PETER RELPH

SEVEN LAST WORDS

FOR CHOIR AND VIOLONCELLO

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SEVEN LAST WORDS

PIECE FOR CHOIR AND VIOLONCELLO

(2023)

TEXT

I

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Luke, 23:34)

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

II

Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. (Luke, 23:43)

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

III

Woman, behold thy son! and Behold thy mother! (John, 19:26-27)

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

IV

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (Mark, 15:34)

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

V

I thirst. (John, 19:28)

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

VI

It is finished. (John, 19:30)

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

VII

Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. (Luke, 23:46)

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

INSTRUMENTATION

Choir SATB (with divisi)

Violoncello

Seven Last Words was written for the Bristol Contemporary Choral Music Festival 2023.

Duration: c. 15 minutes

Cover Photo: Juan Sánchez Cotán - Crucifixion of Jesus (c. 1603). Public Domain: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Juan_S%C3%A1nchez_Cot%C3%A1n_-_Crucifixion_of_Jesus.jpg

More information: peterrelph.com

PERFORMANCE NOTE

Throughout the piece, a circle at the tip of a hairpin indicates *dim. al niente,* or "to nothing."

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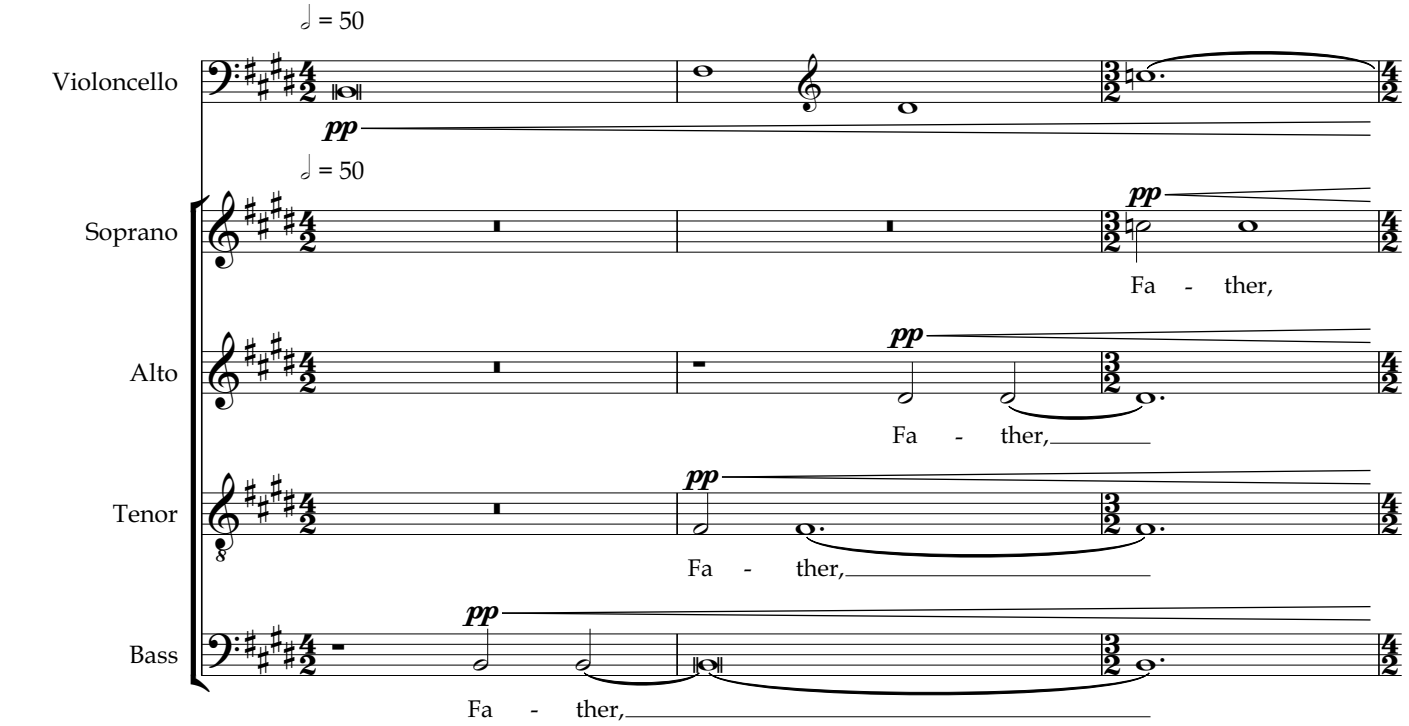
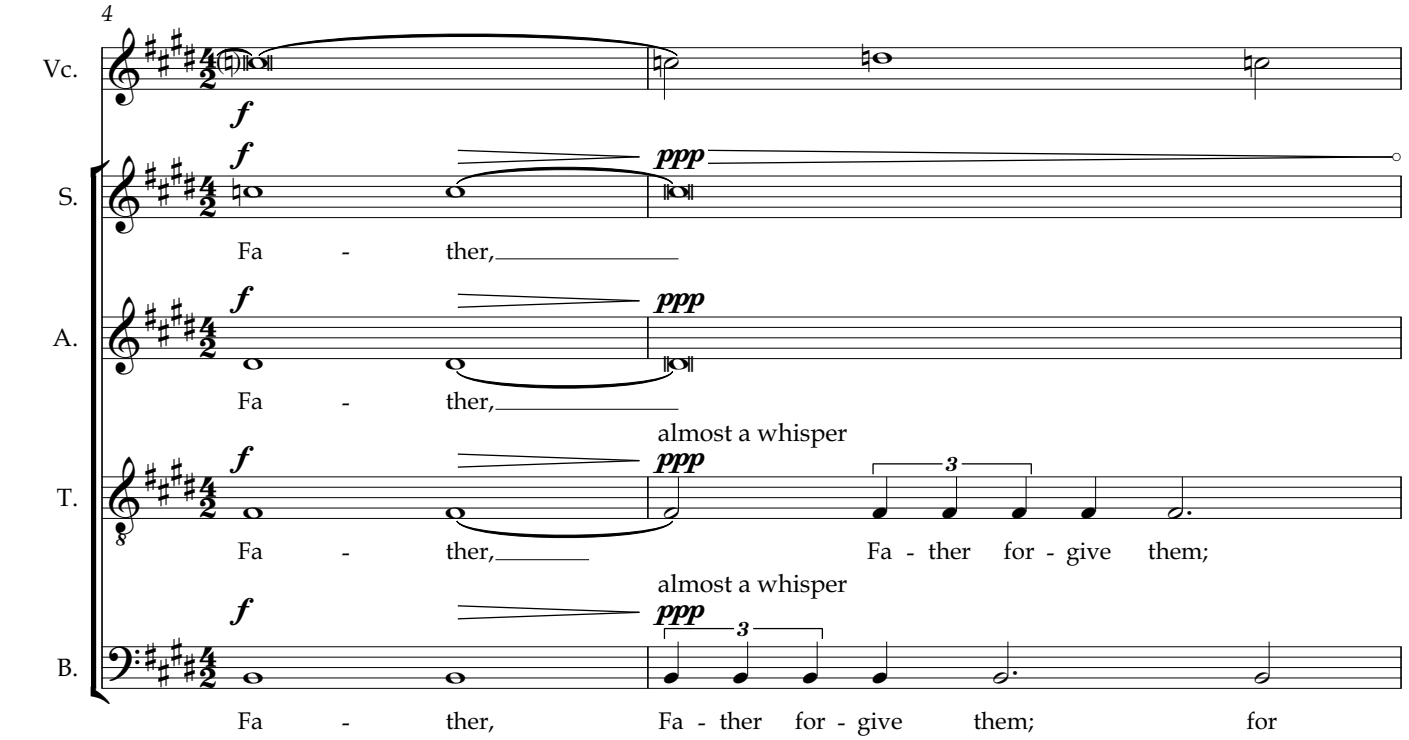
SEVEN LAST WORDS

