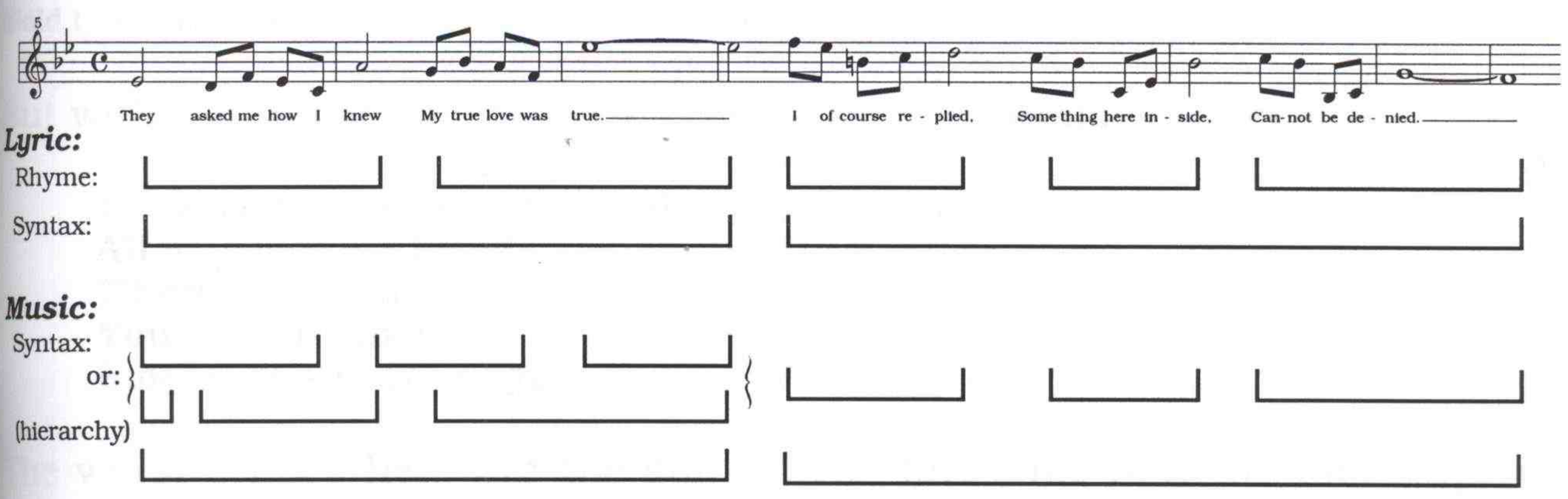
The Melopoetics

That the **A** stanzas have five lines covers up the regular structure, due to the unusual melopoetical relationships. The first two stanzas possess a couplet structure of (two-line) antecedents/(three-line) consequents. This is most clear in the first stanza, where the antecedent is the antagonists' query, and the consequent the protagonist's retort. Its relation to the eight-bar musical sentence is as follows:

Ex. 3.4

Lyric and Music of "A"



With reference to the above example, the music and lyric phrasing on both sentence and phrase level are fairly unified, most importantly at the apogee of the arch. Ambiguity reigns over the first half, with counterpoint between music and lyric phrasing, and indeed more than one possible musical interpretation. Although the lyric is syntactically indivisible in practice, "knew" and "true" rhyme, thus providing latent segmentation realised through lengthening of both words due to minims in the music; the segments are thus respectively one-and-a-half bars and two bars long. Musically, the first half can be interpreted in any one of three ways: i) as two phrases of a minim plus four quavers, and a separate note of six crotchets; ii) as a minim-note followed by two phrases each starting with a four-quaver anacrusis; iii) as a continuum of three-and-a-half bars. Because no one interpretation is any stronger than the others (and because no one interpretation needs to be cognitively decided upon), musical ambiguity reigns – to be clarified by other factors, in this case, the lyric. This leads to a curious situation, whereby accent is thrown upon the wrong syllables:

Ex. 3.5



The clumsiness here lies in the inordinate prominence of the words "knew" and "My", made even worse by the lack of emphasis on the "true" of "true love". The resulting negative melopoetic counterpoint makes semantic

cognition of the lyric difficult.

Whilst melopoetic connections in the first stanza are negatively discordant only in places, the second stanza gets even worse.

(using virtual punctuation and natural stress patterns):

They **said**, "**some**day you'll **find**
All who **love** are **blind**;
When your **heart's** on **fire**,
You must **re**alize
Smoke gets in your **eyes**."

(**Bold** type reflects stress patterns)

But with the music, the following melopoetic stress patterns result:

They said someday you'll **find**,
All who love are **blind**,
When your hearts on **fire**,
You must rea**lize**
Smoke gets in your **eyes**.

The worst crimes here are the start of the first line, and the mis-emphasis implicit in "realize".

In the third stanza, melopoetical dislocation is to blame for the unnatural separation of verbs from their subjects:

So I chaffed them and I gayly laughed to think they could doubt my love.

Yet, the second half of the stanza uses the same long notes to good syntactical lyric effect:

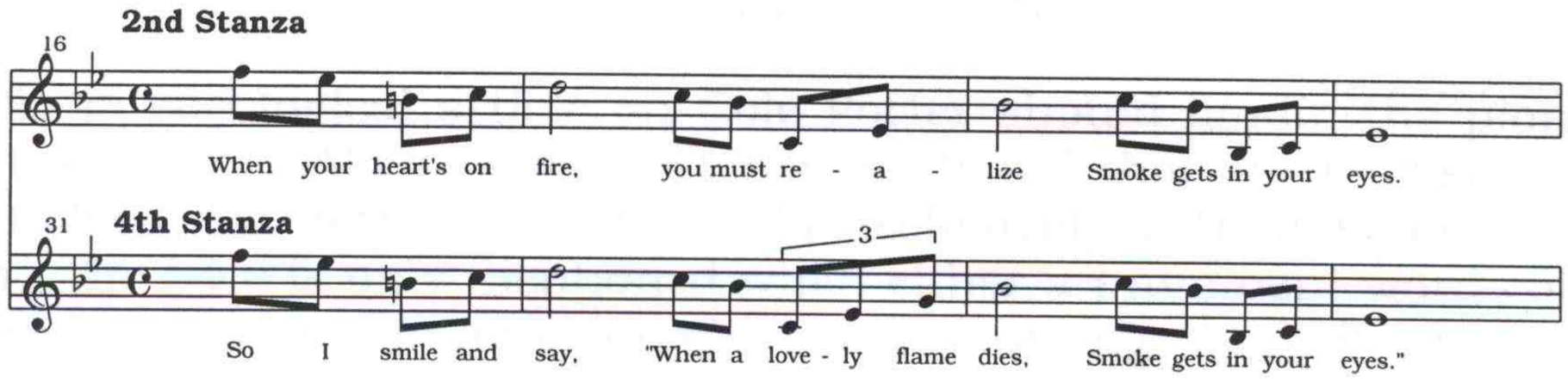
Yet today my love has Flown away I am without my love.

