Vonnegut Requiem

A Place Among

for SATB choir, clarinet, bassoon, and bass

Gabriel Lubell

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for SATB choir, clarinet, bassoon, and bass

(2018)

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Duration: ca. 4' • C Score

Commissioned by

Voces Novae

Bloomington, Indiana

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Charles and Linda Pickle in honor of the Schelbitzki Family

Paul and Susan Sullivan

In Memory of

Marian and John Gaskill

John Lawson

Sandy Wood Taylor

Evans Woollen III

Text

My prayers are unheard,
But thy sublime indifference will ensure
That I burn not in some everlasting fire.
Give me a place among the sheep
And the goats, separating none from none.
Leaving our mingled ashes where they fall.

Program Note

Contrary to the Christian requiem's prayer for the eternal light of paradise, Vonnegut's seeks an alternative form of peace. It is one devoid of judgment, absolutely egalitarian in its requests of the void. In this there is a kind of beautiful unity, one in which the traditional pastoral model is transformed into a fearless landscape where hierarchy is altogether absent. But this is achieved through the cosmos' "sublime indifference" – a potentially horrifying attribute. Historically, the concept of the sublime has been mobilized to convey awe-inspiring vistas and soul-shaking confrontations between humanity and nature. Is the idea of cosmic *indifference*, especially when personified, commensurate with such cataclysmic feelings? Perhaps, but I think Vonnegut's sublimity is of a different, though closely related species. It is one that comes from the knowledge that indifference makes all things part of a grand eternity – one that encompasses all possible lives and non-lives. Surely that qualifies as sublime; to think of leaving one life, only to become commingled with all the others that have come and gone. For an indifferent void, that could be quite the party, and a rather overwhelming scene. But even for an introverted soul there is comfort – after all, eternity is what you make of it, and indifference need not imply emptiness or loneliness unless you want it to. (Likewise with voids; ask an astronomer.) Maybe the only real downside to this cosmology is that it cannot be consciously experienced, but so it goes.

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C Score

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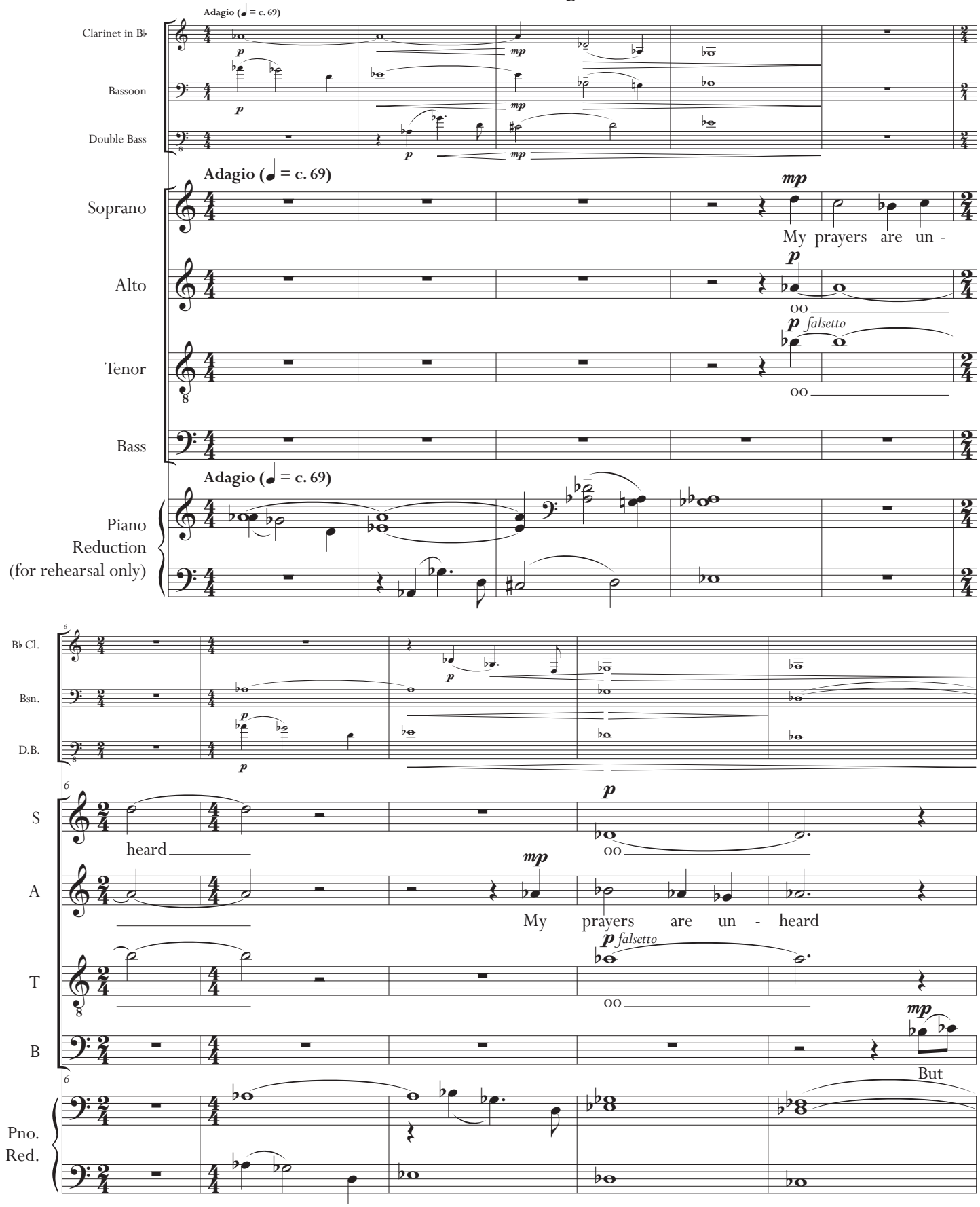
A Place Among

