JUDITH SHATIN

Patterns

Soprano and Piano

Mendigo Music

Patterns: Program Notes

Patterns, a monodrama for soprano and piano, is a setting of the poem of that name by Bostonian Amy Lowell (1874–1925). Lowell broke many of the patterns imposed upon her by society. Although she was not allowed to attend college, she lived her life on her own terms and became a highly regarded poet and author. I have been drawn to her poetry for a long time, and *Patterns* seemed especially apt when opera singer Amy Johnson and I discussed texts. The societal patterns the narrator rails against range from the garments that imprison her body to the "… pattern called a war…" that catches her fiancé in its maw. She plays wondrously with patterns in the poem, at times with dazzling internal rhymes ("… daffodils/bright blue squills"). But she also breaks patterns. She shifts line lengths, and inserts unexpected repetitions and line breaks. With all this local brilliance she creates a powerful arc that I reflect in my setting. *Patterns* begins with the narrator walking in her blossoming garden, where she complains of being corseted in stiff brocade. She goes on to describe her soft body beneath as she dreams of a meeting with her lover. Alas, it is not to be, and she explodes with anguish over his death and cries out against the pattern that is war. In this arc, Lowell nonetheless celebrates the cycles of nature, from flowers in full bloom, to the asters of fall, to snow. *Patterns* was commissioned by, and is dedicated to, Amy Johnson.

Performance Notes

Accidentals apply within the register within the measure.

Piano Notation

S Silently depress notes

\+ Mute the string

Pluck string with fingernail

N Scrape fingernail along string, an inch or two, with direction from back towards front

 Symbol over muted note – move along the string towards the back of the piano; more harmonics will result.

Premiere Performance

Amy Johnson, Soprano & Kathleen Kelly, Piano
Patricia Corbett Theatre
College-Conservatory of Music
Cincinnati, OH
September 10, 2019

Patterns

By Amy Lowell

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze

Bewildered by my laughter.
I should see the sun flashing from his sword-hilt
and the buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body
as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun sifts through the shade.
Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the
Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday sen'night."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the splashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground.
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the ground.
I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,

"Any answer, Madam," said my footman.
"No," l told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."
And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,

Each one.
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

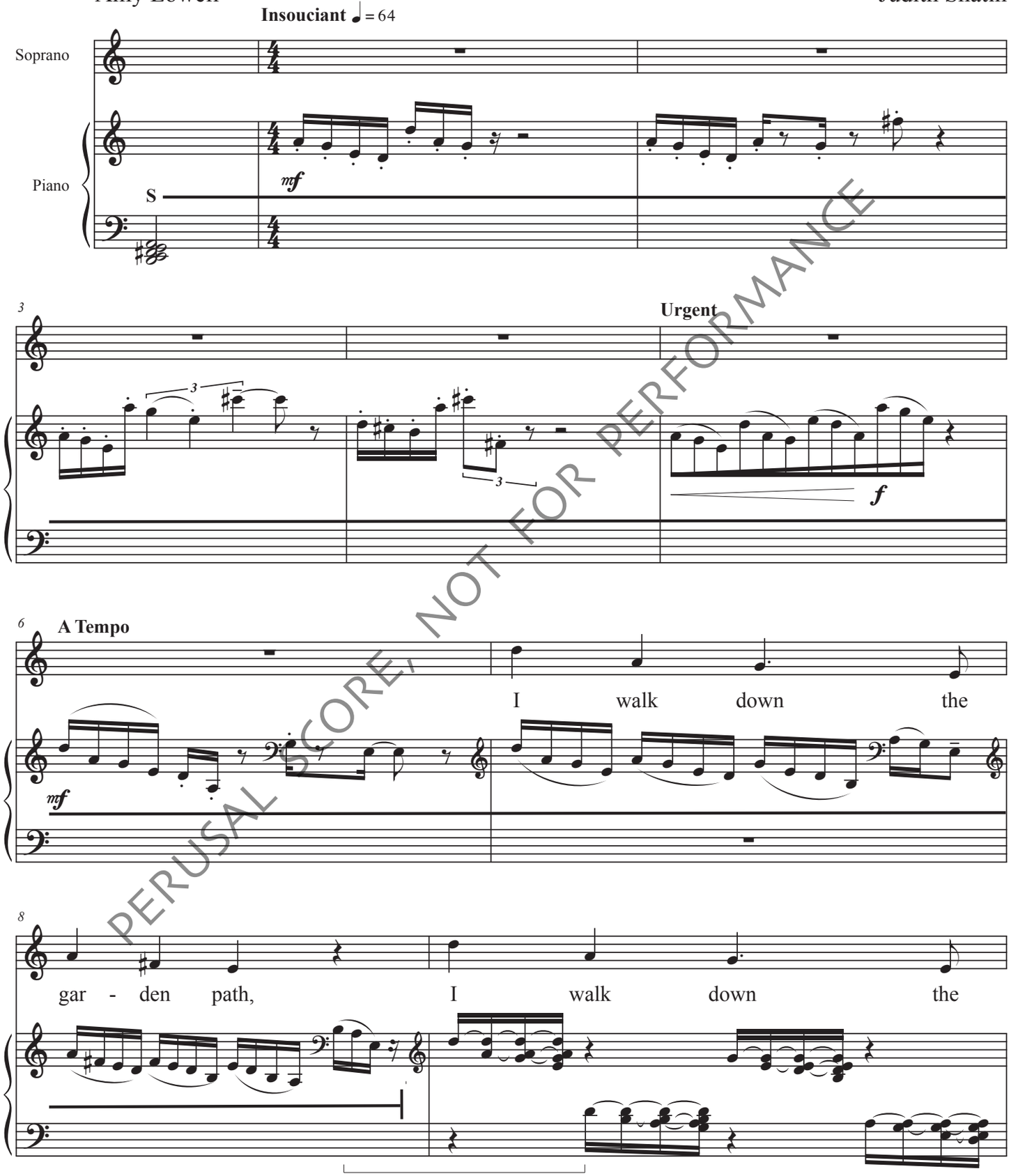
In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

