Below the Surface
I. Fossils
II. Anemones

For soprano and piano

Commissioned by Ensemble for These Times

Music by Emily Doolittle (2021)
Poetry by Rella Lossy (Fossils, 1996) and Rachel Richardson (Anemones, 2014)

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I. Fossils
II. Anemones

For soprano and piano
Duration: 8'00"

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Premiere performance by Ensemble for These Times: Nanette McGuinness, soprano, and Margaret Halbig, piano, January 29, 2022.

Music by Emily Doolittle (2021)
Poetry by Rella Lossy (Fossils, 1996) and Rachel Richardson (Anemones, 2014) (used with permission)

FOSSILS
Herring-like fish. Teeming.
Billions of years old.
Bright brown on the pale limestone
of the Green River.
Now on display.
For sale.

Caressable,
their spines tickle the tips of my fingers.
Their eyes,
their eyes wander the shallows,
looking for lunch.

Fossils.
Netted by time.
The river bed a hard, stone cradle
of flattened mummies.
They live on,
negatives against the false positive
of the mind.

Clumped, aswim
on a wooden shelf,
they leap forever.

Fossils. Graceful, mysterious,
amid abundant seas of deadly time.

(Rella Lossy, 1996)

ANEMONES
Earliest memory: leaves of the olive tree
fluttering, the light coming through,
then not, then through, then not—

My horoscope advises me to avail myself
of the mystery
—and though I've never been a believer,
though I tie my shoes to the leg of the bed
in case of fire or quake because I *won't*
give myself to such flame
—still I can't help
watching these anemones
here in the tidepool, swayed by water's
whim, waving their many tentacles,
no direction, no intention—

(Rachel Richardson, 2014)

