SDM209

THE HAPPY GRASS

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Not for Performance

Seán Doherty

2018

SATB div. and Piano

Seán Doherty Music
seandohertymusic.com

SDM209

TEXT

The Happy Grass

Here, in their final quiet, the singers lie.
True to the dead, to the living true
The grass is growing as it always grew
Drinking every human cry
Like the rain of summer reaching the repose
Of singers long out of sight.
Will we ever know what the grass knows
Flourishing in green wisdom, green delight?
When delusions of communication cease
And we are victims once again
Of rumours the gossip wind is bringing
We'll celebrate the singers in their peace
Because above the graves of men
The happy grass is singing.

Brendan Kennelly (1936–2021),
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PROGRAMME NOTE

This piece celebrates the 120th anniversary of the foundation of the Culwick Choral Society. This remarkable continuity is captured in the poem 'The Happy Grass' by the renowned Irish poet Brendan Kennelly, which honours the eternal nature of song in society. A calm, reflective opening, which commemorates past singers, is contrasted with a *danse macabre* in which the text becomes muddled to reflect the 'delusions of communication' of speech, that the poet contrasts with the true communication of song. Finally, opening musical material returns, reflecting the cyclical nature of life, and assuring us that though life may pass away, the tradition of song is everlasting. This setting, therefore, will honour all singers—past, present, and future—of the Culwick Choral Society.

Duration: *c.* 5 mins

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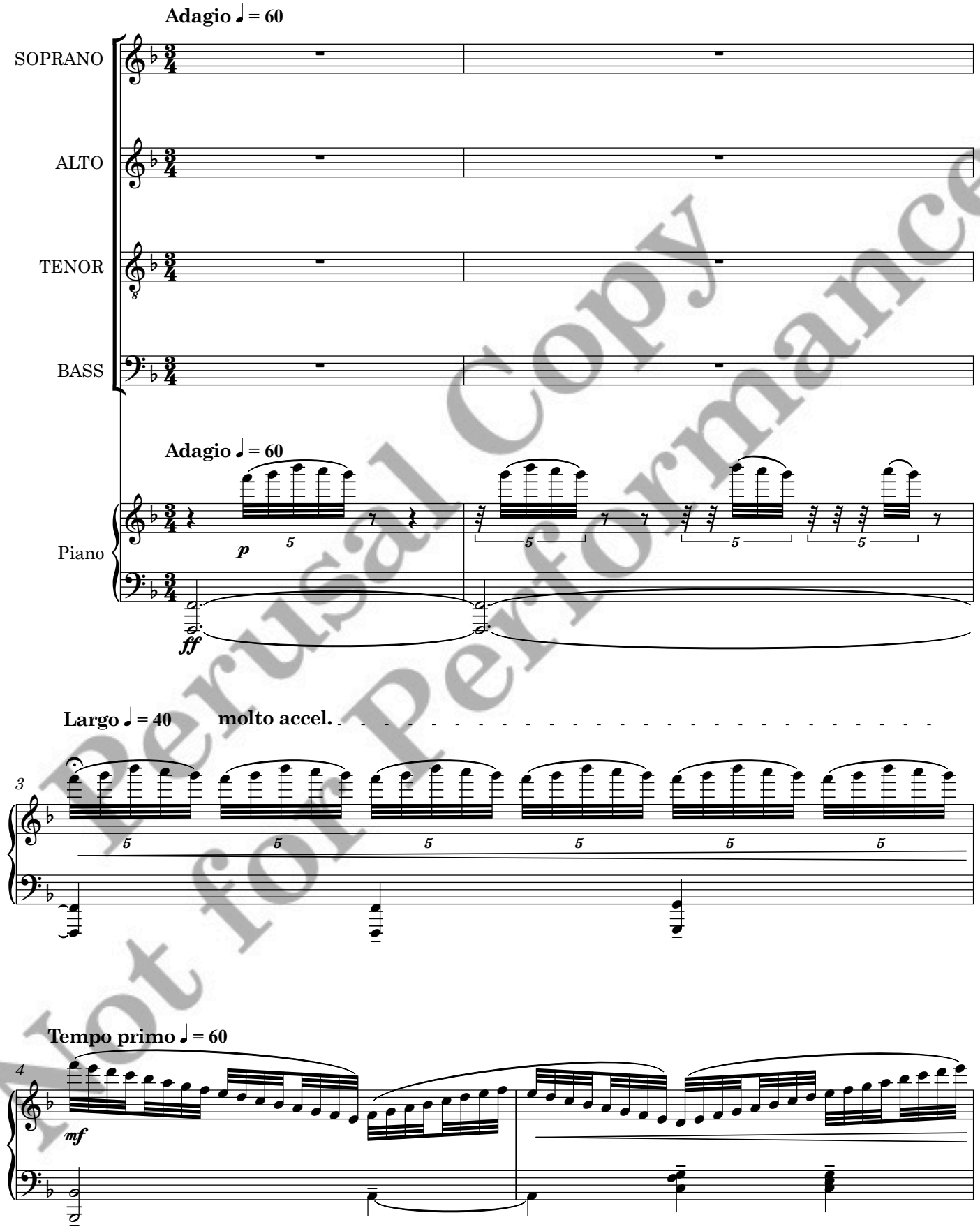
Commissioned by The Culwick Choral Society on the occasion of its 120th anniversary

The Happy Grass

Brendan Kennelly (1936-2021) — Seán Doherty (b. 1987)



