The Job

for mezzo-soprano and piano

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Texts by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez,
Julia Gillard, and Kim Leadbeater

Commissioned by Dr. Michelle Murphy DeBruyn

In loving memory of Joel William DeBruyn (1975-2019) who was a champion of equal rights and just treatment of all individuals in both word and deed.

Thank you to Columbus State University of Columbus, GA for its support of this artistic work through faculty development funding.

16 min
2024

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I. Just another day

I was minding my own business, walking up the steps.
[He] put his finger in my face.
He called me disgusting, he called me crazy,
he called me out of my mind, he called me dangerous.
In front of reporters [he] called me,
and I quote, "a fucking bitch."

All of us have had to deal with this in some form,
some way, some shape, at some point in our lives.
I have waited tables in restaurants.
I have ridden the subway.
I have walked the streets in New York City,
and this kind of language is not new.
It's just another day, right?

Yesterday, [he] decided to make excuses for his behavior,
and that I could not let go.
I could not allow my nieces, the little girls that I go home to,
I could not allow victims of verbal abuse and worse
to see our Congress accept [that excuse] as an apology.
I could not allow that to stand.

[He] mentioned that he has a wife and two daughters.
I am someone's daughter too.

It happens every day in this country.

Speech before the US House of Representatives
by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
July 23, 2020

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II. Not now, not ever

I will not be lectured about sexism
and misogyny by this man.
I will not.
Not now, not ever.
Because if he wants to know
what misogyny looks like,
he needs a mirror.
That's what he needs.

He has said, and I quote:
“If it's true, that men have more power than women,
is that a bad thing?”
“What if men are, by physiology or temperament,
more adapted to issue command?”
“Abortion is the easy way out.”
“What the housewives need to understand
as they do the ironing…”
[He] stood next to a sign
that said “Ditch the witch.”
[He] stood next to a sign
that described me as a man's bitch.

Misogyny, sexism, every day from [him].
Every day in every way,
across the time [he] has sat in that chair
and I've sat in this chair.

Apparently, he's woken up
after this track record,
and he's gone,
“Oh dear! There's this thing called sexism.
Oh, my lords! There's this thing called misogyny.”
Doesn't turn a hair about any of his past statements,
doesn't apologize for the things
that come out of his mouth.

Speech before the Parliament of Australia
by Prime Minister Julia Gillard
October 9, 2012

III. Maiden Speech

It is with a huge amount of pride
and a significant amount of nervousness
that I make my maiden speech today.

But as the House [pays] tribute to my sister,
I mean no disrespect when I say
that I would give literally anything
not to be standing here today in her place.

For me, she will always be
many other things before an MP:
a compassionate and caring humanitarian;
a proud Yorkshire lass;
a friend to many;
a loving daughter;
a fantastic sister-in-law and wife;
an outstanding mum;
and the best big sister anybody could ask for.

Jo’s murder ripped the heart out of our family.
It still does not feel real.

Jo said in her maiden speech,
"What surprises me time and time again
is that we are far more united
and have far more in common
than that which divides us.”
I believe those words are as true today
as when she said them—
perhaps even more so.

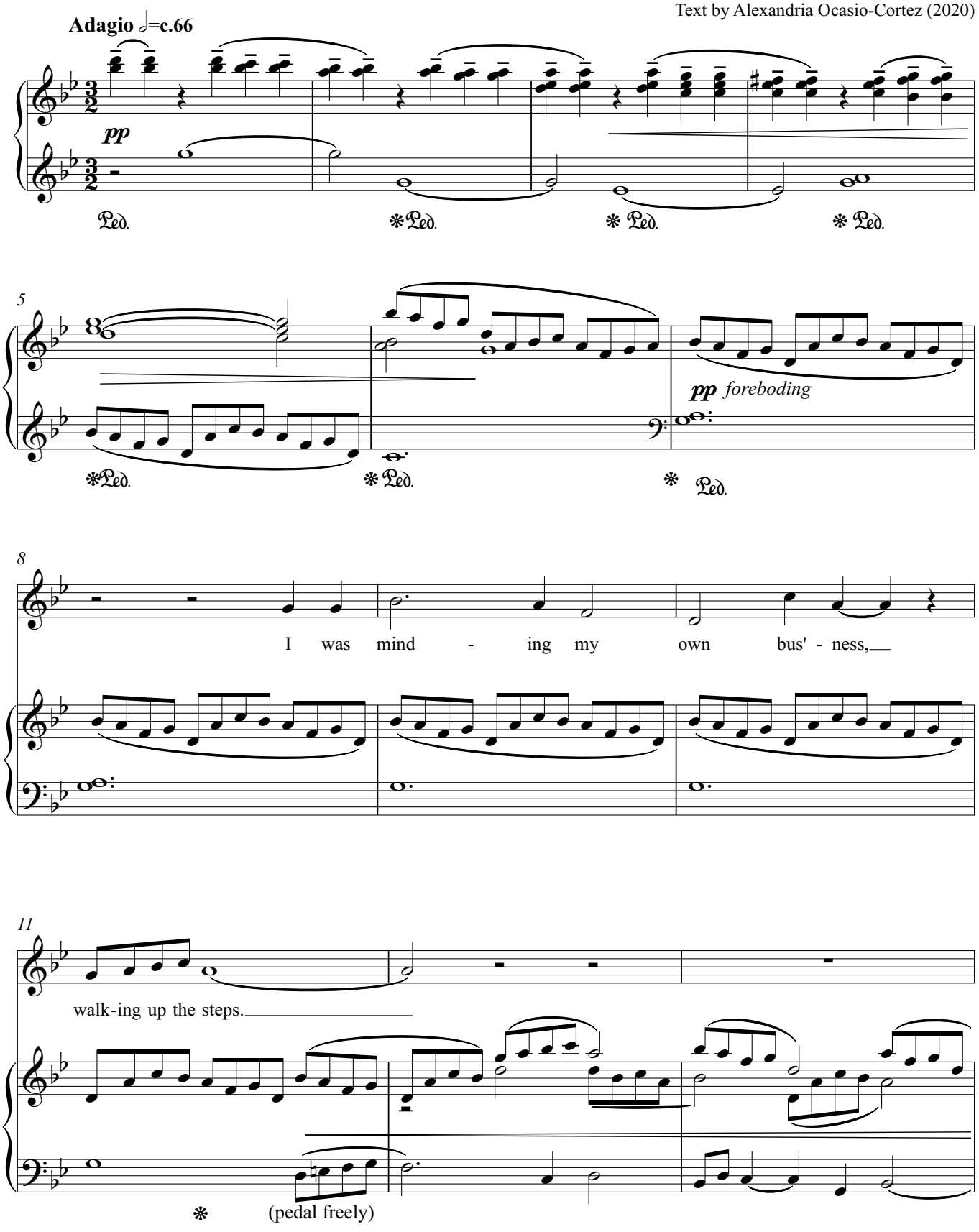
Since my election,
the one thing that people keep saying to me is,
“Kim, please don’t change,”
and I do not intend to.
I will always stay true to my roots and identity.
If I can be half the MP my sister was,
it will be a huge privilege
to get on with the job.

Speech before UK House of Commons
by Kim Leadbeater MP
September 9, 2021

Commissioned by Dr. Michelle Murphy DeBruyn

I. Just Another Day

Music by Melissa Dunphy
Text by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (2020)



