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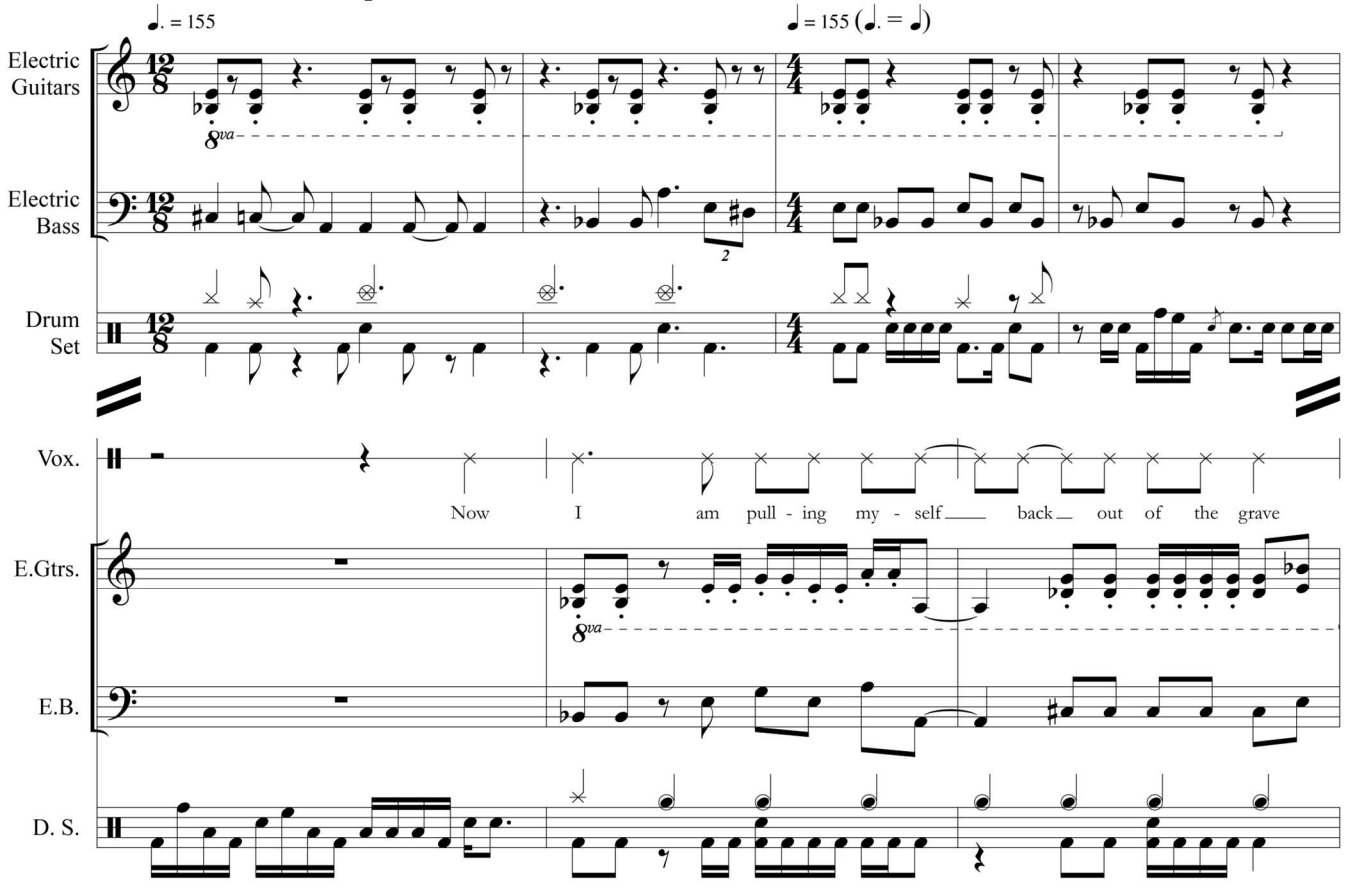
A Formula for Healing: Metric Modulation in Entheos's Time Will Take Us All

Abstract

Although metric modulation offers many fascinating opportunities for music-making, theorists appear to take it for granted. Authors often cite few examples without exploring the technique's nuances or application outside Western art music, with limited exceptions (e.g., Lookenbill 2023, Malawey 2007). As documented by several popular music theorists in the past two decades, metal music provides fertile ground for complex rhythmic and metric compositional devices, among these metric modulation. In their 2023 album, *Time Will Take Us All*, progressive technical death metal band Entheos thoroughly utilizes the technique, notably offering support to the lyrics, which describe the emotions experienced by lead vocalist Chaney Crabb after a serious accident. In this paper, I examine the different ways Entheos uses metric modulation and demonstrate how the device supports the overarching lyrical themes of pain, introspection, and hope.

