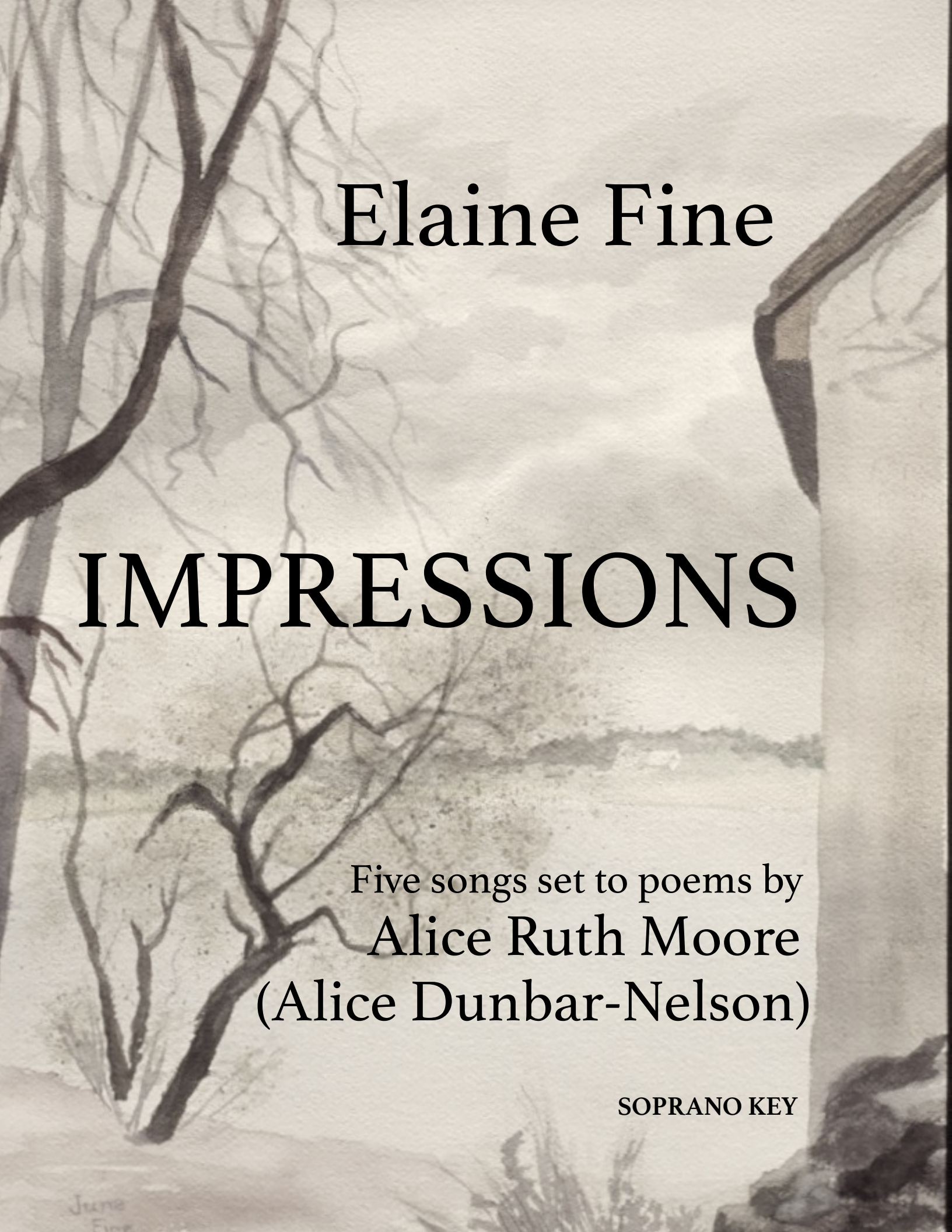


Elaine Fine

IMPRESSIONS

Five songs set to poems by
Alice Ruth Moore
(Alice Dunbar-Nelson)

SOPRANO KEY

Alice Ruth Moore (1875-1935), the daughter of a once-enslaved mother, was born in New Orleans. She graduated from Straight University, and worked in New Orleans as an elementary school teacher.

Moore moved north to Boston in 1895 after "Violets and Other Tales," the collection of poems and stories that includes this set of poems, was published in *The Monthly Review.* She then moved to New York where, along with Victoria Earle Matthews and Maritcha Remond Lyons, she founded the White Rose Mission on East 86th Street in Manhattan. After spending a year there, Moore moved to Washington, DC to be with the poet Paul Laurence Dunbar (who she soon married). She separated from him in 1902, and moved to Wilmington, Delaware, where she taught at the Hampton Institute. It was in Delaware that she met her second husband, Dr. Henry A. Callis, who taught at Howard University. After her divorce from Callis, Alice married the civil rights activist (and poet) Robert J. Nelson.

During the 1920s and 1930s Moore, who then went by the name Alice Dunbar-Nelson, was an activist for African American rights and women's rights, appearing often as a speaker, and writing essays, reviews, and articles in newspapers, magazines, and academic journals.

Her papers are kept at the University of Delaware.

The painting on the cover is by my mother, June Fine (1932-2016), and this setting of these poems is dedicated to her memory.

dedicated to the memory of June Fine

IMPRESSIONS

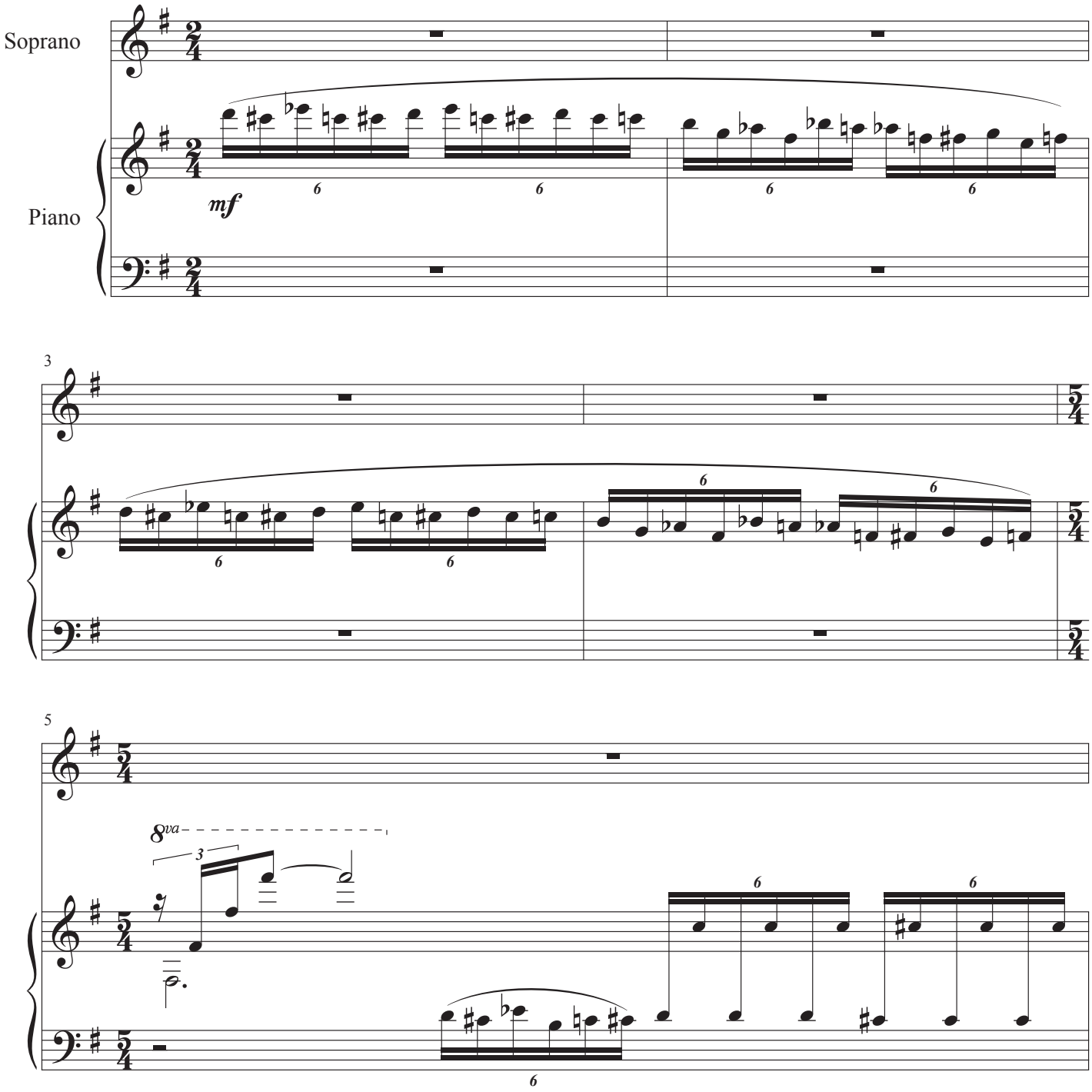
Transposed for higher voice

THOUGHT.

