SDM214

MOBHI'S BELT

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Not for Performance

Seán Doherty

2021

SATB, String Orchestra,
and Piano (opt.)

Seán Doherty Music
seandohertymusic.com

MOBHI'S BELT

I. 'The Torrent' Tacet

II. 'Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland' p. 1

Text from *A Celtic Psaltry* by Alfred Perceval Graves (1917)

III. 'Crios Mobi' p. 17

Text from *The Martyrology of Donegal: A Calendar of the Saints of Ireland* by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh (c.1630)

Duration: 15 mins

PROGRAMME NOTE

It was a pandemic, such as we are currently living through, that gave St Colmcille the impetus to found his first monastery. He was forced to flee from his teacher St Mobhi's monastery in Glasnevin, Dublin, by a contagious plague that ravaged Ireland, the 'Buidhe Chonnaill' or 'yellow pestilence'. He resorted to his home in Ulster and was granted land at Derry by the King of Ireland but refused to found a monastery there until he had permission from St. Mobhi. Two of Mobhi's monks arrived at Derry to tell Colmcille that Mobhi had died of the plague and to prove this, they presented him with Mobhi's belt. Colmcille took this as a sign that he could proceed to found the monastery at Derry. That we are living through another pandemic during the 1500 anniversary year of Colmcille's birth emphasis the understanding that pandemic is a constant of human experience. This understanding is particularly relevant to the people of Donegal and Derry, who were so badly impacted by COVID-19. My thanks to Deirdre Ní Chaomhánaigh who helped me prepare the text of 'Crios Mobi'. Go raibh míle maith agat.

READINGS

Passages to be read before each movement from *Insula Sanctorum et Doctorum* (1890) by John Healy.

I. The Torrent

It was the custom in those days for the students to visit the various saints of Erin, who were celebrated for holiness and learning; and so we find that Colmcille, when he had finished his studies under Finnian of Clonard, directed his steps to the school of another great master of the spiritual life, St. Mobhi Clarainech of Glasnevin. The students' cells at Glasnevin were situated on one side of the River Tolka, and Mobhi's church was on the other, at or near the spot where the Protestant church now stands.

The light-footed youngsters of those days, however, found no difficulty in crossing the rapid and shallow stream at ordinary times. But when the river was swollen with heavy rains, it was no easy task to breast the flood; yet such was Colmcille's zeal in the service of God that on one such occasion, to his master's admiration and surprise, he crossed the angry torrent, that he might be present as usual at the exercises in the church. 'May God be praised', said Colmcille, when he had crossed safely over, 'and deliver us from these perils in future'. It is said that his prayer was heard; and that all the cells, with their occupants, were suddenly transferred to the other side of the stream, and remained there ever after.

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

It was doubtless during his leisure hours, while under Mobhi's care at Glasnevin, that Colmcille used to ramble out to the Hill of Howth, and sitting on the brow of its lofty cliffs, gaze in pensive mood over the wide spreading sea, and contemplate, with a poet's eye, all the stern grandeur of that iron-bound coast. He fed his soul on the glorious vision, and in after years, when surrounded by the sterile rocks of Iona, his sad thoughts often turned to those scenes of his youth, and found expression in words that cannot fail to touch a sympathetic chord in every heart.

III. Crios Mobi

Colmcille had four companions at Glasnevin St. Cannech, St. Ciaran, and St. Comgall—and during their entire lives a tender and ardent friendship united these holy men together. A pestilence which broke out in A.D. 544, and of which St. Ciaran appears to have died, scattered the holy disciples of St. Mobhi's School; so Colmcille resolved to return home to his native territory. When he crossed the stream then called the Bior, but now called the Moyola Water, which flows into Lough Neagh at its north-western extremity, he earnestly prayed to God to stay the ravages of the terrible 'Buidhe Chonnaill' on the southern banks of that stream, so that it might not invade the territories of his kinsmen. His earnest prayer was heard, and thus Tir-Owen and Tir-Connell escaped the dreadful plague.

Colmcille was now a priest twenty-five years of age; and he began to think of founding a church in his native territory. The *Annals of Ulster* record the founding of Derry by Colmcille in the year A.D. 545; and it was brought about in this way. The first cousin of St. Colmcille, Ainmire, son of Setna, who succeeded to the throne of Tara later on, was in A.D. 545 prince of Ailech and the neighbouring territory. His eldest son Aedh, was then a boy of ten years; but it seems, according to O'Donnell's *Life of Colmcille*, the king in the name of his son Aedh, offered the fort in which he then dwelt on the site of the present city of Derry to his cousin in order to found his church and monastery.

Colmcille, however, was at first unwilling to accept the gift, because his master Mobhi had not yet given him, as was customary, permission to found a church—doubtless thinking him too young and inexperienced. But Mobhi himself was taken sick, and died of the plague in A.D. 544, shortly after Colmcille had left him; and before he died he retracted his prohibition, and sent two of his disciples to Colmcille with his belt as a sign to give him full permission to act as he pleased. These messengers had just then arrived; and so Colmcille gladly accepted the gift of his cousin, and founded his church on, what was called then and long after, the Island of Derry. When Colmcille received the belt he said, 'Good was the man who had this belt' said he, 'for it was never opened for gluttony, nor closed on falsehood'.

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

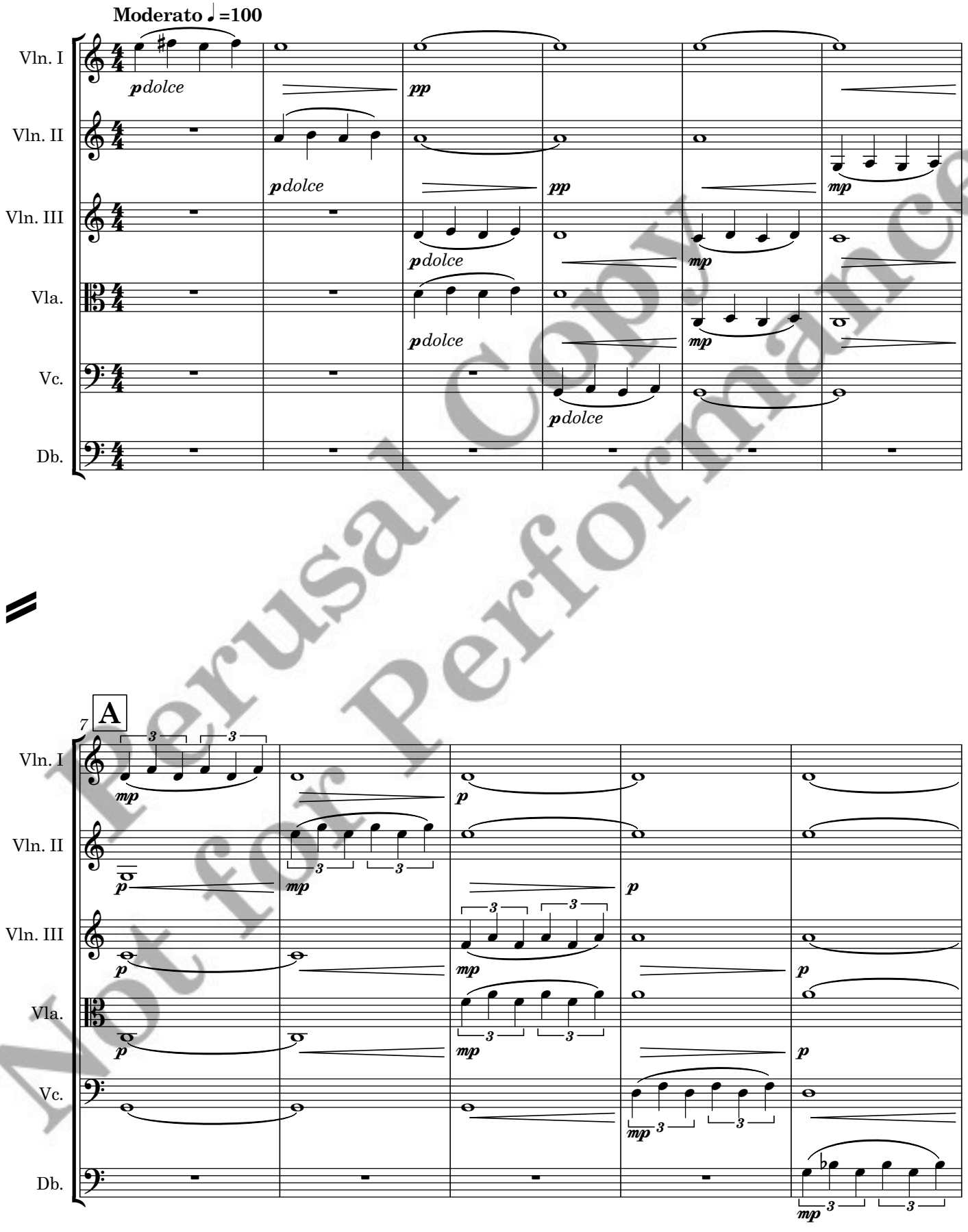
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY



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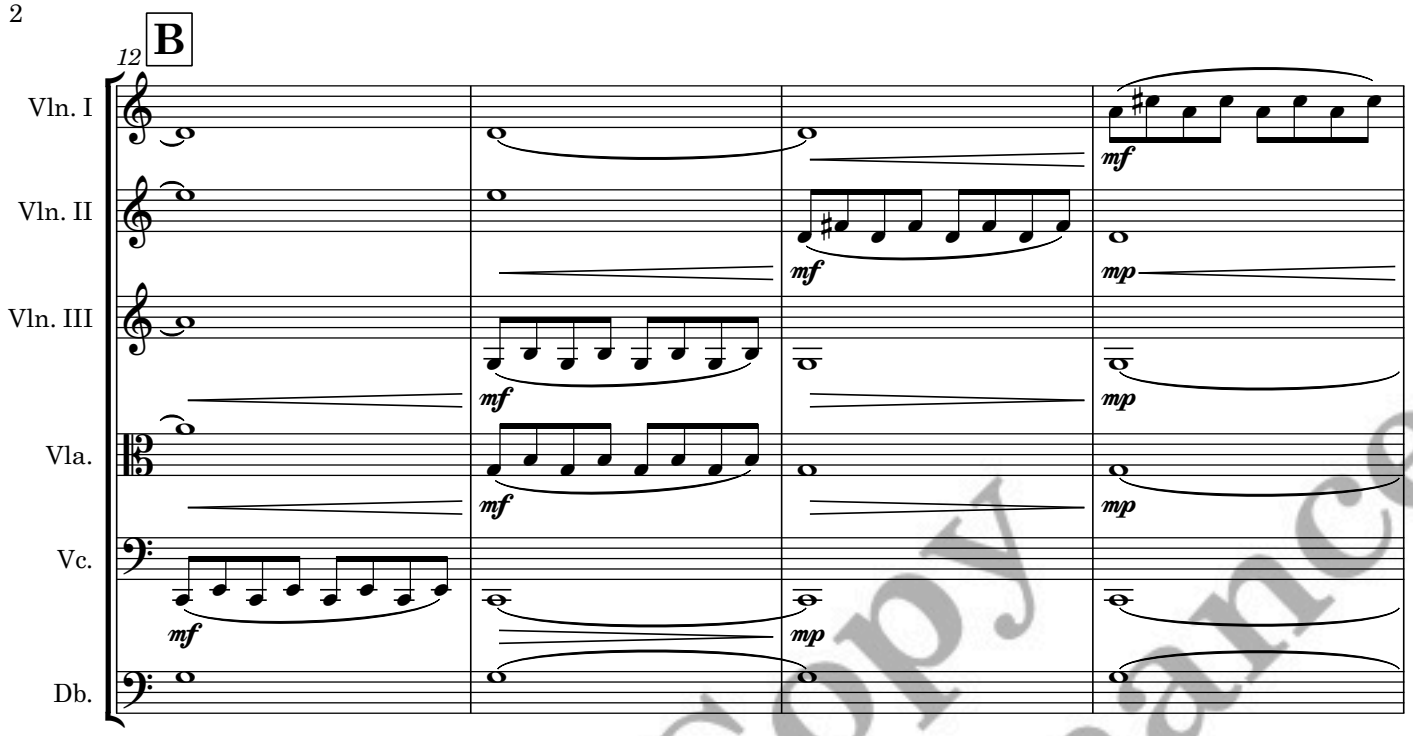

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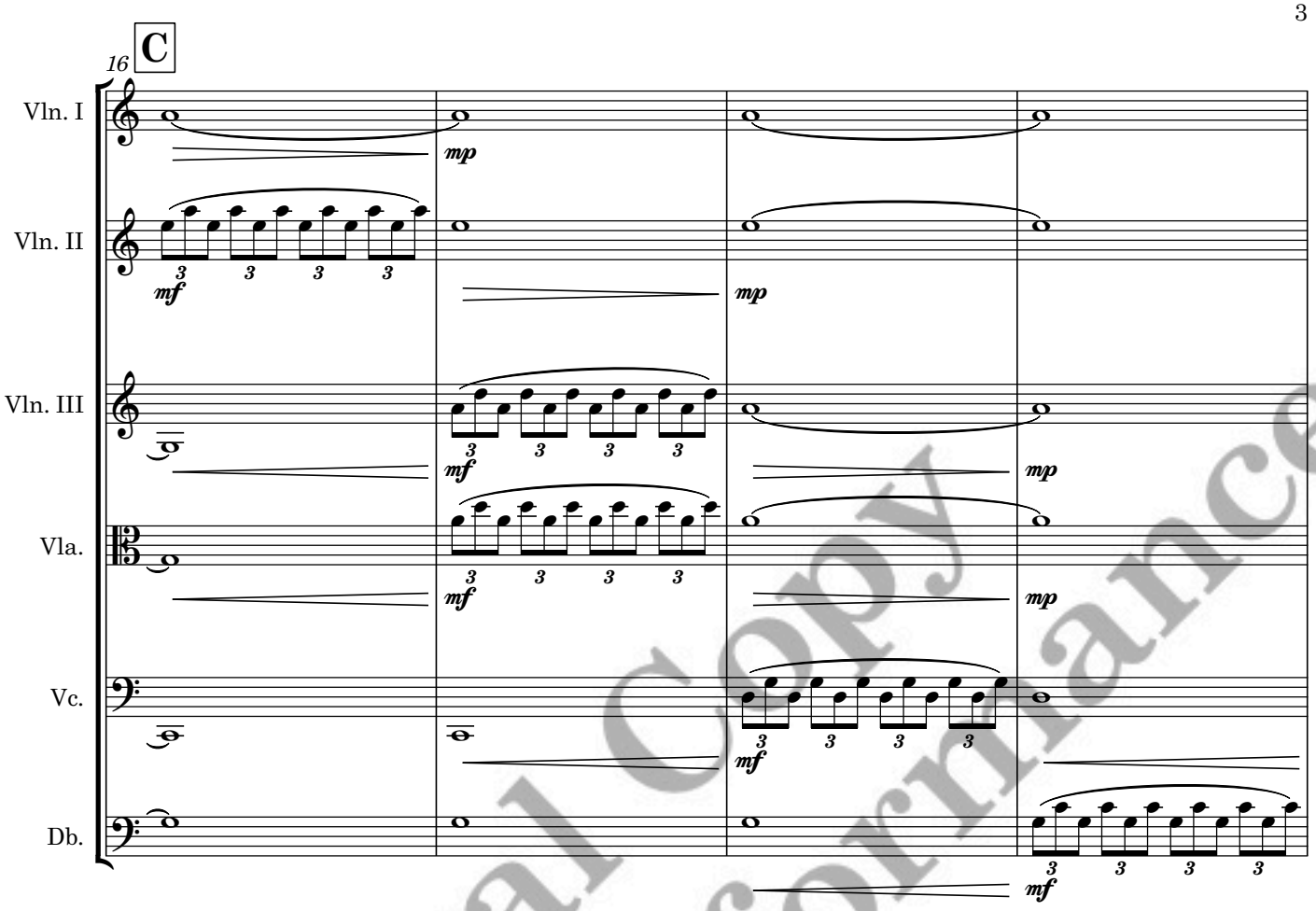

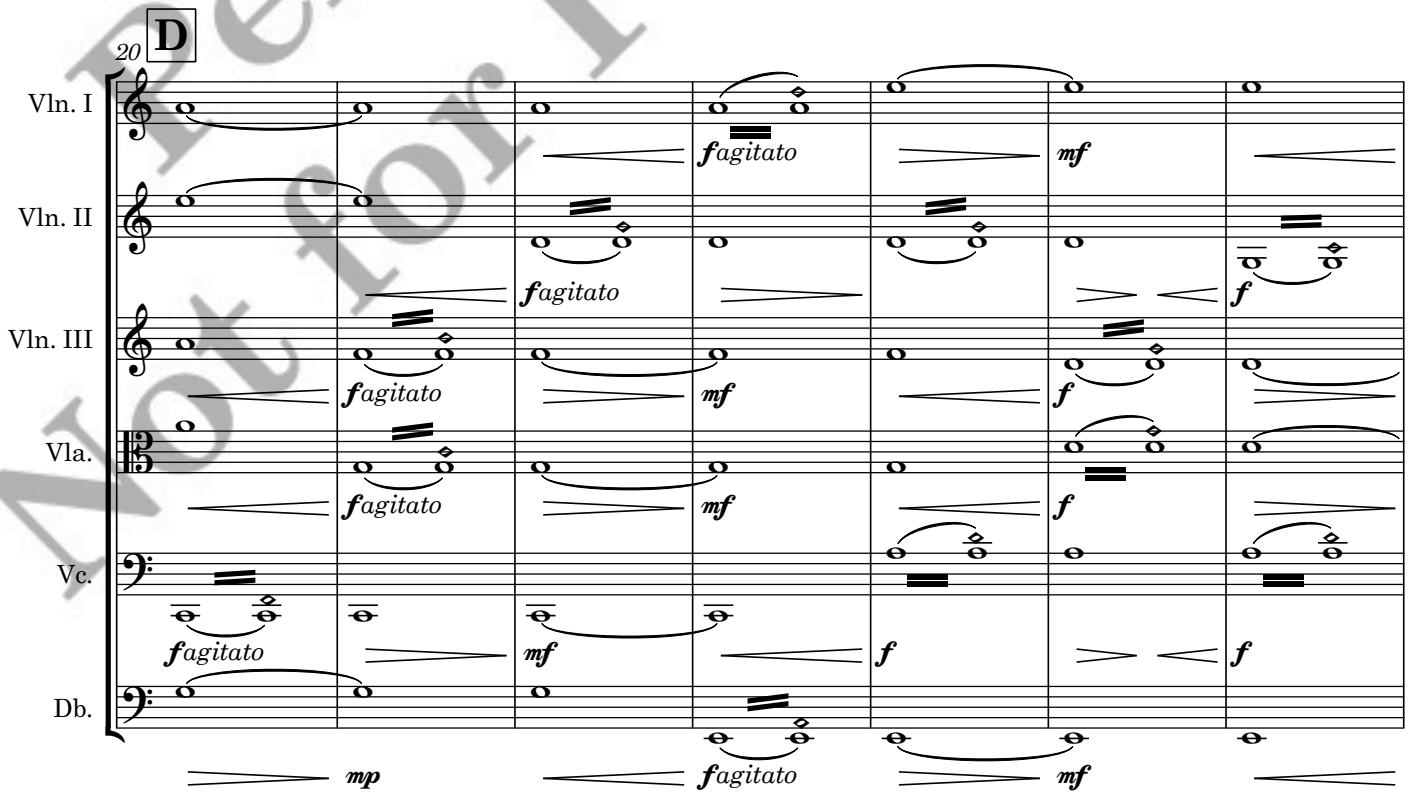

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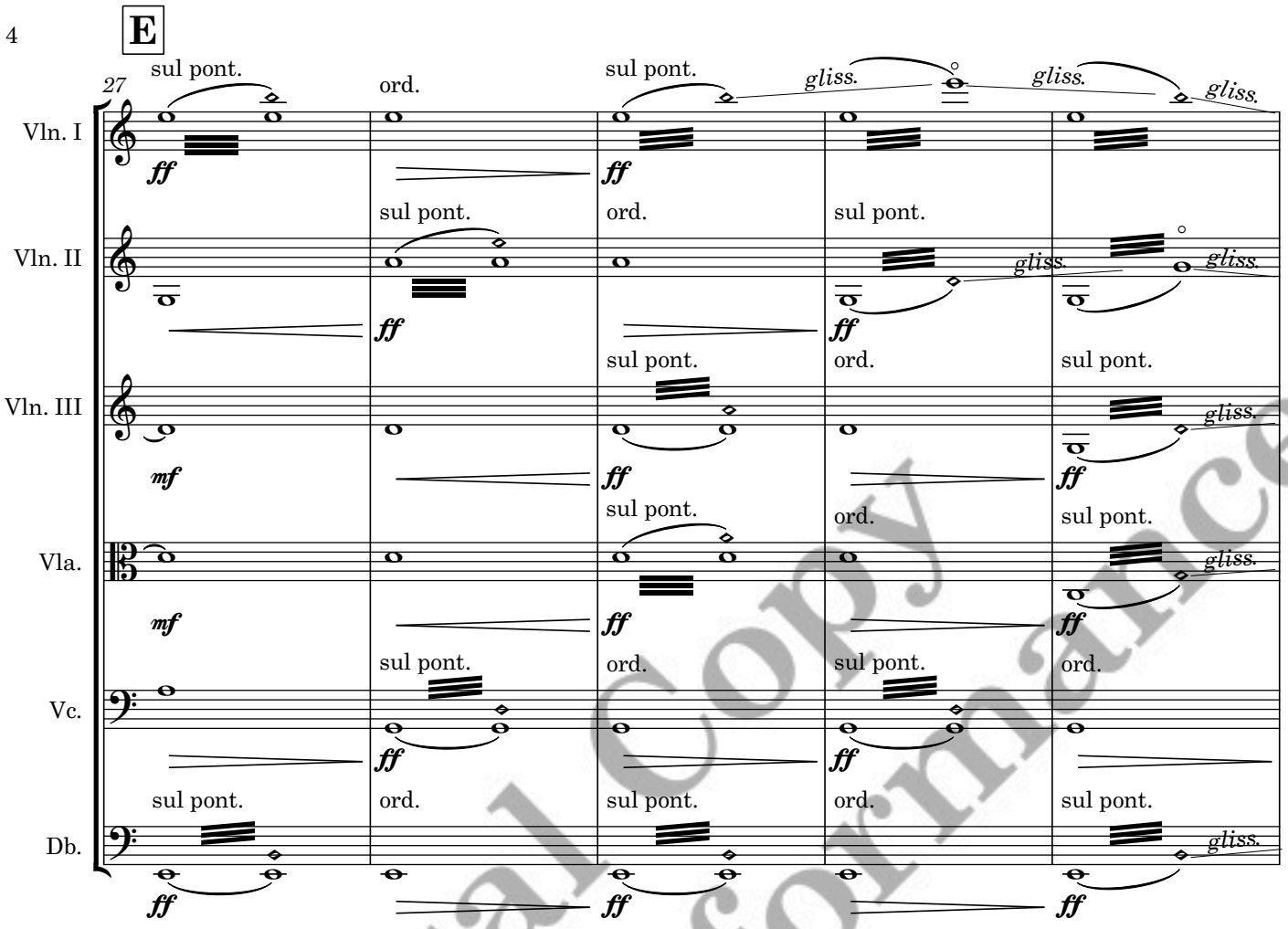

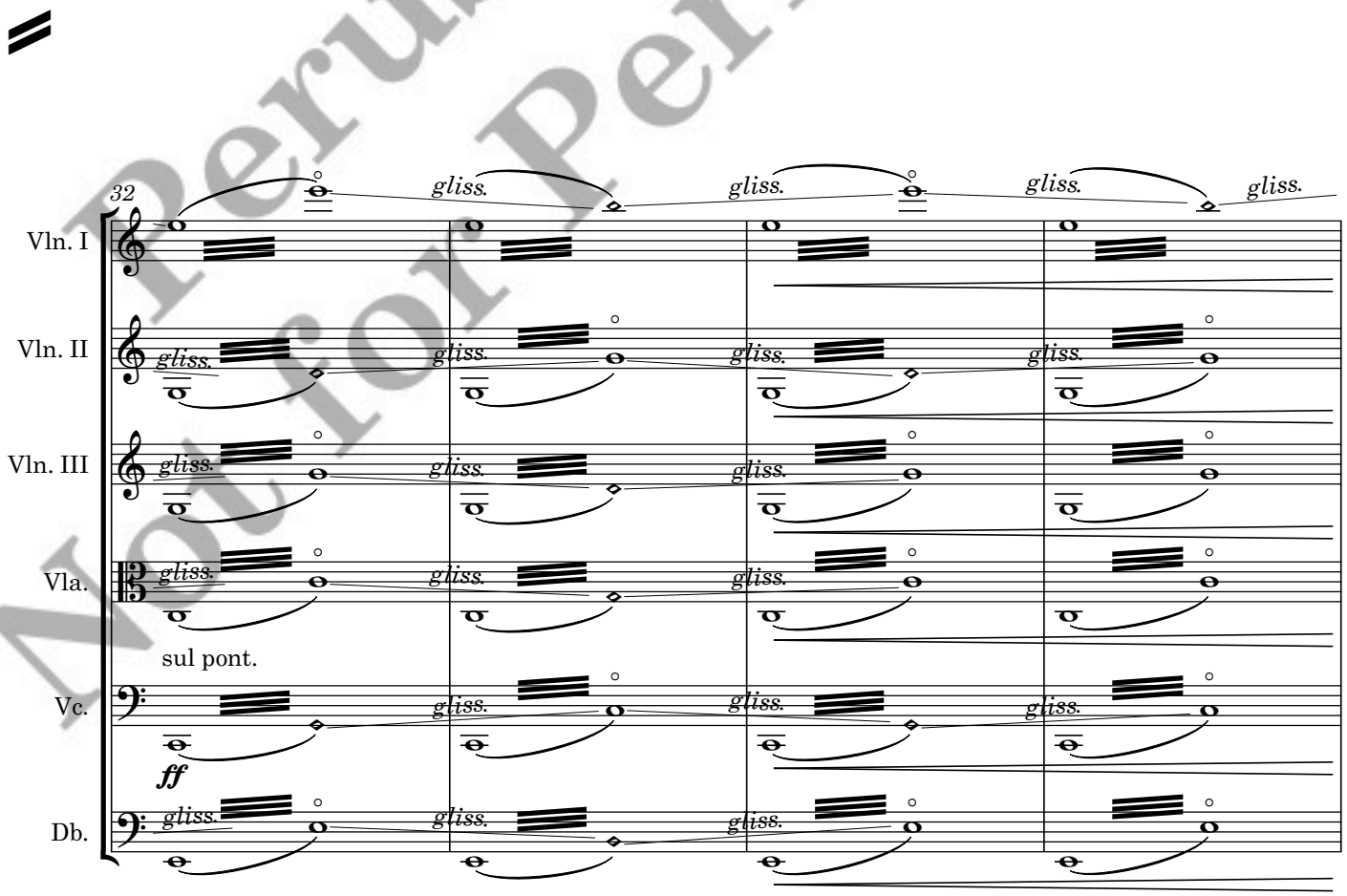

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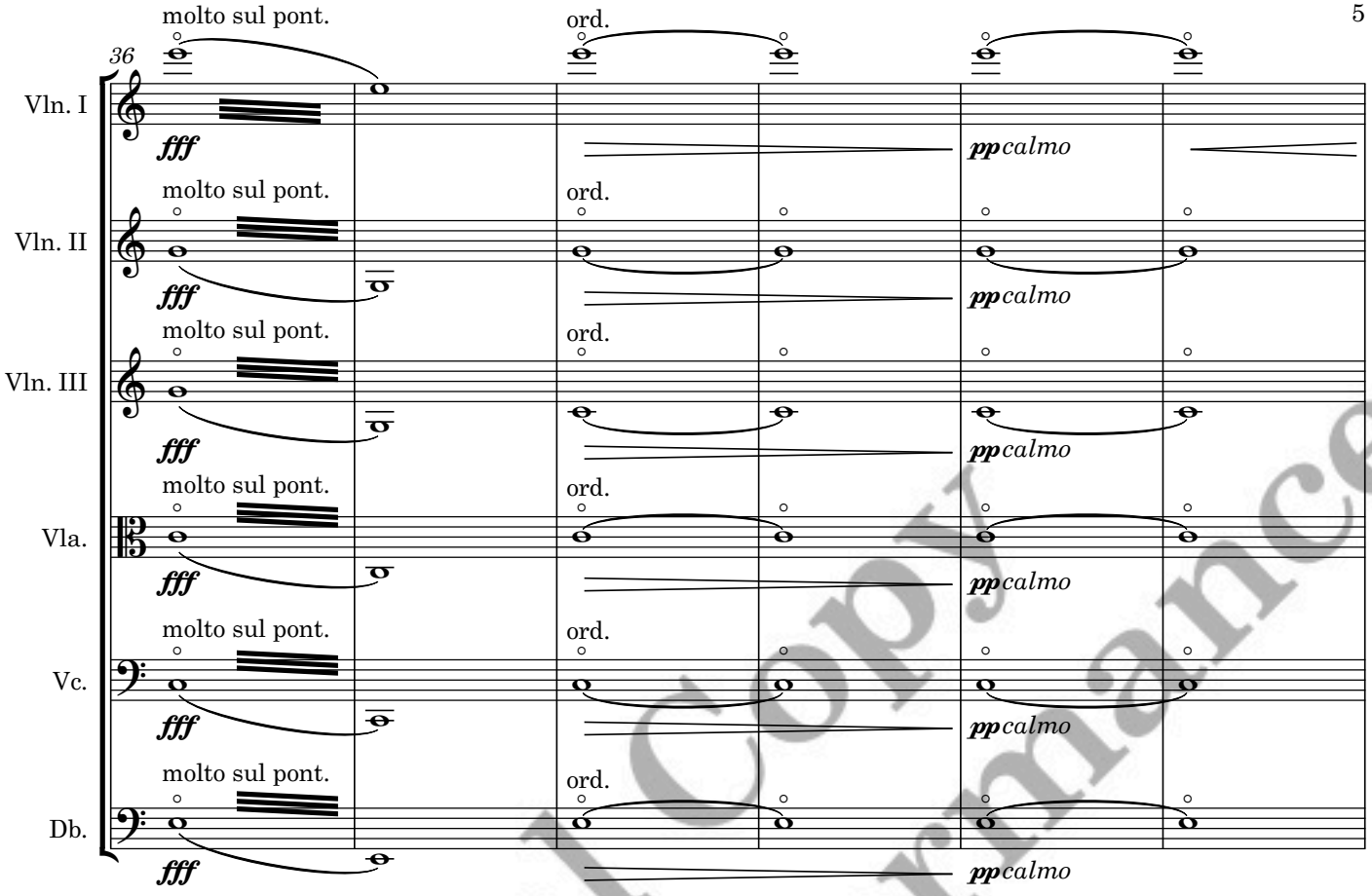

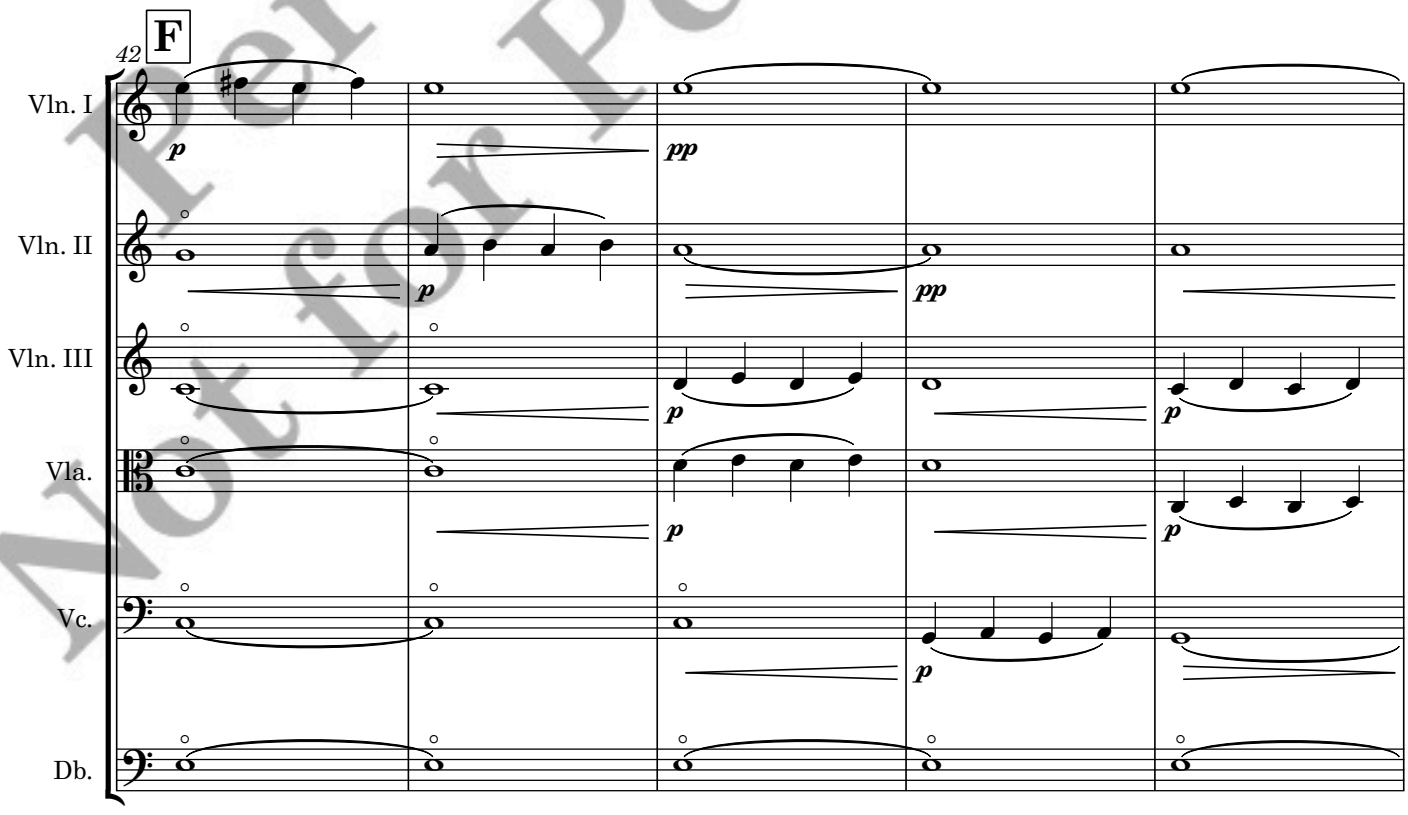

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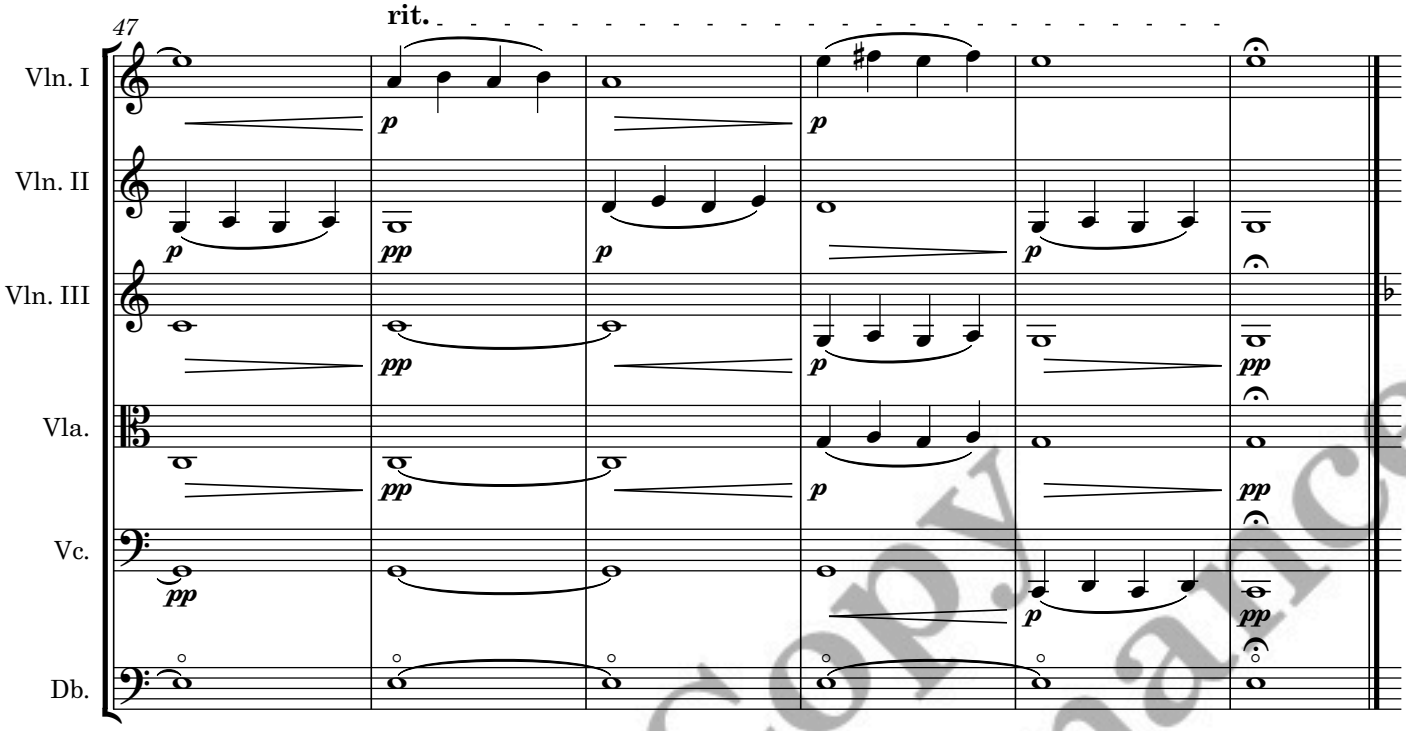

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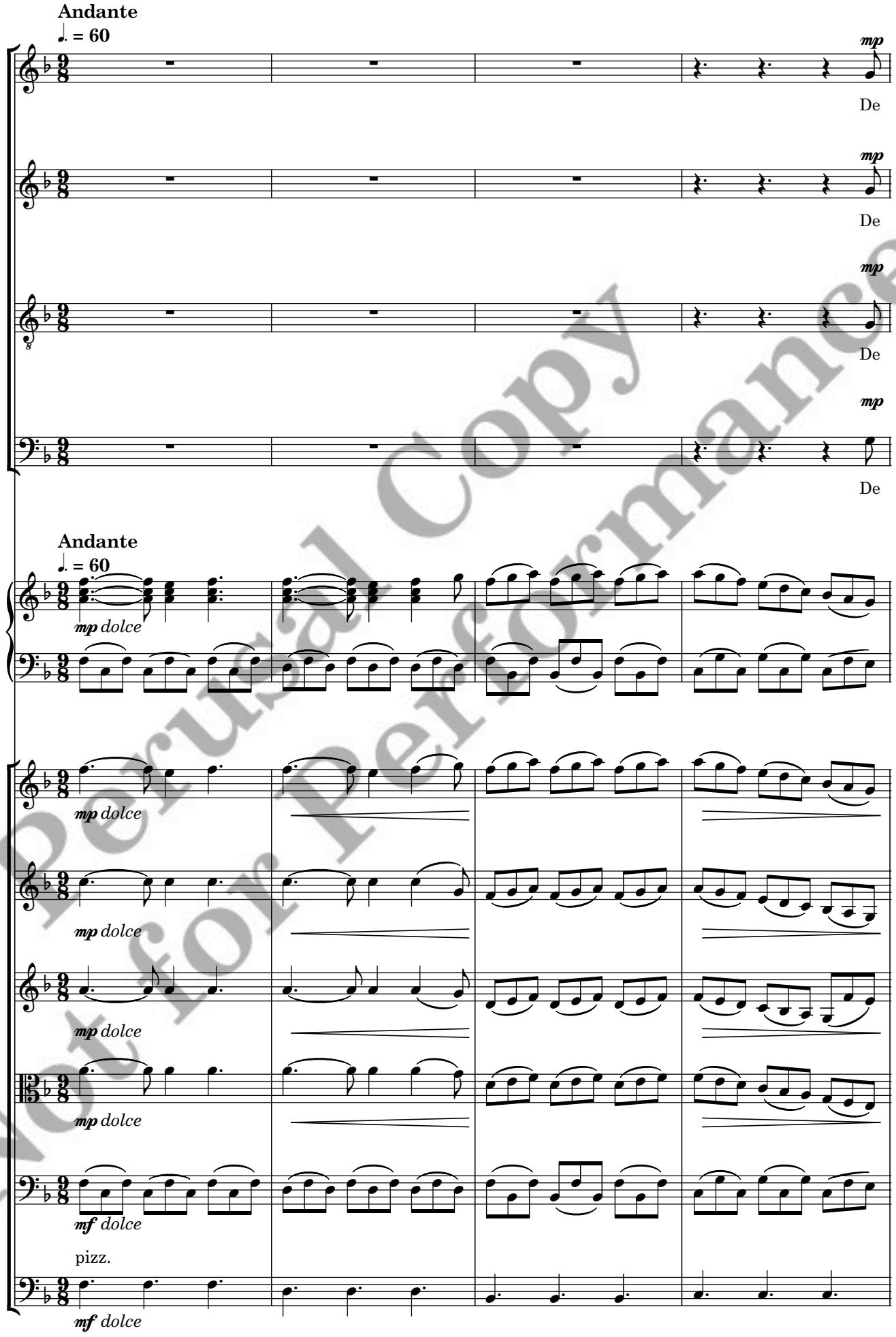

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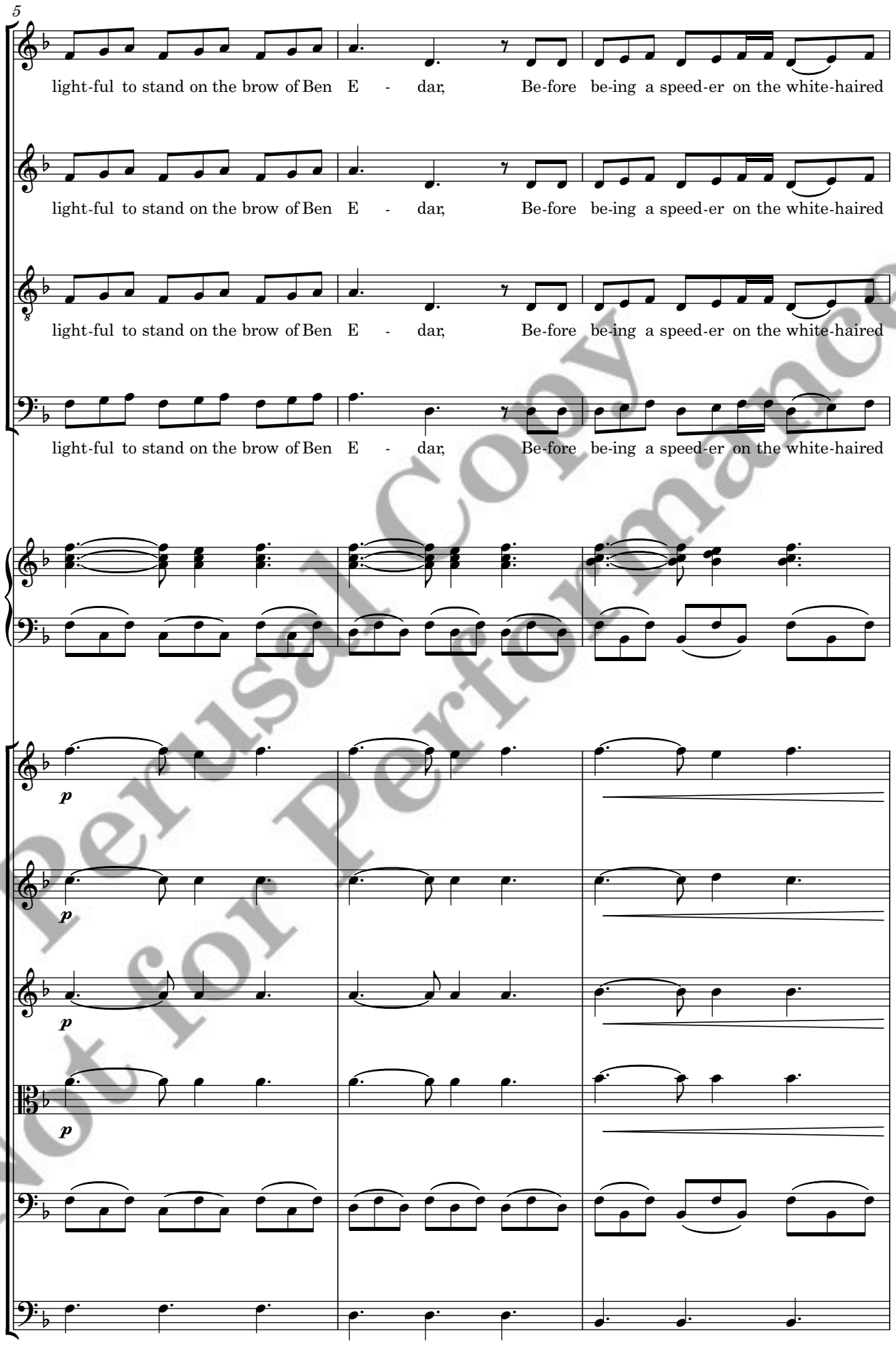

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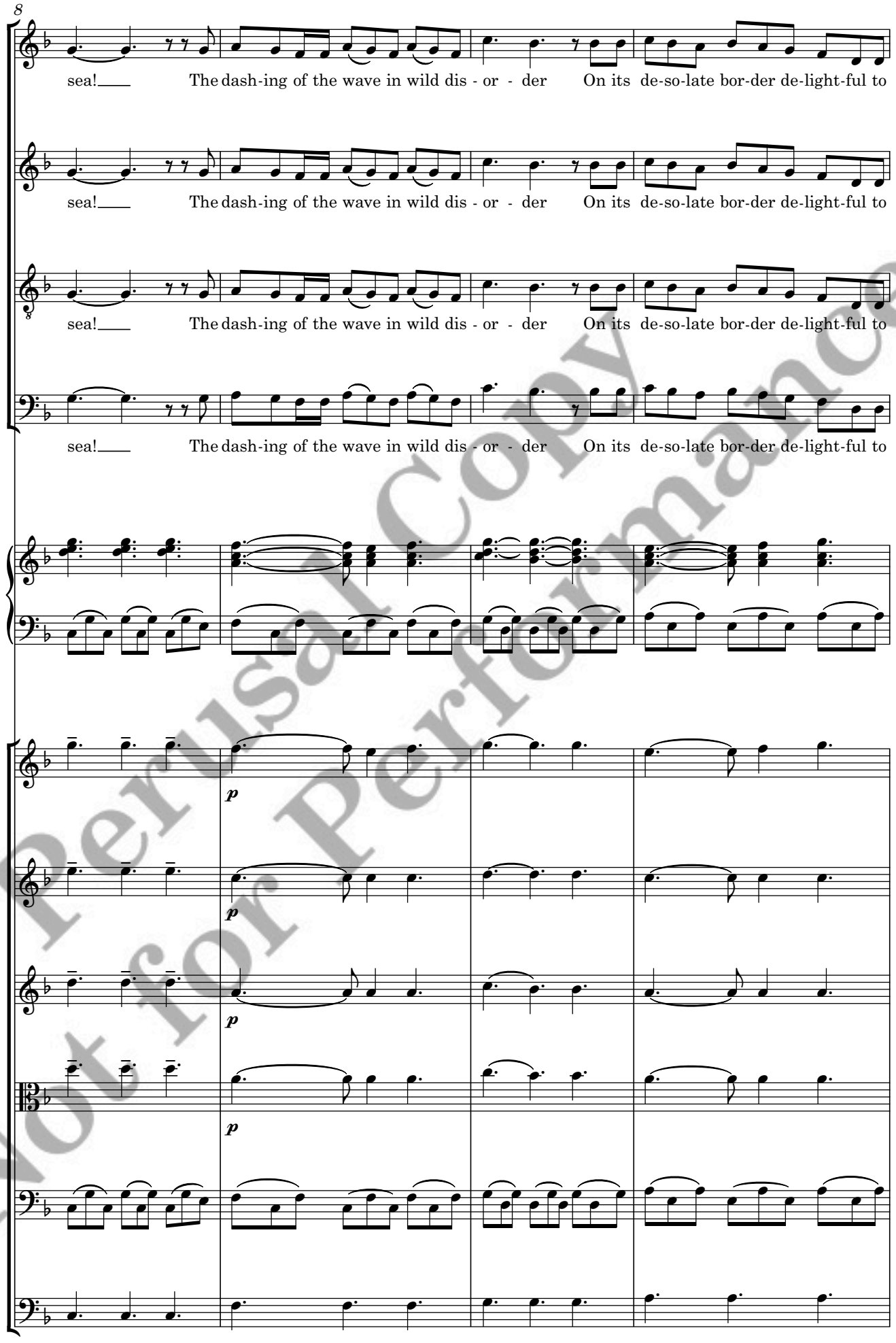

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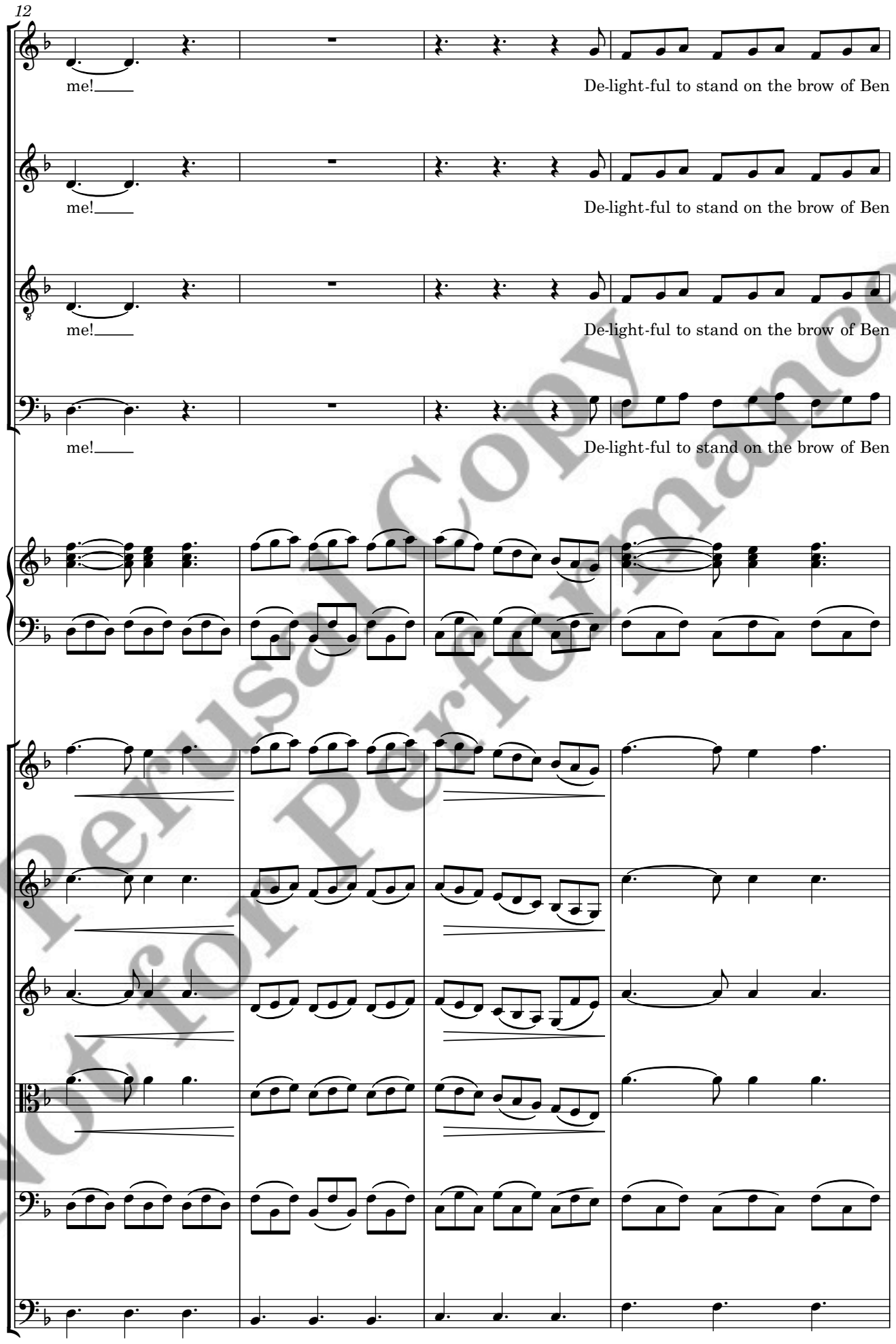

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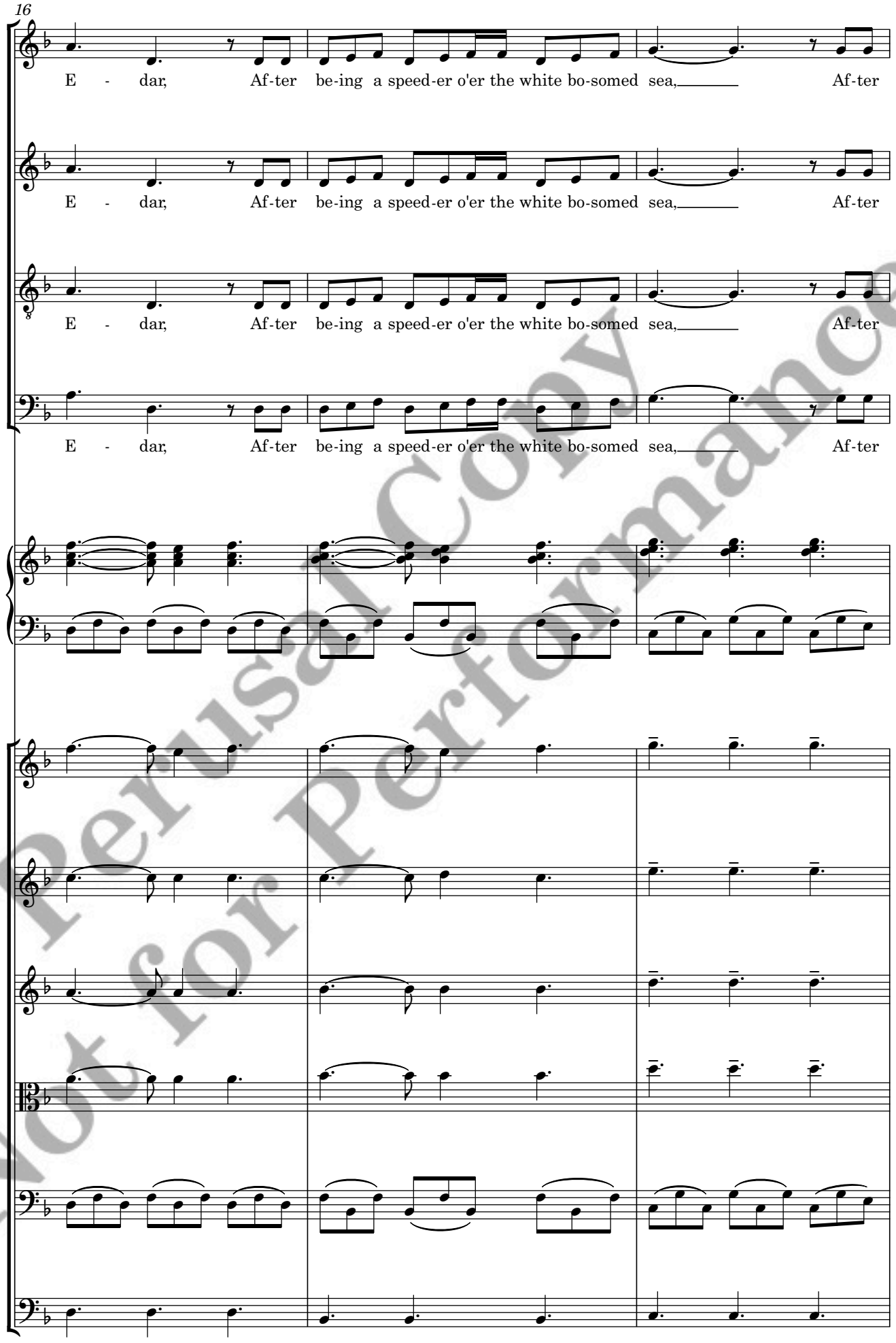