PATTERNS

Amy Lowell

Judith Shatin



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

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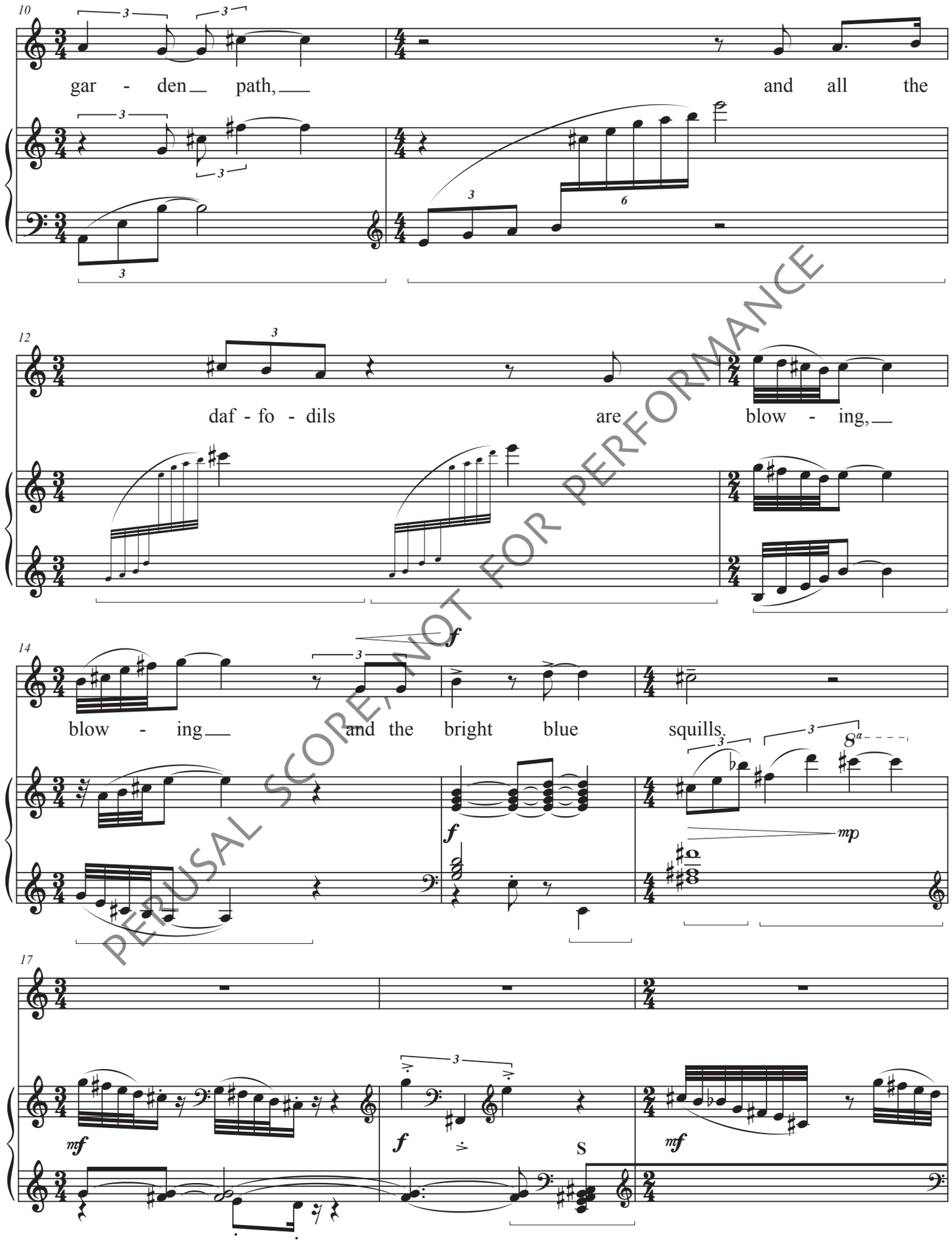