Kurt Vonnegut

Gabriel Lubell



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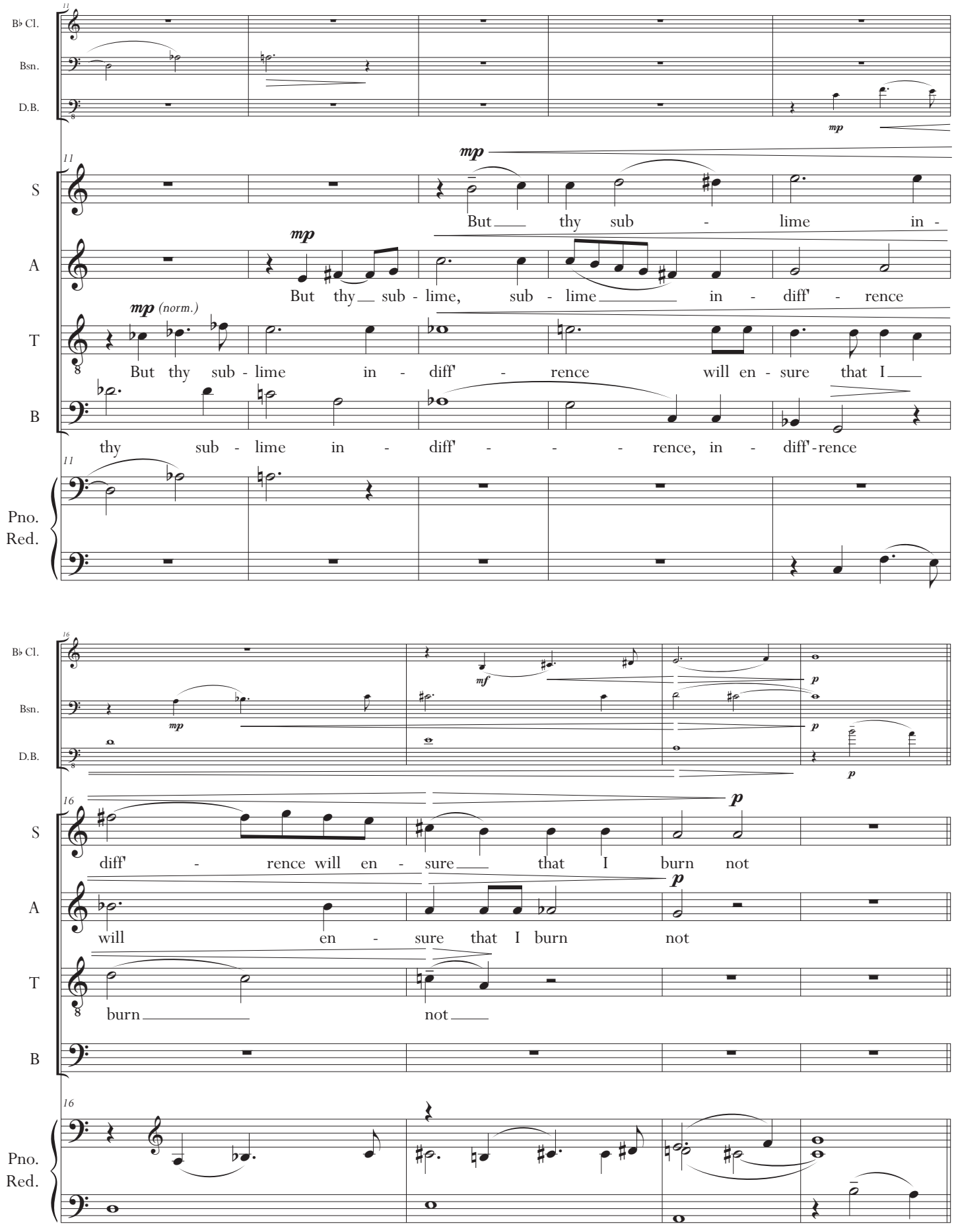
