Hard Songs

23 Stephen Crane settings

written for Nicholas Tolle and Jennifer Ashe

ANDY VORES
(2016)

PROLOGUE

♩ = 132c. *nervous, tight*

Soprano

Cimbalom

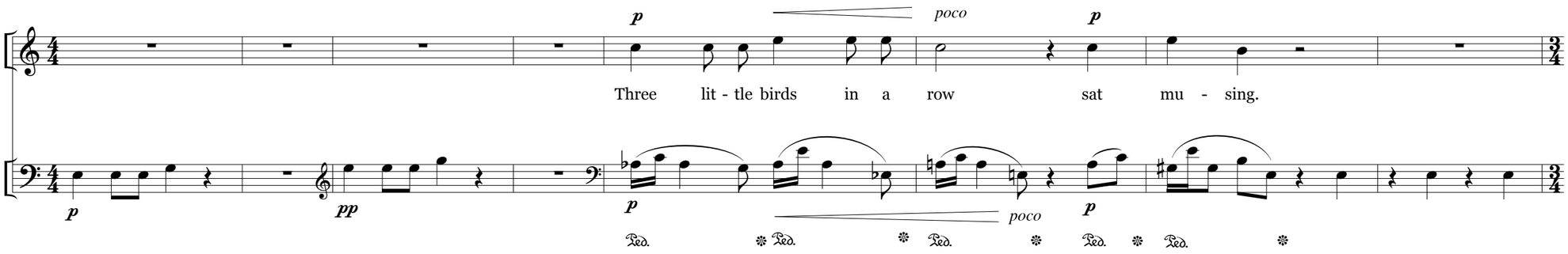
12

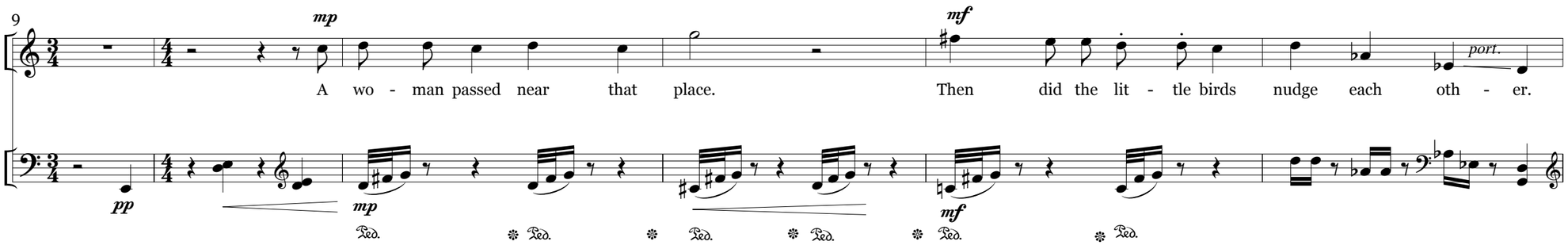
22

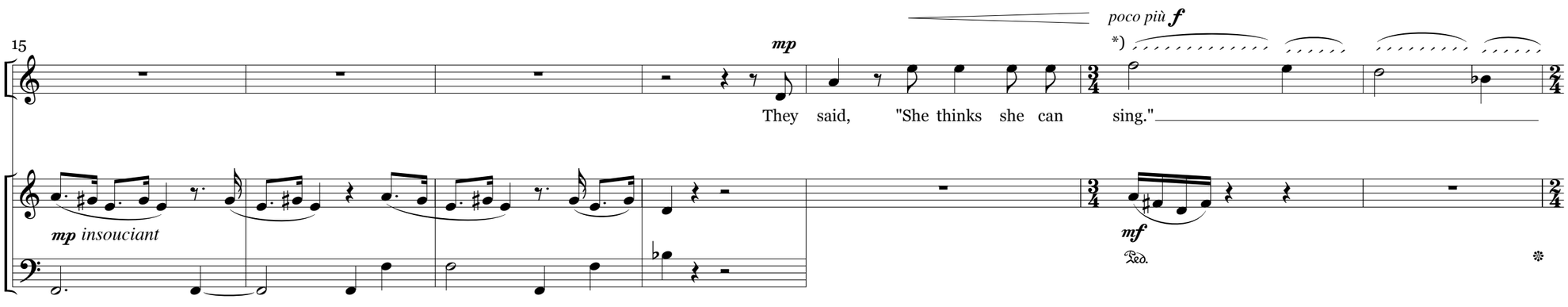
1: THREE + ONE

1.i • three little birds

♩ = 96c. *sly, a little sinister*







*) **like a renaissance *trillo*; regular, fairly rapid repetition of a single pitch**

22

ord.

mf

They threw back their heads to laugh, la ha ha haugh, oo, oo,

mp 3

p sub.

mf *p* *mf* *p*

Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. * Ped. *

27

laugh.

slower

poco mf

With quaint coun - te - nan - ces -

p *f* *mf* *f*

Ped. Ped. *

34

they re - gard - ed her.

