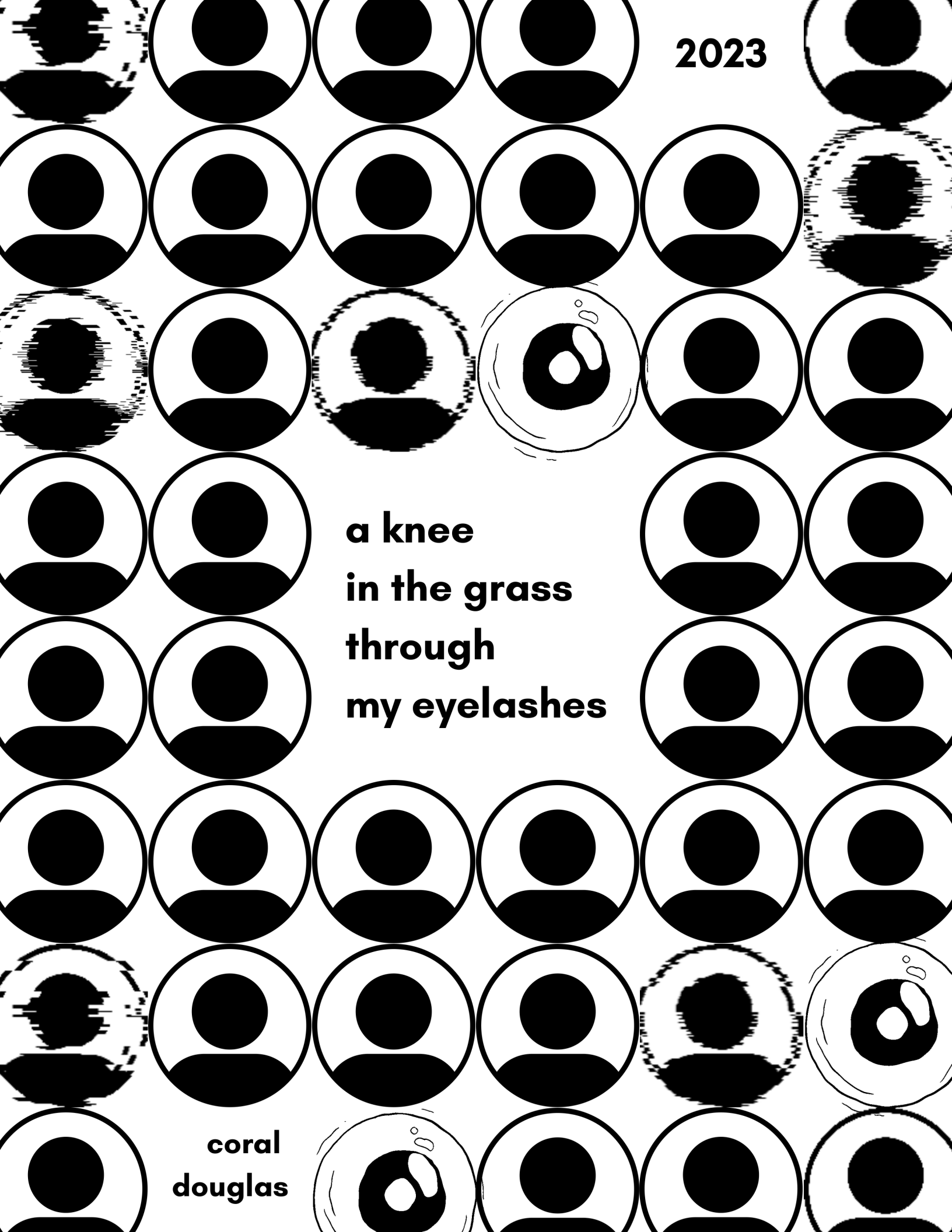
