Please note that not all pages are included. This is purposely done in order to protect our property and the work of our esteemed composers.

If you would like to see this work in its entirety, please order online or call us at 800-647-2117.

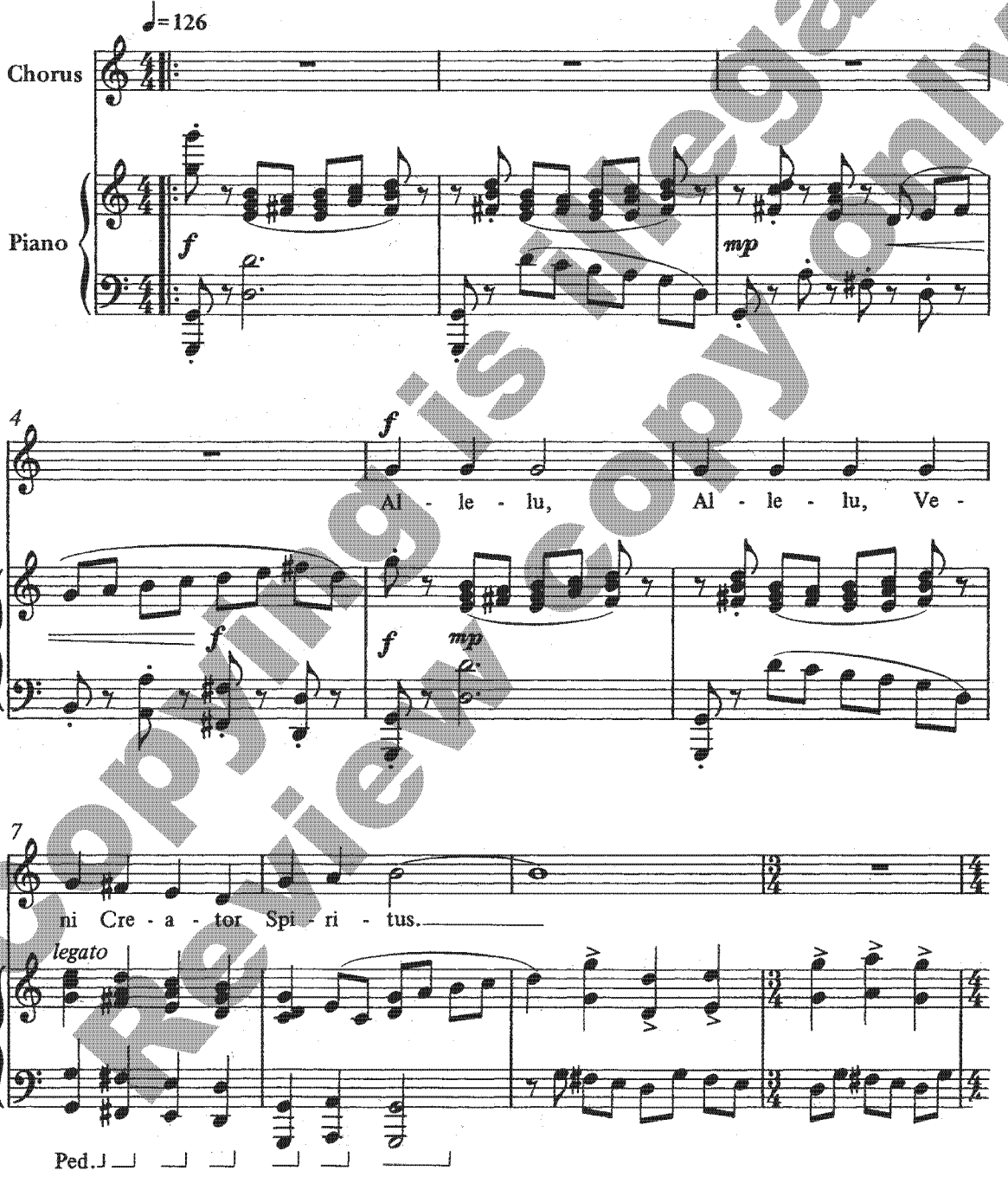
A Garden Wall

A Musical Lesson of Vision for Mission

Text and music by Libby Larsen

PRELUDE

A children's chorus and Orff band should play a short prelude. They are grouped in the stage area. If there is a large chorus, the chorus remains on stage. If the characters of the play make up the chorus, they assume their roles following the prelude.



