

PERUSAL CORE ONLY

The Story of Our Journey

for Clarinet, Electronics, and Video

Dylan Findley

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*Commissioned by the City of Phoenix, through the
Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture's Public Art Program*

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The Story of Our Journey

for Clarinet (A and Bb), Electronics, and Video

I. So...	p. 1	c. 8'51"
II. An Opportunity	p. 19	c. 5'33"
III. I Counted Them Myself	p. 30	c. 6'56"
IV. The Water We Drink	p. 38	c. 6'58"
V. Go, Go, Go!	p. 48	c. 6'05"
VI. Deep In My Heart	p. 59	c. 7'36"
VII. Still Looking	p. 76	c. 9'16"

Duration: 51 minutes

Performance Notes:

The Story of Our Journey is often unmetered yet requires alignment with the fixed media. An unconventional notation, in coordination with a Max patch, liberates the performer from unreasonable rigidity in this improvisatory piece.

The Score

The score features a staff for the clarinet and a fixed media waveform. Beneath the waveform are seconds and between the staves are text and sonic cues from the electronics. Text begins but does not necessarily end in alignment with the waveform. The clarinet notes roughly line up with the waveform below, even during marked tempos, and dotted lines between staves clarify this relationship of alignment between the fixed media and clarinet. Notational symbols are represented on the following pages.

The image shows a musical score snippet. At the top, there is a tempo marking '♩=88'. Below that is a clarinet staff with several notes. Underneath the staff is a waveform representing a fixed media track. The waveform is labeled with time markers '1:40' and '1:42'. Below the waveform, there is text: 'I help them to do' and 'at my early age'. Dotted lines connect the text to specific points on the waveform. A dynamic marking 'mf more lively' is placed above the waveform.

Not all text is in English. The Spanish text is an accurate transcription; however, the Pashto reconstructs recurring syllables. A knowledge of Spanish is not required to perform the piece, and repeated listening will situate the foreign cues within the context of the music.

See the following pages for notational symbols and an explanation of the Max patch.

Notational Symbols

Stems signify a generally consistent lineup with tempo markings. Tempos other than 60 beats per minute are proportioned to align with the seconds in the waveform and dotted lines clarify this relationship. When the tempo is marked at 60 beats per measure, the beats and seconds should generally align. More important than alignment is that the performance does *not* sound metronomic.

Stemless notes encourage gesture over rhythmic consistency. The notes still roughly align with the waveform below but need only coordinate when indicated by a dotted line. Open noteheads should be longer than closed noteheads.

Closed noteheads, especially when marked with a staccato, should be short unless under a slur.

Sixteenth notes with a diagonal line through the beam are to be played as fast as reasonably possible.

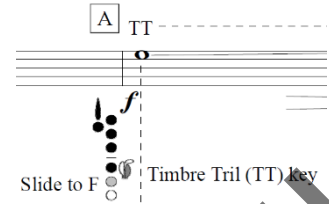
Circles following decrescendos indicate a fade into silence (niente).

An absence of time signature is notated with an X.

Glissandi move from one specific note to another and are notated with a wavy line. Slower glissandi should be chromatic.

Glissandi without specific notes over an extended period of time are notated with a straight line.

Straight lines indicate pitch bends. Often paired with upward pitch bends in this piece are timbre trills (TT). The keys to trill are indicated by fingerings.



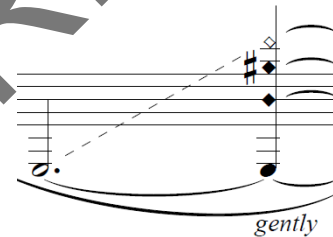
A pitch bend downward is indicated by a downward curve after a note.



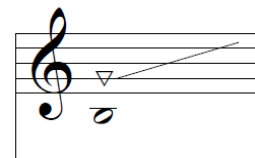
Microtones are notated with fingerings beneath, unless part of a multiphonic.