(Virtual punctuation would add in either a colon or semicolon in the second break to reflect natural speech patterns.)

One final atrocity occurs in the final stanza's only significant difference from the first two **A** sections. A triplet is introduced is introduced in order to crowbar in an extra syllable:

Ex. 3.6

Crow-barring of an Extra Syllable



As the lyric trick of the song is the protagonist's changing of "Smoke gets in your eyes" from a negative to a positive concept, it is vital that attention is drawn to the tool word: "flame". "Lovely" is an important word, but its sense is only derived from "flame". Unfortunately, these requirements are not fulfilled. A combination of metre, melodic leap and triplet rhythm throw emphasis on the first syllable of "lovely", with "flame" being subordinated. As a result of the crucial metaphor being lost, the entire lyric loses its whole form. Aside from the poor melopoetical connections, it is also an example of technically bad lyric-writing. "L" is a difficult vocable to sing three times in succession because of the comparatively long time it takes to voice; the matter is made worse through the aspiration before the "l" in "flame". The *allargando* annotation in the music at this point thus seems to be there primarily to alleviate this problem rather than for a musical purpose.

In isolation, both lyric and music are among the collaborators' finest. But when a lyric as unpausingly rhapsodic as Harbach's is set to a melody as uncompromisingly halting as Kern's, melopoetical dislocation results. In this case, because the music is more indestructible than the lyric, the song is remembered more for its melody than its lyric. It points to a phenomenon in the genre whereby certain songs are known first and foremost for their melodies: a true moment for the composer. In comparison, songs such as "The Man I Love" and "Fascinating Rhythm" are more multi-disciplinary.

Cole Porter

"You're the Top"

Anything Goes (1934)

No musicological article on Cole Porter should ignore the pioneering analytical work of Allen Forte[11] . This is not to say that his analysis is not to be criticised: far from it. Forte deals exclusively with melodic "line and design"; the lyric is only mentioned when either a prominent word coincides with an apex or nadir note, or else word painting is used. He succeeds admirably in justifying his liking of the "beautiful contours of a Cole Porter melody"; but his closing statement, that his article gives "further support...to the critical opinion that Porter's songs are of the highest artistic caliber" cannot be wholly justified. Forte makes the musicologists' oft-made mistake that the quality of songs is purely dependent on their melody. It is the present author's desire to show that this is only one factor in a triangular equation. "Song" = melody, lyric and melopoetic relationship, in a ranking defined by each song. Forte's life-long adoration of Porter's melodies is not unrelated to the fact that the composer was one of the most classically-trained of all Broadway composers. Thus, one would expect to find features of counterpoint and line in his music – the very things that Forte's analytical tools are designed to look for.

Porter's métier was the "list song", where the main body of a lyric consists of a list of events/objects/abstract ideas that (directly or metaphorically) describe the sentiment of the song, as defined by the introduction. To some extent, most lyrics work in this fashion; the difference is that the content of a list song is made up almost exclusively of items, whereas other lyrics make more of the items' context. Beneath are examples of a list song and a more conventional lyric, both by Cole Porter:

"Let's Do It"

list song

The **chimpanzees in the zoos** do it,
Some **courageous kangaroos** do it,
Let's do it, Let's fall in love.
I'm sure **giraffes, on the sly**, do it,
Heavy hippopotami do it,
Let's do it,
Let's fall in love.
Old sloths who hang down from twigs do it,
Though the effort is great,
Sweet guinea-pigs do it,
Buy a couple and wait.
The world admits **bears in pits** do it,
Even **pekineses in the Ritz**, do it,
Let's do it, Let's fall in love.

"Night and Day"

Night and day **you are the one**,
Only you beneath the moon and under the sun.
Whether near to me or far,
It's no matter, darling, where you are
I think of you night and day.
Day and night why is it so,
That this **longing for you follows wherever I go**?
In the roaring traffic's boom
In the silence of my lonely room,
I think of you night and day.
Night and day under the hide of me
There's an Oh, such a **hungry yearning burning inside of me**.
And its torment won't be through
'Til you let me spend my life **making love to you**,
Day and night, night and day.

The list in "Let's Do It" is a speciality of Cole Porter: a double entendre. The implication being that the final item in the list should be a conjugation of the first and second persons. In "Night and Day", the equivalent list takes the form of antecedent-consequent pairs: either "Night and day...[verb-

11 Allen Forte, "Secrets of Melody: Line and Design in the Songs of Cole Porter," *Musical Quarterly* 77/iv (1993): 607-647.

phrase]" or "[verb-phrase]...night and day". The conventional song thus possesses fewer items, each of which are encapsulated by further descriptions (underlined). Due to the density of items, the list song's æsthetic veers toward lyric virtuosity for virtuosity's sake.

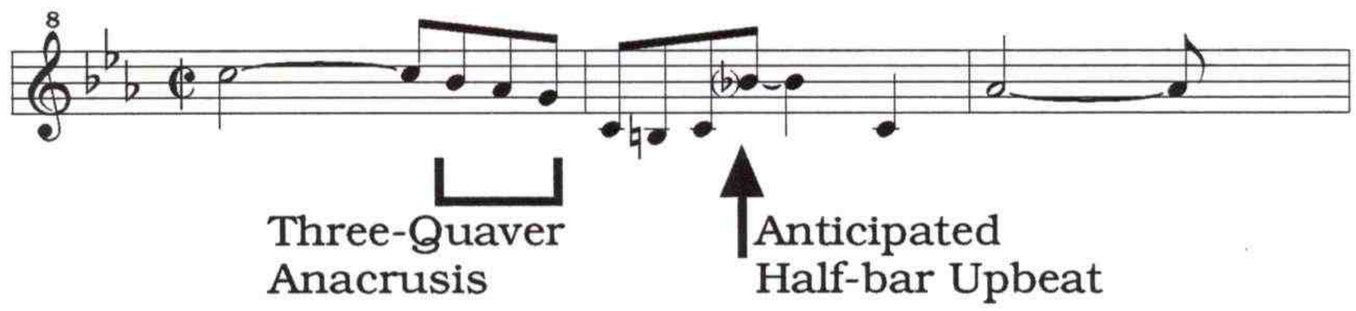
Because form in list songs is much more locally based than in more conventional songs, the melopoetic relationship differs. "You're the Top" from *Anything Goes* (1934), originally sung by Ethel Merman, is one of Porter's finest list songs. With substantial reflexivity, the song tells us as much about Cole Porter's life and æsthetic tastes as it does his protagonists'. The topic of what things are "top" in the world was clearly inspirational for Porter: he wrote seven refrains.

