

Ballad of the Welfare Mother

Pesha Gertler

Linda Allen

Dm



She stood on the pave-ment, hold-ing a rock. She



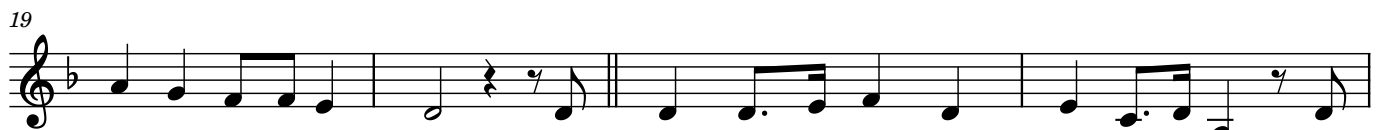
stood on the pave-ment still. She stood on the pave-ment and hurled the rock at



Wel-fare's win-dow-sill. The rock, it bare-ly made a dent. "That's



from a wel-fare bum, Who's tired of say-ing, 'Thanks for a loaf,' and



on-ly get-ting a crumb!" She stood on the pave-ment, hold-ing a rock. She



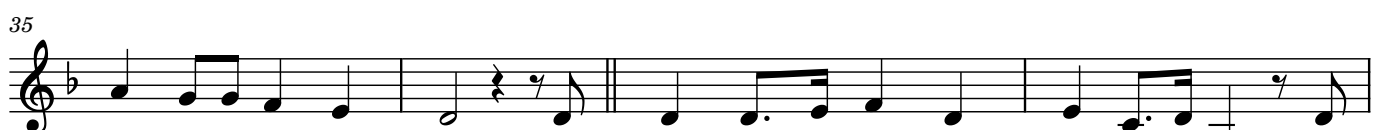
stood like one har- assed. She stood on the pave-ment and hurled the rock. It



bounced off the win-dow glass. "You hold up my check a-gain and a-gain, and




you don't give a damn If me and my kids are hun-gry and broke, while it's



steak for my ex-old man!" She paced on the pave-ment, hold-ing a rock. She

39



paced like one at - tacked. She stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock and

43



watched the win - dow crack. "You sneer at me, sneer at my kids, when

47



we buy food with stamps, But you nev-er sneer at him each night when

51



he goes out to dance." She paced on the pave-ment, hold - ing a rock, while her

55



sweat poured down like rain. She stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock. It

59




shat-tered the win - dow - pane. "The judge a - ward-ed the kids to me; my

63



man was to pay sup - port. But you pro - tect the men who run. And the

67




child-ren are vic-tims in court." A crowd rushed out on the pave - ment, back-ing

71



off as she took aim. One brick in each hand and she hurled them right

75




through the win - dow - pane. "You sneer at the holes in our shoes and clothes and

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 rip off each dime I make And shut the doors of school in my face then

83

 tell me to like my fate." "How's it feel to have holes in *you* for a change?" She

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 shout-ed through the brok-en glass. And the crowd on the pave-ment yelled with her: "Up your

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 bu - reau - crat - ic ass!" The si - rens in the dis - tance came clos - er. Two


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 cops shoved her a - side. "What have you done?" they snarled at her. "A


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 mor - al act!" she cried. They say she laughed in the jail - house and

103

 sang the whole night long, While peo - ple gath - ered out - side and re -

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 called the day in song: Of how she'd paced and held a rock while her

111

 sweat poured down like rain, Of how she'd stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock, and

115

 shat - tered the win - dow - pane.