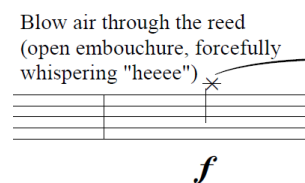
Multiphonics indicate the fundamental as normal notehead, an open diamond notehead as the highest partial, and closed diamond noteheads as other pitches within the sound. Performers often have the most success aiming for the highest partial. If no fingering is in the score, then the multiphonic is fingered the same as the fundamental pitch. If a dotted line connects the fundamental to the multiphonic, the multiphonic should be activated gradually.



Sung notes, while also playing, are indicated by an upside-down triangle notehead. The pitch relationship matters (sung pitches are written in the transposition of the instrument); however, other notes that equally distort the clarinet sound may substitute the written pitches. Falsetto singing is appropriate.



At one point in the piece, the performer blows through the reed. This is done by loudly sustaining the "hee" syllable in a whisper with an open embouchure (the mouth should open but the teeth need not leave the top of the mouthpiece).



Performing with Fixed Media and Video (Max and alternatives)

The performer needs to see the running time of the electronics during each movement and sometimes needs to play at a specific tempo. To facilitate these challenges, a Max patch was developed. The audio and video feed play through the patch and start a timer. Three beats prior to each entrance, a colored, silent metronome is triggered and continues until the end of the excerpt. The prep beats blink in the yellow box, and the entrance and subsequent beats are in the blue box.



The performer begins each movement with a foot pedal. To avoid accidents, the foot pedal will not trigger the following movement until the previous movement finishes. Three pedal clicks in quick succession pause the movement. A big number indicates the movement, and movements can be set for rehearsal, including between attacca movements.

The composer discourages routing the live clarinet through Max because of latency; however, the clarinet may be amplified directly.

All movements begin with the electronics, except movement 3, as indicated by the numbers enclosed in a circle. Movements 4-6 are attacca and thus are one file.

1

Performers need not use the Max patch if they feel comfortable entering the tempo-driven passages without a metronome. Still essential is the timer, so alternative methods should give the performer the live time of the video and audio without revealing it to the audience. Movements should still be triggered by a pedal or by another person, regardless of execution, to avoid disruptions.

Program Notes

The Story of Our Journey gives voice to refugee individuals and families from Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Honduras who fled from life-threatening situations. They tell of their travels across deserts, mountains, forests, and political borders to find safety in central Europe through Greece, Italy, and the United States. Rather than offer commentary or solutions to the refugee crisis, the music allows the refugees to speak directly and personally to each listener.

The following are the stories told in this work by the refugees themselves:

Ali witnessed the destruction of his village in Afghanistan. He counted a death toll of 385 women, men, and children and, following the counsel of his mother, ran before he could be drafted into Taliban forces. Ali traveled on a prosthetic leg through two mountain ranges, helping two women and five children survive the journey. They arrived at the Turkey border and crossed the waters to live at a battered Greek refugee camp. After some time, Ali continued his journey to mainland Europe beneath a trailer truck and eventually arrived in France, where he slept under a bridge for several months before volunteers gave him a home. He learned French and English, and he helps fellow refugees in their circumstances.

Zarrin and Belton lived in Afghanistan until the Taliban pronounced death threats on their family. Zarrin's education and profession as an English teacher made her a target. They travelled to Greece across the Mediterranean Sea in what was a traumatic boat experience for the family. Because they lost their identification and money during the oceanic trip, the family could not initially progress to Central Europe as planned. However, they decided to chance the voyage on foot through Croatia and Serbia to Germany.

Rhenald worked in several countries in West Africa before receiving a job offer in Libya. He took a dangerous journey across the Sahara Desert in the back of a Toyota HiLux pickup truck with about 40 other people. He quickly learned that the recruiter deceived him. Young gangs controlled the area, and his new workplace was ransacked with violence, including murder. Rhenald chanced his escape from the country in a rubber boat with about 220 other people, knowing that 90% of escapees drown. He was rescued by the Italian coast guard while on the sea and, at the time of his interviews, lived in a refugee camp.