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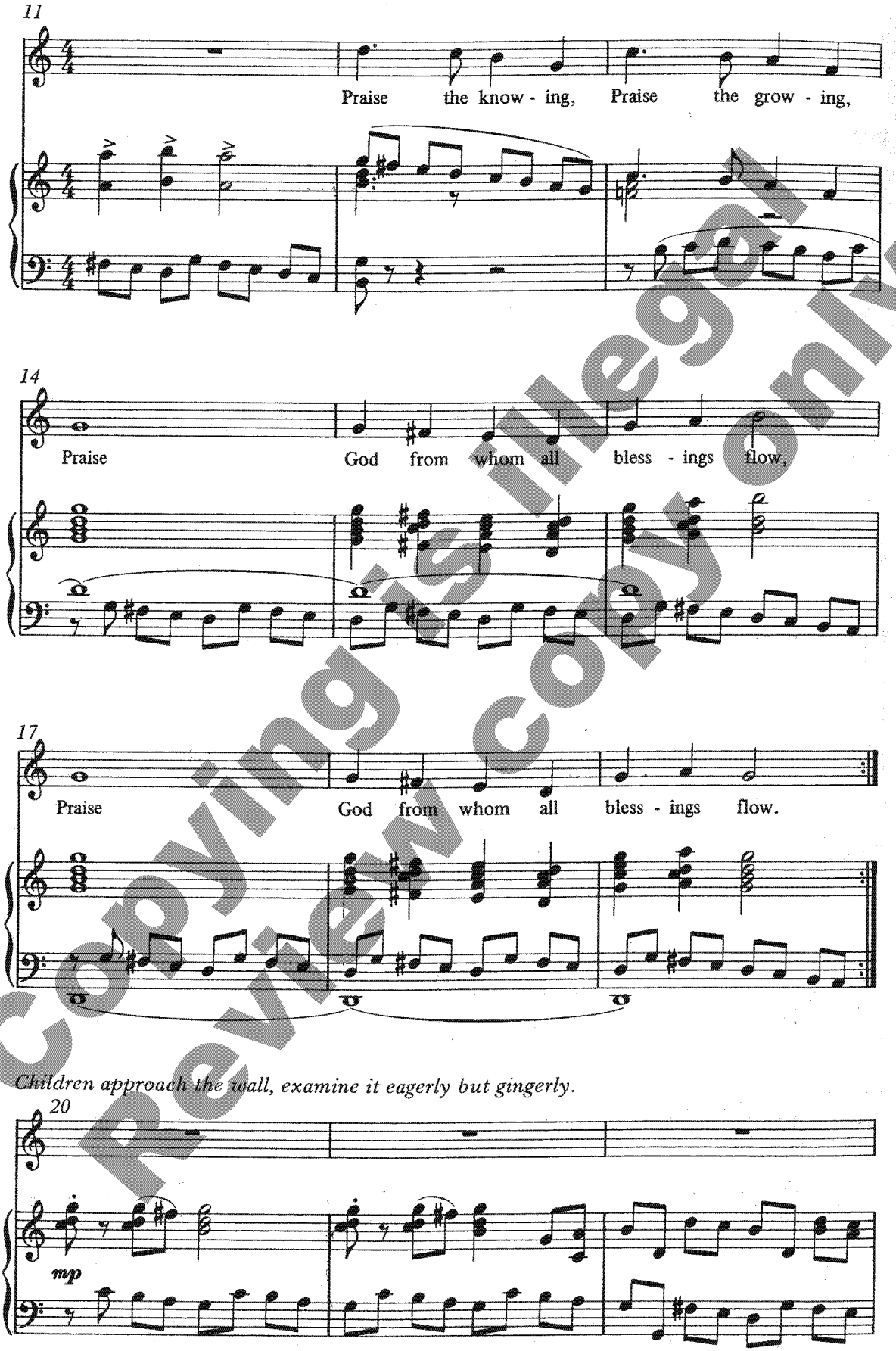