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stood on the pave-ment and hurled the rock at Wel-fare's win-dow-sill. The

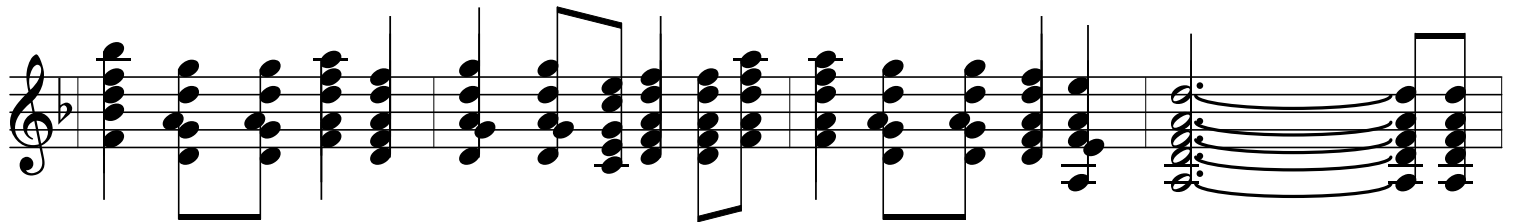
rock, it bare-ly made a dent. "That's from a wel-fare bum, Who's

tired of say-ing, 'Thanks for a loaf,' and on-ly get-ting a crumb!" She

stood on the pave-ment, hold-ing a rock; she stood like one har-assed. She

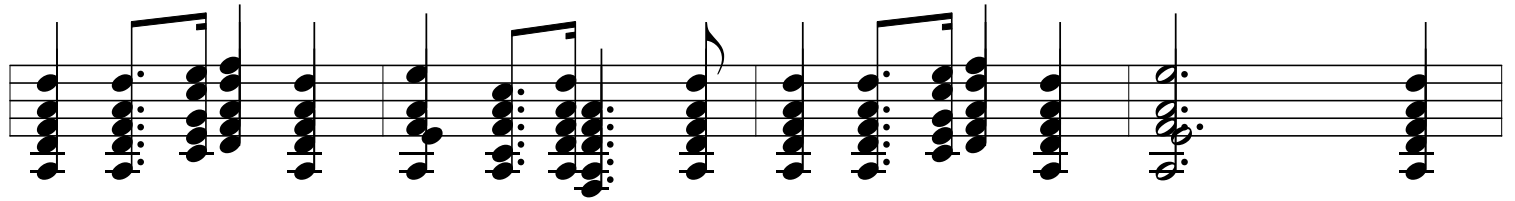
stood on the pave-ment and hurled the rock; it bounced off the win-dow glass. "You

hold up my check a-gain and a-gain, and you don't give a damn If



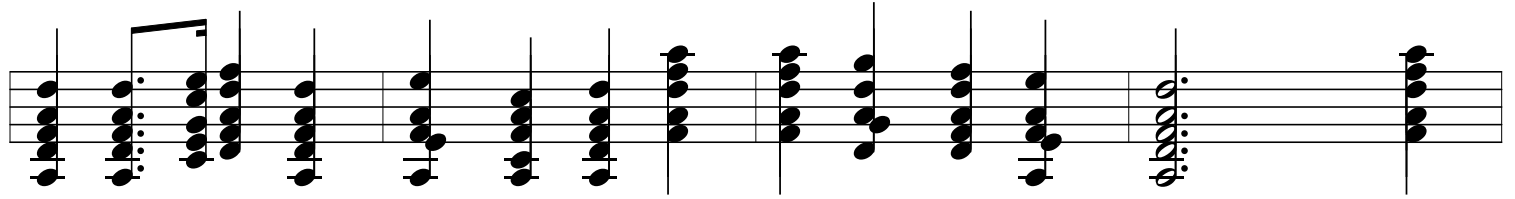
me and my kids are hun- gry and broke, while it's steak for my ex--old man!"