mp 3

They were ve - ry cu - rious, those three lit - tle birds in a row.

p

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

Ped. * Ped. *

attacca

• bullet

ff

ŏ

metal sticks

ff

attacca

1.ii • because it is bitter

♩ = 64c. *brutal*

mf

3

In the de-sert I saw a crea-ture, na - ked, bes - tial, who, squat-ting up - on the ground, held her

(metal sticks)

ff sempre

6

ff

mf

f *ff*

heart in her hands, and ate of it. I said, "Is it good, friend?" "It is bit - ter–

a little slower *rit.* *steady* *tempo*

p

13

mf

fff

bit-ter," she an-swered; "But I like it be-cause it is bit-ter, and be-cause it is my heart."

attacca

• bullet

wound sticks

ff

ŏ

ff

attacca

1.iii • dead in my mouth

very fast *molto ritardando al fine*

p

Yes, I have a thous - sand tongues, and nine and nine - ty - nine lie. Though I strive to use the one, it will make no me - lo - dy at my

3

p

Ped.

very slow

3

will, but is dead in my mouth.

mf sub.

attacca

• bullet, bridge

rit.

f

ah

f

pp

attacca

1.iv • the wind that waves the blossoms

♩. = 90c. *light, airy*

p

The wind that

pp

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

6

poco cresc.

più ***f***

waves the blos - soms sang, sang, sang from

poco cresc.

più ***f***

11

pp

age to age. The flowers were made cu - rious by this joy. "Oh,

pp *sempre*

15

pp

wind," they said, "why sing you at your la - bor, while we,

Ped. Ped.

21

f

pink be - ne - fi - ci - ar - ies, sing not, but

f

Ped.

p

p

26

i - dle, i - dle, i - dle from age to age?"

Ped.

2: FOUR + ONE

• ritornello

fff

(2)

3

p

Ped. Ped.

2.i • when I gazed all was lost

♩ = 60c. *labored, sluggish*

stringendo

mp *cresc.*

There was, be - fore me, mile up - on mile of

fff *molto* *p*

(no cresc.)

9

intense

ritardando

snow, ice, burn - ing sand. And yet I could look be - yond all this, to a place of in - fi - nite beau - ty;

16

♩ = 72c. *delicate, simple*

and I could see the love - li - ness of he who walked in the shade of the trees. When I gazed, all was lost but this

23

place of beau - ty and him. When I gazed, and in my ga - zing, de - sired, then came a - gain

30

♩ = 60c.

mile up - on mile of snow, ice, burn - ing sand.

attacca

• bullet

p

ŏ

p

attacca

2.ii • he is in a place of blackness

10" **2"** ♩ = 96c.

mfp *ff*

He

mf

6

pp

Pla - ces a - mong the

pp sub.

12

mf

stars, soft gar - dens near the sun, keep your dis - tant beau - ty; shed no beams up - on my

16

♩ = 104c.

pp sub. *ff* *(ff)*

weak heart. Since he is here in a place of black - ness,

♩ = 88c.

mp

not your gold - en days nor your sil - ver nights

mf *pp sub.* *(no cresc.)* *ff sub.*

p

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

22

♩ = 104c.

ff

can call me to you. Since he is here in a place of black ness,

♩ = 96c.

(ff)

here I

mp *mf* *f* *ff*

(ff)

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

28

pp

mouth almost closed

slightly more open

stay and wait oh oh

pp

attacca

• bullet

p

ŏ

p

attacca

2.iii • carousing in sin

♩ = 104c.

f

I stood up - on a high place, and saw, be - low,

metal sticks

ff

8

rit.

ma - ny de - vils run - ning, leap - ing, and ca - rou - sing in sin.

15

♩ = 96c.

slower again

♩ = 104c. *(tempo 1º)*

One looked up, grin - ning, and said, "Com - rade! Bro - ther!"