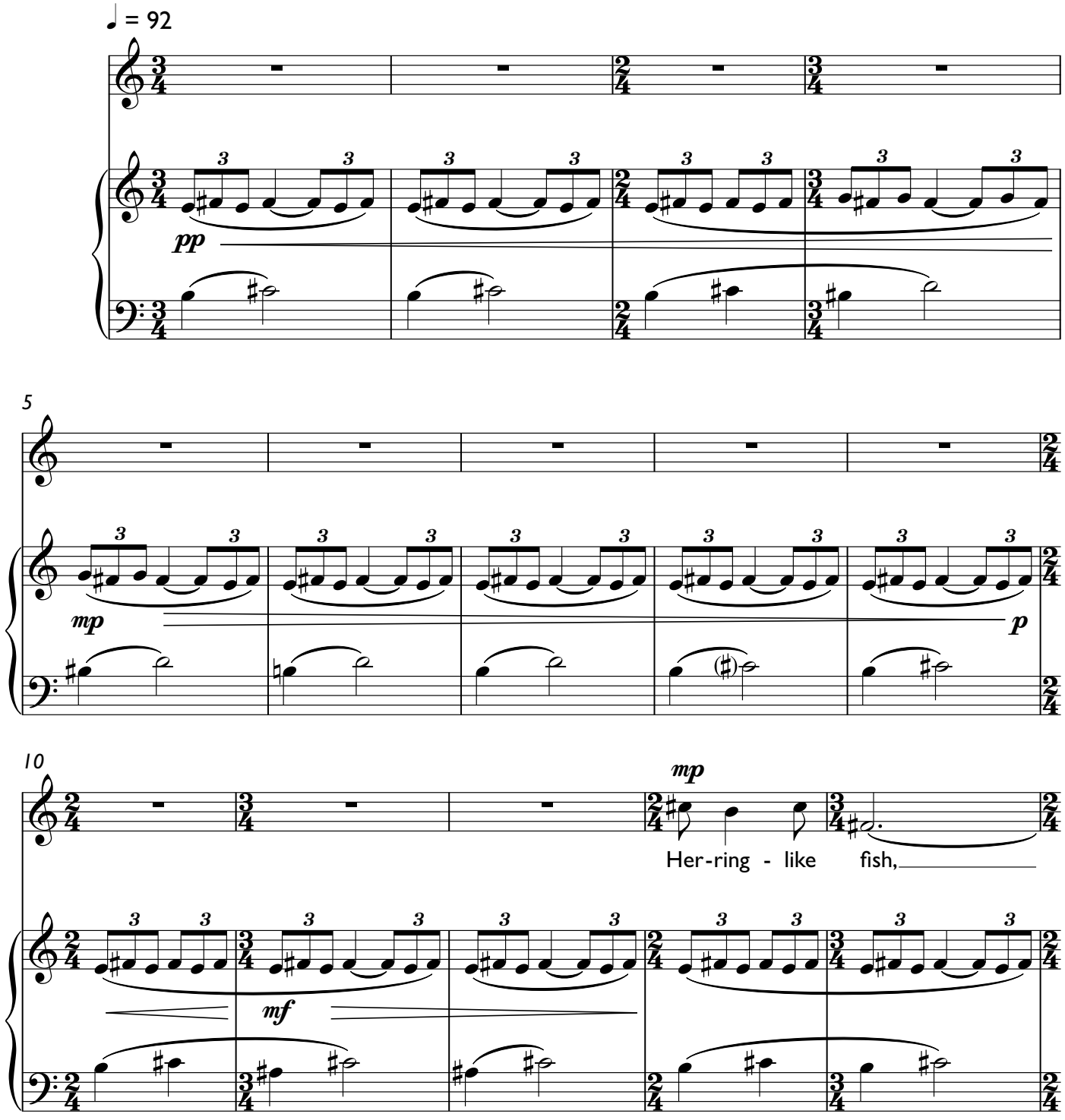
Below the Surface
1. Fossils

commissioned by Ensemble For These Times

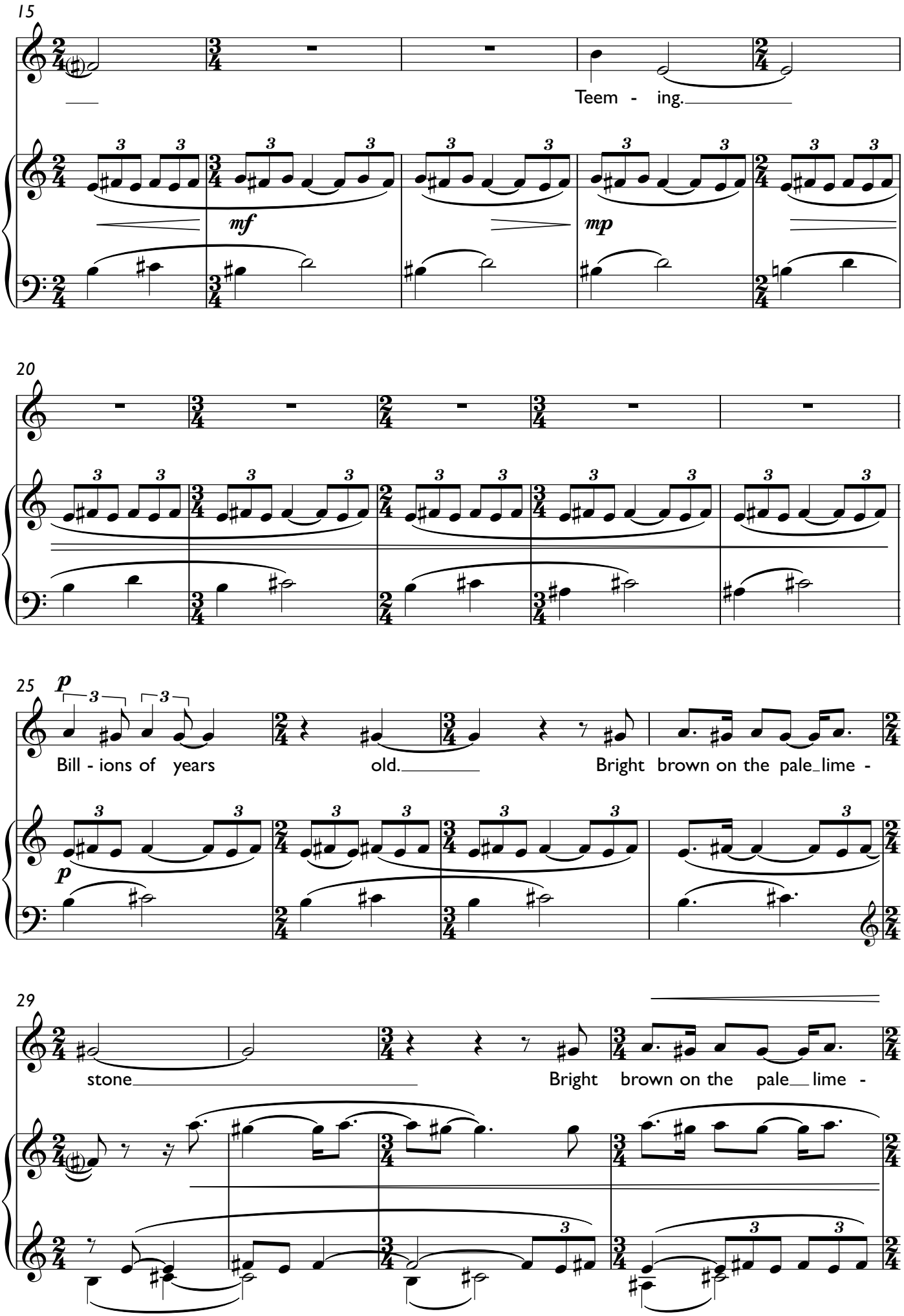
Rella Lossy

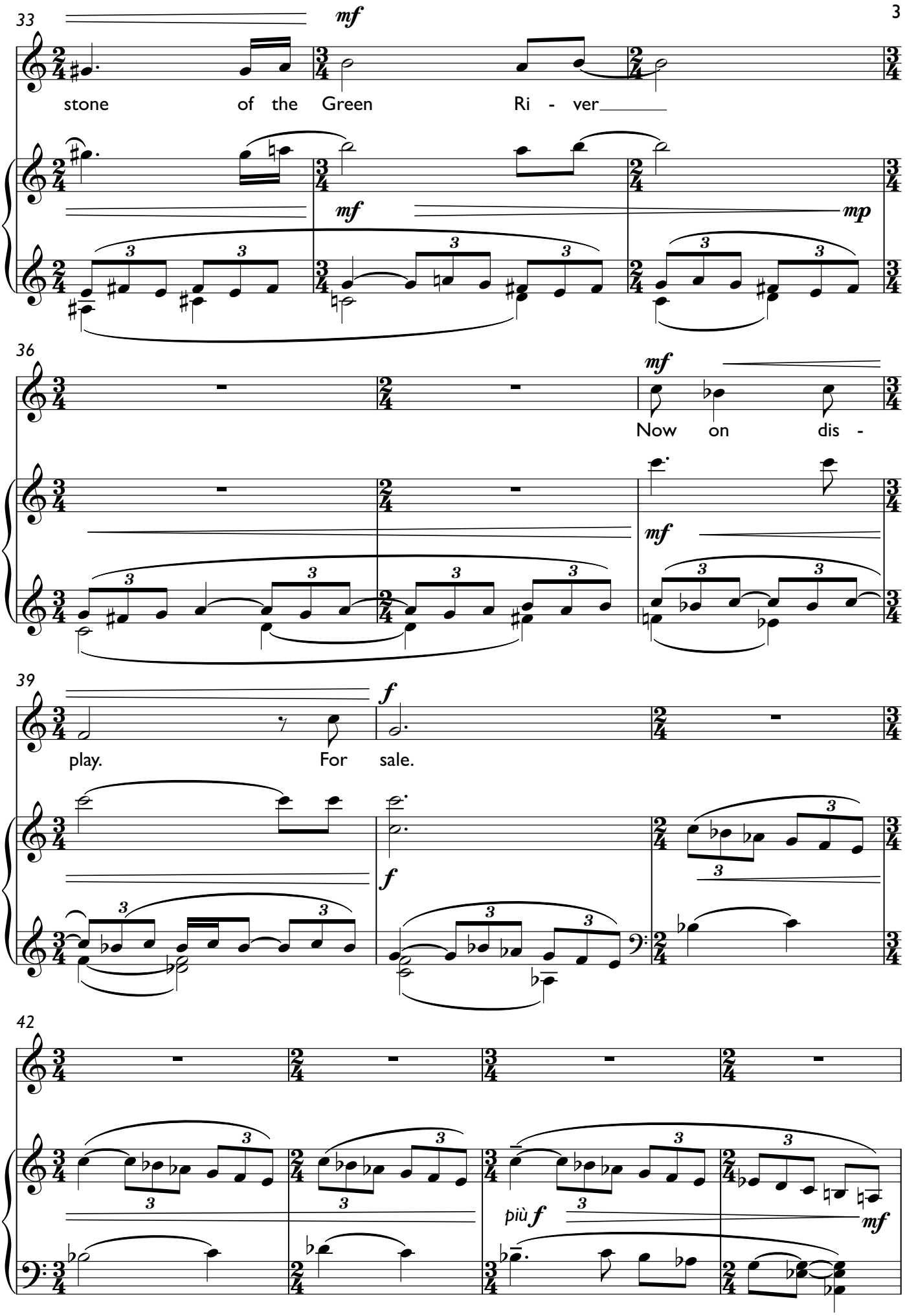
Emily Doolittle

