REMARKS

for 16 singers

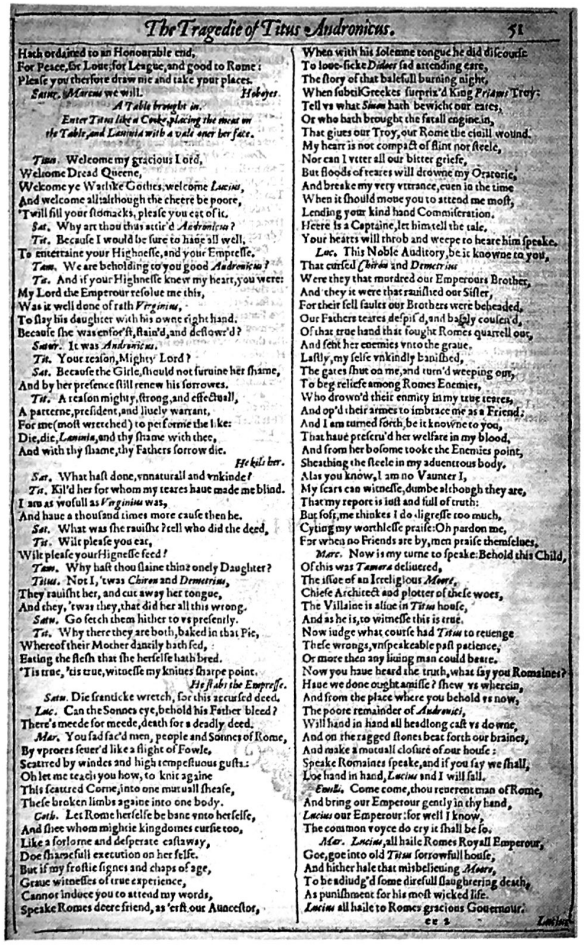
Stephane Crayton

ditions of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.

Origin of Species, 1st ed. (1859)

When a musical history is regarded as a linear series of developments it can effect the depiction of, for example, Monteverdi's work as primitive Baroque. Such a conclusion is clearly inappropriate. The perspective, instead, that music appears not of itself on a timeline but within a social context is more convincing.

This topic has occupied a significant proportion of my research. Before I began work on Remarks I was reading especially widely; I recall the moment I stumbled across a passage from Darwin's Origin of Species that applied equally to my work and research as it did this: 'From so simple a beginning', he wrote in 1859, 'endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved'. Darwin writes without passing judgement, and I found a fantastic humility in this paradox of the 'endless' existence of the 'most' beautiful. In Remarks, written specifically for a conducted choir of sixteen in Cambridge, I wished to represent some of the city's rich choral tradition.



The Tragedie of Titus Andronicus. 51

Hath ordained to an Honourable end,
For Peace, for Loue, for League, and good to Rome:
Please you therfore draw nie and take your places.
Sat. Marcus we will. *Hoboyes.*
A Table brought in.
Enter Titus like a Cooke, placing the meat on the Table, and Lauinia with a vaile ouer her face.
Tam. Welcome my gracious Lord,
Welcome Dread Queene,
Welcome ye Warlike Gothes, welcome *Lucius*,
And welcome all: although the cheere be poore,
'Twill fill your stomacks, please you eat of it.
Sat. Why art thou thus attir'd *Andronicus*?
Tit. Because I would be sure to haue all well,
To entertaine your Highnesse, and your Empresse.
Tam. We are beholding to you good *Andronicus*?
Tit. And if your Highnesse knew my heart, you were:
My Lord the Emperour resolue me this,
Was it well done of rath *Virginius*,
To slay his daughter with his owne right hand.
Because she was enforc'd, stain'd, and deflowr'd?
Sator. It was *Andronicus*.
Tit. Your reason, Mighty Lord?
Sat. Because the Girle, should not survine her shame,
And by her presence still renew his sorrowes.
Tit. A reason mighty, strong, and effectuall,
A patterne, president, and liuely warrant,
For me (most wretched) to perform the like:
Die, die, *Lauinia*, and thy shame with thee,
And with thy shame, thy Fathers sorrow die.
He kils her.
Sat. What hast done, vnnaturall and vnkinde?
Tit. Kil'd her for whom my teares haue made me blind.
I am as wofull as *Virginius* was,
And haue a thousand times more cause then he.
Sat. What was she rauisht? tell who did the deed.
Tit. Wilt please you eat, eat,
Wilt please your Highnesse feed?
Tam. Why hast thou slaine thine onely Daughter?
Tit. Not I, 'twas *Chiron* and *Demetrius*,
They rauisht her, and cut away her tongue,
And they, 'twas they, that did her all this wrong.
Sat. Go fetch them hither to vs presently.
Tit. Why there they are both, baked in that Pie,
Whereof their Mother daintily hath fed,
Eating the flesh that she herselfe hath bred.
'Tis true, 'tis true, witnesse my knines sharpe point.
He stabs the Empresse.
Sat. Die frantick wretch, for this accursed deed.
Luc. Can the Sonnes eye, behold his Father bleed?
There's meede for meede, death for a deadly deed.
Mar. You sad fac'd men, people and Sonnes of Rome,
By vproares seuer'd like a flight of Fowle,
Scattred by windes and high temperstuous gusts:
Oh let me teach you how, to knit againe
This scattred Corne, into one mutuall sheafe,
These broken limbs againe into one body.
Goth. Let Rome herselfe be bane vnto herselfe,
And shee whom mightie kingdomes curtsie too,
Like a forlorne and desperate castaway,
Doe shamefull execution on herselfe.
But if my frostie signes and chaps of age,
Graue witnesses of true experience,
Cannot inducе you to attend my words,
Speake Romes deere friend, as 'erst our Auncestor,
When with his solemne tongue he did discourse
To loue-sicke *Didoe* sad attending eare,
The story of that balefull burning nighe,
When subtill Greekes surpris'd King *Priams* Troy:
Tell vs what *Sinon* hath bewitch our eares,
Or who hath brought the fatall engine in,
That giues our Troy, our Rome the ciuill wound.
My heart is not compact of flint nor steele,
Nor can I vtter all our bitter griefe,
But floods of teares will drowne my Oratorie,
And breake my very vtterance, euen in the time
When it should moue you to attend me most,
Lending your kind hand Commiseration.
Heere is a Captaine, let him tell the tale,
Your hearts will throb and weepe to heare him speake.
Luc. This Noble Auditory, be it knowne to you,
That cursed *Chiron* and *Demetrius*
Were they that murdred our Emperours Brother,
And they it were that rauished our Sister,
For their fell faults our Brothers were beheaded,
Our Fathers teares despis'd, and basely cousen'd,
Of that true hand that fought Romes quarrell out,
And sent her enemies vnto the graue.
Lastly, my selfe vnkindly banished,
The gates shut on me, and turn'd weeping out,
To beg reliefe among Romes Enemies,
Who drown'd their enmity in my true teares,
And op'd their armes to imbrace me as a Friend:
And I am turned forth, be it knowne to you,
That haue preserv'd her welfare in my blood,
And from her bosome tooke the Enemies point,
Sheathing the steele in my aduentrous body.
Alas you know, I am no Vaunter I,
My scars can witnesse, dumbe although they are,
That my report is iust and full of truth:
But soft, me thinkes I do digresse too much,
Citing my worthlesse praise: Oh pardon me,
For when no Friends are by, men praise themselues.
Marc. Now is my turne to speake: Behold this Child,
Of this was *Tamora* delitered,
The issue of an Irreligious *Moore*,
Chiefe Architect and plotter of these woes,
The Villaine is alliue in *Titus* house,
And as he is, to witnesse this is true.
Now iudge what course had *Titus* to reuenge
These wrongs, vnspeakeable past patience,
Or more then any liuing man could beare.
Now you haue heard the truth, what say you Romaines?
Haue we done ought amisse? shew vs wherein,
And from the place where you behold vs now,
The poore remainder of *Andronici*,
Will hand in hand all headlong cast vs downe,
And on the ragged stones beat forth our braines,
And make a mutuall closure of our house:
Speake Romaines speake, and if you say we shall,
Lo hand in hand, *Lucius* and I will fall.
Emilius. Come come, thou reuerend man of Rome,
And bring our Emperour gently in thy hand,
Lucius our Emperour: for well I know,
The common voyce do cry it shall be so.
All. *Lucius*, all haile Romes Royall Emperour,
Goe, goe into old *Titus* sorrowfull house,
And hither hale that misbeleeuing *Moore*,
To be adiudg'd some direfull slaughtering death,
As punishment for his most wicked life.
Lucius all haile to Romes gracious Gouernour.
ee 2 *Lucius*

Remarks to the Kind Lady of Baltimore

delivered at a concert of his works at Hunter College, New York, on December 1, 1965, by

Luciano Berio

Not long ago, after a lecture in Baltimore, during the ritual of the "question period" that every traveling salesman of contemporary music has to deal with, a very kind lady asked me, "Mr. Berio, how do you relate your work to life?" Because of my lifelong habit of over-reading and generalizing, I assumed that by "life" she meant not only my personal life, but also the life of mammals in general, myths and religions, nuclear war, the historical development of the arts, neurosis, love, and astrology. Practically strangled by that question, I was only able to answer that I didn't know precisely and that if I thought I knew maybe I wouldn't even write music, but books. I said that in any case a complex tissue of relations exists and that whatever we do—not necessarily music—is an attempt to uncover a part of it and to become more aware of what we are and where we are. I also said to her that I feel there is always something untrue about a composer talking about himself and that to me the most illuminating self-portraits are those in which a composer doesn't speak about himself but about others or about something other than his work, as were the cases of Debussy writing about the paintings of Turner or the music of Moussorgsky, Webern writing about Schoenberg, and Stravinsky about many others. Maybe the kind lady of Baltimore reached the conclusion that, for me, there is very little about music that can be directly verbalized (unless one is dealing with specific problems in a classroom or of a performance, or is content with metaphors) and that, for me, music must be something like a mystery game with crowds of composers and concert-goers wandering about, searching for the ultimate meaning of their actions.