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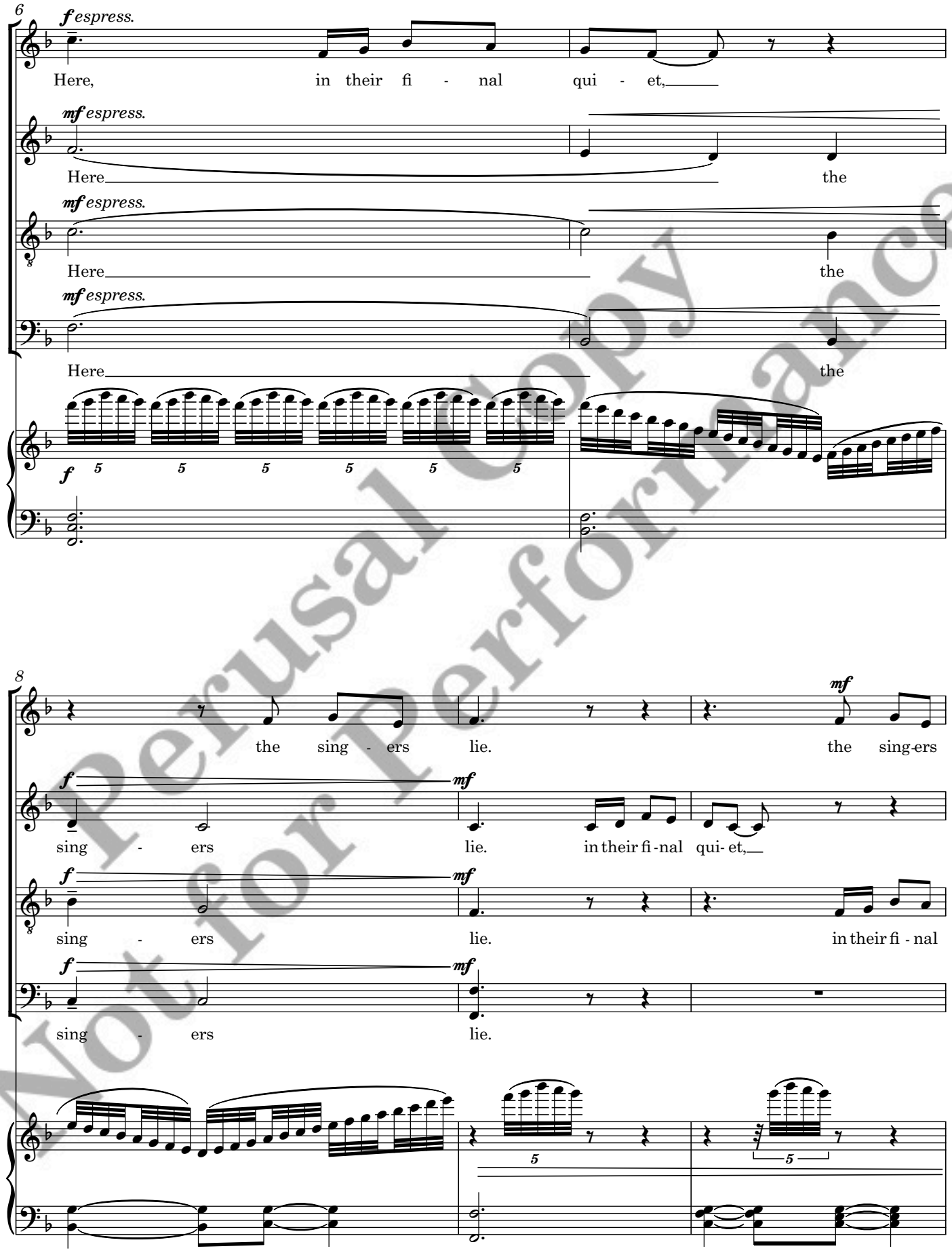

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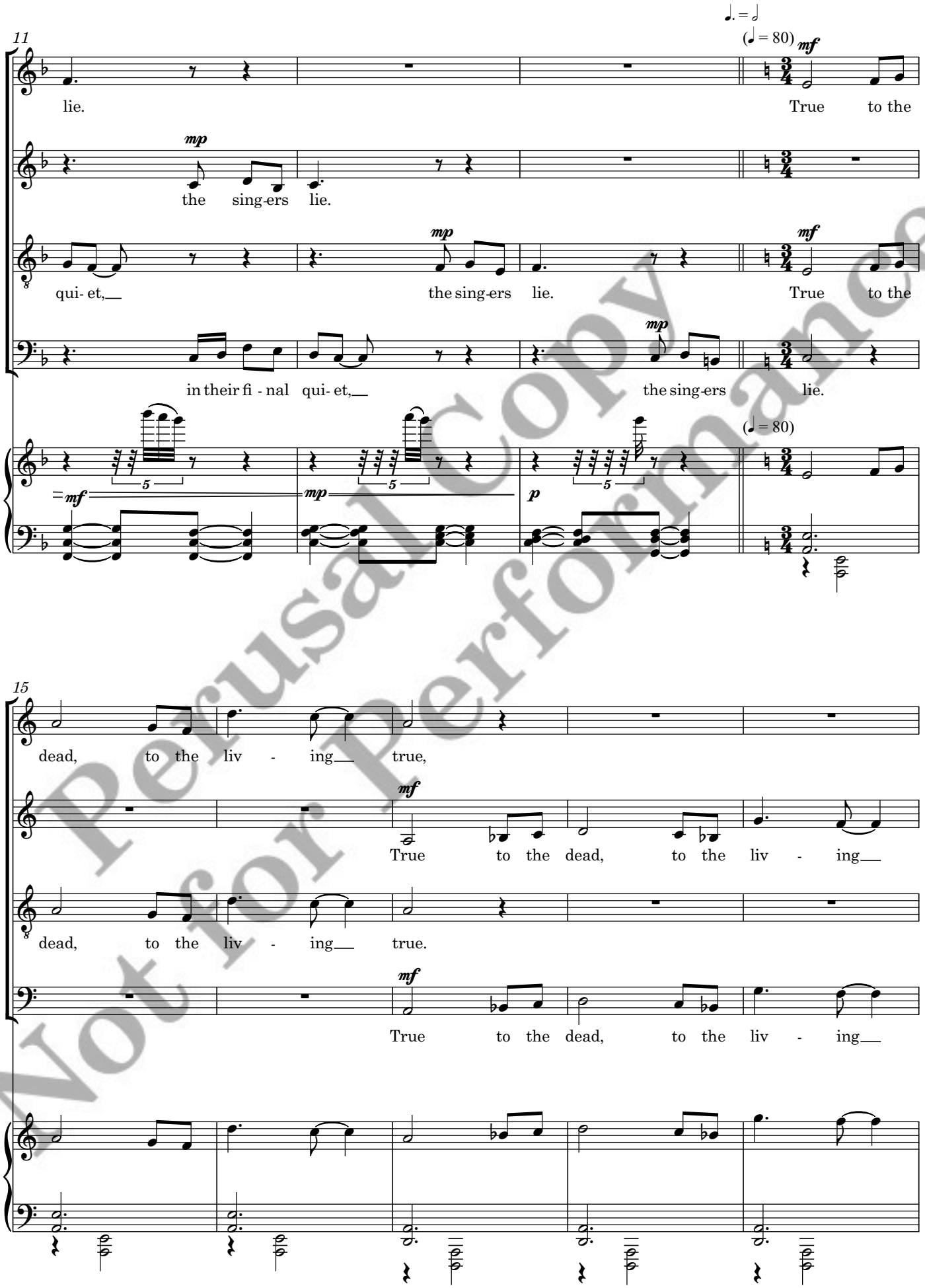