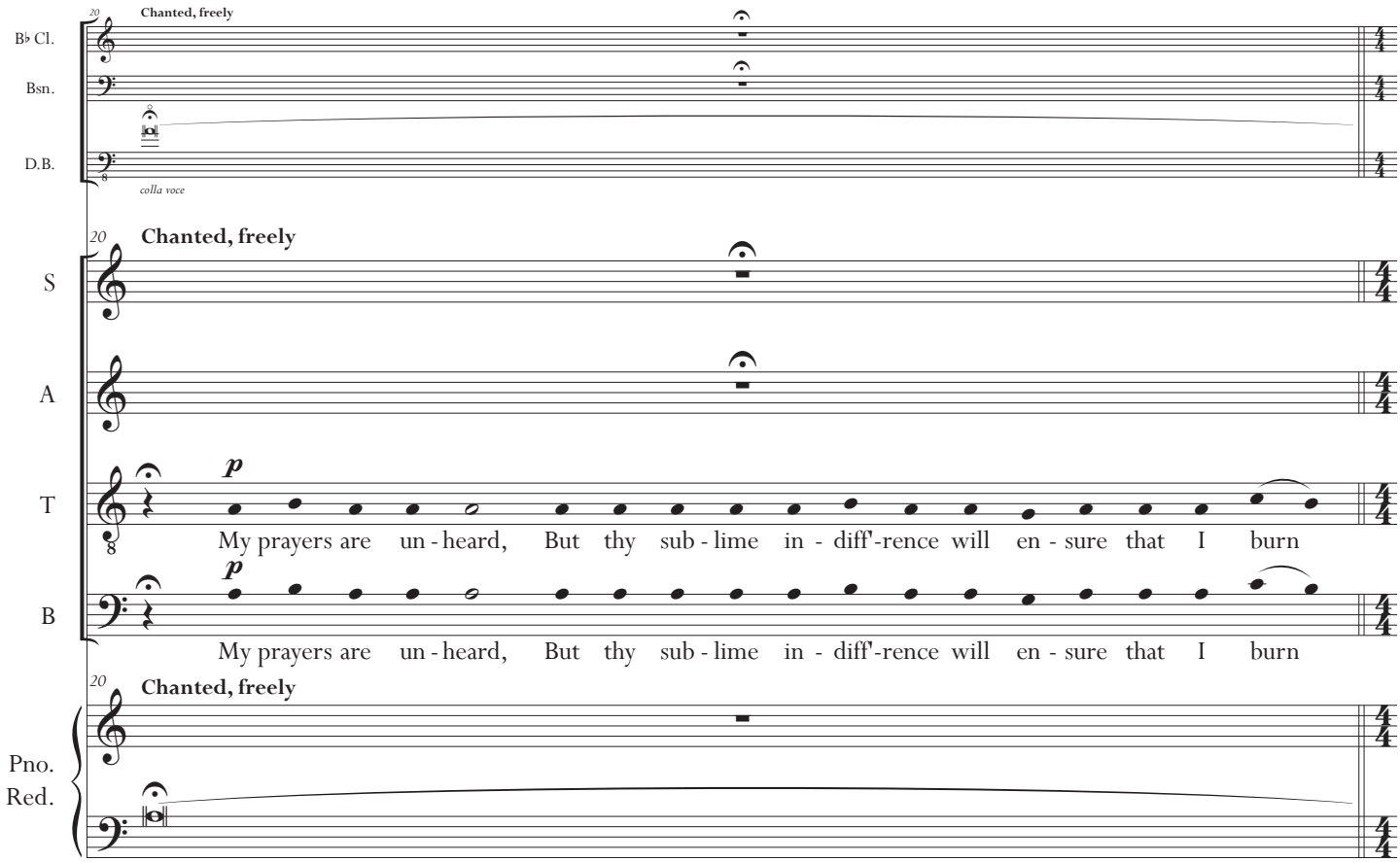
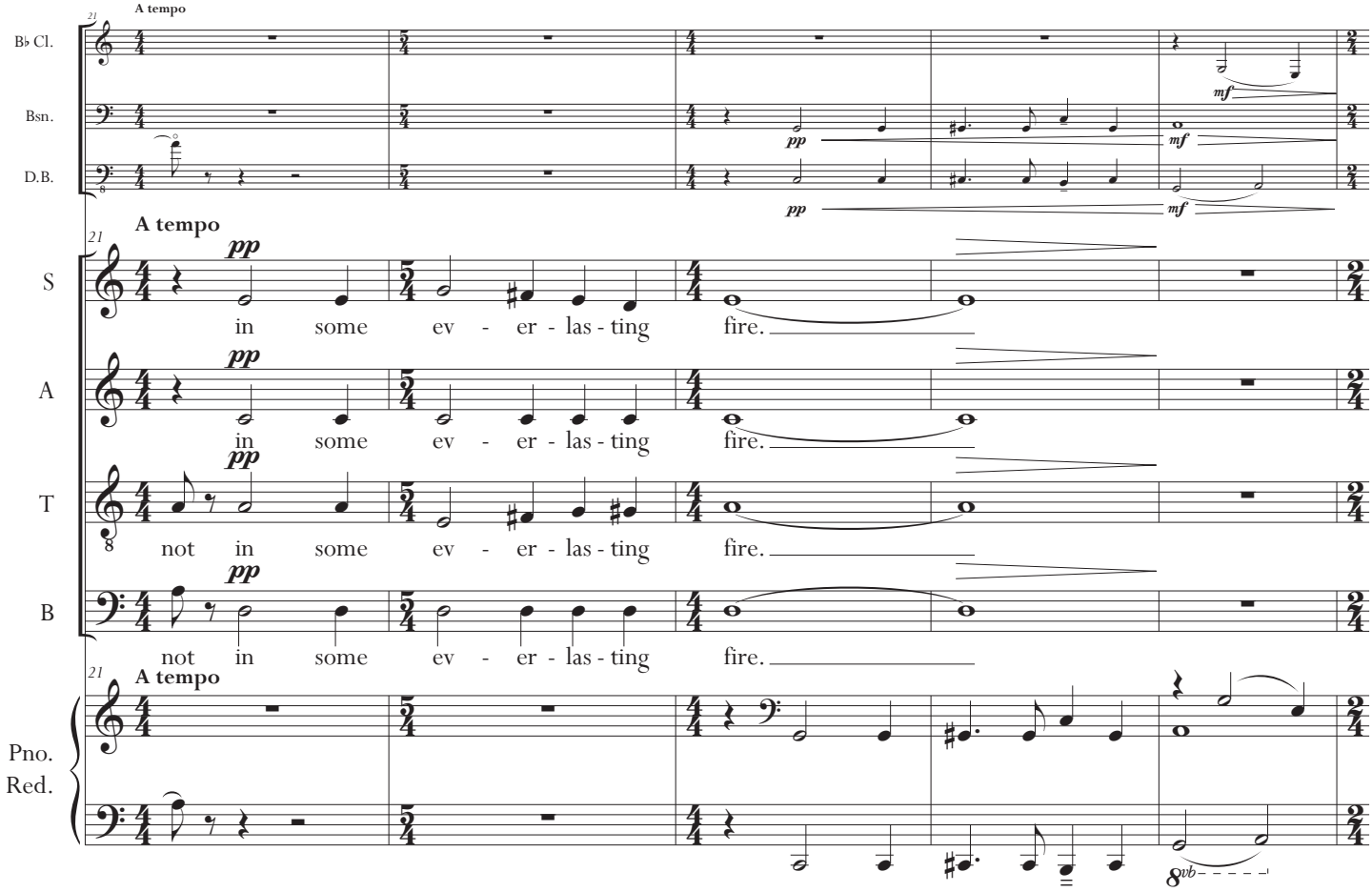
