La Rinuncia

An opera in two acts

by

Richard L. Rose

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Composed in Chicago, Norman, and Santa Fe, May 20-July 4, 2010,
Final score completed September 28, 2010.

Summary:

The action takes place at a sacred Shrine of the Clouds between Montserrat and Mount Kailash. Act I is in the Pilgrims' Hostel in the early evening. Act II takes place the following morning, in the Labyrinth of high walls trellised in roses.

Norman Gykson, disappointed lover and heir to a multimillion dollar software business, has decided to give his fortune to the Order of Clouds and become a monk. His friend, Phil Norman, has accompanied him to the monastery, where he hopes that the rigorous two-year novitiate, now drawing to a close, will dissuade his friend. As the first scene opens, Norman returns to the hostel following his final day of testing by the Guestmaster of the Order. As Norman tells Phil about the battery of tests he has taken, a young American pilgrim and actress, Ipsama Cole, and her younger sister, Dolama, enter the lobby. Norman is immediately infatuated with Ipsi, who seems so much like himself in her appearance, serious religious intention, dietary regime, and interest in technology. Phil persuades Dolama to ask her sister to encourage his friend. Norman's feelings for Ipsi make him even more undecided about his prospective vocation and the complete renunciation it requires.

As Act II opens, Norman walks the Labyrinth in the early morning. As he meditates at one of the shrines, he hears Dolama and Phil, in the next aisle, talking about their conspiracy to interest him in Ipsi. He rounds the corner to confront them. Before Norman can reveal that he has heard their conversation, the three of them hear Ipsi and the Guestmaster talking in another aisle. Ipsi reports to the Guestmaster that Norman is now in love with her, according to his plan for the final ordeal of Norman's novitiate. Because Norman has not acted on his attraction to Ipsi, says the Master, he may now enter the Order of the Clouds. Hearing this, however, Norman no longer wants to join the Order. Deceived by the Guestmaster, humiliated by Ipsi, betrayed by his friend, he wants nothing to do with any of them. Phil tells him that his indecision about renunciation was

. . . sharing all lines and the quilted cover
of the Earth, now surveyed,
waiting to be remade.

—FRAMESHIFTS (vol.2, p.376)
(Quilt design by Mary Hobson)

AFTERWORD

Annunciations surround us. Attention to them reveals patterns in the world around us and inside us. Attention is always rewarded, but annunciations come on their own terms. Mary did not make a deal with Gabriel. Newton did not select his own spectrum. Proper attention requires the proper frame of reference. You do not watch the *chola* cactus grow without yourself slowing down. You don't see through the *sipapu* hole in the floor of a *kiva* without knowing that the character of the world can change so much that only a few survivors may rise into the new reality—the new frameshift.

My writing and music is about accepting annunciations, changing your frame of reference, and crossing thresholds into new realities. We cross thresholds at a child's birth and coming of age, at the death of a loved one, and in other moments of insight and

sacred encounter. *Annunciations,* my first musical work, was an oratorio about the angel's message to Mary. In my works, annunciations come in many forms: a crocodile's warning (*The Queen and the Crocodile*); a child's disappearance (*Shura*), a tattoo (*Hidden Moves and Hidden Faces)*, a frequency distribution (*Spearpoints Bright,* second story in *FRAMESHIFTS)*, a veteran's memories (*Amber*, a chamber opera), and even a virus that seems to have a message for its hosts (in the second volume of *FRAMESHIFTS)*.

Sometimes nature's annunciations must be mediated, as when James Hansen explained the frameshift of climate change to a Congressional committee or when Bill McKibben wrote his book, *Eaarth*—giving a new name to our altered planet. In *Marking Time*, a memoir, my reflections are mediated by the mountains, wildlife, and people of New Mexico, where I lived as an adolescent. Avery Crawley, the weather-prophet in *FRAMESHIFTS*, comments on the way things and places seem to hold our memories:

In some way, railing and cloud could be trusted;
They kept his memories, as did Ark and Salvage Yard.
These and his museums and Foxglove Center
Were his vessels for such memories . . .

Returning to New Mexico after more than forty years, I found that many places and objects still held memories. Annunciations surrounded me. Perhaps, like the teepee stone formations of Cochiti, the annunciations had been there all along. The poet Basho wrote:

Stillness—
soaking into the rocks,
the cicada's cries.

Were so many annunciations soaked up by the desert during forty years, or was I finally quiet enough to hear them?

—***Richard L. Rose***

Other works by Richard L. Rose:

FRAMESHIFTS? *Two volumes? What is it?*

It is literary fiction made of multiple genres united by theme and character. At first glance, it appears to be a story collection, beginning with a mystery; but look at the back and you find a philosophical poem. Between the covers are mysteries, suspense stories, literary fiction, science fiction, love stories, fictional memoirs and letters, adventure stories, dramatic dialogues, and a section of poetic narrative made of made of dozens of forms—sestinas, sonnets, *terza rima*, *droeg-kvaet,* prose poems, ballads.

One may read the stories and poems in any sequence, but as one reads, a novel emerges. Its narrative concerns a fictional community in Northern Virginia from the current time to a disturbing future of climatic and social upheavals. Both volumes are listed on Amazon in hard copy and in Kindle versions. Rose's book blog is http://www.frameshifts.com. To find or add to the reviews on Amazon, look for *Frameshifts* by Richard L. Rose. A sample of *Frameshifts,* the mystery story *Death Wears A Tricorn,* is also available in multiple ebook platforms.

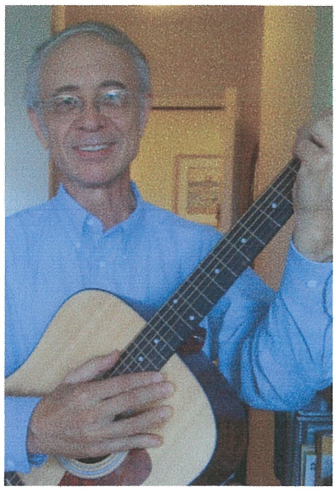
MARGINAL NOTES. Words and music, collected with personal papers, are on the website marginalnotesinwordsandmusic.org. Here find reference to the set of operas—*Annunciations, Amber, The People's Voice, The Books of Daniel, La Rinuncia,* and *The Profit of Doom*—as well as other works and information, including the sequel to *Frameshifts,* entitled *Hidden Moves and Hidden Faces* and information about works in progress, such as *Floats and Sinkers*, a poetry collection, *Marking Time,* a poetic memoir, and *The Fisher of the James,* a solo work retelling a Grimm Brothers' fairy tale about always wanting more than we have.

About Richard L. Rose

Richard L. Rose has retired from several careers, including teaching, medical laboratory work, environmental education and research, math and science supervision, and teaching science and science teaching methods in public schools and universities. After growing up "on the road" with a military family, described in the memoir *Marking Time,* he settled in Northern Virginia with his wife to raise two sons and follow his vocation of teaching and avocations of writing and musical composition.

Since retiring, he has produced a poetry collection, *Floats and Sinkers,* and a set of chamber operas, *Annunciations, The Books of Daniel, Amber, The People's Voice,* and *The Profit of Doom*. Following his wife's death and beginning a second marriage, he composed *La Rinuncia* and self-published the novel, *FRAMESHIFTS*, in 2011. All but the last of the operas were benefit concerts for groups like Amnesty, Habitat, and local charities. Another musical work, *The Fisher of the James,* on environmental concerns, and a set of stories, *Hidden Moves and Hidden Faces,* come from living in Richmond. The book and other projects are described on his website marginalnotesinwordsandmusic.org and book blog site, http://www.frameshifts.com. In his spare time, he collects rejection slips.

Recurrent themes are the transience of our lives and habitat and an insistence that we find effective ways to attend to this fact. By producing benefit concerts, reducing royalties, and recommending nonprofit organizations worthy of their attention, he invites readers to make their own creative responses. Perhaps readers of FRAMESHIFTS will be inspired to imagine and accomplish something positive for their communities. In writing, however, his intention is simply to tell a good story with interesting characters in surprising situations.



Libretto

PRELUDE

ACT I, SCENE 1.1 *During the prelude, the Shrine of the Clouds appears onstage as the sun sets behind nearby mountains and attendants light candles in the lobby of the Pilgrims' Hostel. The rising moon is visible through the large windows.*

ACT I, SCENE 1.2:

Phil and Norman enter the lobby of the Pilgrims' Hostel at the Shrine of the Clouds.

Phil: So many questions—

Norm: And now they're over.

Phil: They kept you day after day.

Norm: He must be certain.

Phil: *You* must be certain.

Norm: Now only another day—

Phil: To give yourself away!

Norm: So many questions—

Phil: So much to cover:

Norm: What caused my parents to drift—

Phil: What do you dream of—

Norm: Why am I making such a gift?

Phil: What secret urges,

Norm: Obsessive thoughts, self-purges—

Phil: Or secret lovers—

| occupy your time.
Norm | occupy my time.

And then he gave me—

Phil: The Master?

Norm: *another* batt'ry!

Phil: He handles your mental domain.

Norm: My psychosocial grip—

Phil: And every Freudian slip.

What was it today?

Norm: He said, "Imagine that you could find the perfect mate.

Describe her to me." Though I protested, he was firm.

I said, "I guess we would share in every trait—

Hopes, loves, yearnings.

Ipsama and her sister enter the lobby. Ipsama wears a novice's robe, like Norman's. Like him, she also carries a small black book, like a missal. Like him, she wears heavy, dark glasses, carries a key pad, and has another electronic device plugged into her ear. He speaks to Phil, but looks only at Ipsi. Phil and Dolama watch the other couple and then stare at each other.

We'd share a vision,

A common discipline, and mission;

Support each other,

Eat raw foods and butter—

Ipsama takes a carrot from her robe and takes a bite.

Drink filtered water,

Gaze at the moon—

Ipsama drinks bottled water as she stands at the window, looking at the moon. The chime sounds, calling the religious to prayer.

Perhaps, she—

Would even chant, as I do now,

"Not It, but Thou."

She stands behind a column. He moves to see her.

ACT 1, SCENE 1.3:

On their way to prayers at the Shrine, a line of religious, chanting "Not It, but Thou," passes through the lobby. Ipsama joins their chant.

ACT 1, SCENE 1.4:

Norman struggles to keep his eyes off Ipsi.

Norm: That life is over, that life of flash and flow.

Phil: Life stopped two years ago.

Norm: That life of grasping, earning, wanting, yearning.

The bliss I seek is losing self and wanting.

Phil: The Master liked that, I guess.

Norm: He said, "That's fine. May you discern
What you must learn
To use what you must lose."

Phil: Or else stay confused. (*He points to himself.*)

Norm: Again he said, "Describe her."
I said again, "In every way, like branch and leaf, like grapes and vine,
We'd hold each other, my heart in hers and hers in mine.
We'd keep a daily office, hear each other's prayer."

Phil: (*aside*) Perhaps *she* is the answer.

Norm: Anchored in each other,
Together, we'd be one."

Ipsi exits.

ACT I, SCENE 2.1

Norm: Then the Master said that I could go.
Training's ended, and my apprenticeship.

Phil: (*aside*) And our relationship.

Norm: Now I go to meditate and pray.

Phil: (*aside, looking at Dolama*) I think an answer's on the way.

Norman exits.

Pardon me, you are Americans and pilgrims?

Dol.: Ipsi's the pilgrim. It's her show.
I'm the audience. She's the show.
Ever since she danced on our dresser
And pranced as Beauty Queen,
I have been the audience.
She's the star of ev'ry scene.
|It's her show.

Phil: |It's her show.

Dol.: Are you a pilgrim?

Phil: Oh no, not me!

Dol.: Through all her boyfriends and husbands,
I've been her claqueur and confessor.
Her latest role's the Holy Sister.
Expenses paid, so why resist her?
Play pious pilgrim, take the bows:
My Ipsi's part, though short on vows,
Is long on head-shots and applause.
She even gave the Master pause.

Dolama looks Phil over.

You're not a pilgrim?

Phil: No, my friend's a novice, Norman Gykson,*
Of Gykson Software.

She nods.

You know the name?

Dol.: I know the name: Tables that set themselves,

Phil nods.

Phil: Floor-lamps that talk.
Millions he made in many ventures
Now fund his questing and adventures.

Dol.: He wants to be a monk?

Phil: This year.
He's been an herbalist, investment banker;
He even traveled on a tanker,
And was a husband.
Restless for devotion.

Dol.: |Restless for devotion.
|Restless for devotion

---

* Pronounced "geeksun."

Phil: He lived in igloos and yurts,
Left behind his suits and shirts,
To live the life of the mind,
And even was a father.
He also left that behind.
Restless for devotion.

Dol.: I'm sure he lost that notion.

Phil: Restless for devotion,
It didn't last a year.

Dol.: Perhaps he came too near
|to devotion.

Phil: |to devotion.

Dol.: And you?

Phil: His friend since childhood.

Dol.: You're his audience. *Phil nods.*

Phil: Two years he's been here
Trying to give it all away,
So he can give himself away.

Dol.: Restless
|for devotion.

Phil: |for devotion

But the Guestmaster doesn't let him.

Dol.: You know the Master?

Phil: Norman sees him ev'ry day.
Why, I could never say.

Dol.: Ipsi sees him ev'ry day.
|Why, I could never say.

Phil: |Why, I could never say.

We shadow greatness,
Their large lives and restlessness:
You and I, you and I.

Both: While they are rising,
We're compromising,
But, if in each other,
They find what they're after,
Dol.: We could be free.
|We could be free.
Phil: |We could be free.

You and me.
Dol.: You and me
Sainthood in making
Is slow in baking.
Phil: But raise the heat!
Dol.: Yes,
|Raise the heat!
Phil: |Raise the heat!

Surrender, devotion,
And loving emotion
Dol.: Require some heat.
|Require heat!
Phil: |Require heat!

If, from their shadows,
We guide them together—
You and I,
|You and I.
Dol.: |You and I.

Both: They'll warm to each other
And we will be free.
You and me.
You and me.

ACT I, SCENE 3.1

In the chapel, Norman prays with other novices members of the Order.

All: Not it, but Thou.

Master: In perfect union, leave all inquiring,
Leave all desiring behind.
Know nothing worldly.
Drive greed, self-promoting,
Grasping, and wanting
Far from your mind.

Norm.(*and other novices)*:
I've been enough that me.
He wandered from my name.
His living used my holy flame.
I've been enough that me.

Norm.: |I've been enough that me.
|Release him. Leave me none.
|And being none,
|I'll be at one
|With all that's said to last.
|I've been enough that me.
Chor.: |Not It, but Thou.

All exit except for Norman. Ipsi, unseen by Norman, stands upstage right. Unseen by Ipsi or Norman, Dolama watches both of them from upstage left.

Norm.: That me—that me…
And yet,
Yet, in a moment,
In just a glance at her face,
All of my plans vanished away.
A perfect union would take my all—
Which I no longer possess
Now that I've seen her face.
Like a flawless program code, so serene,

She turns me 'round as if a ship at sea.
The divine life I came here to seek
Was given in a moment in her face.
In just a moment, I learned more
Than two years of chanting and praying and study could teach.
The life of calm order I've sought for is now in my reach.

But now, I've seen her.
As if dreaming, I have seen her.
She meets ev'ry spec.
I detailed ev'ry flow, constraint, and purpose.
She passed ev'ry check.
Ideal form, somehow now a real form,
Like an empty heart, now fills and beats.
I've seen her.
As if dreaming, I have seen her,
But we must not meet.

Norman exits stage right. Ipsi comes center stage. Her voice draws Norman back onstage, but he does not approach her.

Ipsi: The divine road,
Like a well-defined code,
Dispels ev'ry doubt;
Secure, ev'ry moment, ev'ry meeting,
Within and without.
I saw him, only for a moment.
A moment,
We were isomorphic
As programmed co-events.
We're brought here for this special moment

All happened as was meant.

Norman almost goes to her, but restrains himself, and exits. Ipsi exits stage left. Dolama exits last, and the curtain goes down on the first Act.

ACT 2, PRELUDE

The curtain rises on the Labyrinth, a maze with tall rose hedges between the paths. Three parallel paths open downstage, visible to the audience but not visible to the players walking on them, who only see their own aisles. Lighting during the Prelude portrays dawn and a small cloudburst. Norman, covering his head during the shower, is walking in the aisle on stage left. Later in the Act, Dolama and Phil come down the middle aisle and the Guestmaster and Ipsi come down the aisle on stage right. Norman appears as a dark figure far upstage at the end of the aisle, his head covered during the downpour. He slowly walks downstage. Norman uncovers his head as the Prelude ends and the lights come up.

ACT 2, SCENE 1.1

Norm.: Dawn, and vigil's end,
Droplets hang from branches.
Shall I lose love again?
Love—if it is love.

Gone are wind and rain:
Time for making choices.
I hear so many voices—
Some distant, some at hand.
So many paths and choices:
Who shall command?

To sacrifice—to know the price—
I should be mine, but I am not my own.
I seem to be a thing combined

Of dreams and aspirations,
And flaws, in iterations
Like bad code.
Which path? Which road?

ACT II, SCENE 2

Dolama brings Phil down the middle aisle of the Labyrinth. Norman listens from the other side of the hedge.

Dol.: Who knows where the path goes?

Phil: Can we stop here now?

Dol.: Yes, we're close enough now,
Like bees lost in a rose.

Phil: Alone enough for you?

Dol.: *(She nods, moving closer to him.)*
For what I want to do.

Phil: So, tell me what they said.

Dol.: Ipsi and the geek—

Phil.: Norman, my . . . friend.

Dol.: Oh, that! Well, Ipsi fell.

Phil.: And he fell for her?

Dol.: And I fell for—
She touches his arm. He backs away.

Phil: You took her to prayers?

Dol.: As you said to—
Norman says, "Oh!"

Dol.: What's that?

Phil: Perhaps it's your bees.

Dol.: Lost in the scent.

Phil: And after the monks went?

Dol.: Norman stayed behind.

Phil.: As usual.

He's wrestling, always restless to find—

Dol.: Someone—

Phil: Or something

Dol.: |for his devotion.
|for his devotion.

Phil: He wrestles with himself,
Keeps vigil through the night,
To find a worthy aim—

Dol.: Or worthy one—

Phil: Whom he can give everything.
Everything.

Dol.: But always he returns
To the chatter in his mind,
Where so little passion burns.
But maybe, with Ipsi
He's fin'lly found his path to love.

Phil.: No string to follow out,
He wrestles in his dreams
But stays . . .

Dol.: He seeks to lose himself
But stays within his mental maze.

Phil: If he loves her, then our way is clear.

Dol.: They fit like two cogs in a gear.
The chanting monks filed out,
And Ipsi matched her prayer to his:
Two dweebs checking off their specs
Like a stock clerk and mechanic.

Phil: What did Norman do?

Dol.: Froze, then ran away.

Phil.: Then he loves her.

Phil.: |And we can return to Pittsburgh and recover.
Dol.: |This is a sign. This is a token. *(She pauses.)* Pittsburgh?

Phil: As we have before.

Dol.: As you have before?

Phil: Norman and I will be as we were before.

Dol.: You've done all this before?

Phil: Her absence will convince him.

Dol.: Nothing? Nothing?

Phil: |There is nothing more
Dol.: |No word or token? There is nothing more?

ACT II, SCENE 3 FINALE

Norman comes around the corner of the hedge to confront Phil and Dolama.

Norm.: What kind of friend—

Phil: Norman—

Dol.: Nothing more? Like it was before.

Phil: Norman.

Norm.: What kind of friend?

They hear the Guestmaster in the next aisle.

Master: Seek perfect union.

Phil: The master!

Norm.: There will be no union.

Dol.: As we were before, there is nothing more.

Master: |Seek nothing more.
Phil: |Norman, can't you see? Nothing more?
Norm.: |Not here, not with you: Nothing more.
Dol.: |Nothing more.

The three players in the middle aisle are all surprised to hear Ipsi join the Master.

Ipsi: Here I am, Master, as you bid me.

Phil: |Ipsi!
Norm.: |Ipsi!
Dol.: |Ipsi!
Master: |Ipsi,
Come, my child, and report.

Ipsi: As we rehearsed it, I performed it.
I used ev'ry line.
I think it was one of my best shows.
One of my best shows.

Master: And no one knows?

Ipsi: Not even my sister.

Master: What did the novice do?

Ipsi: He wanted me, but he fled me.

Master: Then his ordeal has ended:
Desiring and inquiring done,
Leaving quiet behind.
He must not see you again. Are you ready?

Ipsi: We're packed and ready.
I've a booking in Scranton.
Not so sweet a gig as this one,
But it's so isolated here.
I need my cell phone and my daily soaps.

Master: He must not see you again.

Ipsi: No problem! He doesn't interest me.
Those techie types will push you in some moldy routine.
No fun there!
I like to move from scene to scene.

Dol.: (*aside*) |And Ipsi always must be seen.

Master: |You must not be seen.

Dolama, Phil, and Norman come around the hedge to confront the Master and Ipsi, center stage.

Dol.: |Ipsi, take your bows!
Phil: |Norman takes no vows!

Norm.: To whom would I make them?

Norman turns to each of them.
A faithless friend?
A false guide?
A face that's just a mask?
My specifications were all met
In two, deep brown eyes.
These, and friendship,
And sage ministrations
Are only betrayals and lies.

Norm.: Though you want to be sure
Your intentions are pure,
You should think twice
About sacrifice.
To give up what you love
For some promise above
Is to pay a dangerous price.

For the argument's slim,
Too cock-eyed for a shim;
Love is giving,
Not sacrifice.

You think the divine path is renunciation,
But, for me, it's acceptance of our situation:

What if I lose all prospects?
What if some people talk?
You are the one I longed for.
You are the path I walked.

Dol.: (*She looks at Phil, then turns away.*)

He was the one I'd hoped for,
To live, and love, and be free.
Now all's the same as before.
This always happens to me.

Master: It is ever thus with love:
Thou, not it or me.
Thou, only Thou,
Here, and above;
Beyond all we know and see.

Ipsi: (*pointing to the gate out of the Labyrinth)*

What is all this chatter about paths and knowing?
There is the exit. It is time to be going.

She opens to gate and beckons Dolama. Norman looks at her and turns away.

Norm.: I should have stayed with machine code.
No vows required, only rules.

Master: Not It, but Thou:

Norm.: No hyperlink ever betrayed me.

Dol.: |He was the one.
Phil.: |You were the one.
Master: |Perfect union.

Norm.: No pixel ever made me a fool.

He watches Ipsi and Dolama go through the gate.

|I've seen her. Here ends my path to knowing.
Both sisters: |Sister, here's the exit. Now it's time to be going.
Master: |Thou, beyond all knowing.
Phil: |You were the path I walked to knowing.

The sisters and Master exit.

Phil: As you struggled to give,
You forgot how to live.

It's really quite simple, my dear.
Giving over to love,
You forget what's above.
It's enough that your loved one be near.

Norman turns away from Phil and stares into the Labyrinth.

You are the one I longed for.
You are the path I walked.
Now, for your sake, I leave you,
Renounce you to let you grow.

Will it be now or tomorrow?
When you find love, you will know.
What seems sacrifice to others
Is joy and food and drink.
Follow the path you long for.
Don't care what others think.

Norman re-enters the Labyrinth and disappears. The lights begin to dim.

You were the one I longed for.
You were the path I walked.

Phil watches Norman disappear, then turns back to the audience.

You were the one I longed for.
You were the path I walked.

He was the one I longed for.
He was the path I walked.

Lights out. Curtain.

FINE

La Rinuncia

An Opera or Musical in two acts

Composed in Chicago, Norman, and Santa Fe, May 20- July 4, 2010
Score completed in final form on September 28, 2010

Richard L. Rose (2010)

Summary

The action occurs at the Sacred Shrine of the Clouds between Montserrat and Mount Kailash. Act I is in the Pilgrims' Hostel in the early evening. Act II takes place the following morning, in the Labyrinth of high walls trellised in roses.

Norman Gykson, disappointed lover and founder of a multimillion dollar software business, has decided to give his fortune to the Order of Clouds and become a monk. His friend, Phil Norman, has accompanied him to the monastery, where he hopes that the rigorous two-year novitiate, now drawing to a close, will dissuade his friend. As the first scene opens, Norman returns to the hosel after his final day of testing by the Guestmaster of the Order. As Norman tells Phil about the battery of tests he has taken, a young American pilgrim and actress, Ipsama Cole, and her younger sister, Dolama, enter the lobby. Norman is immediately infatuated with Ipsi, who seems so much like himself in her appearance, serious religious intention. dietary regime, and interest in technology. Phil persuades Dolama to ask her sister to encourage his friend. Norman's feelings for Ipsi make him even more undecided about his prospective vocation and the complete renunciation it requires.

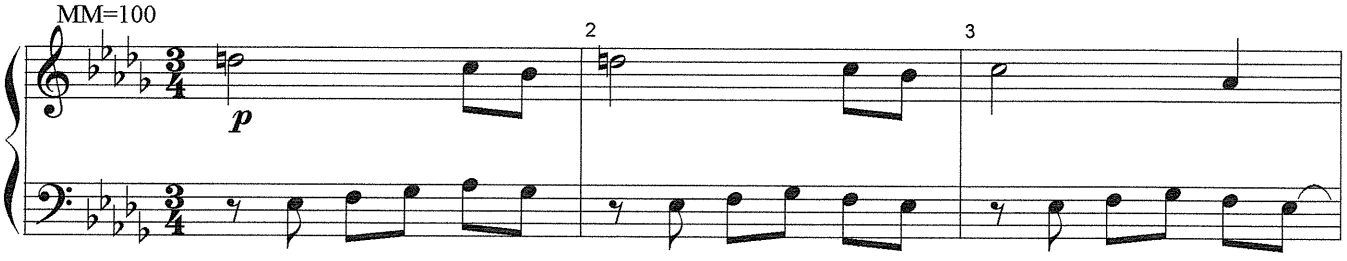
As Act II opens, Norman walks the Labyrinth in the early morning. As he meditates at one of the shrines, he hears Dolama and Phil in the next aisle, talking about their conspiracy to interest him in Ipsi. He rounds the corner to confront them, but then the three of them hear Ipsi and the Guestmaster talking in another aisle. Ipsi reports to the Guestmaster that Norman is now in love with her, according to his plan for the final ordeal of Norman's novitiate. Because Norman did not act upon his attraction to Ipsi, says the Master, he may now enter the Order of the Clouds. Hearing this, however, Norman no longer wants to join the Order. Deceived by the Guestmaster, humiliated by Ipsi, betrayed by his friend, he wants nothing to do with any of them. Phil tells him that his indecision about renunciation was misplaced. What appears to others as sacrifice and self-denial is simply an act of acceptance by a lover. What Norman needs to decide is what--or whom--he loves. One accepts anything if one can be near the loved one, the object of one's devotion. Norman can only learn this for himself; therefore, Phil must leave him. In saying this, Phil reveals his feeling for Norman and disappoints Dolama, who had begun to hope that she might leave her starlet sister. All exit on different paths.

Characters

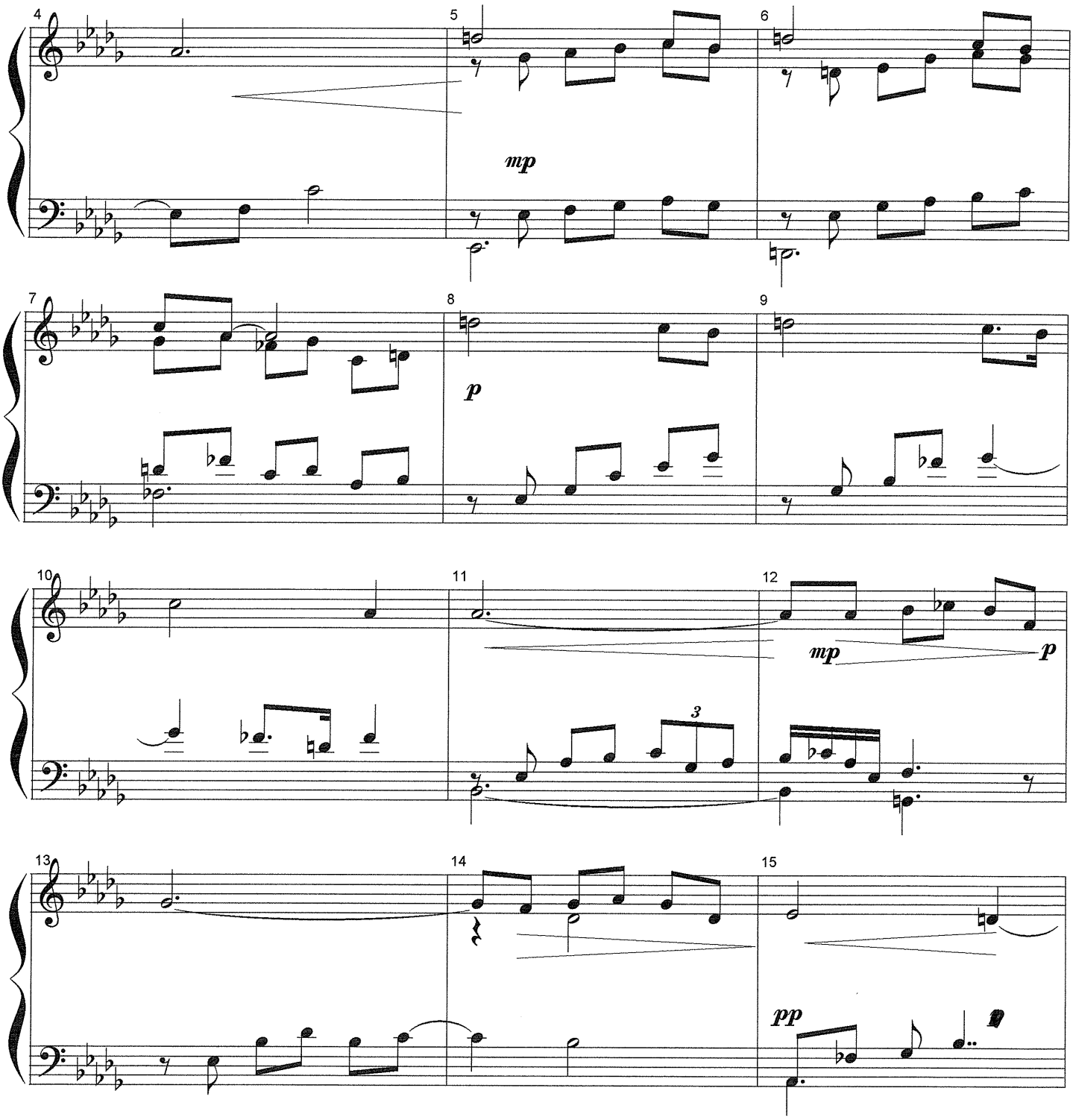
Norman Gykson	(Baritono, A2-D4) Software Businessman, Novice in the Order of Clouds
Phil Norman	(Tenore, C3-G4) Norman's business colleague and friend
The Guestmaster of the Order of Clouds	(Basso, C2-C4) Norman's spiritual guide
Ipsama Cole	(Soprano, C4-G5) Actress
Dolama Cole	(Mezzo-soprano, A3-C5) Younger sister of Ipsama

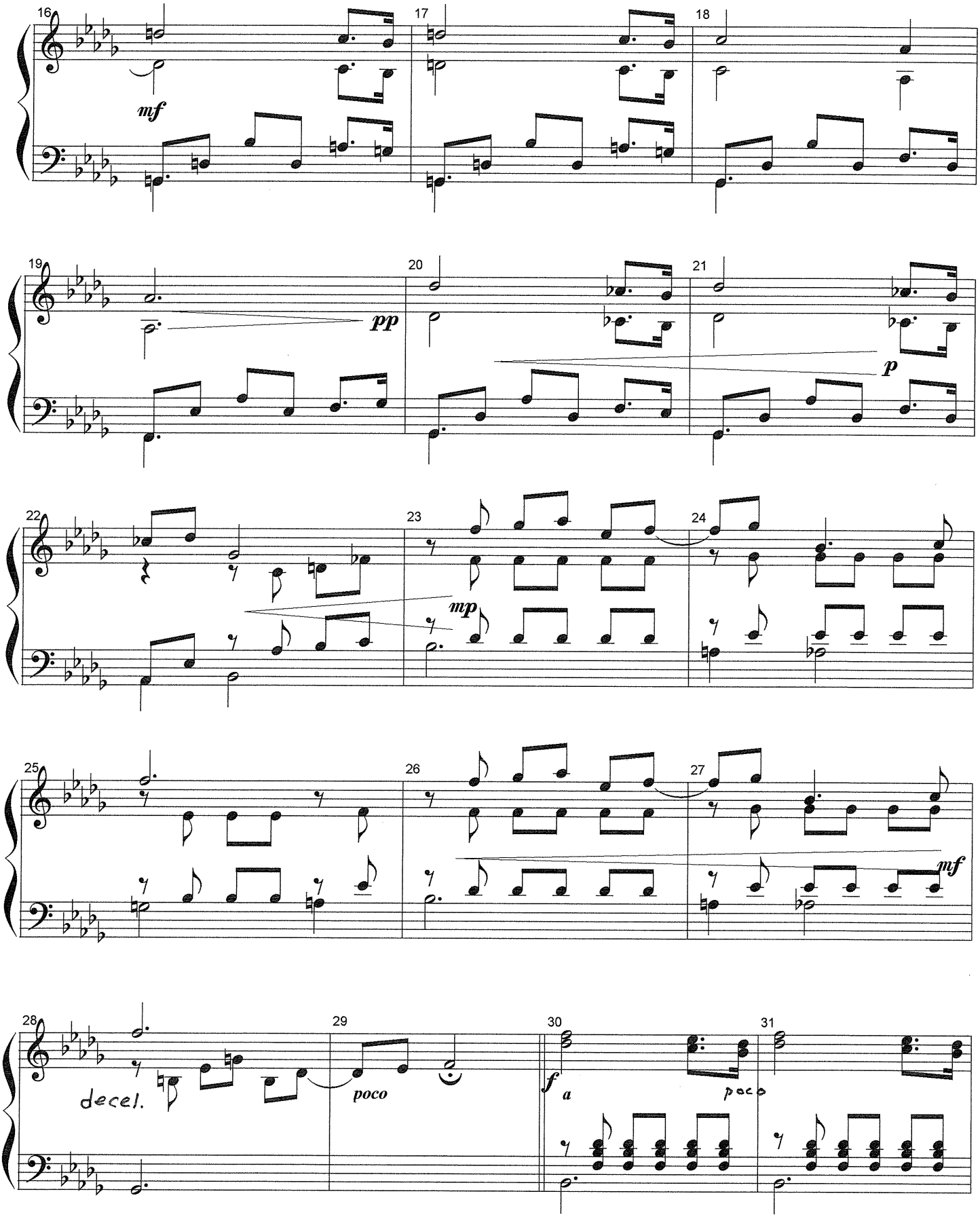
Chorus of the religious from the Shrine of the Clouds

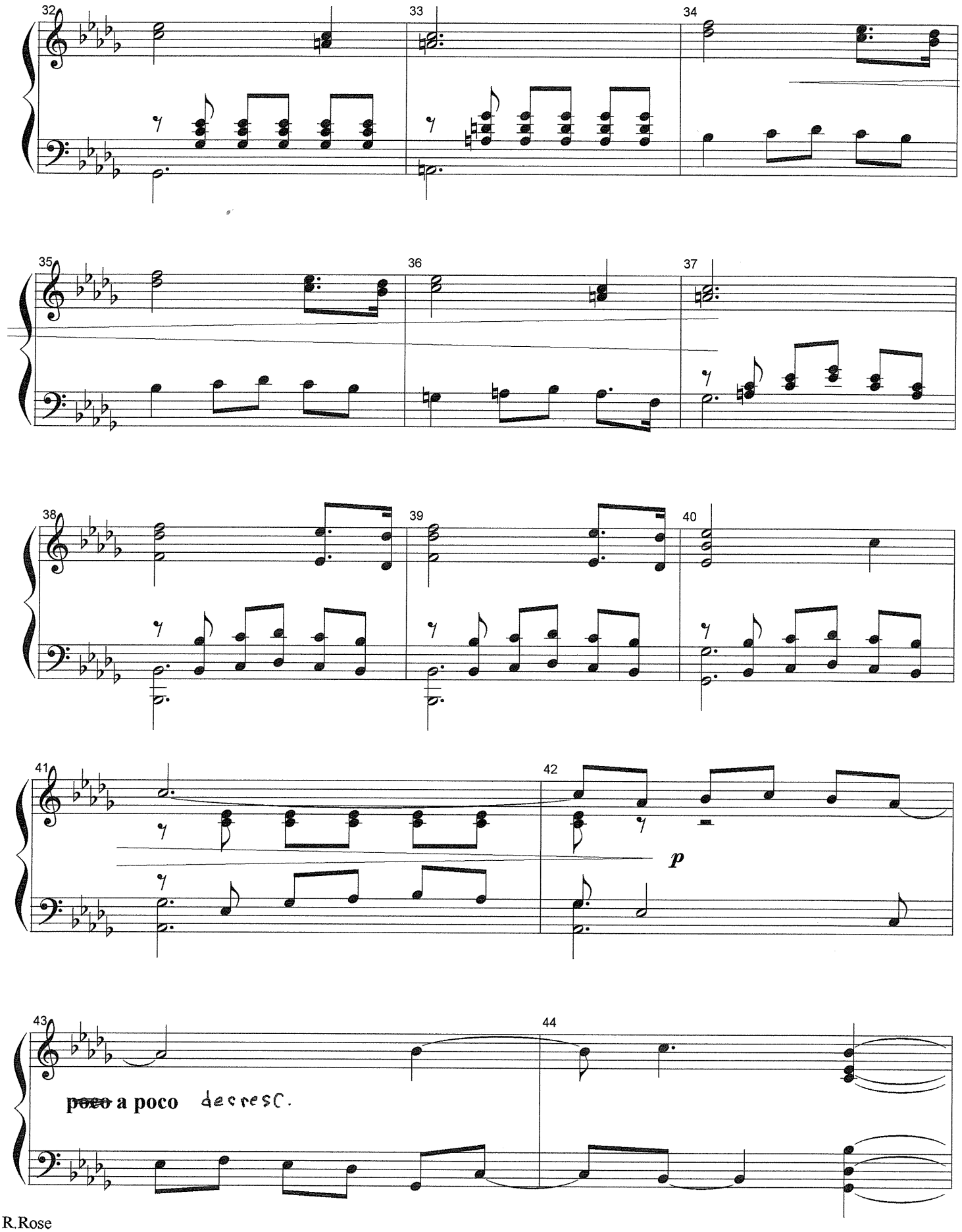
PRELUDE

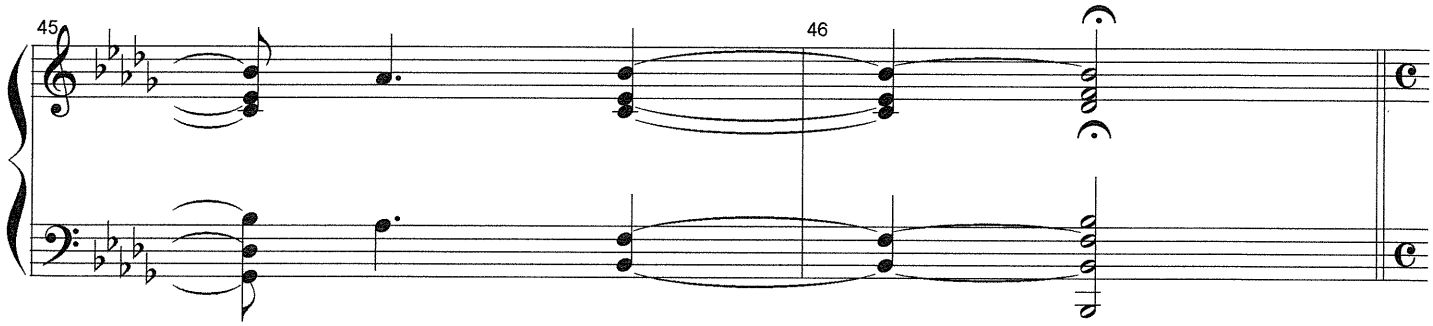


During the prelude,The Shrine of the Clouds appears onstage as the sun sets behind nearby mountains and attendants light candles in the lobby of the Pilgrims' Hostel. The rising moon is visible through large windows.



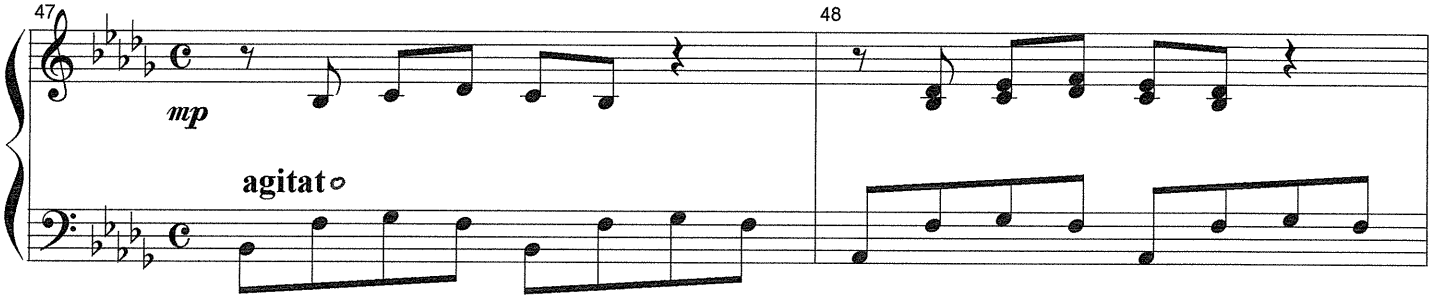

16
17
18
mf
19
20
21
pp
p
22
23
24
mp
25
26
27
mf
28
29
30
31
decel.
poco
f
a
poco

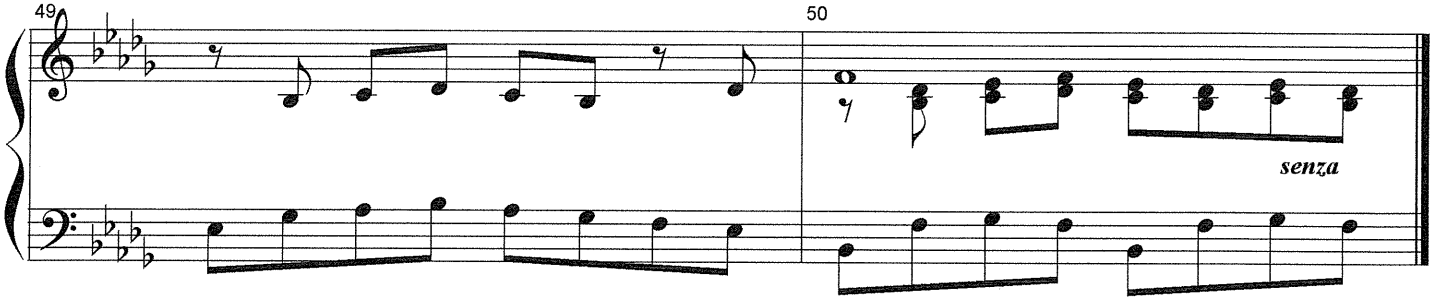

32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
p
43
44
~~poco~~ a poco decresc.



Phil and Norman enter the lobby of the Pilgrims' Hostel.

MM=120

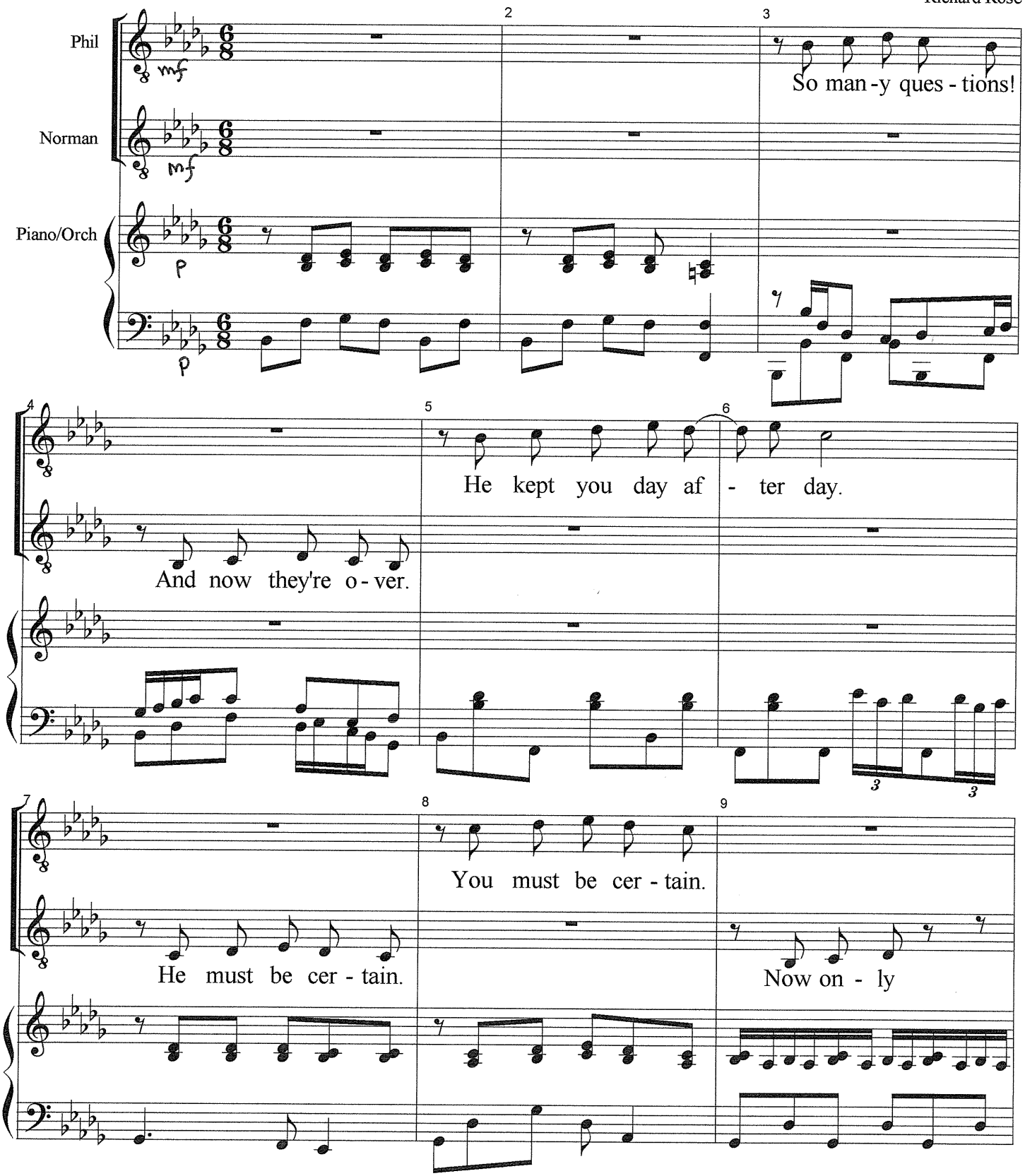




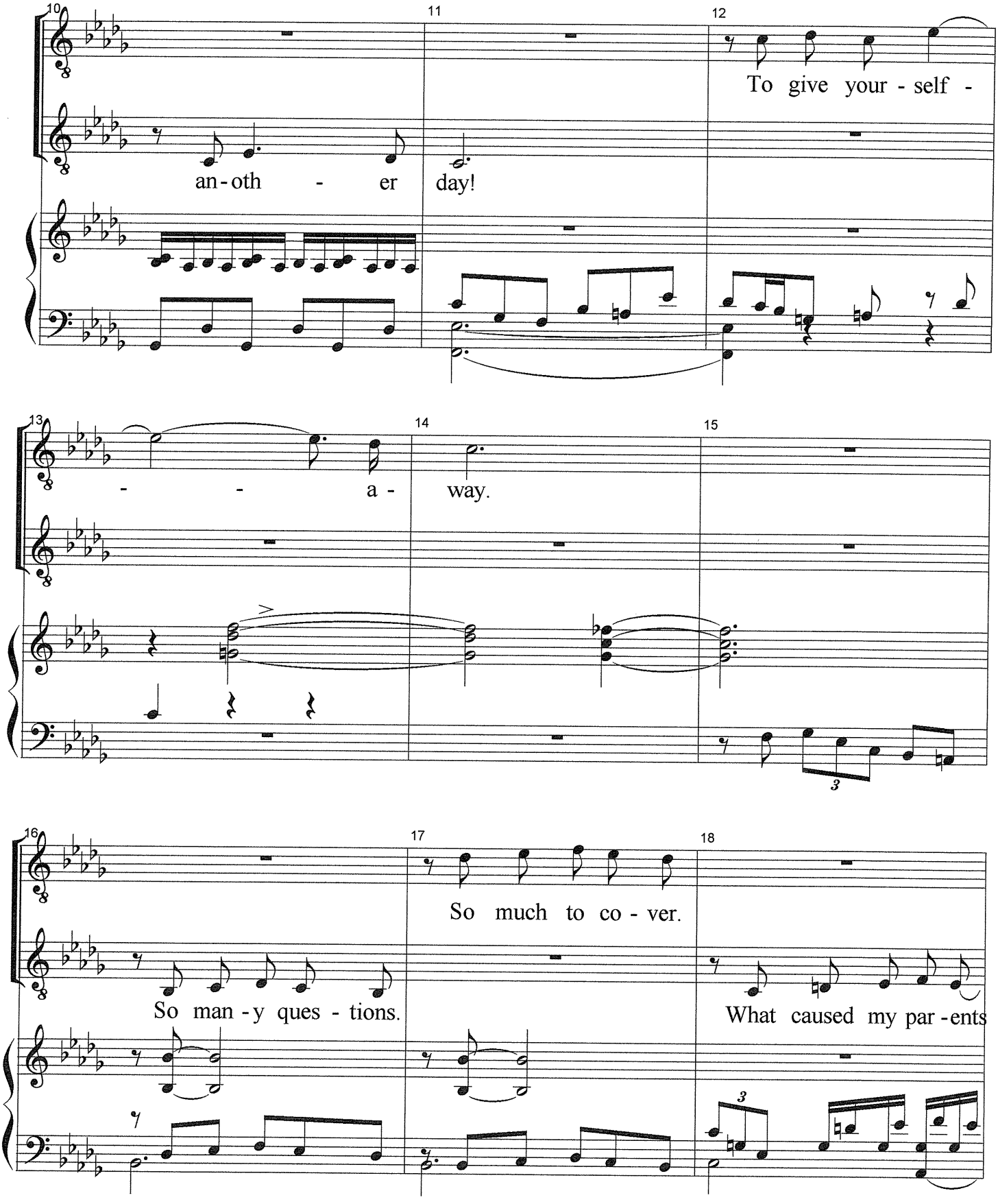
La Rinuncia
Act 1 Scene 1.2

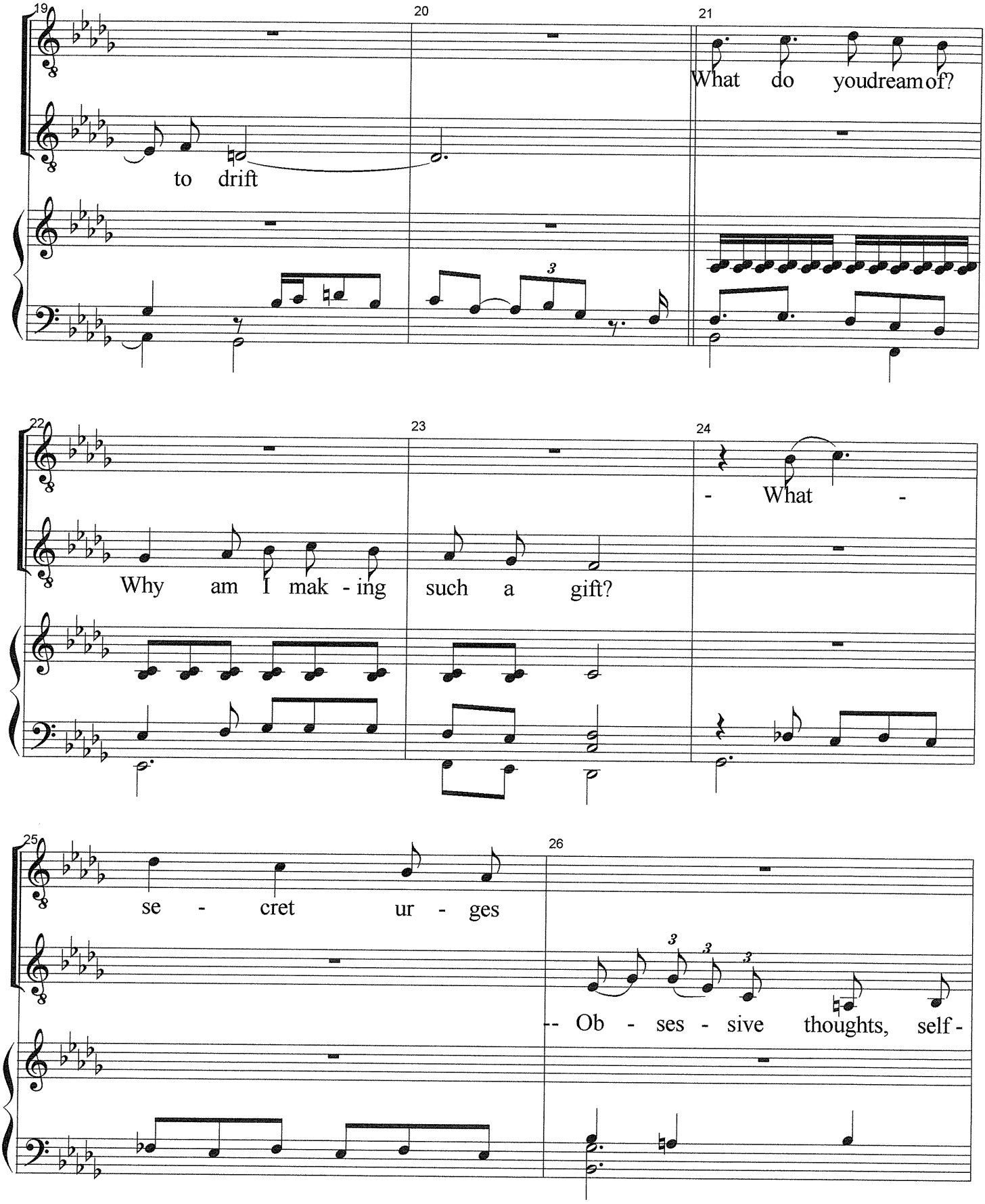
MM=80

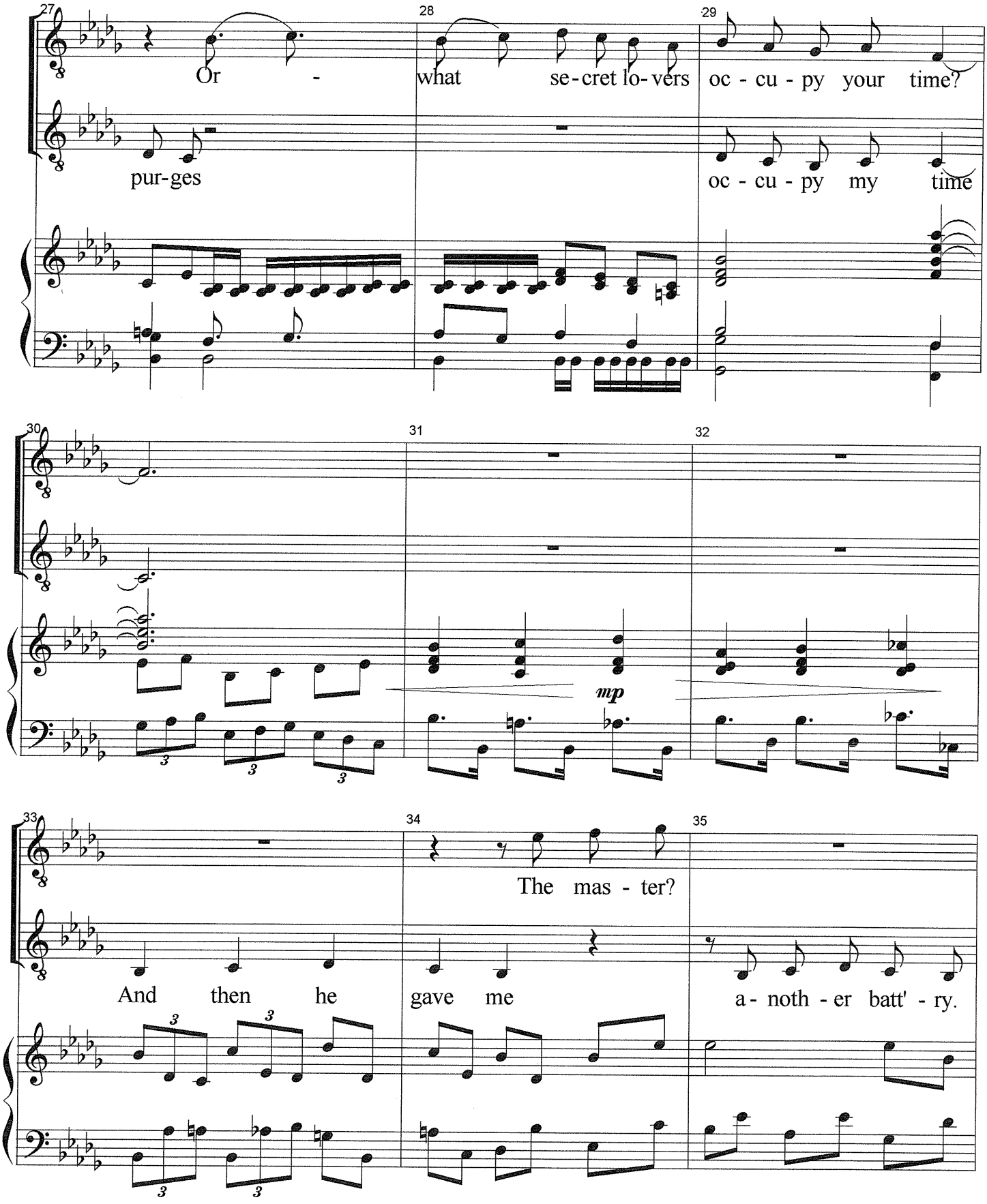
Richard Rose

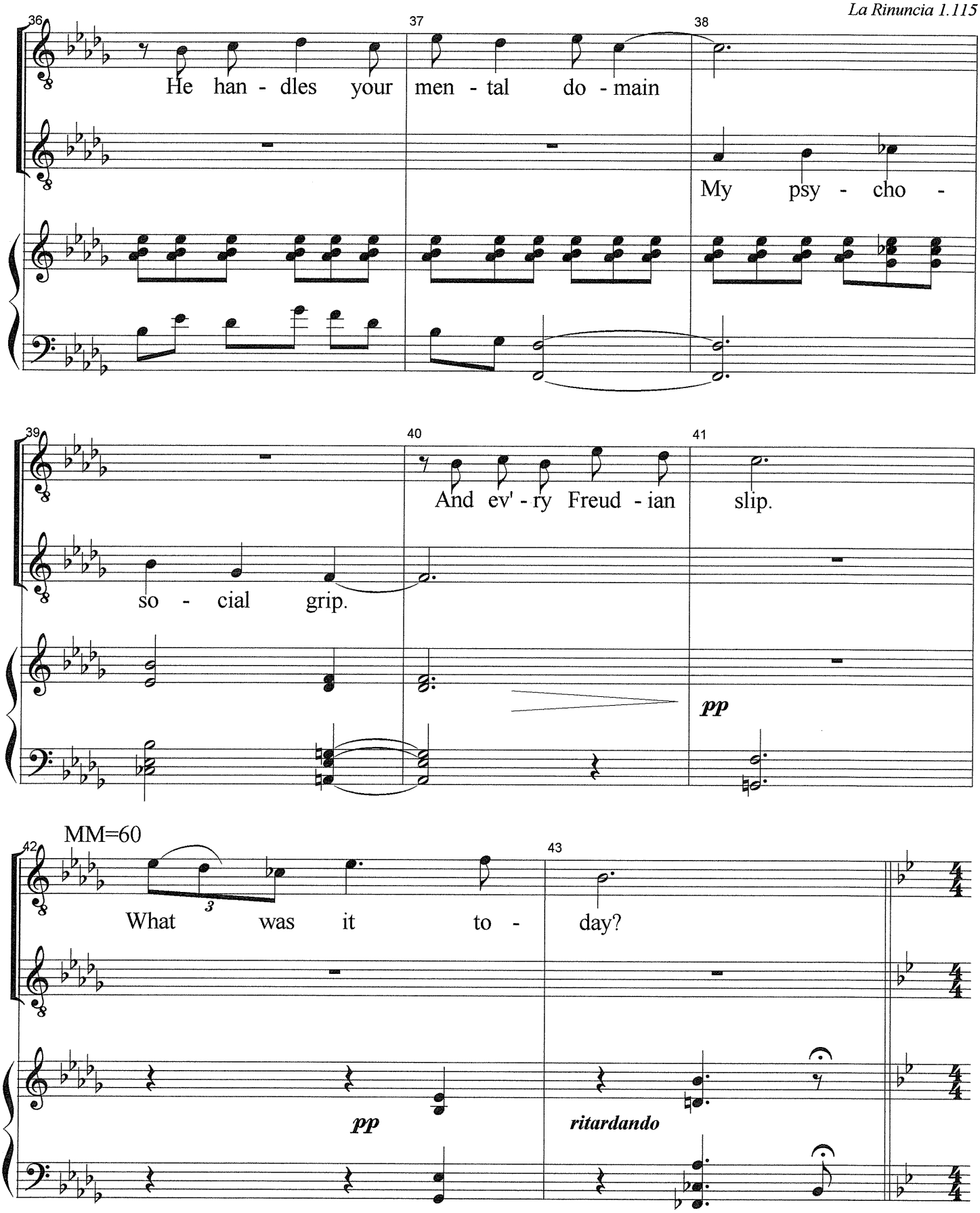


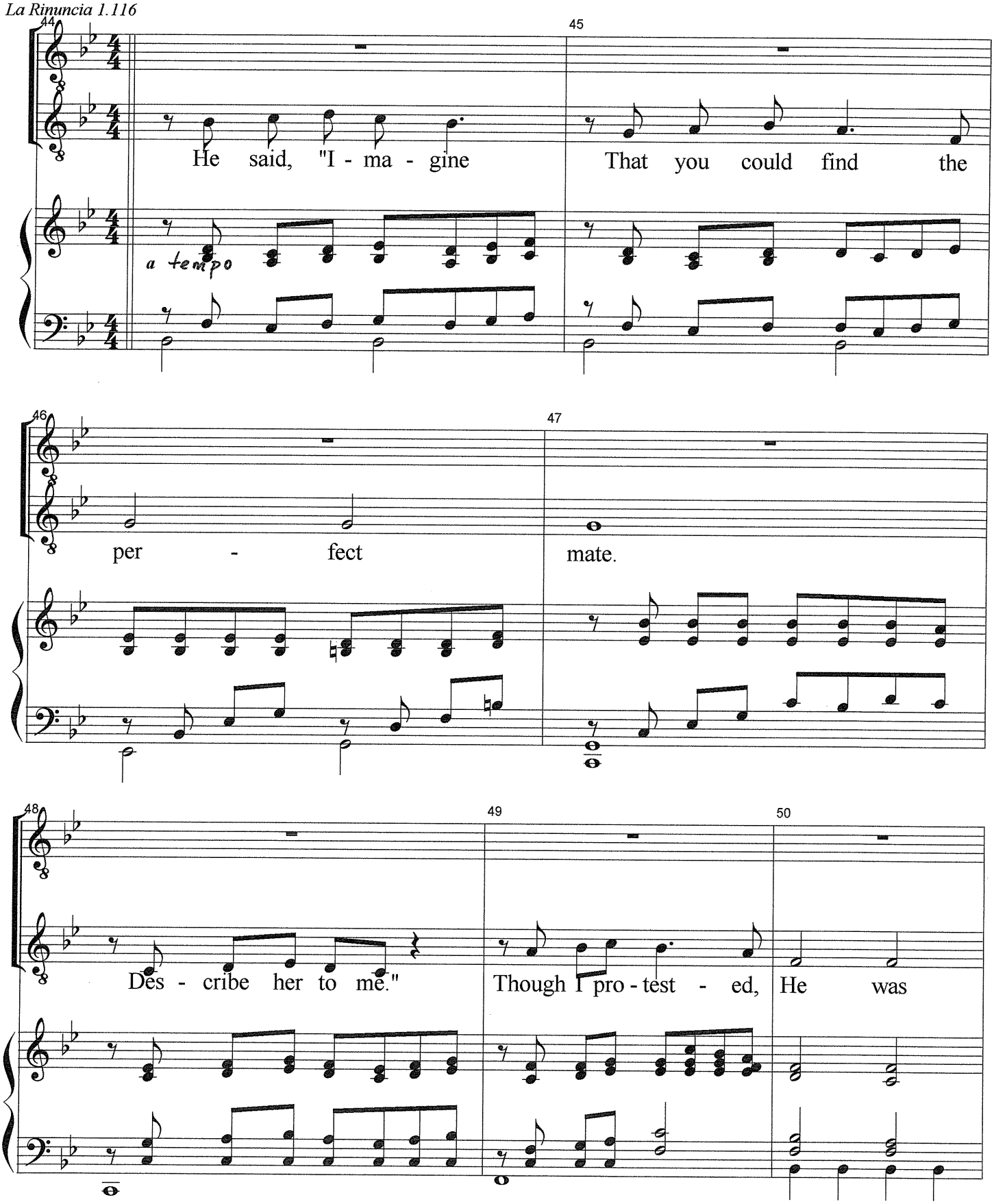
c 2010

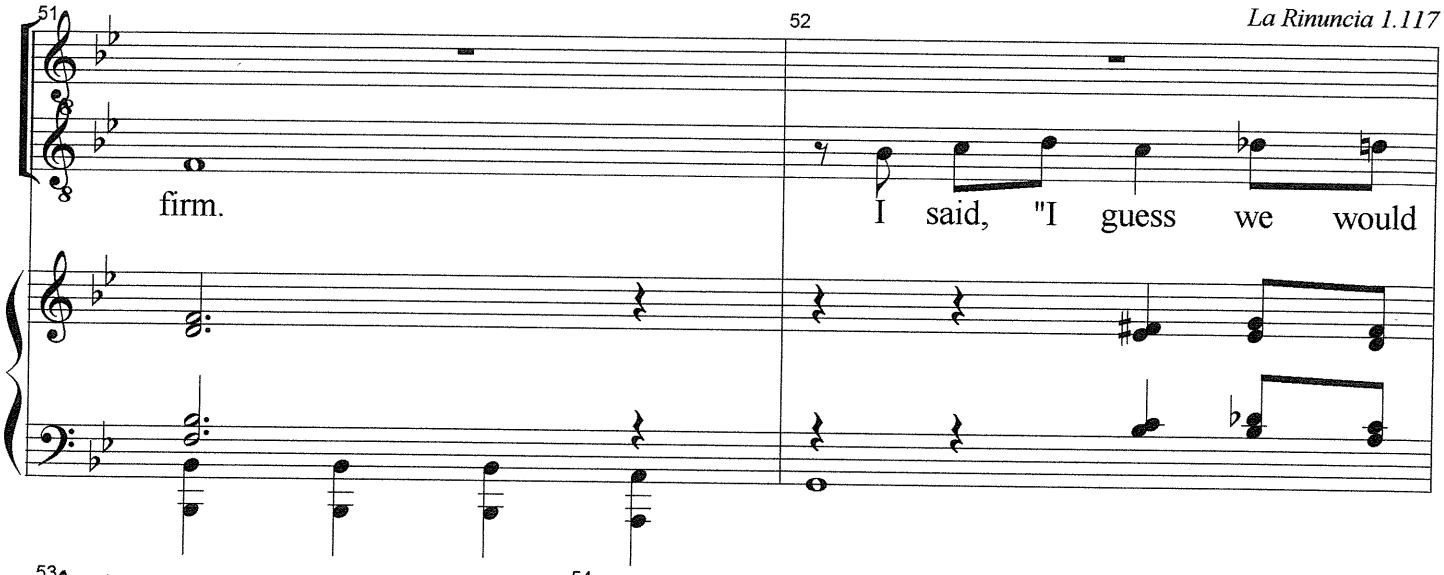

10
11
12
an - oth - er day!
To give your - self -
13
14
15
- - a - way.
3
16
17
18
So much to co - ver.
So man - y ques - tions.
What caused my par - ents
3

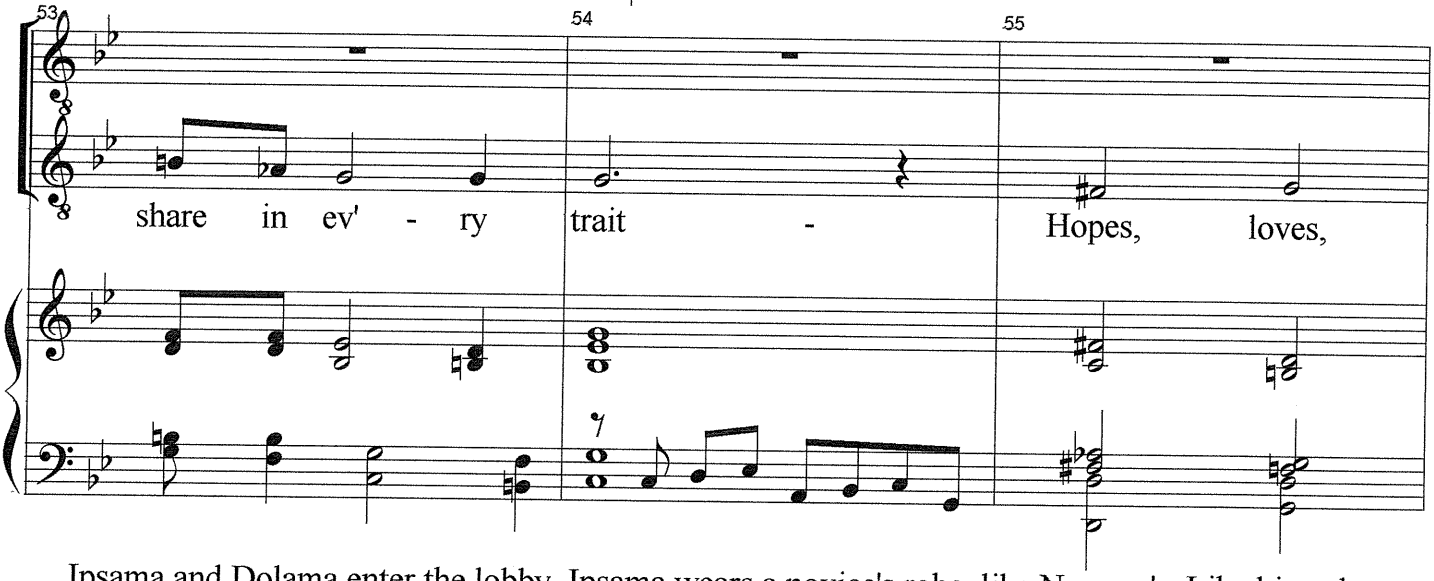

19
20
21
What do youdream of?
to drift
3
22
23
24
- What -
Why am I mak - ing such a gift?
25
26
se - cret ur - ges
3
3
3
-- Ob - ses - sive thoughts, self -


27
28
29
Or -
what se-cret lo-vers oc - cu - py your time?
pur-ges
oc - cu - py my time
30
31
32
mp
33
34
35
The mas - ter?
And then he
gave me
a - noth - er batt' - ry.

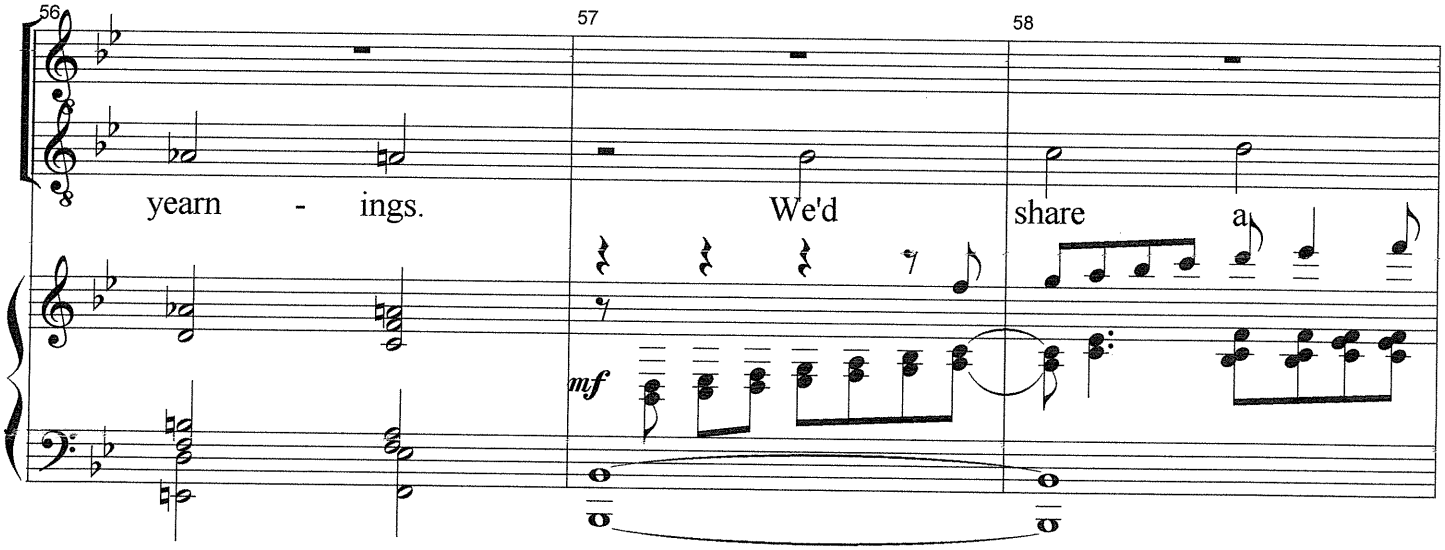

36
37
38
He han - dles your men - tal do - main
My psy - cho -
39
40
41
so - cial grip.
And ev' - ry Freud - ian slip.
pp
MM=60
42
43
What was it to - day?
pp
ritardando

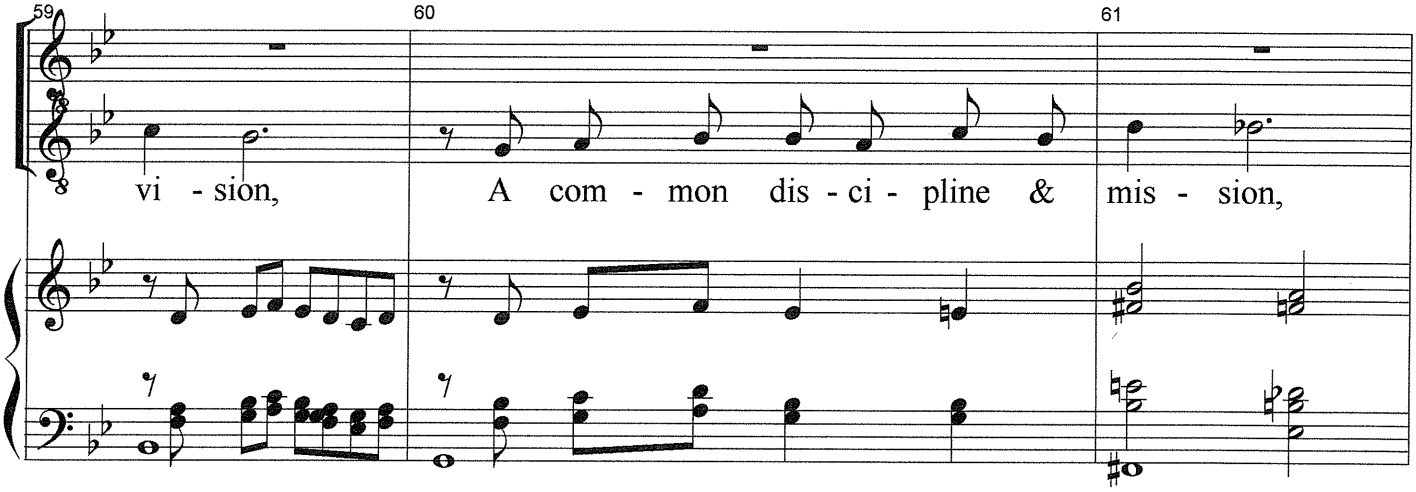

44
45
He said, "I - ma - gine
That you could find the
a tempo
46
47
per - fect
mate.
48
49
50
Des - cribe her to me."
Though I pro - test - ed,
He was

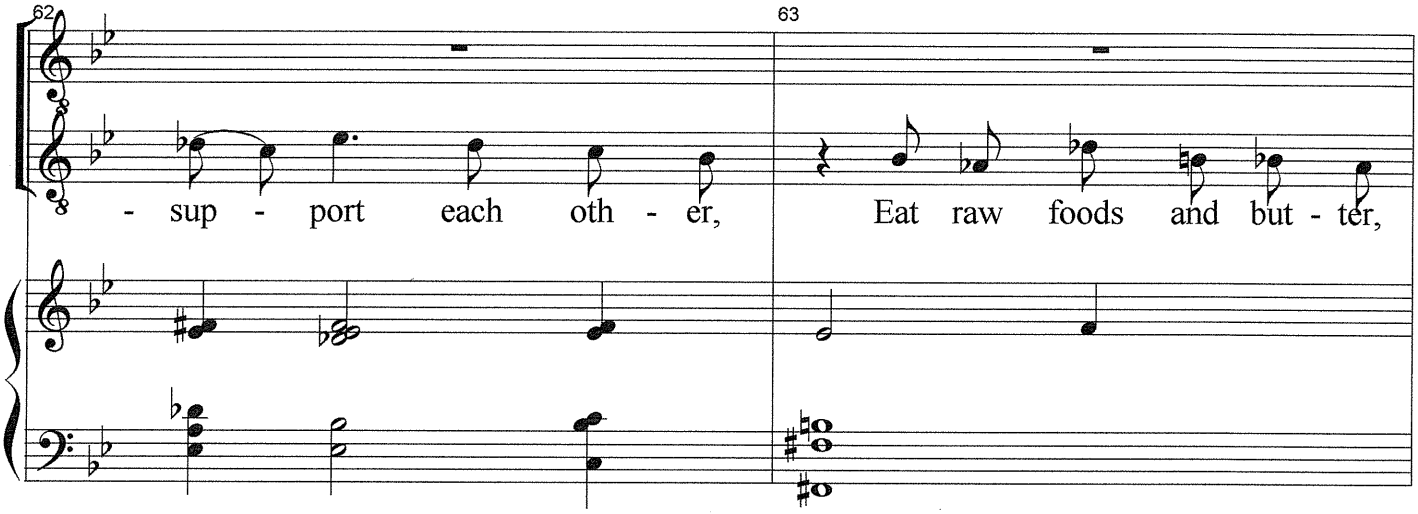




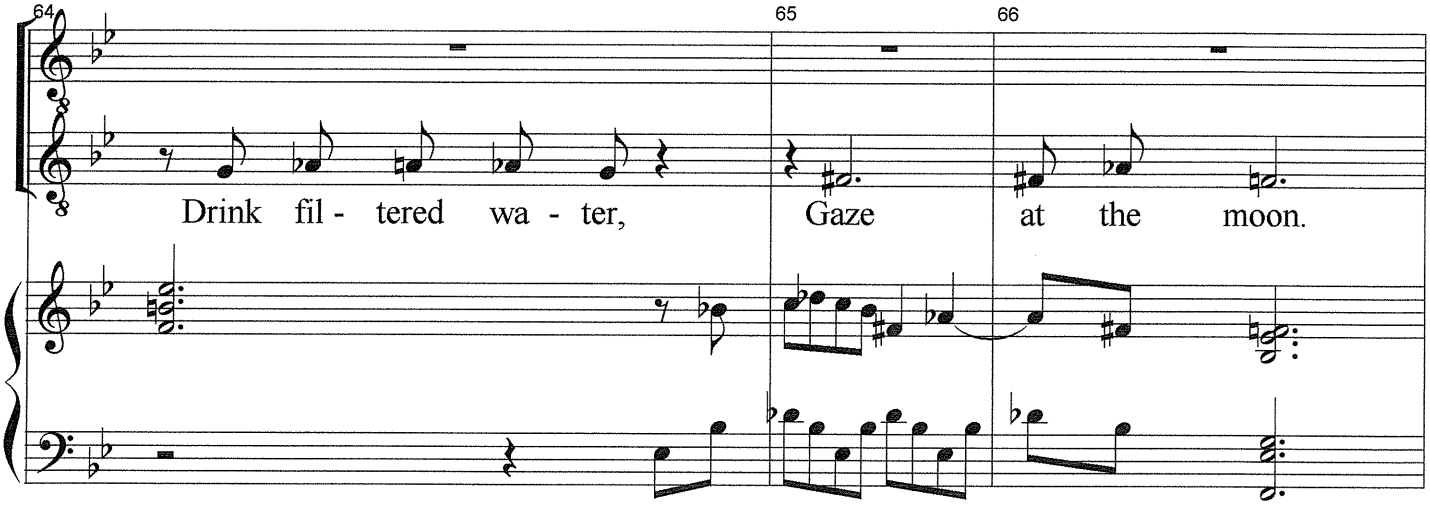
Ipsama and Dolama enter the lobby. Ipsama wears a novice's robe, like Norman's. Like him, she also carries a small black book, like a missal. Like him, she wears heavy, dark glasses, carries a ke pad, and has another electronic device plugged into her ear. He speaks to Phil, but looks only at Ip Phil and Dolama watch the other couple and then stare at each other. .



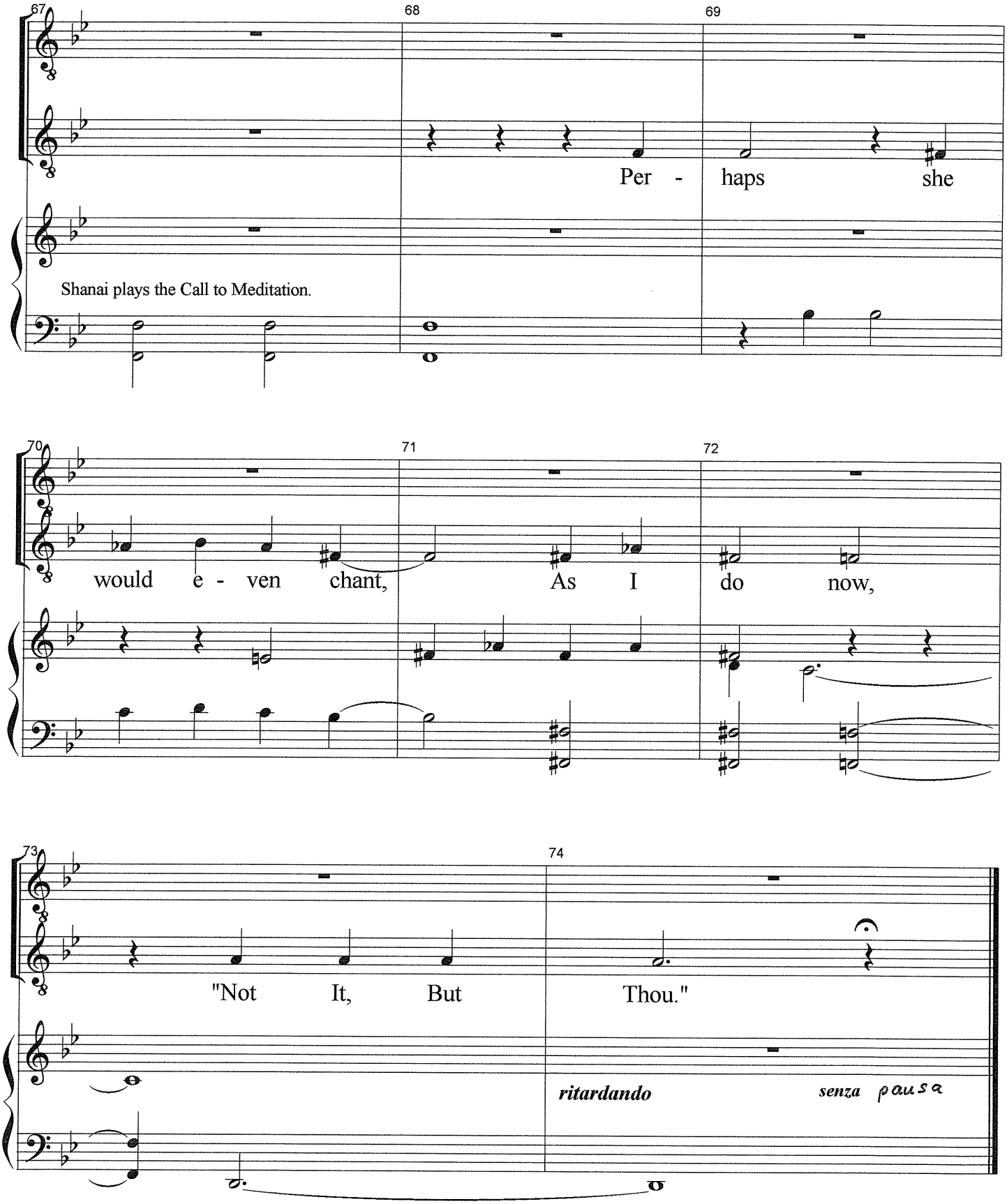




Ipsama takes a carrot from her robe and takes a bite.



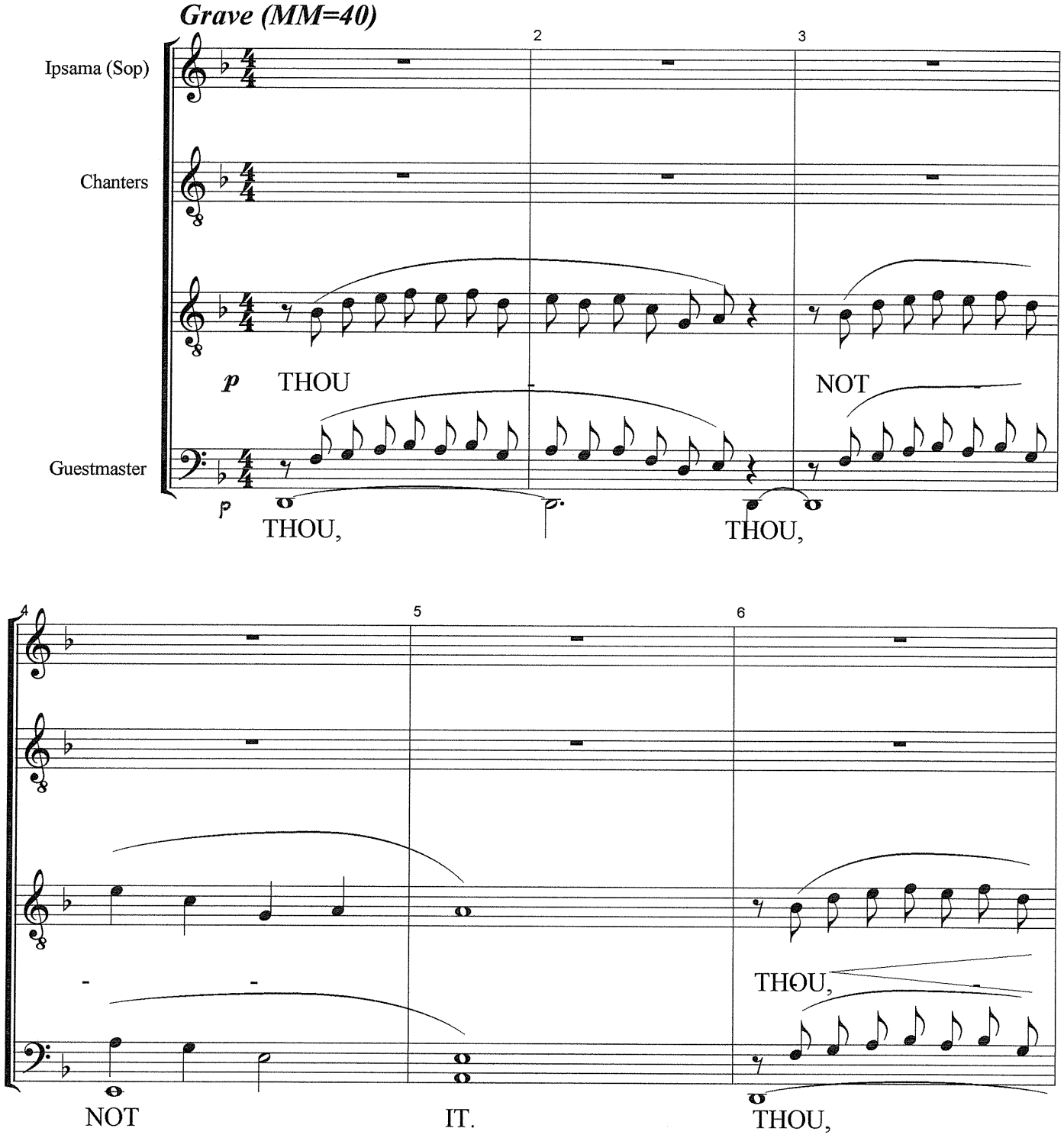
Ipsama drinks bottled water as she stands at the window, gazing at the moon.

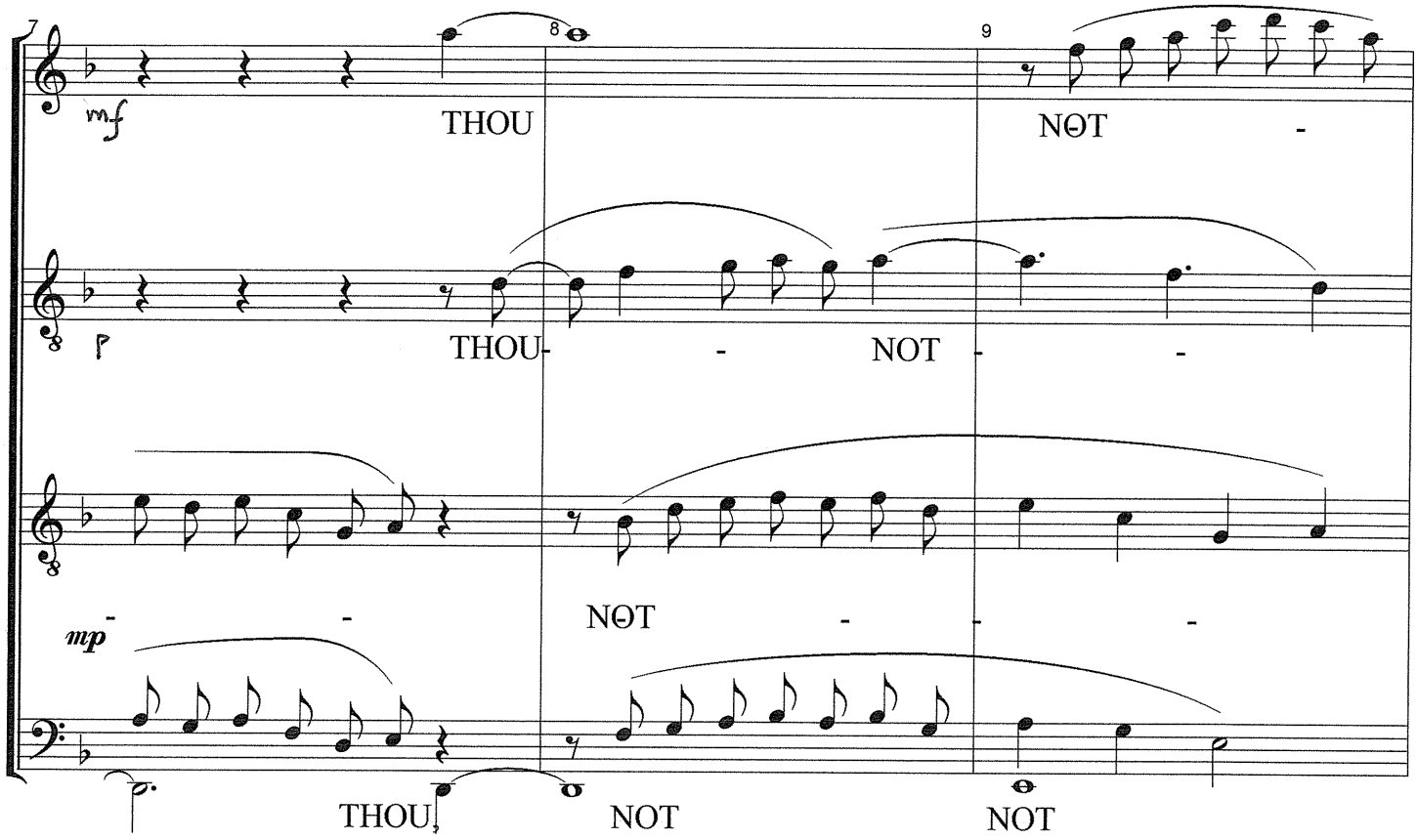


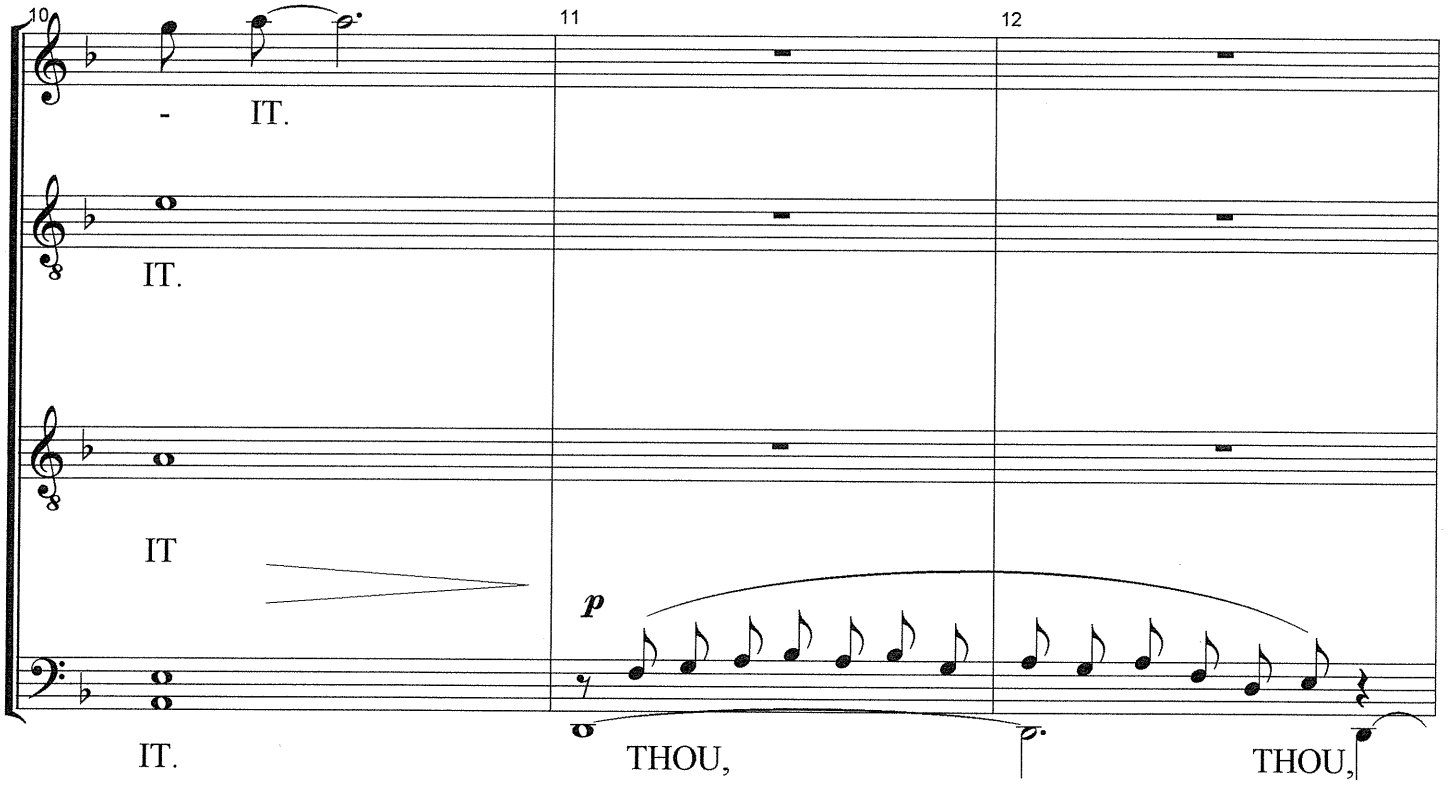
La Rinuncia
Act 1 Scene 1.3

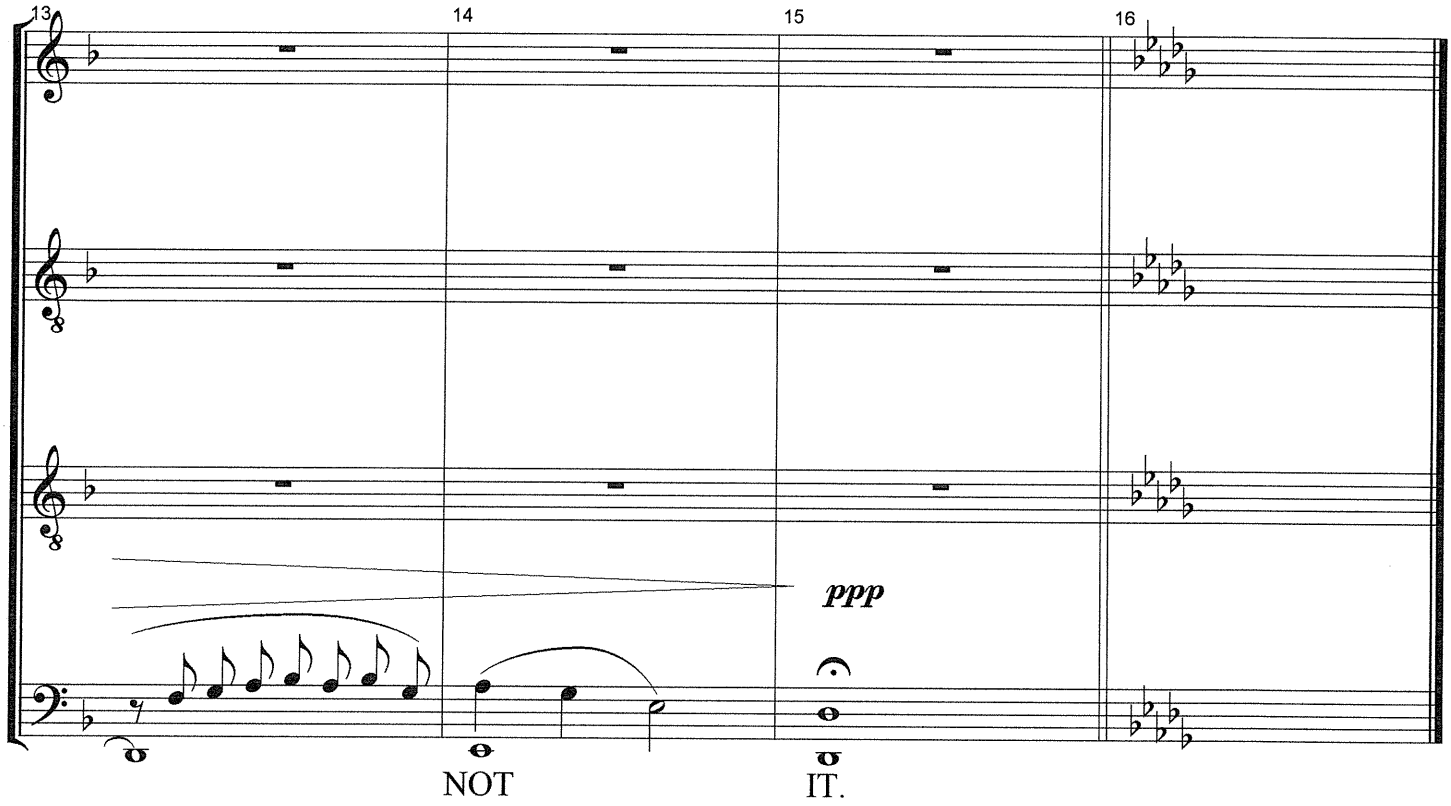
Richard L. Rose

On their way to prayers at the Shrine, a line of religious, chanting "Not It, But Thc passes through the lobby. Ipsi joins their chant.




8
9
mf
THOU
NOT
-
p
THOU- - NOT - -
- - NOT - - -
mp
THOU,
NOT
NOT

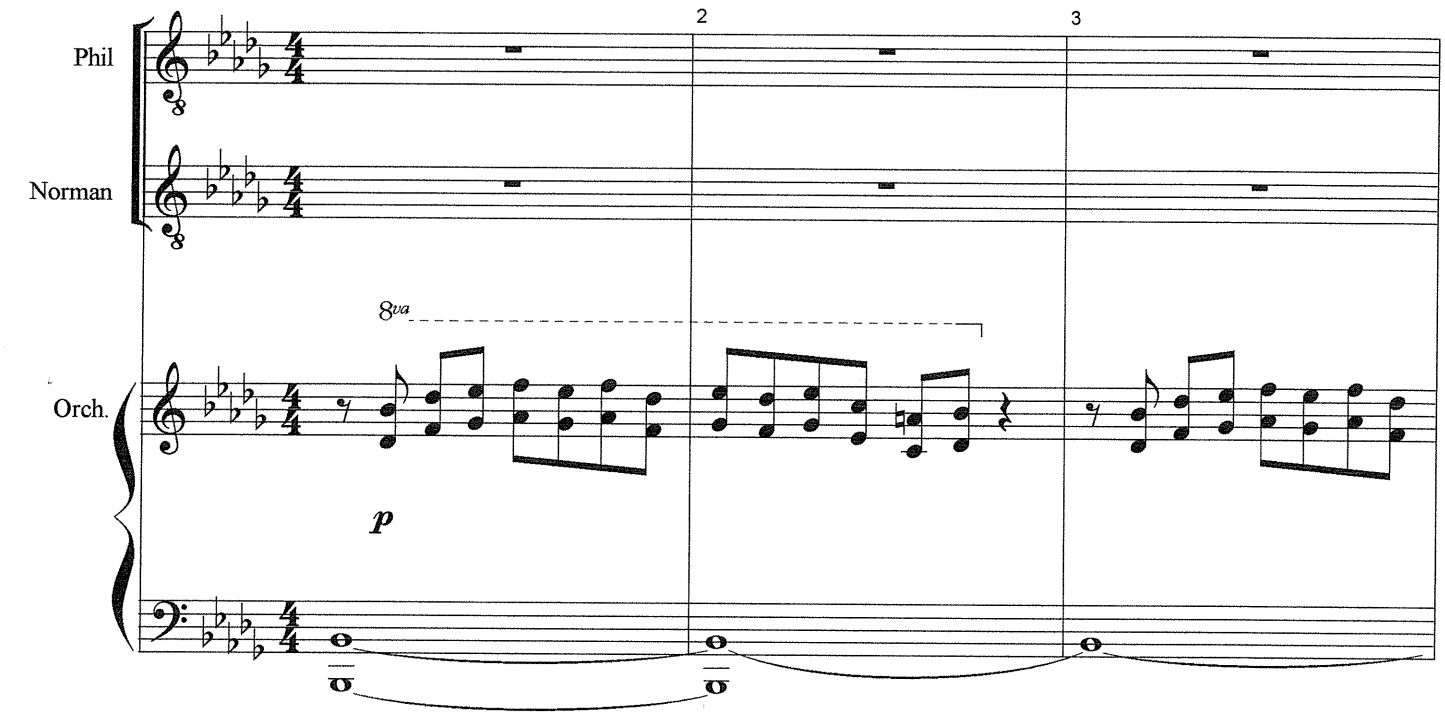

10
11
12
- IT.
IT.
IT
p
IT.
THOU,
THOU,


13
14
15
16
ppp
NOT
IT.

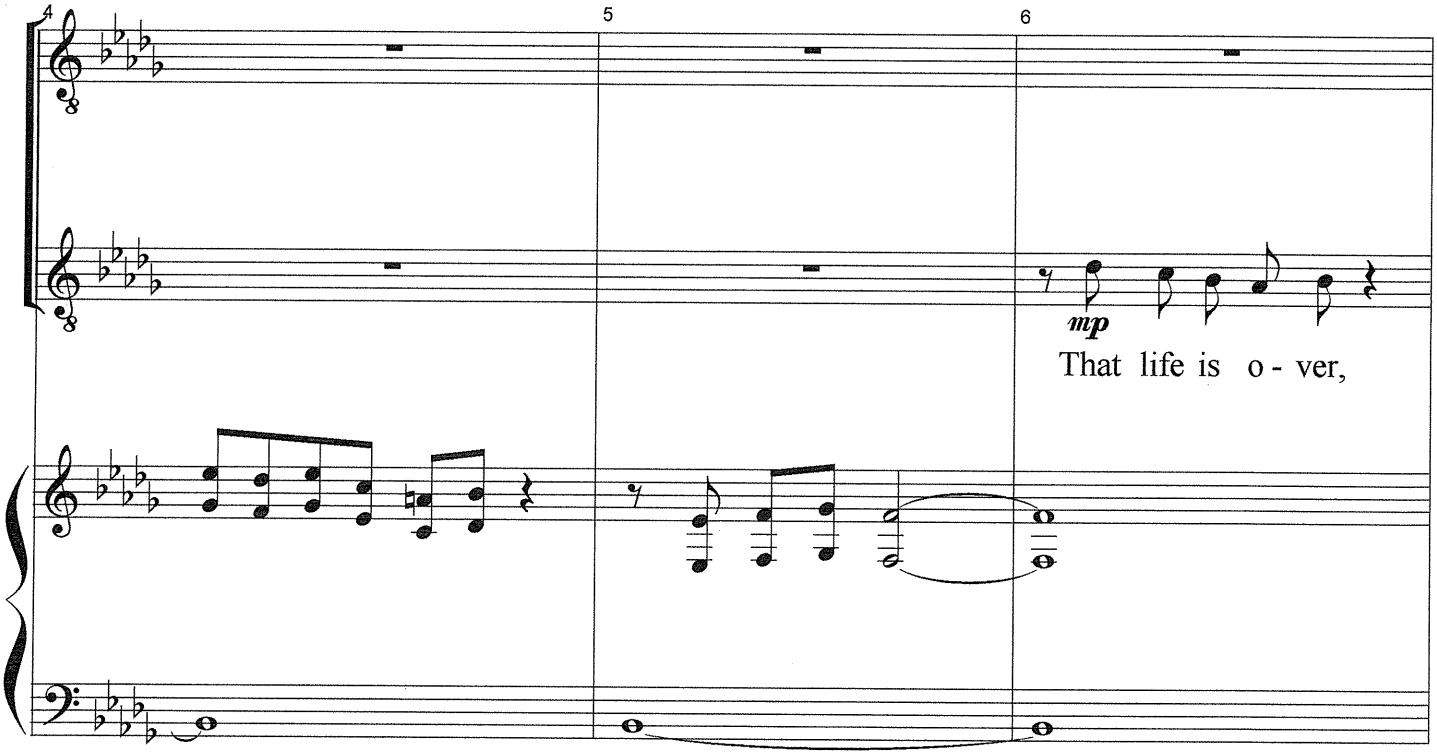
La Rinuncia
Act I Scene 1.4

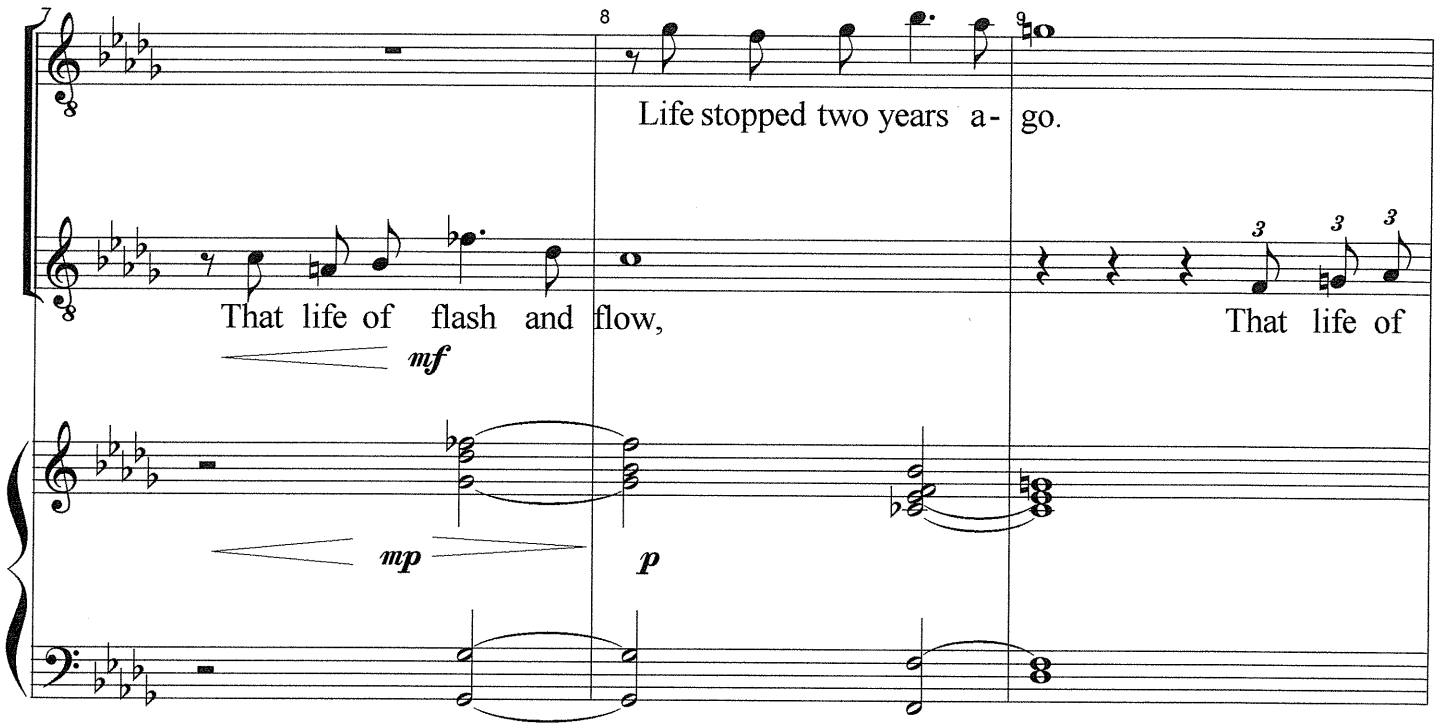
MM=72

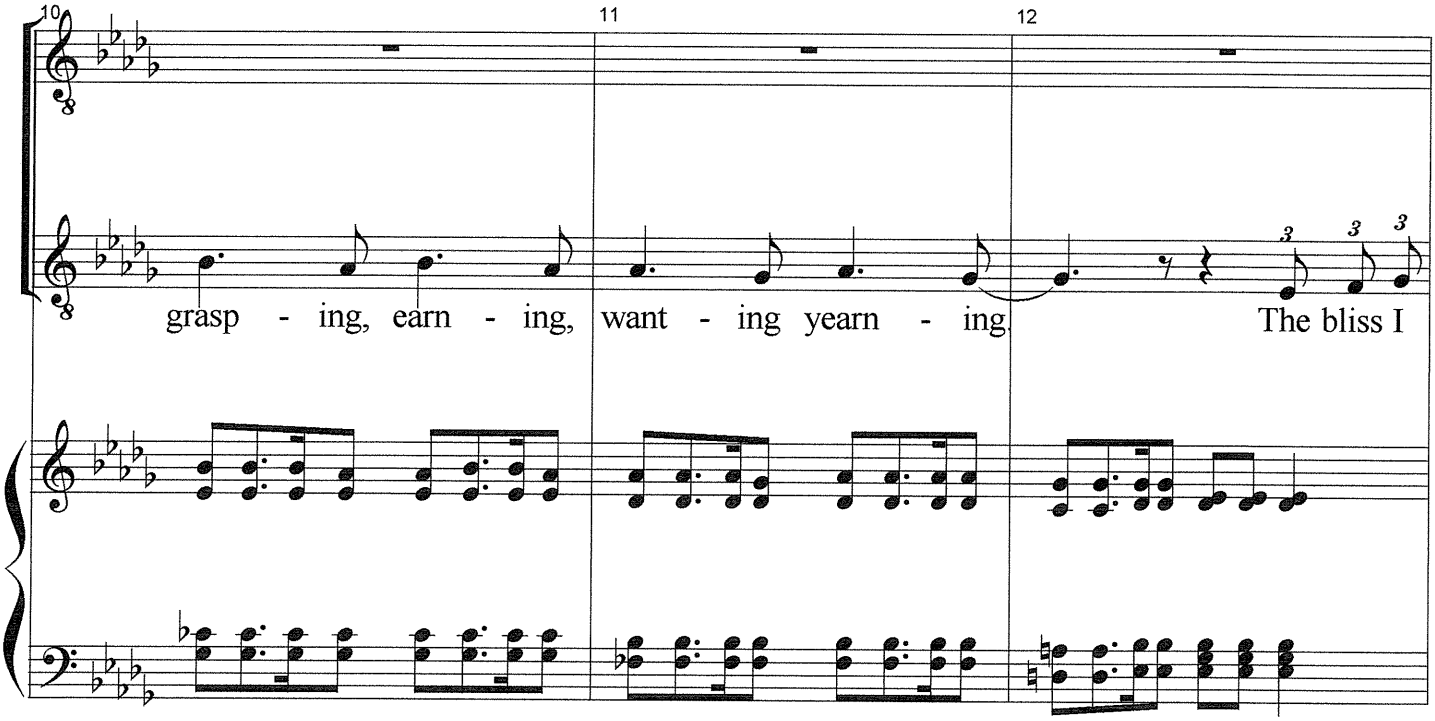
Richard L. Rose

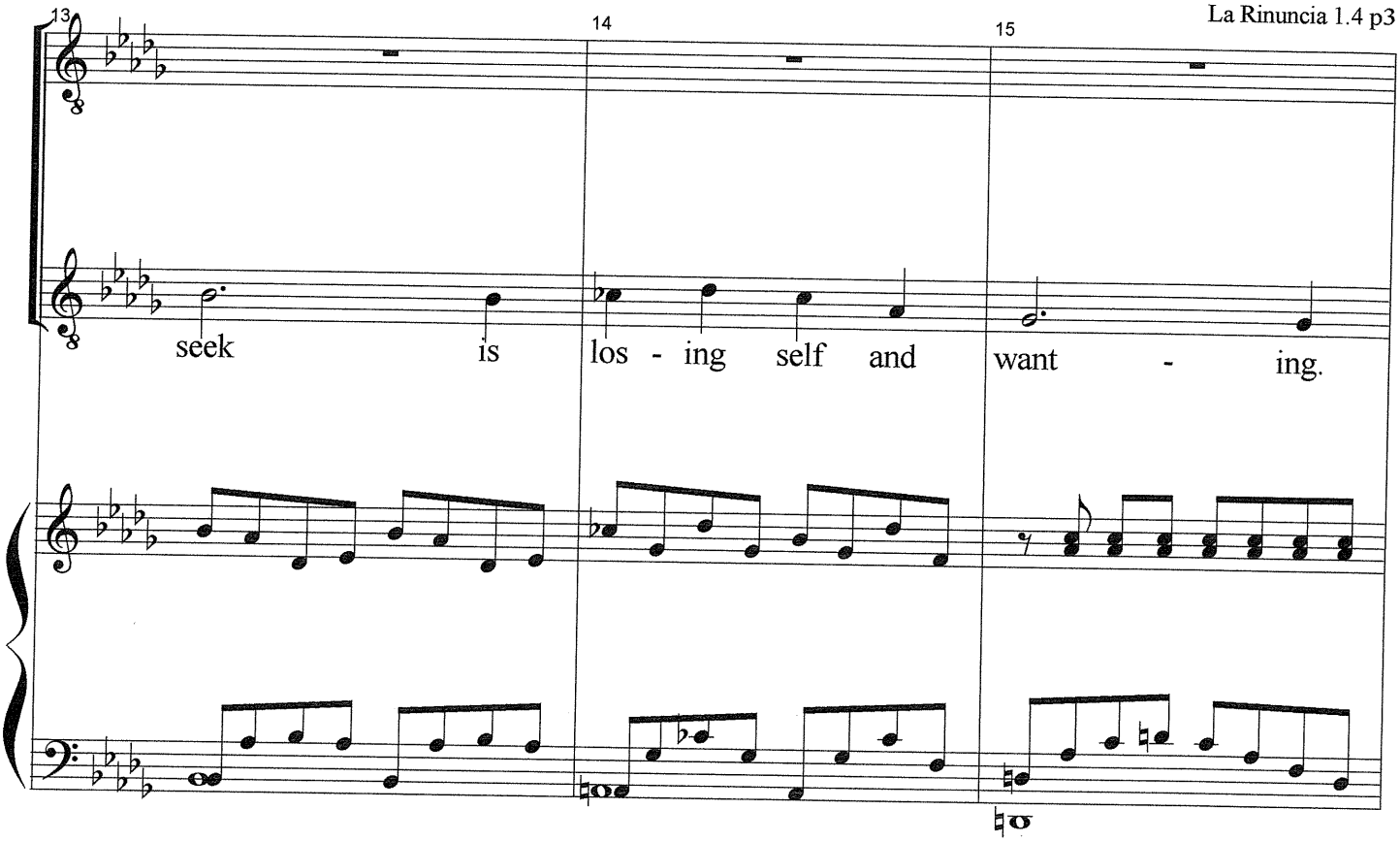


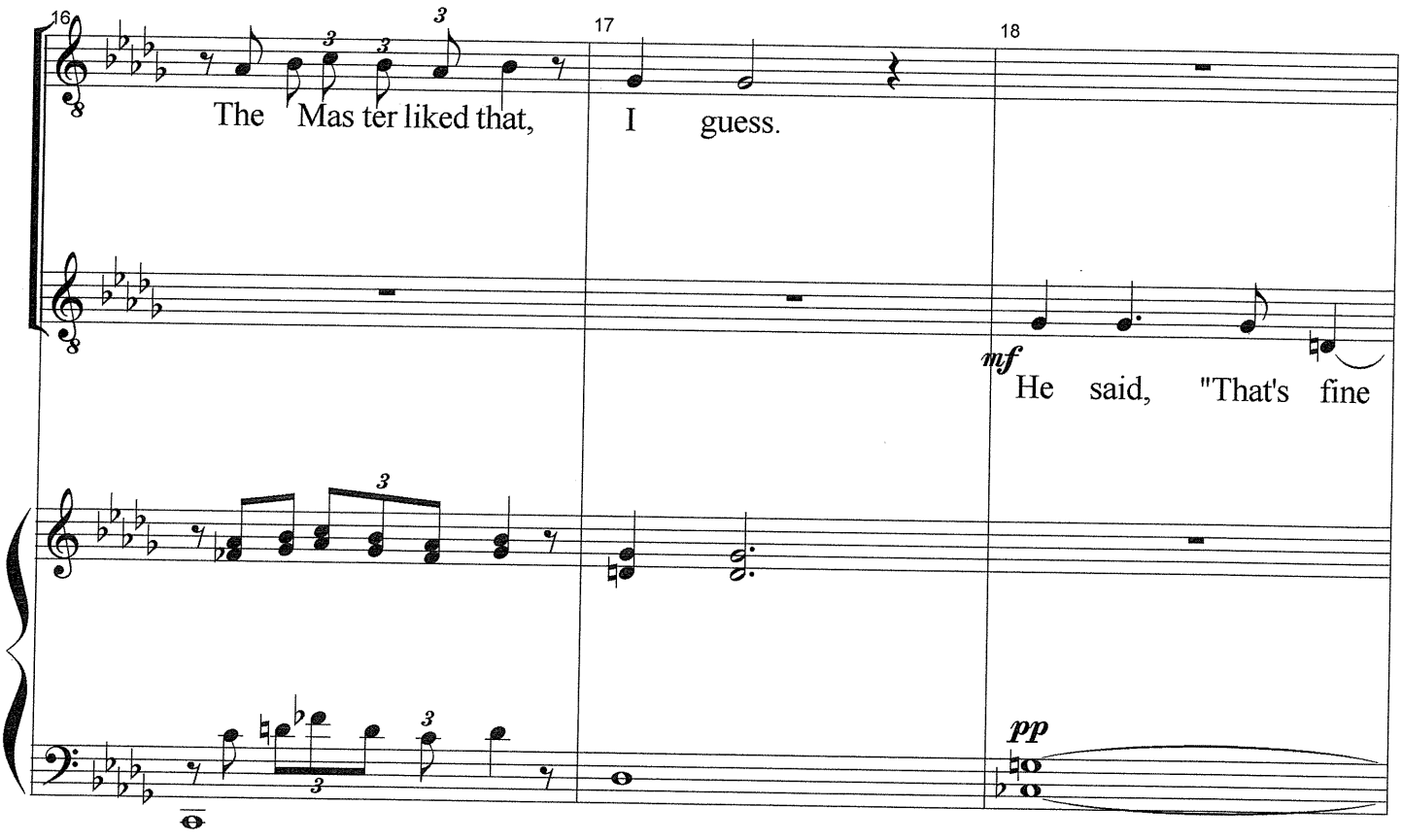
Norman struggles to keep his eyes off Ipsi.

