CHAINS

1. THE NEWS.

Frederic Rzewski
1986

[A] (The SOLOIST holds a copy of today's newspaper.)

♩.=80 (♩=120)

ANY 3-4 INSTRUMENTS

pp p

*8? = MAY BE TRANSPOSED TO ANOTHER OCTAVE.

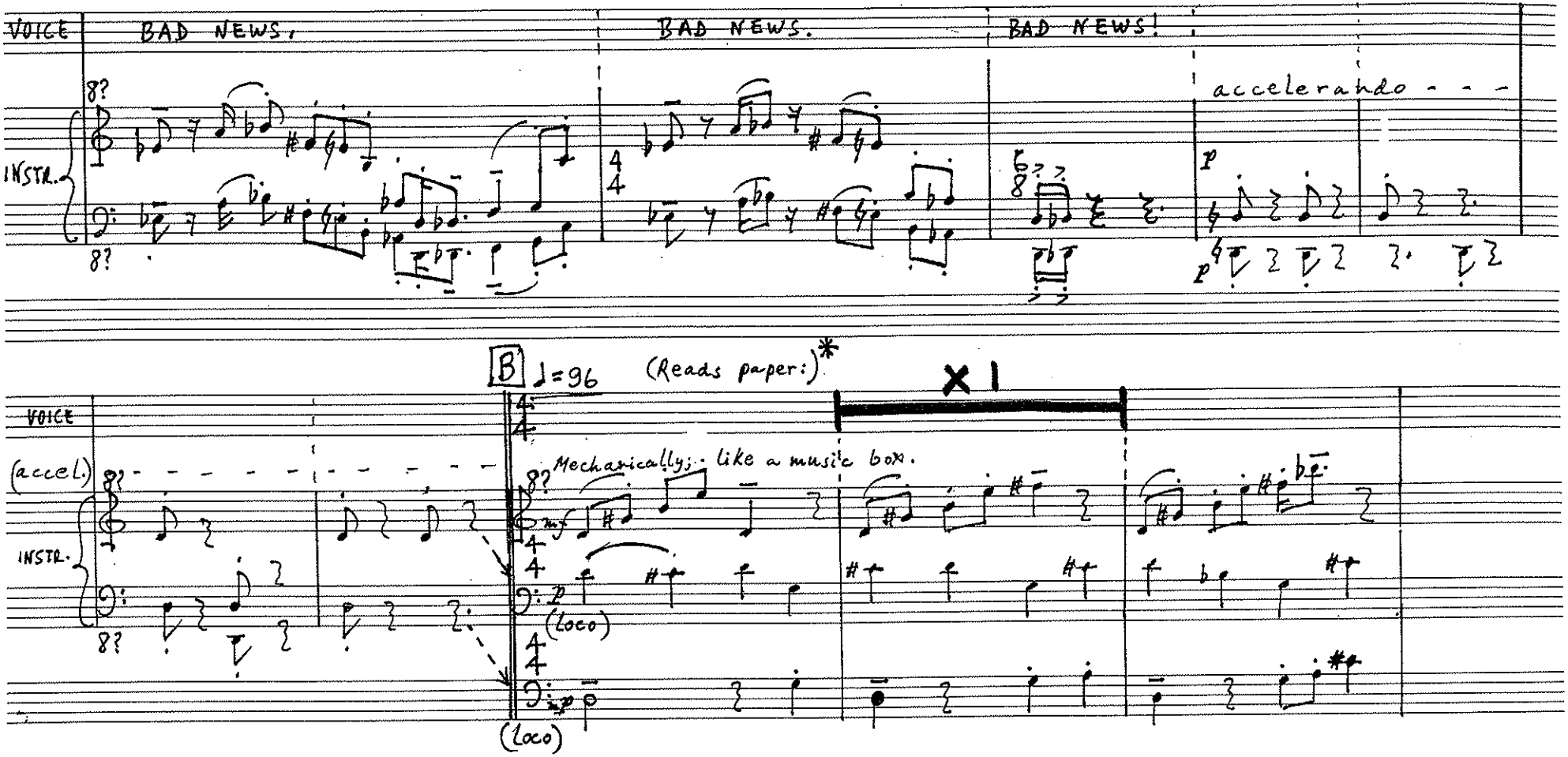
(spoken, simply, matter-of-factly)

VOICE — HERE'S THE NEWS. — PAGE ONE.

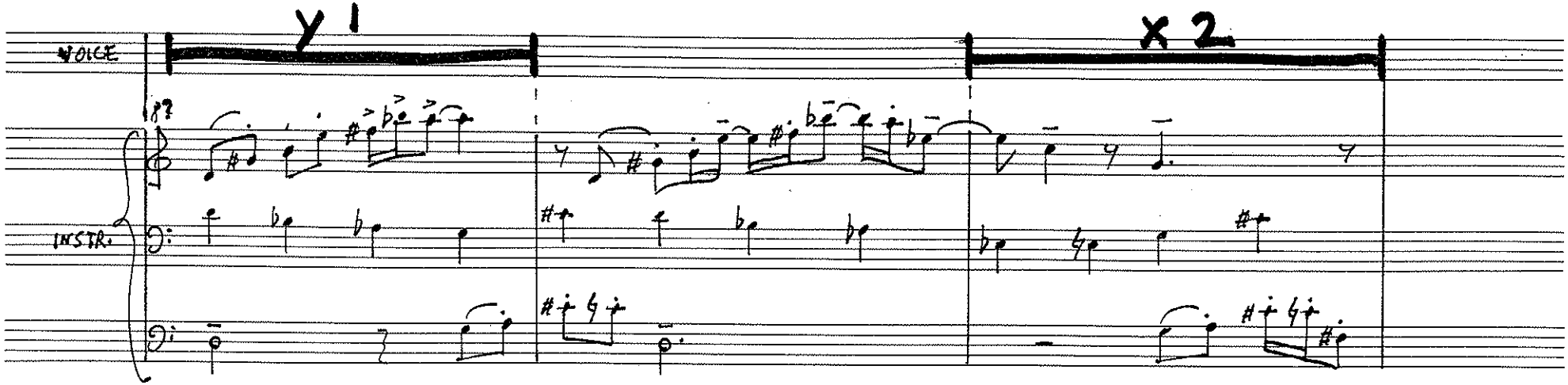
(Instruments)

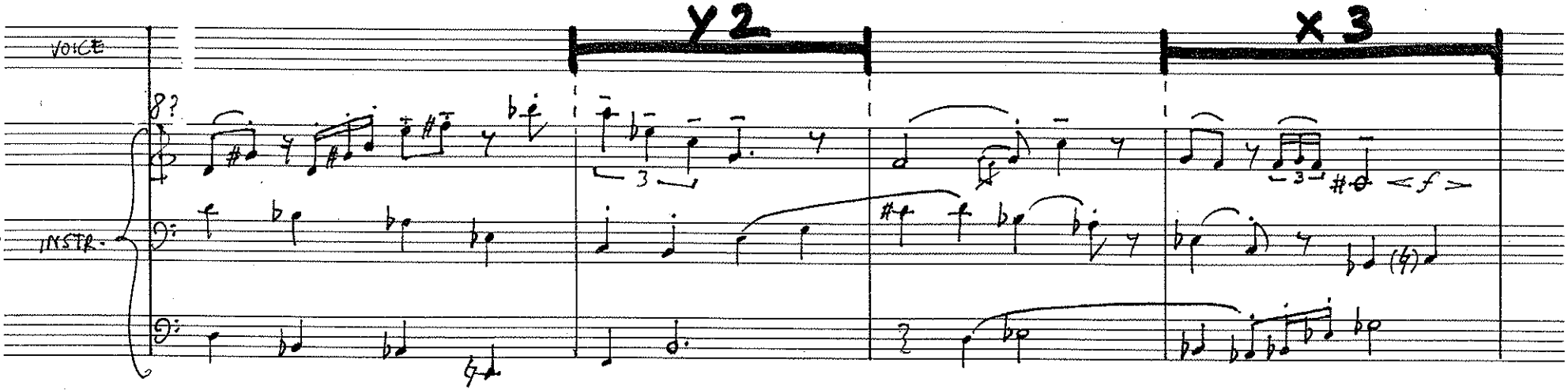
VOICE — BAD NEWS.

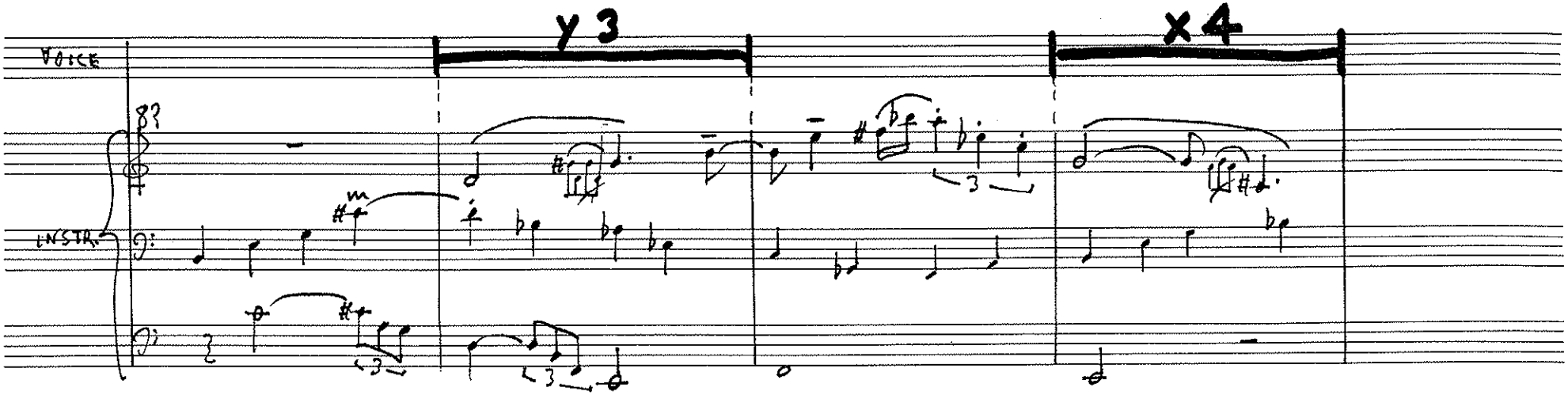
INSTR.

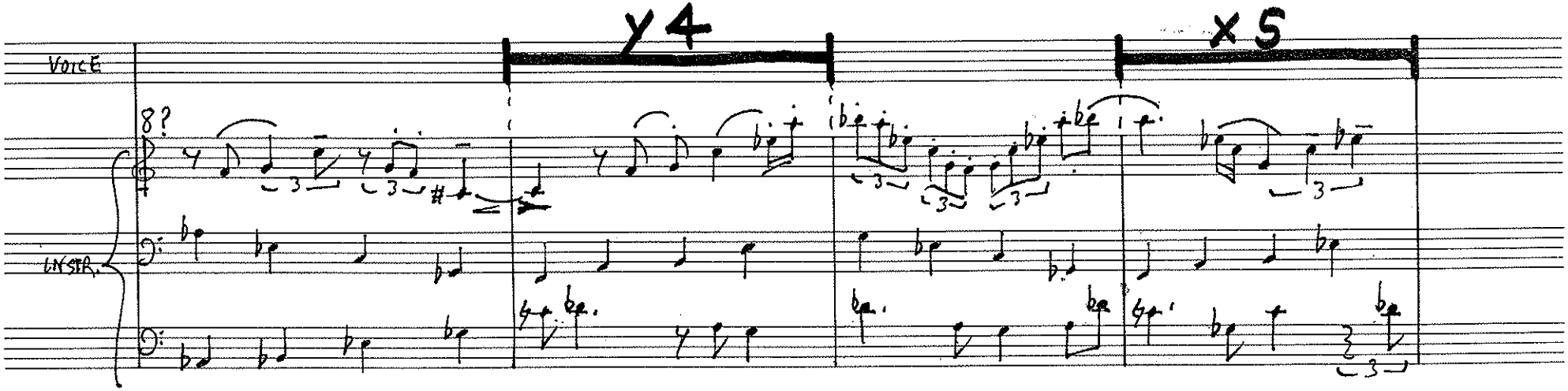


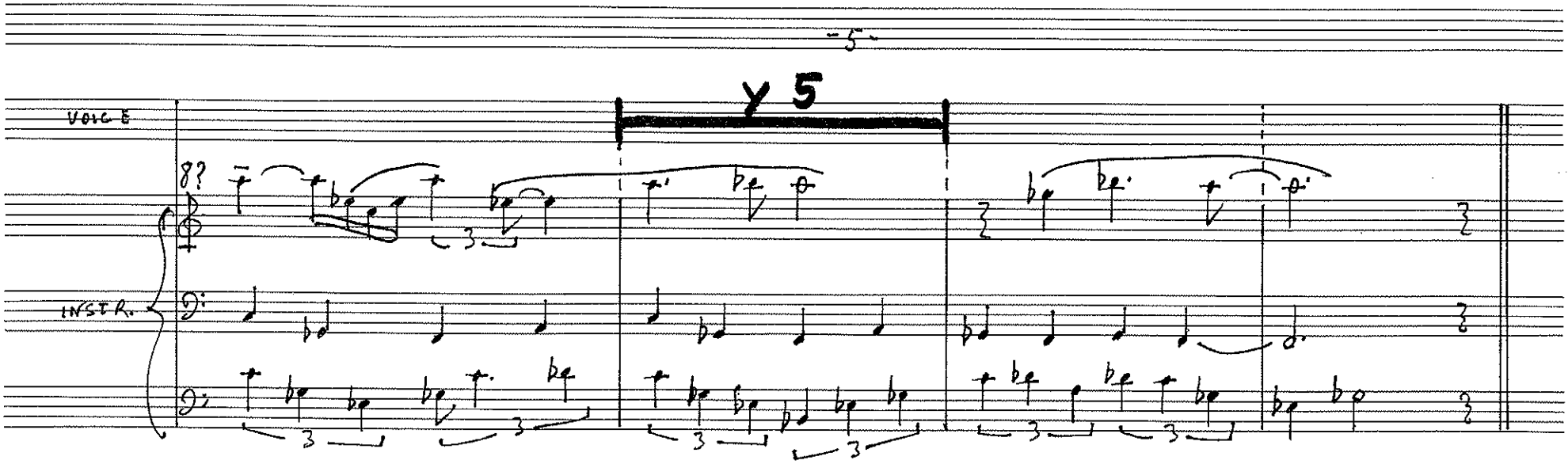
* VOICE IN B: OF ANY TWO ARTICLES — "X" AND "Y" — ON PAGE ONE OF TODAY'S NEWSPAPER, READ ANY FIVE CONSECUTIVE LINES, INCLUDING HYPHENATED FRAGMENTS OF WORDS, WITHIN THE INDICATED TIME. DO NOT BEGIN NECESSARILY WITH THE BEGINNING OF A SENTENCE.


X 1
X 2
VOICE
INSTR.

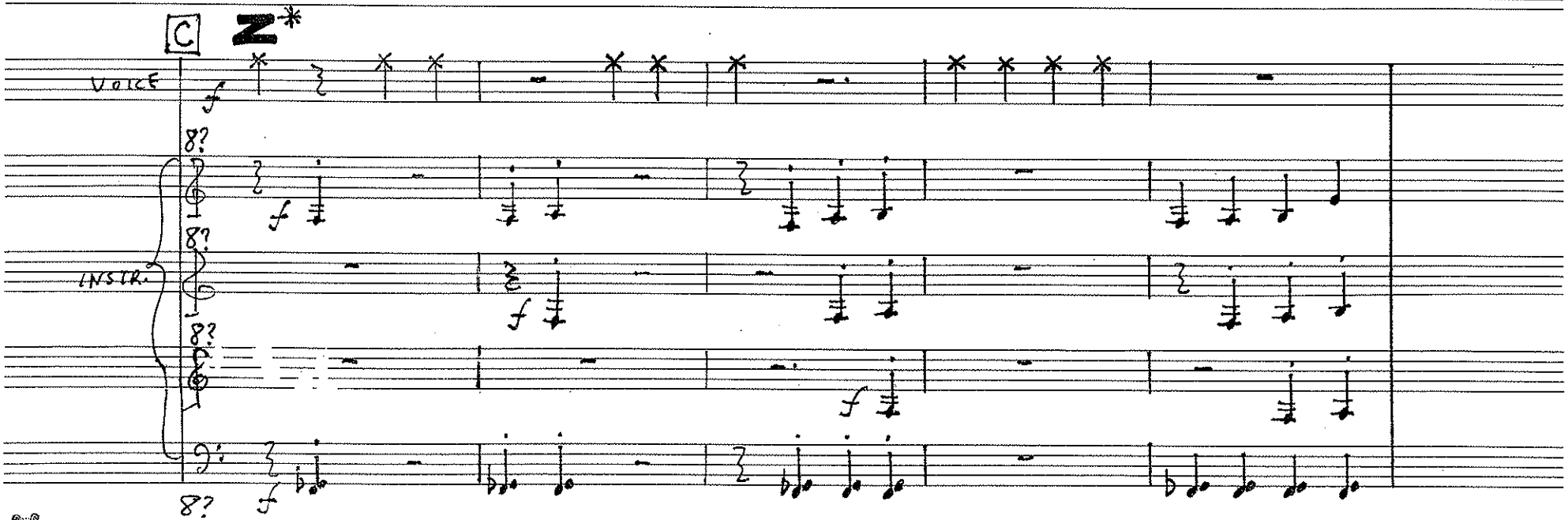

X 2
X 3
VOICE
INSTR.

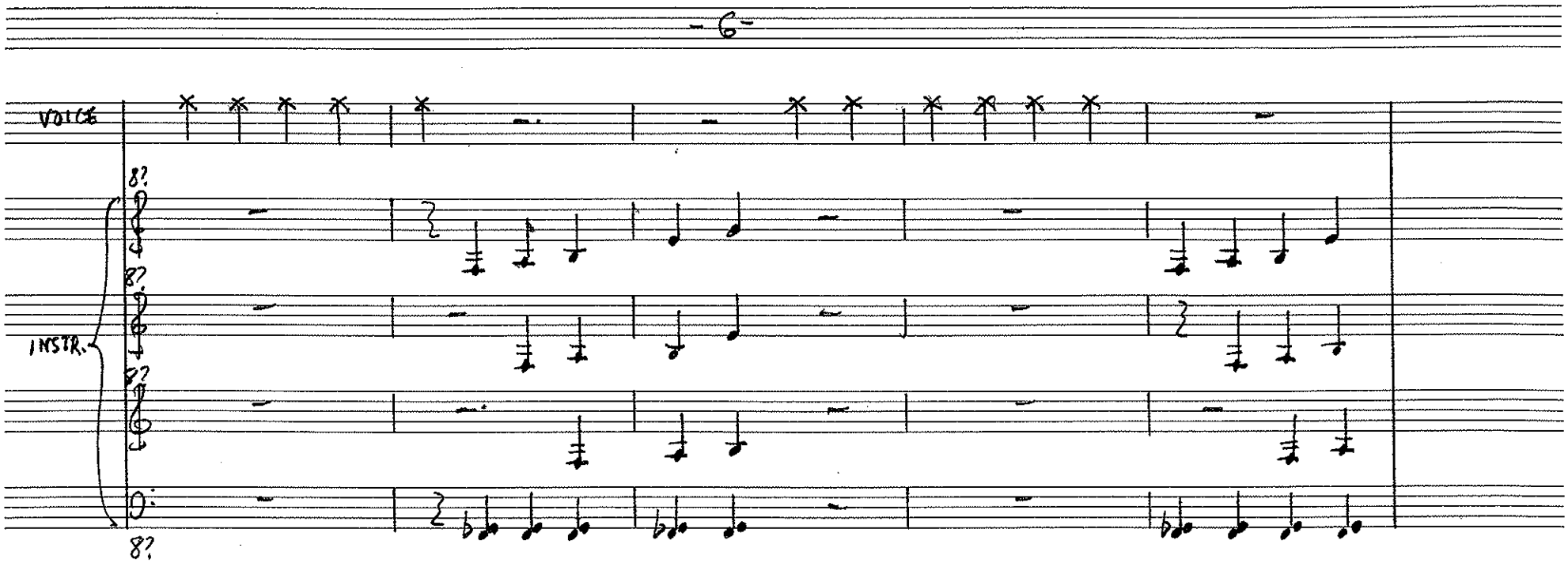

x3
x4
VOICE
INSTR.

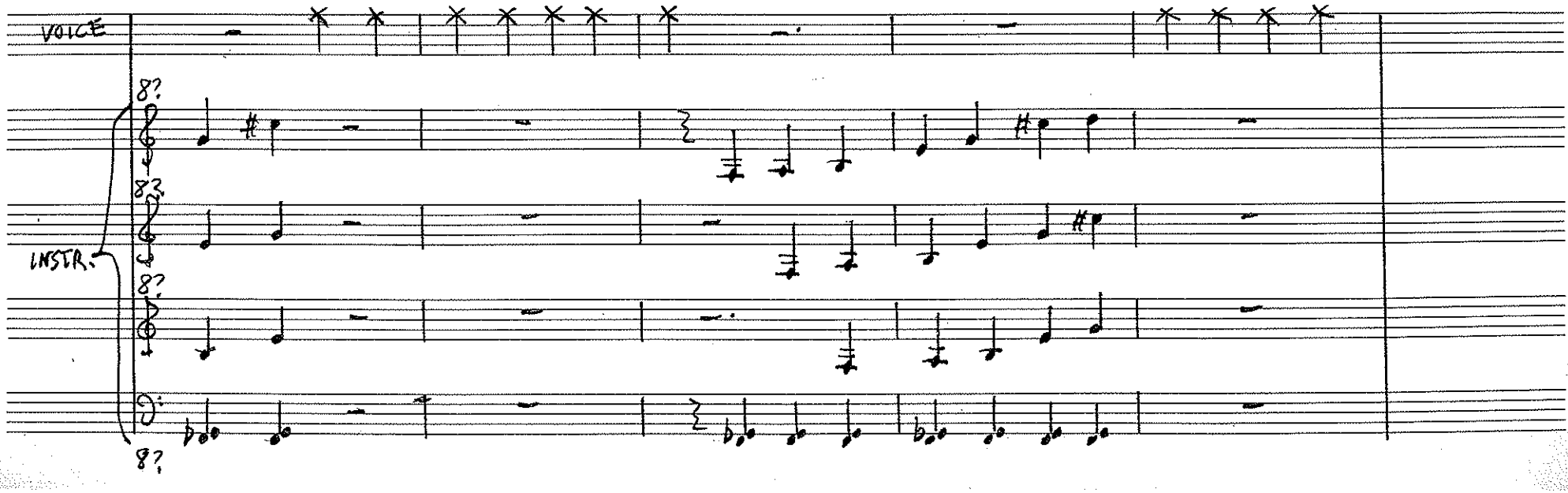

x4
x5
VOICE
INSTR.

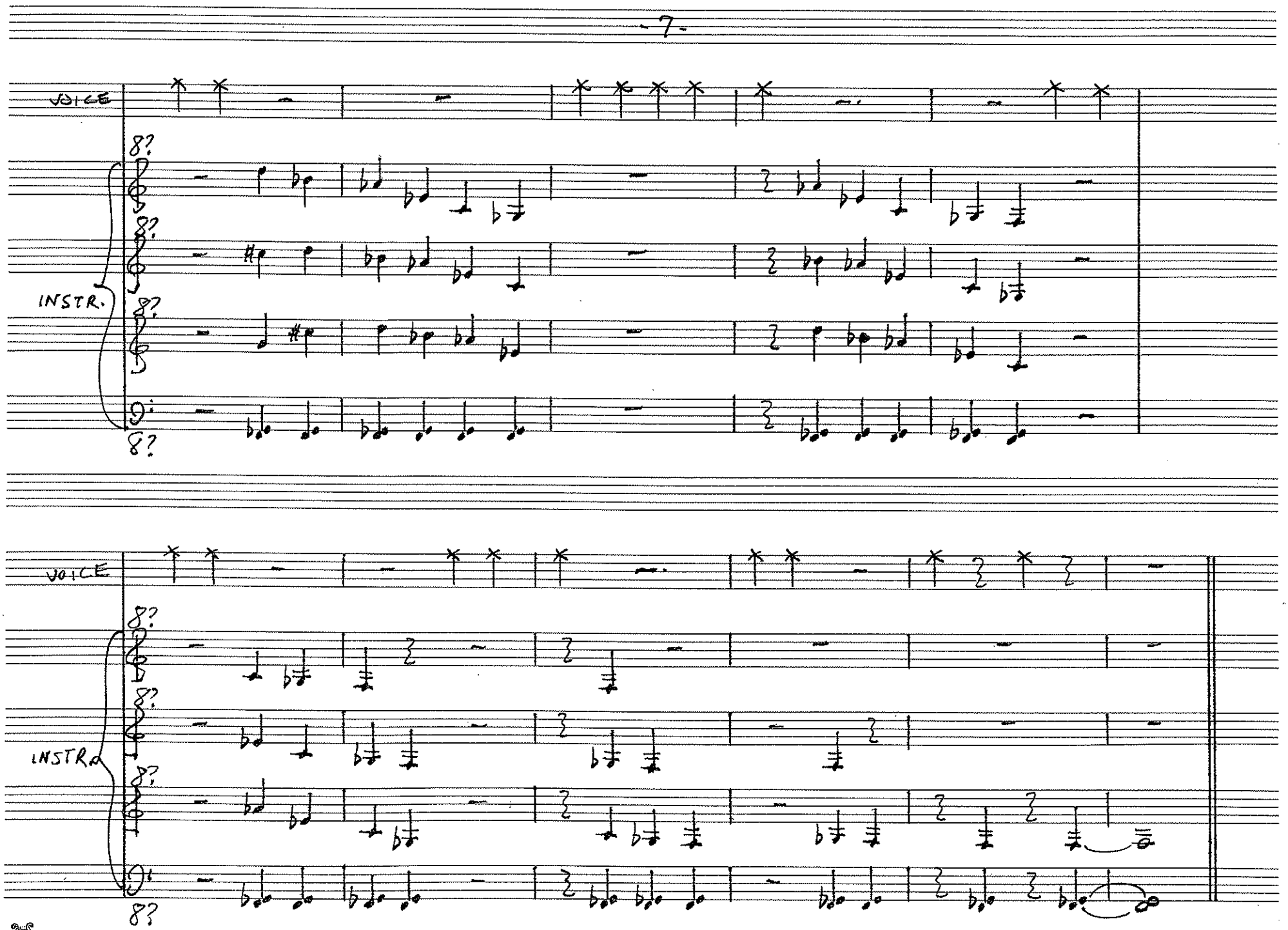


*VOICE IN [C]: TAKE A THIRD ARTICLE — "Z". BEGIN AT ANY POINT IN THE TEXT. ONE SYLLABLE FOR EACH QUARTER-NOTE. READ IN A SHORT, CLIPPED, EXPRESSIONLESS, ROBOTLIKE VOICE.




VOICE
INSTR.
8?
8?
8?
8?
8?


VOICE
INSTR.
8?
8?
8?
8?
8?


VOICE
INSTR.
VOICE
INSTR.

D

♩.=80 (♩=120)

GOOD NEWS! HEAR THIS, IT'S GOOD NEWS!

VOICE

INSTR.

