Frank A. Wallace

Father Said:

sixteen songs for baritone (medium voice) and guitar, op. 28

poems by

Frank C. Wallace, 1887-1951

"to my father Joel Sylvanus Wallace"

Gyre Publications

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www.gyremusic.com

this edition created on 2/11/17

DEFEATING DEATH

My great-grandfather seemed so far remote.
Too vague to fancy him a life-like man.
He was some mystic figure, always old,
And never young, or given to the ways
Of life as you and I, until at length
My Father pointed out a huge pecan,
Which he had planted in his passing year
As though he wished to live, defeating Death.
Frank C. Wallace

NOTES

It has been a tradition in my family that each child and grandchild will receive our grandfather's diary on their fiftieth birthday. His 365 days of entries was kept in his fiftieth year: 1937. On my recent fiftieth birthday, I eagerly awaited the arrival of this document from my brother, which was duly received. To my amazement, however, on the soon to follow Christmas, I also received from my sister a manuscript and edited book of poetry with the title, FATHER SAID:. I had attempted to read a gleaning of his works published posthumously by my grandmother, but had always found the style antiquated, and I was not a poetry buff by nature. However, the raw nature of these two versions of the same effort immediately intrigued me. To see his handwriting and corrections, as well as his magnitude of thinking, was a treasure. I must confess the fascination I felt at the visual stimulus of seeing his name [my name sake] proudly printed on the frontispiece as well as all over the neatly trimmed envelopes on which many of the poems had originally been written; this was, after all, the Great Depression.

The other fact which caught my attention was reference to the age of his father, putting his birth in the mid 1840s, and the poem DEFEATING DEATH, referencing his great grandfather, someone unknown to me, but easily birthed in the 18th century, and yet so close to me by witness of this strange and beautiful document in my hands.

While the title itself may not be "politically correct" at this point in time, the sentiments are universal, if not in reality, certainly in everyone's dreams. The format is in fact a vehicle for expressing not so much the exact words of his father, but rather his own philosophy and beliefs in what creates a beautiful and worthy life, much of which came from their experiences in the young pioneer life of Texas. There is great charm in these images of life on the prairie, but I have chosen to use poems for this song cycle that emphasize the universal rather than the specific.

SHORT VERSION
My recommendation for a condensed version of the cycle,
should time demand, is: I, II, VI, VII, IX, X, XII

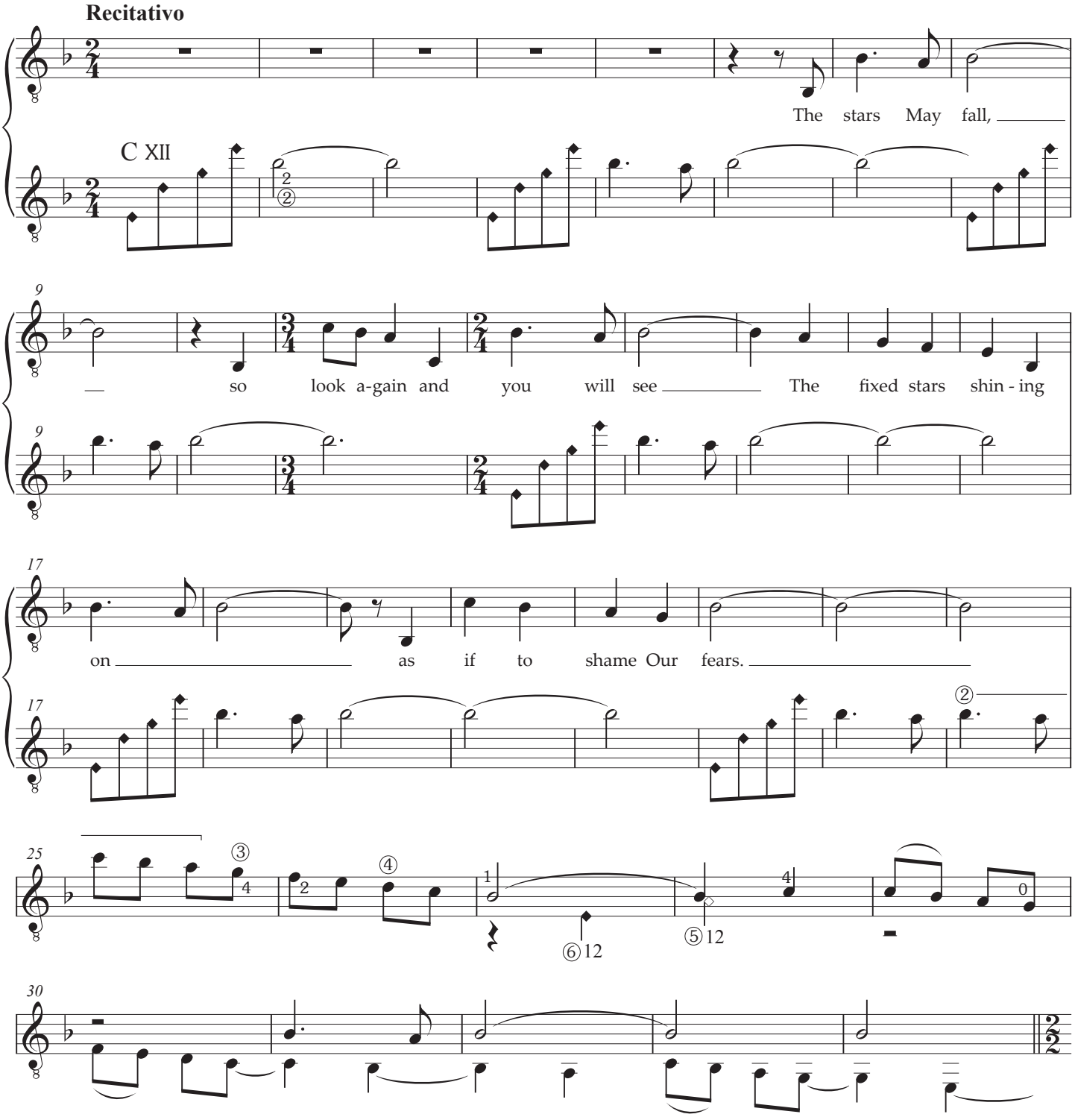
for my father

Father Said:

I. The Stars

poems by
Frank C. Wallace, 1887-1951

Frank A. Wallace
b. 1952, op. 28



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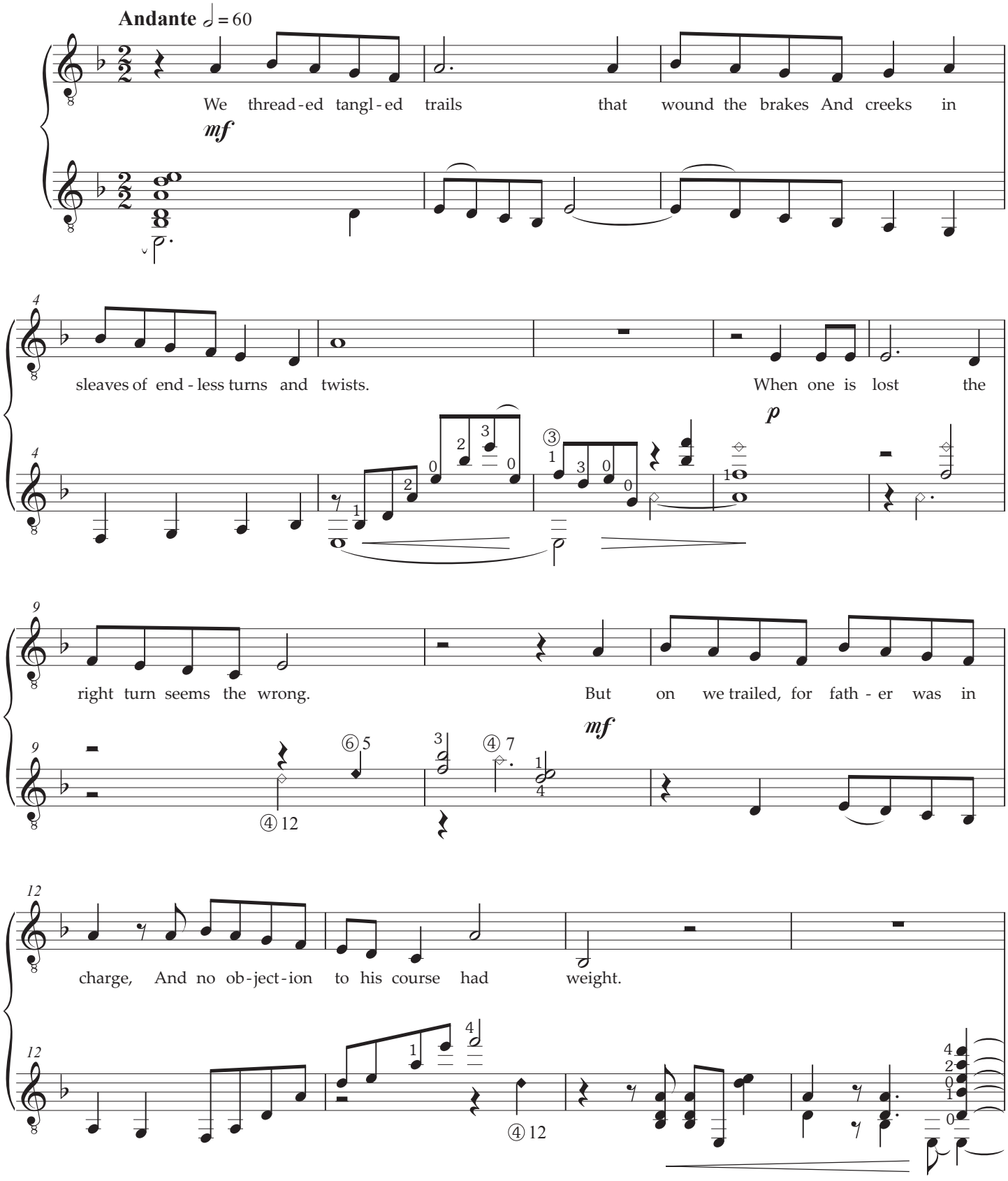
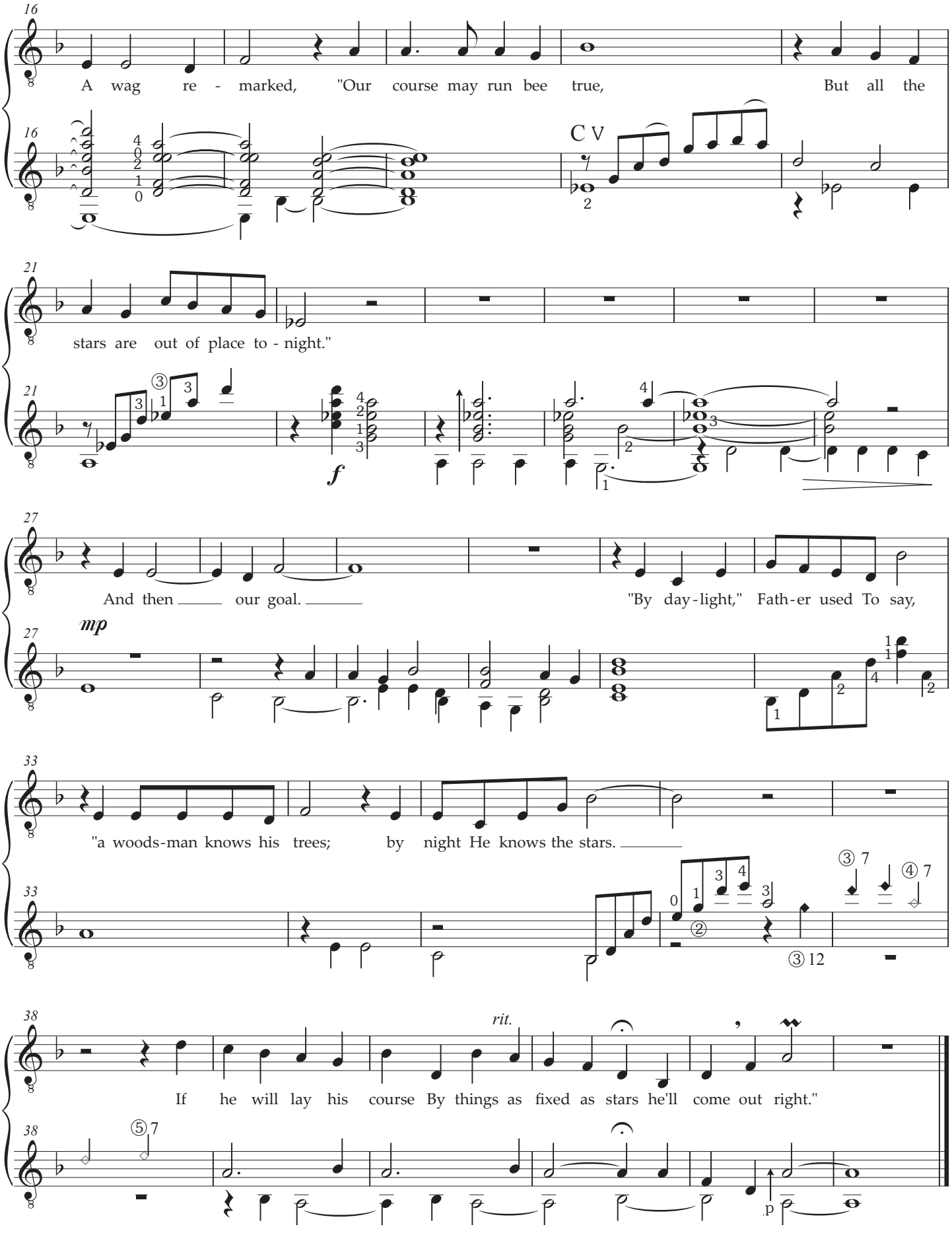
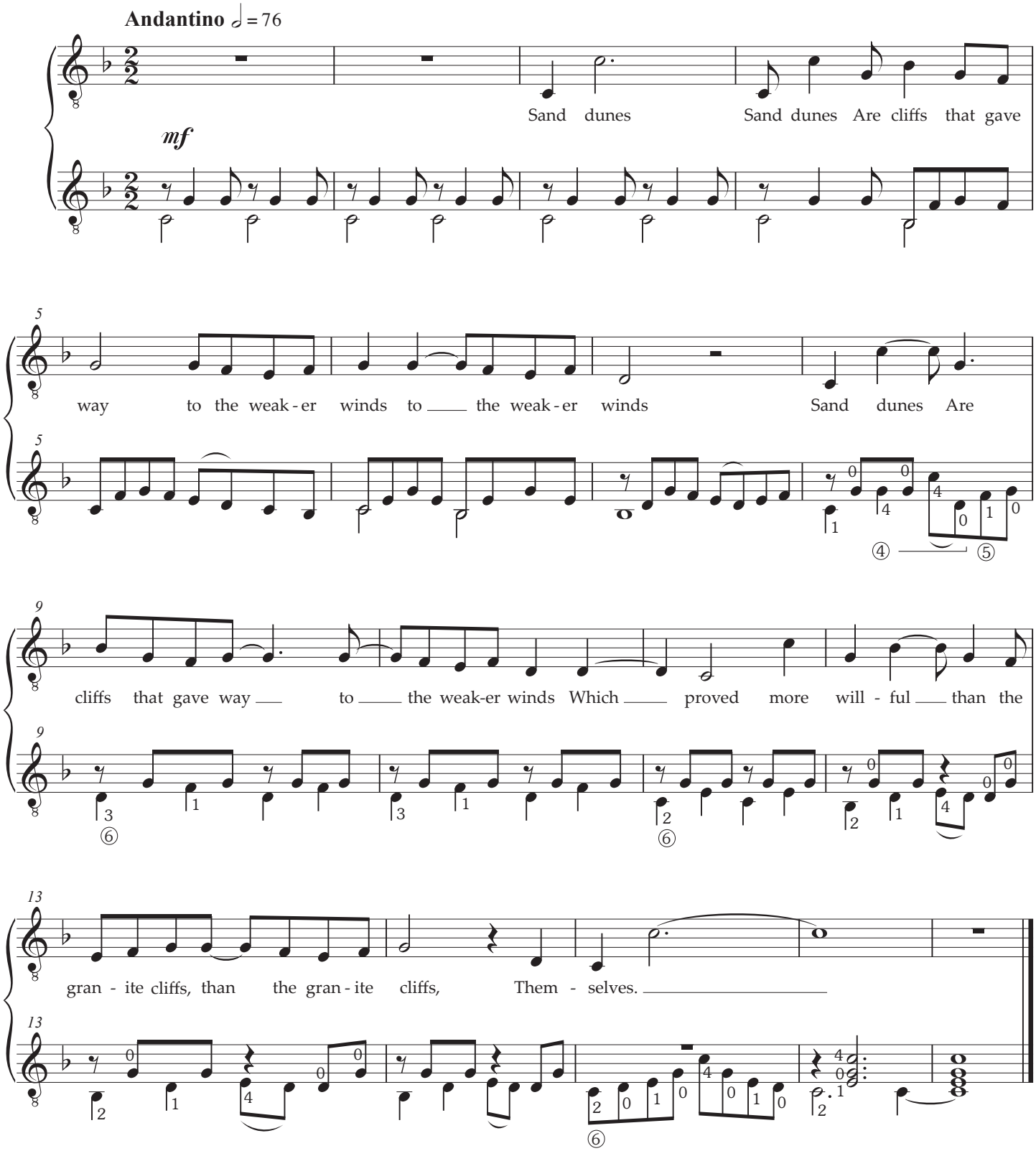
II. The Fixed Course