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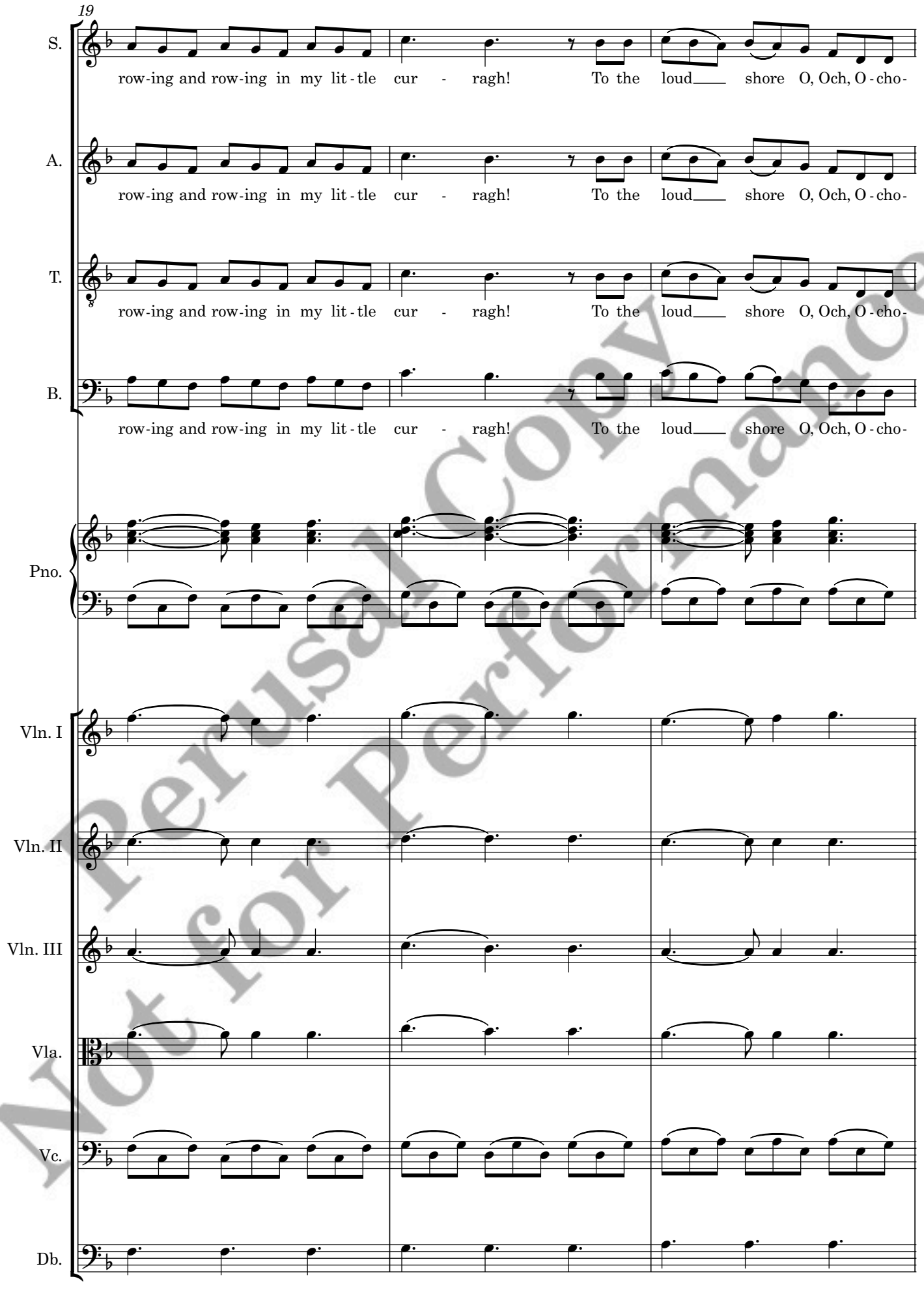

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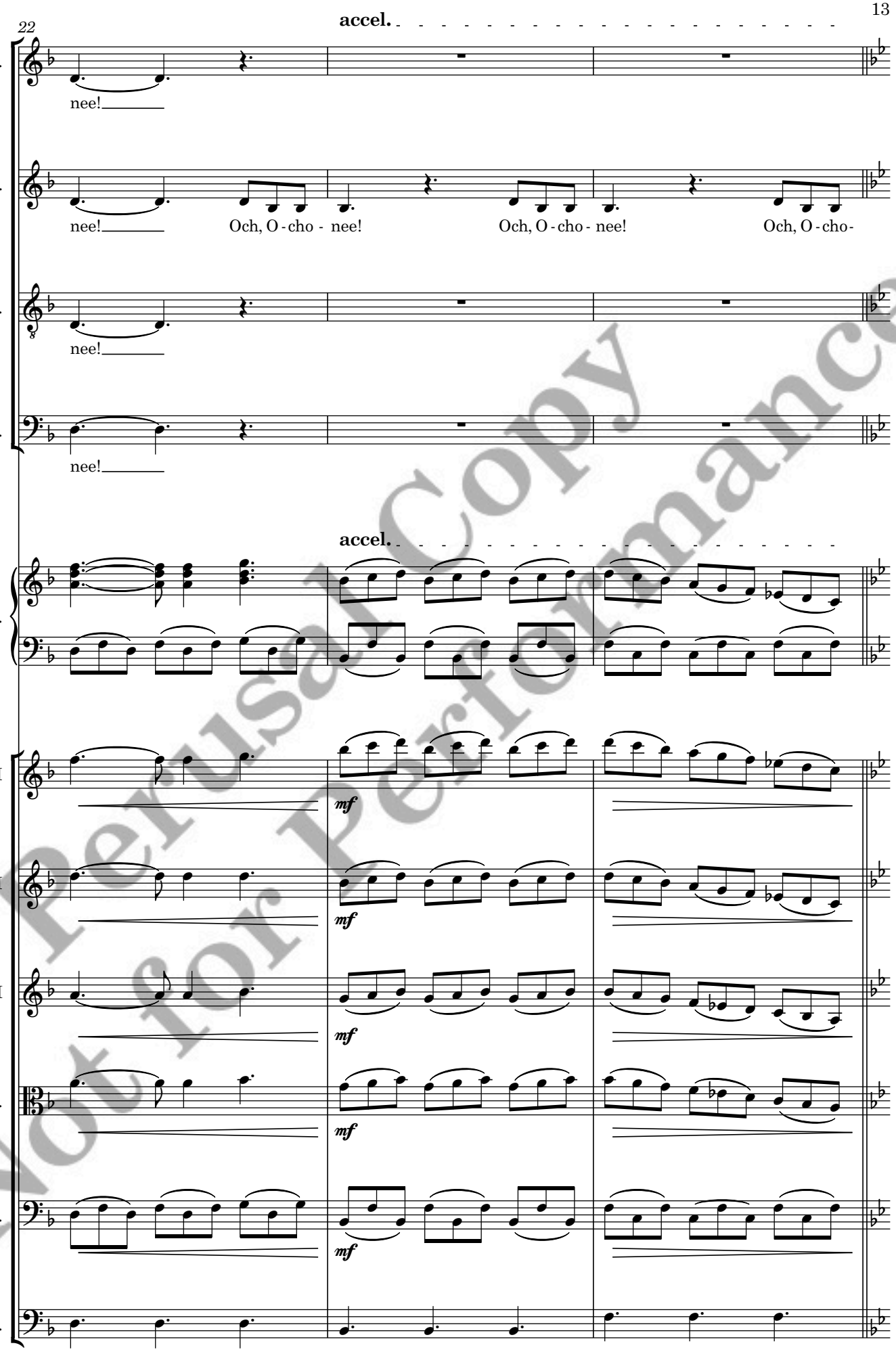

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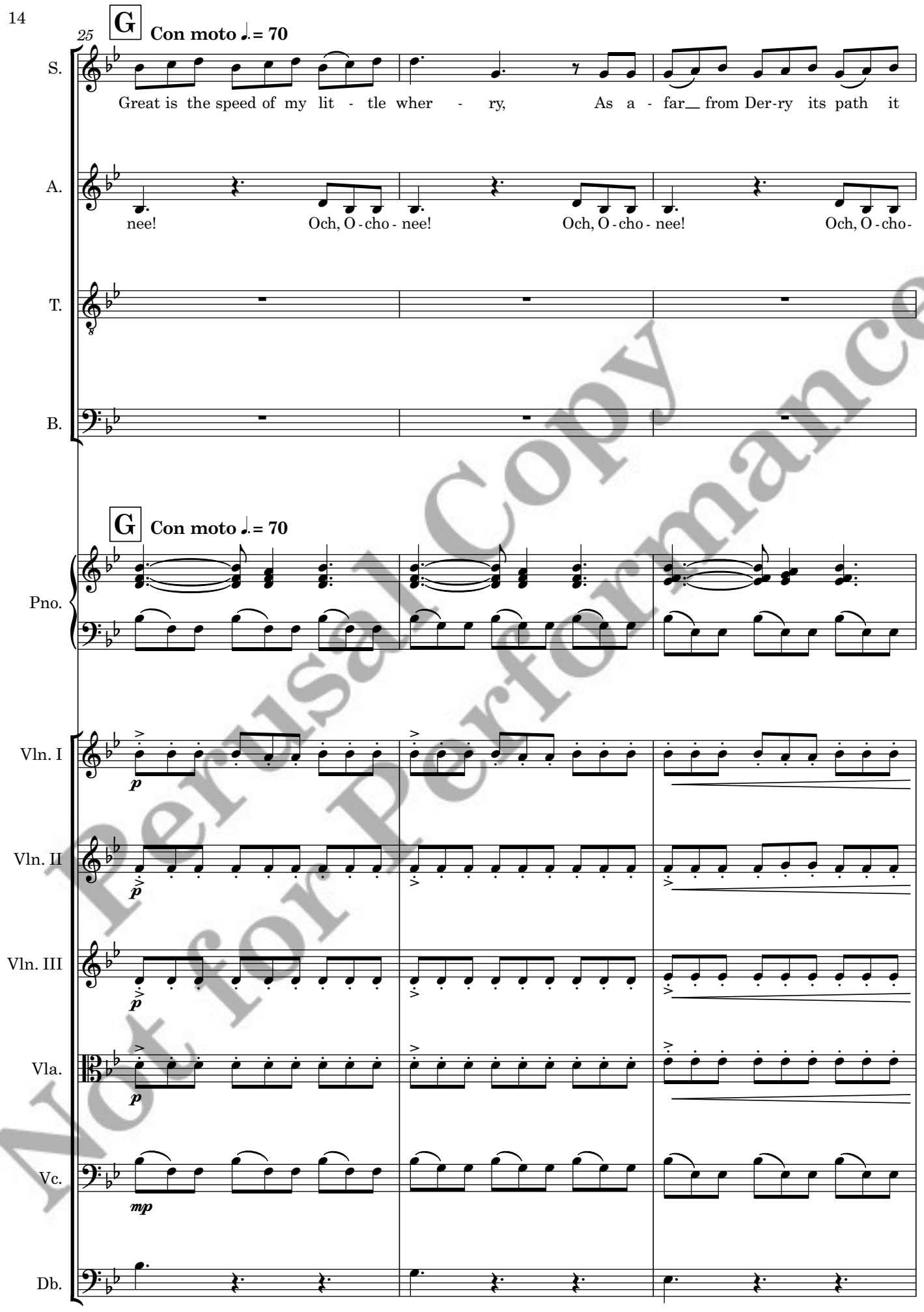

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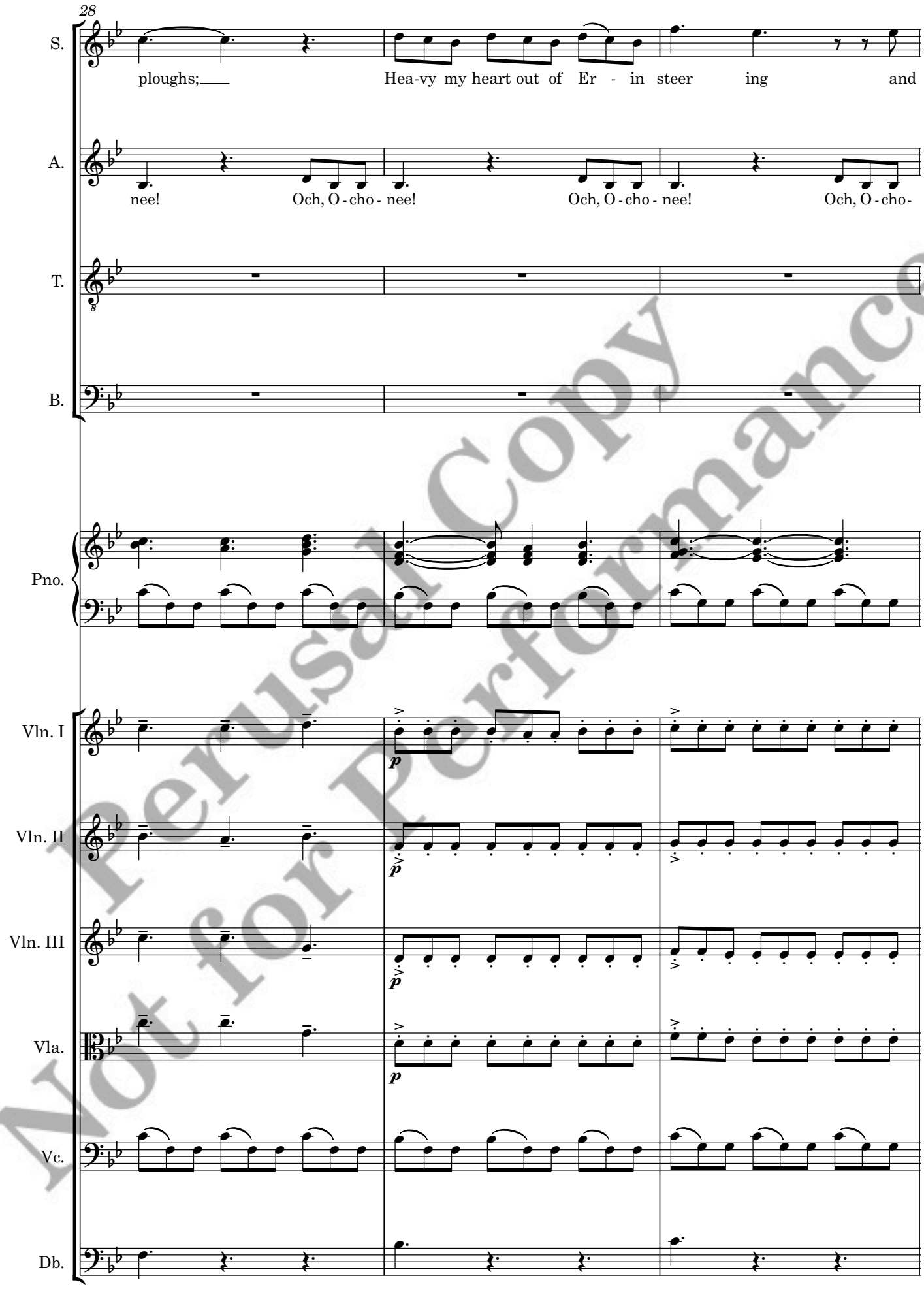

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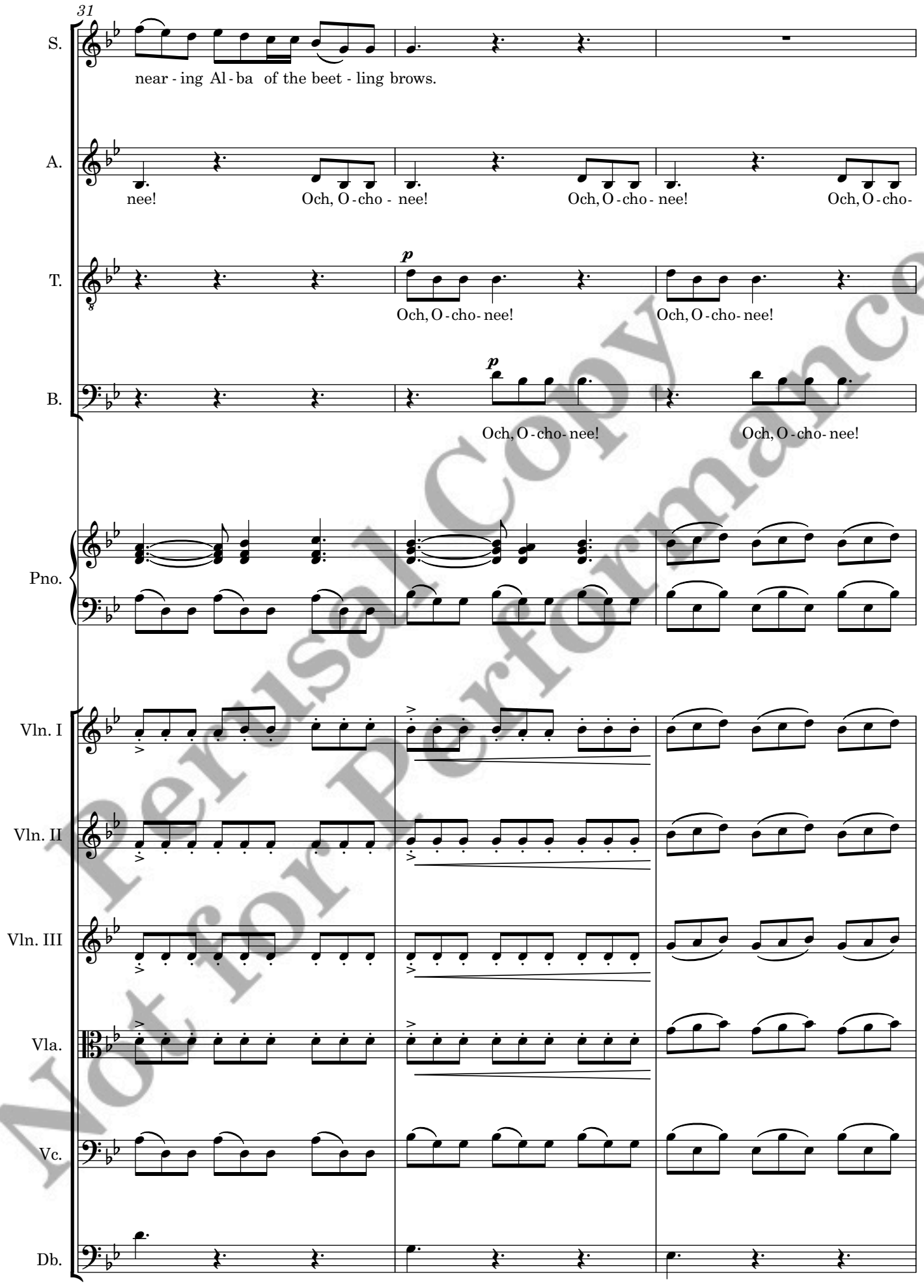

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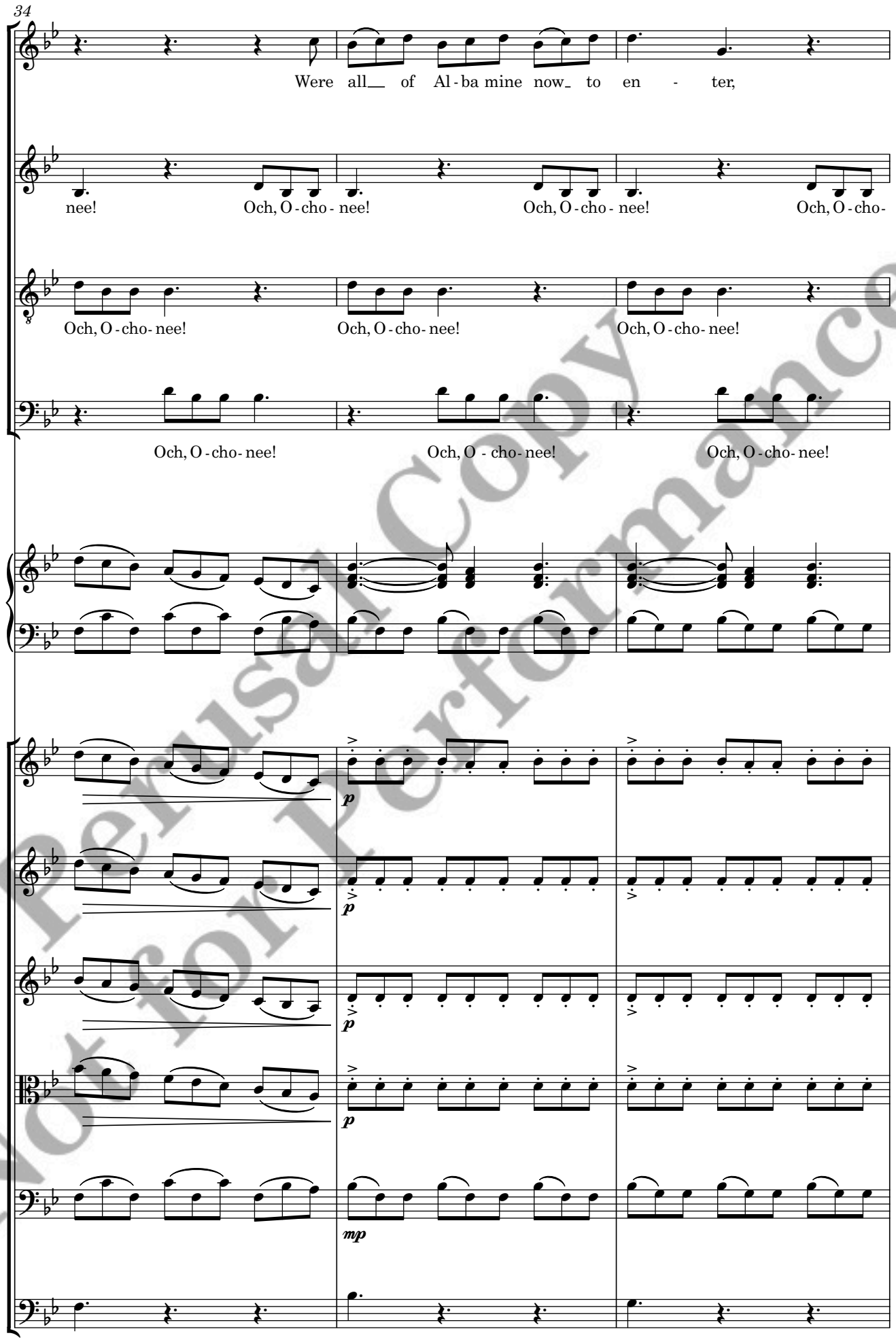

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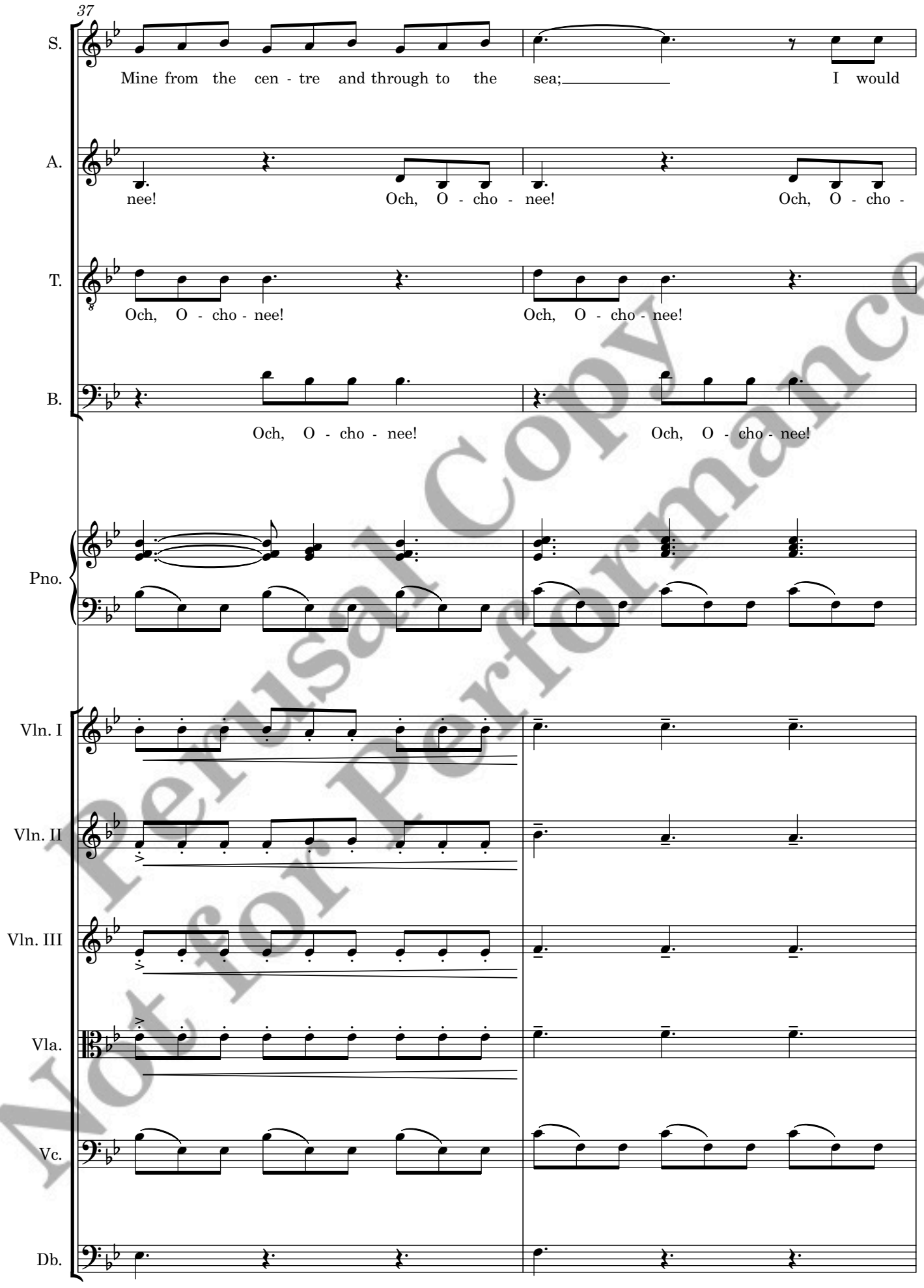

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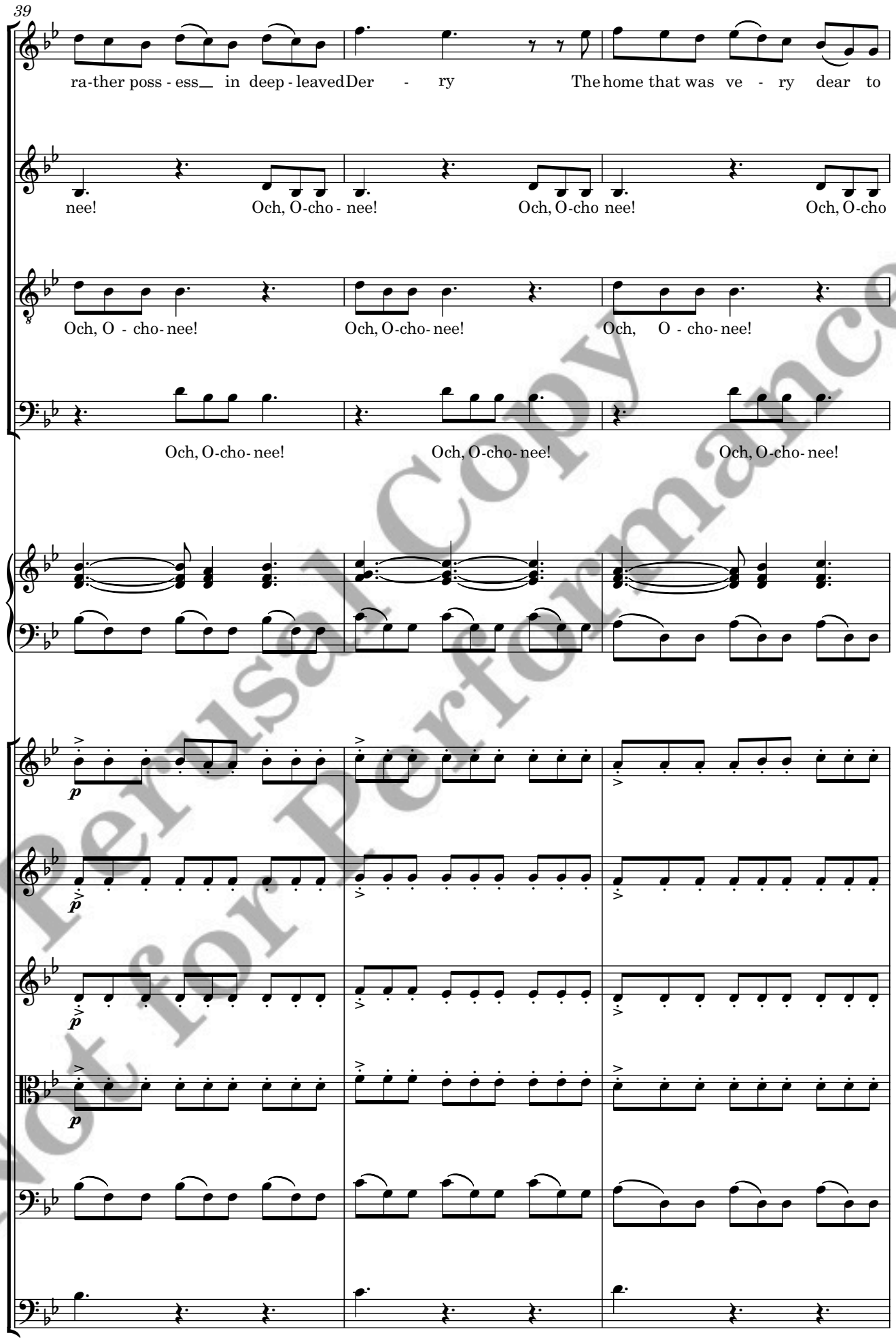

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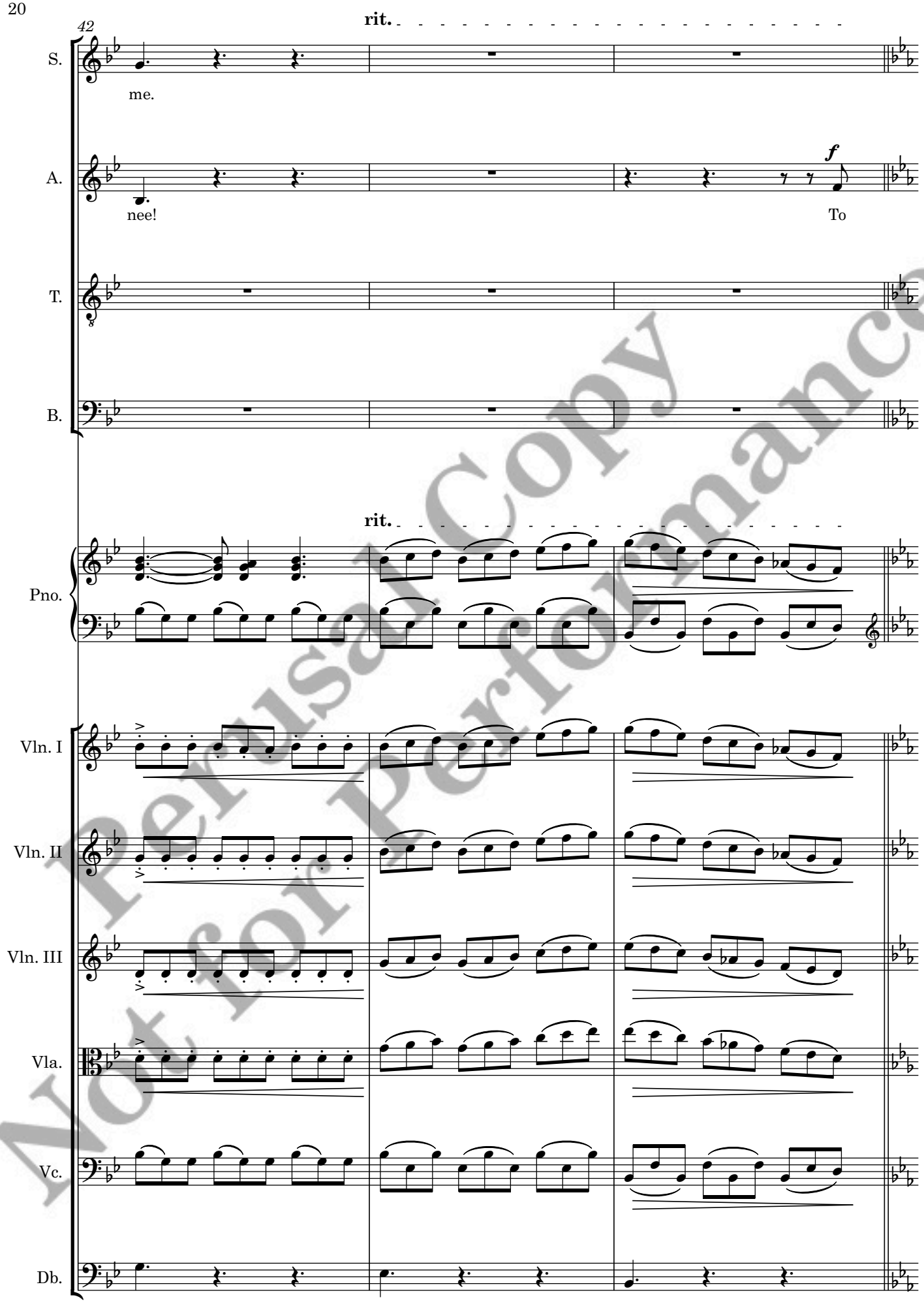

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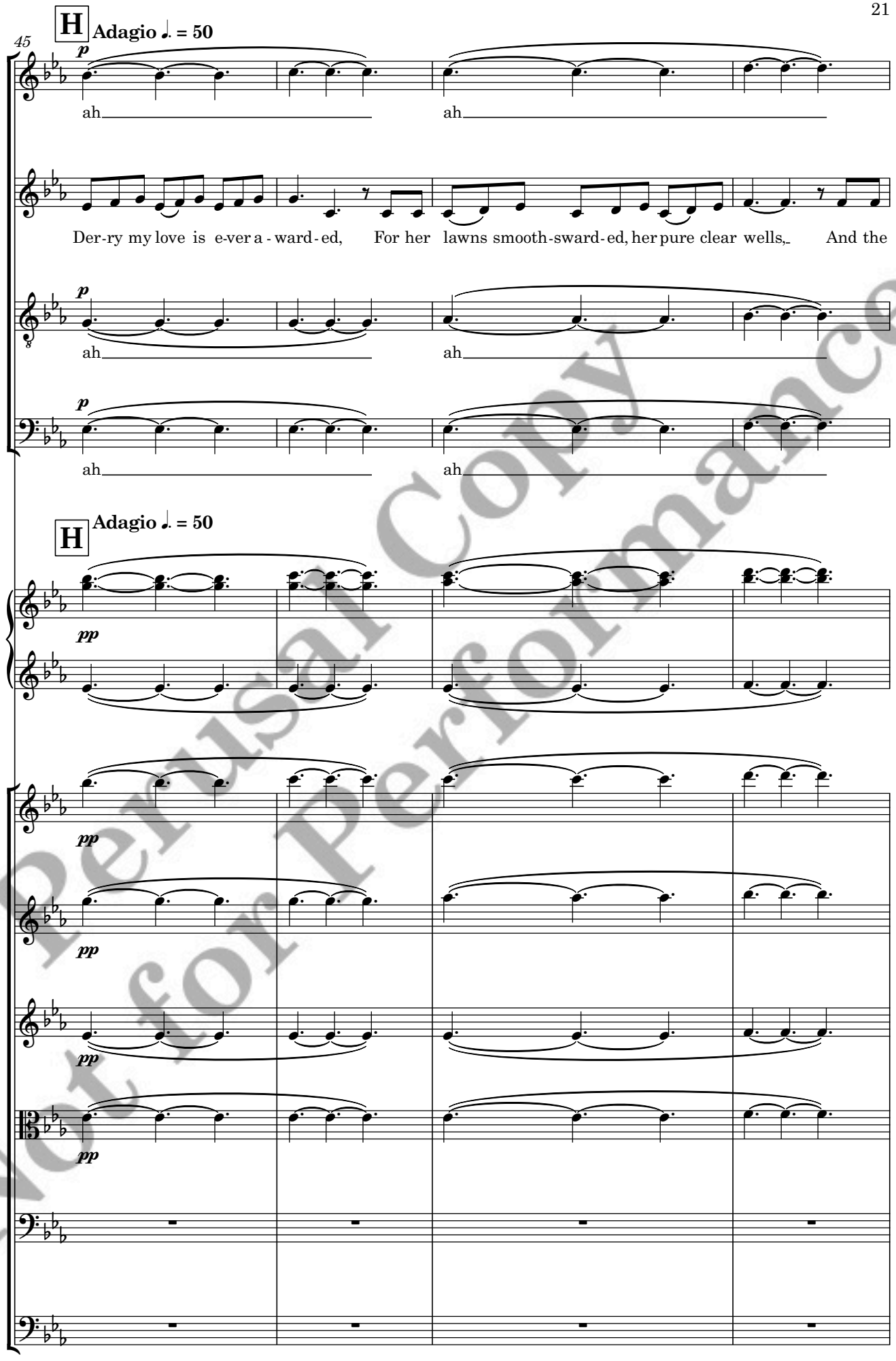

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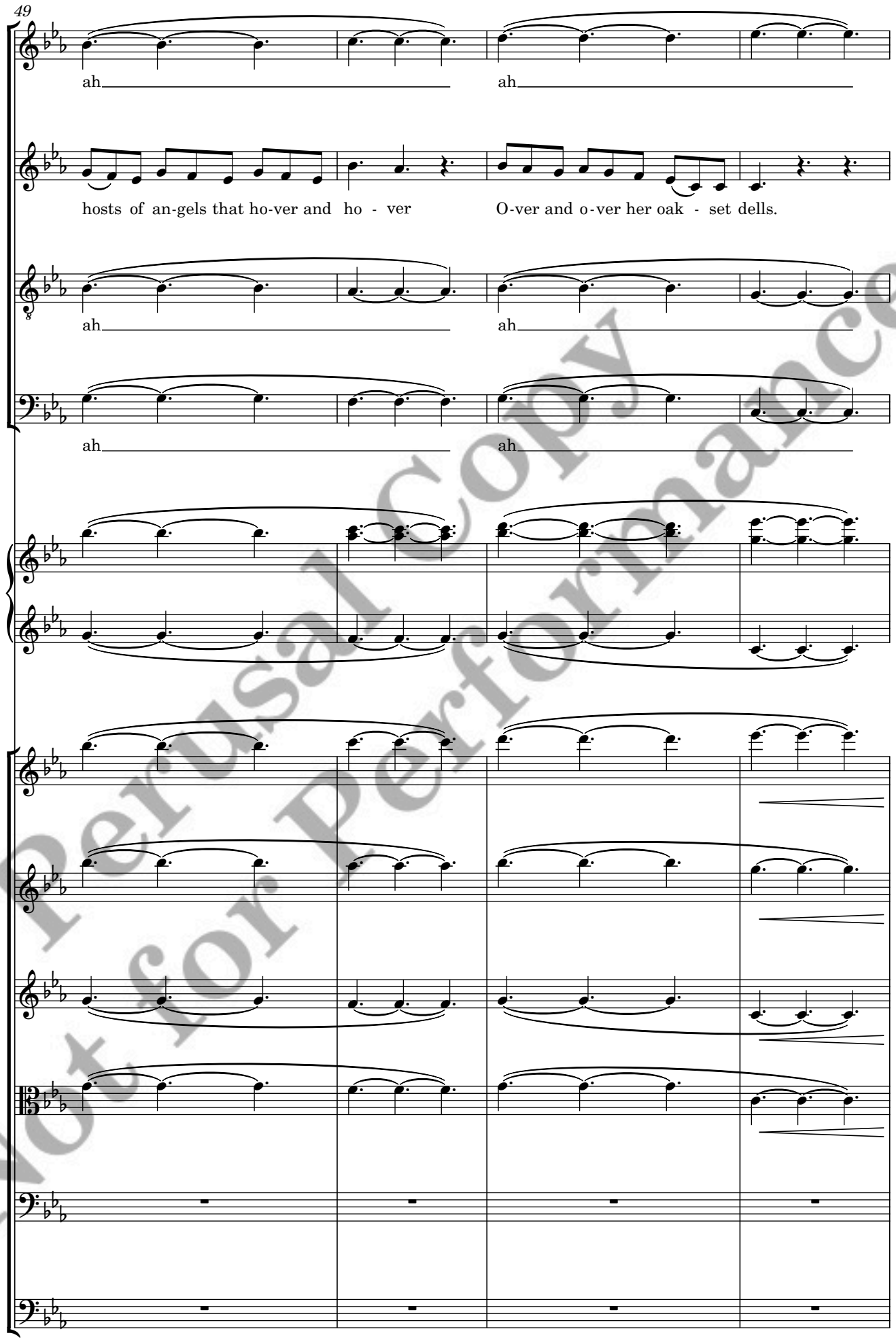

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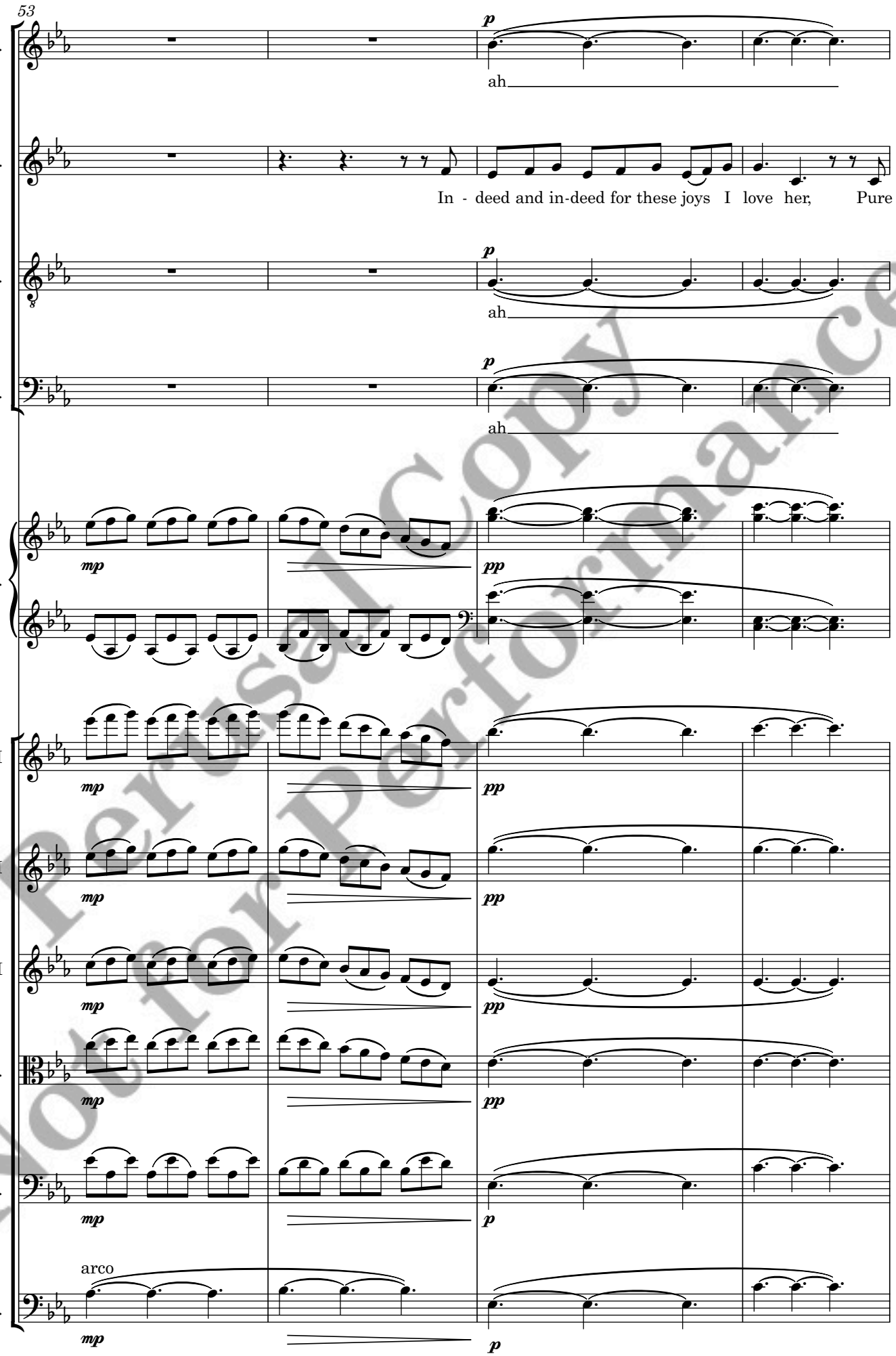

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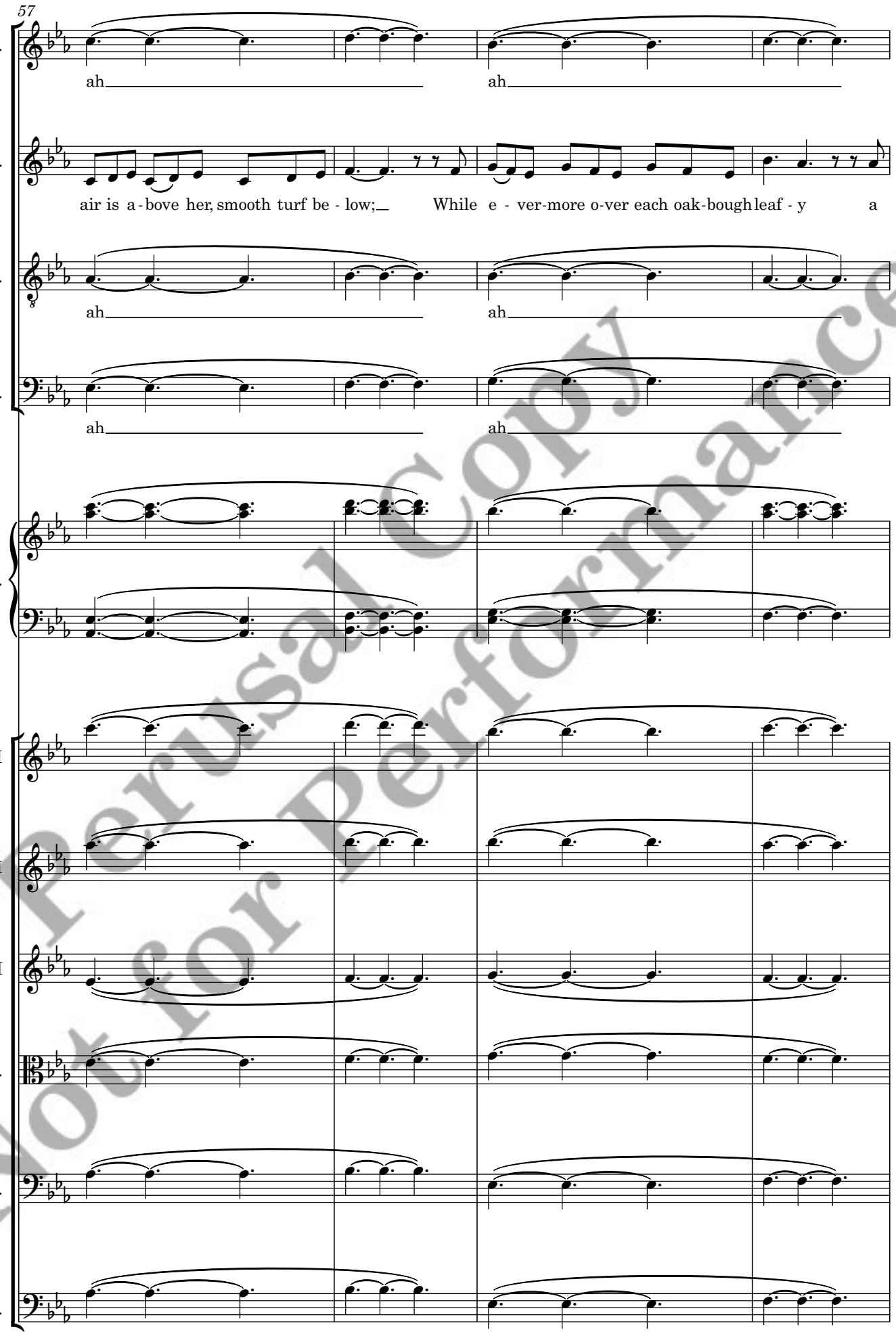

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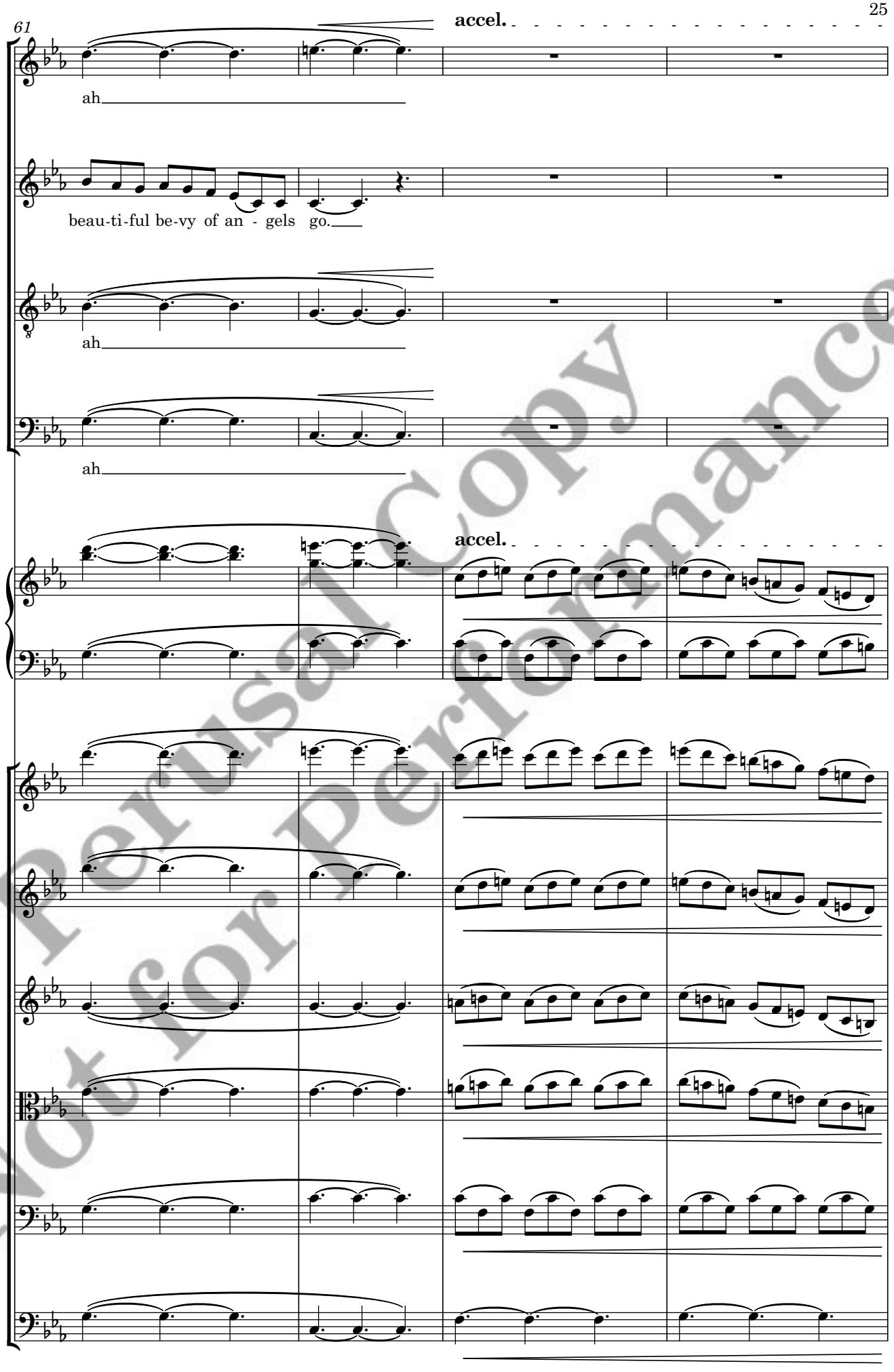

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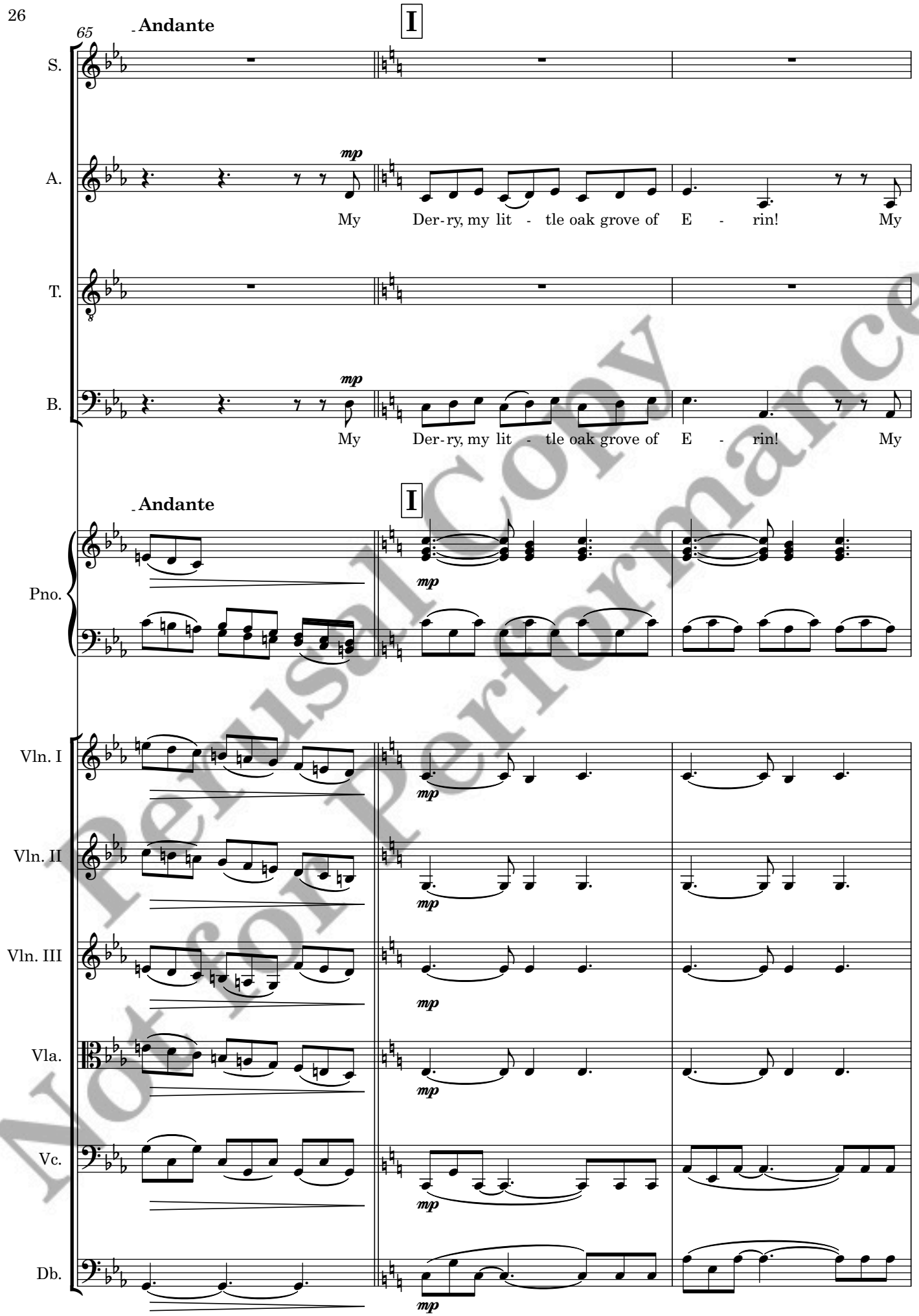

