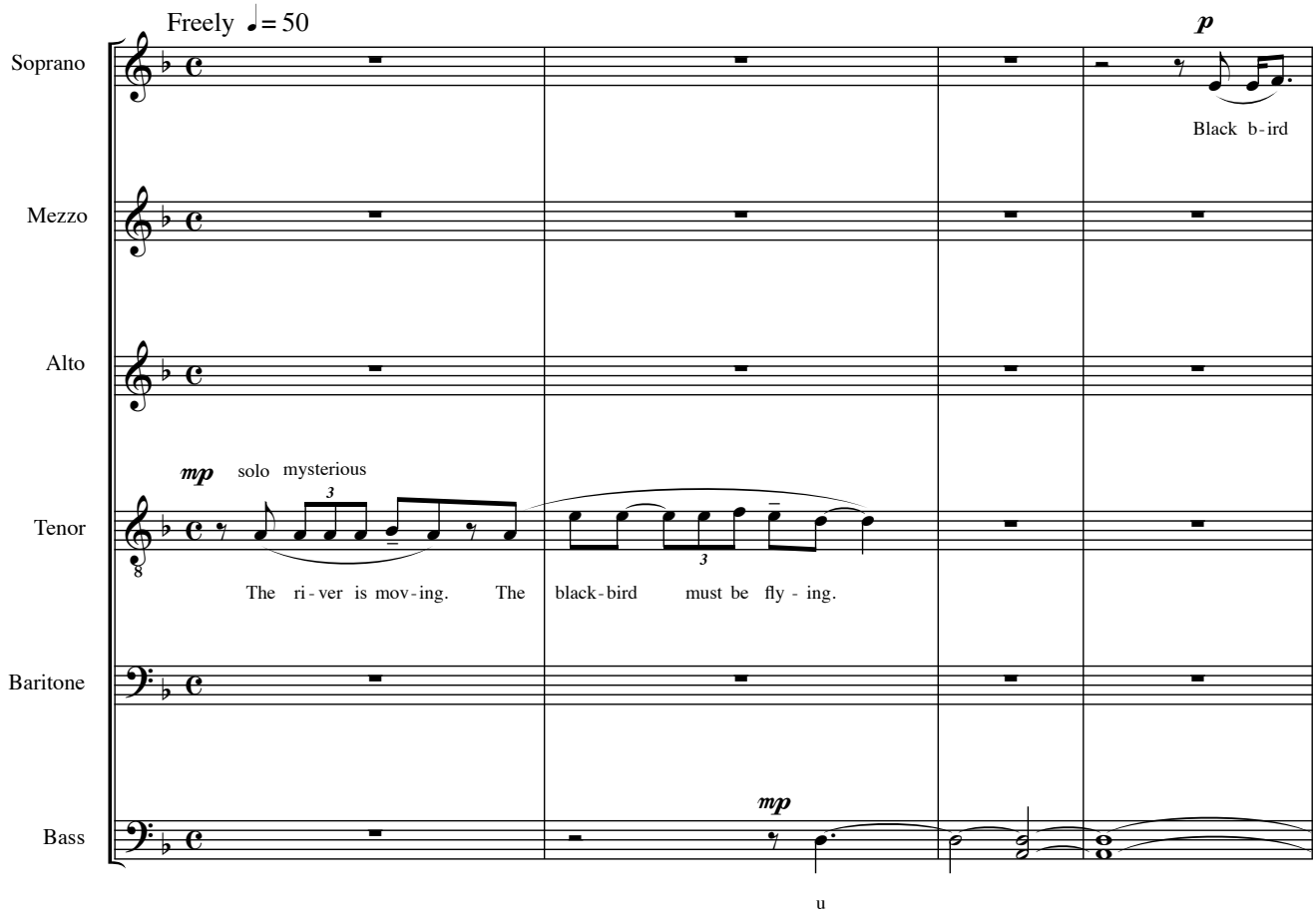
Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird

Poem by Wallace Stevens **Music by Anne Hege**

for the New York Virtuoso Singers
under the direction of Harold Rosenbaum

NOTES:

The choir should be divided into 9 parts S,S2, M, M2, A, A2, T, Bar, Bass. When there is no S2, M2 or A2 staff, these singers should join the S, M and A parts respectively.
Strongly articulate all consonants, the ck when marked with an X notehead is unpitched.
Single "o," "u" or "a" vowels (ie. bass m.2) denote latin vowels, otherwise use standard American English pronunciation.
Stagger breathe within phrase markings as needed.



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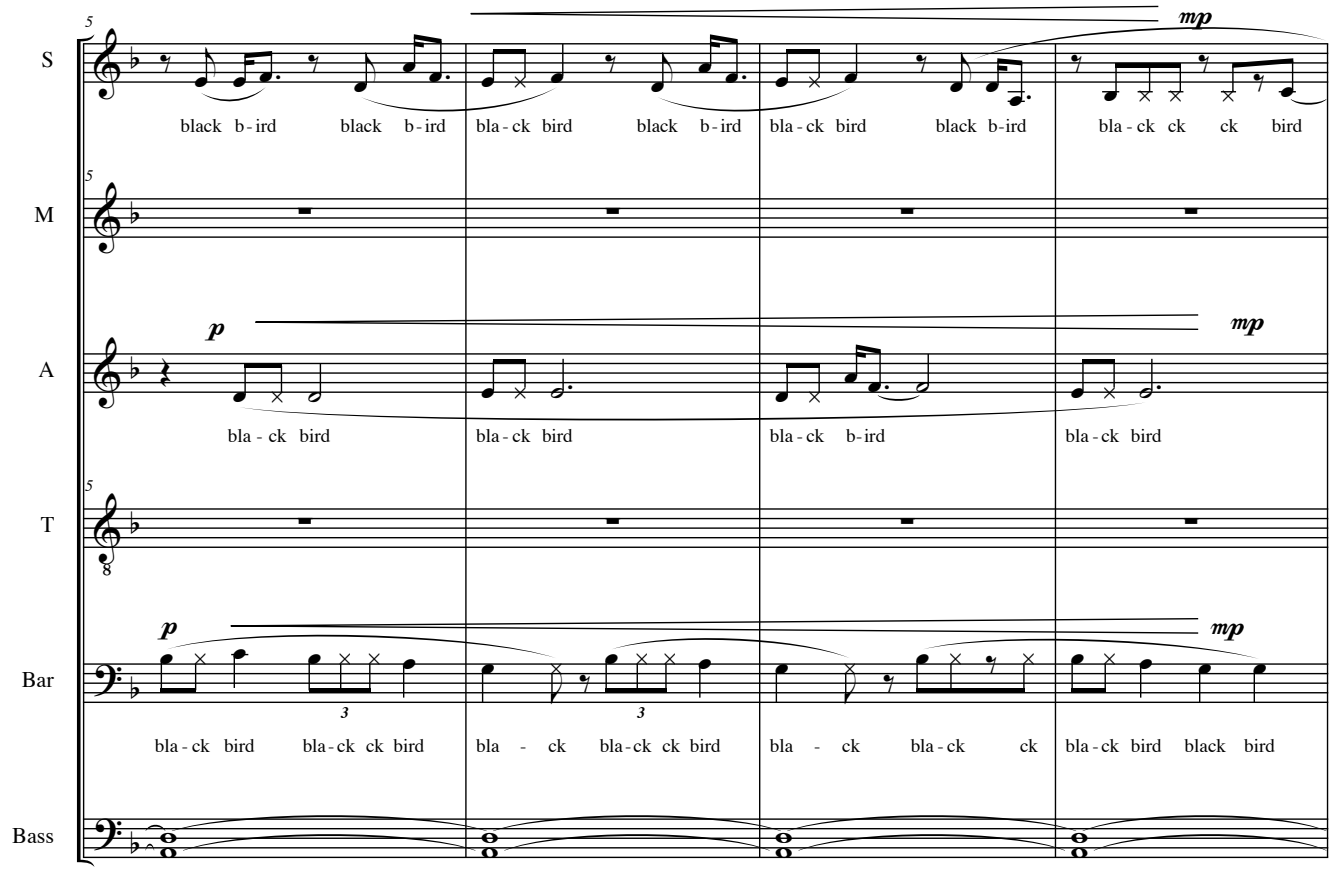
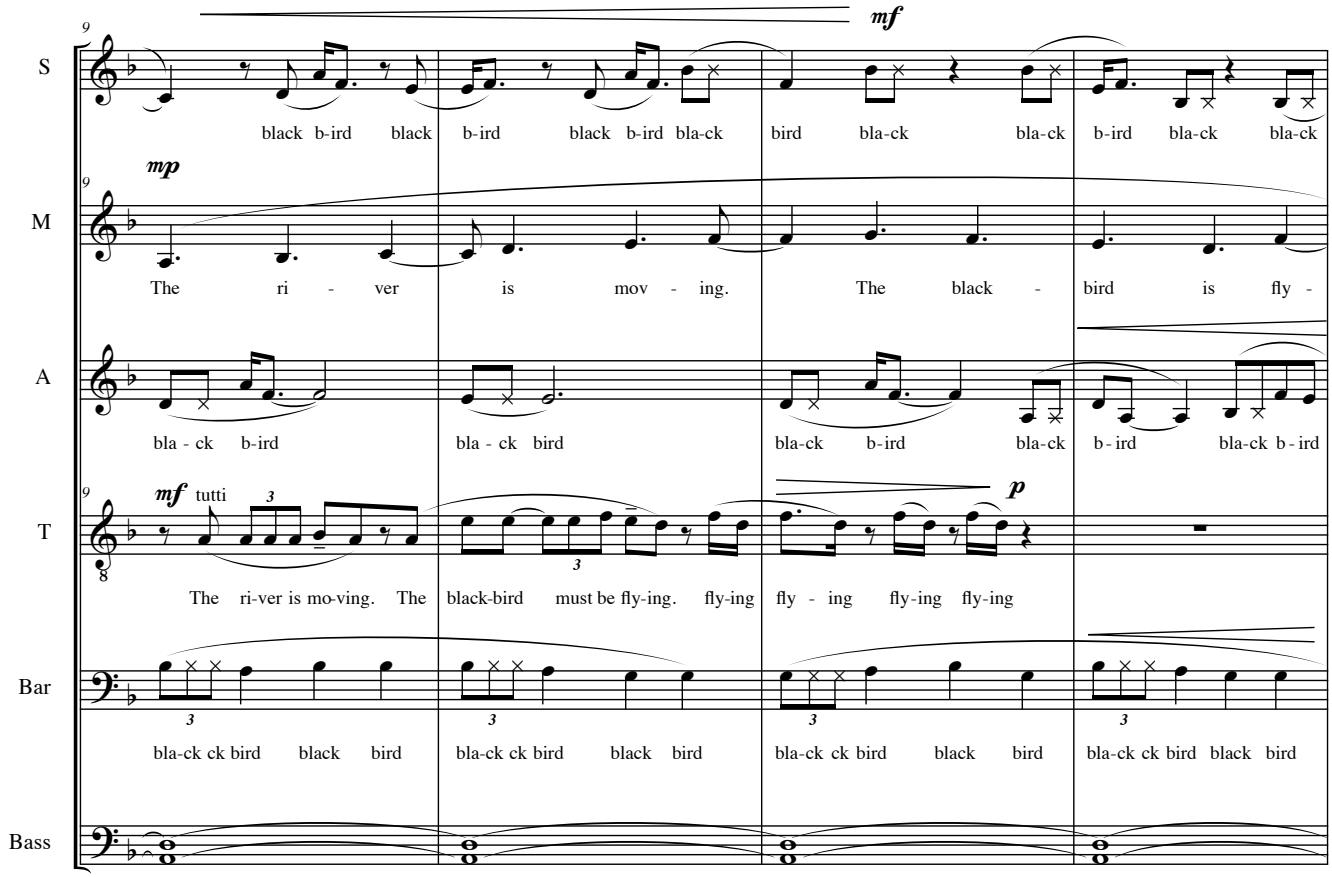
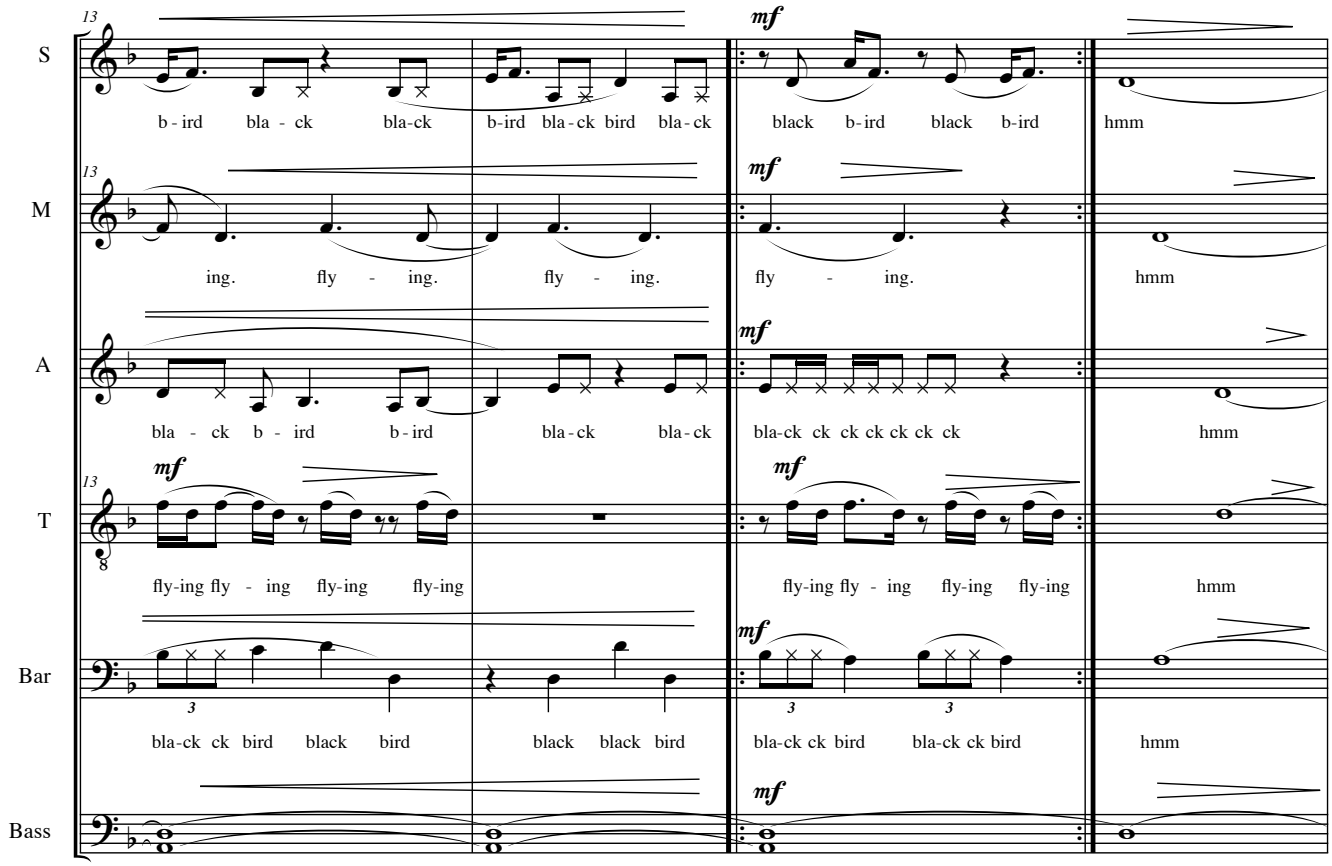
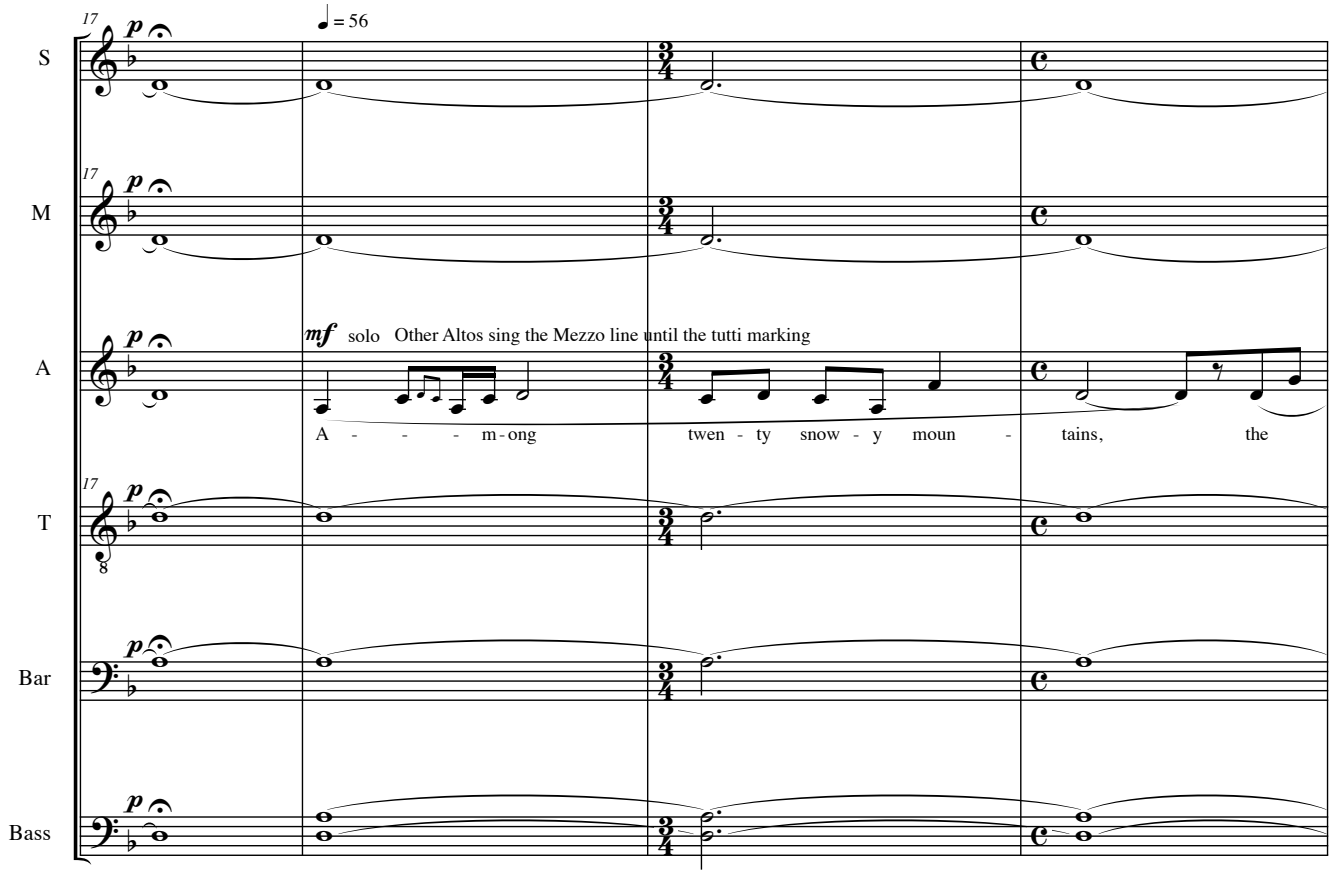
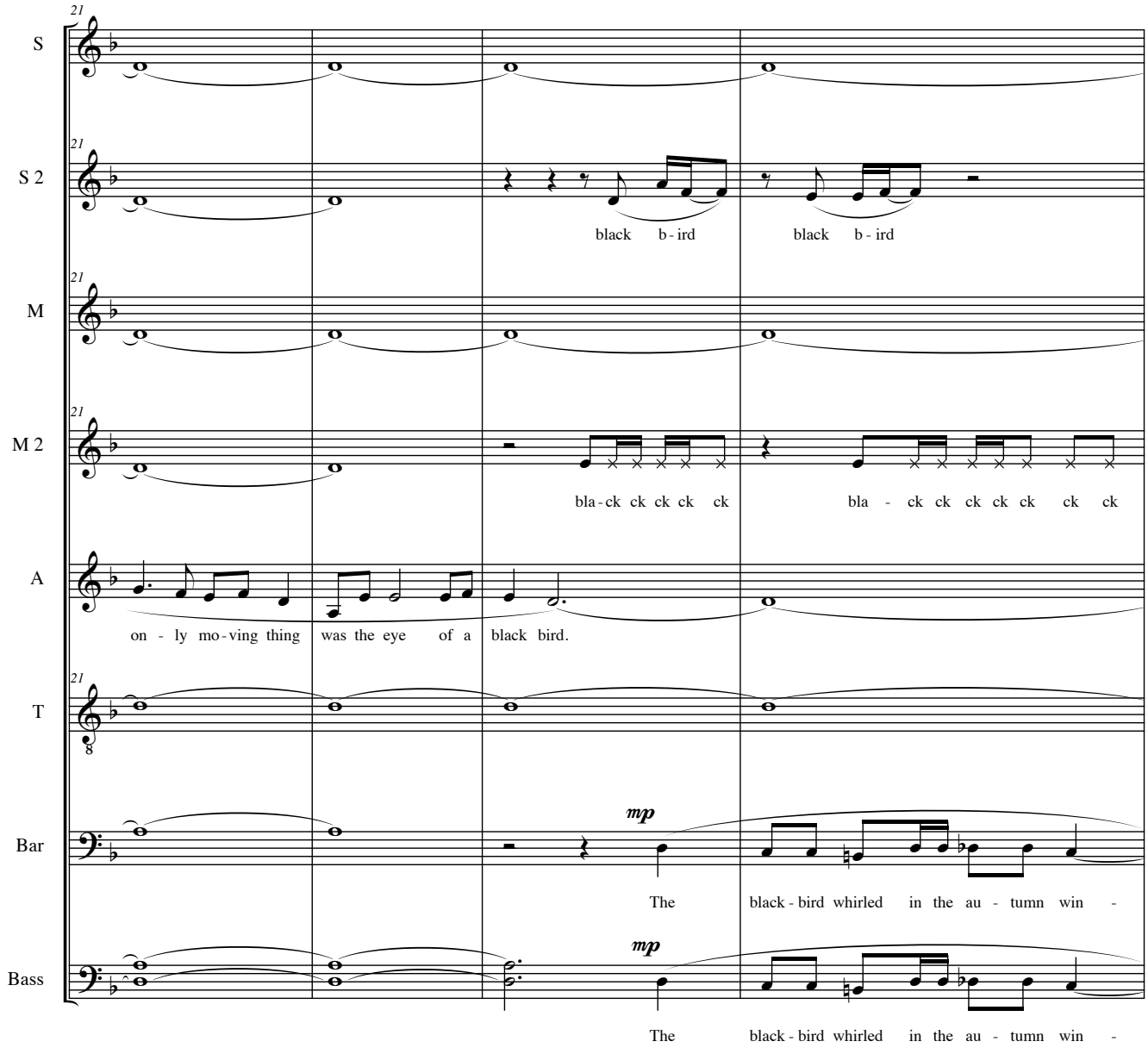

