# CHICAGO SONGS
## for soprano voice and piano

Kurt Erickson

2016

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Chicago Songs is my attempt to musically recreate something of the spirit and people found in Carl Sandburg's iconic poetry. Sandburg's world is one filled with the grit of burgeoning industrialization, the earnest hope of immigrant settlers, and the heartache and beauty found in the everyday. His characters are larger than life, yet tragically human - there's a poignancy in their foibles that I find very attractive. As a composer I've always been drawn to nostalgic, highly personal subject matter and these texts compliment my own nostalgic, highly personal musical impulses.

I SANG to you and the moon
But only the moon remembers.
I sang
O reckless free-hearted
free-throated rhythms,
Even the moon remembers them
And is kind to me.

EVERYBODY loved Chick Lorimer in our town.
Far off
Everybody loved her.
So we all love a wild girl keeping a hold
On a dream she wants.
Nobody knows now where Chick Lorimer went.
Nobody knows why she packed her trunk. . a few old things
And is gone,
Gone with her little chin
Thrust ahead of her
And her soft hair blowing careless
From under a wide hat,
Dancer, singer, a laughing passionate lover.

Were there ten men or a hundred hunting Chick?
Were there five men or fifty with aching hearts?
Everybody loved Chick Lorimer.
Nobody knows where she's gone.

THERE'S Chamfort. He's a sample.
Locked himself in his library with a gun,
Shot off his nose and shot out his right eye.
And this Chamfort knew how to write
And thousands read his books on how to live,
But he himself didn't know
How to die by force of his own hand--see?
They found him a red pool on the carpet
Cool as an April forenoon,
Talking and talking gay maxims and grim epigrams.
Well, he wore bandages over his nose and right eye,
Drank coffee and chatted many years
With men and women who loved him
Because he laughed and daily dared Death:
"Come and take me."

JACK was a swarthy, swaggering son-of-a-gun.
He worked thirty years on the railroad, ten hours a day,
and his hands were tougher than sole leather.
He married a tough woman and they had eight children
and the woman died and the children grew up and went away and wrote the old man every two years.
He died in the poorhouse sitting on a bench in the sun
telling reminiscences to other old men whose women
were dead and children scattered.
There was joy on his face when he died as there was joy
on his face when he lived--he was a swarthy, swaggering
son-of-a-gun.

I SANG to you and the moon
But only the moon remembers.
I sang
O reckless free-hearted
free-throated rhythms,
Even the moon remembers them
And is kind to me.

-Carl Sandburg

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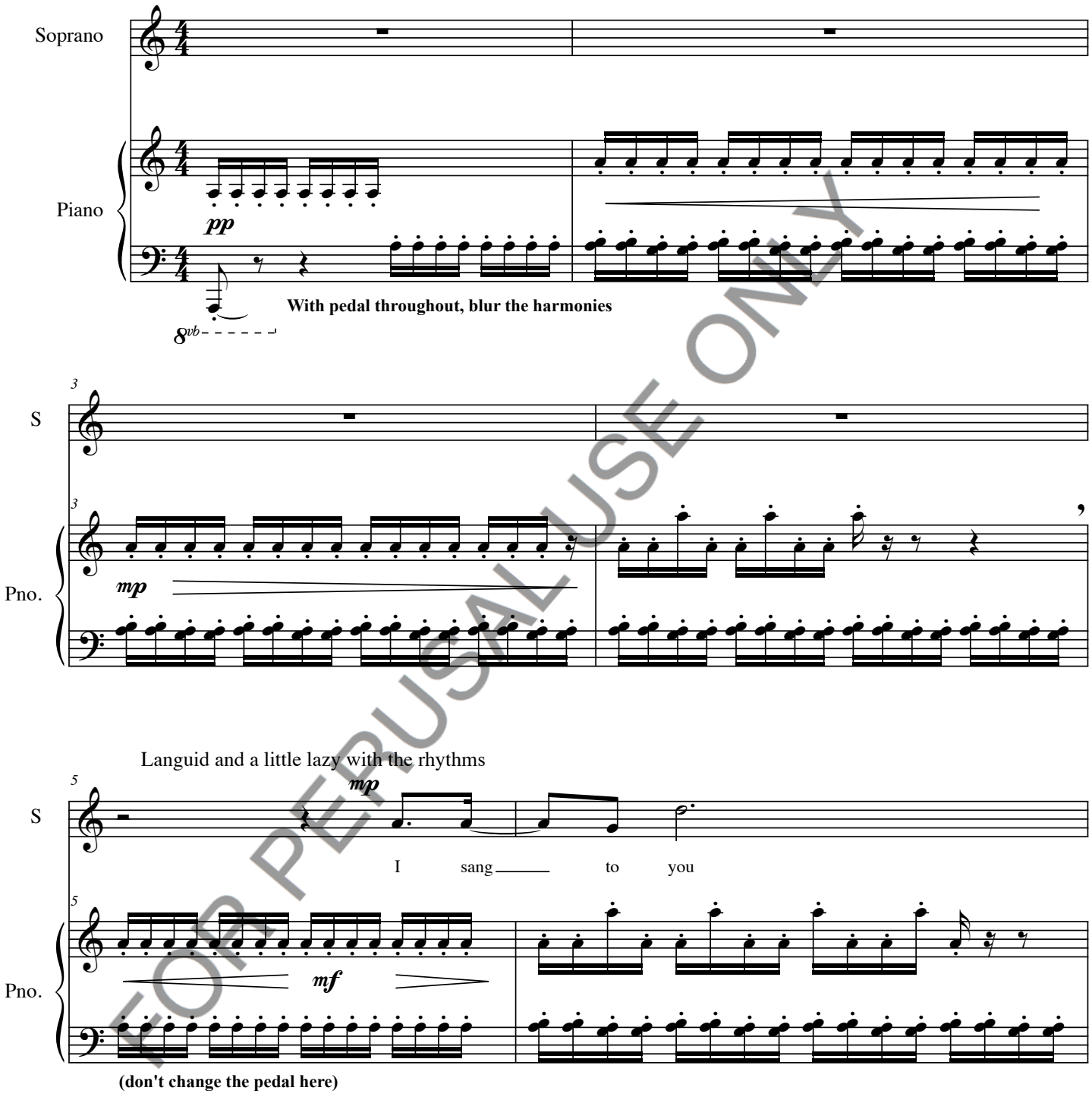
# I Sang to You and the Moon

Carl Sandburg

**Kurt Erickson**

**Delicate & Mysterious** ♩ = 70

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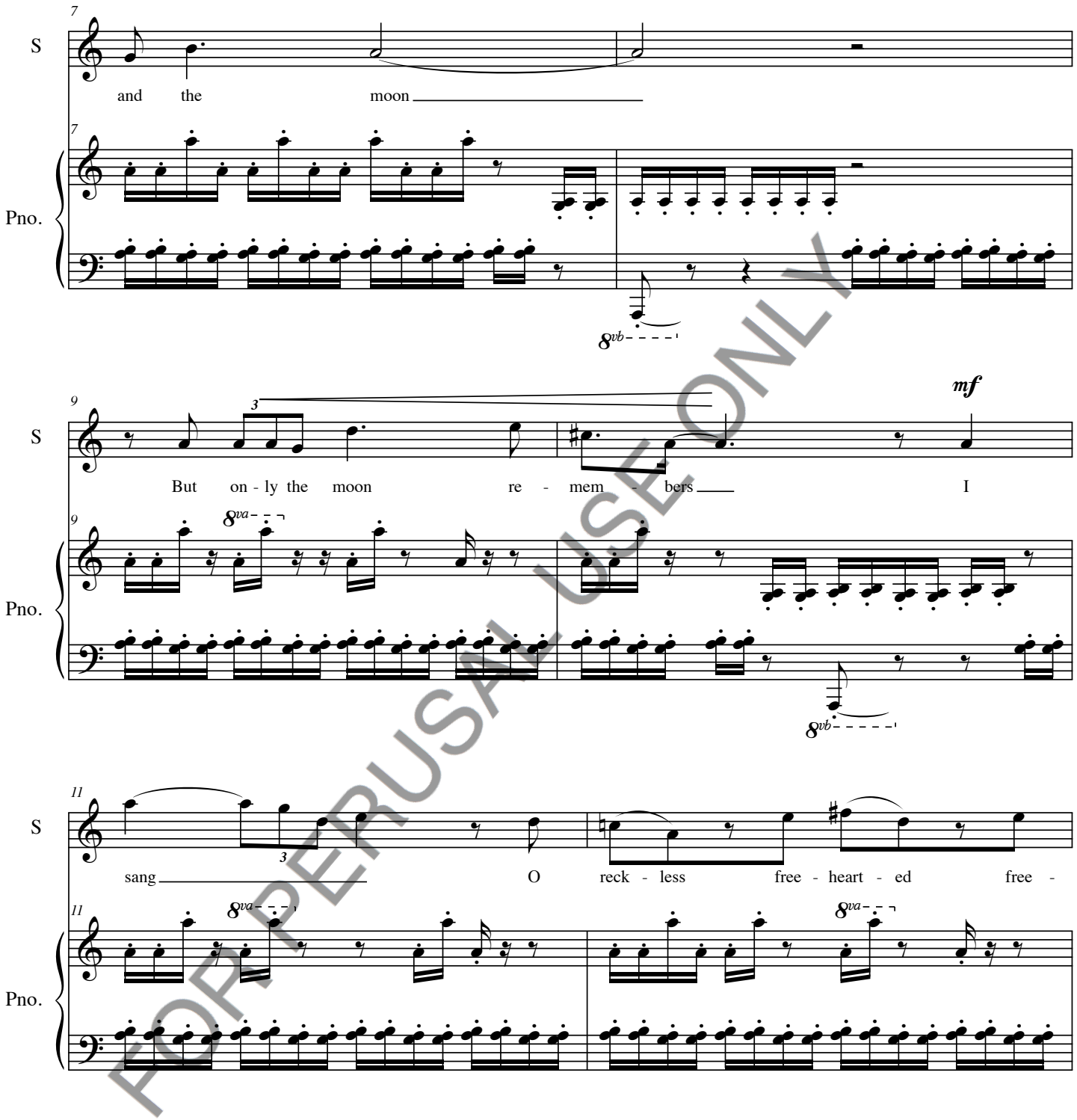


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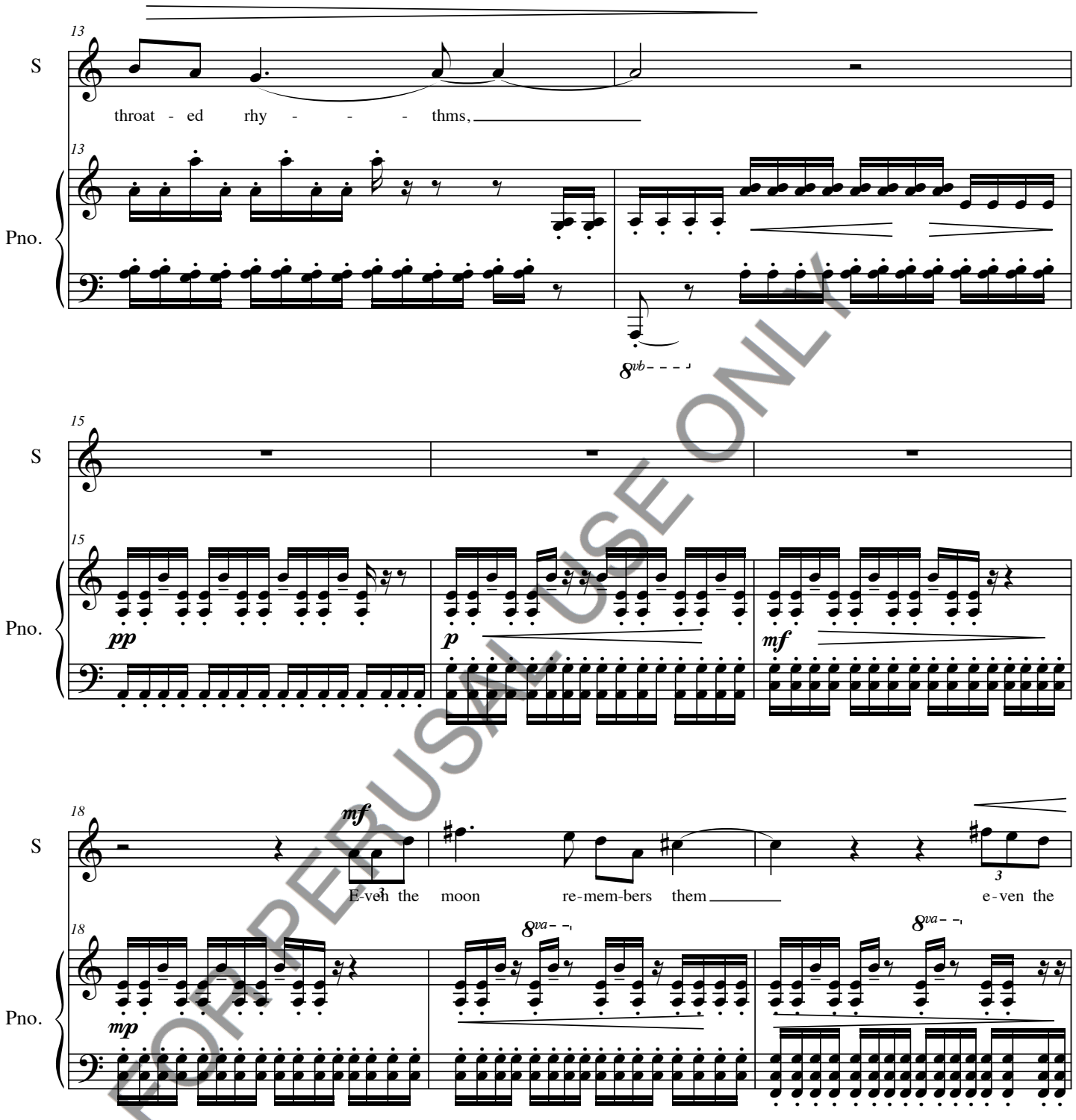


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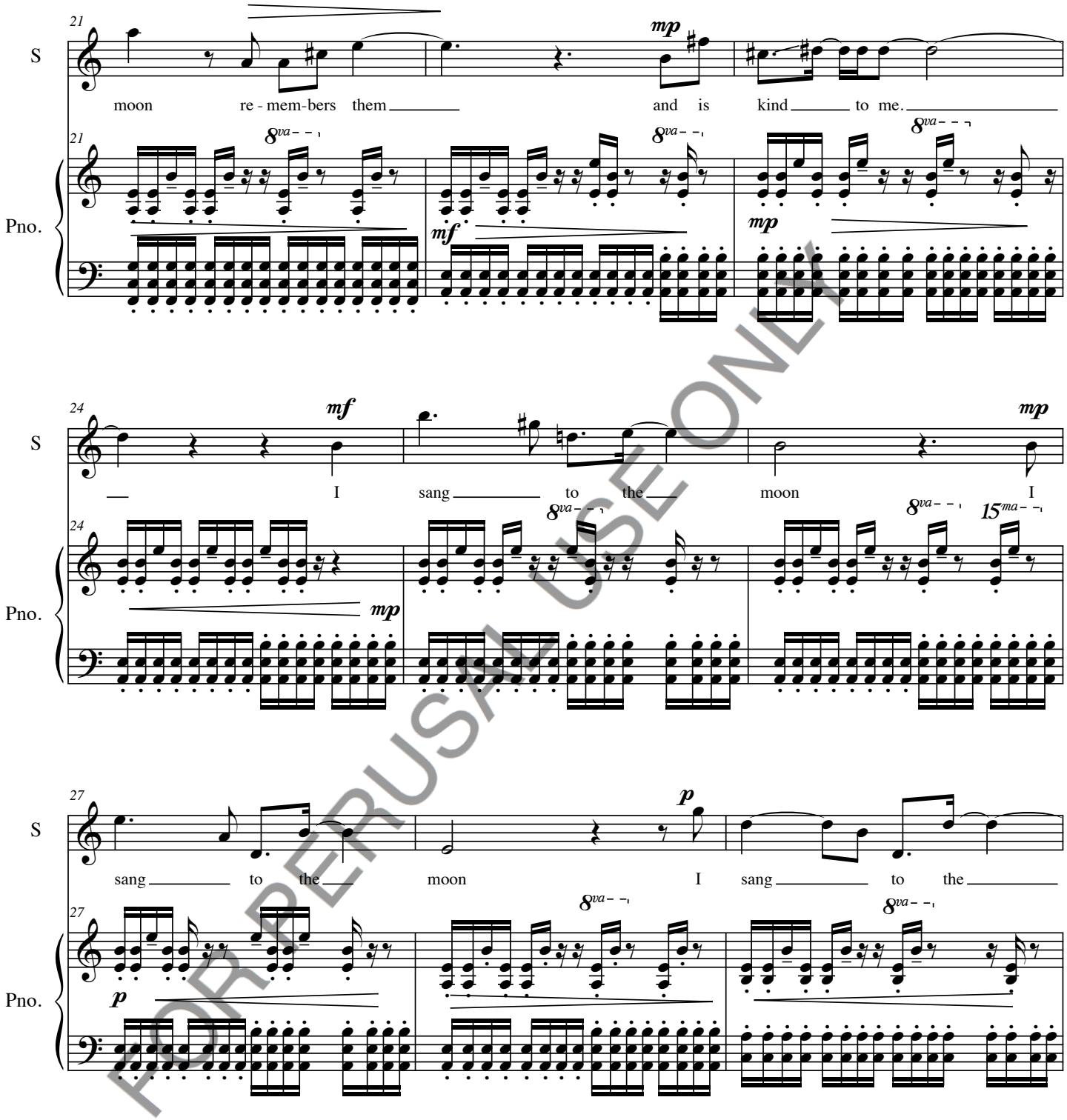


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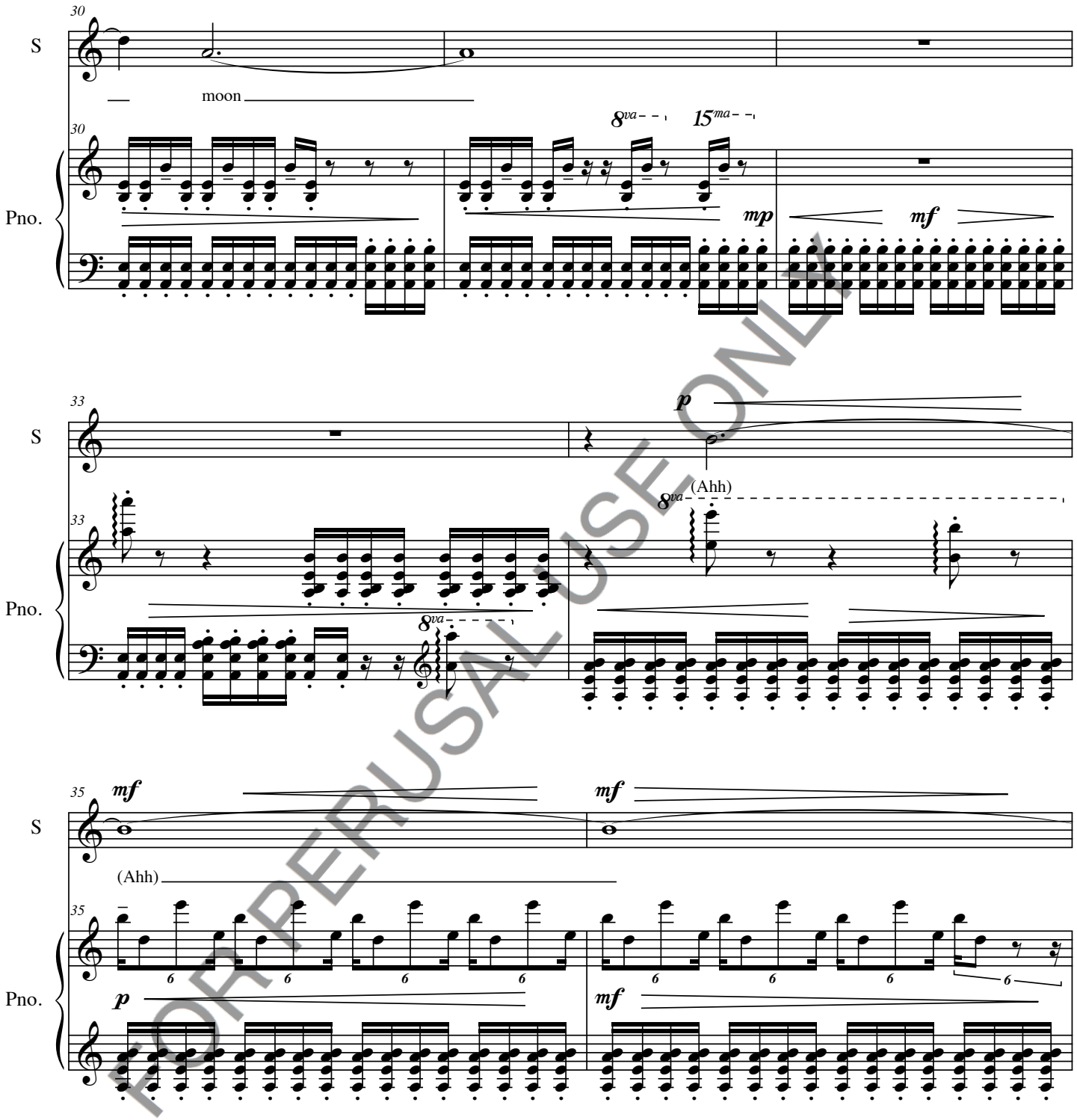