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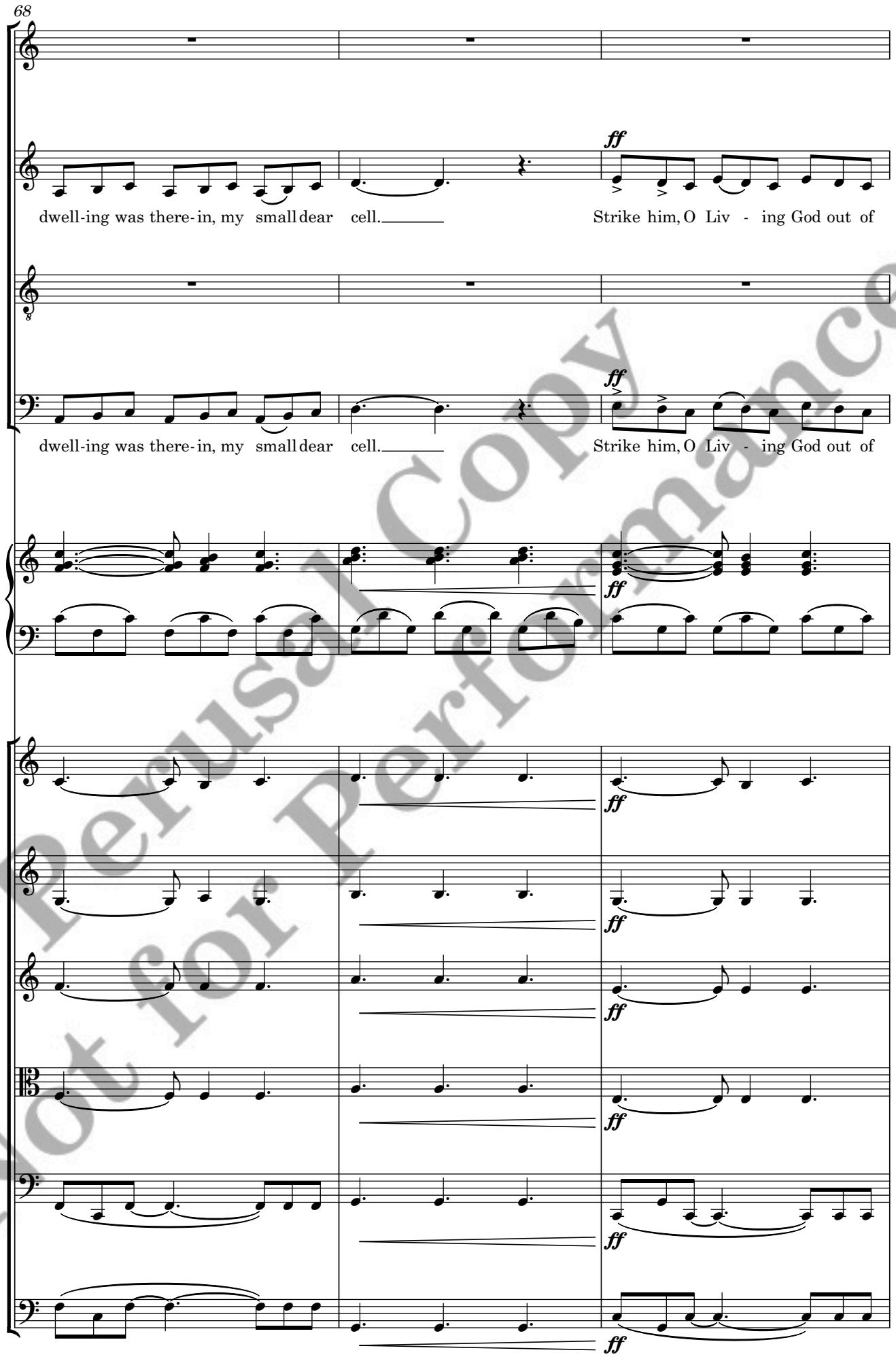

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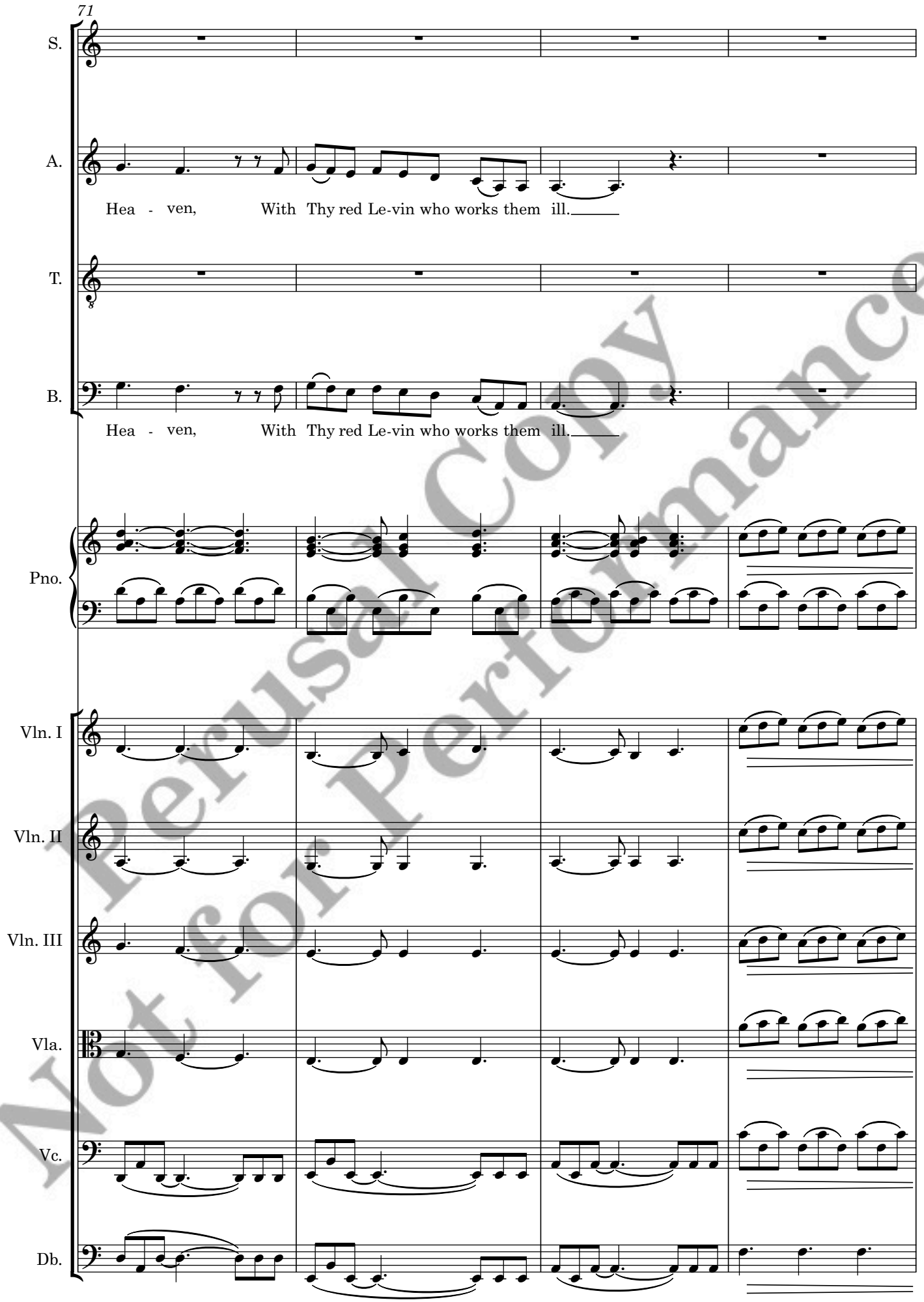

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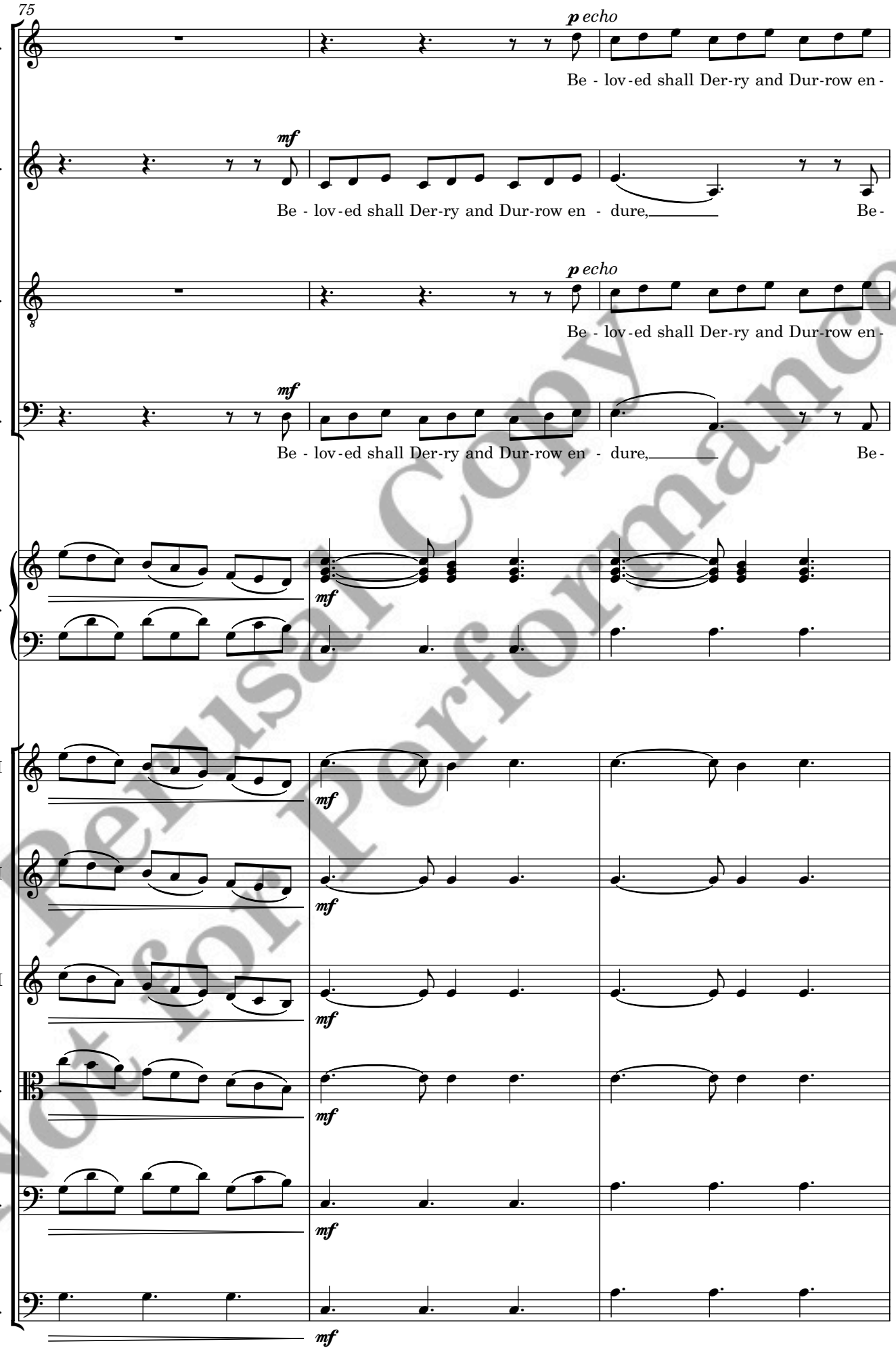

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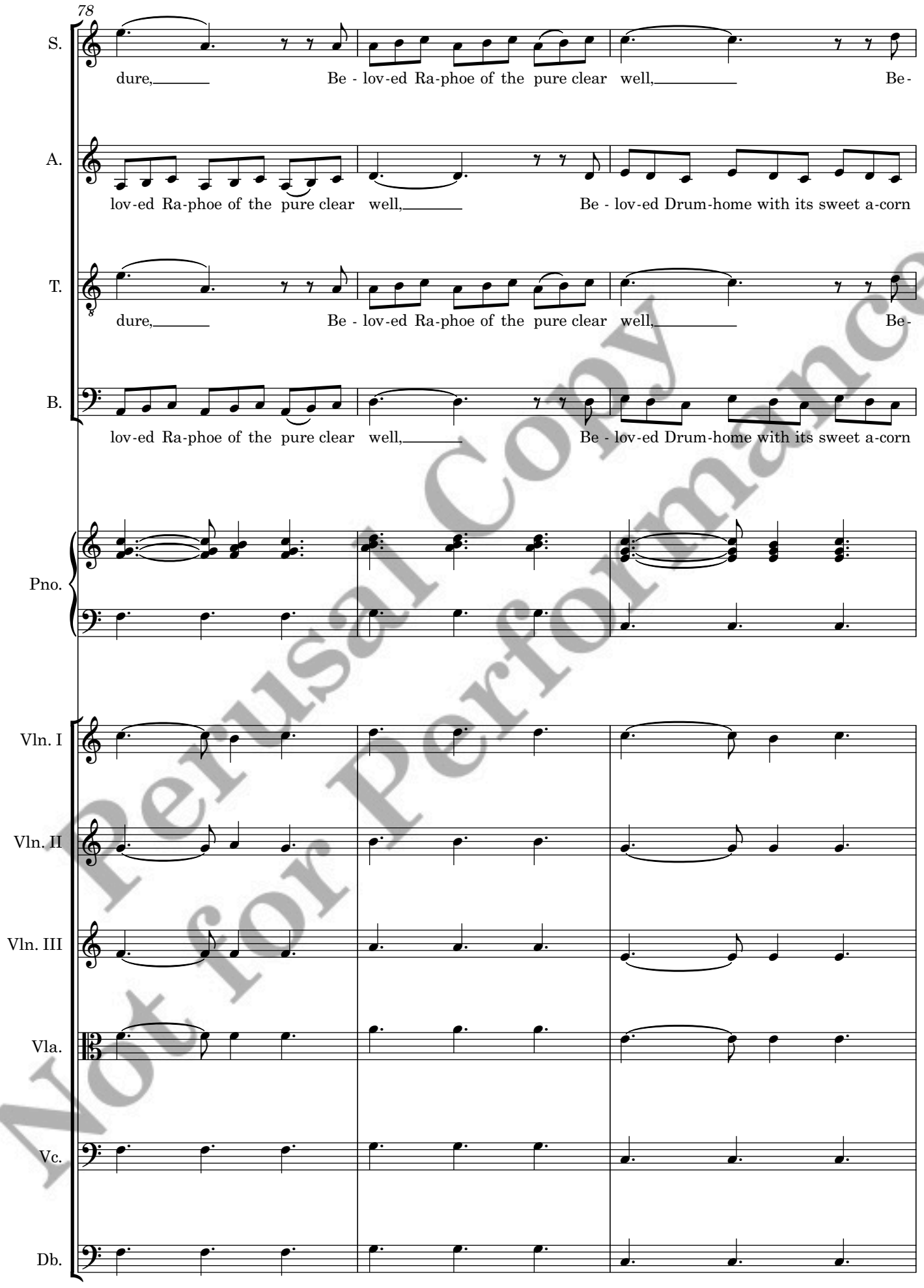

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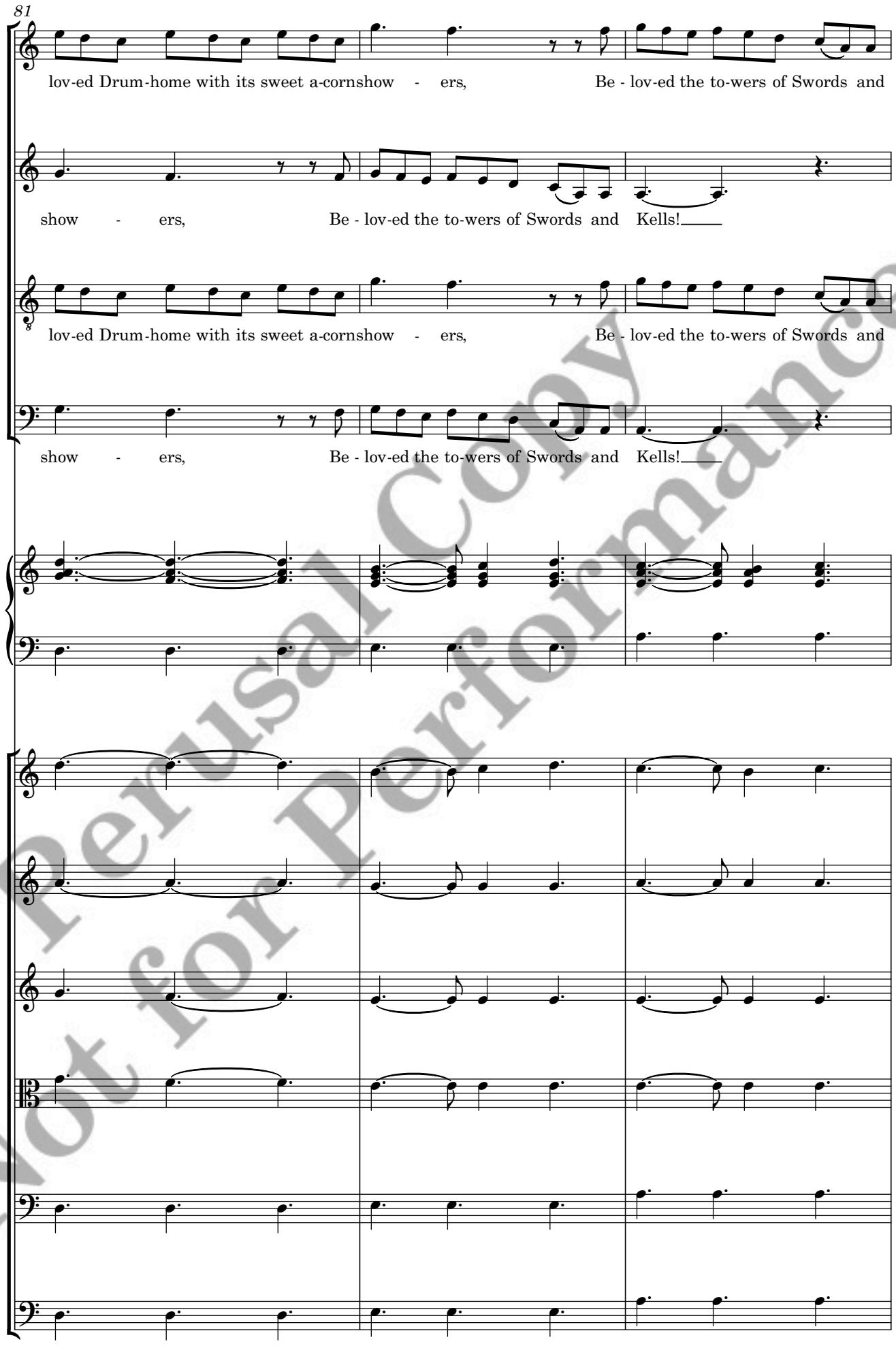

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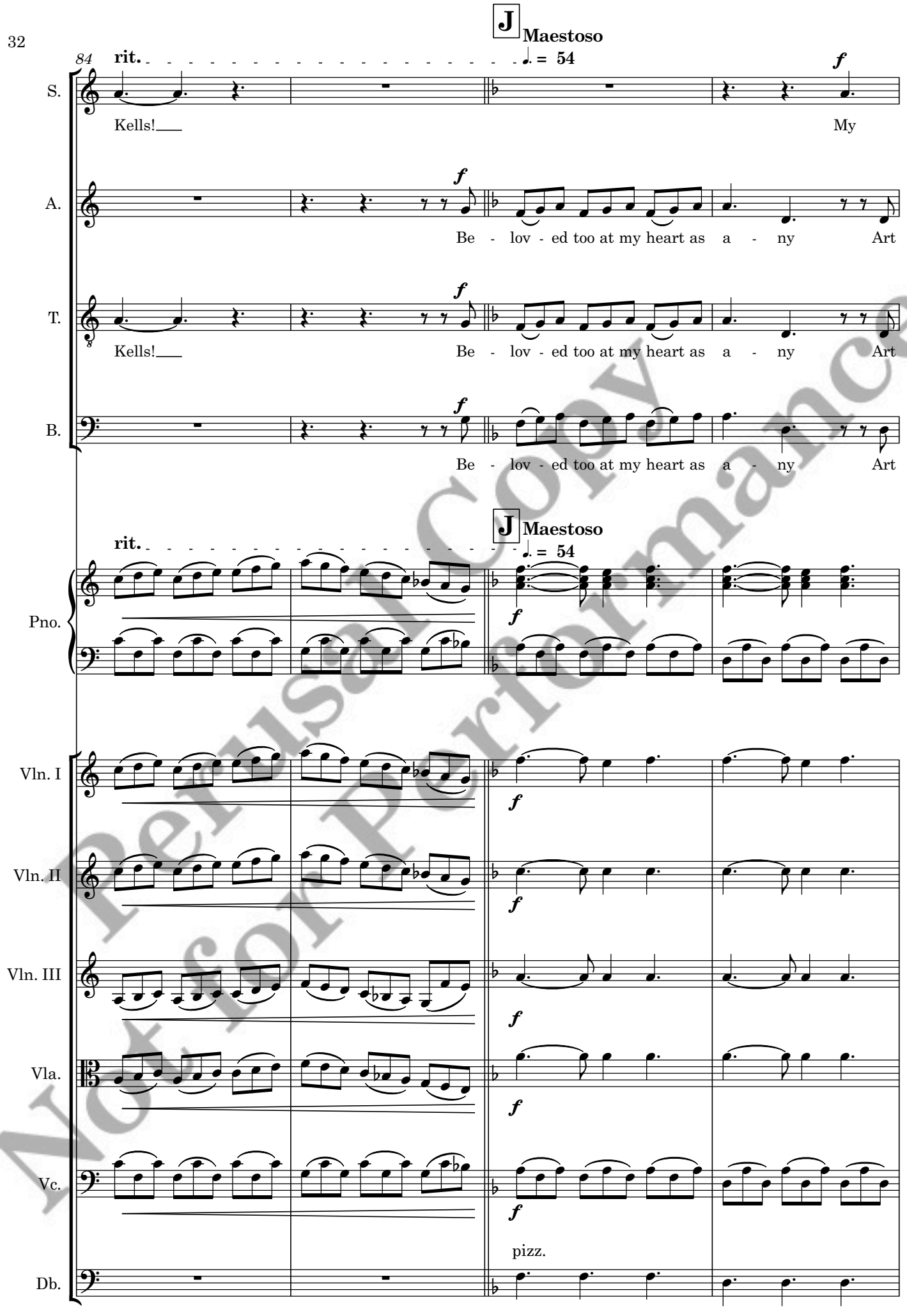

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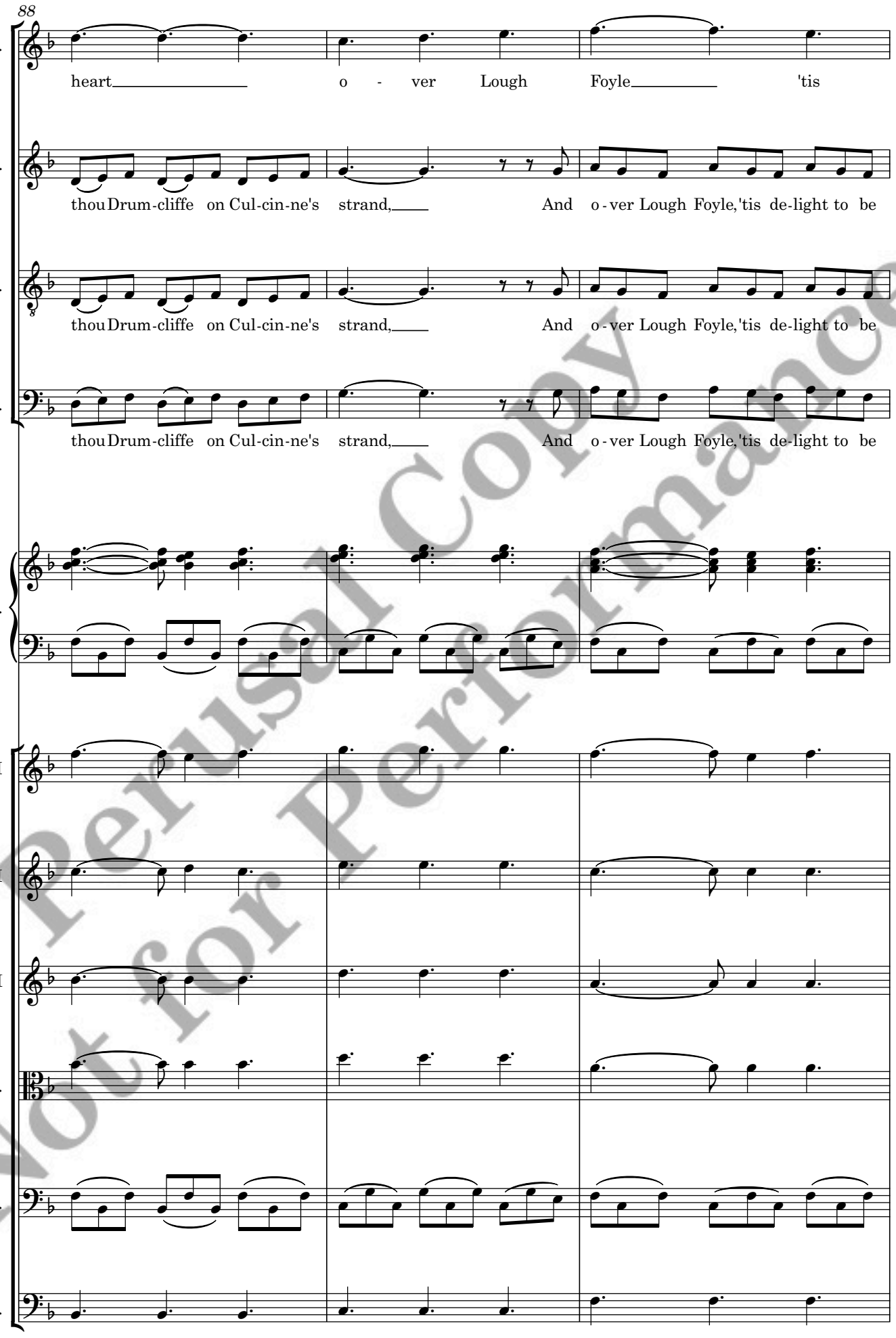

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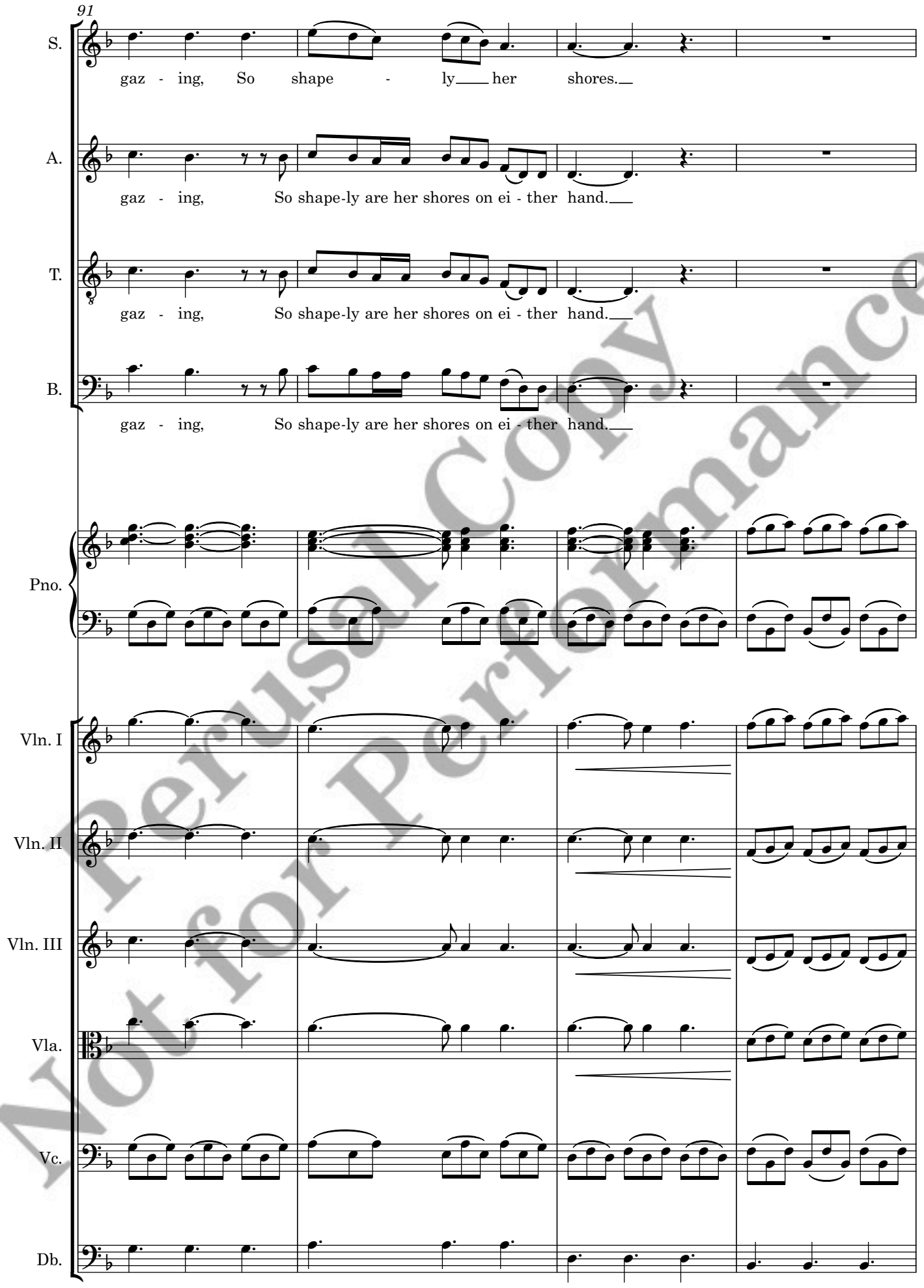

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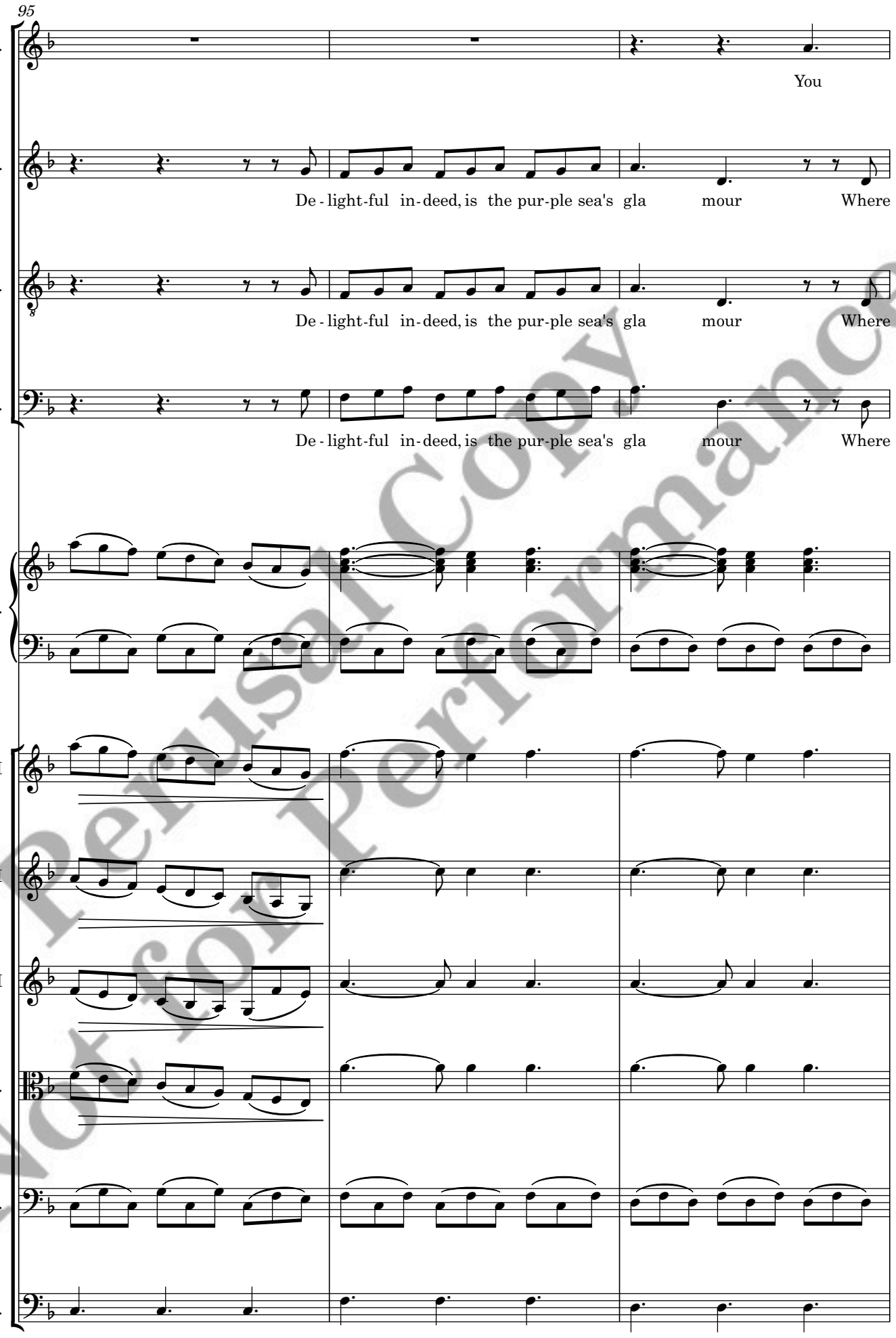

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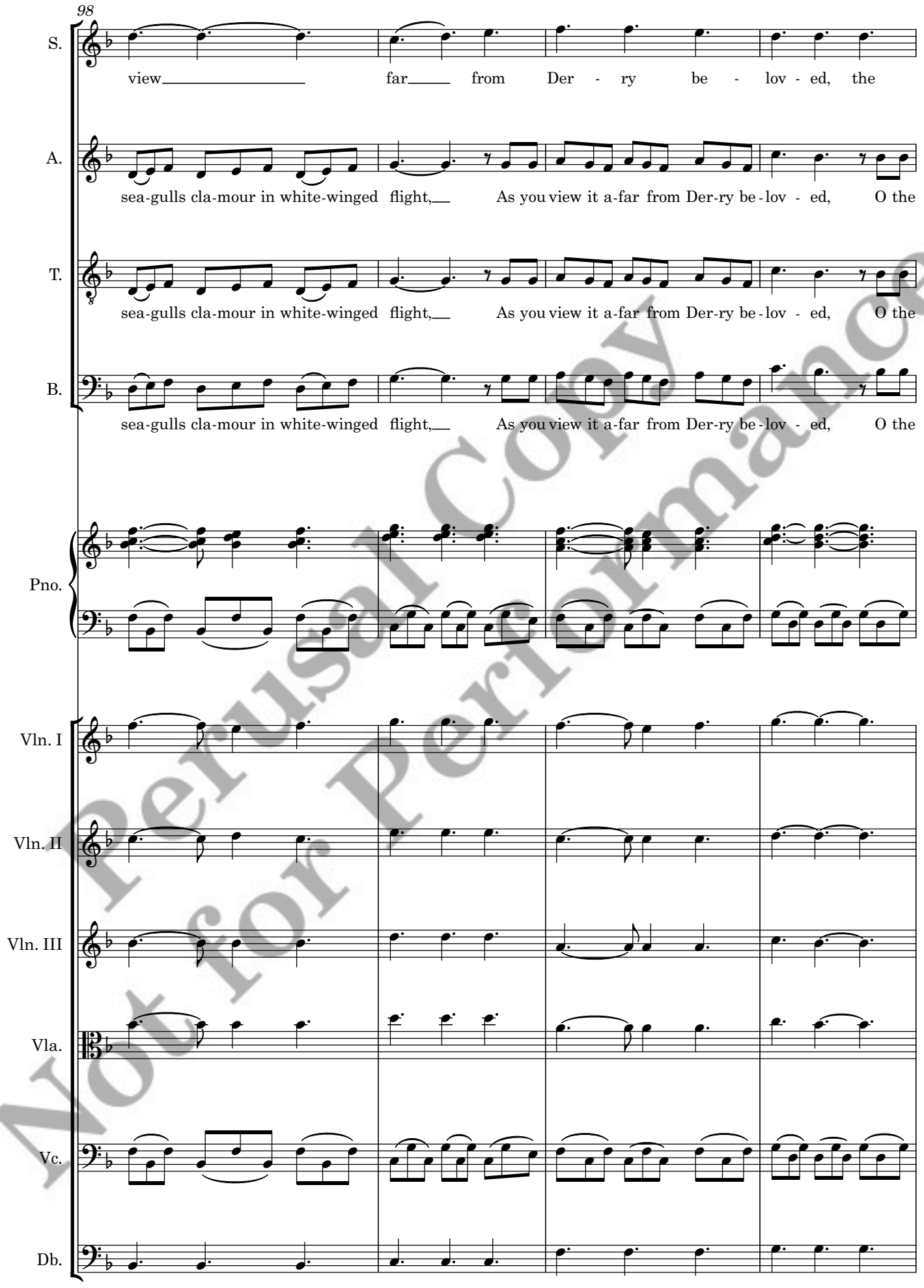

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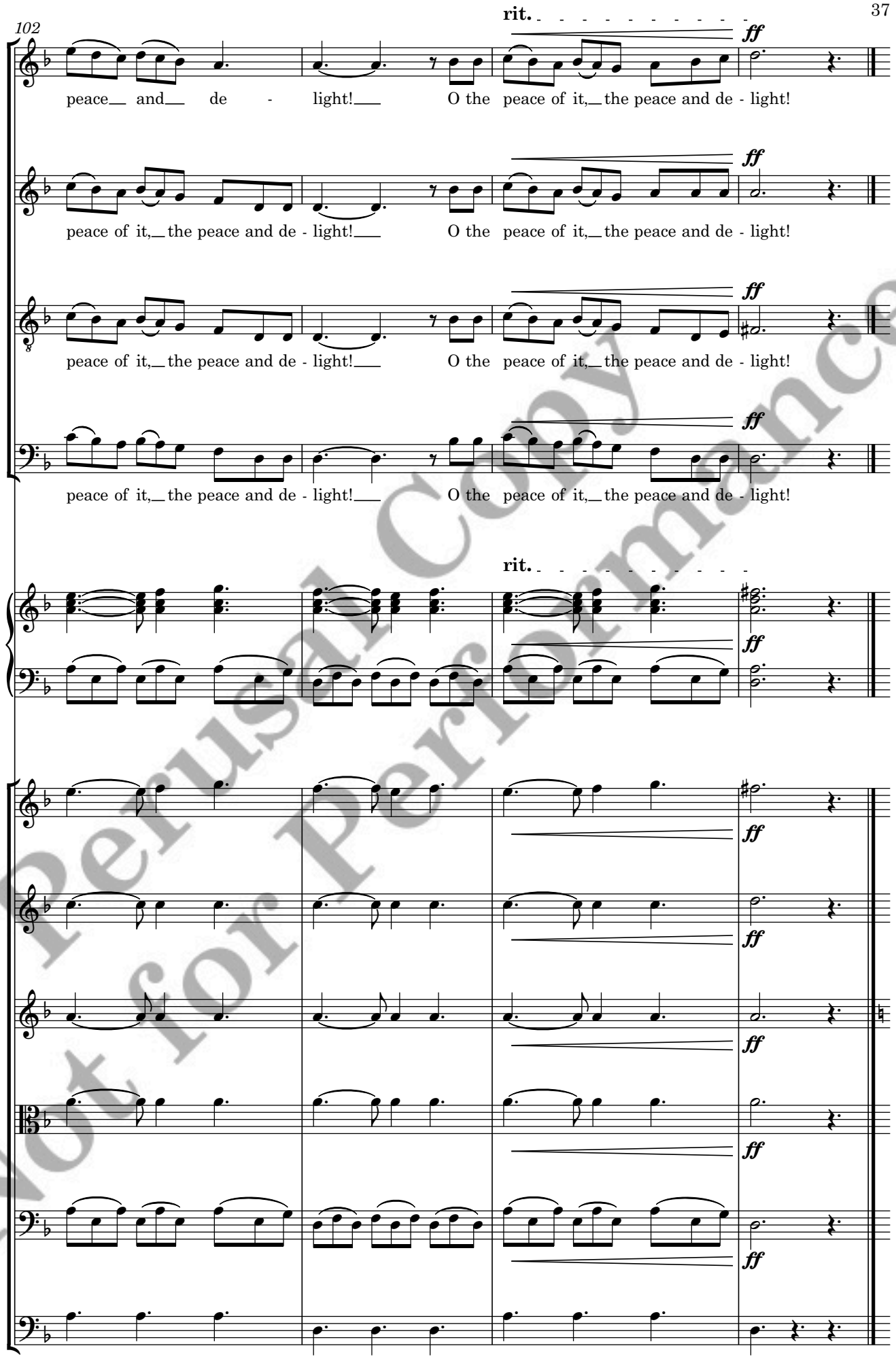

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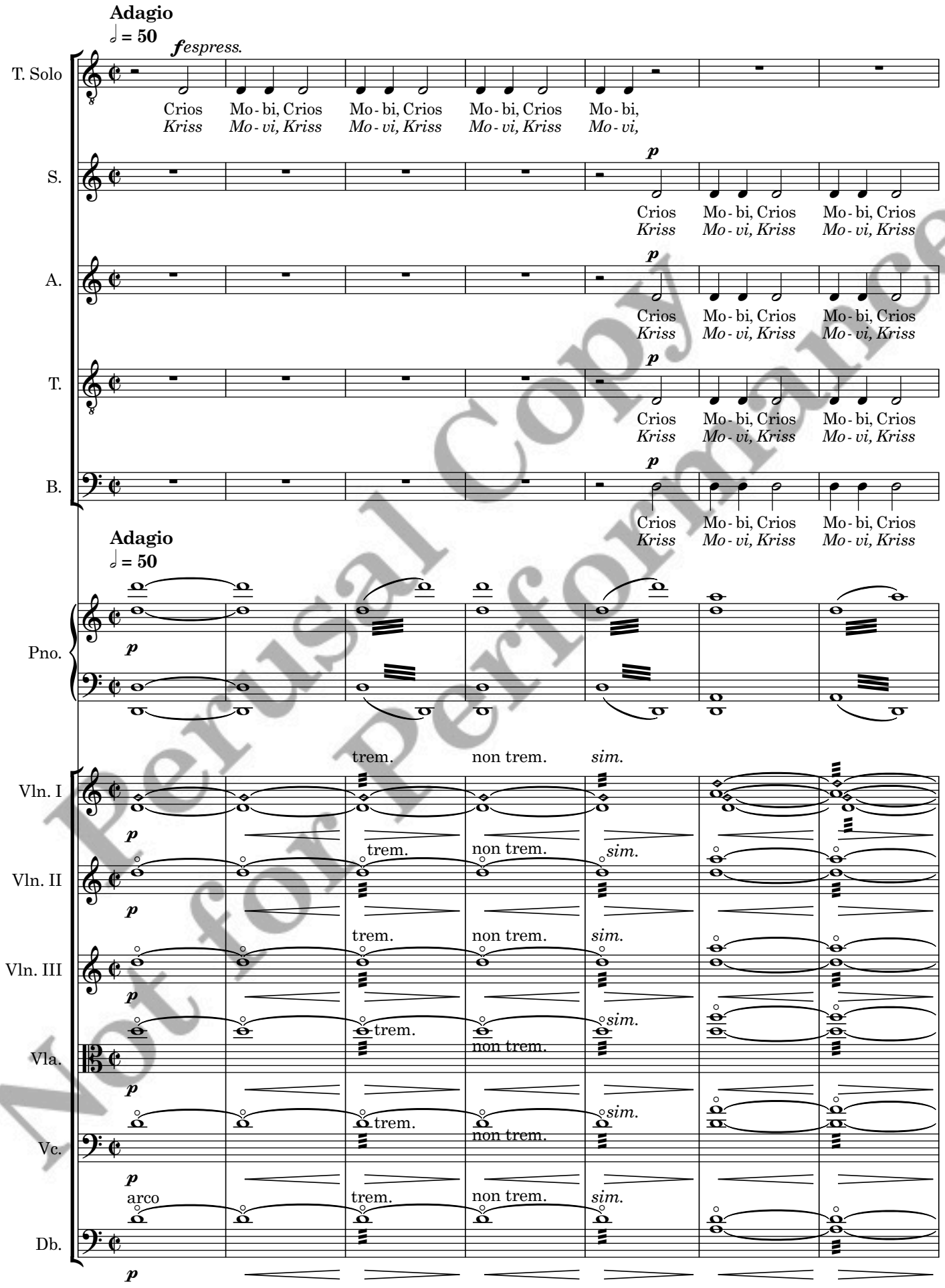

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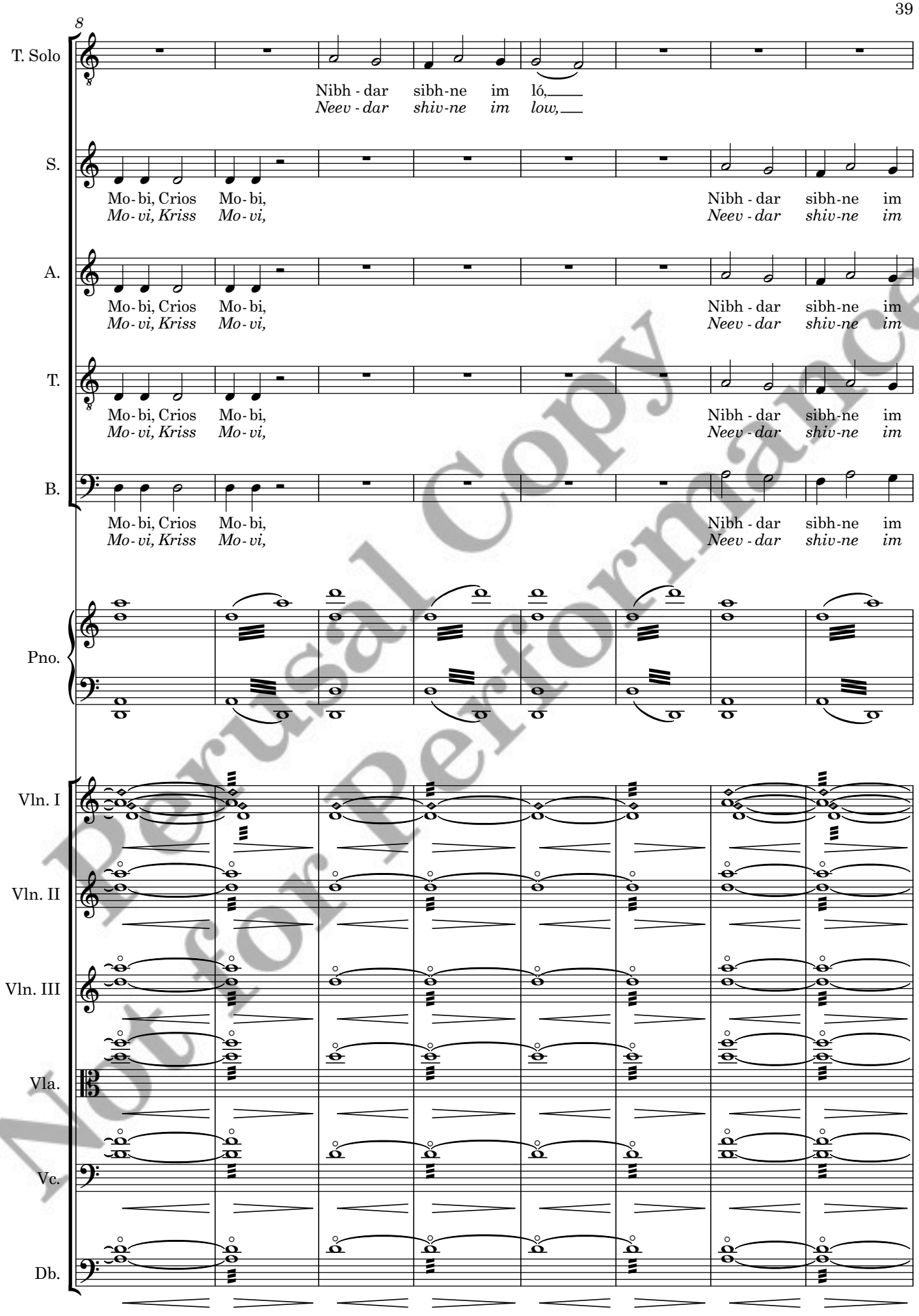

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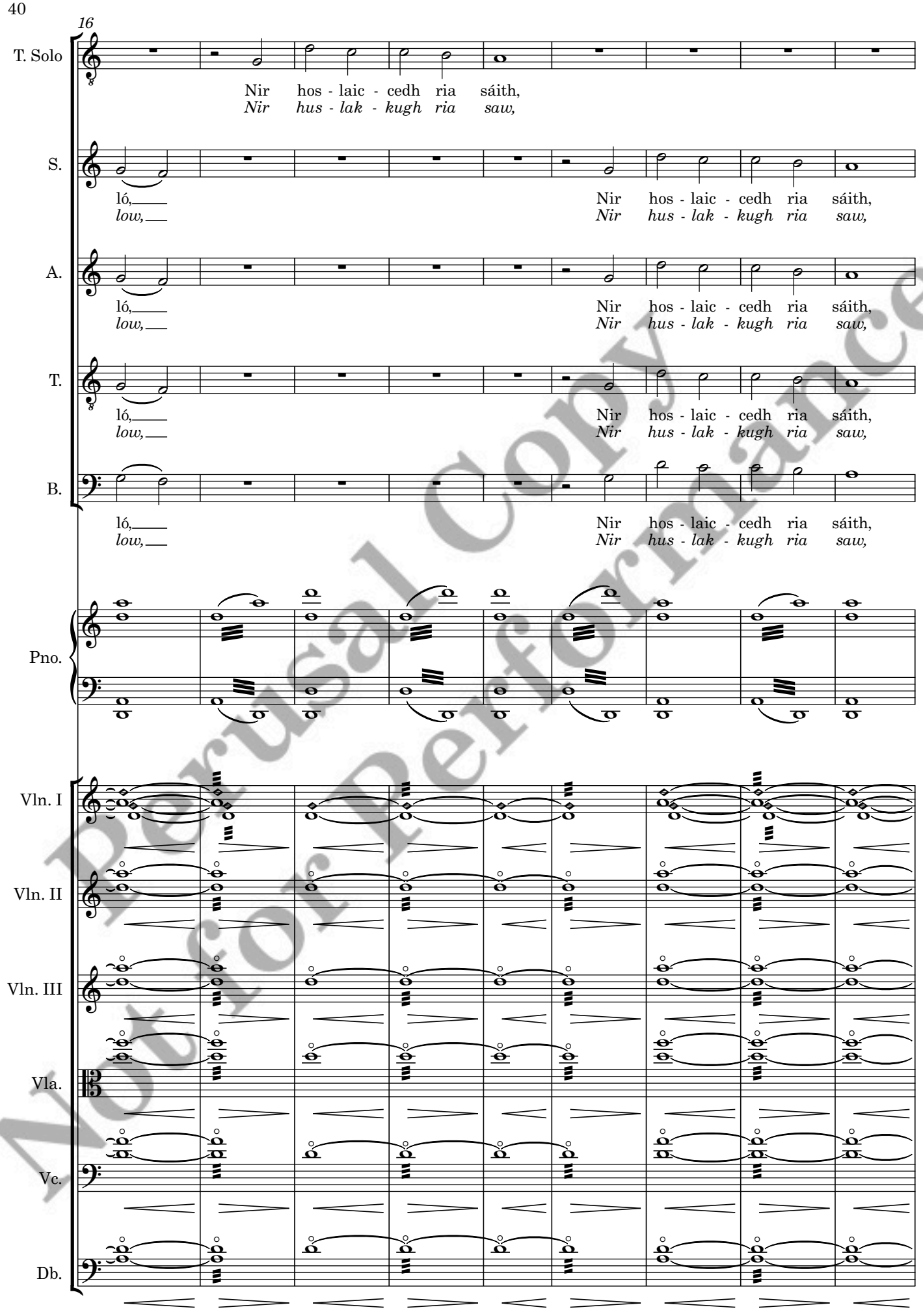

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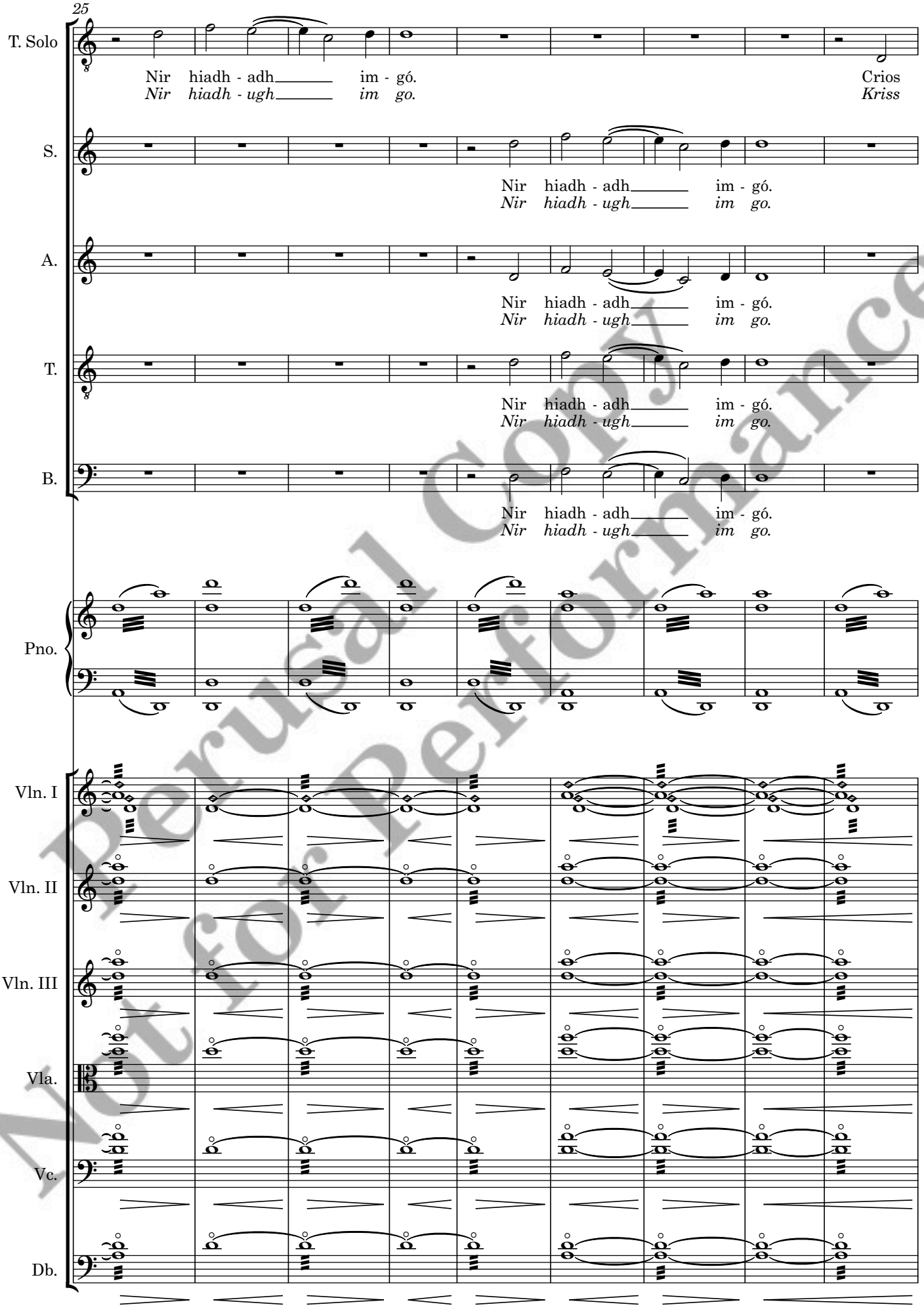