She



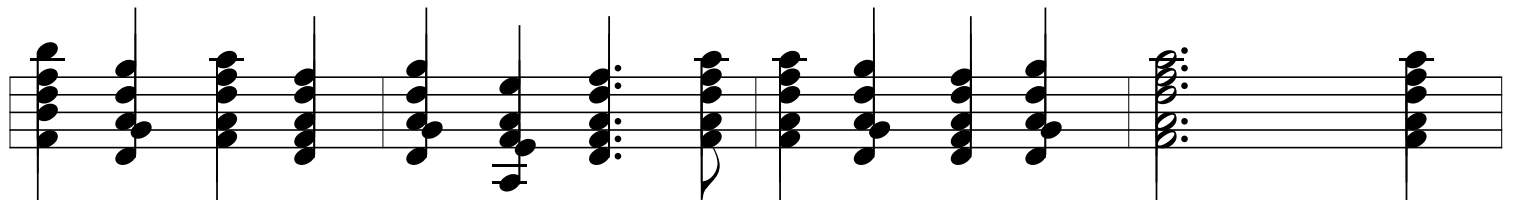
paced on the pave-ment, hold- ing a rock; she paced like one at- tacked.

She



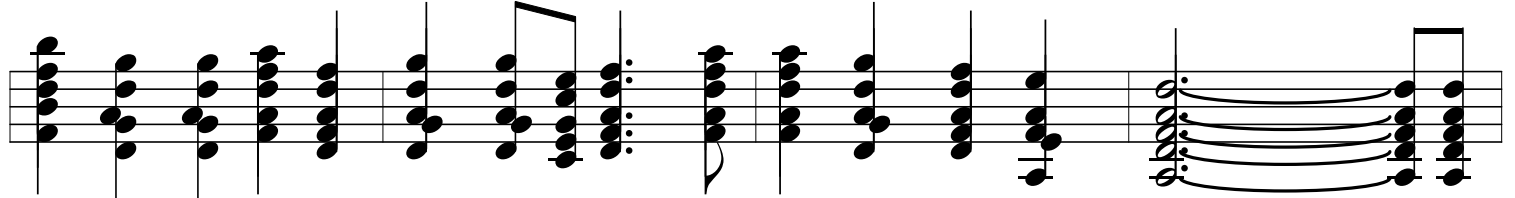
stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock and watched the win- dow crack.

"You



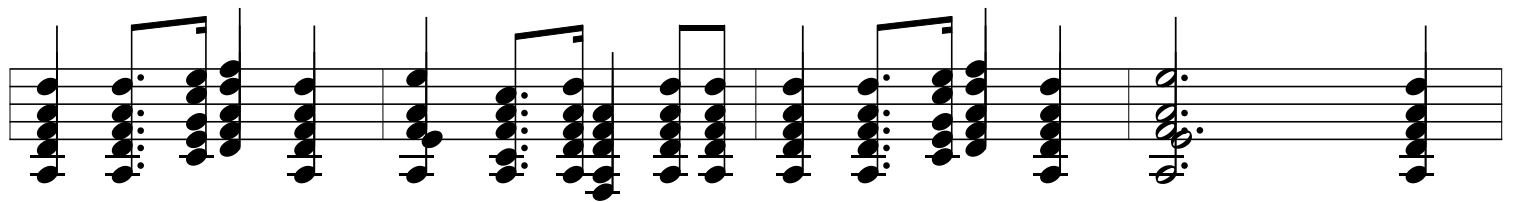
sneer at me, sneer at my kids, when we buy food with stamps,

But



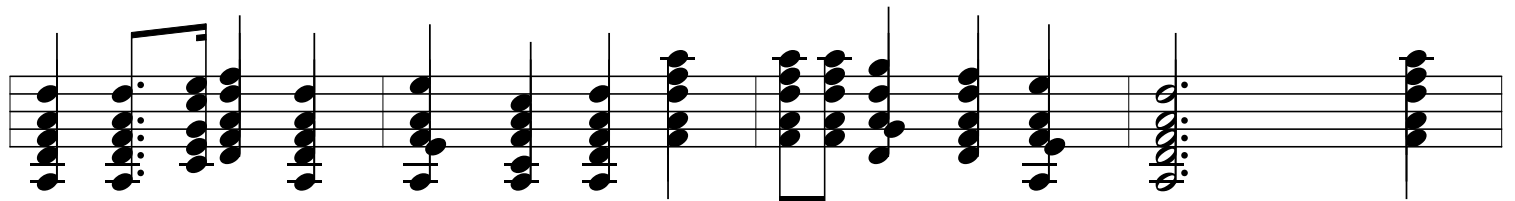
you nev- er sneer at him each night when he goes out to dance."

