Narrow Rooms

Vocal score

Scene 1

Andrew Toovey (2018)

Vance (Counter Tenor)

(Hesitant, stammering)

♩ = 60

Please, I won't take but a minute of your time, doc. It's Sidney

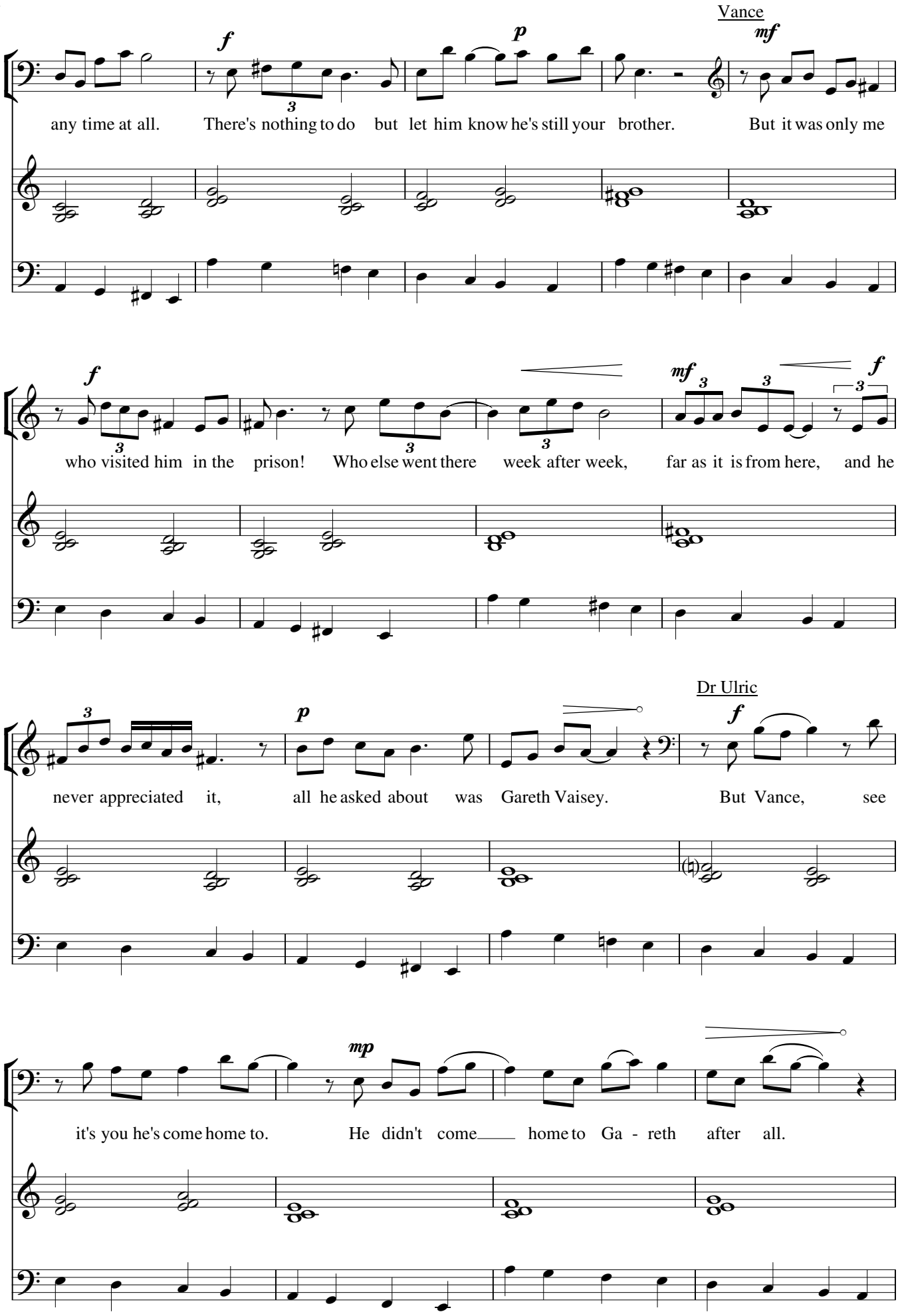
The triad chords can be played on the harmonium and/or distributed between violin (also playing the higher line), viola and clarinet. The bass part can be shared between cello and bassoon or played by one of them.

He's come home. He's been pardoned. He's a free man. But Sidney don't want to go out

Dr. Ulric (bass)

and see any - body and he's not happy either when he's with me. Don't force him, then.

Do nothing now. Best way with most problems: Let them go away from you. But tell him, come see me


Vance
any time at all. There's nothing to do but let him know he's still your brother. But it was only me
who visited him in the prison! Who else went there week after week, far as it is from here, and he
Dr Ulric
never appreciated it, all he asked about was Gareth Vaisey. But Vance, see
it's you he's come home to. He didn't come home to Ga - reth after all.

(Vance walks over to where Sidney appears)

Vance

Sidney (tenor)

You got to face them, Sid. Who says so? Why can't we move

Vance

Sidney

Vance

from here? Leave the house? Everything? Sell it. Who'd buy it, Sid? It's

Sidney

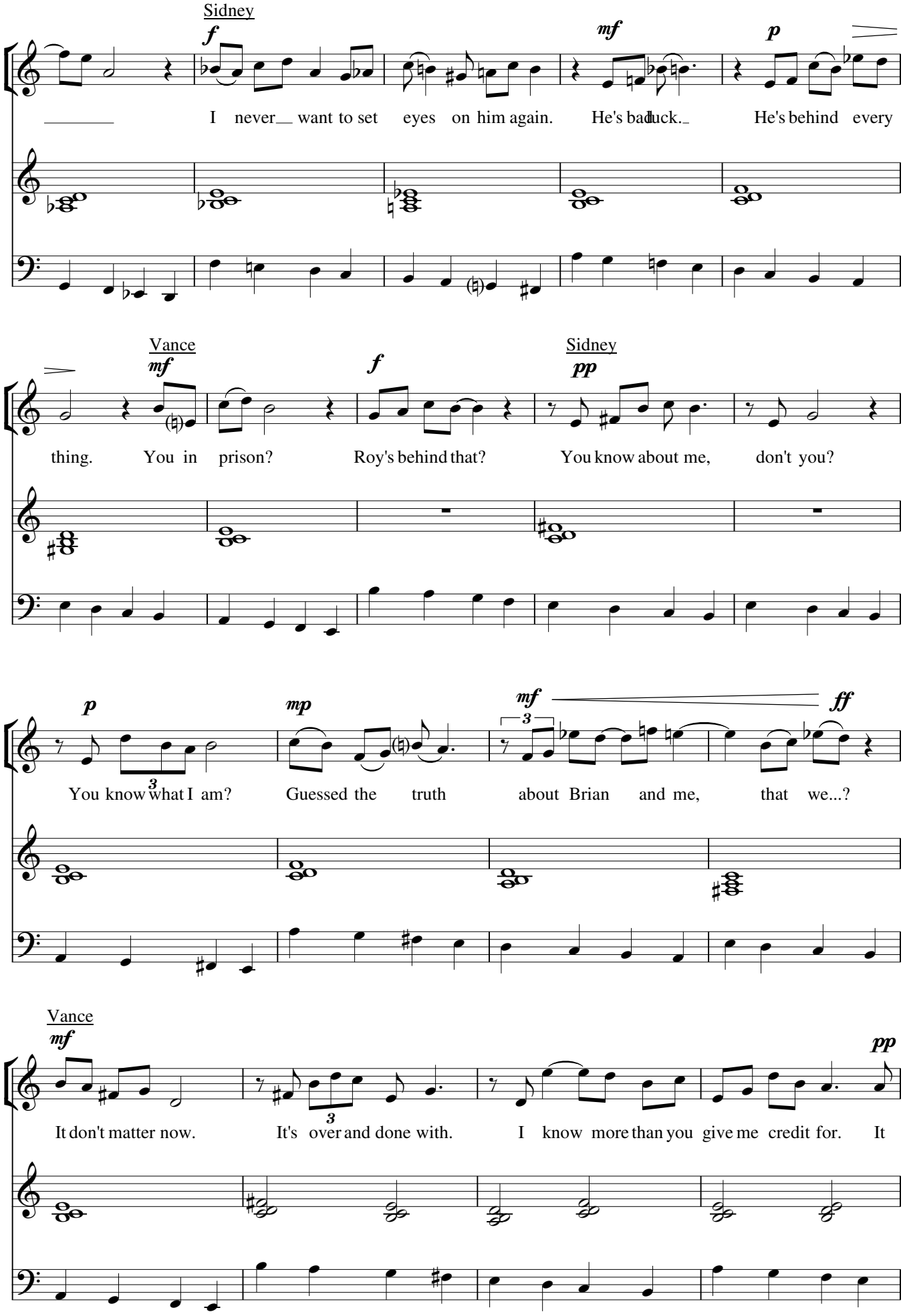
all but turned to powder. It's a wreck. Don't ask me to go to town again.

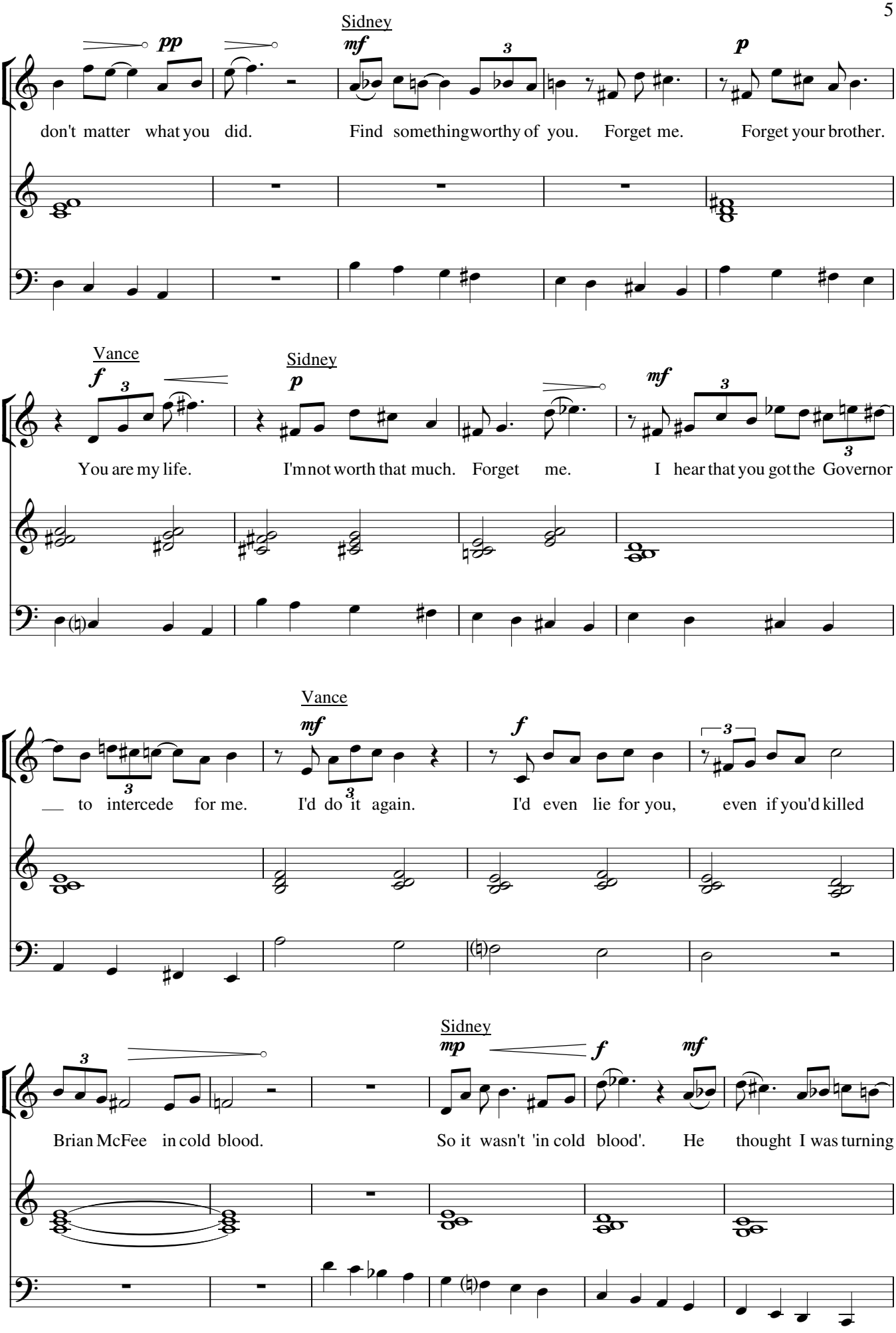
Vance

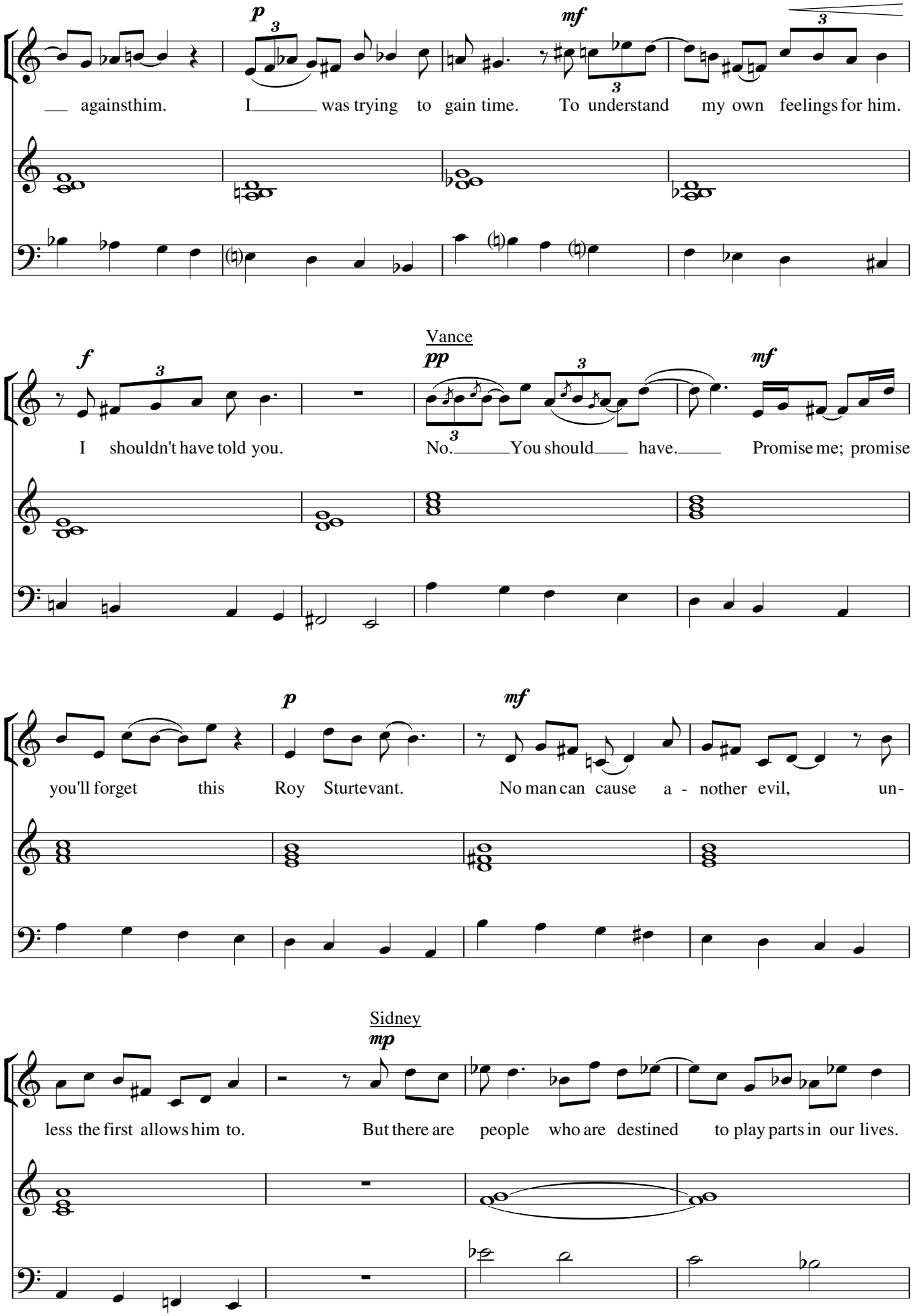
Sidney

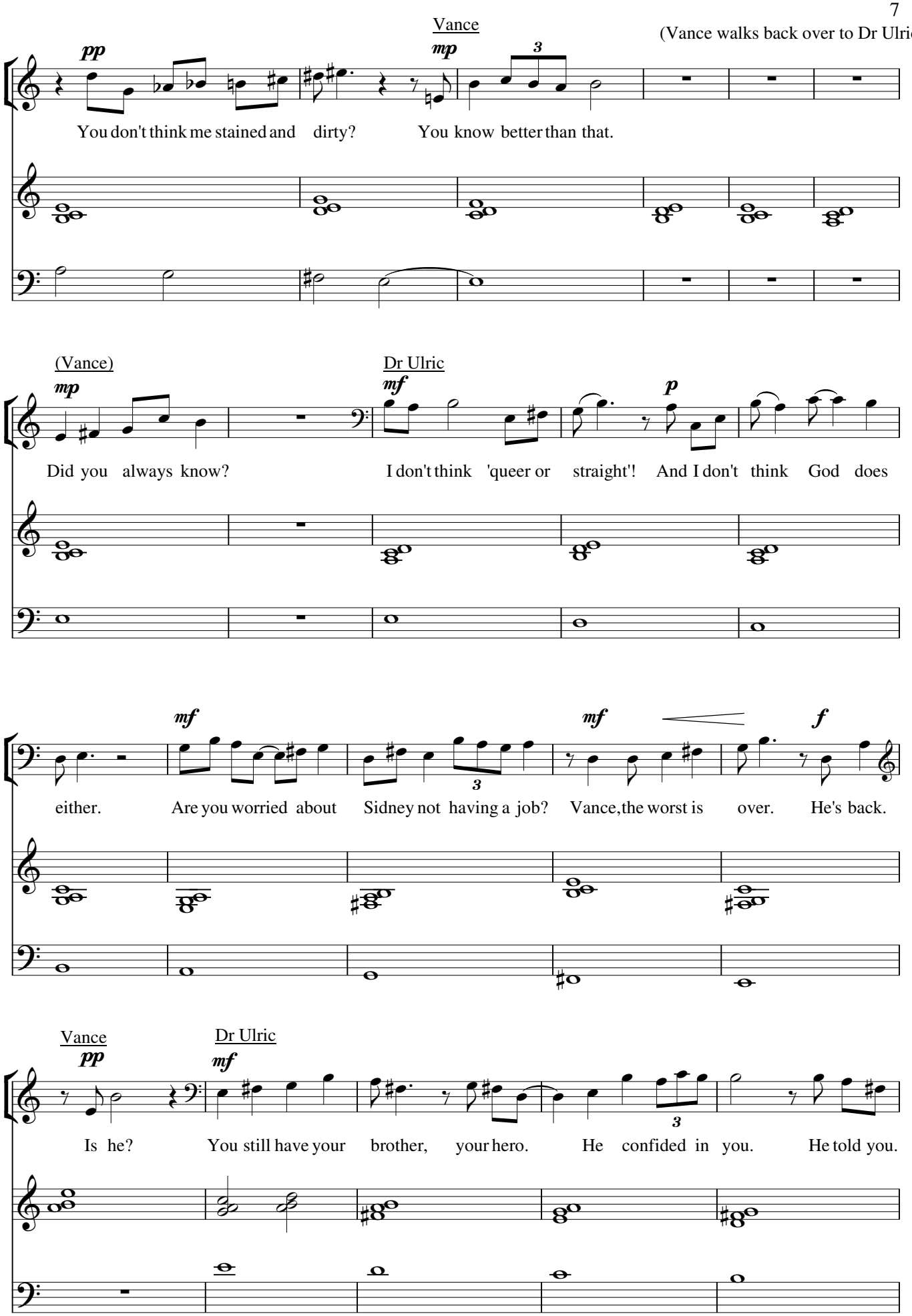
Vance

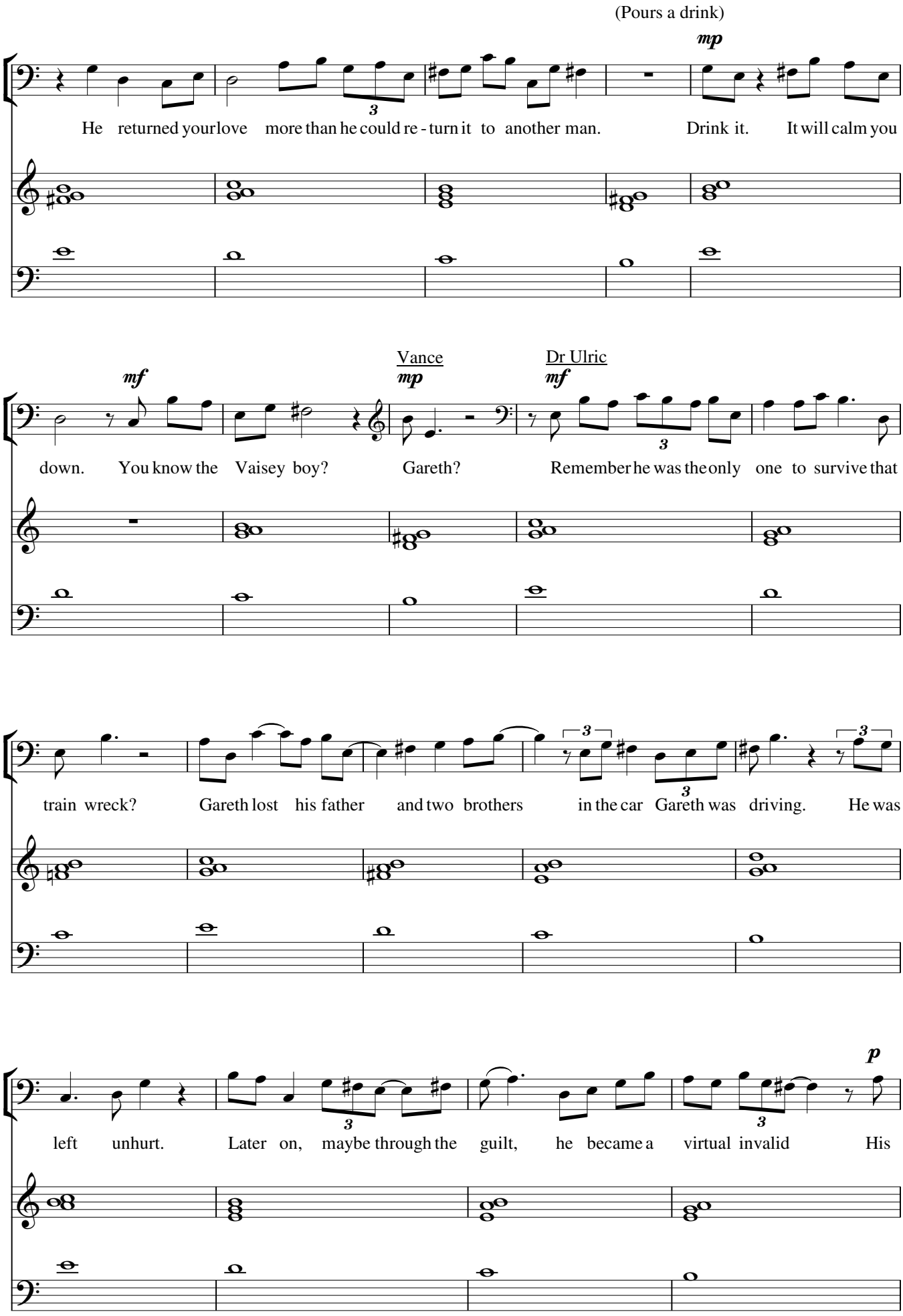
Did you see who was sitting there facing us? Him. Him? You know very well. Roy Sturtevant.

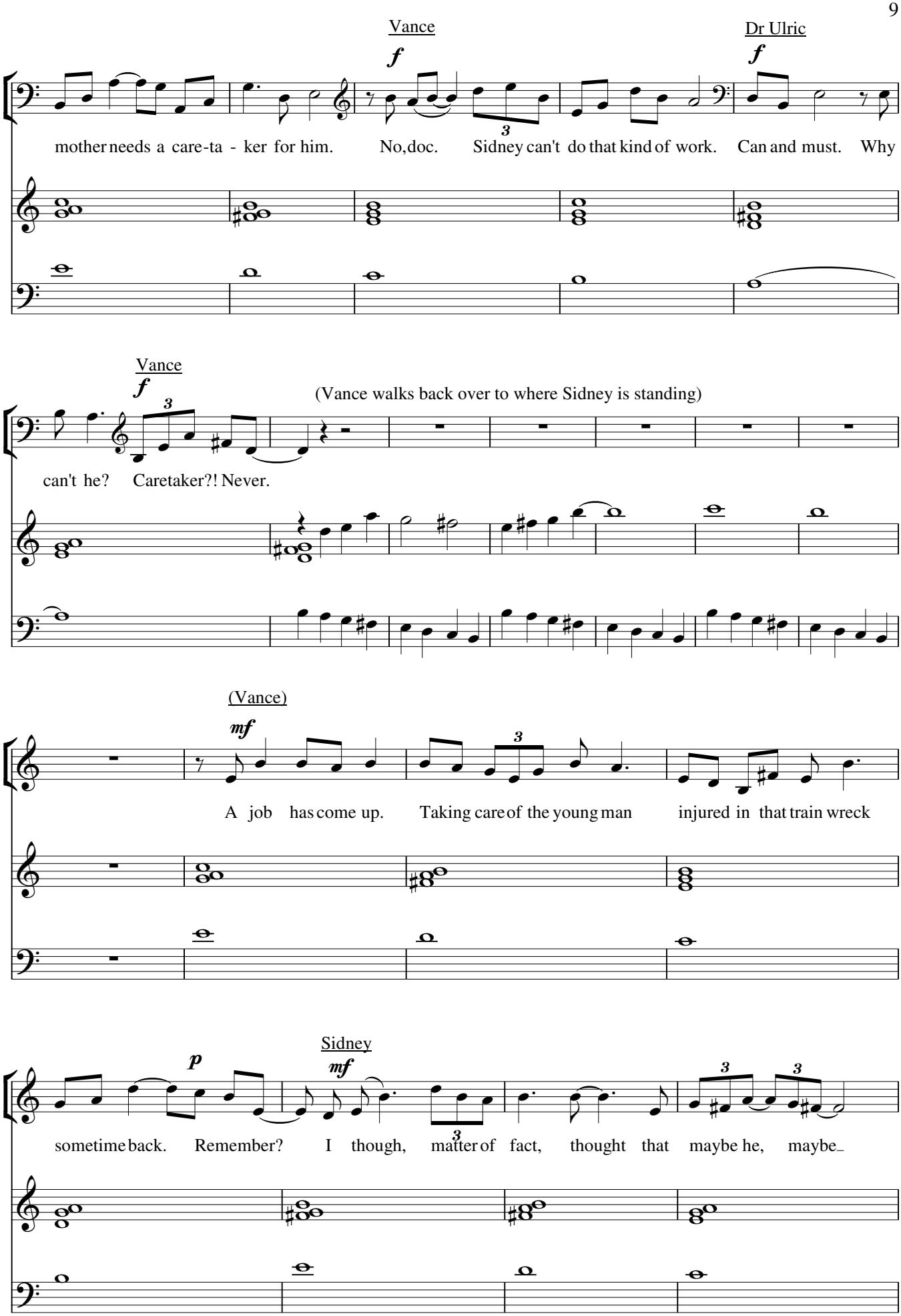

Sidney
f
mf
p
I never want to set eyes on him again. He's bad luck. He's behind every
Vance
mf
f
Sidney
pp
thing. You in prison? Roy's behind that? You know about me, don't you?
p
mp
mf
ff
You know what I am? Guessed the truth about Brian and me, that we...?
Vance
mf
pp
It don't matter now. It's over and done with. I know more than you give me credit for. It

