The Harmonic-Bass Divorce in Rock

Trevor de Clercq

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

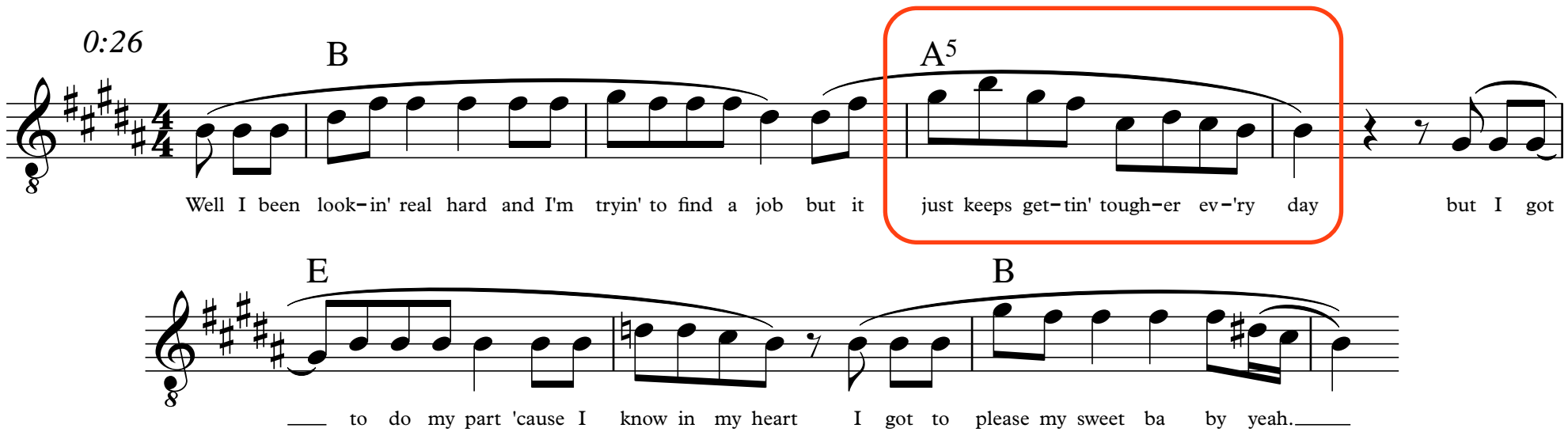
Society for Music Theory
November 2, 2018
San Antonio, TX

Slides available at: www.midside.com/presentations/

Slides available at: www.midside.com/presentations/

Melodic-Harmonic Divorce

“Rock’n Me” (The Steve Miller Band)