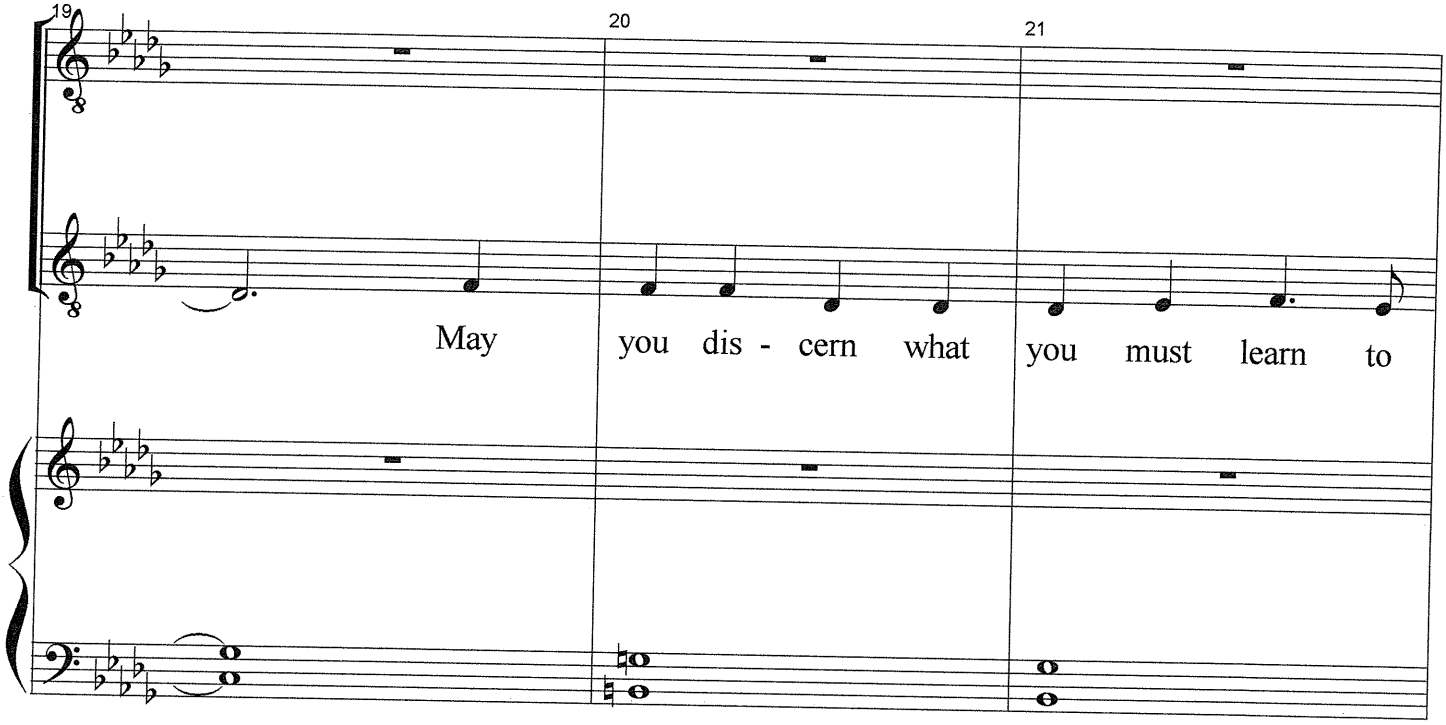


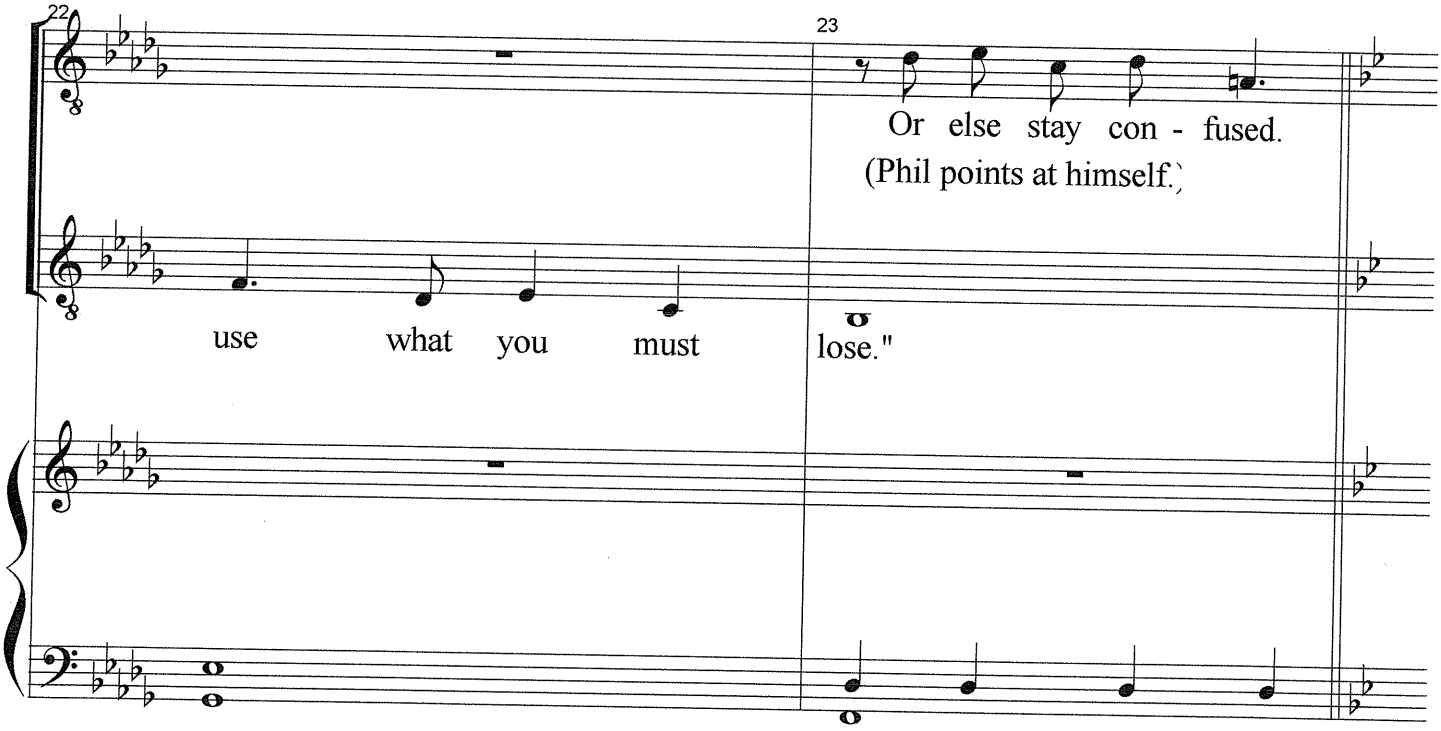

7
8
9
Life stopped two years a- go.
That life of flash and flow,
That life of
mf
mp
p
3
3
3

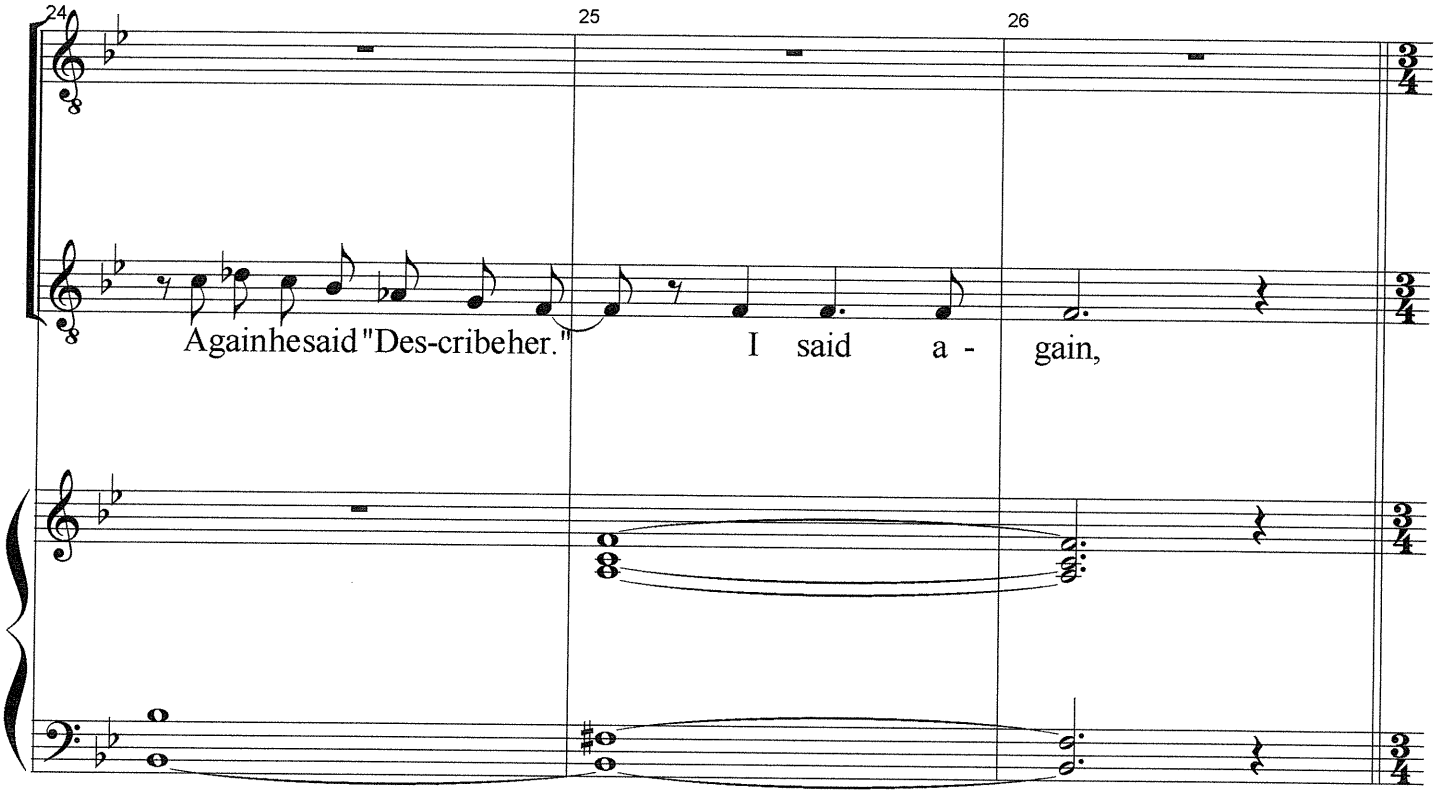

10
11
12
grasp - ing, earn - ing, want - ing yearn - ing.
The bliss I
3
3
3

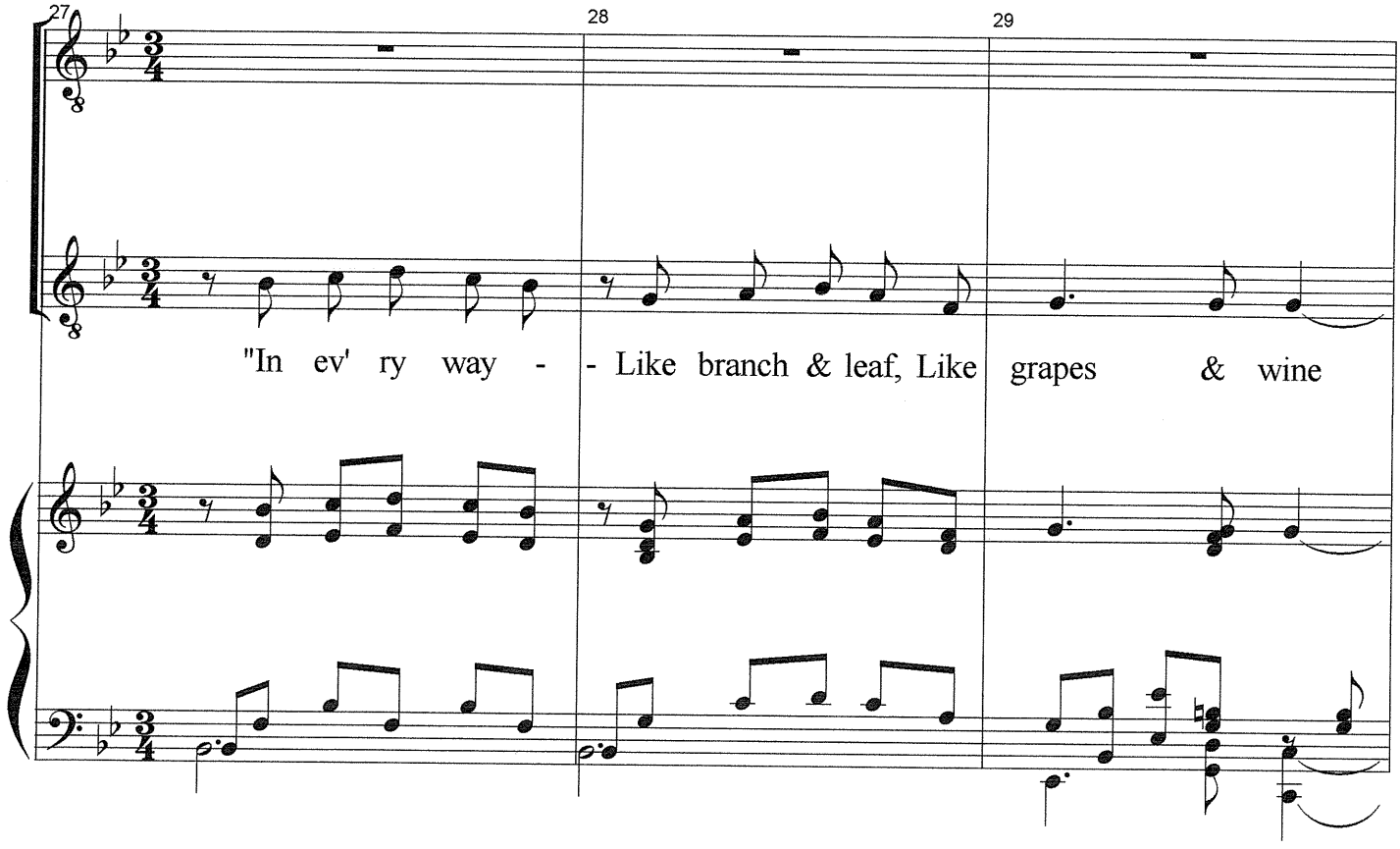

13
14
15
seek
is
los - ing self and
want - ing.

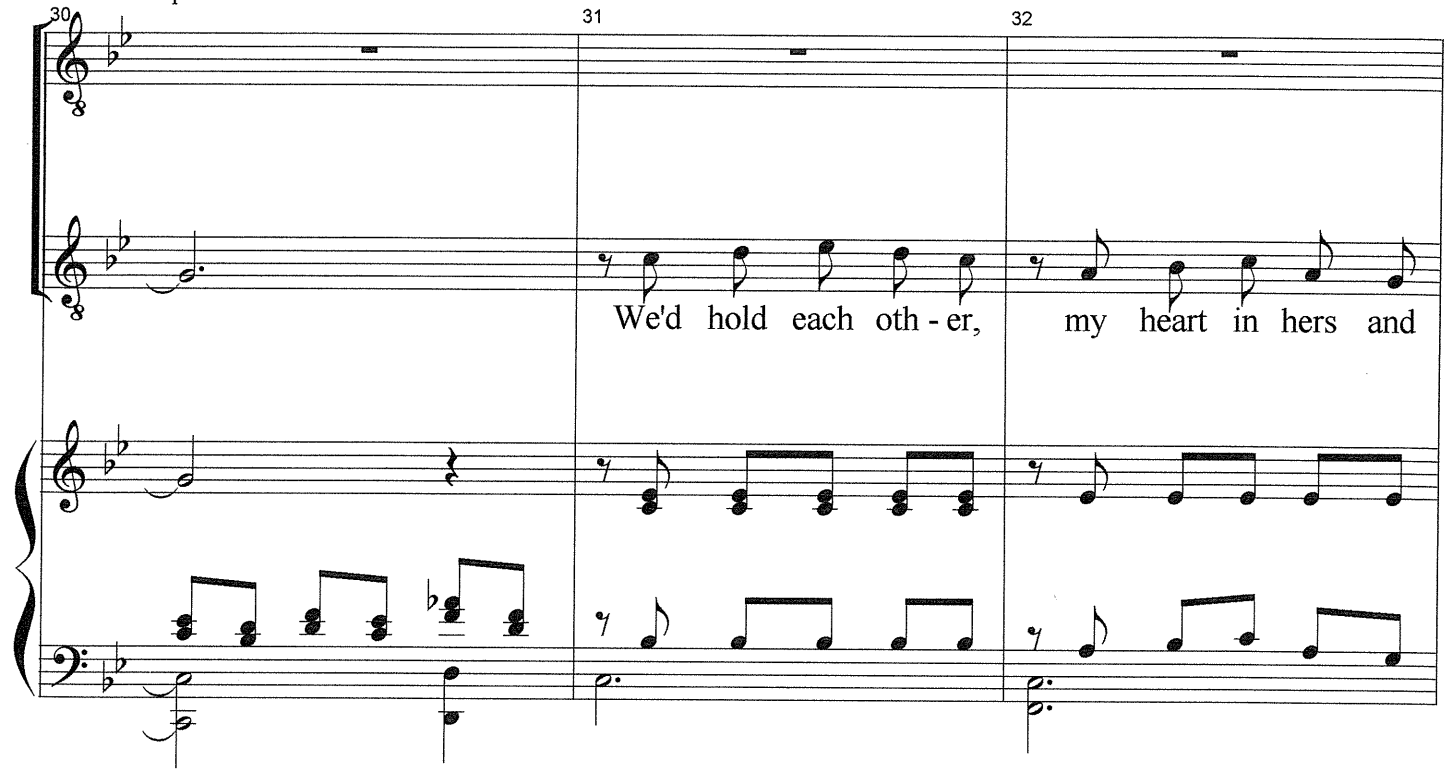

16
17
18
The Mas ter liked that,
I guess.
mf
He said, "That's fine
pp

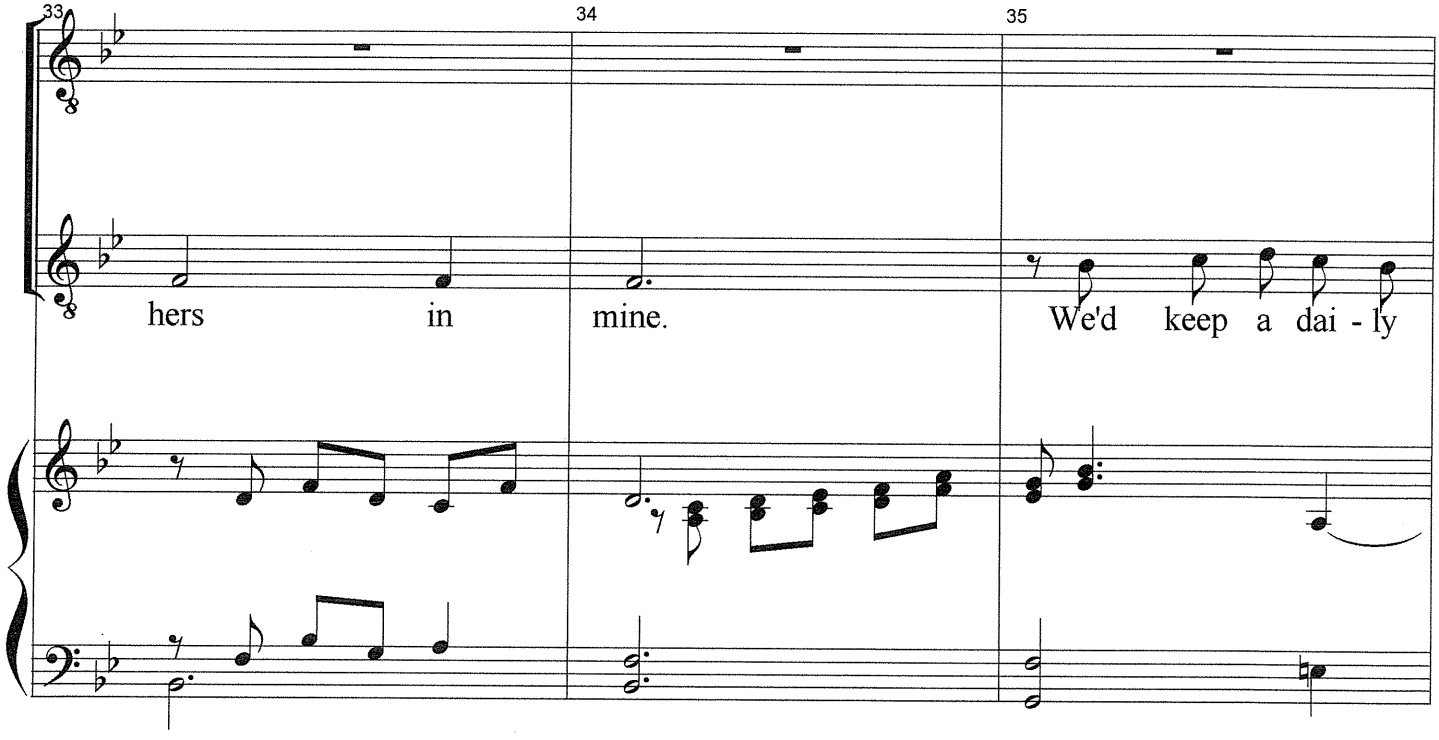

19
20
21
May you dis - cern what you must learn to

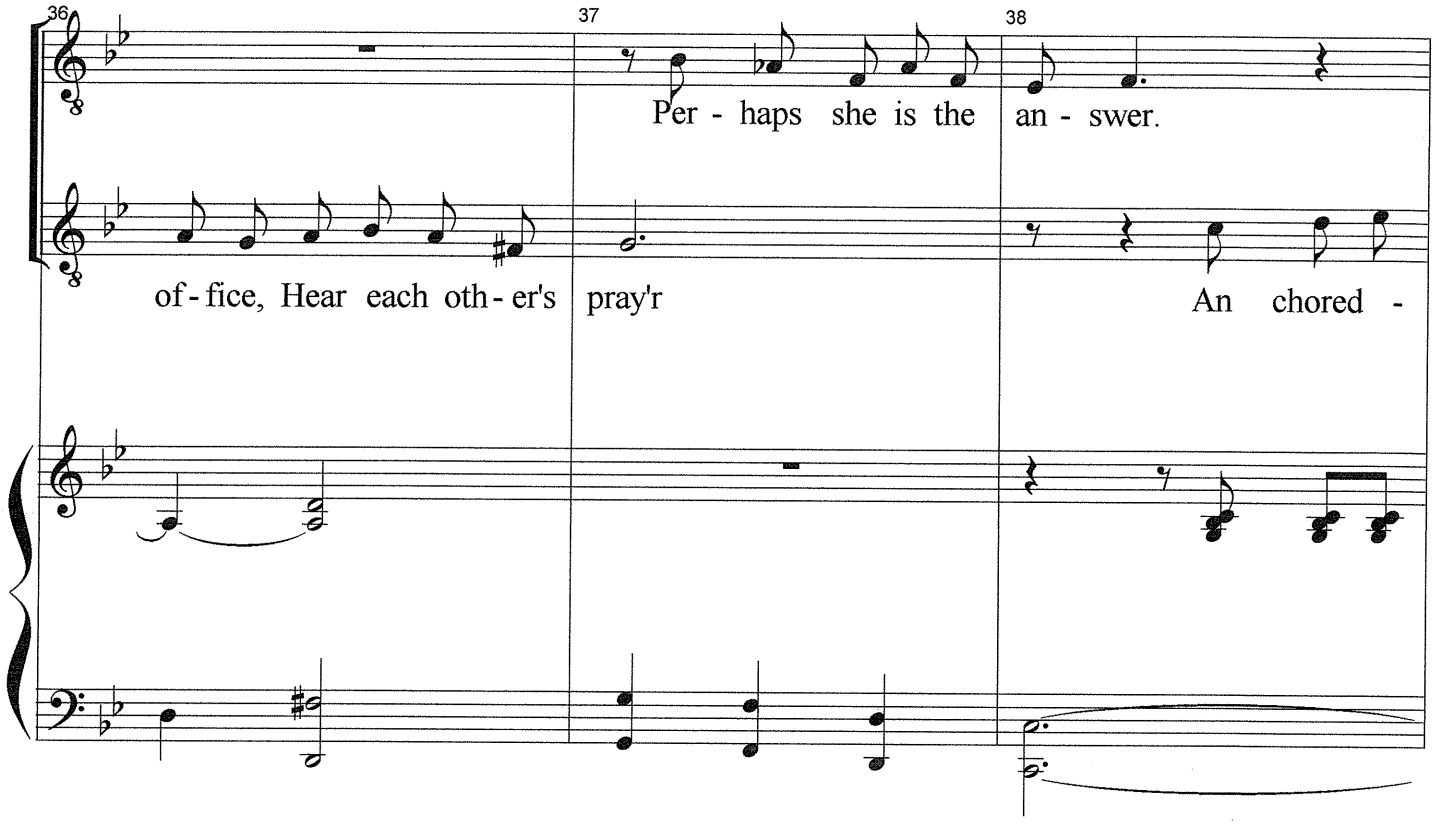

22
23
use what you must
Or else stay con - fused.
(Phil points at himself.)
lose."

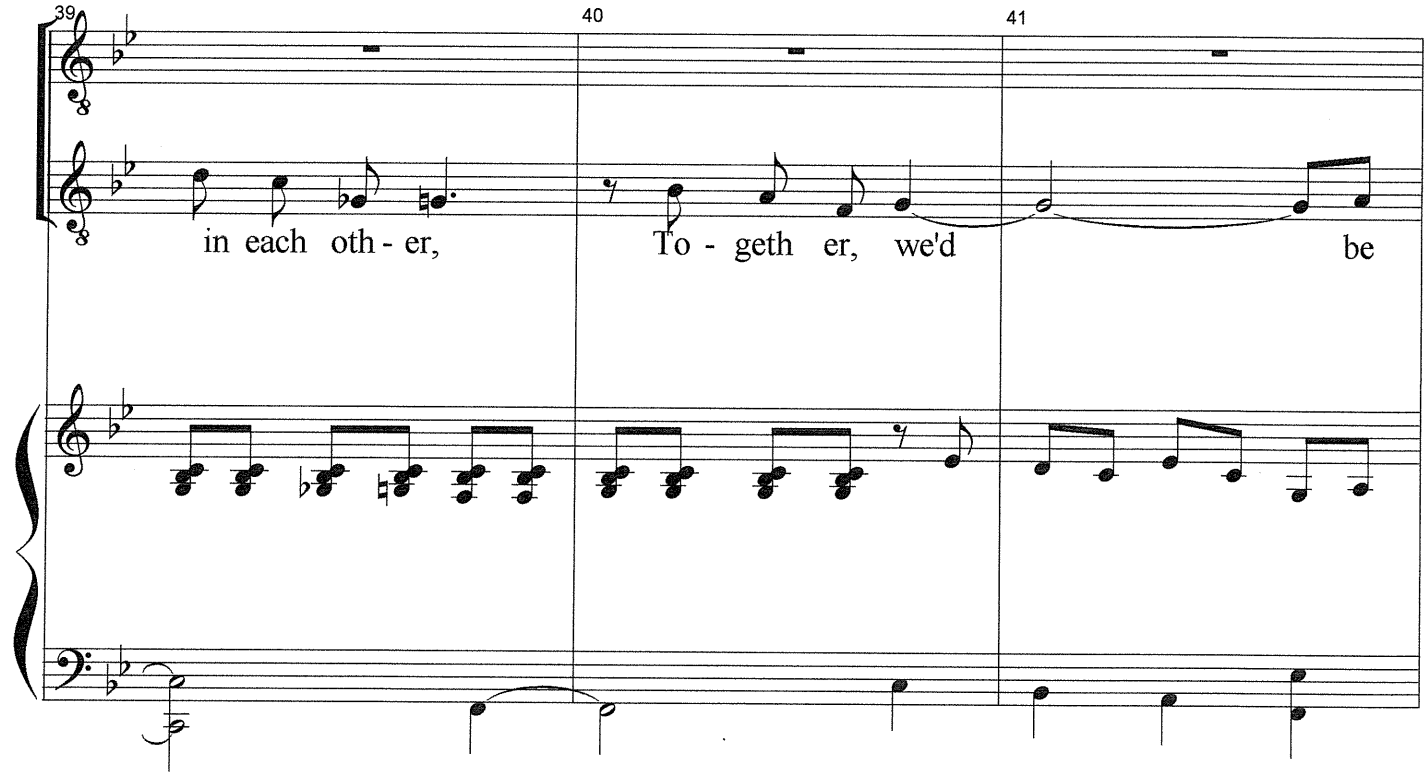

24
25
26
Againhesaid"Des-cribeher."
I said a - gain,

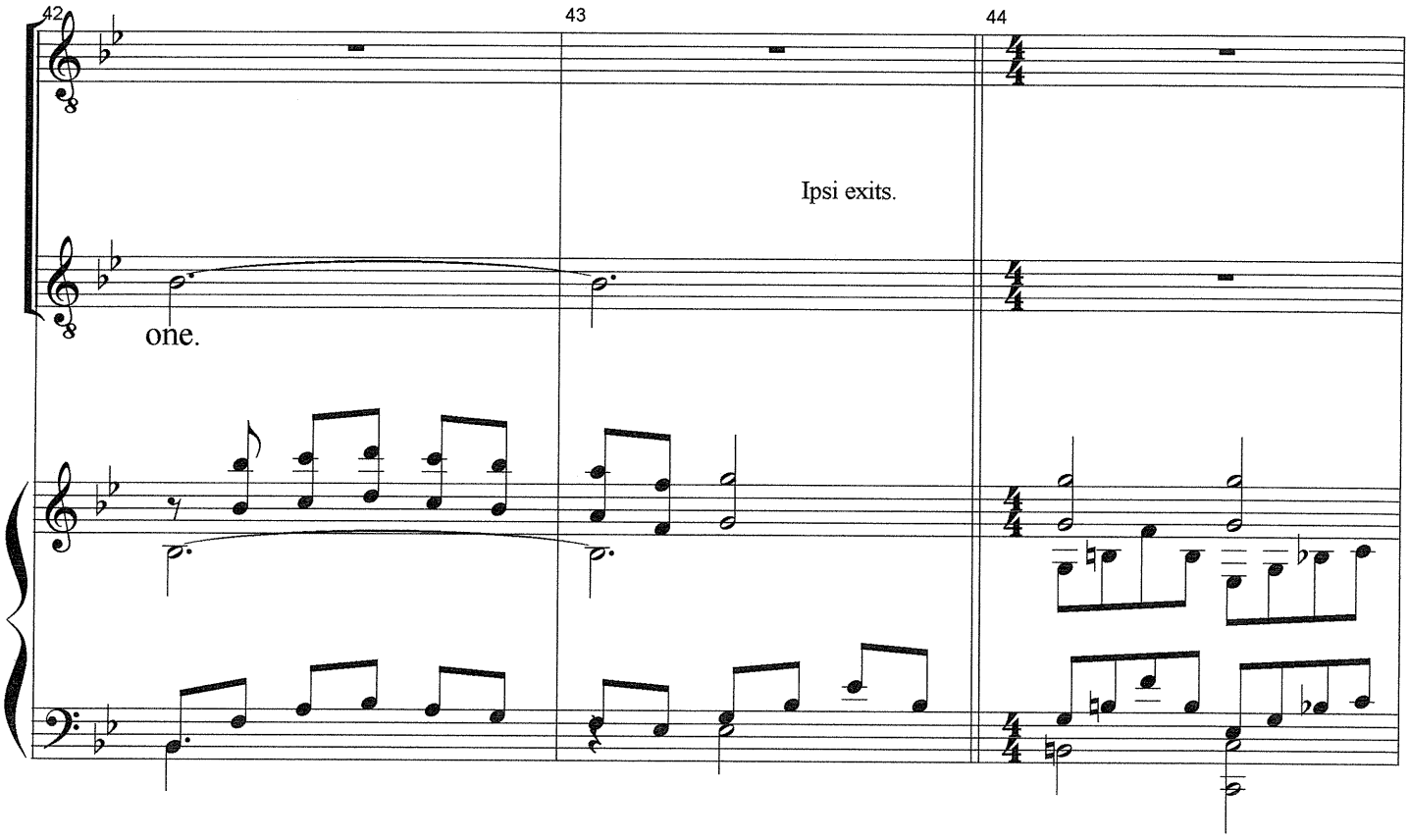

27
28
29
"In ev' ry way - - Like branch & leaf, Like grapes & wine

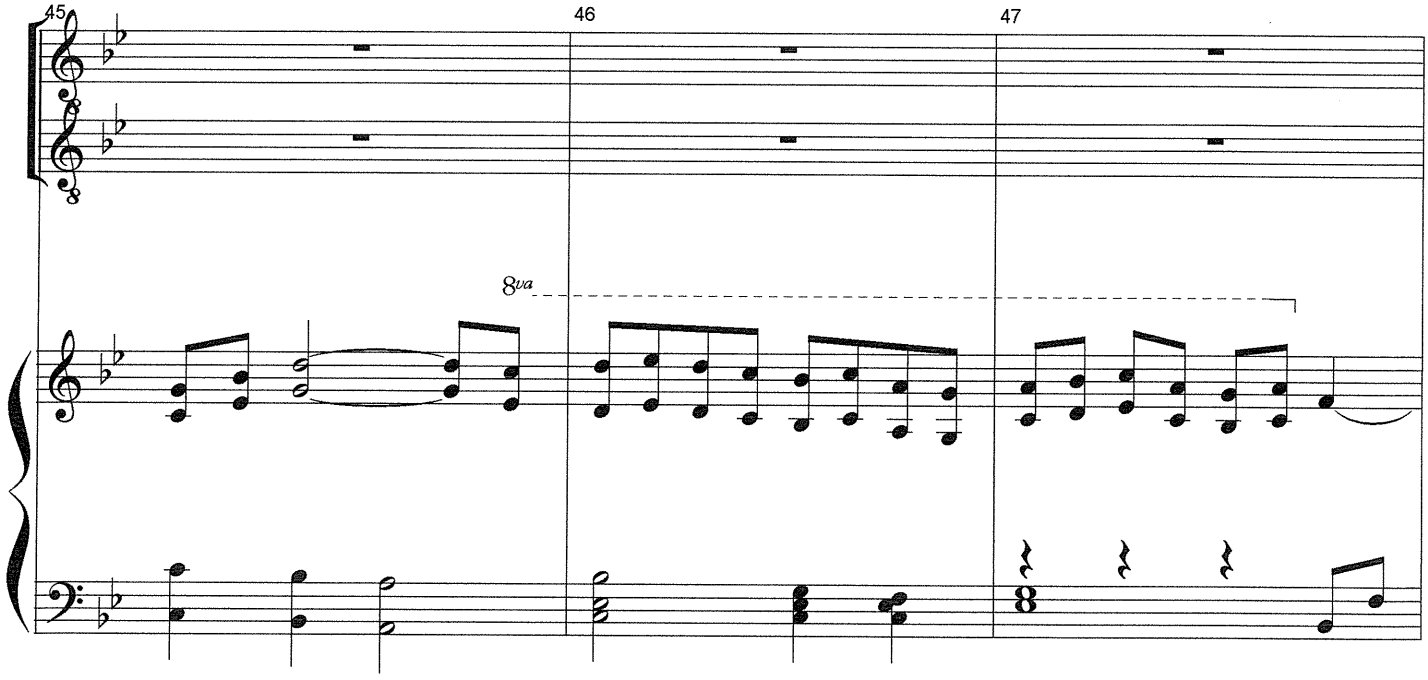

30
31
32
We'd hold each oth - er, my heart in hers and

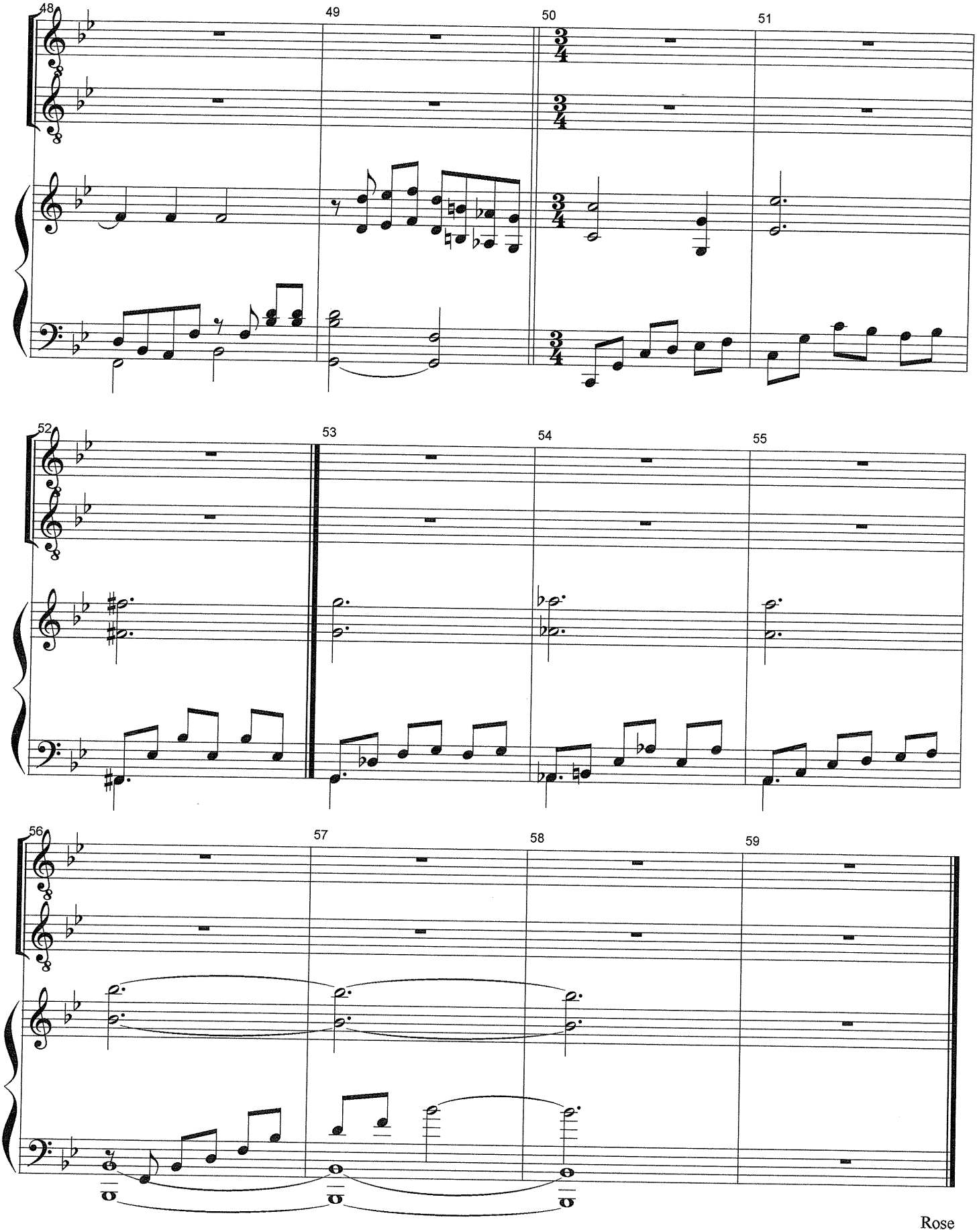

33
34
35
hers in mine. We'd keep a dai - ly


36
37
38
Per - haps she is the an - swer.
of - fice, Hear each oth - er's pray'r
An chored -


39
40
41
in each oth - er,
To - geth er, we'd
be


42
43
44
Ipsi exits.
one.

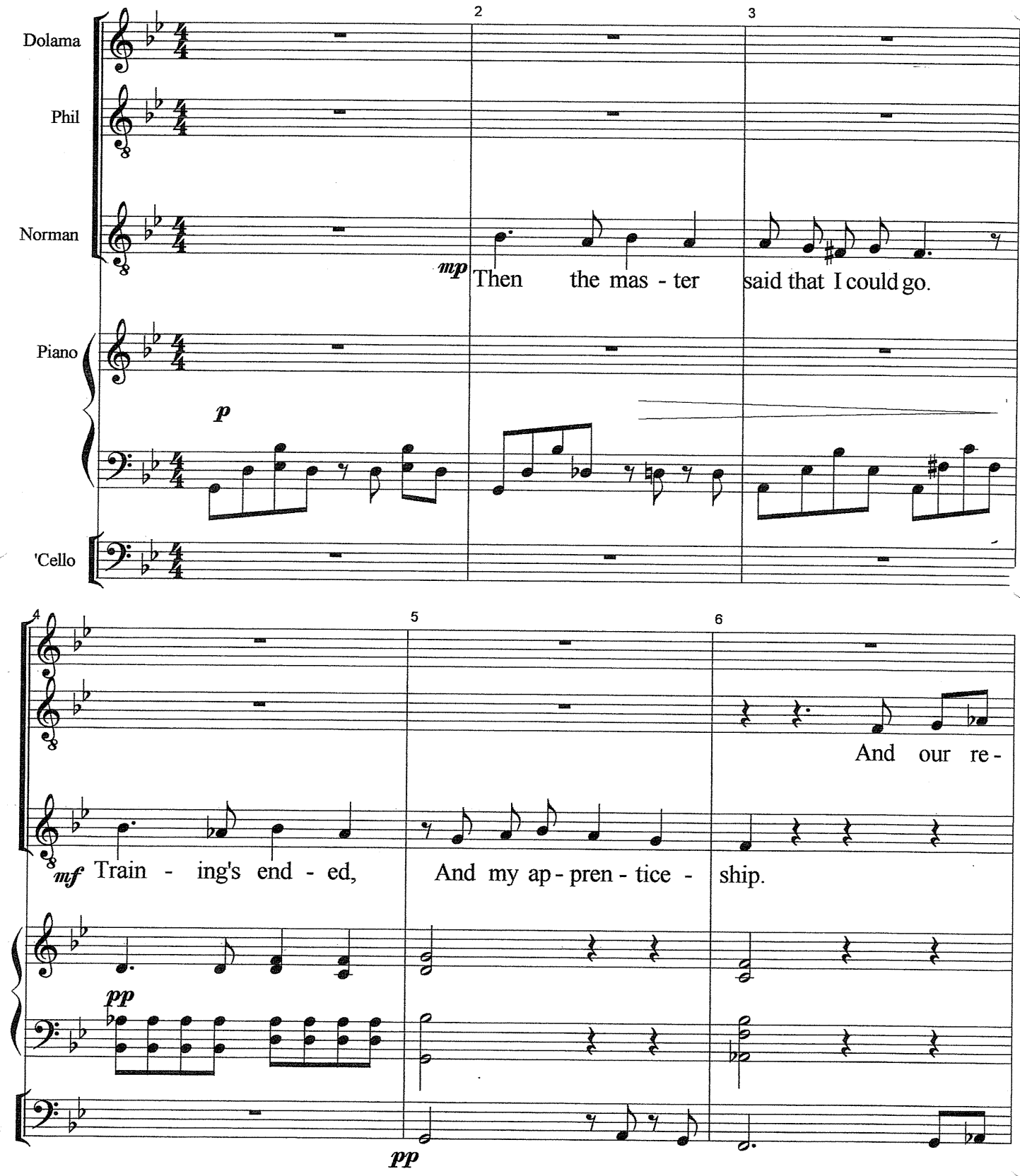

45
46
47
8va

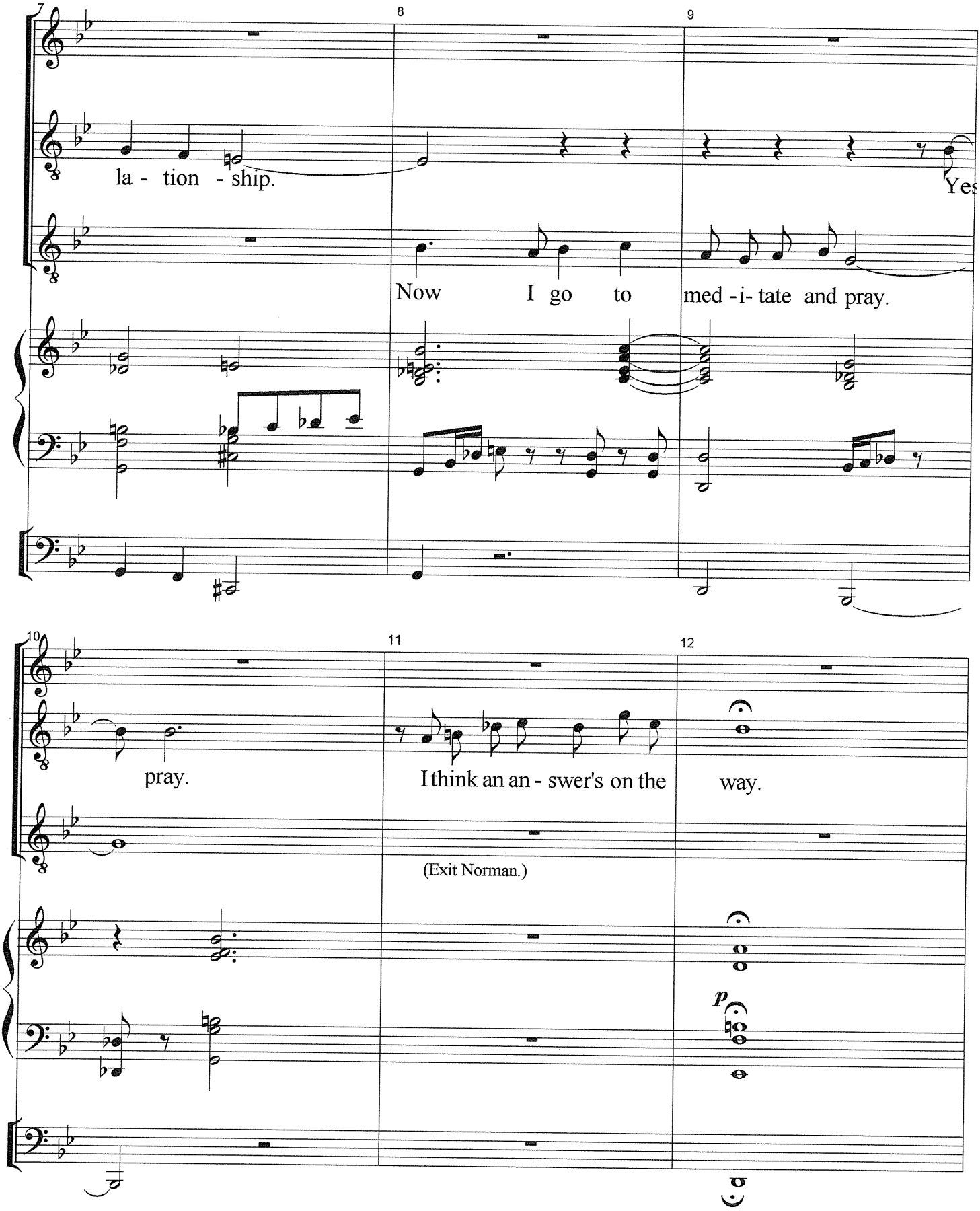

48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59

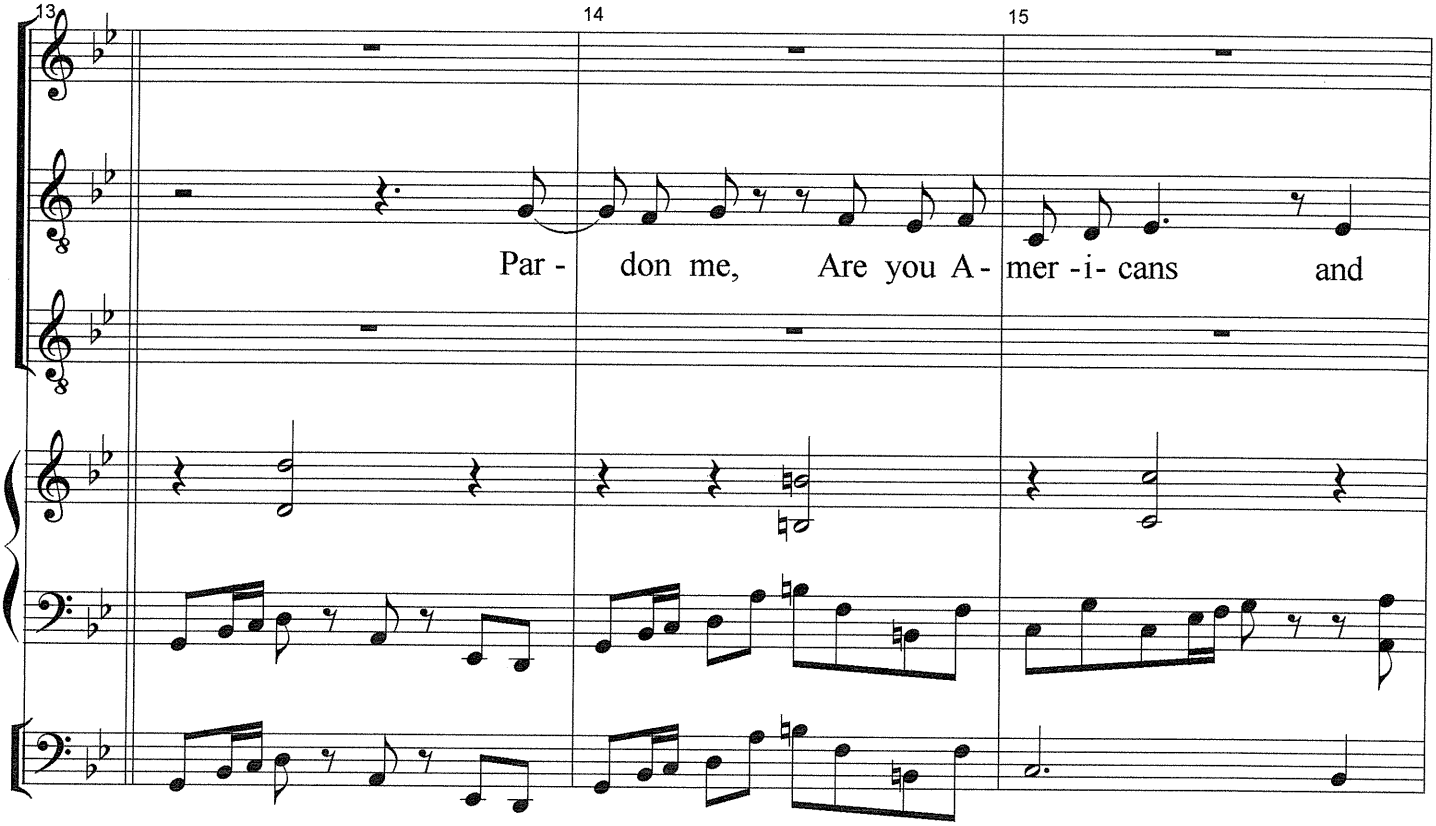
La Rinuncia
Act 1 Scene 2.1

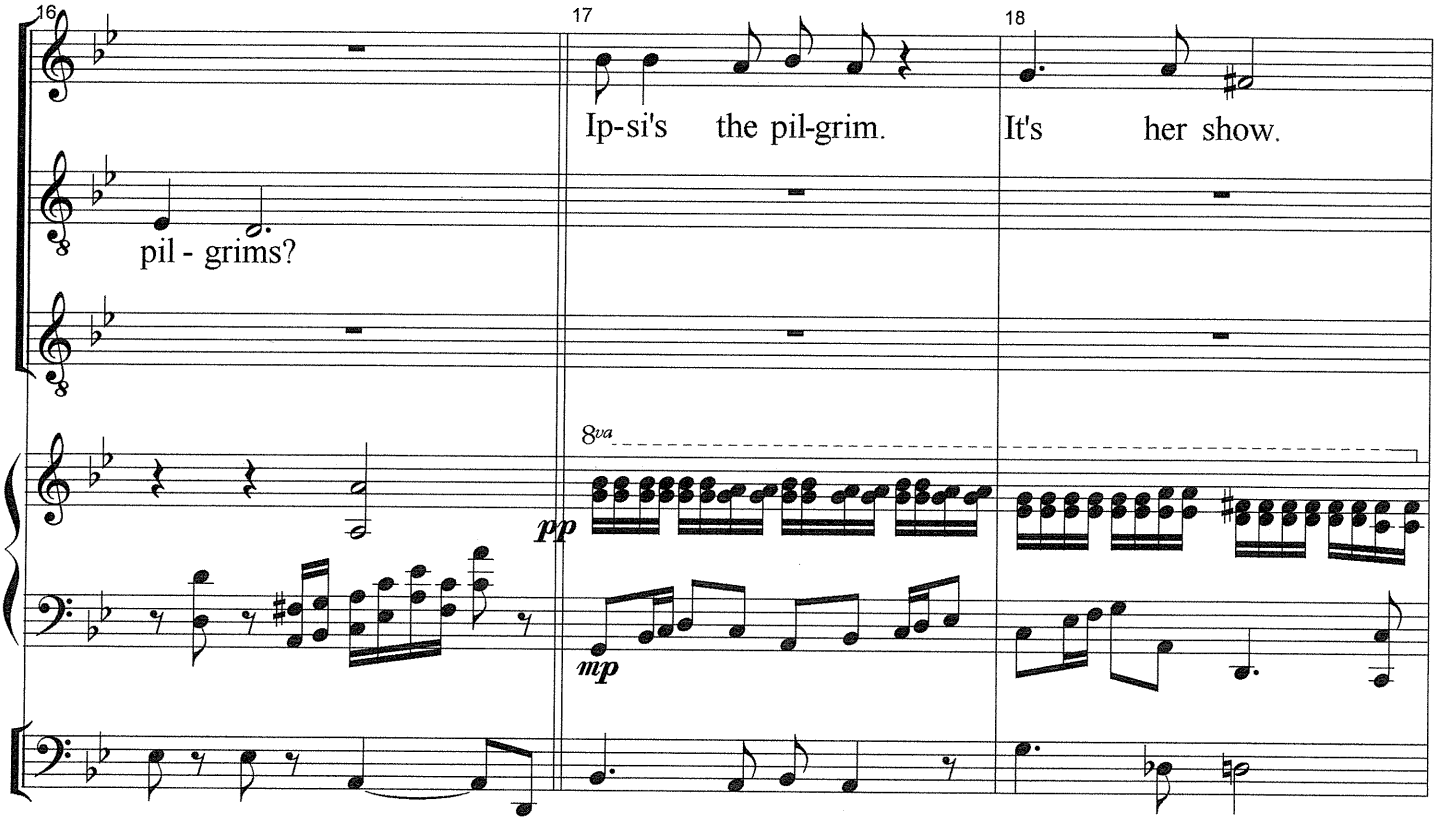
MM=100

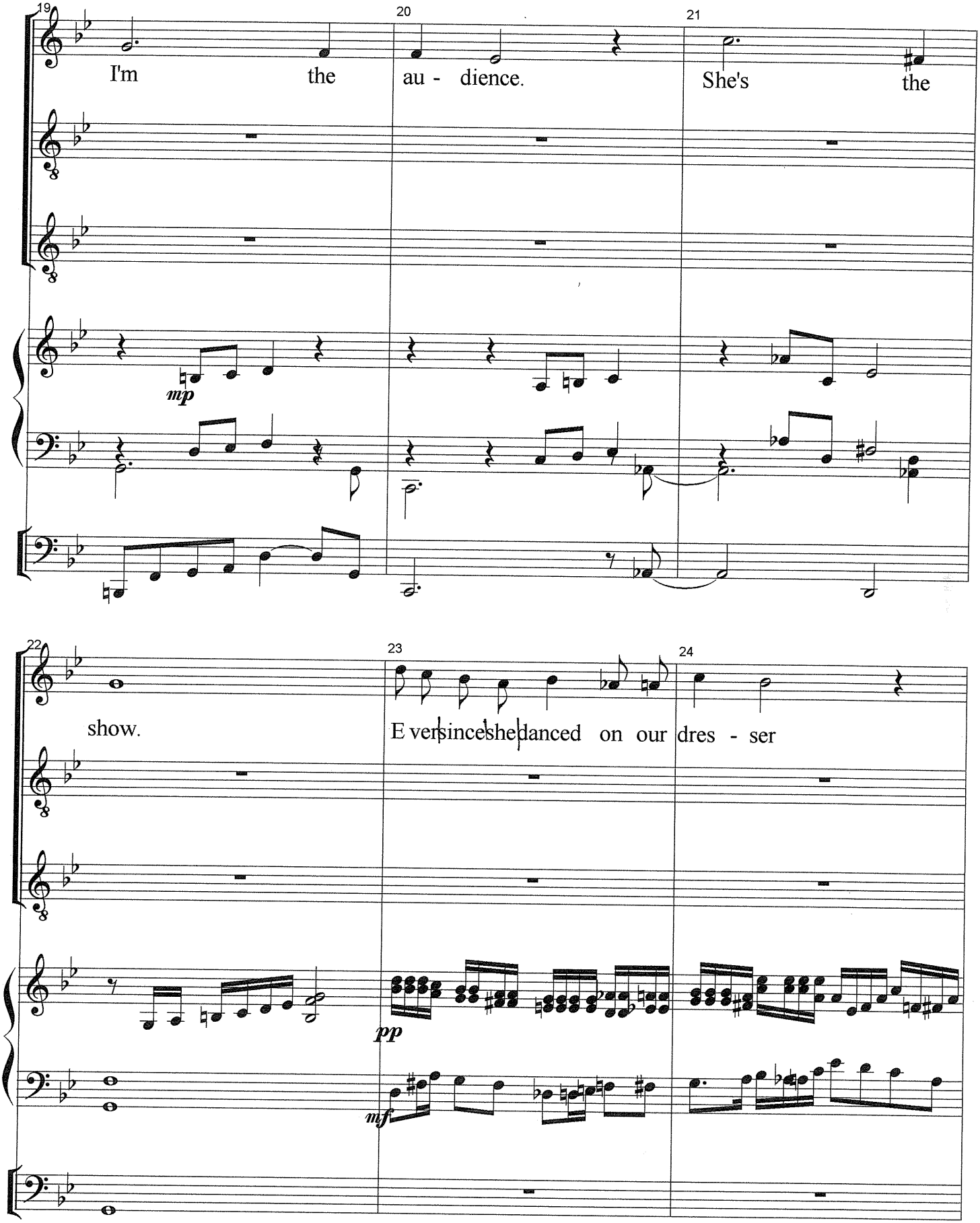
Richard Ros

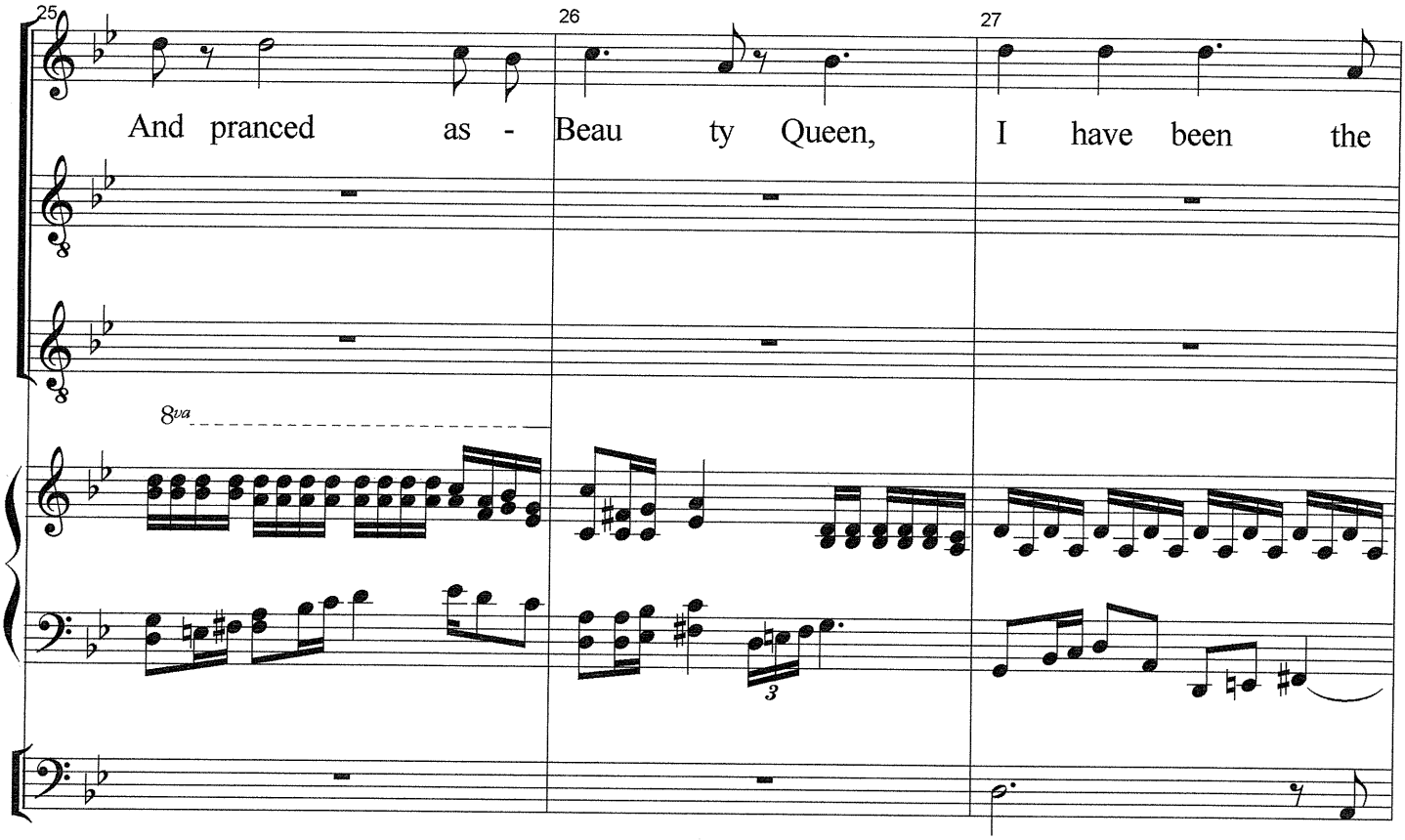


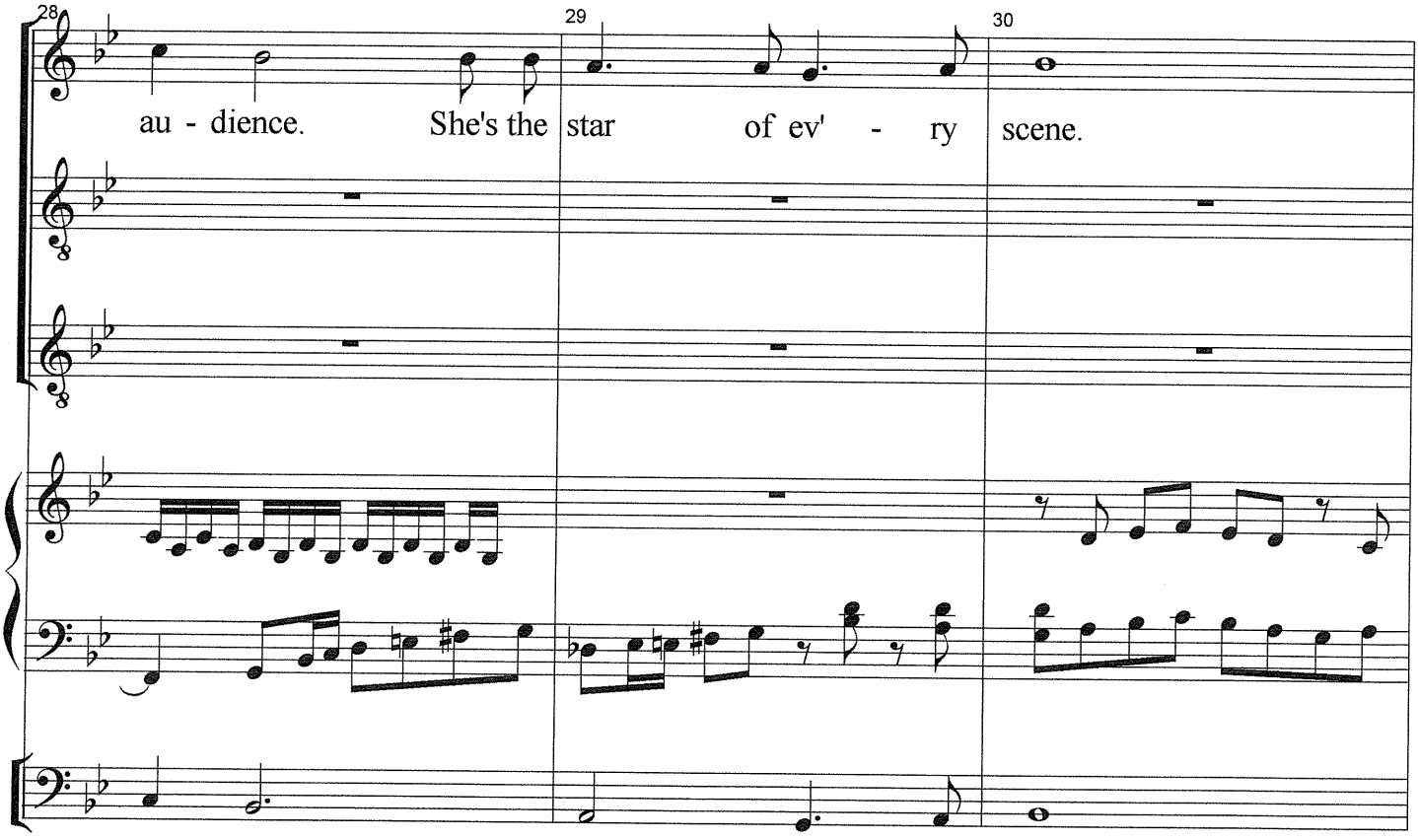

7
8
9
la - tion - ship.
Yes
Now I go to med -i- tate and pray.
10
11
12
pray.
I think an an - swer's on the way.
(Exit Norman.)
p

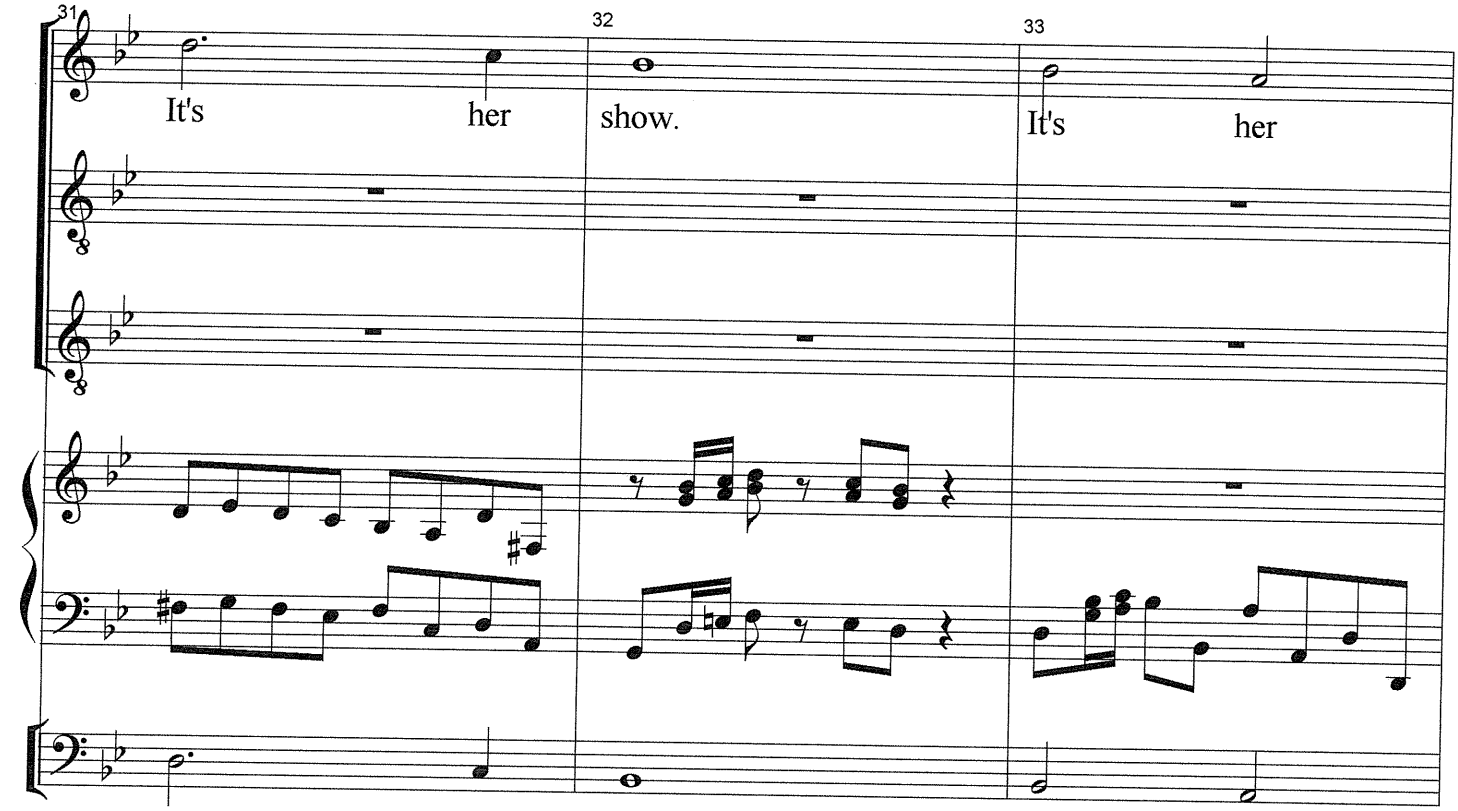

13
14
15
Par - don me, Are you A - mer -i- cans and

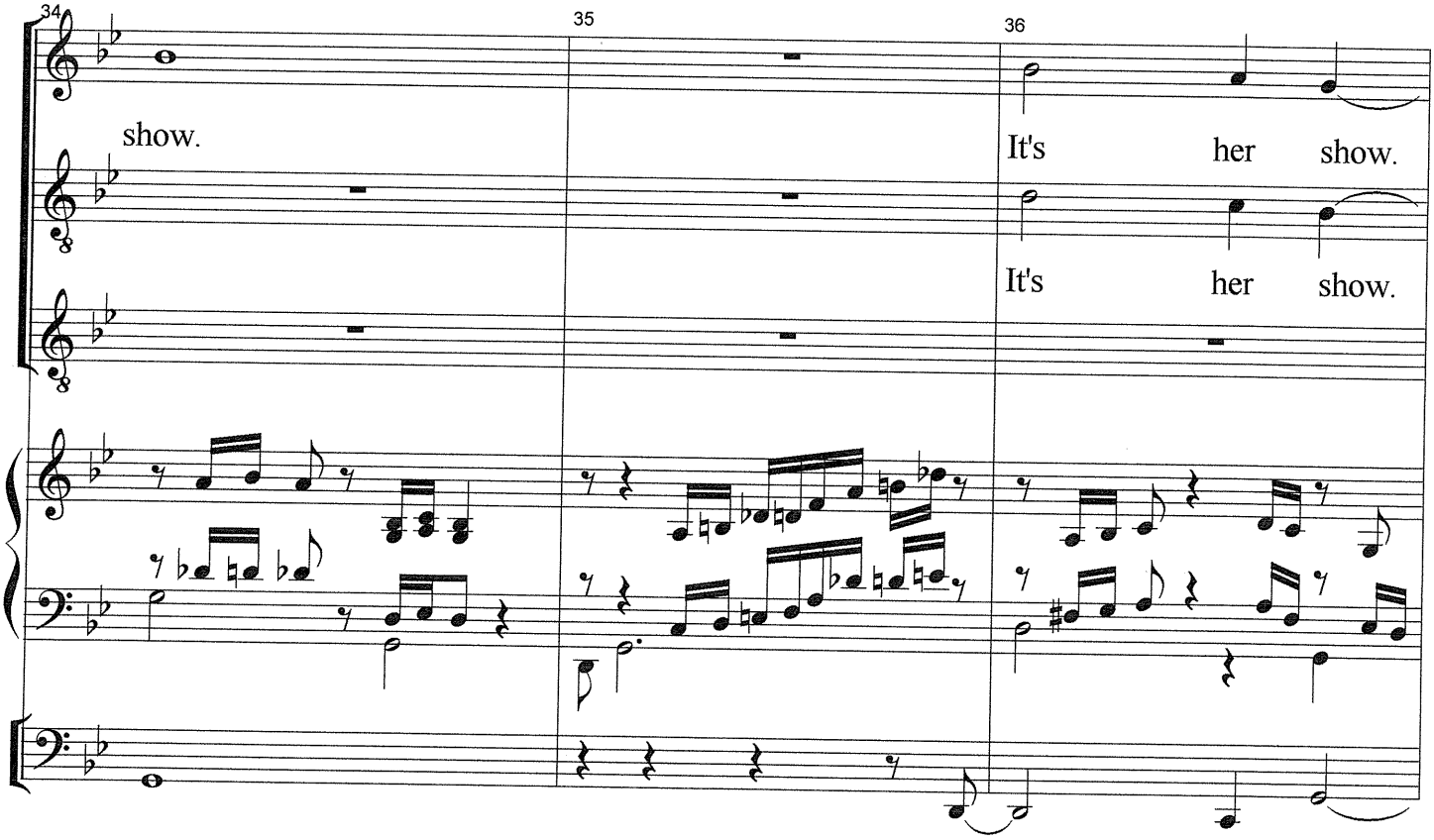

16
17
18
pil - grims?
Ip-si's the pil-grim.
It's her show.
8va
pp
mp

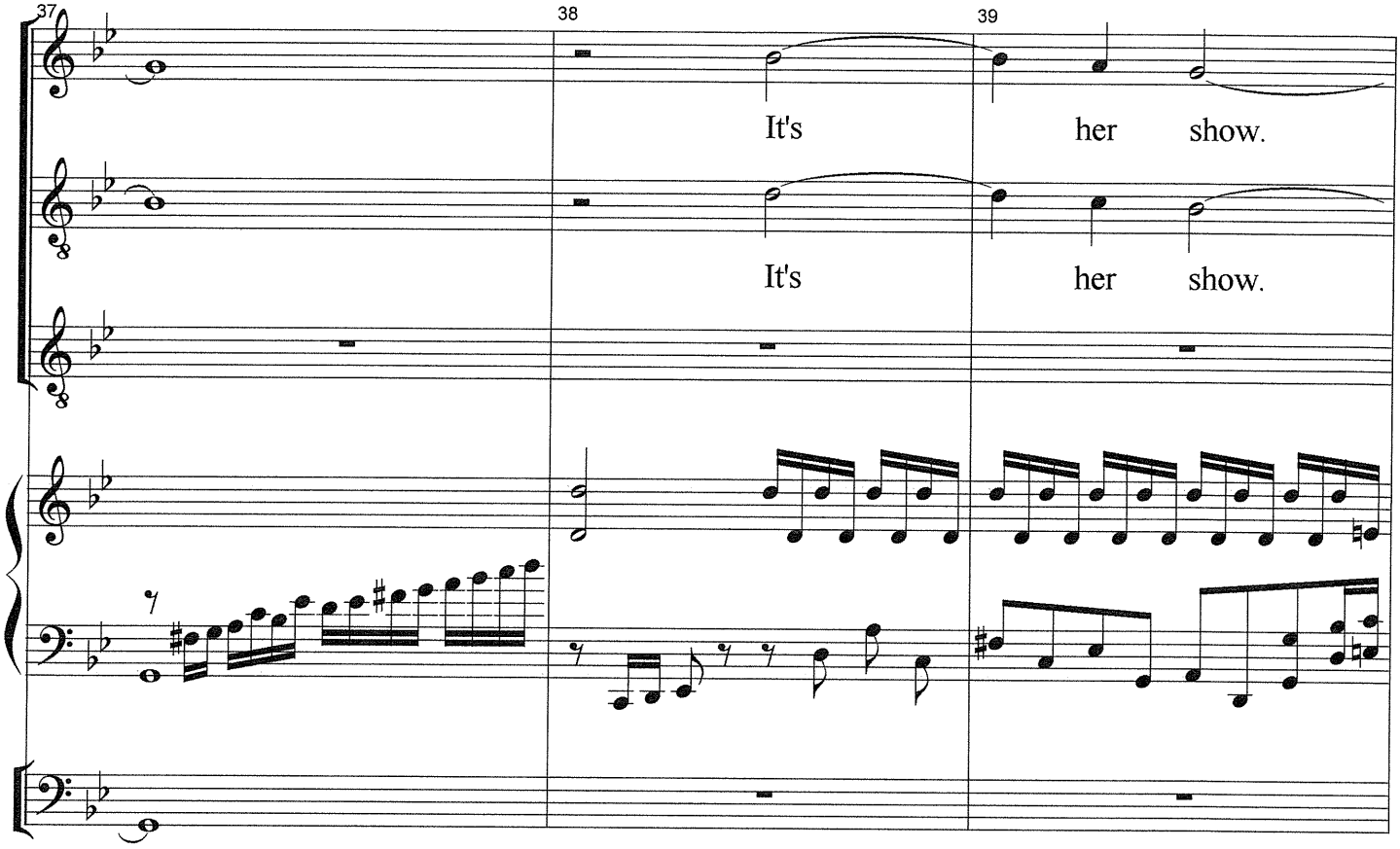

19
20
21
I'm the au - dience. She's the
mp
22
23
24
show. E versince she danced on our dres - ser
pp
mf

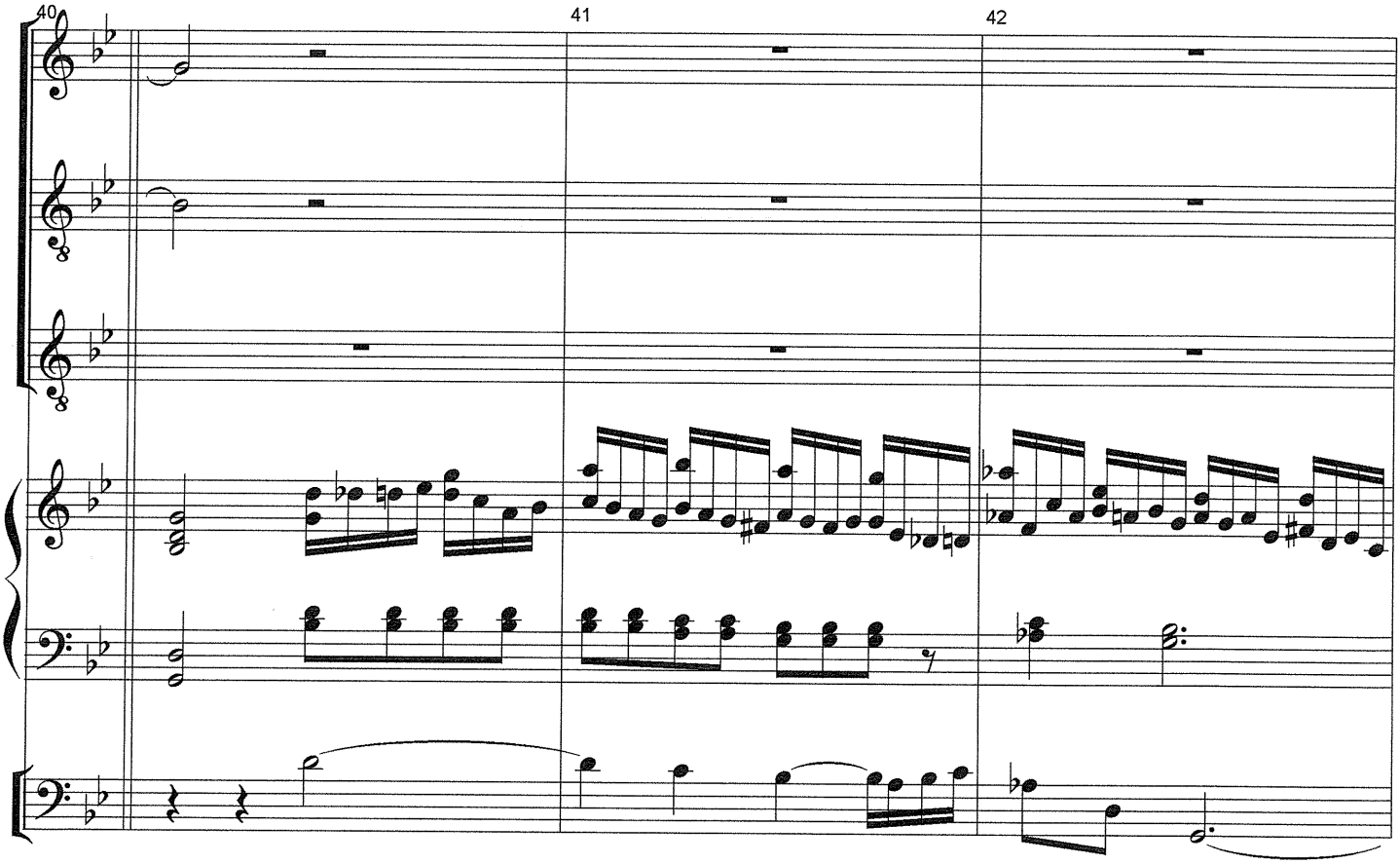

25
26
27
And pranced as - Beau ty Queen, I have been the
8va
3

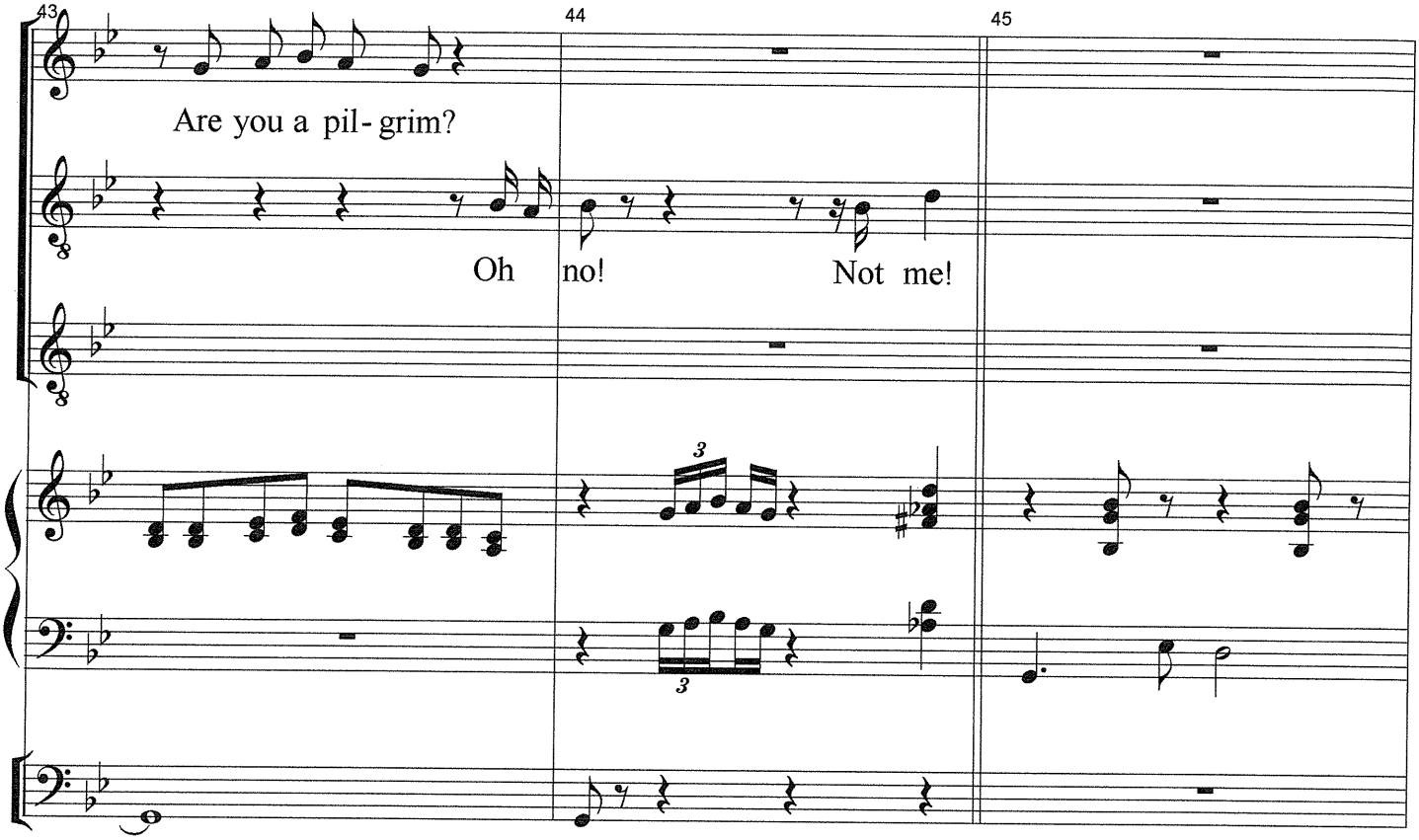

28
29
30
au - dience. She's the star of ev' - ry scene.

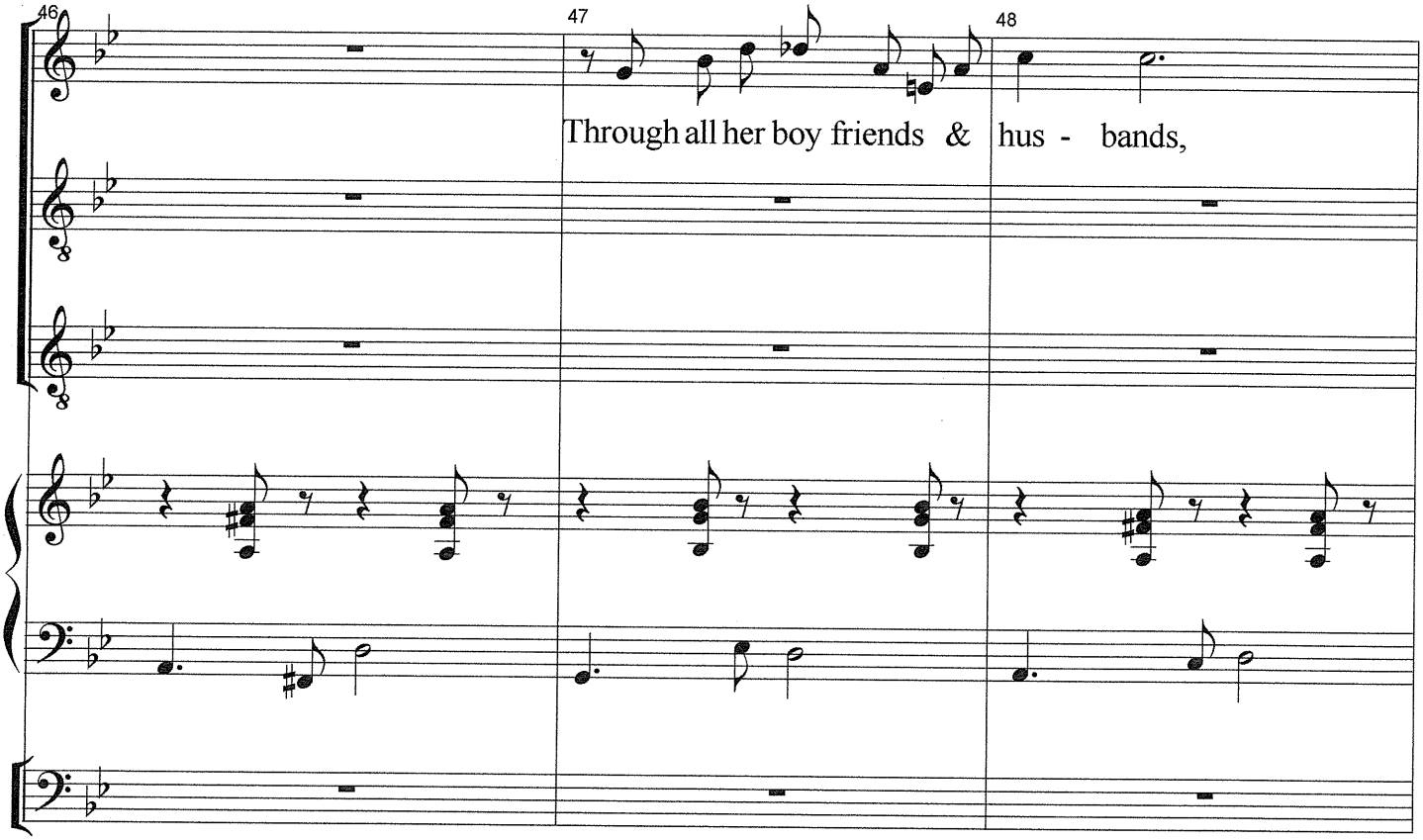

31
It's
her
32
show.
33
It's
her

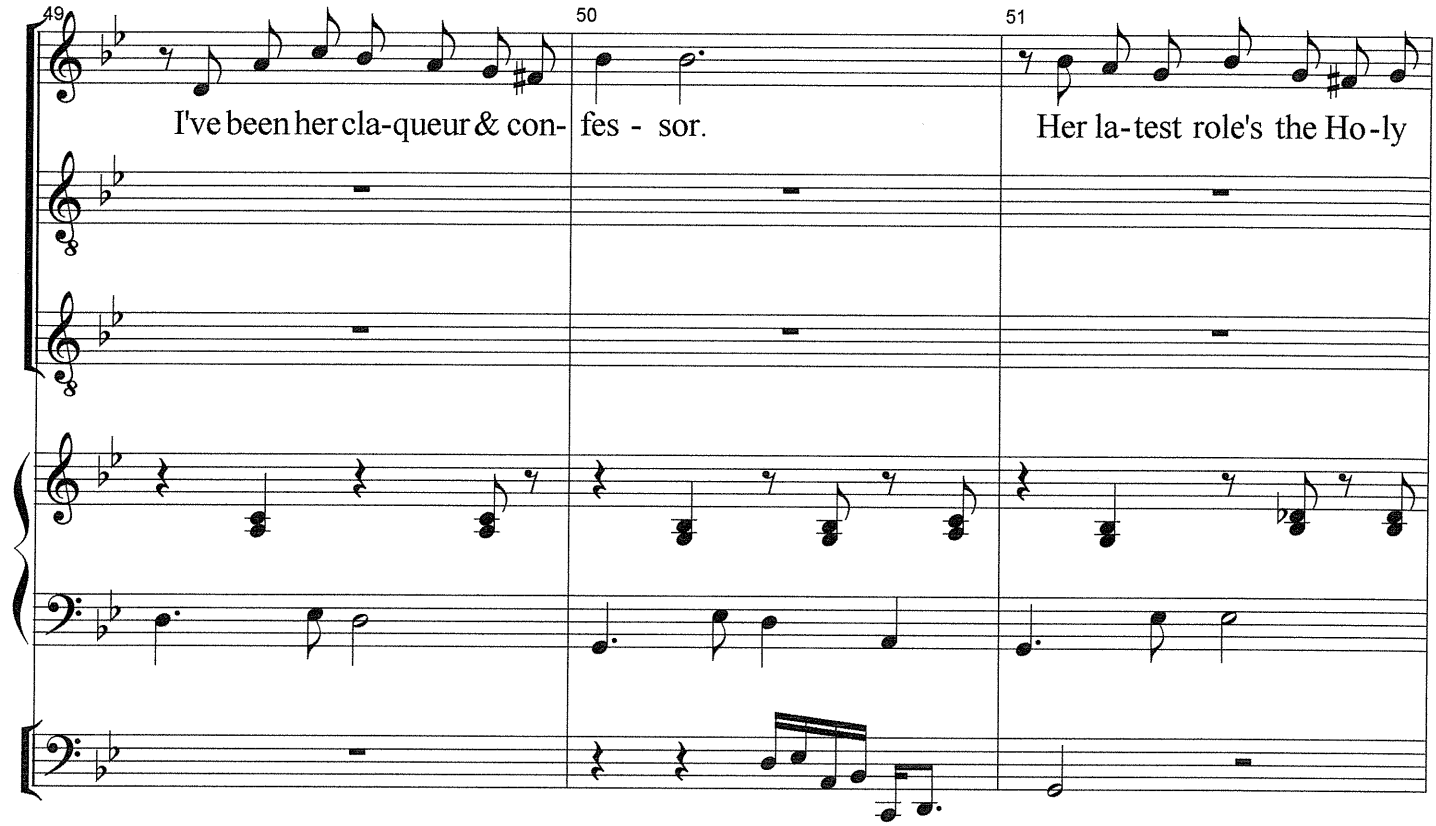

34
show.
35
36
It's
her
show.
It's
her
show.

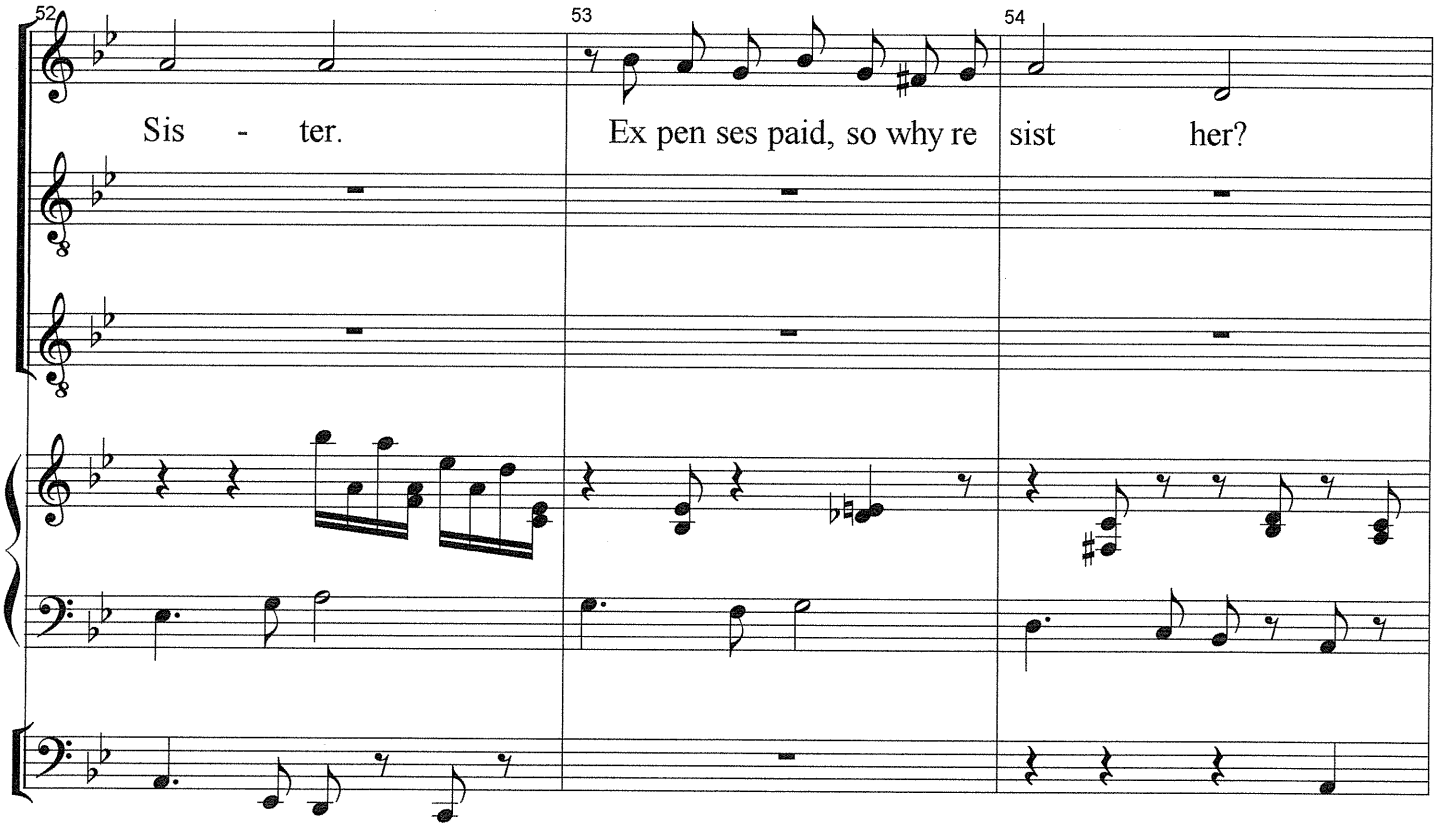

37
38
39
It's her show.
It's her show.

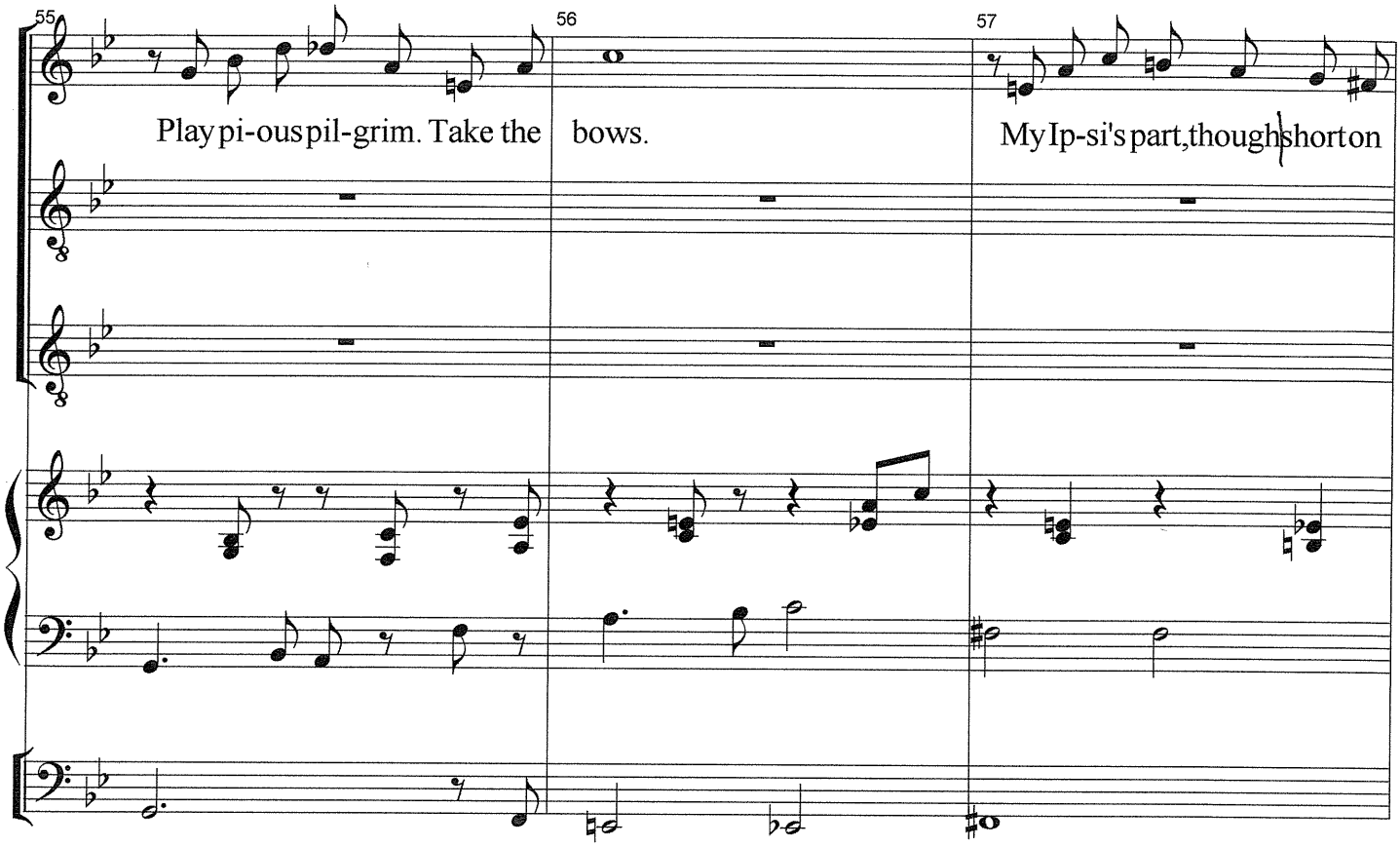

40
41
42

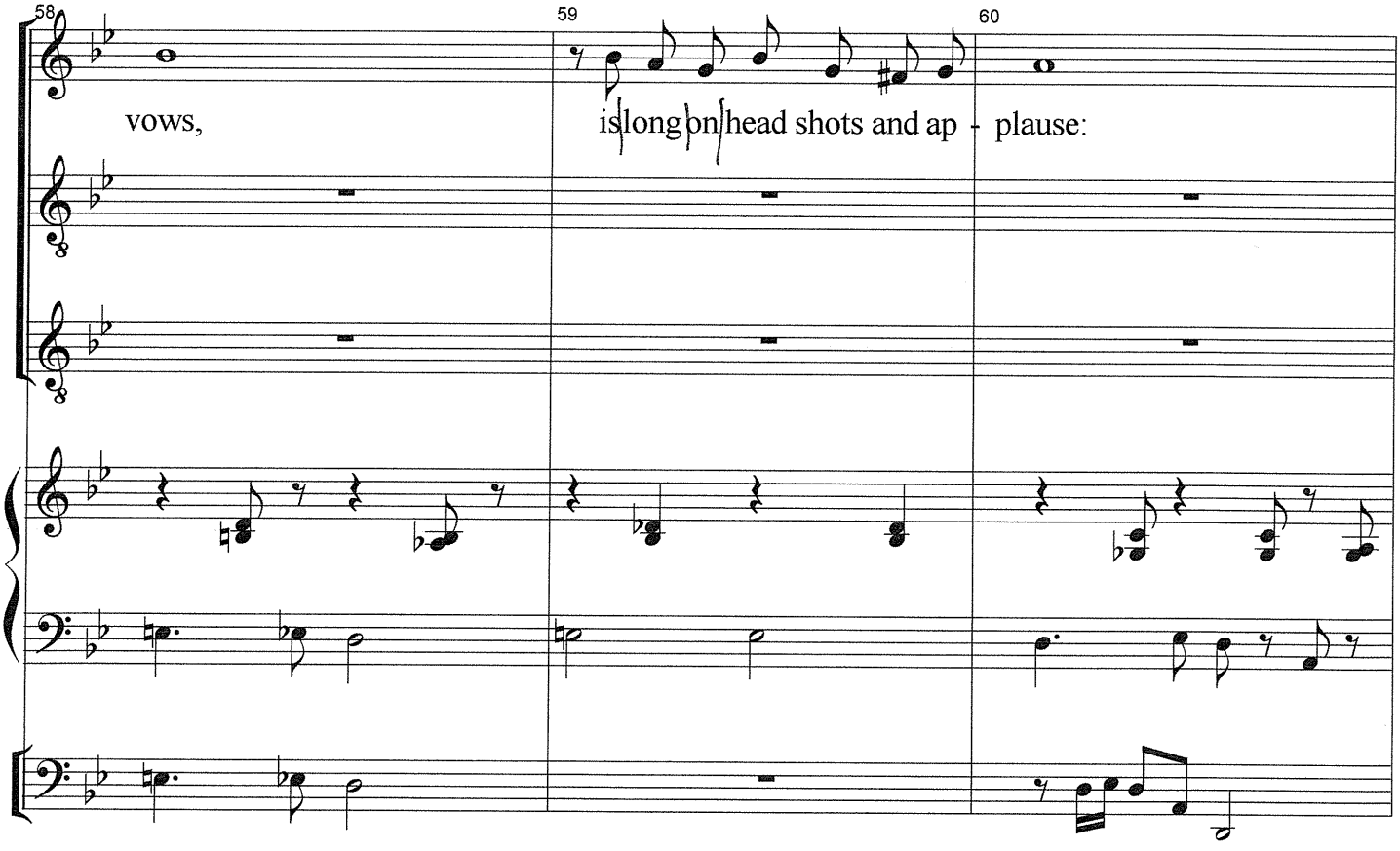

43
44
45
Are you a pil- grim?
Oh no! Not me!

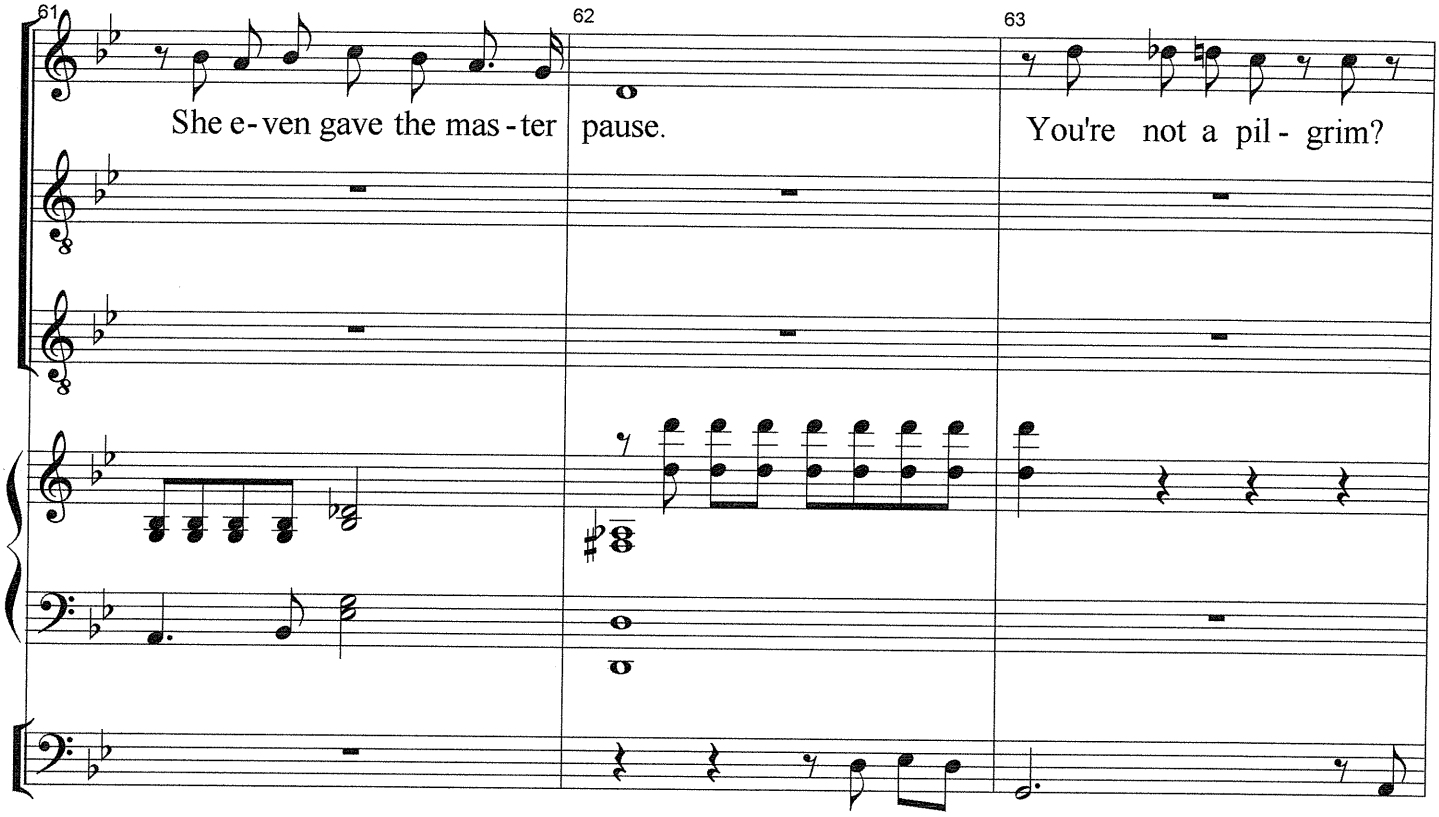

46
47
48
Through all her boy friends & hus - bands,

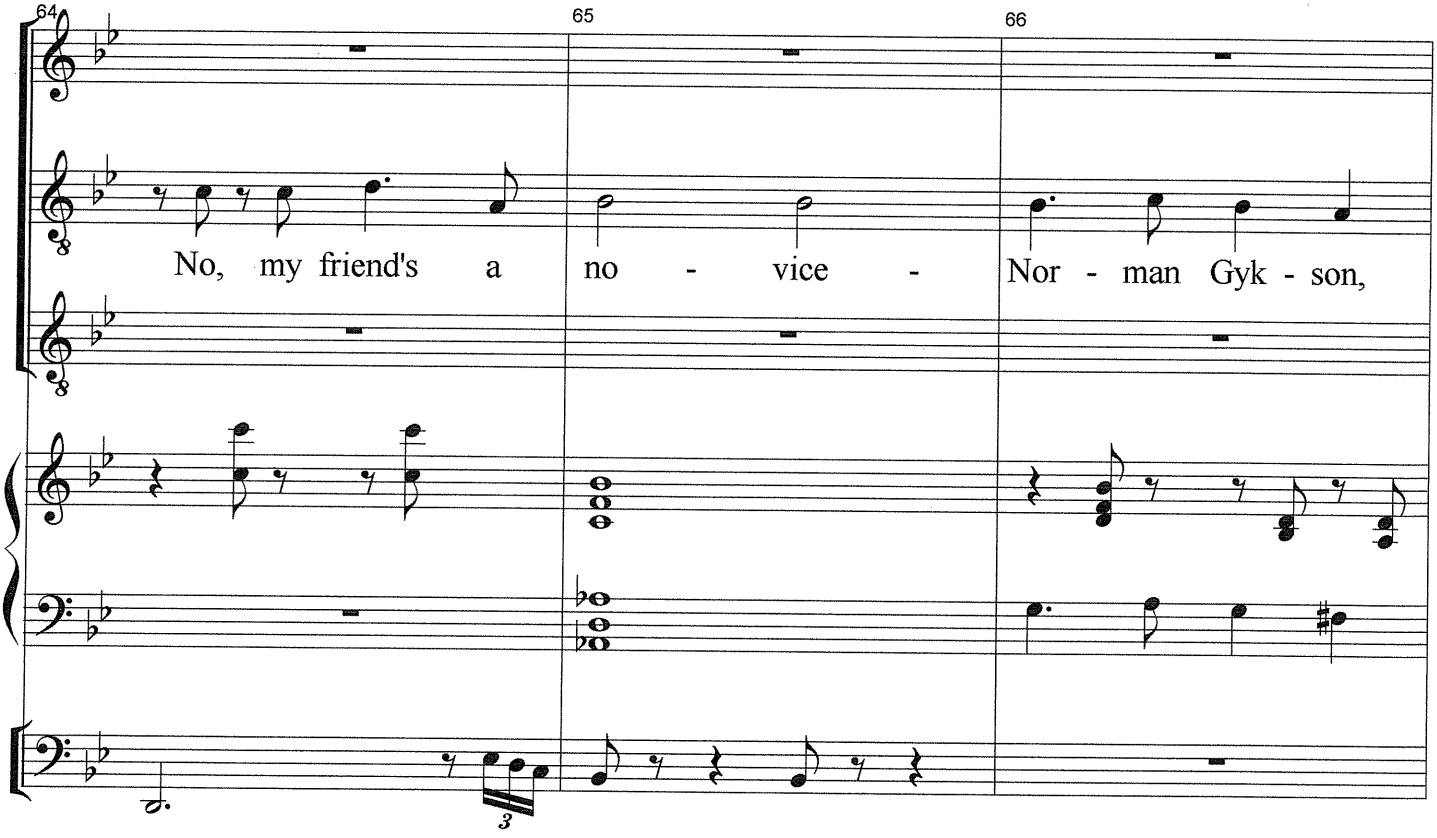

49
50
51
I've been her cla-queur & con- fes - sor.
Her la-test role's the Ho-ly

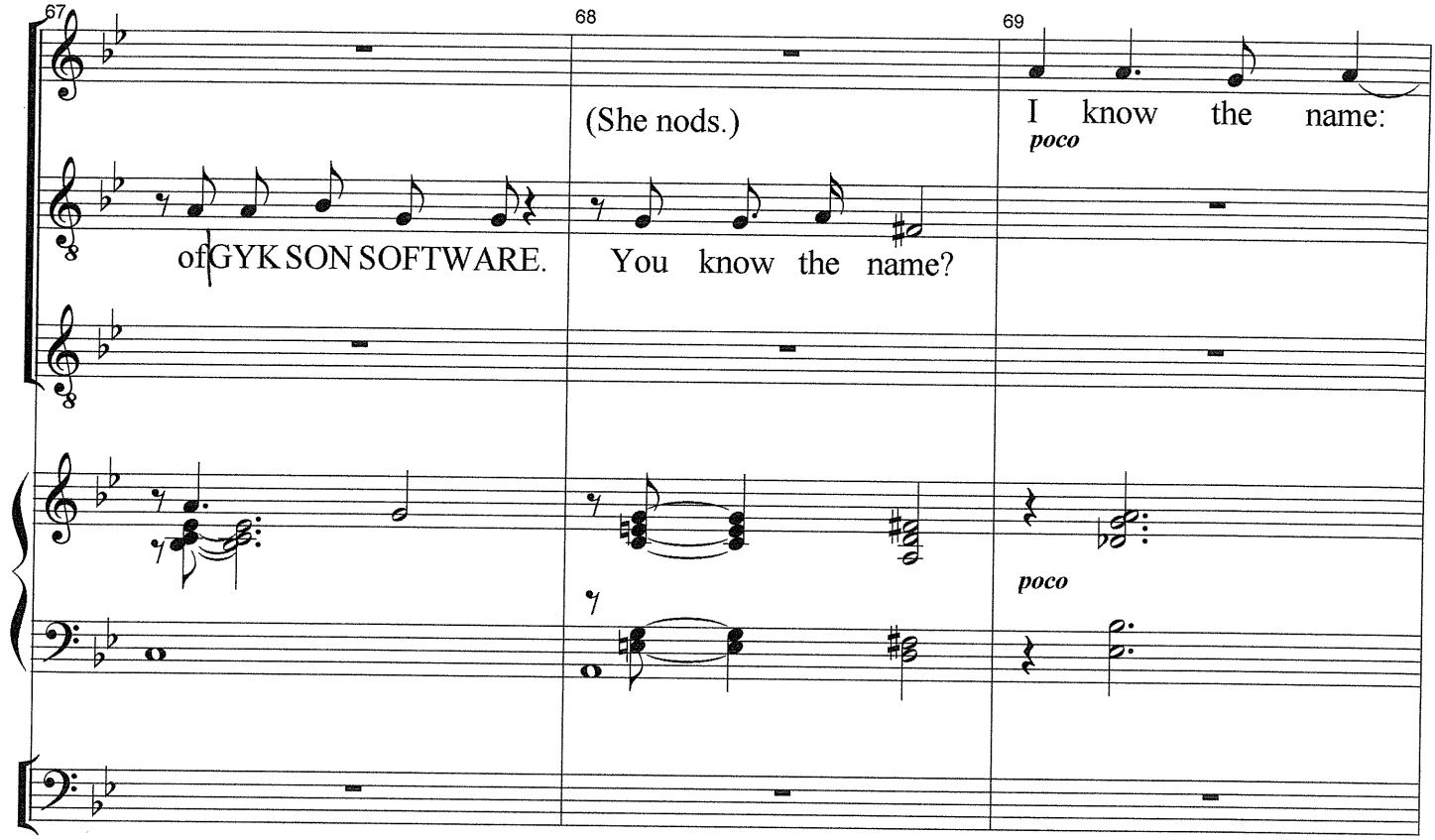

52
53
54
Sis - ter.
Ex pen ses paid, so why re sist her?

