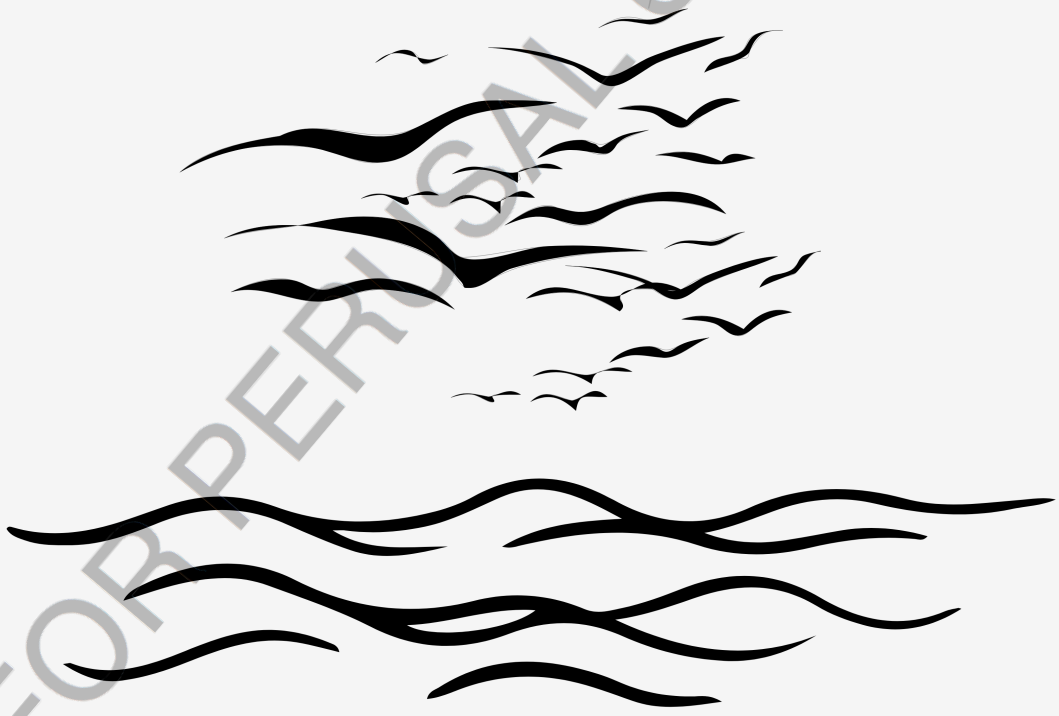
Cast Thy Bread Upon the Waters

Ecclesiastes 11: 1-5

for SATB a cappella



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Music by
Michael T Roberts

Cast Thy Bread Upon the Waters

Ecclesiastes 11: 1-5

for SATB a cappella
Duration: 3'30"

This piece is very special to me, although—and because—it was composed at a very difficult time, in the weeks following the painful loss of a pregnancy that my wife and I suffered early in our marriage. Thumbing through the Bible, I came upon this passage from Ecclesiastes. It spoke to me powerfully about the virtue of accepting loss as a natural and even beautiful part of life. Clouds empty, trees fall; only God knows why. The experience taught me something important: to feel something deeply—I mean all the way down, deep enough to make every cell in your body thrum and cry—this is a rare thing. And when I finally yielded wholly and truly to that sadness, there was a strange kind of joy in it. It happened during the two weeks I wrote the piece. Maybe you can hear it.