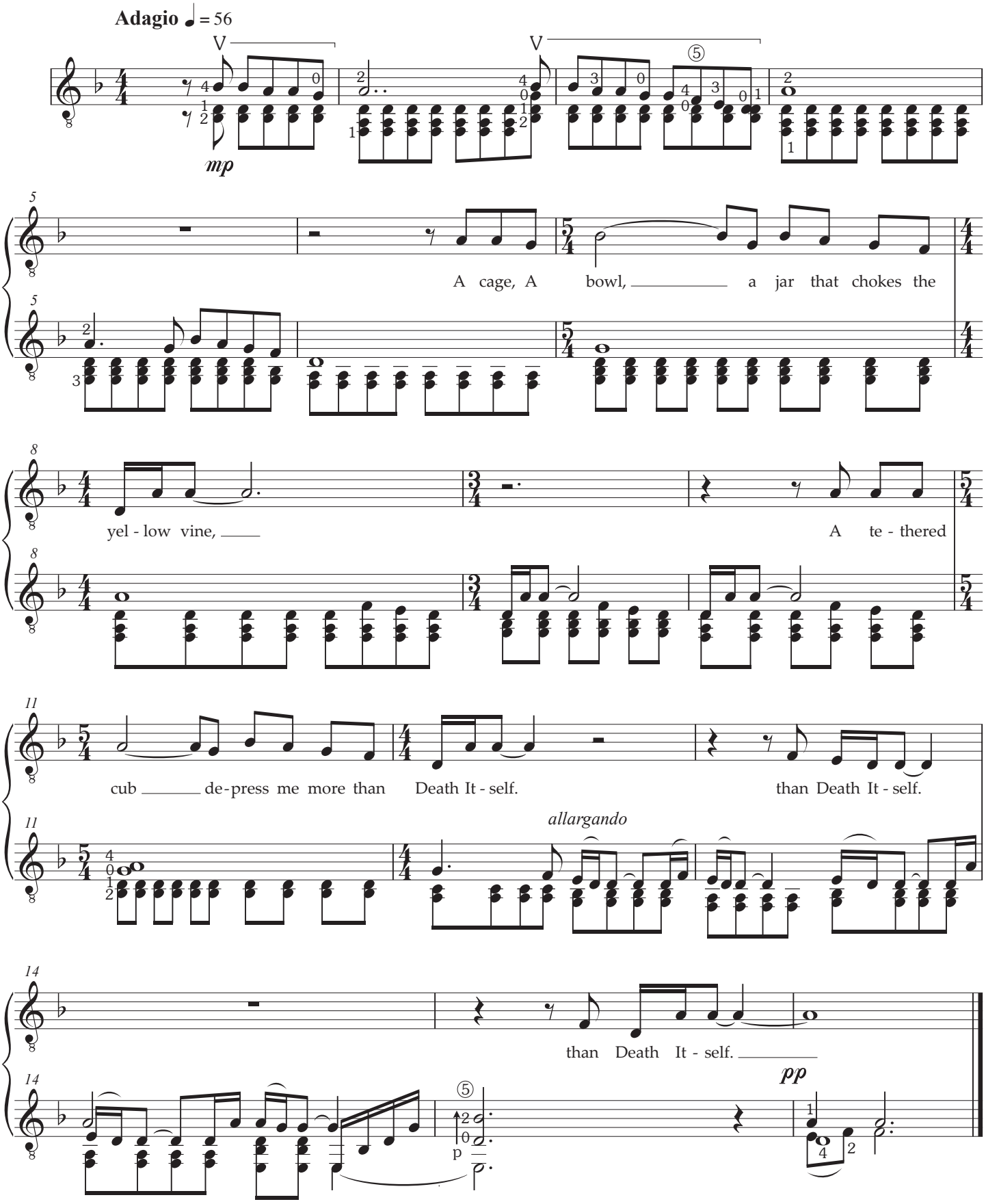



16
A wag re - marked, "Our course may run bee true, But all the
C V
21
stars are out of place to - night."
f
27
And then our goal. "By day-light," Fath-er used To say,
mp
33
"a woods-man knows his trees; by night He knows the stars.
38
rit.
If he will lay his course By things as fixed as stars he'll come out right."
p

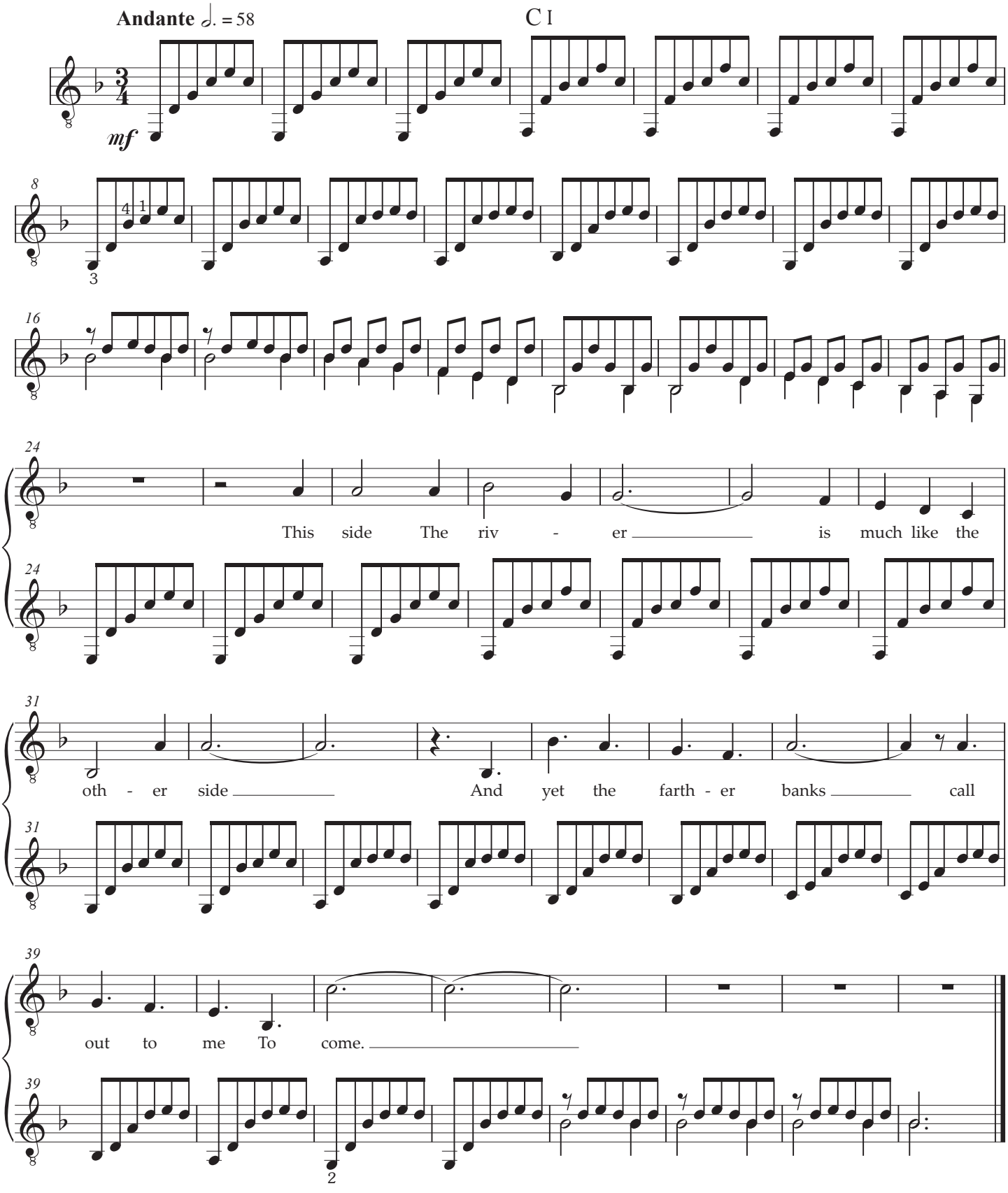
III. Sand Dunes



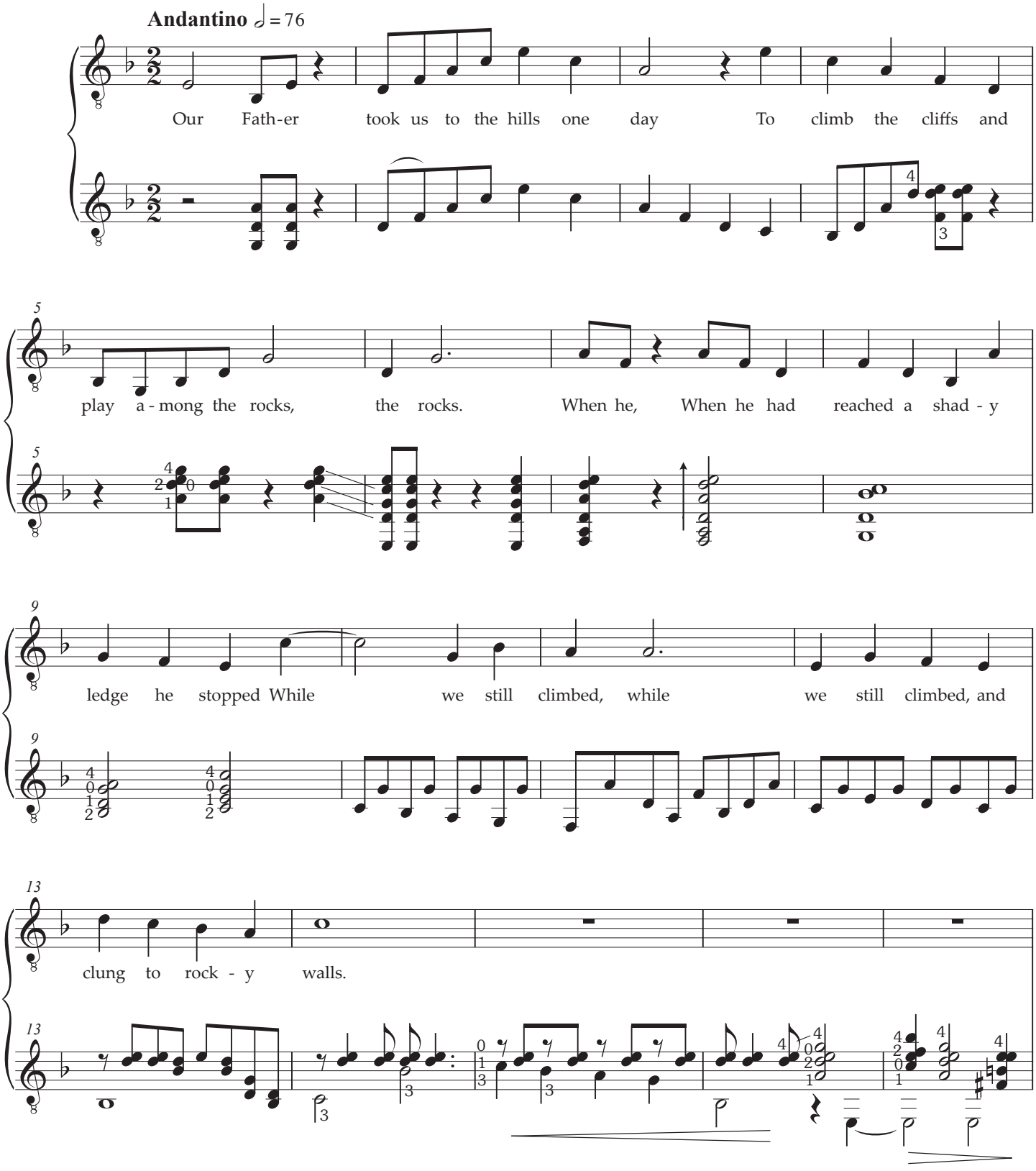
IV. The Cage

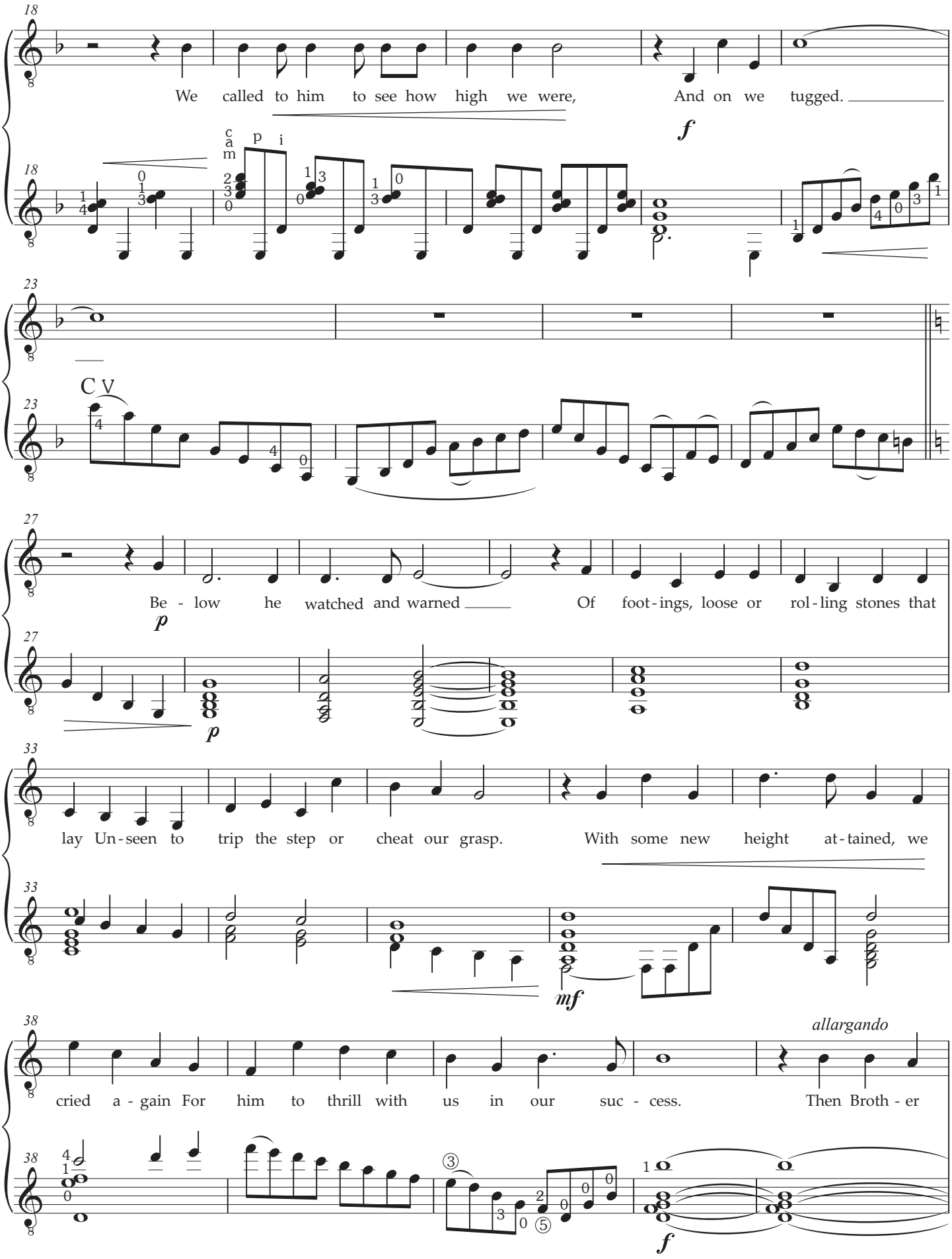

Adagio ♩ = 56
mp
A cage, A bowl, a jar that chokes the
yel - low vine,
A te - thered
cub de-press me more than Death It - self.
than Death It - self.
allargando
than Death It - self.
pp
p