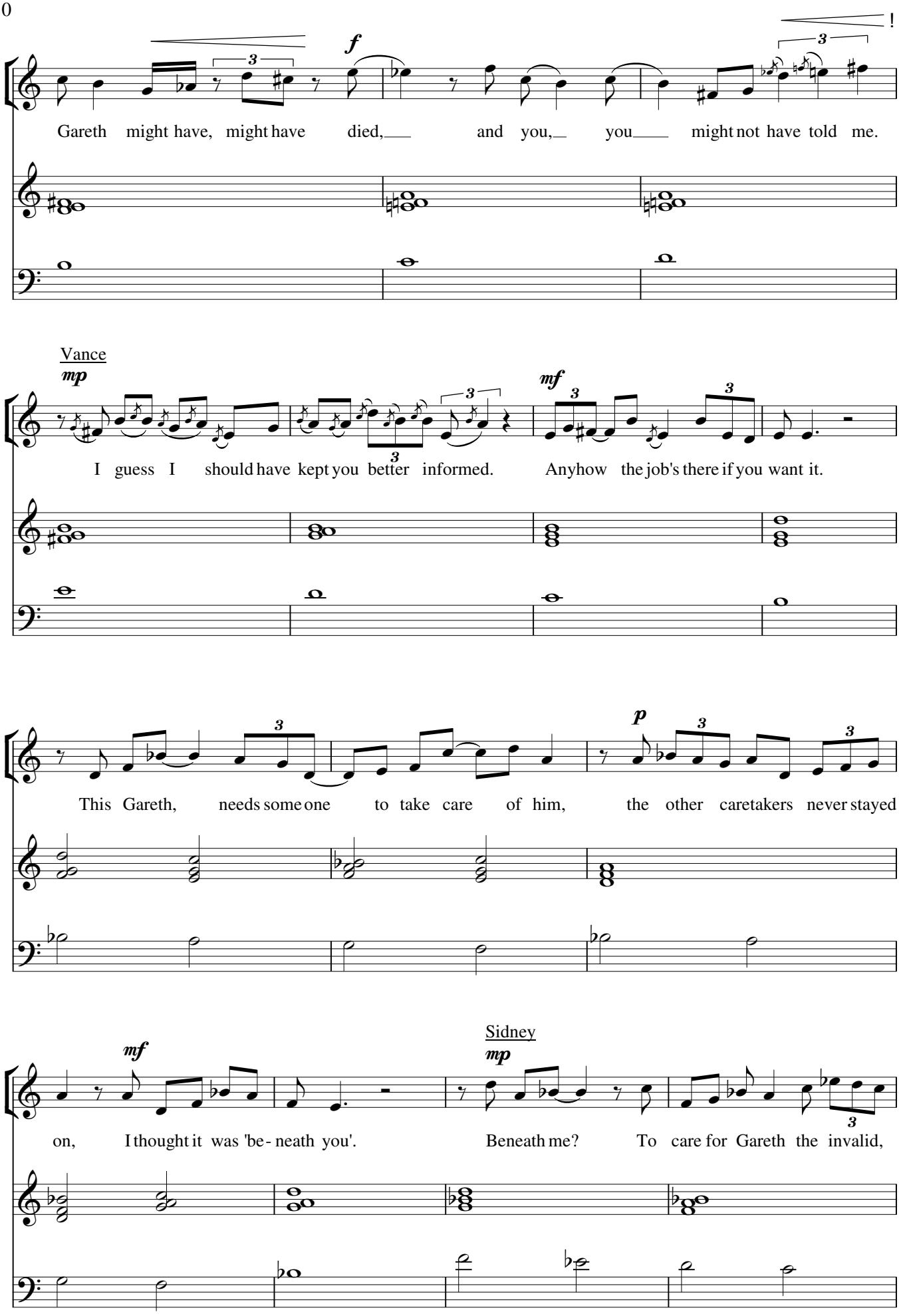

Sidney
pp
mf
p
don't matter what you did.
Find somethingworthy of you.
Forget me.
Forget your brother.
Vance
Sidney
f
p
mf
You are my life.
I'm not worth that much.
Forget me.
I hear that you got the Governor
Vance
mf
f
to intercede for me.
I'd do it again.
I'd even lie for you,
even if you'd killed
Sidney
mp
f
mf
Brian McFee in cold blood.
So it wasn't 'in cold blood'.
He thought I was turning

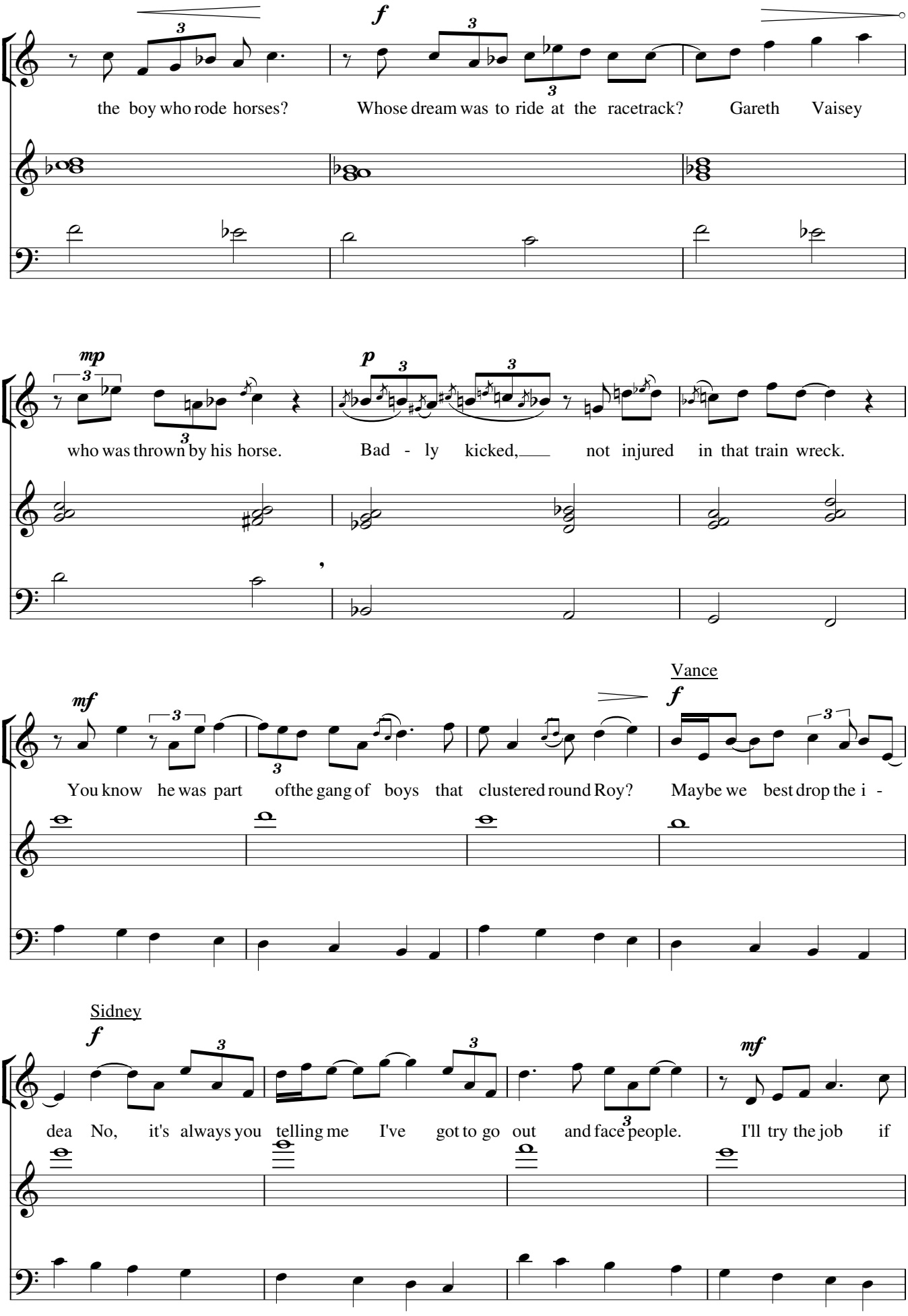

p
mf
against him. I was trying to gain time. To understand my own feelings for him.
f
pp
mf
Vance
I shouldn't have told you. No. You should have. Promise me; promise
p
mf
you'll forget this Roy Sturtevant. No man can cause a - nother evil, un-
mp
Sidney
less the first allows him to. But there are people who are destined to play parts in our lives.

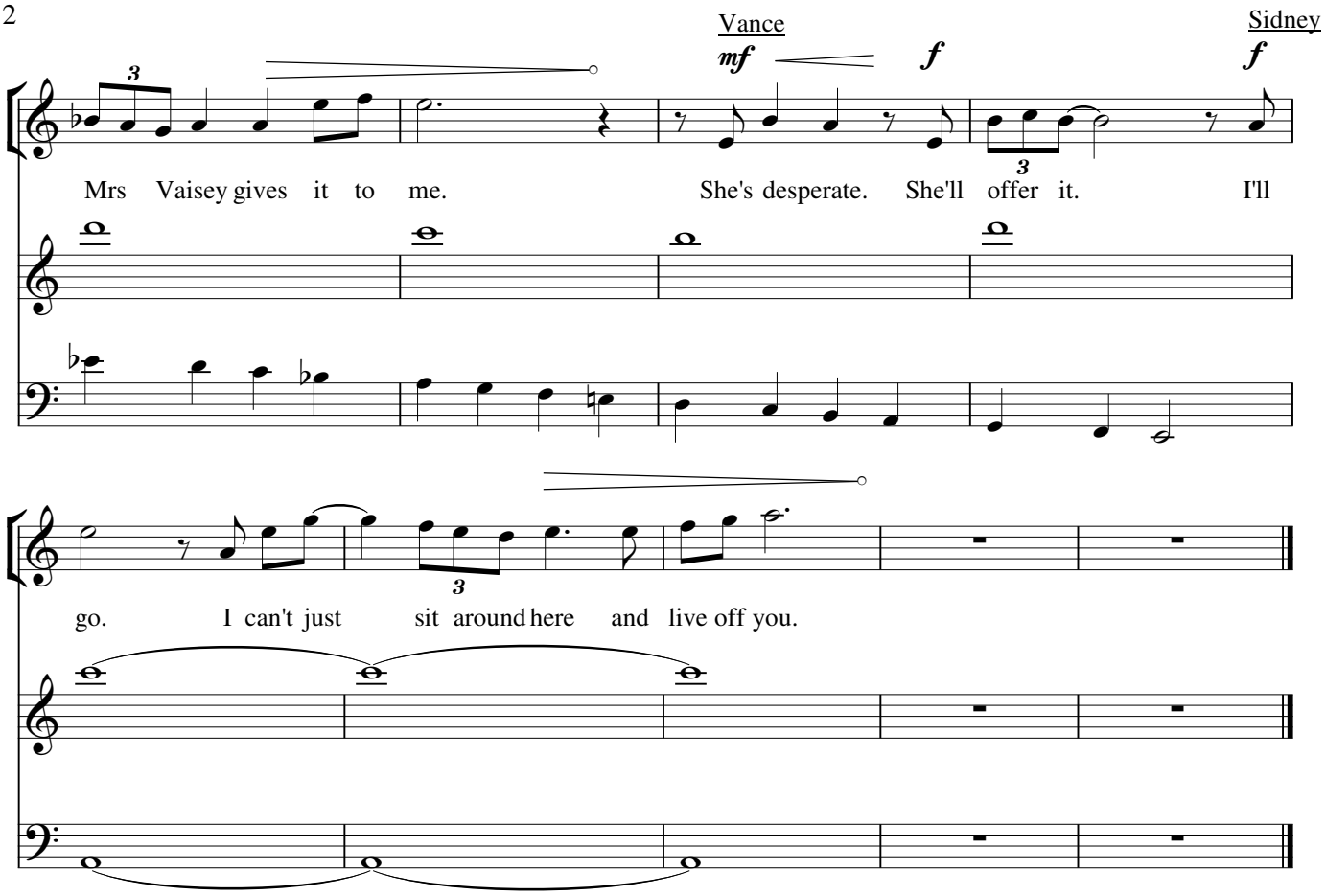

Vance
(Vance walks back over to Dr Ulric)
pp
mp
3
You don't think me stained and dirty? You know better than that.
(Vance)
Dr Ulric
mp
mf
p
Did you always know? I don't think 'queer or straight'! And I don't think God does
mf
mf
f
3
either. Are you worried about Sidney not having a job? Vance, the worst is over. He's back.
Vance
Dr Ulric
pp
mf
3
Is he? You still have your brother, your hero. He confided in you. He told you.


(Pours a drink)
mp
He returned your love more than he could re - turn it to another man. Drink it. It will calm you
mf
Vance
mp
Dr Ulric
mf
down. You know the Vaisey boy? Gareth? Remember he was the only one to survive that
train wreck? Gareth lost his father and two brothers in the car Gareth was driving. He was
p
left unhurt. Later on, maybe through the guilt, he became a virtual invalid His


Vance
f
Dr Ulric
f
mother needs a care-ta - ker for him.
No, doc.
Sidney can't do that kind of work.
Can and must.
Why
Vance
f
(Vance walks back over to where Sidney is standing)
can't he?
Caretaker?! Never.
(Vance)
mf
A job has come up.
Taking care of the young man
injured in that train wreck
Sidney
p
mf
sometime back.
Remember?
I though,
matter of fact,
thought that
maybe he,
maybe_

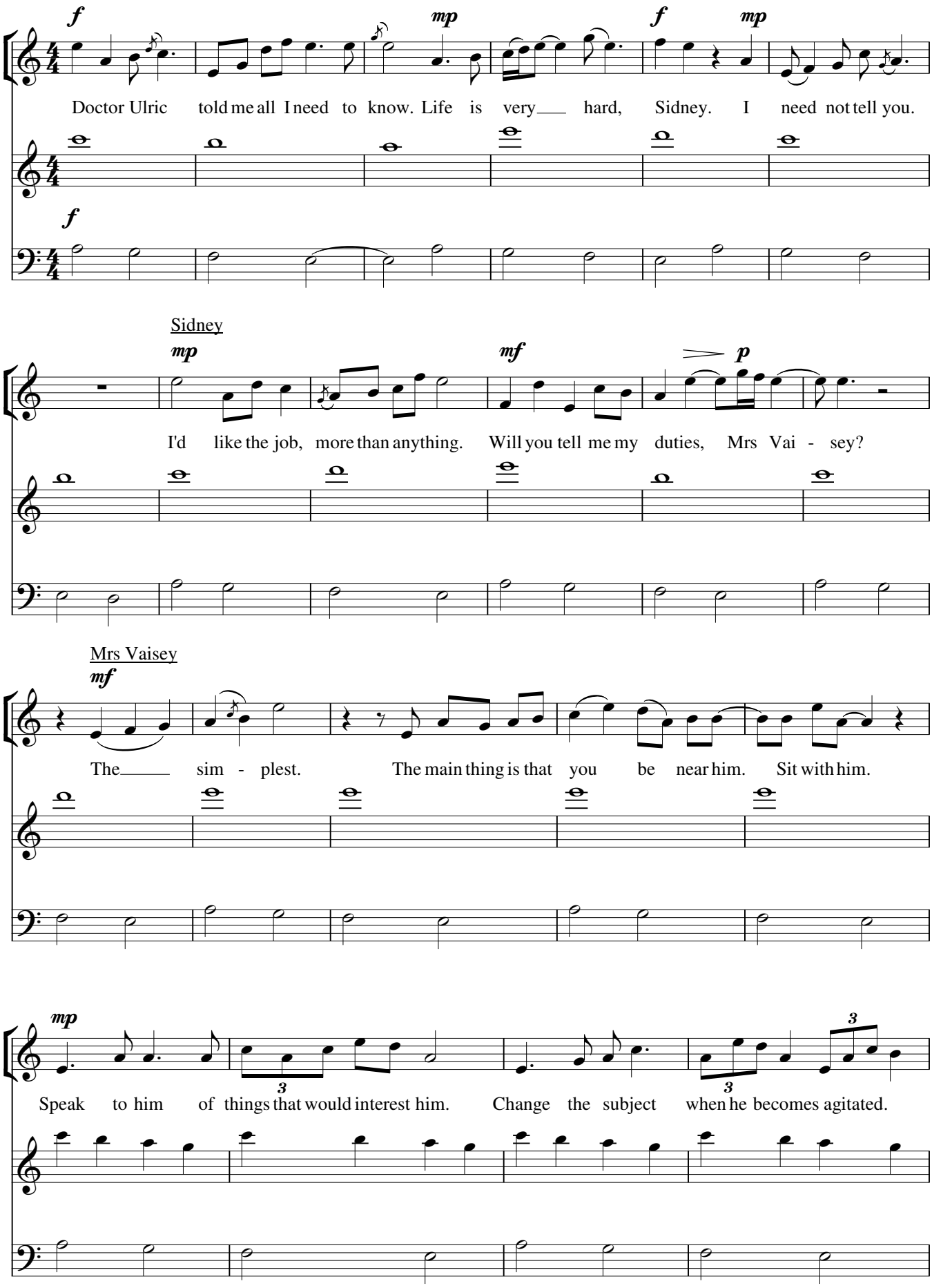

Gareth might have, might have died, and you, you might not have told me.
Vance
I guess I should have kept you better informed. Anyhow the job's there if you want it.
This Gareth, needs some one to take care of him, the other caretakers never stayed
Sidney
on, I thought it was 'be - neath you'. Beneath me? To care for Gareth the invalid,

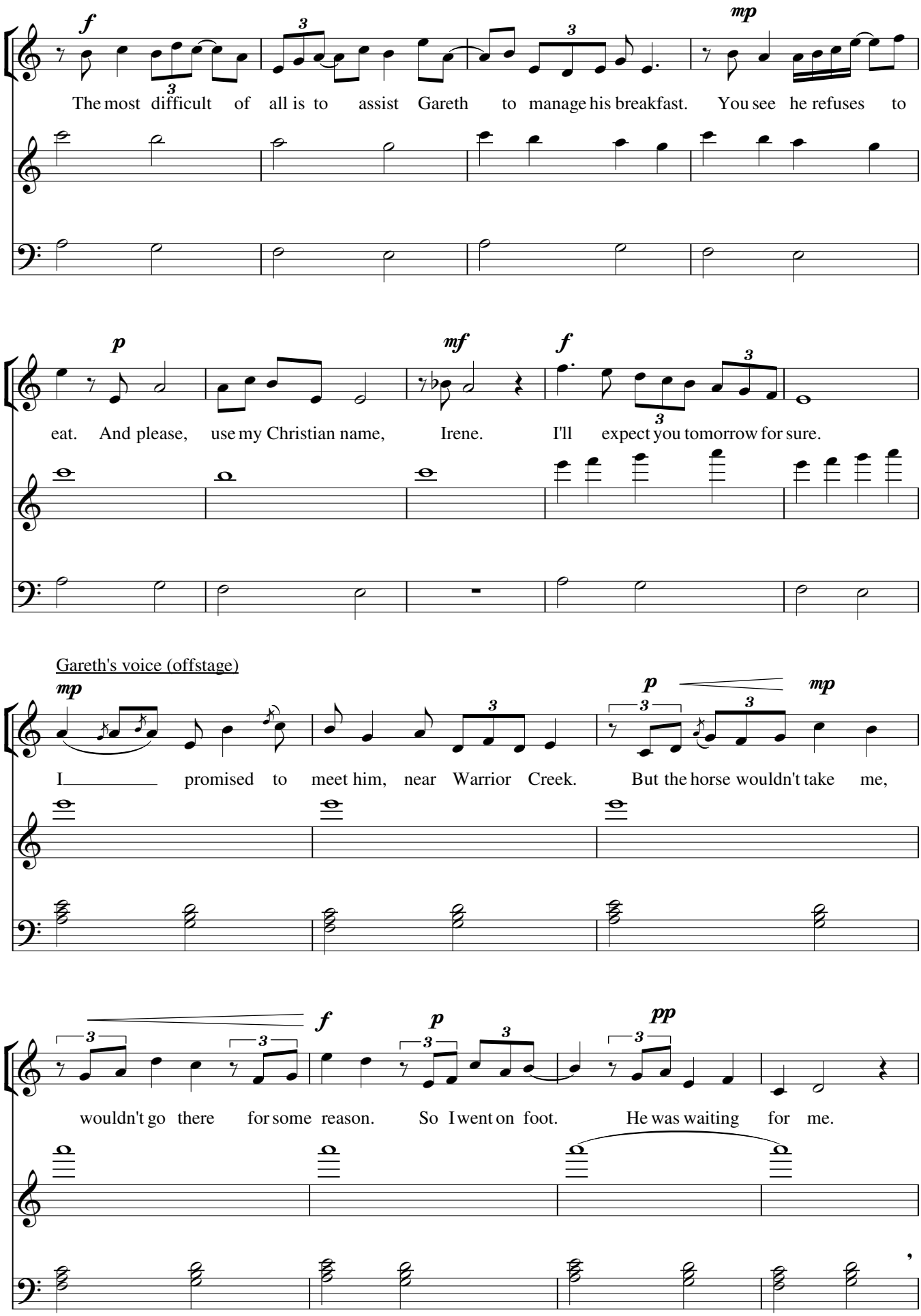

the boy who rode horses? Whose dream was to ride at the racetrack? Gareth Vaisey
who was thrown by his horse. Bad - ly kicked, not injured in that train wreck.
You know he was part ofthe gang of boys that clustered round Roy? Maybe we best drop the i -
Vance
dea No, it's always you telling me I've got to go out and face people. I'll try the job if
Sidney

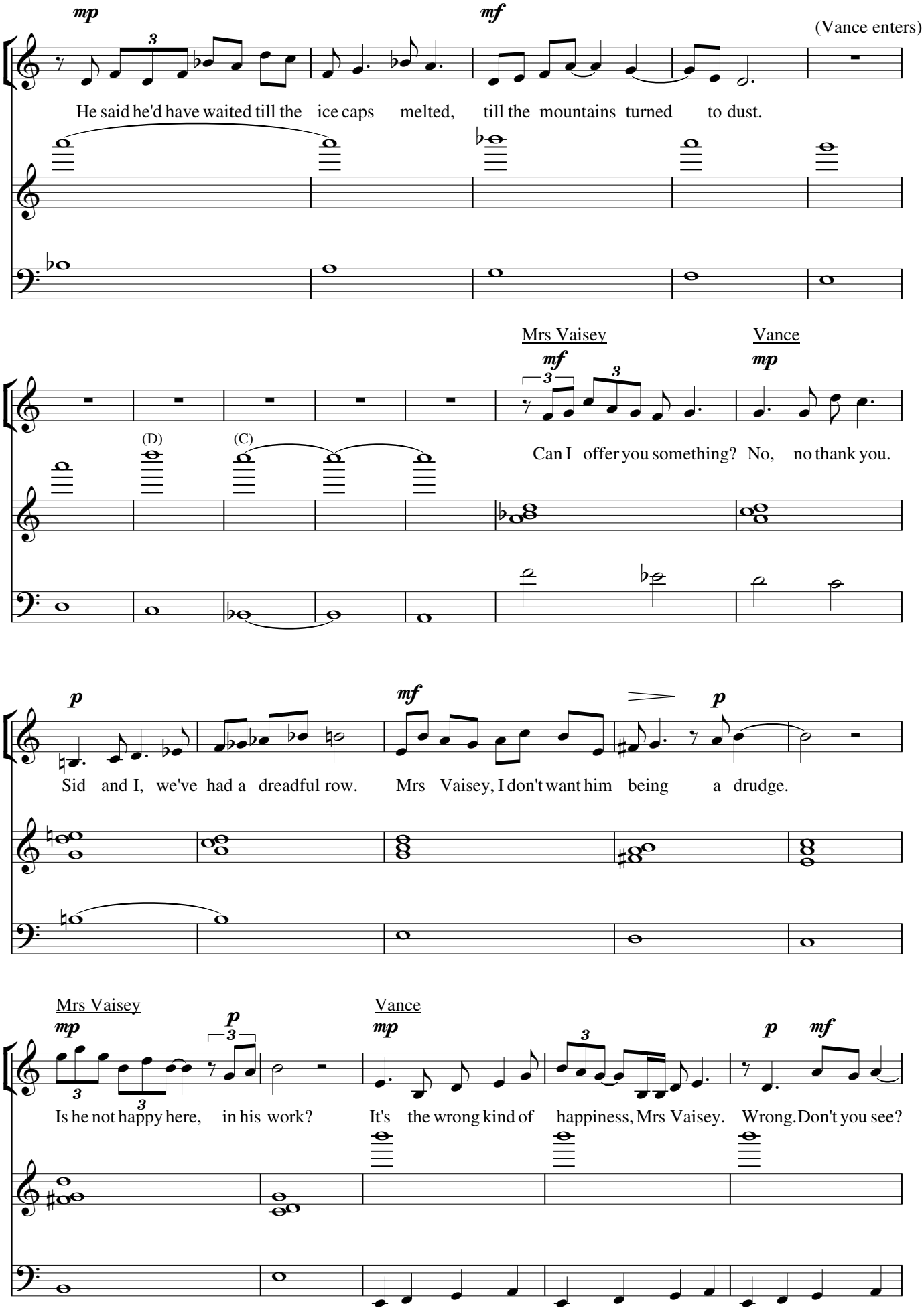

Vance
Sidney
mf
f
f
Mrs Vaisey gives it to me.
She's desperate. She'll offer it.
I'll
go.
I can't just sit around here and live off you.