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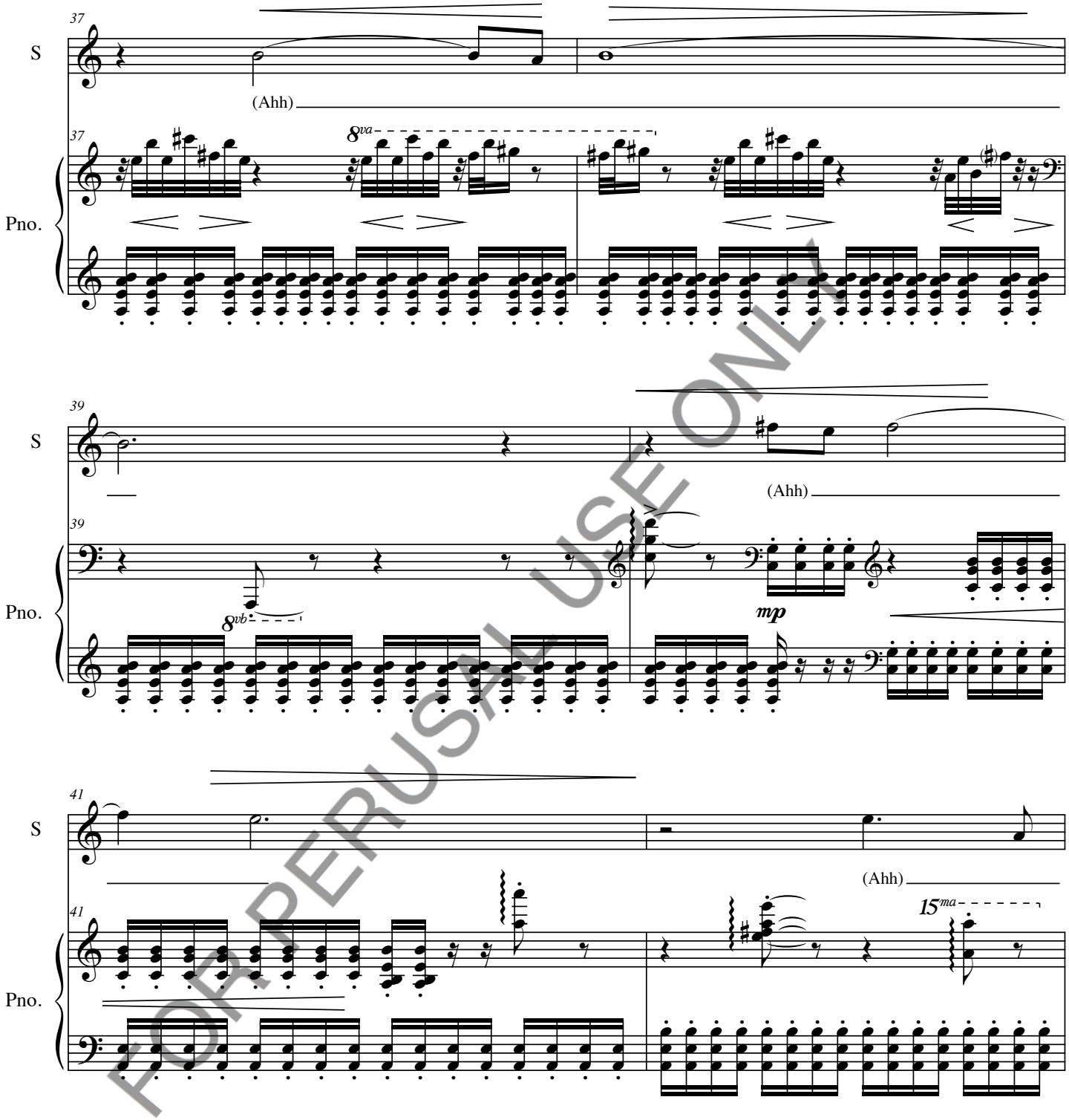


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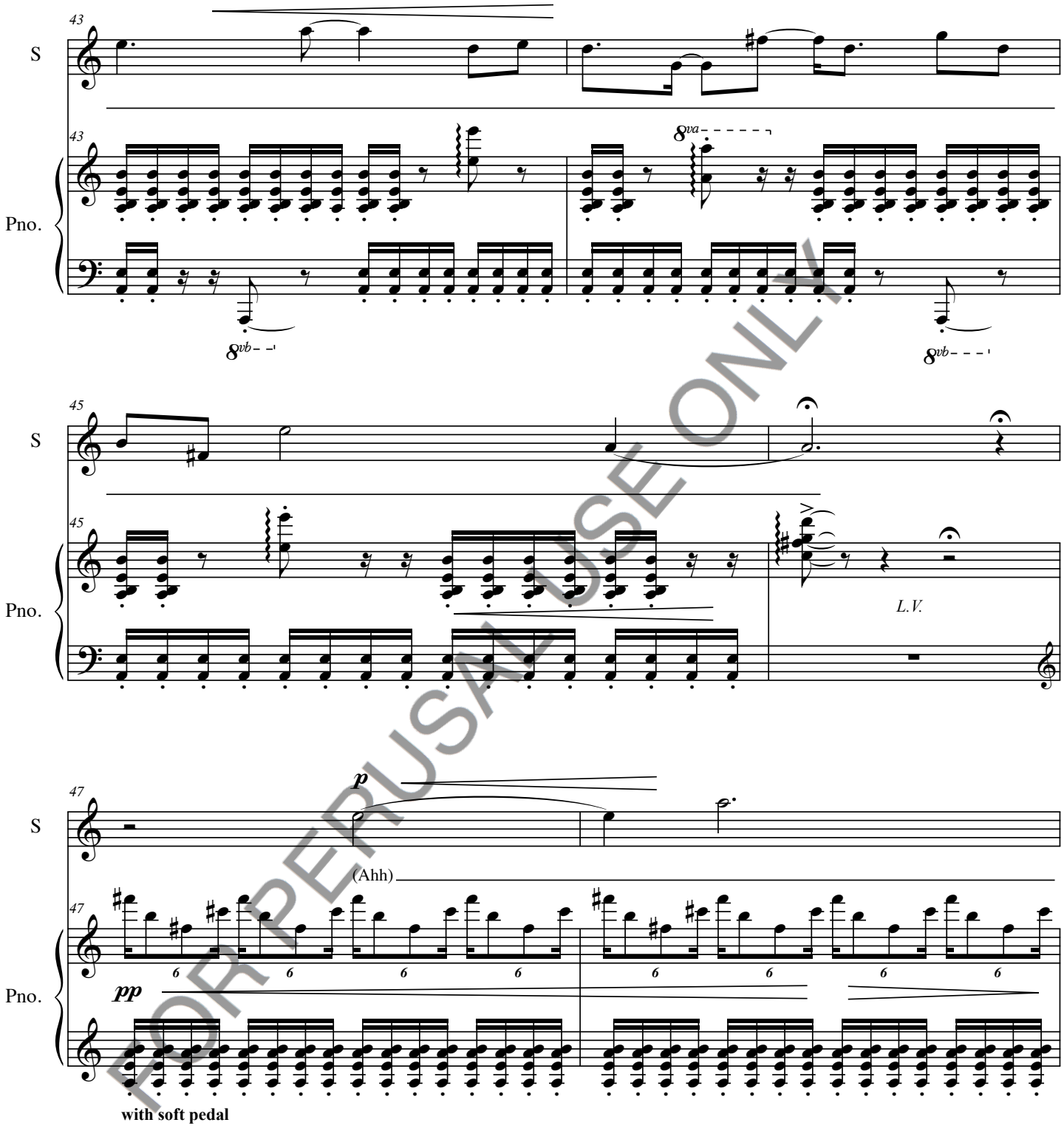


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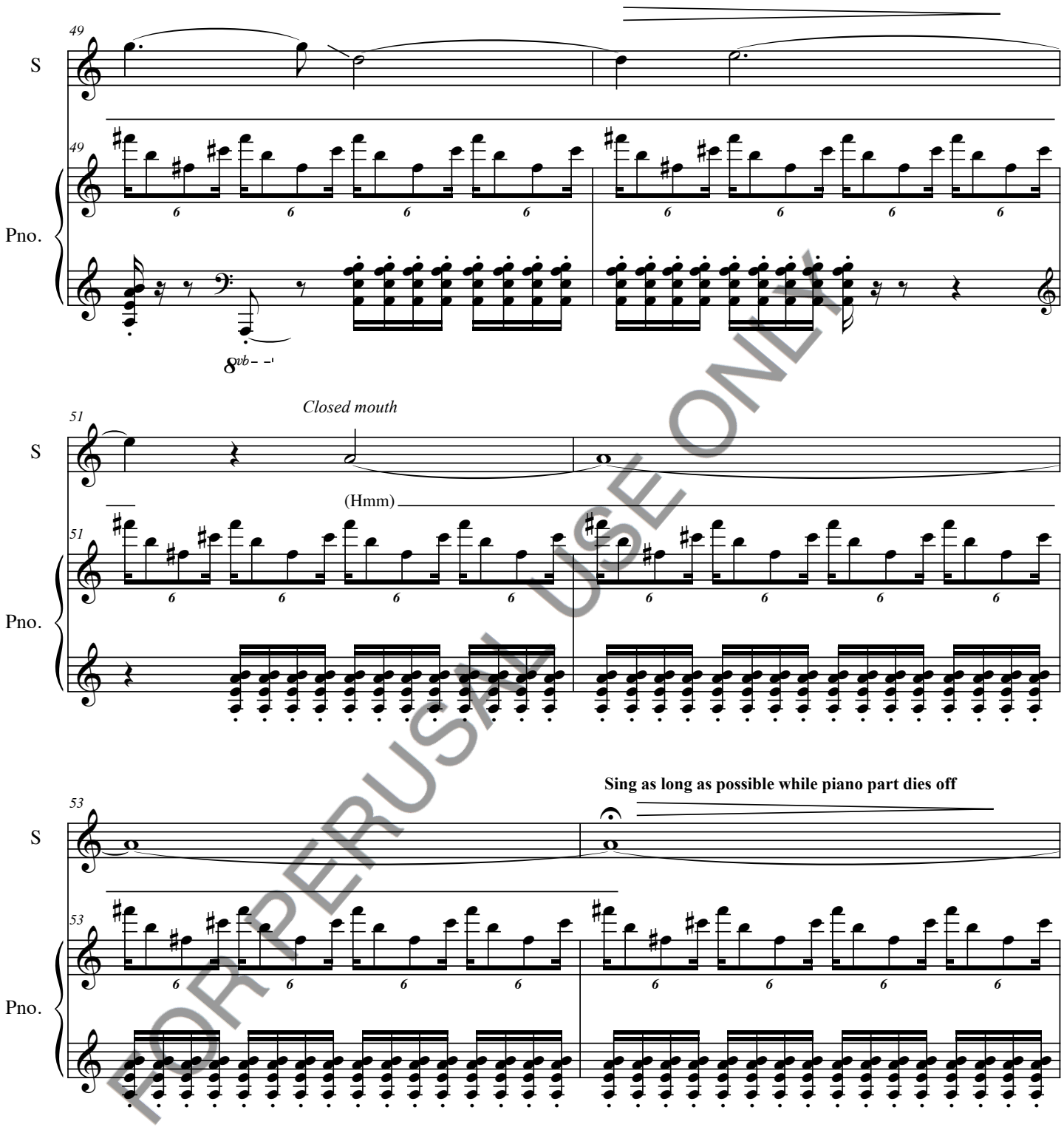


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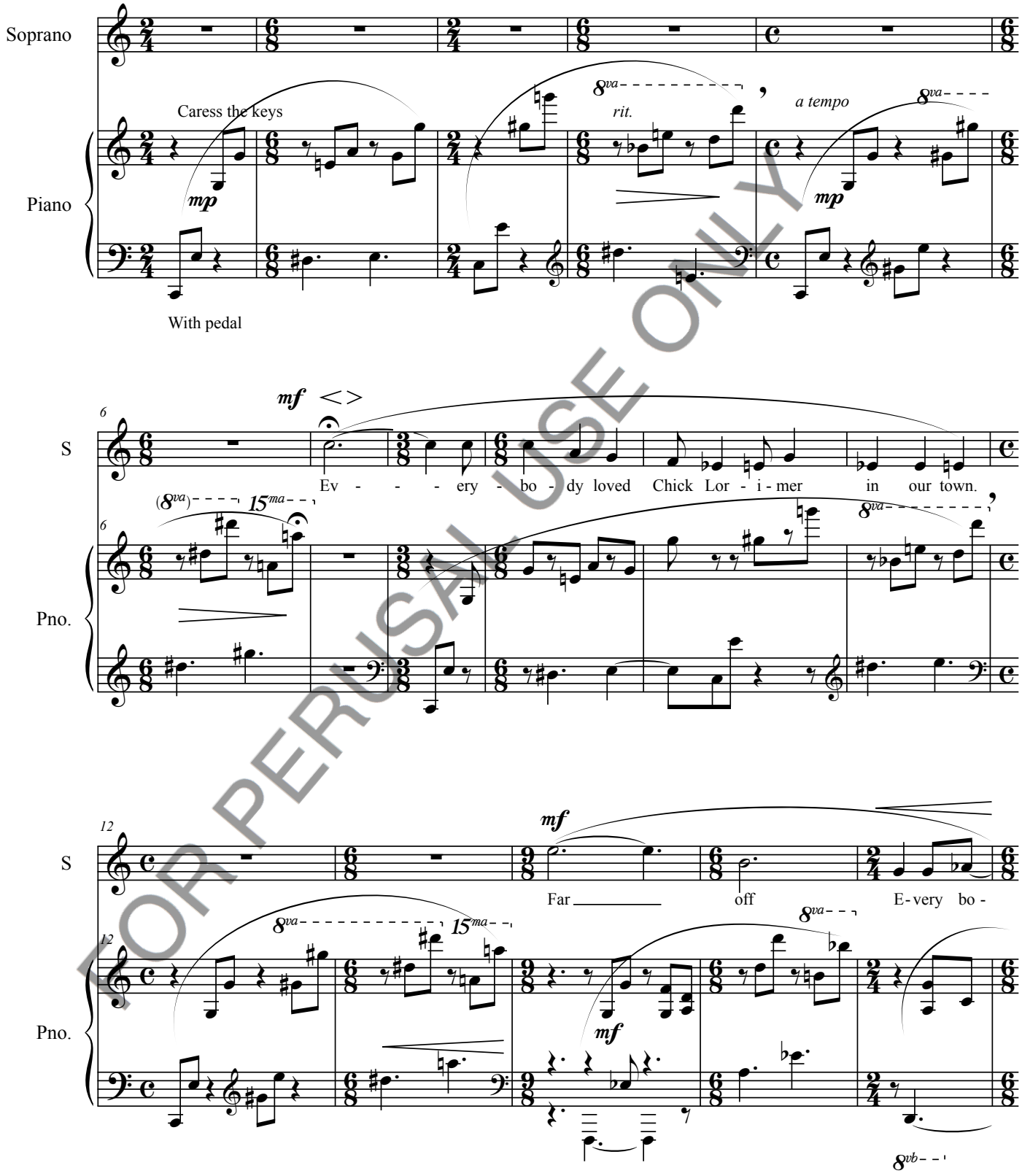
# Gone

**Carl Sandburg** **Kurt Erickson**

Atmospheric, yet sassy

**Moderato** (♩ = c. 110)

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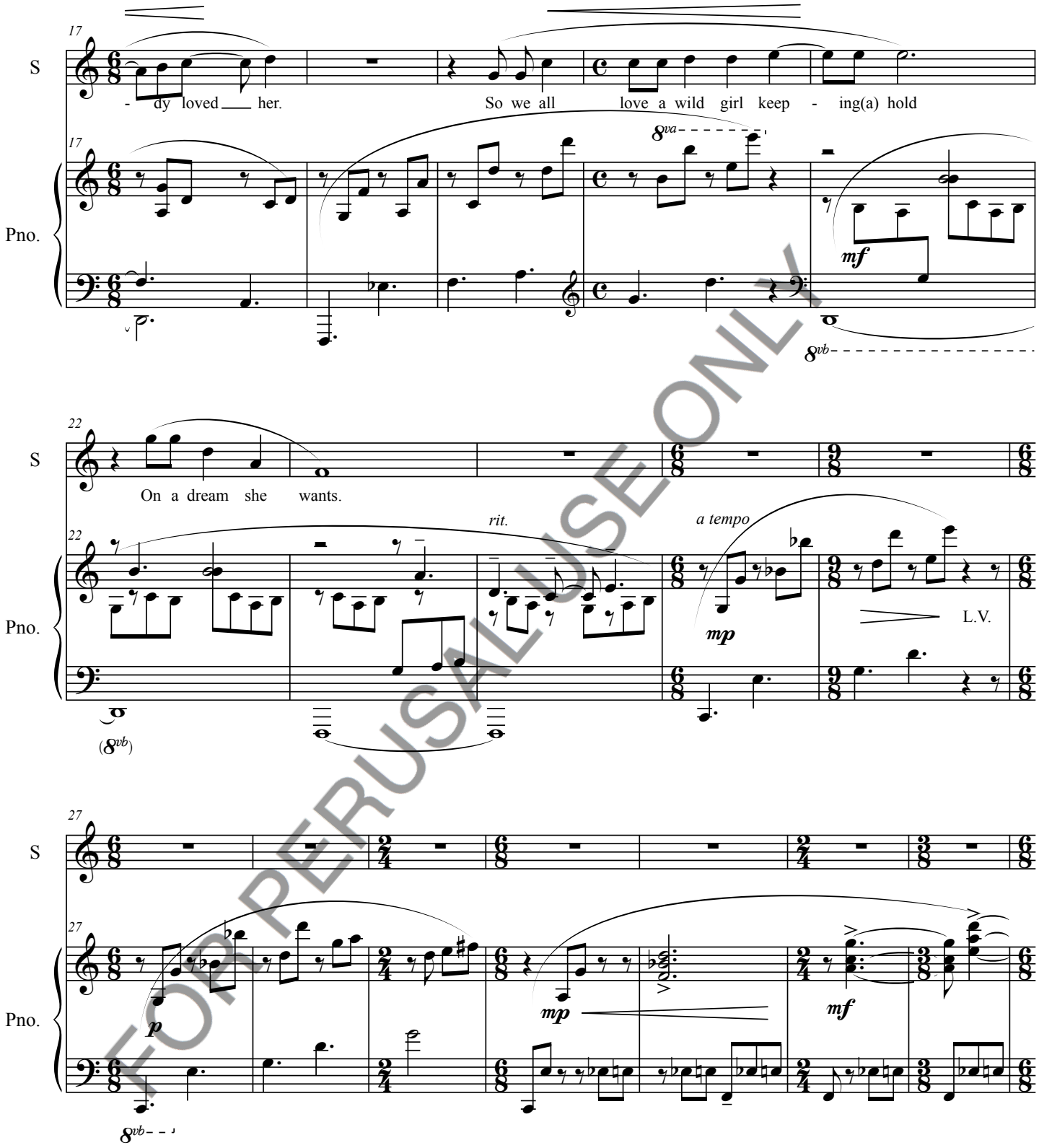


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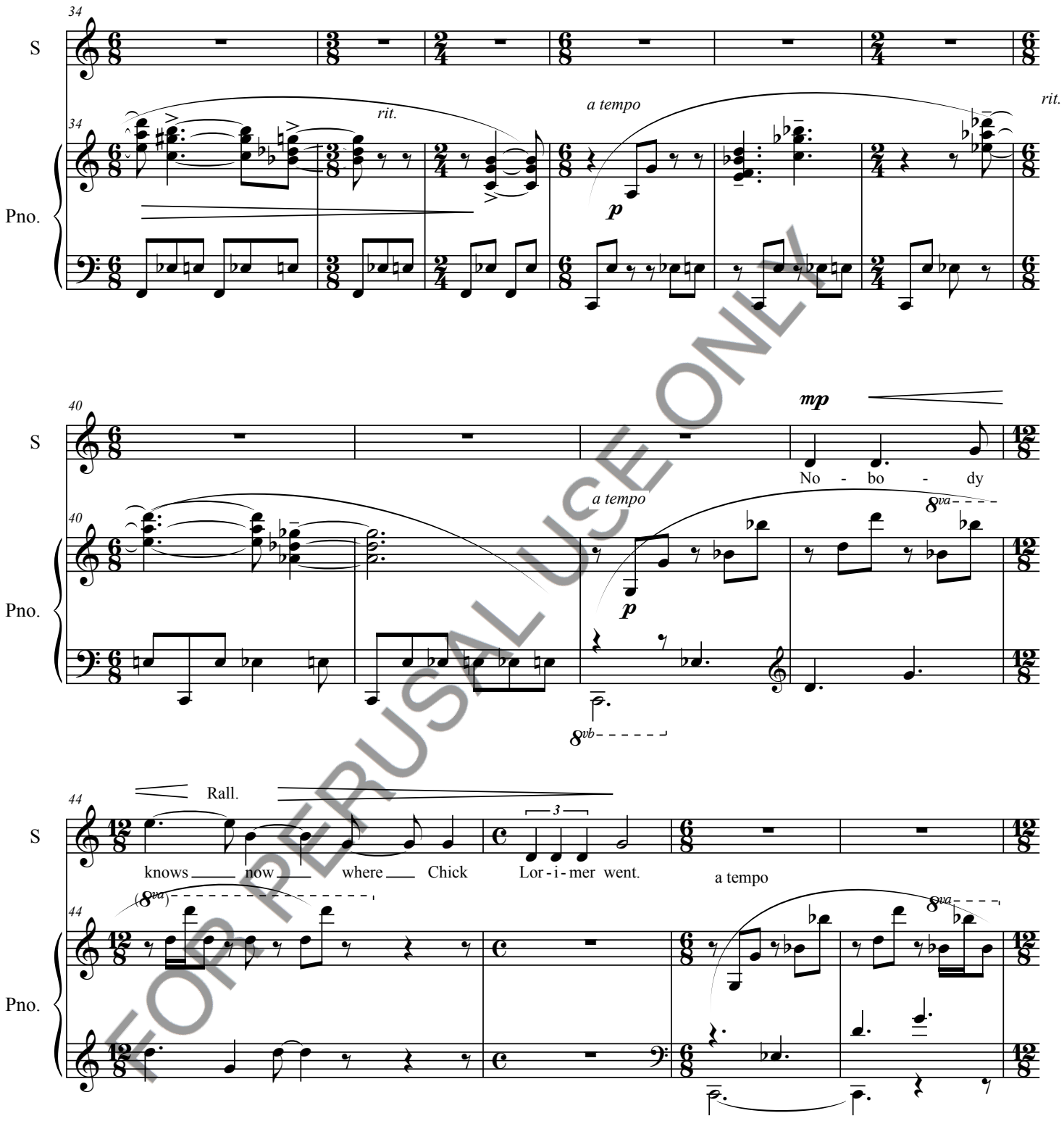