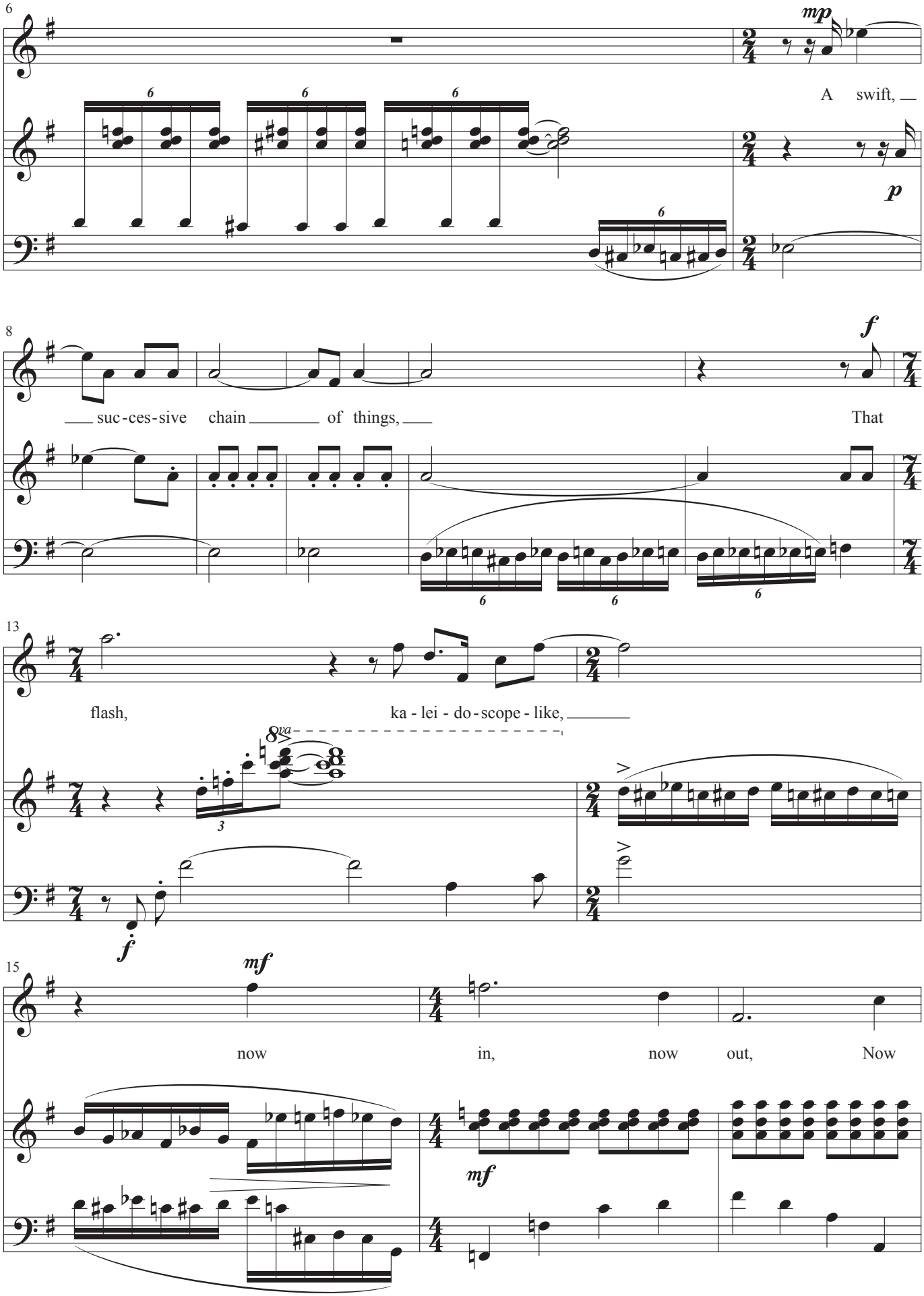
Alice Ruth Moore (Dunbar-Nelson)