attacca

• bullet

pp

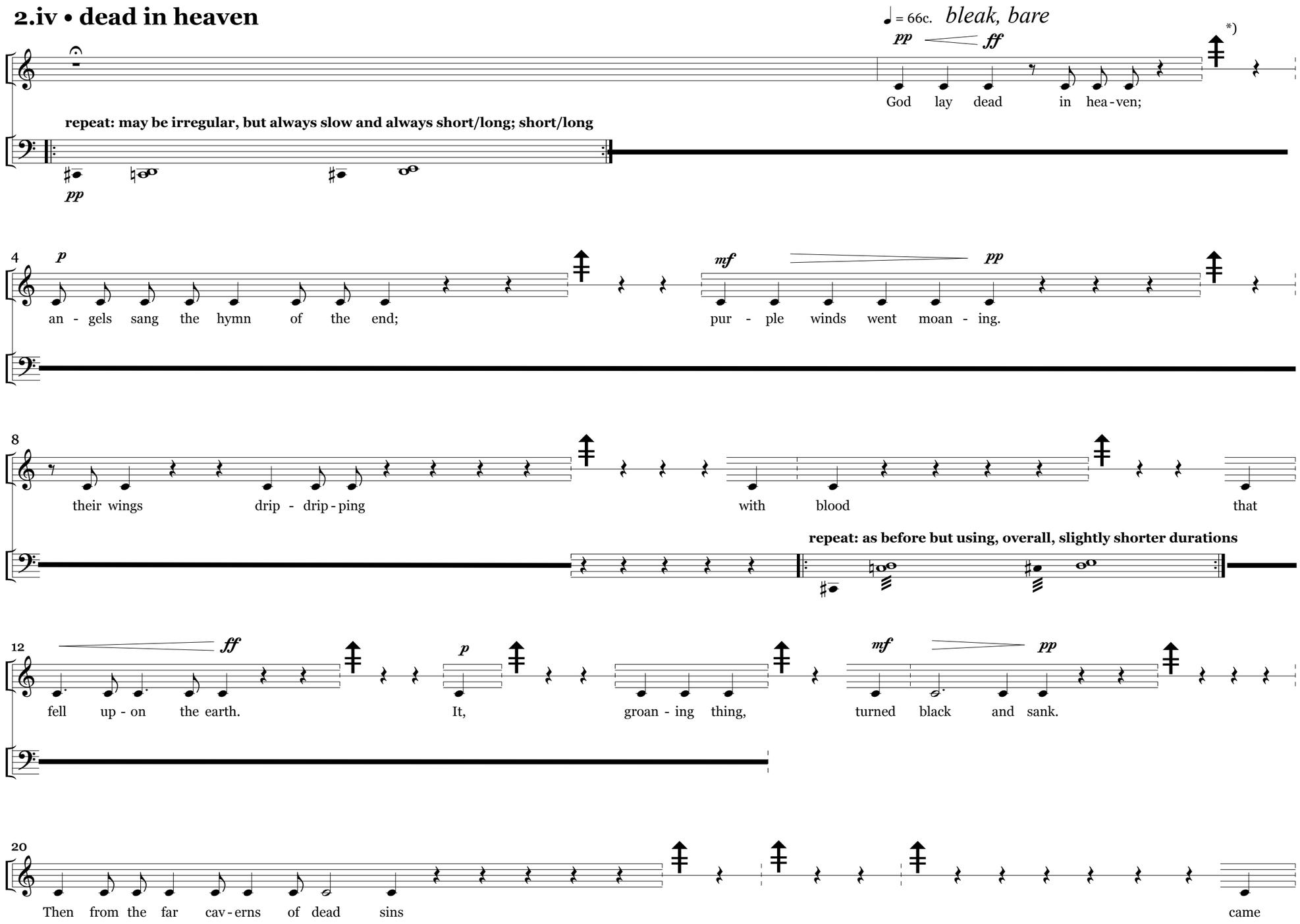
ŏ

wound sticks

pp

attacca

2.iv • dead in heaven



*) **a not too sharp intake of breath through teeth; lasting around a quarter-note, and slightly 'wet' sounding**

mon - sters, liv - id with de - sire. They fought, wrang - led o - ver the world, a mor - sel.

repeat: as before but using, overall, yet shorter durations

But of all sad - ness this was sad– a

wo - man's arms tried to shield the head of a sleep - ing man from the jaws of the fi - nal beast.

attacca

• bullet, bridge

oh

attacca

2.v • clip-clapper

♩ = 76c. *hard*

mf

There was a wo - man with tongue of wood, who ess - ayed to sing, and in truth it was

mf

6

a little faster

mf

la - men - ta - ble. But there was one who heard the clip - clap - per of this tongue of wood and knew what the

11

fast

wo - man wished to sing.

ff *p sub.* *ff*

rall. *a little slower*

(12)

**)

***)

*)

dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ

pp sub.

*) **parlando; more spoken than sung – colorless, repetitious, quite low in the voice, and with minimal pitch inflection**

) **slight accel. starting from base tempo

***) **slight rit. starting from base tempo**

(13)

steady (tempo)

dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ dŭ tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă

accel. (cimbalom only)

mf ***ff***

15

tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă tă

tempo 1° ♩ = 76c.

mp

And with that the sing - er was con - tent.

mp

3: ONE + ONE

• ritornello

fff

Ped.