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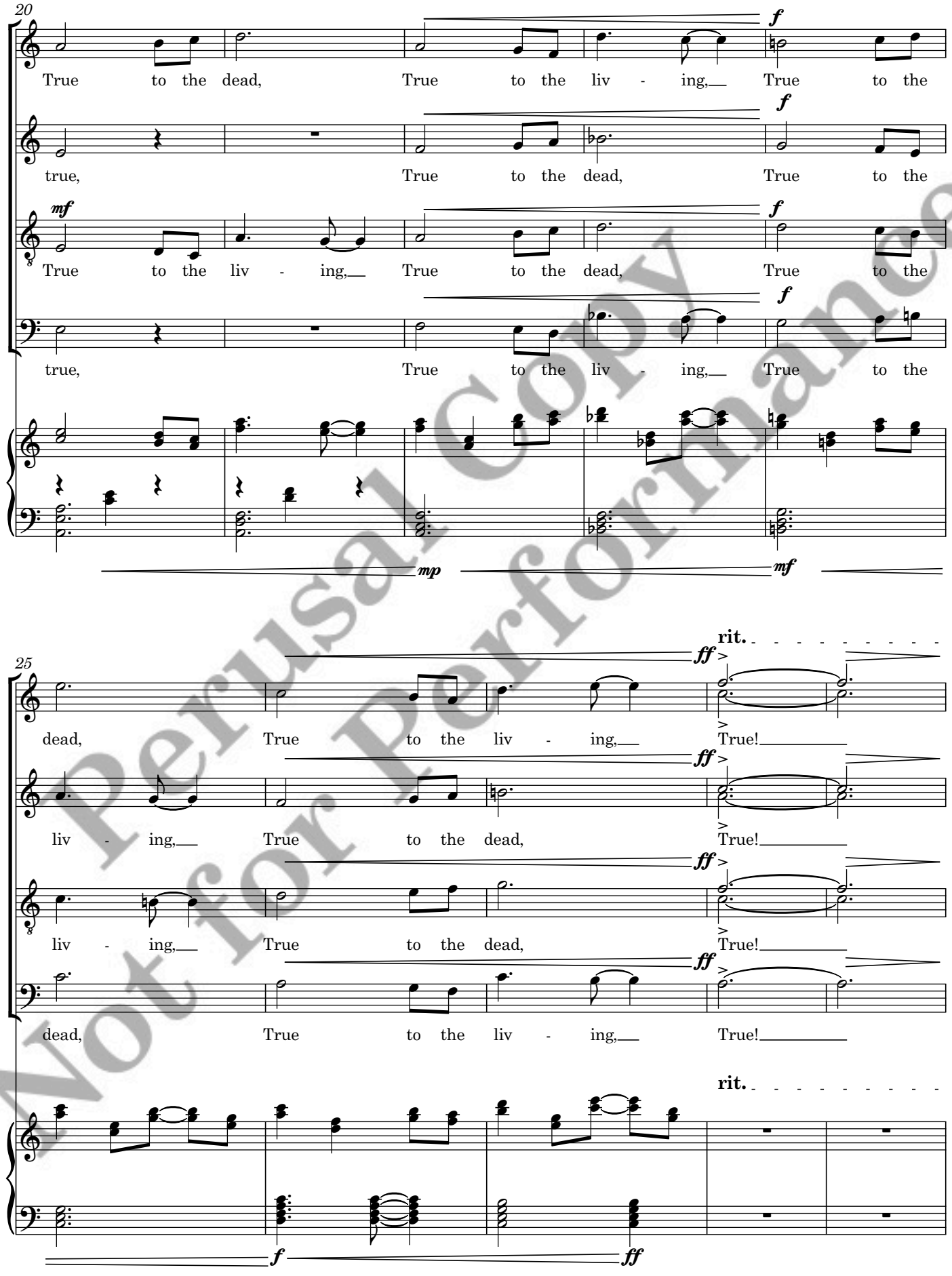

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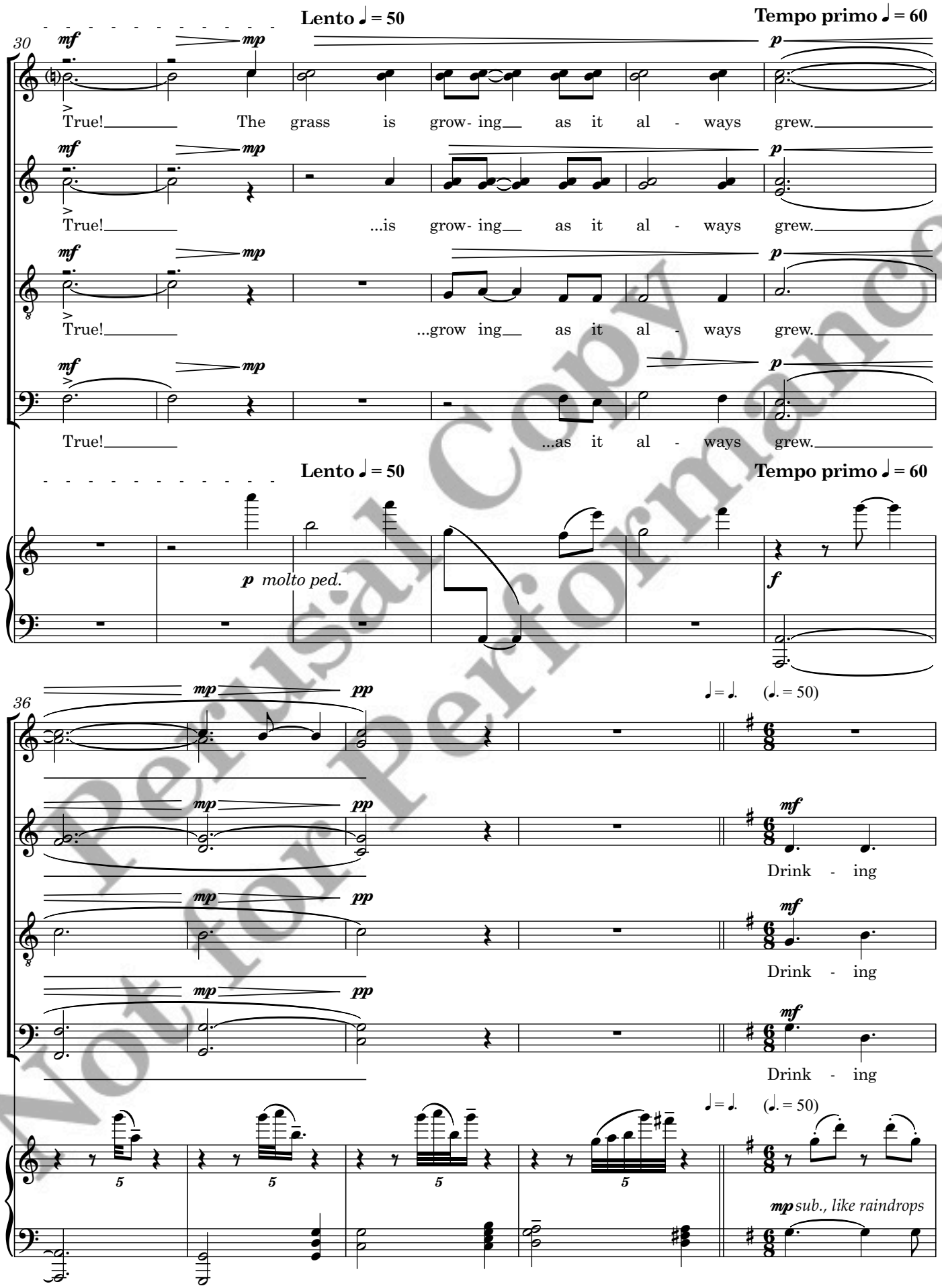