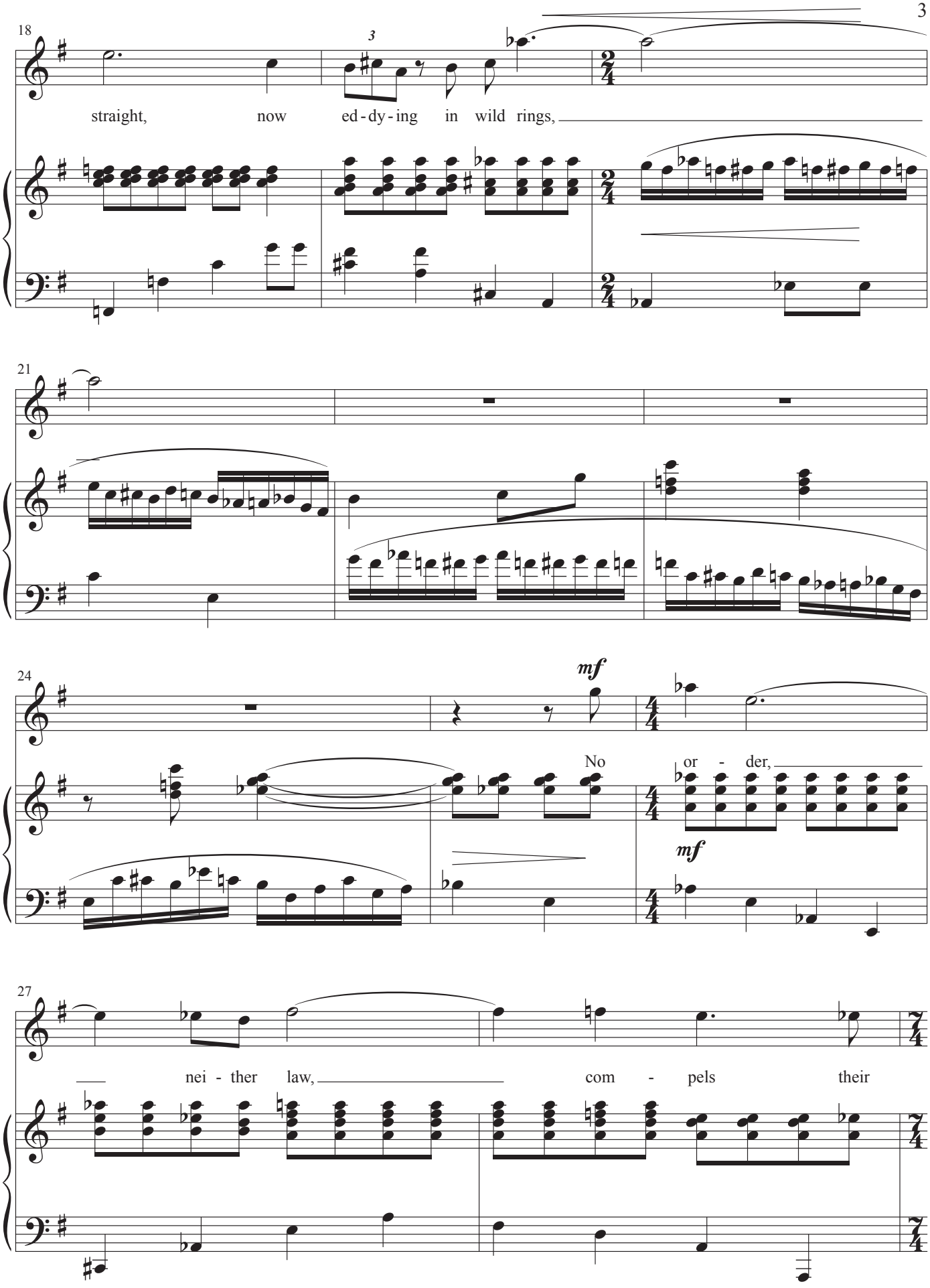
Swiftly and relentless

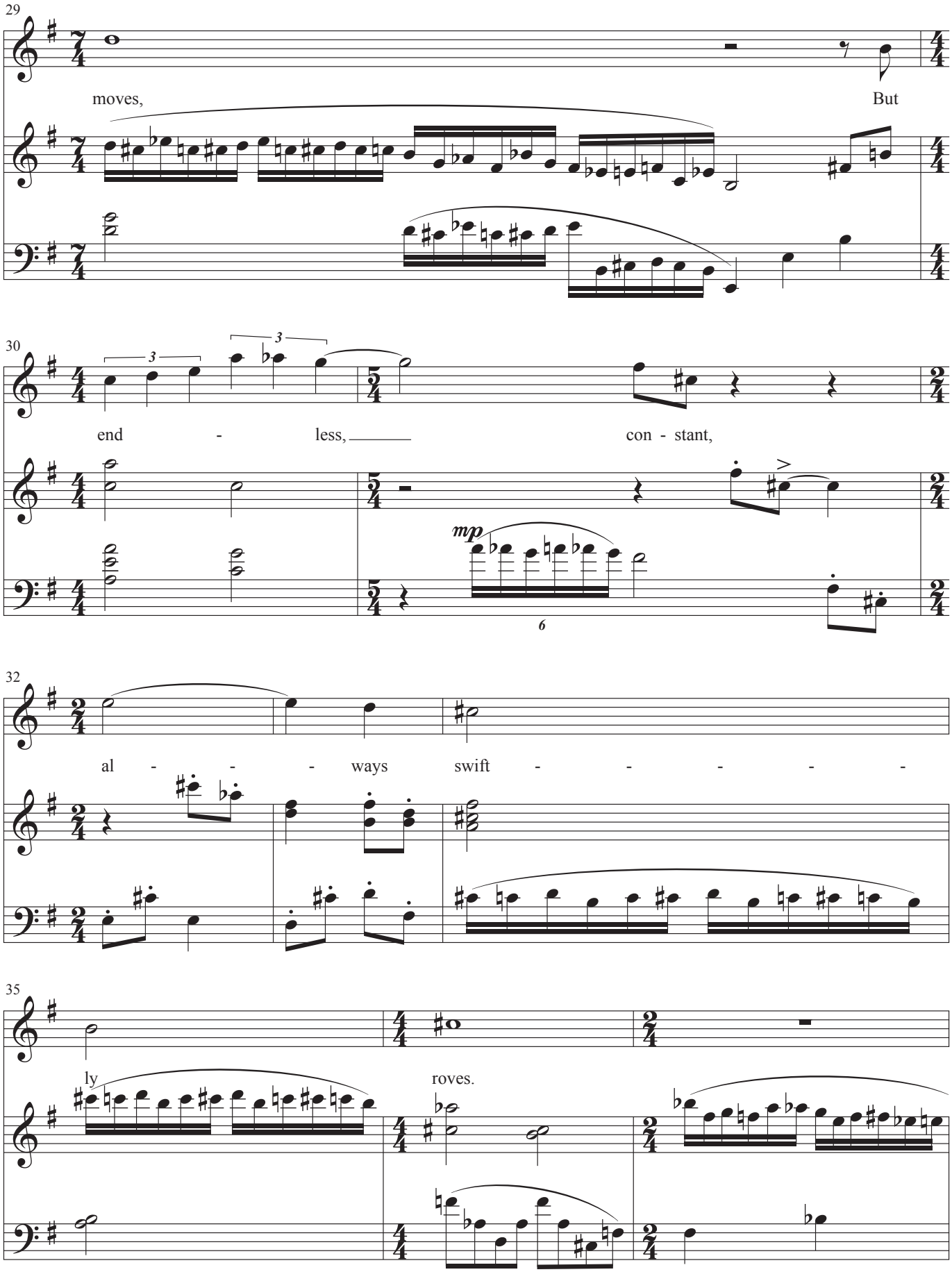
Elaine Fine

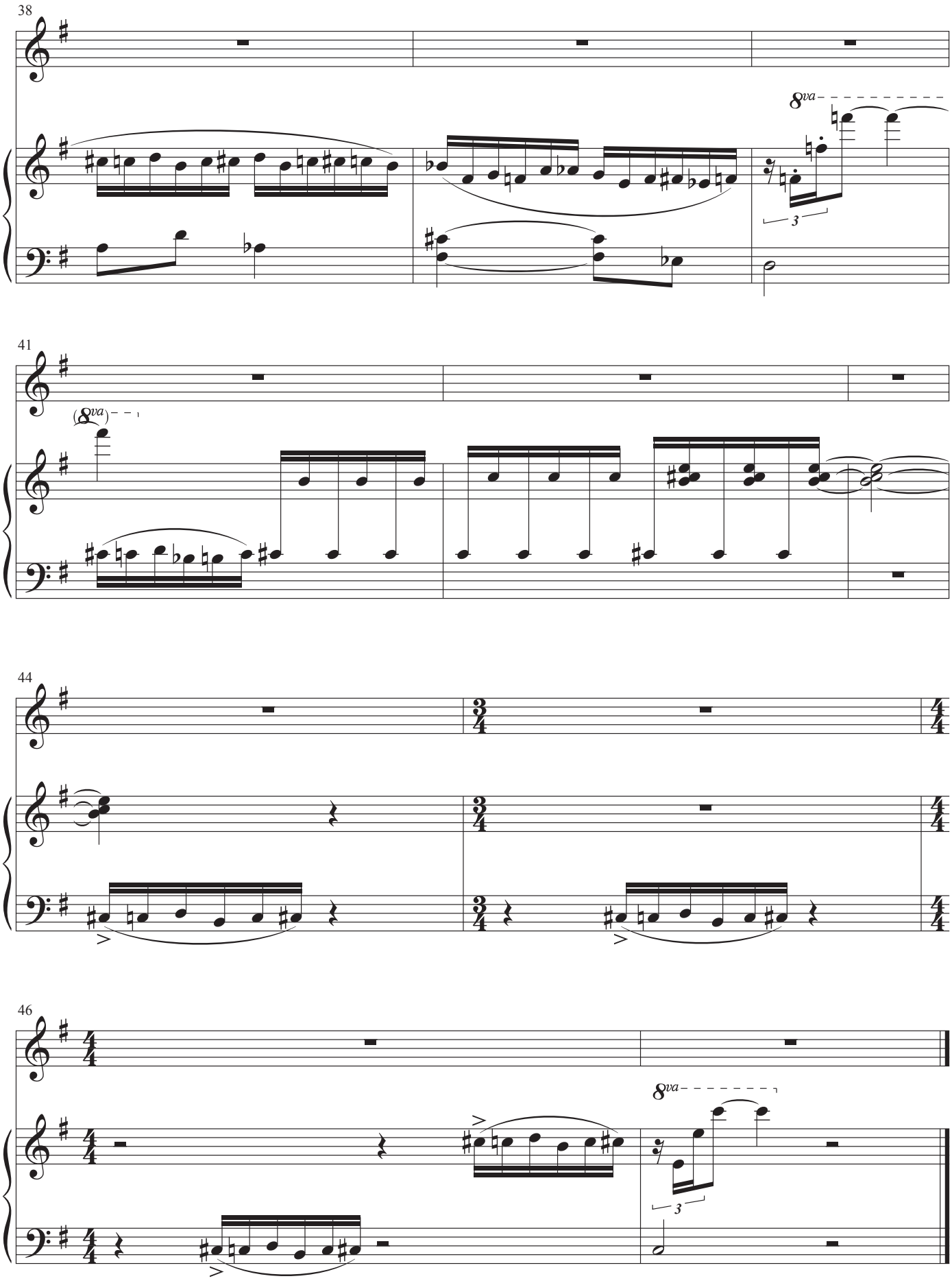


This set of poems was written in 1895 by the 20-year-old Alice Ruth Moore (1875-1935) as part of her collection ″Violets and Other Tales.″ She is also known by as Alice Dunbar-Nelson

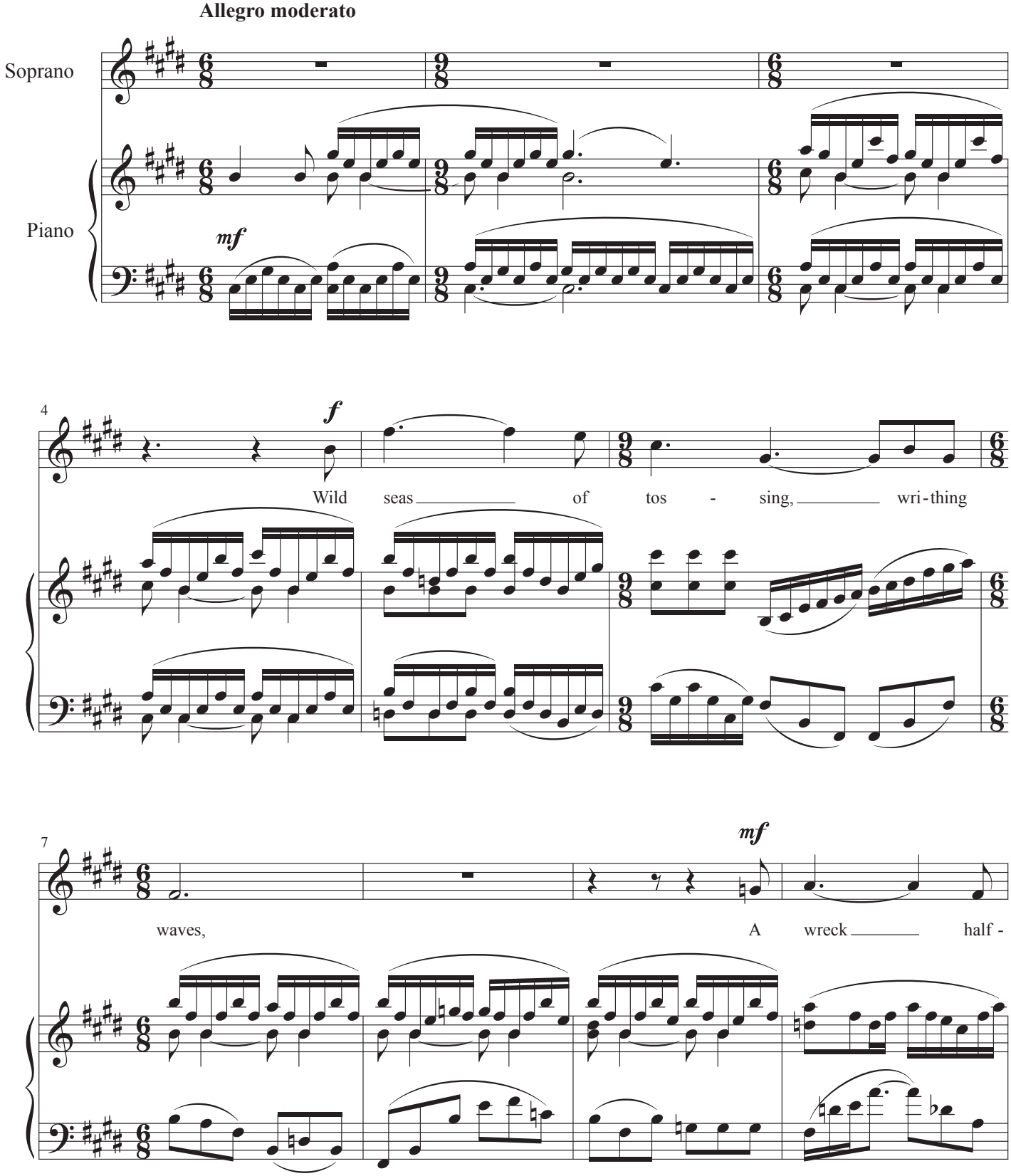

6
mp
A swift,
p
8
f
suc-ces-sive chain of things,
That
13
flash,
ka-lei-do-scope-like,
8va
f
15
mf
now
in,
now
out,
Now
mf

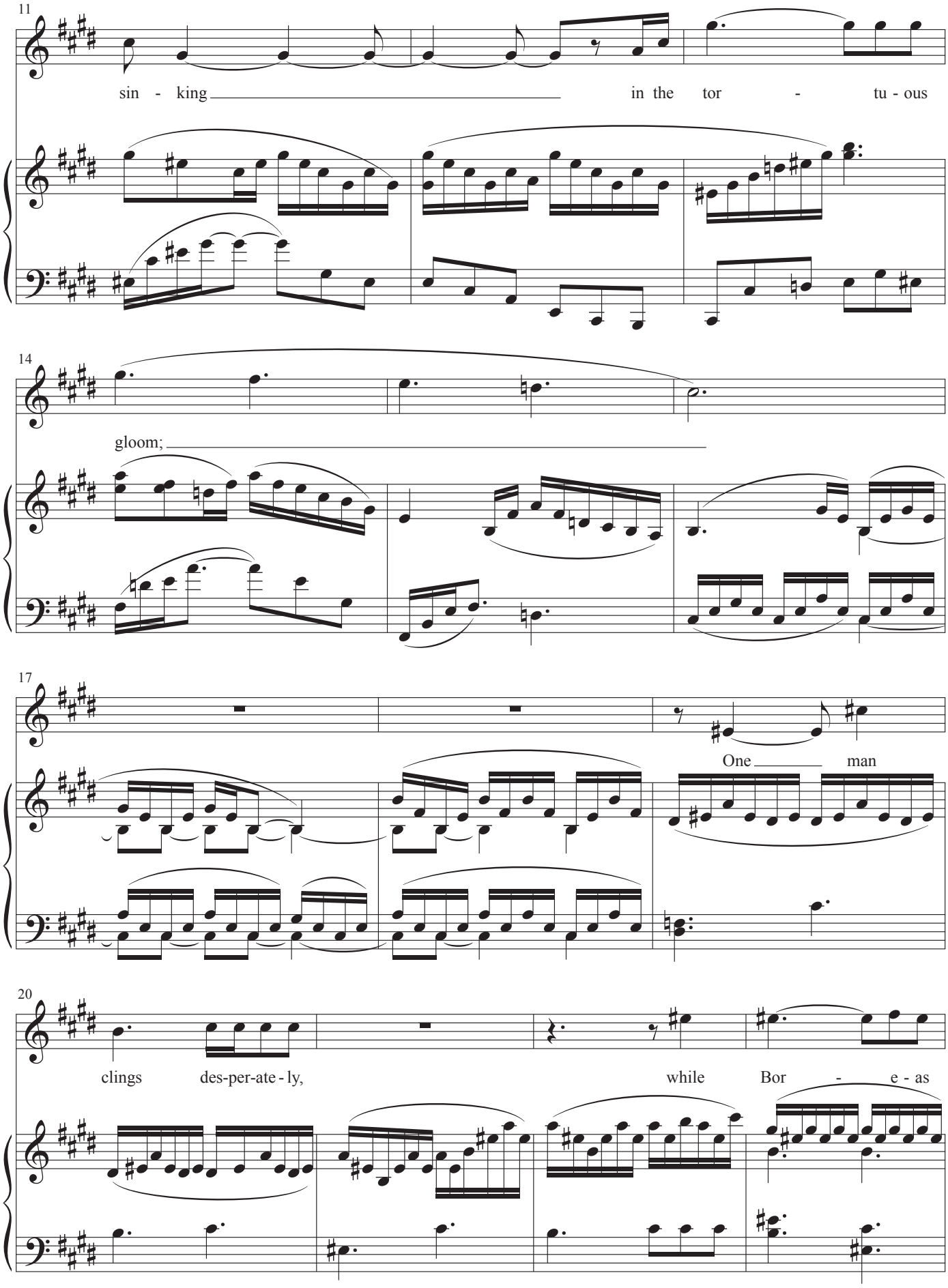

18
3
straight, now ed - dy - ing in wild rings,
21
24
mf
No or - der,
mf
27
nei - ther law, com - pels their