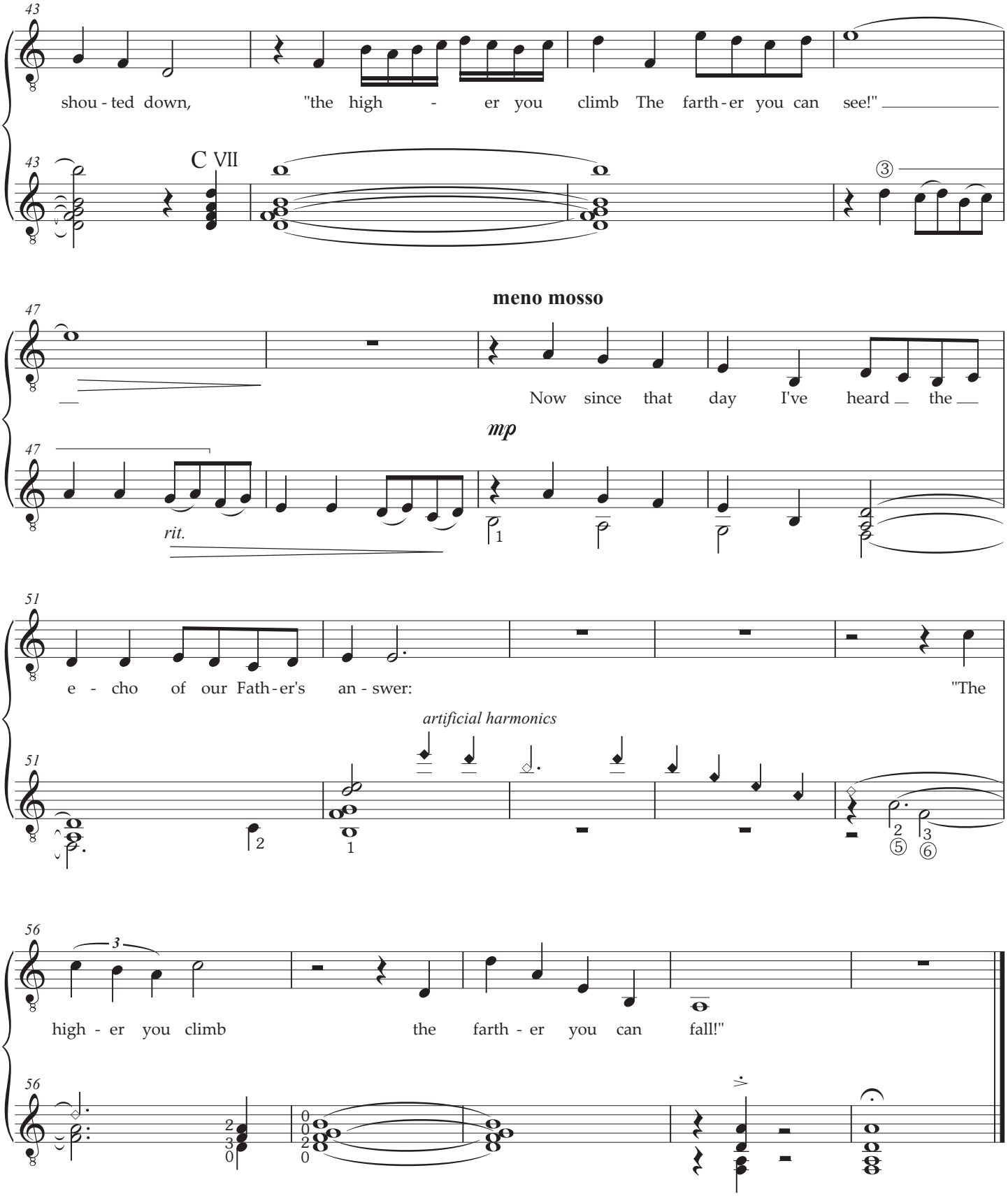
V. The River


Andante ♩. = 58
C I
mf
This side The riv - er is much like the
oth - er side And yet the farth - er banks call
out to me To come.

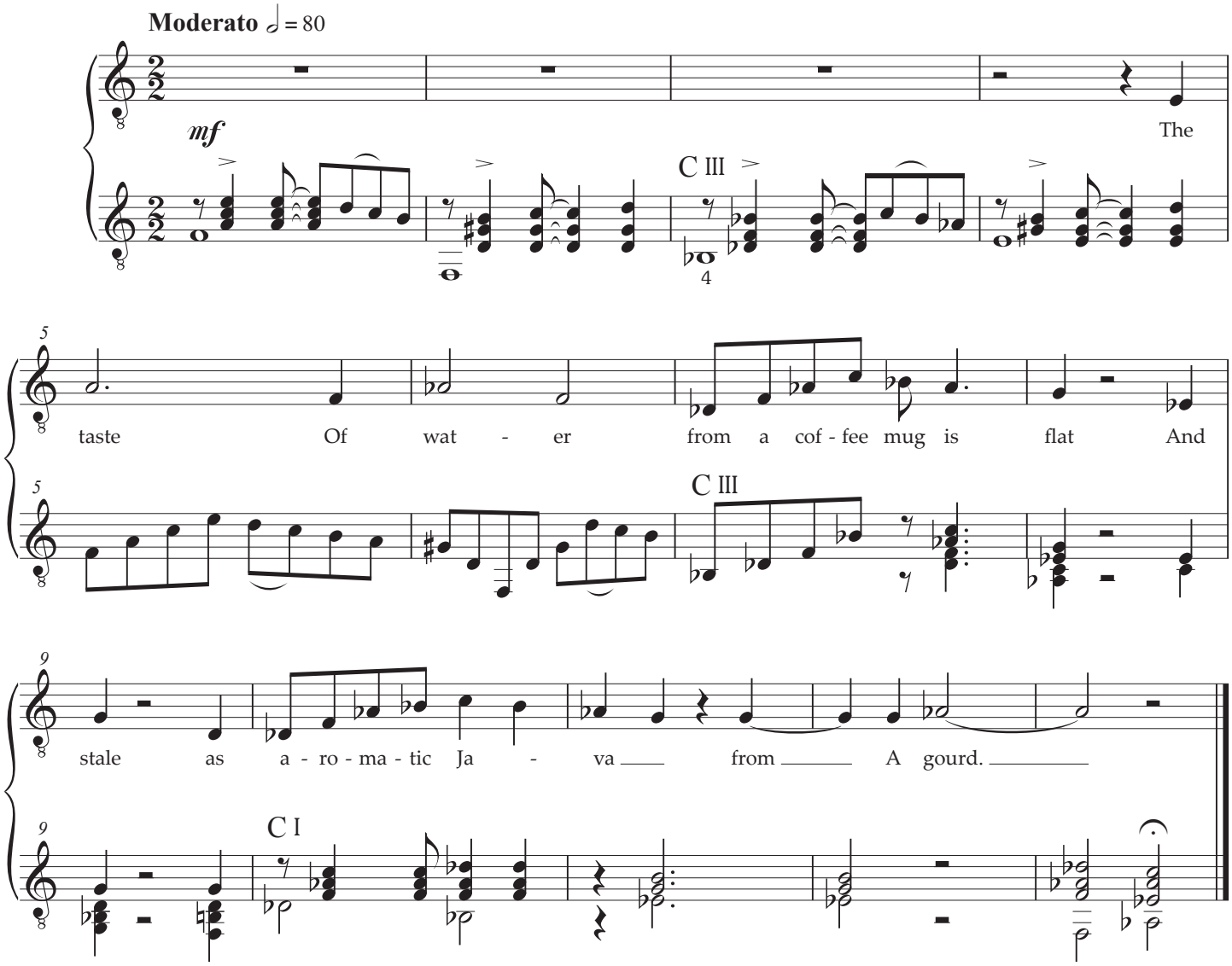
VI. Climbing Cliffs



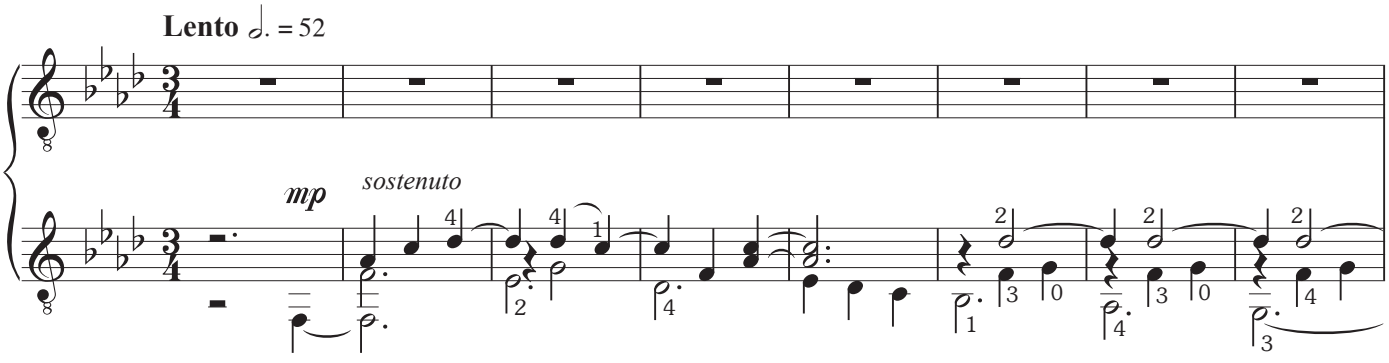

18
We called to him to see how high we were,
And on we tugged.
f
cam p i
23
C V
27
Be - low he watched and warned
Of foot - ings, loose or rol - ling stones that
p
p
33
lay Un - seen to trip the step or cheat our grasp.
With some new height at - tained, we
mf
38
allargando
cried a - gain For him to thrill with us in our suc - cess.
Then Broth - er
f

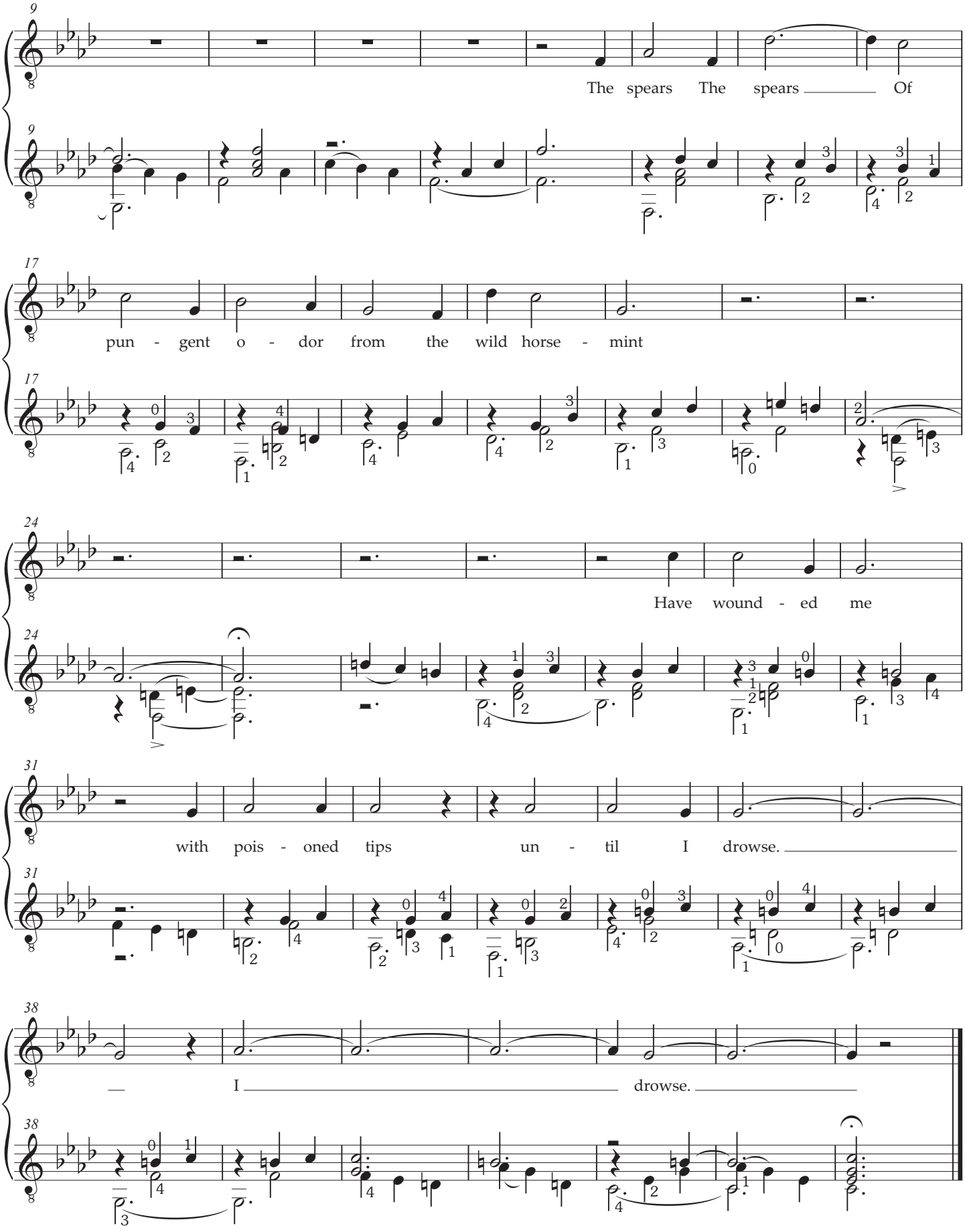

43
shou - ted down, "the high - er you climb The farth - er you can see!"
43
C VII
47
meno mosso
Now since that day I've heard the
47
mp
rit.
51
e - cho of our Fath - er's an - swer: "The
51
artificial harmonics
56
high - er you climb the farth - er you can fall!"
56