Text from Ecclesiastes 11: 1-5 (King James Bible)

1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.
2 Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.
3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.
4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.
5 As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

Cast Thy Bread *was premiered in May 2008 by the San Francisco Conservatory Choir, directed by David Conte.*

Listen to a 2024 performance of *Cast Thy Bread* by Pacific Edge Voices, directed by Lynne Morrow, in San Francisco, CA:
http://www.soundcloud.com/miketrob/cast-thy-bread

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About the Composer

Michael T Roberts resides in Berkeley, CA with his wife and two kids. A songwriter and veteran performer on both classical and electric guitar, Mike has also been an active choral composer for over fifteen years. His work has been commissioned or premiered by the Oakland Symphony Chorus, International Orange Chorale, and Accord Treble Choir, among others. Mike holds a B.A. from Dartmouth College and an M.M. from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. You can hear more of his music at **hotmike.com**.
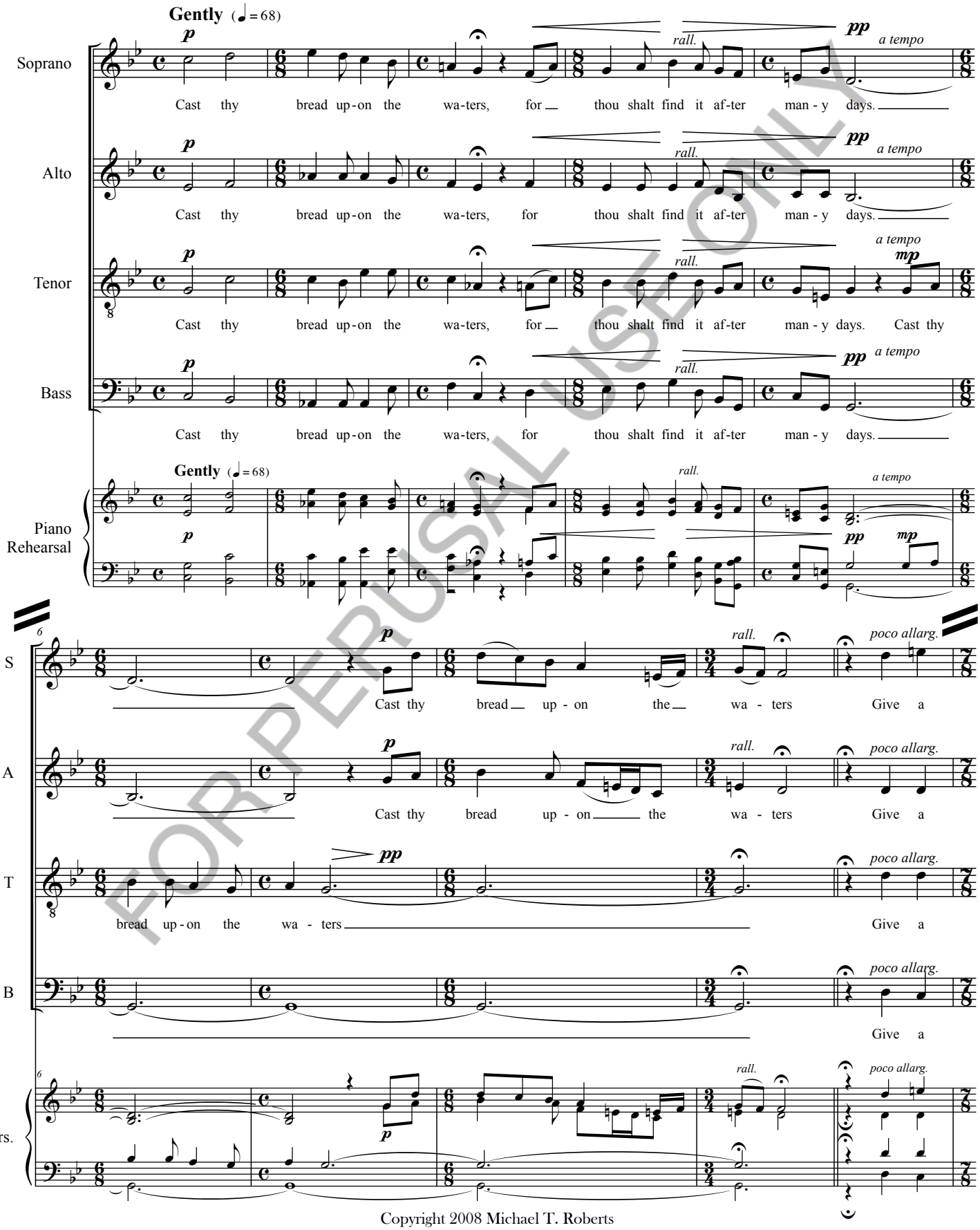
February 28, 2008
rev. 6/25/08

