Lamentations 2020

By Awendela Grantham

1 Prologue

Weeping bitterly,
At night we are betrayed,
With no one to comfort us.

2 Exposition

The queens and kings of the Motherland have become America’s slaves.
1620 enslaved Africans arrive in Virginia.
1640 mandated Durante Vita.

... 400 years later.

3 Setting

The Civil War foregrounds the “race problem” in America.

Those African Americans who enlisted in the Union Army contested the belief that they were created to be slaves.

The election of Abraham Lincoln threatened the southern plantation owning aristocracy because the agenda to free the slaves would destabilize the economic and racial hierarchies elites enjoyed.

The secession of the South forced African Americans to declare their loyalties, though brothers fought on both sides.

40,000 Black soldiers died in the destruction of the ensuing war.

Was the promise of freedom justified by this enormous cost?

In 2020, we live in shock, horror, and terror,

Identifying with the hardships of the Civil War generation.
4 Time
23:00

5 Place
Here and everywhere
Like the artists who cry for justice in the murals of Chicago

6 Tone
Young women grieve,
Bitter, in anguish for their hungry children.

Young men wander
The streets in affliction,
Looking for their home.

It is costly,
When old dreamers,
Are shunted aside in facilities.

7 Characters
Little children

8 Development
To Kill a Mockingbird (1960) by Harper Lee
False allegations destroy a man.
9 Rising Action

During the “Red Summer” of 1919, mobs of angry White supremacists torched homes and lynched Black Americans.

“Red Summer” to Redlining . . .

In 1989, Charles Stuart of Boston alleged that a Black man killed his pregnant wife. Police searched for African American suspects. Later, we learned that the accuser, Stuart, murdered his own wife.

10 Conflict

Power corrupts.

Absolute power corrupts?

Absolutely.

11 Events

Over 100,000 reported cases of Coronavirus

12 Point of View

We will no longer tolerate lies;

Our cell phones record the truth.

13 Plot

Our women are violated;

Our men languish in prison;

Princes sleep in the streets of L.A.

When they take down a statue, what does that mean?

14 Theme

Bullying never changes because the tactics continue to work.
15 Climax
An 8 minute and 46 second video of a man pinned to the ground in dishonor
Bystanders begged, “LET HIM BREATHE!”

16 Literary Devices
Claiming representation on the Internet allows us to shape our digital future and participate in the systems that define our reality.

17 Falling Action
Demonstrators yelled, “WE ARE FED UP WITH YOUR LIES!”

18 Anticlimax
Moments before Floyd died,
He called for his mama to help him.

19 Conclusion
We sit alone in silence,
Waiting for the dawn.

20 Epilogue
Let the Revolution begin . . .

Dr. Awendela Grantham is a faculty member at North Carolina A&T State University.

Lamentations 2020 by Awendela Grantham is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.