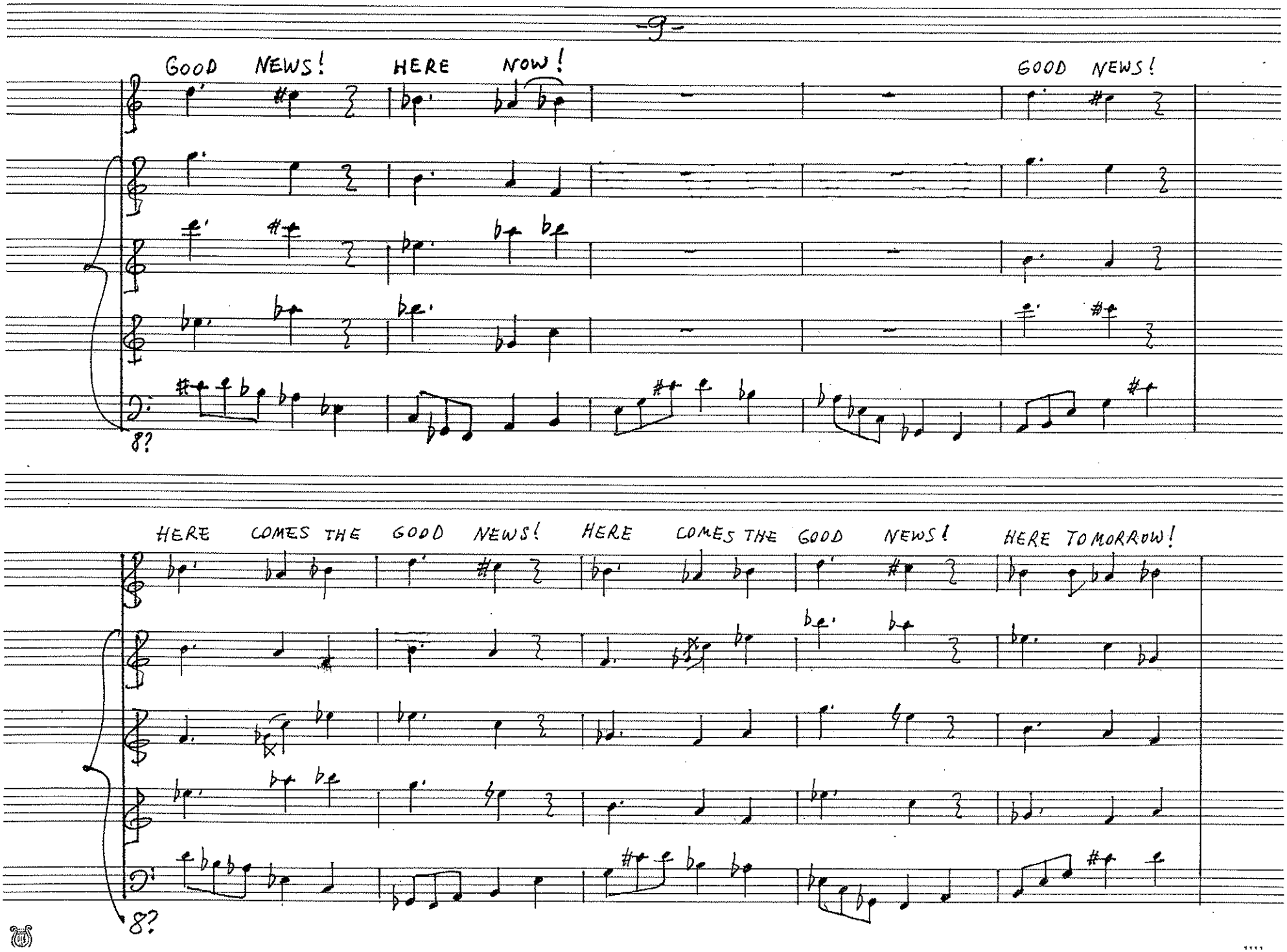
8?

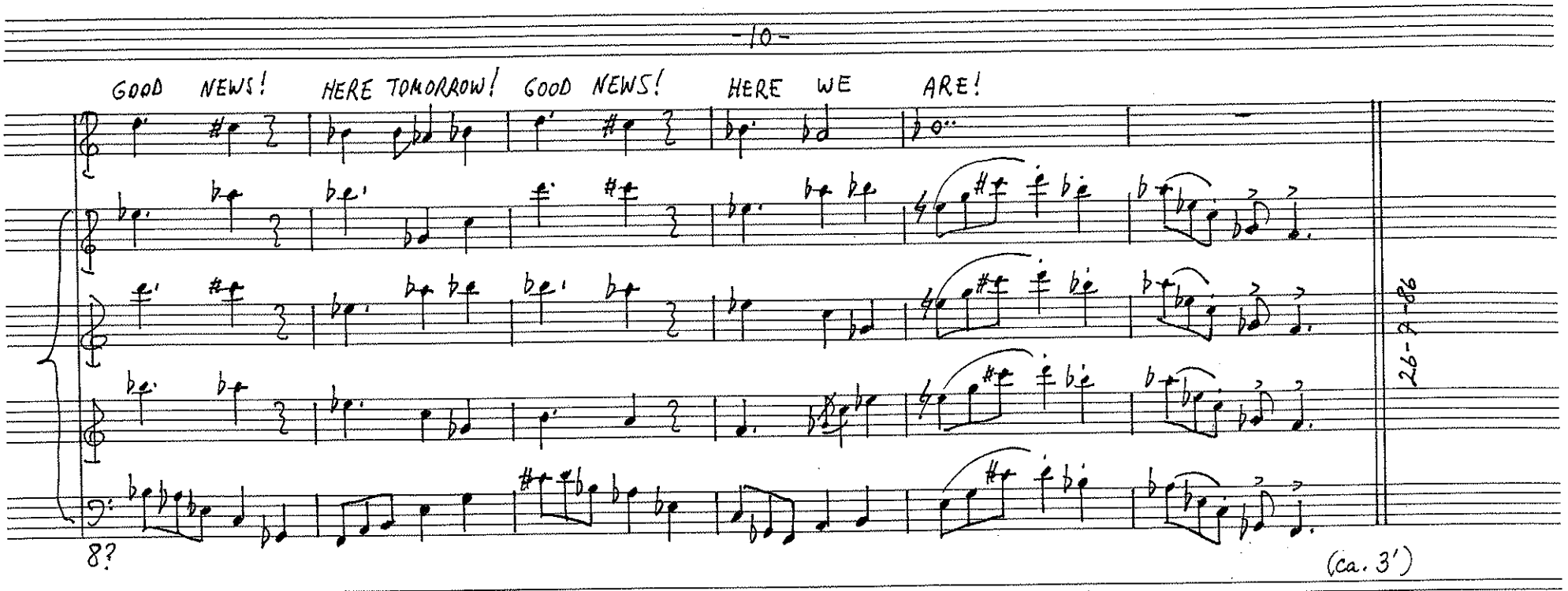
HEAR THIS, IT'S GOOD NEWS! WE'RE STILL HERE! GOOD NEWS! WE'RE STILL HERE!

VOICE

INSTR.

8?


GOOD NEWS! HERE NOW!
GOOD NEWS!
8?
HERE COMES THE GOOD NEWS! HERE COMES THE GOOD NEWS! HERE TOMORROW!
8?



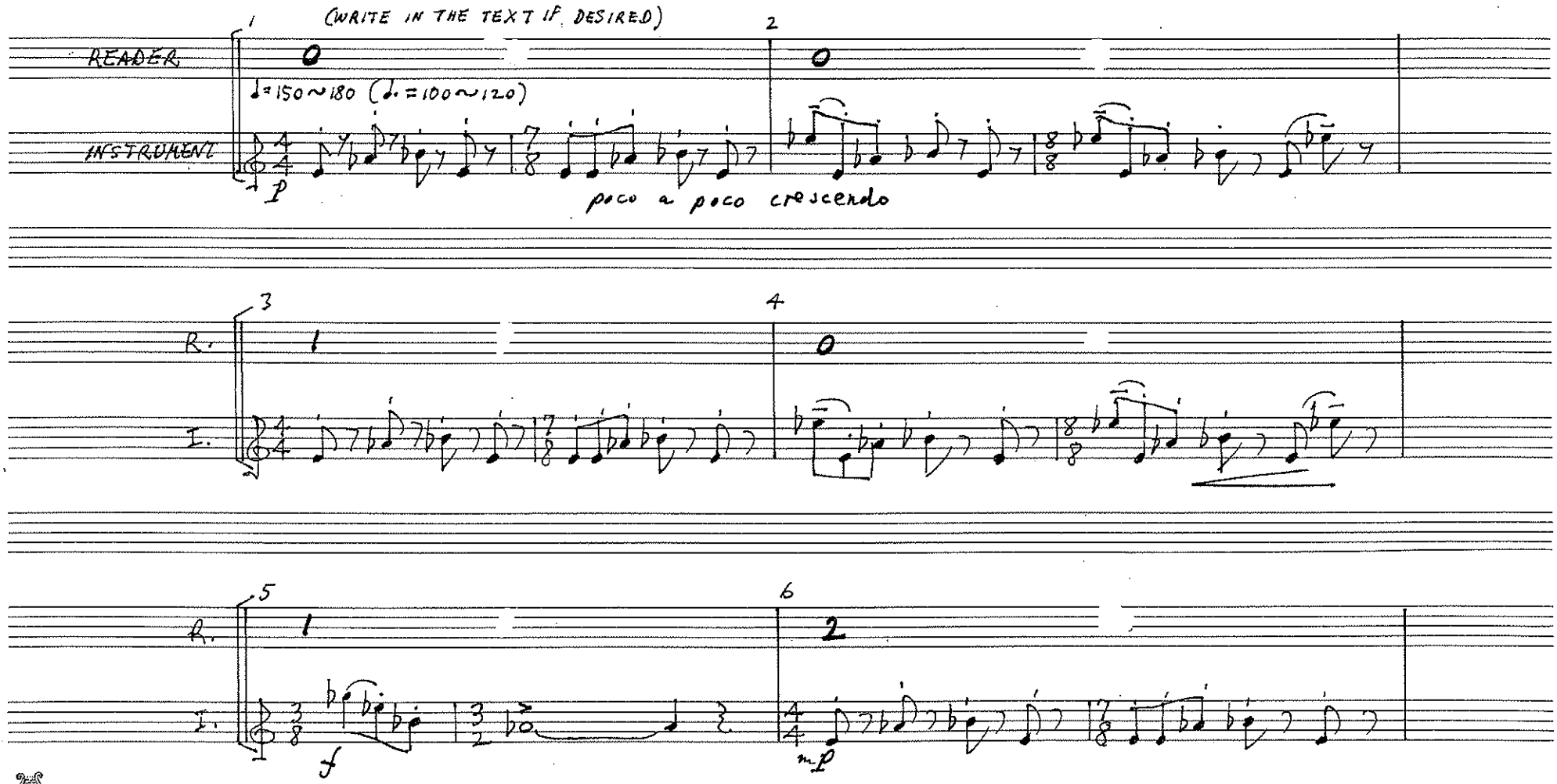
NOTES ON THE TEXT: THE ARTICLES CHOSEN DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO CONTAIN "BAD NEWS". THEY MAY BE CHOSEN RANDOMLY; OR AN EFFORT MAY BE MADE TO FIND MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THEM. THERE MAY BE NO CLEAR RELATION BETWEEN ARTICLES "X" AND "Y"; BUT ARTICLE "Z" MAY BE SELECTED IN A WAY THAT APPEARS TO CAST LIGHT ON THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN "X" AND "Y".

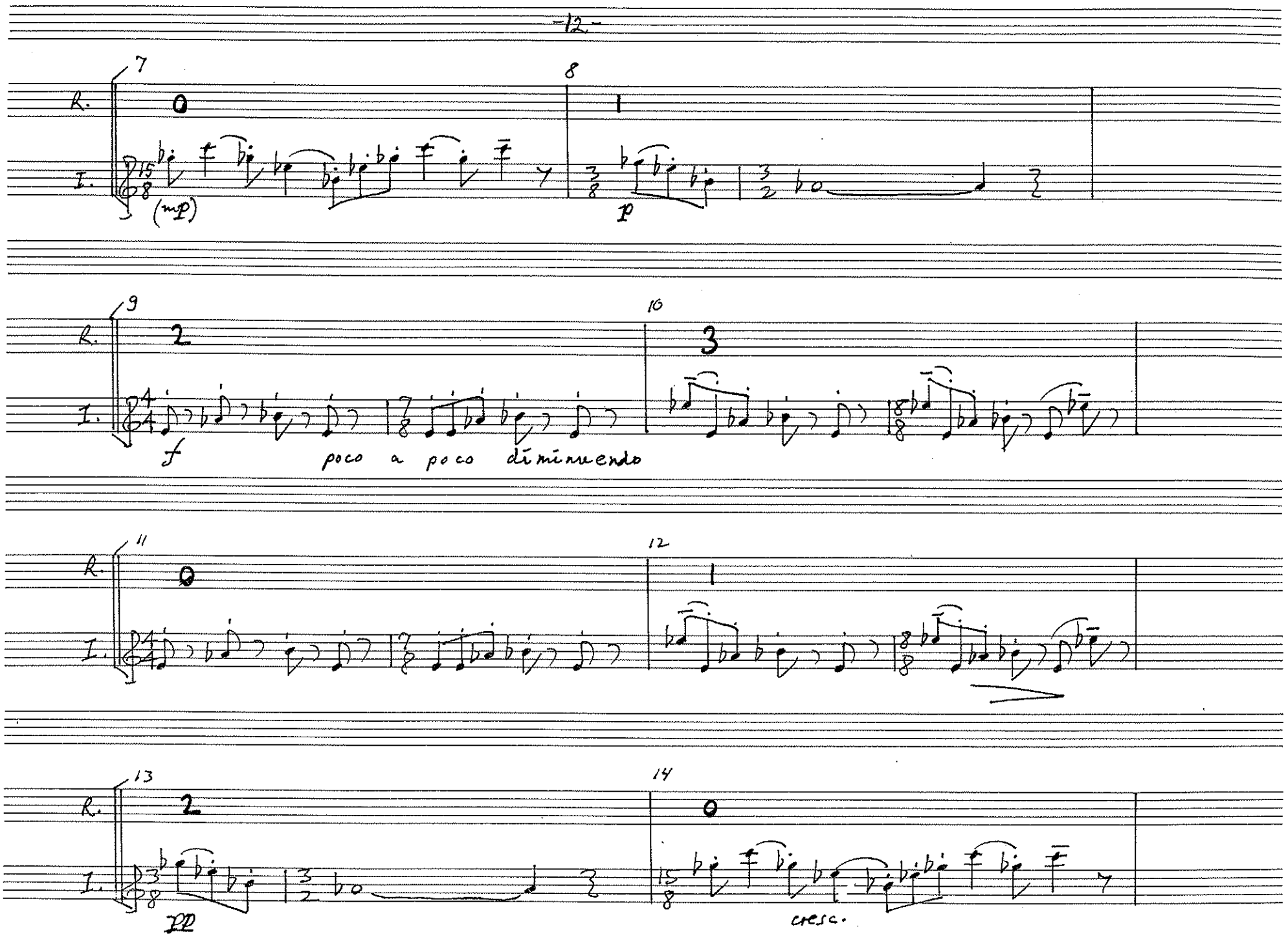
2. THE NEWS, AGAIN

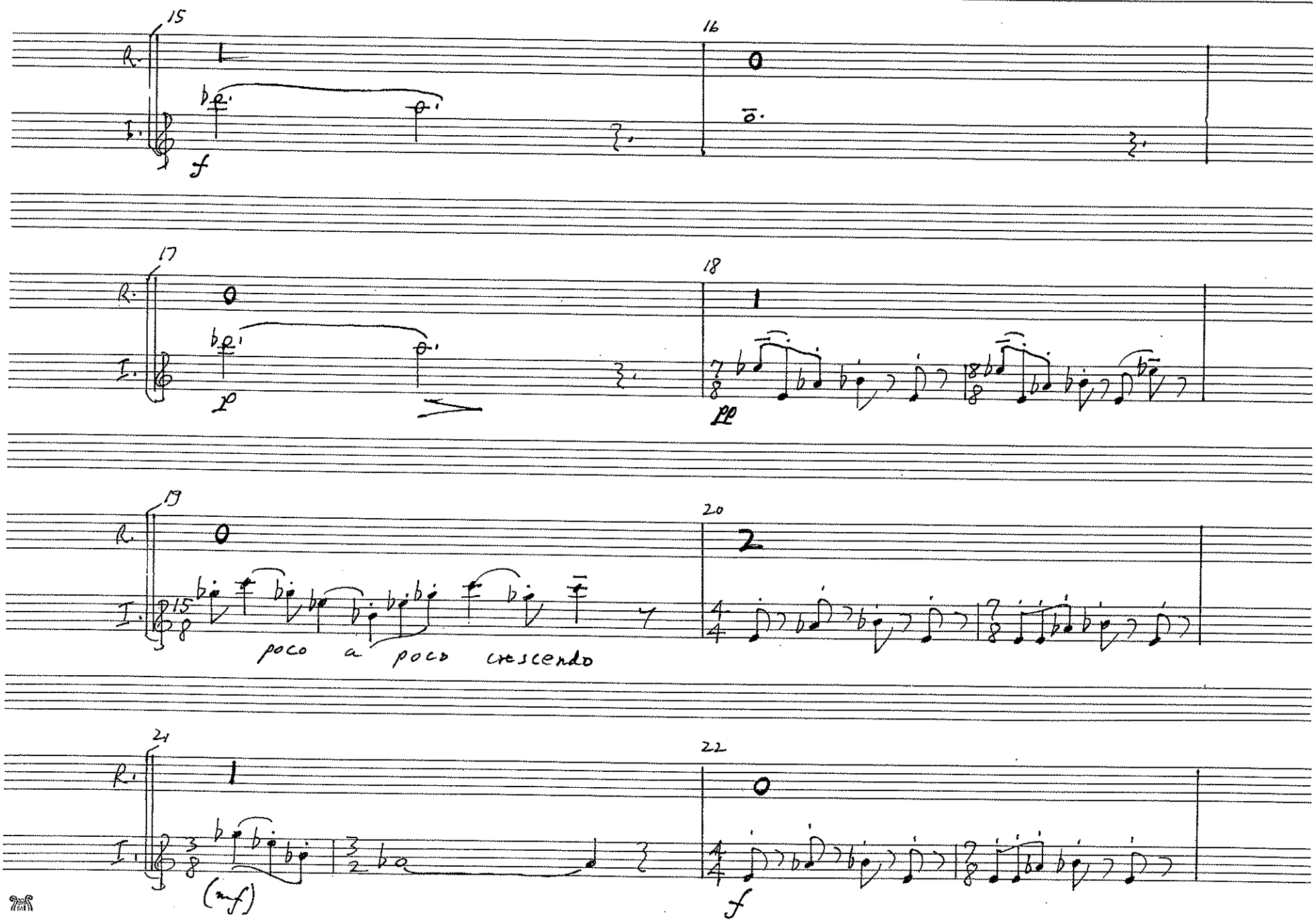
FOR A READER AND ANY SOLO INSTRUMENTAL ACCOMPANIMENT.

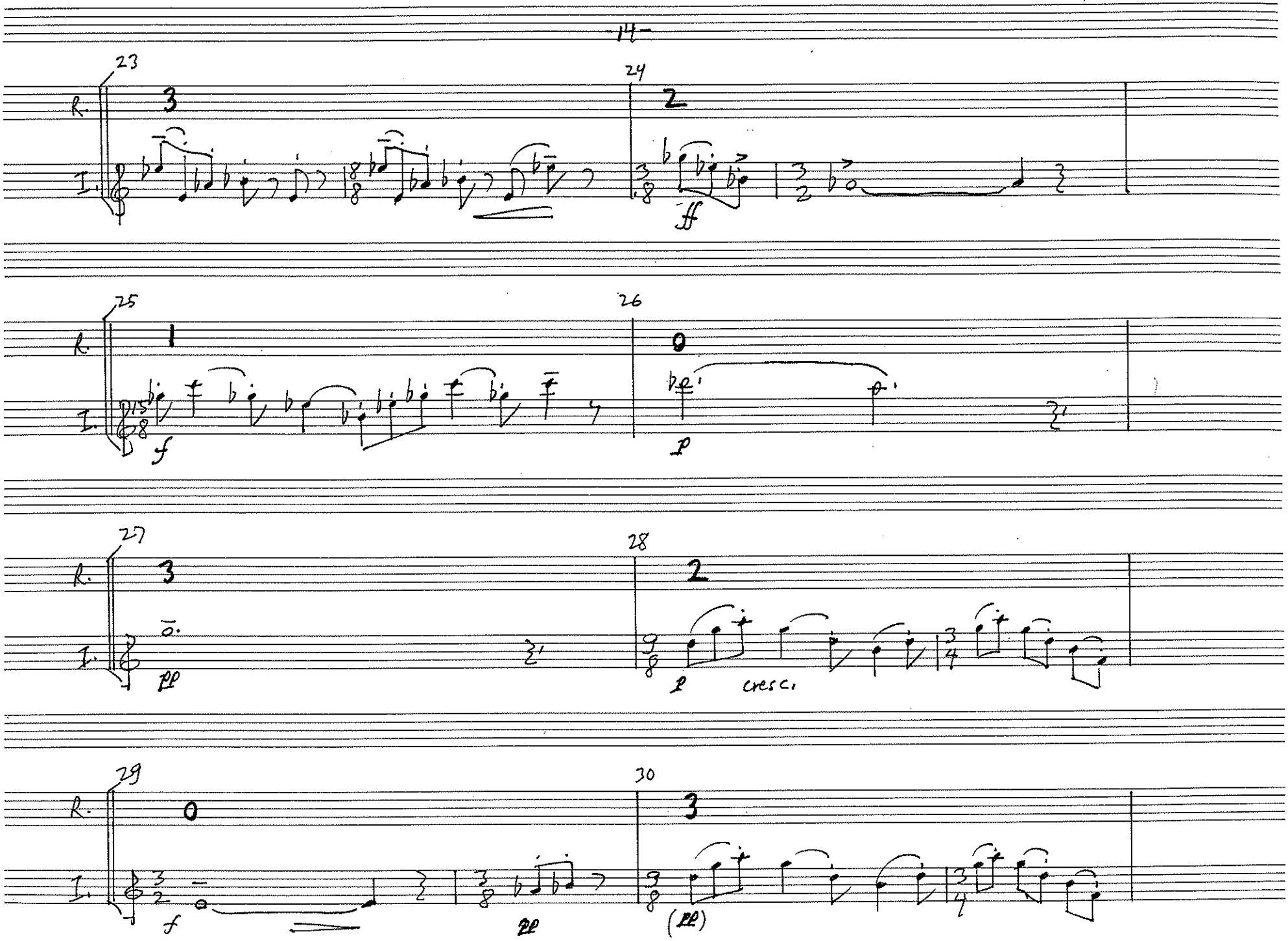
READER: READ FROM AN ARTICLE IN TODAY'S NEWSPAPER. BEGIN AT ANY POINT IN THE TEXT (NOT NECESSARILY AT THE BEGINNING OF A SENTENCE), THEN READ THE TEXT CONTINUOUSLY. NUMBERS REFER TO THE NUMBER OF WORDS IN A BAR. THE SIGN ∞ IN BAR 33 MEANS: AS MANY WORDS AS YOU CAN FIT IN A BAR (≤ 2,5"~3").

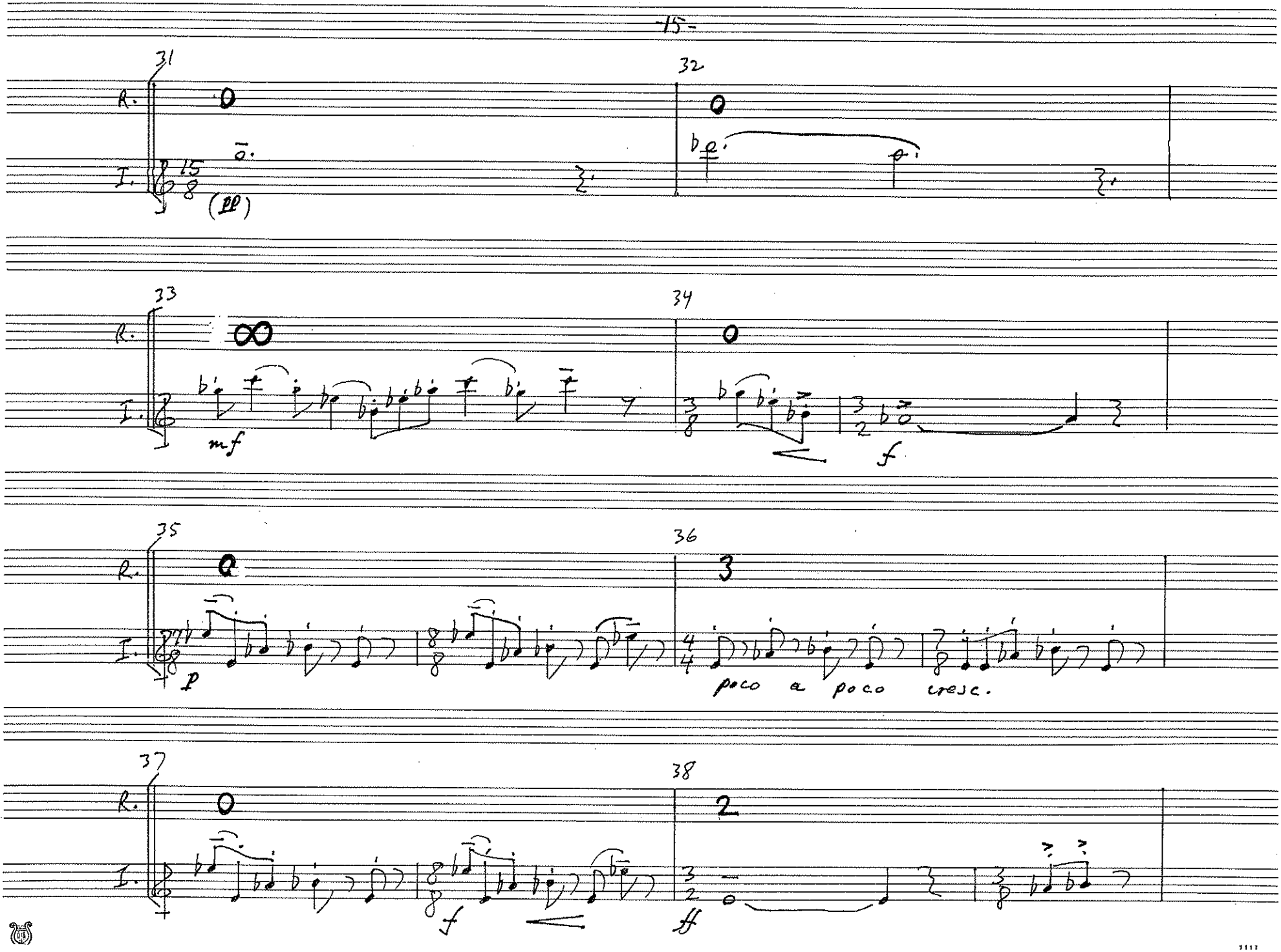
ACCOMPANIMENT: PLAY ON ANY INSTRUMENT, TRANSPOSE TO ANY DEGREE. CHANGE DYNAMICS IF DESIRED, AS IF IN REACTION TO THE TEXT; LET DYNAMIC CHANGES BE SUDDEN, IMPULSIVE, UNPREDICTABLE.