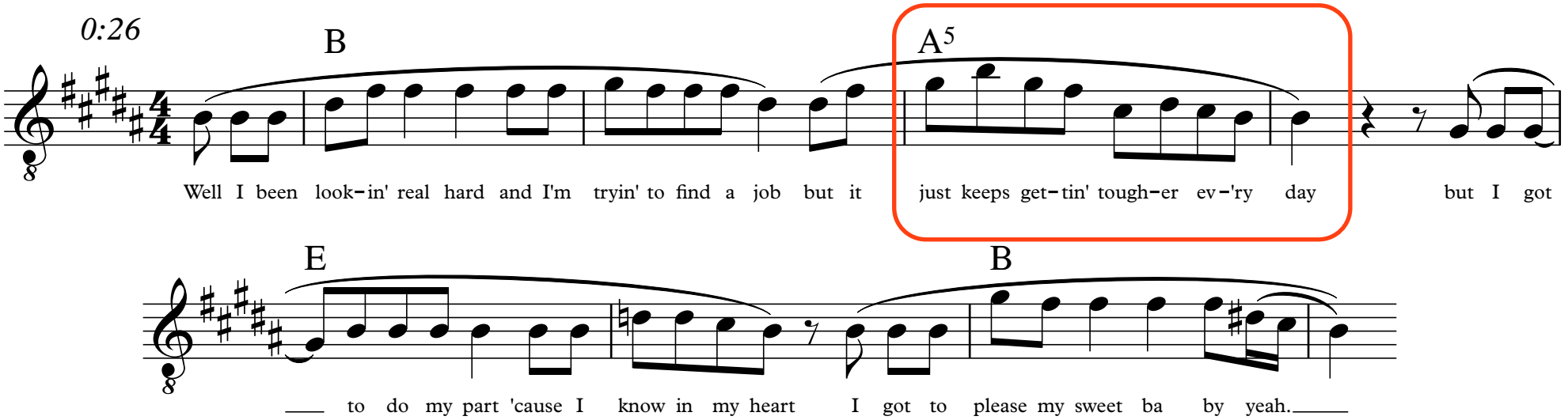


Harmonic-Bass Divorce

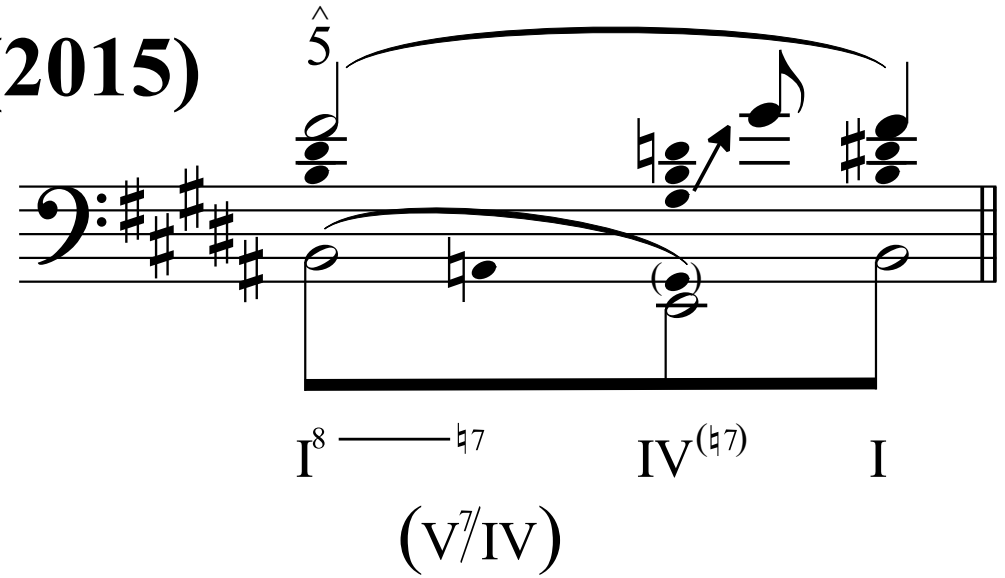
- **Hierarchy Divorce**
- **Loop Divorce**
- **Syntax Divorce**

I. Hierarchy Divorce

“Rock’n Me” (The Steve Miller Band)

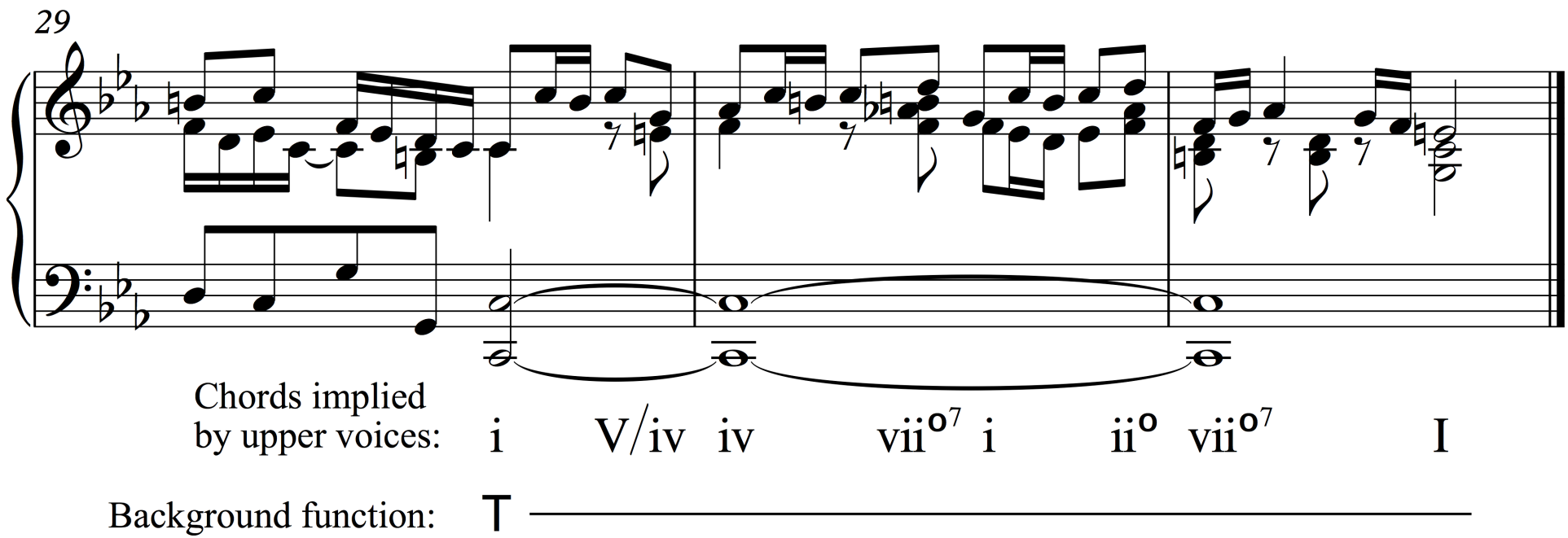


Nobile (2015)



