

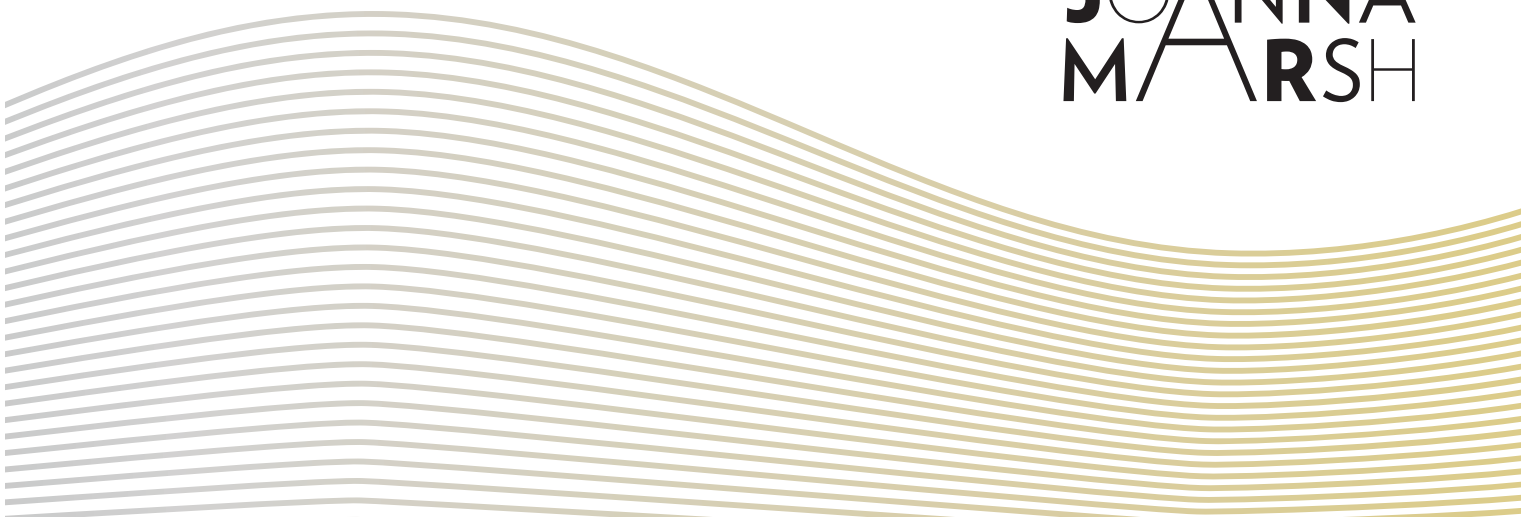
Joanna Marsh

Word

SSAATTBB

Perusal
copy

JOANNA
MARSH



Joanna Marsh

Word (July 2024)

SSAATTBB

Duration c.7'

Word, a setting of the poem of the same name by Patience Agbabi, was commissioned by the National Youth Choir 18-25 for their Summer Course Concert, Saturday 27th July 2024, at Ely Cathedral. The commission was kindly funded by Dorico and The John S Cohen Foundation.

© 2024 Joanna Marsh

www.joannamarsh.co.uk

Word

Patience Agbabi

Give me a word
any word
let it roll across your tongue
like a dolly mixture.
Open your lips
say it loud
let each syllable vibrate
like a transistor
Say it again again again again again
till it's a tongue twister
till its meaning is in tatters
till its meaning equals sound
now write it down,
letter by letter
loop the loops
till you form a structure.
Do it again again again again again
till it's a word picture.
Does this inspire?
Is your consciousness on fire?
Then let me take you higher.

Give me a noun
give me a verb
and I'm in motion
cos I'm on a mission
to deliver information
so let me take you to the fifth dimension.
No fee, it's free,
you only gotta pay attention.
So sit back, relax,
let me take you back
to when you learnt to walk, talk,
learnt coordination
and communication,
mama
dada.
If you rub two words together you get friction
cut them in half, you get a fraction.
If you join two words you get multiplication.
My school of mathematics equals verbal acrobatics
so let's make conversation.