Ped.

p

3.1 • it is futile

♩ = 82c. *simple*

mp *sempre*

mp

I saw a man pur - su ing the ho - ri - zon; round and round they sped. I

3

was dis - turbed at this; I ac - cost - ed the man. "It is fu - tile," I said,

mp ***f***

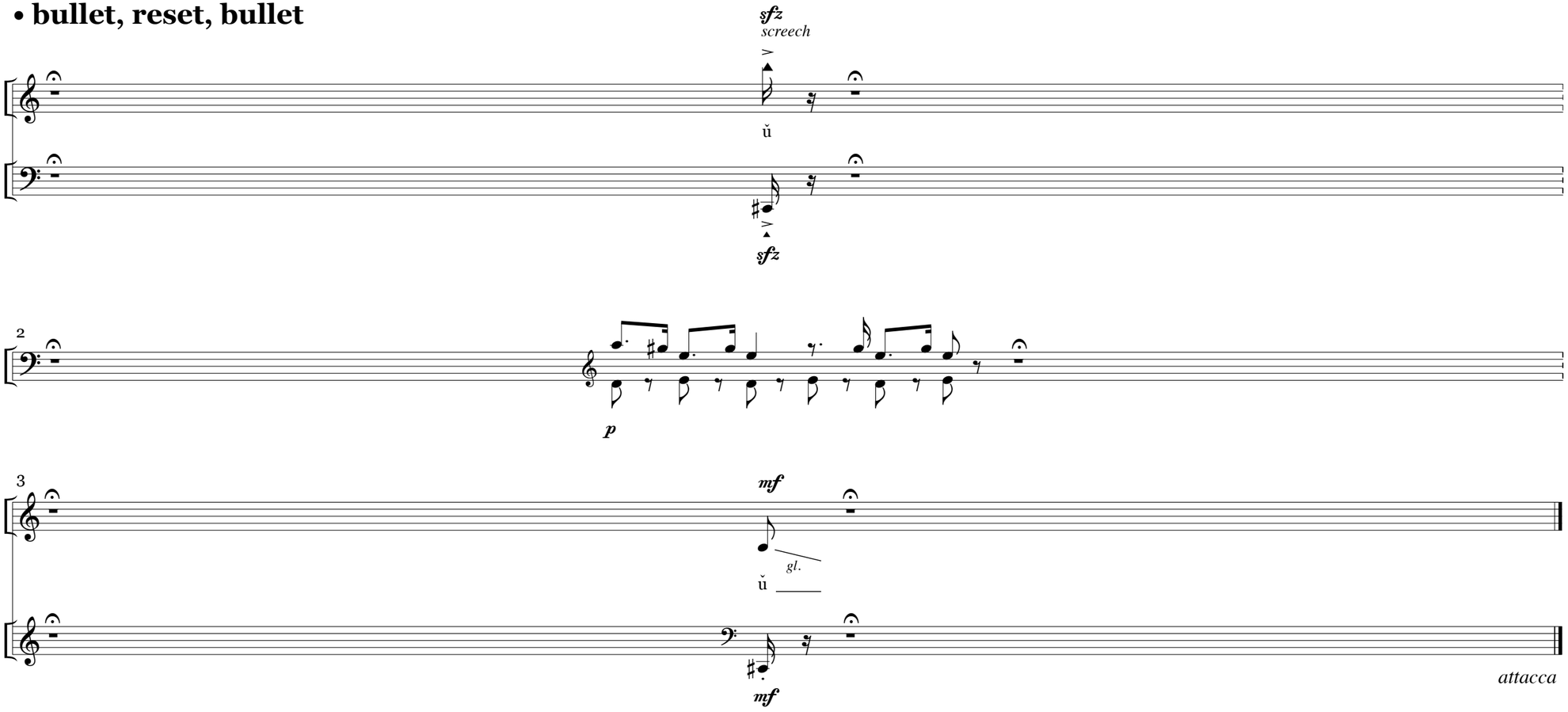
"You can ne - ver–" "You lie," he cried, and ran on.

ff ***mp***

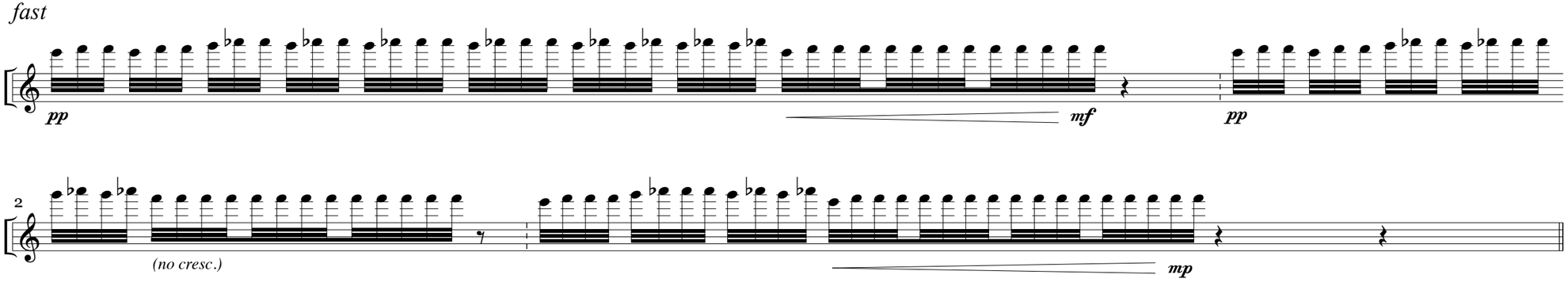
rit.

attacca

• bullet, reset, bullet



3.ii • the chatter



♪ = 78c. *cold*

4

pp

The chat - ter of a death - de - mon from a tree - top.

f

Ped.

