

The Unredeemed Humanity of Black Being

A Manifesto Against the Chromatic Hierarchy



The Sentence

1 The humanity of Black being will never be fully redeemed while heaven is painted white and hell is painted black.

2 On its surface, this is a sentence about paint. Its real subject is the architecture of the human imagination. Long before a Black child meets a racist, she has already met a palette: a moral universe in which white is the colour of God, innocence, beauty, and salvation, and black is the colour of the devil, guilt, ugliness, and death.

3 Racism is usually described as hatred in the hearts of individuals. This manifesto names something older and deeper: a chromatic hierarchy built into language, religion, art, law, science, and everyday speech, which goes on producing an unequal moral universe even when no one in the room consciously hates anyone.

4 Psycho-Cosmocide begins here. Before a people's land is taken, its colour is condemned. Before its body is enslaved, its skin is assigned to the side of everything humanity fears. The palette comes first. The plantation, the mission, and the colony follow.

The Painted Heaven

5 For centuries, the dominant religious art of the colonising world painted God, Jesus, and the angels white, and painted the devil, demons, and evil spirits black. Generations learned to recognise divinity by its skin before they learned to recognise it by its justice.

6 When divinity is whitened and damnation is blackened; the imagination of God becomes entangled with the politics of human skin. A white child looks up at the cathedral ceiling and sees his own face among the saints. A Black child looks up and finds hers only among the damned.

7 Holiness is dressed in white robes. Wickedness is clothed in black. The pure soul is imagined as white and the sinful soul as stained black. The white garment meant righteousness; the black mark meant sin. Through these images, a metaphor of spiritual darkness is allowed to inherit the moral burden of an entire human skin colour.

8 Consider the burden these places on Black believers. They are asked to love a heaven whose painted authorities rarely look like them, to fear a hell whose painted inhabitants looks like them, and to call this arrangement the will of God.

9 This is chromatic theology: the conversion of a colour into a cosmic verdict. When colour becomes a moral geography, heaven becomes a white country, hell becomes a black country, and the human beings who carry those colours are placed on the map before they have done anything.

10 And this theology travelled. It sailed on the ships that carried the enslaved across the Atlantic and the missionaries across the Pacific. It arrived in Africa, the Americas, Australia, and Papua already holding the verdict: the coloniser's skin as the colour of salvation, the colonised skin as the colour of the darkness to be saved from.

The Palette of Virtue

11 The chromatic hierarchy does not stay in the church. It moves into the moral vocabulary of daily life, where every virtue is lit in white and every vice is shadowed in black.

12 A white lie is forgivable. A black heart is wicked. A white knight is honourable. A black mark is a disgrace. White magic heals; black magic curses. A clean white record means respectability; a black stain means guilt. The words seem harmless

one by one. Together they form a moral grammar in which whiteness is the default of goodness and blackness the default of its opposite.

13 The same grammar governs beauty. White skin is lit as the universal standard of attractiveness, and Black beauty is treated as an exception that must justify its own existence. A Black face is praised as “striking”, “exotic”, or “beautiful for a Black person”: words that reveal the hidden standard by the very effort to escape it.

14 Innocence is dressed in white and guilt is wrapped in black before either has been judged by evidence. That is the crime of the palette. It pronounces sentence before the trial, and it pronounces it on skin.

The Colour of Catastrophe

15 Humanity has repeatedly dressed its catastrophes in black. Black days, black clouds, black omens, black moods, black disasters. Even the most devastating plague of the fourteenth century entered history as the Black Death.

16 The name of the Black Death did not arise from anti-Black racism, and black can mean dignity, fertility, power, and ancestral depth in many cultures, just as white can mean mourning, death, or spiritual danger in others. No single word is the problem. The problem is accumulation: the way such words gather, century after century, until blackness carries the vocabulary of collective suffering while whiteness walks free of any equivalent indictment.

17 Death is dressed in black and new beginnings in white, as though blackness belonged naturally to endings and whiteness to the promise of life. Then this symbolic order is laid over real human beings, and Black lives begin to be seen as closer to death, more expendable, and less worthy of mourning.