The Music

With idiomatic ragtime elements, rhythm plays an important role in "You're the Top". Archetypal features in the verse include rising three-quaver anacruses and anticipated half-bar upbeat:

Ex. 4.1

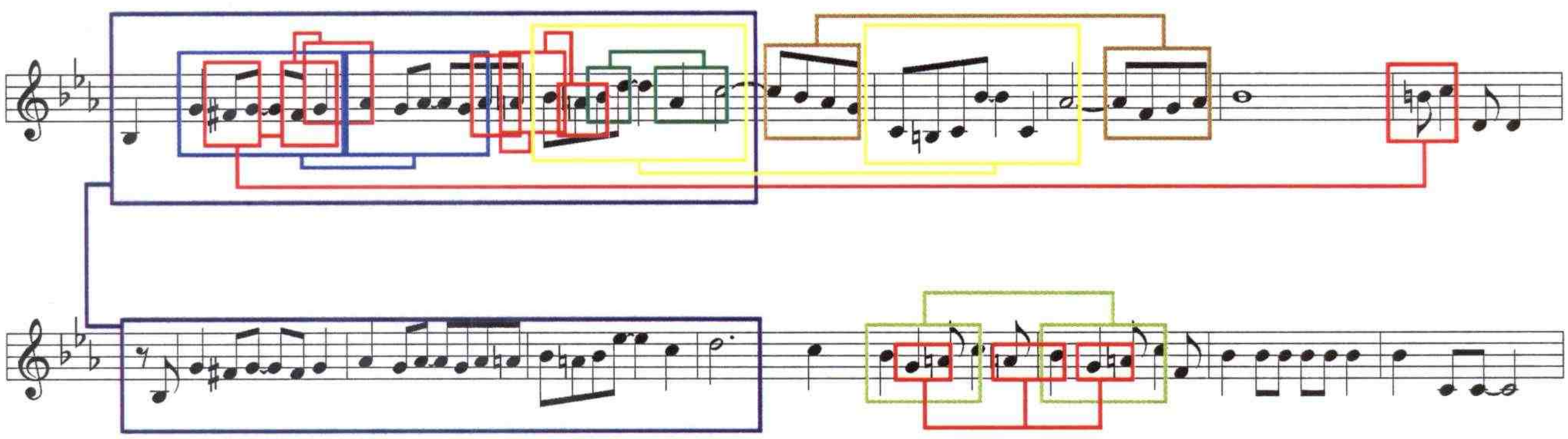
Ragtime Elements



There is also a considerable amount of musical developing variation. This manifests on many levels: from the interval of a rising semitone germ to the 'inner-rhyming' of the first and second bars:

Ex. 4.2a

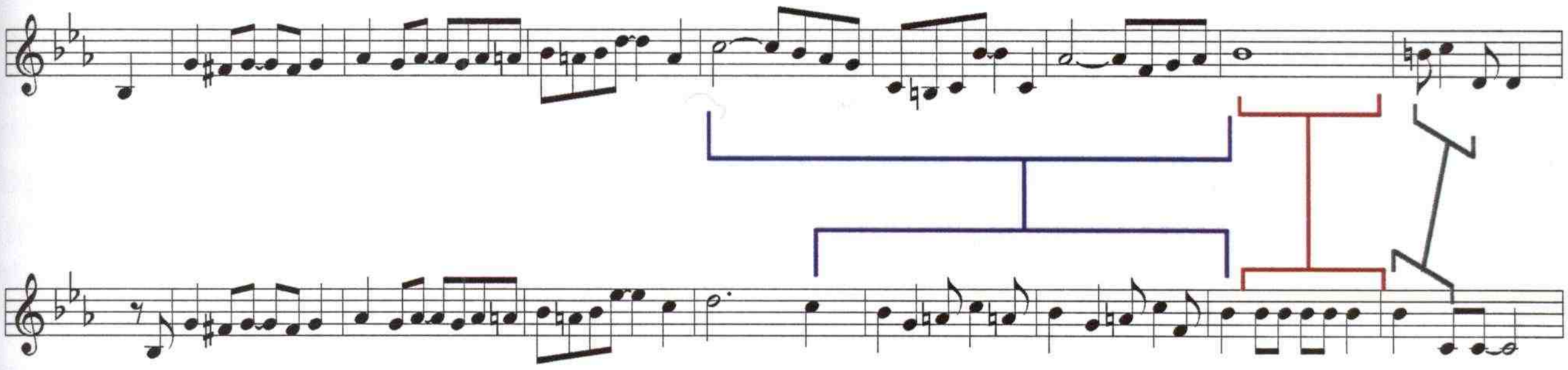
Developing Variation in the Verse



Although essentially **ABAC** in form, the second and fourth quarters have a common melodic sweep:

Ex. 4.2b

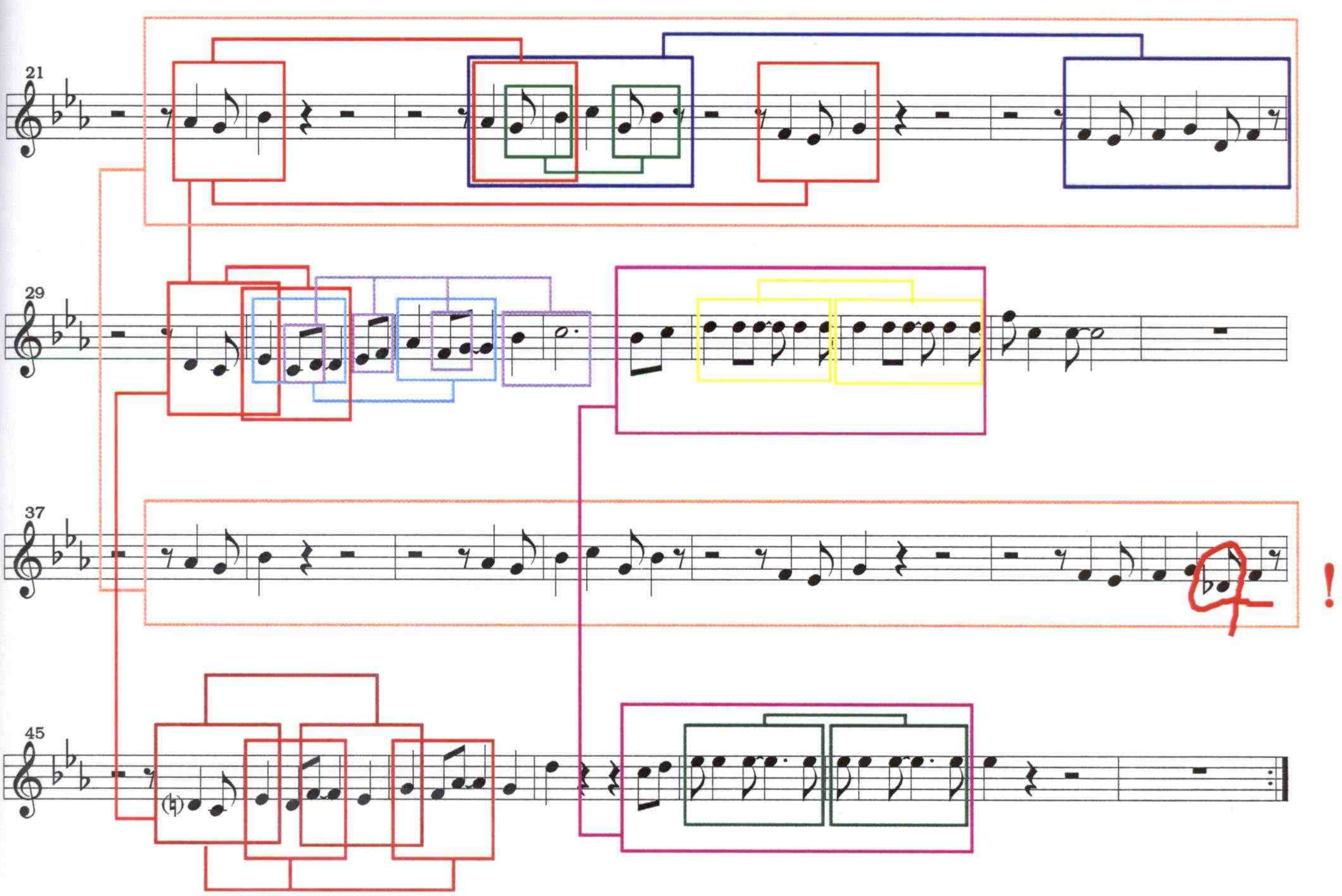
Common Contours in the Verse



In the refrain – aside from the repeated-note phrases at the ends of each stanza and the perfect fifth interval in bars 47/48 – everything is easily related to the opening motive. The most complex transformation is the reversal of the motive in bars 29/30, derived from the palindromic property of the first five notes. Porter uses an **ABAB'** form, where the second **A** is identical to the first, except for the flattened leading note at the end of the line:

Ex. 4.3

Developing Variation in the Refrain



Whereas in his ballads Porter uses colourful (Forte: "special") harmony and adventurous forms as salient features, the 'production numbers' possess simple forms and often use just diatonic chords. Likewise, his list songs tend to be motivically and rhythmically interesting rather than harmonically or tonally. This is because wit is the ultimate purpose of most list songs; wit is the property of the lyric, which makes the primary source of communication melopoetic rather than *Affekt*. On the surface, "You're the Top" is no exception, with simple melodic and tonal **ABAB'** forms. Upon further investigation though, the tonal form conceals important structural minutiæ in the first half of the refrain:

Ex. 4.4

Reduction of the Refrain



Beneath the surface of a seemingly simple musical form, there lies an often asymmetrical structure. The tonic-dominant vamp in the first eight bars has a tonal function that varies, as displayed on the middleground reduction. In the first bar, it describes a structural tonic-dominant 'vamp' in minims; but when dominant harmony ensues in the third and fourth bars, the harmony is static on chord **V**. The middleground harmonic rhythm has thus slowed despite similar figuration.

The background tonal scheme possesses a harmonic rhythm that changes every two bars. With the vocal melody descending a third in the fifth bar, relative-minor harmony is expected; however, its arrival is delayed until the sixth bar, the fifth bar being a return to an equally-concordant tonic. The late arrival of the relative minor harmony is confirmed with its dominant in the following bar: in the place according with the first phrase's dominant. The tonic chord in the fifth bar sounds all the more out of place because in the previous minim, the accompanimental voice-leading falls **7-6** to give a chord of G minor: the relative minor dominant that arrives after one bar's digression to chord **I**. The fifth bar is thus parenthetic.

Another tonal parenthesis is to be found in bar 31, where a local return to the tonic is encompassed within a tonicisation of the relative minor stretching from bars 26 to 32 (see background reduction).

Asymmetry also exists in bars 33 to 35. The dominant prolongation (arrived at by tonal disjuncture up a tone from the relative minor prolongation) is effected by the unwinding of the cycle of fifths; instead of equal minim steps though, the first and third steps are shortened to a crotchet – giving a ragtime feel.

An unusual feature of the accompanimental texture is the tessitural segregation into four-part counterpoint, uncovering a pianistic compositional style. Each of the four parts plays a unique role in the tonal structure; – the bass vamp delineates root notes of the background harmony; it is aided by the inner-voice-leading of the 'tenor' part; the 'alto' part contains the melody and adds in the harmonic middleground; and the top part delineates an arpeggiation of an E♭ major thirteenth chord. This tonic arpeggiation is part of the next most background tonal structure (not shown for clarity): the **I - V - I** movement over the entire refrain.

Alongside register, temporal positioning also differentiates the parts. The top part only occurs on the second beat every odd-numbered bar; the 'alto' part forms the dotted-crotchet anacrusis to every even-numbered bar (forming an extended phrase every four bars); the 'tenor' part forms a three-crotchet anacrusis to every other even-numbered bar (ie. every four bars, opposing the extended 'alto' phrases); and the bass line unremittingly vamps in crotchets. Such registral dislocation of temporal elements is comical: a witticism emphasised through disparate scoring in the original orchestration.

The second half of the refrain possesses an identical initial eight bars except for a flattened leading note in bar 33 in line with the pre-cadential sub-dominant tendencies. The main difference between the two halves lies in the final phrase; instead of a cycle-of-fifths dominant prolongation, the accompanimental progression beneath the static vocal line is scalic. The

vocal line itself is the upper tonic note above predominantly subdominant harmony, creating an impending-cadence effect that tonally balances the dominant prolongation at the end of the first half of the refrain. Forte cites occasional uses of word-painting in Porter; the end of the lyric is such an occasion: "You're the top" is set to the apex note.

The Lyric

vs.1 At words poetic
I'm so pathetic
That I always have found it best,
Instead of getting 'em off my chest,
To let 'em rest
Unexpressed.

I hate parading
My serenading
As I'll probably miss a bar,
But if this ditty
Is not so pretty
At least it'll tell you how great you are.

A quality in many of Porter's list songs is unpretentiousness; as in the above verse, the lyric admits that it is a lyric. The "ditty" to follow does precisely what the protagonist says it will: give us a list of "great" things that the second person is like. Beneath this unpretentious mantle lies the lyricist having fun; how can the protagonist be so pathetically poetic when they complete a quadruple rhyme of best/chest/rest/[unex]pressed? Full effect is gained through the acceleration of the rhyme to the end of the first stanza.

vs.2 Your words poetic
Are not pathetic
On the other hand, boy, you shine
And I can feel after every line
A thrill divine
Down my spine.