Give me a preposition
give me an interjection
give me inspiration.
In the beginning was creation
I'm not scared of revelations
cos I've done my calculations.
I've got high hopes
on the tightrope,
I just keep talking.
I got more skills
than I got melanin
I'm fired by adrenaline
if you wanna know what rhyme it is
it's feminine.
*Cos I'm Eve on an Apple Mac
this is a rap attack so rich in onomatopoeia
I'll take you higher than the ozone layer.*
**So give me Word for Windows
*give me 'W' times three
cos I'm on a mission
to deliver information
that is gravity defying
and I'll keep on trying
till you lose your fear of flying.*

Give me a pronoun
give me a verb
and I'm living in syntax.
You only need two words to form a sentence.
I am I am I am I am I am
bicultural and sometimes clinical
my mother fed me rhymes through the umbilical.
I was born waxing lyrical.
I was raised on Watch with Mother
The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
and Fight the Power.
Now I have the perfect tutor in my postmodern suitor.
I'm in love with me computer.
But let me shut down before I touch down.

Give me a word
give me a big word
let me manifest
express in excess
the M I X
of my voice box.
Now I've eaten the apple
I'm more subtle than a snake is.
I wanna do poetic things in poetic places
Give me poetry unplugged
so I can counter silence.

Give me my poetic license and I'll give you metaphors that top eclipses
I'll give megabytes and megamixes.

Give me a stage and I'll cut form on it
give me a page and I'll perform on it.

Give me a word
any word.

*These lines are omitted in the piece.

Word

Patience Agbabi

Joanna Marsh

$\text{♩} = 144$

SOPRANO 1
f Give me a word *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

SOPRANO 2
f Give me a word *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

ALTO 1
f Give me a word *mp* let it roll (ll) *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

ALTO 2
f Give me a word *mp* let it roll (ll) *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

TENOR 1
f Give me a word a - ny word *mp* let it roll (ll) *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

TENOR 2
f Give me a word a - ny word *mp* let it roll (ll) *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

BASS 1
f a - ny word *mp* let it roll a-cross your tongue *pp* lie - k'a
 like a dol-ly mix-ture.

BASS 2
f a - ny word let it roll a-cross your tongue

5 *mf* O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud *mp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud *mp* *f* let each syl - la - ble

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud *mf* *fp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud *mf* *fp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it let each syl - la - ble

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud *mf* *fp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud *mf* *fp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud *mf* *fp*

mf O - pen your lips *f* sing it loud, *mp* sing it loud

9 *pp* vib - - rate *f* Sing it *mf* a - gain *mp*

mf vib - - rate *f* Sing it *mf* a - gain *mp*

mf vib - - rate *f* Sing it *mf* a - gain *mp*

mf vib - - rate *f* Sing it *mf* a - gain *mp*

mf like a tran - sis - tor *f* Sing it, say it a - gain a - gain a - gain a - gain a - gain,

pp vib - - rate *mf* like a tran - sis - tor *f* Sing it, say it a - gain a - gain a - gain a - gain a - gain,

pp vib - - rate *mf* like a tran - sis - tor *f* Sing it a - gain,

mf vib - - rate *f* Sing it a - gain,



19

The musical score consists of seven systems of staves. The first six systems each have three staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and one piano staff. The seventh system has two staves: a vocal staff and a piano staff. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. The music is in G major and common time. Dynamics include *mf*, *p*, and *f*. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and full notes.

mf
now write it down,
mf
now write it down,
(*p*)
a - gain, a - gain,
mf
till its
mf
now write it down,
till its
mean-ing is in tat-ters till its mean-ing e-quals sound
now write it down,
till its
mf
now write it down,
till its
mean-ing is in tat-ters till its mean-ing e-quals sound
now write it down,
till its
mean-ing
till its mean-ing e-quals sound
till its

31

(echo)

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain *p*

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain (echo)

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. (echo)