VII. The Taste

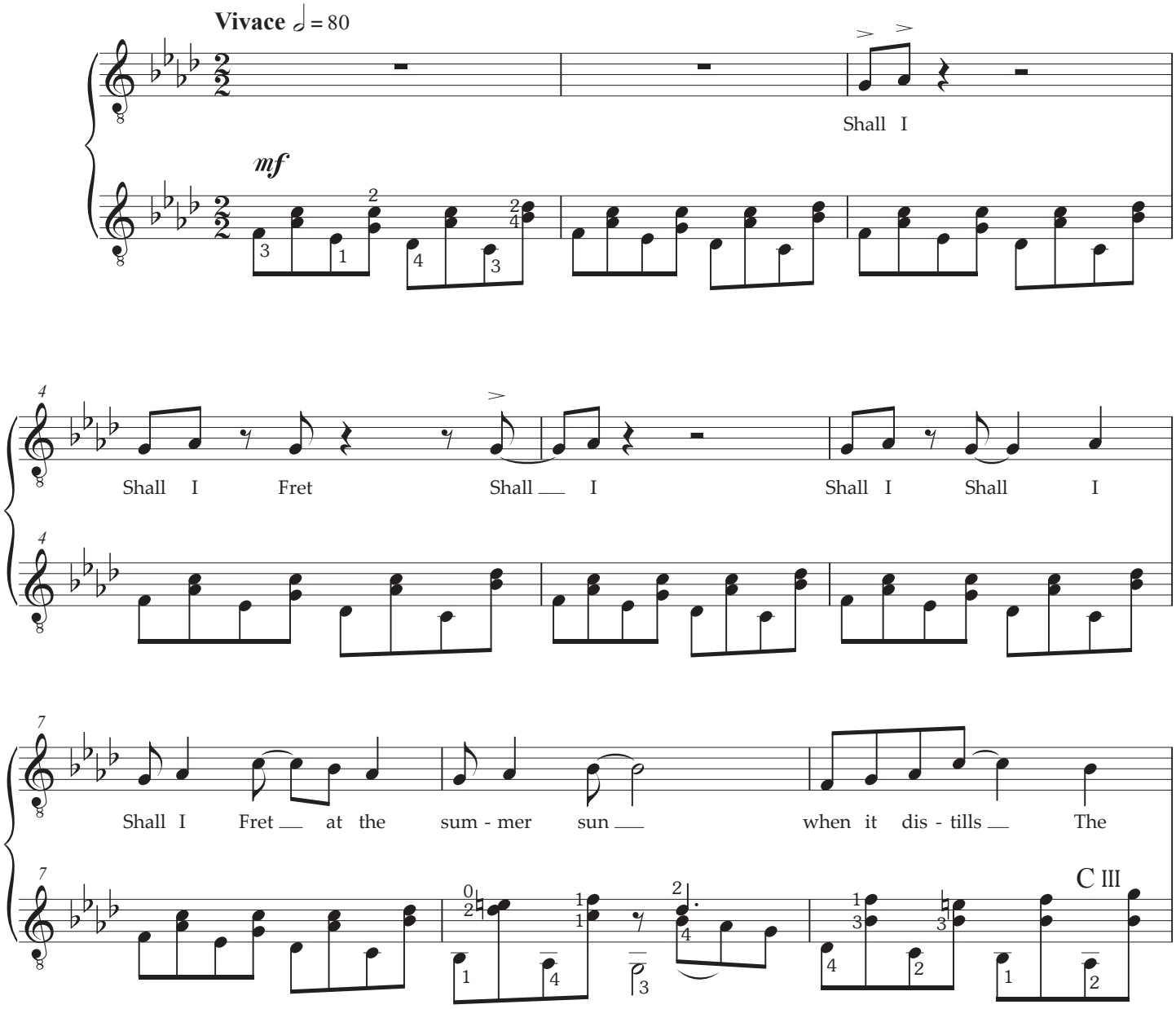


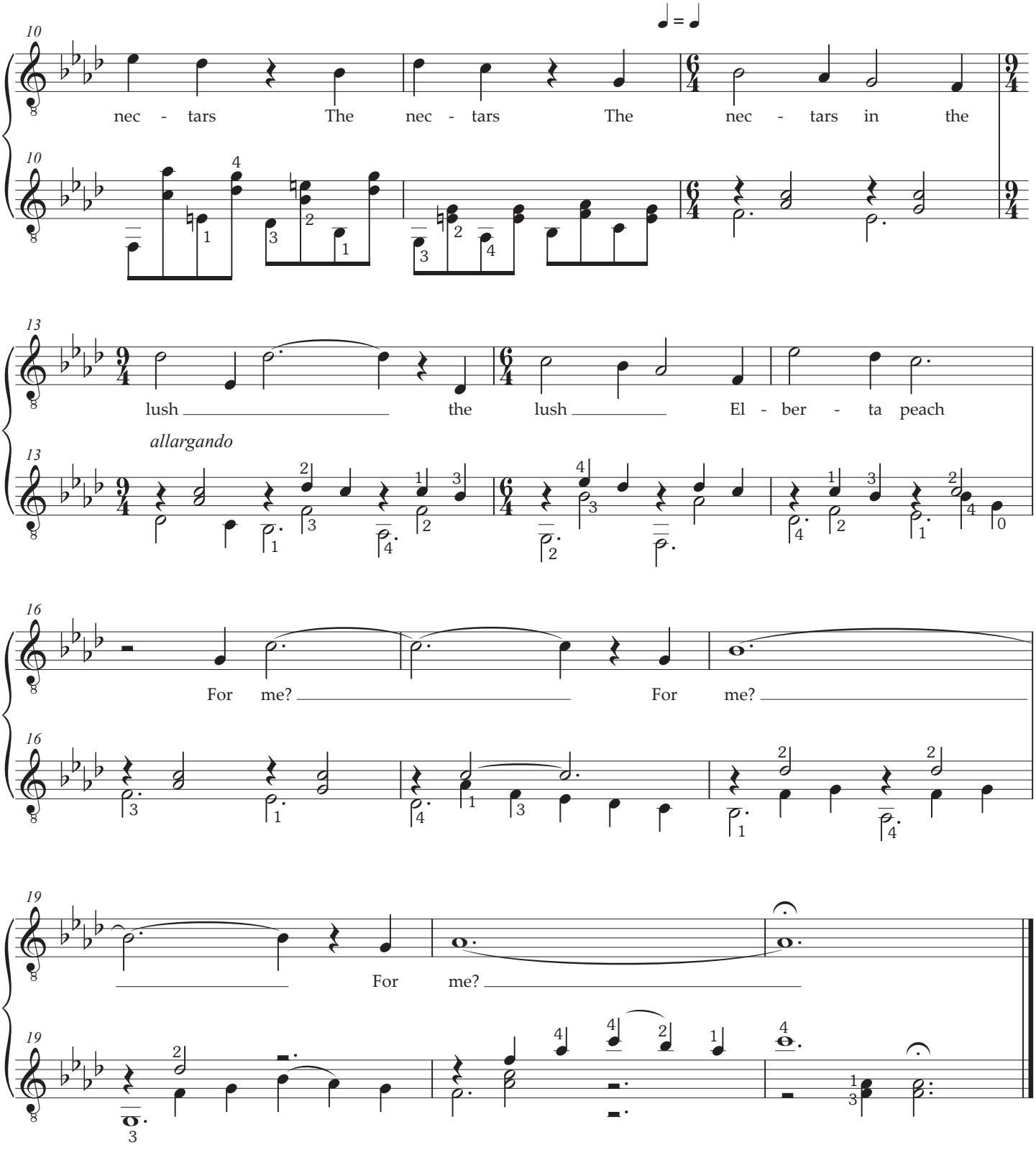
VIII. Pungent Odor



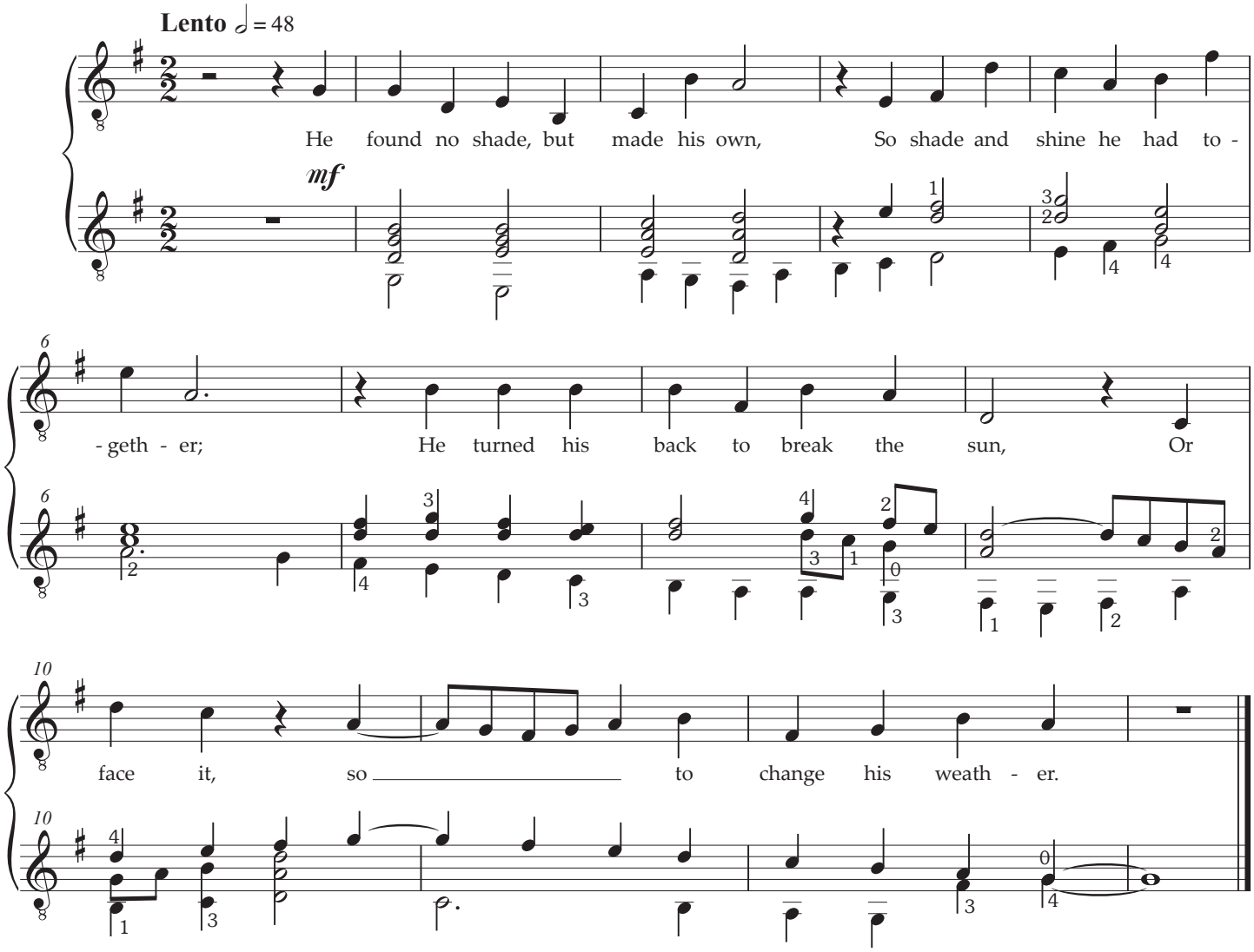

9
The spears The spears Of
17
pun - gent o - dor from the wild horse - mint
24
Have wound - ed me
31
with pois - oned tips un - til I drowse.
38
I drowse.