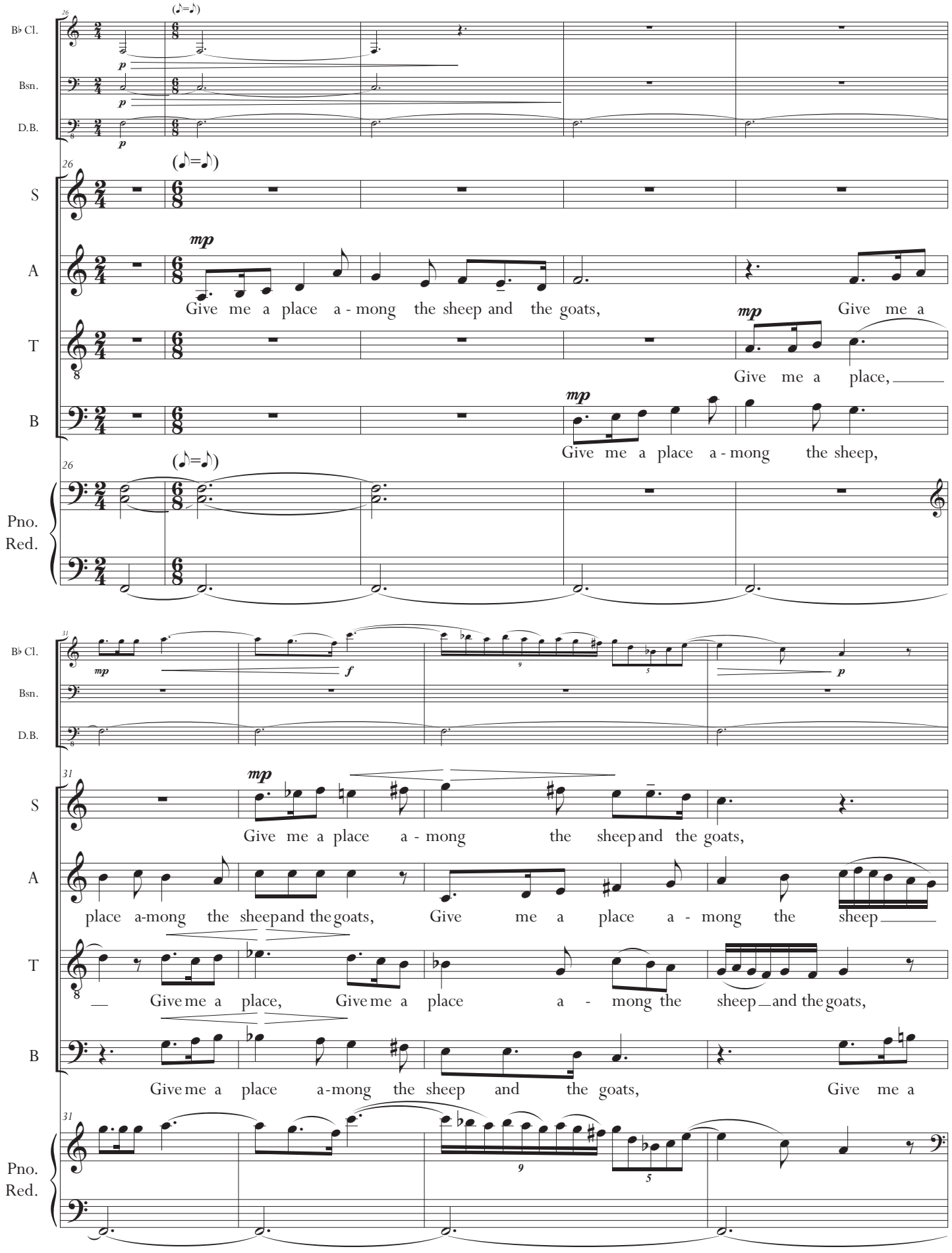