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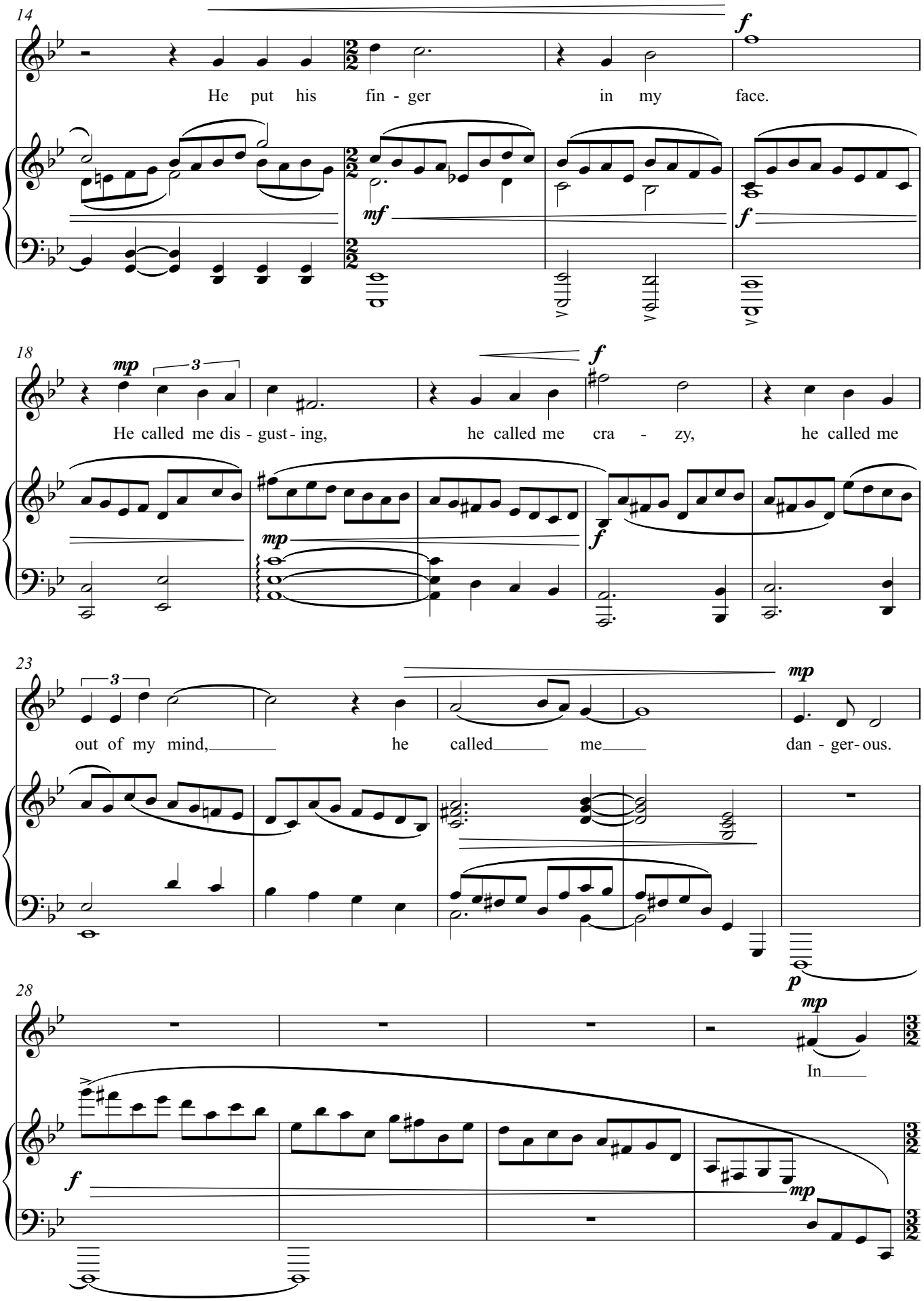
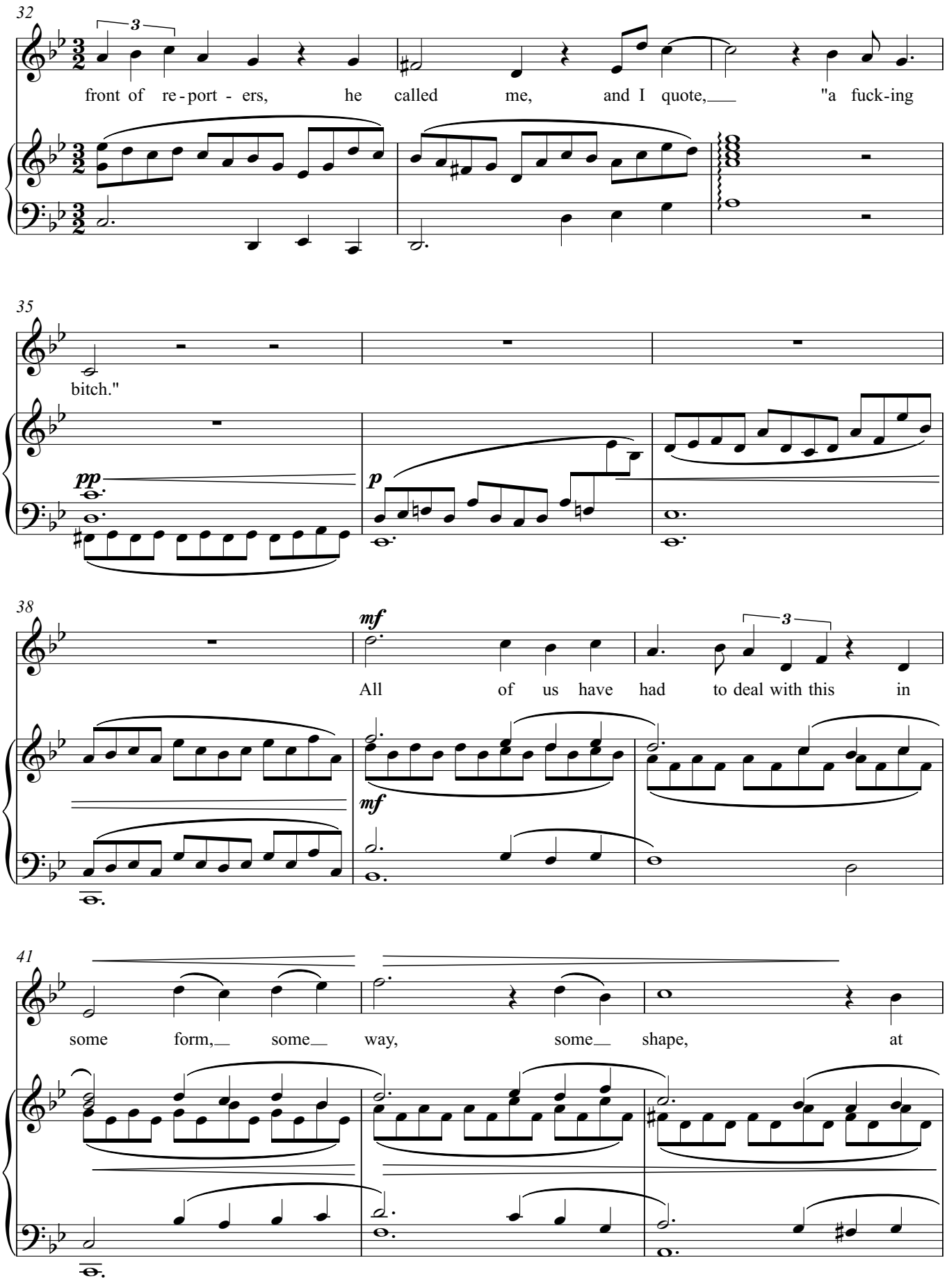
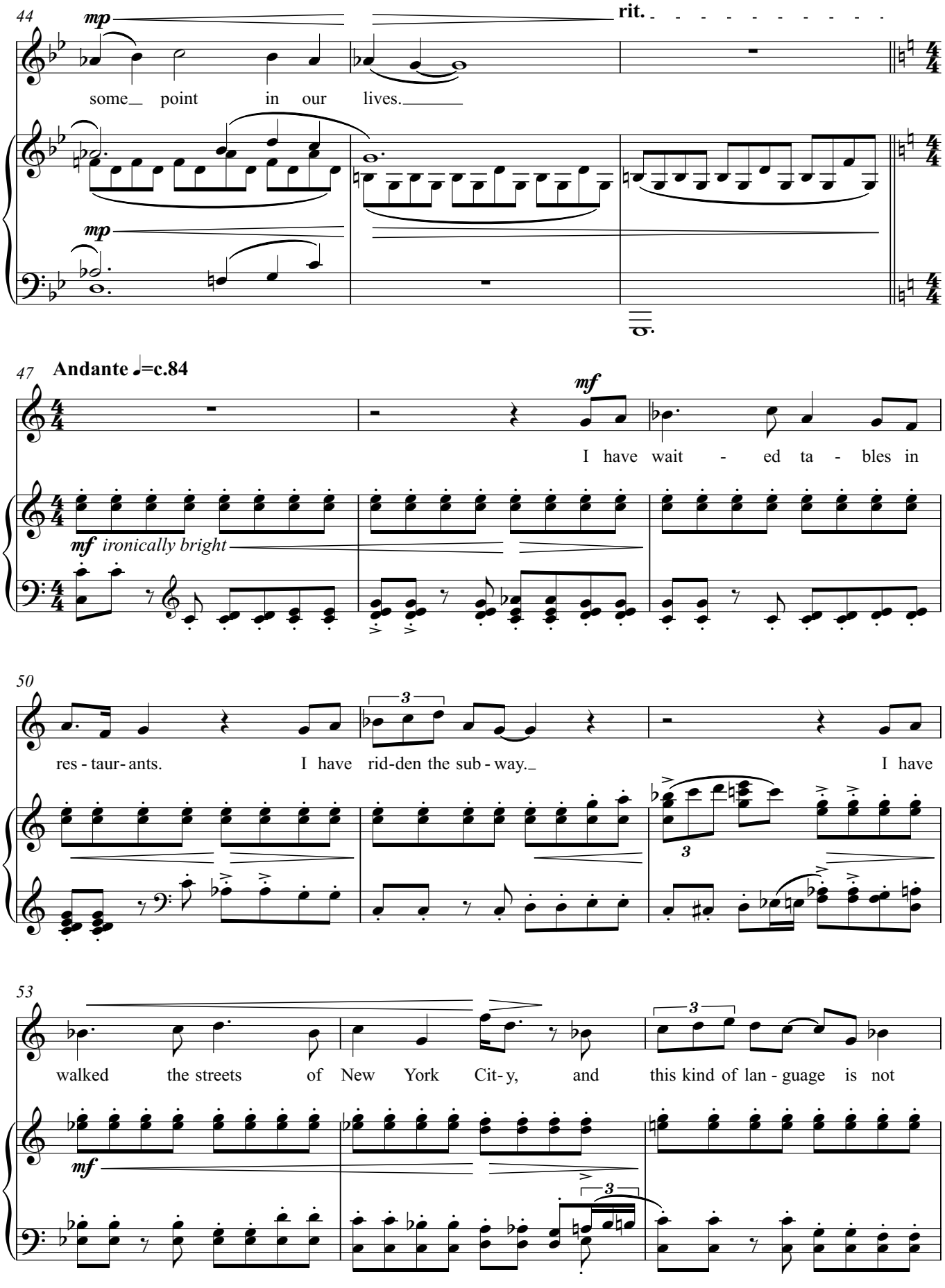
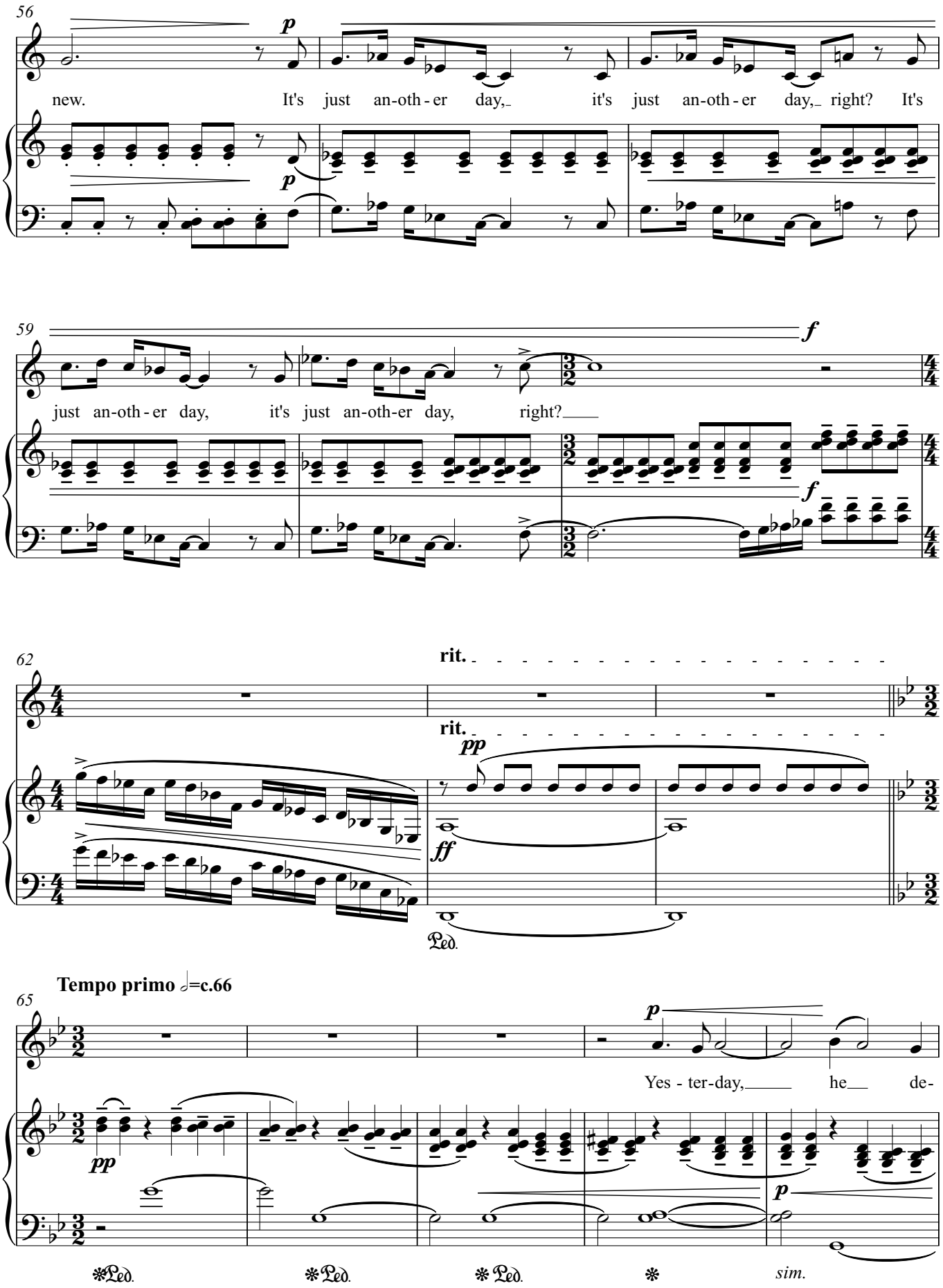
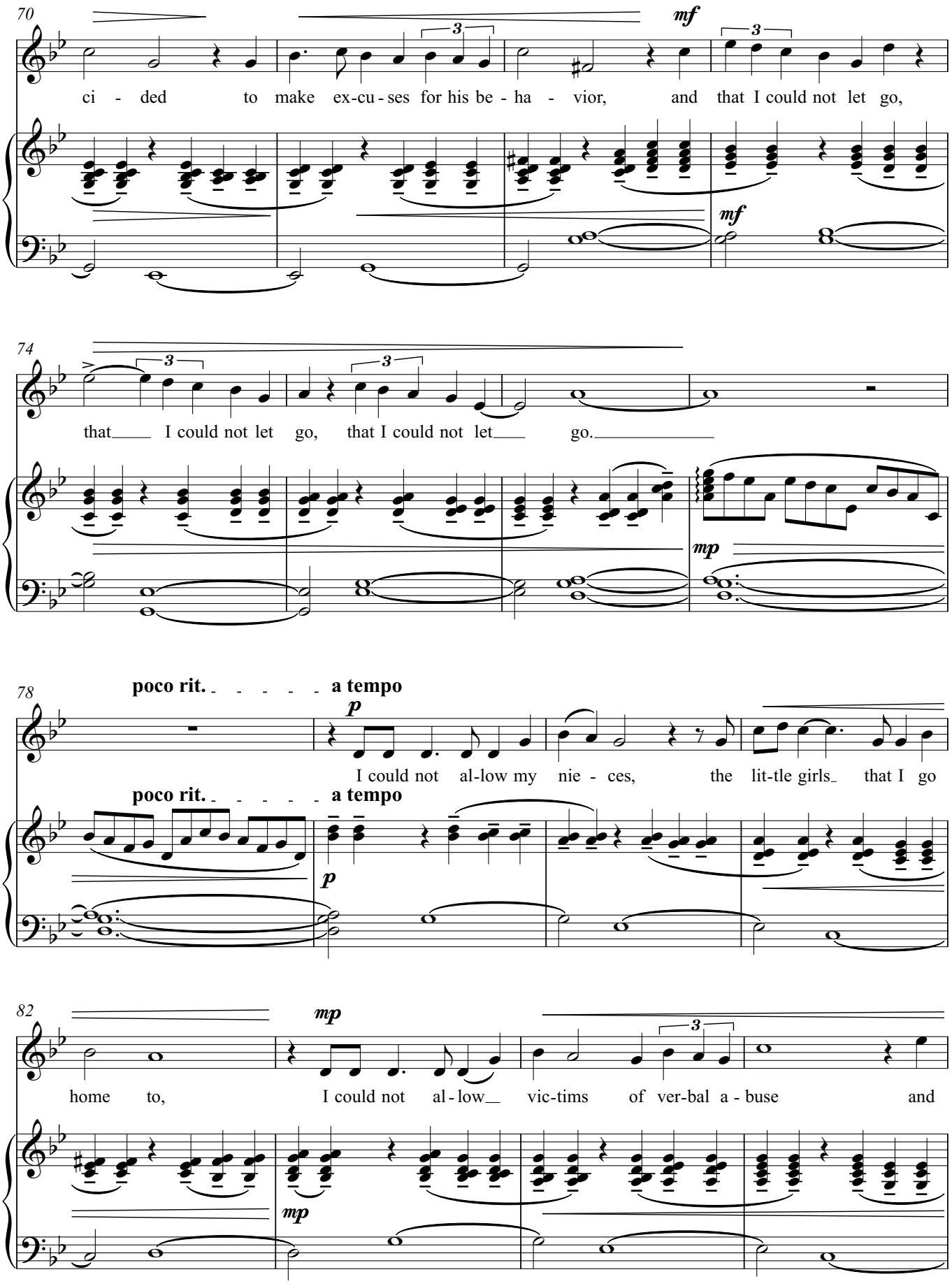
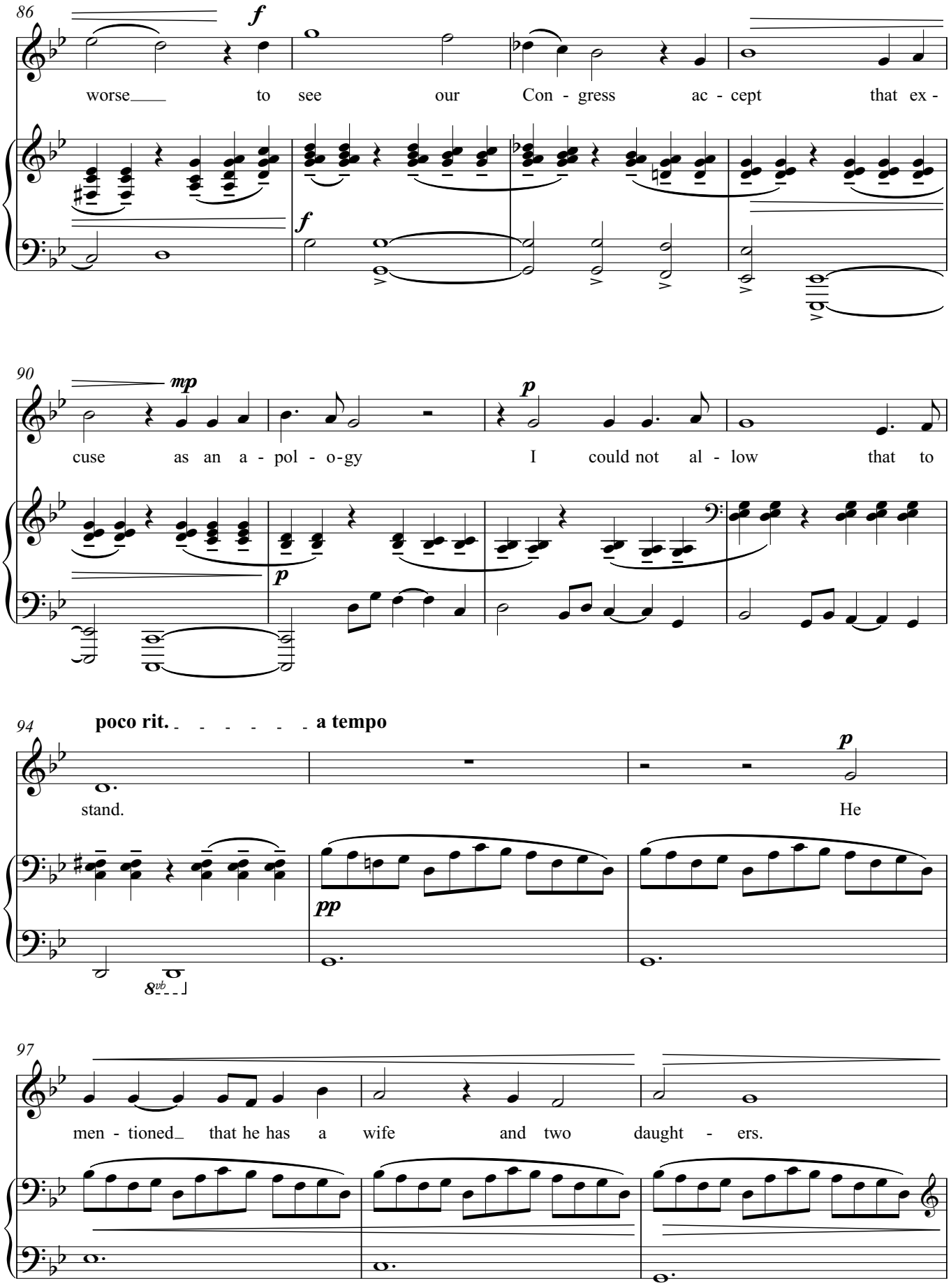

