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JULIANA HALL

THROUGH THE GUARDED GATE

5 Songs for Mezzo Soprano and Piano

on Poems by
Margaret Widdemer

Through the Guarded Gate was commissioned by the Seattle Art Song Society, General & Artistic Director, Brian Armbrust, for its 2018–2019 concert series.

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Cover design by David Sims.

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THE NET

The strangers' children laugh along the street:
They know not, or forget the sweeping of the Net
Swift to ensnare such little careless feet.

And we—we smile and watch them pass along,
And those who walk beside, soft-smiling, cruel-eyed—
We guard our own—not ours to right the wrong!

We do not care—we shall not heed or mark,
Till we shall hear one day, too late to strive or pray,
Our daughters' voices crying from the dark!

A MOTHER TO THE WAR-MAKERS

This is my son that you have taken,
Guard lest your gold-vault walls be shaken,
Never again to speak or waken.

This, that I gave my life to make,
This you have bidden the vultures break—
Dead for your selfish quarrel's sake!

This that I built of all my years,
Made with my strength and love and tears,
Dead for pride of your shining spears!

Just for your playthings bought and sold
You have crushed to a heap of mold
Youth and life worth a whole world's gold—

This was my son that you have taken,
Guard lest your gold-vault walls be shaken—
This—that shall never speak or waken!

THE OLD SUFFRAGIST

She could have loved—her woman-passions beat
  Deeper than theirs, or else she had not known
How to have dropped her heart beneath their feet
  A living stepping-stone:

The little hands—did they not clutch her heart?
  The guarding arms—was she not very tired?
Was it an easy thing to walk apart,
  Unresting, undesired?

She gave away her crown of woman-praise,
  Her gentleness and silent girlhood grace,
To be a merriment for idle days,
  Scorn for the market-place:

She strove for an unvisioned, far-off good,
  For one far hope she knew she should not see:
These—not *her* daughters—crowned with motherhood
  And love and beauty—free.

THE MODERN WOMAN TO HER LOVER

I shall not lie to you any more,
  Flatter or fawn to attain my end—
I am what never has been before,
  Woman—and Friend.

I shall be strong as a man is strong,
  I shall be fair as a man is fair,
Hand in locked hand we shall pass along
  To a purer air:

I shall not drag at your bridle-rein,
  Knee pressed to knee shall we ride the hill;
I shall not lie to you ever again—
  Will you love me still?

THE WOMEN'S LITANY

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our pain's sake!
Lips set smiling and face made fair
Still for you through the pain we bare,
We have hid till our hearts were sore
Blacker things than you ever bore:
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our pain's sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our strength's sake!
Light held high in a strife ne'er through
We have fought for our sons and you,
We have conquered a million years'
Pain and evil and doubt and tears—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for our strength's sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for your own sake!
We have held you within our hand,
Marred or made as we broke or planned,
We have given you life or killed
King or brute as we taught or willed—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for your own sake!

Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for the world's sake!
We are blind who must guide your eyes,
We are weak who must help you rise,
All untaught who must teach and mold
Souls of men till the world is old—
Let us in through the guarded gate,
Let us in for the world's sake!

— Margaret Widdemer

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The Net; A Mother to the War-Makers; The Old Suffragist; The Modern Woman to Her Lover; and *The Women's Litany* are in the public domain.

for Clara Osowski, with admiration and affection

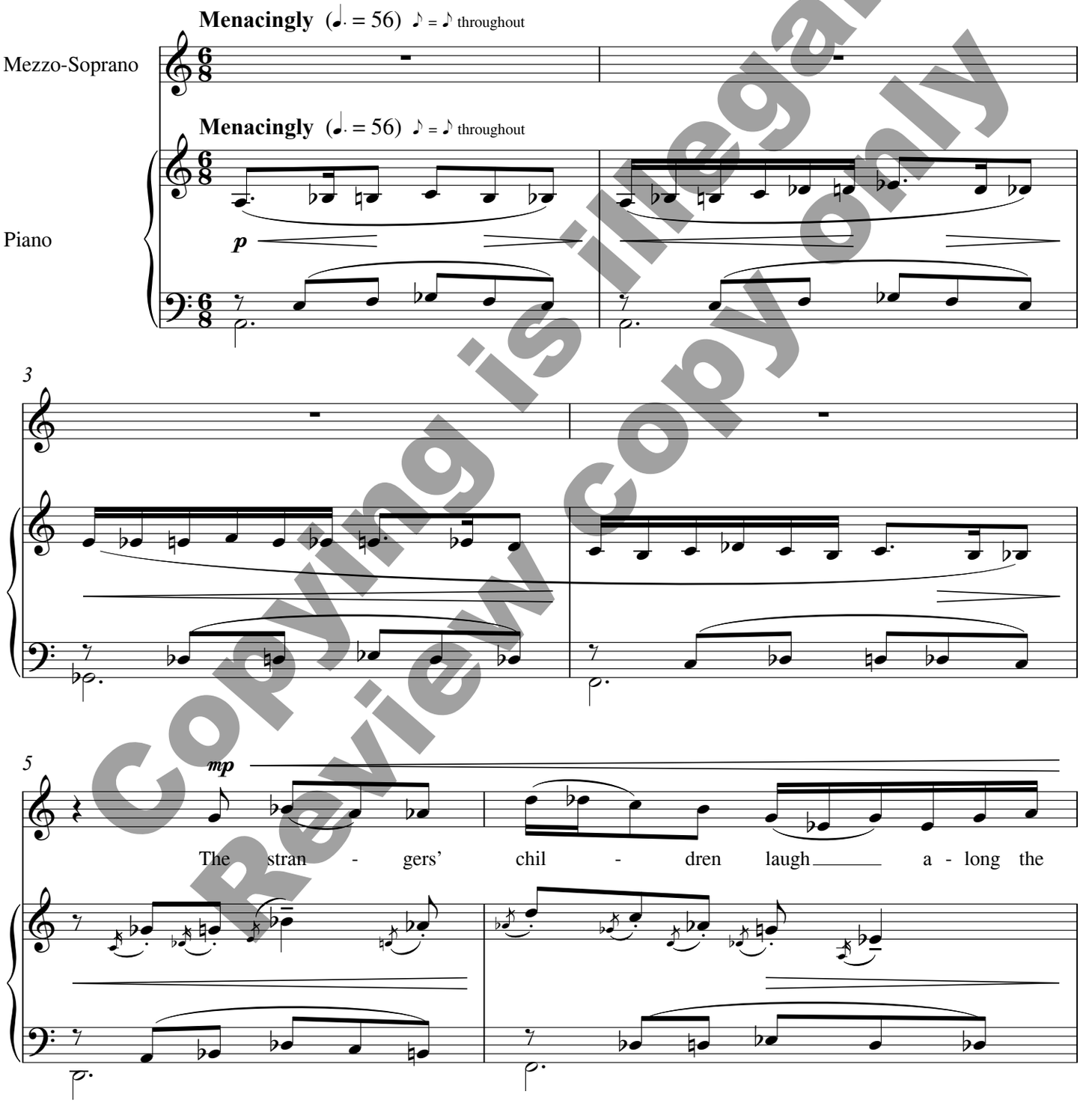
Through the Guarded Gate

for Mezzo-Soprano and Piano

Margaret Widdemer
(1884–1978)

Juliana Hall
(b. 1958)