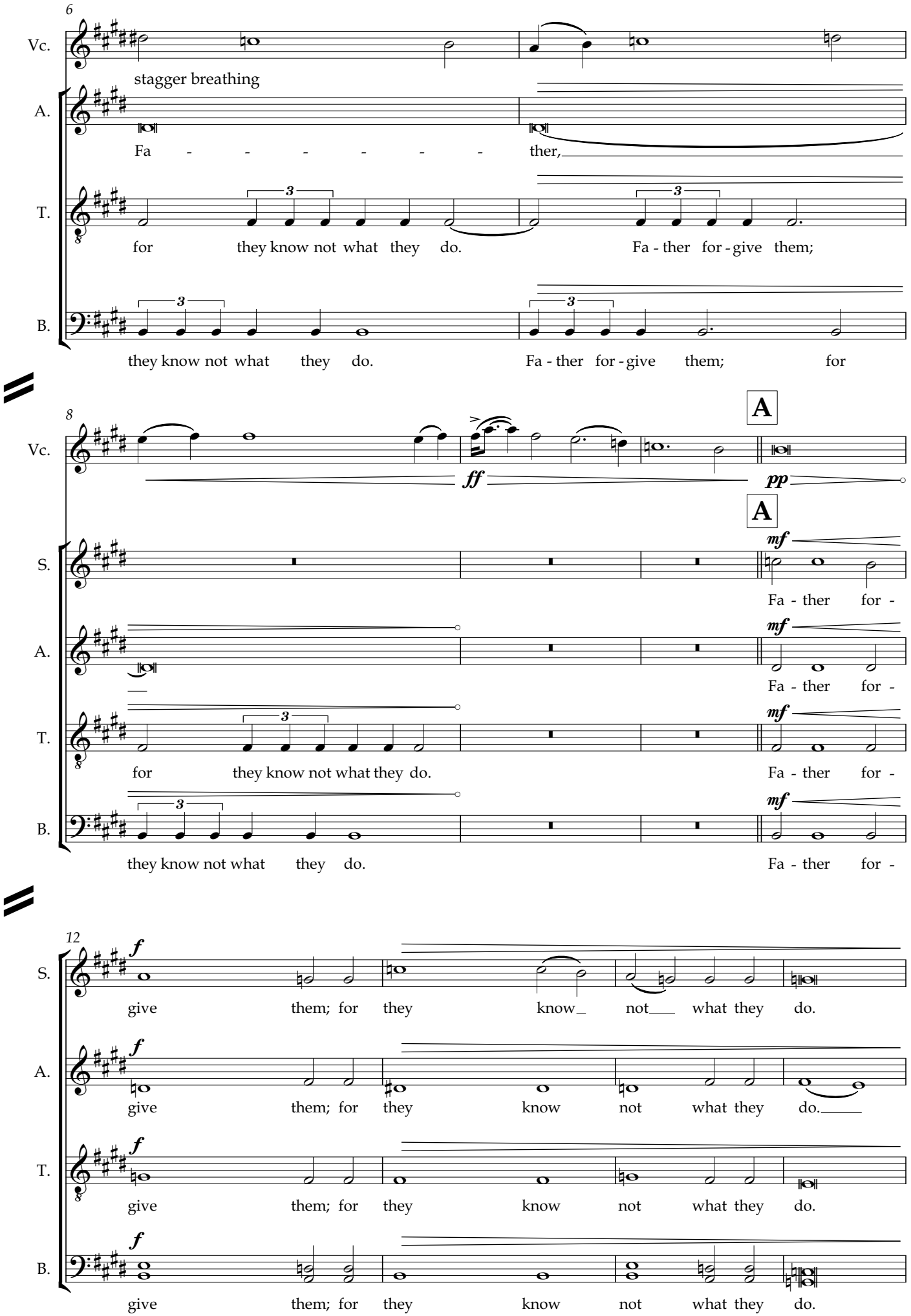
From the Biblical Text

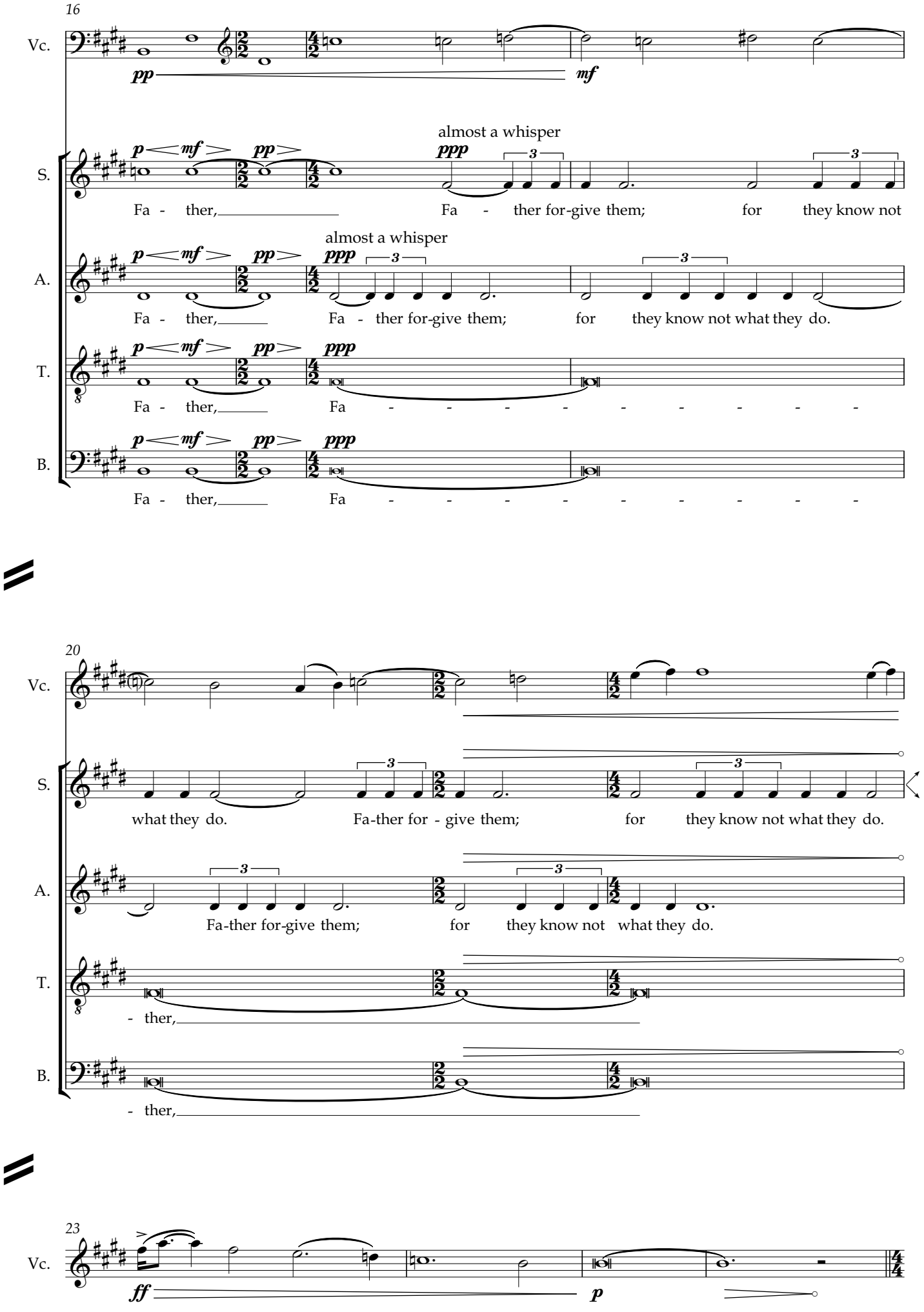
PETER RELPH

I. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

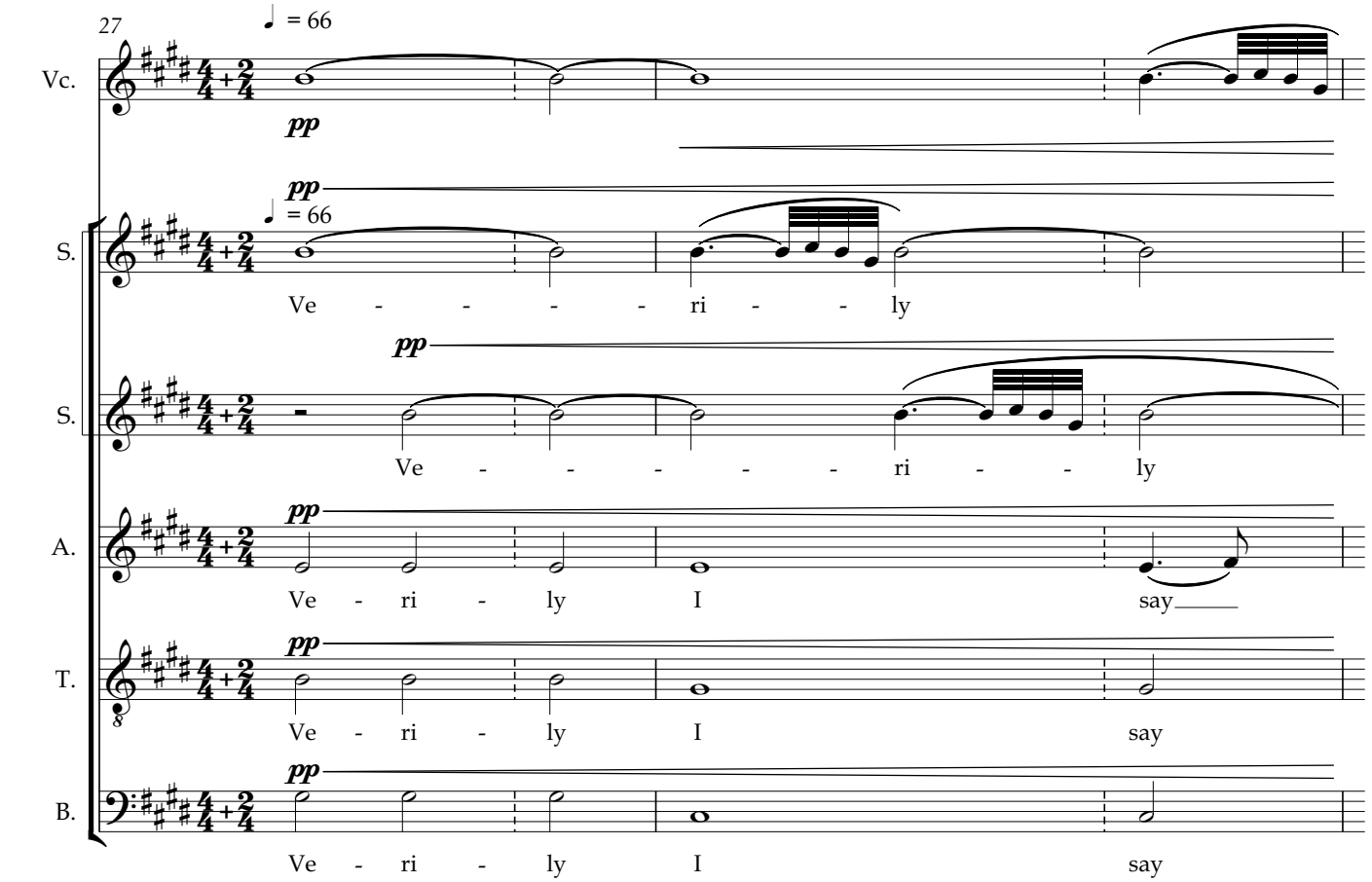


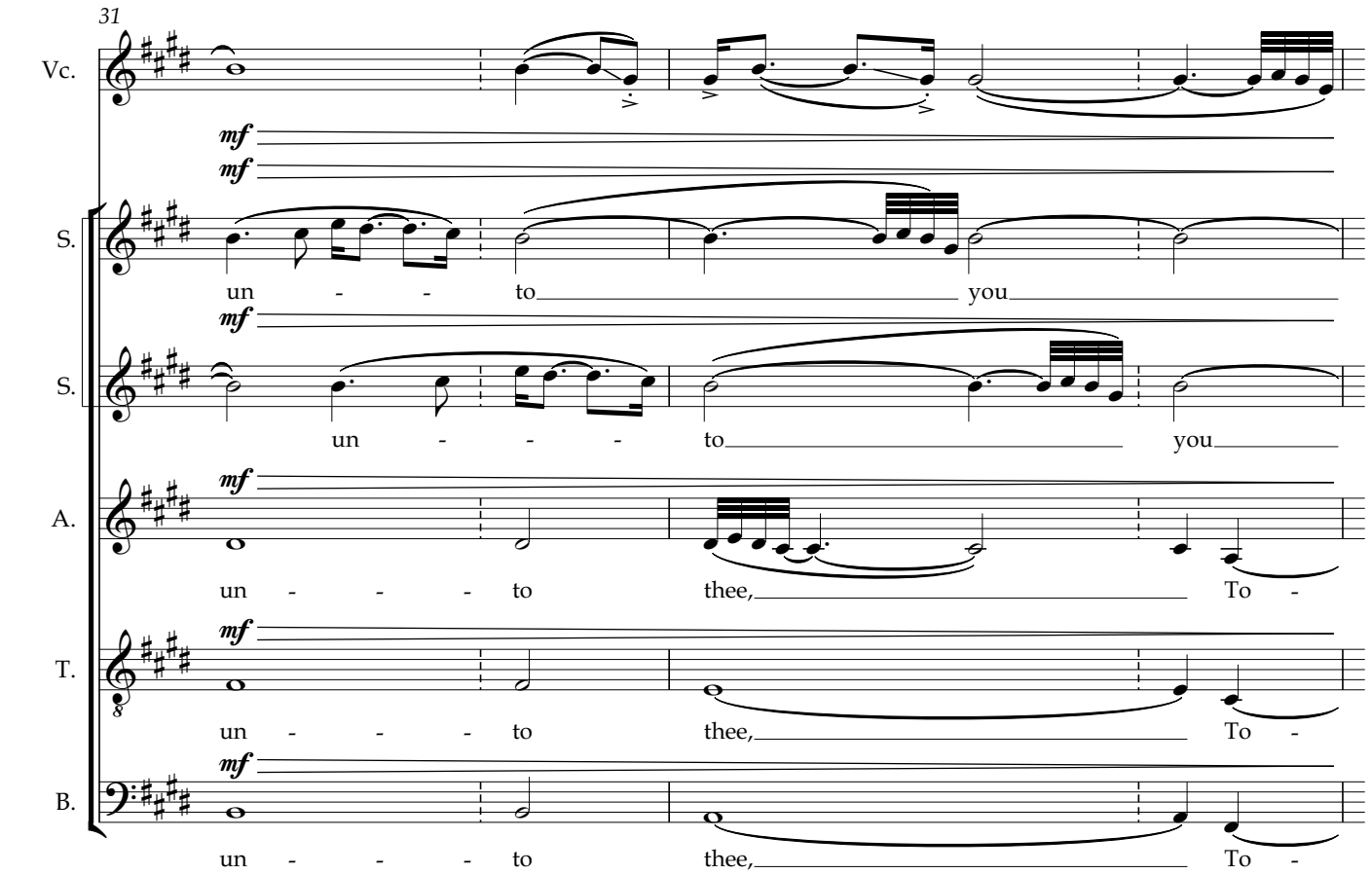


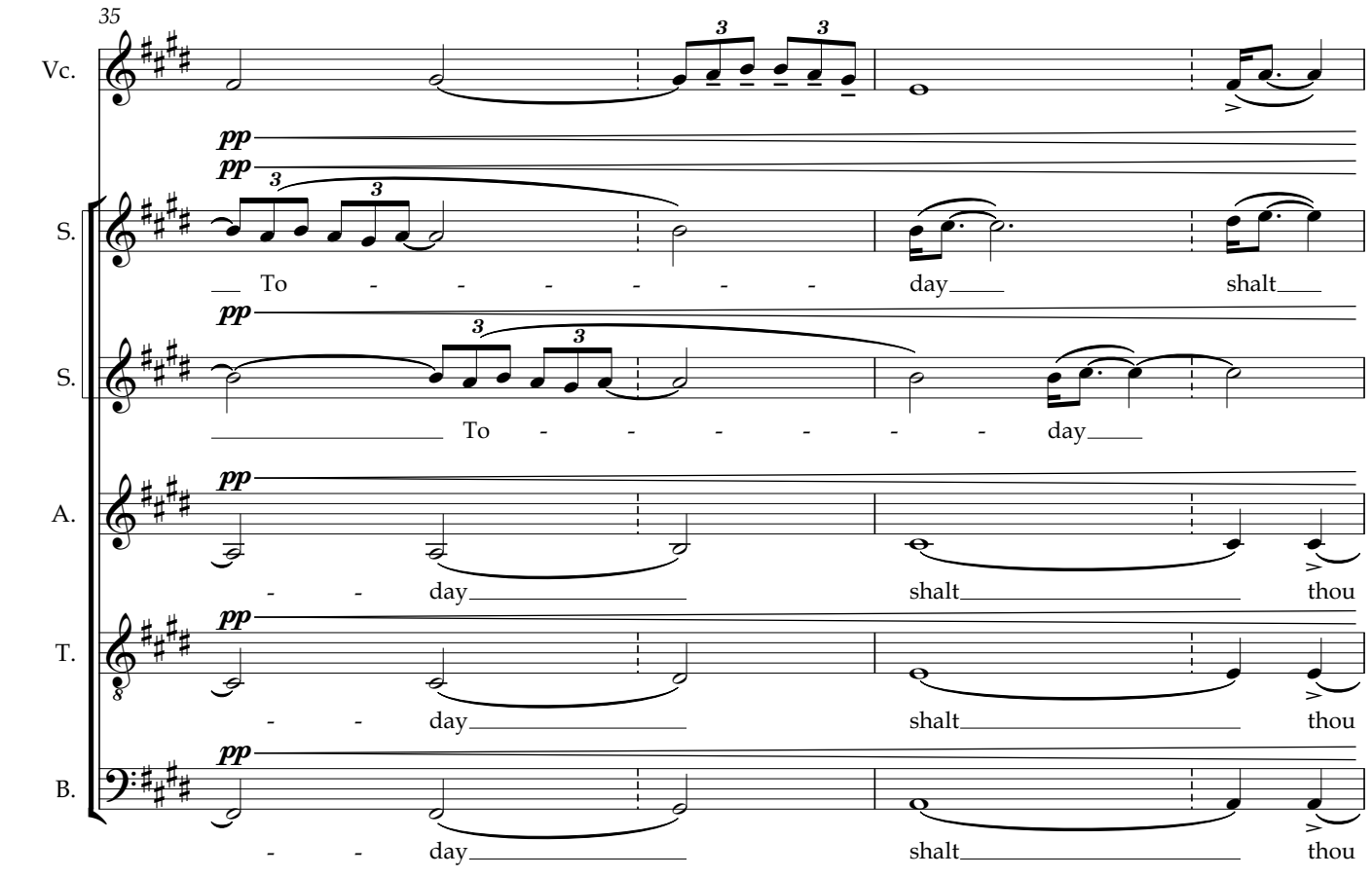

6
Vc.
stagger breathing
A.
Fa - - - - - - ther,
T.
for they know not what they do. Fa - ther for - give them;
B.
they know not what they do. Fa - ther for - give them; for
8
A
Vc.
ff
pp
A
S.
mf
Fa - ther for -
A.
mf
Fa - ther for -
T.
for they know not what they do.
mf
Fa - ther for -
B.
they know not what they do.
mf
Fa - ther for -
12
S.
f
give them; for they know_ not___ what they do.
A.
f
give them; for they know not what they do.___
T.
f
give them; for they know not what they do.
B.
f
give them; for they know not what they do.

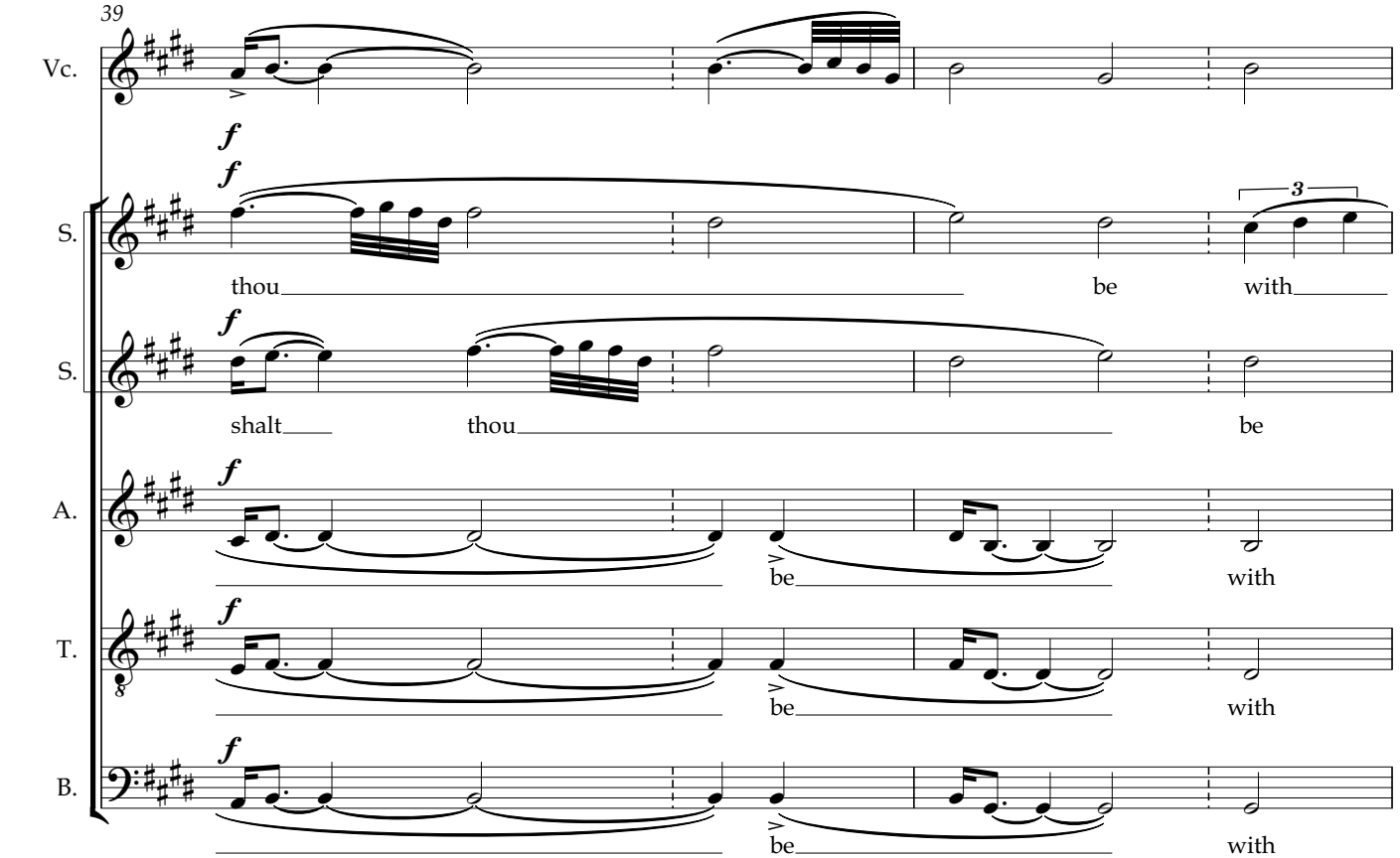

16
Vc.
pp
mf
S.
p mf pp
almost a whisper
ppp
Fa - ther, Fa - ther for-give them; for they know not
A.
p mf pp
almost a whisper
ppp
Fa - ther, Fa - ther for-give them; for they know not what they do.
T.
p mf pp
ppp
Fa - ther, Fa - - - - - - - - -
B.
p mf pp
ppp
Fa - ther, Fa - - - - - - - - -
20
Vc.
S.
what they do. Fa-ther for - give them; for they know not what they do.
A.
Fa-ther for-give them; for they know not what they do.
T.
- ther,
B.
- ther,
23
Vc.
ff
p

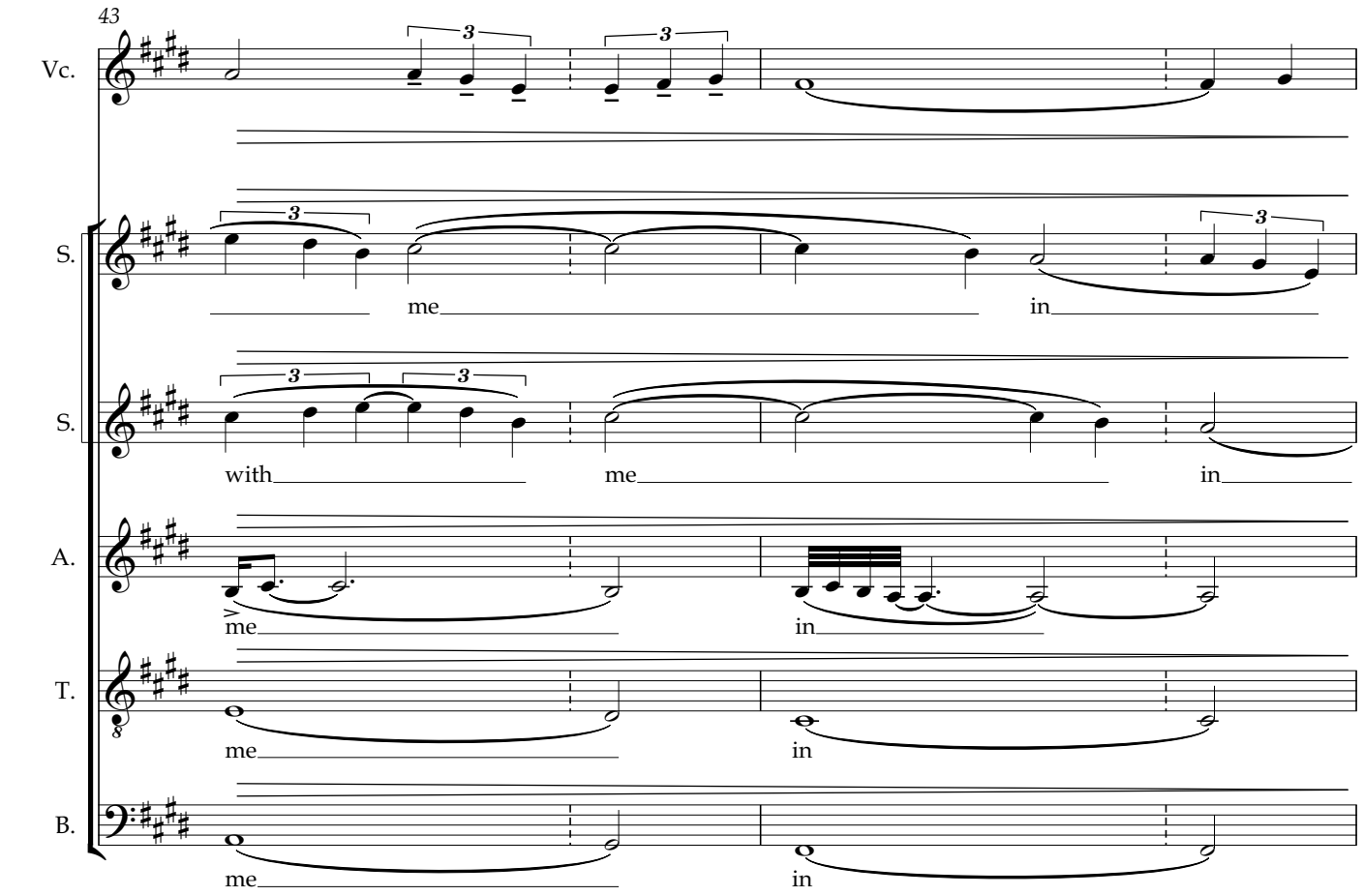
II. Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

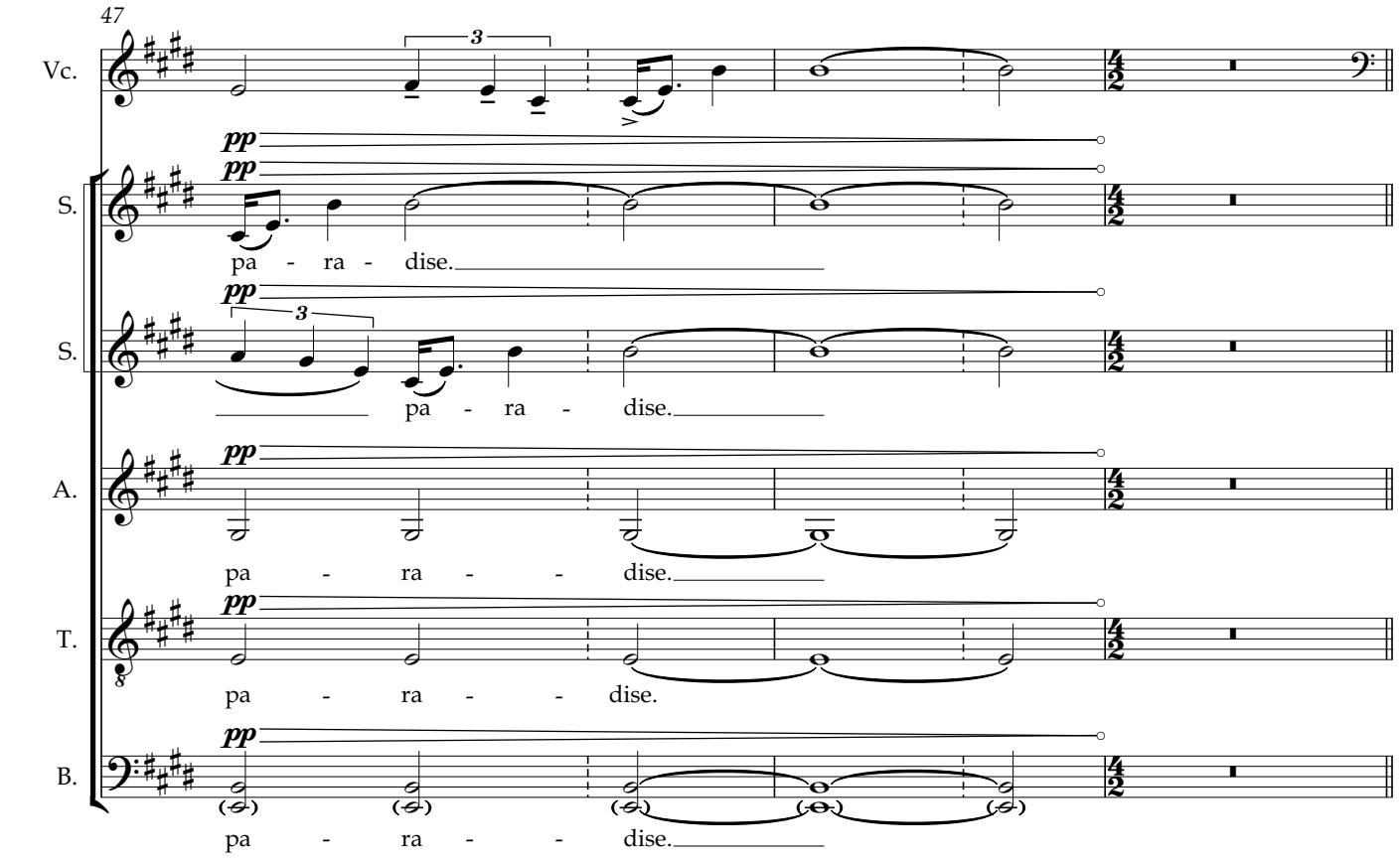




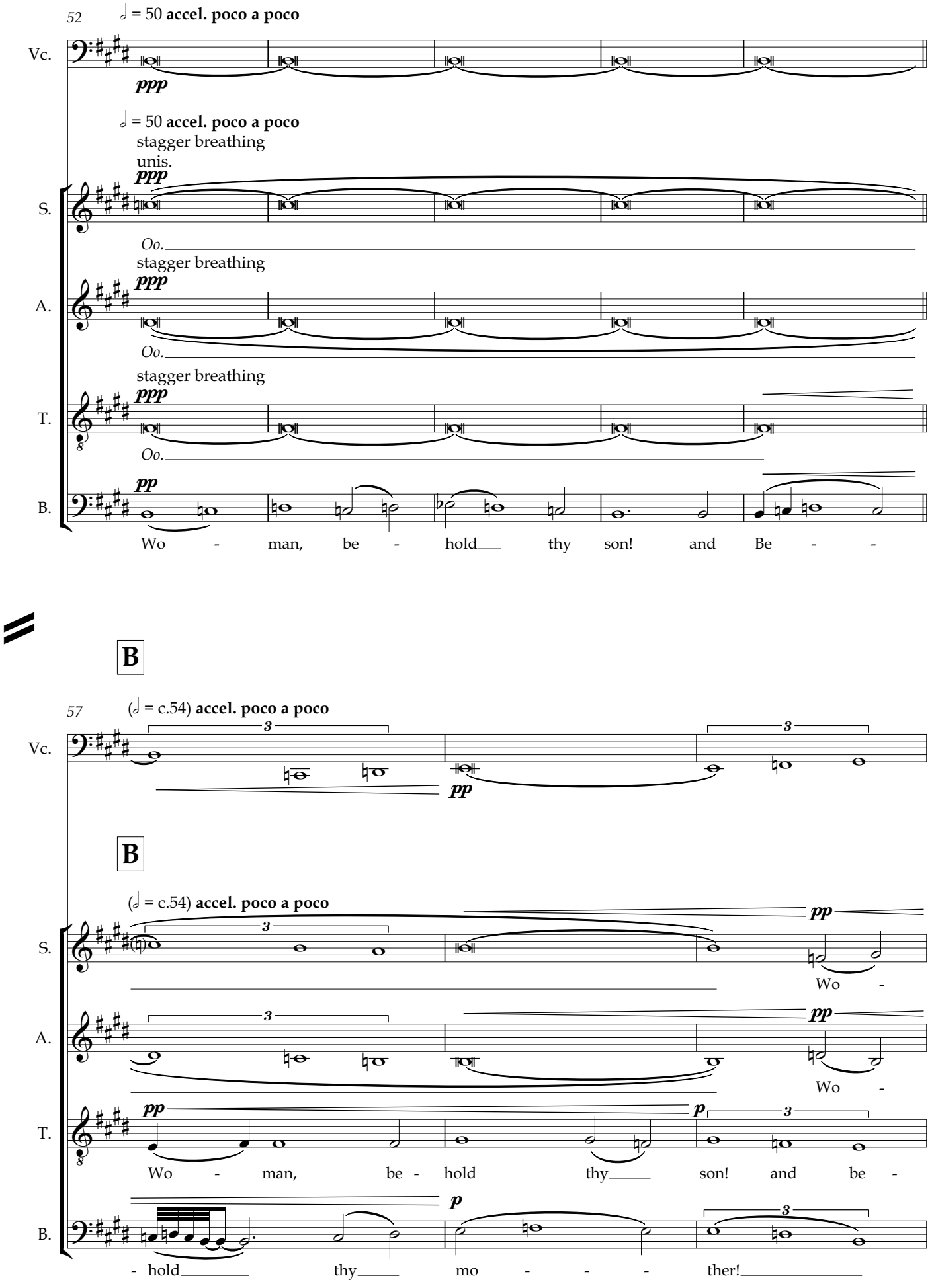

35
Vc.
S.
To - - - - - - day shalt
S.
To - - - - - - day
A.
- - day shalt thou
T.
- - day shalt thou
B.
- - day shalt thou