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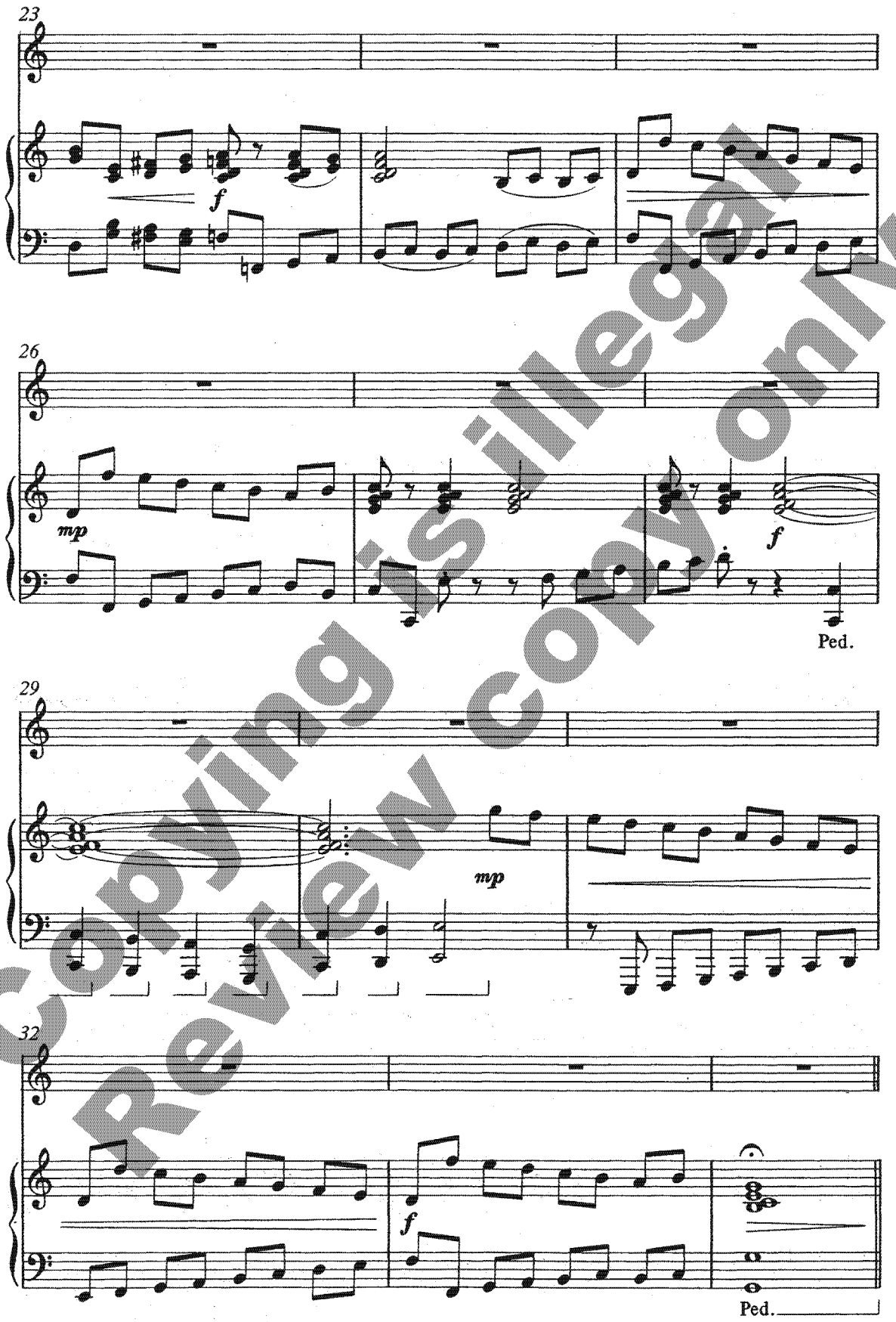