The Net



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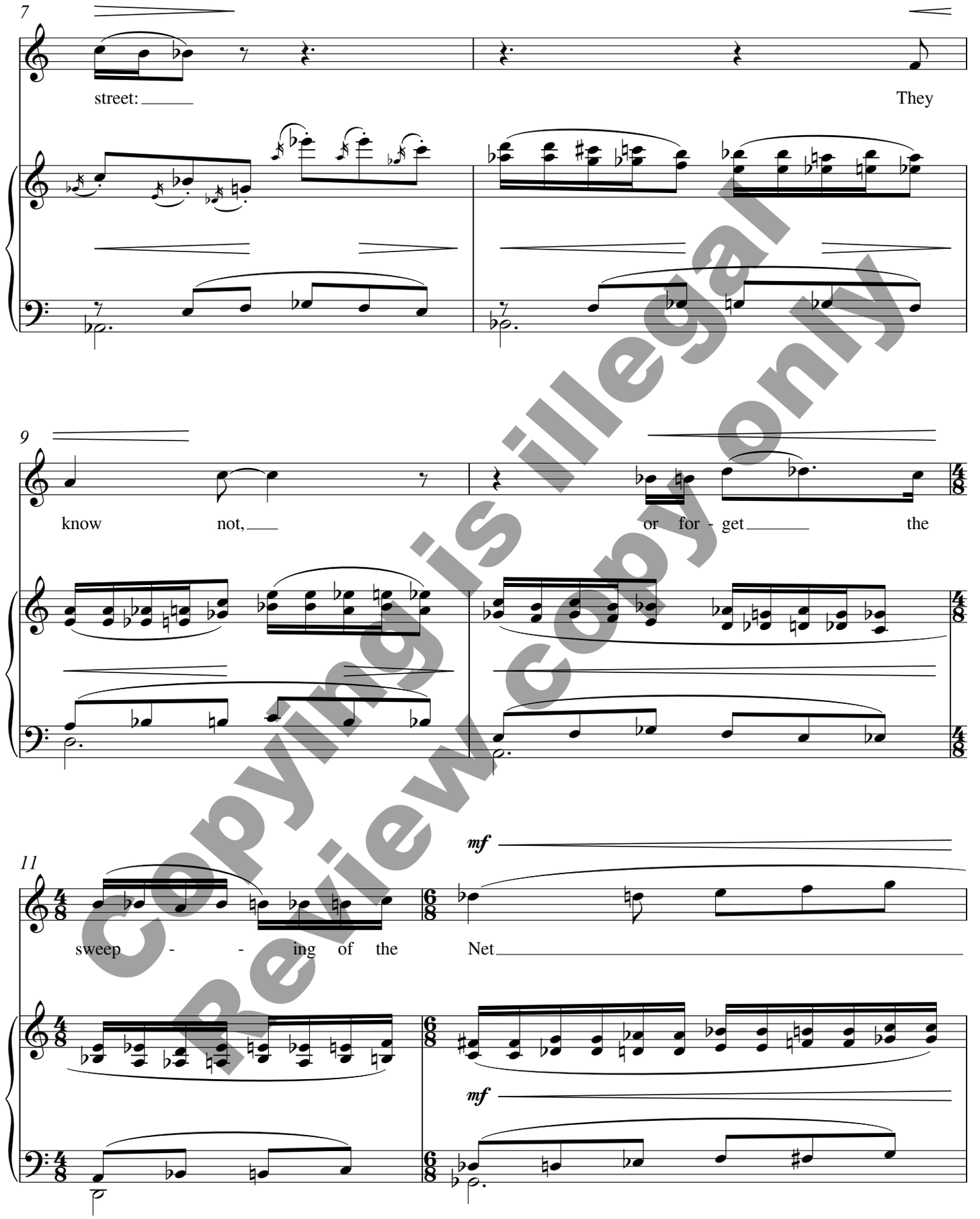

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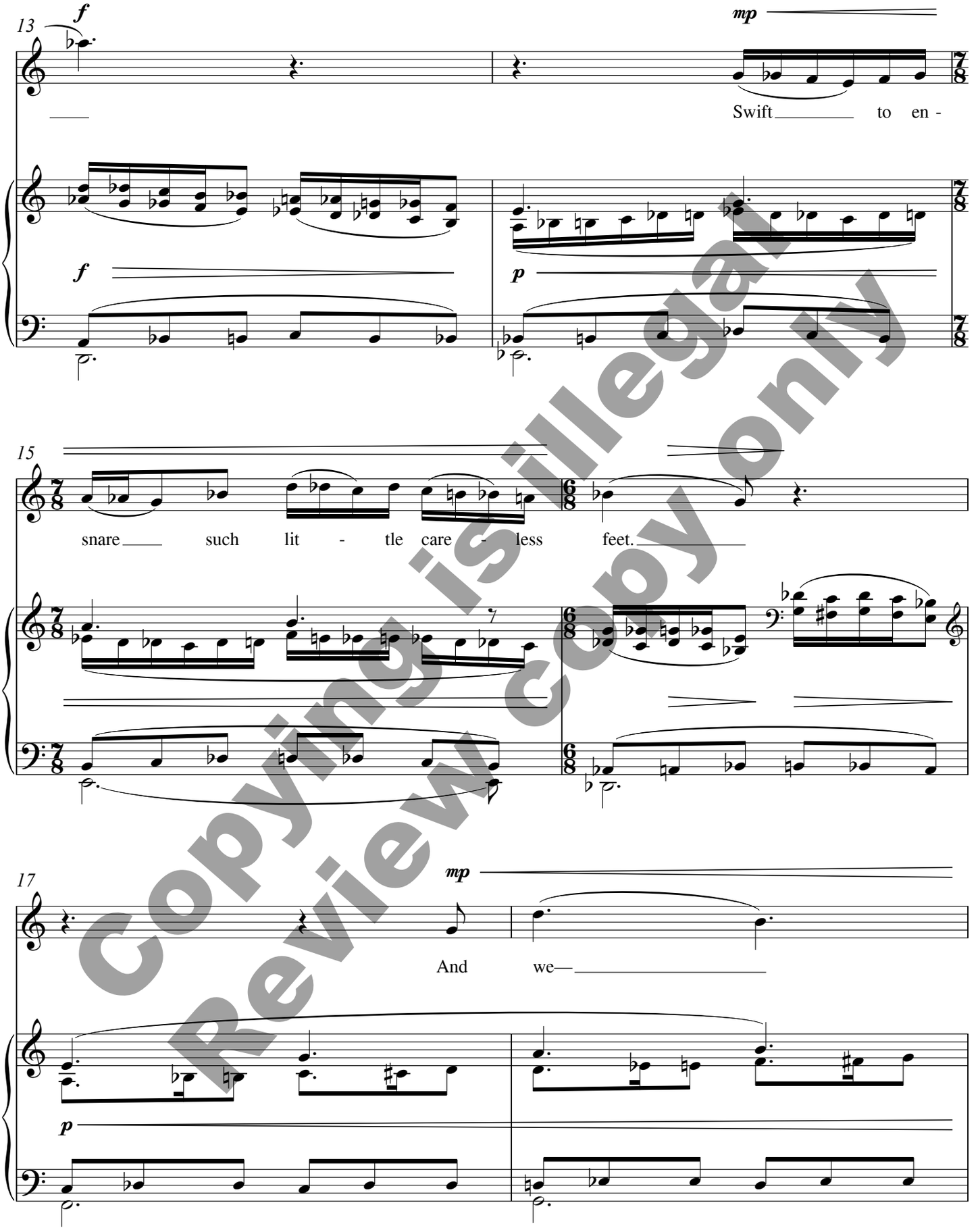