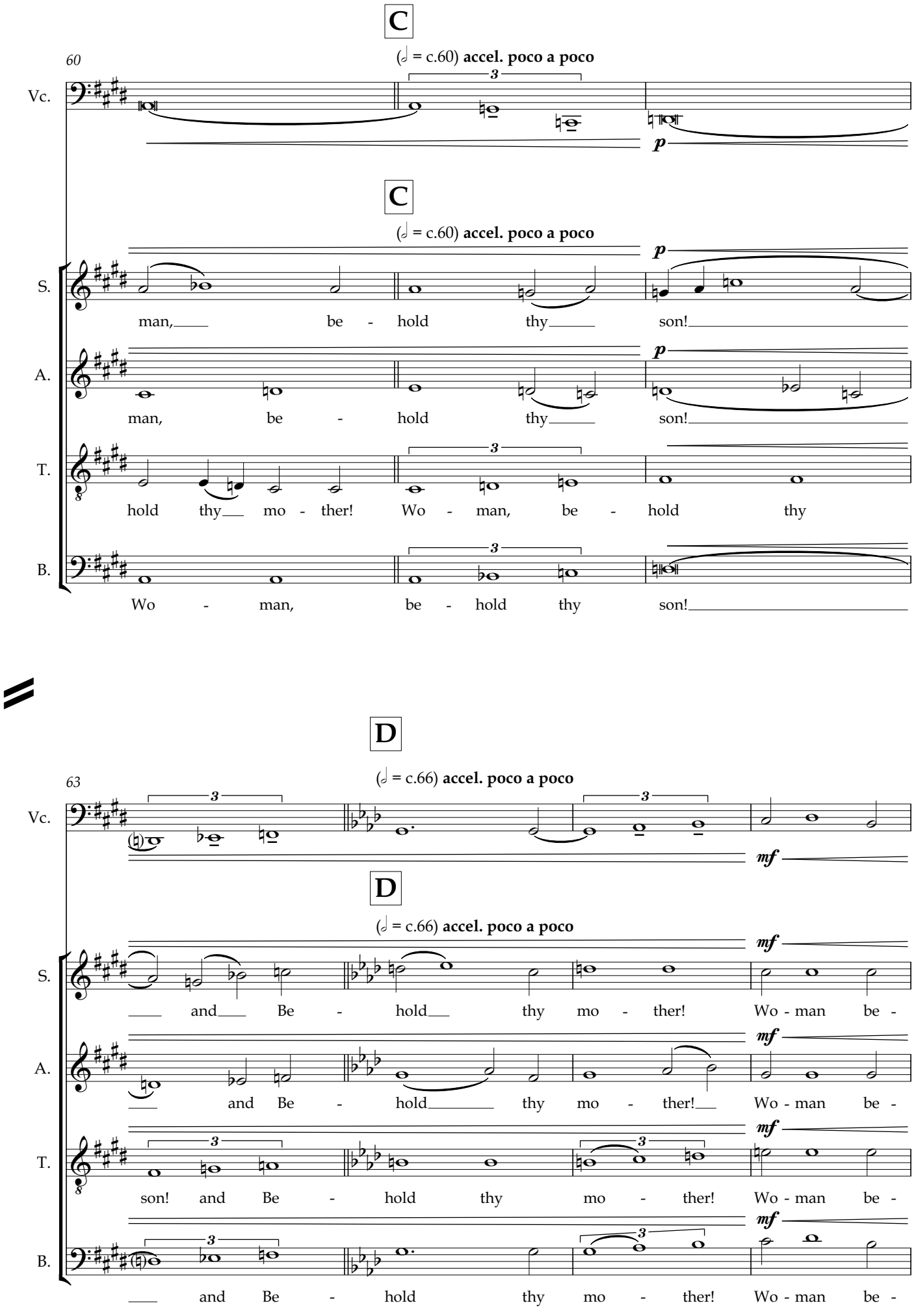

39
Vc.
S.
thou be with
S.
shalt thou be
A.
be with
T.
be with
B.
be with

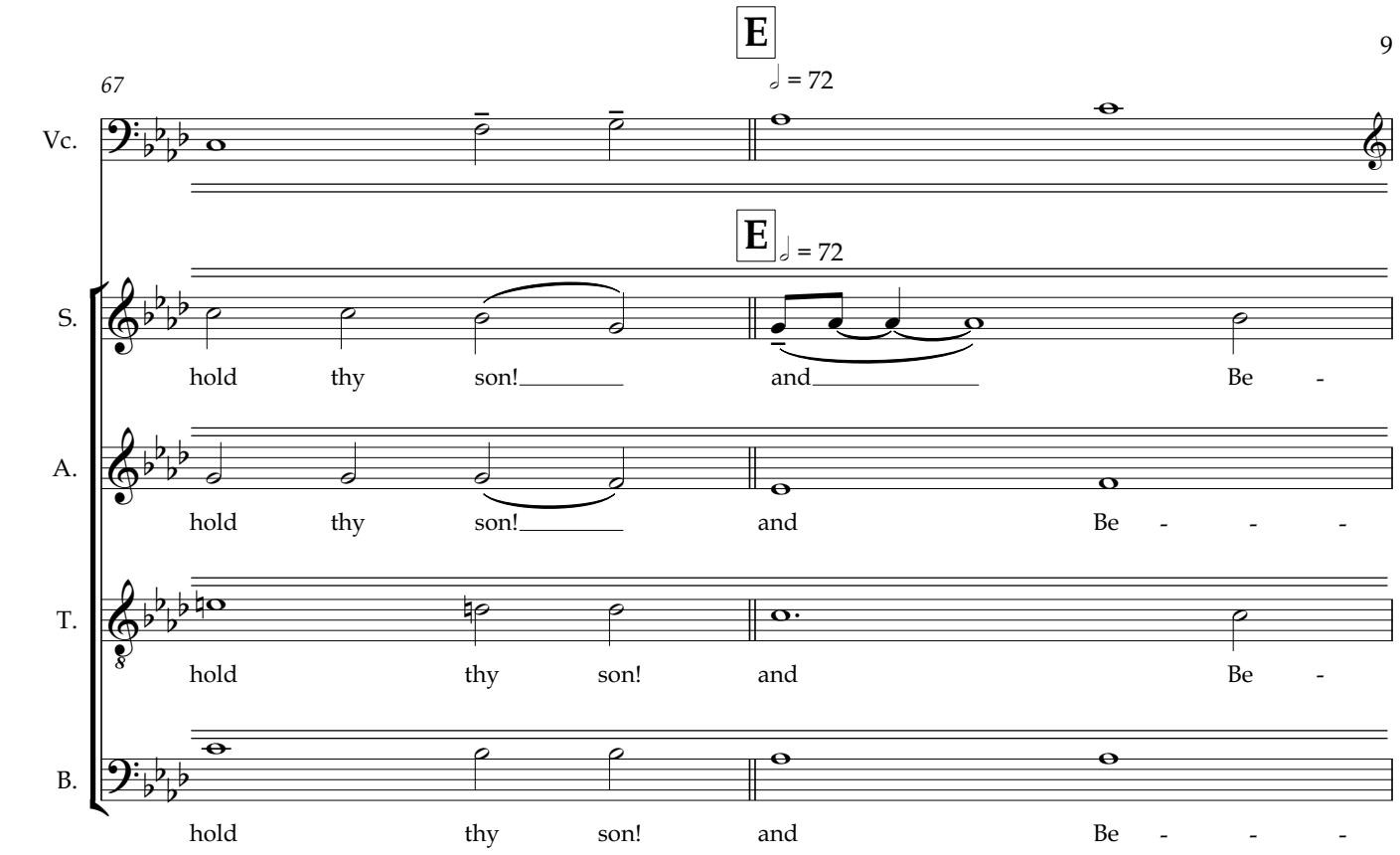

43
Vc.
S.
me
in
S.
with
me
in
A.
me
in
T.
me
in
B.
me
in

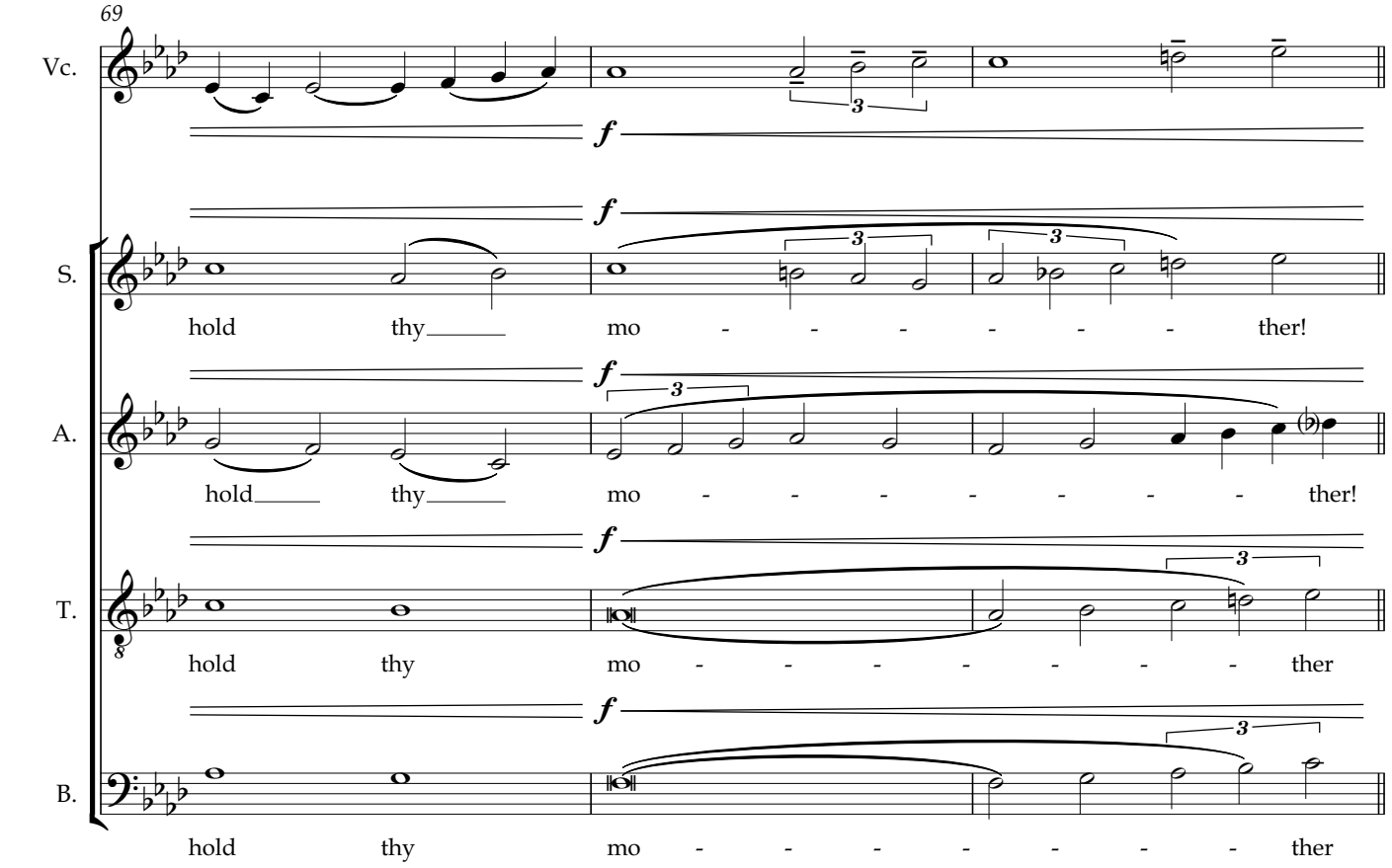

47
Vc.
pp
S.
pa - ra - dise.
S.
pa - ra - dise.
A.
pa - ra - - dise.
T.
pa - ra - - dise.
B.
pa - ra - - dise.

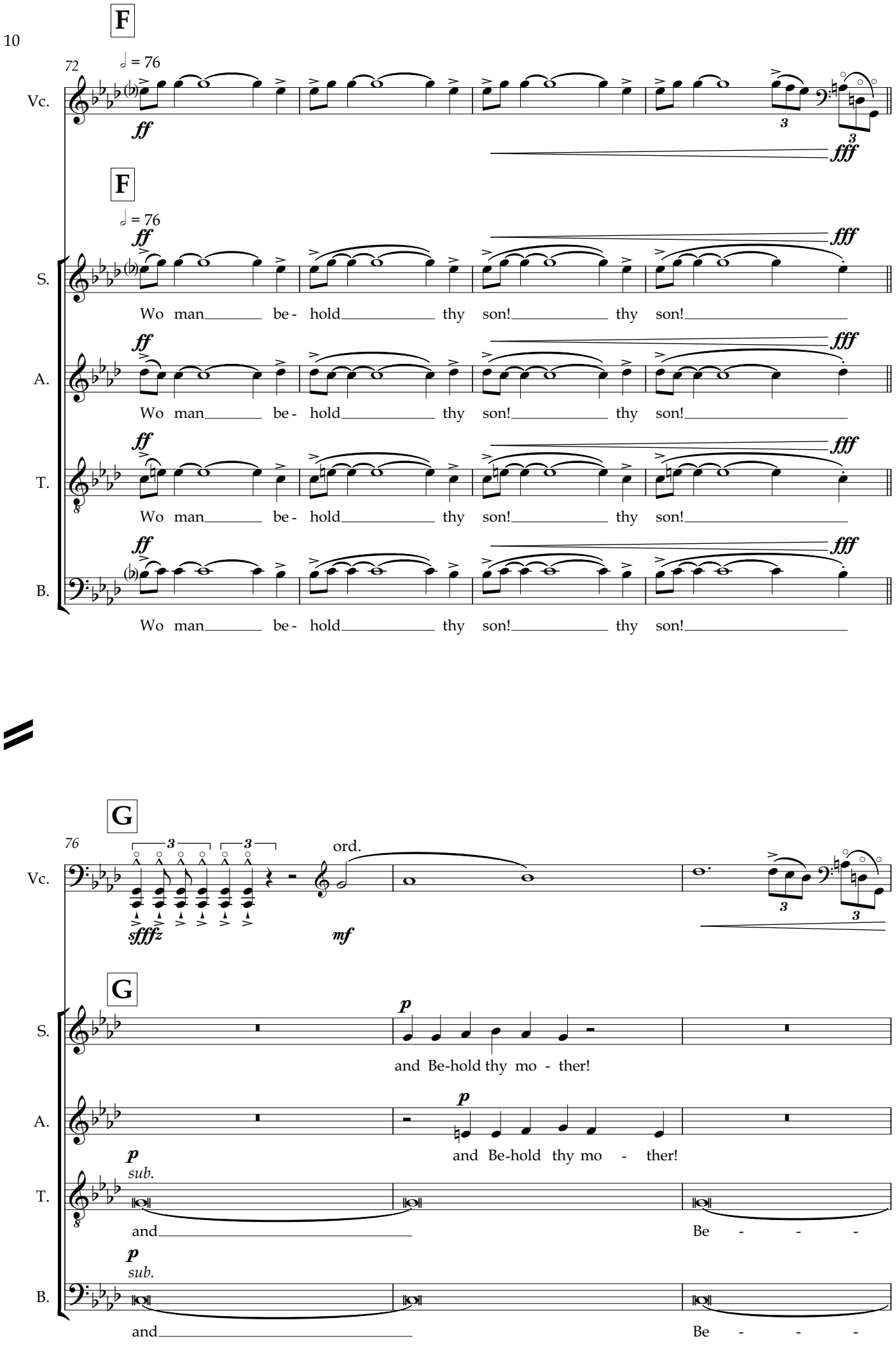
III. Woman, behold thy son! and Behold thy mother!