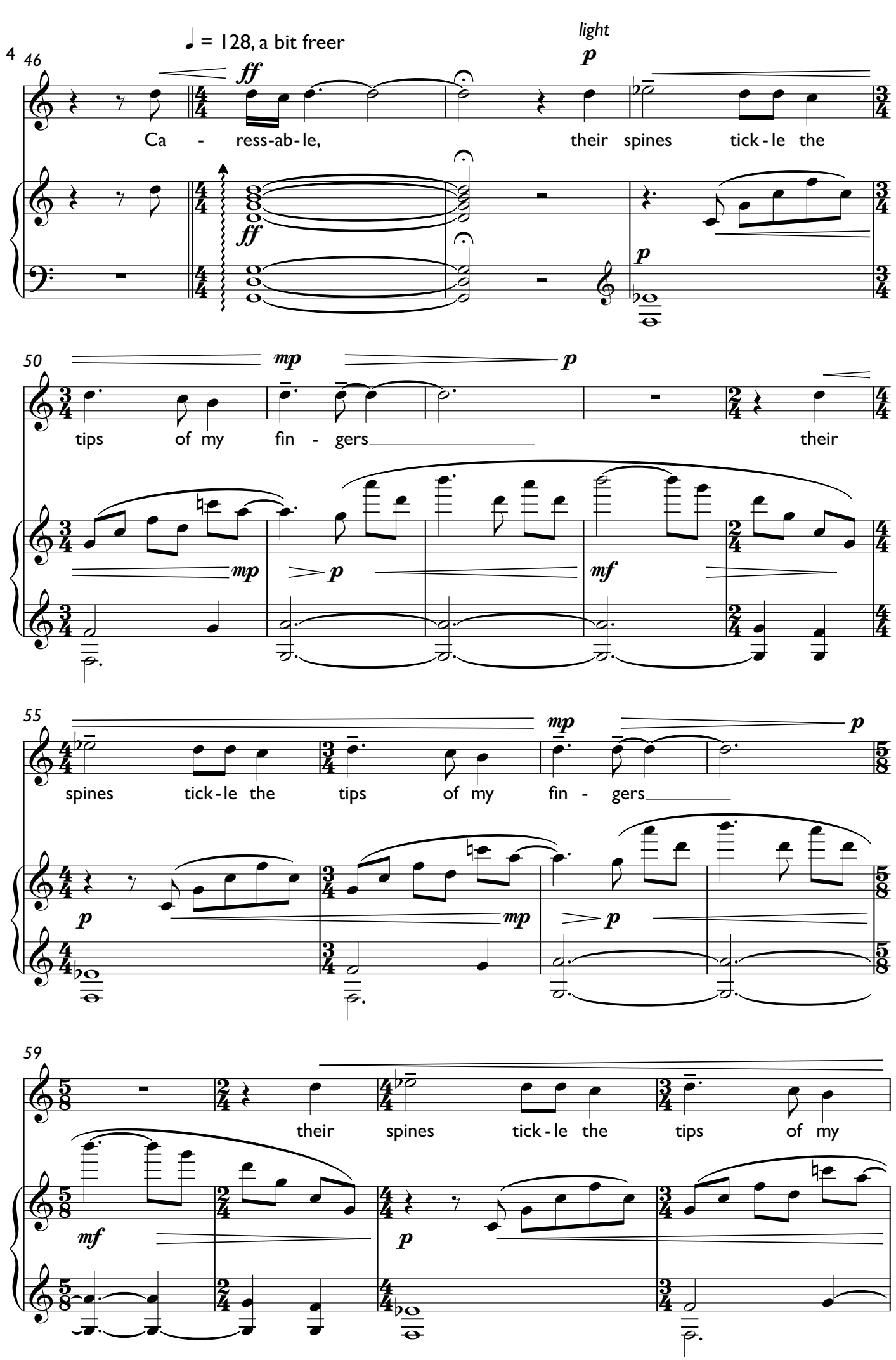
strong currents under a smooth surface

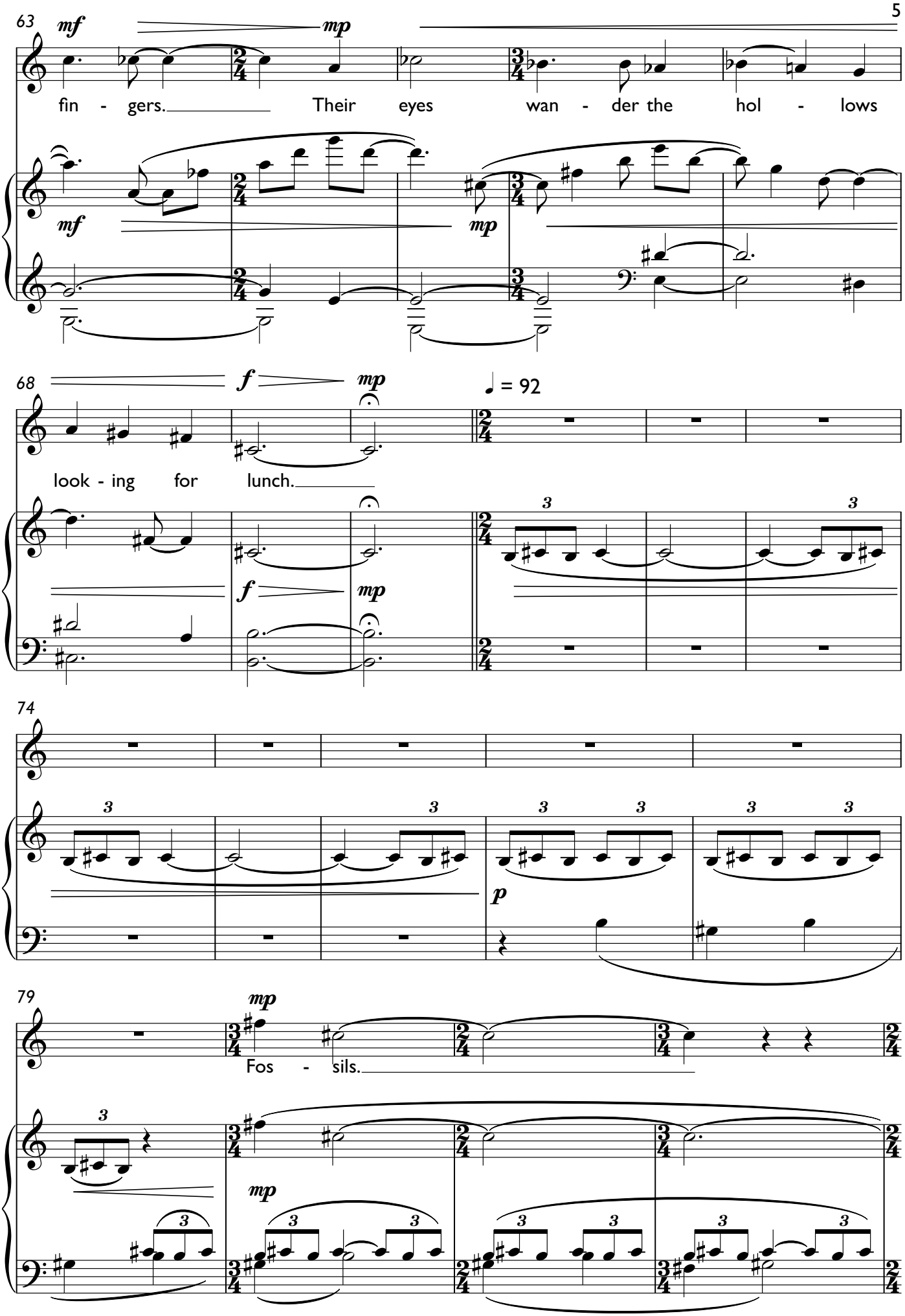


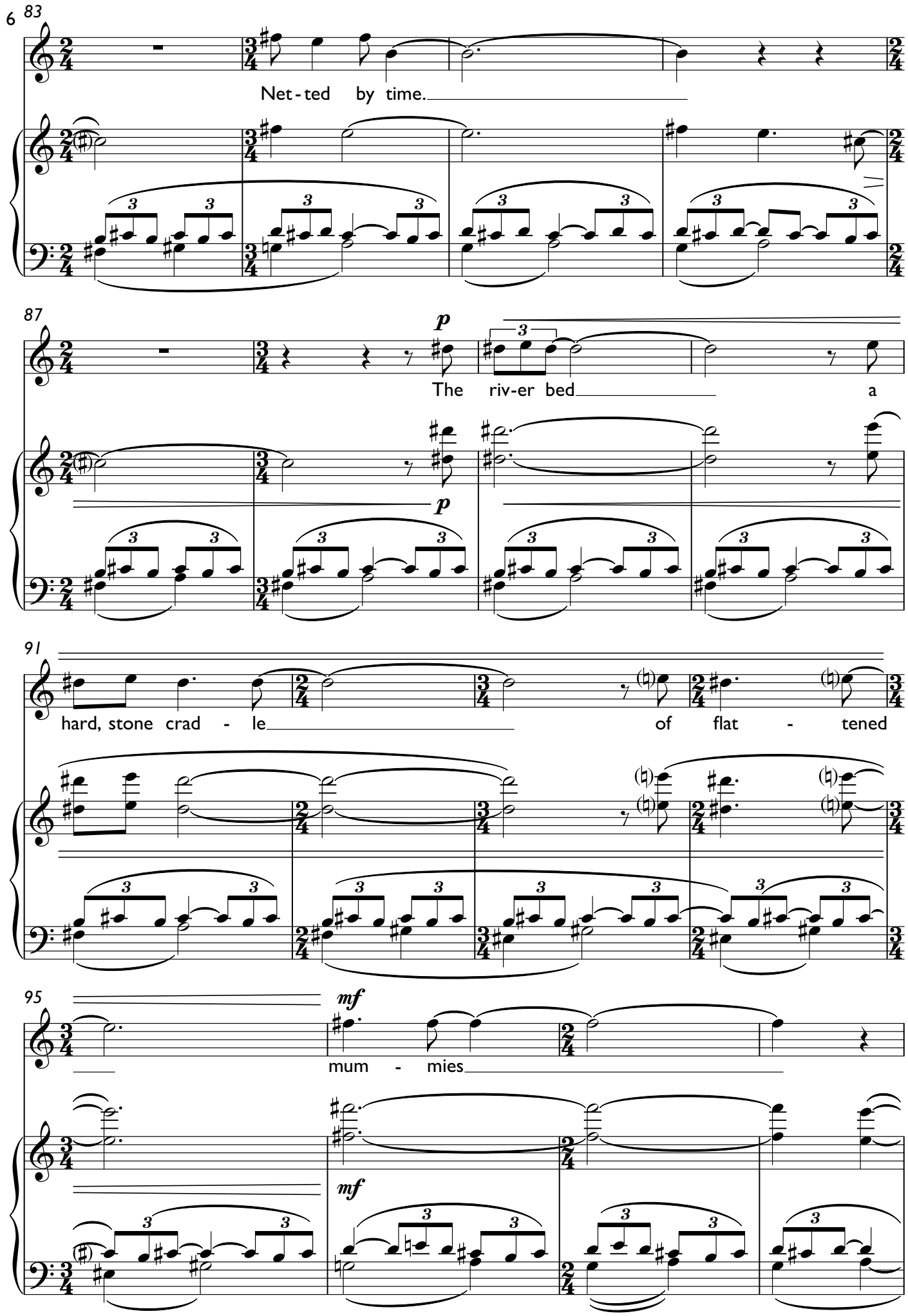
Music © Emily Doolittle, 2021
Words © Rella Lossy, 1996