Now gifted humans
Like Vincent Youmans
Might think that your song is bad,
But for a person
Who's just rehearsin'
Well I gotta say this my lad:

Porter takes even greater delight in the second verse with the dichotomy between the graceful articulation of his quadruple rhyme, "divine", and the humourous rhyme of "person" with "rehearsin'".

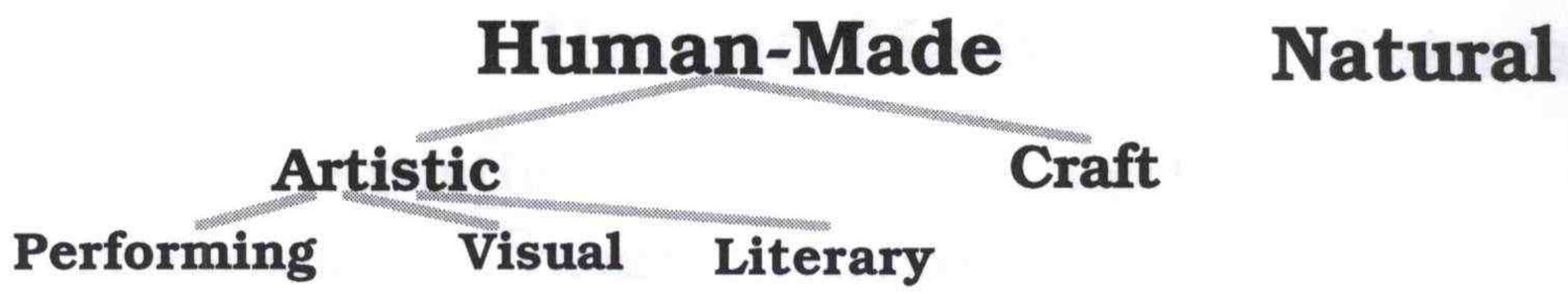
In both the published sheet music and on the 'definitive' recording[12], there are two verses and seven refrains, although the order differs. As many of the listed items were contemporary to 1934, they have now lost much of their effect. For the sake of space, this analysis will only deal with two of the more relevant verses (ie. those most likely to be performed sixty years after composition).

As there is no other source of form to order the list, the refrain must succeed entirely on its wit. In this instance, the wit derives from the incongruous juxtaposition of 'high' and 'low' arts: again with much compositional reflexivity. The form of the first stanza is designed around building up to the witty juxtaposition of the final line. Ex. 4.5a shows the associations of the first refrain (first in both published score and 'definitive' recording), where the following of apogee of English literature with the popular cultural icon Mickey Mouse is the climax:

12 *Anything Goes*, cond. John McGlinn; reconstructed from the original Robert Russell Bennett and Hans Spielak orchestrations; (EMI) CDC 7 498482

Ex. 4.5a

Semantic Allusions in the First Verse

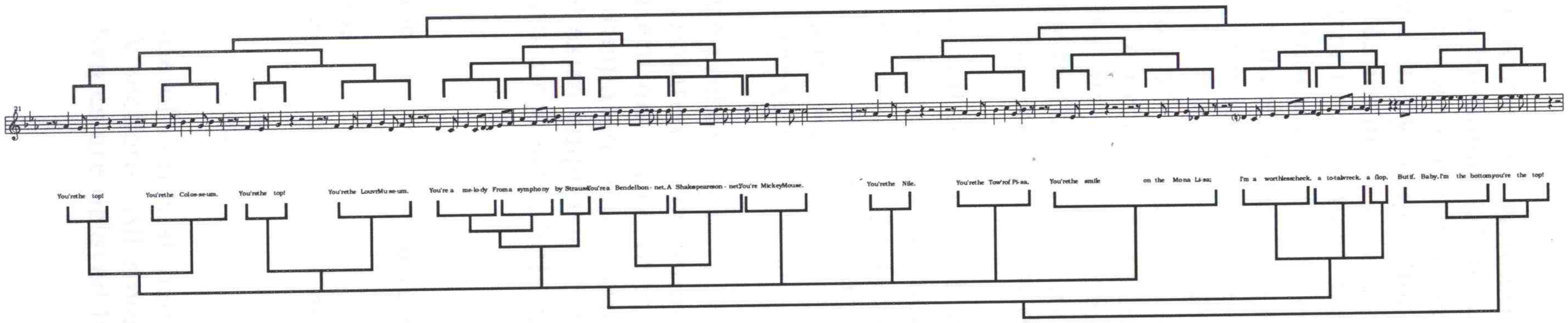


You're the top!		
You're the Colosseum	Roman Amphitheatre	
You're the Louvre Museum	Art Gallery	
You're a melody	Musical (abstract)	
You're a melody from a symphony	High musical art (abstract)	
You're a melody from a symphony by Strauss	Incongruous/hypothetical high musical art	
You're a Bendel bonnet		Fancy Hatware
[You're] a Shakespeare Sonnet	Poetic	
You're Mickey Mouse	High popular culture	
You're the Nile		World's longest river
You're the Tow'r of Pisa		i) Famous Tower ii) Faulty
You're the smile on the Mona Lisa	i) High fine art ii) Enigmatic Beauty	
I'm a worthless check		Self-denigration
[I'm] a total wreck		Self-denigration
[I'm] a flop		Self-denigration
But if, Baby, I'm the bottom, You're the top!		Summation

Note that Porter's construction of "You're a melody..." means that three successive associations are placed on it. Other items have multiple connotations, most wittily the [Leaning] Tower of Pisa. Two items are connected in the above refrain: the Louvre Museum is the home of the Mona Lisa.

Ex. 4.6

Music and Lyric Syntax in the Refrain



The Melopoetics

An analysis of the respective syntactic structures of the first refrain's lyric and music shows a fundamental disparity between the two (ex. 4.6)[14]. The musical structure has an entirely binary hierarchy except on the most foreground level, where ternary run-on lines occur in the **B** and **C** sections; yet the lyric demonstrates its list song structure by a more linear hierarchy giving fewer middleground connections. Having such a structural counterpoint is not inherently negative to cognition, but where it detracts is in the lack of musical prominence given to the crucial lyric change from first to second person. The precise change coincides with the start of the **B'** section, yet the relevant 'first person' four bars are similar to the 'second person' **B** section (ie. bars 45-48 ≈ 29-32). Also, because the only indication that the items refer to the protagonist rather than addressee is the solitary personal pronoun at the start of the phrase, the subject is easily forgotten. If the above drawbacks mean that the change of person is not noticed, then the negative items become assimilated within the main list, defeating the whole point of the song.

Despite the middle and background structural disparity shown in ex. 4.6, the foreground is notable for its syntactic congruence. Porter's handling of the beginning of the second quarter ("You're a melody from a symphony by Strauss") is particularly slick in melopoetic composition. The only important exception to the syntactic congruence is the run-on third and fourth phrases of the second stanza ("You're the smile/on the Mona Lisa" in the first refrain).