Because I have agreed to say a few words before tonight's performance, let me use this occasion to answer the kind lady of Baltimore more properly, even if she is not here to hear my answer. My answer is this:

Once, in Baltimore, [illegible]was a lady who decided to go to hear a lecture-demonstration on [illegible] and Music" given by Luciano Berio. She went because she was ho[illegible] learn something more about the relation between music and the life of mammals, the society in which she was living, racial problems, love, and astrology. At the end of the lecture she seemed very stimulated and she asked the composer what, according to him, was the relation between writing music and her going to listen to it. The composer said that finding an answer to that question is inherent to the role of every individual member of an audience and that she should be questioned and she should answer, not he. He also said that writing music and going to listen to it is perhaps like a mystery game full of crowds searching for the ultimate meaning of their actions and thoughts. But the composer felt that this, again, was not the proper answer and—a few weeks later—he felt the need of giving the kind lady of Baltimore a better answer, even if she was not there to listen to it. And the answer was:

Once, in Baltimore, an immense crowd (at least fifty times larger than tonight's audience) went out to educational institutions, to theatres, to concert halls, to libraries, to churches, and to courthouses, searching for the ultimate meaning of their actions and thoughts. It was night and they couldn't find very much: only an Italian composer who was talking about vocal music and explaining something at the blackboard. After the lecture a kind lady asked the composer how it would be possible to uncover at least a small part of the complex tissue of relations that undoubtedly exists between music and any experience outside of it. Dealing with such a loaded subject, the "question period" soon became an overheated discussion about sound and meaning, about "words and things," about the duality of language, about transposition, translation, and metaphors, about grammar and poetics. There was no moderator to calm the spirits down and very soon, according to the dynamics of group interaction, people were facing each other, separated into two different fronts. The discussion degenerated very soon into a ferocious fight; the kind lady disappeared in the turbulent crowd and the composer stood in a corner to watch. It was almost beautiful and everybody seemed to be right, although the issue appeared to be mainly a disagreement about terms, about the labels of things rather than the things themselves, about the impossibility of labeling certain things and the significance of those things that cannot be labeled. However, watching that confusion, it seemed that the two groups could be quite easily labeled as "operationalist" on one side and "structuralist" on the other. Very soon the former group was yelling about twelve-tone sets, note-objects, combinatorial procedures, and pitch coherence. The latter, the "structuralists," about meaning, segmentations of the sound continuum, synchronic and dyachronic views, history, and responsibility. Gradually the crowd turned into a mob and finally only a few words could be grasped here and there: chance and determinism, good and evil, East and West, black and white, body and soul, night and day, mommy and daddy . . .

That night never ended and here I am again, facing once more the impossibility of giving a real answer to the kind lady of Baltimore. What can we do? Because I have agreed to say a few words before tonight's performance, let me use this occasion to say good-bye to her, even if she is not here to hear me, and to apologize.

Towards the end of Titus Andronicus, one of Shakespeare's early plays, Titus's brother, Marcus Andronicus, addresses the room; his speech follows two hours of terrible violence, featuring no fewer than six severed members. In these concluding remarks Marcus Andronicus calls on us to take responsibility, to put back together what has come apart — literally, to remember the play's events. 'O, let me teach you how to knit again', he speaks.

The notation of sung music inhabits a strange space in the complex web of relations that exists between text and music, between notated and oral traditions, between singer and conductor. In the context of Remarks, knitting and remembering take centre stage. It's a composition that ultimately examines notation: what it can say and what it cannot, the importance of those things that cannot be said, and the importance of acknowledging the shortcomings of attempts to label them.

Extracts from a talk given by Berio entitled Remarks to The Kind Lady of Baltimore are spoken throughout the piece. Berio discusses how music relates to the world around us, how it relates to language, to words, and how it relates to ourselves. The layered talk culminates in a climax in which Berio describes people facing each other in two fronts; 'the issue', he remarked, 'appeared to be mainly a disagreement about terms, about the labelling of things rather than the things themselves'.

In a similar vein there are two musical fronts which clash in this piece: one without words, in which the voices are almost instruments, the other with words, sometimes inhabiting an Elizabethan social dynamic familiar to the Shakespeare. As the dialogue progresses throughout, the piece teaches itself how to sing.

Linking all of this is the tangled doctrine of the authority of a descriptive score. Across the two musical systems the notation of dynamics, of articulation and so on, adapts to the social dynamic, in opposition to or in cooperation with each other. These conflicts are reflected in Berio's words, resolved in Shakespeare's moral, and celebrated in Darwin's regard of 'endless forms most beautiful'.

NOTE TO THE CONDUCTOR

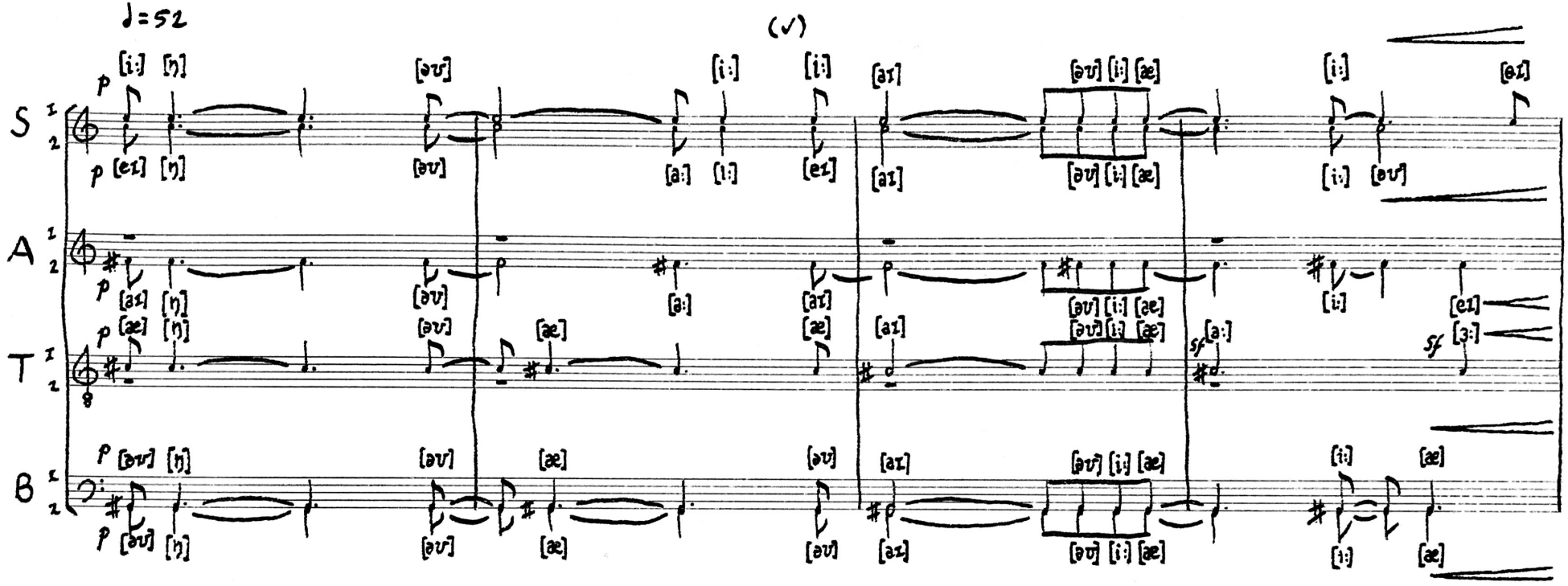
The two bodies of singers are to face each other.

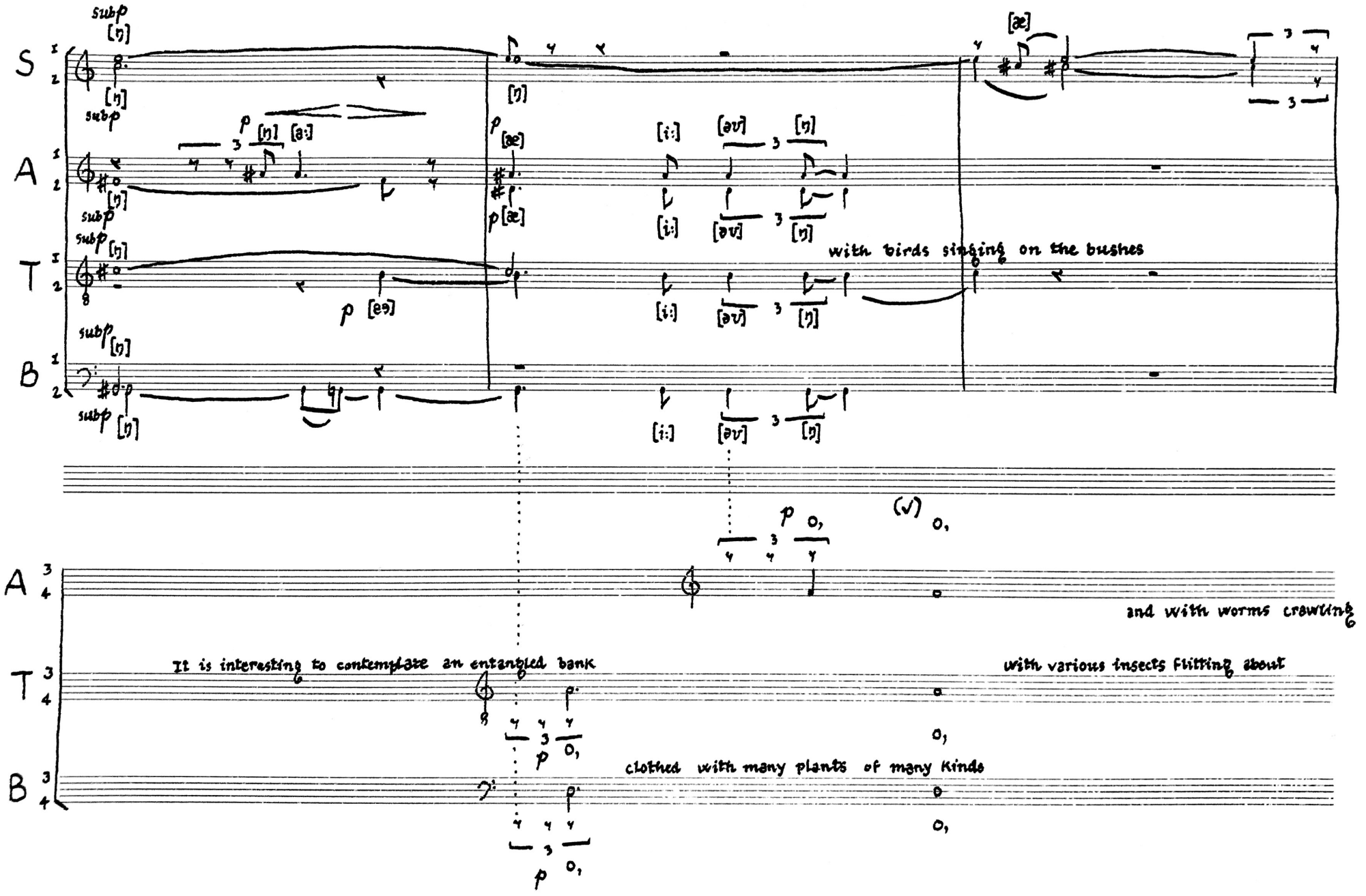
I use international phonetics throughout. An aid is below.