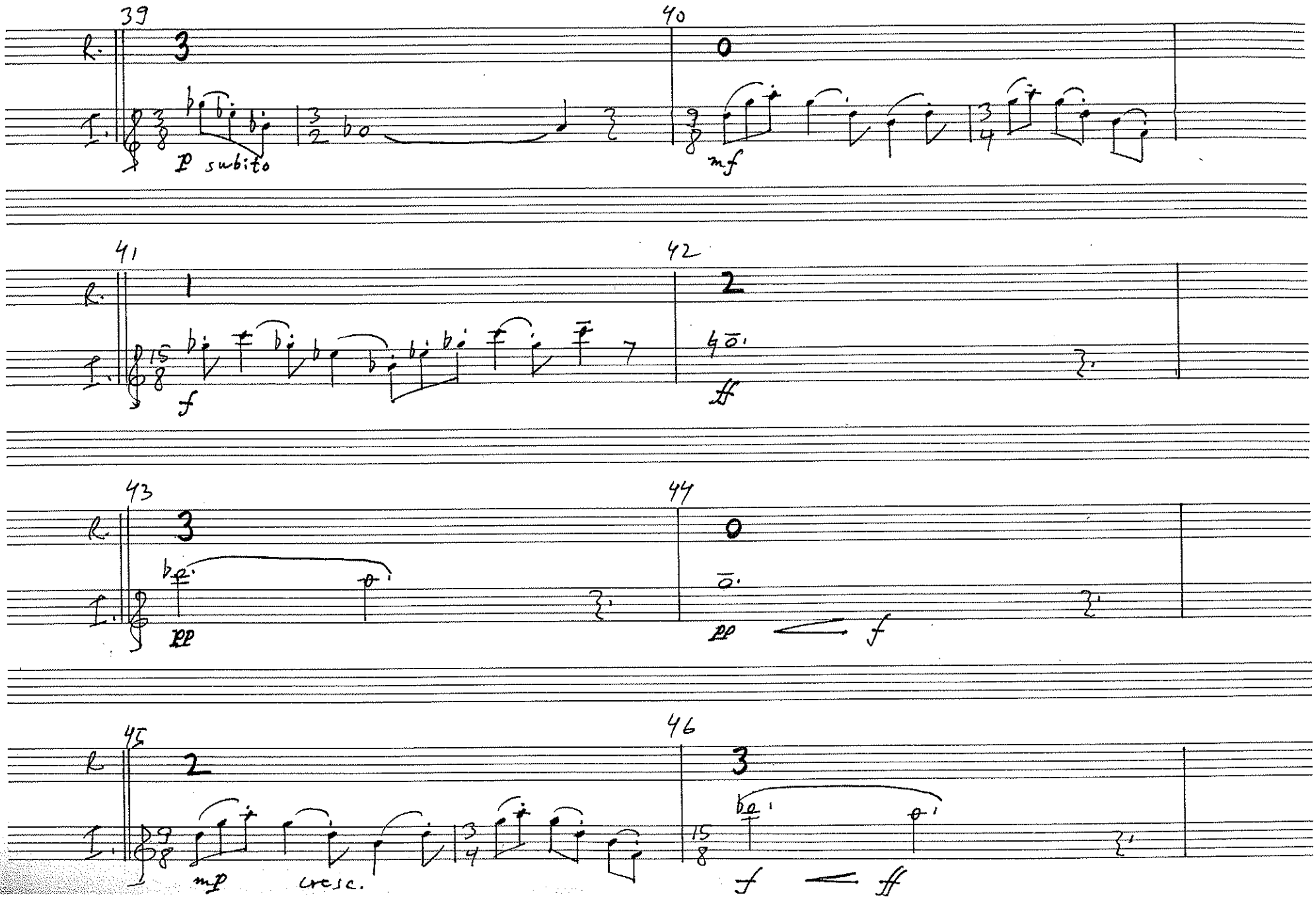


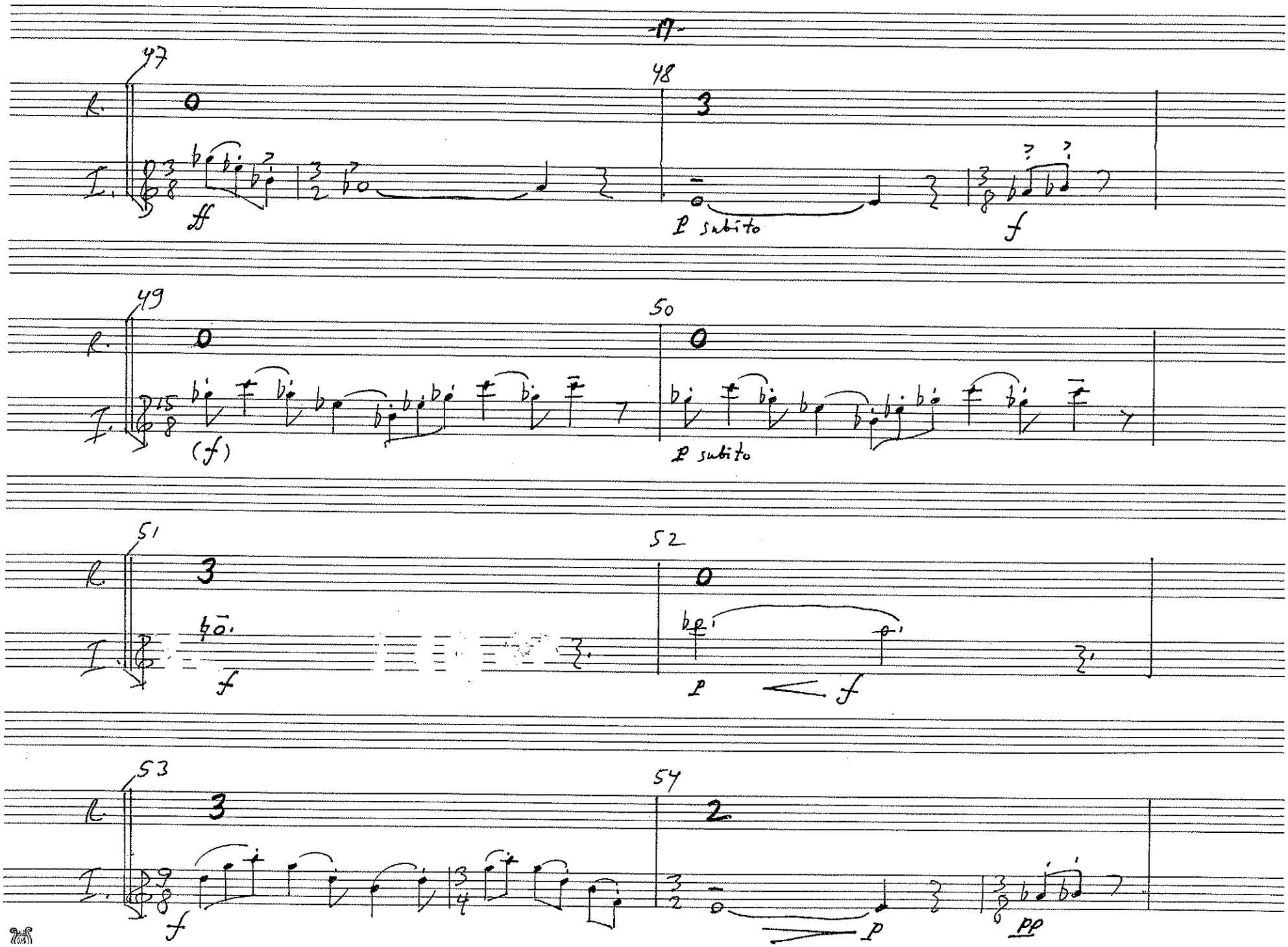

7
8
R.
I.
0
1
(mp)
p
9
10
2
3
f
poco a poco diminuendo
11
12
0
1
13
14
2
0
pp
cresc.

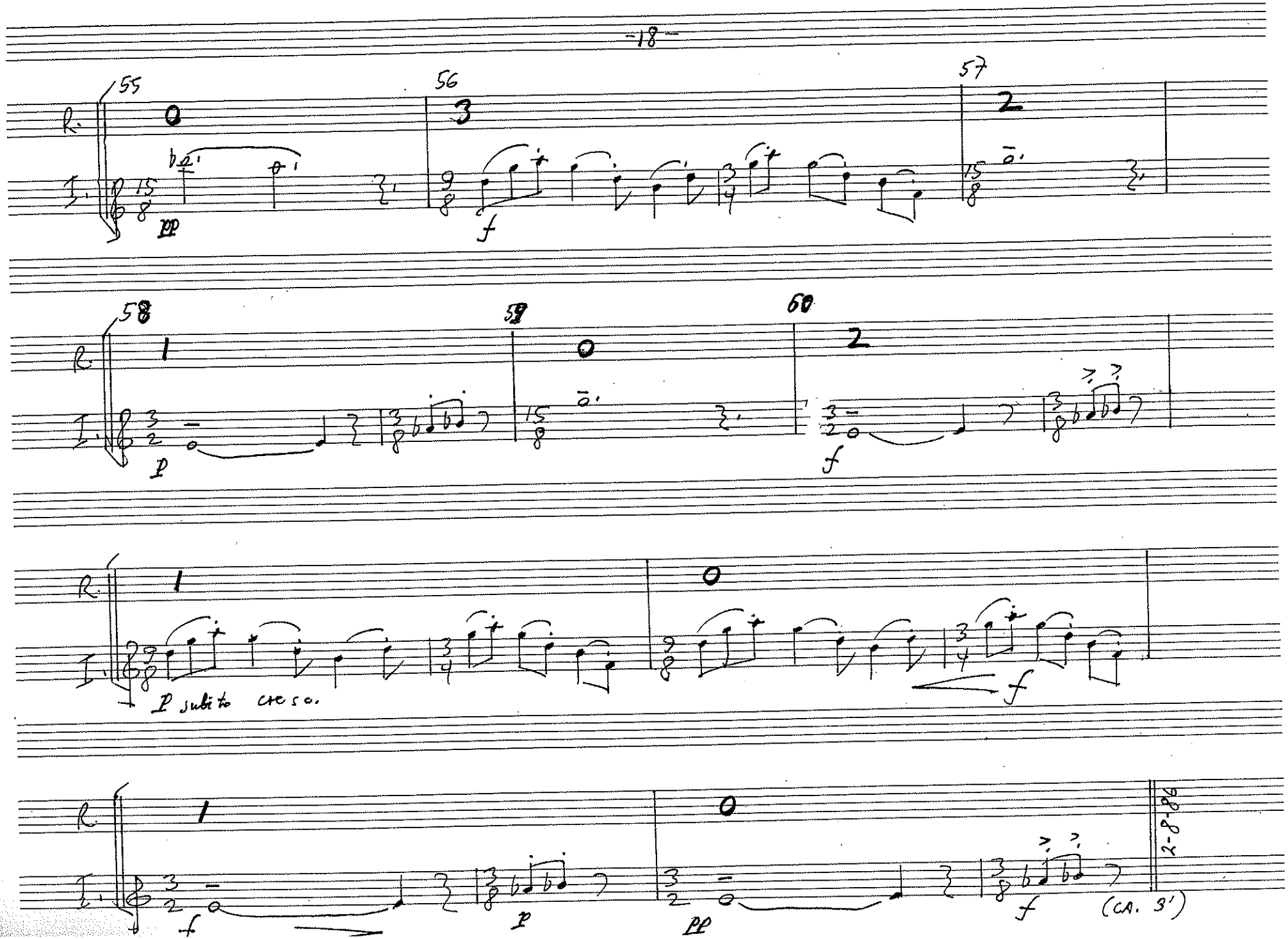

15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
poco a poco crescendo
(mf)


23
24
R.
I.
ff
25
26
f
p
27
28
pp
p
cresc.
29
30
f
pp
(pp)


31
32
R.
I.
15
8
(pp)
33
34
mf
f
35
36
p
poco a poco cresc.
37
38
f


39
40
p subito
mf
41
42
f
ff
43
44
pp
pp
f
45
46
mp
cresc.
f
ff


47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
ff
p subito
f
(f)
p subito
f
p
f
f
p
pp


55
56
57
pp
f
58
59
60
p
f
p subito cresc.
f
p
pp
f
(ca. 3')

3. CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS TO FERDINAND AND ISABELLA

(FOR VOICE AND ANY 4 INSTRUMENTS OF HIGH RANGE)

VOICE [speak after bird-calls have died down somewhat:] CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS TO FERDINAND AND ISABELLA:

INSTRUMENTS 1. 3. 2. 4.

(Improvise on bird calls, squeakers, small whistles, etc. for about 15 seconds.)

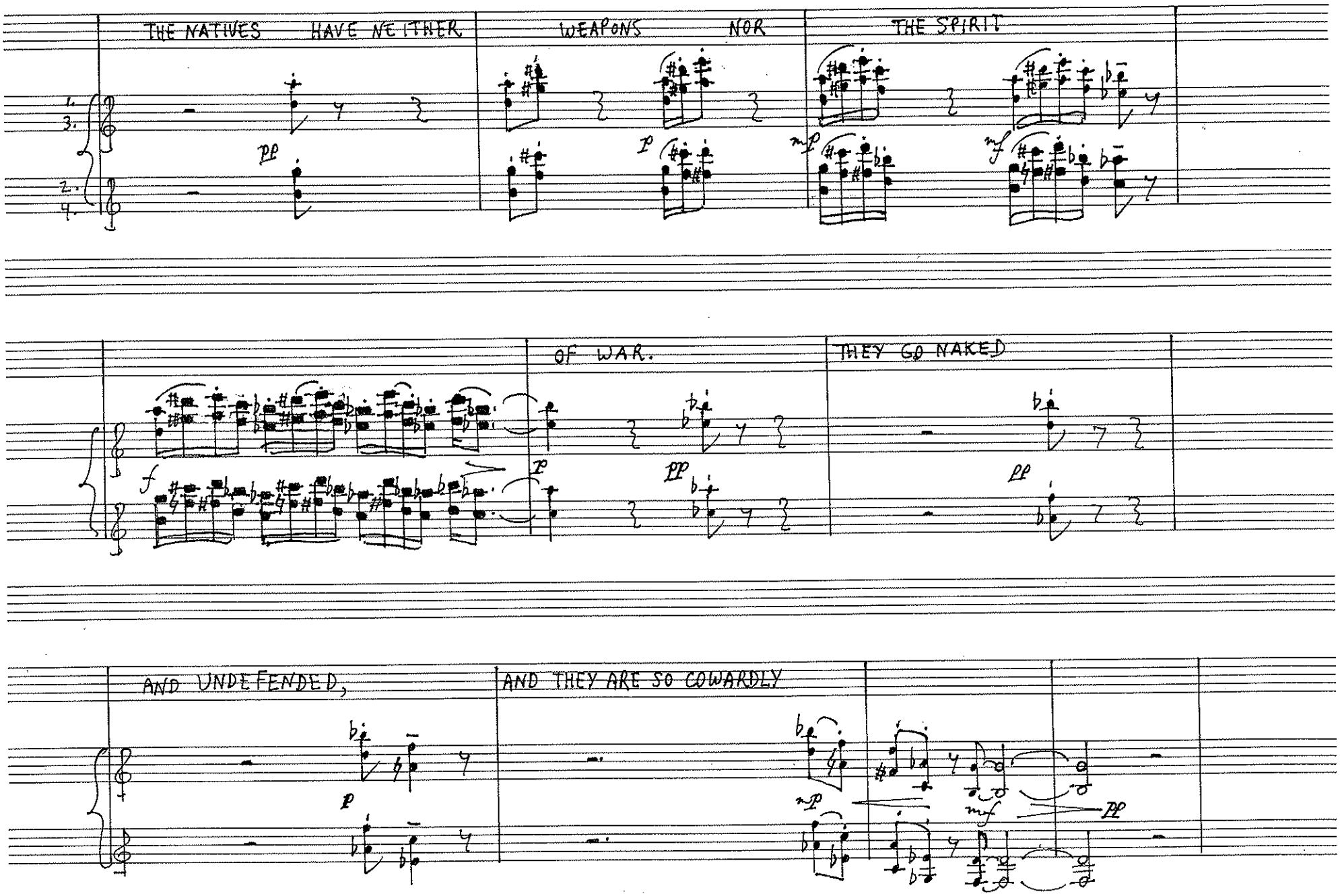
V. "YOUR HIGHNESSES WILL NOT BELIEVE HOW FERTILE AND RICH

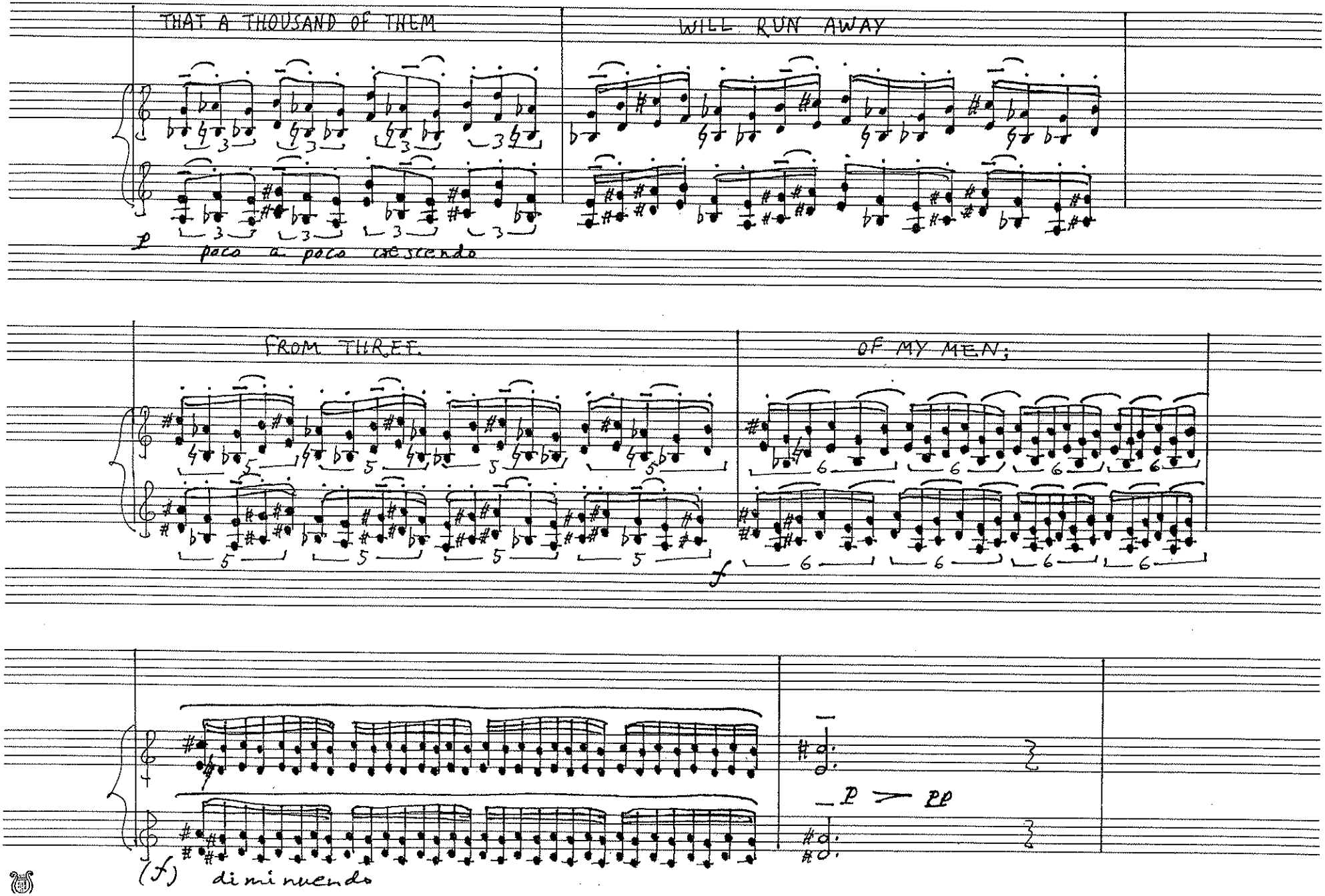
(♩ = 80)

I. ppp ppp pp pp p mp

V. THESE ISLANDS ARE.

I. mf f p pp ppp


THE NATIVES HAVE NEITHER
WEAPONS NOR
THE SPIRIT
OF WAR.
THEY GO NAKED
AND UNDEFENDED,
AND THEY ARE SO COWARDLY


THAT A THOUSAND OF THEM
WILL RUN AWAY
p
poco a poco crescendo
FROM THREE
OF MY MEN;
f
(f)
diminuendo
p
pp

AT THE SAME TIME, THEY ARE WILLING TO OBEY AND TO WORK,

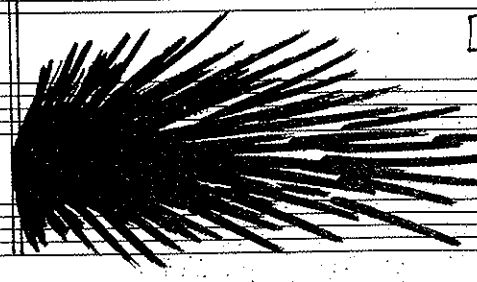
pp

TILL THE SOIL, AND DO WHATEVER

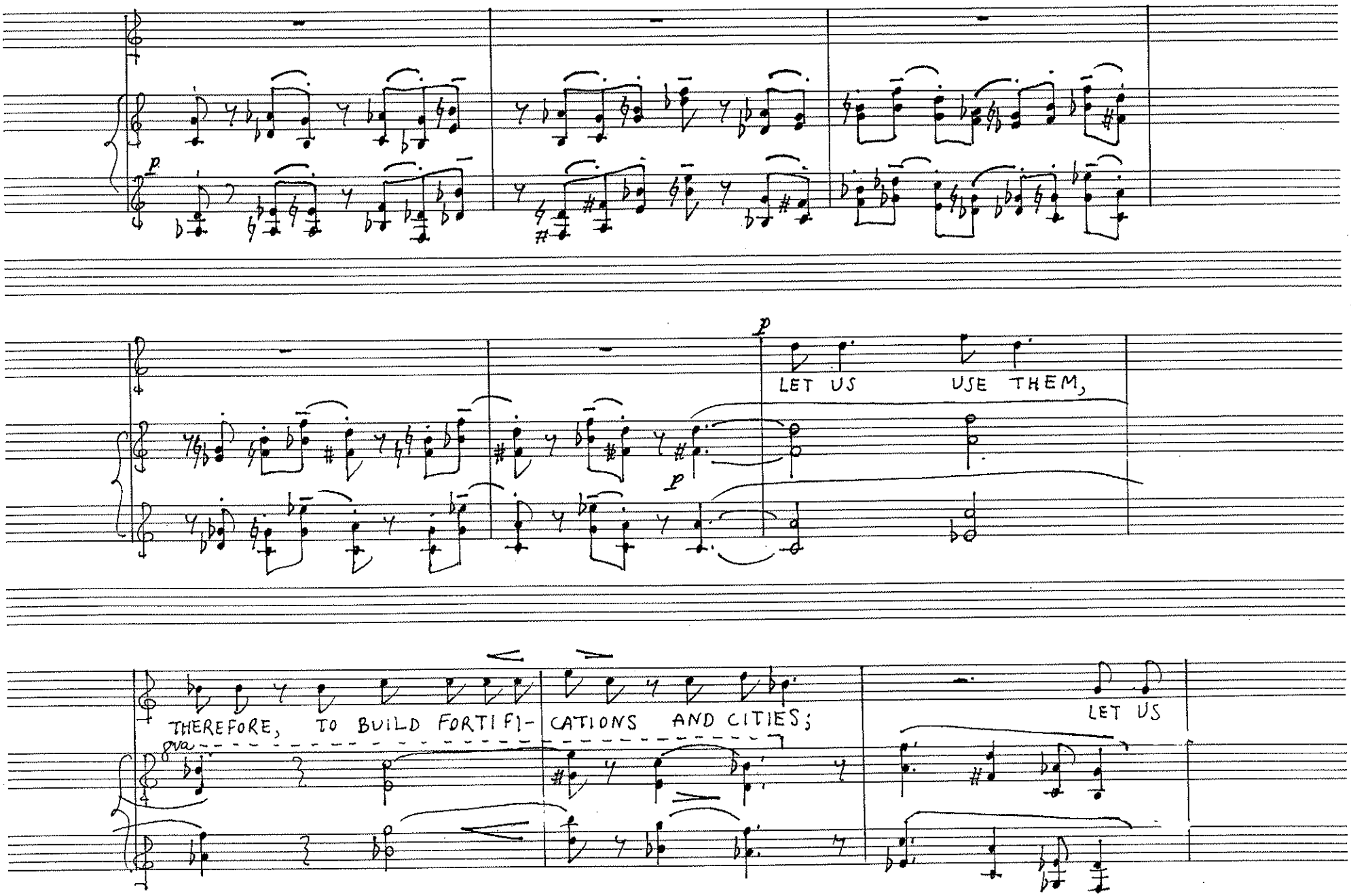
mp

THEY ARE ORDERED TO DO.

pp



[A loud shot or explosion followed by several seconds of silence]

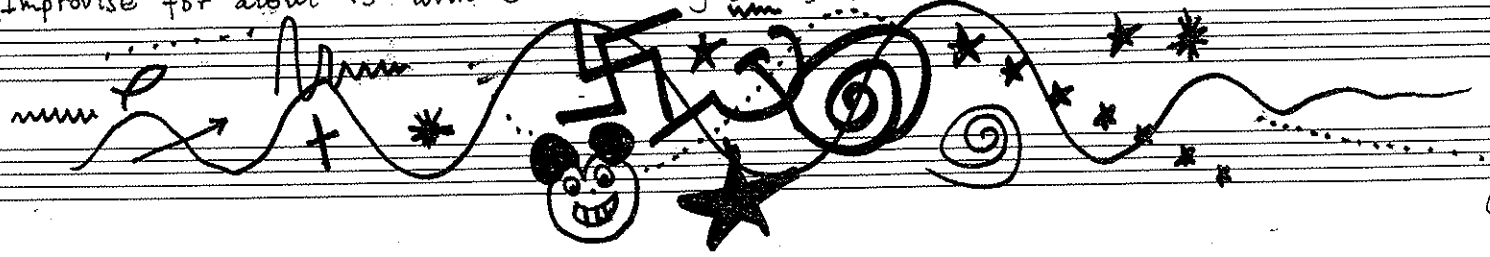

p
p
LET US USE THEM,
THEREFORE, TO BUILD FORTIFI- CATIONS AND CITIES;
8va
LET US

TEACH THEM TO CLOTHE THEMSELVES

AND FINAL- LY

MAKE THEM A- DOPT OUR CUSTOMS."

[Improvise for about 15" with electronic ray-guns, space weapons, etc.]



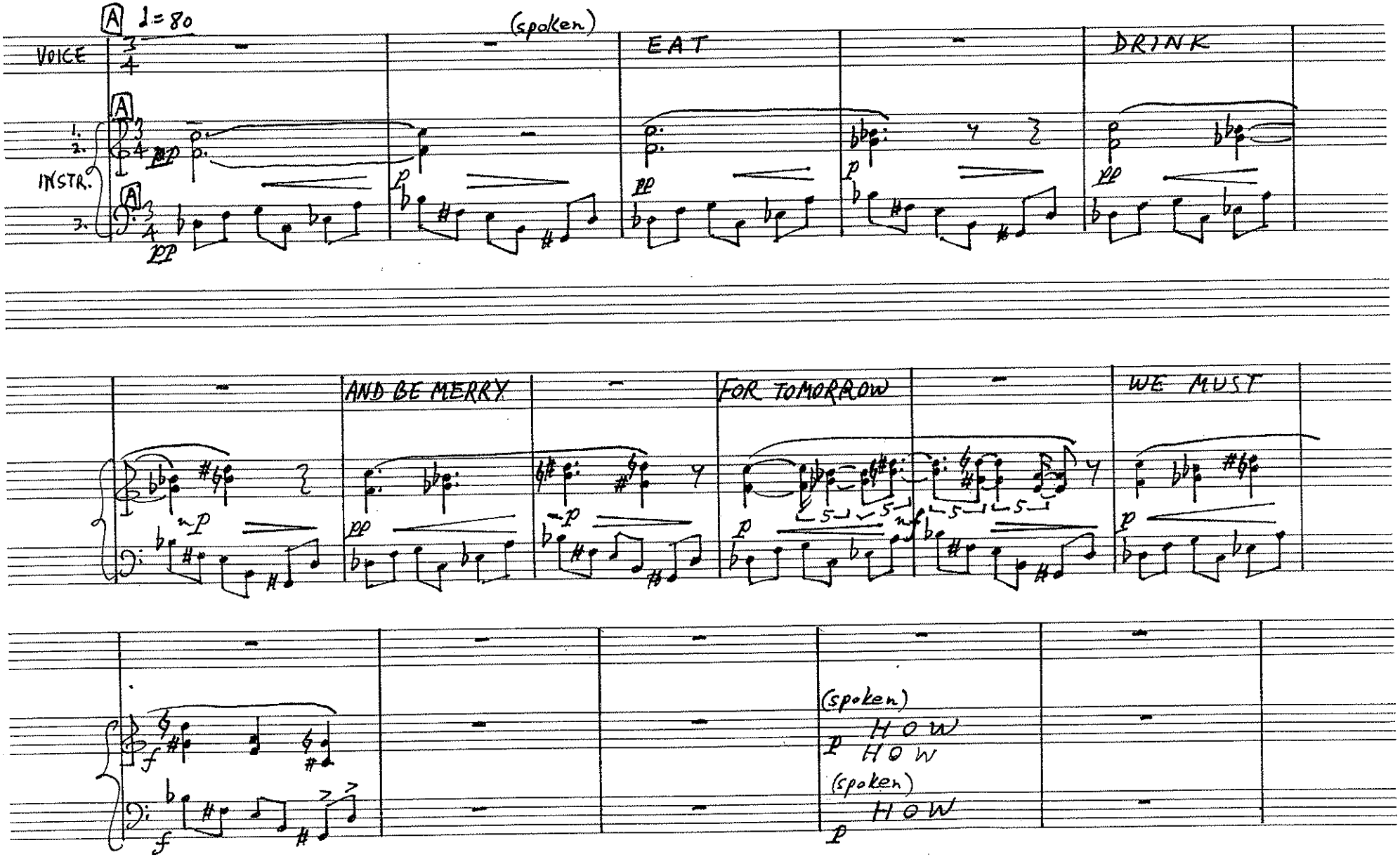
(CA. 3')