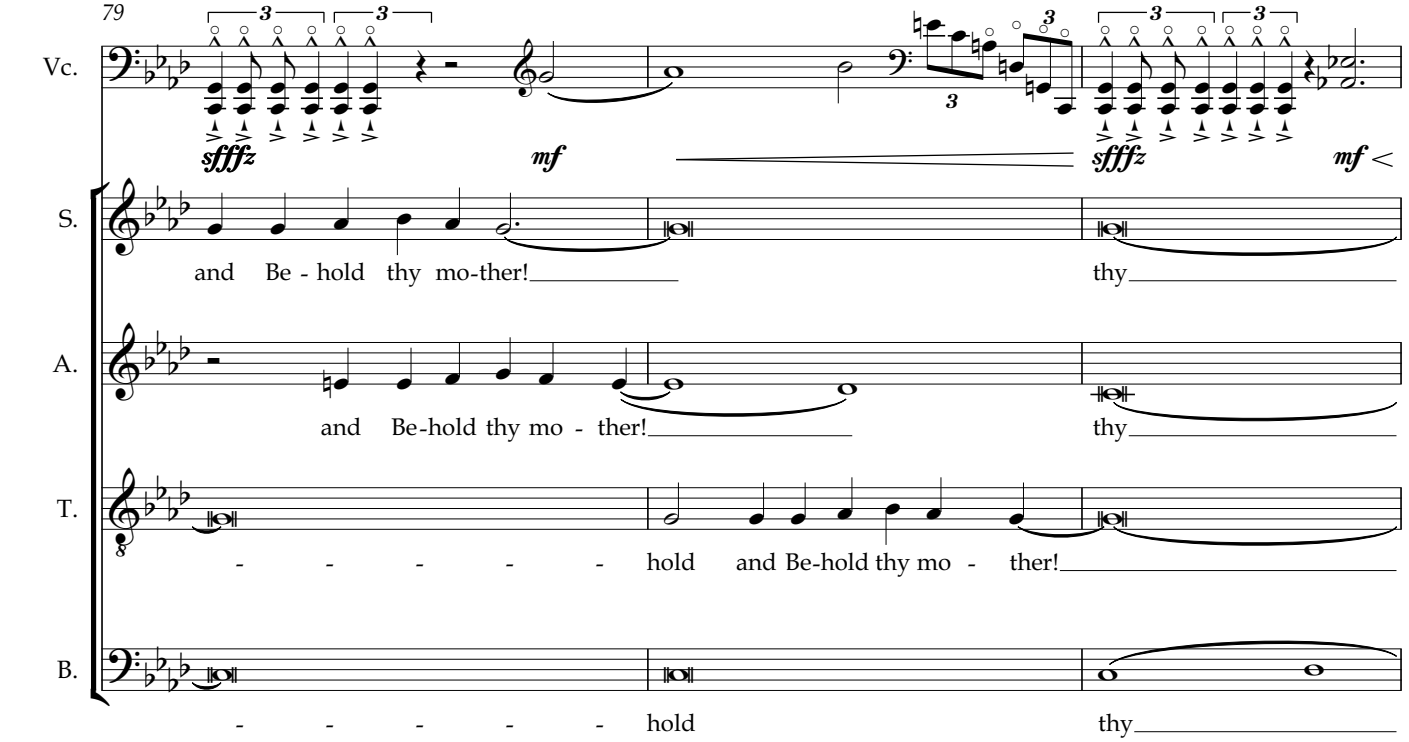


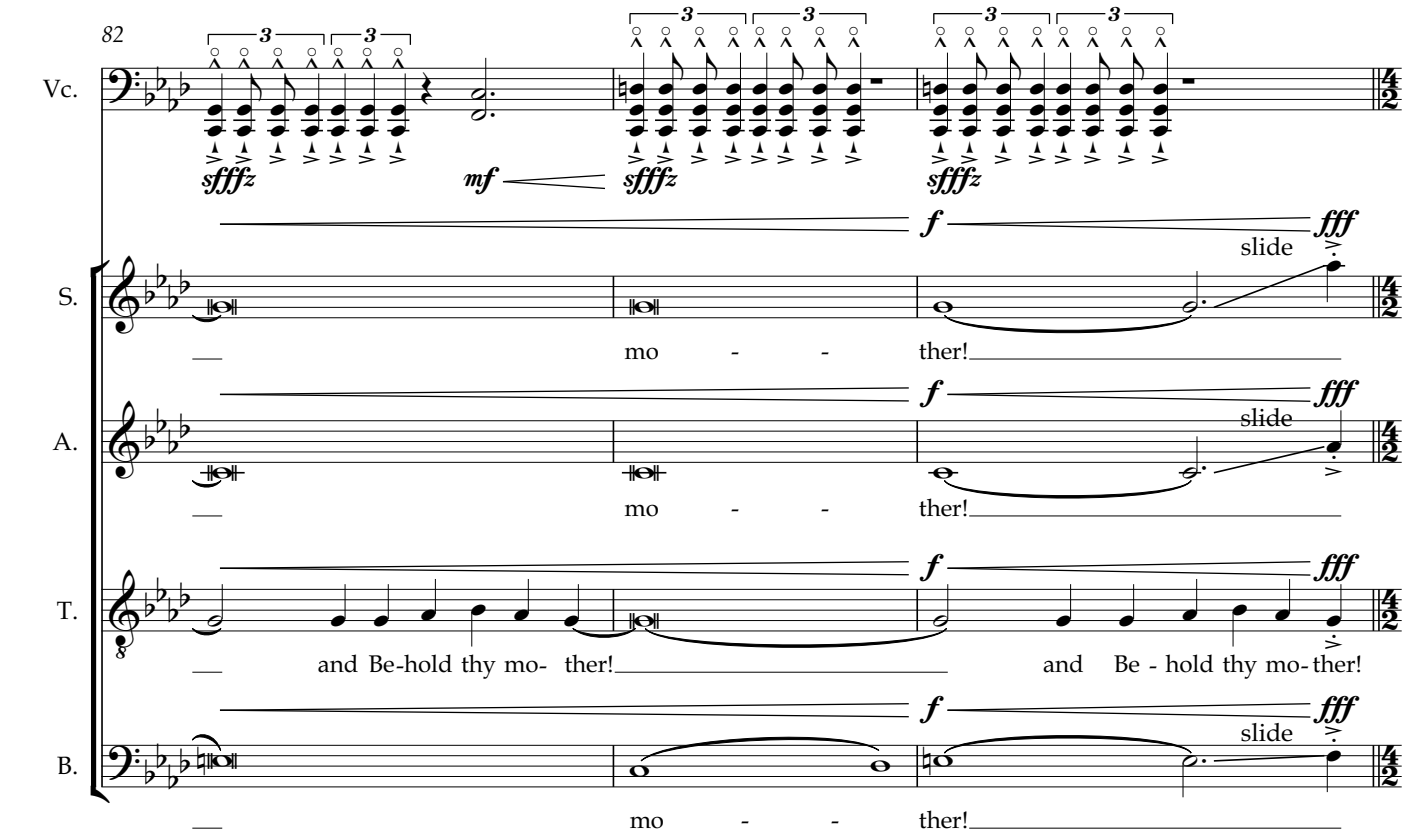

C
60
(𝅗𝅥 = c.60) accel. poco a poco
Vc.
p
C
(𝅗𝅥 = c.60) accel. poco a poco
S.
p
man, be - hold thy son!
A.
p
man, be - hold thy son!
T.
hold thy mo - ther! Wo - man, be - hold thy
B.
Wo - man, be - hold thy son!
D
63
(𝅗𝅥 = c.66) accel. poco a poco
Vc.
mf
D
(𝅗𝅥 = c.66) accel. poco a poco
S.
mf
and Be - hold thy mo - ther! Wo - man be -
A.
mf
and Be - hold thy mo - ther! Wo - man be -
T.
mf
son! and Be - hold thy mo - ther! Wo - man be -
B.
mf
and Be - hold thy mo - ther! Wo - man be -


E
67
♩ = 72
Vc.
E
♩ = 72
S.
hold thy son! and Be -
A.
hold thy son! and Be - - -
T.
hold thy son! and Be -
B.
hold thy son! and Be - - -

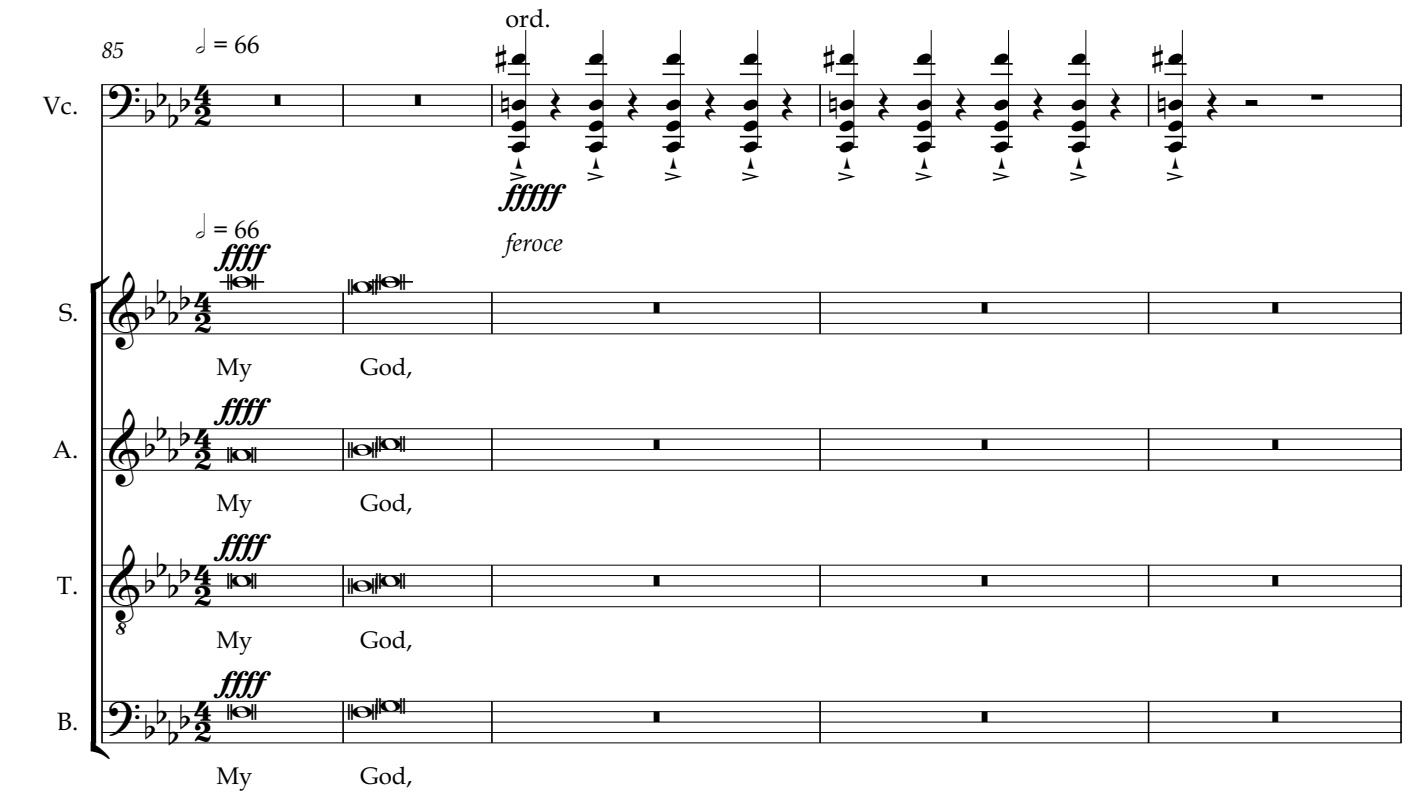

69
Vc.
f
S.
hold thy mo - - - - - - ther!
A.
hold thy mo - - - - - - - ther!
T.
hold thy mo - - - - - - - ther
B.
hold thy mo - - - - - - - ther

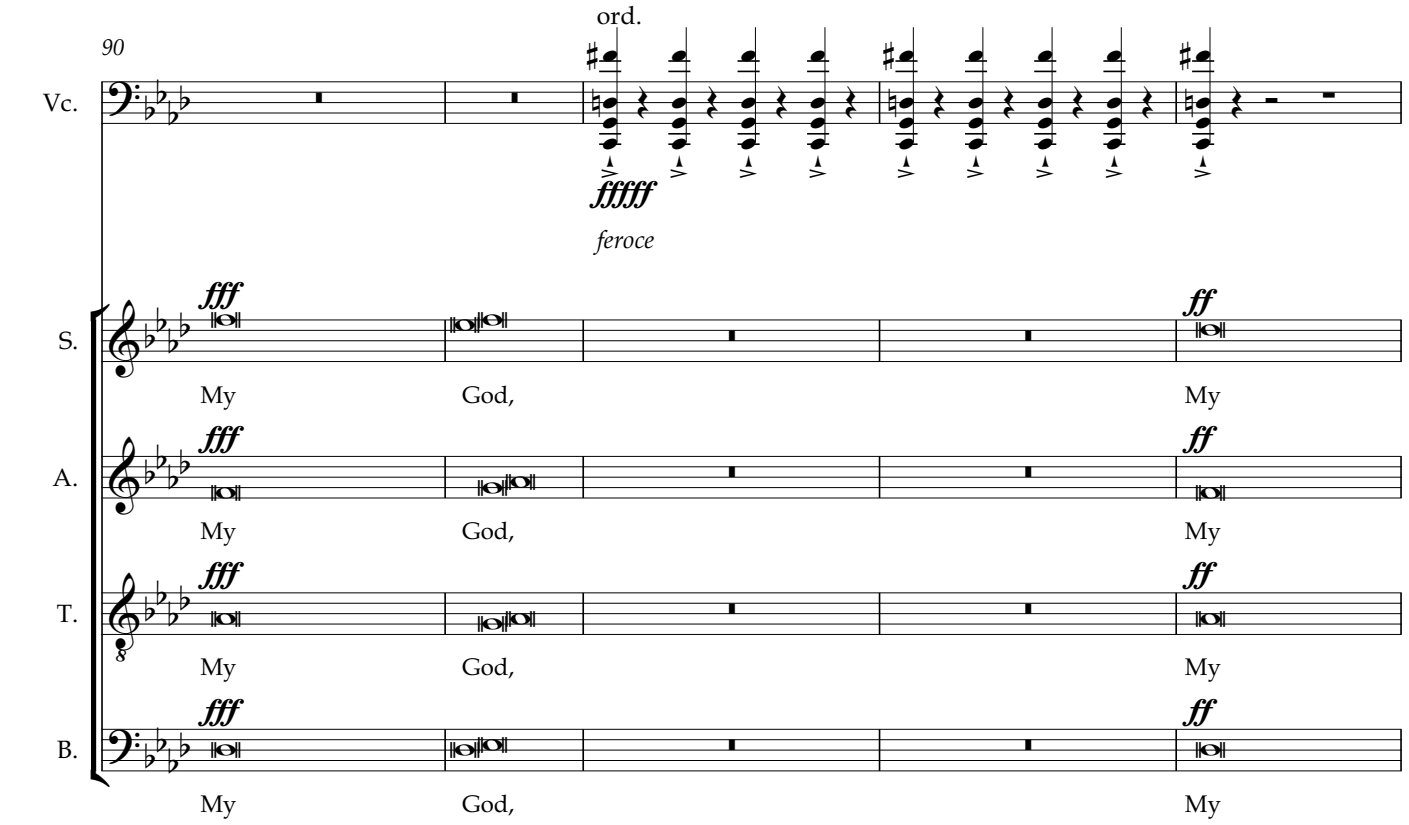

F
72
♩ = 76
Vc.
ff
fff
F
♩ = 76
S.
A.
T.
B.
Wo man be - hold thy son! thy son!
G
76
ord.
sfffz
mf
p
and Be-hold thy mo - ther!
sub.
and
Be - - -

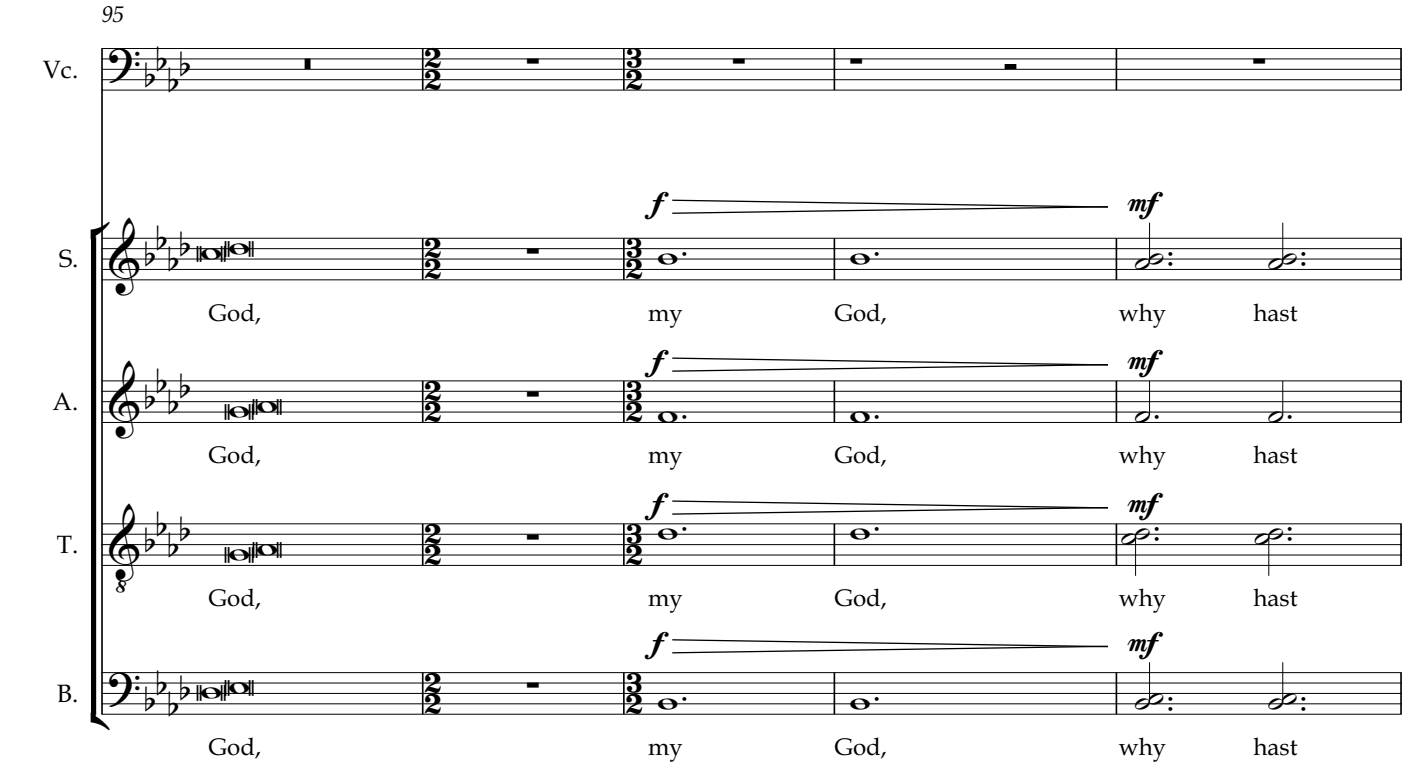

79
Vc.
S.
A.
T.
B.
sffz
mf
and Be - hold thy mo-ther!
thy
and Be-hold thy mo - ther!
- - - - - - hold and Be-hold thy mo - ther!
- - - - - - hold