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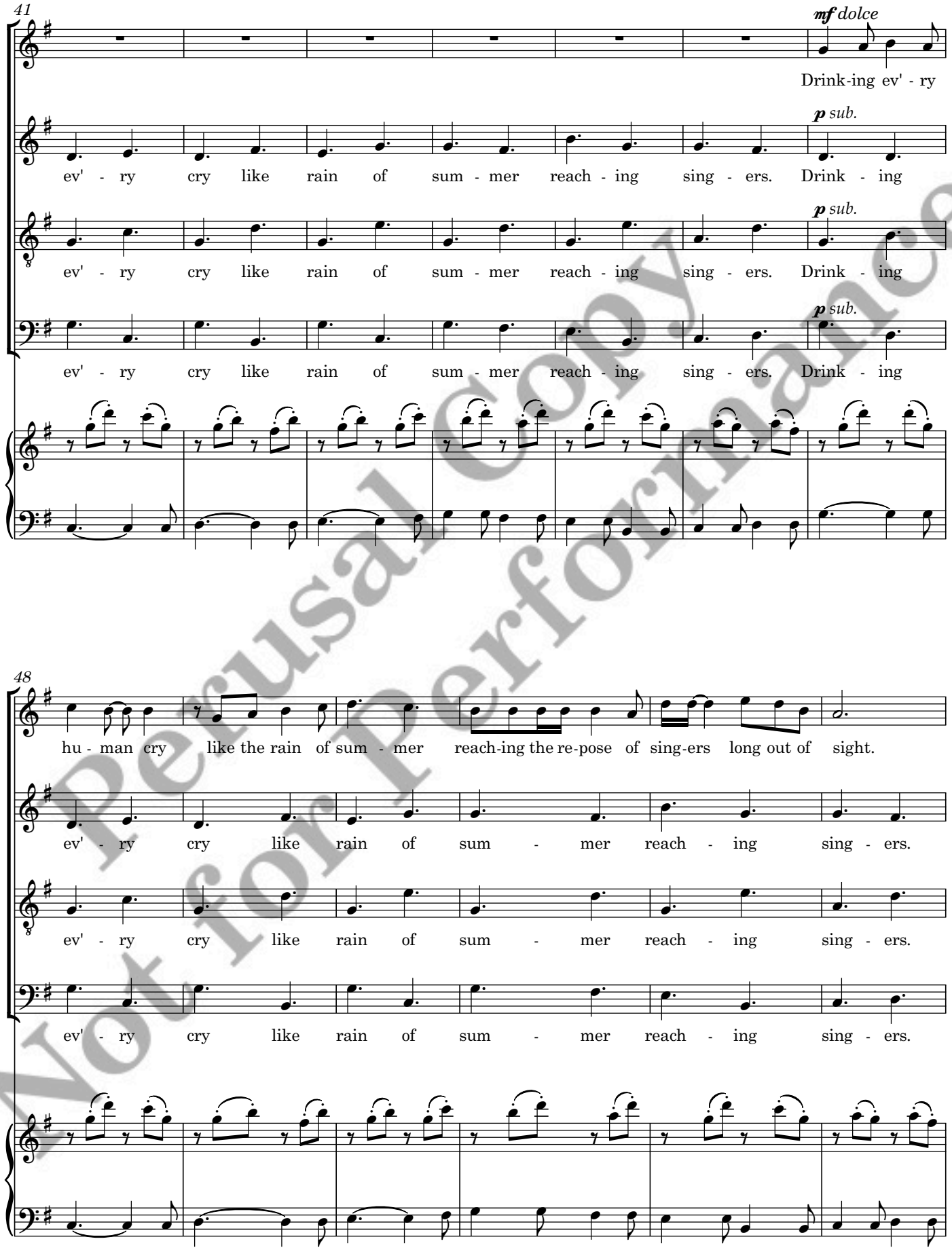

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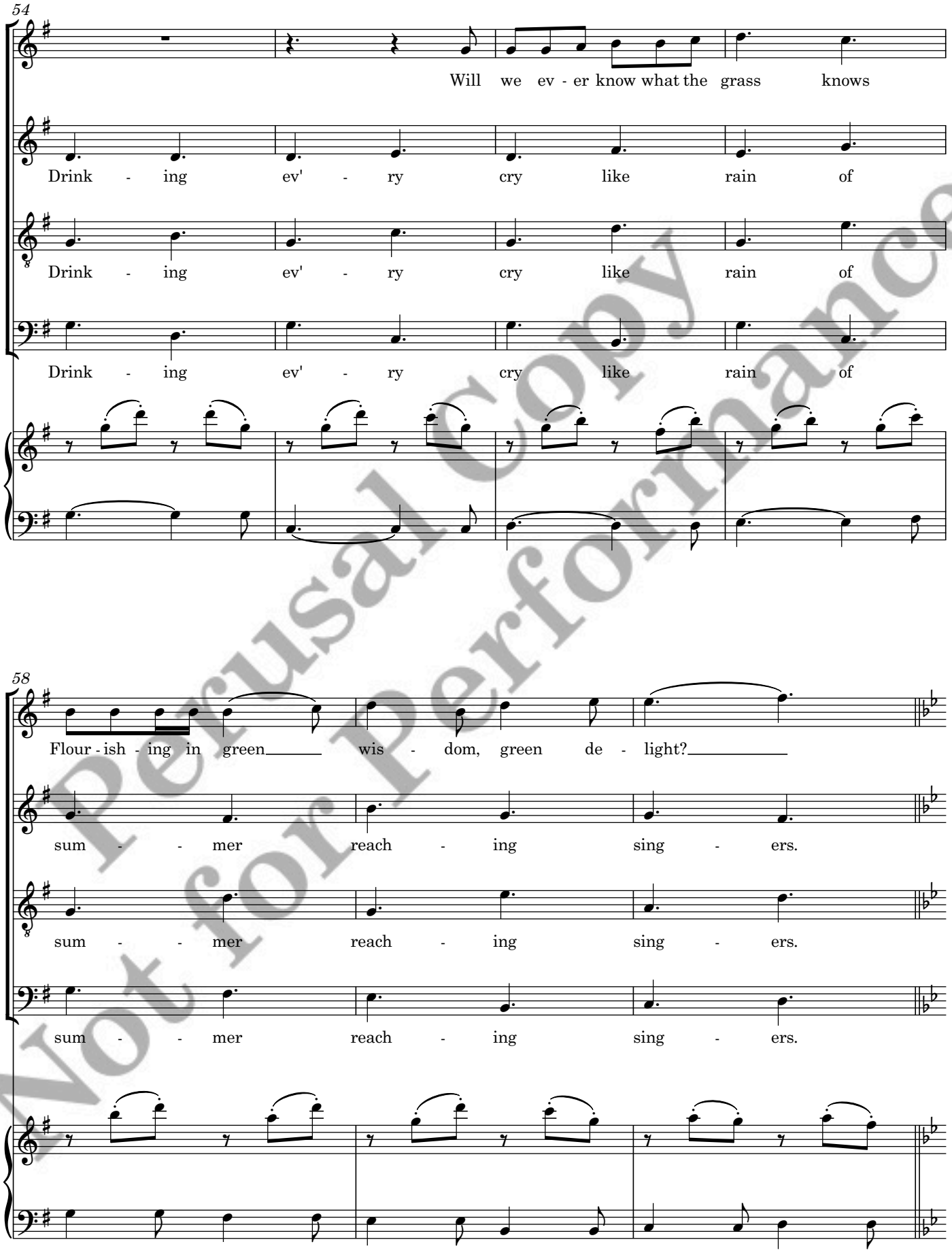