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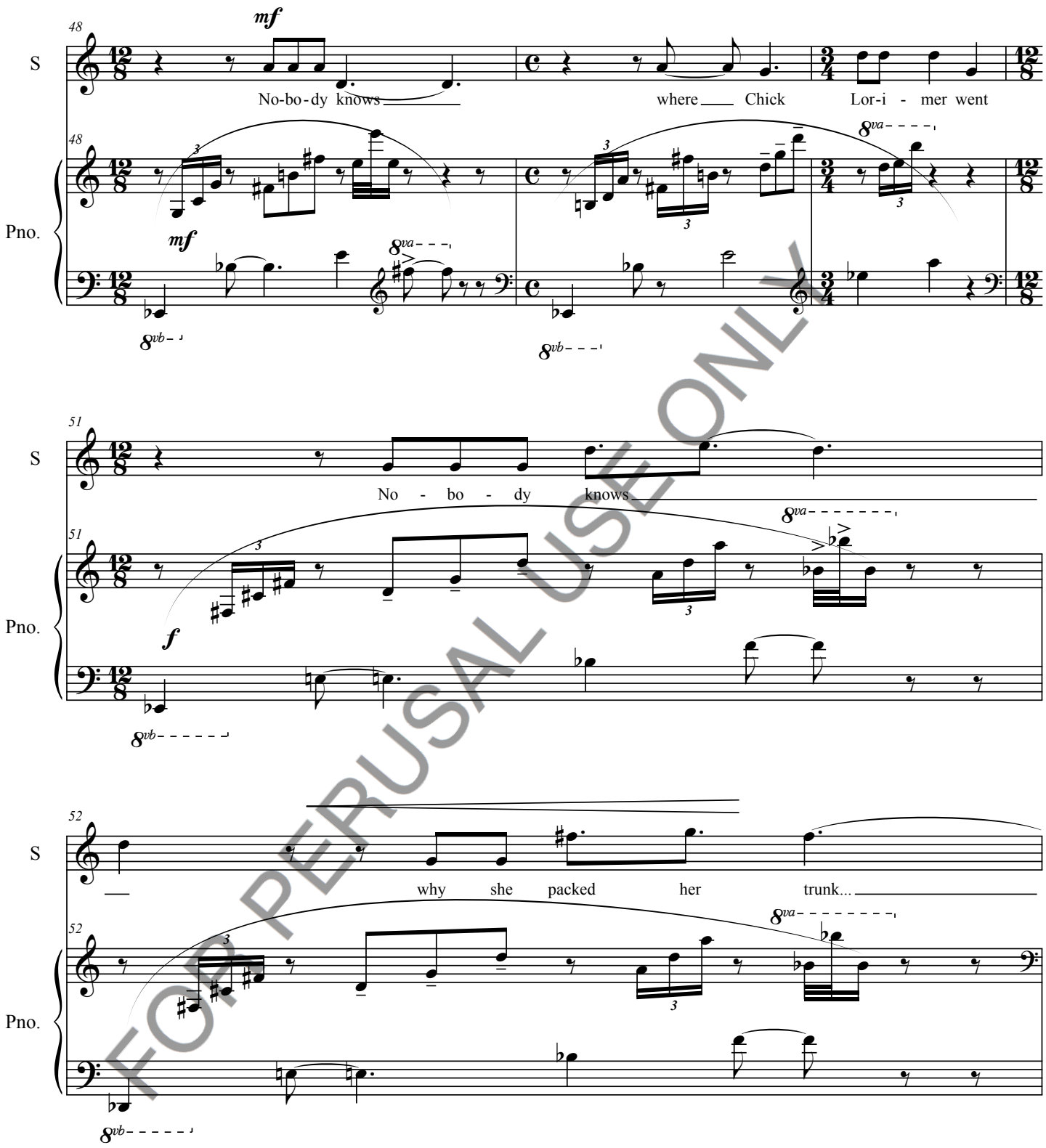


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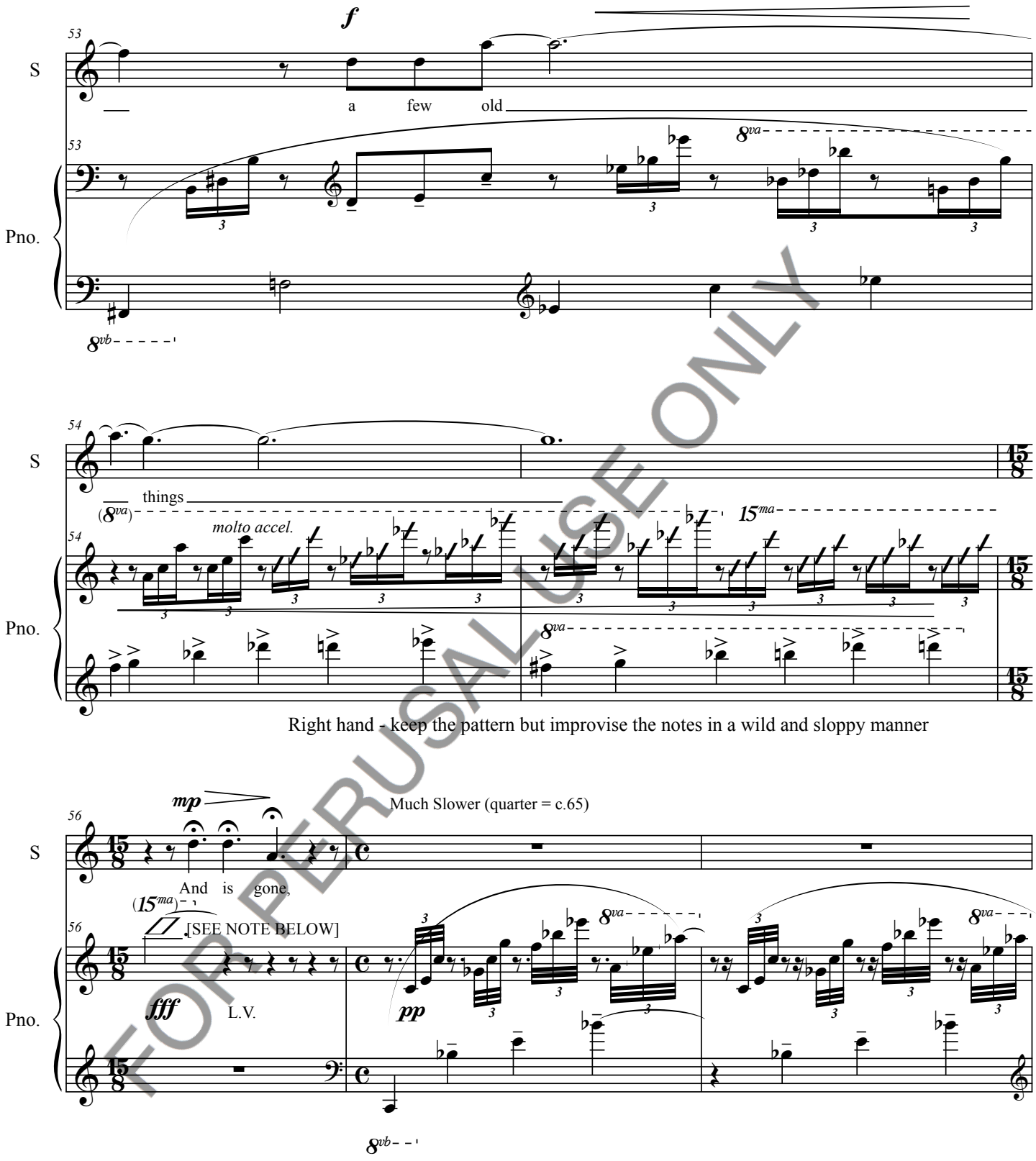


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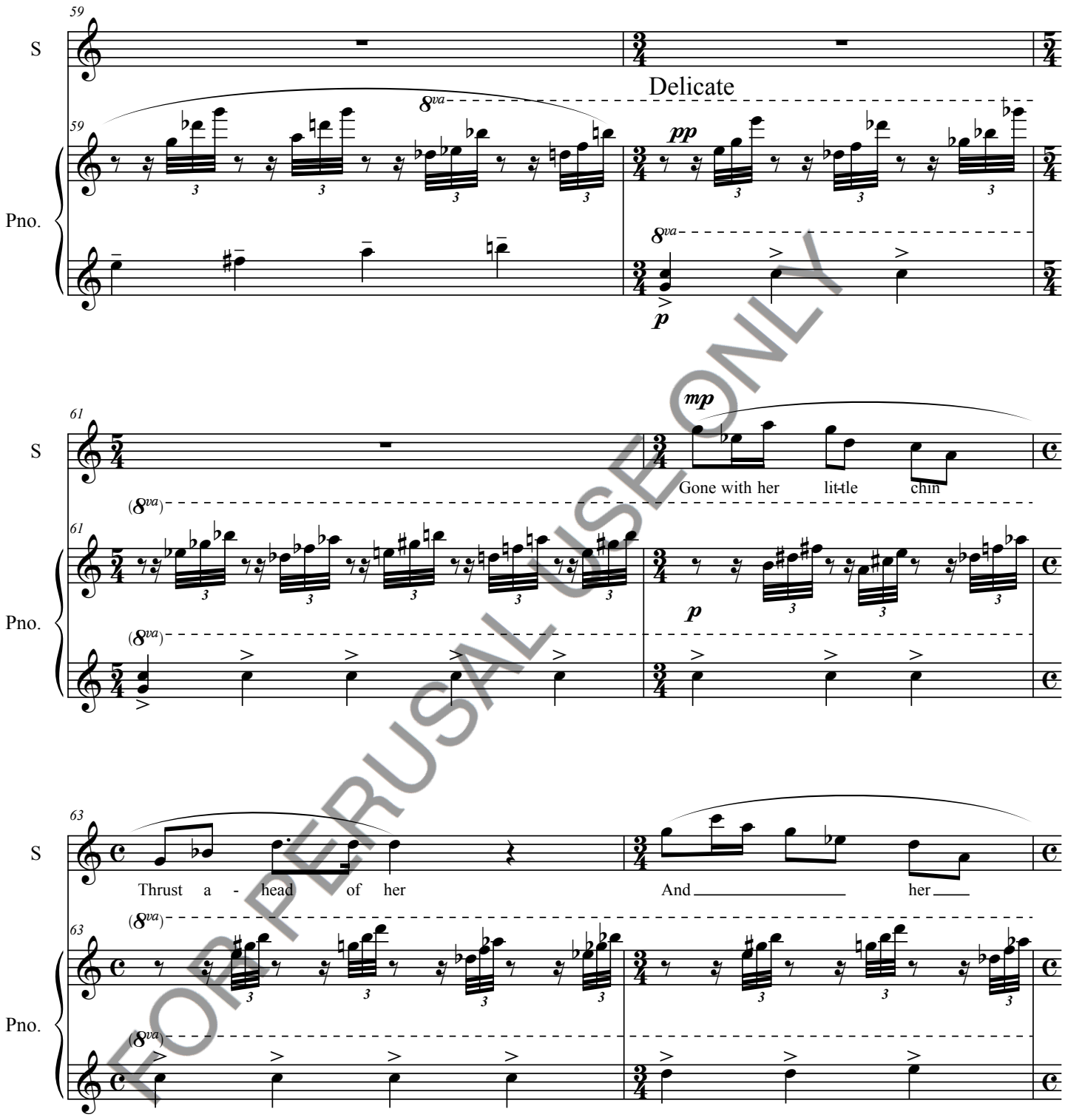
* Measure 54 note: With palm of hand, strike far right edge of piano (past keys) to create a percussive "thud" sound.

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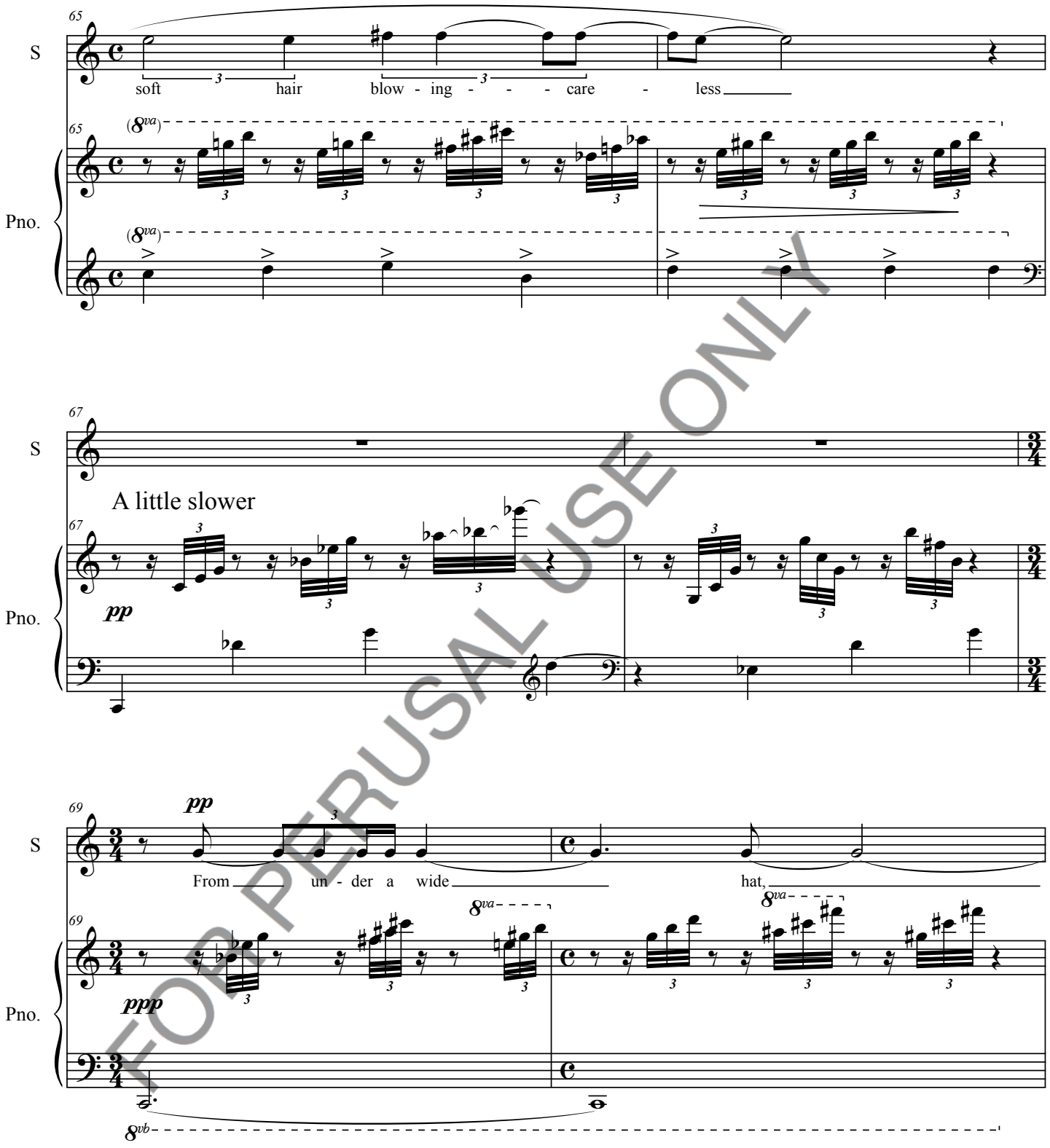


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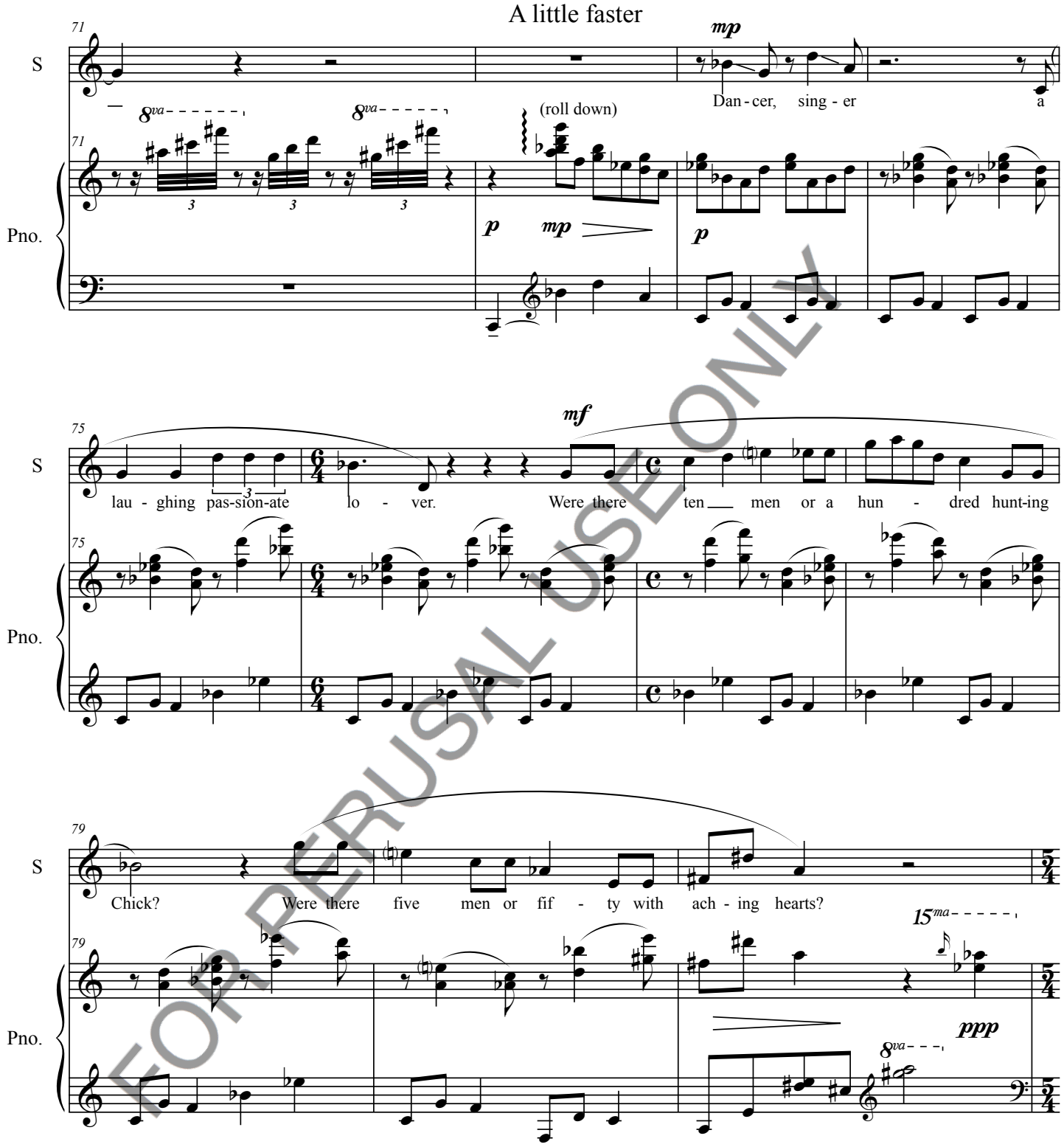


