University of Glasgow

Barron, Richard (2021) *From text to music: a Scots portfolio.* PhD thesis.

(3. Five Soutar songs)

http://theses.gla.ac.uk/82393/

Copyright and moral rights for this work are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This work cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Enlighten: Theses
https://theses.gla.ac.uk/
research-enlighten@glasgow.ac.uk

Richard Barron

Five Soutar Songs

A sequence of settings of poems

of

William Soutar

For

Soprano and Piano

Five Soutar Songs

This is a sequence of settings of five poems by the Scots poet William Soutar (1898-1943), for Soprano and Piano. The texts of the songs are shown on the following page.

In the third song, ‘Faith’, *Sprechgesang* passages, notated with square noteheads, are intended to be closer to singing than speaking. *Sprechstimme* passages, notated with crossed noteheads, are intended to be closer to speaking than singing.

Duration is around 18 minutes.

The songs were first performed in March 2019, at the Scottish Music Centre in Glasgow. The soprano was Nora Holden, with the composer at the piano.

Five Soutar Songs: the texts

1. Ae Simmer's Day

Up by the caller fountain,
A' through a simmer's day,
I heard the gowk gang cryin
Abune the ferny brae.

The reemlin licht afore me
Gaed up; the wind stude still:
Only the gowk's saft whistle
Lowden'd alang the hill.

The wee burn loppert laichly;
A bird cam and was gaen:
I keekit round ahint me
For I was a' my lane.

(1932)

2. The Sea-Shell

Listen! For a lost world maunners here
Frae the cauld mou o' a shell;
And sae far awa the blufferts blare
And the sea-birds skreel:

And the wail o' women alang yon shore
Whaur the swaw comes rowin in;
And the swurly waters whummlin owre
The cry o' the sailor-men.

(1941)

3. Faith

Look up; and yonder on the brae,
Like a sang in silence born,
Wi' the dayspring o' the day
Walks the snaw-white unicorn.

Sae far awa he leams in licht;
And yet his glitter burns atween
The darkness hung ahint the hicht
And hidden in the lifted e'en.

Look doun and doun; frae ilka airt
The flutherin worlds through darkness fa':
But yon bricht beast walks, in the hert,
Sae far awa; sae far awa.

(1938)

4. Brichtness

Frae straucht abune
The licht dreels doun,
And the bare stane
Lowes in the toun.

Through reemlin air
Steeple and street
Are burnin clear
In steady heat:

In steady fire
Sae crystal bricht
Causey and spire
Burn back to licht.

(1943)

5. Song

Whaur yon broken brig hings owre;
Whaur yon water maks nae soun';
Babylon blaws by in stour:
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun.

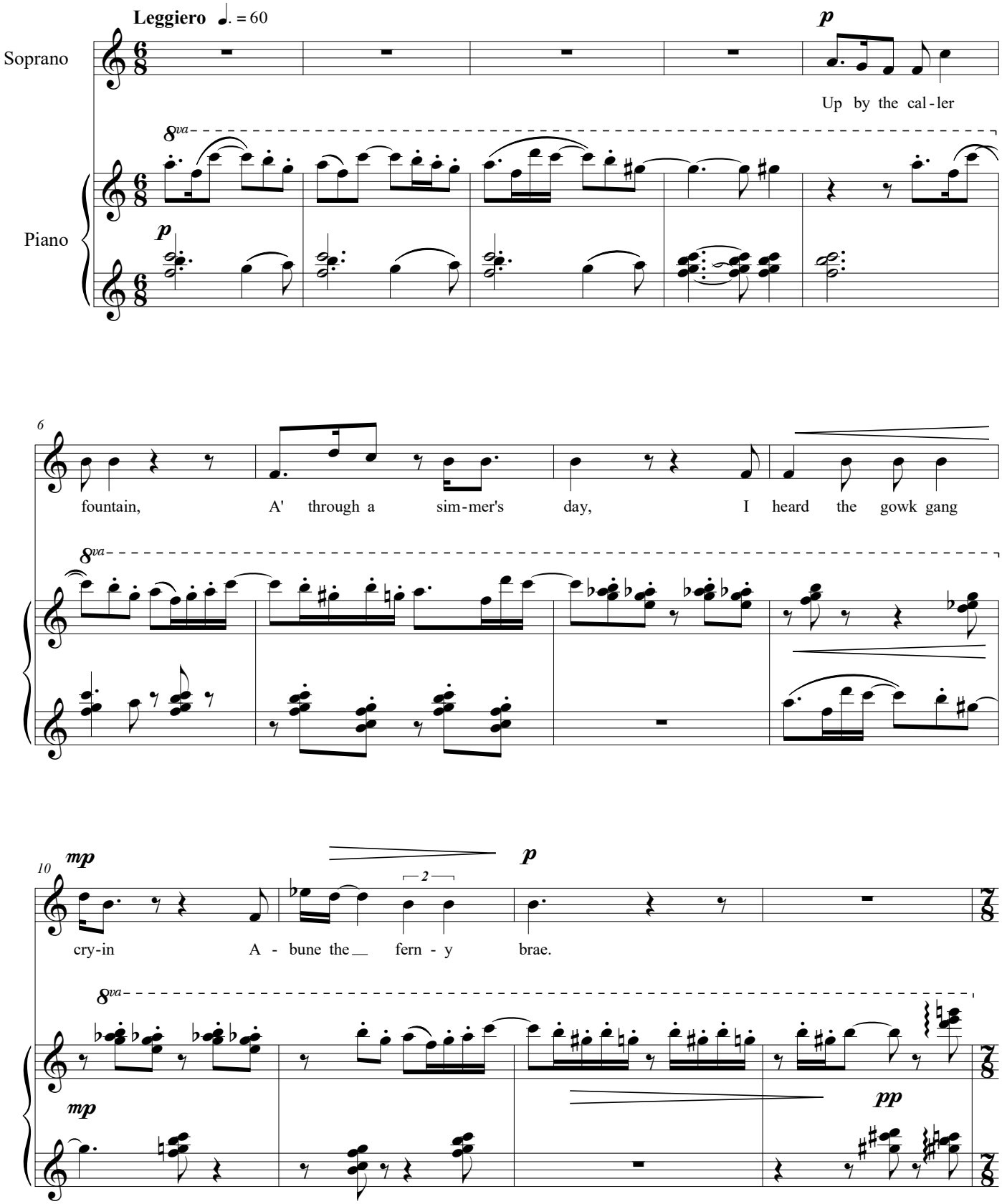
Deep, owre deep, for onie drouth:
Wan eneuch an ye wud droun:
Saut, or seelfu', for the mouth;
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun.

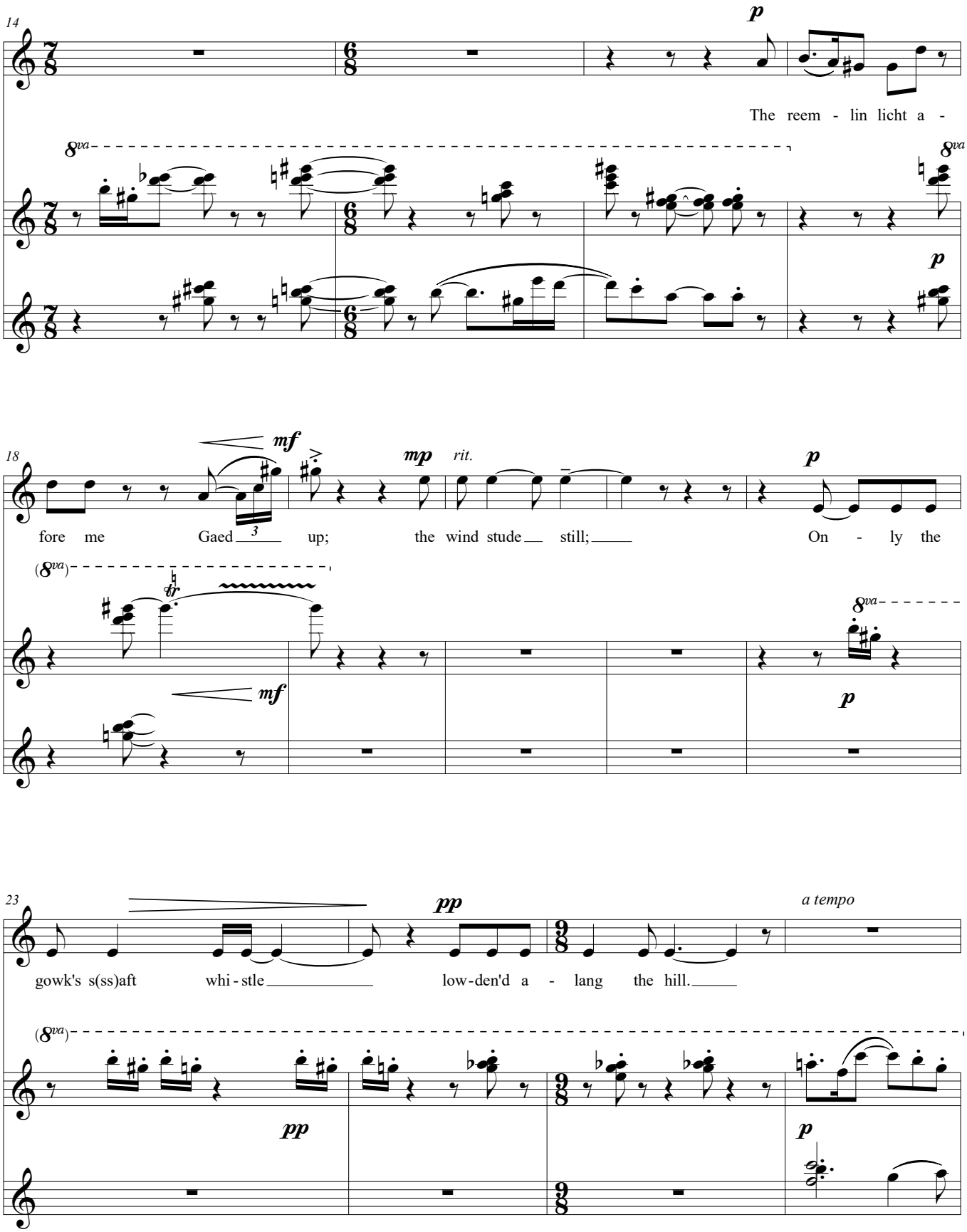
Babylon blaws by in stour
Whaur yon water maks nae soun':
Darkness is your only door;
Gang doun wi'a sang, gang doun.