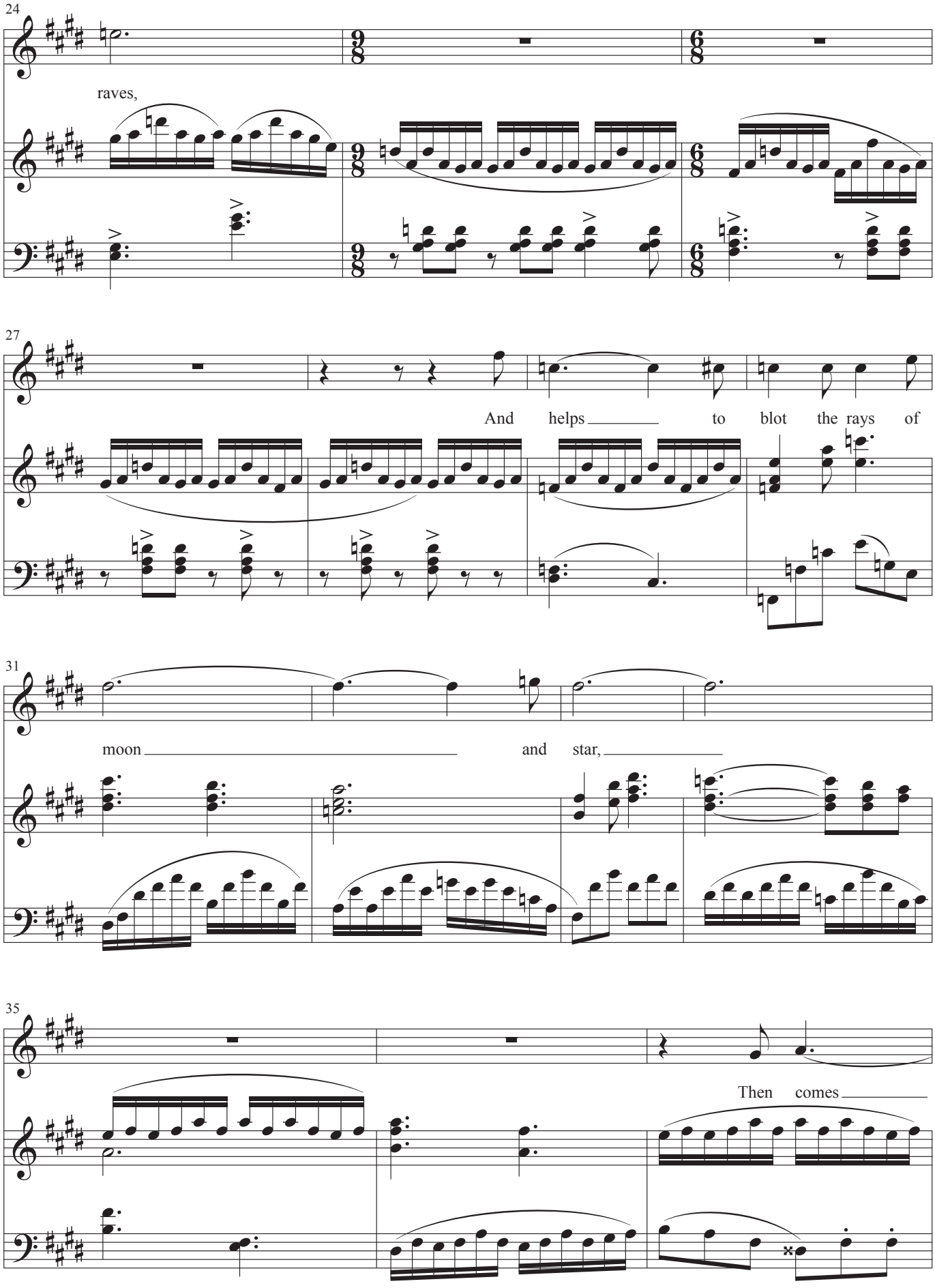

29
moves,
But
30
3
3
end - less,
con - stant,
mp
6
32
al - - - ways swift - - - - -
35
ly
roves.

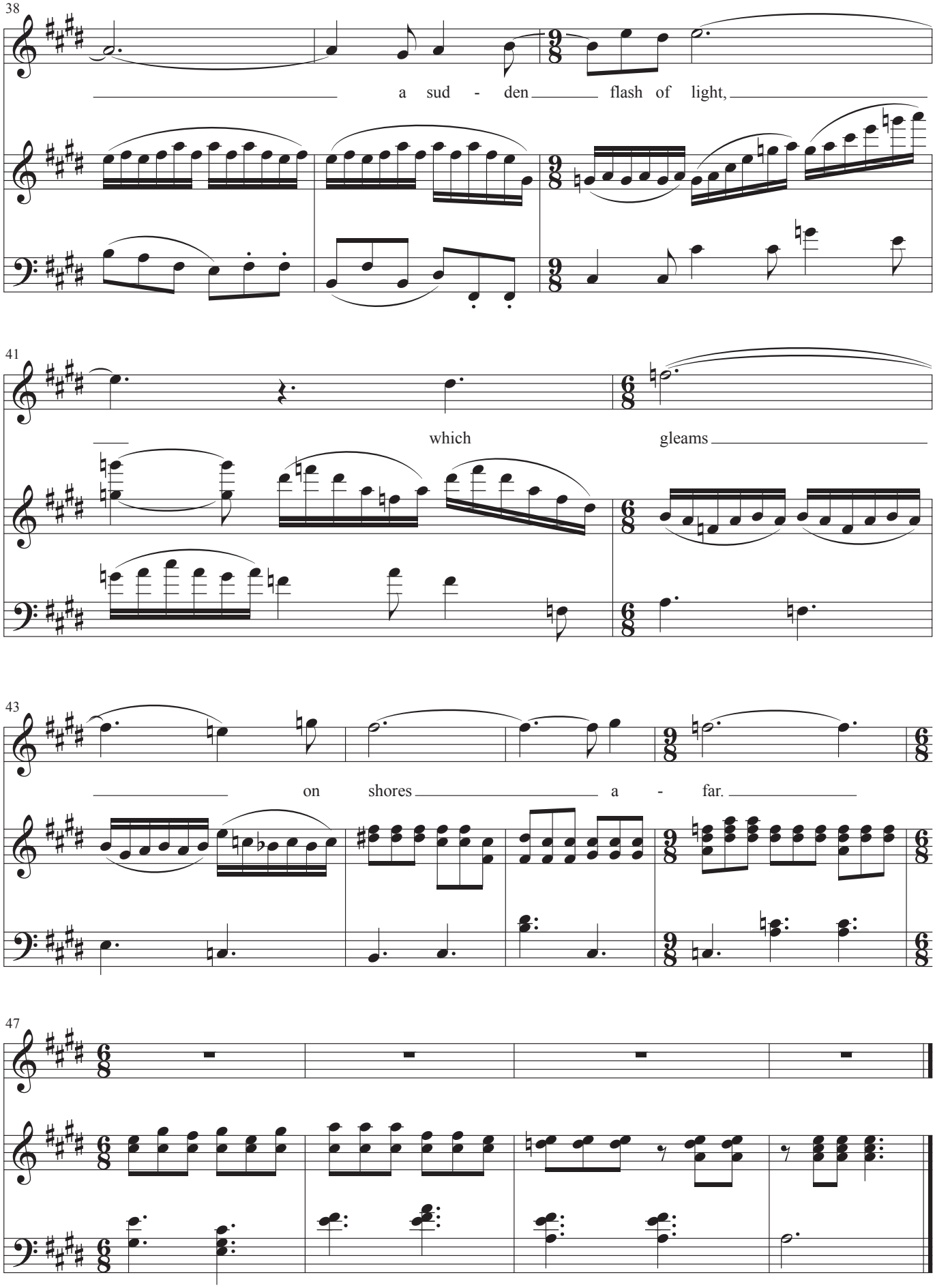

38
8va
3
41
(8va)
44
46
8va
3

HOPE.