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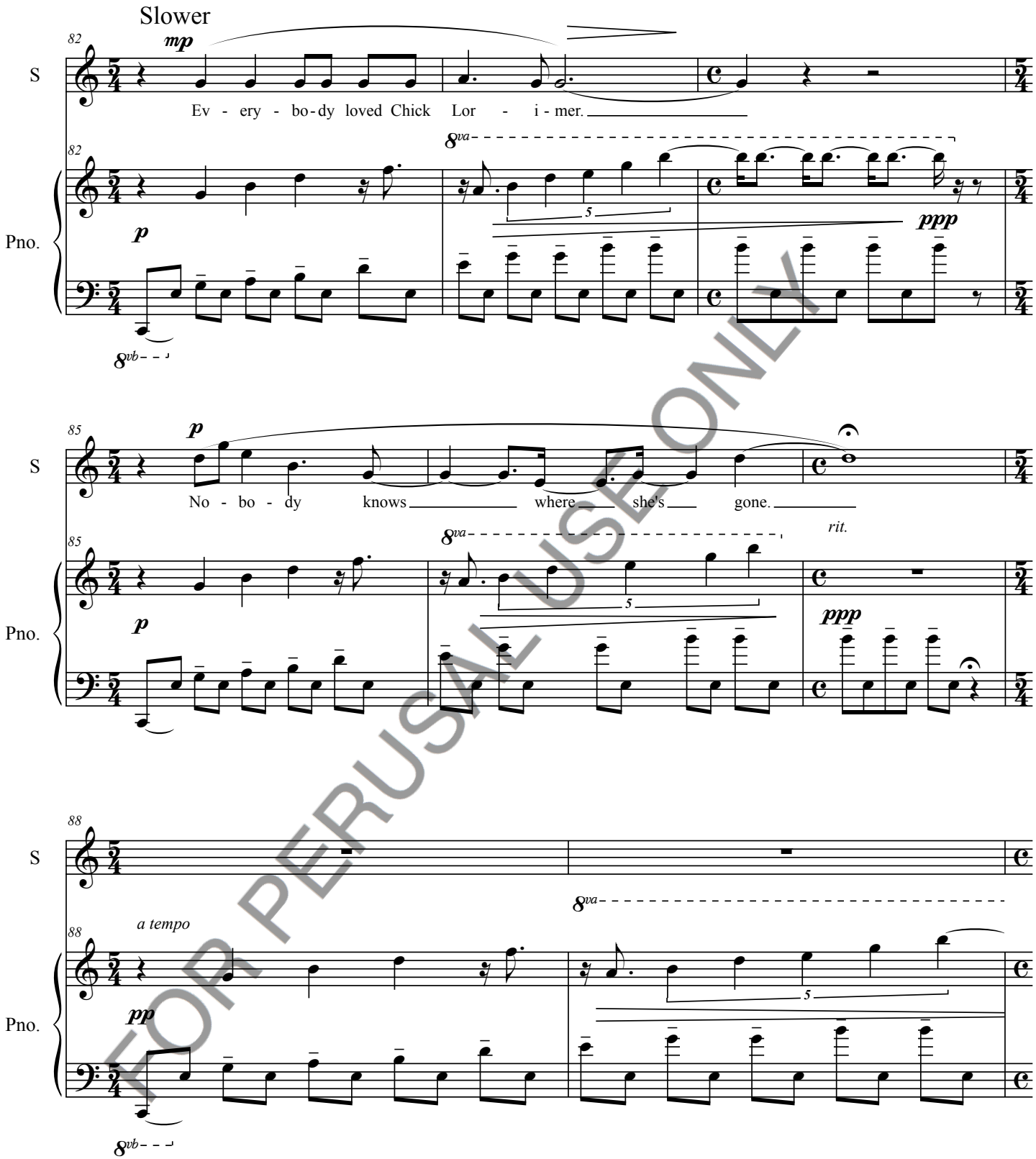


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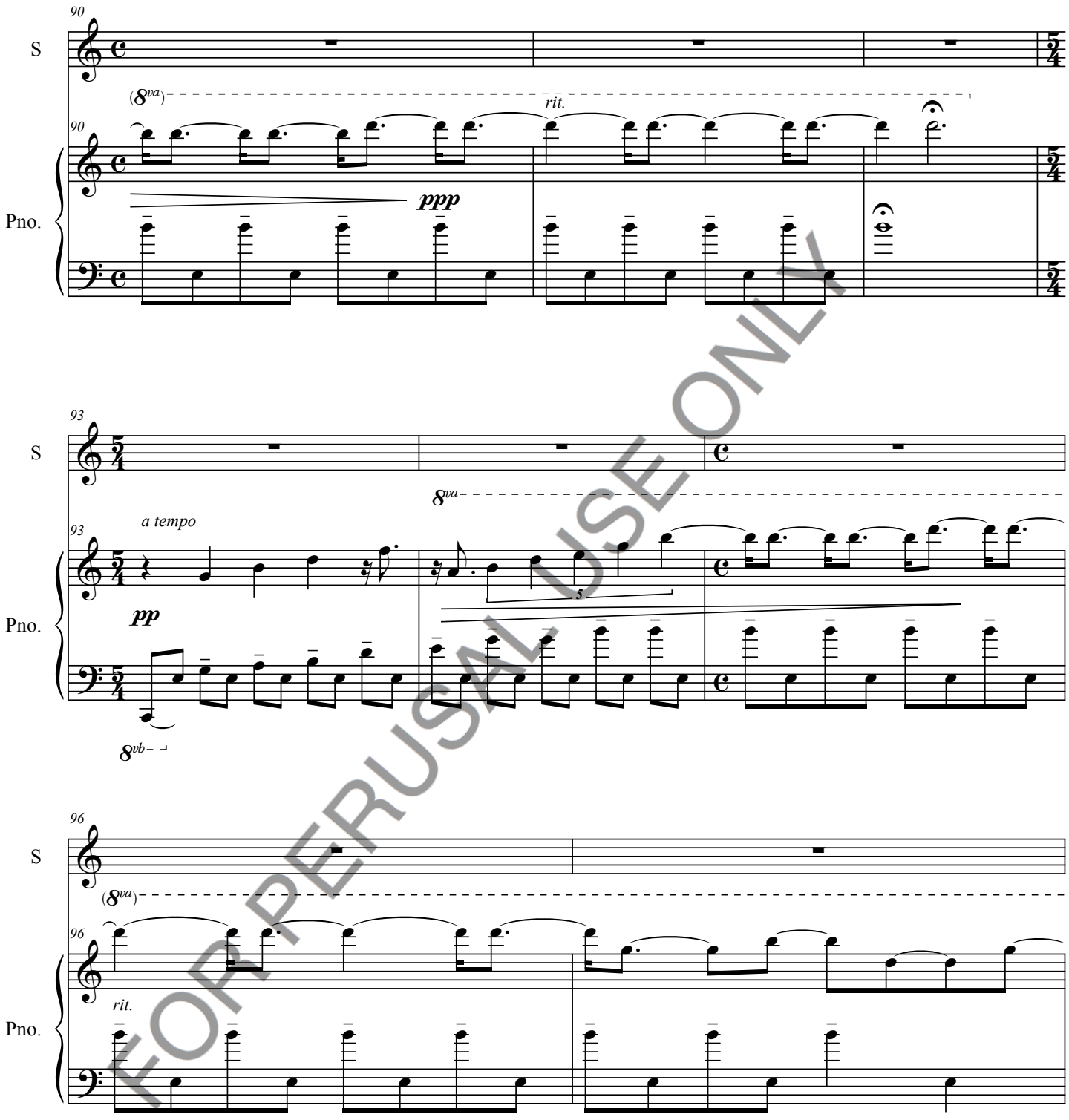


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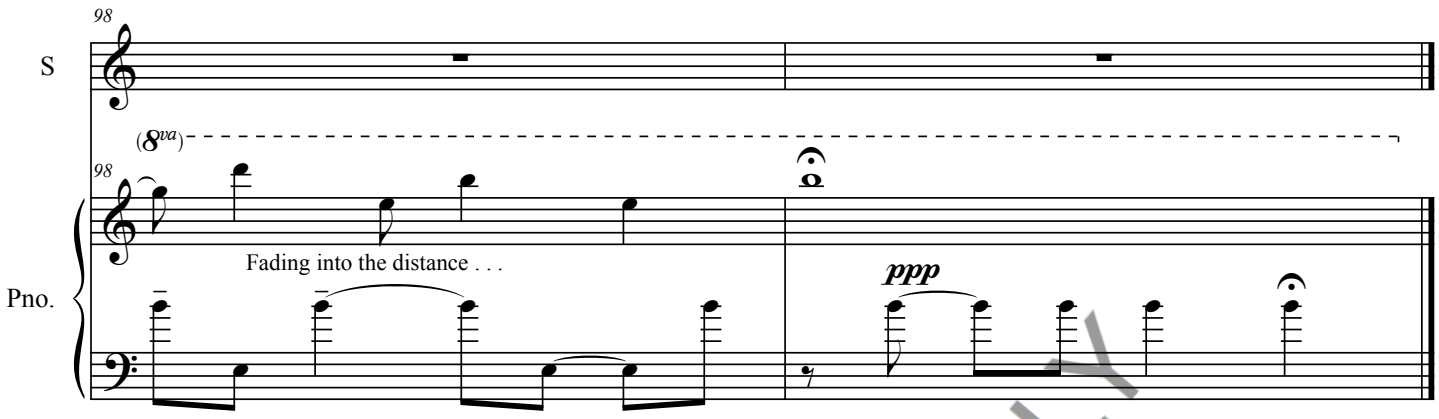


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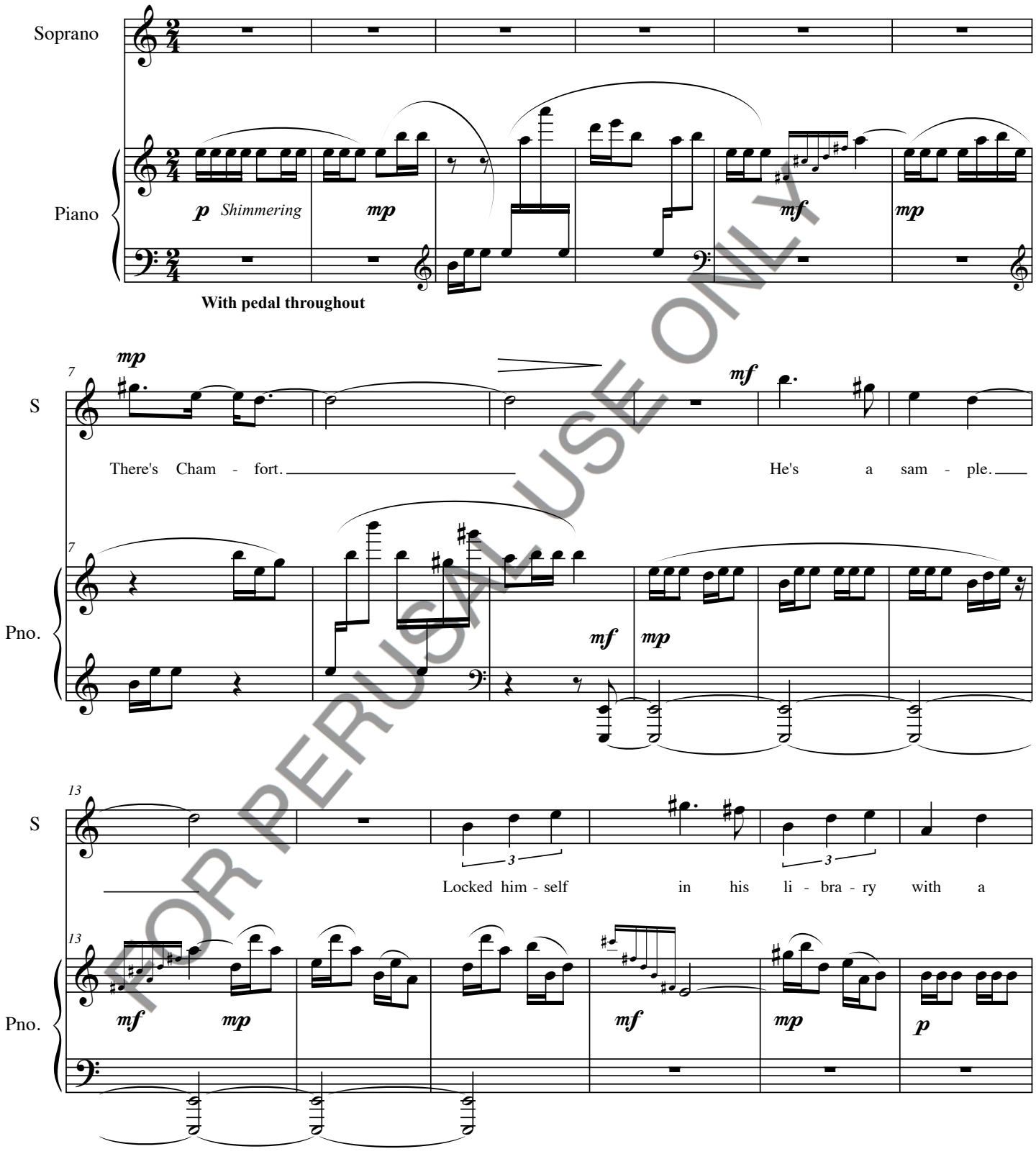
# Chamfort

Carl Sandburg

**Kurt Erickson**

Delicate but dancelike (quarter = 75)

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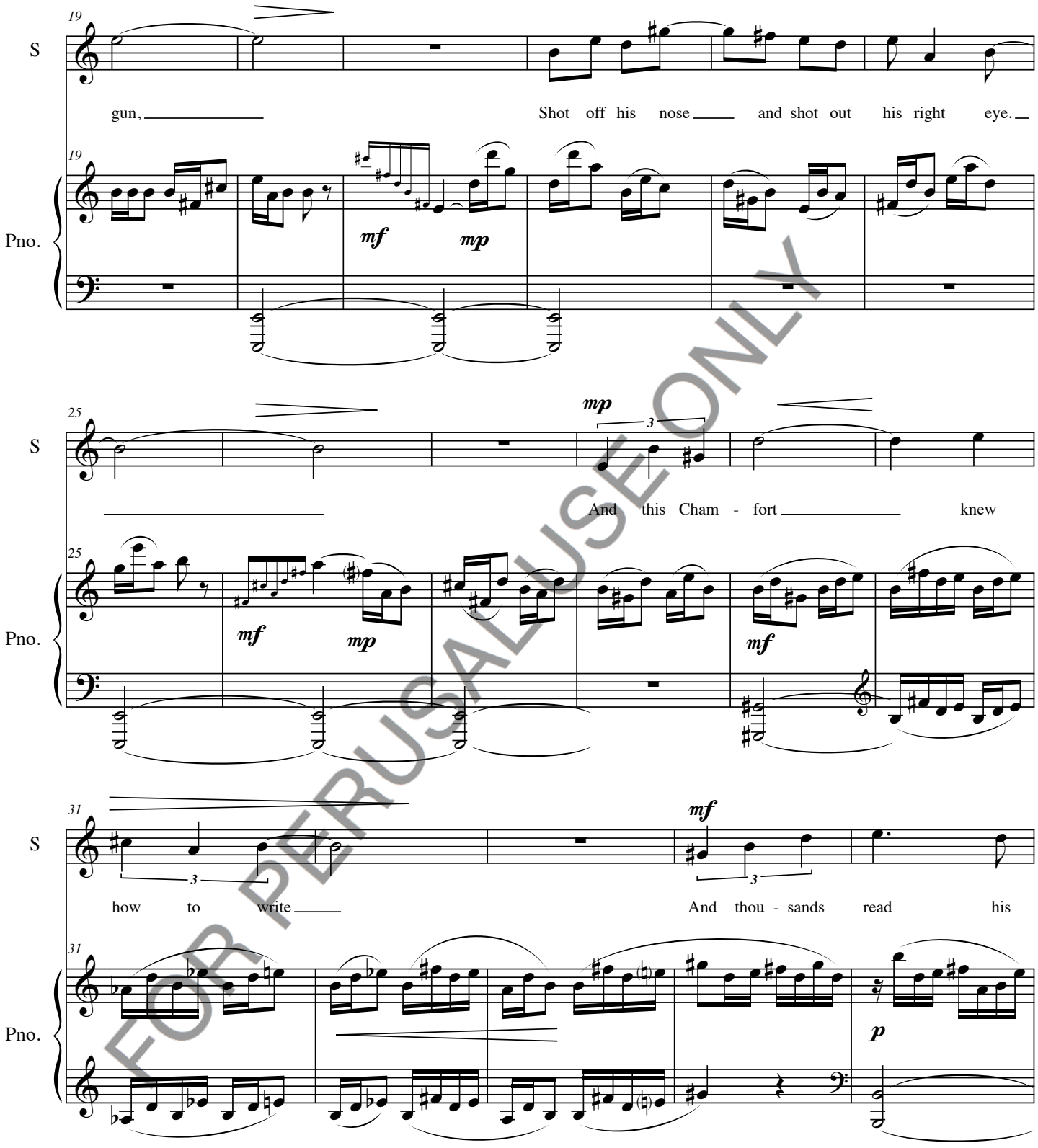


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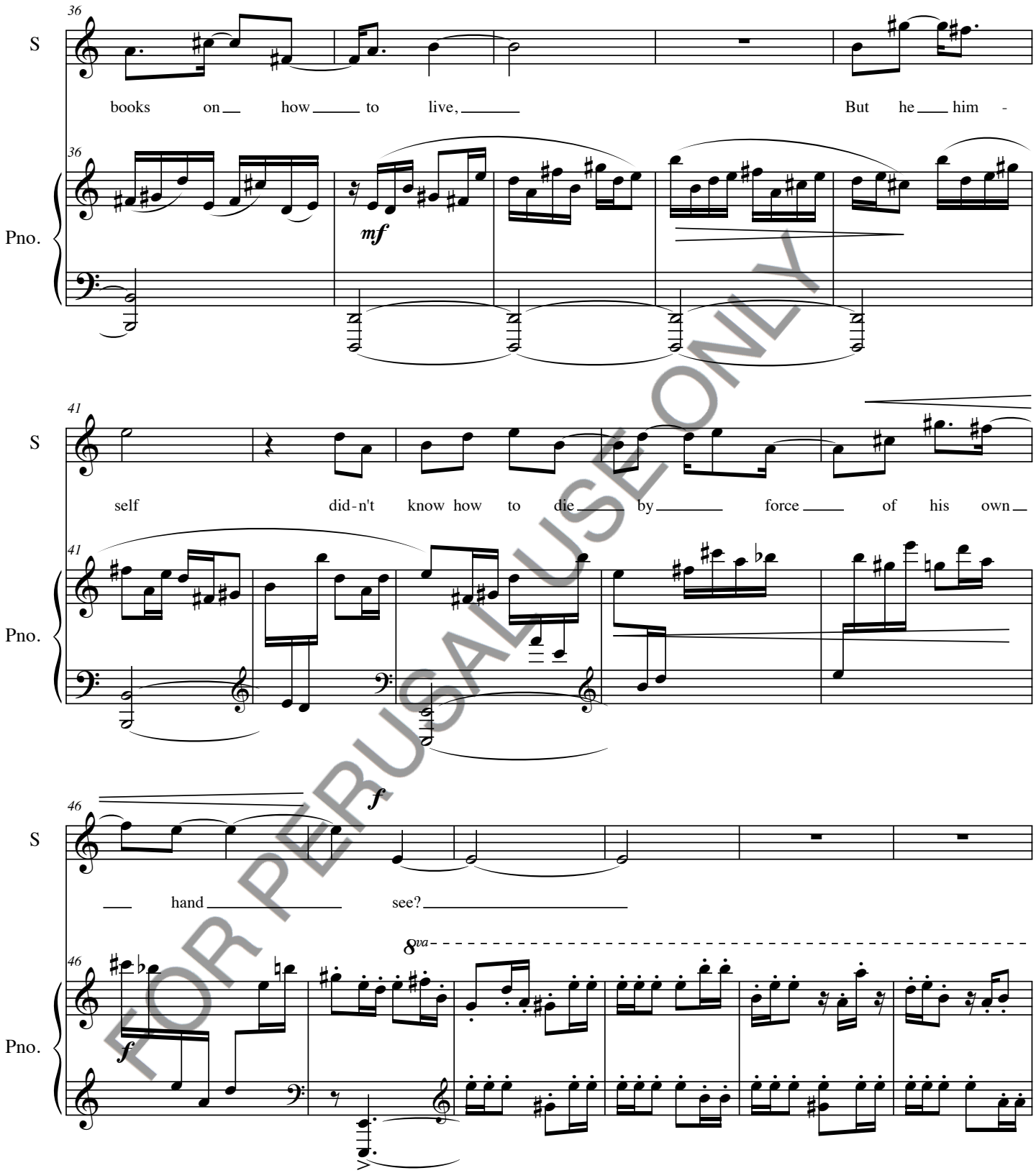