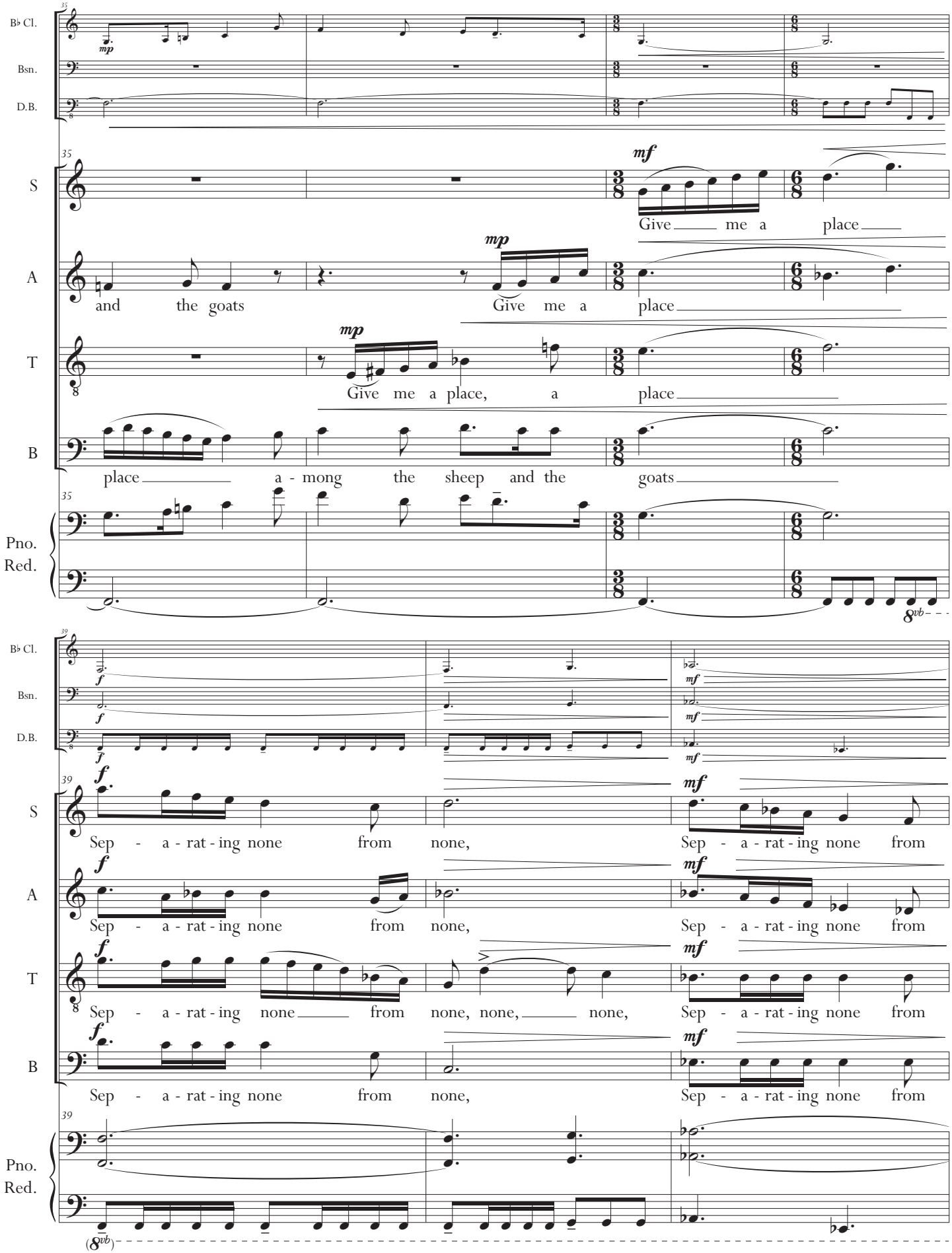
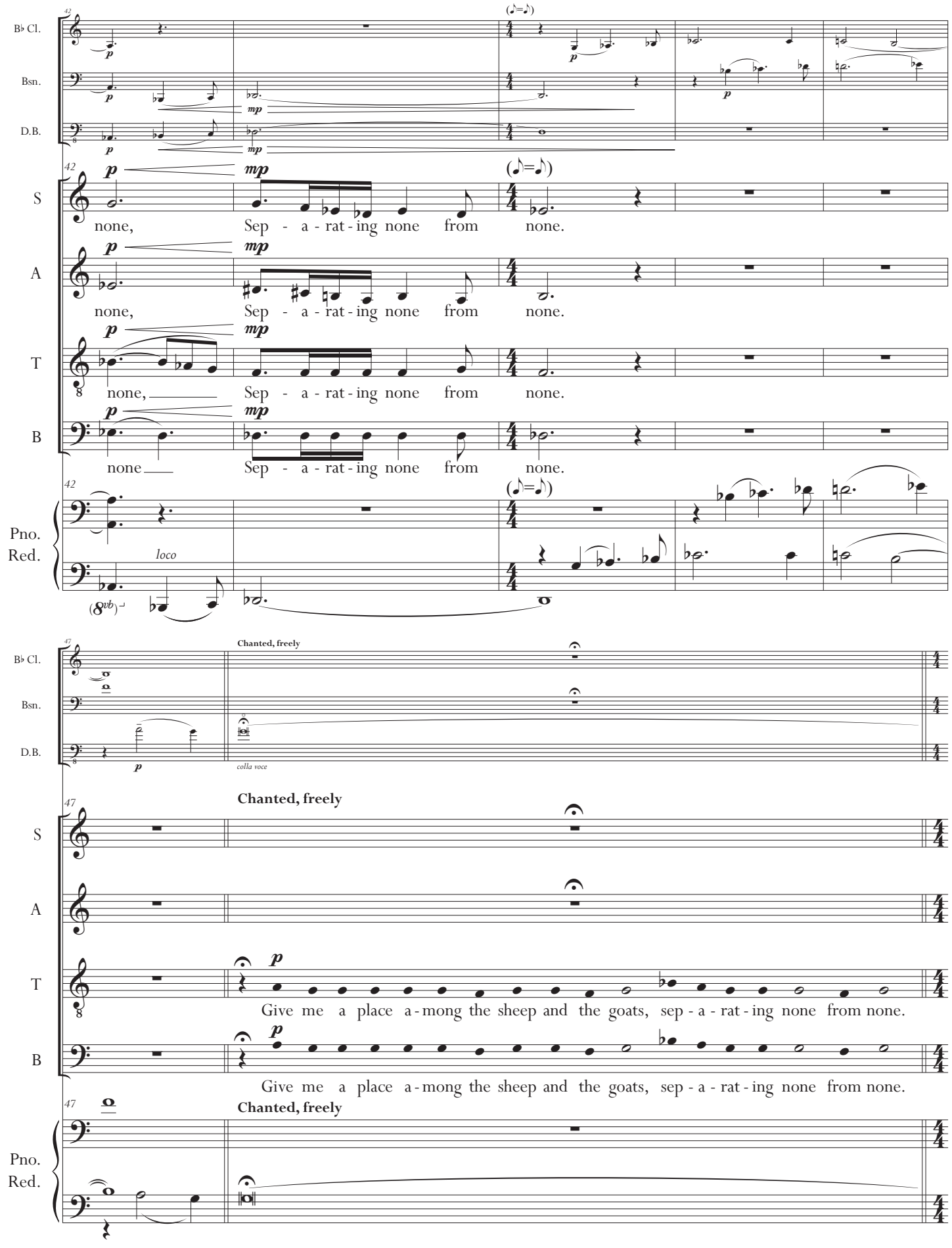