S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mp
p
mp
p
mp
black b-ird black b-ird bla-ck bird black b-ird bla-ck bird black b-ird bla-ck ck ck bird
bla-ck bird bla-ck bird bla-ck b-ird bla-ck bird
bla-ck bird bla-ck ck bird bla-ck bla-ck ck bird bla-ck bla-ck ck bla-ck bird black bird

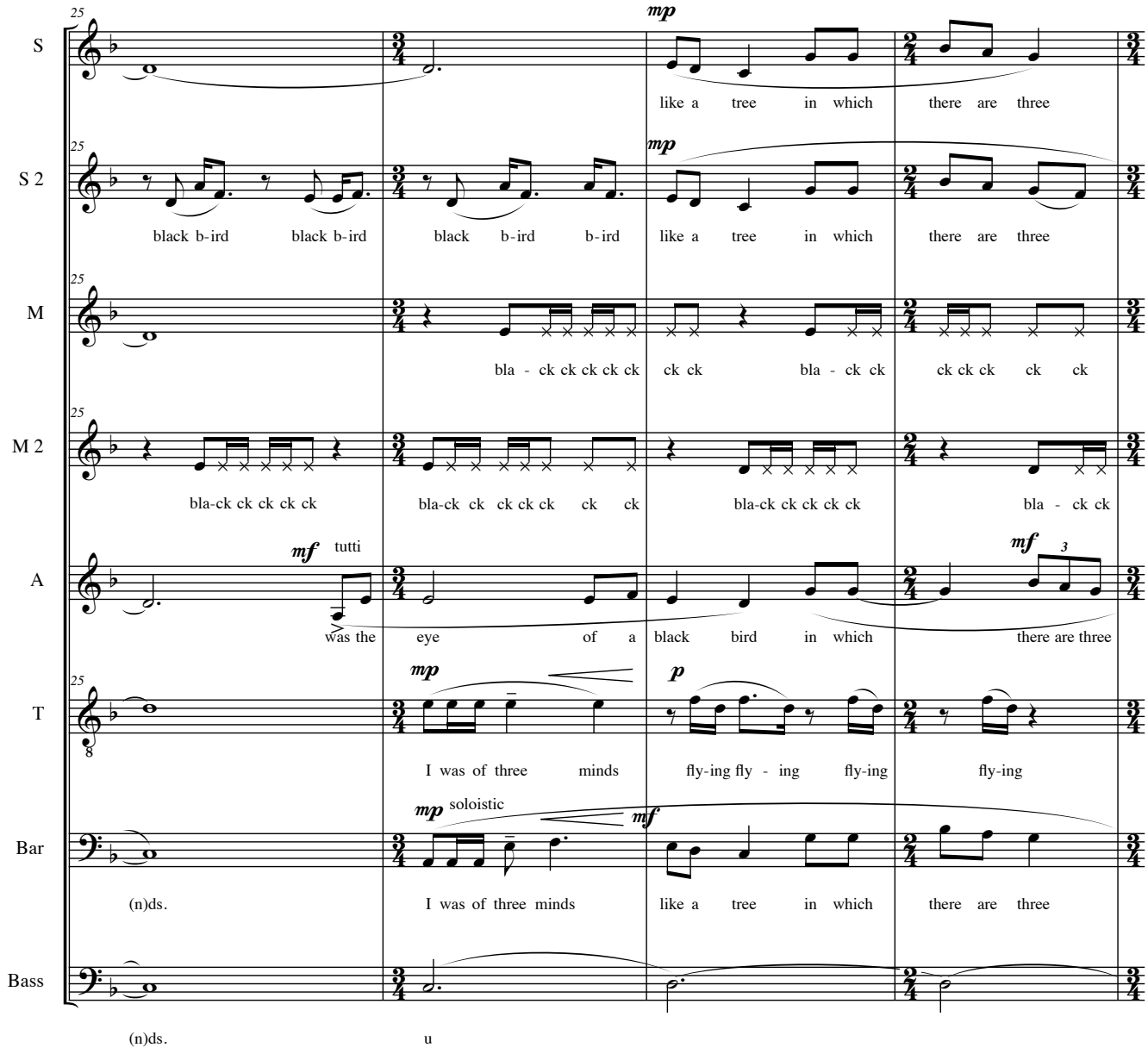

S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mf
mp
mf tutti
p
black b-ird black b-ird black b-ird bla-ck bird bla-ck bla-ck b-ird bla-ck bla-ck
The ri-ver is mov-ing. The black-bird is fly-
bla-ck b-ird bla-ck bird bla-ck b-ird bla-ck b-ird bla-ck b-ird
The ri-ver is mo-ving. The black-bird must be fly-ing. fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing
bla-ck ck bird black bird bla-ck ck bird black bird bla-ck ck bird black bird bla-ck ck bird black bird

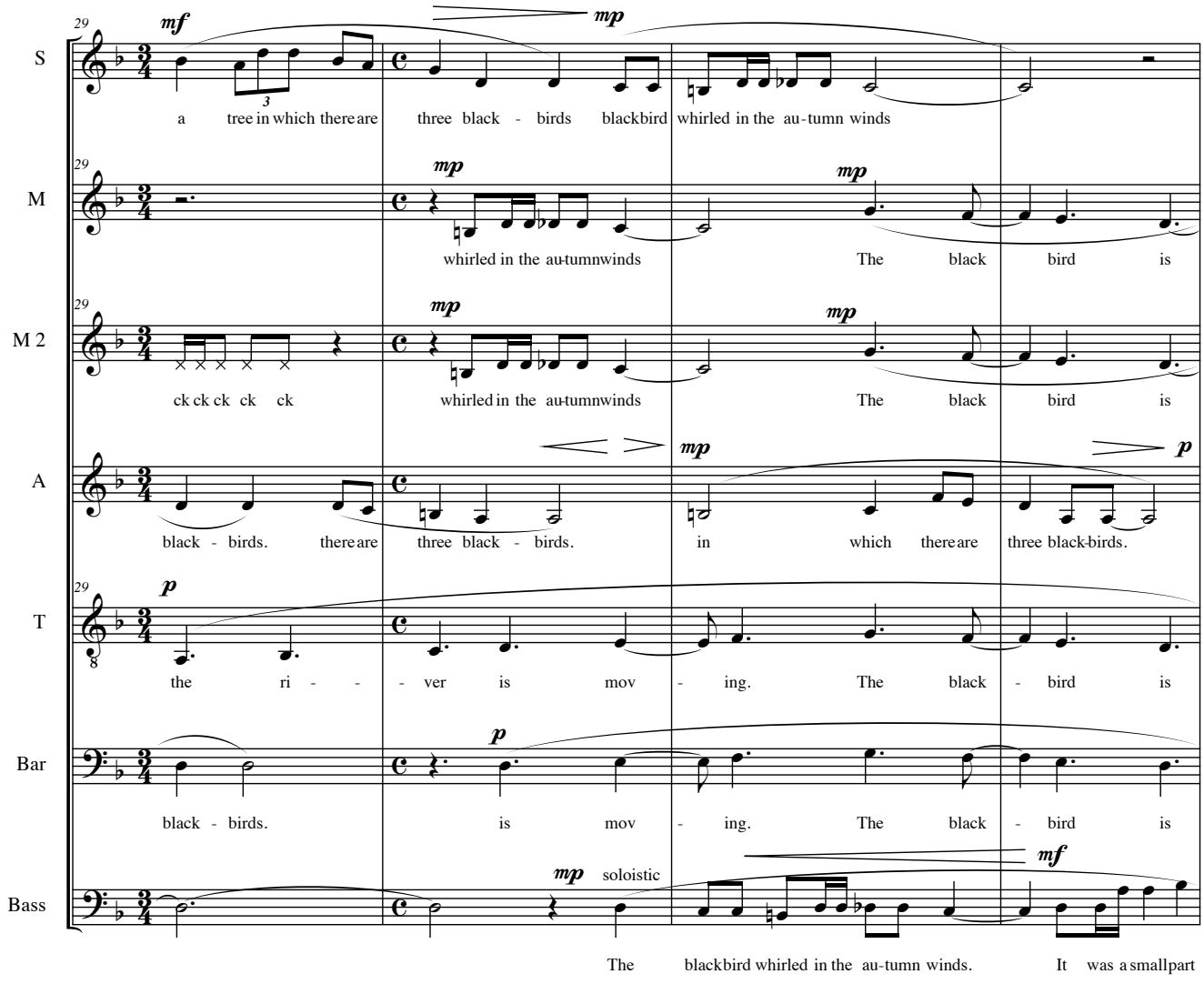
Measure 15 should repeat a minimum of 3 times but as many times as necessary for the conductor to cue a fluid shift from m. 15 to m. 16. Each singer begins the hum independently (even if cued mid-measure 15) so that the change sounds continuous, panning from edges of group inwards.