Felix aspired to become a computer engineer until a family tragedy led him to leave his West African home. During his journey to Libya, he witnessed many deaths and dealt with unsuitable living conditions including rotten pink water and gun-enforced quarantine. He also rode in a Toyota HiLux across the desert. Felix was held ransom in Libya until his family bought his freedom, and, like Rhenald, escaped by boat to Italy.

Eduardo and Adrianna fled from gangs in Honduras. Eduardo had refused to use his fruit-selling business as a drug dealing front, and the gangs pursued him throughout Mexico. The family suffered from inadequate living conditions at the United States border before they received provisional sanctuary. Not yet allowed to work, he struggles to provide for his family.

Elizabeth's daughter was pulled from her high school classroom by gangs. **Elizabeth** confronted the gang and saved her daughter, but they realized that they were in grave danger. The gang followed Elizabeth and her daughter as they fled across Mexico. They mother and daughter received terrible treatment throughout the journey and only received five meals in 22 days. At the United States border, officials attempted to separate Elizabeth and her daughter, but she refused. They drank one shared glass of water each day and slept on a cold floor for six days before they were granted asylum.

The **Rohingya children** were orphaned in the ongoing genocide of their people in Myanmar. Women, men, and children have been raped and murdered, leaving broken families and lone children crossing the ocean to Bangladesh. The living conditions in Bangladesh's asylum, Cox's Bazaar, are meager and difficult, but they provide safety.

This project is the result of a warm-hearted partnership with refugee advocacy organization Their Story Is Our Story to give refugees a voice through art. I sifted through many video and audio interviews before selecting the six main stories represented in this work, and every person had a stirring story to tell. This piece is dedicated to each of them and to every refugee.

This work is also dedicated to Csaba Jevtic-Somlai and his wife Elizabeta. Csaba premiered the piece as part of Cycle 9 of the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture IN FLUX project. We were commissioned jointly to bring this piece to life.

Transposed Score

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The Story of Our Journey

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Duration: 51 minutes

Dylan Findley

I. So...

1 Trigger first cue.

Clarinet in A

- Speakers:
- Rh: Rhenald
- Fe: Felix
- Za: Zarrin
- Al: Ali
- Ed: Eduardo
- El: Elizabeth
- Ro: Rohingya Children
- Int: Interviewer

Fixed Media

Fe: Uh, I'm from Nigeria. And um, I have a family back home.

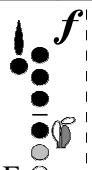
Seconds 0:00 :02 :04 :06 :08

Rh: Um, I'm from Nigeria I'm from Nigeria Fe: Za: I'm from Afghanistan I live in Harat City.

:10 :12 :14 :16 :18

A TT

Note: If using Max, all entrances are preceded by two prep beats. The metronome blinks continues as long as relevant. (See performance notes for details)



Timbre Tril (TT) key

Slide to F

Int: [laughter] You're great [truck horn]

:20 :22 :24 :26 :28

[2]

♩=60 (seconds)

Int: De dónde es? *Rh:* Nigeria *Int:* So, why did... ...leave Afghanistan? *Za:* I live in Harat

0:30

:32

:34

:36

:38

City. *Za:* Harat City. *El:* Yo también.

:40

:42

:44

:46

:48

Int: We're rolling! *Fe:* My family... ...they are okay *Int:* So, *Rh:* So I've been working hard ever since