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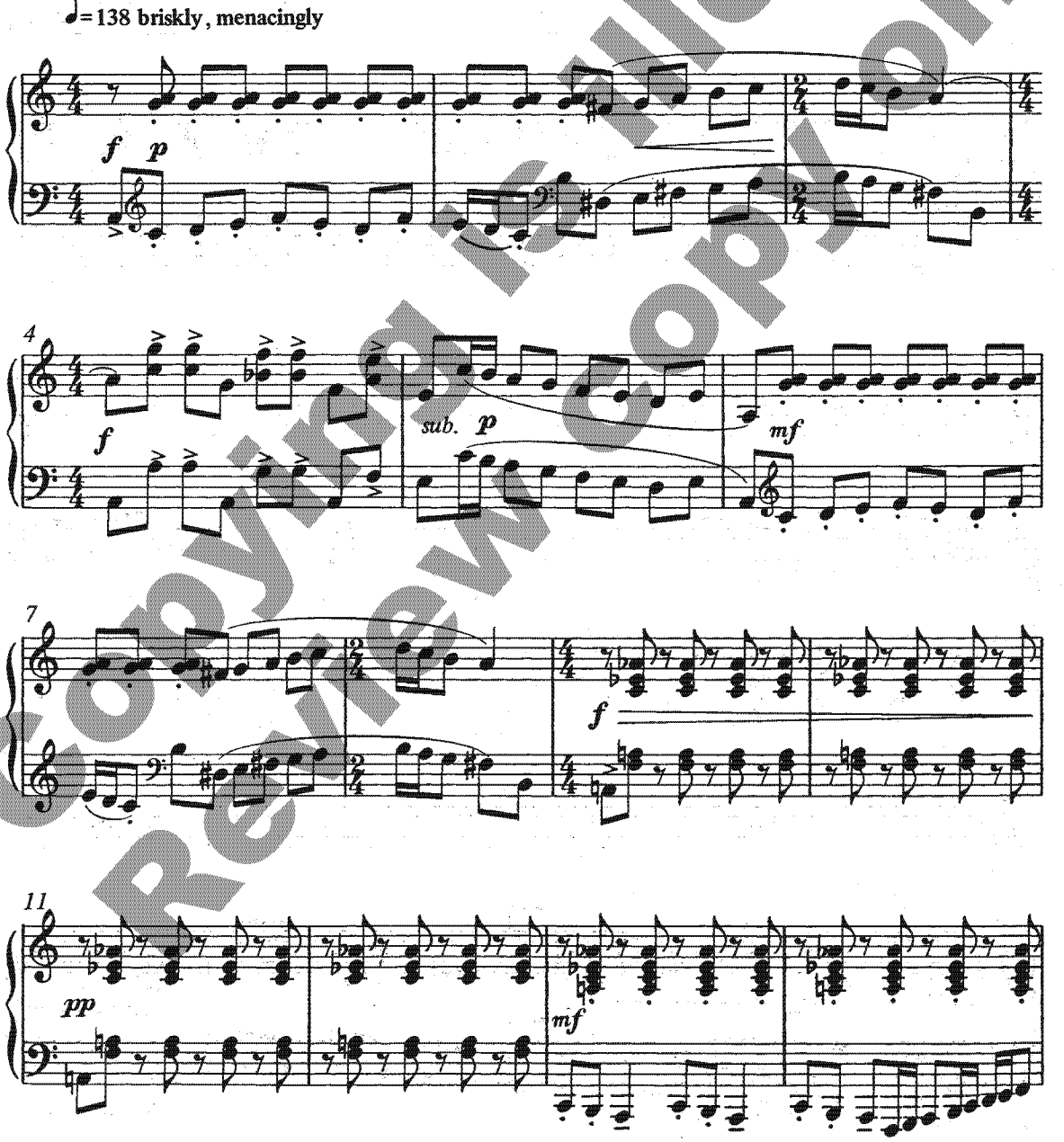
NARRATOR:
In a town, in a country, there is a wall, taller than children, wider than vision, jagged and decaying–just the kind of wall that demands to be climbed–just the kind of wall we are told never to explore. Of course, adults know it is impossible for a child to resist a good climbing wall. We were children once ourselves and from time to time display our scars to prove it. So we use our creativity to find a way to protect our children from danger. We use their innocence as a decoy, telling them not that the wall is dangerous (they know they're unbreakable), instead we say that even though we don't know what is on the other side of the wall, it may be dangerous. We hint at all things monstrous. In the name of protection and security, we teach all too well the lesson that what we don't know *will* hurt us.

INSTRUMENTAL PIECE AT THE WALL
Scary paws are seen groping over the wall.