for Mindy

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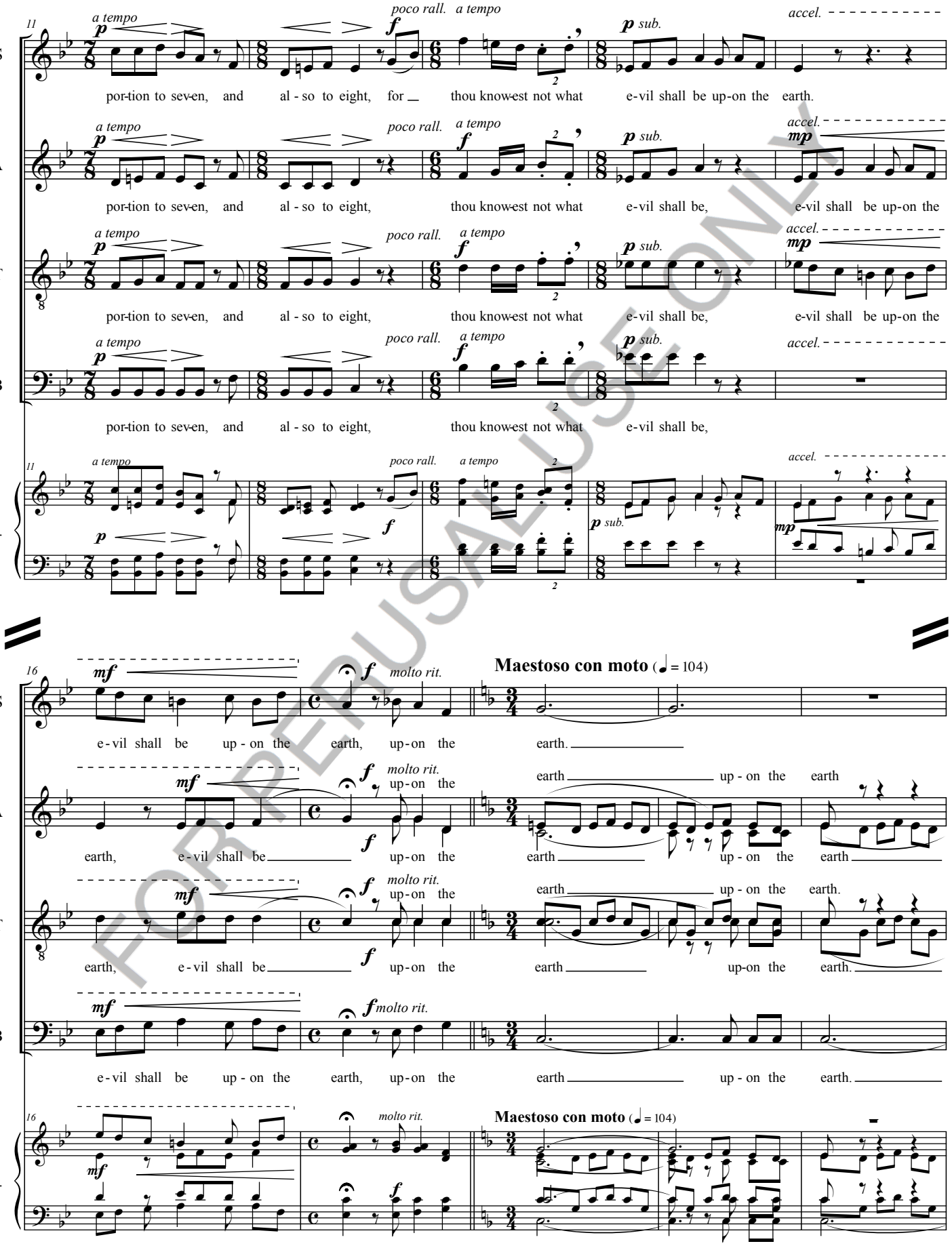
Ecclesiastes 11: 1-5