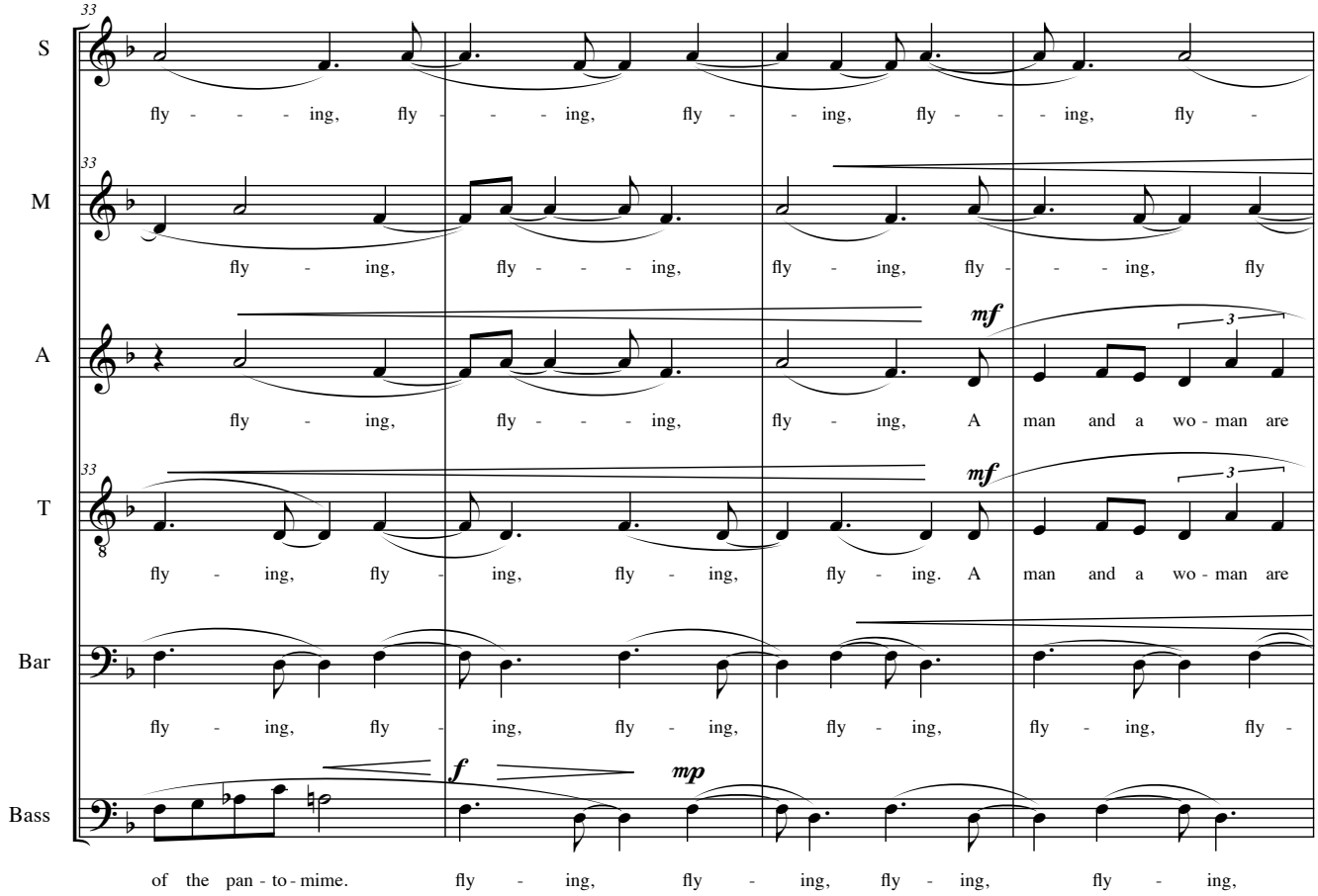


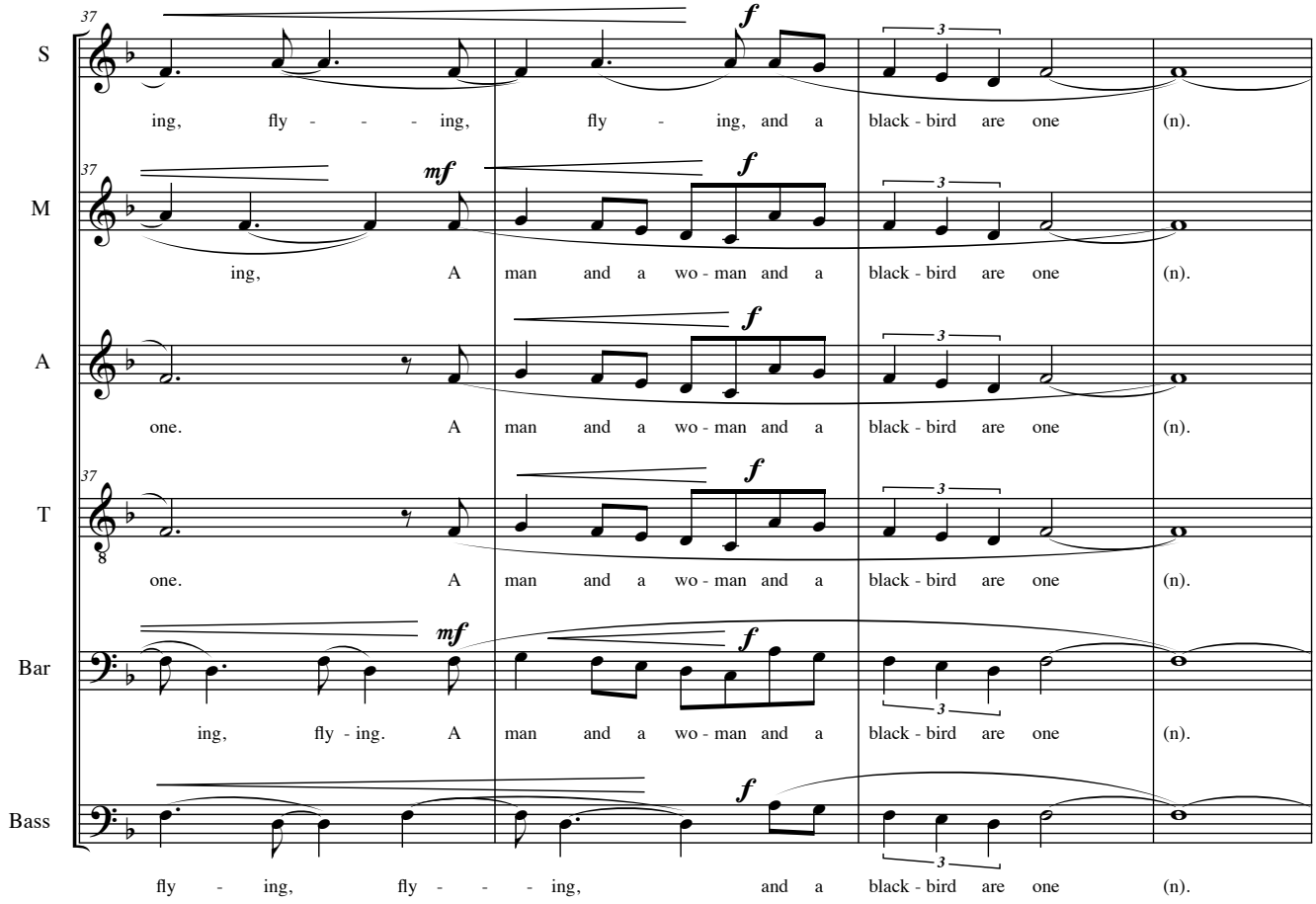


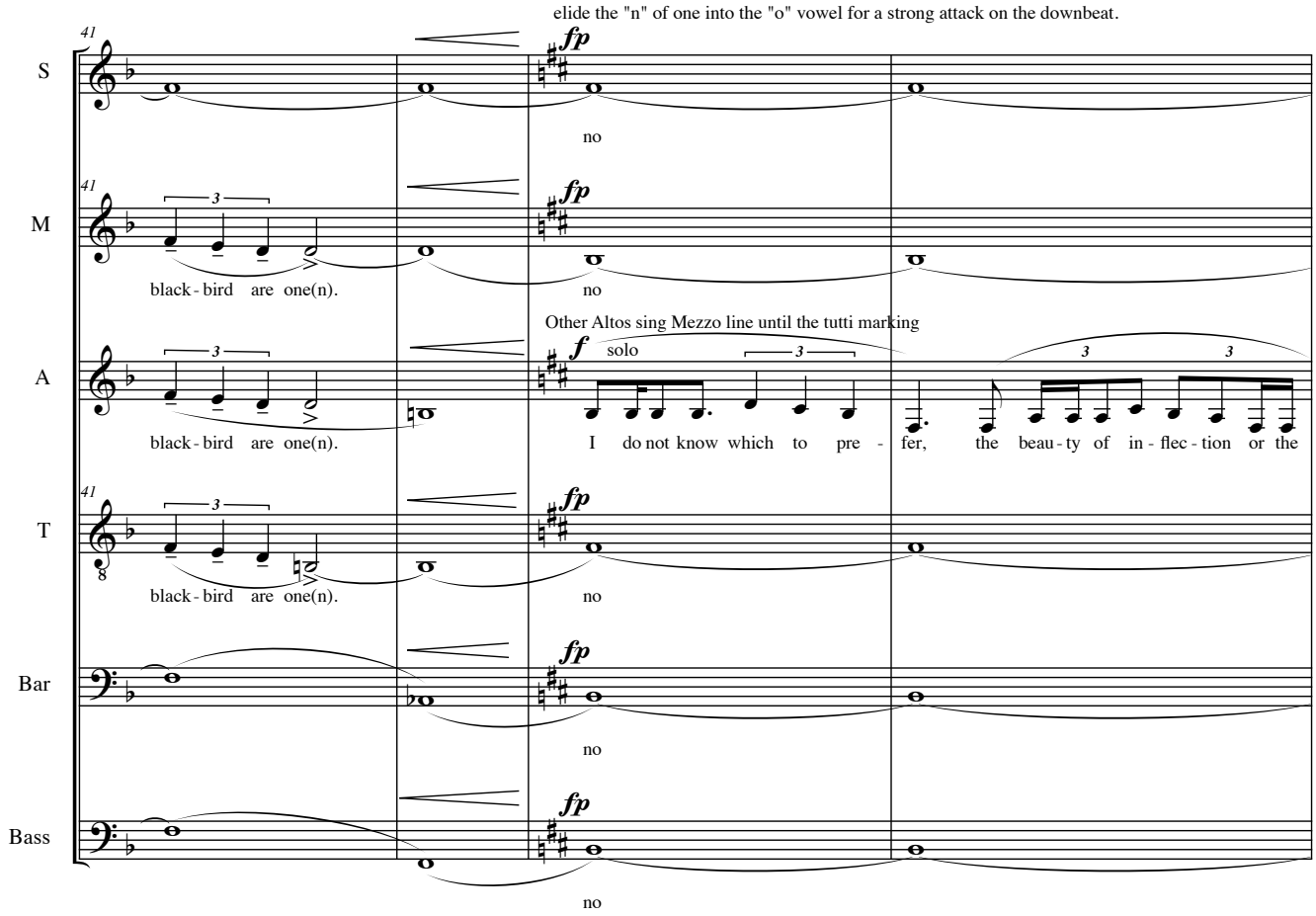

21
S
21
S 2
black b - ird
black b - ird
21
M
21
M 2
bla - ck ck ck ck ck
bla - ck ck ck ck ck ck ck
A
on - ly mo - ving thing was the eye of a black bird.
21
T
Bar
mp
The black - bird whirled in the au - tumn win -
Bass
mp
The black - bird whirled in the au - tumn win -