Another melopoetic problem occurs in the final line of the refrain. The inclusion of the interpolated affectionate term "baby" occurs on the downbeat drawing attention away from both the important personal pronouns on the anticipated half-bars and the initial conditional. Performance practice of extra emphasis on the ragged half-bars is needed to overcome the deficiency of pronouns; little can be done about the conditional though:

Literal
But **if** [Baby] ***I'm*** the **bottom**, ***You're*** the **top**!

Melopoetic Interpretation
But if, ***Baby***, **I'm** the ***bottom***, **You're** the ***top***!

(emboldened = weak stress
emboldened italicised = strong stress**)**

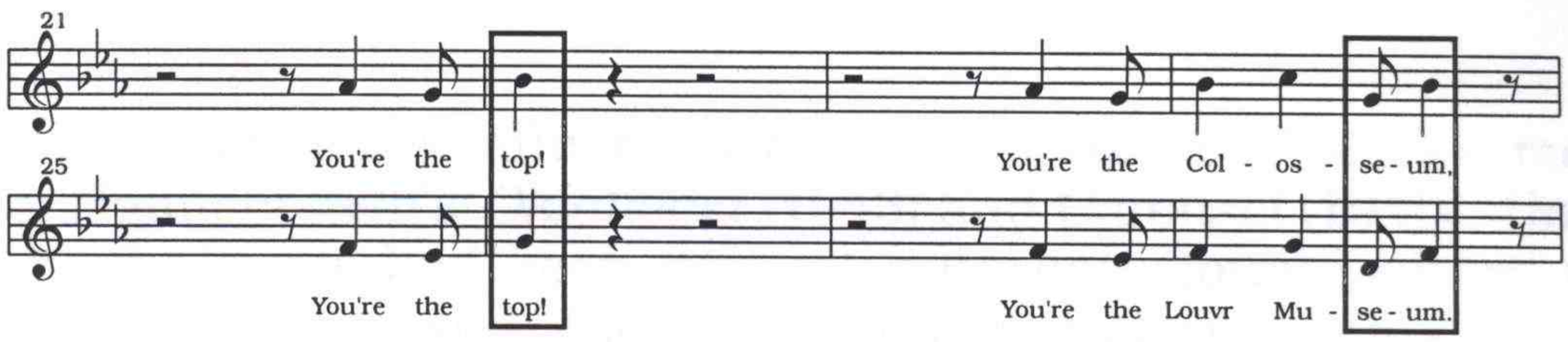
Effective use is made of contrast between alternating masculine and feminine rhymes in the **A** sections. All rhymed syllable(s) occur on a rising third, but the feminine rhymes are delayed by half a bar:

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14 The seven refrains do have differences in their syntaxes, but these are confined to minor alterations of foreground connections. For the purposes of this analysis, the first refrain may be regarded as a typical case.

Ex. 4.7

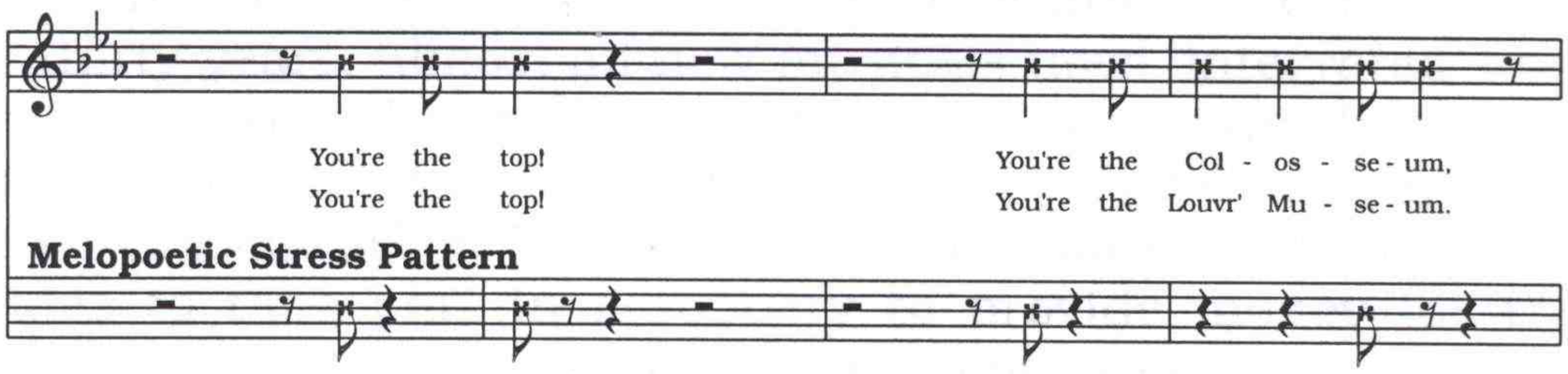
Contrast between Masculine and Feminine Rhymes



These rhymes correspond with the textual stresses on "**top**" and "**se**-um". By combining these lyric emphases with ragged melodic ones, the resulting melopoetic stress pattern shows subtle developing variation:

Ex. 4.8

Melopoetic Developing Variation



The effect of displacing the stressed beat in the fourth and eighth bars by half a bar is to resist subdivision of the metrical hierarchy into two-bar units; instead, four-bar units are the result, creating a far more interesting – and ragged – refrain.

Acceleration to the end of the lyric list noted previously is accomplished melopoetically too. Listed items start at four-bar intervals and accelerate to one-bar intervals by the end of **B**.

The harmonic disjuncture half-way through the first **B** section may be musically inelegant, but it serves a melopoetic purpose. It jolts the listener in preparation for the climactic machine-gun delivery of items in the last line, and in particular the ludicrous associative juxtaposition of the final items.

Repeated notes at the ends of both **B** sections have two lyric parallels. i) the first and second phrases rhyme in all refrains; ii) in some refrains, alliteration connects items (first refrain: "Bendel bonnet/Shakespeare Sonnet/Mickey Mouse"), whilst the second refrain staggers the pattern ("Nation'l Gall'ry/Garbo's salary/cellophane"). Similar alliteration also buttresses the final lyric: "But if, Baby, I'm the bottom, you're the top!".

Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein

"If I Loved You": *Carousel* (1945)

No other musicals influenced other collaborators' shows more than Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* (1943) and *Carousel* (1945). Until 1943, progress in the genre had been gradual, with occasional isolated works of high merit being successful: the innovations not always being taken up by others though. The musico-dramatic breakthrough in Rodgers & Hammerstein's first collaborations aggregate their previous individual achievements from works such as *Showboat* (1927: Kern & Hammerstein) and *Pal Joey* (1940: Rodgers & Hart). The result was an 'integrated' book in which the songs grew organically from a plot with serious issues, had realistic characters who sang in the same linguistic style as their speech, used plot-related ballets and, most importantly, songs based upon character journeys. Within a few years, the older type of musical-comedy was passé; for nearly thirty years, almost all new musicals used 'integrated' books.