0:49

:51

:53

:55

:57

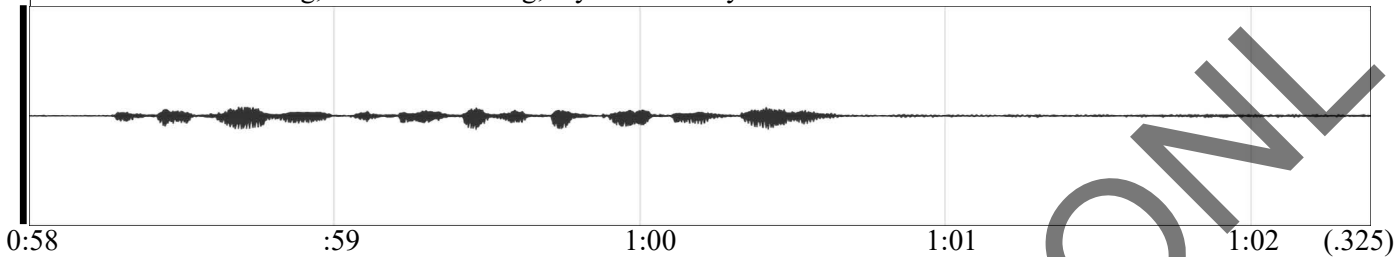
B

♩=96

[3]

mf mimic voice, playfully

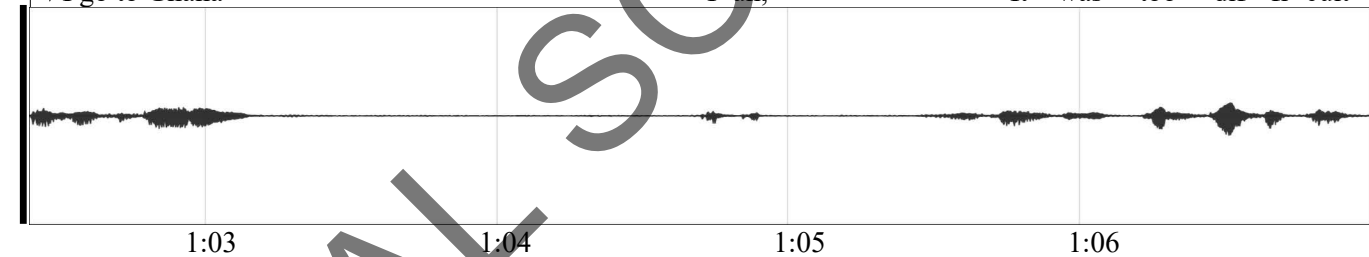
Rh: I started traveling, I started traveling; my first country was Ghana



I go to Ghana

I uh,

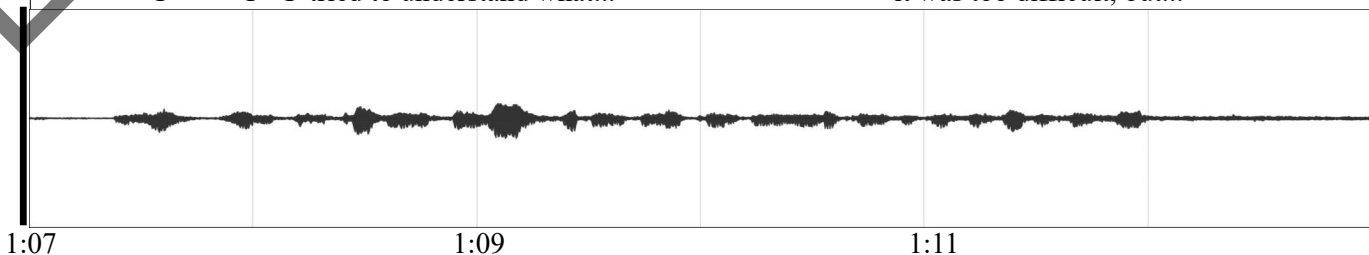
It was too dif- fi- cult



mf imperfectly, almost swung

I I I tried to understand what...

it was too difficult, but...



1:07

1:09

1:11

[4] ♩=60 (freely)

TT

f

Int: Um...

This guy's making a lot of noise...

Rh: At the age of 11, I think I started working

1:13 1:15 1:17 1:19 1:21

♩=88

mp lightly

To make money

from

Can I help you to do some- thing?

mf

1:23 1:24 1:25 1:26

mp

When you when you when you're carrying some loads a lone I ask you

p

1:27 1:28 1:29 1:30

Should I help you?
Should I help you to carry?