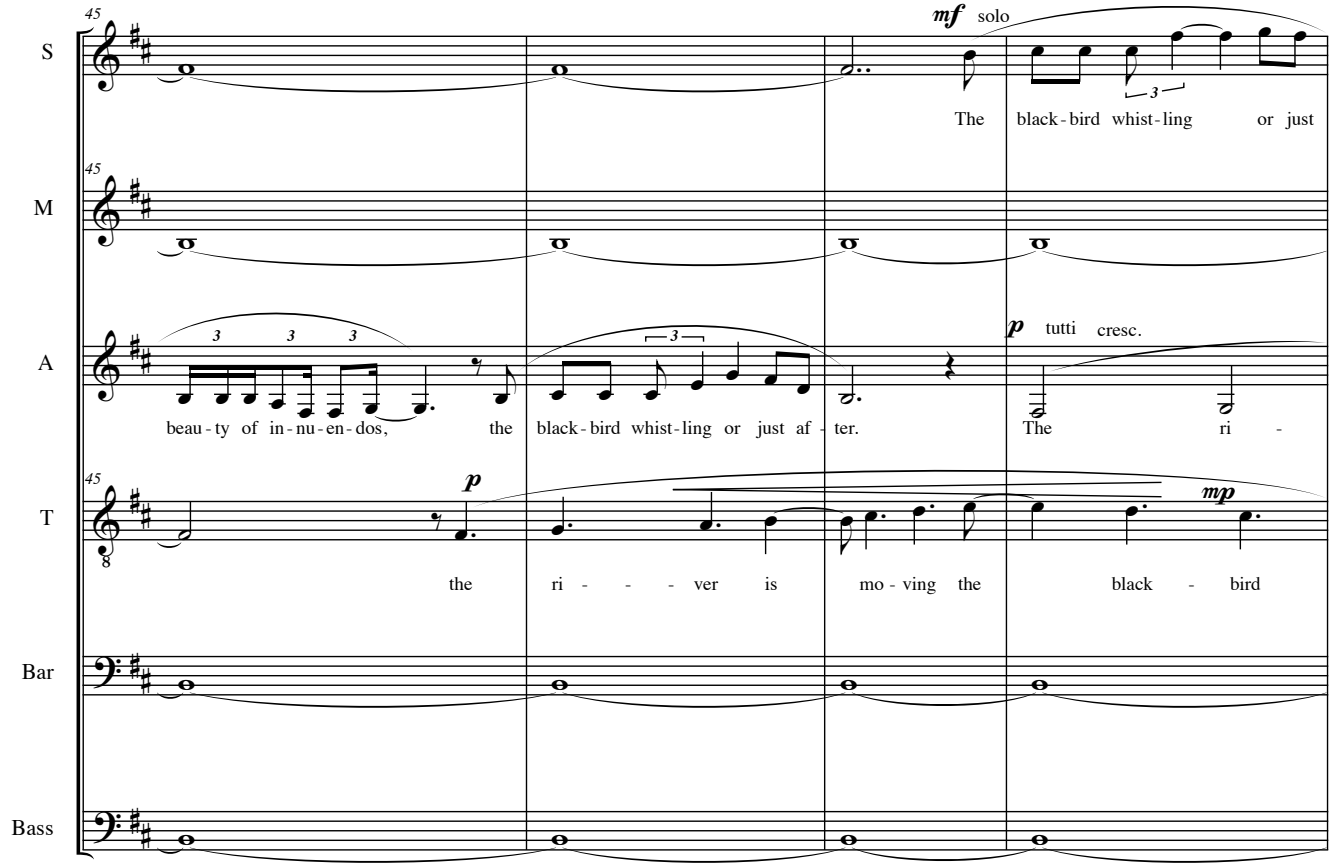

25
S
mp
like a tree in which there are three
25
S 2
mp
black b-ird black b-ird black b-ird b-ird like a tree in which there are three
25
M
bla - ck ck ck ck ck ck ck bla - ck ck ck ck ck ck ck
25
M 2
bla-ck ck ck ck ck bla-ck ck ck ck ck ck ck bla-ck ck ck ck ck bla - ck ck
mf tutti
A
was the eye of a black bird in which there are three
mf
3
25
T
mp
p
I was of three minds fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing
mp soloistic
mf
Bar
(n)ds. I was of three minds like a tree in which there are three
Bass
(n)ds. u

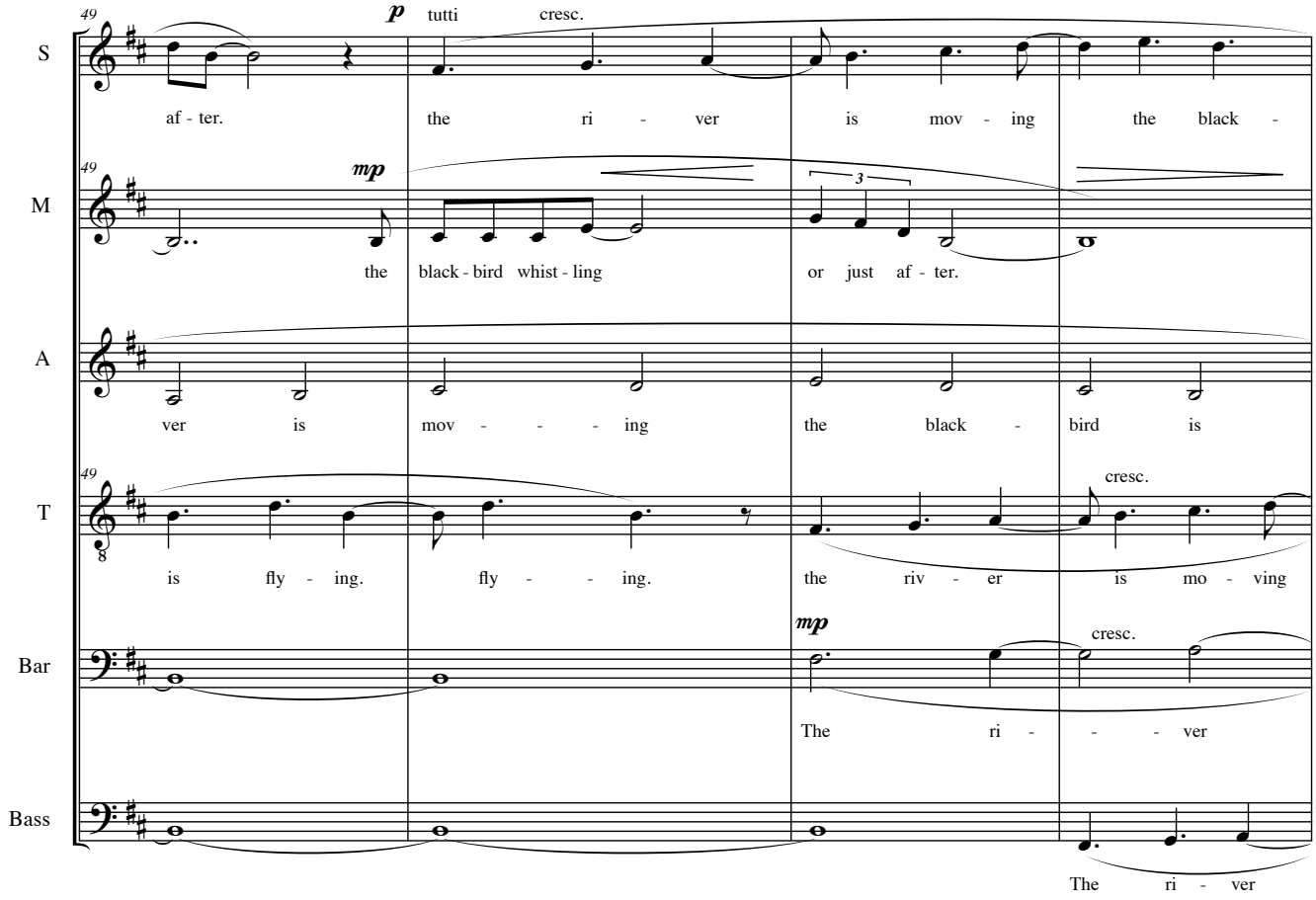

29
S
mf
mp
a tree in which there are three black - birds blackbird whirled in the au-tumn winds
M
mp
mp
whirled in the au-tumnwinds The black bird is
M 2
mp
mp
ck ck ck ck ck whirled in the au-tumnwinds The black bird is
A
mp
p
black - birds. there are three black - birds. in which there are three black-birds.
T
p
the ri - - - ver is mov - ing. The black - bird is
Bar
p
black - birds. is mov - ing. The black - bird is
Bass
mp soloistic
mf
The blackbird whirled in the au-tumn winds. It was a smallpart

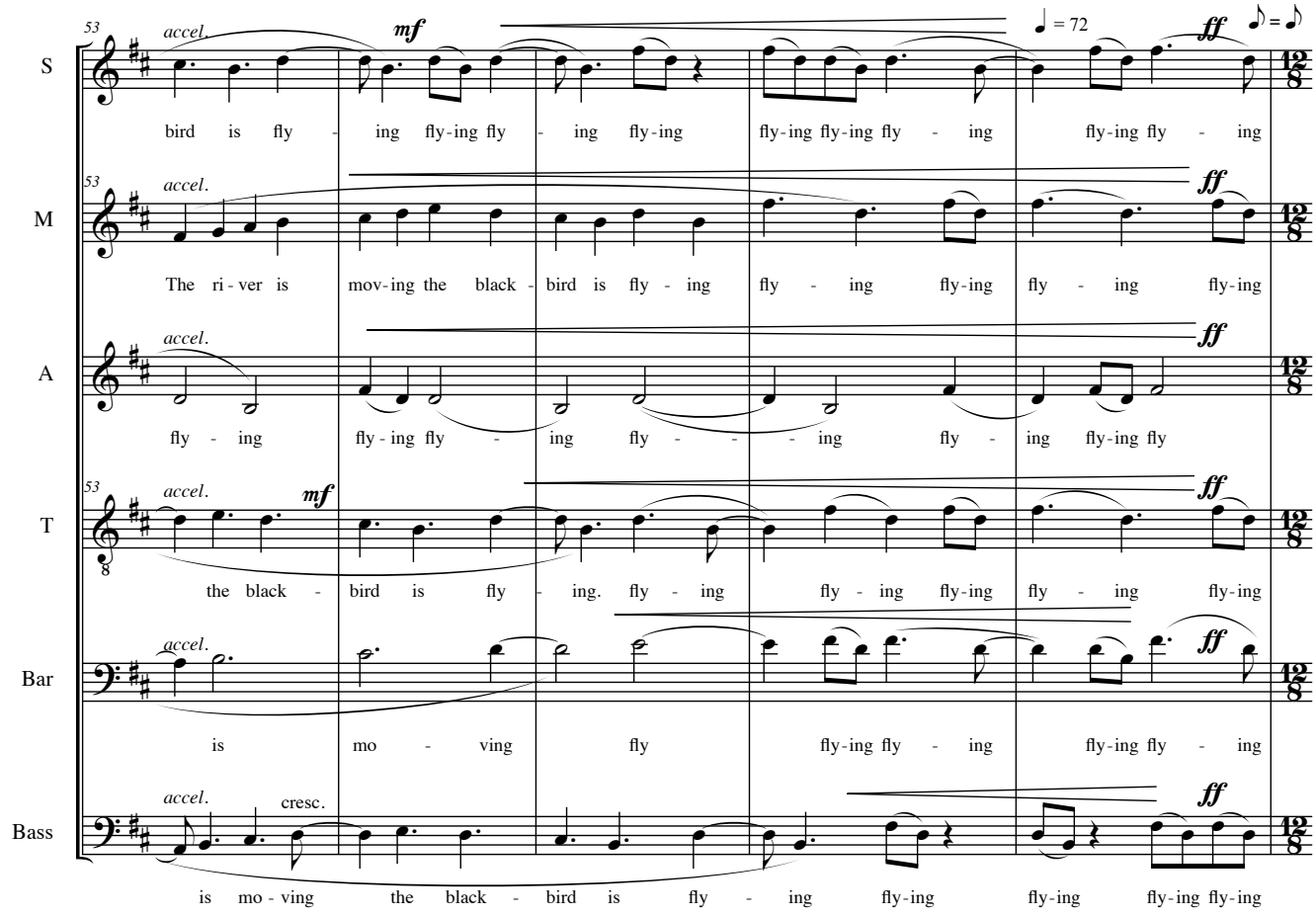

33
S
fly - - - ing, fly - - - ing, fly - - ing, fly - - - ing, fly -
M
fly - ing, fly - - - ing, fly - ing, fly - - - ing, fly
A
mf
fly - ing, fly - - - ing, fly - ing, A man and a wo - man are
T
mf
fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing. A man and a wo - man are
Bar
fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing, fly -
Bass
f
mp
of the pan - to - mime. fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing, fly - ing,


37
S
f
ing, fly - - - ing, fly - ing, and a black - bird are one (n).
M
mf
f
ing, A man and a wo - man and a black - bird are one (n).
A
f
one. A man and a wo - man and a black - bird are one (n).
T
f
one. A man and a wo - man and a black - bird are one (n).
Bar
mf
f
ing, fly - ing. A man and a wo - man and a black - bird are one (n).
Bass
f
fly - ing, fly - - - ing, and a black - bird are one (n).


elide the "n" of one into the "o" vowel for a strong attack on the downbeat.
41
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
fp
no
black - bird are one(n).
Other Altos sing Mezzo line until the tutti marking
f solo
I do not know which to pre - fer, the beau - ty of in - flec - tion or the

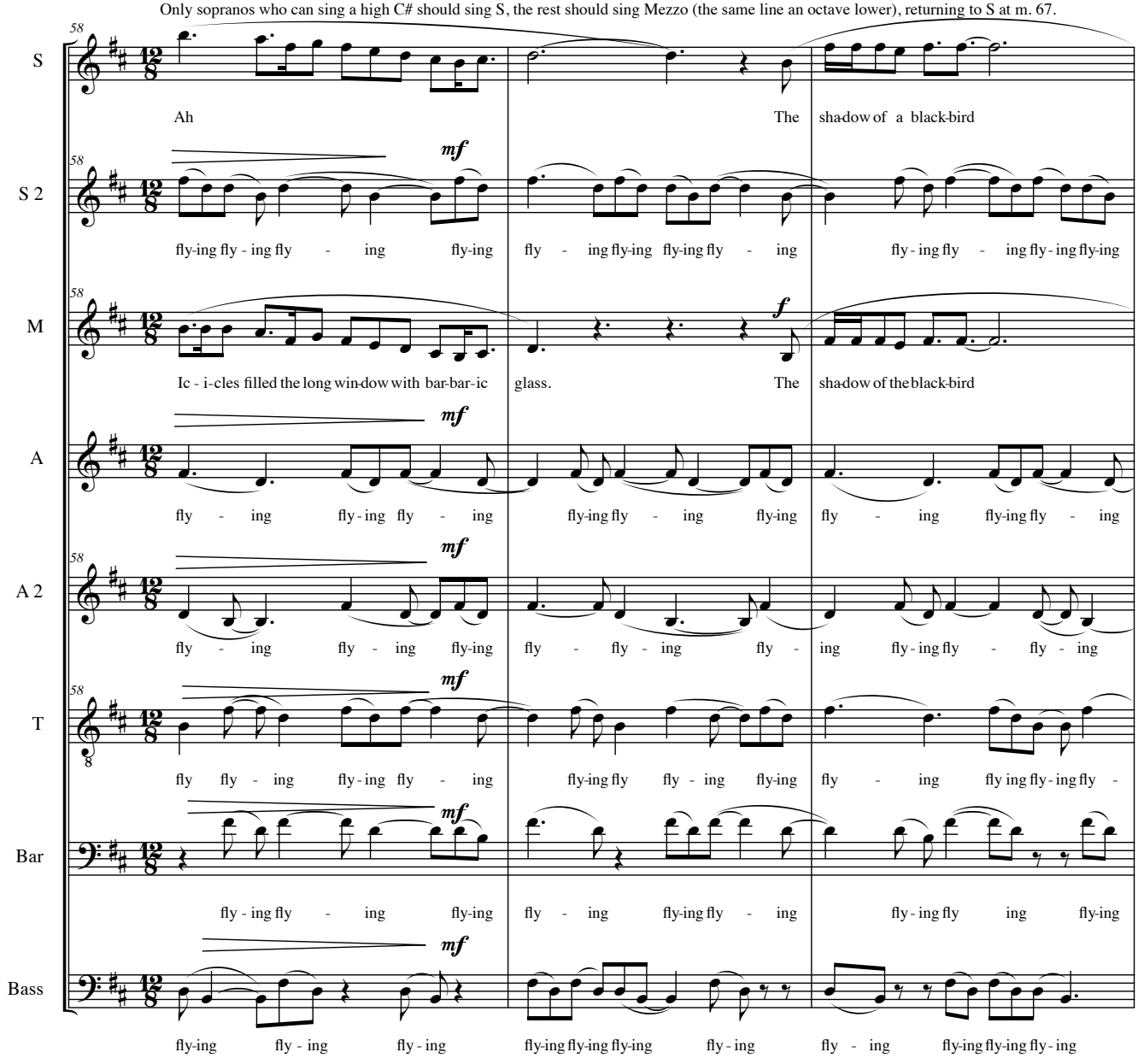

45
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mf solo
The black - bird whist - ling or just
p tutti cresc.
beau - ty of in - nu - en - dos, the black - bird whist - ling or just af - ter. The ri -
p
mp
the ri - - - ver is mo - ving the black - bird