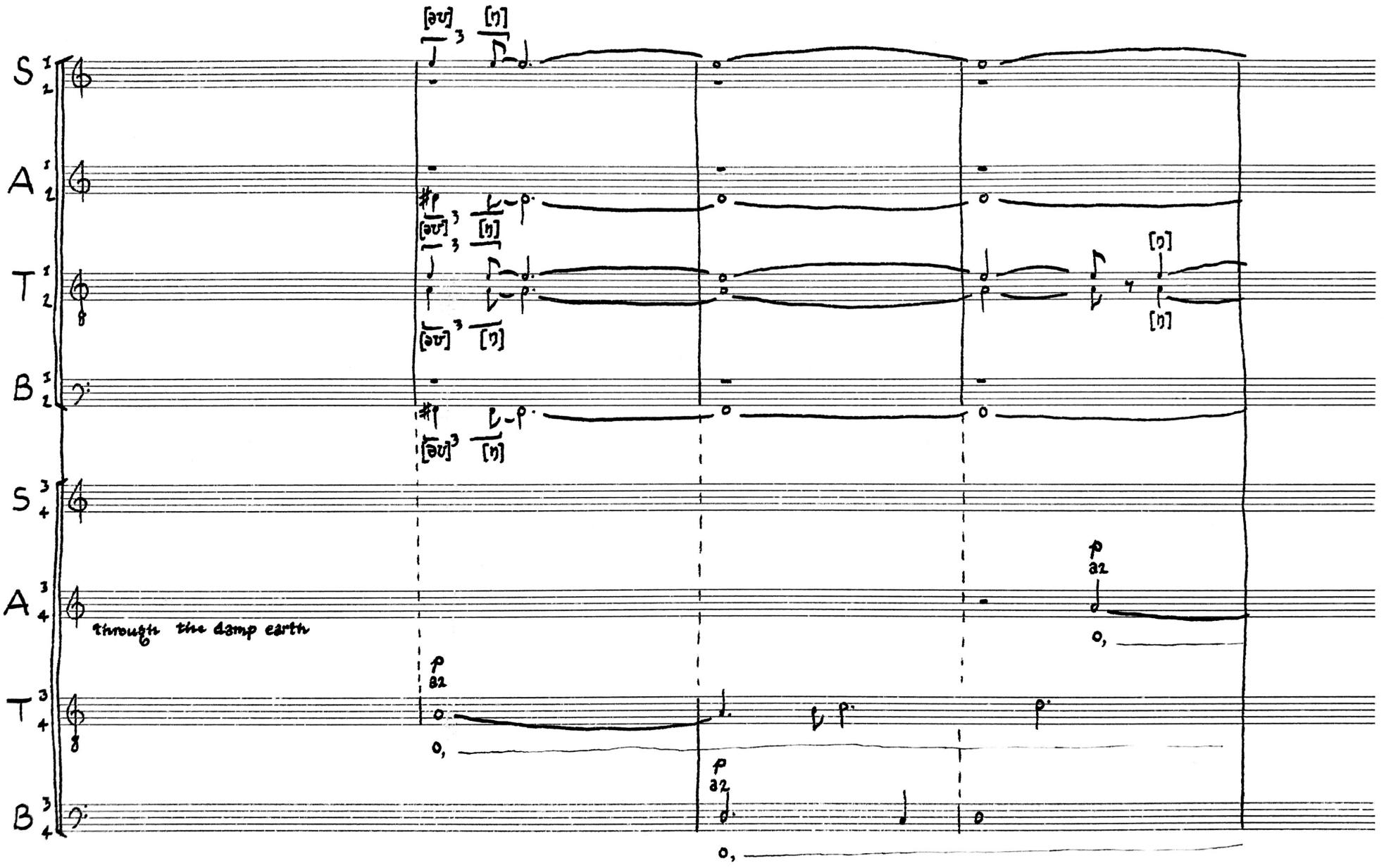
[ŋ] thing, song, swimming	[e] went, intend, send
[æ] cat, hand, nap	[i:] need, heat, team
[ɜ:] nurse, third, turn	[ɔ:] talk, law, bored
[u:] few, boot, lose	[ɑ:] fast, car, hard
[eə] hair, there, care	[eɪ] face, rain, eight
[aɪ] my, sight, pride	[əʊ] no, don't, stones