She



paced on the pave-ment, hold- ing a rock, while her sweat poured down like rain.

She



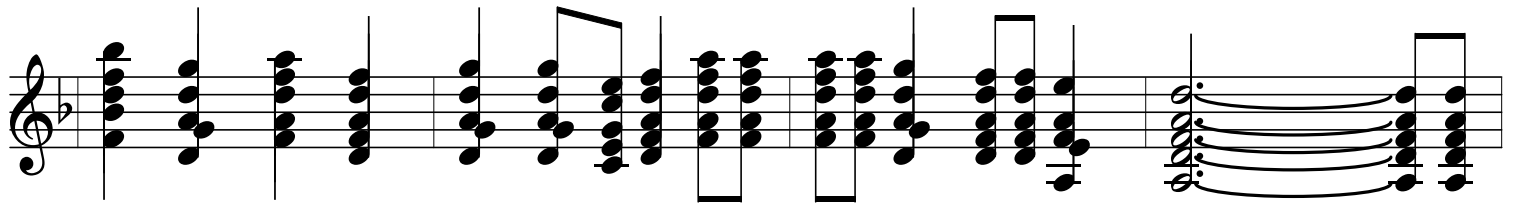
stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock; it shat-tered the win-dow- pane.

"The

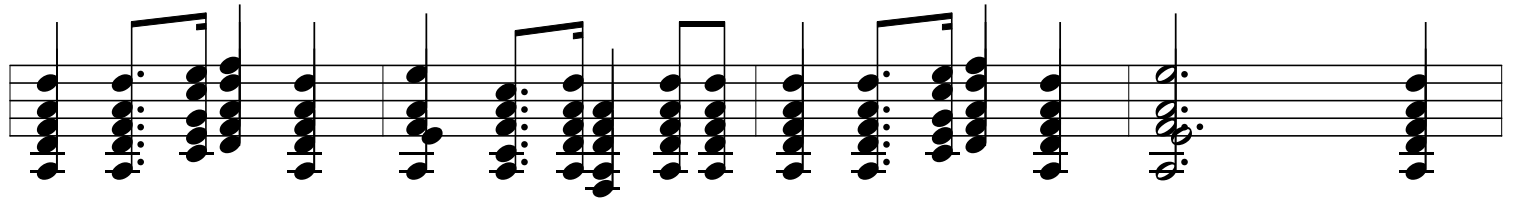


judge a- ward-ed the kids to me; my man was to pay sup- port.