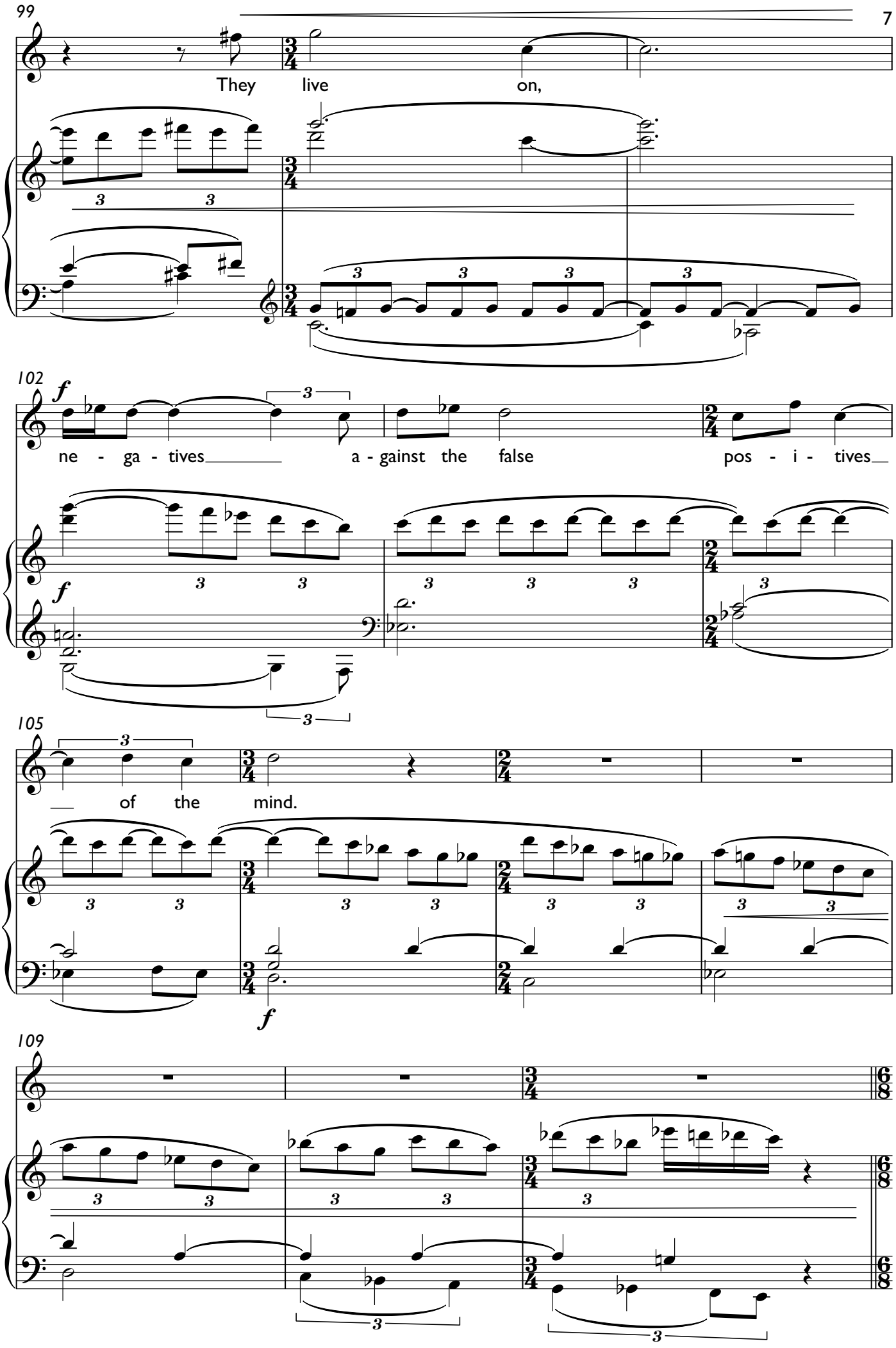

15
Teem - ing.
mf
mp
20
25
p
Bill - ions of years old.
Bright brown on the pale lime -
p
29
stone
Bright brown on the pale lime -