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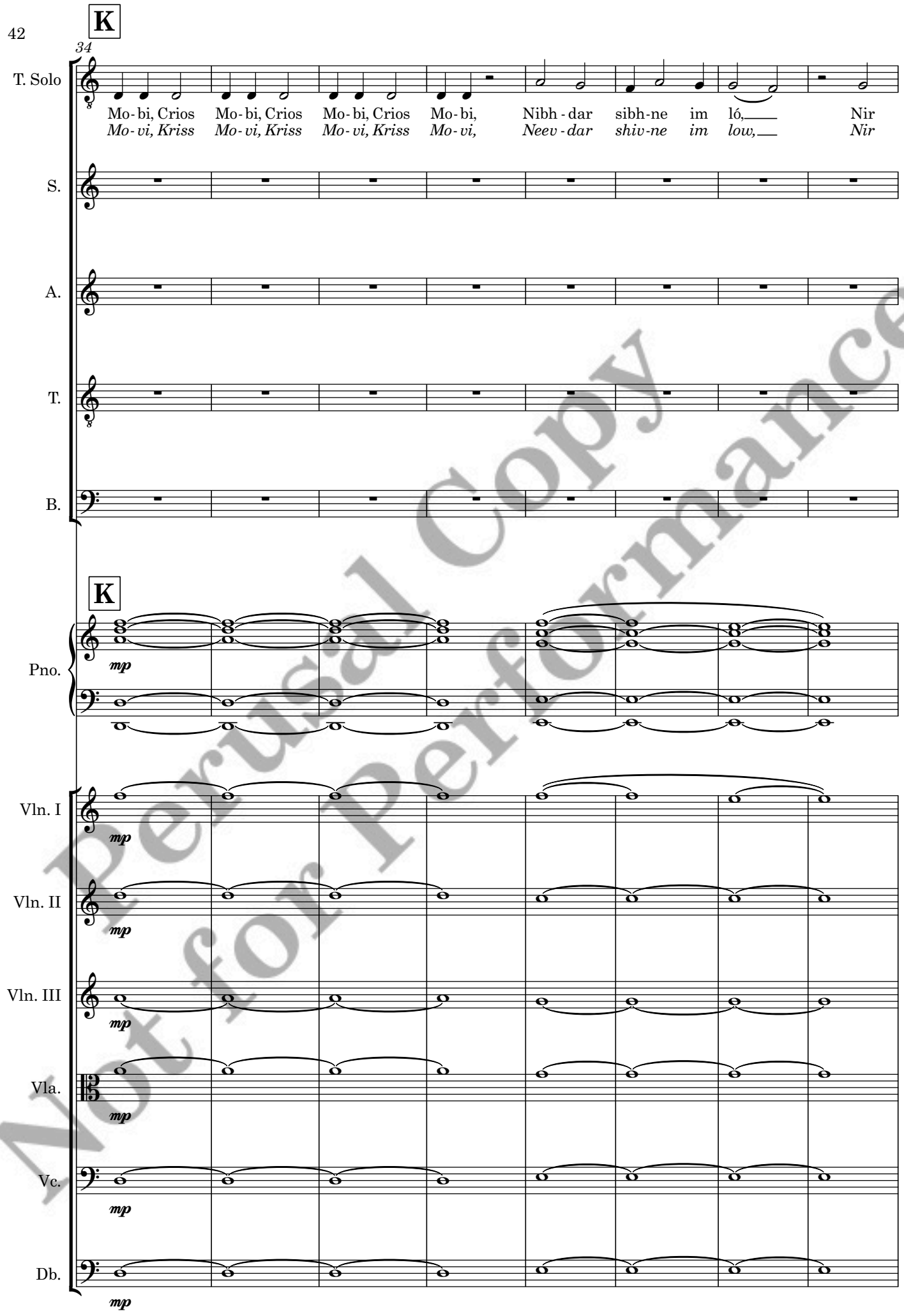

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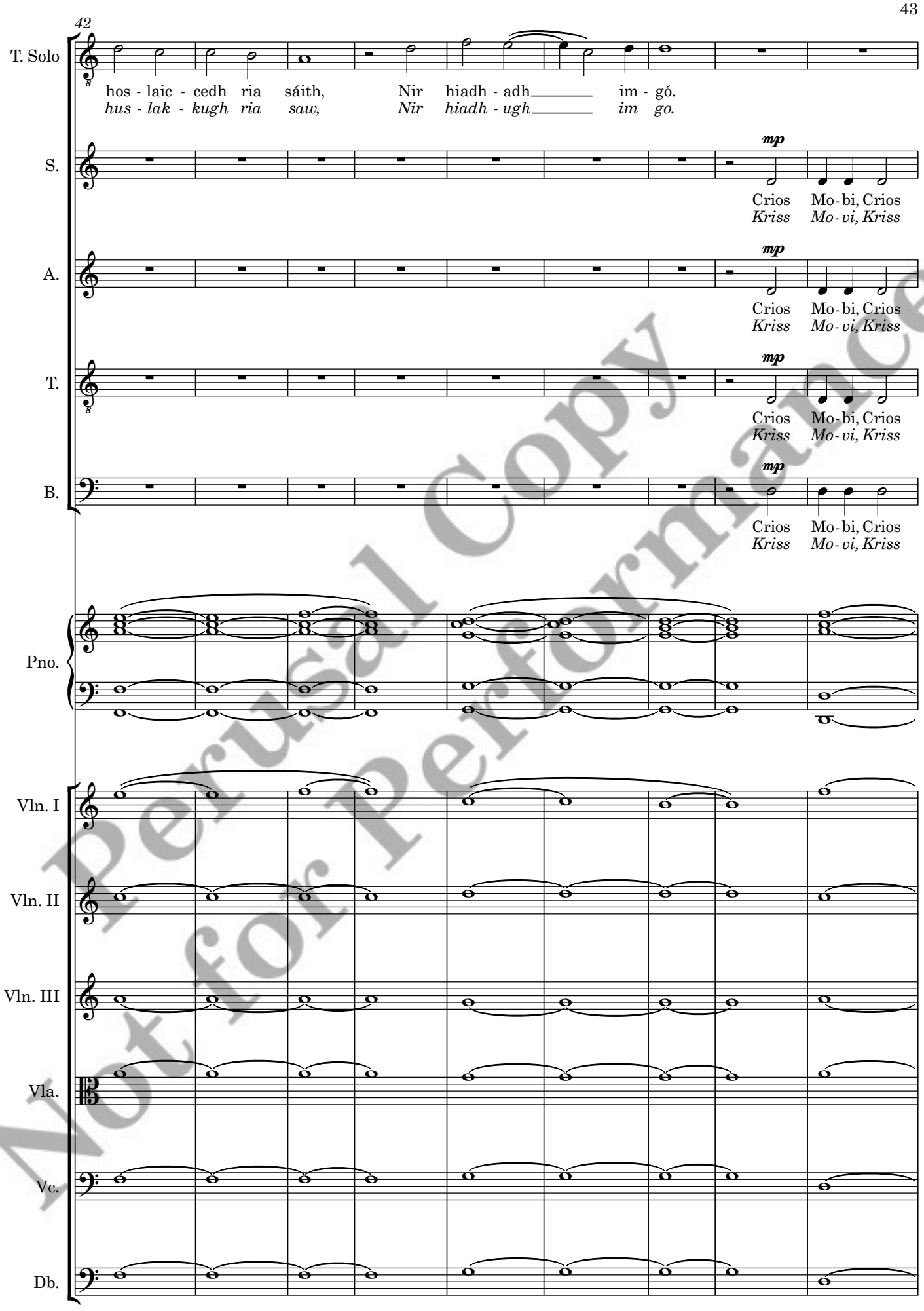

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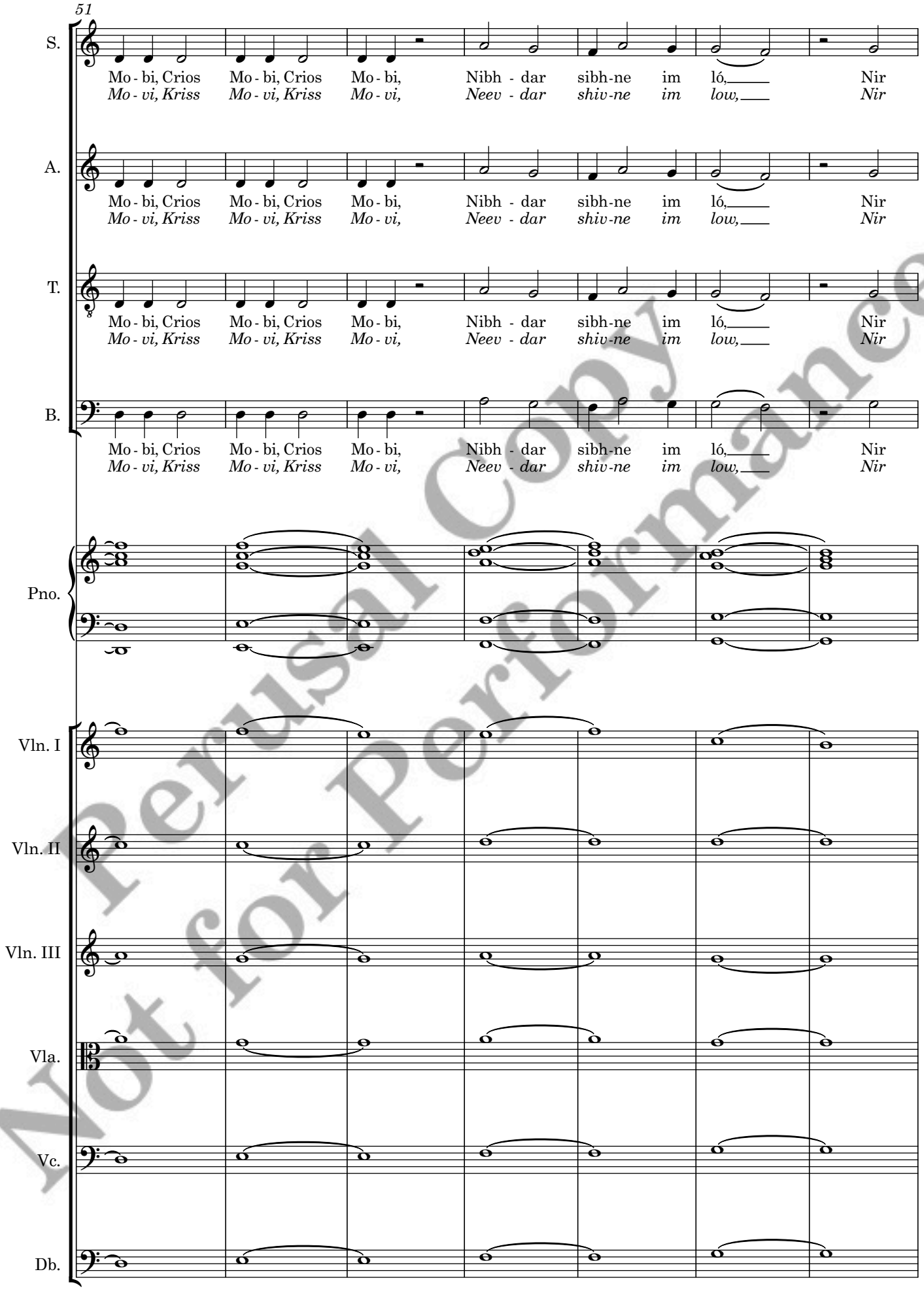

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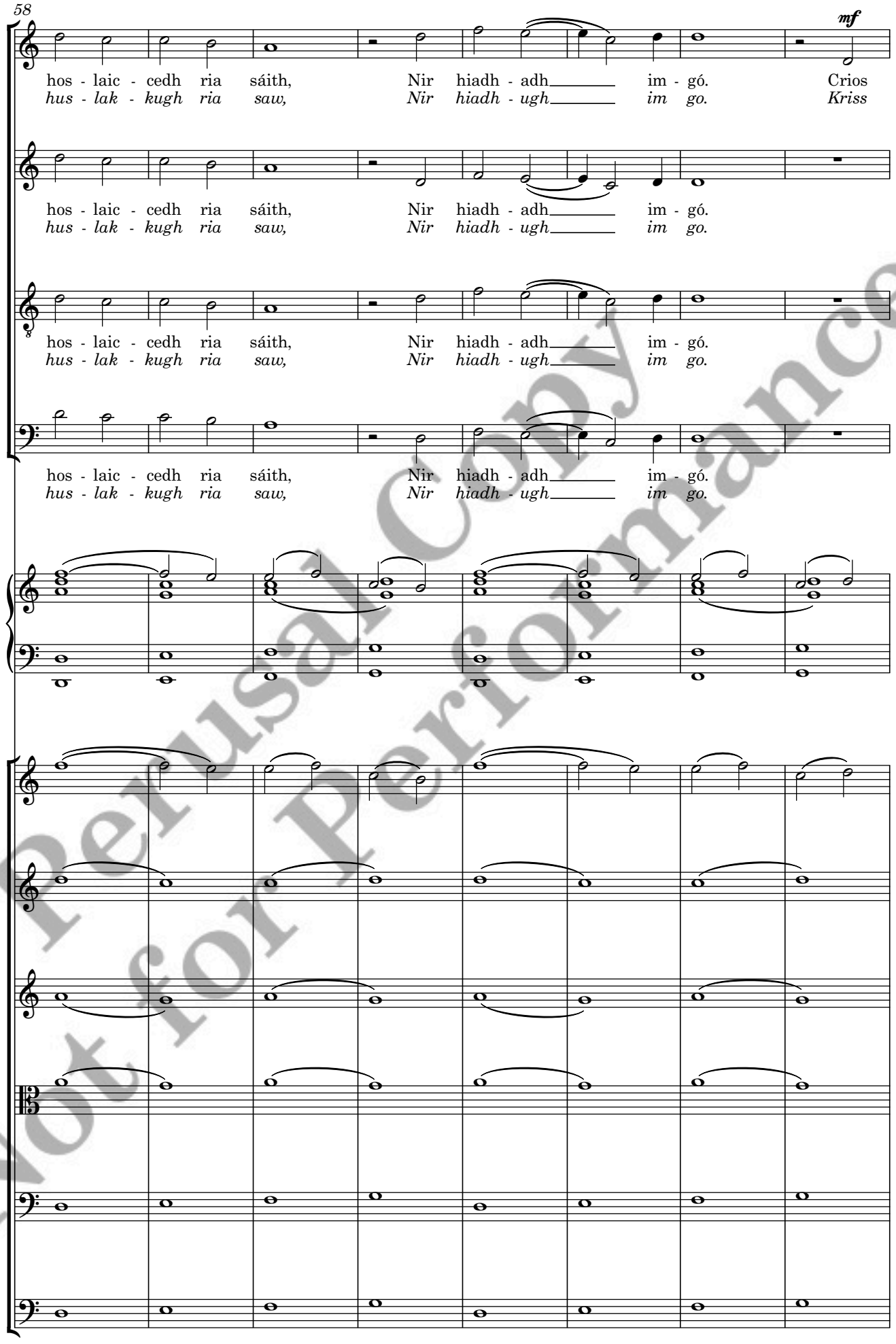

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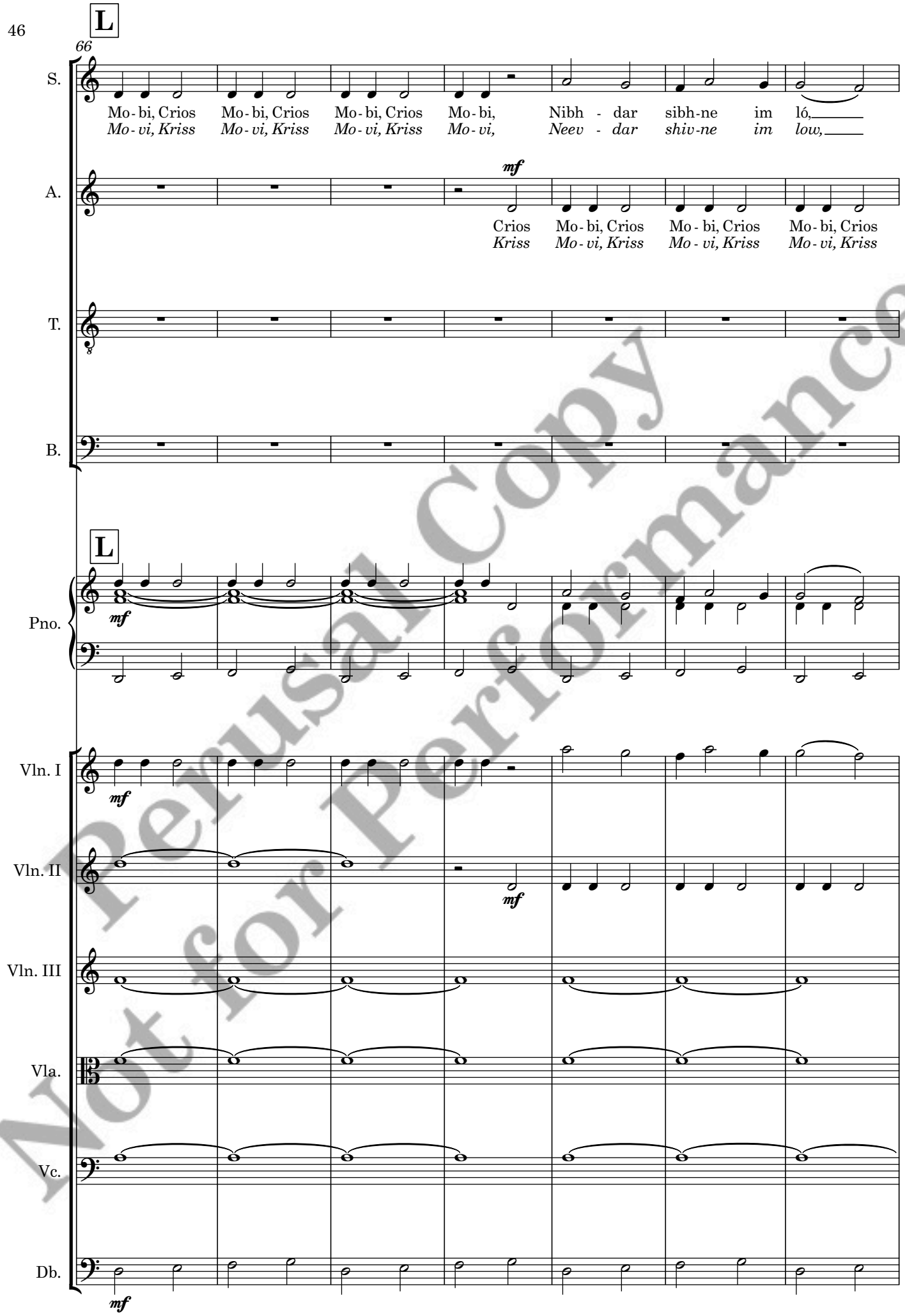

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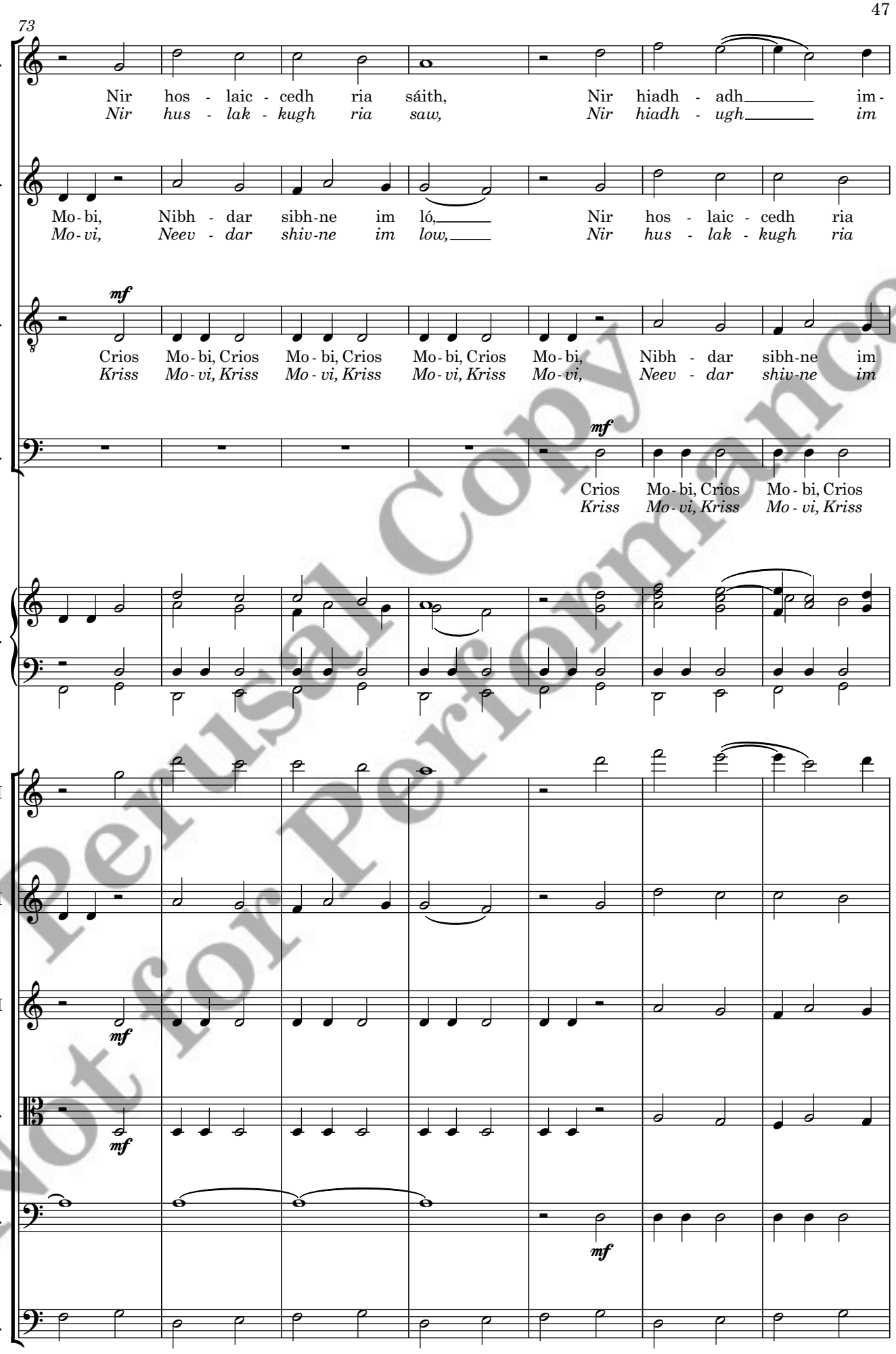

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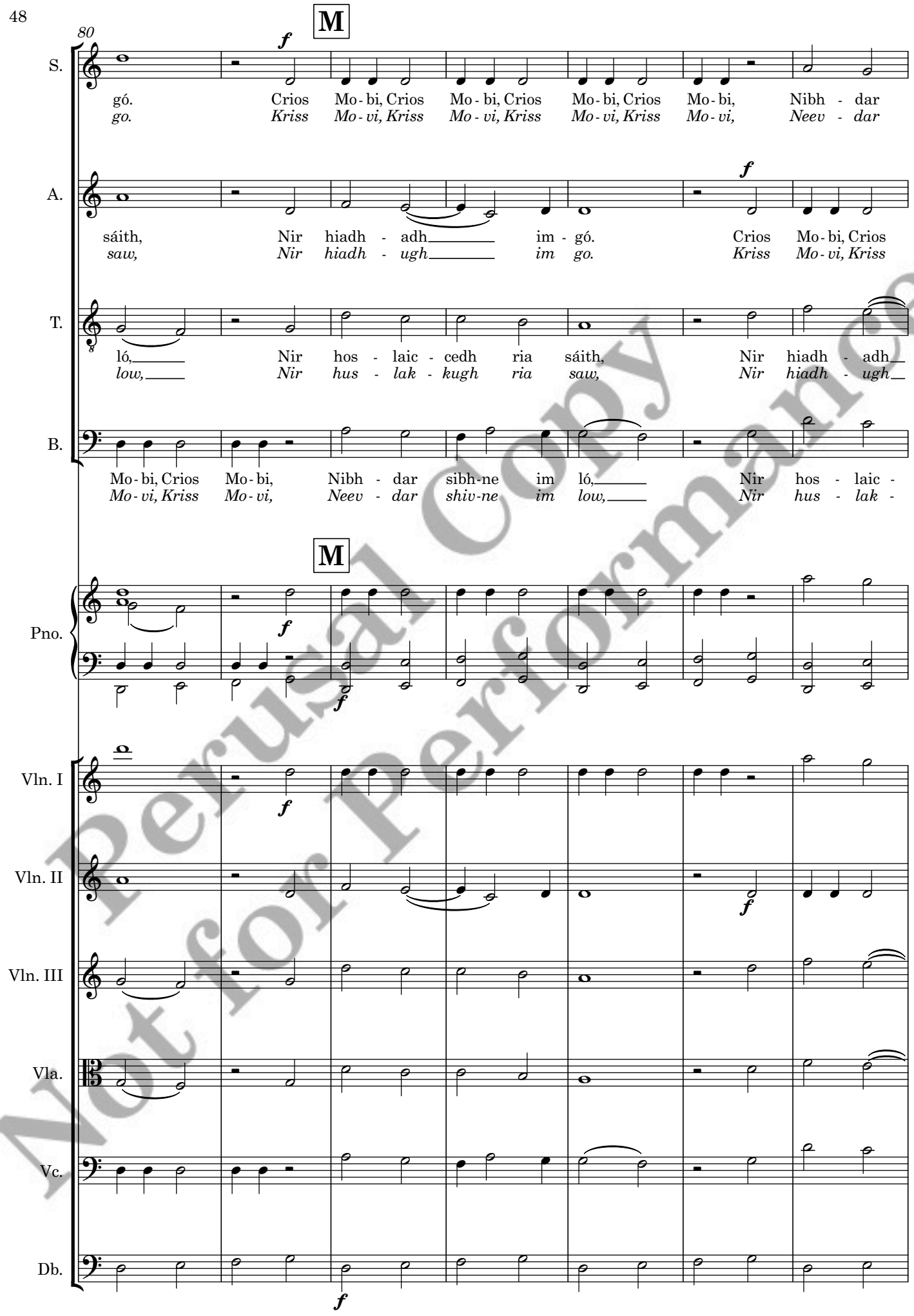

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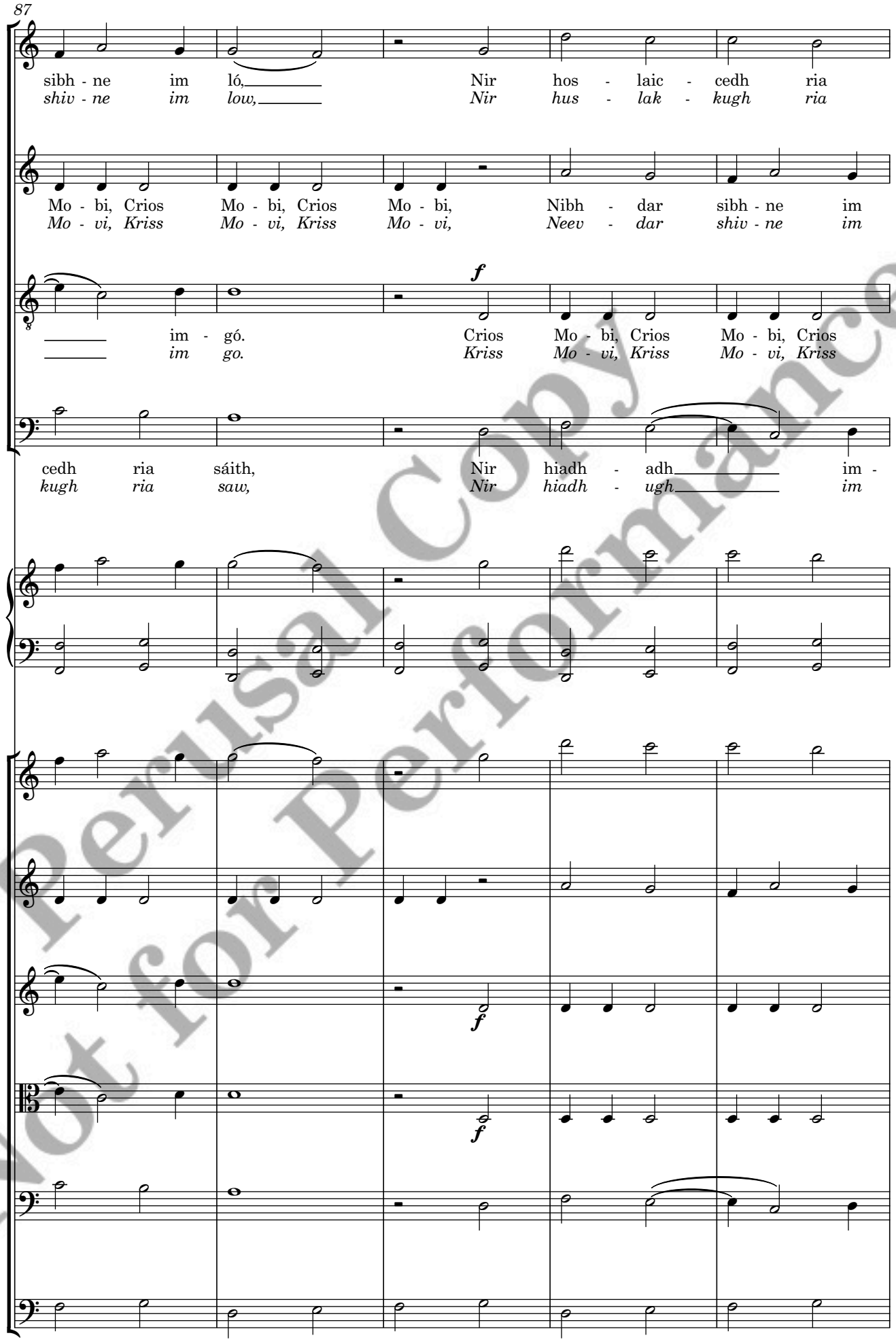

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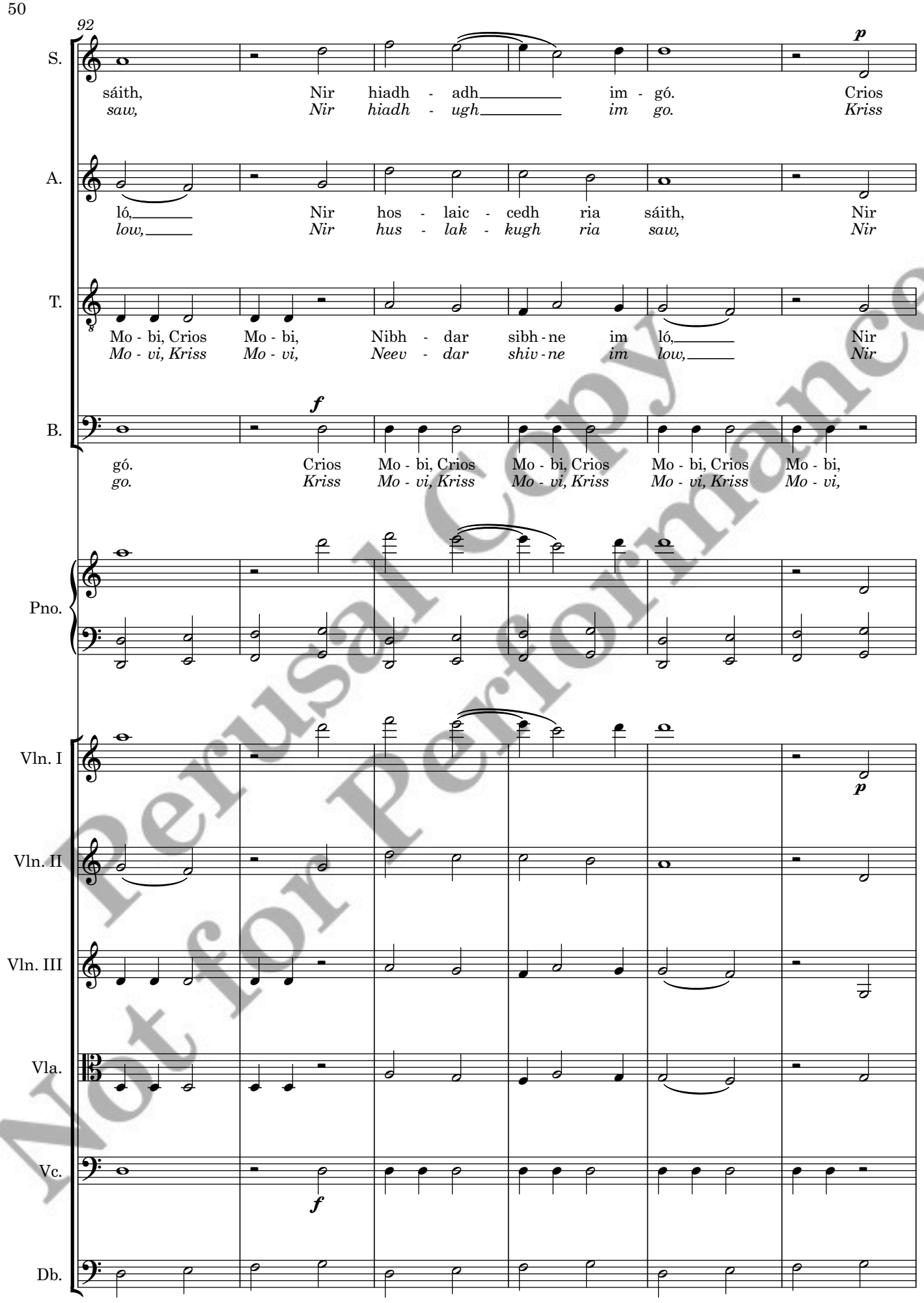

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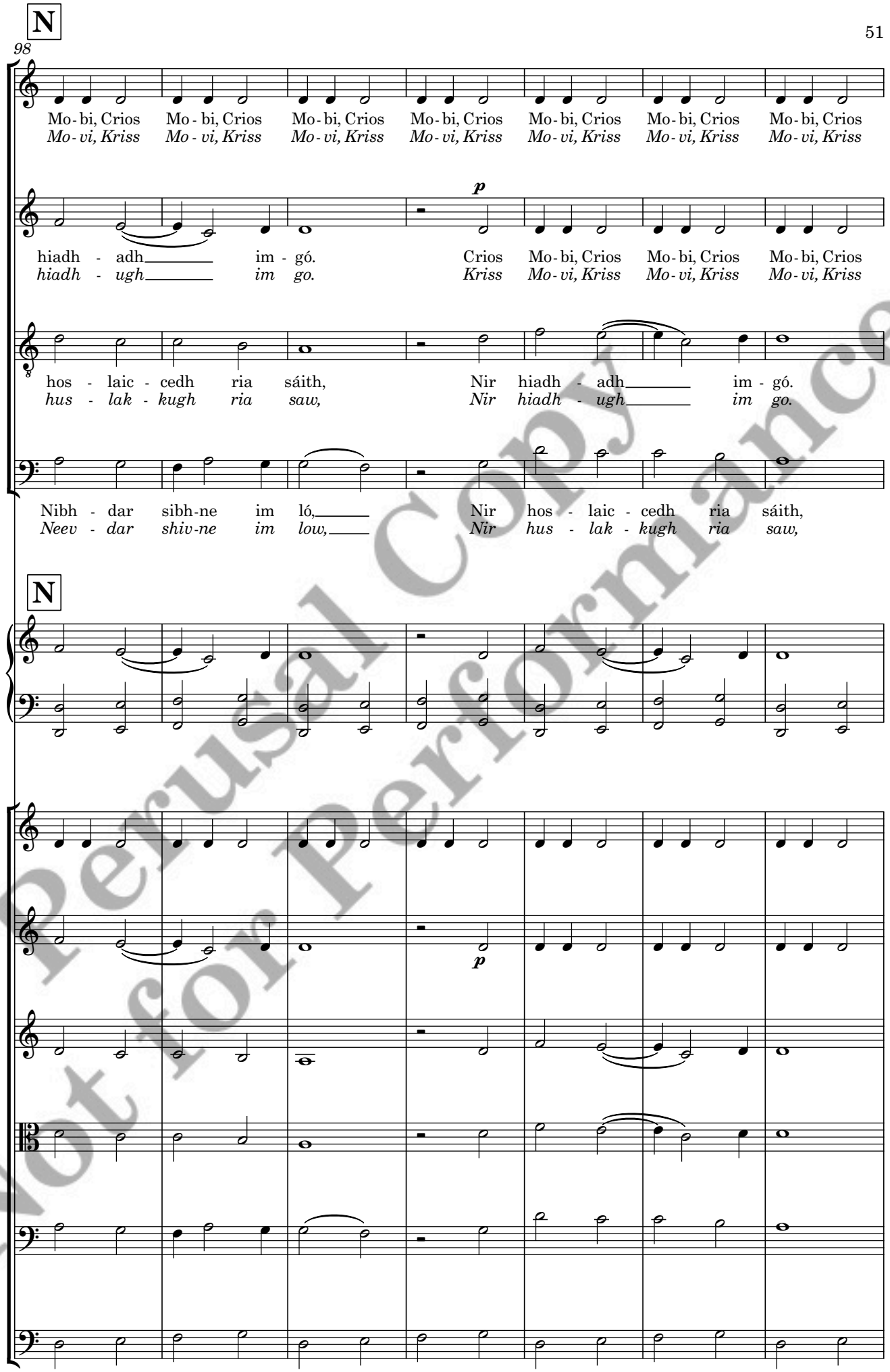

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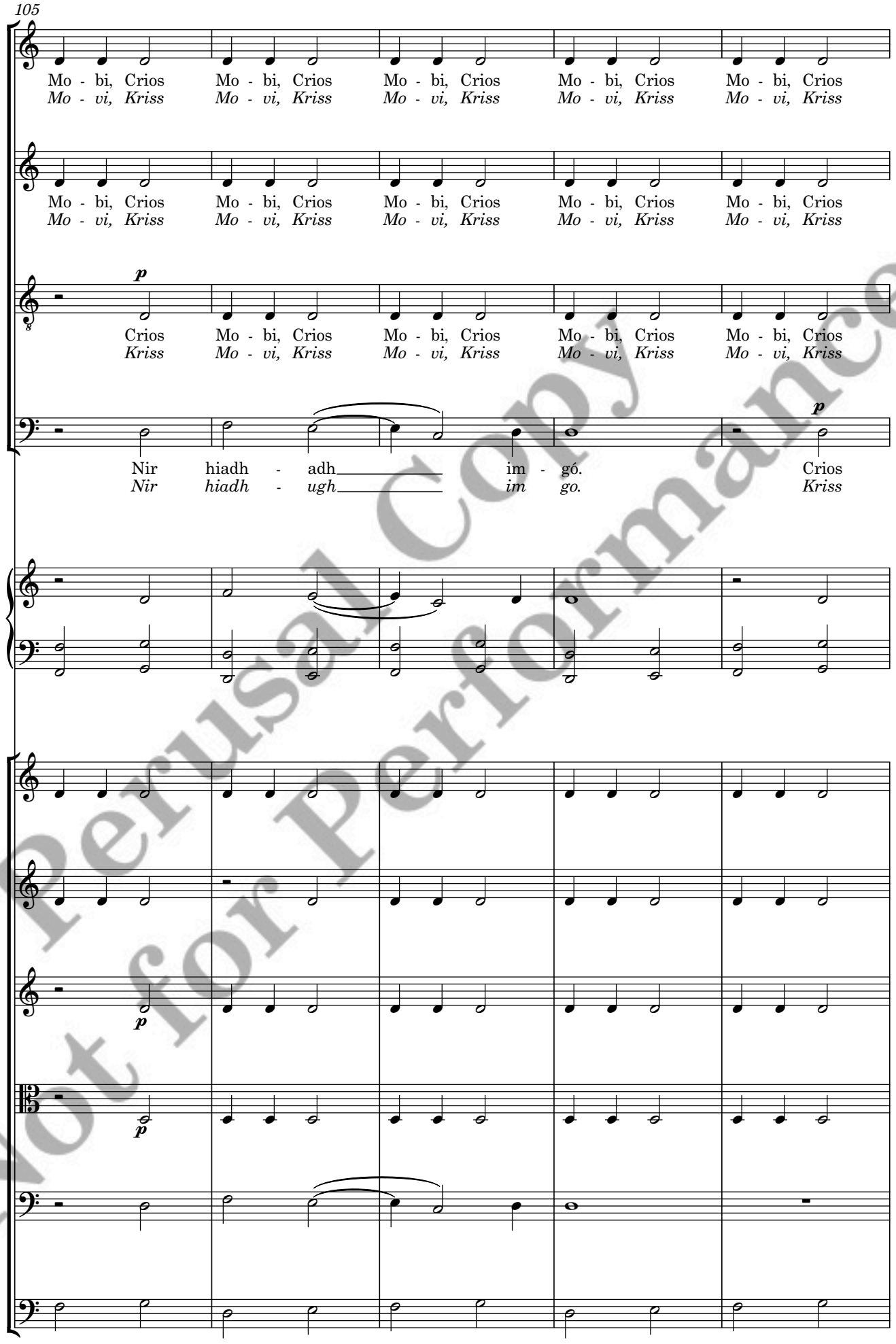

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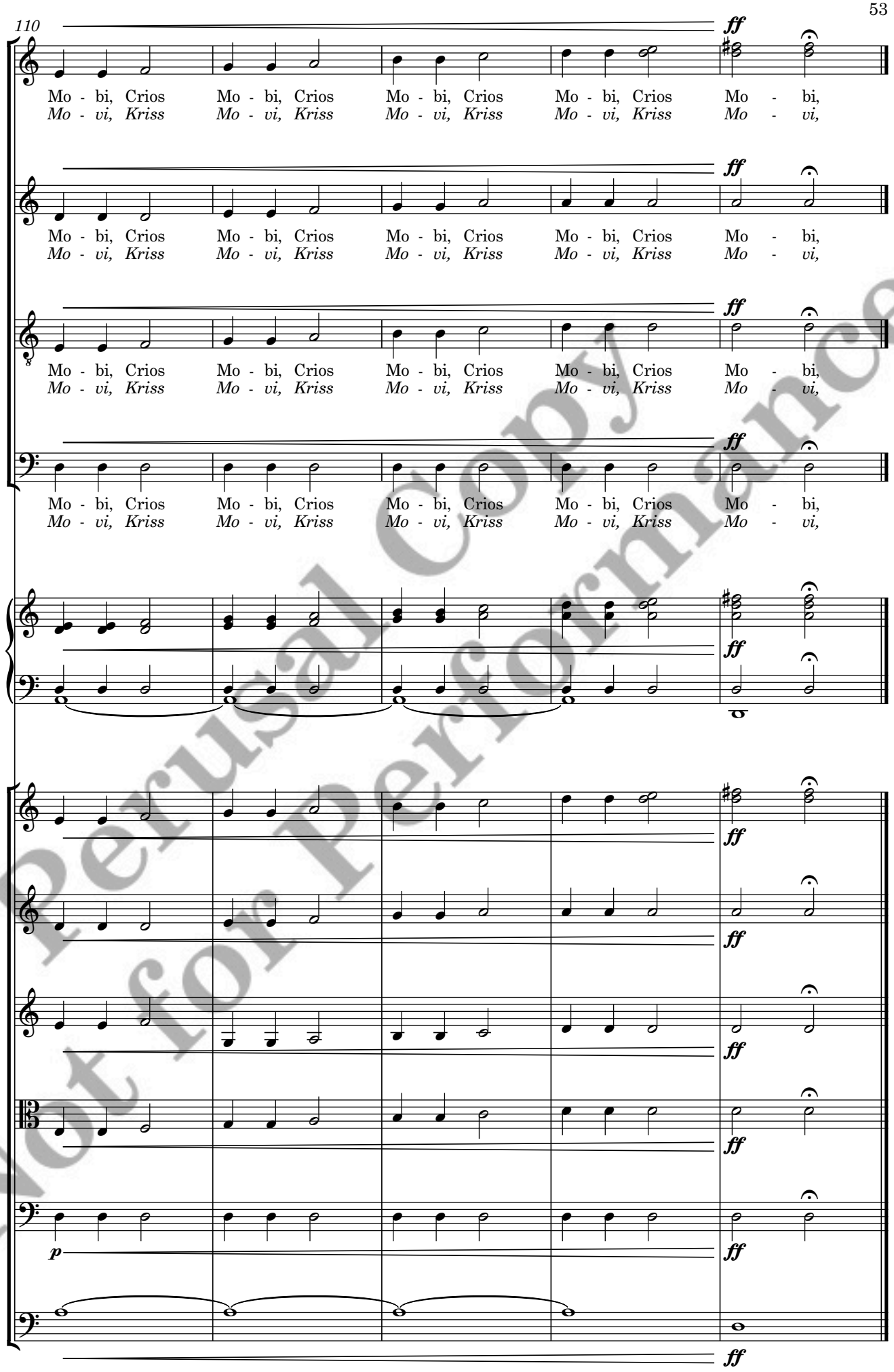


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Vocal Score

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

I. The Torrent

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

SEÁN DOHERTY

Moderato ♩=100

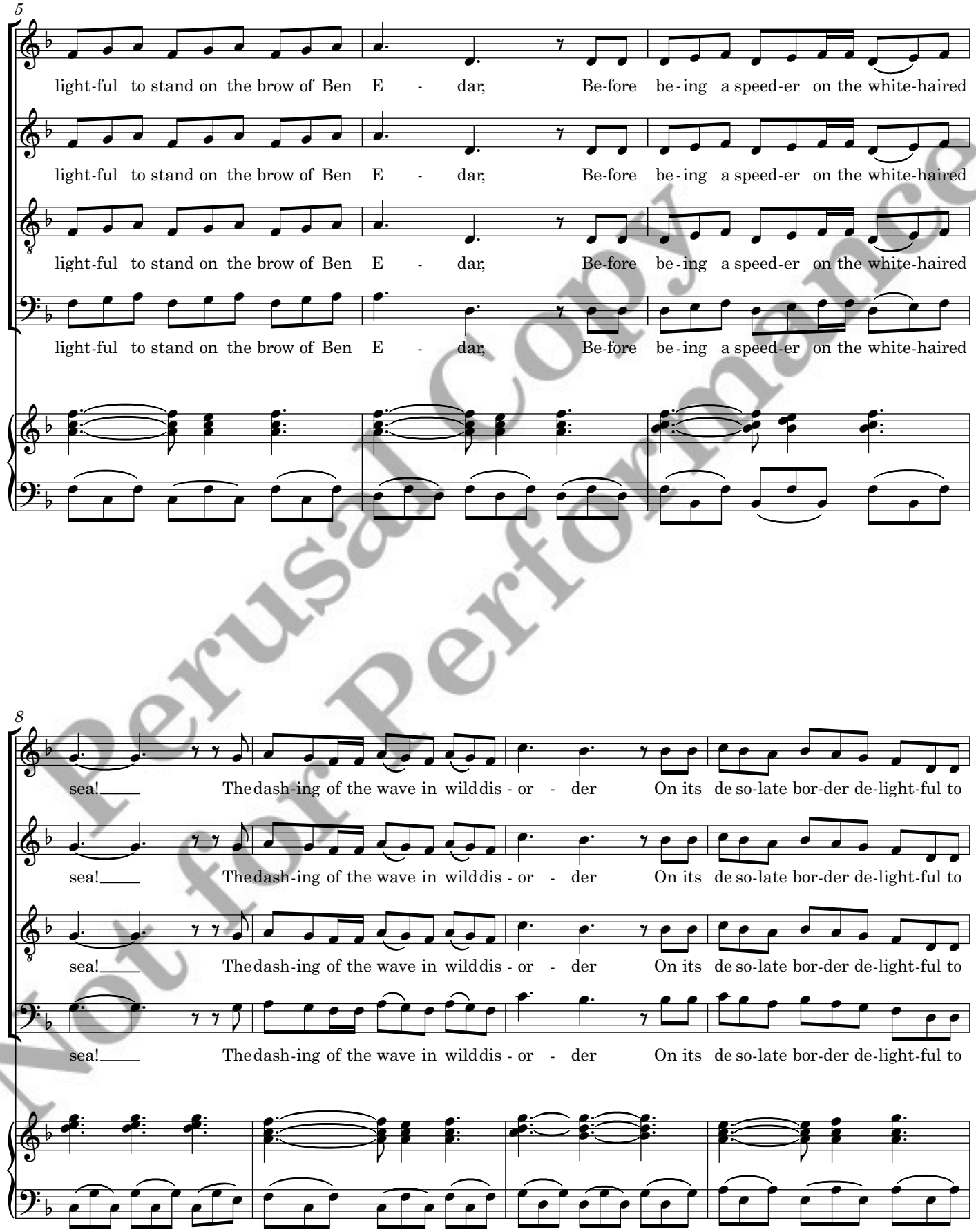
TACET

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Andante
♩. = 60

V.S.