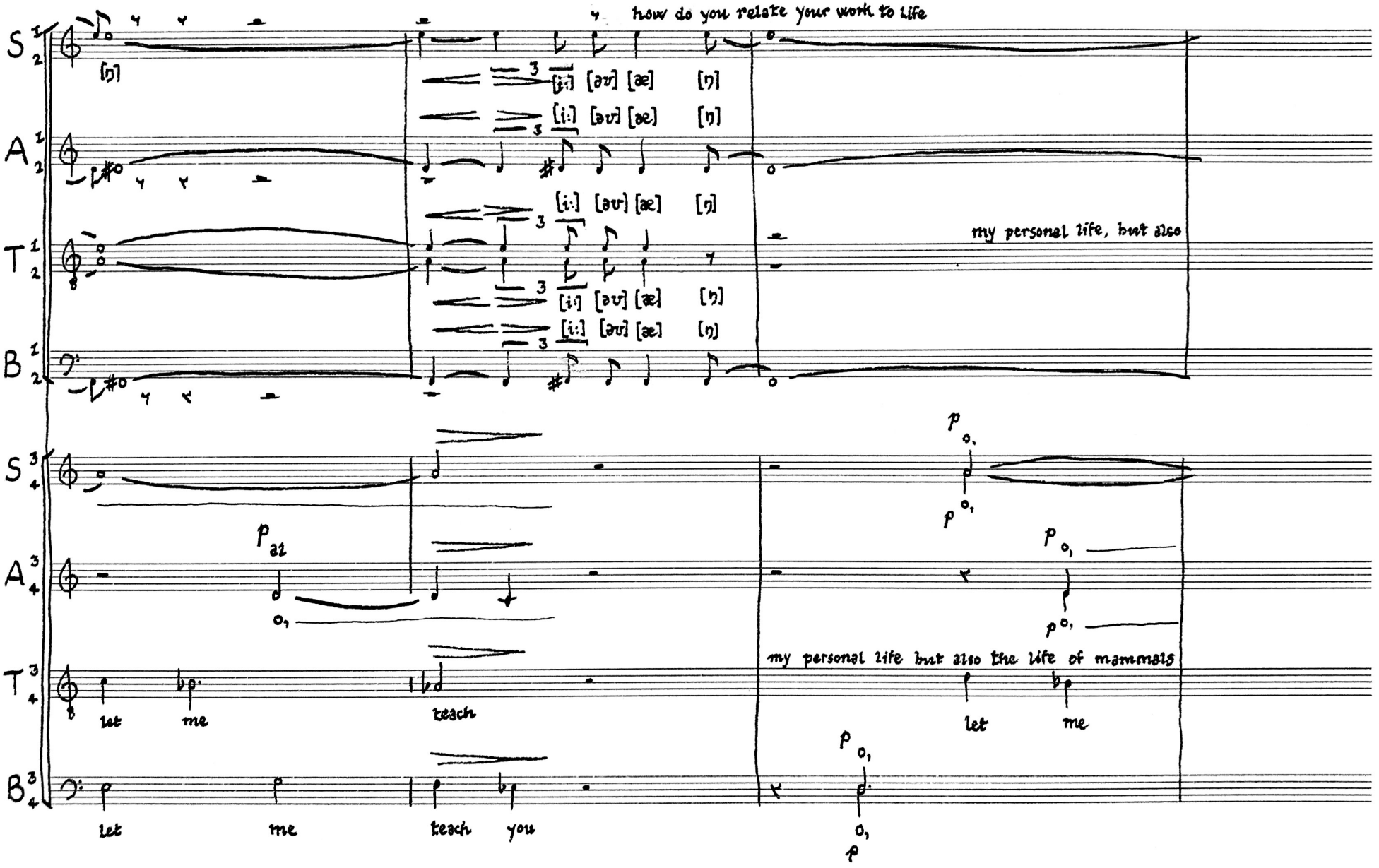
REMARKS

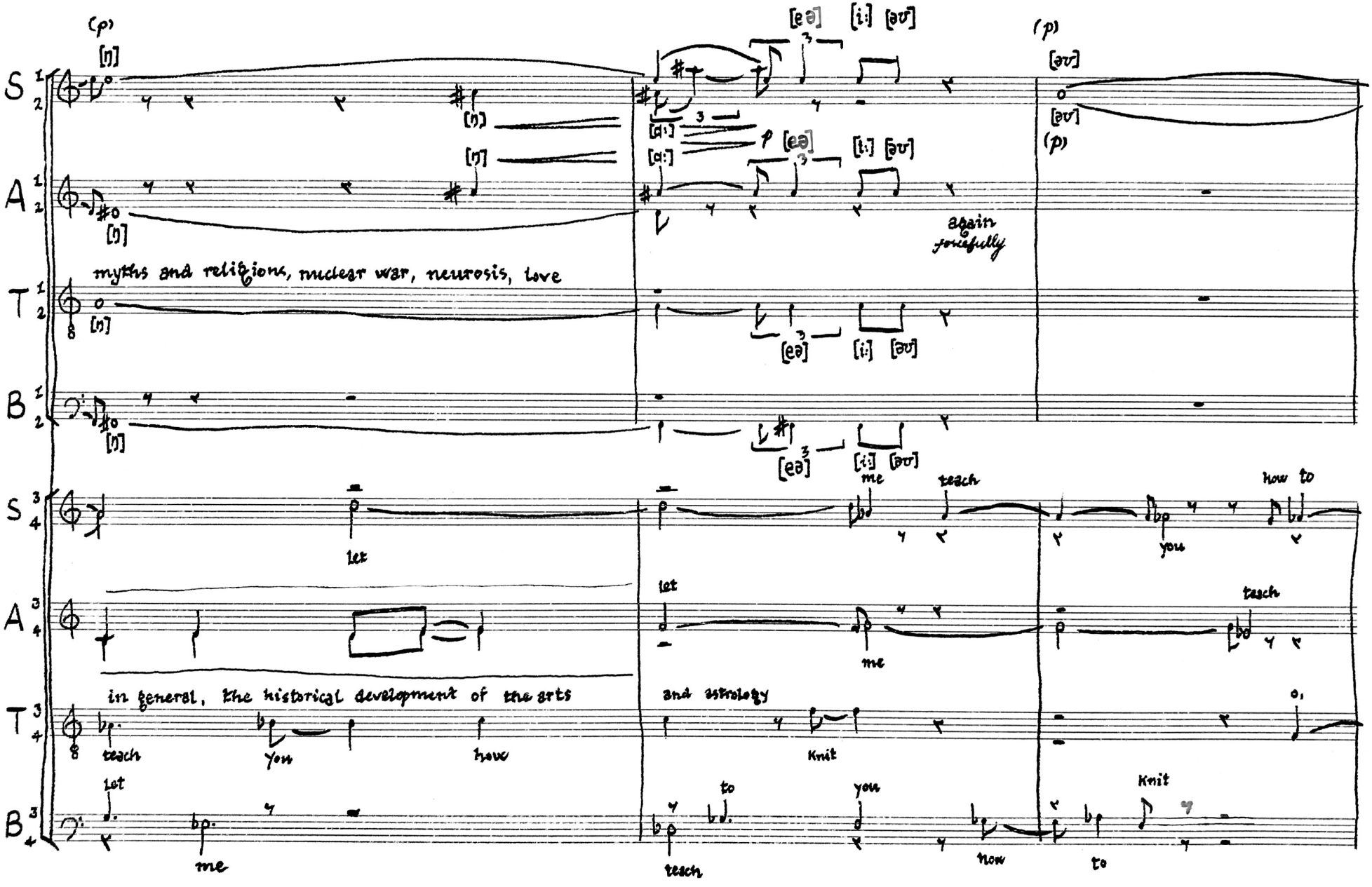
Stephanie Crayton




S
A
T
B
with birds singing on the bushes
and with worms crawling
It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank
with various insects flitting about
clothed with many plants of many kinds


S 1 2
A 1 2
T 1 2
B 1 2
S 3 4
A 3 4
T 3 4
B 3 4
through the damp earth
p
a2


how do you relate your work to life
[ŋ]
[i:] [əʊ] [æ] [ŋ]
[i:] [əʊ] [æ] [ŋ]
[i:] [əʊ] [æ] [ŋ]
[i:] [əʊ] [æ] [ŋ]
[i:] [əʊ] [æ] [ŋ]
my personal life, but also
p al
p
my personal life but also the life of mammals
let me teach
let me
let me teach you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[ŋ]
[eə]
[i:]
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p
again
forcefully
myths and religions, nuclear war, neurosis, love
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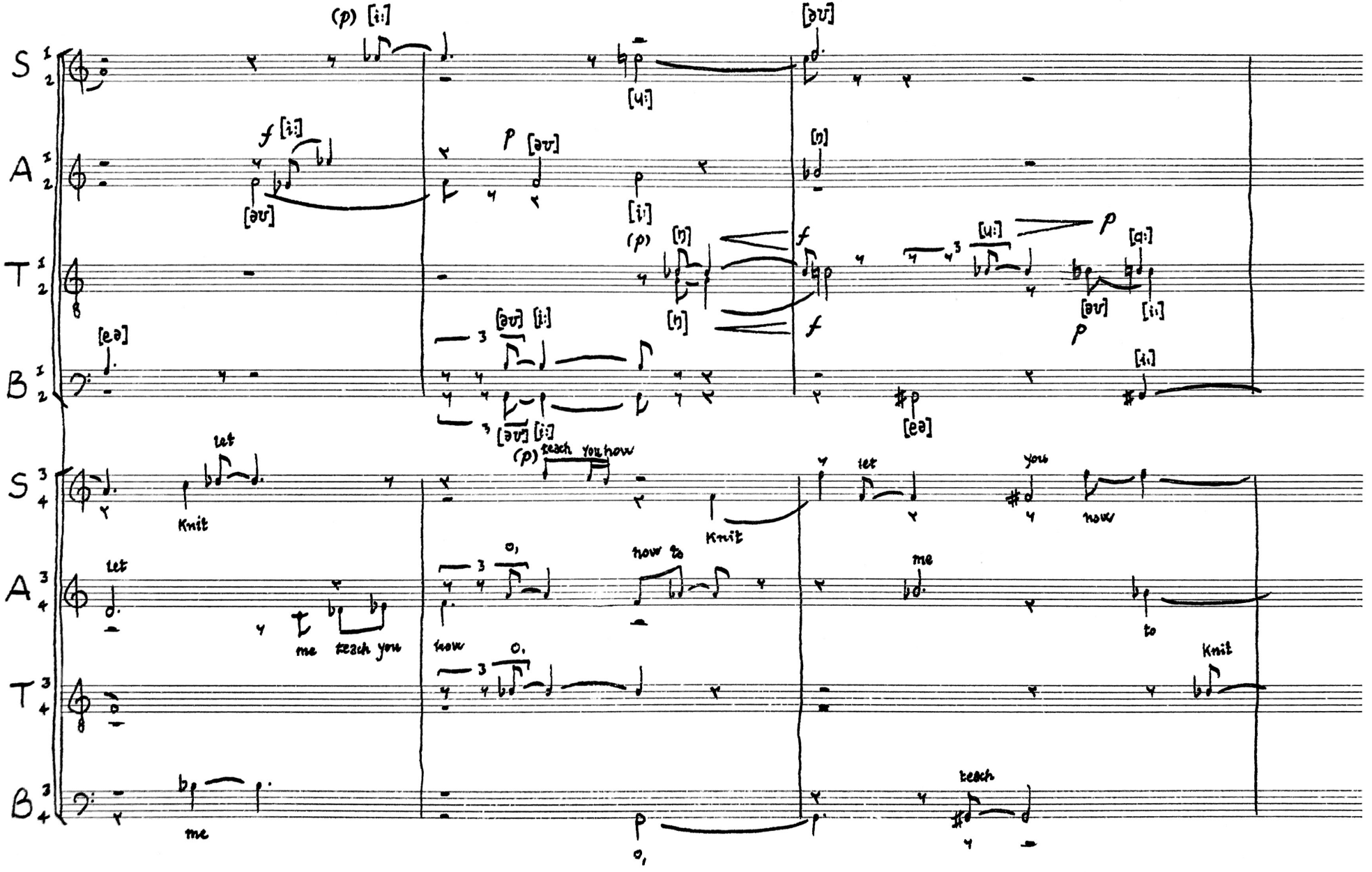
me
teach
you
how
to
in general, the historical development of the arts
and astrology
Knit