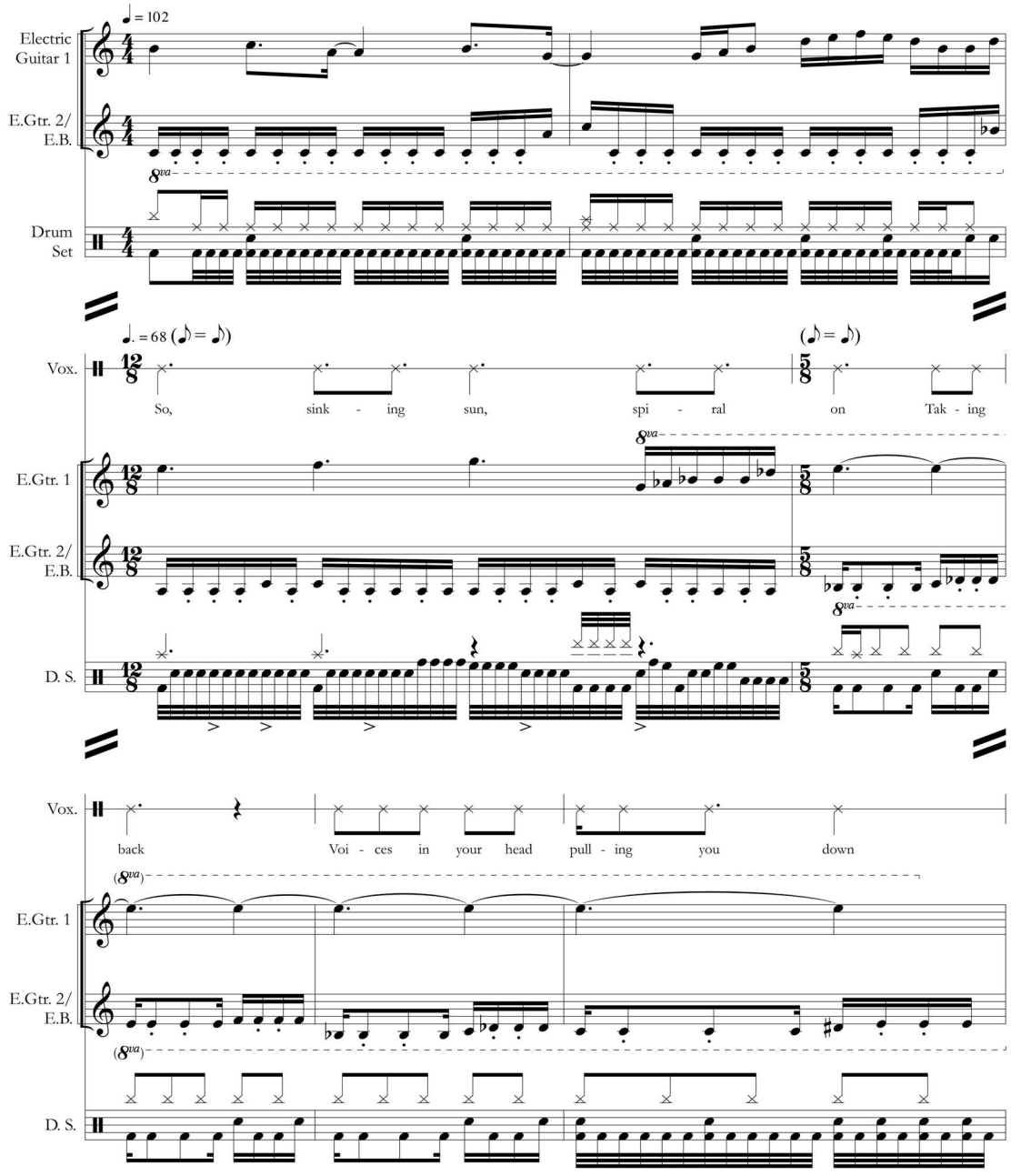
Musical Examples[1]