♩ = 116c.

mf

ch t t t ch t ch t ch t ch t ch t t t

(6)

pp

t t t t t t t t ch

♩ = 96c.

f

pp

Blood– blood and torn grass– had marked the rise of his

f

Ped.

9

a - go - ny– this lone hunt - er.

The grey - green woods im - pas - sive had watched the thresh - ing of

pp *f*

pp *f*

Ped.

11

ff

his limbs.

p *f* *p*

A ca - noe with flash - ing pad - dle, a

f

pp *ff*

Ped. Ped.

mf

16

girl with soft search - ing eyes, a call: 'John!'

mp *p* *pp* *mp* *p*

20

♩ = 116c.

pp

Come, a - rise ss,

tap inside of cimbalom frame with beater or knuckle

scratch along any low string with fingernail or plectrum

(22)

♩ = 96c.

hunt - er! Can you not t t t hear? ch ch t t ch ch ch ch ch t t t t

pppp

(26)

♪ = 78c.

pppp *pppp sempre* *(count fully)*

t t t t t t t t t The chat - ter of a death - - de - mon from a tree - - - - - top

(with wound sticks)

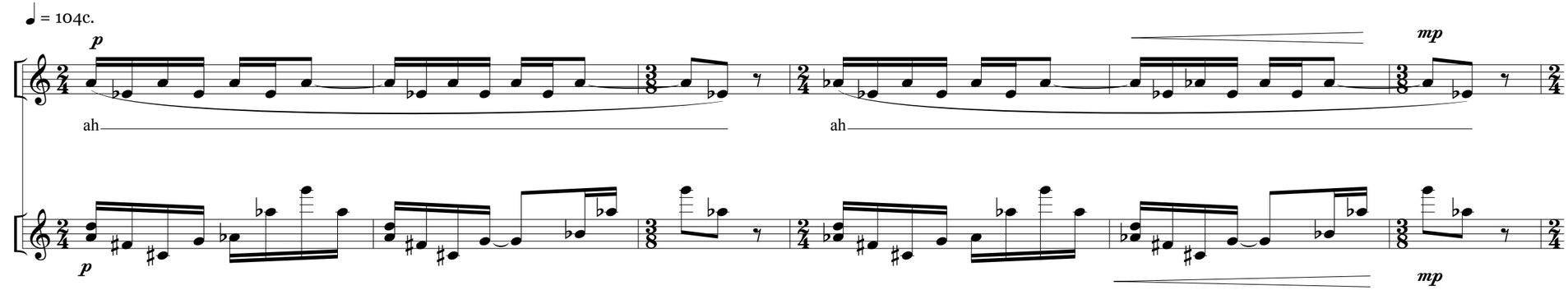
3

pp

Ped.

4 • ONE + ONE

• transition



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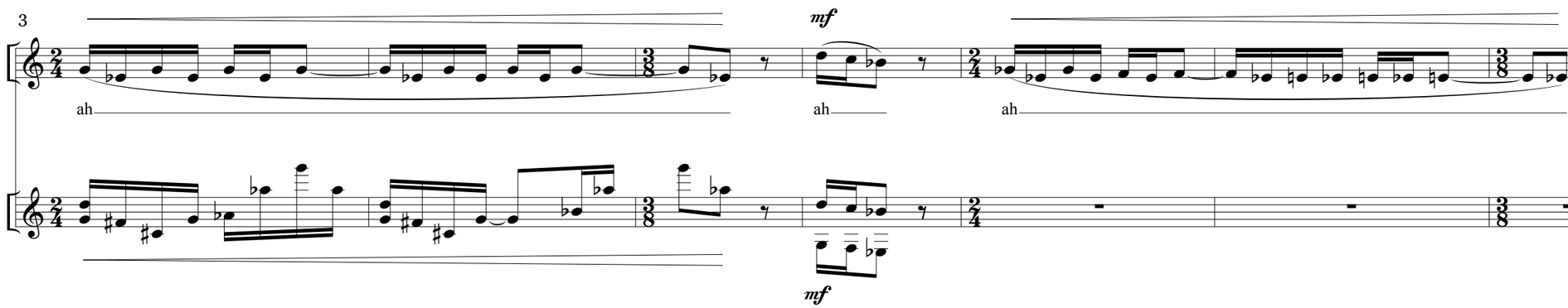


4.i • poor soul

♩ = 78c. *warmly*

p

There was one I met up - on the road who looked at me with kind

p

7

eyes. He said, "Show me of your wares." And this I did, hold - ing forth one.

p

12

f *molto*

He said, "It is a sin." Then held I forth an - o - ther; he said,

f

p

18

f *molto*

"It is a sin." Then held I forth an - - o - ther; he said,

f

p

molto

23

"It is a sin." And so to the end; al - ways he said, "It is a sin."