14
He put his fin - ger in my face.
18
He called me dis - gust - ing, he called me cra - zy, he called me
23
out of my mind, he called me dan - ger - ous.
28
In

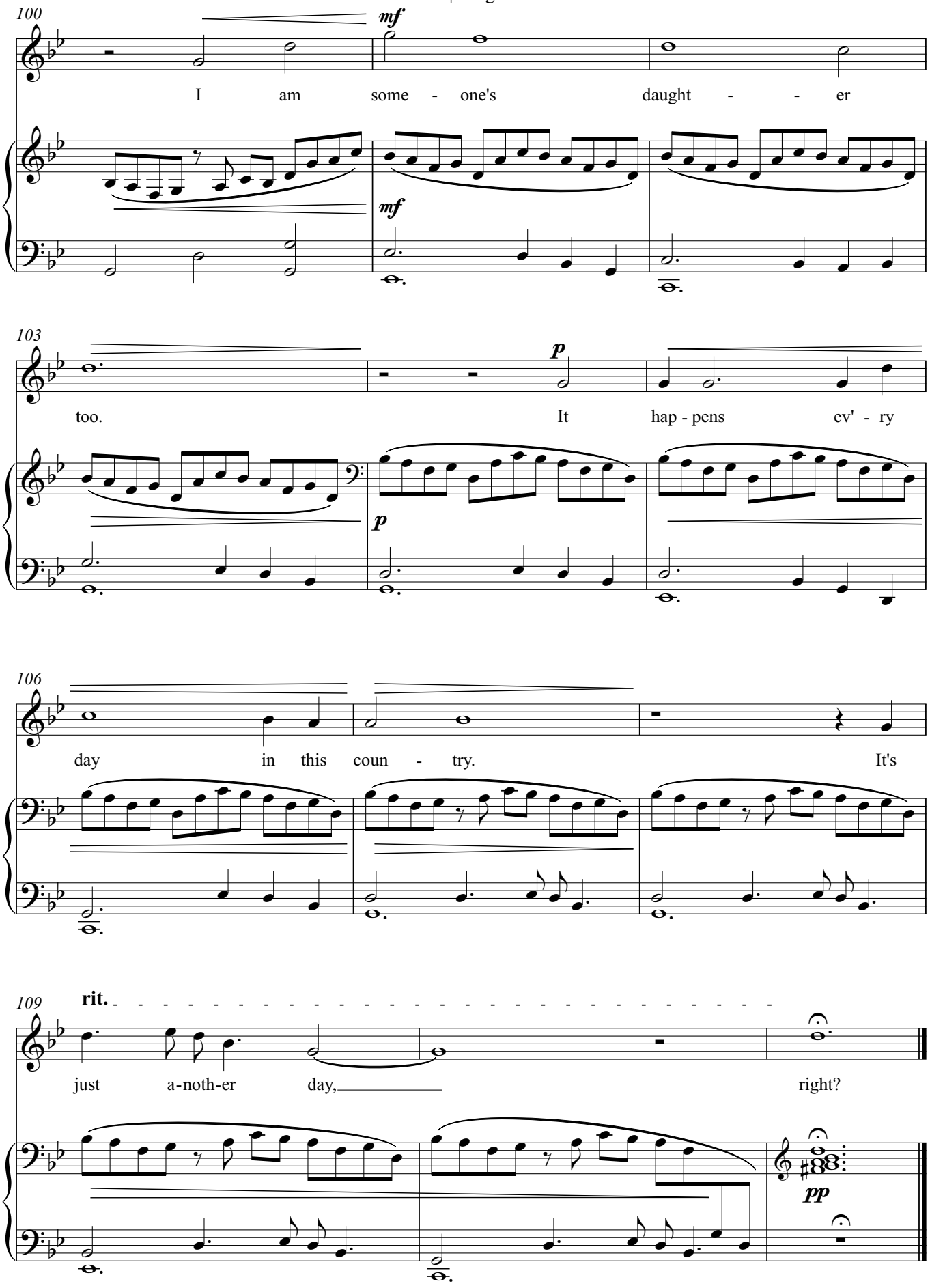

32
front of re - port - ers, he called me, and I quote, "a fuck-ing
35
bitch."
pp
p
38
mf
All of us have had to deal with this in
mf
41
some form, some way, some shape, at


44
mp
rit.
some point in our lives.
mp
47
Andante ♩=c.84
mf
I have wait - ed ta - bles in
mf ironically bright
50
3
res - taur - ants. I have rid-den the sub - way. I have
3
53
walked the streets of New York Cit - y, and this kind of lan - guage is not
mf
3


56
p
new. It's just an-oth-er day, it's just an-oth-er day, right? It's
59
f
just an-oth-er day, it's just an-oth-er day, right?
f
62
rit.
rit.
pp
ff
Ped.
Tempo primo ♩=c.66
65
p
Yes-ter-day, he de-
pp
p
✻Ped. ✻Ped. ✻Ped. ✻ sim.


70
mf
ci - ded to make ex-cu - ses for his be - ha - vior, and that I could not let go,
mf
74
that I could not let go, that I could not let go.
mp
78
poco rit. a tempo
p
I could not al-low my nie - ces, the lit-tle girls that I go
poco rit. a tempo
p
82
mp
home to, I could not al - low vic-tims of ver-bal a - buse and
mp


86
f
worse to see our Con - gress ac - cept that ex -
f
90
mp
cuse as an a - pol - o - gy
p
I could not al - low that to
p
94
poco rit.
a tempo
stand.
p
He
pp
8vb
97
men - tioned that he has a wife and two daught - ers.


100
mf
I am some - one's daught - - er
mf
103
p
too. It hap - pens ev' - ry
p
106
day in this coun - try. It's
109
rit.
just a-noth-er day, right?
pp

Commissioned by Dr. Michelle Murphy DeBruyn

II. Not Now, Not Ever

Music by Melissa Dunphy
Text by Julia Gillard (2012)

Allegro ♩=c.138

f driving

Ped. ✻Ped. ✻Ped.

6

mp

I will not be lec - tured, lec - tured a - bout

mp

✻Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

11

sex - i - sm and mis - o-gy-ny by this man.

Ped. ✻Ped. ✻Ped.

16

mf

I will not be lec - tured, lec - tured a - bout sex - i - sm and mis-

mf

✻Ped. ✻Ped.