18 Consider how suffering is remembered. Black deaths are counted as statistics; the deaths of dominant peoples are given names, photographs, biographies, and monuments. Black suffering becomes historical background; white suffering becomes human tragedy.

19 Then comes the most perverse inversion of all. The darkness of colonial violence (the slave ship, the plantation, the massacre) is confused with the supposed darkness of the people it destroyed. The black pages of history are written by empires and then blamed on the colour of their victims.

The Grammar of Exclusion

20 Language is the house in which consciousness lives, and the chromatic hierarchy has furnished every room.

21 People are blacklisted for exclusion and whitelisted for approval. They are blackballed from opportunity. Reputations are whitewashed into respectability. Blackmail means coercion, a black market means crime, a black sheep means the family's disgrace. Darkness means ignorance, deception, and fear; light means truth, knowledge, and hope.

22 Each of these words has its own history, and not everyone began as a racial insult. But no child learns them one etymology at a time. A child absorbs them all at once, as the atmosphere of a language in which blackness keeps meaning rejection and whiteness keeps meaning acceptance.

23 Even the Enlightenment named itself through light and named ignorance through darkness. Then it looked at the darkest-skinned peoples on earth and called them unenlightened. A metaphor about knowledge became a verdict about humanity.

24 The humanity of Black being will never be fully redeemed while generations inherit this vocabulary without ever asking who benefits from its accumulated meanings.

The Wedding and the Funeral

25 In many cultures shaped by Europe, the bride wears white and the mourner wears black. Neither colour determines the worth of the person who wears it. But the ritual repeats a lesson so often that it begins to feel like nature: white belongs to beginnings, innocence, and joy; black belongs to endings, loss, and grief.

26 The white dress is idealised as the symbol of feminine purity, while Black femininity is judged through racialised standards of respectability. White gloves signify refinement, while Black hands have been stereotyped for centuries as dirty, threatening, or made for labour.

27 Black hair is labelled unprofessional, untidy, or inappropriate merely because it does not imitate European hair. Black features must be altered, concealed, or softened to satisfy institutions that mistake one group's appearance for neutrality.

28 The ceremonial dress of Europe is called elegance. The ceremonial dress of Africa and Melanesia is called costume. The difference is not in the cloth. It is in the hierarchy that decides whose culture is the standard and whose is the exhibit.

The Black Soil and the Night Sky

29 Turn the palette over, and the hierarchy collapses under its own contradictions.

30 The richest soil on earth is black. Farmers honour it, buy it, and fight over it, because black earth feeds the crops that feed civilisation. Yet the same civilisation devalues human beings for the blackness of their skin.

31 The night sky is black. It is not empty. It holds every star, every galaxy, every ancestral constellation by which Cosmobian peoples navigated oceans and timed their harvests. Darkness is not the absence of meaning. It is the field in which light becomes visible and shines.

32 The womb is dark. The seed germinates in darkness. Sleep, dreaming, healing, and gestation all happen in the dark. Life on this planet did not begin in a sunlit cathedral. It began in darkness, and it still does.

33 The chromatic hierarchy is therefore both unjust and cosmologically false. It takes the colour of fertility, origin, refuge, and possibility and turns it into the colour of evil. A civilisation that fears the dark has forgotten where it came from.

The Machine That Reads Skin

34 The chromatic hierarchy has been built into institutions so thoroughly that it now operates without anyone needing to believe in it.

35 Black communities are watched more, stopped more, searched more, and suspected more, until skin colour becomes a proxy for danger. And the systems built to manage human lives are increasingly black boxes: machines that decide without explaining, trained on the records of societies that were never colour-blind.

36 The crimes of the powerful are softened into white-collar language, while crimes attributed to Black people are amplified into racial narratives. Financial fraud that ruins thousands is called misconduct. A Black teenager's petty theft is called a crime wave.

37 Institutions call themselves colour-blind while refusing to examine the inequalities that colour has already produced. In a world built on a colour hierarchy, colour-blindness amounts to a decision not to look at the scaffolding.

38 White privilege remains invisible to those who possess it, while Black disadvantage is blamed on individual failure. The hierarchy is most powerful exactly where it has become invisible.