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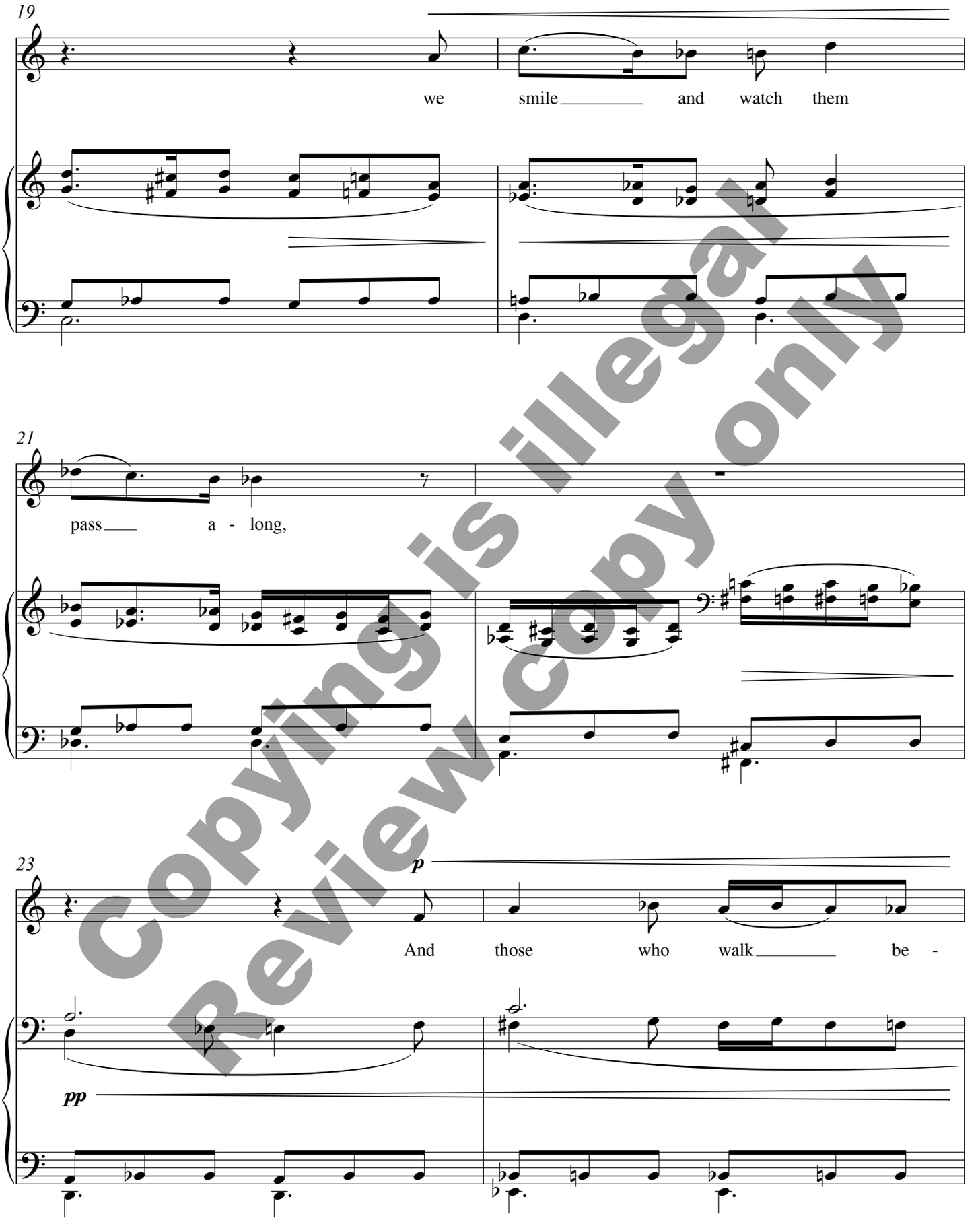

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The Old Suffragist

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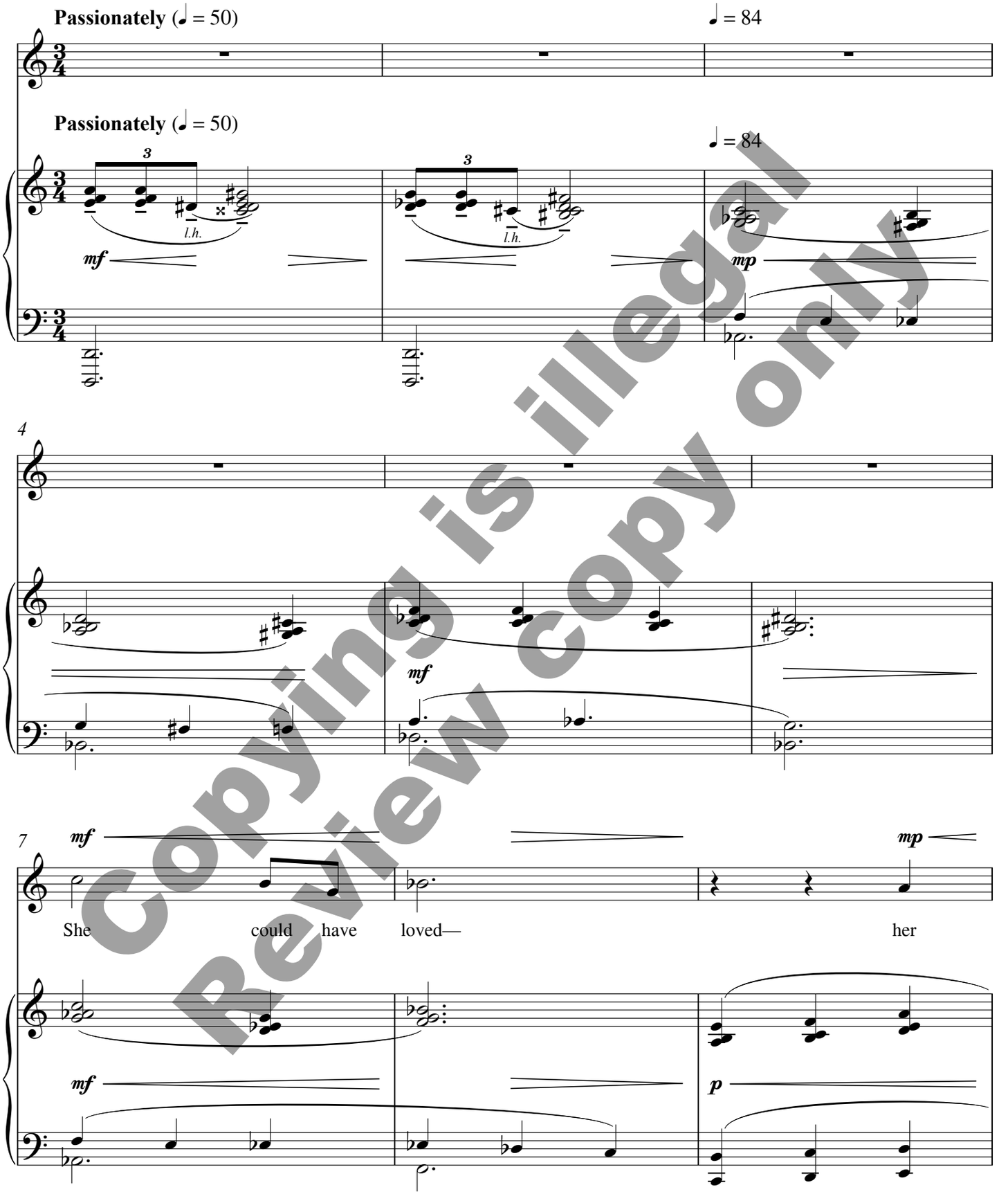