IX. Shall I Fret

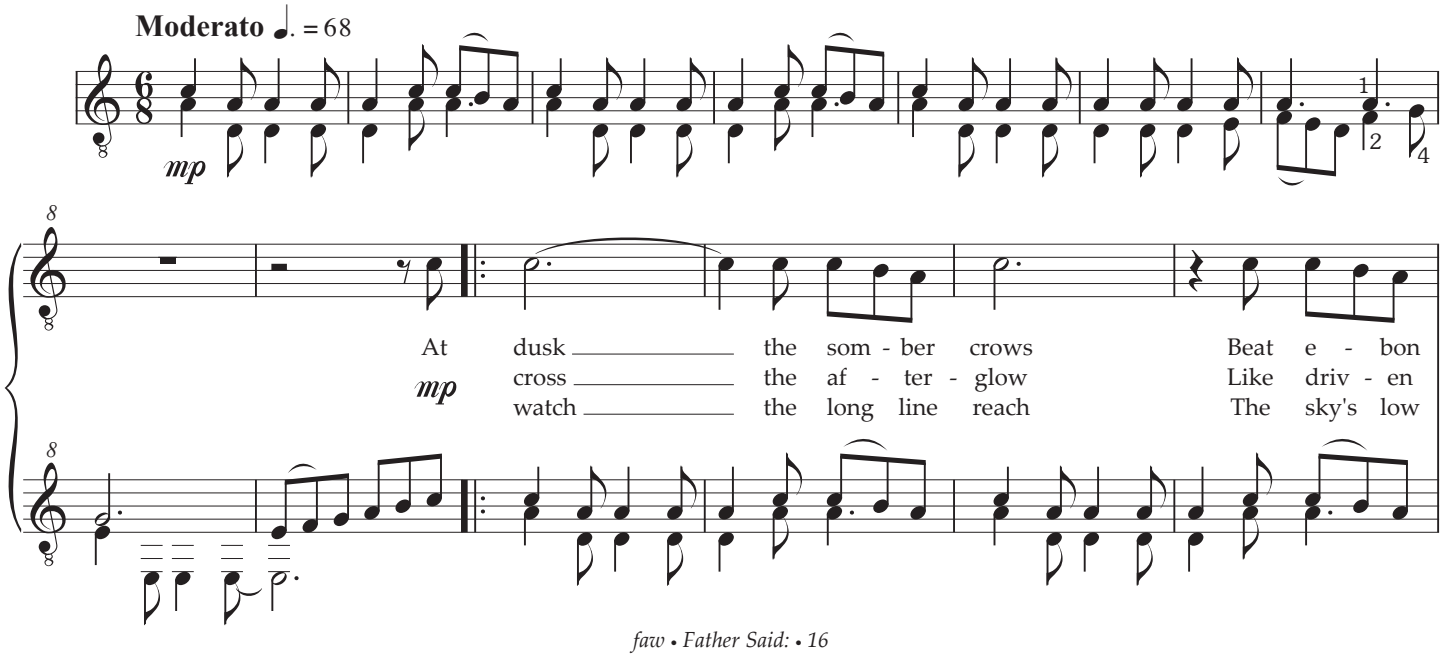


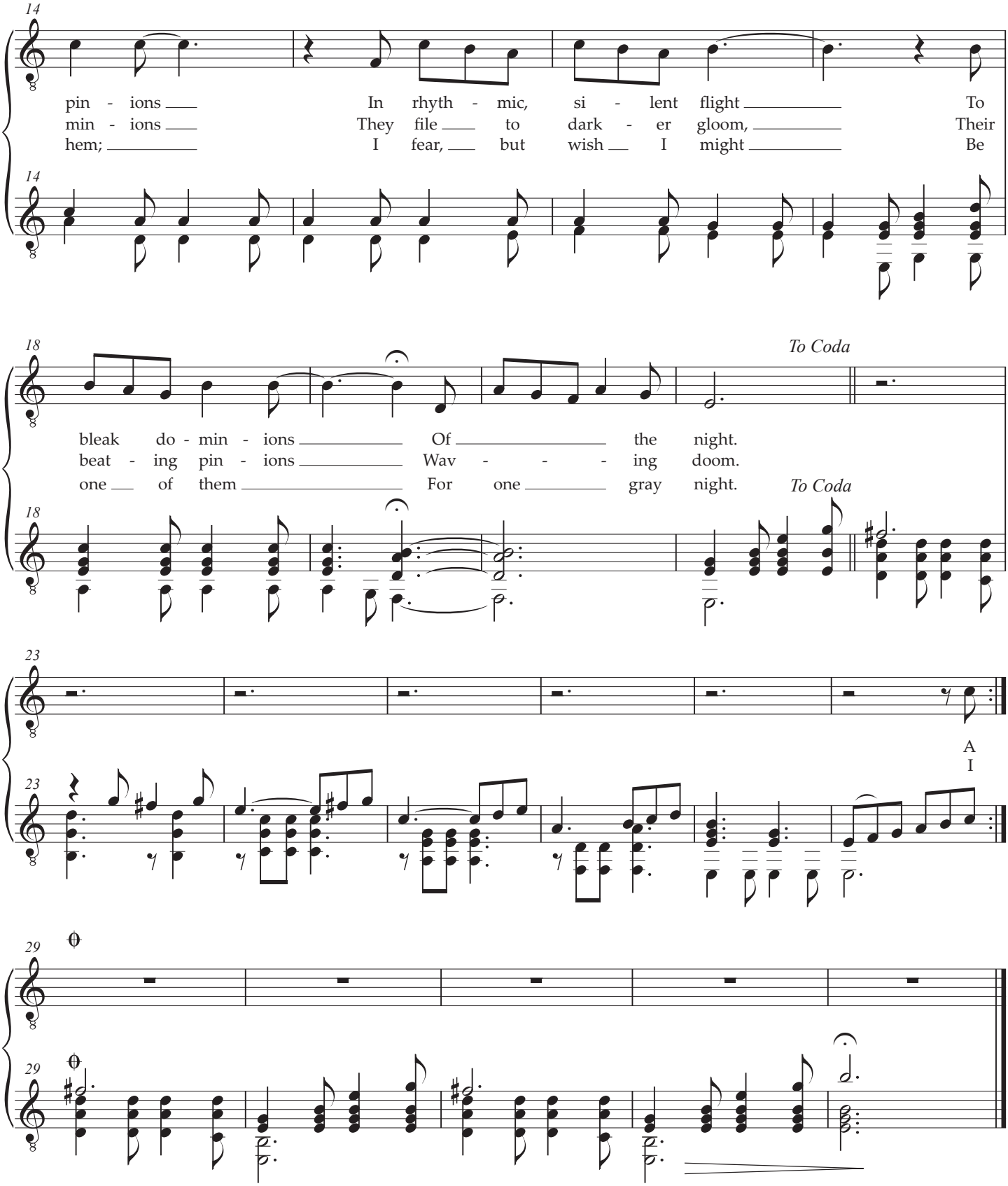

10
nec - tars The nec - tars The nec - tars in the
13
lush the lush El - ber - ta peach
allargando
16
For me? For me?
19
For me?

X. Shade

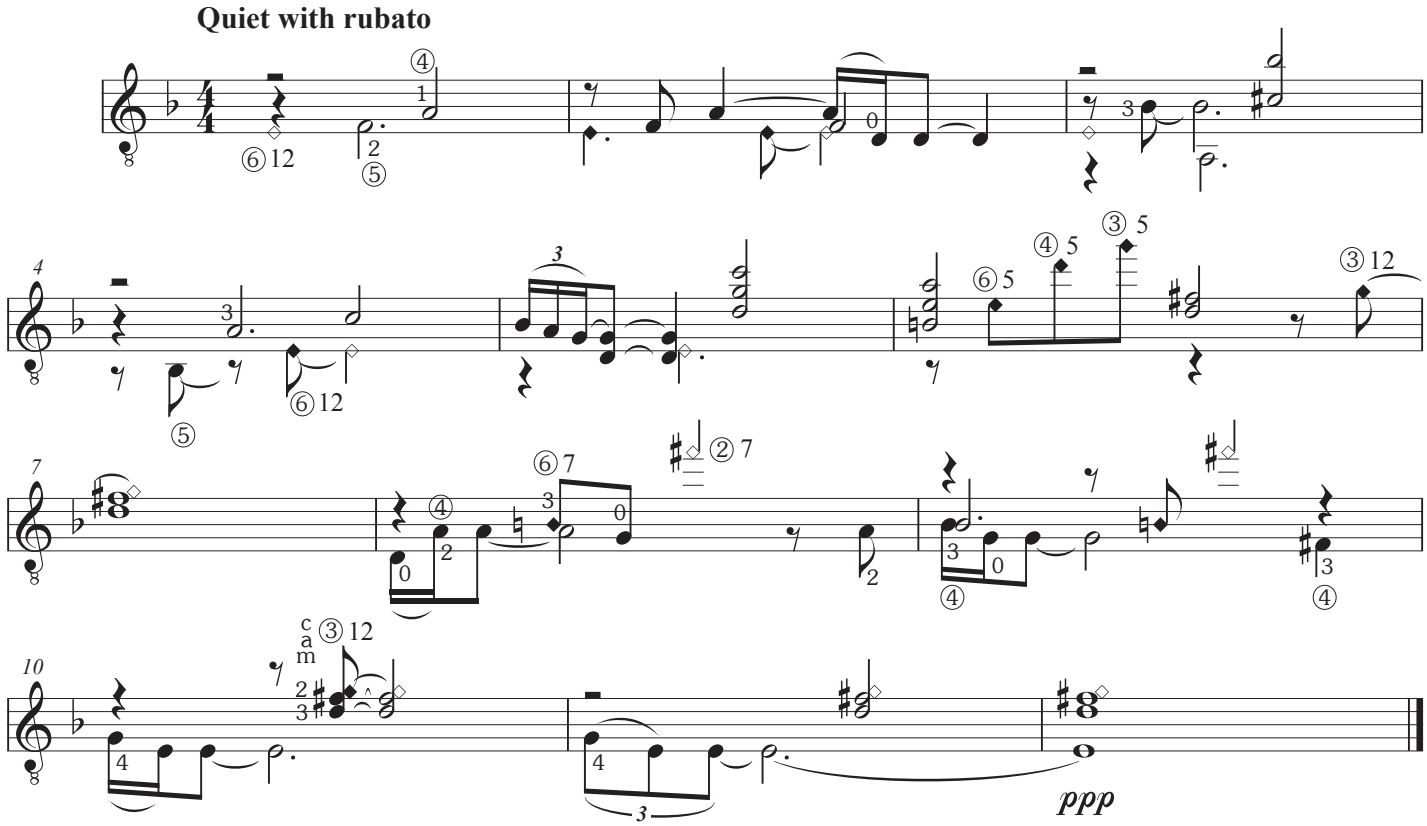


XI. Dusk

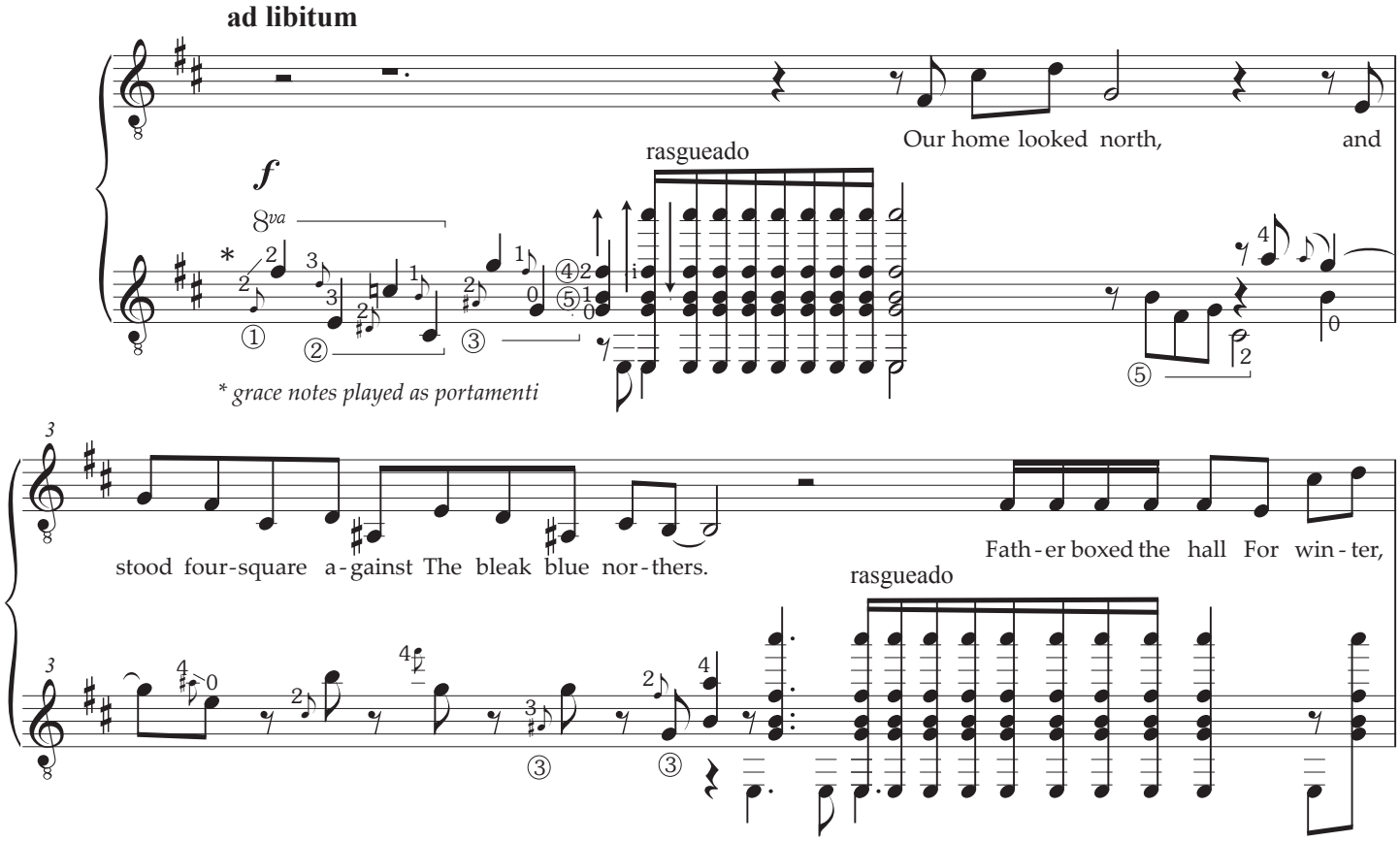


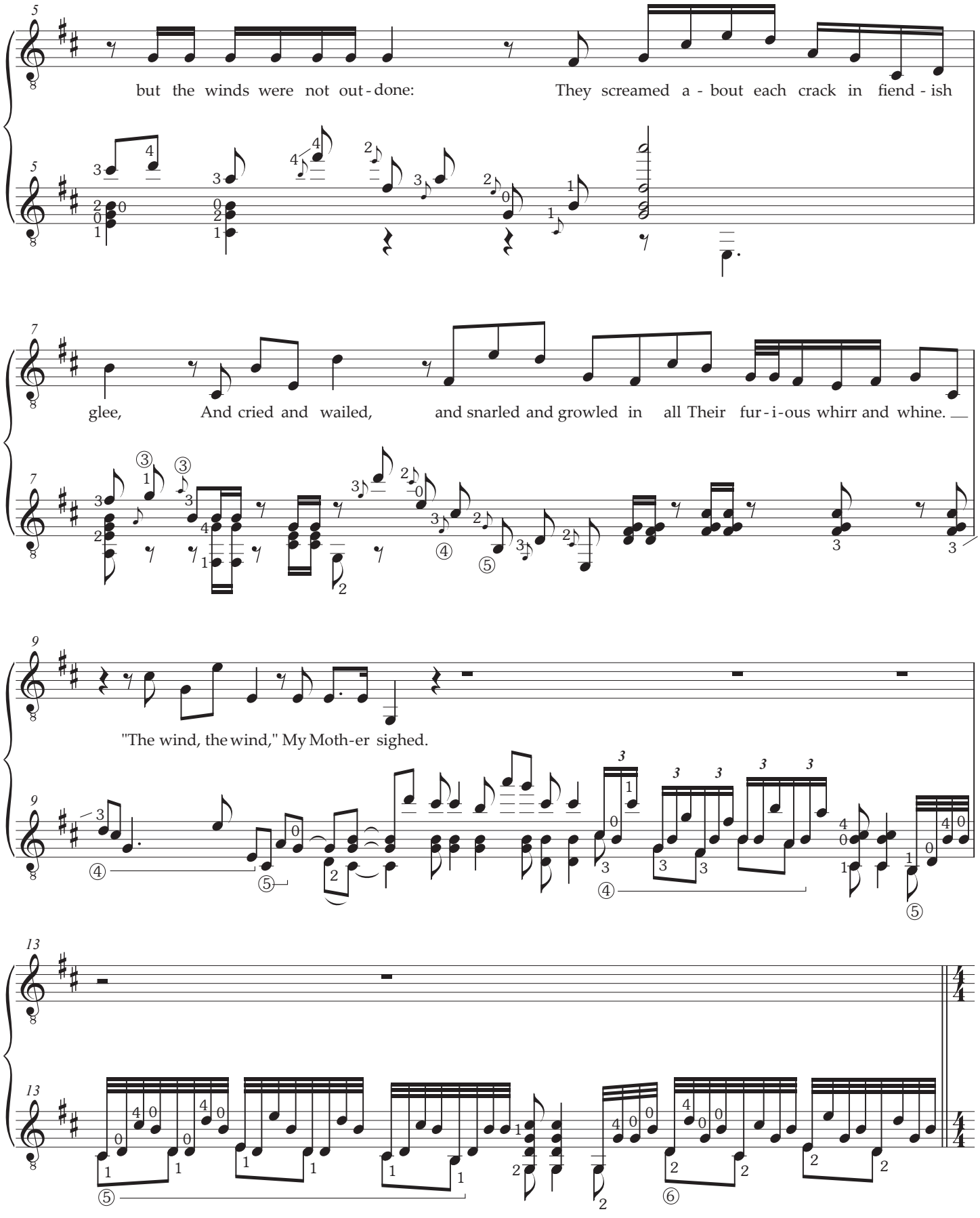

14
pin - ions In rhyth - mic, si - lent flight To
min - ions They file to dark - er gloom, Their
hem; I fear, but wish I might Be
14
18
To Coda
bleak do - min - ions Of the night.
beat - ing pin - ions Wav - - - ing doom.
one of them For one gray night.
To Coda
18
23
A
I
23
29
29