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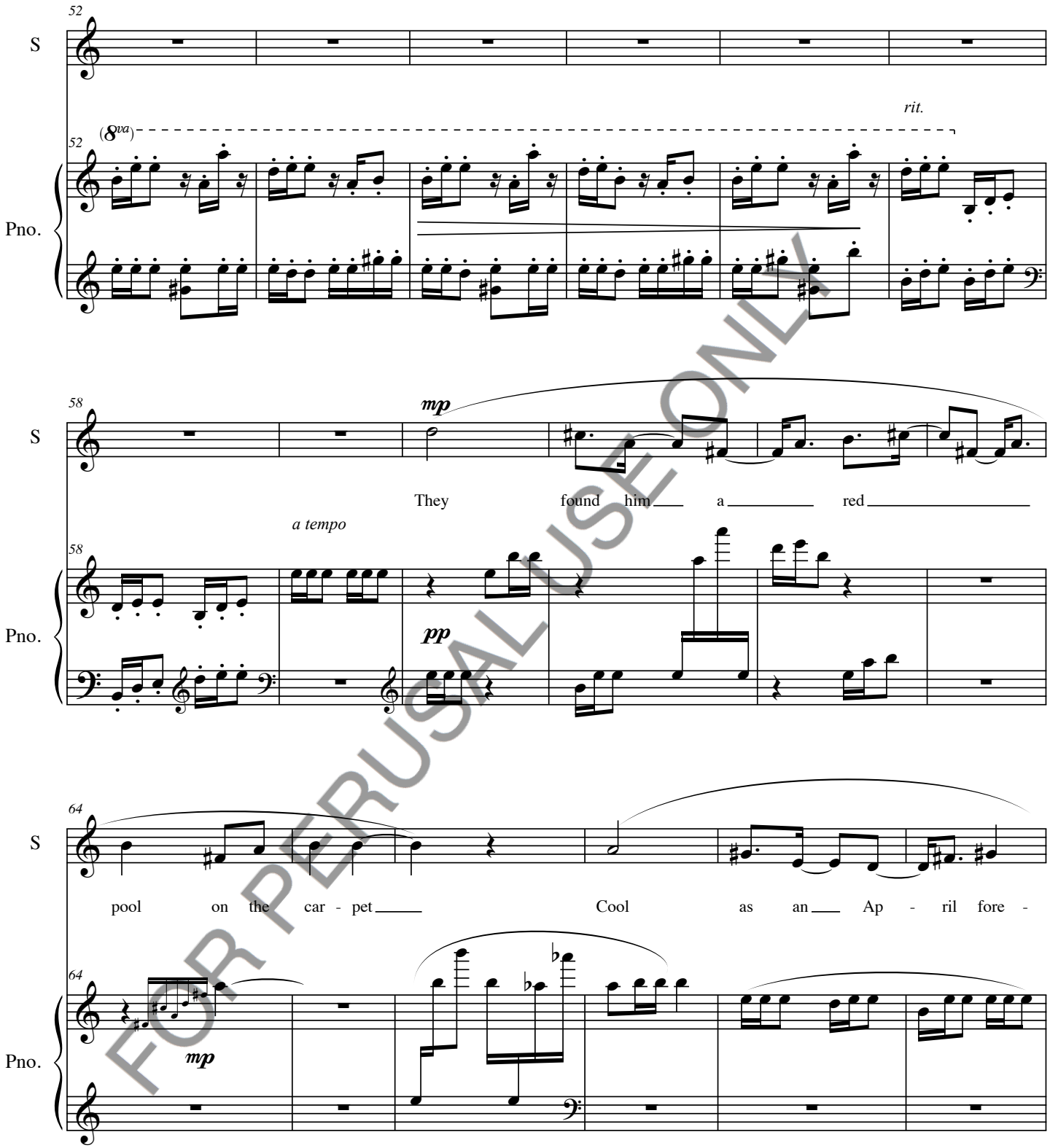


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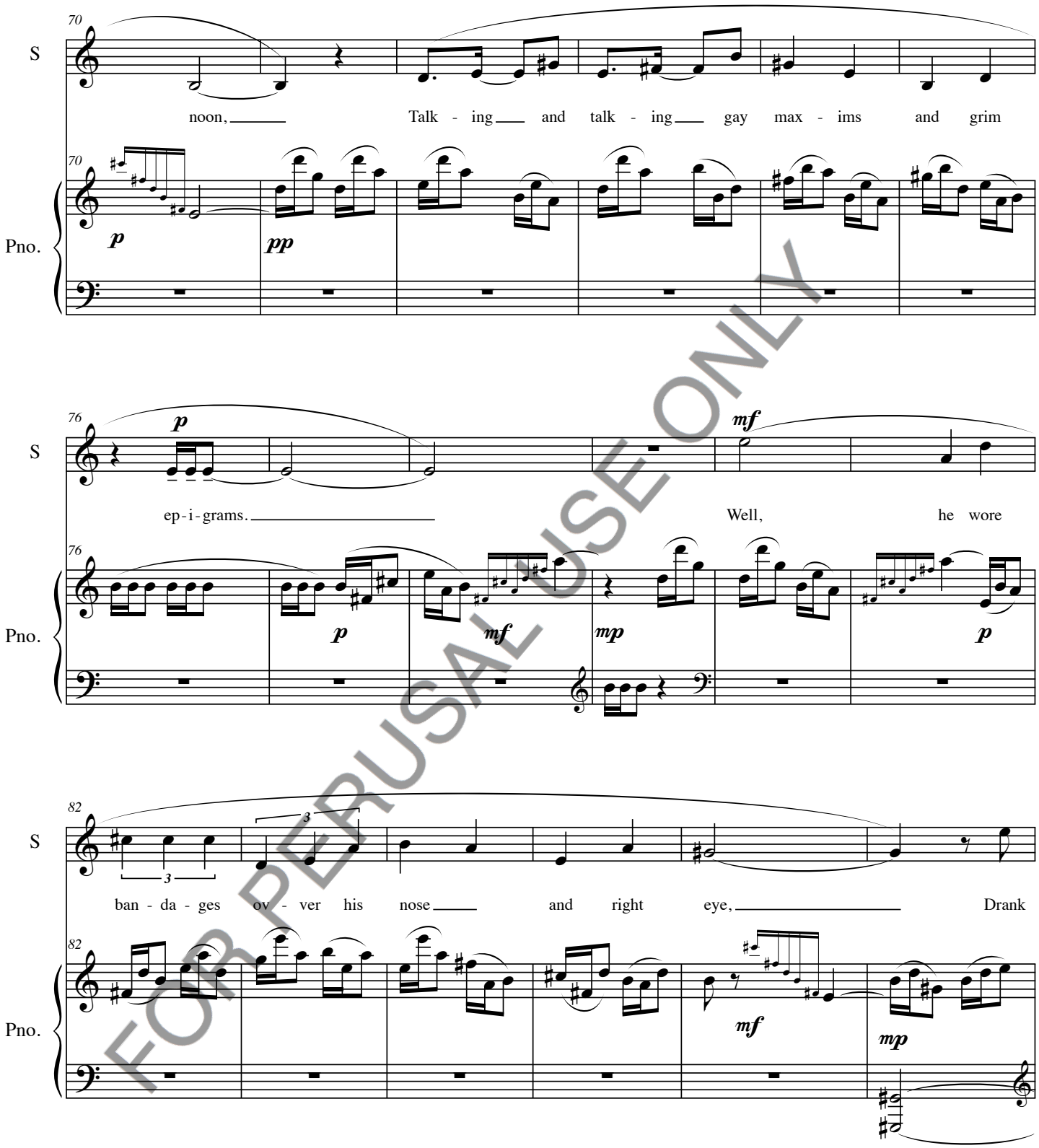


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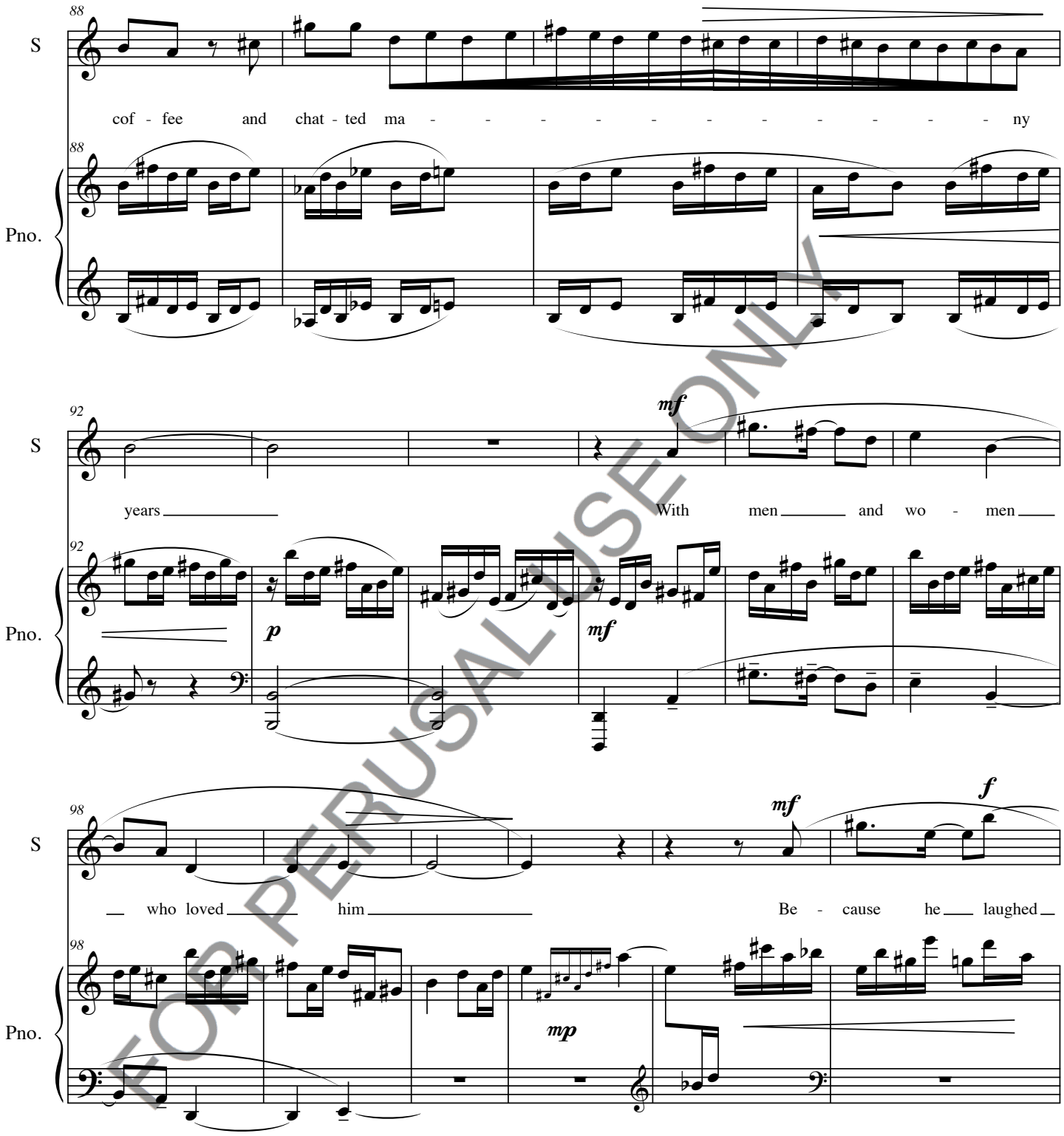
(free and unmeasured)

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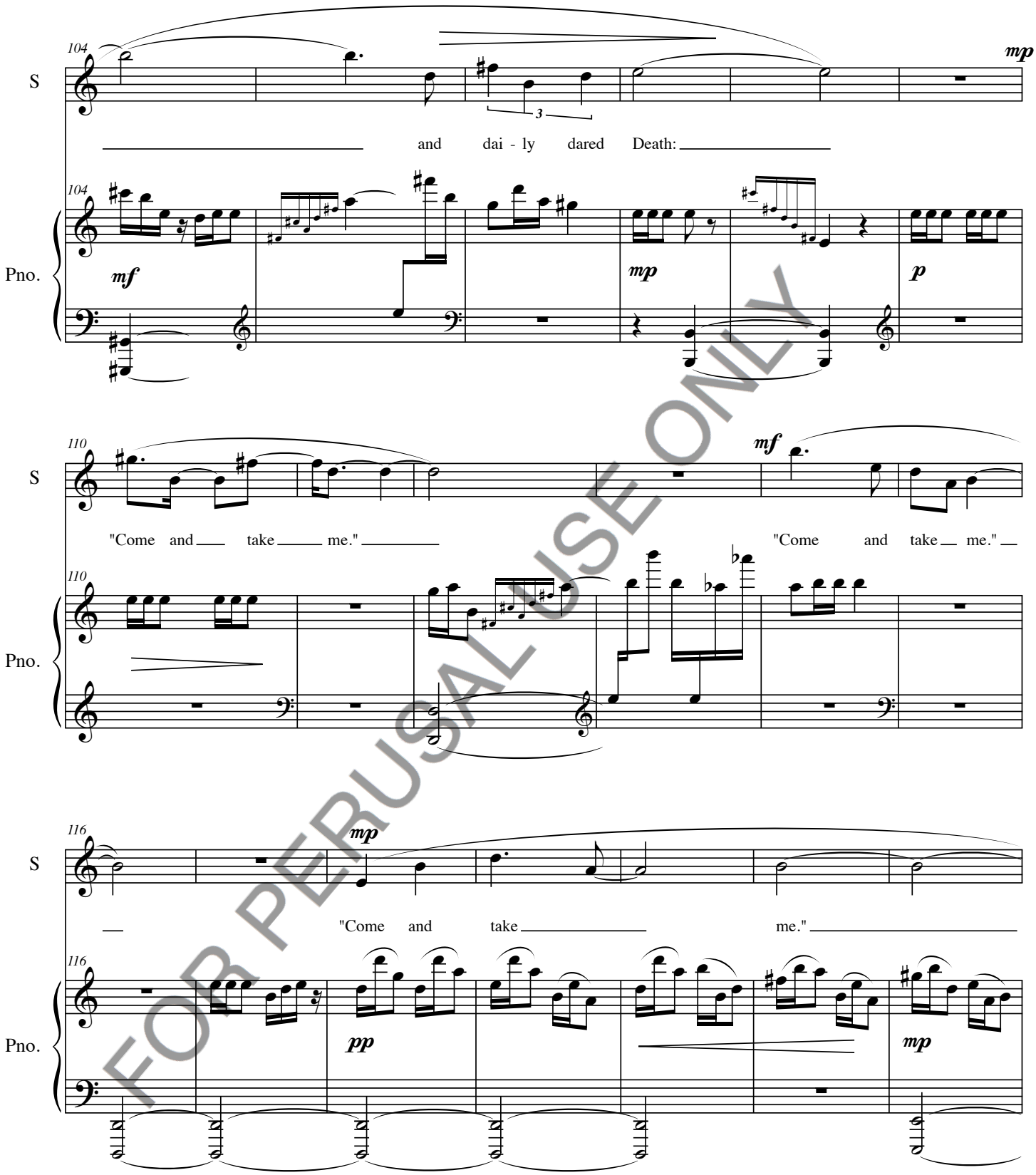


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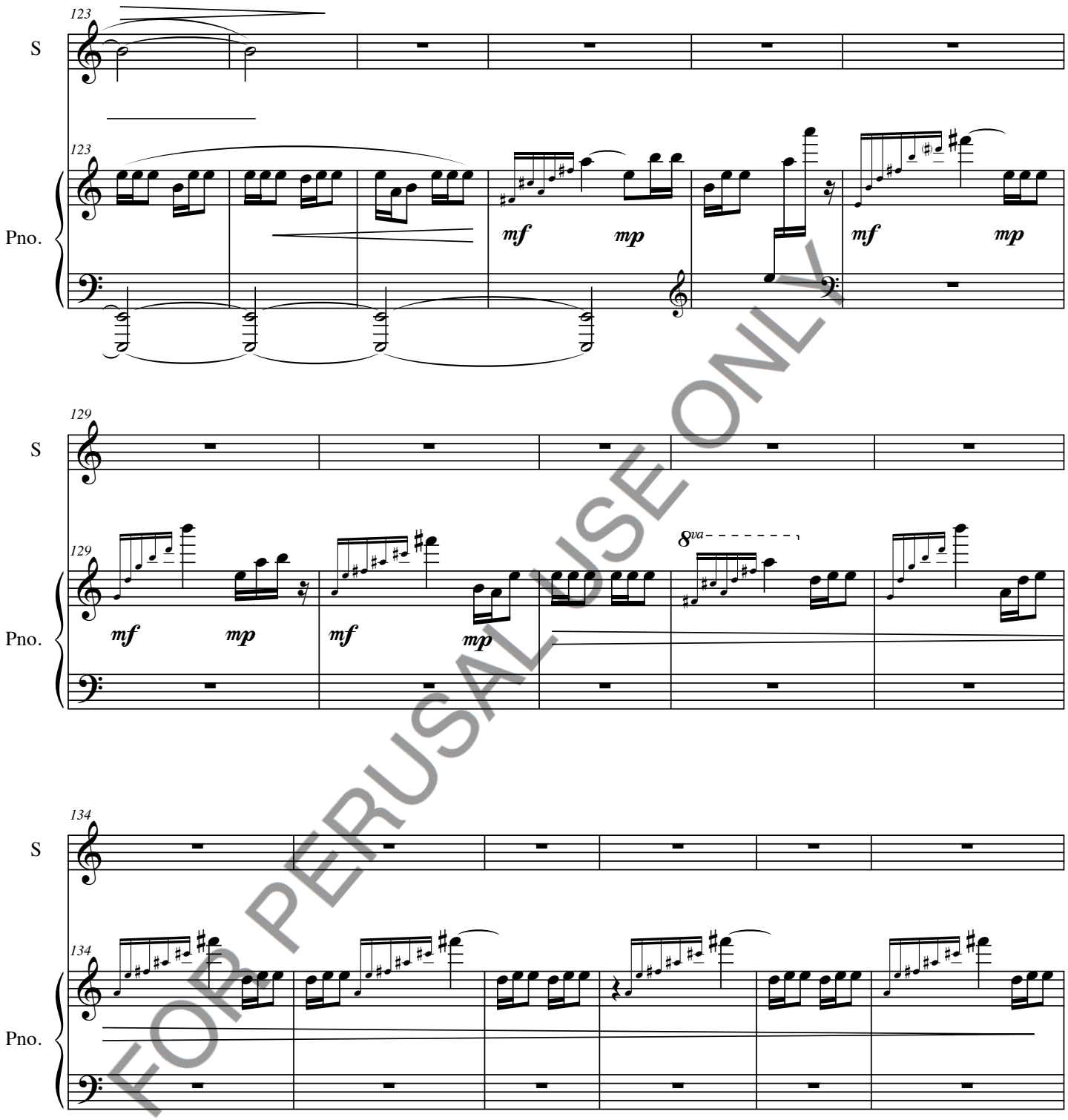


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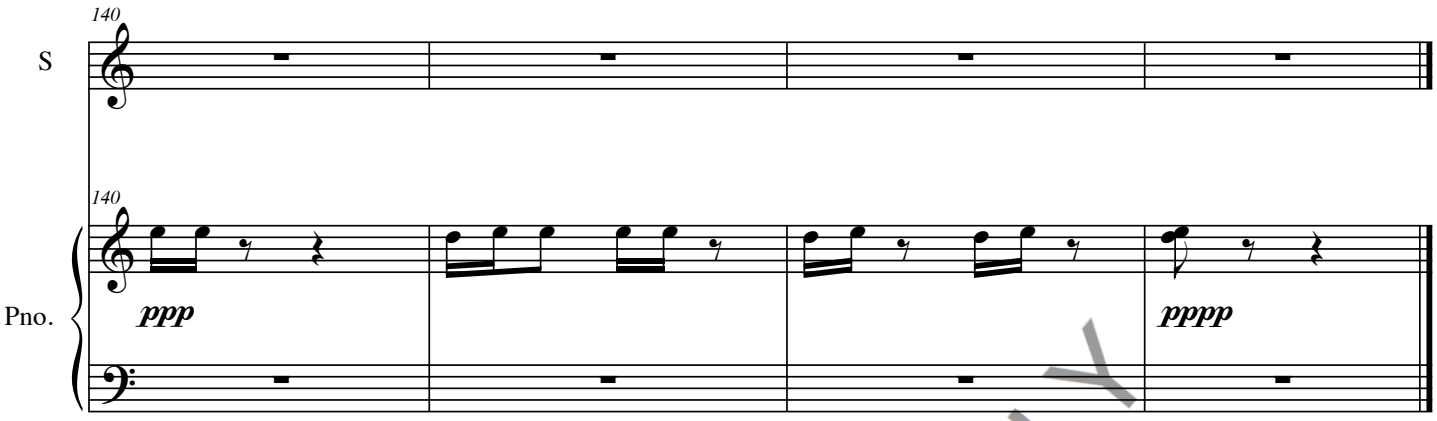