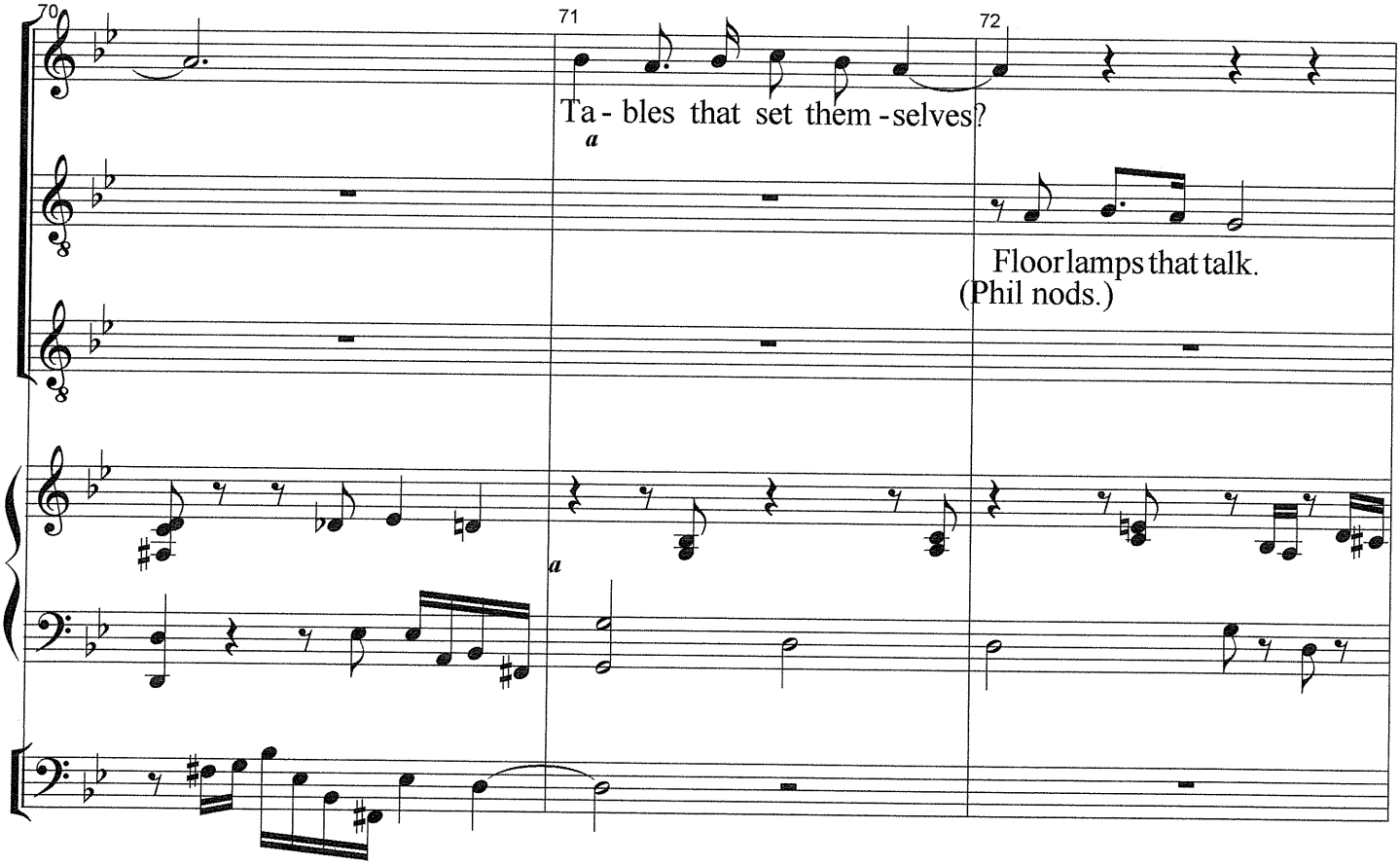

55
56
57
Play pi-ous pil-grim. Take the
bows.
My Ip-si's part, though short on

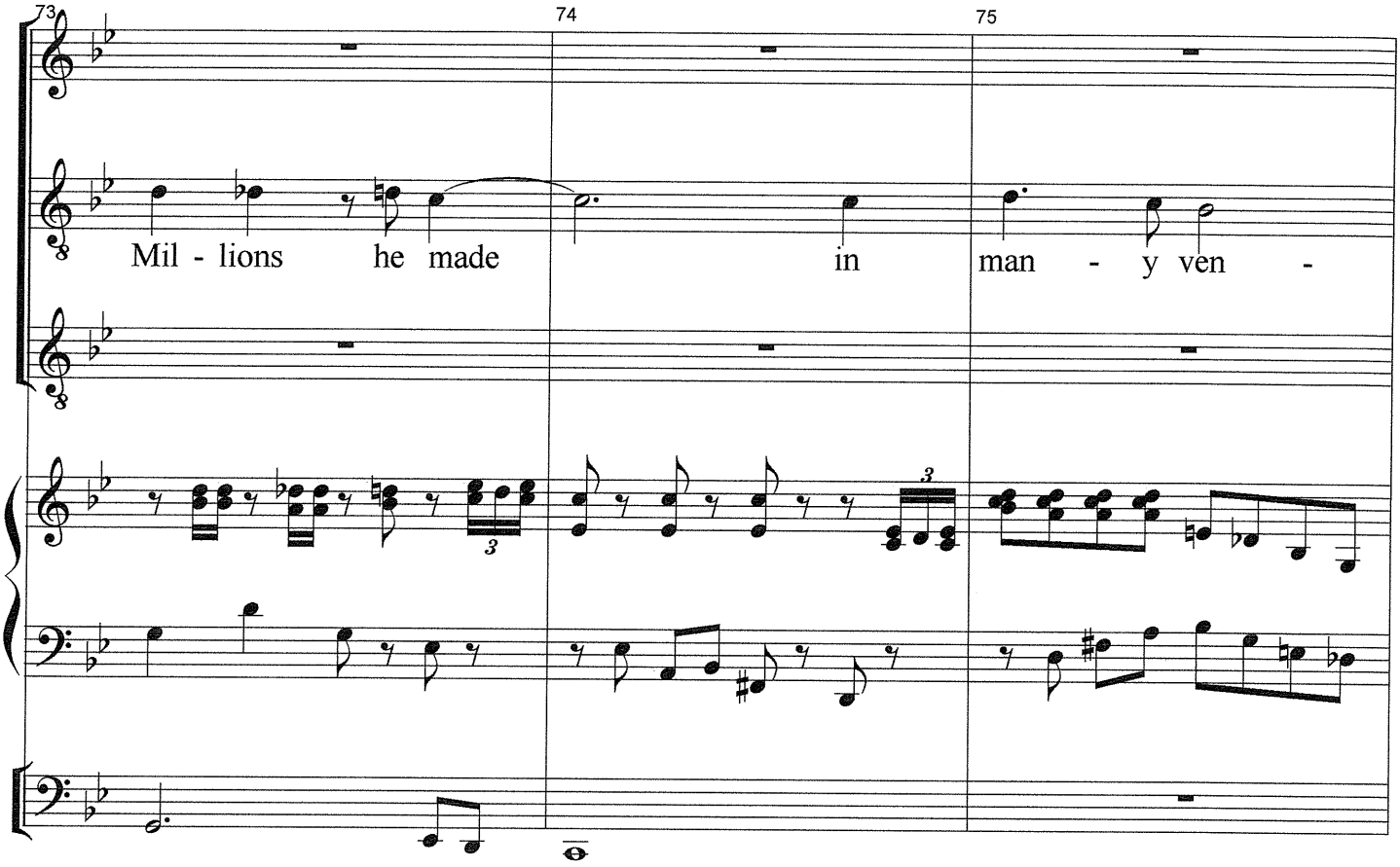

58
59
60
vows,
is long on head shots and ap - plause:

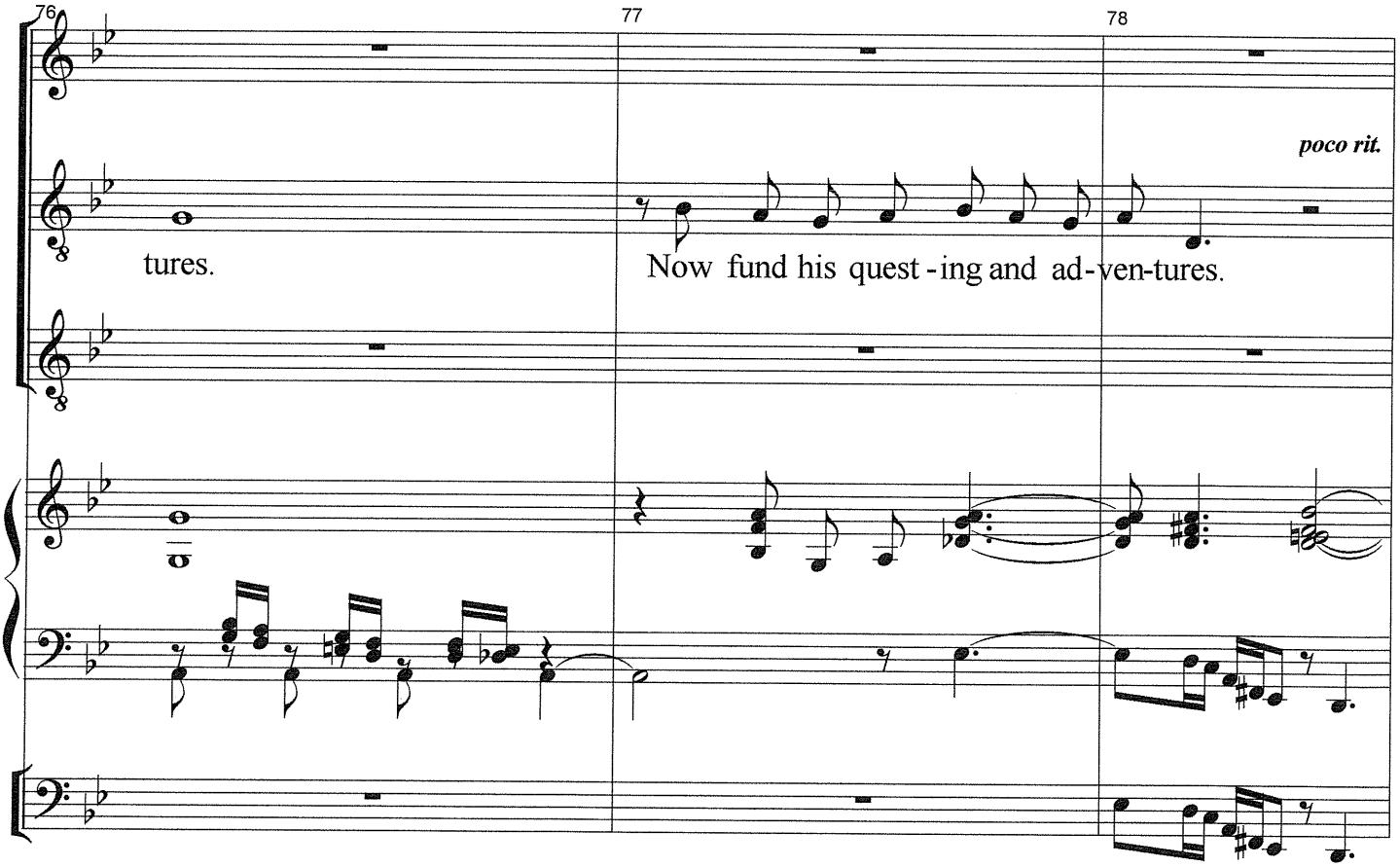

61
62
63
She e-ven gave the mas-ter
pause.
You're not a pil- grim?

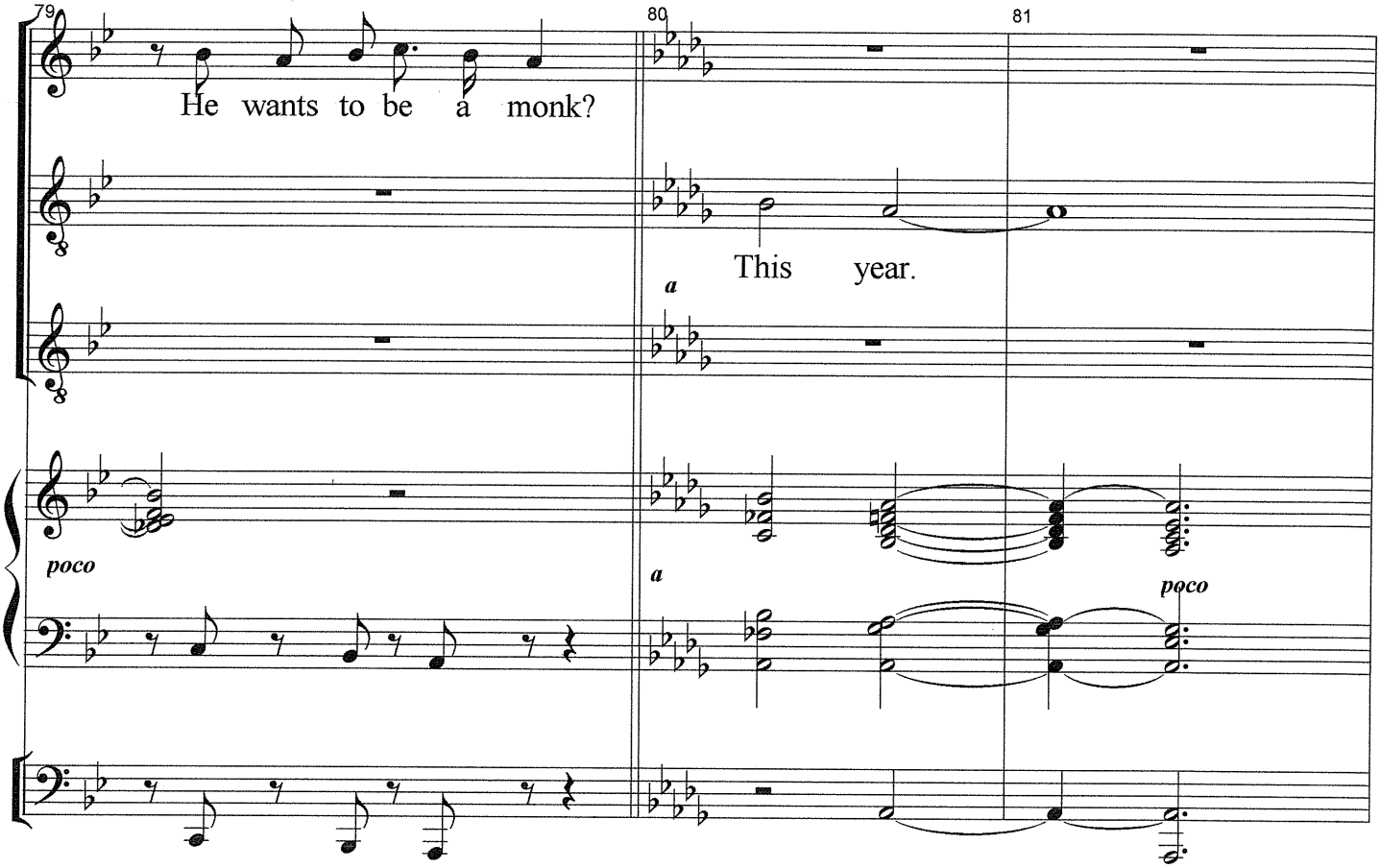

64
65
66
No, my friend's a
no - vice -
Nor - man Gyk - son,
3

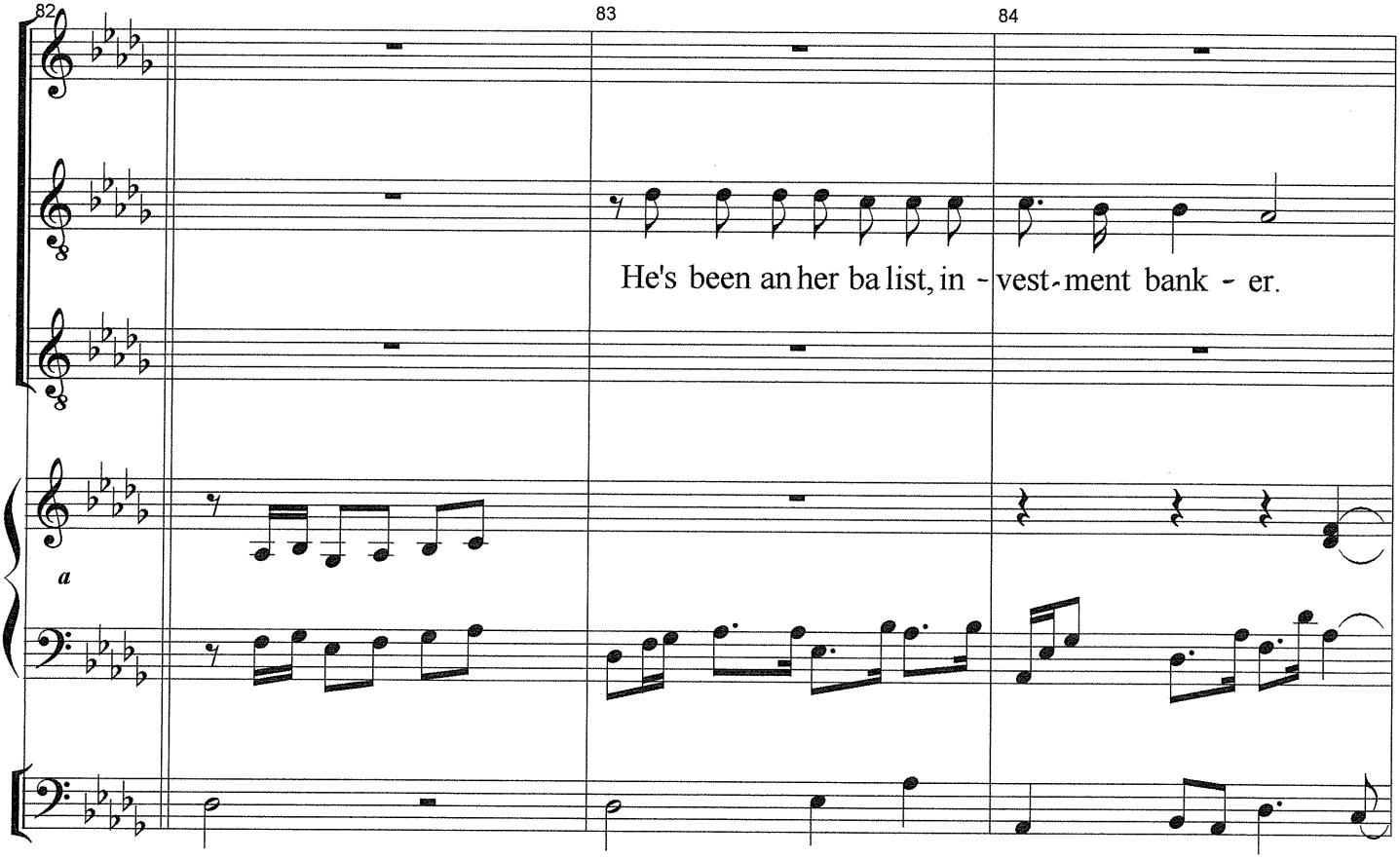

67
68
69
of GYK SON SOFTWARE.
(She nods.)
You know the name?
I know the name:
poco
poco

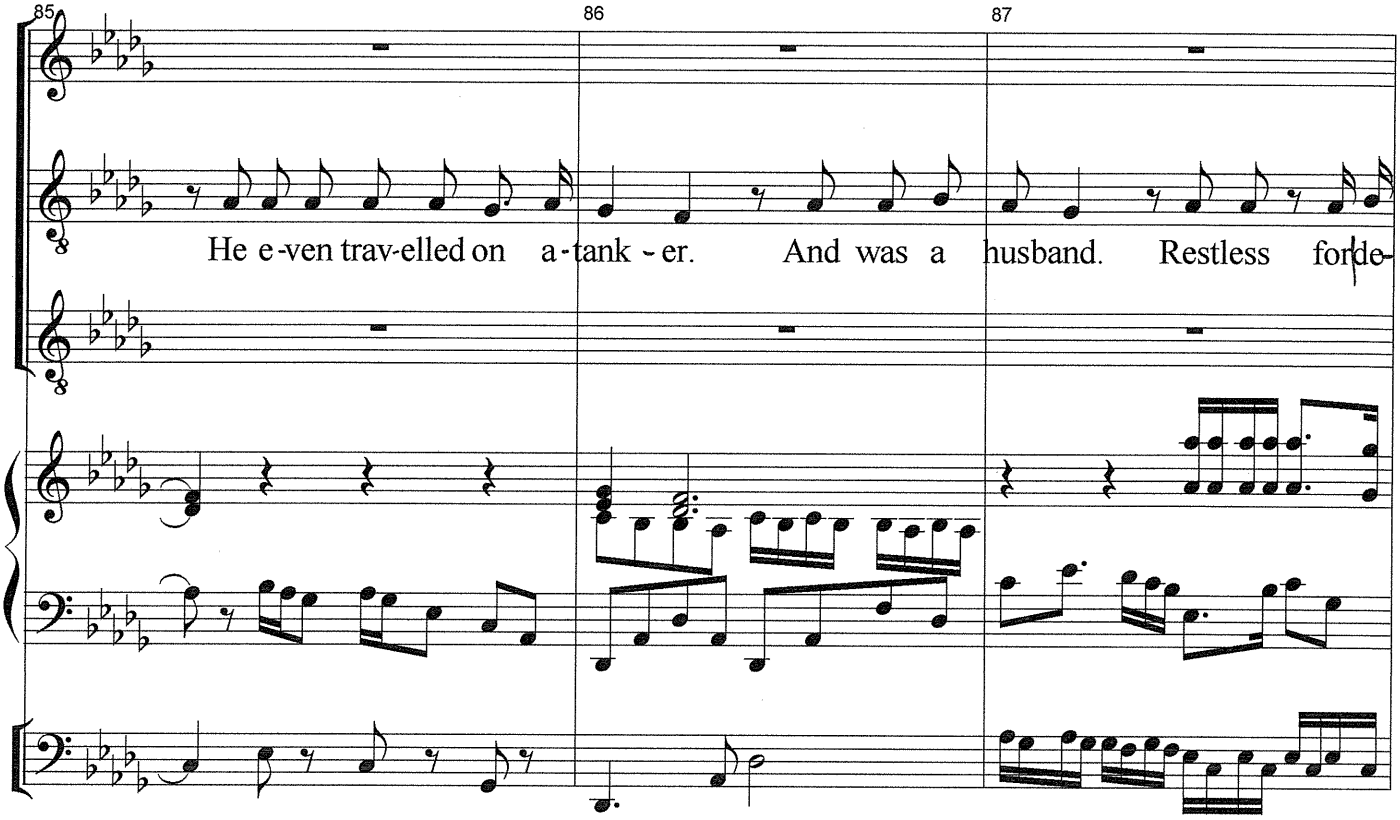

70
71
72
Ta - bles that set them - selves?
a
a
Floor lamps that talk.
(Phil nods.)

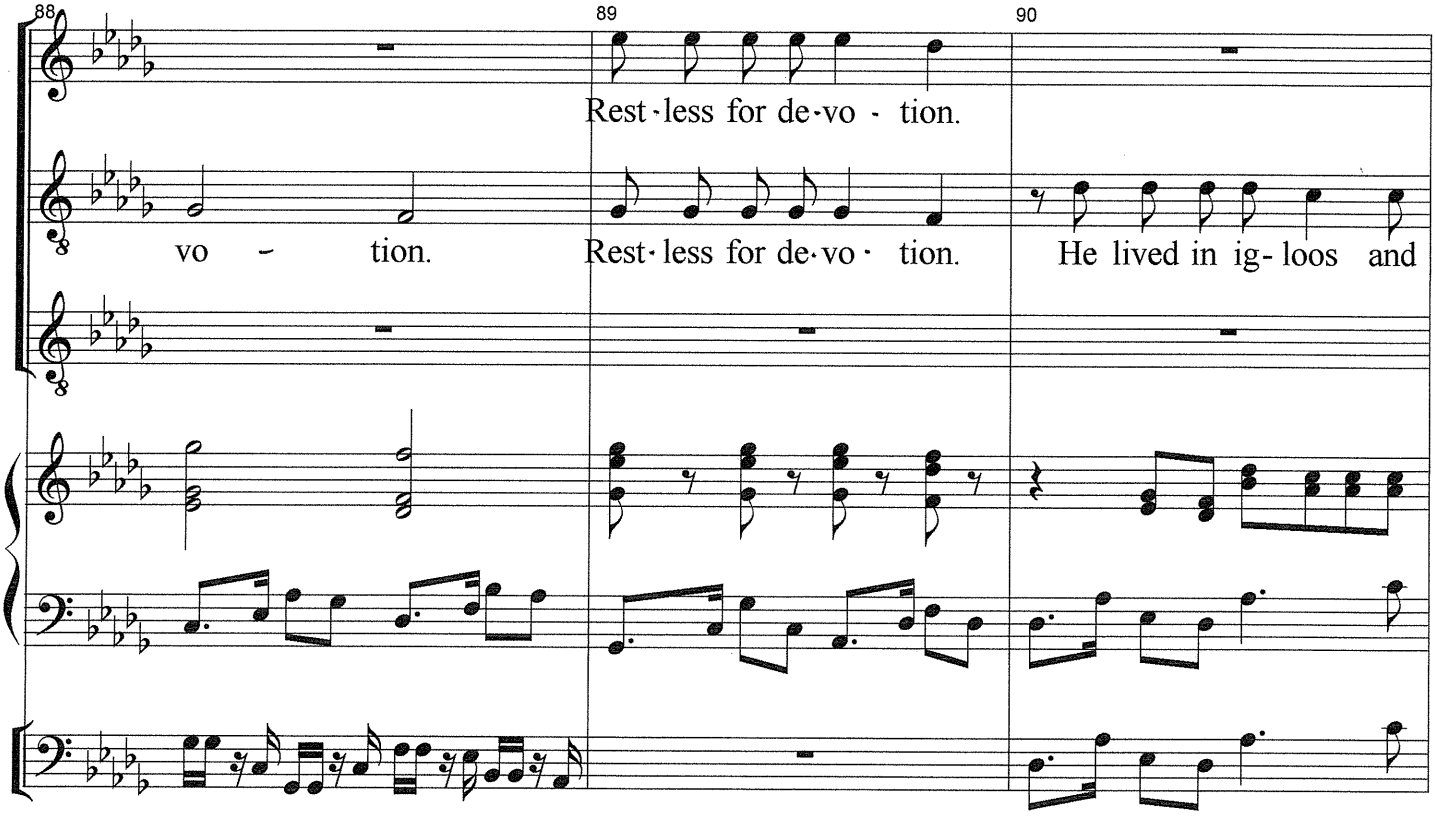

73
74
75
Mil - lions he made in man - y ven -

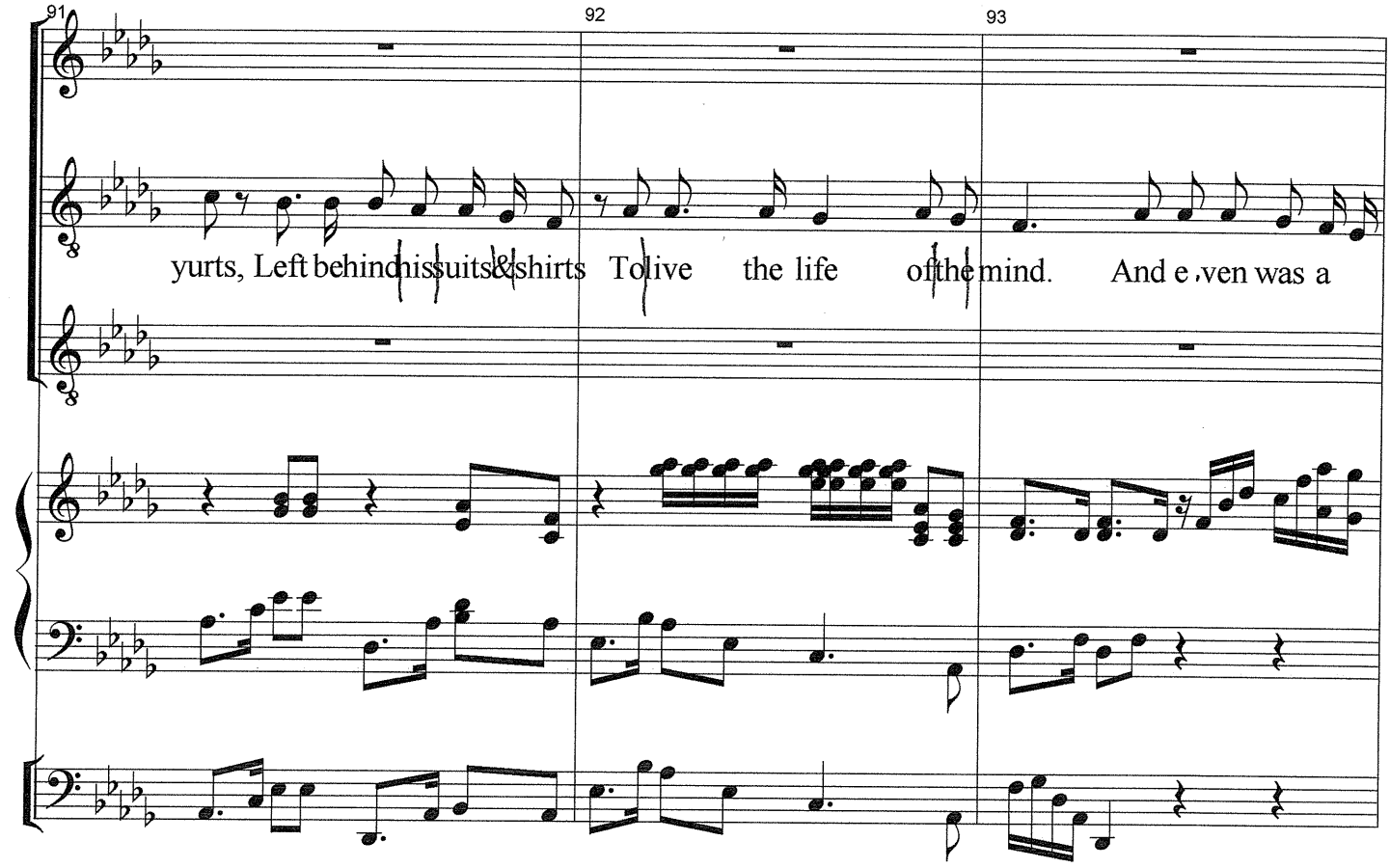

76
77
78
poco rit.
tures.
Now fund his quest - ing and ad - ven-tures.

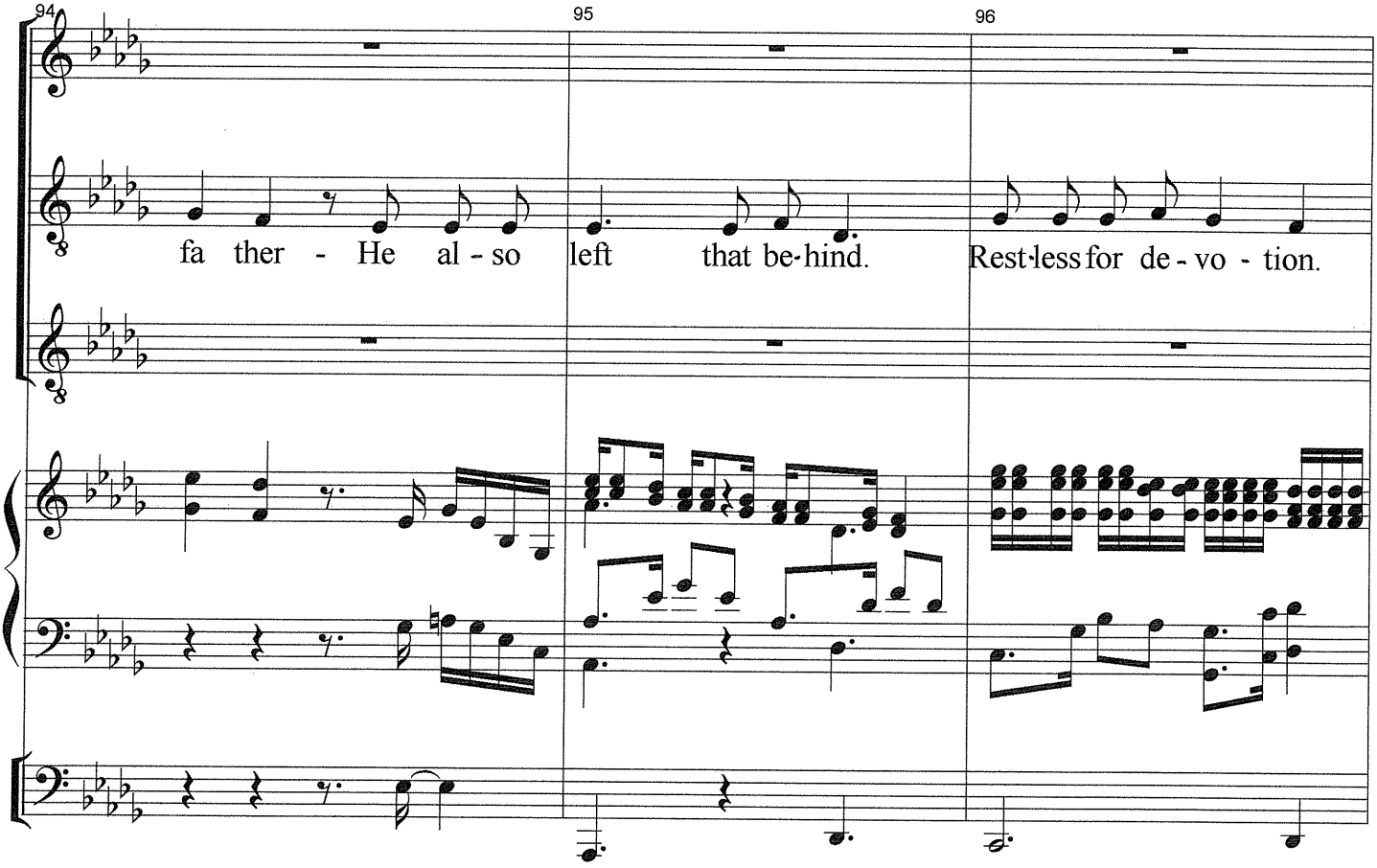

79
80
81
He wants to be a monk?
This year.
a
poco
a
poco

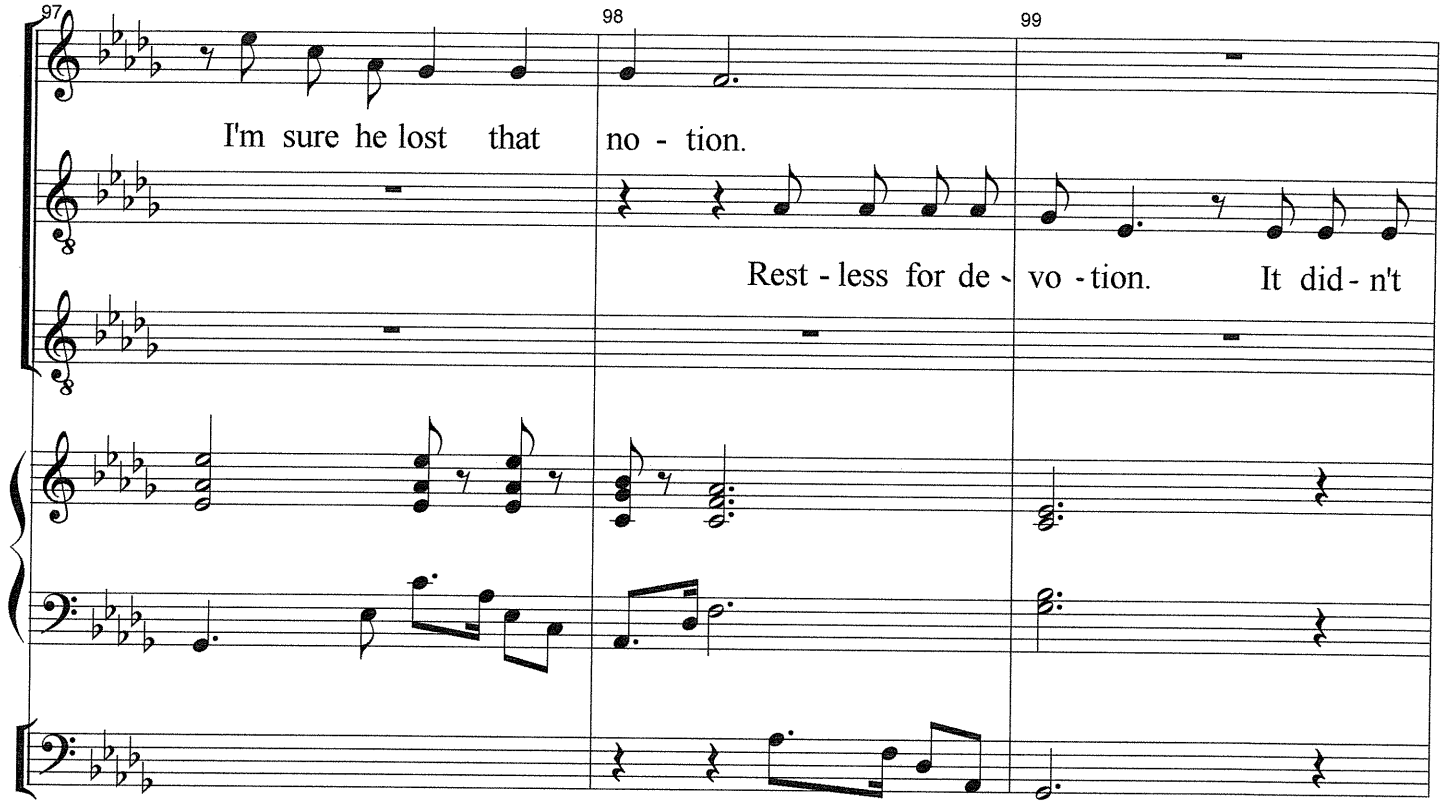

82
83
84
He's been an her ba list, in - vest - ment bank - er.
a

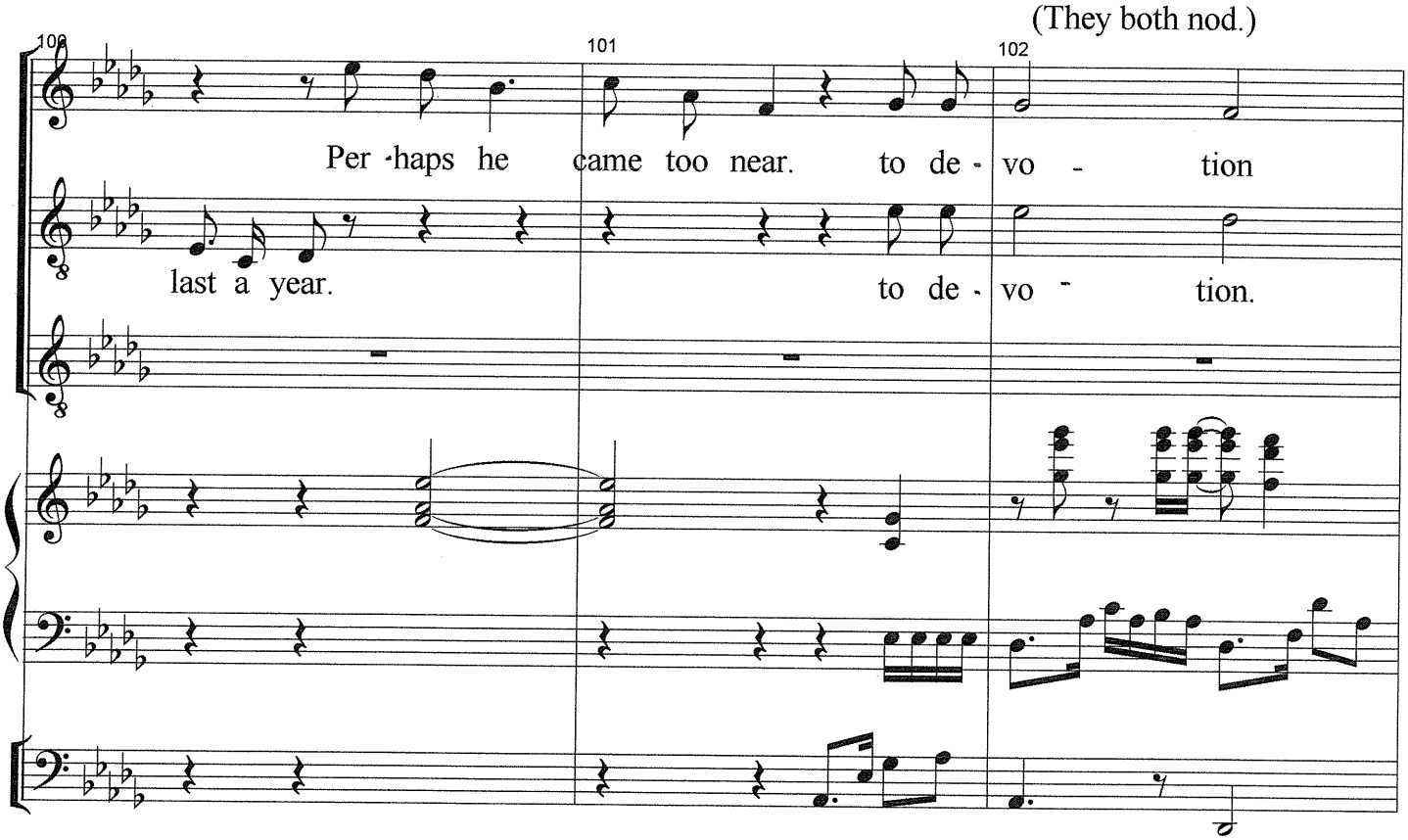

85
86
87
He e-ven trav-elled on a-tank-er. And was a husband. Restless forde-

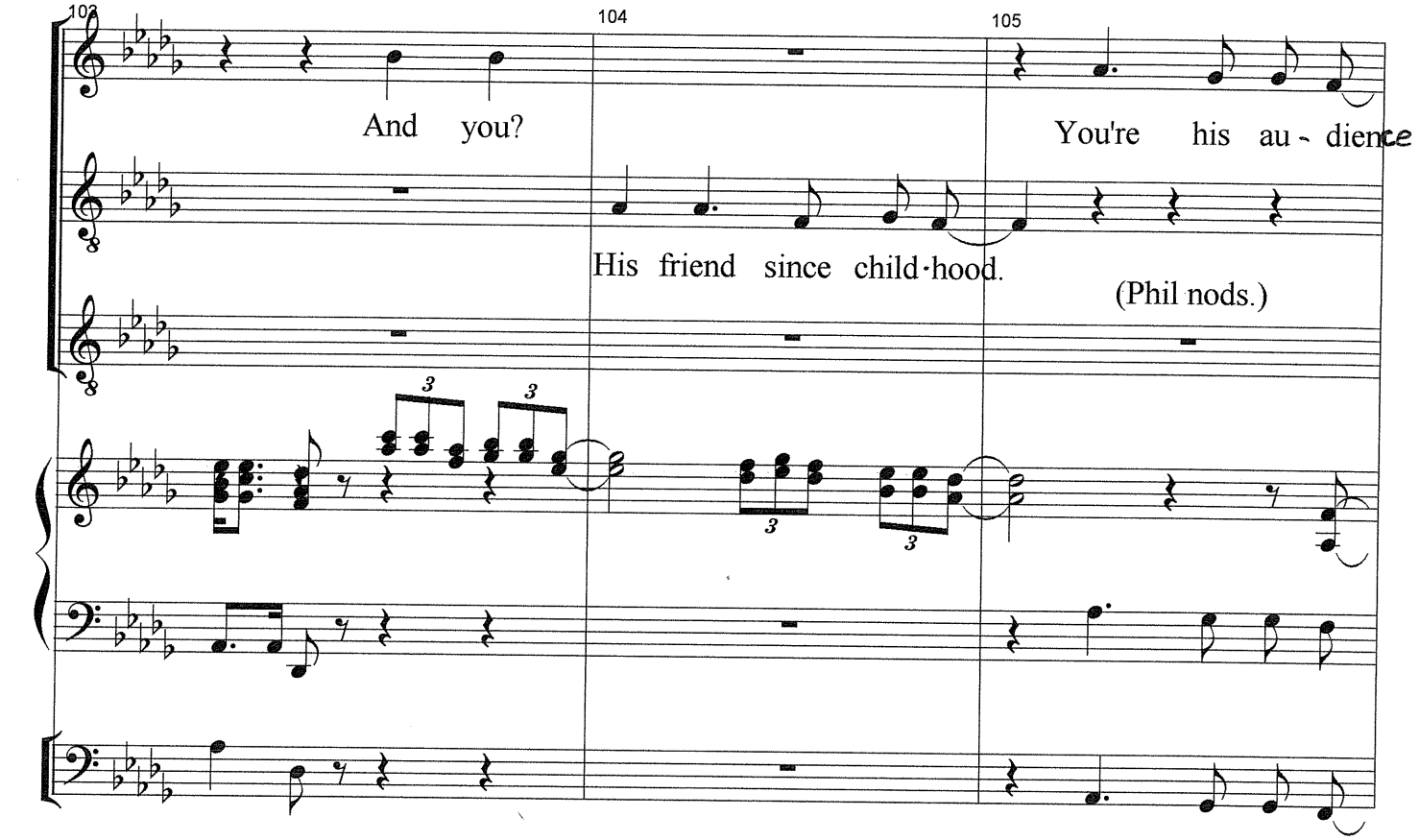

88
89
90
Rest-less for de-vo-tion.
vo - tion. Rest-less for de-vo-tion. He lived in ig-loos and

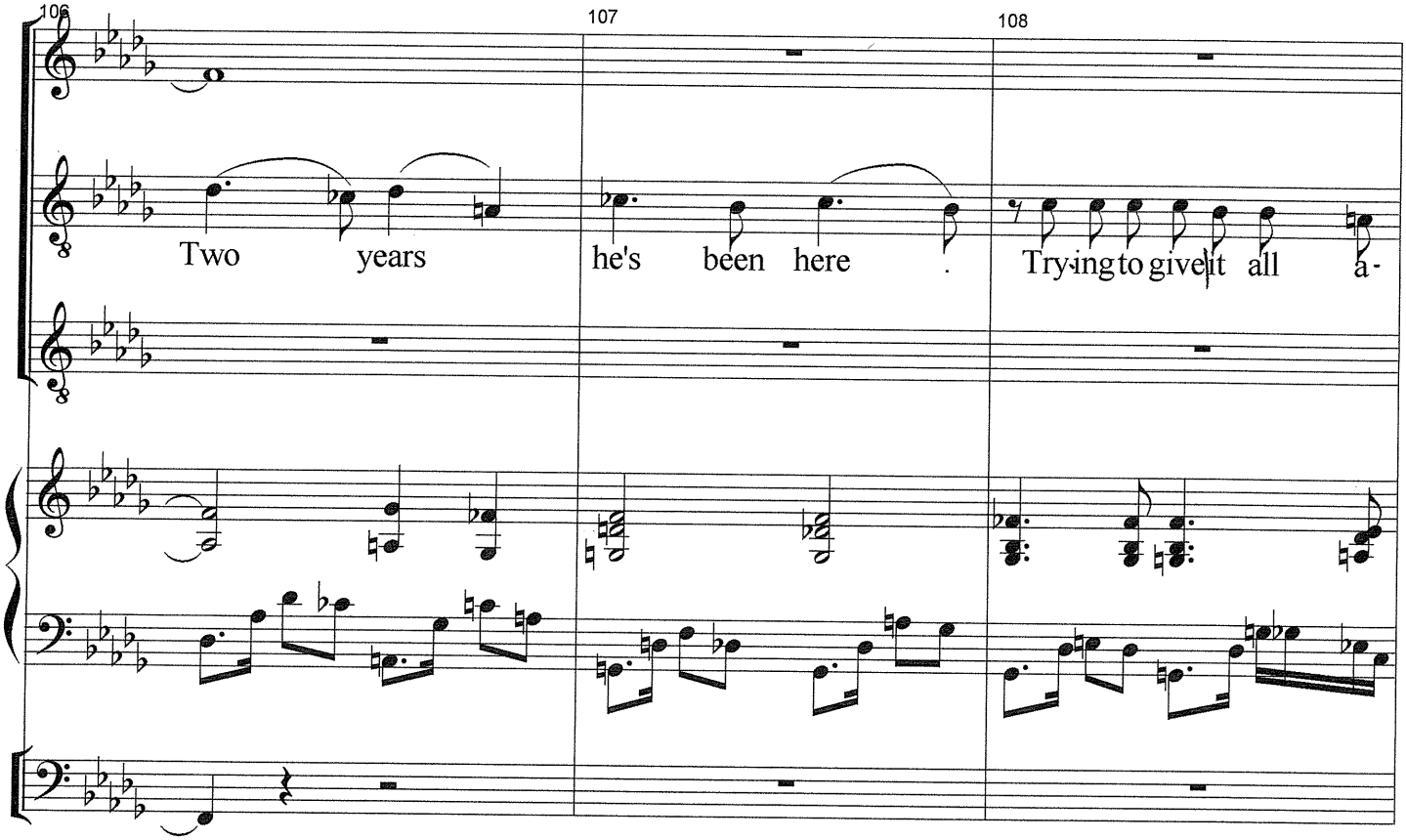

91
92
93
yurts, Left behind his suits & shirts To live the life of the mind. And e ven was a

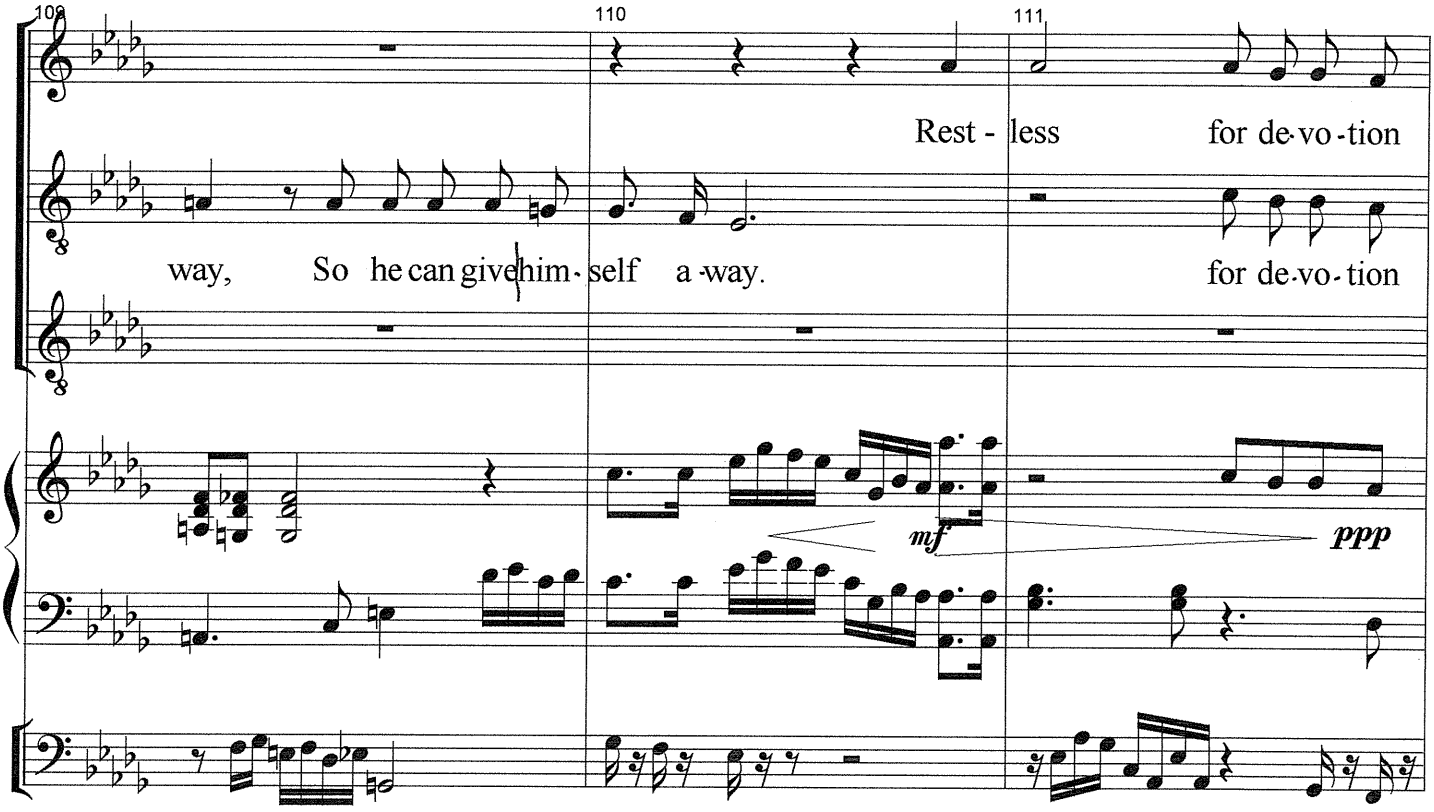

94
95
96
fa ther - He al - so left that be-hind. Rest-less for de - vo - tion.

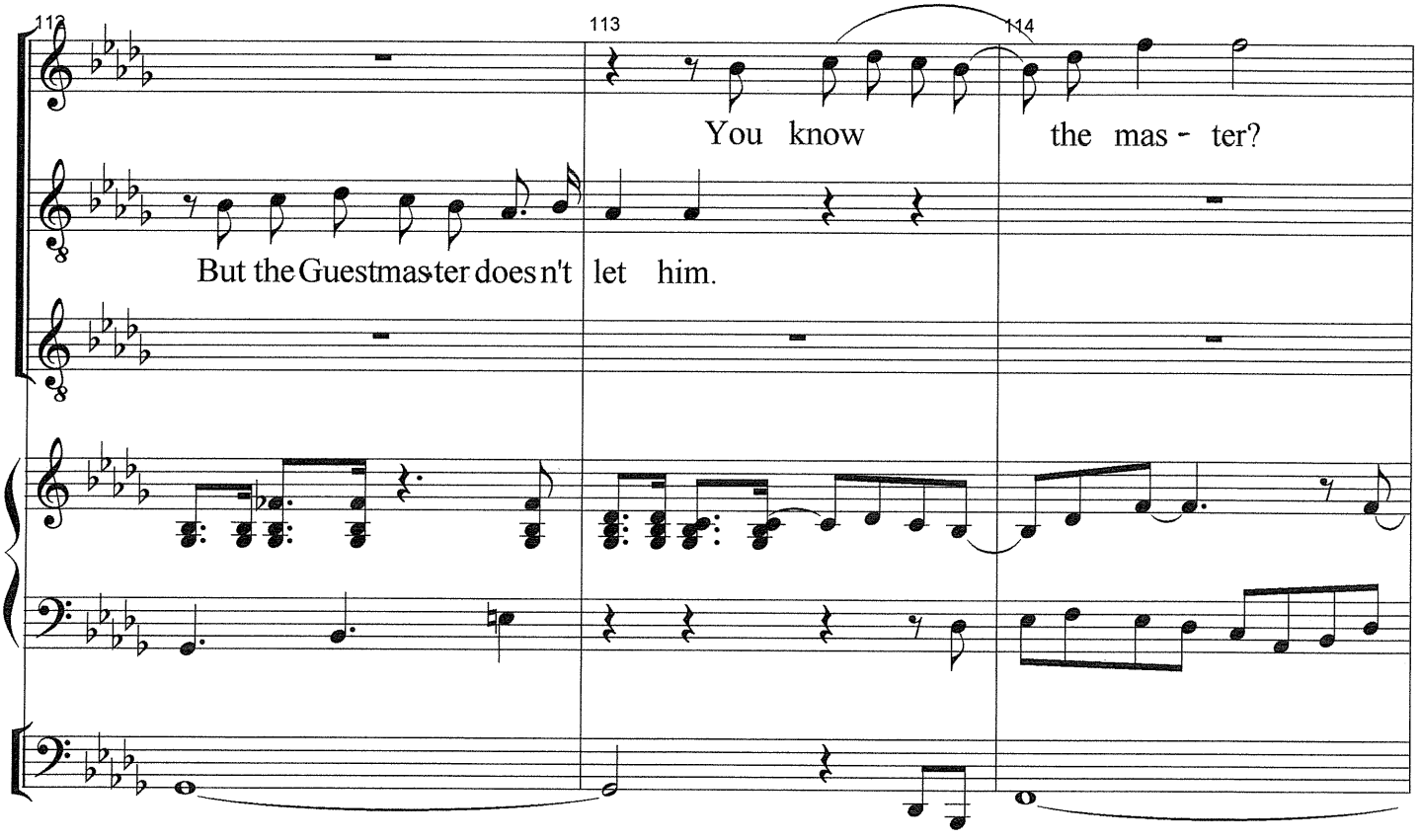

97
98
99
I'm sure he lost that
no - tion.
Rest - less for de - vo - tion.
It did - n't

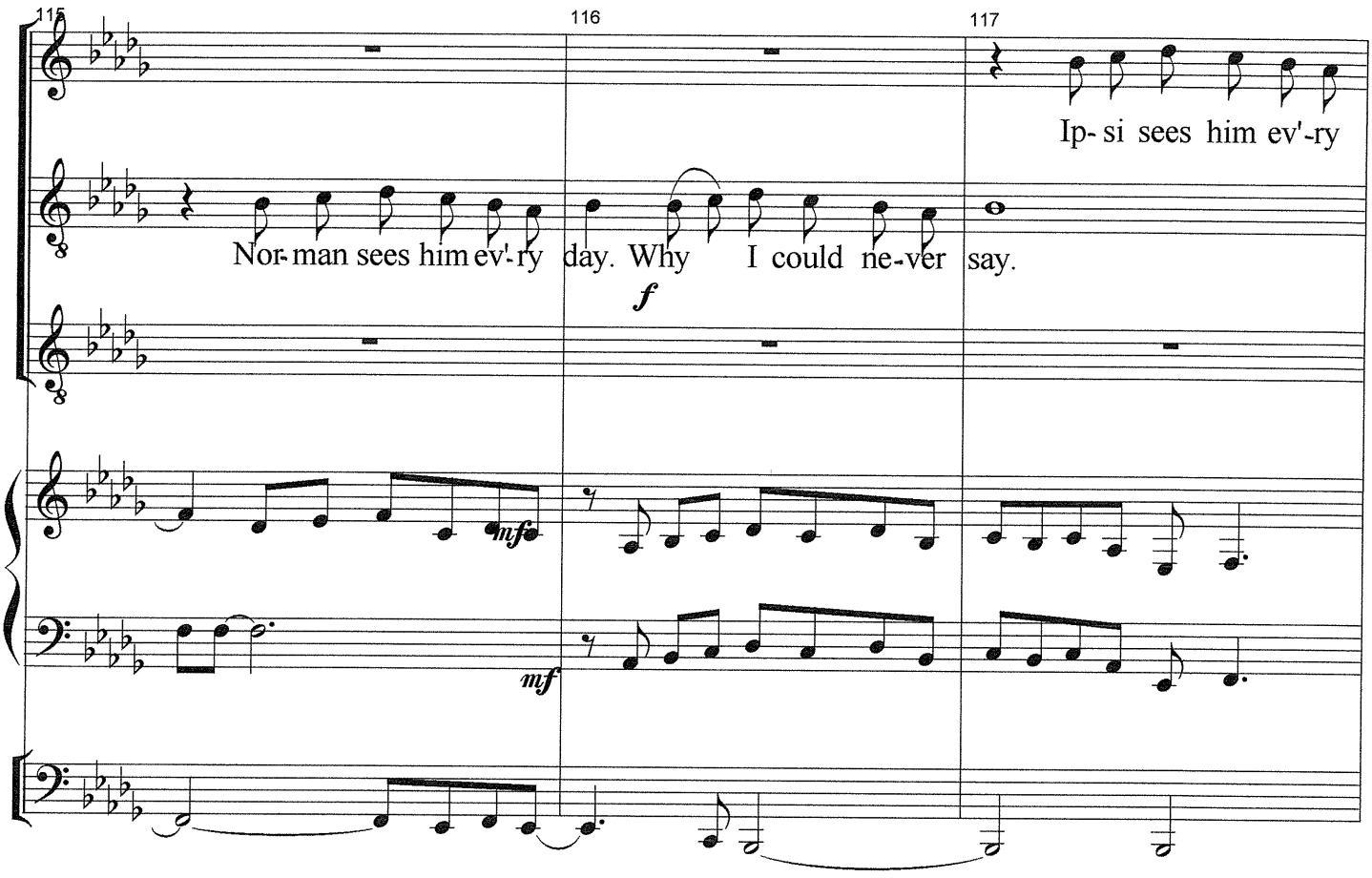

(They both nod.)
100
101
102
Per - haps he
came too near.
to de - vo - tion
last a year.
to de - vo - tion.

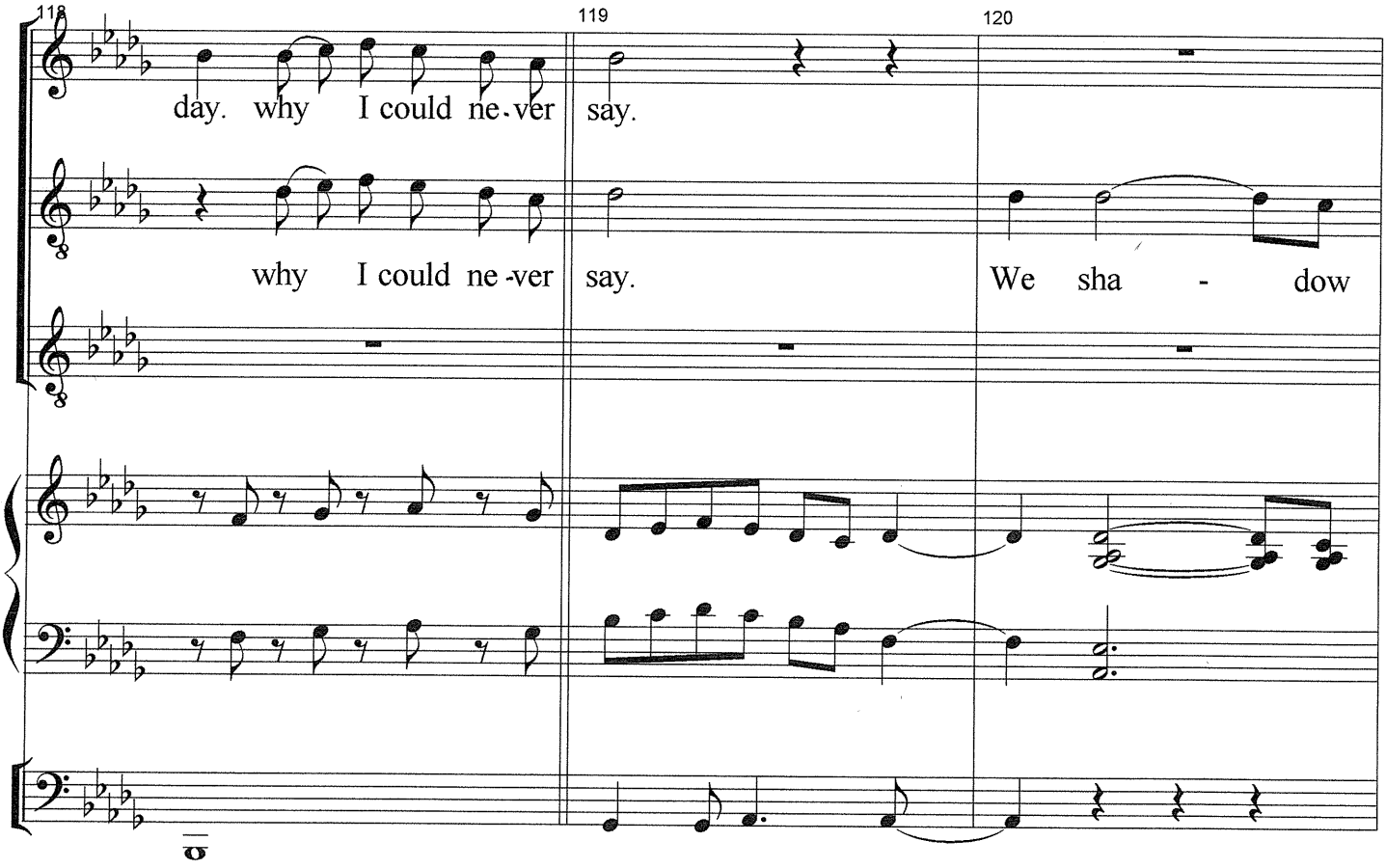

103
104
105
And you?
You're his au - dience
His friend since child - hood.
(Phil nods.)

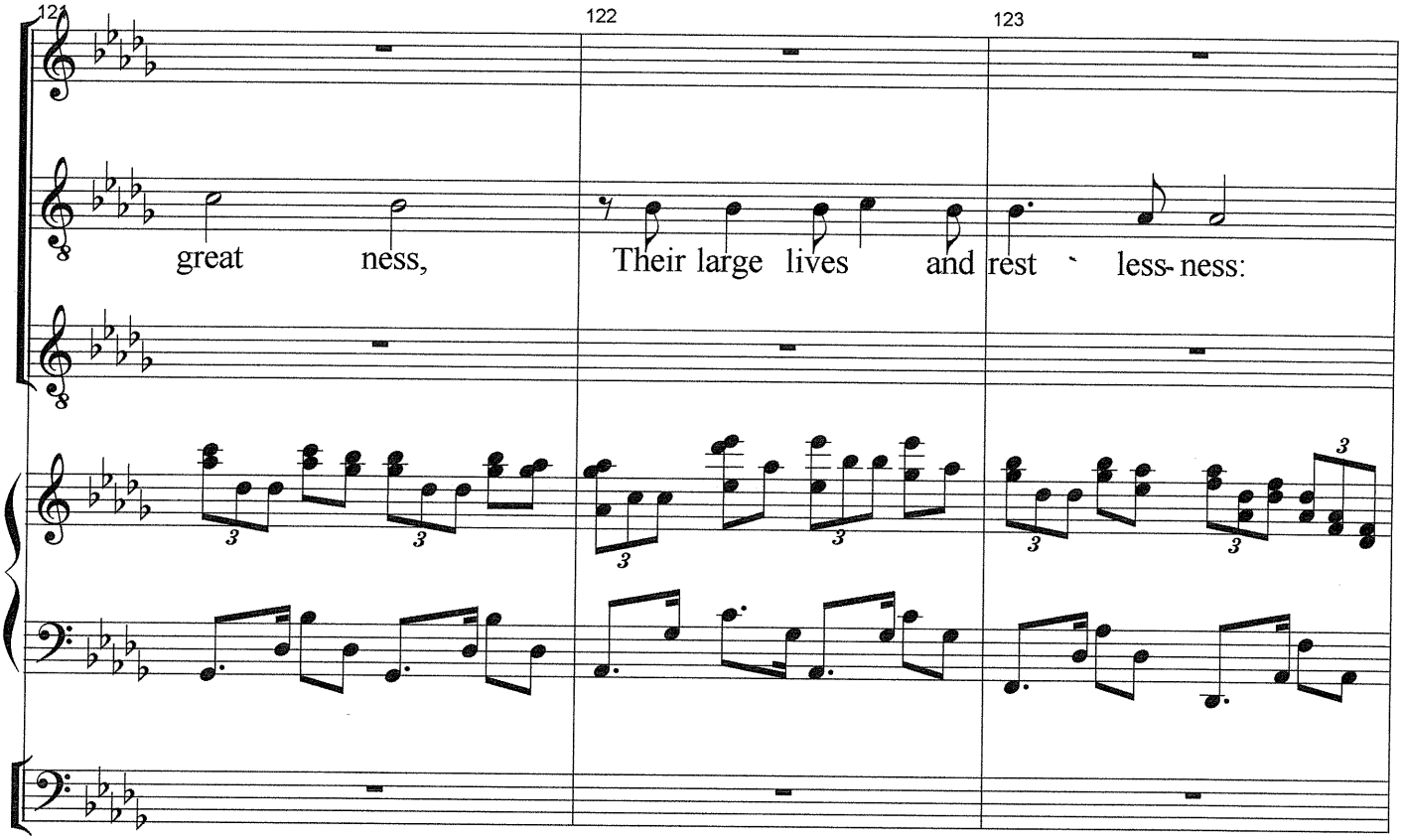

106
107
108
Two years
he's been here .
Try-ing to give it all a-

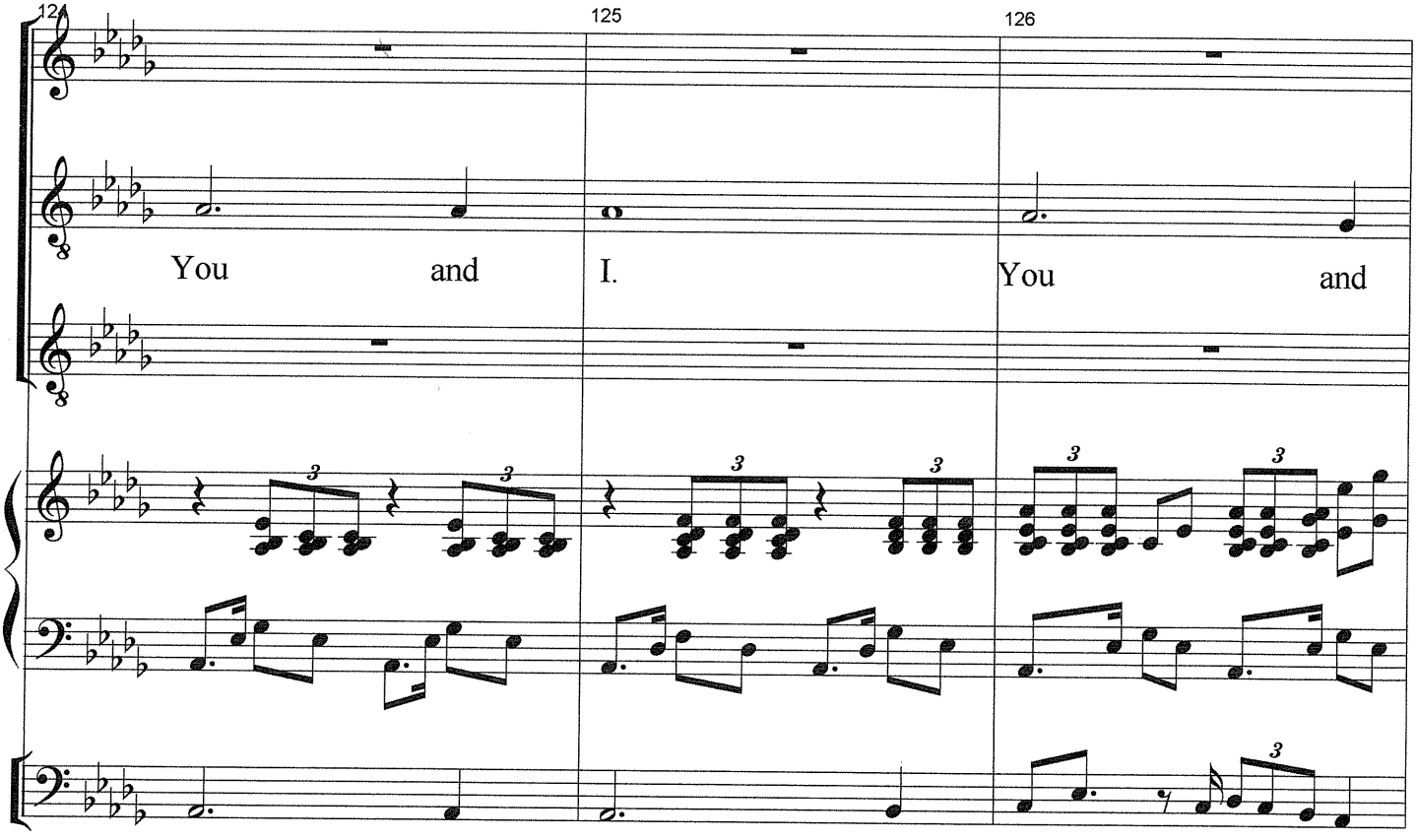

109
110
111
Rest - less for de-vo-tion
way, So he can give him-self a-way. for de-vo-tion
mf
ppp

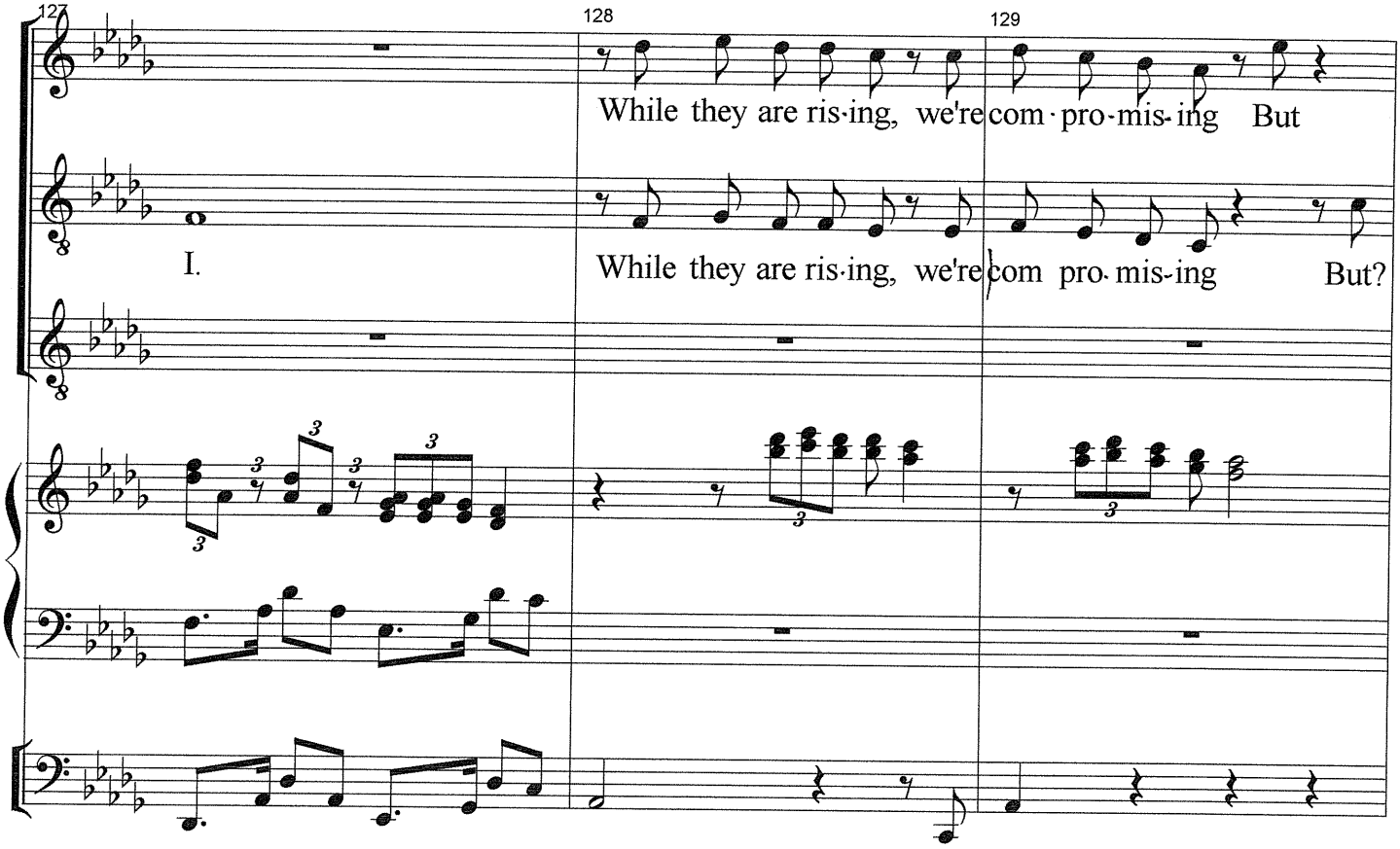

112
113
114
You know the mas - ter?
But the Guestmaster doesn't let him.


115
116
117
Nor- man sees him ev'- ry day. Why I could ne- ver say.
Ip- si sees him ev'- ry
f
mf
mf

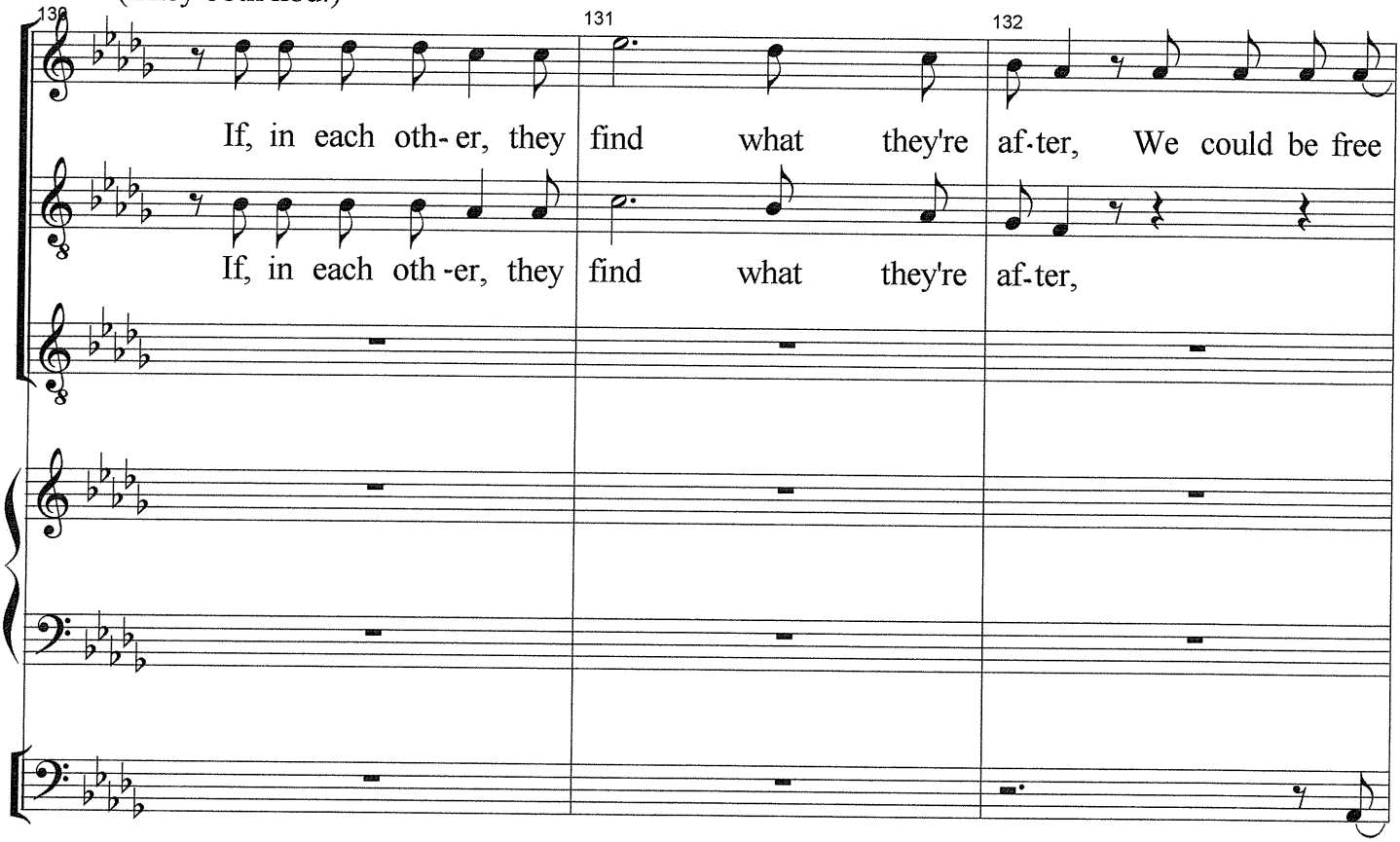

118
119
120
day. why I could ne- ver say.
why I could ne- ver say.
We sha - dow

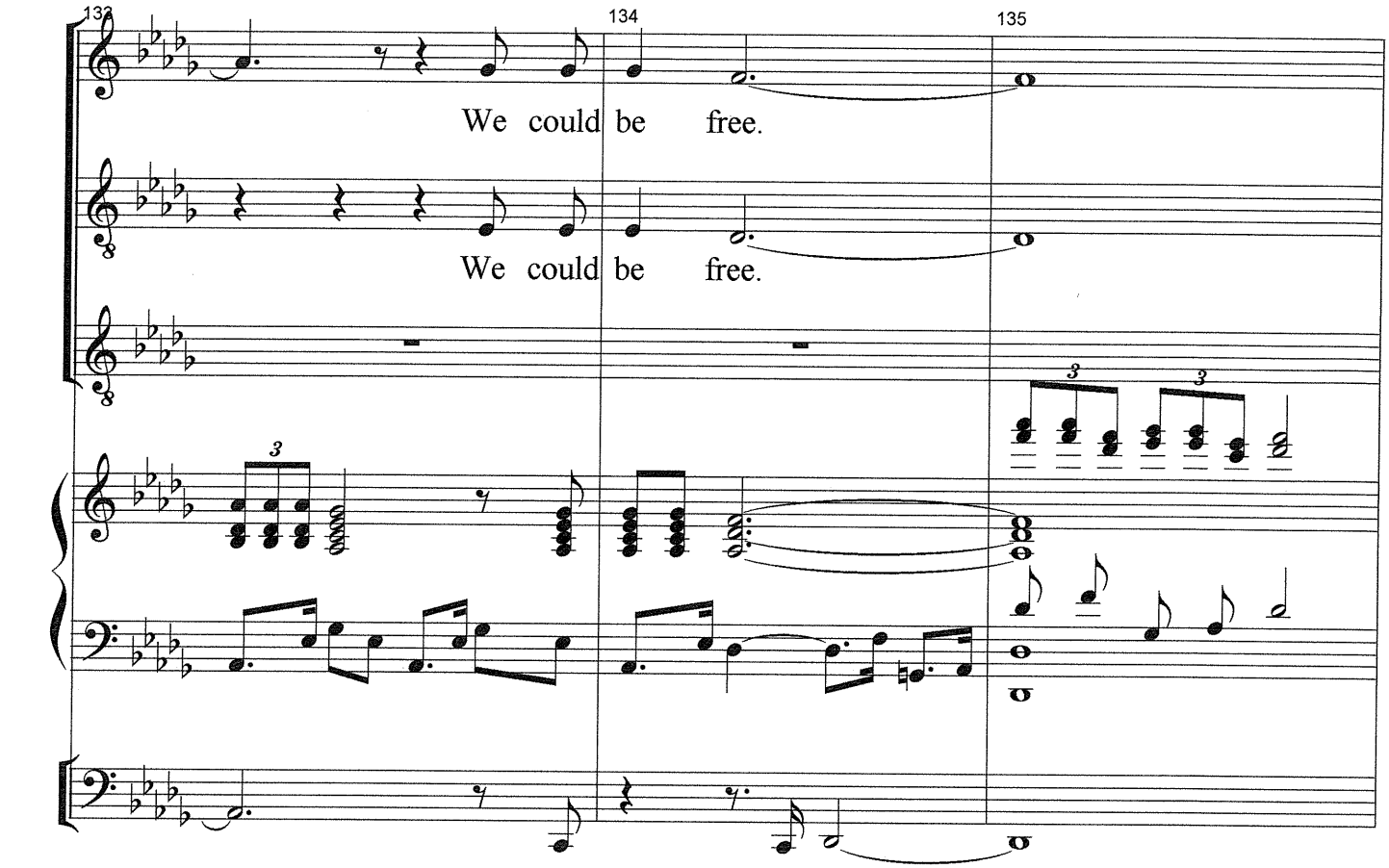

121
122
123
great ness,
Their large lives and rest less- ness:

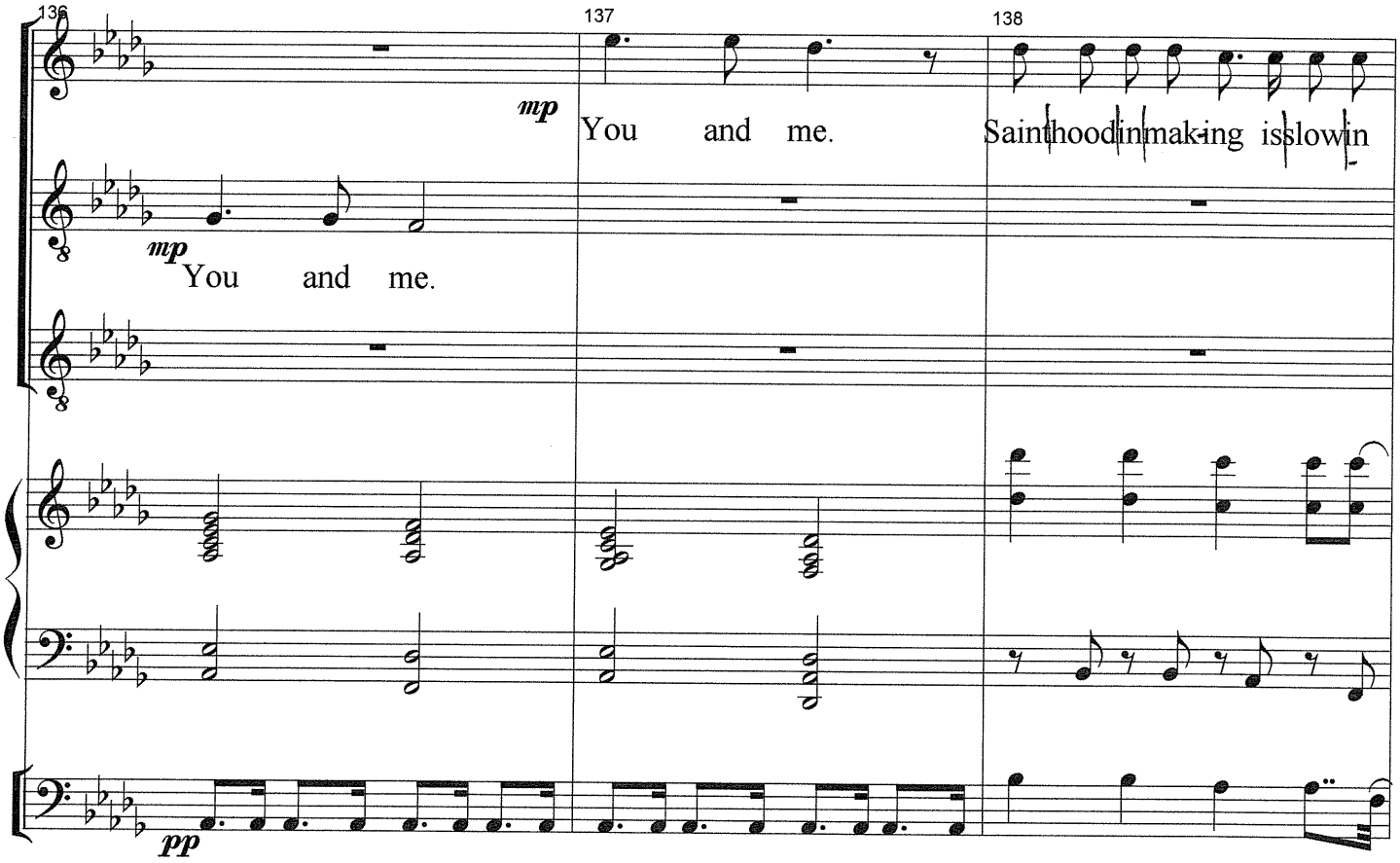

124
125
126
You and I.
You and

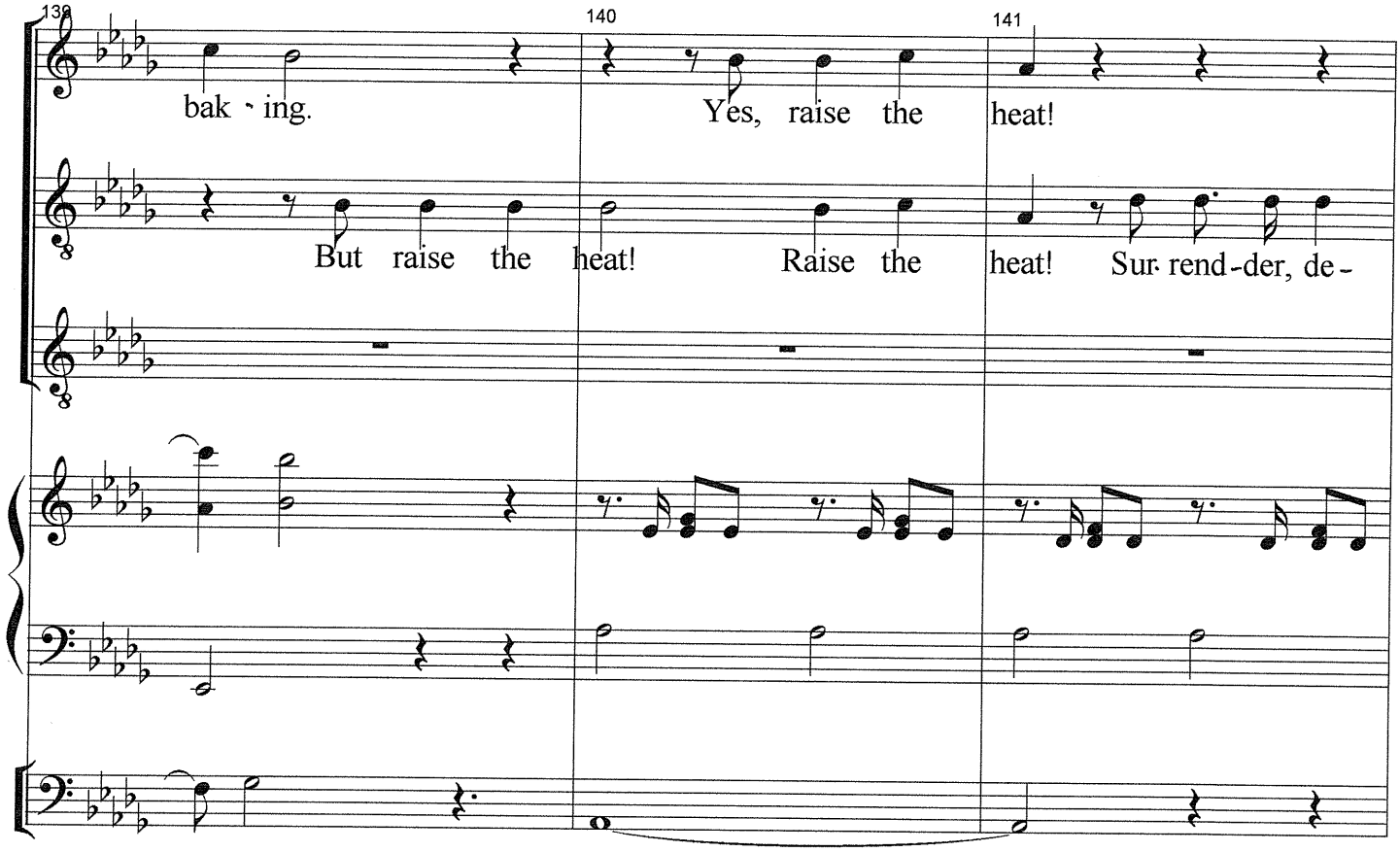


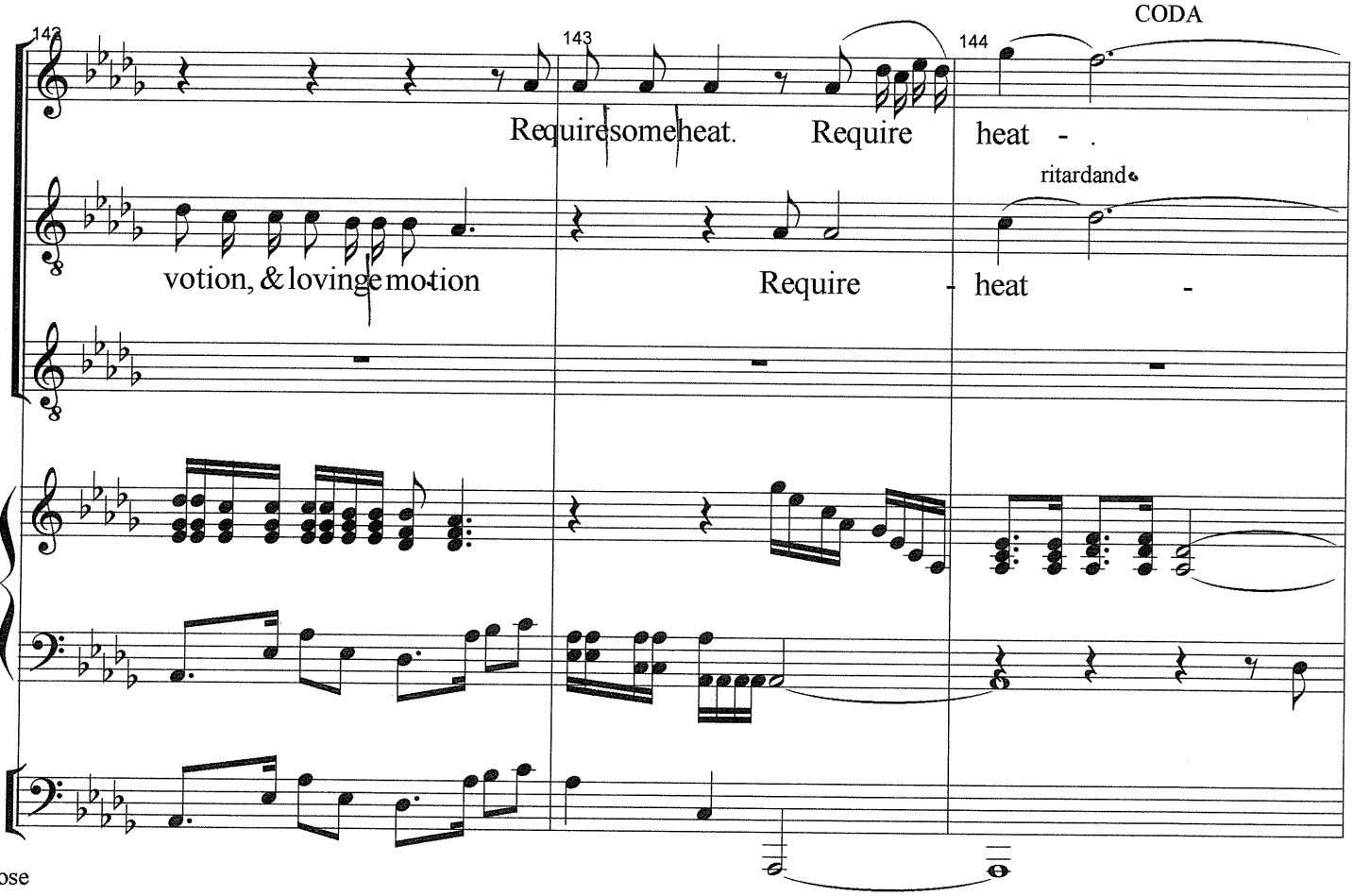
(They both nod.)

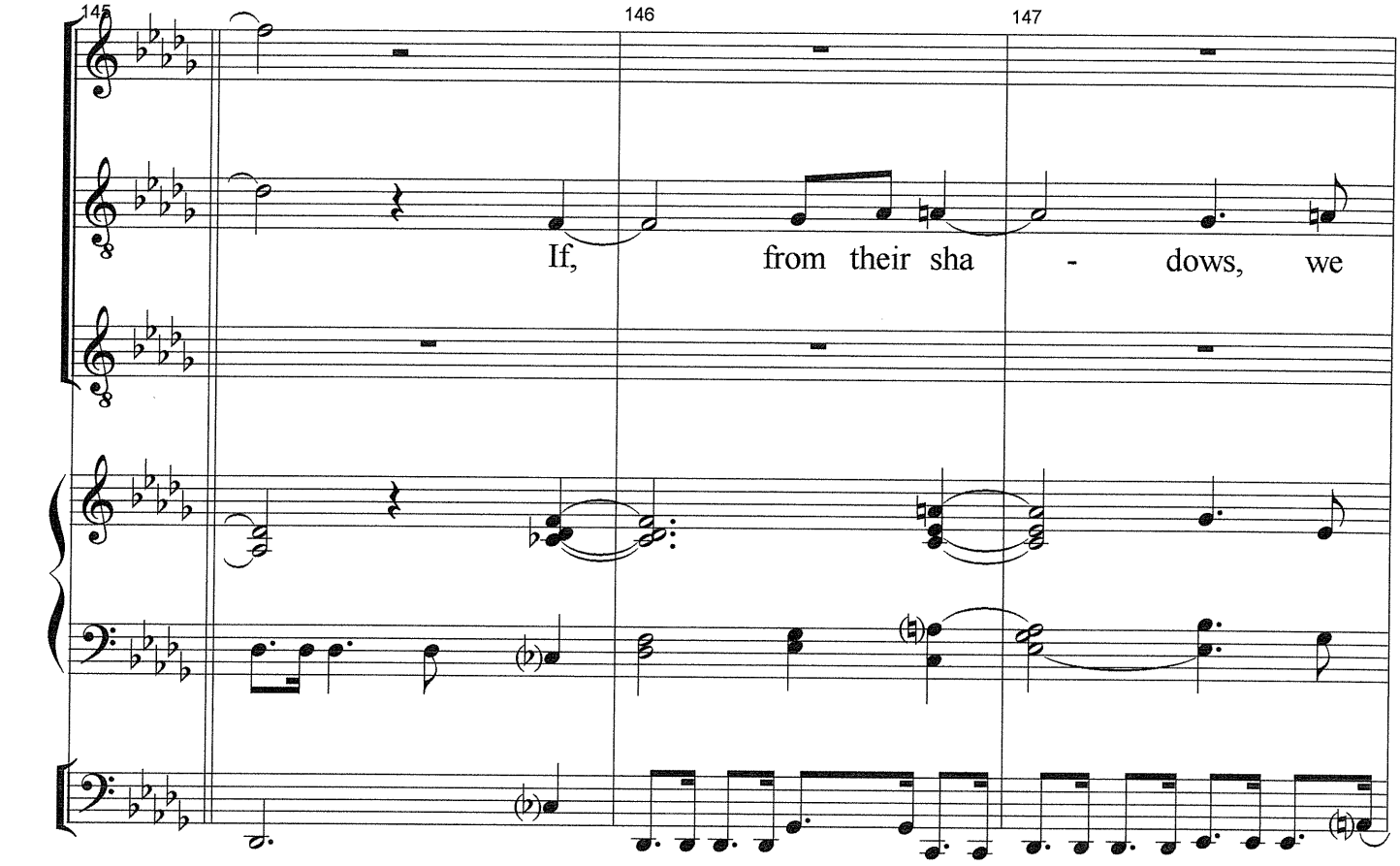


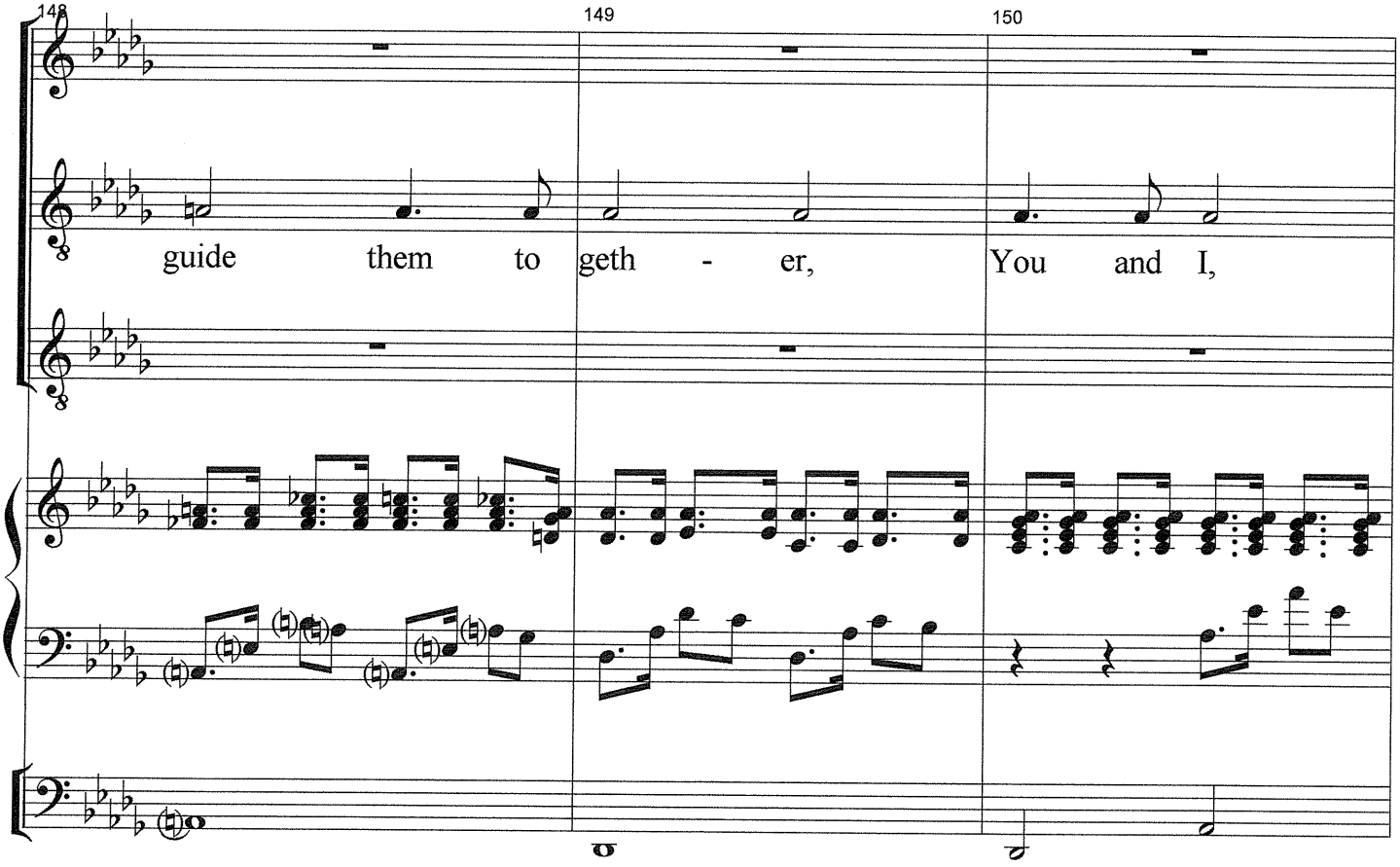

133
134
135
We could be free.
We could be free.
3
3
3

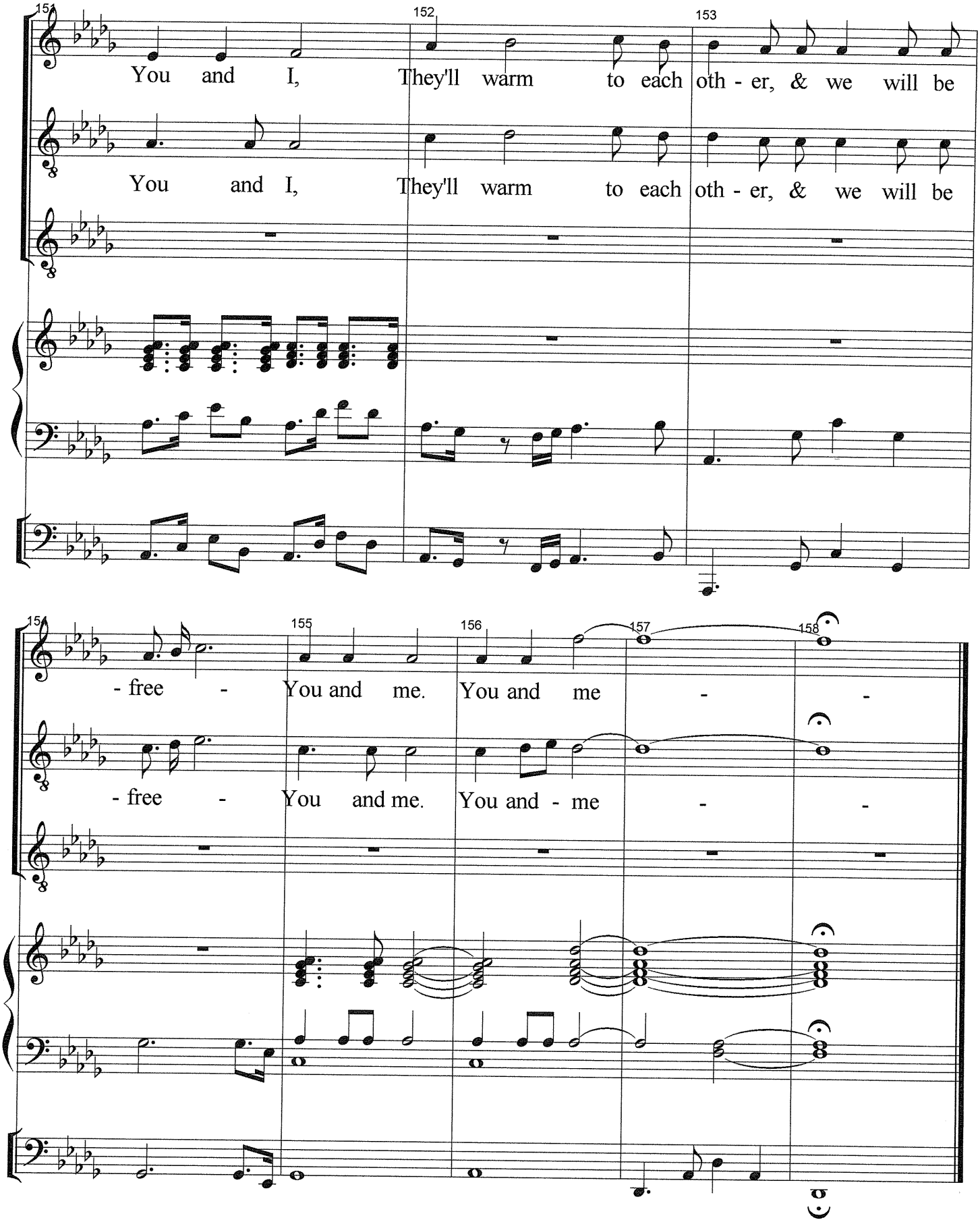

136
137
138
mp
You and me.
mp
You and me.
You and me.
Sainthoodinmaking isslowin
pp


139
140
141
bak - ing.
Yes, raise the heat!
But raise the heat!
Raise the heat!
Sur- rend - der, de -


142
143
144
CODA
Requiresomeheat.
Require heat - .
votion, & lovingemotion
Require - heat -
ritardando


145
146
147
If, from their sha - dows, we

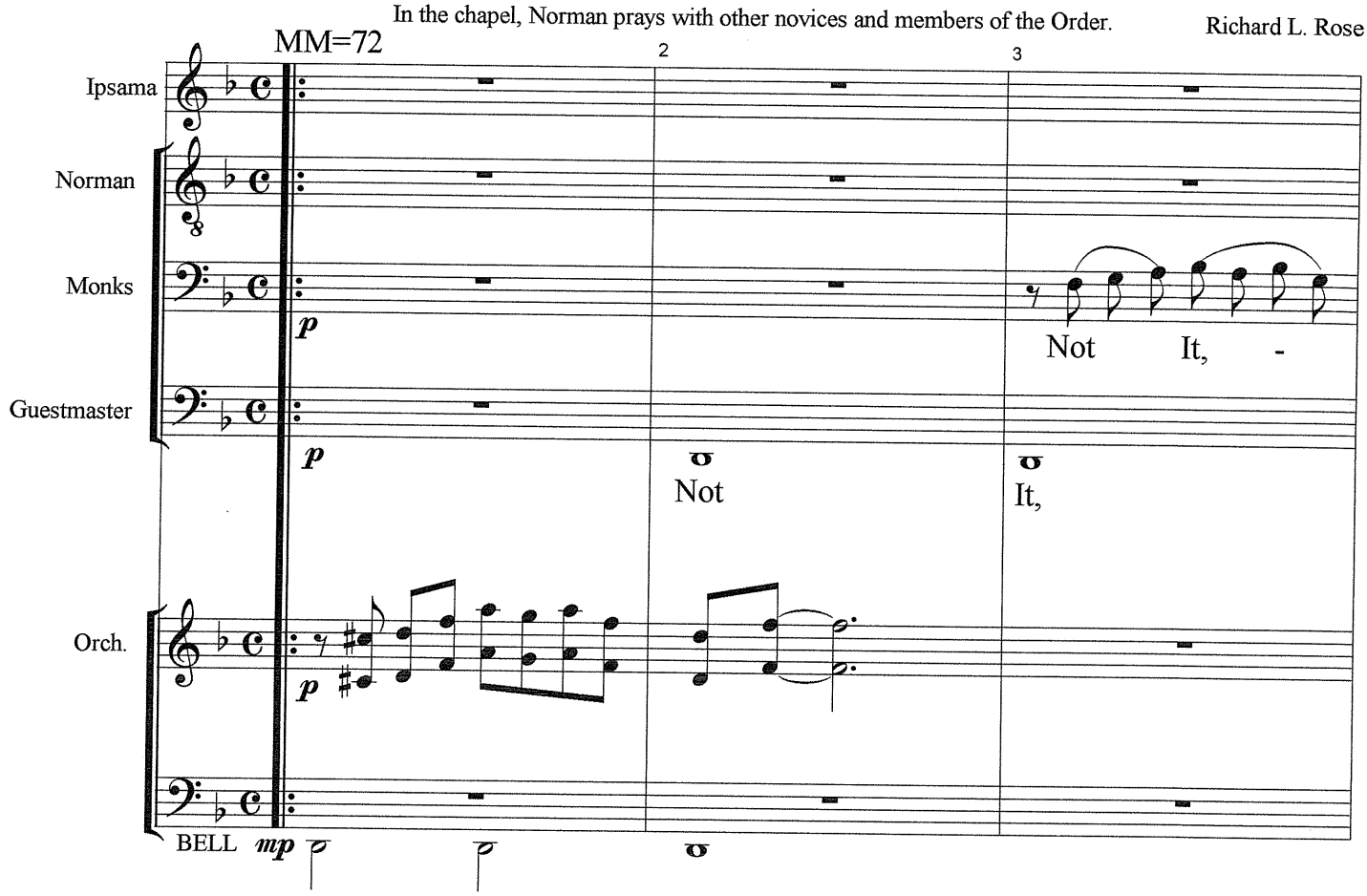

148
149
150
guide them to geth - er, You and I,

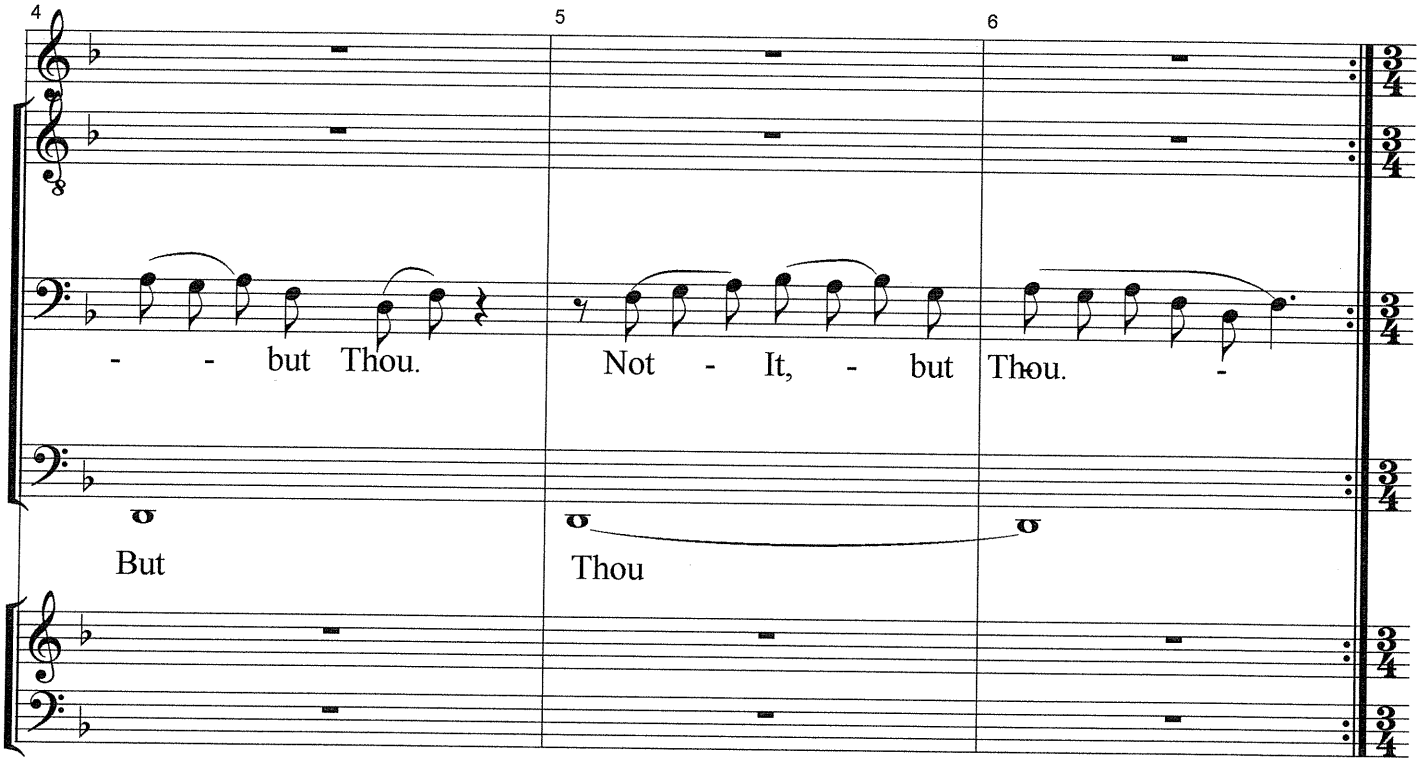

151
152
153
You and I, They'll warm to each oth - er, & we will be
You and I, They'll warm to each oth - er, & we will be
154
155
156
157
158
- free - You and me. You and me - -
- free - You and me. You and - me - -

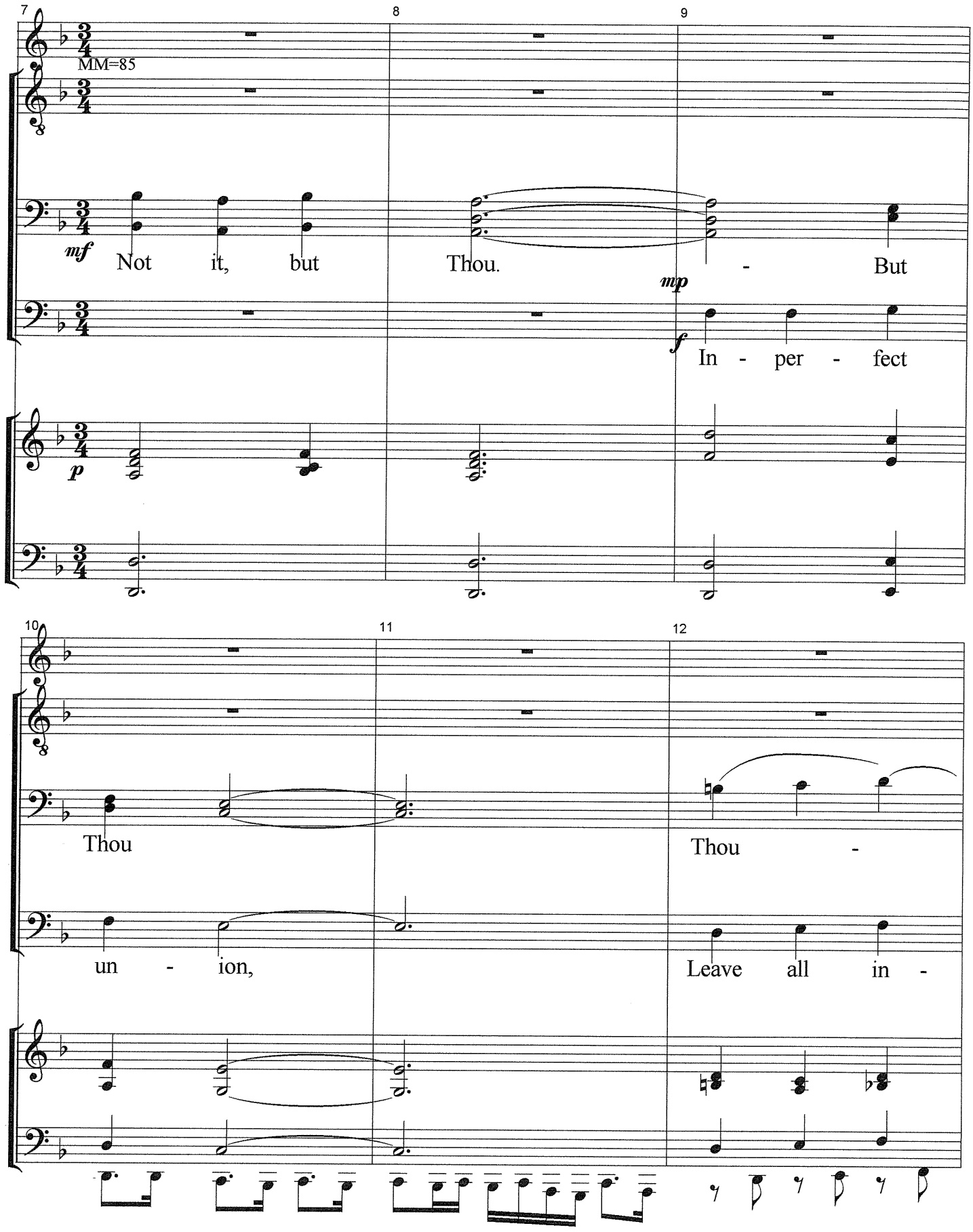
La Rinuncia
Act I, Scene 3

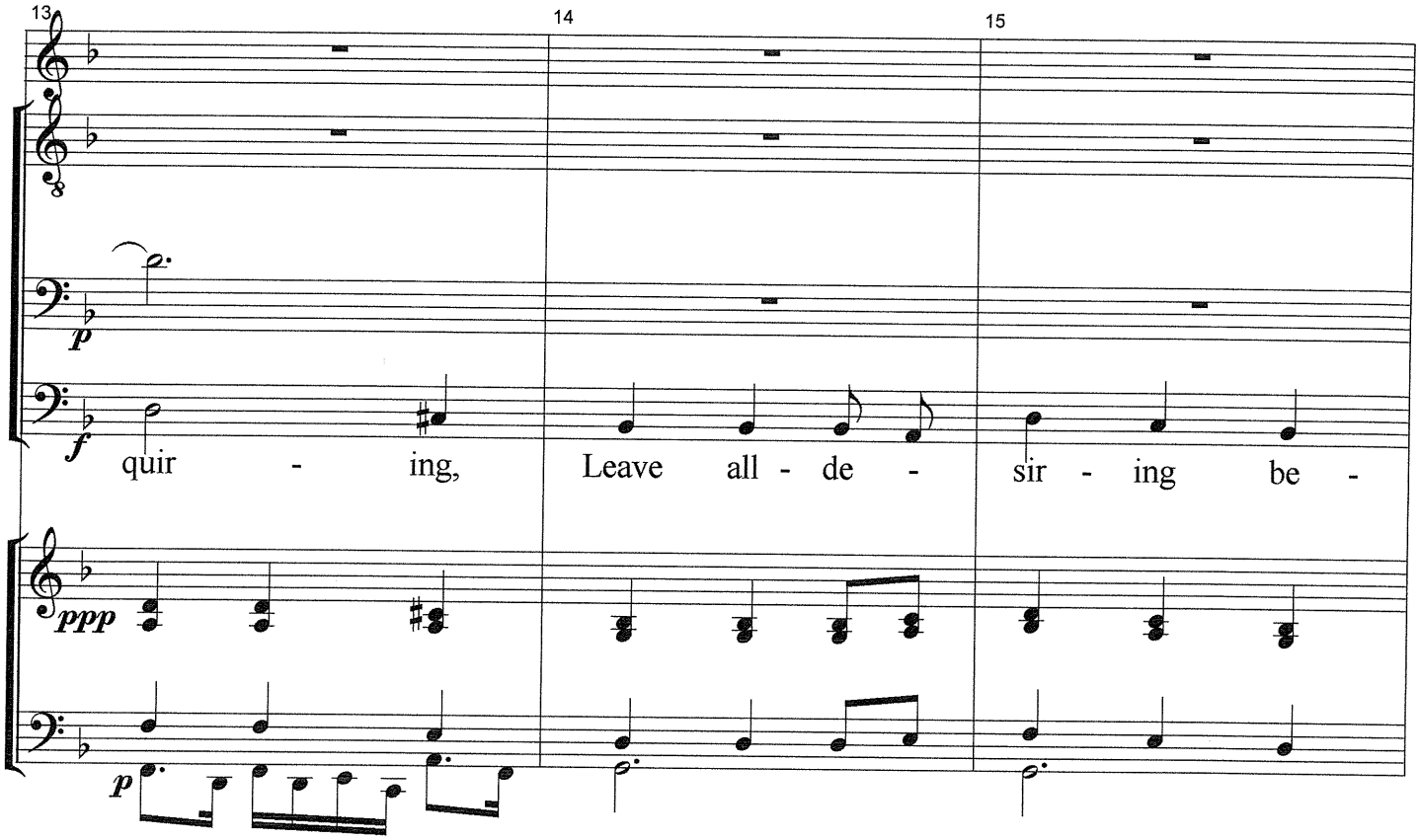
In the chapel, Norman prays with other novices and members of the Order.