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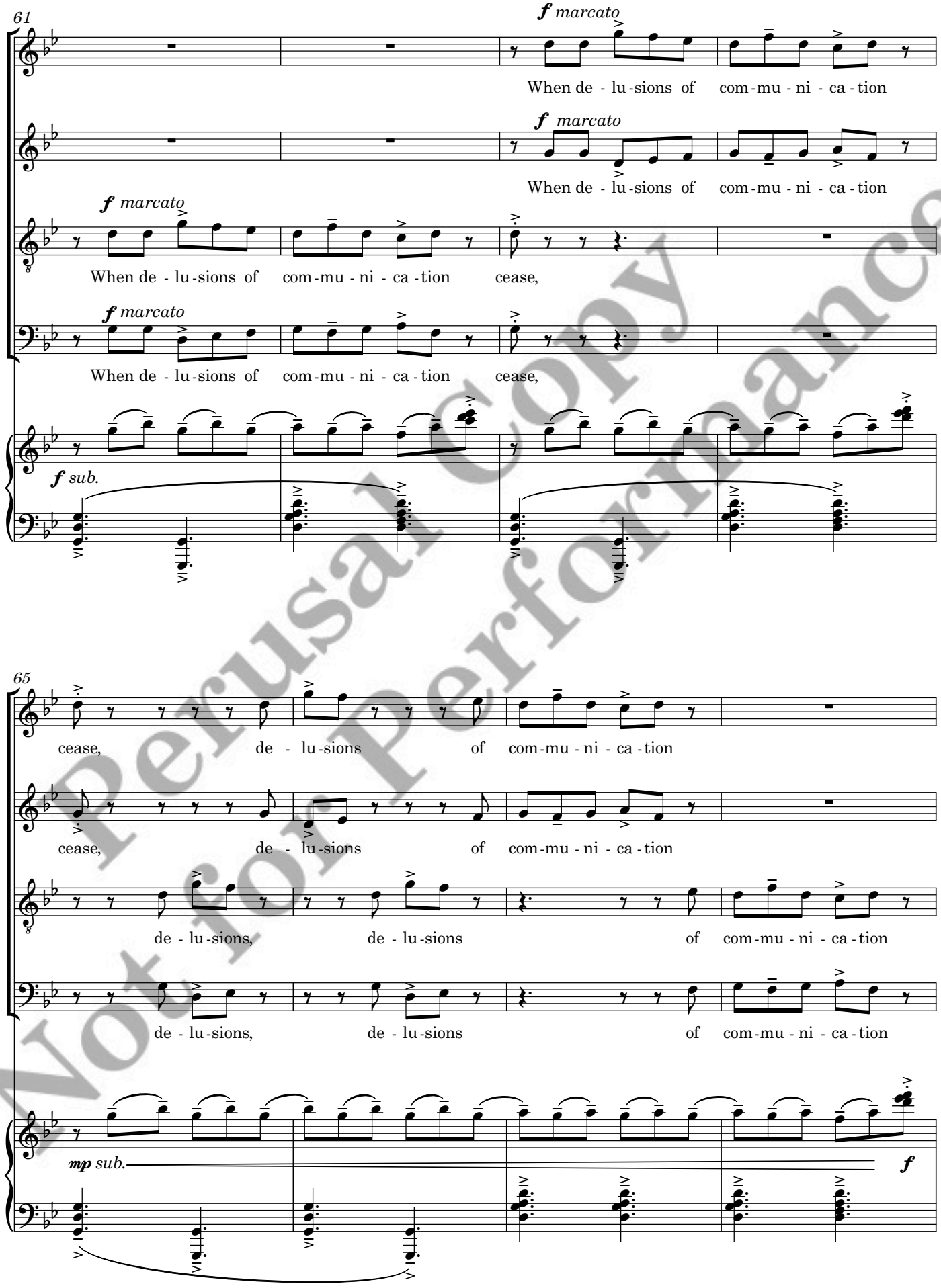

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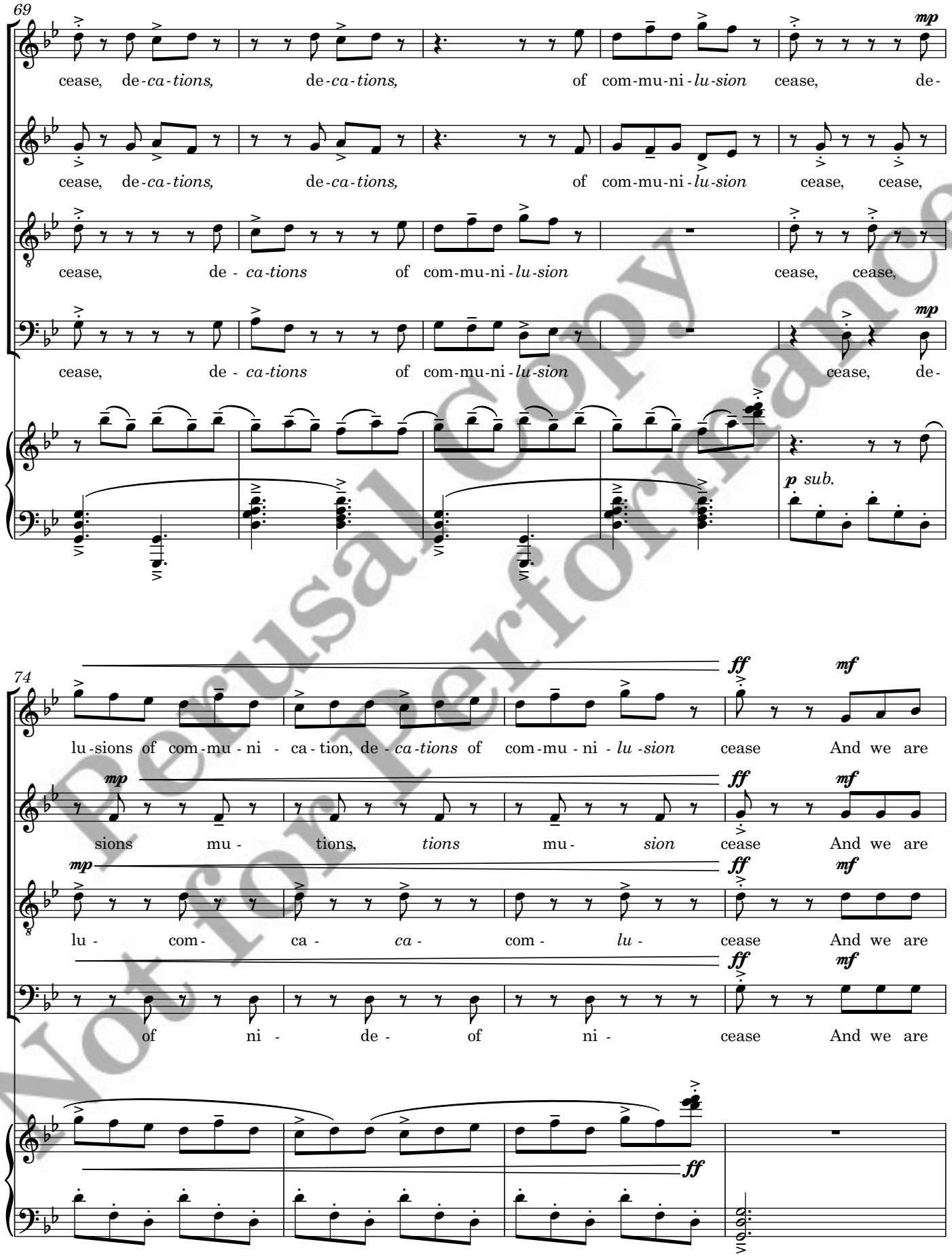