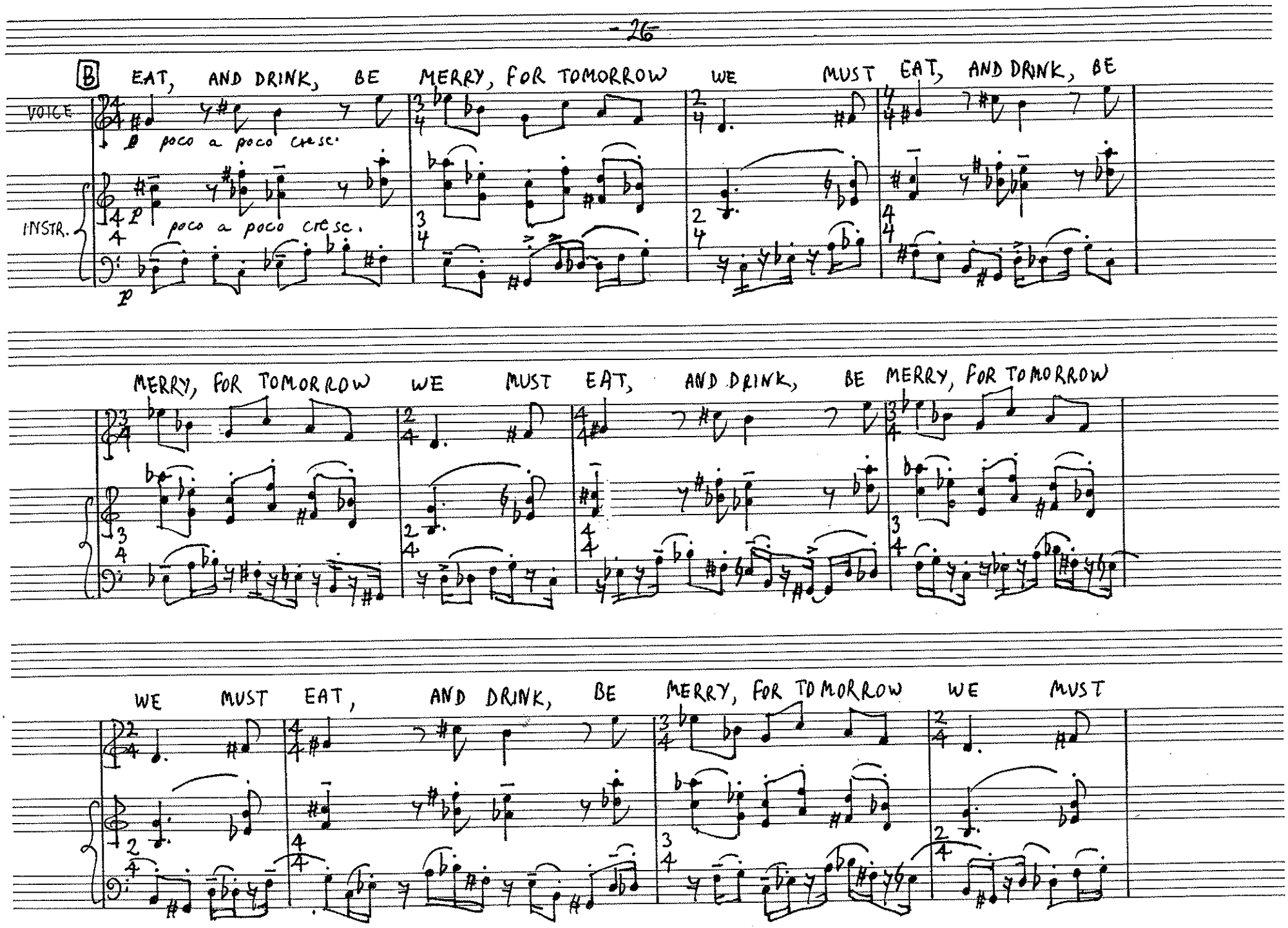
(Text: after G. B. Shaw)

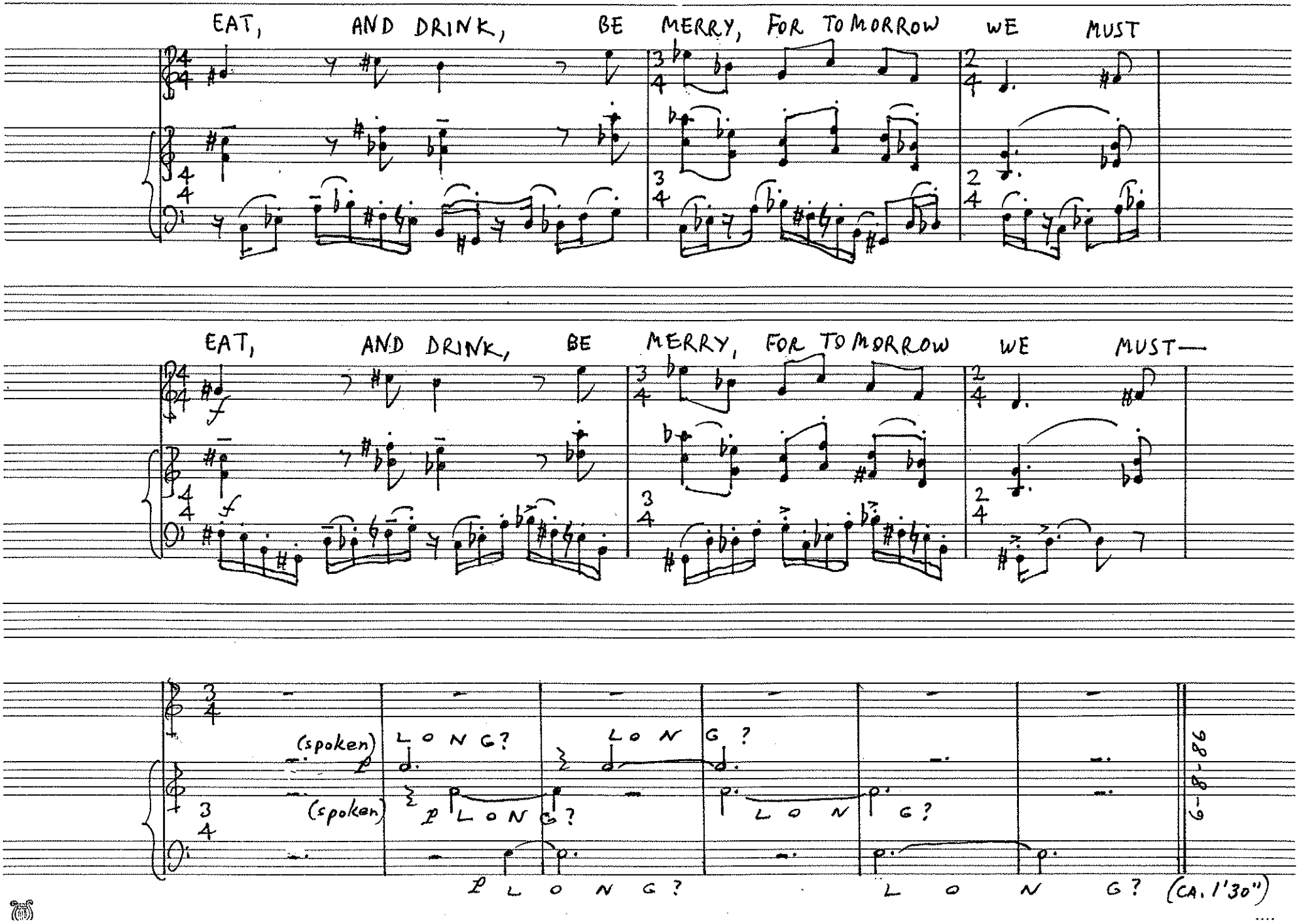
-25- 4. THE CRY OF THE RICH AND POOR

(FOR VOICE, TWO HIGH INSTRUMENTS AND ONE LOW INSTRUMENT)

(VOICE: ANNOUNCE THE TITLE BEFORE BEGINNING)




B
EAT, AND DRINK, BE MERRY, FOR TOMORROW WE MUST EAT, AND DRINK, BE
VOICE
p poco a poco cresc.
INSTR.
p poco a poco cresc.
p
MERRY, FOR TOMORROW WE MUST EAT, AND DRINK, BE MERRY, FOR TOMORROW
WE MUST EAT, AND DRINK, BE MERRY, FOR TOMORROW WE MUST

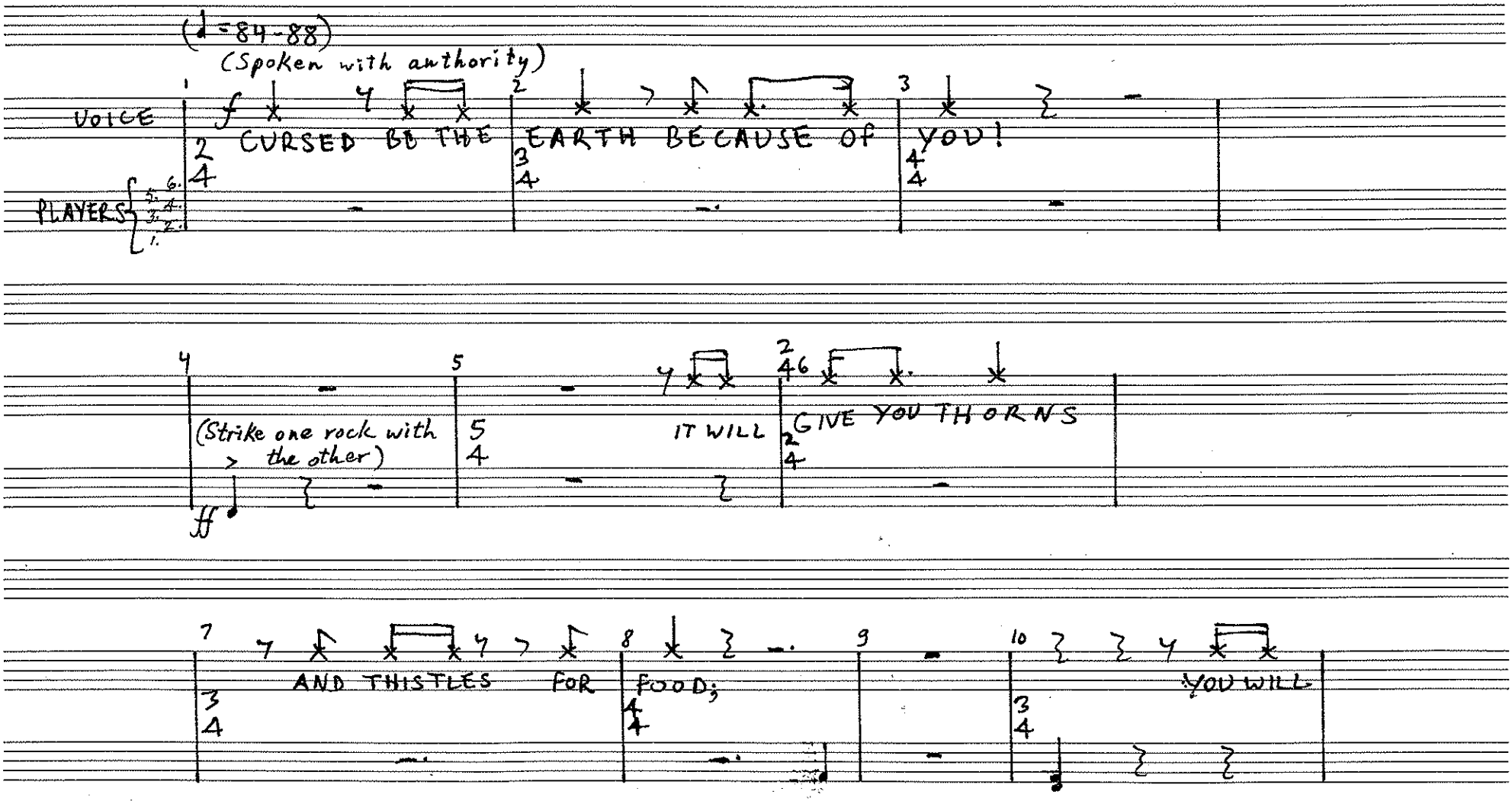

EAT, AND DRINK, BE MERRY, FOR TOMORROW WE MUST
EAT, AND DRINK, BE MERRY, FOR TOMORROW WE MUST—
f
f
(spoken)
(spoken)
LONG?
LONG?
LONG?
LONG?
LONG?
LONG?
LONG?
(CA. 1'30")

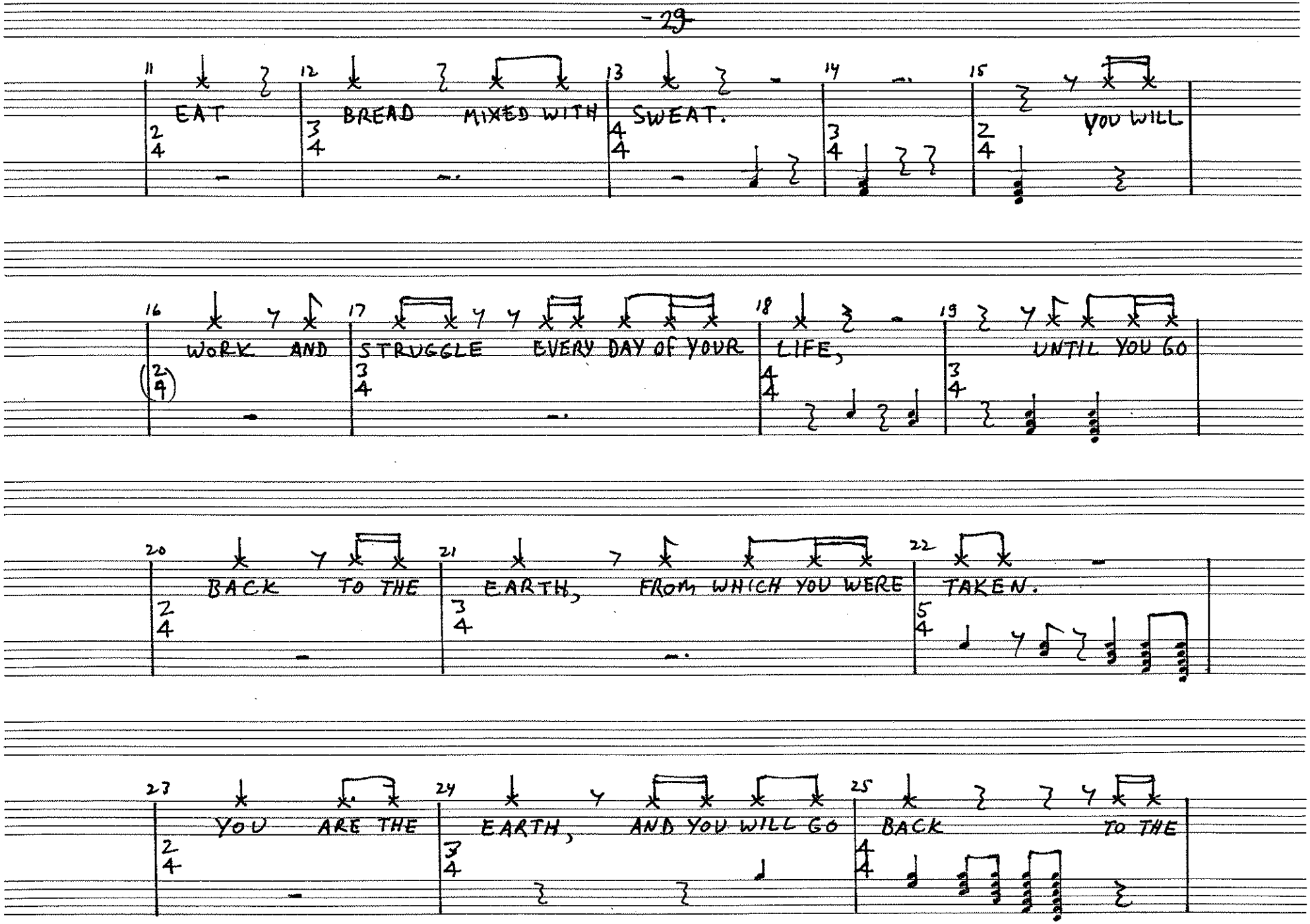
-28- 5. CREATION (PART 1)

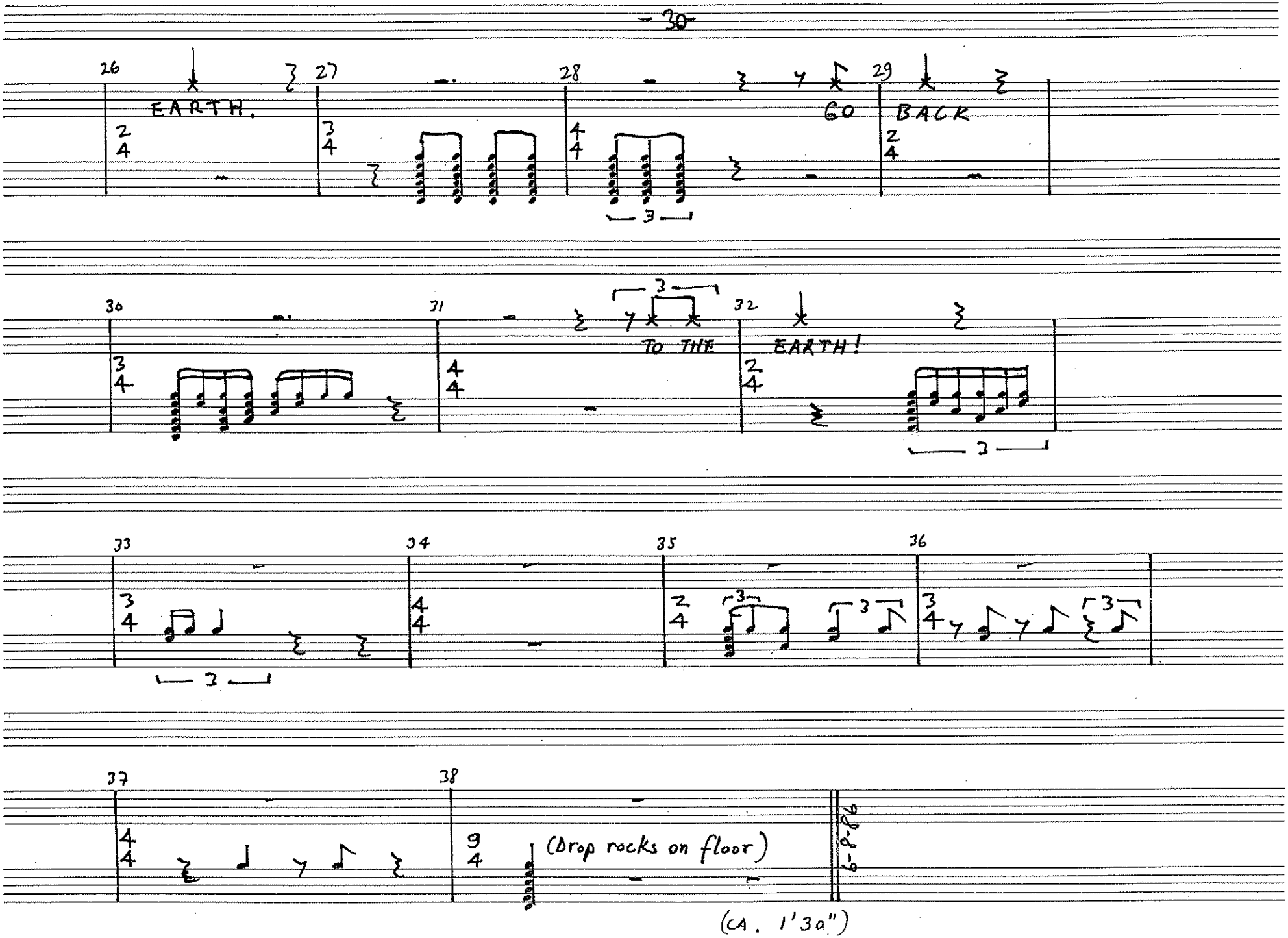
FOR VOICE AND 6 PLAYERS (OR 5, IF PLAYER 1 IS ALSO THE SPEAKER),
EACH WITH A PAIR OF ROCKS.

PLAYER 1 = LARGE ROCKS; PLAYER 2 = SMALLER ONES, ETC. . . . . .
PLAYER 6 : PEBBLES.

TEXT: GENESIS (ADAPTED)




11
EAT
12
BREAD MIXED WITH
13
SWEAT.
14
15
YOU WILL
16
WORK AND
17
STRUGGLE EVERY DAY OF YOUR
18
LIFE,
19
UNTIL YOU GO
20
BACK TO THE
21
EARTH, FROM WHICH YOU WERE
22
TAKEN.
23
YOU ARE THE
24
EARTH, AND YOU WILL GO
25
BACK TO THE

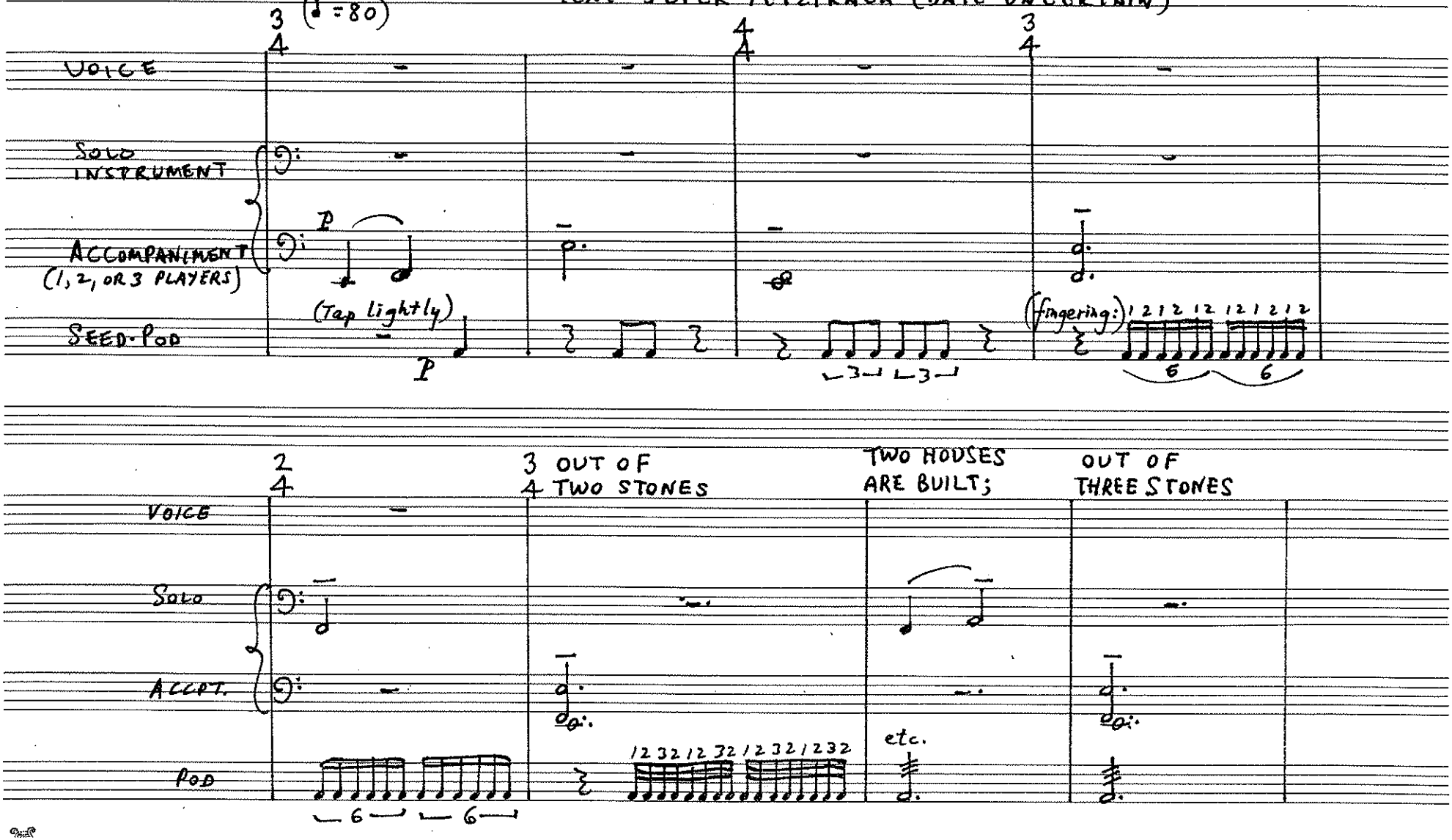

26
EARTH.
27
28
GO
29
BACK
30
31
TO THE
32
EARTH!
33
34
35
36
37
38
(Drop rocks on floor)
(CA. 1'30")

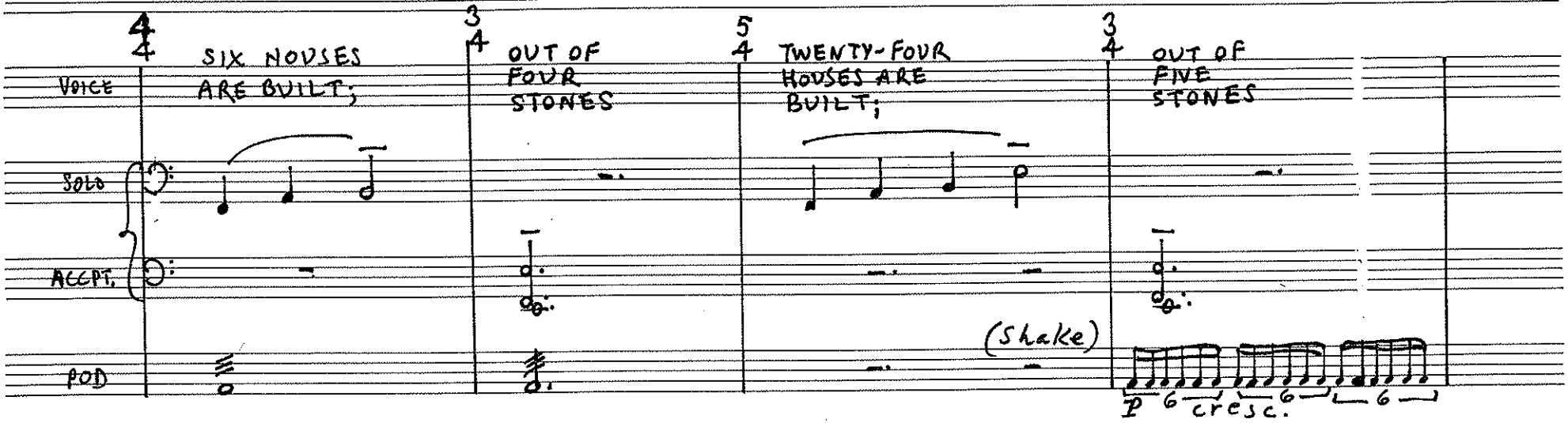
6. CREATION (PART 2)

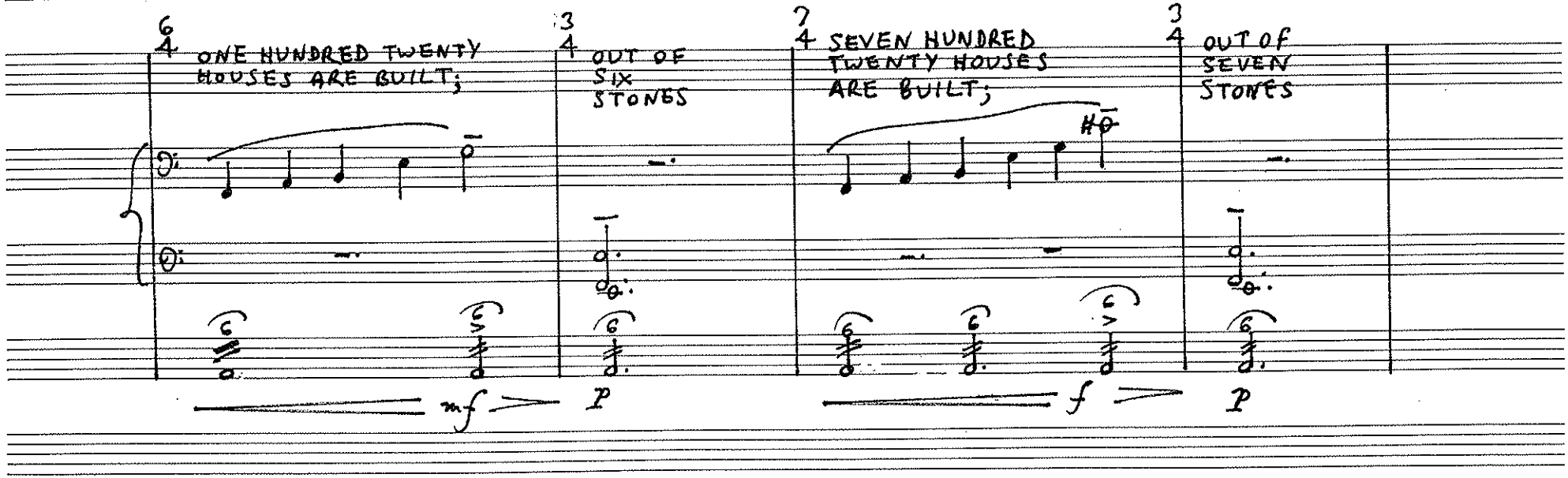
FOR VOICE, SOLO INSTRUMENT WITH A RANGE OF 3 OCTAVES + 9 SEMITONES, ACCOMPANIMENT, AND SEED-POD OR RATTLE WHICH CAN BE PLAYED WITH FINGERS.