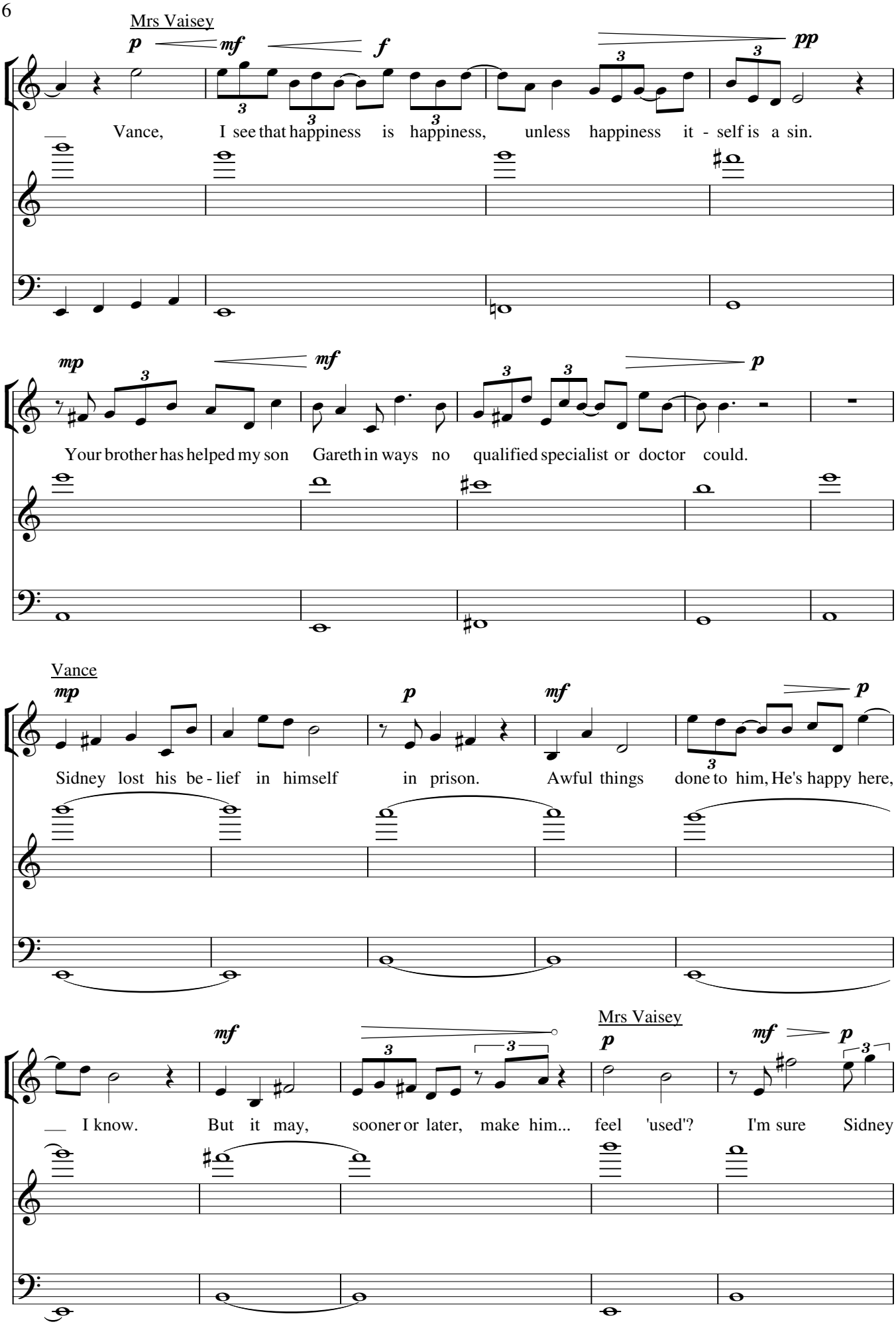
Scene 2

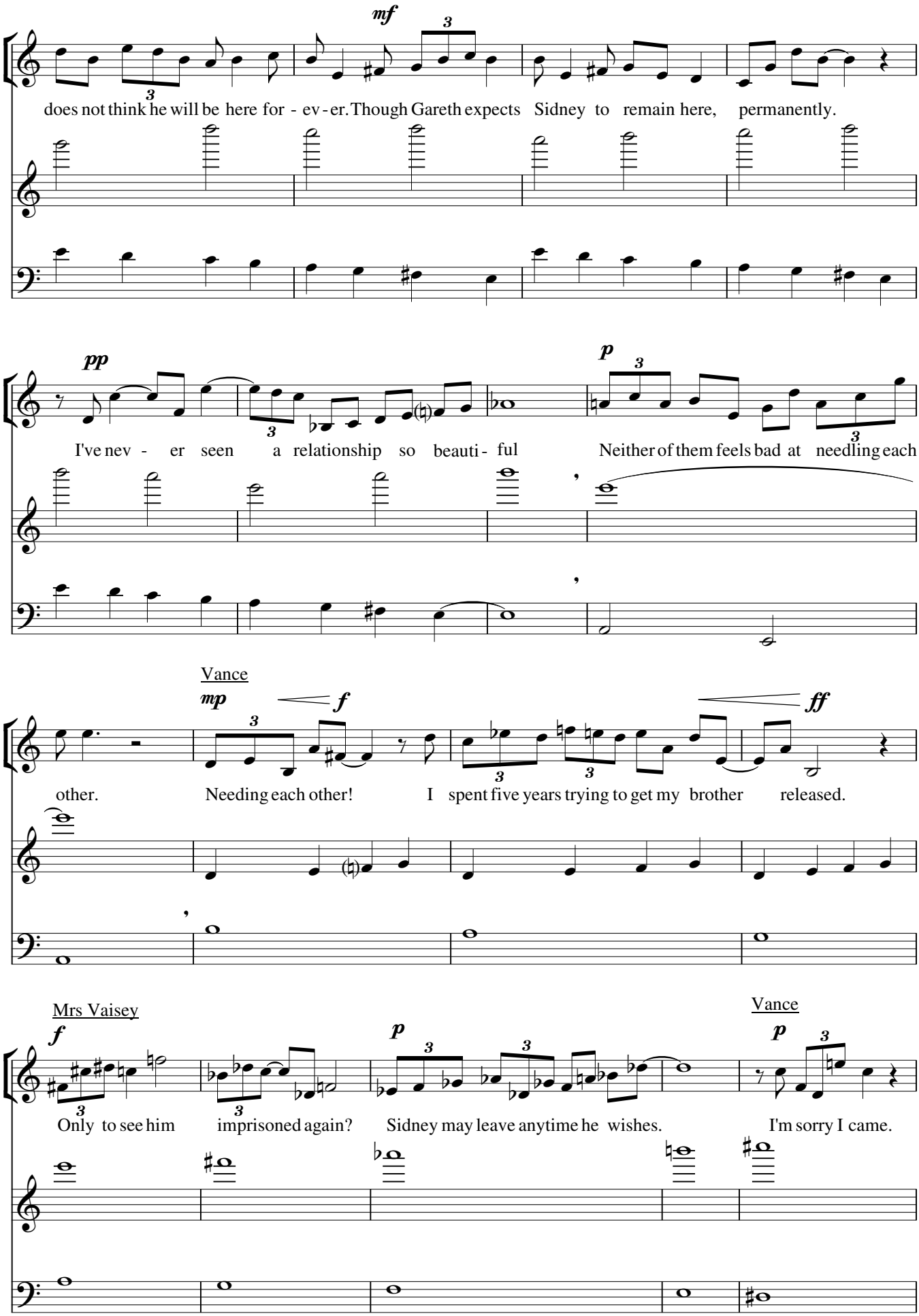
Mrs Vaisey (Soprano) (In the home of Mrs Vaisey and Gareth, her son)

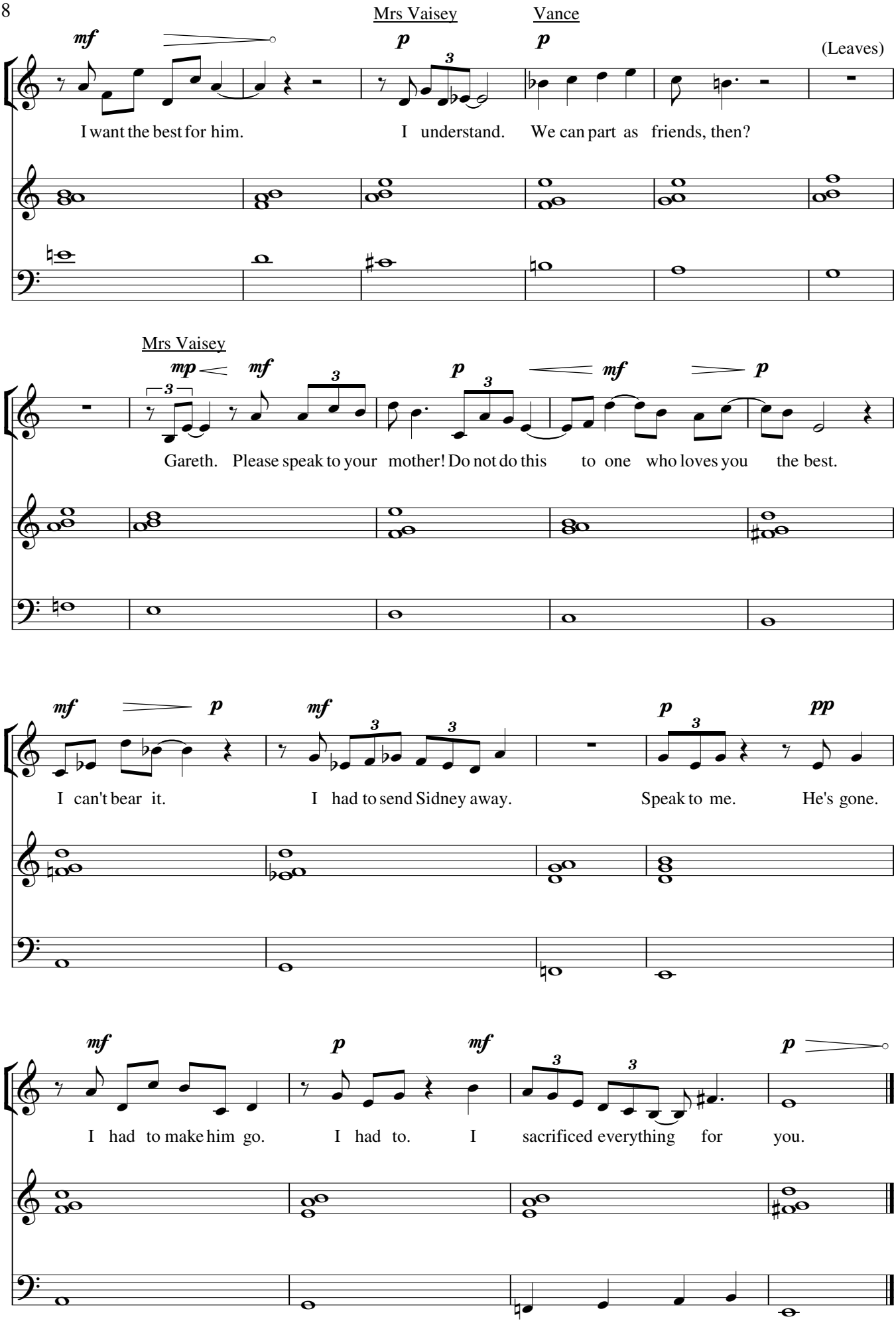


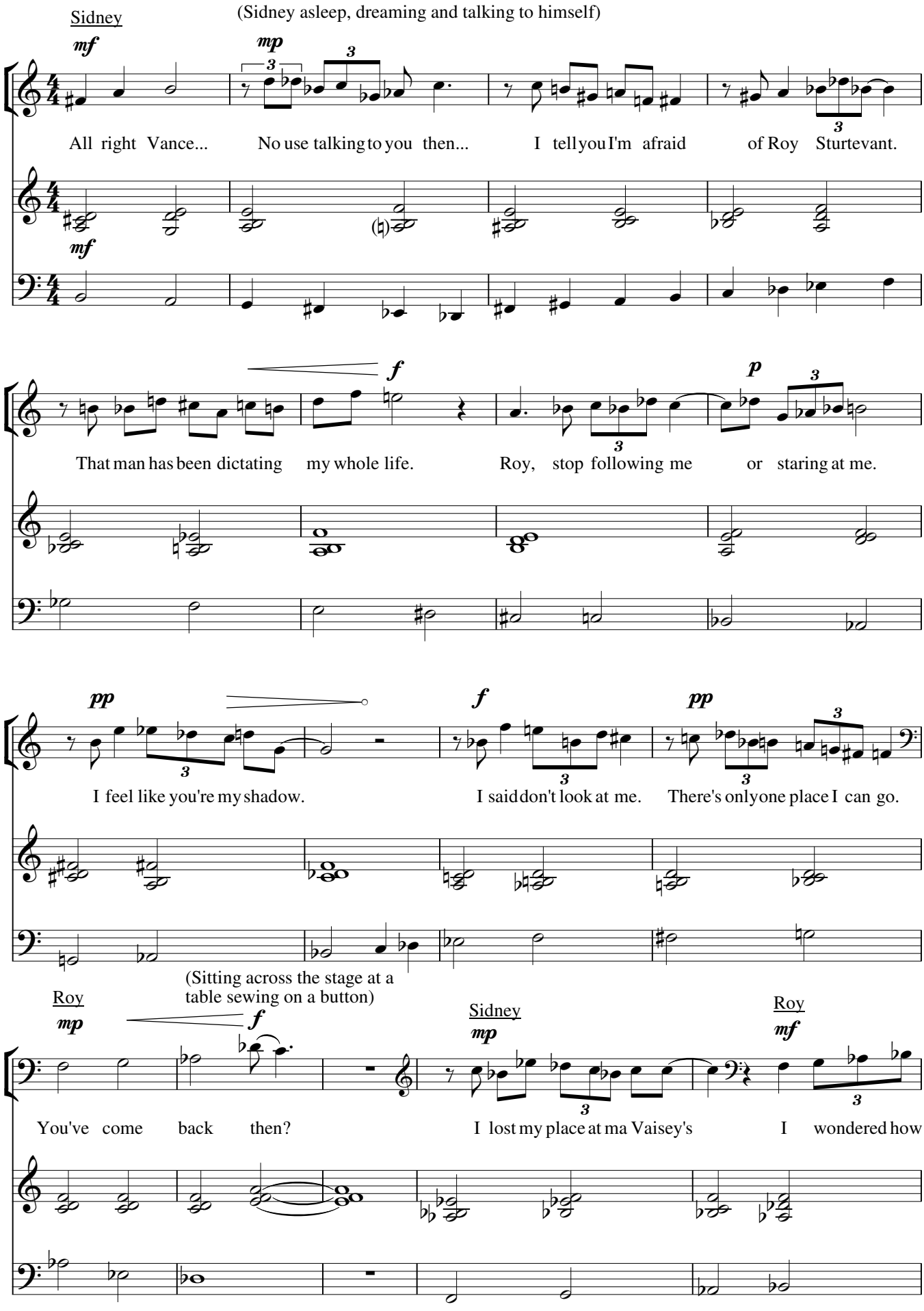

The most difficult of all is to assist Gareth to manage his breakfast. You see he refuses to
eat. And please, use my Christian name, Irene. I'll expect you tomorrow for sure.
Gareth's voice (offstage)
I promised to meet him, near Warrior Creek. But the horse wouldn't take me,
wouldn't go there for some reason. So I went on foot. He was waiting for me.

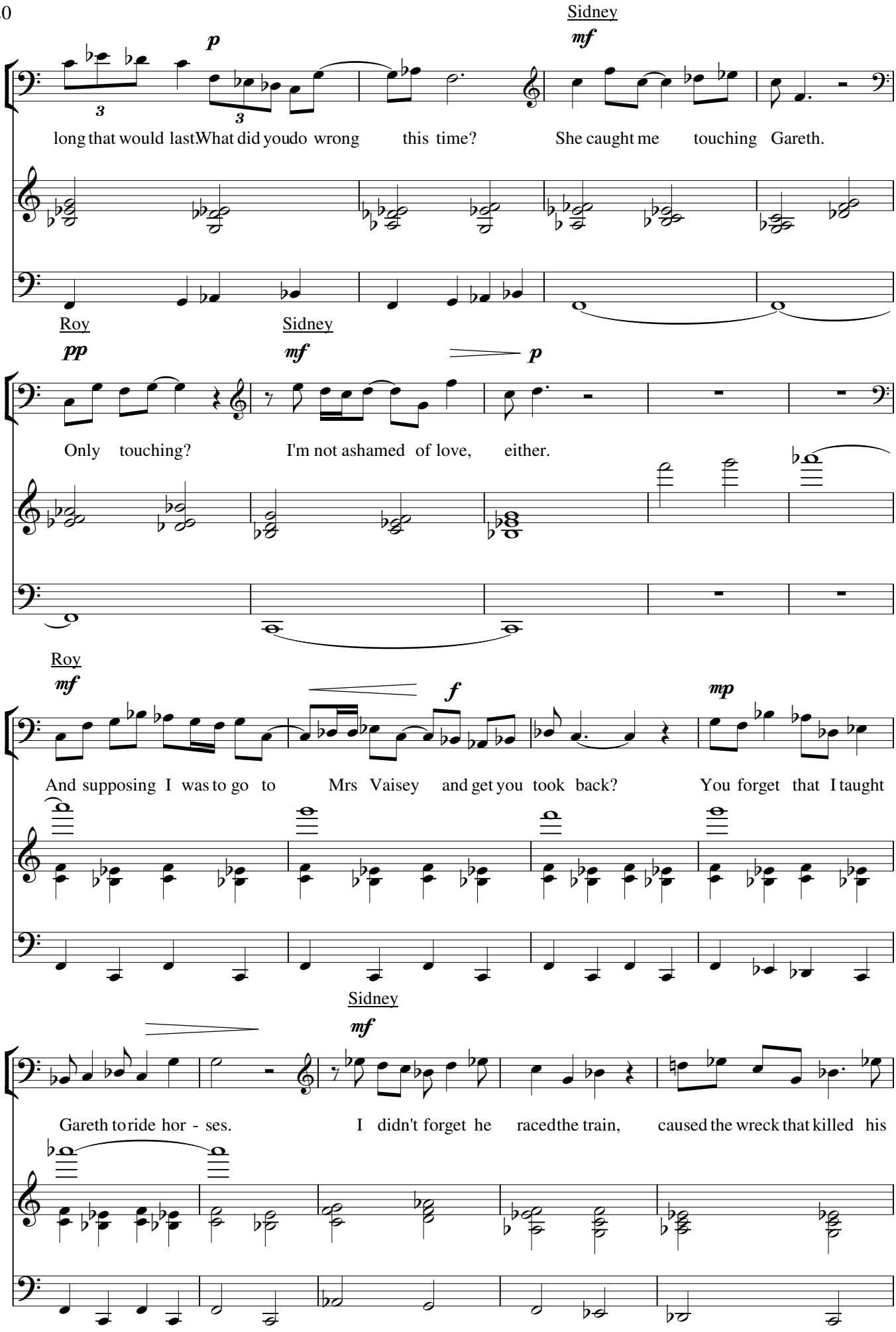

mp
mf
(Vance enters)
He said he'd have waited till the ice caps melted, till the mountains turned to dust.
Mrs Vaisey
Vance
mf
mp
(D)
(C)
Can I offer you something? No, no thank you.
p
mf
p
Sid and I, we've had a dreadful row. Mrs Vaisey, I don't want him being a drudge.
Mrs Vaisey
Vance
mp
p
mp
p
mf
Is he not happy here, in his work? It's the wrong kind of happiness, Mrs Vaisey. Wrong. Don't you see?

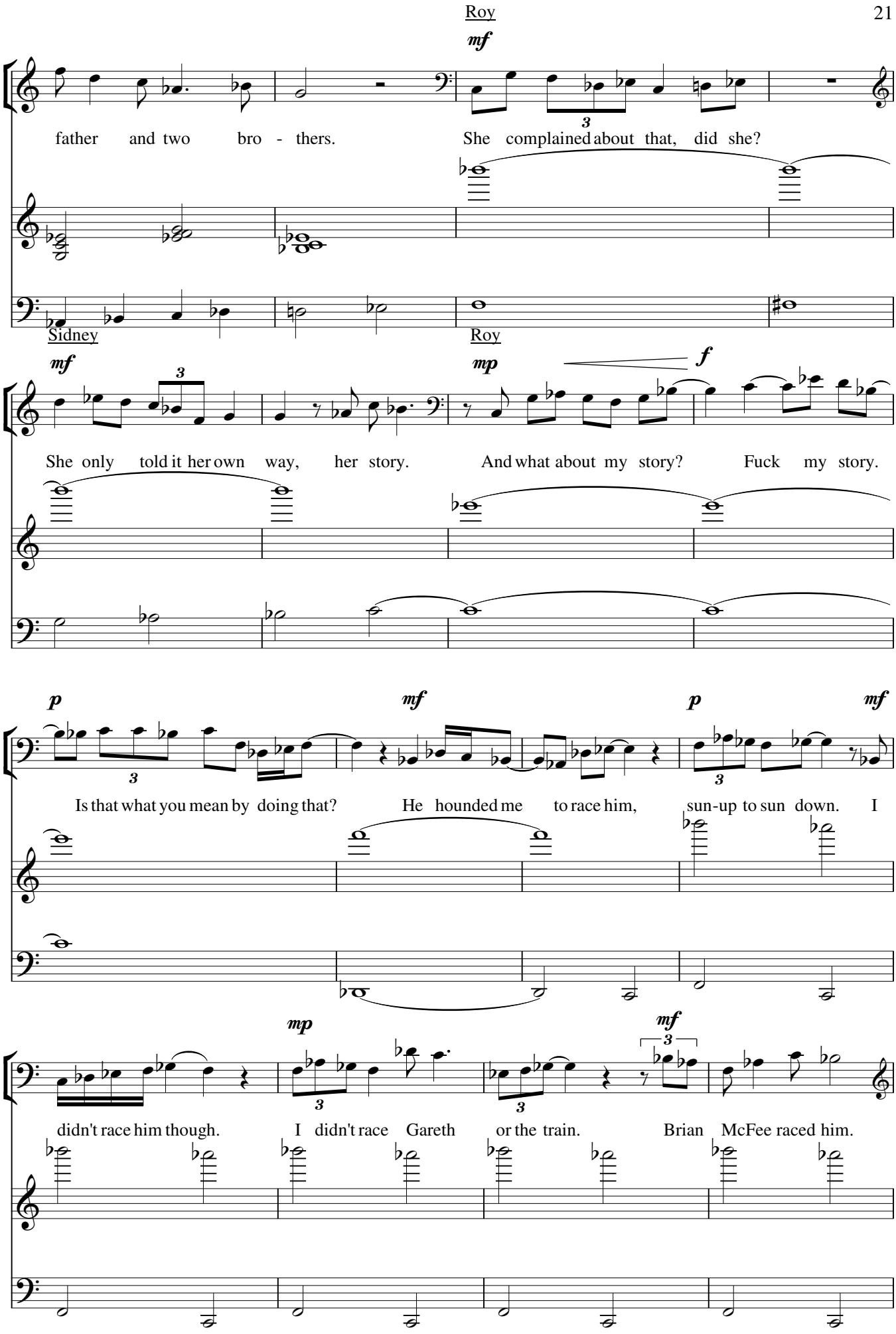

Mrs Vaisey
p mf f pp
Vance, I see that happiness is happiness, unless happiness it - self is a sin.
mp mf p
Your brother has helped my son Gareth in ways no qualified specialist or doctor could.
Vance
mp p mf p
Sidney lost his be - lief in himself in prison. Awful things done to him, He's happy here,
mf
Mrs Vaisey
p mf p
I know. But it may, sooner or later, make him... feel 'used'? I'm sure Sidney

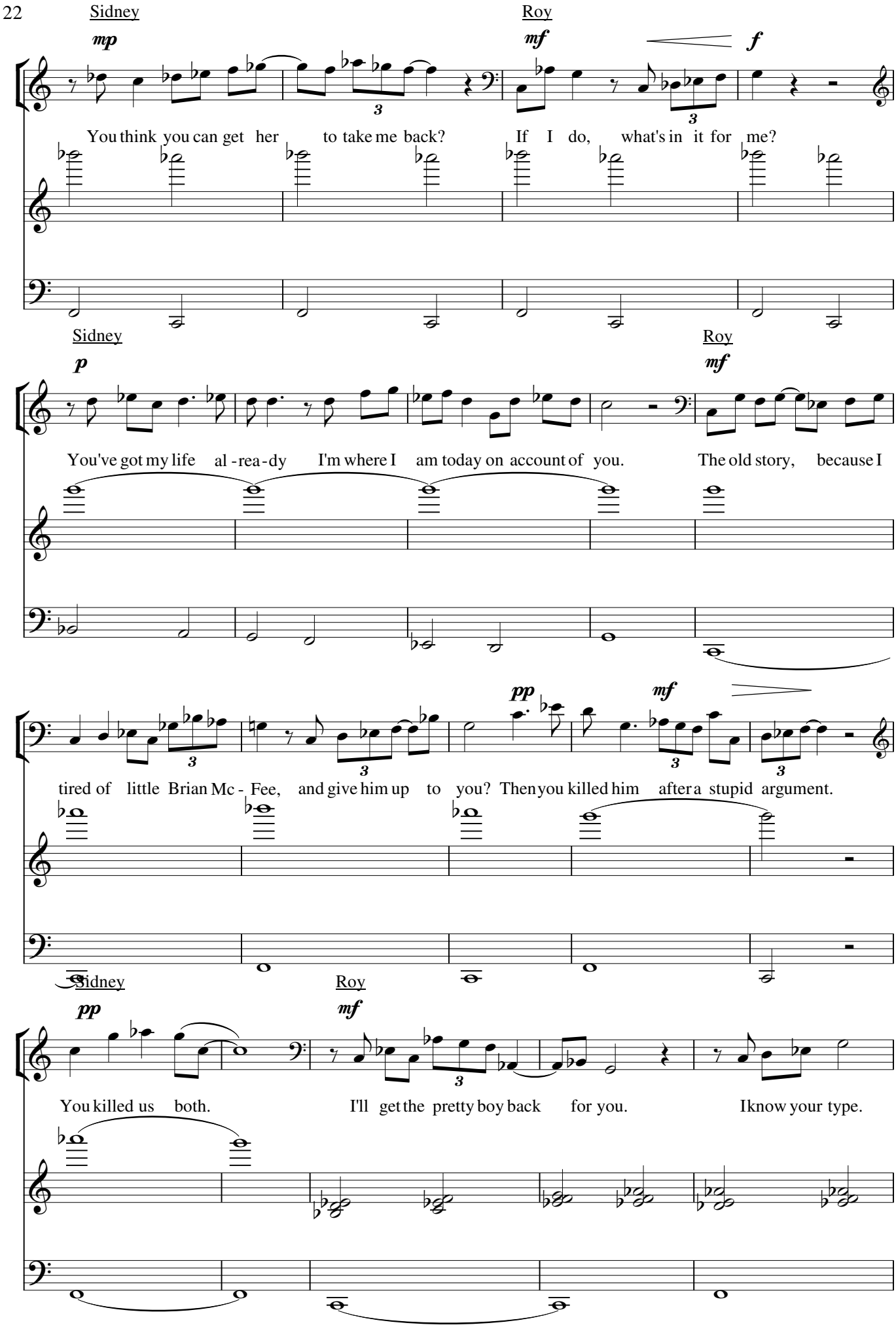

mf
does not think he will be here for - ev - er. Though Gareth expects Sidney to remain here, permanently.
pp
p
I've nev - er seen a relationship so beauti - ful Neither of them feels bad at needling each
Vance
mp
f
ff
other. Needing each other! I spent five years trying to get my brother released.
Mrs Vaisey
f
p
Vance
p
Only to see him imprisoned again? Sidney may leave anytime he wishes. I'm sorry I came.

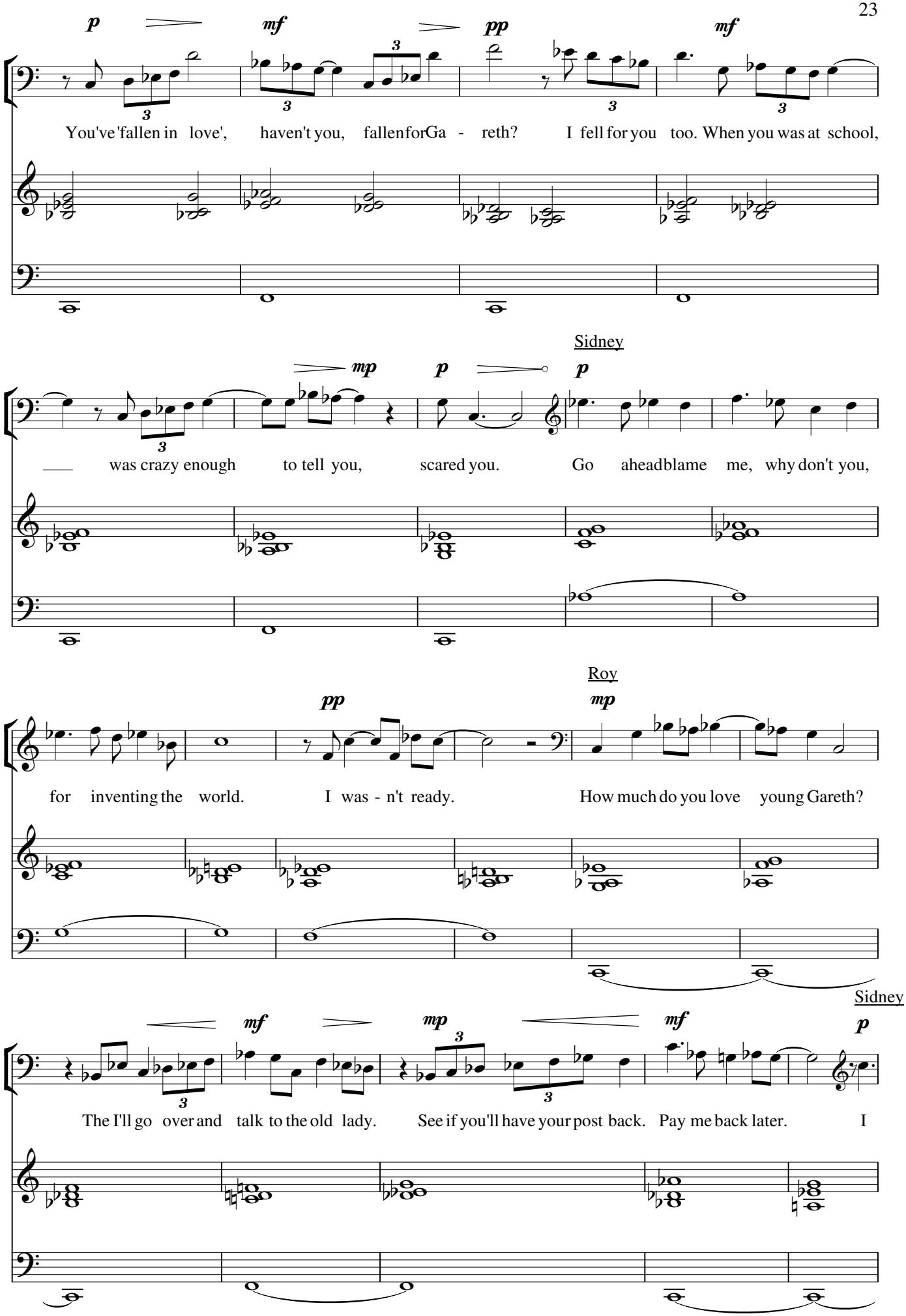

Mrs Vaisey
Vance
mf
p
p
(Leaves)
I want the best for him.
I understand.
We can part as friends, then?
Mrs Vaisey
mp
mf
p
mf
p
Gareth. Please speak to your mother! Do not do this to one who loves you the best.
mf
p
mf
p
pp
I can't bear it.
I had to send Sidney away.
Speak to me.
He's gone.
mf
p
mf
p
I had to make him go.
I had to.
I sacrificed everything for you.