28

And, fi - nal - ly, I cried out, "But I have no oth - er."

Ped.

poco rall. slightly slower a tempo rit.

34

Then did he look at me with kind - er eyes. "Pour soul!" he said.

Ped. Ped.

attacca

• bullet, turn

oh

attacca

4.ii • comrade

♩ = 104c.

f

I stood up - on a high place, and saw, be - low, ma - ny de - vils

ff

9

rit.

run - ning, leap - ing, and ca - rou - sing in sin.

3

♩ = 96c.

slower again

15

One looked up, grin - ning, and said, "Com - rade! Sis - ter!

3

5: TWO + ONE

• ritornello

fff

Ped. Ped.

p

5.i • the strange part

♩ = 66c.

pp

A man saw a ball of gold in the sky;

ppp

mp

6

← ♩ = ♩. → (♩. = 66c.)

he climbed for it, and e - vent - ual - ly he a - chieved it– it was clay. Now

f

p

mf

12

♪ = ♪

♪ = ♪ *sempre*

this is the strange part: When the man went to the earth and looked a - gain, lo, there was the ball of gold. Now

mf

pp

ppp

mf

18

this is the strange part: It was a ball of gold, aye, by the hea - vens, it was a ball of gold.

mp

p

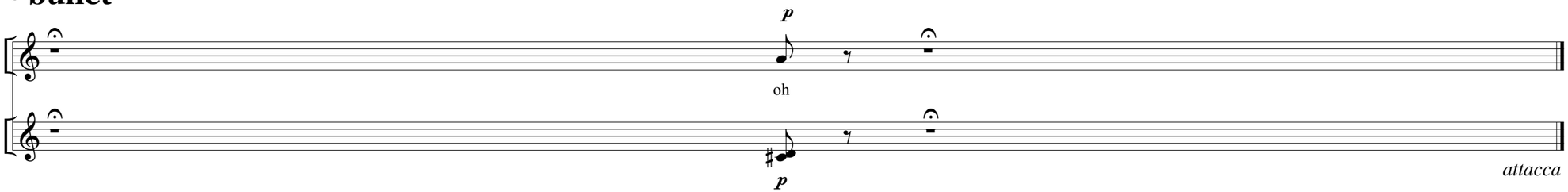
rall.