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain

-ter loop the loops till you form a struc - ture. Do it a - gain_ a - gain

mf (hum) loops ____ form a struc - ture. Do 'n do it a - gain_ a - gain *f*

Do 'n do it a - gain_ a - gain *p*

35

p a - gain a - gain *mf* Does this ____ in - spire? ____ *p* con - scious-ness on

mf till it's ____ a word pic - ture. *p* Is this your con - scious-ness on

p a - gain a - gain *mf* Does this ____ in - spire? ____ *p* Is this your con - scious-ness on

mf till it's ____ a word pic - ture. *p* In - spire? ____ Is this your

p a - gain a - gain *mf* Does this ____ in - spire? ____ *p* Is this your con - scious-ness on

mf till it's ____ a word pic - ture. Does this ____ in - spire? ____

mf till it's ____ a word pic - ture. In - spire? ____ Is this your con - scious-ness

mf *ossia* till it's a word pic - ture. *p* Is this your con - scious-ness *mf*

41 *fp* *mf* *ff* (soli)

fire? Then let me take you high - er.

fire? Then let me take you high - er.

f *mp* *f* *ff*

fire? a - gain, a - gain, a - gain a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain take you high - er.

mf *ff*

a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, _ Then let me take you high - er.

fp *mf* *ff*

fire? Then let me take you high - er.

mp *f* *ff*

a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, a - gain, _ a - gain, a - gain, _ take you high - er.

mf *ff*

Then let me take you high - er.

mf *ff*

Then let me take you high - er.

45 *f* *fp* (solo) *f*

Give me a noun and I'm in mo - - - tion (n) to de -

f *fp* *f*

give me a verb_ and I'm in mo - - - tion I'm on a mis-sion to de -

f *fp* *f*

Give me a noun give me a verb_ and I'm in mo - - - tion I'm on a mis-sion to de -

f

Give me a noun give me a verb_ and I'm in mo - - - tion cos I'm on a mis-sion to de -

f

Give me a noun and I'm in mo - - - tion cos I'm on a mis-sion to de -

f

Give me a noun give me a verb_

f

Give me a verb_

49

mf legato *f*

-li-ver in-for-ma - tion (n) fifth di - men-sion. It's free,

mf legato *f*

-li-ver in-for-ma - tion (n) fifth di - men-sion. No fee, it's free,

mf legato *f*

-li-ver in-for-ma - tion (n) fifth di - men-sion. No fee, it's free,

mf legato *f*

-li-ver in-for-ma - tion (n) fifth di - men-sion. No fee, it's free,

mf legato *f*

-li-ver in-for-ma - tion fifth di - men-sion. No fee, it's free,

f *mf* *f*

so let me take you to the fifth No fee, you on-ly got-ta pay at-ten-tion. _

f *mf* *f*

so let me take you to the No fee, you on-ly got-ta pay at-ten-tion. _

54

p < > *pp* *pp*

So sit back, re - lax, (m) ba'

p < > *pp* *pp*

So sit back, re - lax, (m) ba'

p < > *pp* *mp* > *pp*

So sit back, re - lax, back

p < > *pp* *mp* > *pp*

So sit back, re - lax, back

p < > *pp* *mp* > *pp*

So sit back, re - lax, back

p < > *pp* *mf*

— sit back, re - lax, let me take you back, back to when you learnt to

p < > *pp* *p*

— sit back, re - lax, let me take you back, back

60

baby voice mp *solo mf*
ma - ma, ma - ma

baby voice mp
ma - ma

p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)

p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)

p mf
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)

p leggiero
talk, learnt co - or - di - na - tion and com - mu - ni - ca - tion (n)

baby voice mp
walk ma - ma,

baby voice mp
ma - ma

64

tutti mp
da - da.

solo mf *tutti mp*
da - da, da - da.

ord. mf
If you rub two words to - ge - ther you get fric - tion

ord. mf
If you rub two words to - ge - ther you get fric - tion

ord. mf
cut them in half,

ord. mf
cut them in half,

solo mf *tutti mp*
ma - ma da - da.