The Verdict Before the Crime

39 Blackness is associated with criminality before any crime has been committed. The same behaviour is called aggression in a Black body and confidence in a white one. Black anger is pathologised; white anger is called leadership, authority, or patriotism.

40 Black resistance is remembered as violence; white resistance is remembered as revolution. The American and French revolutions are celebrated as the birth of modern freedom. The Haitian Revolution, the only revolt of the enslaved in history to found a free nation, was for generations treated as a horror and a warning.

41 Conquest is renamed exploration. Occupation is renamed administration. Cultural destruction is renamed the civilising mission. And the peoples who were robbed are filed in the dungeon of civilisational history as primitive savages, while the societies that robbed them award themselves the title of civilisation.

42 The cruellest demand comes last: the colonised are required to prove their humanity to the very institutions that denied it. The conqueror writes the history, names the primitive, and appoints himself the judge of civilisation, and then sits in judgement over the people whose land, labour, and lives built his court.

The Screen and the Storybook

43 Children's stories teach the palette before children can read. The princess is fair. The hero shines. The witch wears black. The villain lives in shadow.

44 A Black child grows up surrounded by white princes, white princesses, and white saviours, and rarely meets herself as the unquestioned centre of beauty, heroism, and destiny. She learns that she may be the sidekick, the servant, the criminal, the comic relief, or the victim in someone else's story, but seldom its author.

45 Black history is reduced to slavery, suffering, and struggle, while Black philosophy, science, art, and statecraft are left out of the frame. The Black hero is celebrated only after he has been translated into the dominant culture's language.

46 Behind every camera stands an invisible director: the white gaze, deciding who is beautiful, who is frightening, who is intelligent, and who deserves to be saved. The humanity of Black being will never be fully redeemed while Black people remain objects of the camera rather than the subjects who decide what it sees.

The Neutral Human Who Was Always White

47 The deepest trick of the chromatic hierarchy is to make whiteness disappear into the word "human". White becomes the neutral standard. Black becomes the deviation that requires explanation.

48 History is narrated with Europe at the centre and Black peoples at the margins. African, Melanesian, and Aboriginal civilisations become footnotes rather than authors of knowledge, institutions, and worlds. European thought is called universal theory; Black thought is called culture.

49 Black knowledge is welcomed as raw material and resisted as a source of theory. It is extracted from its communities, repackaged by dominant institutions, and returned without its name. Indigenous cosmologies are classified as belief systems, while the metaphysical assumptions of the dominant civilisation are presented as reason itself.

50 This is the final form of the hierarchy: Black humanity acknowledged biologically but diminished symbolically, historically, intellectually, and politically. The body is admitted into the species. The mind, the memory, and the cosmos are left outside the door.

The Child Before the Mirror

51 Every structure described in this manifesto finally arrives at one place: a Black child standing before a mirror.

52 She has been taught, directly or indirectly, that her skin is less beautiful than the skin in her books, her toys, her advertisements, and her classroom. She must learn to love her reflection in a world that keeps associating her colour with what is undesirable.

53 Her parents must spend precious years defending her self-worth against a hierarchy they did not create. She must be twice as gentle, twice as intelligent, and twice as innocent to receive the ordinary trust extended to others. And if she succeeds, she will be praised as "exceptional", a word that quietly implies her humanity would otherwise have been unremarkable.

54 The humanity of Black being will never be fully redeemed while a Black person's dignity is treated as something to be earned rather than something inherent in being human.

Papua Behind the Chromatic Veil

55 Papua knows this hierarchy in her flesh. Her children are Black, Melanesian, curly-haired, and Cosmopolitan, and they have lived for more than sixty years inside a state that measures humanity against lighter skin and straighter hair.

56 In August 2019, Papuan students in Surabaya were called monkeys by a mob outside their dormitory. The insult was not new; it was simply said aloud. Papua rose in protest across her cities, and the uprising was answered with soldiers, arrests, and an internet shutdown. The chromatic hierarchy had spoken in its oldest voice, and the state defended it.