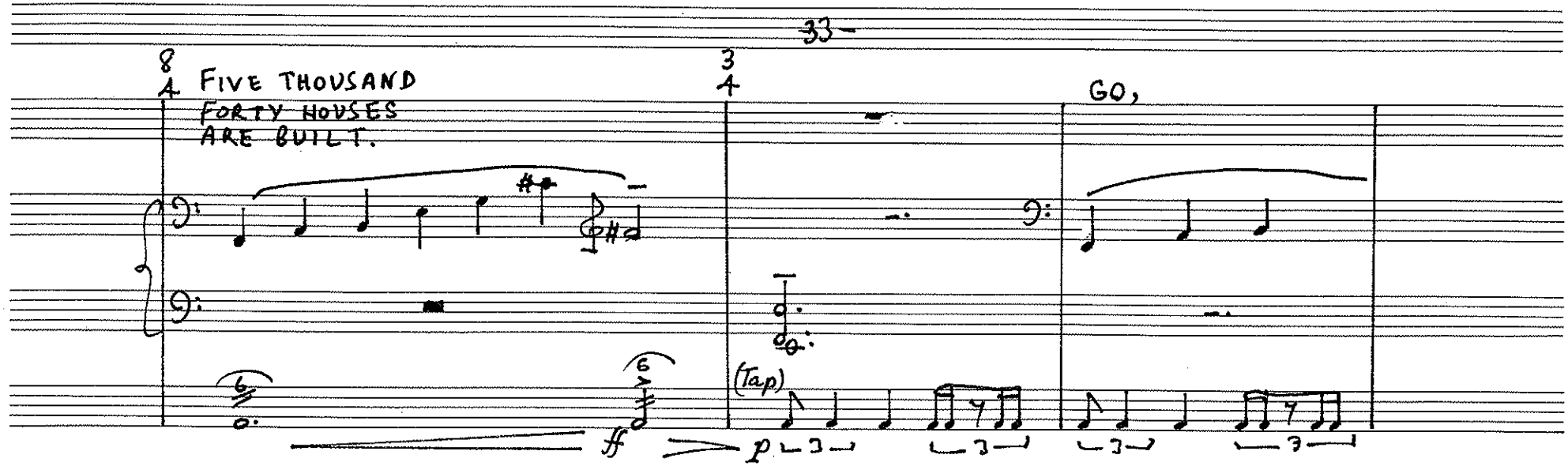
MAY BE TRANSPOSED AS NEEDED FOR ANY SUITABLE INSTRUMENTS.

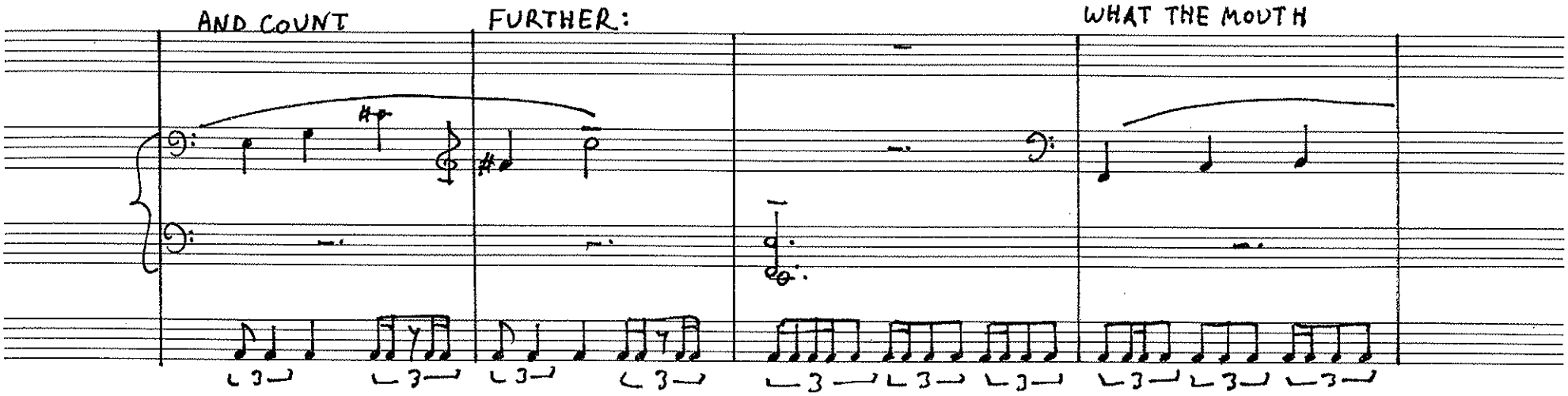
TEXT: SEFER YETZIRACH (DATE UNCERTAIN)

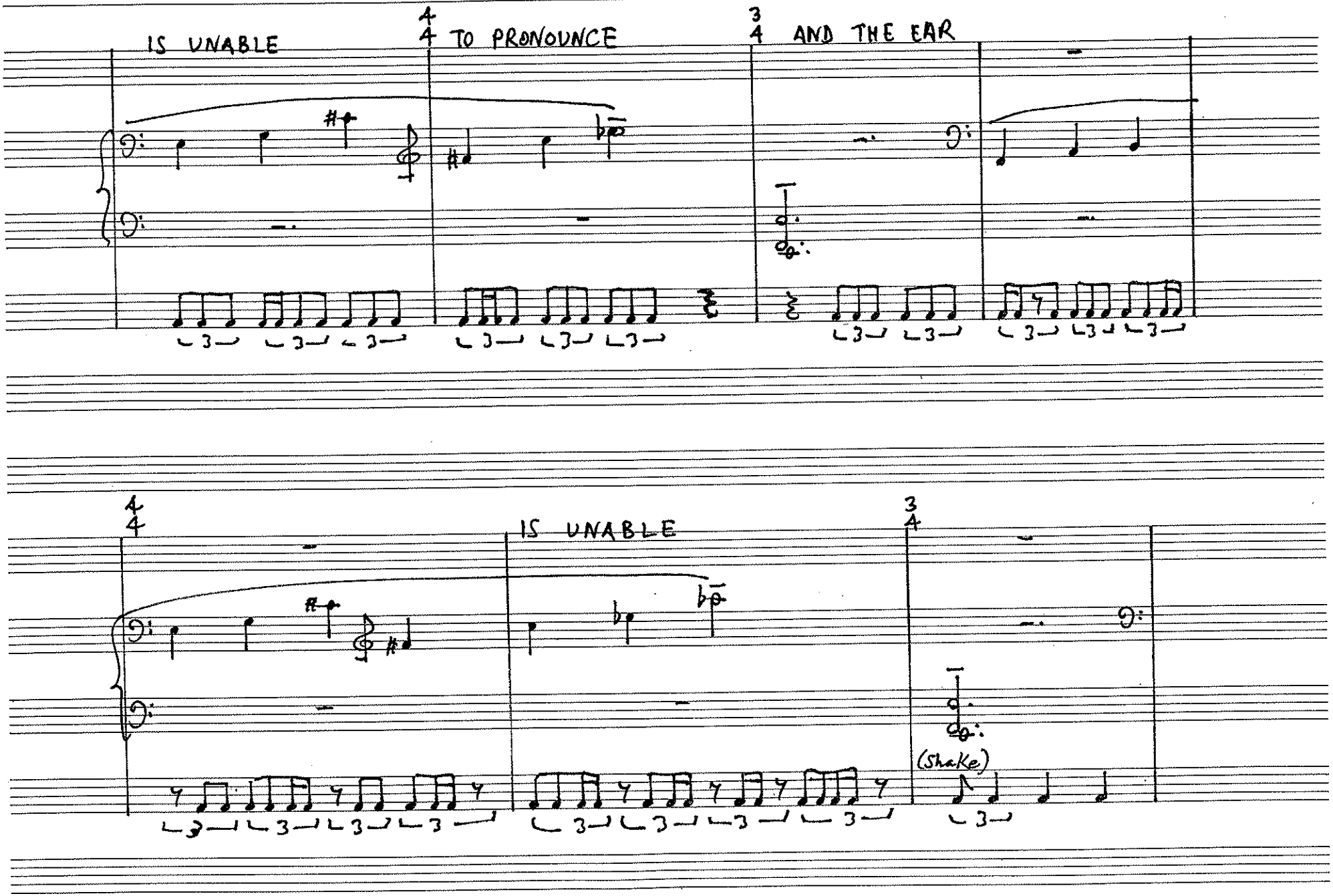


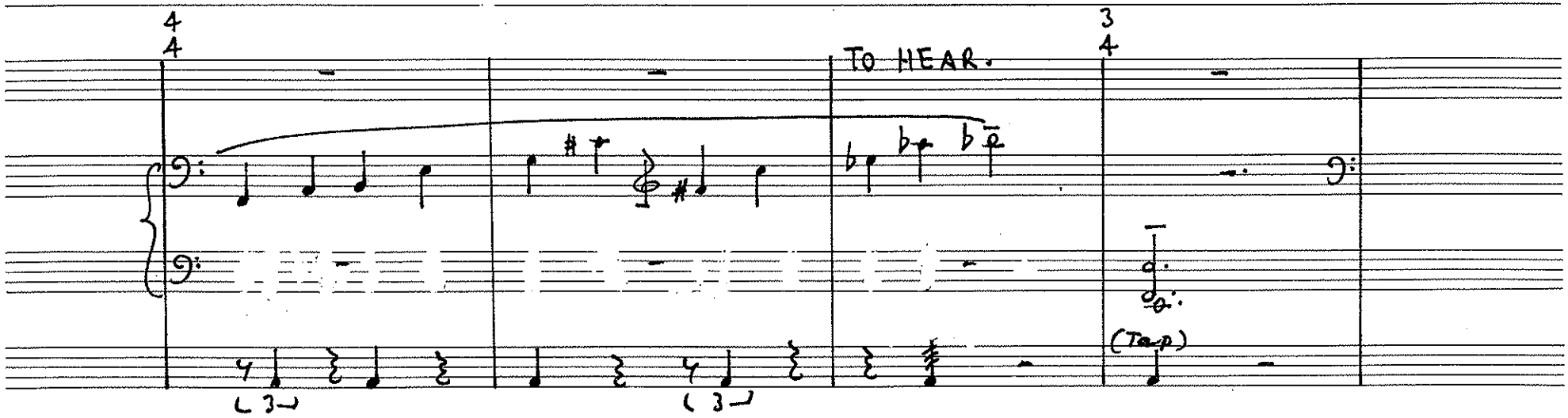

VOICE
SOLO
ACCPT.
POD
SIX HOUSES ARE BUILT;
OUT OF FOUR STONES
TWENTY-FOUR HOUSES ARE BUILT;
OUT OF FIVE STONES
(shake)
p
cresc.

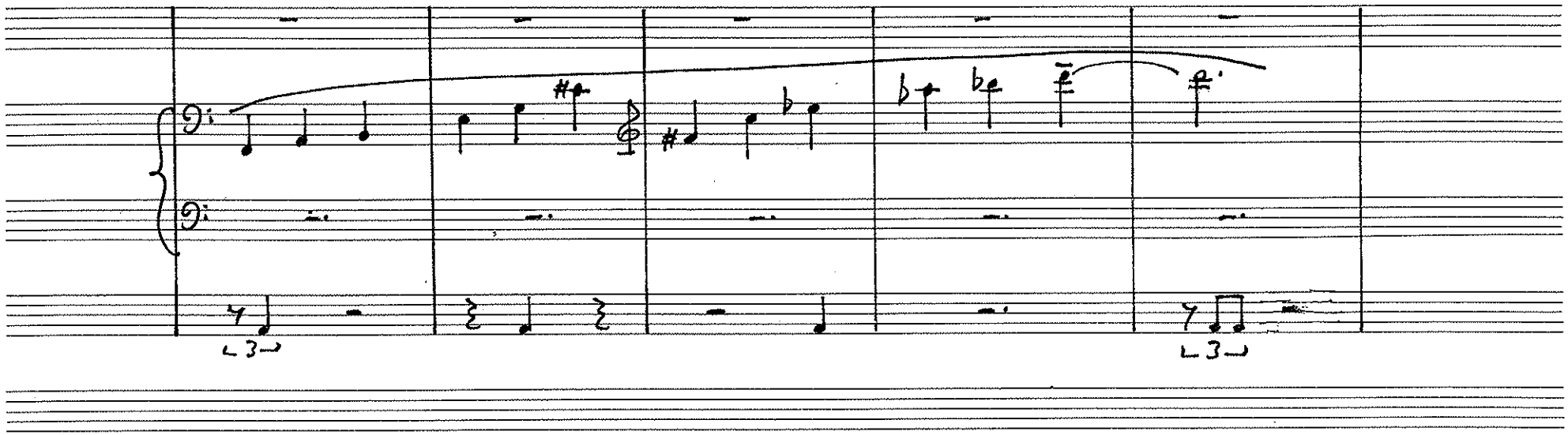

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY HOUSES ARE BUILT;
OUT OF SIX STONES
SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY HOUSES ARE BUILT;
OUT OF SEVEN STONES
mf
p
f
p

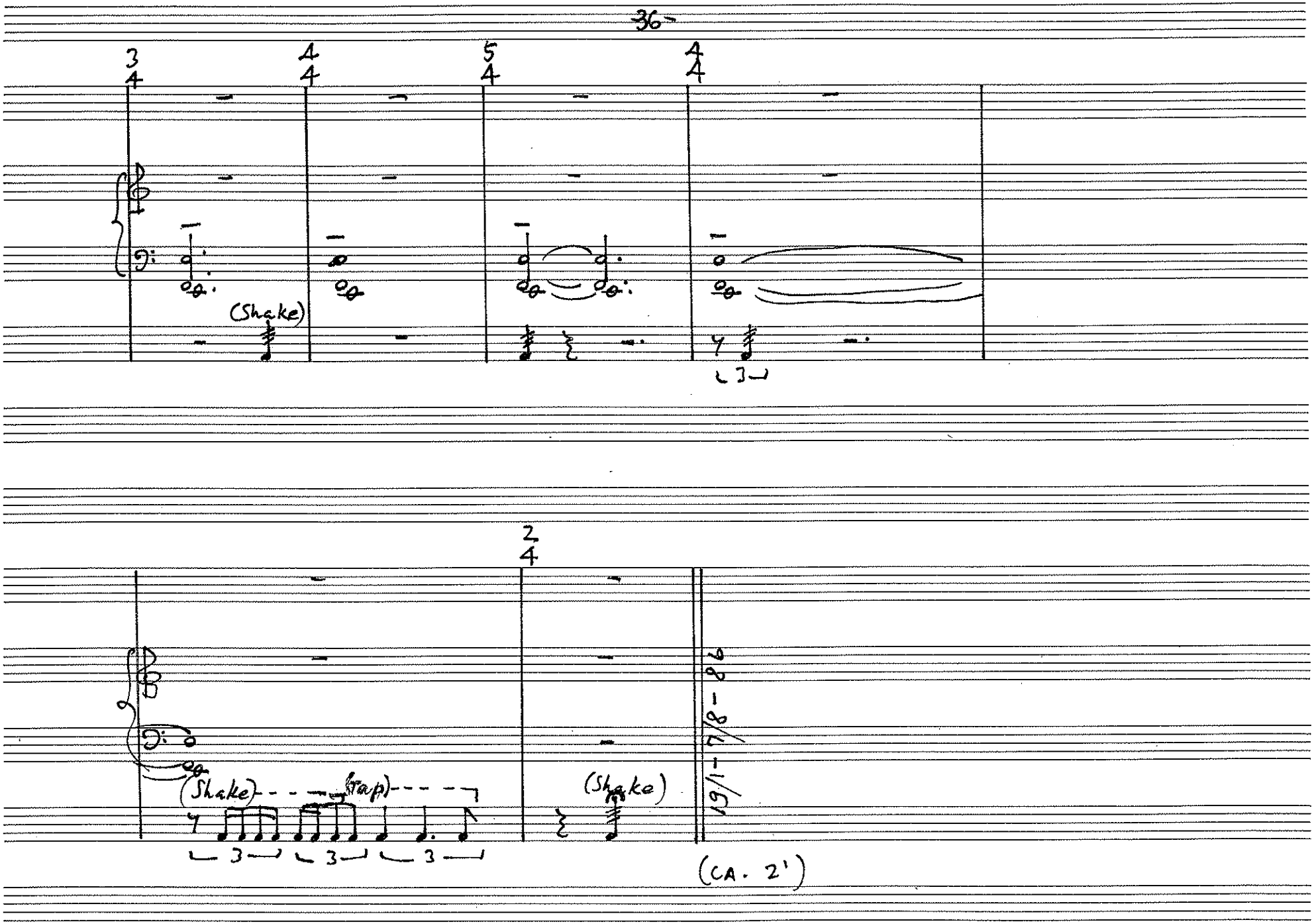

FIVE THOUSAND
FORTY HOUSES
ARE BUILT.
GO,
(Tap)
ff
p


AND COUNT
FURTHER:
WHAT THE MOUTH


IS UNABLE
TO PRONOUNCE
AND THE EAR
IS UNABLE
(Shake)


4
4
TO HEAR.
3
4
(Tap)

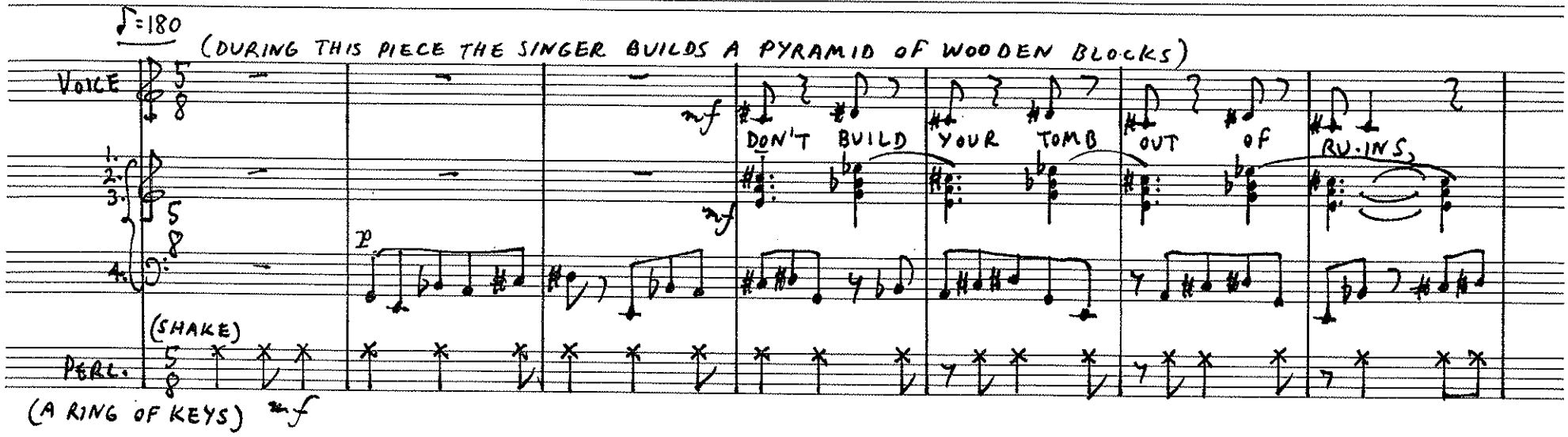


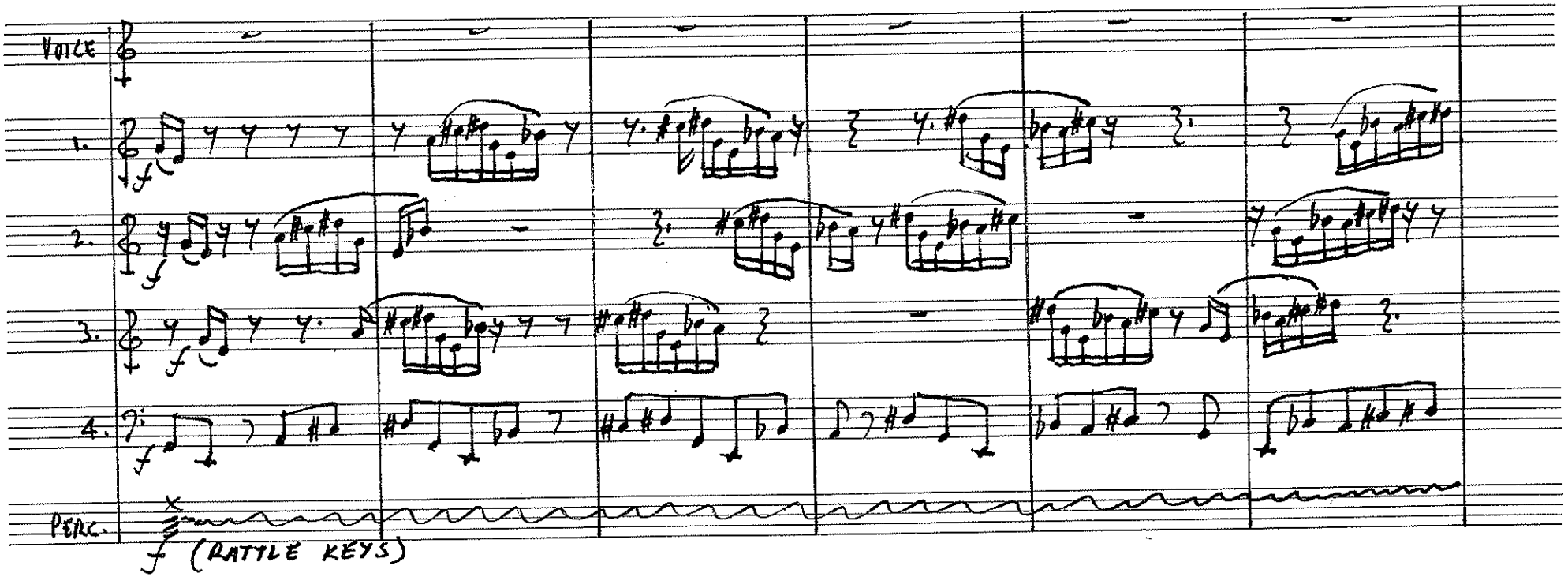

(Shake)
(Shake)
(Tap)
(Shake)
19/1-7/8-86
(CA. 2')

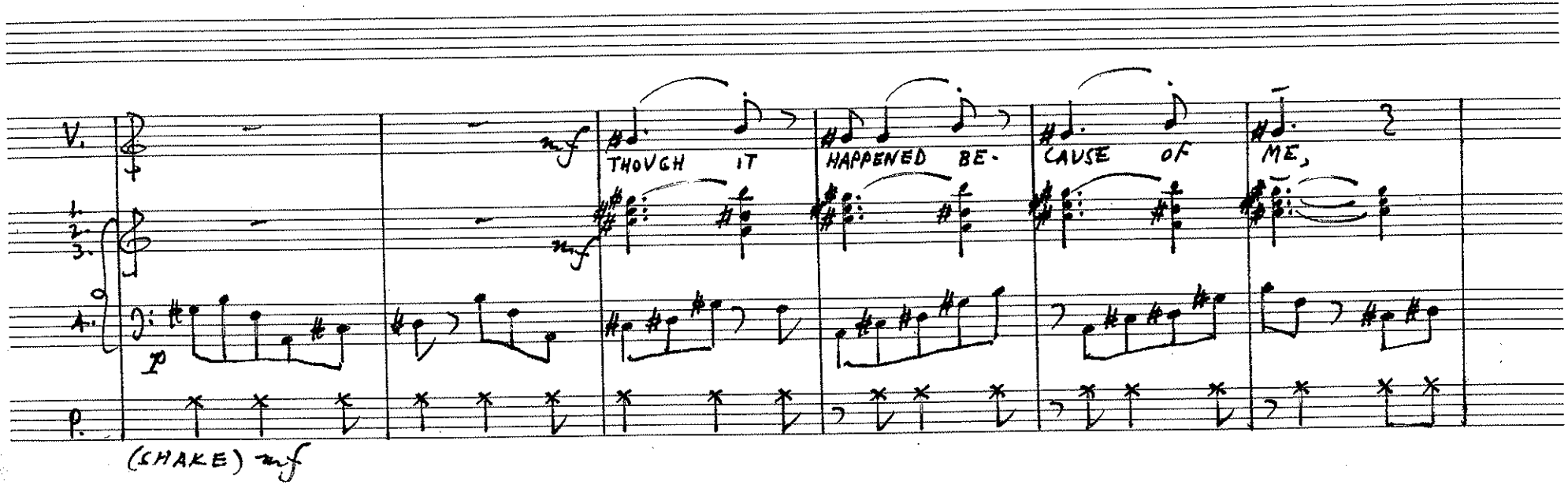
7. SONG OF THE SPHINX

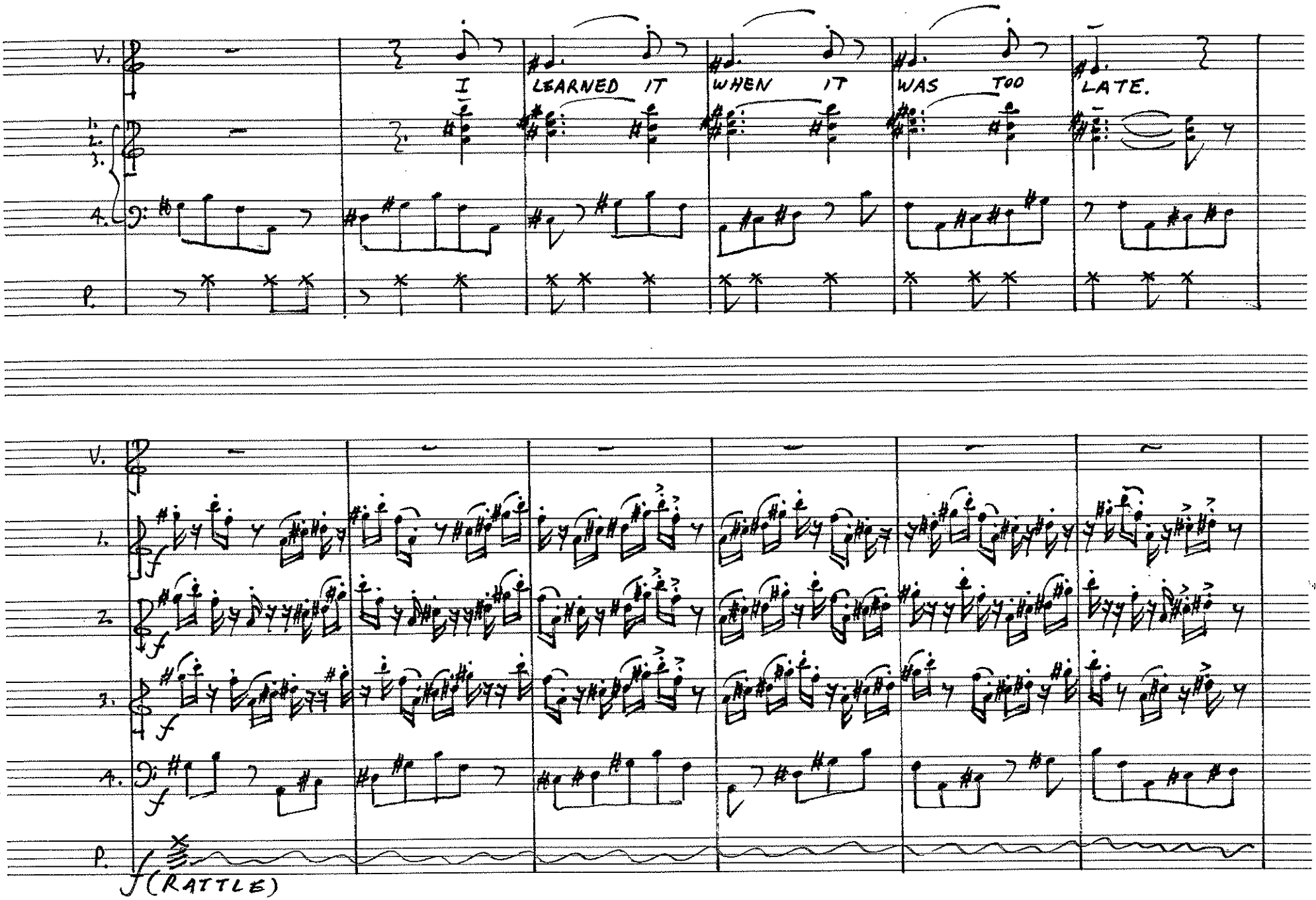
FOR VOICE AND 4-5 PLAYERS, INCLUDING ONE PERCUSSIONIST.
PARTS 1 AND 4 MAY BE PLAYED BY A KEYBOARD INSTRUMENT.