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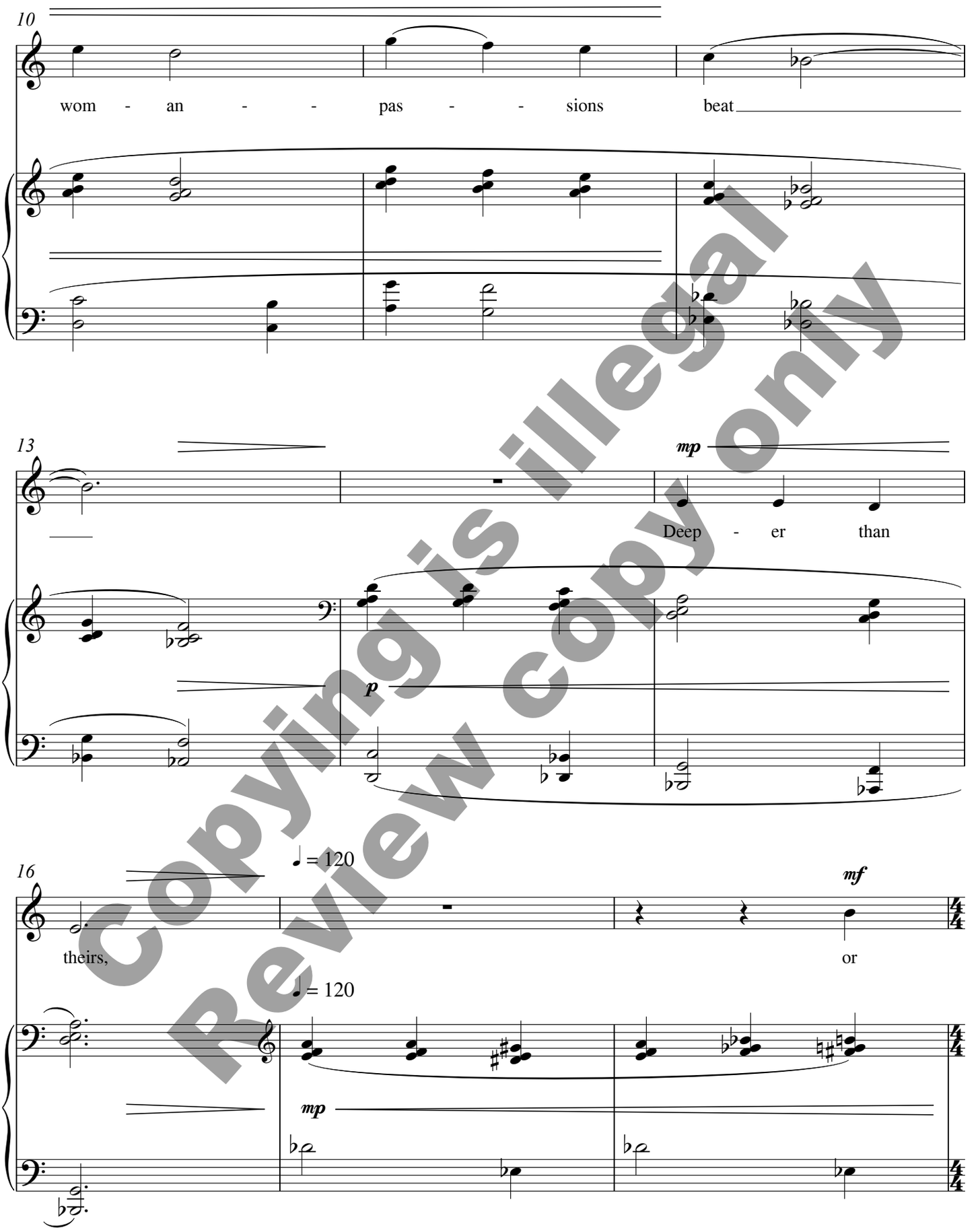

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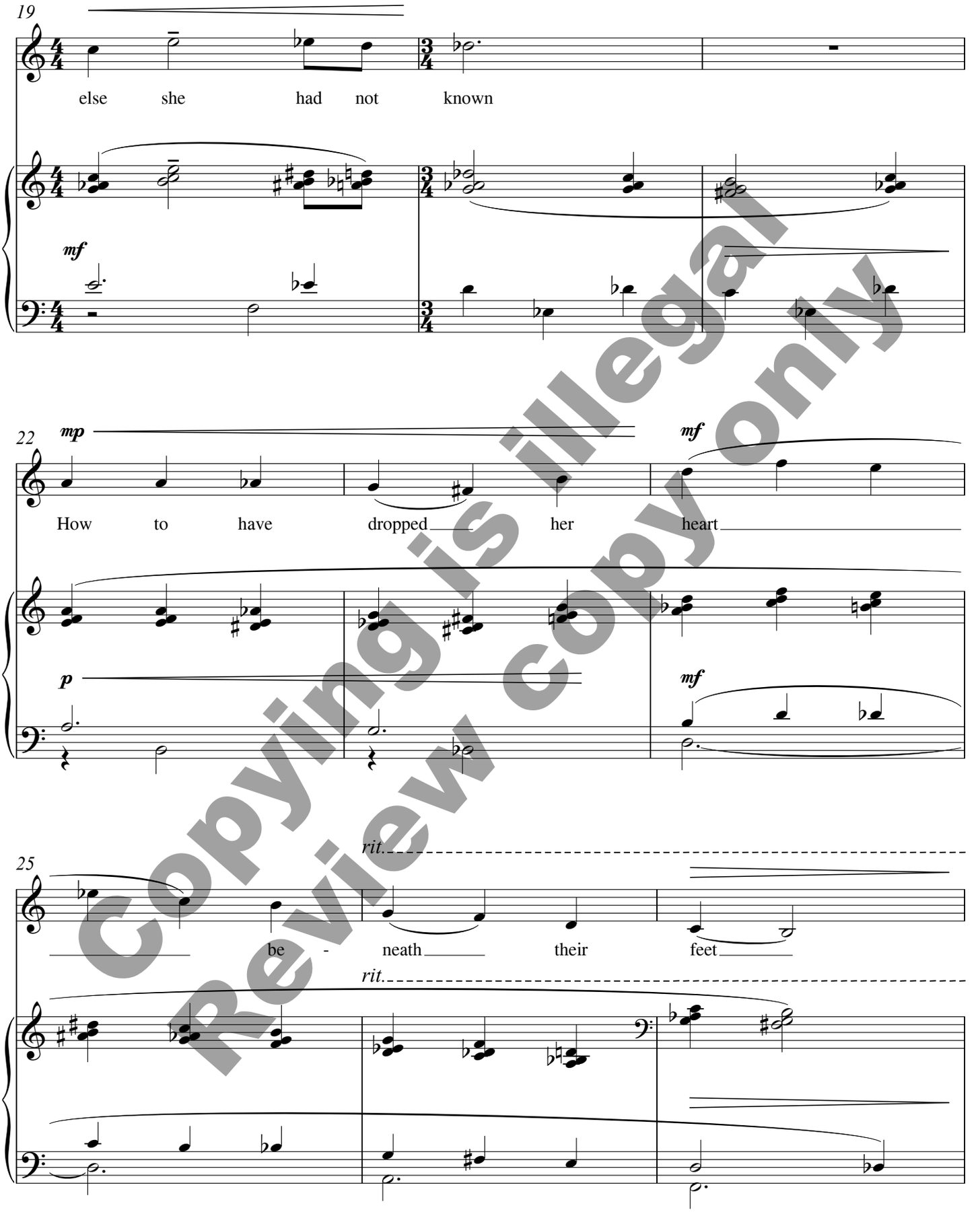