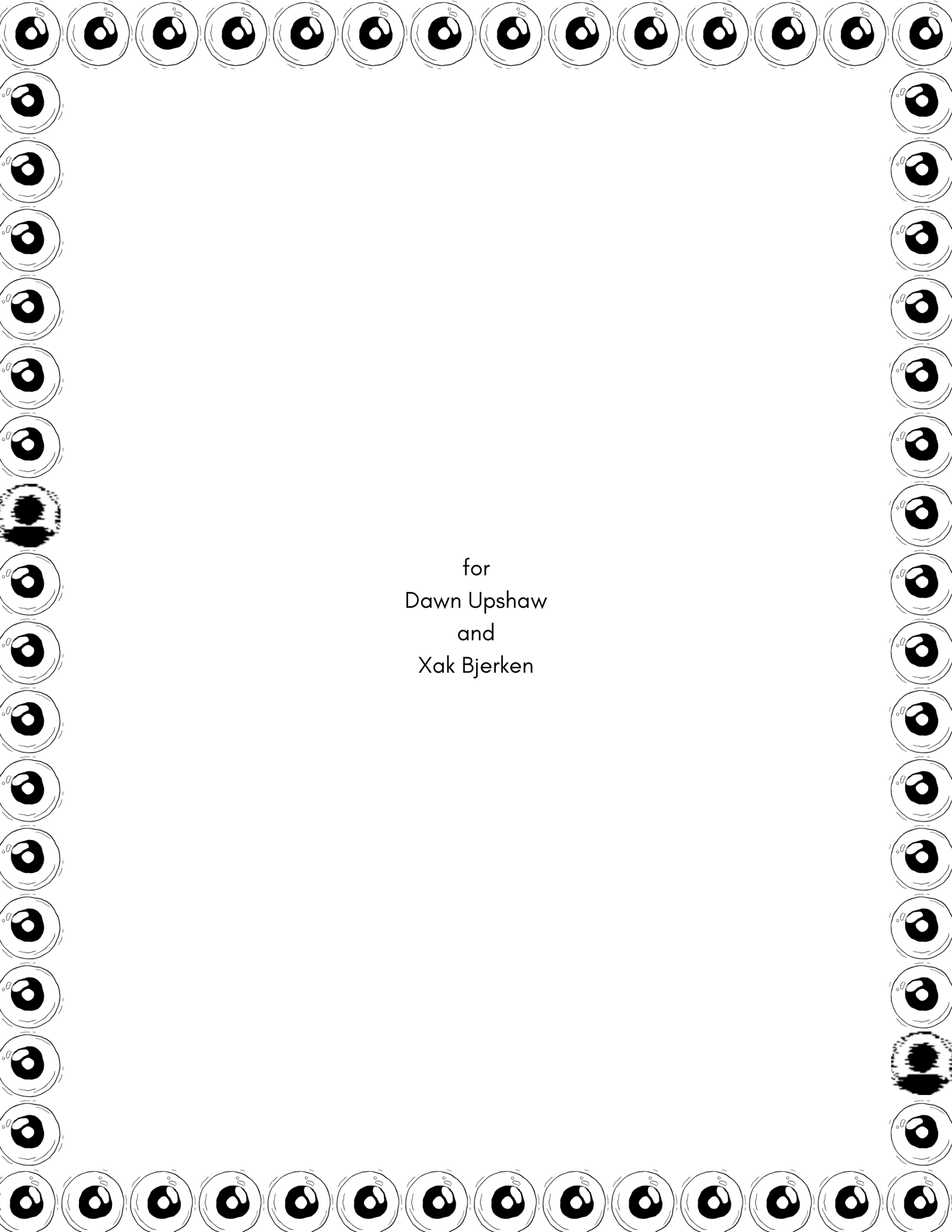