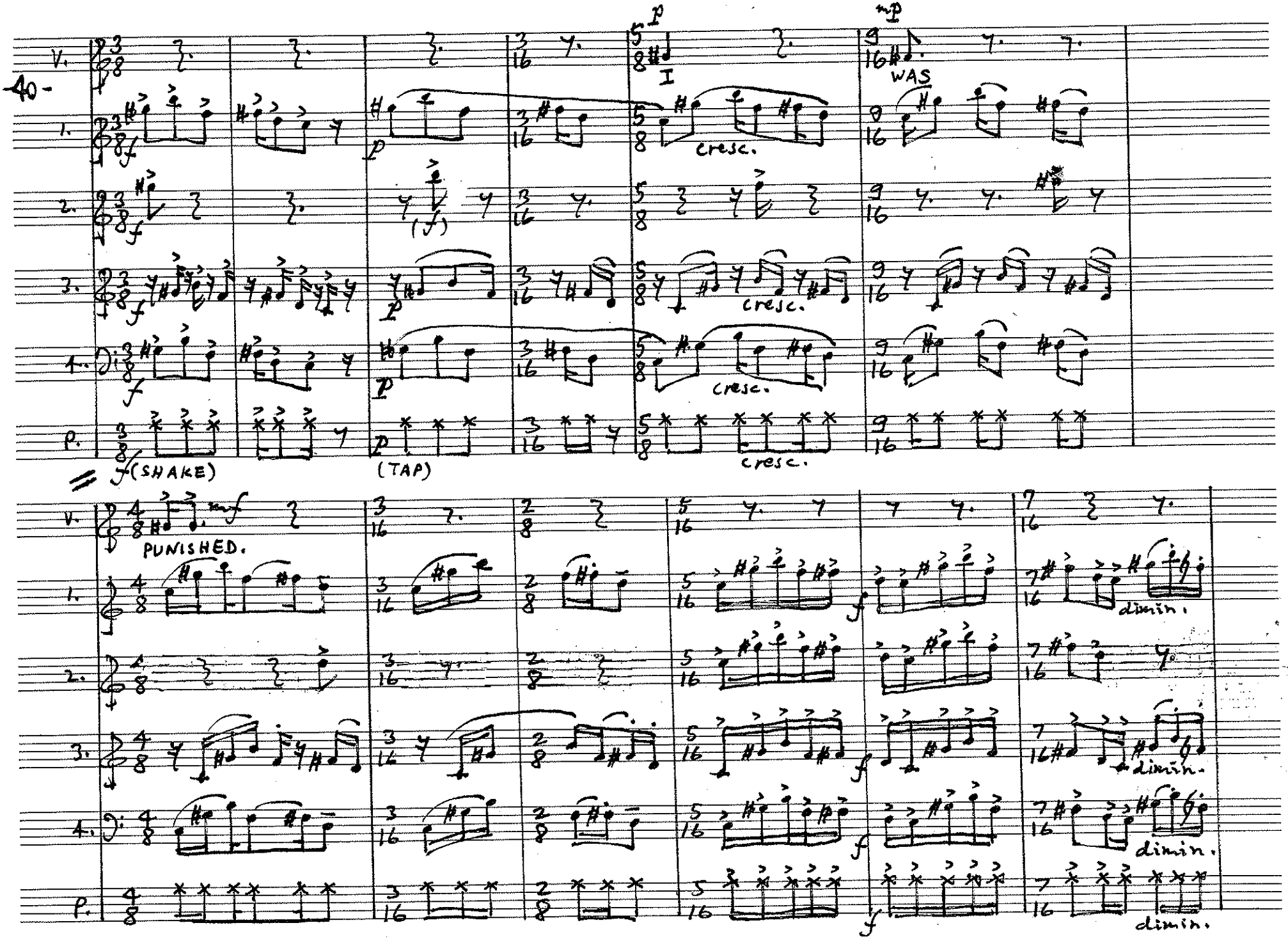
TEXT: INSTRUCTION TO MERIKARE, CA. 2100 B.C. (TO RONALD REAGAN)

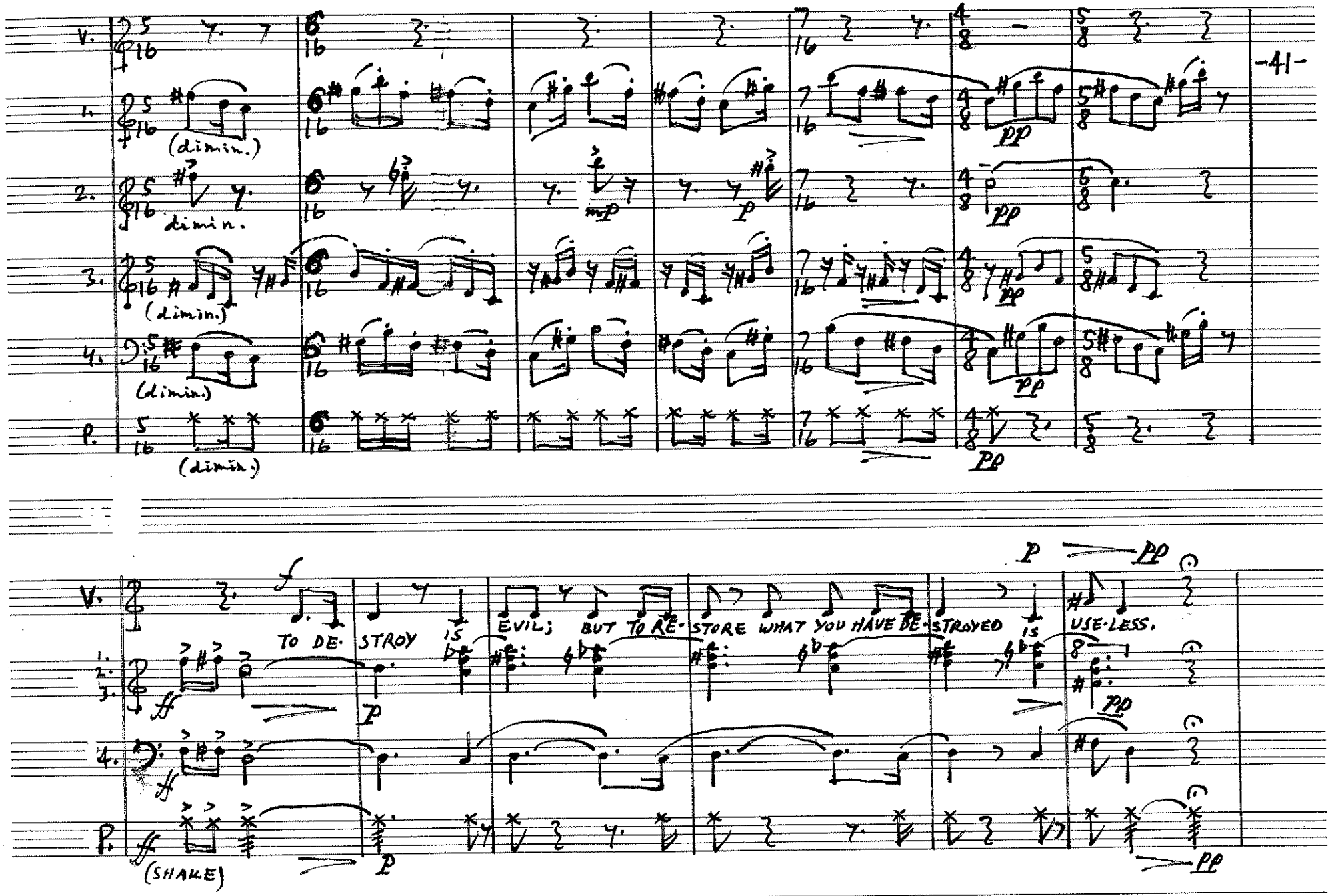


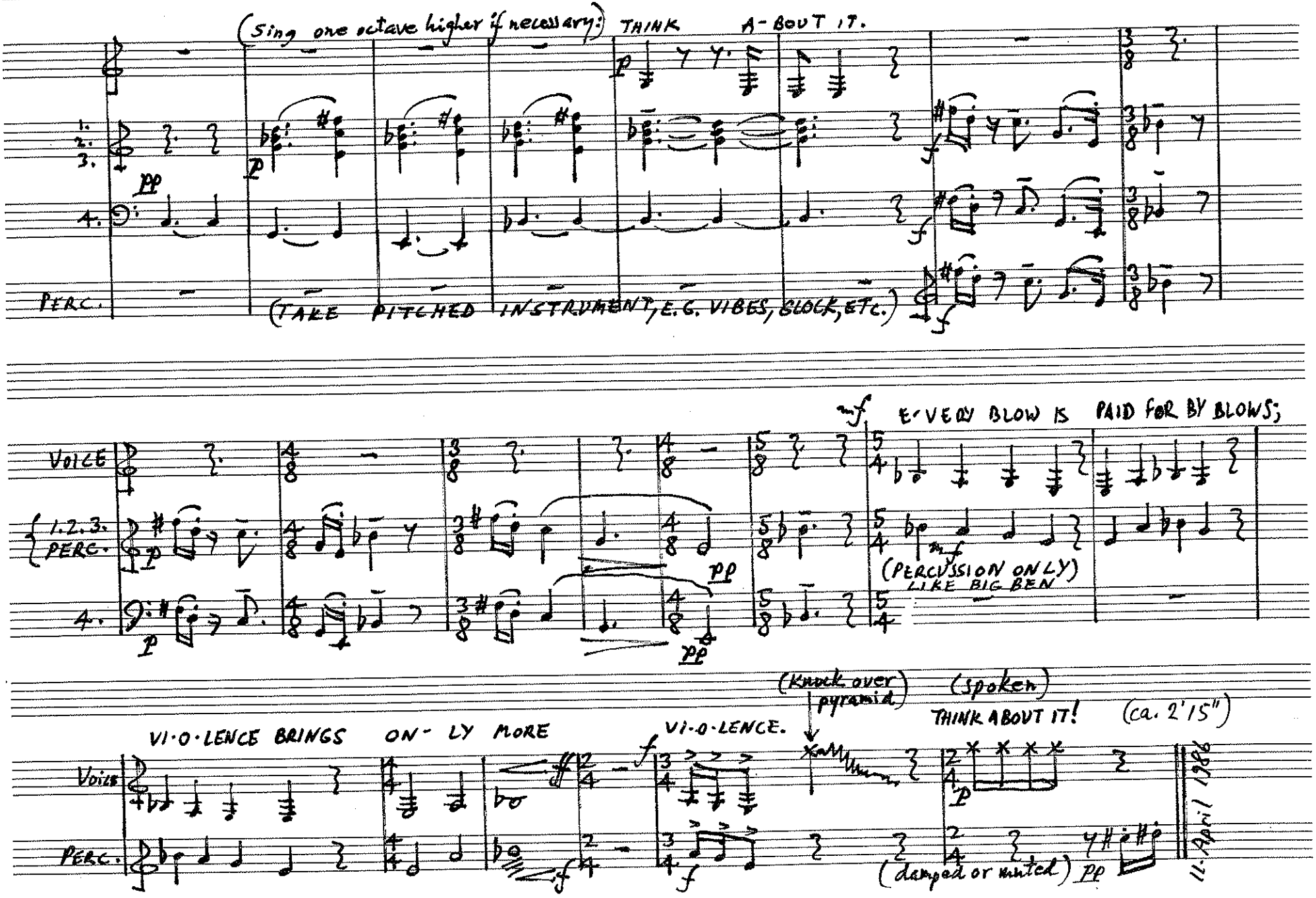

VOICE
1.
2.
3.
4.
PERC.
f
f (RATTLE KEYS)


V.
1.
2.
3.
4.
P.
mf
THOUGH IT
HAPPENED BE-
CAUSE OF
ME,
p
(SHAKE) mf


V.
1.
2.
3.
4.
P.
I
LEARNED IT
WHEN IT
WAS TOO
LATE.
f
(RATTLE)


40-
V.
1.
2.
3.
4.
P.
p
mp
WAS
I
cresc.
(f)
f(SHAKE)
(TAP)
mf
PUNISHED.
dimin.


V.
1.
2.
3.
4.
P.
(dimin.)
dimin.
(dimin.)
(dimin.)
(dimin.)
pp
mp
p
TO DE- STROY IS EVIL; BUT TO RE- STORE WHAT YOU HAVE DE- STROYED IS USE-LESS.
(SHAKE)
ff
f
p
pp

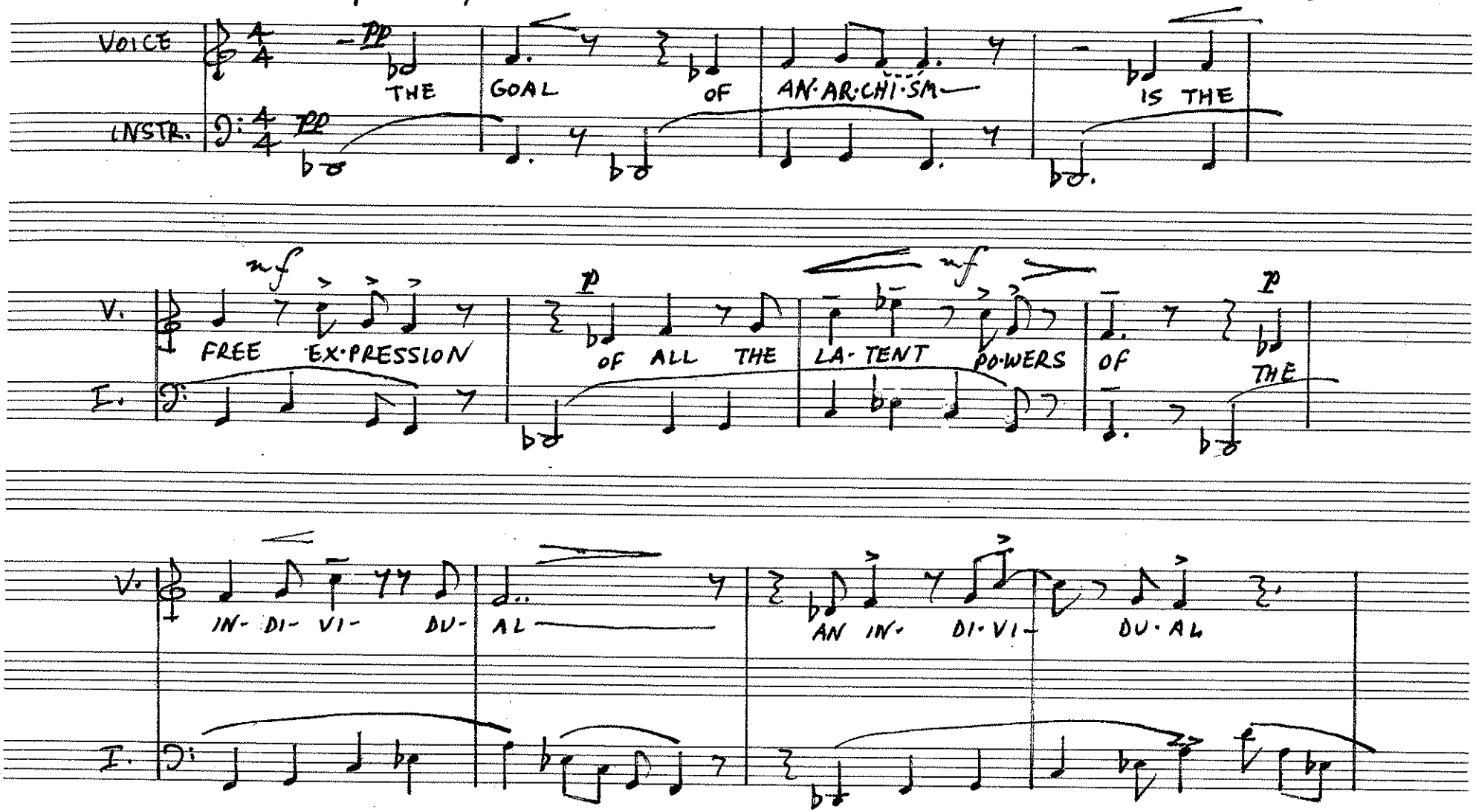

(Sing one octave higher if necessary:) THINK A-BOUT IT.
PERC.
(TAKE PITCHED INSTRUMENT, E.G. VIBES, GLOCK, ETC.)
EVERY BLOW IS PAID FOR BY BLOWS;
VOICE
1.2.3. PERC.
(PERCUSSION ONLY) LIKE BIG BEN
VI-O-LENCE BRINGS ON-LY MORE
VI-O-LENCE.
(Knock over pyramid)
(spoken) THINK ABOUT IT!
(ca. 2'15")
(damped or muted)
11. April 1986

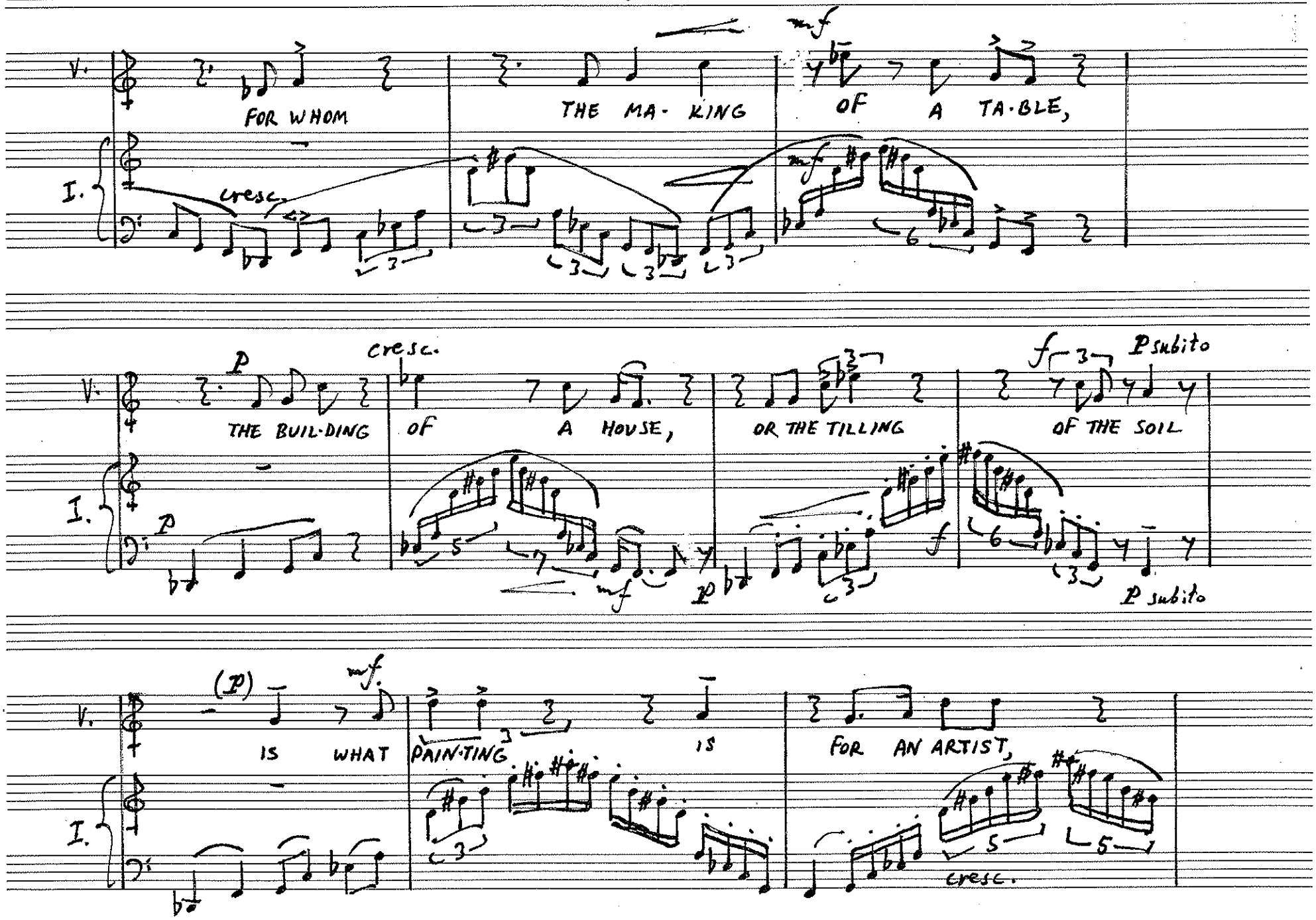
8. WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

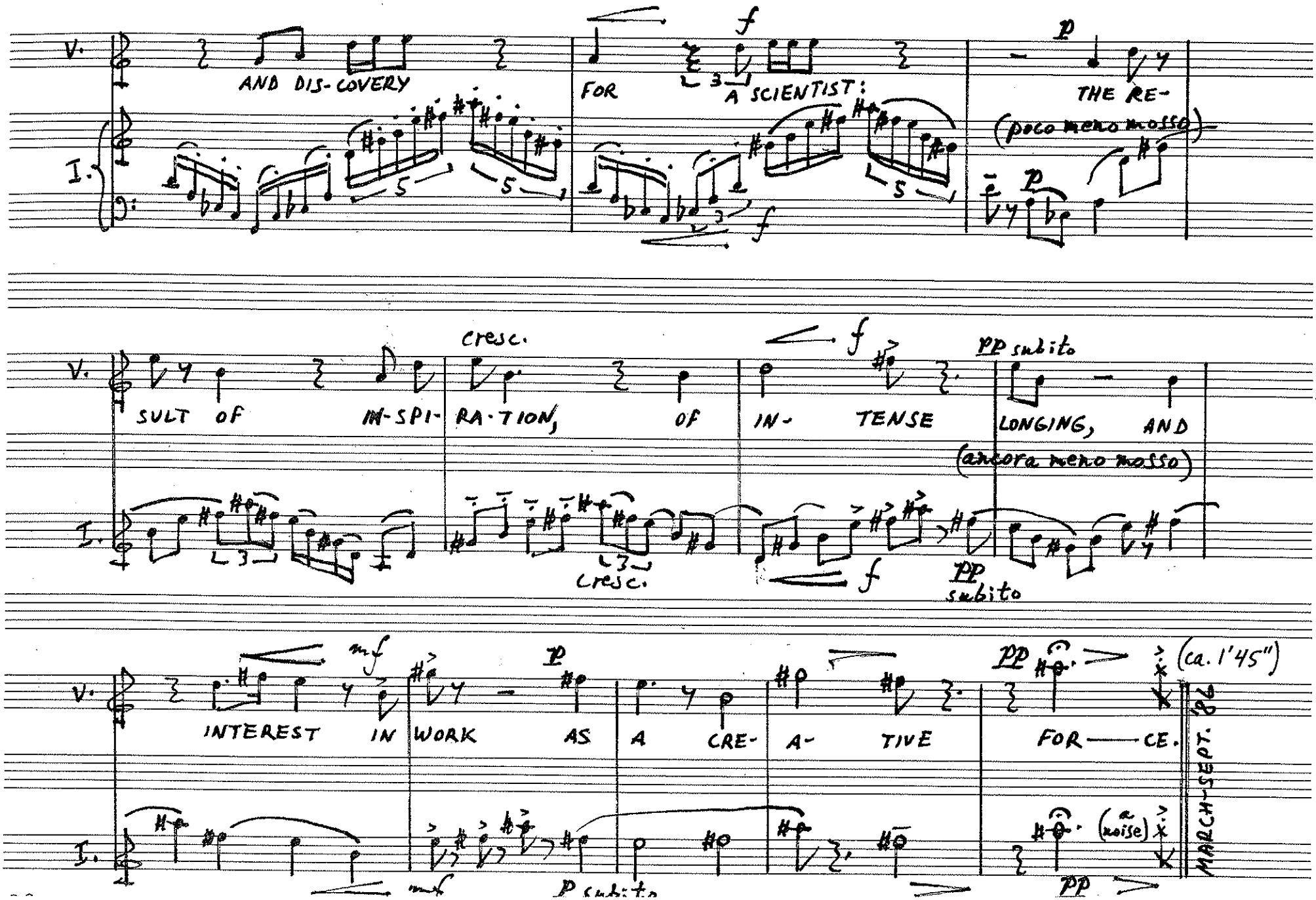
FOR VOICE AND ONE INSTRUMENT WITH A LARGE RANGE

♩=76-84 Espressivo, con rubato

(TEXT: EMMA GOLDMAN)




V.
I.
FOR WHOM
cresc.
THE MA- KING
mf
OF A TA-BLE,
P
THE BUIL-DING
cresc.
OF A HOUSE,
mf
P
OR THE TILLING
f
f
P subito
OF THE SOIL
P subito
(P)
mf.
IS WHAT
PAIN-TING
IS
FOR AN ARTIST,
cresc.

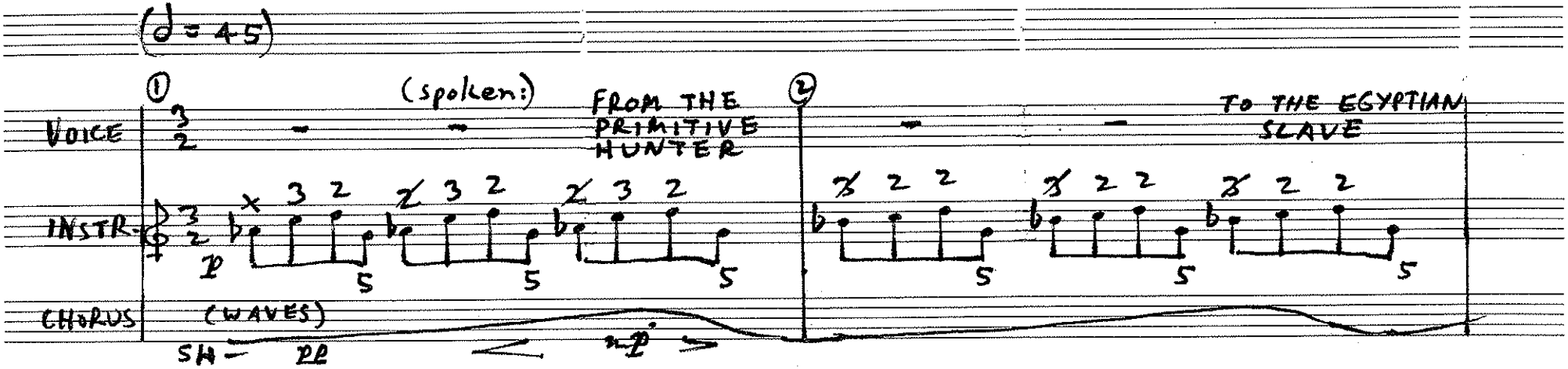

V.
I.
AND DIS- COVERY
FOR
A SCIENTIST:
THE RE-
(poco meno mosso)
SULT OF
IN-SPI- RA-TION,
cresc.
OF
IN-
TENSE
pp subito
LONGING, AND
(ancora meno mosso)
INTEREST IN WORK AS A CRE- A- TIVE FOR—CE.
(ca. 1'45")
(a noise)
MARCH-SEPT. '82

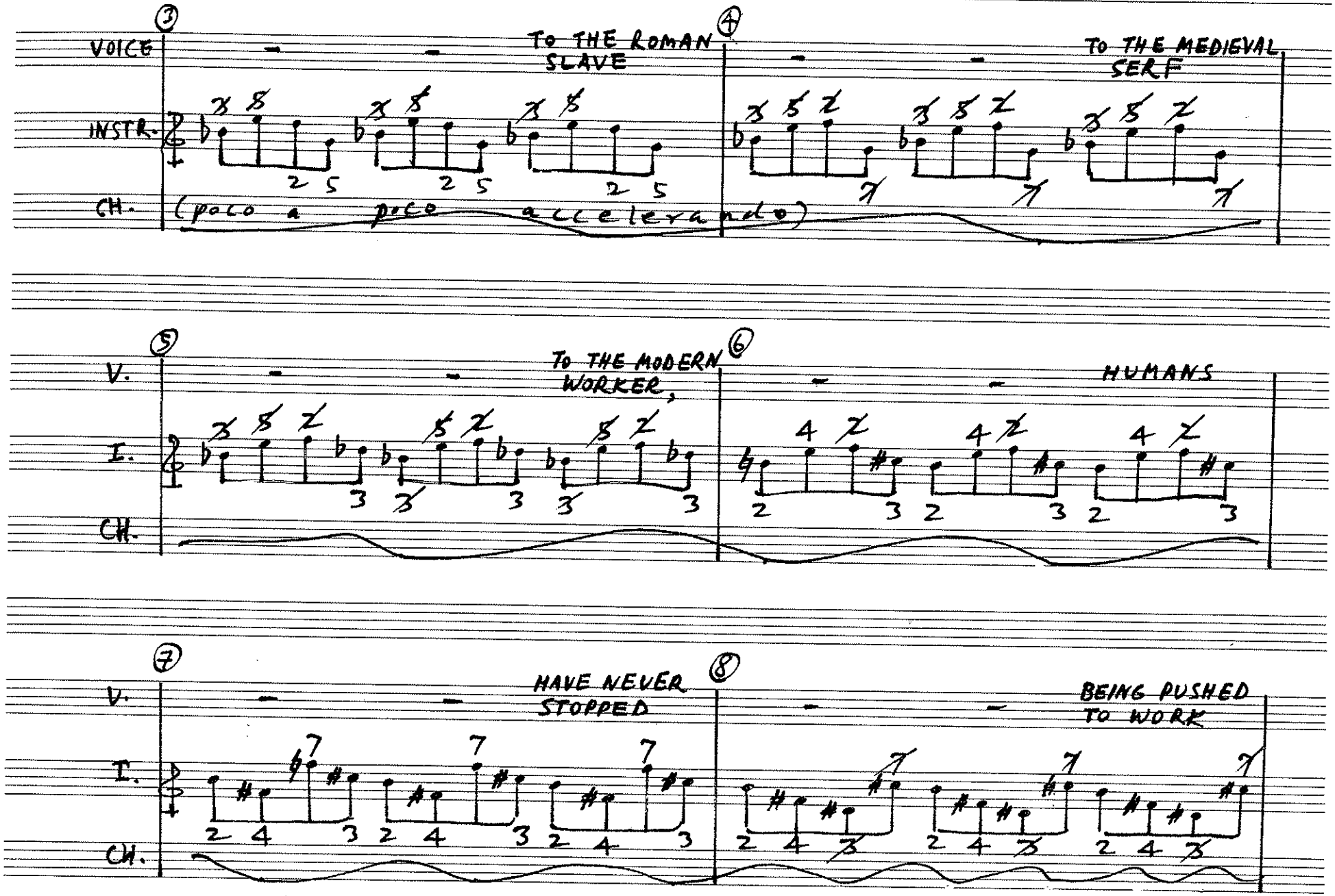
9. HISTORY'S ENDLESS CHAIN (TEXT: SIMONE WEIL)