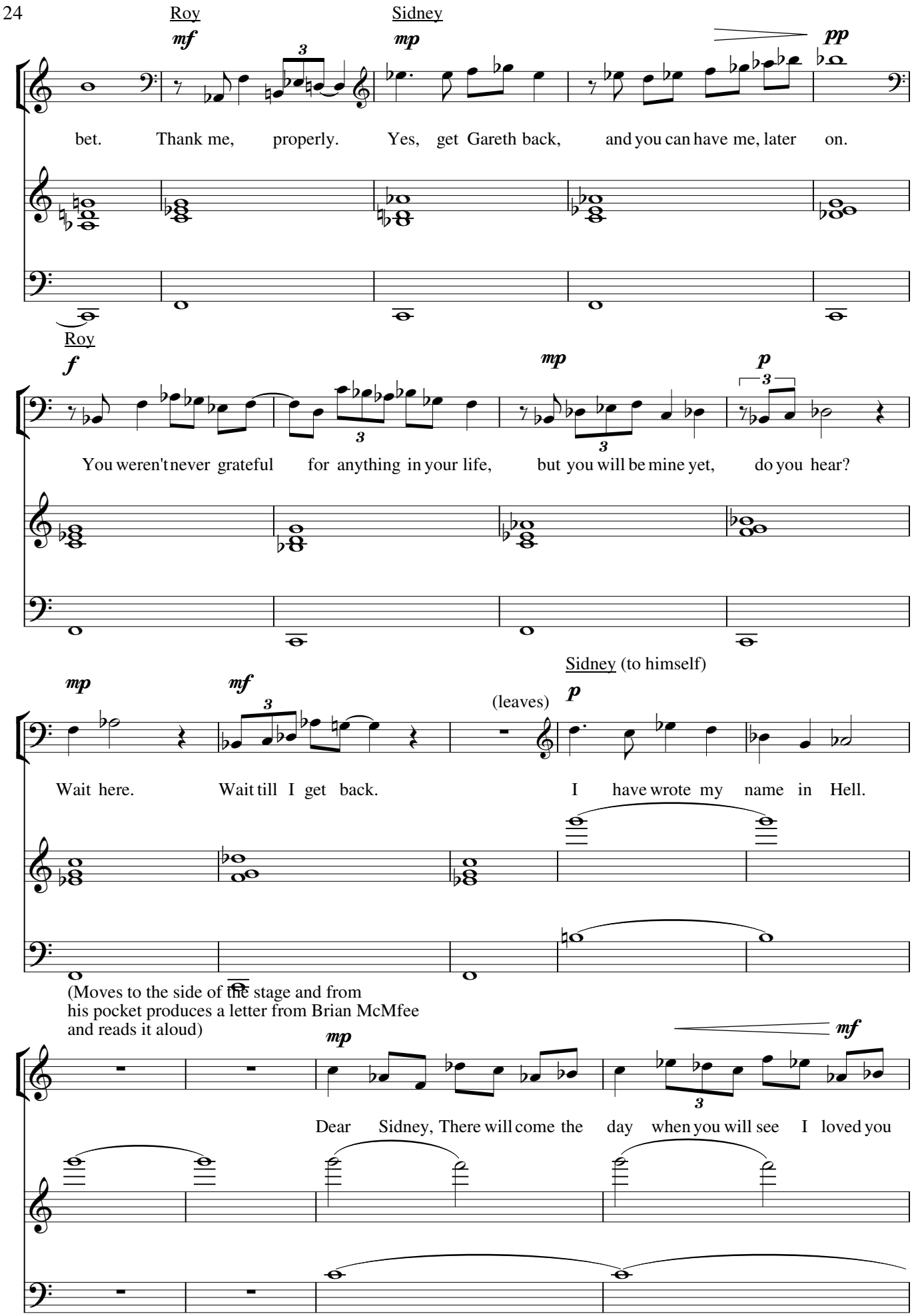

Sidney
(Sidney asleep, dreaming and talking to himself)
All right Vance... No use talking to you then... I tell you I'm afraid of Roy Sturtevant.
That man has been dictating my whole life. Roy, stop following me or staring at me.
I feel like you're my shadow. I said don't look at me. There's only one place I can go.
(Sitting across the stage at a table sewing on a button)
Roy
Sidney
Roy
You've come back then? I lost my place at ma Vaisey's I wondered how

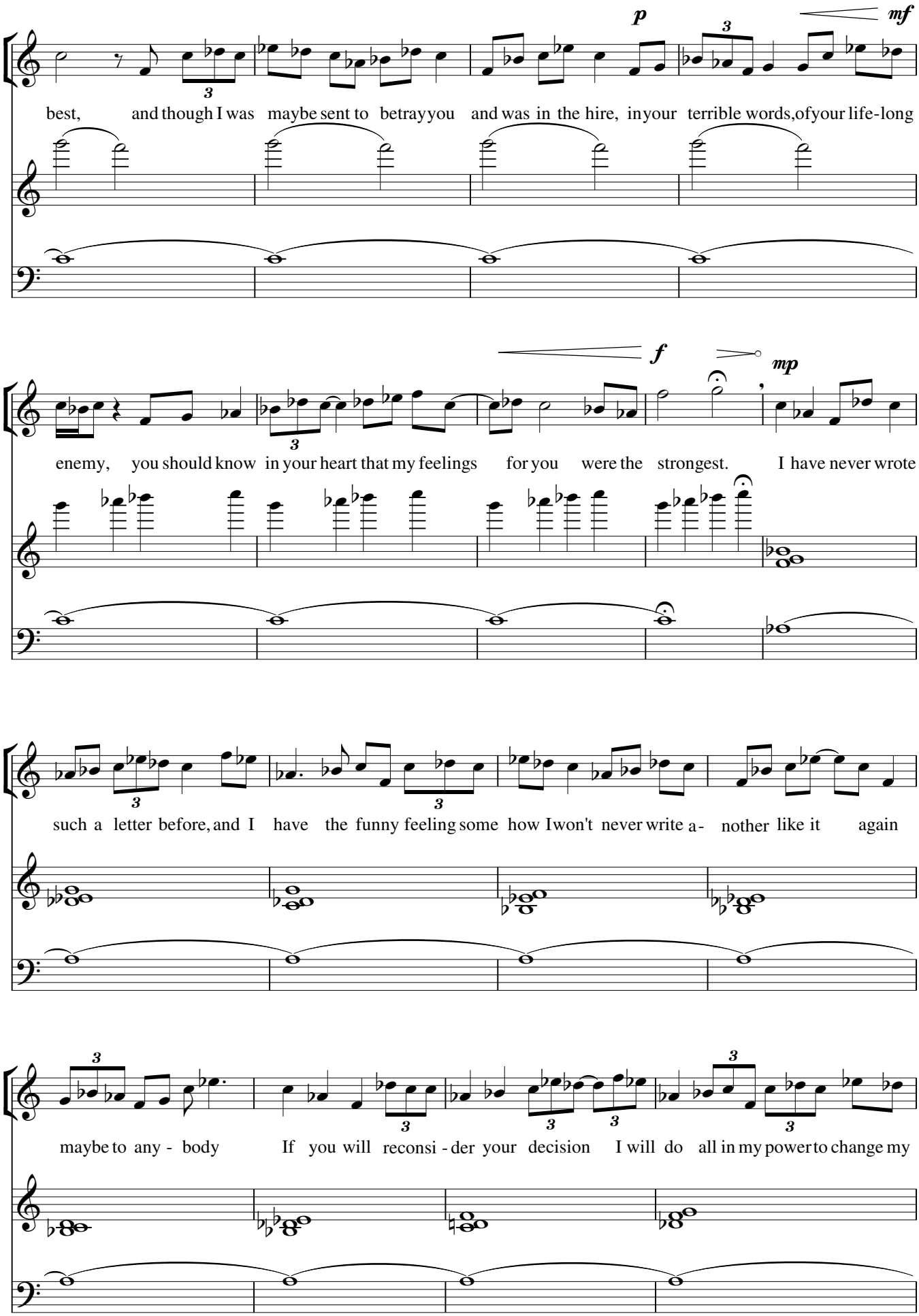

Sidney
p
mf
long that would last.What did youdo wrong this time? She caught me touching Gareth.
Roy
Sidney
pp
mf
p
Only touching? I'm not ashamed of love, either.
Roy
mf
f
mp
And supposing I was to go to Mrs Vaisey and get you took back? You forget that I taught
Sidney
mf
Gareth toride hor - ses. I didn't forget he racedthe train, caused the wreck that killed his

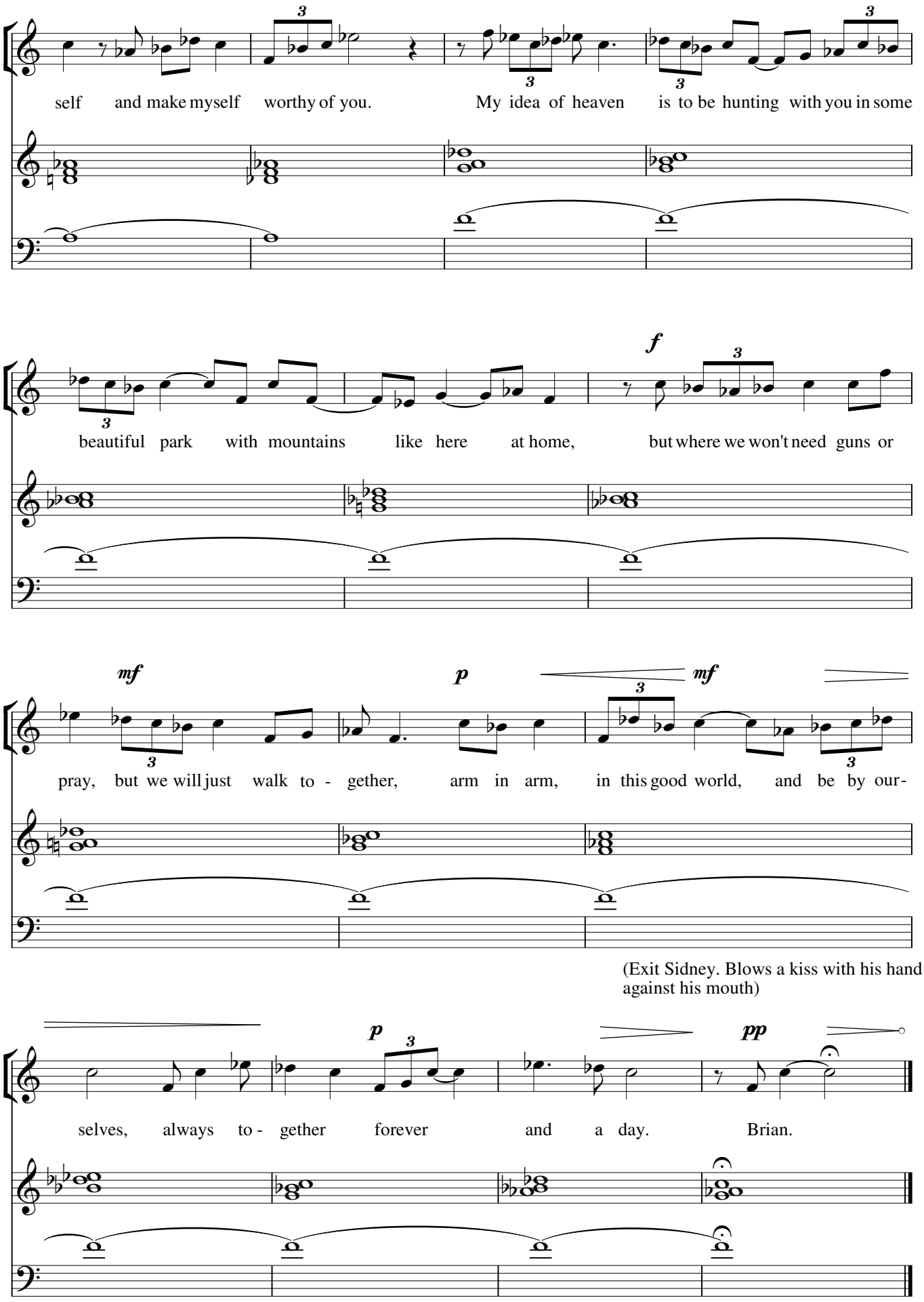

Roy
mf
father and two bro - thers.
She complained about that, did she?
Sidney
Roy
mf
mp
f
She only told it her own way, her story.
And what about my story?
Fuck my story.
p
mf
p
mf
Is that what you mean by doing that?
He hounded me to race him, sun-up to sun down. I
mp
mf
didn't race him though.
I didn't race Gareth or the train.
Brian McFee raced him.


Sidney
Roy
mp
mf
f
You think you can get her to take me back?
If I do, what's in it for me?
Sidney
Roy
p
mf
You've got my life al - rea - dy I'm where I am today on account of you.
The old story, because I
pp
mf
tired of little Brian Mc - Fee, and give him up to you? Then you killed him after a stupid argument.
Sidney
Roy
pp
mf
You killed us both.
I'll get the pretty boy back for you.
I know your type.


p
mf
pp
mf
You've 'fallen in love', haven't you, fallen for Ga - reth? I fell for you too. When you was at school,
Sidney
mp
p
p
was crazy enough to tell you, scared you. Go aheadblame me, why don't you,
Roy
pp
mp
for inventing the world. I was - n't ready. How much do you love young Gareth?
Sidney
mf
mp
mf
p
The I'll go over and talk to the old lady. See if you'll have your post back. Pay me back later. I


Roy
mf
Sidney
mp
pp
bet. Thank me, properly. Yes, get Gareth back, and you can have me, later on.
Roy
f
mp
p
You weren't never grateful for anything in your life, but you will be mine yet, do you hear?
mp
mf
Sidney (to himself)
p
(leaves)
Wait here. Wait till I get back. I have wrote my name in Hell.
(Moves to the side of the stage and from his pocket produces a letter from Brian McMfee and reads it aloud)
mp
mf
Dear Sidney, There will come the day when you will see I loved you


p
mf
best, and though I was maybe sent to betray you and was in the hire, in your terrible words, of your life-long
f
mp
enemy, you should know in your heart that my feelings for you were the strongest. I have never wrote
such a letter before, and I have the funny feeling some how I won't never write a- nother like it again
maybe to any - body If you will reconsi - der your decision I will do all in my power to change my


self and make myself worthy of you. My idea of heaven is to be hunting with you in some
beautiful park with mountains like here at home, but where we won't need guns or
pray, but we will just walk to - gether, arm in arm, in this good world, and be by our-
(Exit Sidney. Blows a kiss with his hand against his mouth)
selves, always to - gether forever and a day. Brian.

Scene 4

(Roy moves to near the Vaisey home)

Roy (calling offstage)

(Enter Mrs Vaisey)

If you want a roof over that sick brat's head, get down here, I don't have forever.

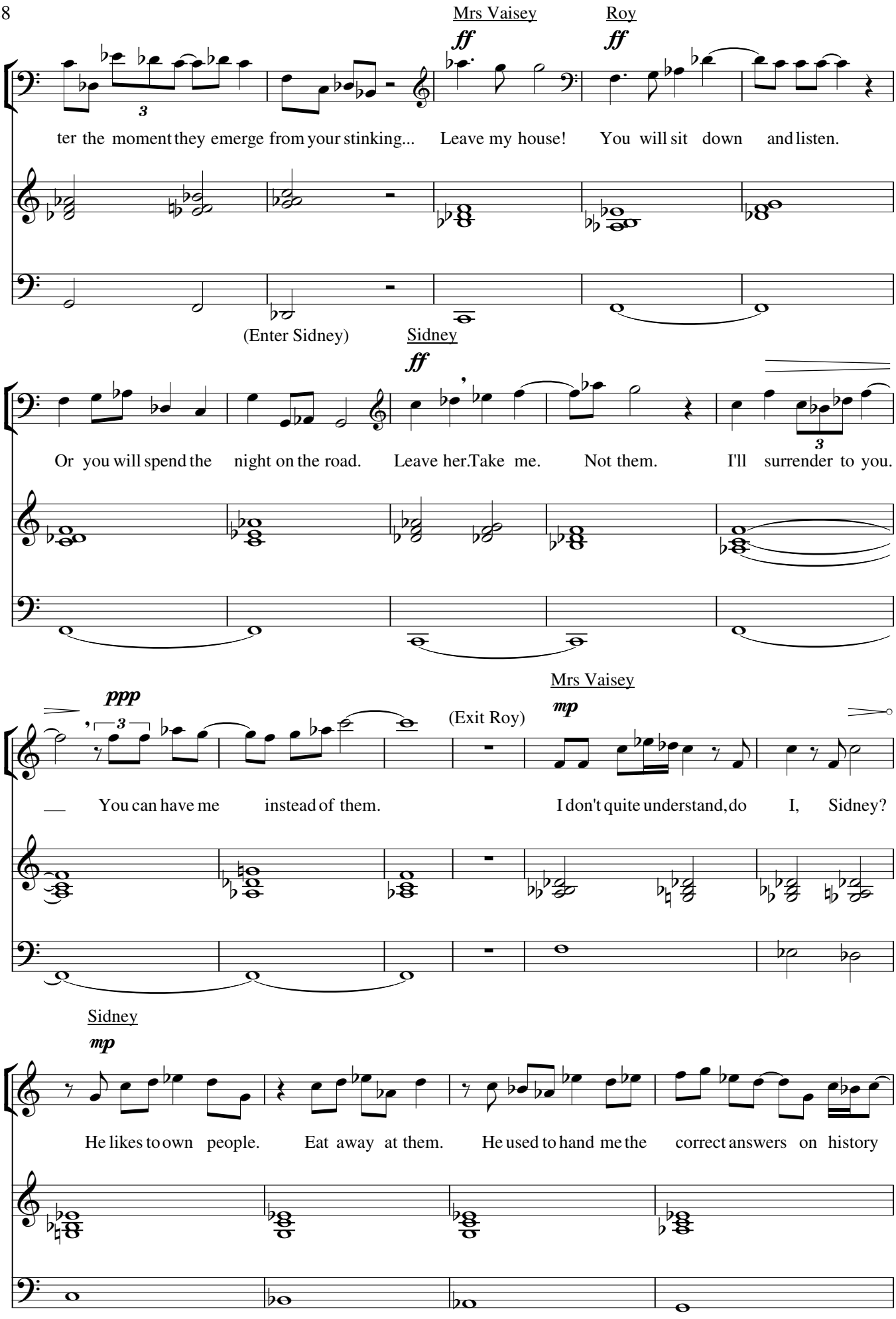
Mrs Vaisey

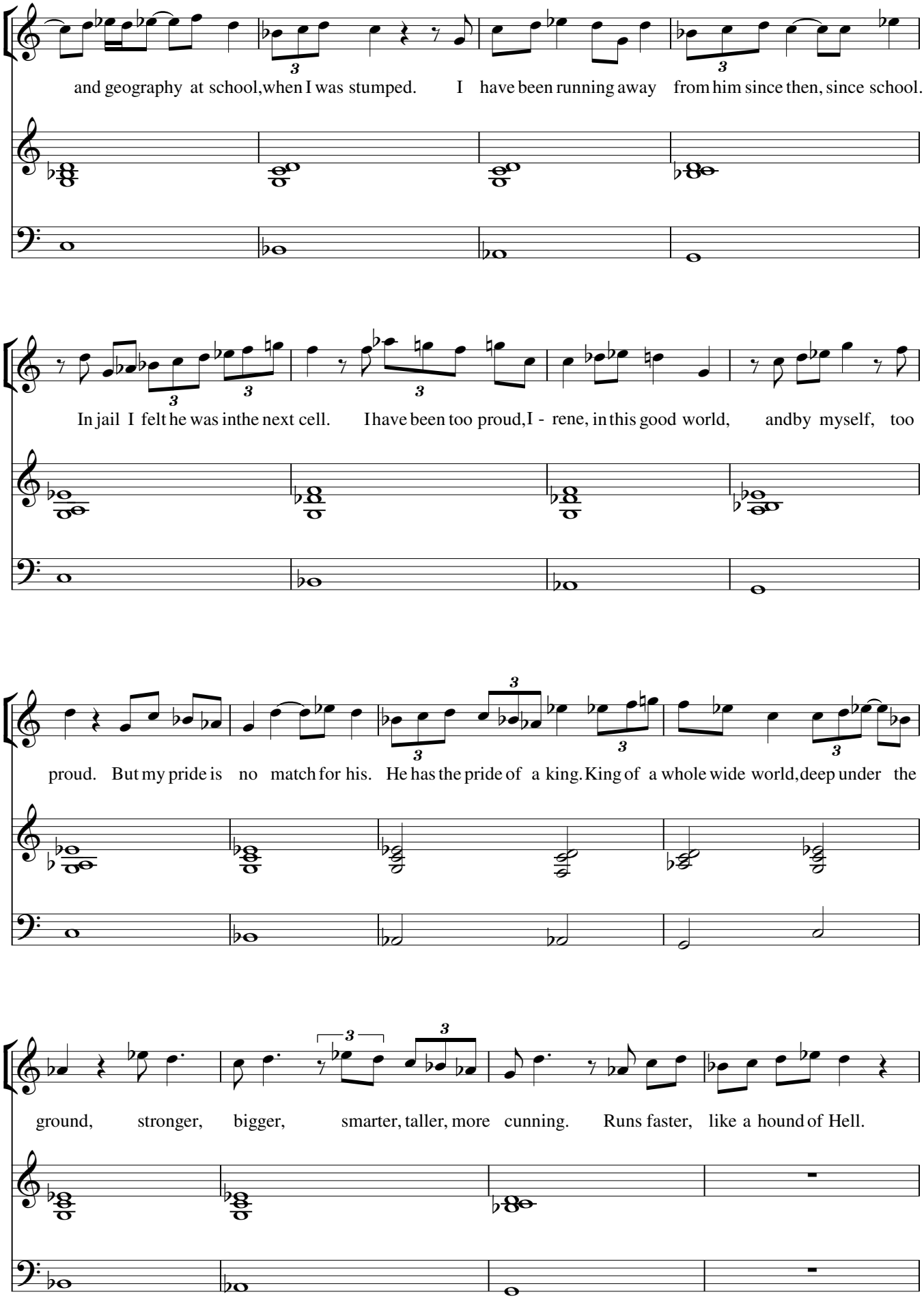
What more can I do? I have reinstated him. I followed your orders. Shall I go live in the in-

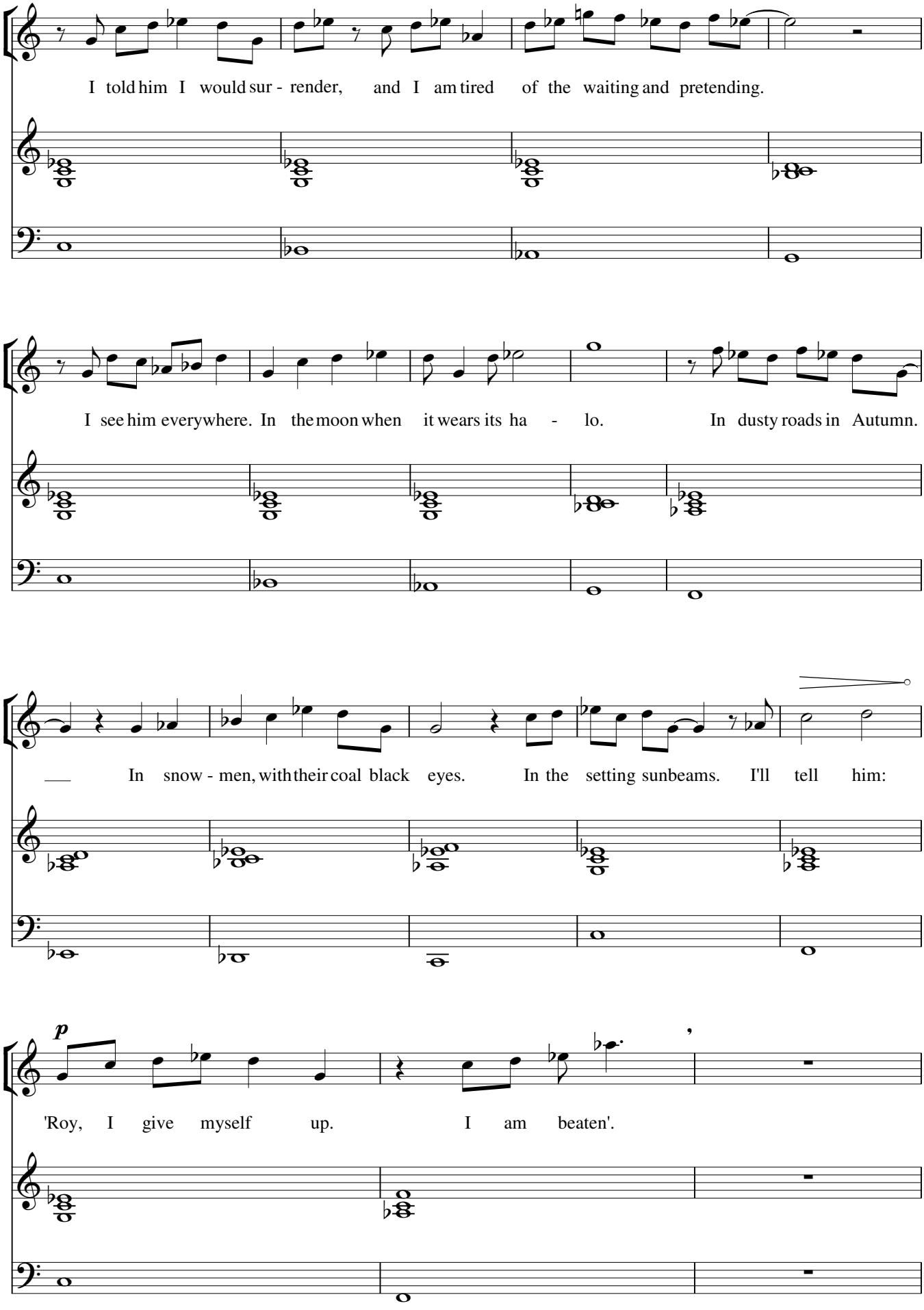
Roy

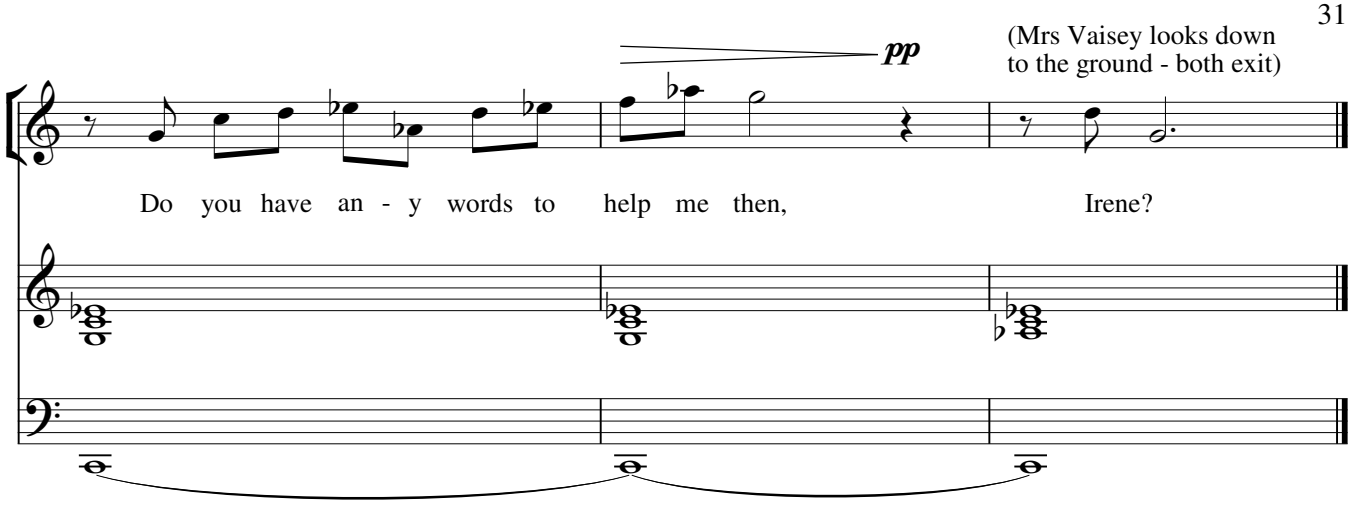
- fir - mary for you? Everyone knows your mor - al character and that you are

unfit to take care of Gareth. Whores like you have no right to see their sons af -