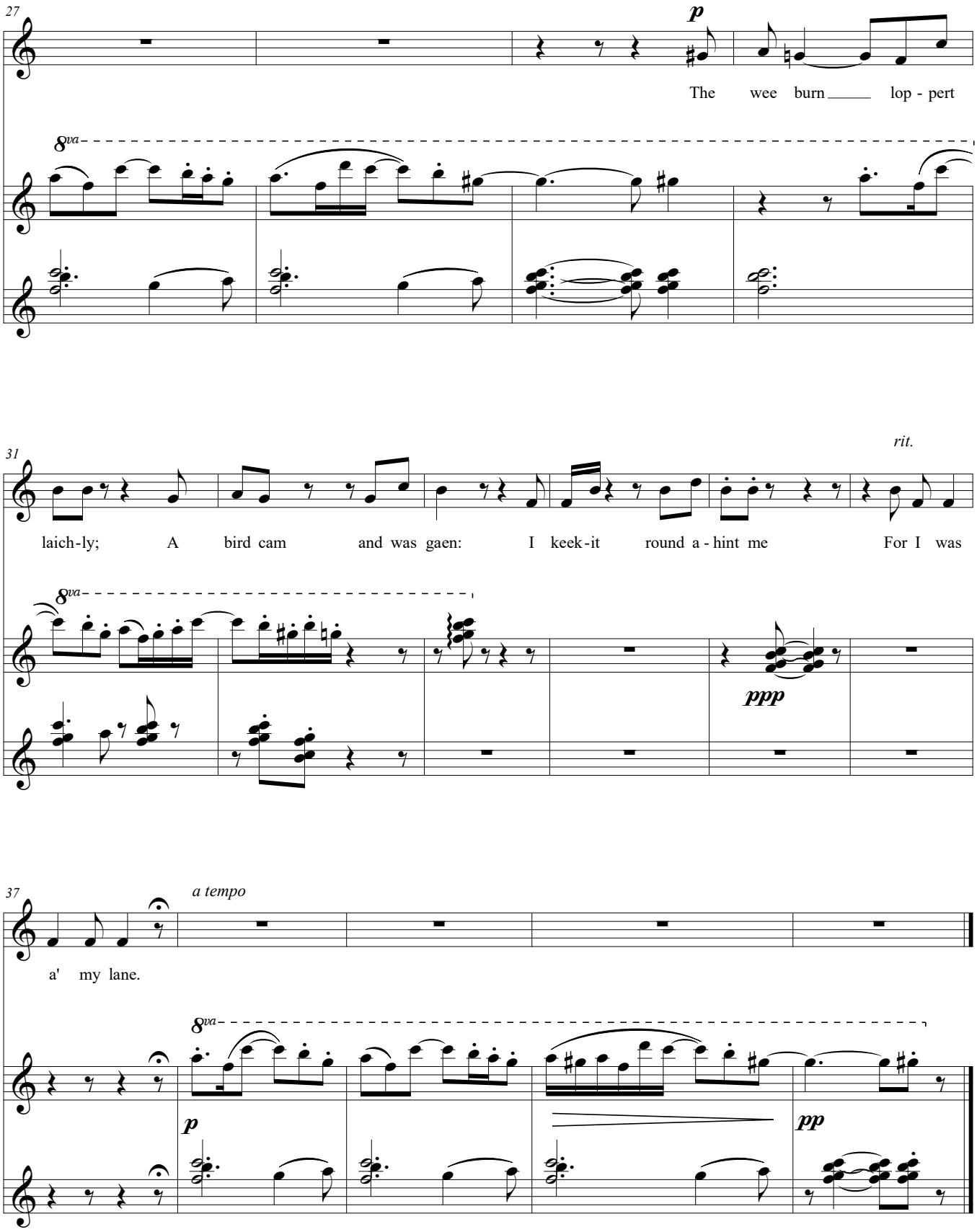
(1935)

1. Ae Simmer's Day

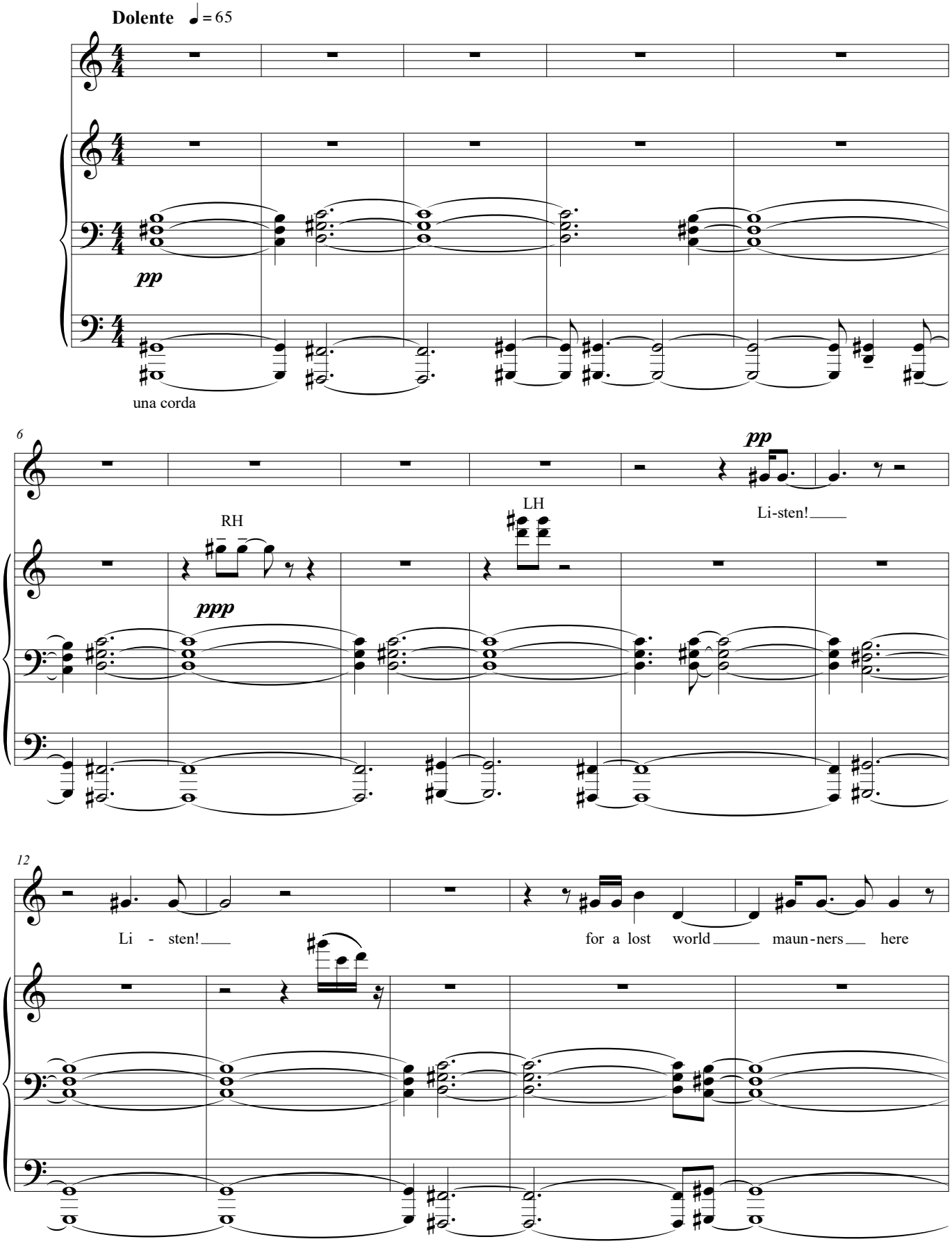
Richard Barron

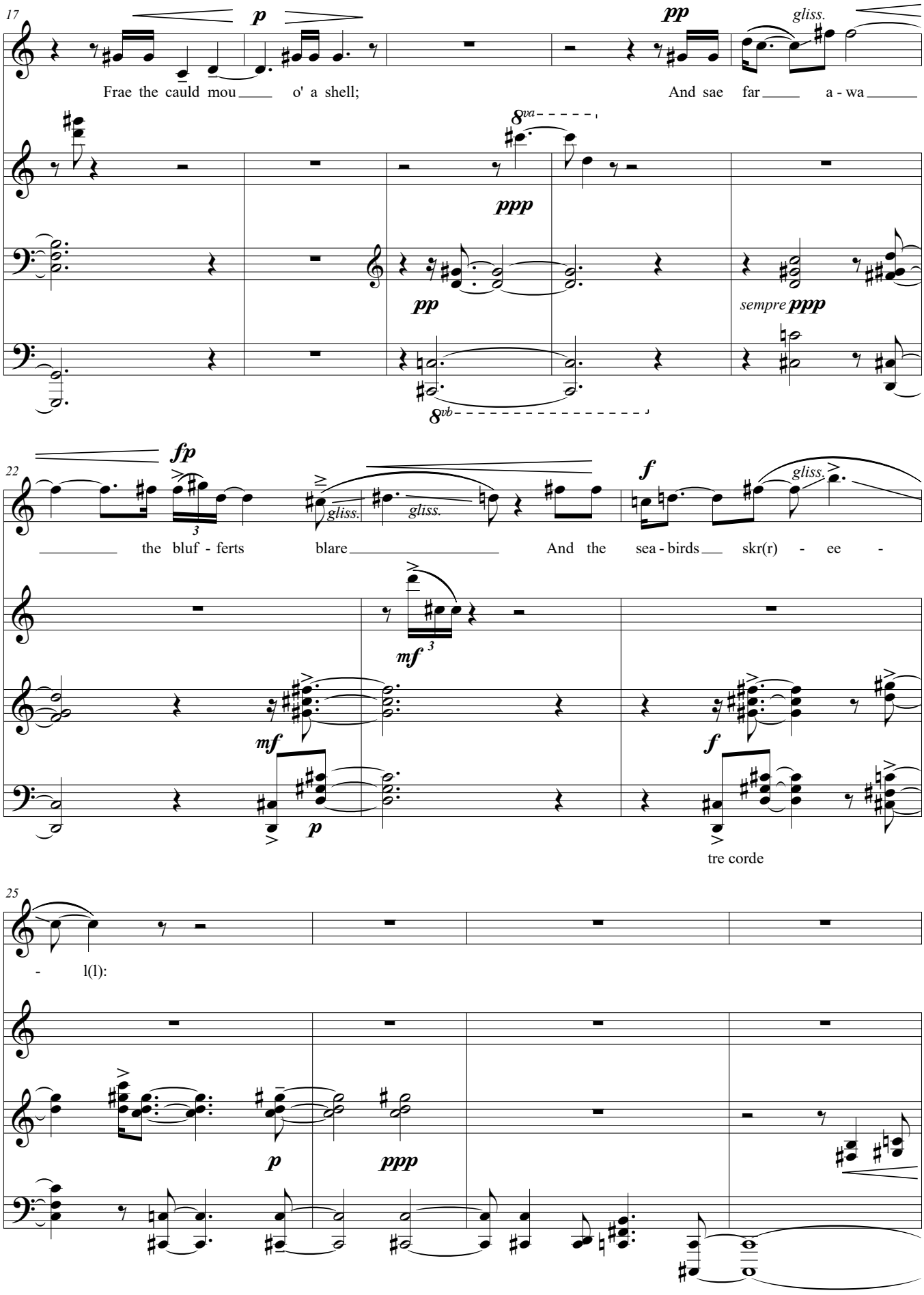


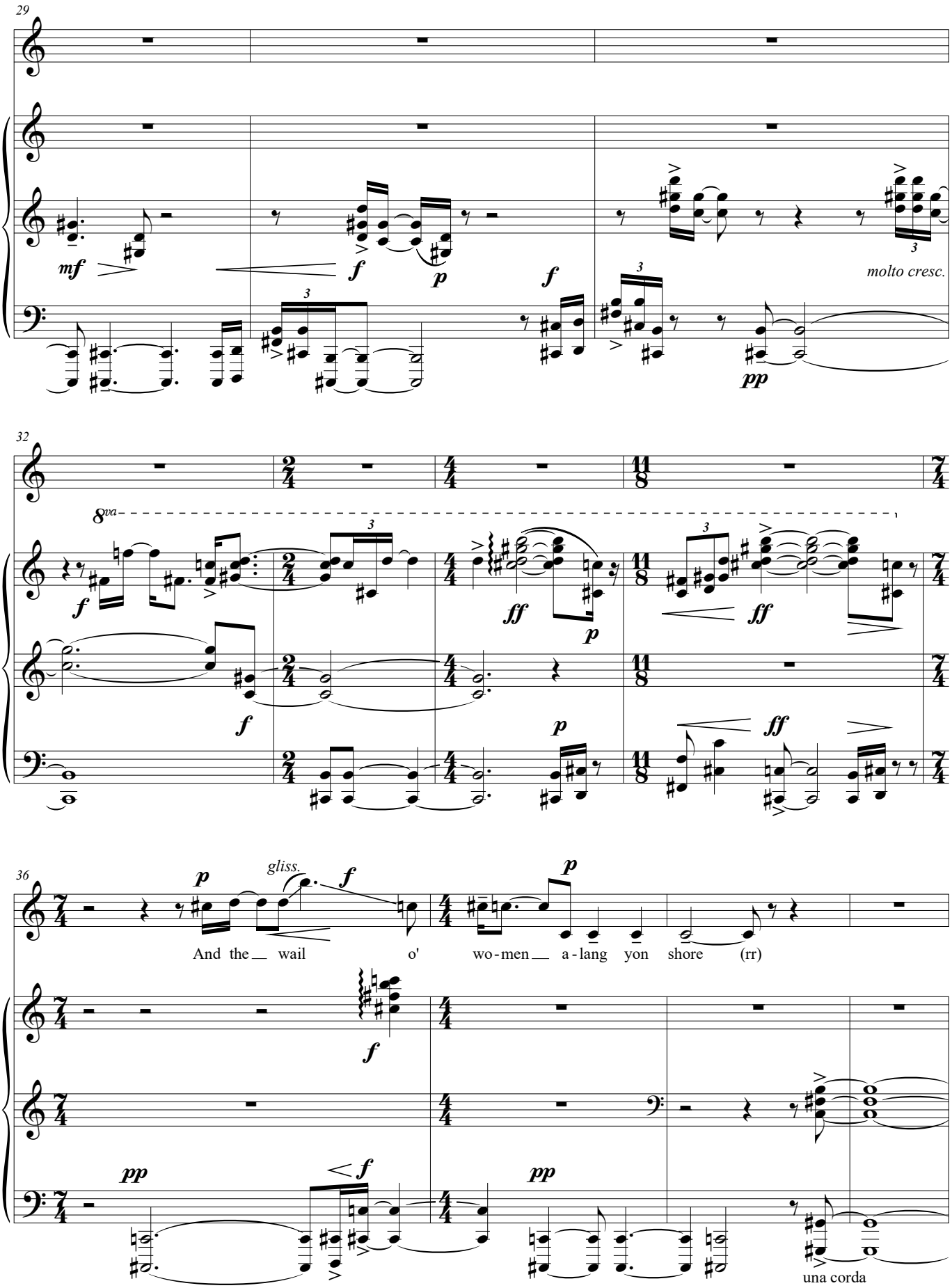

14
p
The reem - lin licht a -
8va
8va
p
18
mf
mp
rit.
p
fore me Gaed 3 up; the wind stude still; On - ly the
(8va)
tr
8va
mf
p
23
pp
a tempo
gowk's s(ss)aft whi - stle low - den'd a - lang the hill.
(8va)
pp
p