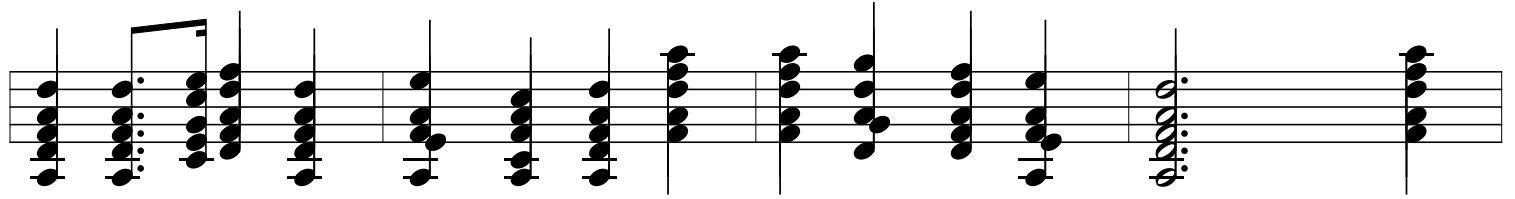
But



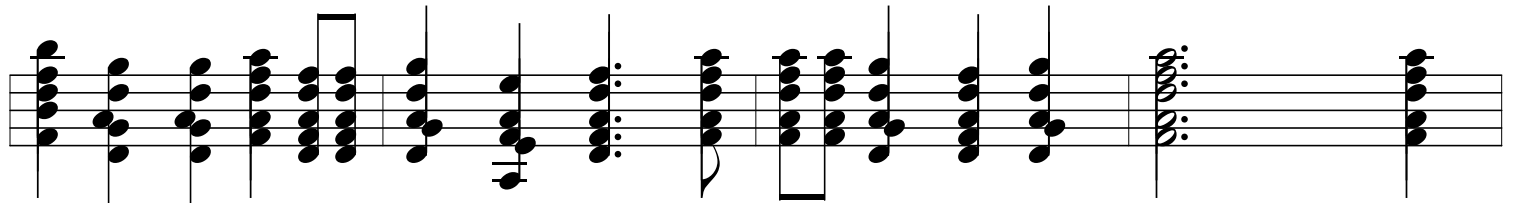
you protect the men who run, and the children are victims in court." A



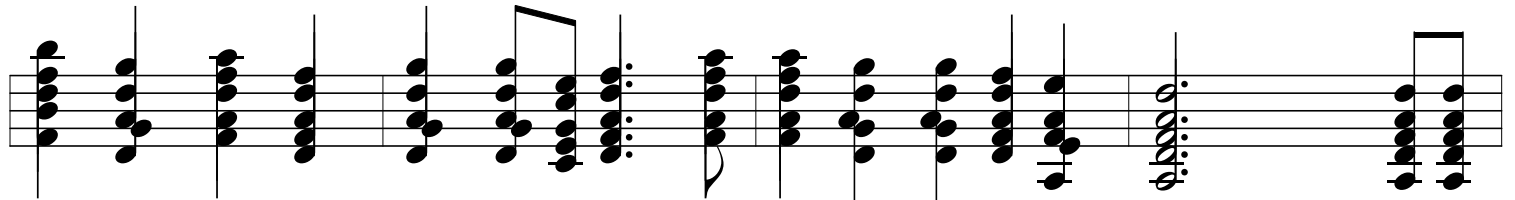
crowd rushed out on the pavement, backing off as she took aim. One



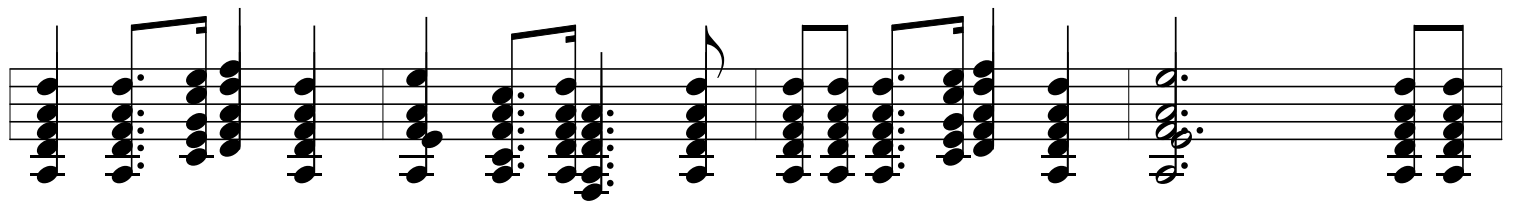
brick in each hand and she hurled them right through the window pane. "You