mf

p

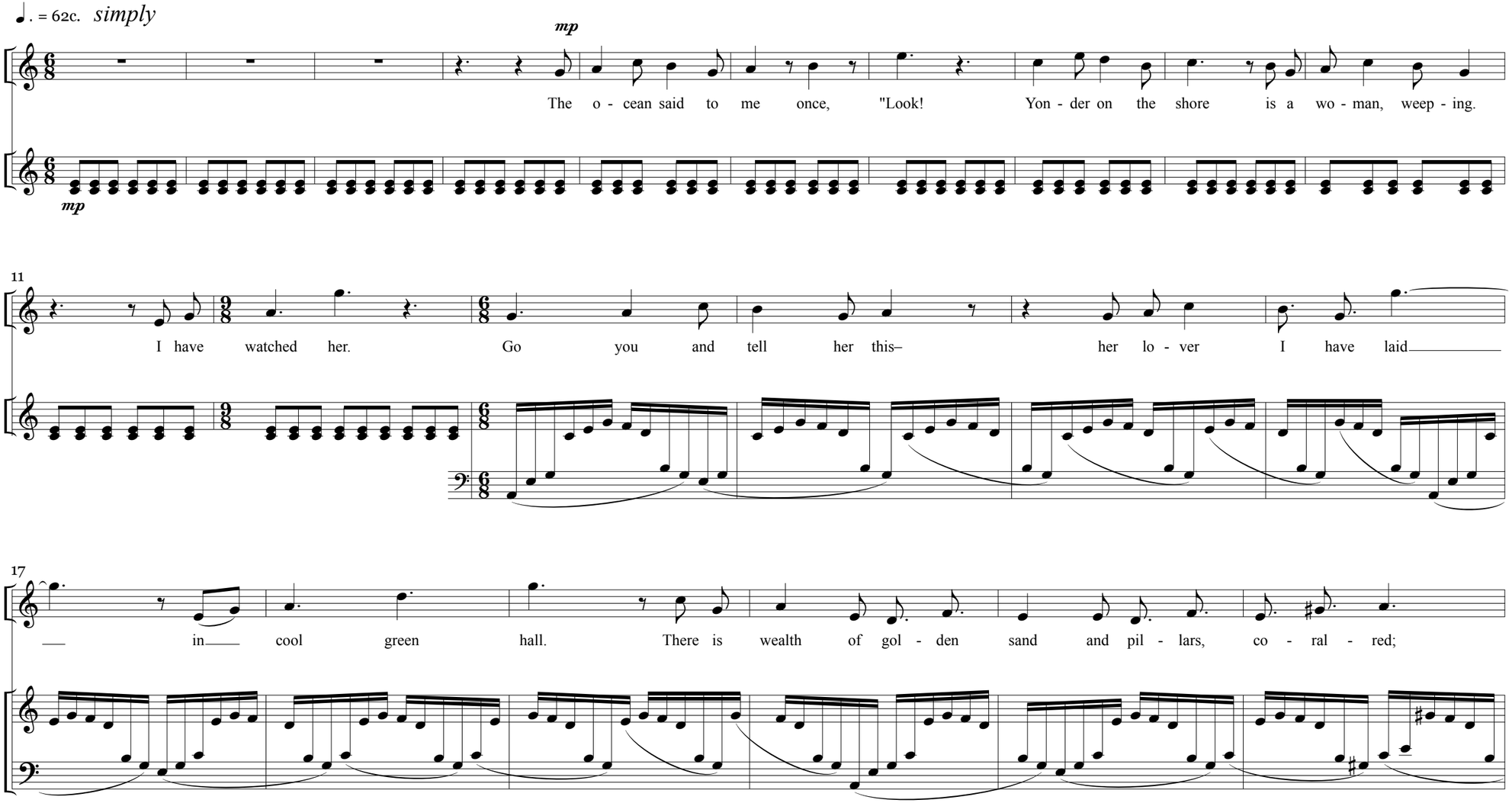
attacca

• bullet



5.ii • in cool green hall

♩. = 62c. *simply*



23

two white fish stand guard at his bier.

30

"Tell her this and more– that the king of the

36

seas weeps too, old, help - less man. The bus - tling fates heap his hands with

45

corp - - - ses un - til he stands like a child with a sur - plus of toys."

attacca

• bullet, turn

pp

oh

pp *mp* *pp*

attacca

5.iii • she thinks she can sing

♩ = 86c.

pp

whistle

Three lit - tle birds in a row A

pp

10

wo - man passed near Then did the lit - tle birds nudge each oth - er. They

with sticks pizz. with sticks

17

said, "She thinks she can sing." They threw back their heads to

ord.

Ped.

24

laugh, la ha ha ha, They were ve - ry cu - rious,

pizz. with sticks pizz.

6: ONE + ONE

• ritornello

slow and deliberate *rall.*

p *ff* *p sub.*

6.i • it is no desert

♩ = 86c. *spare*

p

I walked in a de - sert and I cried,

p *f* *p sub.*

8

"Ah, god, take me from this place!" A voice said,

f *f* *p* *f*

30

15

mf *p*

"It is no de - sert." I cried, "Well, but– the sand, the heat, the

p sub. *f* *mf* *p*

23

f

va - cant ho - ri - zon." A voice said, "It is no de - sert."

f *p* *mf* *p*

attacca

• bullet, reset, bullet

p

ee

p

2

pp

3

p

ee

p

attacca

6.ii • a call

♩ (sic) = 78c. *cold*

pp

The chat - ter of a death - de - mon– ch t t t ch t

f

4

f *pp*

Blood– blood and torn grass– ch t t The grey green woods im - pass - ive–

p *pp*

7

t ch t A ca - noe– A girl– A call, 'John!'

mf *pp*

(12)

ch t t ch t t The chat - ter . . . from a tree - top.

f *pp*

f

7: ONE + ONE

• transition

♩ = 78c.

p *mf*

7.i • whisperings

♩ = 78c.

pp

There came whis - per - ings in the winds: "Good - bye!

ff

pp

Good - - - - - bye!" Lit - tle voi - ces called in the dark - ness:

"Good - bye! Good - bye!" Then I stretched forth my arms.

ff

p

"No– no–" There came whis - per - ings in the winds:

pp

p

pp

ff

Good - bye!" Good - bye!" Lit - tle voi - ces called in the dark - ness:

ff

40

pp

Good - bye!"

Good - bye!"

pp

attacca

• bullet, bridge

rit.

f

ah

f

pp

attacca

7.ii • birds of the night

unstable, free, quite fast

mf

ff

mp sub.

mf

ppp

mp

ppp

Li - i - i - i - i - tle birds, birds of the night, pf pf pf aye, ff ff

mf

ff

(3)

mf

p

mf

they have much to tell, perch - ing there in rows, blink - ing at me with their se - rious eyes, p

p

(5)

p

p p p p p p p p

mf

p

re - count - ing of flow, flow - ers they have seen and

p

(6)

f

loved, of mea - dows and groves of the dis - tance, and pale sands at the foot of the sea,

p

f

tr

p

ff

f

p

pf pf and bree - zes that fly, fly in the leaves. They are vast in ex - pe - rience,

pp

ff

mf

these li - i - i - i - i - tle birds oo ff pf p that come in the night.

pp

mf

p

pp

mf

ff

8 • TWO + ONE

• transition

♩ = 58c.

pp

ah ah ah ah ah

pp

8

ah ah ah ah ah ah oh

8.i • red devils

♩. = 46c. (♪ = 138c.) *ghostly, inward*

ppp *sempre*

Man - y red dev - ils ran from my heart and out up - on the page.

pp

Ped.