Mrs Vaisey
ff
Roy
ff
ter the moment they emerge from your stinking... Leave my house! You will sit down and listen.
(Enter Sidney)
Sidney
ff
Or you will spend the night on the road. Leave her.Take me. Not them. I'll surrender to you.
ppp
(Exit Roy)
Mrs Vaisey
mp
You can have me instead of them. I don't quite understand, do I, Sidney?
Sidney
mp
He likes to own people. Eat away at them. He used to hand me the correct answers on history

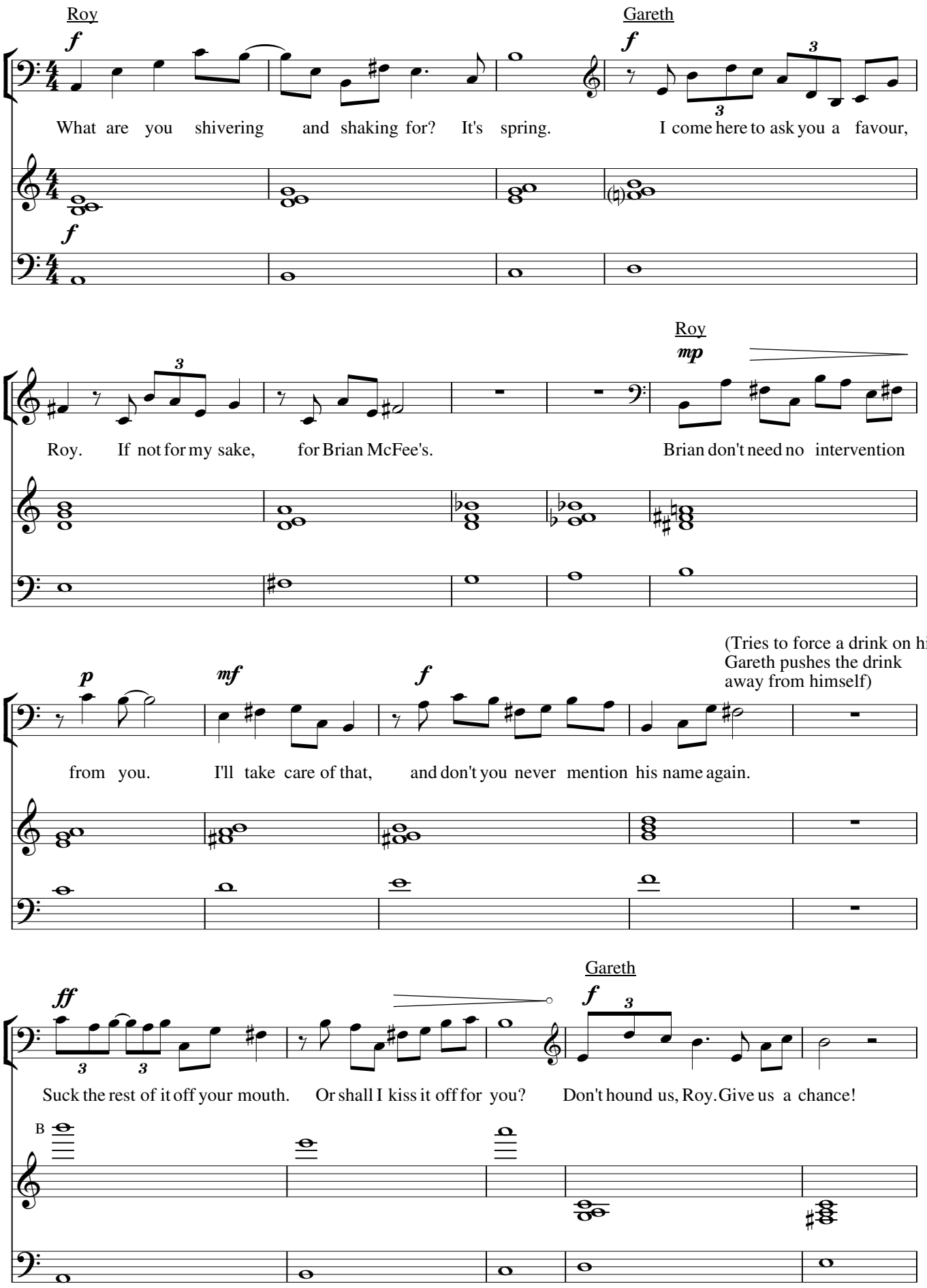

and geography at school,when I was stumped. I have been running away from him since then, since school.
In jail I felt he was inthe next cell. Ihave been too proud,I - rene, in this good world, andby myself, too
proud. But my pride is no match for his. He has the pride of a king. King of a whole wide world,deep under the
ground, stronger, bigger, smarter, taller, more cunning. Runs faster, like a hound of Hell.

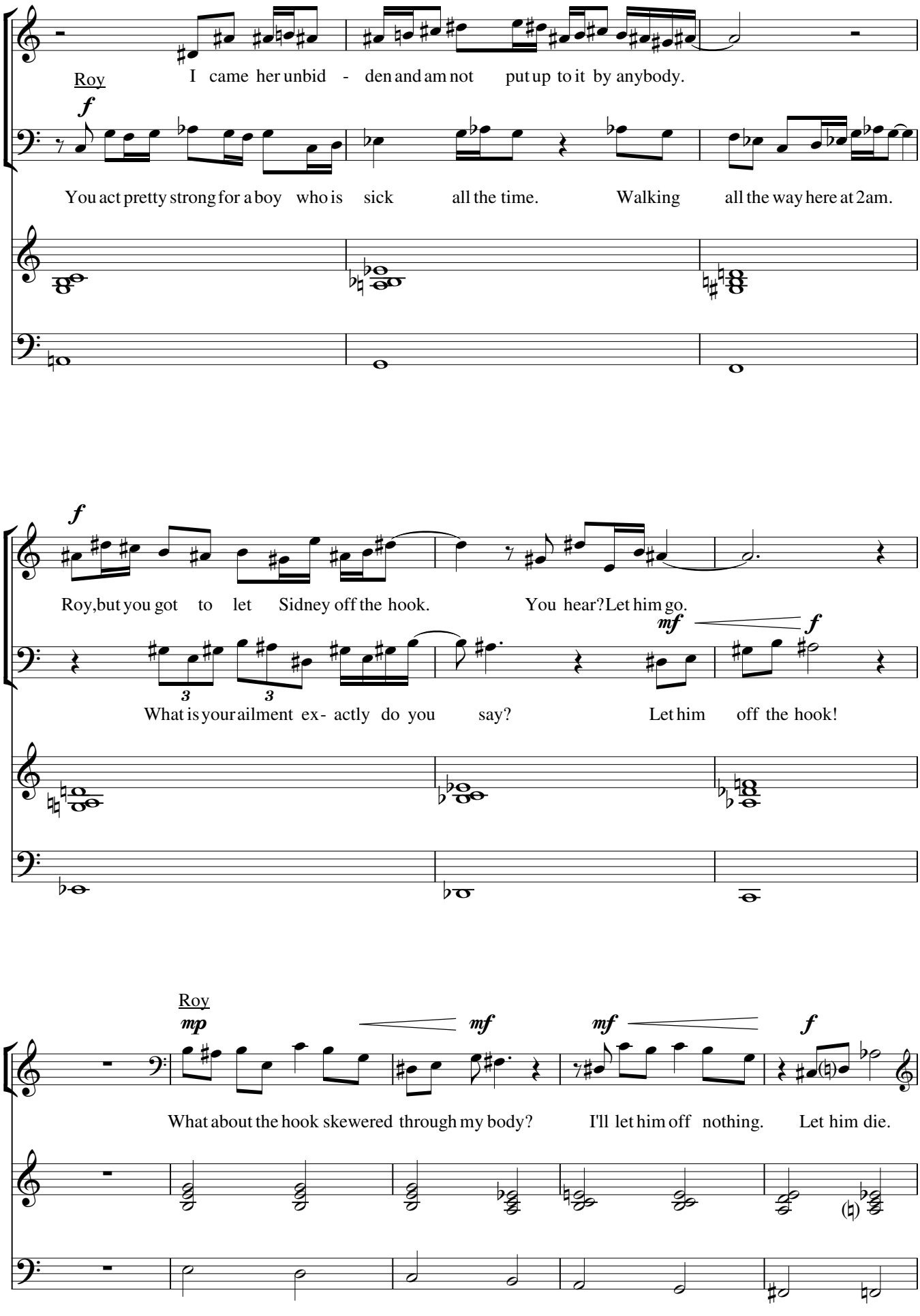

I told him I would sur - render, and I am tired of the waiting and pretending.
I see him everywhere. In the moon when it wears its ha - lo. In dusty roads in Autumn.
In snow - men, with their coal black eyes. In the setting sunbeams. I'll tell him:
p
'Roy, I give myself up. I am beaten'.

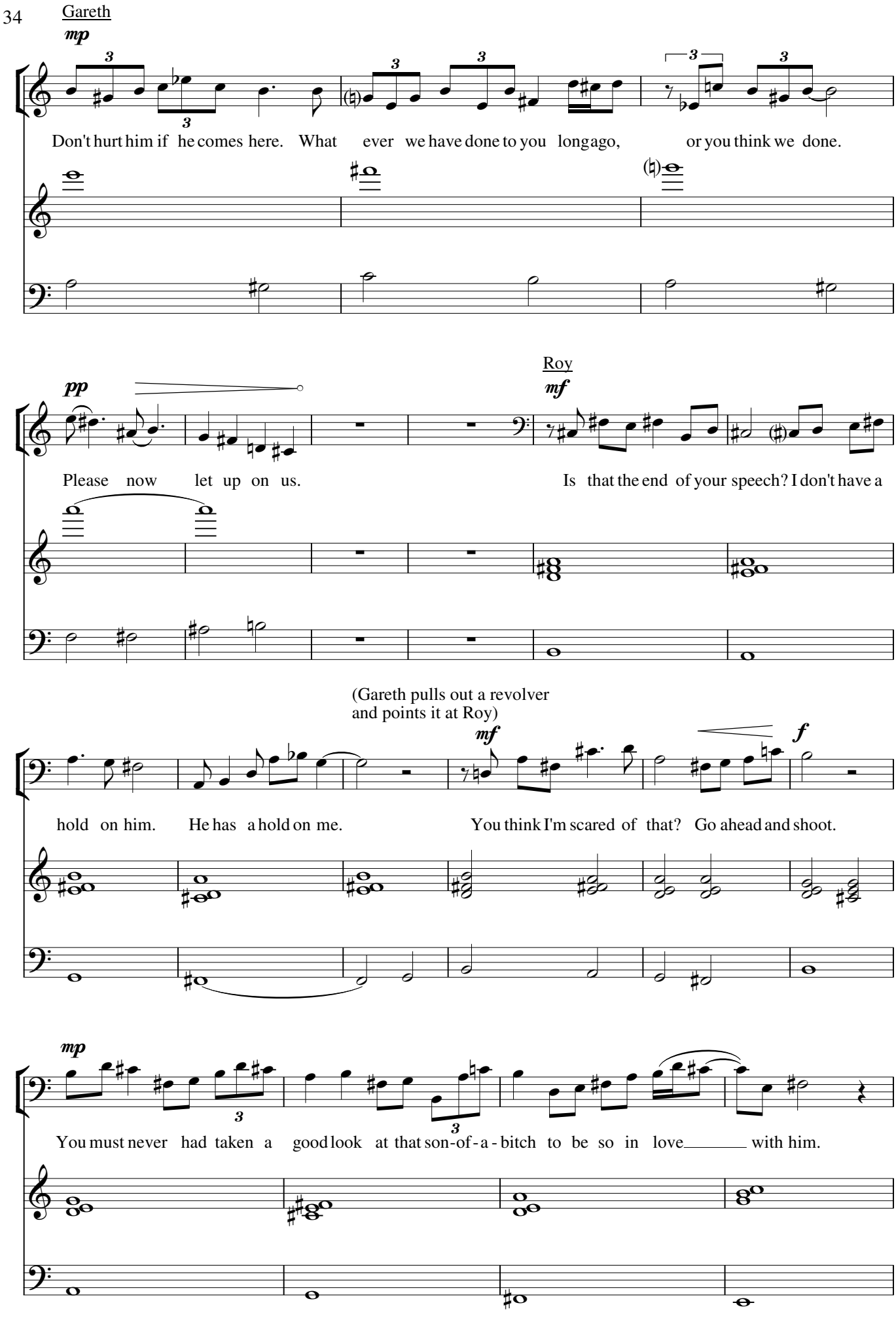

pp
(Mrs Vaisey looks down
to the ground - both exit)
Do you have an - y words to help me then, Irene?

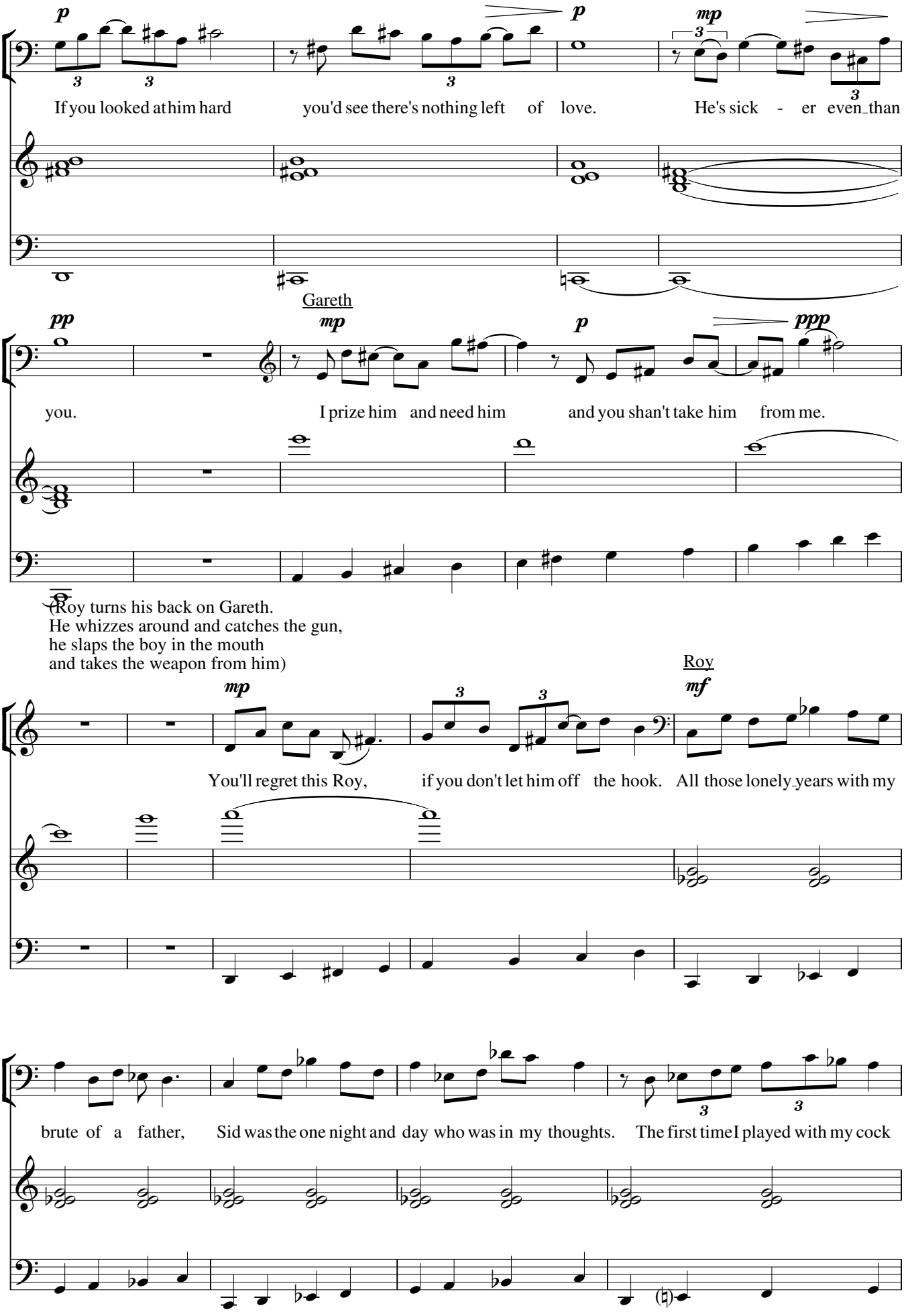
Scene 5

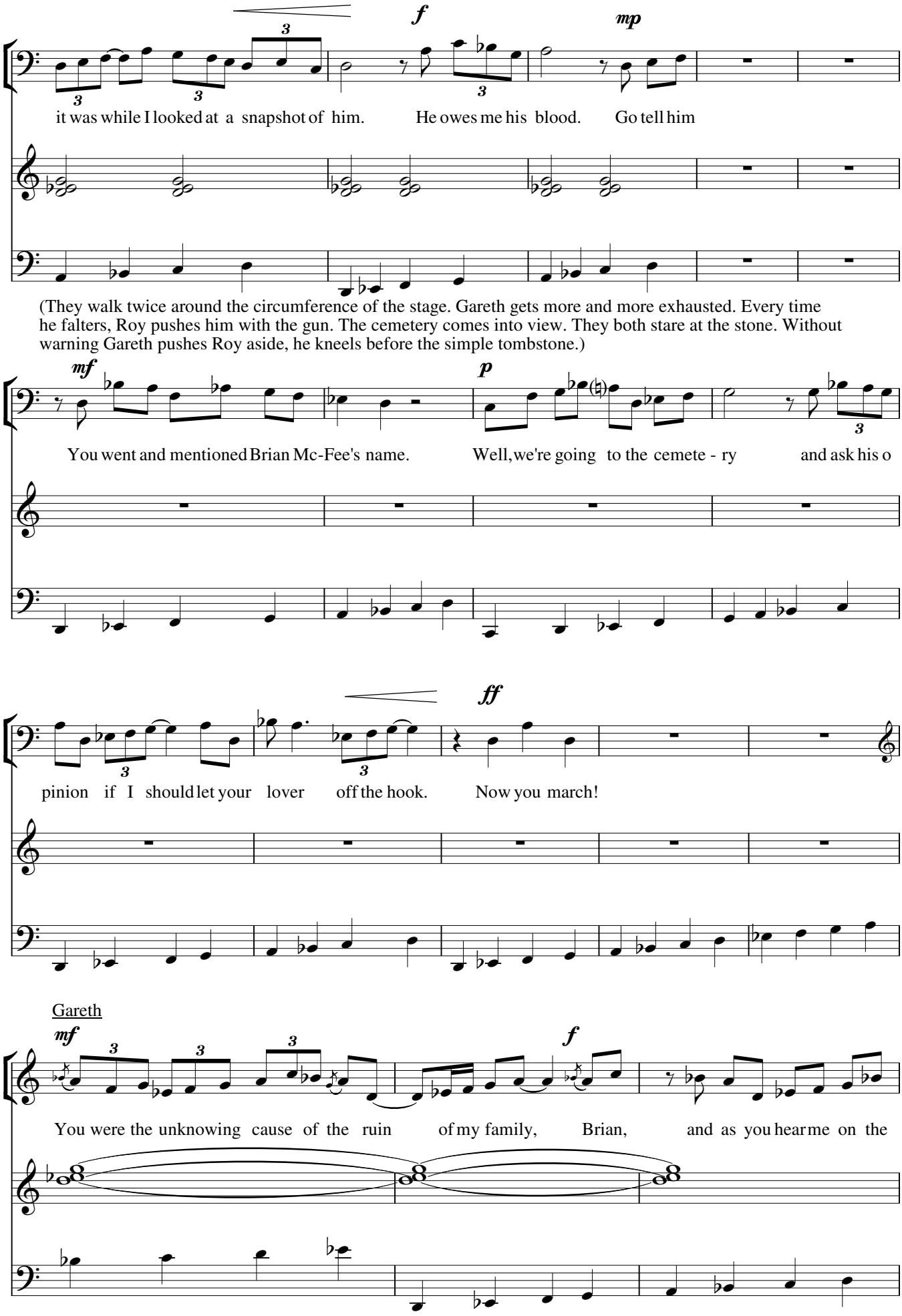
(Gareth appears at Roy's house)

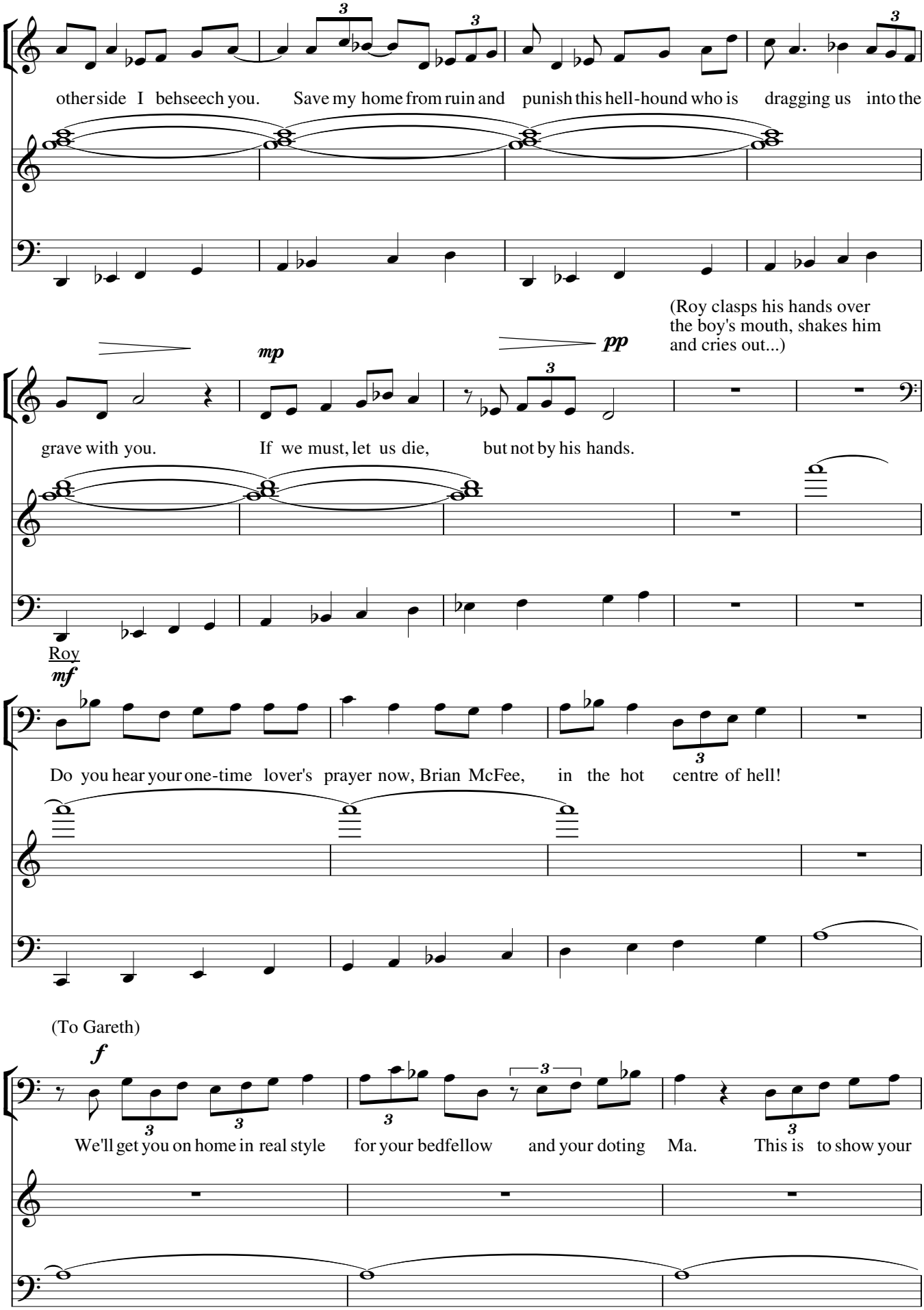



Roy
f
I came her unbid - den and am not put up to it by anybody.
You act pretty strong for a boy who is sick all the time. Walking all the way here at 2am.
f
Roy,but you got to let Sidney off the hook. You hear?Let him go.
mf
f
What is your ailment ex- actly do you say? Let him off the hook!
Roy
mp
mf
mf
f
What about the hook skewered through my body? I'll let him off nothing. Let him die.

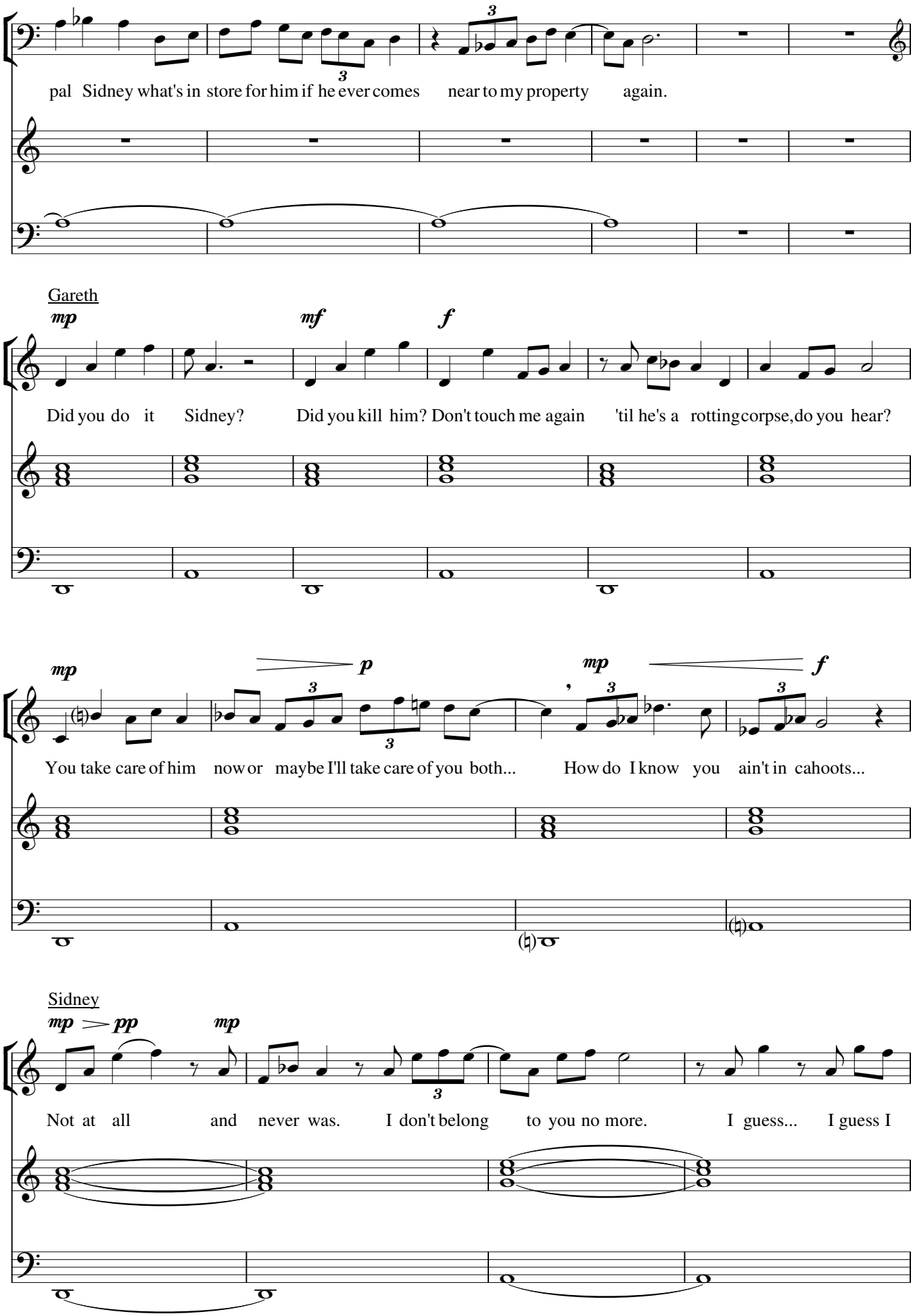

Gareth
mp
Don't hurt him if he comes here. What ever we have done to you longago, or you think we done.
Roy
pp
mf
Please now let up on us. Is that the end of your speech? I don't have a
(Gareth pulls out a revolver
and points it at Roy)
mf
f
hold on him. He has a hold on me. You think I'm scared of that? Go ahead and shoot.
mp
You must never had taken a good look at that son-of-a-bitch to be so in love with him.