S
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p [əʊ]
[i:]
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(p) [ŋ]
[ŋ]
f
f
[u:]
p
[ɑ:]
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[i:]
p
[eə]
[əʊ] [i:]
[əʊ] [i:]
[eə]
[i:]
let
Knit
(p) teach you how
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you
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o,
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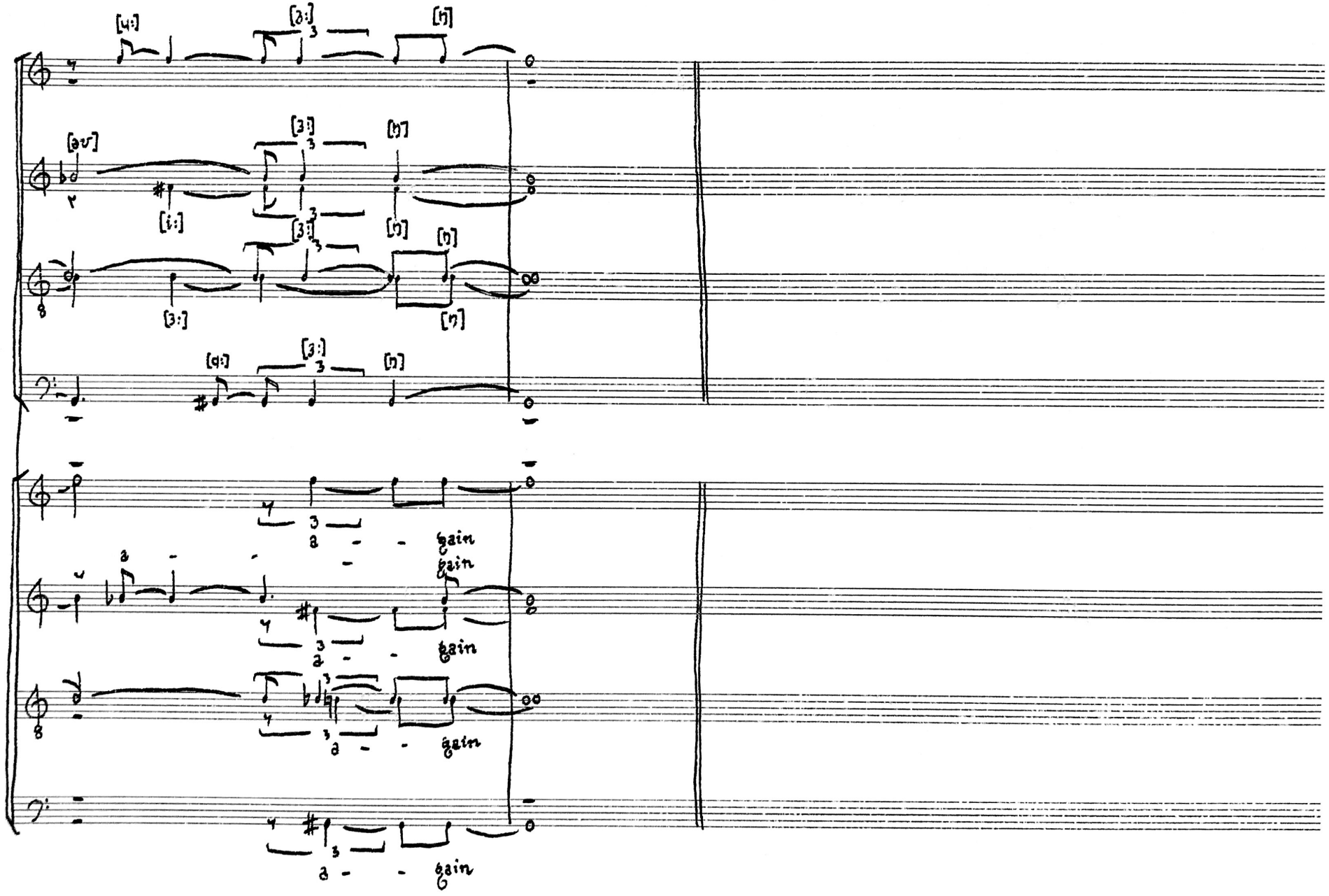
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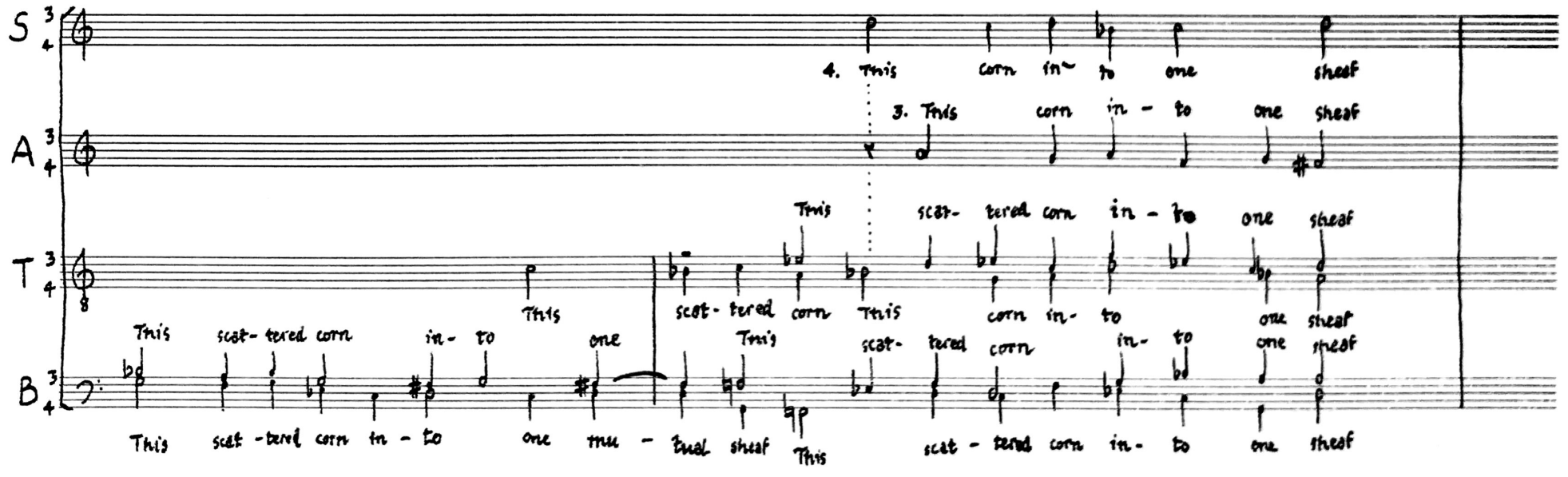
again
again
again


S
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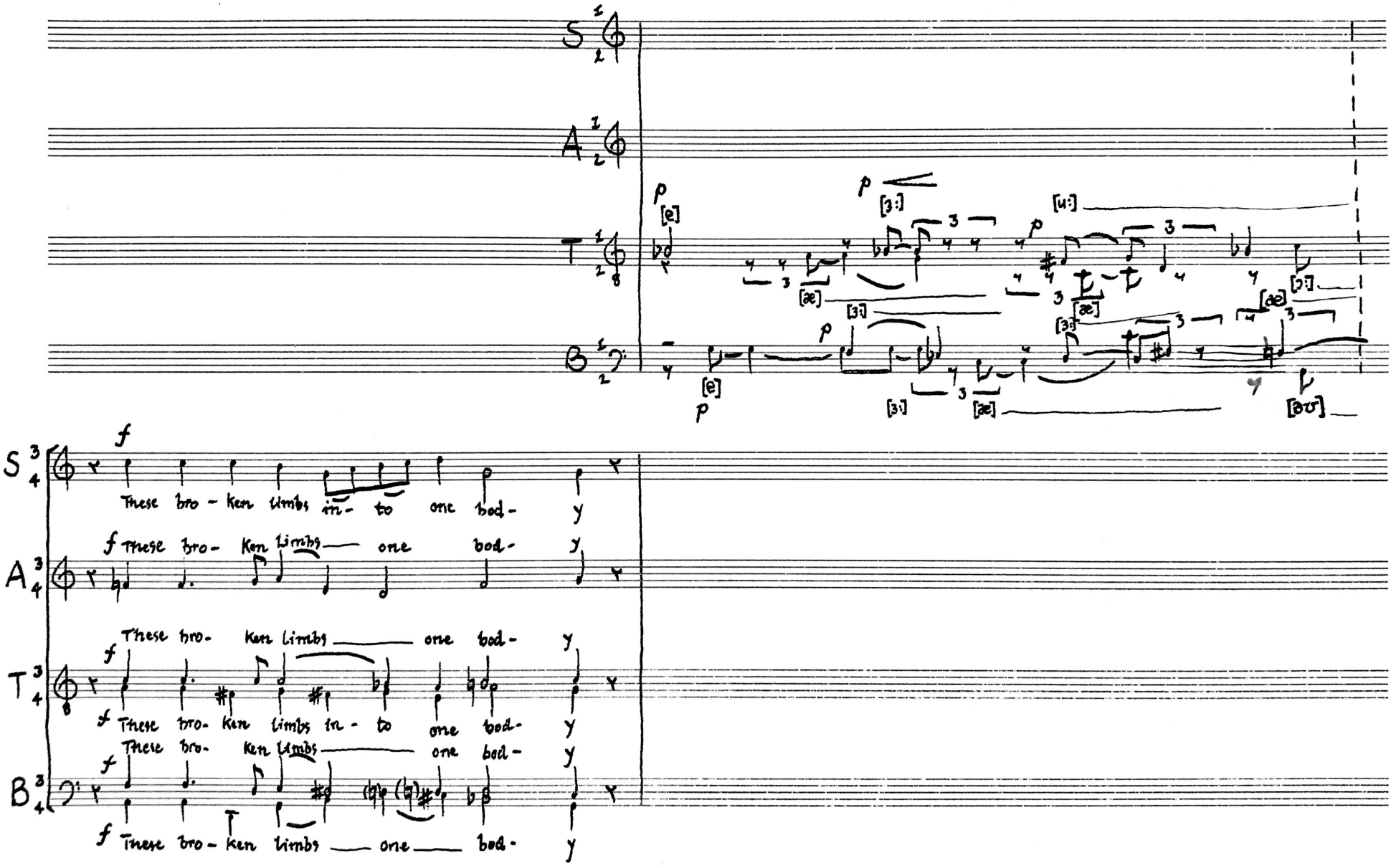
B
4. This corn in~ to one sheaf
3. This corn in - to one sheaf
This scat- tered corn in - to one sheaf
This scat- tered corn in - to one mu - tual sheaf
This scat- tered corn This corn in- to one sheaf
This scat- tered corn in- to one sheaf
This scat - tered corn in - to one sheaf
This scat - tered corn in - to one sheaf