2023

**a knee
in the grass
through
my eyelashes**

**coral
douglas**





for
Dawn Upshaw
and
Xak Bjerken

performance notes

Equipment needed:

- Felt mallet (1), Superball mallet (1), E-Bows (2)

General:

- Accidentals only apply to individual pitches; they do not apply to all octaves. However, accidentals persist for the entire measure.

Spoken text:

- Monologue and dialogue occurs throughout the score. This is always enclosed within a box, and the spoken text is always in a bold print.

Noteheads:

Soprano:

- o X noteheads indicate normal speech
- o Square noteheads indicate pitched vowels sounds
- o Slash noteheads indicate breathing

Pianist:

- o Circle X noteheads indicate silently depressing keys

Soprano:

- The Soprano will occasionally need to sing into the piano. This is indicated with a bold box marked "INSIDE" (to sing inside piano) or "TO AUDIENCE" (facing the audience normally).
- Treat all glissandos as smoothly and connected as possible
- Spoken text, as in the example below, may be approached with great interpretive freedom. Whisper/unpitched, normal speech, and sprechstimme approaches (and switching between) are all equally viable.



Pianist:

- Using the Superball mallet to create pitched gestures may be difficult at first. Practice (with and without Soprano) and care should be given to ensure success with this technique.
 - o An example of playing with a Superball mallet on the bars can be found here: <https://youtu.be/ru80AbrqVes?t=203>

a knee in the grass through my eyelashes

Text by Trinton Hlynn

Coral Douglas

A

Soprano: (hunched over inside the piano)

Pianist: (gently, but seriously, whispered): **You must never forgive me.**

(brief pause, around 5 seconds)

A1

♩ = 80

reference pitch

dreamy, rubato

Pno.

The piano accompaniment for section A1 is written in 4/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half note G4 with an accent (>) and a slur. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together with a slur and a triplet '3' below. The third measure contains a half note C5 with an accent (>) and a slur. The fourth measure contains a half note B4 with a slur. The fifth measure contains a half note A4 with a slur. The sixth measure contains a half note G4 with a slur. The piece ends with a 5/4 time signature.

into piano

A5

bel canto, dreamy

p

mp

f

Soprano

The soprano vocal line for section A5 is written in 5/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half note G4 with an accent (>) and a slur. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together with a slur and a triplet '3' below. The third measure contains a half note C5 with an accent (>) and a slur. The fourth measure contains a half note B4 with a slur. The fifth measure contains a half note A4 with a slur. The sixth measure contains a half note G4 with a slur. The lyrics are: Bo - dy croo - ke - - d.

Pno.

The piano accompaniment for section A5 is written in 5/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half note G4 with an accent (>) and a slur. The second measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, all beamed together with a slur and a triplet '3' below. The third measure contains a half note C5 with an accent (>) and a slur. The fourth measure contains a half note B4 with a slur. The fifth measure contains a half note A4 with a slur. The sixth measure contains a half note G4 with a slur. The piece ends with a 2/4 time signature.

♩ = 120

p

The soprano vocal line continues in 2/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half note G4 with an accent (>) and a slur. The second measure contains a half note A4 with a slur. The lyrics are: Could be,

Pno.

The piano accompaniment continues in 2/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The first measure contains a half note G4 with an accent (>) and a slur. The second measure contains a half note A4 with a slur. The lyrics are: light, fluttering

2

A8

breathy sprechstimme

mf *p* *fp* *f* *p* *mp* *f*

Soprano

3 3

Could be, could be, could be, a cru - x of it - se - lf

Pno.

A12

0:15

p *f* *p*

Soprano

yes, won't say no, could be yours, is it?

Pno.

(continue pedal)

A13

0:10

p *f* *mf* *f* *p*

Soprano

3/4

curved spi - ne with something at its tip! can't quite,

A14

$\text{♩} = 120$ $\text{♩} = 80$ normal speech

Soprano

to audience

f (chew the word)

No, should - n't.

Pno.

p

8vb

B

Allow 10-15 seconds before continuing, keeping dramatic tension unbearably palpable.

B1

♩ = 60

bel canto, mechanically precise

Soprano

mp *mf*

As if you could, as if you would.

8va

precise

Pno.

ppp

B4

normal speech,
pitches given for contextual reference

anxiously

f

Soprano

Is it? No! Don't!

(8va) 15va 15va (8va)

powerfully

Pno.

f

8vb 8vb

B6

deeply saddened,

0:10

mp

Soprano
please, don't, you don't... understand

Pno.

8vb

C

Pianist: (immediately interrupting, delicately): **You must ~~forgive me.~~**

Soprano (assuming "You must never forgive me," interrupts): **No, of course not!**

C1

♩ = 80

f sharp breath in

f fiery

Soprano
You should have told me! not a-lone,

Pno.

ppp

8vb

accel. -----

gooey glissando

Soprano

There are ma - ny of them. So ma - ny press - ing,

Pno. *mp*

8vb

strong, fully pitched, no longer breathy

ff

Soprano

so ma - ny press - ing flesh in - to rub - ber, in - to smooth con - crete,

Pno. *f*

8vb



♩ = 120

strong

Soprano

fff

in-toearth, just earth.

gliss.

Pno.

fff

8vb



weakly
(let breath tremble and die)

Soprano

gliss.

4 10 16

(15va)

Pno.

p

pp

mechanically, like a typewriter (normal accents)

lightly revive resonance

sim.

Sostenuto

4 10 16

(15va)



rit.

Pno.

Piano accompaniment for C13, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and a dynamic marking of *f*.

f

(15va)



Pno.

Piano accompaniment for C16, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and a dynamic marking of *f*.



$\text{♩} = 80$

normal speech

p

Soprano

Soprano vocal line for C19, starting with a rest and then a series of notes with accents.

May-be, it's not so cold.