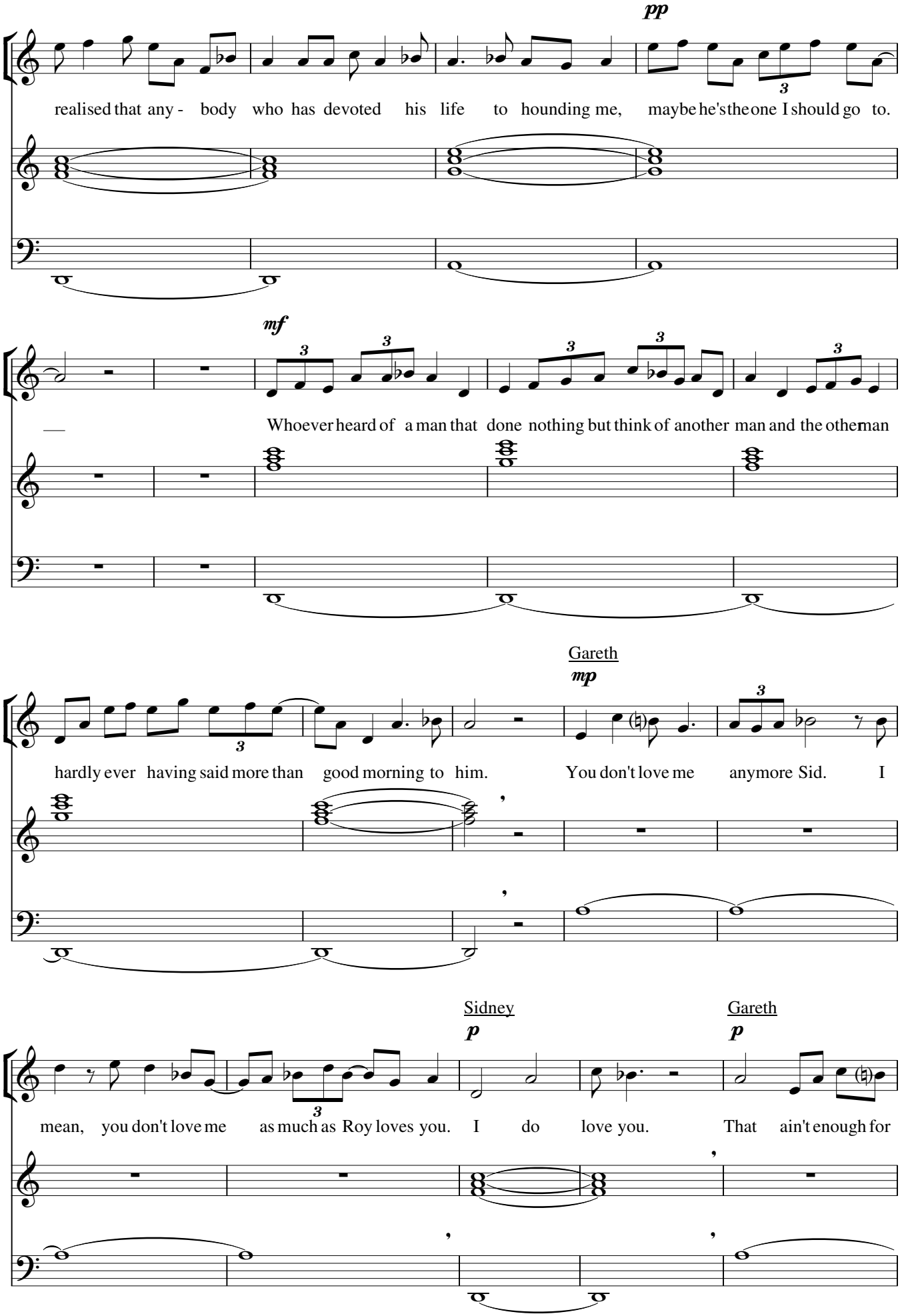

If you looked at him hard you'd see there's nothing left of love. He's sick - er even_than
Gareth
you. I prize him and need him and you shan't take him from me.
(Roy turns his back on Gareth.
He whizzes around and catches the gun,
he slaps the boy in the mouth
and takes the weapon from him)
Roy
You'll regret this Roy, if you don't let him off the hook. All those lonely_years with my
brute of a father, Sid was the one night and day who was in my thoughts. The first time I played with my cock

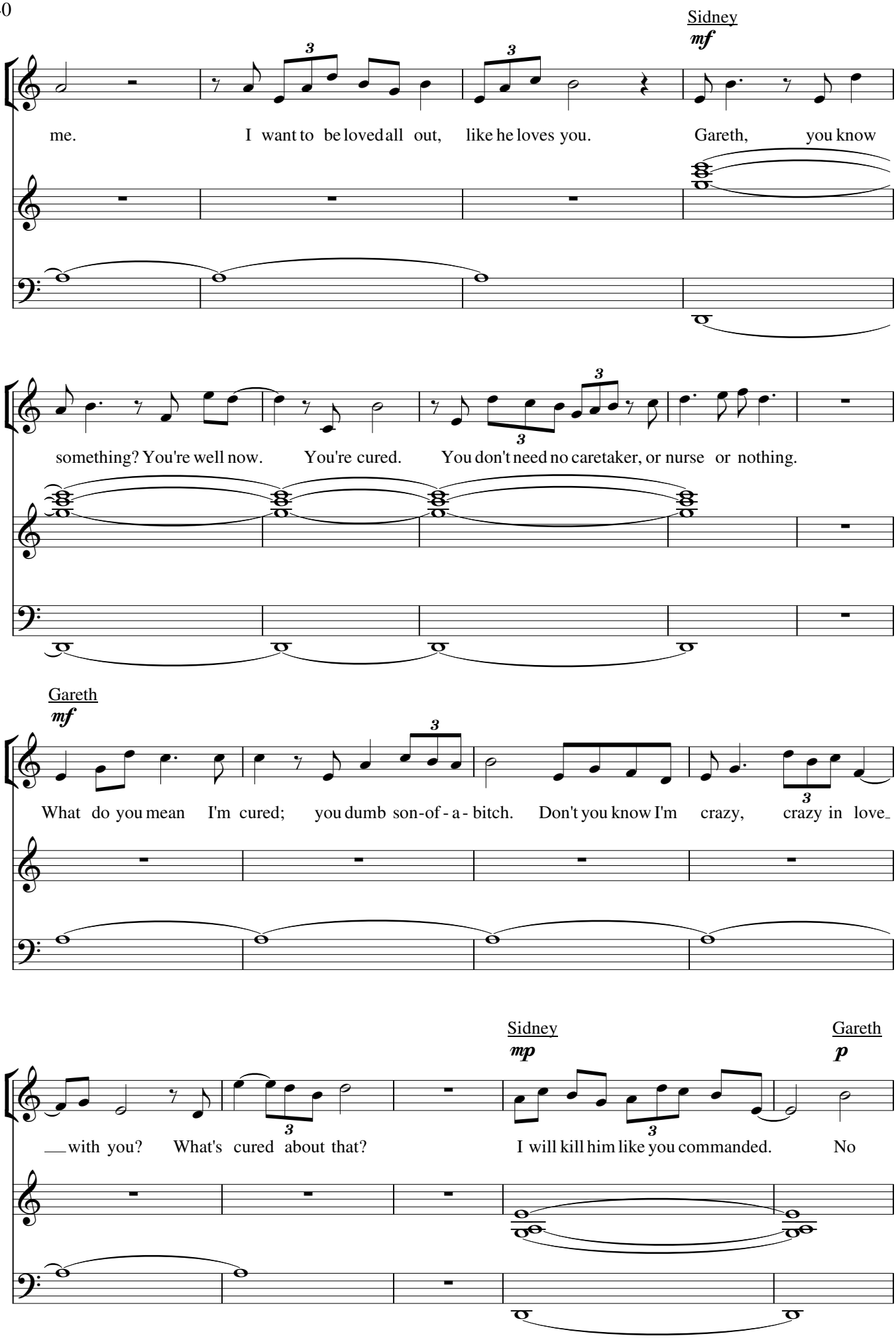

it was while I looked at a snapshot of him. He owes me his blood. Go tell him
(They walk twice around the circumference of the stage. Gareth gets more and more exhausted. Every time he falters, Roy pushes him with the gun. The cemetery comes into view. They both stare at the stone. Without warning Gareth pushes Roy aside, he kneels before the simple tombstone.)
You went and mentioned Brian Mc-Fee's name. Well, we're going to the cemete - ry and ask his o
pinion if I should let your lover off the hook. Now you march!
Gareth
You were the unknowing cause of the ruin of my family, Brian, and as you hear me on the


other side I behseech you. Save my home from ruin and punish this hell-hound who is dragging us into the
(Roy clasps his hands over the boy's mouth, shakes him and cries out...)
mp
pp
grave with you. If we must, let us die, but not by his hands.
Roy
mf
Do you hear your one-time lover's prayer now, Brian McFee, in the hot centre of hell!
(To Gareth)
f
We'll get you on home in real style for your bedfellow and your doting Ma. This is to show your

(Exit Roy, Sidney appears)




pp
realised that any - body who has devoted his life to hounding me, maybe he's the one I should go to.
mf
Whoever heard of a man that done nothing but think of another man and the other man
Gareth
mp
hardly ever having said more than good morning to him. You don't love me anymore Sid. I
Sidney
p
Gareth
p
mean, you don't love me as much as Roy loves you. I do love you. That ain't enough for


Sidney
mf
me. I want to be loved all out, like he loves you. Gareth, you know
something? You're well now. You're cured. You don't need no caretaker, or nurse or nothing.
Gareth
mf
What do you mean I'm cured; you dumb son-of-a-bitch. Don't you know I'm crazy, crazy in love
Sidney
mp
Gareth
p
with you? What's cured about that? I will kill him like you commanded. No

(Sidney walks over to where Roy is standing)

Roy
mf

f

he'll kill you Sid. Is there no end to my punishment? Ain't I ever-

Sidney
mf

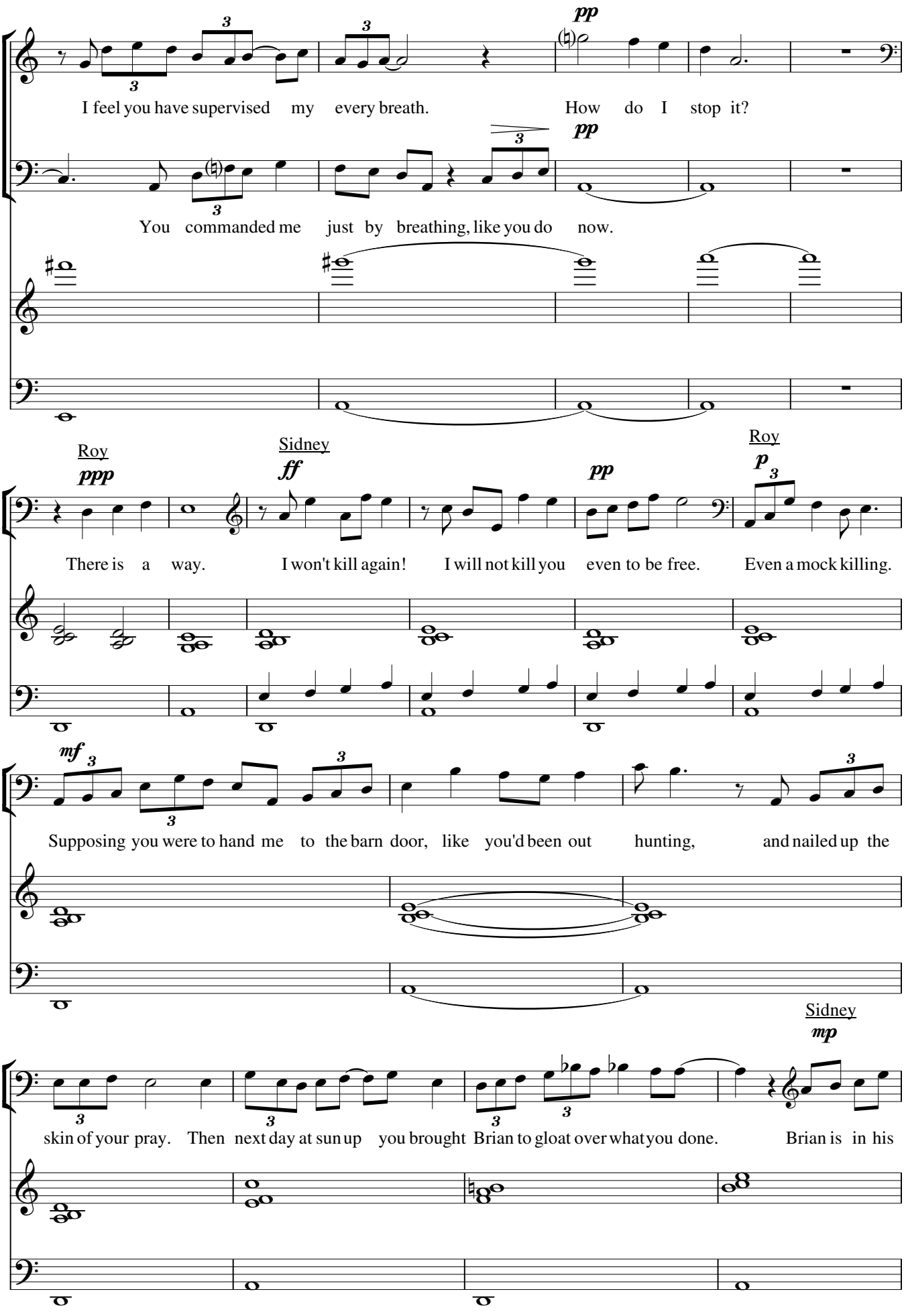
going to be forgiven either? Why? I didn't do nothing to egg you on. Don't deny you have been

Roy
mf

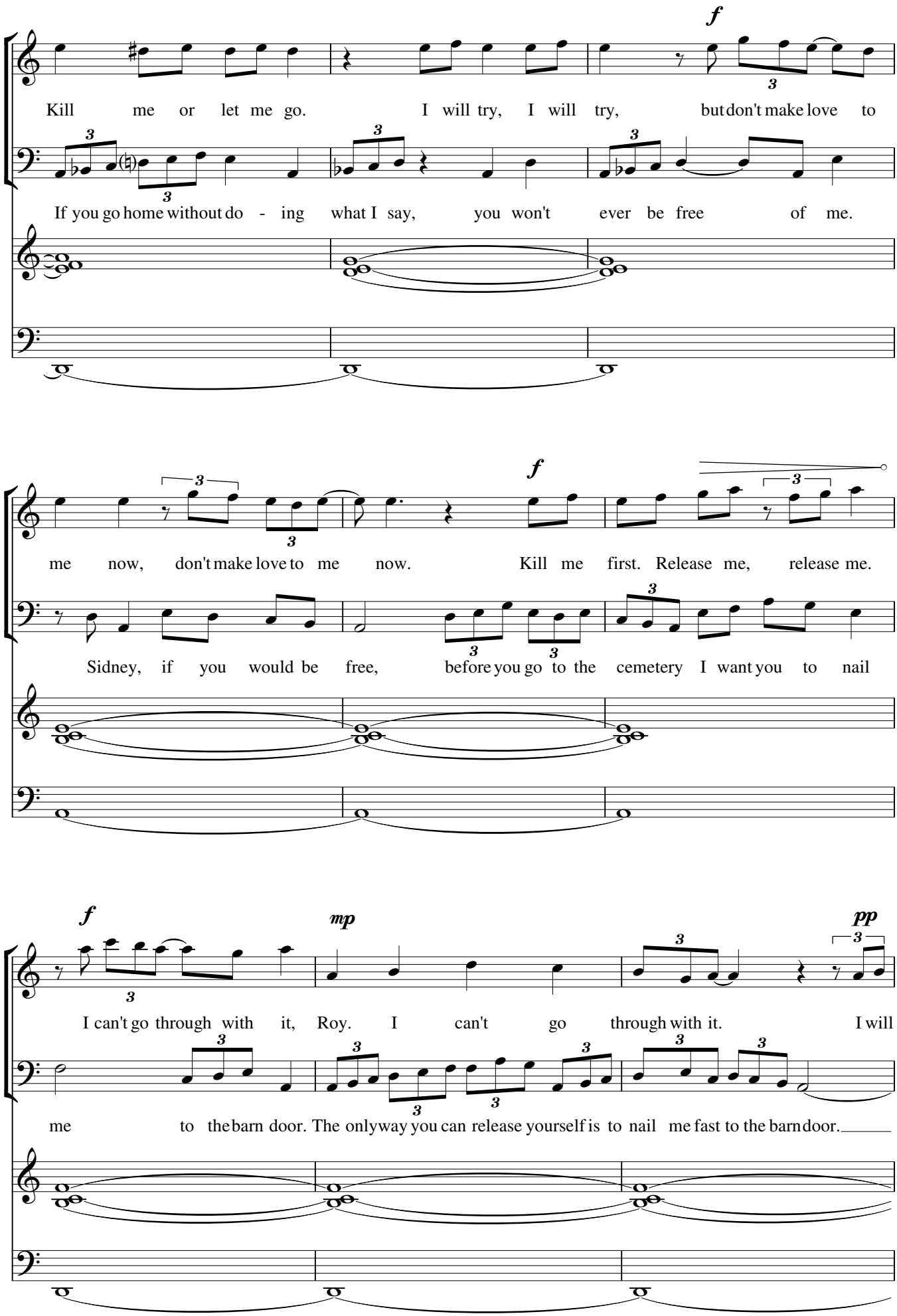
Everything you did.

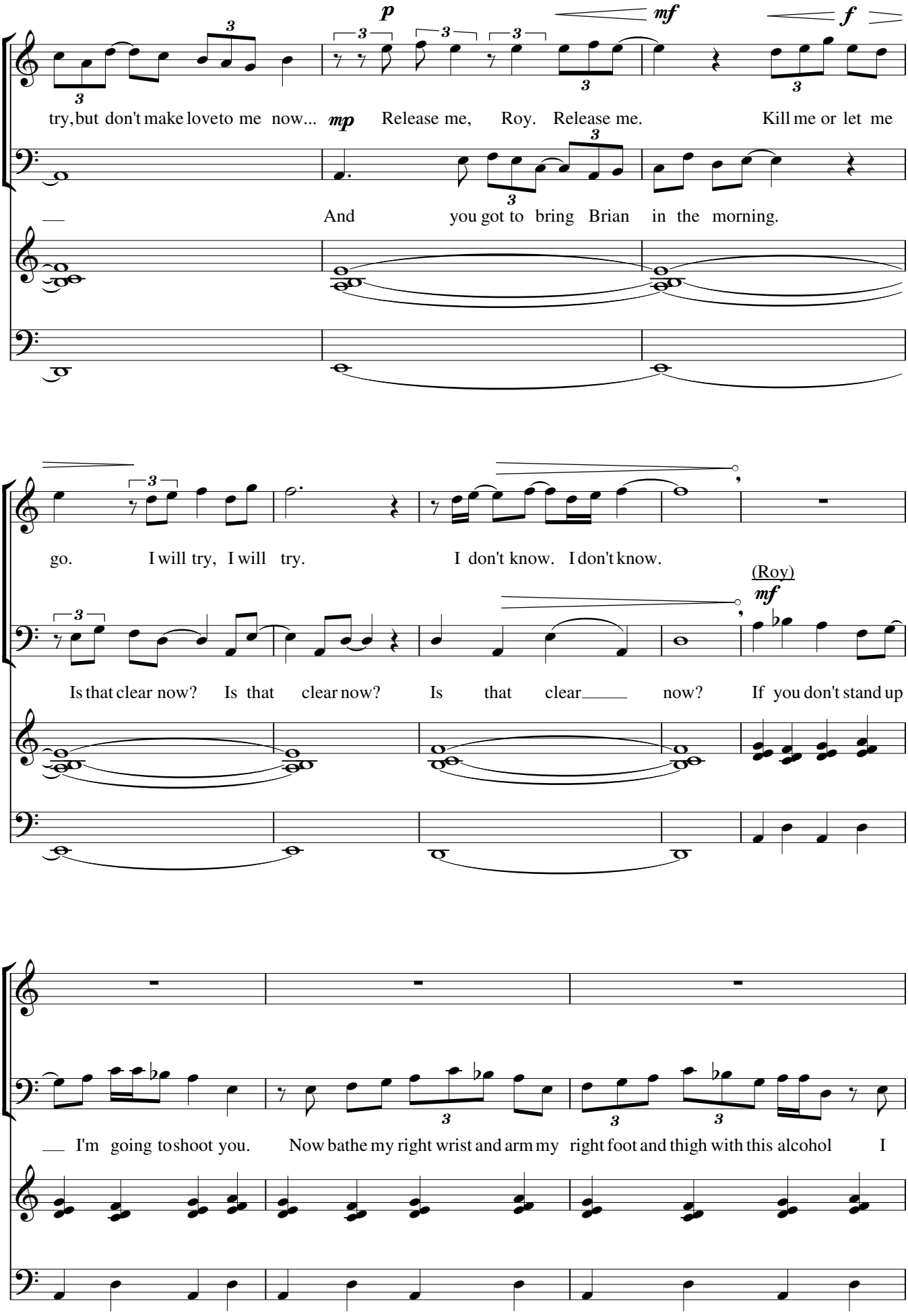
stalking me all my life. I wonder you were not present when I was born.

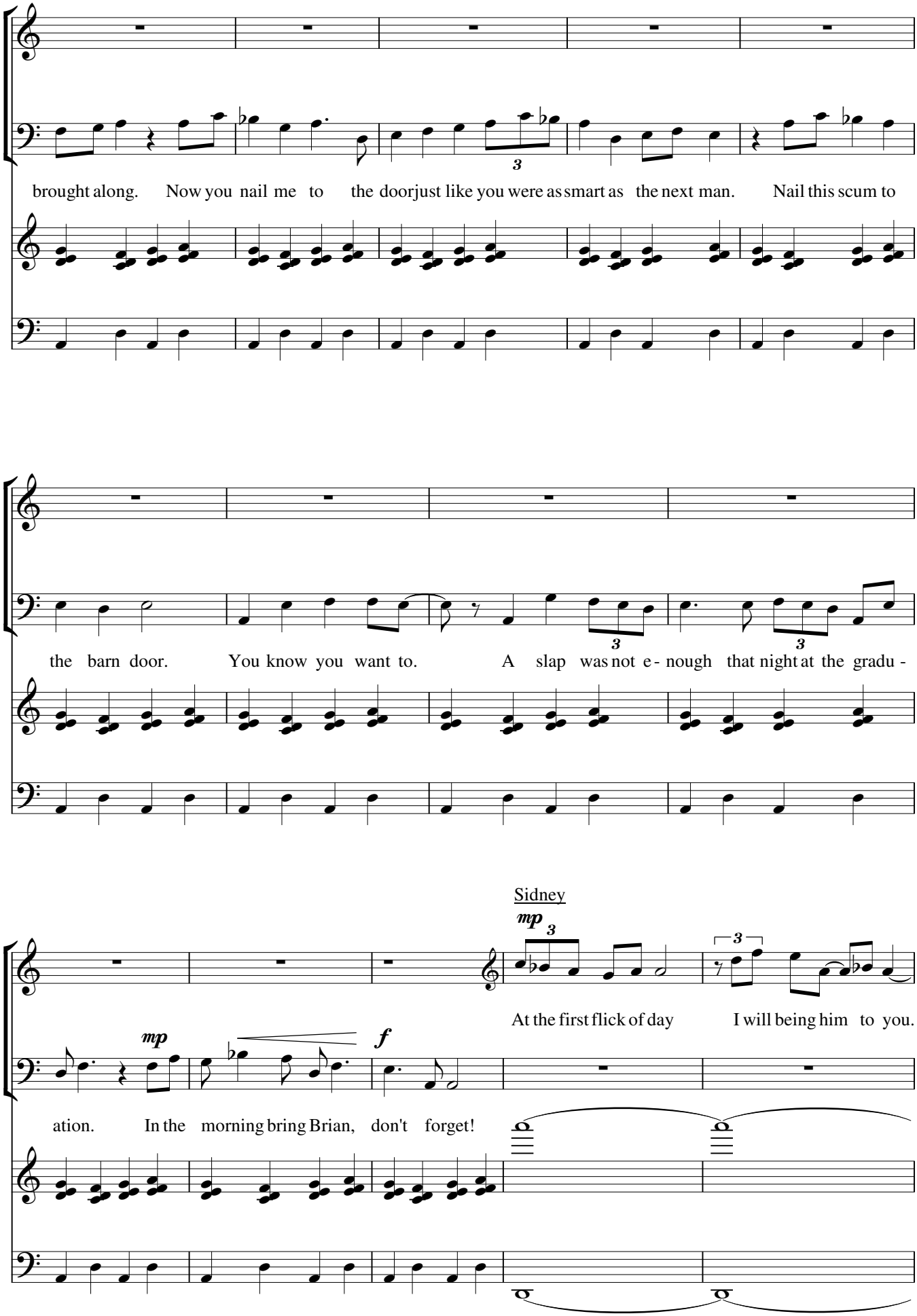
Eve - ry time you passed by, you threw off enough energy for me to want you forever.