S
A
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B
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[e]
[ɜː]
[æ]
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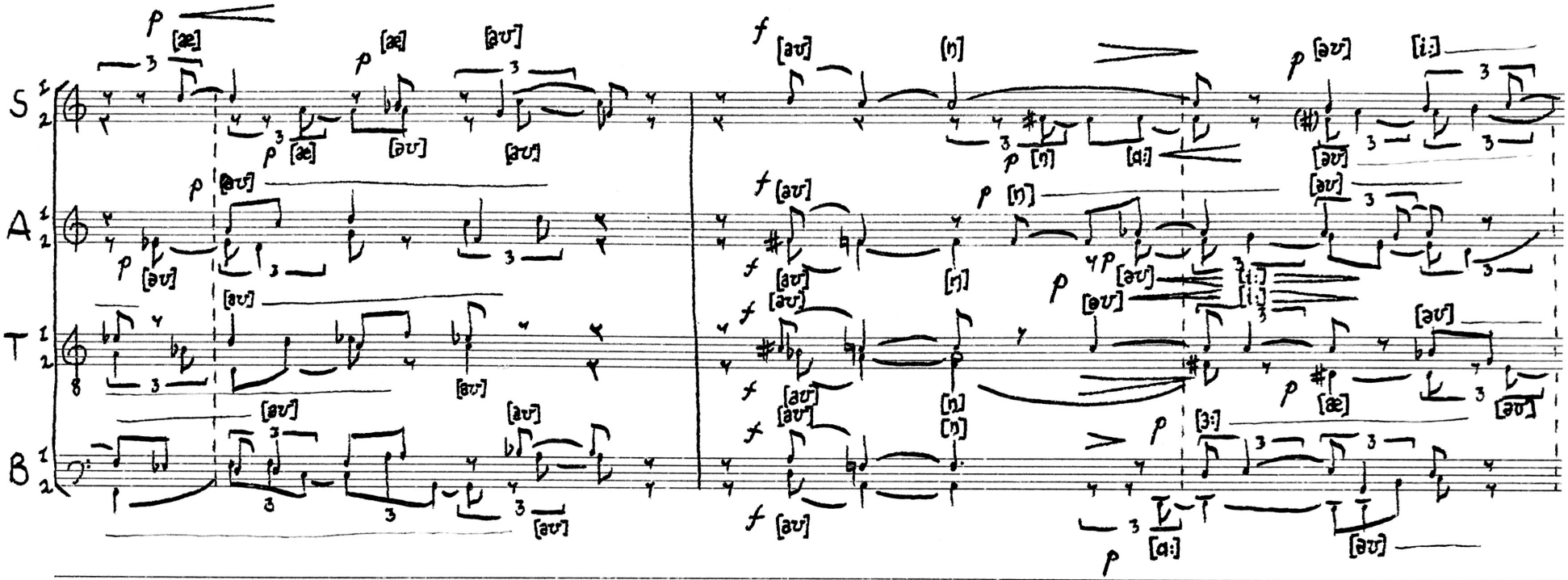
f
These bro - ken limbs in - to one bod - y
These bro - ken limbs one bod - y


S
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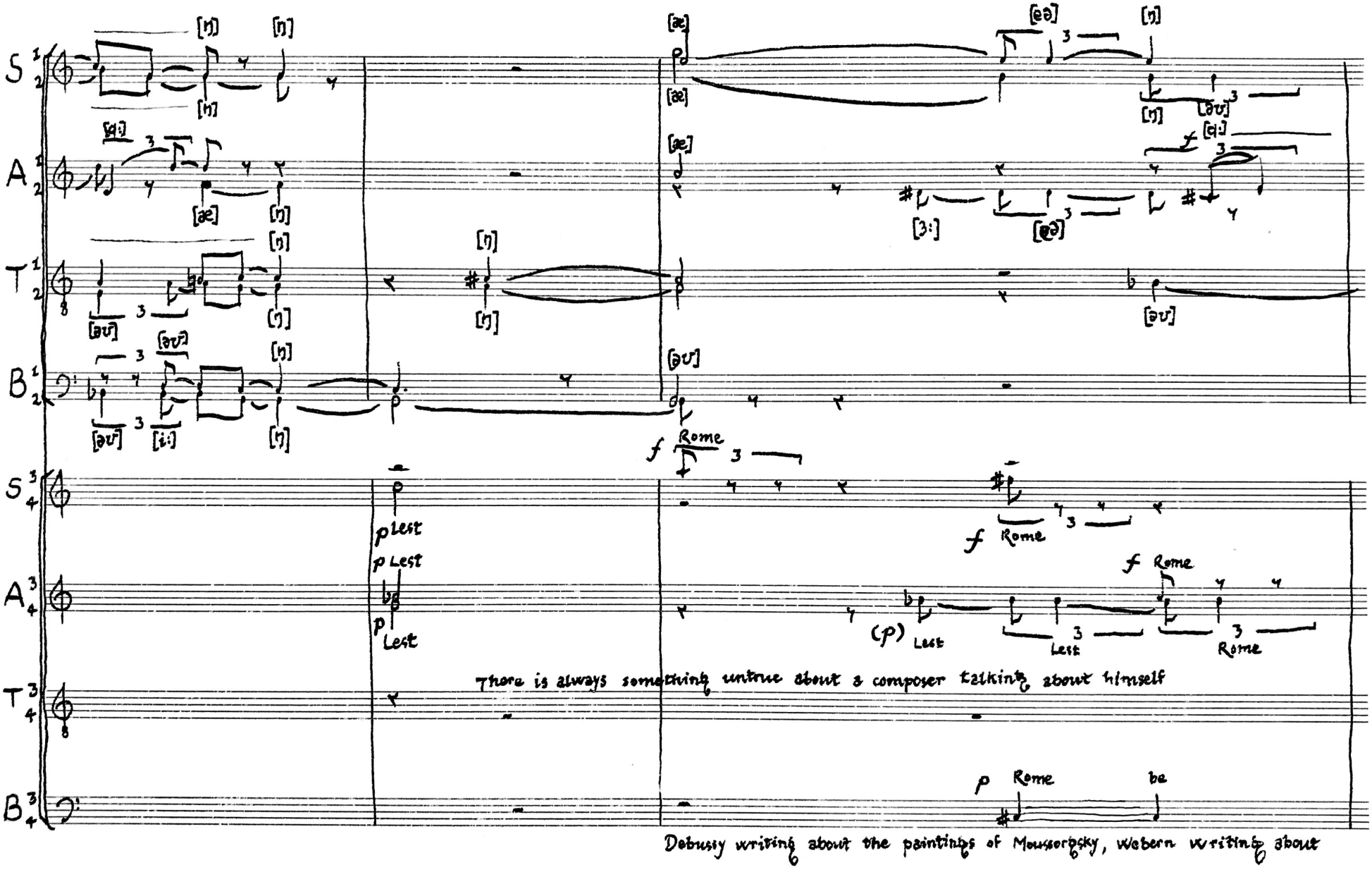
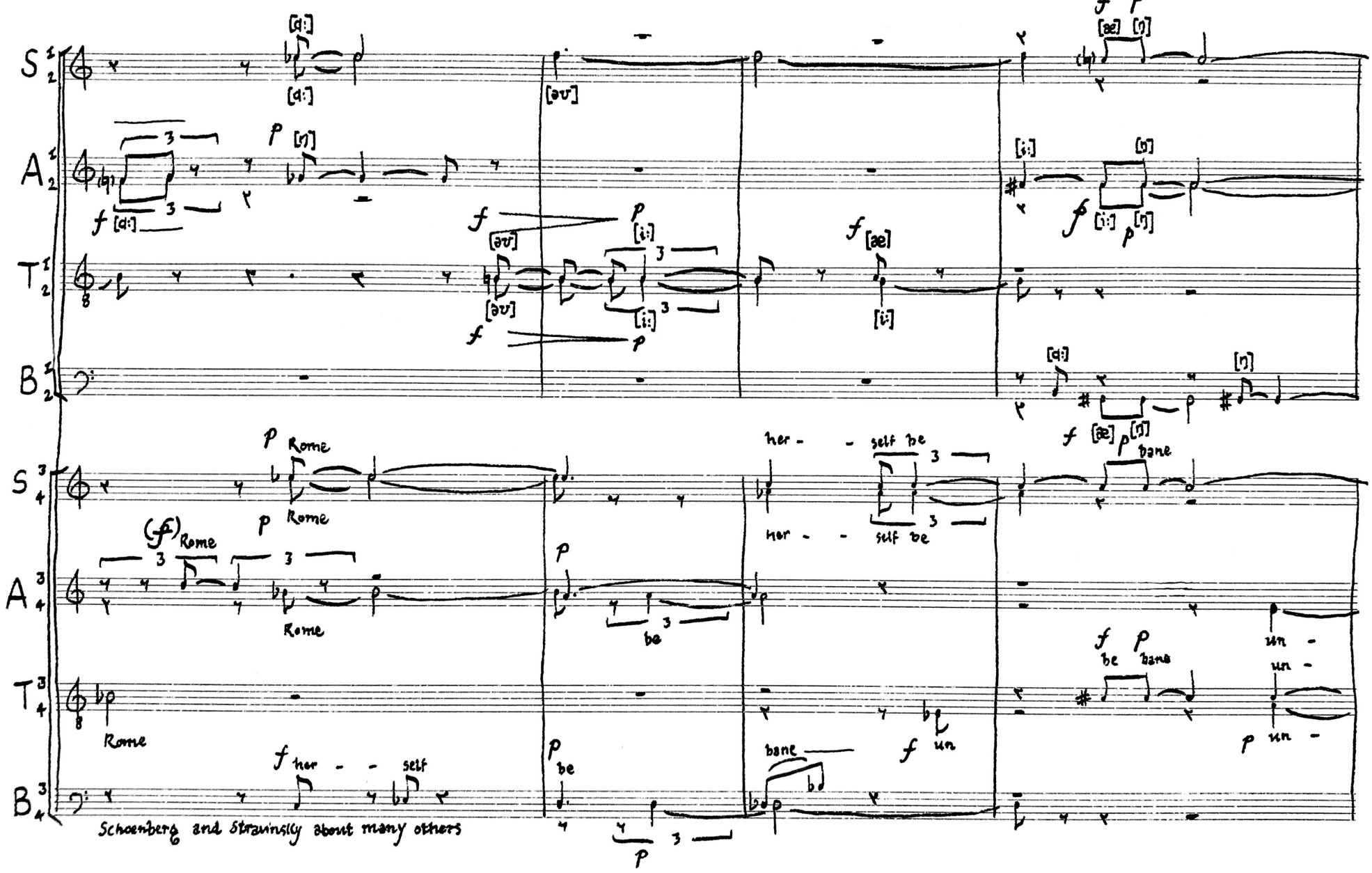
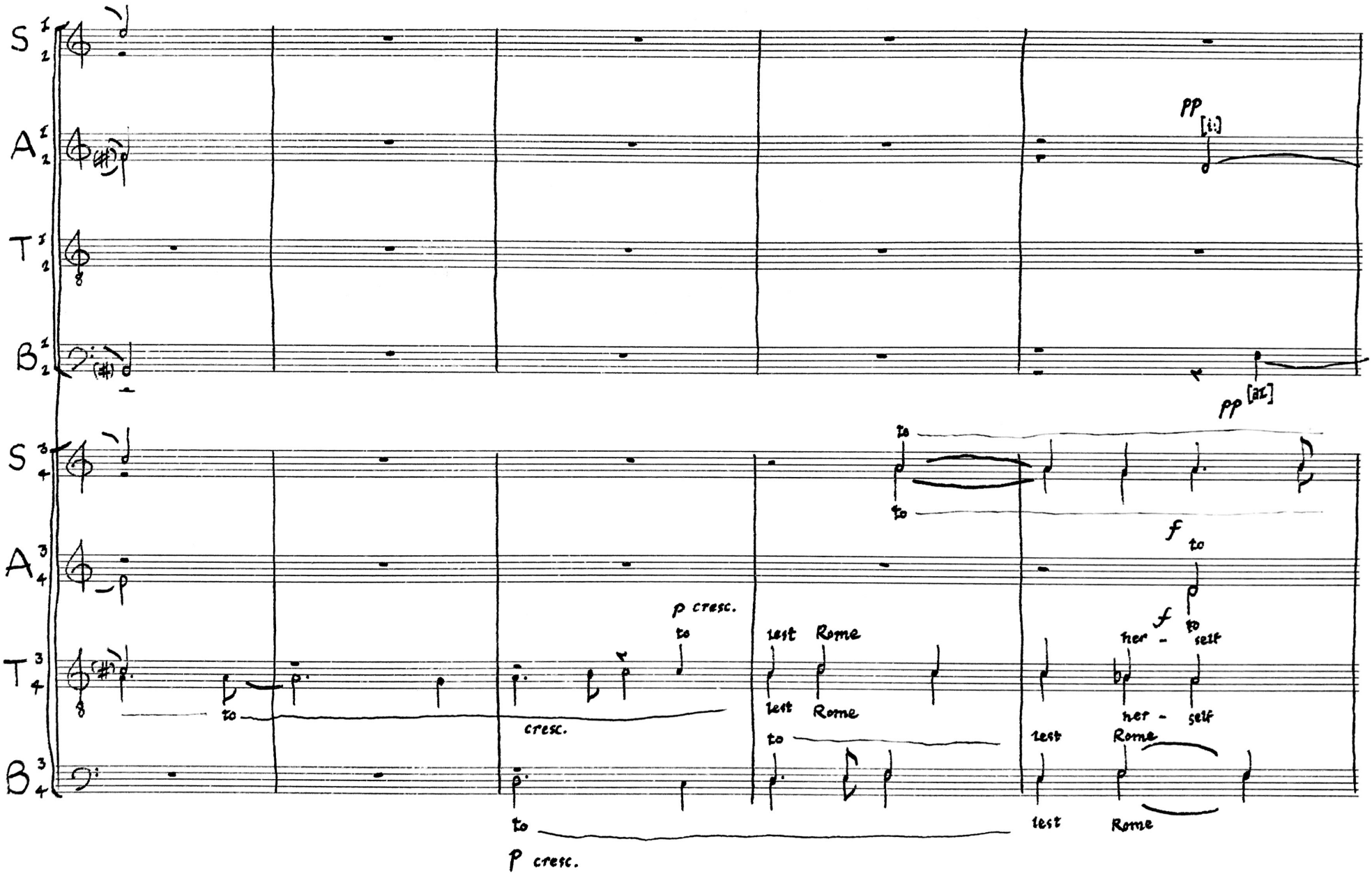