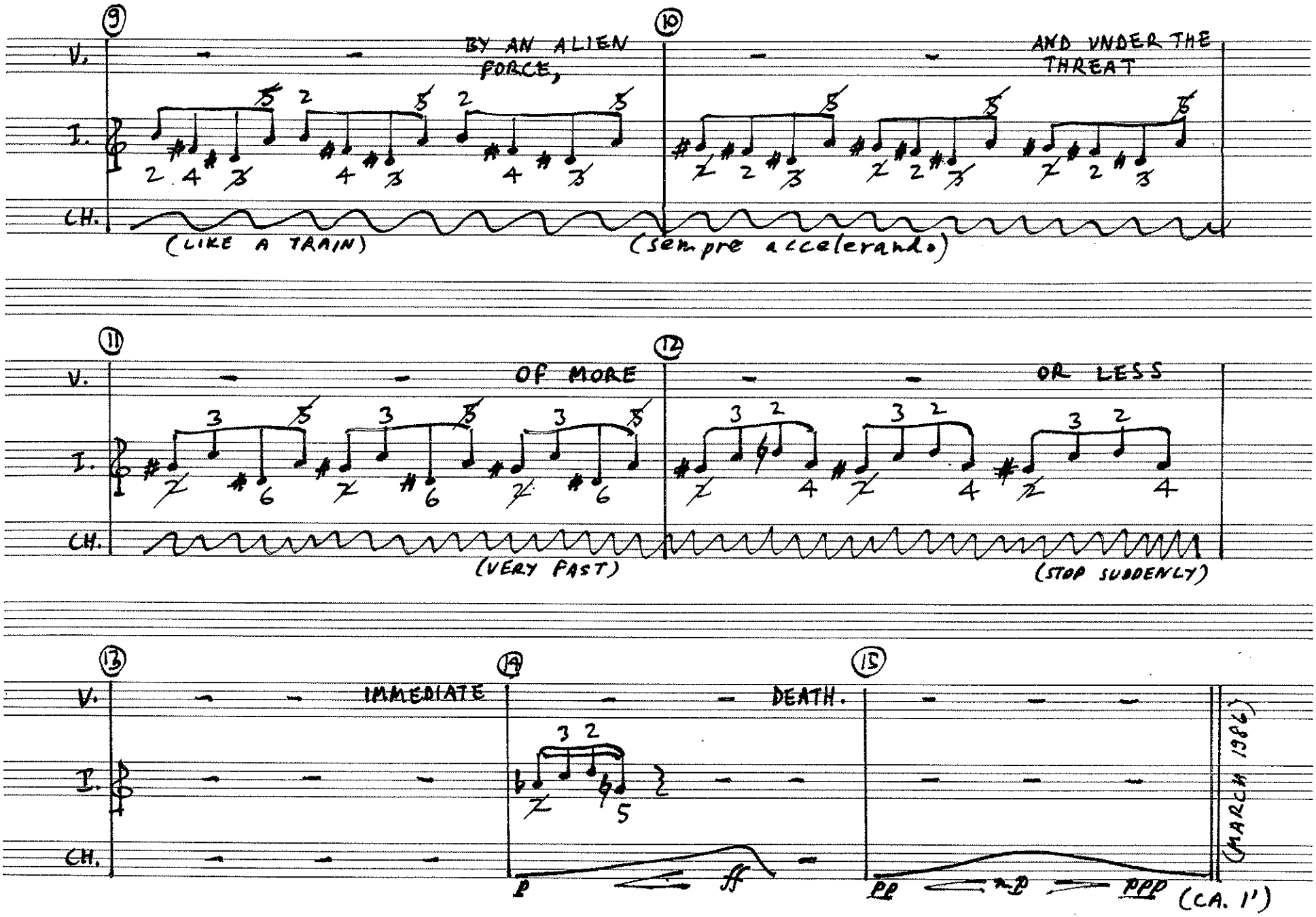
FOR VOICE; 2, 3, OR 4 INSTRUMENTS; AND A CHORUS OF 2 OR 3 PEOPLE MAKING NONPITCHED VOCAL SOUNDS.

INSTRUMENTS: ONE PLAYER PLAYS NOTATED PITCHES THROUGHOUT. THE OTHERS PLAY, OR NOT, AD LIB., FOR VARYING LENGTHS OF TIME, AT ANY DEGREE of TRANSPOSITION, PAUSING BETWEEN EACH BIT PLAYED, AND CHOOSING A NEW DEGREE of TRANSPOSITION FOR EACH BIT. INTERVAL SEQUENCE IS GIVEN IN NUMBERS: X = ANY NOTE; 2 = MAJOR SECOND HIGHER (IF ABOVE THE NOTE) THAN THE PREVIOUS NOTE, OR LOWER (IF BELOW THE NOTE); $\not{2}$ = MINOR SECOND; A NUMBER WITHOUT A SLASH = MAJOR OR PERFECT INTERVAL; WITH A SLASH = MINOR OR DIMINISHED.

CHORUS: STAND OR MOVE ABOUT IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE SPACE. USE ONLY THE SOUND "SH". AT FIRST MAKE LONG WAVE-LIKE NOISES, SUGGESTING THE OCEAN. GRADUALLY ACCELERATE, BECOMING LIKE A TRAIN AT (9). ACCELERATE FURTHER, THEN STOP SUDDENLY AFTER THE WORD "LESS" IN (13). MAKE "WAVES" AGAIN IN (14) – (15).




3
VOICE
INSTR.
CH.
TO THE ROMAN SLAVE
4
TO THE MEDIEVAL SERF
(poco a poco accelerando)
5
V.
I.
CH.
TO THE MODERN WORKER,
6
HUMANS
7
V.
I.
CH.
HAVE NEVER STOPPED
8
BEING PUSHED TO WORK


9
10
V.
I.
CH.
BY AN ALIEN FORCE,
AND UNDER THE THREAT
(LIKE A TRAIN)
(sempre accelerando)
11
12
OF MORE
OR LESS
(VERY FAST)
(STOP SUDDENLY)
13
14
15
IMMEDIATE
DEATH.
(MARCH 1984)
p
ff
pp
mp
ppp
(CA. 1')

10. LABOR'S ENDLESS CHAIN (Text: traditional)

FOR TWO VOICES (PREFERABLY MALE AND FEMALE) AND ANY NUMBER OF PLAYERS DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS, (A) AND (B).

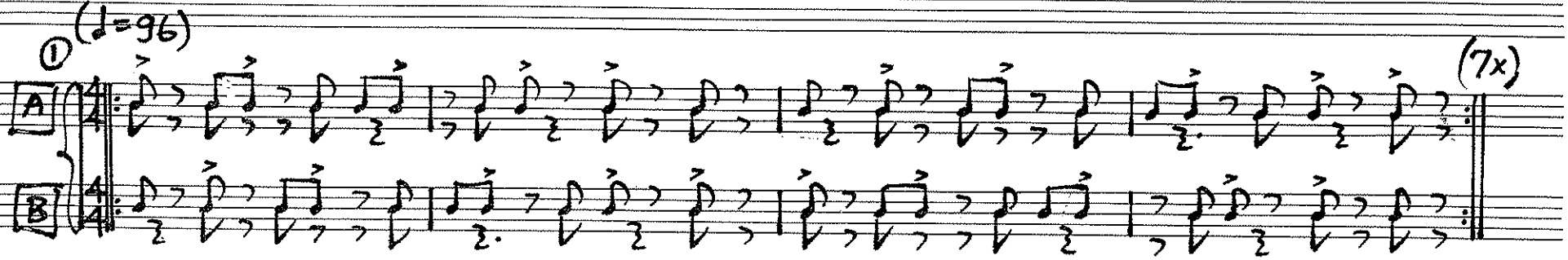
EACH PLAYER PERFORMS SOME KIND OF WORK. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT, AS LONG AS IT IS RECOGNIZABLY WORK AND PRODUCES A SOUND WHICH CAN BE RHYTHMICALLY ARTICULATED.

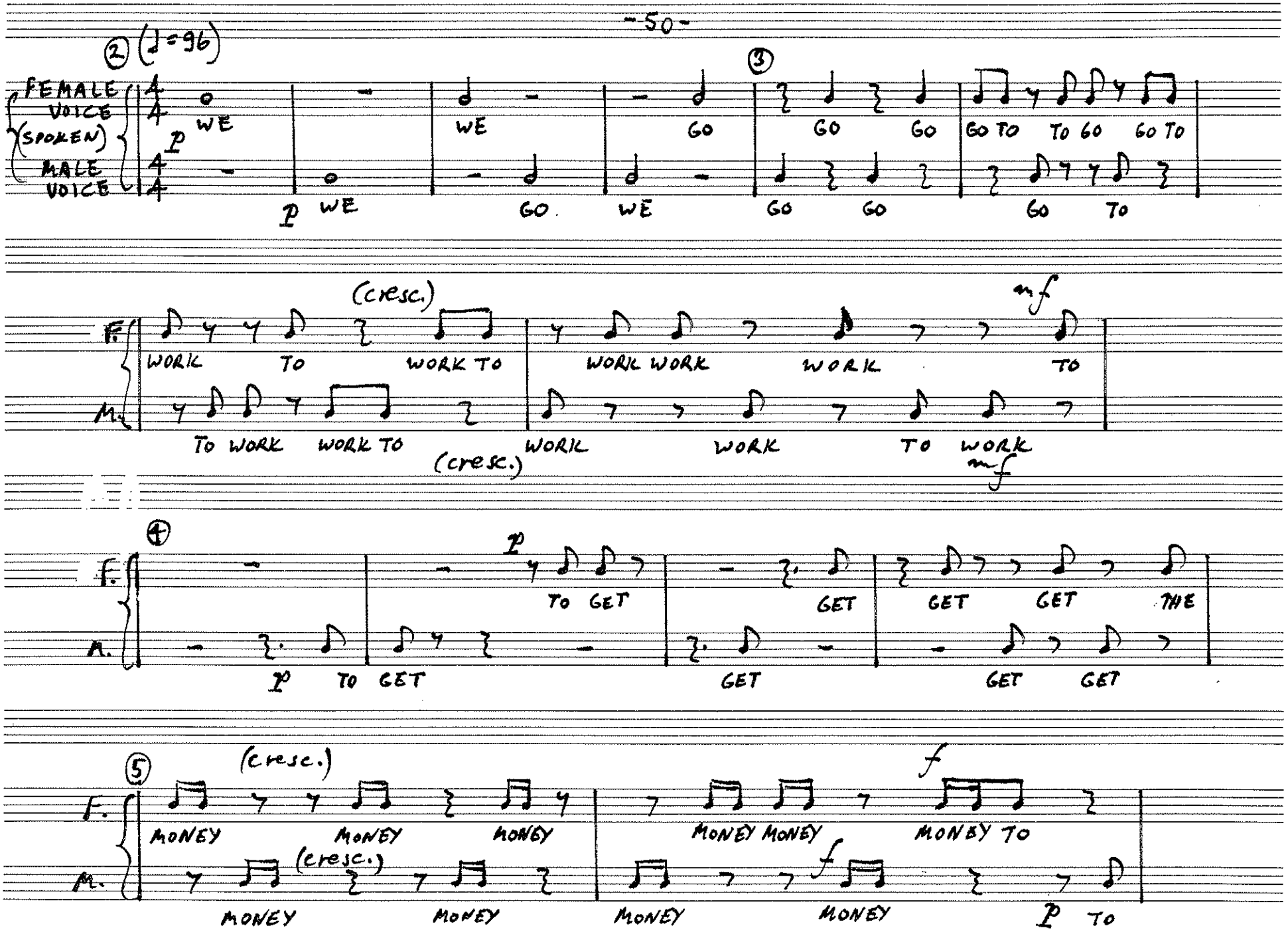
BEGIN (NOT ALL AT ONCE) BY DOING YOUR WORK IN ITS OWN NATURAL RHYTHM. CONTINUE FOR ABOUT ONE MINUTE. GRADUALLY INTRODUCE A PULSE AND CO-ORDINATE THIS PULSE WITH THAT OF THE OTHER PLAYERS UNTIL ALL AGREE ON A COMMON PULSE of ♩ = 96. THEN PLAY THE FOUR-BAR CYCLE SEVEN TIMES.

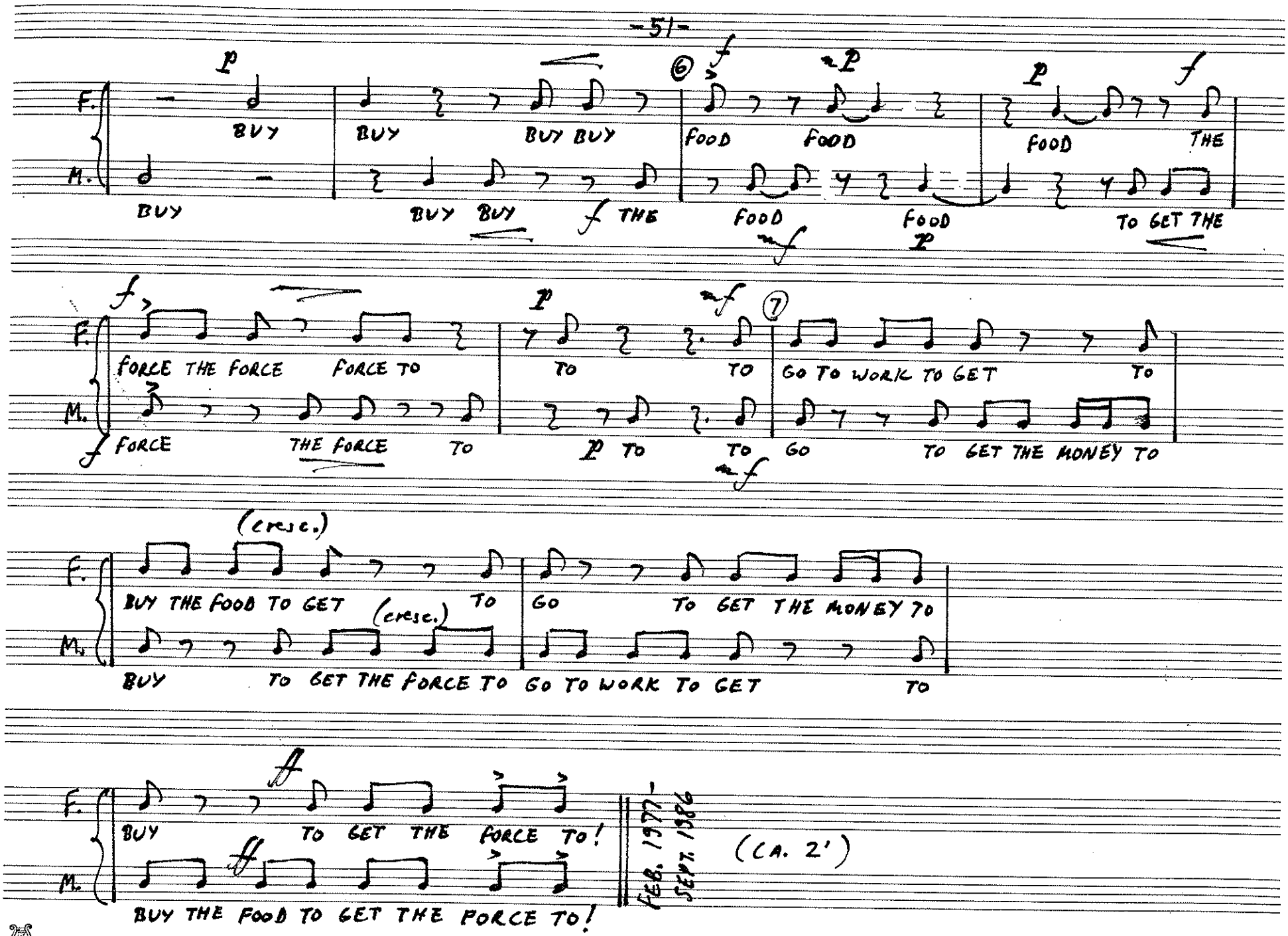
IF THERE IS ONLY ONE PLAYER ON A PART, PLAY THE UPPER RHYTHM. IF THERE IS A SECOND PLAYER, ADD THE LOWER RHYTHM. A THIRD PLAYER SHOULD PLAY ONLY THE ACCENTED NOTES.

BEGINNING WITH THE SECOND CYCLE, TWO OF THE WORKERS SHOULD EXECUTE THE VOCAL PART. AT THE END, ALL STOP SIMULTANEOUSLY.

THIS PIECE SHOULD BE PERFORMED BY MEMORY.




② (♩=96)
FEMALE VOICE (SPOKEN)
MALE VOICE
p
WE
GO
③
GO TO TO GO GO TO
(cresc.)
mf
F.
M.
WORK TO WORK TO
WORK WORK WORK TO
TO WORK WORK TO
WORK WORK TO WORK
④
A.
TO GET
GET
GET GET THE
⑤
MONEY
MONEY MONEY
MONEY TO
f


F.
M.
p
BUY
BUY
BUY BUY
⑥
f
FOOD
FOOD
p
p
f
FOOD
THE
BUY
BUY BUY
f THE
FOOD
FOOD
mf
p
TO GET THE
f
FORCE THE FORCE
FORCE TO
p
mf
⑦
TO
TO
GO TO WORK TO GET
TO
f FORCE
THE FORCE
TO
p TO
TO
mf
GO
TO GET THE MONEY TO
(cresc.)
BUY THE FOOD TO GET
TO
(cresc.)
BUY
TO GET THE FORCE TO
GO
TO GET THE MONEY TO
GO TO WORK TO GET
TO
ff
BUY
TO GET THE FORCE TO!
ff
BUY THE FOOD TO GET THE FORCE TO!
FEB. 1977 -
SEPT. 1986
(CA. 2')

11. LONG MARCH

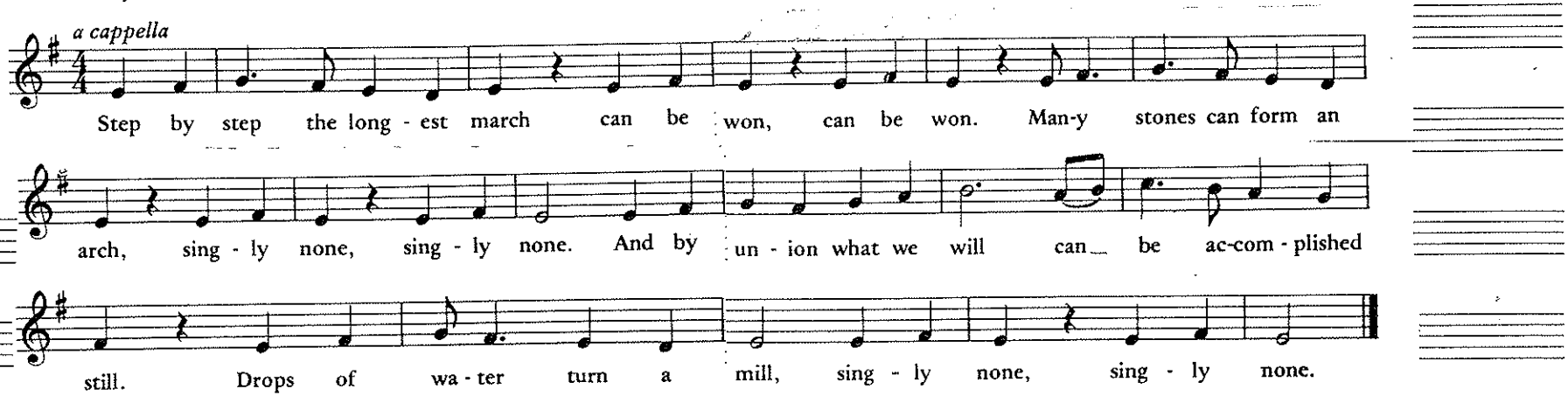
FOR VOICE AND SEVERAL PLAYERS (ANY INSTRUMENTS).
BEGIN BY SINGING THE SONG IN UNISON.
VOICE: SPEAK THE WORDS MORE OR LESS TOGETHER WITH THE INSTRUMENTAL LINE. (OR SING, IF YOU LIKE.)
INSTRUMENTS: PLAY OR REST AD LIB. IF YOU PLAY, PLAY THE WHOLE PHRASE. AT LEAST ONE PERSON SHOULD BE PLAYING AT ANY TIME. IF (MORE THAN ONE) PERSONS ARE PLAYING, TRY TO STAY MORE OR LESS TOGETHER. IF YOU PLAY THE WRONG INTERVAL, DO NOT CORRECT THE ERROR, BUT KEEP ON PLAYING IN THE NEW TRANSPOSITION.
NOTATION GIVES (RELATIVE) RHYTHMS AND INTERVALS ONLY. (LINES AND SPACES MEAN NOTHING.) X = ANY PITCH.
NUMBERS WITHOUT SLASHES = MAJOR OR PERFECT INTERVALS.
NUMBERS WITH SLASHES = MINOR OR DIMINISHED INTERVALS.
• = MEDIUM LENGTH (0.5" ~ 1"); O = LONG; ♪ = SHORT; 𝅘𝅥𝅯 = VERY SHORT.

• STEP BY STEP •

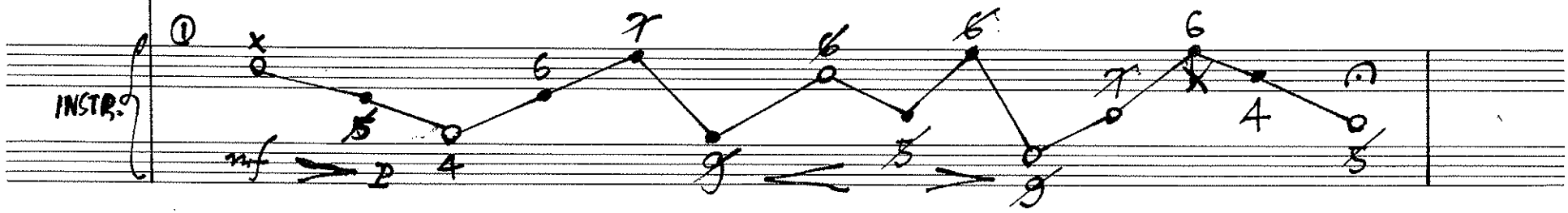
NUMBER BELOW NOTE = LOWER THAN PREVIOUS NOTE;
" ABOVE " = HIGHER " " " .

Words: anonymous

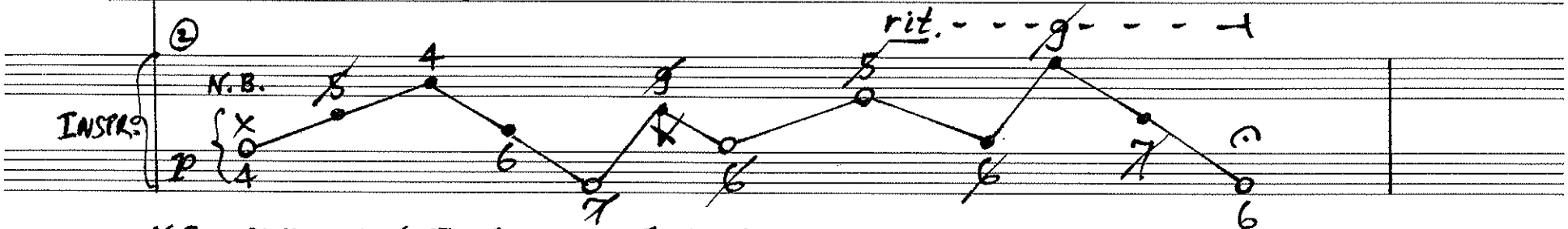
Tune: Traditional Irish



VOICE STEP BY STEP, THE LONGEST MARCH

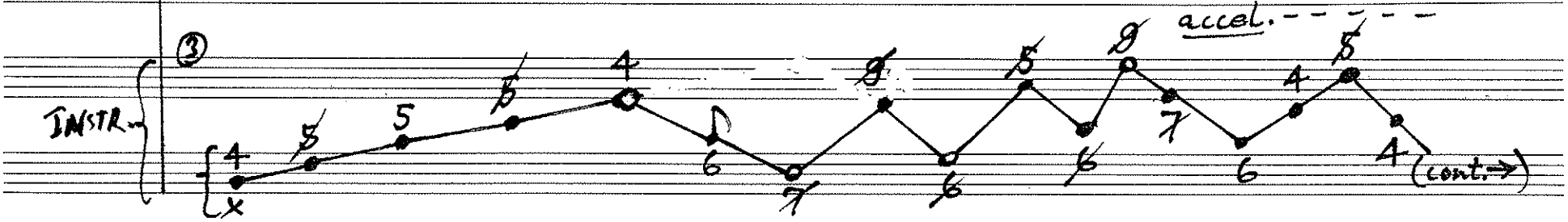


V. CAN BE WON, CAN BE WON.



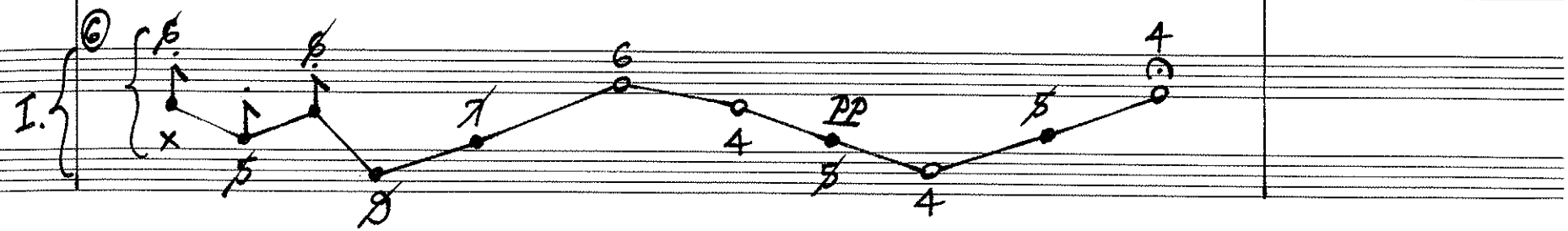
N.B.— PLAY ANY NOTE, IF YOU HAVE NOT PLAYED THE PREVIOUS PHRASE;
IF YOU HAVE PLAYED, PLAY A PERFECT 4TH LOWER THAN THE PRECEDING NOTE.