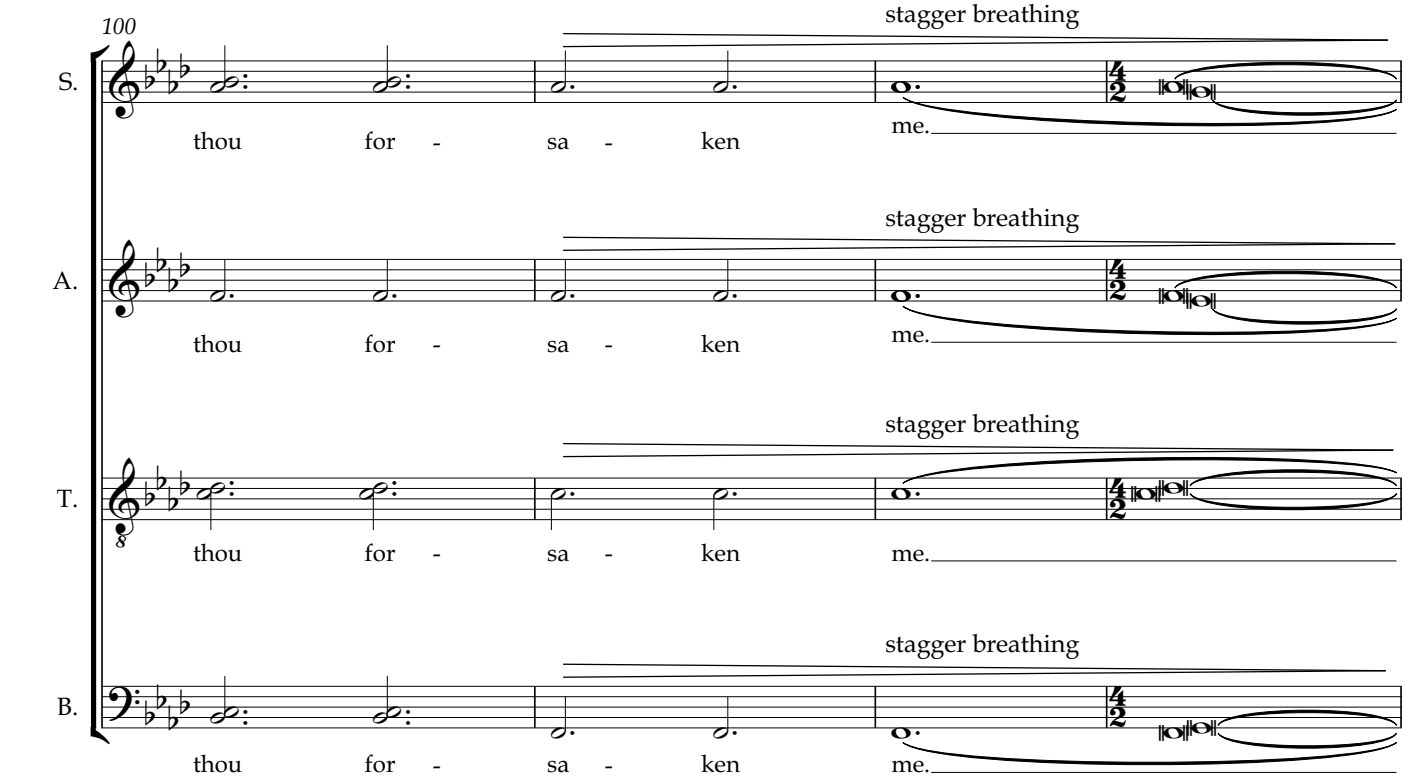

82
Vc.
S.
A.
T.
B.
sffz
mf
f
fff
slide
mo - - ther!
and Be-hold thy mo- ther!
and Be - hold thy mo- ther!

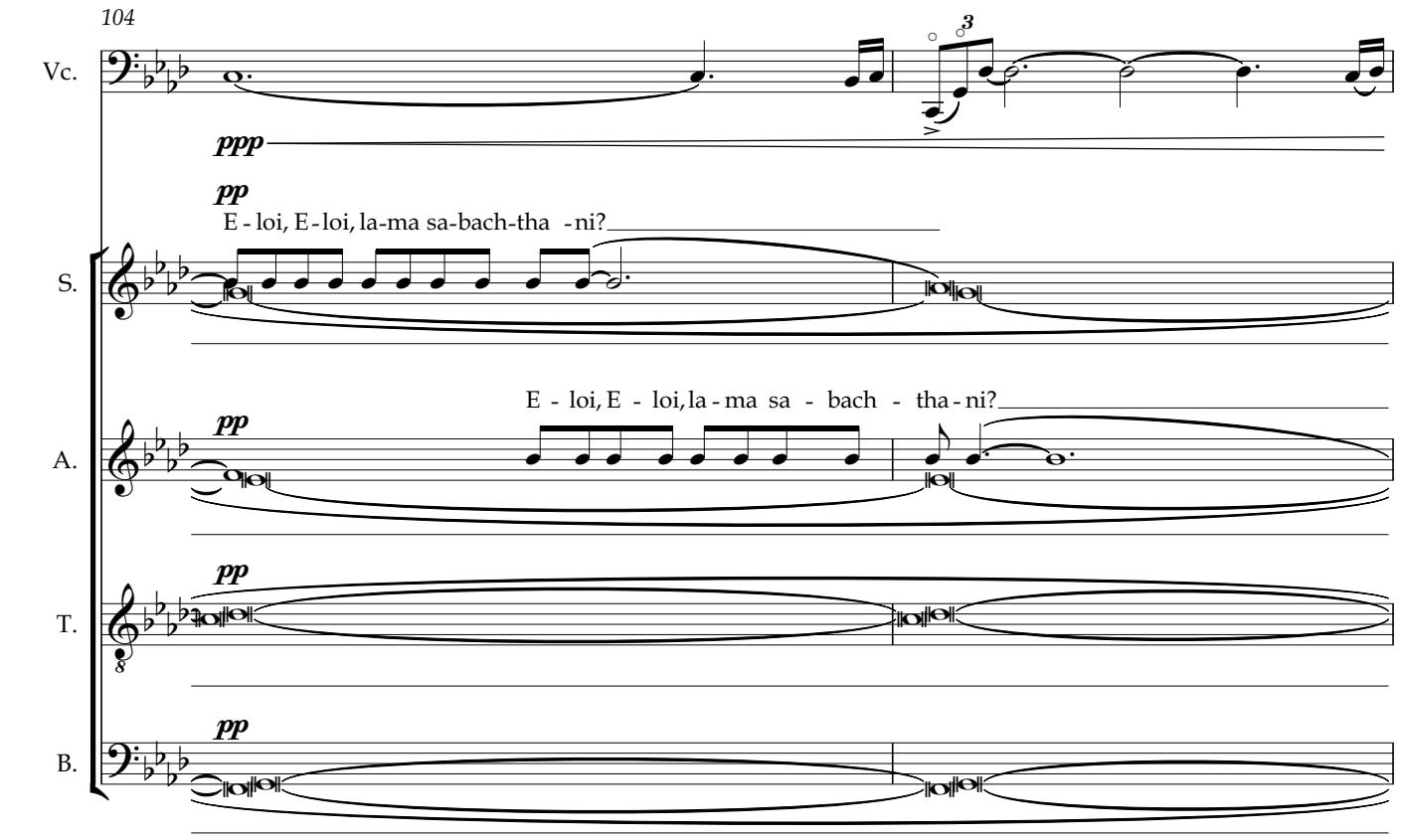
IV. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

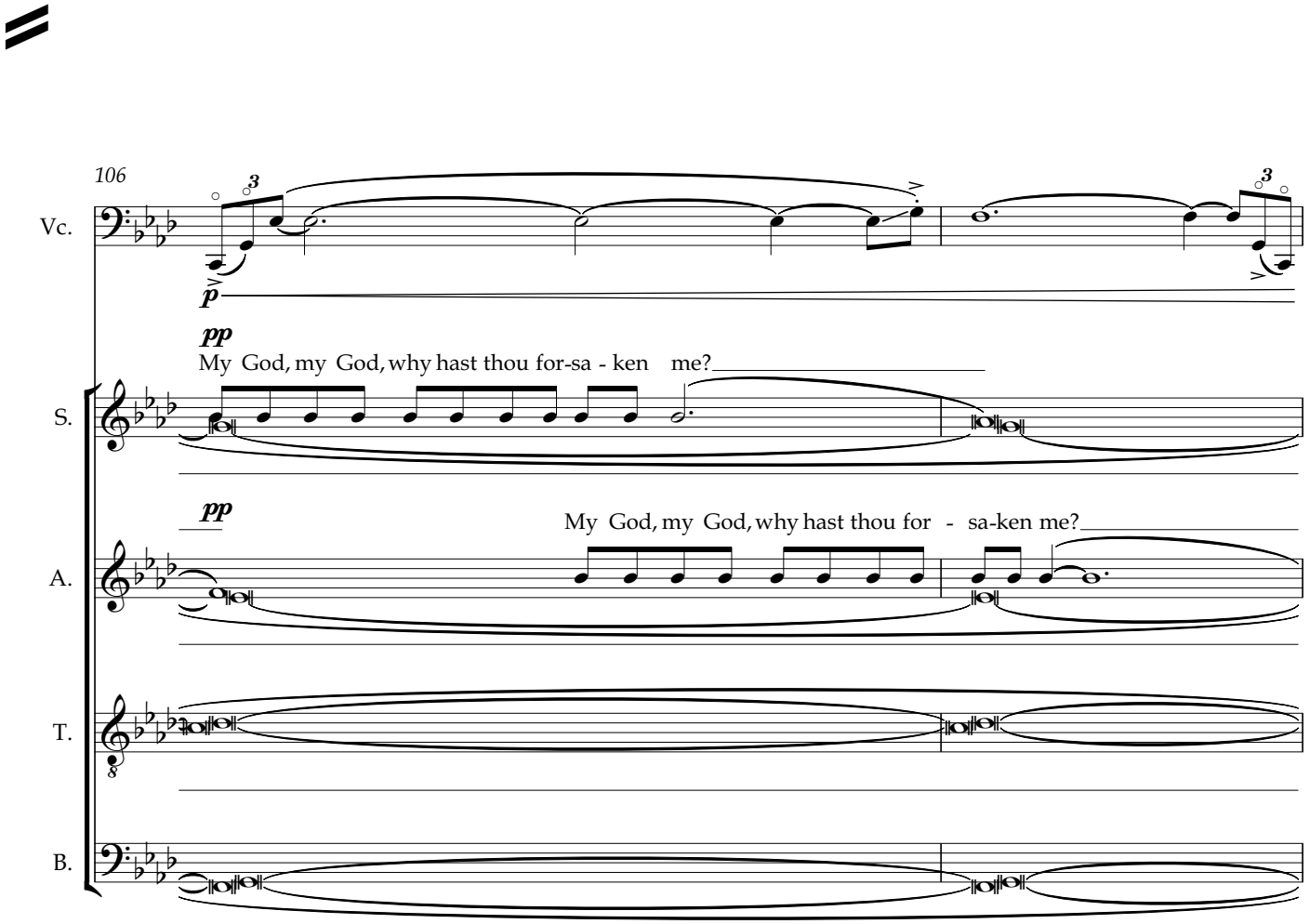


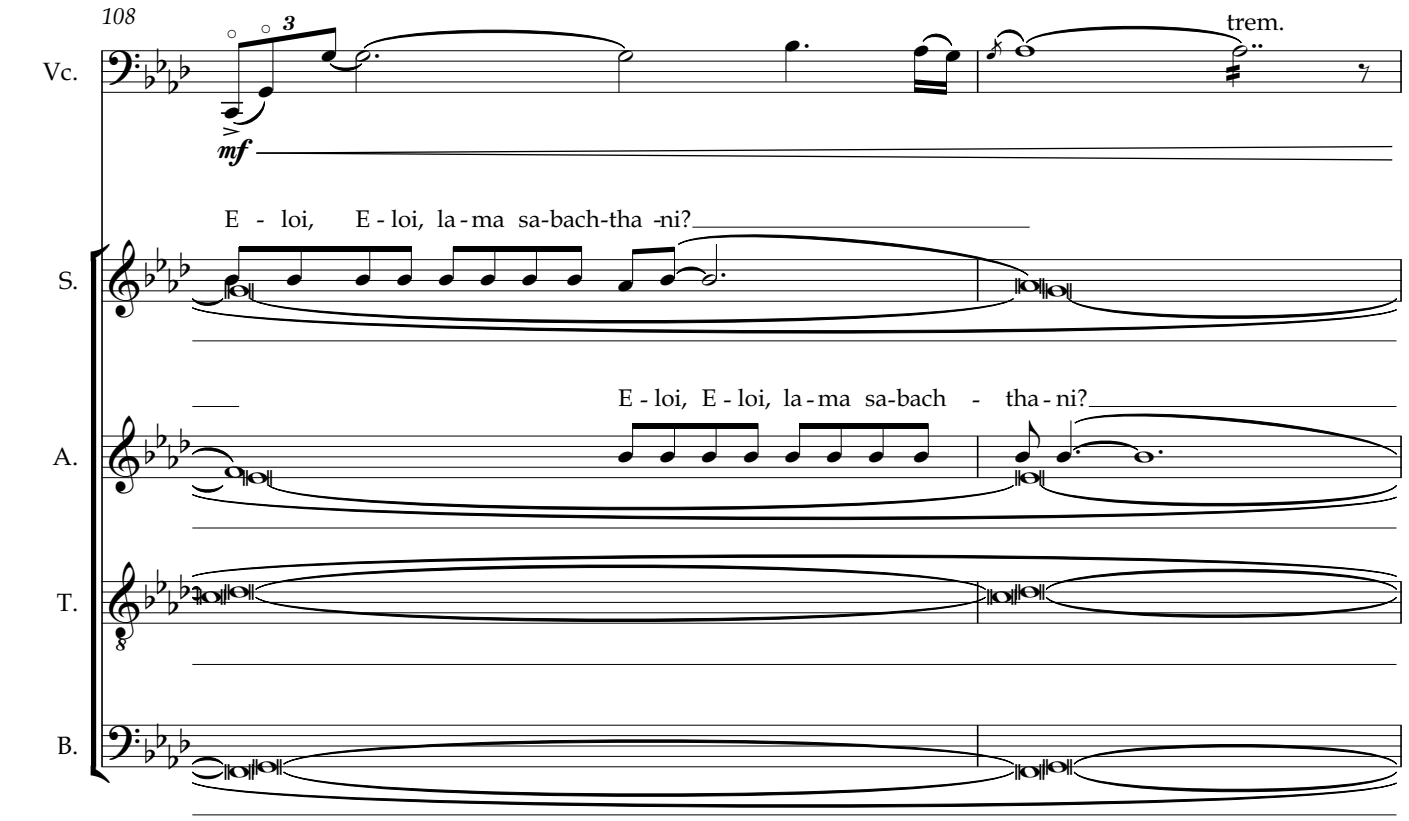


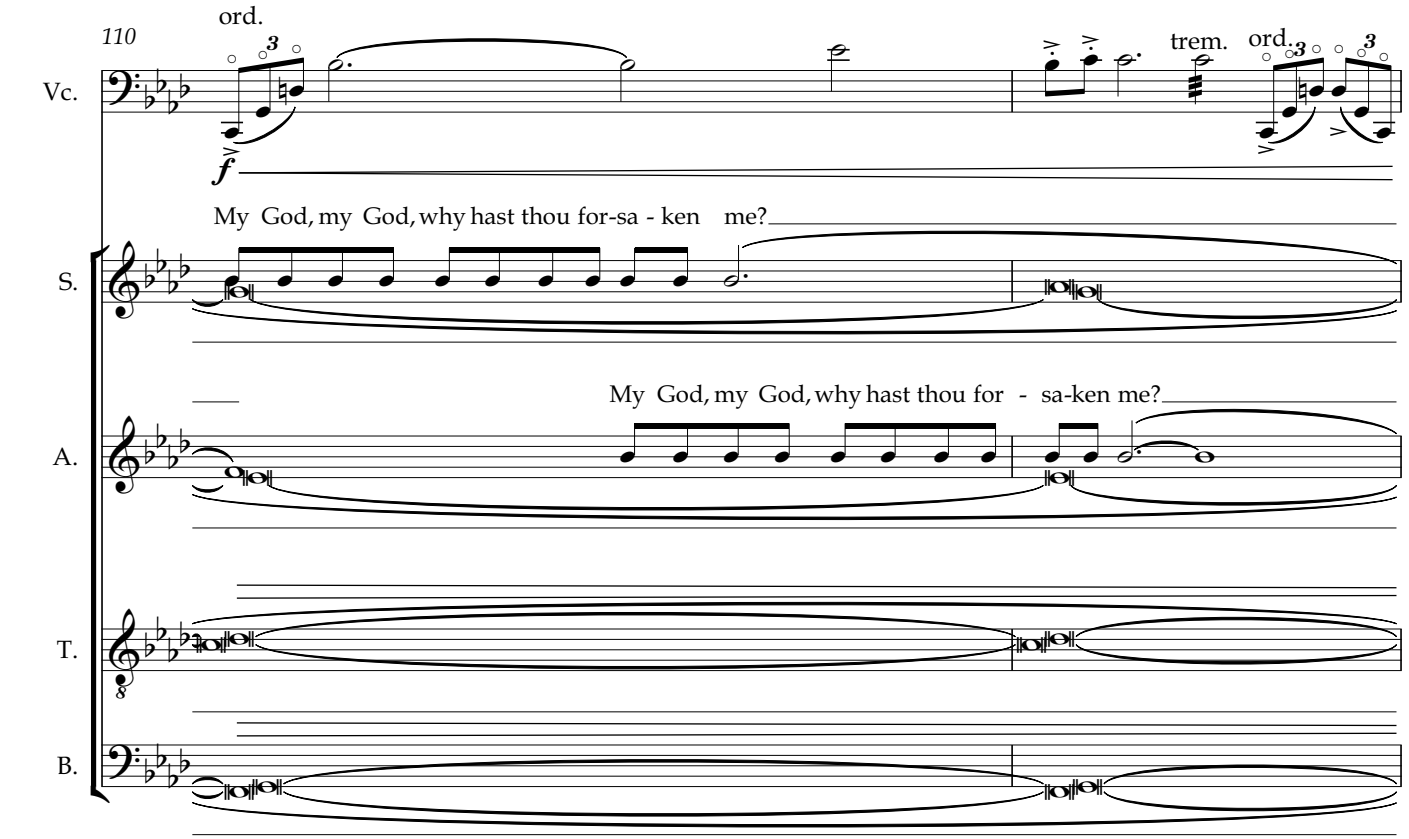

95
Vc.
S.
A.
T.
B.
f
mf
God, my God, why hast

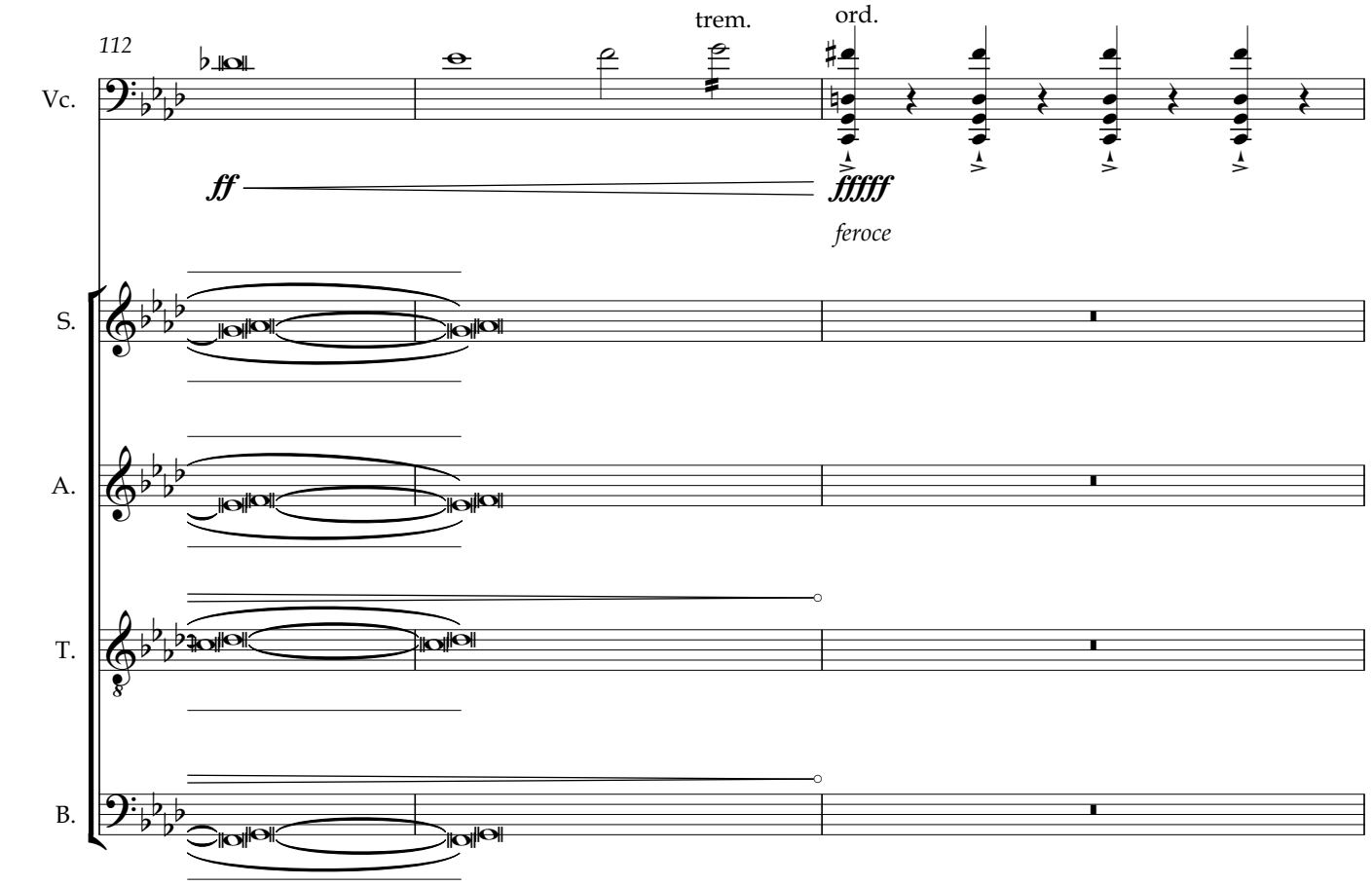

100
S.
A.
T.
B.
stagger breathing
thou for - sa - ken
me.

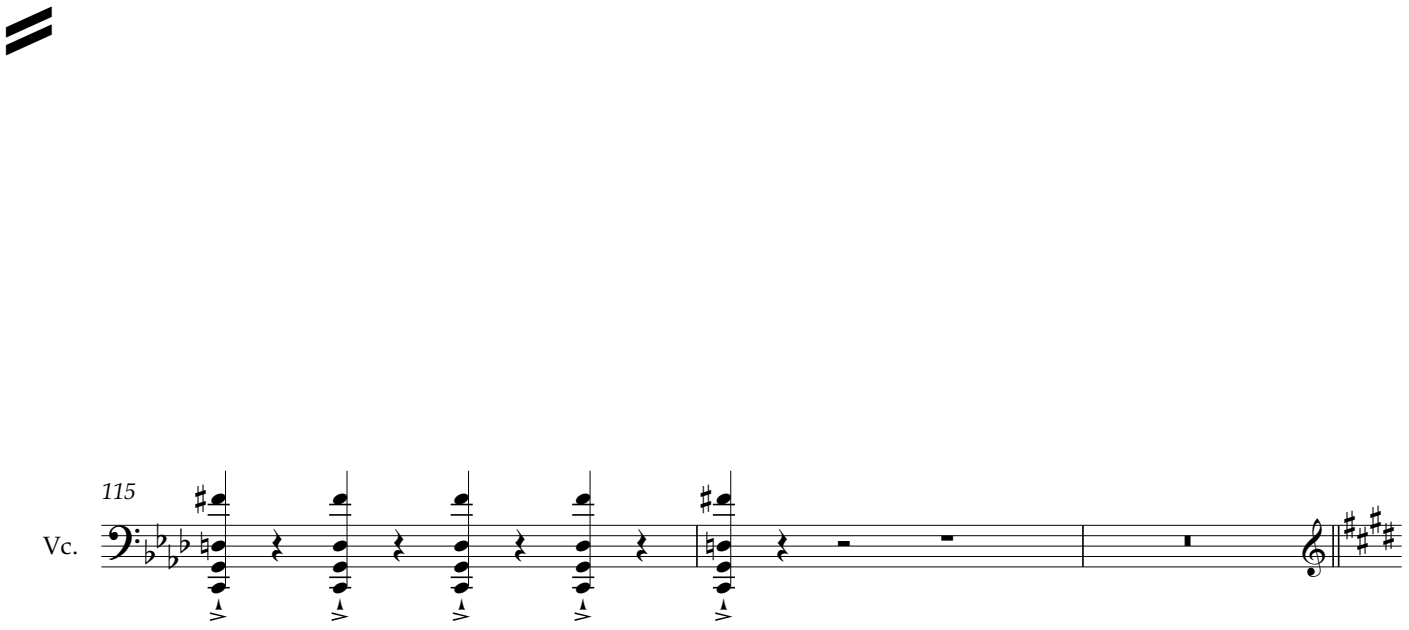

104
Vc.
ppp
pp
E - loi, E - loi, la-ma sa-bach-tha -ni?
S.
E - loi, E - loi, la - ma sa - bach - tha - ni?
A.
pp
T.
pp
B.
pp


106
Vc.
p
pp
My God, my God, why hast thou for-sa - ken me?
S.
pp
My God, my God, why hast thou for - sa-ken me?
A.
T.
B.