Debussy writing about the paintings of Moussorgsky, Webern writing about


S 1 2
A 1 2
T 1 2
B 1 2
S 3 4
A 3 4
T 3 4
B 3 4
Rome
her - - self be
bane
un -
Schoenberg and Stravinsky about many others


S 1 2
A 1 2
T 1 2
B 1 2
pp [i:]
pp [aɪ]
S 3 4
A 3 4
T 3 4
B 3 4
to
to
f to
p cresc.
to
cresc.
test Rome
test Rome
to
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her - self
her - self
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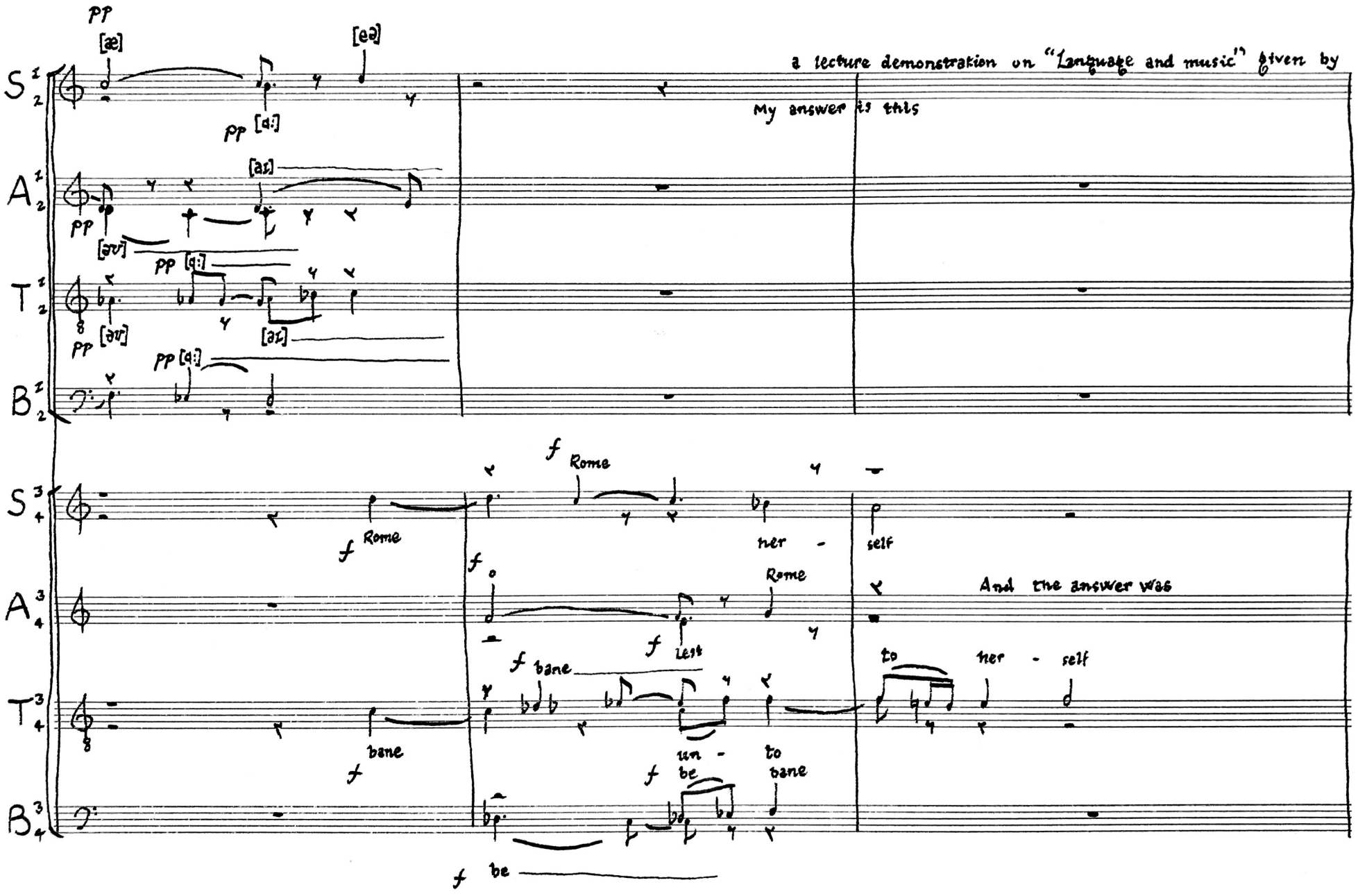
test Rome
to
p cresc.


a lecture demonstration on "Language and music" given by
My answer is this
And the answer was
Rome
her - self
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Rome
Lest
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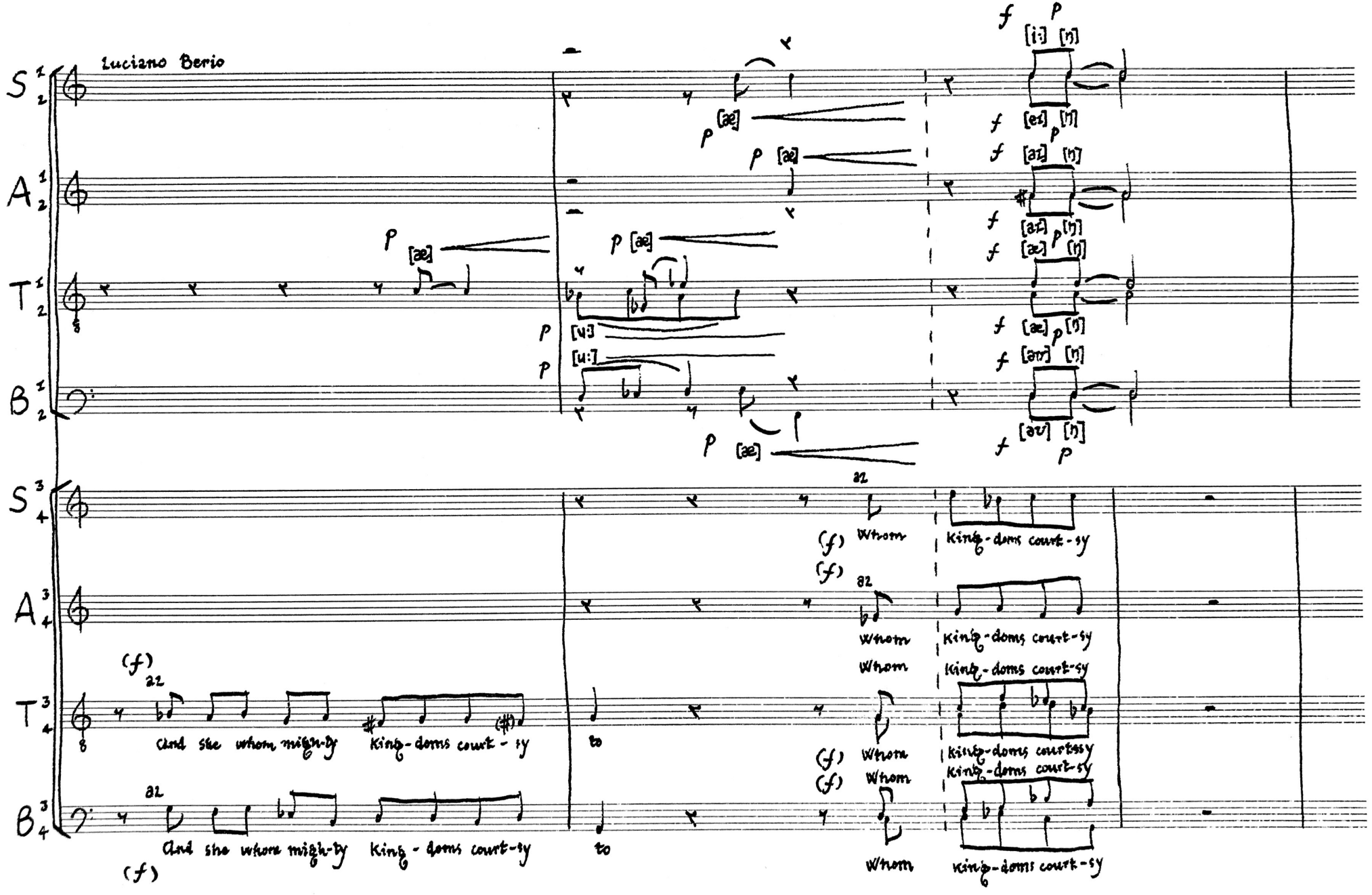
be
to her - self