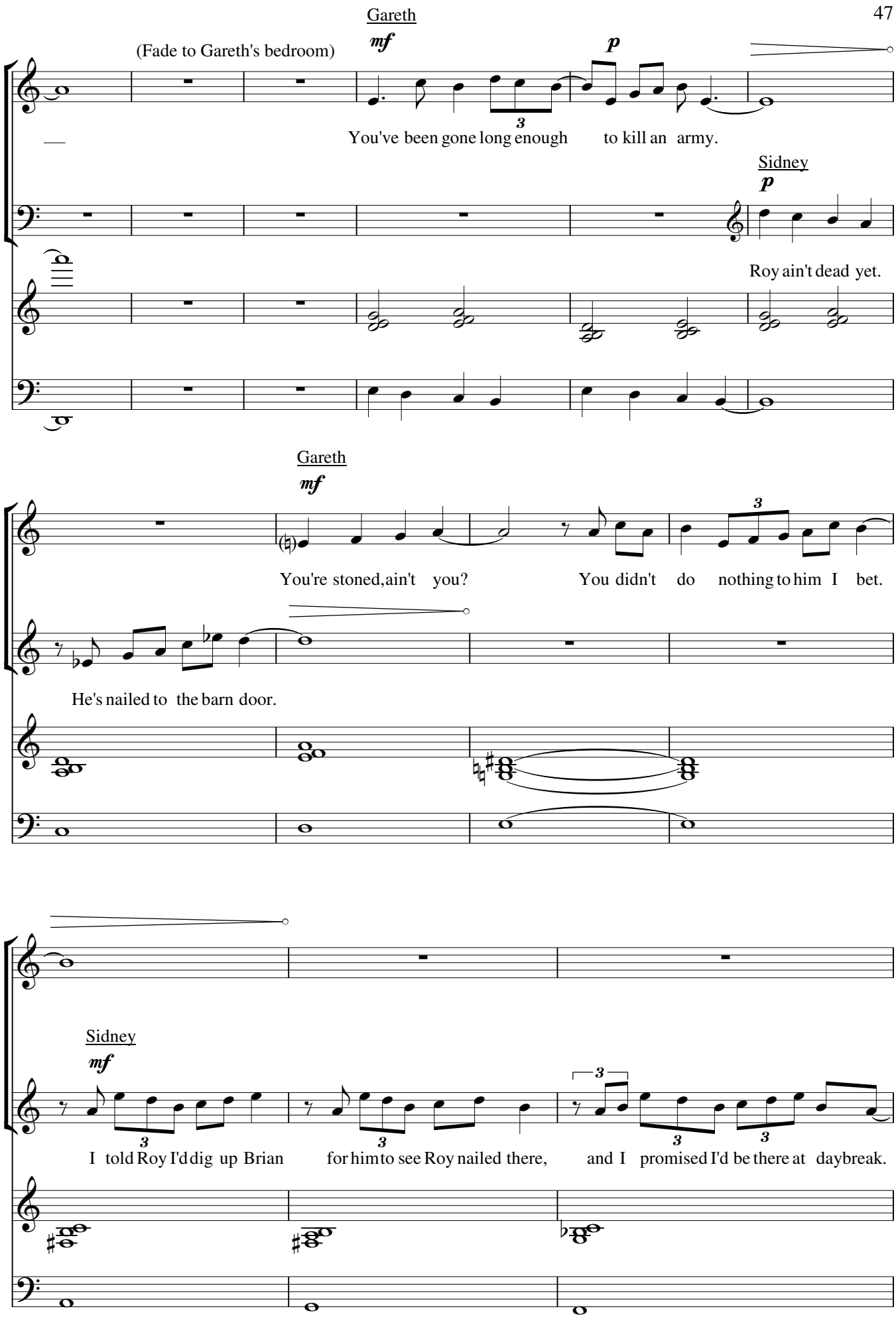

pp
I feel you have supervised my every breath. How do I stop it?
pp
You commanded me just by breathing, like you do now.
Roy
ppp
Sidney
ff
pp
Roy
p
There is a way. I won't kill again! I will not kill you even to be free. Even a mock killing.
mf
Supposing you were to hand me to the barn door, like you'd been out hunting, and nailed up the
Sidney
mp
skin of your pray. Then next day at sun up you brought Brian to gloat over what you done. Brian is in his

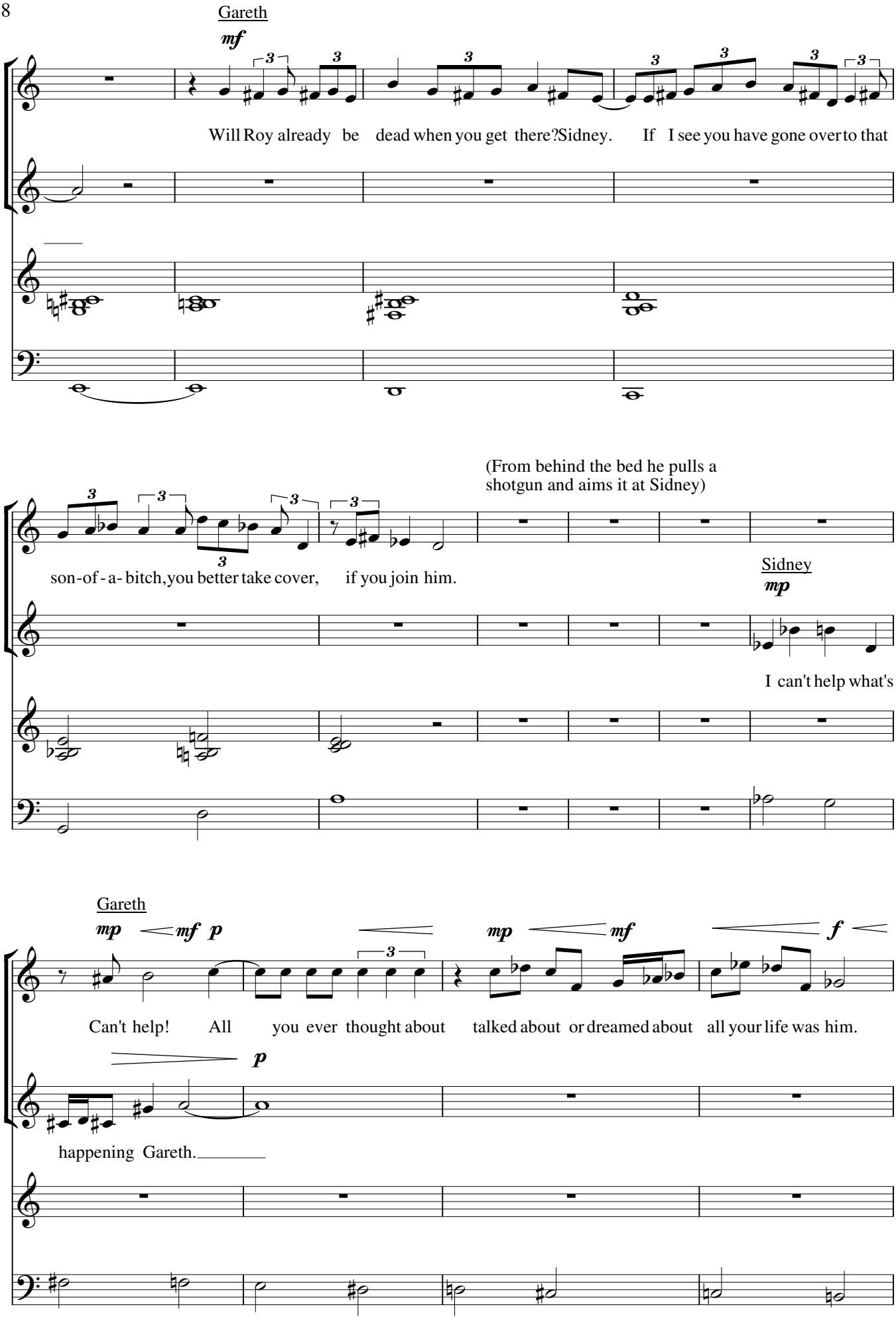
Roy
mp
f
Sidney
f
ff
grave.
But he could be brought out of his grave.
No!
Don't touch me Roy.
Don't!
Roy
f
Sidney
ff
Kissme Sidney
if you want to be free.
I'm kissing you.Kill me
Roy.
I don't care.
mp
You can kill me then.
No one will ever know.
Kill me or let me go.
Kill me or let me go.
Roy
mf
I don't want to kill you, never wanted to.

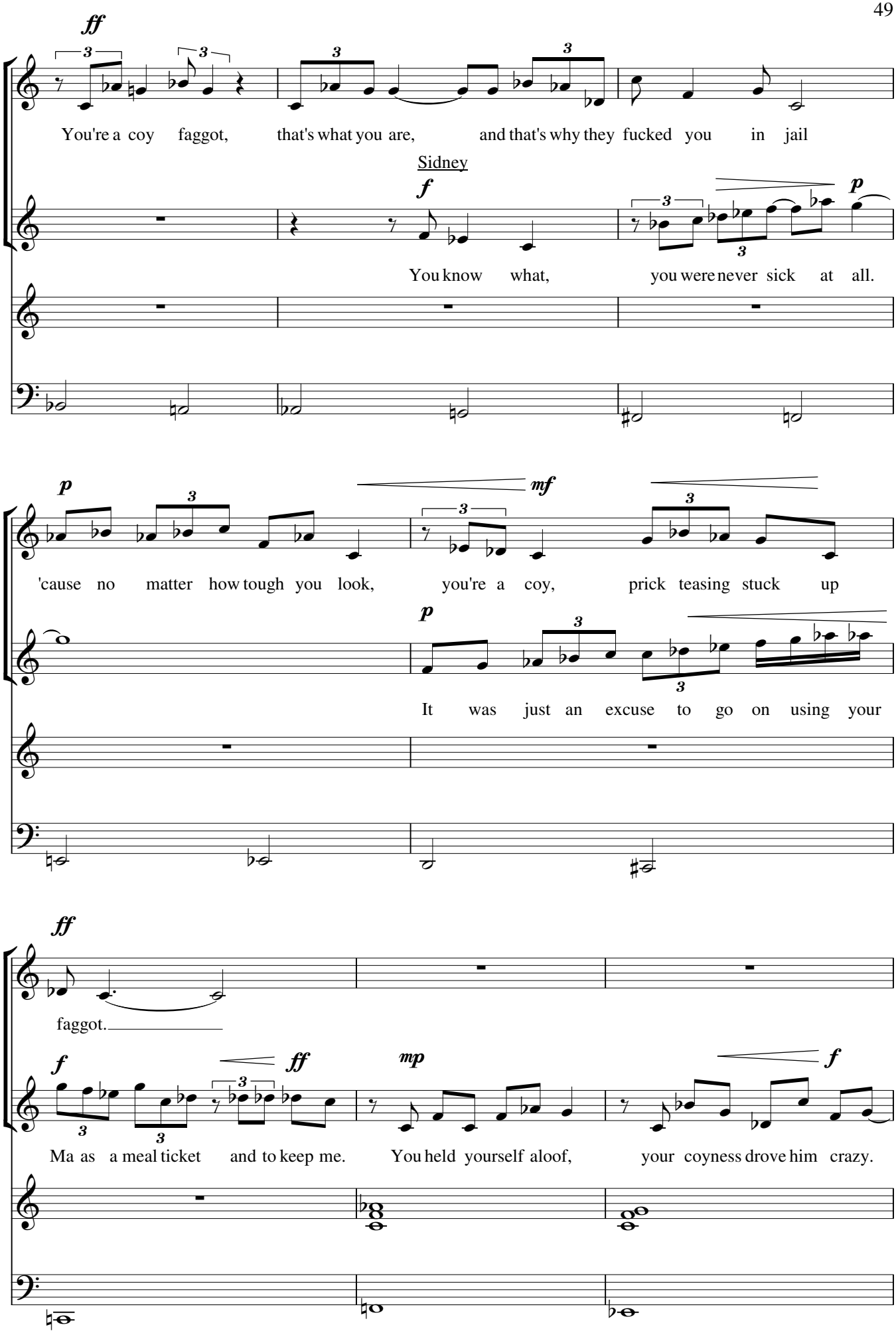

f
Kill me or let me go. I will try, I will try, but don't make love to
If you go home without do - ing what I say, you won't ever be free of me.
f
me now, don't make love to me now. Kill me first. Release me, release me.
Sidney, if you would be free, before you go to the cemetery I want you to nail
f
mp
pp
I can't go through with it, Roy. I can't go through with it. I will
me to the barn door. The only way you can release yourself is to nail me fast to the barn door.

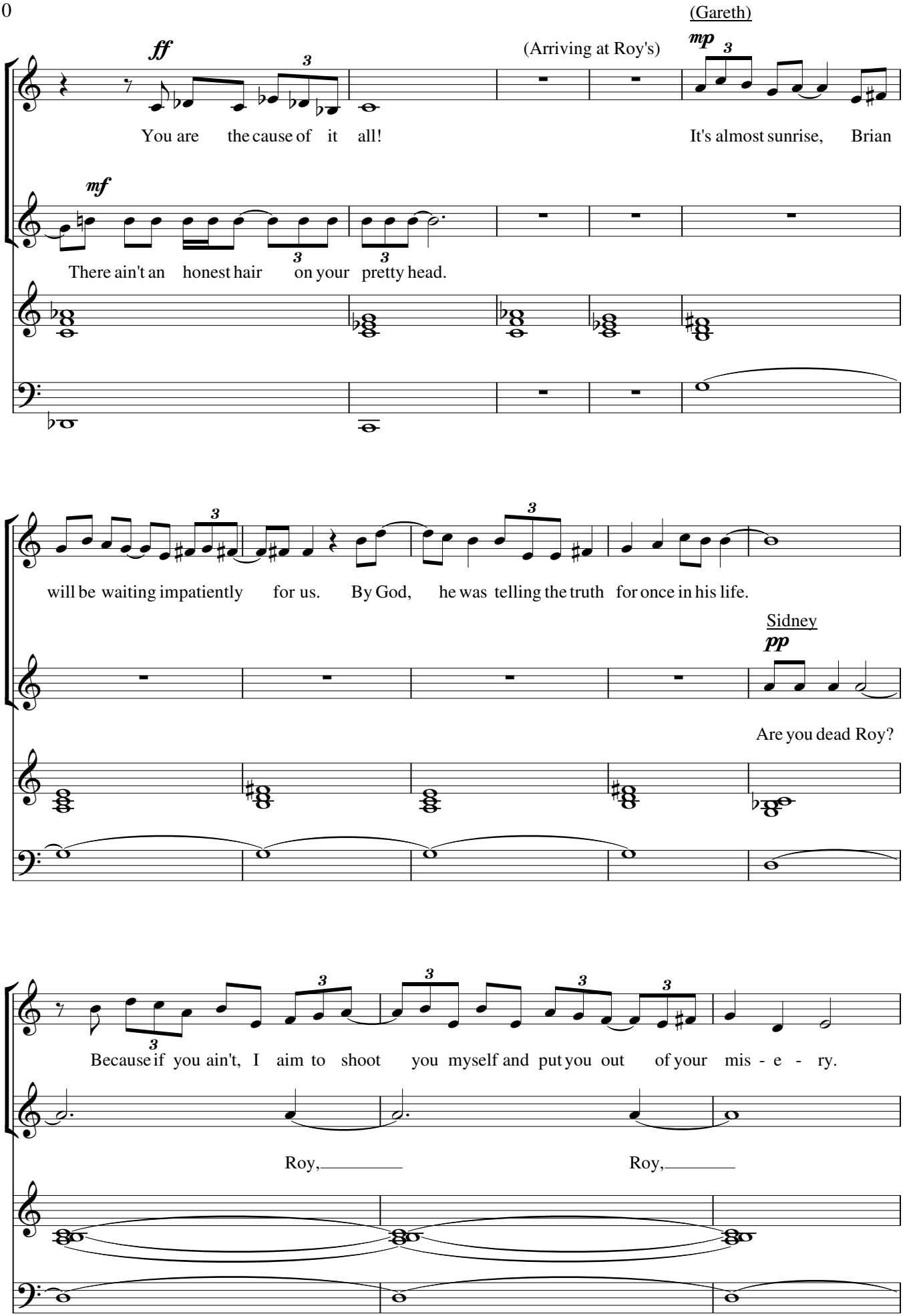

p
mf
f
try, but don't make love to me now...
mp
Release me, Roy. Release me.
Kill me or let me
And you got to bring Brian in the morning.
go.
I will try, I will try.
I don't know. I don't know.
(Roy)
mf
Is that clear now? Is that clear now?
Is that clear now?
If you don't stand up
I'm going to shoot you.
Now bathe my right wrist and arm my right foot and thigh with this alcohol
I

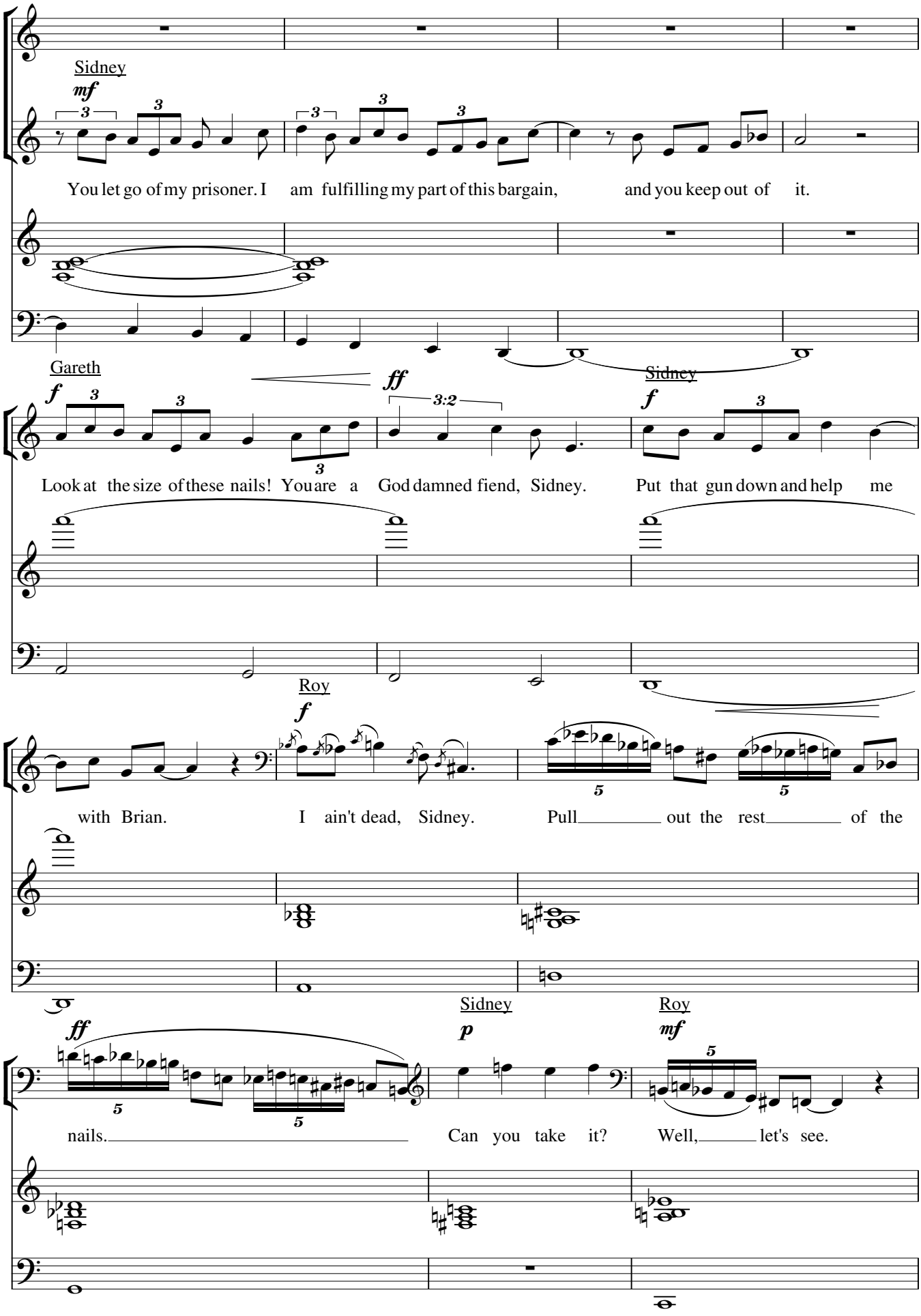

brought along. Now you nail me to the doorjust like you were as smart as the next man. Nail this scum to
the barn door. You know you want to. A slap was not e - nough that night at the gradu -
Sidney
mp
At the first flick of day I will being him to you.
mp
f
ation. In the morning bring Brian, don't forget!

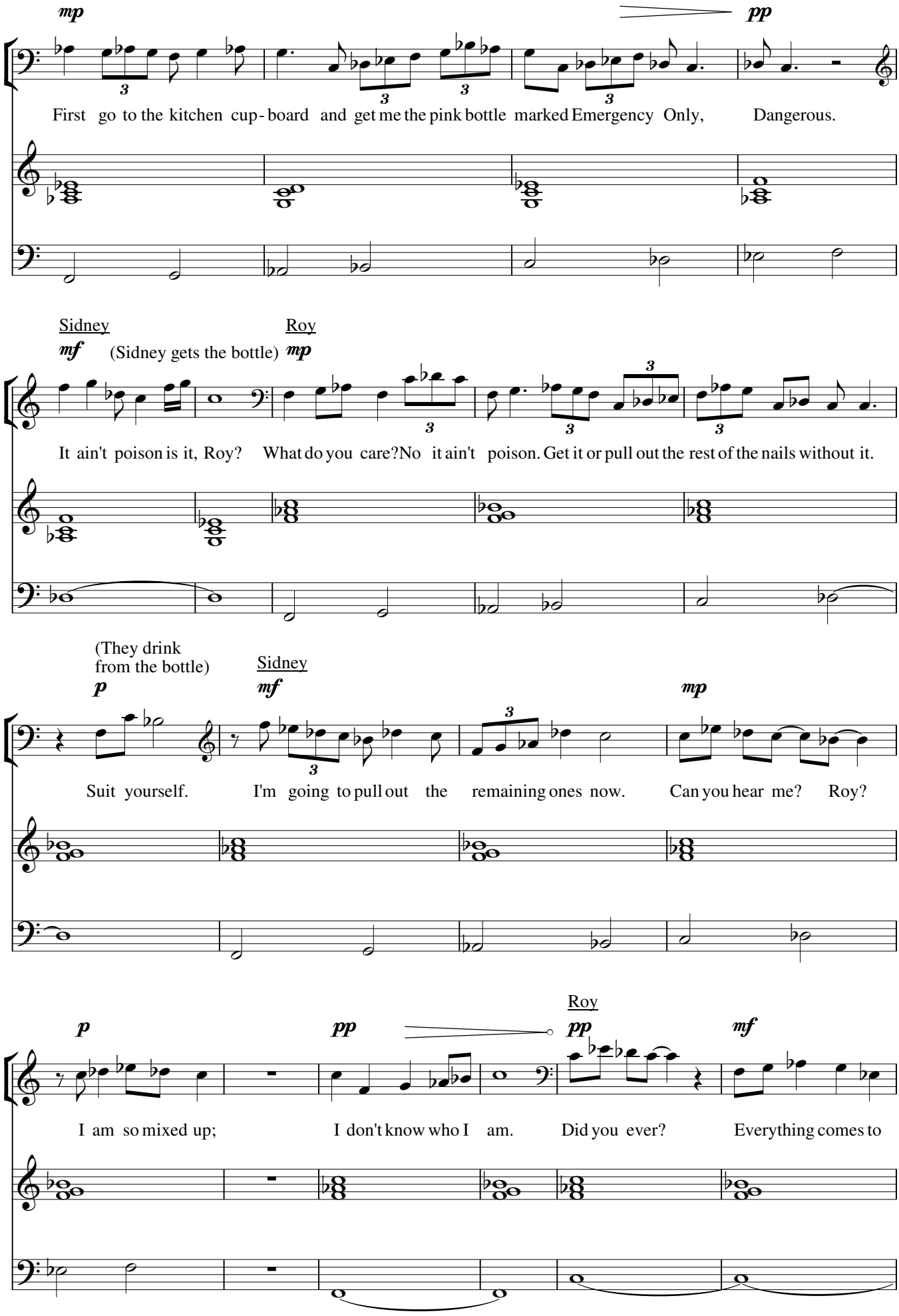

Gareth
mf
(Fade to Gareth's bedroom)
p
You've been gone long enough to kill an army.
Sidney
p
Roy ain't dead yet.
Gareth
mf
You're stoned,ain't you?
You didn't do nothing to him I bet.
He's nailed to the barn door.
Sidney
mf
I told Roy I'd dig up Brian for him to see Roy nailed there, and I promised I'd be there at daybreak.

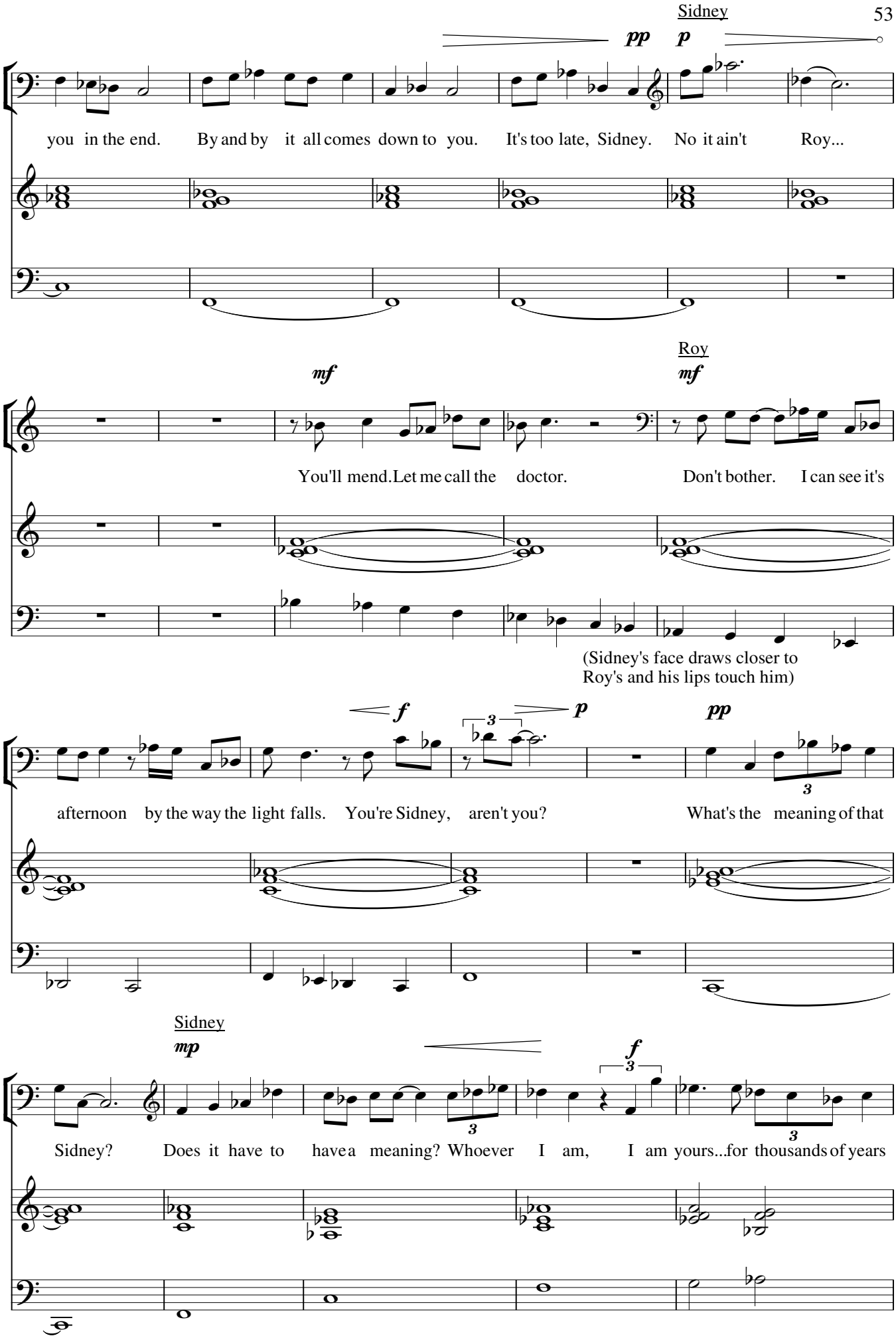

Gareth
mf
Will Roy already be dead when you get there?Sidney. If I see you have gone over to that
(From behind the bed he pulls a shotgun and aims it at Sidney)
son-of-a-bitch,you better take cover, if you join him.
Sidney
mp
I can't help what's
Gareth
mp
mf p
mp
mf
f
Can't help! All you ever thought about talked about or dreamed about all your life was him.
p
happening Gareth.

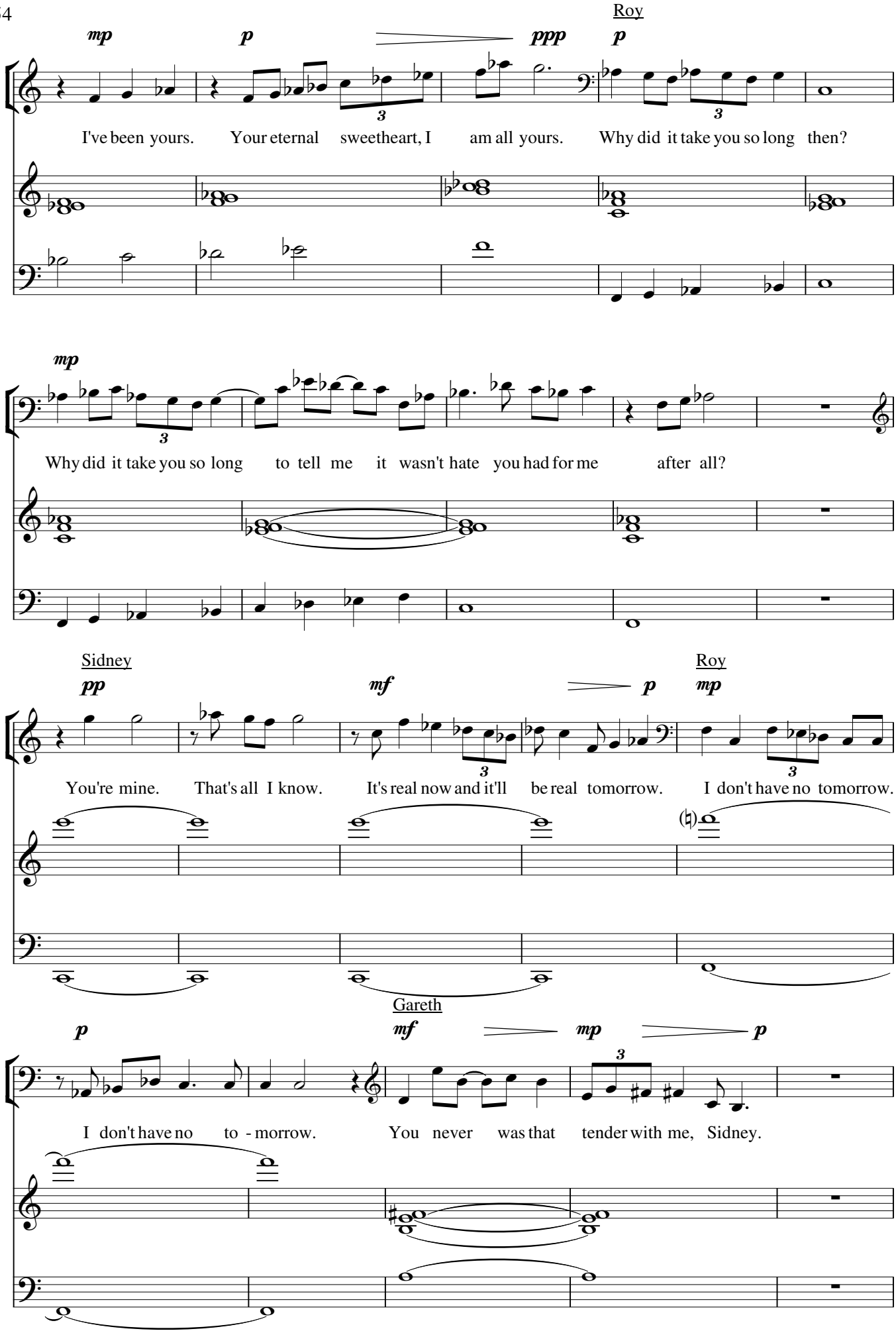

ff
You're a coy faggot, that's what you are, and that's why they fucked you in jail
Sidney
f
p
You know what, you were never sick at all.
p
mf
'cause no matter how tough you look, you're a coy, prick teasing stuck up
p
It was just an excuse to go on using your
ff
faggot.
f
ff
mp
f
Ma as a meal ticket and to keep me. You held yourself aloof, your coyness drove him crazy.