ord. mf
cut them

ord. mf
cut them

68 *ord. p* *mf* *f buoyant*

you get a frac-tion. If you join two words you get

ord. p *mf*

you get a frac-tion.

p *mf*

you get a frac-tion.

f buoyant

If you join two words you get mul - -

p *mf* *f buoyant* *p*

you get a frac-tion. If you join two words you get mul - -

p *mf* *p leggiero* *mf*

you get a frac-tion. you join two words you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,

p leggiero *mf*

If you join two words to - ge - ther, if you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,

f *p leggiero* *mf*

If, if you join two words you get mul - ti - pli - ca - tion,

72 *mf buoyant* *mp*

My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal

p *mp*

mul - ti - pli - ca - tion. (hum)

mf buoyant *mp*

My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal

p *mf buoyant* *mp*

- ti - pli - ca - tion. My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal

mf buoyant *p*

- ti - pli - ca - tion. My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal ac - ro - ba - tics

mf buoyant *mp*

My school of math - e - ma - tics e - quals ver - bal

p *p subito*

mul - ti - pli - ca - tion. My school of math - e - ma - tics, math - e - ma - tics, tics e - quals ac - ro - ba - tics

p subito

mul - ti My e - quals ver - bal ac - ro - ba - tics

76

ac - ro - ba - tics

so

ac - ro - ba - tics

so

ac - ro - ba - tics

so

ac - ro - ba - tics

so

ba - tics

let's make con - ver - sa - tion,

ac - ro - ba - tics

so let's make

ba - tics

so

80

let's make con - ver - sa - tion.

Give me,

let's make con - ver - sa - tion.

Give me,

let's make con - ver - sa - tion.

give me, give me con-ver - sa-tion, give me con-ver-sa-tion.

let's make con - ver-sa-tion, con-ver - sa - tion.

Give me,

let's make con - ver - sa - tion.

Give me,

Give me,

con-ver-sa-tion.

84

f give me a pre - po - si - tion give me, *mp*

p give me con-ver - sa - tion, give me, give me pre-po - si - tion give me con-ver - sa - tion,

f give me a pre - po - si - tion give me, *f*

pp (m) give me, *mp*

pp (m) give me a pre - po - si - tion con-ver - sa - tion,

p pre-po - si - tion_ give me *f*

p give me a pre - po - si - tion, pre-po - si - tion_ give me *mp*

con-ver - sa - tion,

88 *mf* give me an in - ter - jec - tion *f* give, *mp* warmly give me ins - pi -

mf 'ter - jec - tion give me, *f* give me ins - pi -

mf give me an in - ter - jec - tion give me ins - pi -

mf give me an in - ter - jec - tion give me ins - pi -

mf in - ter - jec - tion *p* give me con-ver - sa - tion

mf give me an in - ter - jec - tion *mp* warmly give me ins - pi -

mf give me an in - ter - jec - tion *mp* warmly give me ins - pi -

mf in - ter - jec - tion

93

f *p* *pp*

-ra - tion, ins - pi - ra - tion. (n) cre -

f *p*

-ra - tion, give me ins - pi - ra - tion. (n)

f *p* *pp*

-ra - tion, give me ins - pi - ra - tion. (n) cre -

f *p* *pp*

-ra - tion. (n) cre -

give me ins - pi - ra - tion. cre -

f *mf* *p*

-ra - tion, ins - pi - ra - tion. (n)

f *mf*

-ra - tion. In the be - gin-ning was cre - a - tion

mf

give me In the be - gin-ning was cre - a - tion

98

p

-a - tion cos I've done my cal - cu -

mp *mf* *p*

re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -

mp *mf* *p*

-a - tion I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -

mp *mf* *p*

-a - tion I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -

mp *mf*

-a - tion scared of re - ve - la - tions

mp *mf*

I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions

mp *mf* *p*

I'm not scared of re - ve - la - tions cos I've done my cal - cu -

mp *p*

I'm not scared cos I've done my cal - cu -

103 *poco meno mosso* *freely*

f -la - tions. I've got high *hope(s)