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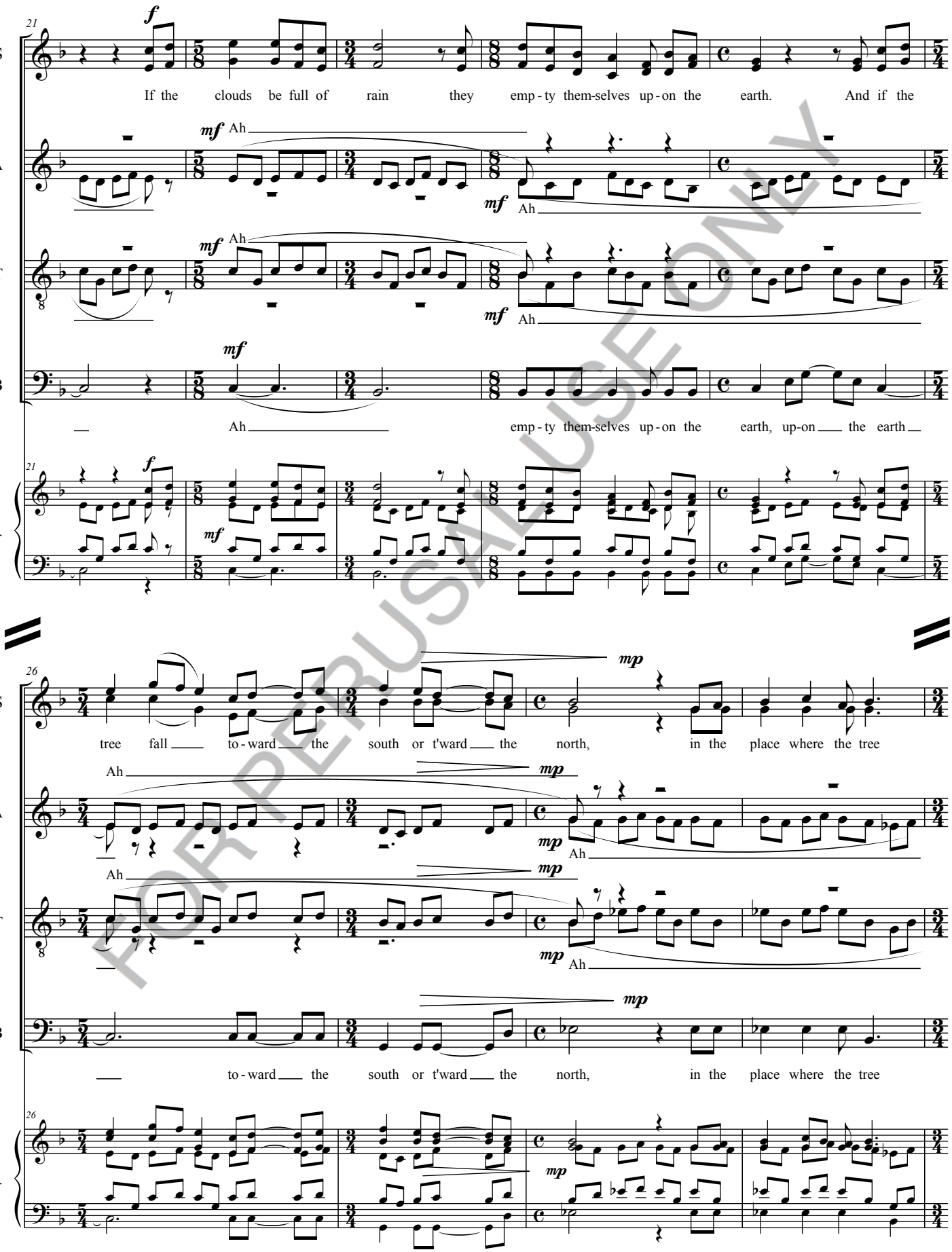