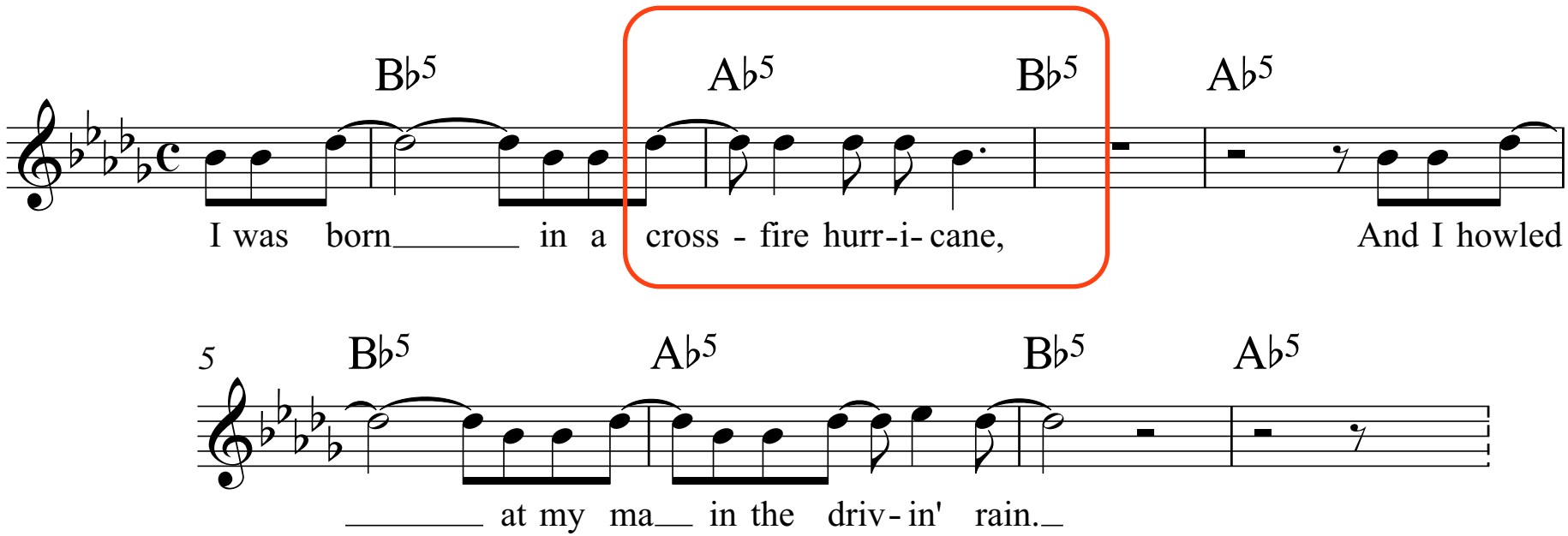
I. Hierarchy Divorce

J. S. Bach, Fugue in C minor, *WTC*, Book 1, BWV 847



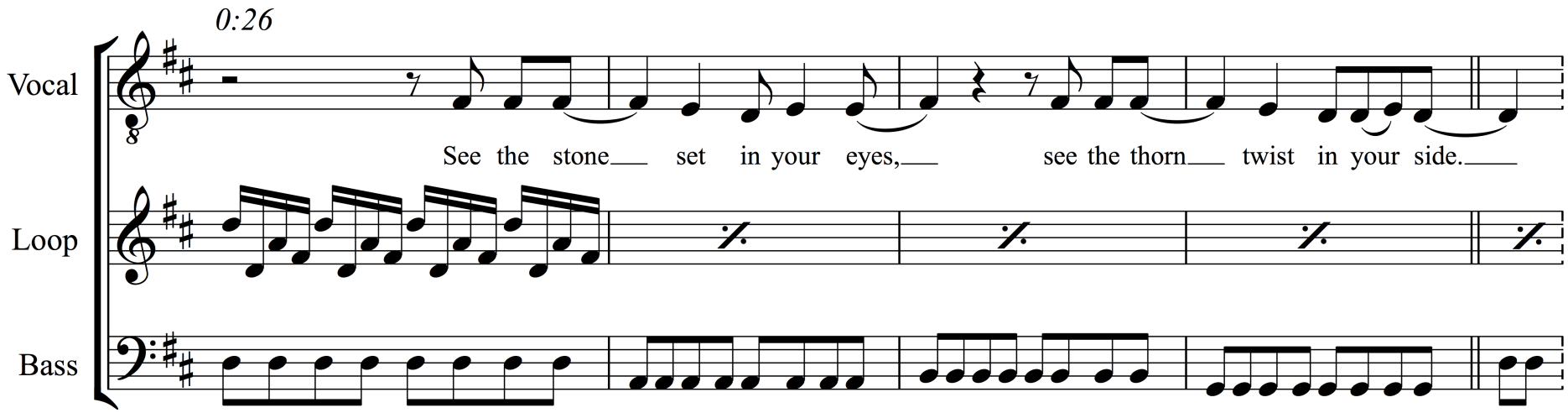
I. Hierarchy Divorce

“Jumpin’ Jack Flash” (The Rolling Stones)



I. Hierarchy Divorce (inverted pedal)

“With or Without You” (U2)