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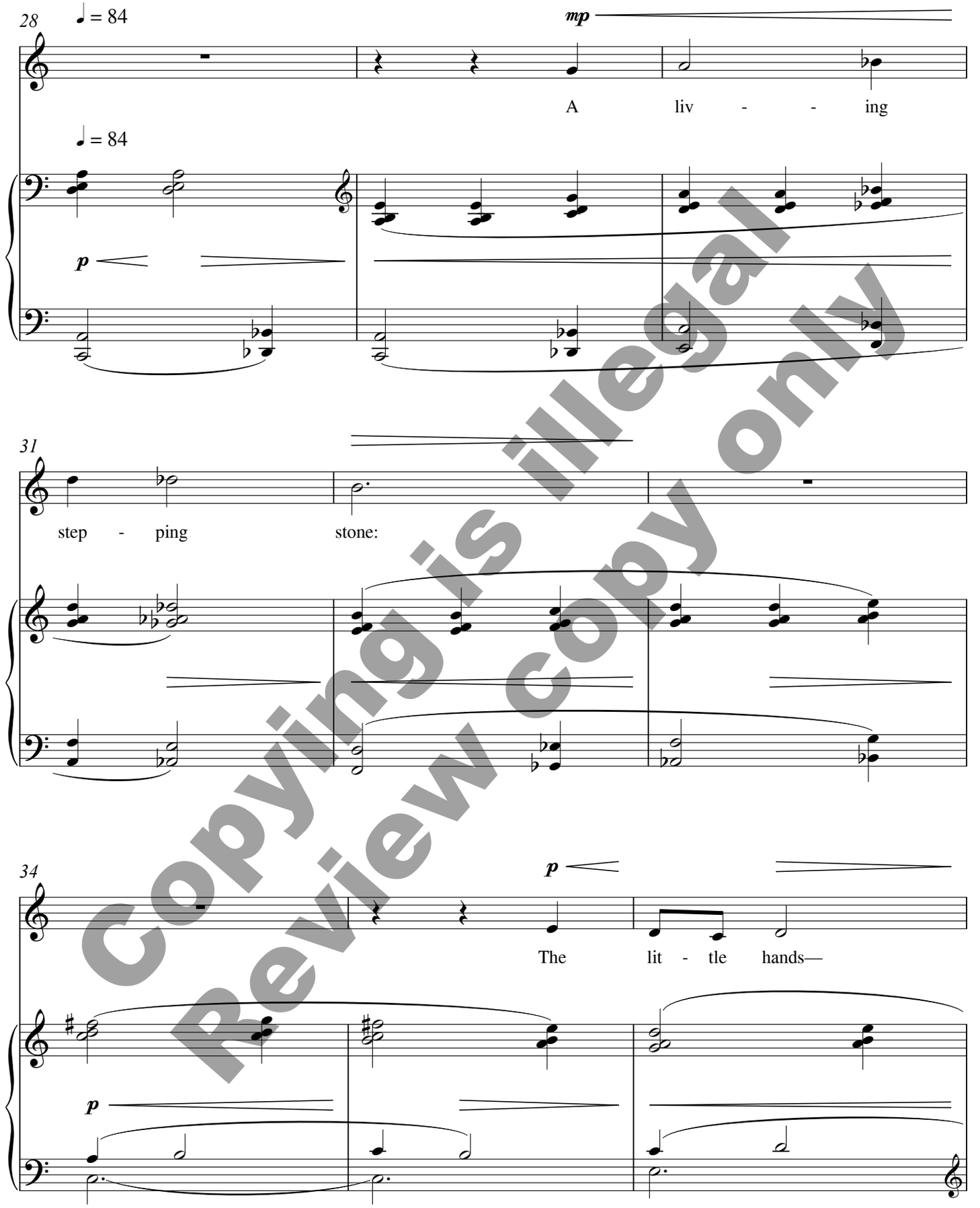

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The Modern Woman to Her Lover

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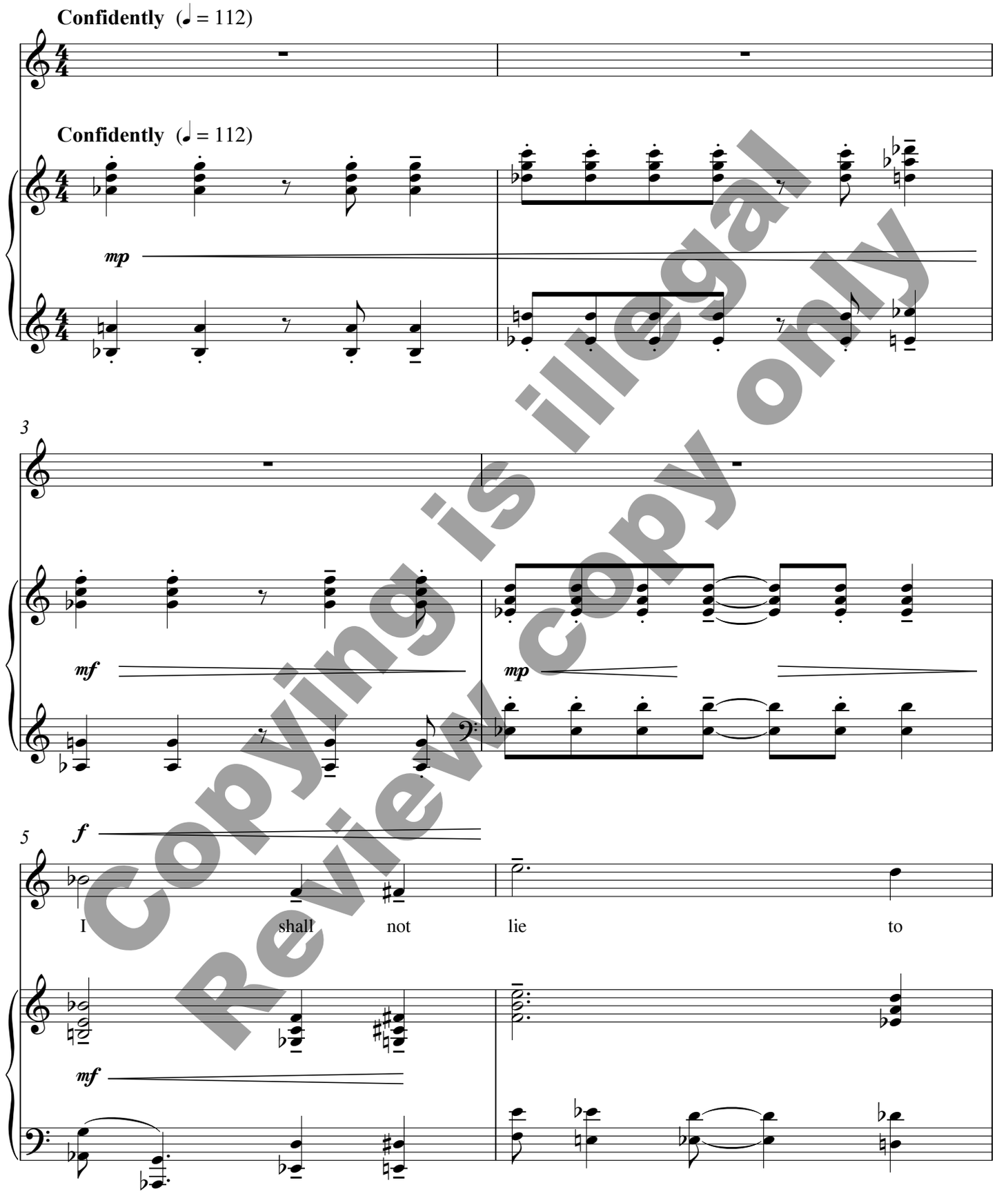