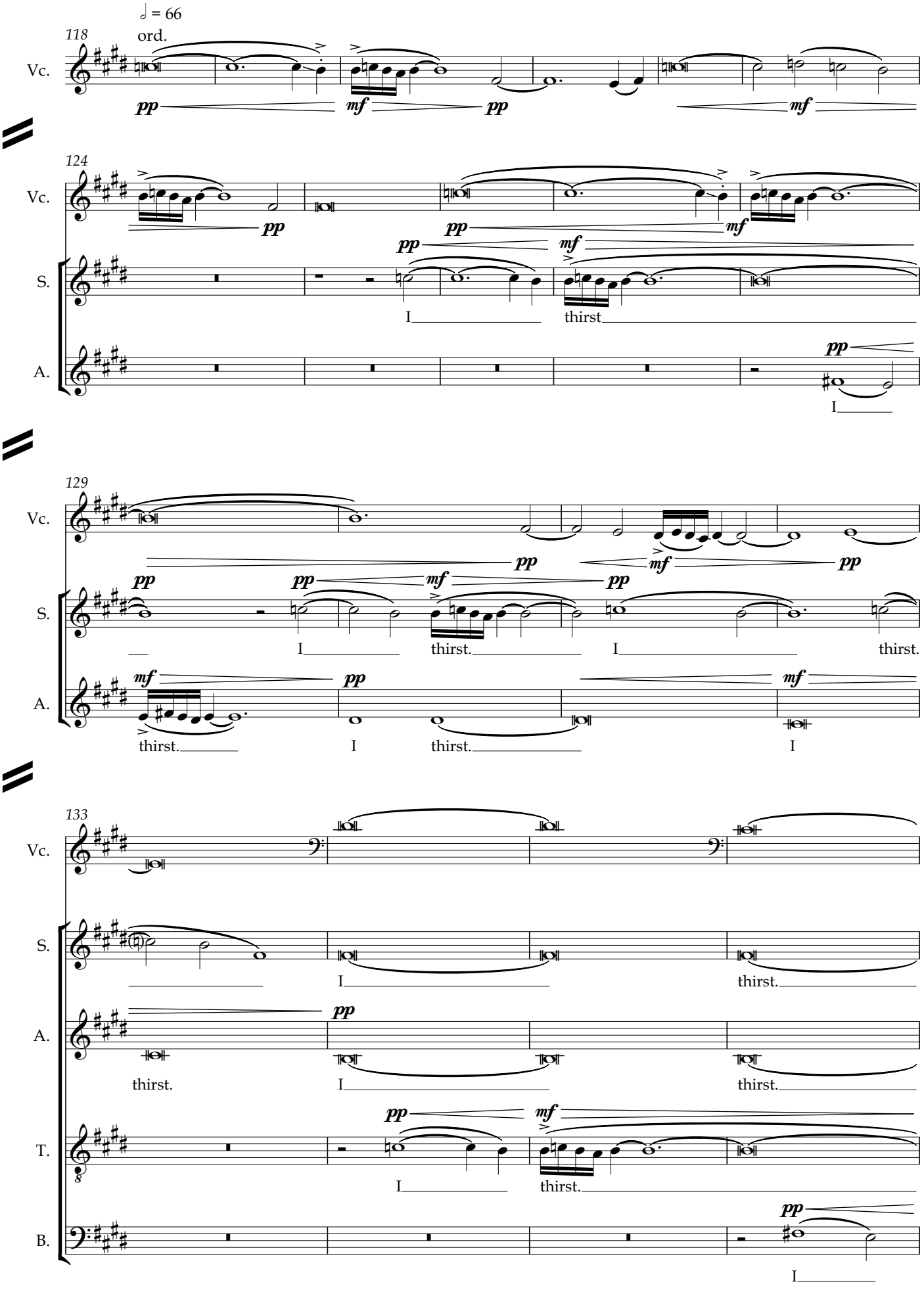

108
Vc.
3
mf
trem.
S.
E - loi, E - loi, la - ma sa-bach-tha -ni?
A.
E - loi, E - loi, la - ma sa-bach - tha - ni?
T.
B.

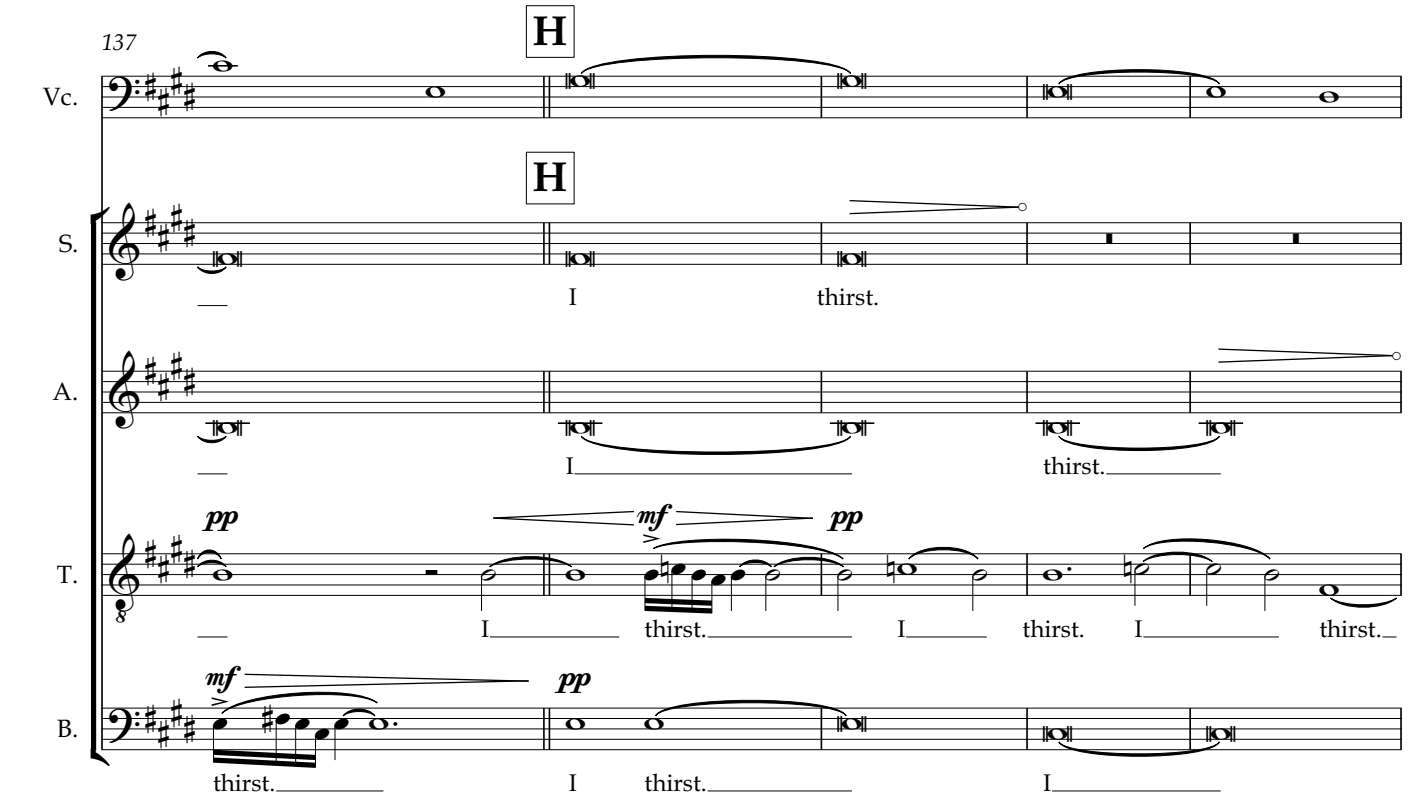

110
ord.
Vc.
3
f
trem.
ord.
3
3
S.
My God, my God, why hast thou for-sa - ken me?
A.
My God, my God, why hast thou for - sa-ken me?
T.
B.

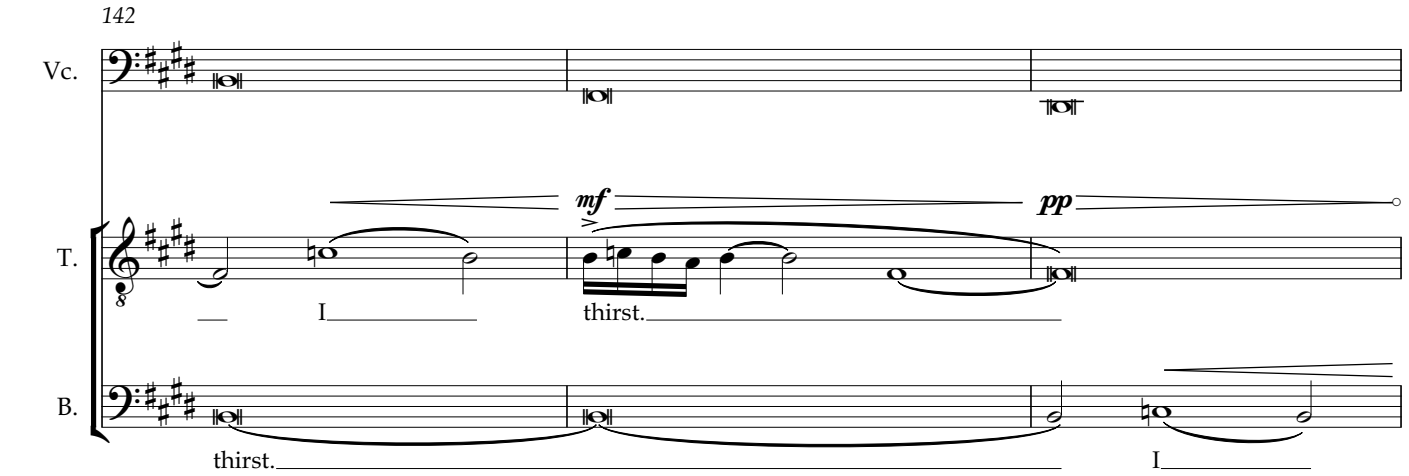

112
trem.
ord.
Vc.
ff
fffff
feroce
S.
A.
T.
B.

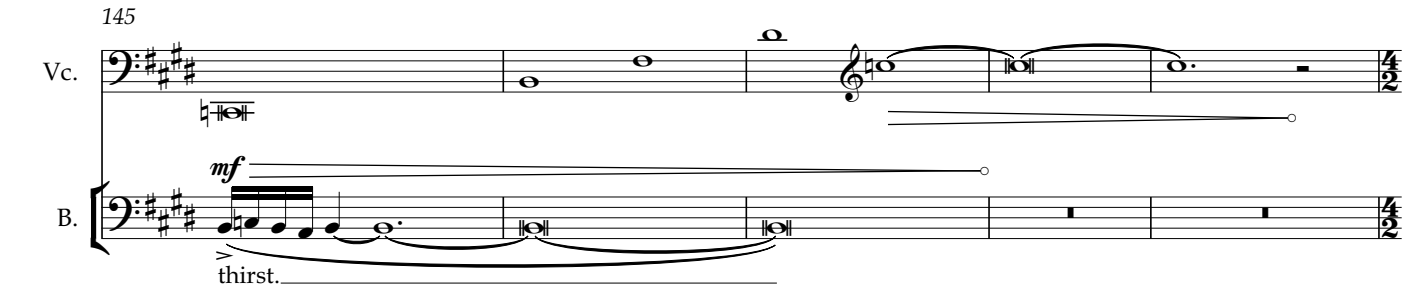

115
Vc.

V. I thirst.

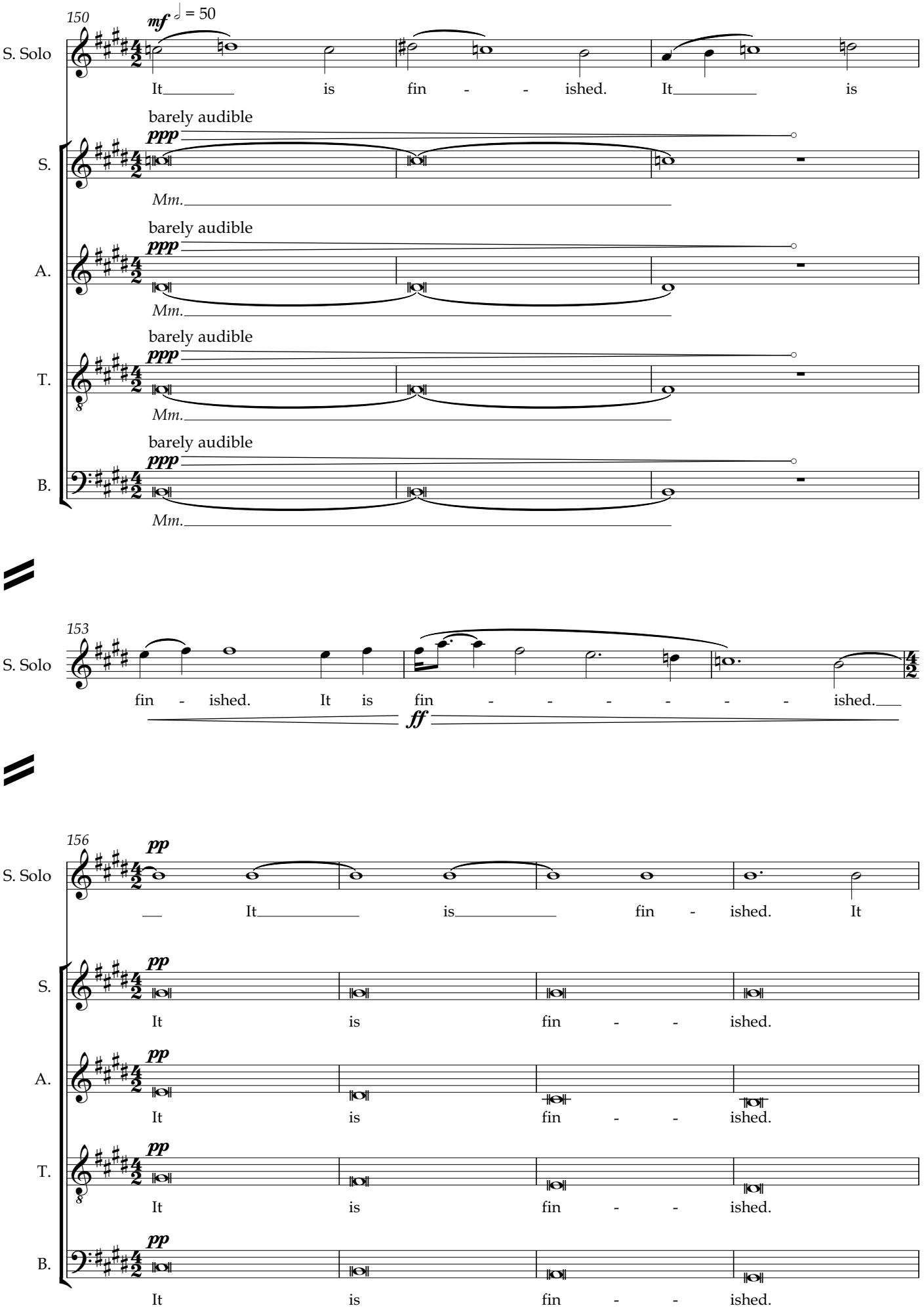

♩ = 66
ord.
118
Vc.
pp
mf
pp
mf
124
Vc.
pp
pp
mf
S.
pp
mf
I
thirst
A.
pp
I
129
Vc.
pp
mf
pp
S.
pp
pp
mf
pp
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
A.
mf
pp
mf
thirst.
I
thirst.
I
133
Vc.
S.
I
thirst.
A.
pp
thirst.
I
thirst.
T.
pp
mf
I
thirst.
B.
pp
I

