

ZAG QUERY

qhàL ZhùN



221110

A handbook

sāl — day (Sol)
rĭQ — fast (Phobos)
220202 — 668 sols
tshŭm — slow (Deimos)
11 — four / the fourth planet
221110 — 687 / the Martian year

The idea

The EP takes its name from 221110: that is 687 written in base 3 — the length of a Martian year, counted in Earth days. A Martian year is also 668 sols, which is the number behind the third track, 220202.

A sol, a day on Mars, lasts 24 hours and 37 minutes. Those figures become metre: 37 sixteenths for the day, 24 sixteenths for the hours.

In the final piece, 221110, the two scales run against each other and only meet at the last stroke:

- The year is a drum cycle of 6/8 + 8/8 + 7/8 — 42 sixteenths.
- The day is a bass cycle of 37/16, grouped 7+8+7+8+7, and it never resets.
- The least common multiple of 37 and 42 is 1554 sixteenths. That point is the final hit: 37 year-cycles and 42 day-cycles arrive together.

The six tracks follow that system. Each one takes a number from the Martian calendar or from one of the two moons, writes it in ternary, and turns the digits into accent, hit and rest.

The six tracks

Title	Meaning	Ternary	Final hit
sāl	day (Sol)	1101 = 37	3:40.7
rǐQ	fast (Phobos)	1110 = 39	3:25.2
220202	668 sols of a Martian year	220202 = 668	3:56.7
tshŭm	slow (Deimos)	1010 = 30	3:52.8
11	four; the fourth planet	11 = 4	3:33.9
221110	687; a Martian year in Earth days	221110 = 687	3:44.1

The language

qhàL ZhùN is the language of this work. The name means “language of the underside”, “under-tongue”: qhàl is the underside, the other dark world; zhùN is tongue, language, speech. In the proper name the strong finals are written large: qhàL ZhùN.

It is isolating: one-syllable roots, a tone language, coverbs, no inflection. Word order is subject–verb–object, and a modifier stands before its head. The romanisation is angular, with tight clusters, a glottal stop, a capital Q (a dark k, far back in the throat) and a capital I (the short i of “bit”). The building of the words follows a Chinese pattern: one syllable, one tone, one sense.

Pronunciation

Every full root is a syllable: (initial) + nucleus + (final), and the nucleus always carries a tone.

Initials

Spelling	Sound	For speakers of the translation language
Q	q	Always capital. A very dark k, formed far back in the throat, a dry “k”.
qh	qʰ	The same dark k, then a breath — roughly “kch”.
tlh	t͡ɬ	“tl” and a soft ich-sound in one stroke, roughly “tlch”. Not “till-h”.
tsh	t͡ʃ	Like tsch in German Klatsch, or ch in English church.
zh	ʒ	Like s in English measure, or j in French journal.
kh	x	Like ch in German Bach, or Scottish loch.
gh	ɣ	A voiced ch, a soft gargle, like Dutch g.
hm	m̥ / ʰm	A breathed nasal, roughly “mm” with a breath before it.
'	ʔ	A glottal stop, the little break in uh-oh, or in German be'achten.
I	ɪ	Always capital. Short i as in English bit. Long /i/ stays a small i, also with tone: ī í ǐ ì.

Vowels

Spelling	Sound	For speakers of the translation language
a	a	as in English father
e	ɛ	as in English bet
i	i	clear ee as in English see
o	o	as in German Boot, rather close
u	u	as in English food
aI	aɪ	as in English high, the second part short
eI	ɛɪ	as in English face, the second part short

The four tones

Four tones, marked with accents on the vowel, after the Chinese pattern. Every root carries a tone. Without a tone mark a word is incomplete.

- *ā ē Ī ī ō ū* — 1, high and level — a held, high “yaa—”
- *á é Í í ó ú* — 2, rising — a questioning “ya?”
- *ǎ ě Ǐ ǐ ǒ ǔ* — 3, low and dipping — a thoughtful, low “yaa-a?”
- *à è Ì ì ò ù* — 4, falling — a firm “ya!”

Counting in threes

Numbers are written in base 3 and read digit by digit, with only three digits. 1 = Qés, 2 = rŏm, 0 = 'ĭn (“silence, emptiness”; zero is a rest). The zero is not sung. In the lyrics an ellipsis (…) marks that silent slot.

Examples

	qhàL ZhùN
4 = 11	Qés Qés
37 = 1101	Qés Qés … Qés
24 = 220	rŏm rŏm …
7 = 21	rŏm Qés
39 = 1110	Qés Qés Qés …
30 = 1010	Qés … Qés …
18 = 200	rŏm … …
15 = 120	Qés rŏm …
668 = 220202	rŏm rŏm 'ĭn rŏm 'ĭn rŏm
687 = 221110	rŏm rŏm Qés Qés Qés 'ĭn

How the digits set the accents

Over the sequence of rhythmic cells run the ternary digits of the track's number:

2
2 = an accent

1
1 = a hit

0
0 = a rest

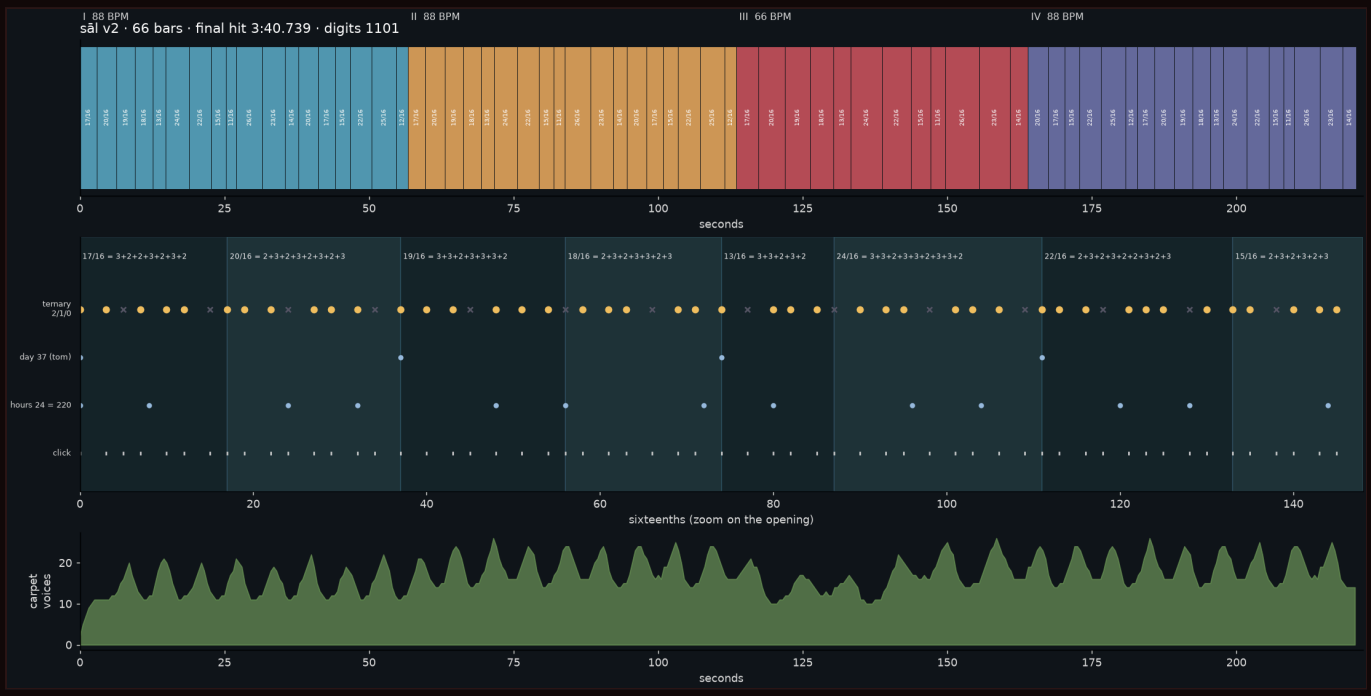
There is no four-on-the-floor, and no straight 4/4 groove.

Beside each original line this handbook gives a pronunciation line. It is a practical reading aid: the tone marks are dropped, Q is written k, qh is written kh, and the glottal stop (') is omitted.

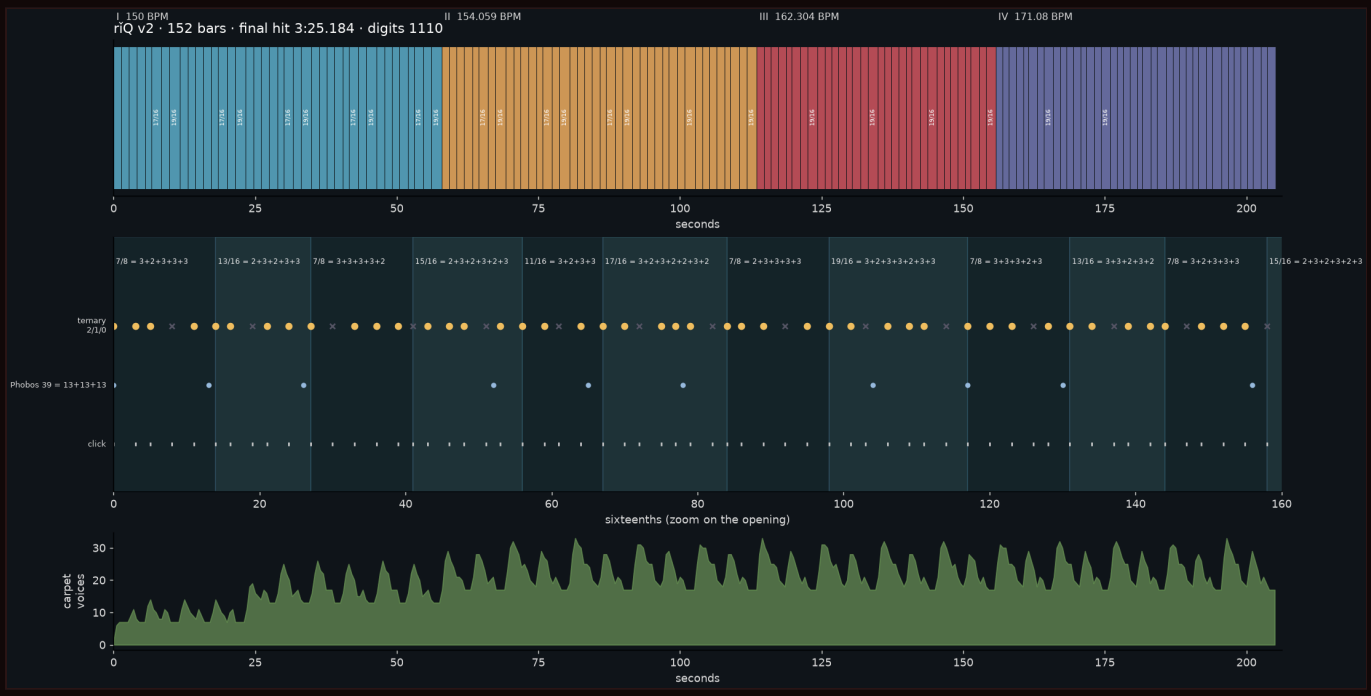
Crooked rhythms

The backbone of every track is a MIDI score. The bars are deliberately crooked: the metre changes from bar to bar, and each metre is broken into rotating cells of two and three (additive rhythm).

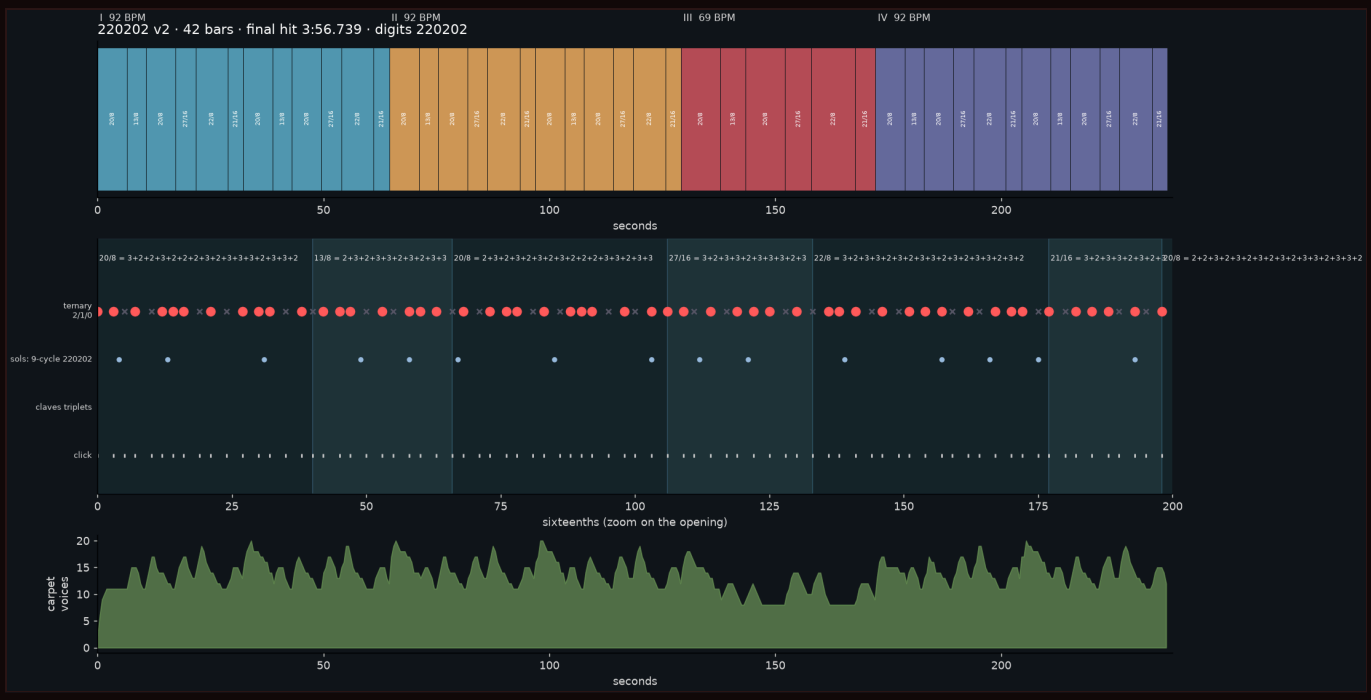
The charts below show the metre strip of each track, the digit pattern, and the opening zoomed to the sixteenth-note grid. They are the maps of the MIDI backbone.



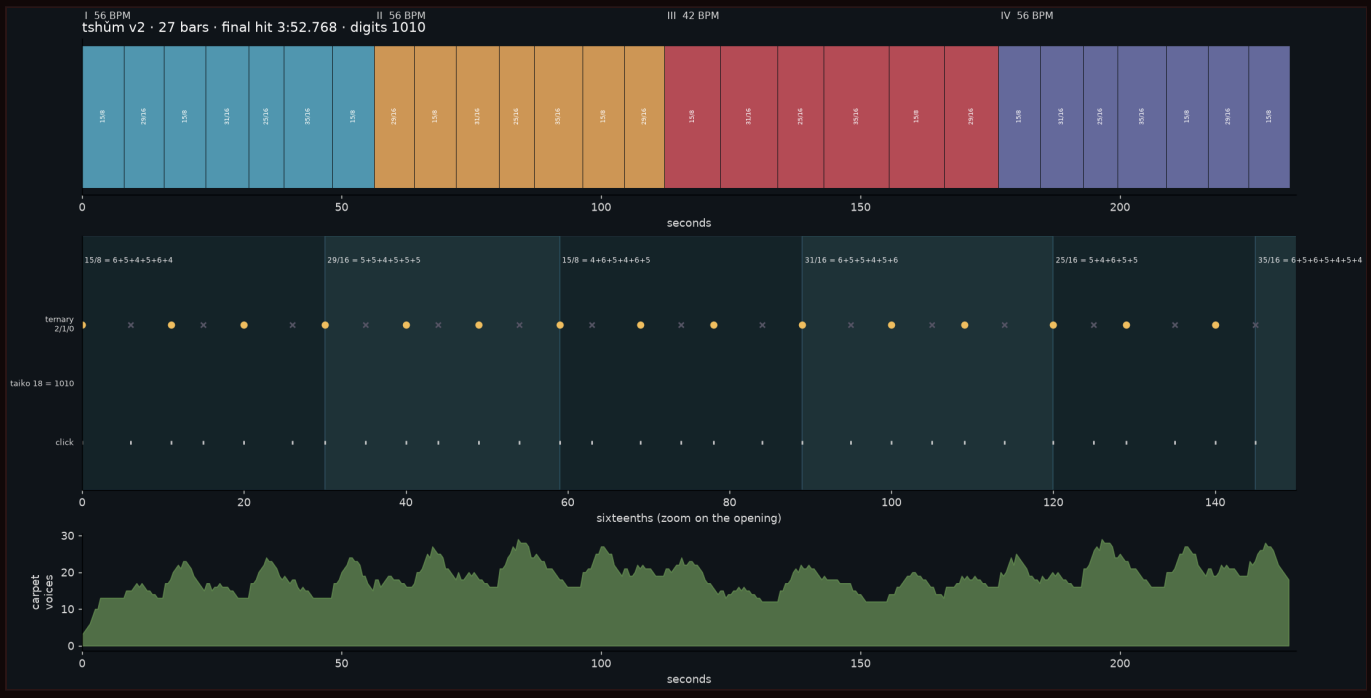
sāl — 66 bars, digits 1101, final hit at 3:40.7. The day (37) is split into changing metres; the hours (24 = 220) mark against it.



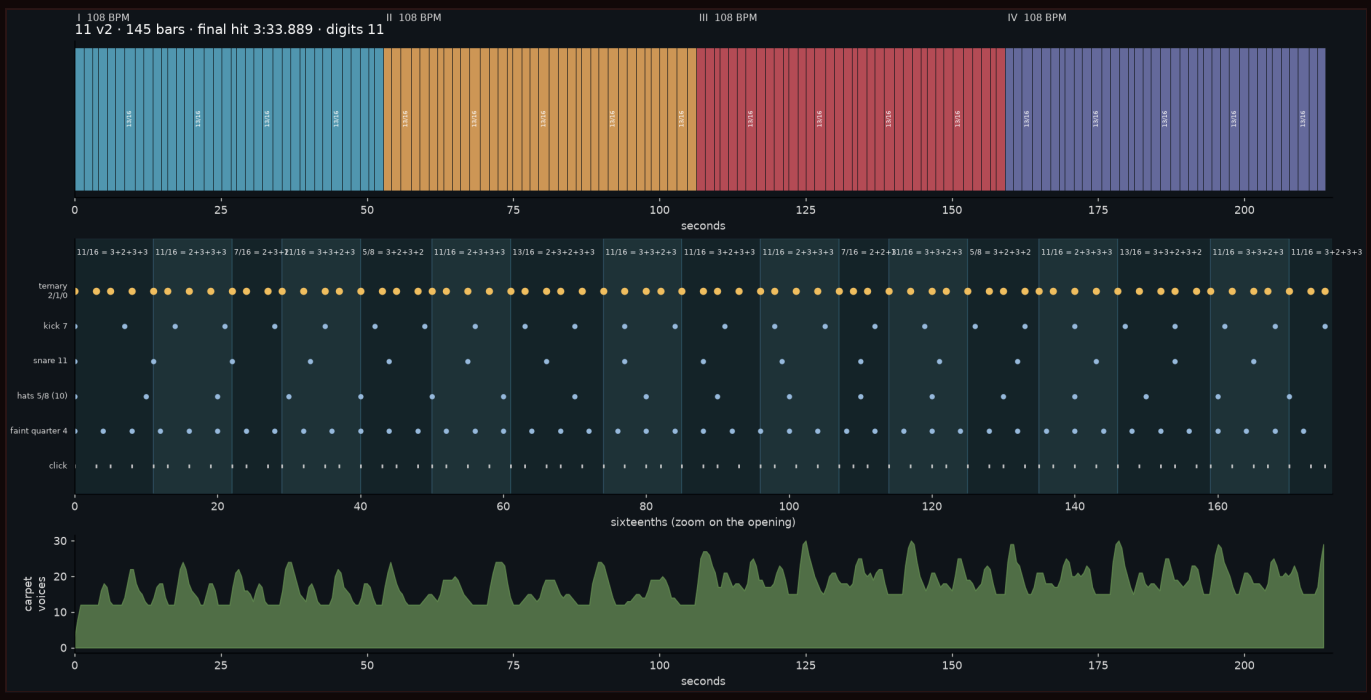
rïQ — 152 bars, digits 1110, final hit at 3:25.2. An eight-bar cycle against the Phobos orbit of 39 sixteenths (13+13+13), accelerating from 150 to 184 BPM.



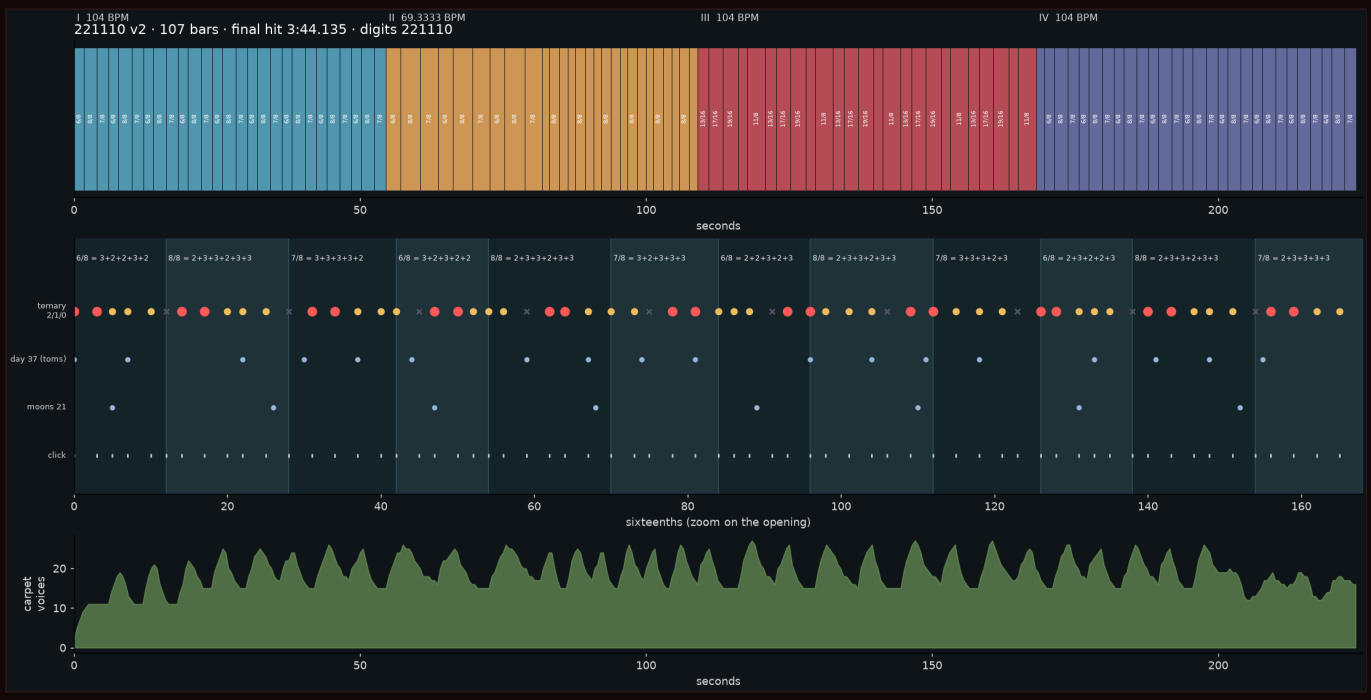
220202 — 42 bars, digits 220202, final hit at 3:56.7. A six-bar cycle of 20/8, 13/8, 20/8, 27/16, 22/8, 21/16: the counting of 668 sols.



tshŭm — 27 bars, digits 1010 (30), final hit at 3:52.8. Large, unequal cells of 4, 5 and 6 sixteenths; a taiko every 18 sixteenths (30 h 18 min) from part II.



11 — 145 bars, digits 11 (4), final hit at 3:33.9. Kick every 7, snare every 11, hats in 5/8 (3+3+4), a quiet quarter-tick every four sixteenths. All cycles meet only at 1540.



221110 — 107 bars, digits 221110, final hit at 3:44.1. Year (6/8 8/8 7/8) against day (37/16 as 7+8+7+8+7). lcm(37, 42) = 1554 = the final hit.

sāl

Sol — the day

Length: 3:41.6 · Final hit: 3:40.7 · Bars: 66 · Digits: 1101 = 37 · Tempo: 88 BPM; part III 66 BPM

Meaning

sāl means “day”. It opens the EP as a Martian day. A sol lasts 24 hours and 37 minutes; 37 is 1101 in ternary (sung Qés Qés … Qés), and 24 is 220 (rŏm rŏm …). The text is about breathing through a long, cold day of red dust, until night comes from the underside: “Will the day come tomorrow? I have breathed.”

Metre

Each Martian day is 37 sixteenths, split into a rotating pair of bars (17/16+20/16, 19/16+18/16, 13/16+24/16, and so on). No pair repeats within nine days. A tom marks every day-start. Against this, the hours: 24 sixteenths as 8+8+8, in the digits 220. Tempo 88 BPM; part III drags to 66, part IV returns to 88. The digits 1101 run over the cells: 2 = accent, 1 = hit, 0 = rest.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
sāl lāQ, sĕQ sŏm fēn	sal lak, sek som fen	The day comes, the light opens a little.
zhàk hăs, zhàk tìl	zhak has, zhak til	I breathe, I remain.
mètlh 'àsh săr Qīng	metlh ash sar king	Red dust drifts.
tlhún 'īl mètlh 'ùQ fūs	tlhun il metlh uk fus	We live in the red world.
sāl nè tàI tlhĕs	sal ne tai tlhes	The sun is cold.
Qés Qés … Qés	kes kes … kes	One, one, zero, one (= 37).
dī sāl tshŭm	di sal tshum	This day is slow.
hăs tàm sĕQ zhŭr	has tam sek zhur	The breath flows with the light.
sūr tlhàs zhàk nè hăs hmàQ	sur tlhas zhak ne has hmak	Do you hear my breath?
PART II		
rŏm rŏm …	rom rom …	Two, two, zero (= 24).
dī sāl dŭQ gàt ghò sāl	di sal duk gat gho sal	This day is deeper than that day.
zhàk dàQ fōtlh gēn Qīng	zhak dak fotlh gen king	I am walking towards the threshold.
dōr nàm, dōr mètlh	dor nam, dor metlh	The path is low, the path is red.
tlhún tshēn sĕQ, tlhún pīn hăs	tlhun tshen sek, tlhun pin has	We take light, we give breath.
'àsh shàk kūl	ash shak kul	Dust enters the mouth.
sūr nè lŭm sŏm tlhĕs	sur ne lum som tlhes	Your body is a little cold.
tshŏr qhūm, hăs tìl	tshor khum, has til	The sound vanishes, the breath remains.
sāl tàm tlhōm gēn	sal tam tlhom gen	The day goes with time.
PART III		
tshŭm, tshŭm, săr yà	tshum, tshum, sar ya	Slowly, slowly, drift!
zhàk wèN rùm	zhak wen rum	I do not run.
tlhōm săr, sĕQ săr	tlhom sar, sek sar	Time drifts, the light drifts.
dī hăs dŭQ gàt nùk	di has duk gat nuk	This breath is deeper than the night.
Qŏr qhūm, sāl	kor khum, sal	Do not vanish, day.
sāl nè tàI bŭr Qīng	sal ne tai bur king	The sun is burning.
PART IV		
sĕQ khām, sĕQ khām	sek kham, sek kham	The light falls, the light falls.
nùk mòk qhàl lāQ	nuk mok khal lak	The night comes from the underside.
zhàk lìp sāl, zhàk lìp hăs	zhak lip sal, zhak lip has	I count the day, I count the breath.
tlhún nè sāl dàQ khèt gēn	tlhun ne sal dak khet gen	Our day goes towards the end.
zhàk tàm sūr hăs	zhak tam sur has	I breathe with you.
Qăk nùk, tlhĕs 'àsh	kak nuk, tlhes ash	Black night, cold dust.
sāl qhūm mèQ	sal khum mek	The day will vanish.
kĕQ sāl lāQ mèQ hmàQ	kek sal lak mek hmak	Will the day come tomorrow?
zhàk hăs zhà'	zhak has zha	I have breathed.

rĭQ

Phobos — fast

Length: 3:25.8 · Final hit: 3:25.2 · Bars: 152 · Digits: 1110 = 39 · Tempo: 150–184 BPM, accelerando

Meaning

rĭQ means “fast”. Phobos orbits Mars in about 7 hours 39 minutes. 7 is 21 in ternary (rŏm Qés), 39 is 1110 (Qés Qés Qés …). The moon is slowly falling towards the planet, so the whole track accelerates from 150 to 184 BPM. The text tries to grasp him and cannot; at the end he is swallowed by the red world: “Fall!”

Metre

A cycle of eight bars: 7/8, 13/16, 7/8, 15/16, 11/16, 17/16, 7/8, 19/16 = 117 sixteenths = 3 × 39. Against this runs the Phobos orbit: 39 sixteenths as 13+13+13, in the digits 1110. The track accelerates from 150 to 184 BPM, one tempo event per bar. 152 bars.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
rĭQ Qīl, rĭQ Qīl	rik kil, rik kil	Fast orbit, fast orbit.
Qòn rùm Qīng, Qòn wèN tìl	kon rum king, kon wen til	He races, he does not stand still.
rŏm Qés, Qés Qés Qés …	rom kes, kes kes kes …	Two, one (= 7); one, one, one, zero (= 39).
sūr nŏm Qòn hmàQ	sur nom kon hmak	Do you see him?
Qòn wèN tàm mètlh 'ùQ lŭQ	kon wen tam metlh uk luk	He does not keep pace with the red world.
kìt sĕQ, kìt sĕQ	kit sek, kit sek	Chopped light, chopped light.
Qòn rĭQ gàt sāl	kon rik gat sal	He is faster than the day.
Qòn nè Qīl nàm	kon ne kil nam	His orbit is low.
PART II		
Qòn dàQ 'ùQ khām Qīng	kon dak uk kham king	He is falling towards the world.
tlhīs bēQ, tlhīs bēQ	tlhis bek, tlhis bek	Glass breaks, glass breaks.
zhàk wŭn tshēn Qòn	zhak wun tshen kon	I want to grasp him.
zhàk wèN khàl tshēn	zhak wen khal tshen	I cannot grasp.
'àsh rùm, zhōk rùm	ash rum, zhok rum	Dust races, the beat races.
tlhōm Qàt Qīl	tlhom kat kil	Time cuts the orbit.
Qòn lāQ tlhūr	kon lak tlhur	He comes again and again.
rùm yà, rùm yà	rum ya, rum ya	Run! Run!
PART III		
tlhàs yà	tlhas ya	Listen!
Qòn nè tshŏr tlhàp	kon ne tshor tlhap	His sound is hard.
kìt kìt, khūr	kit kit, khur	Chopped, chopped, thunder.
ghĕn sĕQ kò tlhàQ	ghen sek ko tlhak	All light is swallowed.
zhàk lìp Qòn nè Qīl	zhak lip kon ne kil	I count his orbits.
rŏm Qés tŏn Qīl	rom kes ton kil	Seven (ternary 21) orbits.
Qòn wèN-tlhà khām	kon wen-tlha kham	He has not yet fallen.
tlhún mŭl Qīng	tlhun mul king	We wait.
PART IV		
Qòn rĭQ, Qòn nàm	kon rik, kon nam	He is fast, he is low.
Qīl bēQ Qīng	kil bek king	The orbit breaks.
mètlh 'ùQ nè kūl fēn	metlh uk ne kul fen	The mouth of the red world opens.
Qòn kò tlhàQ mèQ	kon ko tlhak mek	He will be swallowed.
tlhún wèN khàl tìl	tlhun wen khal til	We cannot remain.
zhàk nŏm khūr	zhak nom khur	I see the lightning.
Qés Qés Qés …	kes kes kes …	One, one, one, zero (= 39).
khām yà	kham ya	Fall!

03 / 06

220202

668 sols

Length: 3:57.5 · Final hit: 3:56.7 · Bars: 42 · Digits: 220202 = 668 · Tempo: 92 BPM; part III 69 BPM

Meaning

220202 is 668 in ternary (rŏm rŏm … rŏm … rŏm): the sols of a Martian year. The digits are the rhythm as well. The text is a tally: one day, one mark, cut into bone, until the cycle is full: “Make the mark.”

Metre

A cycle of six bars: 20/8, 13/8, 20/8, 27/16, 22/8, 21/16 = 198 sixteenths. Seven cycles, 42 bars. The digits 220202 run over the groups (accent / hit / rest), and again as a nine-count tom cycle. Tempo 92 BPM; part III drags to 69.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
zhàk sàQ qhīt, zhàk lìp sāl	zhak sak khit, zhak lip sal	I make a mark, I count the day.
rŏm rŏm … rŏm … rŏm	rom rom … rom … rom	Two, two, zero, two, zero, two (= 668).
Qés tŏn sāl, Qés tŏn qhīt	kes ton sal, kes ton khit	One day, one mark.
qhīt 'īl gùN tìl	khit il gun til	The mark remains in the bone.
kìt zhōk Qàt sāl	kit zhok kat sal	The chopped beat cuts the day.
tlhún lìp tlhūr	tlhun lip tlhur	We always count.
ghĕn sāl nè qhīt Qăk	ghen sal ne khit kak	The mark of every day is black.
zhàk wèN mŭl	zhak wen mul	I do not wait.
PART II		
rŏm tŏn qhīt, rŏm tŏn qhīt	rom ton khit, rom ton khit	Two marks, two marks.
'àsh tàm sāl khām	ash tam sal kham	Dust falls with the day.
Qŏm lìp, zhàm lìp	kom lip, zham lip	They count, we count.
'īl 'ùQ yŭ mètlh kàtlh	il uk yu metlh katlh	In the world there is a red grid.
sūr nè qhīt rè mèI	sur ne khit re mei	What is your mark?
zhàk nè qhīt rè Qés	zhak ne khit re kes	My mark is the one.
sāl Qàt, sāl bēQ	sal kat, sal bek	The day cuts, the day breaks.
lìp yà, sàQ yà	lip ya, sak ya	Count! Make!
PART III		
tshŭm, sāl tshŭm	tshum, sal tshum	Slowly, the day is slow.
gùN dŭn Qīng	gun dun king	The bone pulses.
zhàk khàl lìp hmàQ	zhak khal lip hmak	Can I count?
tlhōm nè lĕs nŭr	tlhom ne les nur	The pattern of time is crooked.
Qŏr qhūm, qhīt	kor khum, khit	Do not vanish, mark.
'òm wèN-tlhà qhūm	om wen-tlha khum	The cycle has not yet passed.
PART IV		
zhàk lìp zhà'	zhak lip zha	I have counted.
rŏm rŏm … rŏm … rŏm tŏn sāl	rom rom … rom … rom ton sal	668 days.
Qés tŏn 'òm	kes ton om	One cycle.
ghĕn qhīt tlhīt	ghen khit tlhit	All marks meet together.
lŭm tlhàp, hăs kìt	lum tlhap, has kit	The body is hard, the breath chopped.
tlhún tàm sāl gēn	tlhun tam sal gen	We go with the day.
dī qhīt rè khèt	di khit re khet	This mark is the end.
sàQ qhīt	sak khit	Make the mark.

tshŭm

Deimos — slow

Length: 3:53.8 · Final hit: 3:52.8 · Bars: 27 · Digits: 1010 = 30 · Tempo: 56 BPM; part III 42 BPM

Meaning

tshŭm means “slow”. Deimos, the far, small moon, orbits Mars in about 30 hours 18 minutes. 30 is 1010 in ternary (Qés … Qés …), 18 is 200 (rŏm … …), 15 is 120 (Qés rŏm …). The text waits for him; he does not come; he does not hear: “Stay.”

Metre

A cycle of six large, unequal bars: 15/8, 29/16, 15/8, 31/16, 25/16, 35/16, in cells of 4, 5 and 6 sixteenths — the tempo is slow. 27 bars. The digits 1010 (30) run over the cells. A taiko every 18 sixteenths (30 h 18 min) from part II. Tempo 56 BPM; part III drags to 42.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
ghò Qīl tshŭm	gho kil tshum	That orbit is slow.
Qòn 'īl nùk tìl	kon il nuk til	He remains in the night.
Qés … Qés …	kes … kes …	One, zero, one, zero (= 30).
rŏm … …	rom … …	Two, zero, zero (= 18).
Qòn nè sĕQ tlhĕs	kon ne sek tlhes	His light is cold.
ghŭm zhŭr, ghŭm zhŭr	ghum zhur, ghum zhur	The sub-bass flows, the sub-bass flows.
PART II		
zhàk mŭl Qīng	zhak mul king	I wait.
Qòn wèN lāQ	kon wen lak	He does not come.
wōr ghŭm tàm lŭm dŭn	wor ghum tam lum dun	The fat sub-bass pulses with the body.
tlhōm mŭsh, tlhōm dŭQ	tlhom mush, tlhom duk	Time is velvety, time is deep.
Qés rŏm …	kes rom …	One, two, zero (= 15).
ghò Qīl săr	gho kil sar	That orbit drifts.
PART III		
tlhàs yà	tlhas ya	Listen.
'àsh săr	ash sar	Dust drifts.
Qòn tlhàs zhàk hmàQ	kon tlhas zhak hmak	Does he hear me?
wèN	wen	No.
PART IV		
Qòn mòk ghò tàl lāQ	kon mok gho tal lak	He comes from that side.
tshŭm, tshŭm, tlhīt mèQ	tshum, tshum, tlhit mek	Slowly, slowly, it will meet.
ghŭm nè gùN tlhàp	ghum ne gun tlhap	The frame of the sub-bass is hard.
zhàk tàm Qòn tìl	zhak tam kon til	I remain with him.
dī nùk dŭQ gàt tlhōm	di nuk duk gat tlhom	This night is deeper than time.
tìl yà	til ya	Stay.

11

four — the fourth planet

Length: 3:34.5 · Final hit: 3:33.9 · Bars: 145 · Digits: 11 = 4 · Tempo: 108 BPM, steady

Meaning

11 is 4 in ternary (Qés Qés): the fourth planet. A stubborn, clinical click stands against cycles of 7, 11 and 5/8 that refuse to agree with it. The text sets a chrome machine that counts, against a body that breathes, is hot, and is crooked: “Do not count.”

Metre

A cycle of eight bars: 11/16, 11/16, 7/16, 11/16, 5/8, 11/16, 13/16, 11/16 = 85 sixteenths. 18 cycles plus a 5/8 = 145 bars = 1540 sixteenths = lcm(4, 7, 10, 11). The digits 11 (4) make every cell a hit. Kick every 7, snare every 11, hats in 5/8 (3+3+4), and a very quiet quarter-note tick every four sixteenths — a shadow of a 4/4 click. All cycles meet only at the final hit (1540). Tempo 108 BPM, steady.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
Qés Qés	kes kes	One, one (= 4).
Qés Qés shù 'ùQ	kes kes shu uk	The fourth world.
zhōk tìl, zhōk tìl	zhok til, zhok til	The beat remains, the beat remains.
ghěn lěs wèN tìl	ghen les wen til	No pattern remains.
zhàk wèN tàm zhōk gēn	zhak wen tam zhok gen	I do not go with the beat.
kàtlh tlhěs, kàtlh sīQ	katlh tlhes, katlh sik	The grid is cold, the grid is chrome.
PART II		
tlhàs yà, dī zhōk	tlhas ya, di zhok	Listen, this beat.
yàt wèN lǔQ	yat wen luk	It does not keep pace.
ghǔQ lìp Qīng	ghuk lip king	The machine counts.
sīQ ghǔQ wèN hăs	sik ghuk wen has	The chrome machine does not breathe.
zhàk hăs, zhàk nŭr	zhak has, zhak nur	I breathe, I am crooked.
Qŏm wŭn kàtlh	kom wun katlh	They want the grid.
PART III		
nŭr zhōk Qàt kàtlh	nur zhok kat katlh	The crooked beat cuts the grid.
ghŭm bēQ, gùN bēQ	ghum bek, gun bek	The sub-bass breaks, the bone breaks.
rùm yà	rum ya	Run!
tlhún nè lŭm pàng	tlhun ne lum pang	Our body is hot.
ghǔQ tlhěs, lŭm pàng	ghuk tlhes, lum pang	The machine is cold, the body hot.
Qŏr lìp	kor lip	Do not count.
PART IV		
zhōk là, yàt tìl tlhūr	zhok la, yat til tlhur	The beat: it always remains.
zhàk wèN tìl	zhak wen til	I do not remain.
Qés Qés, Qés Qés	kes kes, kes kes	Four, four.
ghěn tlhīt mèQ	ghen tlhit mek	Everything will meet together.
kàtlh wèN qhūm	katlh wen khum	The grid does not vanish.
tlhīt	tlhit	Meeting.

221110

687 — the Martian year

Length: 3:45.0 · Final hit: 3:44.1 · Bars: 107 · Digits: 221110 = 687 · Tempo: 104 BPM; part II drag 69.33 then rush 138.67

Meaning

221110 is 687 in ternary, read rŏm rŏm Qés Qés Qés and then a rest for the 0. It is the closing piece: a Martian year in Earth days, set as a drum cycle of 6/8, 8/8 and 7/8 against a day of 37/16. Two orbits and two bodies run against each other and do not meet, until the last word: “We meet together.”

Metre

The year (6/8 8/8 7/8, 42 sixteenths) runs against the day (37/16 as 7+8+7+8+7), which never resets. The least common multiple of 37 and 42 is 1554 — the final hit (3:44.1). Part III changes metre every bar (13/16, 17/16, 19/16, 11/16, 11/8). Part IV opens with a 5/8 pickup, then returns to the year. Tempo 104 BPM; in part II a drag to 69.33, then a rush to 138.67, back to 104 from part III. The digits 221110 run over the cells. The two moons appear as a shaker pair every 21 sixteenths.

ORIGINAL	PRONUNCIATION	TRANSLATION
PART I		
zhàk tlhàs dŭQ zhōk	zhak tlhas duk zhok	I hear the deep beat.
mètlh lŭm là, yàt dŭn	metlh lum la, yat dun	The red body: it pulses.
nŭr dōr mòk nùk lāQ	nur dor mok nuk lak	The crooked path comes from the night.
zhàk wèN tàm lĕs gēn	zhak wen tam les gen	I do not go with the pattern.
tlhún nè hăs tlhĕs	tlhun ne has tlhes	Our breath is cold.
sūr nŏm nàm sĕQ	sur nom nam sek	You see the low light.
ghŭm tàm gùN dŭn	ghum tam gun dun	The sub-bass pulses with the bone.
dī zhōk wèN lŭQ	di zhok wen luk	This beat does not keep pace.
rŏm rŏm Qés Qés Qés	rom rom kes kes kes	Two, two, one, one, one; then zero as a rest.
[Rest | ternary final digit 0 | silent slot; do not sing the zero]	*[Rest | ternary final digit 0 | silent slot; do not sing the zero]*	*[Rest: digit 0 = silence; it is not sung.]*
zhàk lìp nŭr Qīl	zhak lip nur kil	I count the crooked orbit.
tlhōm nè dōr bēQ	tlhom ne dor bek	The path of time shatters.
kūl tshēn tlhĕs hăs	kul tshen tlhes has	The mouth takes cold breath.
tlhún dàQ fōtlh gēn	tlhun dak fotlh gen	We go towards the threshold.
dī lĕs wèN tlhīt	di les wen tlhit	This pattern does not meet together.
PART II		
zhōk Qàt hăs	zhok kat has	The beat cuts the breath.
nŭr ghŭQ tshŭm	nur ghuk tshum	The crooked machine is slow.
zhàk nè lŭm tìl	zhak ne lum til	My body remains.
tlhōm wèN mŭl	tlhom wen mul	Time does not wait.
tlhún tàm ghŭm gēn	tlhun tam ghum gen	We go with the sub-bass.
dī Qīl rĭQ	di kil rik	This orbit is fast.
sūr nè zhùN dŭn	sur ne zhun dun	Your tongue pulses.
kìt tshŏr shàk lŭm	kit tshor shak lum	Chopped sound enters the body.
zhàk wèN tshēn lĕs	zhak wen tshen les	I do not grasp the pattern.
Qăk fōtlh fēn	kak fotlh fen	The black threshold opens.
tlhún tlhàs ghĕn zhōk	tlhun tlhas ghen zhok	We hear every beat.
sĕQ tàm Qīl săr	sek tam kil sar	The light drifts with the orbit.
hăs zhŭr Qīng	has zhur king	Breath flows.
dī lŭm wèN qhūm	di lum wen khum	This body does not vanish.
PART III		
nŭr zhōk Qàt tlhōm	nur zhok kat tlhom	The crooked beat cuts time.
zhàk nŏm bēQ nè kàtlh	zhak nom bek ne katlh	I see the grid that shatters.
tlhún nè lĕs wèN tìl	tlhun ne les wen til	Our pattern does not remain.
sūr tàm tshŏr rùm	sur tam tshor rum	You run with the sound.
ghŭm tlhàQ nùk	ghum tlhak nuk	The sub-bass swallows the night.
dī zhùN nŭr	di zhun nur	This tongue is crooked.

tlhún wèN-tlhà tlhīt	tlhun wen-tlha tlhit	We do not yet meet together.
mètlh Qīl săr Qīng	metlh kil sar king	The red orbit drifts.
ghěn gùN dŭn	ghen gun dun	Every bone pulses.
tlhōm là, zhàk wèN mŭl	tlhom la, zhak wen mul	As for time: I do not wait.

PART IV

dī sěQ nàm	di sek nam	This light is low.
tshŏr sŏm qhūm	tshor som khum	The sound vanishes a little.
zhàk tàm sūr tìl	zhak tam sur til	I remain with you.
ghŭm 'īl lŭm zhŭr	ghum il lum zhur	The sub-bass flows in the body.
nùk nè fōtlh tlhĕs	nuk ne fotlh tlhes	The threshold of the night is cold.
rŏm tŏn Qīl dŭn	rom ton kil dun	Two orbits pulse.
zhàk nè hăs wèN khām	zhak ne has wen kham	My breath does not fall.
dī lĕs dàQ khèt gēn	di les dak khet gen	This pattern goes towards the end.
sūr nŏm wàr sěQ	sur nom war sek	You see the shared light.
tlhún wèN-tlhà tlhīt hmàQ	tlhun wen-tlha tlhit hmak	Do we not yet meet together?
Qŏr mŭl	kor mul	Do not wait.
tlhōm nè dōr là, gēn yà	tlhom ne dor la, gen ya	As for the path of time: Go!
hăs tìl	has til	The breath holds.
tlhún tlhīt	tlhun tlhit	We meet together.

Glossary

The most important words used in the six songs. Each root is one syllable and carries a tone.

qhàL ZhùN
qhàL ZhùN — “language of the underside”, “under-tongue”. The name of the language.

qhàl qʰal˧˩
the underside, the other dark world; also stative: under-sided, abyssally dark

zhùN ʒun˧˩
language, tongue, speech

sāl salˉ
day, daylight

rǐQ ɾiqˌ˩˧
fast

tshǔm t͡ʃumˌ˩˧
slow

Qés qesˌˉ
one

rǒm ɾomˌ˩˧
two

'ǐn ʔinˌ˩˧
silence, emptiness, the open without sound (the zero; a rest; not sung)

hǎs hasˌ˩˧
breath, air; also as a verb: to breathe

sěQ sɛqˌ˩˧
light

mètlh mɛt͡ɬˋ
red

'ùQ ʔuqˋ
world, realm, domain

'àsh ʔaʃˋ
ash, spore, dust

nùk nukˋ
night

tlhōm t͡ɬomˉ
time, the current of time

tlhīt t͡ɬitˉ
to meet, coincide, fall together

Qīl qilˉ
orbit, circular path

nǔr nuɾˌ˩˧
crooked, uneven, not dividing evenly

kàtlh kat͡ɬˋ
grid, lattice, mesh

lìp lipˋ
to count, tally, ration

qhīt qʰitˉ
mark, sign, call

zhōk ʒokˉ
beat, pulse (noun)

ghǔm ɣumˌ˩˧
sub-bass, sub, deep current

lěs lesˌ˩˧
pattern, repeating figure

dōr doɾˉ
path, road

fōtlh fot͡ɬˉ
threshold, gate, the space before it

khèt xɛtˋ
end, close, end of a cycle

'òm ʔomˋ
cycle, album, a set of pieces

gùN gunˋ
bone, frame

ghǔQ ɣuqˌ˩˧
machine, motor, engine

sīQ siqˉ
chrome, cold metallic sheen

wàr waɾˋ
the shared, the common; also stative: shared, common

tàI taɪˋ
fire, embers (sāl nè tàI, “fire of the day” = the sun)

zhàk ʒakˋ
I

sūr suɾˉ
you

tlhún t͡ɬunˌˉ
we (inclusive)

wèN wɛnˋ
not, no

nè `nɛ˩˨`
attribute and possessive particle

yà `ja˩˨`
imperative particle

hmàQ `m̩ma˩˨q`
yes/no question particle

zhà' `ʒa˩˨ʔ`
perfective aspect (completed)

qhūm `qʰum˧`
to vanish, fade, go out

tlhàQ `t͡ɬa˩˨q`
to swallow, devour

tìl `til˩˨`
to remain, stand, hold (a position)

gēn `gen˧`
to go, walk, move

lāQ `laq˧`
to come

zag Query · 221110 · Query Records. This handbook explains the language, the metres and the lyrics. Official lyrics, if released, are the original lines in qhàL ZhùN.