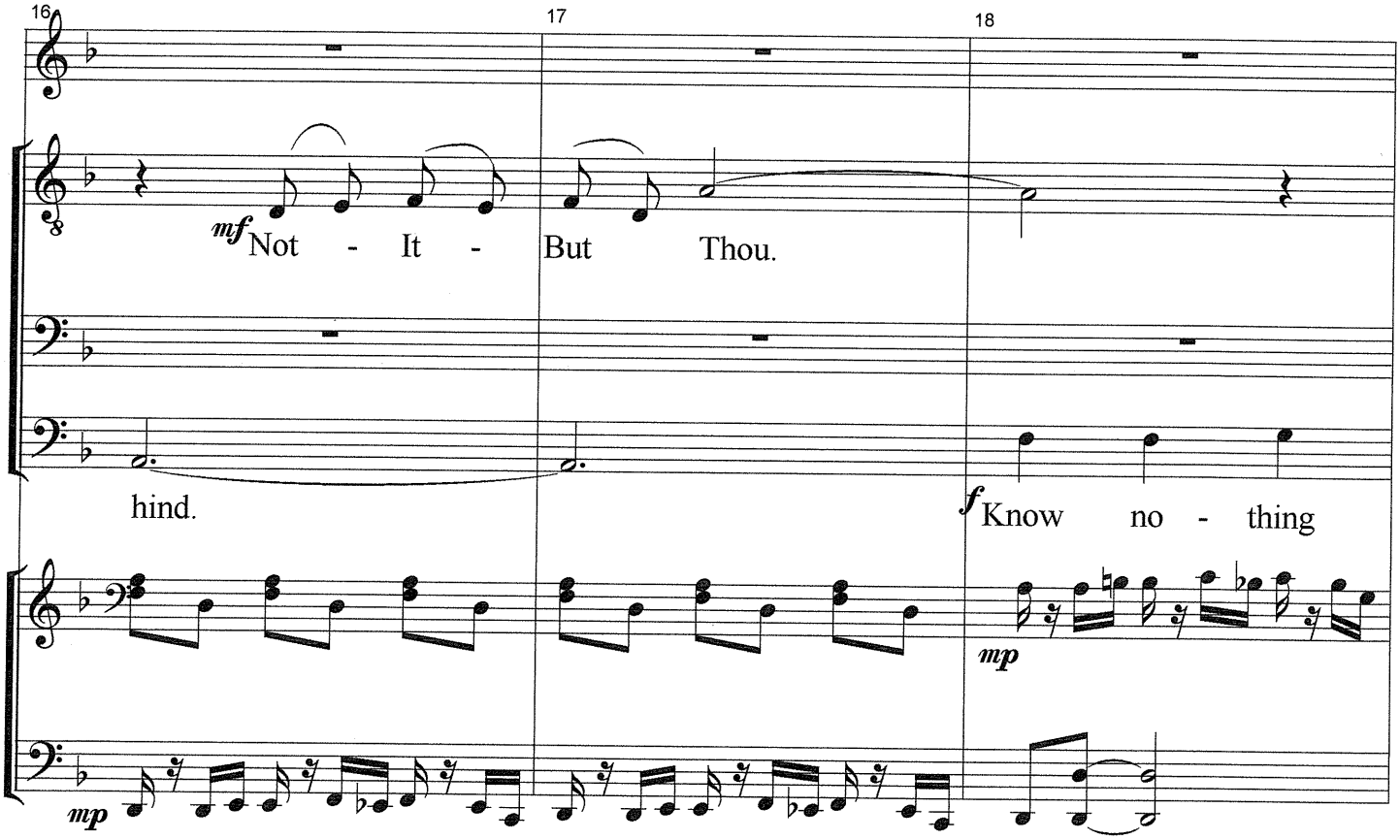
Richard L. Rose

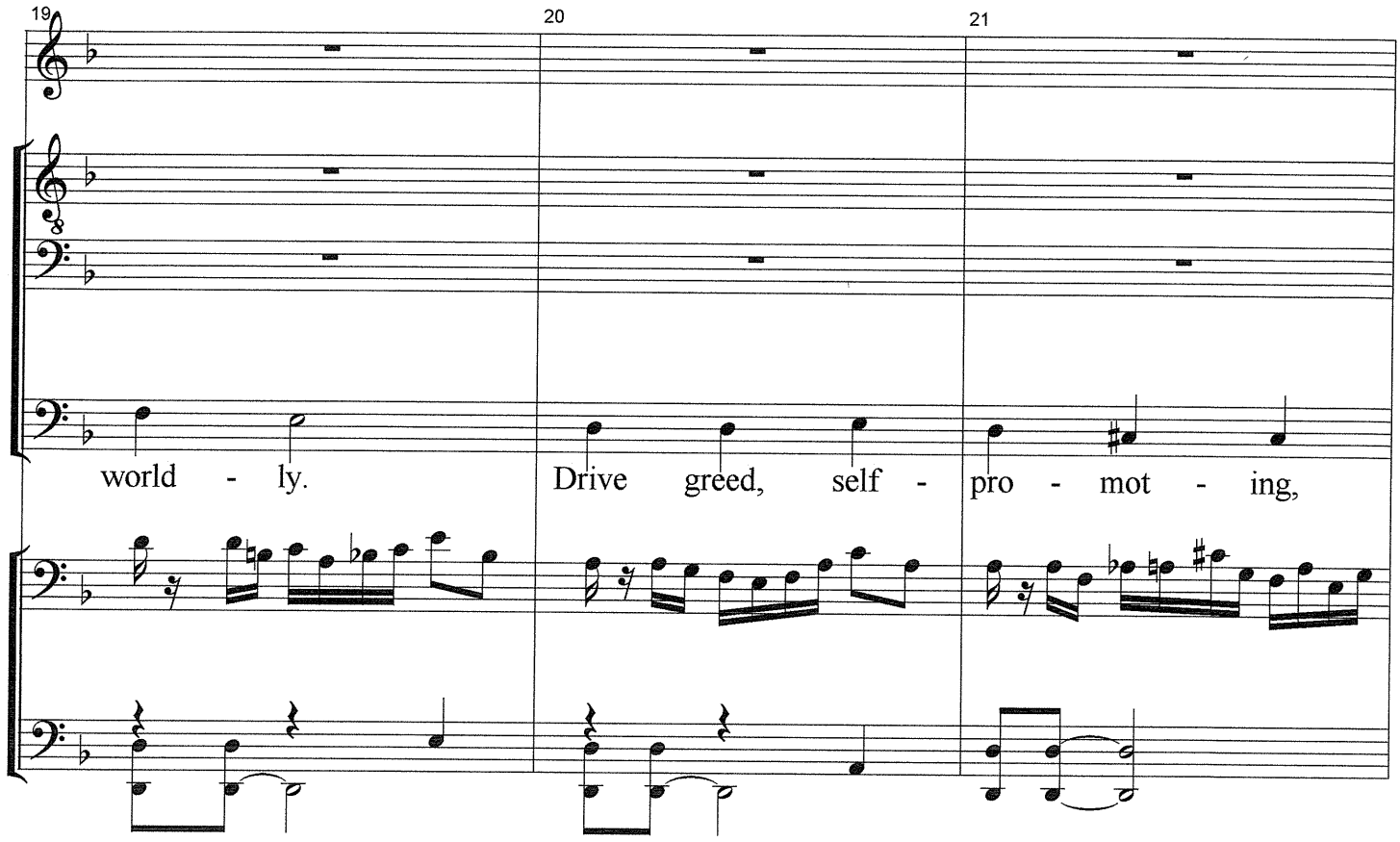


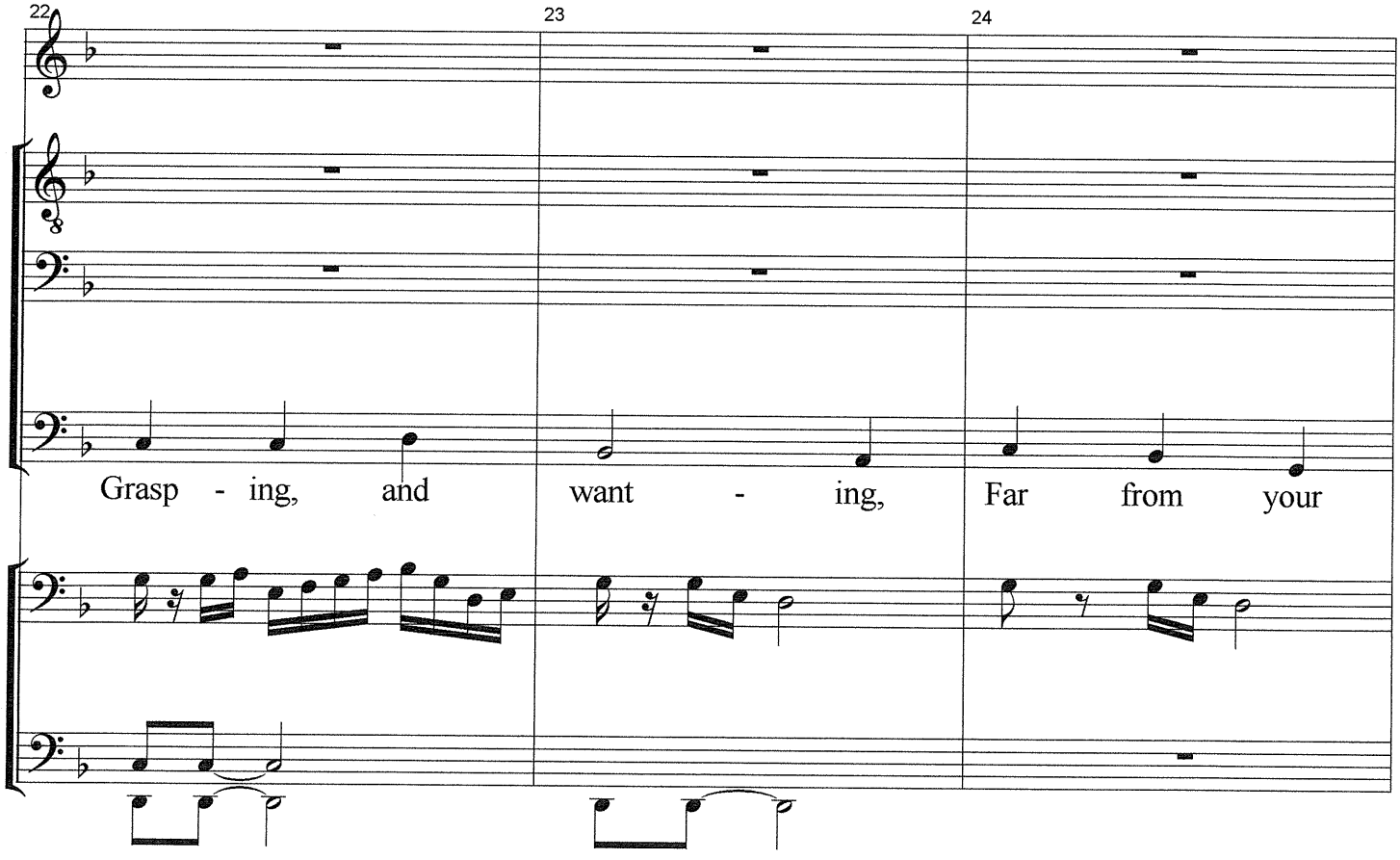


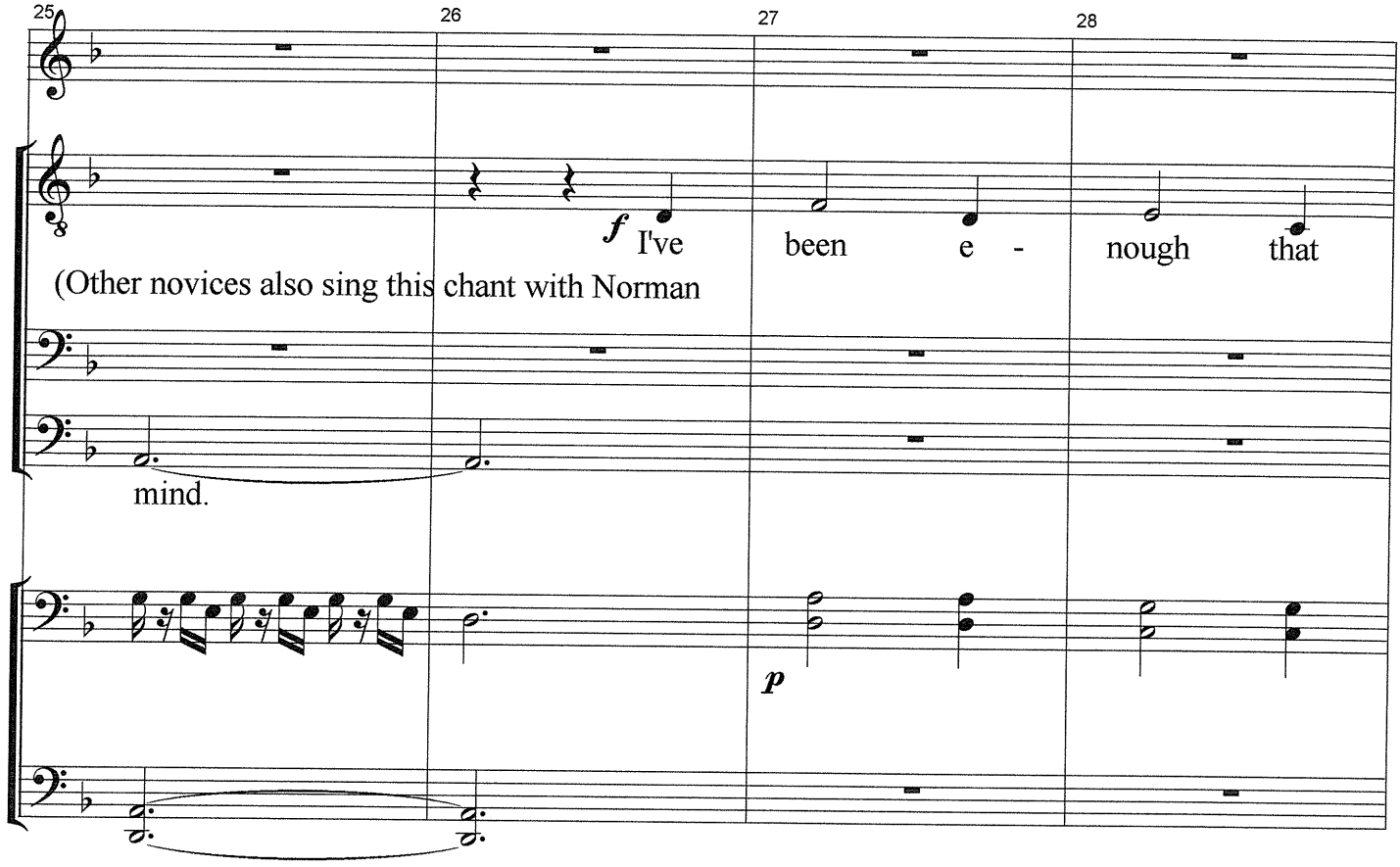

7
8
9
MM=85
mf
Not it, but Thou. - But
mp
f
In - per - fect
p
10
11
12
Thou
Thou -
un - ion,
Leave all in -

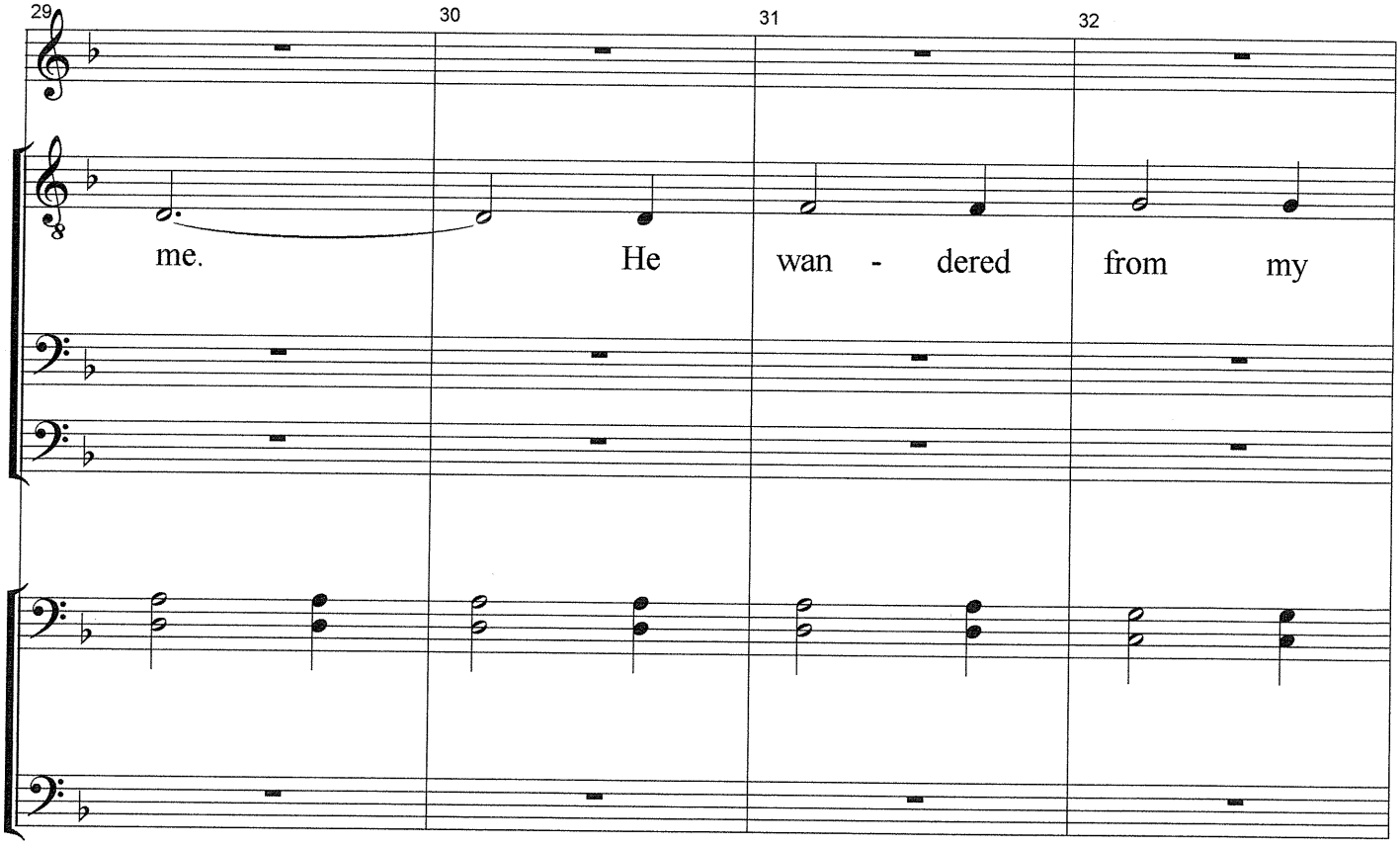

13
14
15
p
f
quir - ing,
Leave all - de -
sir - ing be -
ppp
p

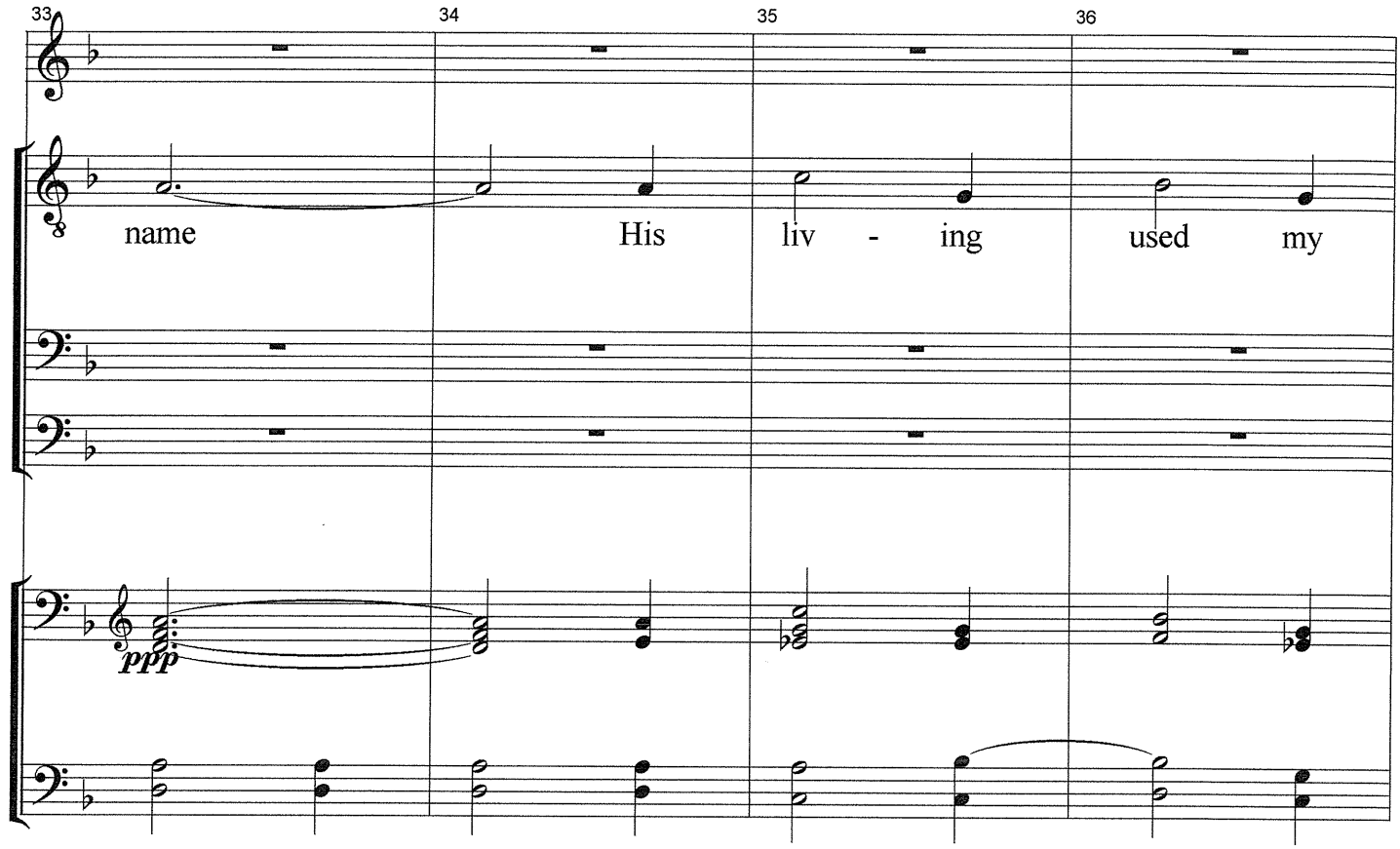

16
17
18
mf
Not - It -
But Thou.
hind.
f
Know no - thing
mp
mp

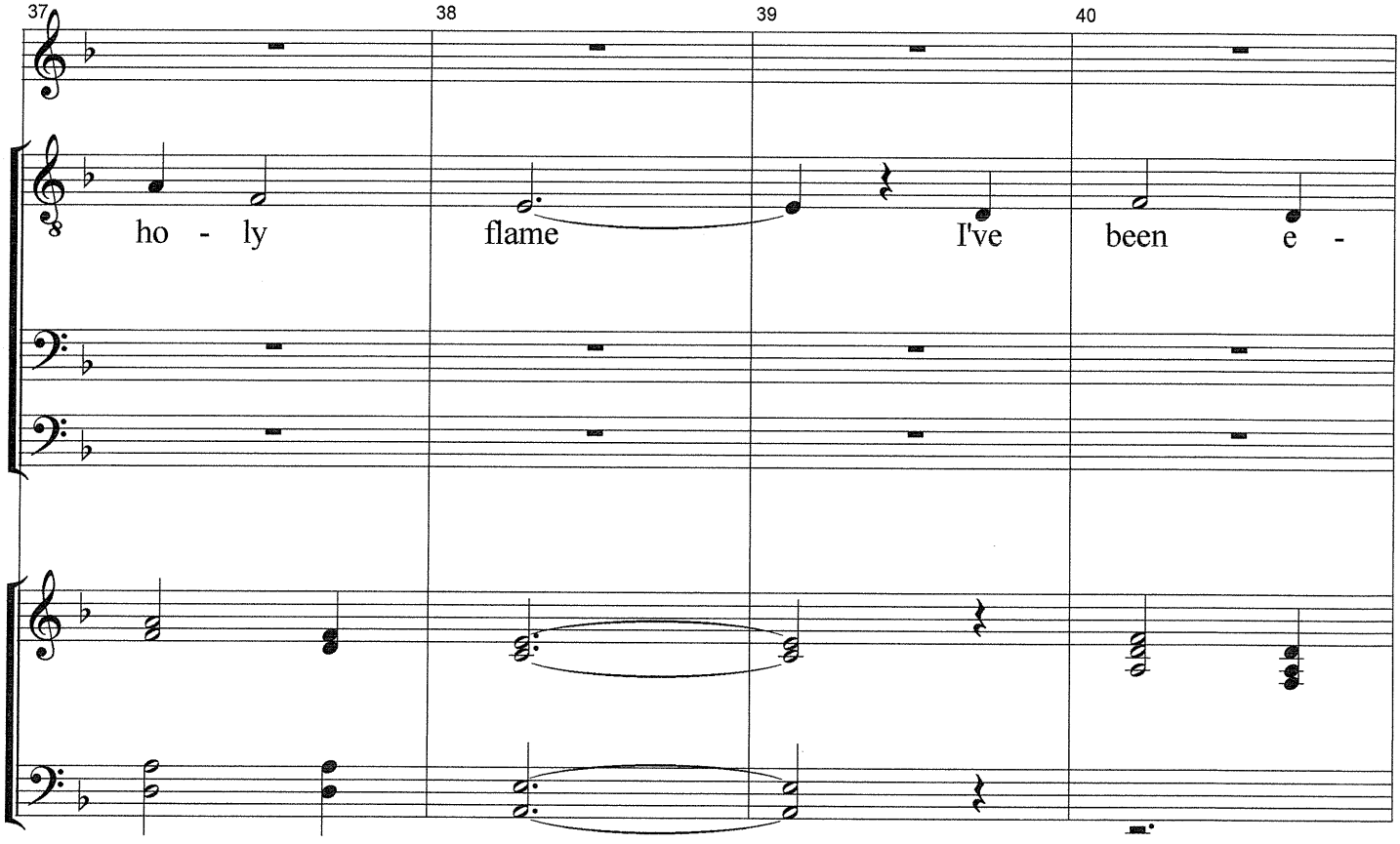

19
20
21
world - ly.
Drive greed, self - pro - mot - ing,

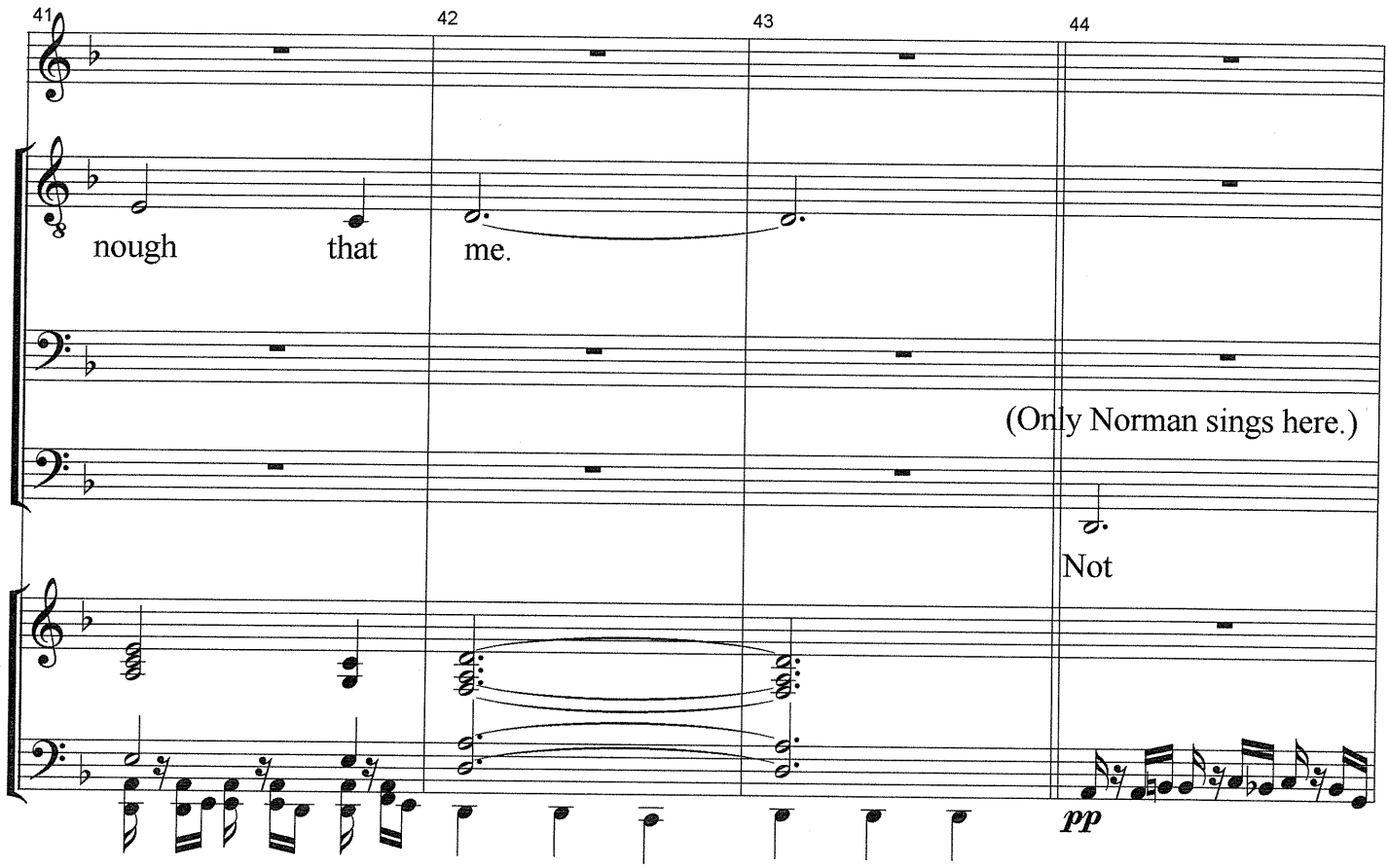

22
23
24
Grasp - ing, and
want - ing,
Far from your

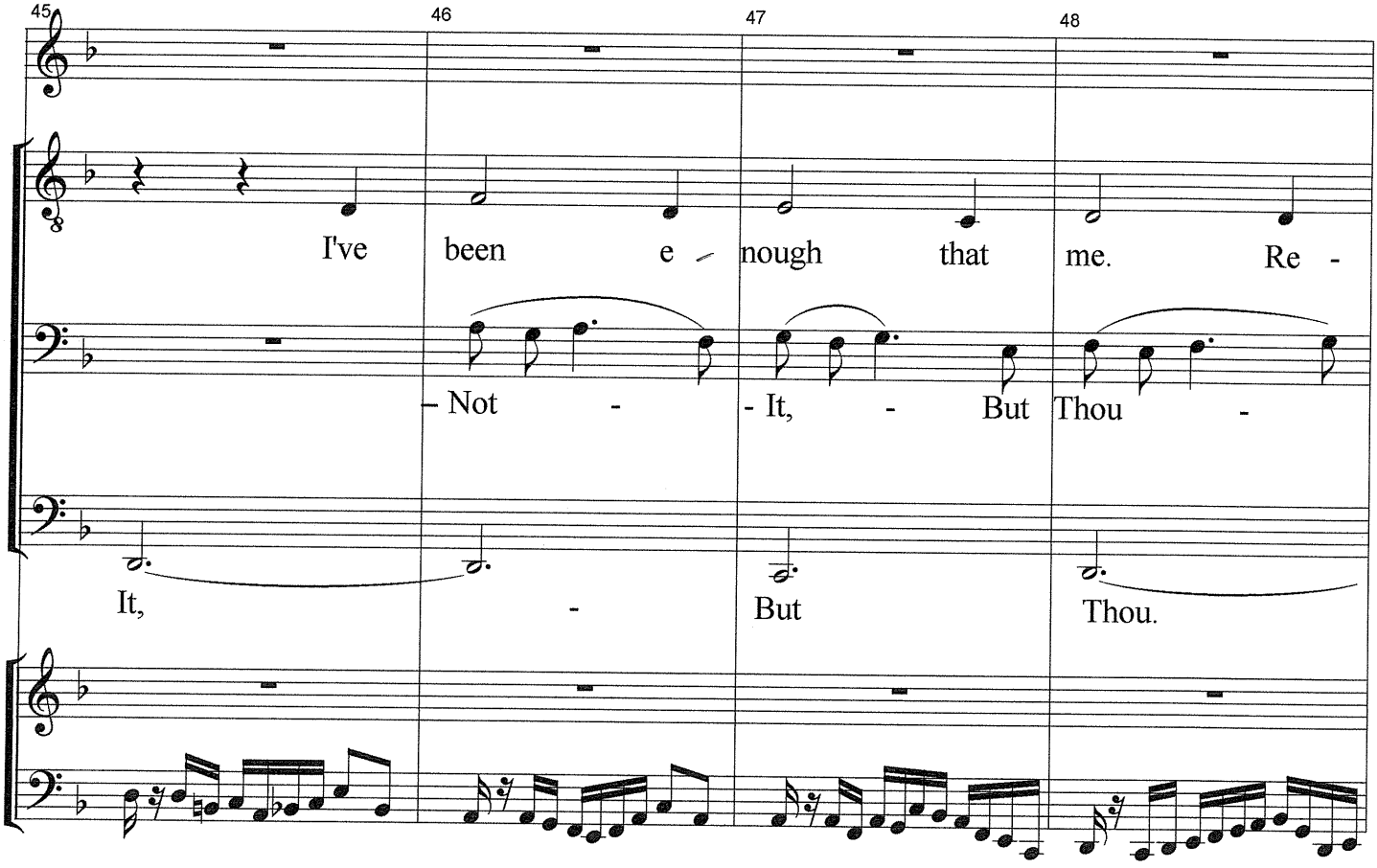

25
26
27
28
f I've been e - nough that
(Other novices also sing this chant with Norman
mind.
p

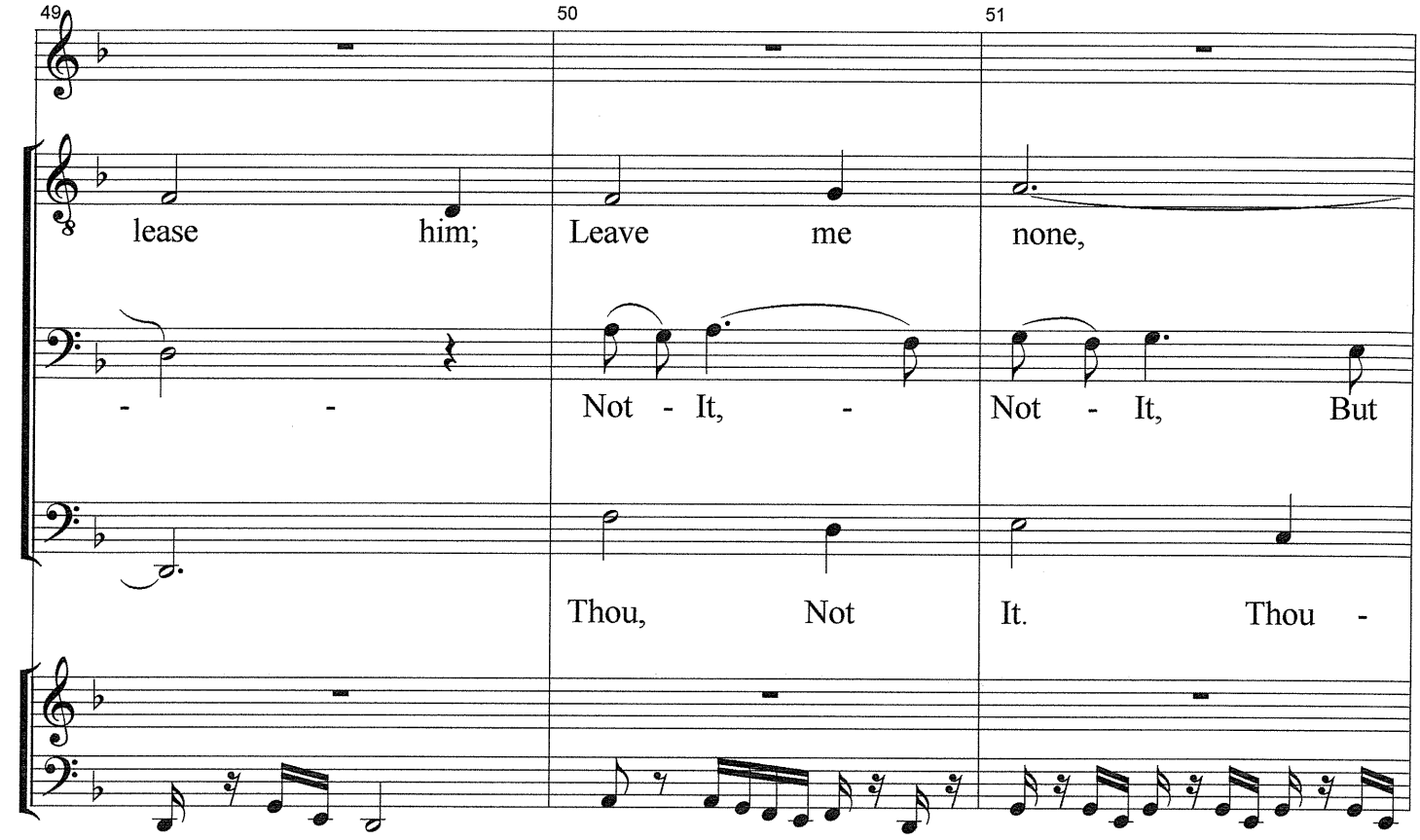

29
30
31
32
me.
He wan - dered from my

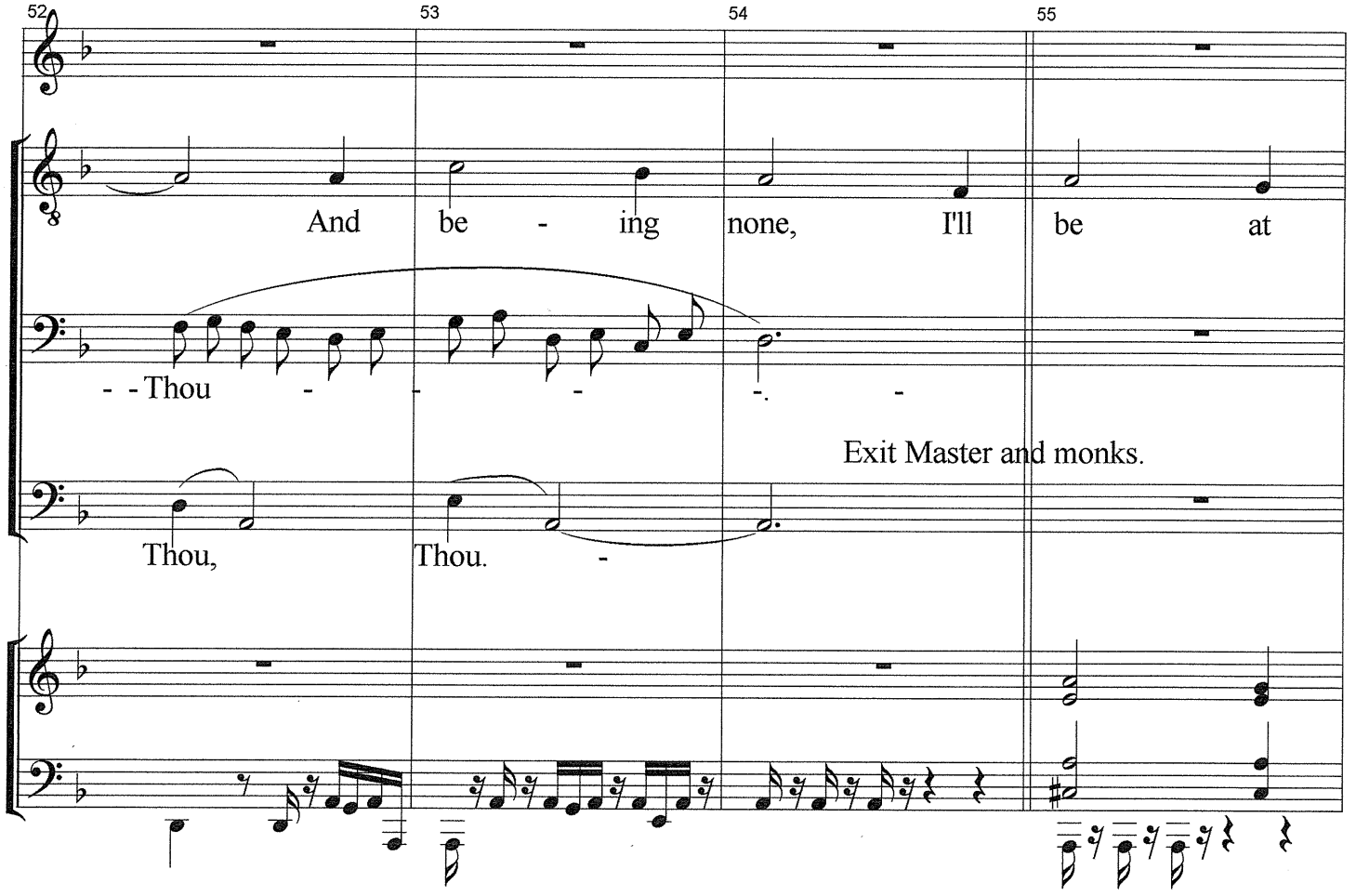

33
34
35
36
name
His
liv - ing
used
my
ppp

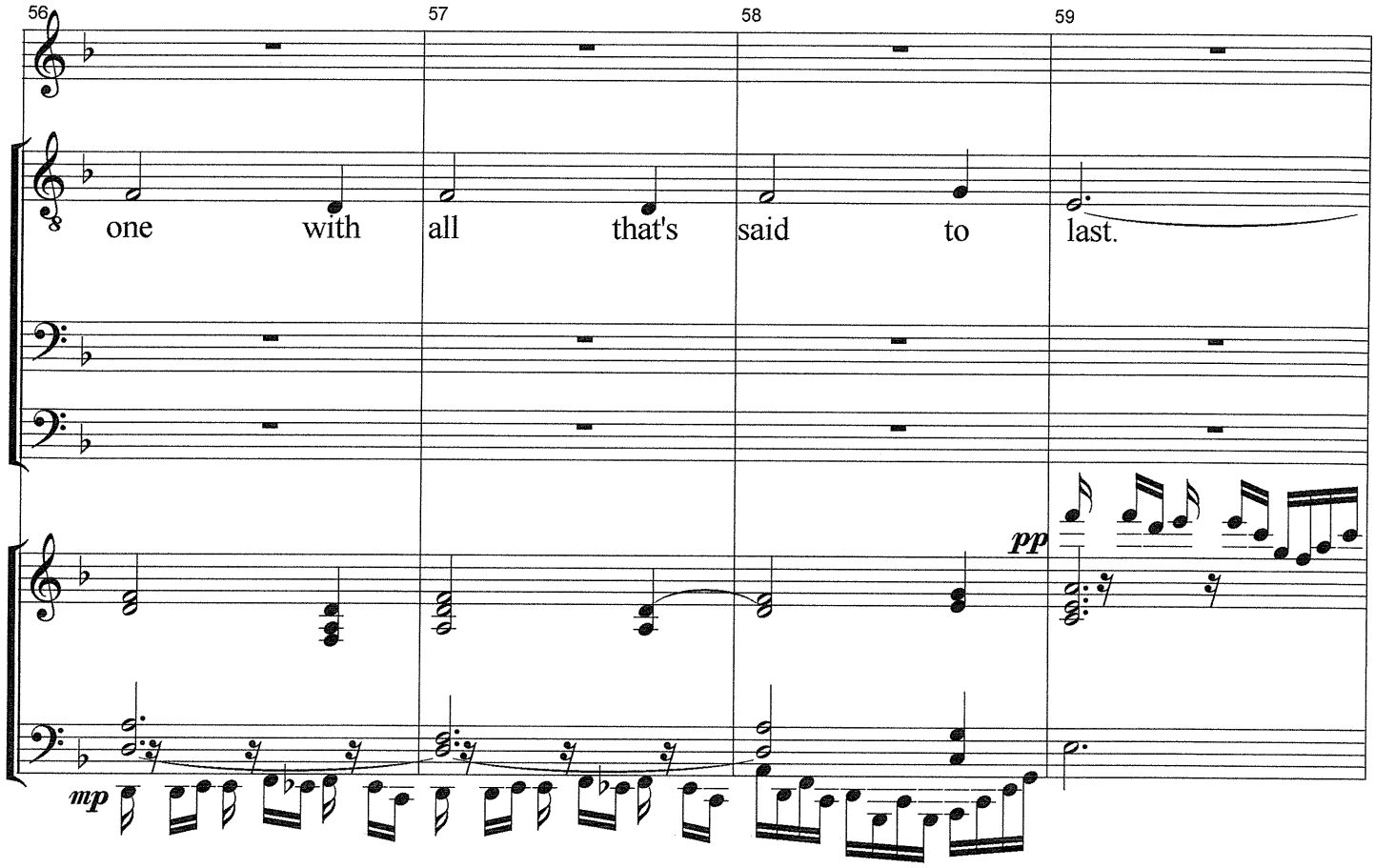

37
38
39
40
ho - ly
flame
I've
been
e -

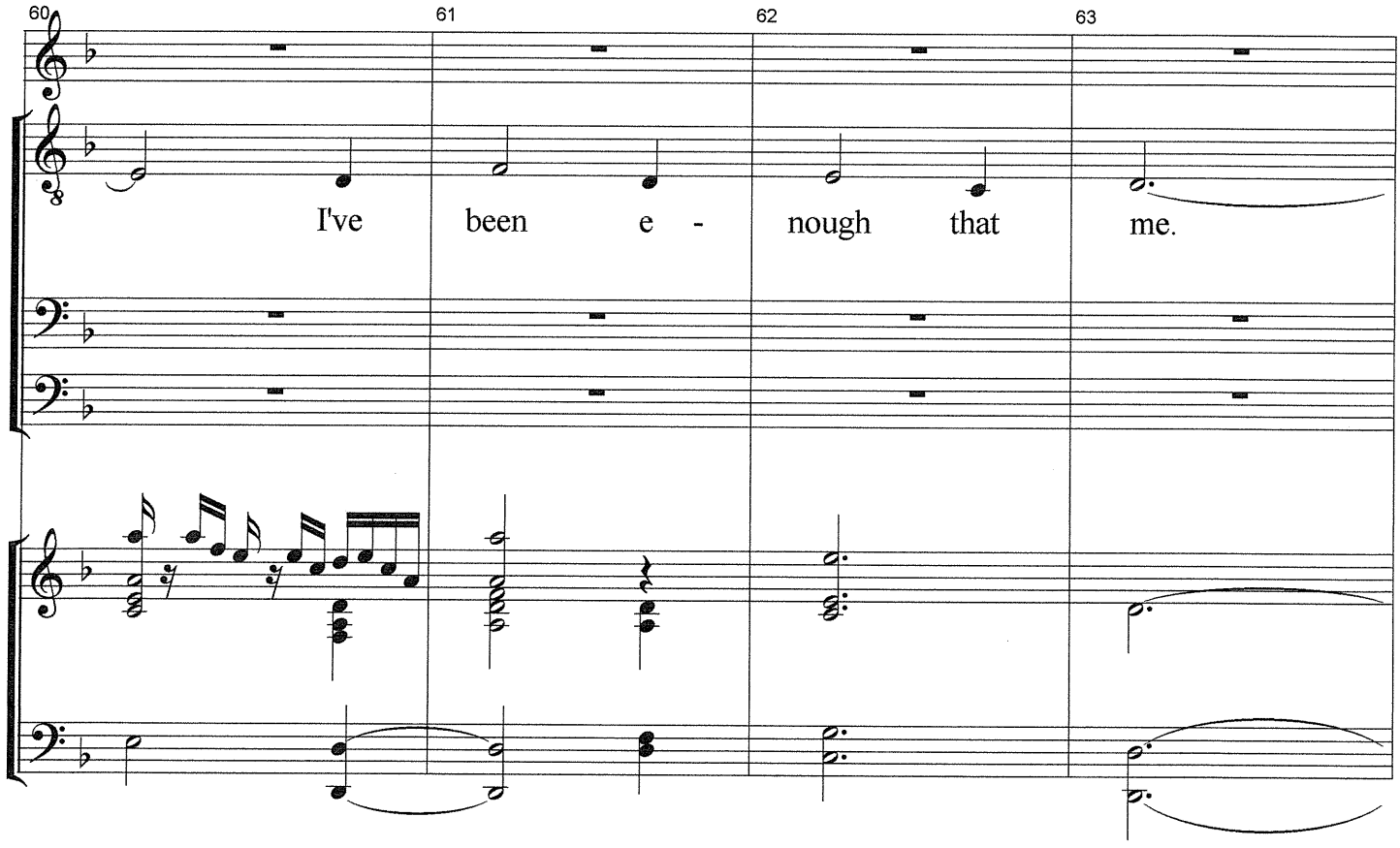

41
42
43
44
nough that me.
(Only Norman sings here.)
Not
pp

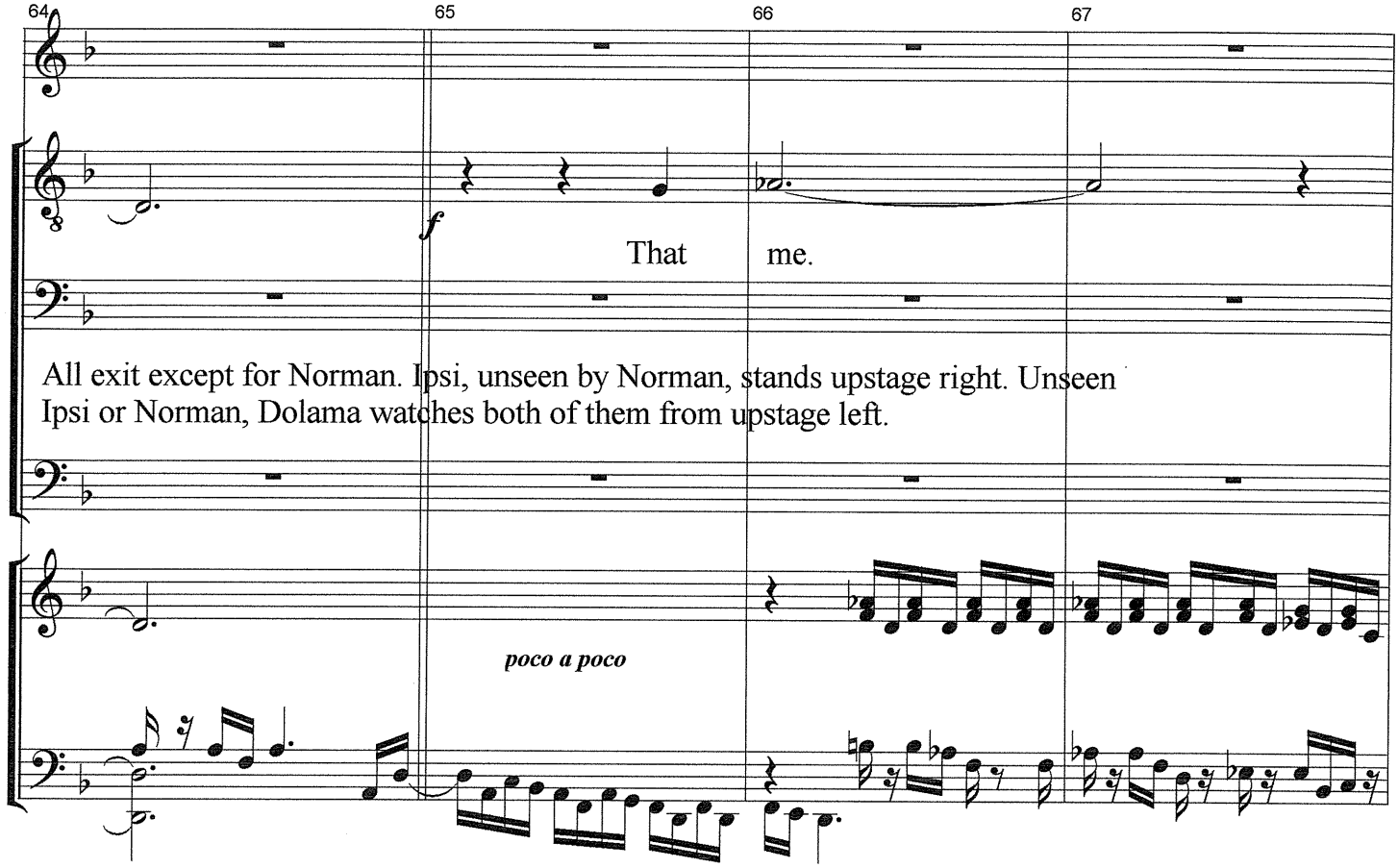

45
46
47
48
I've been e - nough that me. Re -
- Not - - It, - But Thou -
It, - But Thou.

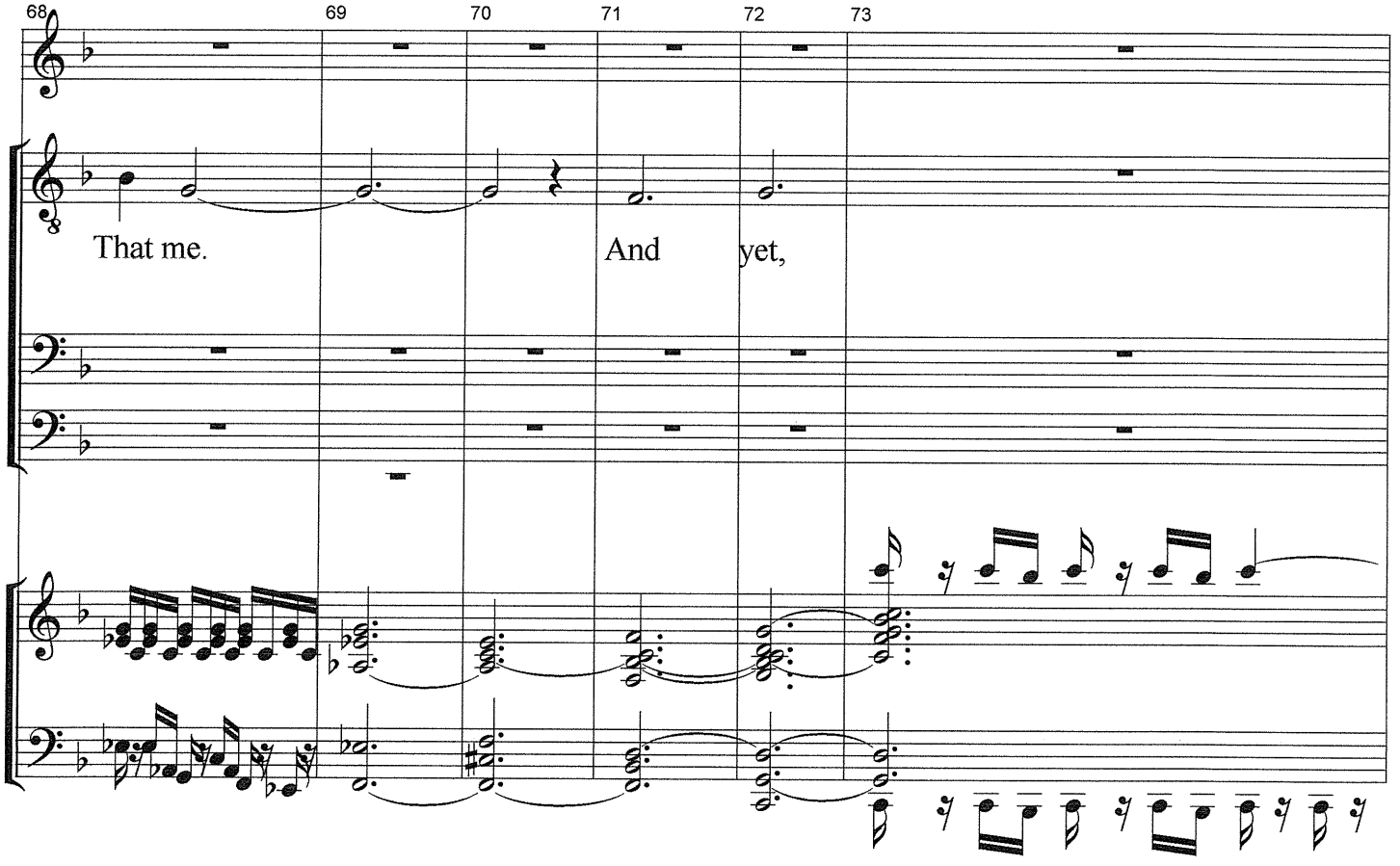

49
50
51
lease him;
Leave me none,
- -
Not - It, -
Not - It, But
Thou, Not
It. Thou -

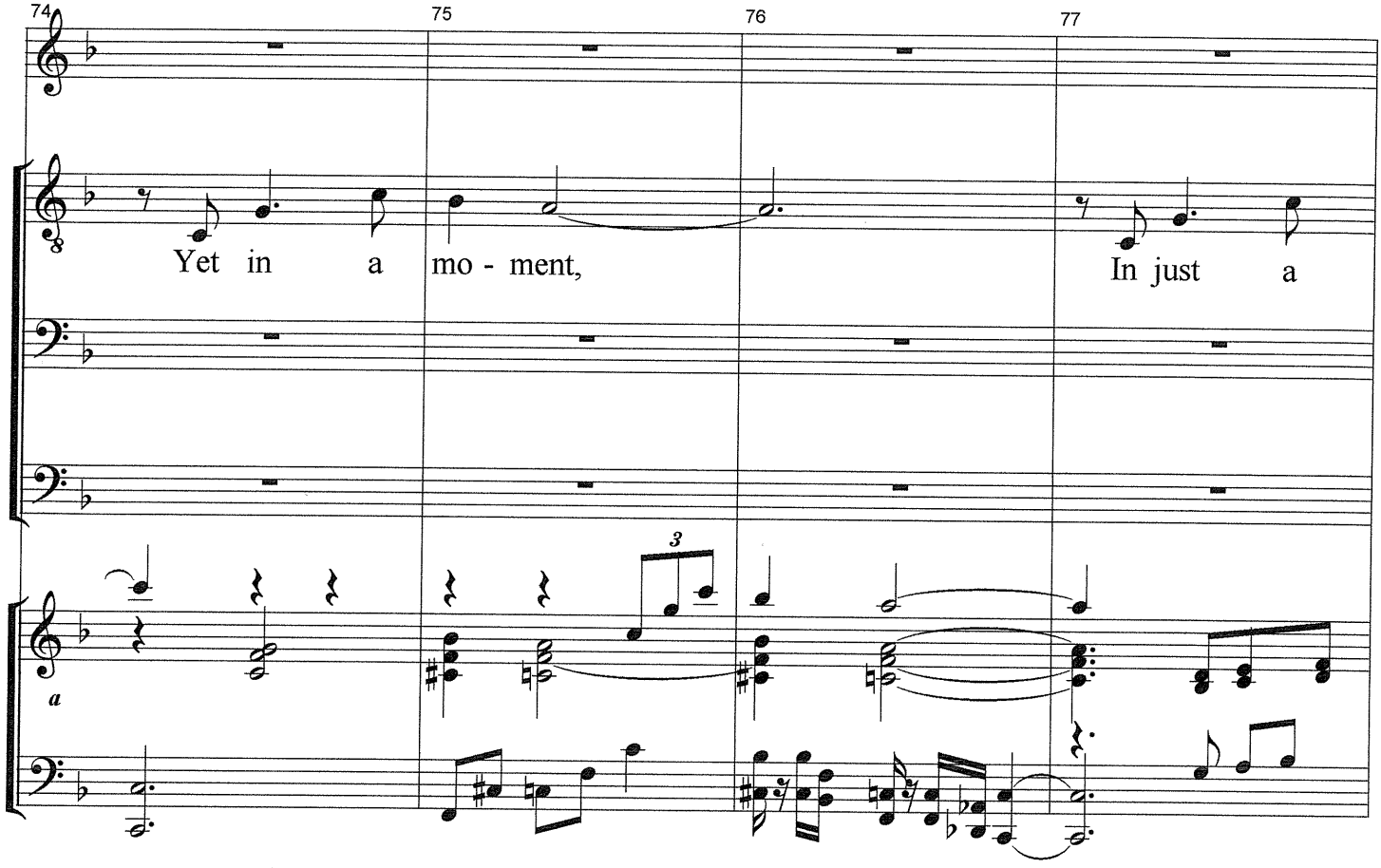

52
53
54
55
And be - ing none, I'll be at
- - Thou - - - -.
Exit Master and monks.
Thou, Thou. -

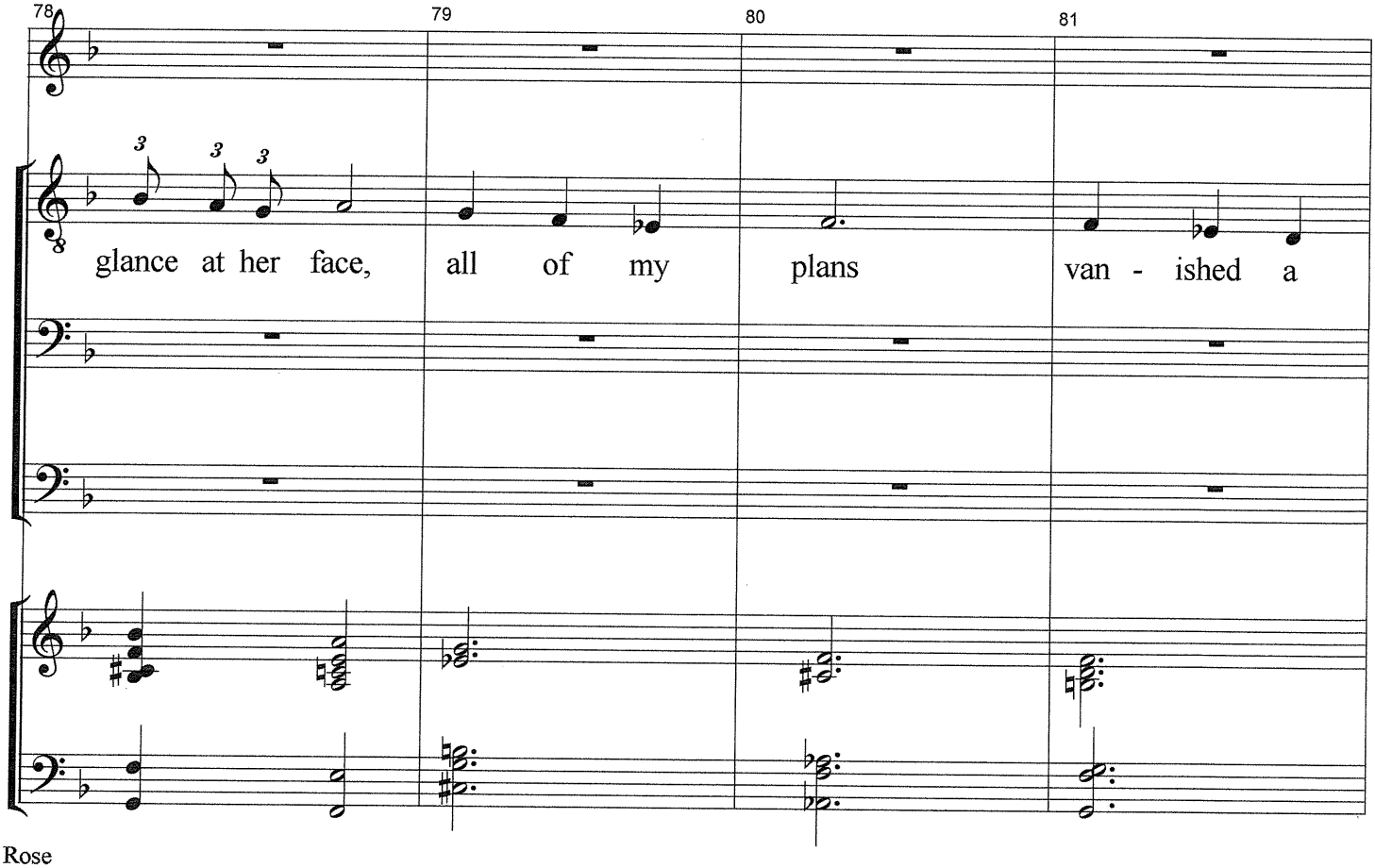

56
57
58
59
one with all that's said to last.
pp
mp

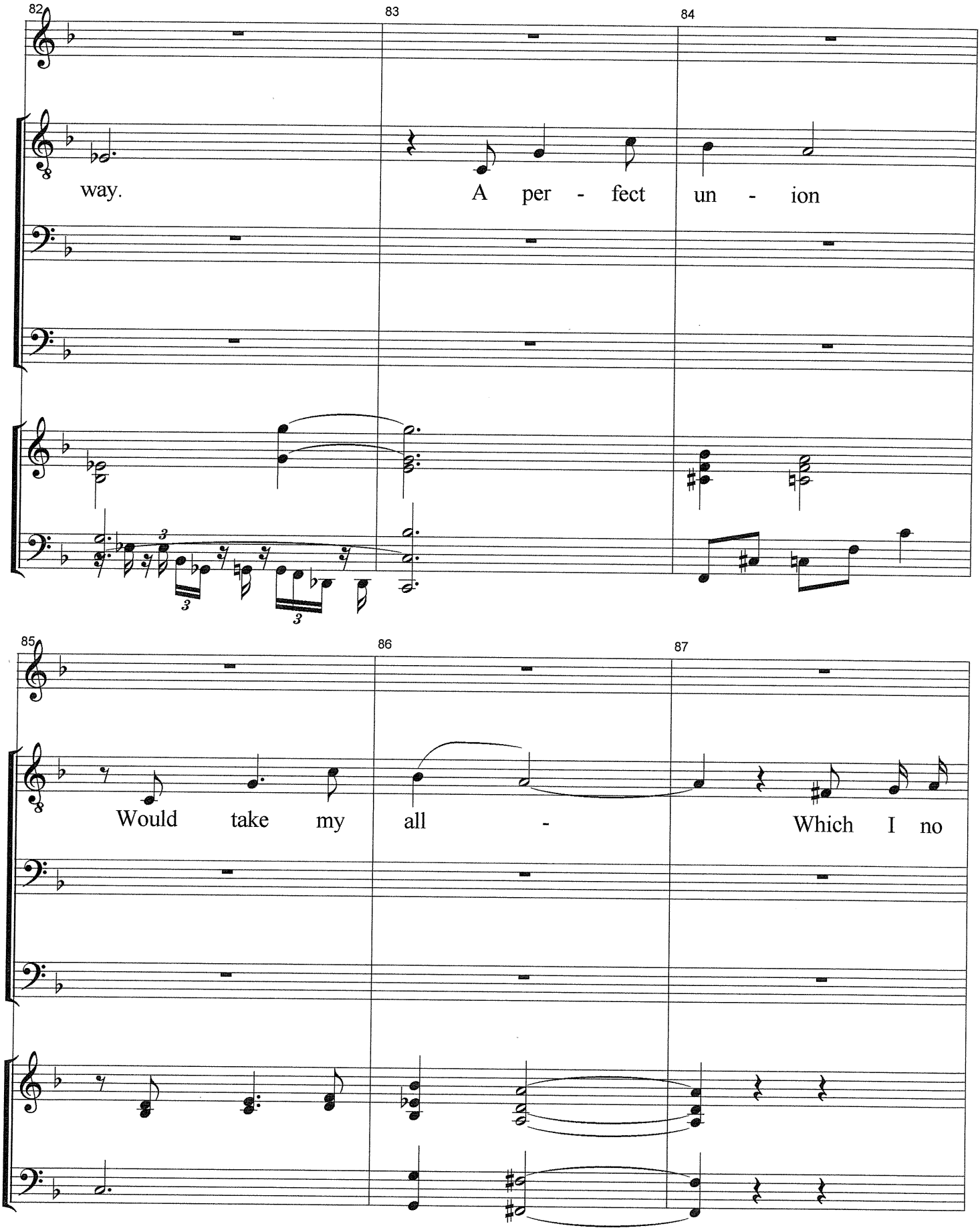

60
61
62
63
I've been e - nough that me.

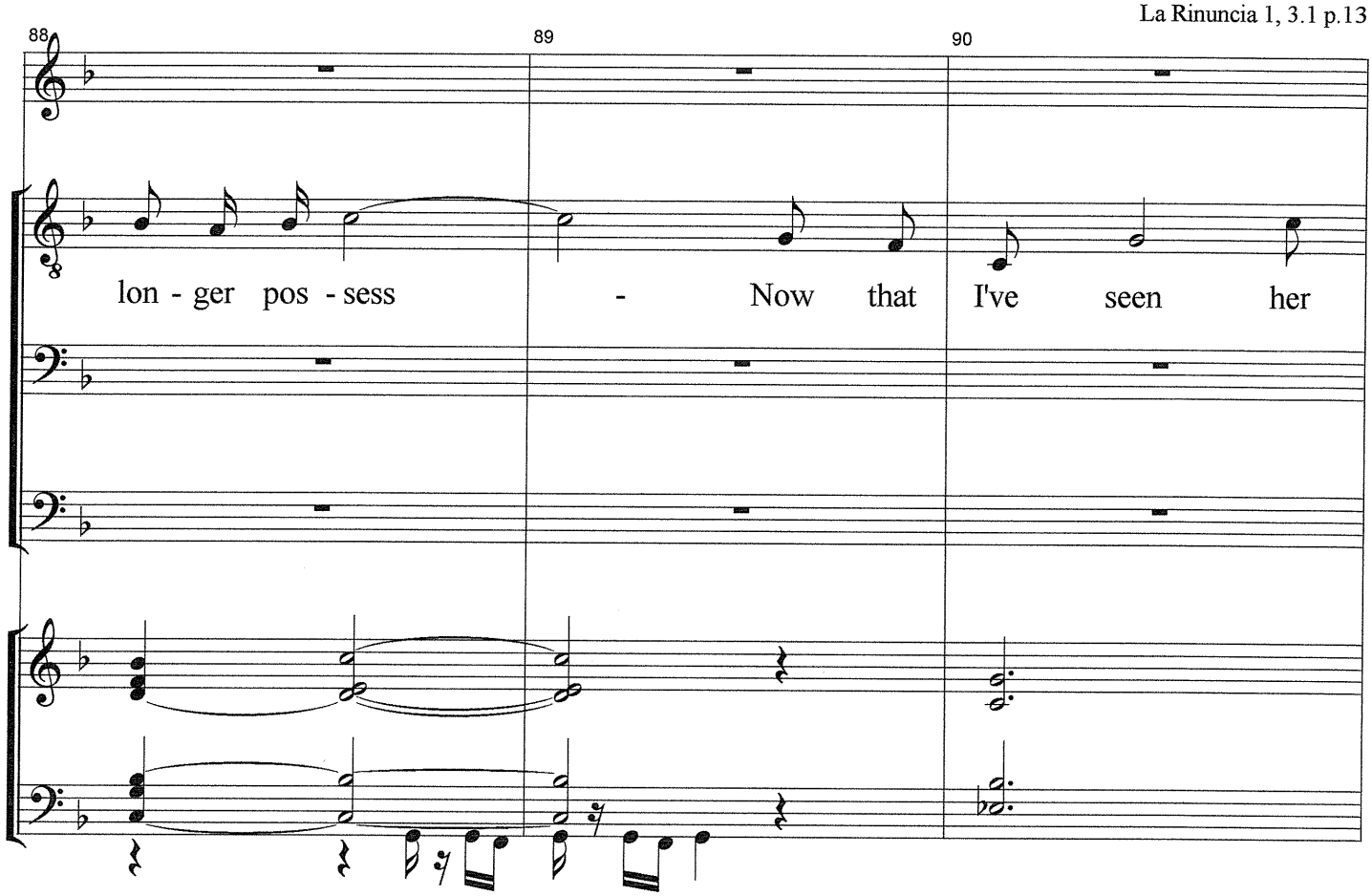

64
65
66
67
f
That me.
All exit except for Norman. Ipsi, unseen by Norman, stands upstage right. Unseen Ipsi or Norman, Dolama watches both of them from upstage left.
poco a poco

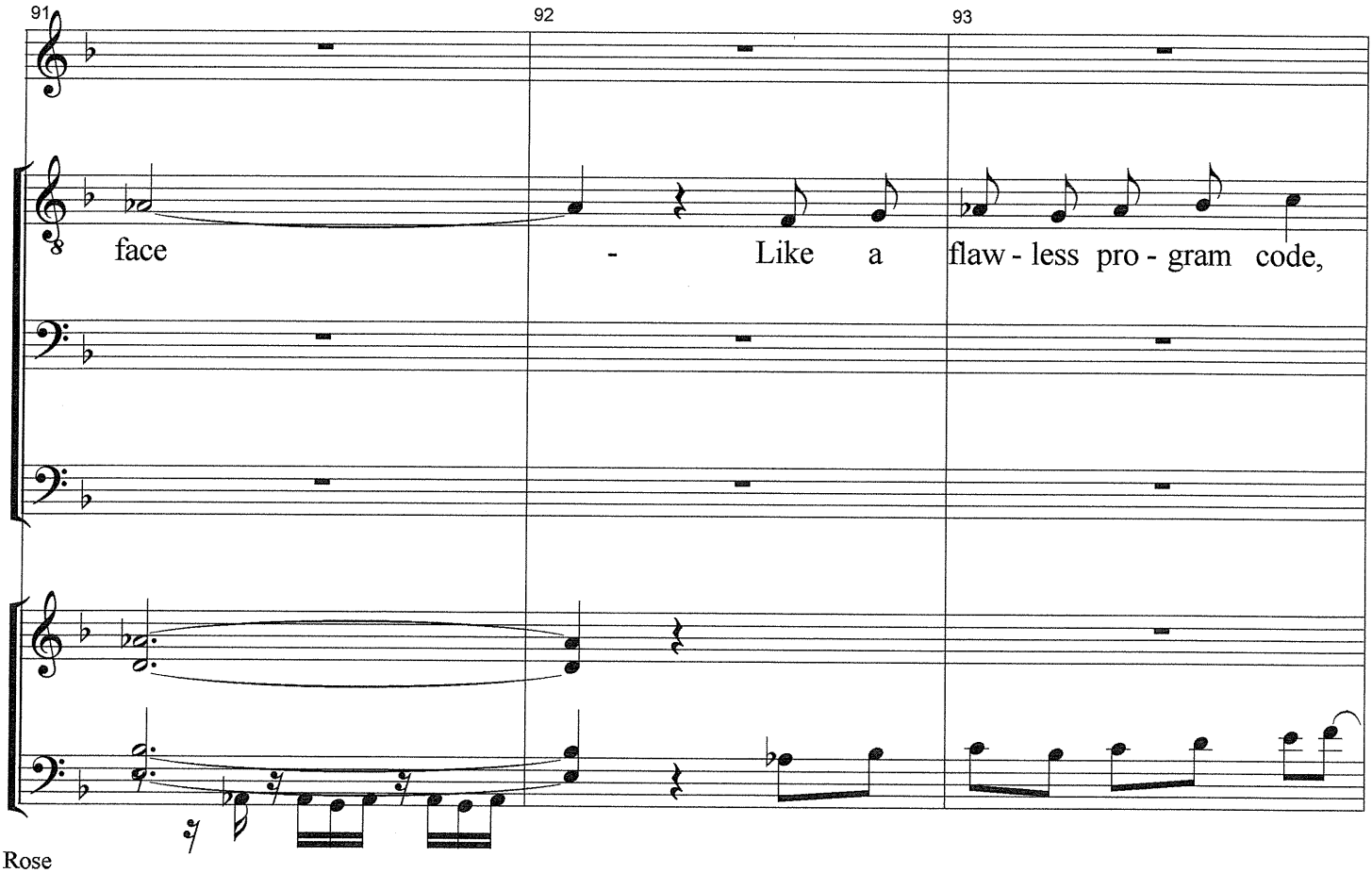

68
69
70
71
72
73
That me.
And yet,


74
75
76
77
Yet in a mo - ment,
In just a
a

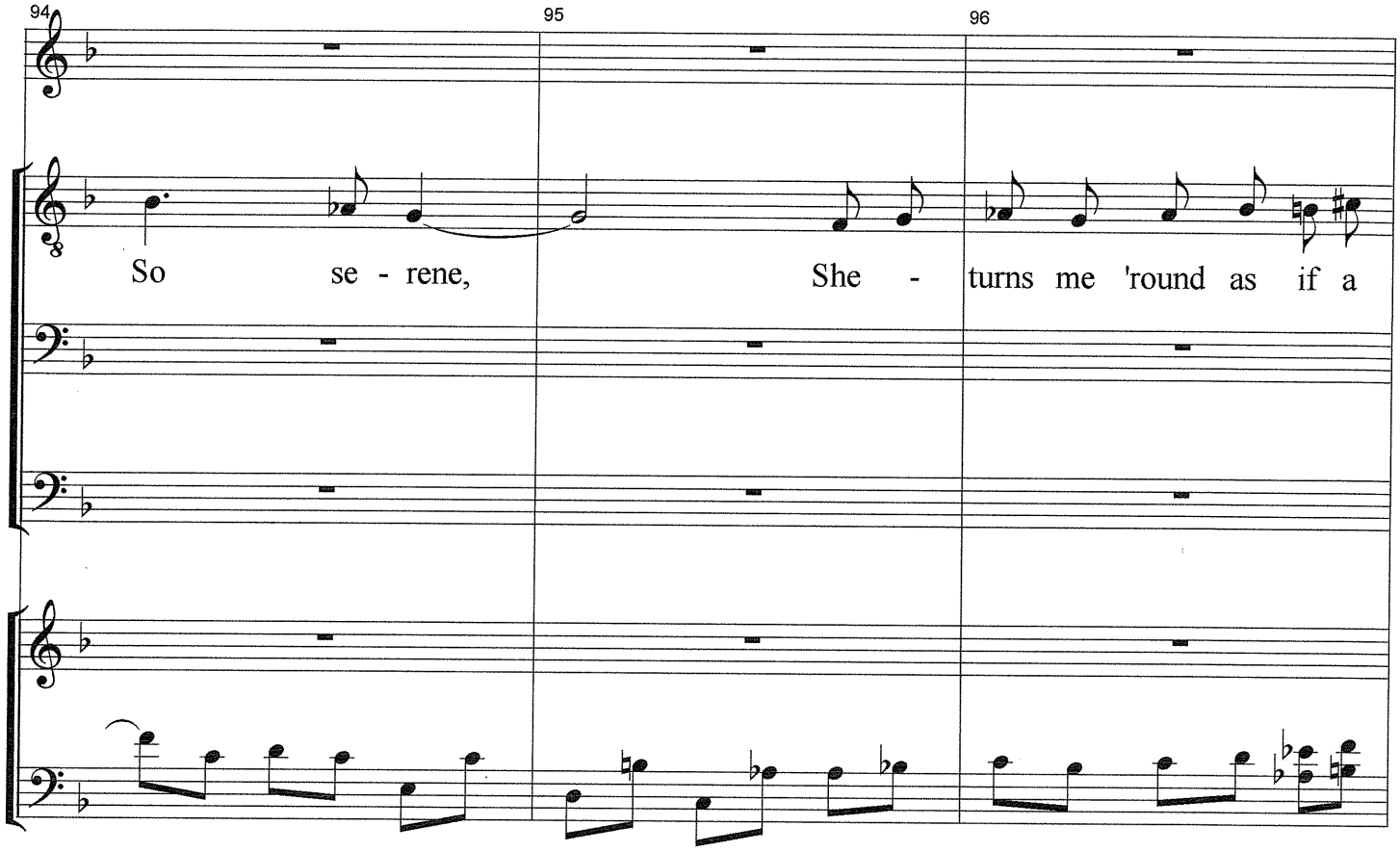

78
79
80
81
glance at her face,
all of my
plans
van - ished a

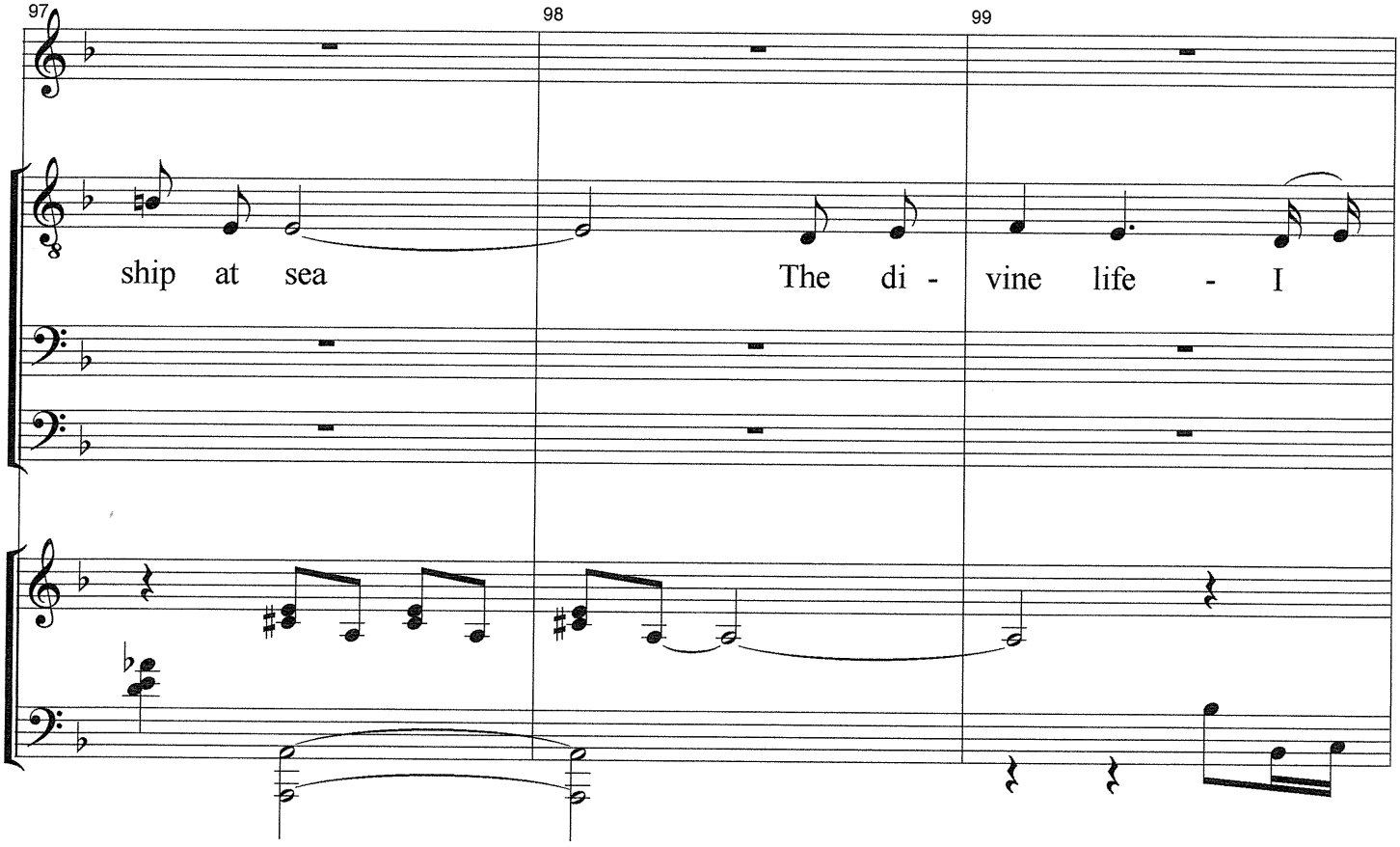

82
83
84
way.
A per - fect un - ion
85
86
87
Would take my all -
Which I no

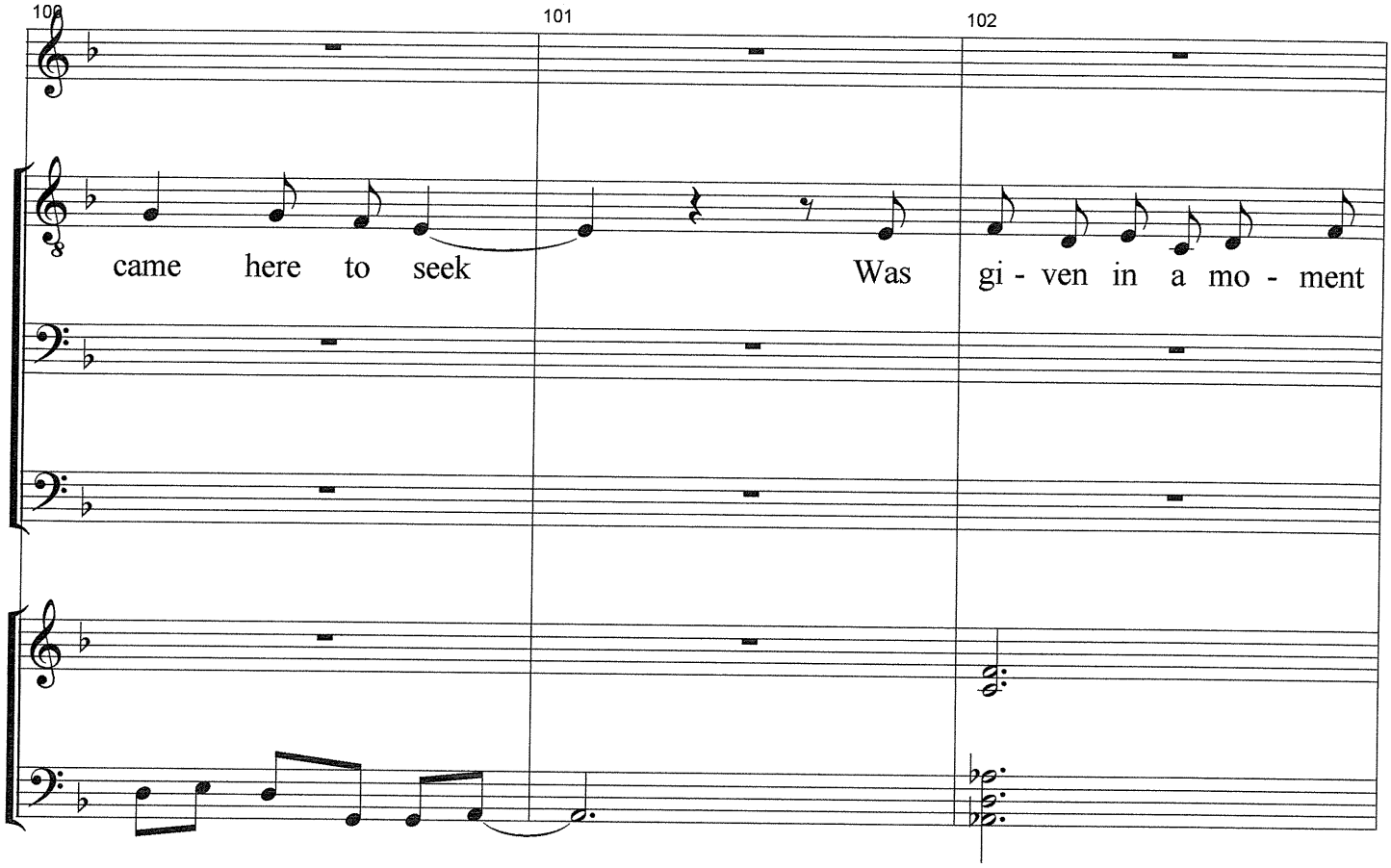

88
89
90
lon - ger pos - sess - Now that I've seen her

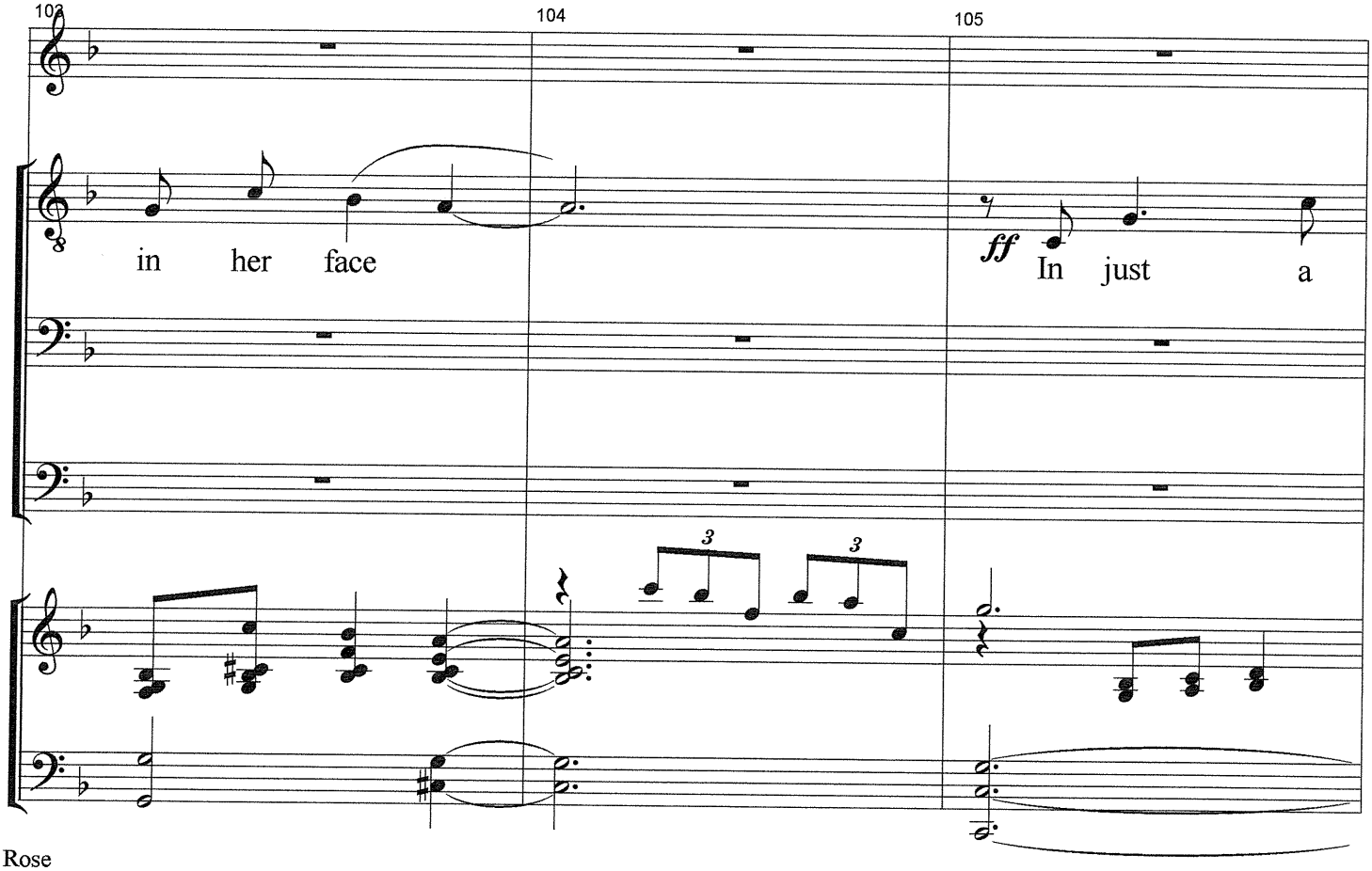

91
92
93
face - Like a flaw - less pro - gram code,

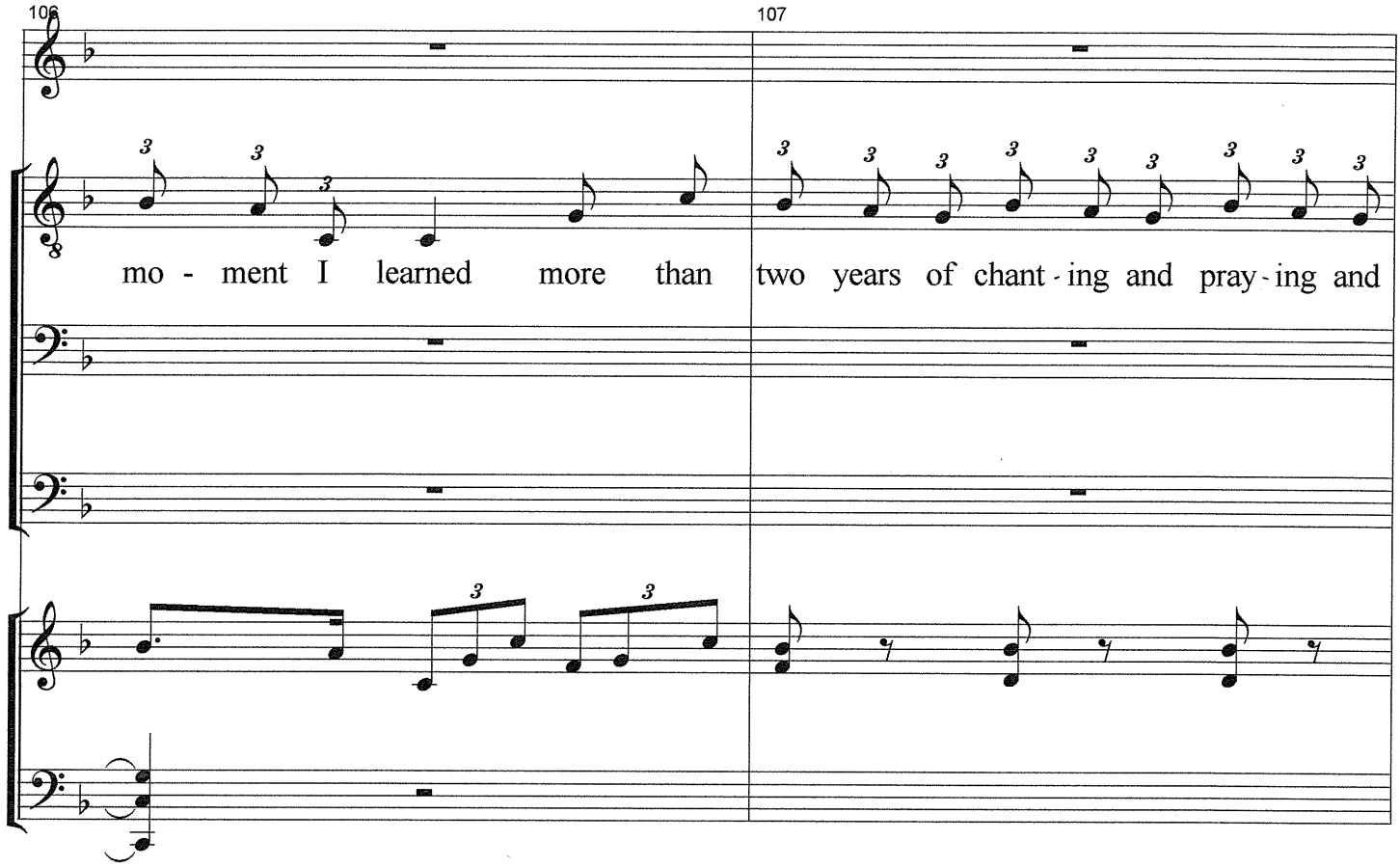
Rose

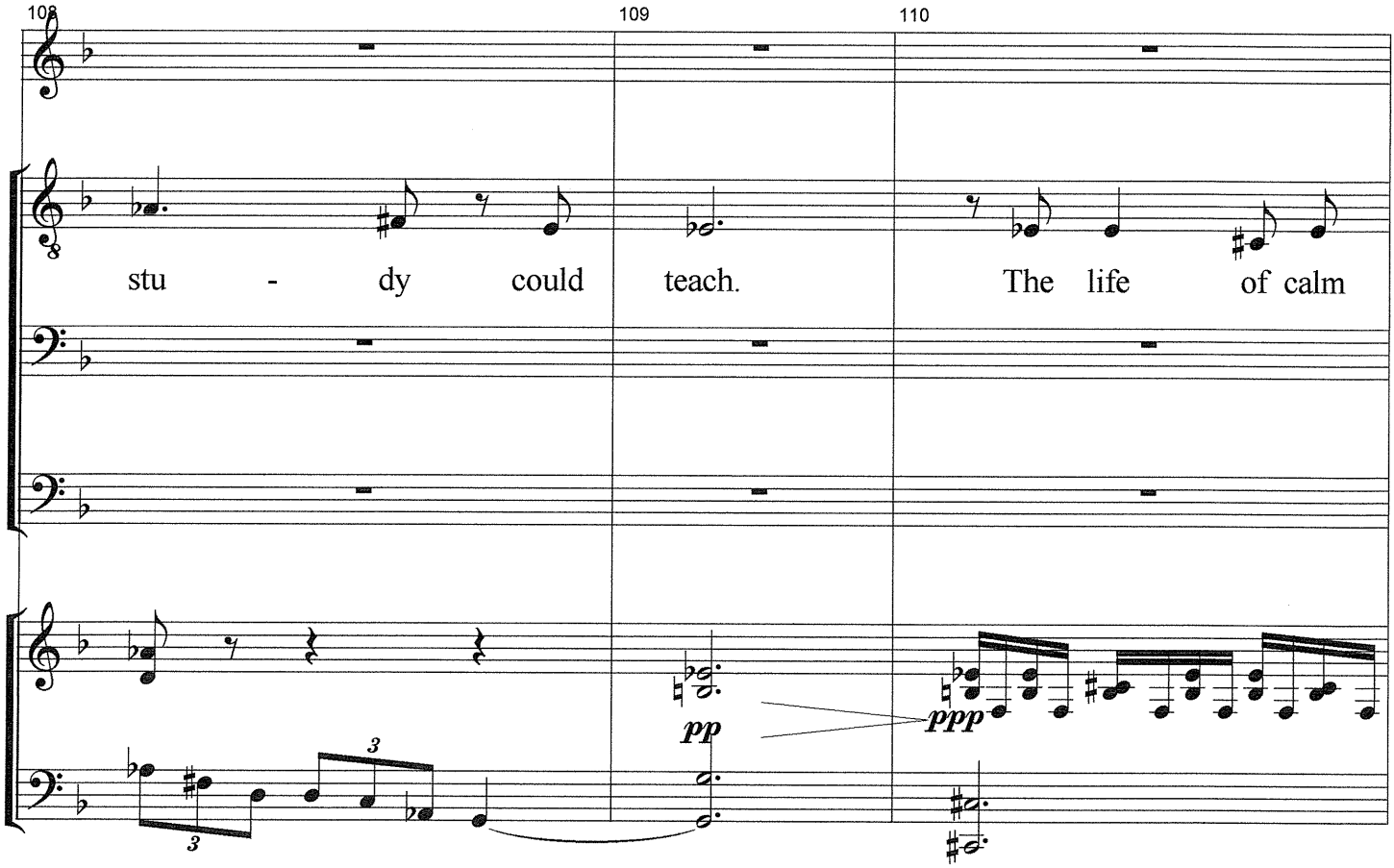

94
95
96
So se - rene, She - turns me 'round as if a

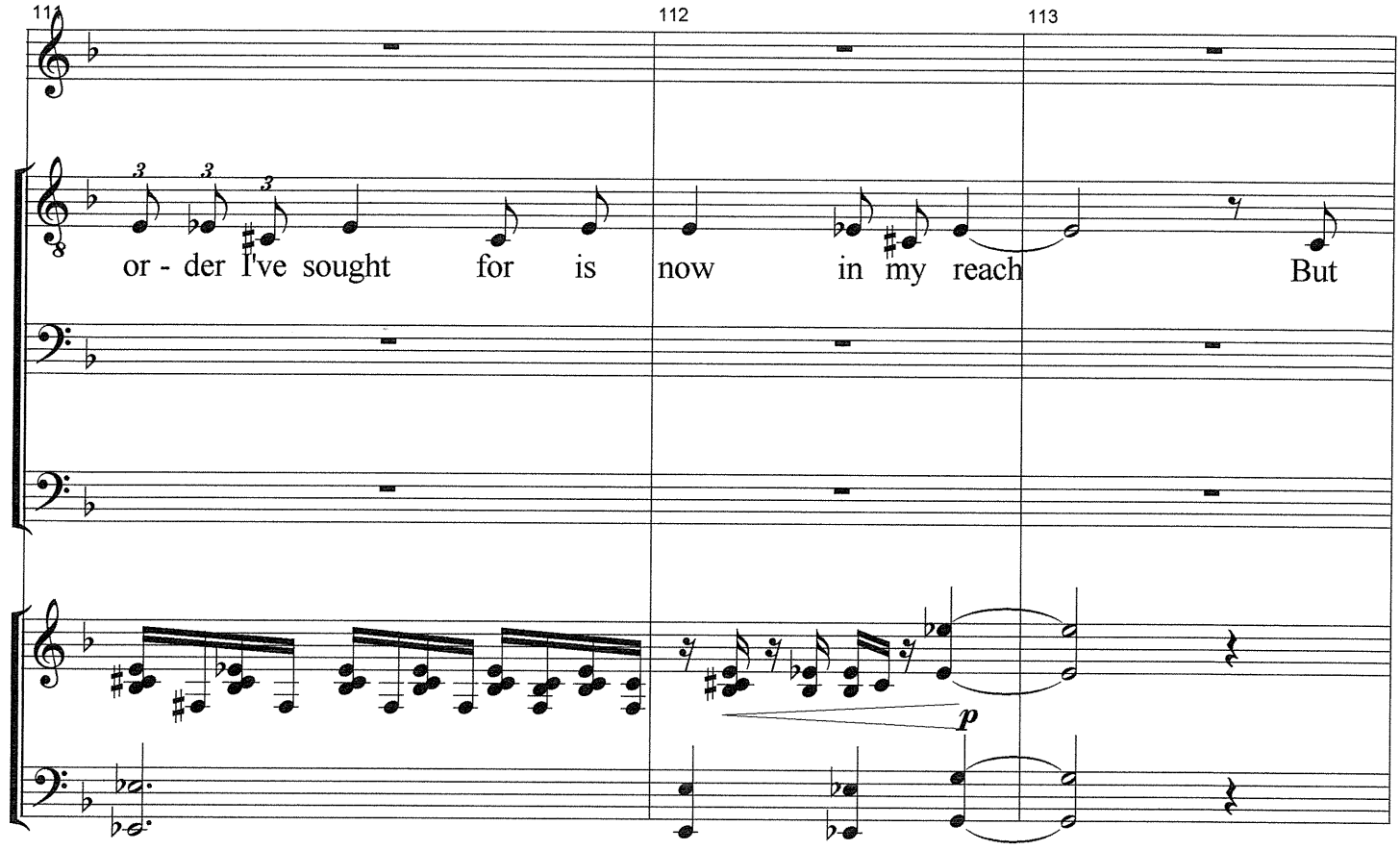

97
98
99
ship at sea The di - vine life - I

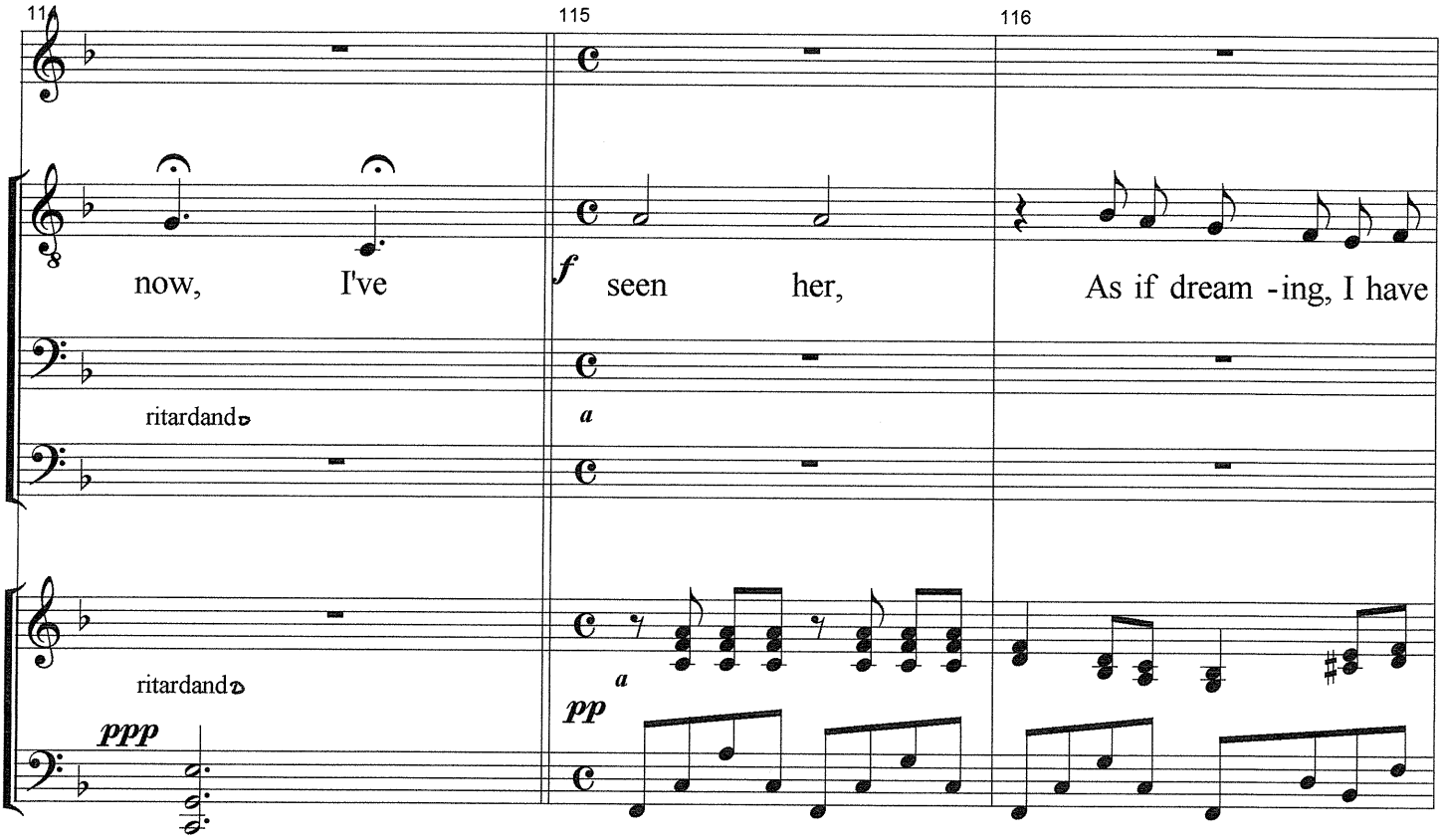

100
101
102
came here to seek
Was gi - ven in a mo - ment

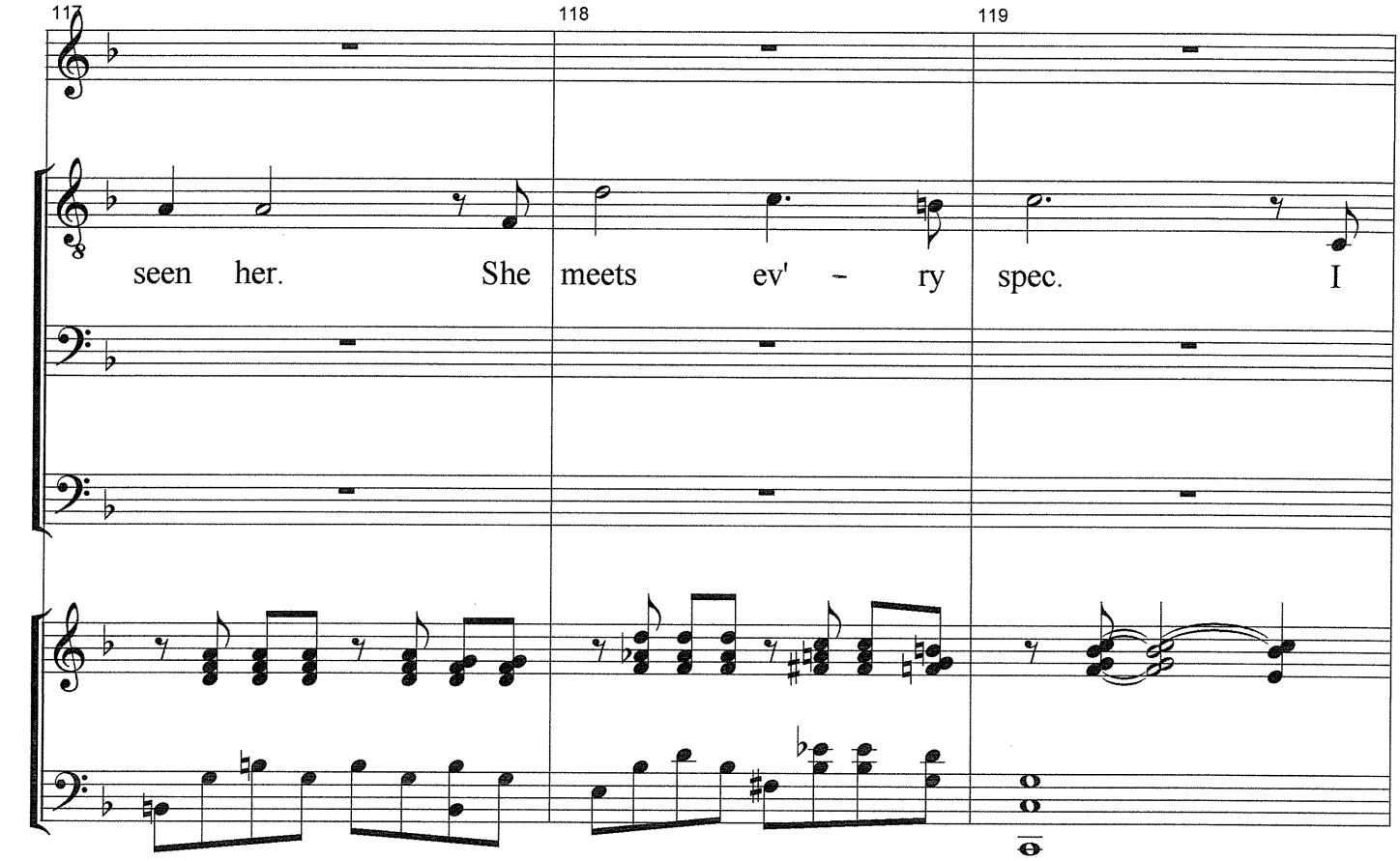

103
104
105
in her face
ff
In just a
3
3

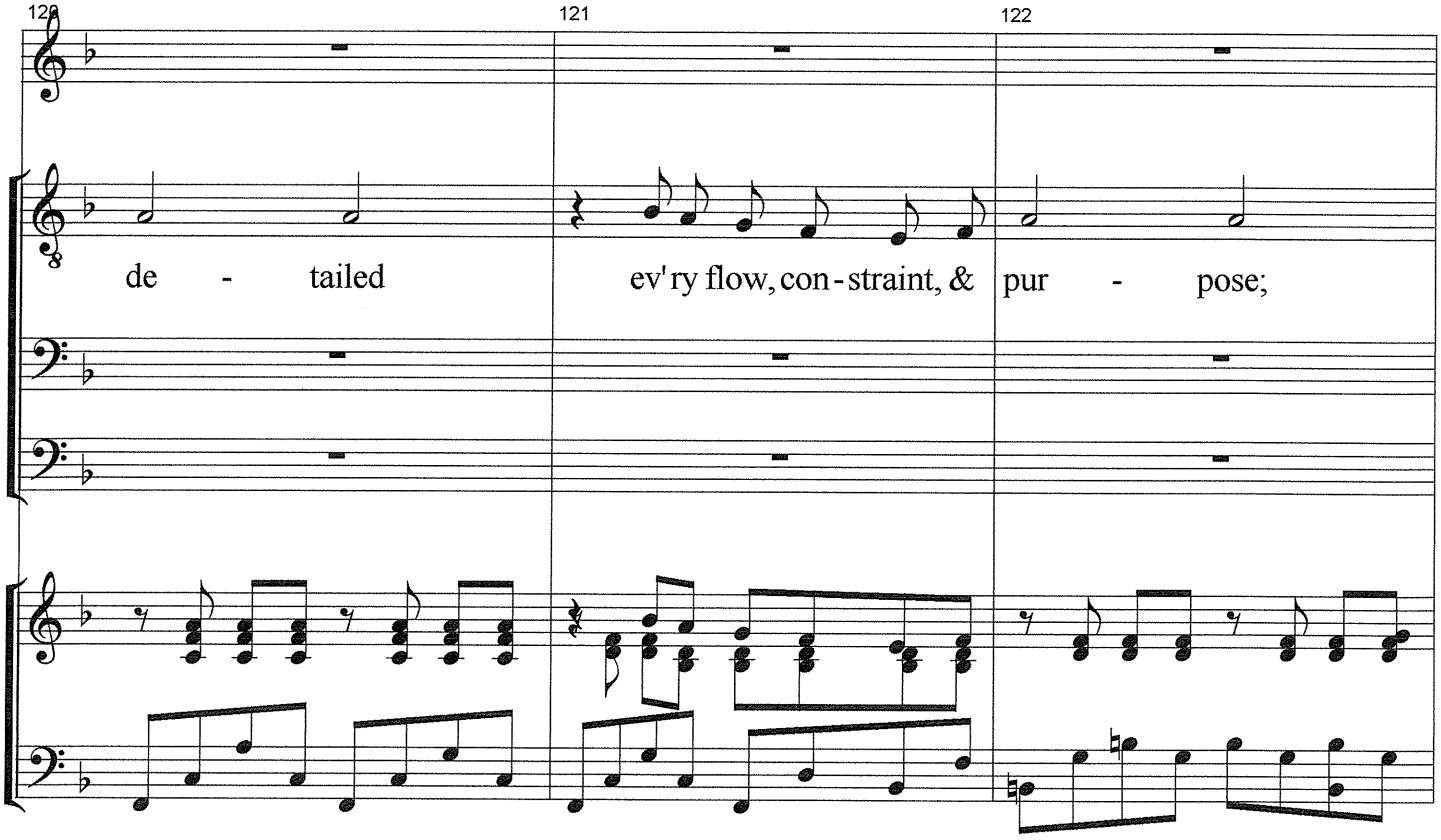

106
107
mo - ment I learned more than
two years of chant - ing and pray - ing and