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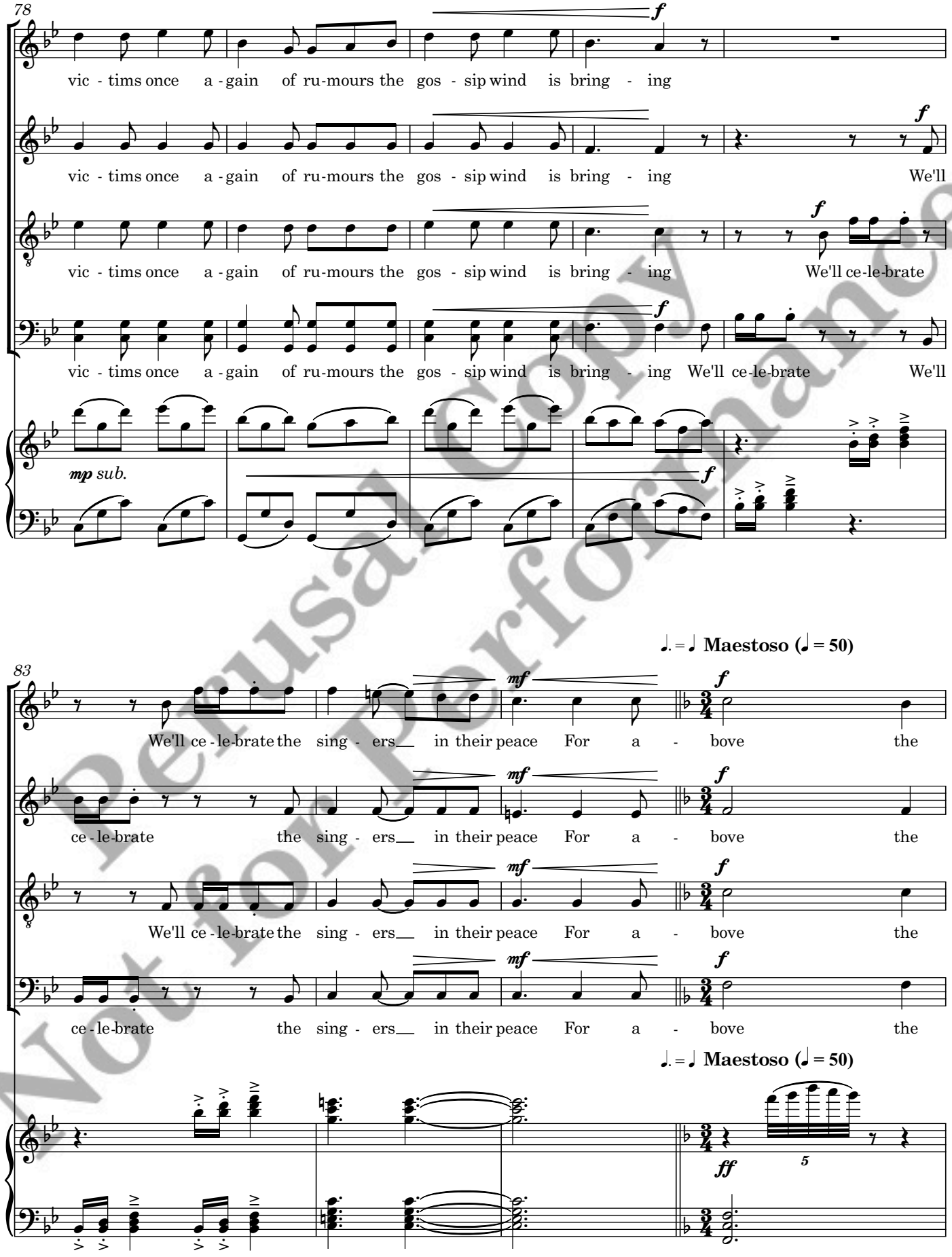