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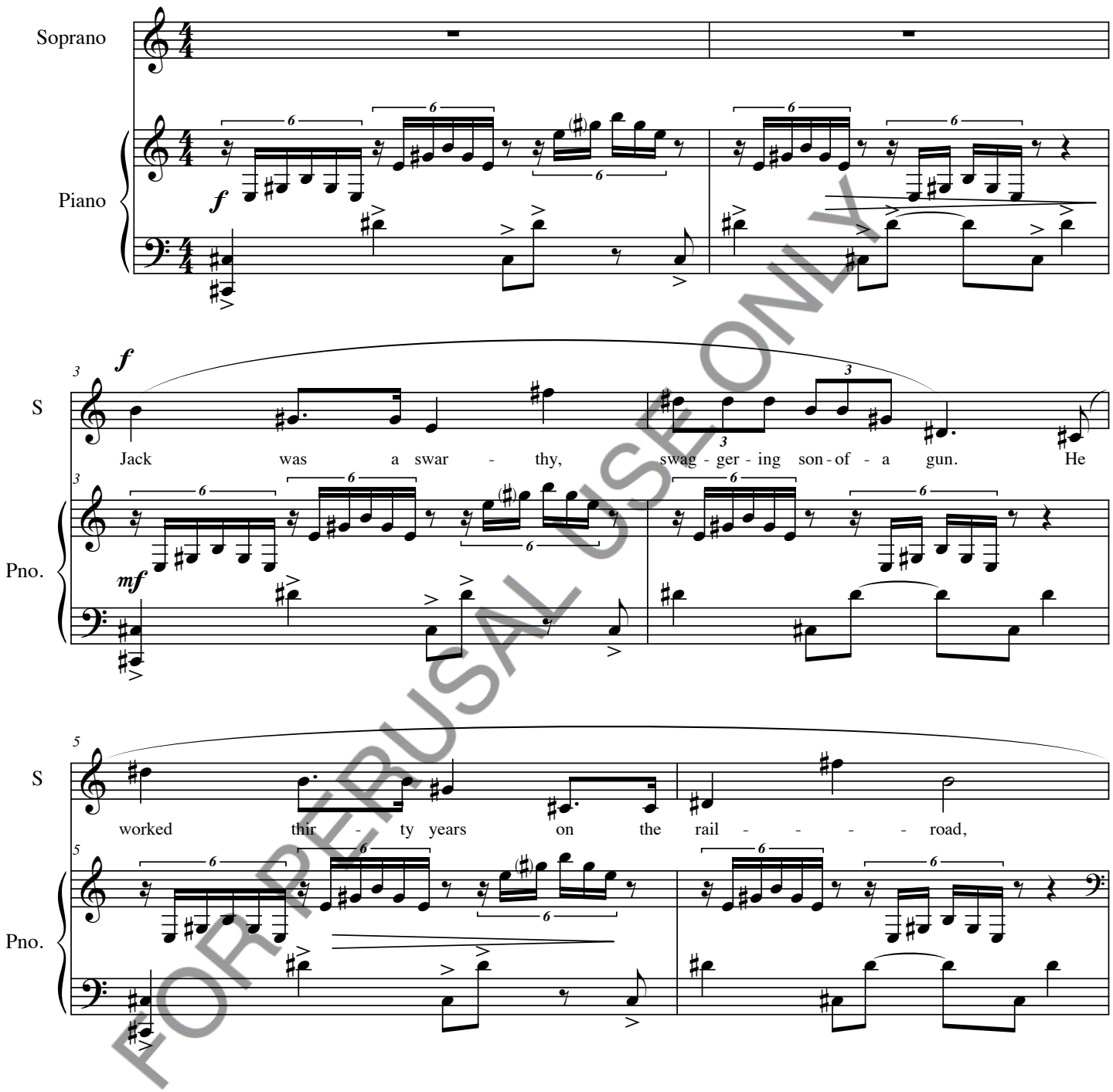
# Jack

Carl Sandburg

**Kurt Erickson**

With energy and even a little wildness (quarter - 85)

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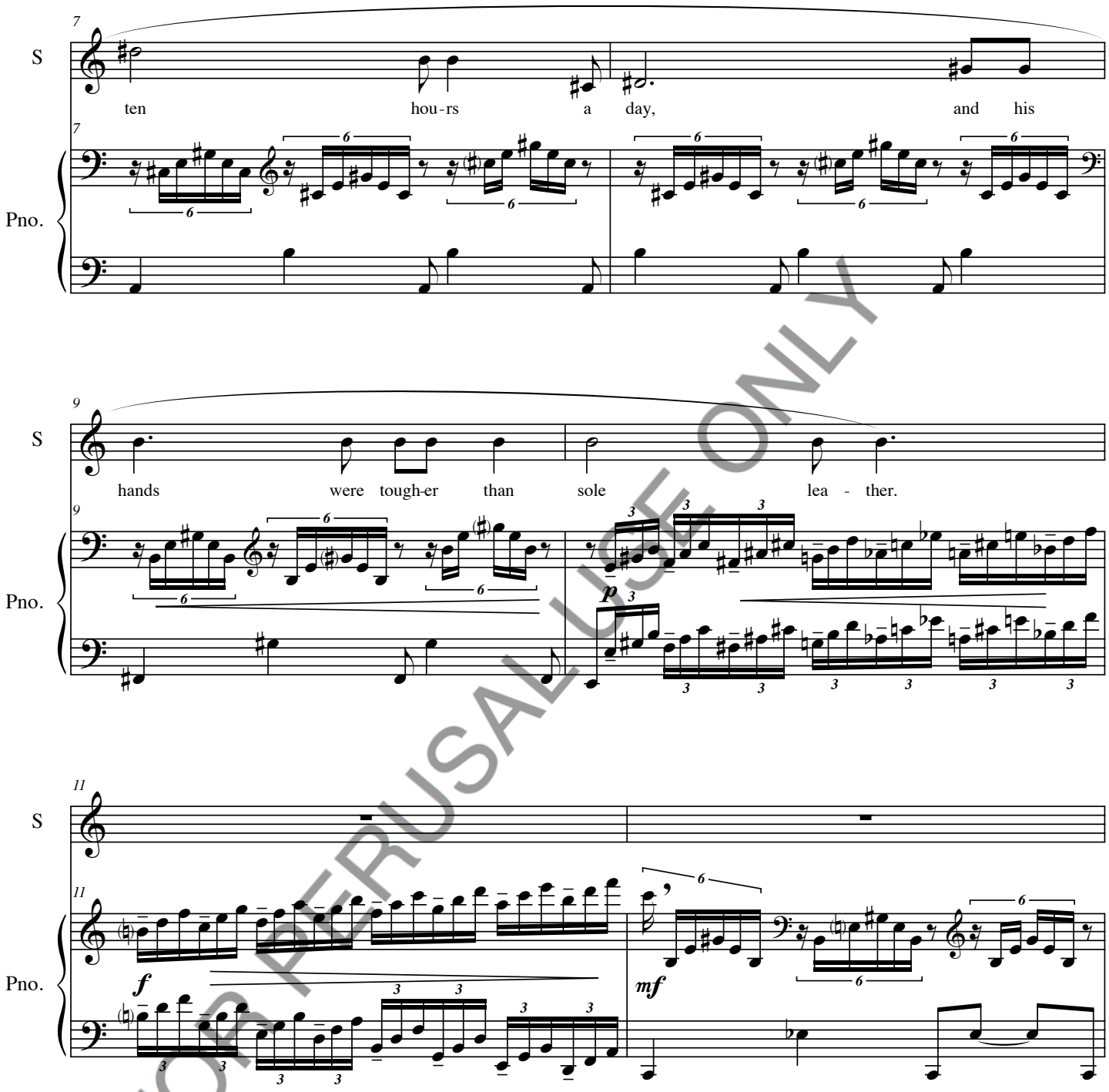


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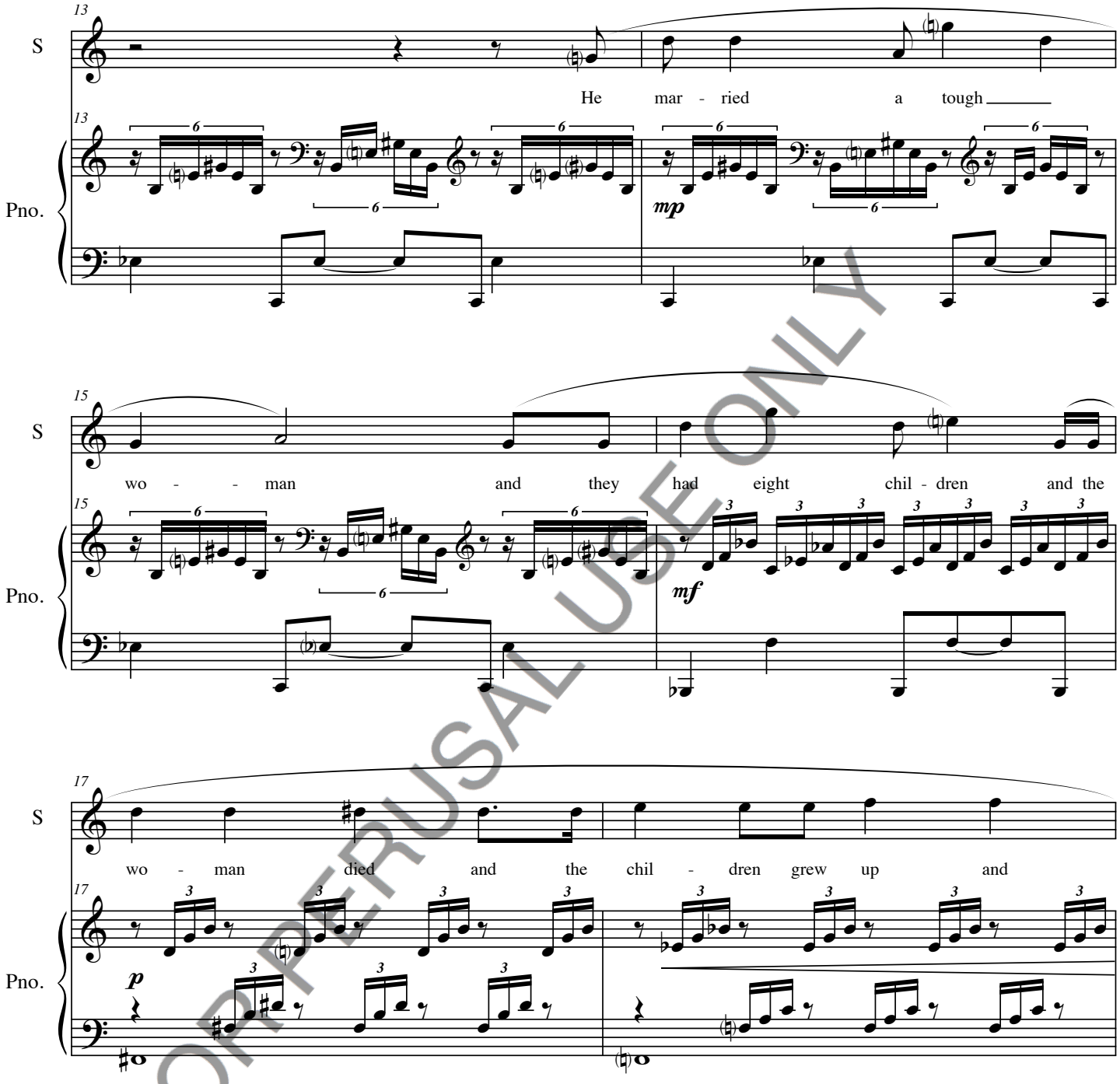


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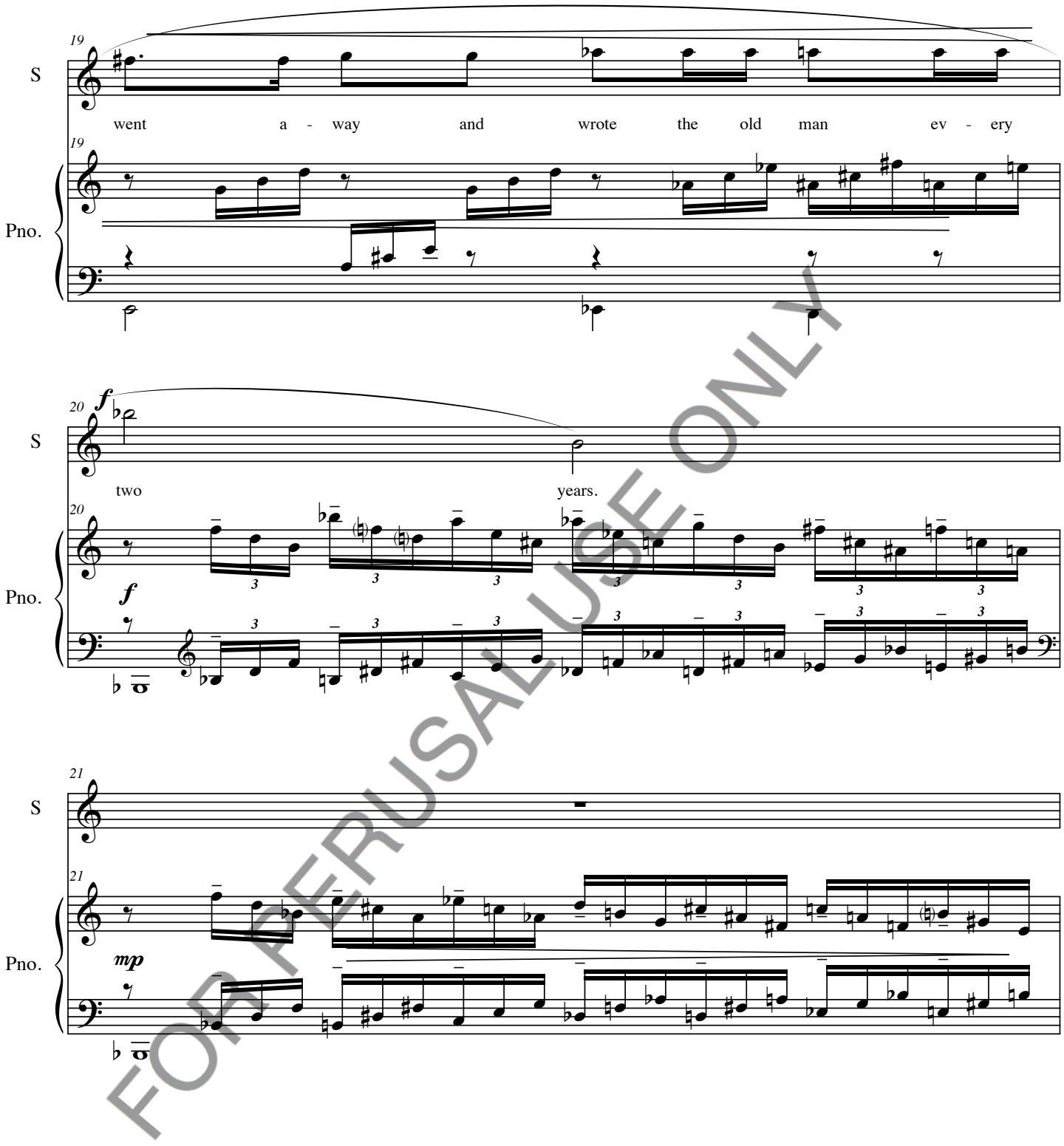


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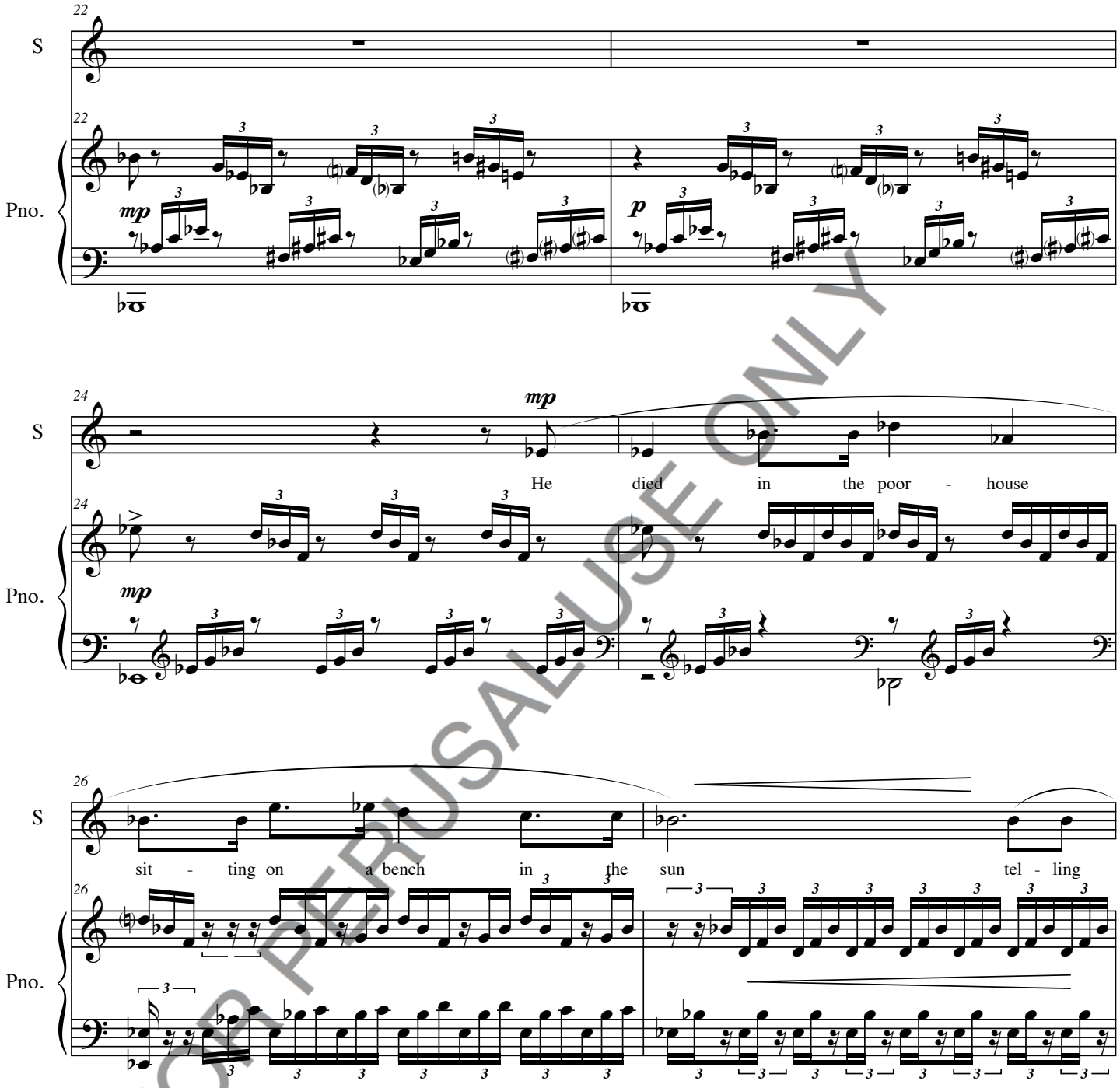


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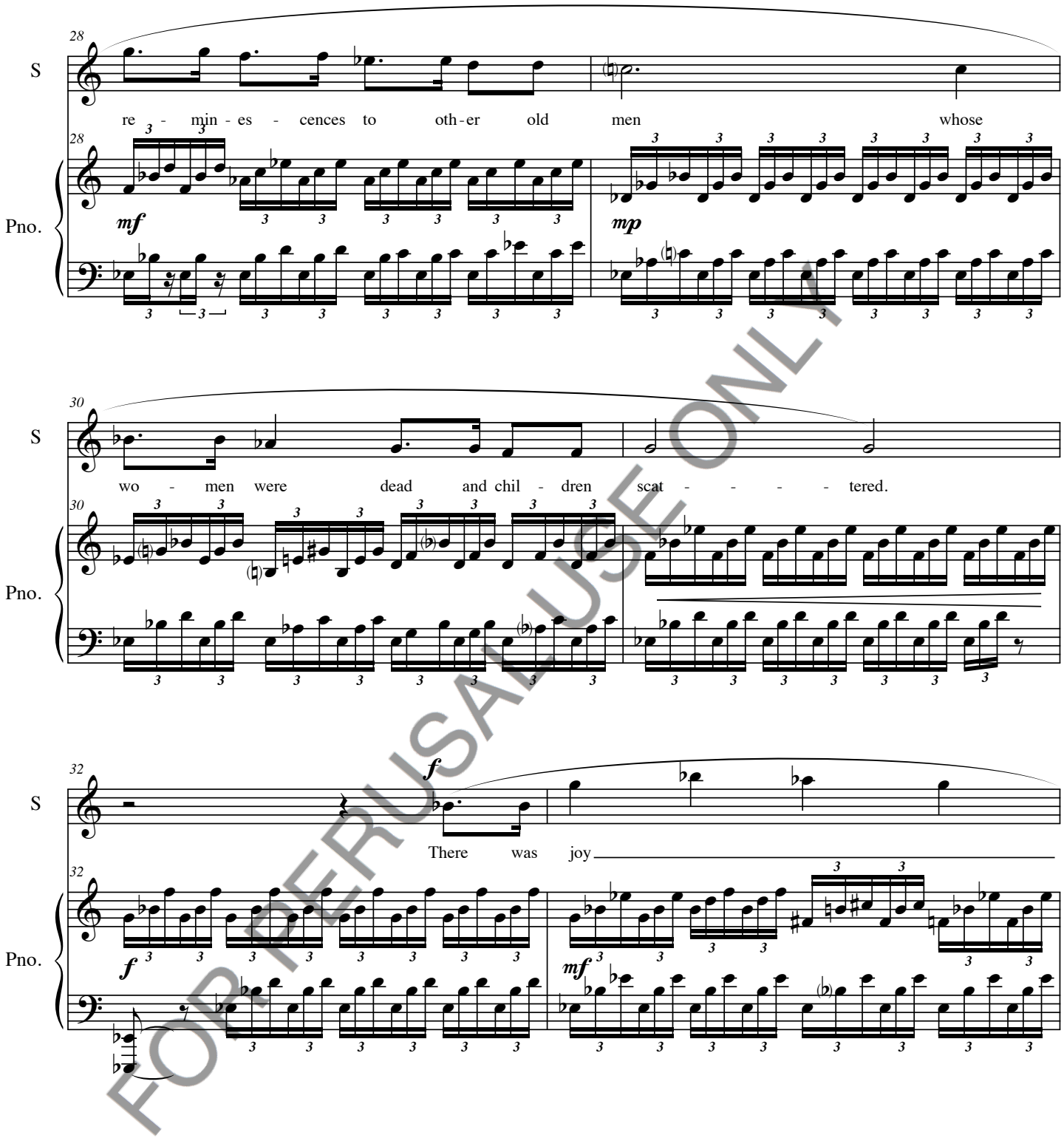