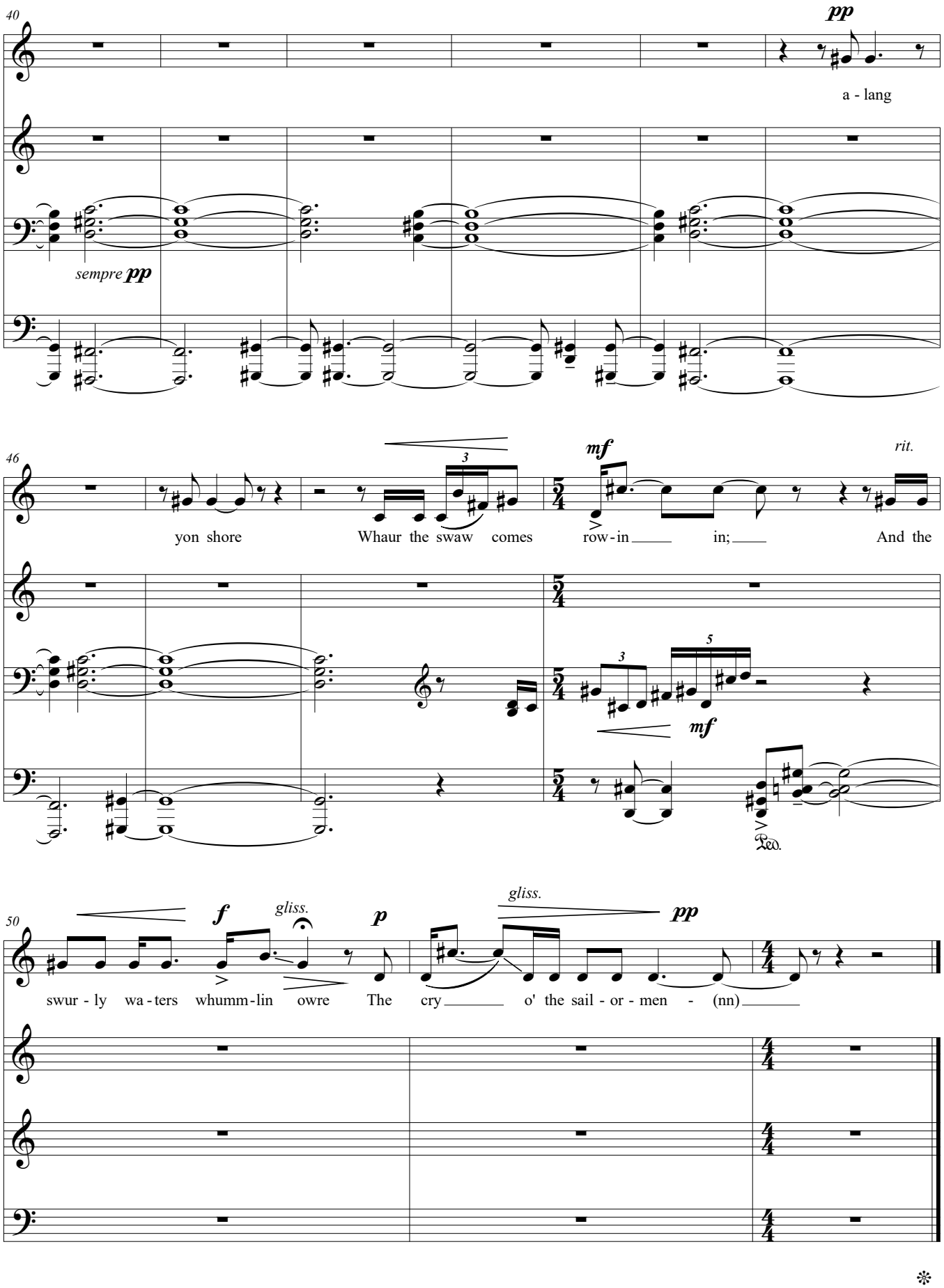

27
p
The wee burn lop - pert
8va
31
rit.
laich-ly; A bird cam and was gaen: I keek-it round a-hint me For I was
8va
ppp
37
a tempo
a' my lane.
8va
p
pp

2. The Sea-Shell



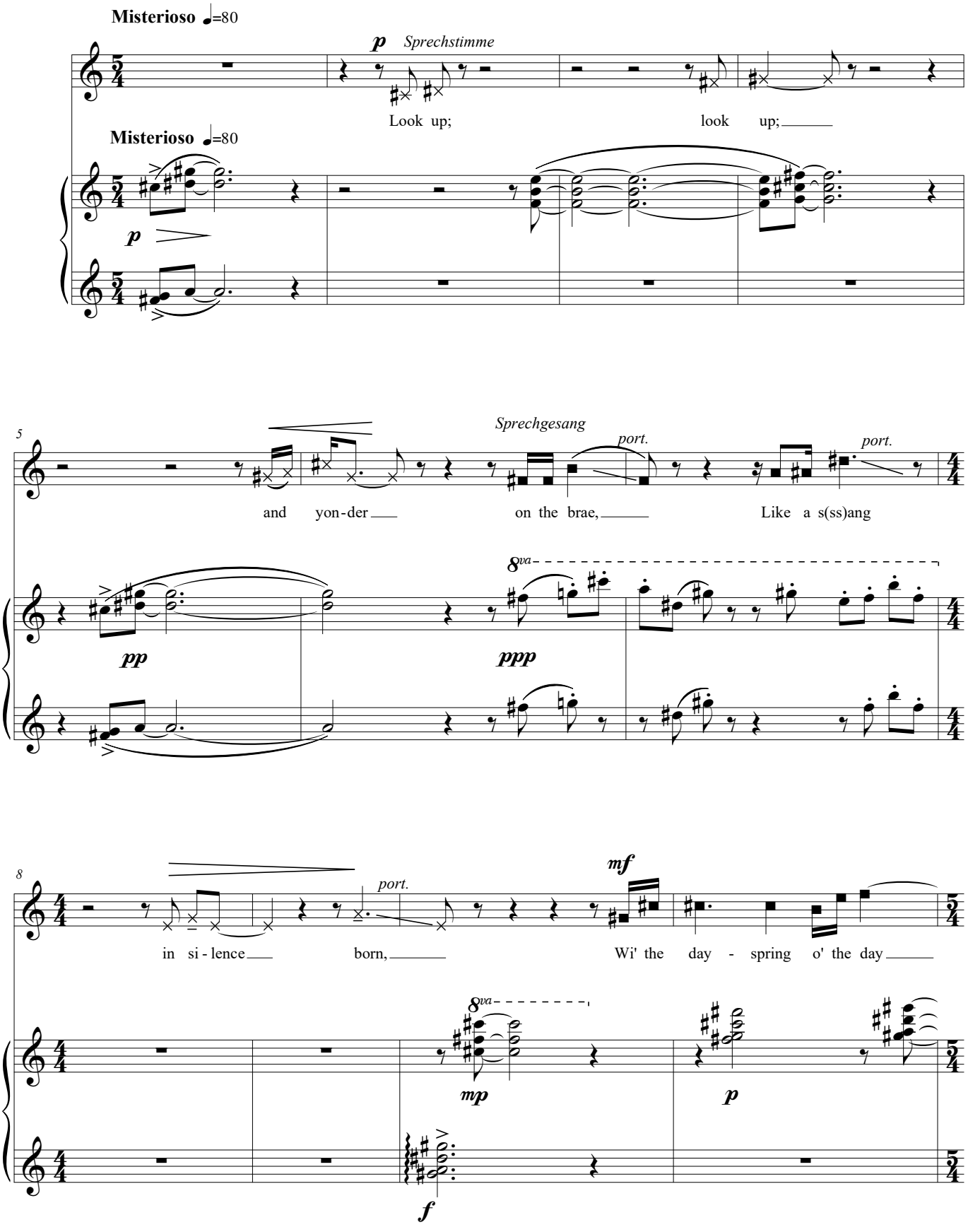

17
p
pp
gliss.
Frae the cauld mou o' a shell;
And sae far a - wa
8va
ppp
pp
sempre ppp
8vb
22
fp
gliss.
gliss.
f
gliss.
the bluf - ferts blare
And the sea - birds skr(r) - ee -
mf
mf
p
f
tre corde
25
- l(l):
p
ppp

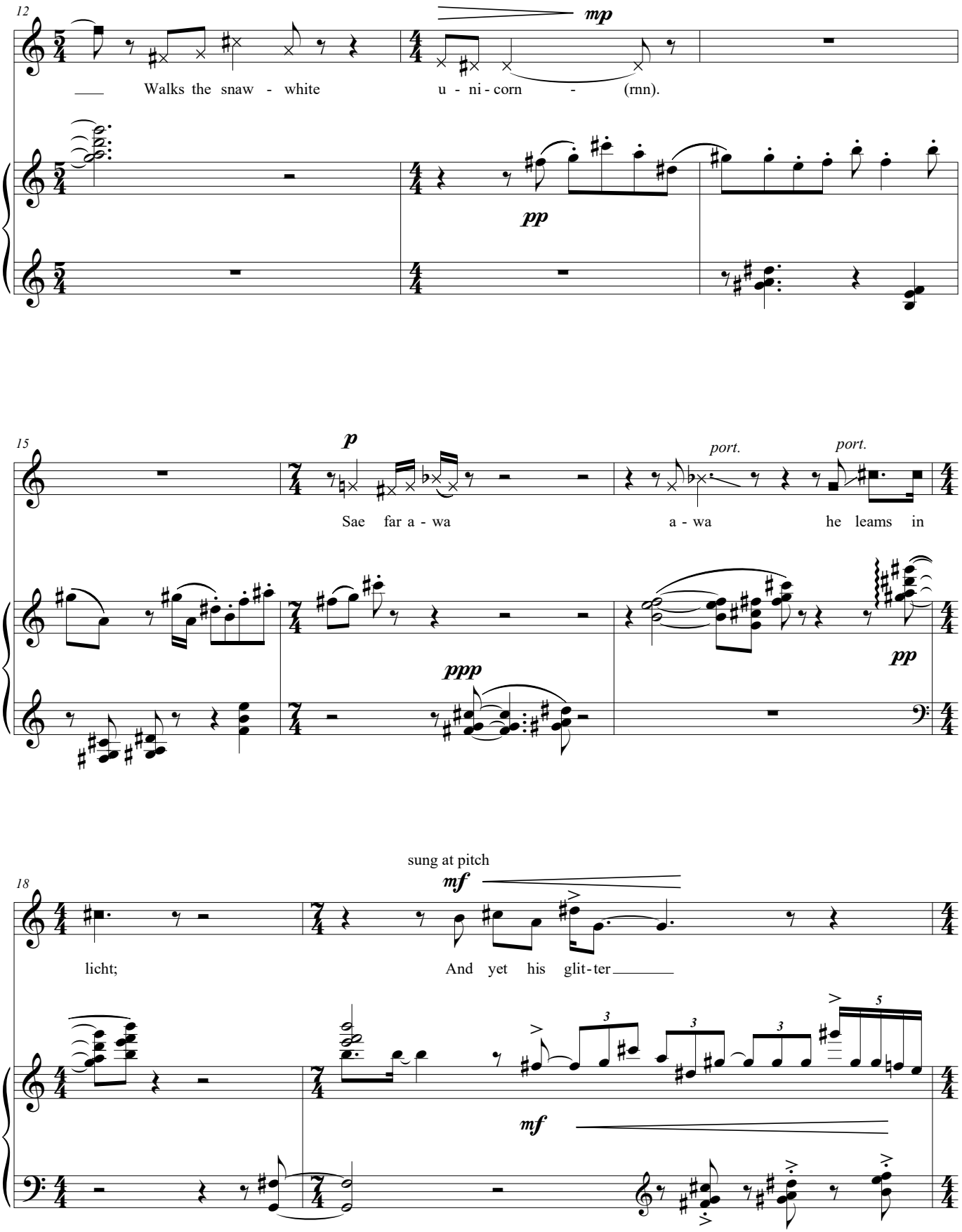

29
mf
f
p
f
molto cresc.
pp
32
8va
f
ff
p
f
p
ff
ff
36
p
gliss.
f
p
And the wail o' wo-men a-lang yon shore (rr)
f
pp
f
pp
una corda

