed sound. The crescendo signifies a gradual movement towards an open/normal sound.

50

*f* *dehydrated* *mf*

you \_\_\_\_\_ loved you al-ways \_\_\_\_\_ to be me is to have you \_\_\_\_\_ to be me is

54

*mp*

Small and in the back of the mouth. Speaking as if panicked and out of breath. Gasping in between phrases.

you \_\_\_\_\_ No! Is that why? So close we are, you... want closest?!

*mp*

Gradually speed the vamp

*1<sup>o</sup> Ed.*

56

Small and restricted. Terrified. Speaking as if constipated and forcing out feces. Dehydrated and slow.

What are we? Pri-son am I? be-com-ing with you Prarrriage mare physical permanent

57

Weak and pathetic. Alternating chest voice and falsetto. yelling

*ff*

No! I've loved but not can't don't want I want myself. I beg no! Nooo! Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

*8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>*

(Same directions)

You should be playing the vamp so fast that it has become a tremolo.

*ff*

*8<sup>vb</sup>* *8<sup>vb</sup>* *8<sup>vb</sup>* *8<sup>vb</sup>*



60

Panting.  
Down bow is exhale, up bow is inhale.

Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!

While panting, take a few steps away from the piano, grabbing your hair as if you can't believe what's happening.

Flat hands on your chest

Ah! Ah! I'll! Get! Out! Ah! Ah! Ah! You! You!Fuuhh

Raise your arms

(Same directions)

Start Track 2 and stop Track 1 simultaneously.

68

hhh (choking)

Throw yourself onto the floor while choking with occasional screams. The piano is attacking you and ridding you of your voice. Flop around violently out of control. Twitch. Move with the electronics. If they slow or fade then your movement slows and fades because you are taking on less mental and physical blows. When the abuse stops, catch your breathe. Lie on the floor, beaten and exhausted. As you start to move and crawl back to the piano, realize that your voice is gone. Grunt. Try to clear it. When ready, sit back down on the piano bench.

5/4

5/4

7 **C** ♩ = 70

Throat singing

74

*mf*

You've tak-en my I see

With pedal

*mf*

78

You felt cooped can't sing how you wesh (wish)

From a smile shaped mouth, slowly move to a very wide open mouth. Then slowly close it while keeping the shape round.

80

*mp*

*f*

ma - nip - u - la - ted poun-ded my

5

3

8va

*mp*

*f*

*p*

*mf*

Ped.

8vb  
Ped.

Slowly close your mouth to a small rounded shape and make the sound more nasally. Use your tongue and mouth shape to bring out different harmonics.



Free tempo

♩ = 80

dear sin - cer-i-ty I give

*mf* *mp* *pp*

\*

88

but

*mf* *mp* *f* *p* *mf*

8va

♩ = 75

93

please my love I won't be mad if you bring my voice back

Arpeggios should be faster each bar.

in a similar style to the preceding run

*f* *f* *ff* *f* *ff*

Red

94 *ff*

Please just that!

Just as you are about to play another arpeggio, stop yourself and slowly wipe your eyes. Then clear your throat a few times, realizing that your voice is back.

96 speaking *mp*

and me? Maybe me too? I plead? Please? Please? Let me?!

When the electronics enter, grab your head in insanity and in pain. Stand up indecisively, screaming. Run to the side of the piano and bang on the strings while yelling "die die die die!" Run to eight feet behind. The piano intensely whispers/speaks in a constipated way through you, "I say we all will forever be like this one day!" Run into the end of the piano so that you arms wrap around it as if you are giving it a hug. But it's not a hug, you are trying to take something from it. Repeat this action (whispering again). Keep your arms spread as if you are still holding the piano. Walk to the keys and drop what you are imaginarily holding while simultaneously depressing the pedal with your foot. Put your arms in the same position and repeat. Sit down and begin.

Track 3

98  $\text{♩} = 150$  *f* restricted 8" gliss. ear ear ear gliss. gliss.

Play notes in this manner, following the range of the graphic notation.

99 not restricted

whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw whaw

as fast as possible

Ped.

5"

restricted

f

ear

gliss.

4"

Make gagging and vomiting sounds.

not restricted

3"

ff who

♩ = 130 accel.

as fast as possible

mf

Ped.

For this figure, act as though you are euphorically dizzy.

105 *ff* 2" *a tempo*  
*molto accel.*

high yi yi yi yi yi yi yi yi

*as fast as possible*

*ff* *mf*

\* Ped. \* Ped.

109 *ff* 1" *molto accel.*  
*a tempo*

who

*as fast as possible* *Act as though your head is being sucked towards the keys.*

*ff* *mp*

\* Ped. \* *slowly depress the pedal*

114 *as fast as possible* ♩ = 56

*f* Chromatic cluster with forehead. Keep your head on the keys.

→ Ped. \* Ped.

*Stop track*

120 *Rubato* *p*

*mf* *mf* *p*

*sad but poignant*

129

*p* *mp*

aww

*mp* *mp* *p*

135

*mf*

aww

*f* *p*

6/4 6/4 6/4

139

*mp* *pp* *mf*

*f*

aww haww haww haww haww

3

With a hint voice cracking.