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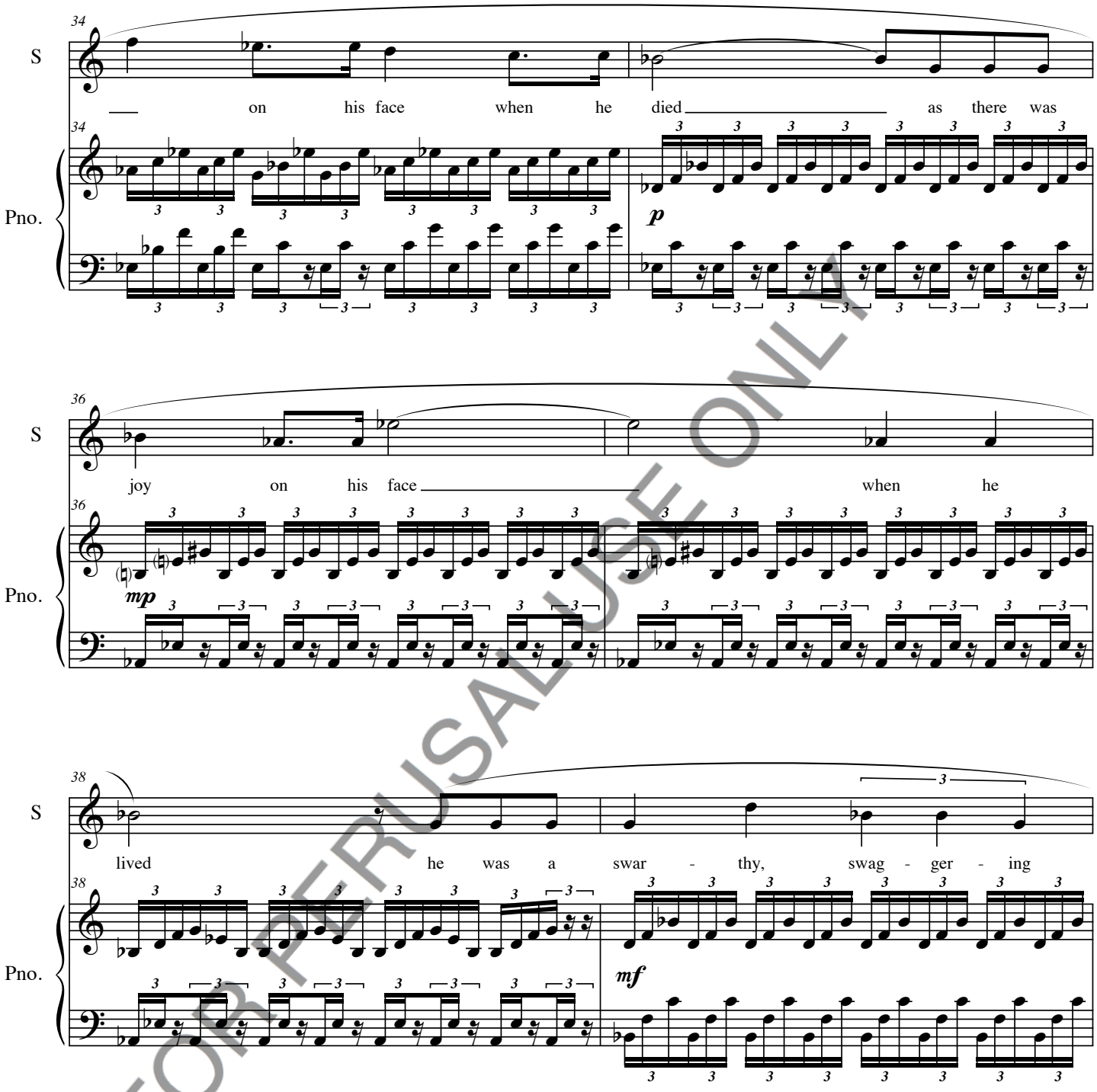


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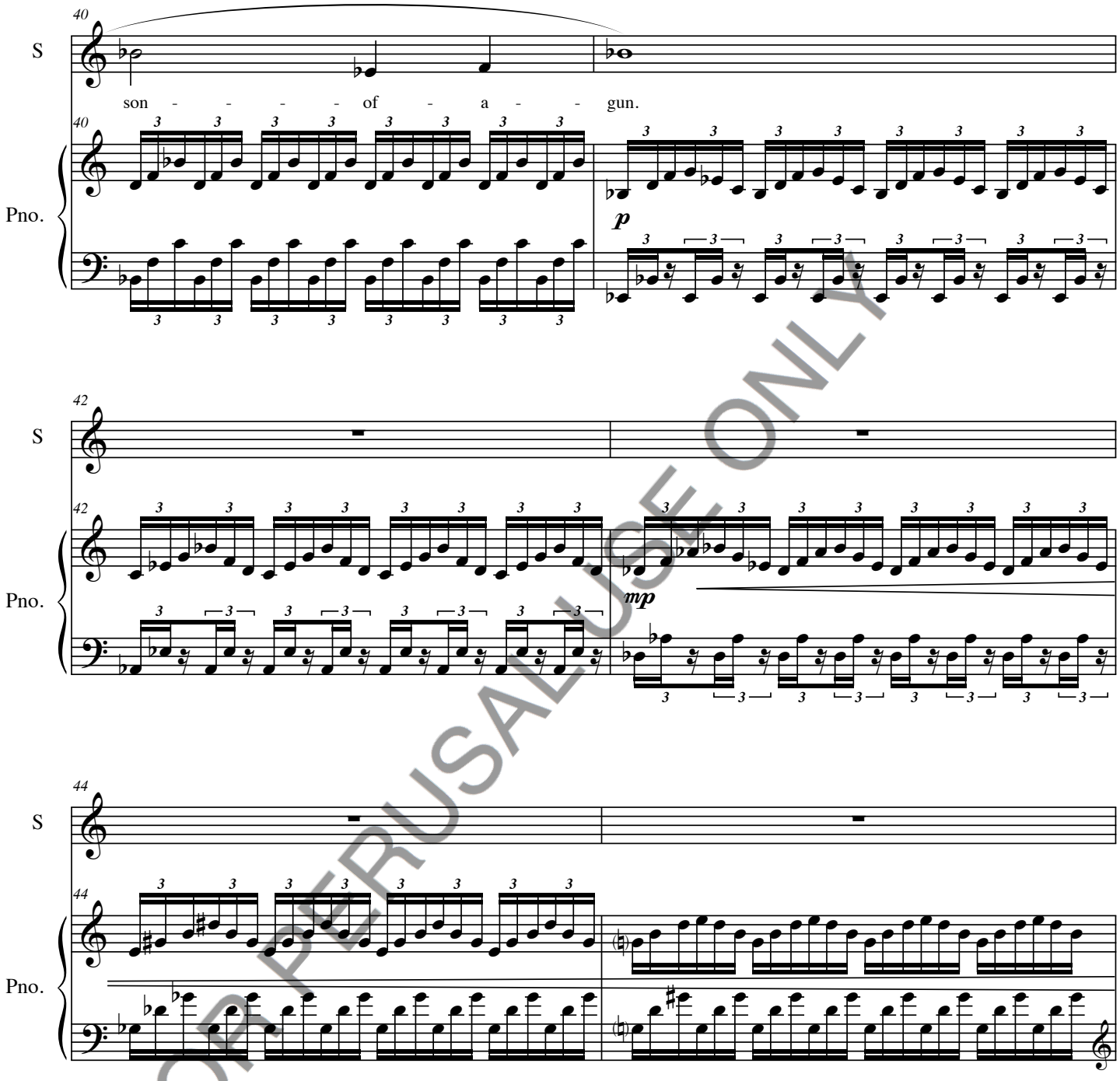


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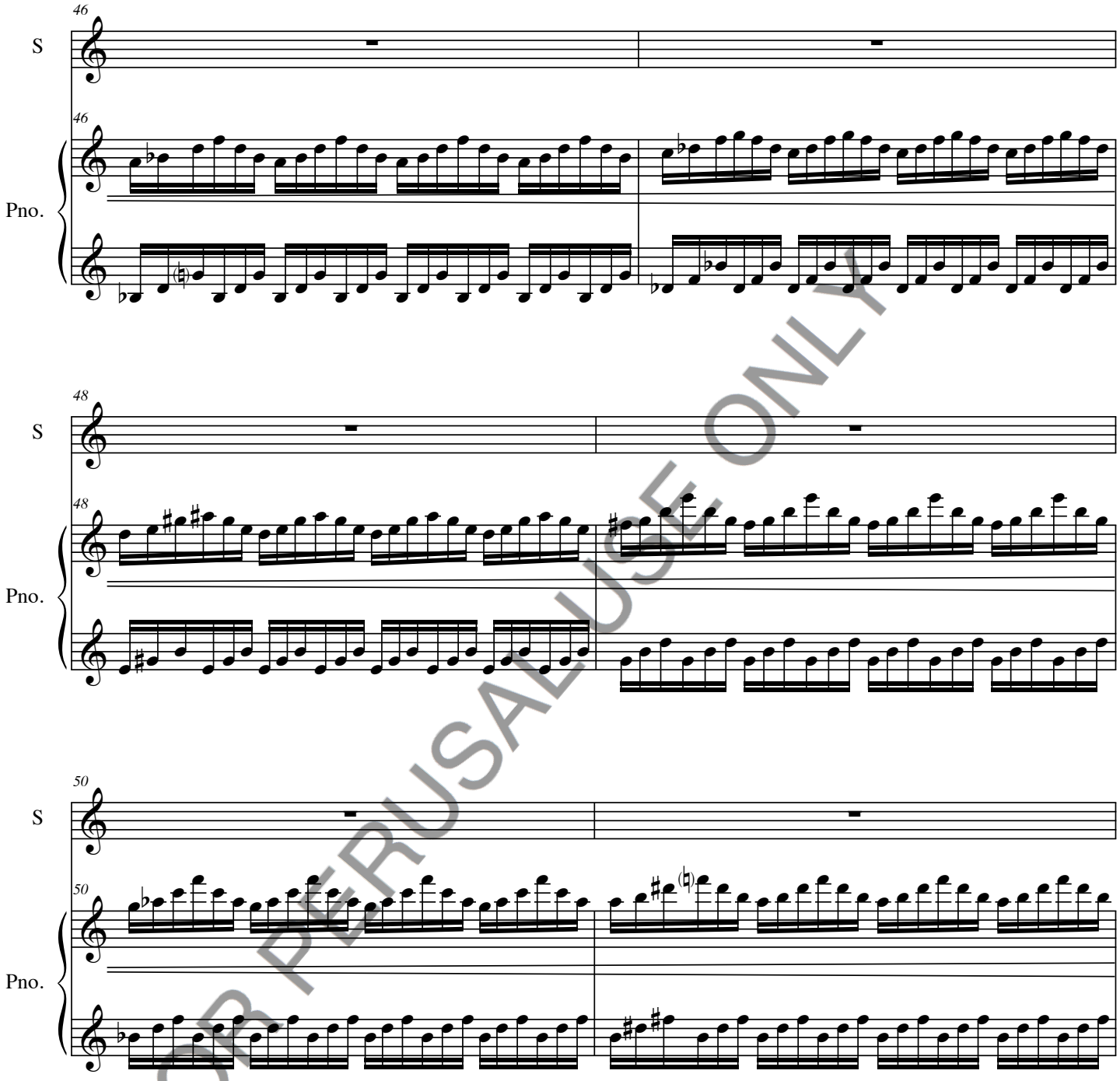


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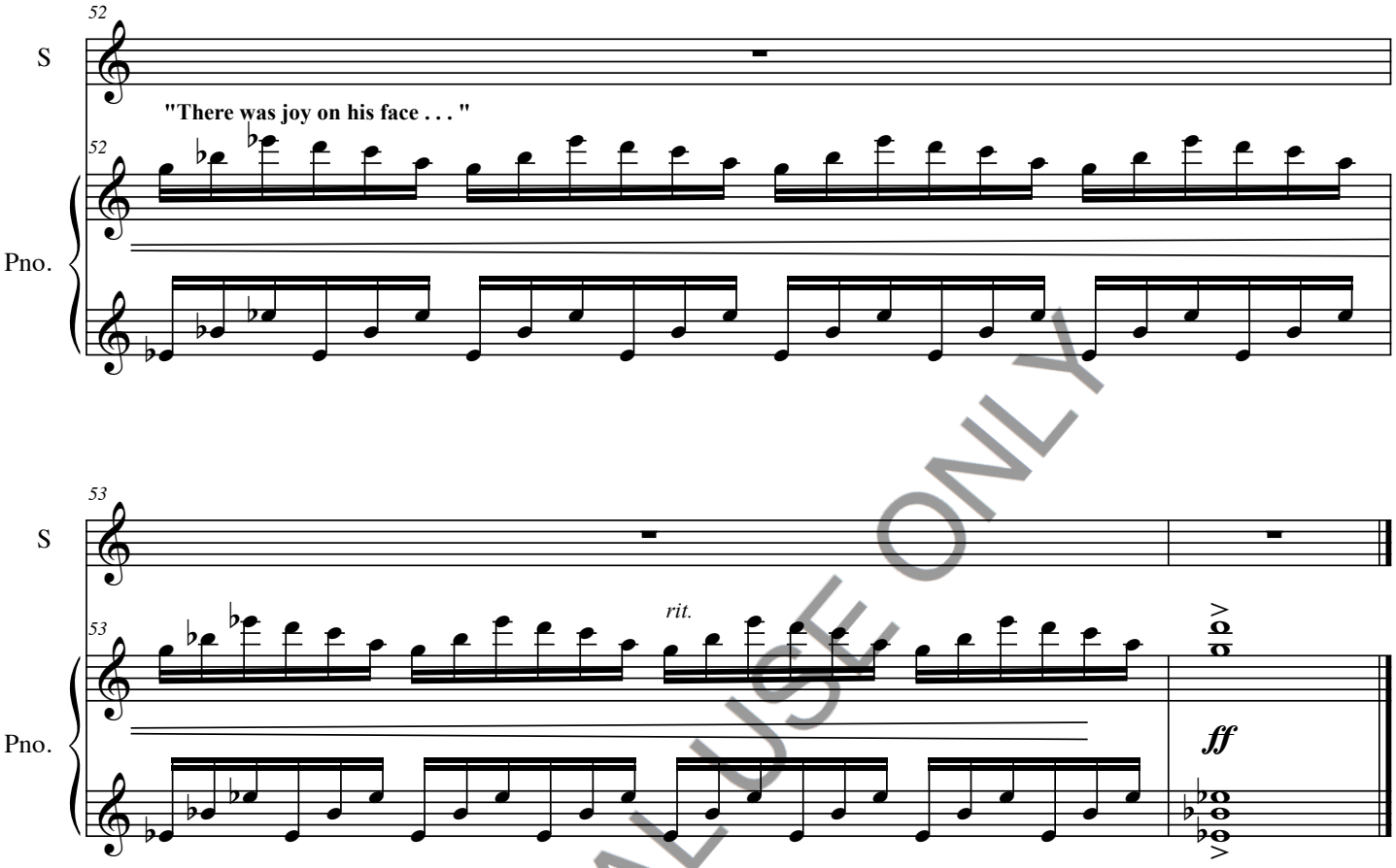


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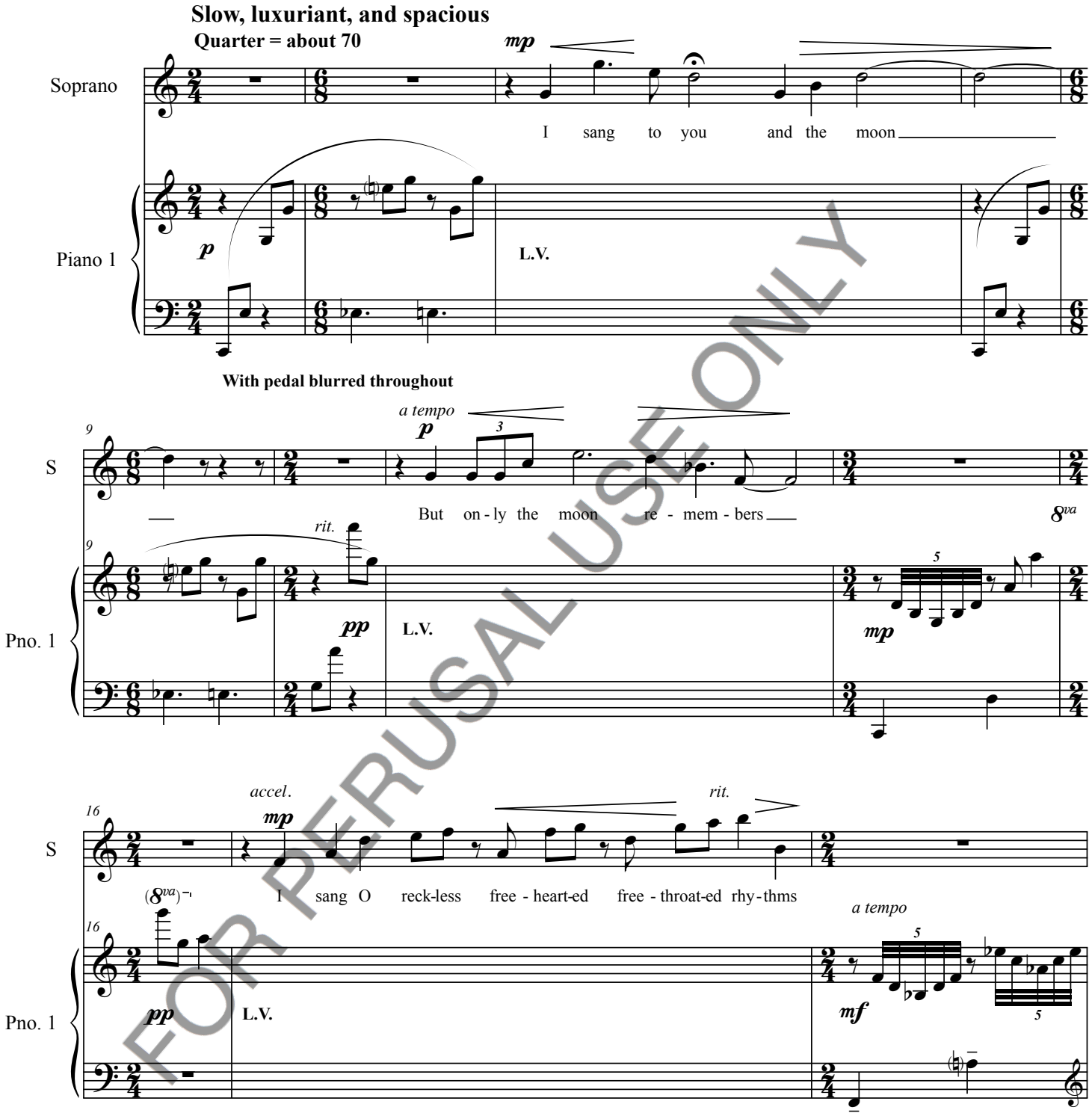
# I Sang To You And The Moon