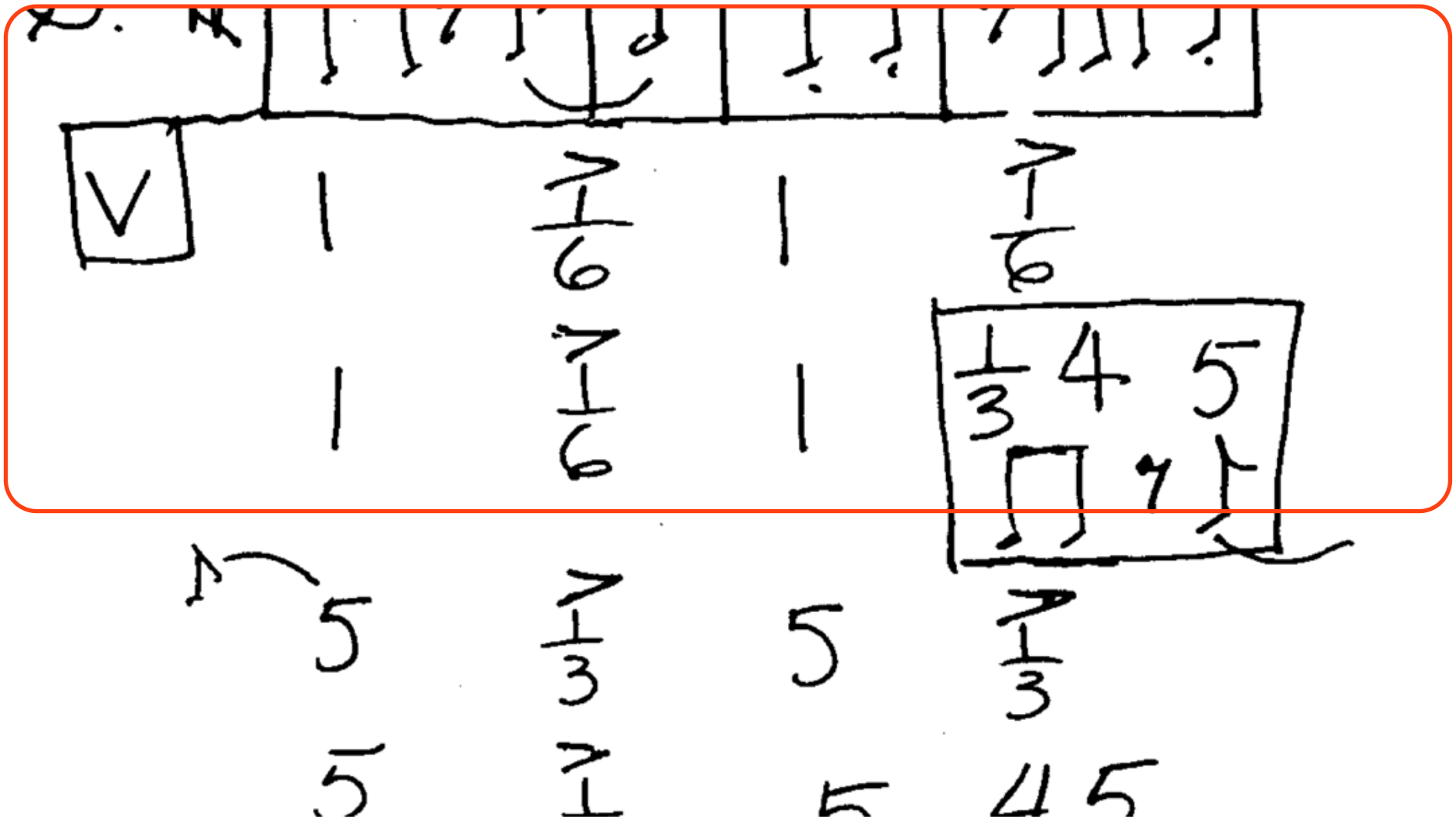


1) **D** **A$^{\text{add6}}_{\text{sus4}}$** **Bm7** **G$^{\text{maj9}}_{\text{(no3)}}$**

2) **D** **D/A** **D/B** **D/G**

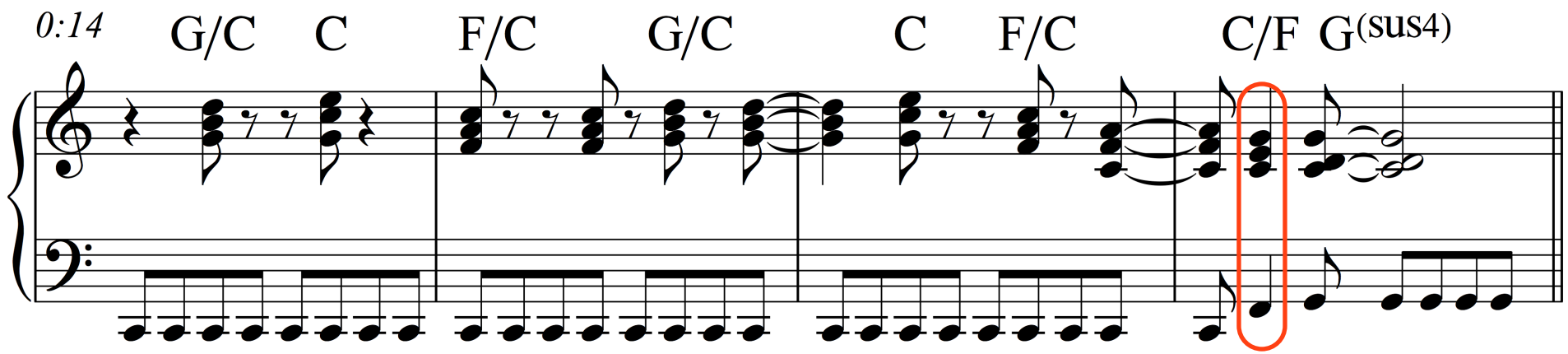
I. Hierarchy Divorce (inverted pedal)

"White Hardware" (Chas Williams)