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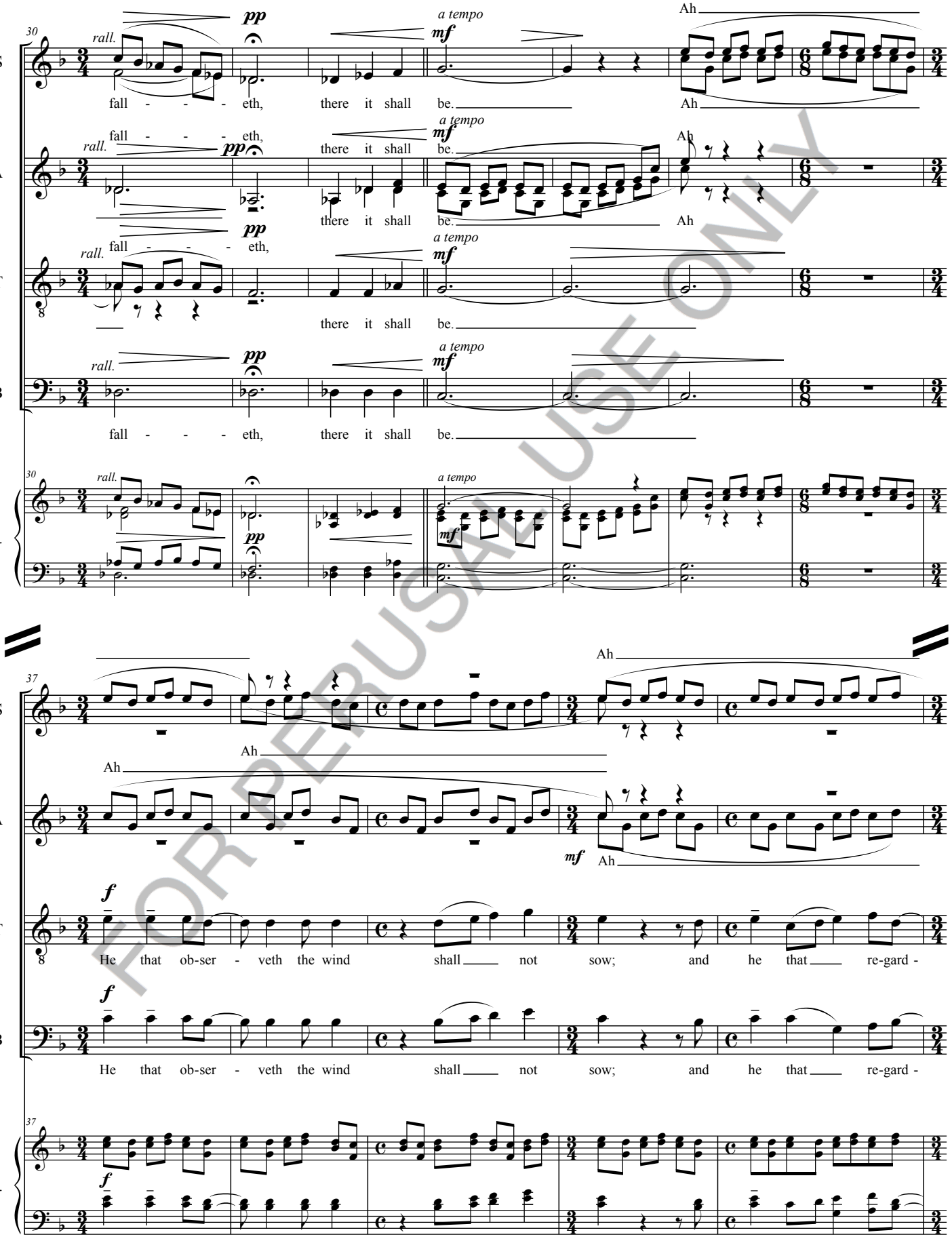