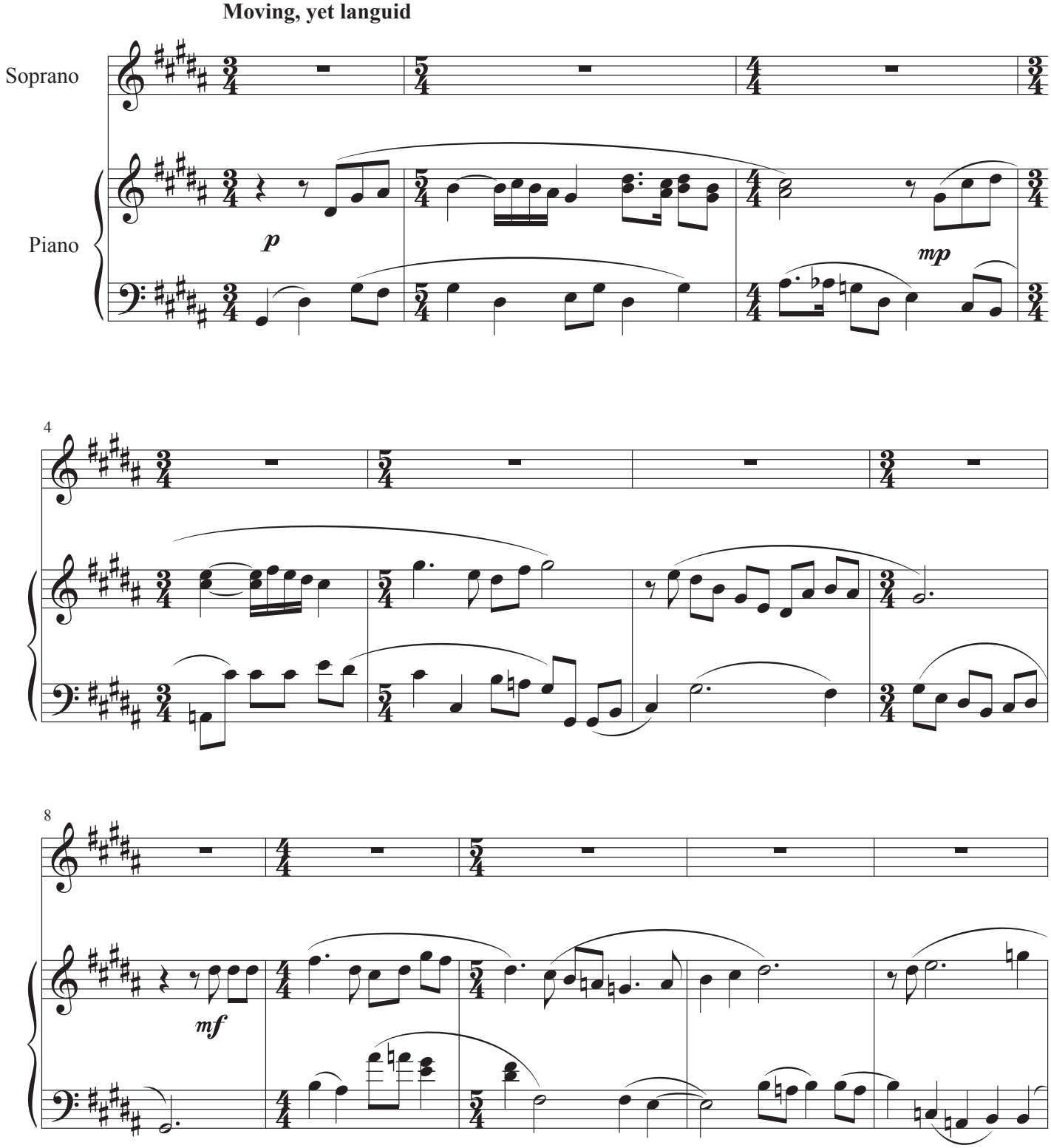

Allegro moderato
Soprano
Piano
mf
4
f
Wild seas of tos - sing, wri-thing
7
mf
waves,
A wreck half -

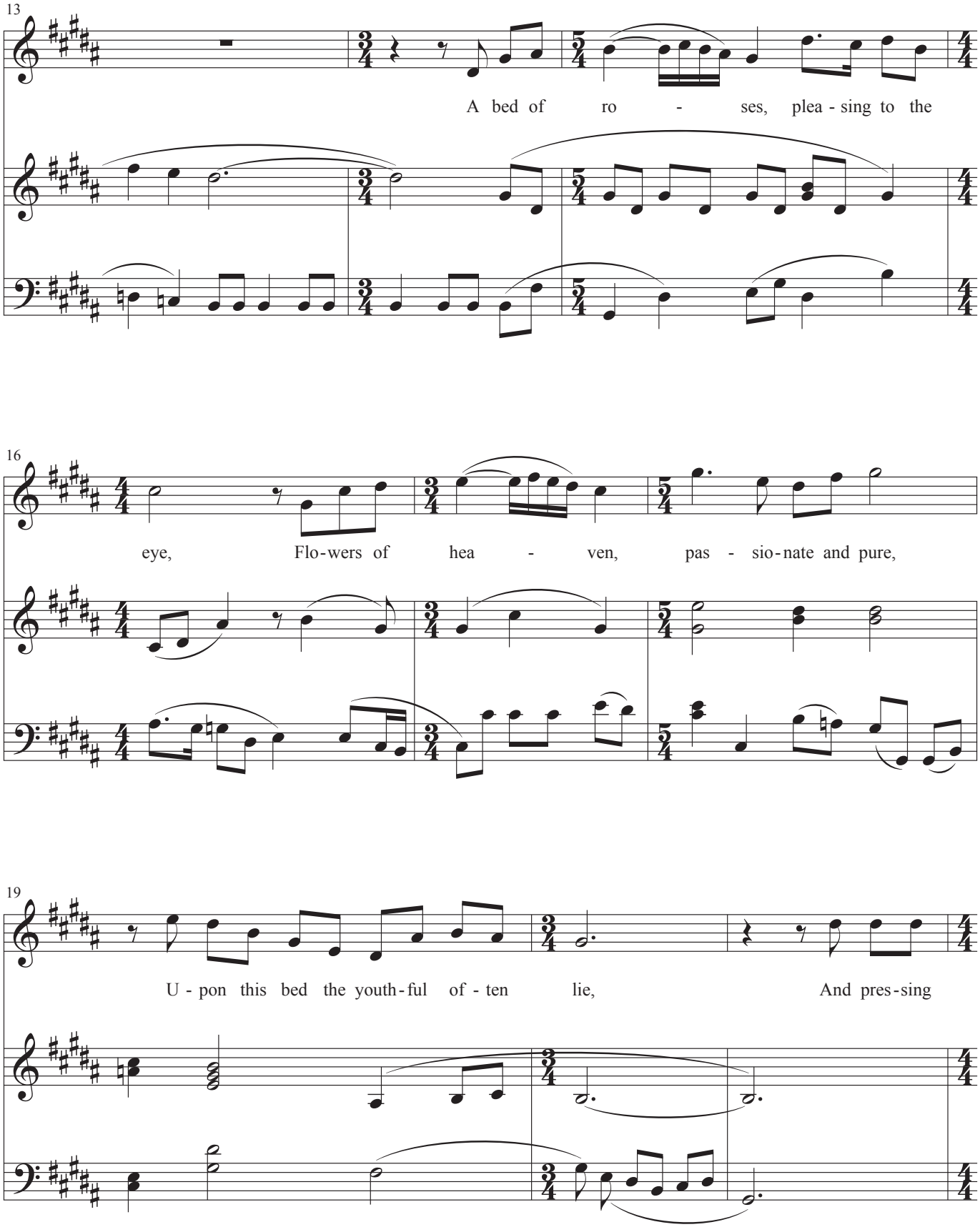

11
sin - king
in the tor - tu - ous
14
gloom;
17
One man
20
clings des-per-ate - ly,
while Bor - e - as