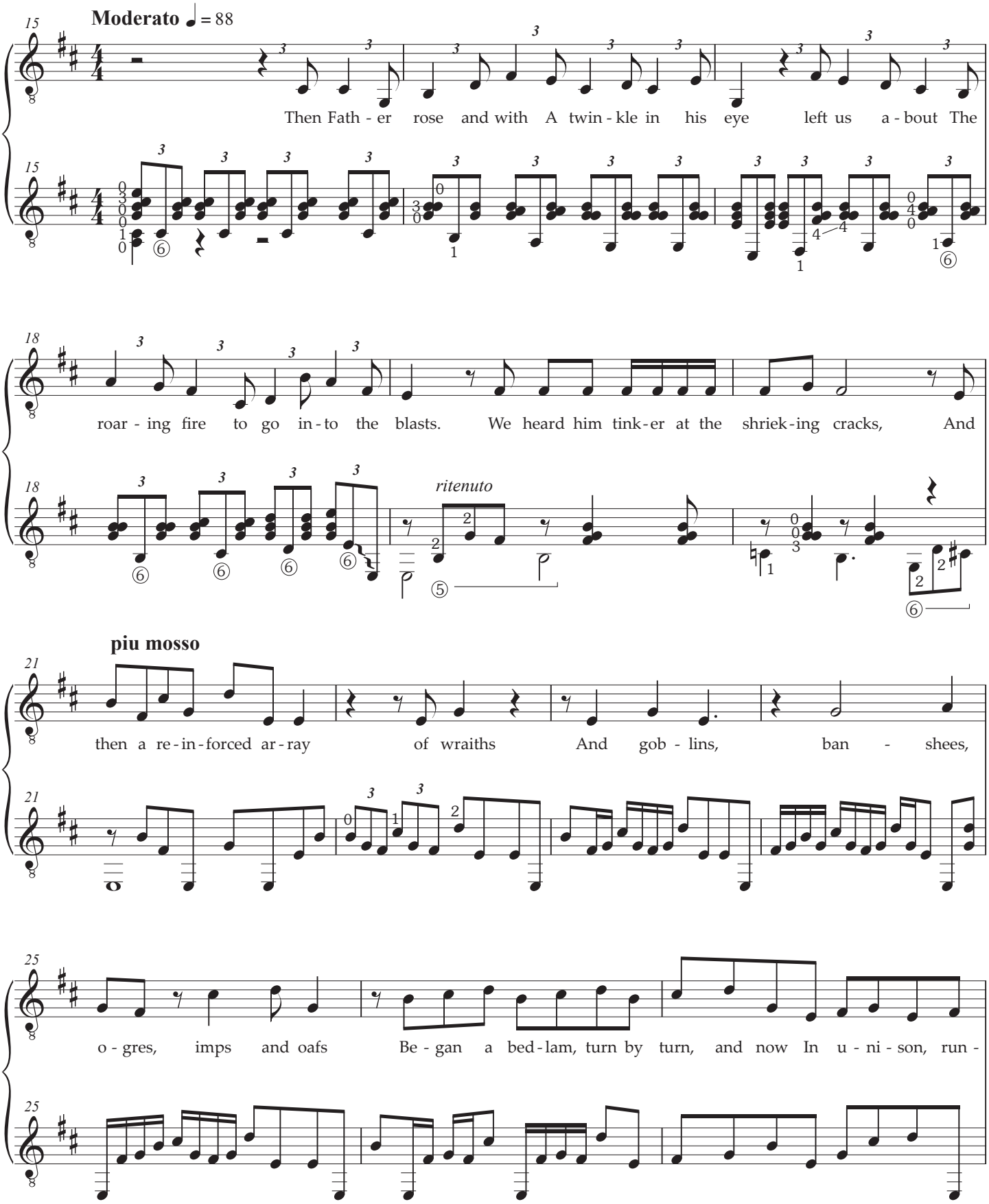
Interlude

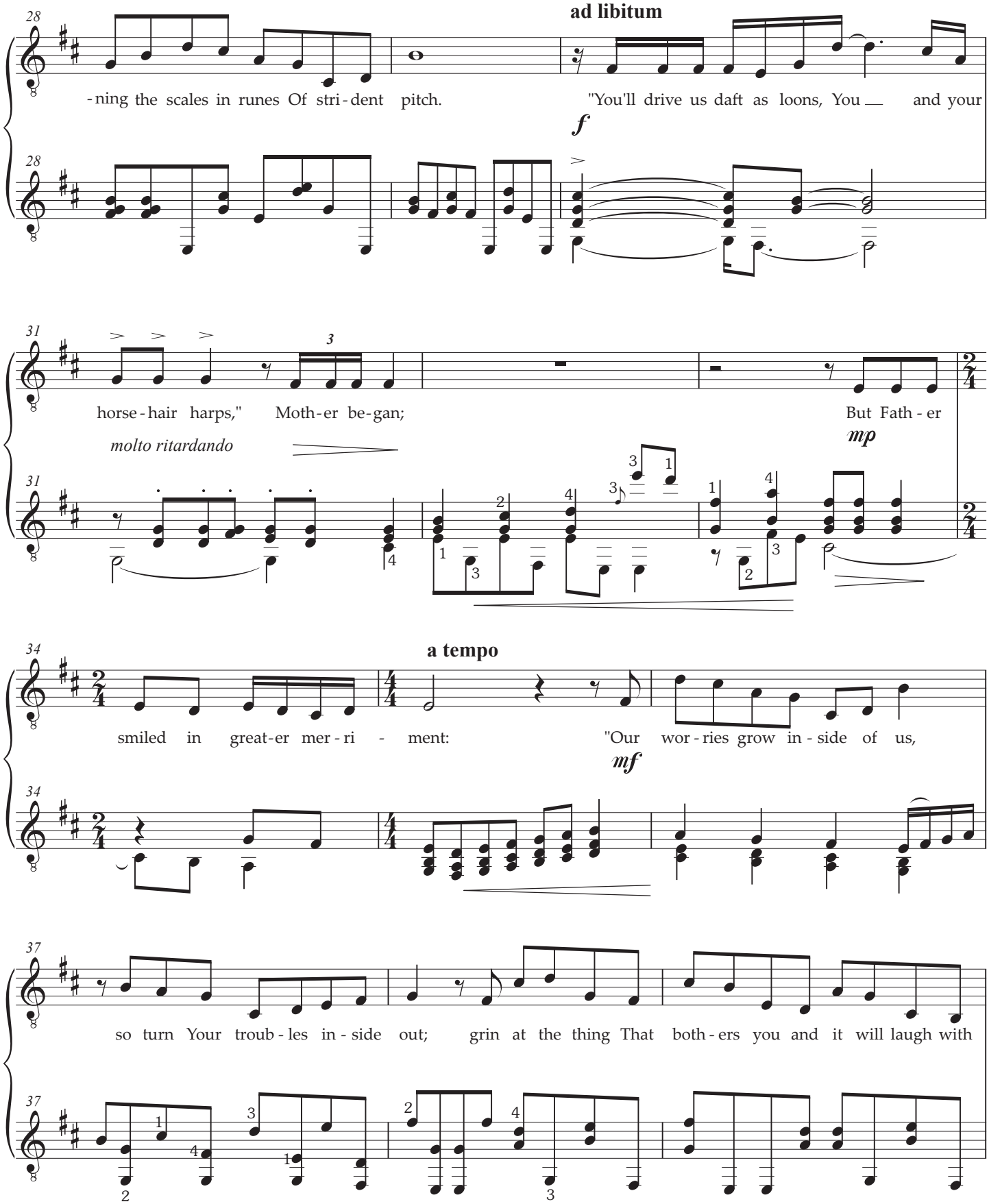


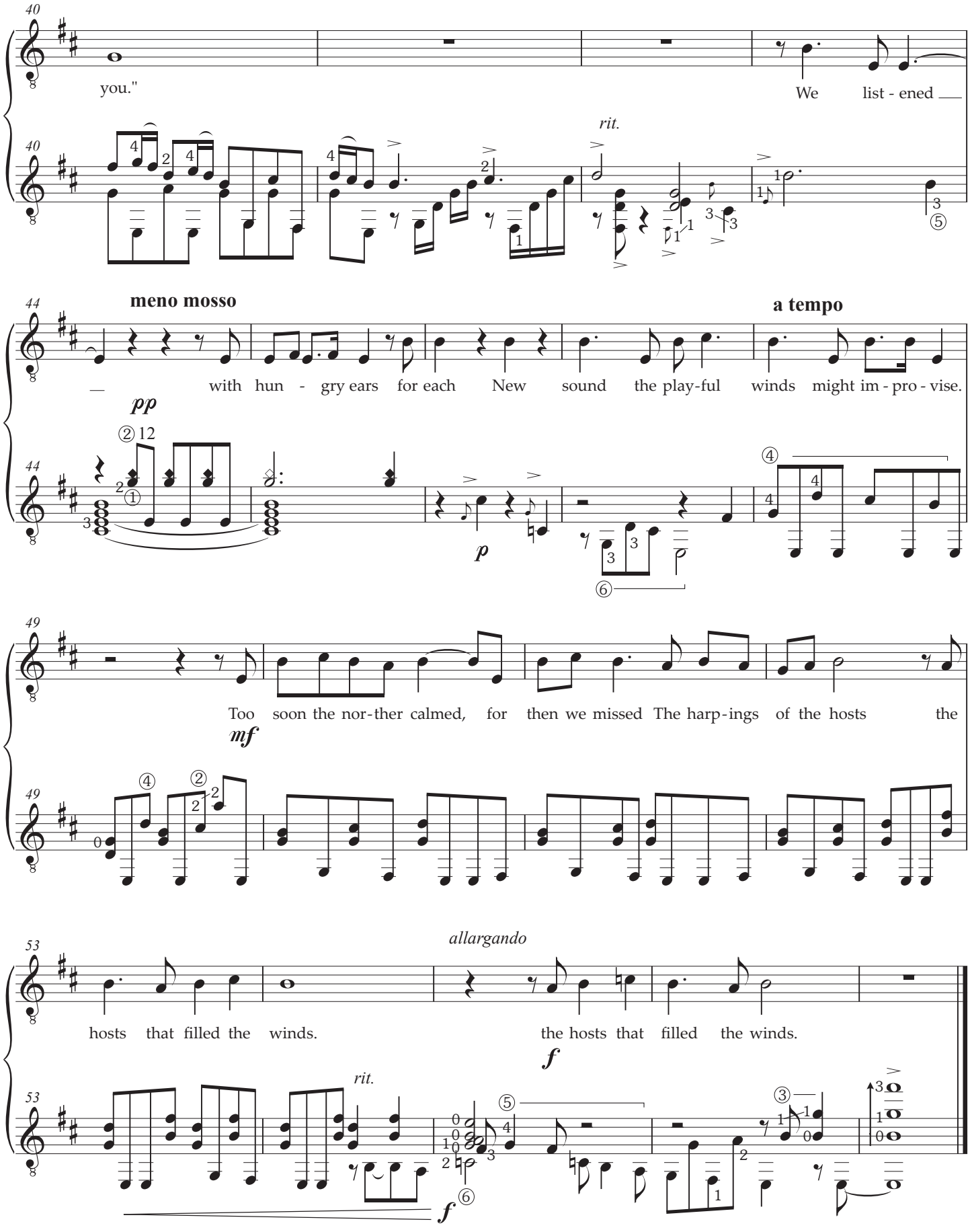
XII. Tantalize your Troubles



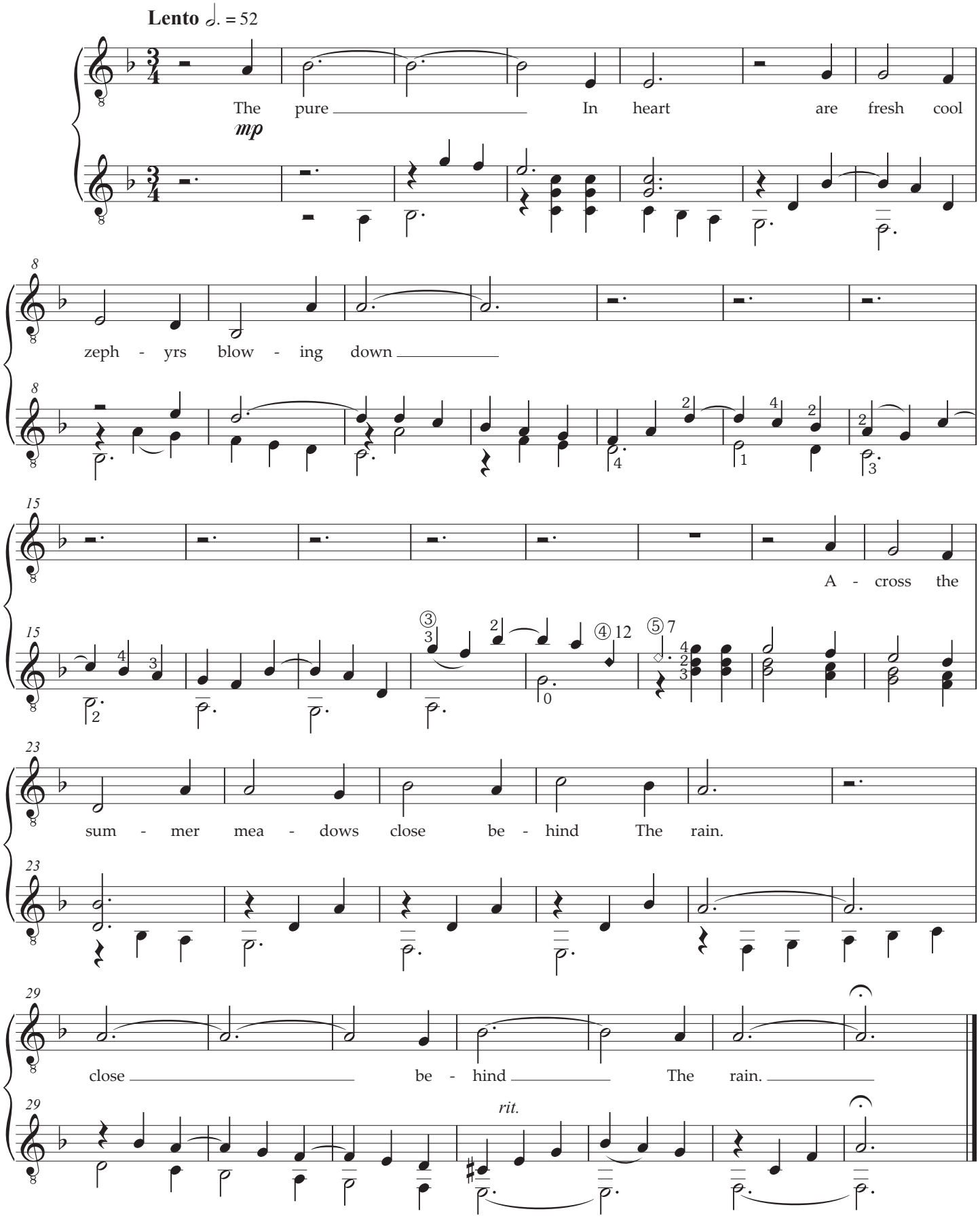

5
but the winds were not out - done: They screamed a - bout each crack in fiend - ish
7
glee, And cried and wailed, and snarled and growled in all Their fur - i - ous whirr and whine.
9
"The wind, the wind," My Moth - er sighed.
13


Moderato ♩ = 88
15
Then Fath - er rose and with A twin - kle in his eye left us a - bout The
18
roar - ing fire to go in - to the blasts. We heard him tink - er at the shriek - ing cracks, And
ritenuto
piu mosso
21
then a re - in - forced ar - ray of wraiths And gob - lins, ban - shees,
25
o - gres, imps and oafs Be - gan a bed - lam, turn by turn, and now In u - ni - son, run -