f -la - tions. I've got high hopes

f -la - tions. I've got high hopes

f -la - tions. I've got high hopes

f 'la - tions. I've got high hopes

f 'la - tions. I've got high *hope(s)

f -la - tions. I've got high *hope(s)

f -la - tions. I've got high

ossia 3

molto rit. *p* **Tempo primo**

109

on the tight - rope,

on the tight - rope,

on the tight - rope,

on the tight - rope,

on the tight - rope,

talk-ing, talk-ing, talk-ing,

mf *crisp* I just keep talk-ing.

mf *crisp* I just keep talk-ing.

*omit the 's' and sing 'hope'.

p
talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,

mf
I got more skills than I got

talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,

mf
I'm fired by a - dre - na - line

me - lan - in

mf
I'm fired by a - dre - na - line

me - lan - in by a - dre - na - line

120

f it's fe - mi - nine. _____

f it's fe - mi - nine. _____

talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,

talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,

mf if you wan - na know what rhyme it is

(mf) if you wan - na know what rhyme it is *f* it's fe - mi - nine. _____

(mf) if you wan - na know what rhyme it is

ossia *(mf)* if you wan - na know what rhyme it is

123

p (n) *mf* Cos I'm Eve _____

p (n) *mf* Cos I'm Eve _____

mp *p* fe - - - - mi - nine(n) _____ talk - ing, talk - ing

talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing, talk - ing,

mf Cos I'm Eve _____

p (n) *mf* Cos I'm Eve _____

135

mf and I'll keep on try-ing *p* lose your fear *f* of fly-ing.

mf gra-vi-ty de-fy-ing and I'll keep on try-ing *p* till you lose your fear *f* of fly-ing.

mf gra-vi-ty de-fy-ing and I'll keep on try-ing *p* till you lose your fear *f* of fly-ing.

mf gra-vi-ty de-fy-ing *p* till you lose your fear *f* of fly-ing.

mf and I'll keep on try-ing *p* your fear *f* of fly-ing.

mf gra-vi-ty de-fy-ing and I'll keep on try-ing *p*

mf gra-vi-ty de-fy-ing *p* till you lose your fear

mf and I'll keep on try-ing

139

mf soli Ah

mf Give,

mf Give, give me a pro-

mf Give, give me a pro-

mf Give, give me a pro-

mf Give me a pro-noun

mf Give me a, give me a, give me a, give me a, give me a, give me a, give me a pro-noun

f ossia

f Give me pro-noun

*omit if there is no singer that can sing this delicately.

[illegible]

155

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l)

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l)

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am bi - cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l)

p through the um - bi - li - cal

cul - tu - ral and some-times cli - ni - cal (l)

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal

p through the um - bi - li - cal

am my mo-ther fed me rhymes through the um - bi - li - cal

mf my mo-ther fed me rhymes

159

pp The Rime

mp The Rime

mf I was raised on Watch with Mo - ther The Rime

pp The Rime

wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l). The Rime

wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l).

wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l).

wax - ing ly - ri - cal (l).

mp The Rime

mf I was born (tr)

— (m) — Fight the Po - - - wer. Now I

— of the An - cient Ma - ri - ner and Fight the Po - - - wer.

— (m) — Fight the Po - - - wer.

— (m) — Fight the Po - - - wer. Now I

Now I

Now I

— of the An - cient Ma - ri - ner and Fight the Po - wer, the Po - wer.

have the per - fect tu - tor I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.

But

in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter. But

have the per - fect tu - tor in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.

have the per - fect tu - tor in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, But

have the per - fect tu - tor I'm in love with me com - pu - ter. But

in my post - mo - dern sui - tor, I'm in love with me com - pu - ter.