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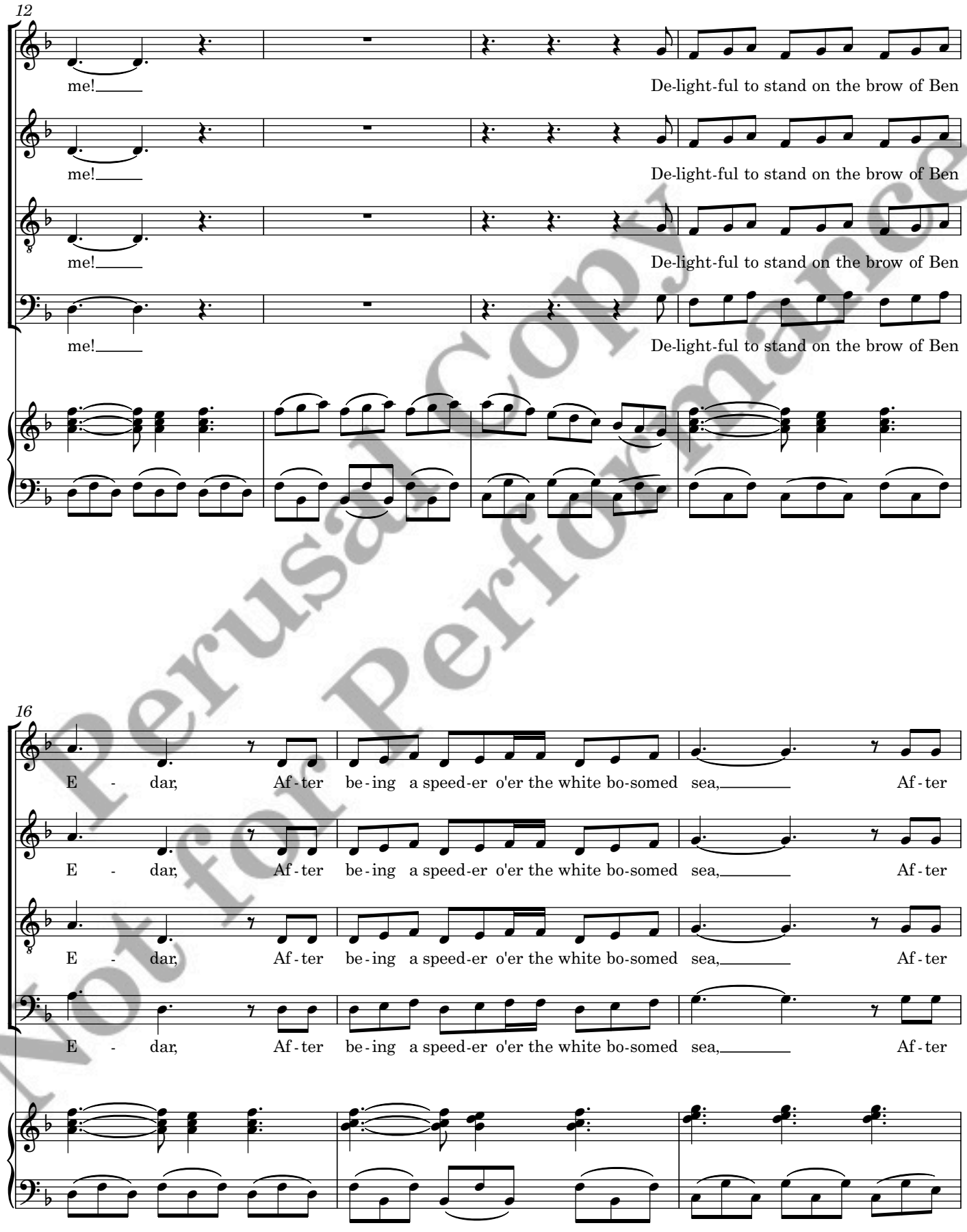

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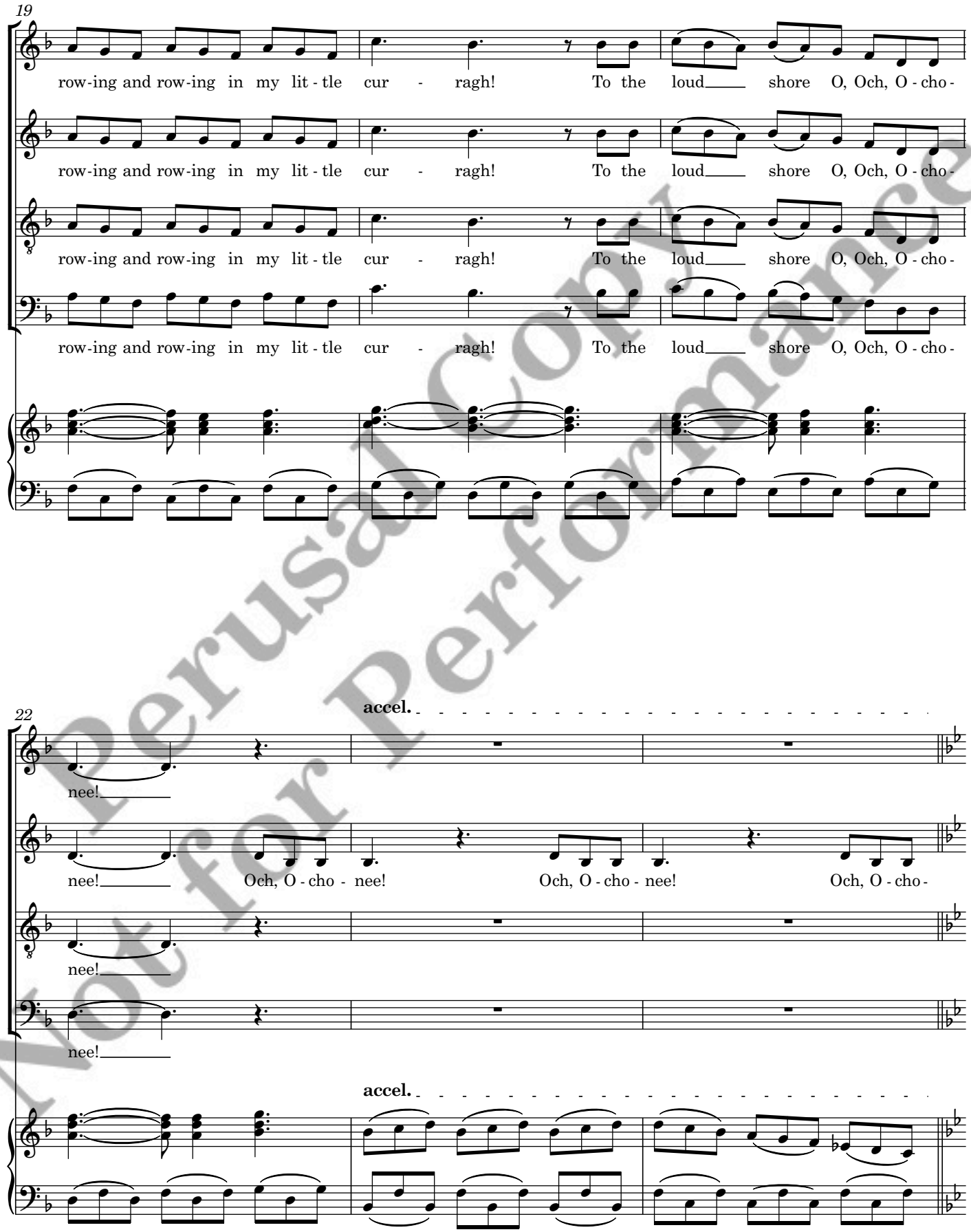

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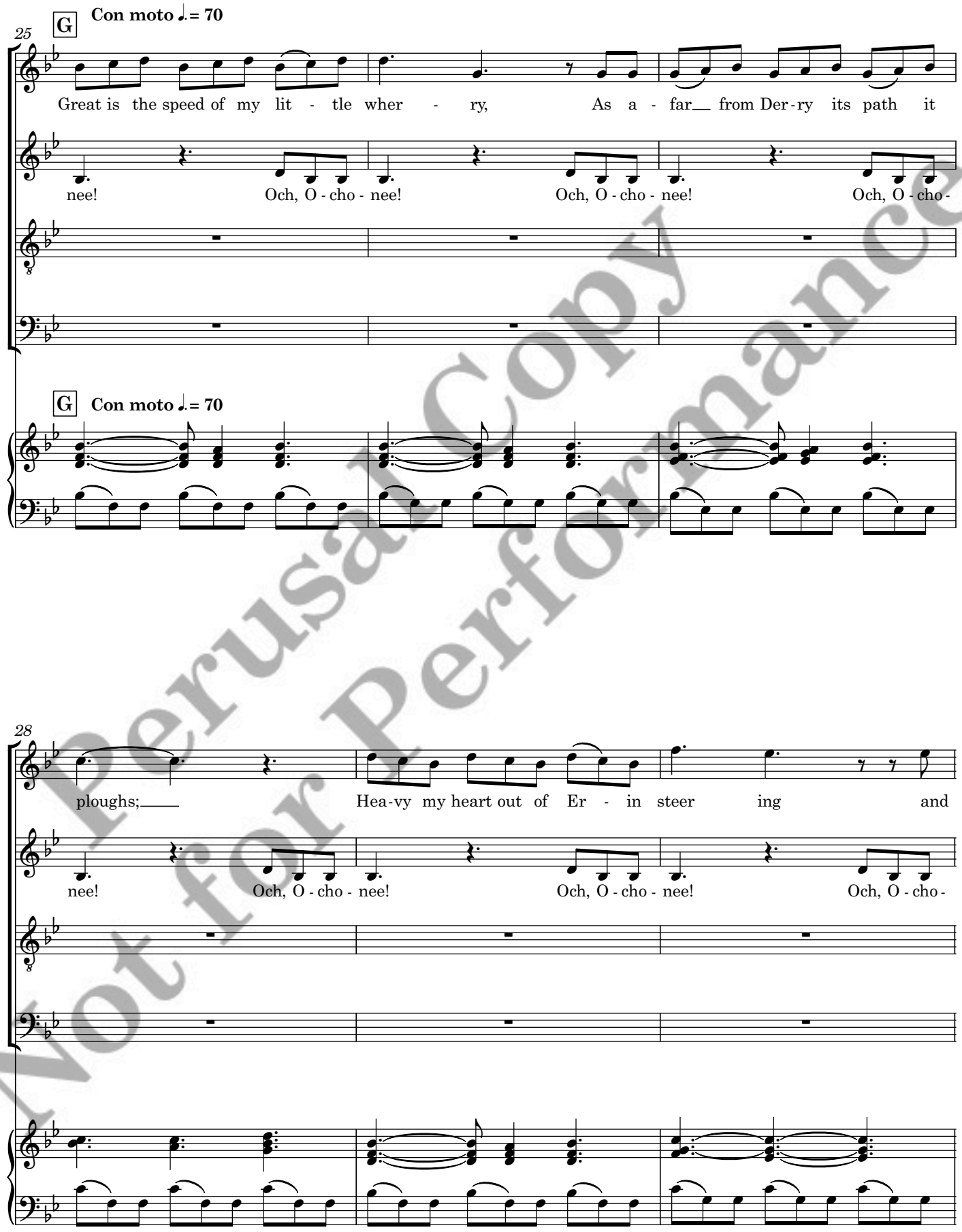

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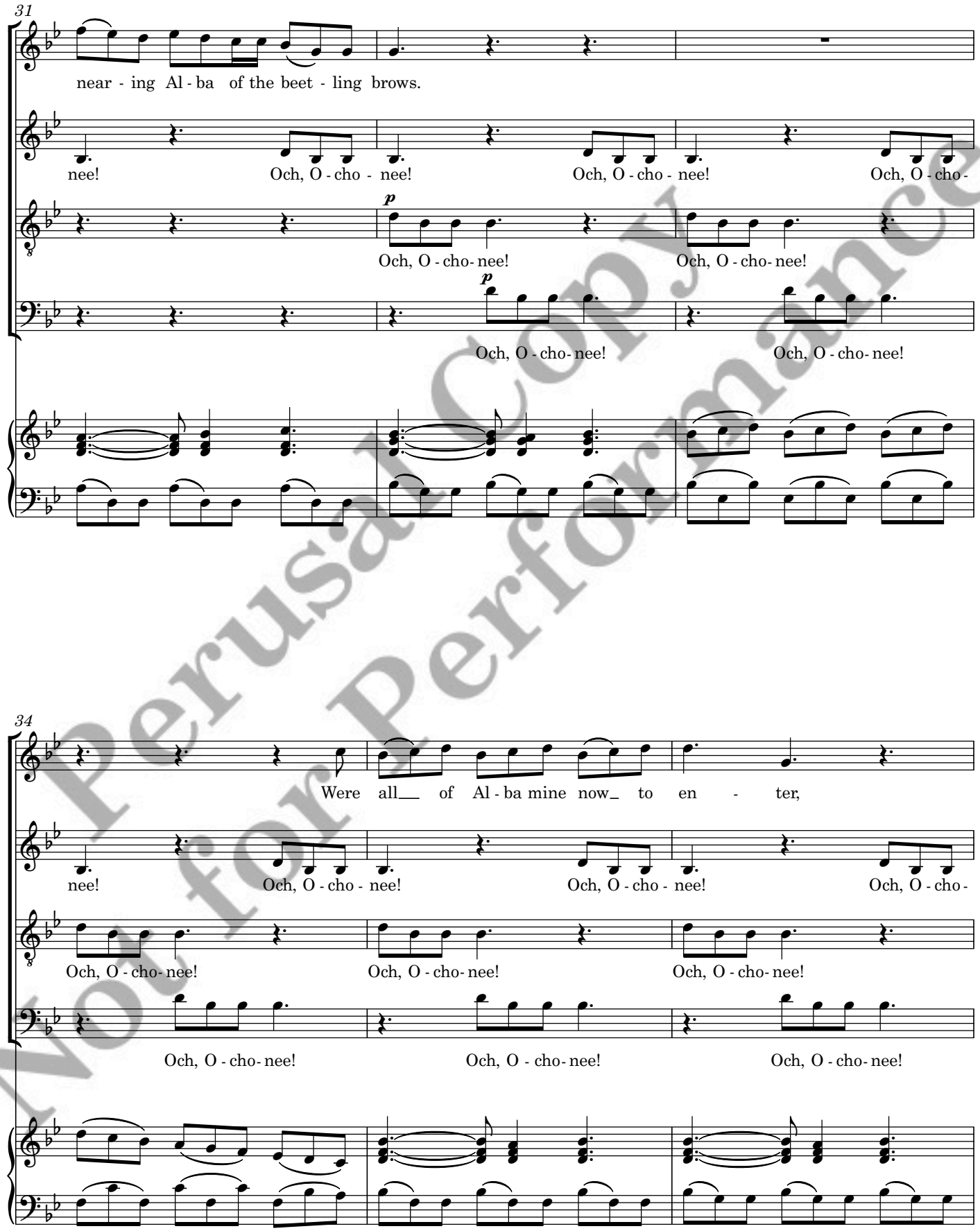

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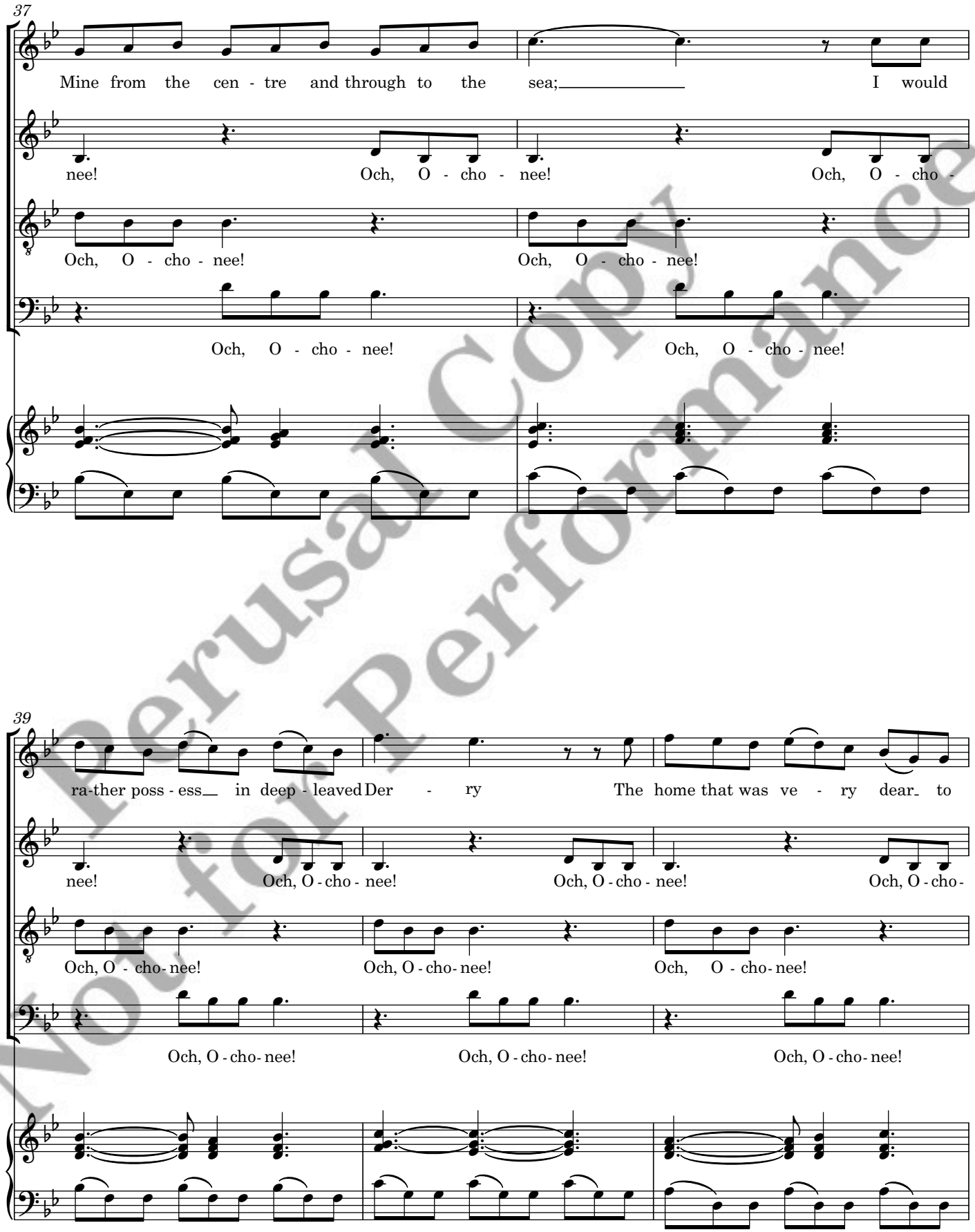

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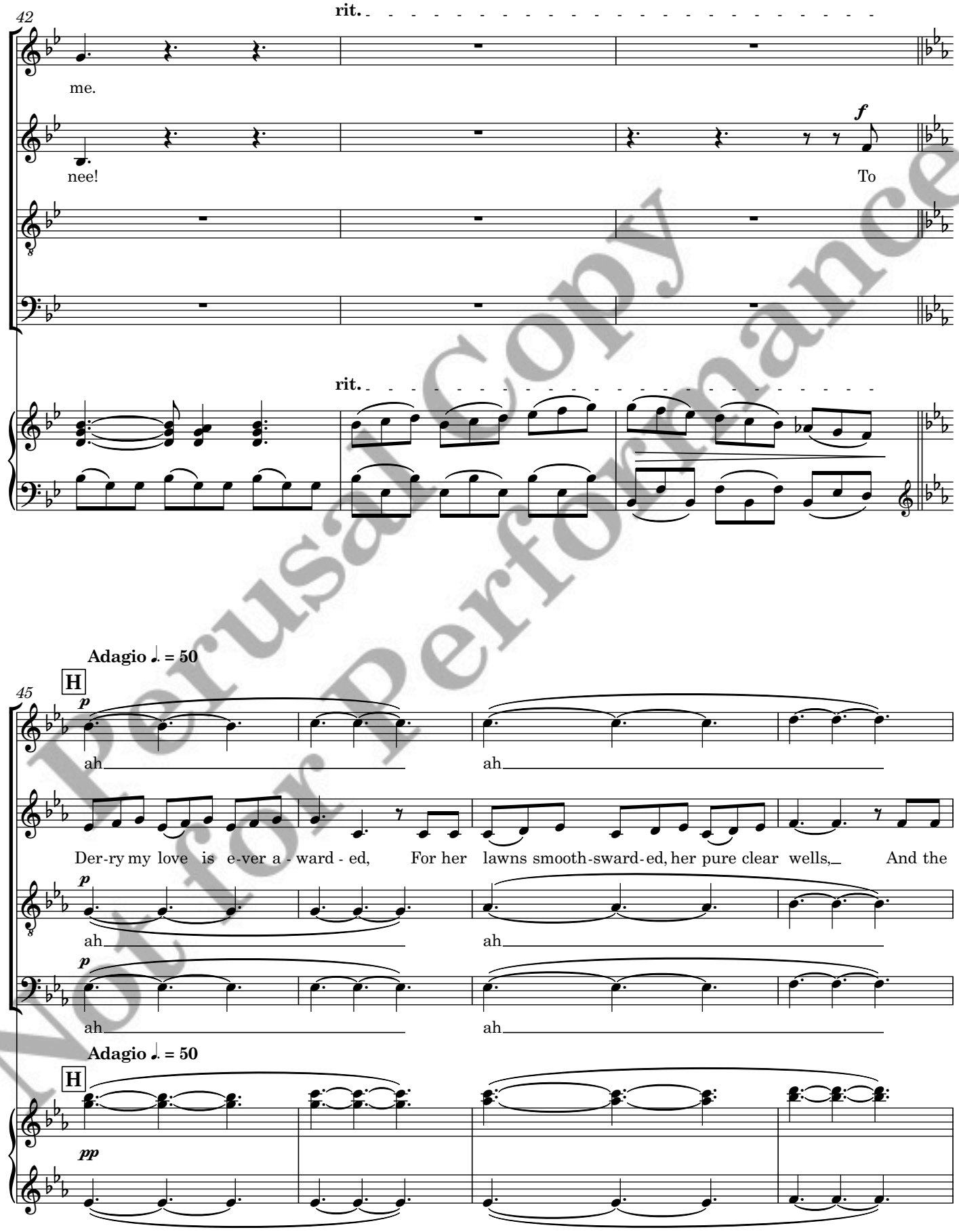

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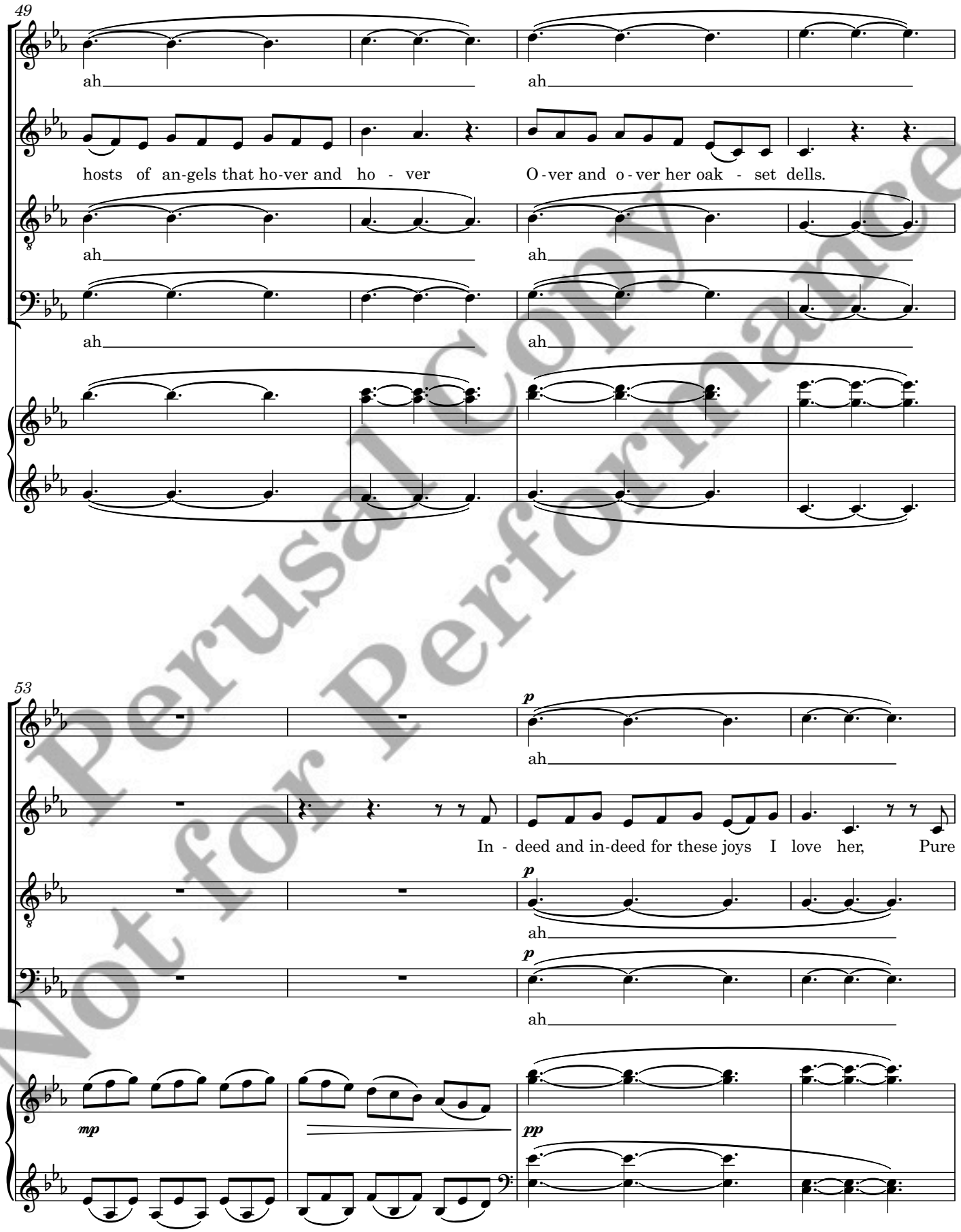

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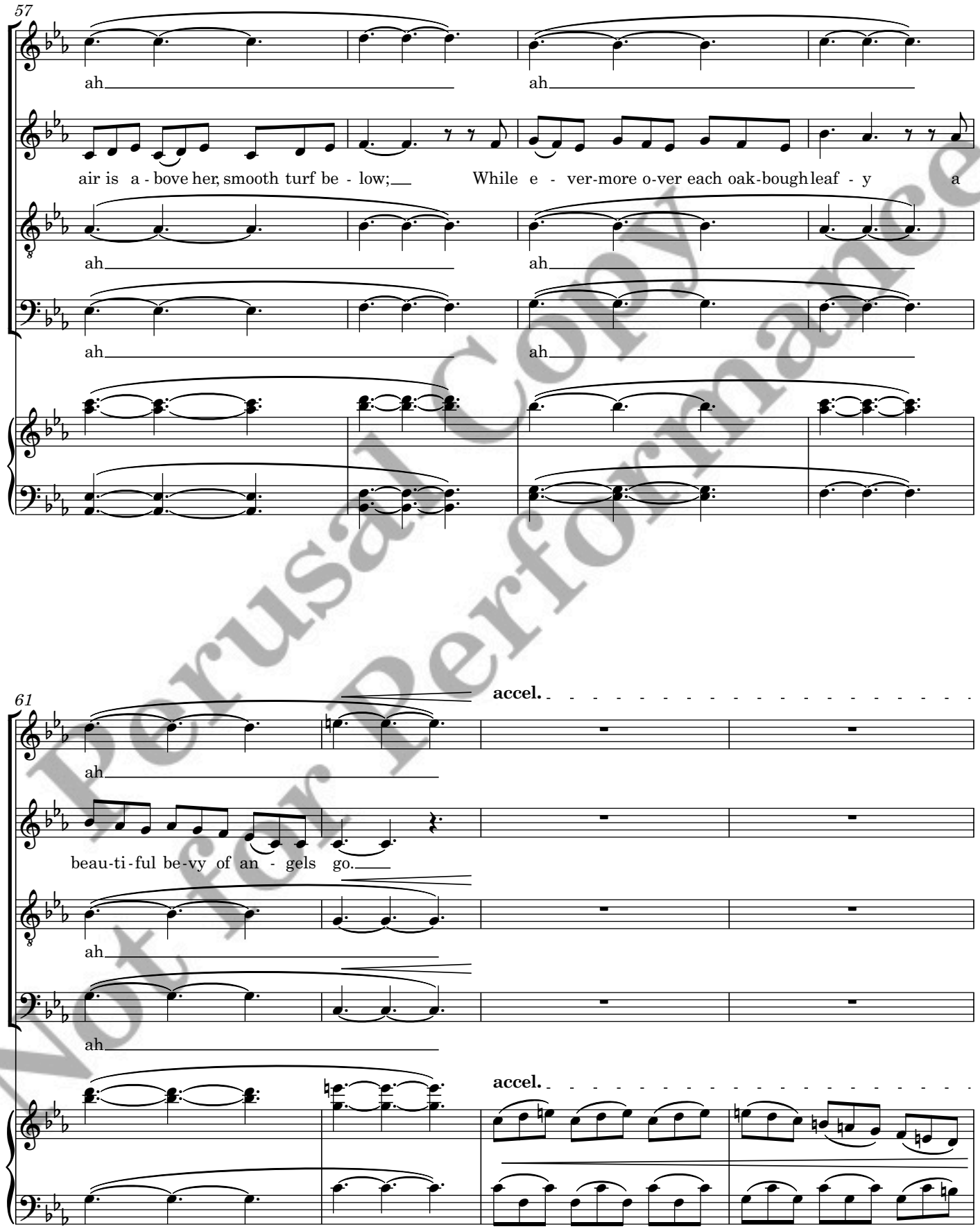

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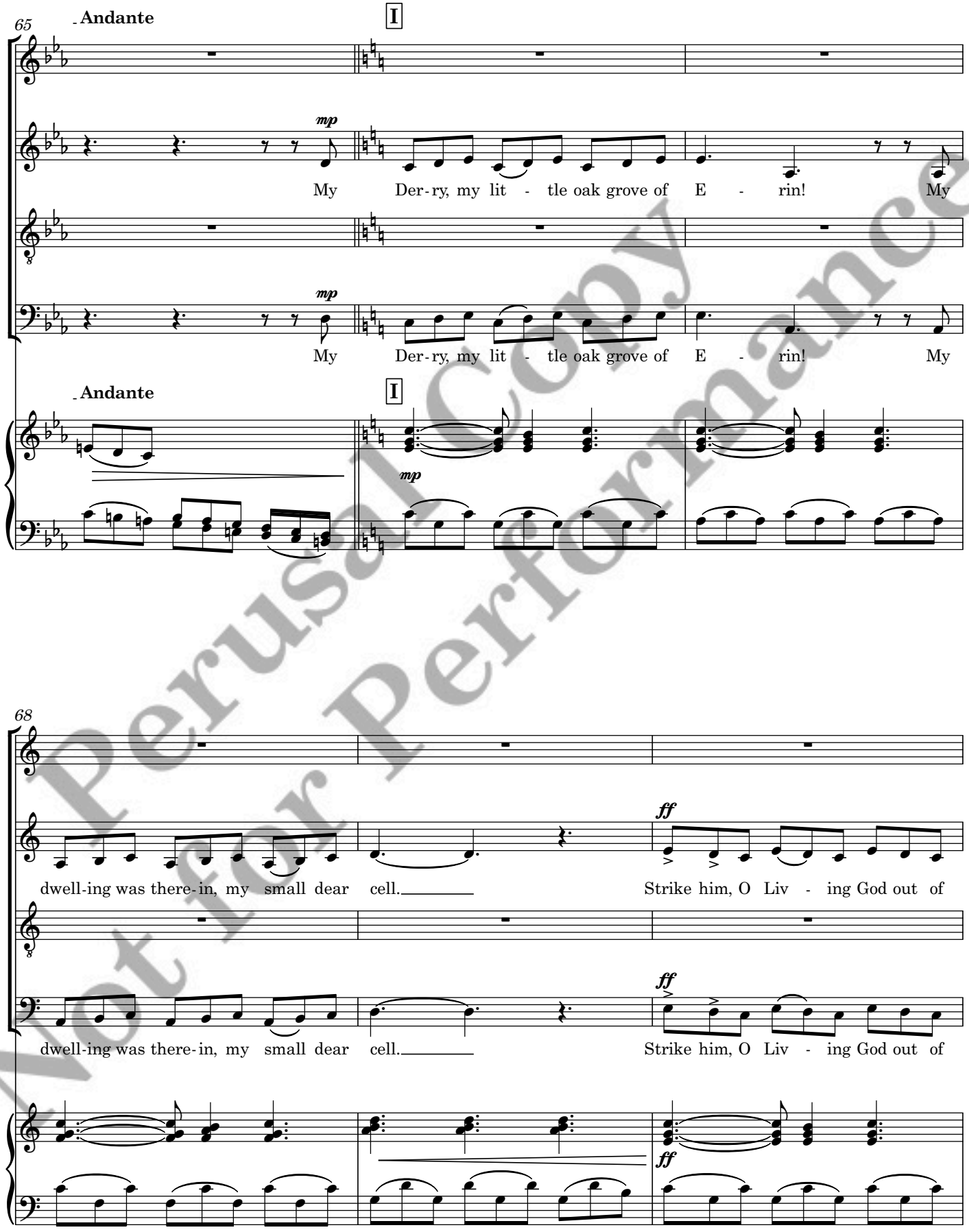

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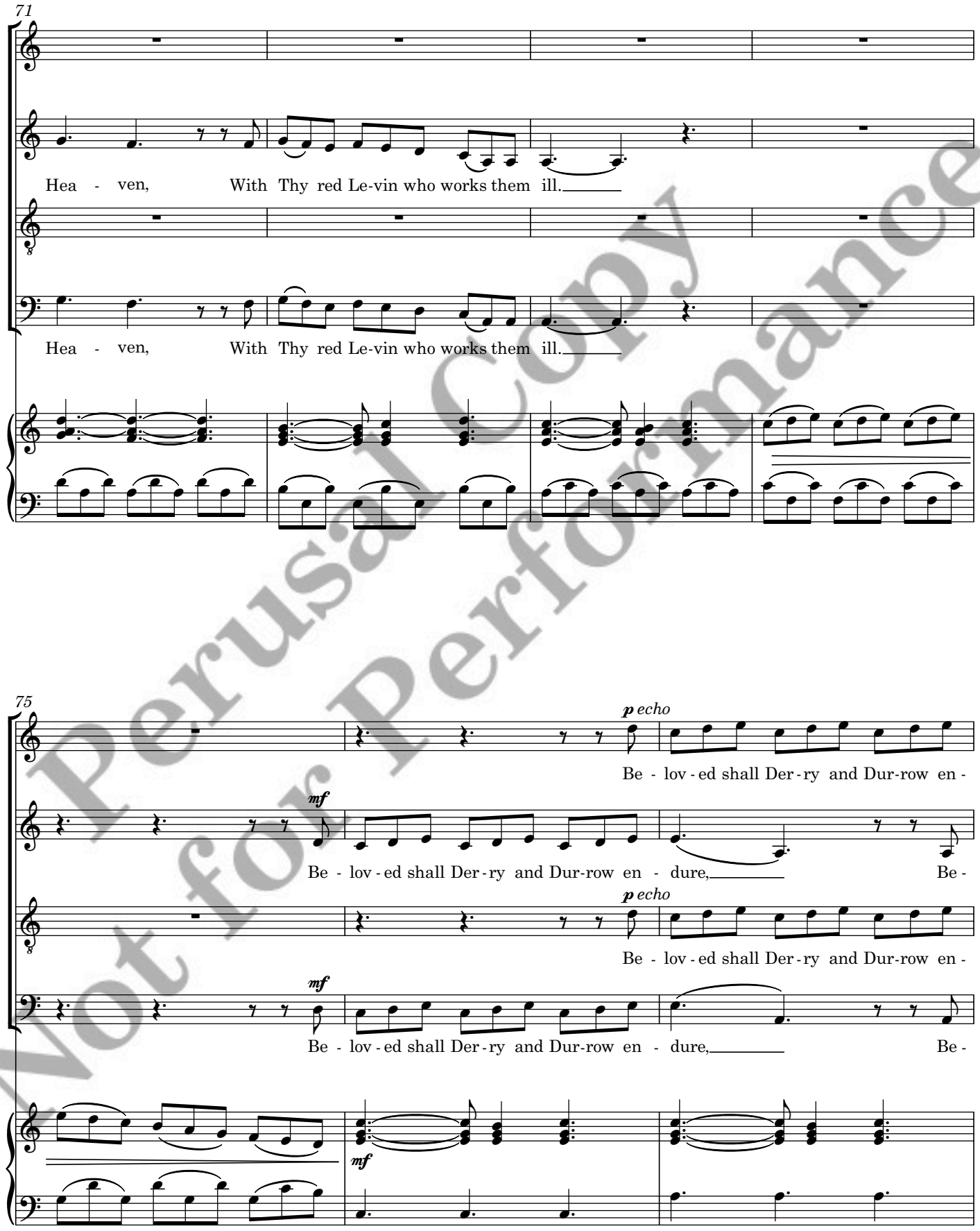

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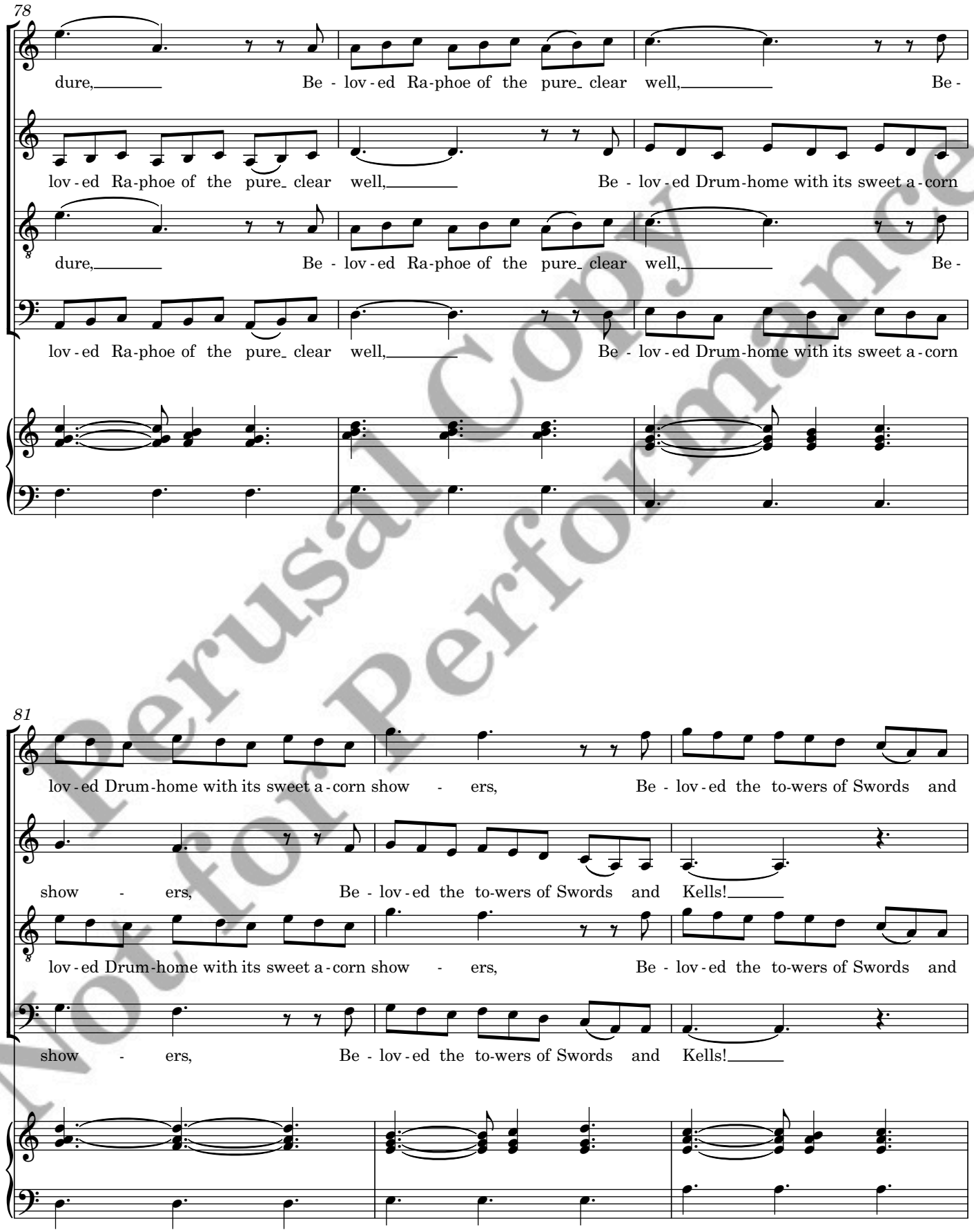

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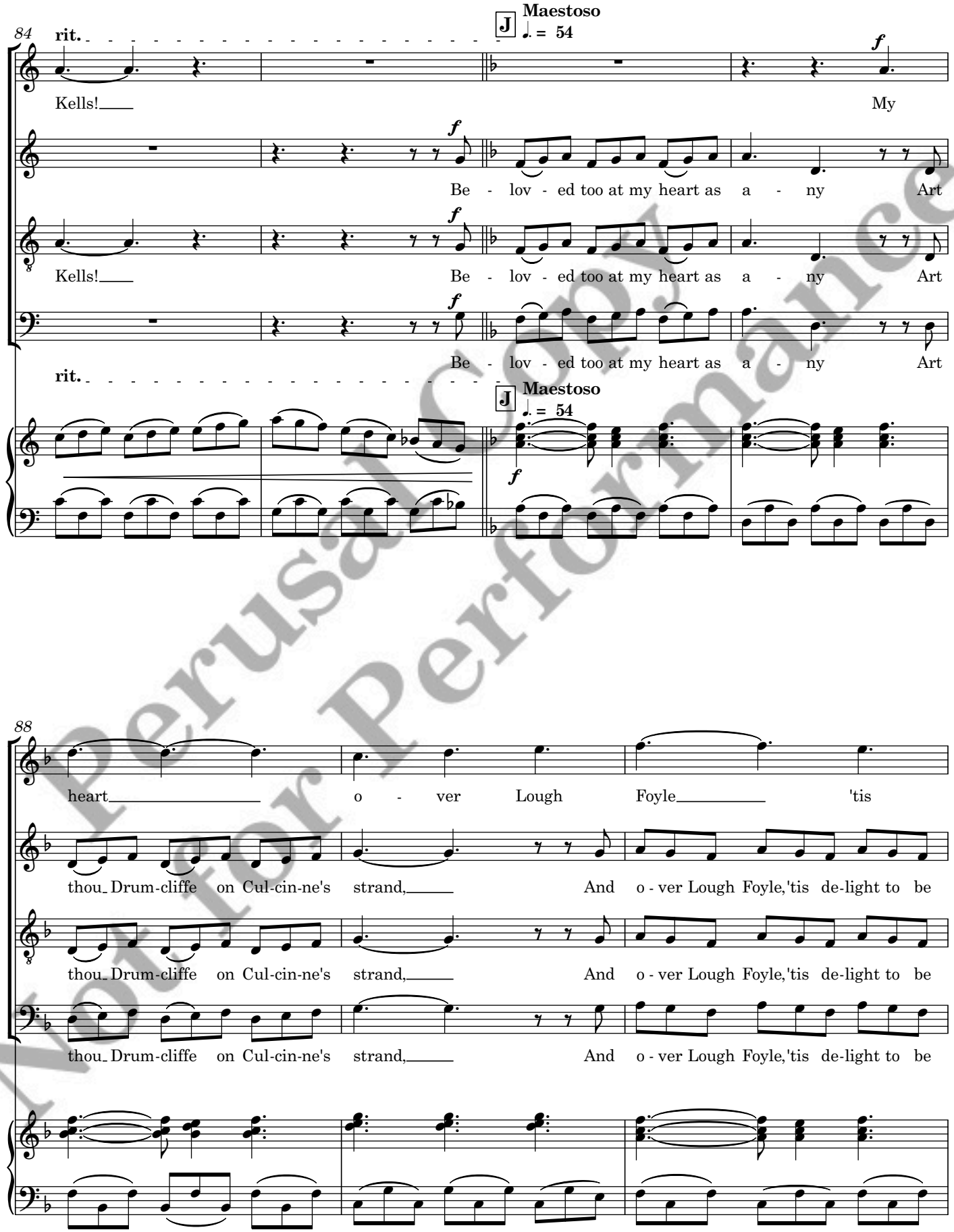

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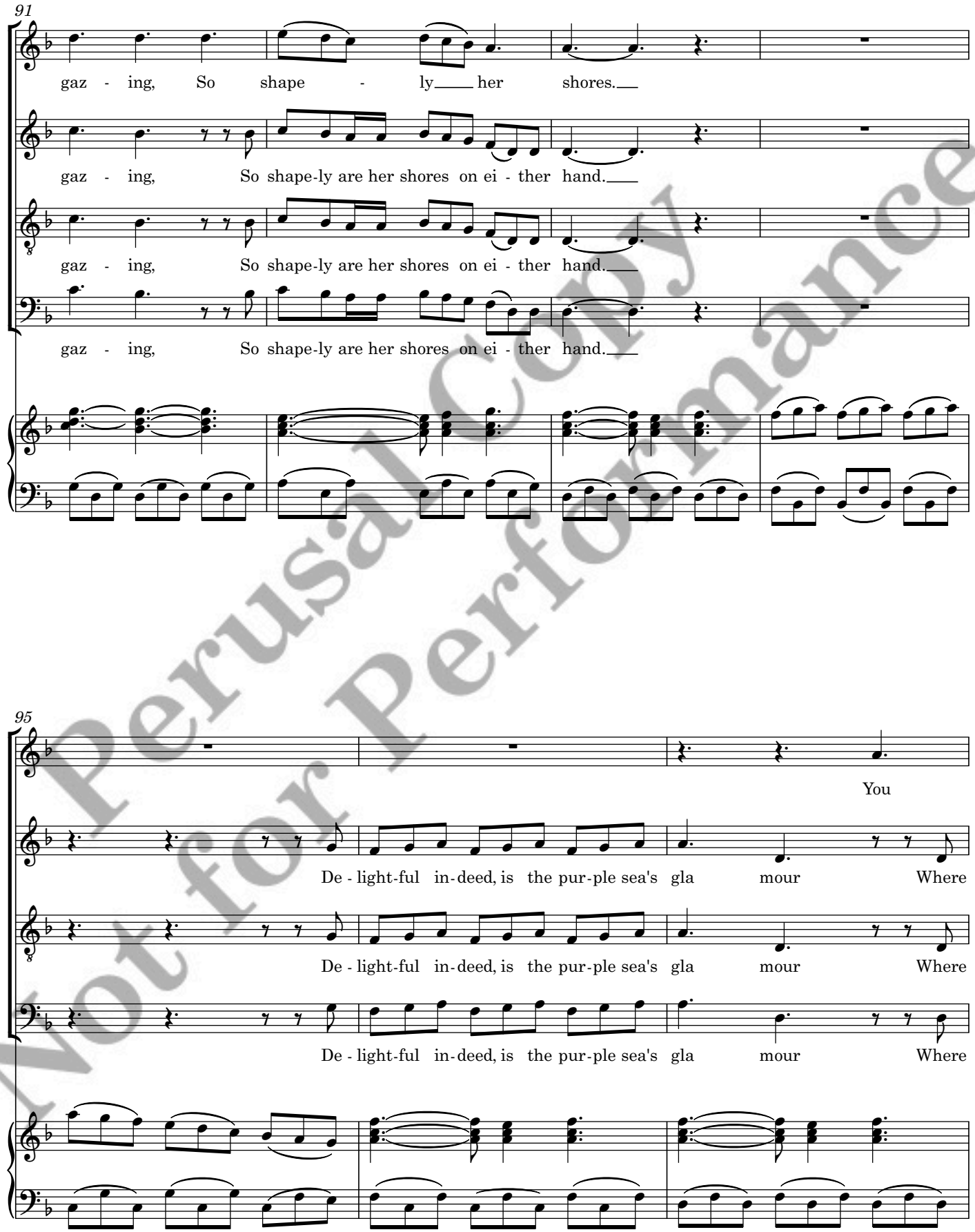

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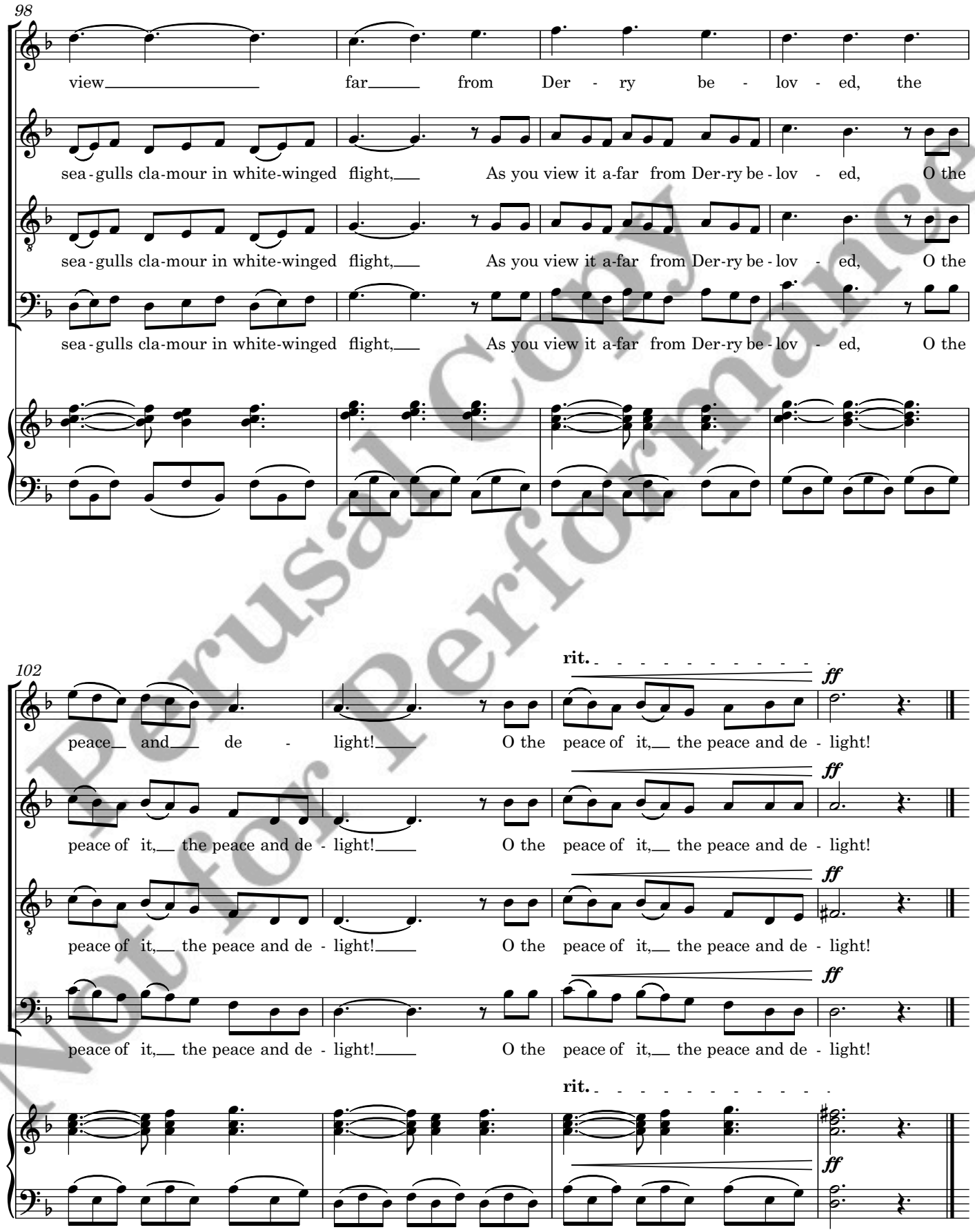
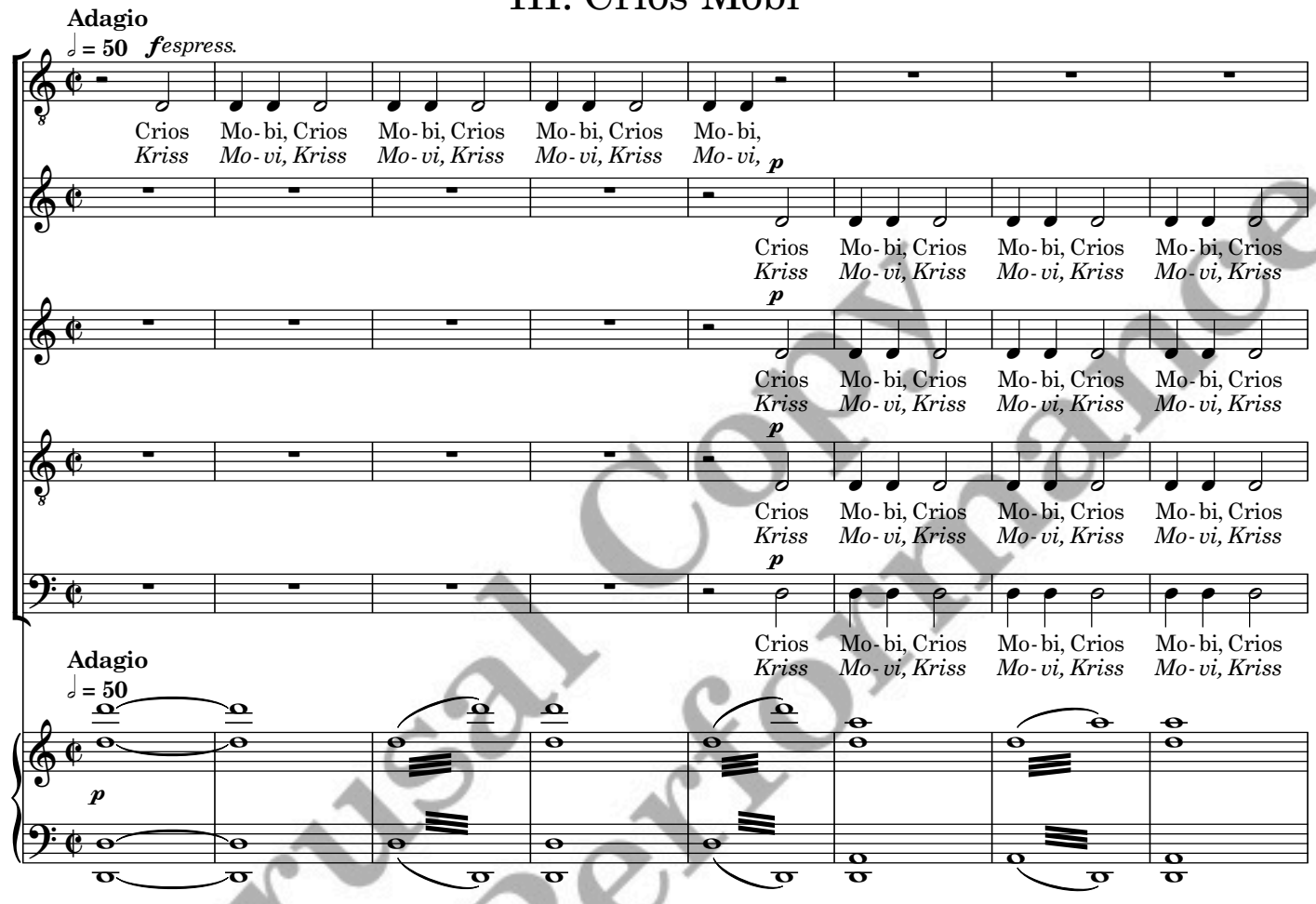


Perusal Copy Not for Performance

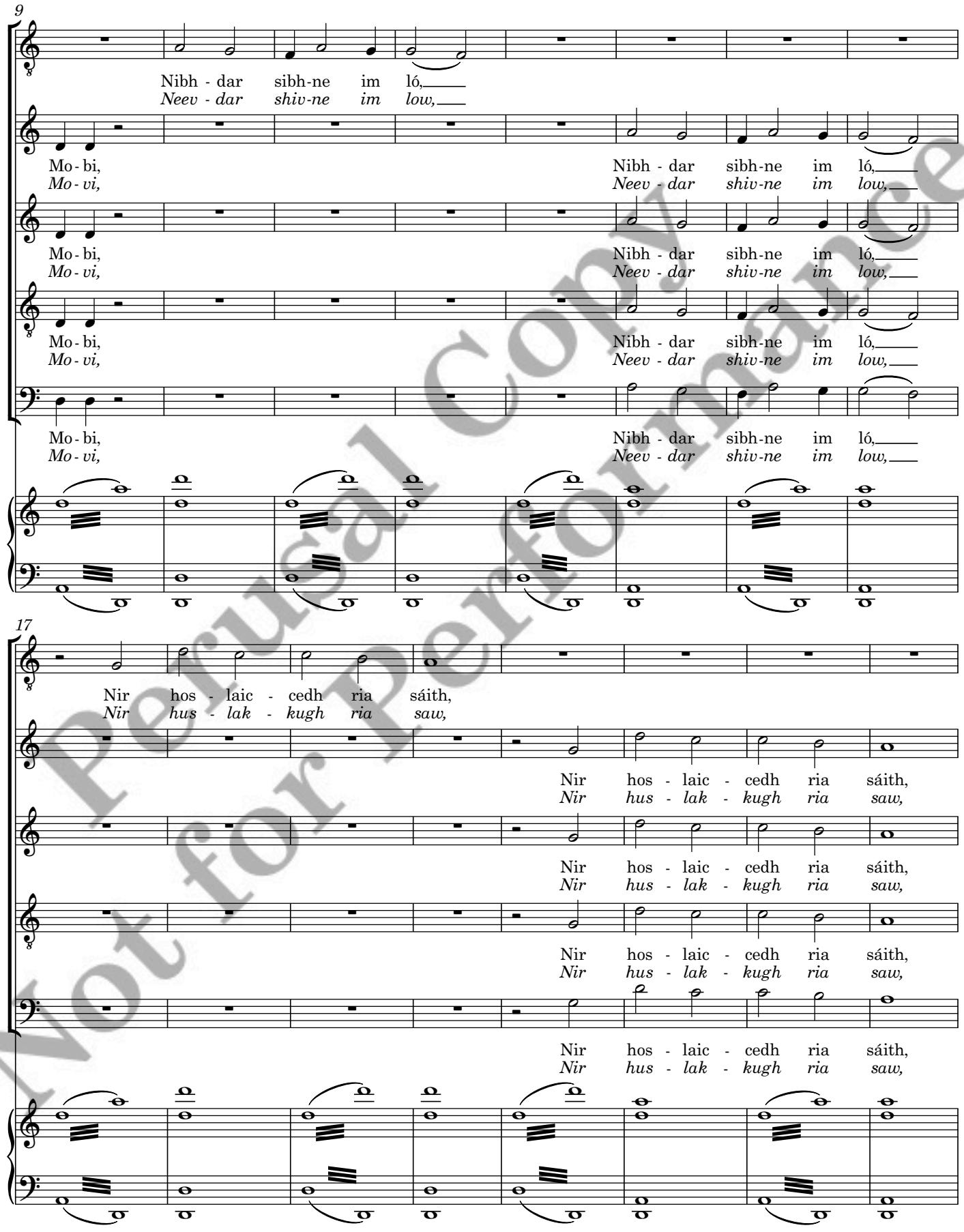
Vocal Score

III. Crios Mobi



V.S.