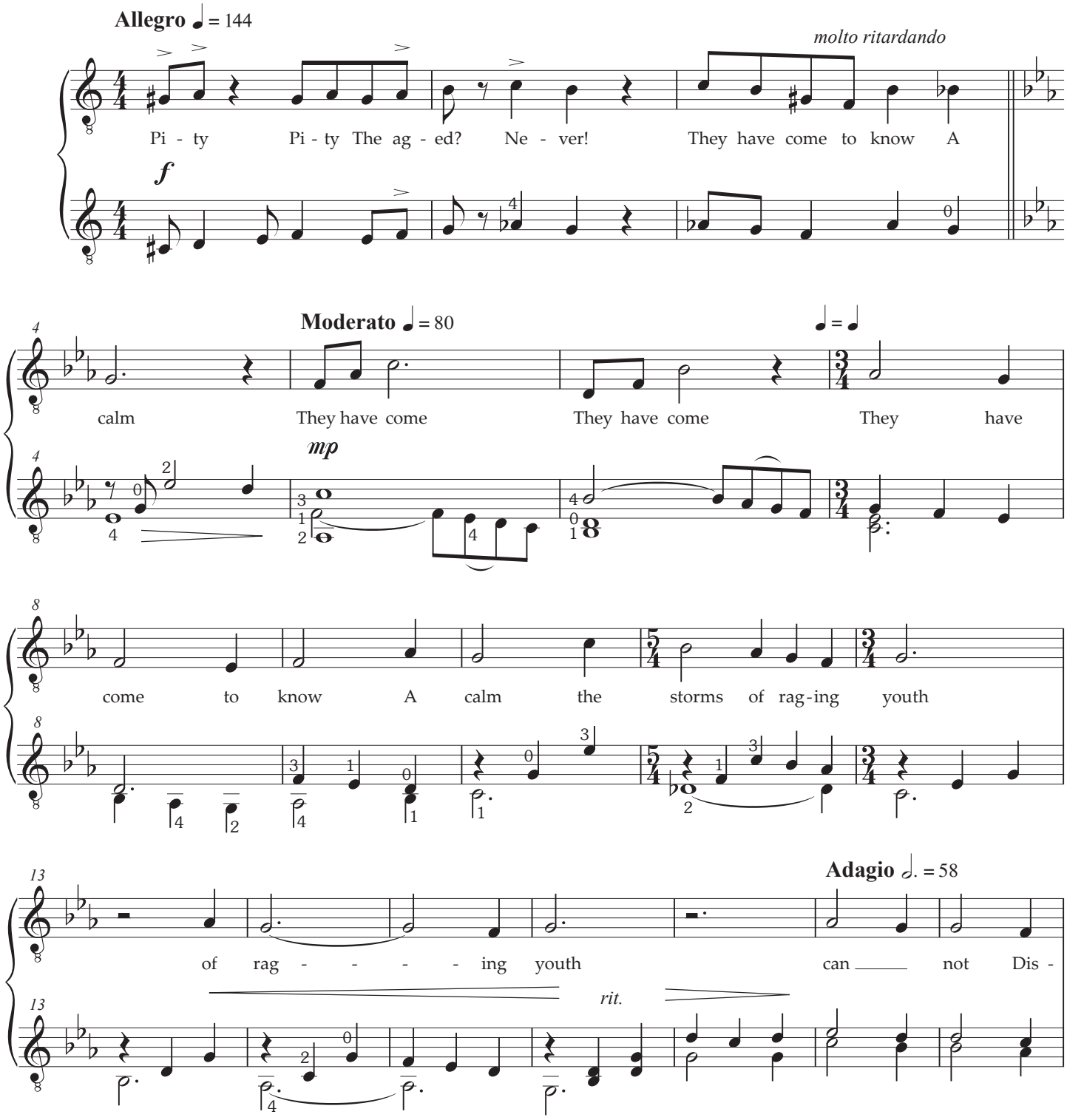

28
ad libitum
-ning the scales in runes Of stri-dent pitch.
"You'll drive us daft as loons, You and your
f
28
31
horse-hair harps," Moth-er be-gan;
But Fath-er
molto ritardando
mp
31
34
a tempo
smiled in great-er mer-ri - ment:
"Our wor-ries grow in-side of us,
mf
34
37
so turn Your troub-les in-side out;
grin at the thing That both-ers you and it will laugh with
37

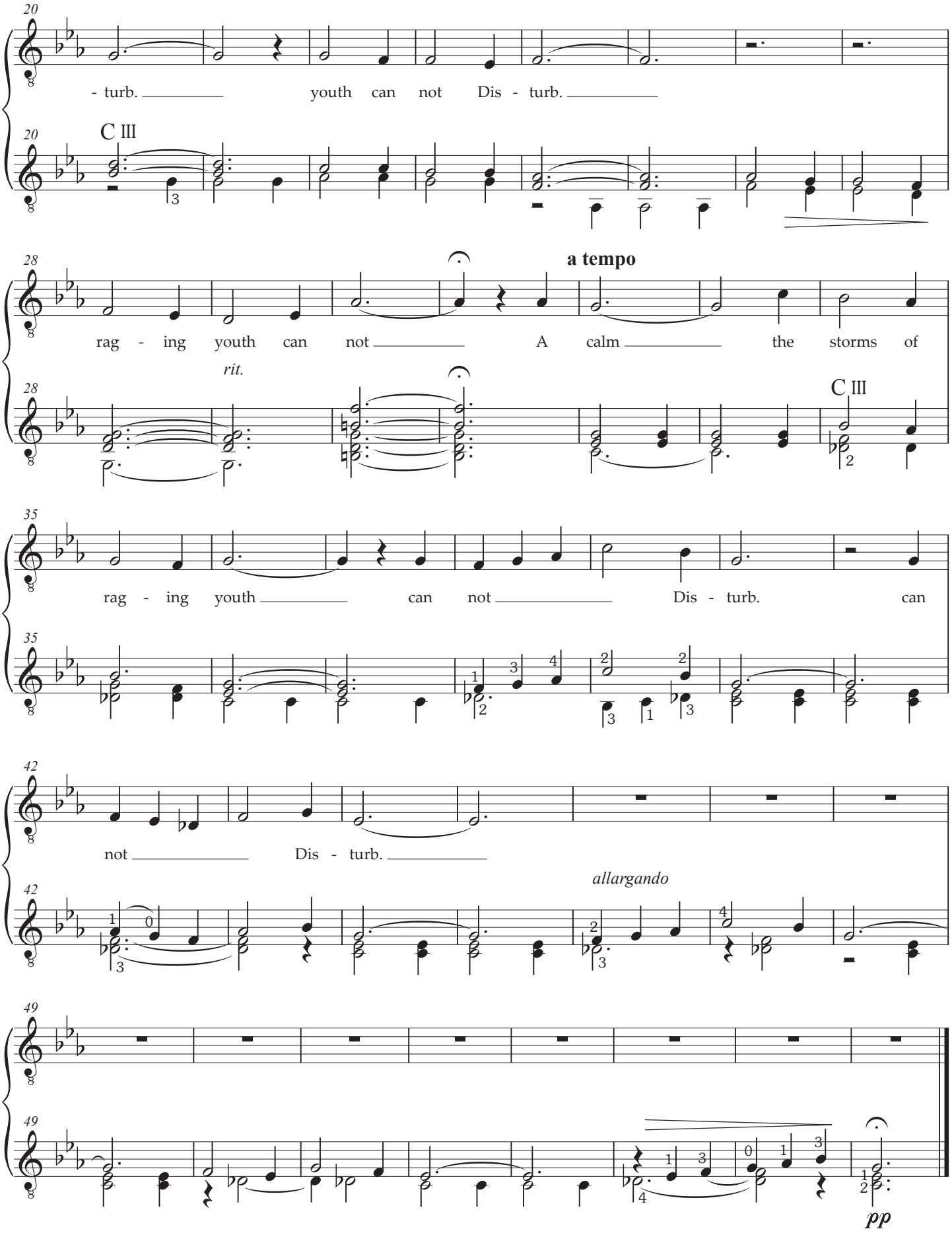

40
you."
We list - ened
rit.
40
44
meno mosso
a tempo
with hun - gry ears for each New sound the play-ful winds might im - pro - vise.
pp
p
44
49
Too soon the nor-ther calmed, for then we missed The harp-ings of the hosts the
mf
49
53
allargando
hosts that filled the winds.
the hosts that filled the winds.
f
rit.
53
f

XIII. Cool Zephyrs

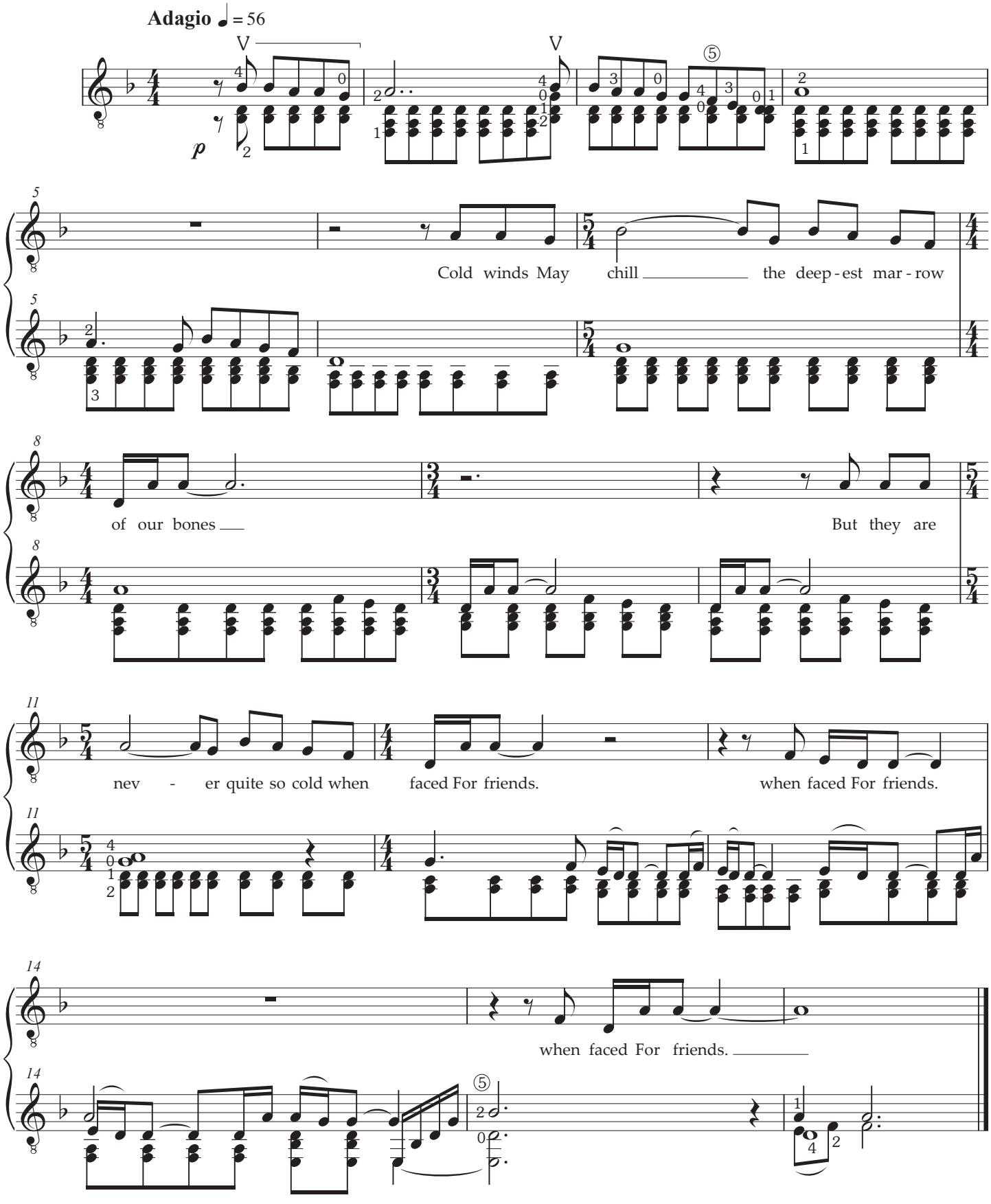


XIV. A Calm

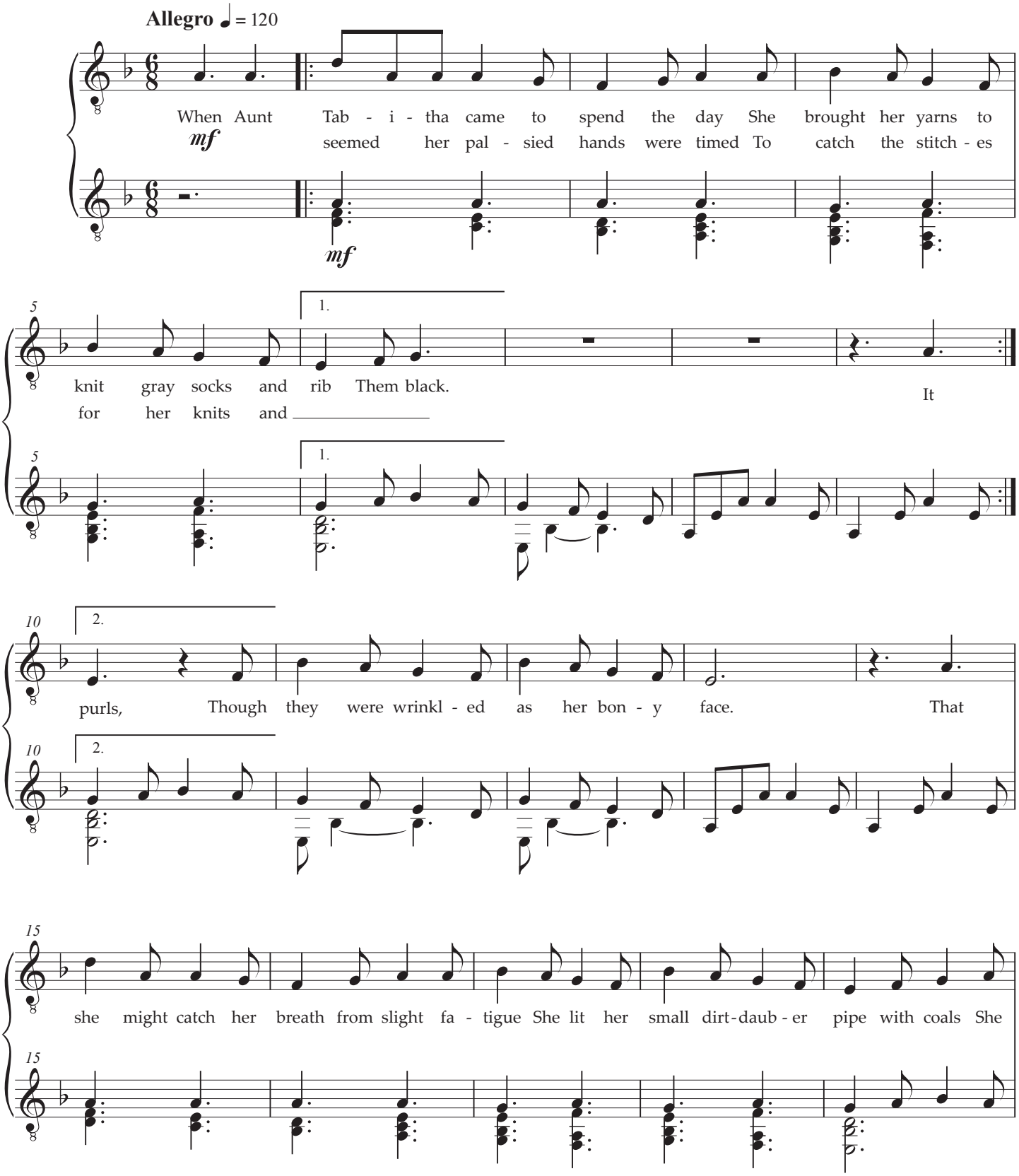

Allegro ♩ = 144
molto ritardando
Pi - ty Pi - ty The ag - ed? Ne - ver! They have come to know A
f
Moderato ♩ = 80
♩ = ♩
calm They have come They have come They have
mp
come to know A calm the storms of rag-ing youth
Adagio 𝅗𝅥. = 58
of rag - - - - ing youth can not Dis -
rit.