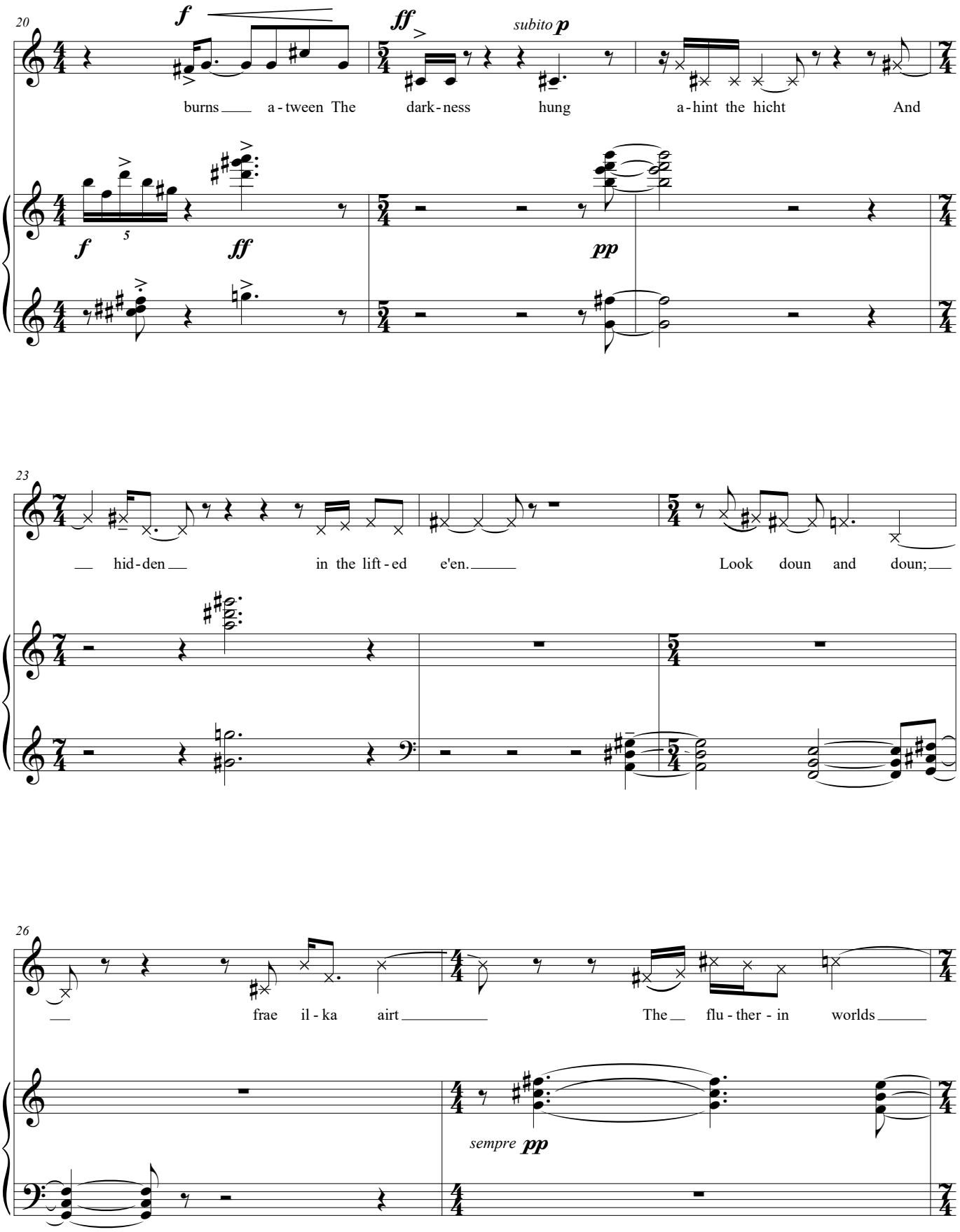

40
pp
a - lang
sempre pp
46
mf
rit.
yon shore
Whaur the swaw comes
row - in
in;
And the
mf
Ped.
50
f
gliss.
p
gliss.
pp
swur - ly wa - ters whumm - lin owre
The cry
o' the sail - or - men - (nn)