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance



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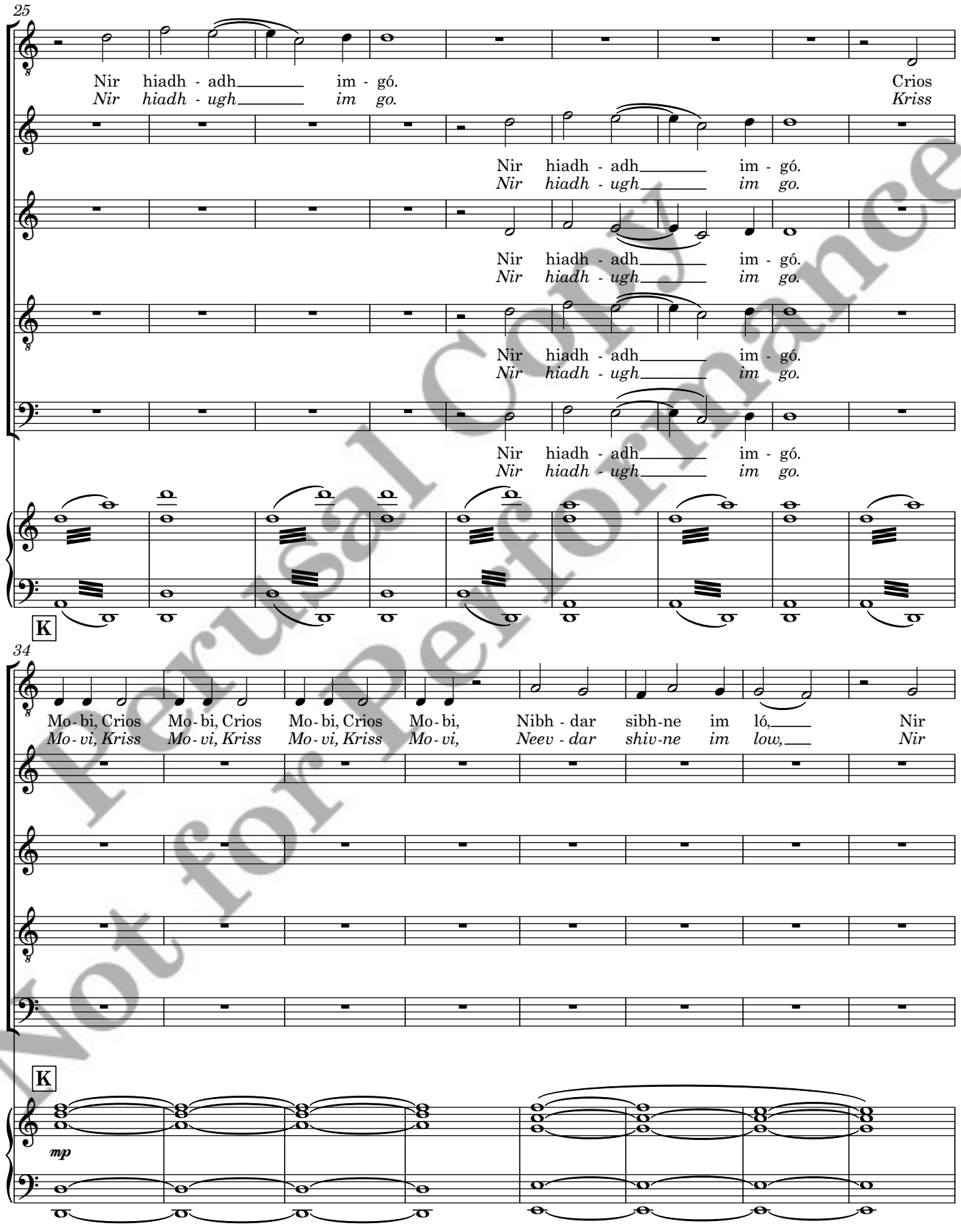

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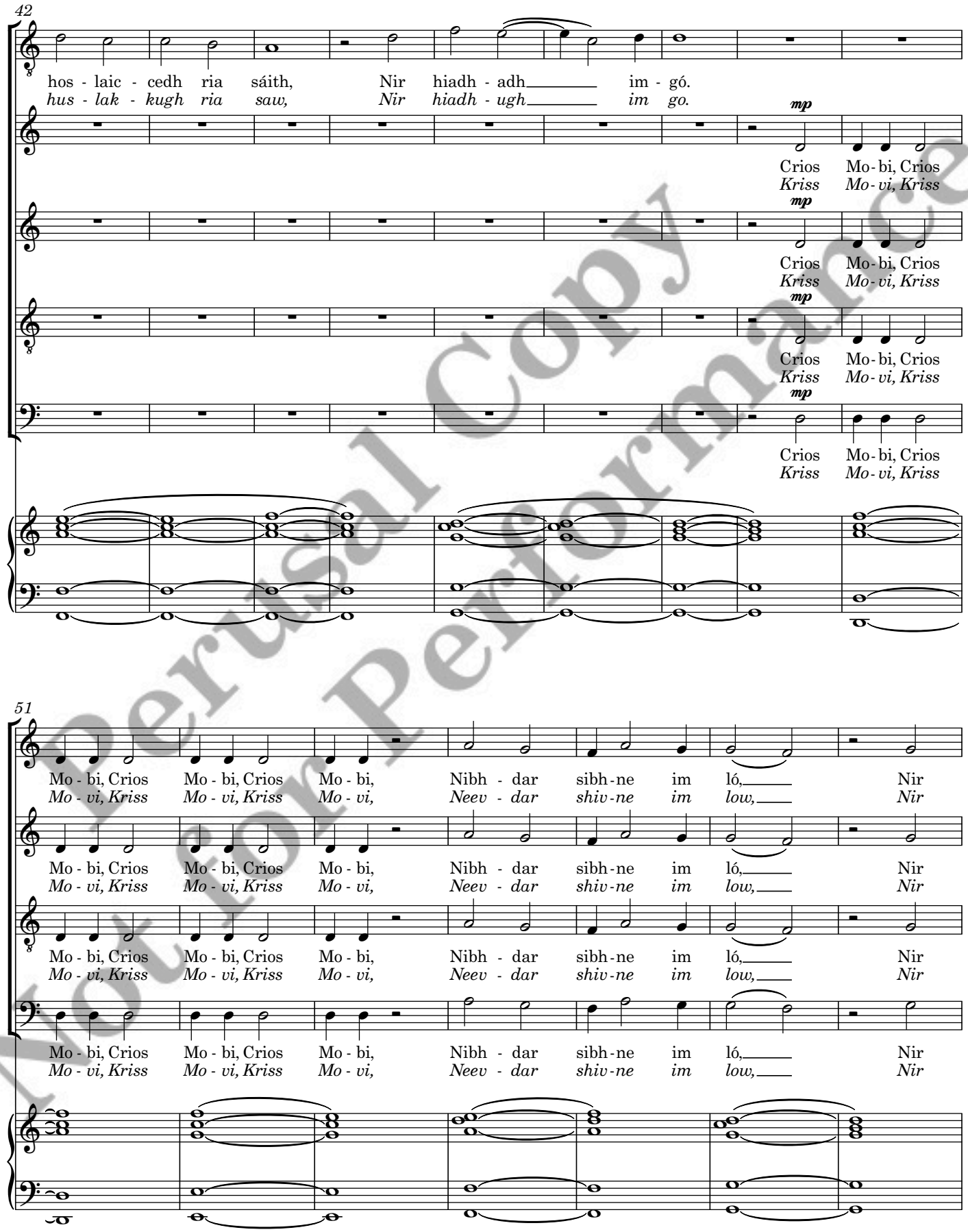

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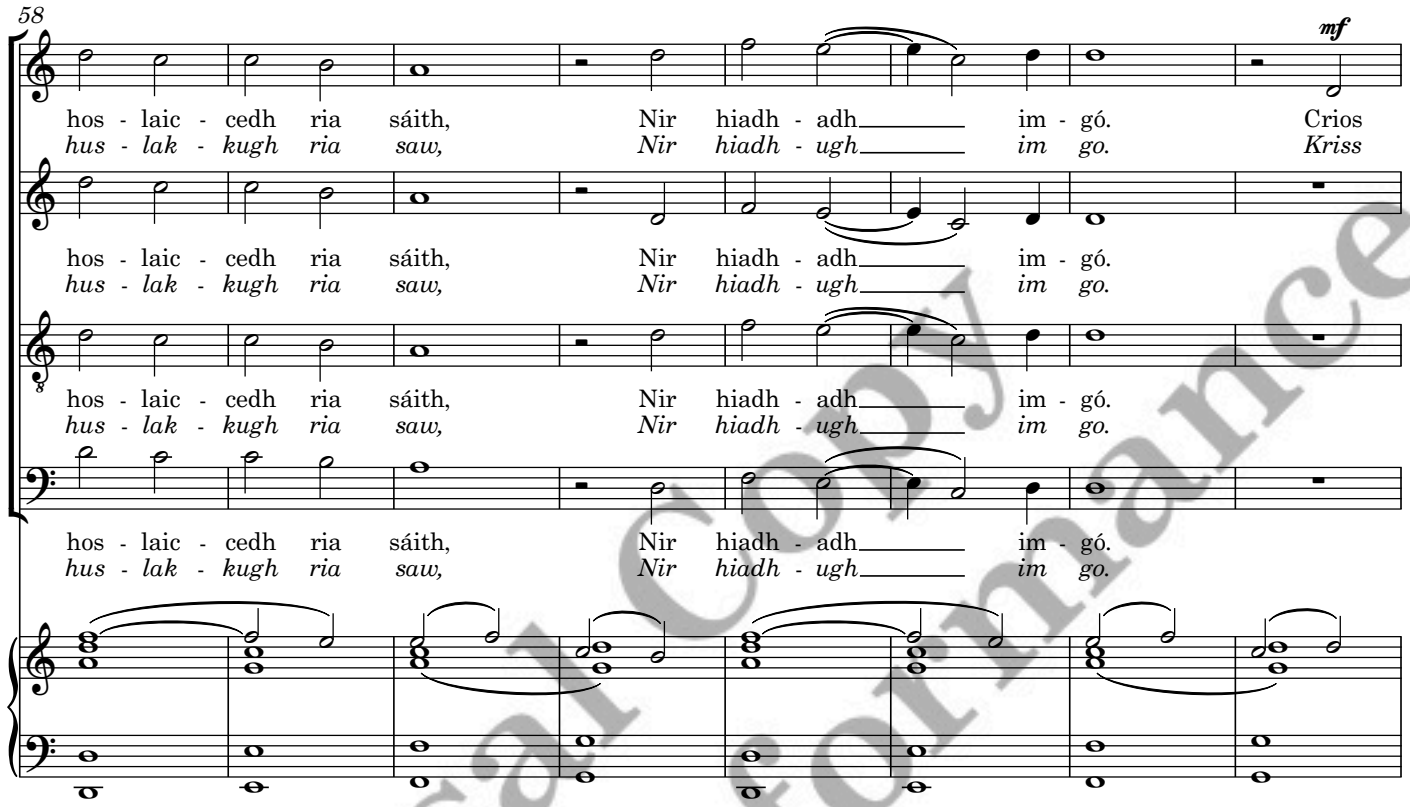

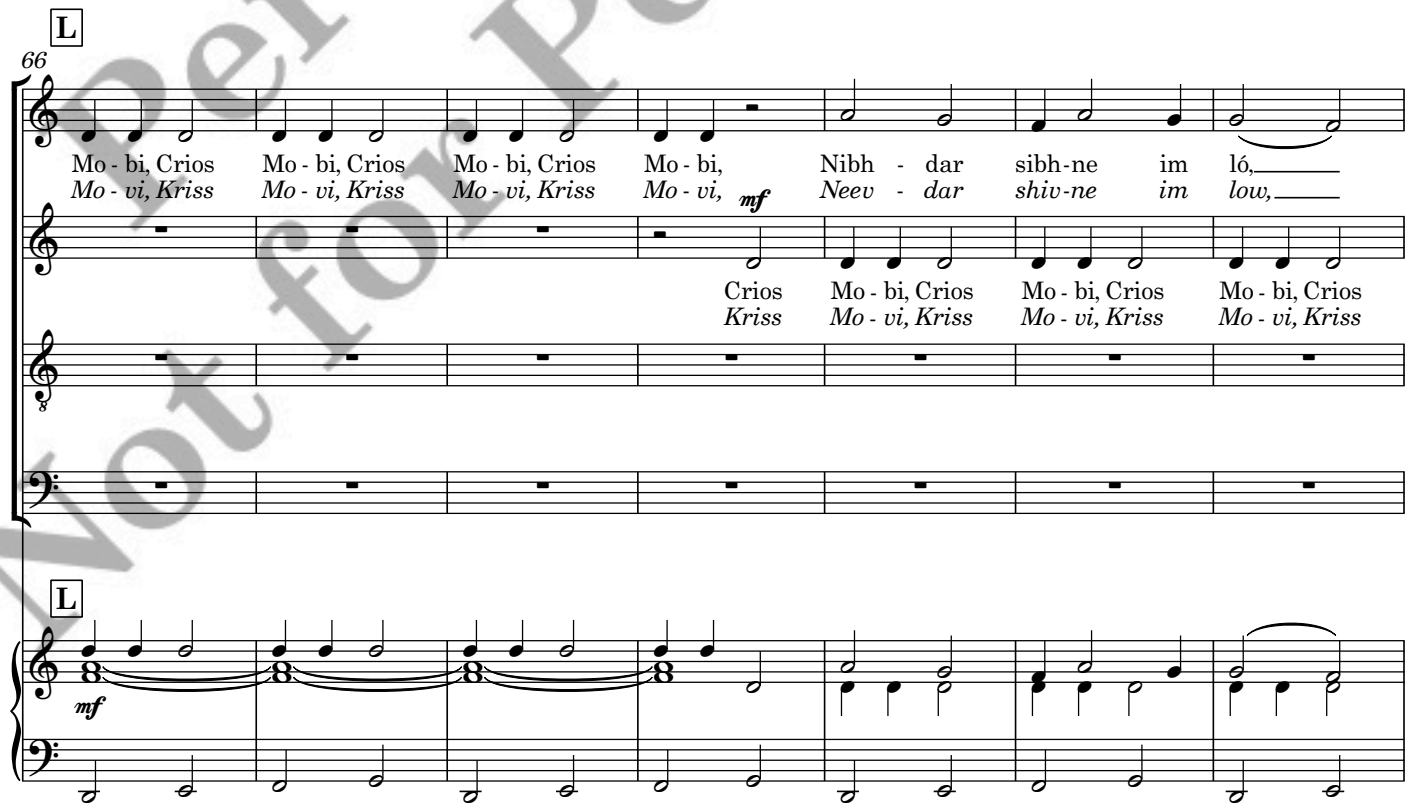

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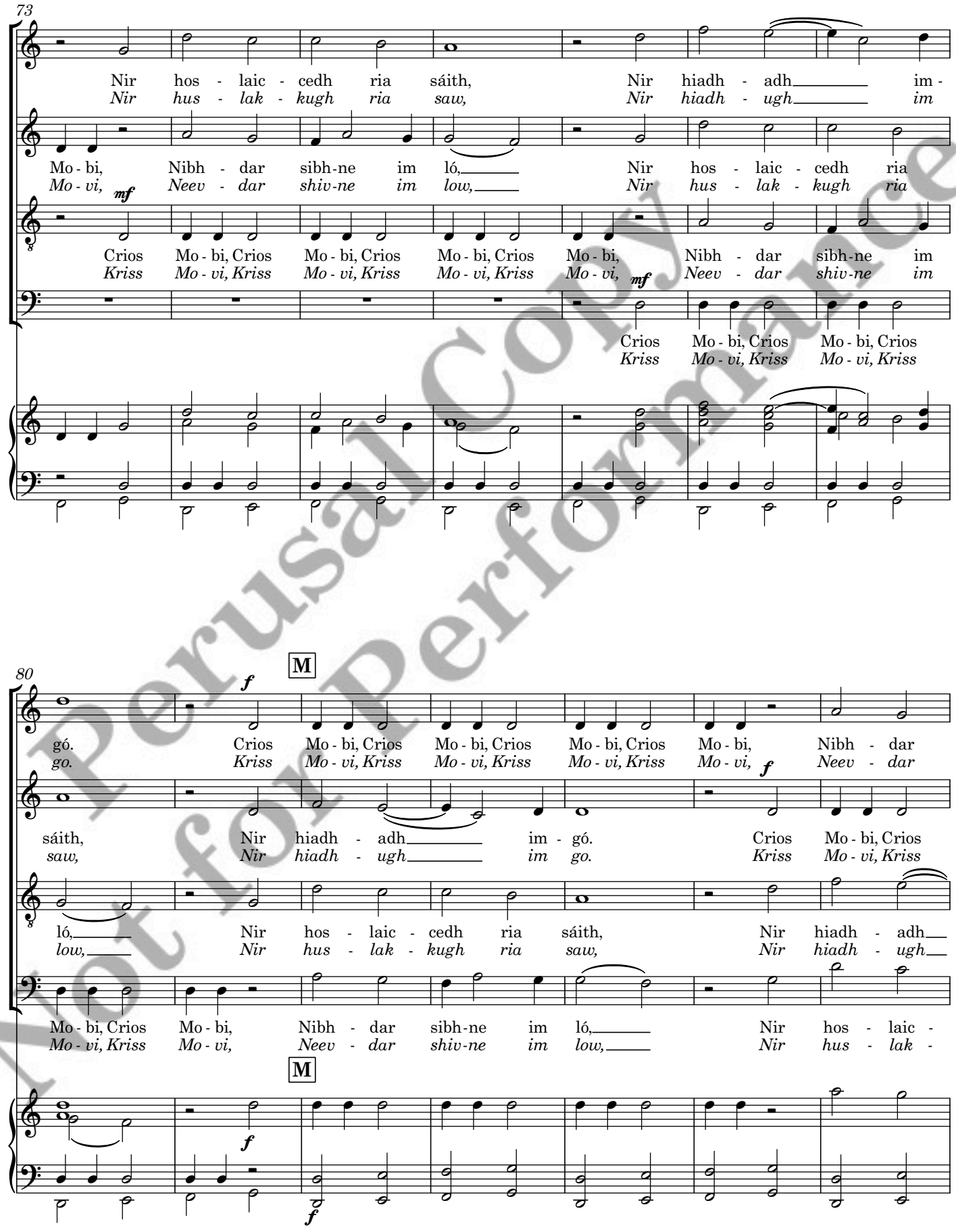

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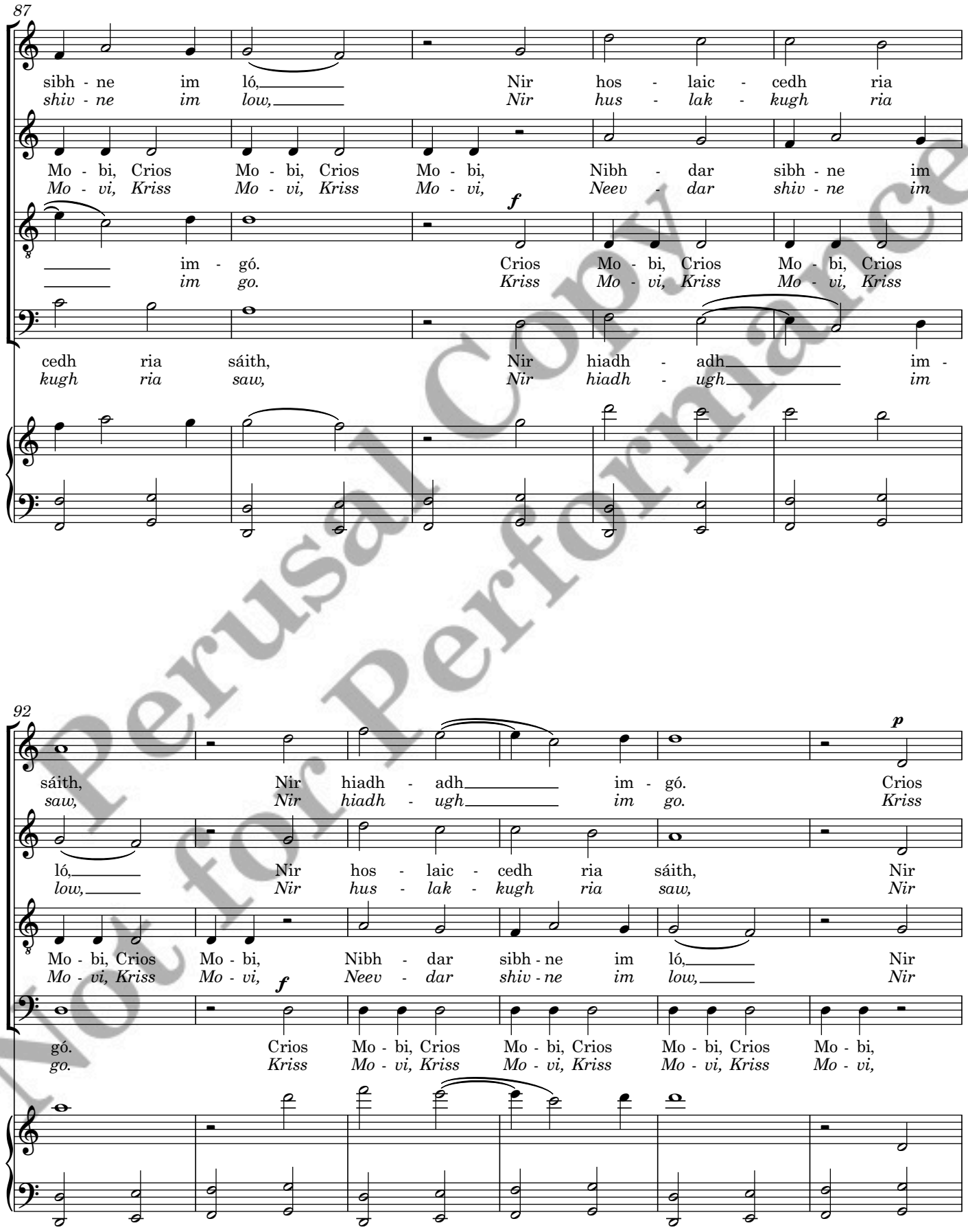

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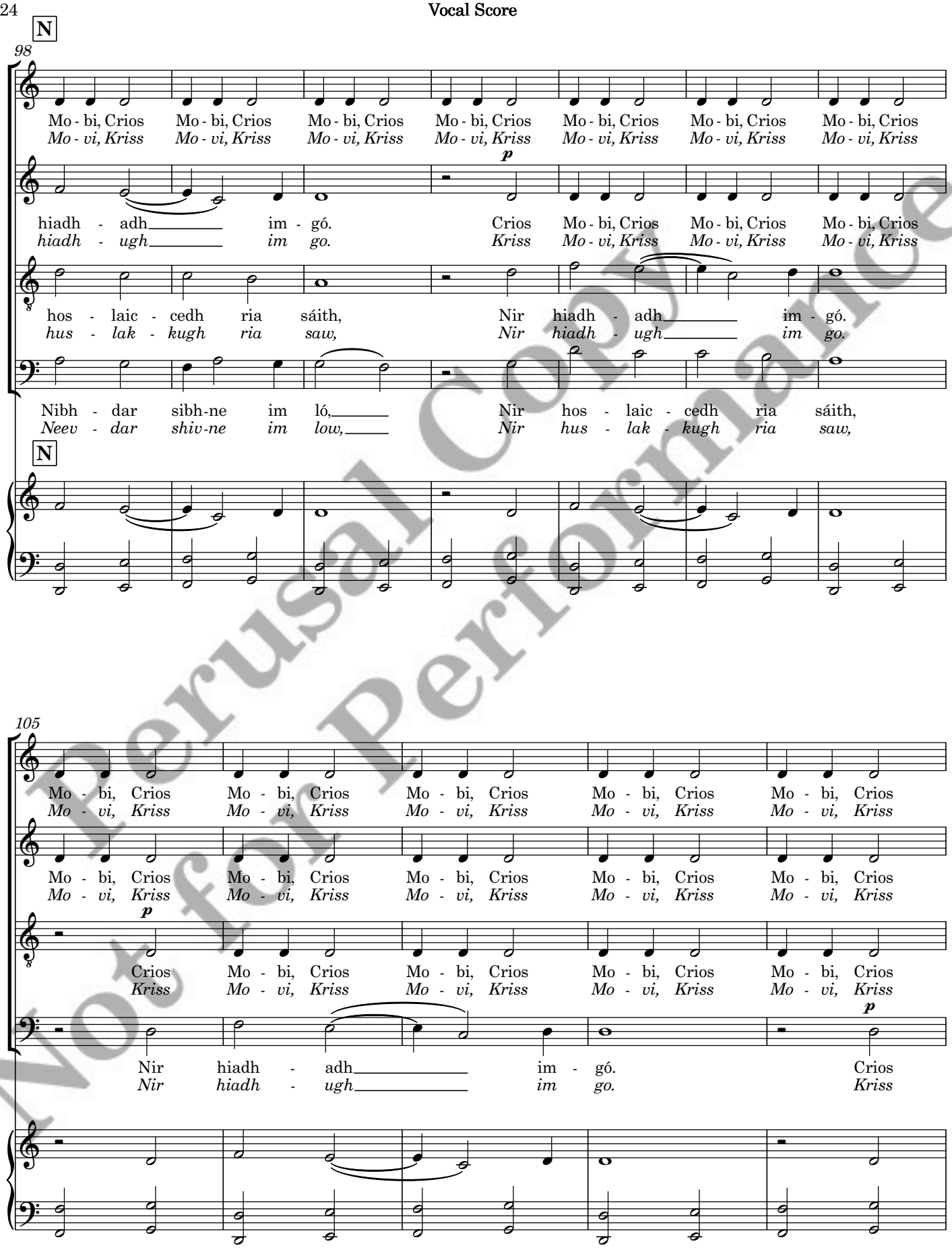

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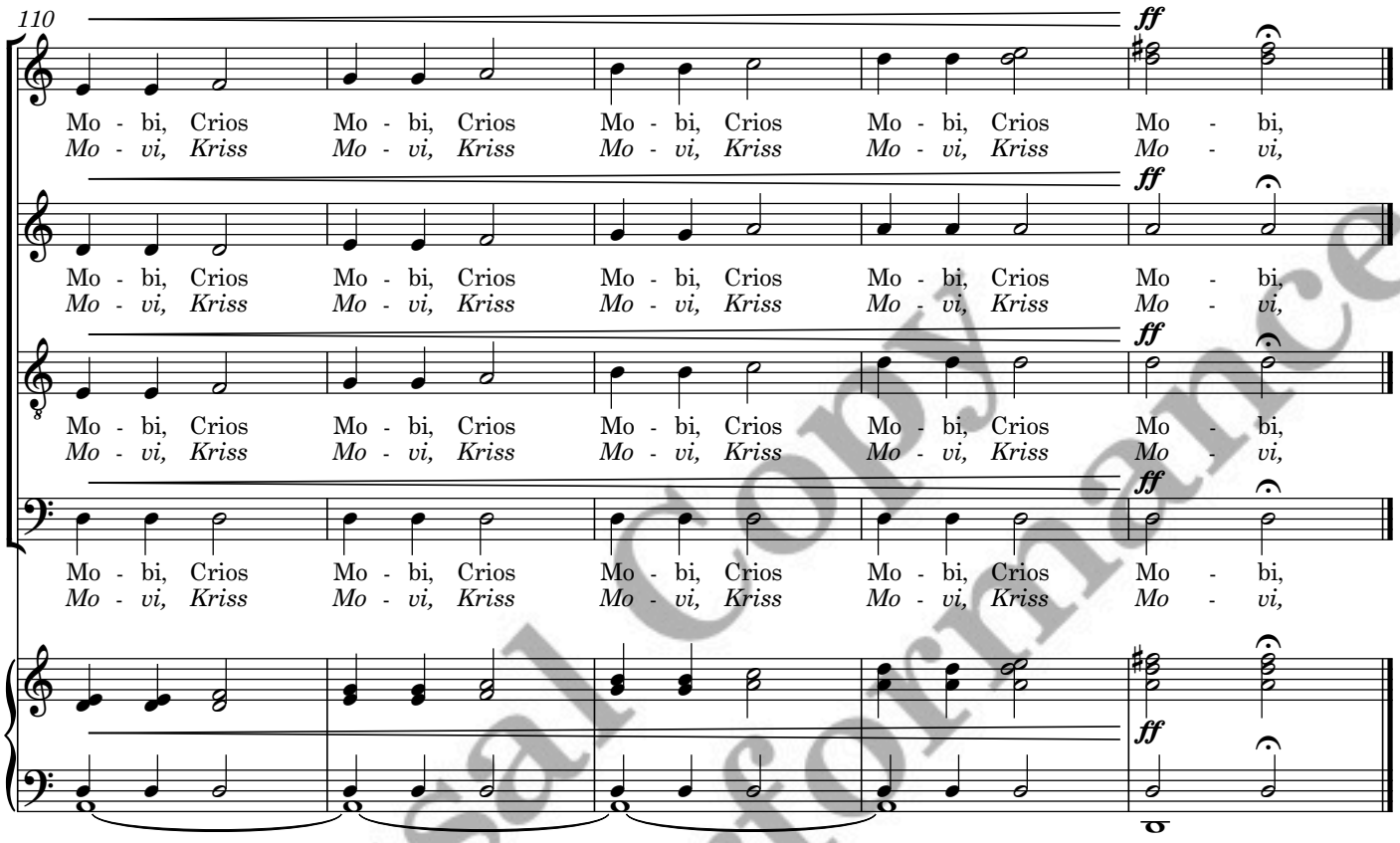


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Piano

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY

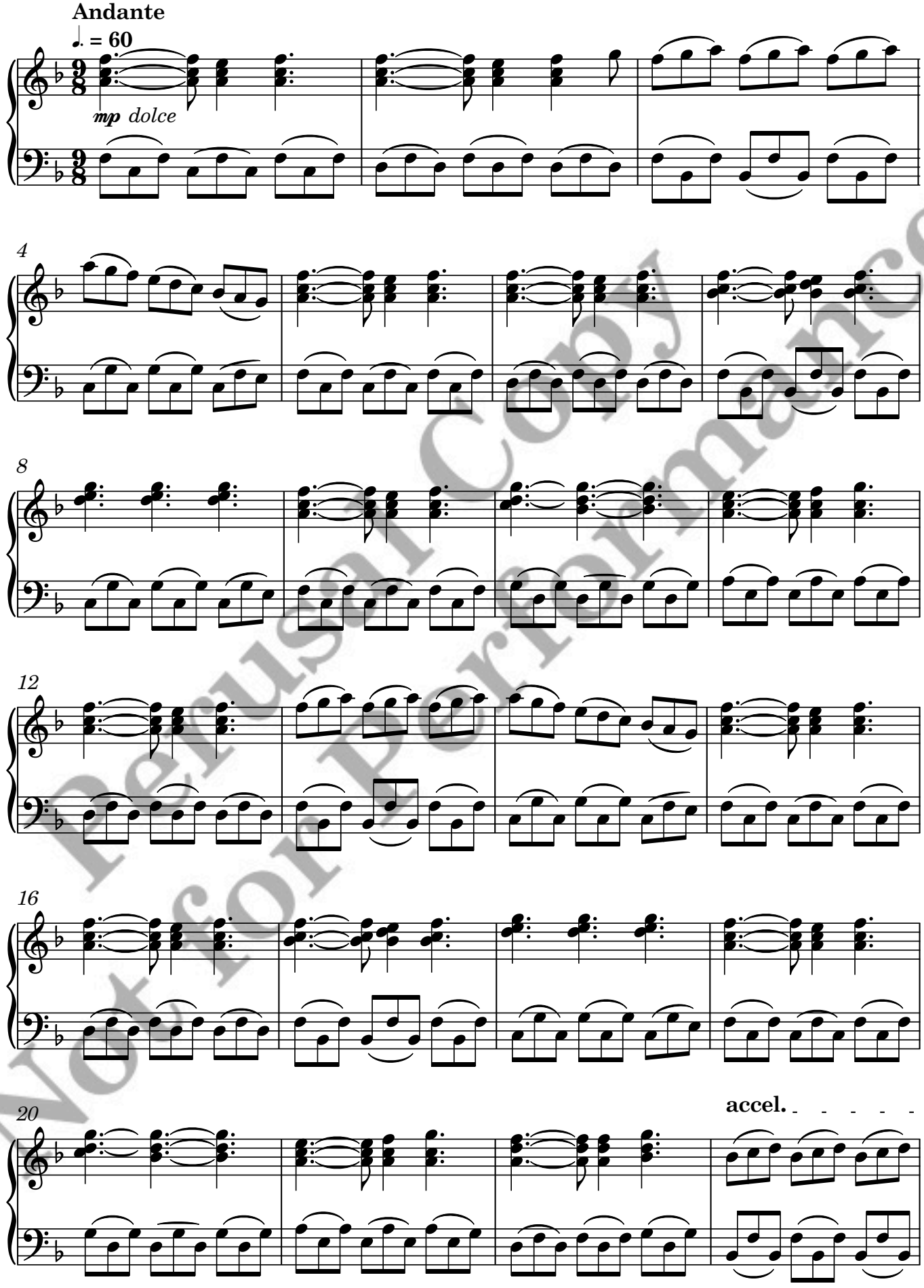
rit. Moderato ♩=100

TACET

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Piano



Personal Copy
Not for Performance

24

G Con moto ♩. = 70

27

31

35

39

rit.

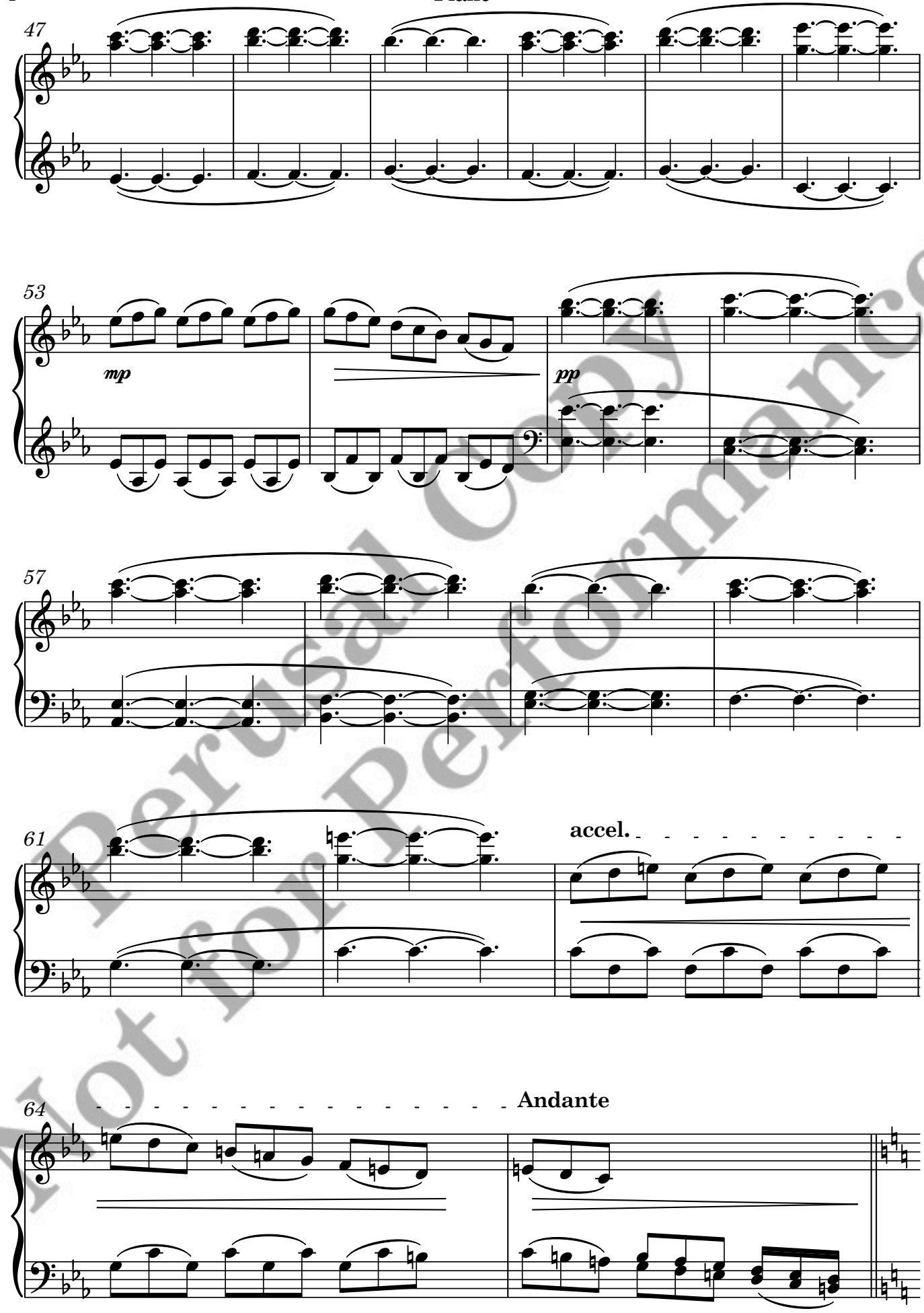
43

H Adagio ♩. = 50

pp

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

V.S.



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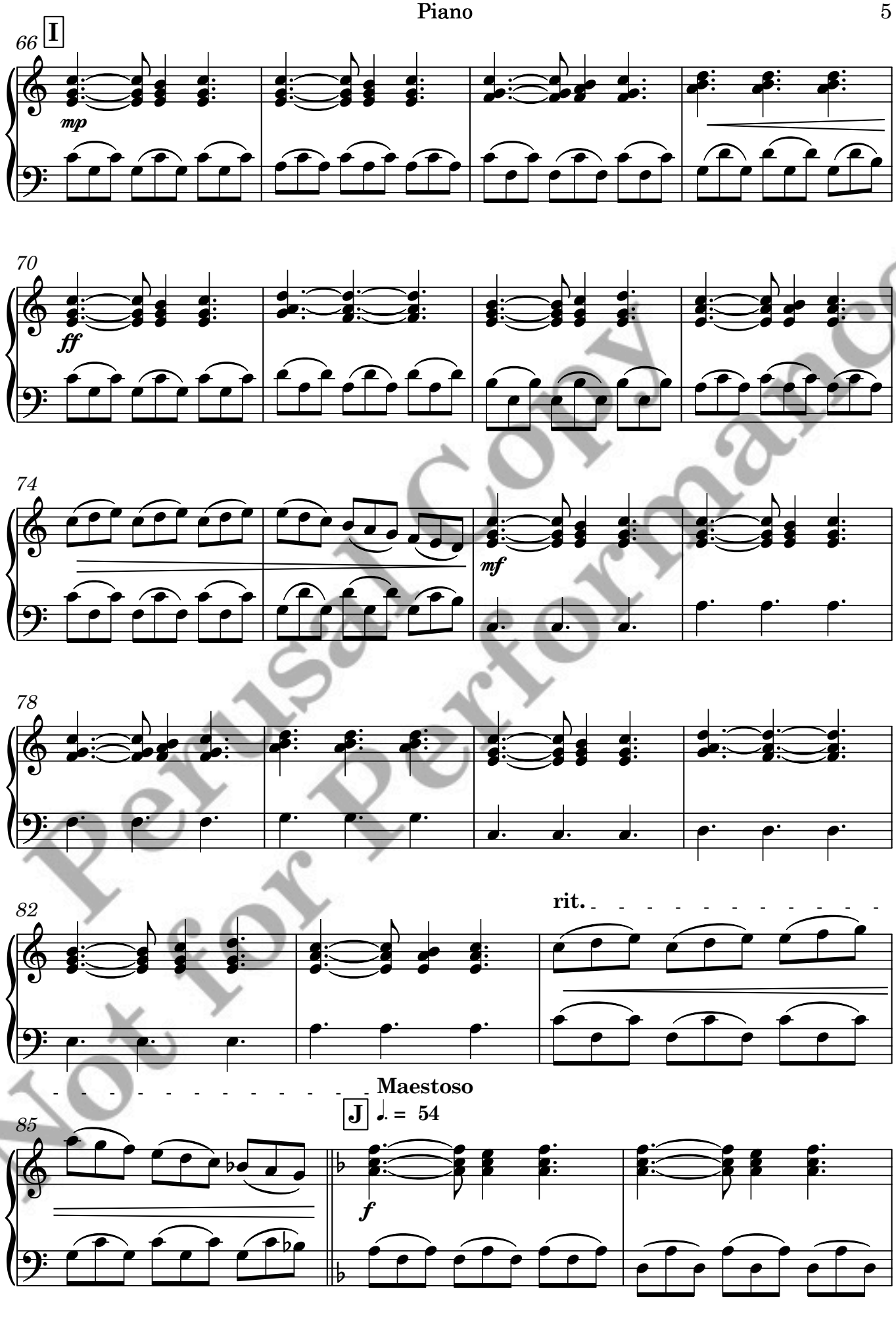
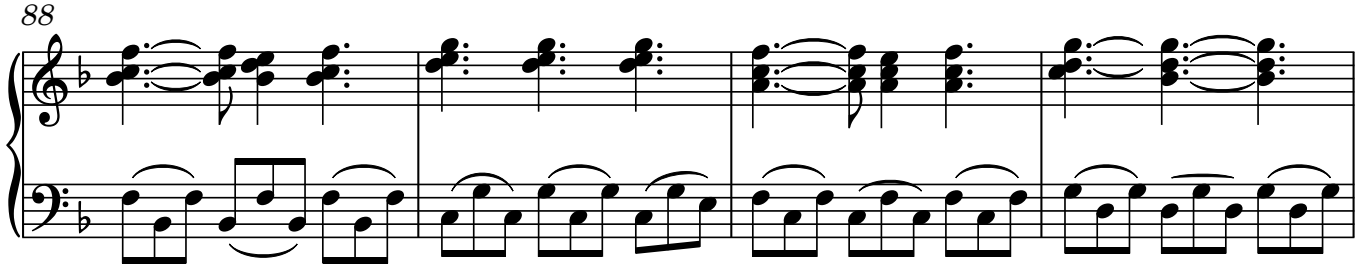


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

88



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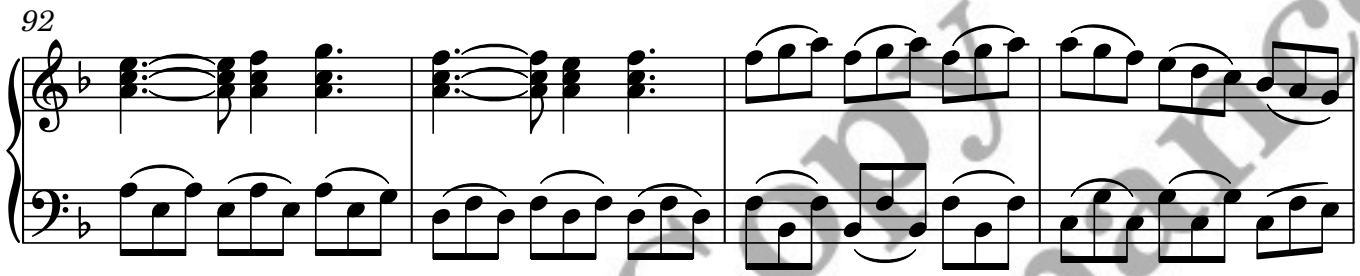

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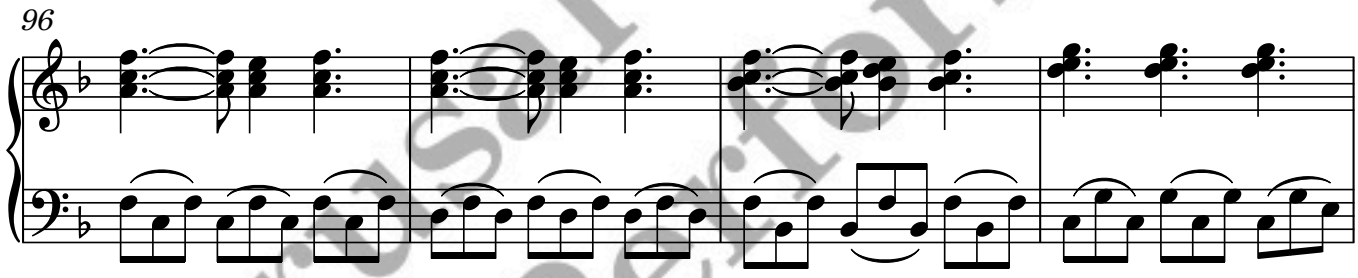

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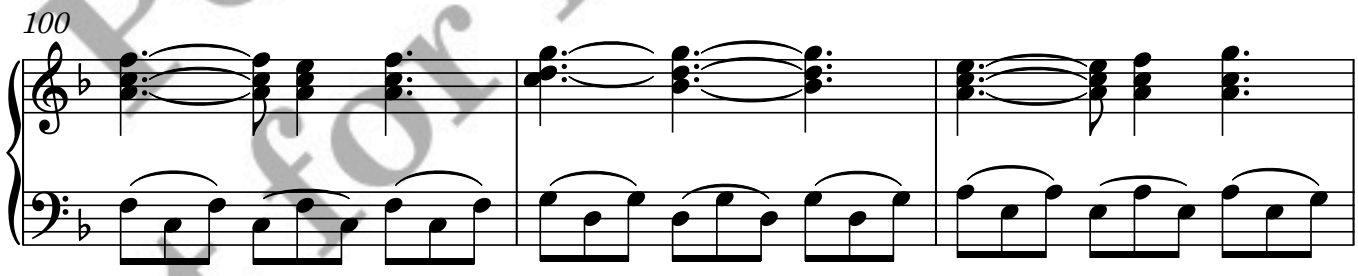
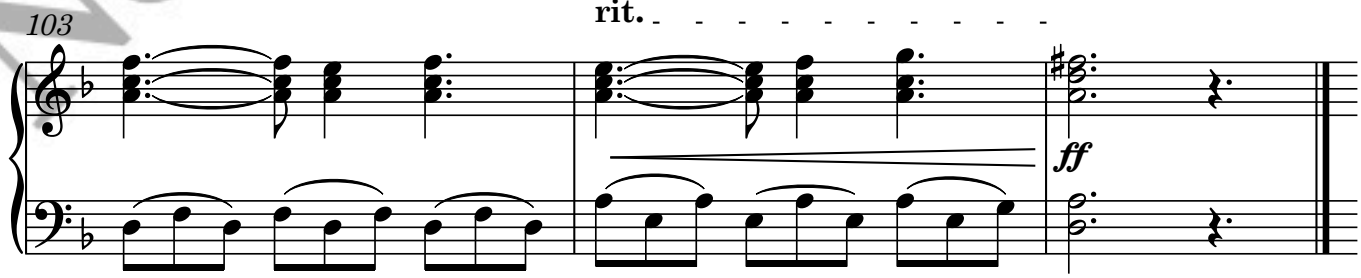


103

rit.



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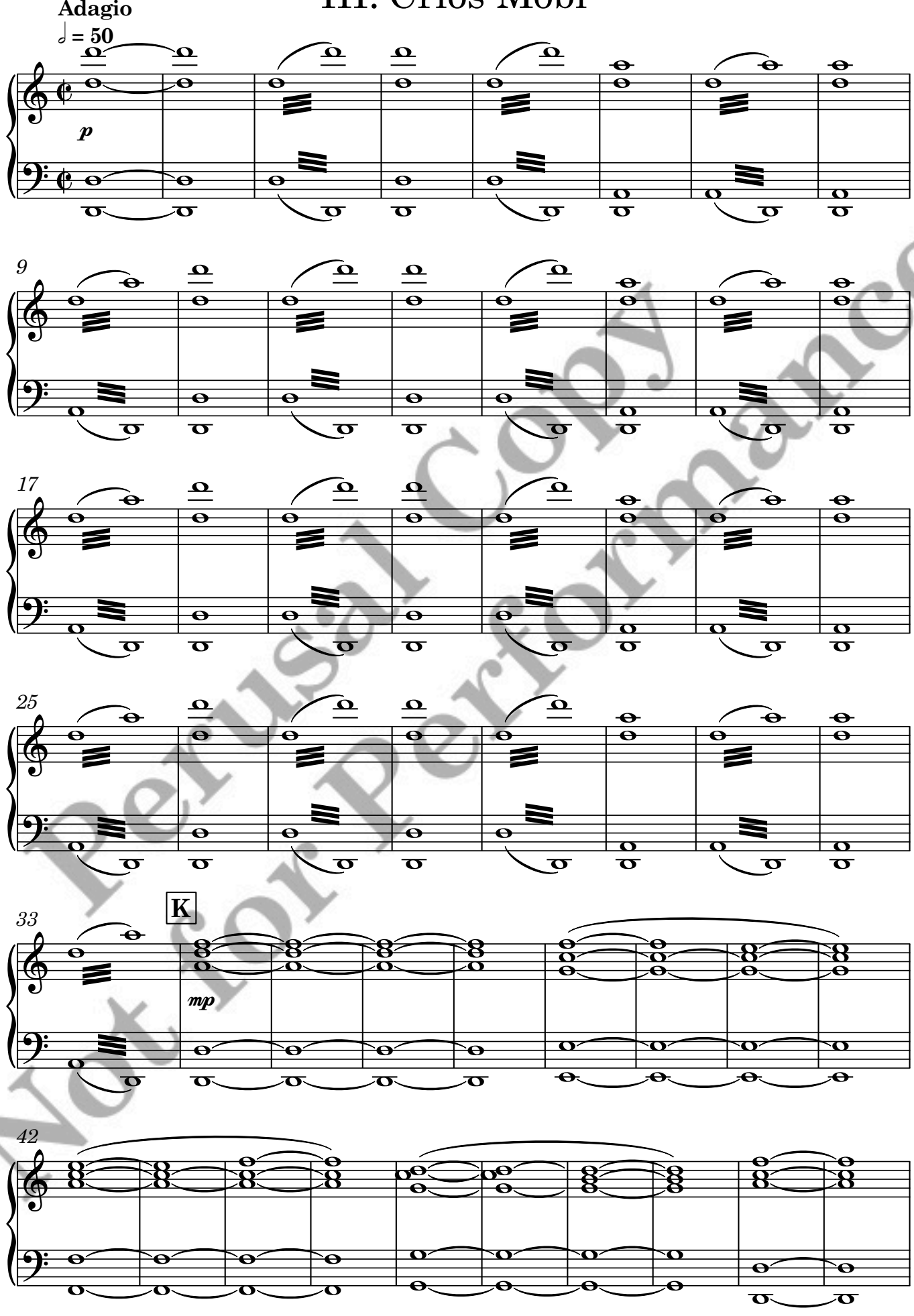
Not for Performance

III. Crios Mobi

Piano



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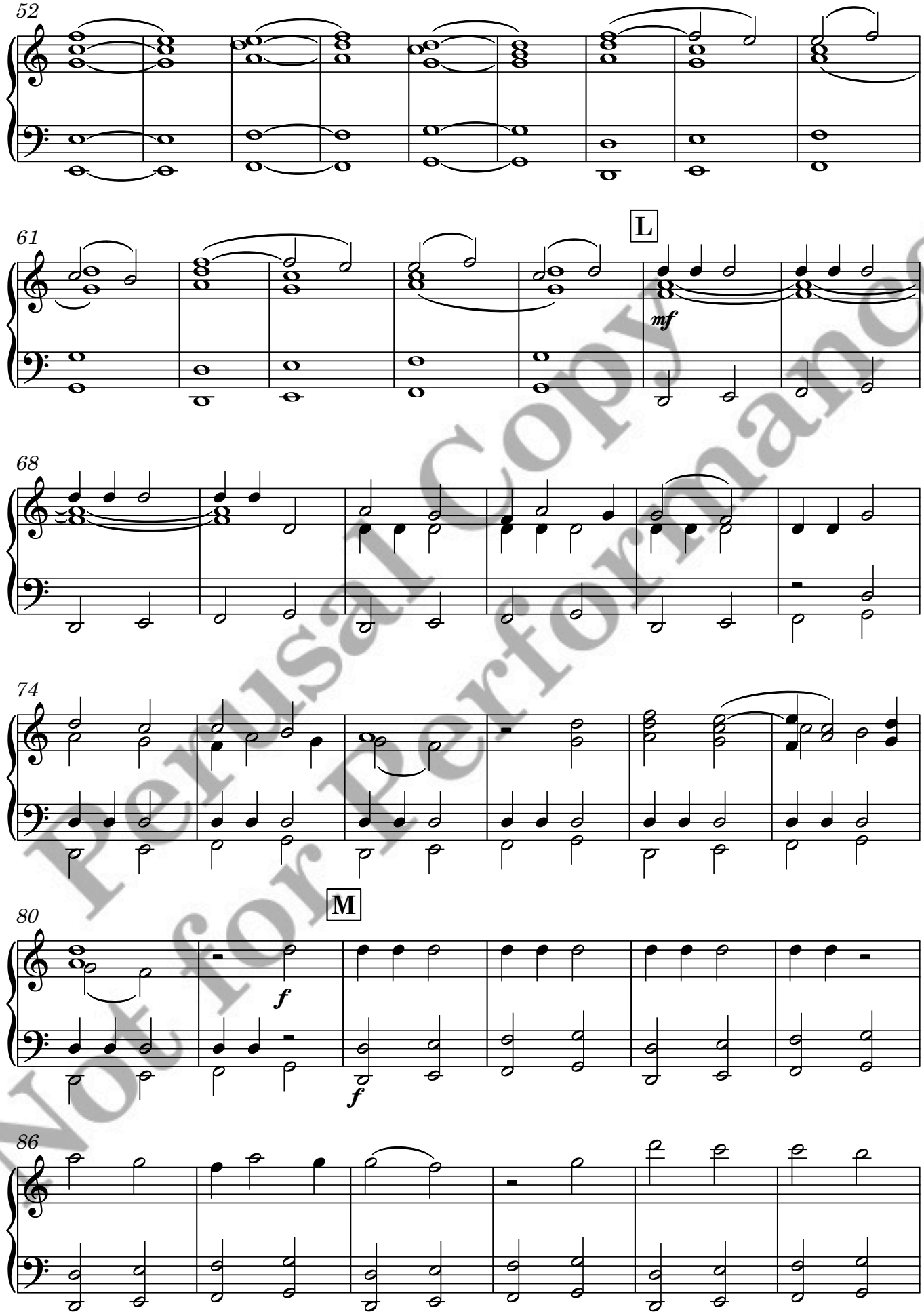


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Violin I

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

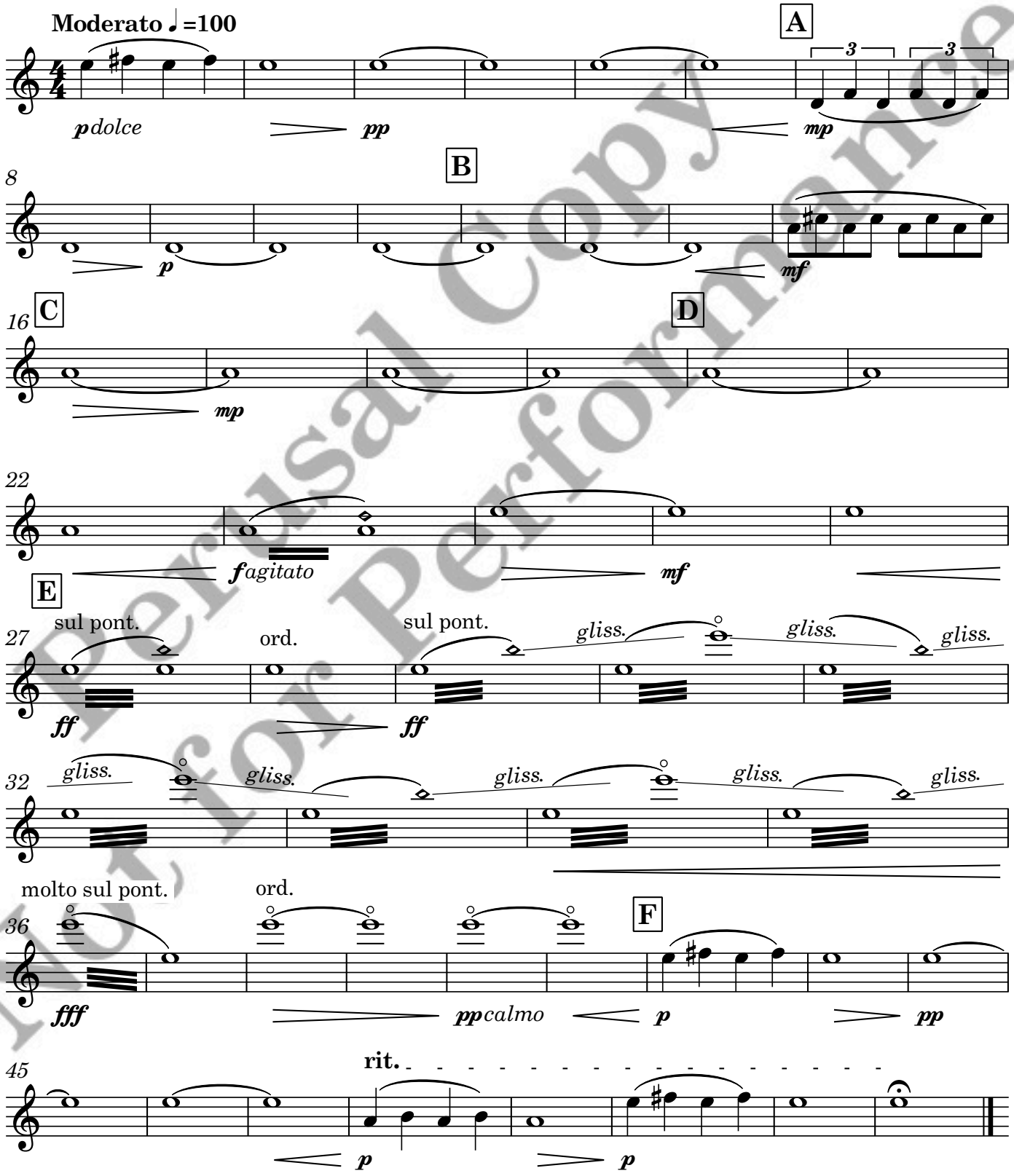
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

I. The Torrent

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

SEÁN DOHERTY



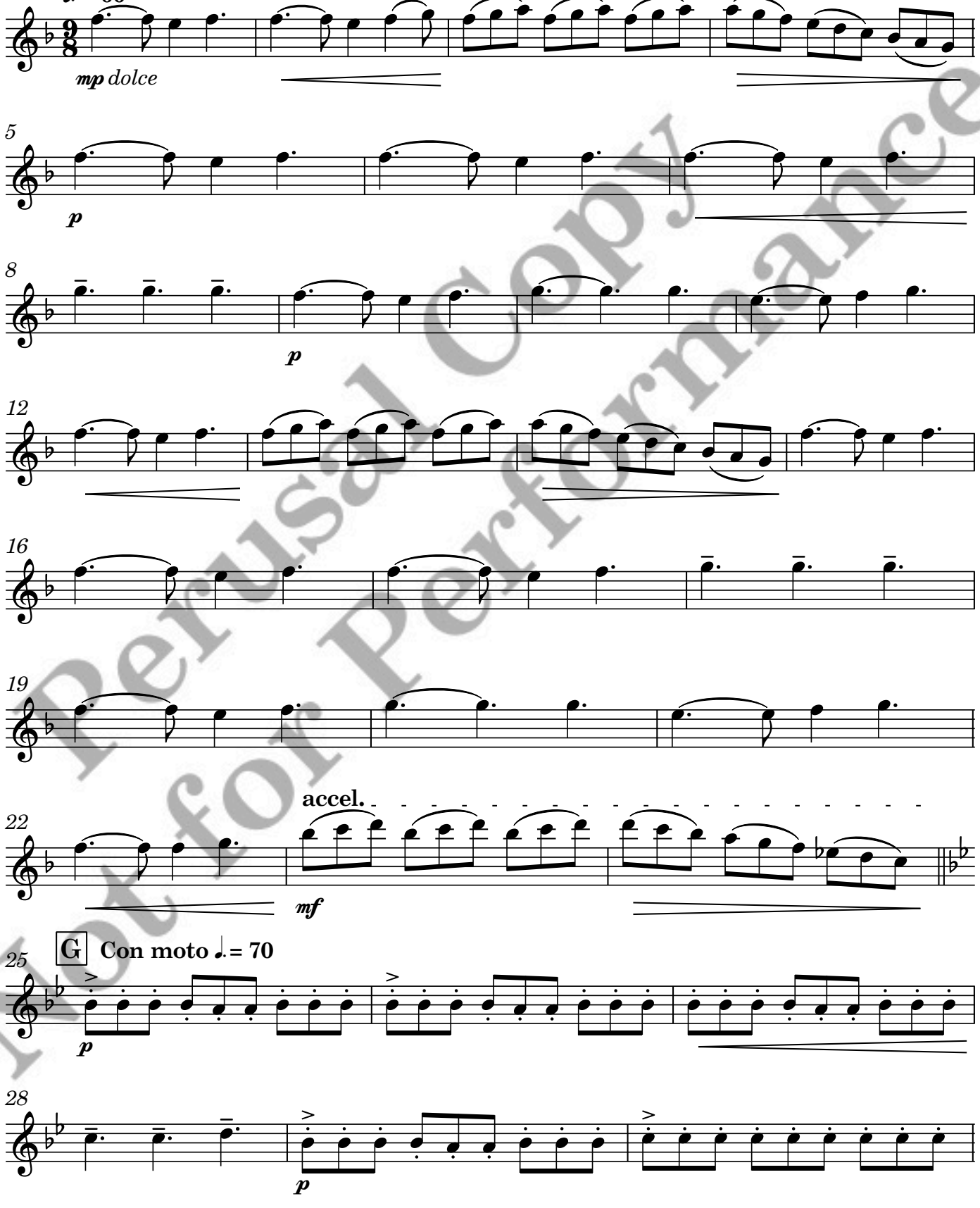
Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Violin I