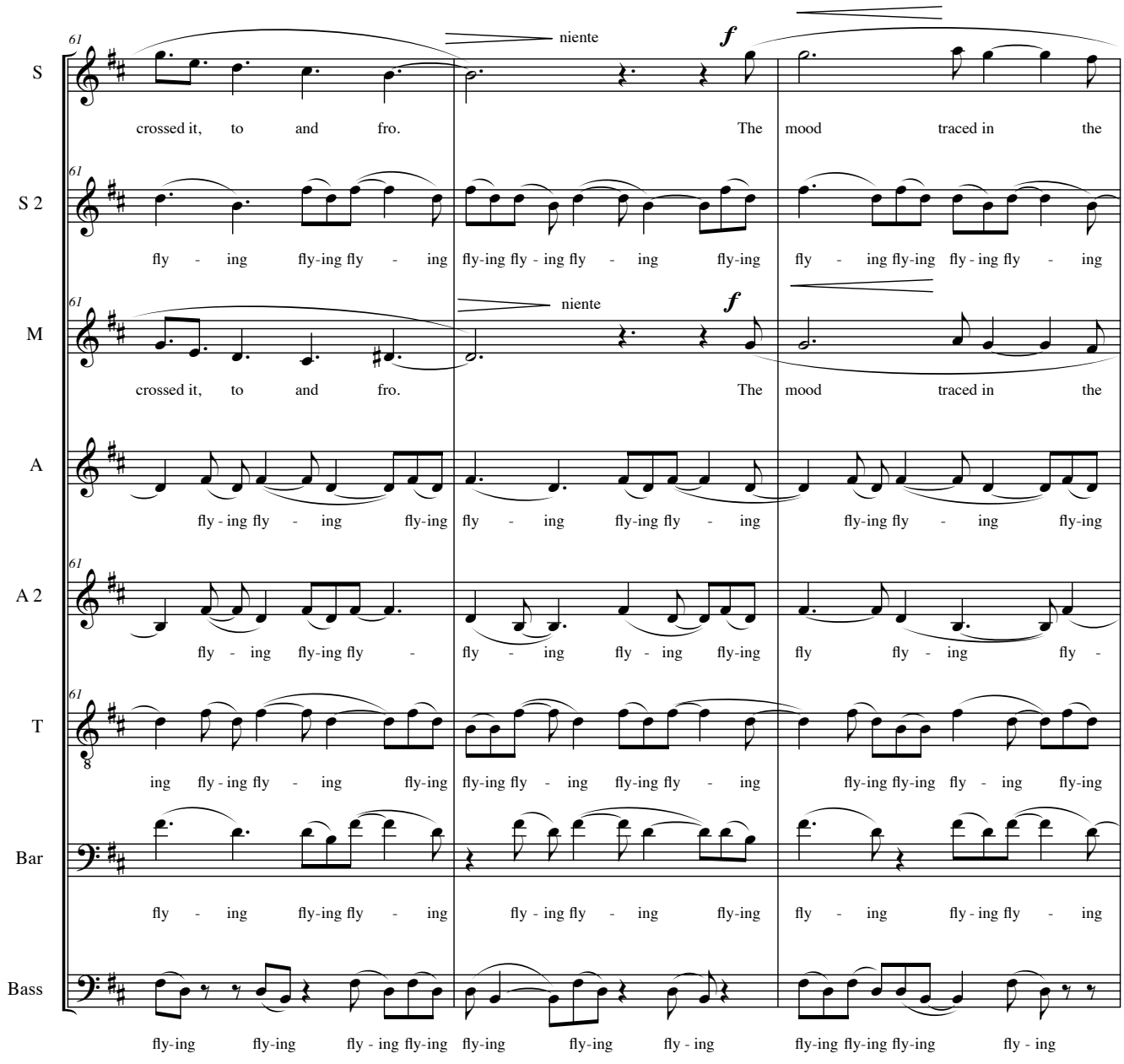

49
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
p
tutti
cresc.
mp
3
af - ter. the ri - ver is mov - ing the black -
the black - bird whist - ling or just af - ter.
ver is mov - - - - ing the black - bird is
is fly - ing. fly - - ing. the riv - er is mo - ving
mp
cresc.
The ri - - - - ver
The ri - ver

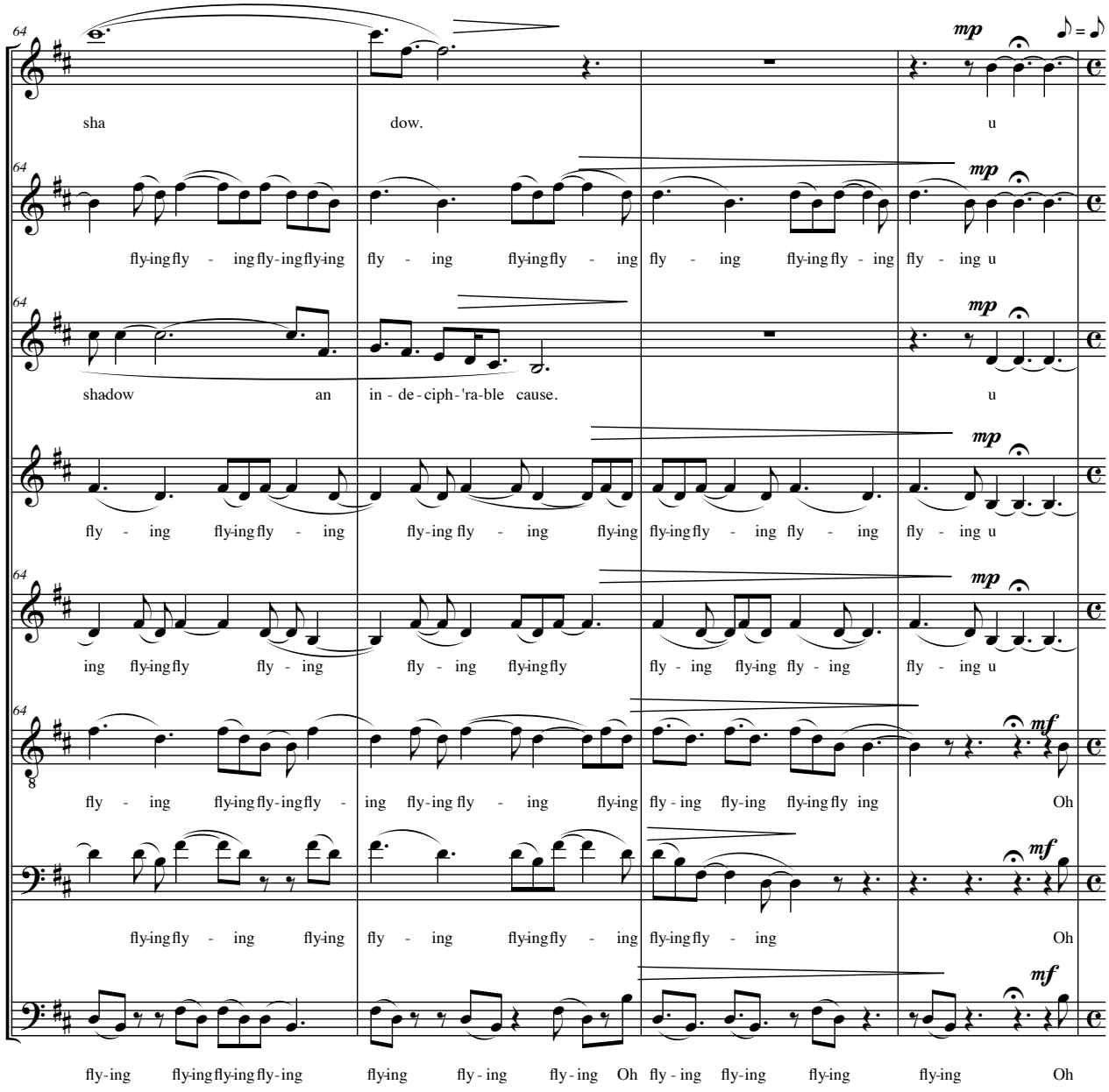

53
accel.
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mf
♩ = 72
ff
bird is fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing
The ri - ver is mov-ing the black - bird is fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing
fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - - - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly
the black - bird is fly - ing. fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing
is mo - ving fly fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing
cresc.
is mo - ving the black - bird is fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing

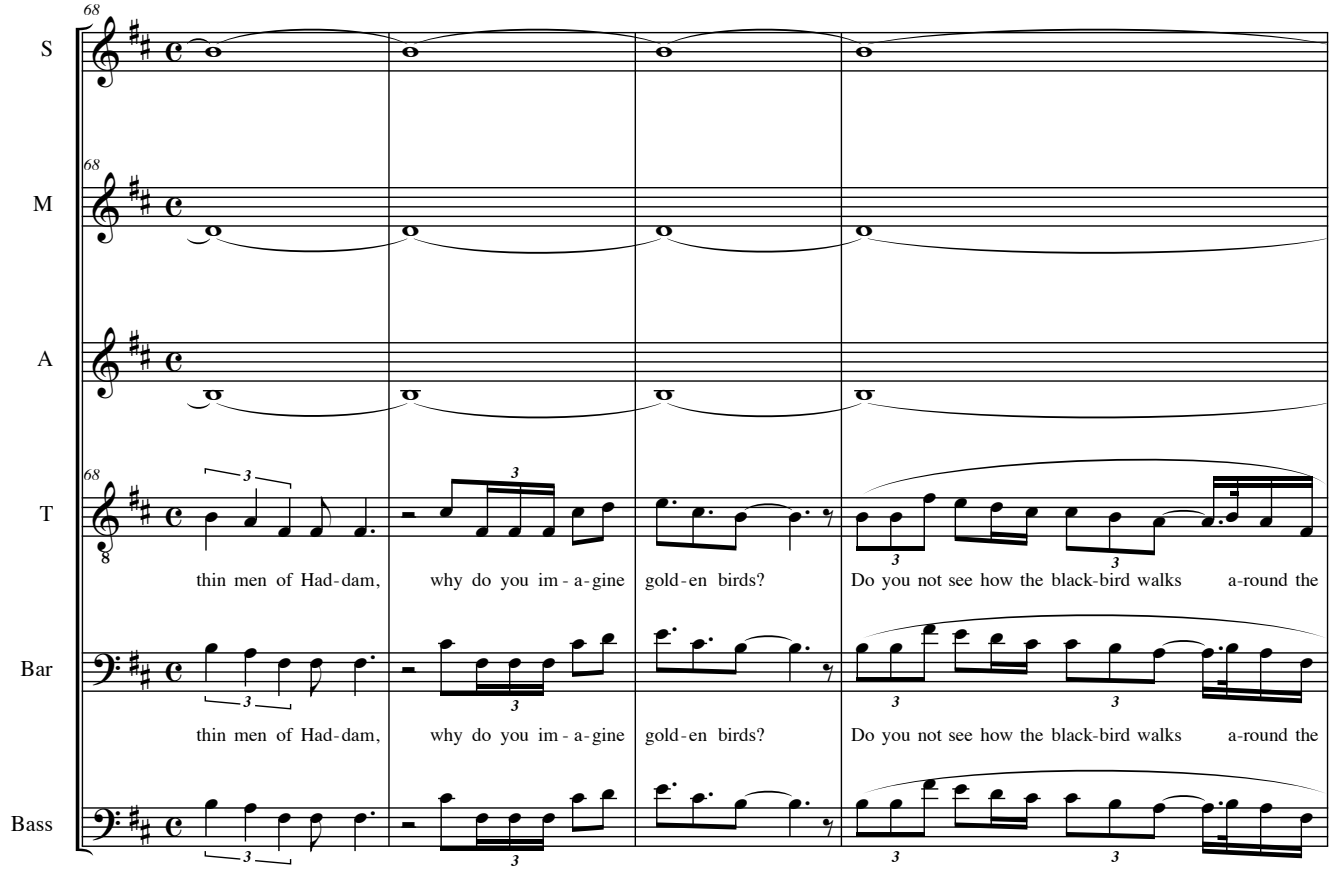
Conductor should beat the 12/8 in a slow 4 pattern with wide graceful gestures, so that there is a sense of slowing and expanse from 4/4 to 12/8, hinting at the wings of a bird.