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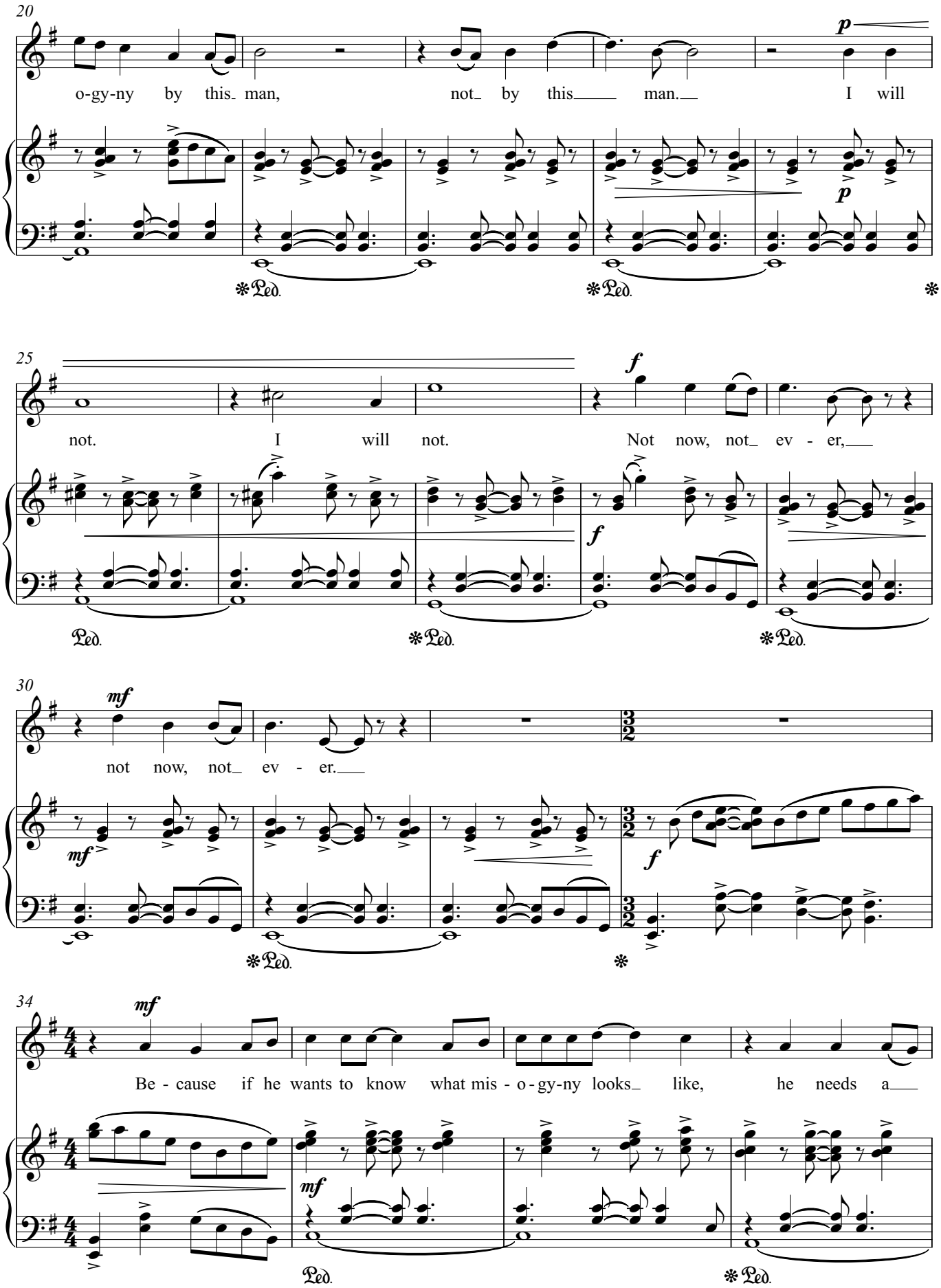
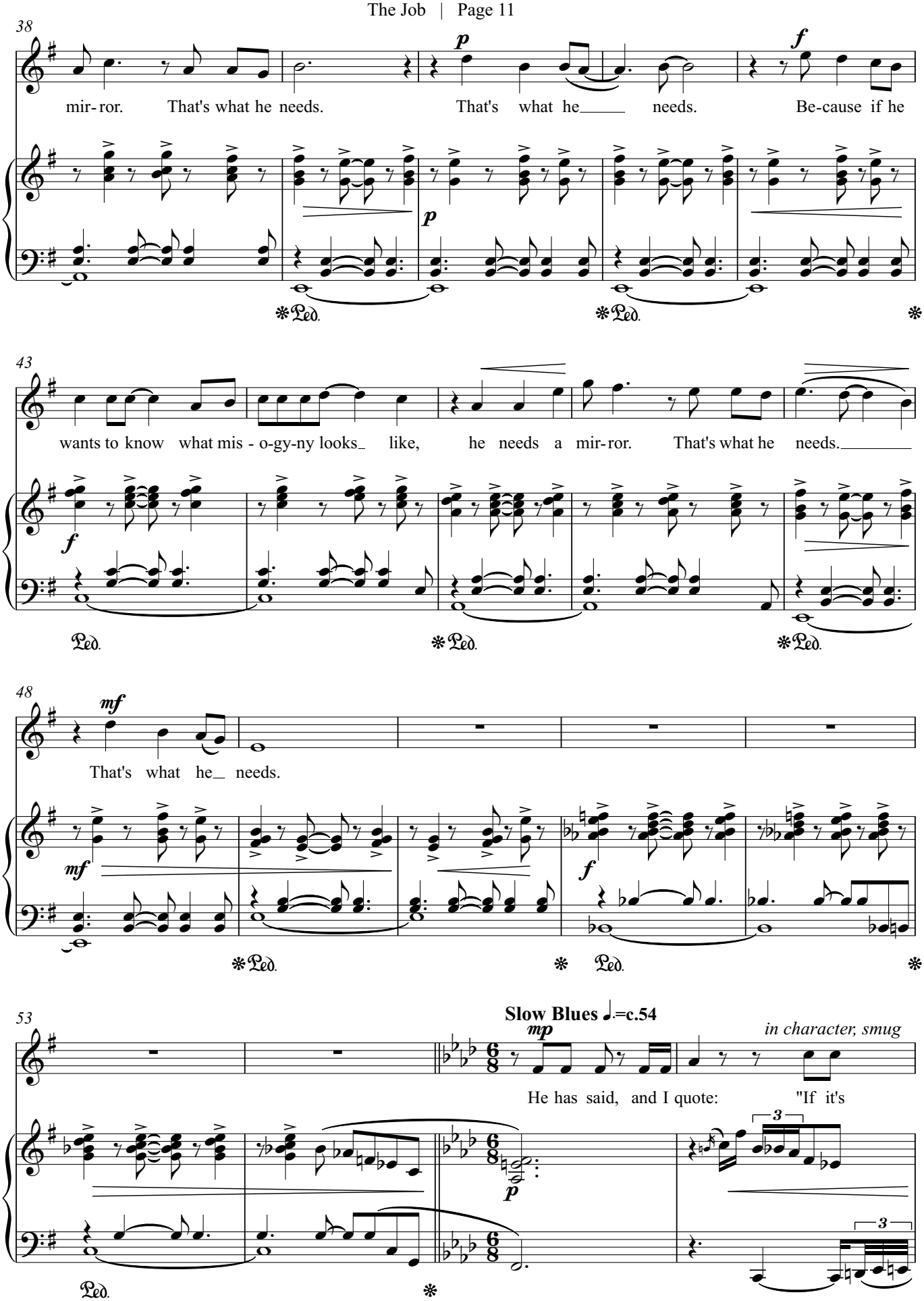
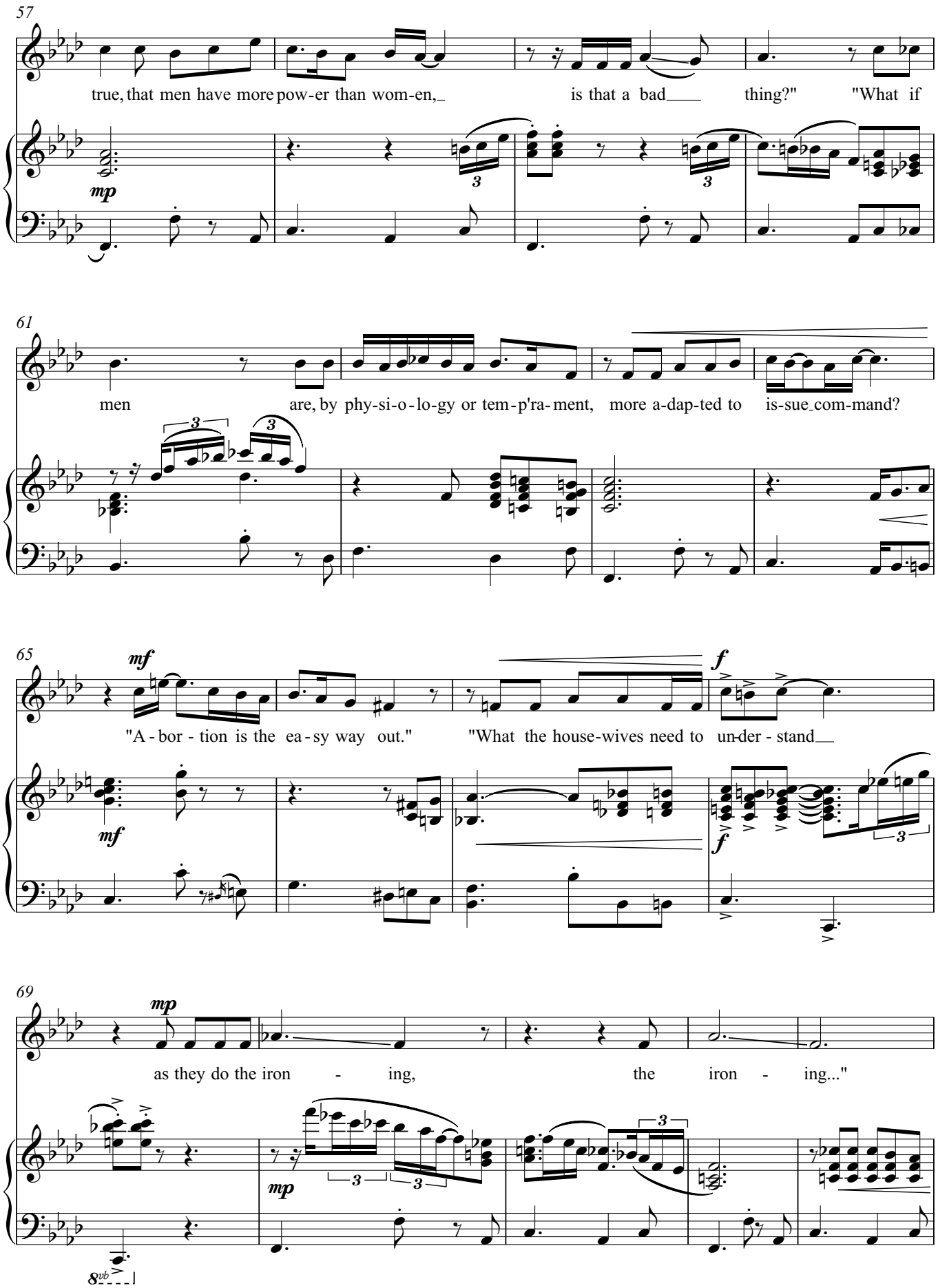
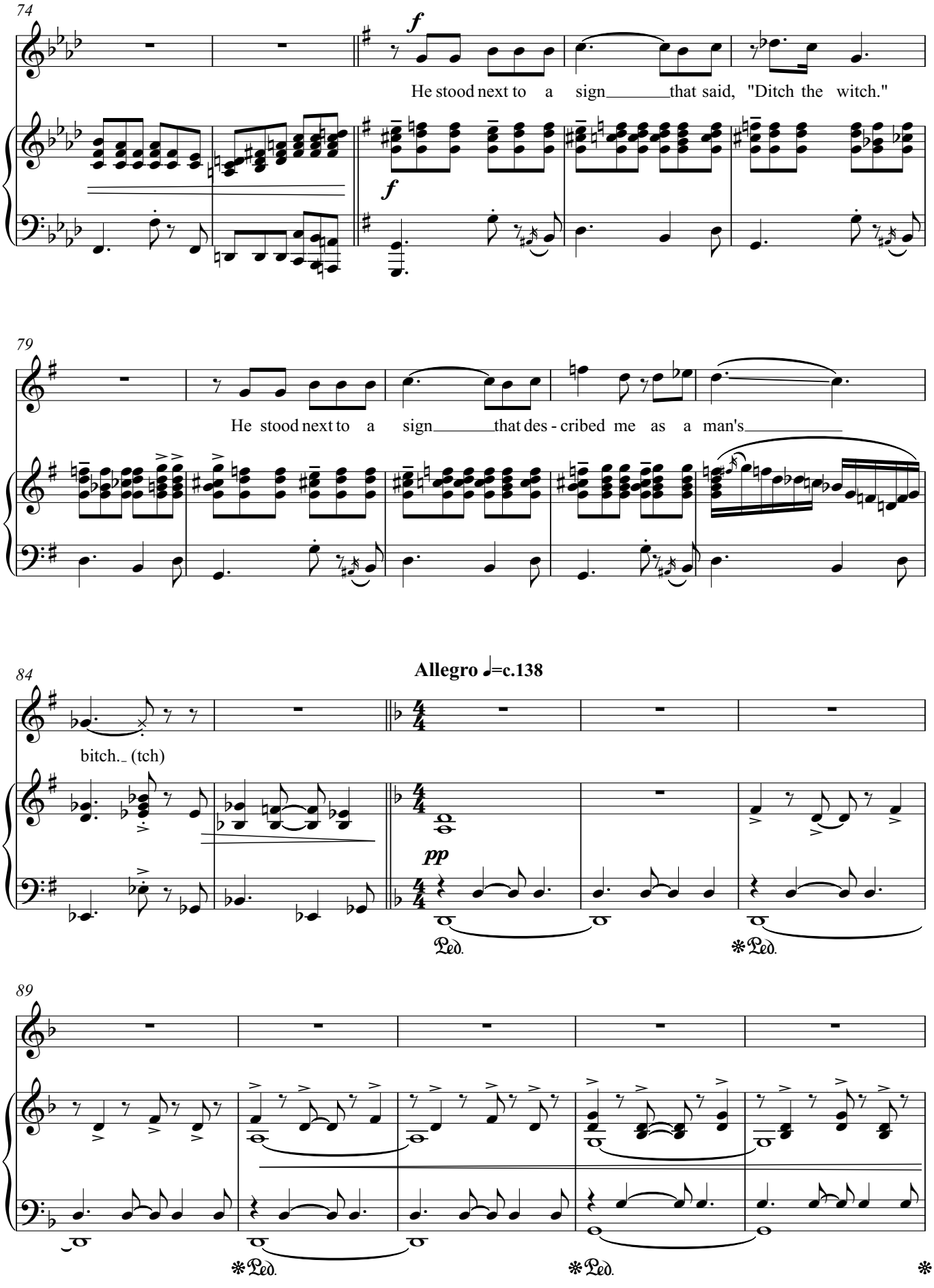
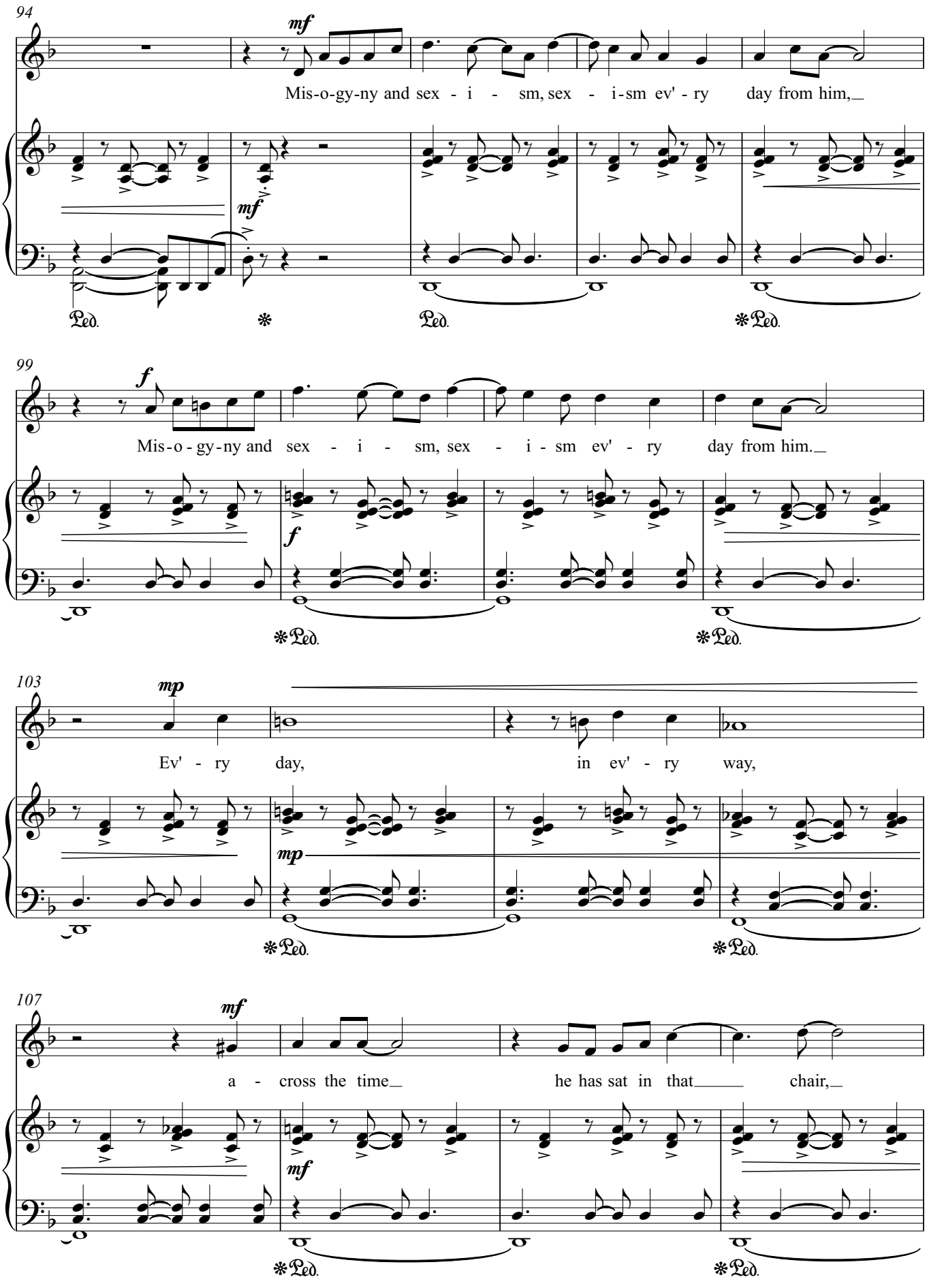
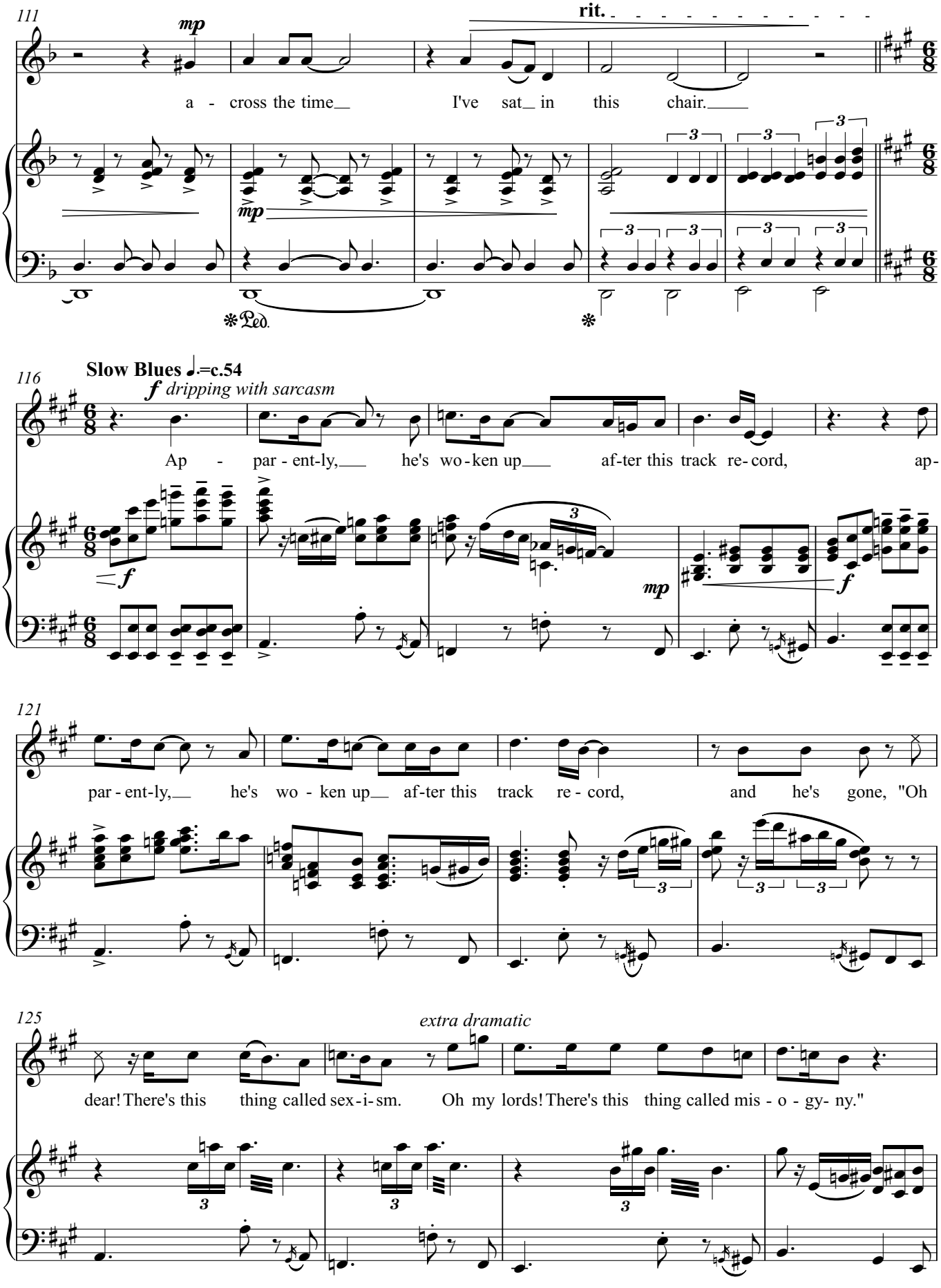