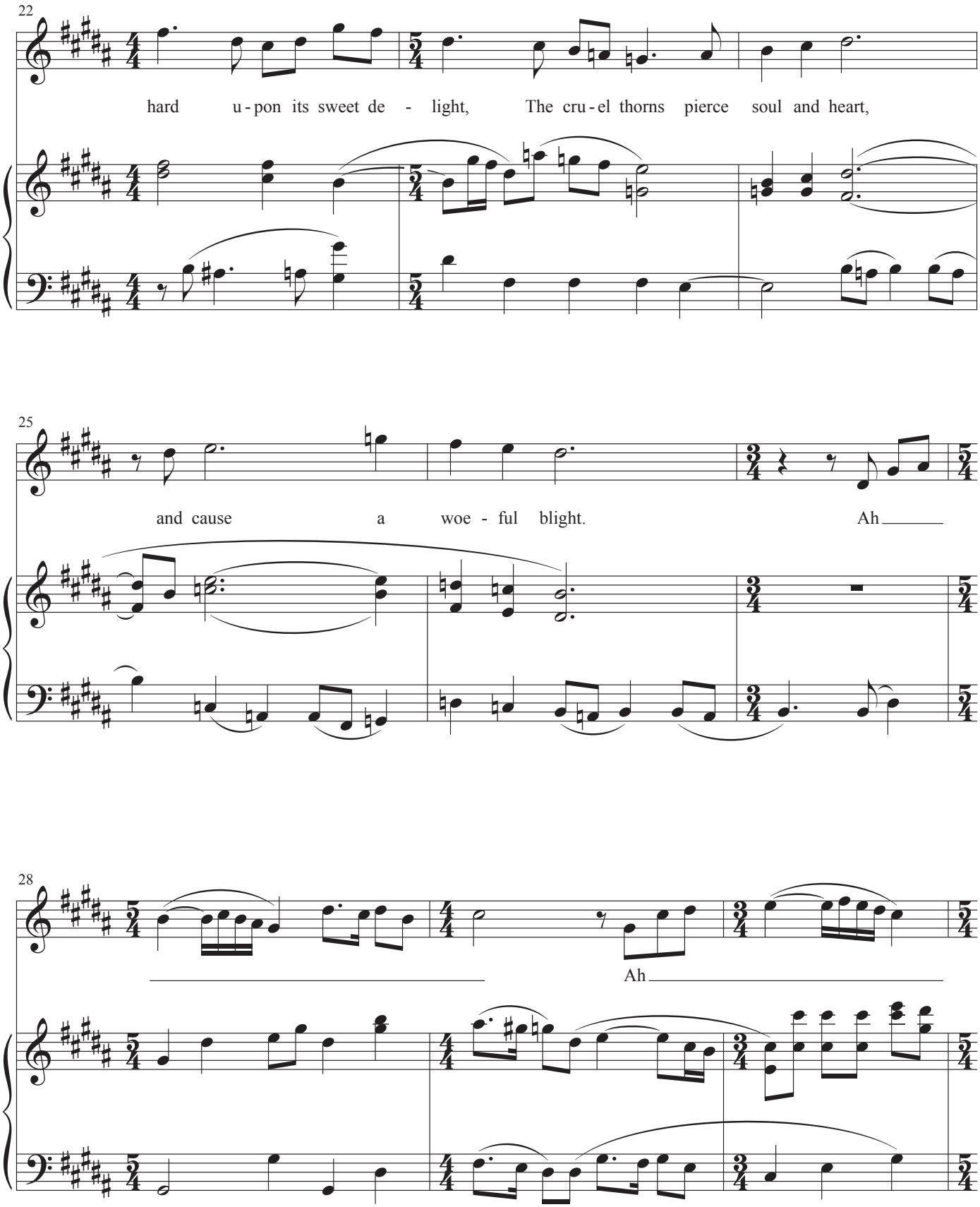

24
raves,
27
And helps to blot the rays of
31
moon and star,
35
Then comes

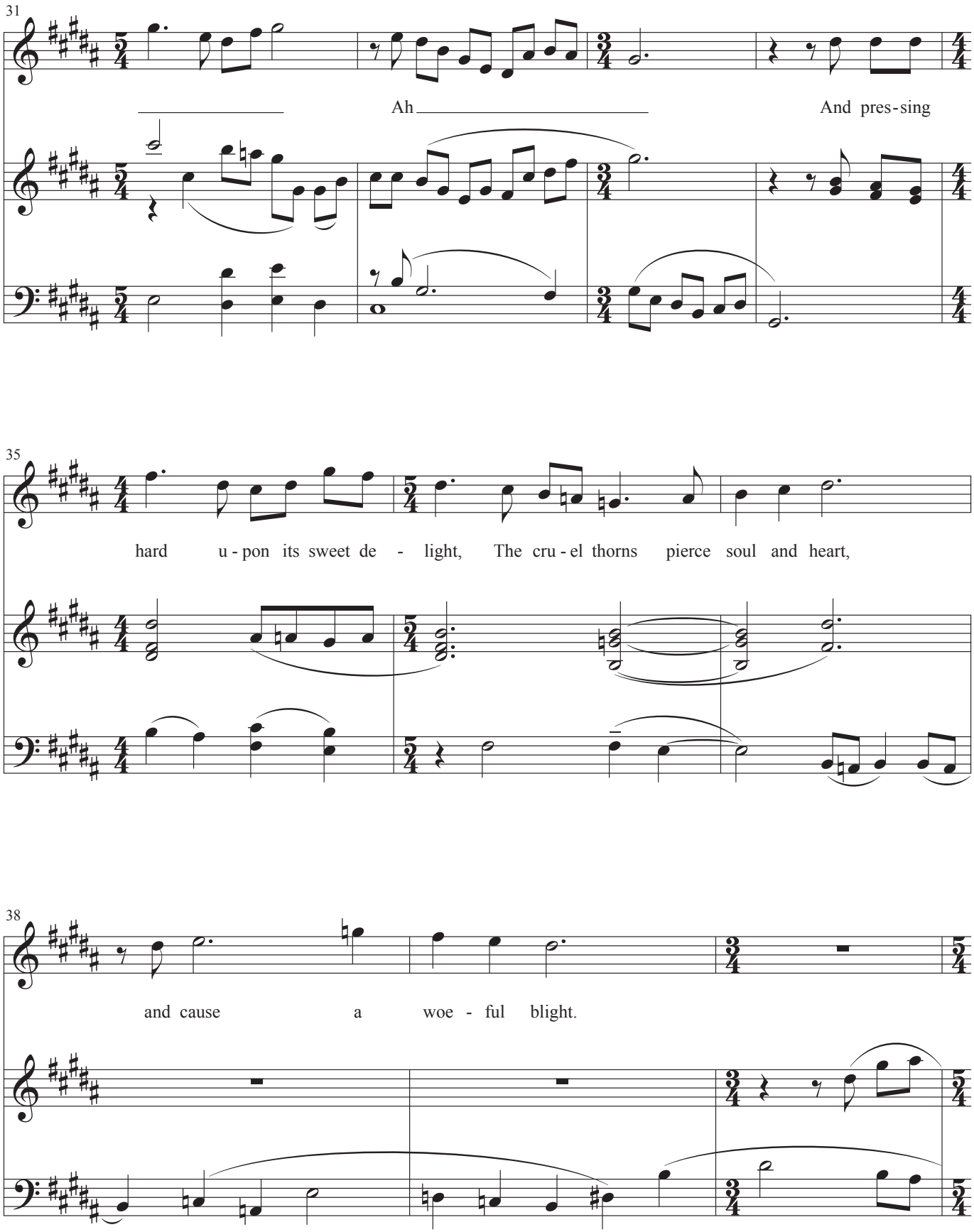

38
a sud - den flash of light,
41
which gleams
43
on shores a - far.
47

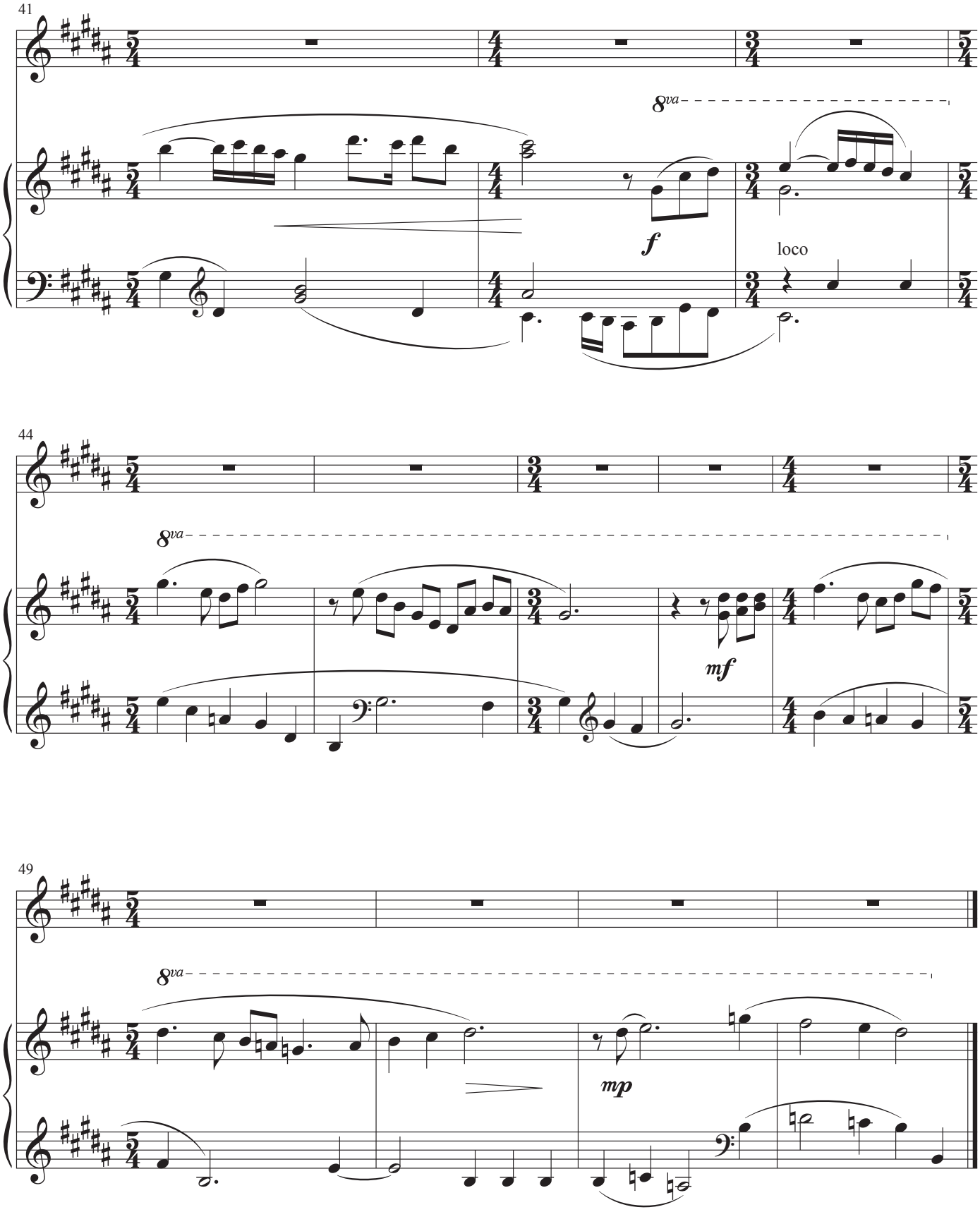
LOVE.



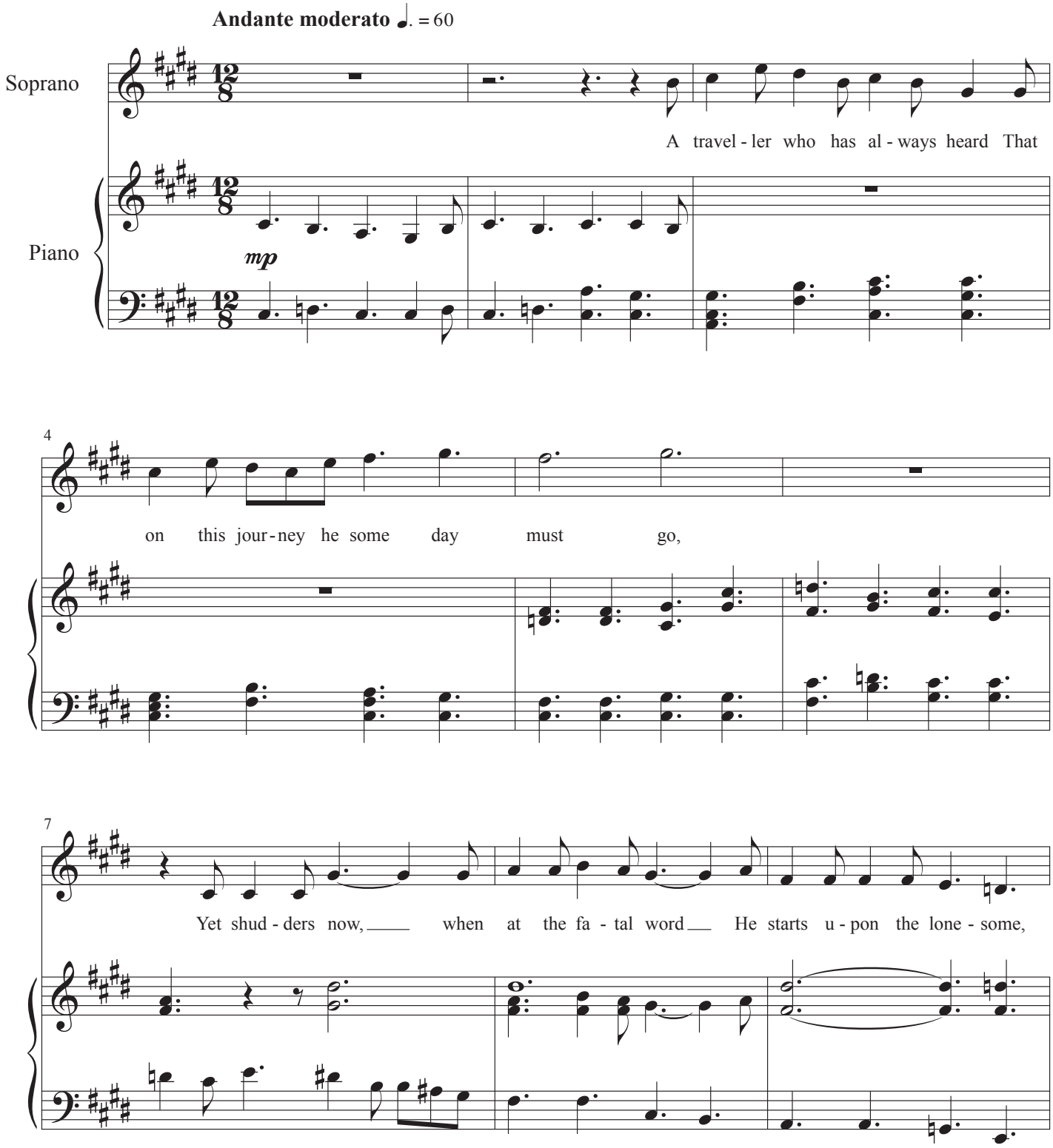

13
A bed of ro - ses, plea - sing to the
16
eye, Flo-wers of hea - ven, pas - sio-nate and pure,
19
U - pon this bed the youth-ful of - ten lie, And pres-sing