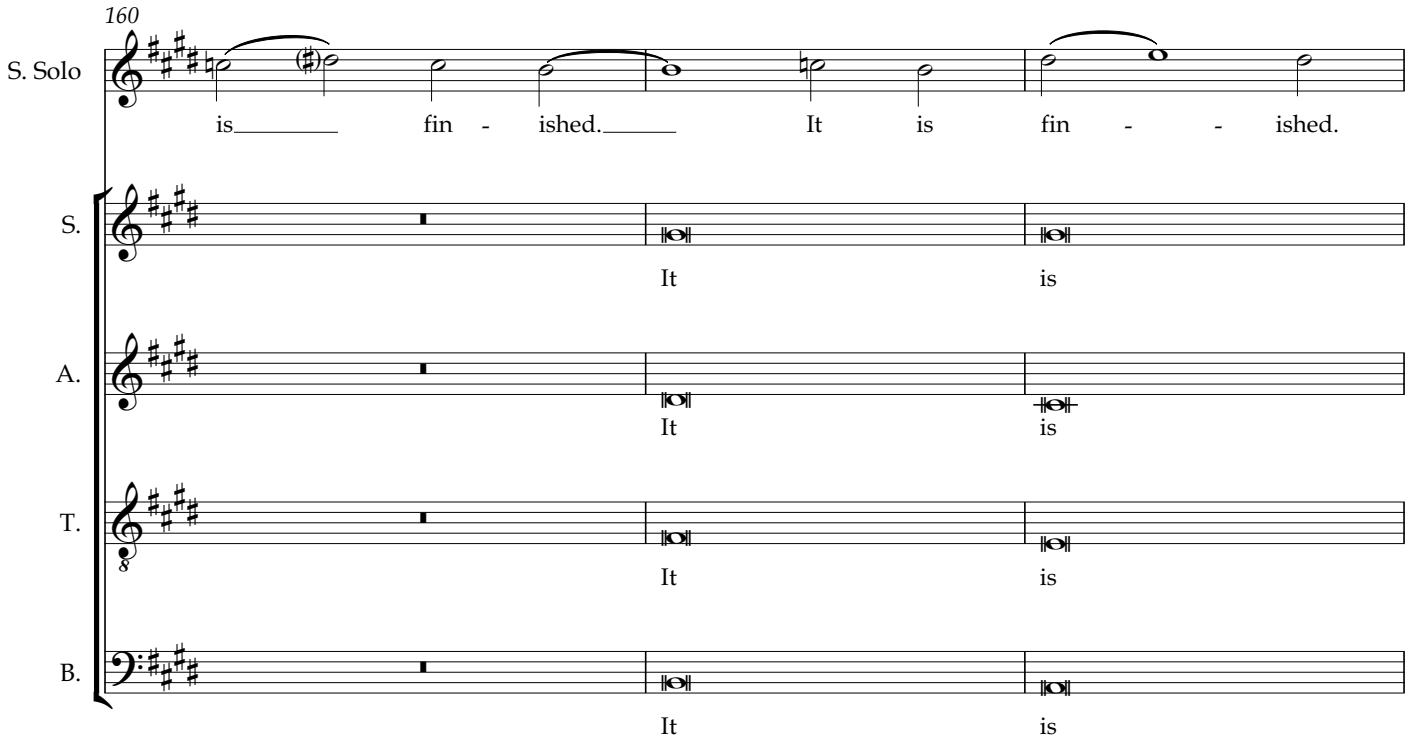

137
H
H
Vc.
S.
A.
T.
B.
pp
mf
pp
mf
pp
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
I
thirst.
I

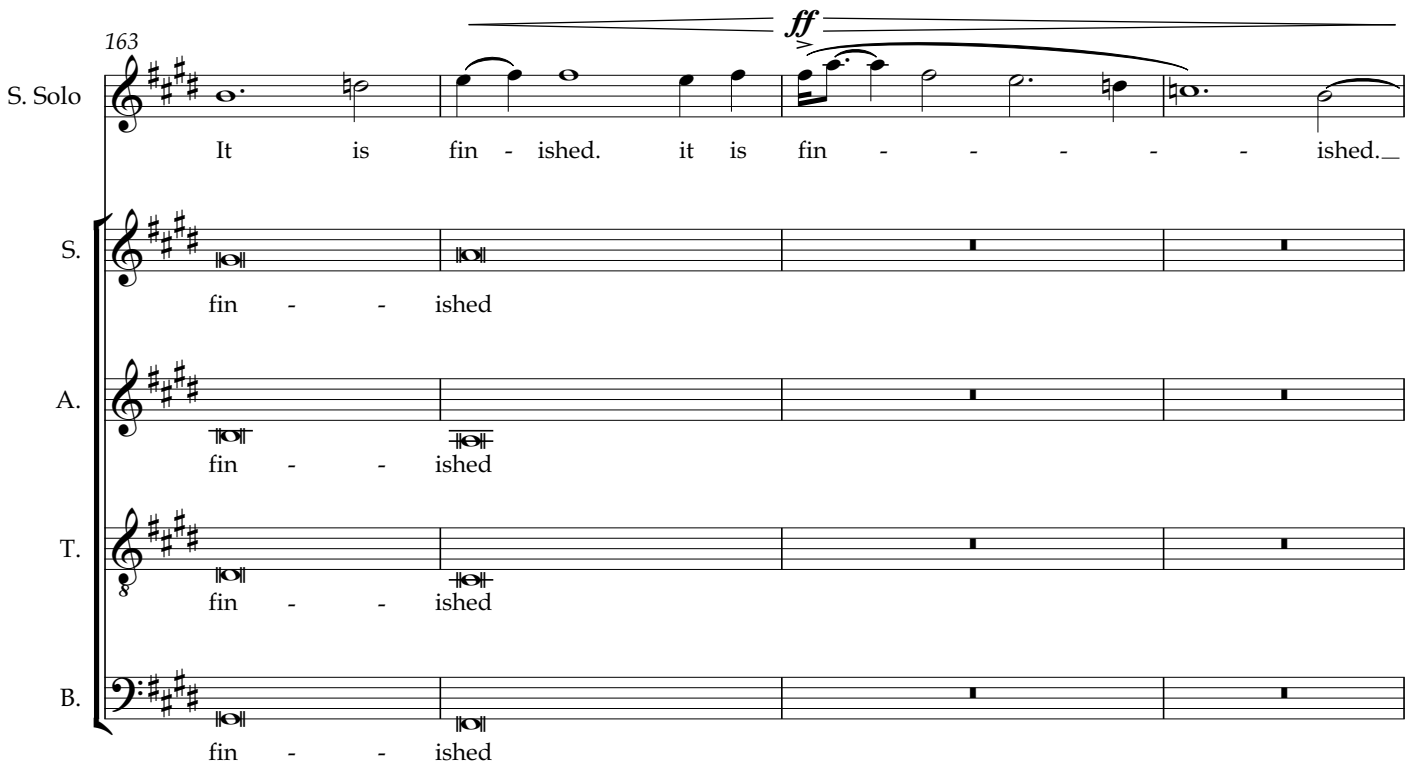

142
Vc.
T.
B.
mf
pp
I
thirst.
thirst.
I

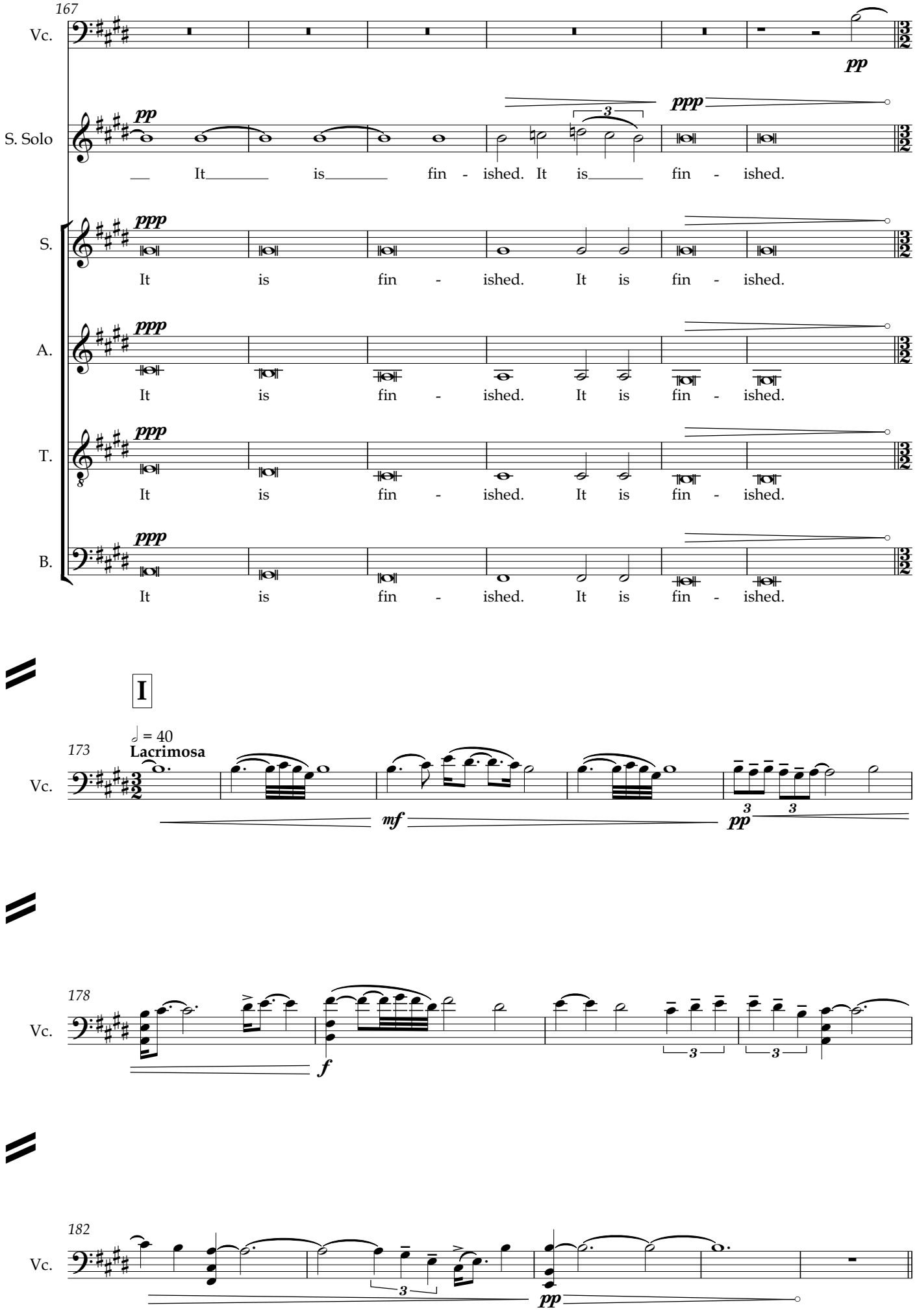

145
Vc.
B.
mf
thirst.

VI. It is finished.

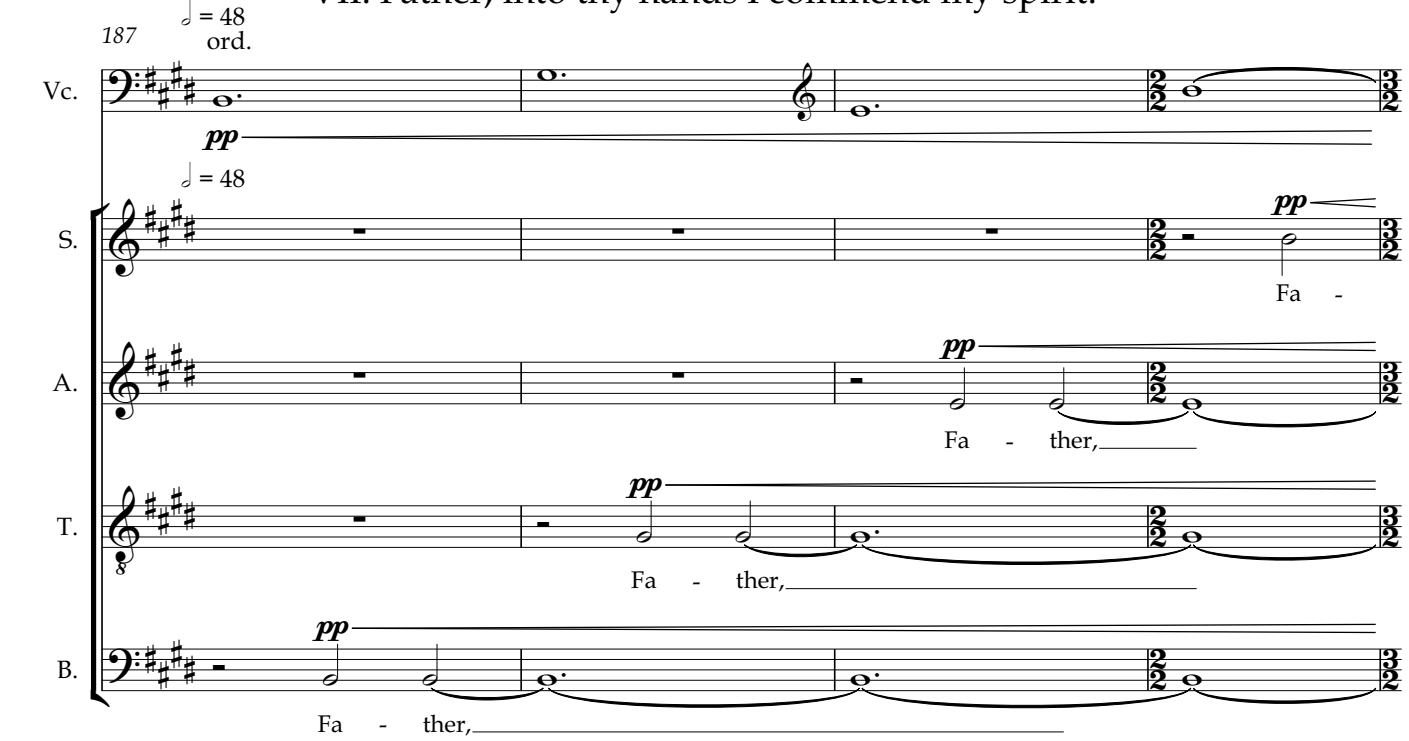


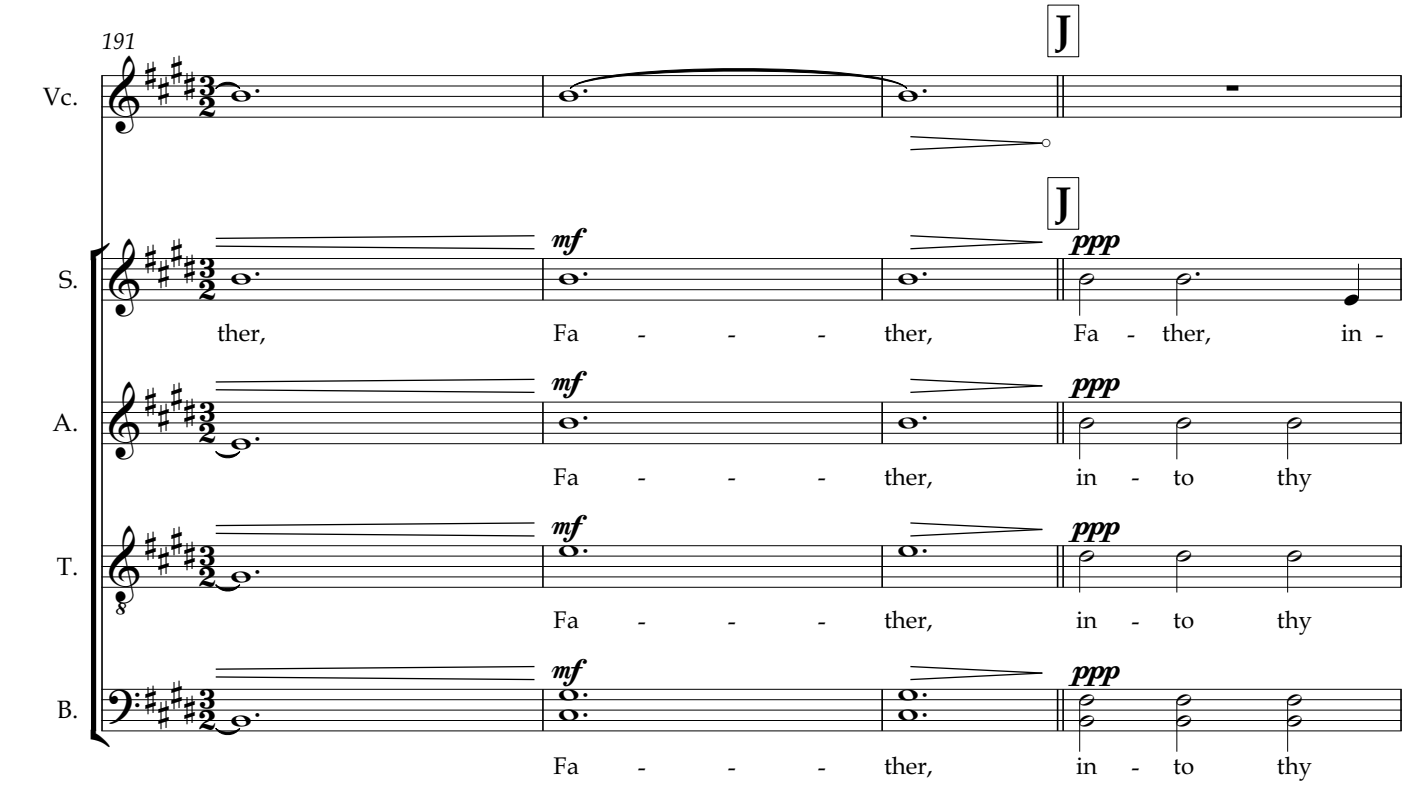

160
S. Solo
is fin - ished. It is fin - - ished.
S.
It is
A.
It is
T.
It is
B.
It is

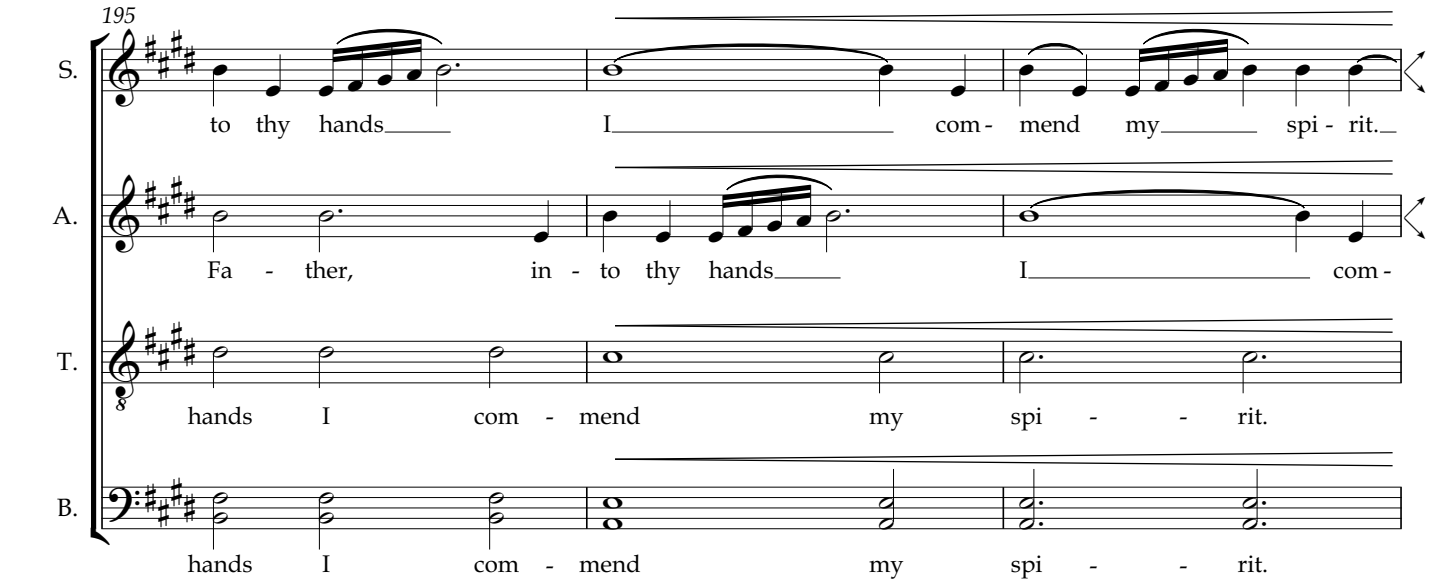

163
ff
S. Solo
It is fin - ished. it is fin - - - - - ished.
S.
fin - - ished
A.
fin - - ished
T.
fin - - ished
B.
fin - - ished