20
o-gy-ny by this man, not by this man. I will
p
Ped.
Ped.
25
not. I will not. Not now, not ev - er,
f
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
30
mf
not now, not ev - er.
mf
f
Ped.
34
mf
Be - cause if he wants to know what mis - o - gy-ny looks like, he needs a
mf
Ped.
Ped.

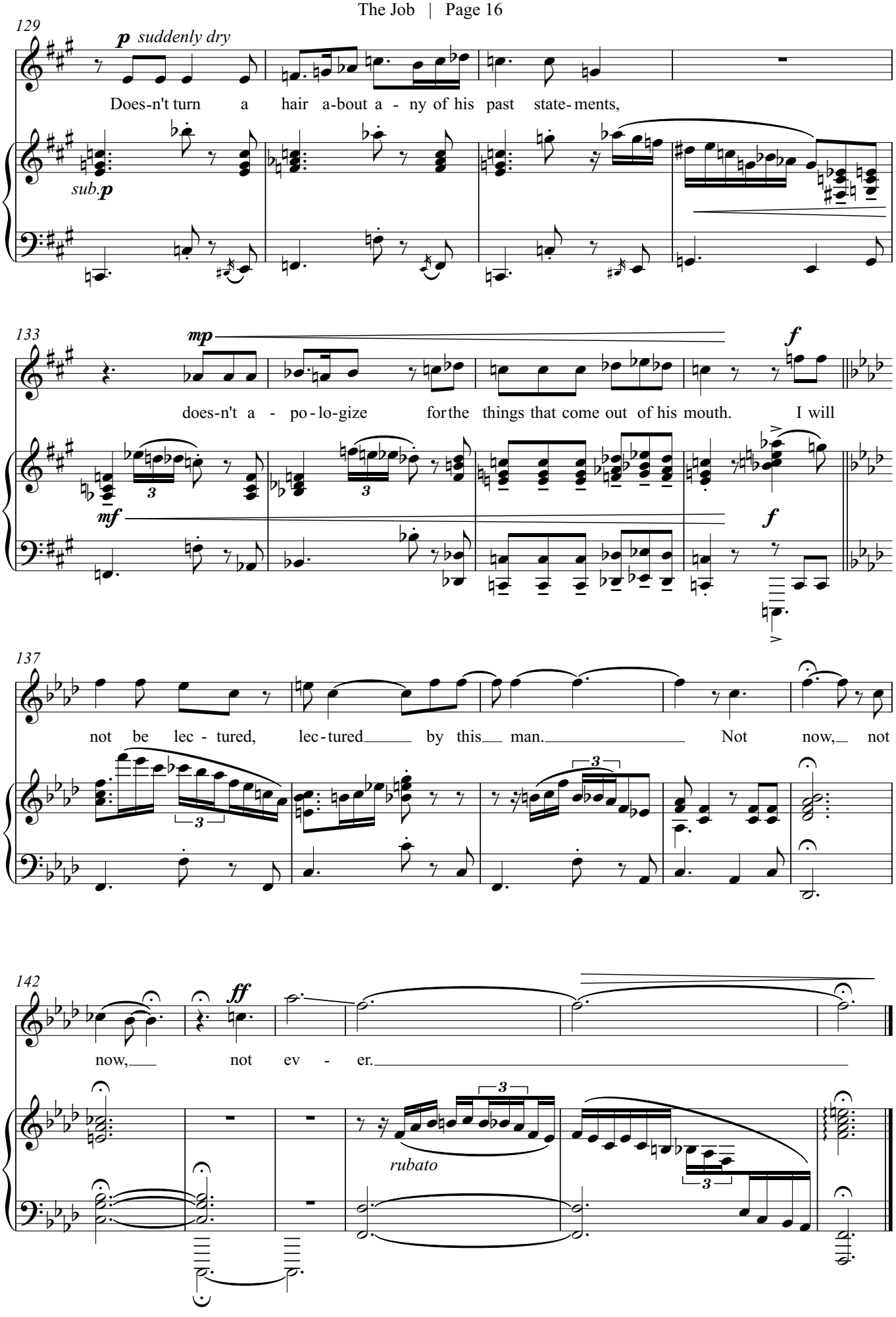

38
p
f
mir- ror. That's what he needs. That's what he needs. Be-cause if he
p
Ped.
Ped.
43
wants to know what mis - o-gy-ny looks like, he needs a mir-ror. That's what he needs.
f
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
48
mf
That's what he needs.
mf
Ped.
Ped.
53
Slow Blues ♩.=c.54
mp
in character, smug
He has said, and I quote: "If it's
p
3
3
Ped.


57
true, that men have more pow-er than wom-en, is that a bad thing?" "What if
mp
61
men are, by phy-si-o-lo-gy or tem-p'ra-ment, more a-dap-ted to is-sue com-mand?
65
mf
"A - bor - tion is the ea - sy way out." "What the house-wives need to un-der - stand
mf
f
f
69
mp
as they do the iron - ing, the iron - ing..."
mp
8vb


74
f
He stood next to a sign that said, "Ditch the witch."
f
79
He stood next to a sign that des - cribed me as a man's
84
Allegro ♩=c.138
bitch. (tch)
pp
Ped.
Ped.
89
Ped.
Ped.


94
mf
Mis-o-gy-ny and sex - i - sm, sex - i-sm ev' - ry day from him,
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
99
f
Mis-o-gy-ny and sex - i - sm, sex - i - sm ev' - ry day from him.
f
Ped.
Ped.
103
mp
Ev' - ry day, in ev' - ry way,
mp
Ped.
Ped.
107
mf
a - cross the time he has sat in that chair,
mf
Ped.
Ped.


111
mp
rit.
a - cross the time I've sat in this chair.
Ped.
116
Slow Blues ♩.=c.54
f dripping with sarcasm
Ap - par - ent-ly, he's wo-ken up af-ter this track re-cord, ap-
mp
f
121
par - ent-ly, he's wo - ken up af-ter this track re - cord, and he's gone, "Oh
125
extra dramatic
dear! There's this thing called sex-i-sm. Oh my lords! There's this thing called mis - o - gy- ny."

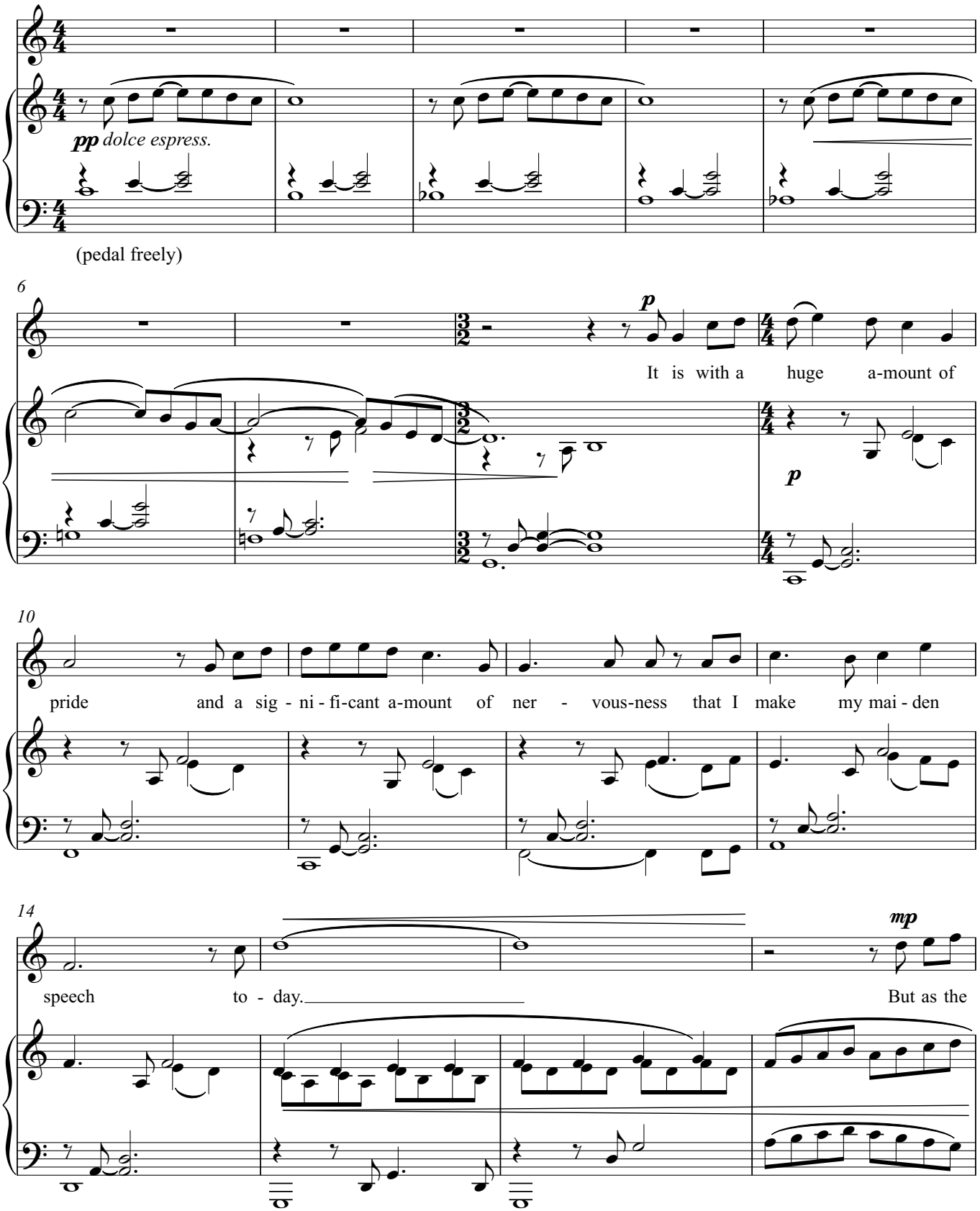

129
p suddenly dry
Does-n't turn a hair a-bout a - ny of his past state-ments,
sub.p
133
mp
f
does-n't a - po-lo-gize for the things that come out of his mouth. I will
mf
f
137
not be lec - tured, lec-tured by this man. Not now, not
3
142
ff
now, not ev - er.
rubato

Commissioned by Dr. Michelle Murphy DeBruyn

III. Maiden Speech

Music by Melissa Dunphy
Text by Kim Leadbeater (2021)