Carousel is based upon Ferenc Molnar's successful book *Liliom*. It is centred on the love-affair and marriage of Billy, a low-down carousel barker, and Julie an ex-millworker. When he discovers that he is to become a father, Billy decides to take part in a robbery to provide money for the child's upbringing, but is caught in the act and commits suicide to prevent capture. He goes to heaven and is made to observe the insults and bullying that his daughter is subjected to because of his reputation. The play ends with him being allowed to return to earth on her graduation day to give her advice: don't let your personal qualities be affected by the reputation of your forebearers – "You'll Never Walk Alone".

Like *Showboat*, several scenes in *Carousel* are set entirely to song and underscored music. One of the most moving is the "Scene Billy and Julie", where they meet for the first time alone. Initially, neither is prepared to admit that they are in love with the other: Billy because of chauvinism, and Julie because she is "never goin' to marry". Music is used in a *Leitsektionen* fashion throughout the scene, the climax being the song "If I Loved You" – one of the best in the work. It is sung initially by Julie and later repeated by Billy, with the surrounding leitsektionen dramatically analogous to verses. After Billy's rendition of the song, dramatic tension is finally resolved as the two lovers render their doubts helpless with a kiss. "If I Loved You" marks the point where the characters are expressing their love for one another without wanting to admit it, yet totally failing to hide their feelings.

The Music

Although in **AA'BA"** form, "If I Loved You" lasts thirty-six bars, the four-bar extension being a coda. This modification of the standard form is musico-dramatically justified, as demonstrated later.

Rodgers made increasing use of chromatic voice-leading as his compositional style matured. Whilst such harmonic progressions had their

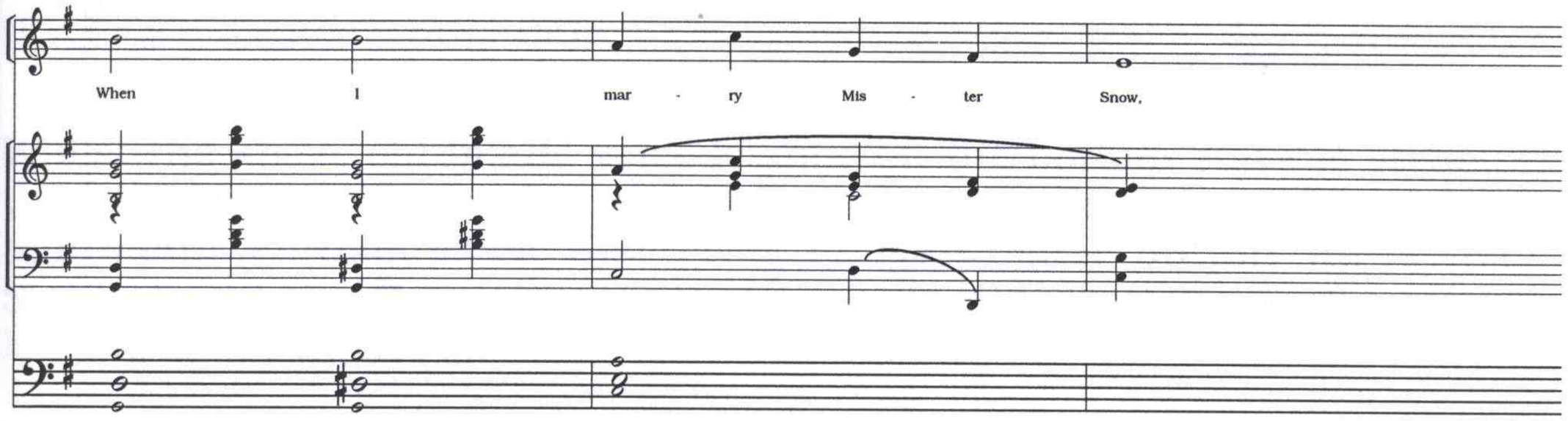
immediate precedent within the genre in Gershwin, Rodgers cultivated a style that used both structural chromatic voice-leading and redundant chromaticism. The latter device was a suitable vehicle for the sentimentality of Rodgers' later shows, particularly *The King and I* (1951) onwards. *Carousel* represents a compositional high for Rodgers because whilst most songs in the score are based on a rising-chromatic inner-voice motive, the use of redundant chromaticism had not yet reached detracting proportions.

As a score, *Carousel* was one of the most motivically-unified works to be heard on Broadway by 1945, with each character having their own musical identity, within an overall generative germ of a rising chromatic line:

Ex. 5.1

Chromatic Inner-Voice-Leadings from *Carousel*

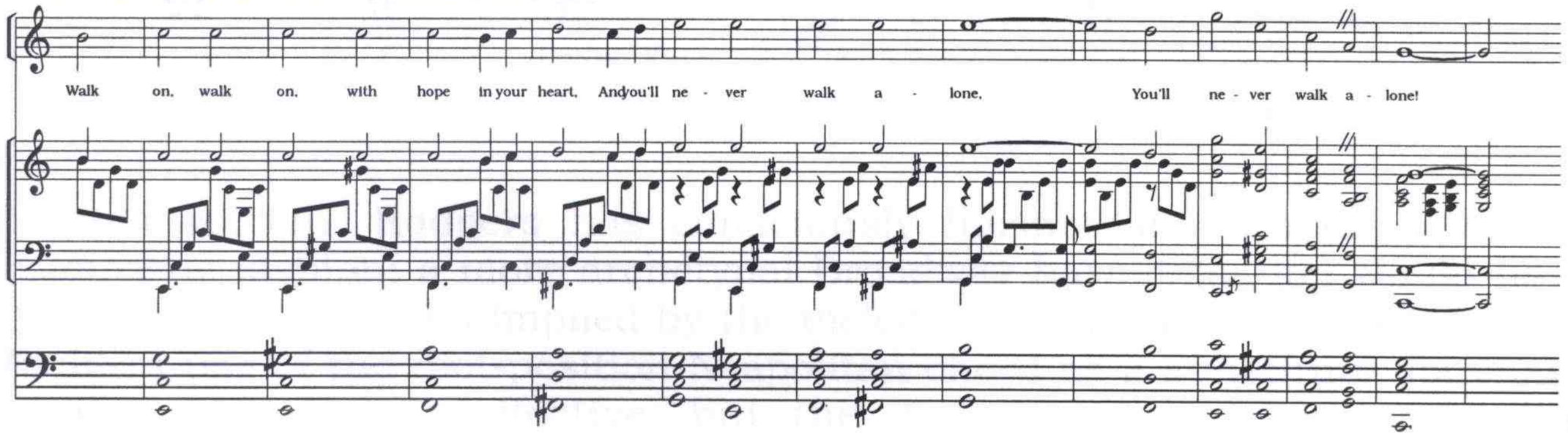
"Mister Snow"