4/4 4/4 4/4 4/4

141 *gliss.* *mp*

— haww haww haww haww —

144 *softly restricted almost closed mouth* *mf*

huh — aww —

147 *whistle the diamond note* *p*

Slowly peel from the piano and curl up on your side on the bench. After a few seconds, silence your breathing. Lie still for 5-10 seconds. Suddenly flip so that you are lying on your stomach. You are slightly confused. Semi-gradually start to move your arms and legs so that it looks as though you are swimming. Build it for 8 seconds. You are swimming from danger.  
**Track 4 comes in.**

When the electronics come in, quickly move your face towards the audience while the back of your hands move across your face. Loudly inhale through your teeth. You are a budding flower. Notice the electronics and stop in semi-awe. Slide underneath the piano bench and slowly grip it in ecstasy. Write in pleasure. Reach your arms back and brush the piano pedals. Play with the piano bench. Move your arms through it. Get on your knees and very delicately bend down to kiss one of the piano wheels. You are kissing its feet. Fall on your back, happily drugged. Drift underneath the piano.

◆  
**Track 4**



**D**

♩ = 110

♩ = 124

*Slightly imagine that you are Michael Jackson*

When the electronics fade out, dance. Then walk back to the piano with a new sense of joy and take a shower. Do this by banging the keys and gathering the sound from inside the piano. Rub the sound onto your body. Wash your arms, your legs, your face, chest, hair. Perhaps you should get naked. When done showering, you decided you want to do some composing and improvising. Continue →

*unsure* *confidently*

The staccato notes shouldn't necessarily be voiced but are more of a guttural stop.

154

*pp* *p* *f* *mf* *f*

uh oh yeah    uh yeh ah oo    eh oo ahh    uh oh yeah

Chromatic cluster

159

*p* *f*

uh

162

oo oh yeah uh uh!

*f*

166

aw mm eh uh

The square is a snap with both hands.  
The triangle is a clap.

These are chromatic clusters created by flopping flat hands back and forth. The only important pitches are the F# in the right hand and the C# in the left hand.

Create these quintuplets by half-hazardly but aggressively flopping all five fingers across chromatic clusters, hitting more than one note with each finger.

Quickly stand and hit these like an effeminate man. Sit back down immediately.

*sfz*

169

ee yeah!

R.H. L.H. 5

R.H.

**Fast, without pedal.**

Only the vertical squares are blocked chords.

171

*f* *mf* *f*

172

Inside the piano with the pads of your second, third, and fourth fingers. Normal

*p*

Ped. Ped.

$\text{♩} = 110$   
Triumphant  
With pedal

173

*ff* *mp* *ff*

*v*

177

Without pedal

*mp* *f*

Play these clusters as if you are picking things up off of the keys.

With pedal

179

*ff* *mp*

*8va* *8va*

Ped.

184

*8va* *8vb* *8vb*

\*

189 *Vomit* *Laugh insanely, following the piano.* *Weep*

*Only white notes.*

Ped.

190

*f*

*mp p ff*

With pedal

8va

Mute these three hits with your right hand.

Track 5

You are suddenly dragged off the bench by an invisible figure and bent downwards. Your head is by your hands, which are on the lowest keys. The figure violently rapes you as you scream. You keep looking behind yourself to see what is holding your hips, but nothing is there. Your head and hands keep bashing into the piano and the keys. "You're raping me!" After a few brief moments, the figure lets go of you and you fall to the side.

**\*Slowly fade out Track 5**

Crying and whimpering, sounding as if you are saying "ear", grab hold of the closest piano leg and curl up to it. In between your whimperings, madly whisper, "I say we all will forever be like this one day, when glass stung wit rips apart the cheeks of failing eyes, squeeze the hold of committed starch spreading their thoughts of inferiority. Forever will it spread." The piano is saying this through you. You don't realize that you are speaking. Slowly pull yourself up, defeated. Sit back on the bench and lose control of your arms.

Your shoulders stiffen and your hands start playing →

192

*Start crying harder when your hands begin playing. Gradually quiet as you listen to the beauty of the music.*

**E** You should no longer interrupt with whispering.

♩ = 90

195

*p*

*pp*

Ped.

Ped.

Ped.

*There should be no more crying by this point.*

202

*p*

Ped. Ped.

208

Slightly jerk back from the keys as your entire upper body stiffens. With your arms still outstretched, begin to rapidly and minutely move them as if you are doing a fast drum roll. Your fingers should still appear as if they are resting on piano keys. Your arms and shoulders need to be incredibly stiff. You are horrified. You are losing control of your body. Occasionally release gasps of fear. Staring at your arms and hands, lean forward so that your shaking hands hit the piano lid and then proceed to hit strings inside the piano. Lean back, then stand up, still staring at your arms. Walk behind the audience and panic, screaming. Run to the stage and violently fall. As soon as you hit the ground, twitch onto your back with your arms and legs in the air and freeze in a decrepit pose. You are done.