11
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
mp
S
But thy sub - lime in -
A
mp
But thy sub - lime, sub - lime in - diff' - rence
T
mp (norm.)
But thy sub - lime in - diff' - rence will en - sure that I
B
thy sub - lime in - diff' - - - rence, in - diff'-rence
Pno.
Red.
16
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
mf
mp
p
S
diff' - rence will en - sure that I burn not
A
will en - sure that I burn not
T
burn not
B
Pno.
Red.

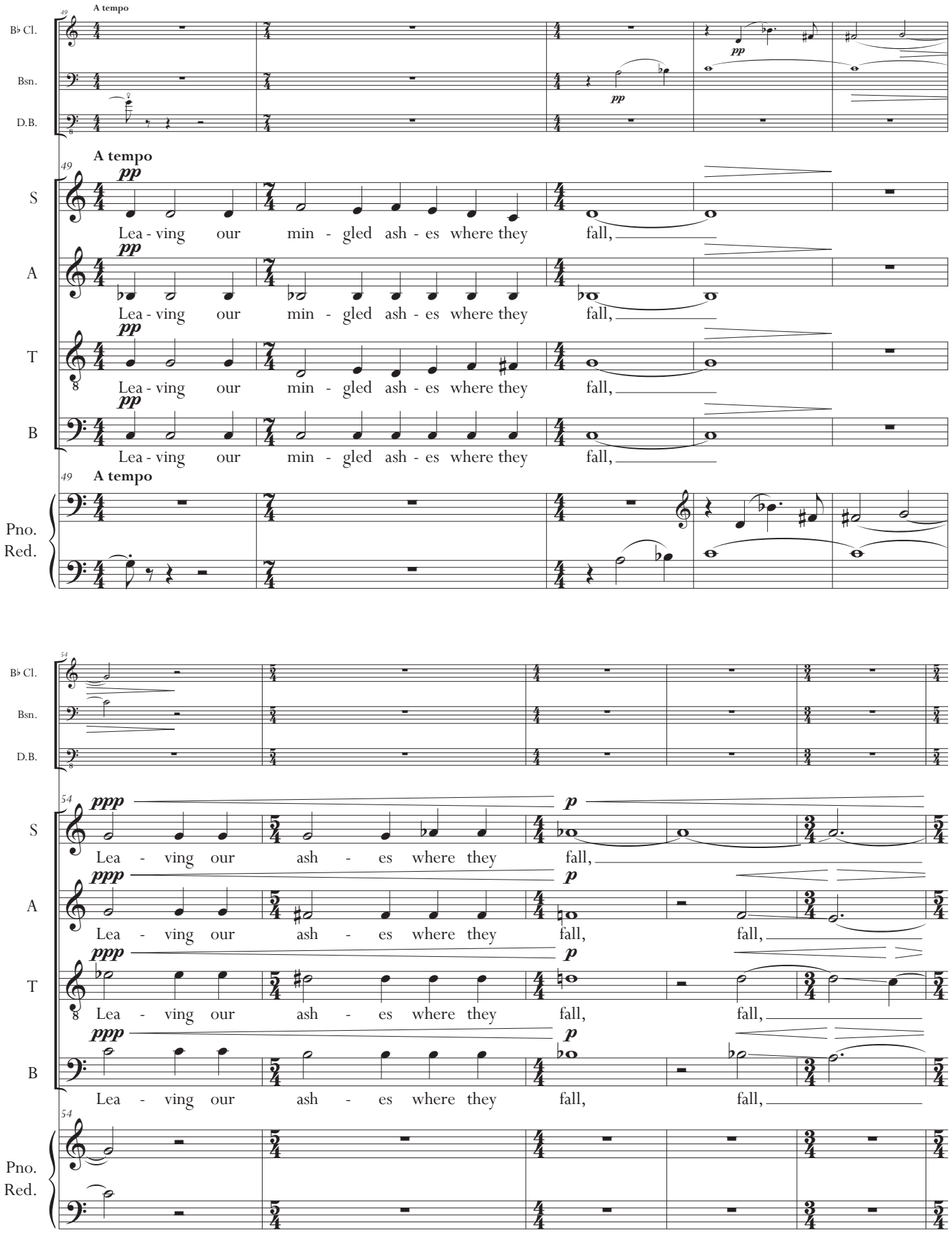

20
Chanted, freely
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
colla voce
20
Chanted, freely
S
A
T
p
My prayers are un - heard, But thy sub - lime in - diff'-rence will en - sure that I burn
B
p
My prayers are un - heard, But thy sub - lime in - diff'-rence will en - sure that I burn
20
Chanted, freely
Pno.
Red.