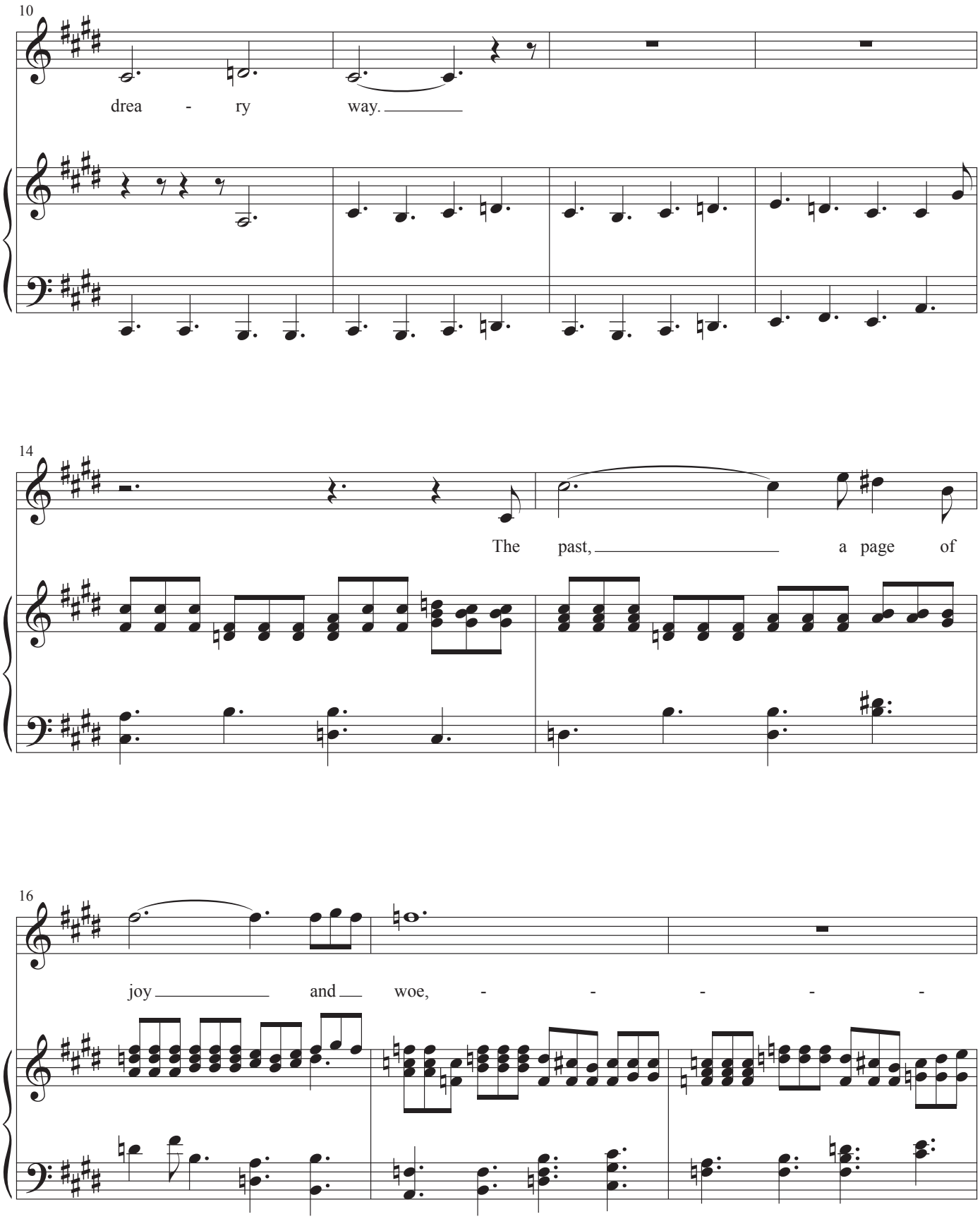

22
hard u - pon its sweet de - light, The cru - el thorns pierce soul and heart,
25
and cause a woe - ful blight. Ah
28
Ah

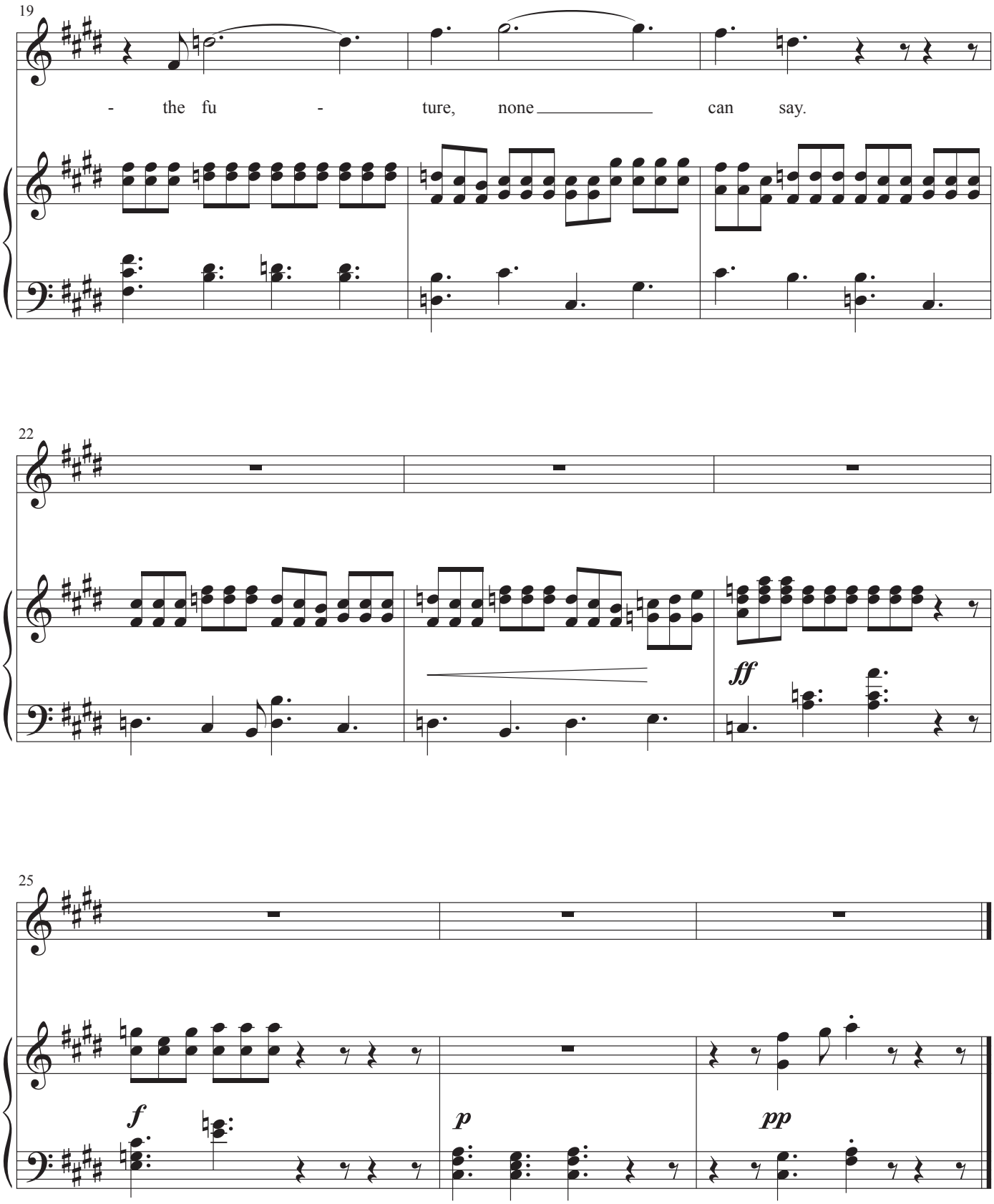

31
Ah
And pres-sing
35
hard u-pon its sweet de - light, The cru-el thorns pierce soul and heart,
38
and cause a woe - ful blight.