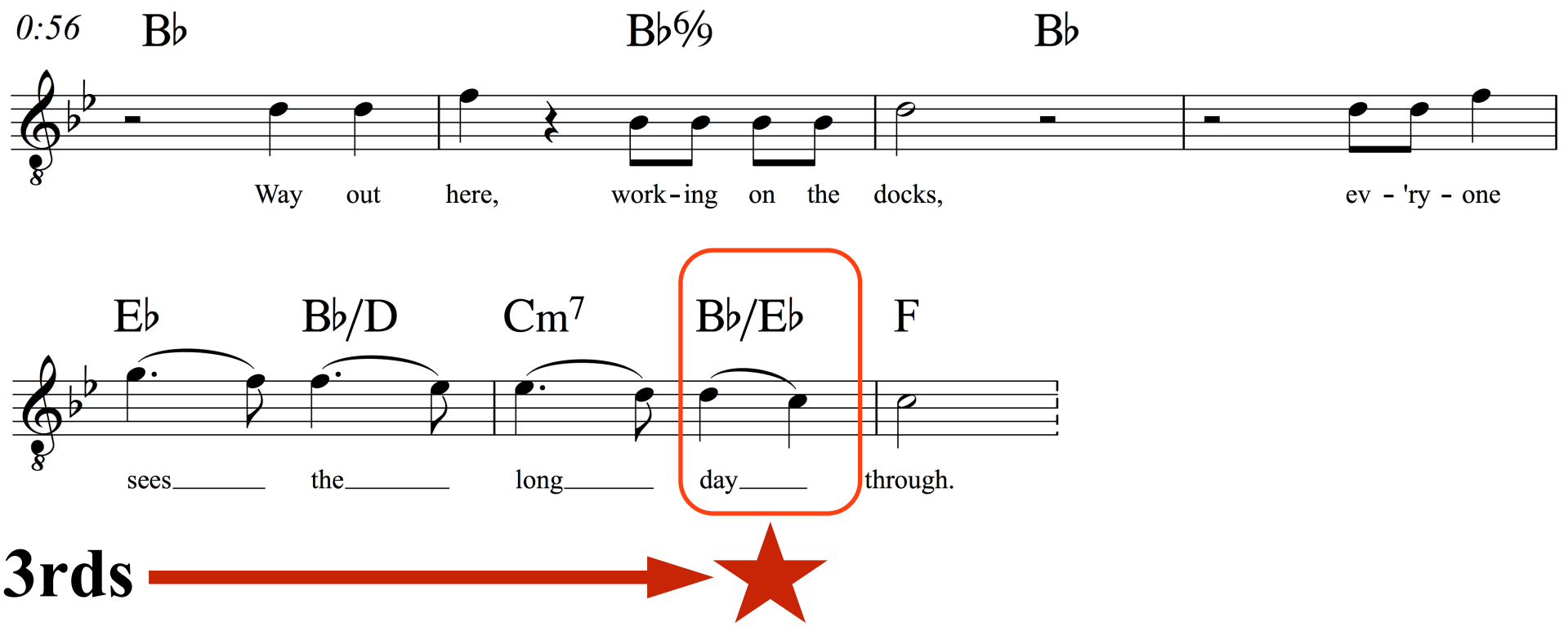
II. Syntax Divorce

“Jump” (Van Halen)



II. Syntax Divorce

“Every Little Kiss” (Bruce Hornsby & The Range)

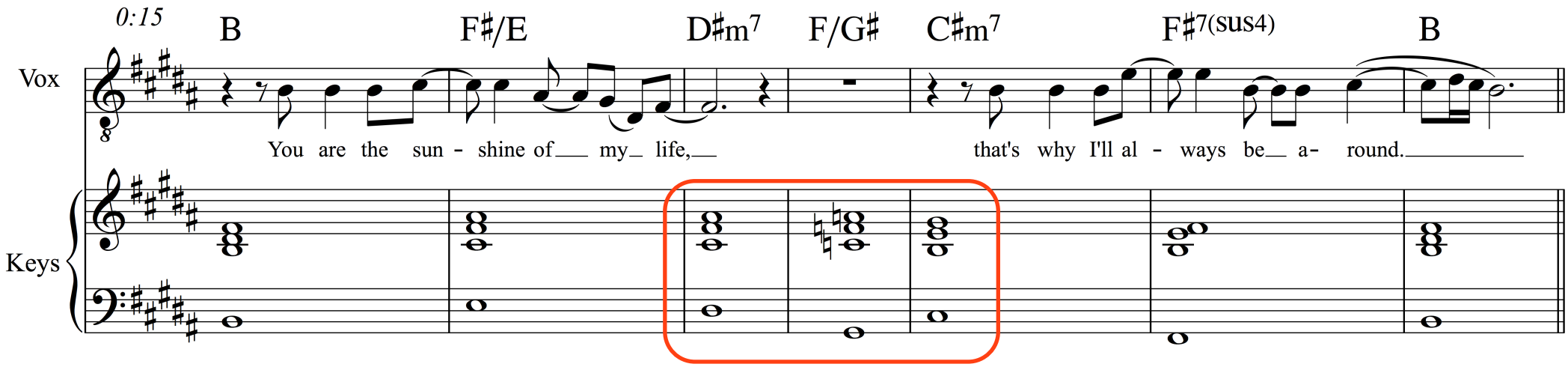


3rds

(repeat w/new lyrics)