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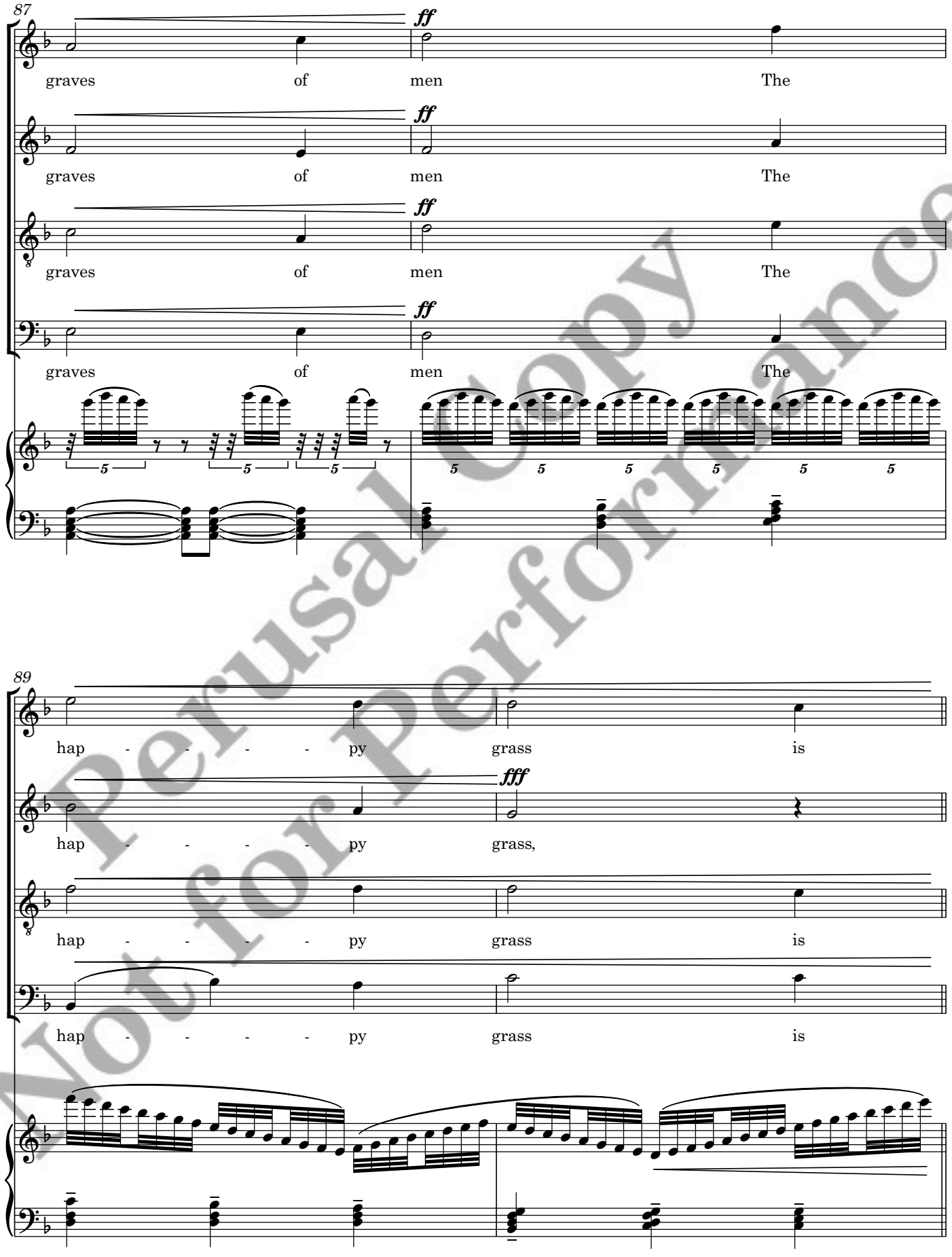

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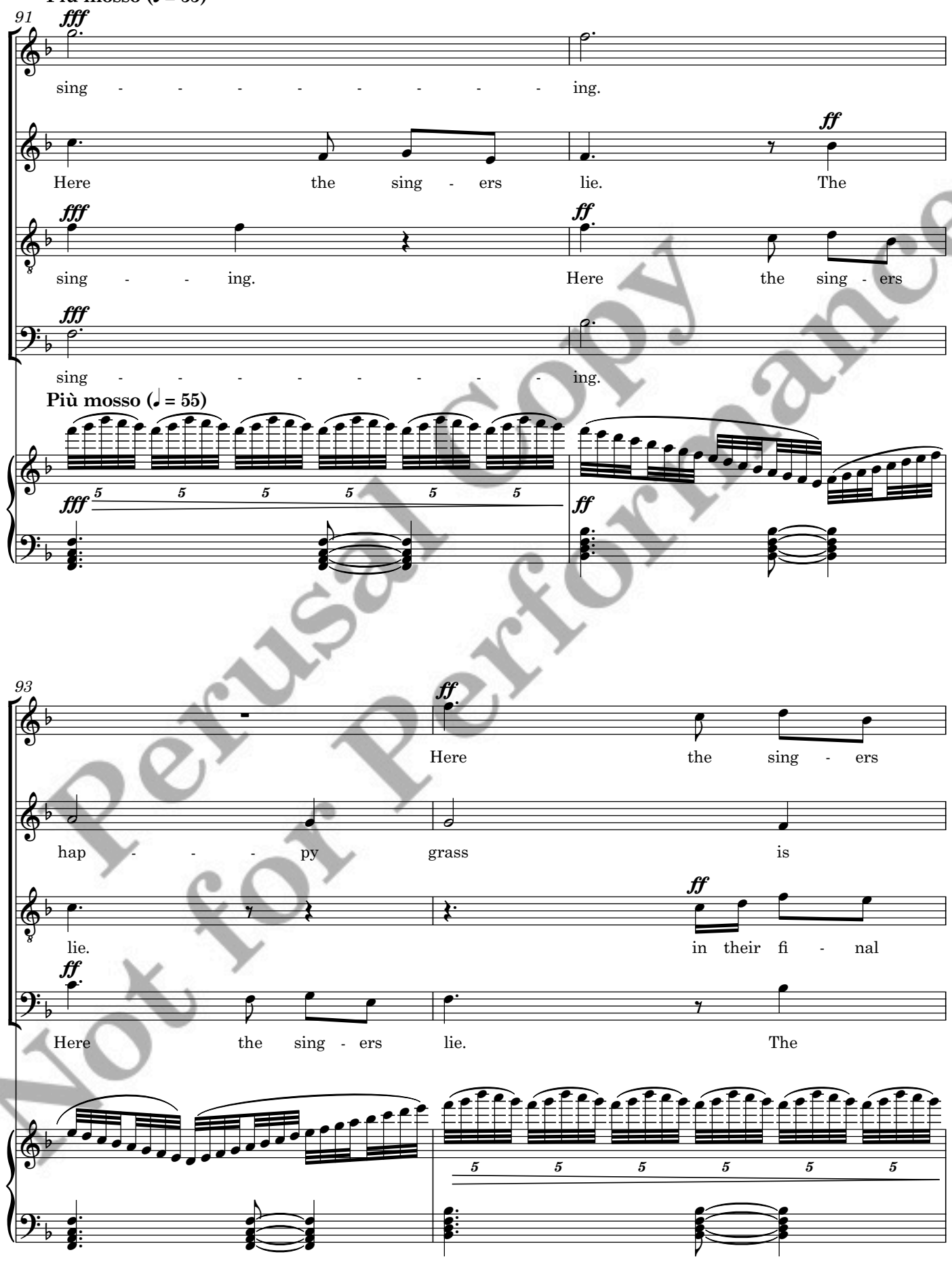