41
8va
f
loco
44
8va
mf
49
8va
mp

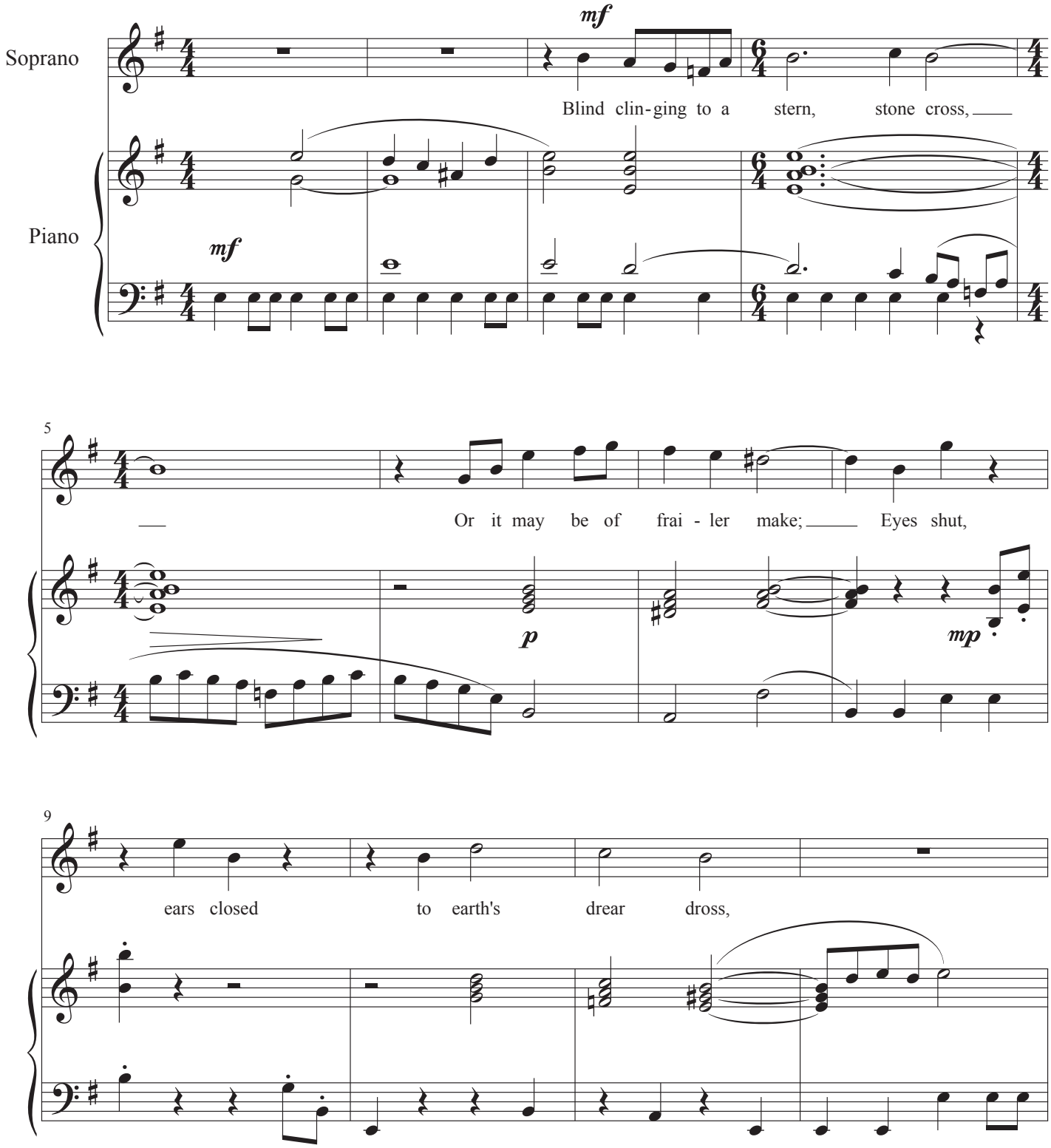
DEATH.

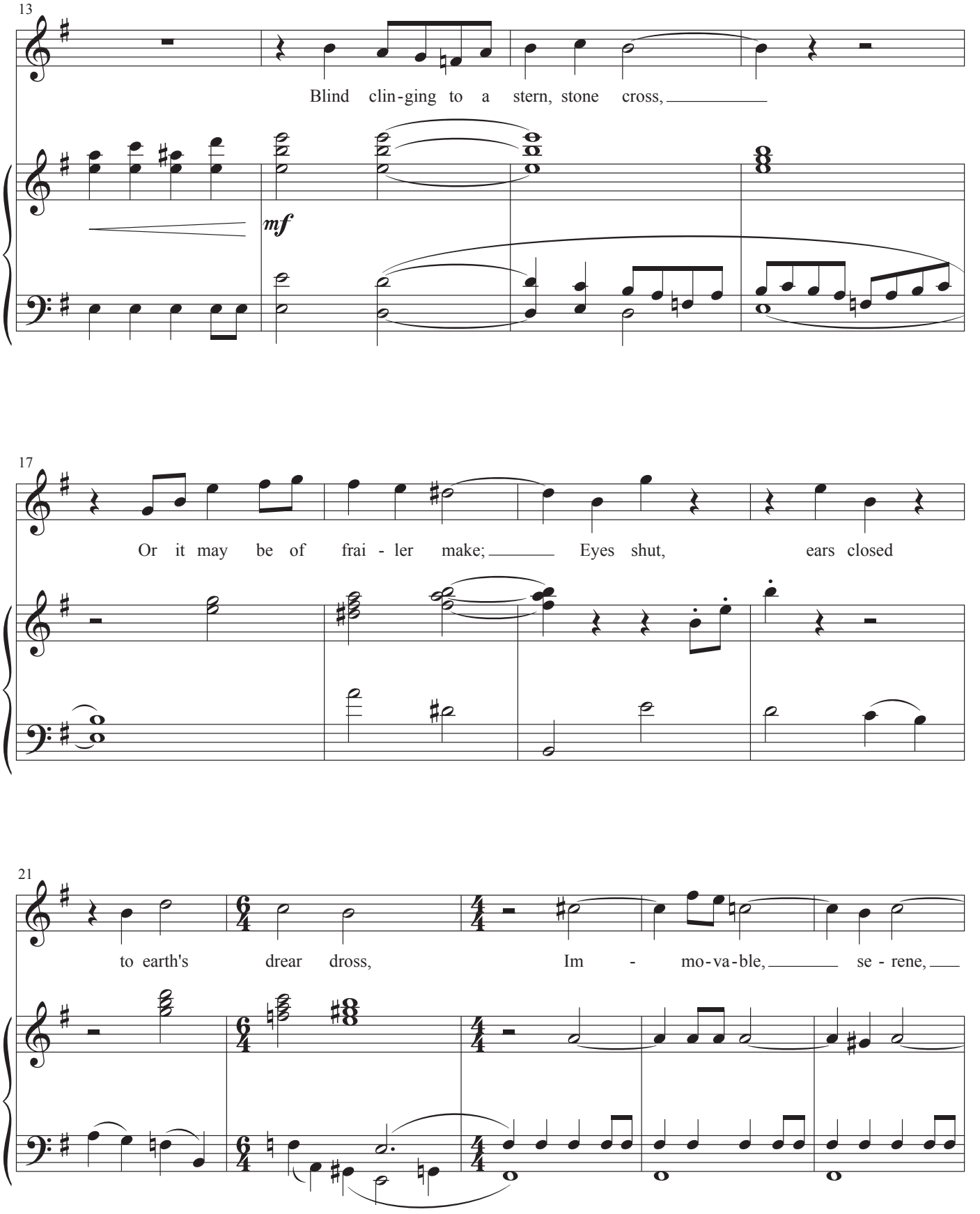

Andante moderato ♩. = 60
Soprano
Piano
mp
A travel - ler who has al - ways heard That
4
on this jour - ney he some day must go,
7
Yet shud - ders now, when at the fa - tal word He starts u - pon the lone - some,

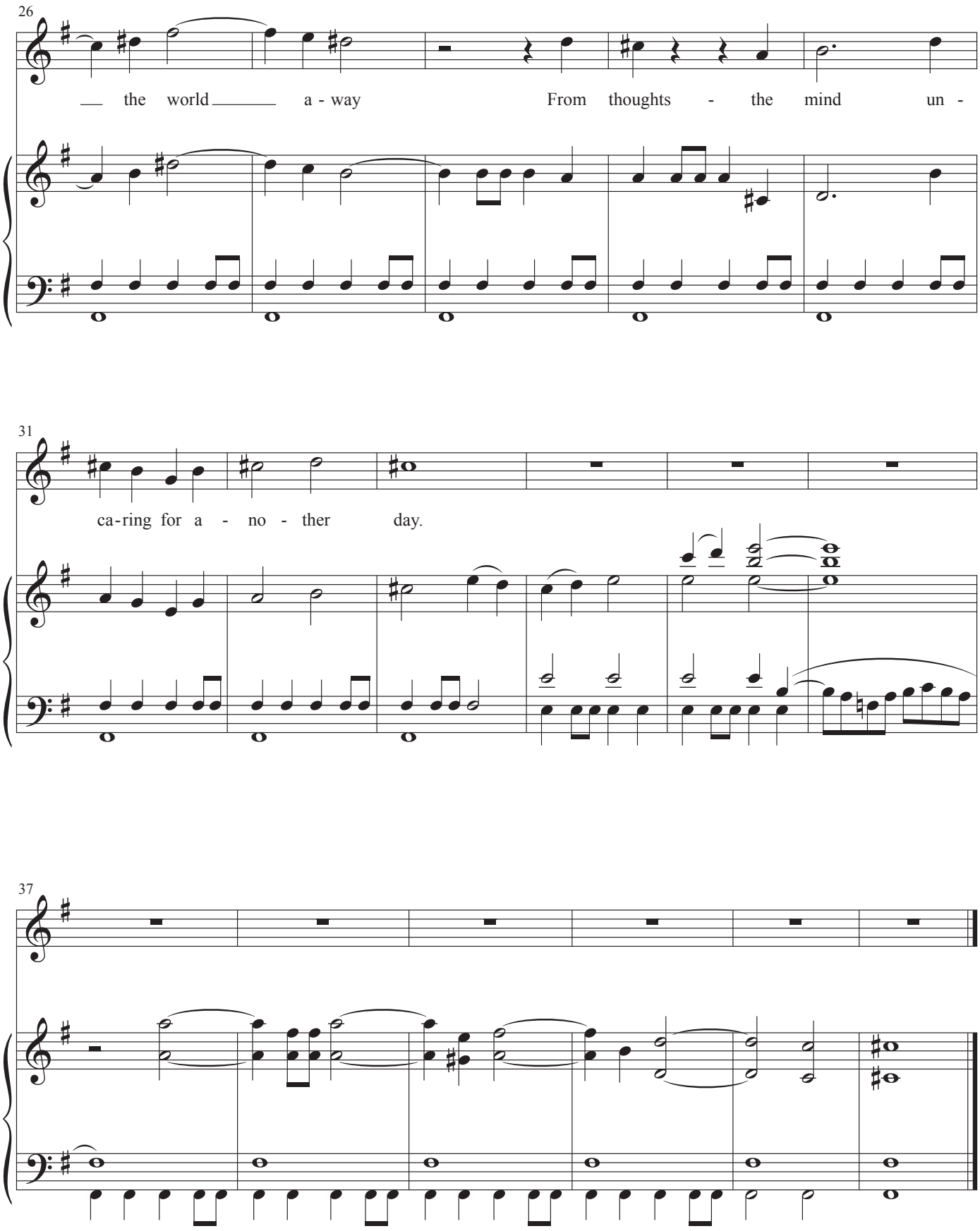

10
drea - ry way.
14
The past, a page of
16
joy and woe, - - - - -


19
- the fu - ture, none can say.
22
ff
25
f
p
pp

FAITH.


Soprano
Piano
mf
Blind clin-ging to a stern, stone cross,
mf
5
Or it may be of frai - ler make; Eyes shut,
p
mp
9
ears closed to earth's drear dross,


13
Blind clin-ging to a stern, stone cross,
mf
17
Or it may be of frai - ler make; Eyes shut, ears closed
21
to earth's drear dross, Im - mo-va-ble, se - rene,



June 11, 2020
c. 10 minutes