II. Syntax Divorce

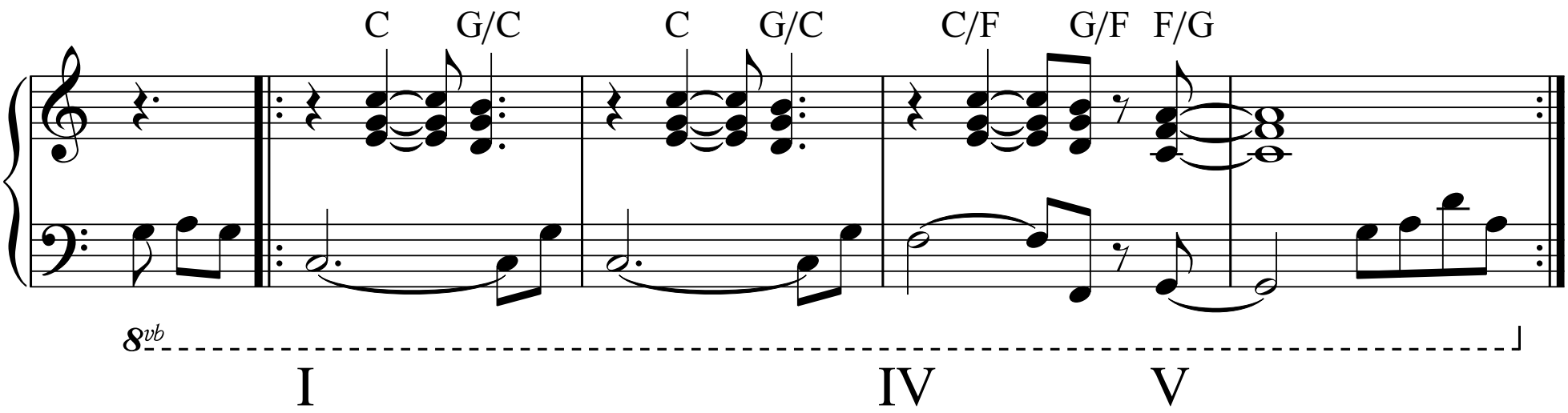
“You Are the Sunshine of My Life” (Stevie Wonder)



(repeat w/new vocal)

III. Loop Divorce

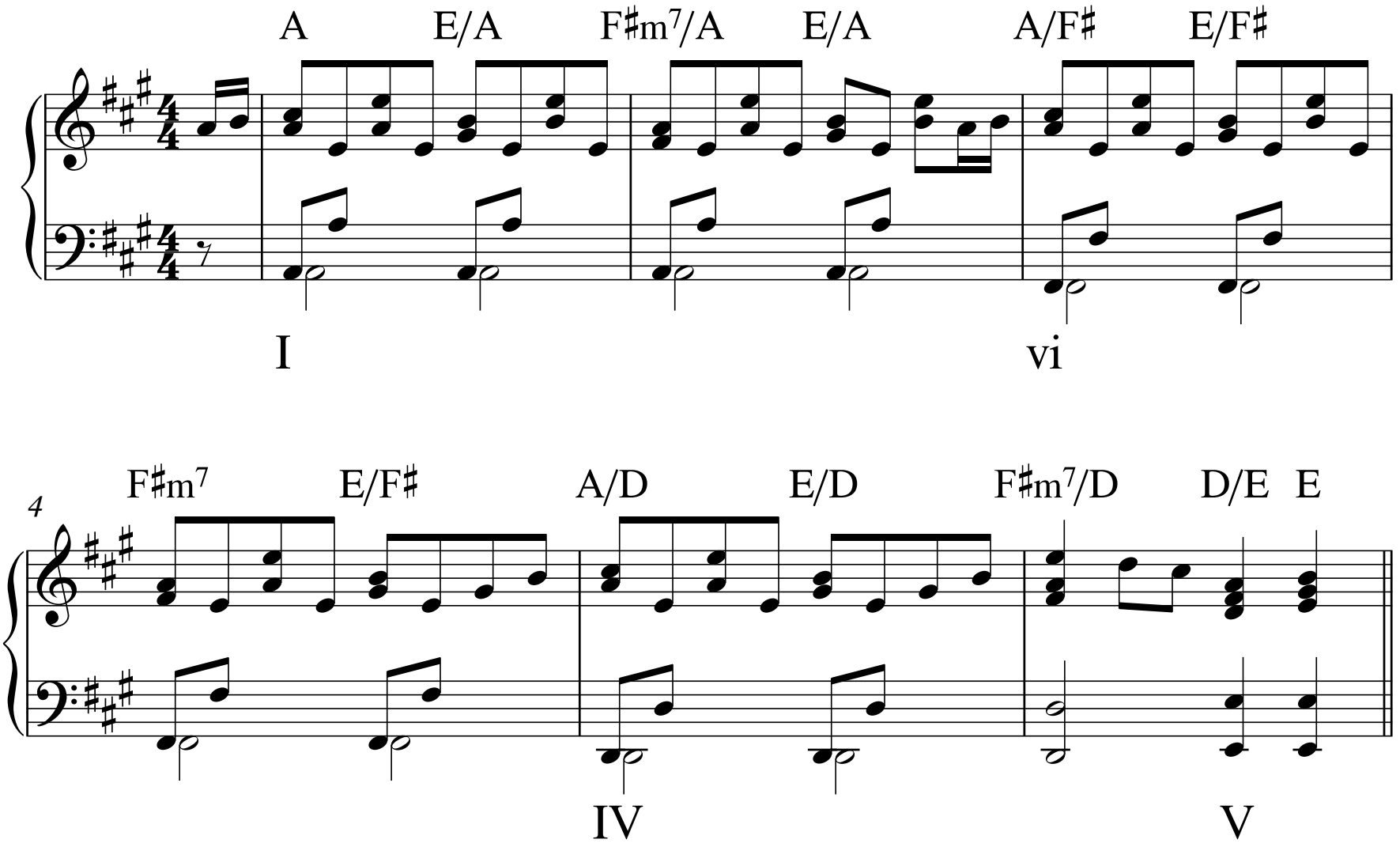
“I Really Got the Feeling” (Dolly Parton)