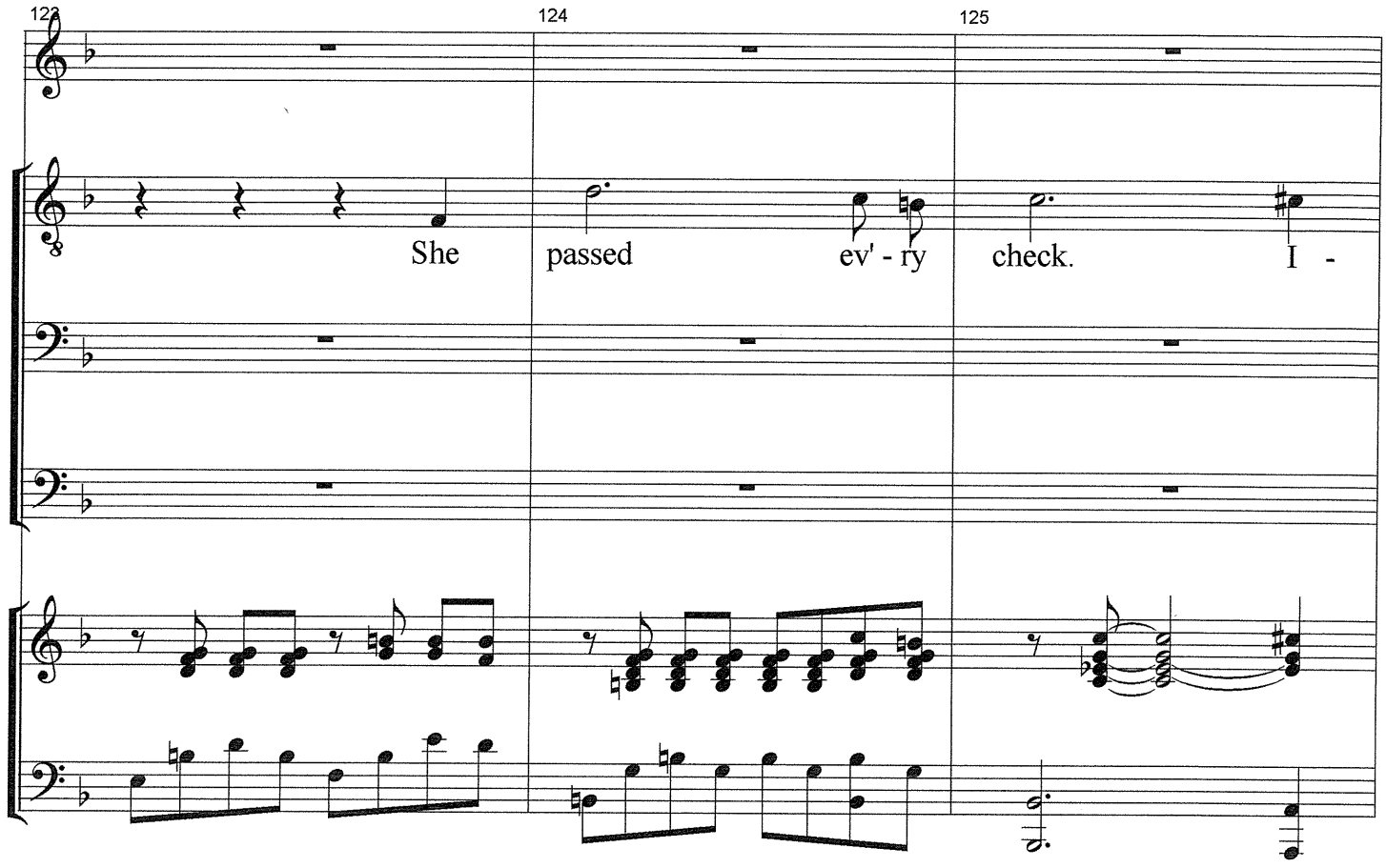

108
109
110
stu - dy could
teach.
The life of calm
pp
ppp

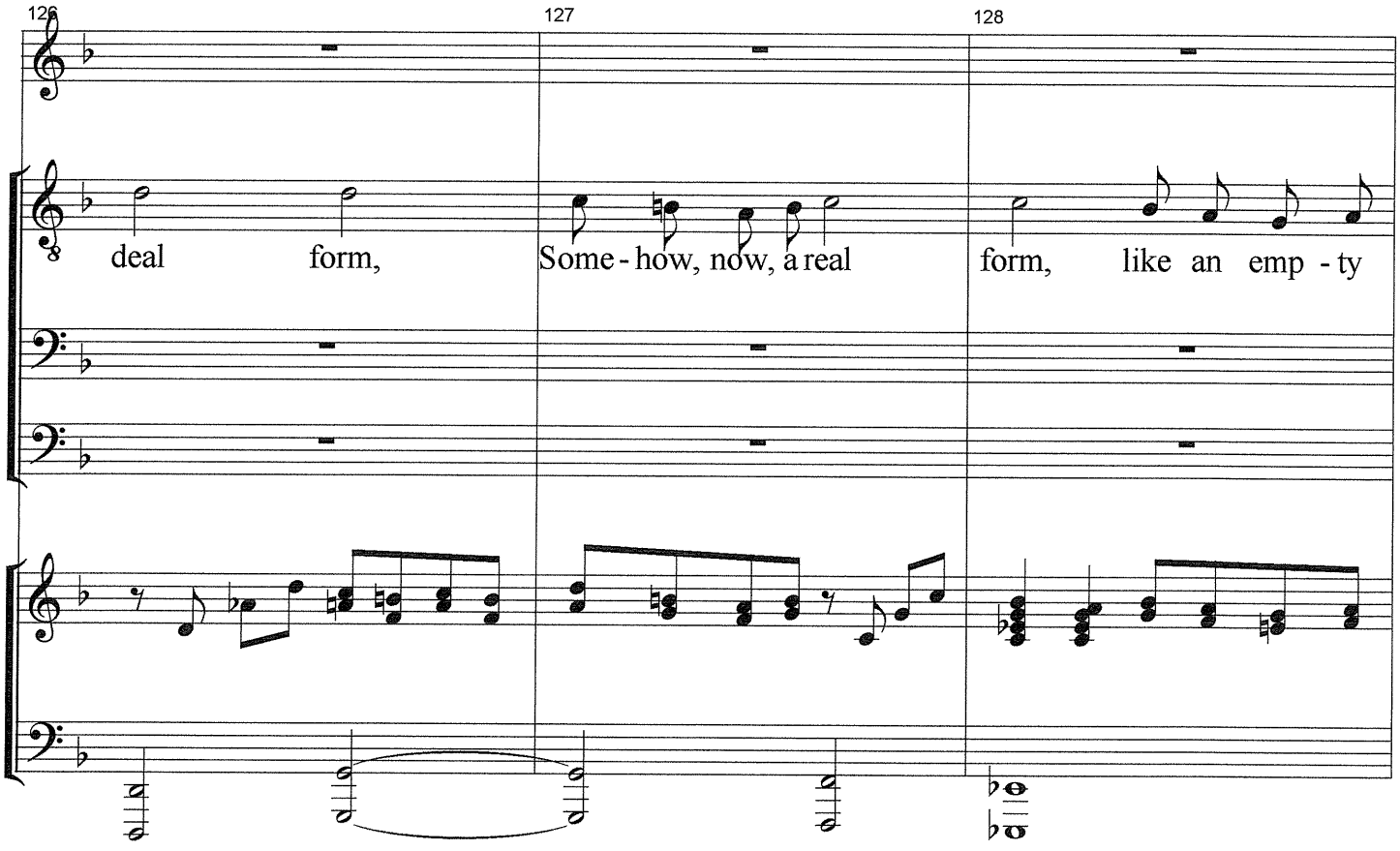

111
112
113
or - der I've sought for is now in my reach But
p

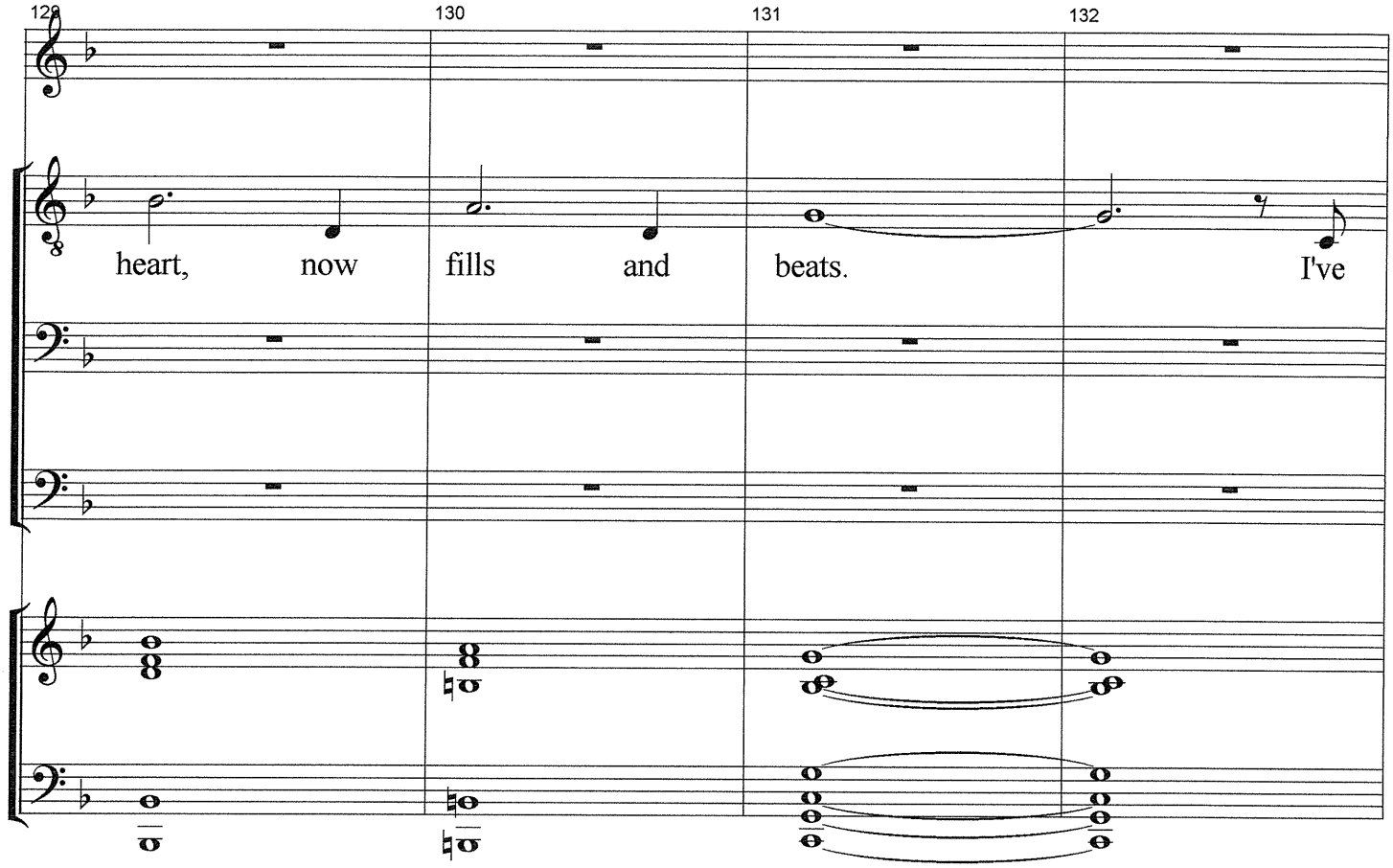

114
115
116
now, I've
f
seen her,
As if dream - ing, I have
ritardando
a
ritardando
a
ppp
pp

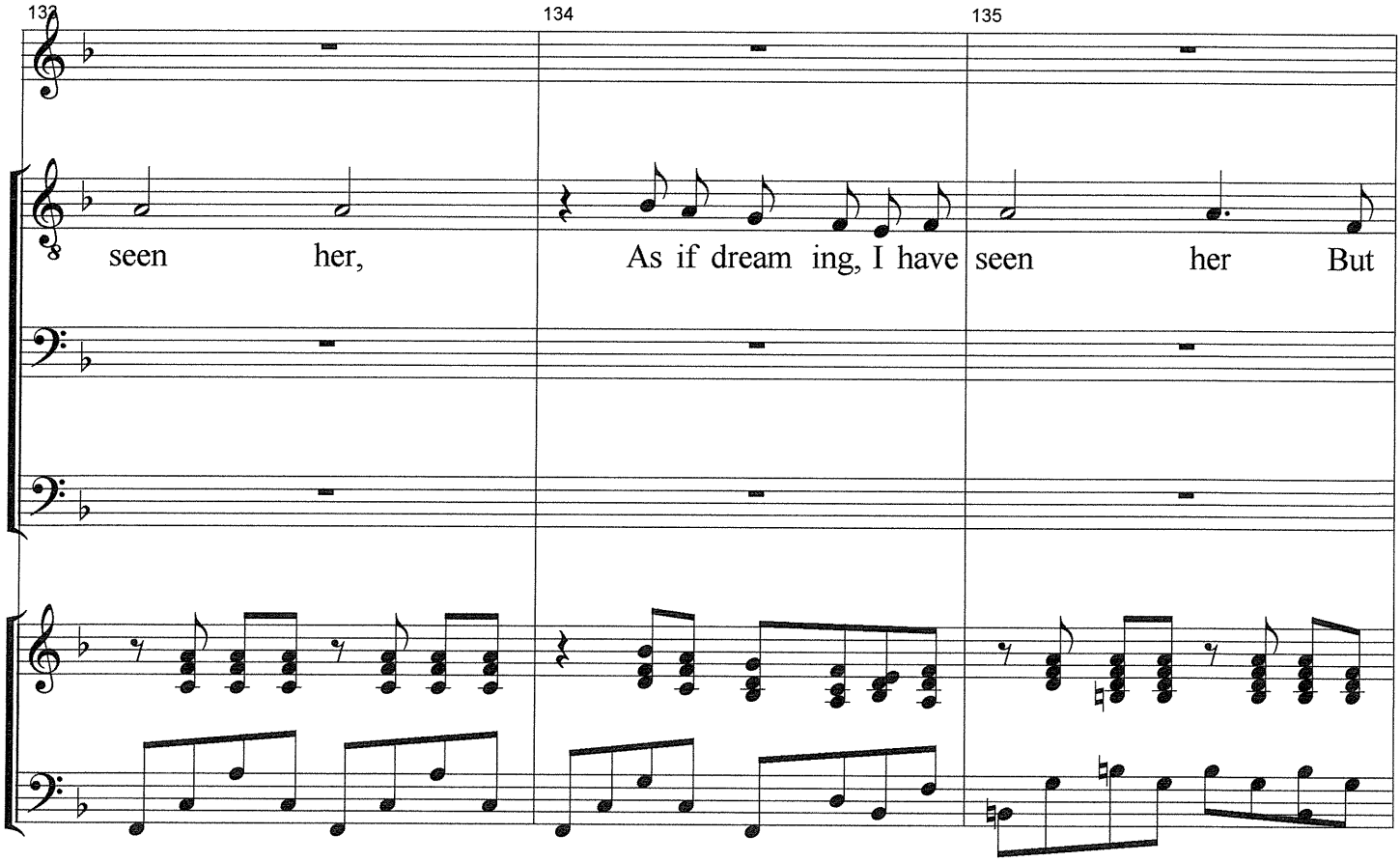

117
118
119
seen her. She meets ev' - ry spec. I

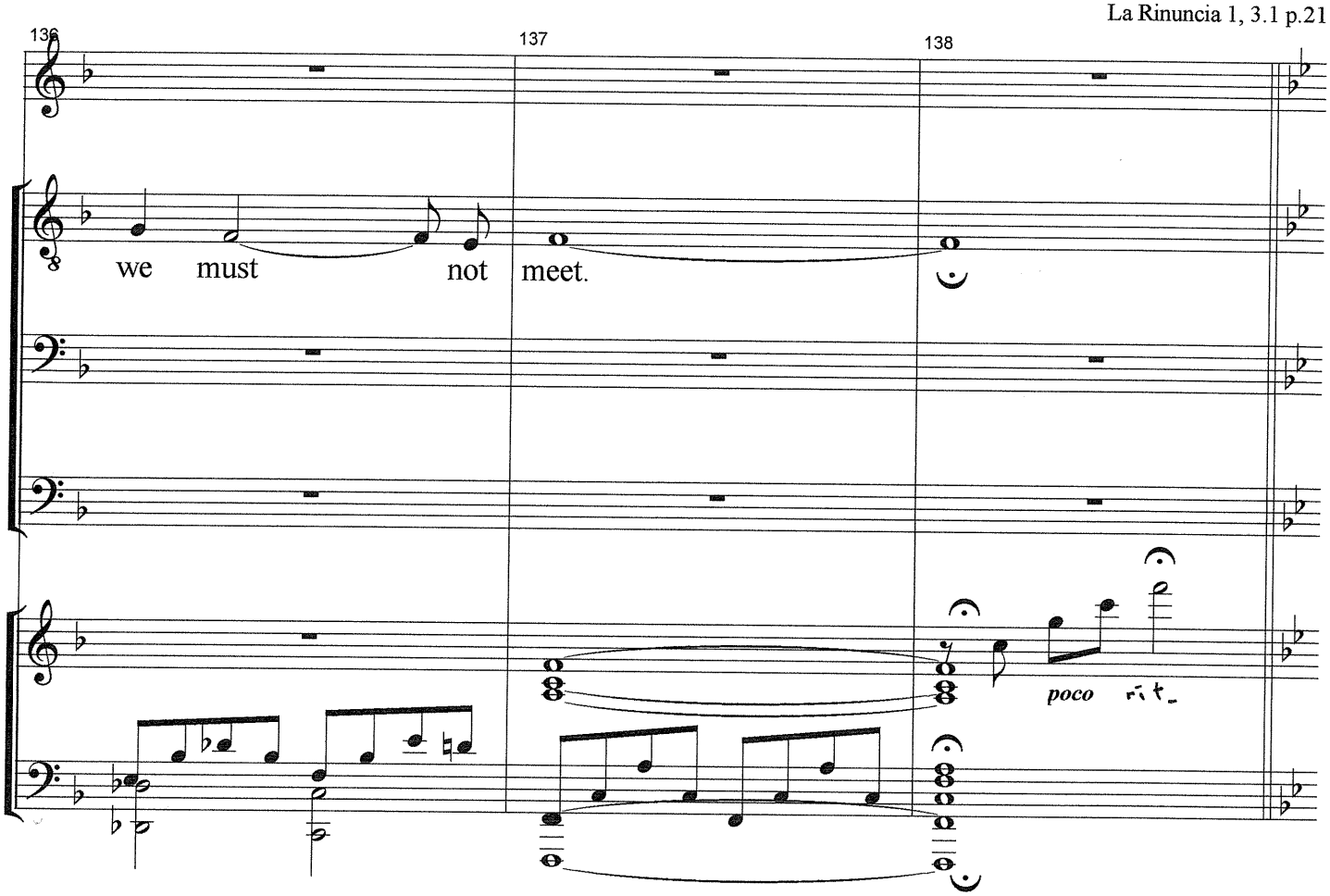

120
121
122
de - tailed ev'ry flow, con-straint, & pur - pose;

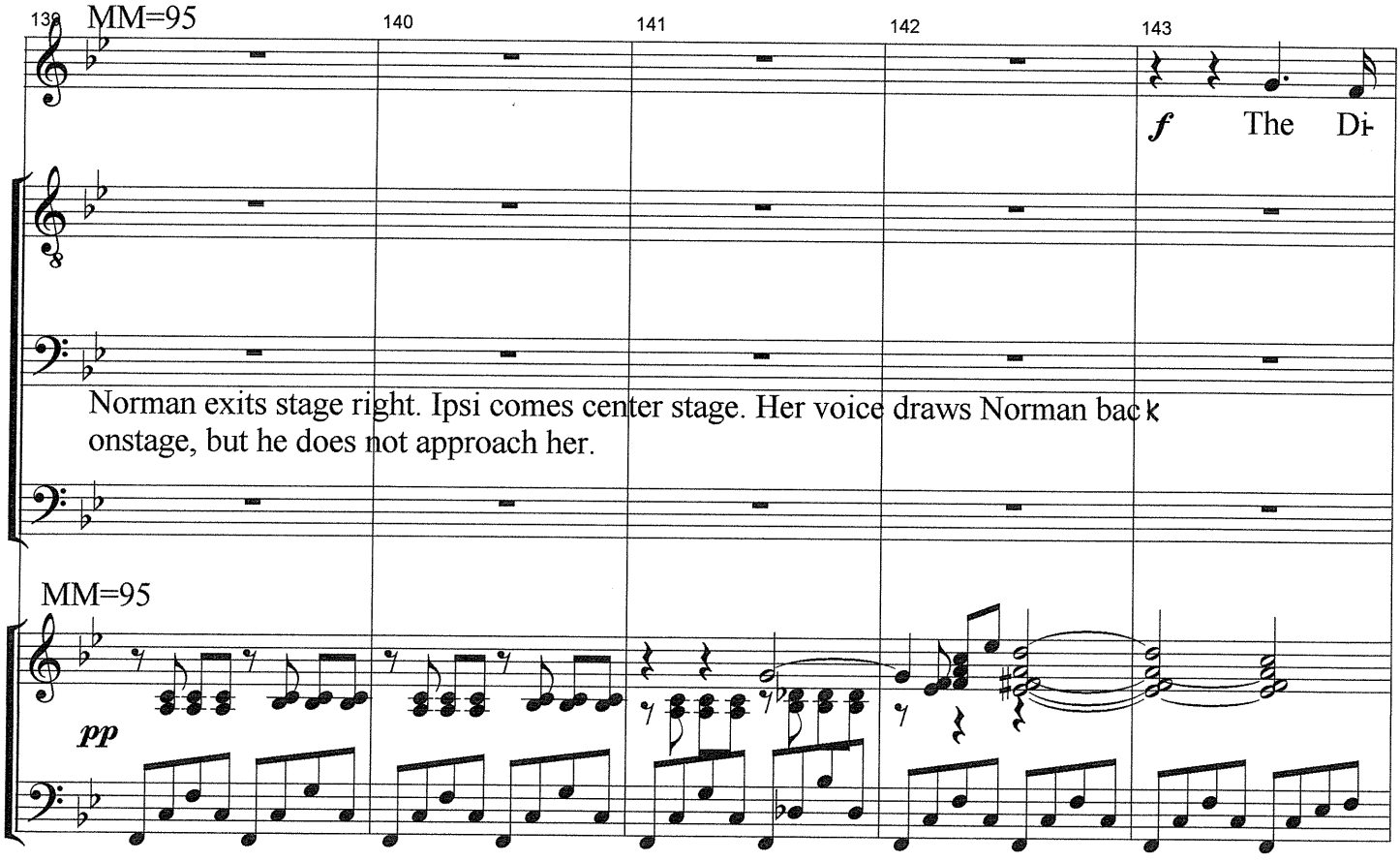

123
124
125
She
passed
ev' - ry
check.
I -

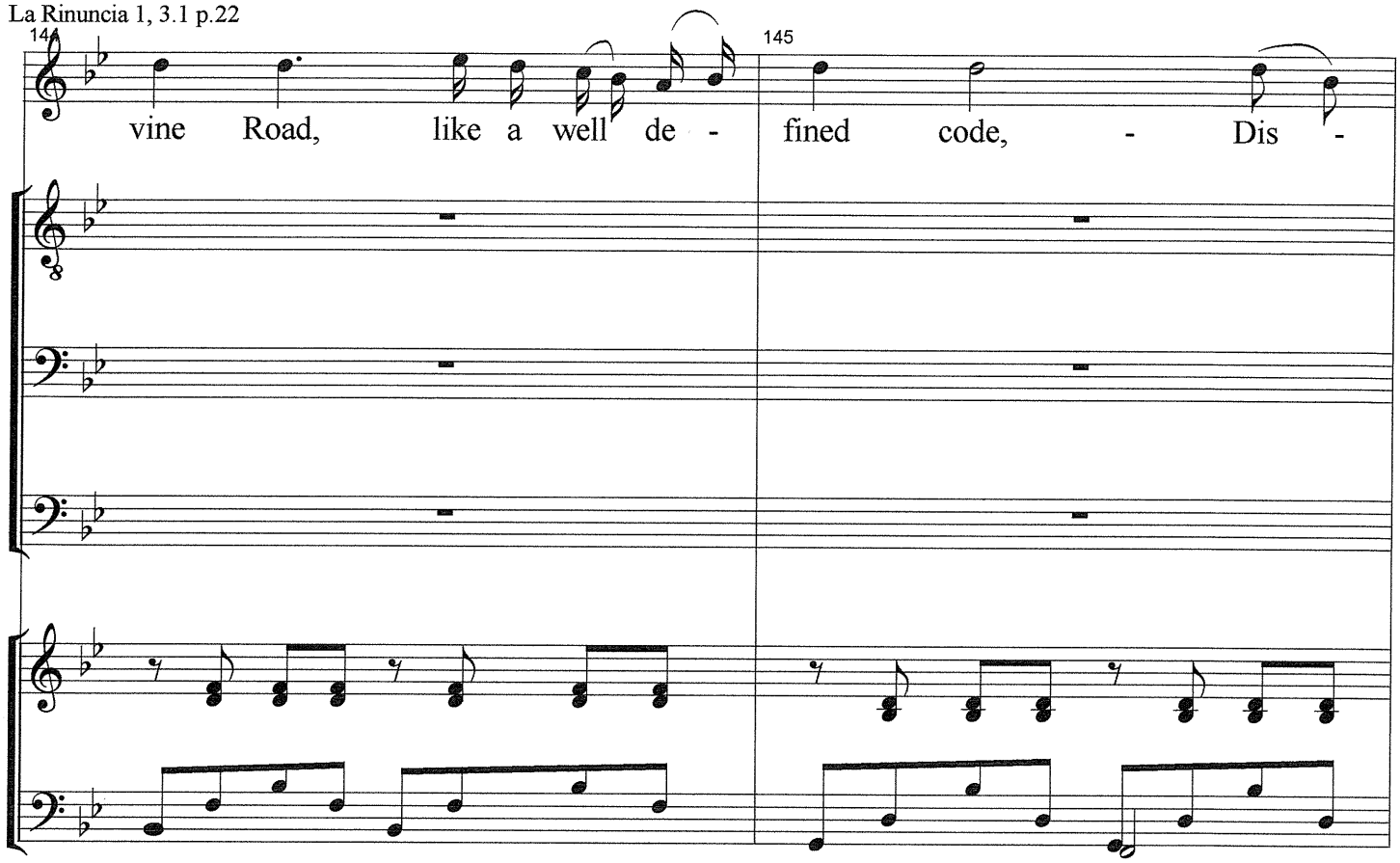

126
127
128
deal
form,
Some - how, now, a real
form,
like an emp - ty

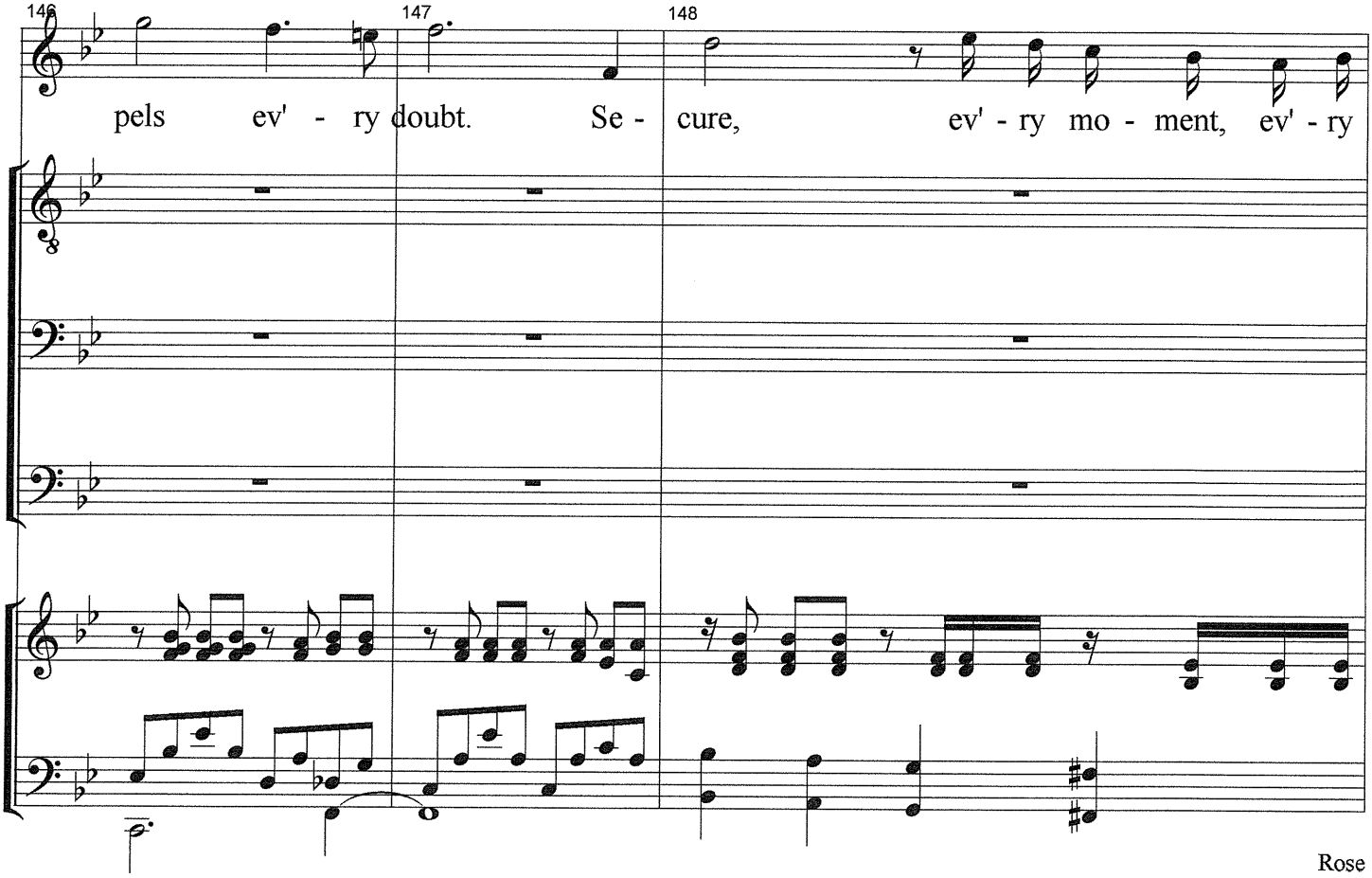

129
130
131
132
heart, now fills and beats. I've

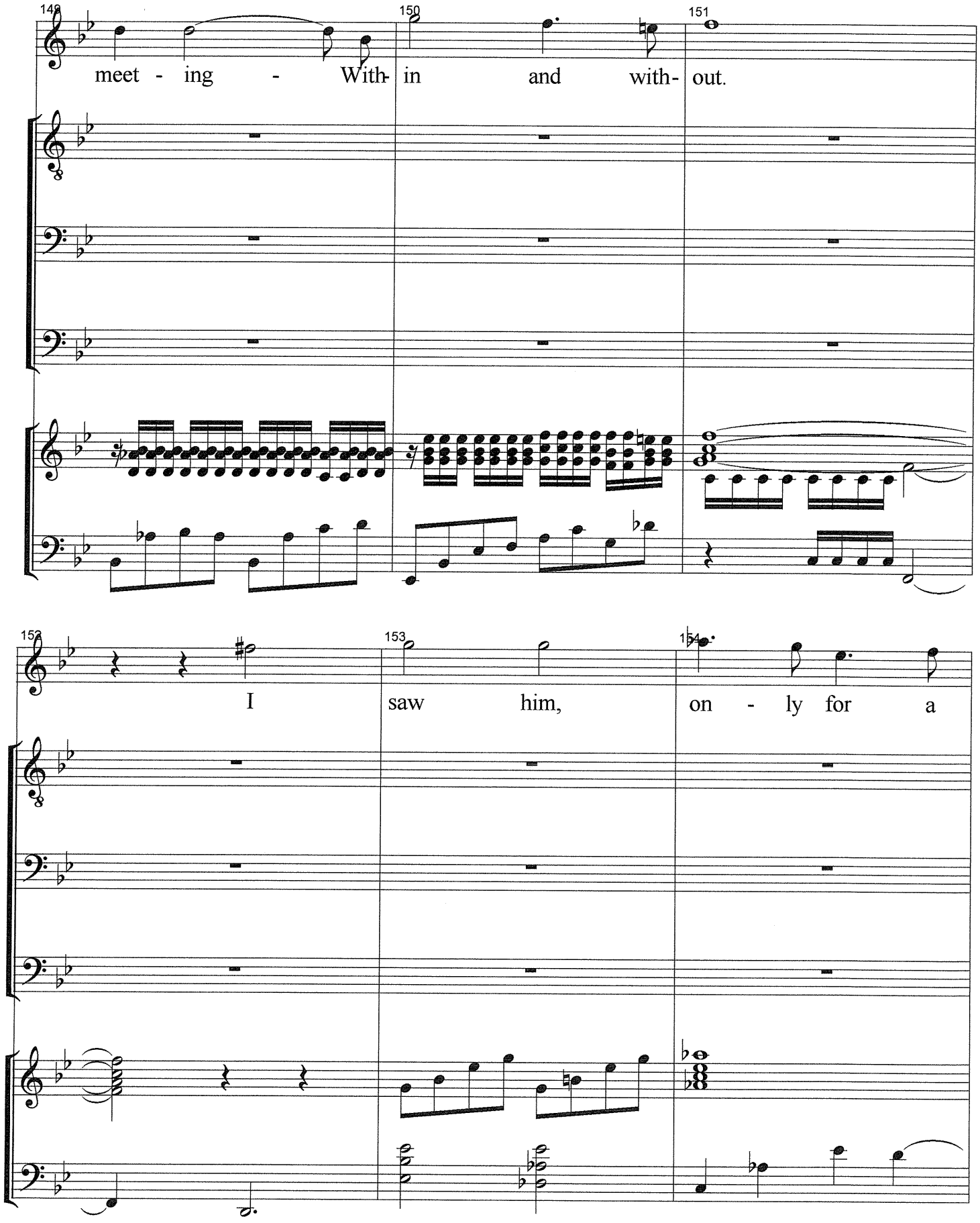

133
134
135
seen her, As if dream ing, I have seen her But

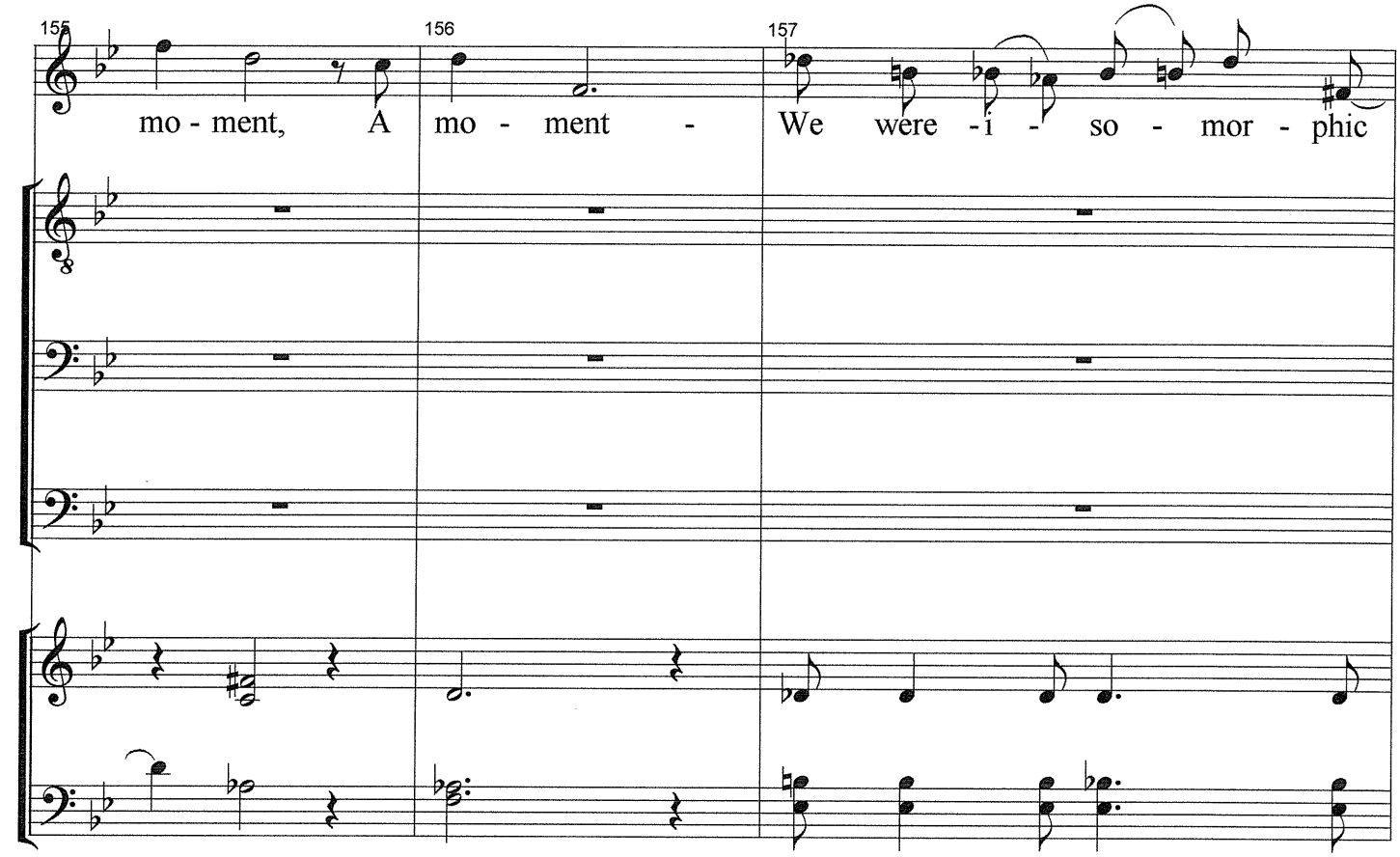

136
137
138
we must not meet.
poco

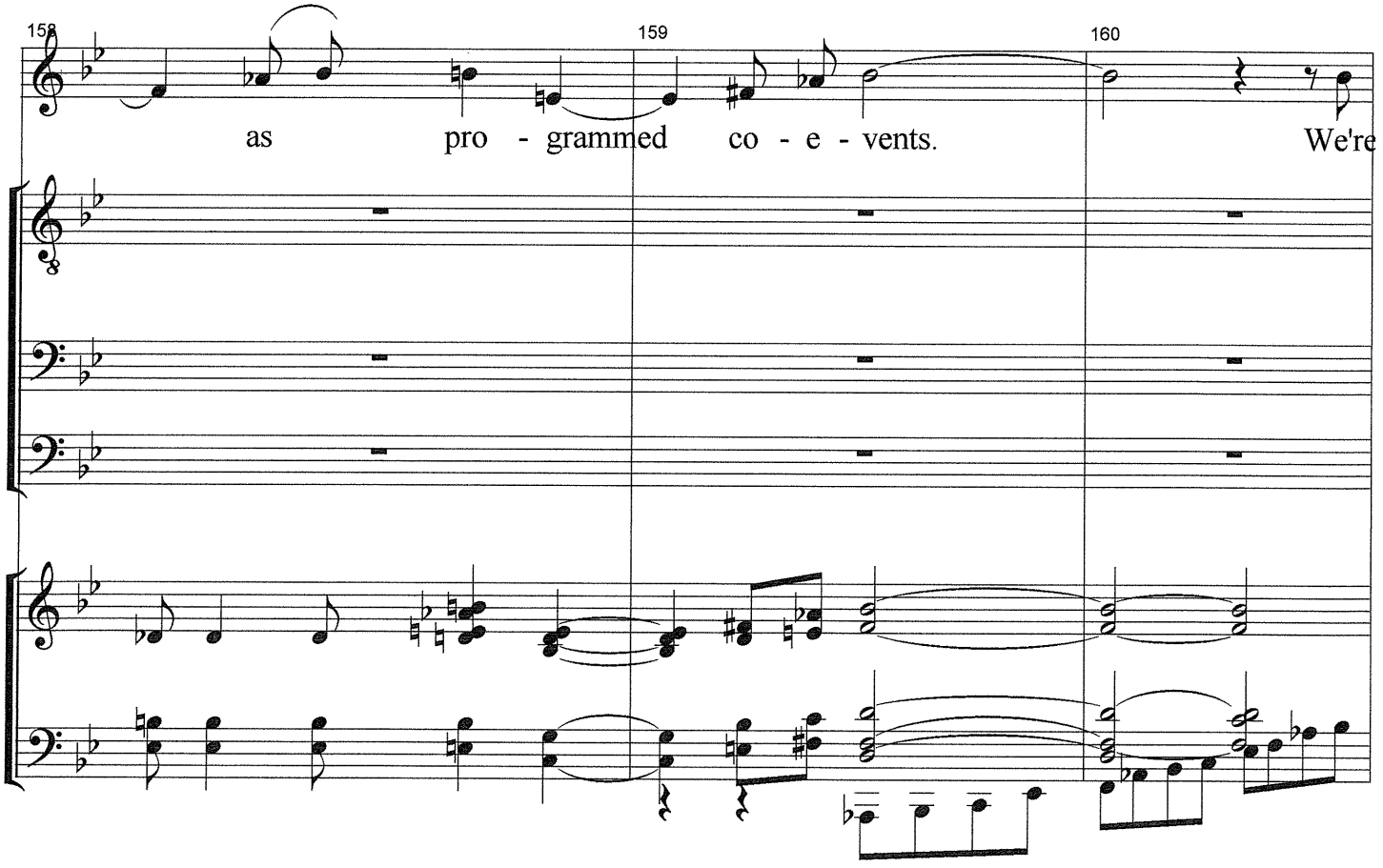

139
MM=95
140
141
142
143
f The Di-
Norman exits stage right. Ipsi comes center stage. Her voice draws Norman back onstage, but he does not approach her.
MM=95
pp

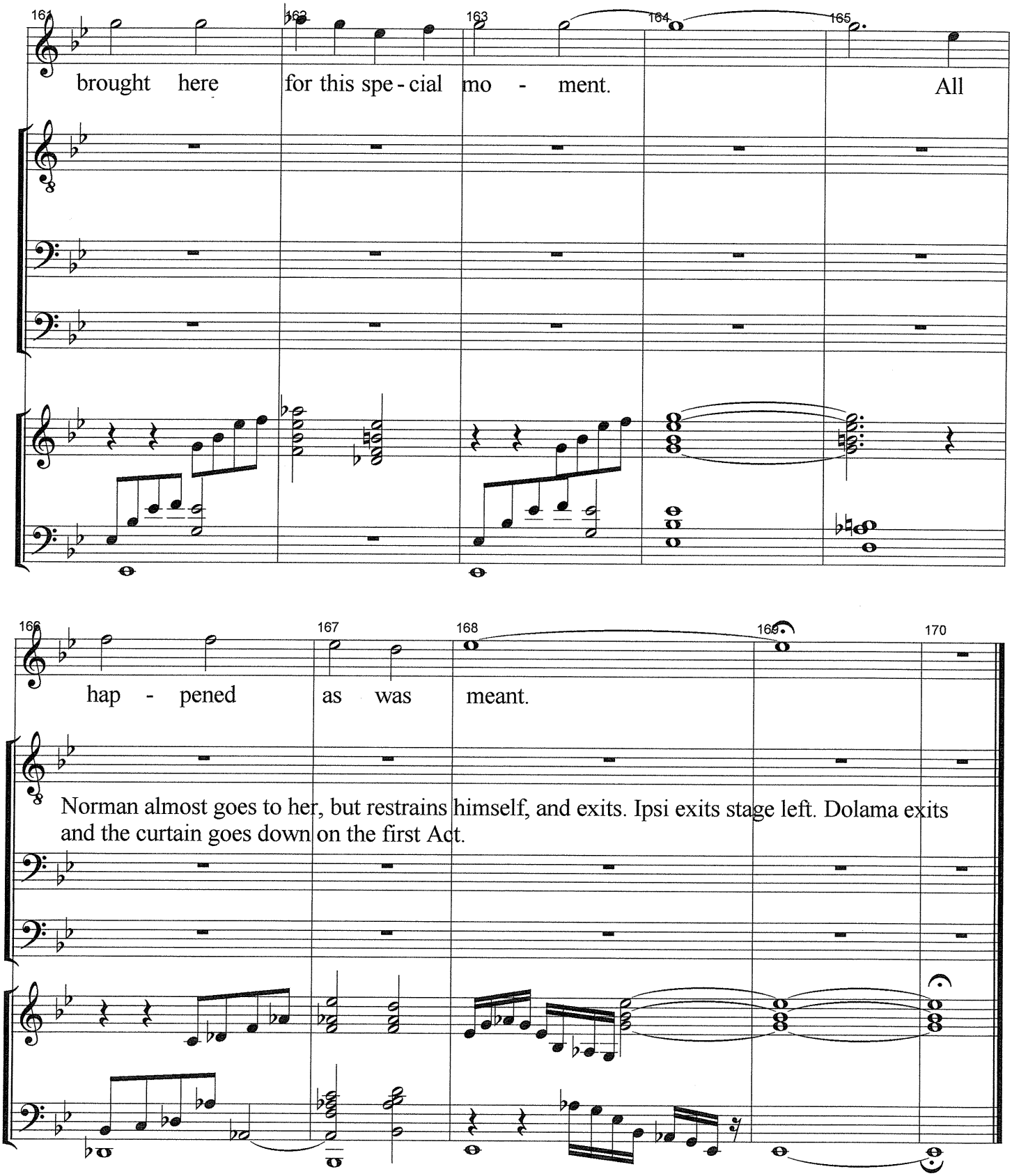

144
145
vine Road, like a well de - fined code, - Dis -


146
147
148
pels ev' - ry doubt. Se - cure, ev' - ry mo - ment, ev' - ry


149
150
151
meet - ing - With- in and with- out.
152
153
154
I saw him, on - ly for a


155
156
157
mo - ment, A mo - ment - We were - i - so - mor - phic

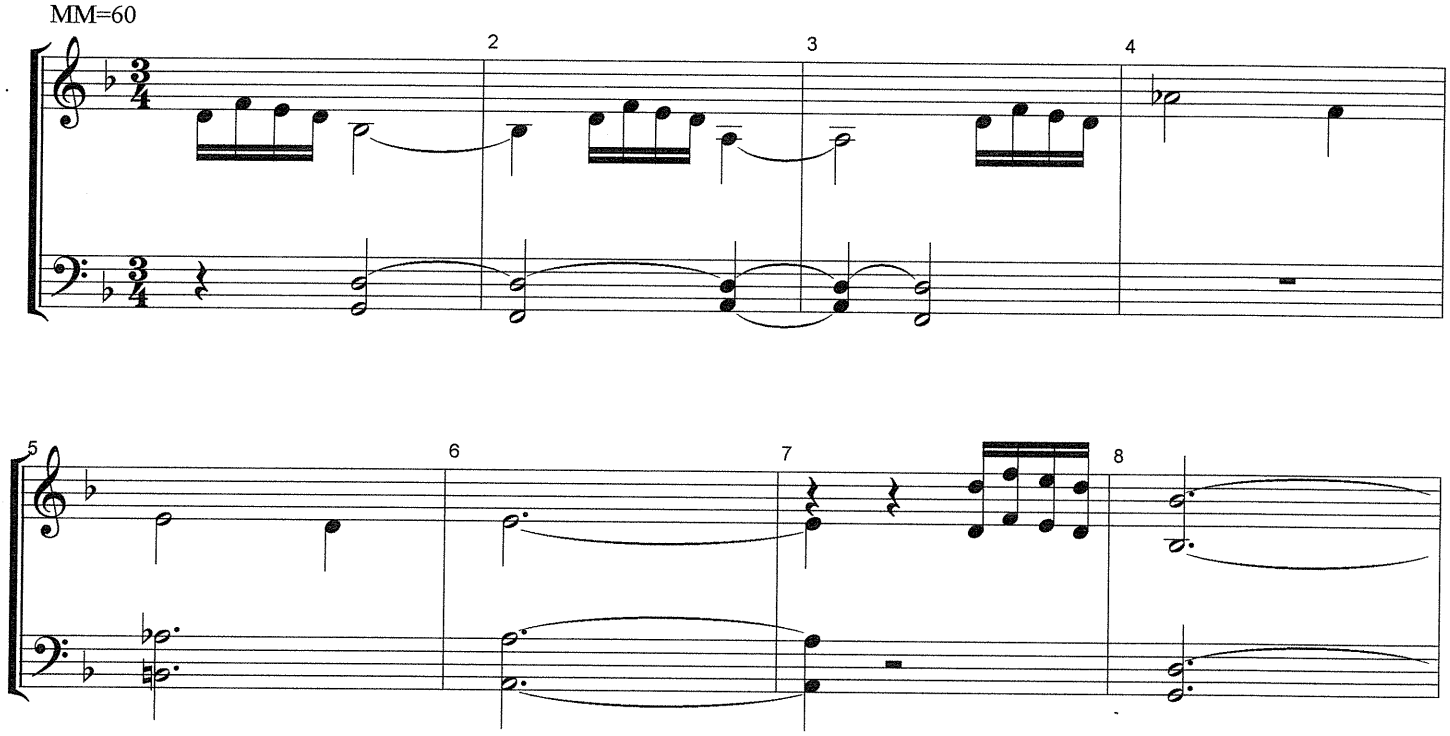

158
159
160
as pro - grammed co - e - vents. We're


161
162
163
164
165
brought here for this spe - cial mo - ment. All
166
167
168
169
170
hap - pened as was meant.
Norman almost goes to her, but restrains himself, and exits. Ipsi exits stage left. Dolama exits and the curtain goes down on the first Act.

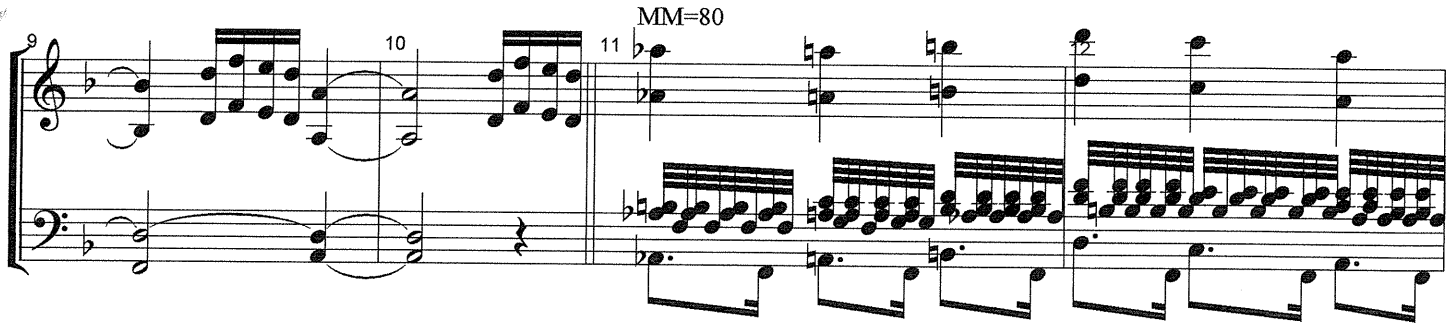
La Rinuncia
Act II, Prelude

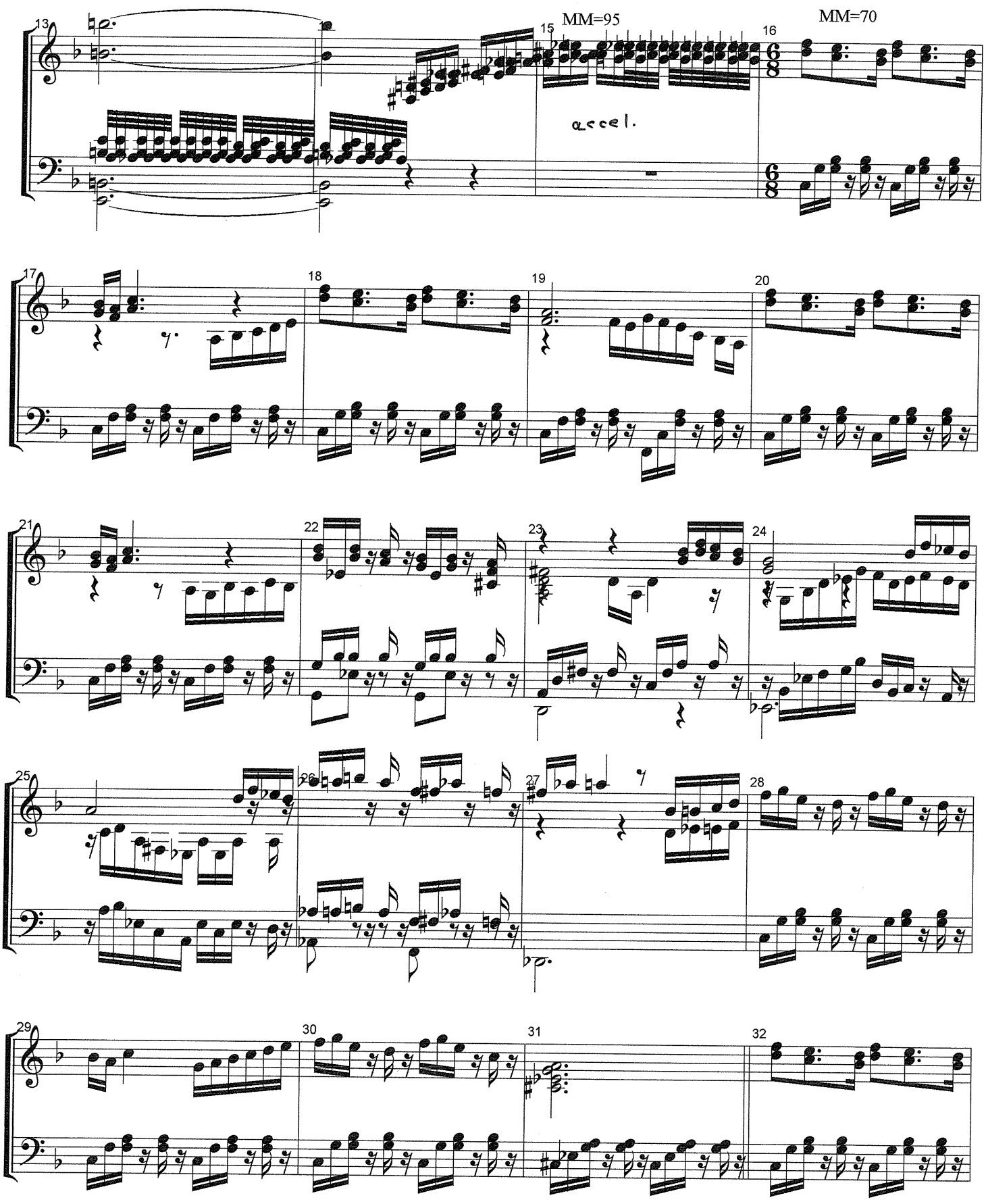
Richard L. Rose

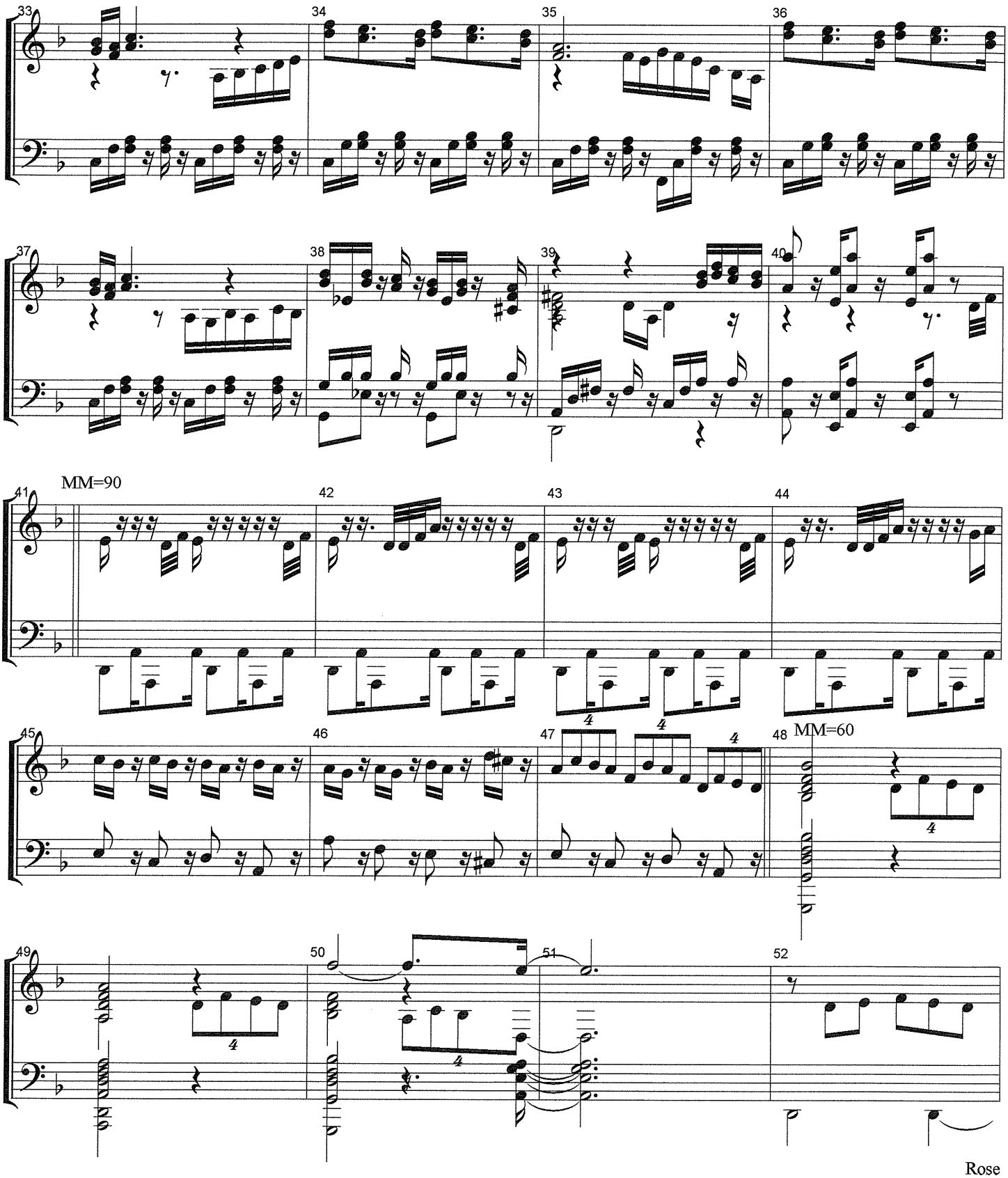
The curtain rises on the Labyrinth, a maze with tall rose hedges between the paths. Three parallel paths open downstage, visible to the audience, but not visible to the players walking on them, who see only their own aisles. Lighting during the Prelude portrays dawn and a small cloudburst. Norman, covering his head during the shower, is walking in the aisle on stage left. Later in the Act, Dolama and Phil come down the middle aisle and the Guestmaster and Ipsi come down the aisle on stage right. Norman uncovers his head as the Prelude ends.

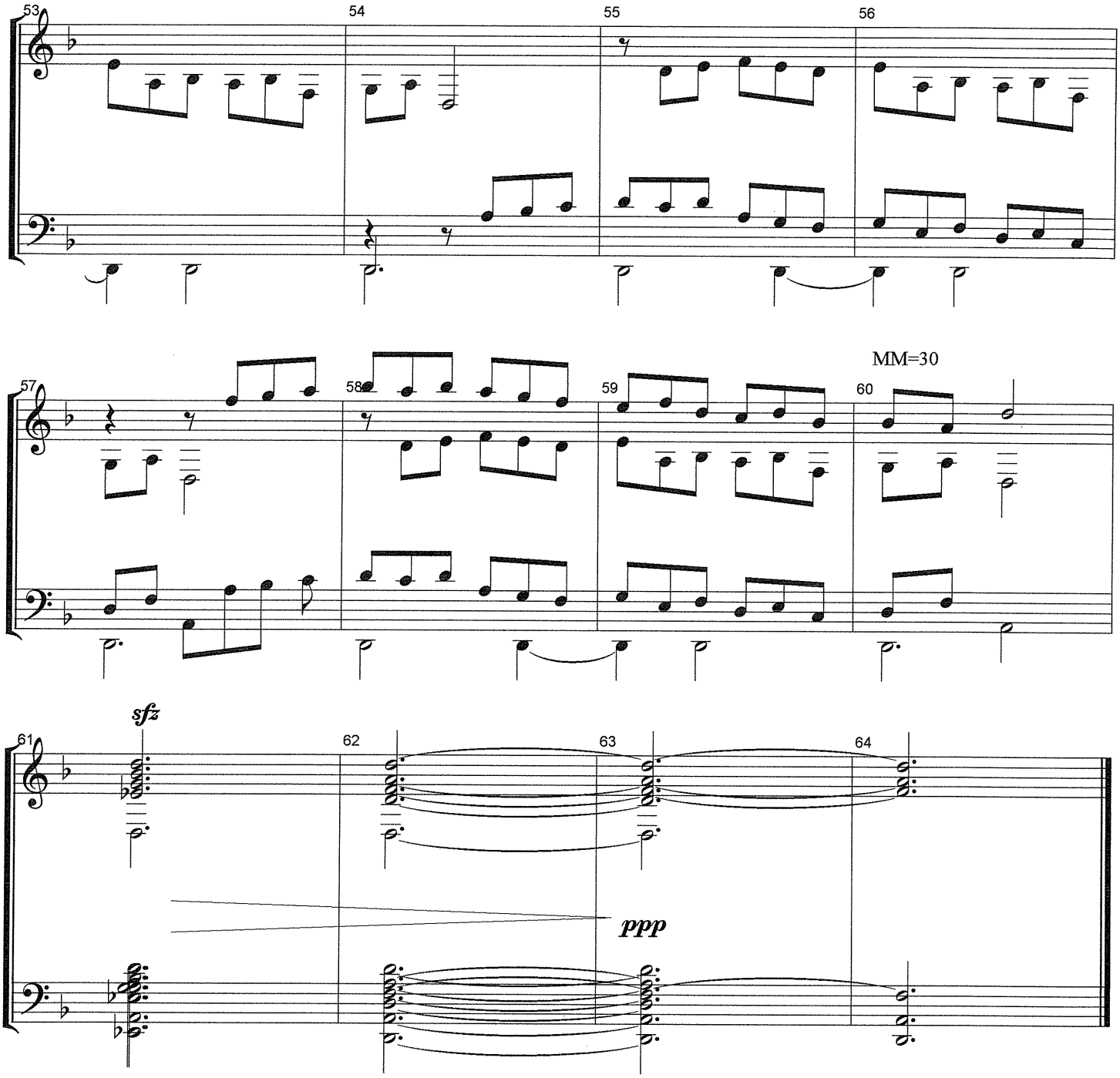


Norman appears as a dark figure far upstage at the end of the aisle, his head covered during the downpour. He slowly walks downstage.




MM=95
MM=70
accel.

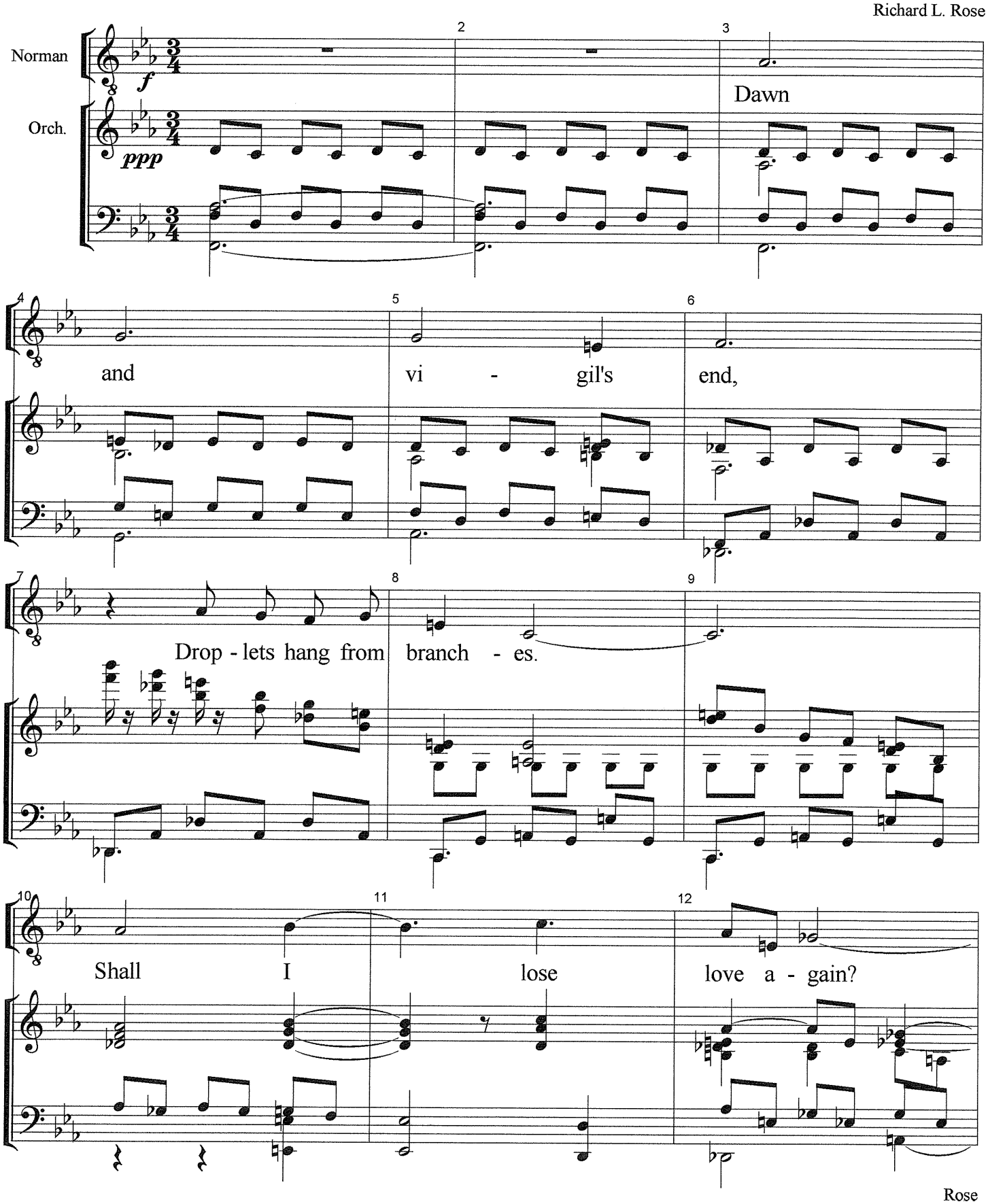

33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
MM=90
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
MM=60
49
50
51
52

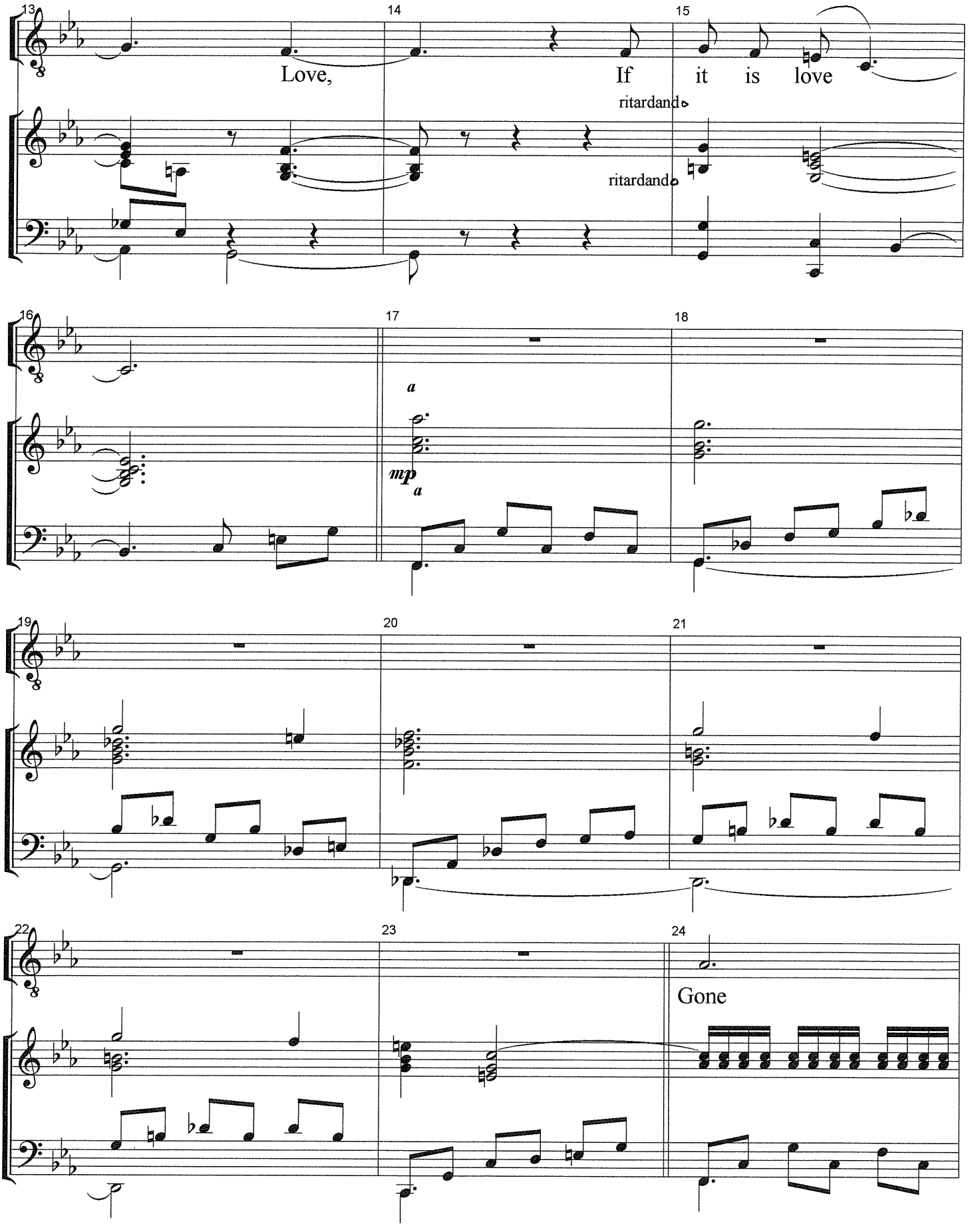


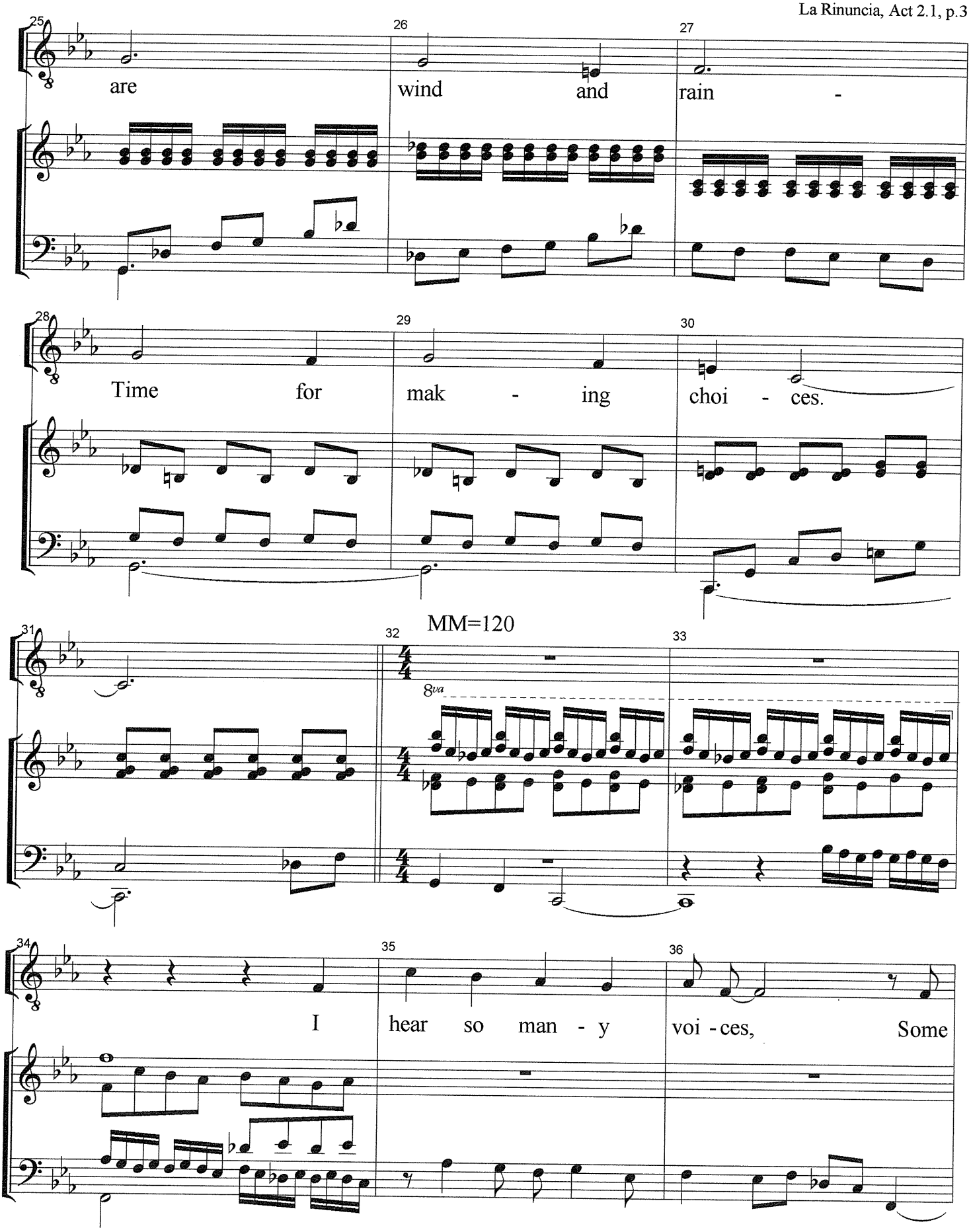
Norman uncovers his head as the Prelude ends and the lights come up.

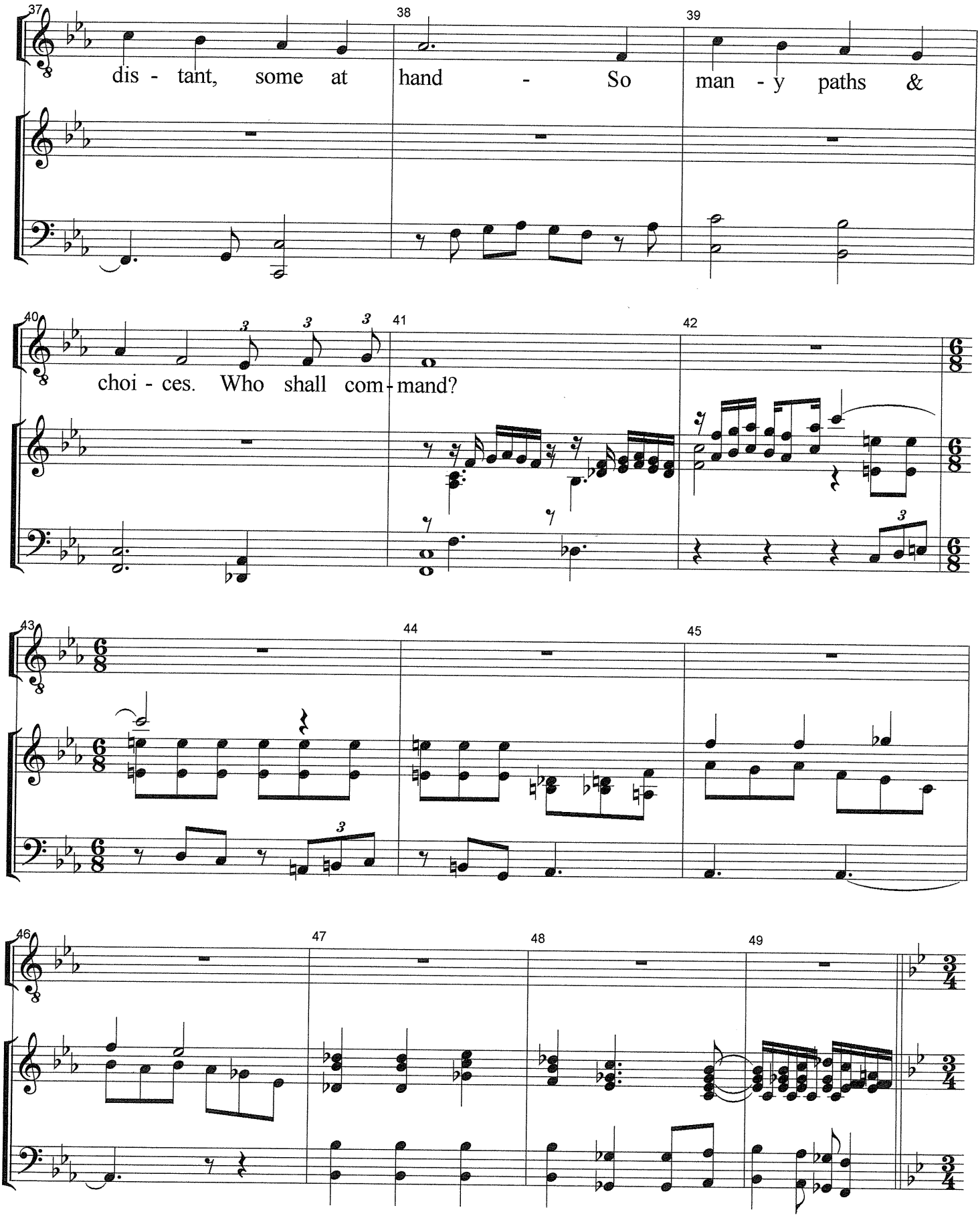
La Rinuncia
Act 2, Scene 1.1

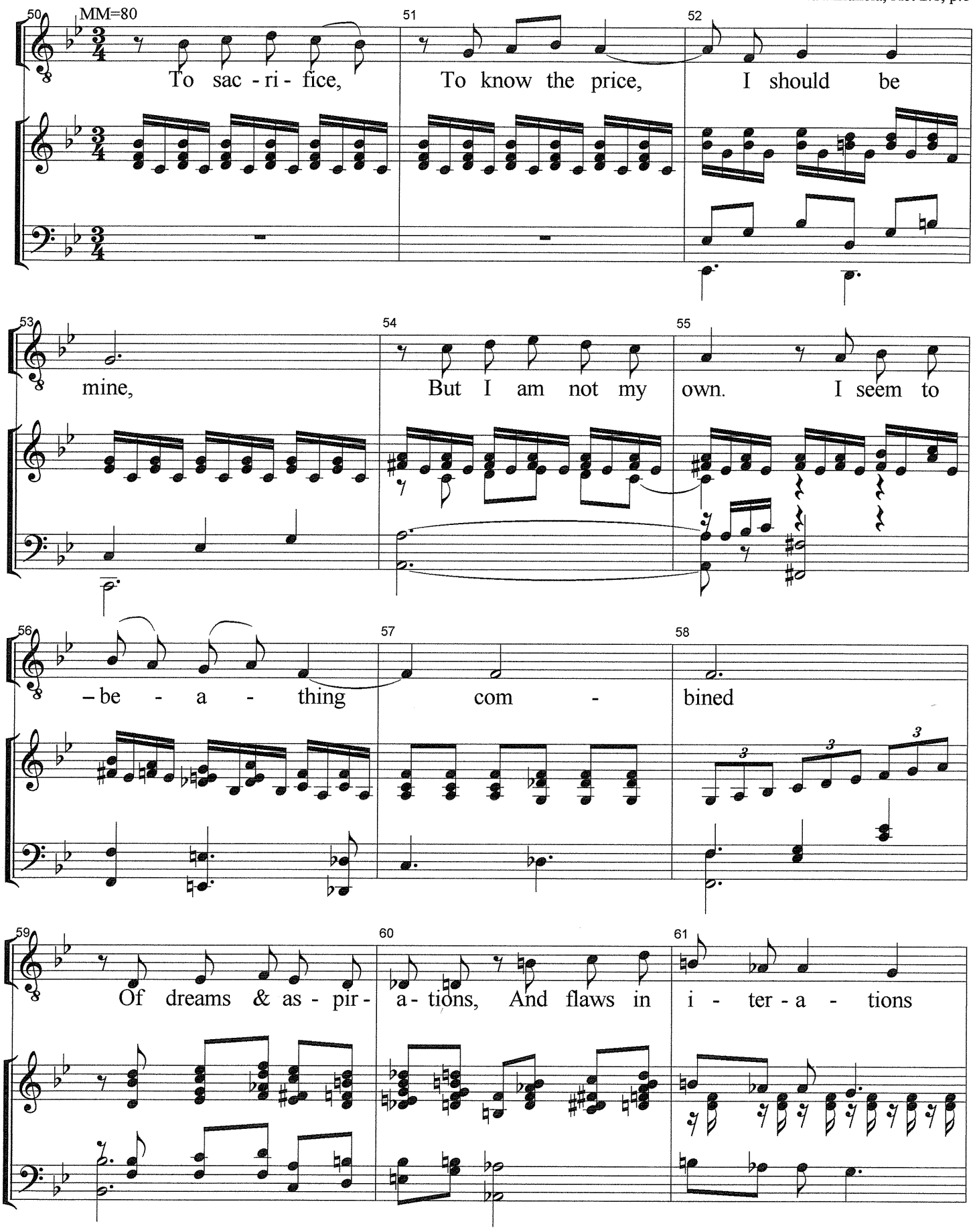
Richard L. Rose

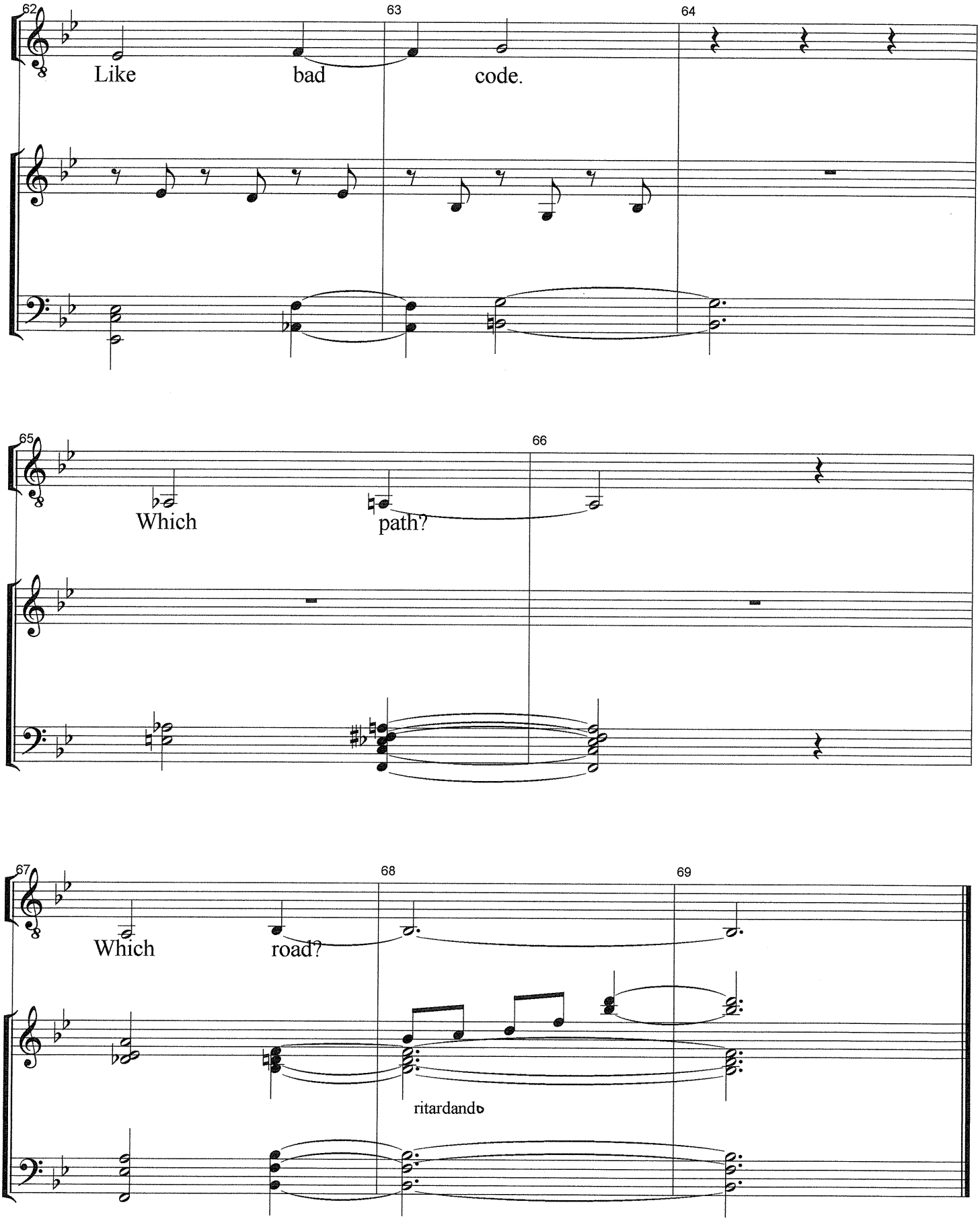



13
14
15
Love,
If it is love
ritardando
ritardando
16
17
18
a
mp
a
19
20
21
22
23
24
Gone


25
26
27
are
wind
and
rain
-
28
29
30
Time
for
mak
-
ing
choi
-
ces.
MM=120
31
32
33
8va
34
35
36
I
hear
so
man
-
y
voi
-
ces,
Some


37
38
39
dis - tant, some at hand - So man - y paths &
40
41
42
choi - ces. Who shall com - mand?
43
44
45
46
47
48
49

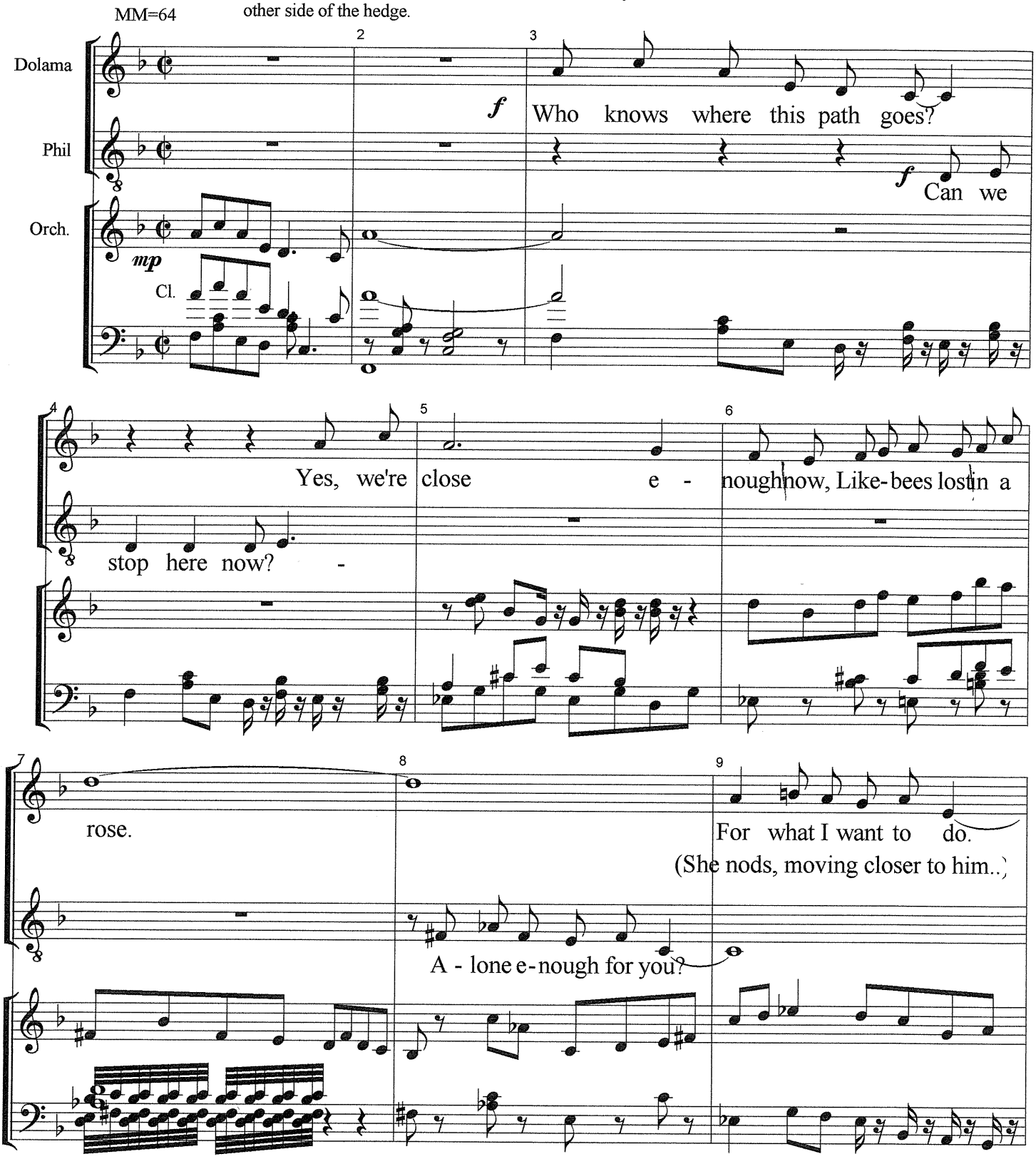

MM=80
To sac - ri - fice,
To know the price,
I should be
mine,
But I am not my
own.
I seem to
– be - a - thing
com -
bined
Of dreams & as - pir -
a - tions,
And flaws in
i - ter - a - tions

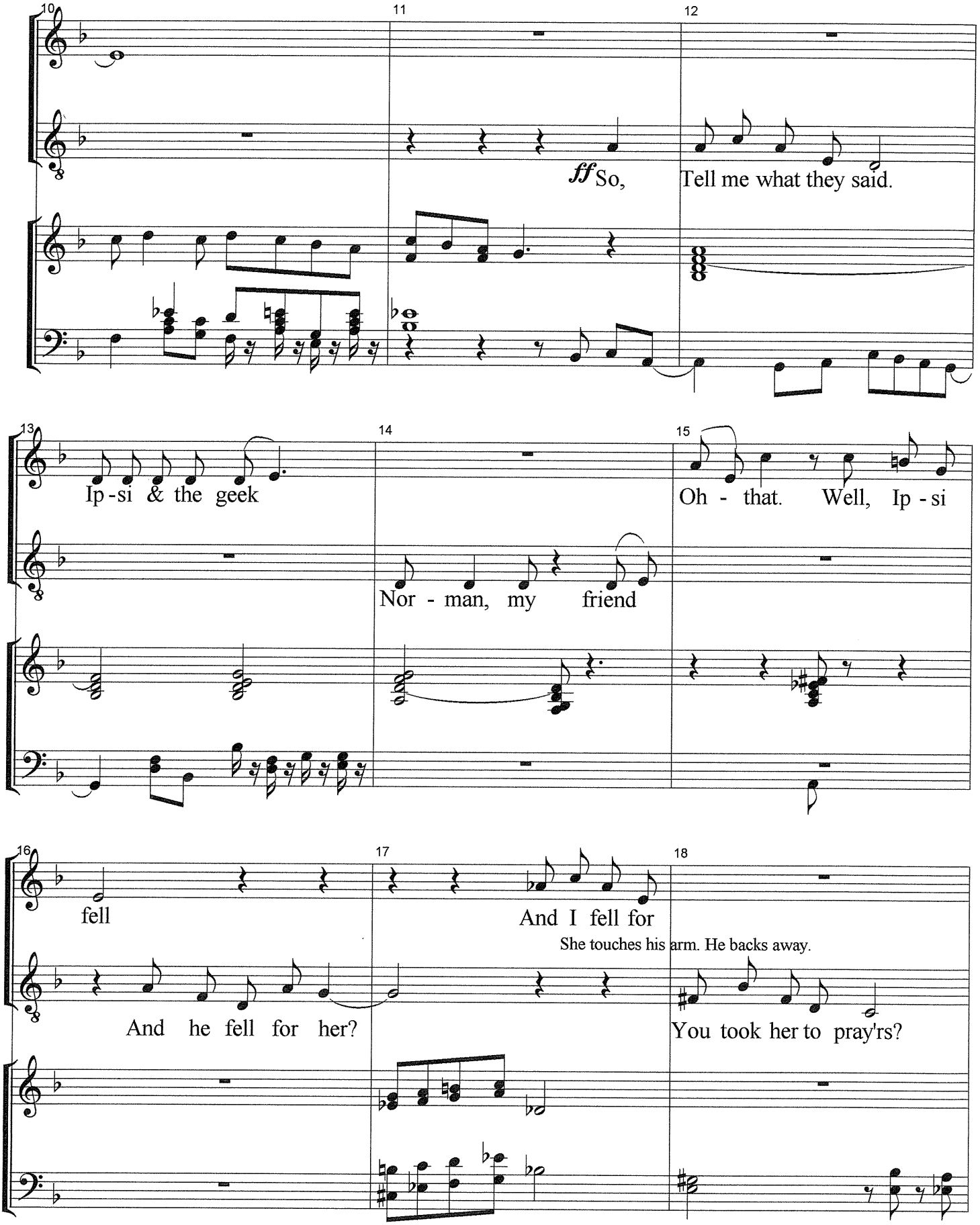

62
63
64
Like
bad
code.
65
66
Which
path?
67
68
69
Which
road?
ritardando

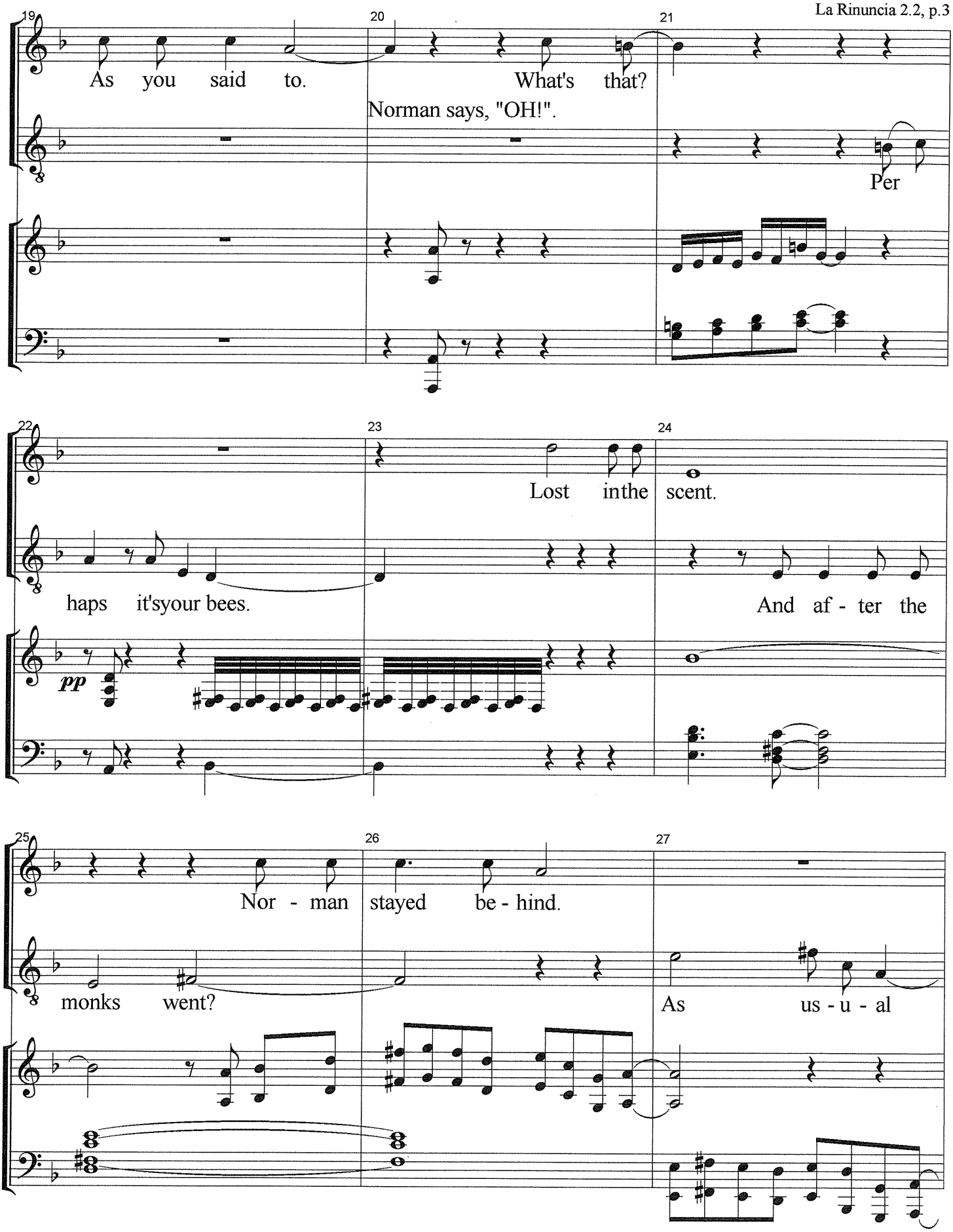
La Rinuncia, Act II, Scene 2
In the walled labyrinth of climbing roses

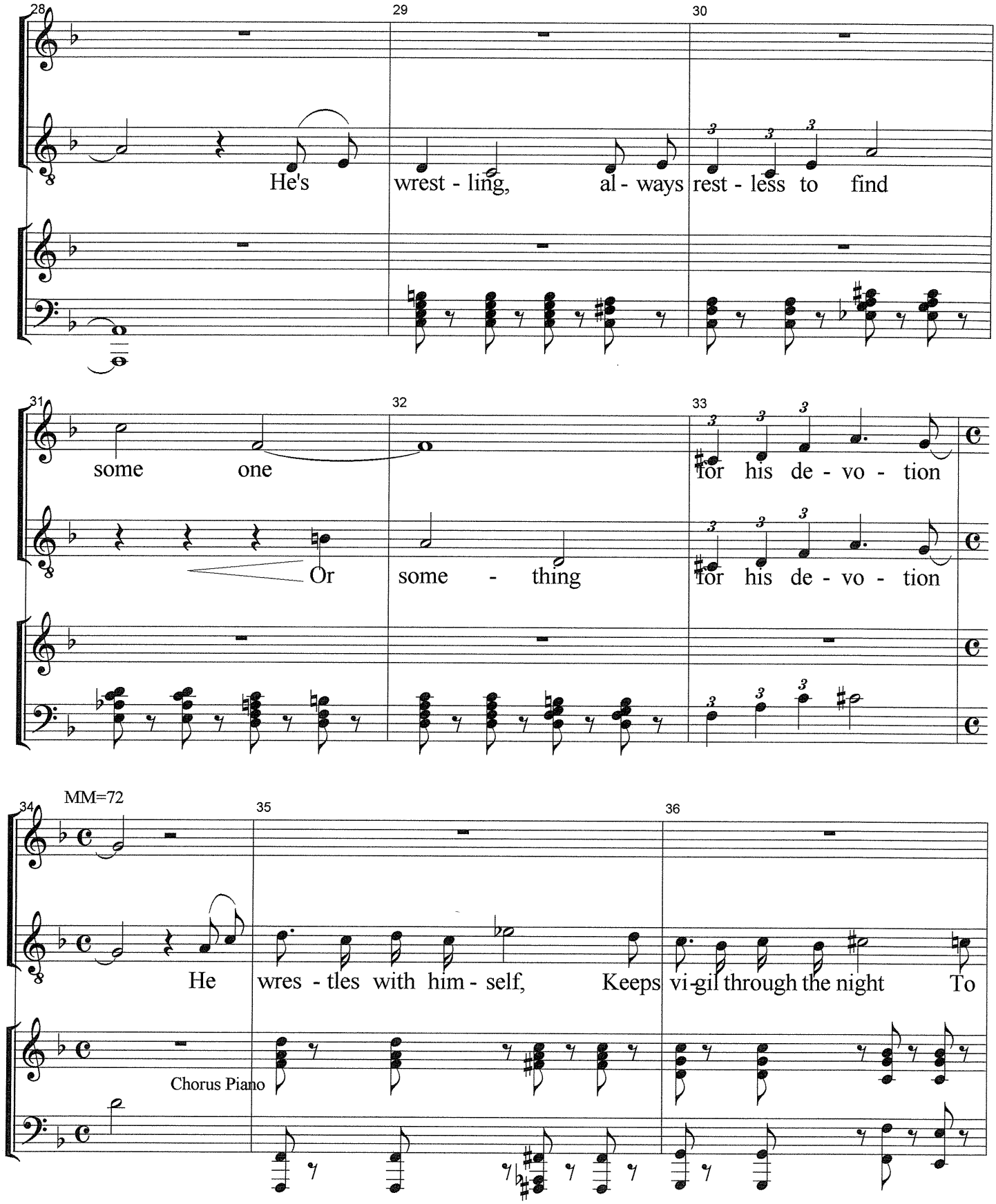
Richard L. Rose

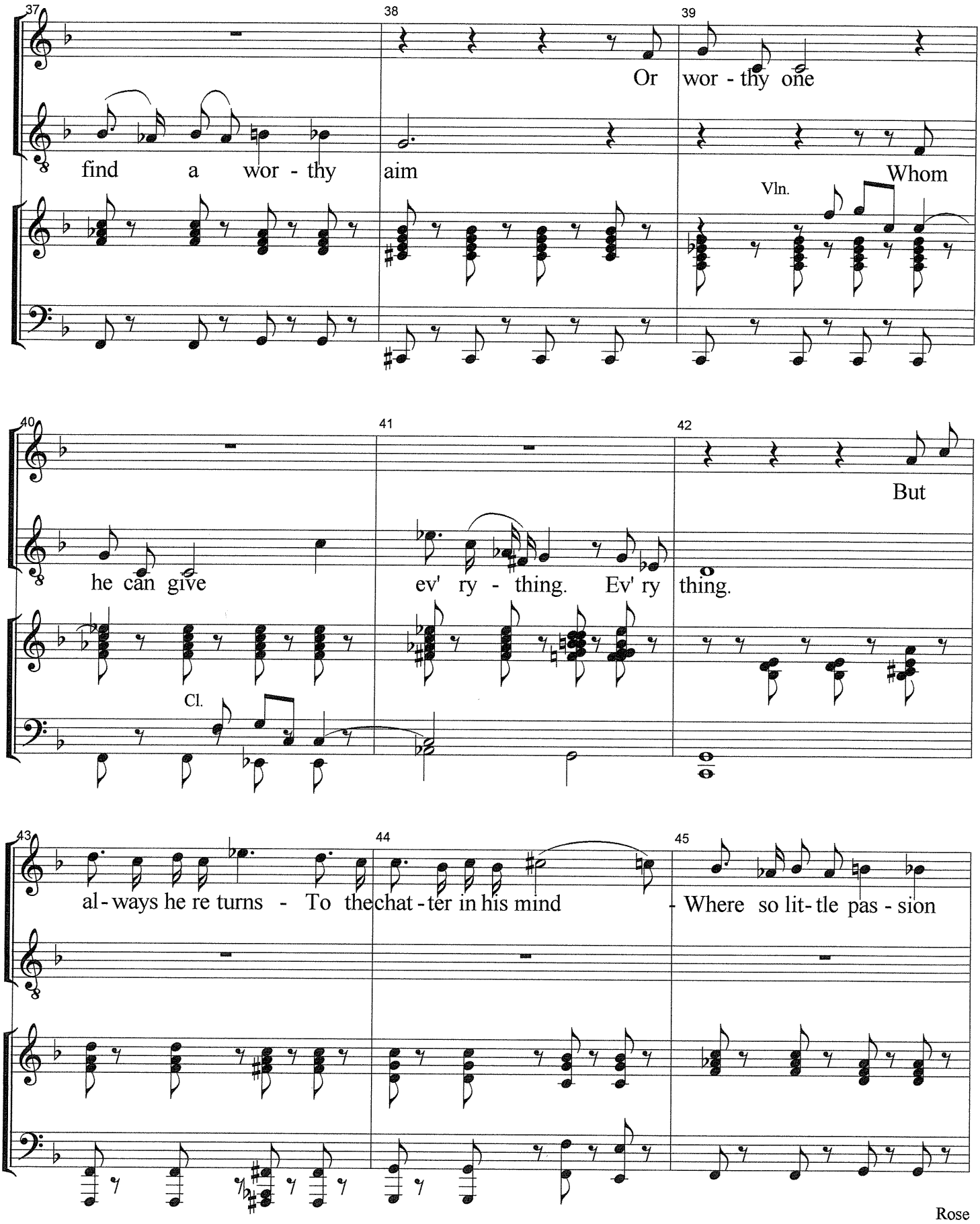
Dolama brings Phil down the middle aisle of the Labyrinth. Norman listens from the other side of the hedge.

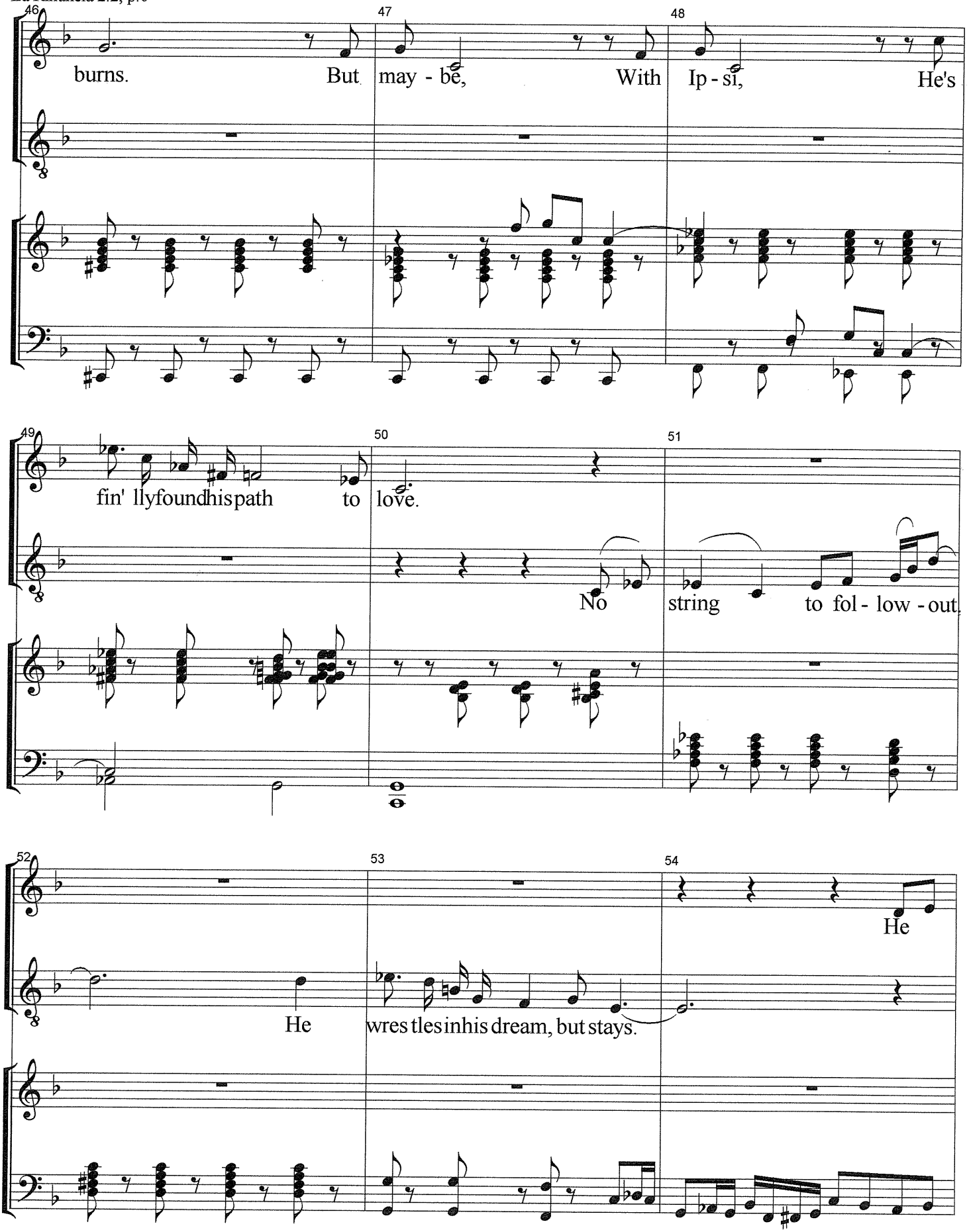


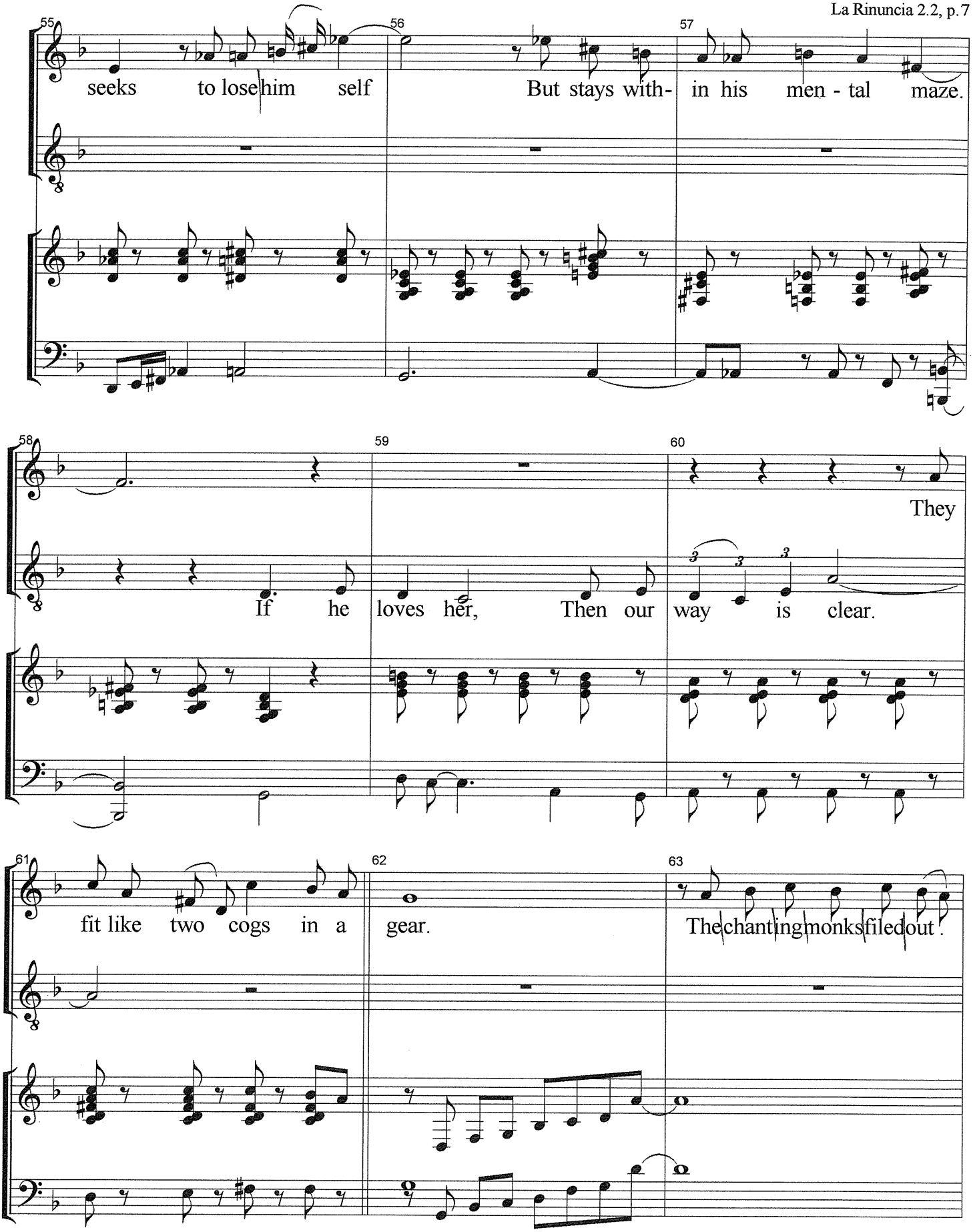

10
11
12
ff So,
Tell me what they said.
13
14
15
Ip - si & the geek
Nor - man, my friend
Oh - that. Well, Ip - si
16
17
18
fell
And I fell for
She touches his arm. He backs away.
And he fell for her?
You took her to pray'rs?