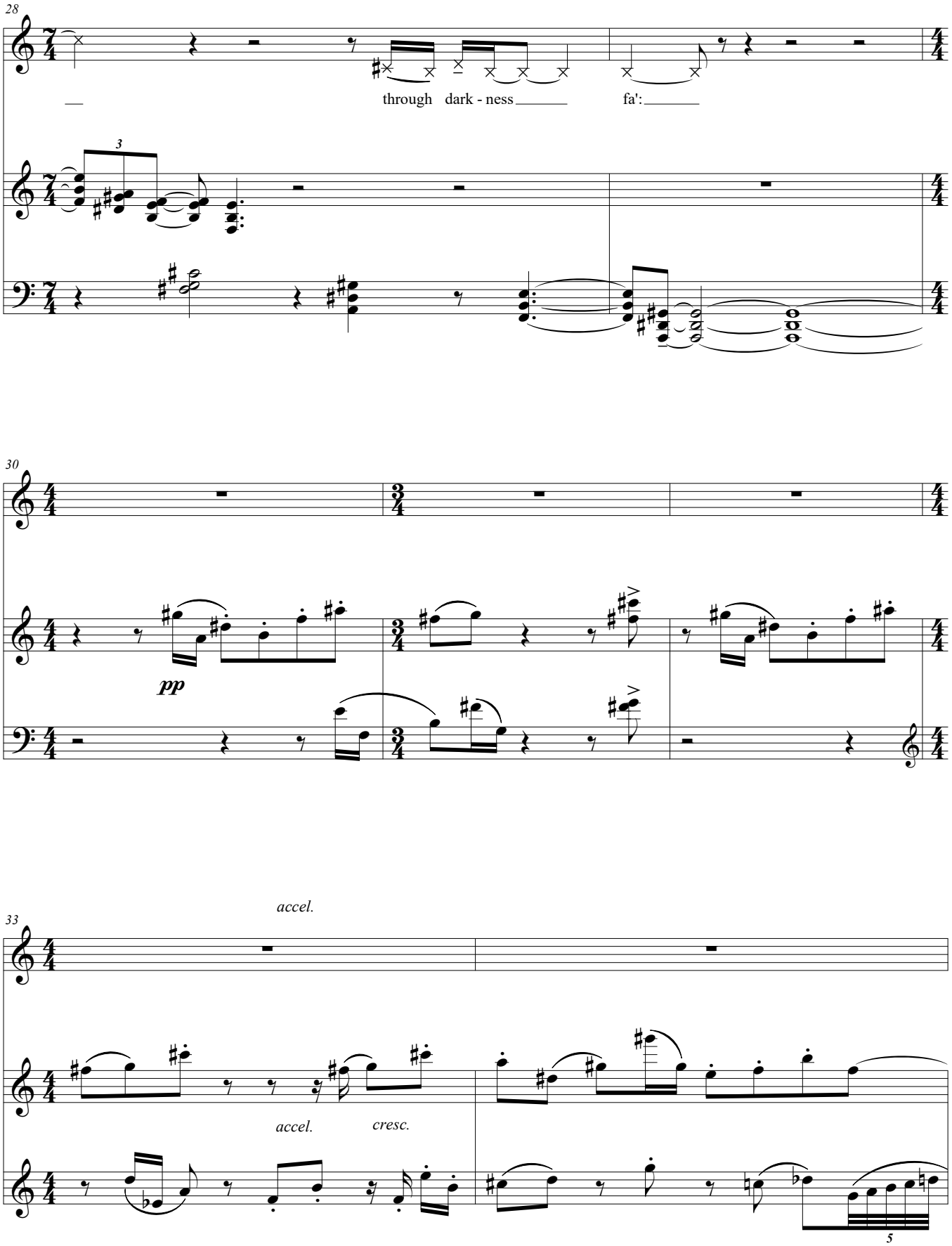
3. Faith

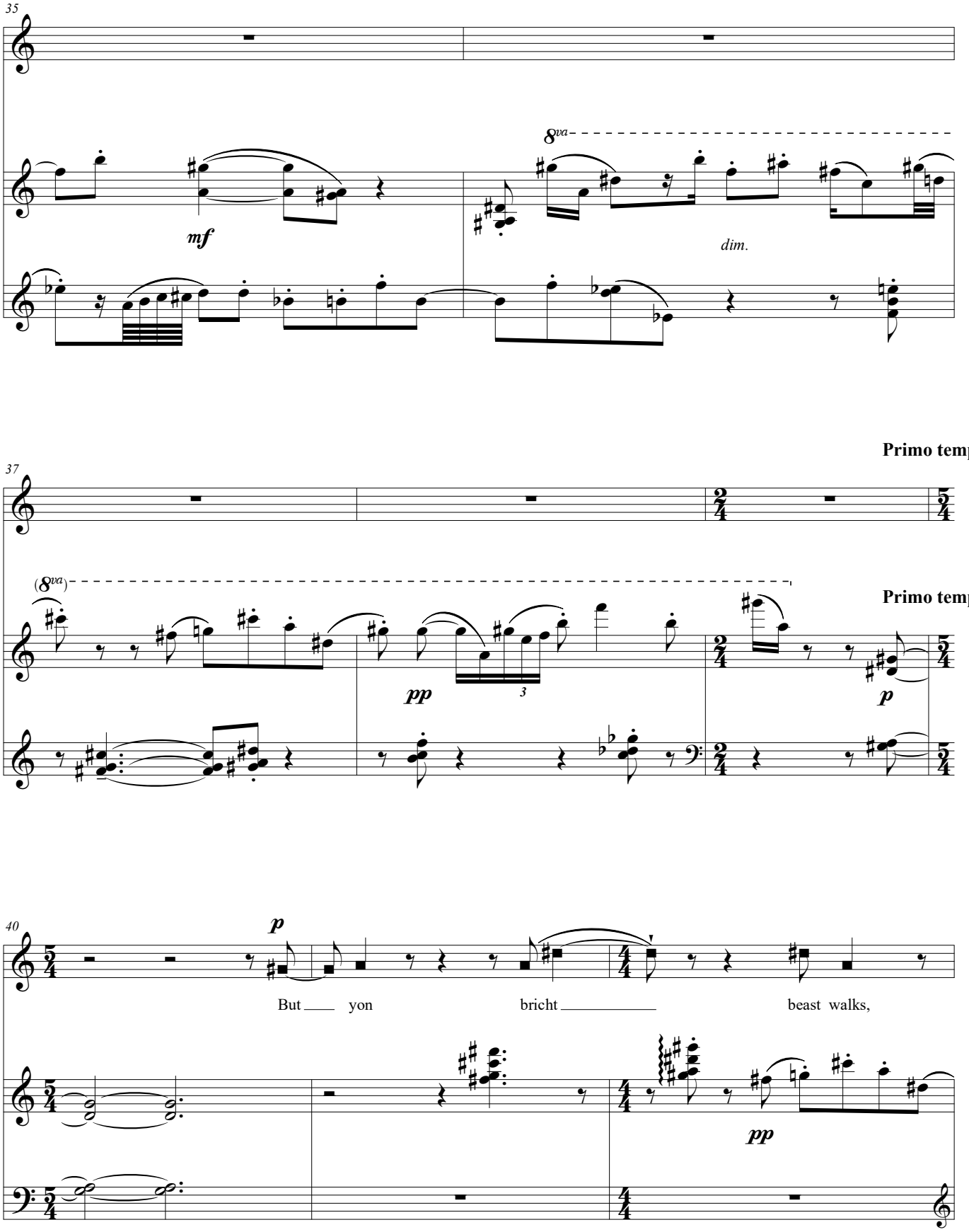
The snaw-white unicorn

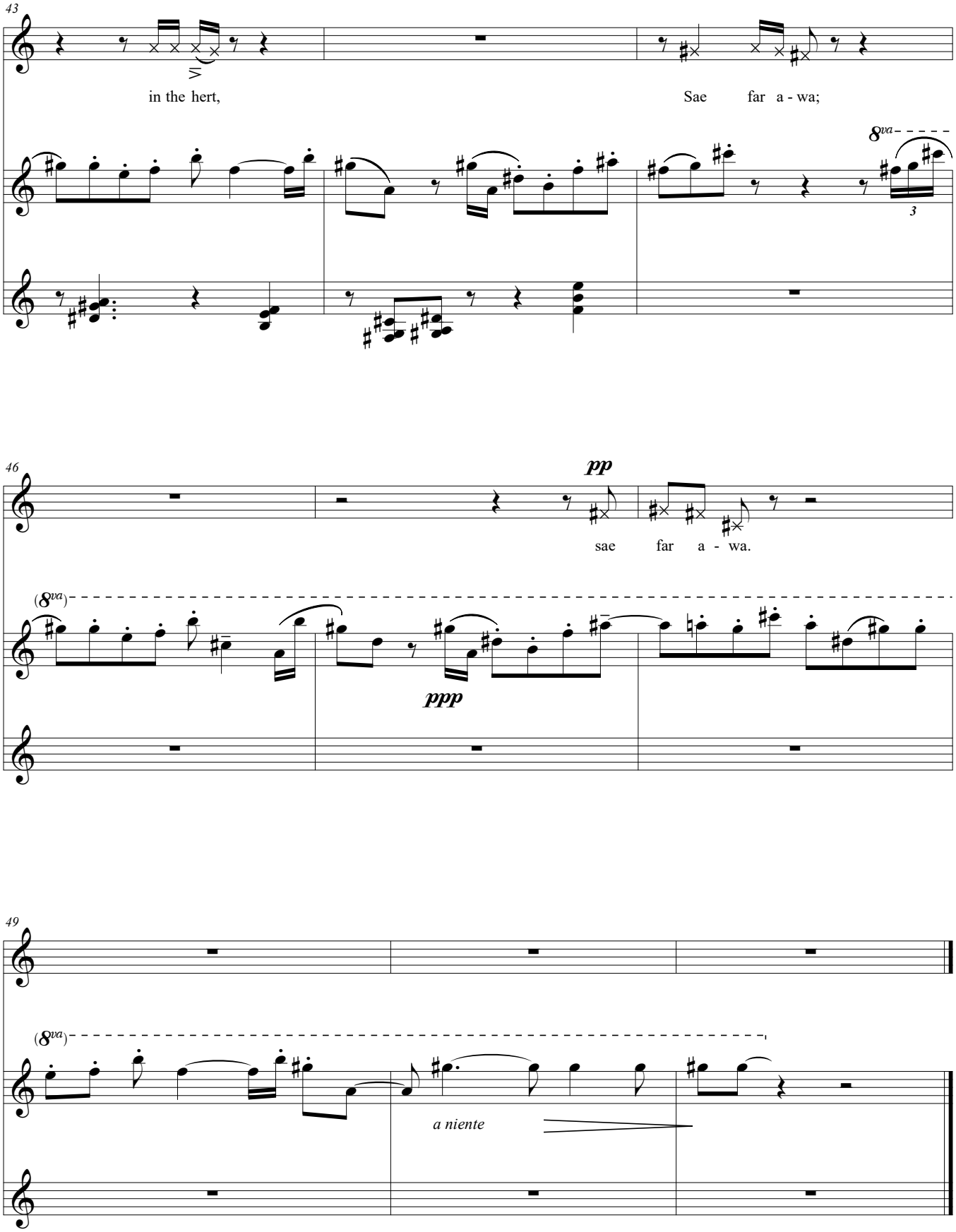



12
mp
Walks the snaw - white u - ni - corn - (rnn).
pp
15
p
port.
port.
Sae far a - wa a - wa he leams in
ppp
pp
18
sung at pitch
mf
licht; And yet his glit - ter
3
3
3
5
mf

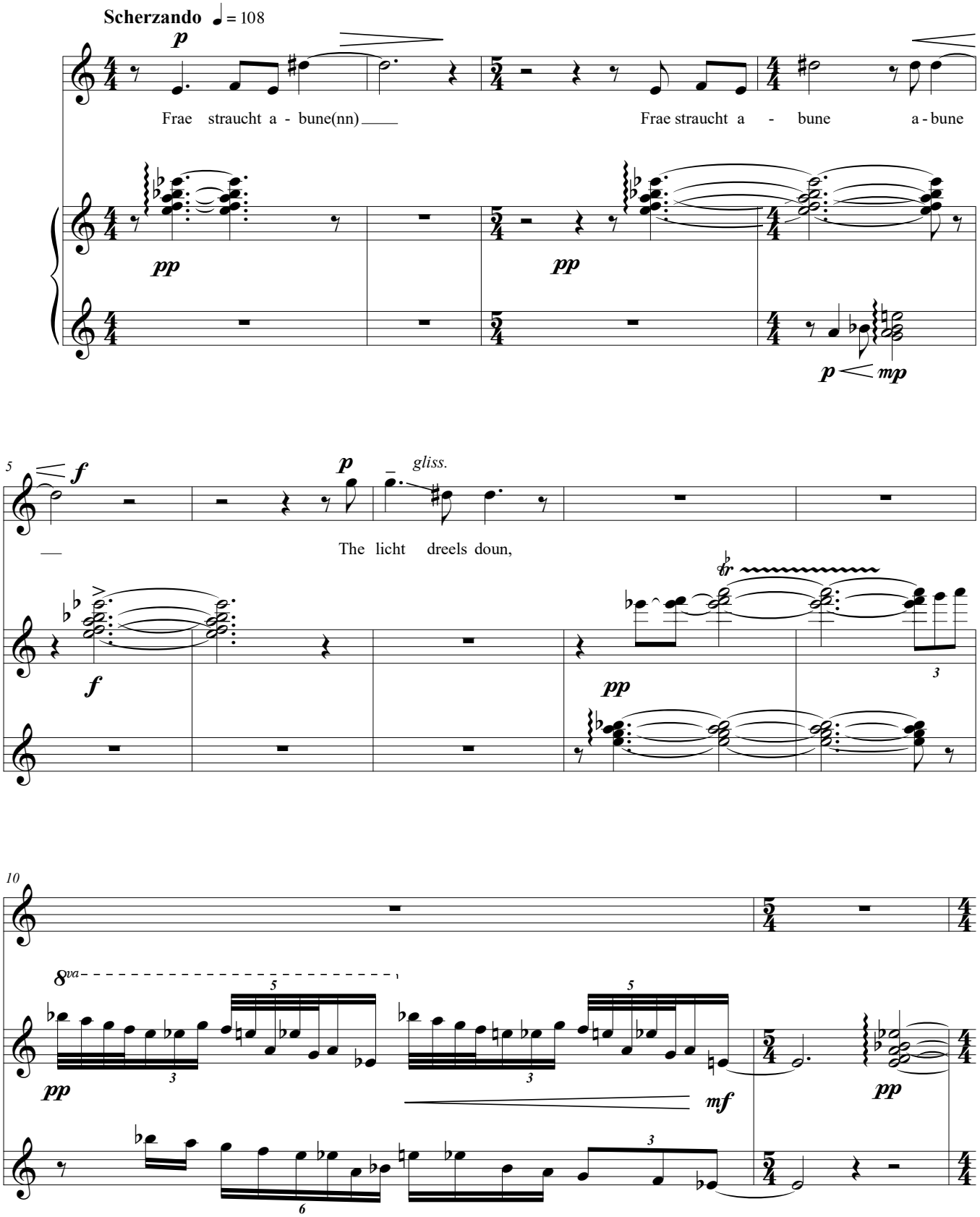

20
f
ff
subito p
burns a - tween The dark - ness hung a - hint the hicht And
f
ff
pp
23
hid - den in the lift - ed e'en. Look doun and doun;
26
frae il - ka airt The flu - ther - in worlds
sempre pp

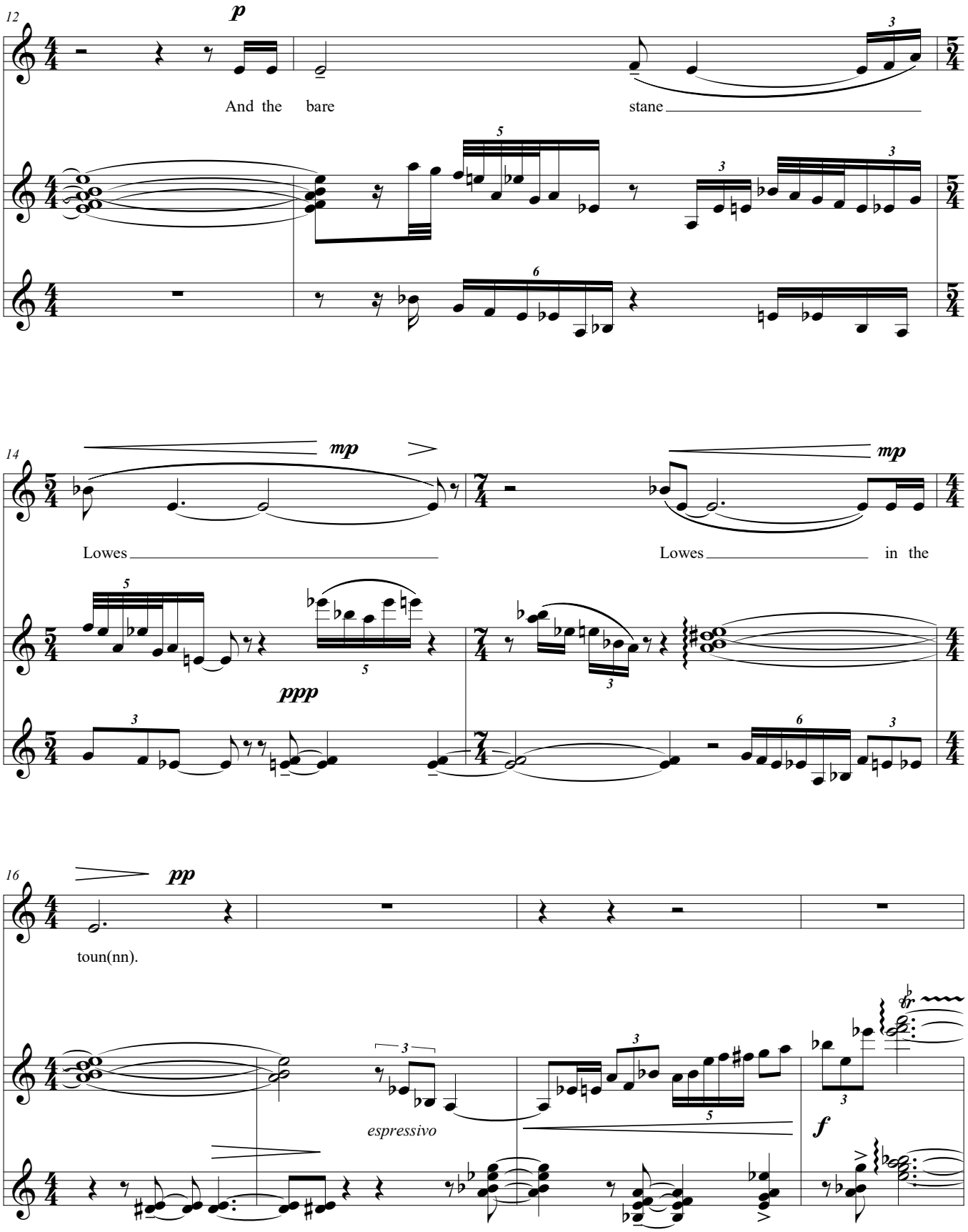

28
through dark - ness
fa':
30
pp
33
accel.
accel.
cresc.