Hierarchy **Loop** **Syntax**

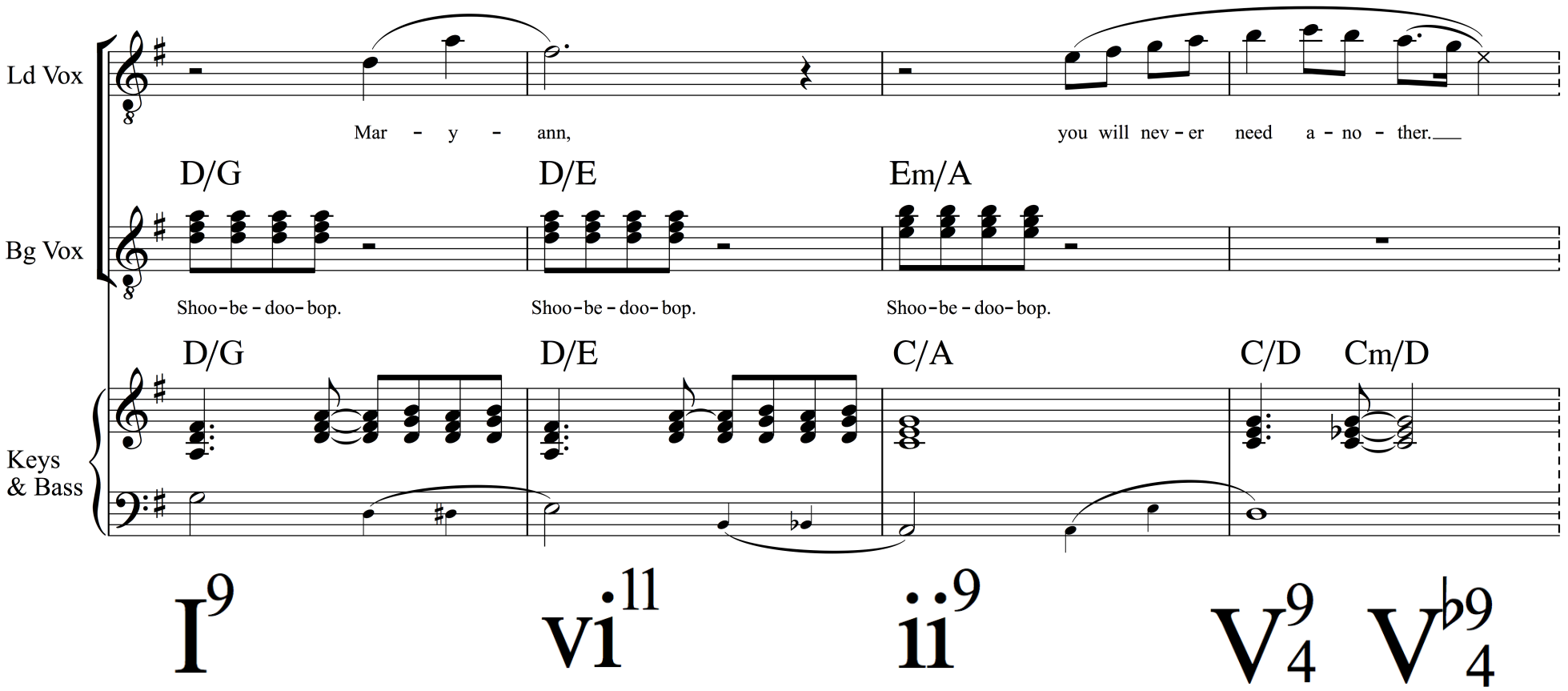
III. Loop Divorce

“I Can’t Fight This Feeling” (REO Speedwagon)