(15va)

like a heartbeat

Pno.

Piano accompaniment for C19, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and a dynamic marking of *p*.

p

pp



Soprano

Soprano vocal line for C23, featuring notes with accents and a dynamic marking of *ppp*.

But it feels, they feel? I, I,

(15va)

Pno.

Piano accompaniment for C23, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents and a dynamic marking of *ppp*.

ppp

pick up superball mallet and stand up to reach inside the piano frame

D

Unpitched whisper
like a mother tucking in her child

0:15

Soprano *mp*
Don't be afraid Whatever you do, don't be afraid-

Pno.

Leftmost metal beam:
Use superball mallet to mimic pitch and volume of Soprano

D2

♩ = 100

Soprano *f* *breathy* *mp sub.*
Oh god, they know me. They know me. Why did-n't you tell me that

Pno.

Halfway standing:
ref sweep felt mallet over strings sim.
f *ff* *mp sub.*

8vb

D4

Soprano *f* *mp*
they kno sharp breath in trembling breath out

into piano →

♩ = 120

D5

anxiously
p *mf* *f* *p*
gliss
goeey *dainty*

Soprano
 Bo - dy, cru - x, is that righ - t? Col - d, like be - fore.

Pno.
brightly
p *f*

sporadic

D7

p *fff* *p* *f* *fff* **0:10**

Soprano
 This time, on the forehead! Don't? Make me answer!

mp *ppp* *p*
 One of ours, yes. Only mine... Don't make me...

Pno.

♩ = 80

D8

All fermatas approx. 3" **15va**

Pno.
ppp

Soprano: **I'm sorry**

to audience →

E

♩ = 80

breathy sprechstimme → more pitch → no pitch goeey gliss

p ————— *mf* ————— *p* ————— *f* ————— *p*

Soprano

So - rry, so - rry, so - rry, so - rry, so - rry, So - rry, so - rry, so - rry,

Pno.

ppp

p

gently

E4

mf ————— *f* ————— *p*

Soprano

it's on-ly that this is so cold on my fore - head.

Pno.

mp ————— *f*

p

restrained

gently

E6

weak
p

frustrated

f *pp*

Soprano

3 3 3 3

gliss.

You've cared for me so we - ll, it's only that this is so cold on my fore - head.

3''

Pno.

ppp *p* *mp* *pp sub.*

3 3 3

3''

E9

sharp diction

p *f*

mp

Soprano

3

and the front of my skull is sore it's on - ly that this

Pno.

harshly

mf *f*

E11

Soprano

f *ff*

is so cold on my fore-head and the front of my skull was sore

p *f* *mf*_{sub.}

F

E14

Soprano

mp *rit.* *♩ = 80 (tempo primo)*

gliss.

docile, but with clarity *sweetly*

mp *mp*_{sub.} *p*

*f*_{sub.}

Soprano *mf*

and you're be - ing so kind it's just, my spine

Pno. *mf* *p*

Pno. *pp* *mf* *pp*

3"

Soprano: (exiting the piano): **No. I will not rise.**

Soprano *p*

the spine...

Pno. *p* *mf* *p*

5"



Soprano

p

and I could not rise

8"

pp *mp* *pp*

pick up superball mallet and stand up to reach inside the piano frame



Soprano: (calmly): I . . . ☹



like a mother tucking in her child
mp

0:05

Soprano

...shouldn't be when you see its eyes. Don't...

Leftmost metal beam:

Use superball mallet to mimic pitch and volume of Soprano

Pno.

Pianist: (assuringly, kindly): **You will never forgive me.**



0:20

Monologue 1:

Well, how am I supposed to know, I can barely see!

**Just a knee in the grass through my eyelashes,
that's all.**

And you must be quiet,

**as you have been,
as you have not,**

**for maybe above the knee
there will be someone speaking to me.**

For maybe someone will tell me, "Look, see it - - -"

H3

Immediate character change
like a mother warning her child

p

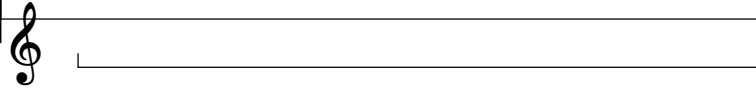
Soprano

s eyes, when you look do not be afraid. Whatever you do, understand?

Leftmost metal beam:

Use superball mallet to mimic pitch and volume of Soprano

Pno.