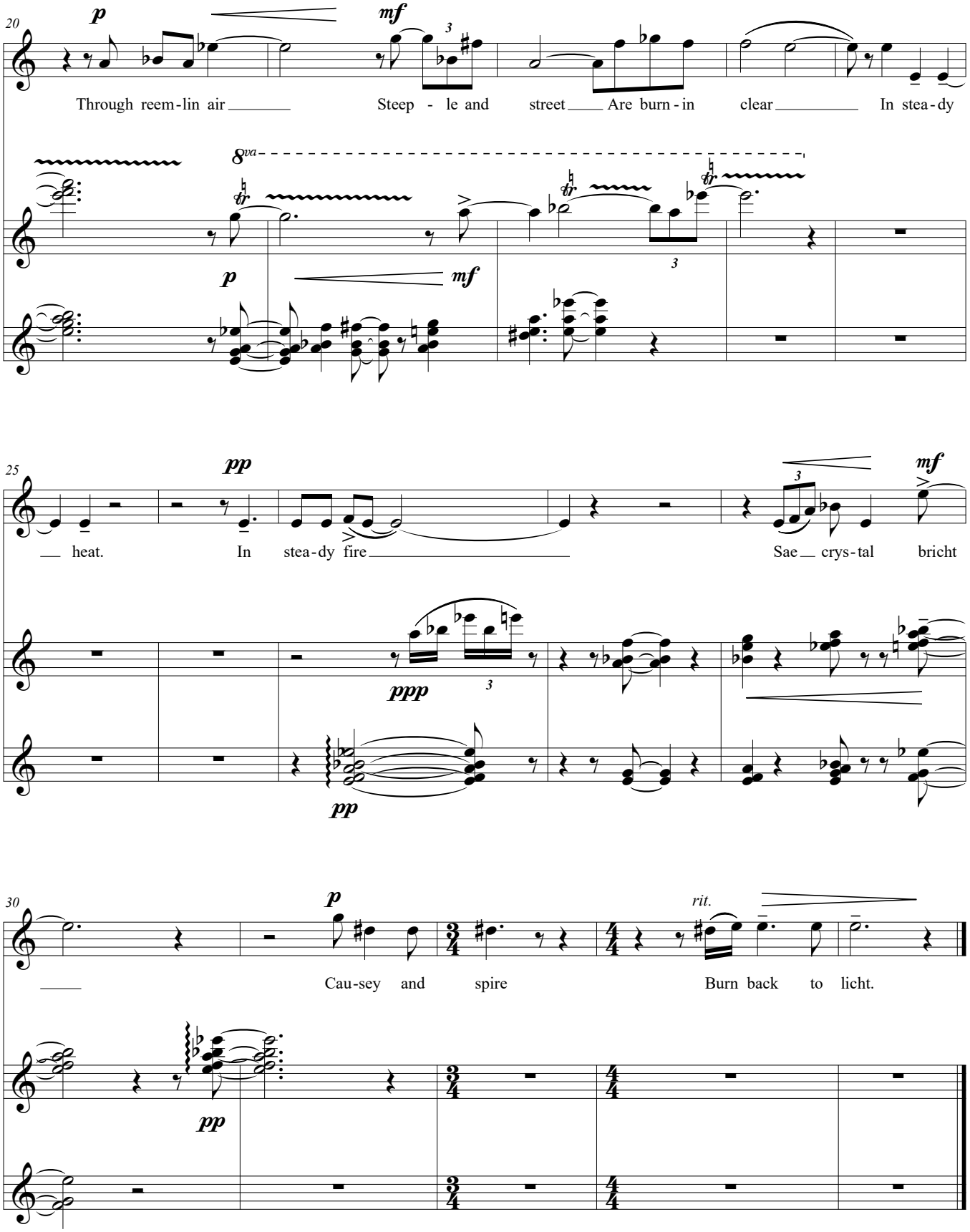

35
8va
mf
dim.
Primo tempo
37
(8va)
pp
3
Primo tempo
p
40
p
But yon bricht beast walks,
pp


43
in the hert,
Sae far a - wa;
8va
3
46
pp
sae far a - wa.
(8va)
ppp
49
(8va)
a niente

4. Brichtness



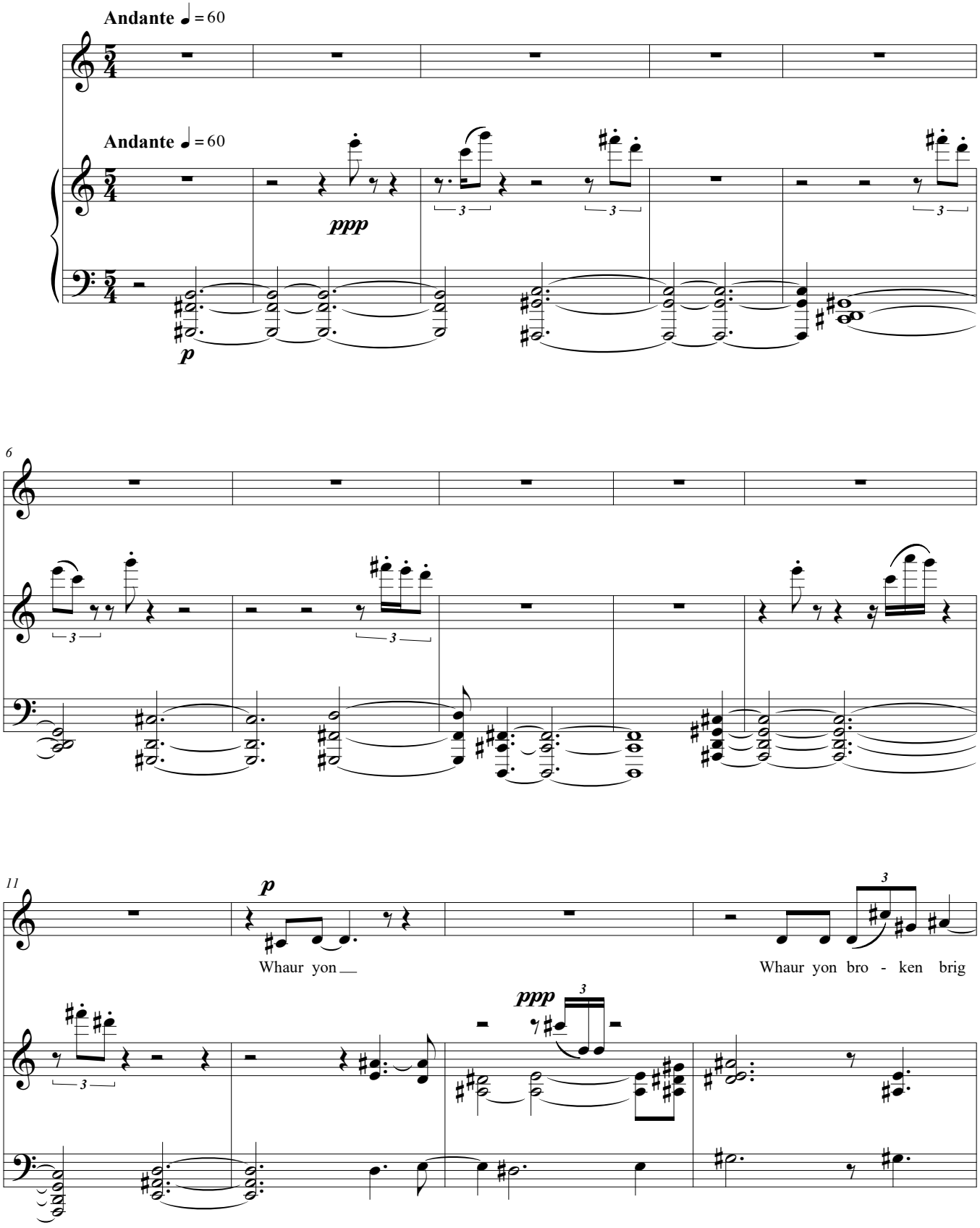

12
p
And the bare
stane
14
mp
Lowes
Lowes
mp
in the
ppp
16
pp
toun(nn).
espressivo
f

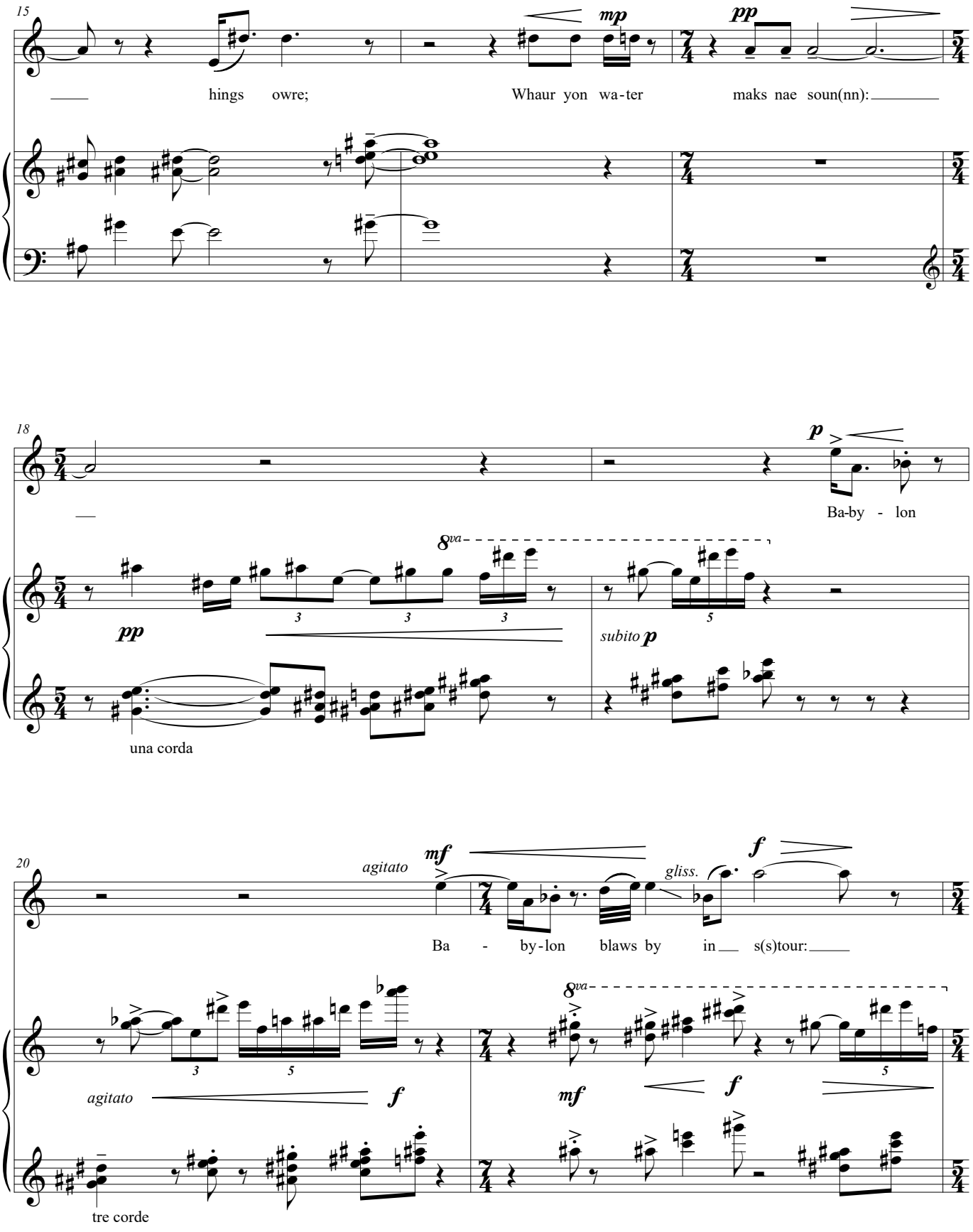

20
p
mf
Through reem-lin air
Steep - le and
street
Are burn-in
clear
In stea-dy
8va
tr
p
mf
25
pp
heat.
In
stea-dy fire
mf
Sae
crys-tal
bricht
ppp
pp
30
p
rit.
Cau-sey and
spire
Burn back to licht.
pp