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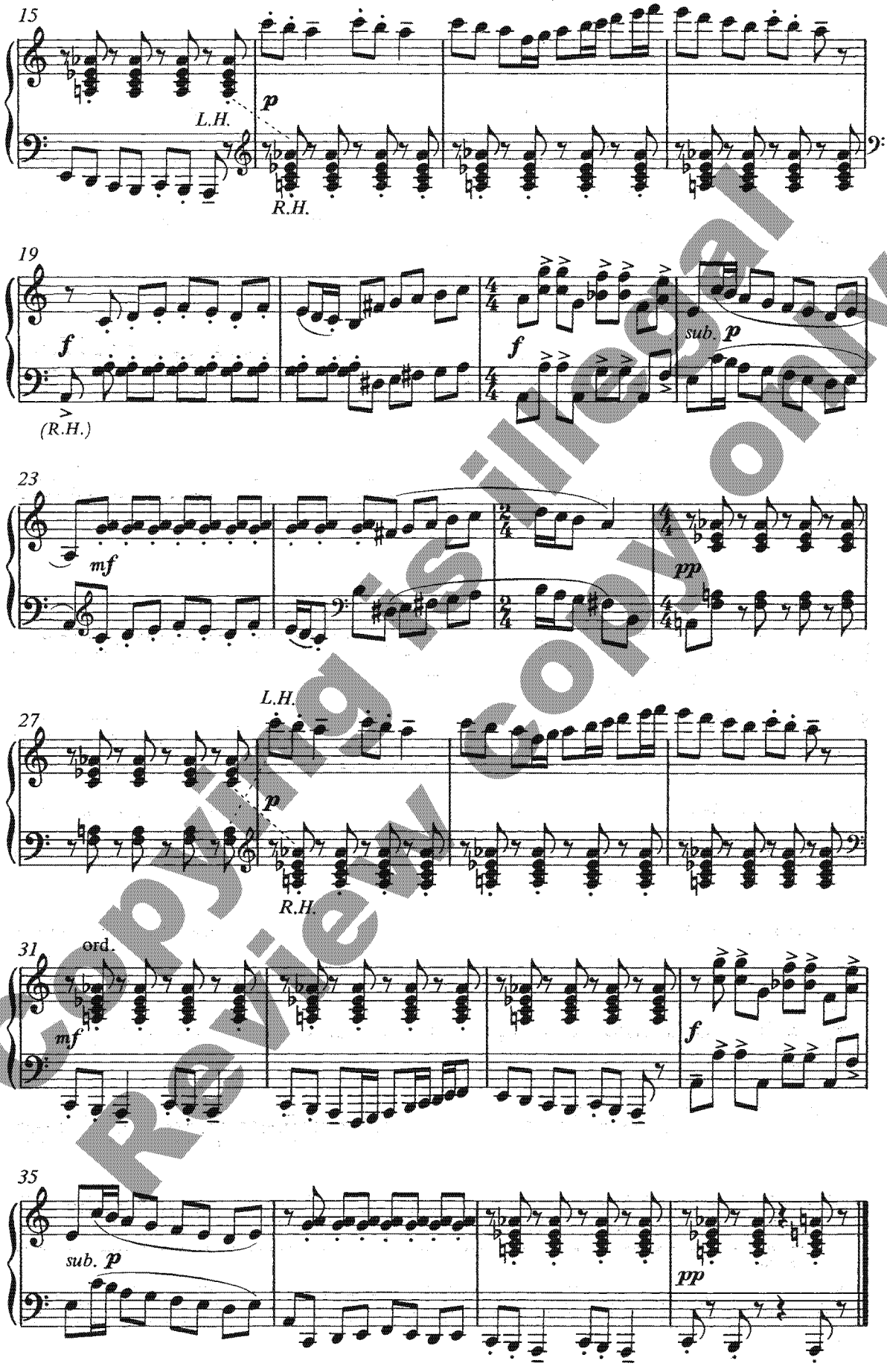