Or come to my house and
do some cleaning cleaning jobs

clearing the grass
and other things...

1:31 1:33 1:35 1:37 1:39

This segment features a musical score in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Below the score is a waveform showing the audio signal. The time markers are 1:31, 1:33, 1:35, 1:37, and 1:39.

$\text{♩} = 88$ C

mf more lively

I help them to do at my early age after school I do that

Int: You know some of her story... [Pashto]

1:40 1:42 1:44 1:46

This segment includes a musical score with a tempo marking of quarter note = 88 and a common time signature 'C'. The dynamics are marked *mf* more lively. The lyrics describe helping others at an early age. An interjection in Pashto is also present. The waveform and time markers (1:40, 1:42, 1:44, 1:46) are shown below.

[interviewer chatter]

Fe: Uh, I'm from Nigeria.

1:48 1:50 1:52 1:54 1:56 1:58

This segment shows an empty musical staff at the top. The audio waveform below shows a period of interviewer chatter followed by a response from the female interviewee. The time markers are 1:48, 1:50, 1:52, 1:54, 1:56, and 1:58.

[6] ♩=88

mf more lively

Fe: I'm from Nigeria *Int.:* Uh, de dónde es? and uh, *Fe:* I have a family back home... My family they are... okay they're okay

1:59

2:01

2:03

2:05

2:07

♩=100

f

p sub

mf

They're okay.

I left them

before I start the journey. [horn]

2:09

2:11

2:13

2:15

fp

Za: A hard it was a very hard difficult hard for me. I get a decision. I think

2:16

2:18

2:20

2:22

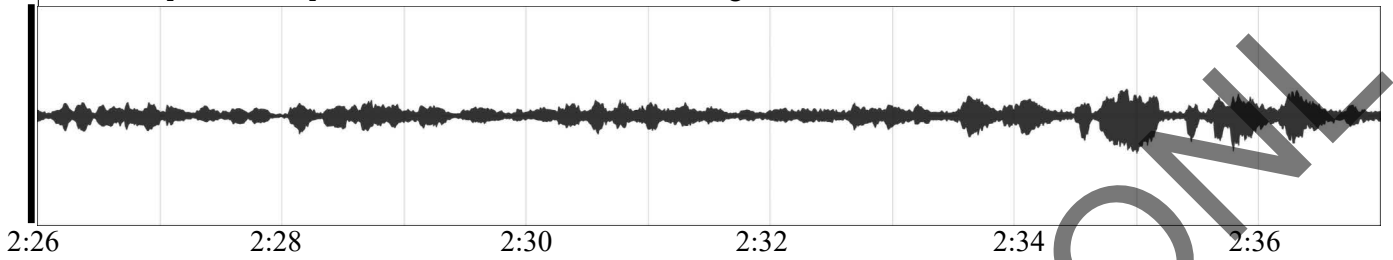
2:24

Musical score for two voices. The top staff shows a melodic line with a fermata over a note. Above the staff is a wavy line with a flat symbol. The bottom staff shows a bass line with notes.

[Two voices]

Za: I have a good life...

Rh: Both women, both children.



2:26

2:28

2:30

2:32

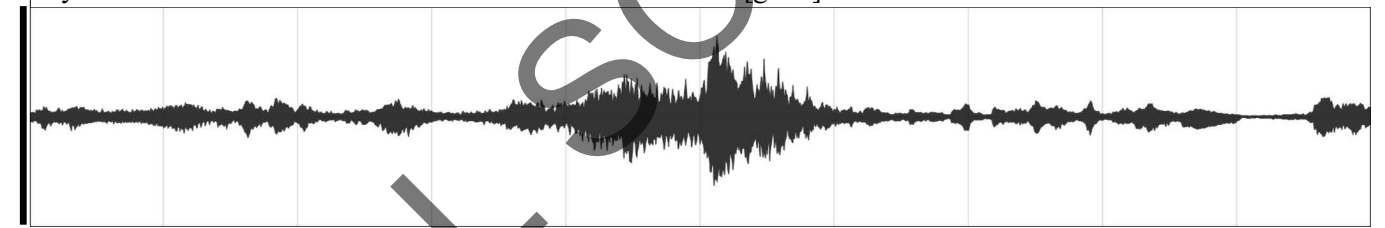
2:34

2:36

Musical score for voice 'Za'. The top staff shows a melodic line with a chromatic scale indicated by '(chromatically)'. A box labeled 'E' is placed above the staff. The bottom staff shows a bass line.

