



# Tension, apprehension and dissension...

SATB chorus  
text by Alfred Bester

Katherine Saxon

2 minutes

[katherinesaxon.com](http://katherinesaxon.com)

Tension, apprehension and dissent is a spoken fugue that portrays the madness, speed and violence of modern existence. Speaking should follow the general contours of the **x** note heads. In measures 42 – 52, the soprano and alto parts should sing the “the annoying playground song” in relative pitch, rather than the specific pitches provided. It is not necessary that each section decide on a pitch and each person can sing it relative to their own sense, but it generally happens that the sopranos and altos choose similar pitches after a few rehearsals.

It is intentional that the word “begun” is broken apart. The repeated b’ b’ b’ should be sung as an explosive stutter. Later the second half “begun” is broken off and results in the aggressive repetition of the word “gun” in measures 48 and 50.

**Alfred Bester** (1913 – 1987) was an American science fiction and comic book writer. His novel *The Demolished Man* won the inaugural Hugo Award in 1953.

# Tension, apprehension and dissension...

words adapted from  
*The Demolished Man* by Alfred Bester

Katherine Saxon  
2006

## Rigid and Robotic

Unison *mf*



Eight sir, se-vensir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

3




ten-ser said to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sion, ap - pre-hen-sion and dis-sen-sion have be -

## Slightly Faster

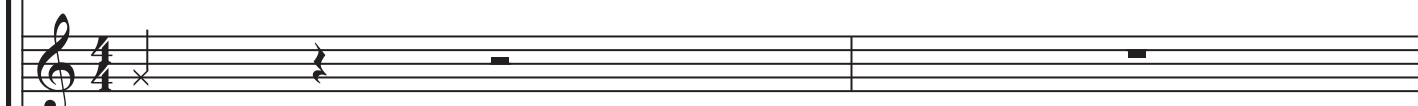
5 *p*

S



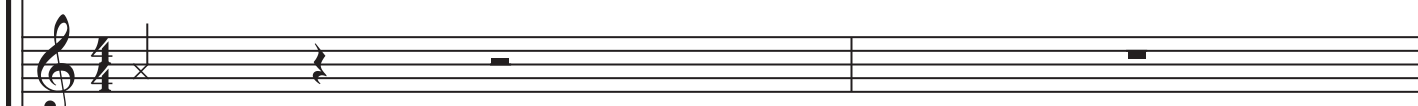
Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

A



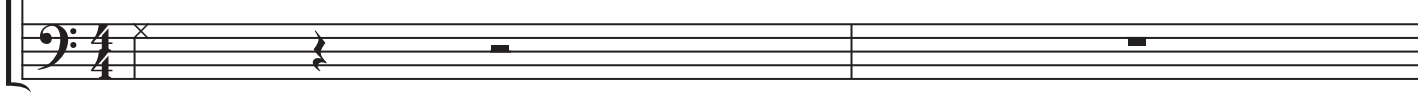
gun

T



gun


B



gun

7 *mf*

S



ten-ser said to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sion, ap - pre-hen-sion and dis-sen-sion have be -

9 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

S gun. tension, ap-pre-hension b' b' b' tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension b' b'

A *mp*

Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

11 *p* *mp* *mf*

S tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension be -

A *mf*

ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sion, ap - pre-hen-sion and dis-sen-sion have be -

13 *mp* *sub.p* *mf* *sub.p* *mf* *mp*

S gun. one, sir two, one, sir three, one,

A *sub.p* *mf* *sub.p* *mf* *mp*

gun. tension, ap-pre-hension b' b' b' tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension b' b'

T *mf*

Eight sir, se-vensir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.



15

S  
sir four one, *p* sir five, sir six, sir se-ven,

A  
*sub.p* *mf* *mf*  
tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension be -

T  
8 ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, *f* ten-sion, ap-pre-hen-sion and dis-sen-sion have be -

17

S  
*mf* *mp*  
sir eight, be-gun. one, sir two, one, sir three,

A  
*mp*  
gun. one, sir two, one, sir three, one,

T  
*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*  
gun. tension, ap-pre-hension b' b' b' tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension b' b'

B  
*f*  
Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

19

S  
one, sir fourone, sir five, sir six, se-ven,

A  
sir fourone, sir five, sir six, sir se-ven,

T  
tension, ap-pre-hension *f* dis-sension *f* be -

B  
ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-ser said to ten - sor, ten-sion, ap - pre-hen-sion and dis-sen-sion have be -

21

S  
*f*  
one!

A  
*f* *mf* *mp*  
sir eight, one! sir two, one! sir three,

T  
*mf* *mp*  
gun. one! sir two, one, sir three, one,

B  
*mf* *f* *mf* *sub.p* *mf*  
gun. tension, ap-pre-hension b' b' b' tension, ap-pre-hension dis-sension b' b'

23 *accel.* -----

A  
one! sir four, sir five, one! sir six,

T  
8 sir four, one, sir five, one, sir six, one,

B  
*subp* *mf* *mp* *f*  
tension, ap-prehension dis-sension dis-sension dis-sension one!