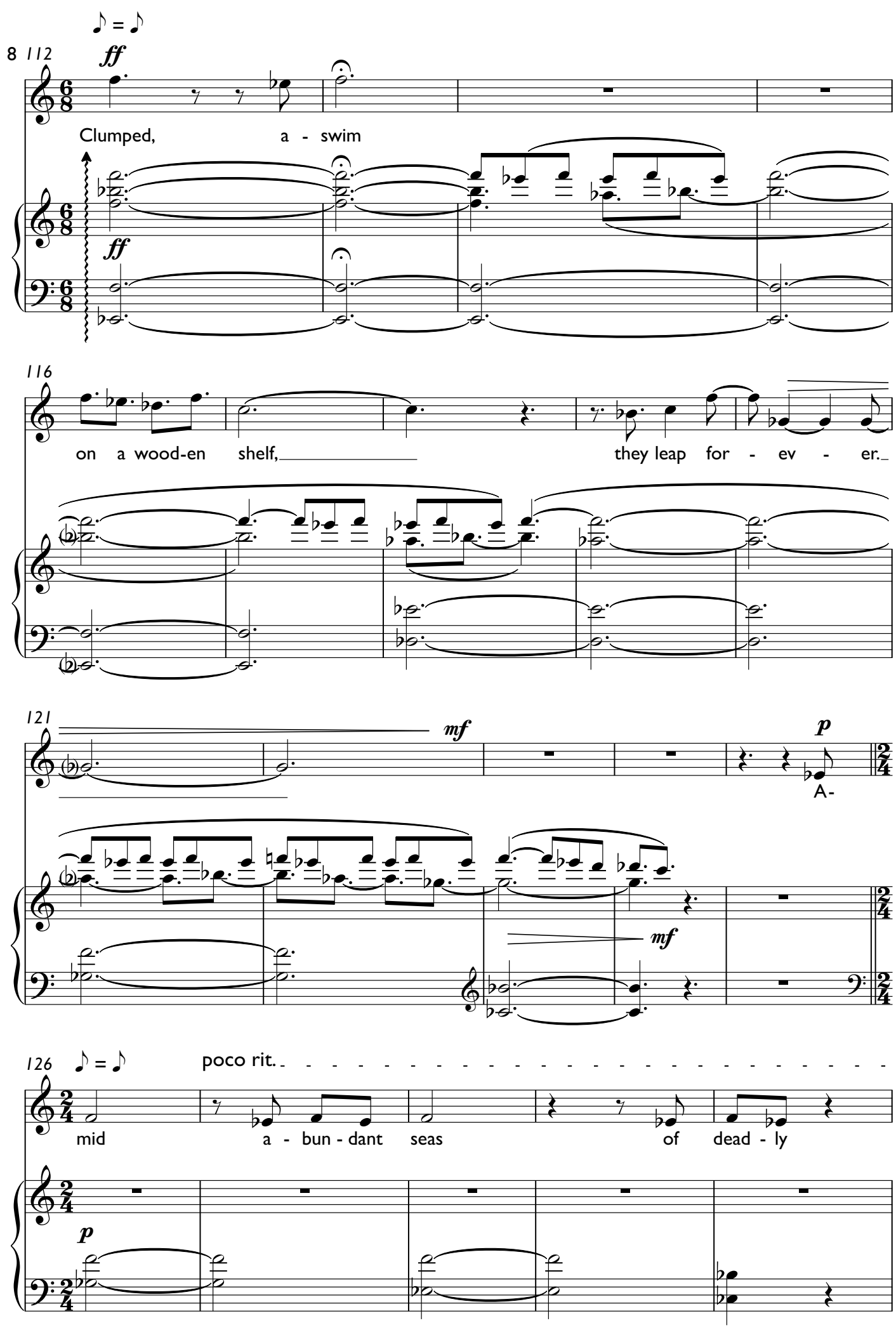

33
mf
stone of the Green Ri - ver
mf
mp
36
mf
Now on dis -
mf
39
f
play. For sale.
f
42
più f
mf

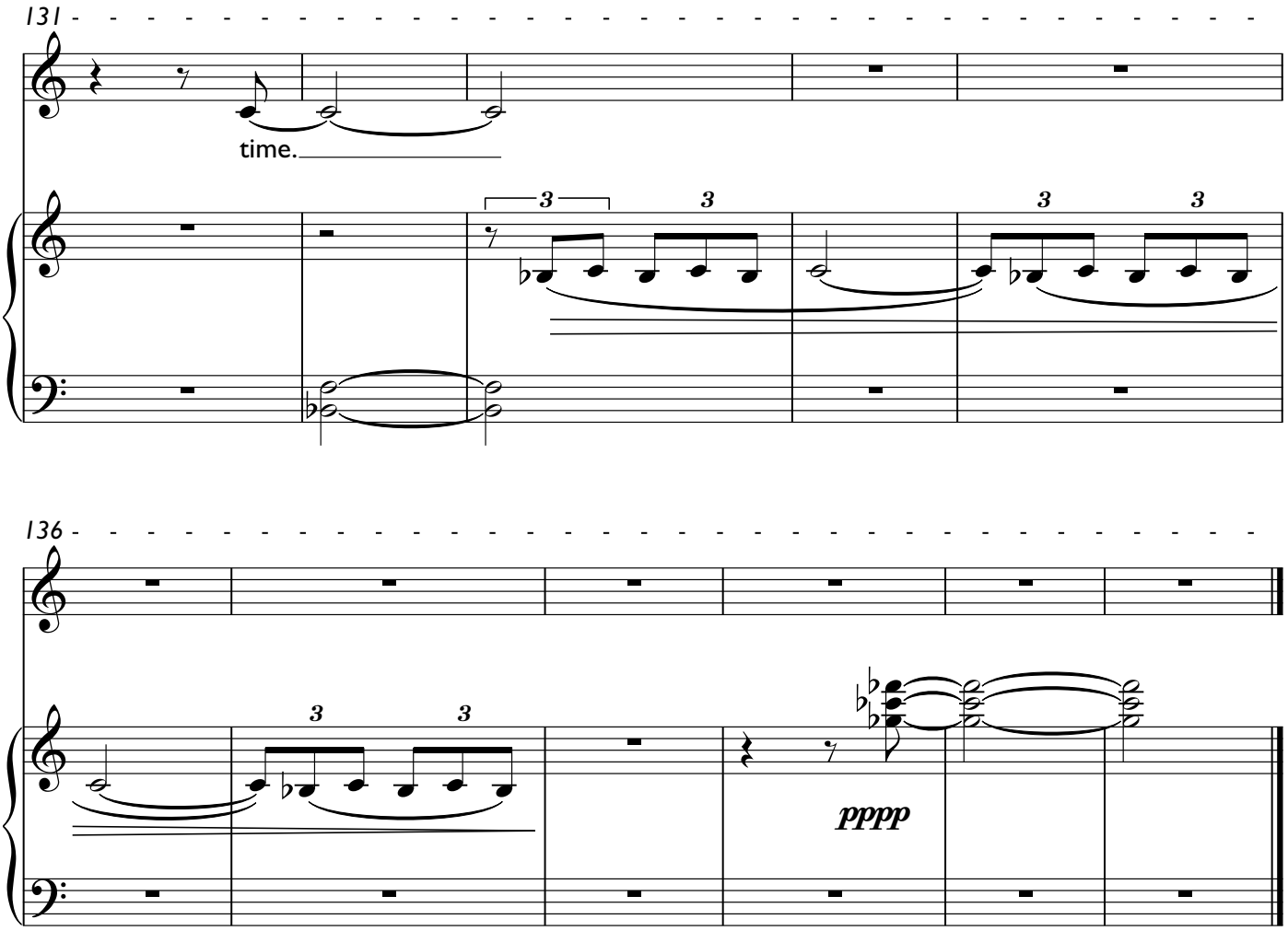

46
♩ = 128, a bit freer
ff
light
p
Ca - ress-ab-le, their spines tick-le the
50
mp
p
tips of my fin - gers their
55
spines tick-le the tips of my fin - gers
59
their spines tick-le the tips of my


63
mf
mp
fin - gers. Their eyes wan - der the hol - lows
mf
mp
68
f
mp
♩ = 92
look - ing for lunch.
f
mp
3
3
74
3
3
3
3
3
3
p
79
mp
Fos - sils.
3
mp
3
3
3
3
3
3


83
Net - ted by time.
87
p
The riv-er bed a
p
91
hard, stone crad - le of flat - tened
95
mf
mum - mies
mf


99
They live on,
102
f
ne - ga - tives a - gainst the false pos - i - tives
105
of the mind.
109


8 112
♪ = ♪
ff
Clumped, a - swim
ff
116
on a wood-en shelf, they leap for - ev - er.
121
mf
p
A-
mf
126
♪ = ♪
poco rit.
mid a - bun - dant seas of dead - ly
p