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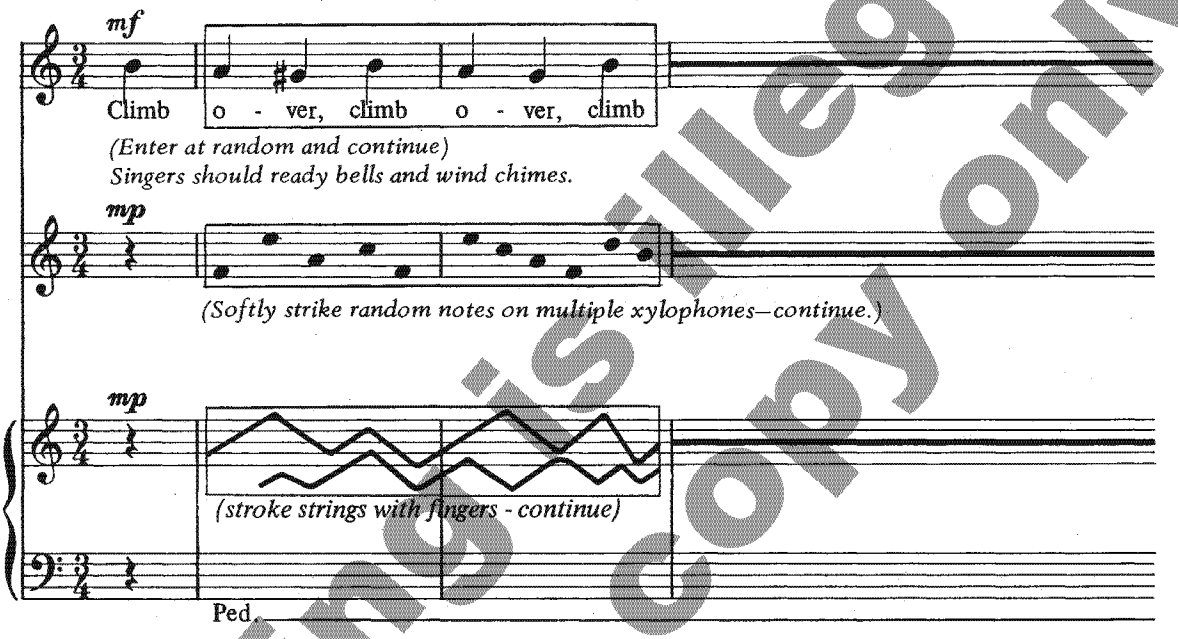
NARRATOR:
Still, as children we were irresistably drawn to the wall. It has beauty; though crumbling it is still strong; it is old and venerable. It is worth climbing if only we could be sure we are not in danger. *[Children sit with backs to the wall.]* "But what is danger?," we ask. "If we scrape our knees or even break a bone, won't our bodies heal? After all, we've seen our parents' scars and heard their proud stories of this tree climbed, or that silo conquered. And if there are monsters waiting, why haven't we ever heard of anyone actually being devoured by one?" *[Pause]* Oh that rock-stepped, amber-stoned, ivy-leaking wall, calling us, tempting us, "Climb over, climb over..."

FLOWERS & BUSHES *(chanting)*

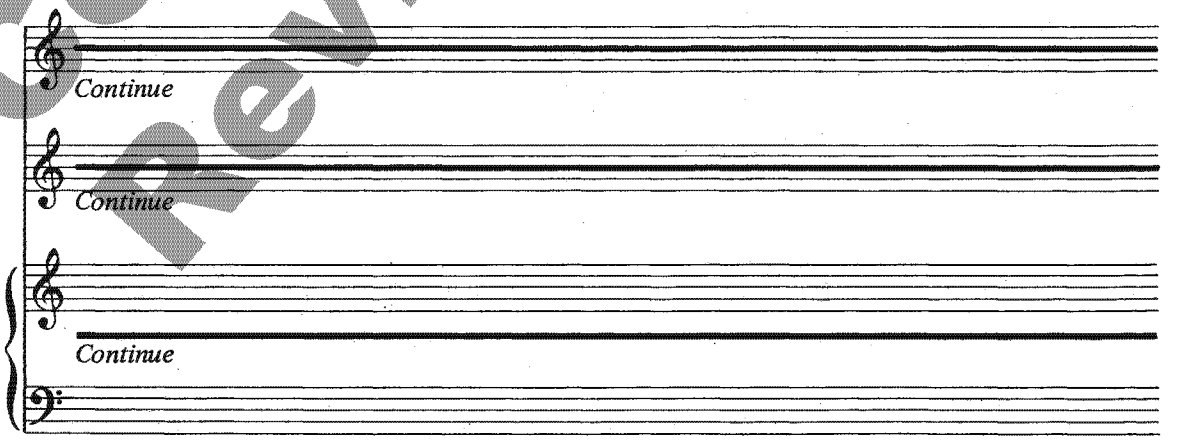


NARRATOR: What *is* on the other side? **CHILD ONE:** Treasure! **CHILD TWO:** Monsters!