"My Little Girl" from "Soliloquy"



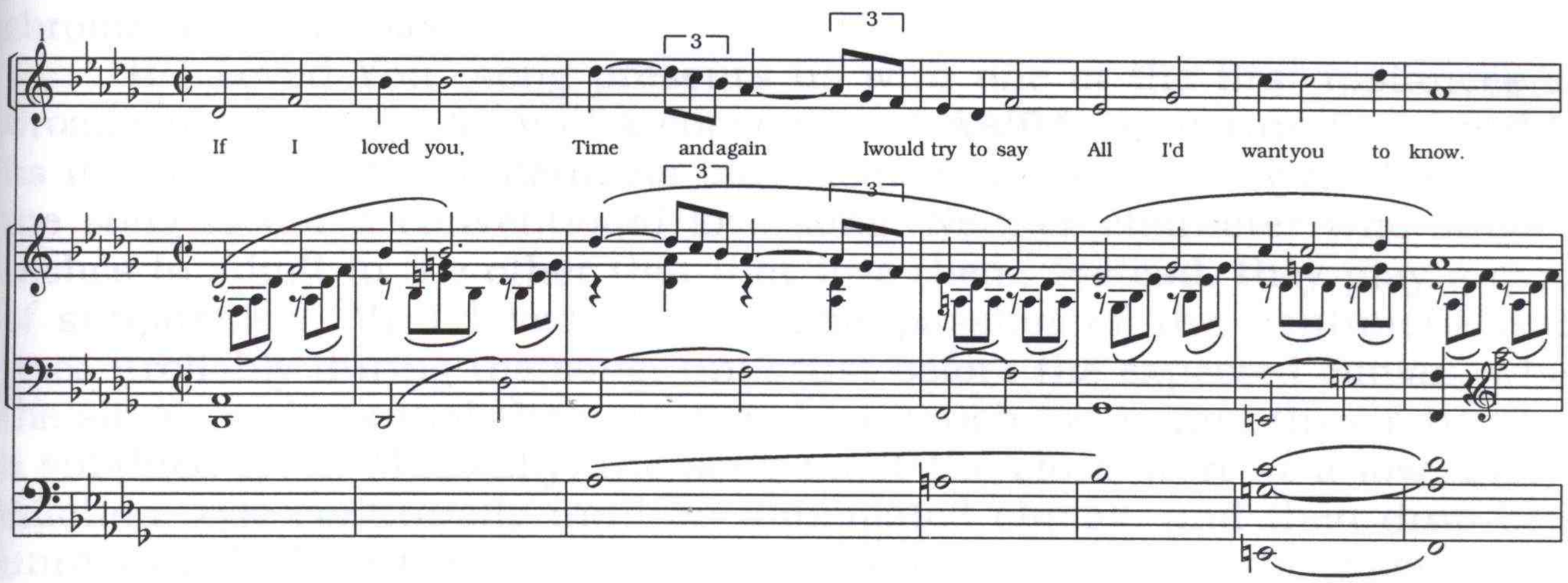
"You'll Never Walk Alone"



"If I Loved You" thus fits in neatly in the context of a score dominated by rising chromatic inner-voices:

Ex. 5.2

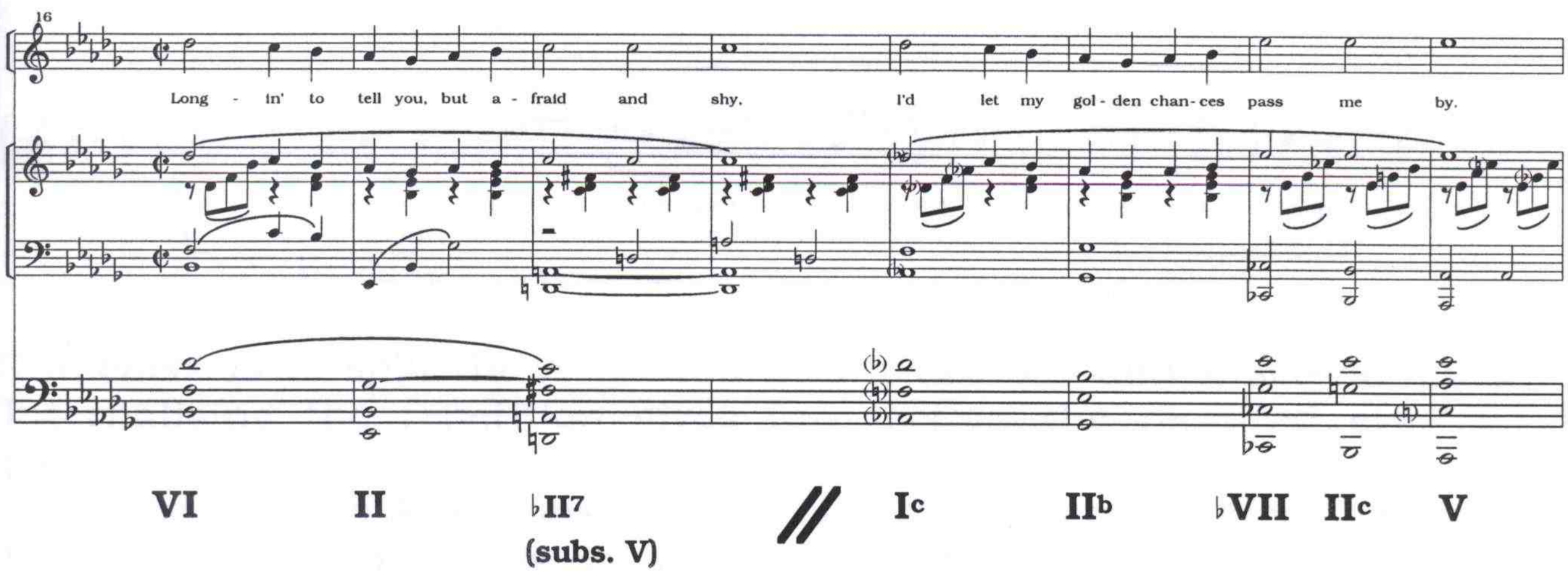
"If I Loved You": "A" Section



Whilst the above chromatic voice-leading on the bottom stave is structural, the shift to and from the diminished chord in bar 2 is not; it is this redundant chromaticism that gives Rodgers' later output its schmaltz. Similarly, in the **B** section, such harmonic colouration results in voice-leading dislocation:

Ex. 5.3

Redundant Chromaticism



In this section, Rodgers has consciously harmonised the melody in a colouristic fashion; a more archetypal Broadway harmonisation would have used the cycle of fifths implied by the melody: **VI - II - V - - Ib - VI - II - V**. Rodgers use of the root-position Neapolitan chord as a substitute dominant in the third bar is effective, but the dislocated voice-leading to the succeeding **Ic** mars the effect. This is indicative of his adventurous use of