Andante ♩=c.84



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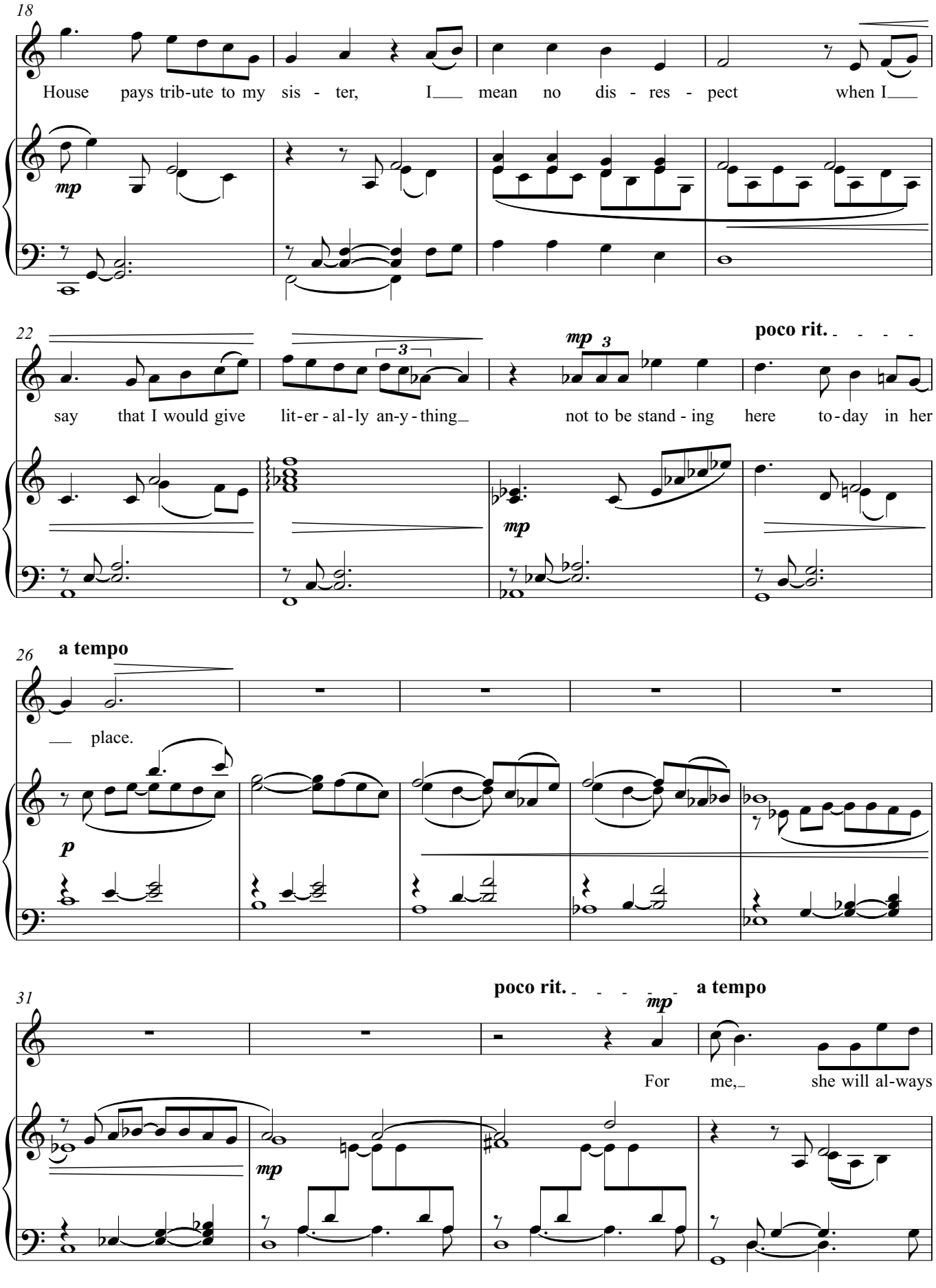
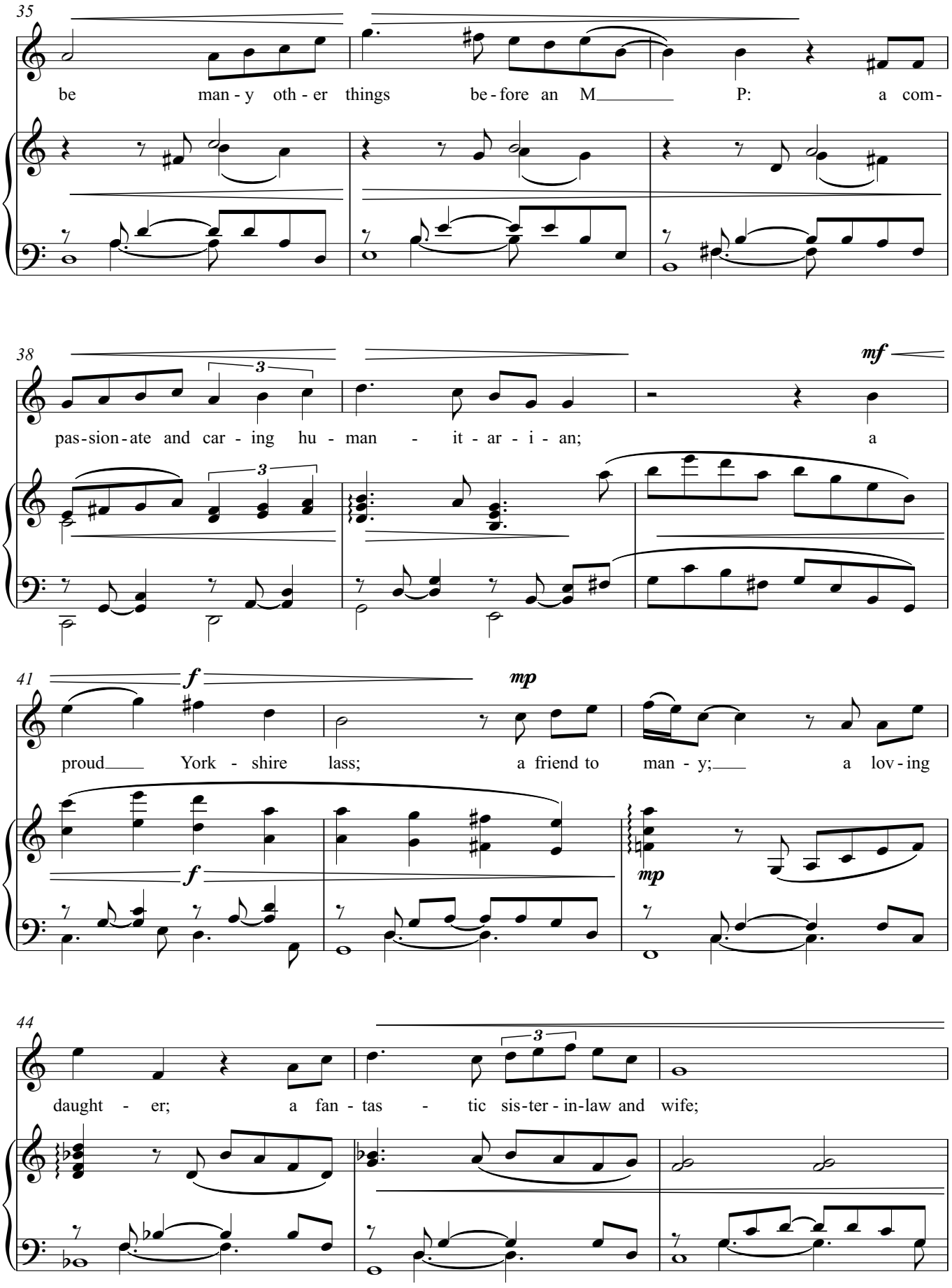