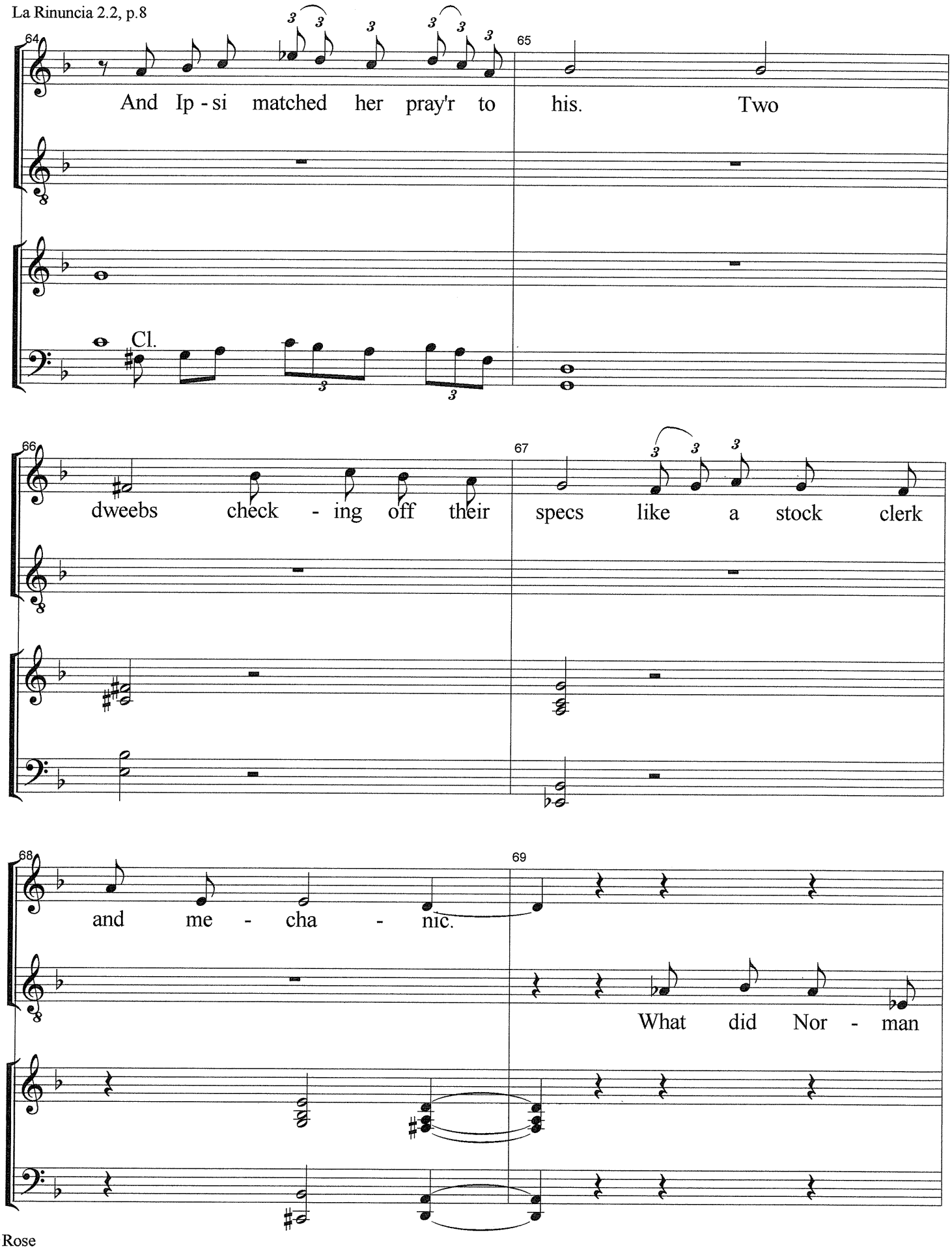

19
20
21
As you said to.
What's that?
Norman says, "OH!".
Per
22
23
24
Lost in the scent.
haps it's your bees.
And af - ter the
pp
25
26
27
Nor - man stayed be - hind.
monks went?
As us - u - al

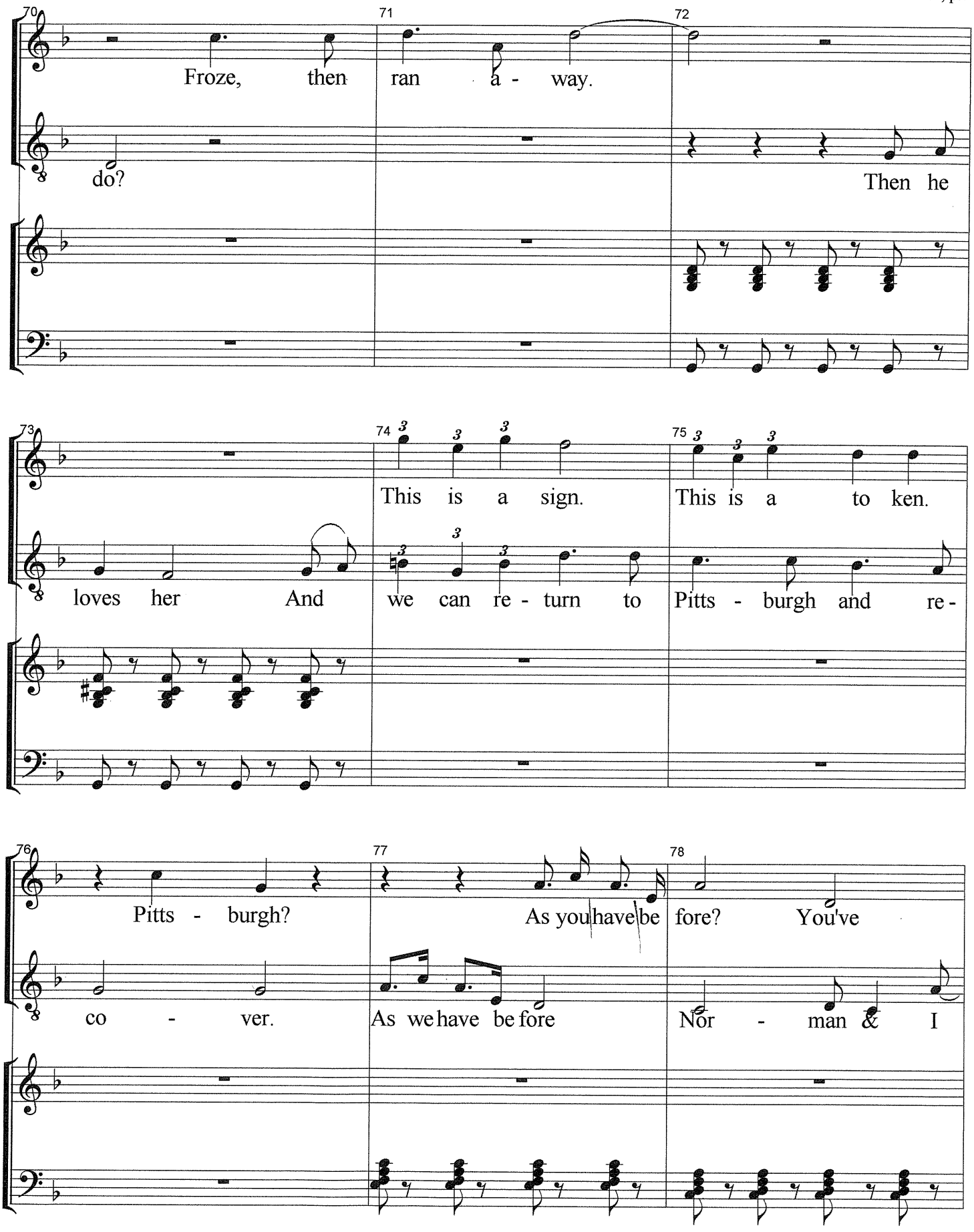

28
29
30
He's wrest - ling, al - ways rest - less to find
31
32
33
some one for his de - vo - tion
Or some - thing for his de - vo - tion
MM=72
34
35
36
He wres - tles with him - self, Keeps vi-gil through the night To
Chorus Piano

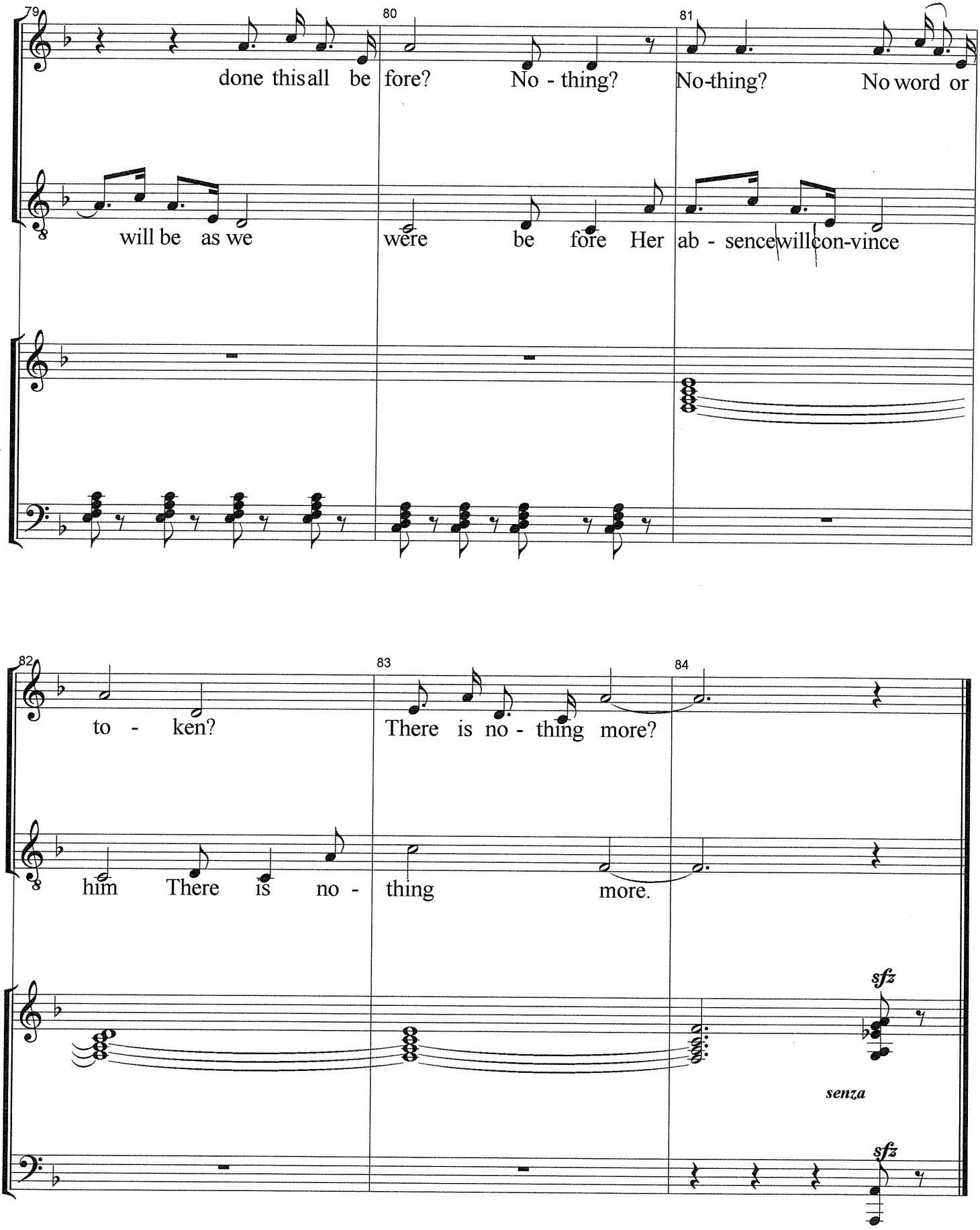

37
38
39
find a wor - thy aim
Or wor - thy one
Whom
Vln.
40
41
42
he can give
ev' ry - thing. Ev' ry thing.
But
Cl.
43
44
45
al - ways he re turns - To the chat - ter in his mind
- Where so lit - tle pas - sion


46
47
48
burns.
But
may - be,
With
Ip - si,
He's
49
50
51
fin' llyfoundhispath
to
love.
No
string
to fol - low - out,
52
53
54
He
He
wres tlesinhis dream, but stays.


55
56
57
seeks to lose him self
But stays with- in his men - tal maze.
58
59
60
They
If he loves her, Then our way is clear.
61
62
63
fit like two cogs in a
gear.
The chanting monks filed out.


64
And Ip - si matched her pray'r to
65
his. Two
Cl.
66
dweebs check - ing off their
67
specs like a stock clerk
68
and me - cha - nic.
69
What did Nor - man


70
71
72
Froze, then ran a - way.
do?
Then he
73
74
75
This is a sign.
This is a to ken.
loves her And we can re - turn to Pitts - burgh and re -
76
77
78
Pitts - burgh?
As you have be fore? You've
co - ver.
As we have be fore
Nor - man & I

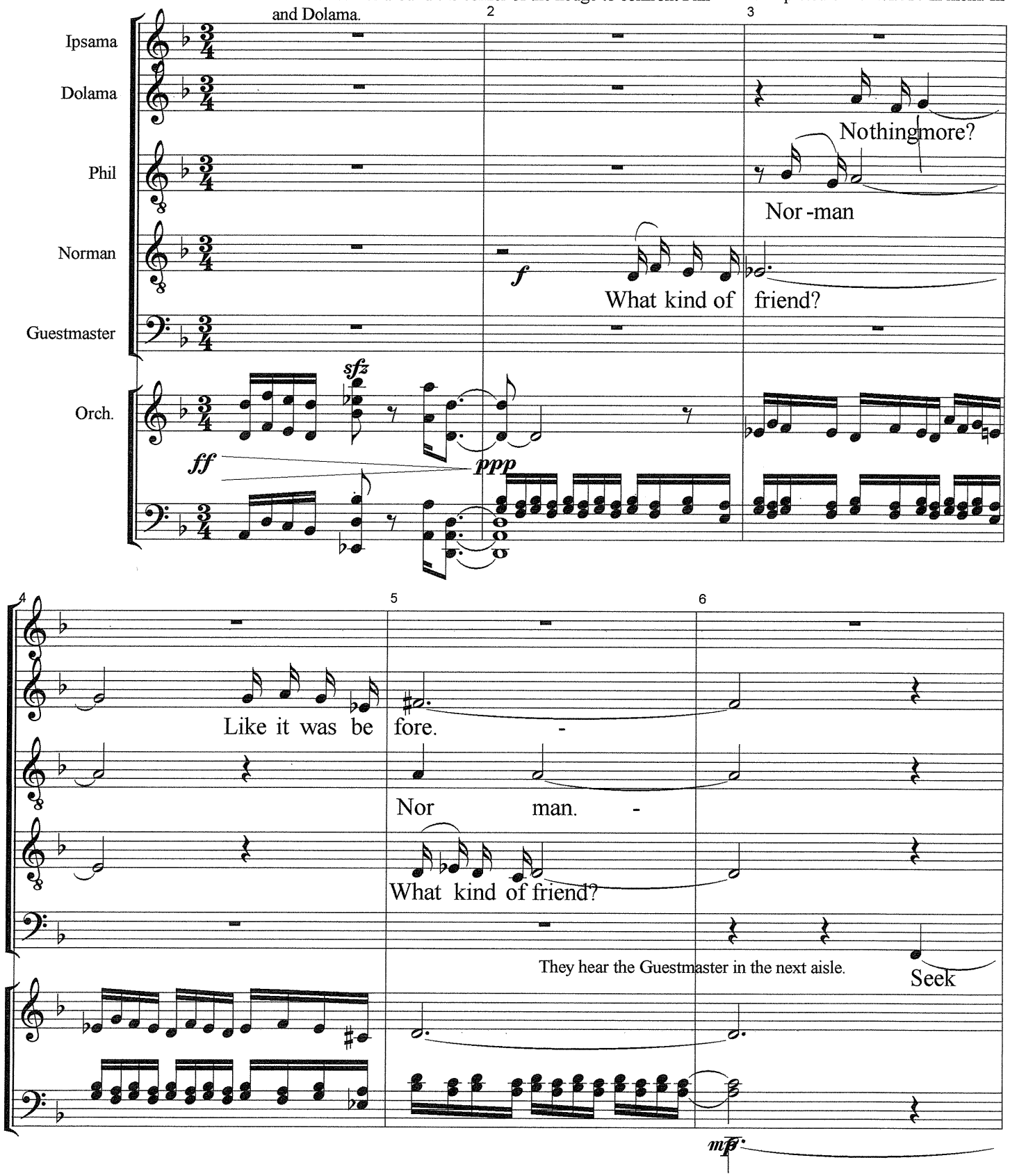

79
done this all be fore?
will be as we
80
No - thing?
were be fore
81
No-thing?
No word or
Her ab - sence will con-vince
82
to - ken?
him There is no -
83
There is no - thing more?
thing more.
84
sfz
senza
sfz

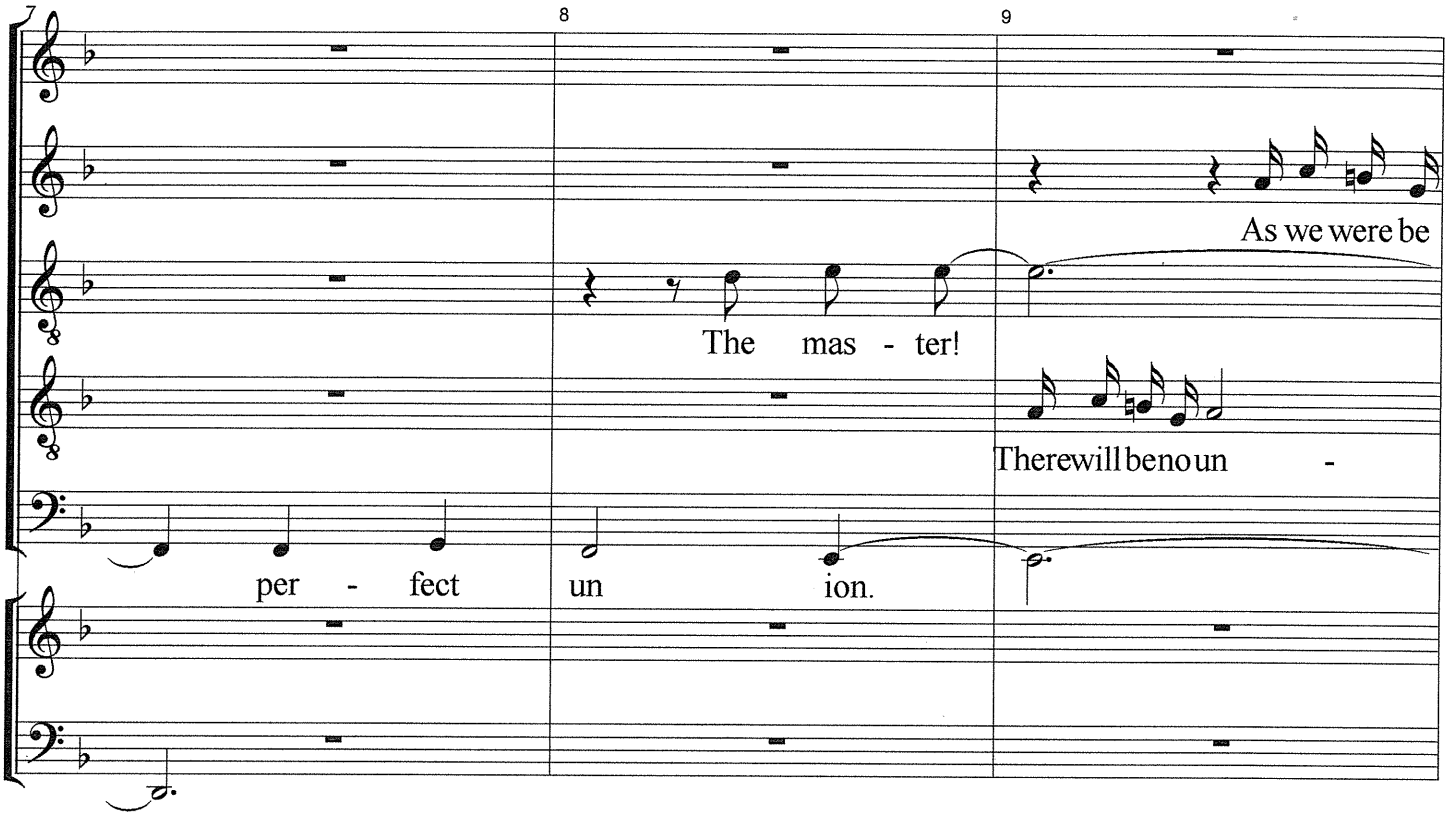
La Rinuncia, Act II, Scene 3
Finale

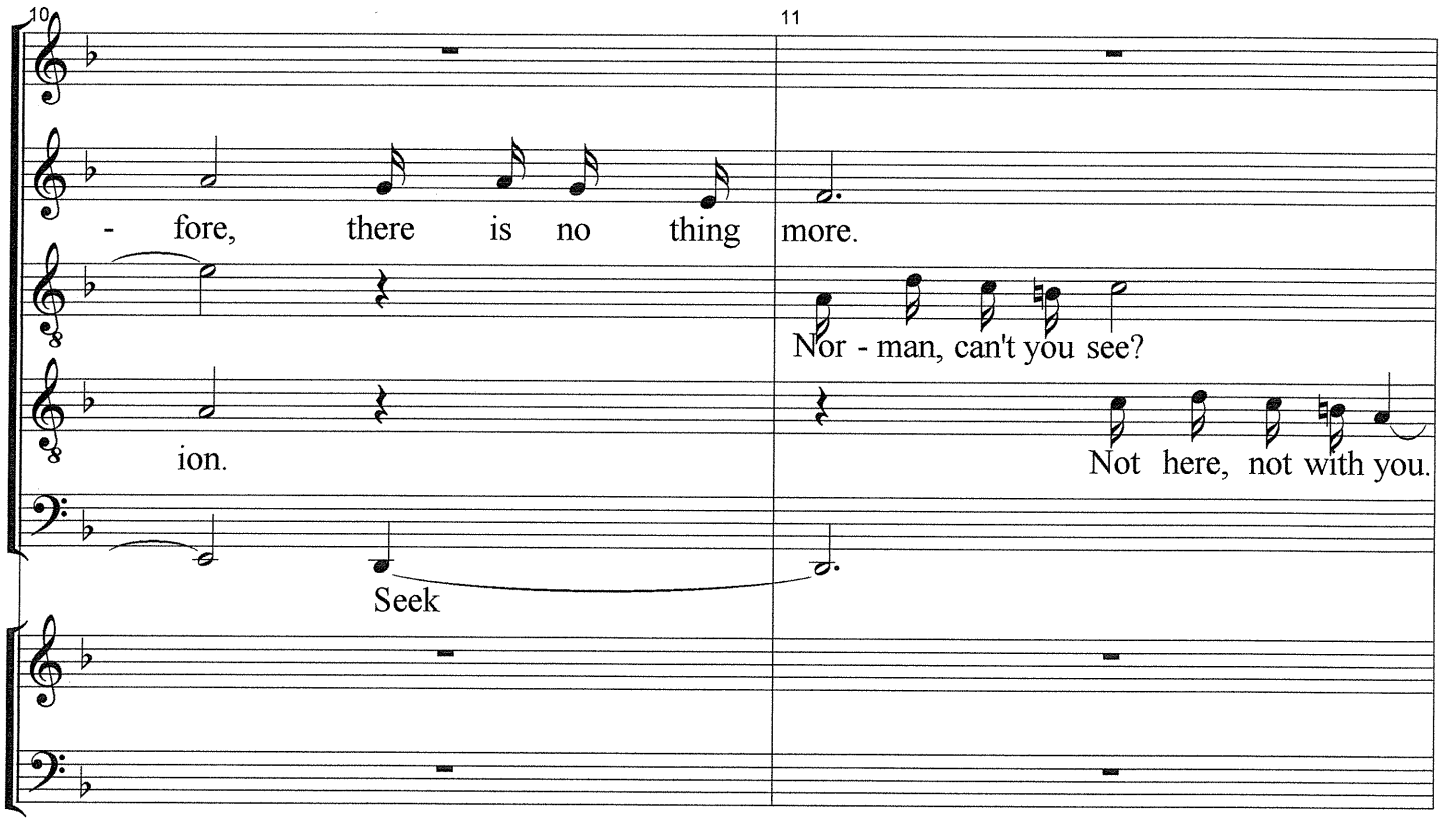
Richard L. Rose

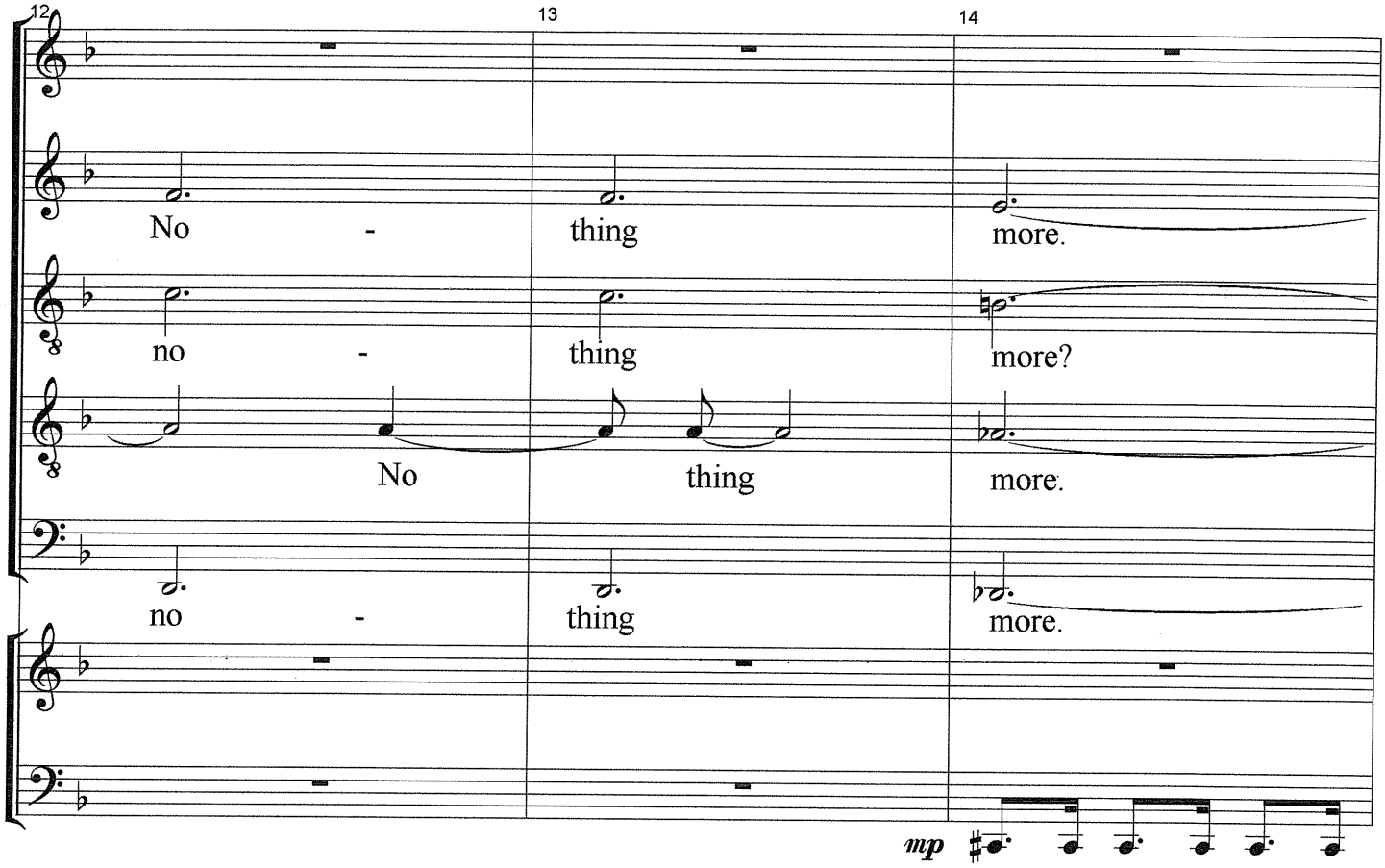
Completed on 9/28/2010 in mem. flr

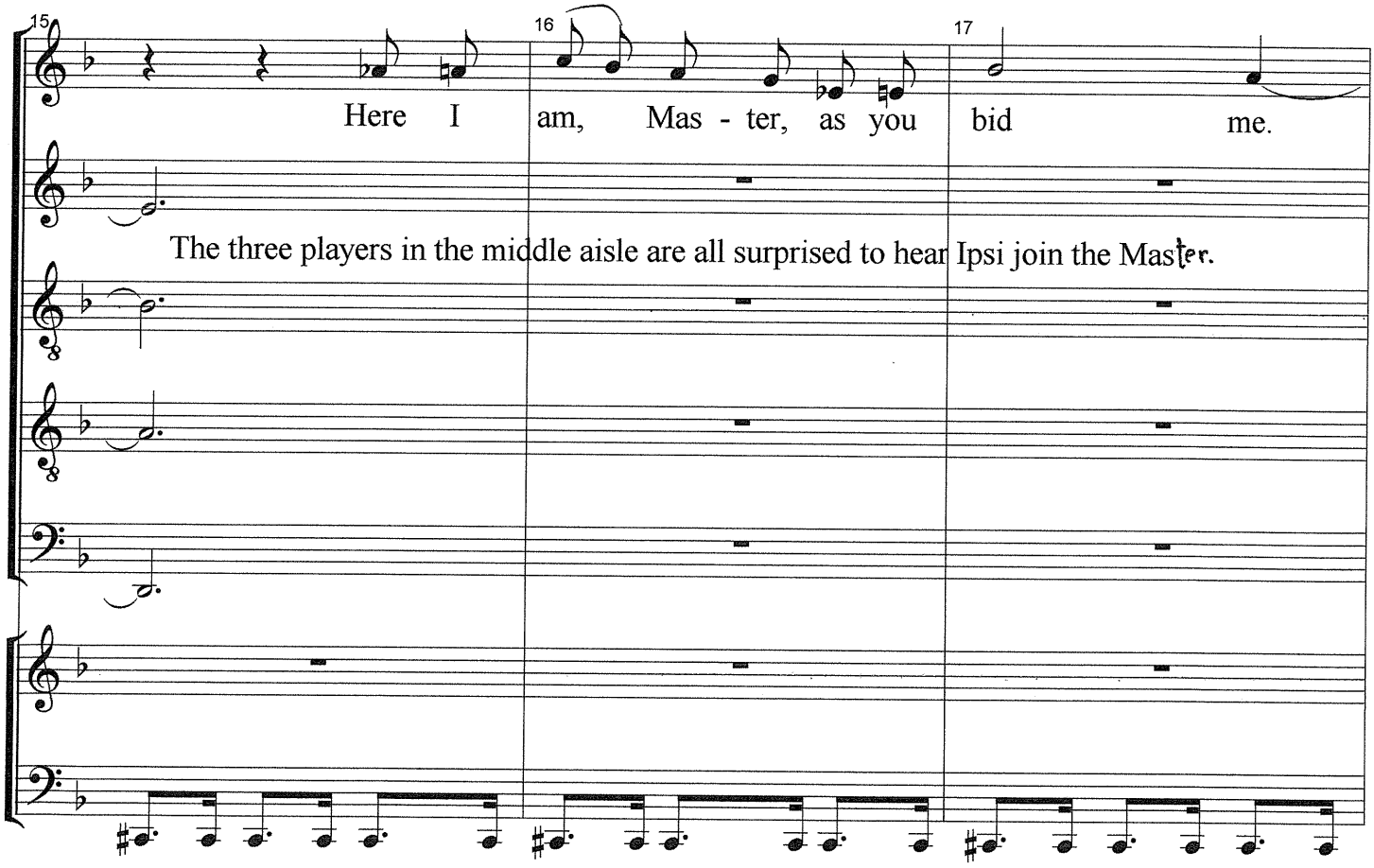
Norman comes around the corner of the hedge to confront Phil and Dolama.

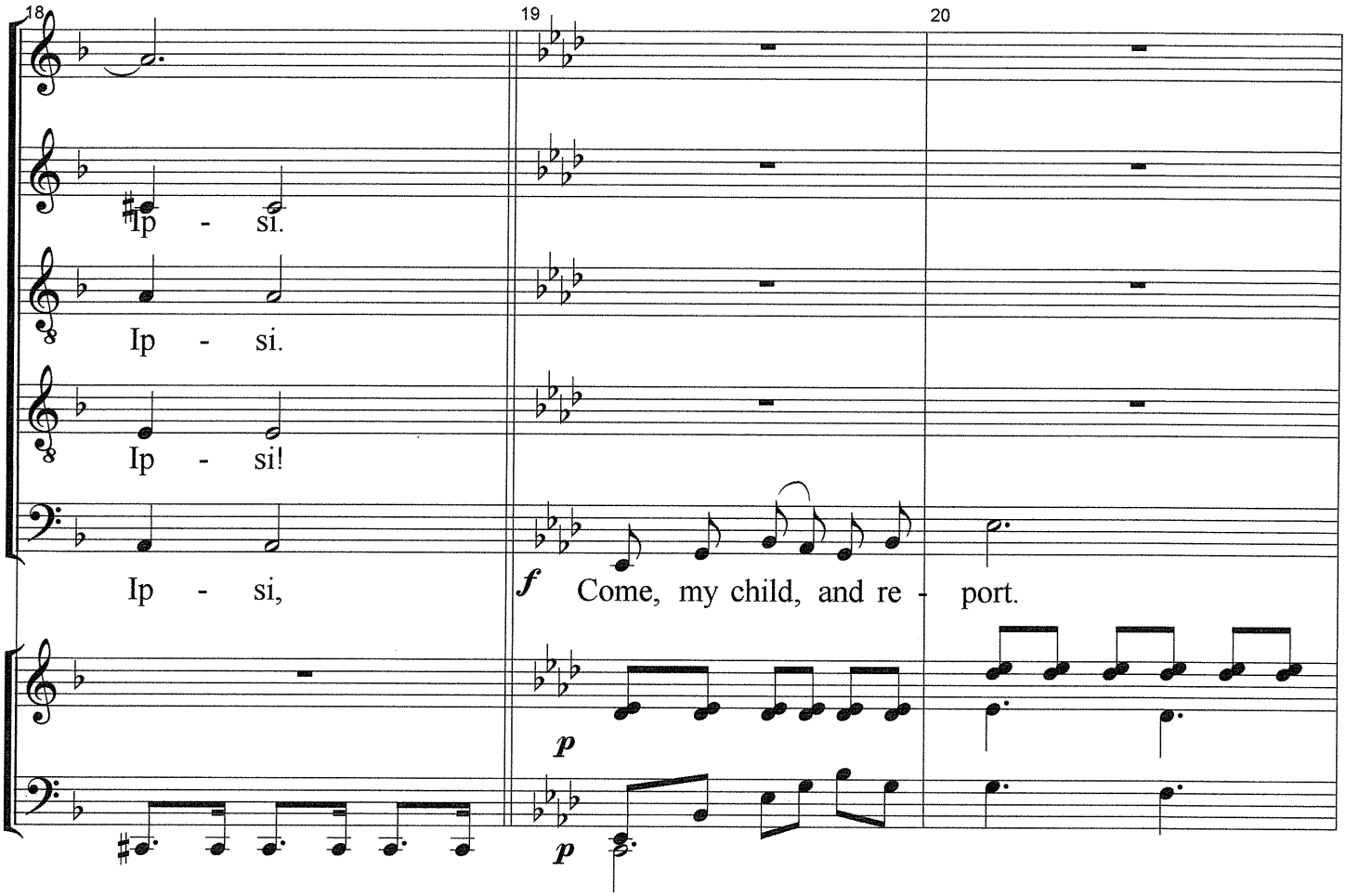


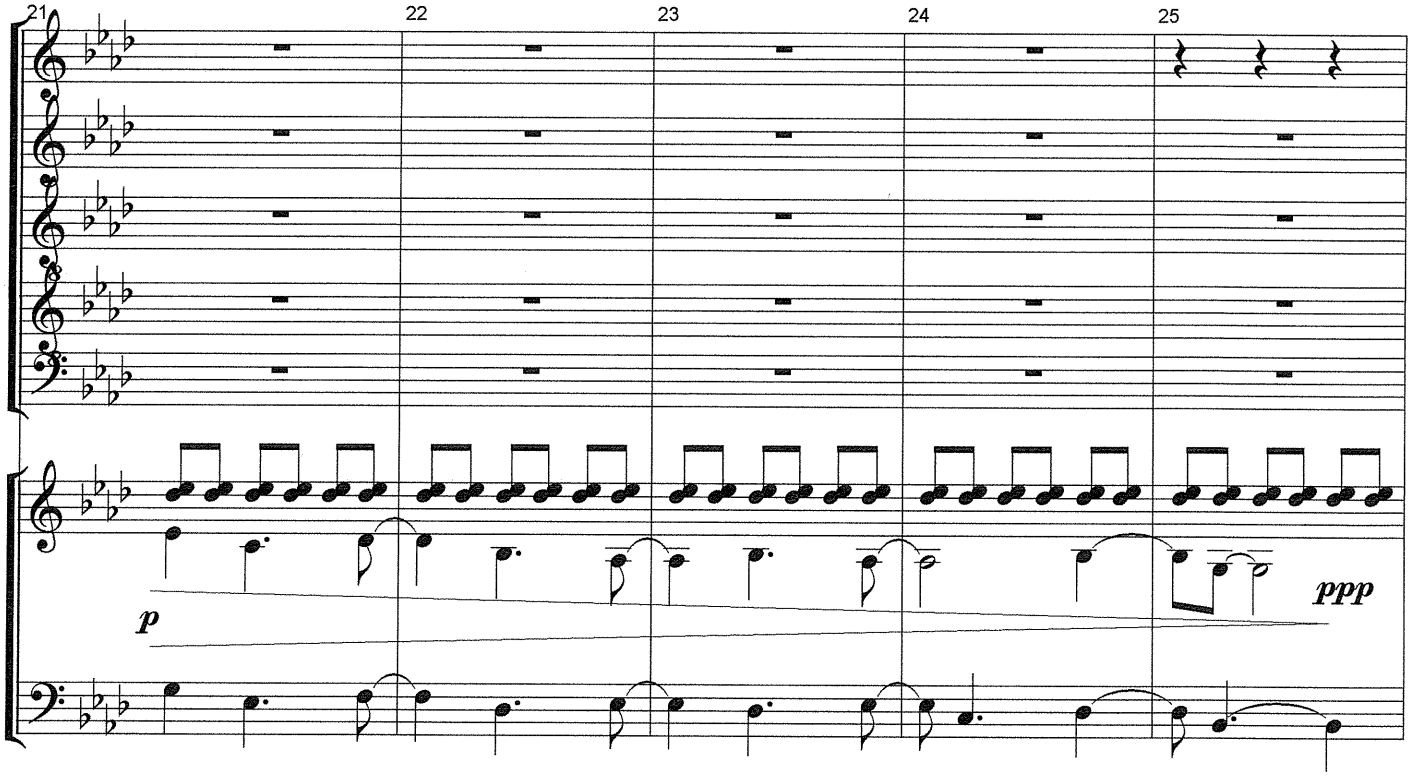

7
8
9
As we were be
The mas - ter!
Therewillbenoun -
per - fect un ion.

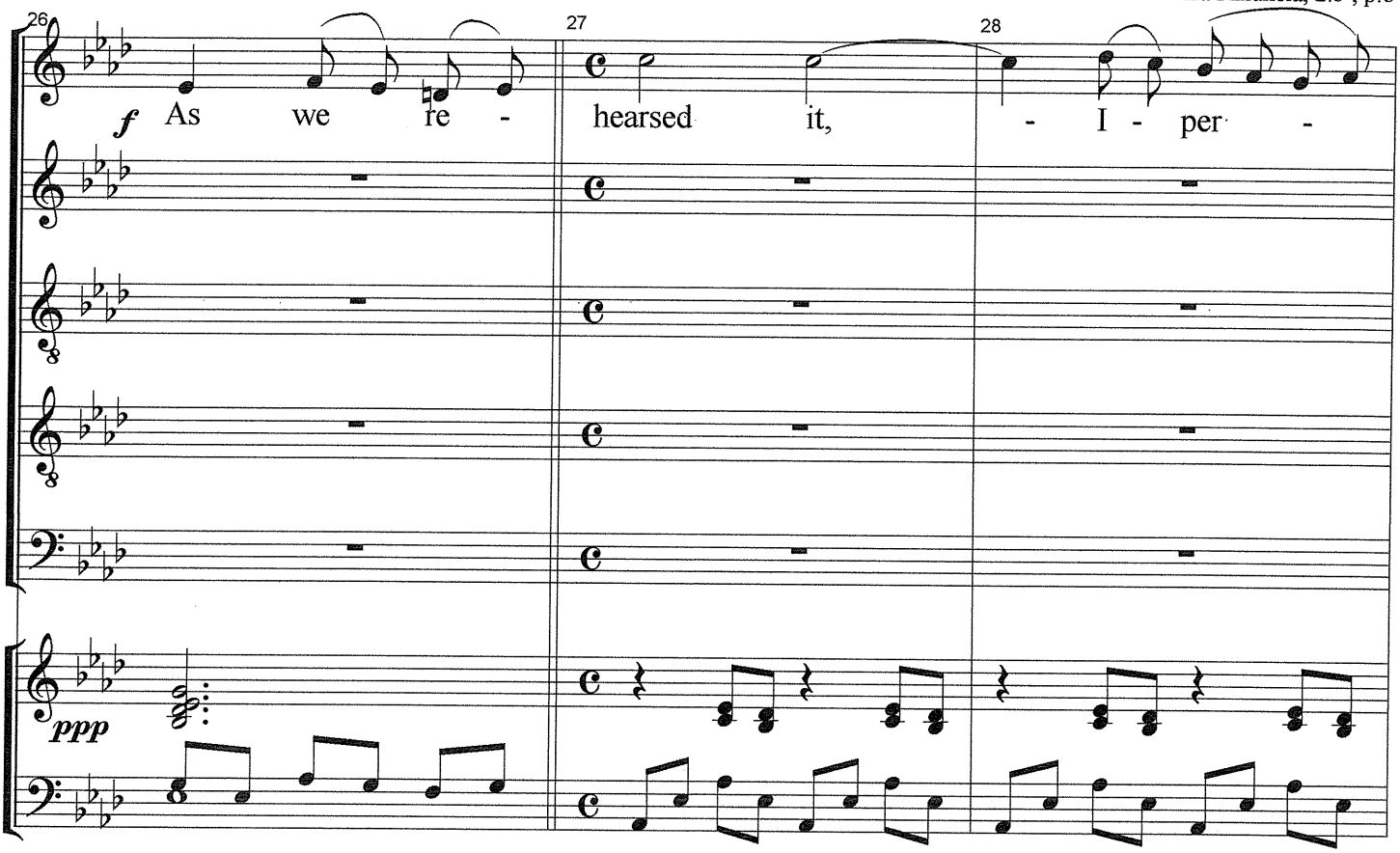

10
11
- fore, there is no thing more.
Nor - man, can't you see?
ion.
Not here, not with you.
Seek

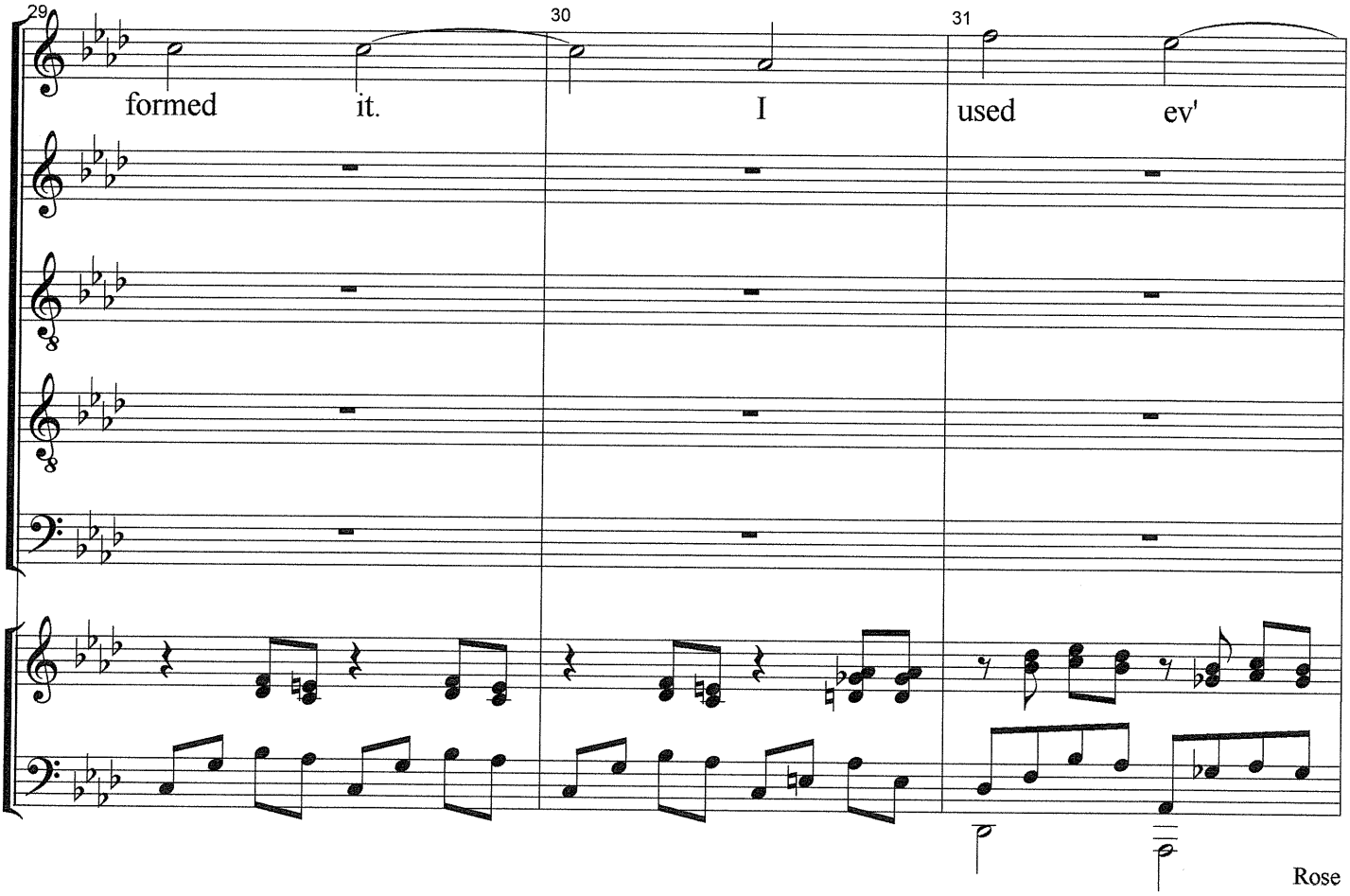

12
13
14
No - thing more.
no - thing more?
No thing more.
no - thing more.
mp

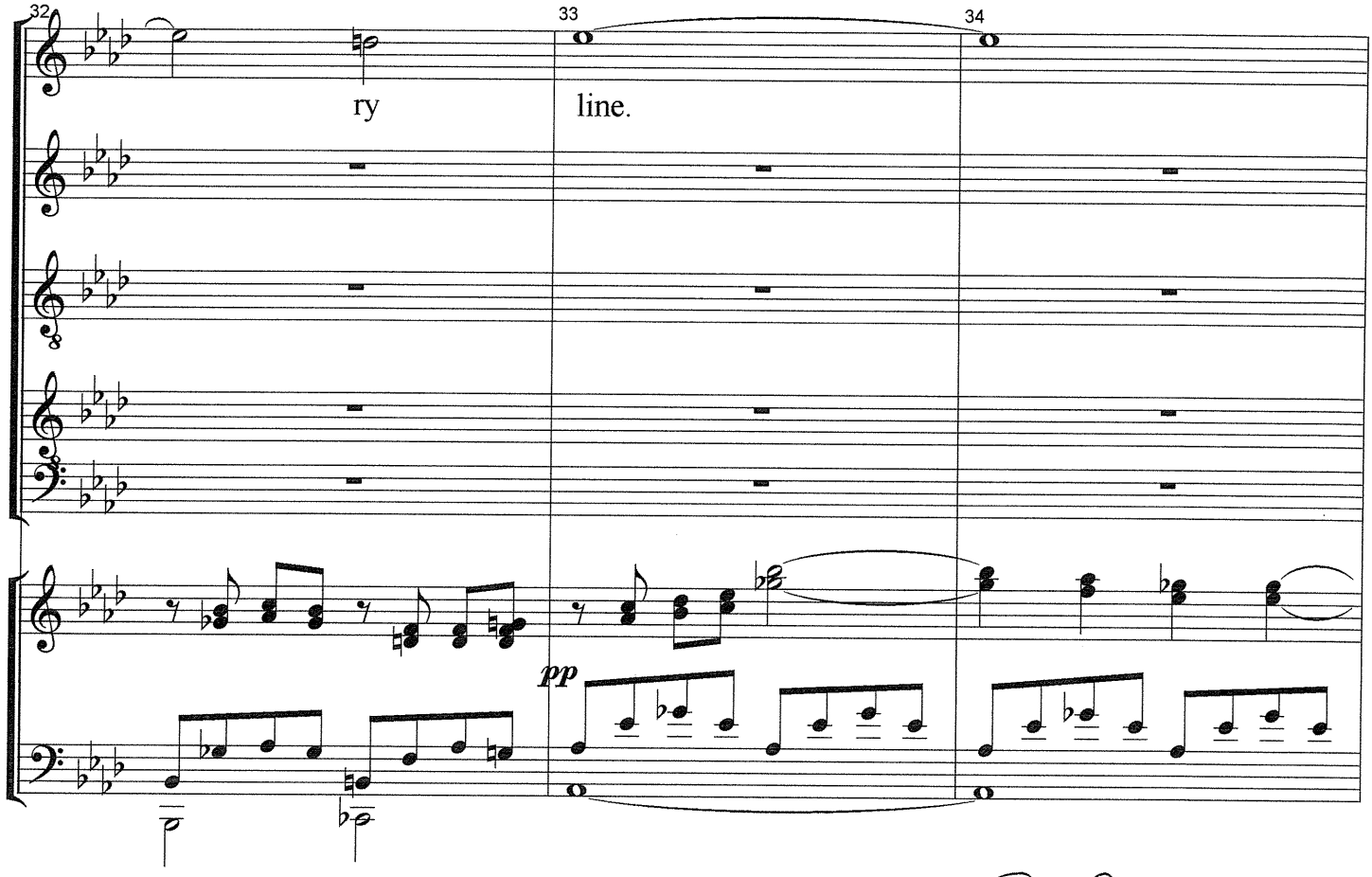

15
16
17
Here I am, Mas - ter, as you bid me.
The three players in the middle aisle are all surprised to hear Ipsi join the Master.

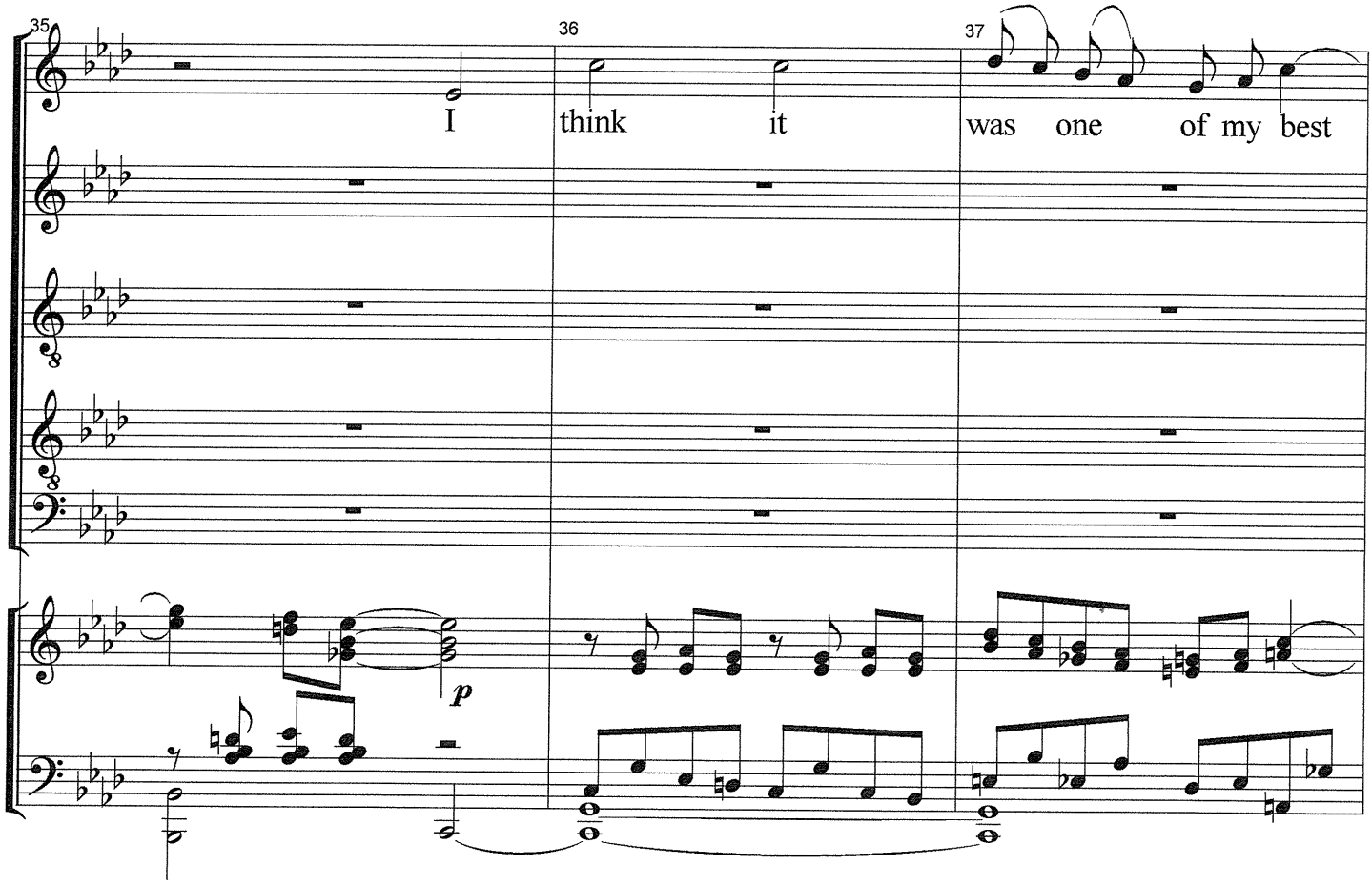

18
19
20
Ip - si.
Ip - si.
Ip - si!
Ip - si,
f Come, my child, and re - port.
p
p

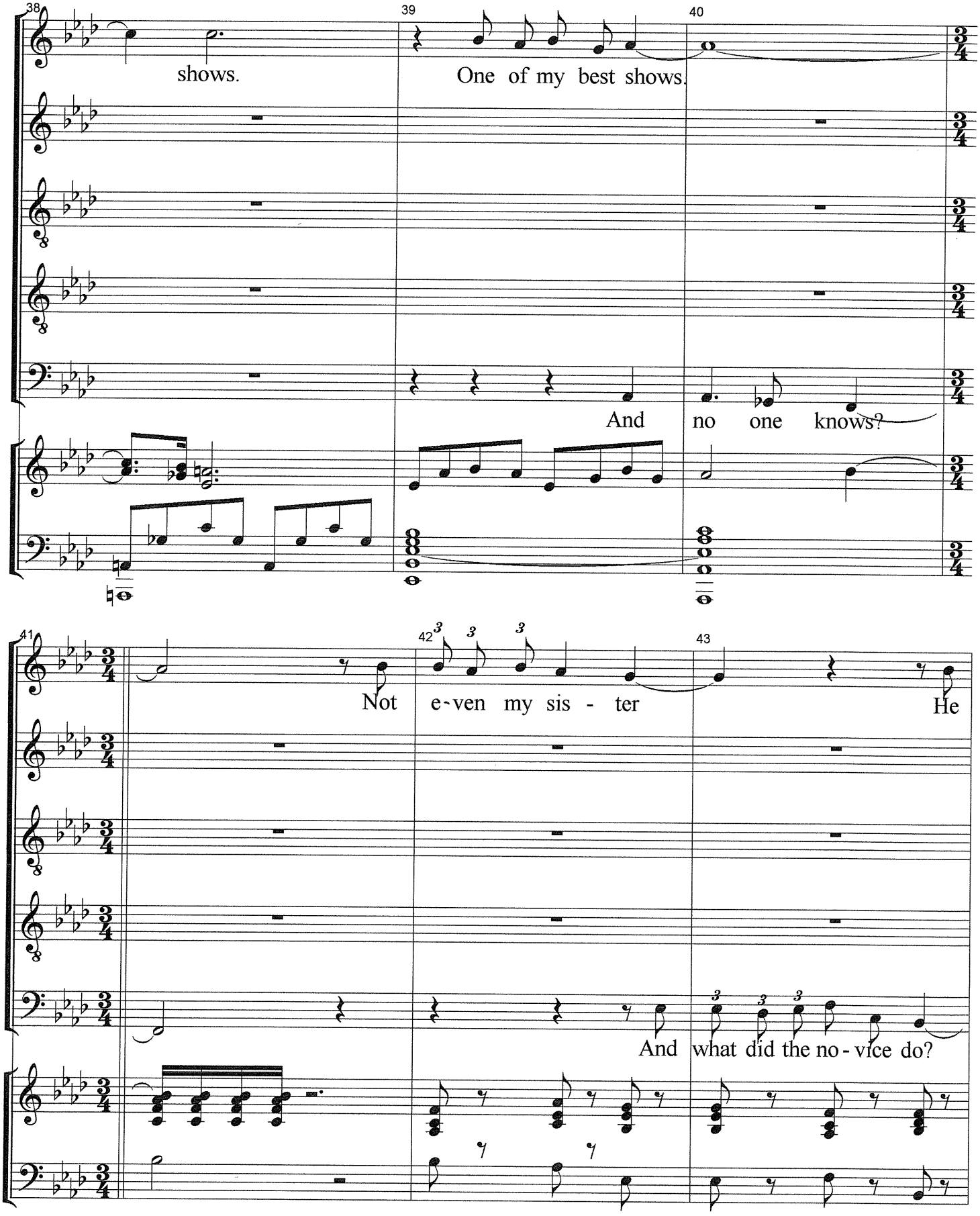

21
22
23
24
25
p
ppp

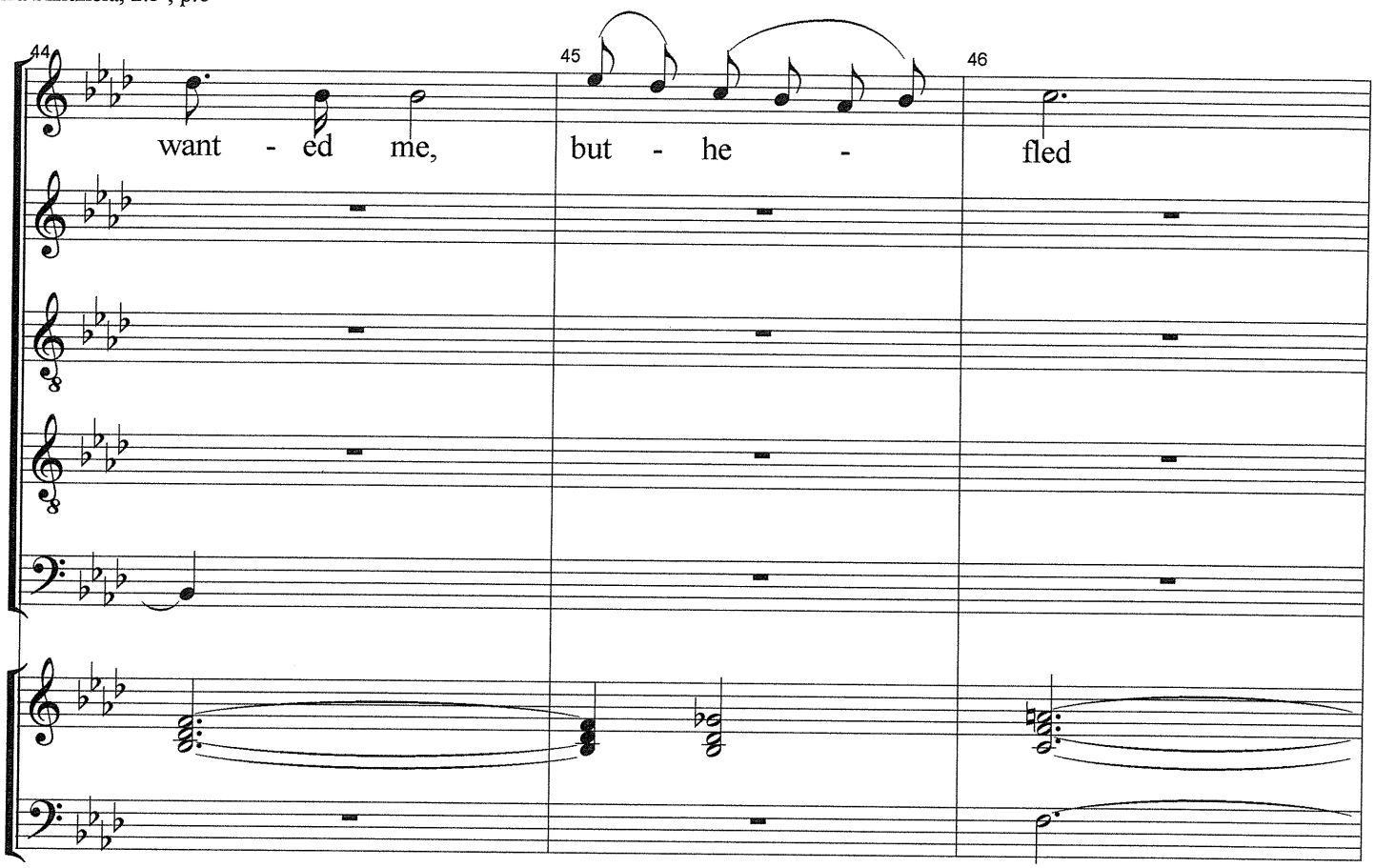

26
27
28
f As we re -
hearsed it,
- I - per -
ppp

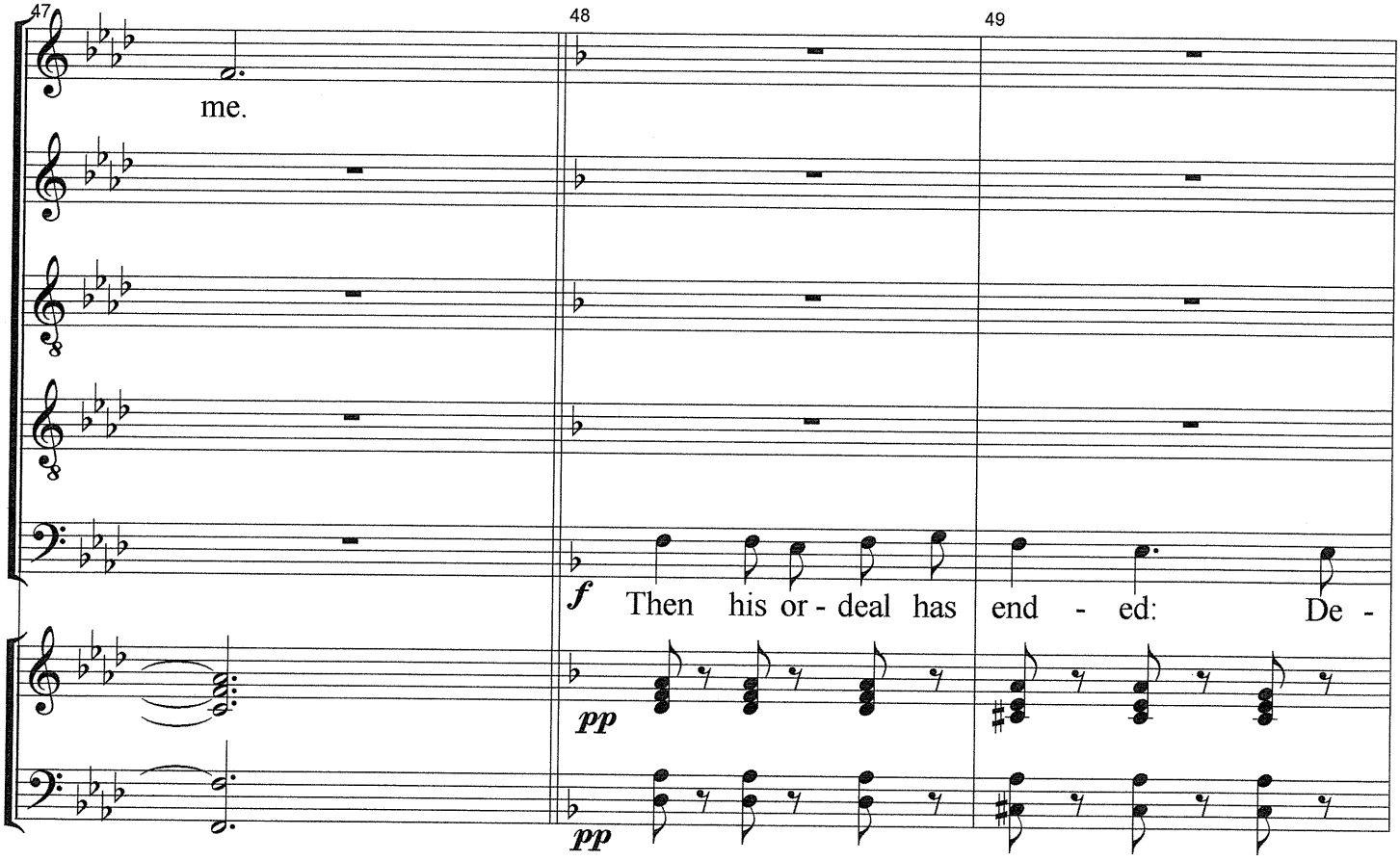

29
30
31
formed it.
I
used ev'

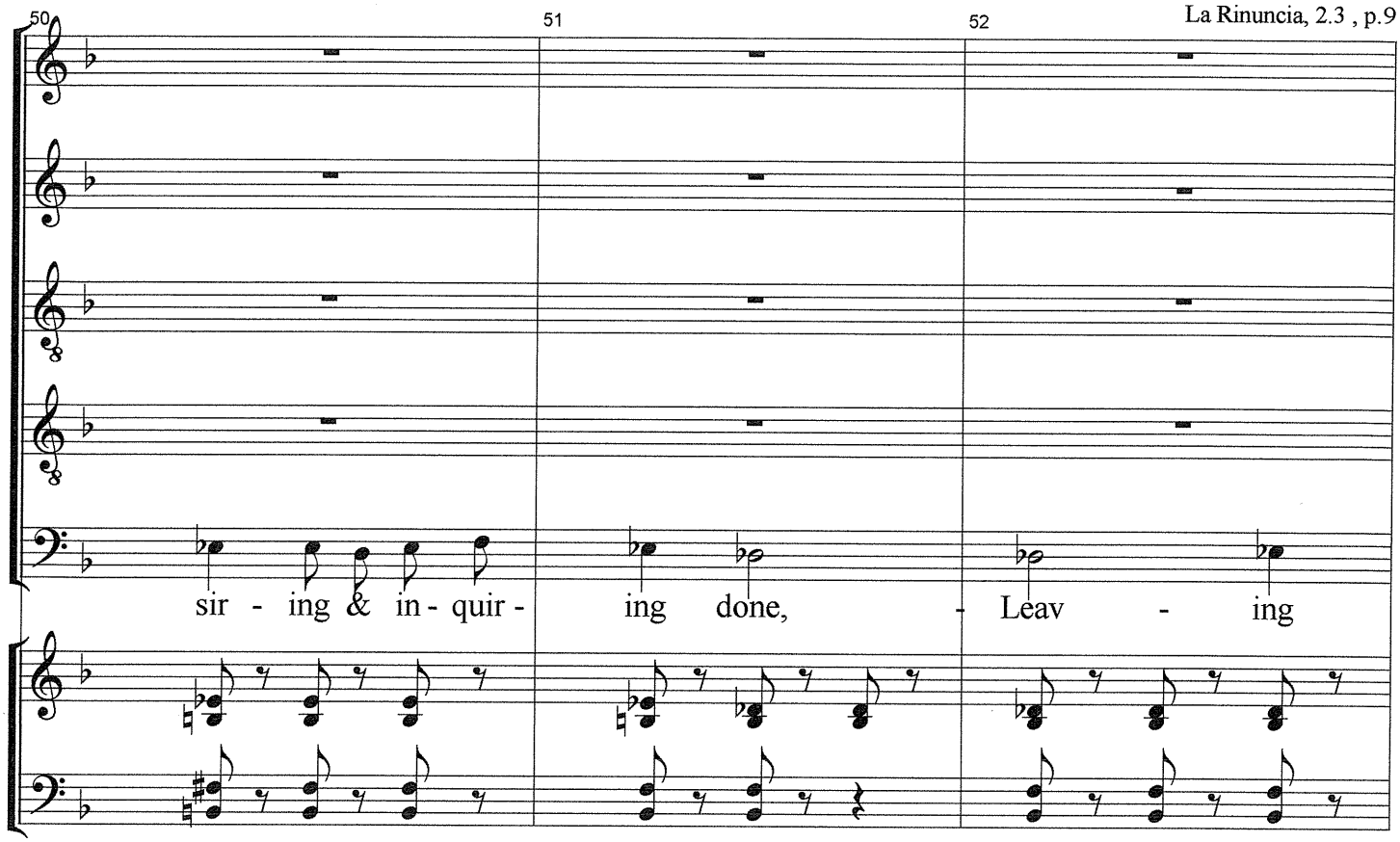

32
33
34
ry
line.
pp

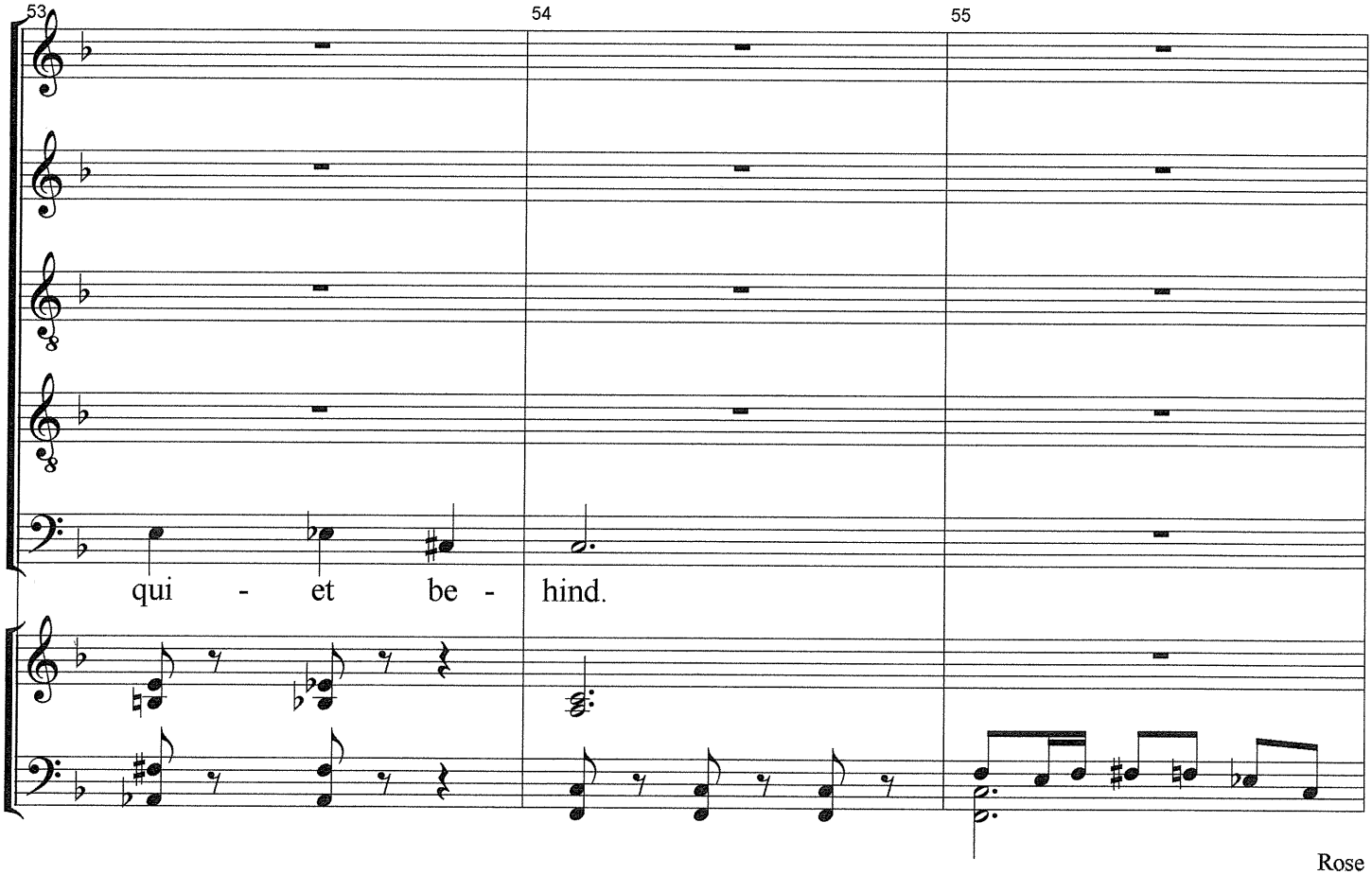

35
36
37
I
think
it
was one of my best
p

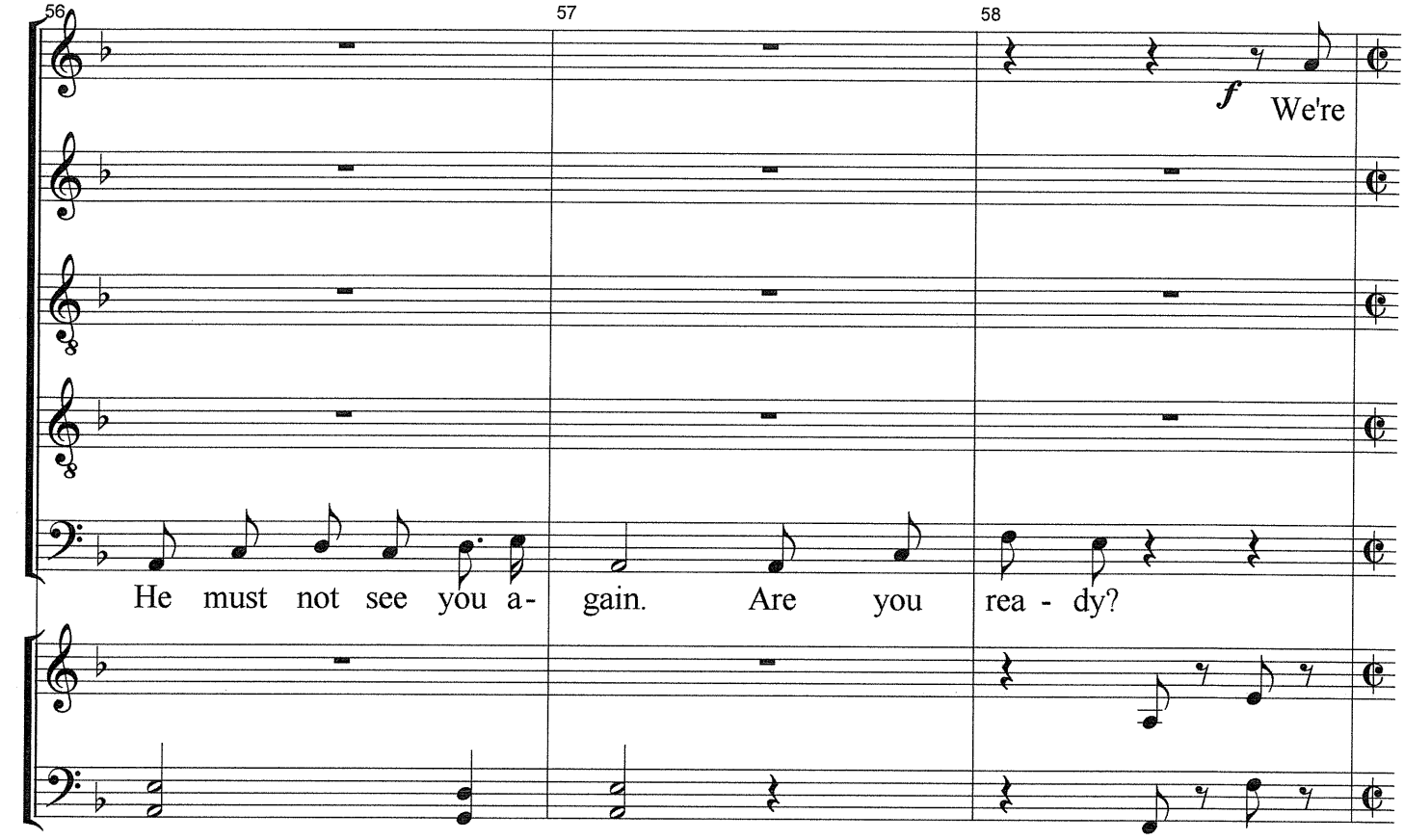

38
39
40
shows.
One of my best shows.
And no one knows?
41
42
43
Not e-ven my sis - ter
He
And what did the no - vice do?

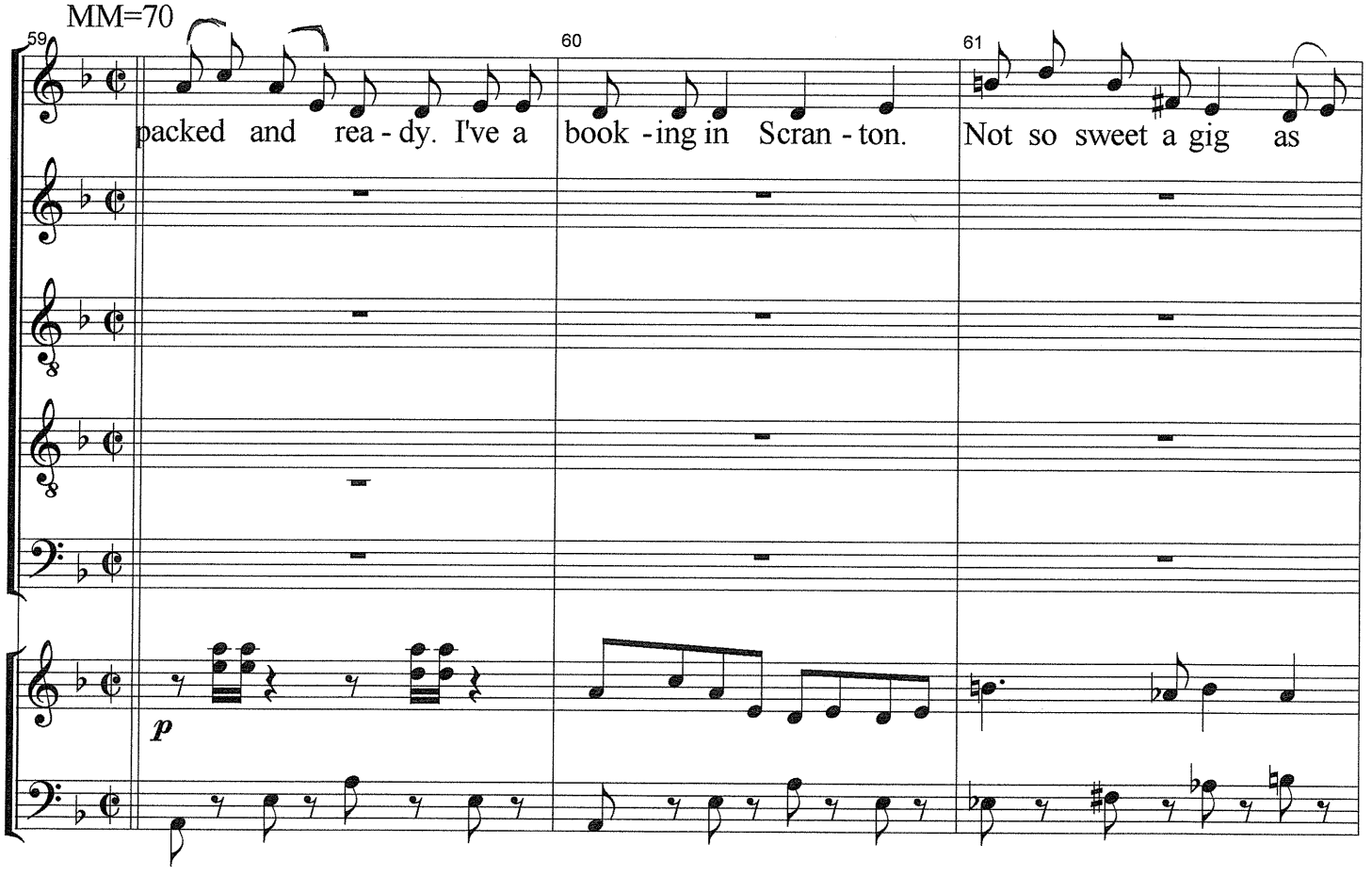

44
45
46
want - ed me,
but - he -
fled

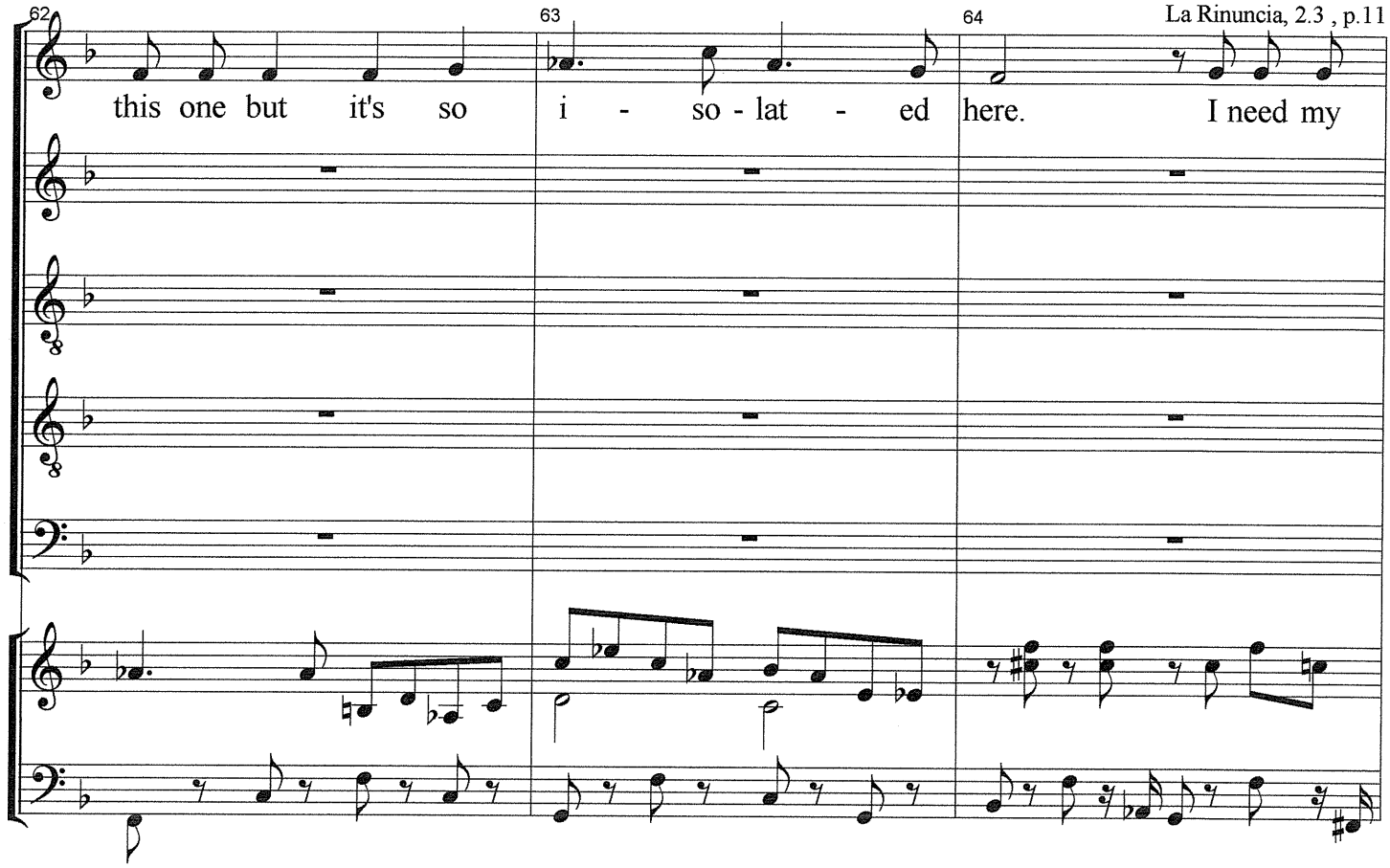

47
48
49
me.
f
Then his or - deal has end - ed: De -
pp
pp

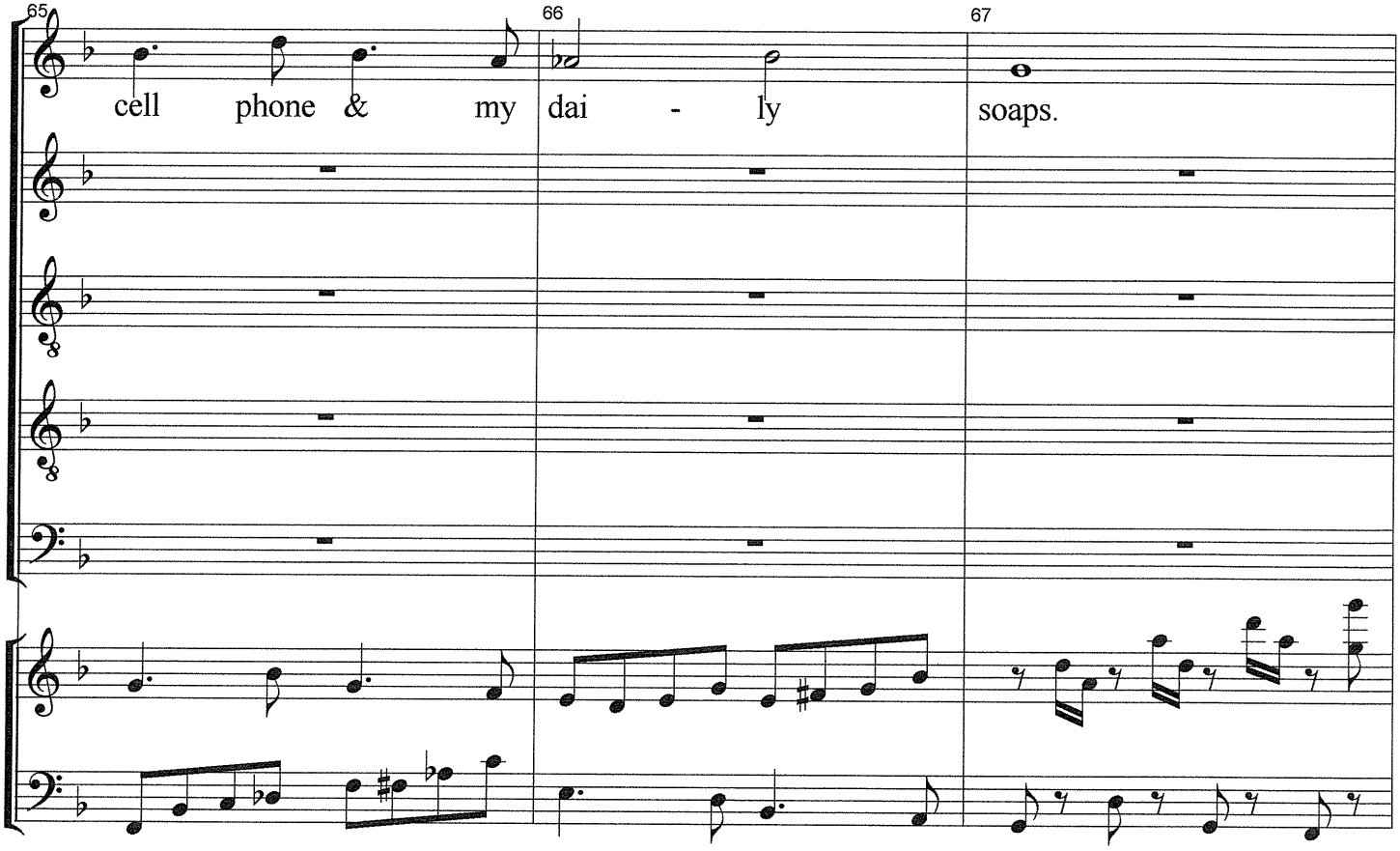

50
51
52
sir - ing & in - quir - ing done, - Leav - ing


53
54
55
qui - et be - hind.

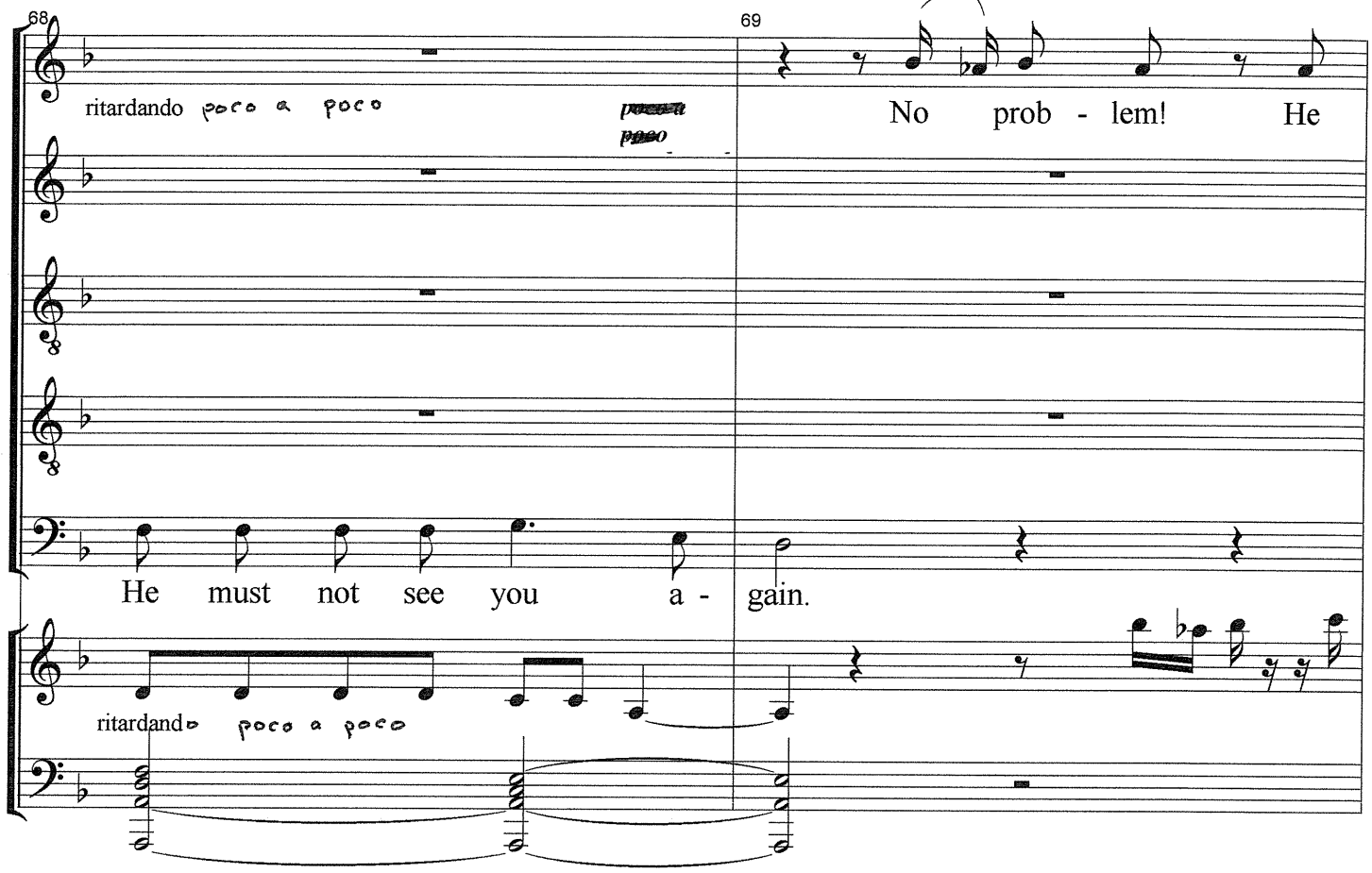

56
57
58
f
We're
He must not see you a- gain. Are you rea - dy?

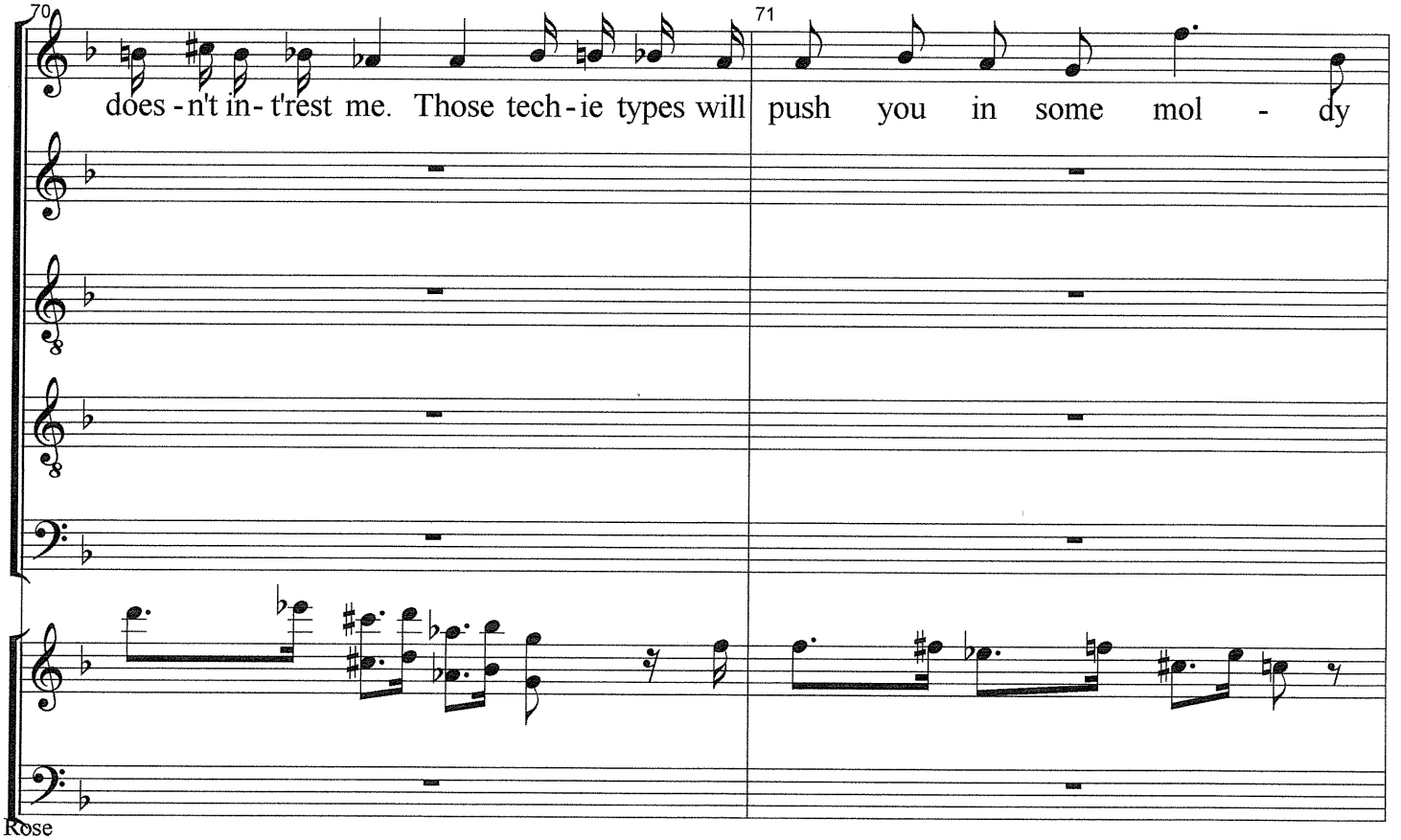

MM=70
59
60
61
packed and rea - dy. I've a book - ing in Scran - ton. Not so sweet a gig as
p

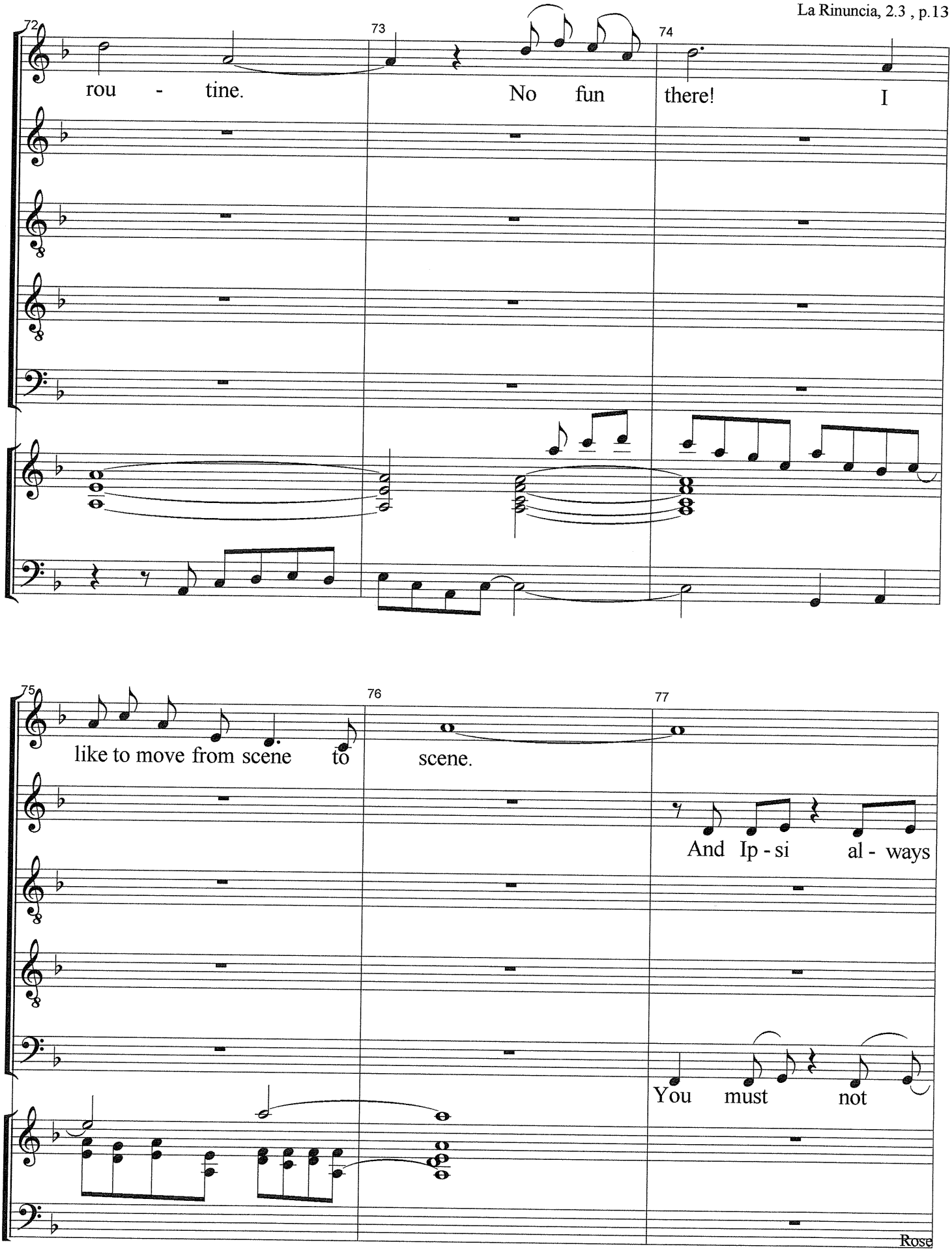

62
63
64
this one but it's so i - so - lat - ed here. I need my

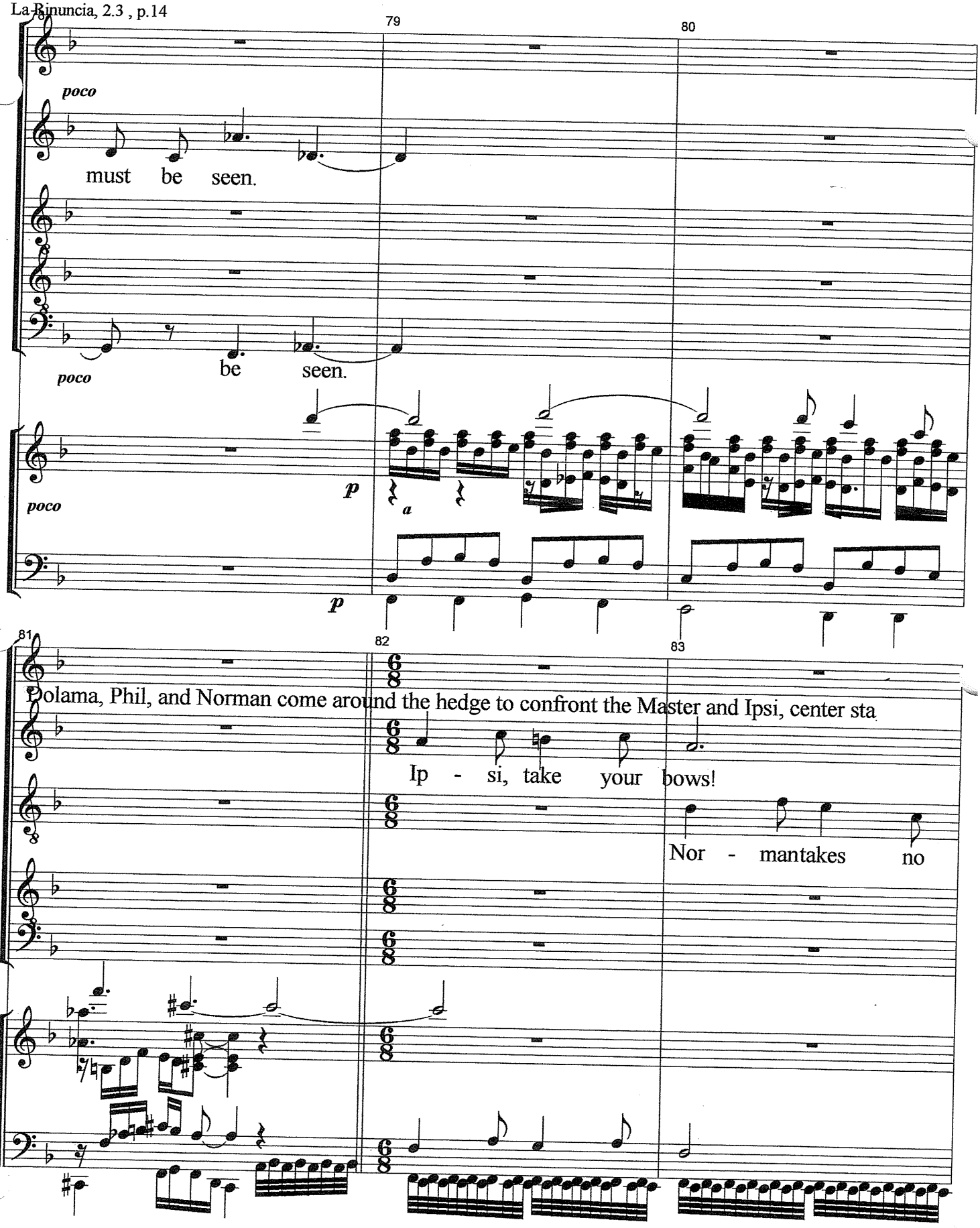

65
66
67
cell phone & my dai - ly soaps.