57 The missionary arrived with a white Jesus and a black devil. The school arrived with textbooks in which beauty, intelligence, and modernity had lighter faces. The market arrived with skin-whitening creams. Papua was taught that to become human, she must become less Black, hate black and delete black.

58 This is the chromatic veil: the colour hierarchy laid over the Papuan world until Papuans begin to see their own skin through the coloniser's eyes. Psycho-Cosmocide does not need to kill a people that has learned to be ashamed of its own face.

Three Names for the Disease

59 To fight the hierarchy, name it precisely.

60 The first is chromatic dualism: the symbolic opposition of black and white, darkness and light, night and day. Dualism alone is not racism. Many cultures use these oppositions without assigning human worth.

61 The second is chromatic hierarchy: the unequal moral, spiritual, aesthetic, and social value assigned to those opposites, so that white climbs towards goodness and black sinks towards evil.

62 The third is chromatic racialisation: the moment the hierarchy is laid over real human populations, so that one people appears naturally closer to goodness and another naturally closer to evil. This is the step at which a metaphor becomes a massacre waiting to happen.

63 The struggle, then, is directed against the second and third steps, not against the colours black and white themselves: the ranking of colours, and the ranking of human beings through them.

The Unredeemed Inclusion

67 This manifesto calls for a change in how redemption itself is understood. For generations, the redemption of Black humanity has been imagined as inclusion: more Black faces in the paintings, the films, the parliaments, and the boardrooms.

68 Representation matters. But inclusion in an intact hierarchy is not redemption. A Black face admitted into a white heaven, a Black body admitted into a white standard, a Black mind admitted into a white curriculum: each is a guest in a house whose architecture still says that white is the owner.

69 The humanity of Black being will never be fully redeemed while redemption means acceptance into a world whose hierarchy of human worth remains untouched. Black people are asked to celebrate their inclusion without being allowed to question the very standard that admits them.

70 What must be asked is how the palette itself can be dismantled, not how Black people can be admitted into it.

The Great Inversions

71 Where heaven is painted white, let every people paint the sacred in its own colours and its own faces.

72 Where darkness is made the colour of evil, let darkness be restored as the colour of soil, womb, night, seed, and cosmos.

73 Where Black children meet their faces only among the damned, let them meet themselves among the ancestors, the heroes, and the makers of worlds.

74 Where the white gaze directs the camera, let Black peoples hold the camera and decide what it sees.

75 Where Black knowledge is extracted as raw material, let it stand as theory, philosophy, and law in its own right.

76 Where colour-blindness hides the scaffolding, let the scaffolding be named, examined, and taken down.

77 Where Black humanity is admitted only into an intact hierarchy, let the hierarchy itself be abolished.

The Question

78 For centuries, the question has been asked: when will Black people be accepted as fully human?

79 That question already concedes too much. It leaves the judge on the bench and asks only when the verdict will change.

80 The deeper question is this:

Why did humanity ever make heaven, beauty, innocence, and worth a question of colour, and what kind of civilisation must be built so that it never does so again?

81 A truly human civilisation does not ask which colour deserves heaven. It asks why heaven was ever coloured at all.

The Redemption

82 Black skin is not the darkness of humanity. It is one of humanity's colours, and darkness itself is one of creation's first gifts.

83 Whiteness does not become innocent because it is white. Blackness does not become guilty because it is black. When a colour becomes a moral verdict, symbolism ceases to be innocent.

84 The redemption of Black being will not come when blackness is declared superior to whiteness. It will come when neither colour is permitted to determine the dignity of a human being, and when Blackness no longer has to defend its right to signify beauty, intelligence, goodness, divinity, and humanity.

85 Let every Black mother teach her daughter that the night sky is full of stars.

86 Let every Black father teach his son that the richest soil is black.

87 Let every Papuan child look into the mirror and see not the coloniser's shadow, but the face of the ancestors and the colour of the earth that bore her.

88 The deepest work of redemption is not to whiten the world, nor to blacken it, but to free humanity from the moral tyranny of colour.

The views, words, and ideas expressed in this manifesto are personal, reflective, and diagnostic rather than declarations of settled truth. They offer a reading of the human condition through the Psycho-Cosmocide lens, intended to open questions rather than to close them.

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