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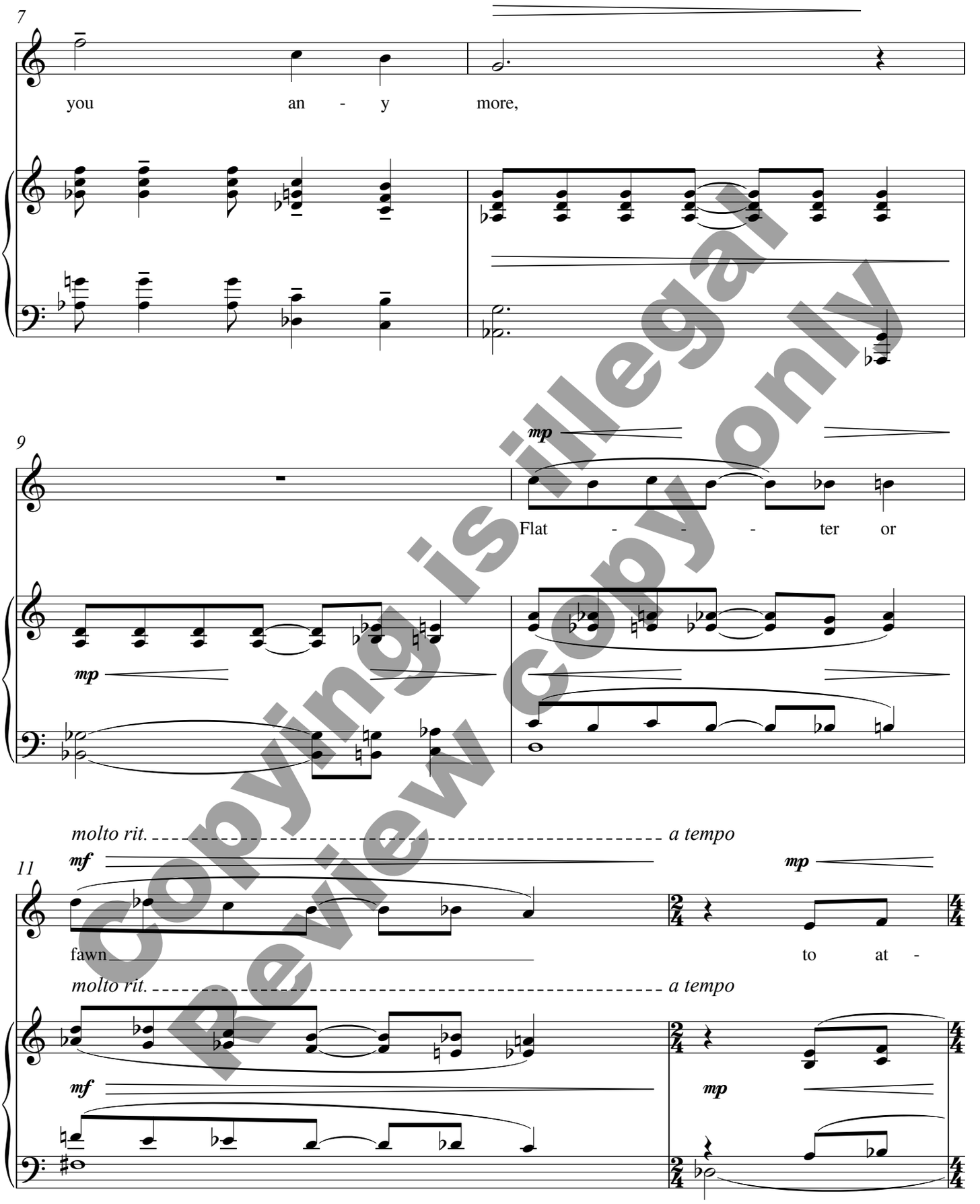

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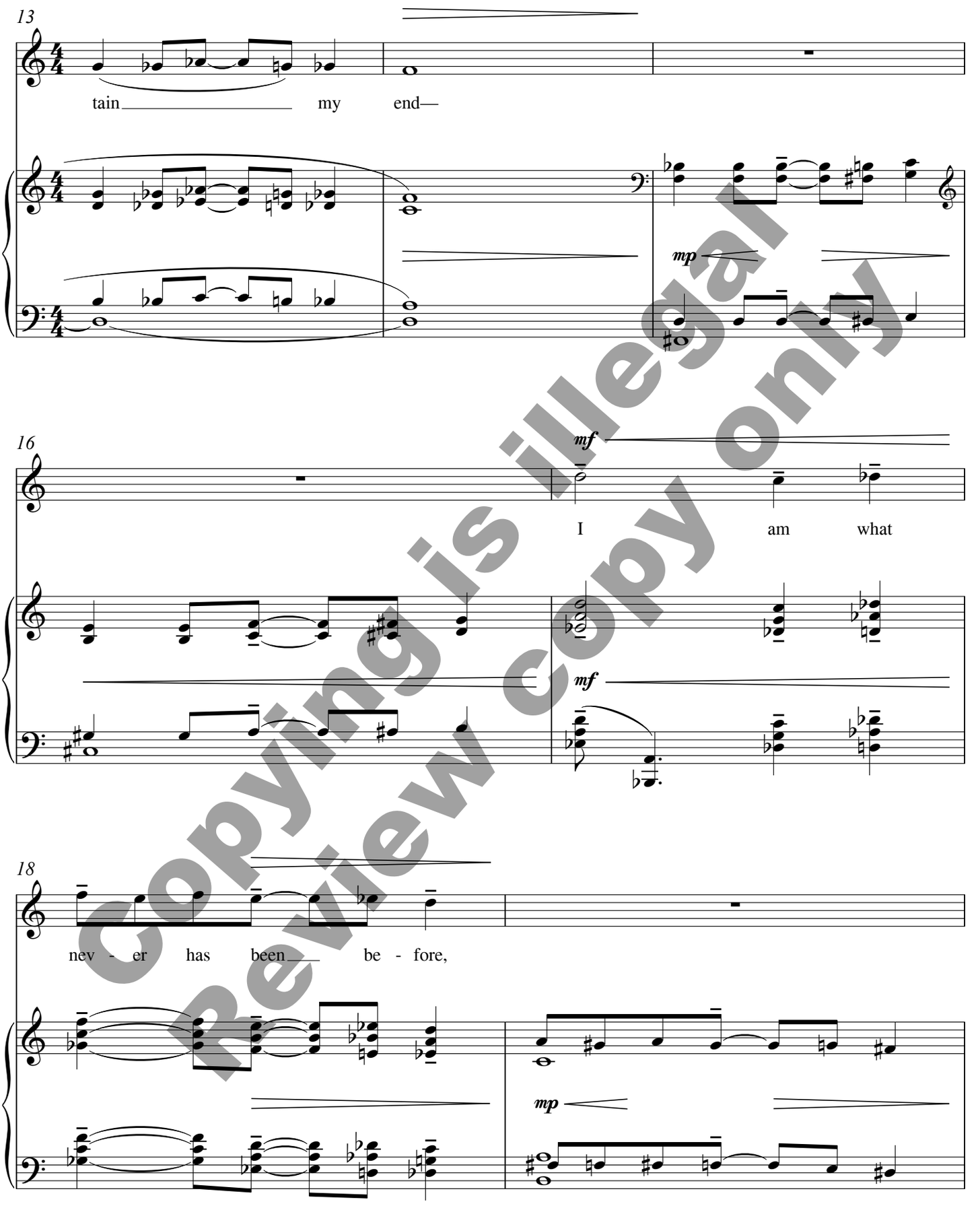