Carl Sandburg

**Kurt Erickson**

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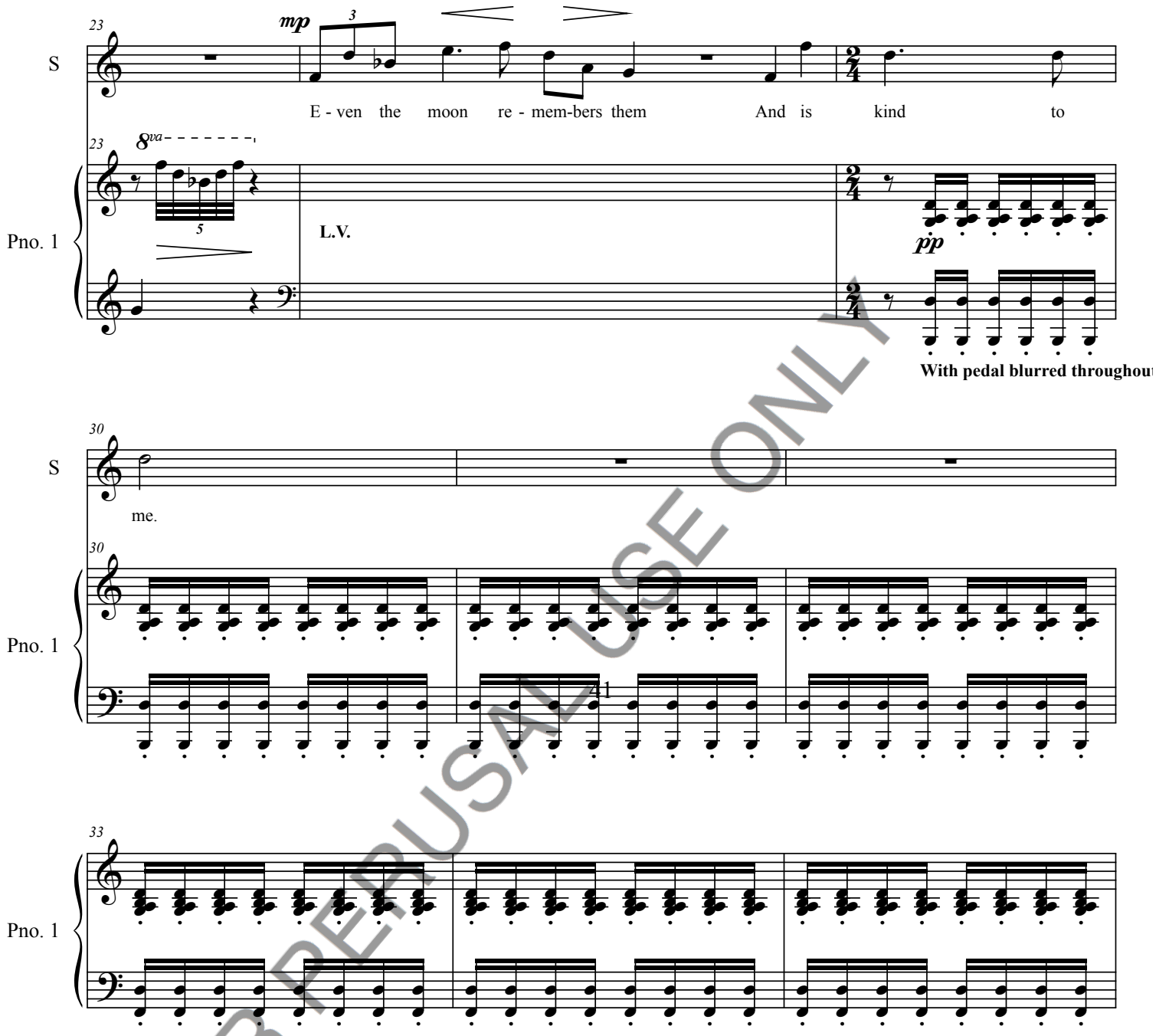


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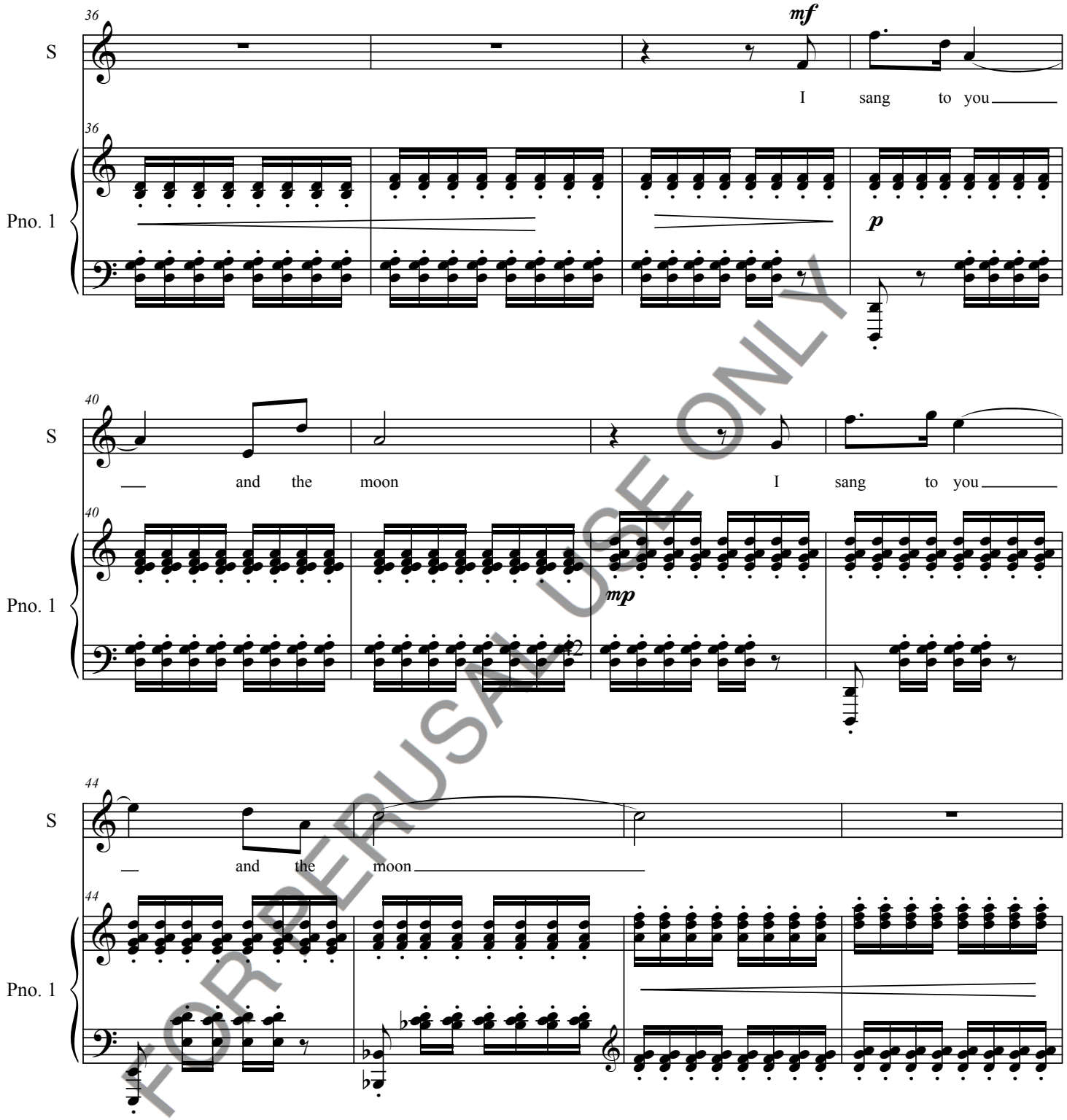


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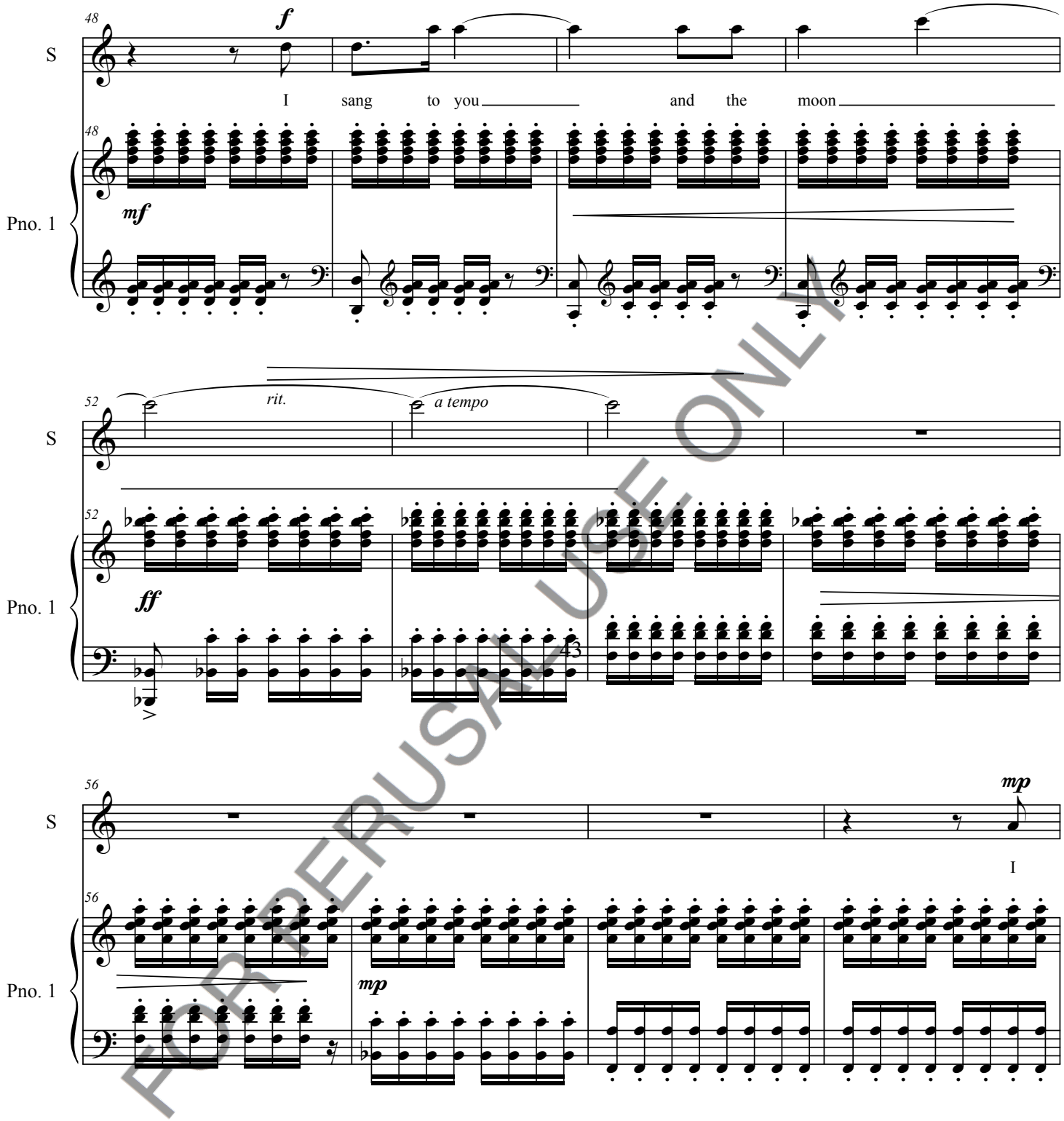


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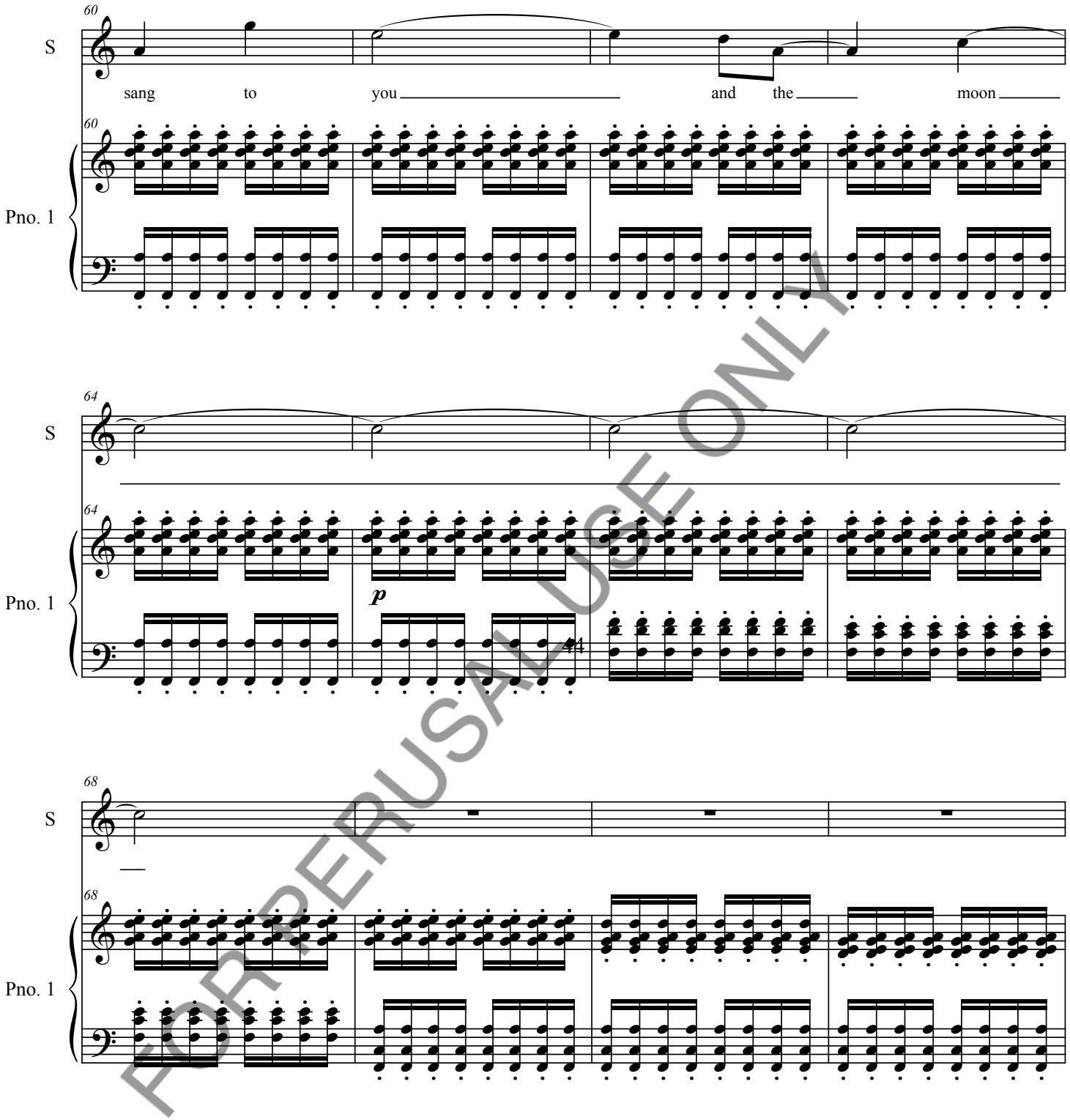


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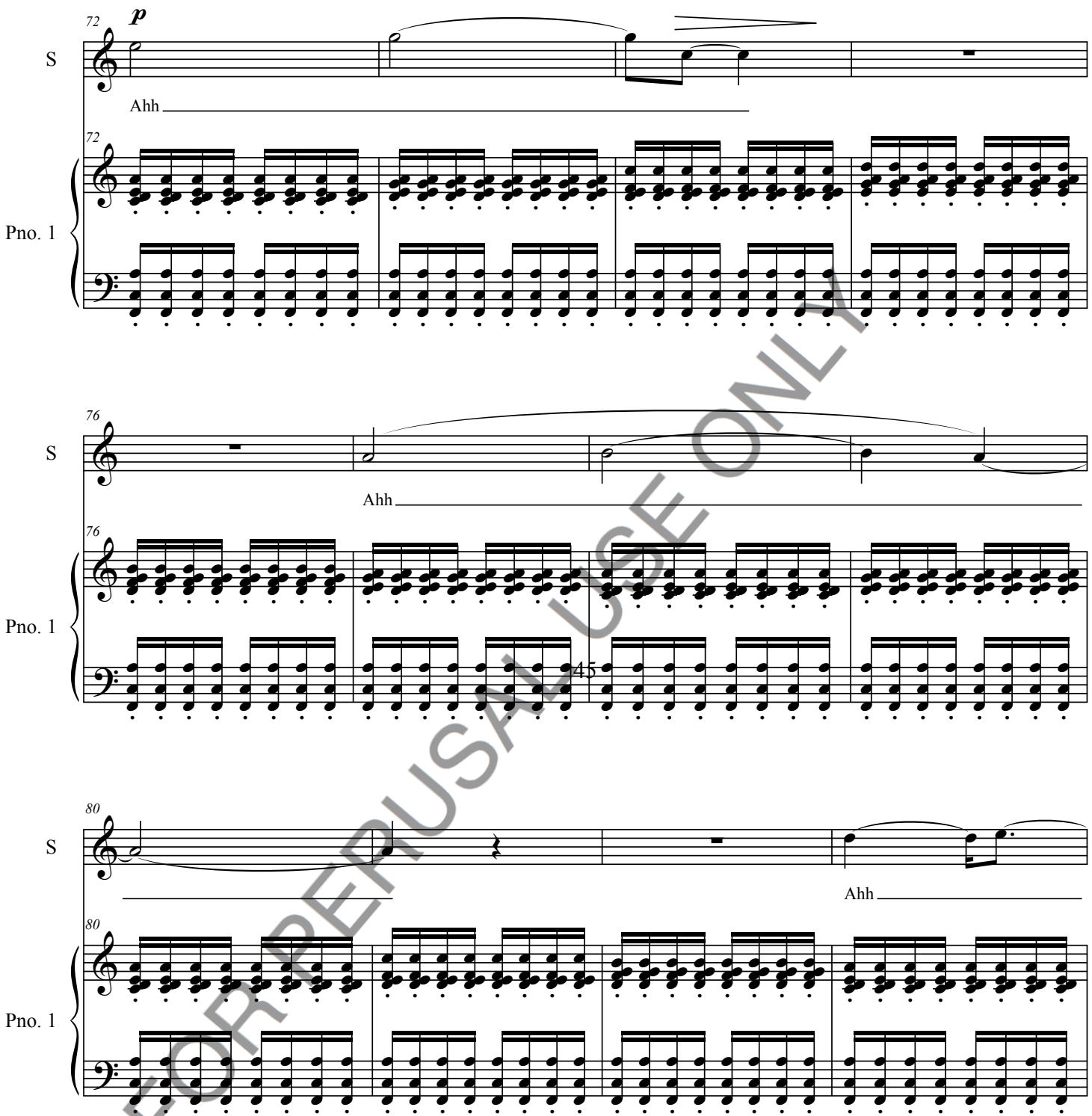


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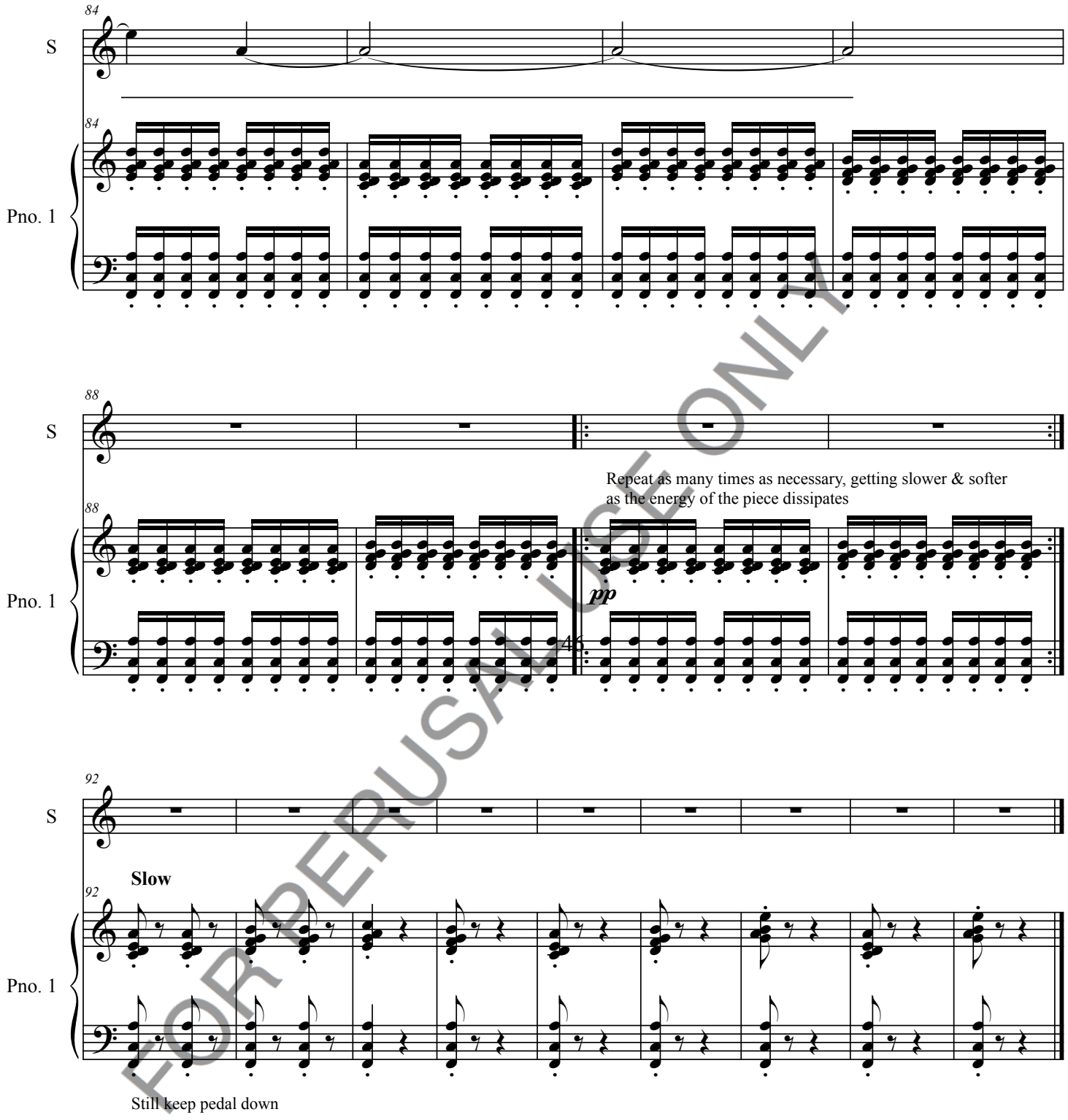


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