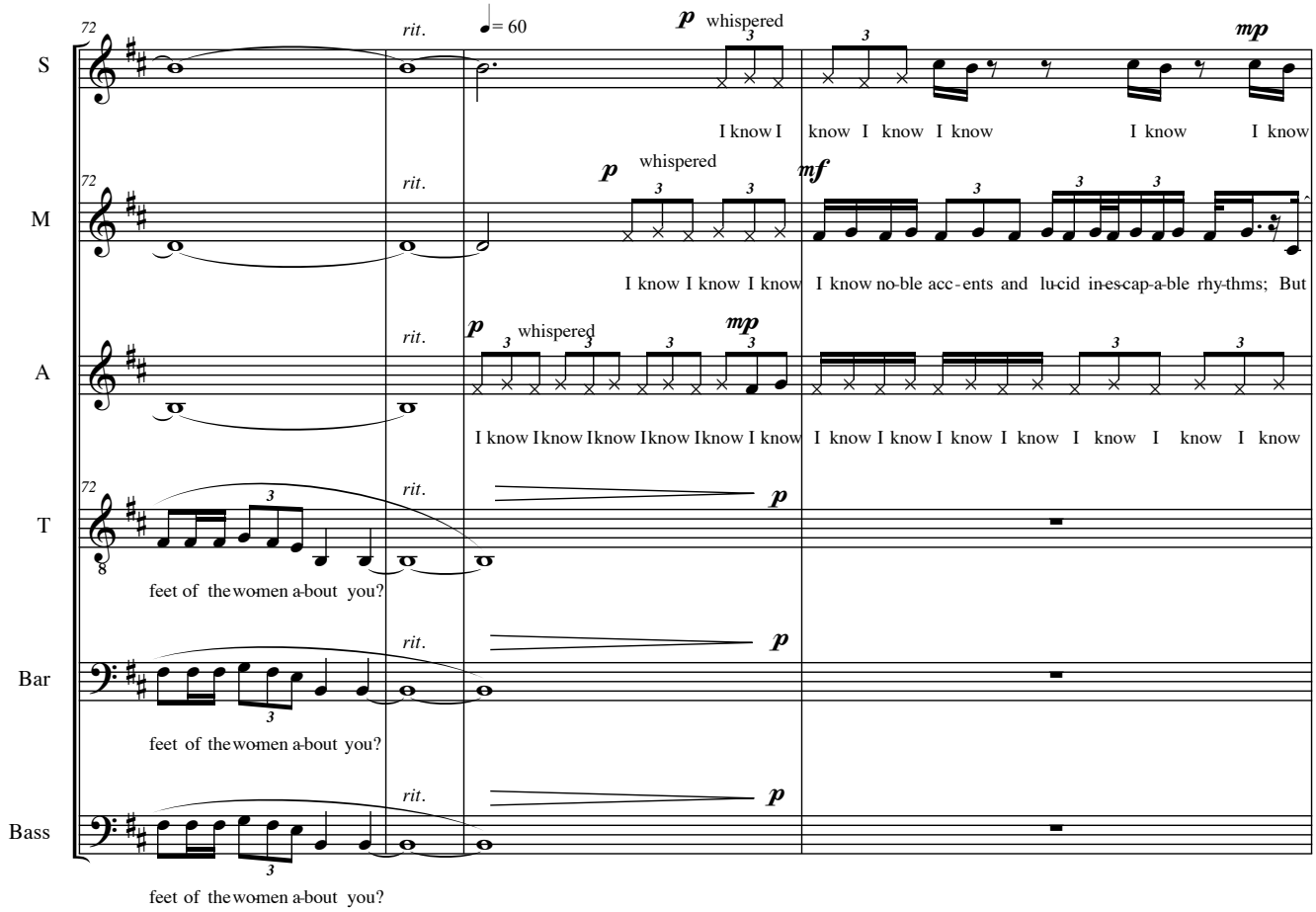
Only sopranos who can sing a high C# should sing S, the rest should sing Mezzo (the same line an octave lower), returning to S at m. 67.

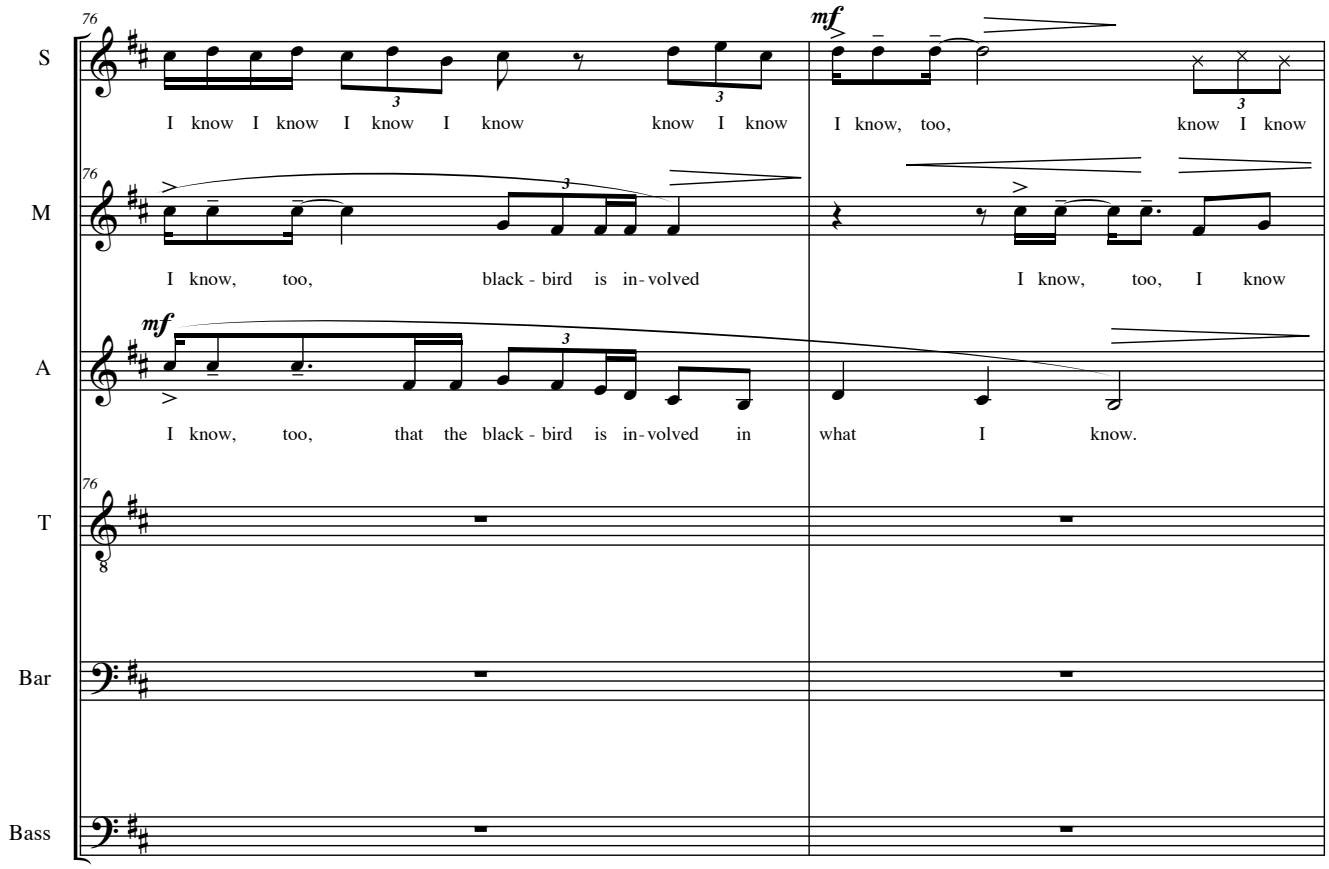


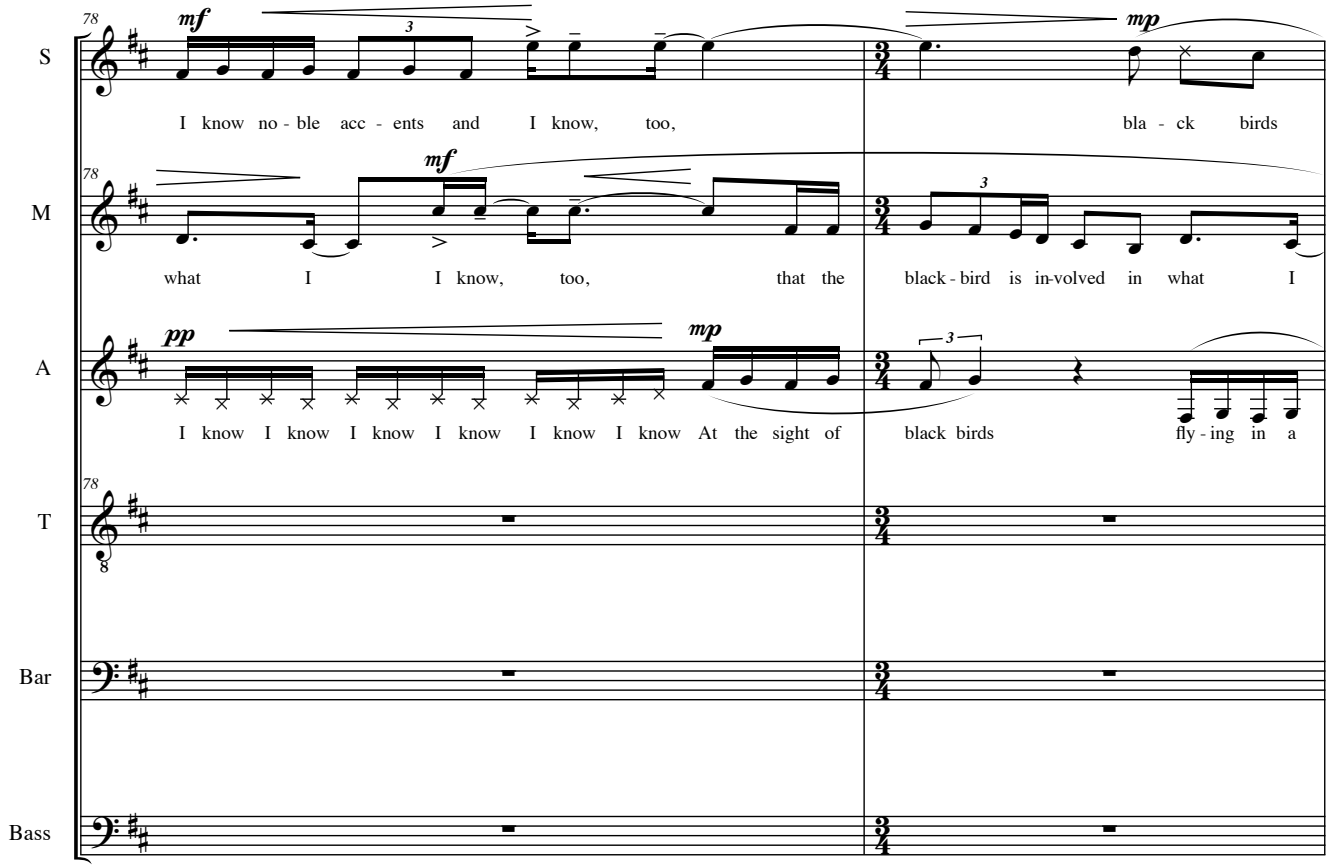

61
S
niente
f
crossed it, to and fro. The mood traced in the
61
S 2
fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing
61
M
niente
f
crossed it, to and fro. The mood traced in the
A
fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing
61
A 2
fly - ing fly-ing fly - fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly fly - ing fly -
61
T
ing fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing
Bar
fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing
Bass
fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing

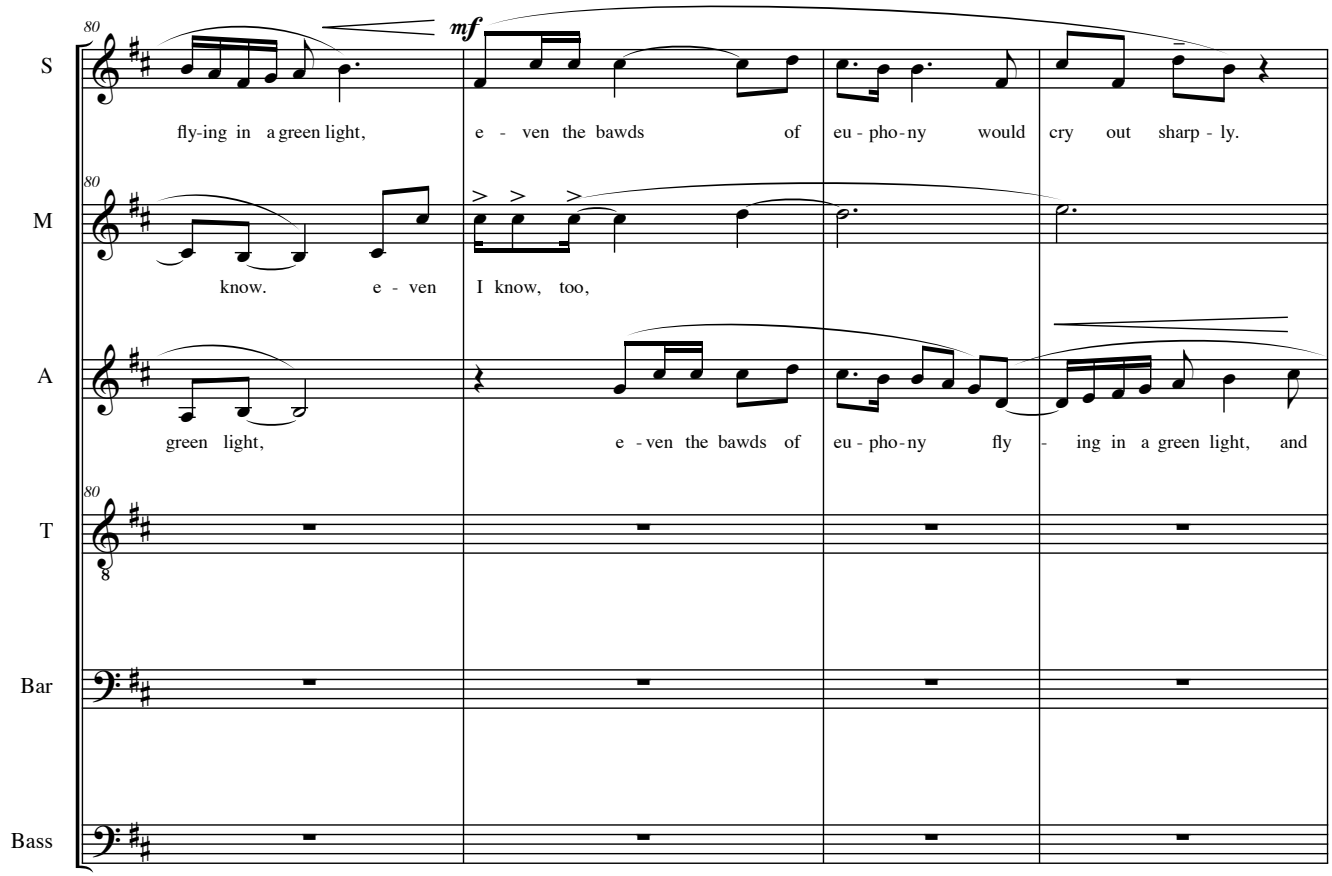

S
sha dow. u
S 2
fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing u
M
shadow an in - de - ciph - 'ra - ble cause. u
A
fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing fly - ing u
A 2
ing fly-ing fly fly - ing fly - ing fly-ing fly fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing u
T
fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly ing Oh
Bar
fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing Oh
Bass
fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly - ing fly-ing fly - ing fly - ing Oh fly - ing fly-ing fly-ing fly-ing Oh
mp
mf