131
time.
3
3
3
3

136
3
3
pppp

Anemones

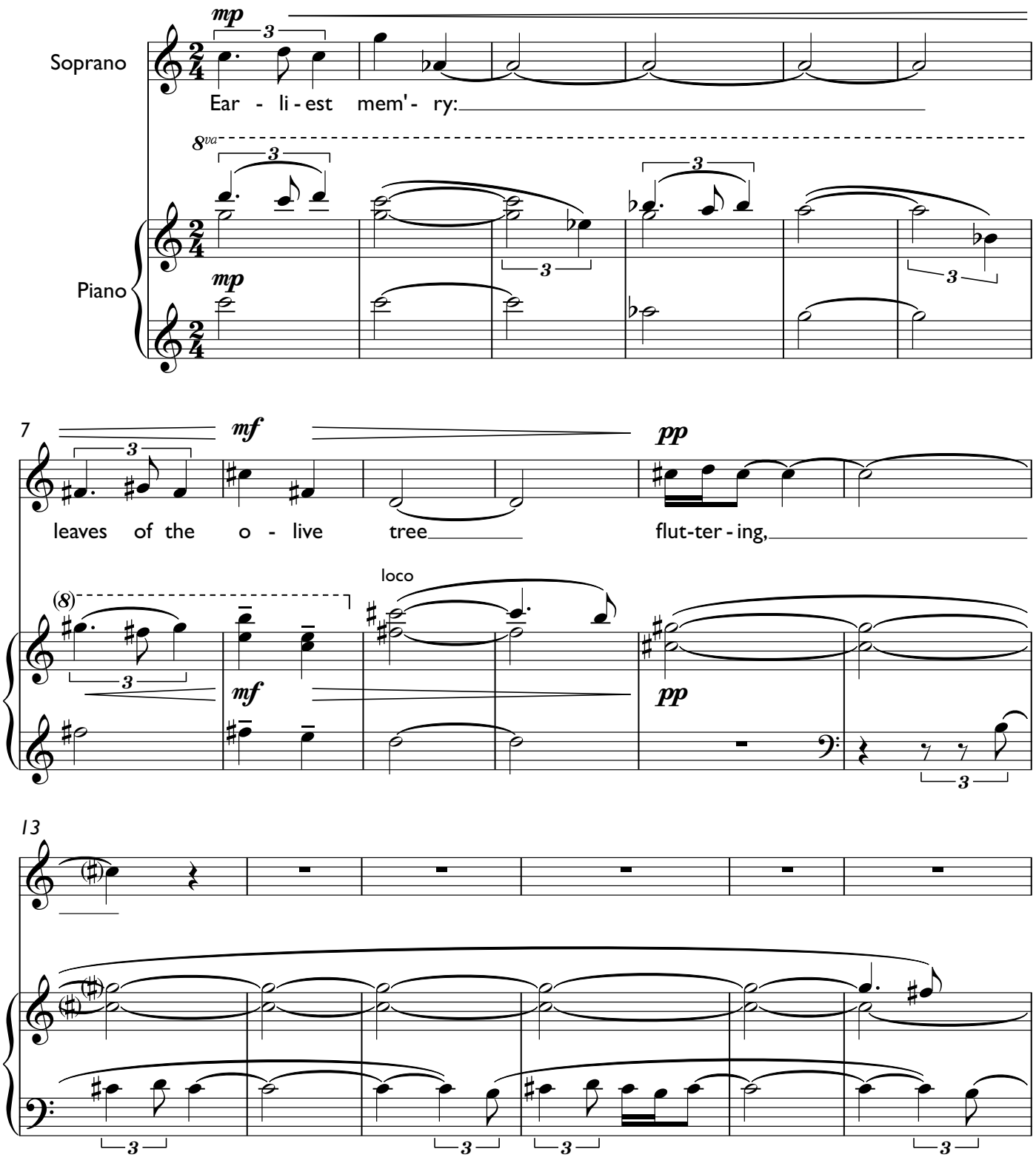
commissioned by Ensemble for These Times