Luciano Berio
S 1 2
A 1 2
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S 3 4
A 3 4
T 3 4
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[æ]
[u:]
[i:] [ŋ]
[eɪ] [ŋ]
[aɪ] [ŋ]
[æ] [ŋ]
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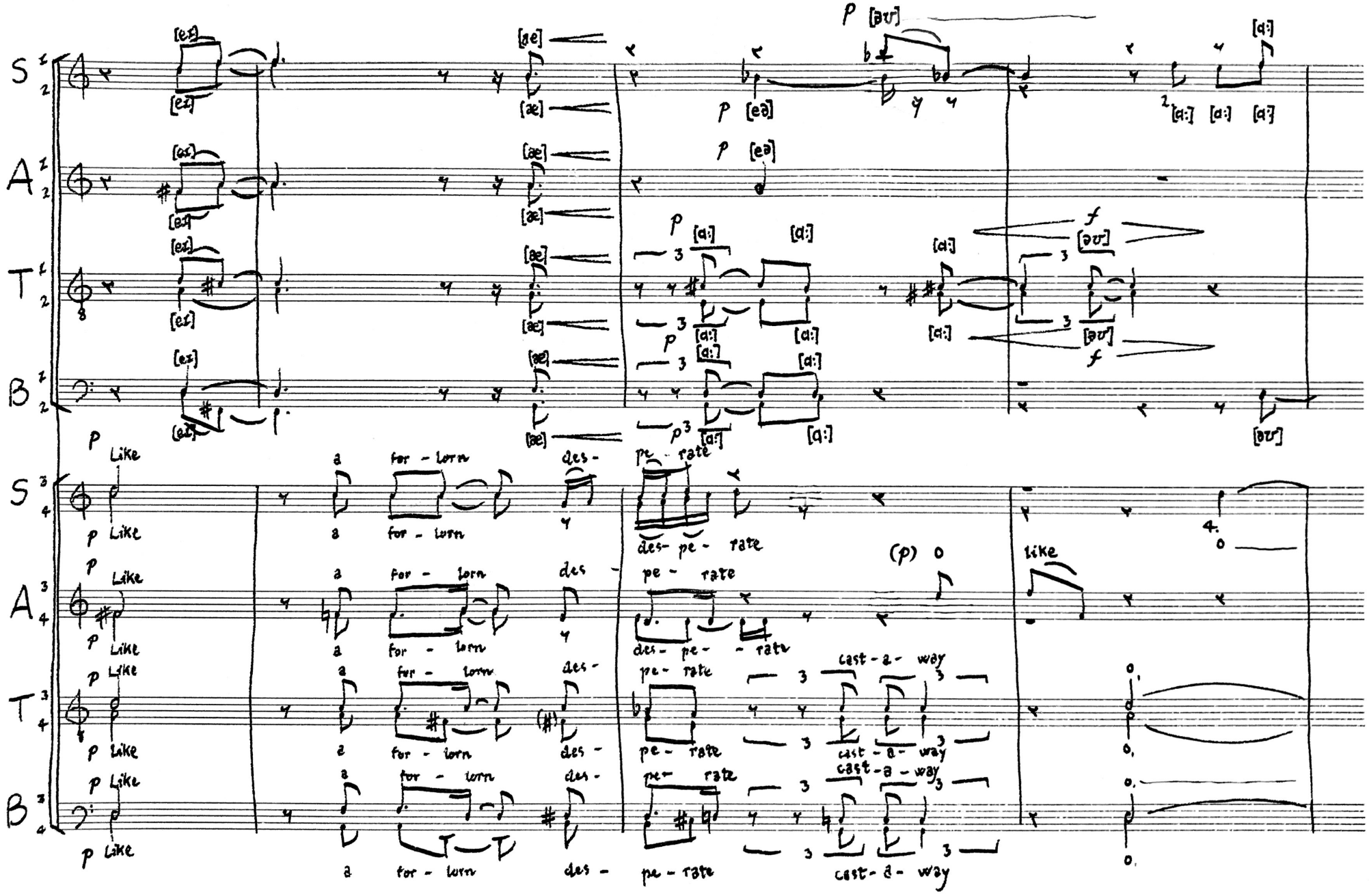
32
(f)
And she whom migh-ty King-doms court-sy
to
Whom King-doms court-sy
Whom King-doms courtssy


S
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a for - lorn des - pe - rate
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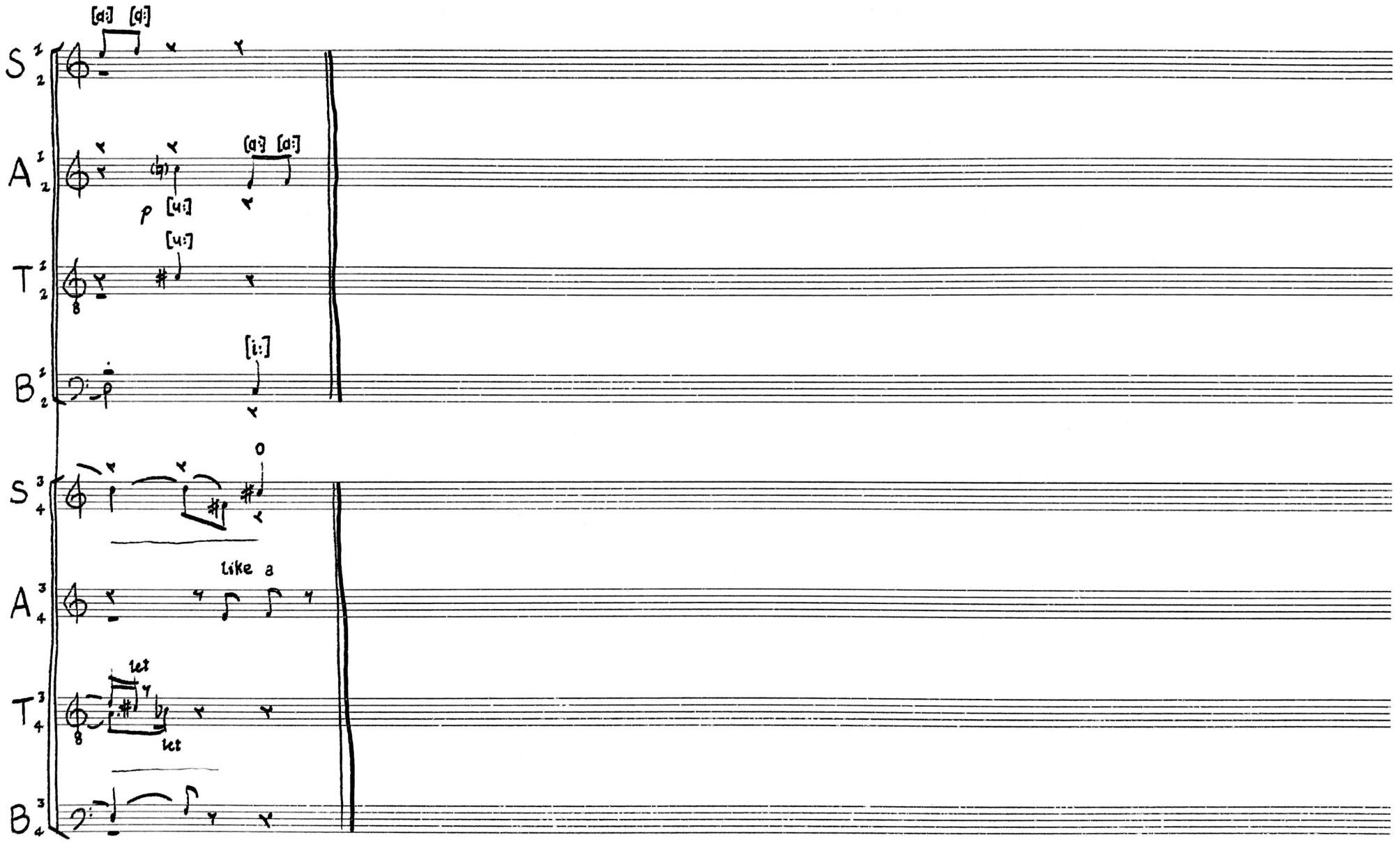
cast - a - way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