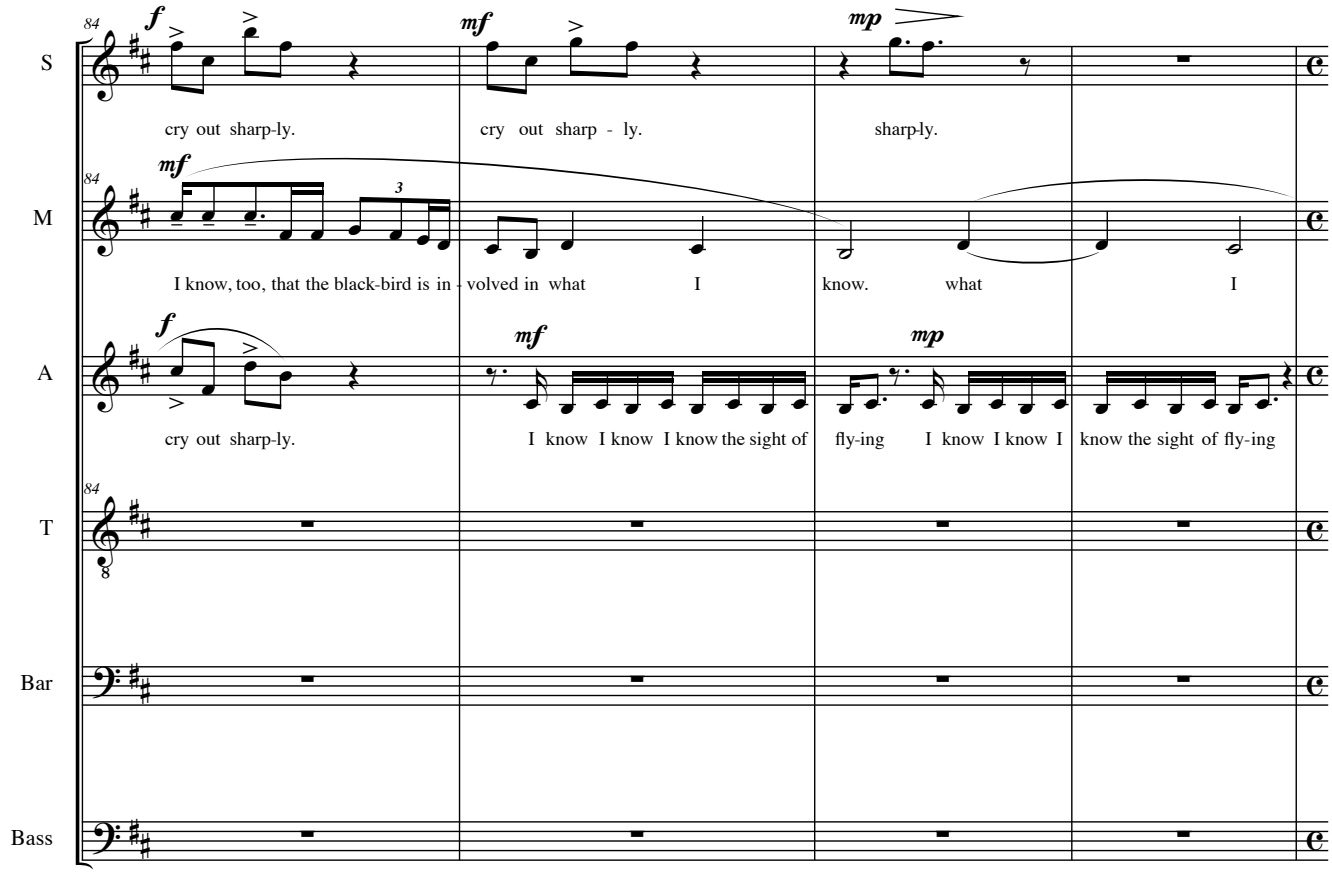

68
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
thin men of Had-dam, why do you im-a-gine gold-en birds? Do you not see how the black-bird walks a-round the
thin men of Had-dam, why do you im-a-gine gold-en birds? Do you not see how the black-bird walks a-round the
thin men of Had-dam, why do you im-a-gine gold-en birds? Do you not see how the black-bird walks a-round the

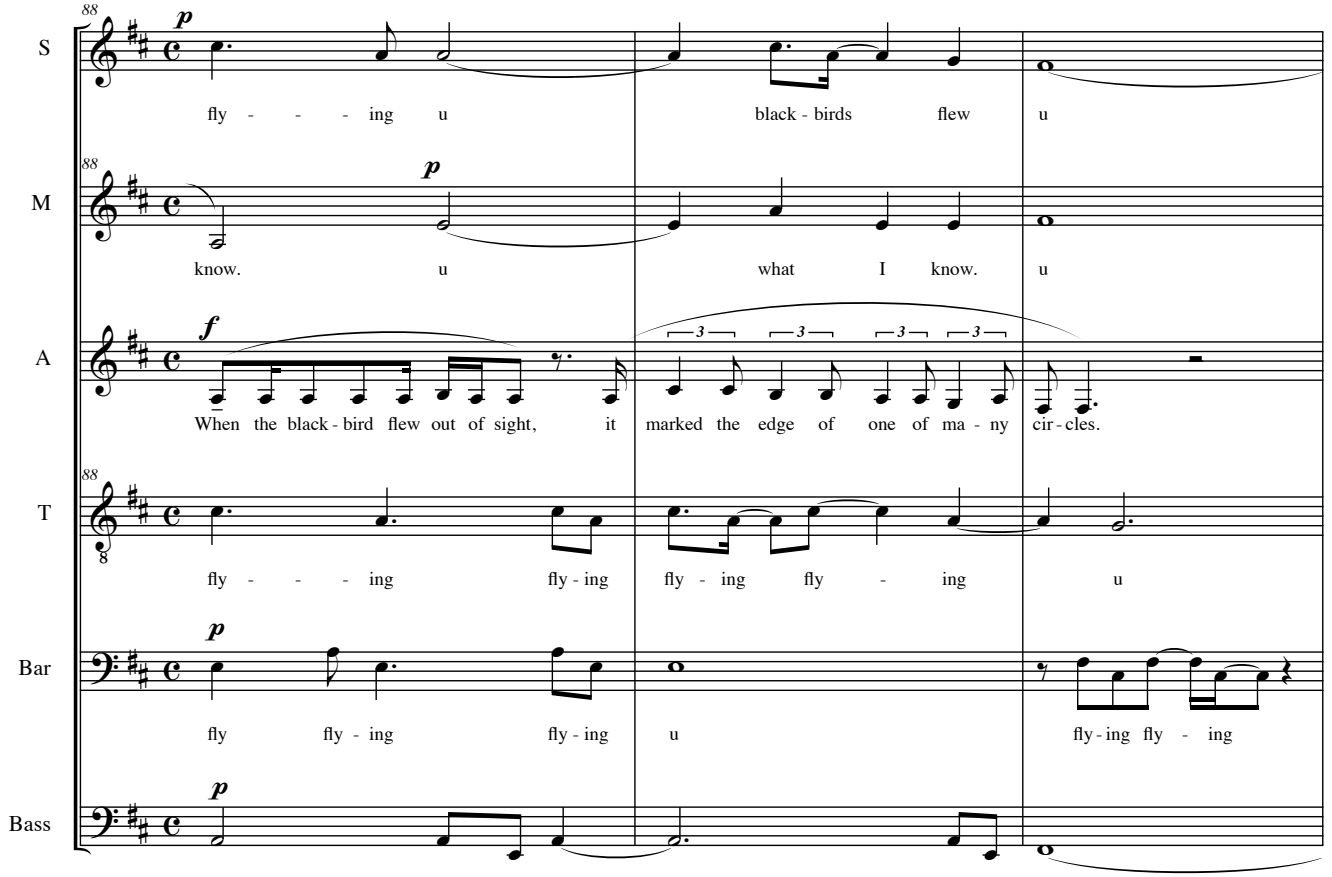

72
rit.
♩= 60
p whispered
mp
I know I know I know I know I know I know
mf
I know I know I know I know no-ble acc-ents and lu-cid in-es-cap-a-ble rhy-thms; But
mp
I know I know I know I know I know I know I know I know I know I know I know I know
feet of the wo-men a-bout you?
feet of the wo-men a-bout you?
feet of the wo-men a-bout you?

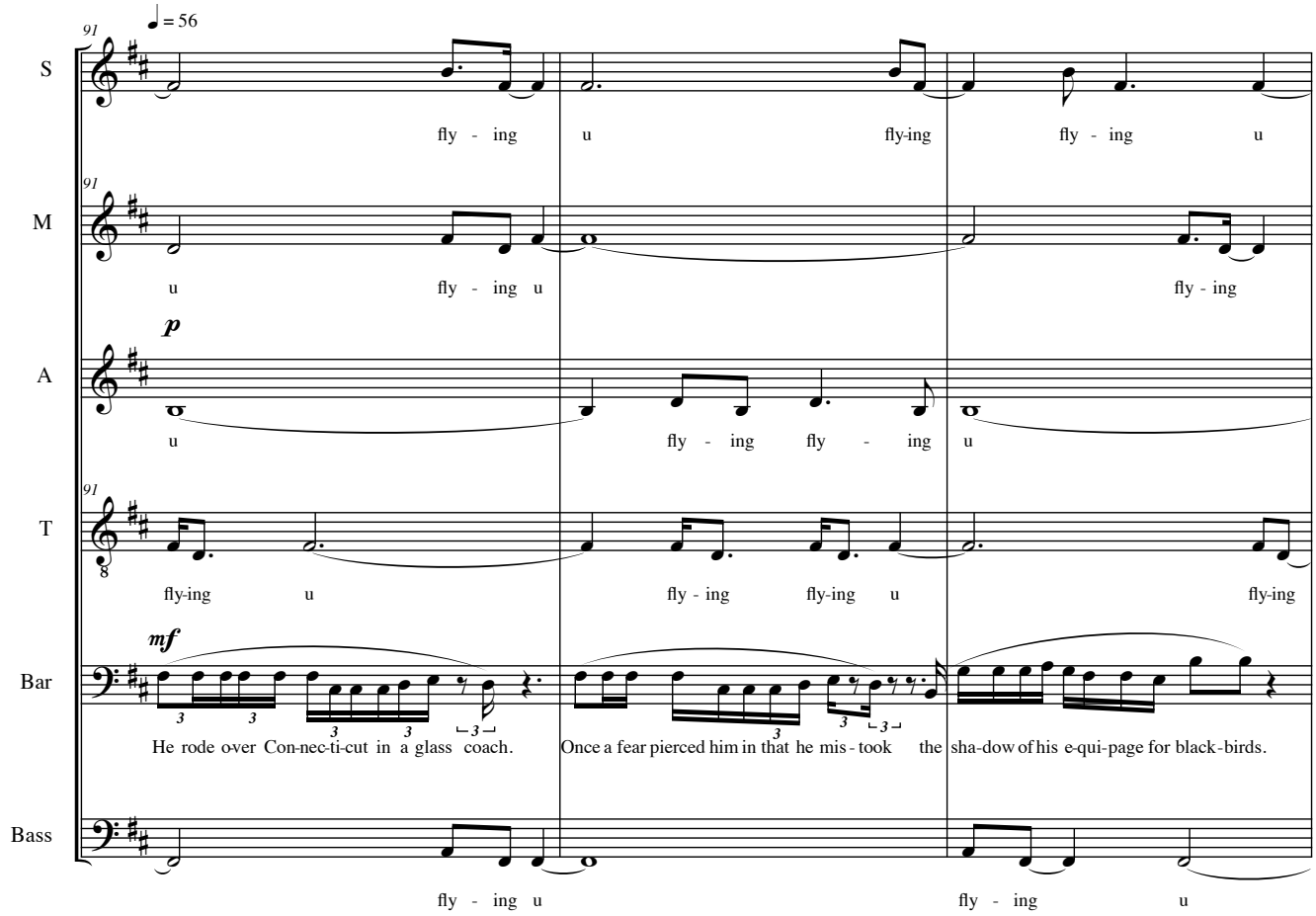

76
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mf
I know I know I know I know know I know
I know, too, know I know
I know, too, black - bird is in - volved
I know, too, I know
I know, too, that the black - bird is in - volved in
what I know.

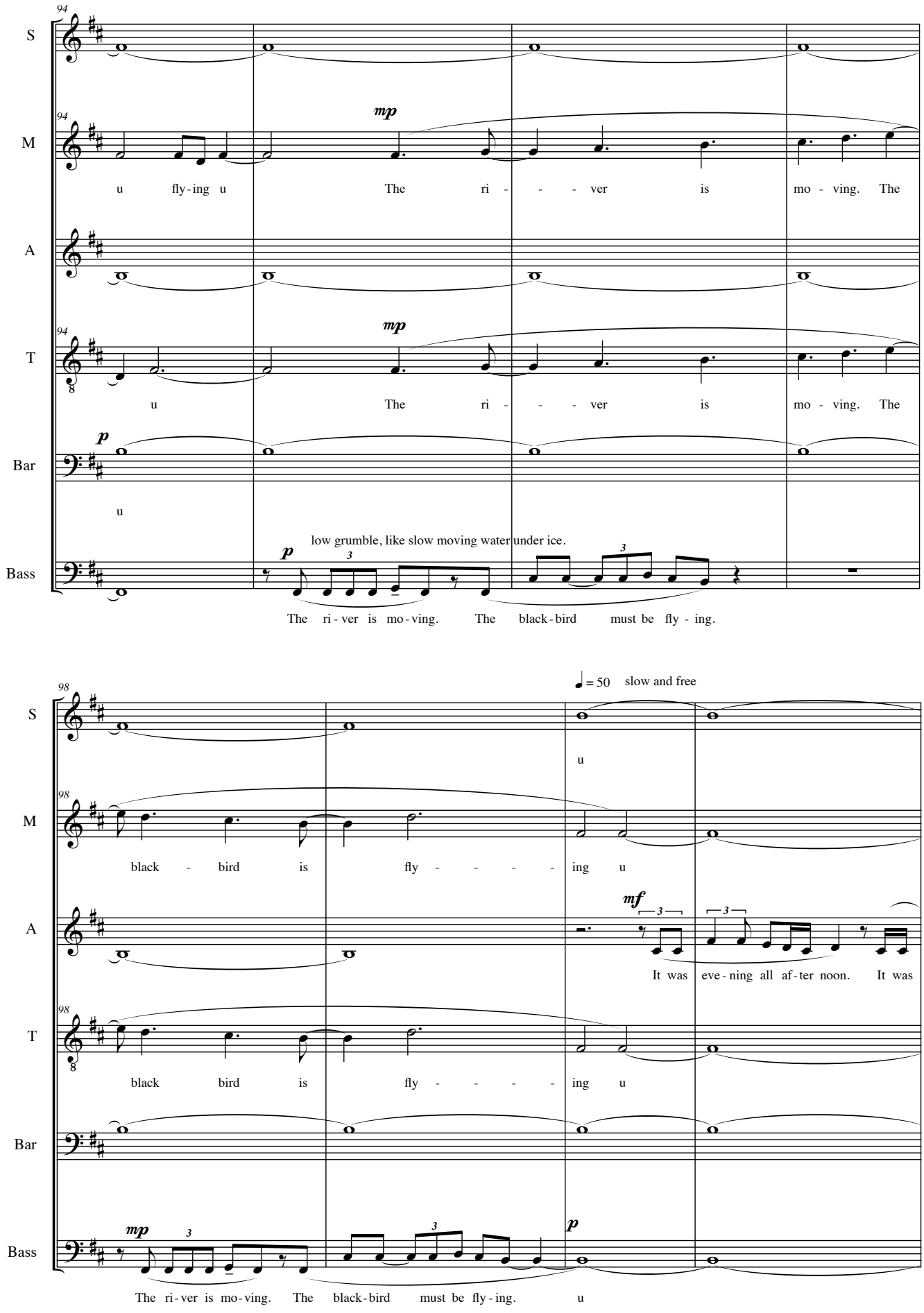

78
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mf
mp
pp
I know no - ble acc - ents and I know, too,
bla - ck birds
what I I know, too, that the
black - bird is in-volved in what I
I know I know I know I know I know I know At the sight of
black birds fly - ing in a