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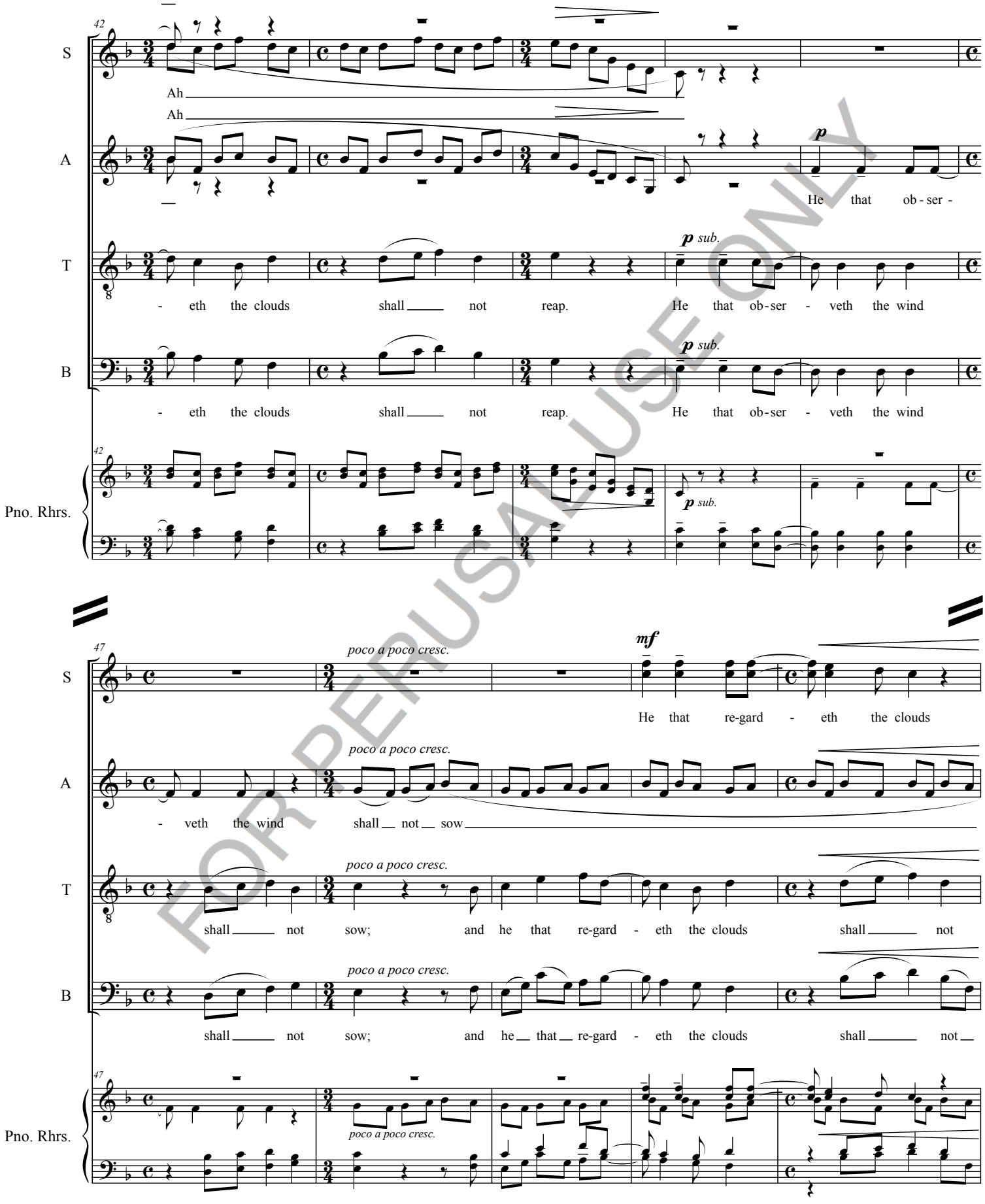


