

## Tonality/Harmony

Tonic key = A minor  
Modulates to dominant (b.14) and relative major (G major b. 16)  
B section starts in C major (relative major)  
Chromatic movement in ground bass  
Perfect cadences used to confirm modulations  
Dissonance (b.12 'pains' – link to word-painting)  
Tierce de Picardie (b. 23 & 28)  
False relations (b. 29)  
Diatonic & Functional chords

## Instrumentation

Soprano voice (High female) – range of 9th  
Harpsichord  
Bass Viol (Baroque version of a cello)  
Ground Bass – Harpsichord L.H. & Bass Viol

# Music for a While Henry Purcell

## Baroque Features

Small 'orchestra'  
Ornamentation (see Melody)  
Terraced Dynamics  
Ground bass (common form in Baroque era)  
Much use of Imitation  
Ornamented melody  
Functional harmony  
Basso continuo

## Context

Theatre production 'Oedipus'  
Song meant to calm Alecto (Fury) – sent to punish Oedipus for killing his father.  
Lament – sad song – minor tonality, slow tempo, descending phrases  
Written in the Italian style – dotted rhythms and A-B-A structure

## Melody

Word-painting (b.24 'drop')  
Some melismatic word-setting (b. 10-11 'wond'ring)  
Mostly syllabic word-setting  
Mostly conjunct (in step)  
Ornamentation (bar. 1 lower mordent & grace notes; b.2 appoggiatura; b. 13 trill)  
Soprano range = 9<sup>th</sup>  
Sequence (b.13)  
Descending sequence (b.20 & 21)  
Rests breaking up phrases (b.11)  
Repetition of text (b. 23-25 'drop')

## Structure

Ternary form (A B A1 structure)  
4 bar introduction before vocal  
3-bar ground bass – entirely quavers, arpeggio shaped, use of semitones, ends with octave fall  
A section reprise is slightly different – melody has additional ornamentation, added notes/passing notes.

## Texture

Melodic development layered above the ground bass  
Counterpoint (B.1-3)  
Homophonic – 'Melody-dominated homophony' (melody & accompaniment)  
Accompaniment is the ground bass  
Imitation (b.5-6)

## Tempo/Metre

No indication of tempo given (typical of Baroque)  
Slow tempo  
4/4 (simple quadruple)  
Variety of rhythms – quavers & semiquavers very prominent  
Dotted rhythms (b.16, b.7-9)  
Ground bass entirely made up of quavers  
Occasional syncopation (b. 20 & 24)