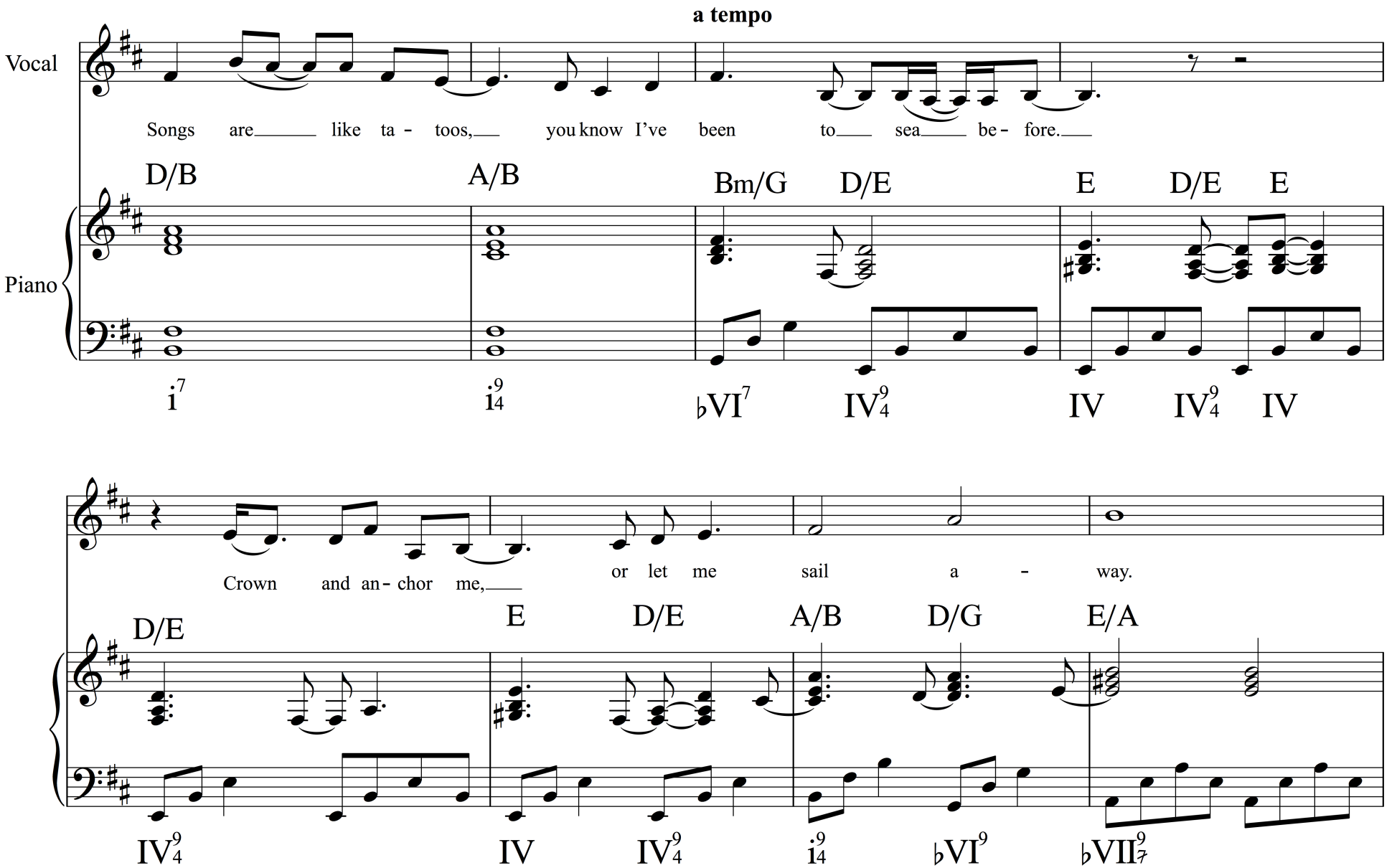
III. Loop Divorce

“Maryann” (New Edition)



(repeat w/new vocal)

“Blue” (Joni Mitchell)



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benward, Bruce and Marilyn Saker. 2008. Music in Theory and Practice, Vol. 1, 8th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Buckingham, Bruce and Eric Pascal. 1997. Rhythm Guitar: The Complete Guide. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard.

Covach, John and Andrew Flory. 2015. What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History, 4th edition. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

de Clercq, Trevor. 2015. The Nashville Number System Fake Book. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard.

Doll, Christopher. 2017. Hearing Harmony: Toward a Tonal Theory for the Rock Era. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Everett, Walter. 2001. The Beatles as Musicians: The Quarry Men through Rubber Soul. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Felts, Randy. 2002. Reharmonization Techniques. Boston, MA: Berklee Press.

Hornsby, Bruce. 1994. Bruce Hornsby Anthology. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing.

Huron, David. 2016. Voice Leading: The Science Behind a Musical Art. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Laitz, Steven. 2012. The Complete Musician: An Integrated Approach to Tonal Theory, Analysis, and Listening, 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Levine, Mark. 1995. The Jazz Theory Book. Petaluma, CA: Sher Music.

Moore, Allan. 1995. "The So-Called 'Flattened Seventh' in Rock." Popular Music 14 (2): 185–201.

———. 2012. Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

Mulholland, Joe and Tom Hojnacki. 2013. The Berklee Book of Jazz Harmony. Boston, MA: Berklee Press.

Nobile, Drew. 2015. "Counterpoint in Rock Music: Unpacking the 'Melodic-Harmonic Divorce'." Music Theory Spectrum 37 (2): 189–203.

Riley, Jim. 2010. Song Charting Made Easy: A Play-along Guide to the Nashville Number System, 2nd ed. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation.

Schenkius, Patrick. 2011. "Slash Chords: Triads with a 'Wrong' Bass Note?" Dutch Journal of Music Theory 16 (1): 47–52.

Spicer, Mark. 2004. "(Ac)cumulative Form in Pop-Rock Music." Twentieth-Century Music 1 (1): 29–64.

———. 2017. "Fragile, Emergent, and Absent Tonics in Pop and Rock Songs." Music Theory Online 23 (2).

Stephenson, Ken. 2002. What to Listen for in Rock: A Stylistic Analysis. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Straus, Joseph. 2014. "Harmony and Voice-Leading in the Music of Stravinsky." Music Theory Spectrum 36 (1): 1–33.

Temperley, David. 2007. "The Melodic-Harmonic 'Divorce' in Rock." Popular Music 26 (2): 323–42.

van der Merwe, Peter. 1989. The Origins of the Popular Style: The Antecedents of Twentieth-Century Popular Music. New York: Oxford University Press.

Williams, Chas. 2012. The Nashville Number System, 7th ed. Nashville, TN: Chas Williams.

Winkler, Peter. 1978. "Toward a Theory of Pop Harmony." In Theory Only 4 (2): 3–26.

———. 1997. "Writing Ghost Notes: The Poetics and Politics of Transcription." In Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, and Culture, edited by David Schwarz, Anahid Kassabian, and Lawrence Siegel, 169–203. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia.