Nicolas Chuaqui

Apocalyptic Visions

song cycle for tenor and piano | 22'

2018

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

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Apocalyptic Visions for tenor and piano Text by the composer

These songs are "apocalyptic" in different senses of the word. None of the poems relate to "the apocalypse" in a religious sense, except for 2, though only by virtue of the fact that it is a paraphrase of a recitative text from one of Bach's cantatas (BWV 198, a secular cantata written for the funeral of a princess). Rather, each moment presented is viewed as an apocalypse, or an end of something, whether that is a person, the planet, or an idea, such as a painful past that has been "blocked out" in movement 5. Additionally, an "end" can be said to start very early on, and the "seeds" of the end can be present in the thing from the very beginning.

1
The sky burns red
with the unquenchable fire of a thousand suns
just like the blood in us all

2
The trembling sound of the bell awakens us with fear and loathing piercing flesh and bone
the eternal sapphire house
draws, o princess, your gaze
the blinding light of one thousand suns turns our day to midnight
and surrounds your transfigured head

3
In this desert you are an oasis
your skin is purer than the dunes of sand
your mouth is a fountain
your lips pour out water
but I, the parched ground, drink it up so completely that nothing remains.

4
At noon the sun lags darkness covers the land the ground freezes
birds fall from the sky
Memories for cello, piano and electronics
and everywhere people are covered in ice the silence is unlike anything

5
Now some doors are closed that will never open again I used to hear them swing open behind me
but now they're all boarded shut
will I ever see inside again?

6
The trees, tall, noble and green
have been accomplices in our crimes
only by feigning lifelessness have they escaped the punishment of the law.

through the years and the steady passing of time they have witnessed unspeakable things
they watched it all
but they just stood there.

when the oceans rise, and the last rain falls
still it won't be enough to wash the blood from their branches
and still, still, the rivers of red blood will reach the seas and fill them completely.

Am I saying this out of envy?
I want nothing more than what a tree wants. To wrap myself in the forest, hidden
and to chase the sun.

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PERFORMANCE NOTES:

- Where there are fast leaps in the piano part, it is expected that there will be a delay in the music, and this should add weight to the dramatic interpretation of the piece, rather than hinder it.

- Relatedly, tempi are expected to ebb and flow.

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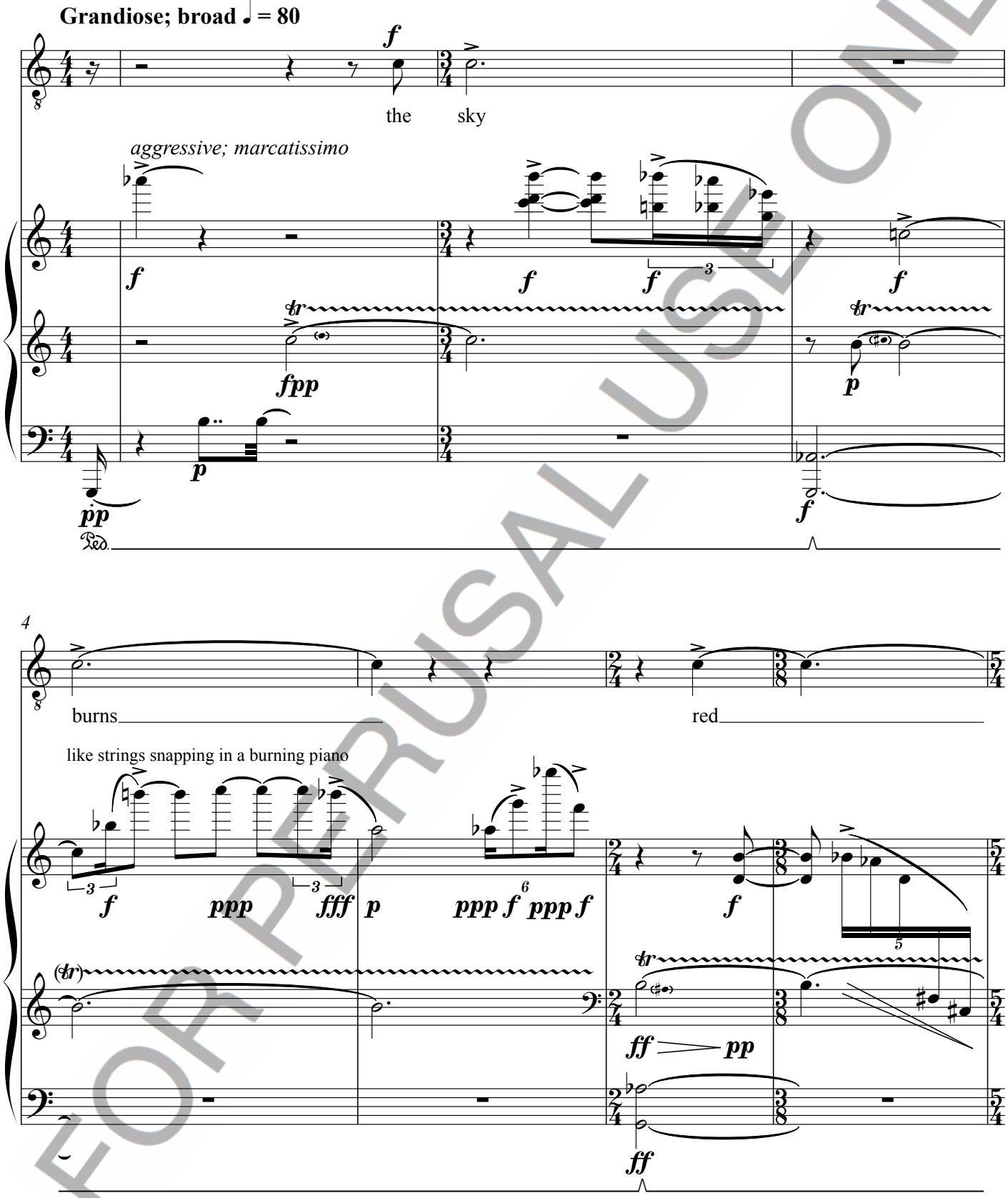
APOCALYPTIC VISIONS

for tenor and piano

Nicolas Chuaqui
2018

1



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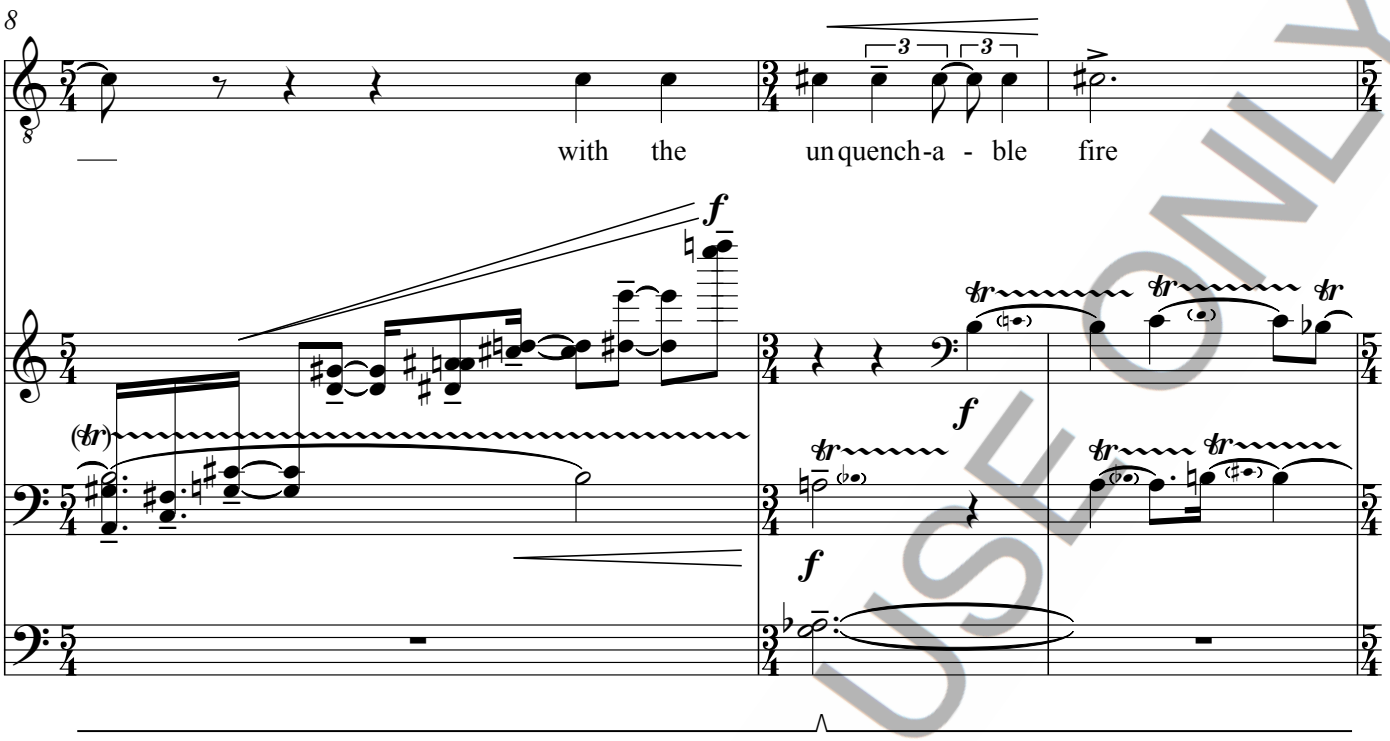

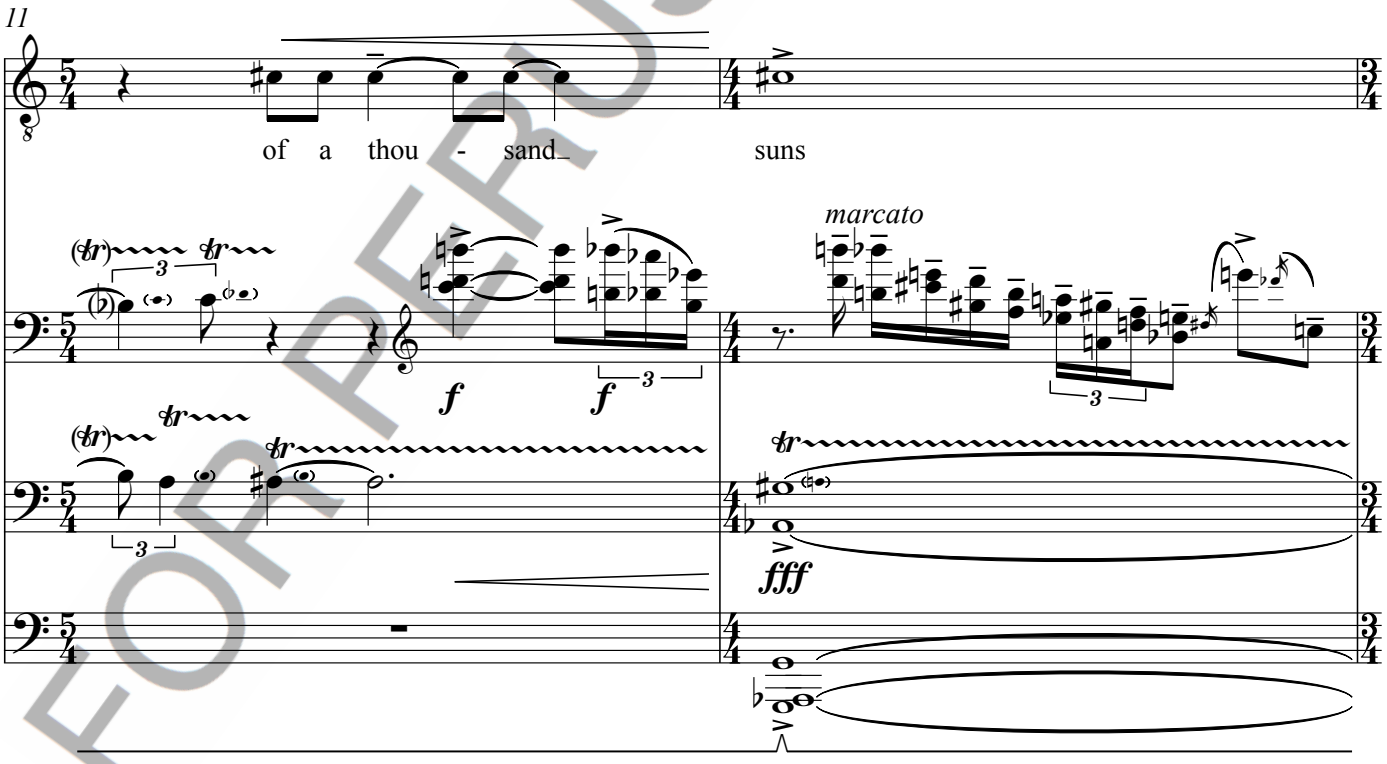

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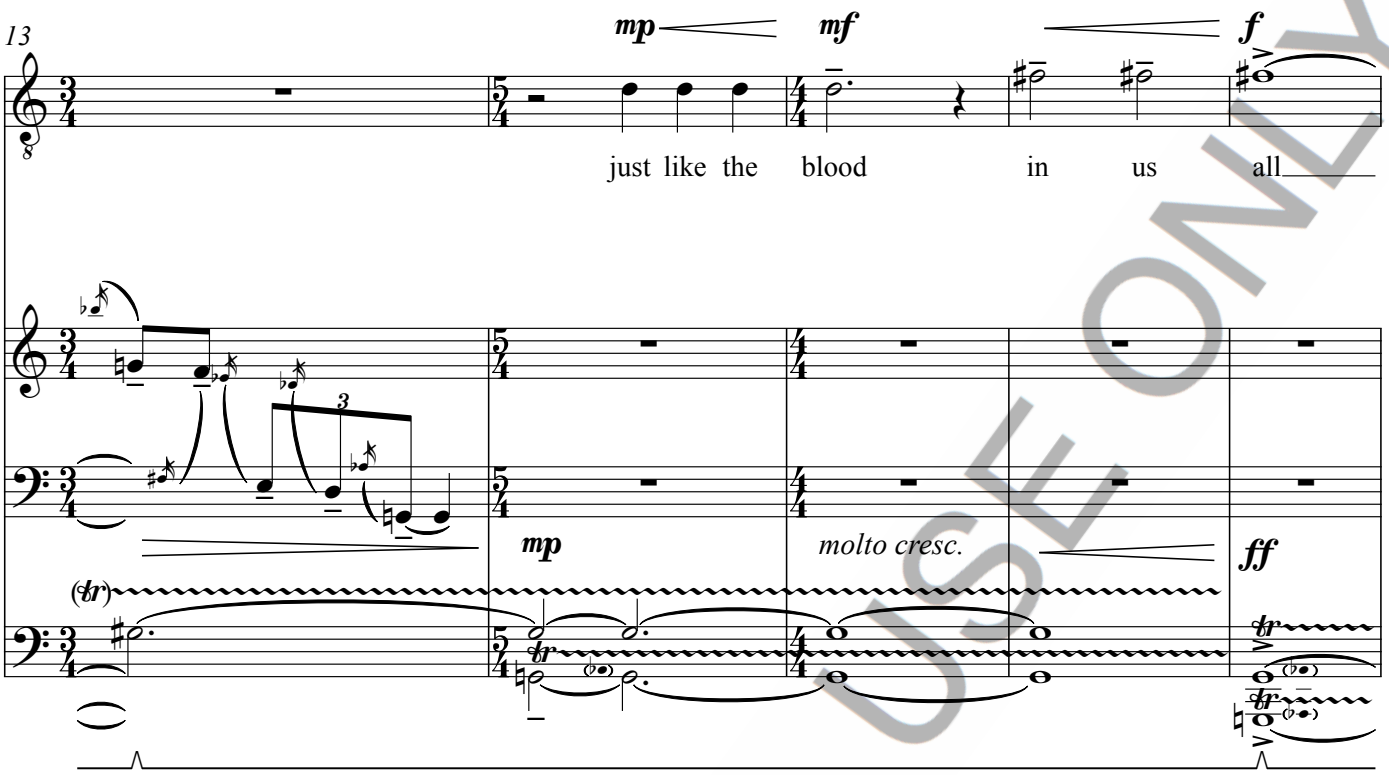

not too much of a pause
before the next song

February 24

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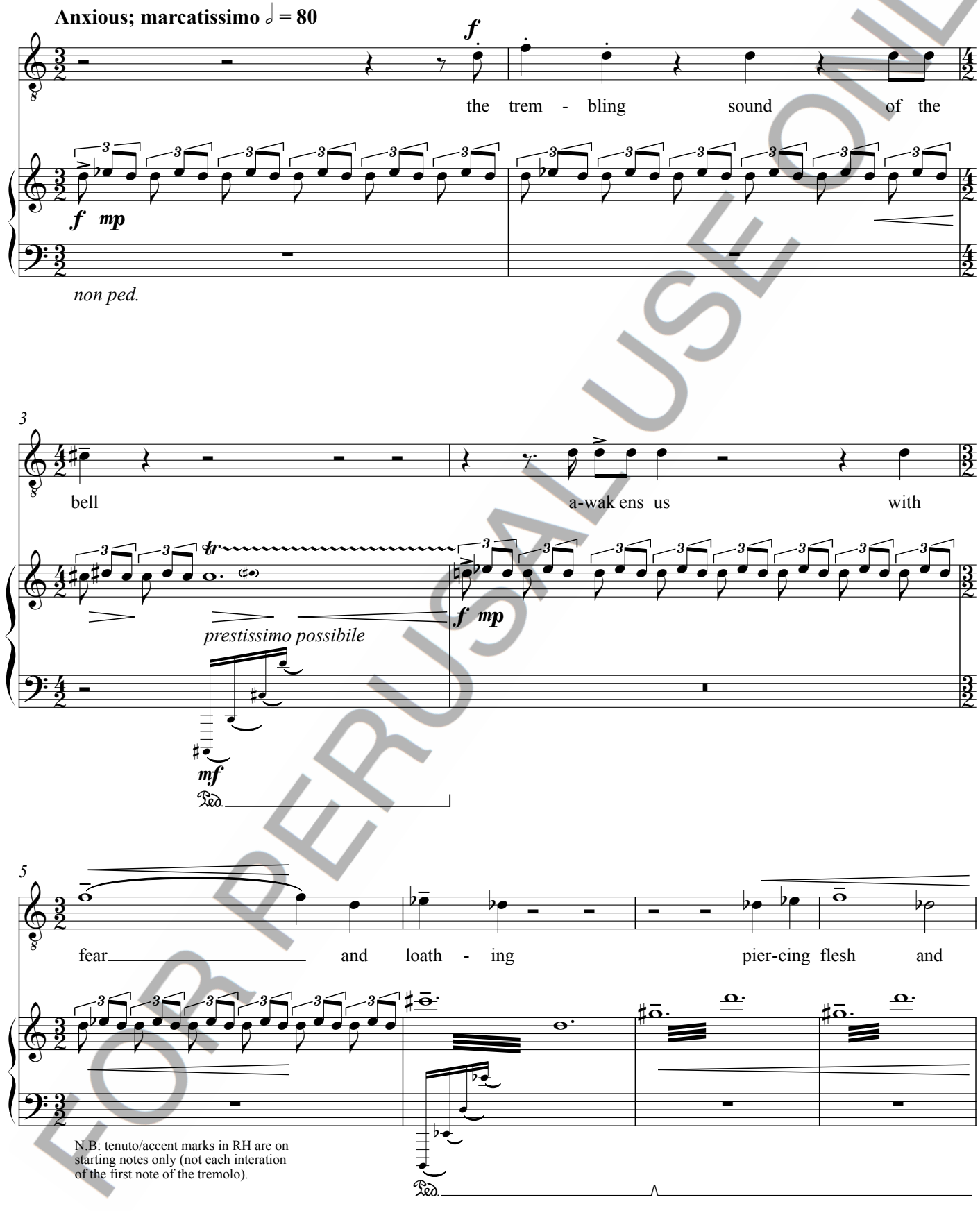
2

Text after Johann Christoph Gottsched



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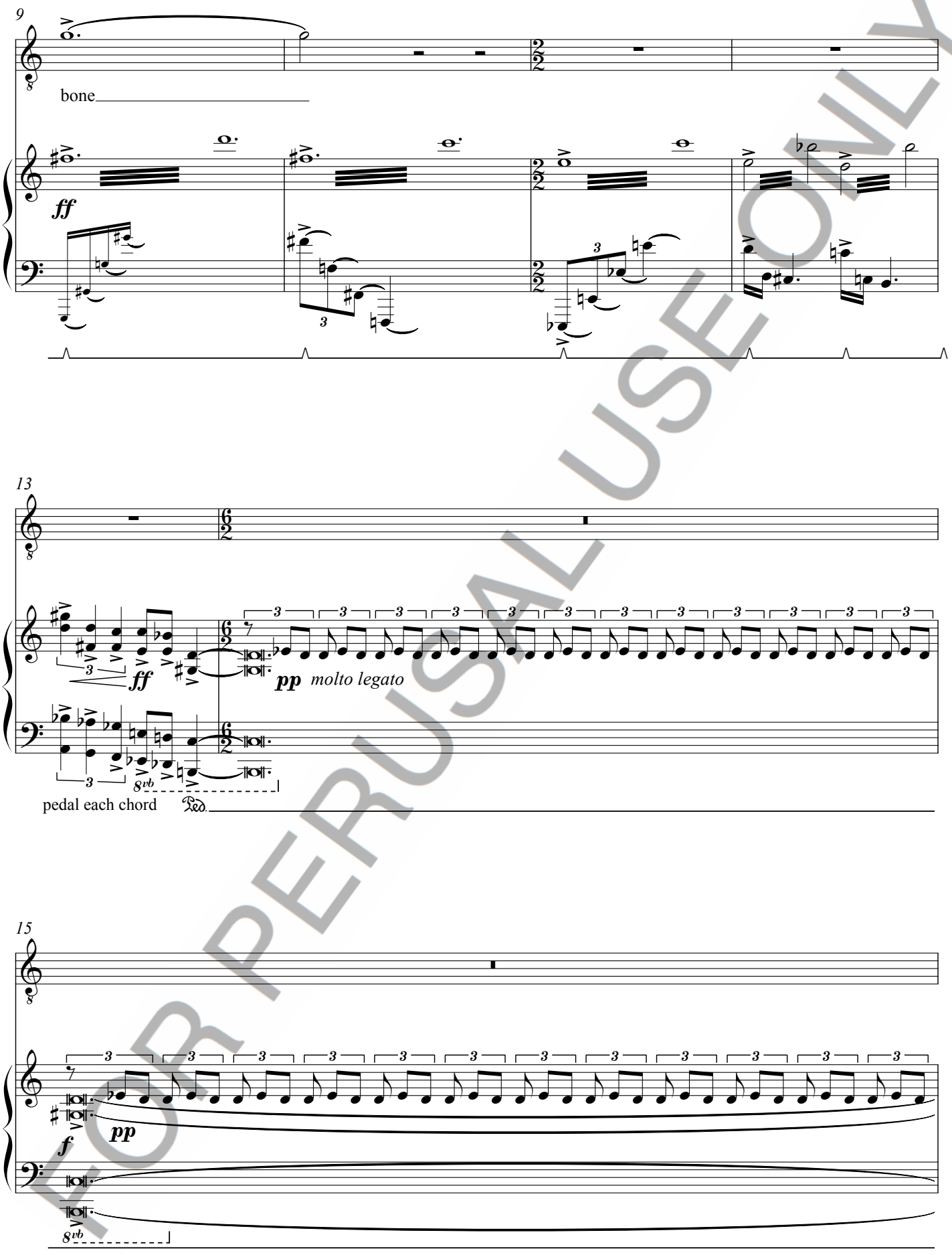

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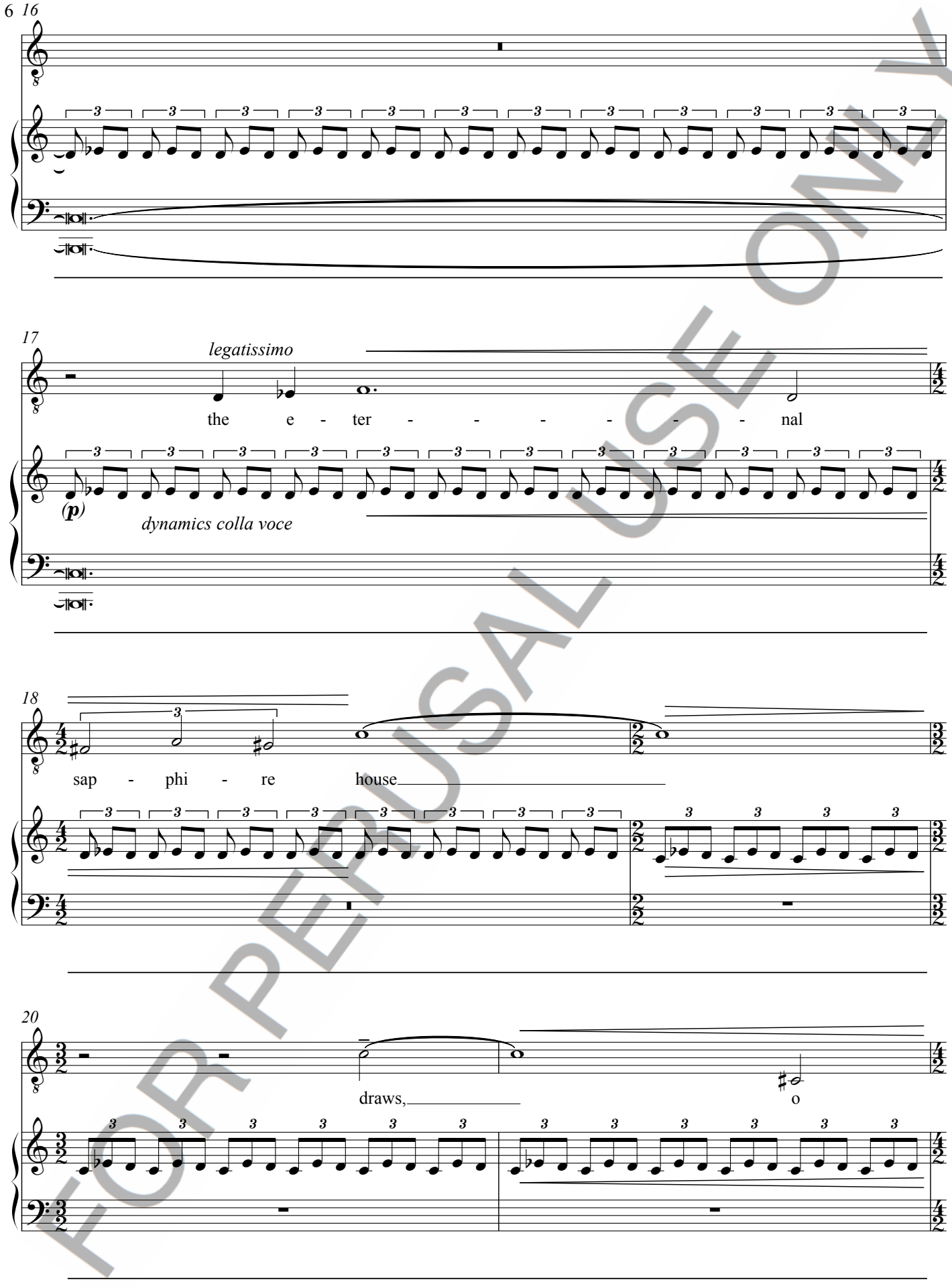

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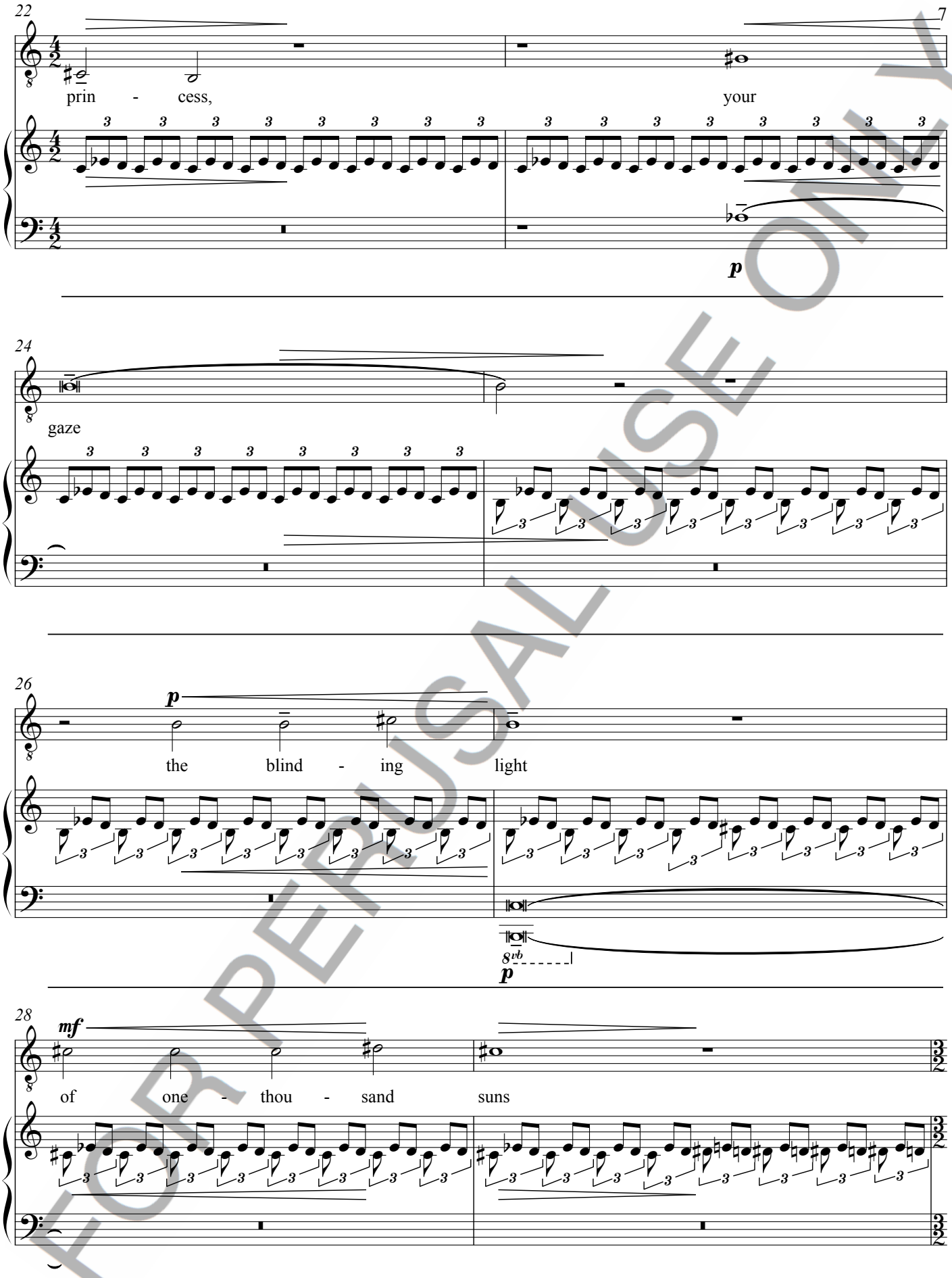

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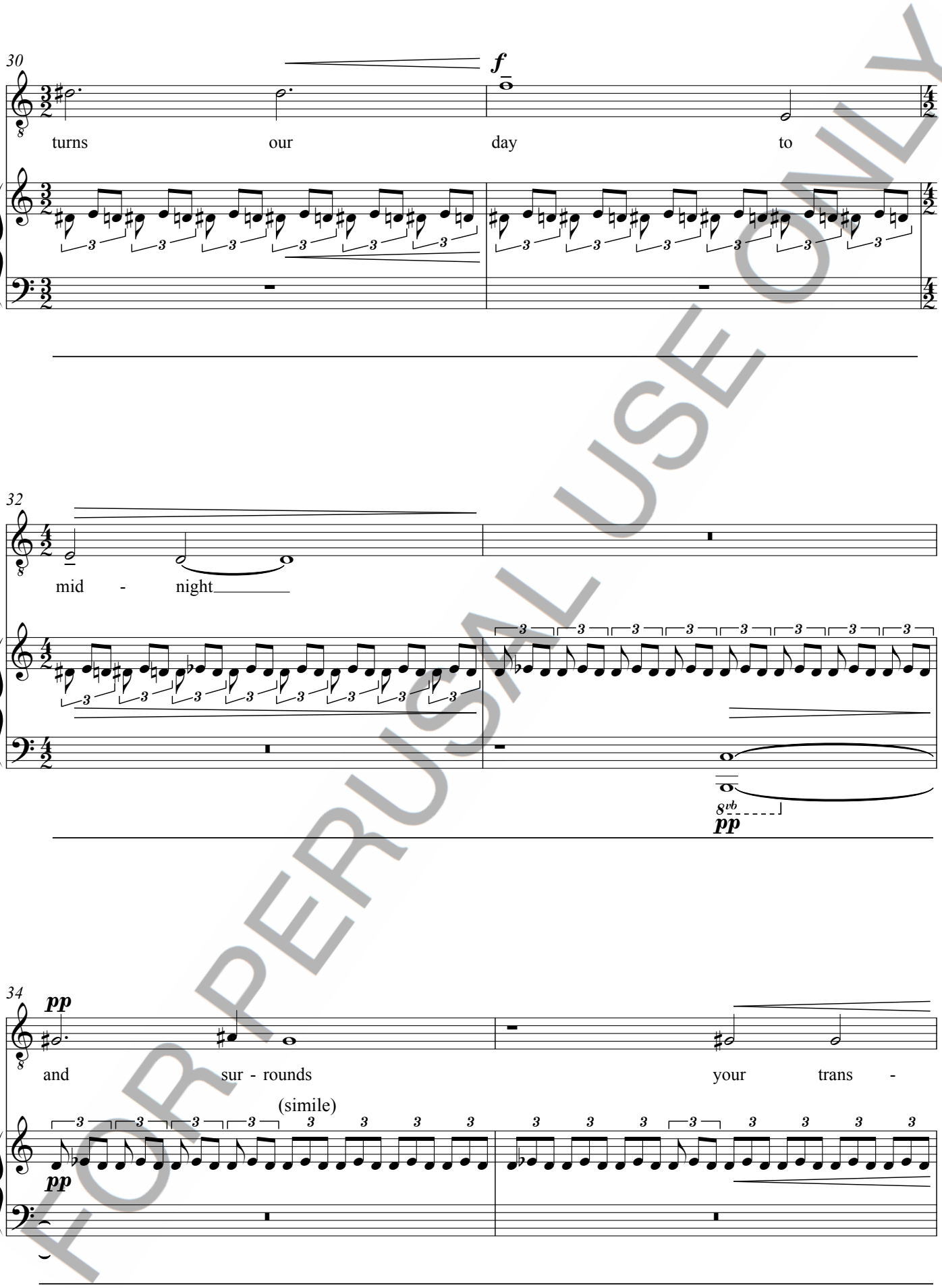

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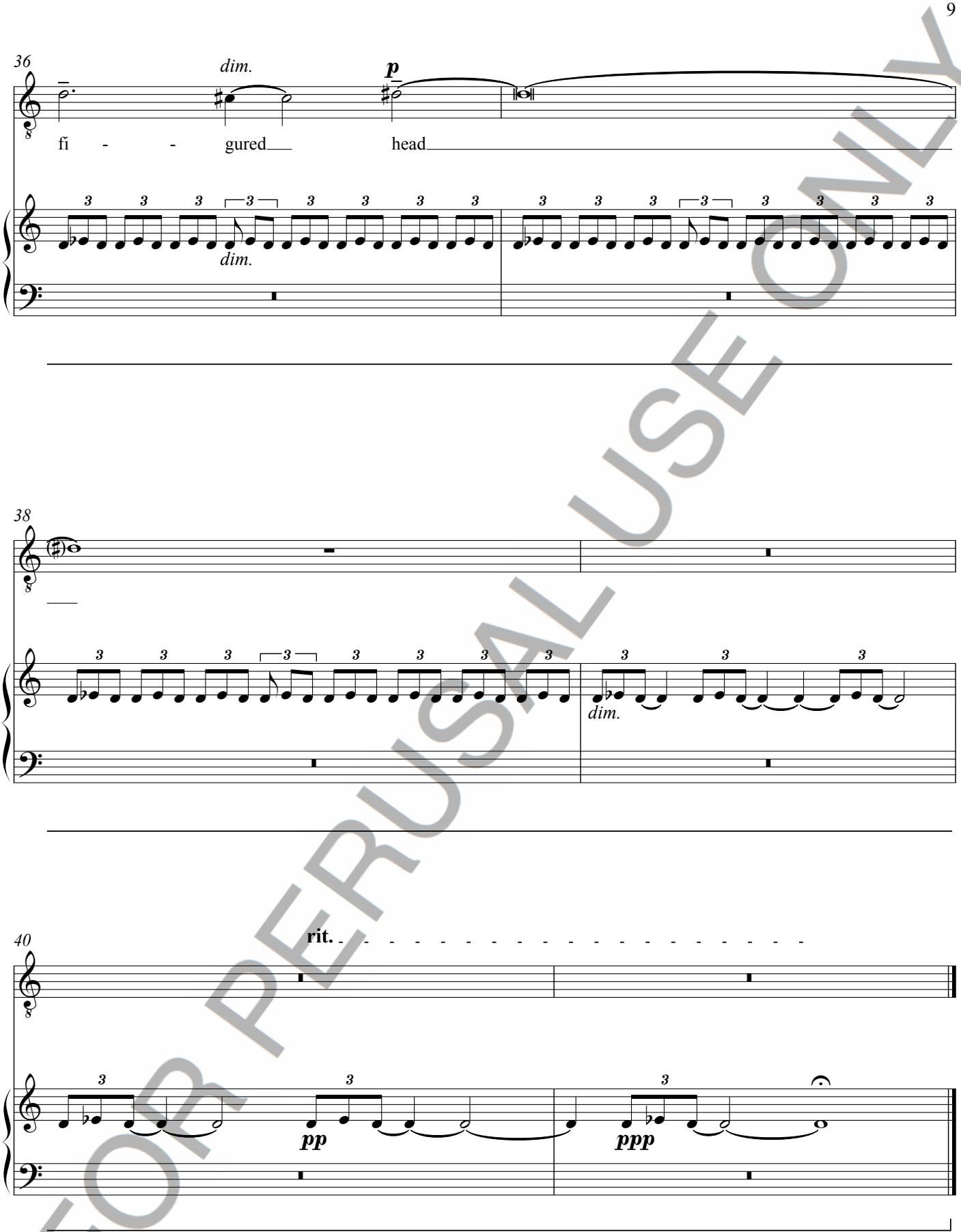

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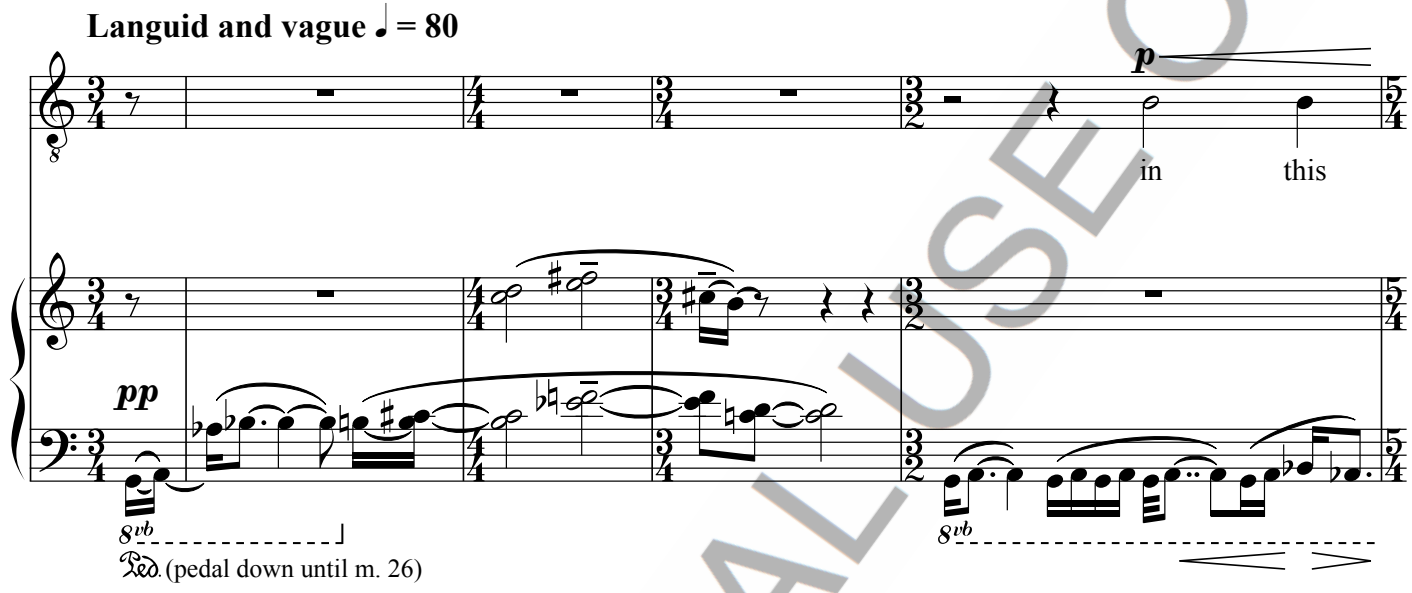

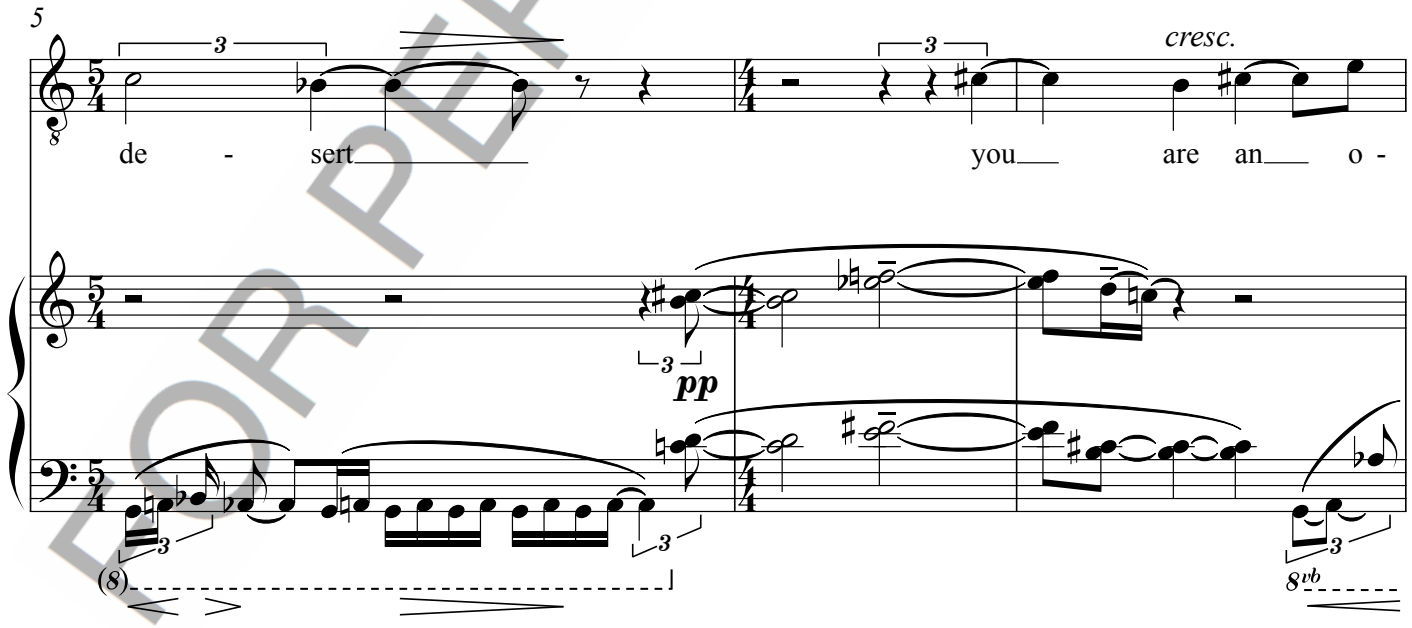

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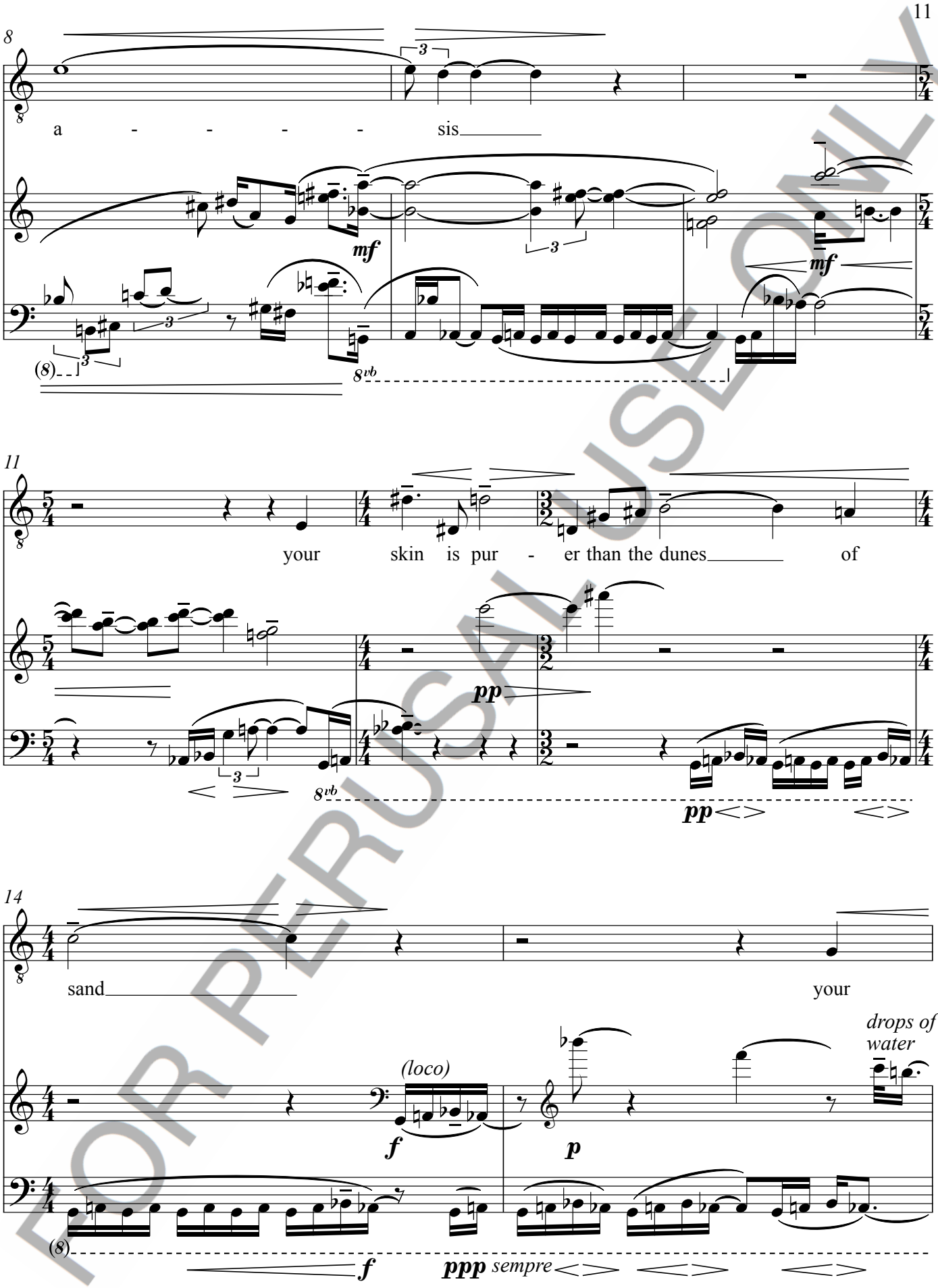

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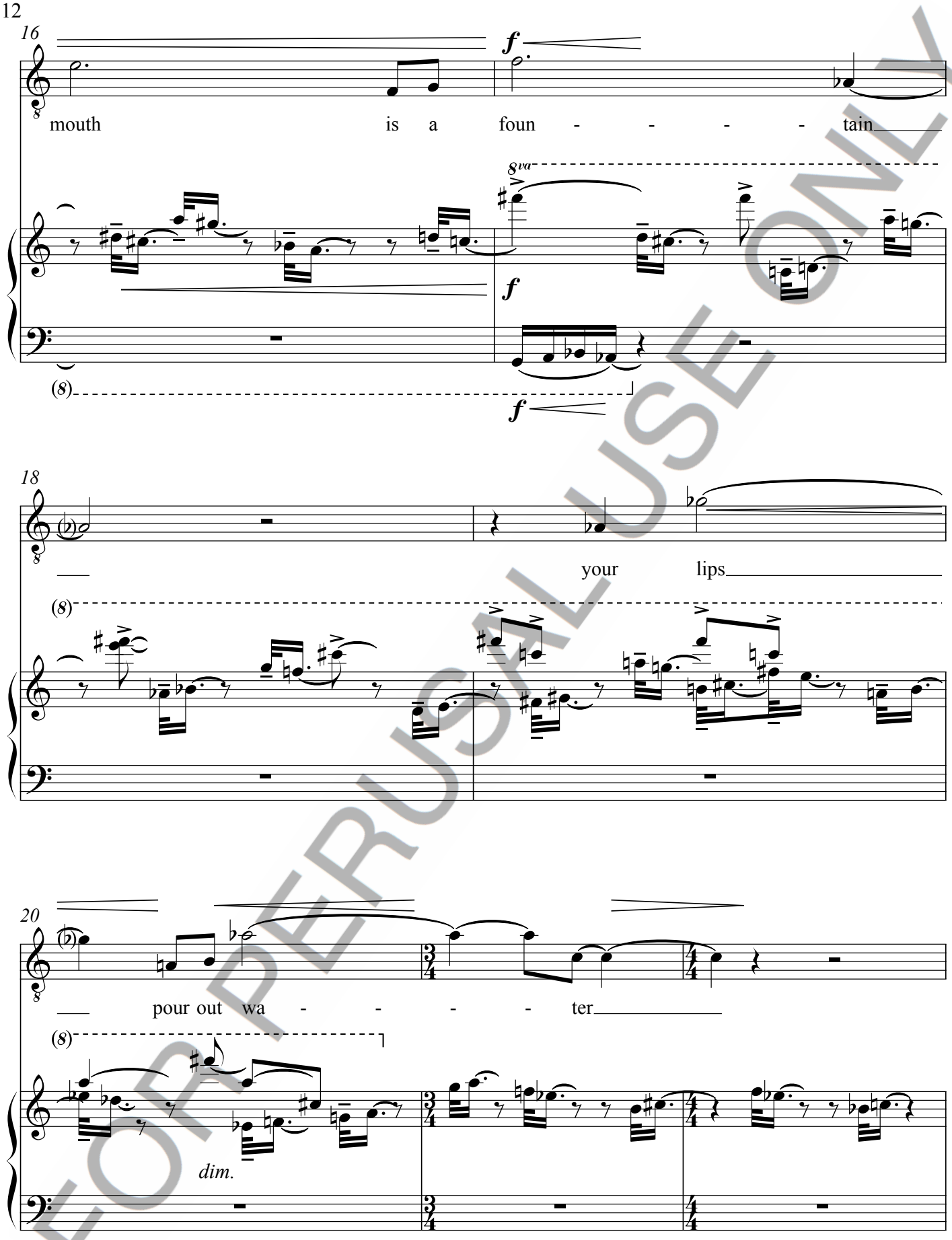

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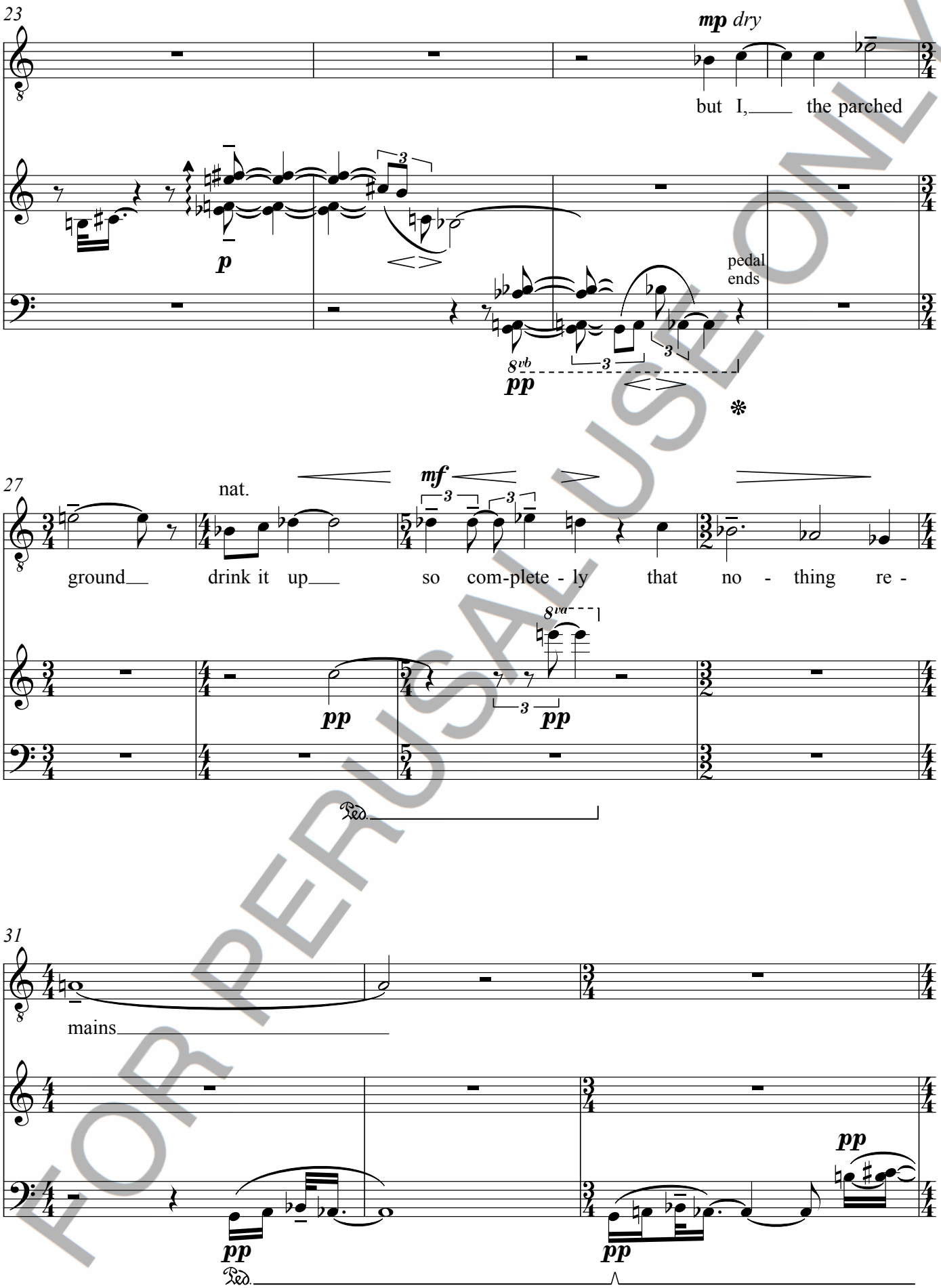

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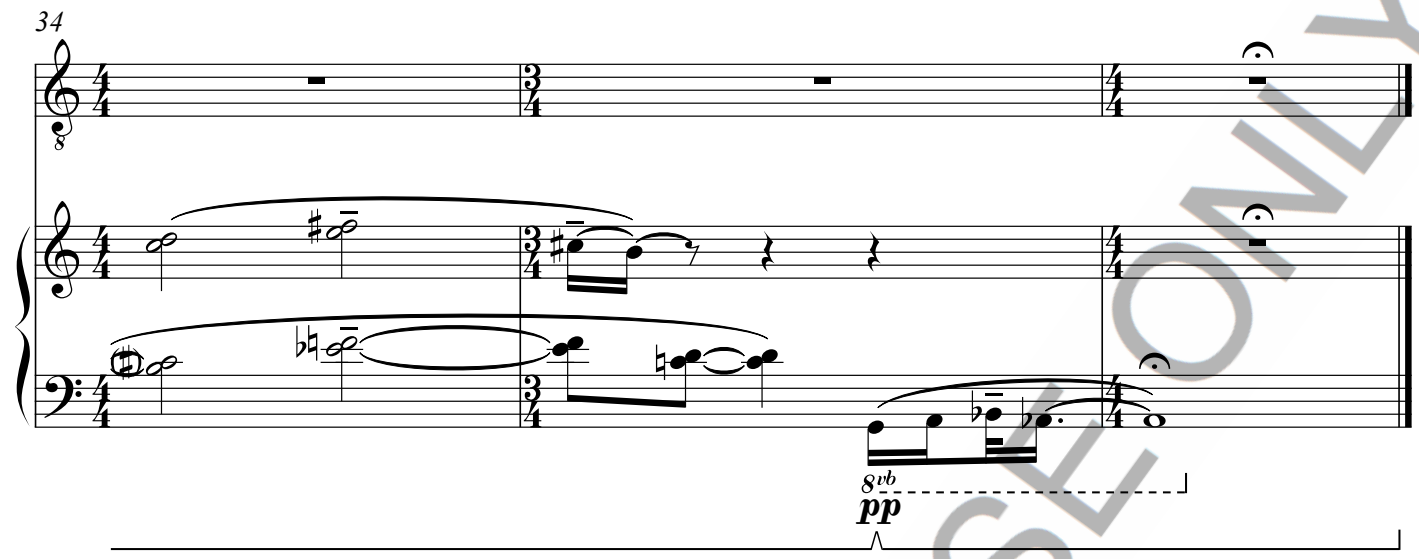

March 15-17

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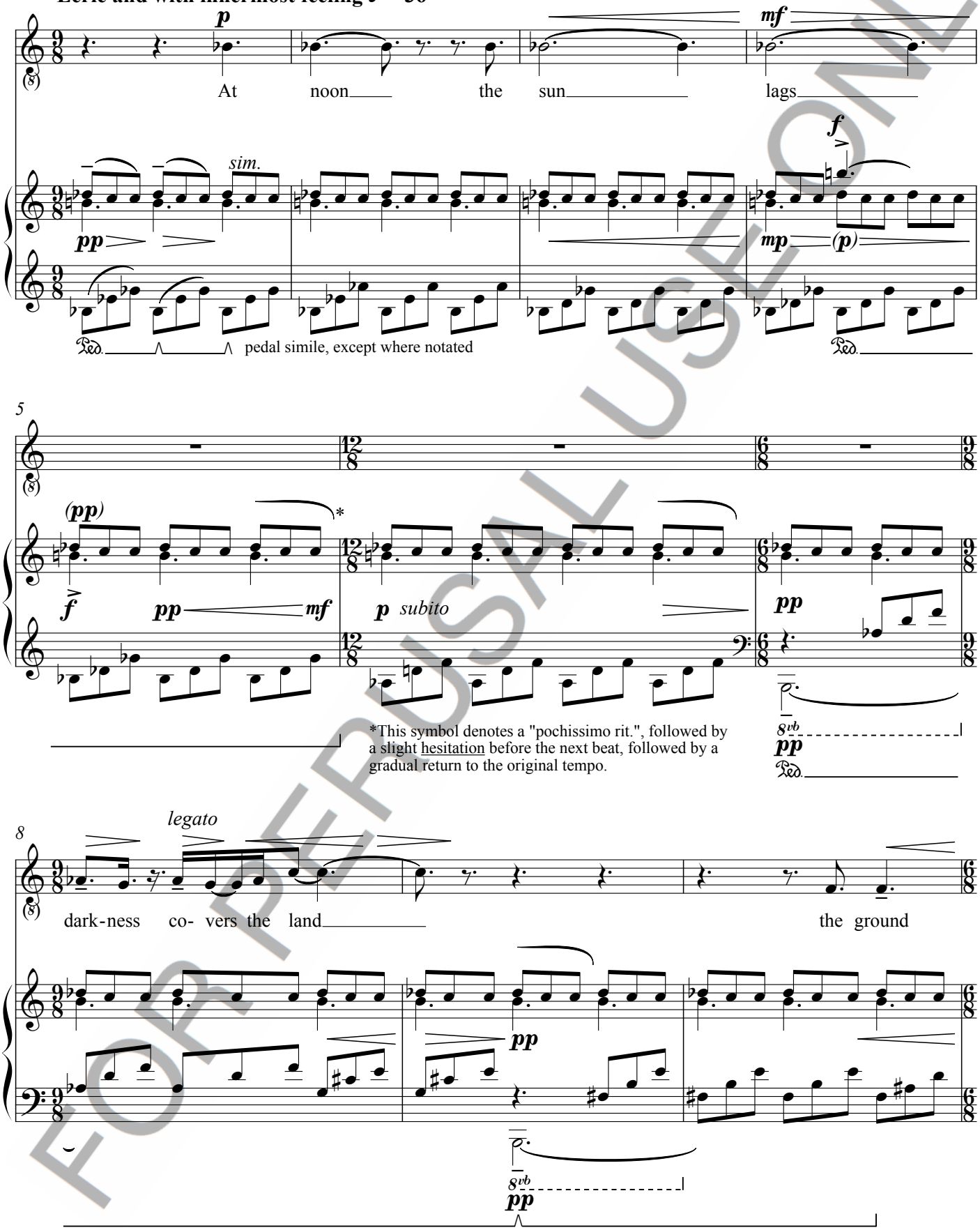

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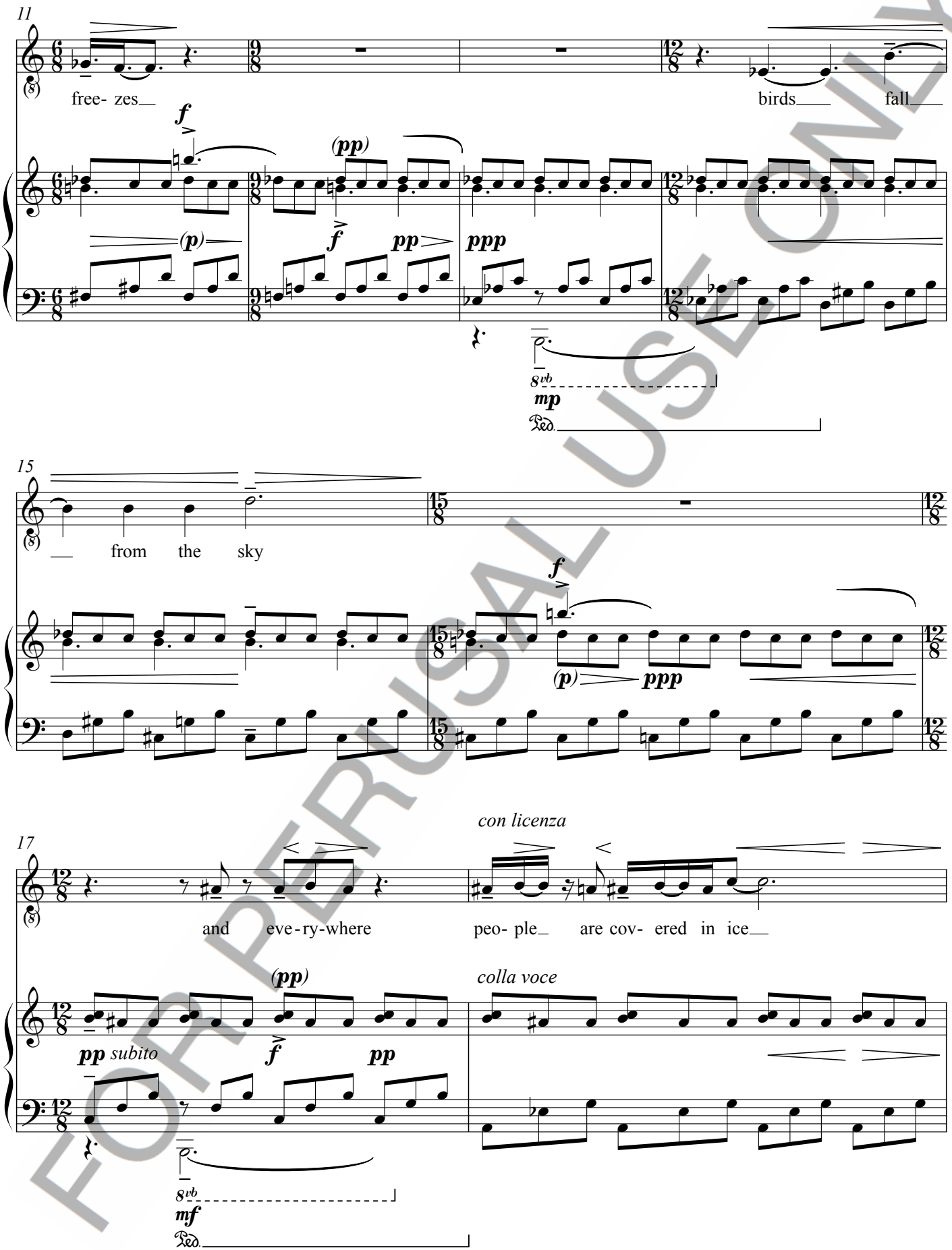

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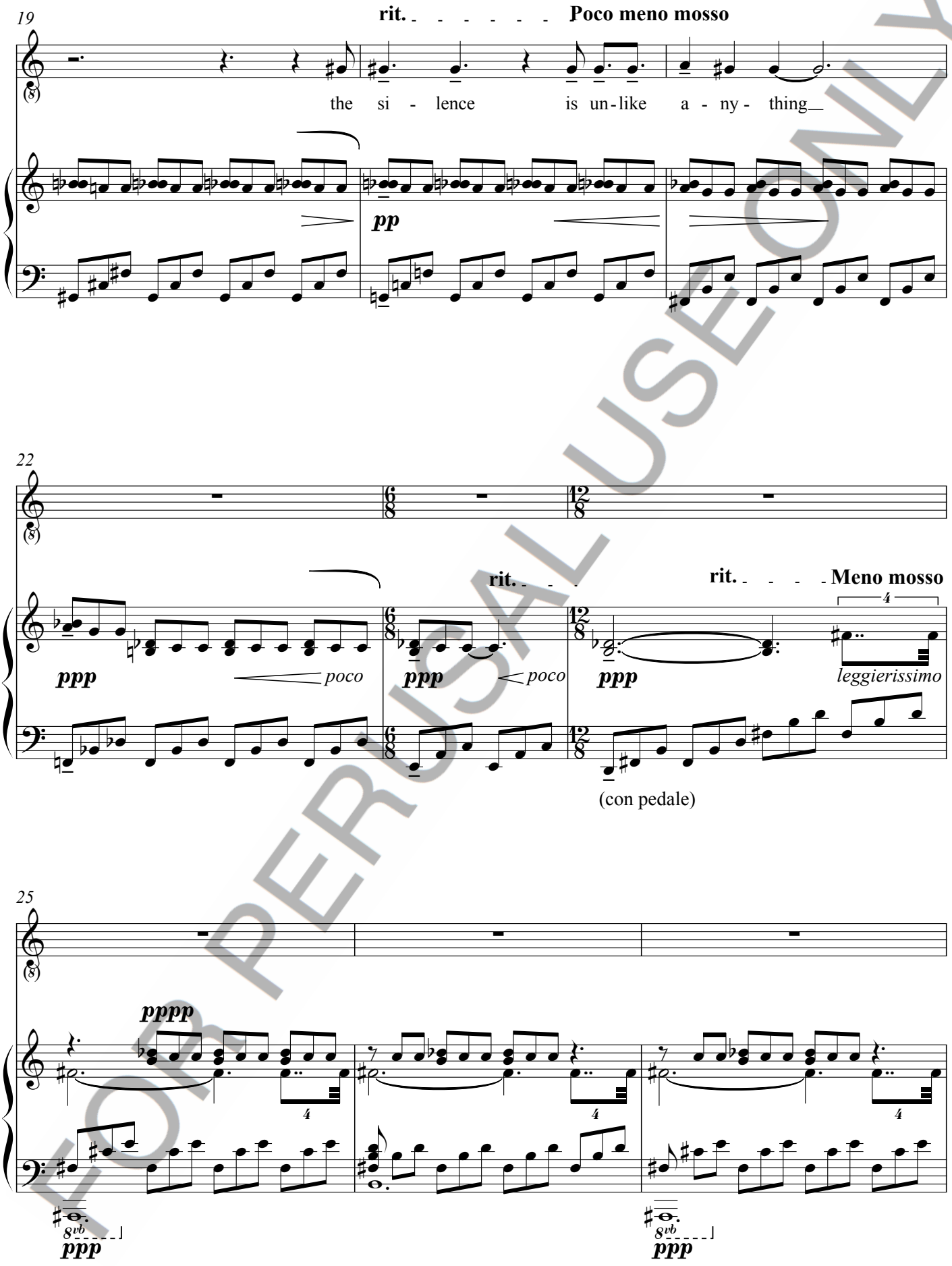

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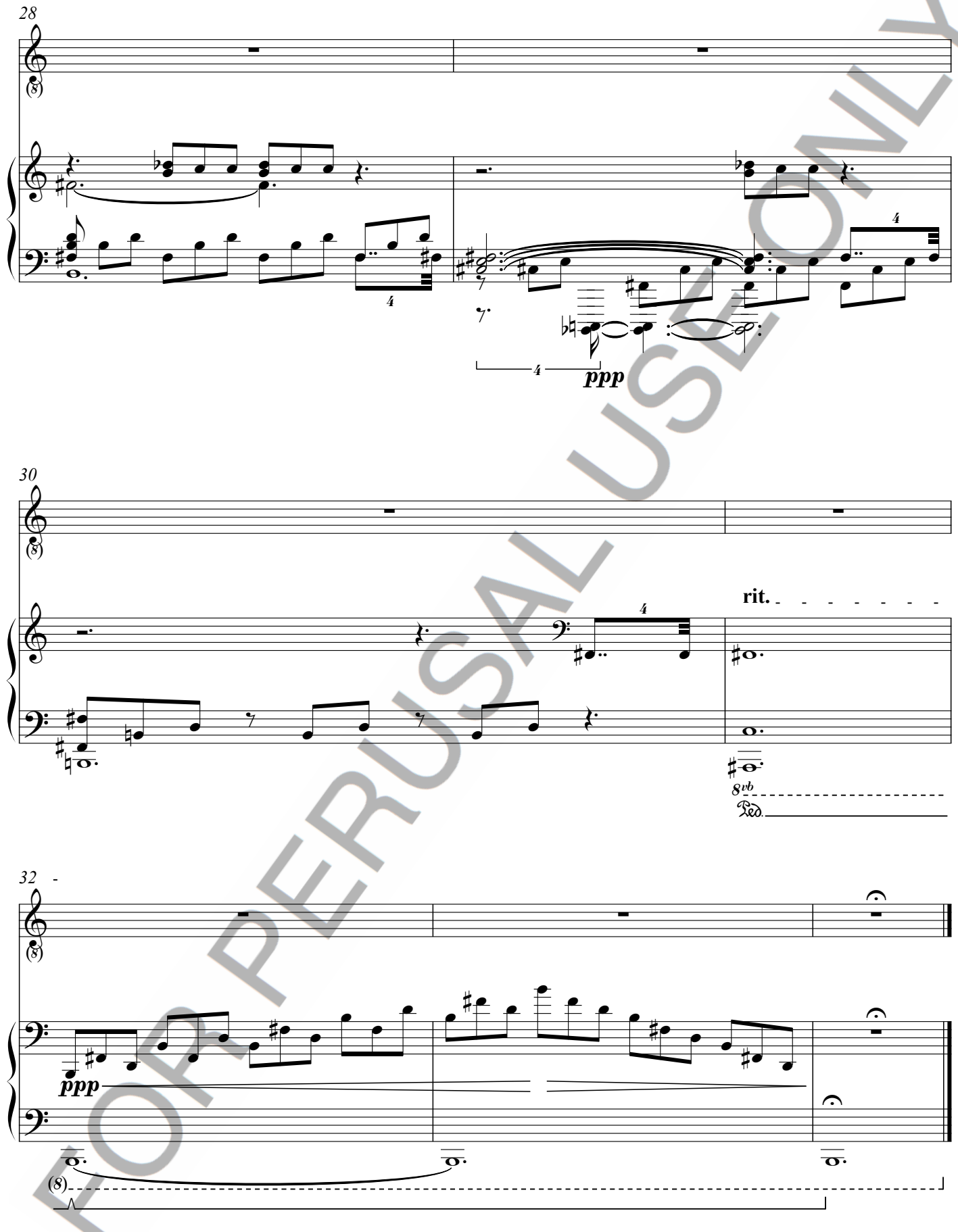

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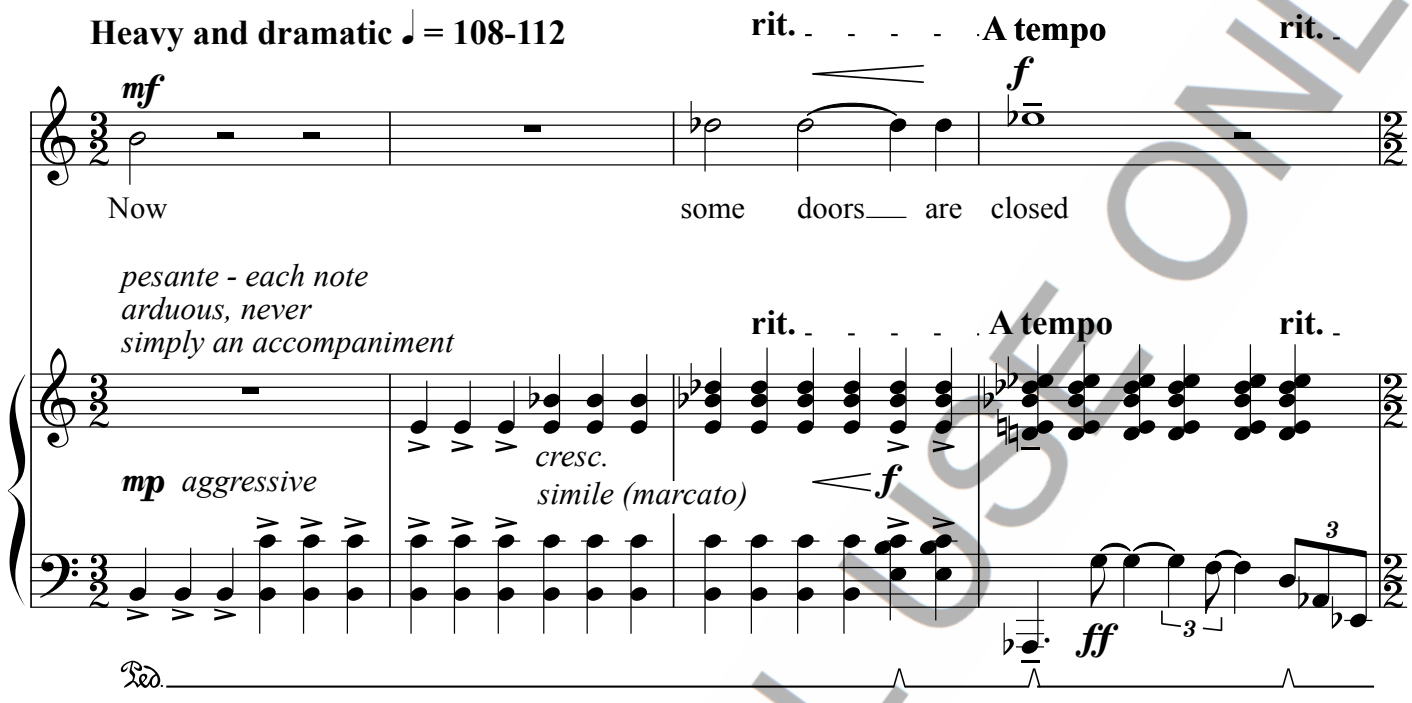

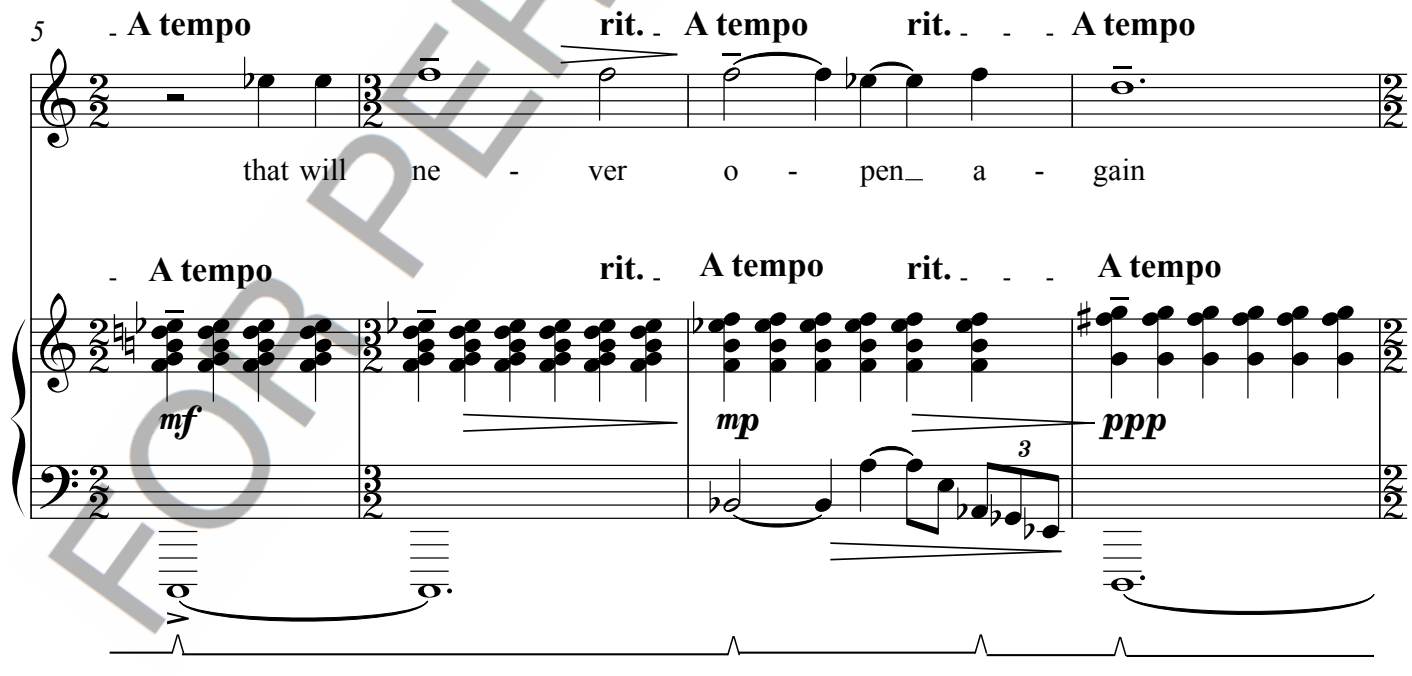

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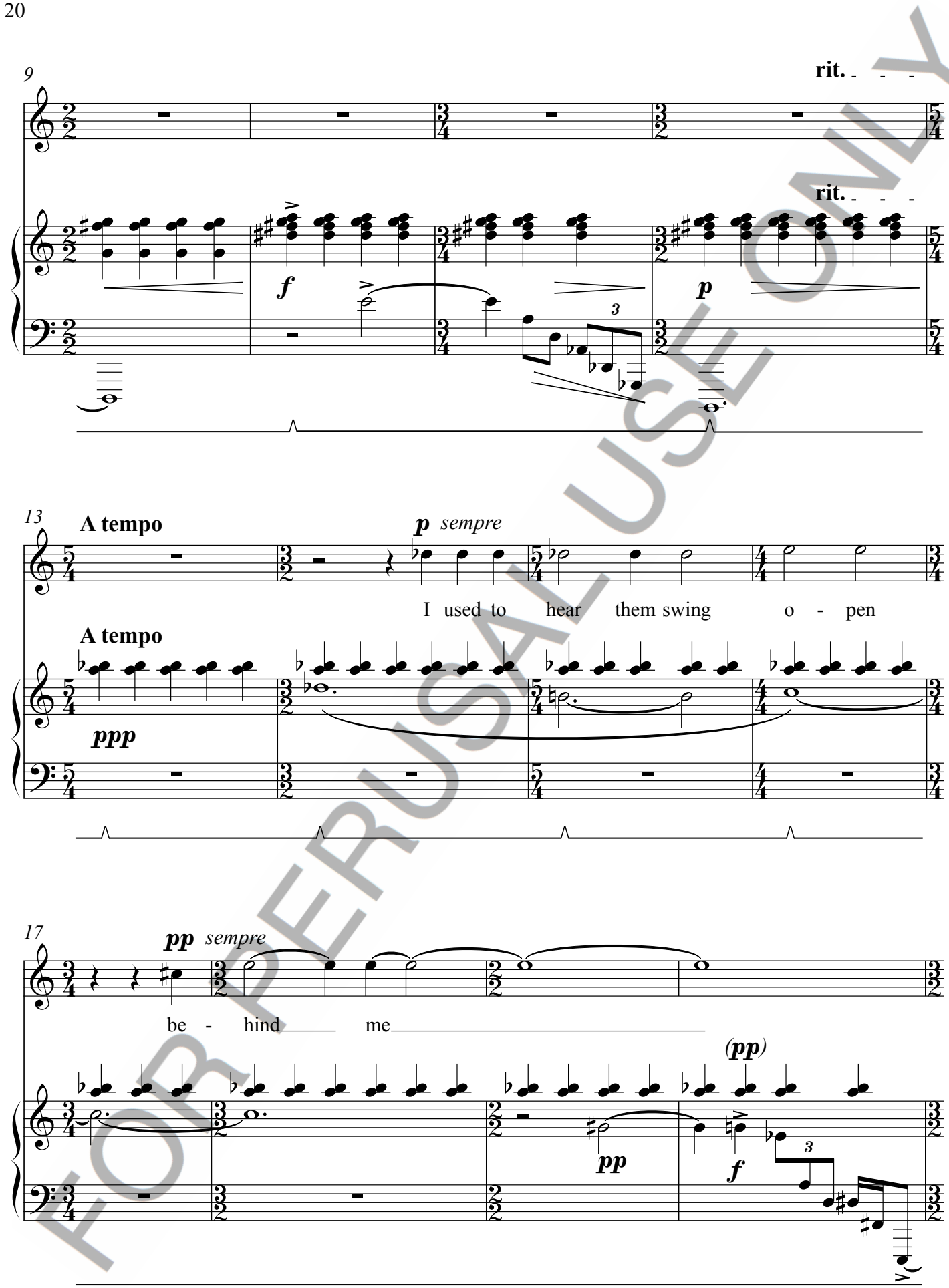

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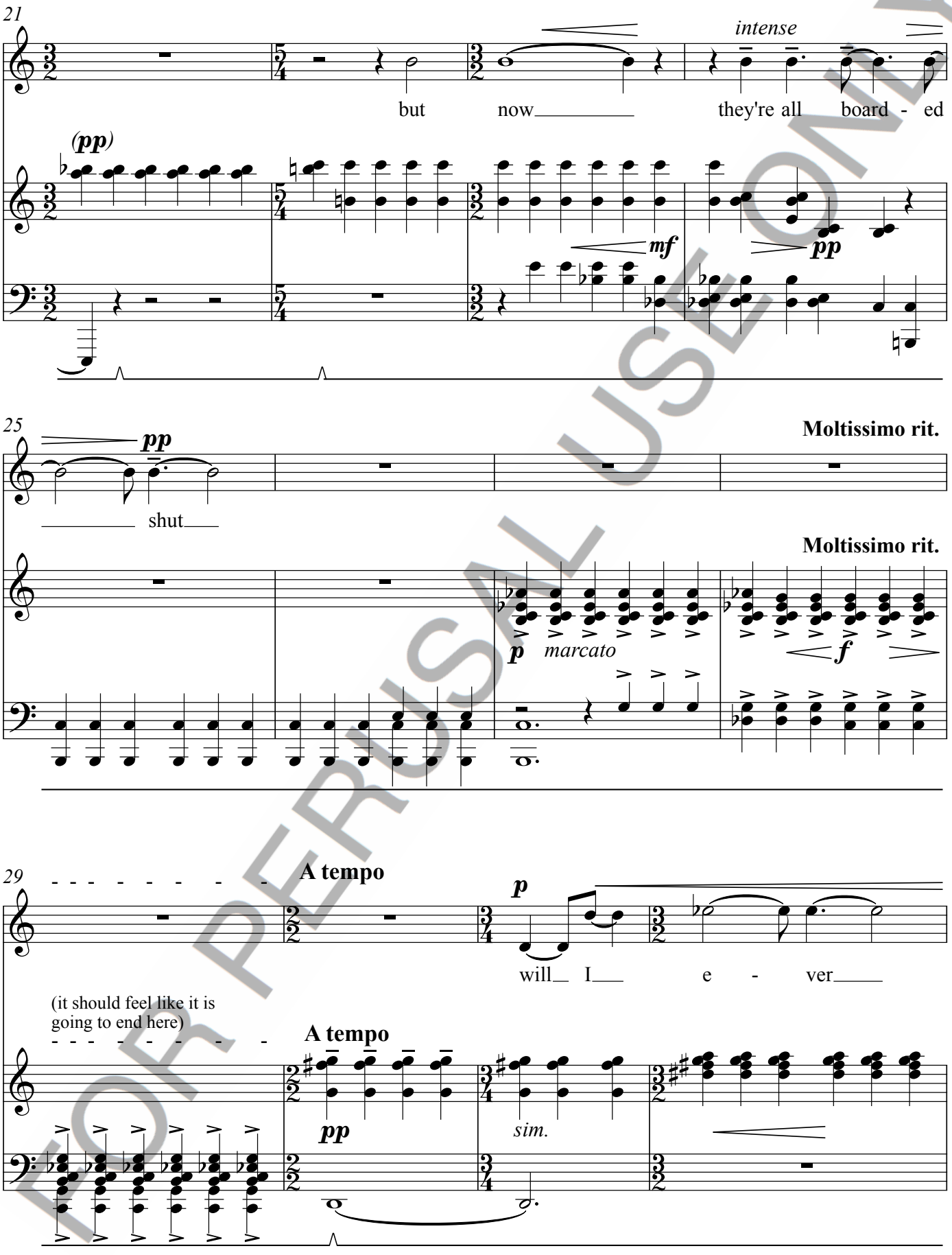

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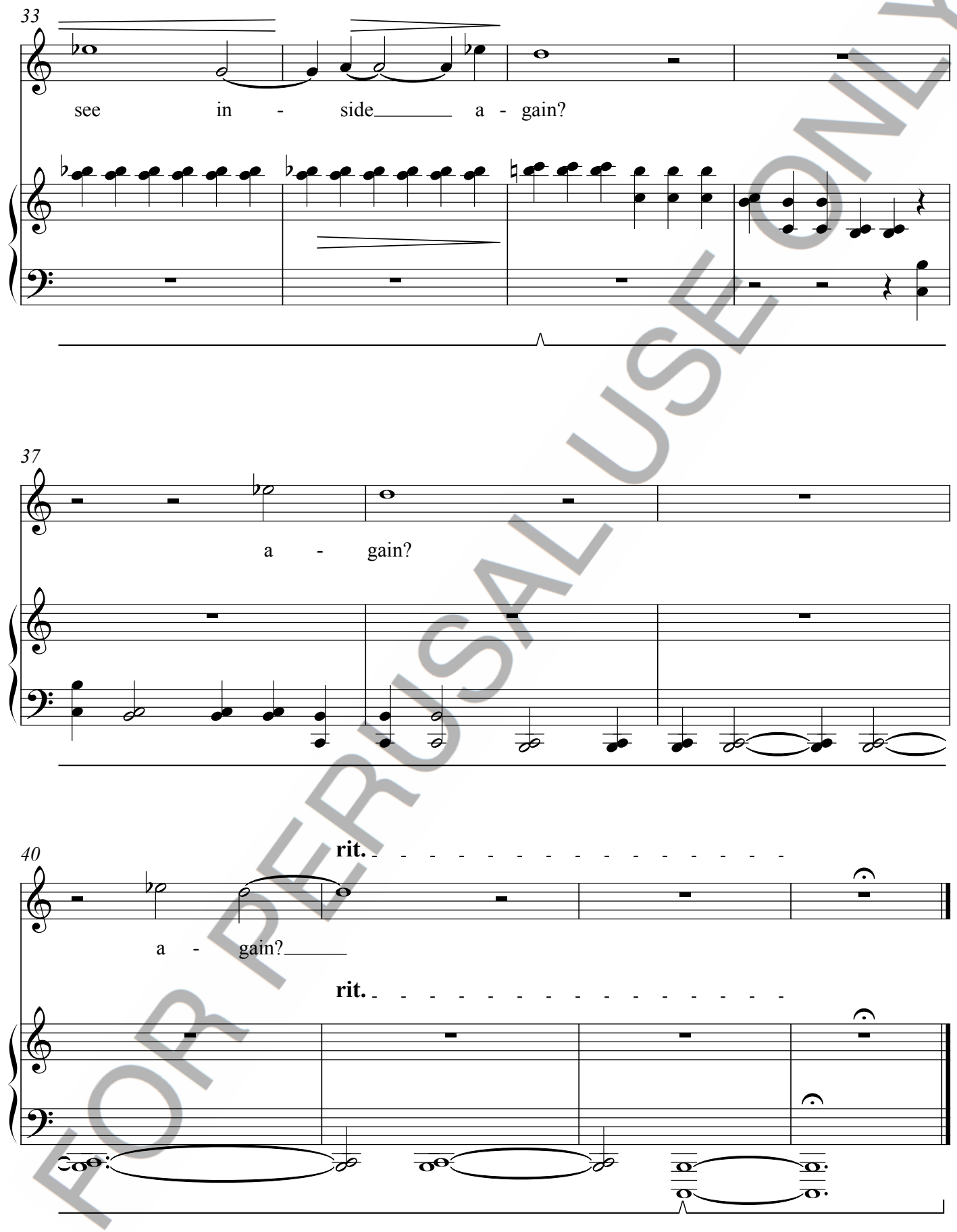

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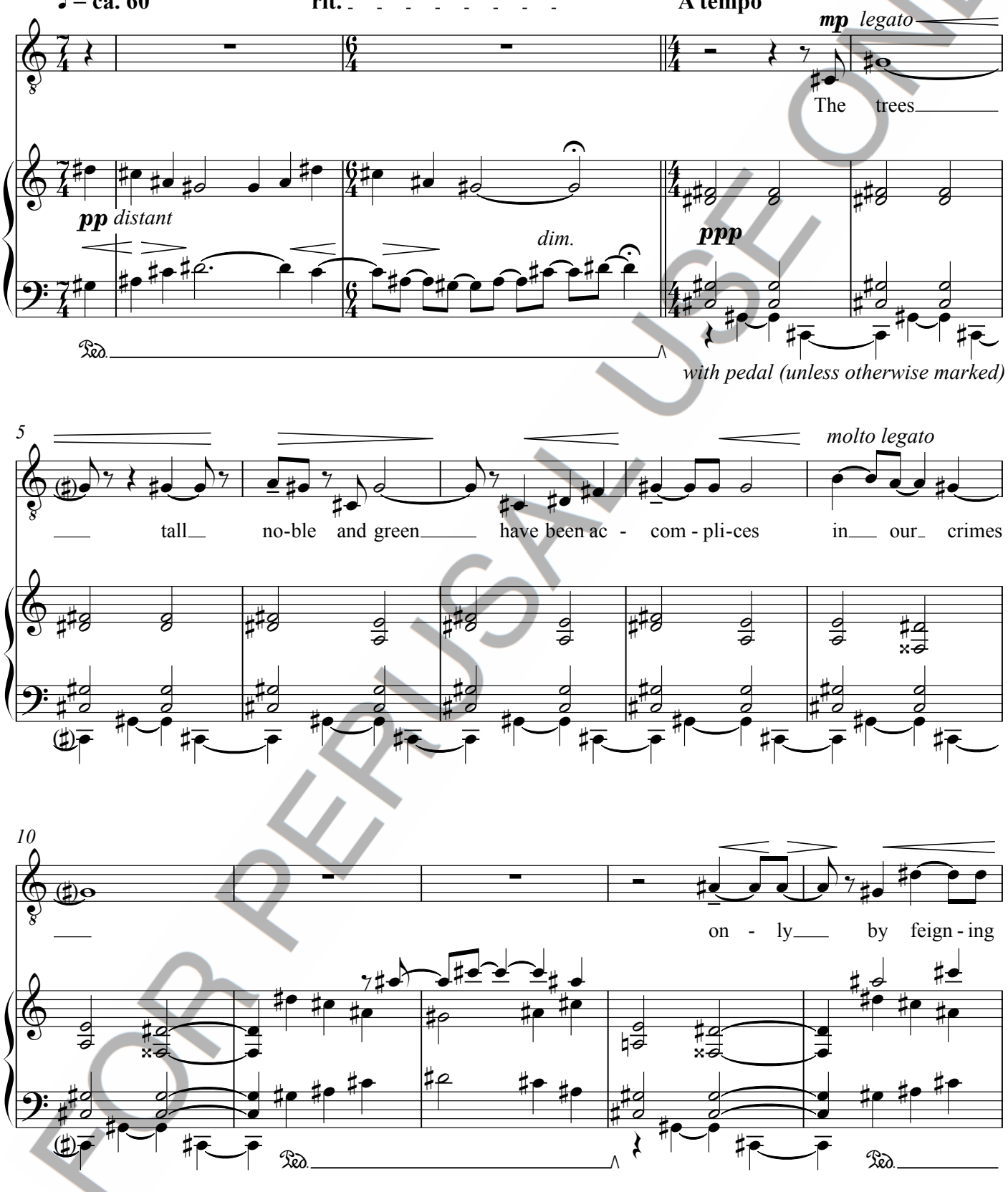

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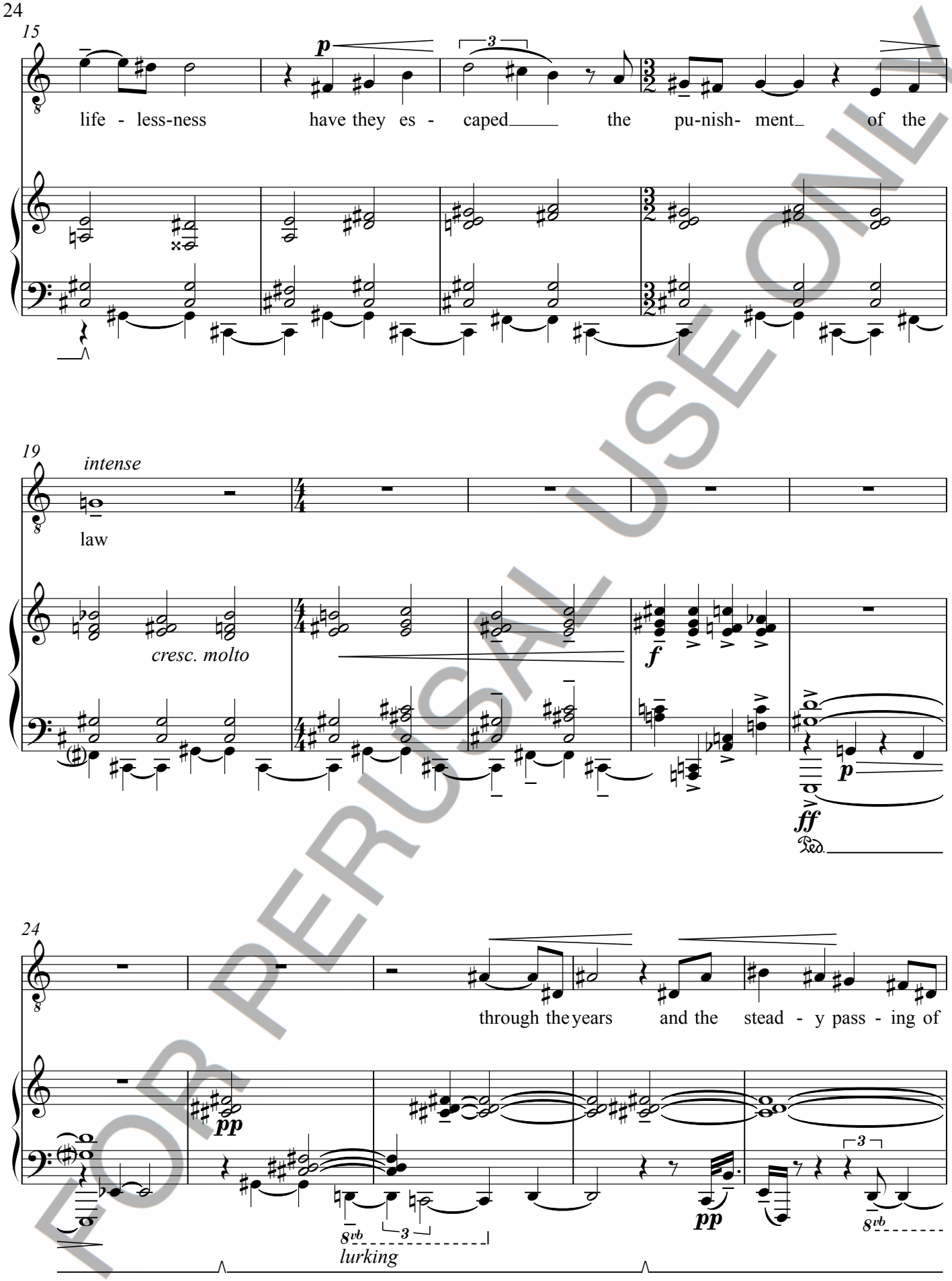

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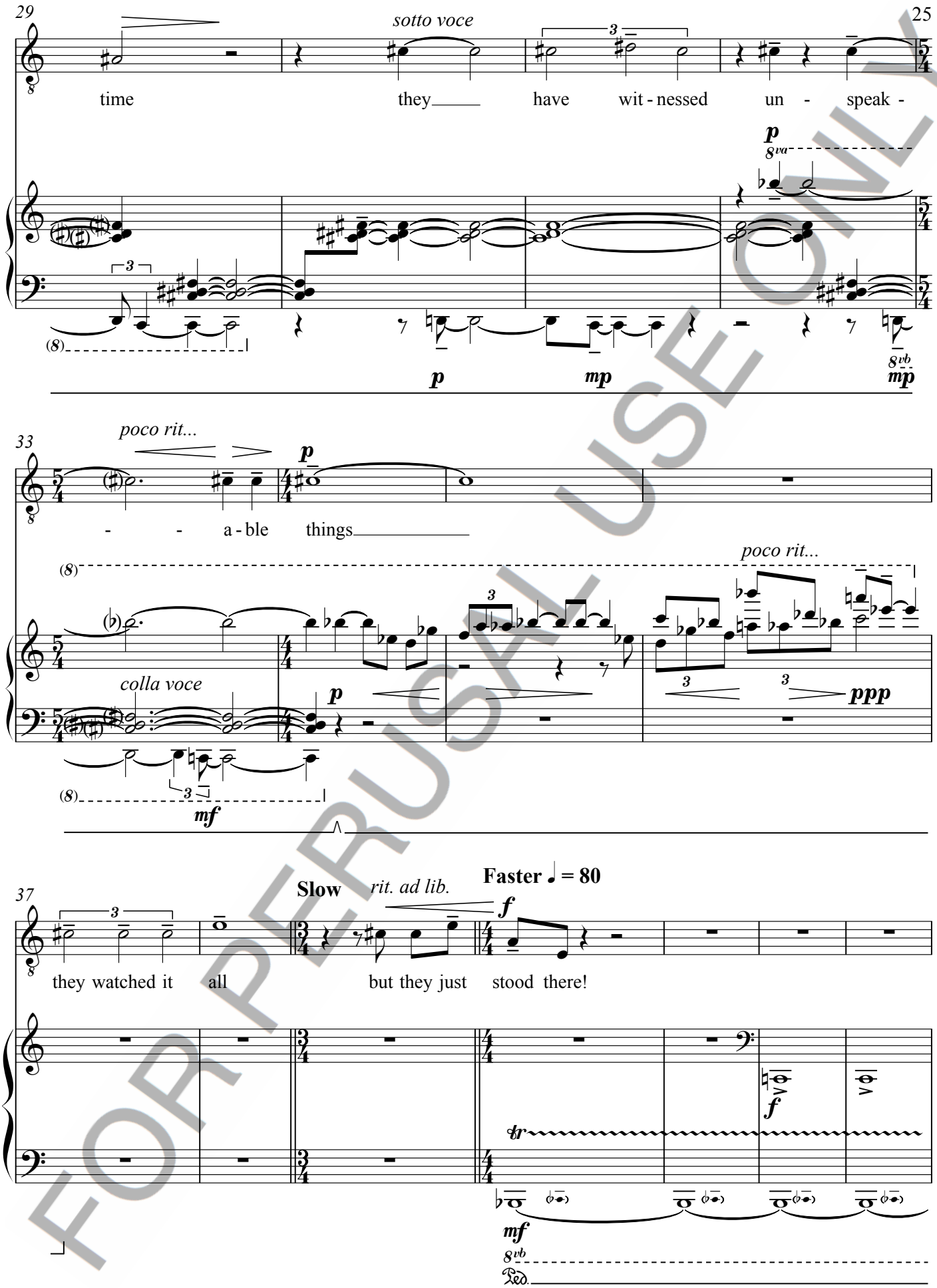

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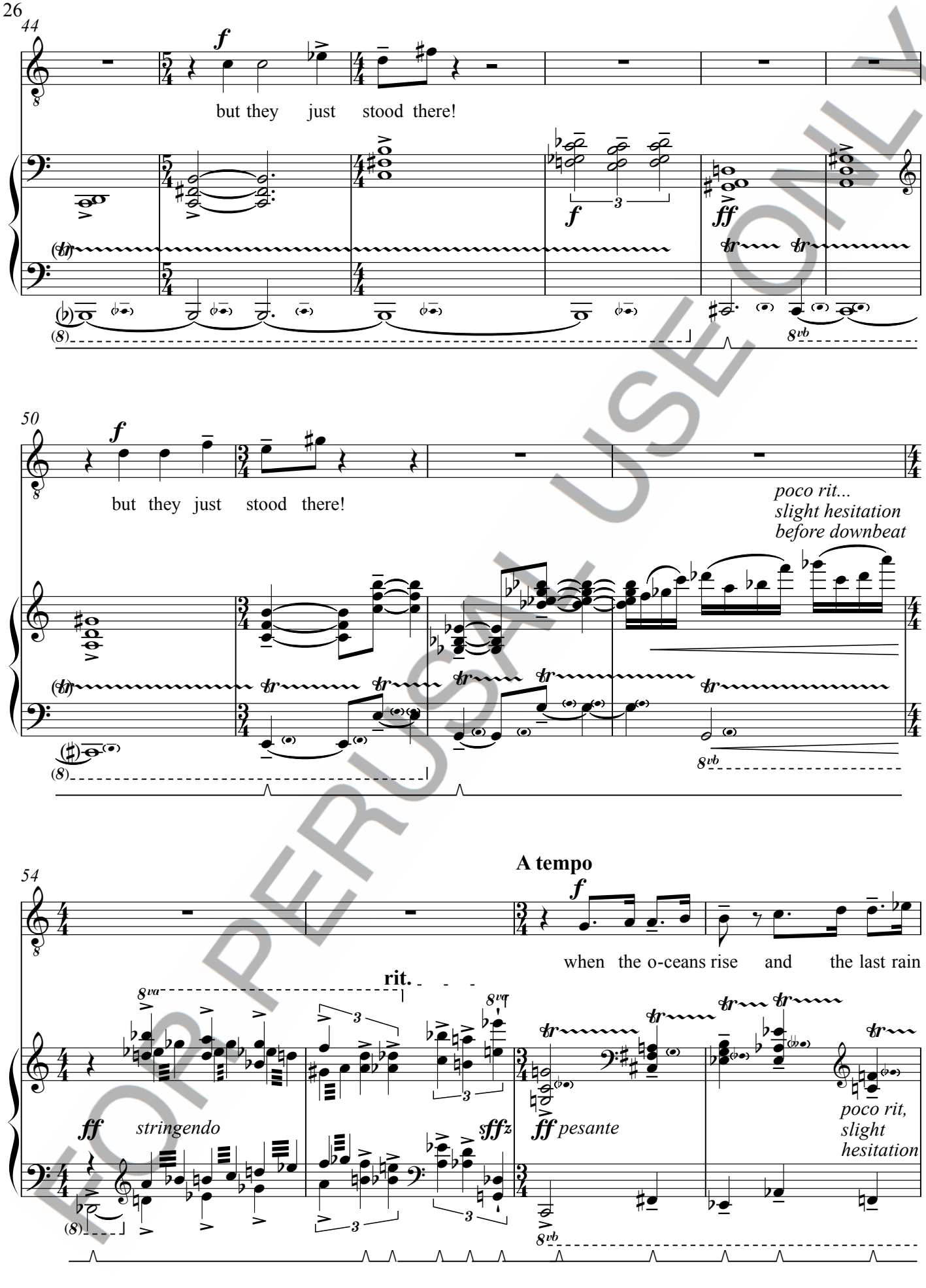

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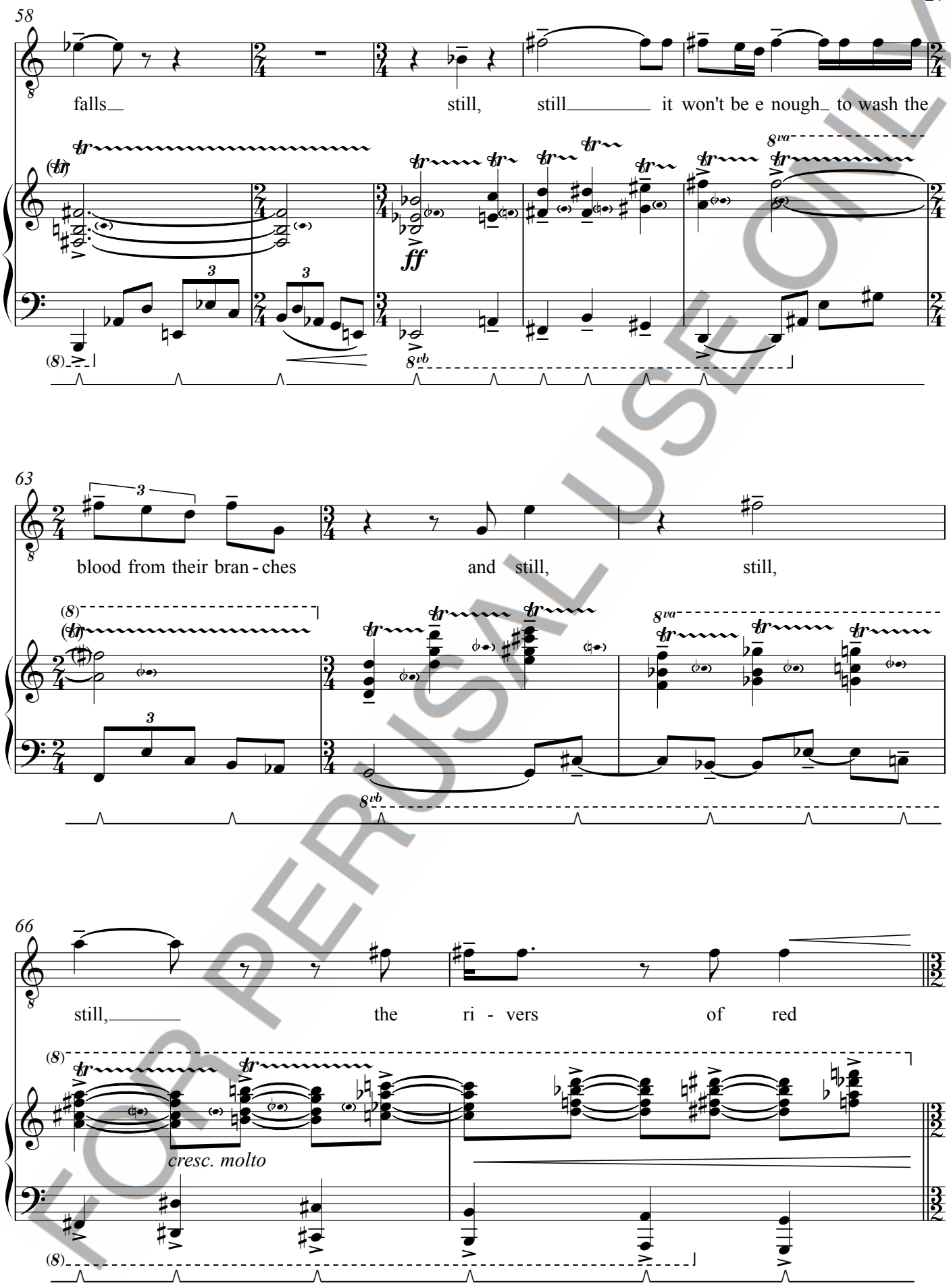

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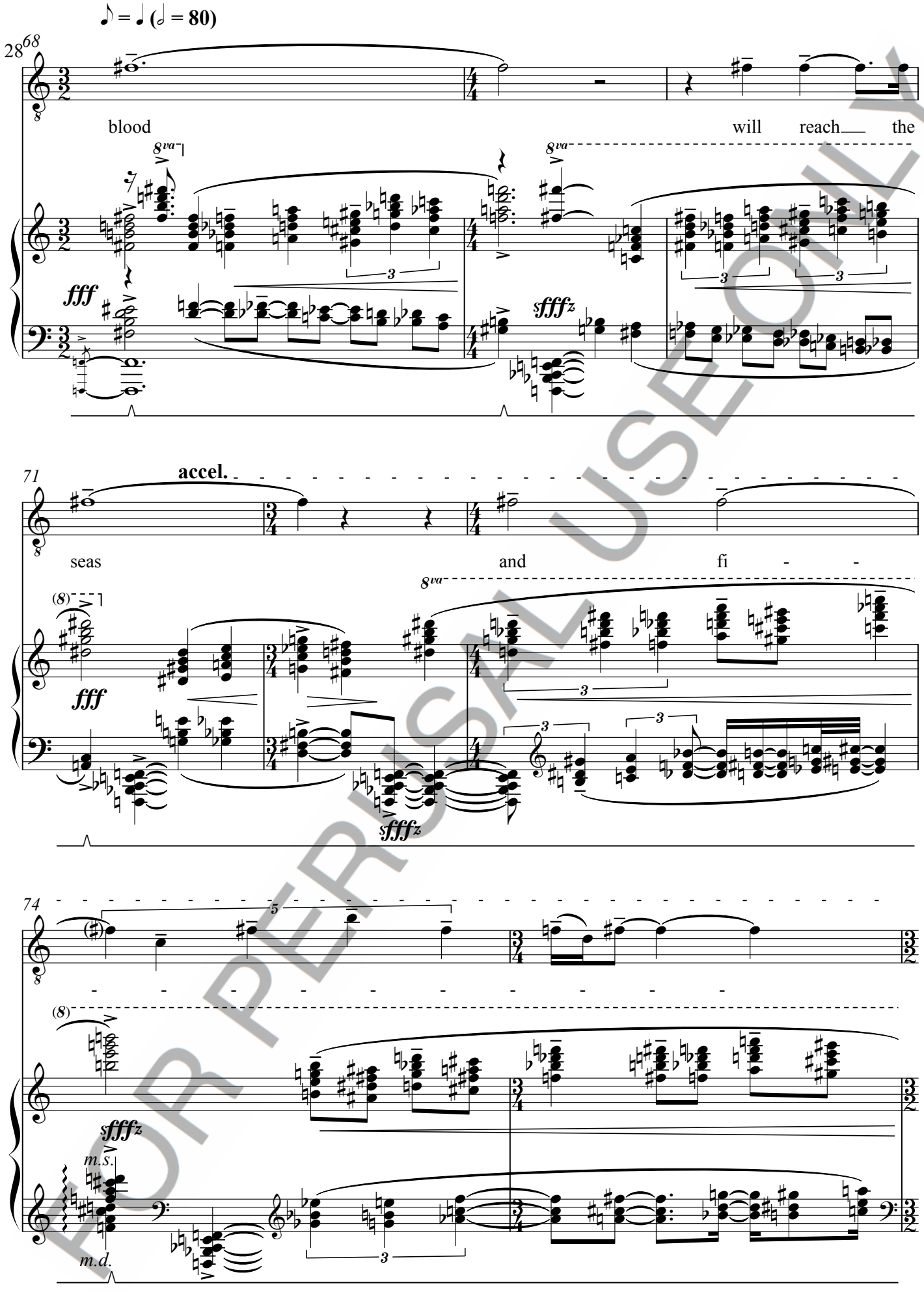

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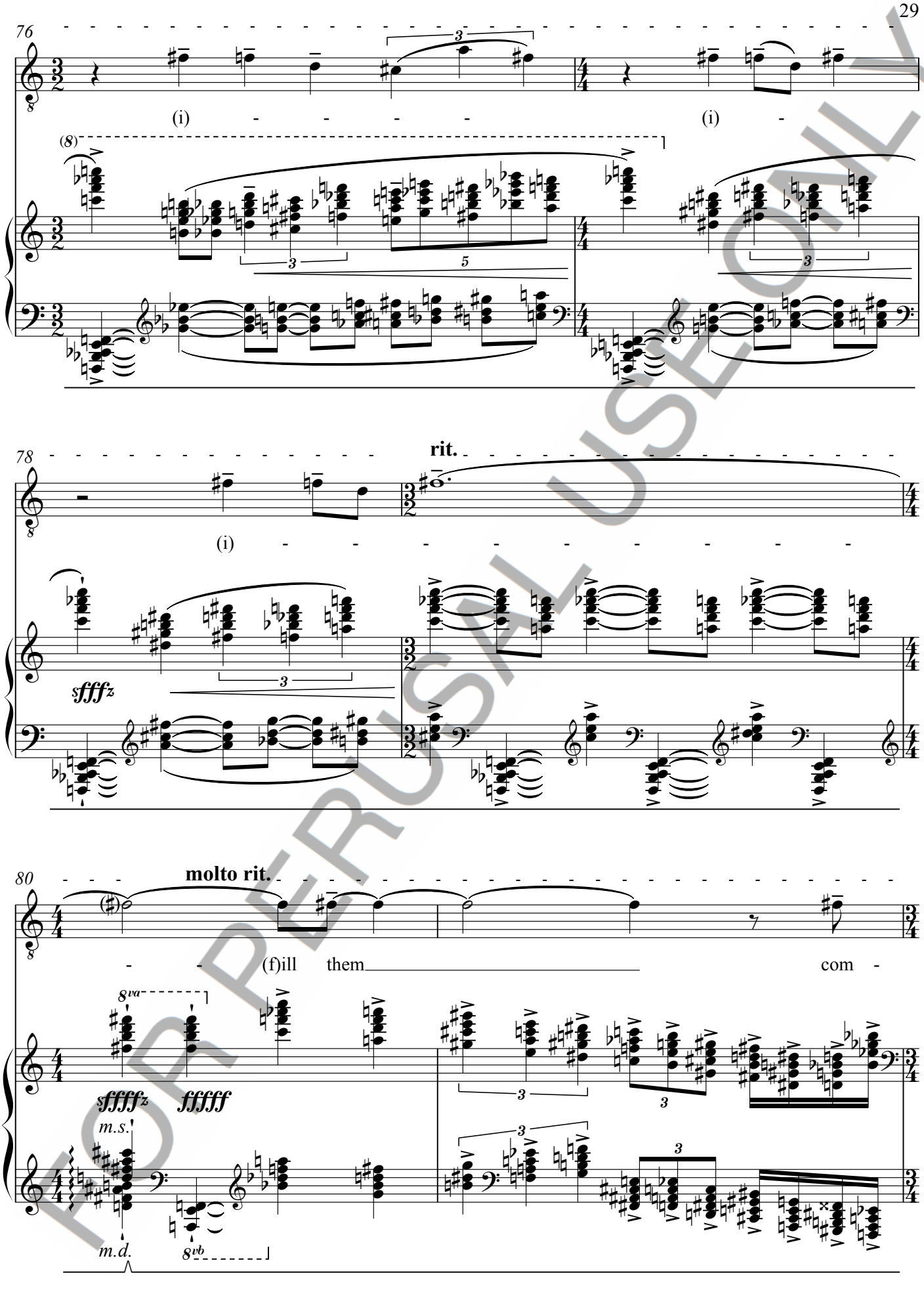

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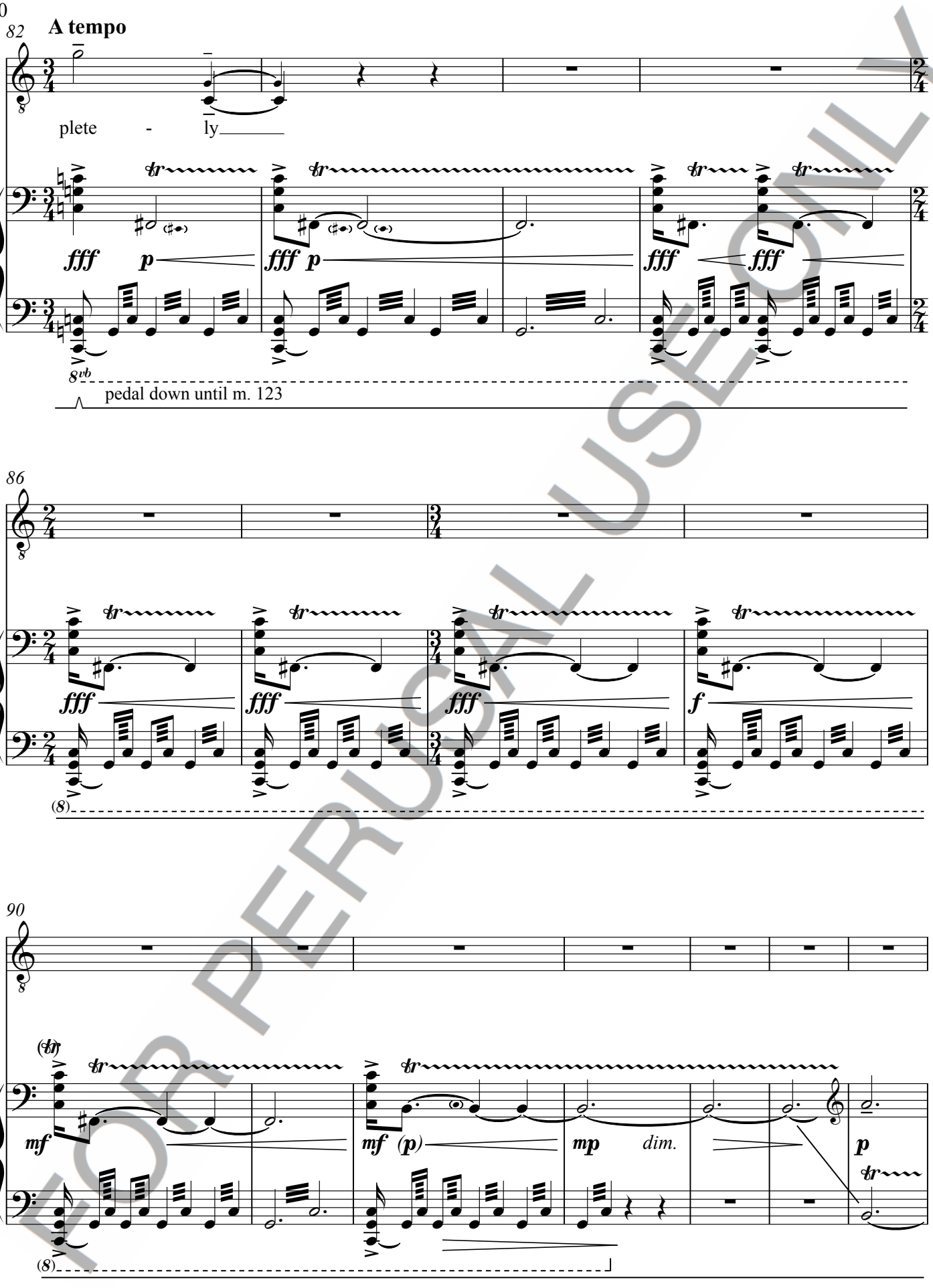

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poco rit., ad lib

97

p legato

mp

am I say-ing this out of en - vy?

8va

p

pp

rall. . . . .

accell. back to tempo

at each of these moments, a slowing down of the pattern, followed by a slight hesitation, with the downbeat emphasized in length, followed by a gradual return to original speed of the pattern.

104

I want no-thing more than what a tree wants

8va

ppp

rall. .

109

to wrap my - self in the fo- rest hid-den

accell...

p

p

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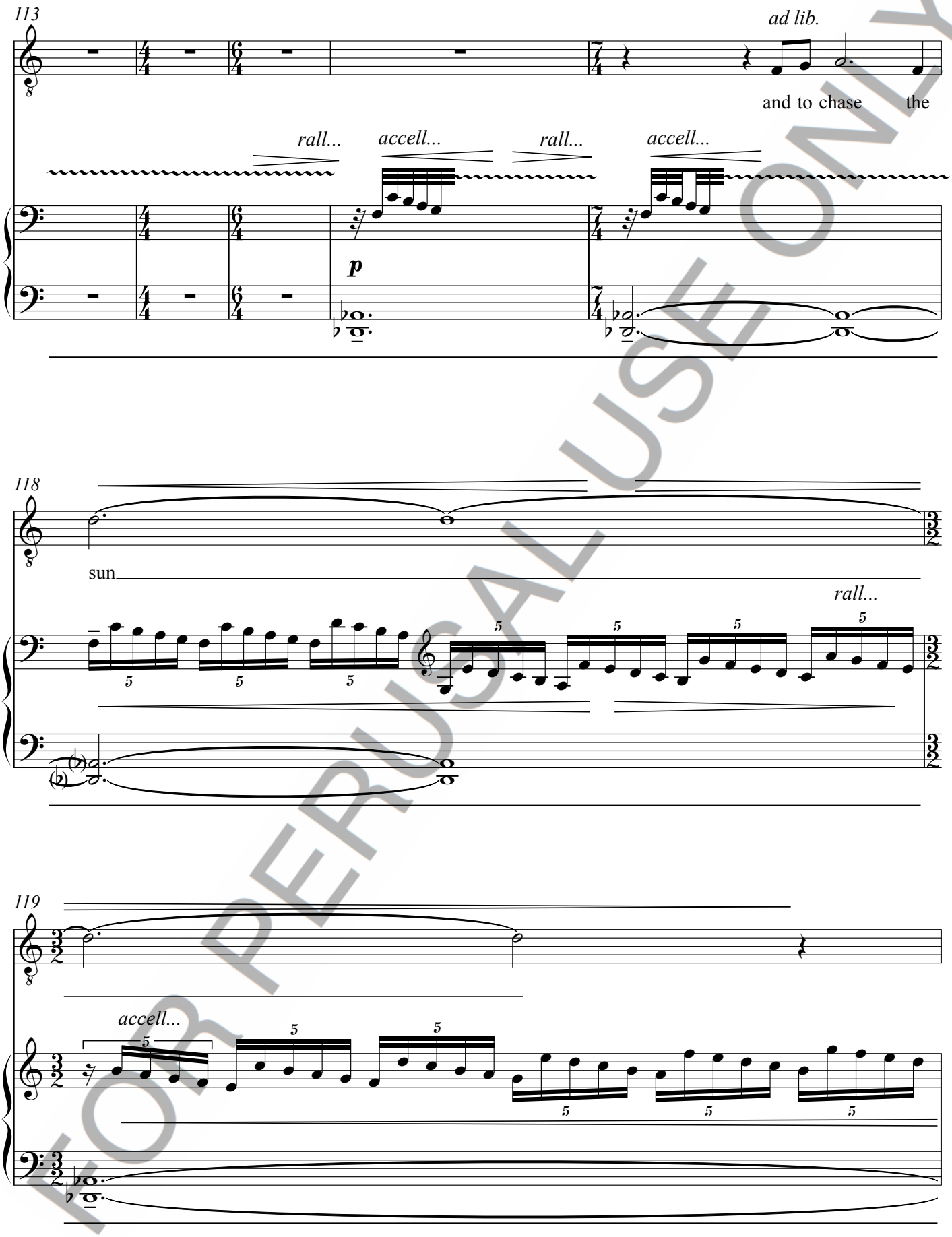

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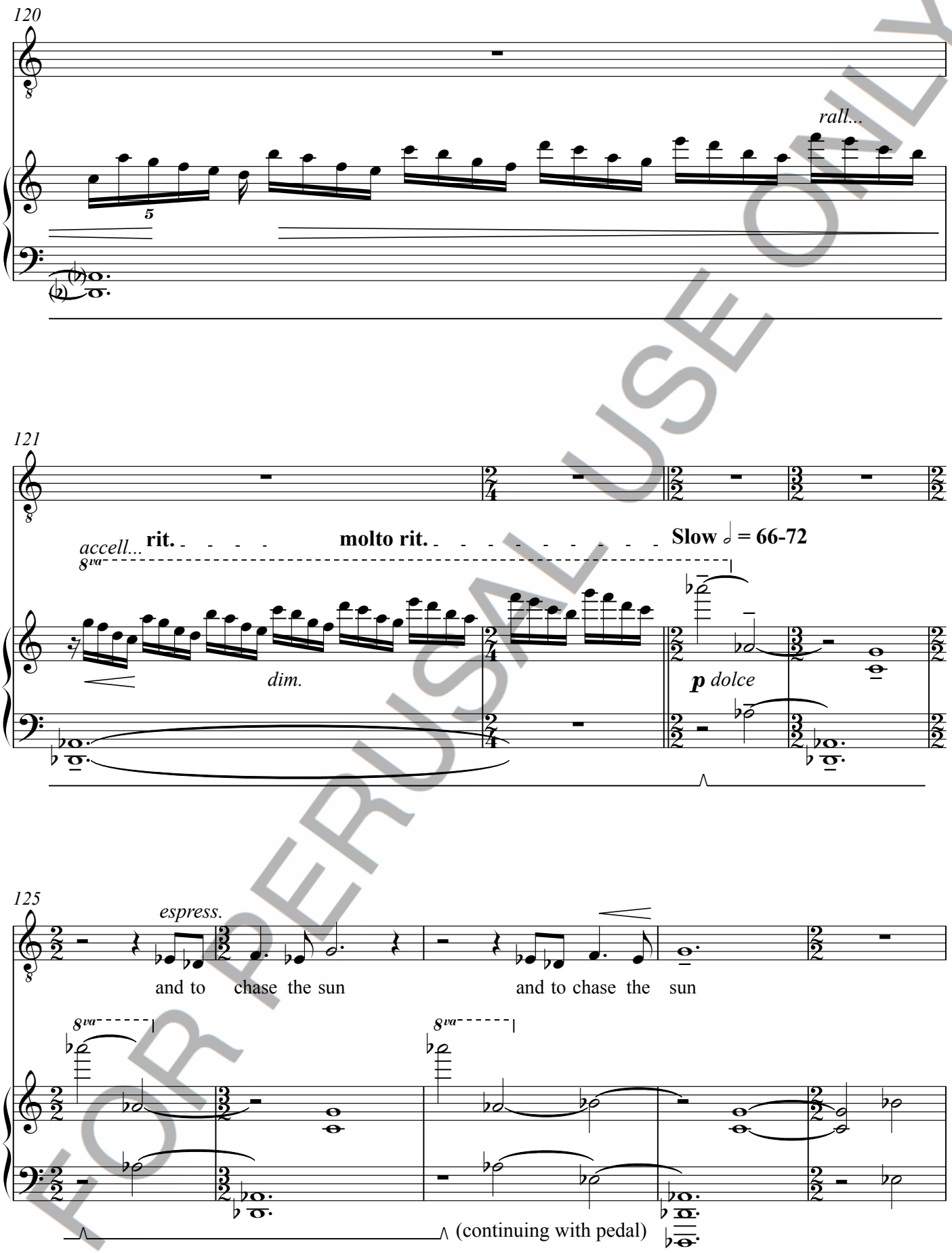

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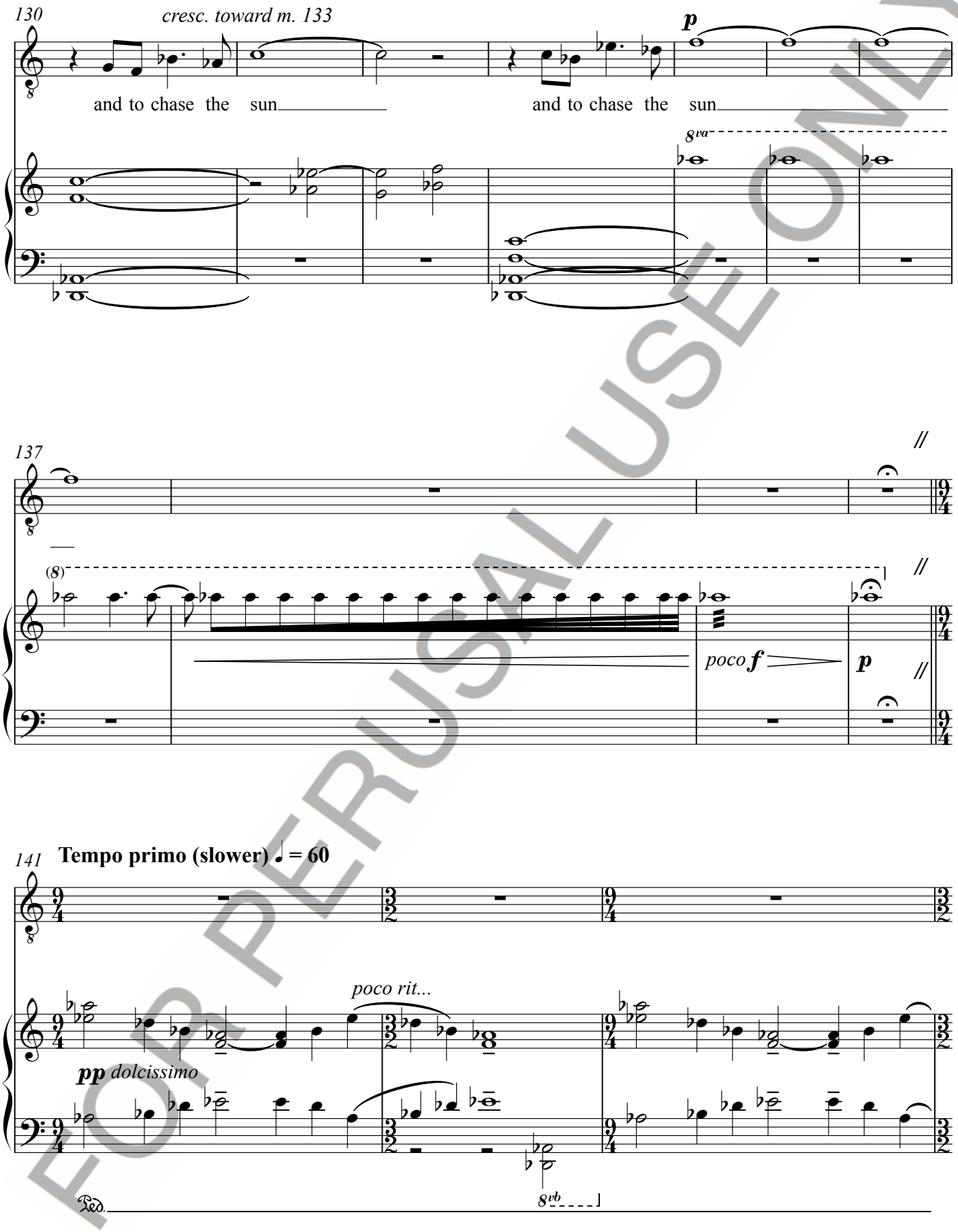

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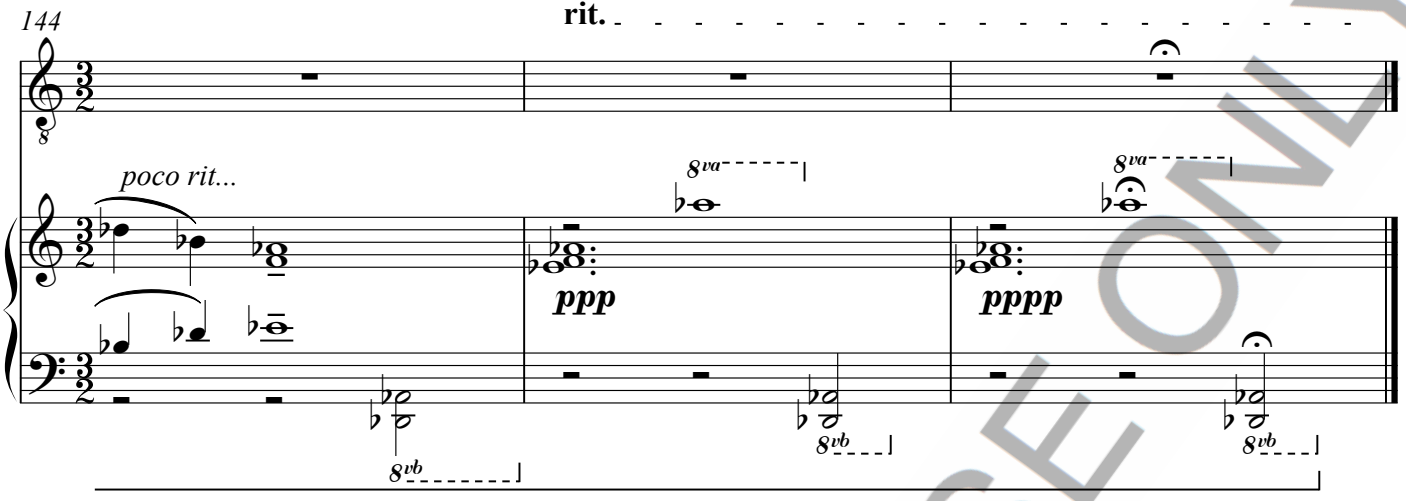

March/August

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