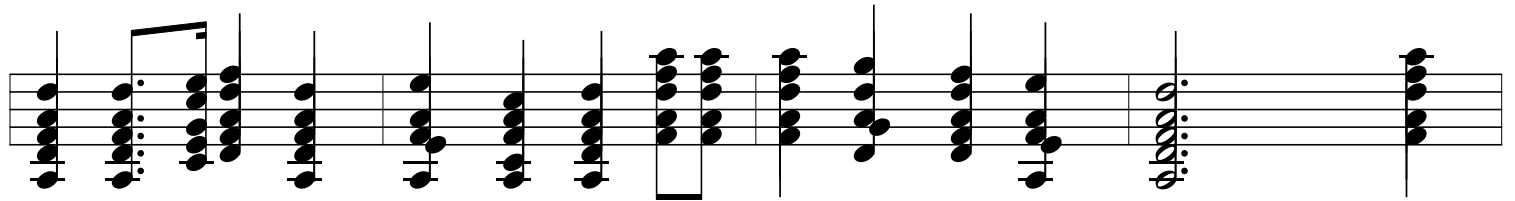
sneer at the holes in our shoes and clothes and rip off each dime I make And



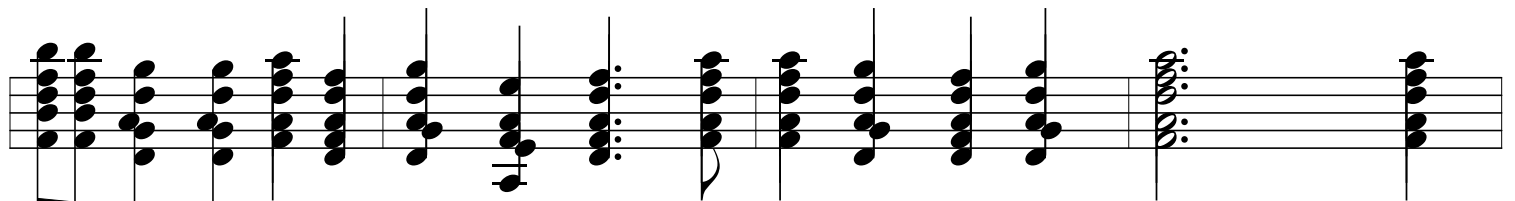
shut the doors of school in my face then tell me to like my fate." "How's it



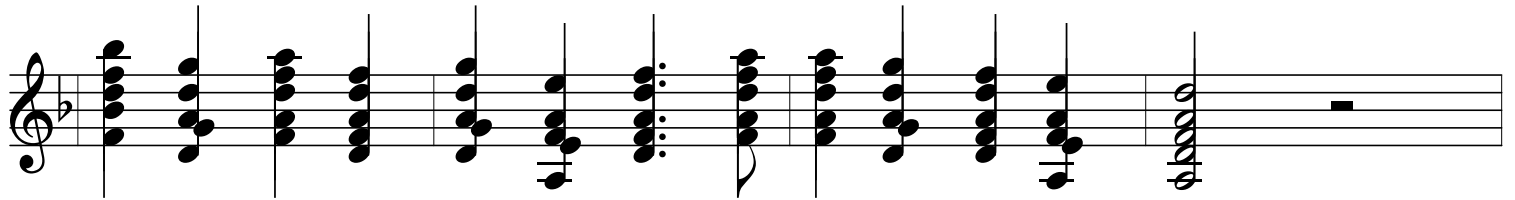
feel to have holes in you for a change?" she shouted through the broken glass. And the



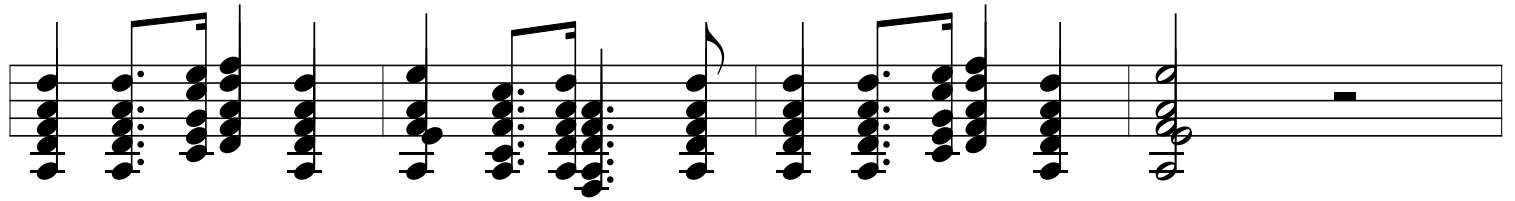
crowd on the pavement yelled with her: "Up your bureaucratic ass!" The