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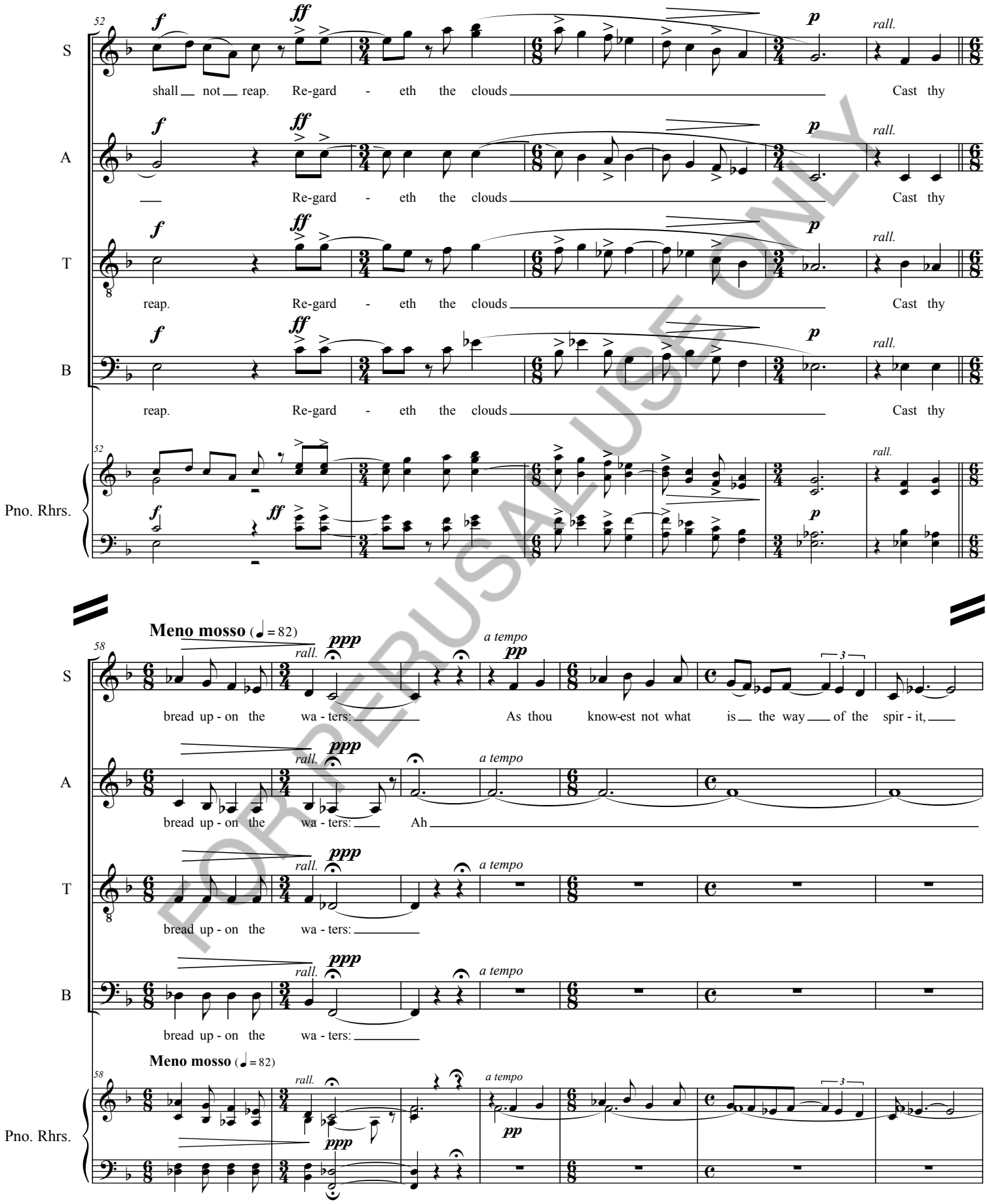