The scary paws appear again. The children leap to their feet, alternately approaching and backing away from the wall.

CHILD THREE: A big dark pit that we can't climb out of! **CHILD FOUR:** Ghosts!

CHILD FIVE: Snakes! **ALL** *(in unison)*: Tigers, beasts, fire, horrifical horrors!



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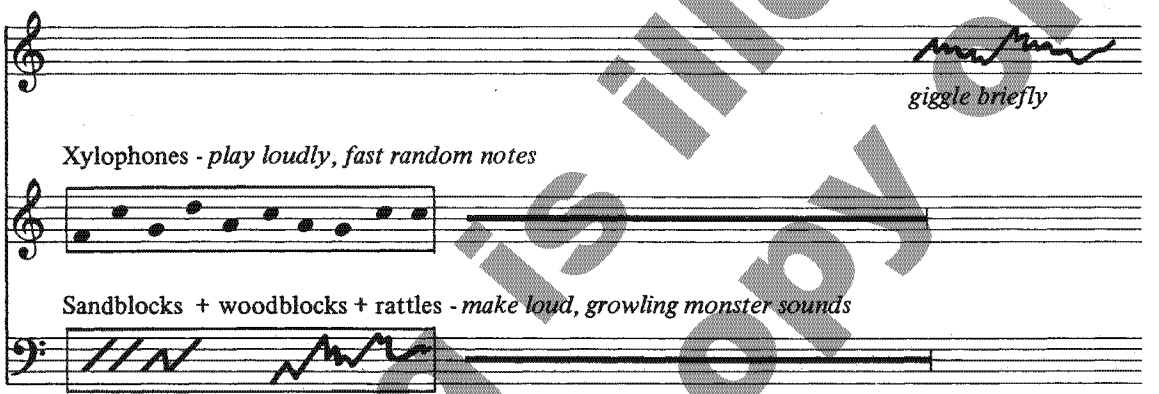
Suddenly, flowers are blown over the wall landing at the feet of the children. The scary paws disappear. The flowers and bushes giggle. There is a dramatic moment of silence.

Child One picks up the flower(s) and looks at it (or them) in wonder and awe. Then Child One bursts forth with excitement.

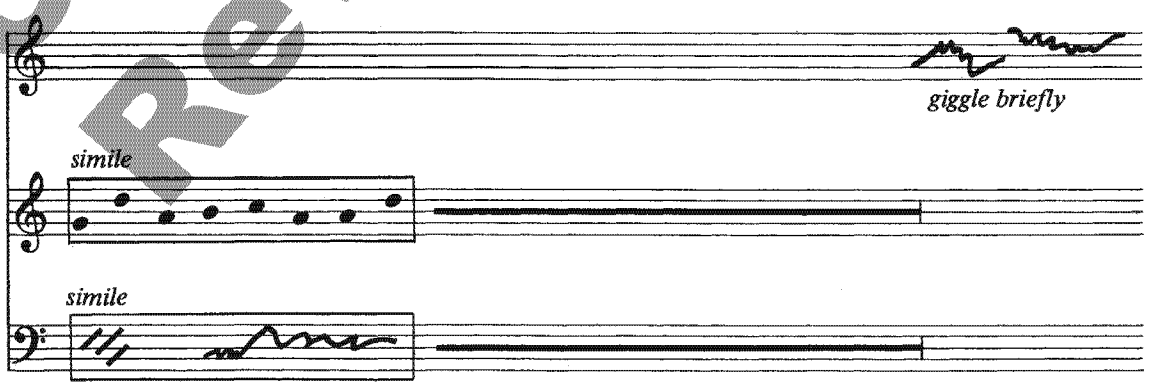
CHILD ONE: *(speaking)* I'm going over. I *have* to go over!

CHILDREN TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE: *(backing away, singing)* But...monsters!



CHILD ONE: *(speaking, imploring the dog to jump up and see what's on the other side, which the dog does)* No, flowers...I think.