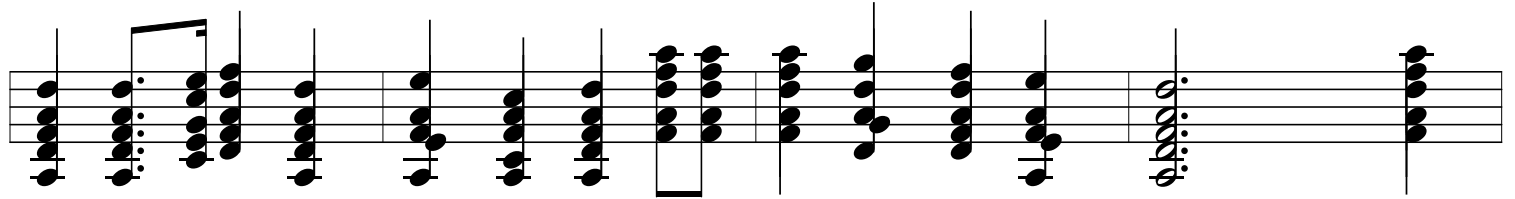
sirens in the distance came closer; two cops shoved her aside. "What



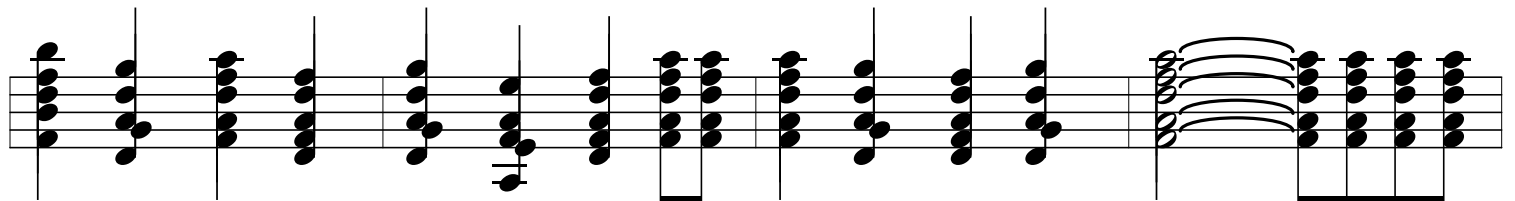
have you done?" they snarled at her. "A moral act!" she cried.



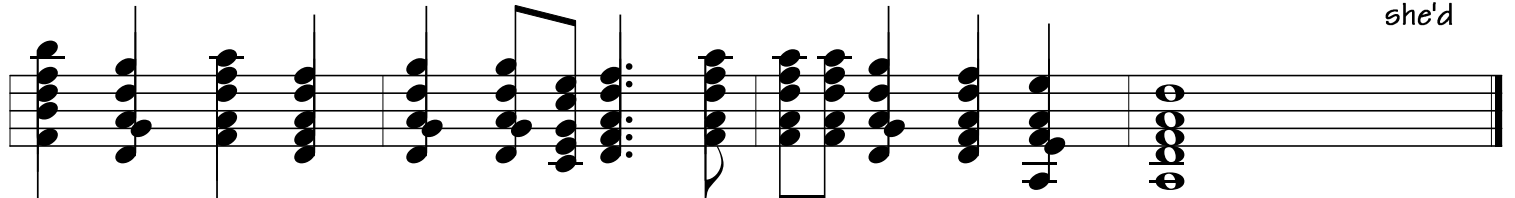
They say she laughed in the jail-house and sang the whole night long,



While people gathered outside and recalled the day in song: Of



how she'd paced and held a rock while her sweat poured down like rain, Of how she'd



stopped, took aim, and hurled the rock, and shattered the window-pane.