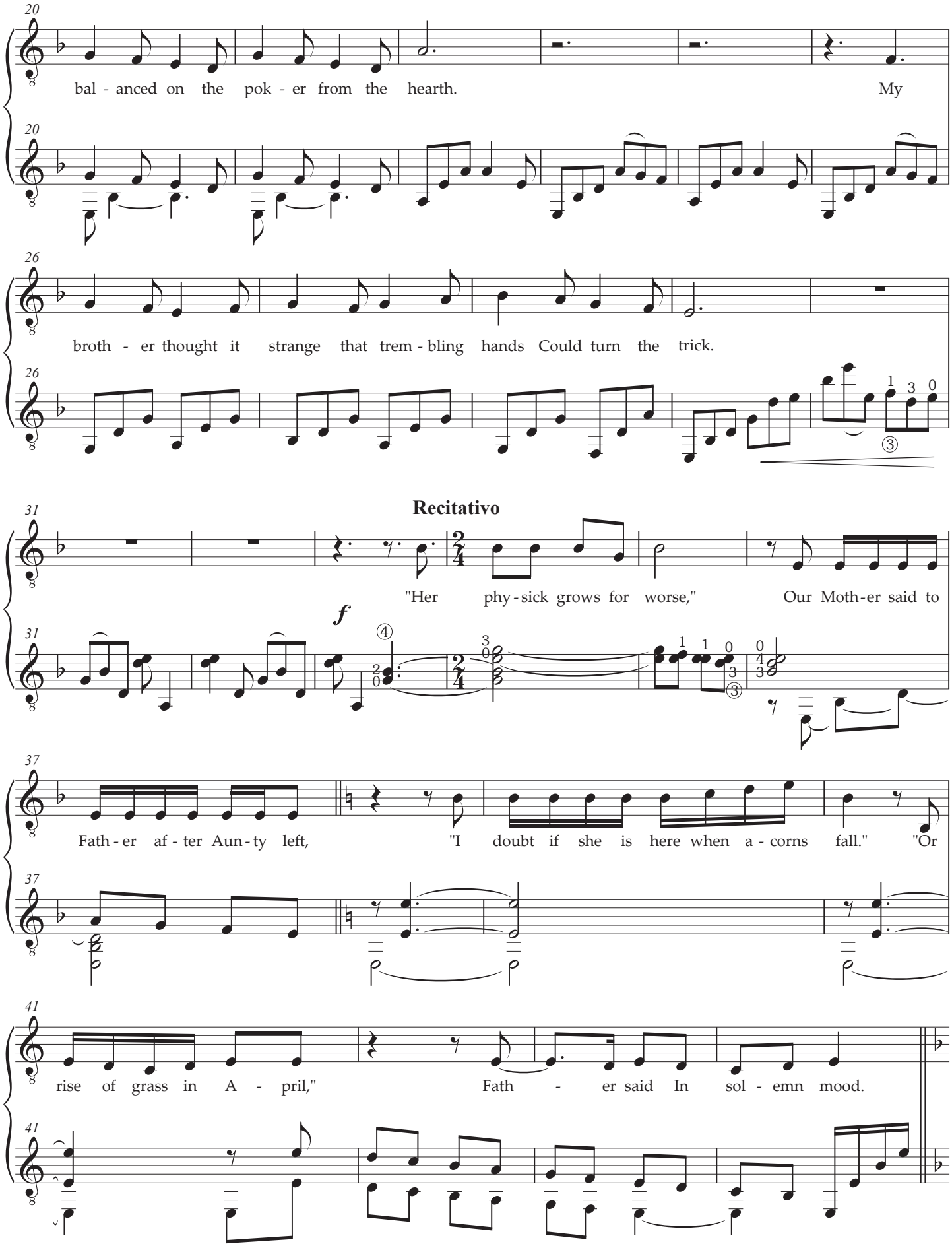

20
- turb. youth can not Dis - turb.
C III
28
a tempo
rag - ing youth can not A calm the storms of
rit.
C III
35
rag - ing youth can not Dis - turb. can
42
not Dis - turb.
allargando
49
pp

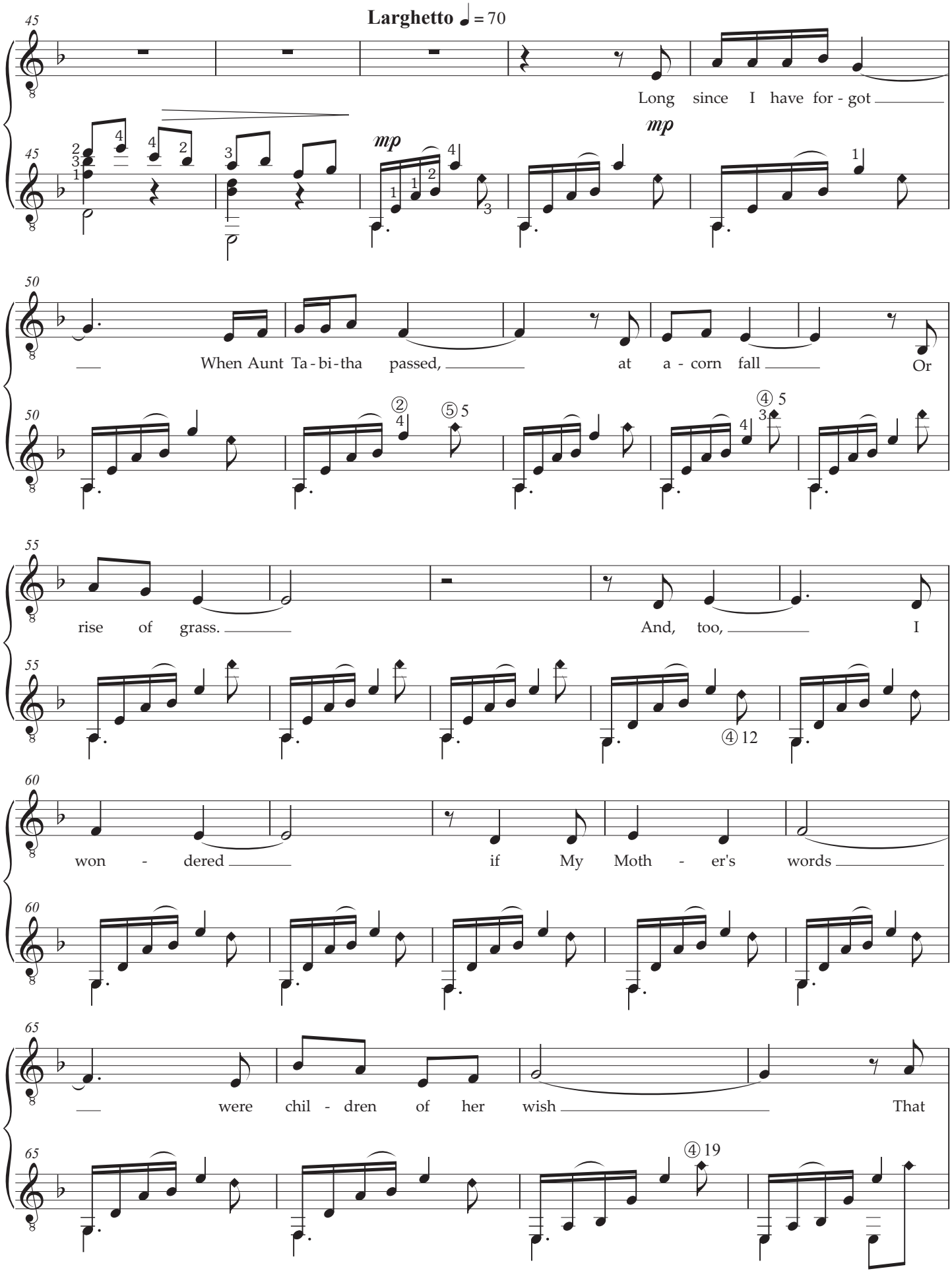
XV. Cold Winds

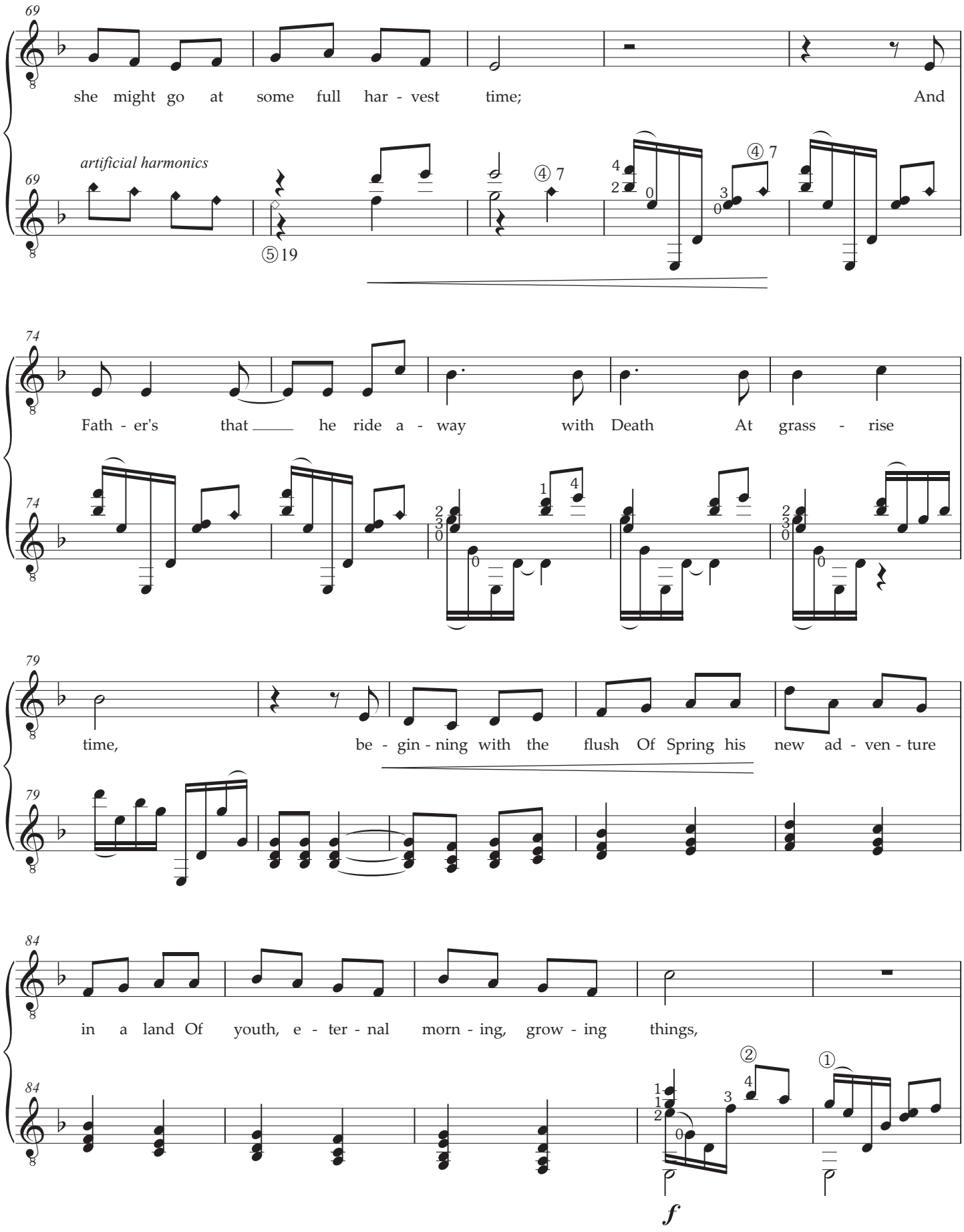


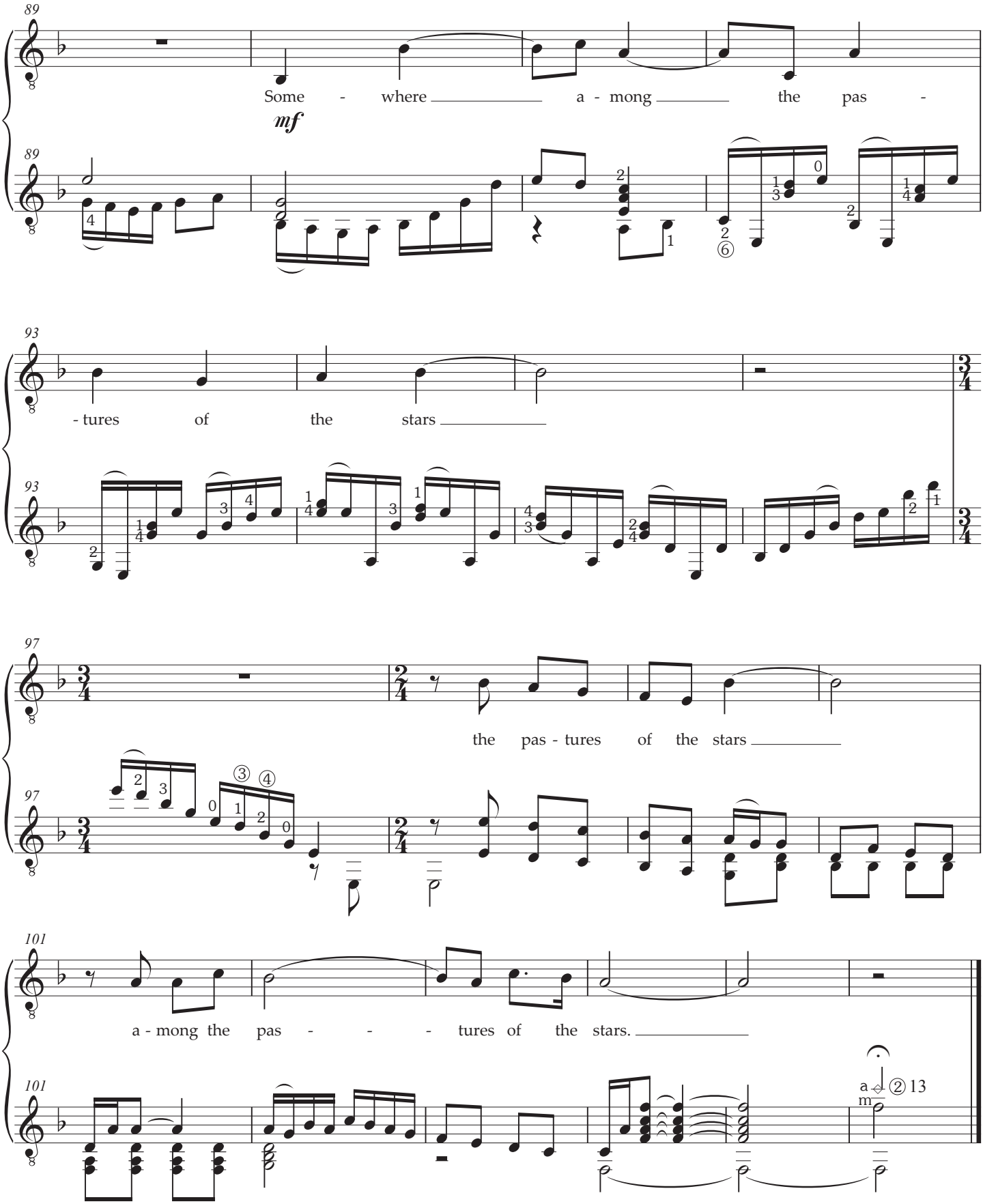
XVI. Aunt Tabitha




20
bal - anced on the pok - er from the hearth. My
20
26
broth - er thought it strange that trem - bling hands Could turn the trick.
26
Recitativo
31
"Her phy - sick grows for worse," Our Moth - er said to
31
f
37
Fath - er af - ter Aun - ty left, "I doubt if she is here when a - corns fall." "Or
37
41
rise of grass in A - pril," Fath - er said In sol - emn mood.
41


Larghetto ♩ = 70
45
Long since I have for - got
mp
mp
50
When Aunt Ta - bi - tha passed, at a - corn fall Or
55
rise of grass. And, too, I
60
won - dered if My Moth - er's words
65
were chil - dren of her wish That


69
she might go at some full har - vest time; And
artificial harmonics
⑤19
④ 7
74
Fath - er's that he ride a - way with Death At grass - rise
79
time, be - gin - ning with the flush Of Spring his new ad - ven - ture
84
in a land Of youth, e - ter - nal morn - ing, grow - ing things,
f



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So. Londonderry, VT
12/30/2002