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Andante

♩. = 60



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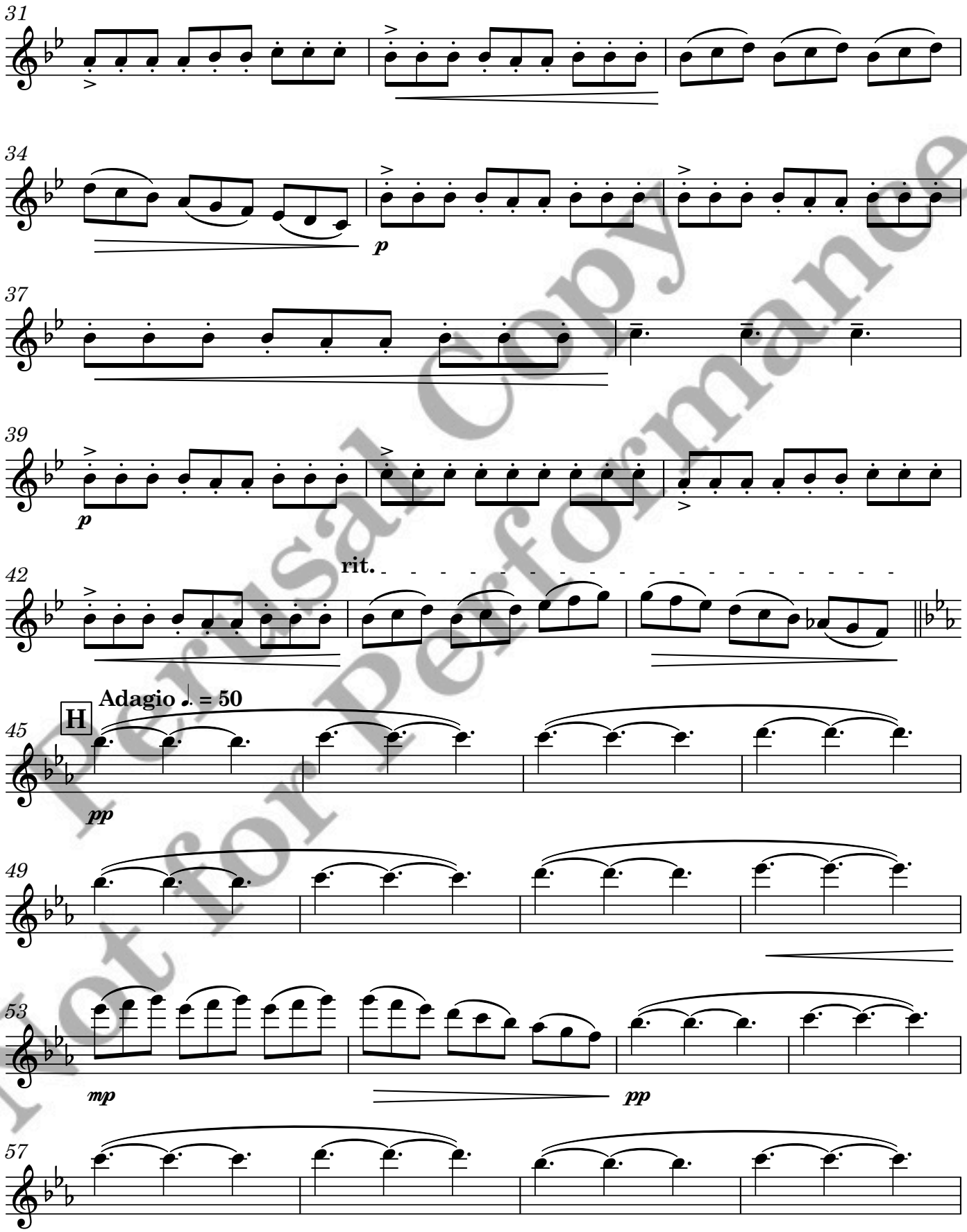

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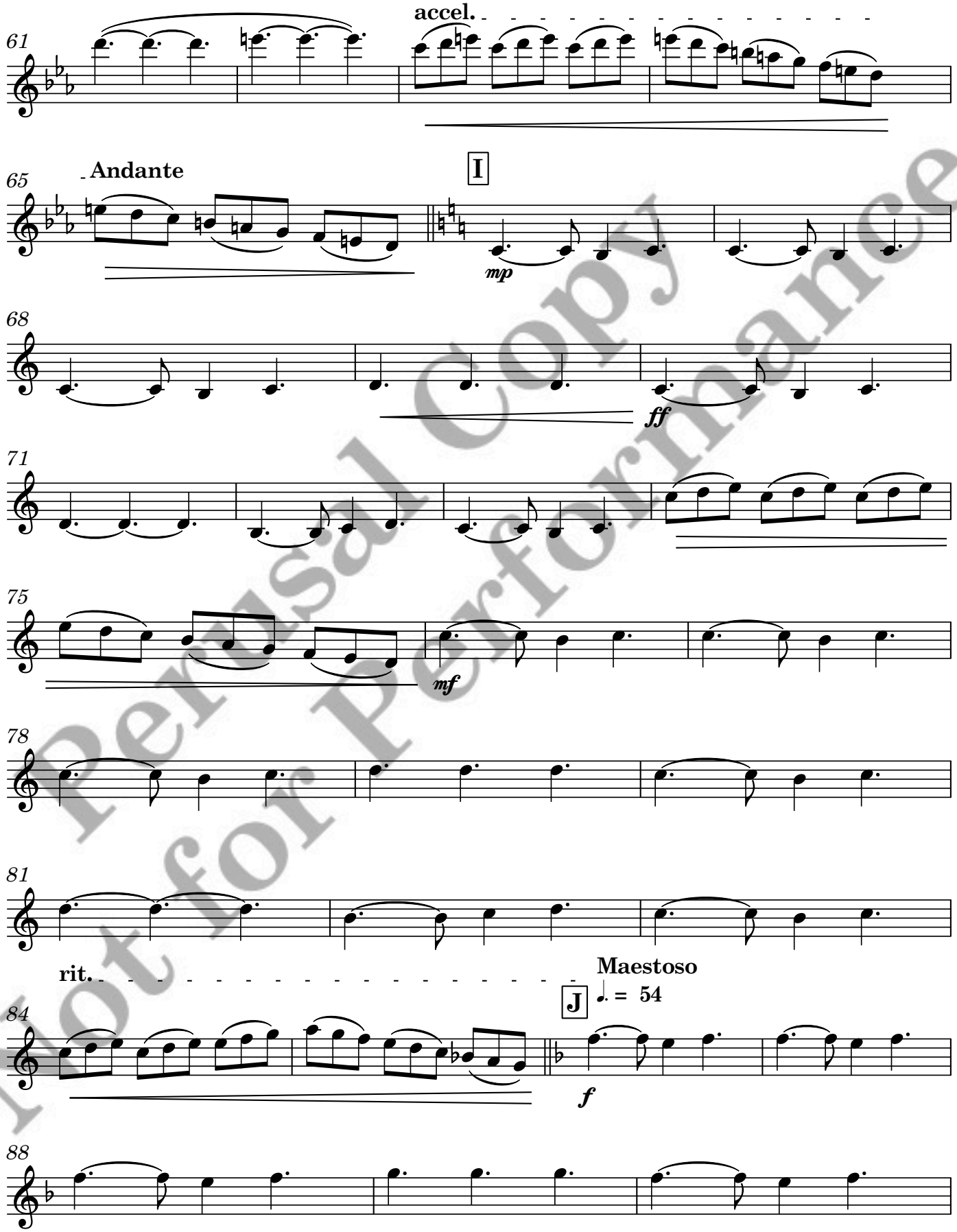
Not for Performance



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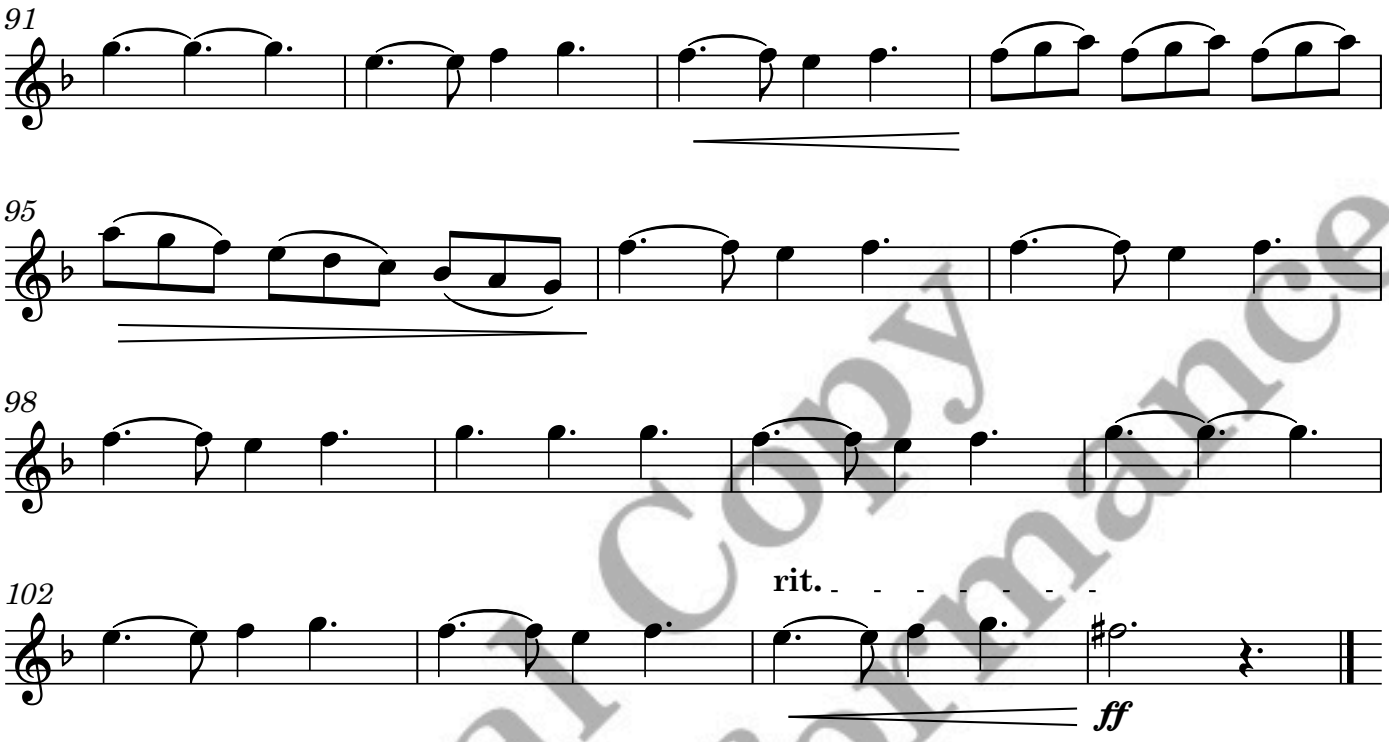

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Violin I

III. Crios Mobi

Adagio

♩ = 50

trem. non trem. *sim.*

p

8

16

25

34 **K**

mp

42

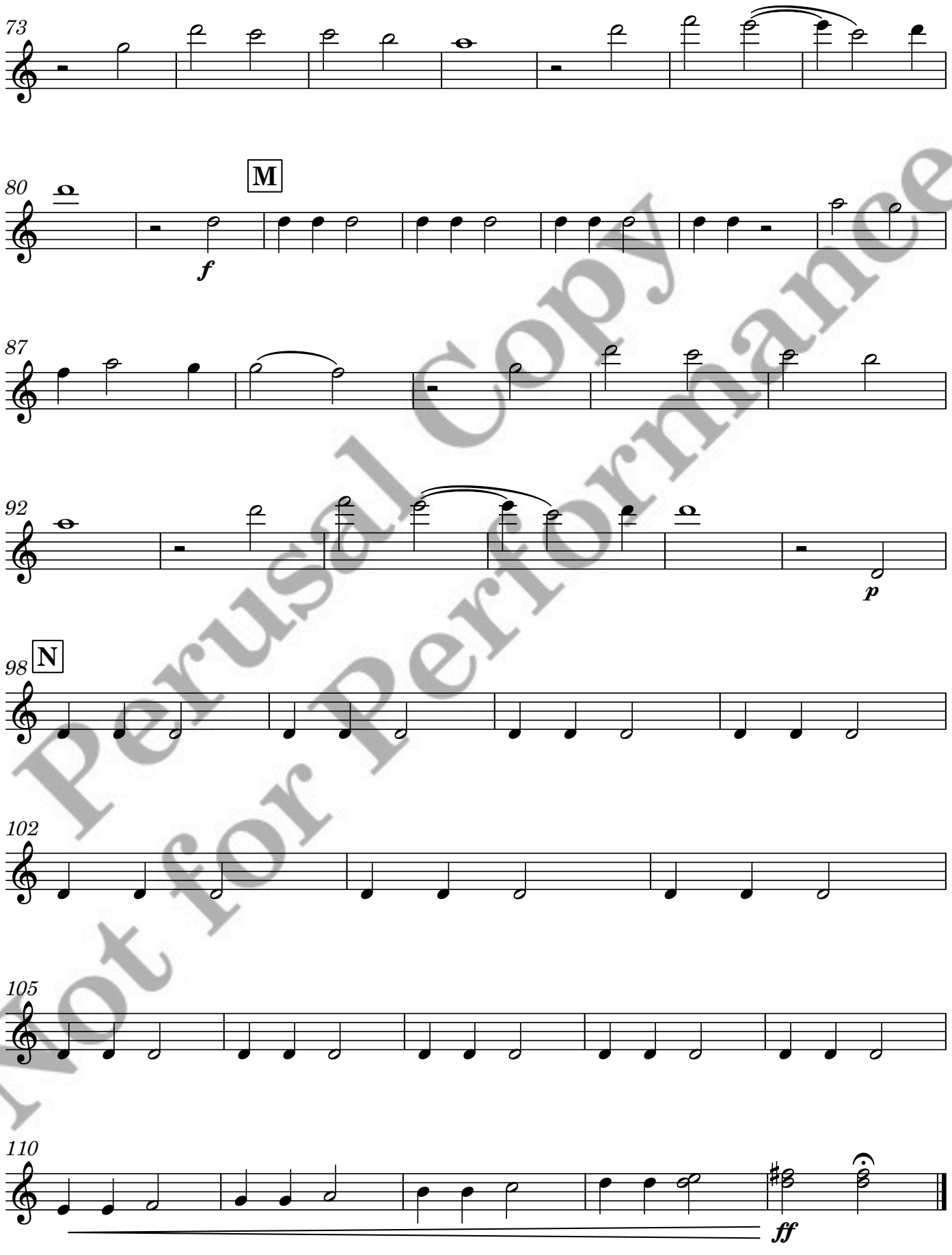
51

58

66 **L**

mf

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance



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Violin II

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

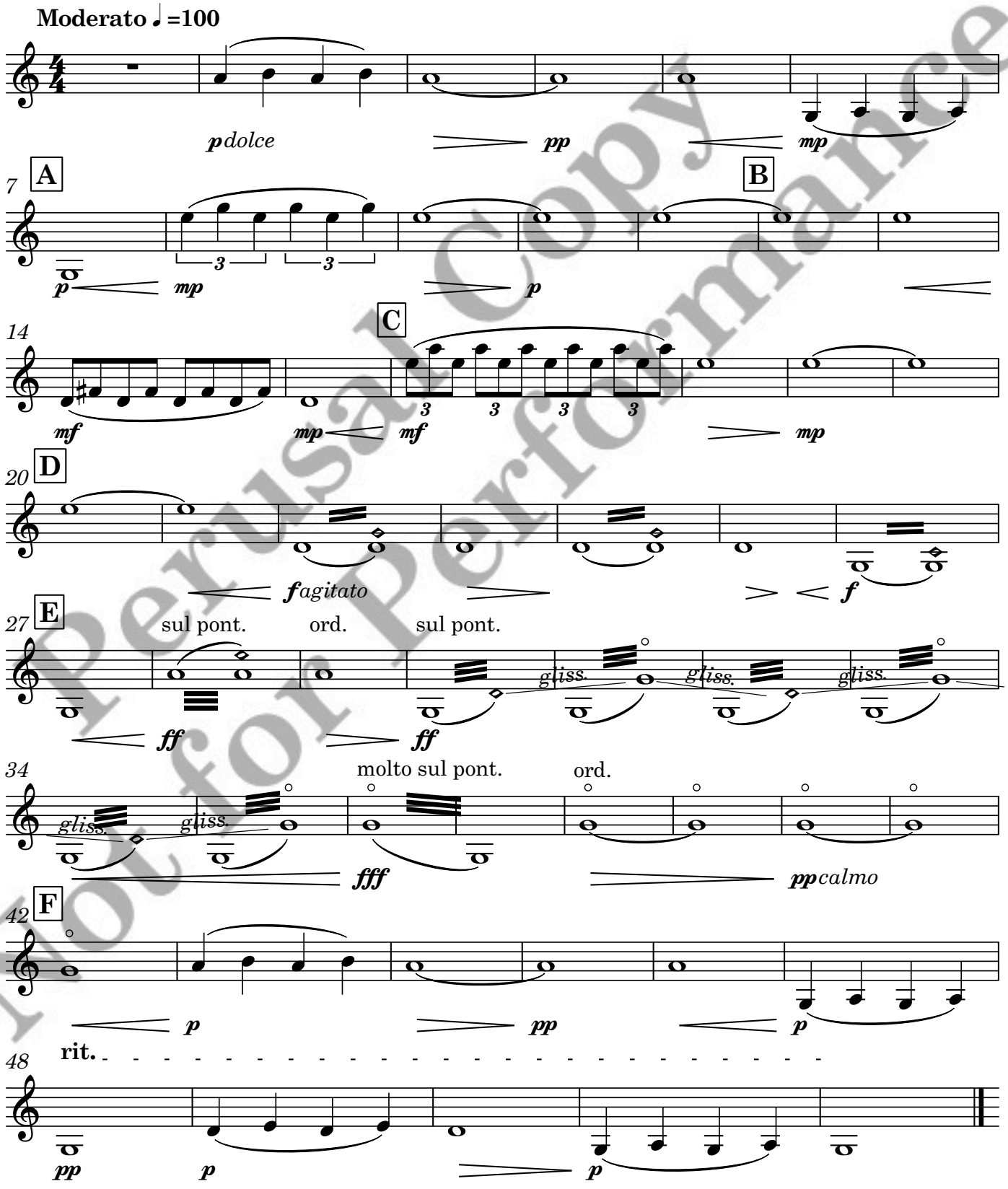
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

I. The Torrent

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

SEÁN DOHERTY



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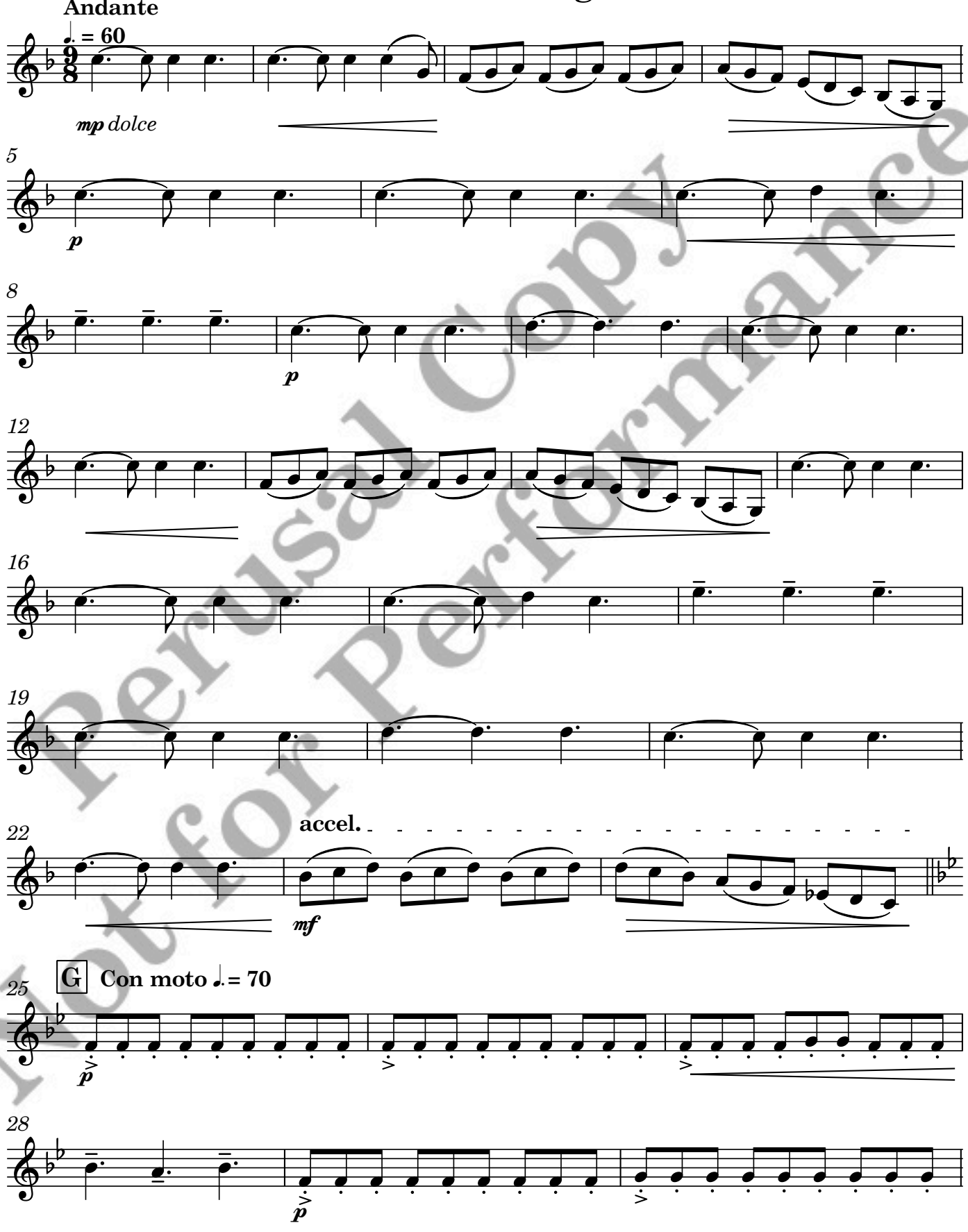
II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland



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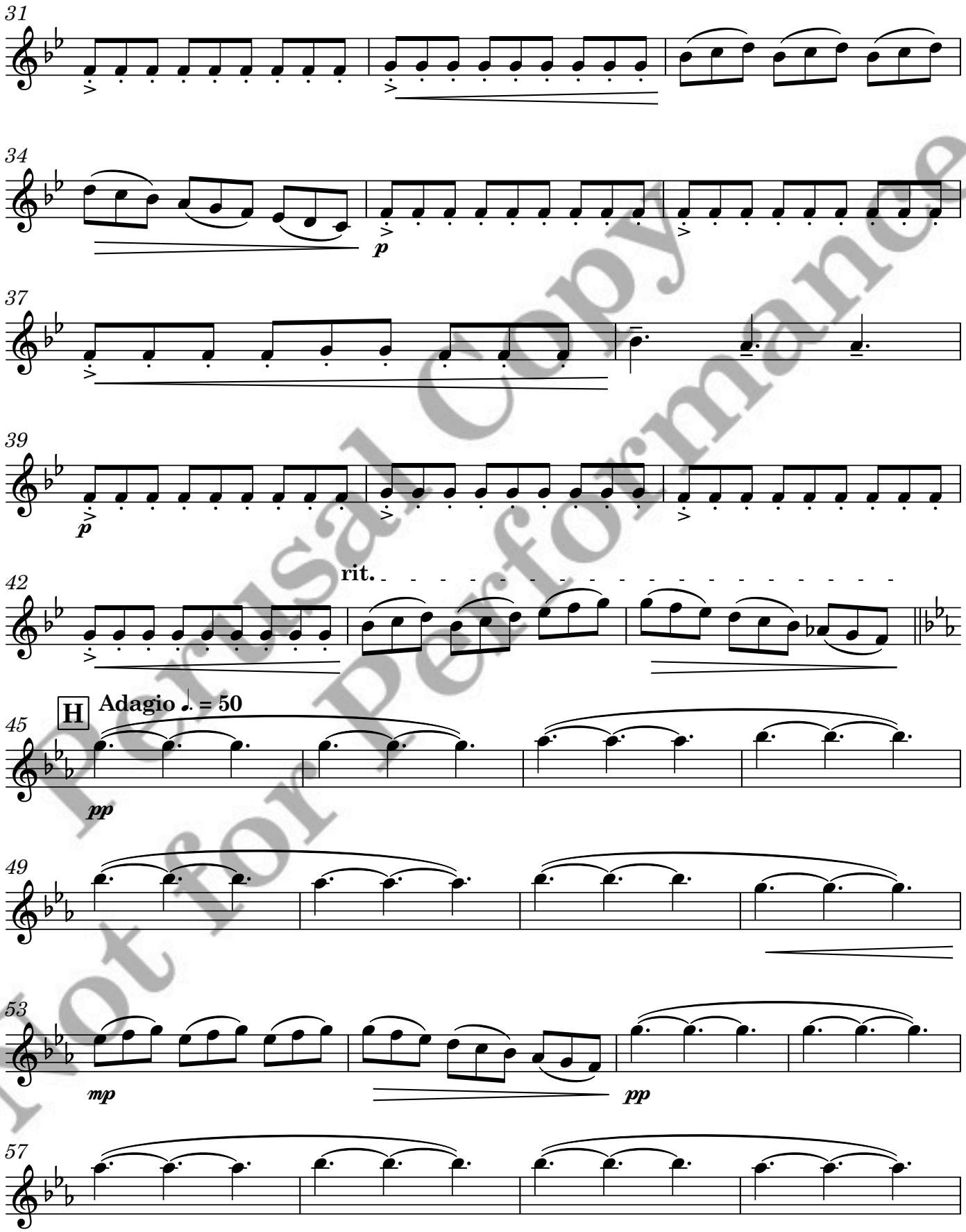

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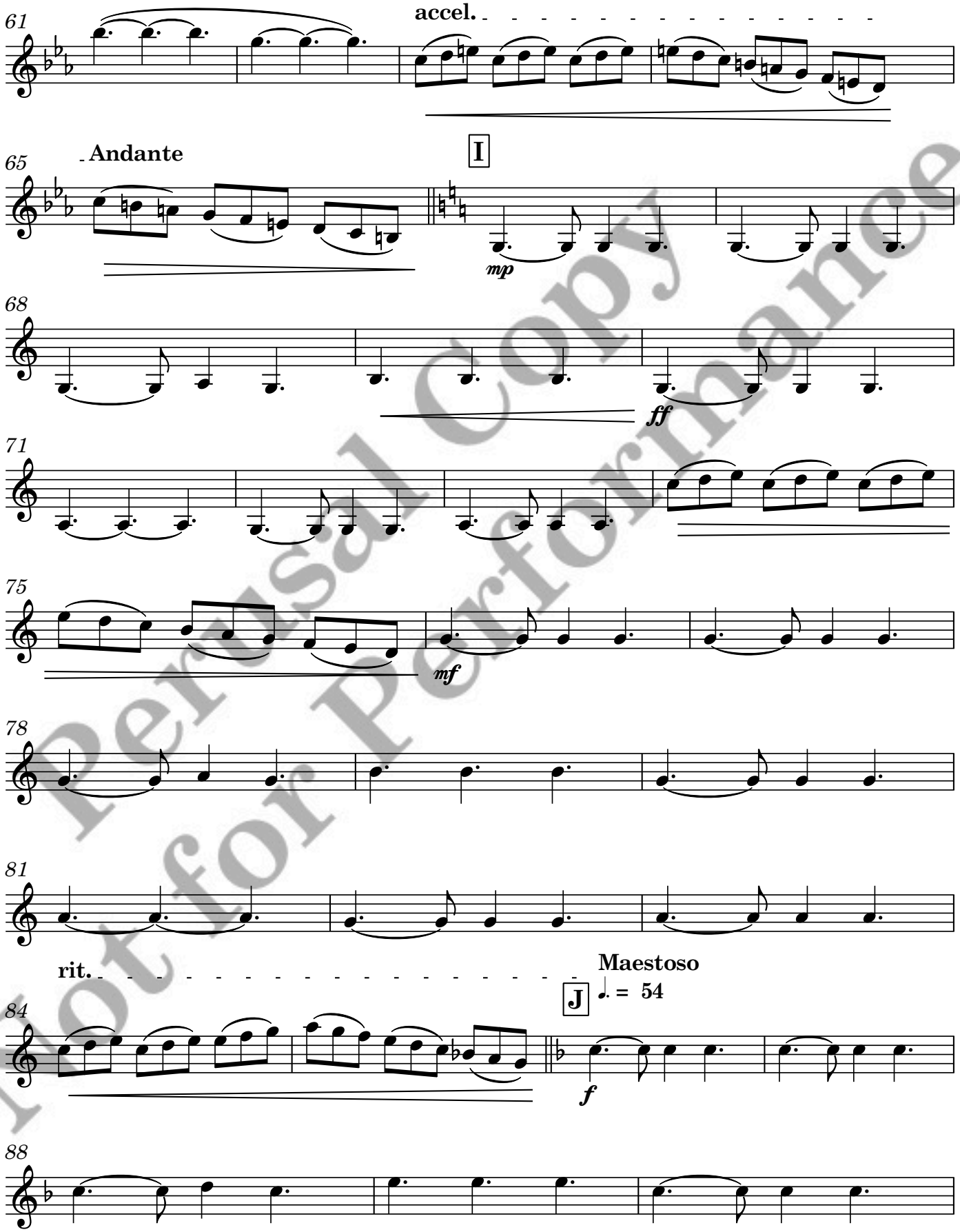

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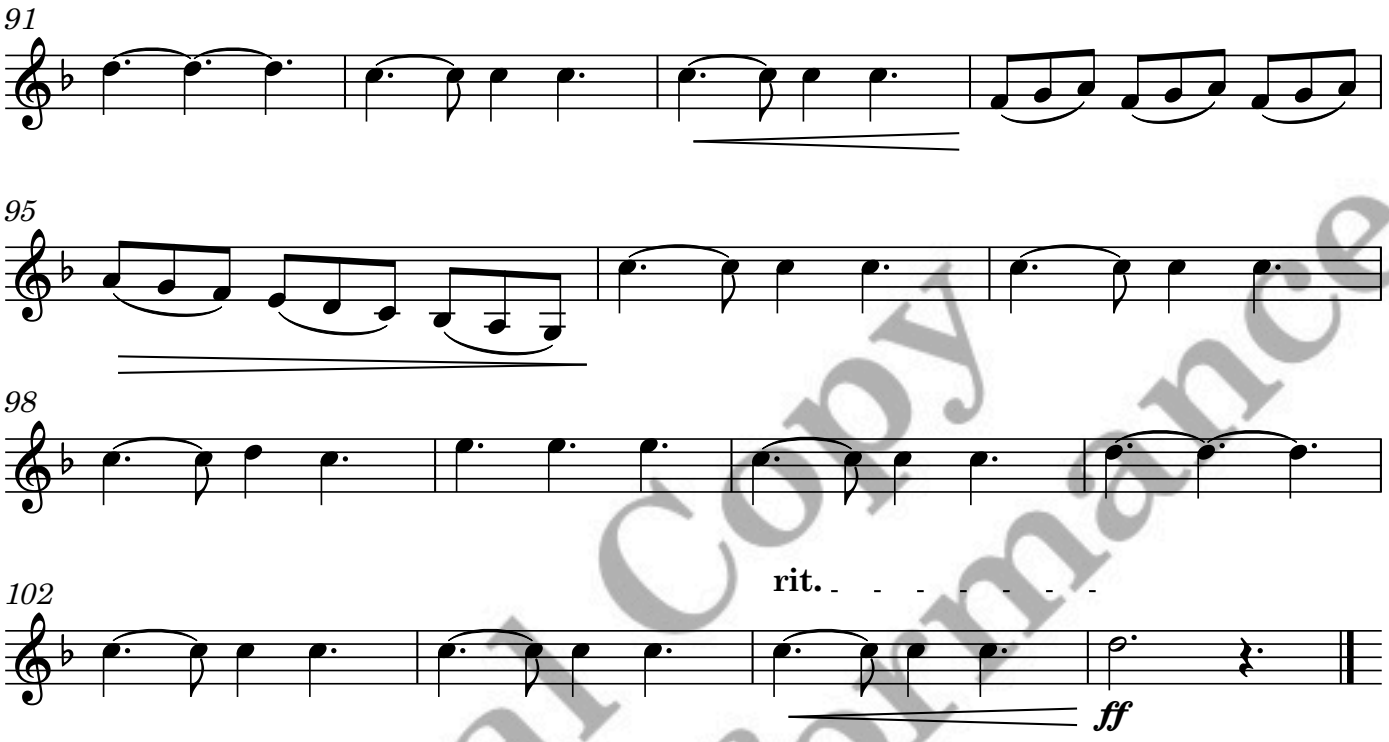

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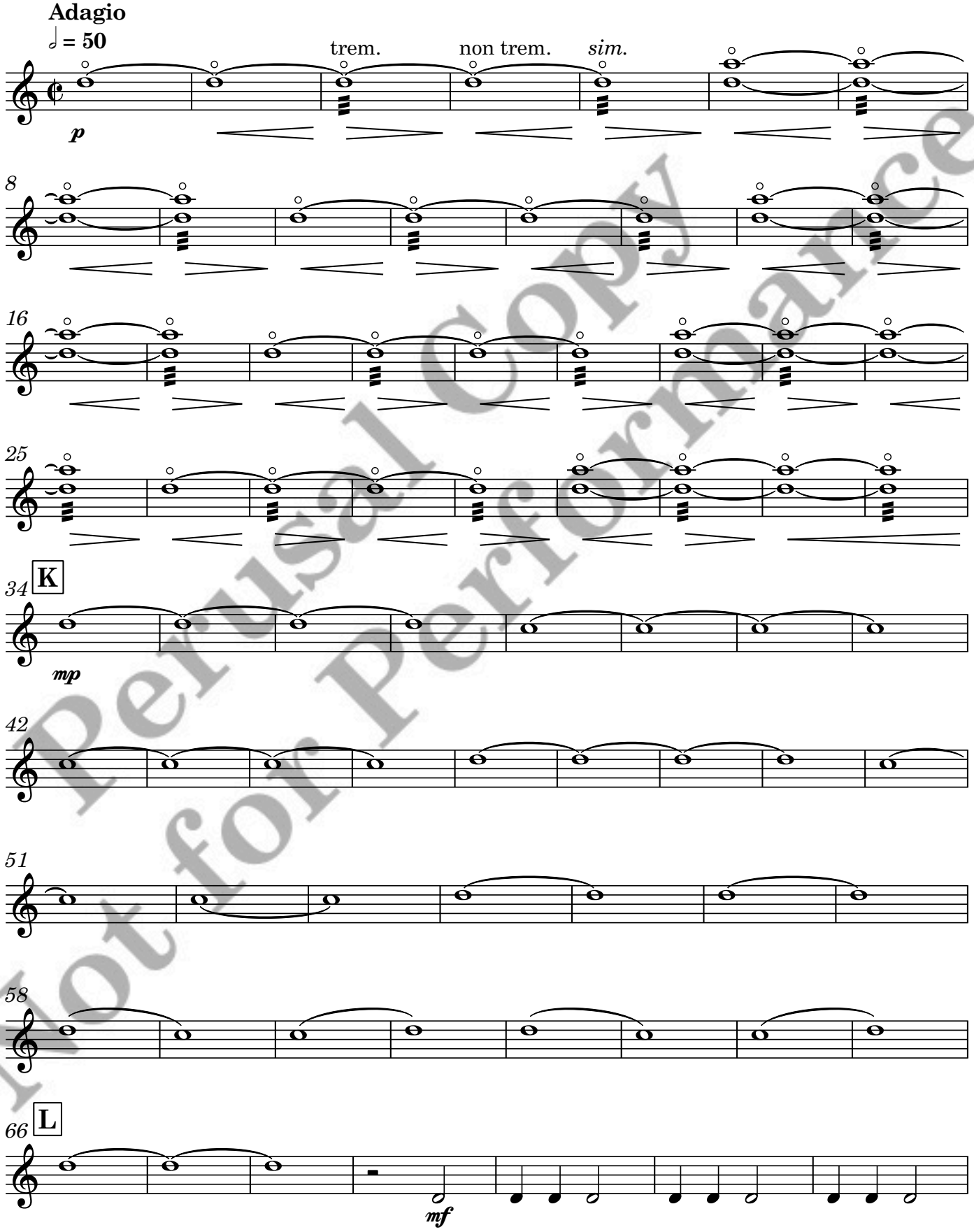
Violin II

III. Crios Mobi



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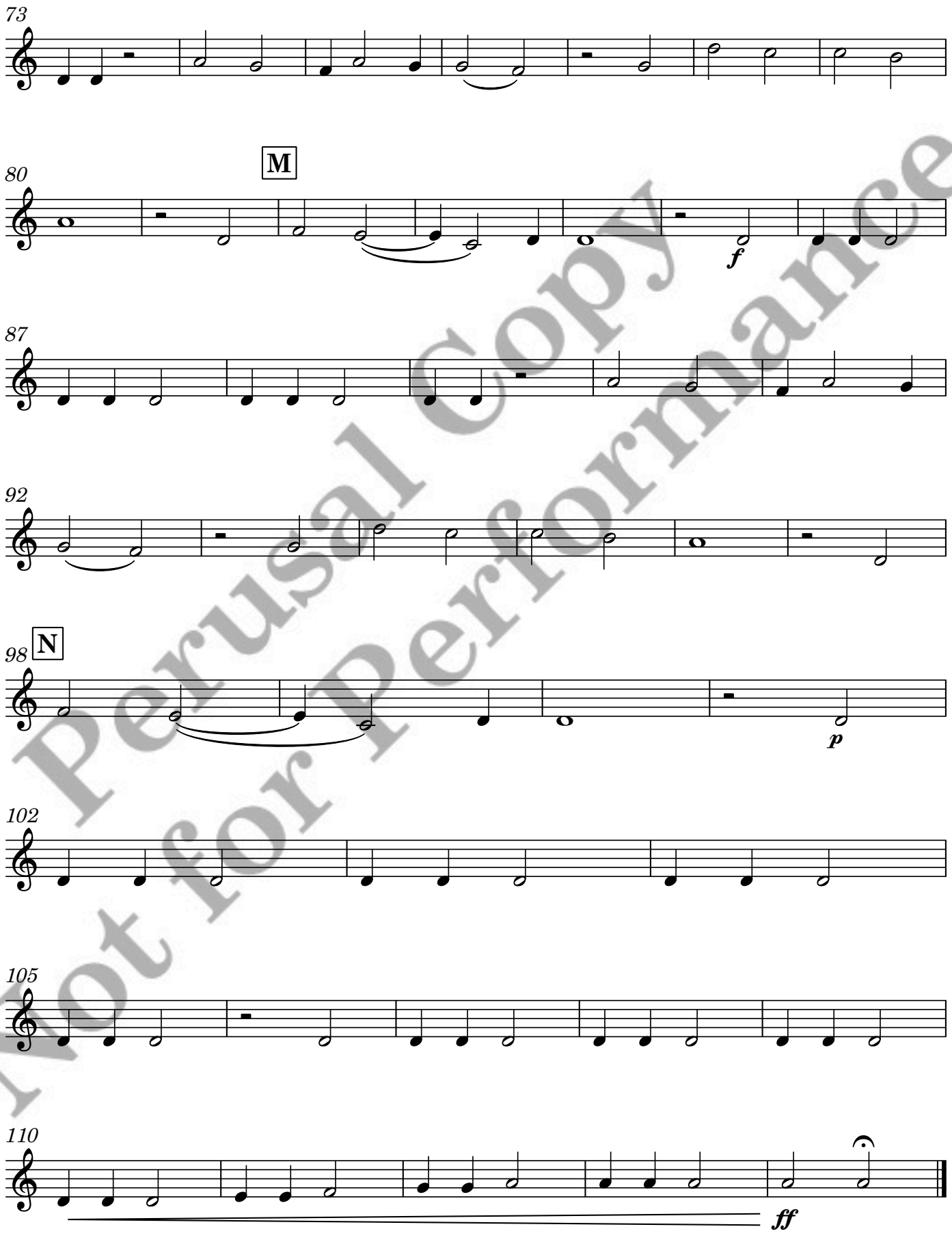

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Violin III

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

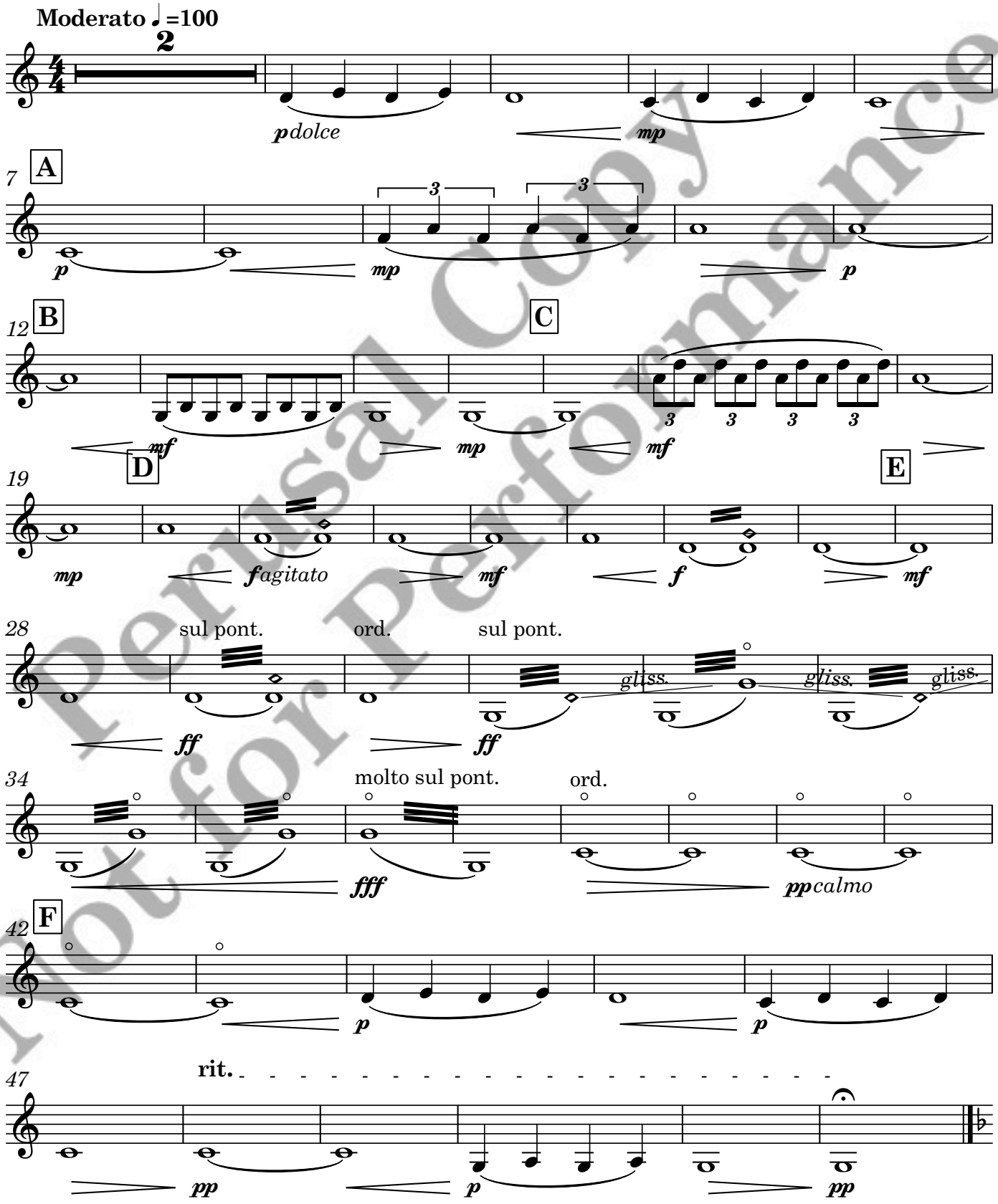
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY



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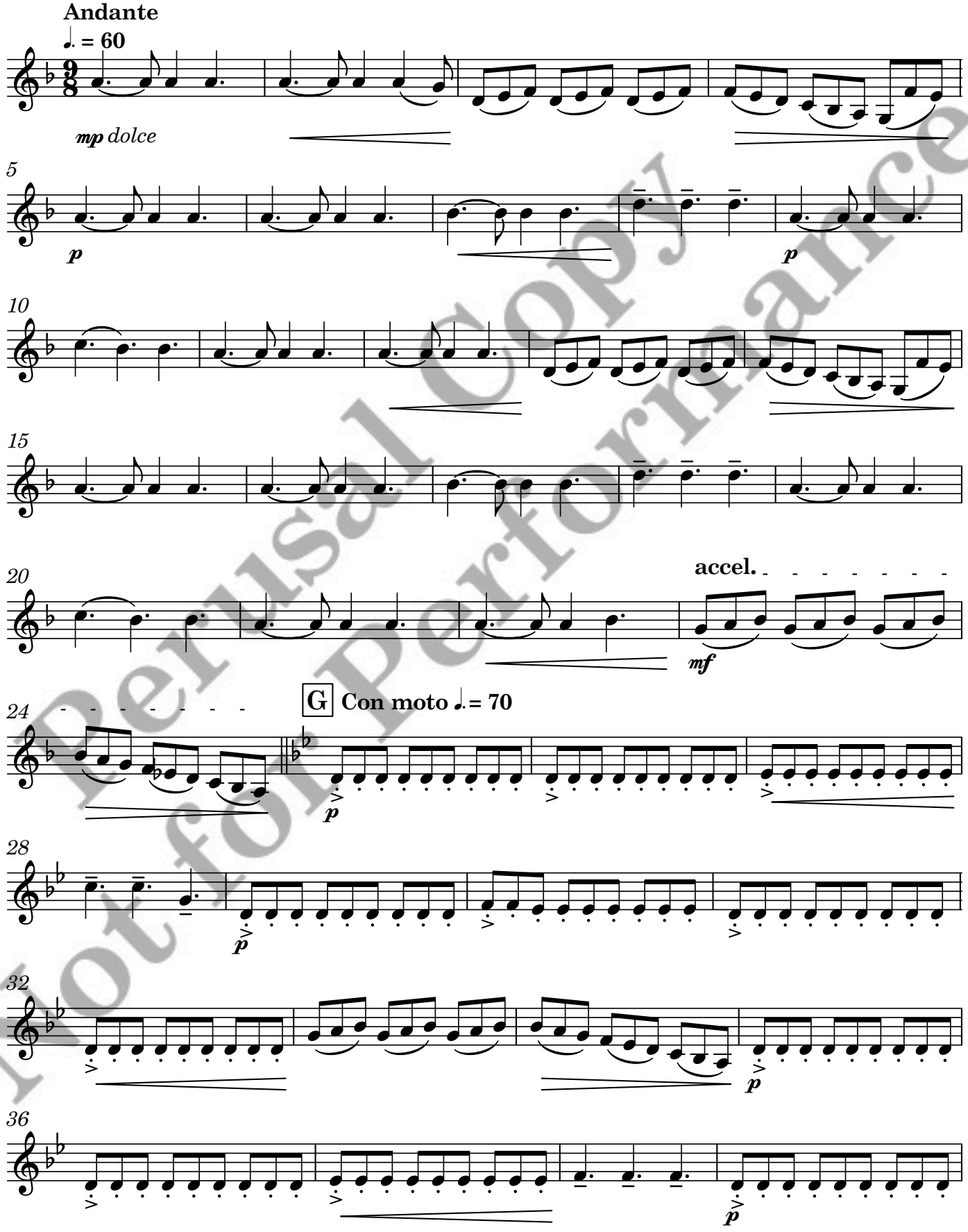
II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland



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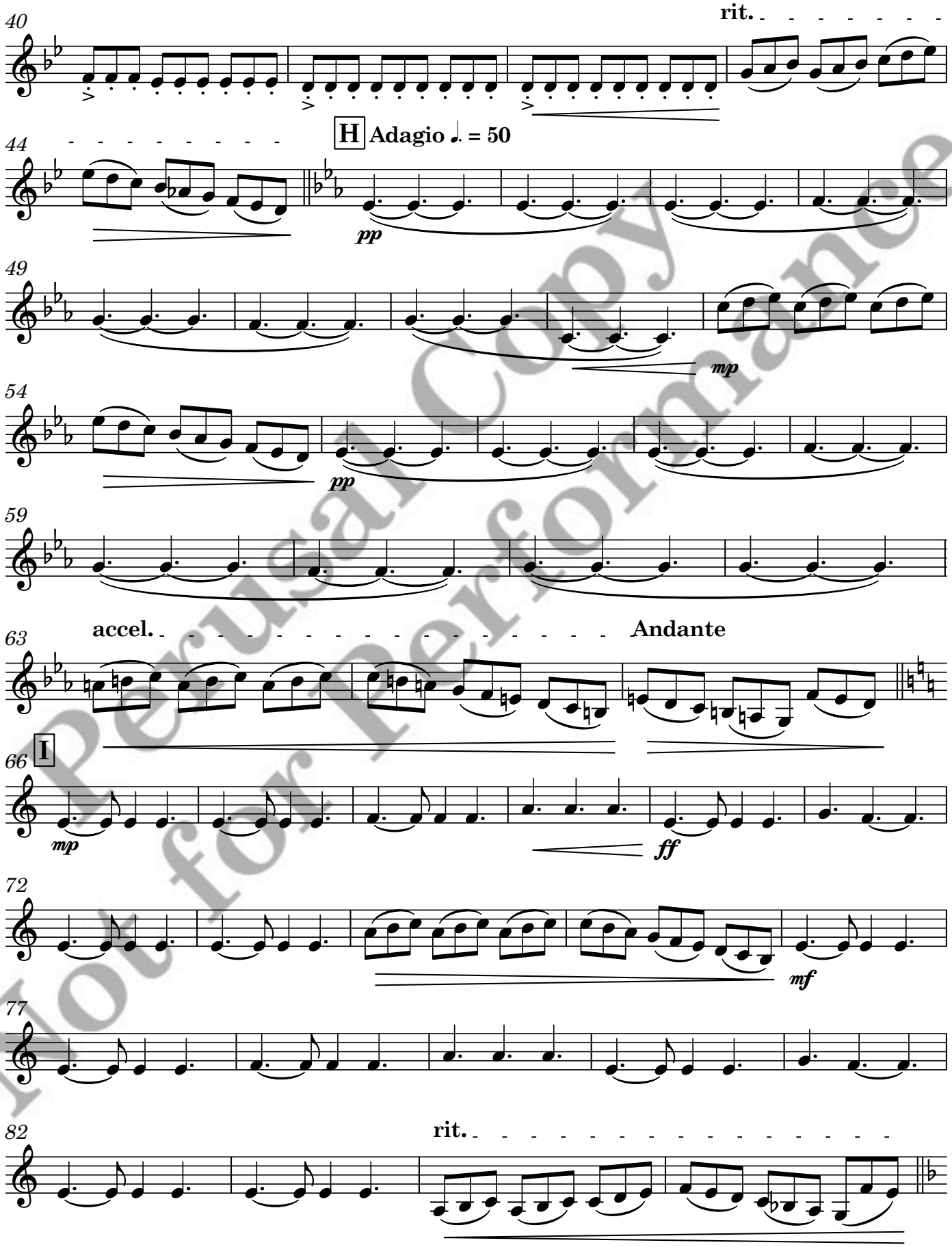

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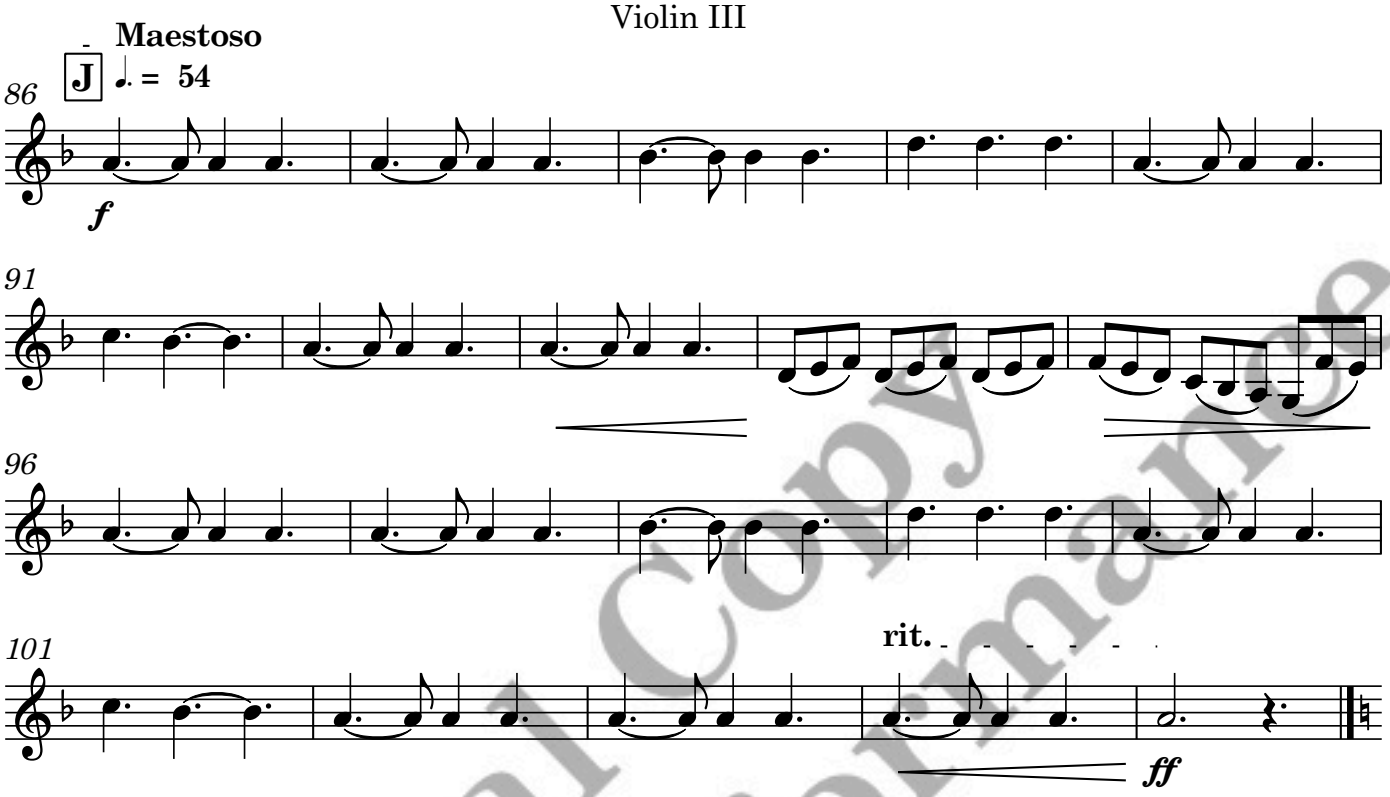
V.S.