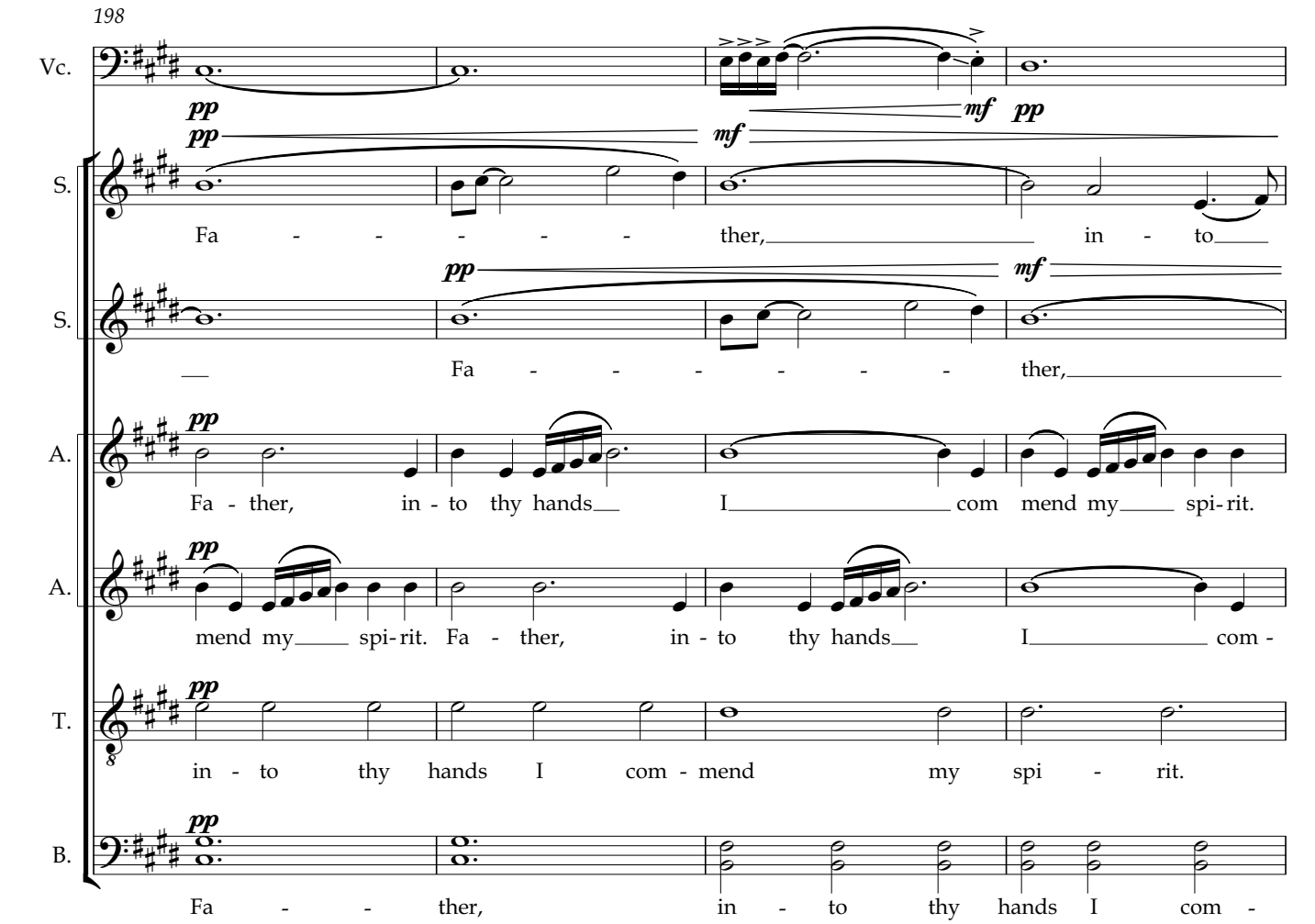

167
Vc.
pp
S. Solo
pp
3
ppp
It is fin - ished. It is fin - ished.
S.
ppp
It is fin - ished. It is fin - ished.
A.
ppp
It is fin - ished. It is fin - ished.
T.
ppp
It is fin - ished. It is fin - ished.
B.
ppp
It is fin - ished. It is fin - ished.
I
173
♩ = 40
Lacrimosa
Vc.
mf
3
pp
178
Vc.
f
3
3
182
Vc.
3
pp

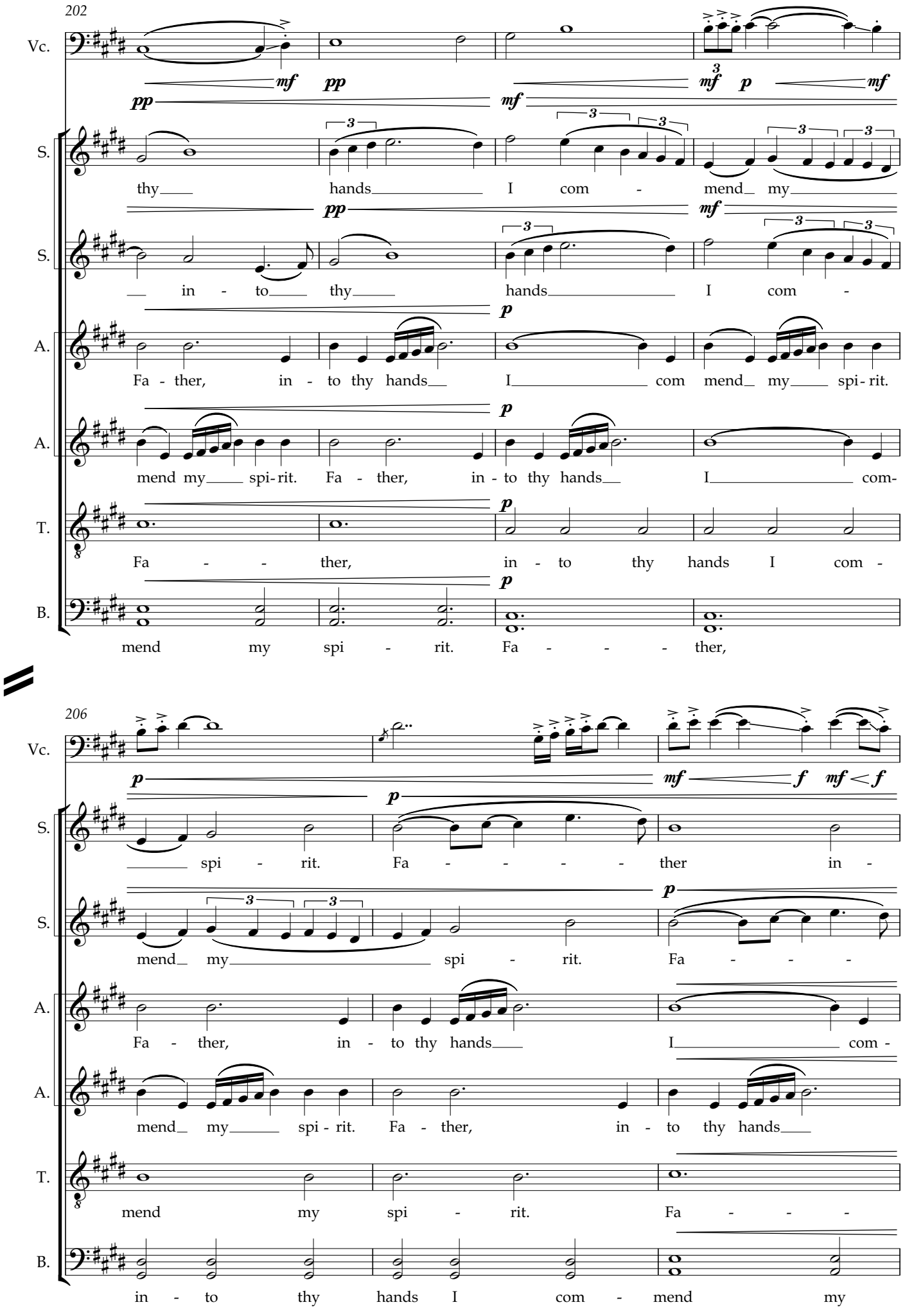
VII. Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.

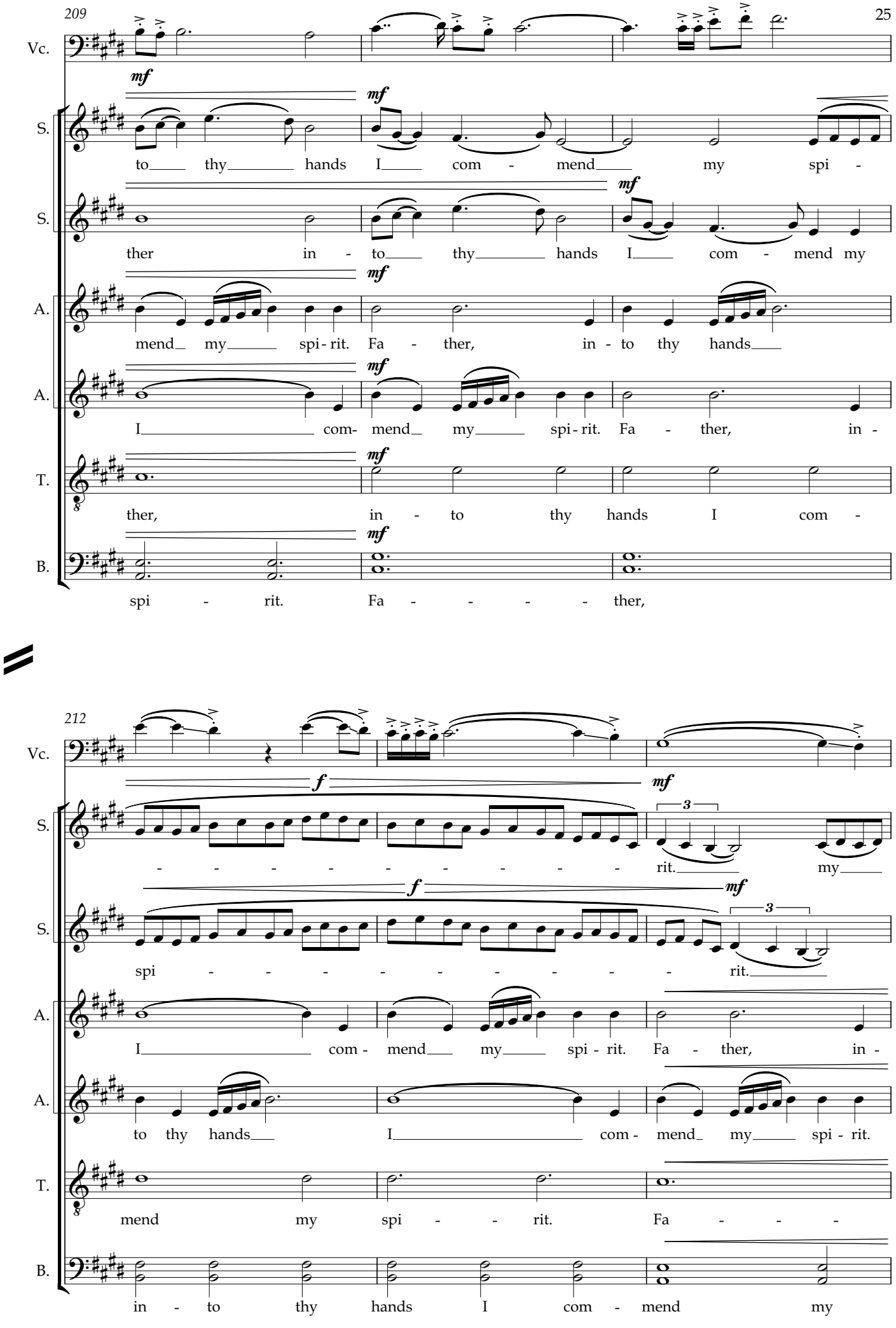


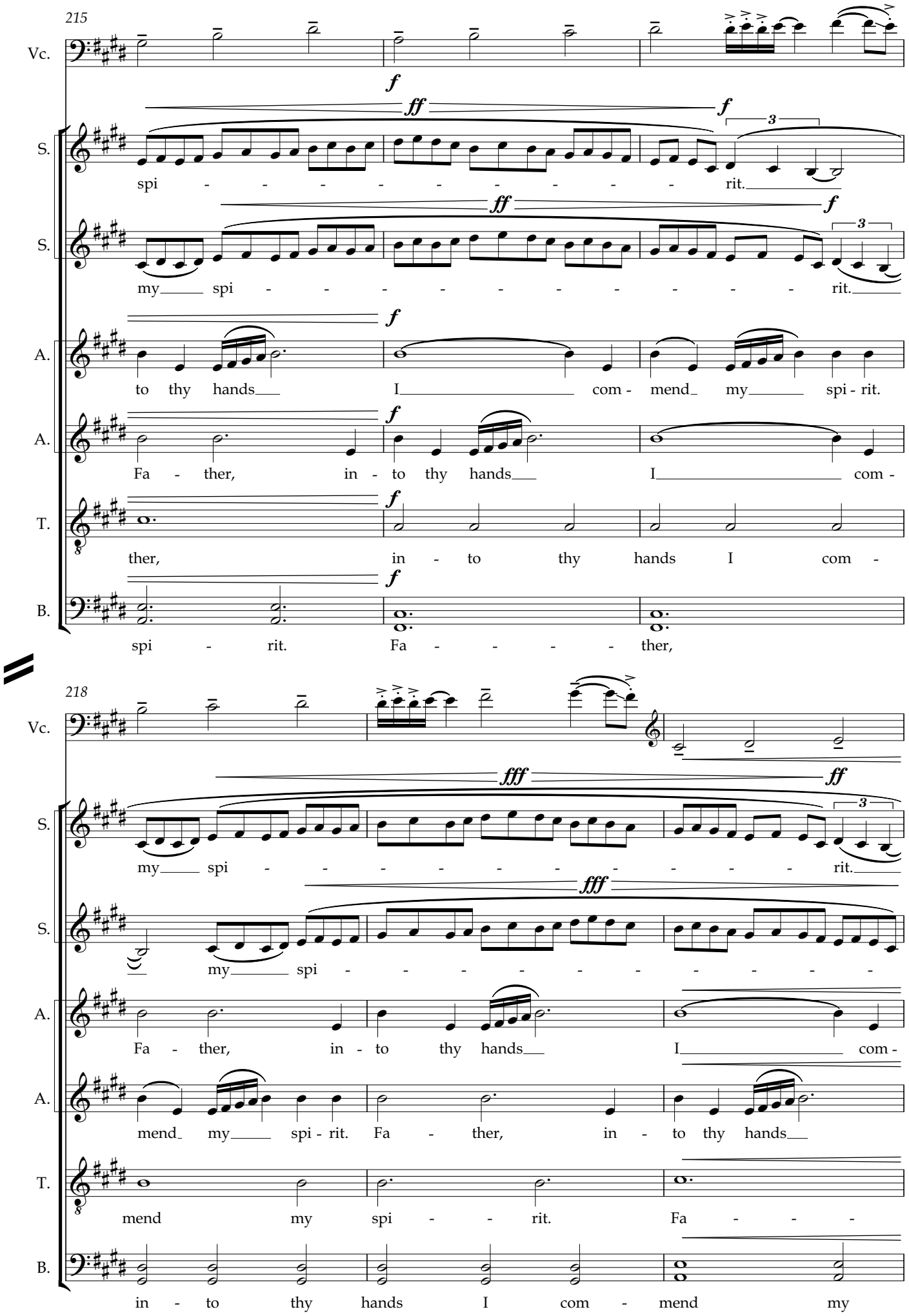


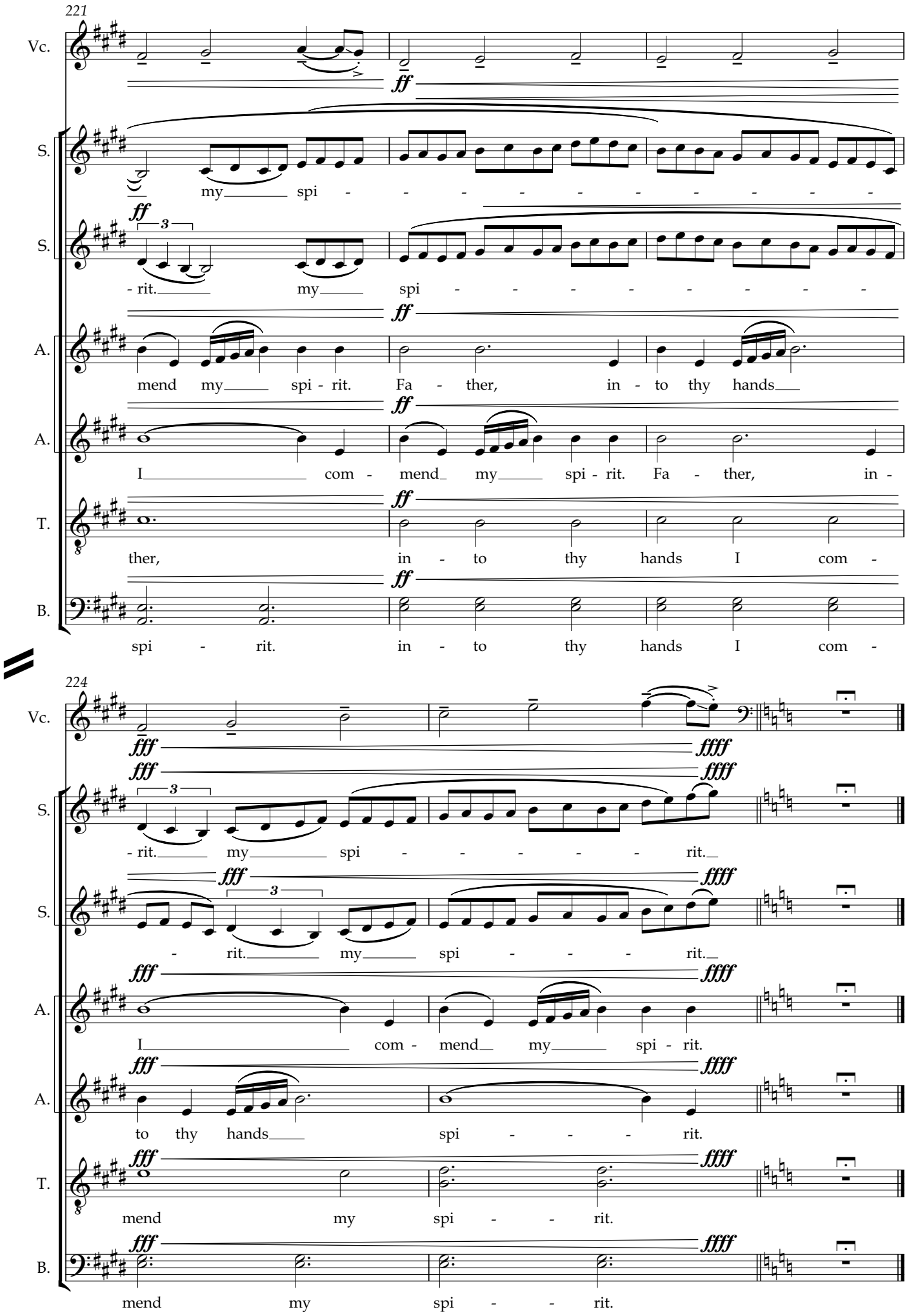

195
S.
to thy hands I com - mend my spi - rit.
A.
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
T.
hands I com - mend my spi - - rit.
B.
hands I com - mend my spi - - rit.


198
Vc.
pp
mf
pp
S.
Fa - - - - - ther, in - to
S.
pp
mf
Fa - - - - - ther,
A.
pp
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com mend my spi-rit.
A.
pp
mend my spi-rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
T.
pp
in - to thy hands I com - mend my spi - rit.
B.
pp
Fa - - ther, in - to thy hands I com -


202
Vc.
S.
thy hands I com - mend my
S.
in - to thy hands I com -
A.
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com mend my spi - rit.
A.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
T.
Fa - - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
B.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - - - ther,
206
Vc.
S.
spi - rit. Fa - - - - ther in -
S.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - - -
A.
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
A.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands
T.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - - -
B.
in - to thy hands I com - mend my


209
Vc.
S.
to thy hands I com - mend my spi -
S.
ther in - to thy hands I com - mend my
A.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands
A.
I com- mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in -
T.
ther, in - to thy hands I com -
B.
spi - rit. Fa - - - - - ther,
212
Vc.
S.
- - - - - - - - - - rit. my
S.
spi - - - - - - - - - rit.
A.
I com - mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in -
A.
to thy hands I com - mend my spi - rit.
T.
mend my spi - - rit. Fa - - -
B.
in - to thy hands I com - mend my


215
Vc.
S.
spi - - - - - - - - - - rit.
S.
my spi - - - - - - - - - - - rit.
A.
to thy hands I com - mend my spi - rit.
A.
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
T.
ther, in - to thy hands I com -
B.
spi - rit. Fa - - - - - ther,
218
Vc.
S.
my spi - - - - - - - - - - rit.
S.
my spi - - - - - - - - - -
A.
Fa - ther, in - to thy hands I com -
A.
mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands
T.
mend my spi - - rit. Fa - - -
B.
in - to thy hands I com - mend my


221
Vc.
S.
S.
A.
A.
T.
B.
ff
my spi - - - - - - - - -
- rit. my spi - - - - - - - - -
mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in - to thy hands
I com - mend my spi - rit. Fa - ther, in -
ther, in - to thy hands I com -
spi - rit. in - to thy hands I com -
224
fff
ffff
- rit. my spi - - - - - rit.
- rit. my spi - - - rit.
I com - mend my spi - rit.
to thy hands spi - - - rit.
mend my spi - - rit.
mend my spi - - rit.