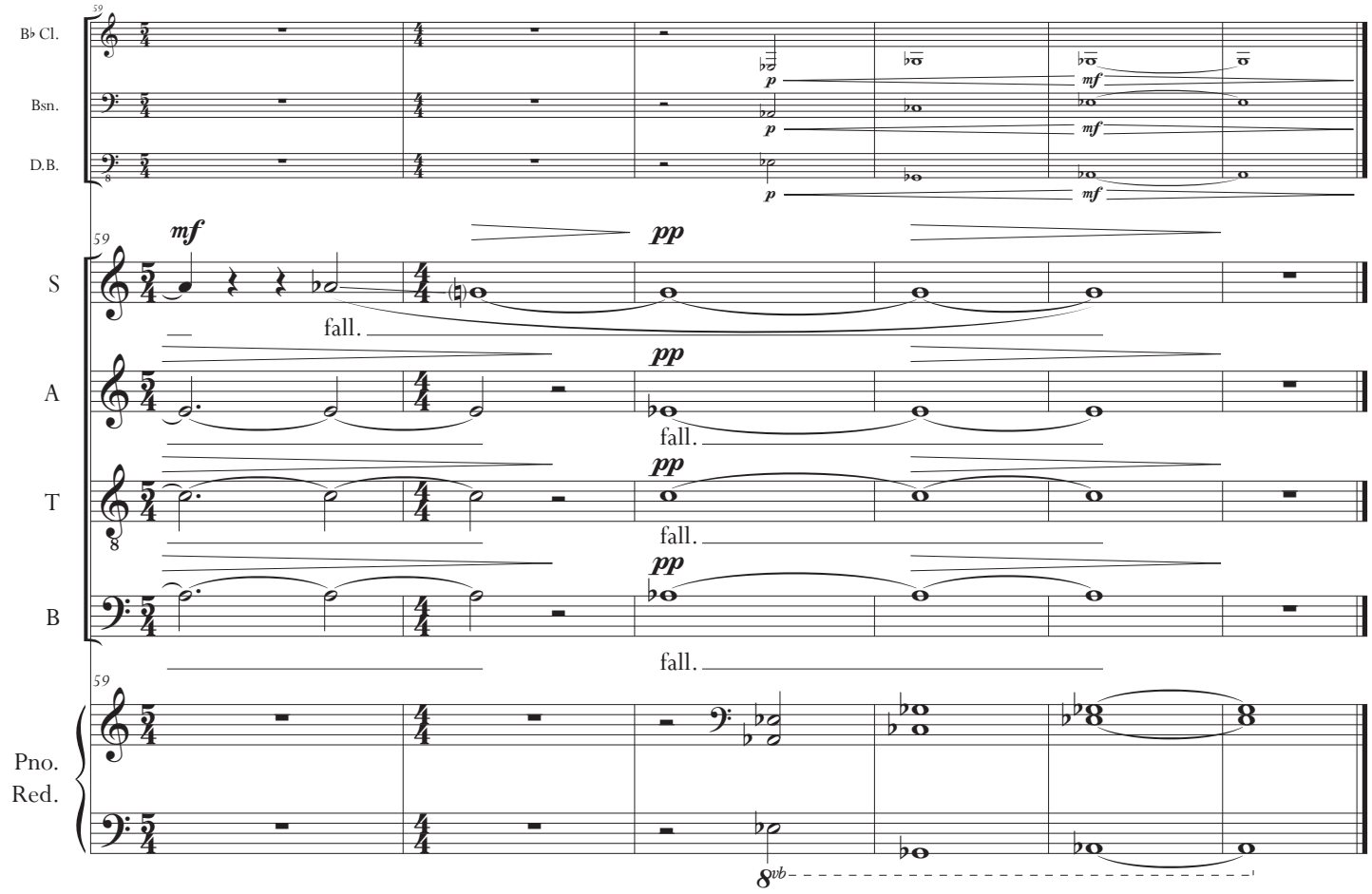

21
A tempo
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
pp
mf
21
A tempo
S
pp
in some ev - er - las - ting fire.
A
pp
in some ev - er - las - ting fire.
T
pp
not in some ev - er - las - ting fire.
B
pp
not in some ev - er - las - ting fire.
21
A tempo
Pno.
Red.
8vb


B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
S
A
T
B
Pno.
Red.
(♪=♪)
mp
p
f
Give me a place a - mong the sheep and the goats,
Give me a place,
Give me a place a - mong the sheep,
place a-mong the sheep and the goats, Give me a place a - mong the sheep
Give me a place, Give me a place a - mong the sheep and the goats,
Give me a place a-mong the sheep and the goats, Give me a


B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
S
A
T
B
Pno.
Red.
35
mp
mf
Give me a place
and the goats
Give me a place
Give me a place, a place
place a - mong the sheep and the goats
8vb
39
f
mf
Sep - a - rat - ing none from none,
Sep - a - rat - ing none from
Sep - a - rat - ing none from none, none, none,
(8vb)


42
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
(♪=♪)
p
mp
S
A
T
B
none, Sep - a - rat - ing none from none.
none, Sep - a - rat - ing none from none.
none, Sep - a - rat - ing none from none.
none Sep - a - rat - ing none from none.
Pno.
Red.
loco
(8vb)
47
Chanted, freely
colla voce
Give me a place a - mong the sheep and the goats, sep - a - rat - ing none from none.
Give me a place a - mong the sheep and the goats, sep - a - rat - ing none from none.


49
A tempo
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
S
A
T
B
Pno.
Red.
pp
Lea - ving our min - gled ash - es where they fall,
54
ppp
p
Lea - ving our ash - es where they fall, fall,


59
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
D.B.
p
mf
59
S
A
T
B
mf
pp
fall.
59
Pno.
Red.
8vb