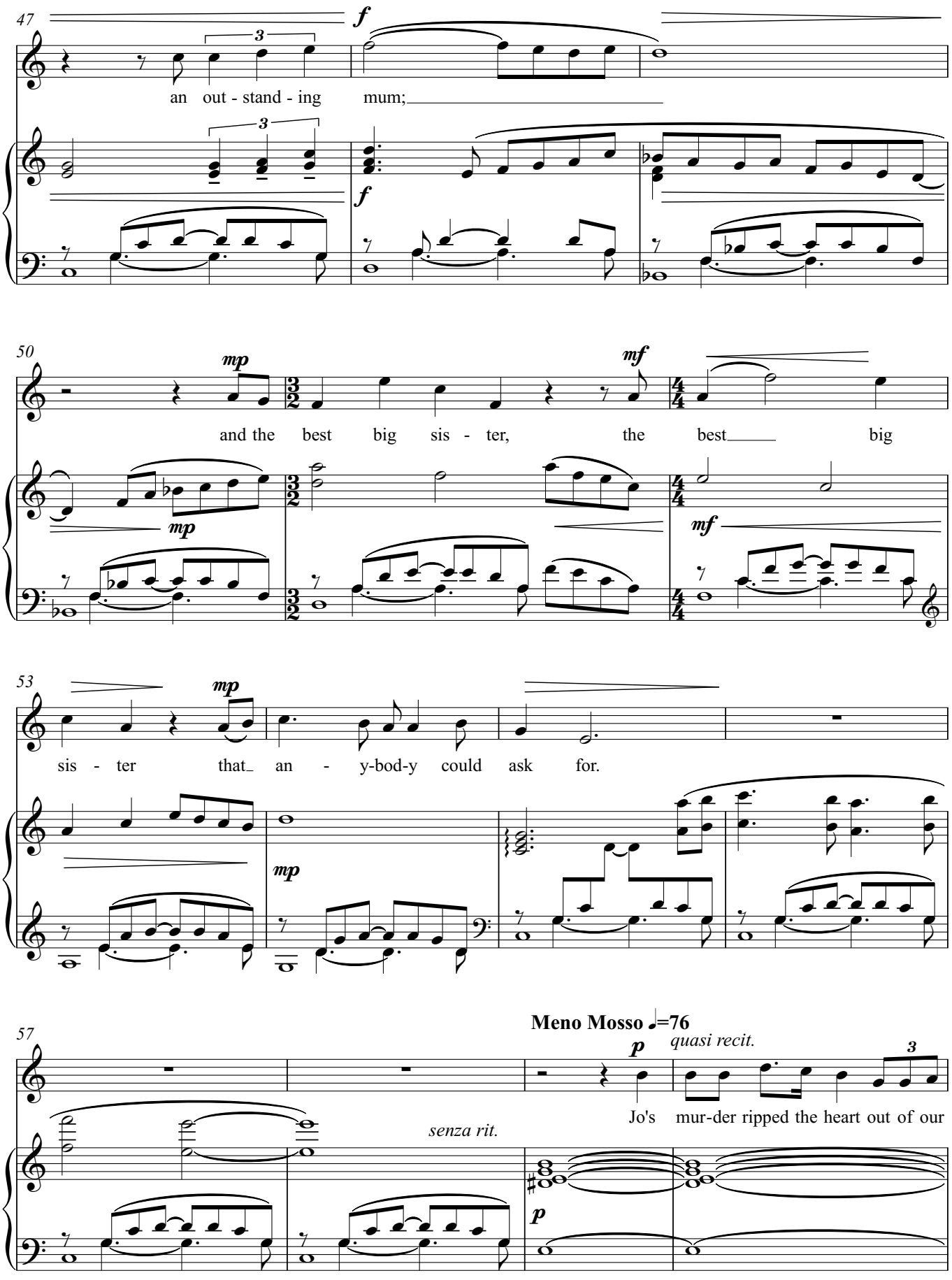
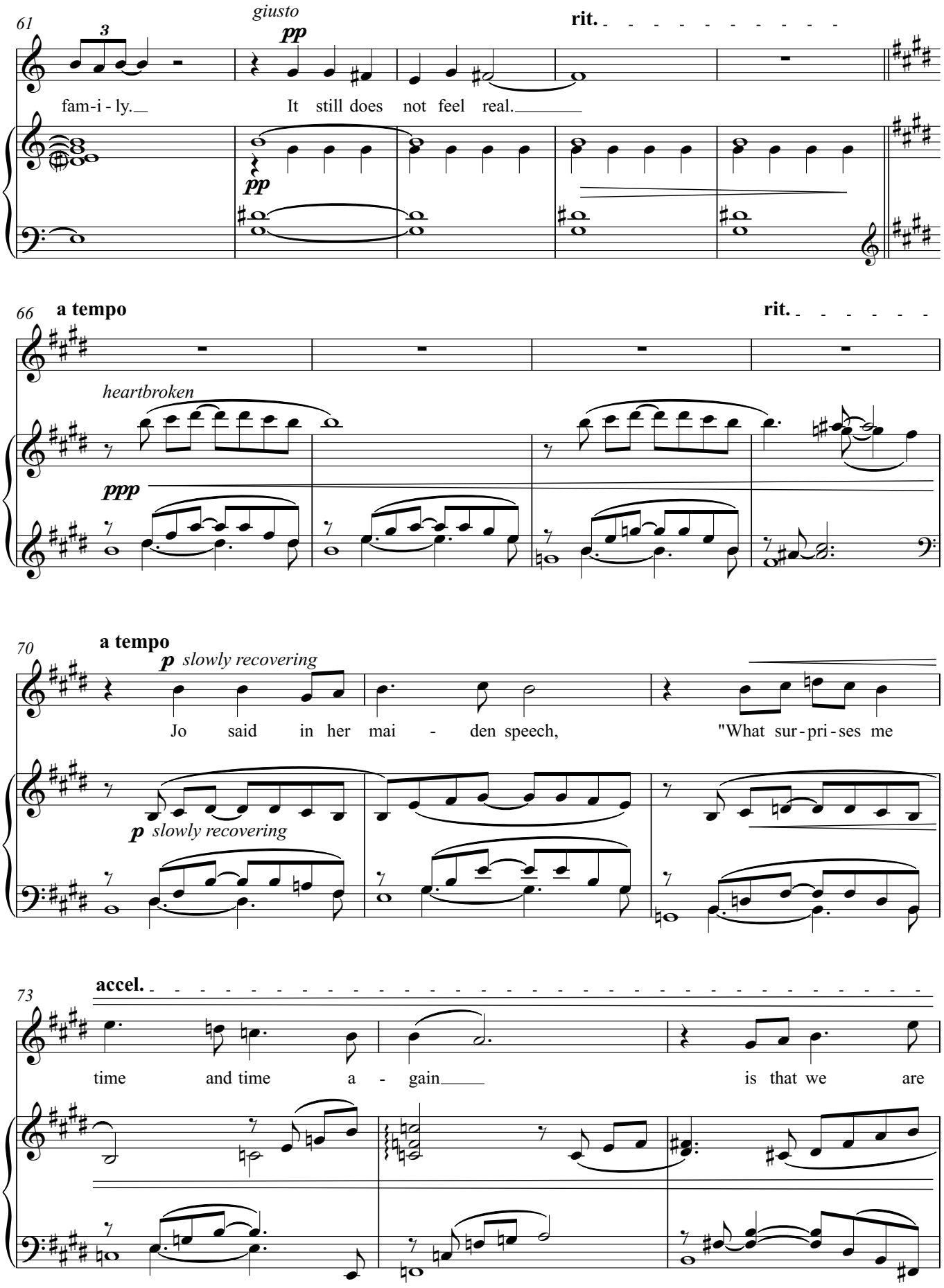
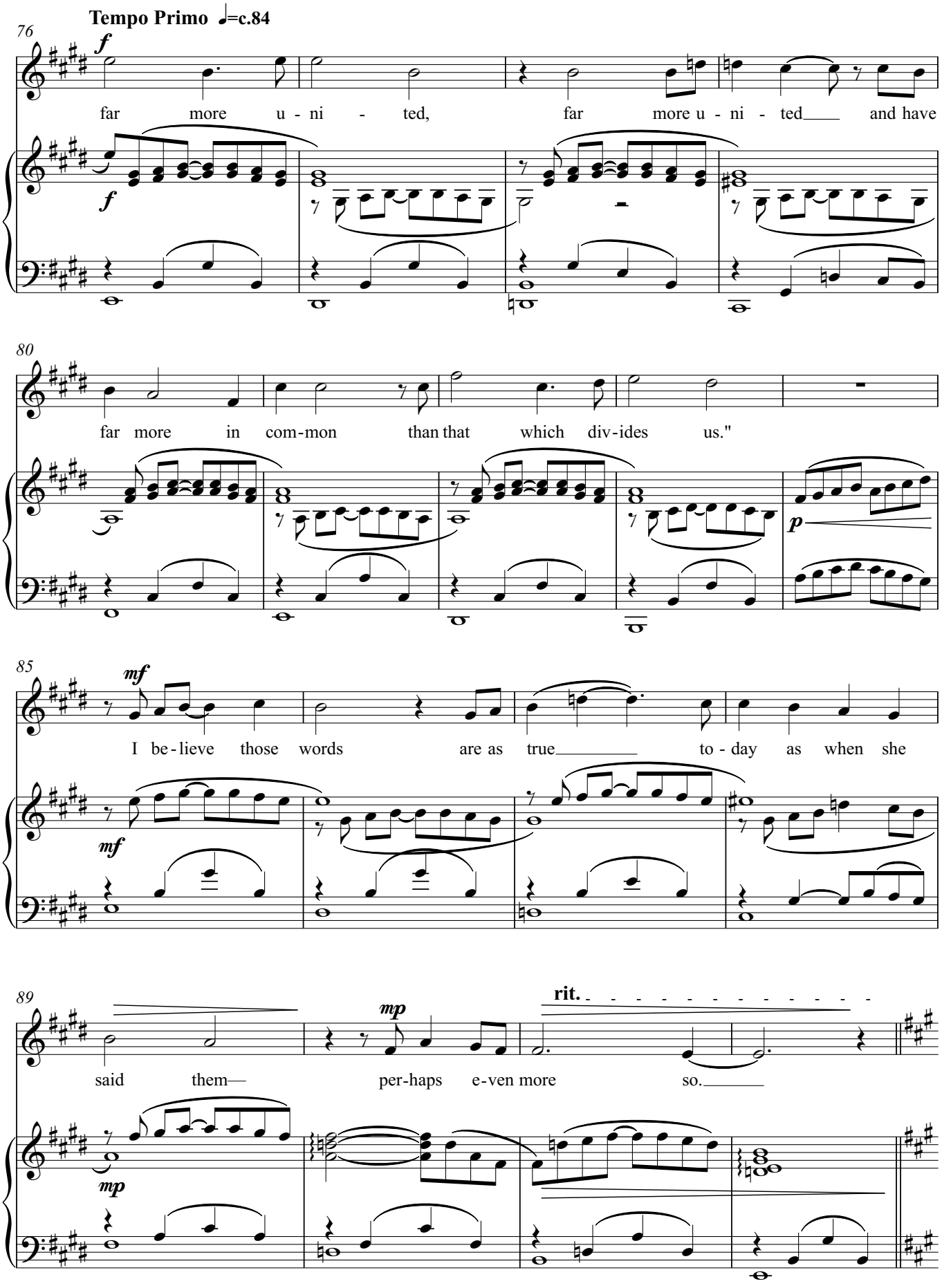
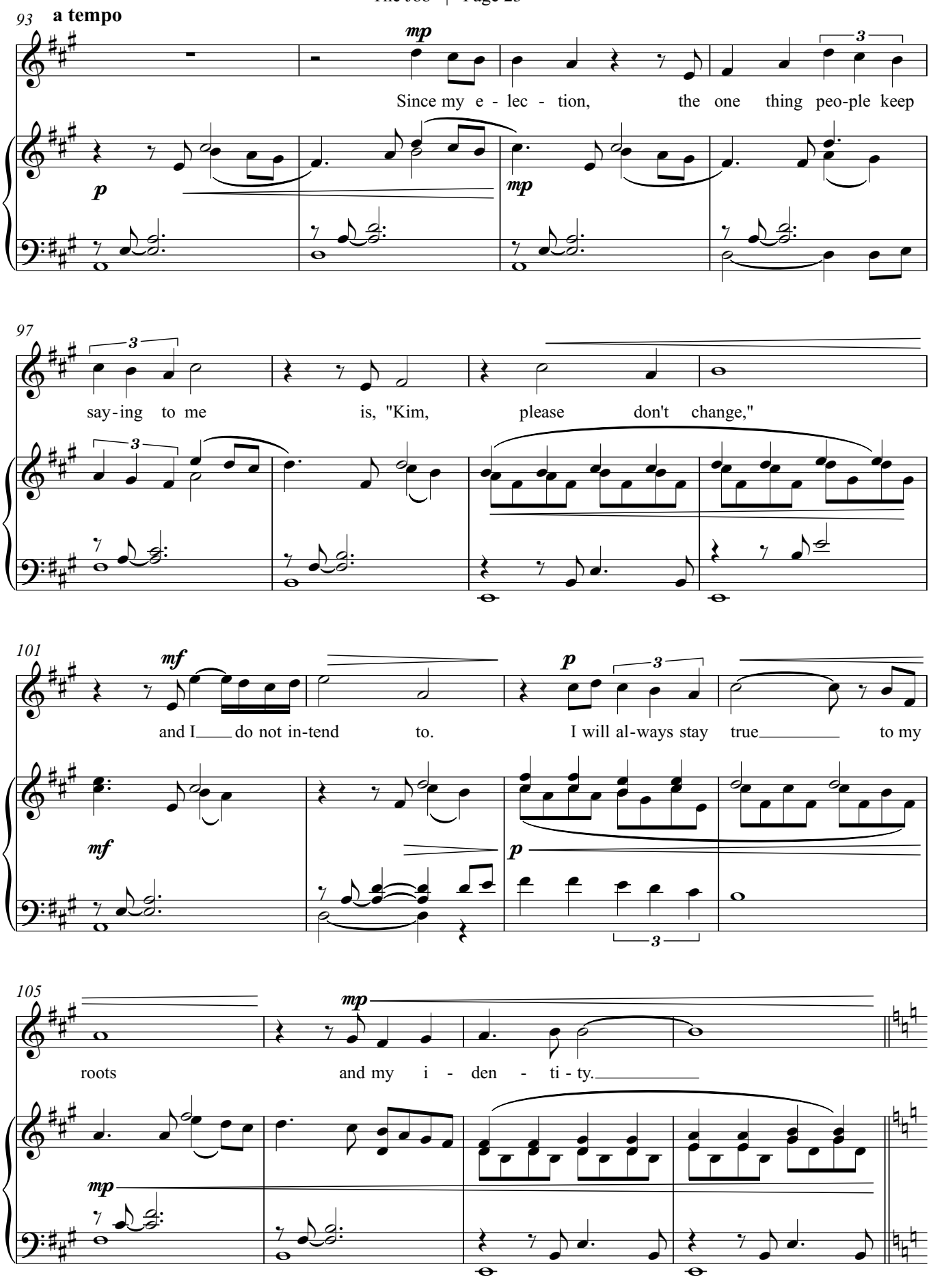