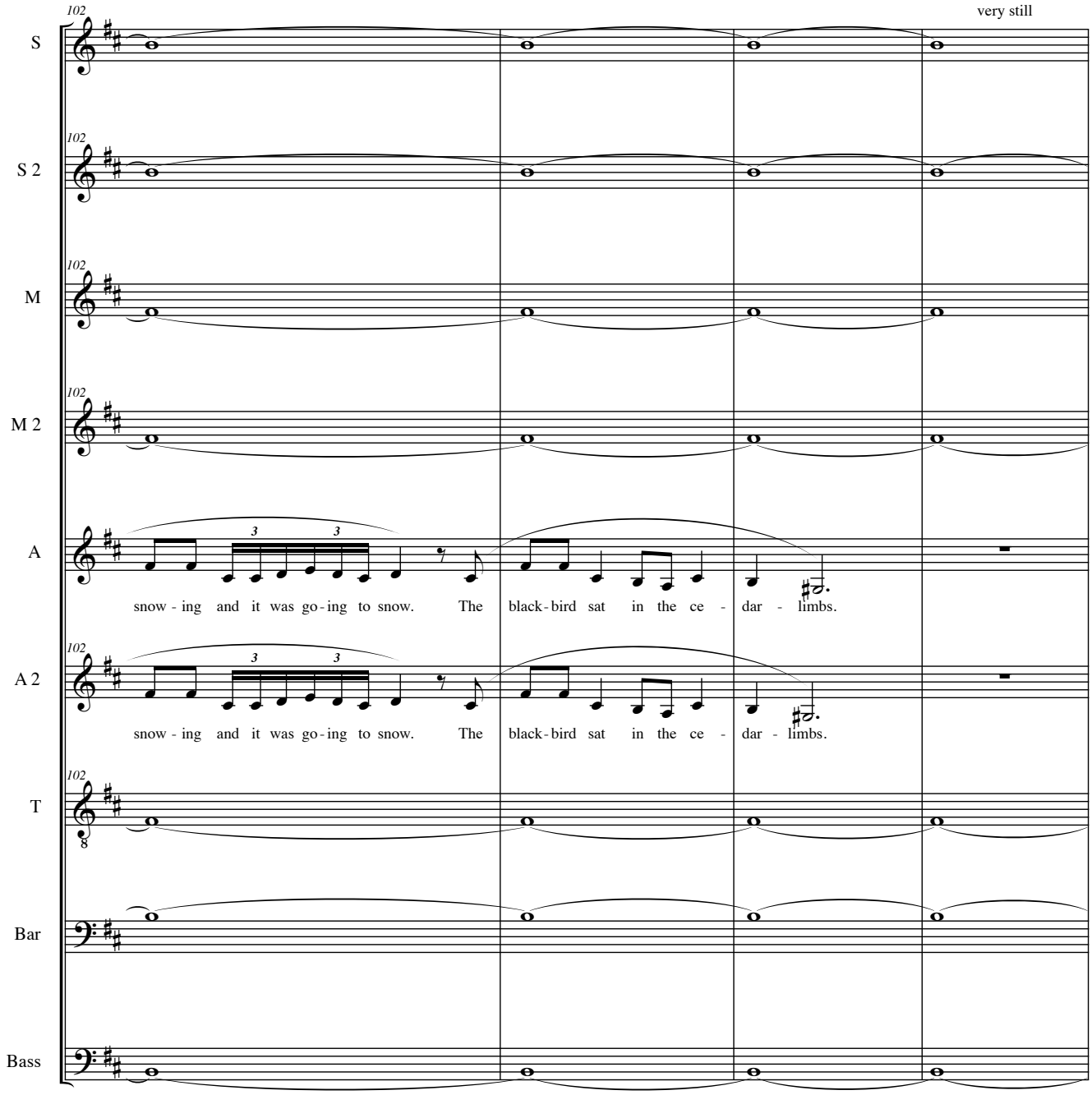

80
S
fly-ing in a green light,
mf
e - ven the bawds of eu - pho - ny would cry out sharp - ly.
M
know. e - ven
I know, too,
A
green light,
e - ven the bawds of eu - pho - ny fly - ing in a green light, and
T
Bar
Bass

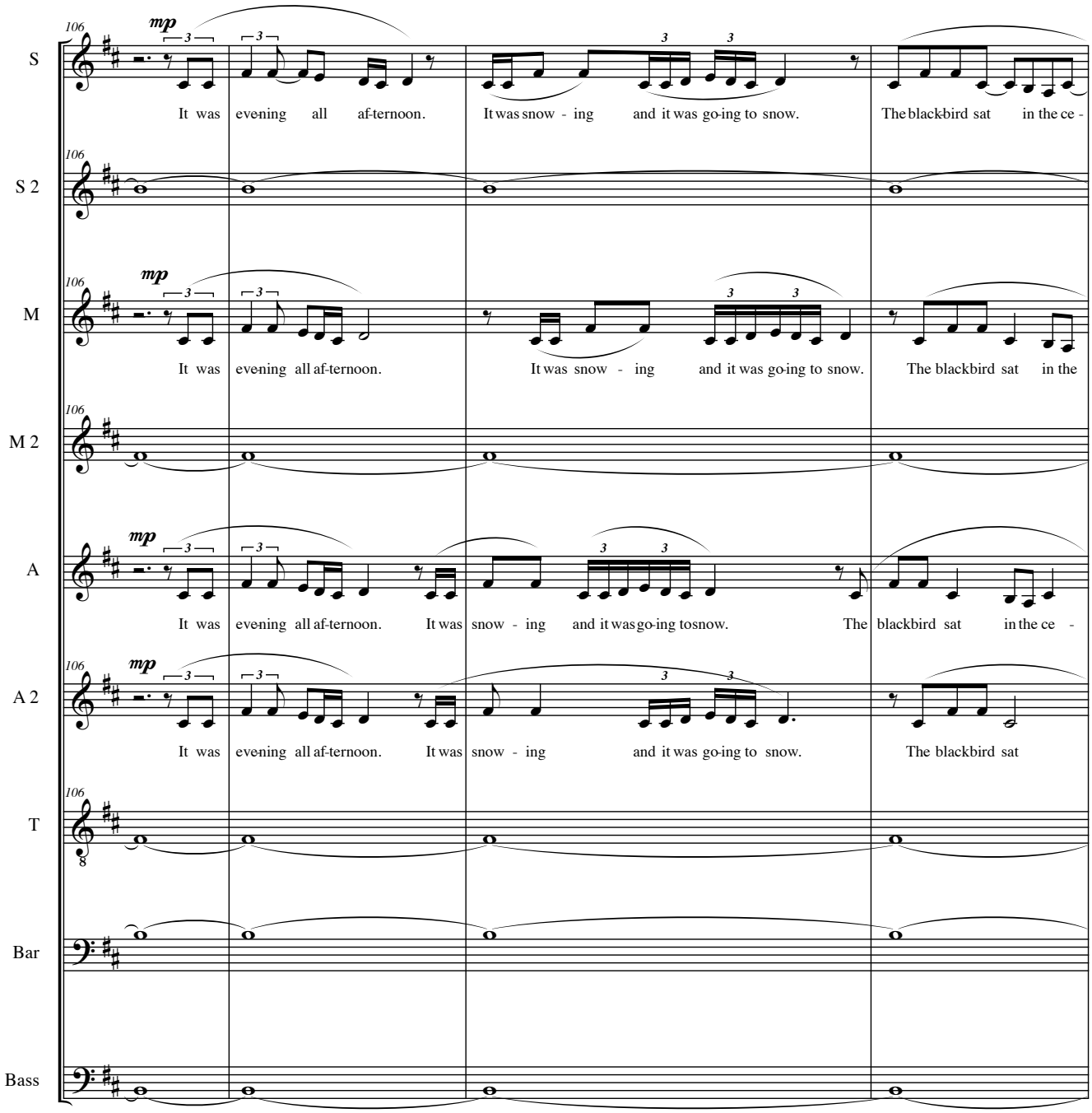

84
S
cry out sharp-ly.
f
cry out sharp - ly.
mf
sharp-ly.
mp
M
I know, too, that the black-bird is in - volved in what I know. what I
A
cry out sharp-ly.
I know I know I know the sight of fly-ing I know I know I know the sight of fly-ing
T
Bar
Bass

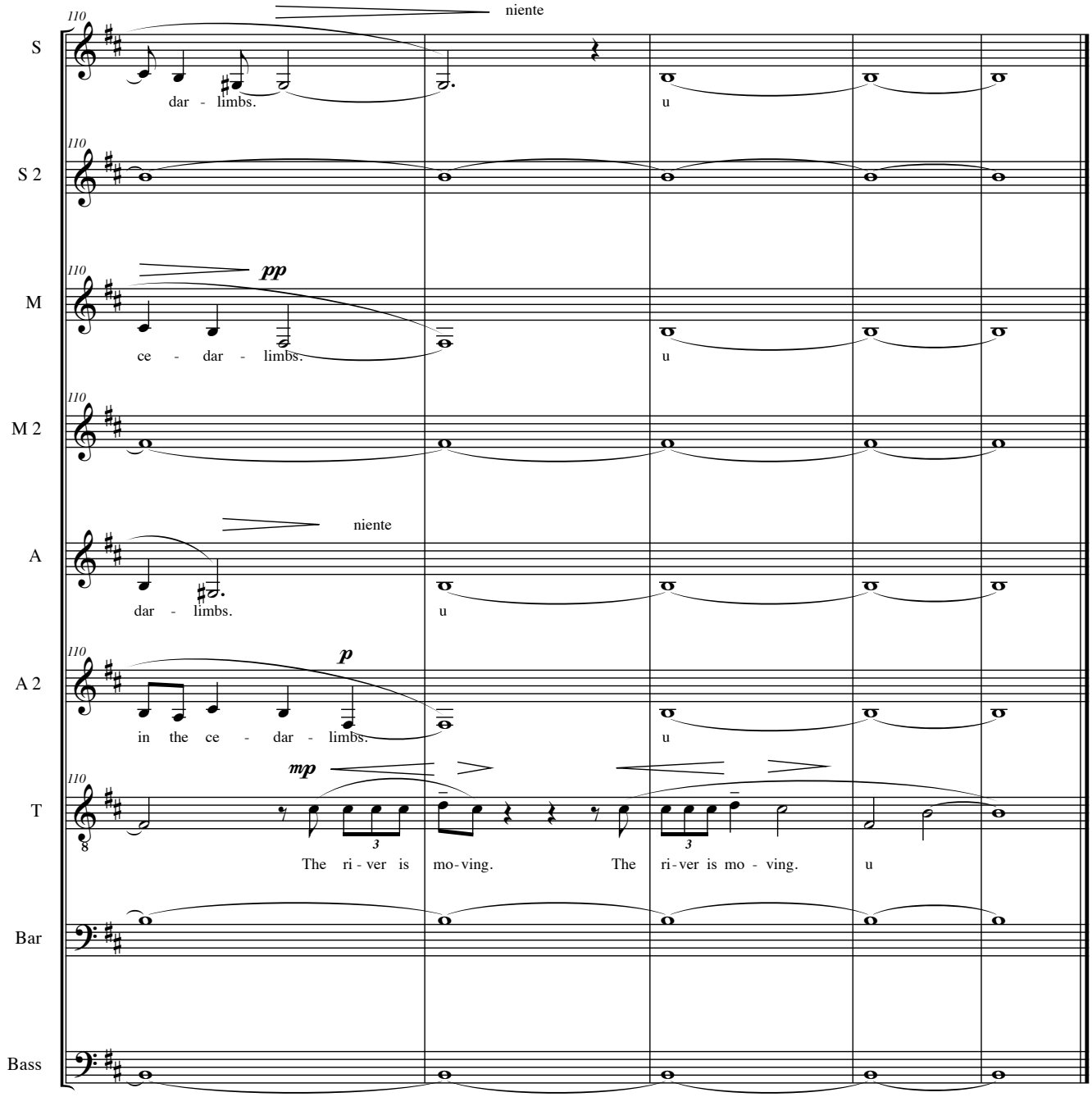

88
S
p
fly - - - ing u
black - birds flew u
88
M
p
know. u
what I know. u
A
f
When the black - bird flew out of sight, it marked the edge of one of ma - ny cir - cles.
88
T
fly - - - ing fly - ing fly - ing fly - ing u
Bar
p
fly fly - ing fly - ing u
fly - ing fly - ing
Bass
p
fly fly - ing fly
fly - ing u


91
♩ = 56
S
fly - ing u
fly-ing fly - ing u
91
M
u fly - ing u
fly - ing
A
p
u fly - ing fly - ing u
91
T
fly-ing u
fly - ing fly-ing u
fly-ing
Bar
mf
He rode over Con-nec-ti-cut in a glass coach.
Once a fear pierced him in that he mis - took the sha-dow of his e-qui-page for black-birds.
Bass
fly - ing u
fly - ing u


94
S
M
A
T
Bar
Bass
mp
u fly-ing u
The ri - - - ver is mo - ving. The
p
u
low grumble, like slow moving water under ice.
The ri-ver is mo-ving. The black-bird must be fly - ing.
98
= 50 slow and free
u
black - bird is fly - - - - ing u
mf
It was eve-ning all af-ter noon. It was
black bird is fly - - - - ing u
The ri-ver is mo-ving. The black-bird must be fly-ing. u


very still
S
S 2
M
M 2
A
A 2
T
Bar
Bass
snow - ing and it was go - ing to snow. The black - bird sat in the ce - dar - limbs.
snow - ing and it was go - ing to snow. The black - bird sat in the ce - dar - limbs.


106
mp
S
It was even-ning all af-ternoon. It was snow - ing and it was go-ing to snow. The blackbird sat in the ce -
S 2
M
It was even-ning all af-ternoon. It was snow - ing and it was go-ing to snow. The blackbird sat in the
M 2
A
It was even-ning all af-ternoon. It was snow - ing and it was go-ing to snow. The blackbird sat in the ce -
A 2
It was even-ning all af-ternoon. It was snow - ing and it was go-ing to snow. The blackbird sat
T
Bar
Bass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