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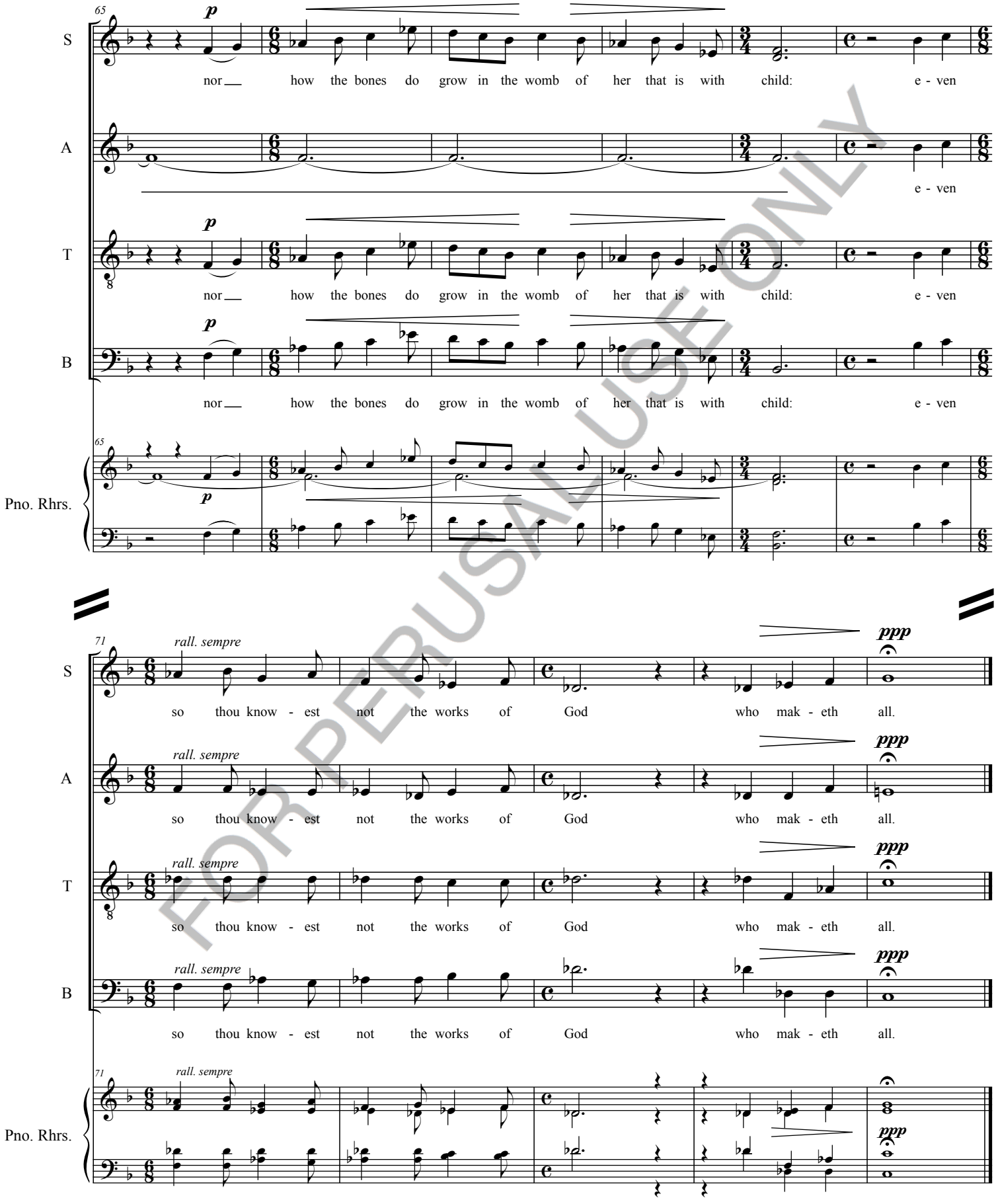


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