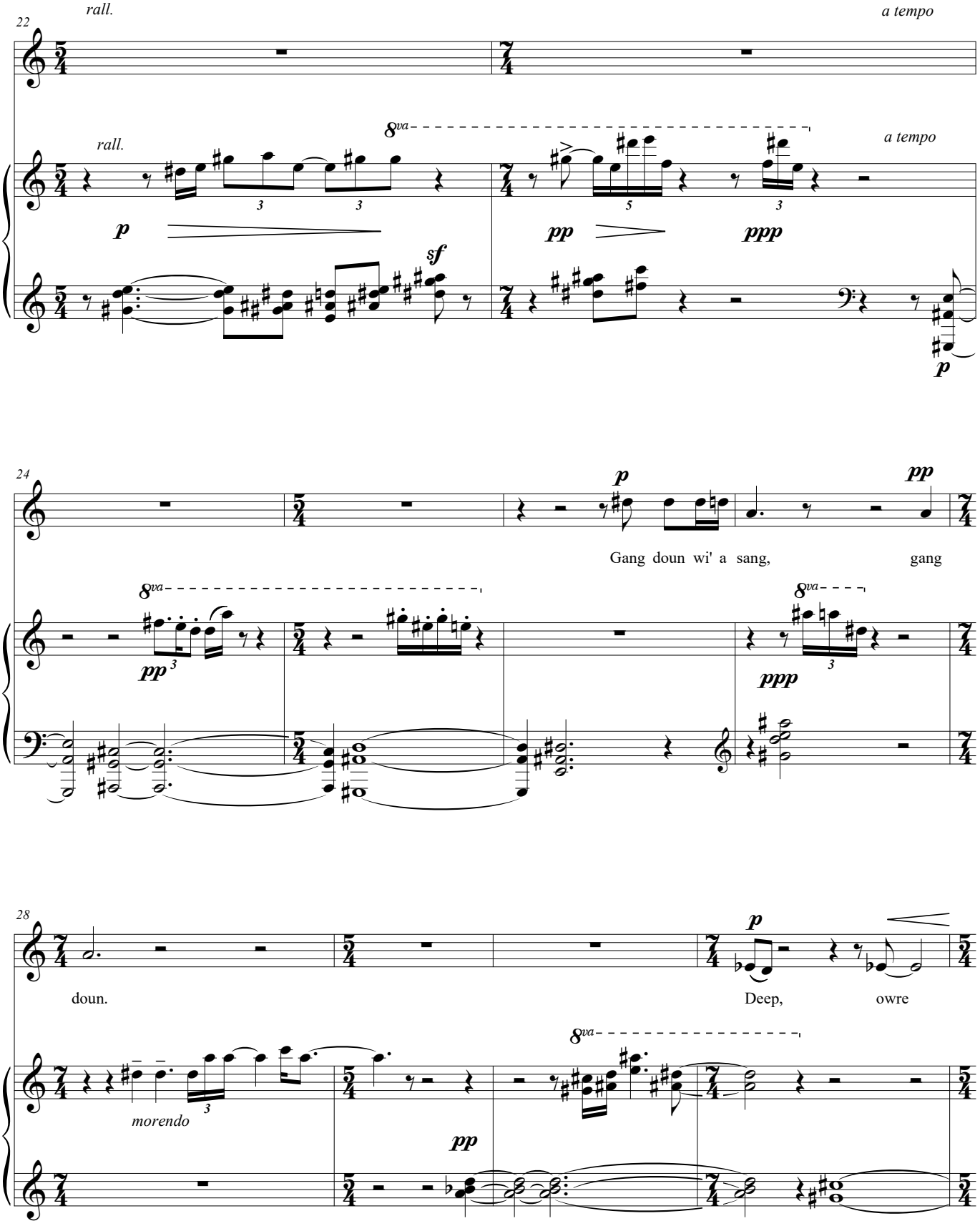
For Ken

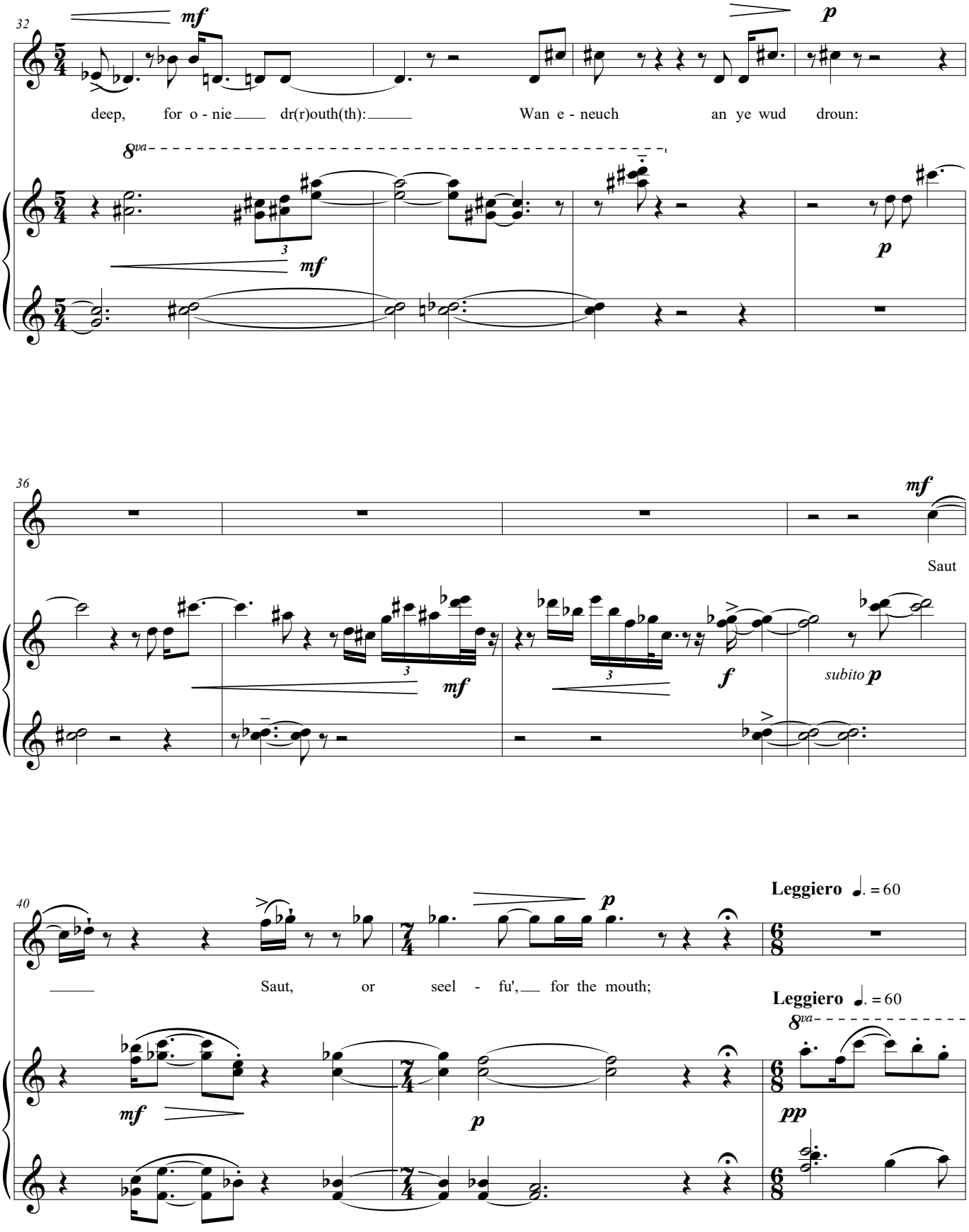
5. Song

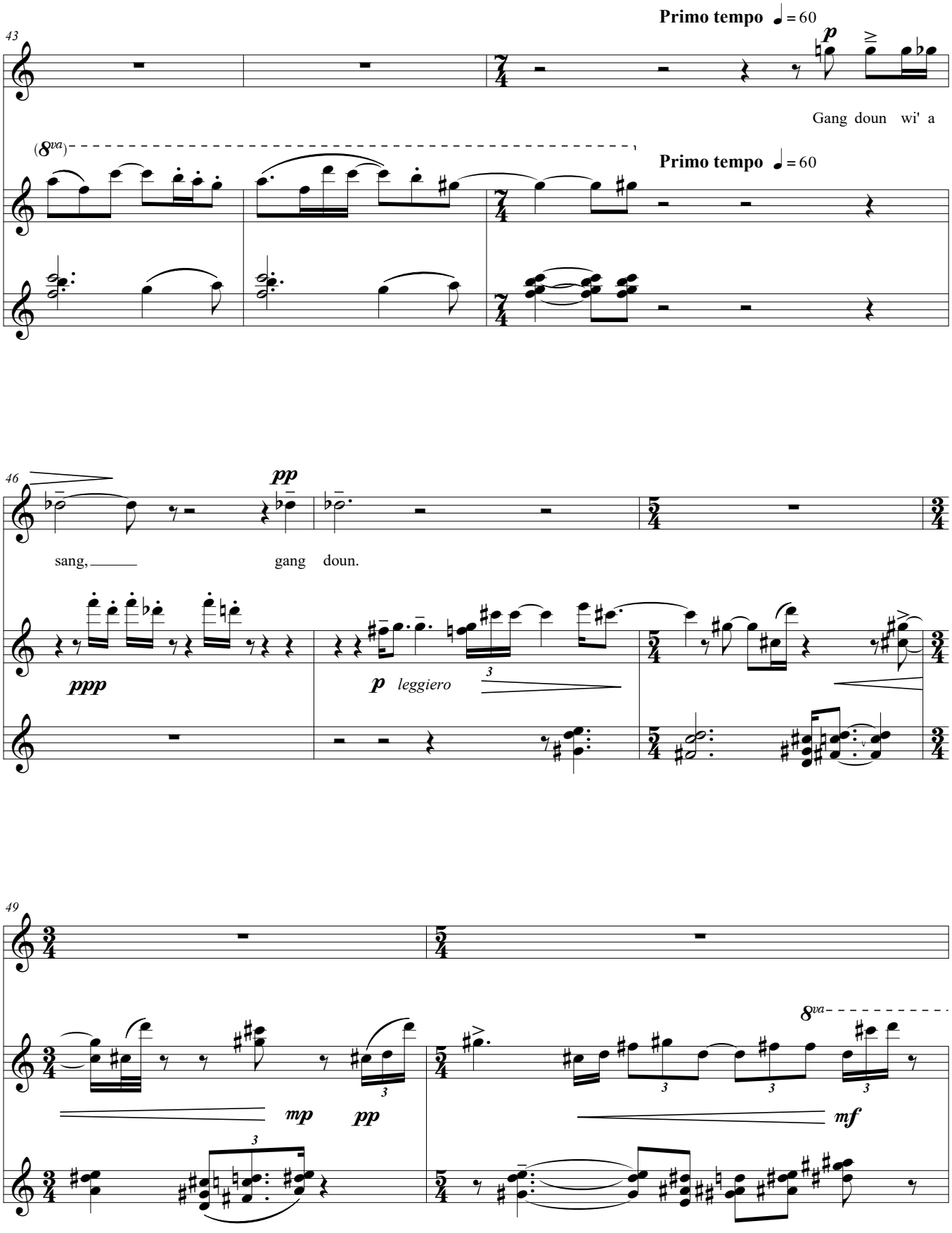
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang doun