Za:

my life and after that and decide came to here [glass]



2:37

2:39

2:41

2:43

2:45

Musical score for voice 'Za'. The top staff shows a melodic line with a fermata. The bottom staff shows a bass line.

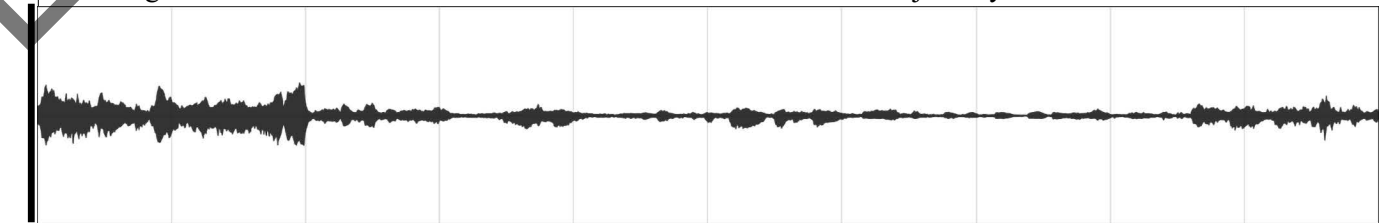
Za:

From Afghanistan...

Fe: I left them

before I start the journey

before I start...



2:47

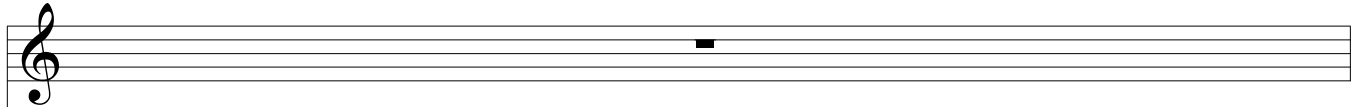
2:49

2:51

2:53

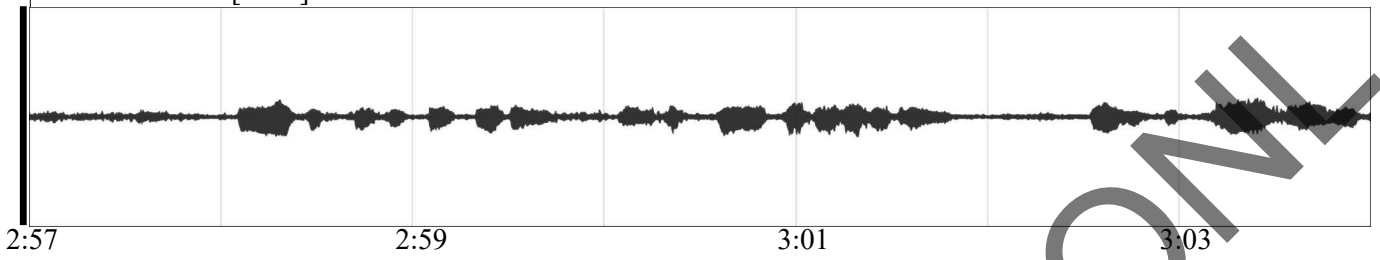
2:55

[8]



[Farsi]

No...