(Gareth)
ff
mp
(Arriving at Roy's)
You are the cause of it all!
It's almost sunrise, Brian
mf
There ain't an honest hair on your pretty head.
will be waiting impatiently for us. By God, he was telling the truth for once in his life.
Sidney
pp
Are you dead Roy?
Because if you ain't, I aim to shoot you myself and put you out of your mis - e - ry.
Roy,
Roy,

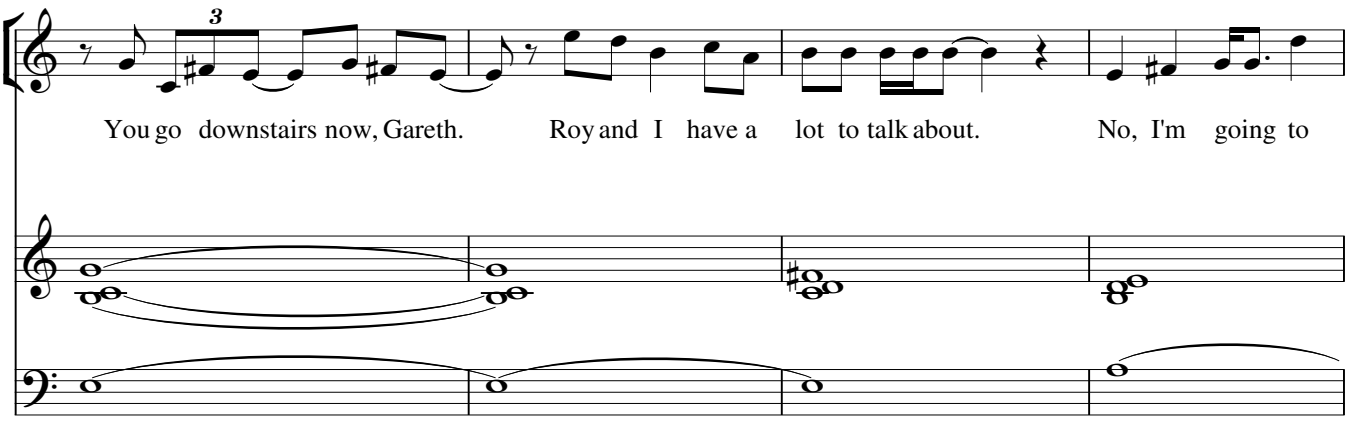

Sidney
mf
You let go of my prisoner. I am fulfilling my part of this bargain, and you keep out of it.
Gareth
f
ff
3:2
Sidney
f
Look at the size of these nails! You are a God damned fiend, Sidney. Put that gun down and help me
Roy
f
with Brian. I ain't dead, Sidney. Pull out the rest of the
Sidney
p
Roy
mf
ff
nails. Can you take it? Well, let's see.

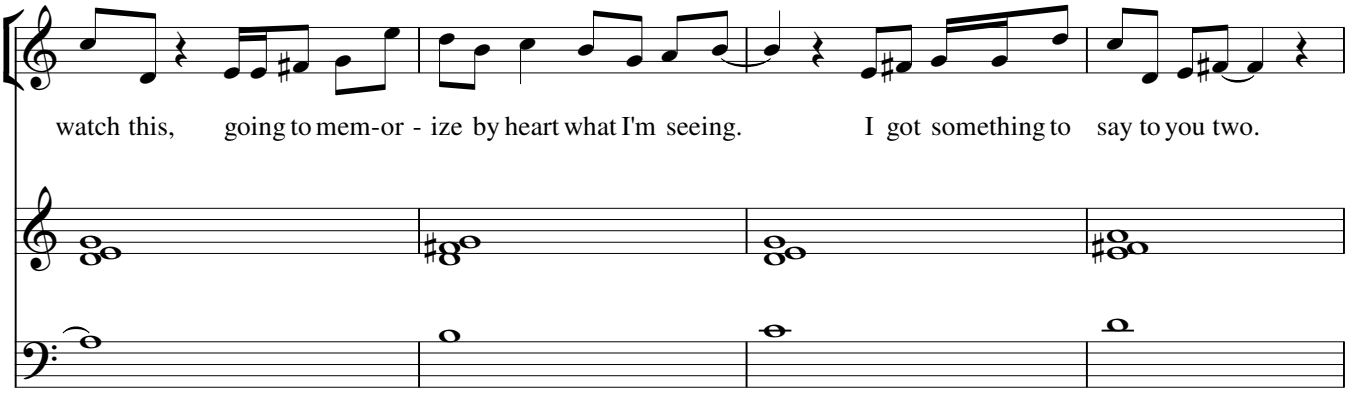

mp
pp
First go to the kitchen cup-board and get me the pink bottle marked Emergency Only, Dangerous.
Sidney
Roy
mf
(Sidney gets the bottle)
mp
It ain't poison is it, Roy? What do you care?No it ain't poison. Get it or pull out the rest of the nails without it.
(They drink from the bottle)
Sidney
p
mf
mp
Suit yourself. I'm going to pull out the remaining ones now. Can you hear me? Roy?
Roy
p
pp
pp
mf
I am so mixed up; I don't know who I am. Did you ever? Everything comes to

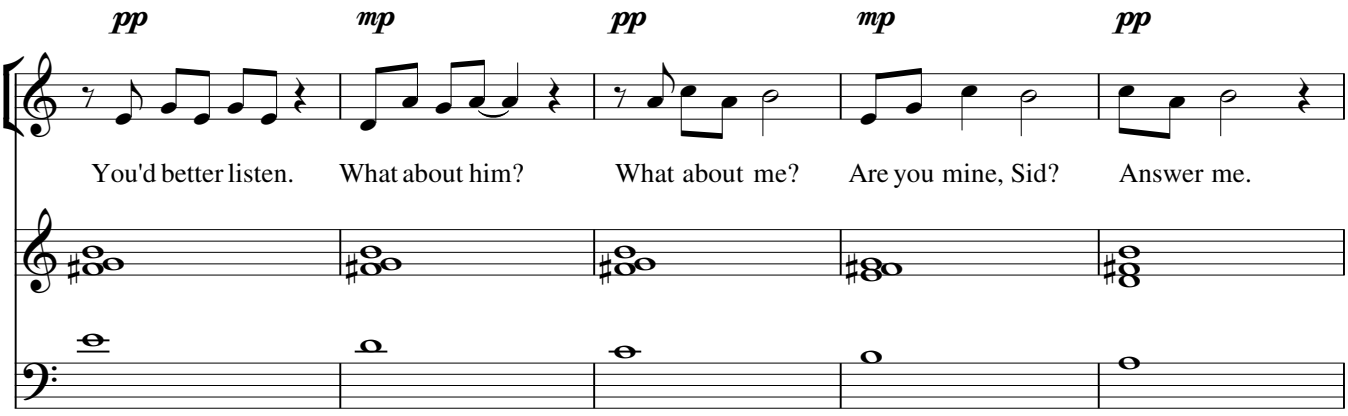

Sidney
pp
p
you in the end. By and by it all comes down to you. It's too late, Sidney. No it ain't Roy...
Roy
mf
mf
You'll mend.Let me call the doctor. Don't bother. I can see it's
(Sidney's face draws closer to
Roy's and his lips touch him)
f
p
pp
afternoon by the way the light falls. You're Sidney, aren't you? What's the meaning of that
Sidney
mp
f
Sidney? Does it have to have a meaning? Whoever I am, I am yours...for thousands of years

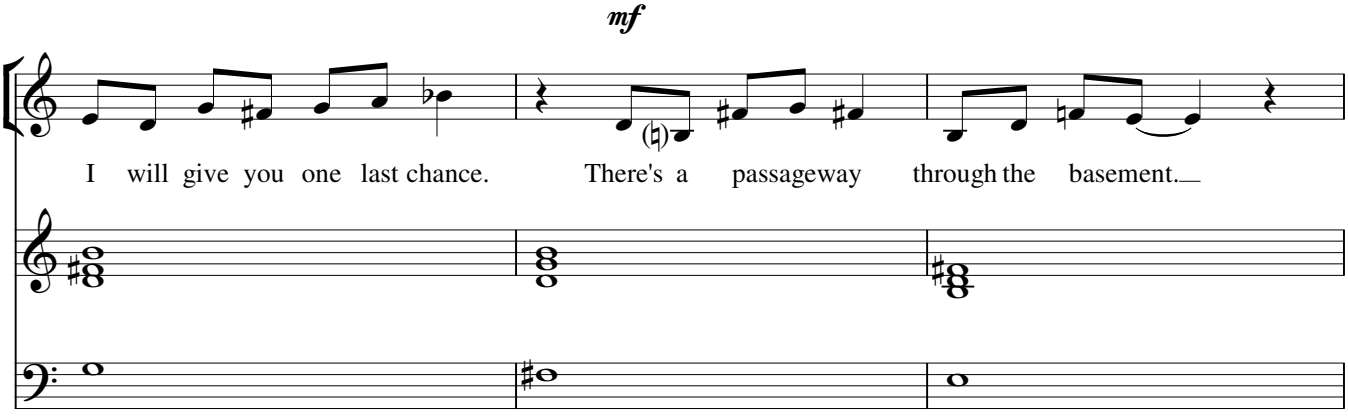

Roy
mp
p
ppp
p
I've been yours. Your eternal sweetheart, I am all yours. Why did it take you so long then?
mp
Why did it take you so long to tell me it wasn't hate you had for me after all?
Sidney
pp
mf
p
Roy
mp
You're mine. That's all I know. It's real now and it'll be real tomorrow. I don't have no tomorrow.
Gareth
p
mf
mp
p
I don't have no to - morrow. You never was that tender with me, Sidney.

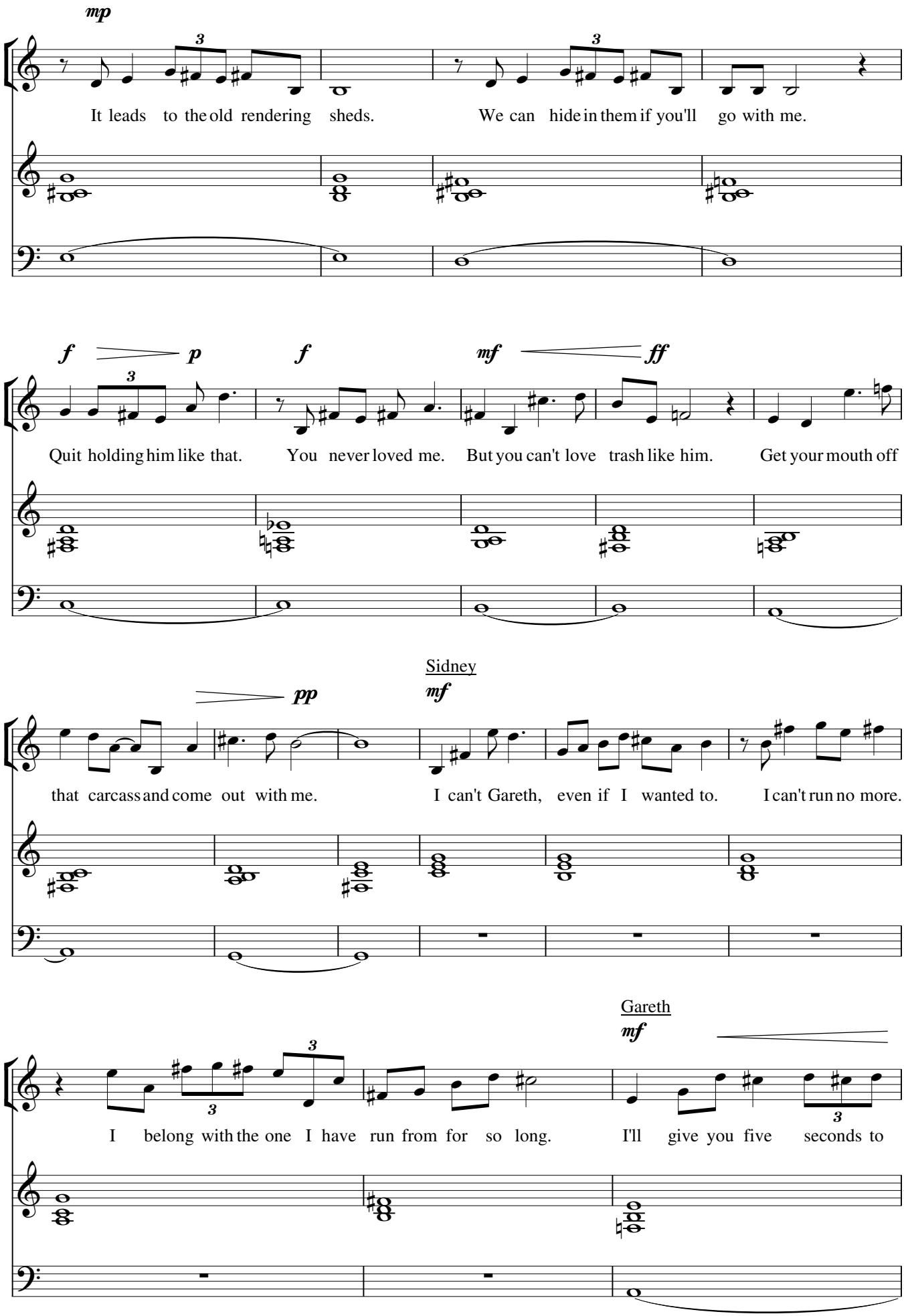
Sidney *mf* Gareth *mp*

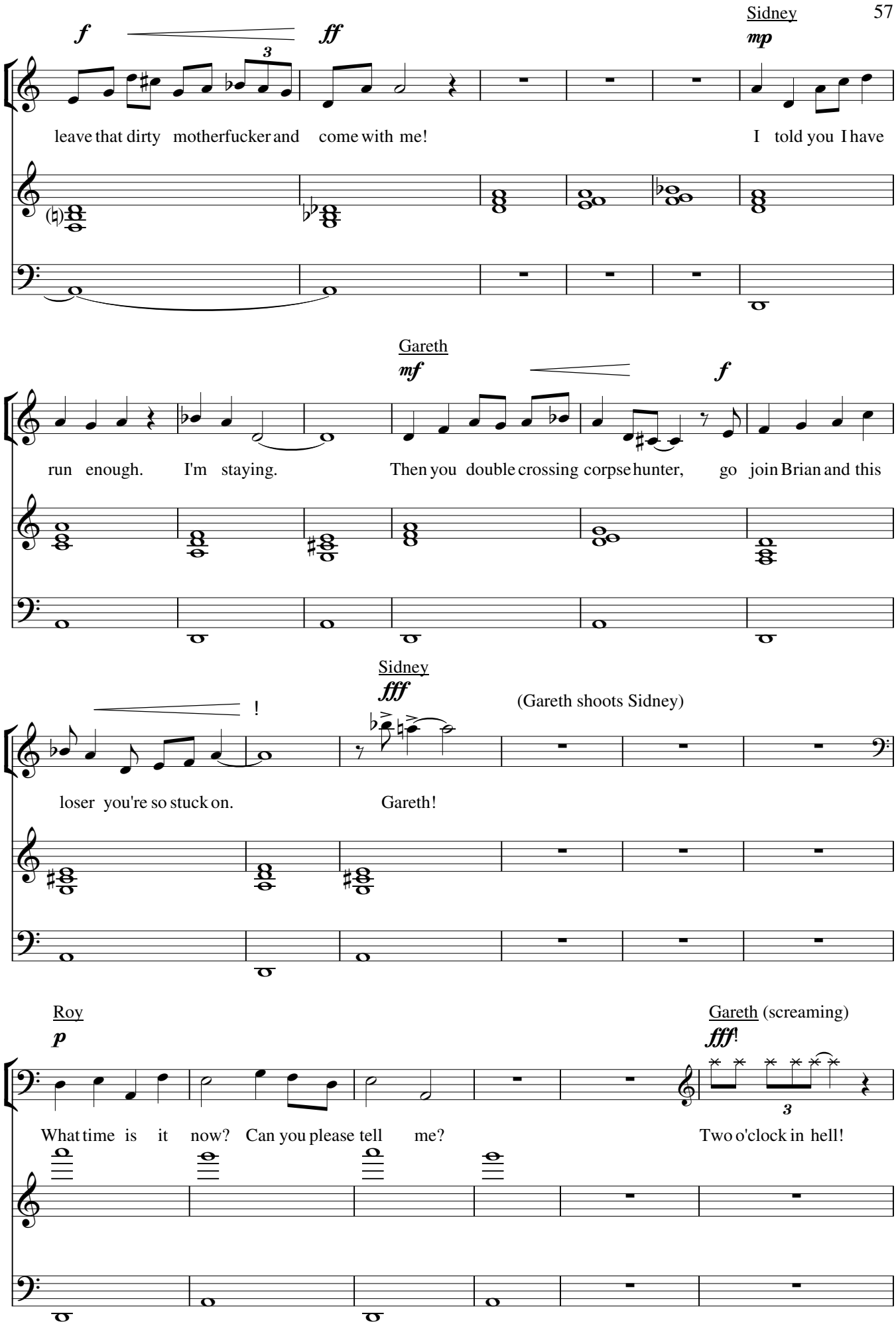









mp
It leads to the old rendering sheds.
We can hide in them if you'll go with me.
f
p
f
mf
ff
Quit holding him like that.
You never loved me.
But you can't love trash like him.
Get your mouth off
pp
Sidney
mf
that carcass and come out with me.
I can't Gareth, even if I wanted to.
I can't run no more.
Gareth
mf
I belong with the one I have run from for so long.
I'll give you five seconds to


Sidney
f
ff
mp
leave that dirty motherfucker and come with me!
I told you I have
Gareth
mf
f
run enough. I'm staying.
Then you double crossing corpse hunter, go join Brian and this
Sidney
fff
(Gareth shoots Sidney)
loser you're so stuck on.
Gareth!
Roy
p
Gareth (screaming)
fff
What time is it now? Can you please tell me?
Two o'clock in hell!

58

(He shoots Roy in the head. The scene fades to hospital room. Gareth is in a hospital bed covered in bloody bandages, obviously dying with Dr. Ulric - Mrs Vaisey gradually appears from the shadows)

Gareth

mp

I couldn't be shut out again, I couldn't lose Sidney.

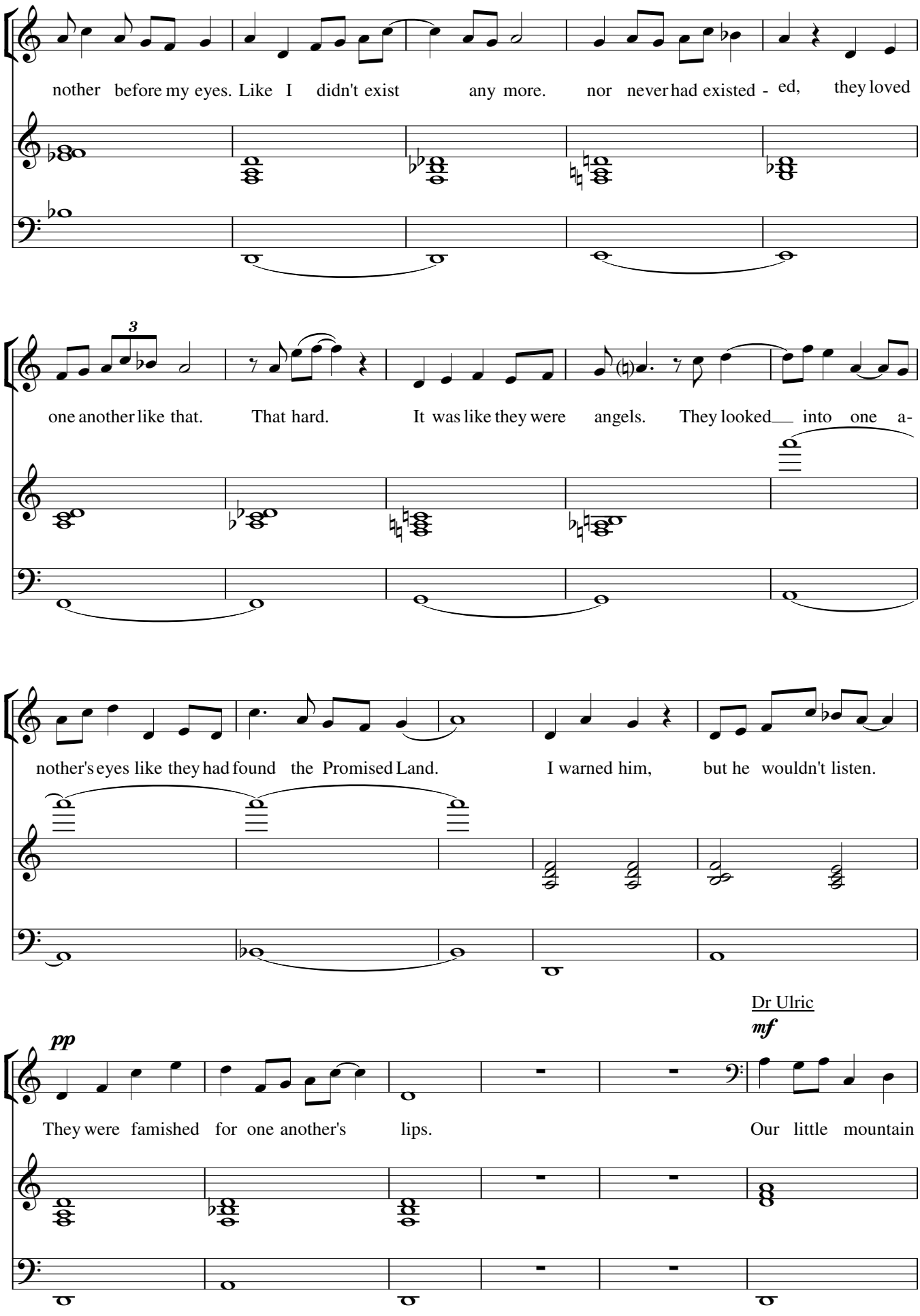
After I had al-ready lost my horses, and my father and two brothers. Yet that was happening right in front

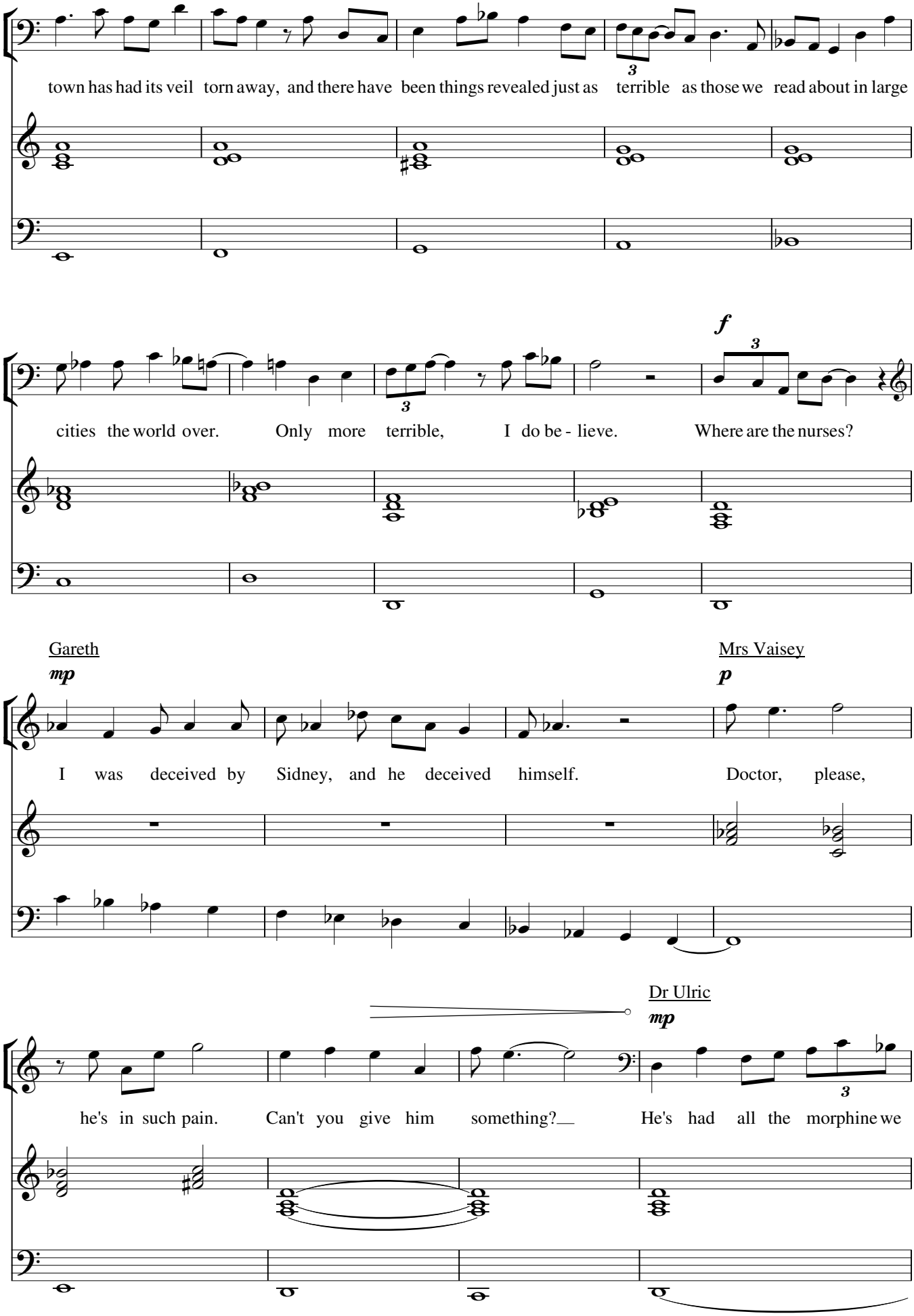
ppp!

of my eyes. Then shutting me out with their better love making.

mp

I had to kill them because of the famished way they loved one a -


nother before my eyes. Like I didn't exist any more. nor never had existed - ed, they loved
3
one another like that. That hard. It was like they were angels. They looked into one a-
nother's eyes like they had found the Promised Land. I warned him, but he wouldn't listen.
Dr Ulric
pp
mf
They were famished for one another's lips. Our little mountain


town has had its veil torn away, and there have been things revealed just as terrible as those we read about in large
cities the world over. Only more terrible, I do be - lieve. Where are the nurses?
f
Gareth
mp
I was deceived by Sidney, and he deceived himself.
Mrs Vaisey
p
Doctor, please,
Dr Ulric
mp
he's in such pain. Can't you give him something? He's had all the morphine we

Gareth

mp

dare administer. I want the truth taken_down and given to everyone to read. I had to shoot

Dr Ulric

p

Gareth

mp

them. Yes, I know. It allowed them to forget me,

p

pp

and it let them go. I'm a - lone, am I?

(The Doctor takes a cloth to wipe away the blood on Gareth's face.
Mrs Vaisey takes the cloth from him and embraces her son tenderly kissing him)