25

A  
*mf* *f* *mf* *f*  
one! sir se-ven, one! sir se-ven, one!

T  
*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*  
8 sir se-ven, one! sir se-ven, one!

B  
*p* *mp* *p* *mp* *f*  
sir se-ven, one! sir se-ven, one! sir se-ven,

27 **Brisk**  
**f** SOPRANOS

S  
Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir,

B  
*p*  
one! sir se-ven, one! sir se-ven, sir eight, be -

29 *mp* *p* *mp*

S one. ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-ser said to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-

A *p* *mf*

dis-sension dis-sension Eight sir,

T *mf* *mp*

Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

B *mf* *p*

gun. one! dis-sension

31 *p* *mp* *mf*

S hen-sion and dis-sension have be-gun. dis-sension dis-sension

A se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

T *mp* *mf*

ten-ser said to ten - sor, ten-ser said to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have be -

B *mp* *mf*

dis-sension dis-sension dis-sension dis-sension

33

S *f* *mp* *f* *p*  
 dis-sension dis-sension dis-sension ap - pre - - -

A *mf* *f* *mf*  
 ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have be -

T *mp* *f* *mp* *p*  
 gun. dis-sension dis-sension ap - pre - hen - - -

B *f* *p* *mf*  
 dis-sension ap - pre - - - hen - sion,

35

S *mf* *f* *p*  
 hen - sion, ten - sion, ap - pre - hen -

A *sub.p* *mf* *f* *p*  
 ap - pre - hen - sion, ten - sion, ap - pre -

T *mf* *f* *p* *f*  
 sion, ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion,

B *f* *p* *f*  
 ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion,

37

**f**

*accel.*

**p**

S

sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

sion sion

sion sion

A

hen - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

sion sion

sion sion

T

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

sion sion

sion sion

sion sion

B

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

ten - sion,

sion sion

sion sion

sion sion

**Allegro**

**With manic intensity**

39

**f**

S

gun

A

gun

T

gun

Eight sir,

se - ven sir,

six sir,

B

Eight sir,

se - ven sir,

six sir,

five sir,

four sir,

three sir,

two sir,

do not copy

Perusal Score

41

*f*

S  
Eight sir, se-vensir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir,

A  
*f*  
Eight sir, se-vensir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one.

T  
five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir, one. ten-ser said to ten - sor, ten-ser said to

B  
one. ten-sersaid to ten - sor, tensersaid to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dis -

43

*f*

S  
two sir, one. ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dis -

A  
ten-sersaid to ten - sor, ten-sersaid to ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dissension have b' tension, appre -

T  
*mf* *ff*  
ten - sor, tension, ap-pre-hension and dissension have b' Eight se-ven six five four three two one.

B  
*f* *f*  
sension have Eight sir, se-ven sir, six sir, five sir, four sir, three sir, two sir,



45

Sung (in relative pitch)  
"annoying playground song"

S  
*ff* *mf* *f*  
 sension have b' b' b' b' b' b' gun ten - - - ser said to

A  
*ff* *mf* *f*  
 hension and dis-sension have b' b' b' b' be - gun.

T  
*f* *ff* *mf*  
 tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have b' tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have b' b' b'

B  
*f* *ff* *mf*  
 ONE: tension, ap-pre-hension and dis - sension have b' tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have b'

47

*mp* *f*

S  
 ten - - - sor, said to ten - - -

A  
 ten - - - ser said to ten - - - sor,  
 Sung (in relative pitch)  
*f* "annoying playground song"

T  
*mp* *p* *mf*  
 b' tension, appre-hension and dis-sension have be - gun. gun gun gun gun gun gun

B  
*mp* *p*  
 b' b' b' tension, ap-pre-hension and dis-sension have be-gun. gun gun gun gun gun



S  
sor, ten - - - ser said to ten - - -

A  
said to ten - - - - sor, said to

T  
8  
tension, ap-prehension and dissension have be-gun. gun gun gun gun gun gun tension, ap-pre-

B  
gun tension, ap-prehension and dissension have be-gun. gun gun gun gun gun gun

*mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *p* *f* *mp*

*mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

S  
sor, said to ten - - - - sor,

A  
ten - - - - sor, said to said said said

T  
8  
hension and dissension have be-gun. gun gun gun dis-sension ap-prehension dis-sension ap-prehension

B  
tension, ap-prehension and dissension have be-gun. Eight se-ven six five four three two

*f* *mf* *subp* *f* *fp* *fp*

*p* *f* *f*

53

*ffp* *f* *ff*

S ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion and dis - sen - sion have be - gun.

*ff* *ffp* *f* *ff*

A one. ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion and dis - sen - sion have be - gun.

*ff* *ffp* *f* *ff*

T one. ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion and dis - sen - sion have be - gun.

*ff* *ffp* *f* *ff*

B one. ten - sion, ap - pre - hen - sion and dis - sen - sion have be - gun.

do not copy