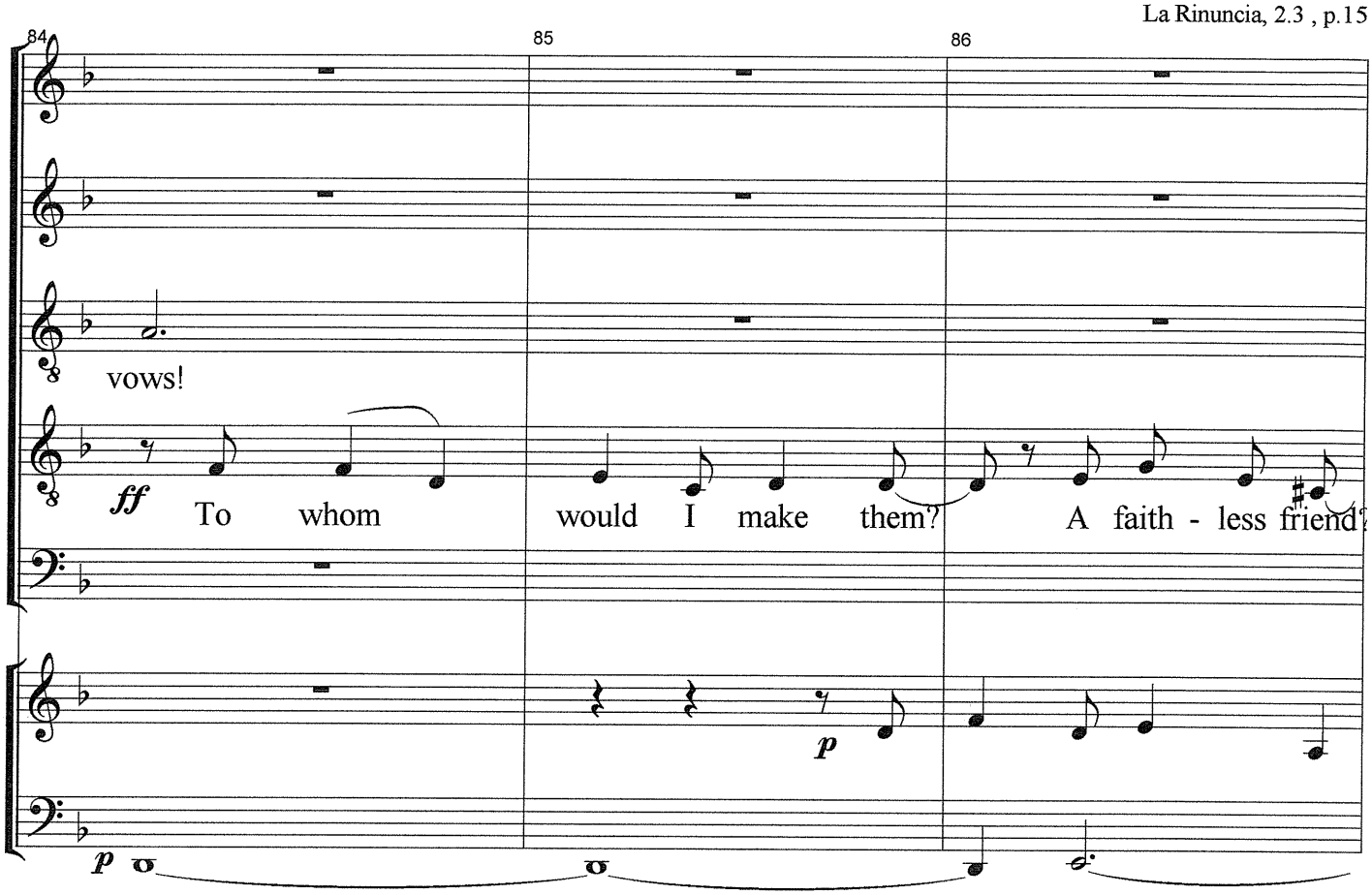
MM=50

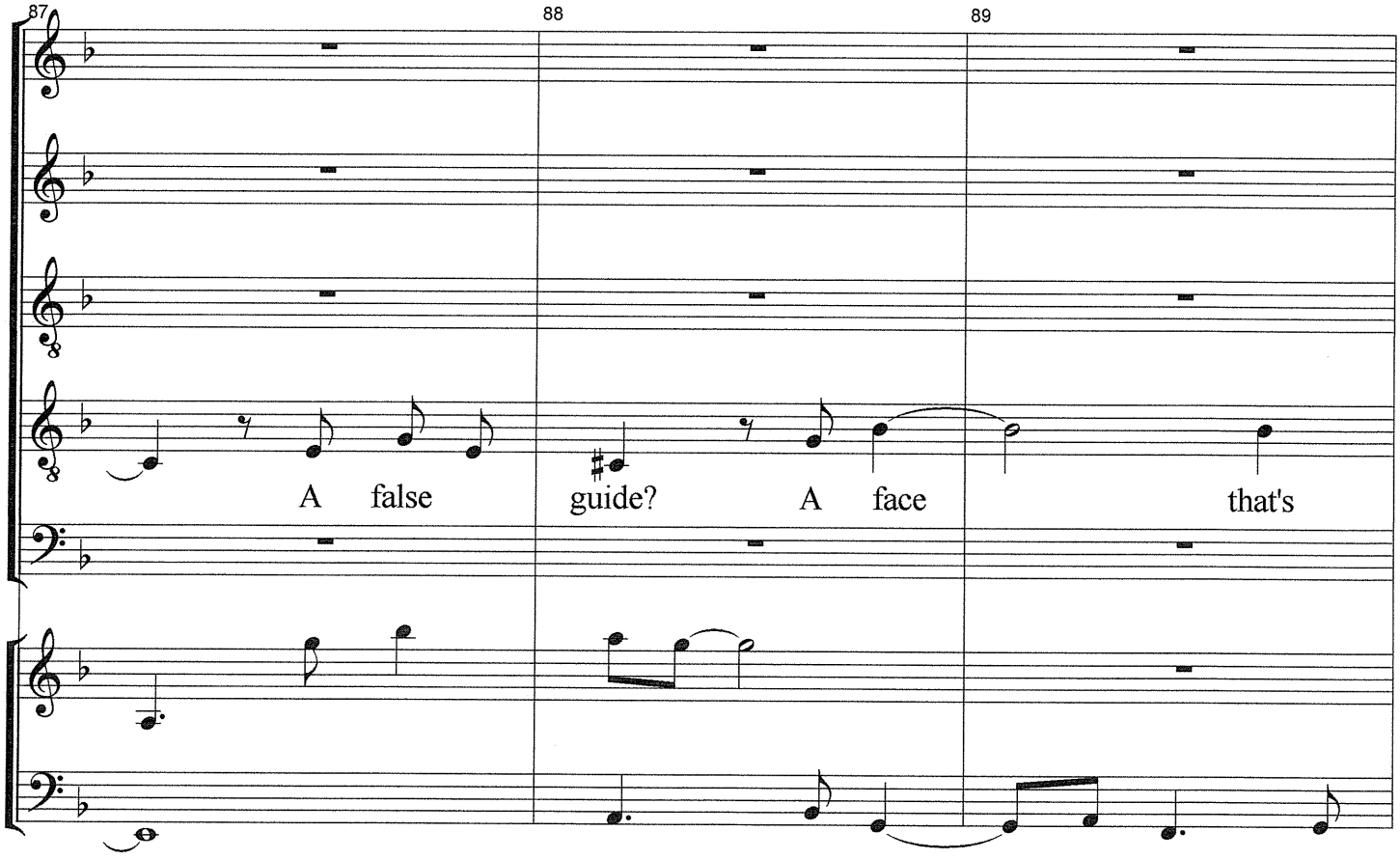

68
69
ritardando poco a poco
No prob - lem! He
He must not see you a - gain.
ritardando poco a poco

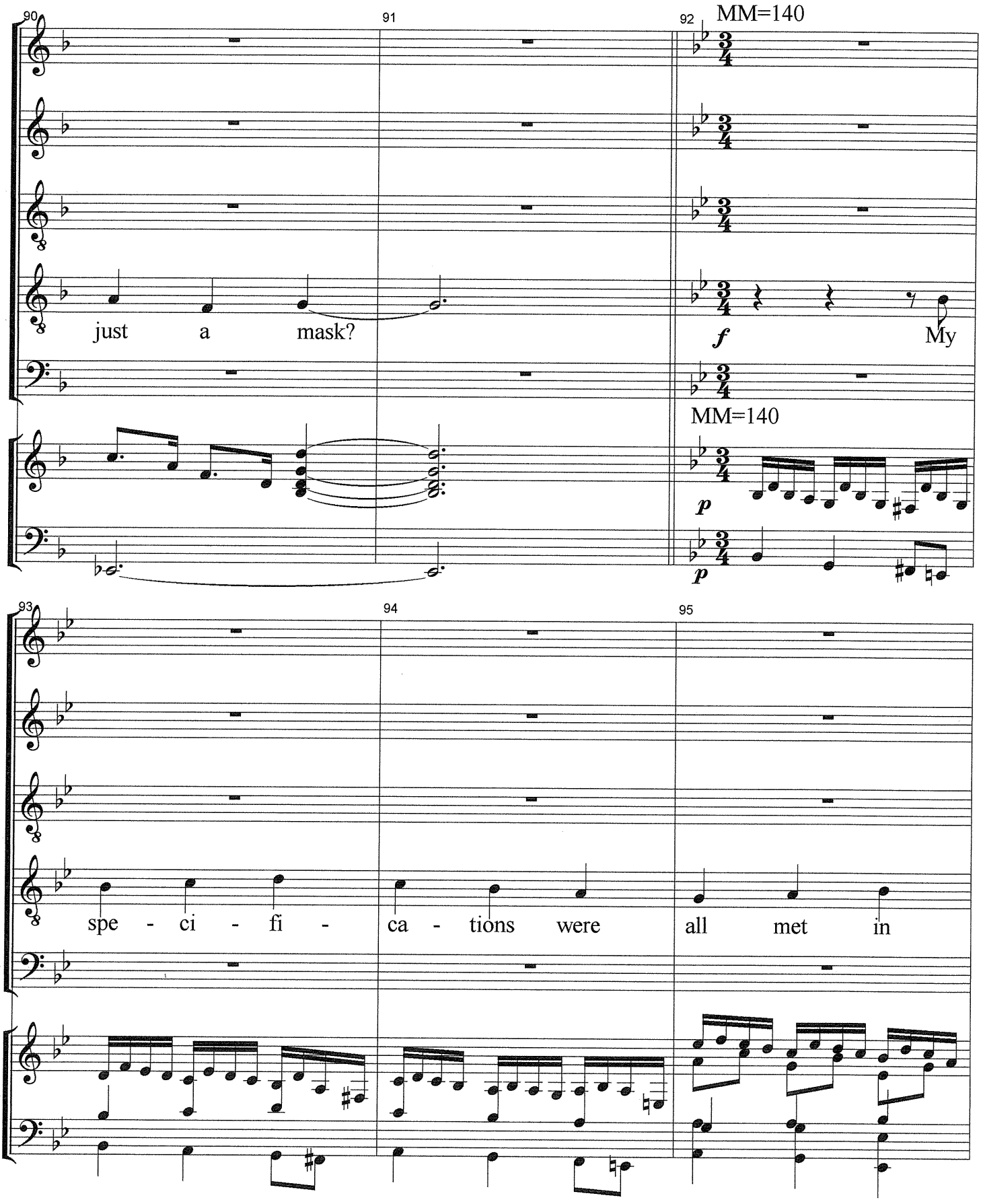

70
71
does - n't in - t'rest me. Those tech - ie types will push you in some mol - dy

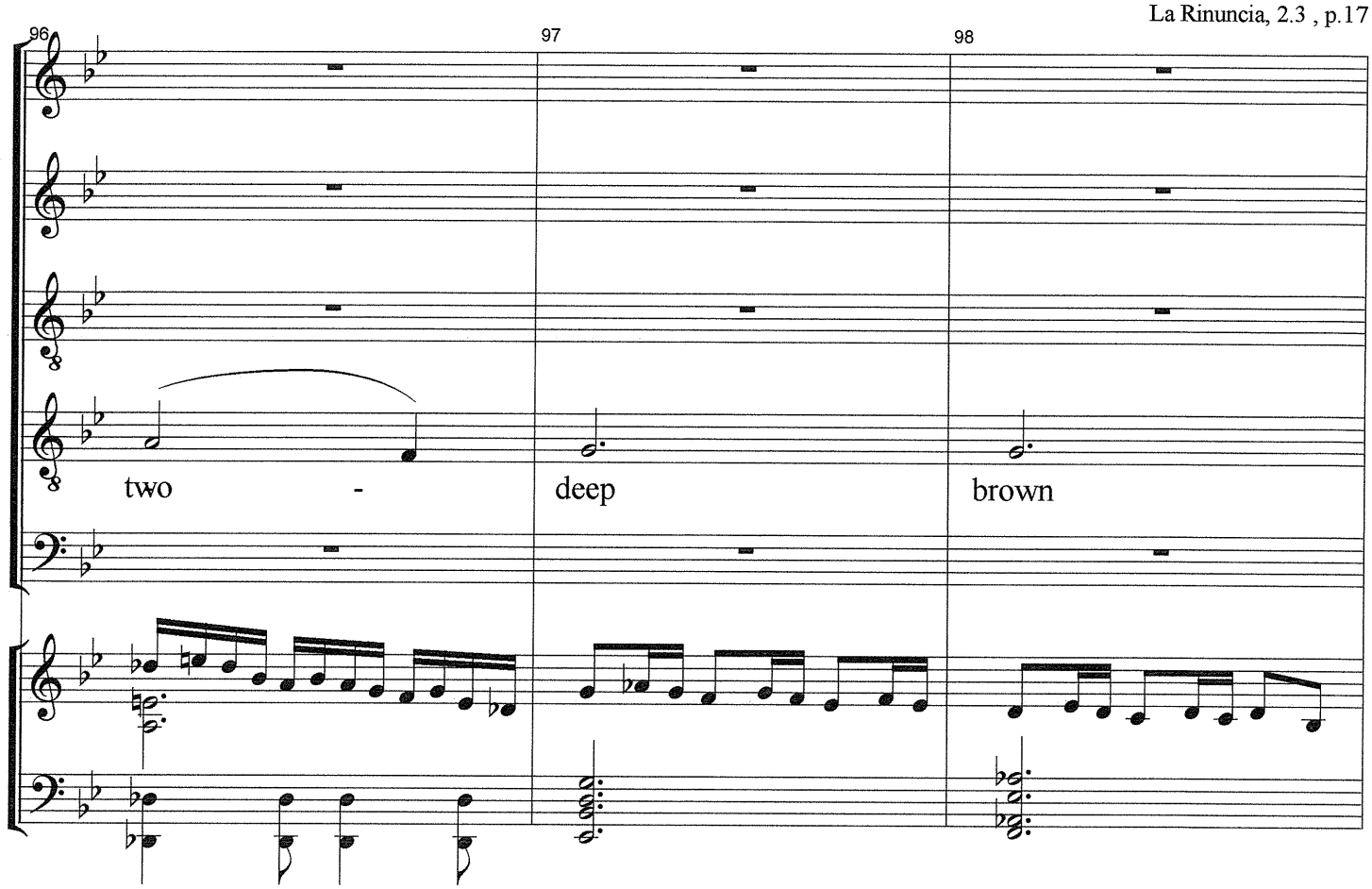

72
rou - tine.
73
No fun
74
there! I
75
like to move from scene to
76
scene.
77
And Ip - si al - ways
You must not
Rose

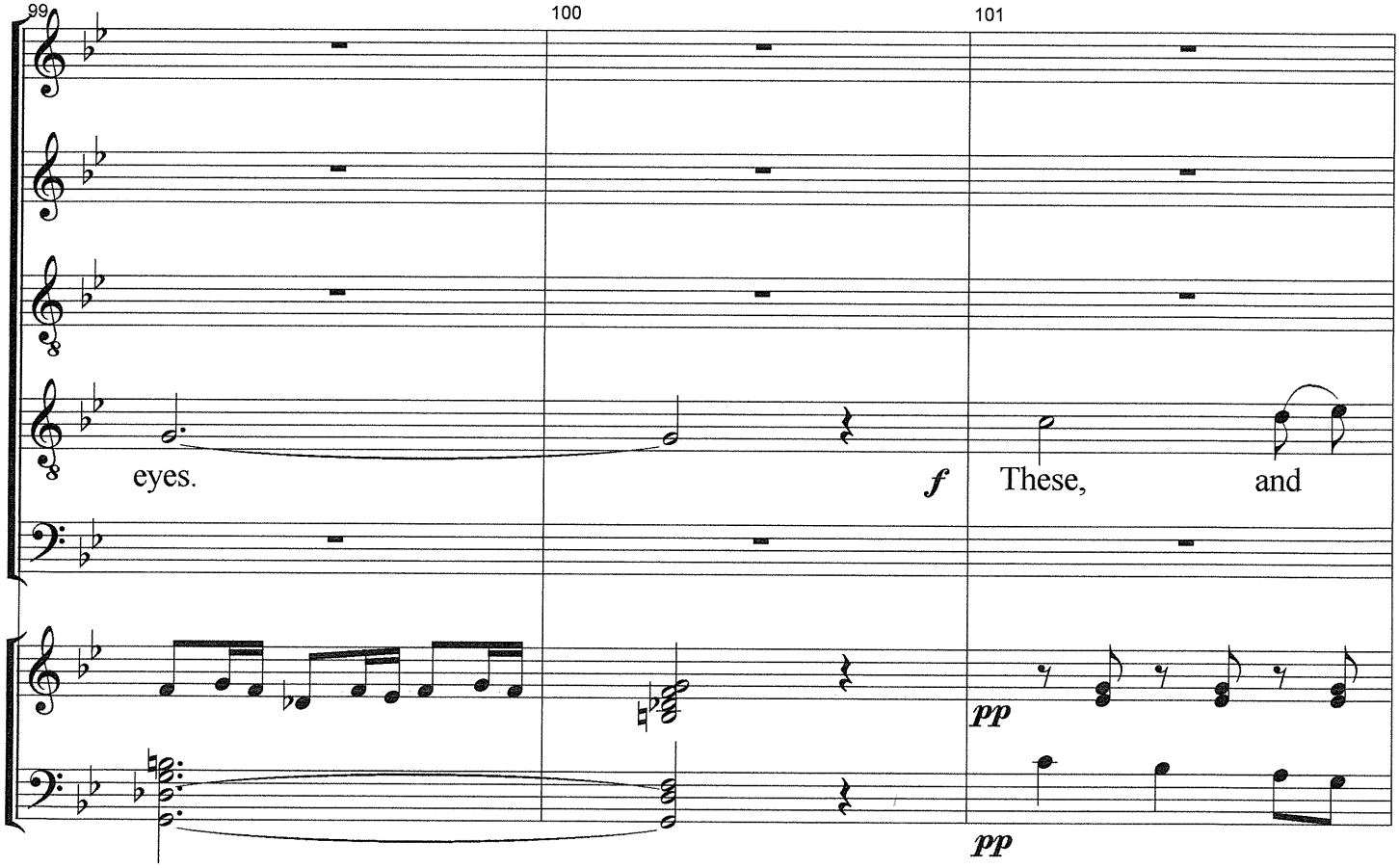

79
80
poco
must be seen.
poco
be seen.
poco
p
a
p
81
82
83
Polama, Phil, and Norman come around the hedge to confront the Master and Ipsi, center sta
Ip - si, take your bows!
Nor - mantakes no

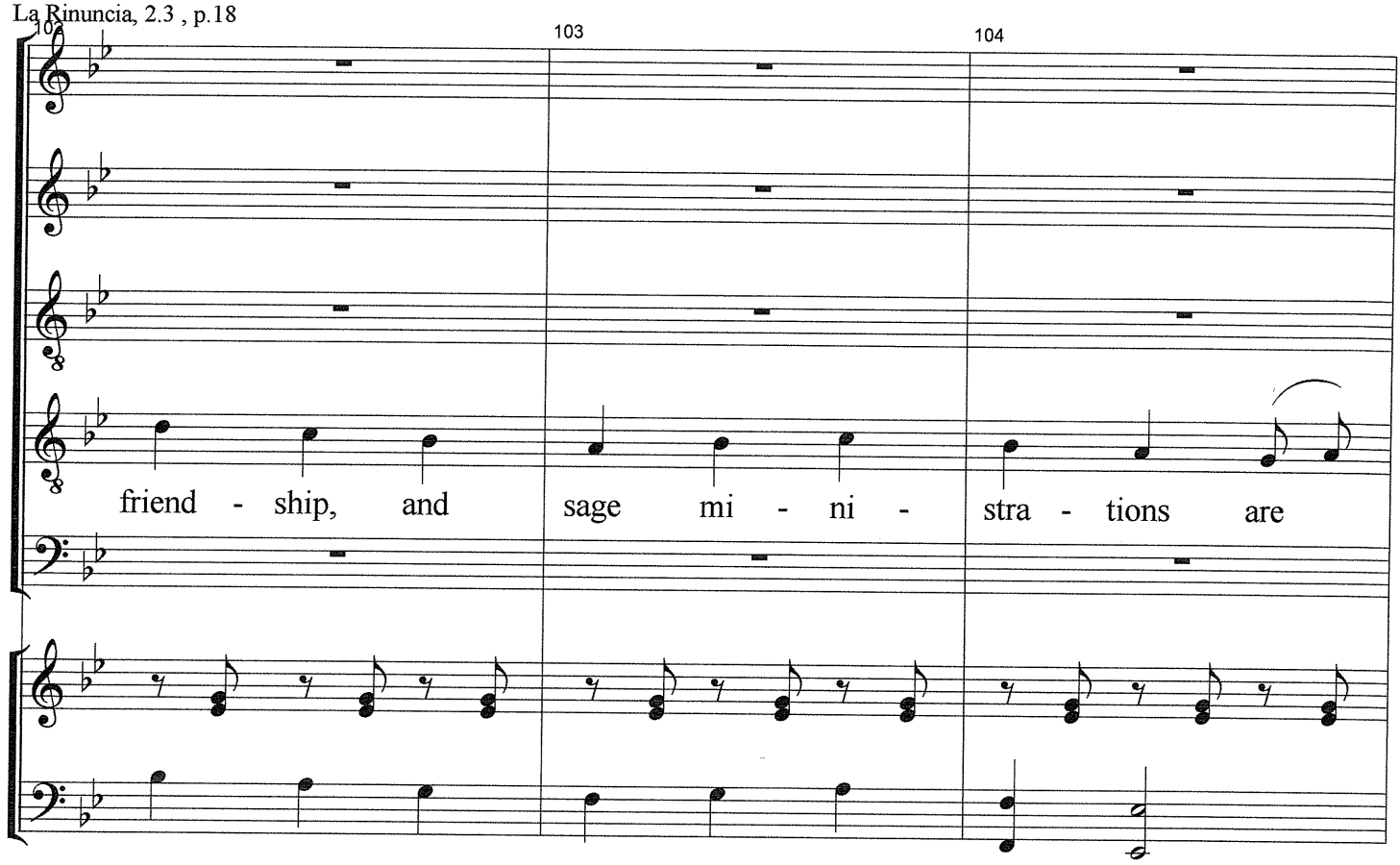

84
85
86
vows!
ff
To whom would I make them? A faith - less friend?
p
p

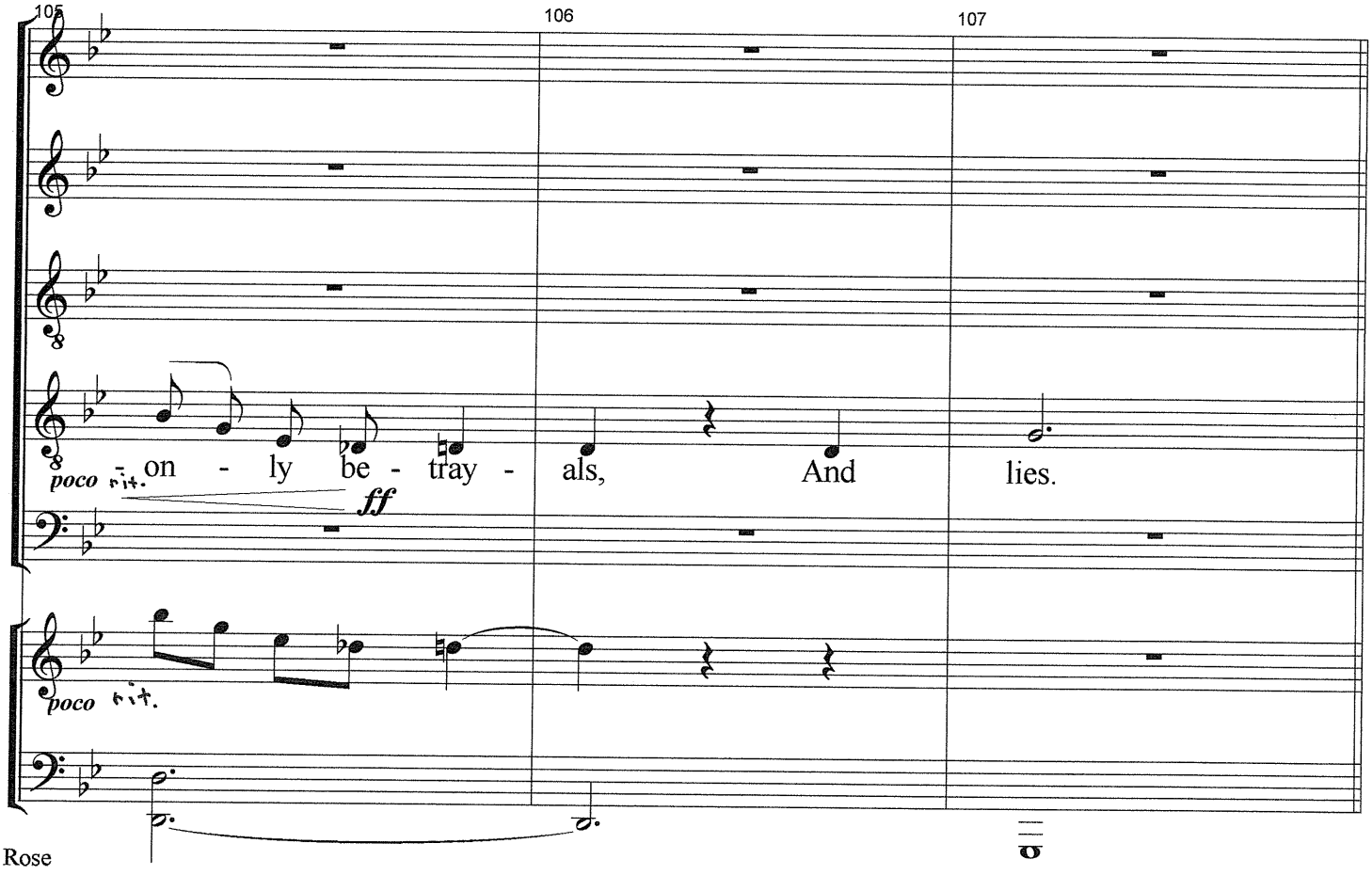

87
88
89
A false guide? A face that's

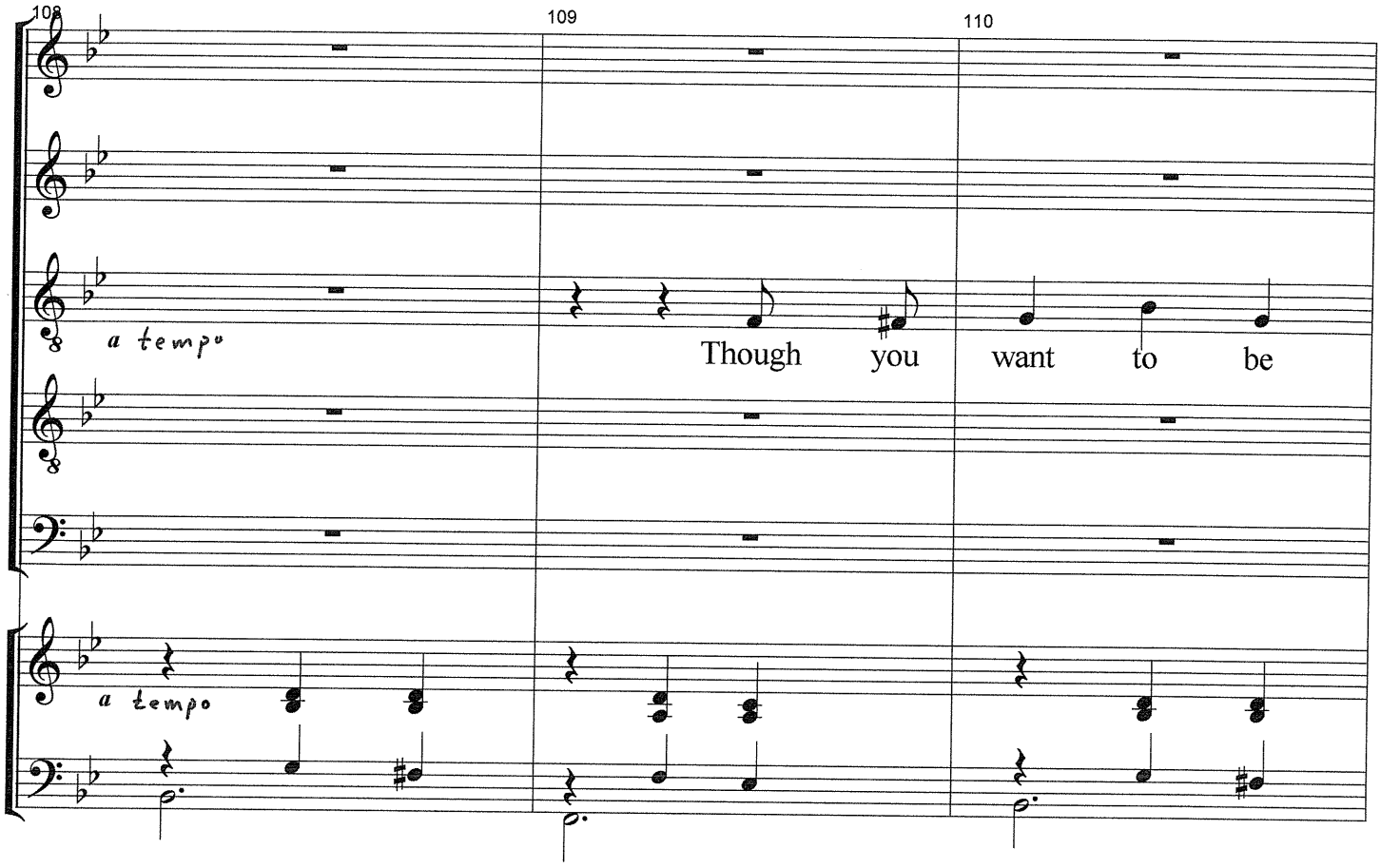

90
91
92
MM=140
just a mask?
f
My
MM=140
p
p
93
94
95
spe - ci - fi - ca - tions were all met in

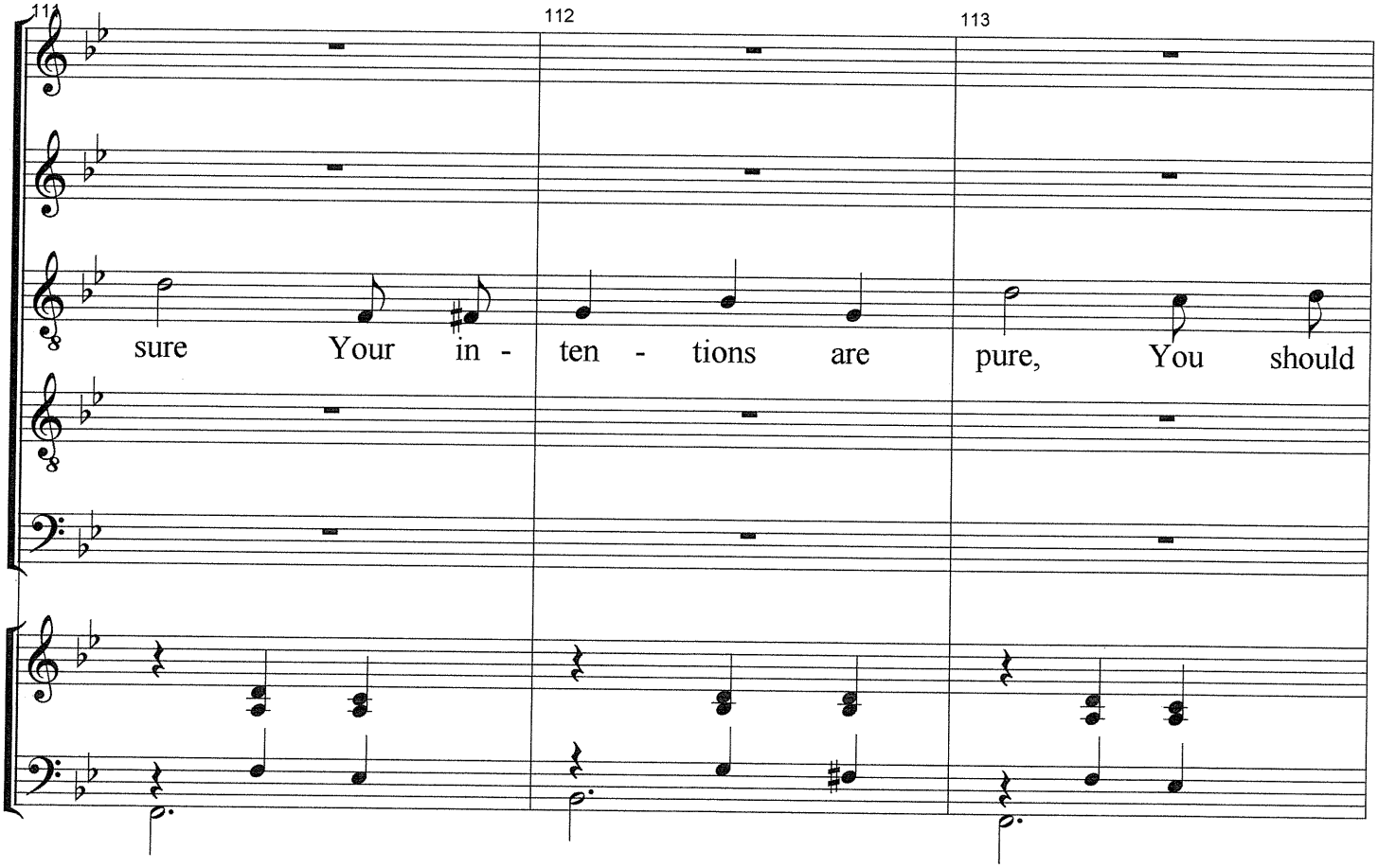

96
97
98
two - deep brown

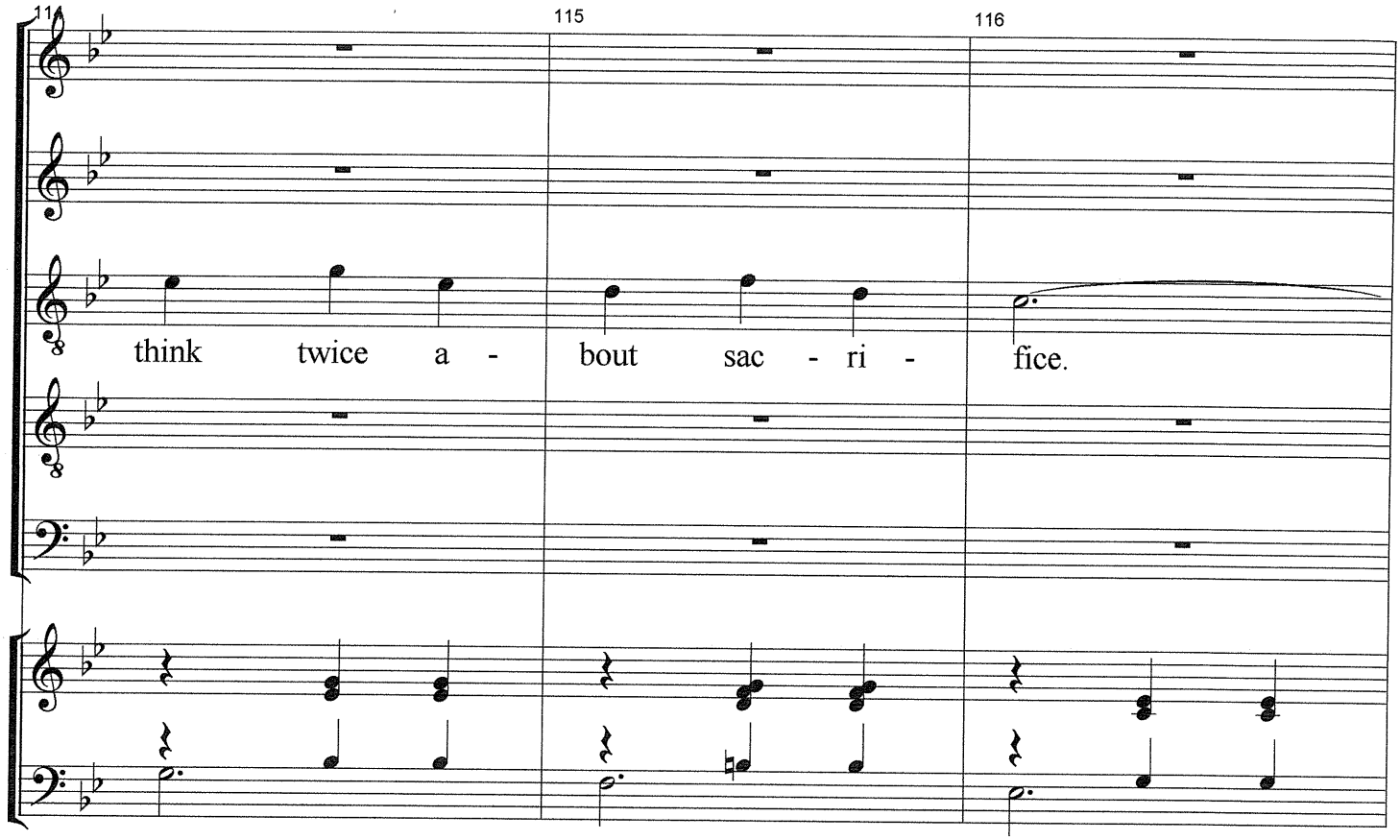

99
100
101
eyes.
f
These, and
pp
pp

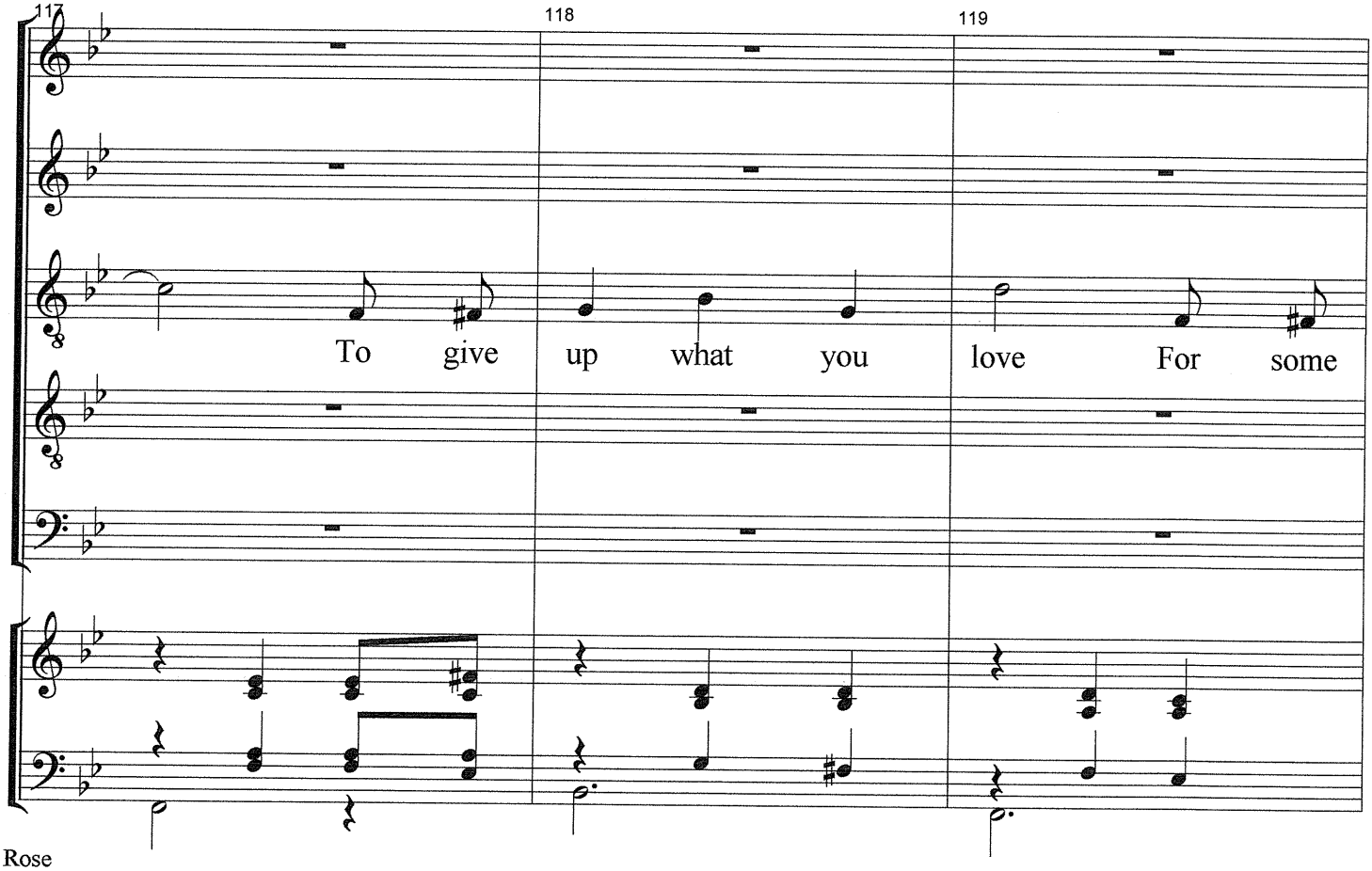

103
104
friend - ship, and sage mi - ni - stra - tions are

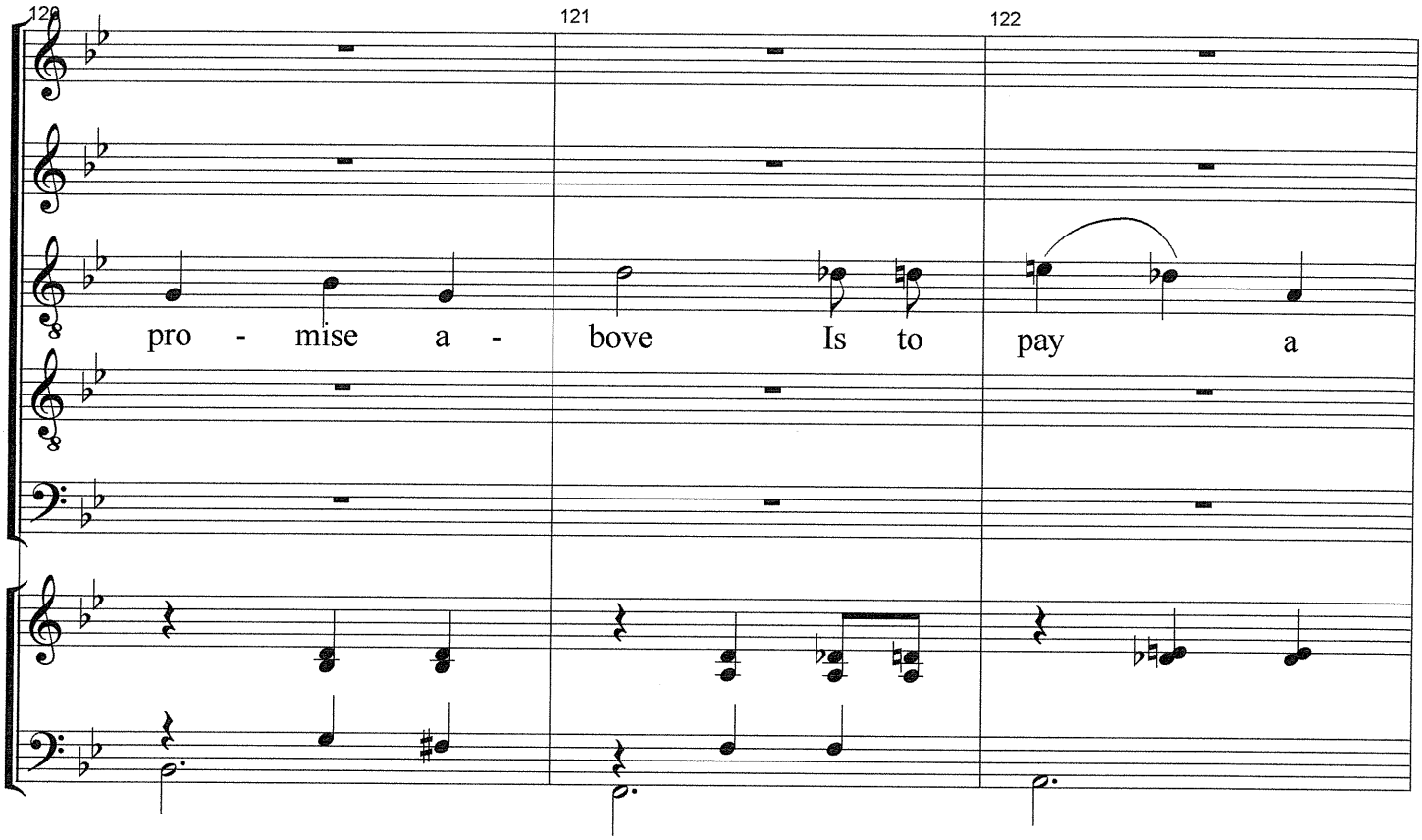

106
107
poco rit.
- on - ly be - tray - als, And lies.
ff
poco rit.

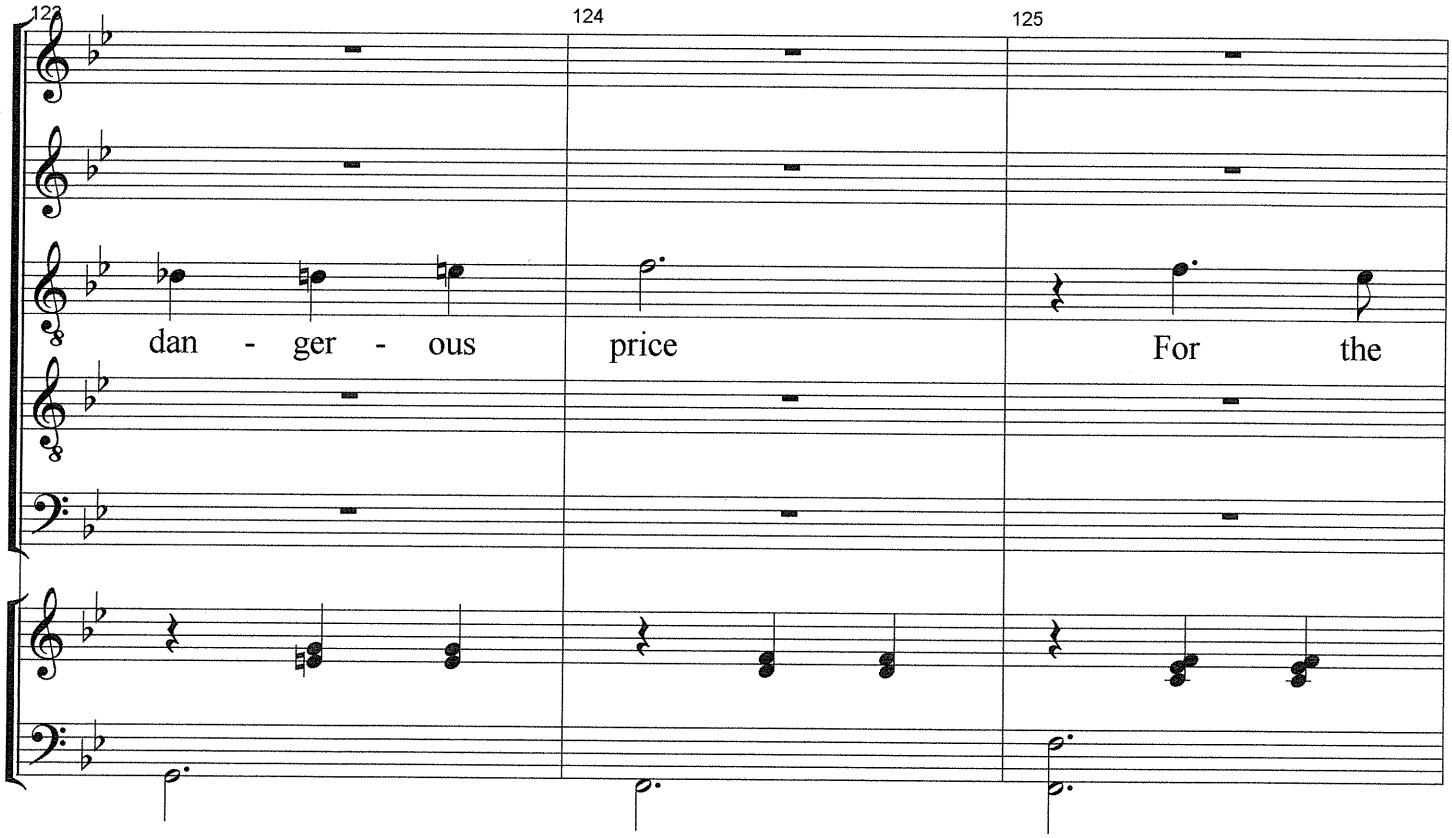

108
109
110
a tempo
Though you want to be
a tempo

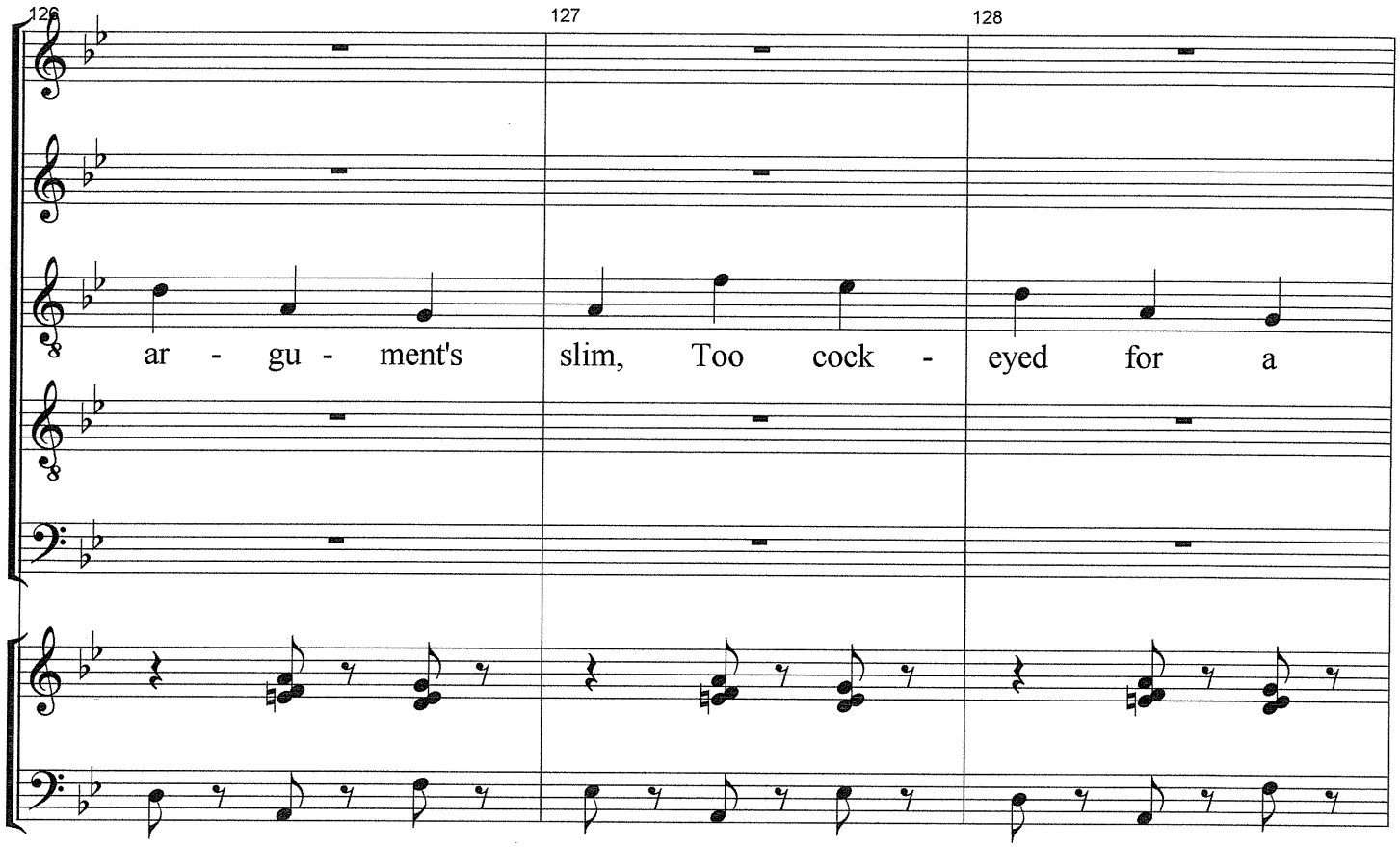

111
112
113
sure Your in - ten - tions are pure, You should

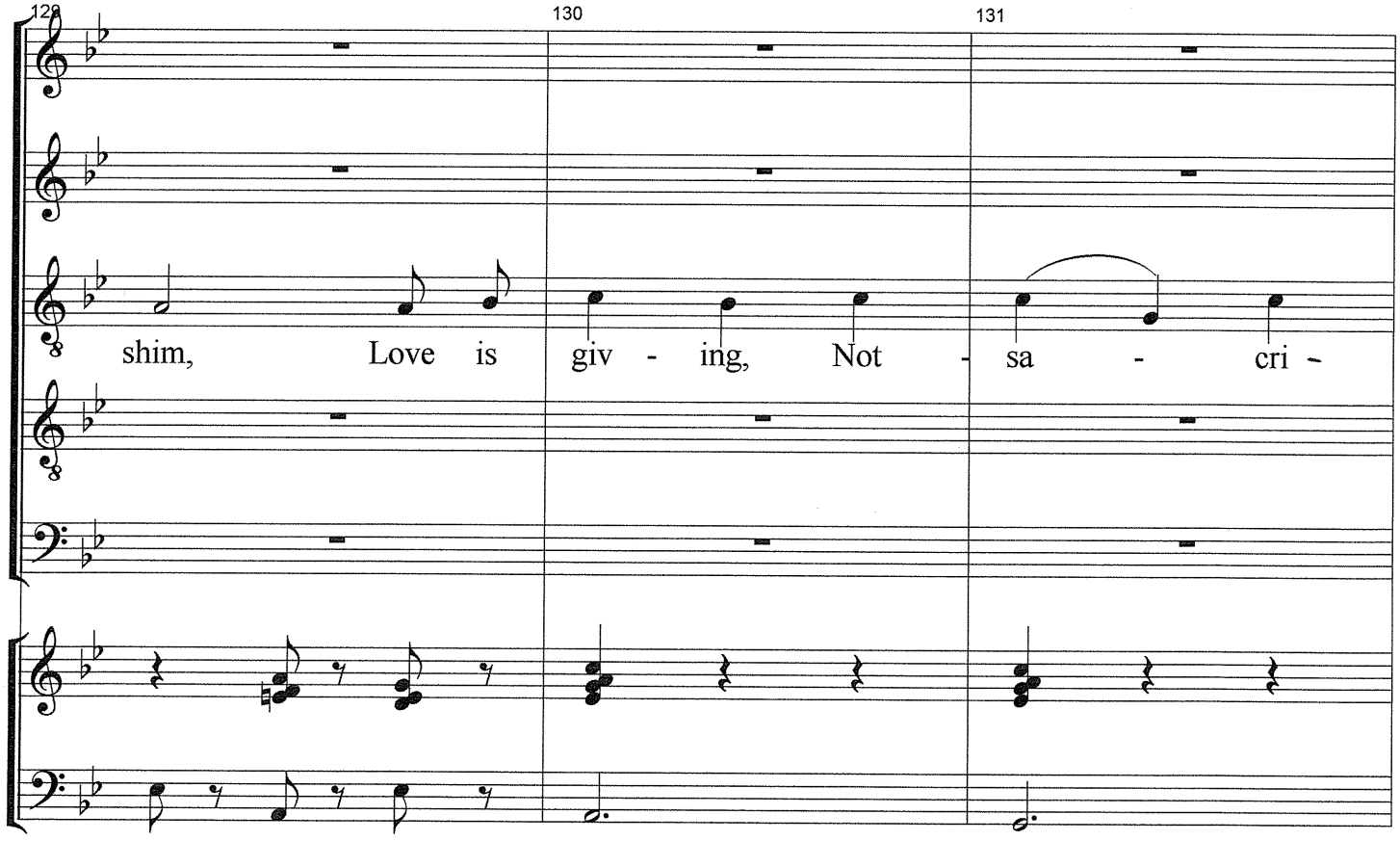

114
115
116
think twice a - bout sac - ri - fice.

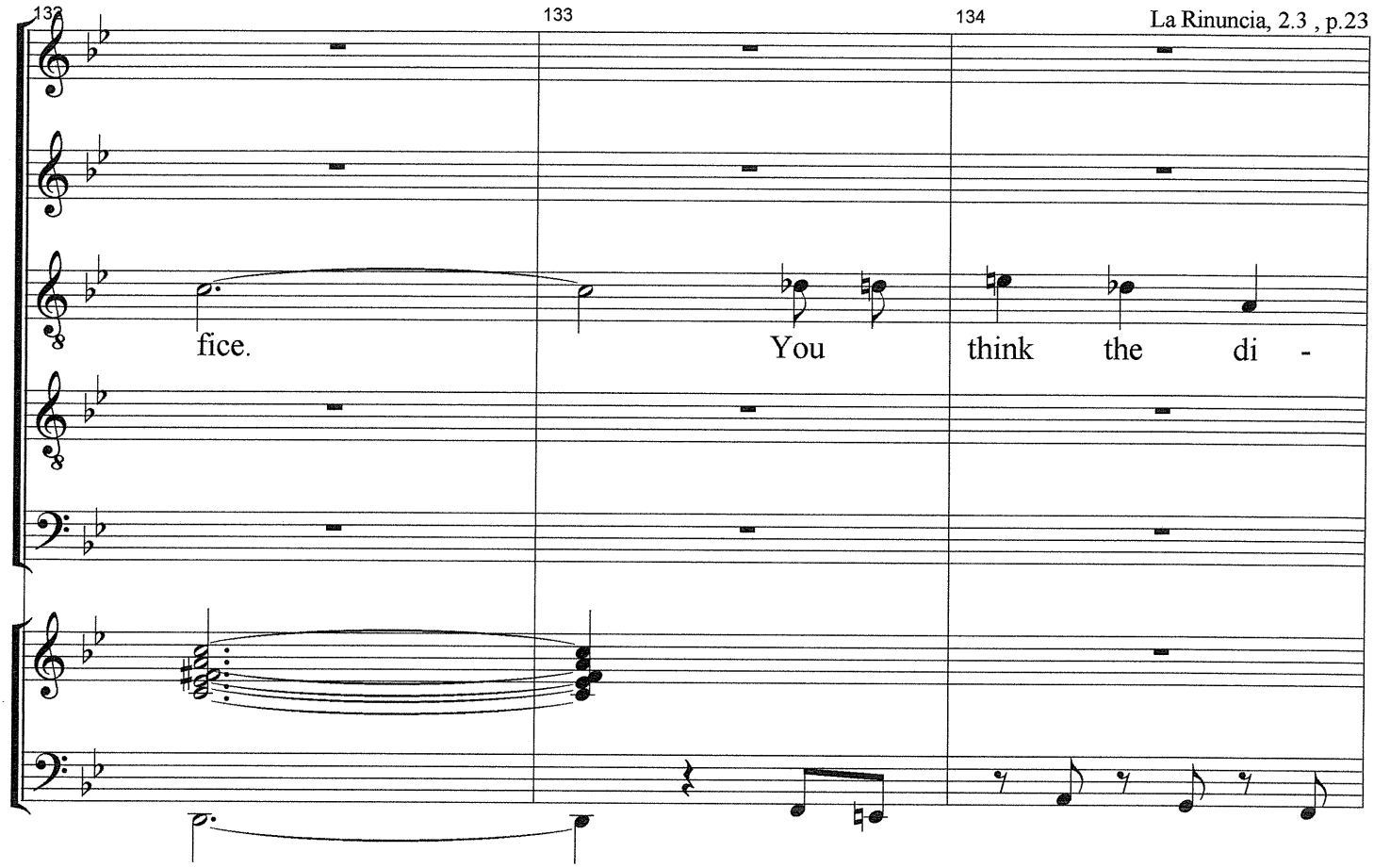

117
118
119
To give up what you love For some

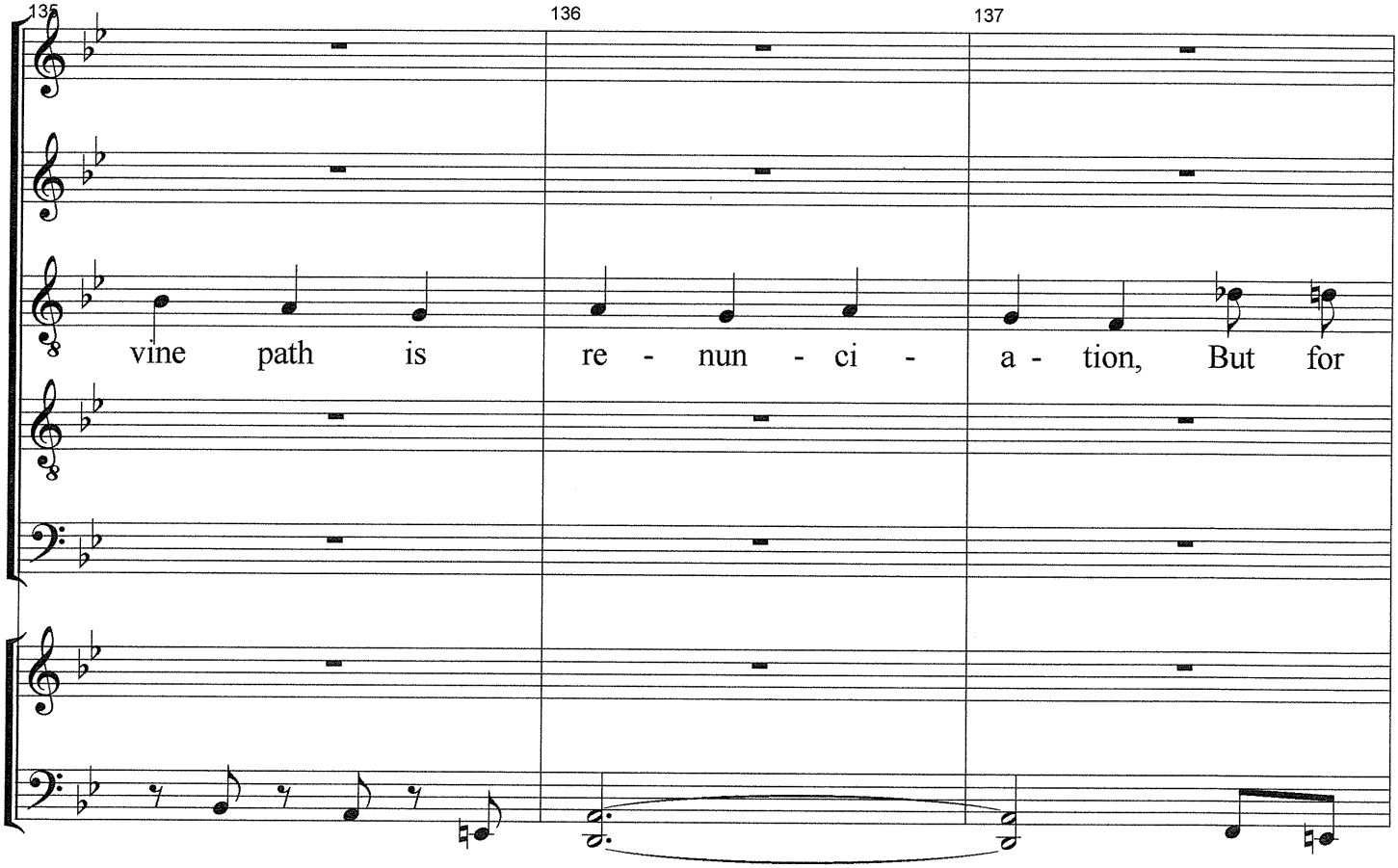

120
121
122
pro - mise a - bove Is to pay a

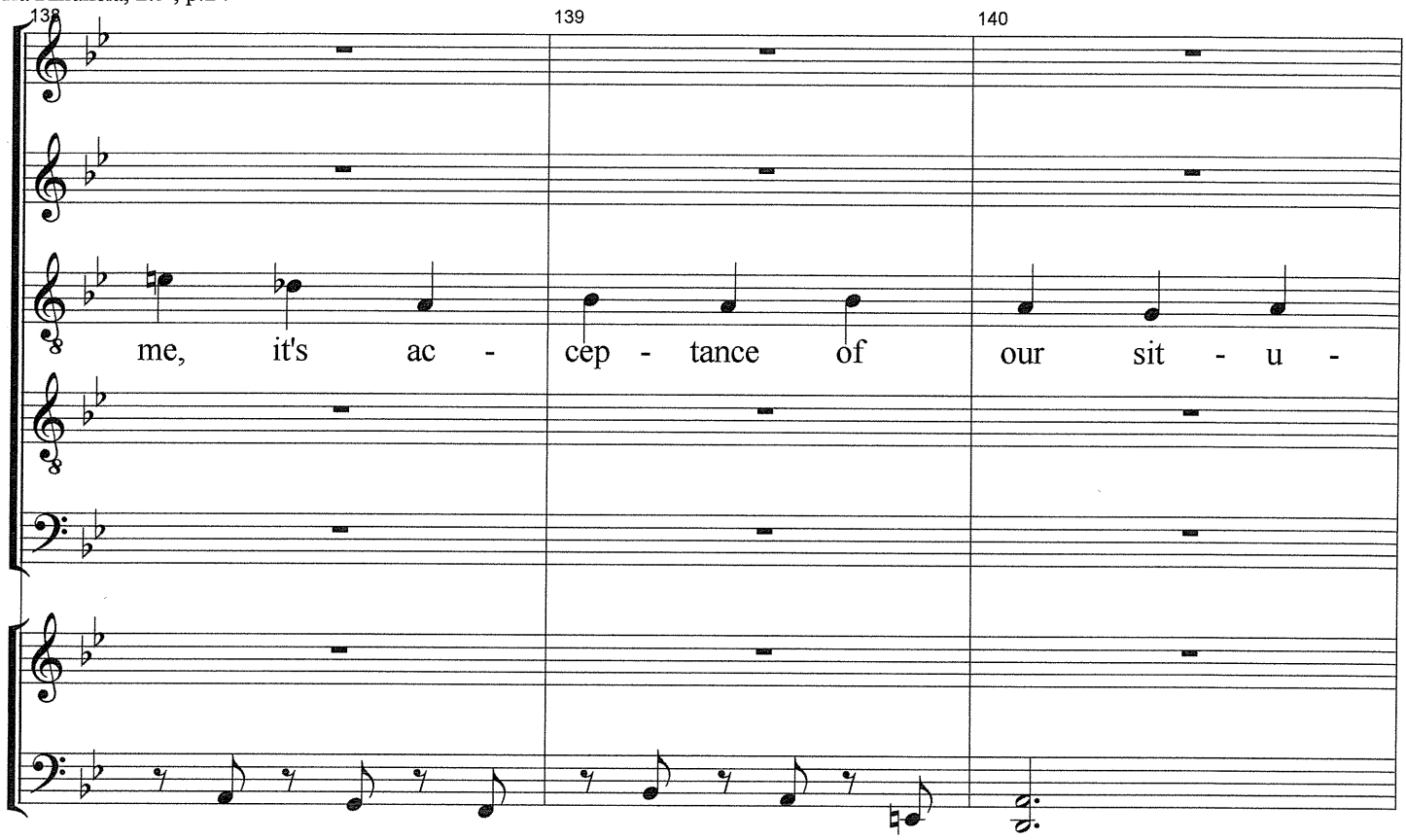

123
124
125
dan - ger - ous price For the

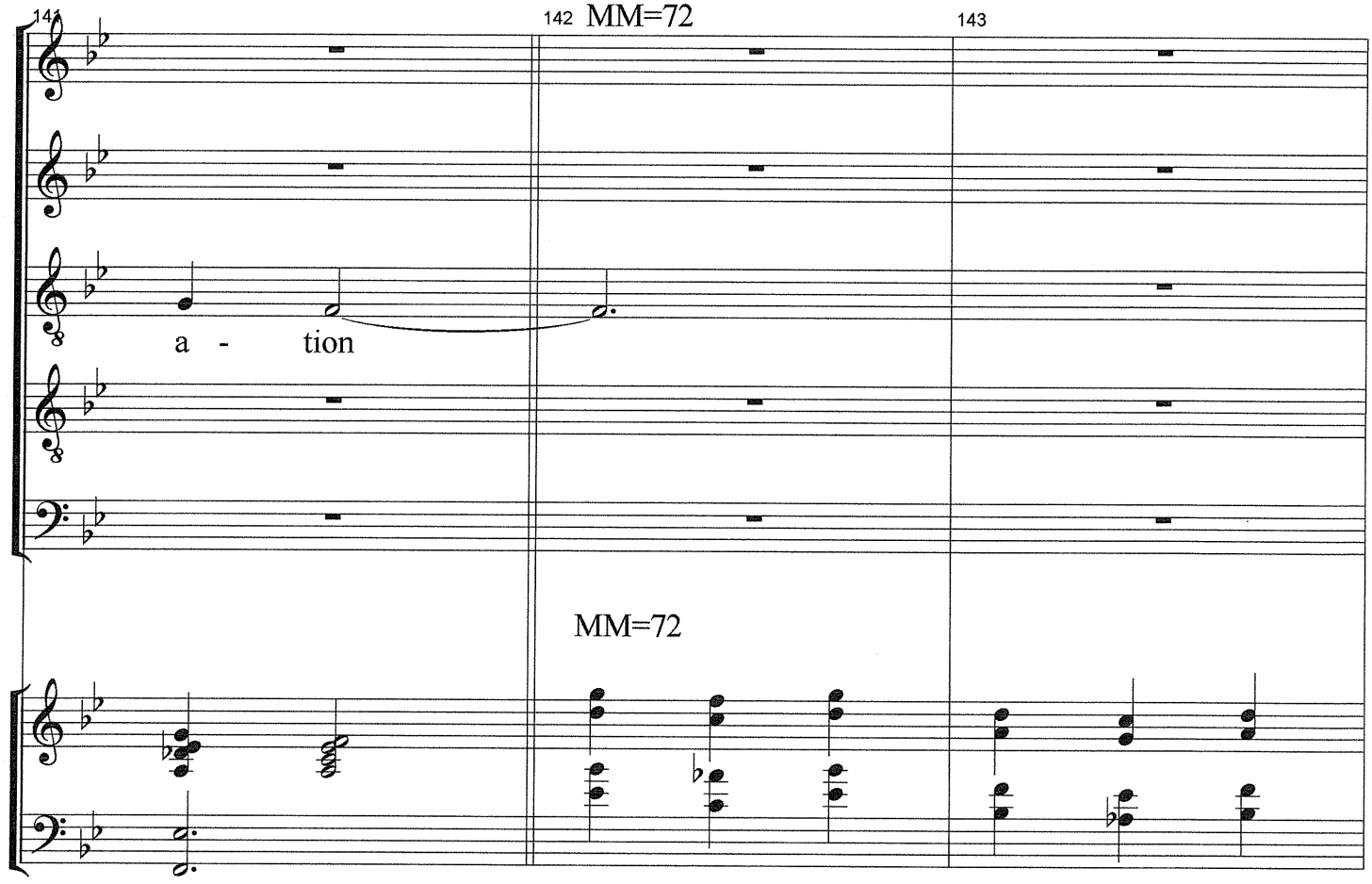

126
127
128
ar - gu - ment's slim, Too cock - eyed for a

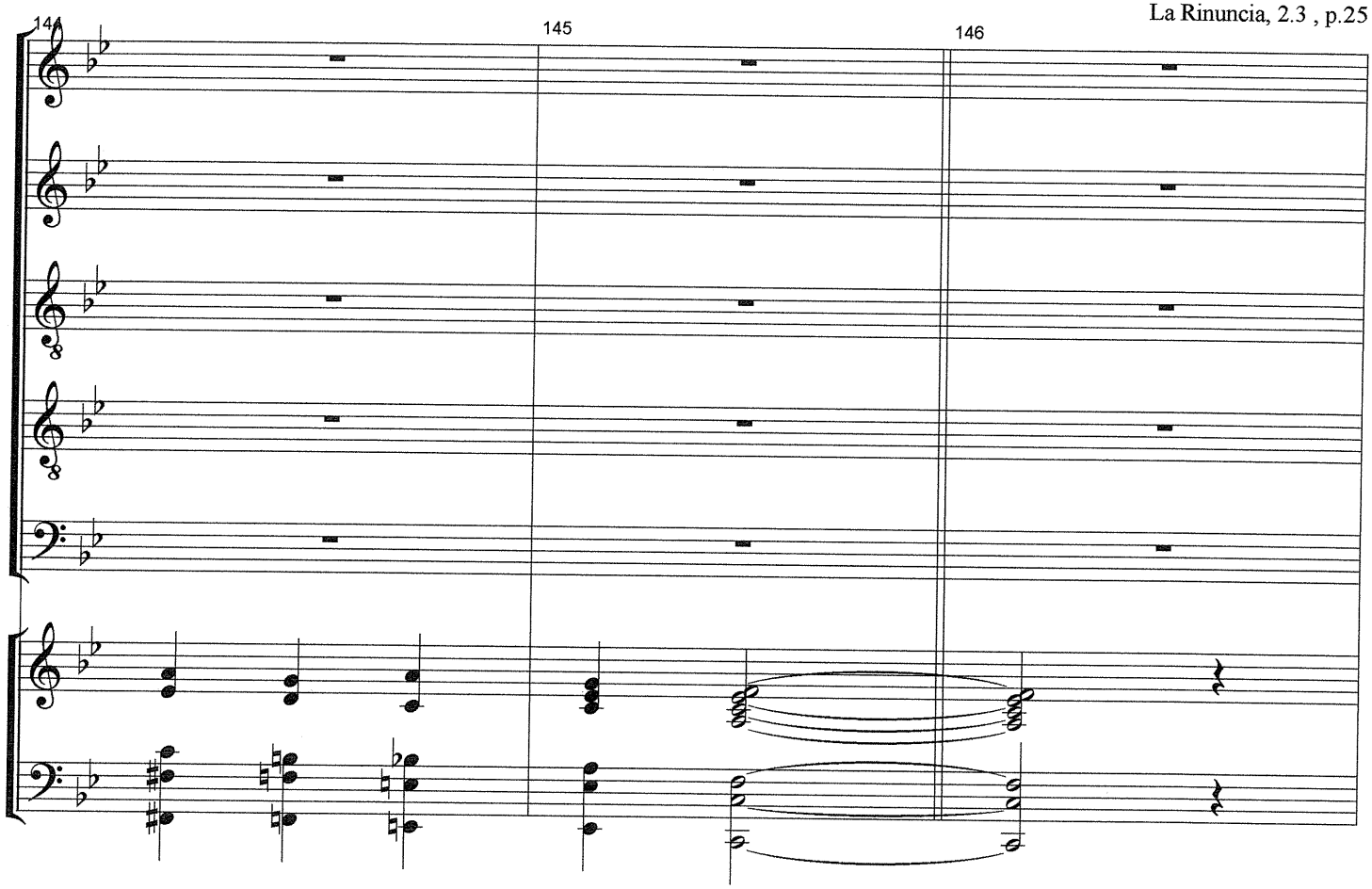

129
130
131
shim, Love is giv - ing, Not - sa - cri -

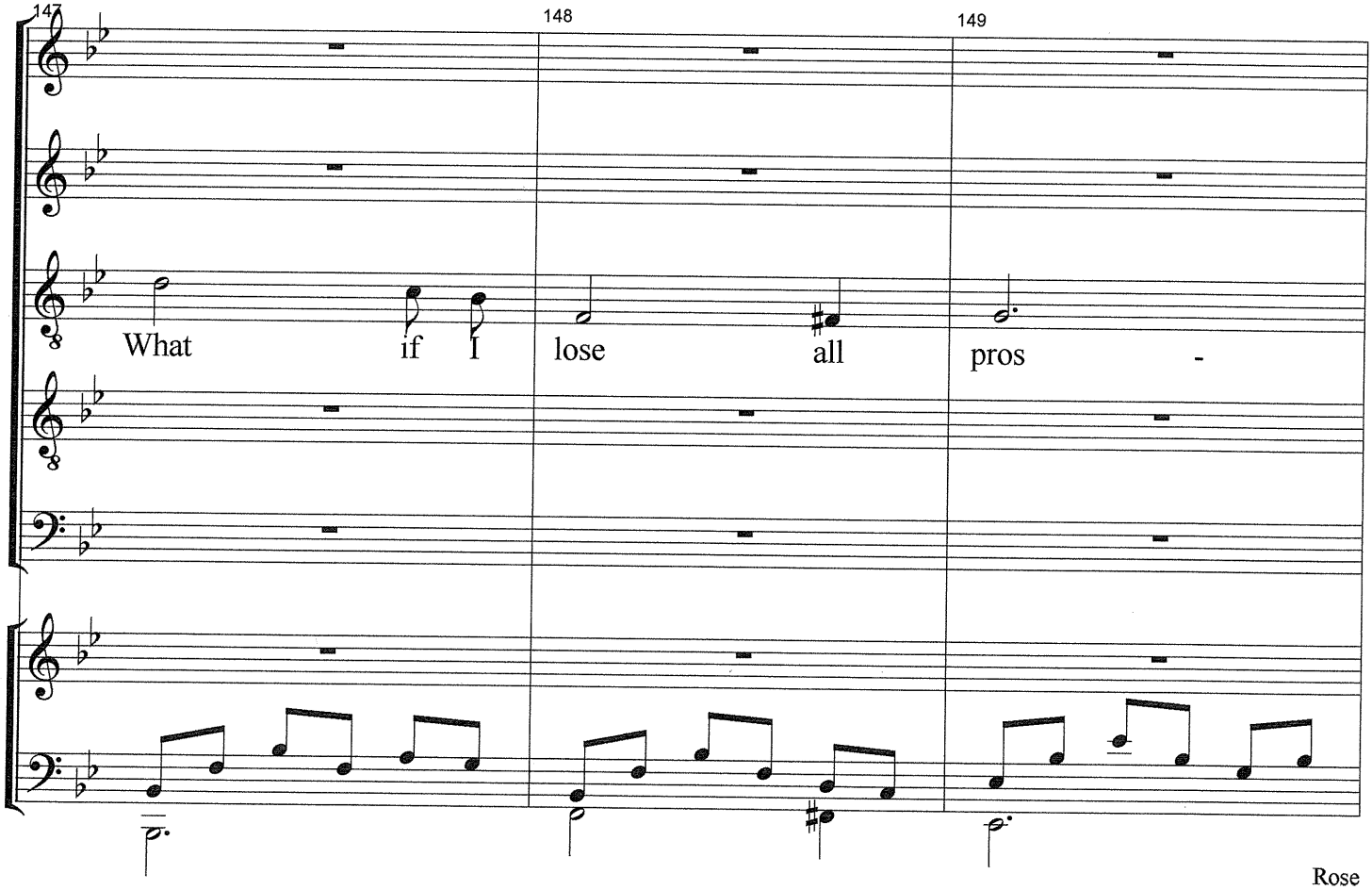

132
133
134
fice.
You
think
the
di -

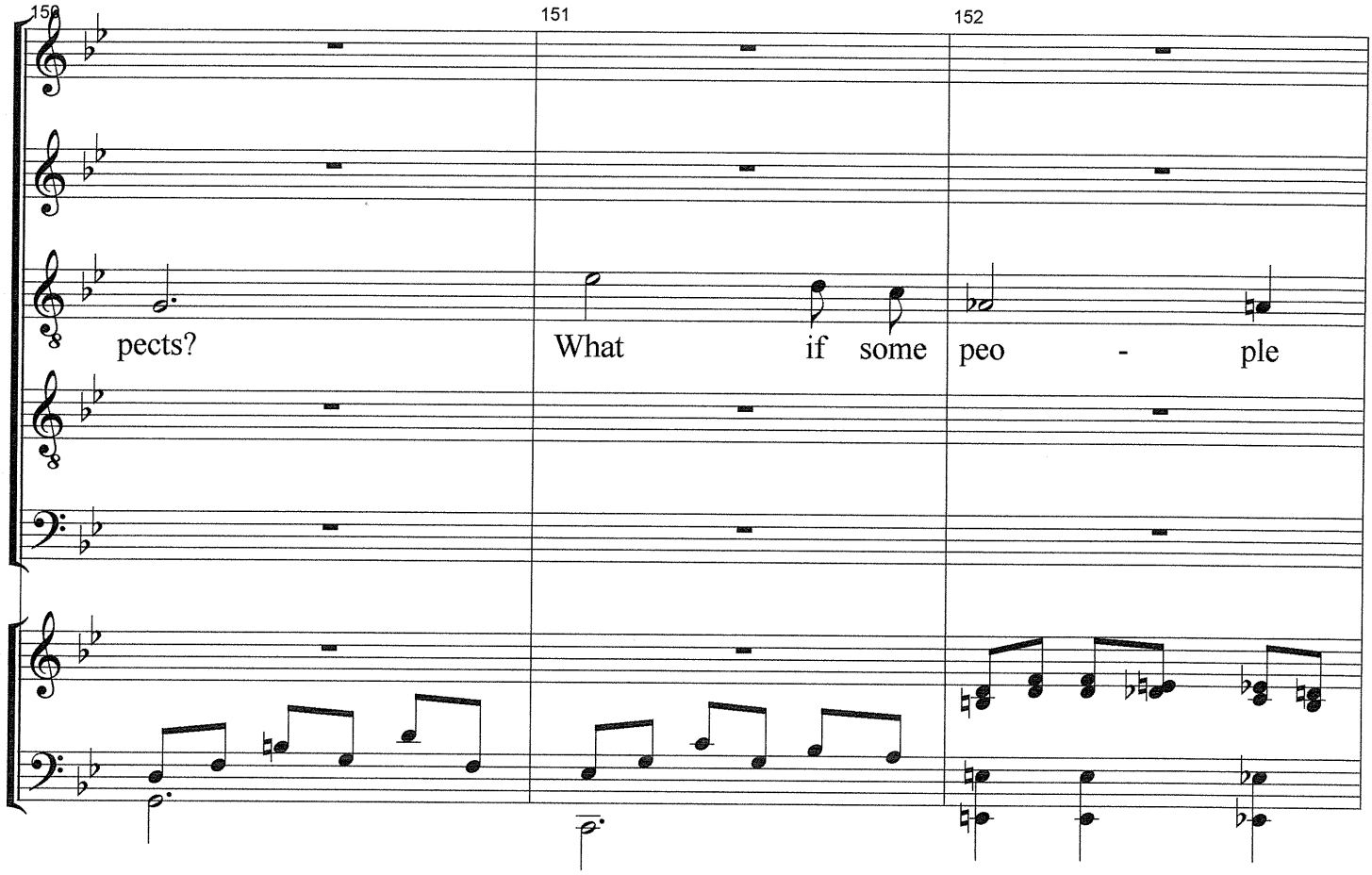

135
136
137
vine
path
is
re - nun - ci -
a - tion,
But
for

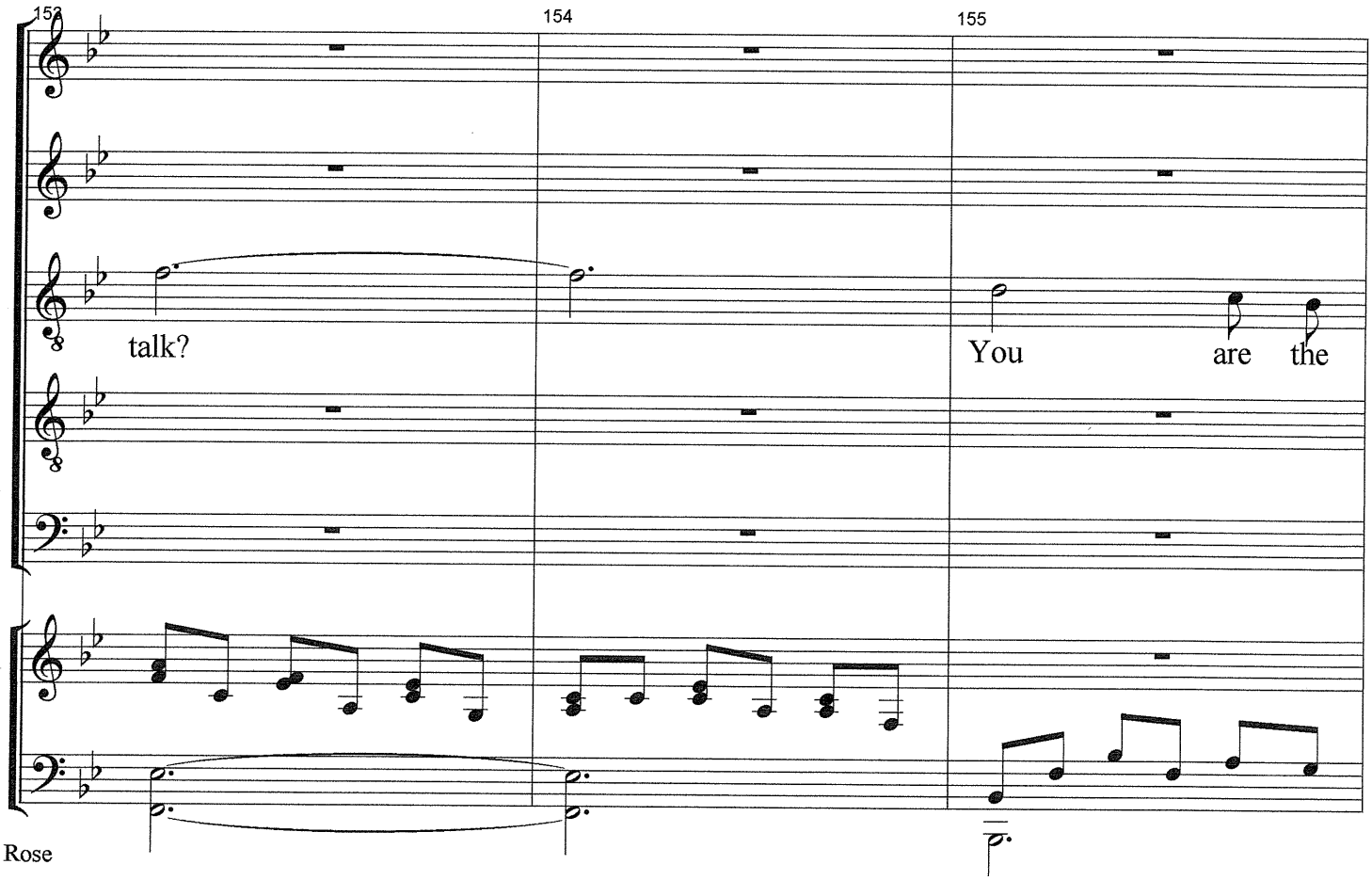

138
139
140
me, it's ac - cep - tance of our sit - u -

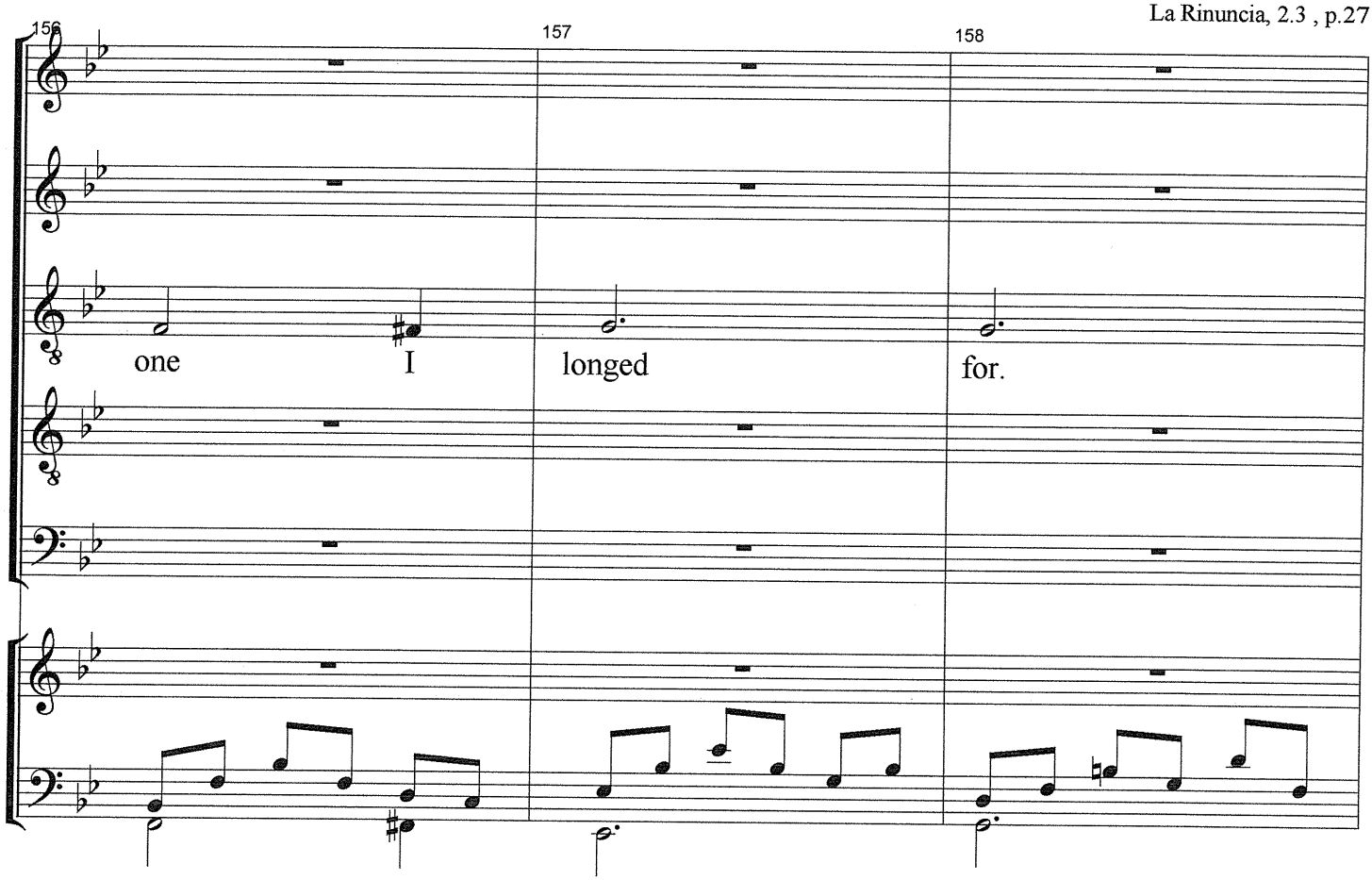

141
142 MM=72
143
a - tion
MM=72

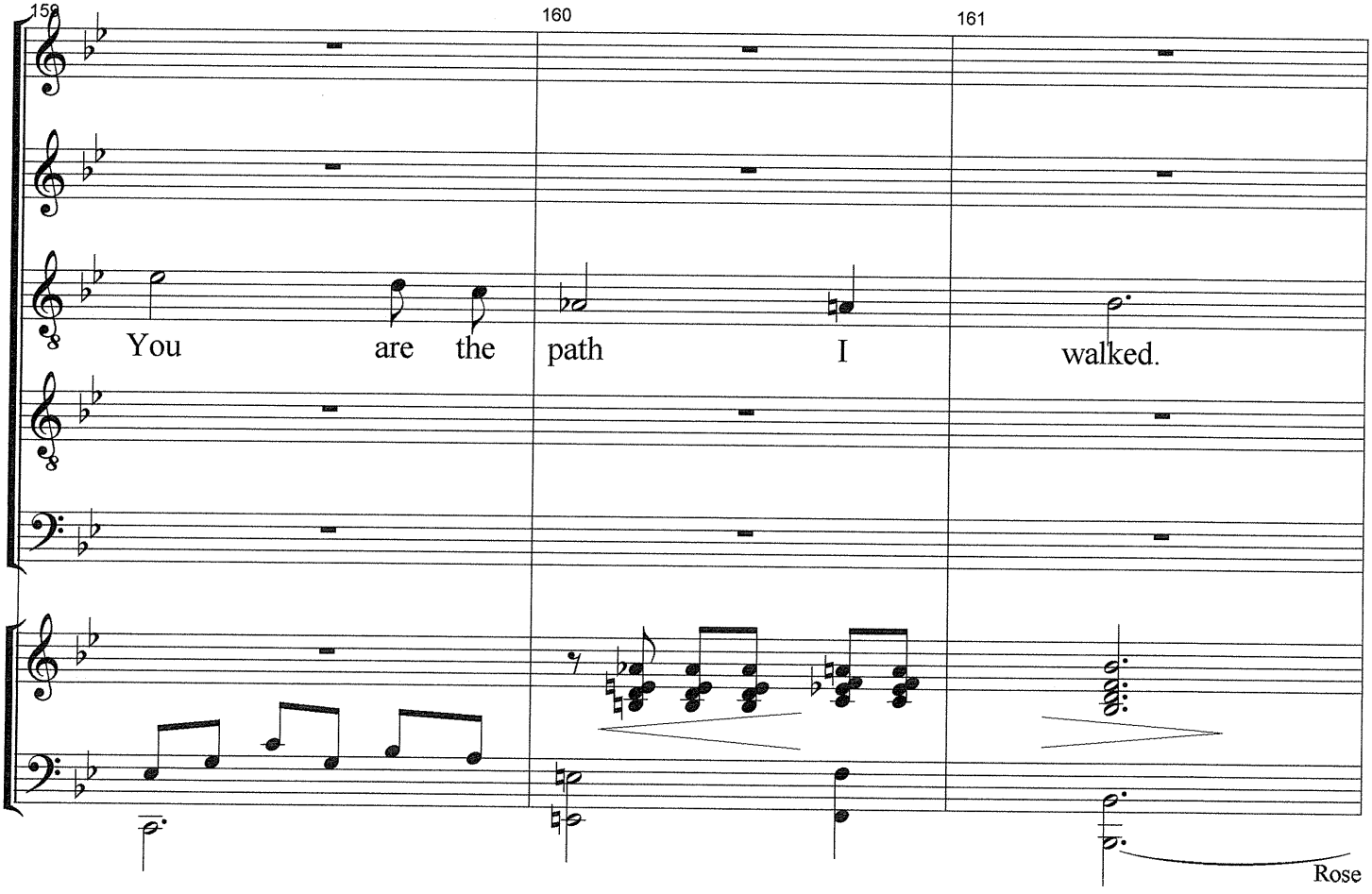

144
145
146

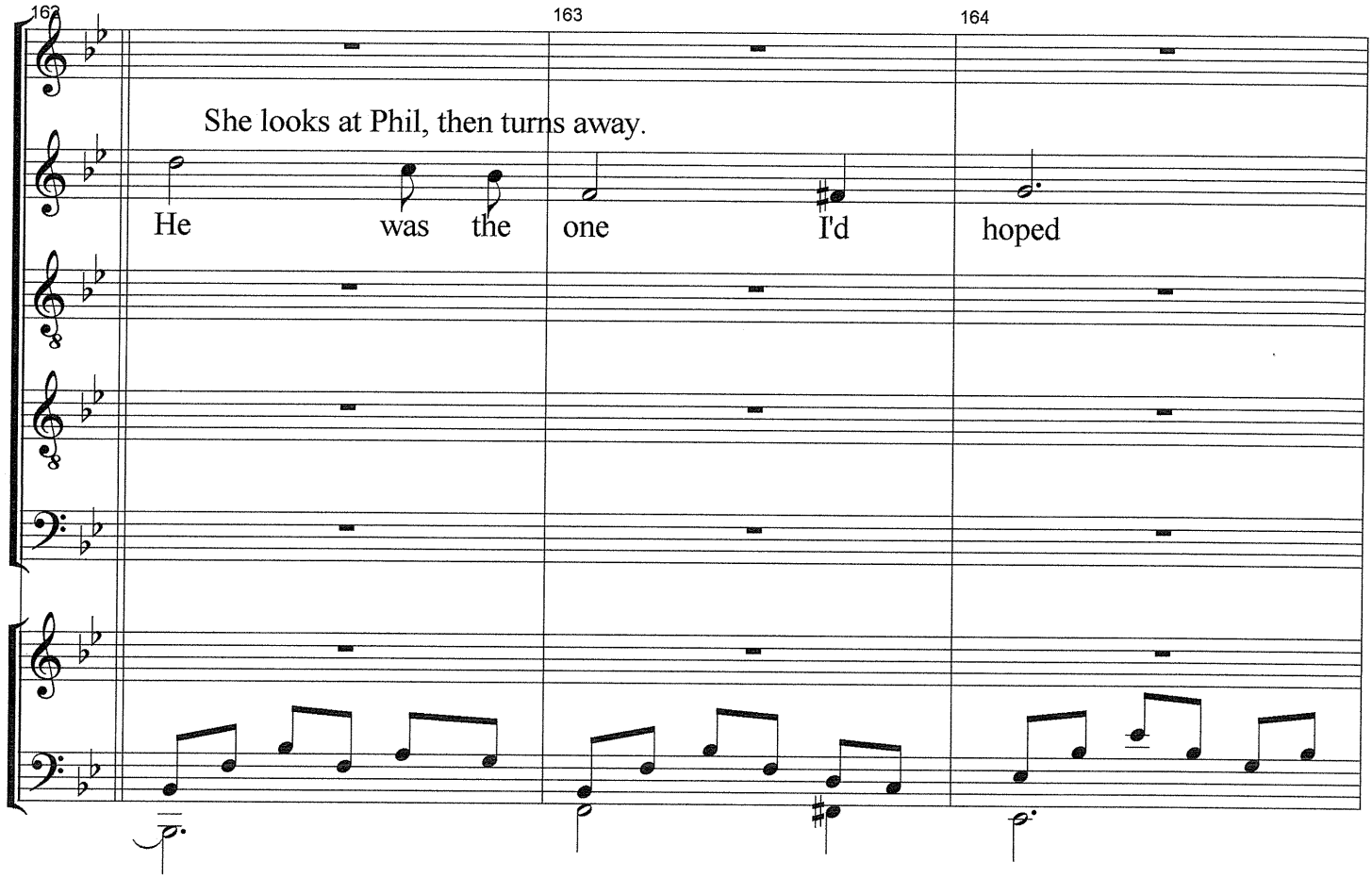

147
148
149
What
if
I
lose
all
pros
-

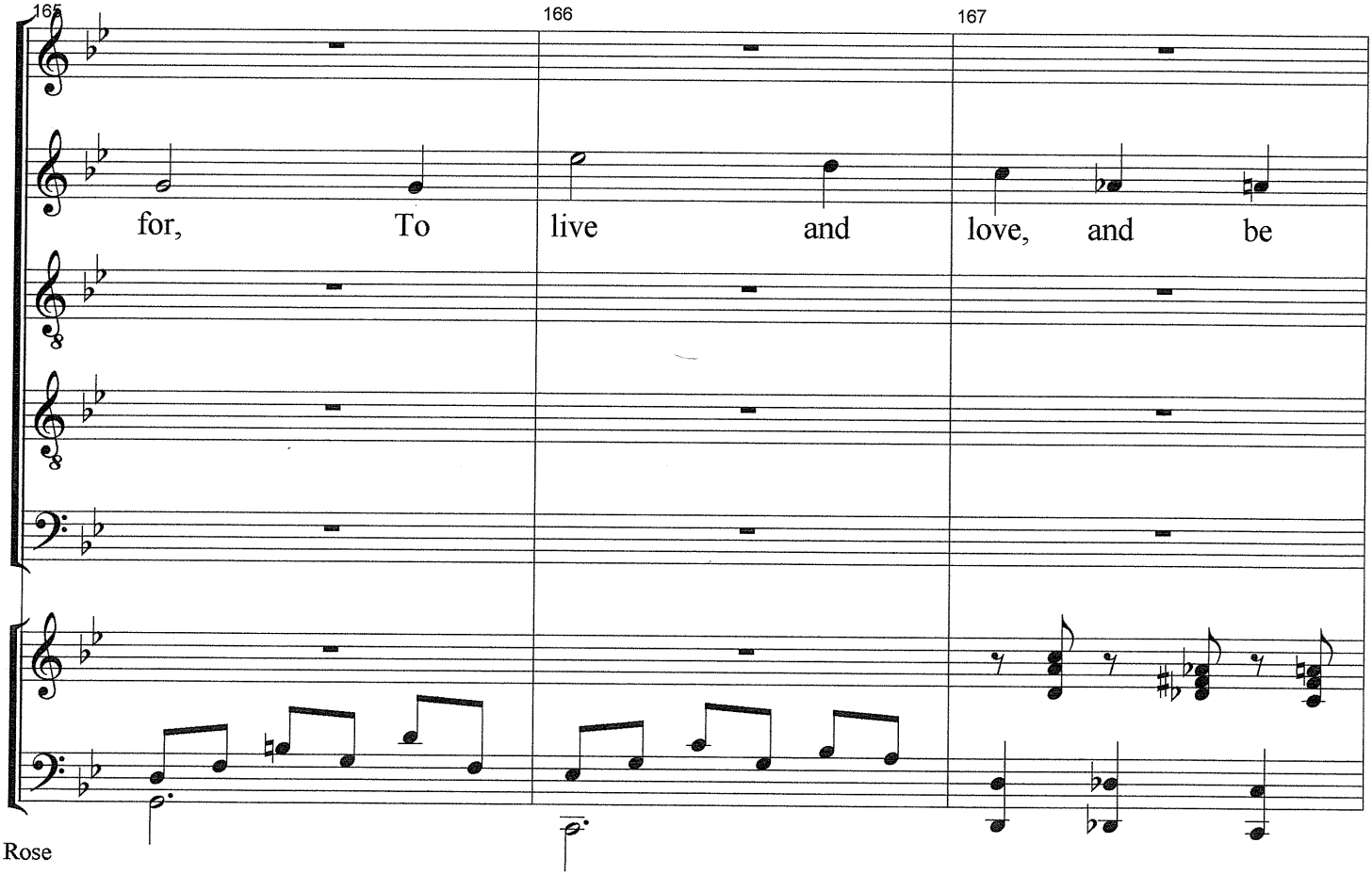

150
151
152
pects?
What if some peo - ple

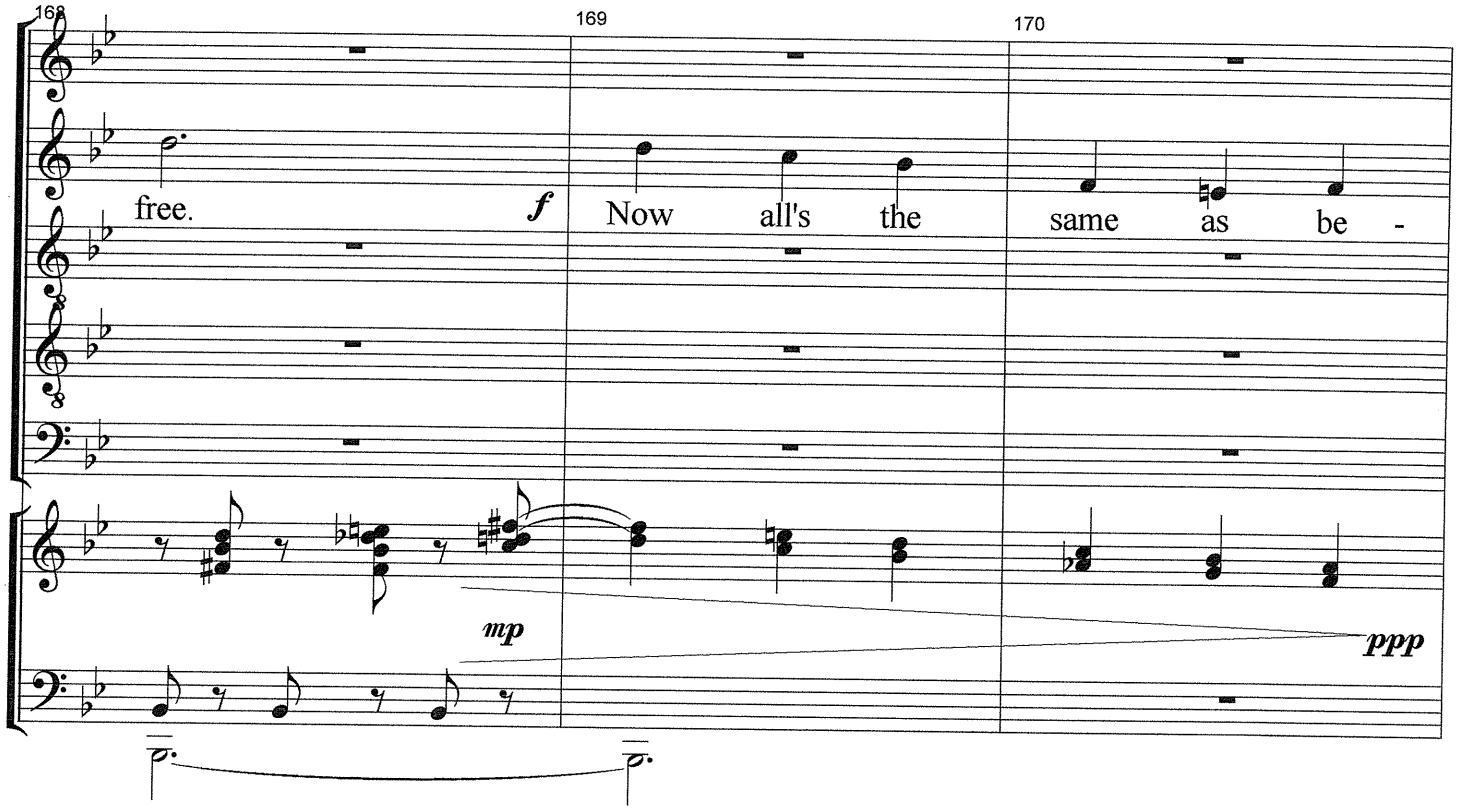

153
154
155
talk?
You are the

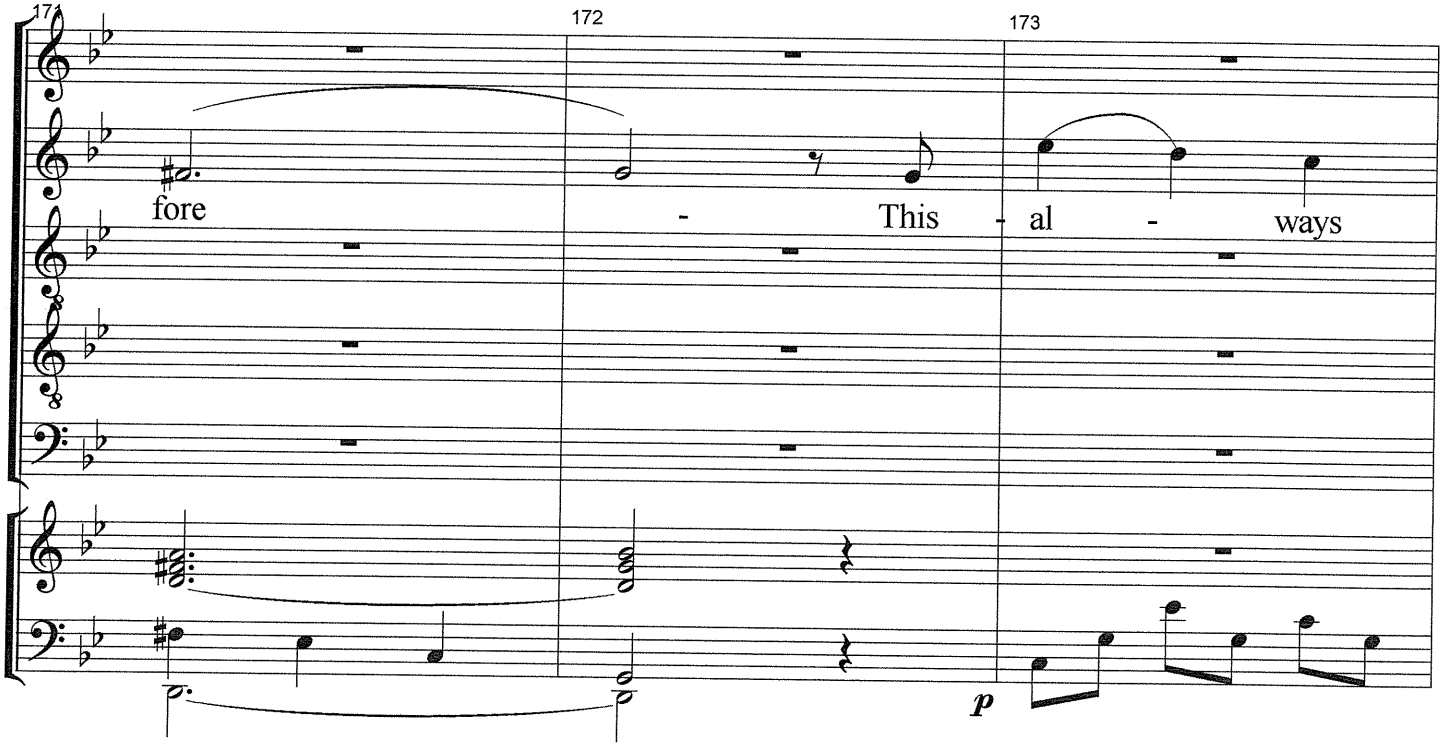

156
157
158
one
I
longed
for.

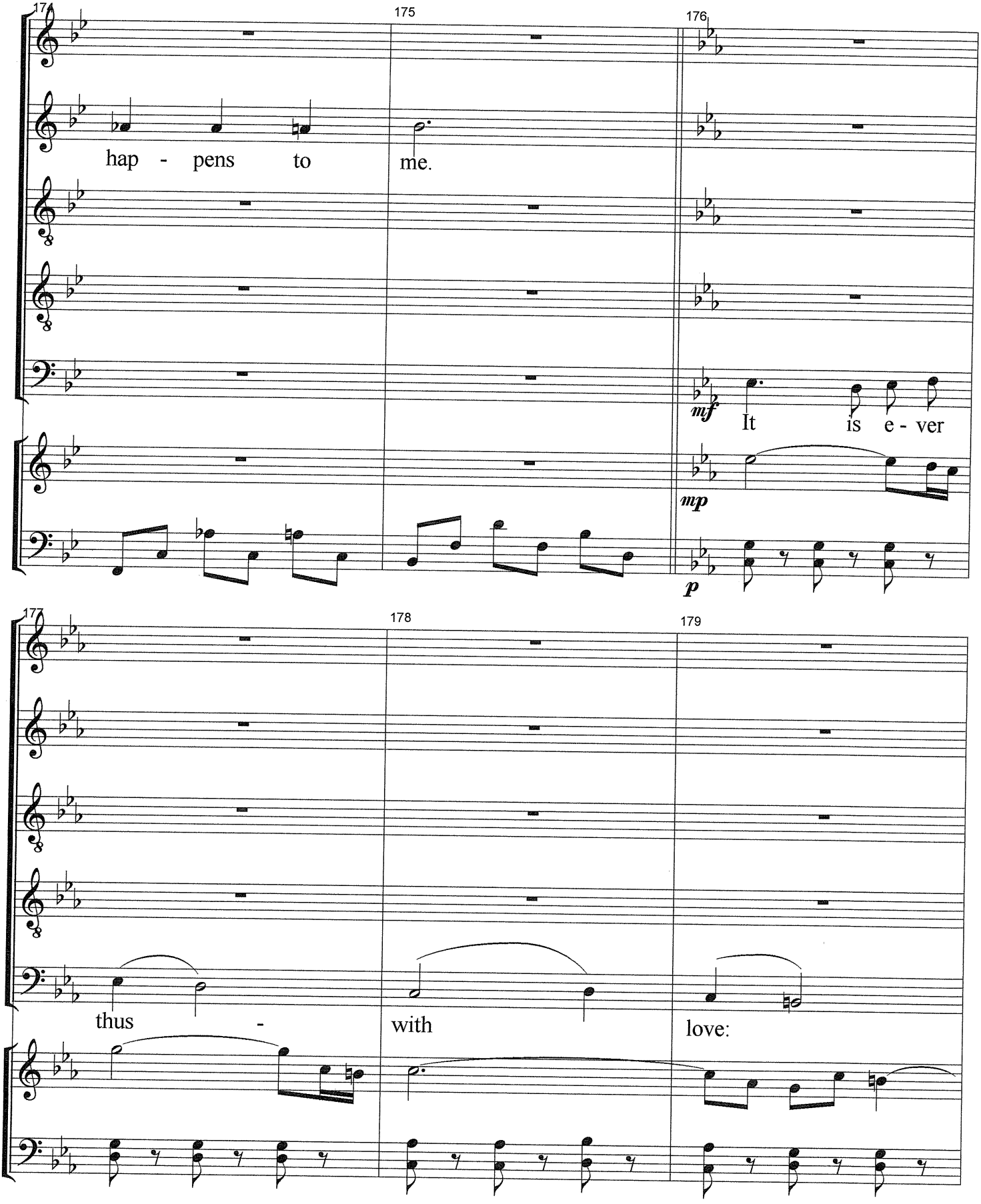

159
160
161
You
are
the
path
I
walked.
Rose

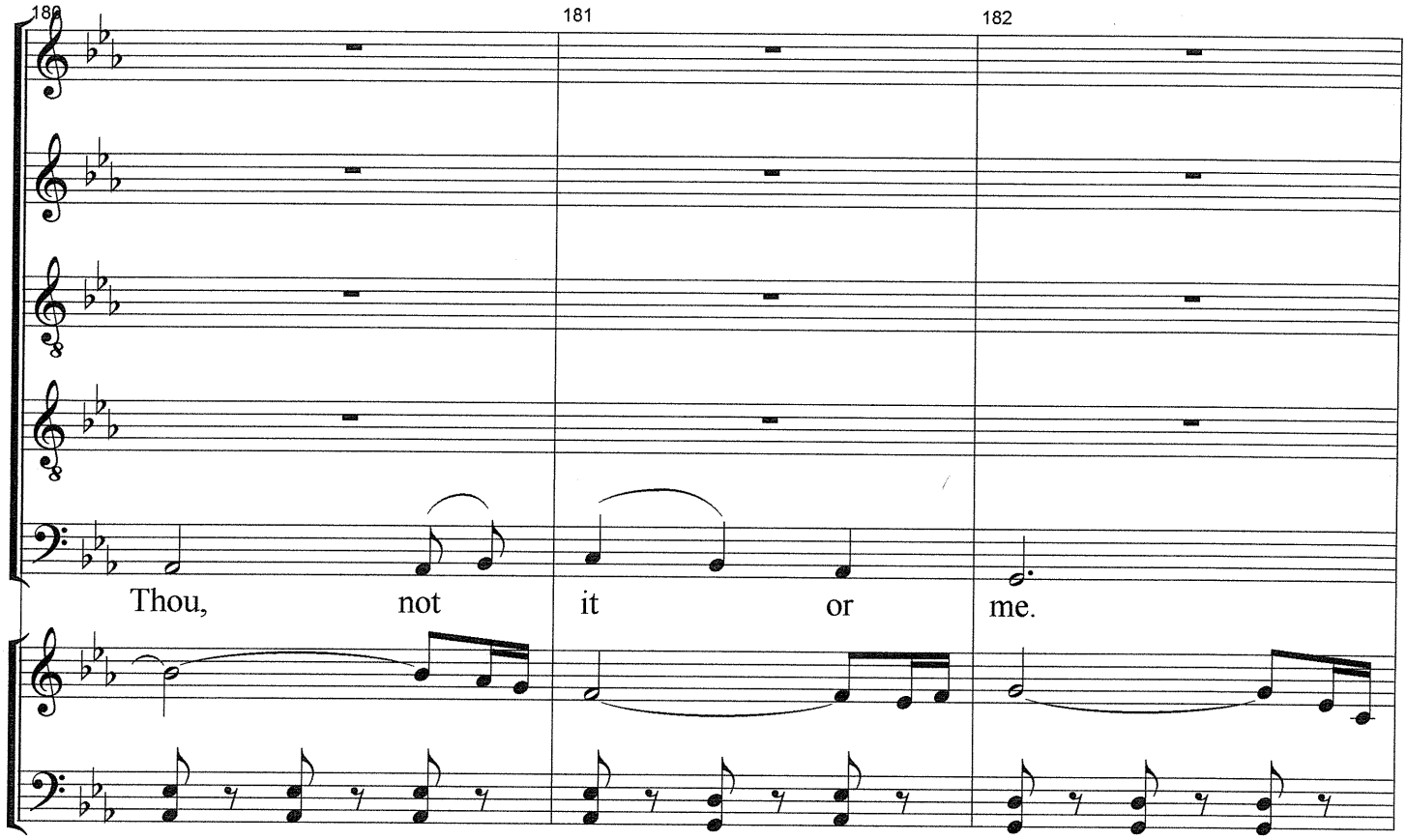

162
163
164
She looks at Phil, then turns away.
He was the one I'd hoped

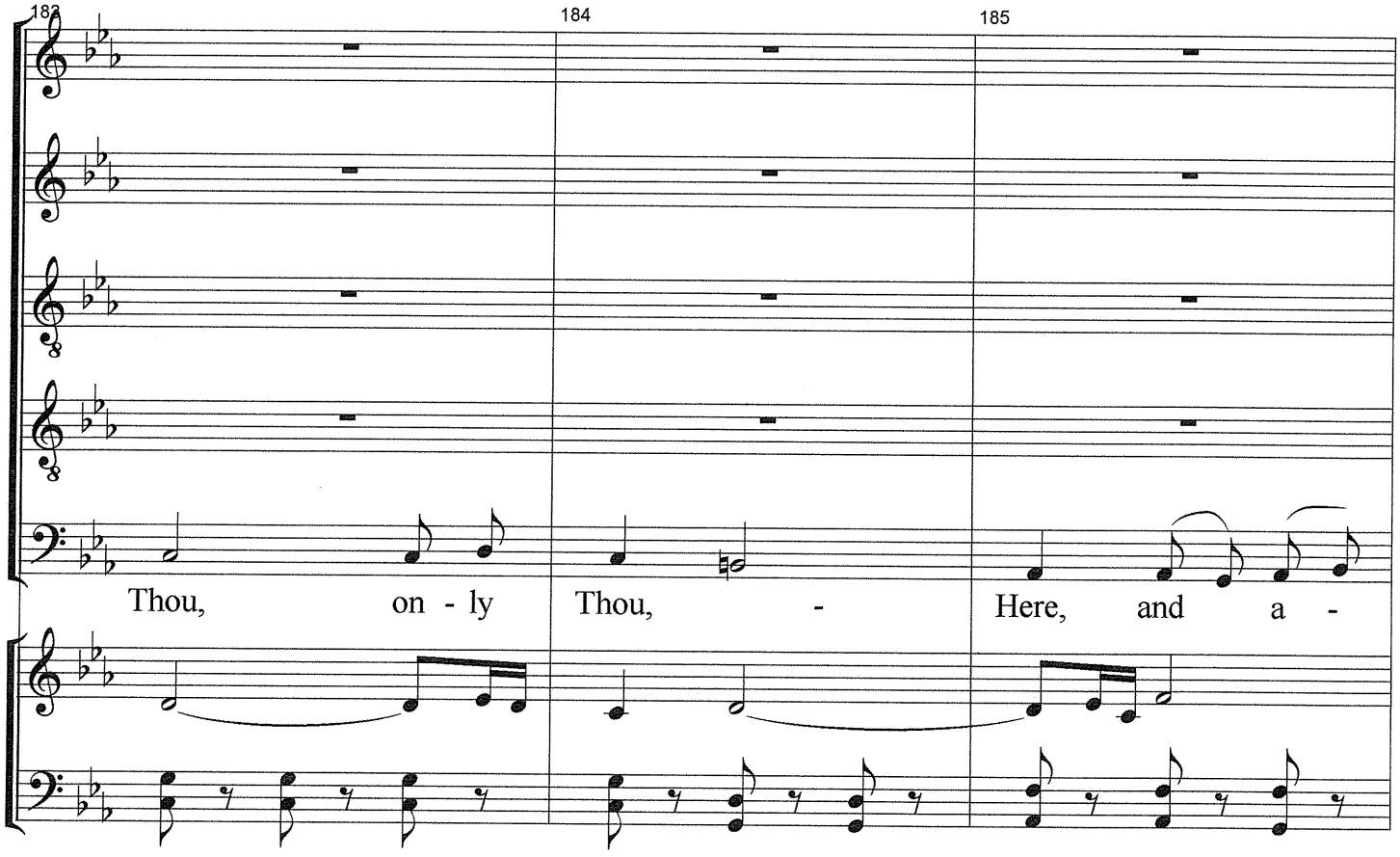

165
166
167
for, To live and love, and be

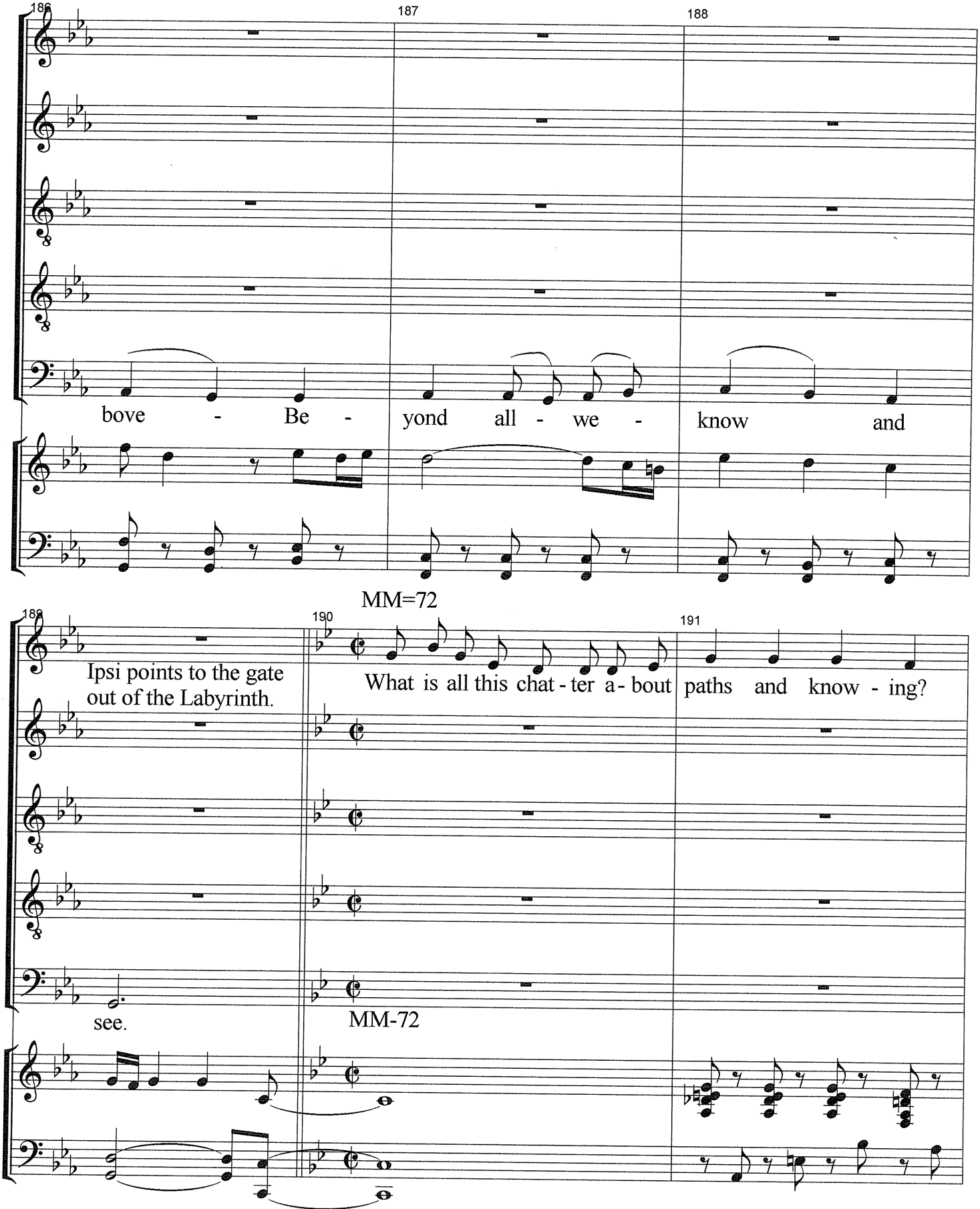

168
169
170
free.
f
Now all's the same as be -
mp
ppp

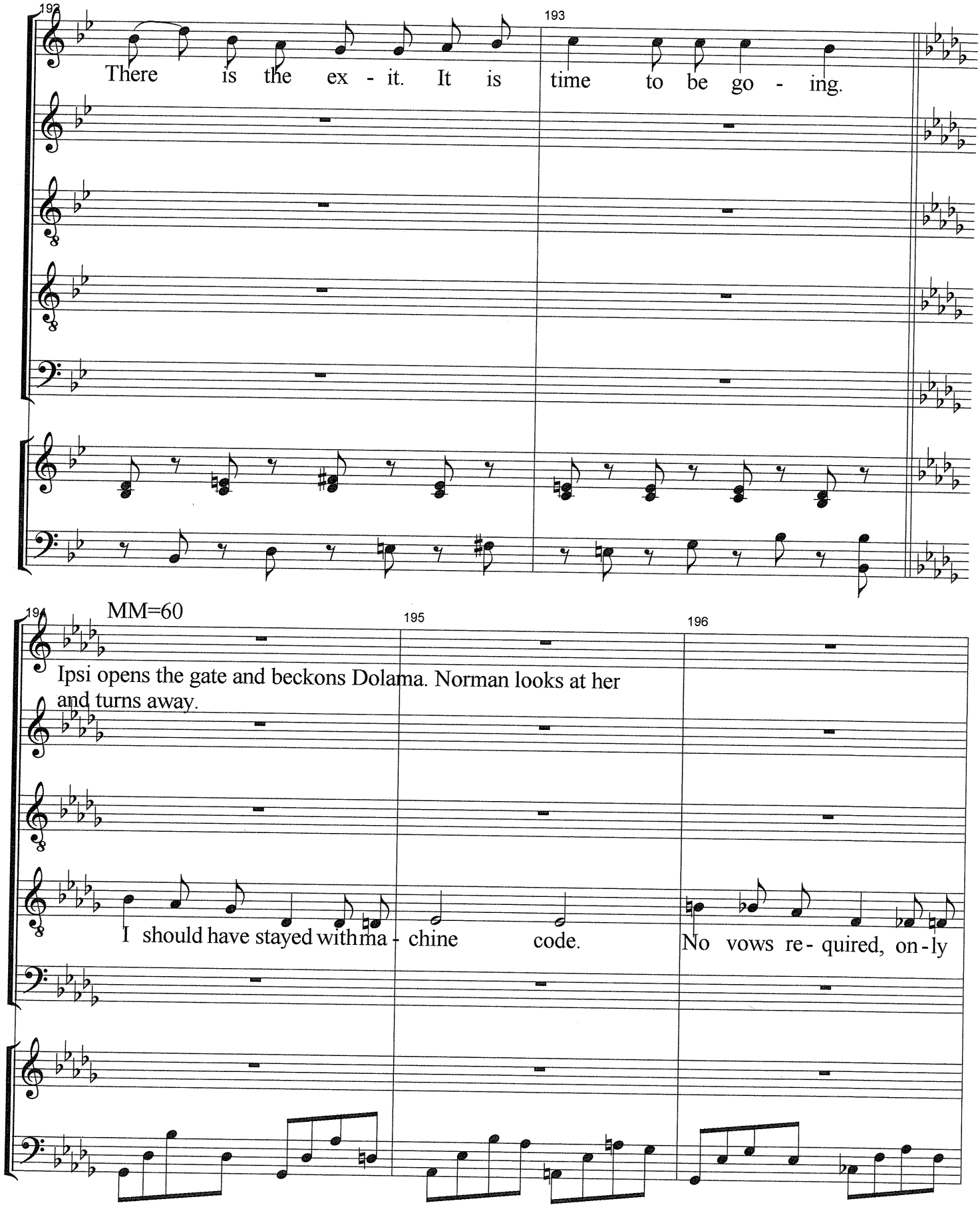

171
172
173
fore
- This - al - ways
p

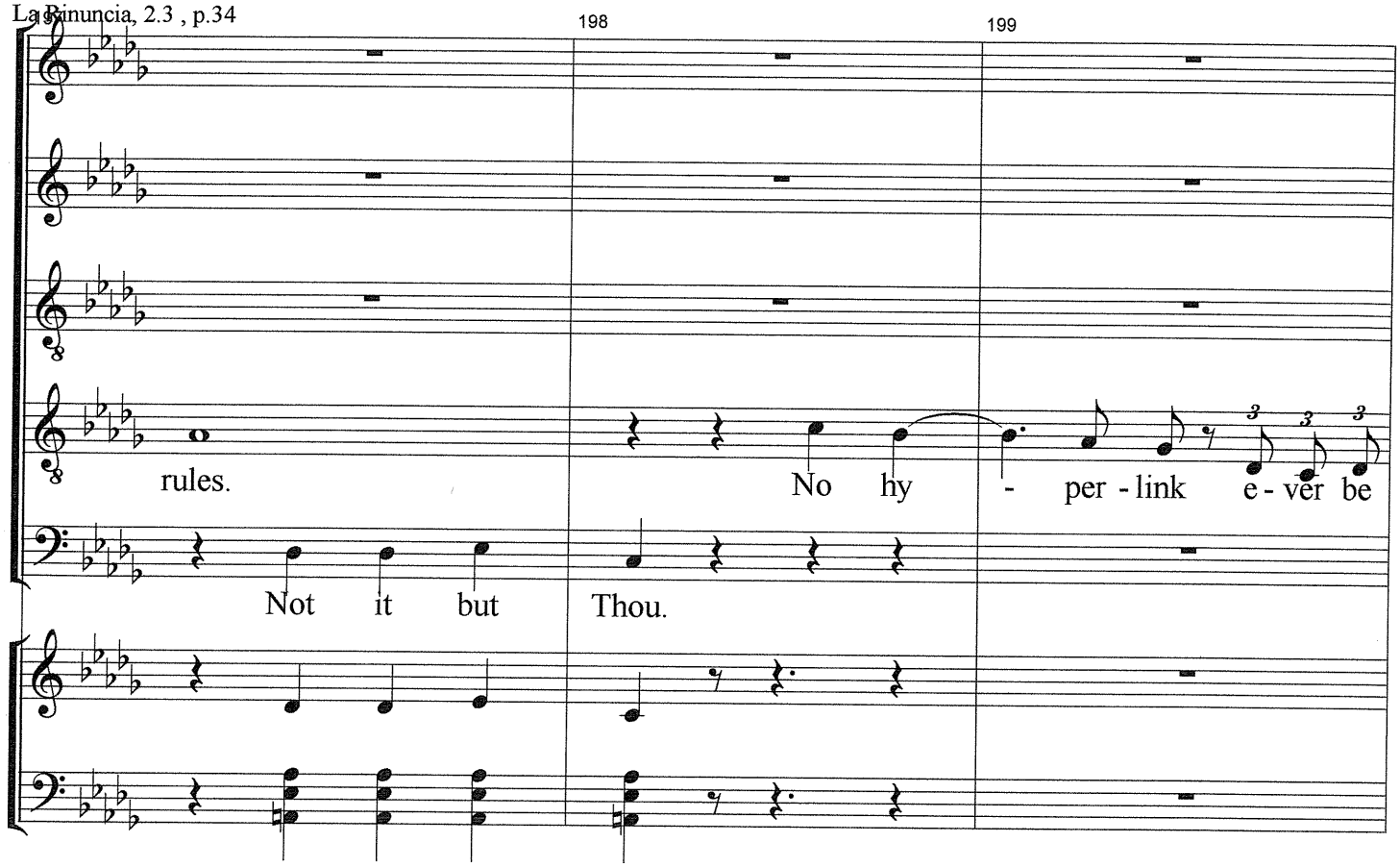

174
175
176
hap - pens to me.
mf
It is e - ver
mp
p
177
178
179
thus -
with
love:

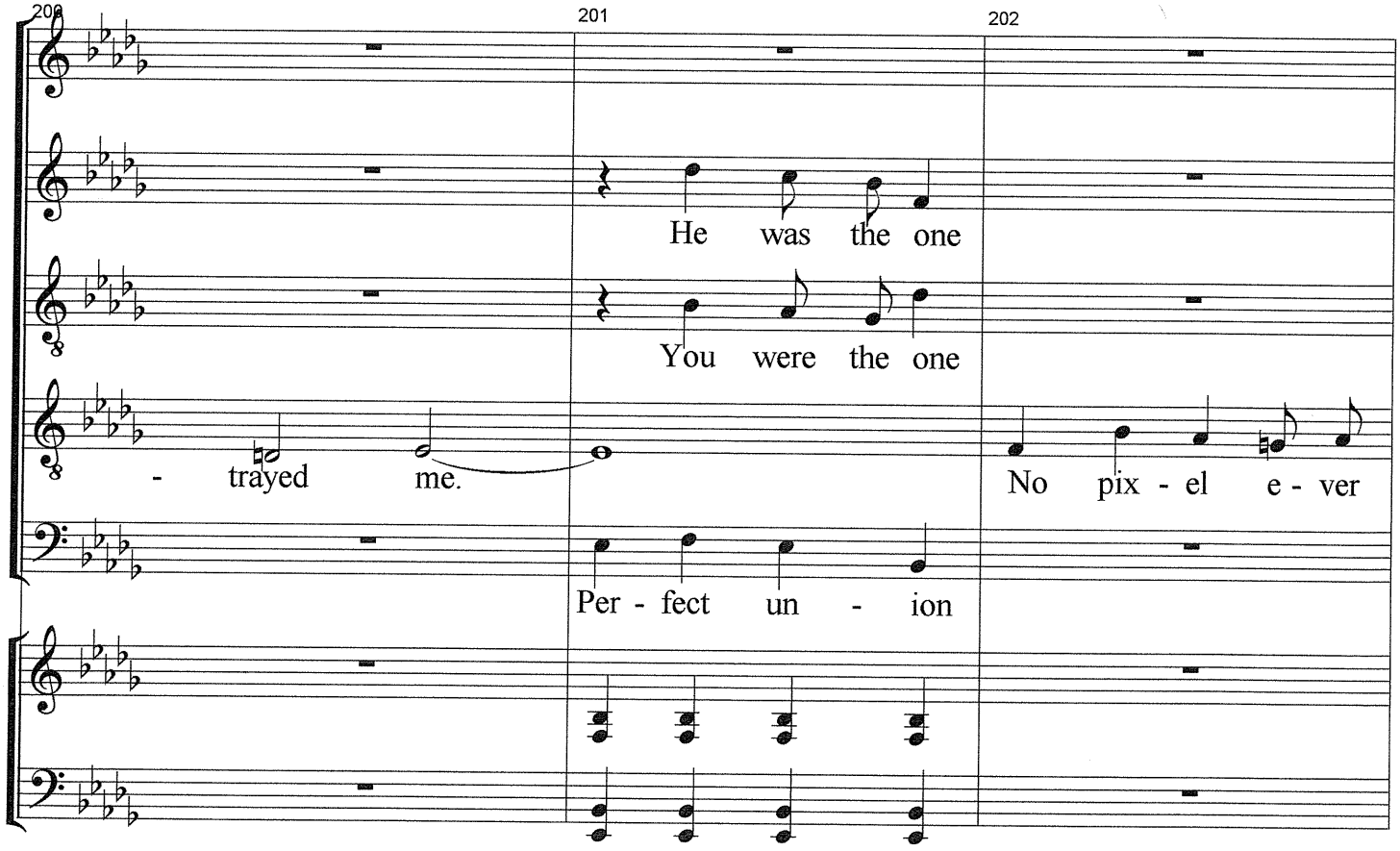

180
181
182
Thou, not it or me.