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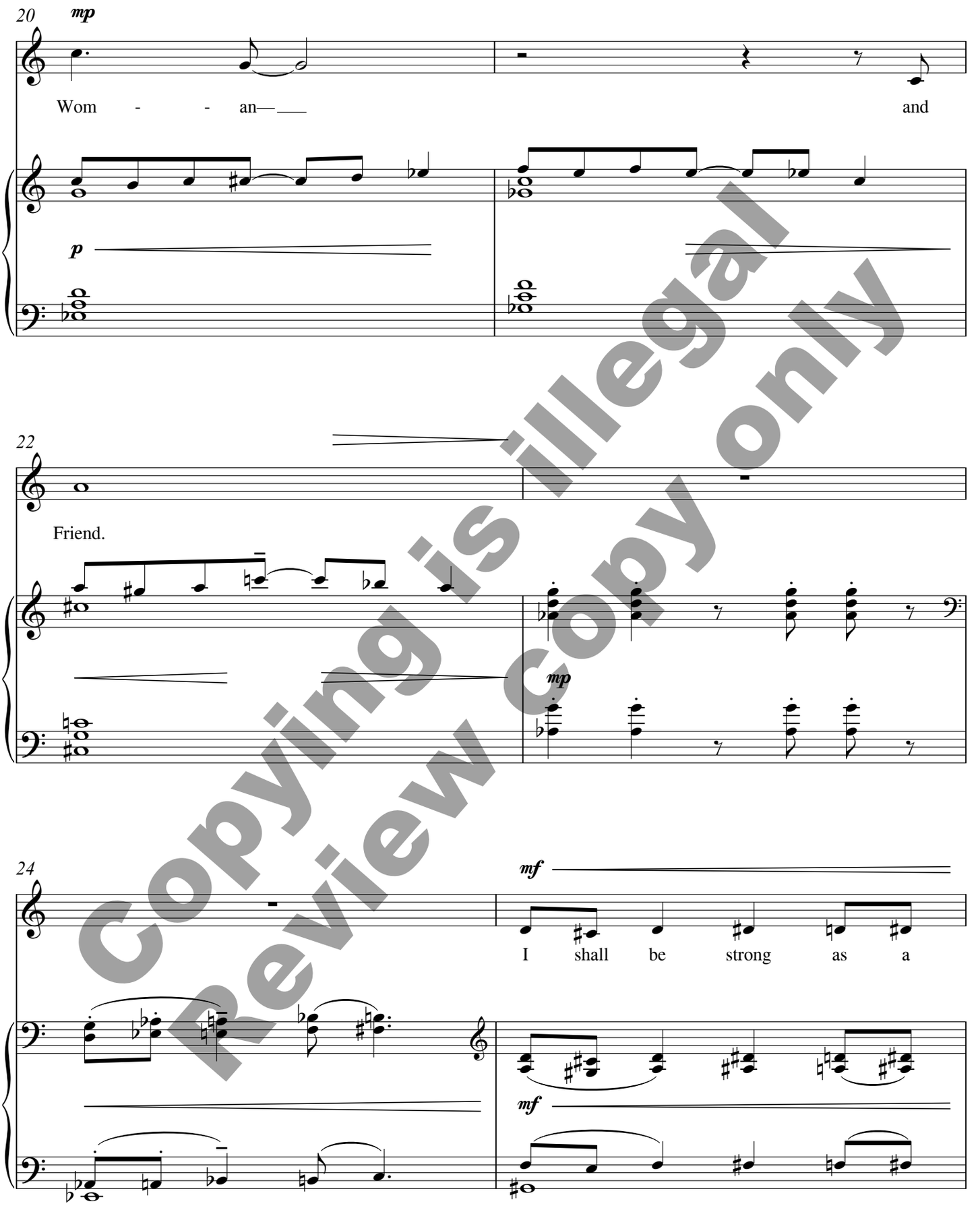

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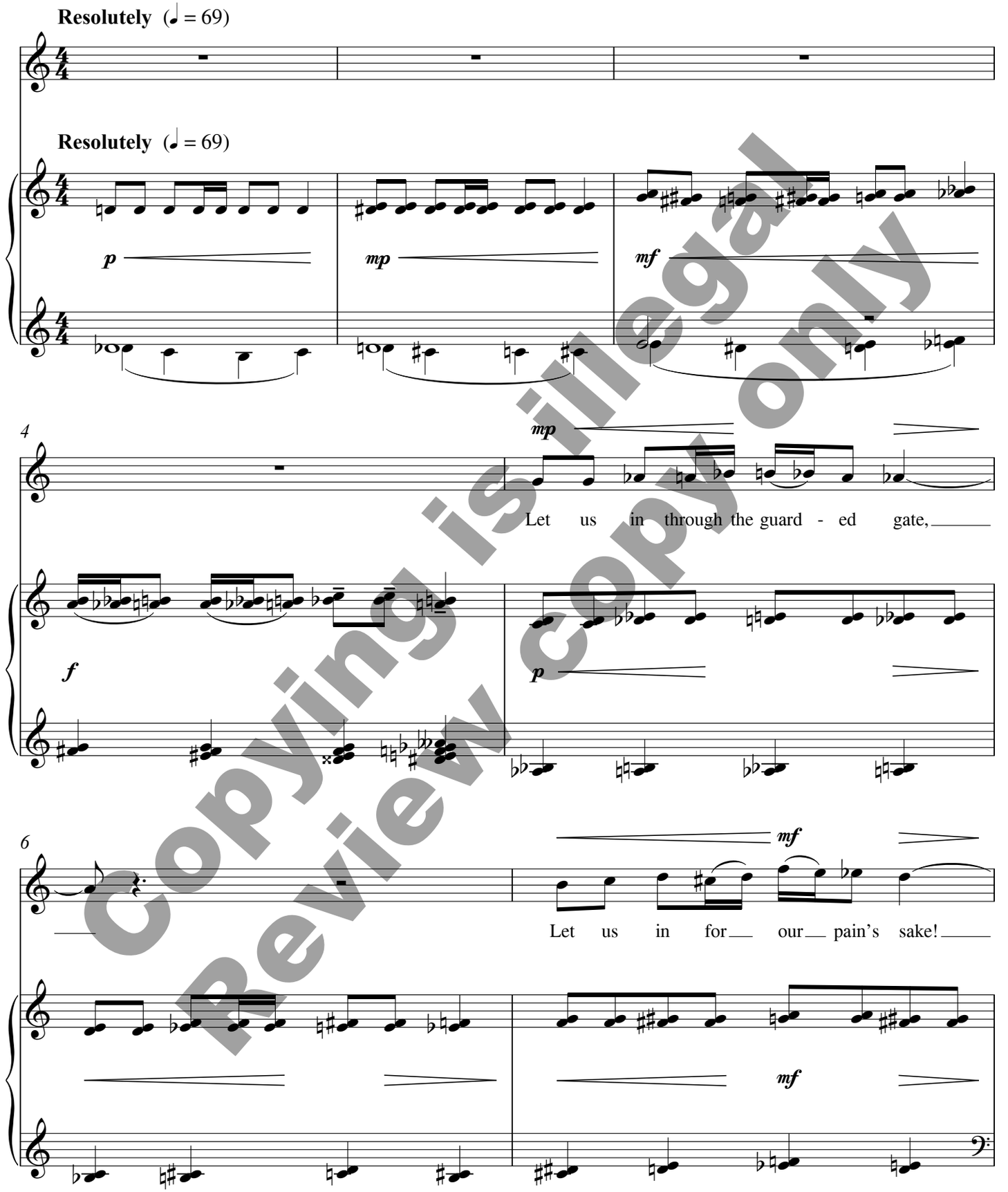