Rachel Richardson

Emily Doolittle

leafy, drifting

♩ = approx. 100



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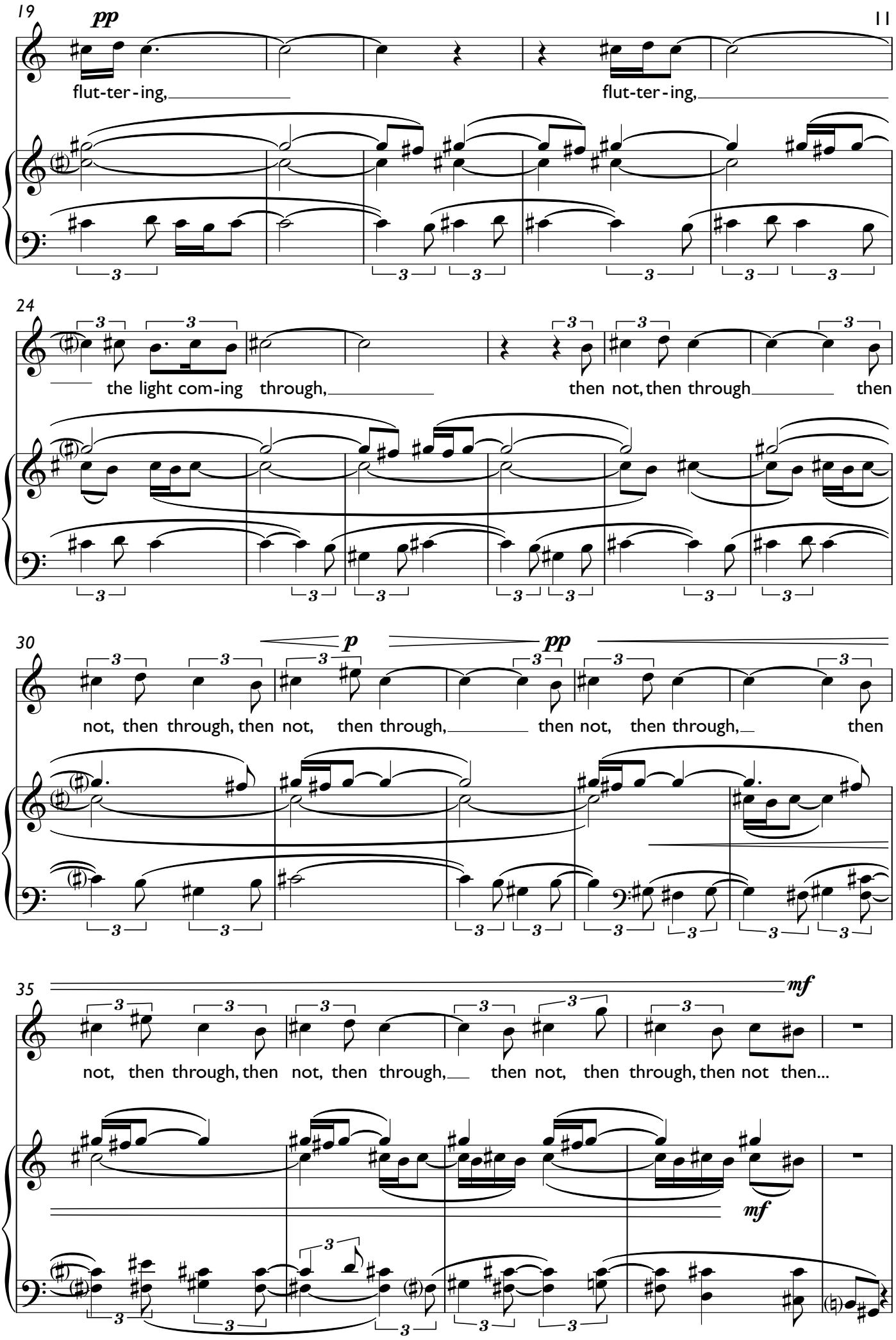
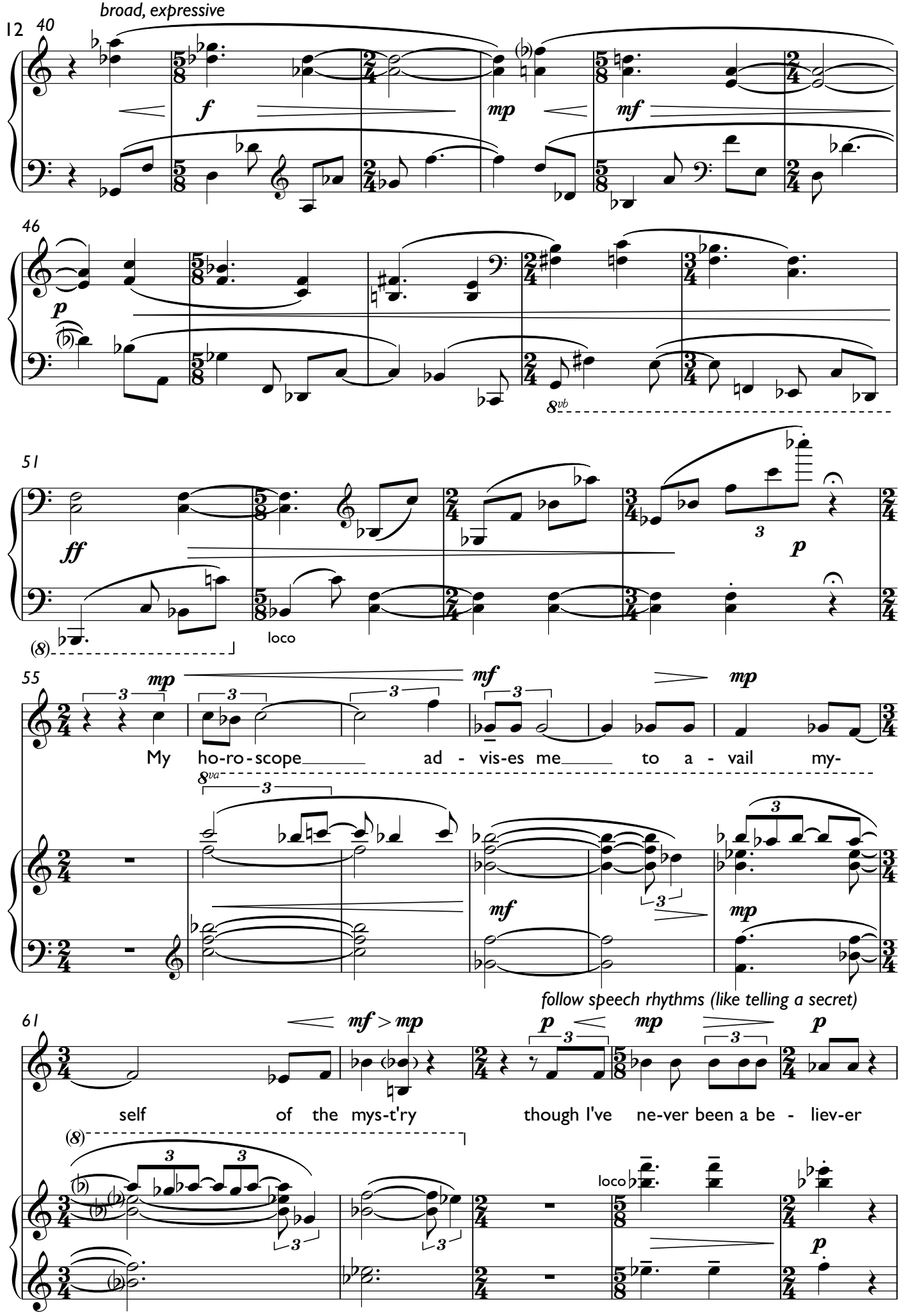
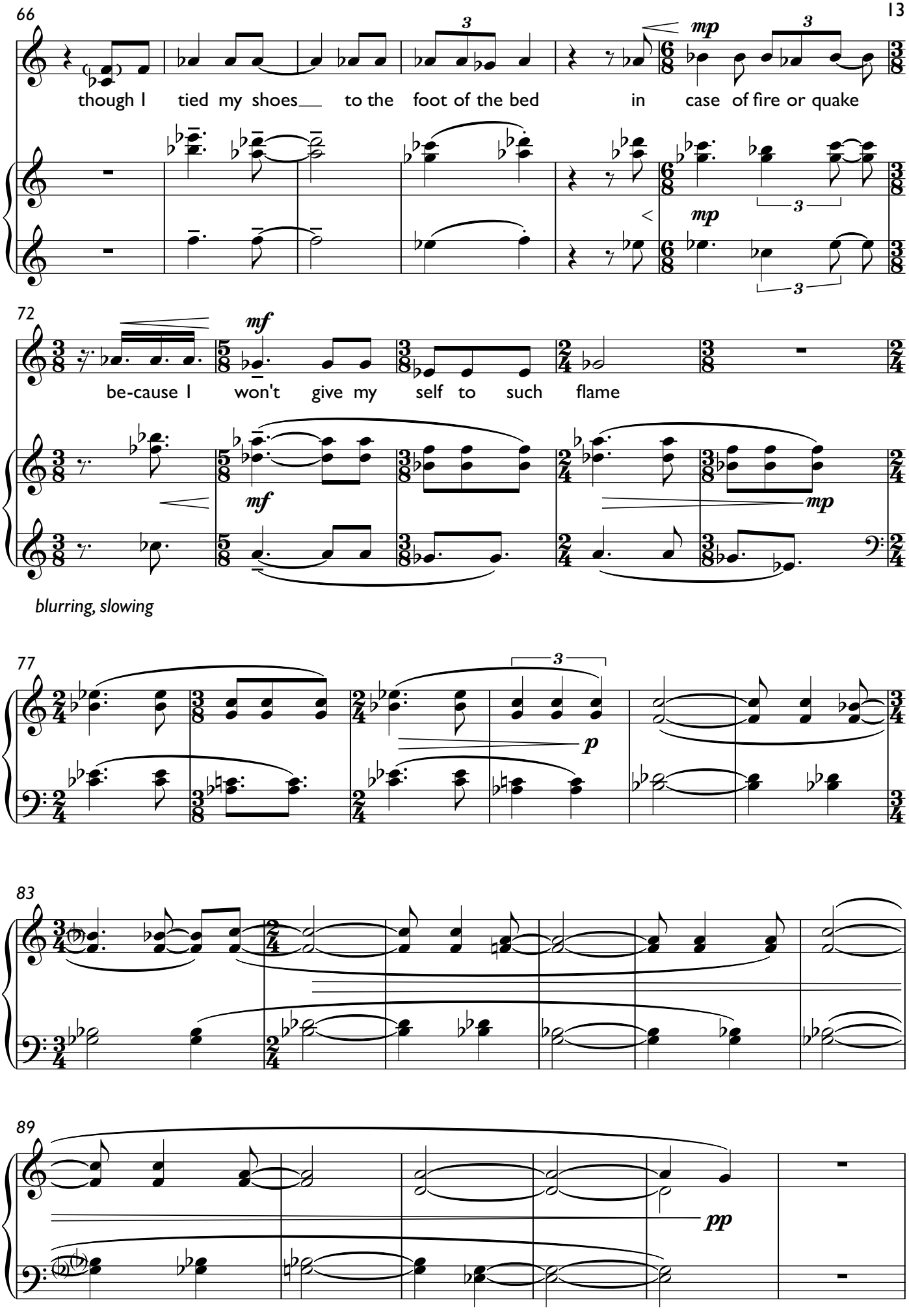
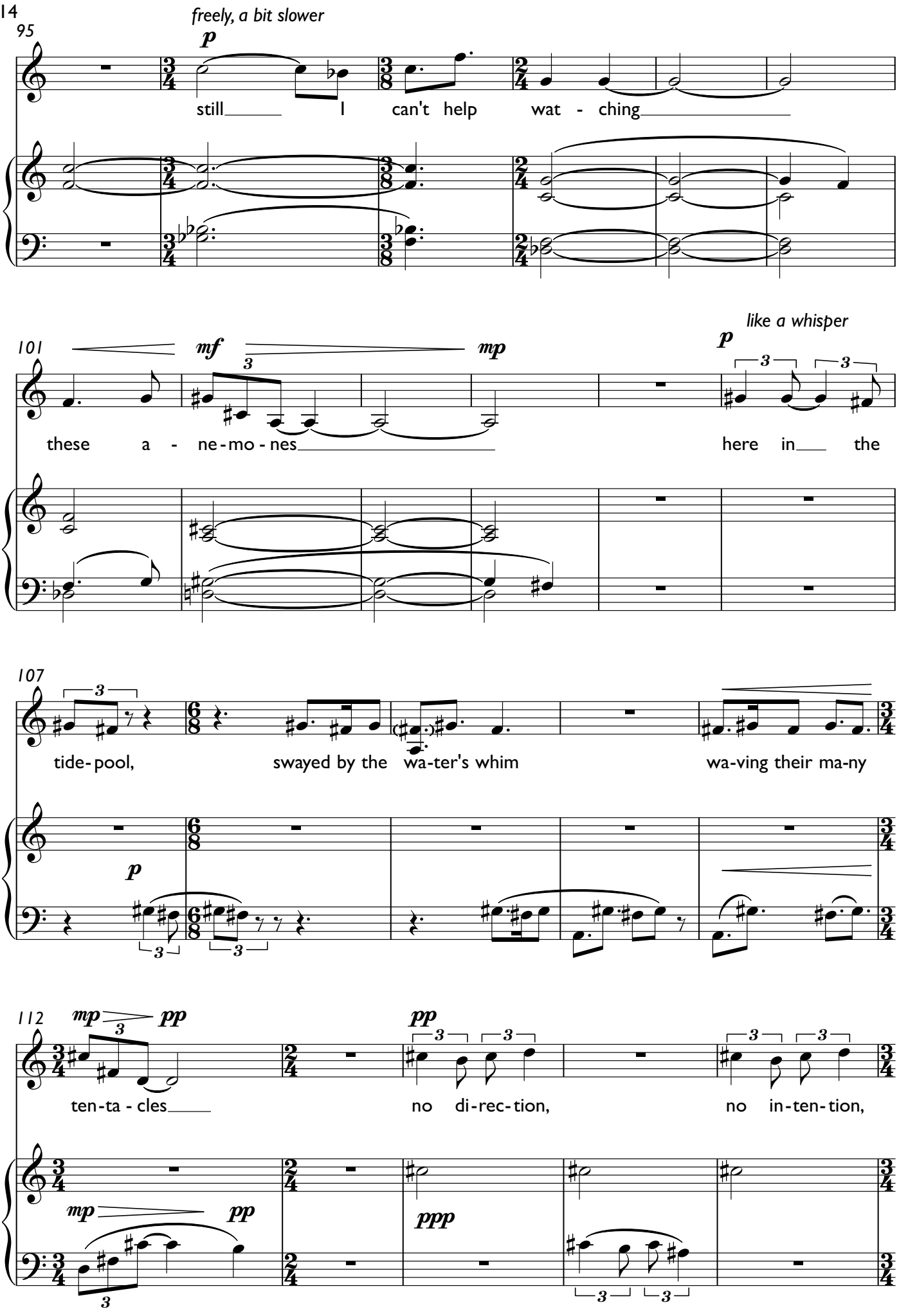
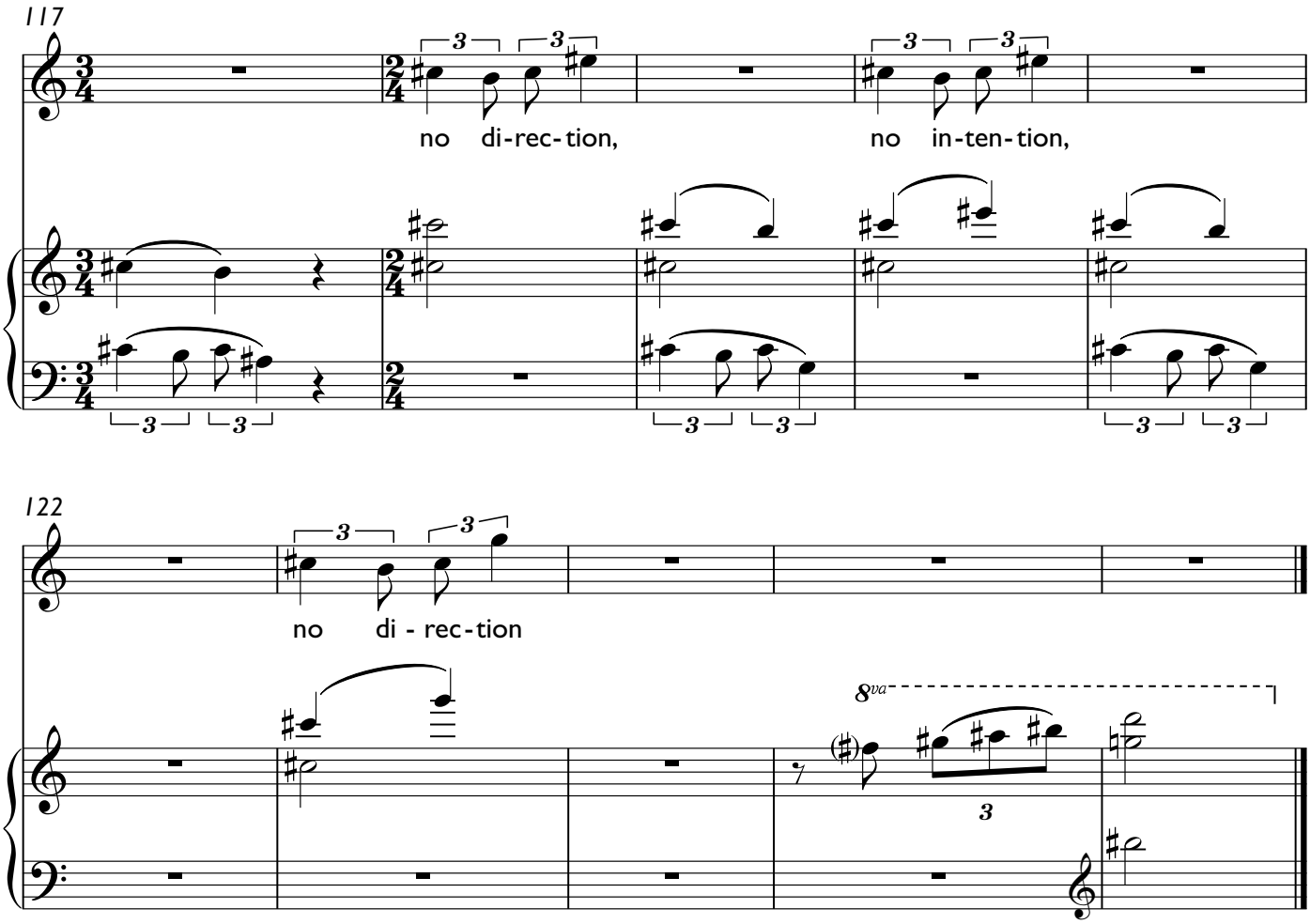
Words © Rachel Richardson, 2014


19
pp
flut-ter-ing,
flut-ter-ing,
24
the light com-ing through,
then not, then through
then
30
p
pp
not, then through, then not, then through,
then not, then through,
then
35
mf
not, then through, then not, then through,
then not, then through, then not then...
mf


broad, expressive
40
f
mp
mf
46
p
8vb
51
ff
loco
p
55
mp
mf
mp
My ho-ro-scope ad - vis-es me to a - vail my-
8va
mf
mp
follow speech rhythms (like telling a secret)
61
mf > mp
p
mp
p
self of the mys-t'ry though I've ne-ver been a be - liev-er
loco
p


66
though I tied my shoes to the foot of the bed in case of fire or quake
mp
72
be-cause I won't give my self to such flame
mf
mp
blurring, slowing
77
p
83
89
pp


95
freely, a bit slower
p
still I can't help wat - ching
101
mf
mp
p
like a whisper
these a - ne - mo - nes here in the
107
tide - pool, swayed by the wa-ter's whim wa-ving their ma-ny
p
112
mp pp
pp
ten-ta - cles no di-rec-tion, no in-ten-tion,
mp pp
ppp


117
no di-rec-tion,
no in-ten-tion,

122
no di - rec-tion
8va