18
House pays trib-ute to my sis - ter, I mean no dis - res - pect when I
mp
22
poco rit.
say that I would give lit-er - al - ly an-y - thing not to be stand - ing here to-day in her
3
mp
26
a tempo
place.
p
31
poco rit.
a tempo
mp
For me, she will al-ways
mp

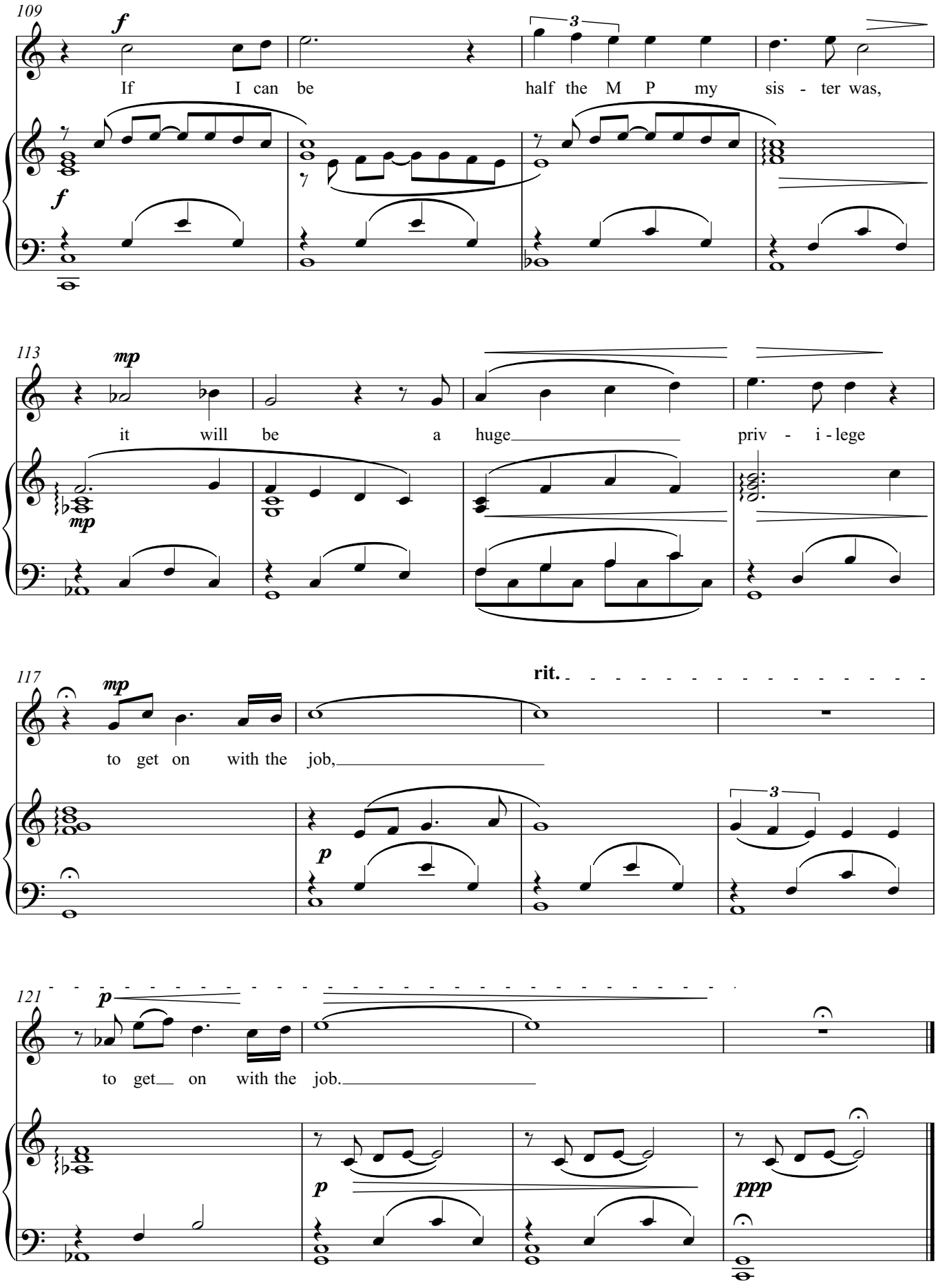

35
be man - y oth - er things be - fore an M P: a com -
38
mf
pas - sion - ate and car - ing hu - man - it - ar - i - an; a
41
f
mp
proud York - shire lass; a friend to man - y; a lov - ing
f
mp
44
daught - er; a fan - tas - tic sis - ter - in - law and wife;


47
f
an out - stand - ing mum;
50
mp
mf
and the best big sis - ter, the best big
53
mp
sis - ter that an - y-bod-y could ask for.
57
Meno Mosso ♩=76
p
quasi recit.
Jo's mur-der ripped the heart out of our
senza rit.
p


61
giusto
pp
rit.
fam-i-ly.
It still does not feel real.
pp
66
a tempo
rit.
heartbroken
ppp
70
a tempo
p slowly recovering
Jo said in her mai - den speech,
"What sur-pri-ses me
p slowly recovering
73
accel.
time and time a - gain
is that we are


Tempo Primo ♩=c.84
76
f
far more u - ni - ted, far more u - ni - ted and have
80
far more in com-mon than that which div-ides us."
p
85
mf
I be-lieve those words are as true to - day as when she
89
mp
rit.
said them— per-haps e-ven more so.


93
a tempo
mp
Since my e - lec - tion, the one thing peo-ple keep
p
mp
97
say-ing to me is, "Kim, please don't change,"
101
mf
and I do not in-tend to.
p
I will al-ways stay true to my
mf
p
105
mp
roots and my i - den - ti - ty.
mp


109
f
If I can be half the M P my sis - ter was,
113
mp
it will be a huge priv - i - lege
117
mp
rit.
to get on with the job,
p
121
p
to get on with the job.
p
ppp