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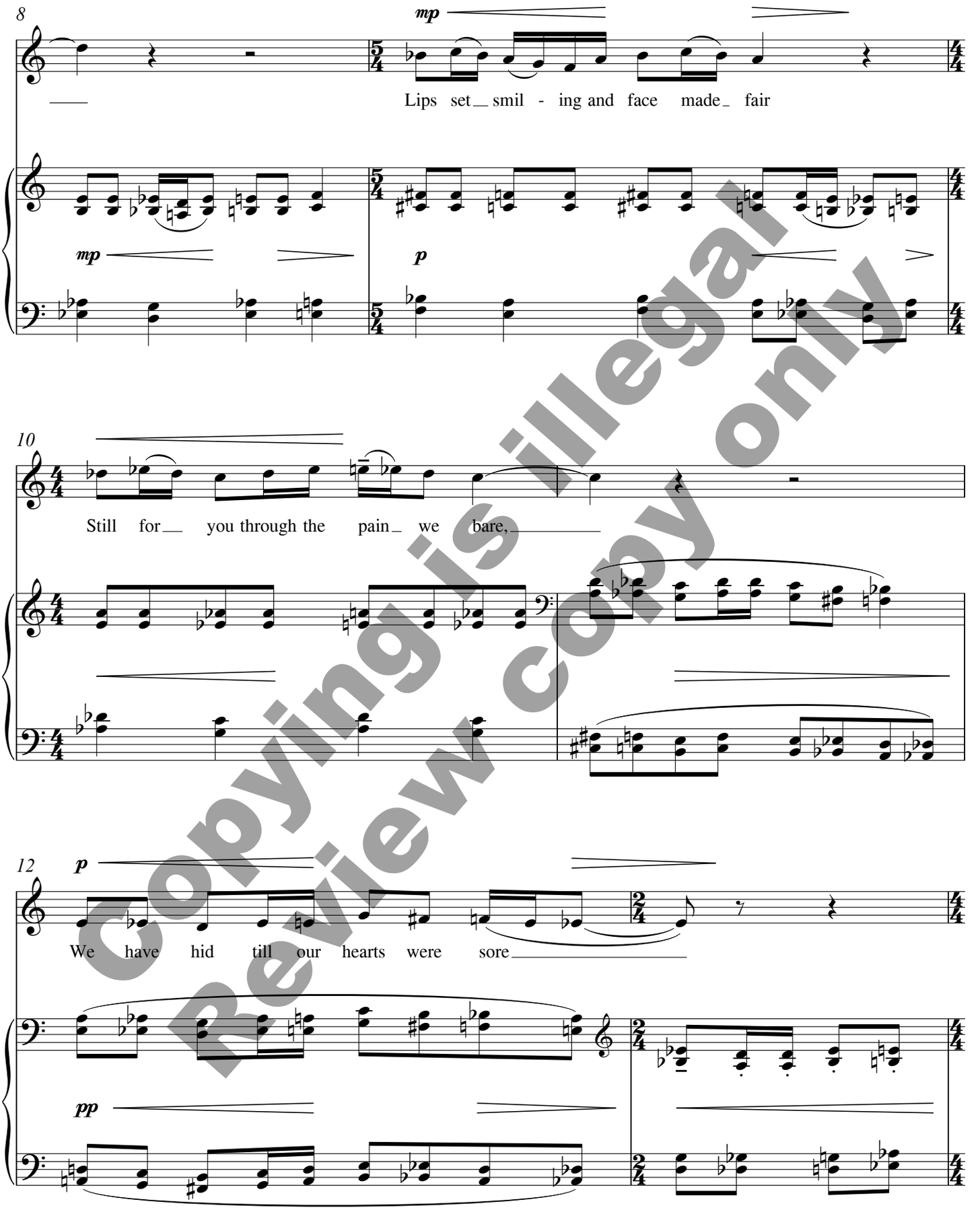

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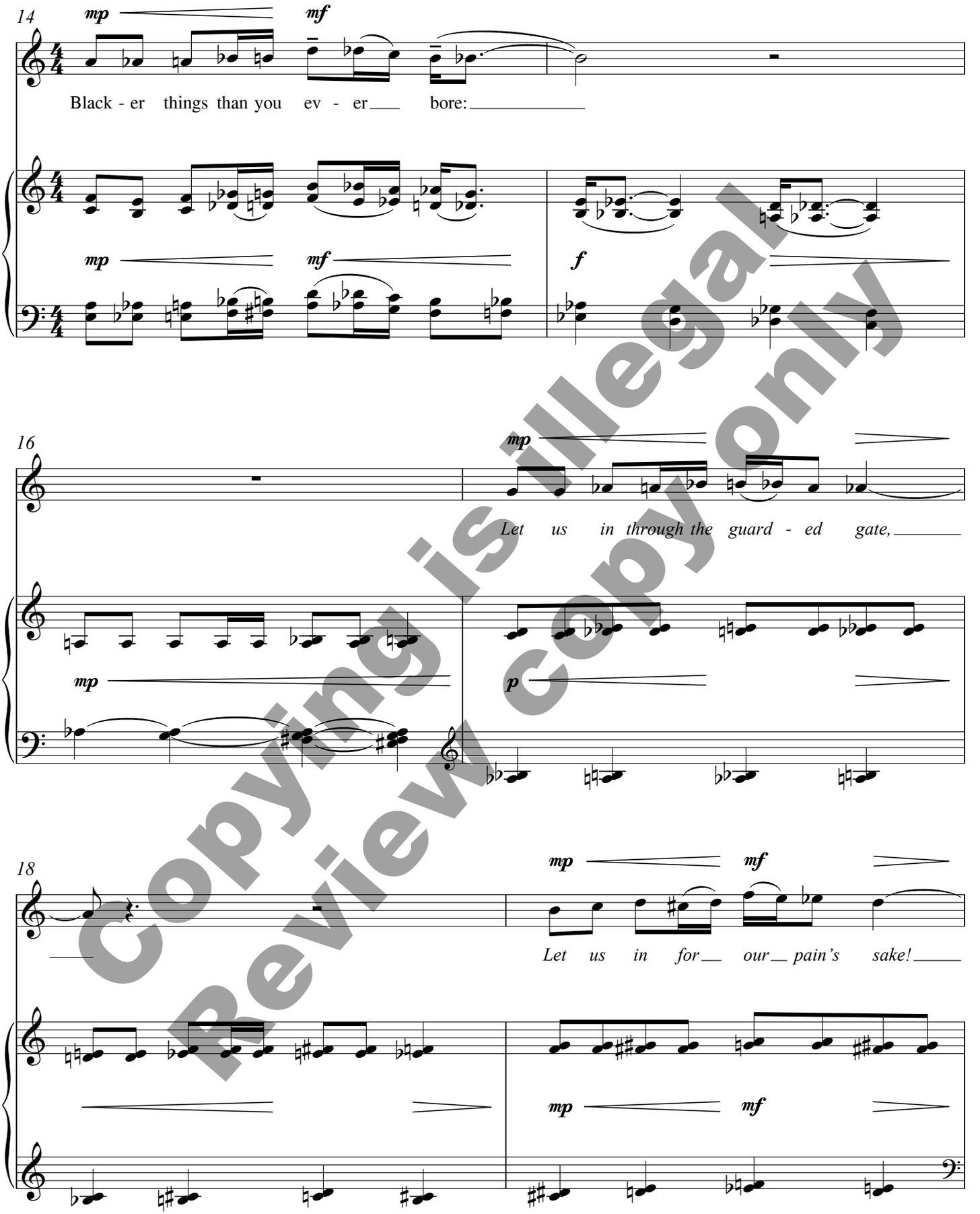

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