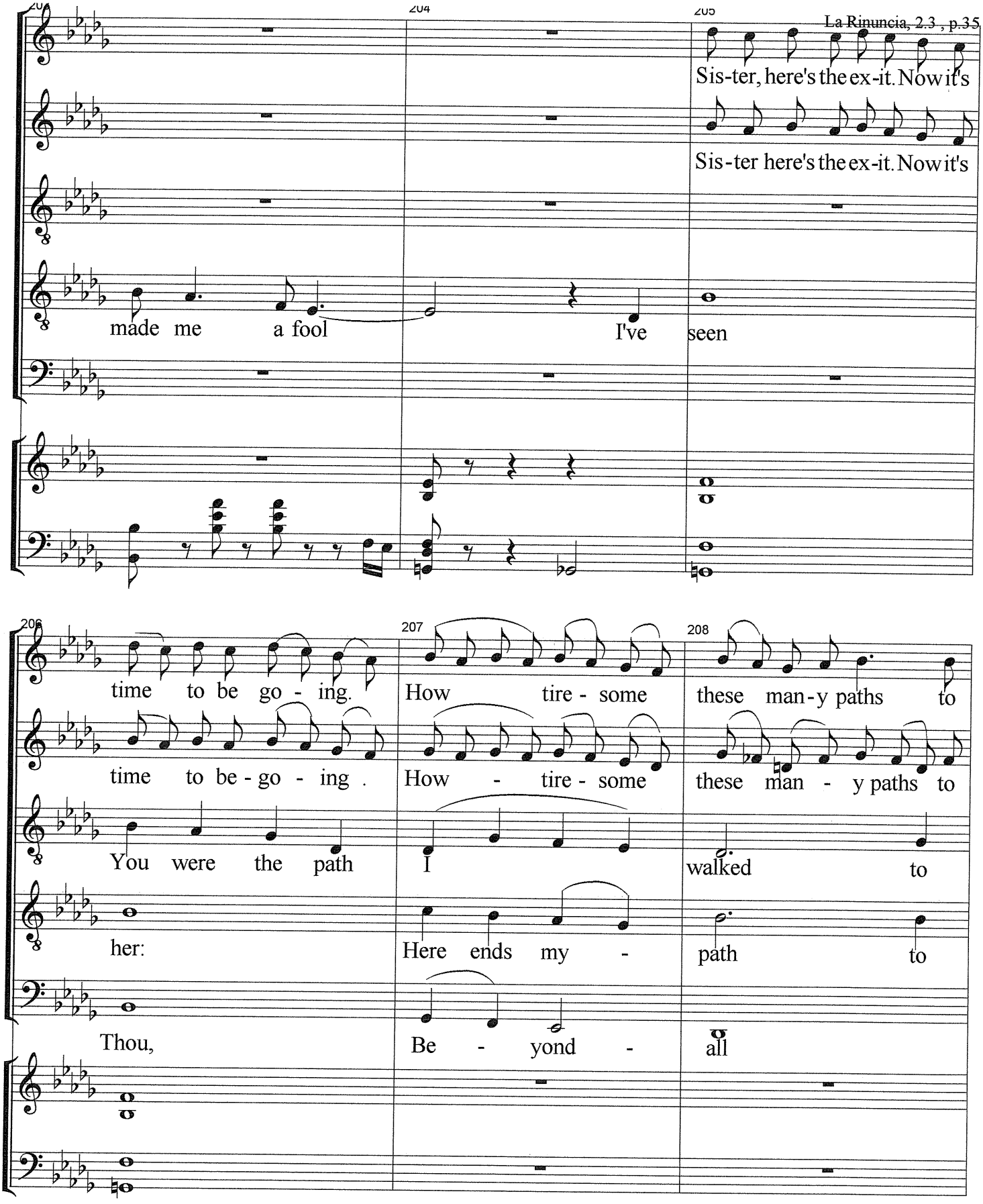

183
184
185
Thou, on - ly Thou, - Here, and a -

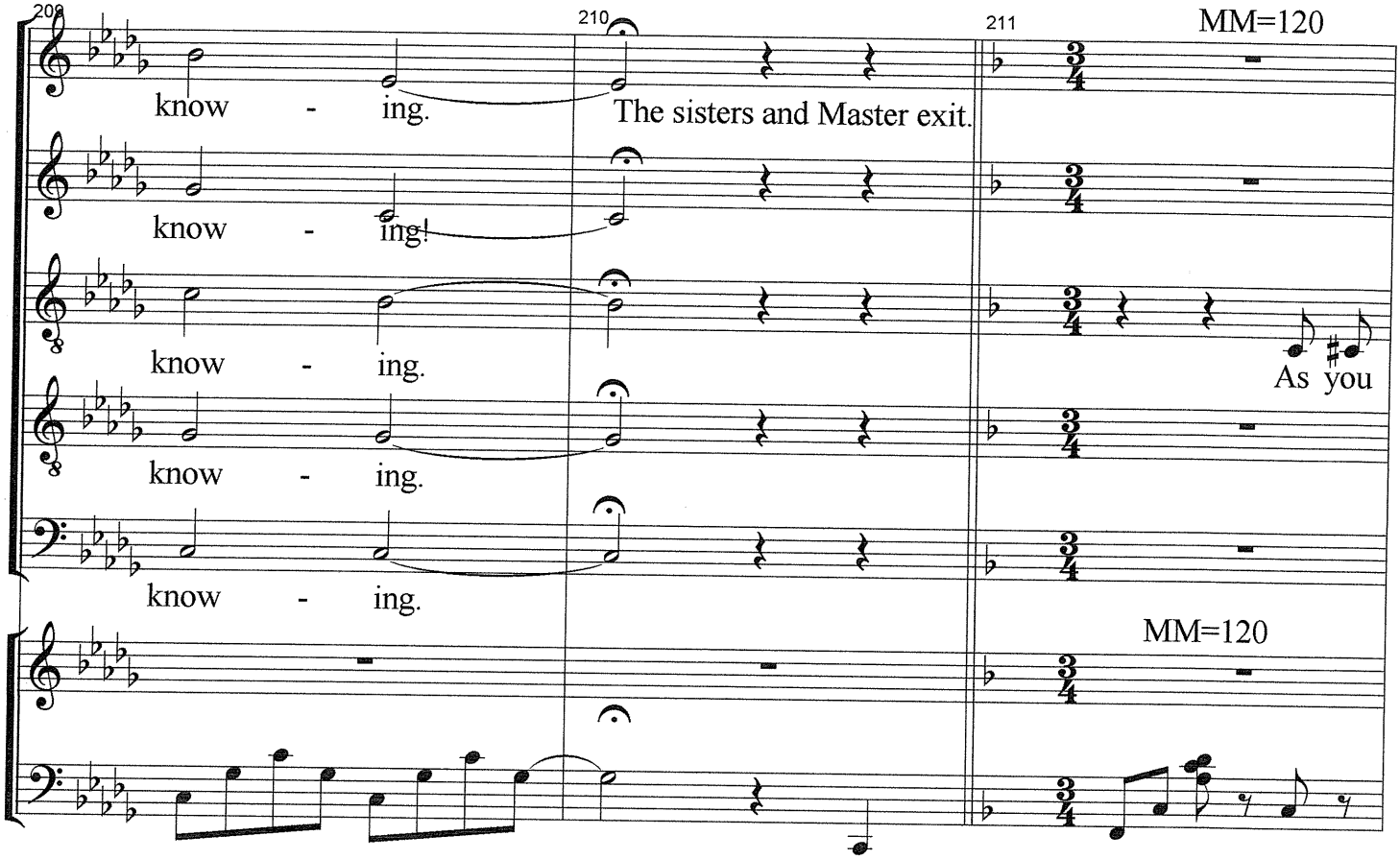

186
187
188
bove - Be - yond all - we - know and
MM=72
189
190
191
Ipsi points to the gate out of the Labyrinth.
What is all this chat - ter a - bout paths and know - ing?
see.
MM-72

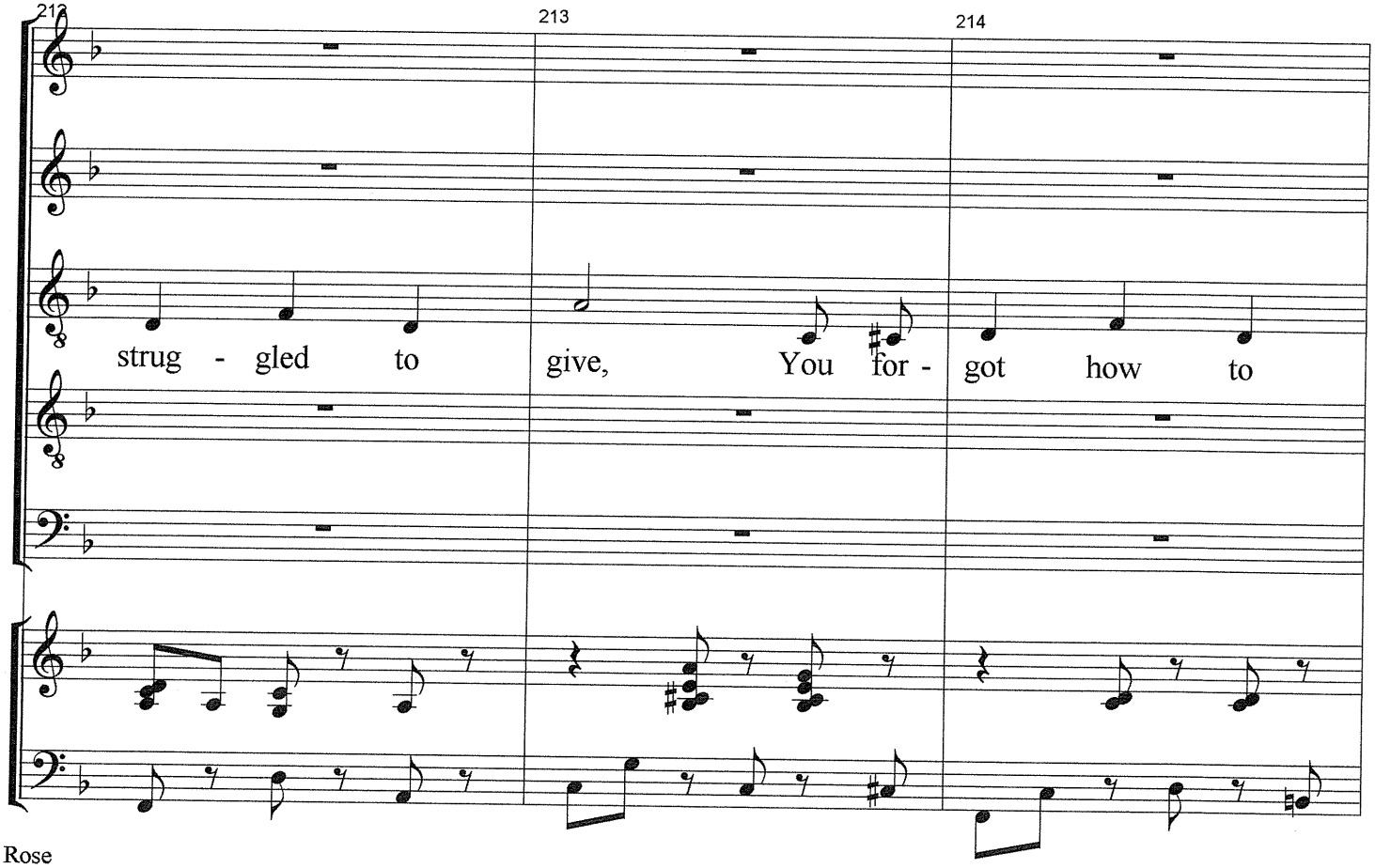

192
193
There is the ex - it. It is time to be go - ing.
194
MM=60
195
196
Ipsi opens the gate and beckons Dolama. Norman looks at her and turns away.
I should have stayed with ma - chine code. No vows re - quired, on - ly

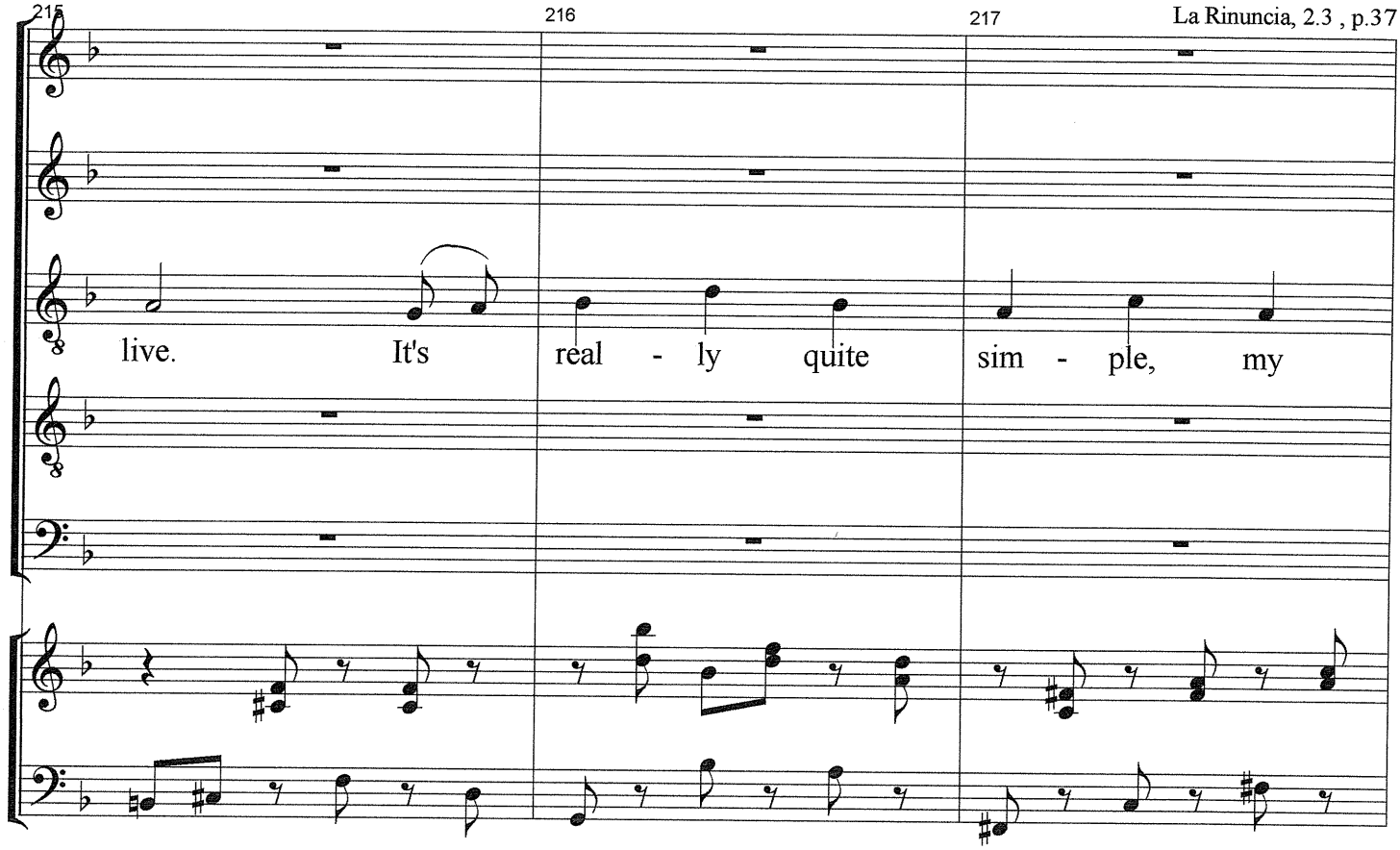

198
199
rules.
No hy - per - link e - ver be
Not it but Thou.

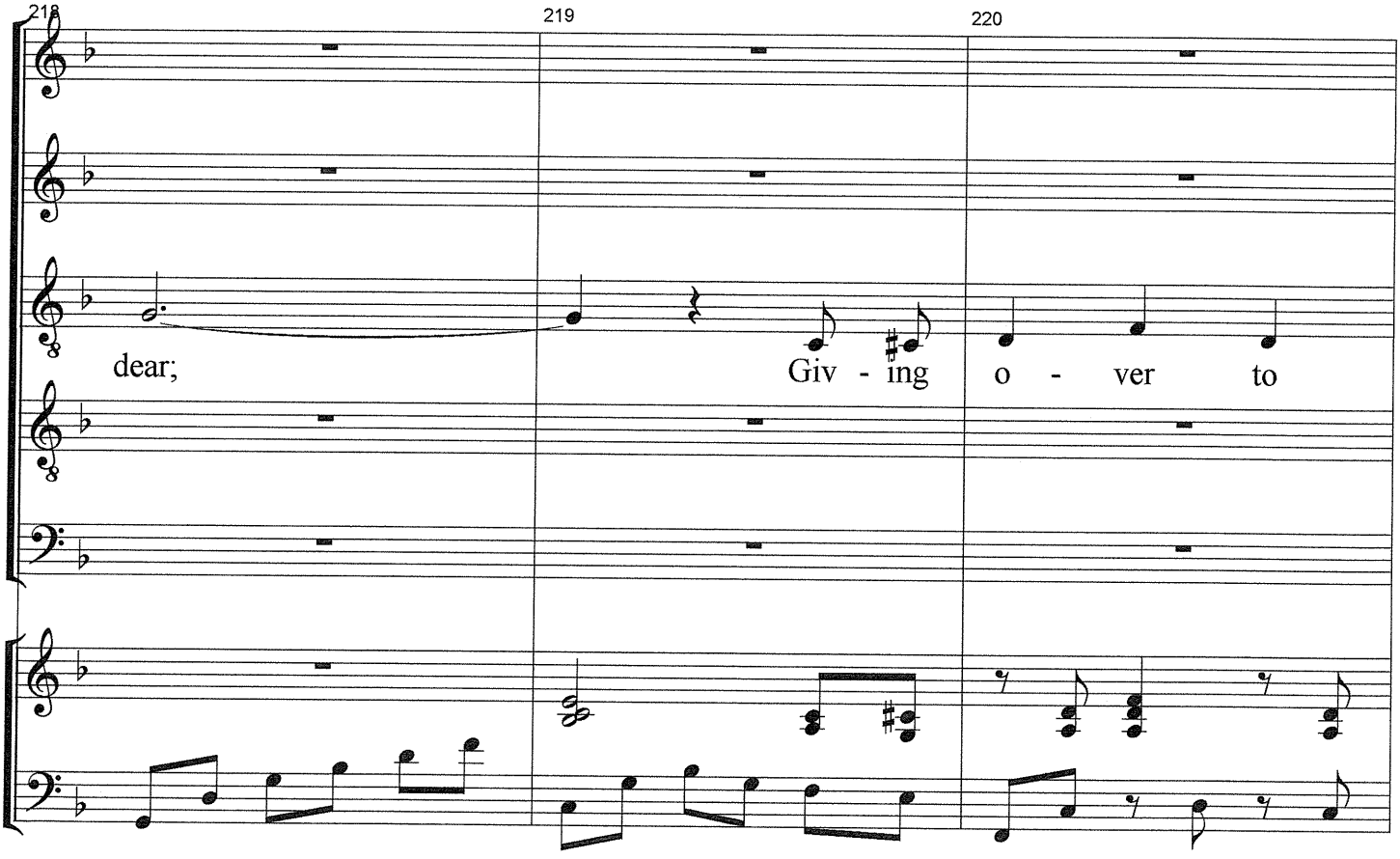

200
201
202
He was the one
You were the one
- trayed me.
No pix - el e - ver
Per - fect un - ion

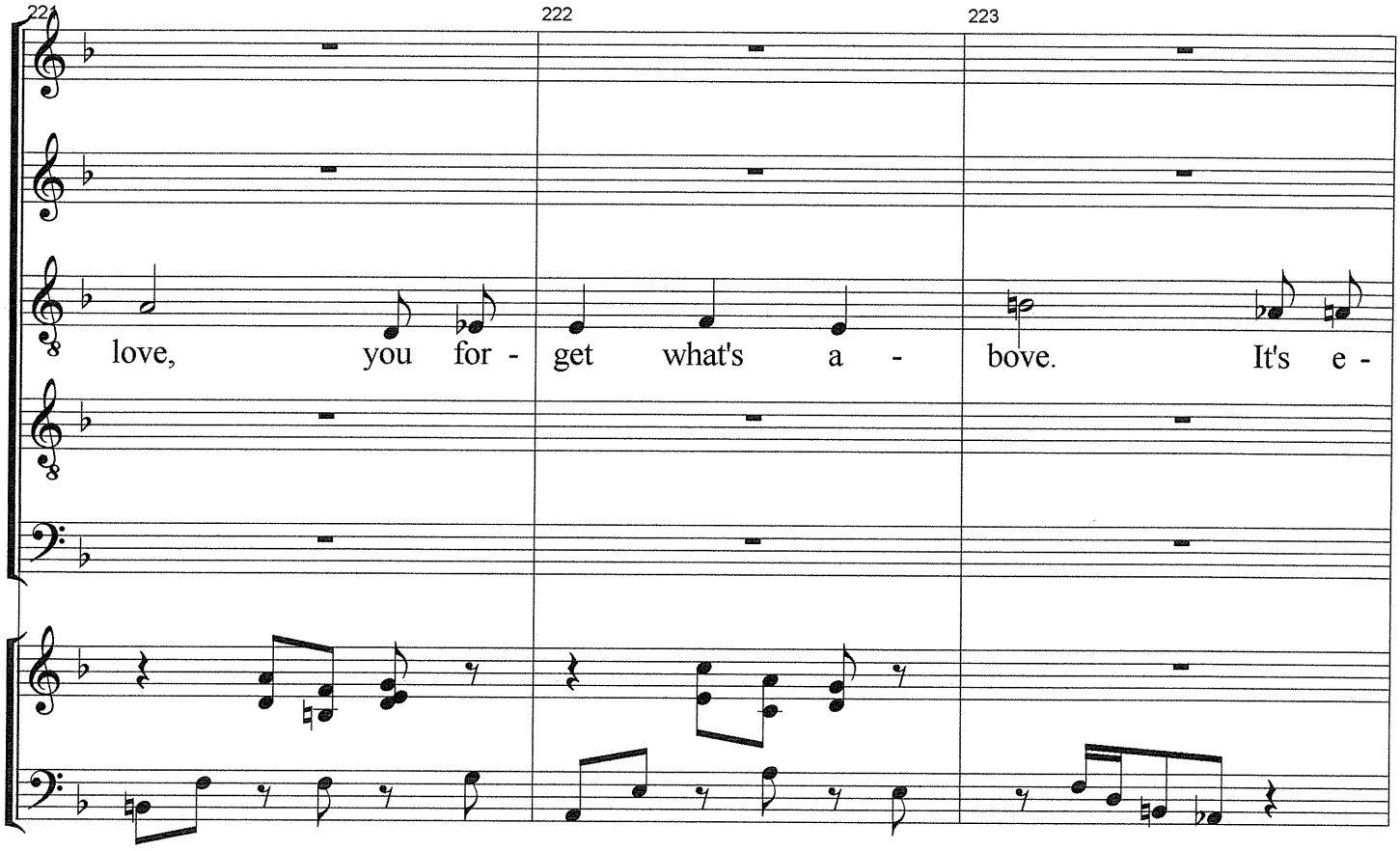

204
205
Sis-ter, here's the ex-it. Now it's
Sis-ter here's the ex-it. Now it's
made me a fool I've seen
206
207
208
time to be go - ing.
How tire - some these man-y paths to
time to be - go - ing .
How - tire - some these man - y paths to
You were the path I walked to
her:
Here ends my - path to
Thou,
Be - yond - all

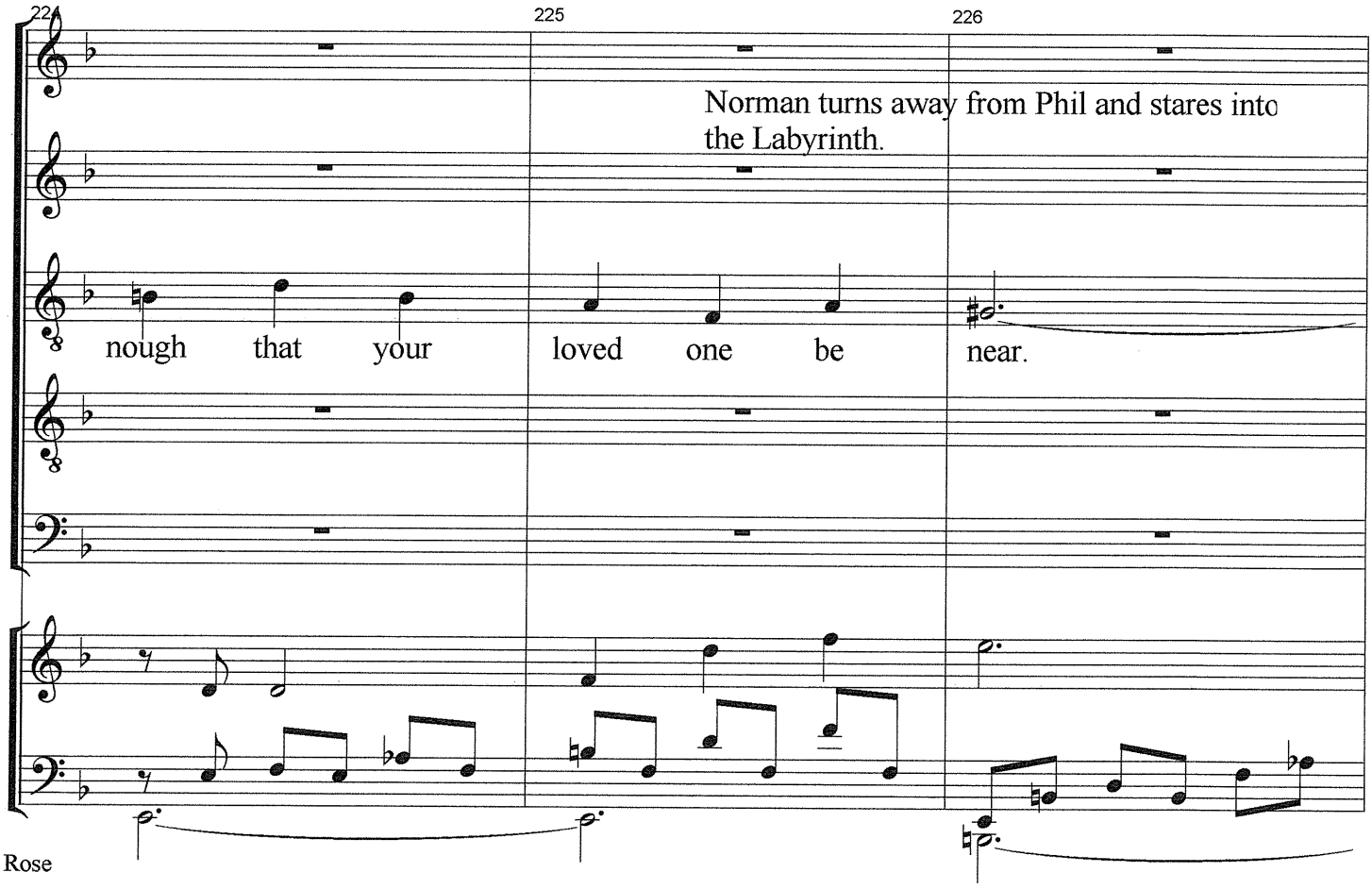

209
210
211
MM=120
know - ing.
know - ing.
know - ing.
know - ing.
know - ing.
The sisters and Master exit.
As you
MM=120

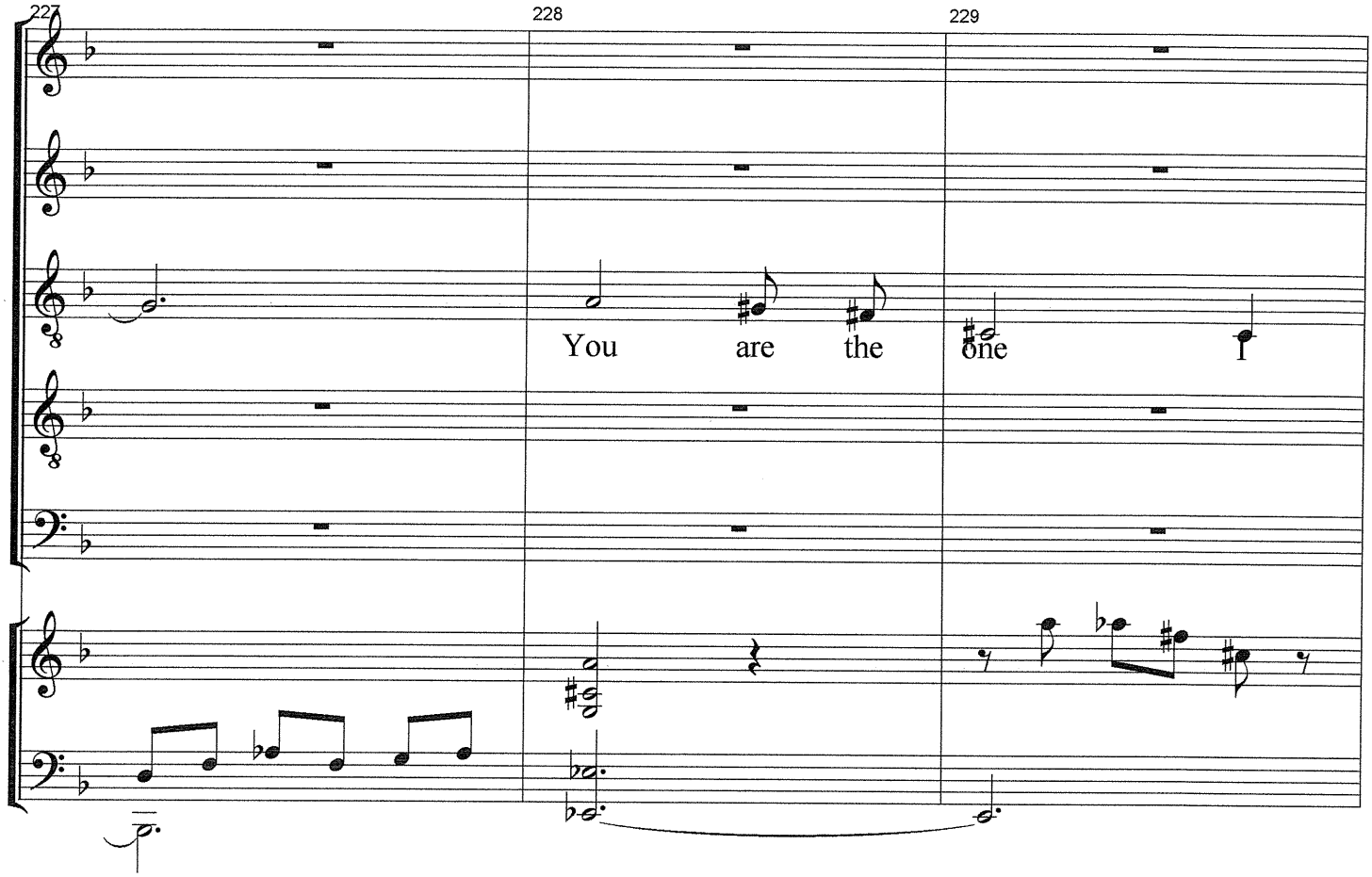

212
213
214
strug - gled to
give,
You for -
got how to

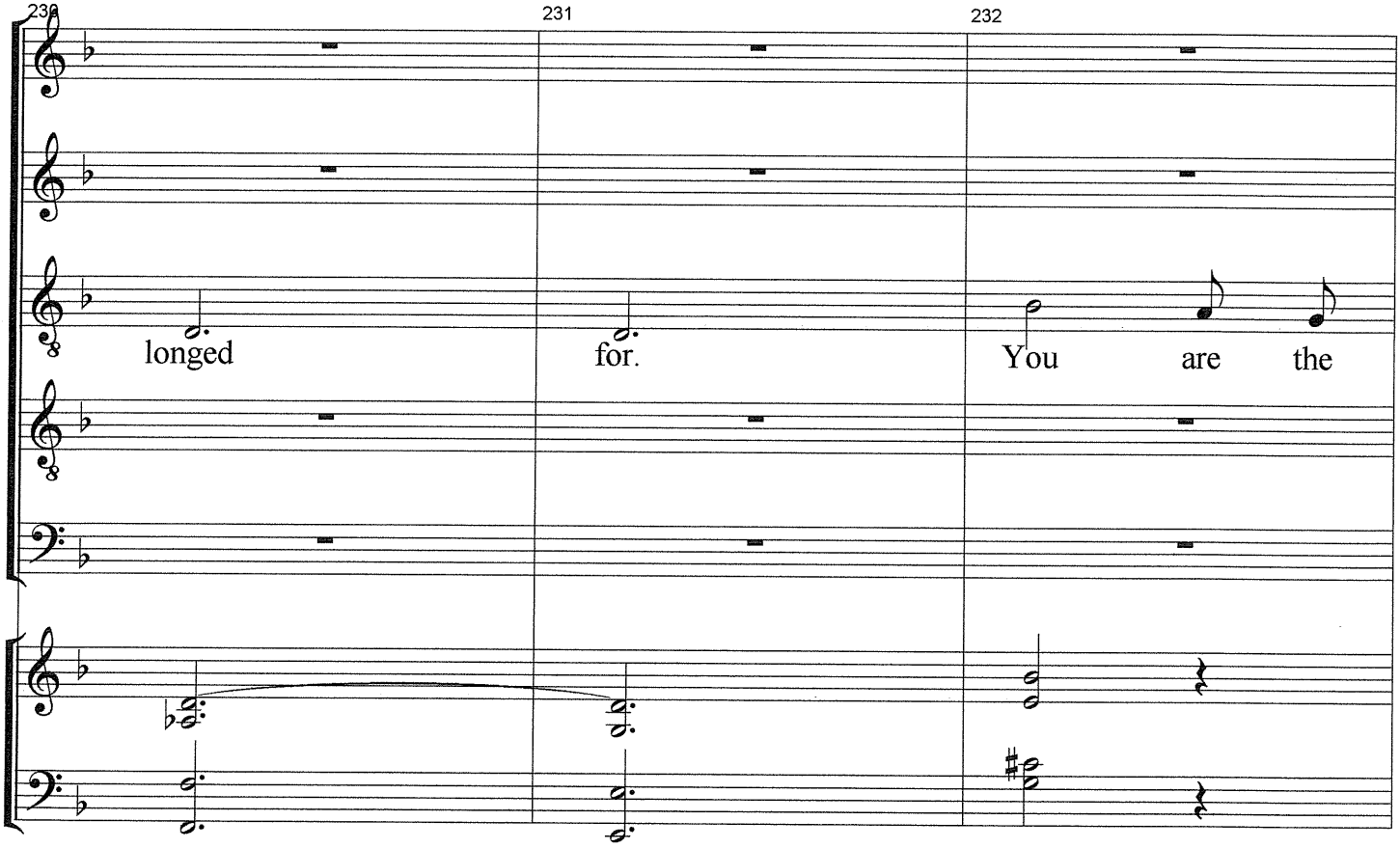

215
216
217
live.
It's
real - ly
quite
sim - ple,
my

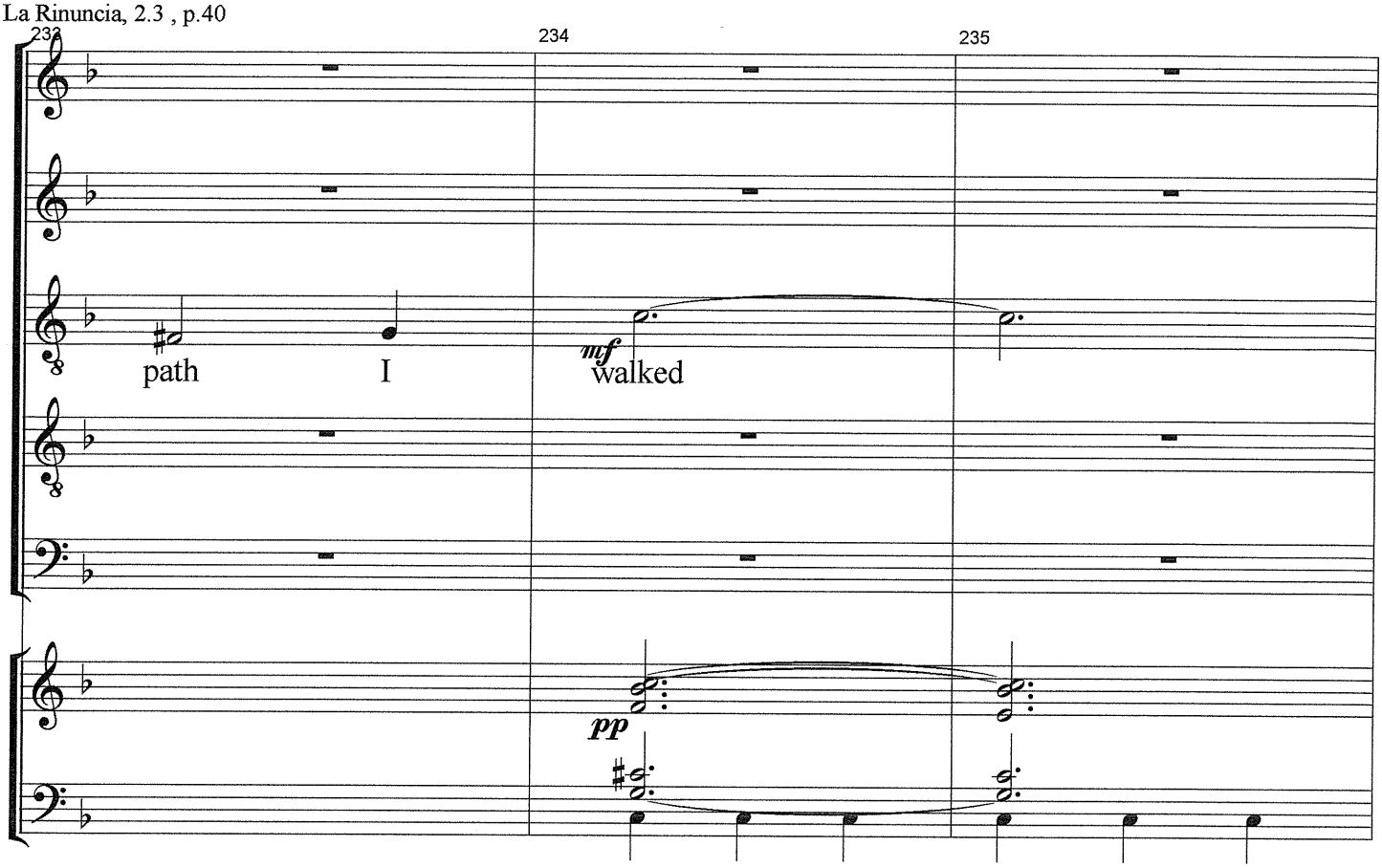

218
219
220
dear;
Giv - ing
o - ver
to

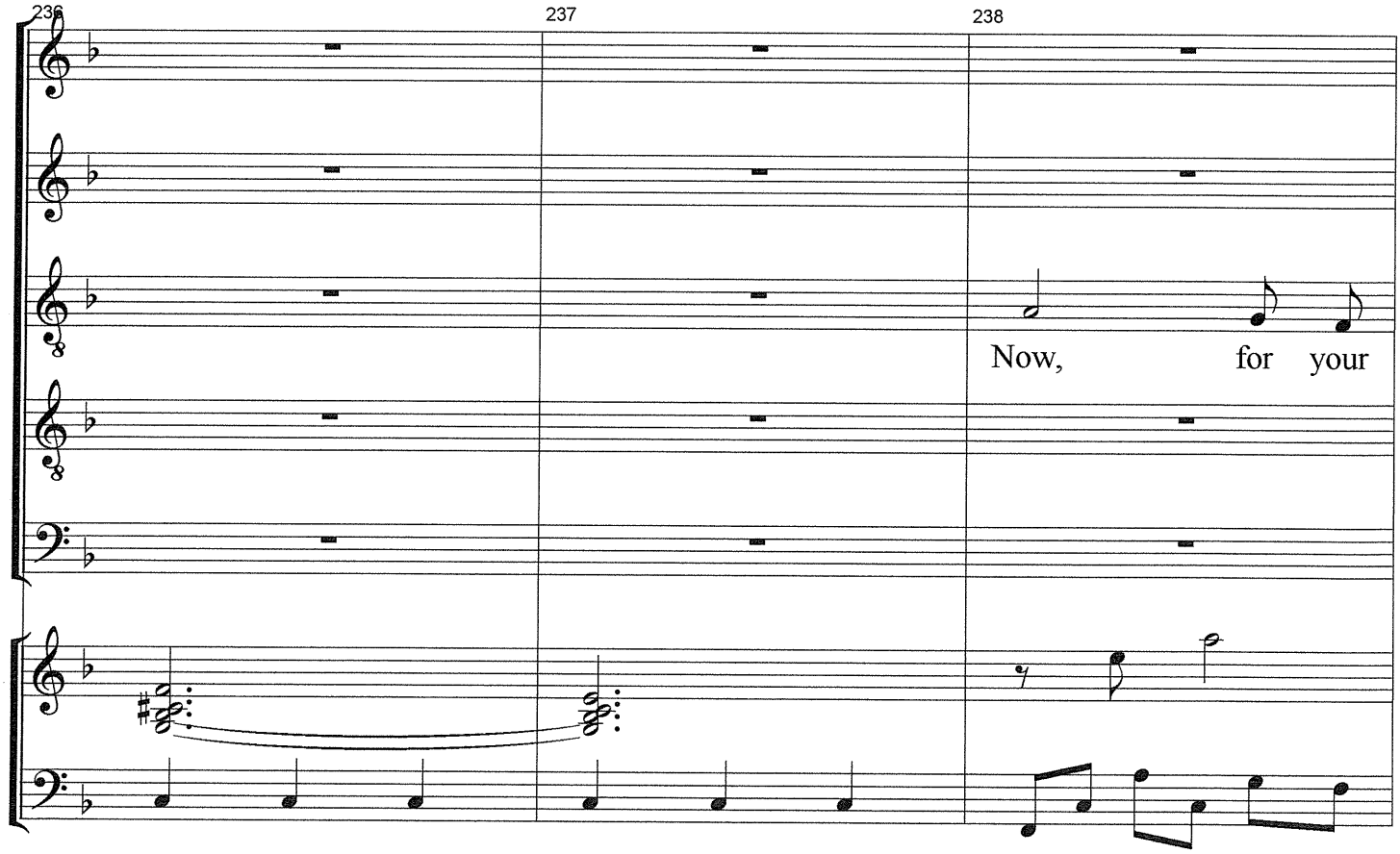

221
222
223
love, you for - get what's a - bove. It's e -

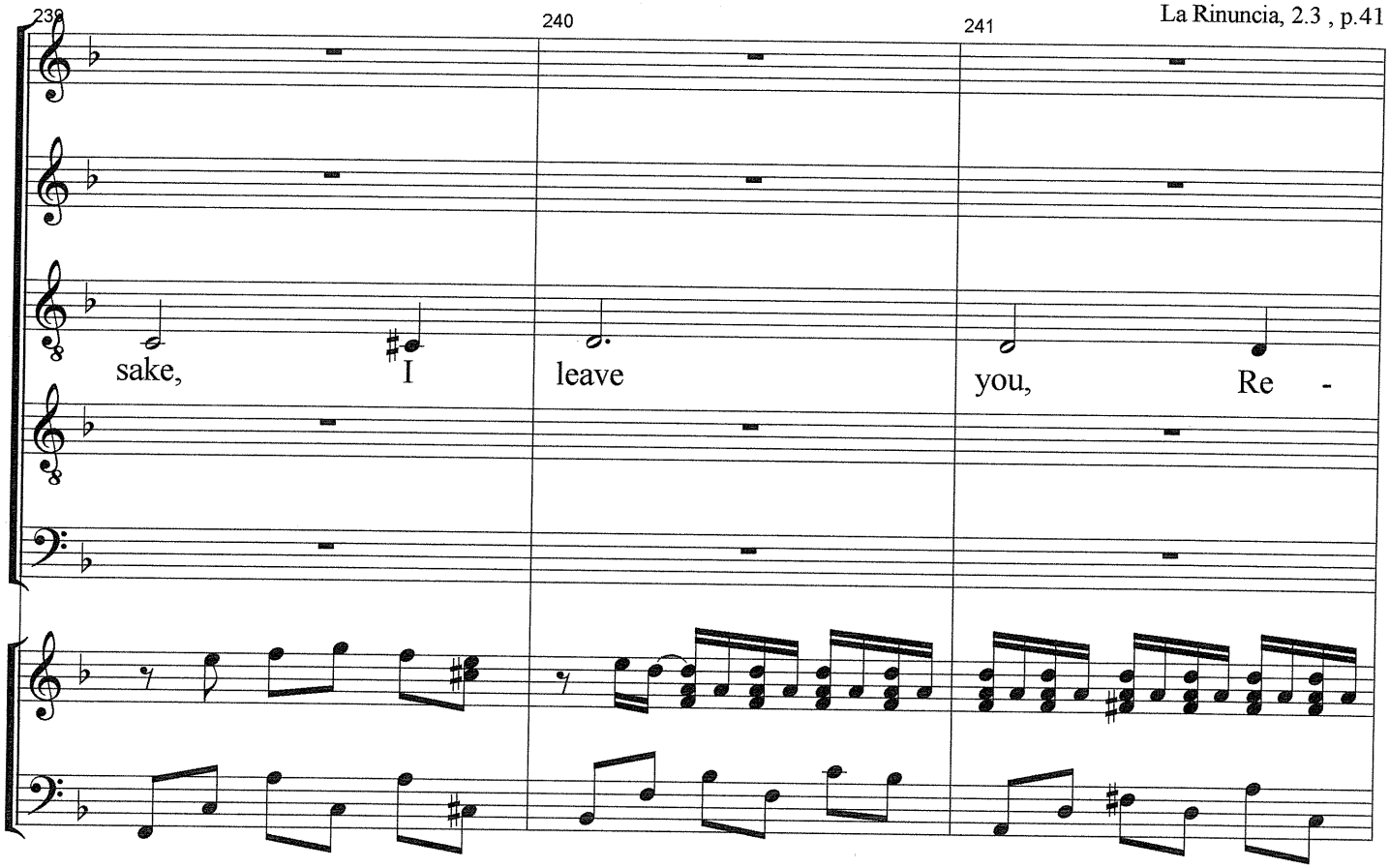

224
225
226
Norman turns away from Phil and stares into the Labyrinth.
nough that your loved one be near.

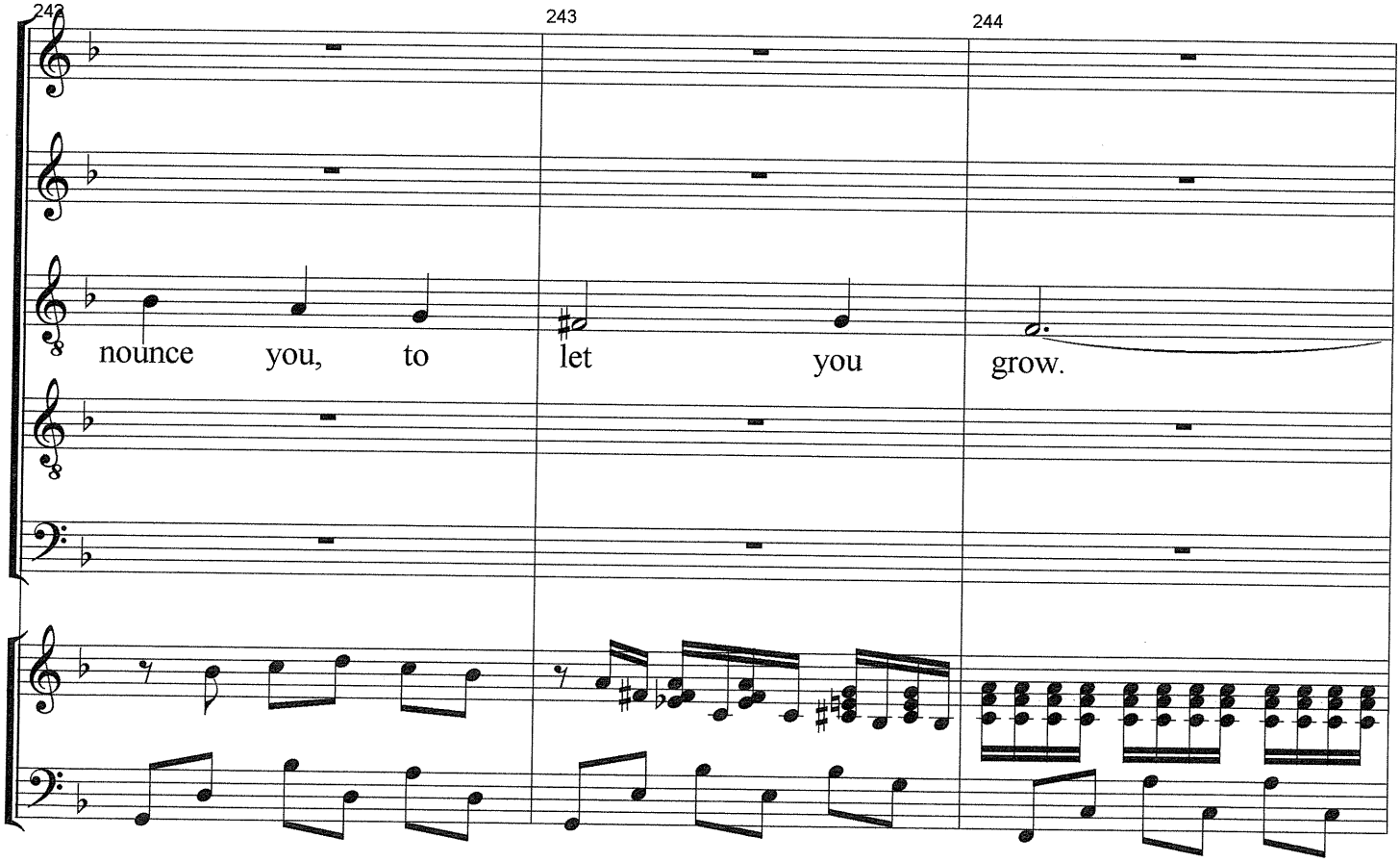

227
228
229
You are the one I

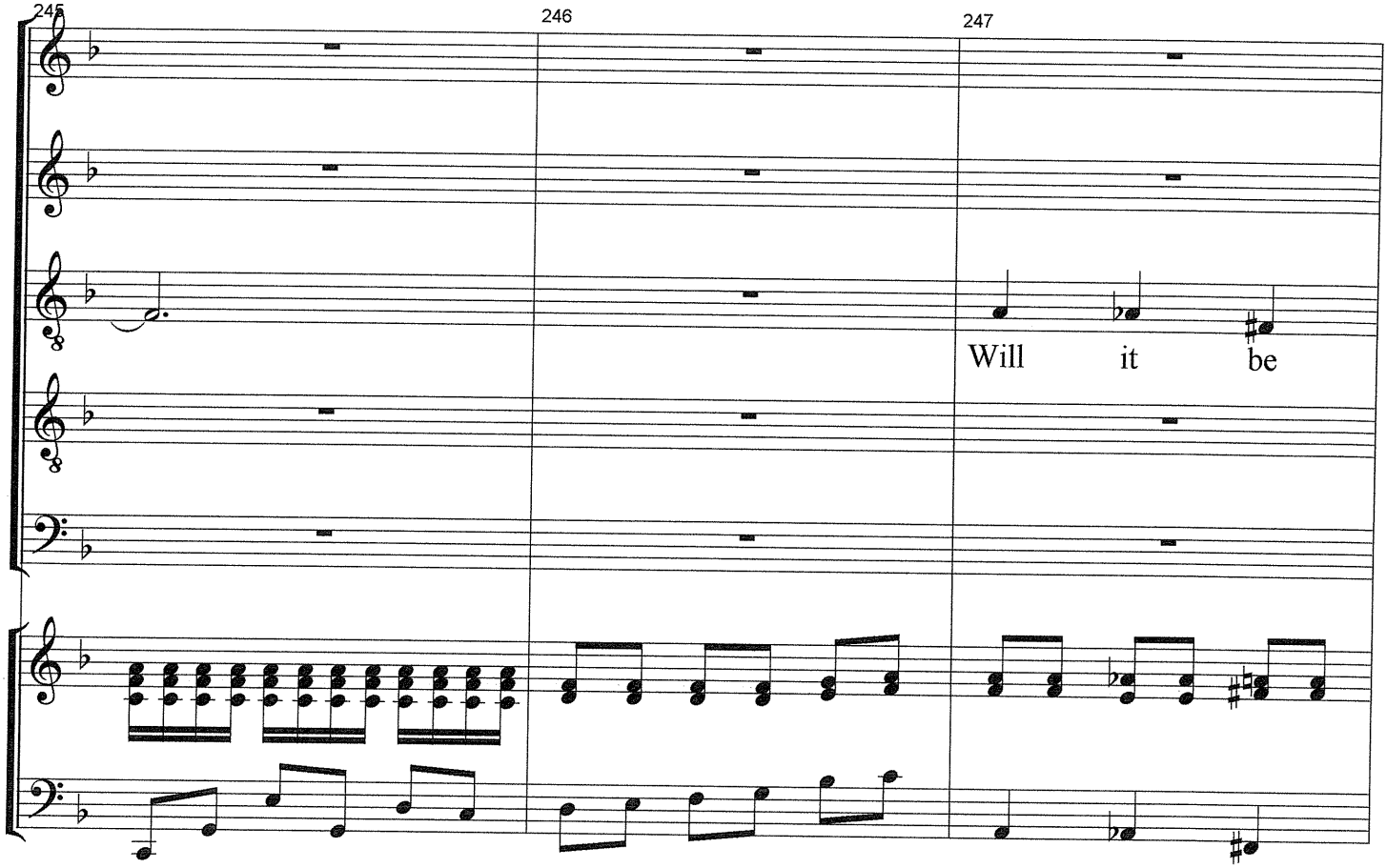

230
231
232
longed for. You are the

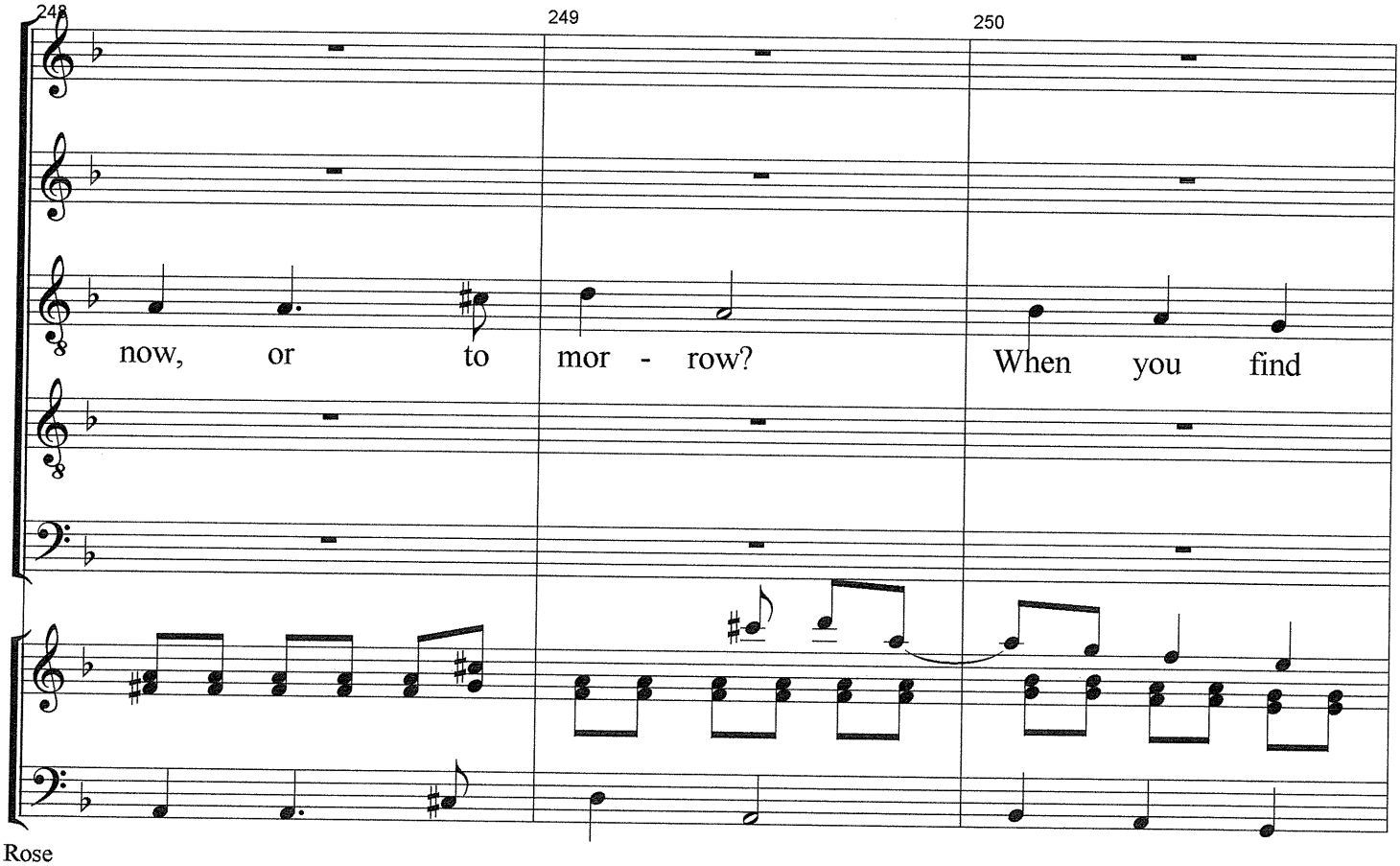

233
234
235
path
I
mf
walked
pp

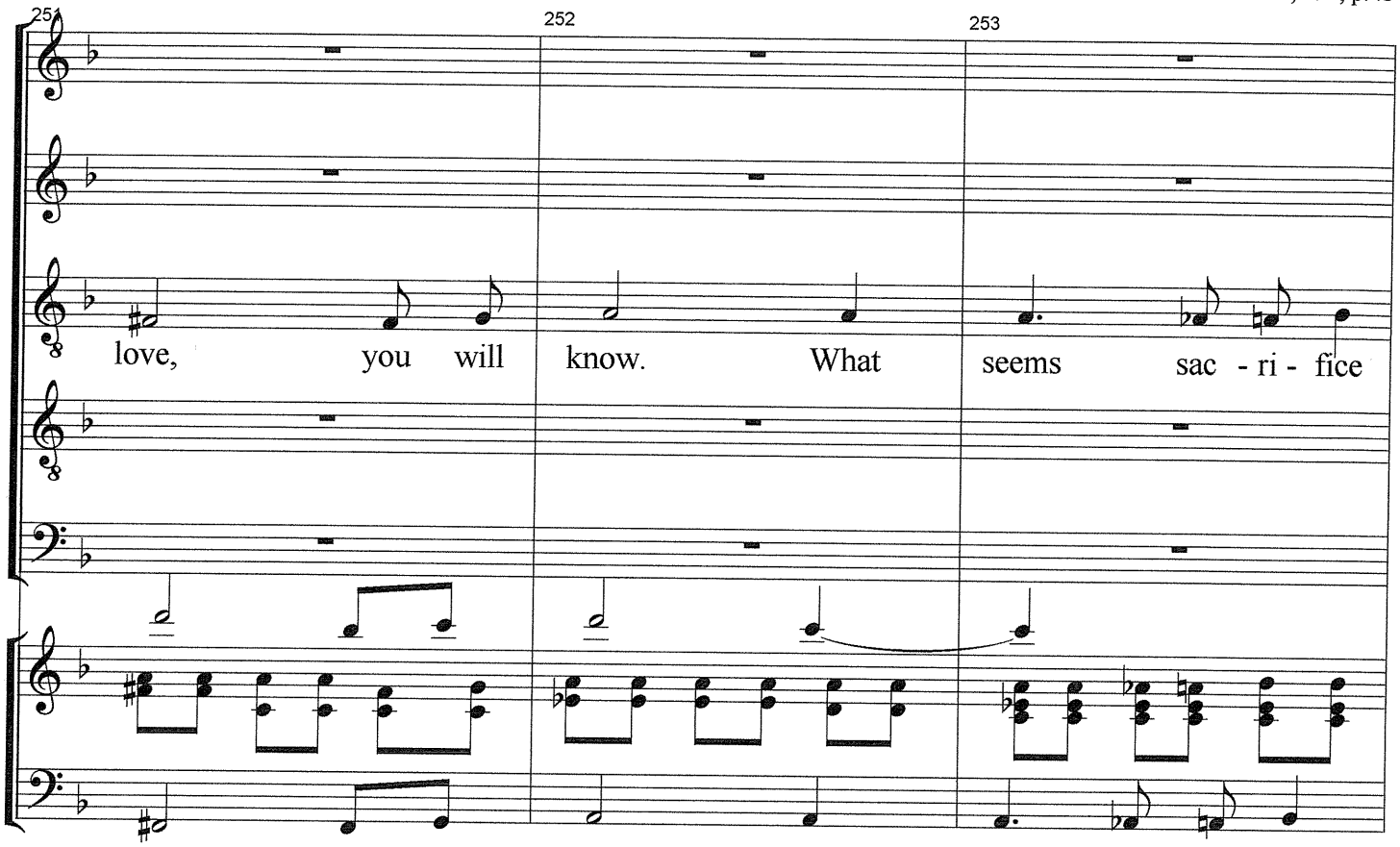

236
237
238
Now,
for
your

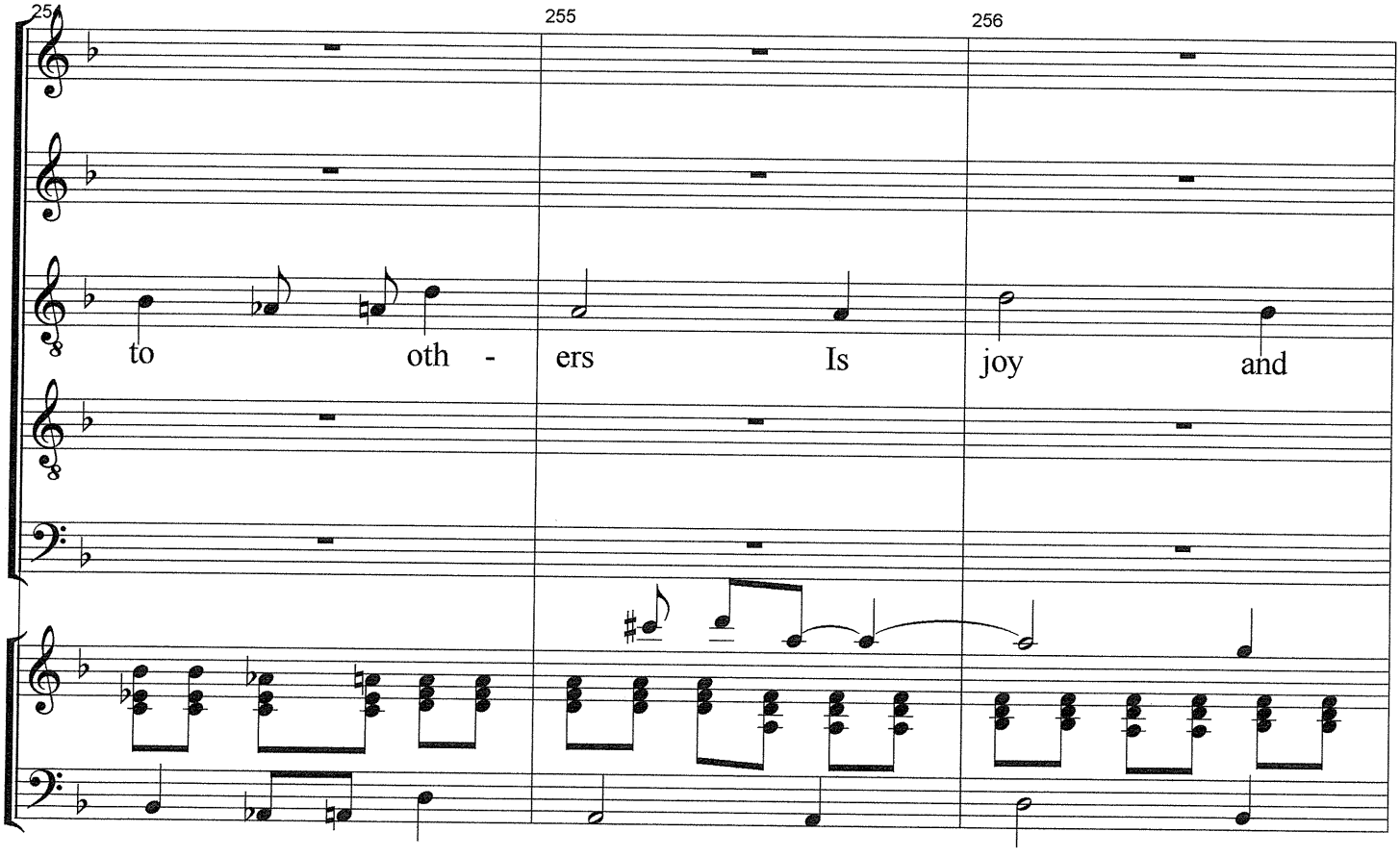

239
240
241
sake,
I
leave
you,
Re -

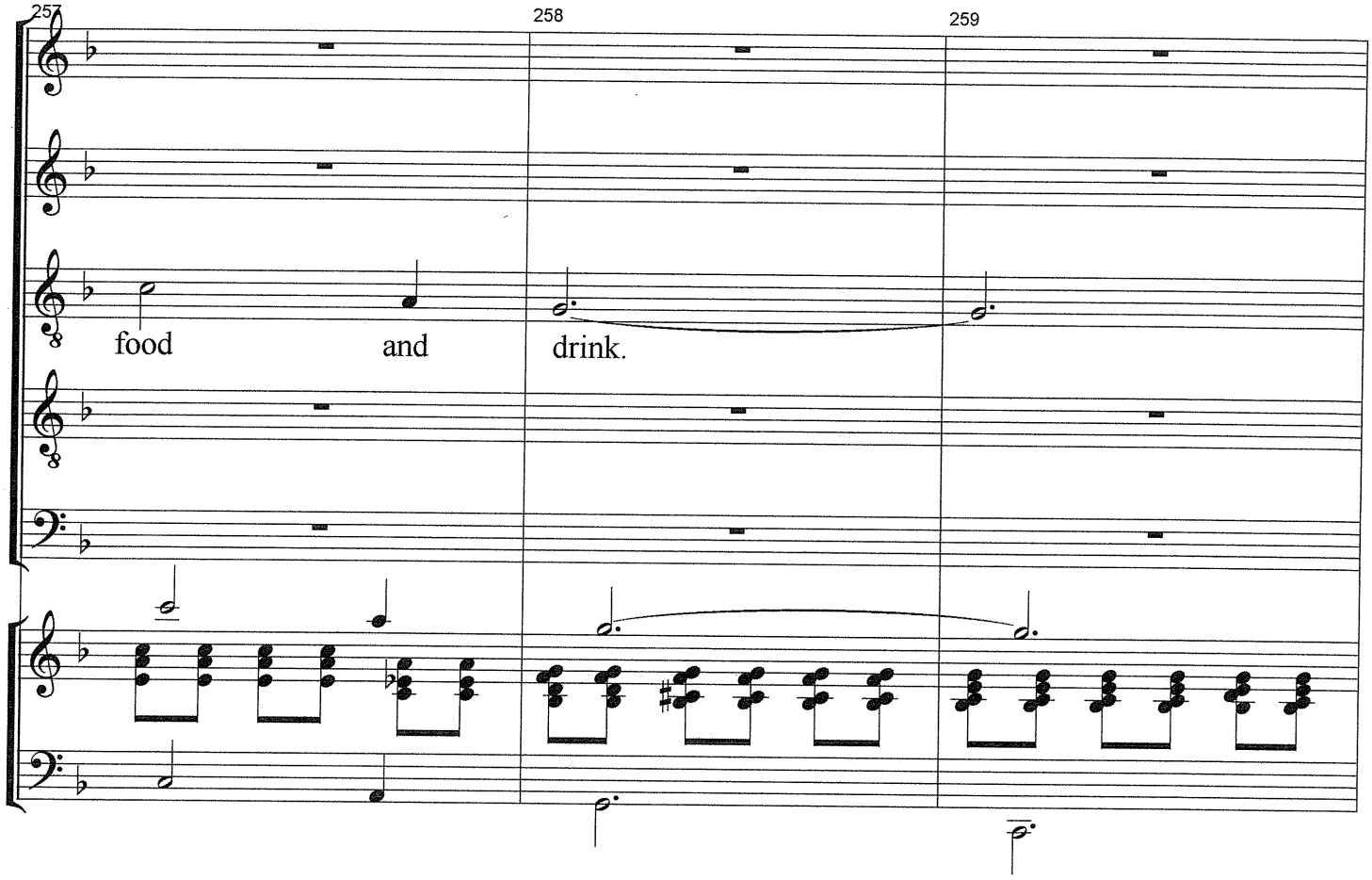

242
243
244
nounce
you,
to
let
you
grow.

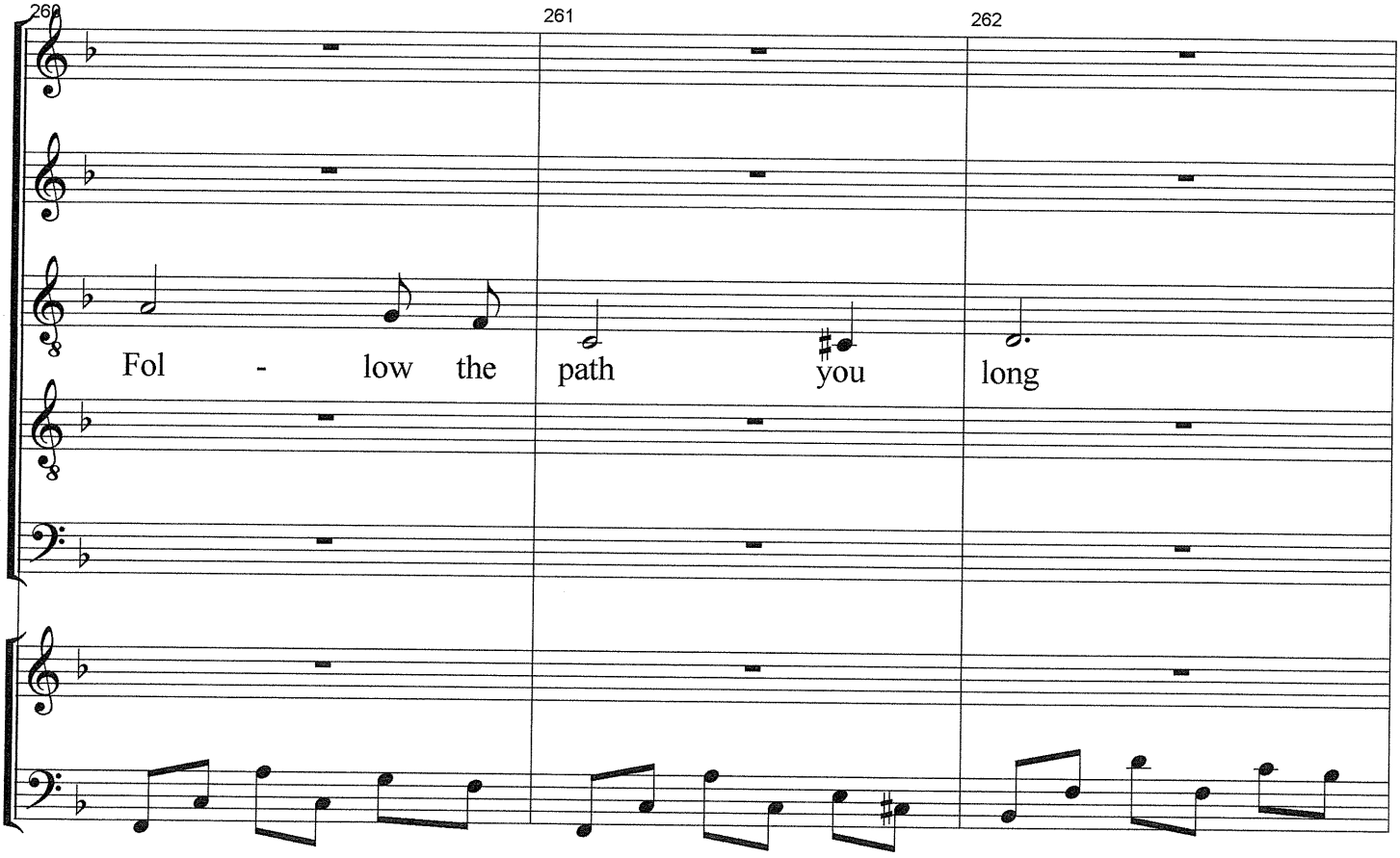

245
246
247
Will it be

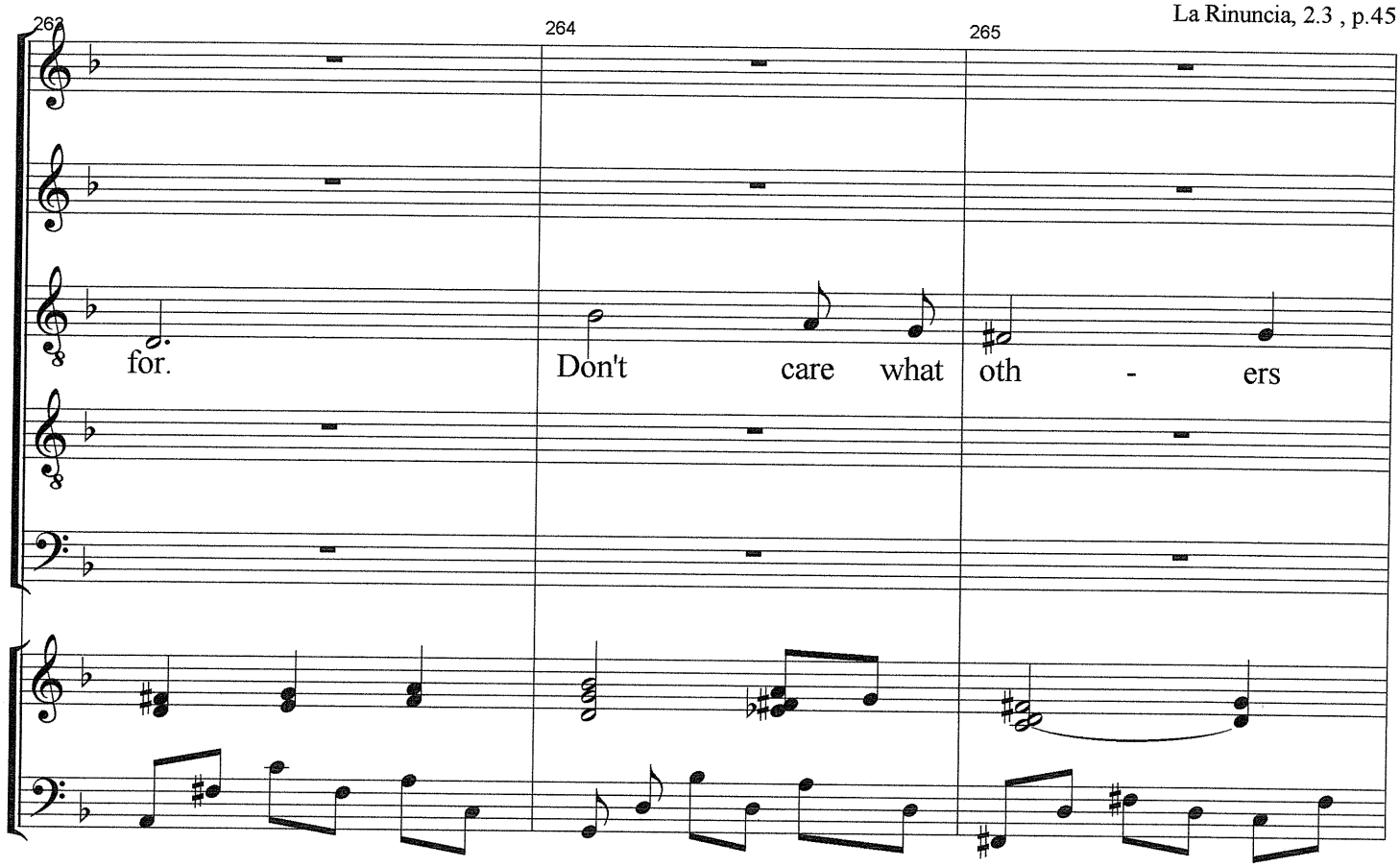

248
249
250
now, or to mor - row?
When you find

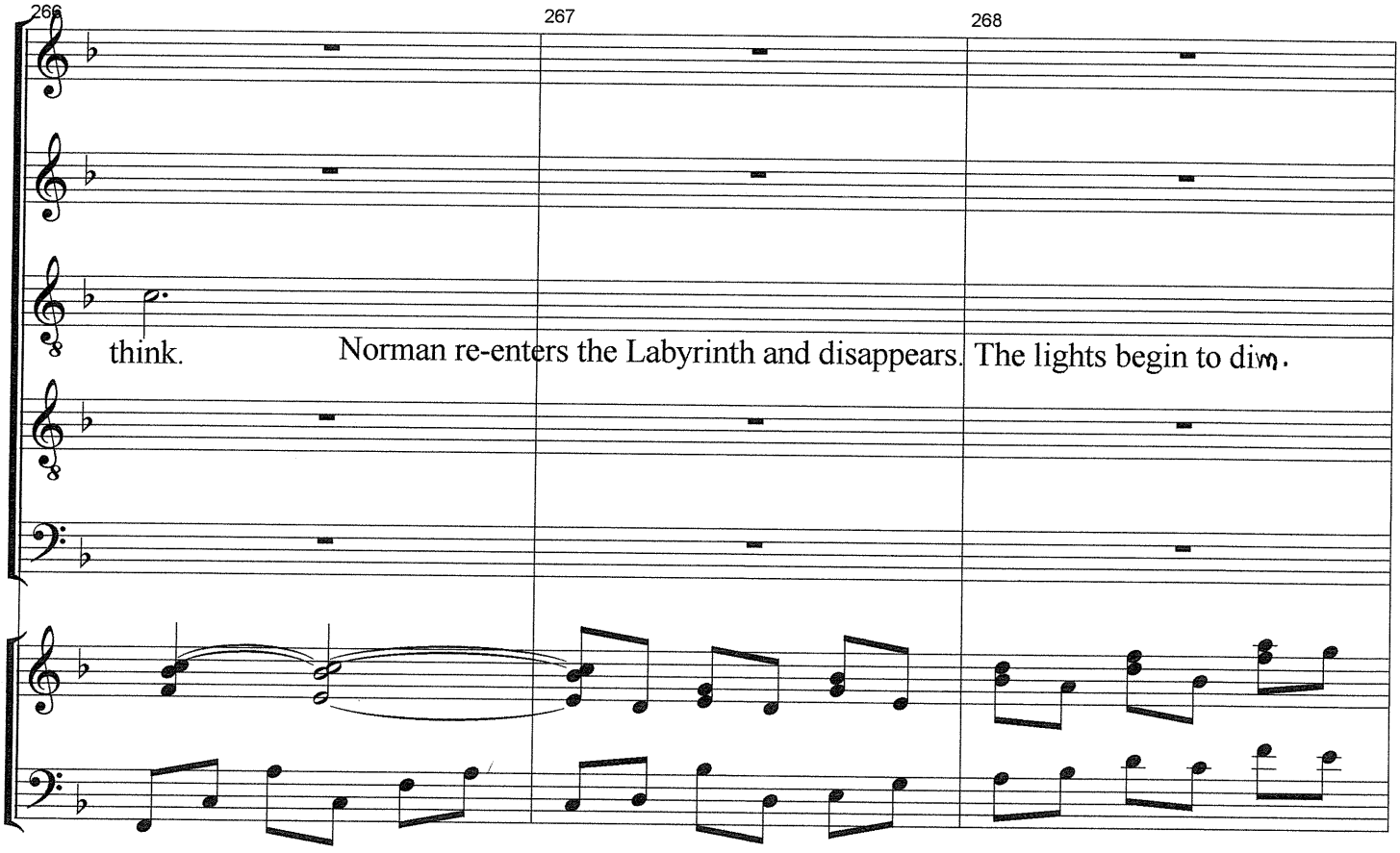

251
252
253
love, you will know. What seems sac - ri - fice

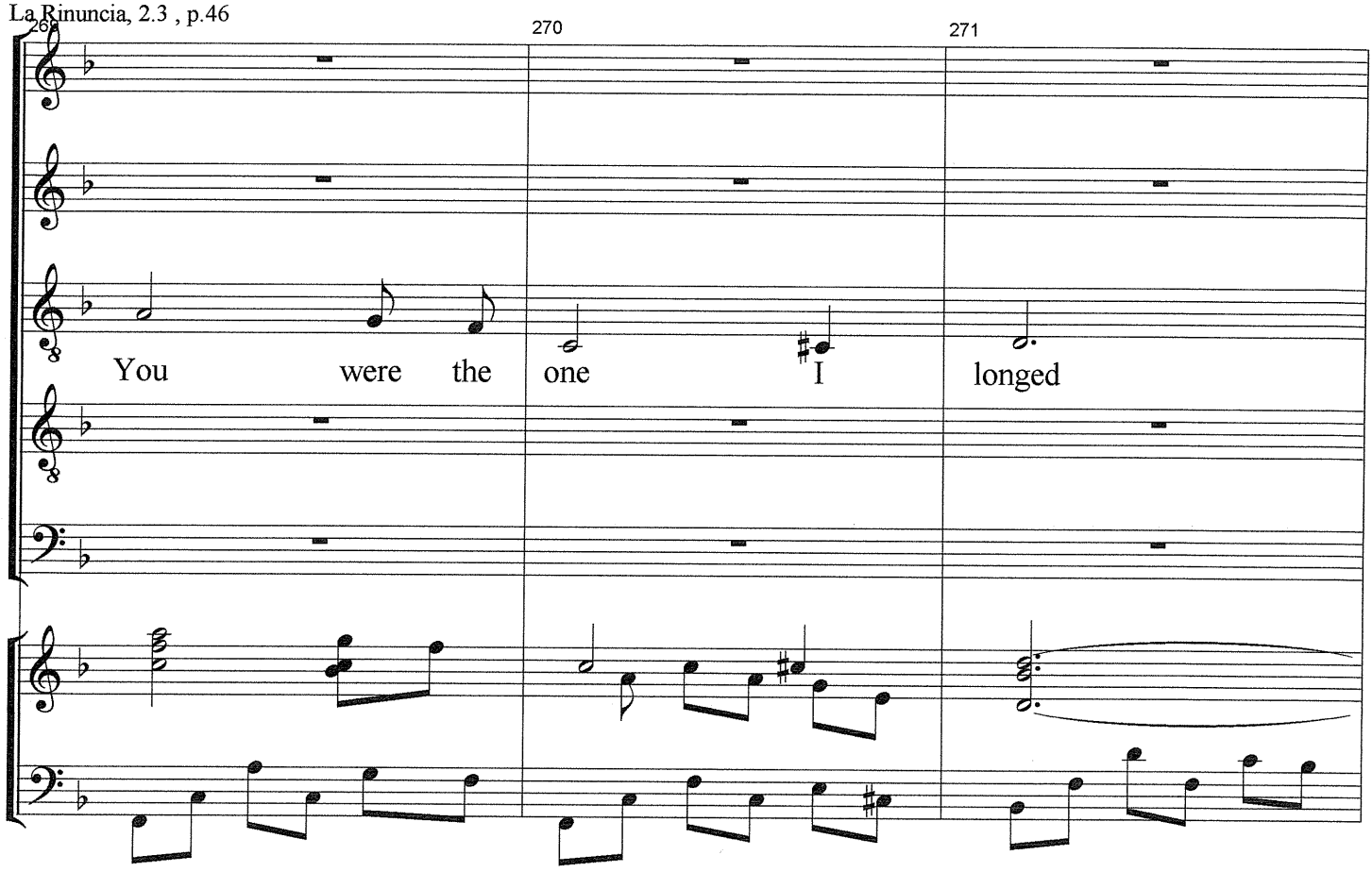

254
255
256
to oth - ers Is joy and

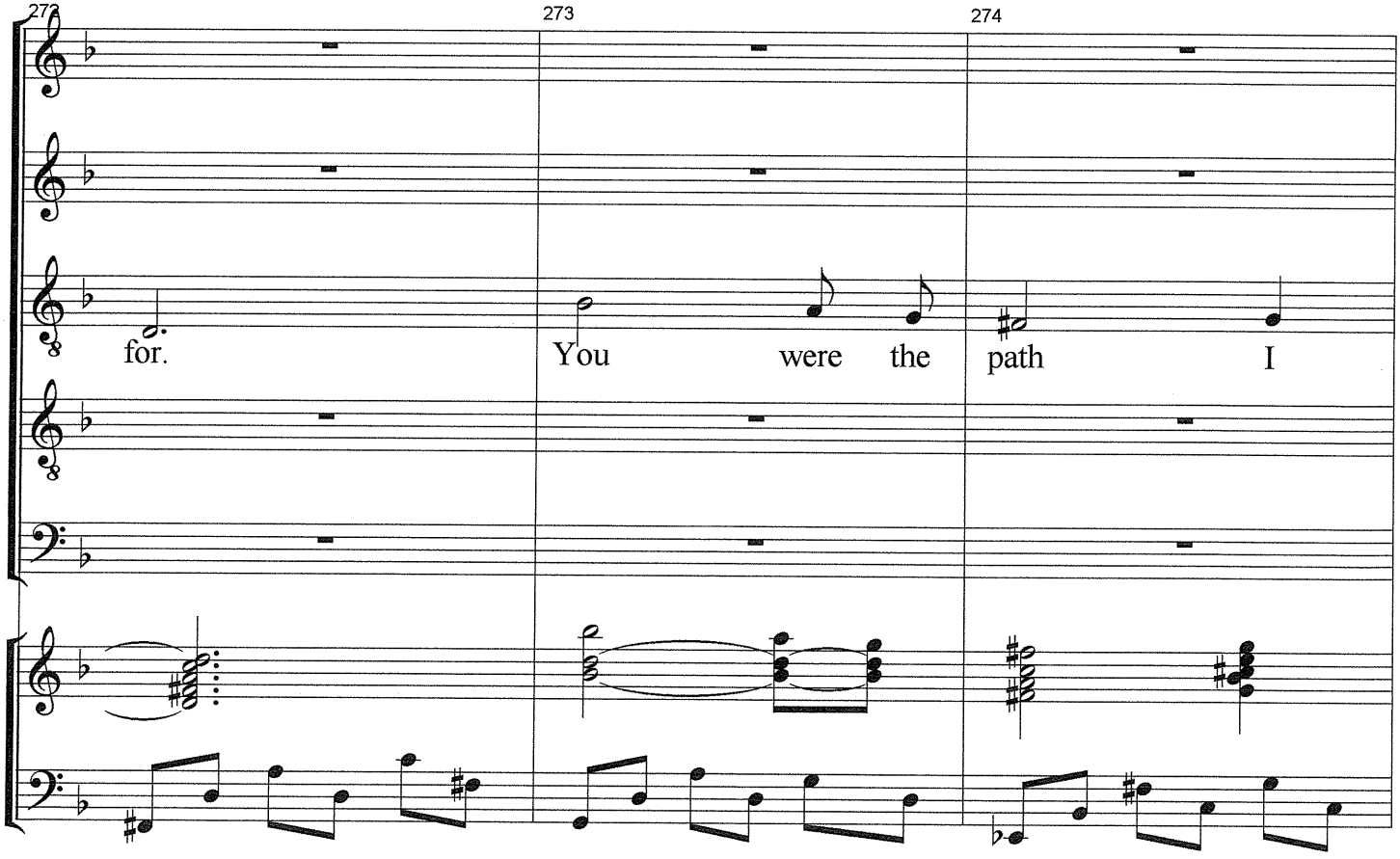

257
258
259
food
and
drink.

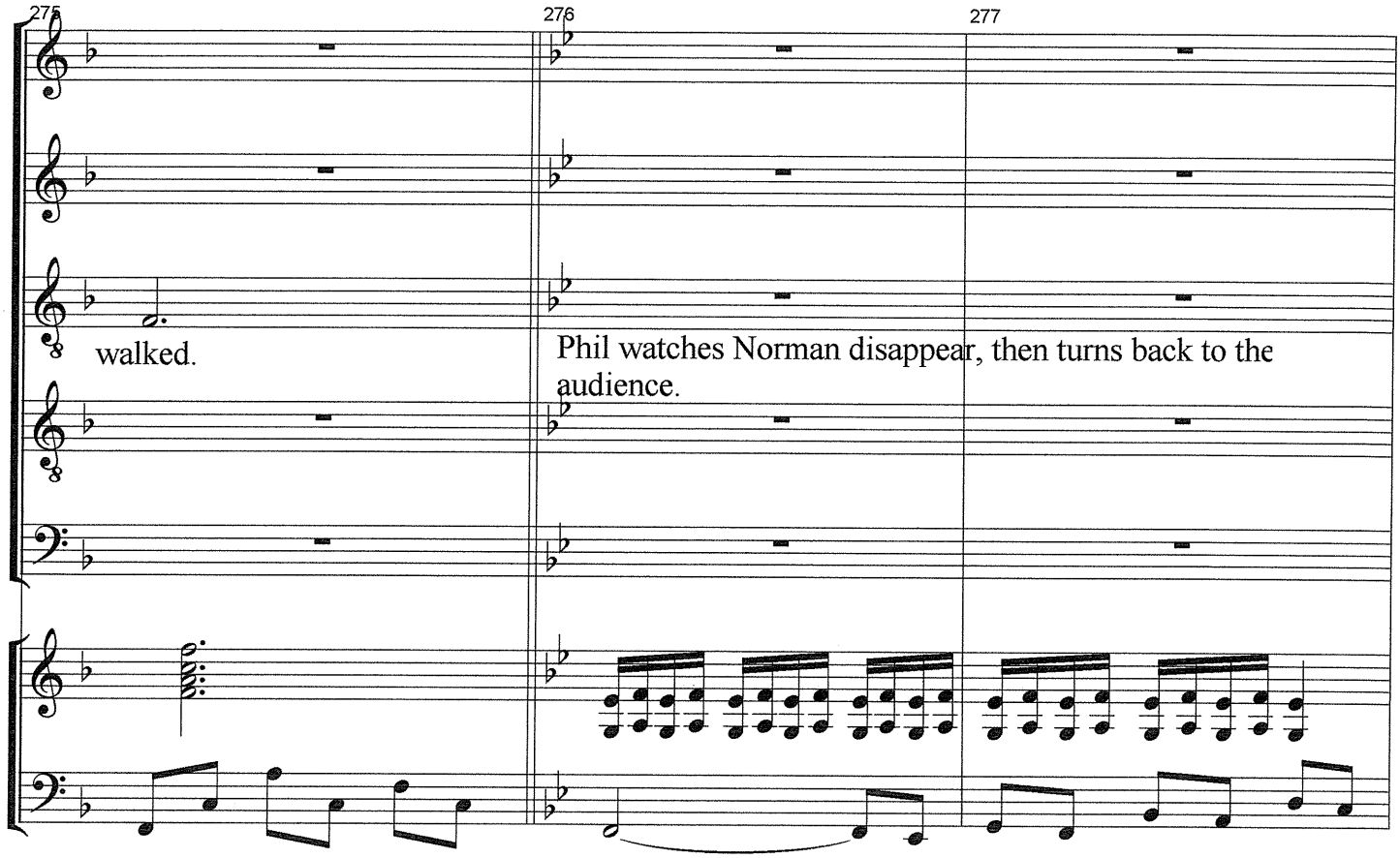

260
261
262
Fol - low the path you long

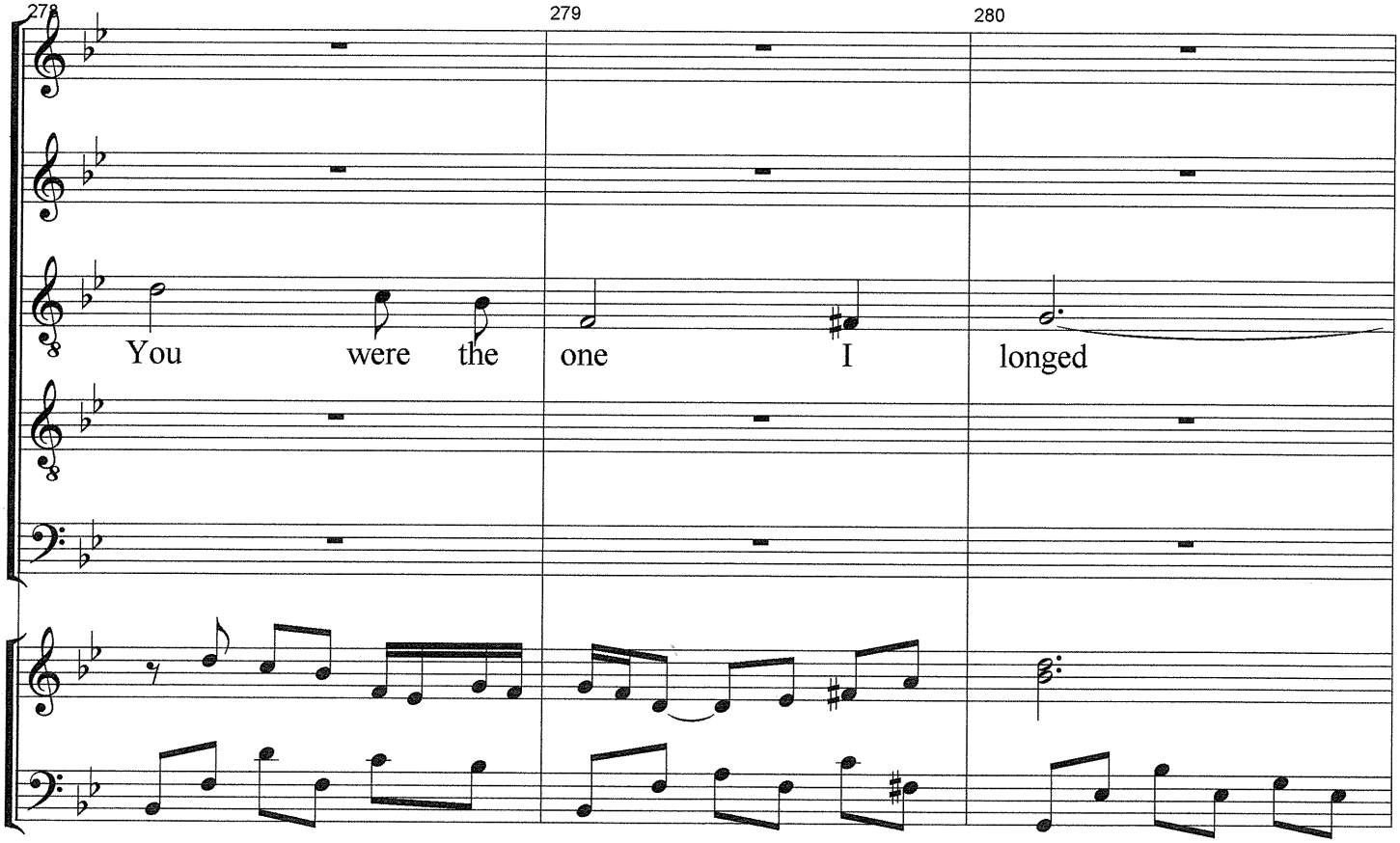

263
264
265
for.
Don't care what oth - ers

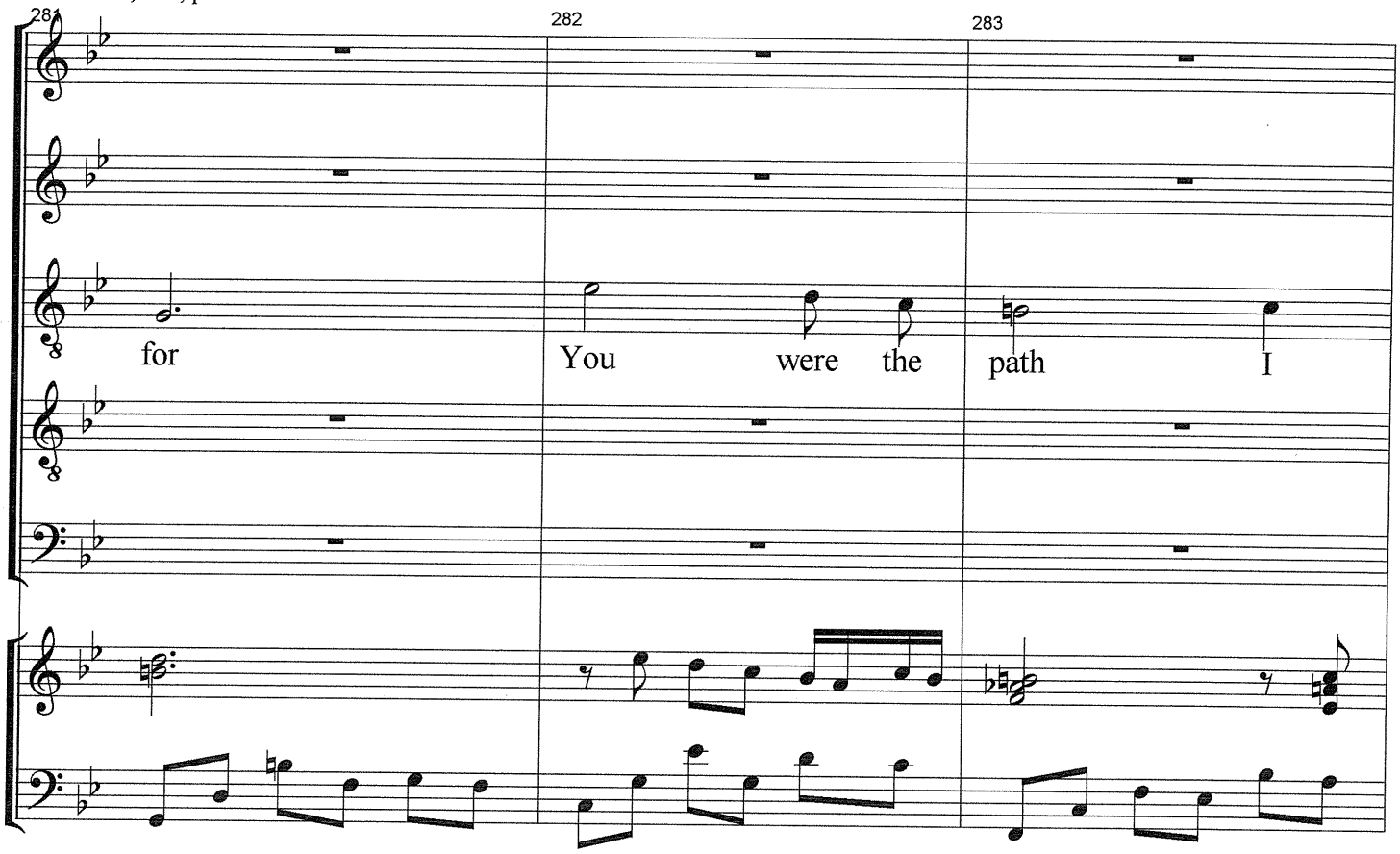

266
267
268
think.
Norman re-enters the Labyrinth and disappears. The lights begin to dim.

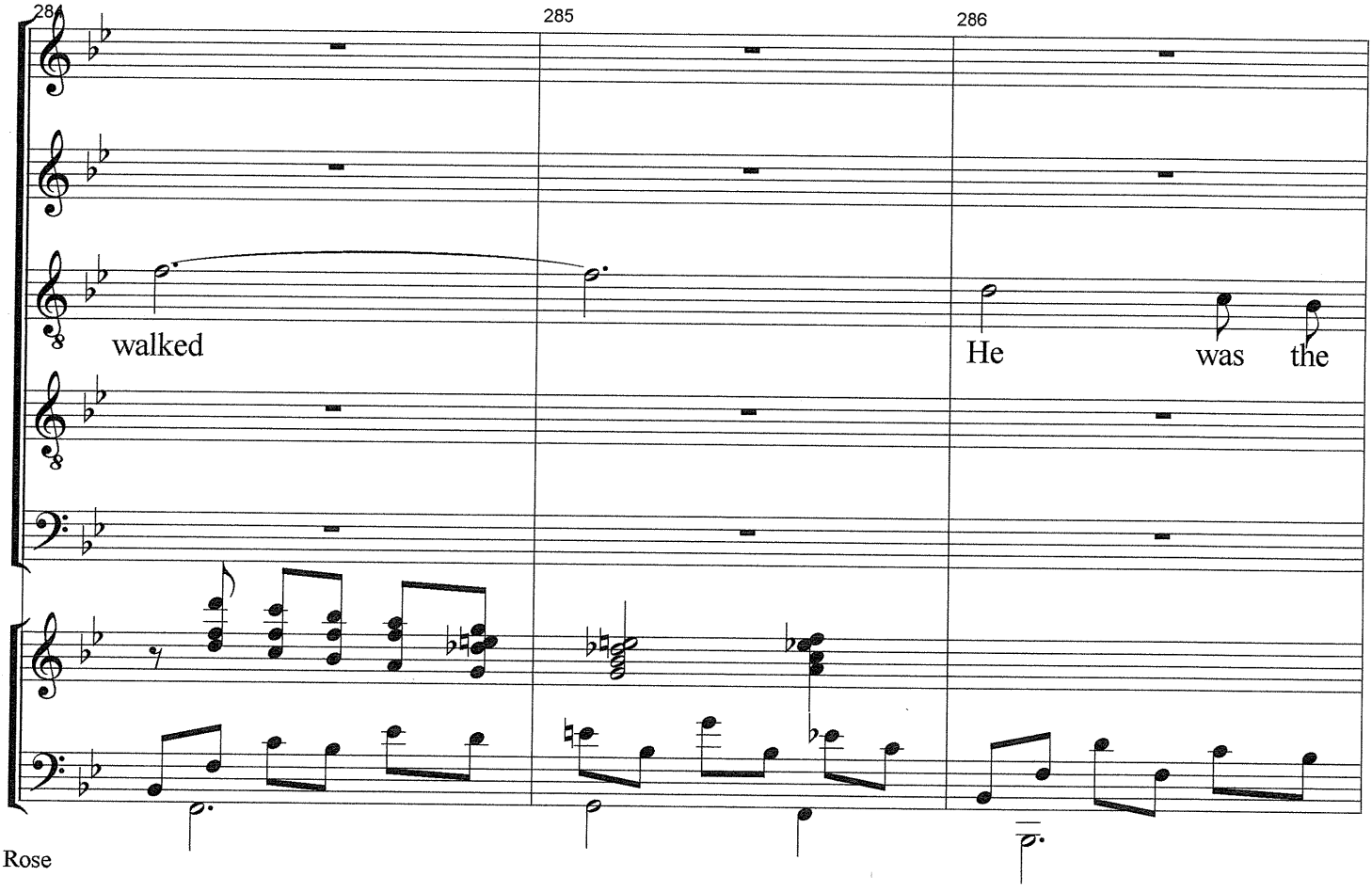

269
270
271
You were the one I longed

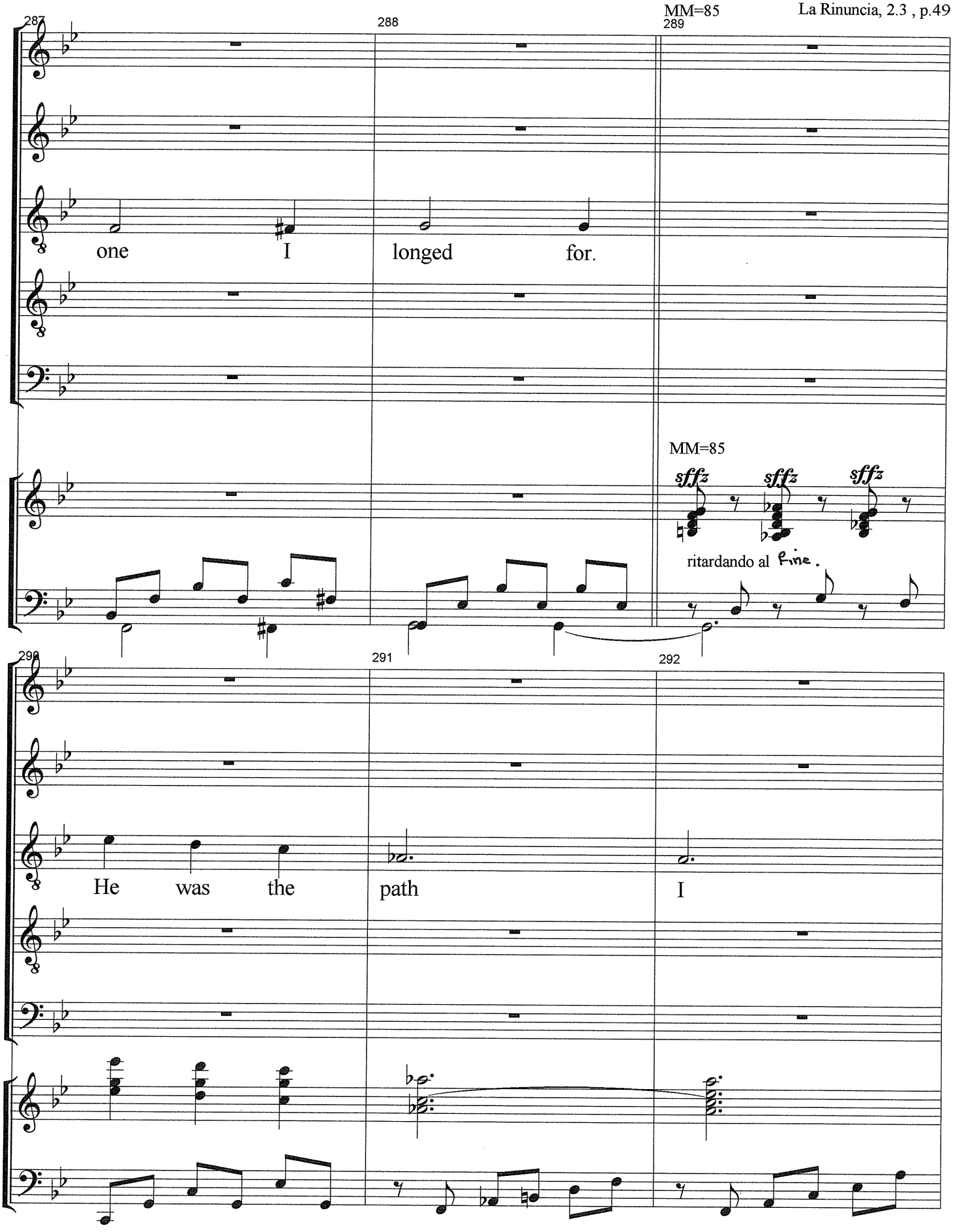

272
273
274
for.
You were the path I

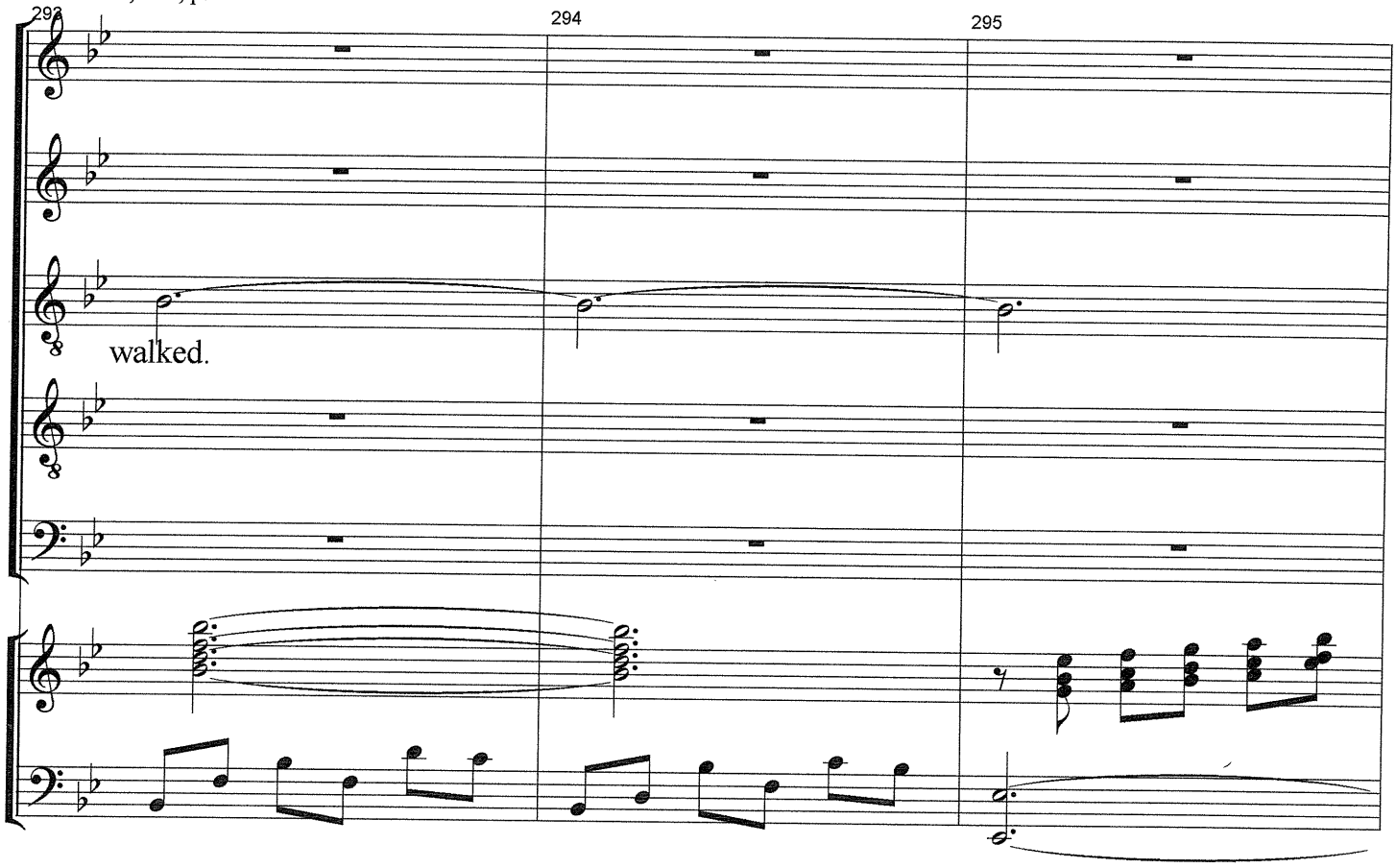

275
276
277
walked.
Phil watches Norman disappear, then turns back to the audience.

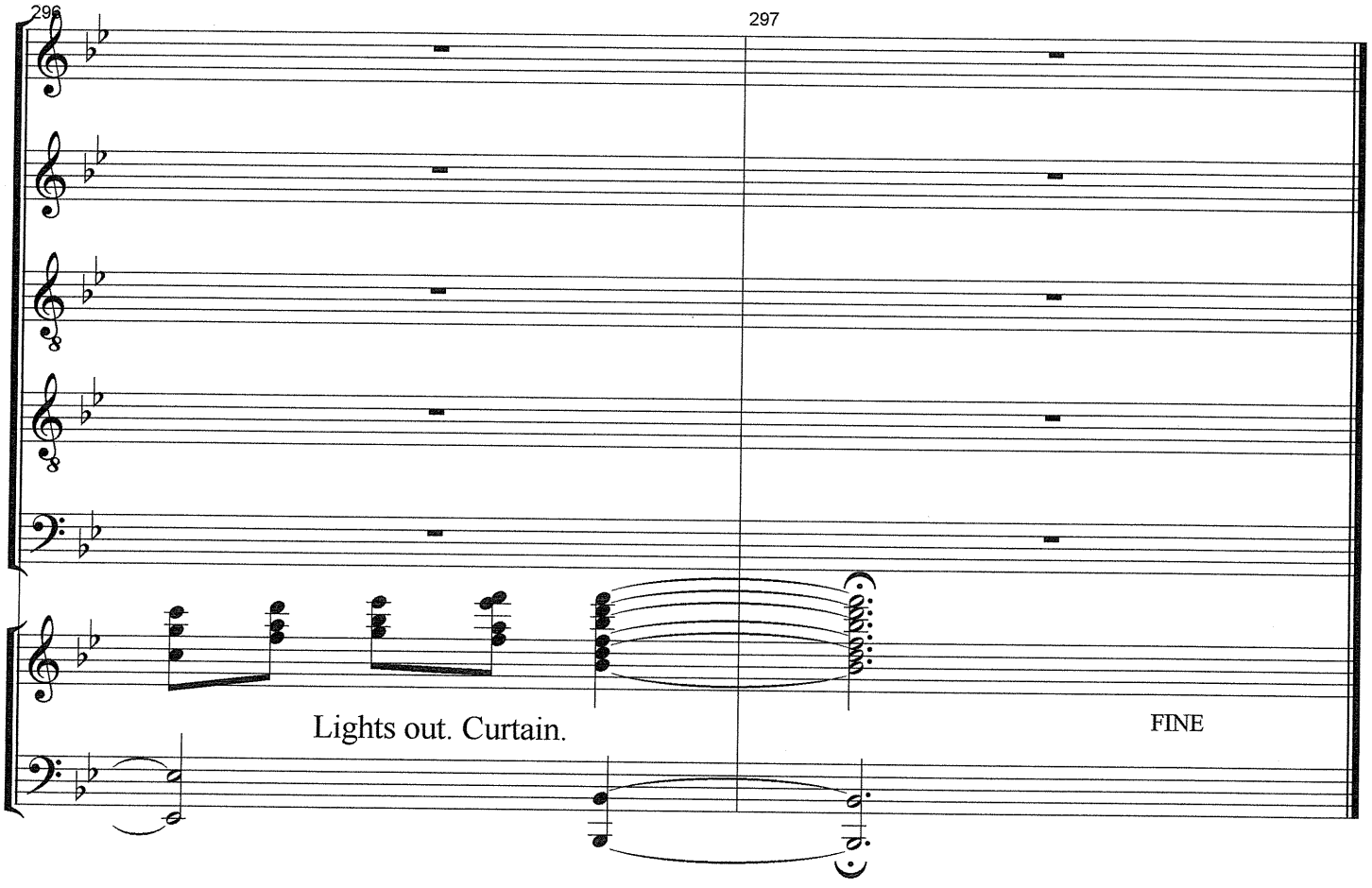

278
279
280
You were the one I longed


281
282
283
for
You were the path I


284
285
286
walked
He was the


MM=85
287
288
289
one
I
longed
for.
MM=85
sfffz
sfffz
sfffz
ritardando al Fine.
290
291
292
He
was
the
path
I


293
294
295
walked.


296
297
Lights out. Curtain.
FINE