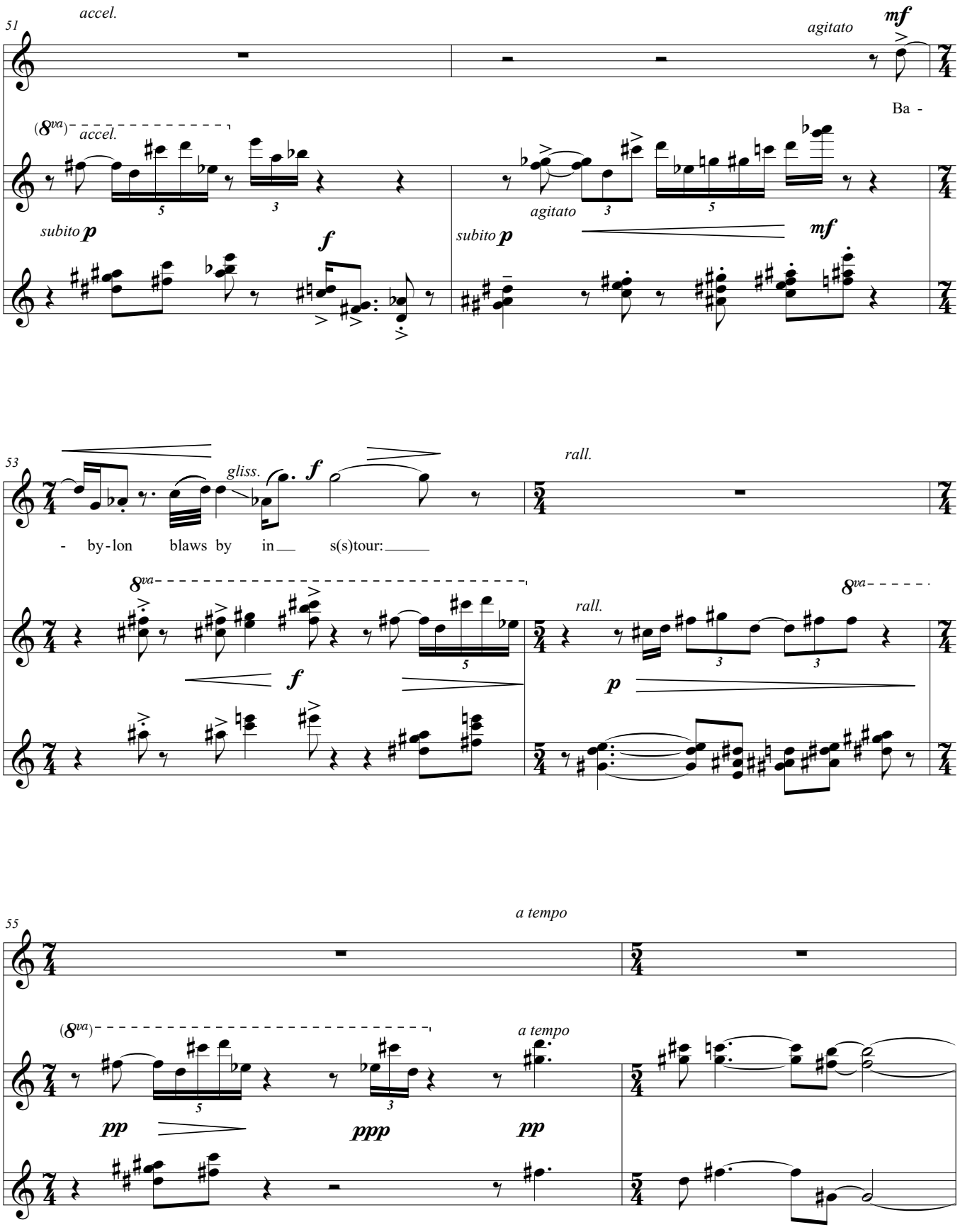


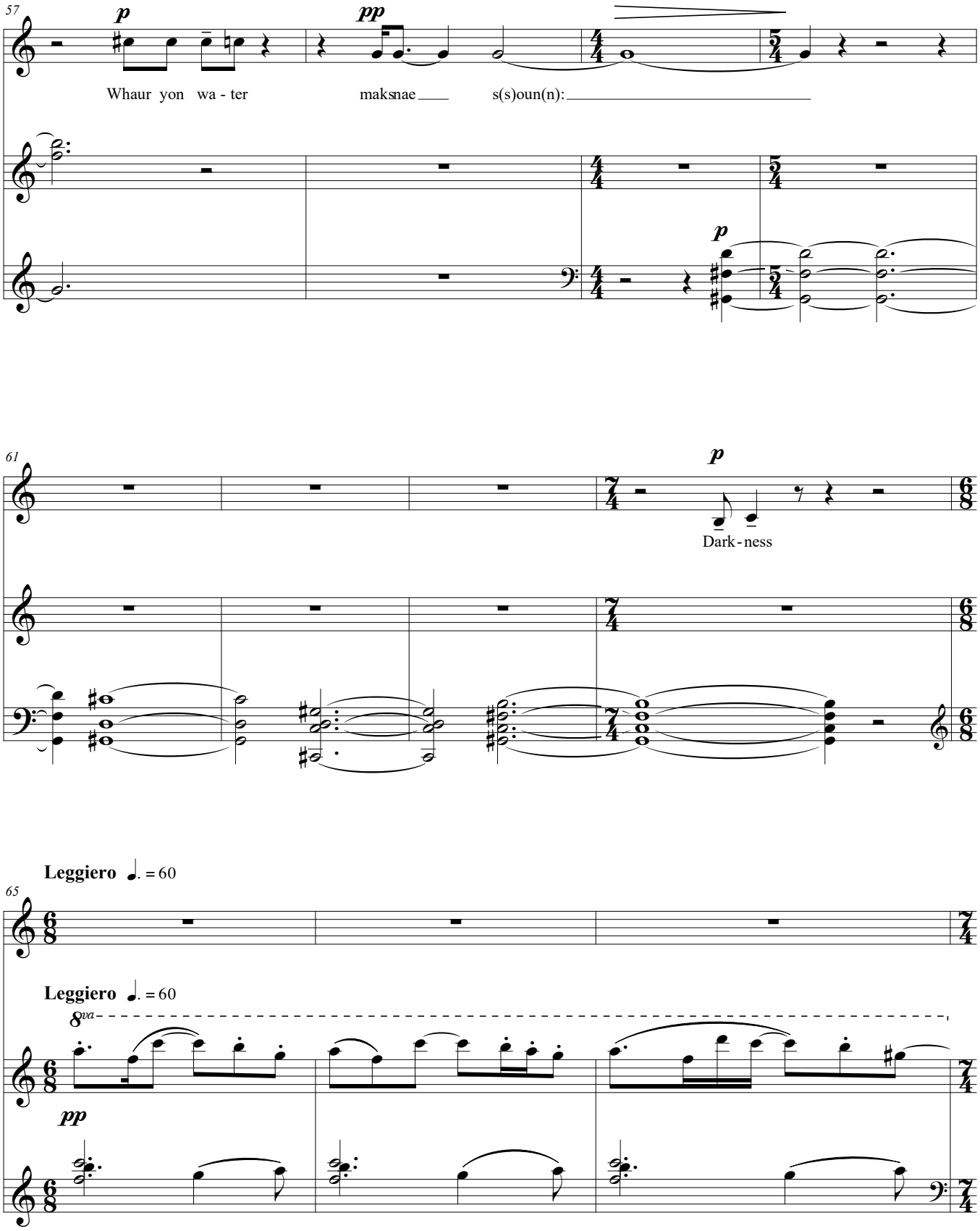

15
mp
pp
hings owre;
Whaur yon wa-ter
maks nae soun(nn):
18
p
Ba-by - lon
8va
pp
subito p
una corda
20
agitato
mf
gliss.
f
Ba - by-lon blaws by in s(s)tour:
8va
agitato
f
mf
f
tre corde

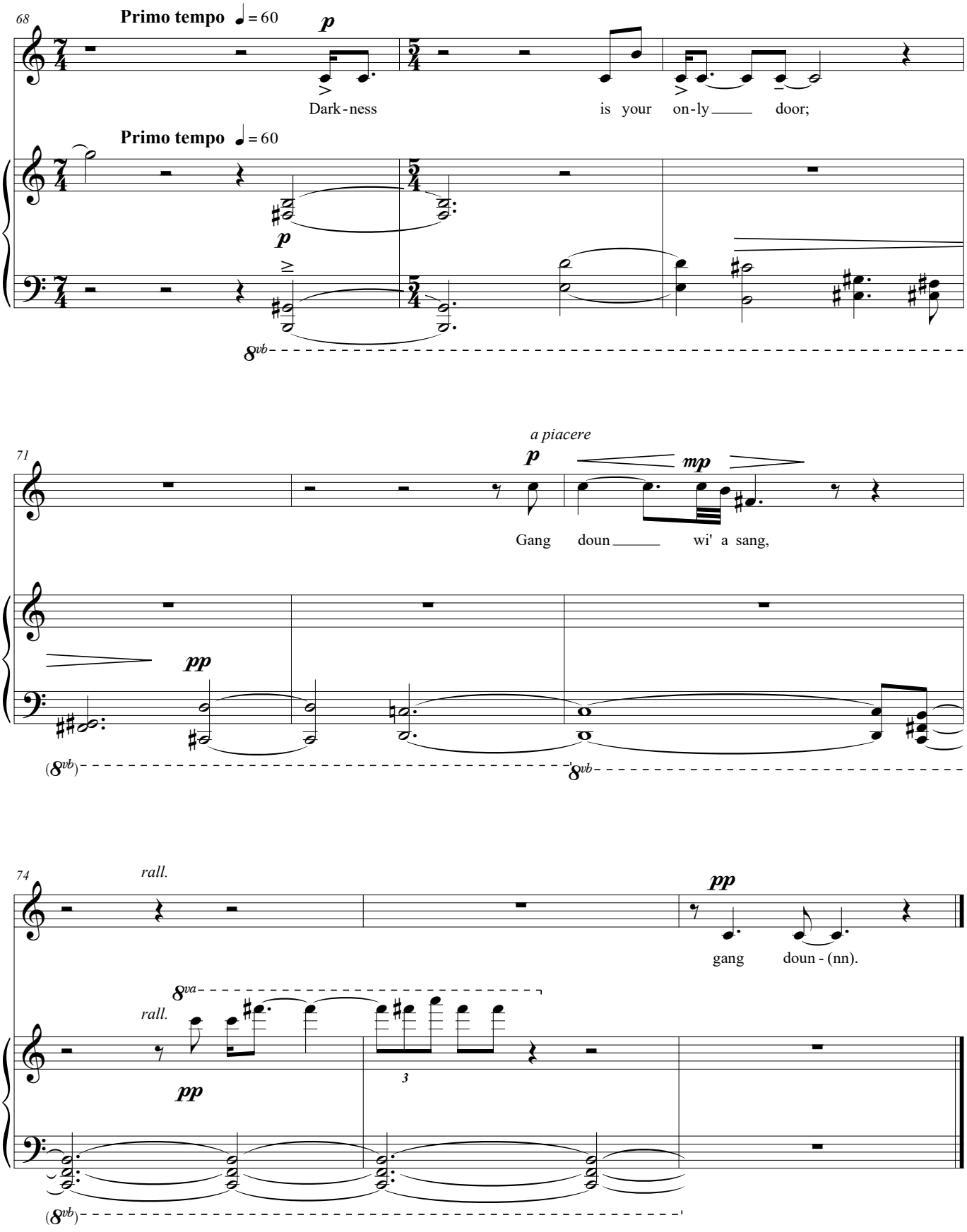

22
rall.
a tempo
rall.
8va
a tempo
p
pp
ppp
sf
p
24
p
pp
Gang doun wi' a sang, gang
8va
8va
pp
ppp
28
p
doun.
Deep, owre
morendo
8va
pp


32
mf
p
deep, for o - nie dr(r)outh(th): Wan e - neuch an ye wud droun:
8va
3
mf
p
36
mf
Saut
3
mf
3
f
subito p
40
Leggiero ♩. = 60
p
Saut, or seel - fu', for the mouth;
Leggiero ♩. = 60
8va
mf
p
pp


Primo tempo ♩= 60
43
p
Gang doun wi' a
(8va)
Primo tempo ♩= 60
46
pp
sang,
gang doun.
ppp
p leggiero
49
mp
pp
8va
mf


51
accel.
agitato
mf
Ba -
(8va)
accel.
subito p
f
agitato
subito p
mf
53
gliss.
f
rall.
- by-lon blaws by in s(s)tour:
8va
rall.
8va
f
p
55
a tempo
(8va)
a tempo
pp
ppp
pp


57
p
pp
Whaur yon wa - ter
maksnae
s(s)oun(n):
p
61
p
Dark - ness
Leggiero ♩. = 60
65
Leggiero ♩. = 60
8va
pp


68
Primo tempo ♩= 60
p
Dark - ness
is your on - ly door;
Primo tempo ♩= 60
p
8vb
71
a piacere
p
mp
Gang doun wi' a sang,
pp
(8vb)
8vb
74
rall.
pp
gang doun - (nn).
8va
rall.
pp
3
(8vb)