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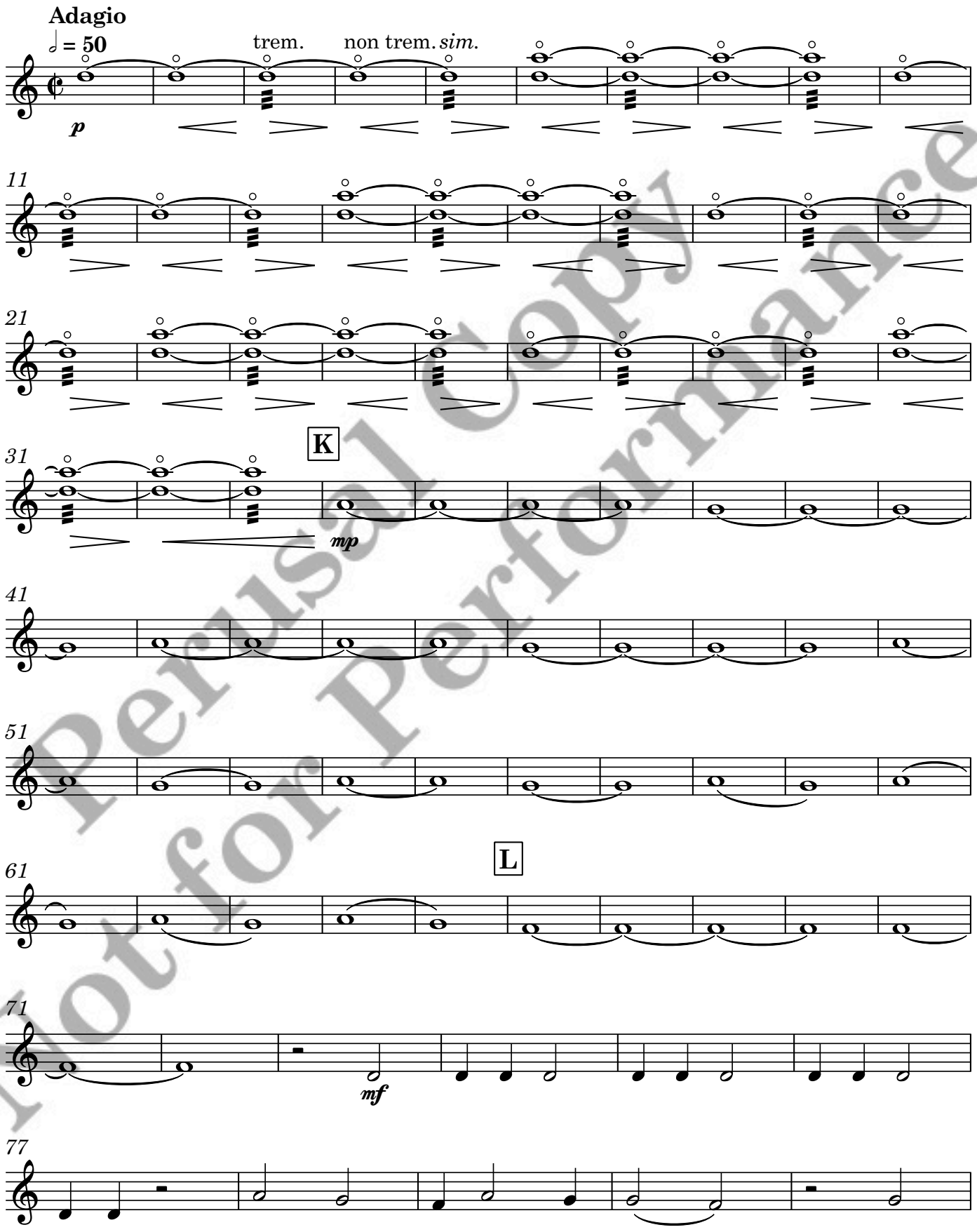
Violin III

III. Crios Mobi



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Viola

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

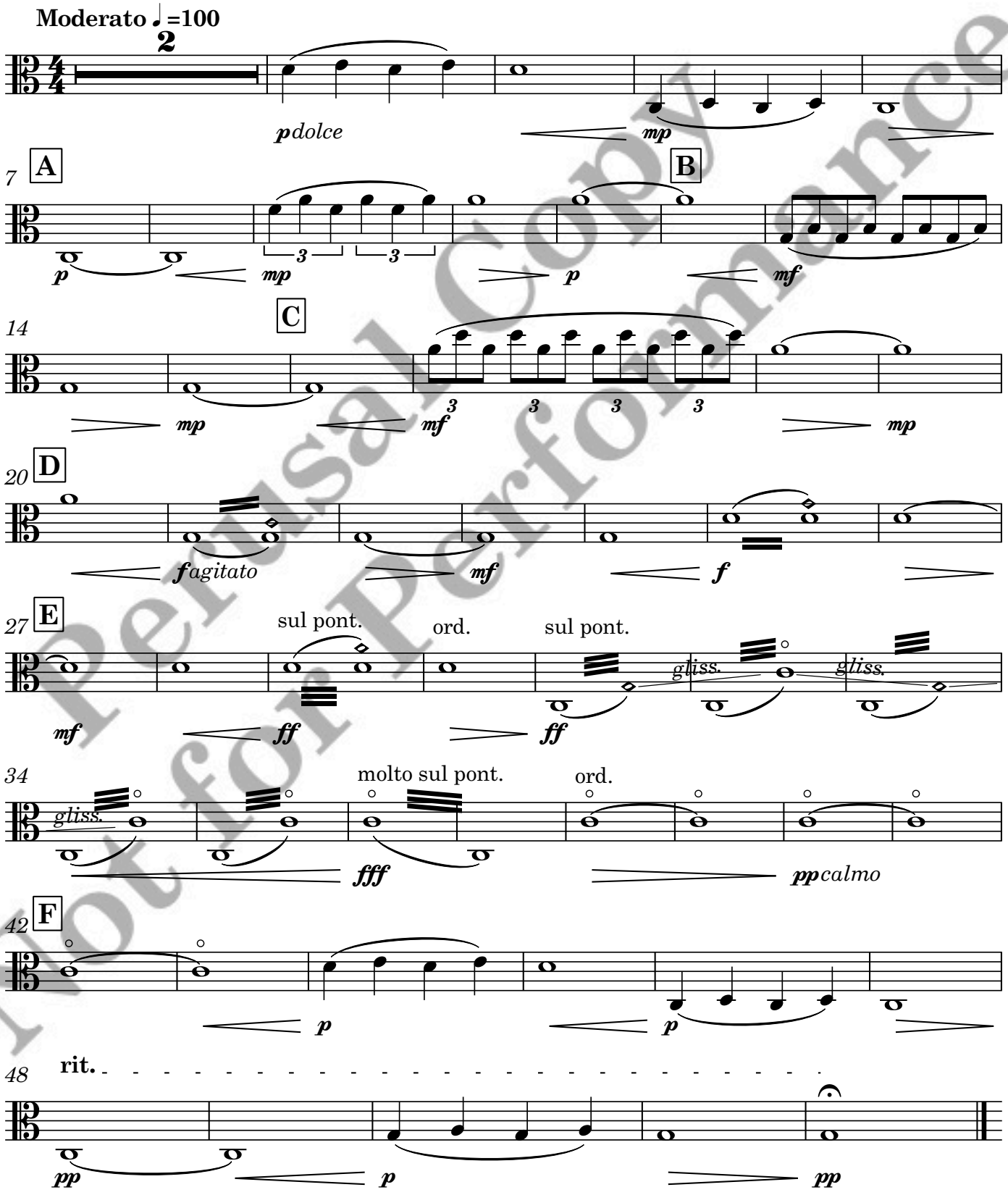
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY



Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Viola

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Andante

♩. = 60

mp *dolce*

5

p

8

p

12

16

19

22

accel.

mf

G **Con moto ♩. = 70**

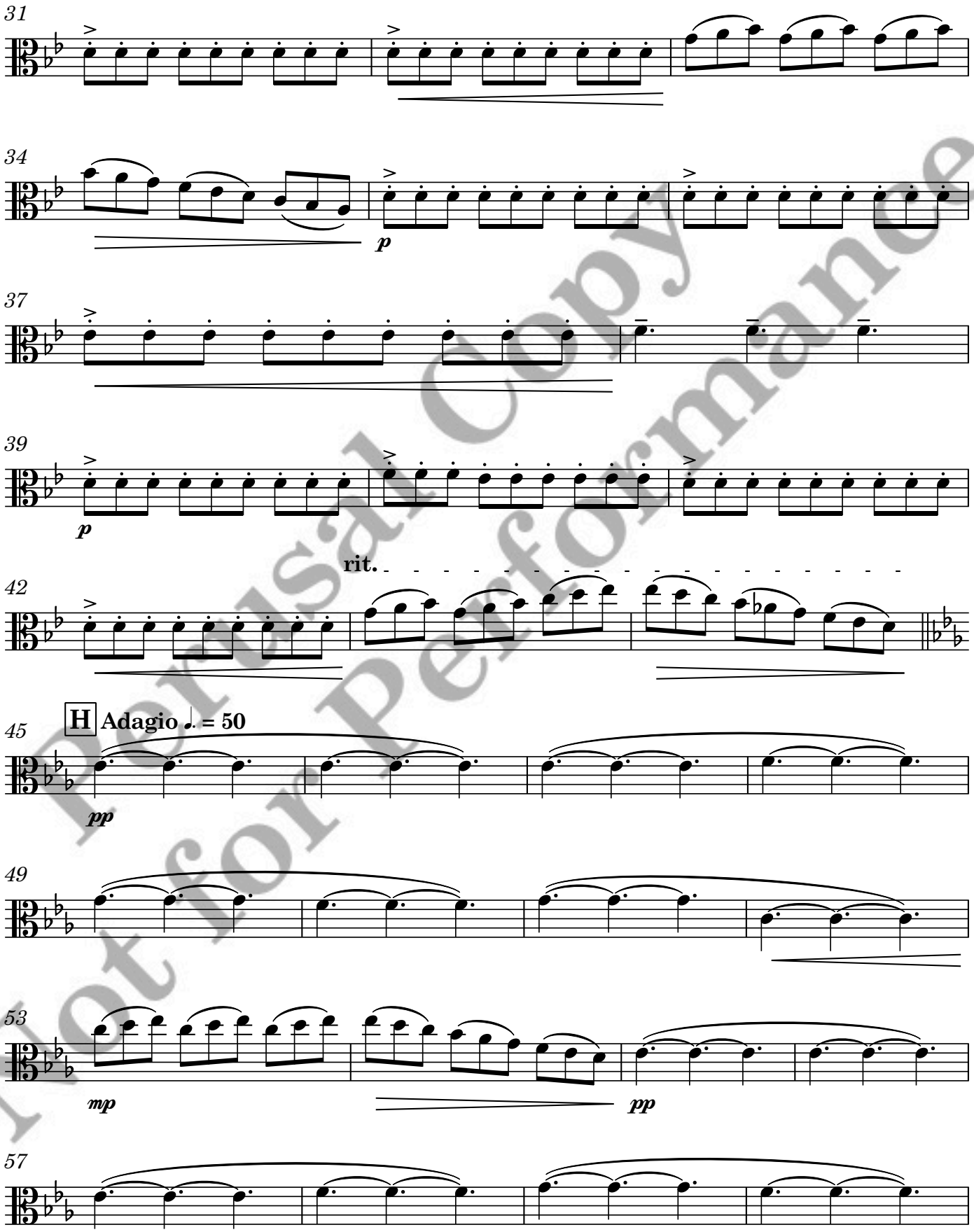
25

p

28

p

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance



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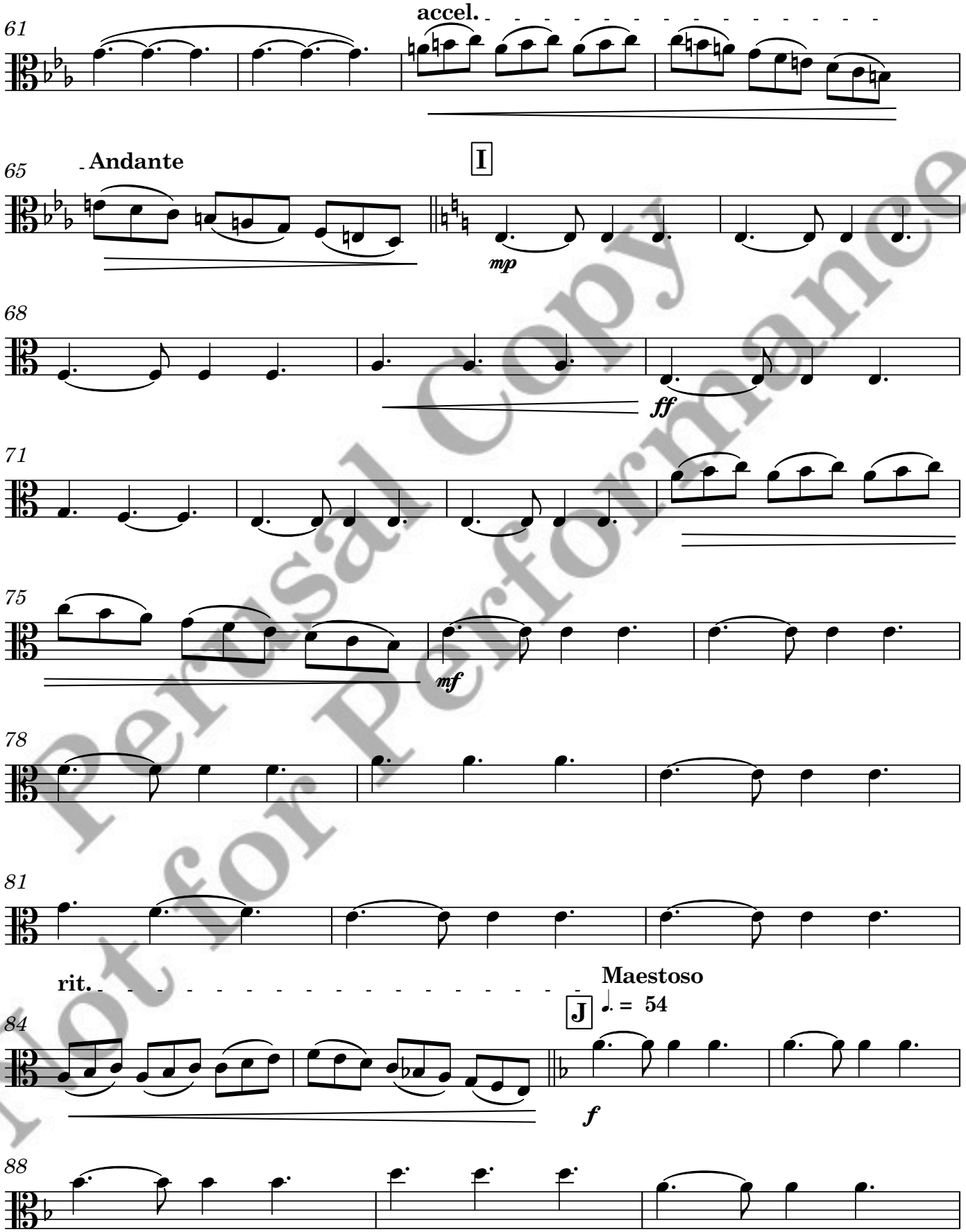

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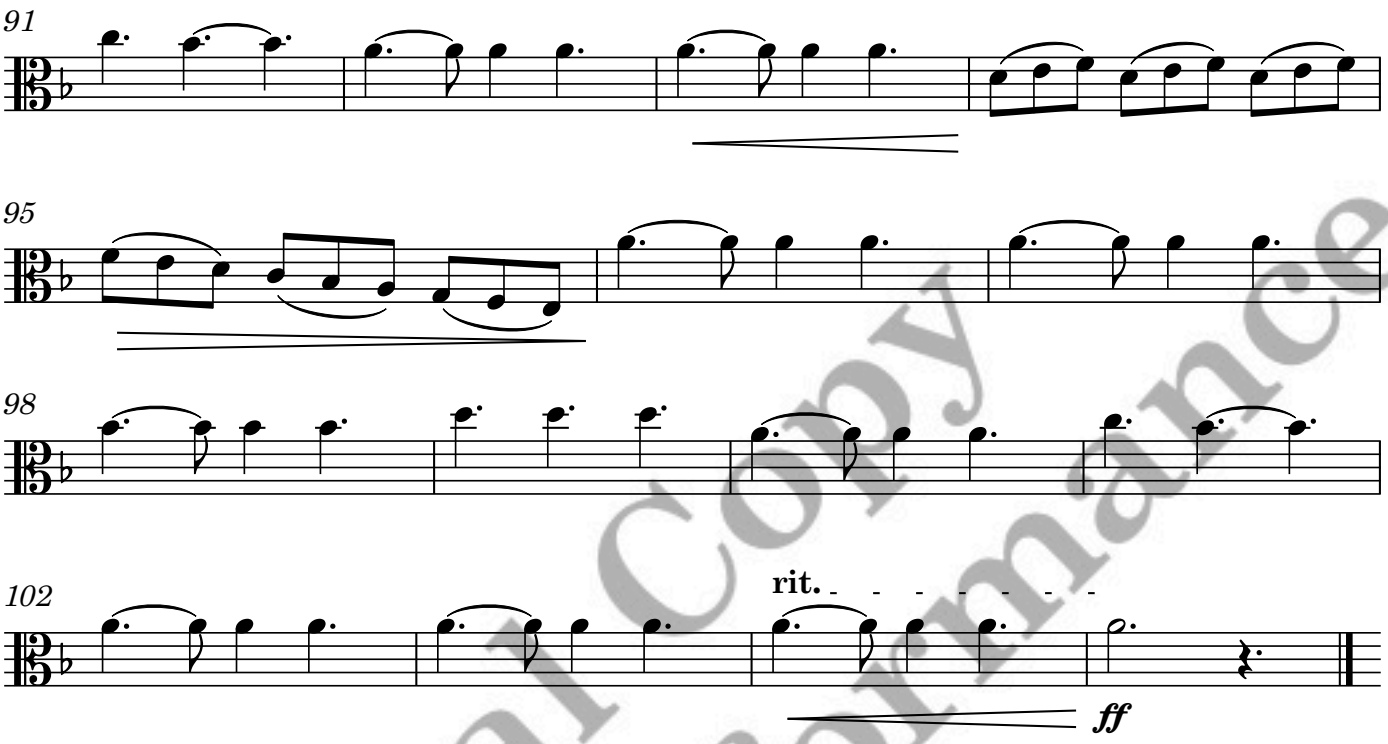

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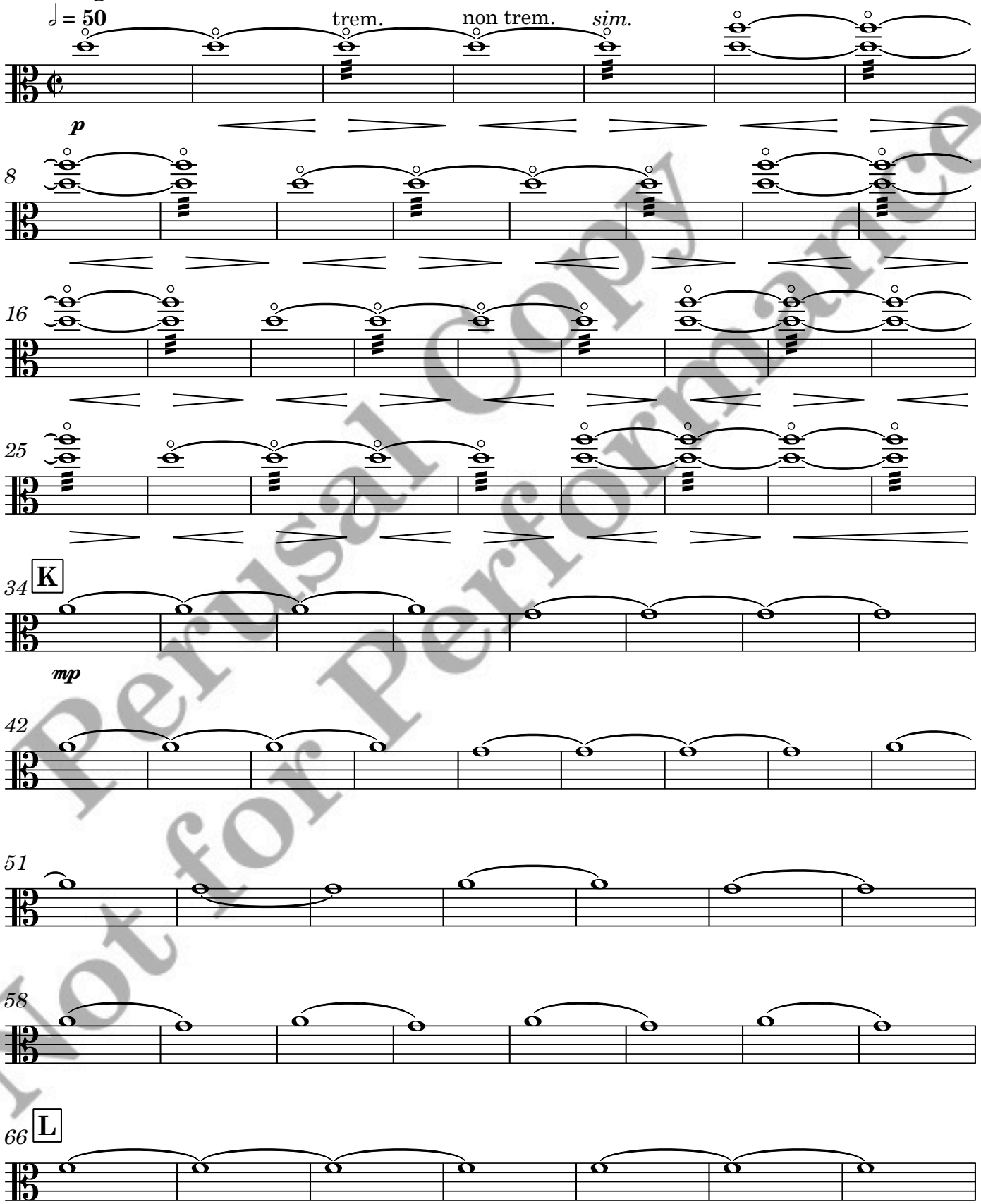
Viola

III. Crios Mobi



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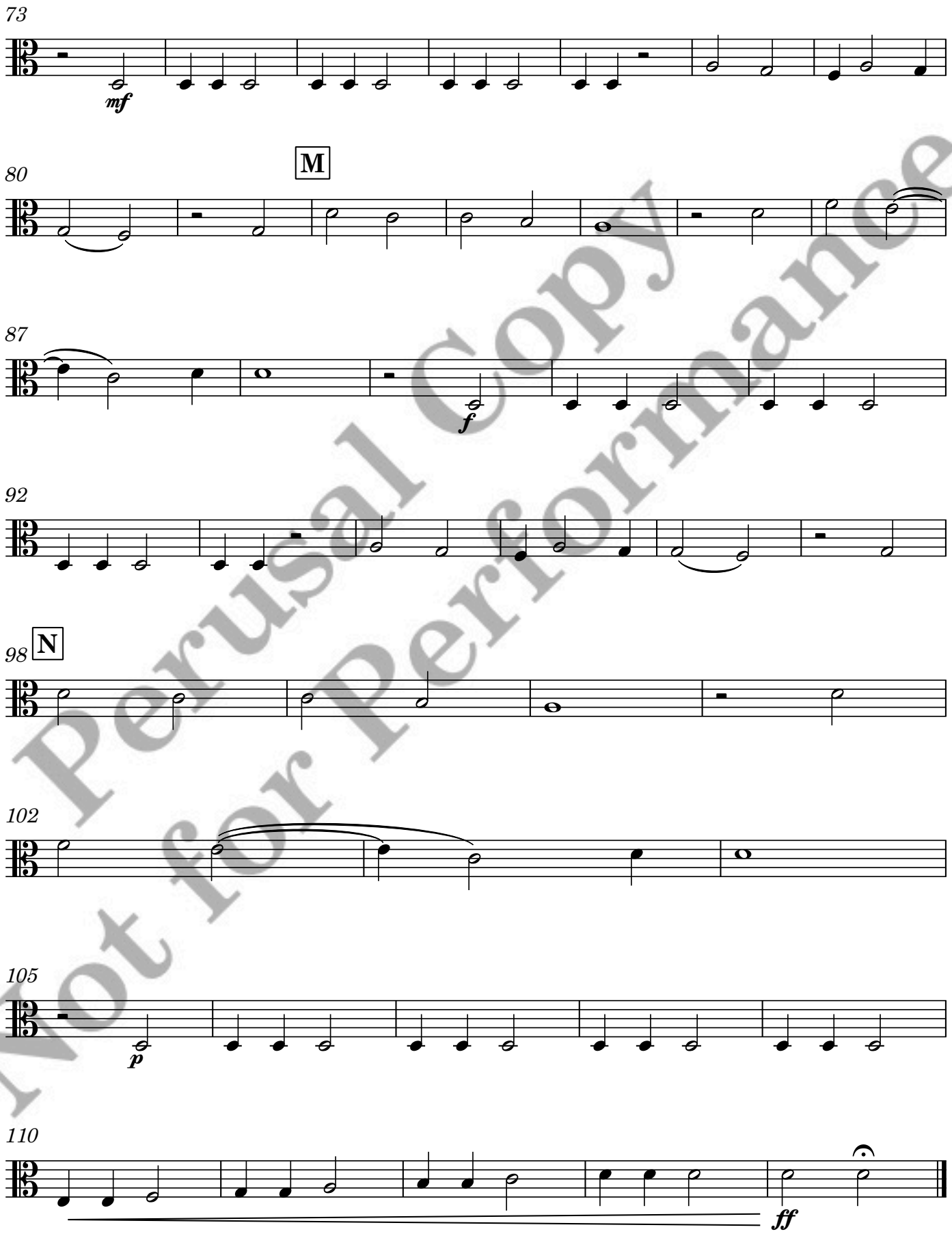

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Violoncello

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

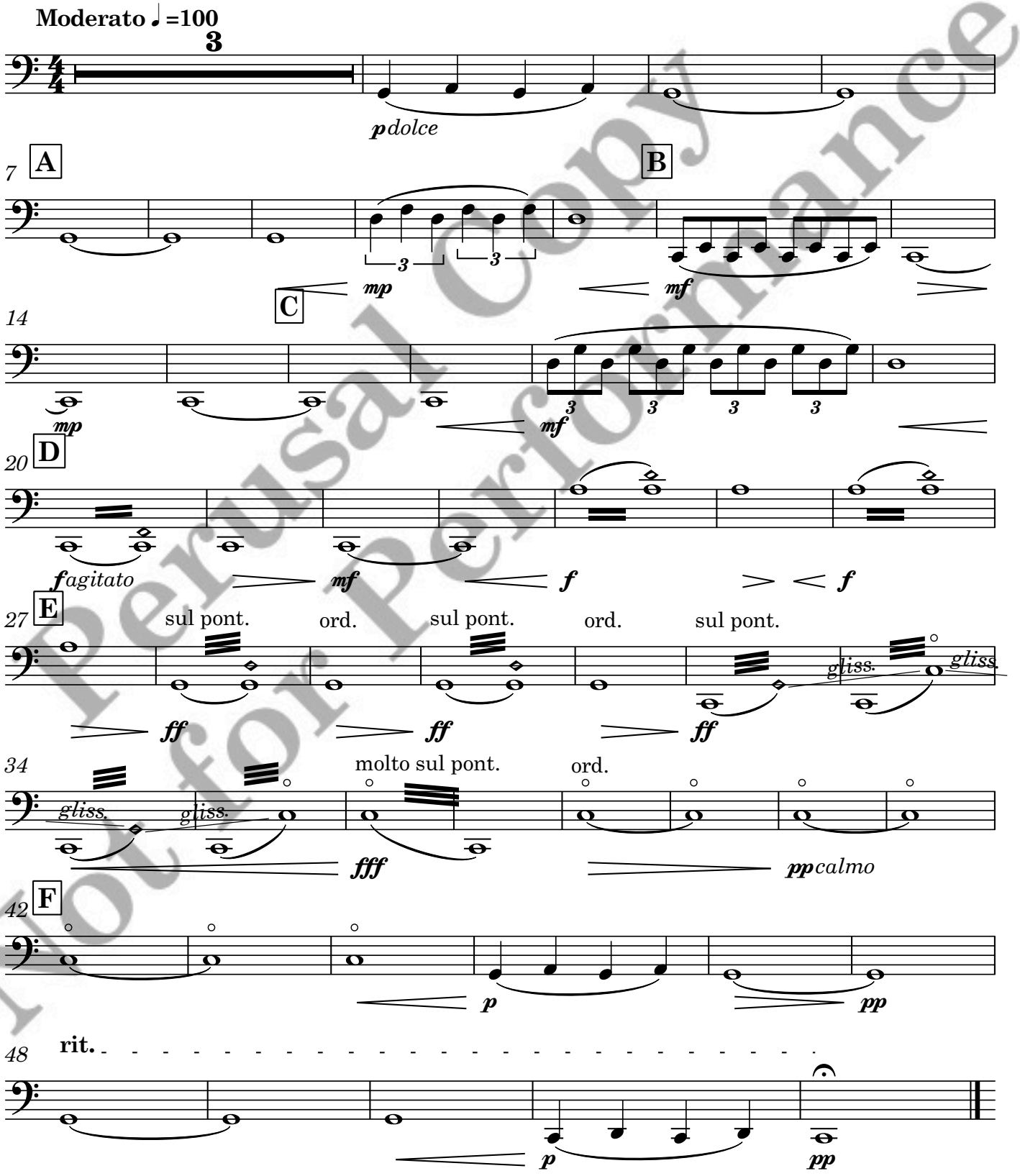
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY



Perusal Copy
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Violoncello

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Andante ♩. = 60

mf dolce

5

8

12

16

19

22

accel.

mf

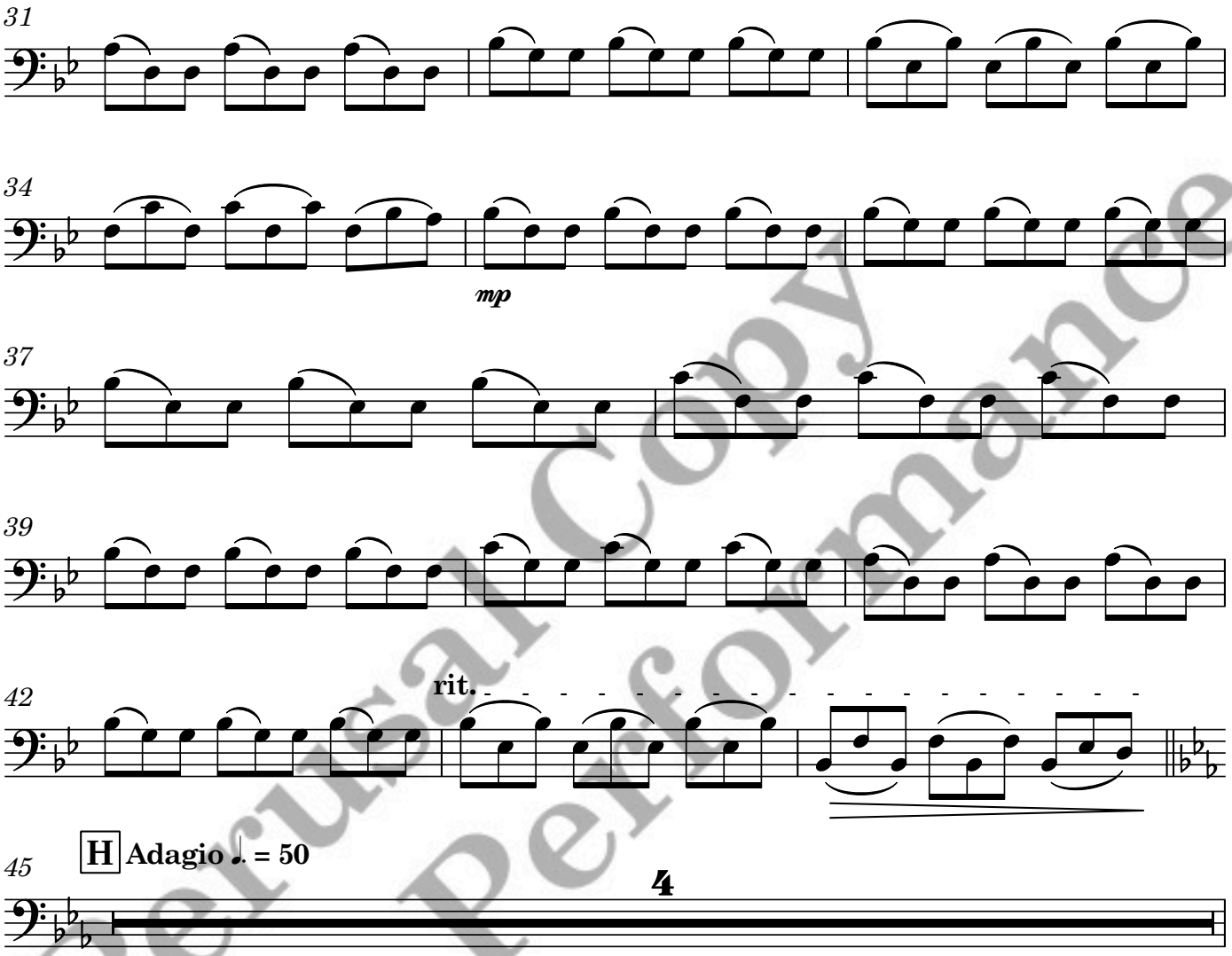
G **Con moto** ♩. = 70

25

mp

28

Perusal Copy Not for Performance



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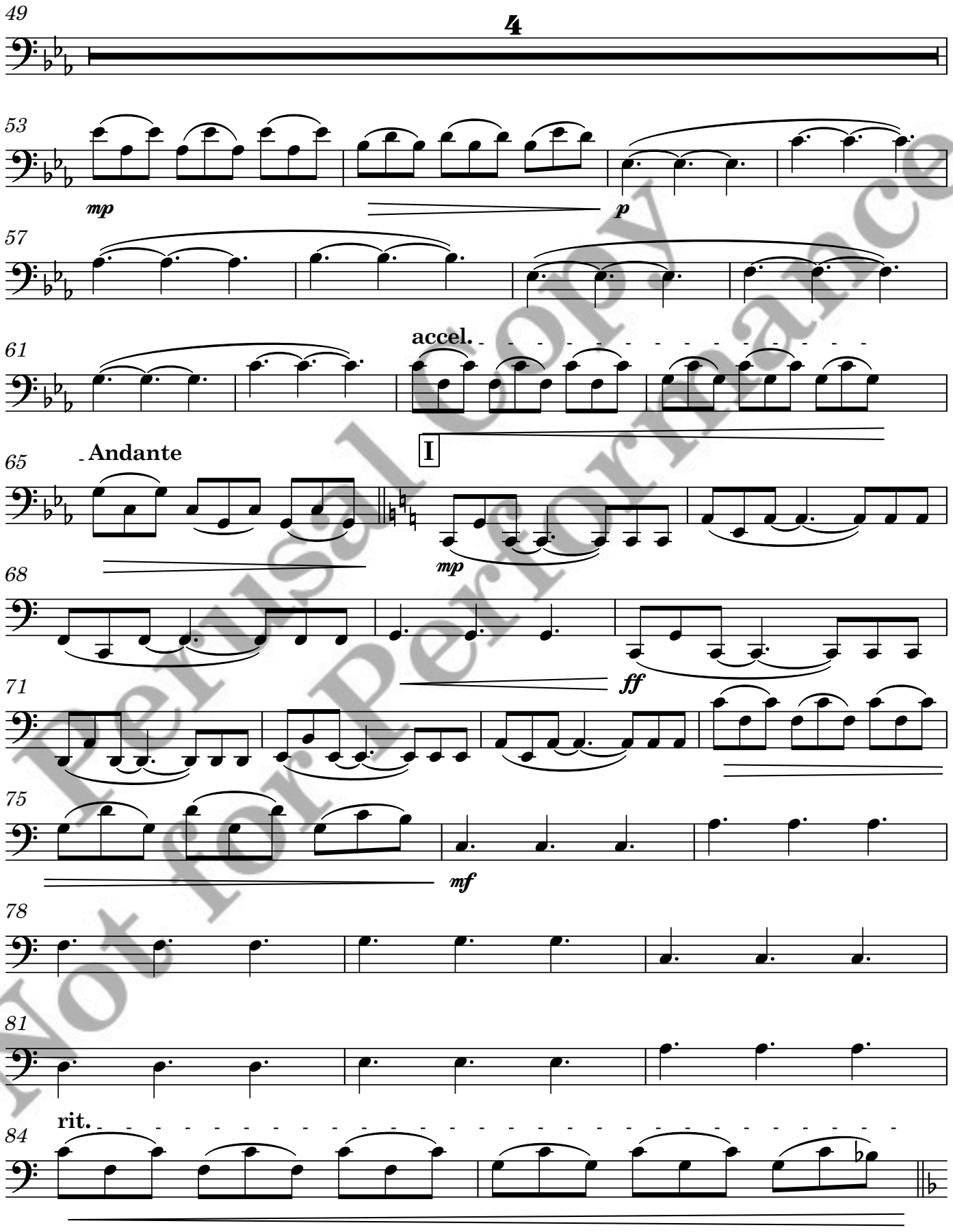

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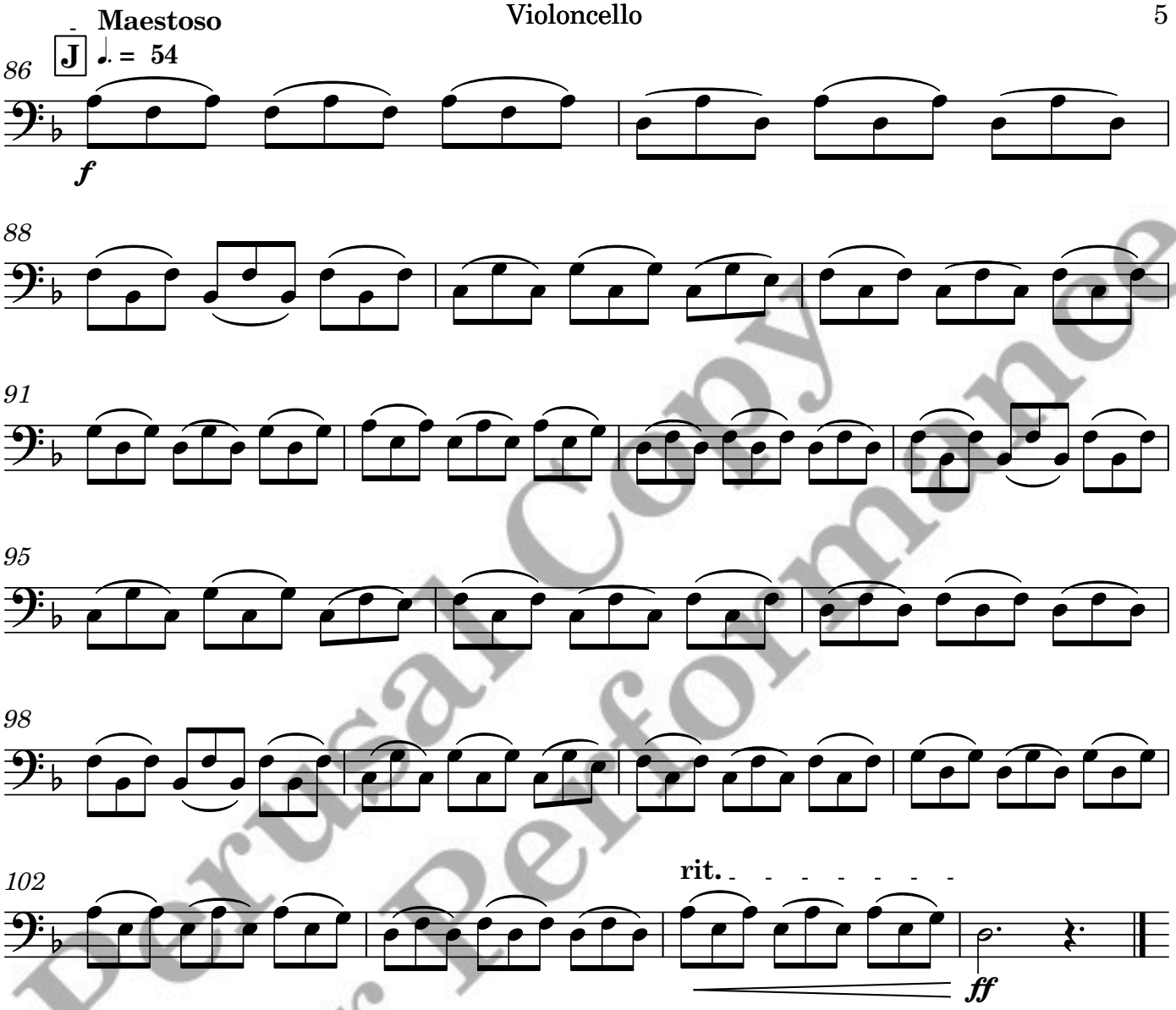


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

Violoncello

III. Crios Mobi

Adagio

♩ = 50

trem. non trem. *sim.*

p

8

16

25

34 **K**

mp

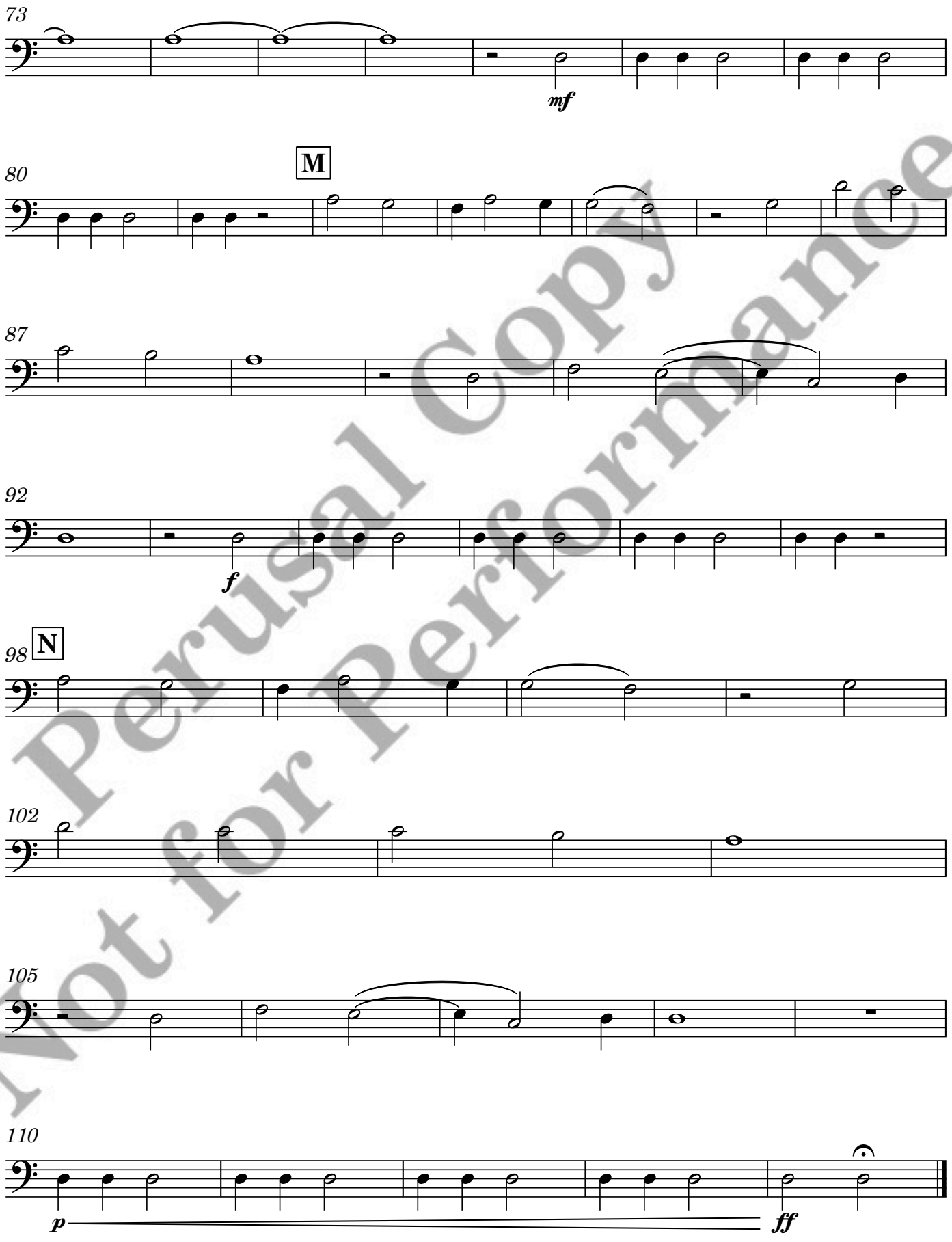
42

51

58

66 **L**

Perusal Copy
Not for Performance



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Double Bass

Commissioned by the Donegal Chamber Music Society,
supported by the Colmcille 1500 Grant Scheme

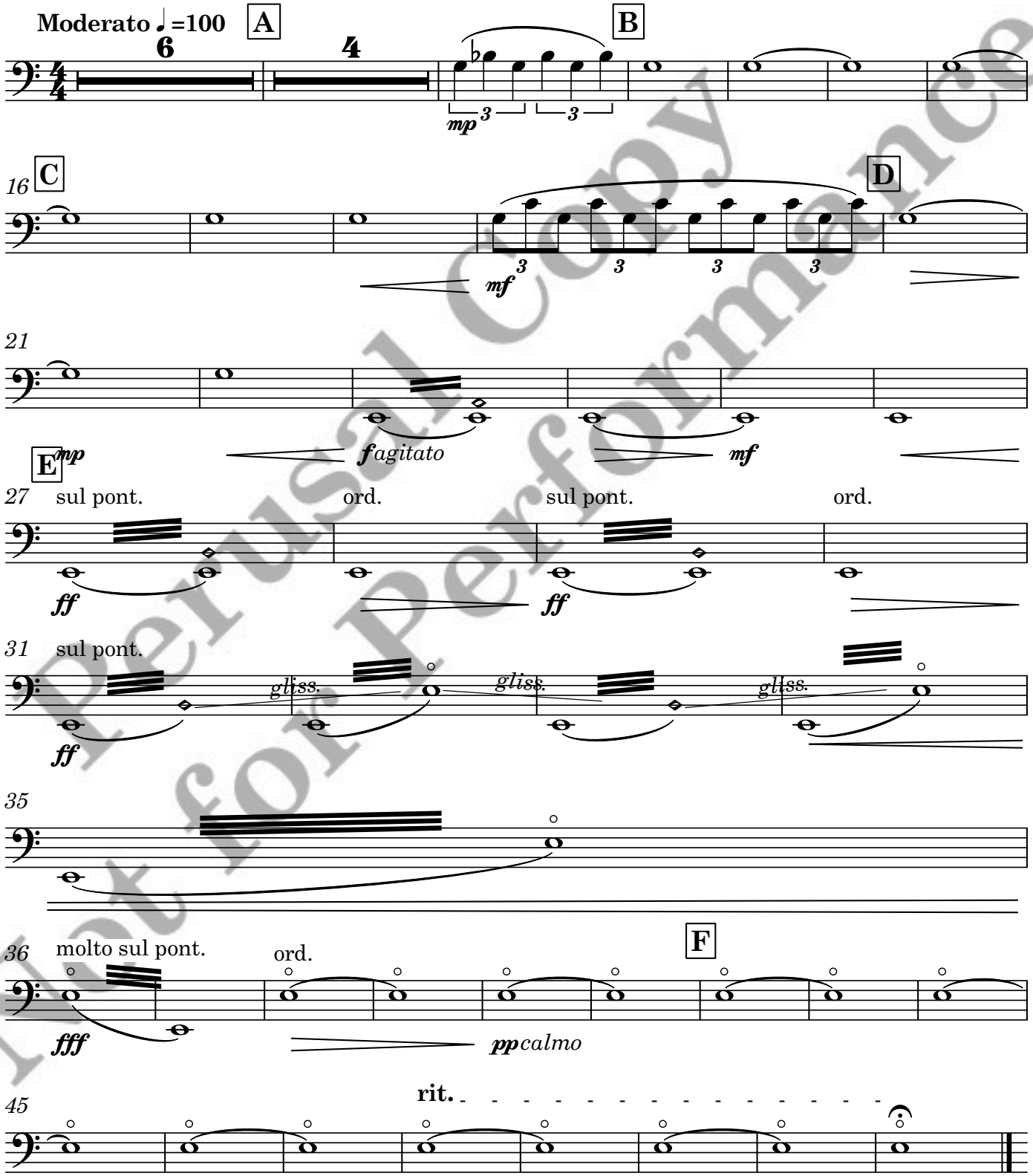
Mobhi's Belt

dedicated to the Hannigan Family

6th-century attrib. Colmcille

I. The Torrent

SEÁN DOHERTY



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Double Bass

II. Colmcille's Greeting to Ireland

Andante

♩. = 60

pizz.

mf *dolce*

9

17

accel.

25

G **Con moto ♩. = 70**

33

41

rit.

H **Adagio ♩. = 50**

49

53

arco

mp

p

59

accel.

Andante

Perusal Copy
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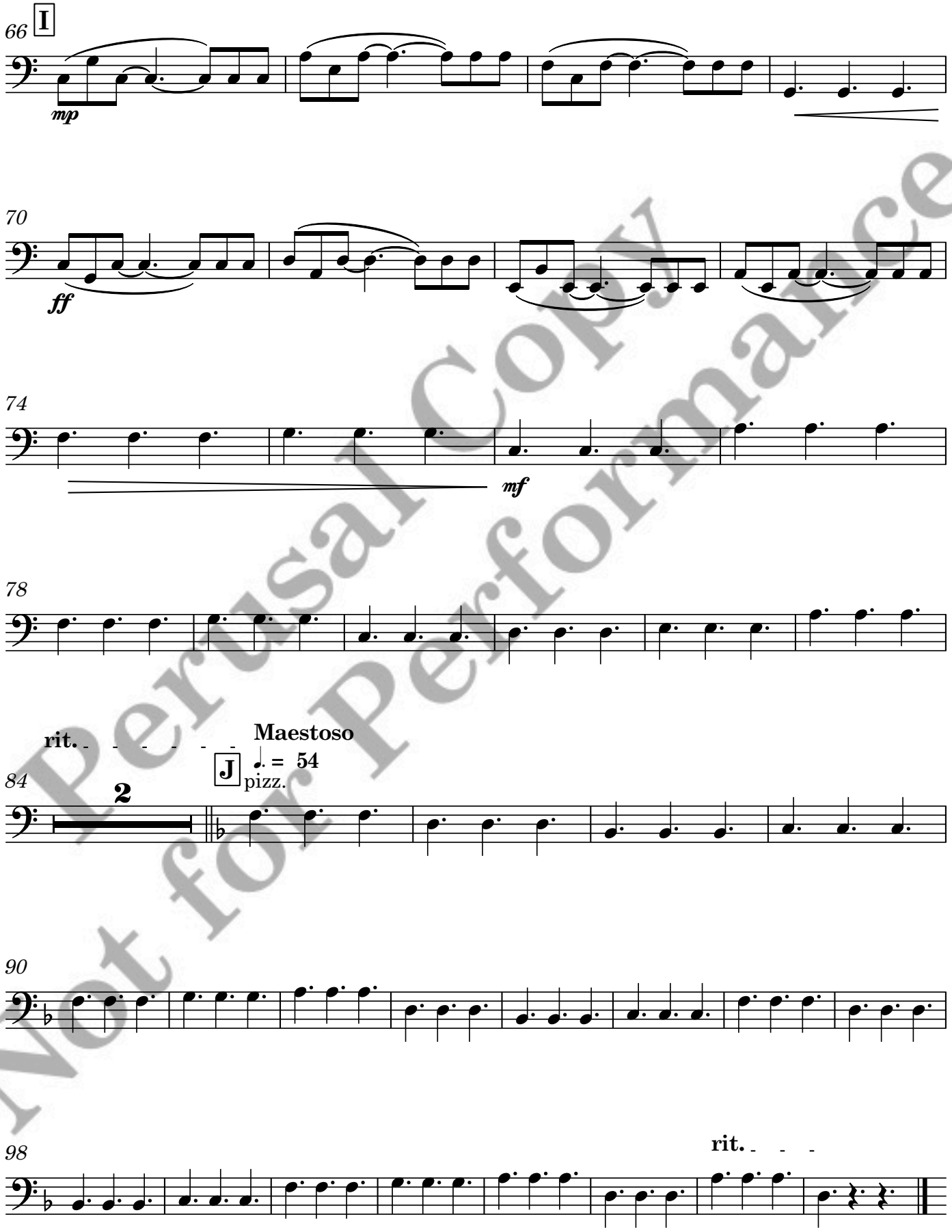


Perusal Copy
Not for Performance

III. Crios Mobi

Adagio

♩ = 50

arco trem. non trem. *sim.*

p

8

16

25

34 **K**

mp

42

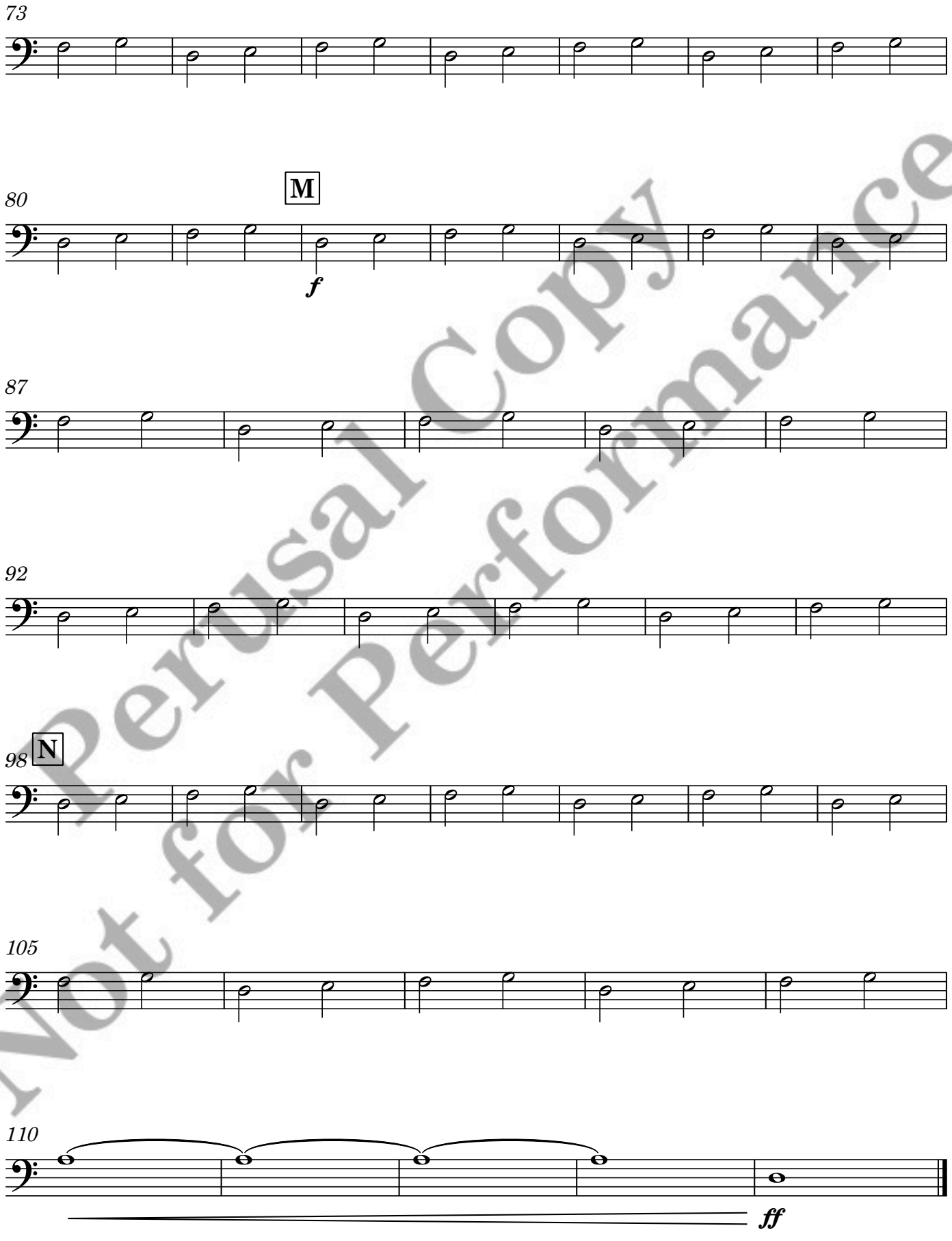
51

58

66 **L**

mf

Perusal Copy Not for Performance



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