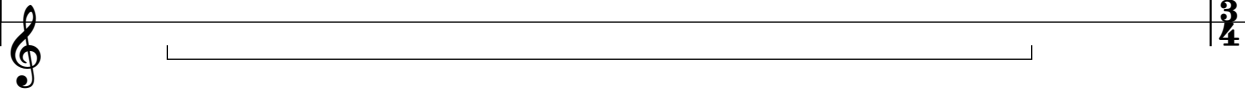
H4

f

Soprano

Listen to us, this is very important. When you know the answer to its question, When you kn-

Pno.



I

♩ = 80

♩ = 60

bel canto

p_{sub.}

ppp

mysteriously

p

Soprano



know - me

know me know me know me, know me.

They know me.

(8va)

gently

mysteriously

Pno.



ppp

p

14

calmly *mf*

Soprano

Why did - n't you tell me that they would know me?

Pno.

(8va)

mf *p*

16

p

Soprano

That once they knew me,

Pno.

p

18

mf *p* *sfz*

Pno.

harsh, forceful, powerful

110

croaky.....→ bel canto

mf *f* *belt f*

Soprano
but not an - y - mo - re it's on-ly the taste of my

Pno.
fff *fff* *mf* *f*

Sost. 8vb 5 8vb

113

fff *in great distress fff*

Soprano
tee - th! My teeth and their taste, it's on-ly this! That's all!

Pno.
fff

8vb 8vb 8vb

J

fff *croaky*.....→ *bel canto* *mf* → *f* *belt* *f*

Soprano

This! The dull taste and their tee - th will not al - low me

Pno.

fff *f*

8vb 8vb

Sost.

J3

fff *in pain*

Soprano

whe - ther you'll care, whe - ther you cared for me... the front of my skull and my spine, they will not allow me to rise...

Pno.

f

8vb 8vb 8vb

J5

Soprano

Pno.

#*♯*
8vb
fff

pick up superball mallet and stand up to reach inside the piano frame

Immediate character change

deathly calm

mp

Don't! Do not, do not, do not, Whatever you do, do not be afr -

Use superball mallet to mimic pitch and volume of Soprano

K

0:30

Monologue 2:

(softly) **Still, you must be quiet.**

Perhaps it will speak, above its knee,

if I can rise above the grass.

**If my eyelashes got out of the way, and if you will be still,
if you will just be quiet,**

(a little more than a whisper, lightly pitched)

**I can trace from the knee up the leg,
I can find the verticalities along the body,**

follow the neck . . .

Yes.

(terrified, full speech)

Oh god.

(intensely, but in control)

Oh, god. . .

♩ = 180 (♩ = 90)

L

deathly calm

pp ————— *p* > *pp*

9x

5"

Soprano

Musical staff for Soprano in section L, featuring a treble clef, 15/16 time signature, and a 4/4 time signature at the end. The staff contains a series of dotted quarter notes.

Do not, do not, do not!

Use superballet mallet to gently activate (hit) the bottom strings (keep sustain down)

9x

5"

Pno.

Musical staff for Piano in section L, featuring a bass clef, 15/16 time signature, and a 4/4 time signature at the end. The staff contains a series of dotted quarter notes.

pp ————— *p* > *pp*

♩ = 80

M

delicately with crisp diction

mf

Soprano

Musical staff for Soprano in section M, featuring a treble clef and 4/4 time signature. The staff contains a melodic line with lyrics.

I re-mem - ber you told me. "Mm"
You told me how they know me.

(8va)

playful

delicate

Pno.

Musical staff for Piano in section M, featuring a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and 4/4 time signature. The staff contains complex piano accompaniment with dynamics and articulation markings.

p ————— *mp*

pp

*bel canto**p* ————— *ppp*

M8

Soprano

And you will be so kind.

(8va)

Pno.

pp ————— *ppp* ————— *p* ————— *ppp*

N

Soprano

so, kind, you, you al rea - dy

p ————— *p* *mf*_{sub.} ————— *p*

Pno.

p ————— *p*

N3

Soprano

mf *p*

If you can, ju - st tou - ch my fore-head.

mf *p* *f*

N5

Pno.

f *mp* *f* *mp*

N8

Pno.

fff *mp*

8vb



♩ = 80 *mf*

Soprano

It's on - ly that my skull is so sore.

Pno.

mf *p* *ppp*

ref

3 3

gliss.



♩ = 80 pitched whisper *p* — *mf*

Soprano

will you?