F

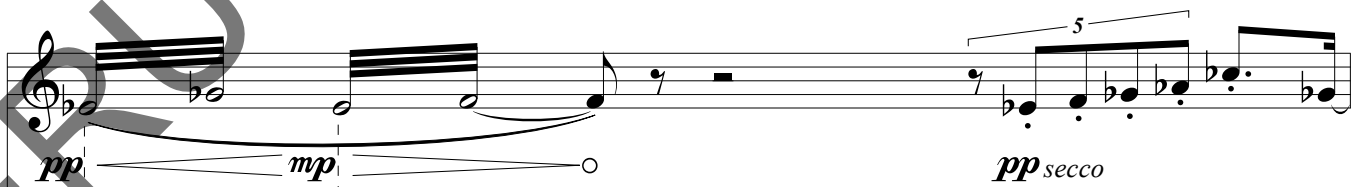
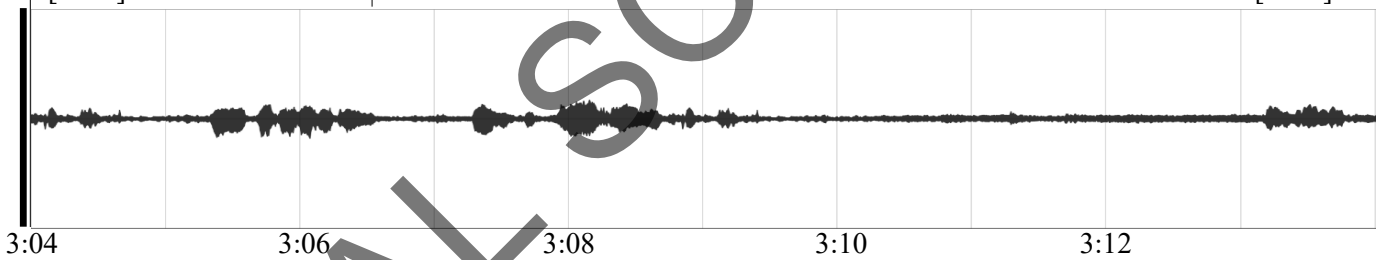
♩=60 (freely)



[Farsi]

No...

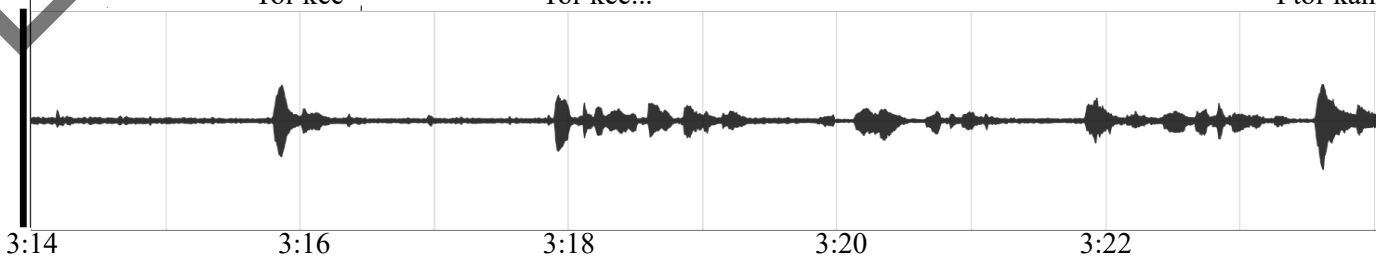
[Farsi]



Toi-kee

Toi-kee...

Ptoi-kah



mf *p*

[Farsi] Toi-kee

3:24 3:26 3:28 3:30 3:32

G ♩=60 (seconds)

p

Toi-kee Toi-kee... Fe: I left them

3:34 3:36 3:38 3:40 3:42

mp *p*

Before I start the journey Rh: I stayed up... [distinct voices inaudible]