CHILDREN TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE: *(singing)* But...our parents! Mother! Father! Father! Mother! *(etc.)*



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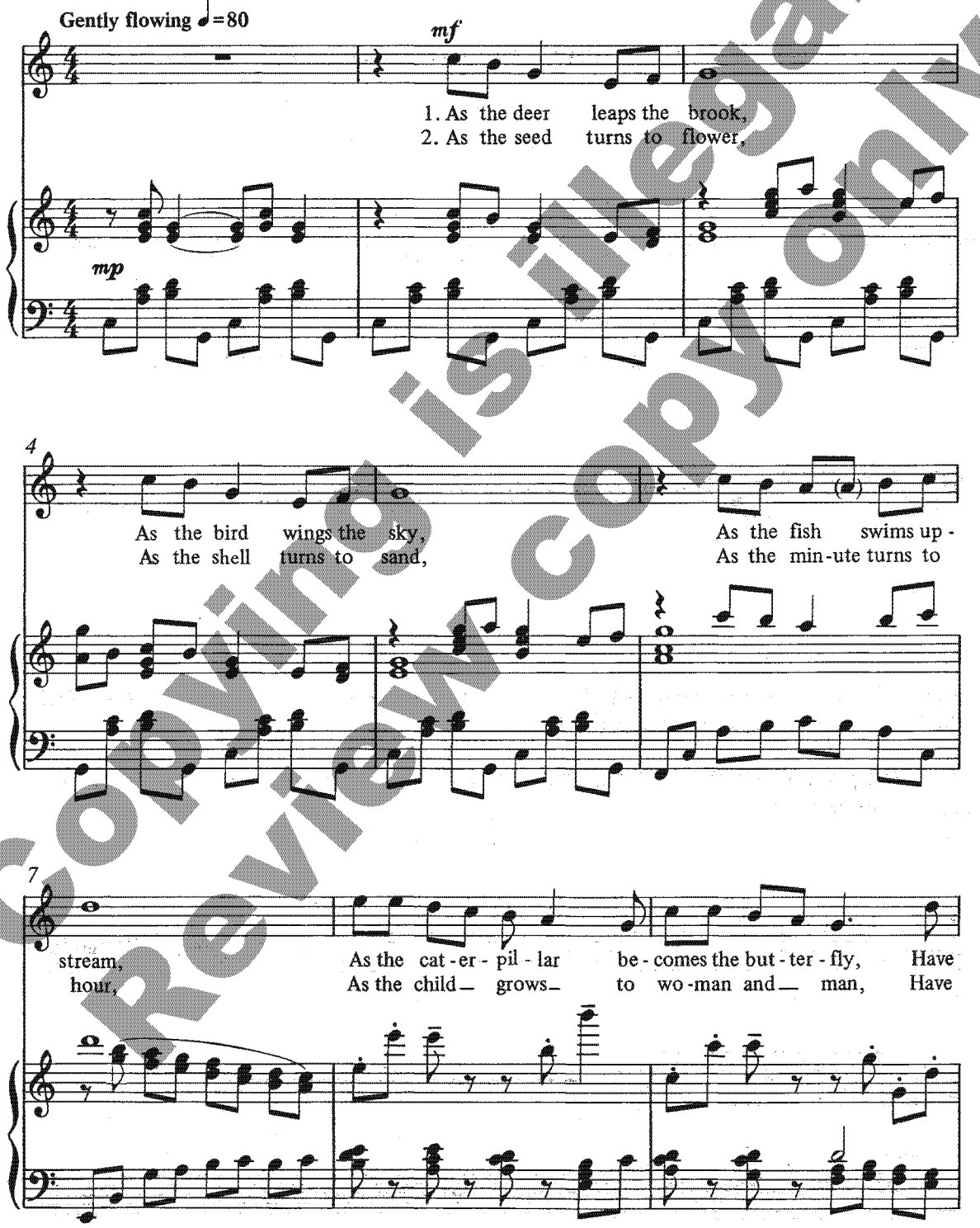
CHILD ONE: *(speaking)* I *have* to go over. I'll find a way. There *must* be a way. *[He tries to climb the wall but fails. The dog gets on all fours and woofs for the child to climb on his back to the top of the wall. He does. The other children do the same during the following narration and song.]*

NARRATOR: Though we're told never to go over the wall, we have to. So we ask mercy for what we are about to do. Not mercy for our disobedience, but mercy that our way be made less perilous.



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