(1)

They were so ti - ny the pen could mash them. And man - y strug - gled in the ink.

mf

(3)

It was strange to write in this red muck of things from my heart.

pp

attacca

• bullet

ff

ff

attacca

8.ii • a song all of birds

♩ = 102c. *melancholy*

mf

Once, I knew a fine song, –it is true, be - lieve me–

mf

p

9

it was all of birds, and I held them in a

mf

16

bas - ket; when I o - pened the wick - et, Hea - vens! they

f

f

23

all flew a - way.

p

I cried, "Come back, lit - tle thoughts!"

mf

30

But they on - ly laughed.

p

f

36

f

They flew on un - til they were as sand thrown be - tween me and the

pp

45

sky.

mf

attacca

• bullet, turn

pp

oh

pp

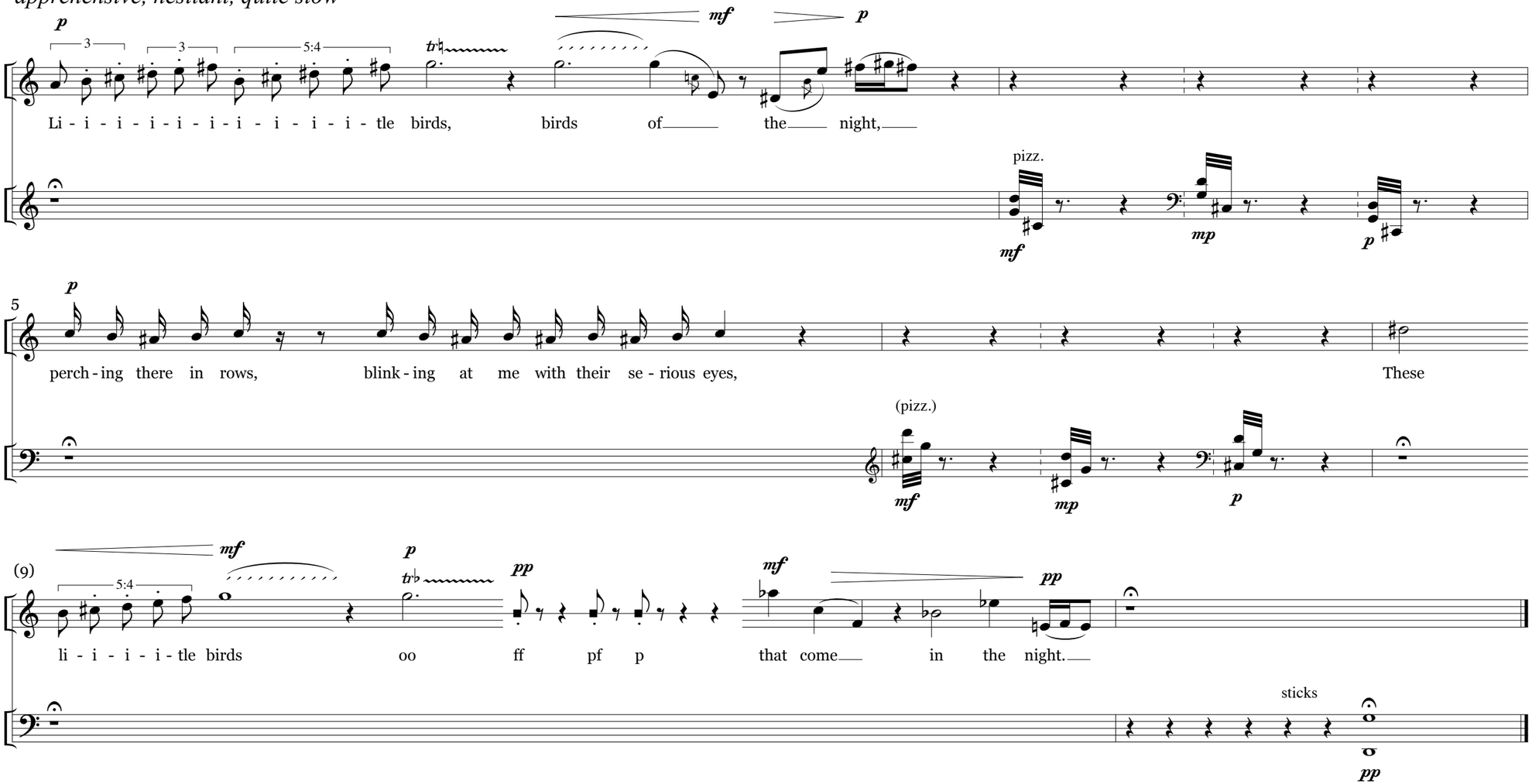
mp

pp

attacca

8.iii • blinking

apprehensive, hesitant, quite slow



Cambridgeport MA, September 30, 2016