169

f let me shut down, *ff* let me shut down, *f* shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, —

ff let me shut down, let me shut, *mf* let me shut down (n)

ff let me shut down, shut, but let me shut down (n) *mf*

f let me shut down, *ff* let me shut, but let me shut down (n) *mf*

ff let me shut down, but let me shut, but let me shut down (n) *mf*

ff let, but let me shut, but let me shut down (n) *mf*

f let me shut down, *ff* but let me shut down (n) *mf*

shut down (n)

173

p — shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, shut down, —

p shut down be - fore I touch down, —

p — shut down be - fore I touch down, —

p shut down be - fore I touch down, —

p be - fore I touch down, —

p shut down be - fore I touch down, —

p be - fore I touch down, —

p touch down, —

177

pp

shut_ down, shut_ down, shut_ down, shut_ down_

p

touch_ down,

p

touch_ down, touch_ down,

pp

touch down.

pp

touch down.

pp

touch down.

pp

touch down.

pp

touch down.

pp

touch down.

ossia

pp

touch down.

181

rit.

p

pp

touch down (n)

mf

f

Give me a word

p

pp

touch down, touch down, touch down (n)

mf

f

Give me a word

mf

f

Give me a word, give_ me

mf

Give me, give_ me,

mf

Give me, give_

mf

Give me a word_

ossia

mf

Give me a word_

187

mp give me a big word let me ma - ni - fest, let me

f give me a big word let me ma - ni - fest,

mp give me a big word let me ma - ni - fest, let me

a big word let me ma - ni - fest, ma - ni - fest,

mp give me a, give me a big word let me ma - ni - fest, let me

me a big word let me ma - ni - fest, let me ma - ni - fest,

big word let ma - ni - fest, ma - ni - fest

big word let ma - ni - fest

192

f energico ma - ni - fest 'press in ex - cess ah *mf*

mp ma - ni - fest ex - press

f energico ma - ni - fest ex - press in ex - cess, ex - press the M - I - X of my

f energico ma - ni - fest ex - press in ex - cess, *mf* ex - press the M - I - X of my

f ma - ni - fest ex - press M - I - X of my

f energico ex - press in ex - cess, *mf* ex - press the M - I - X

mf ex - press the M - I - X

mf ex - press the M - I - X

197 *tutti* *mf* *f* *mp*

Now _ I've ea - ten the ap - ple I'm (m) _____

Now _ I've ea - ten the ap - ple I'm (m) _____

voice box. ea - ten the ap - ple I'm (m) _____

voice box. Now _ I've I'm more sub - tle than a

voice box. I've ea - ten the ap - ple I'm more sub - tle than a

ea - ten the ap - ple I'm _____

Now _ I've ea - ten sub - tle than a

Now I've ea - ten sub - tle than a

200 *mf* *f* *mp*

I wan - na do po - e - - tic things _____

I wan - na do po - e - - tic things _____ *mf*

I wan - na do po - e - - tic things _____ *mp* *mf*

I wan - na do po - e - - tic things _____ in _____

snake is. do po - e - - tic in po - e - - tic

snake is. do po - e - tic, po - e - tic, do po - e - tic things

I wan - na do in _____ po - e - - tic

snake is. do in po - e - - tic

snake is. po -

204

— (n) —

— (n) —

pla - ces

mf Give me po - e - try un - plugged *p* so I can

mf pla - ces Give me po - e - try un - plugged *p* so I can

mf pla - ces Give me po - e - try un - plugged *p* so I can

mf *mp* *p* — e - tic pla - ces Give me po - e - try, give — me, give me po - e - try, give — me, give me po - e - try, give —

208

p espress. *mf*

Give me my po - e - tic li -

p espress. *mf*

Give me my po - e - tic li -

p espress. *mf*

Give me my po - e - tic li -

p espress. *mf*

Give me my po - e - tic li -

pp *p* *mf*

coun - ter si - lence. my po - e - tic li -

pp *p* *mf*

coun - ter si - lence.

pp *p* *mf*

coun - ter si - lence.

pp *p* *mf*

— me, give me si - lence. Give — me, give — me, give me my po - e - tic li - cense, give —