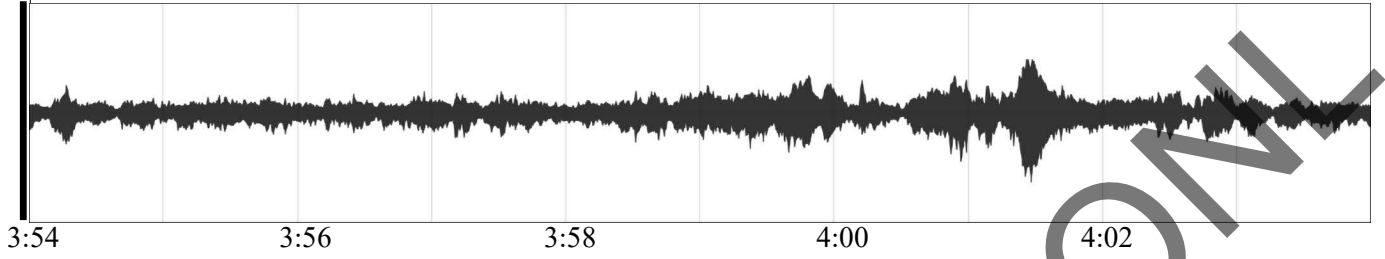
3:44 3:46 3:48 3:50 3:52

[10]

Musical score for the first system. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and dynamic markings *mf* and *p sub*. The music consists of a melodic line with a wavy hairpin and a bass line with a wavy hairpin.

[indistinct voices]

[Elizabeth enters]



3:54

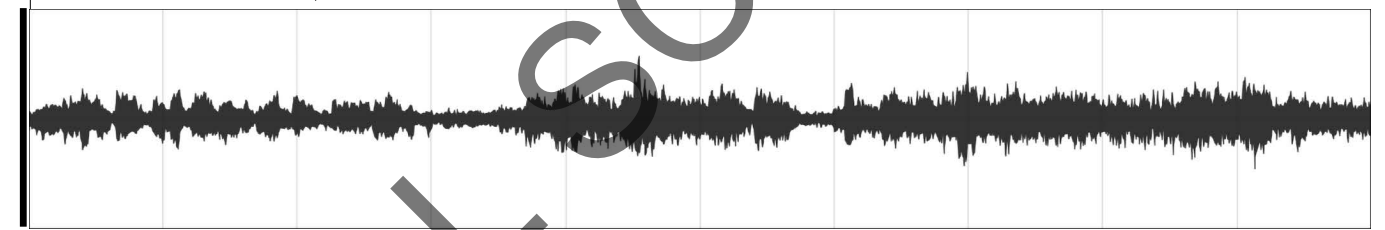
3:56

3:58

4:00

4:02

Musical score for the second system. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and dynamic markings *mf* and *p*. The music consists of a melodic line with a wavy hairpin and a bass line with a wavy hairpin.



4:04

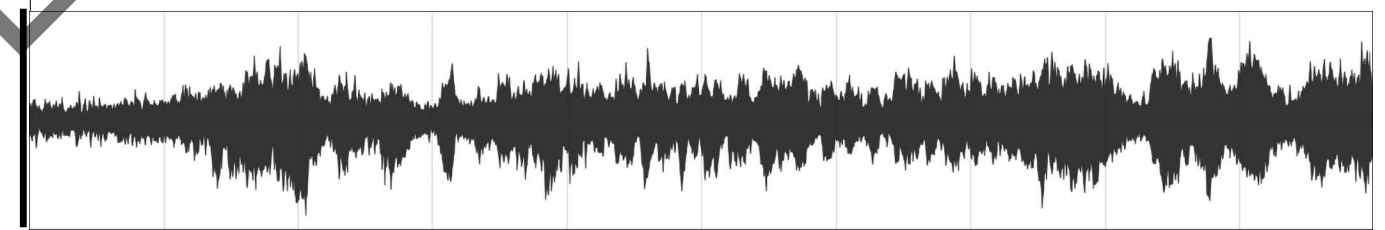
4:06

4:08

4:10

4:12

Musical score for the third system. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and dynamic markings *mf*, *f*, and *p*. The music consists of a melodic line with a wavy hairpin and a bass line with a wavy hairpin.



4:14

4:16

4:18

4:20

4:22