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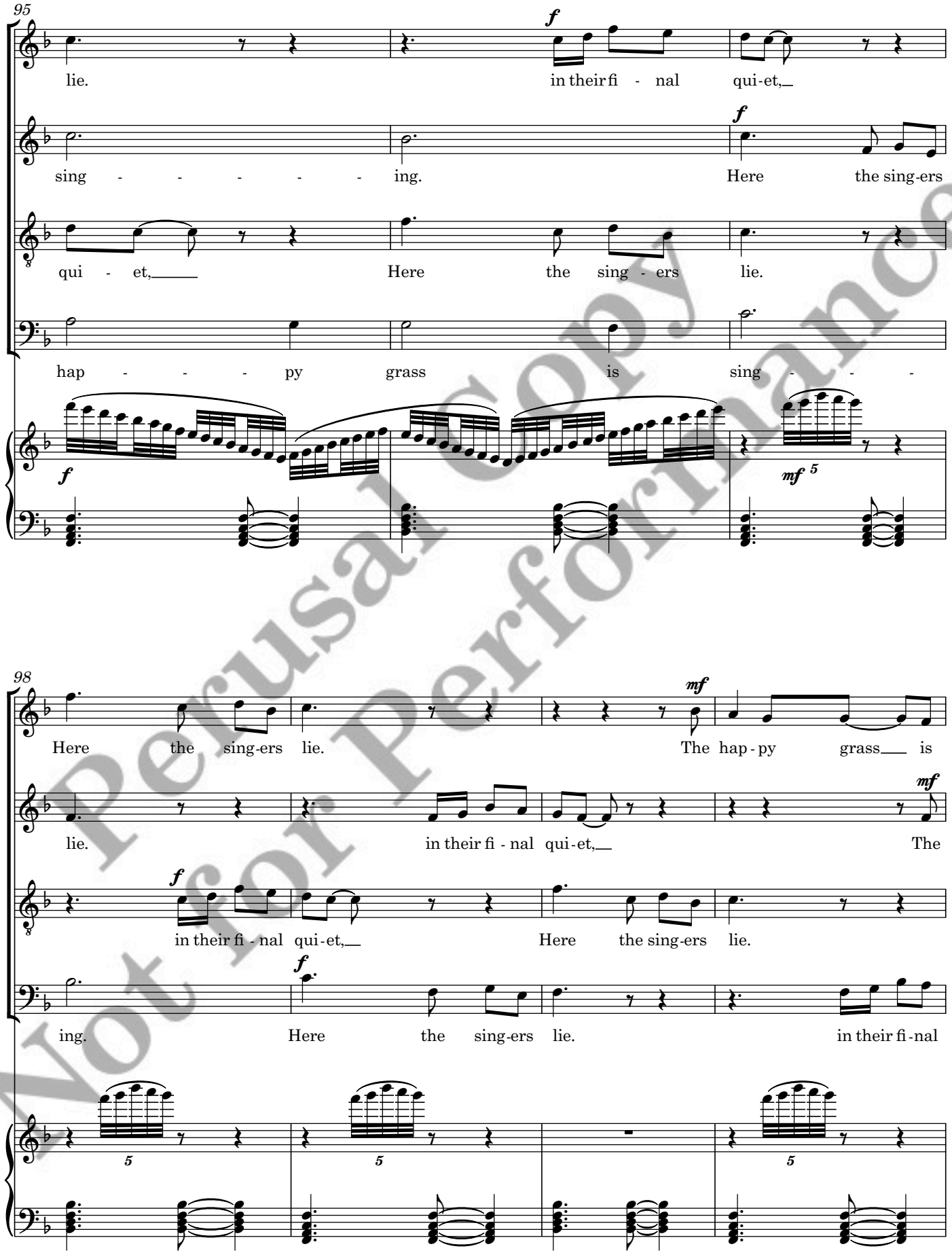

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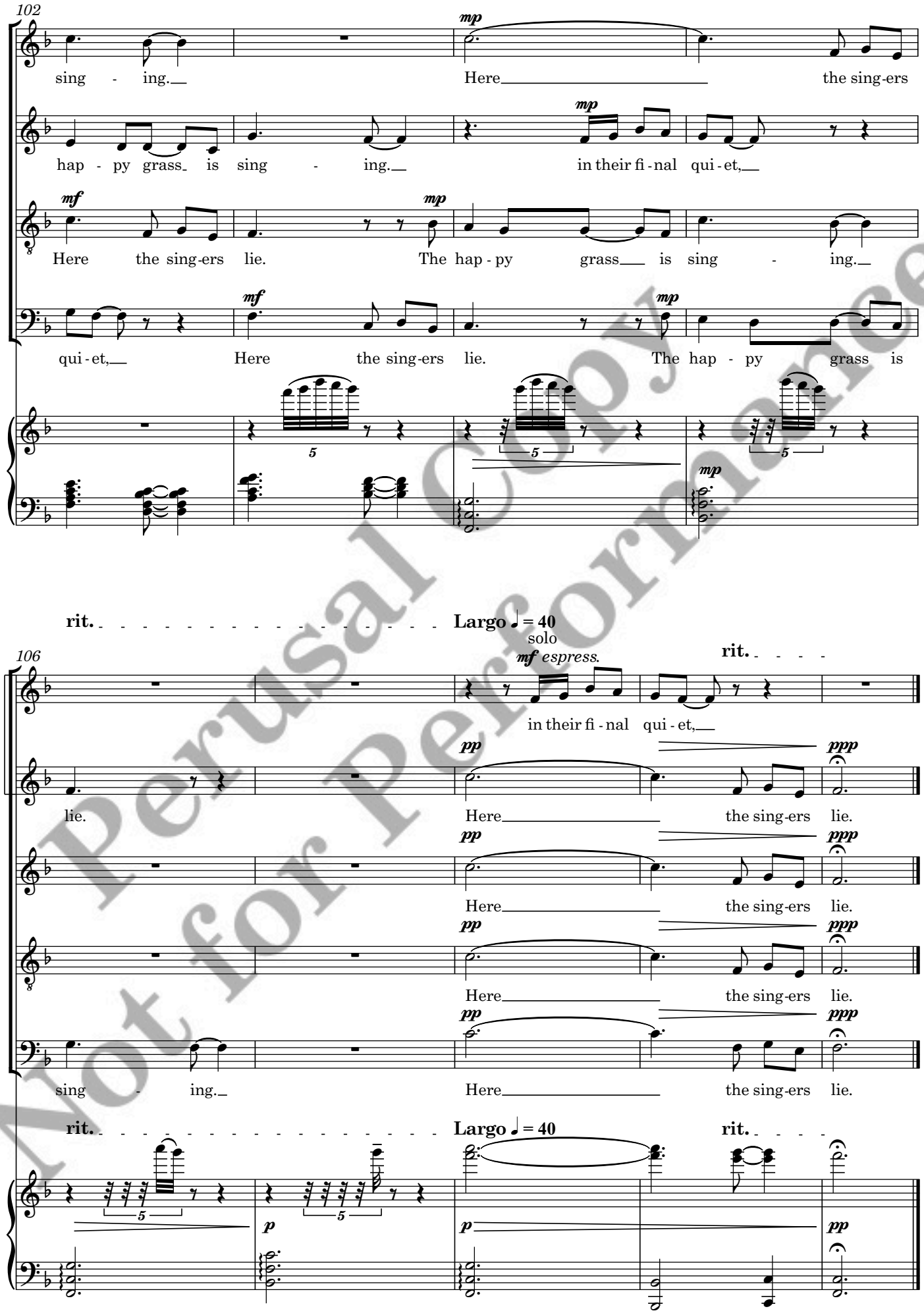

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