Pno.

light, fluttering *pp* — *p*

place e-bows on the given pitches,
allow 5" of resonance before continuing



bel canto *p* — *pp* *p* — *mf*

Soprano

that's all, please.

Pno.

pp — *p*

O12

Pno.

O16

Soprano

p < > < >

Y - e - eI - e - e - s

Pno.

O21

P

Soprano

θ - v cour-se

You have told me. There are many of them.

(8va)

Pno.

ppp

place e-bows on given pitches,
allow 5" of resonance before continuing

P4

Soprano

tenderly

3

Soma-nypress-ing, in-to earth,

3

in-to just earth.

remove e-bows

(8va)

Pno.

tenderly

3

Q

0:50

Monologue 3:*(softly)* **There isn't so much now.****Only to count how much we have done for my eyelashes.****Only to realize we never were speaking.***(a little more than a whisper, lightly pitched)***After all this time, our multiplying limbs,****the heads we hold,
and the yous we will defend.****The others we will destroy.***(kindhearted)***We will learn each other.****Together, we will drape the Grammaton
over our blue muscles,****and you will never need to forgive me.**

GRAMMATON

Hlynn

You must never forgive me.

body . . . crooked . . . could be . . . a crux of itself, yes
won't say no --- could be yours, is it?
could be.
curved spine with something at its tip --- can't quite . . . well,
shouldn't. as if you could / as if you would.
is it?
I won't say . . .
don't.
You / Don't

You must

threadshespeaksinknotstthreadshespeaksinknotstthreadshespea

No!
Of course not!
You should have told me.
Not alone, there are many of them.
So many pressing flesh into rubber into smooth concrete into earth
just earth. Maybe it's not so cold, but it feels.
They feel.
I ---

"Don't be afraid.
Whatever you do. Don't be afr--"

Oh god they know me.
What are you doing?! Why didn't you tell me that they
kn ---

body . . . crux . . . is that the right . . .
cold like before, this time on the forehead.
one of ours, yes, don't / only mine / make me answer / don't make me -

--

. . .

I'm sorry.

it's only that this is so cold on my forehead.

you've cared for me so well.

it's only that this is so cold on my forehead.

and the front of my skull is sore.

it's only that this is to be so cold on my forehead and the front of my
skull was sore. and you're being so kind it's just my spine . . . / the

spine . . .

and I could not rise.

no.

I will not rise.

"-- shouldn't be when you see its
eyes. Don' --"

You will never forgive me.

Well, how am I supposed to know, I can barely see!

*Just a knee in the grass through my eyelashes,
that's all.*

And you must be quiet,

as you have been, / as you have not,

*for maybe above the knee there will be someone
speaking to me. For maybe someone will tell me, "Look,*

see it --"

"--s eyes, when you look do not be
afraid. Whatever you do, understand?

Listen to us, this is very important.

When you know the answer to its
question, When you kn --"

Know me. / They know me.

Why didn't you tell me they would know me?

Before I'm hearing the rustle of their wools against one
another's arms. And that they once knew me, but not

anymore.

That they once knew me but not anymore they will come to
know.

I will come to know when their skin and their fabrics

will not rise . . .

can not . . .

. . .

it's only the taste of my teeth
my teeth and their taste it's only this and that's all
this, the dull taste and their teeth will not allow me
whether or not you will care for me / whether or not
you cared the front of my skull and my spine, they
will not allow me to rise
and I will not - - -

"Don't!

Do not, do not, do not,

Whatever you do, do not be afr - - -"

Still.

You must be quiet.

*Perhaps it will speak, above its
knee, if I can rise above the grass.*

If my eyelashes got out of the way,

and if you will be still,

if you will just be quiet,

I can trace from the knee up the

leg,

I can find the verticalities along the

body, follow the neck . . .

Yes.

Oh god.

Oh, god . . .

"Do not.

Do not.

Do not."

I remember, you told me.
You told me how they know me.

and you will be so kind.

you already . . .

if you can, just touch my forehead?

it's only that my skull is so sore

will you?

that's all / . . .

. . .

please

Yes.
Of course.
You have told me.
Not alone, there are many of them.
So many pressing into earth.
Into just earth.

*There isn't so much now.
Only to count how much we have done for my
eyelashes. Only to realize we never were speaking.
After all this time, our multiplying limbs,
the heads we hold,
and the yous we will defend.
The others we will destroy.
We will learn each other.
Together, we will drape the Grammaton over our blue
muscles, and you should never forgive me.*

ksinknotstreadshespeaksinknotstreadshespeaksinkn