Example 1: "Absolute Zero," 1:13, common-beat modulation

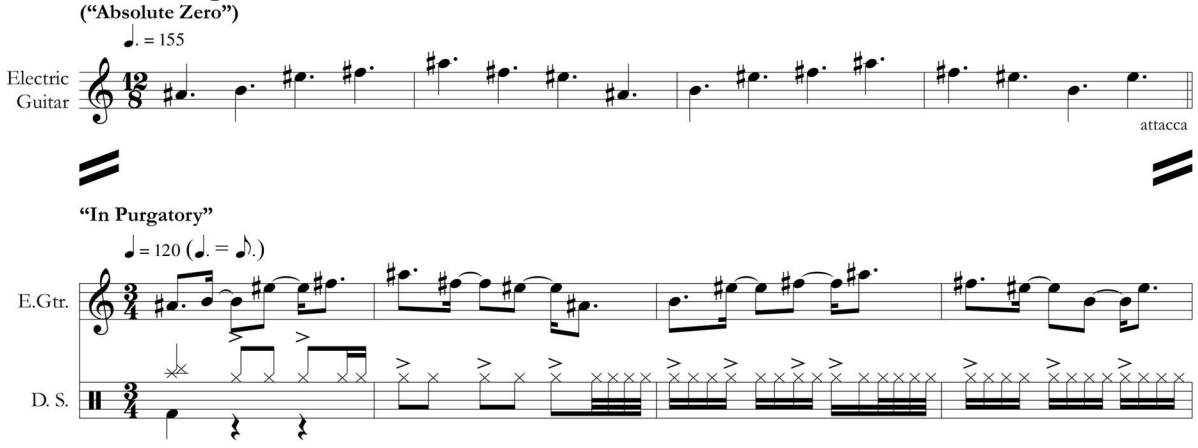


[1] I consulted the official guitar tabs for "Absolute Zero" and "In Purgatory" after I completed my own transcriptions, leading to some adjustments. Otherwise, all the transcriptions shown here are solely mine.

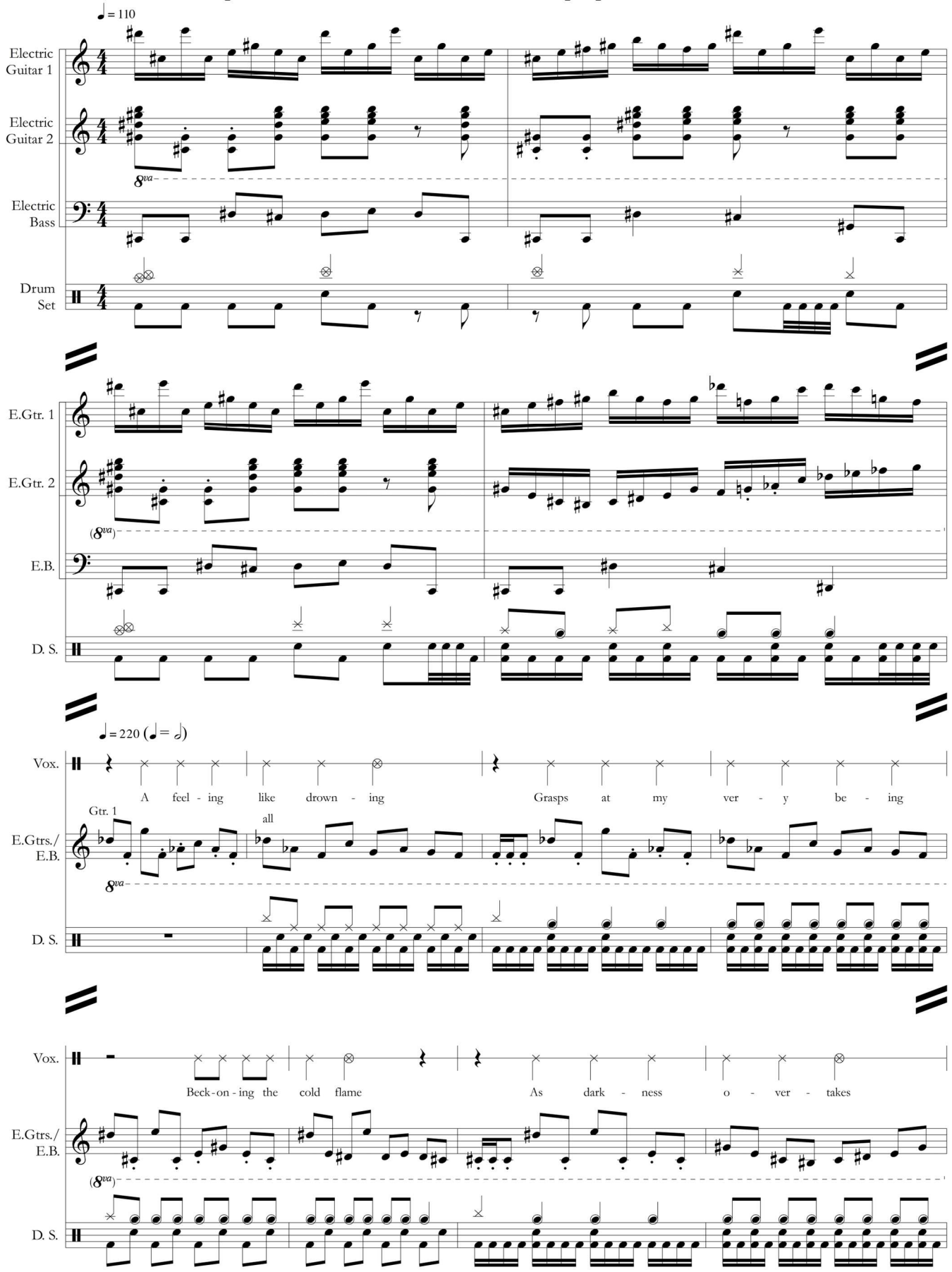
Example 2: “Darkest Day,” 1:00, common-division modulation followed by a common-division/cardinality modulation