V. SINGLE STONES WILL FORM AN ARCH,

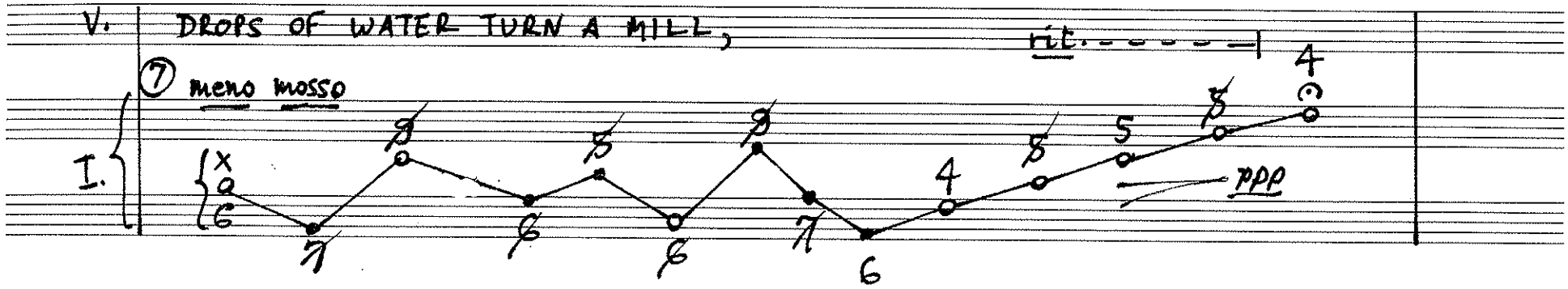


V.
I.
rit.
accel.
rit.
V.
ONE BY ONE, ONE BY ONE.
④
I.
mf
V.
AND, BY UNION, WHAT WE WILL
⑤
I.
f
rit.

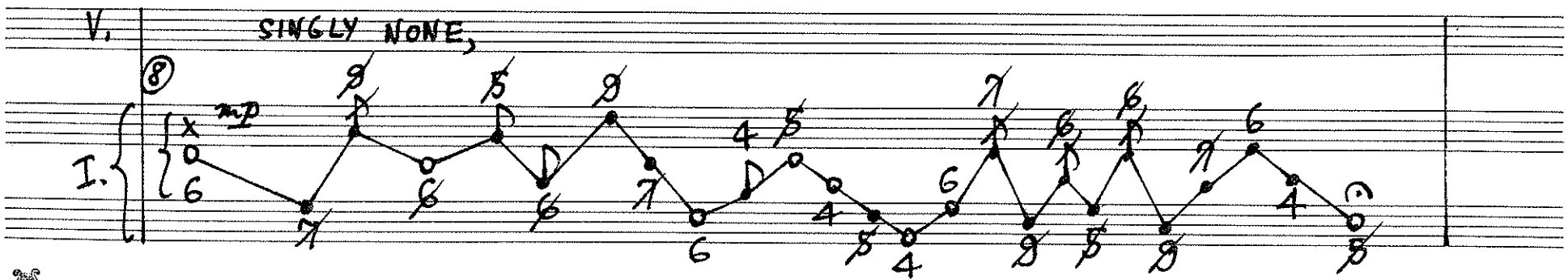
V. CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED STILL, STILL.



V. DROPS OF WATER TURN A MILL,

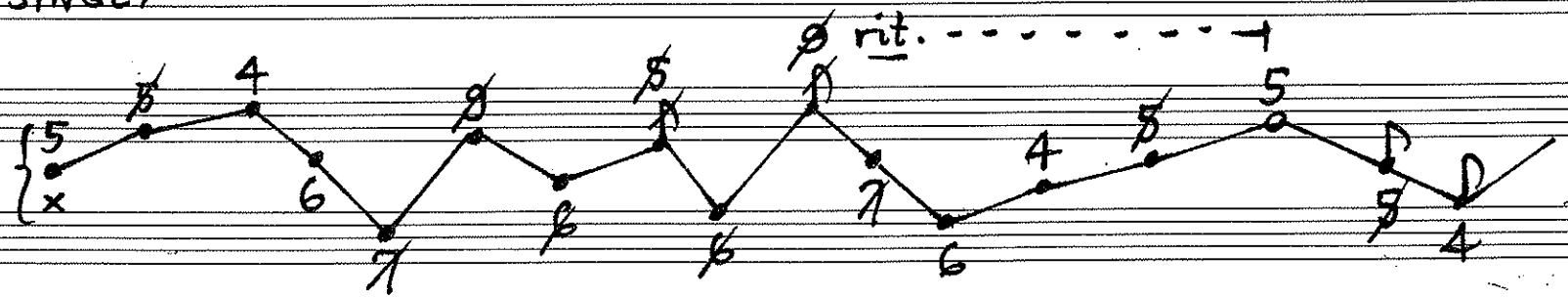


V. SINGLY NONE,



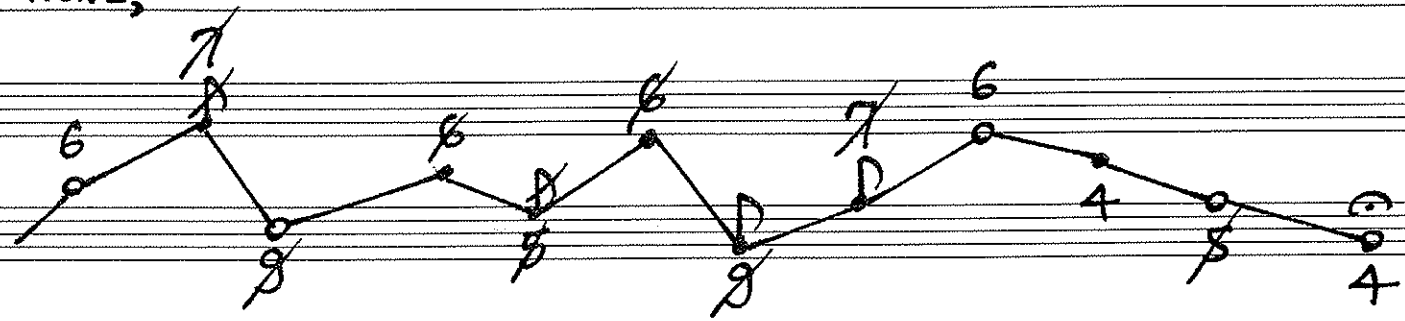
V. SINGLY

I.



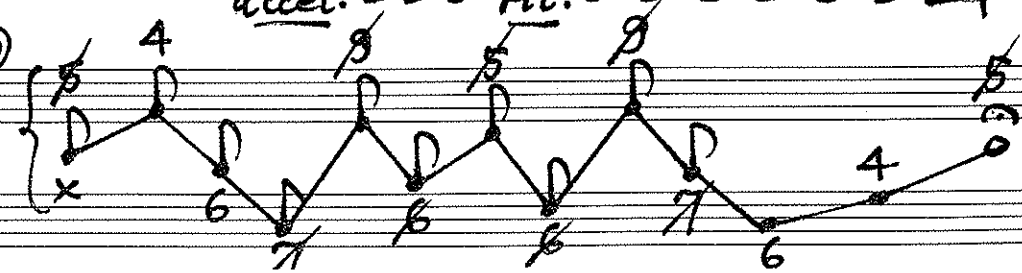
V. NONE,

I.



V. SINGLY NONE.

I.



(ca 3'–4')

MARCH 9, 1984

(Text 1: Pete Seeger, Carry it On!, p.51; text 2: P. Foner, American Labor Songs of the 19th Century, Urbana 1975, p. 193)

12. HOW TO MAKE A PIN (TEXT: ADAM SMITH)

FOR VOICE AND SEVERAL PLAYERS

VOICE: IN PART [A], SPEAK NORMALLY. IN PART [B], CHANT THE TEXT IN A "SING-SONG" VOICE, USING 4 DIFFERENT LEVELS FROM LOW TO HIGH (ANY PITCHES). IN [B]: DO THE FIRST 25 BARS AS WRITTEN. WHEN YOU GET TO BAR 27, WAIT UNTIL AT LEAST ONE FULL BAR HAS GONE BY WITHOUT ANYONE PLAYING, THEN PROCEED.

PLAYERS: IN PART [A], CHOOSE FREELY AMONG 6 TYPES OF WORK-ACTIONS, TO BE DONE WITH ANY OBJECTS IN THE SPACE OF ONE QUARTER-NOTE:

① PUSHING OR DRAGGING SOME HEAVY OBJECT (LIKE A CHAIR OR TABLE)

② POUNDING, HAMMERING

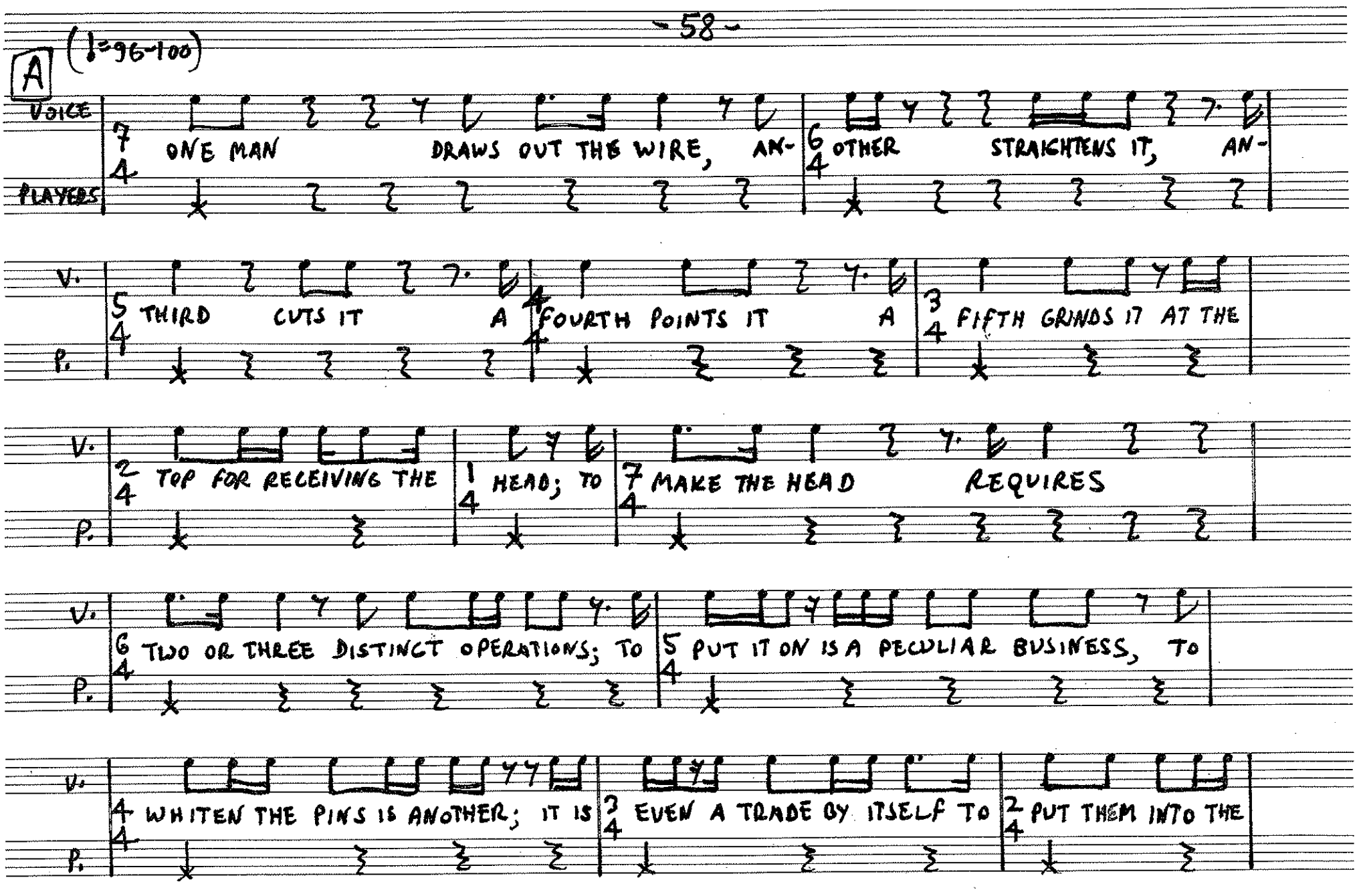
③ LIGHT RUBBING OR POLISHING

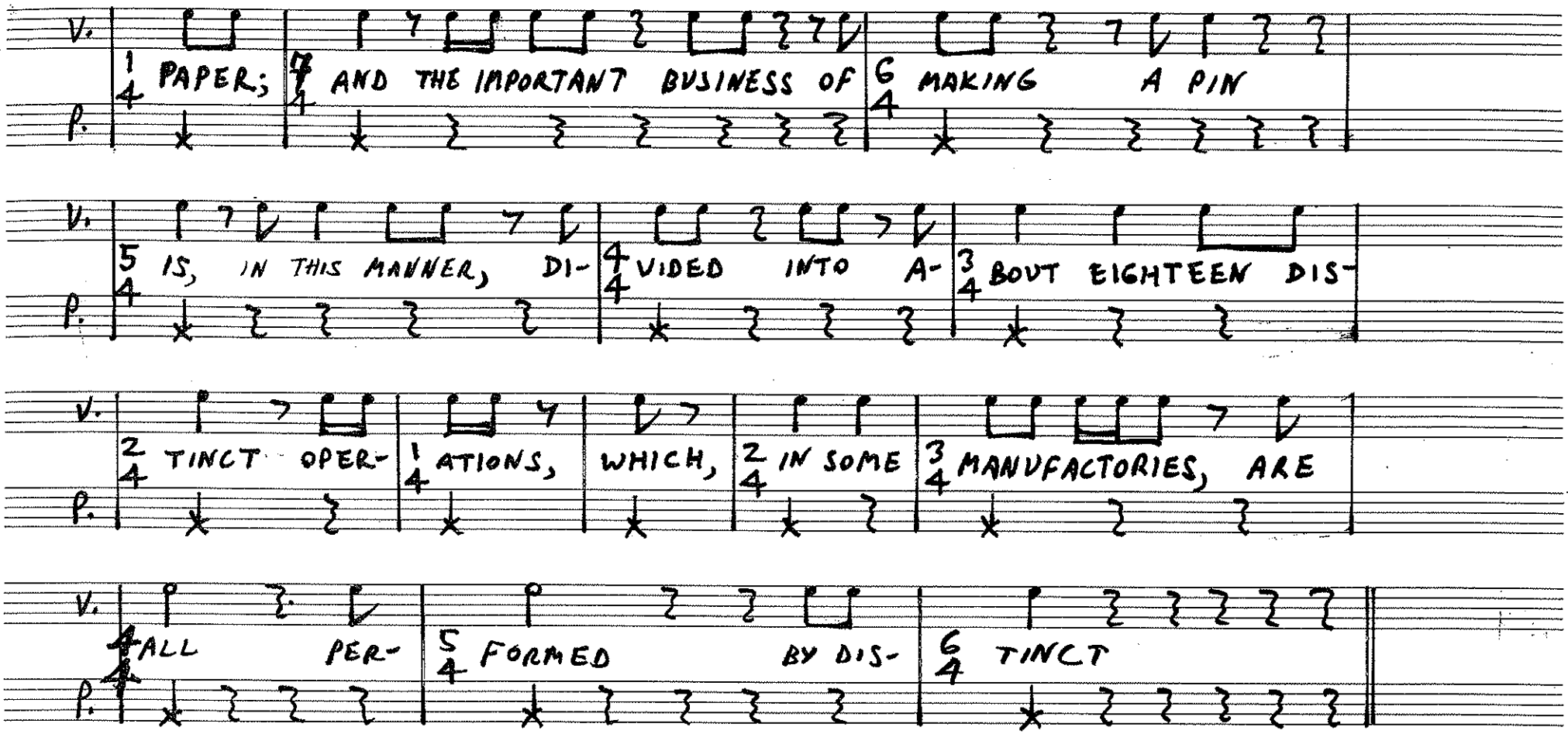
④ TAPPING, TYPING

⑤ A QUICK SCRAPE WITH A HARD OBJECT AGAINST A HARD SURFACE

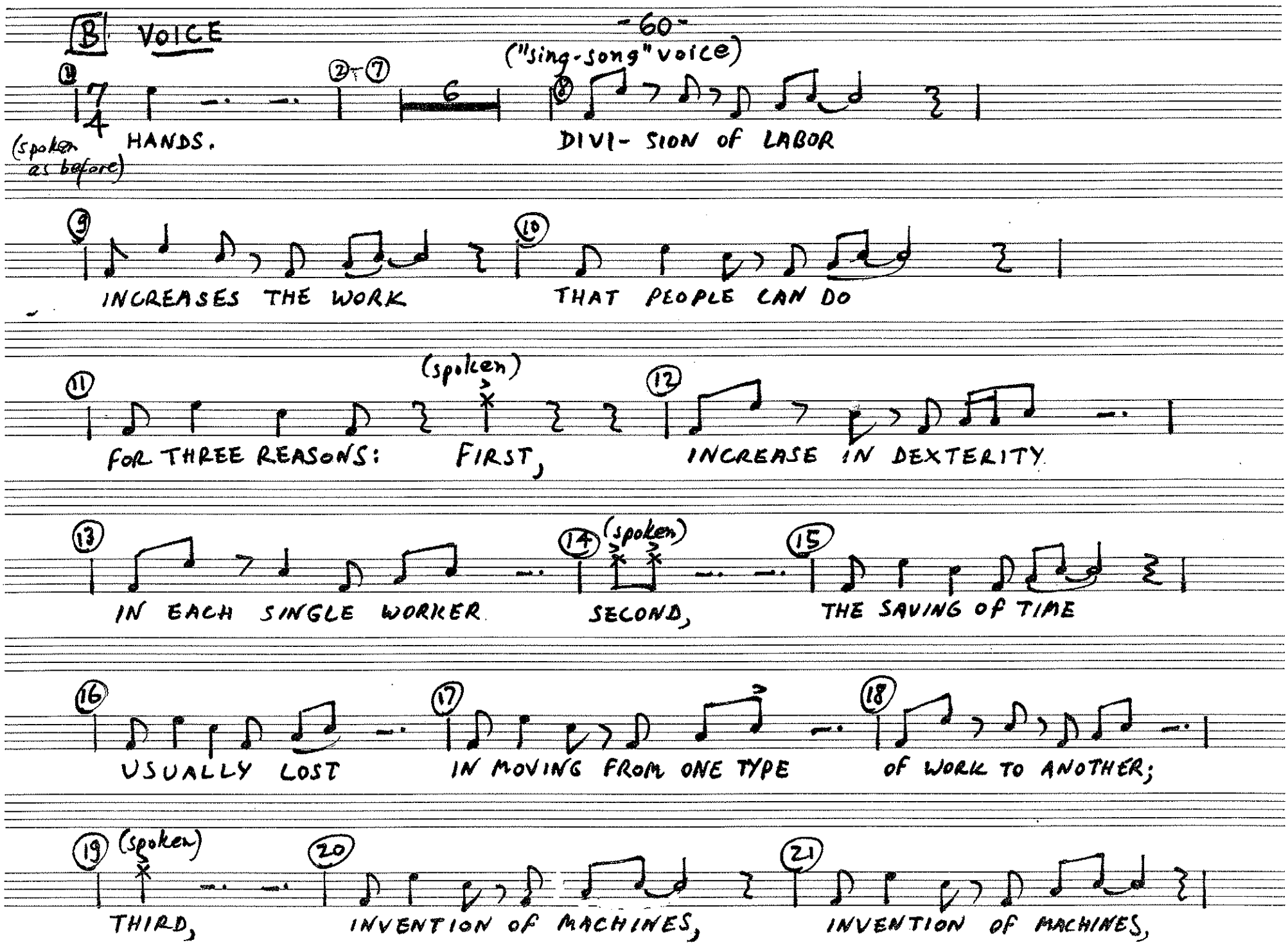
⑥ PICKING UP SOME THING OR THINGS, DROPPING THEM, OR THROWING THEM DOWN.

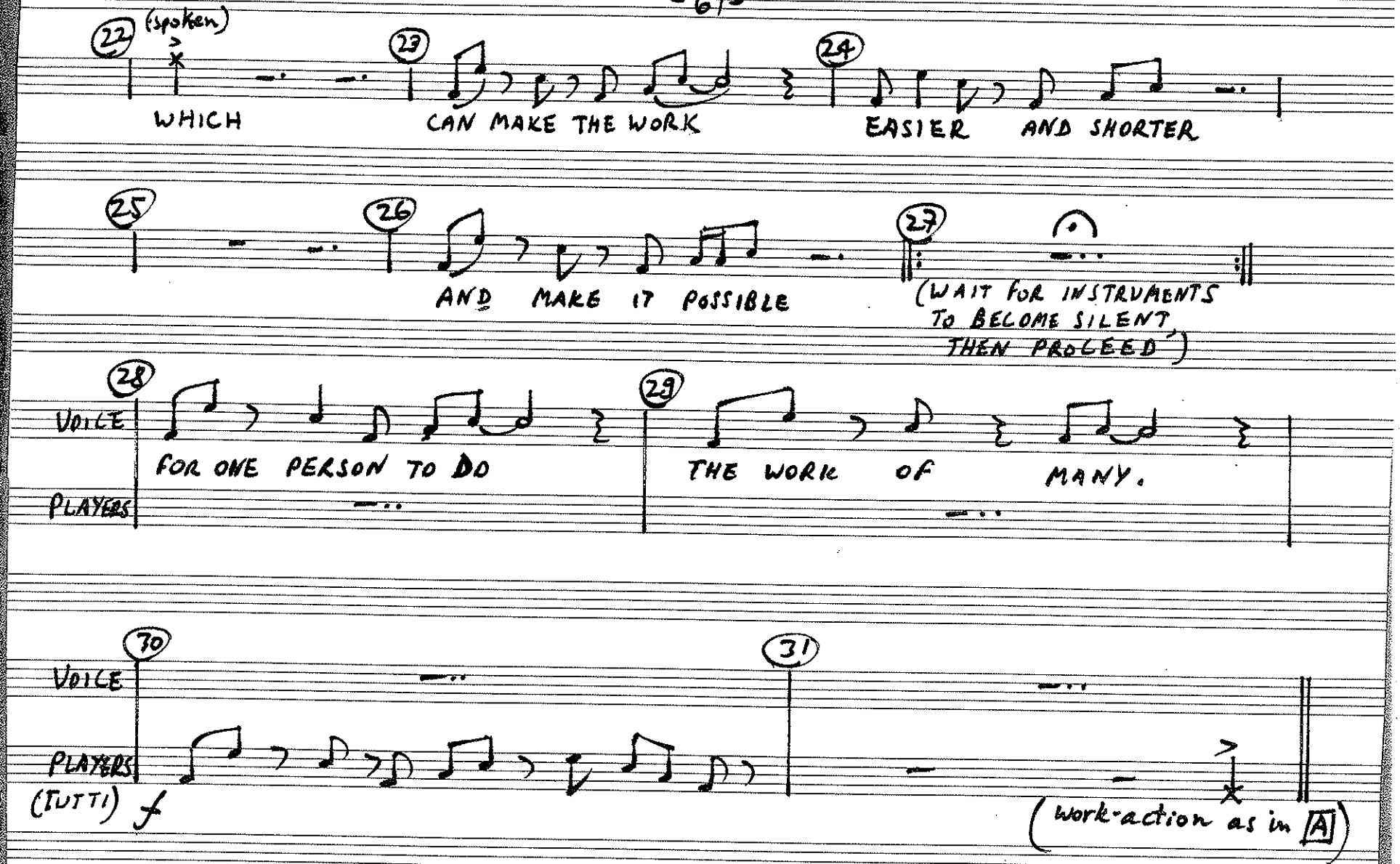
PART [B]: USING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, PLAY FIGURES ⓐ to ⓕ. 4 LEVELS FROM LOW TO HIGH, AS IN VOCAL PART (ANY PITCHES). YOU MAY REPEAT A FIGURE AD LIB., REMAIN SILENT, AND SKIP FIGURES AD LIB. WHEN EVERYONE HAS REACHED ⓕ, PROCEED WITH VOICE IN BARS 28 — 31.
A KEYBOARD PLAYER, IF THERE IS ONE, SHOULD PLAY WITH BOXING GLOVES.
ANY EIGHTH-NOTE (♪) MAY BE SUBSTITUTED BY TWO SIXTEENTHS (♬).


A
(♩=96-100)
VOICE
PLAYERS
ONE MAN DRAWS OUT THE WIRE, AN-
OTHER STRAIGHTENS IT, AN-
THIRD CUTS IT A
FOURTH POINTS IT A
FIFTH GRINDS IT AT THE
TOP FOR RECEIVING THE
HEAD; TO
MAKE THE HEAD REQUIRES
TWO OR THREE DISTINCT OPERATIONS; TO
PUT IT ON IS A PECULIAR BUSINESS, TO
WHITEN THE PINS IS ANOTHER; IT IS
EVEN A TRADE BY ITSELF TO
PUT THEM INTO THE

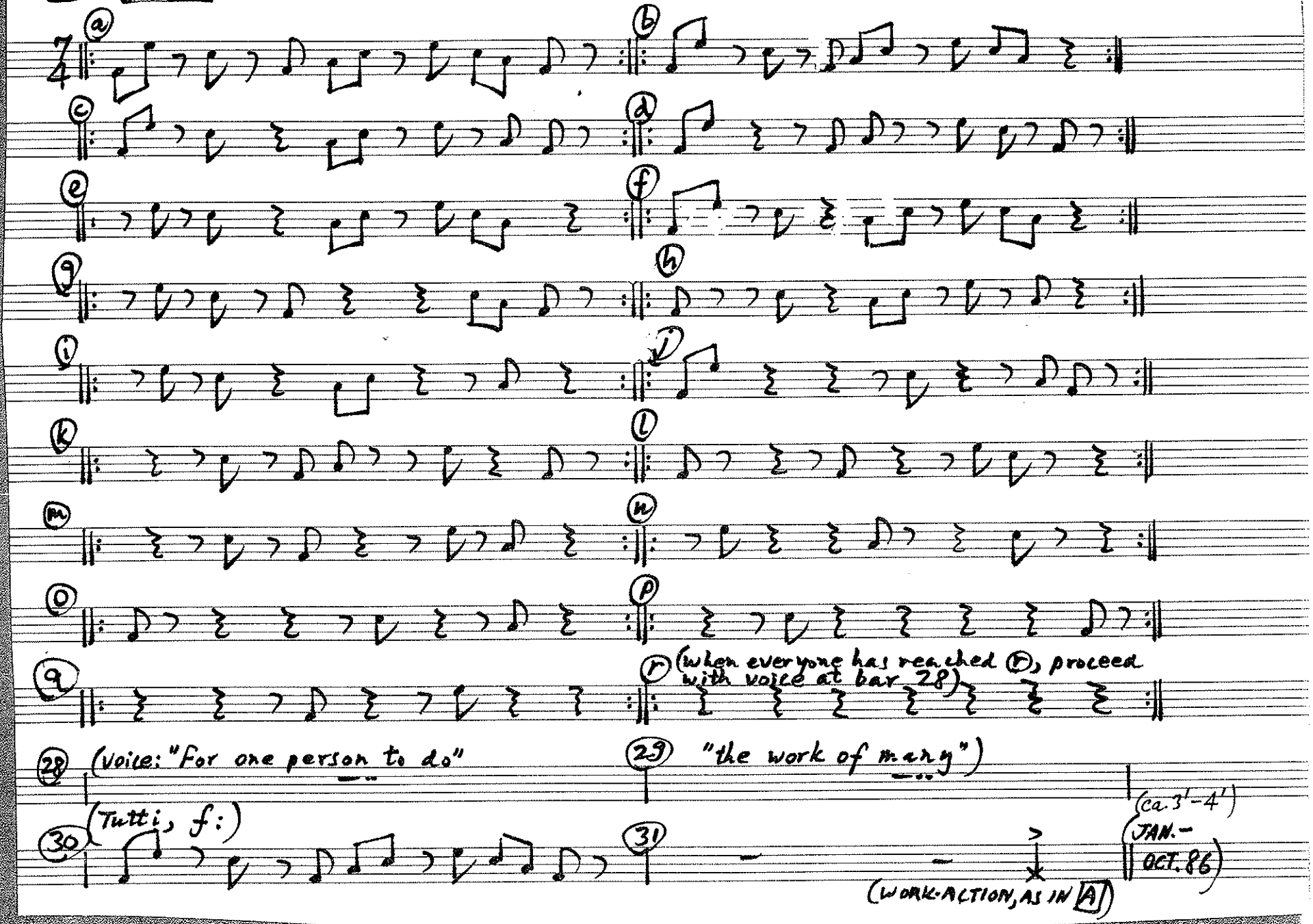


(PLAYERS: TAKE INSTRUMENTS; GO DIRECTLY TO PART [B])


B VOICE
("sing-song" voice)
(spoken as before)
HANDS.
DIVI- SION of LABOR
INCREASES THE WORK
THAT PEOPLE CAN DO
(spoken)
FOR THREE REASONS: FIRST,
INCREASE IN DEXTERITY
IN EACH SINGLE WORKER
(spoken)
SECOND,
THE SAVING of TIME
USUALLY LOST
IN MOVING FROM ONE TYPE
OF WORK TO ANOTHER;
(spoken)
THIRD,
INVENTION of MACHINES,
INVENTION of MACHINES,


22
(spoken)
WHICH
23
CAN MAKE THE WORK
24
EASIER AND SHORTER
25
26
AND MAKE IT POSSIBLE
27
(WAIT FOR INSTRUMENTS TO BECOME SILENT THEN PROCEED)
28
VOICE
PLAYERS
FOR ONE PERSON TO DO
29
THE WORK OF MANY.
30
VOICE
PLAYERS
(TUTTI)
f
31
(work-action as in A)

B PLAYERS


4
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
j
k
l
m
n
o
p
q
r
(when everyone has reached (F), proceed with voice at bar 28)
28
(Voice: "For one person to do"
29
"the work of many")
30
(Tutti, f:)
31
(WORK-ACTION, AS IN A)
(ca. 3'-4')
JAN.-OCT. 86