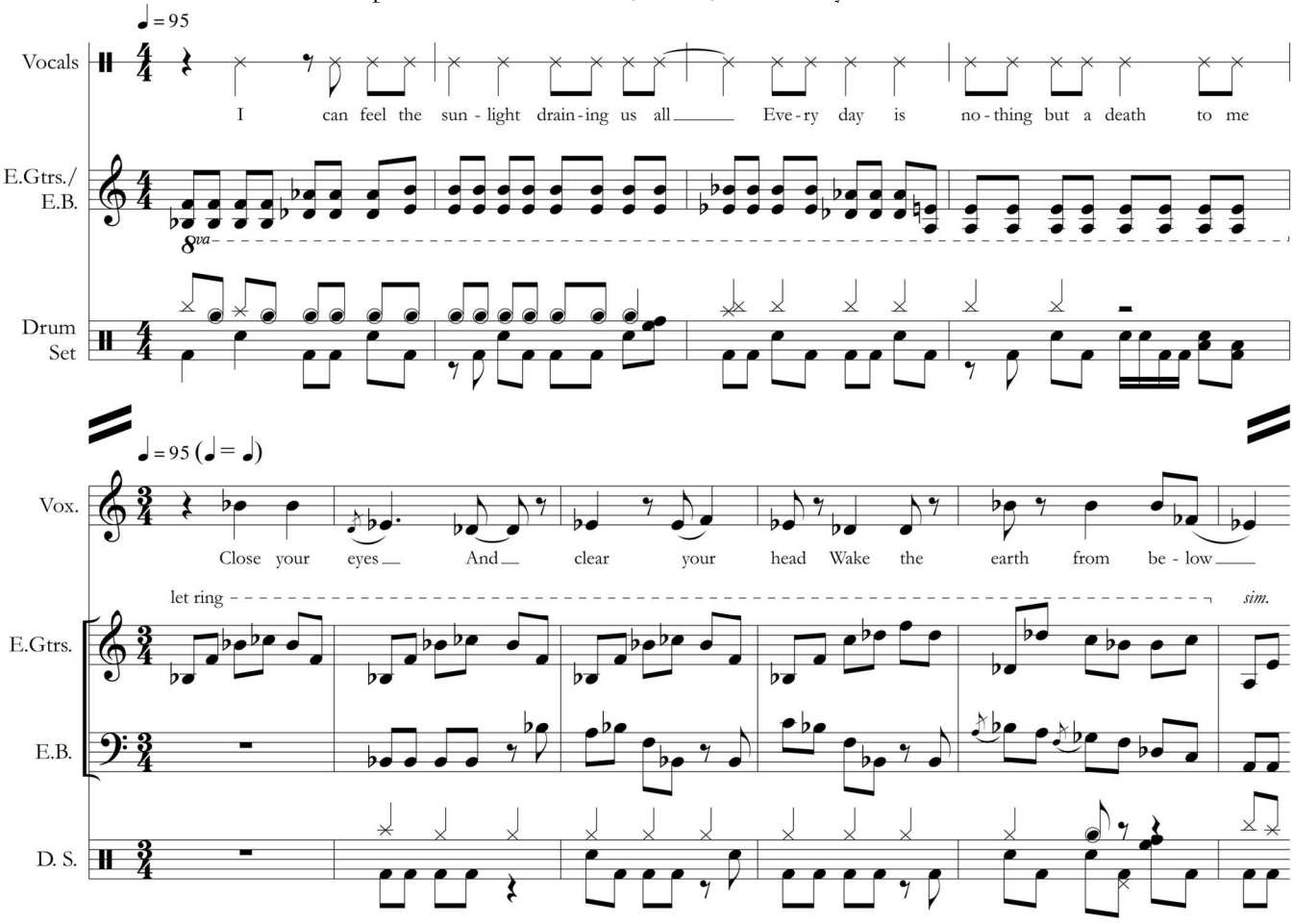
Example 3: “Absolute Zero,” 4:34, common-absolute duration modulation



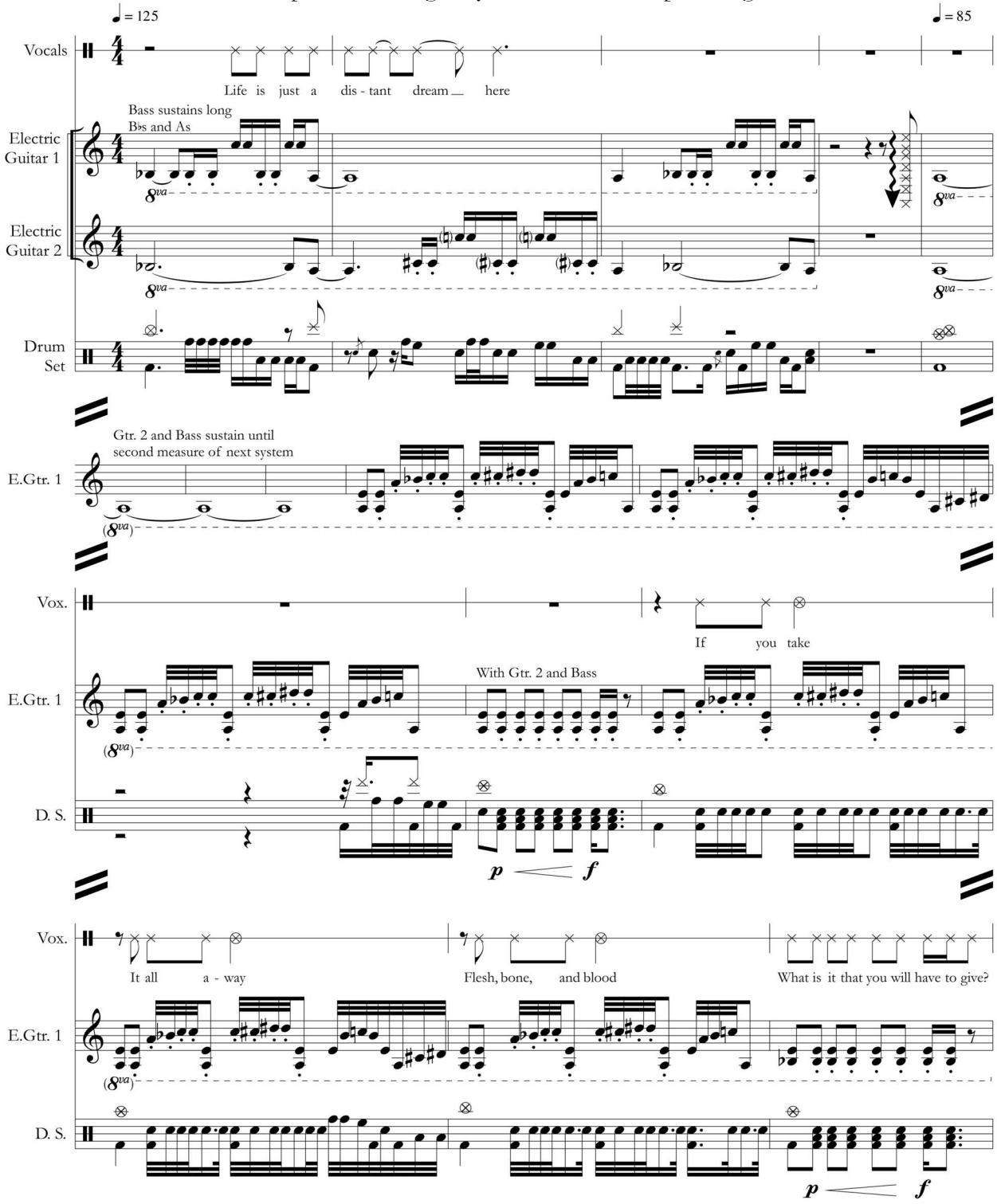
Example 4: "The Interior Wilderness," 2:31, proportional modulation



Example 5: “I Am the Void,” 1:36, cardinality modulation



Example 6: “In Purgatory,” 2:57, direct tempo change



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