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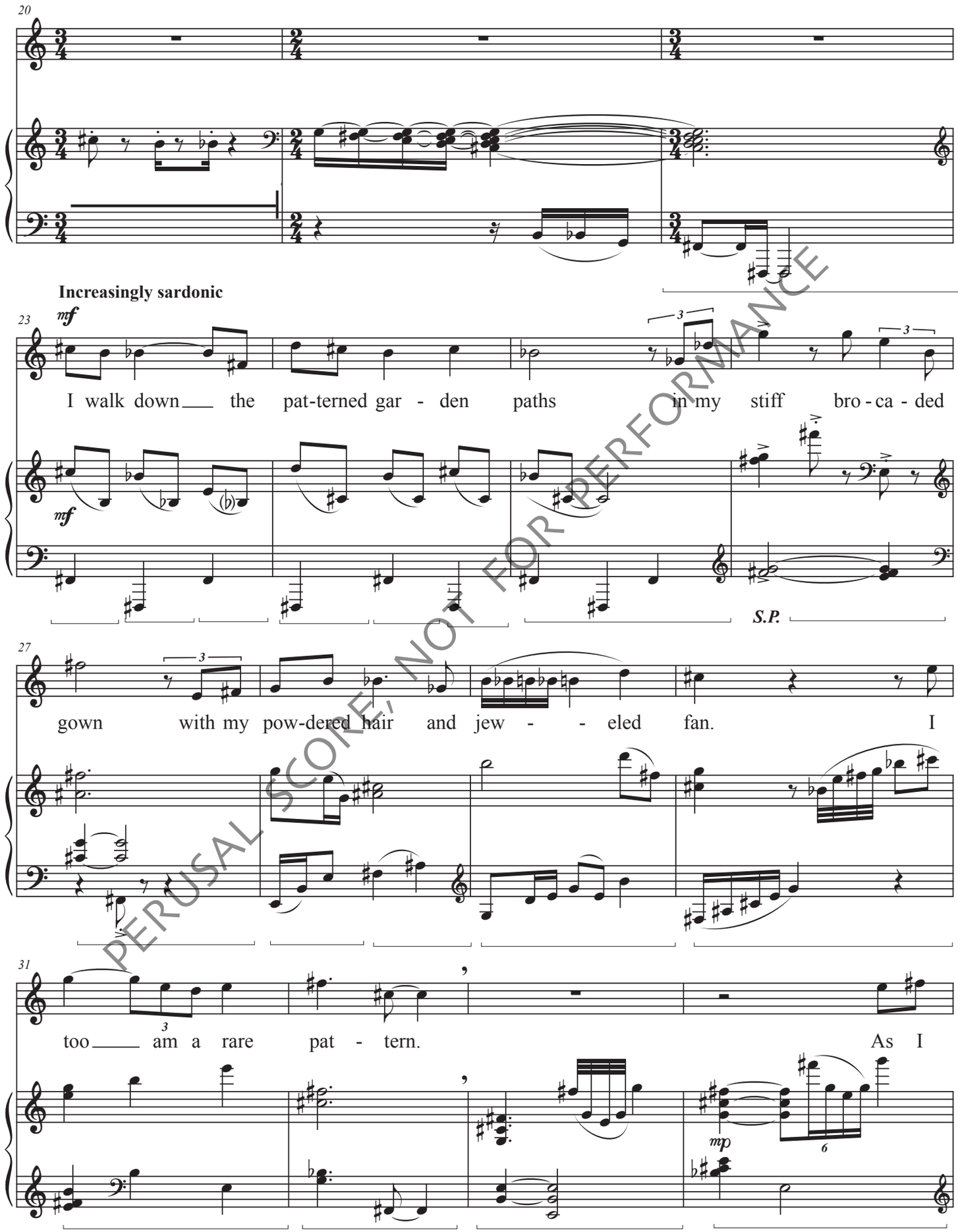


PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

35

wan - der down the pat-terned paths, Wan-der down the pat - terned

37

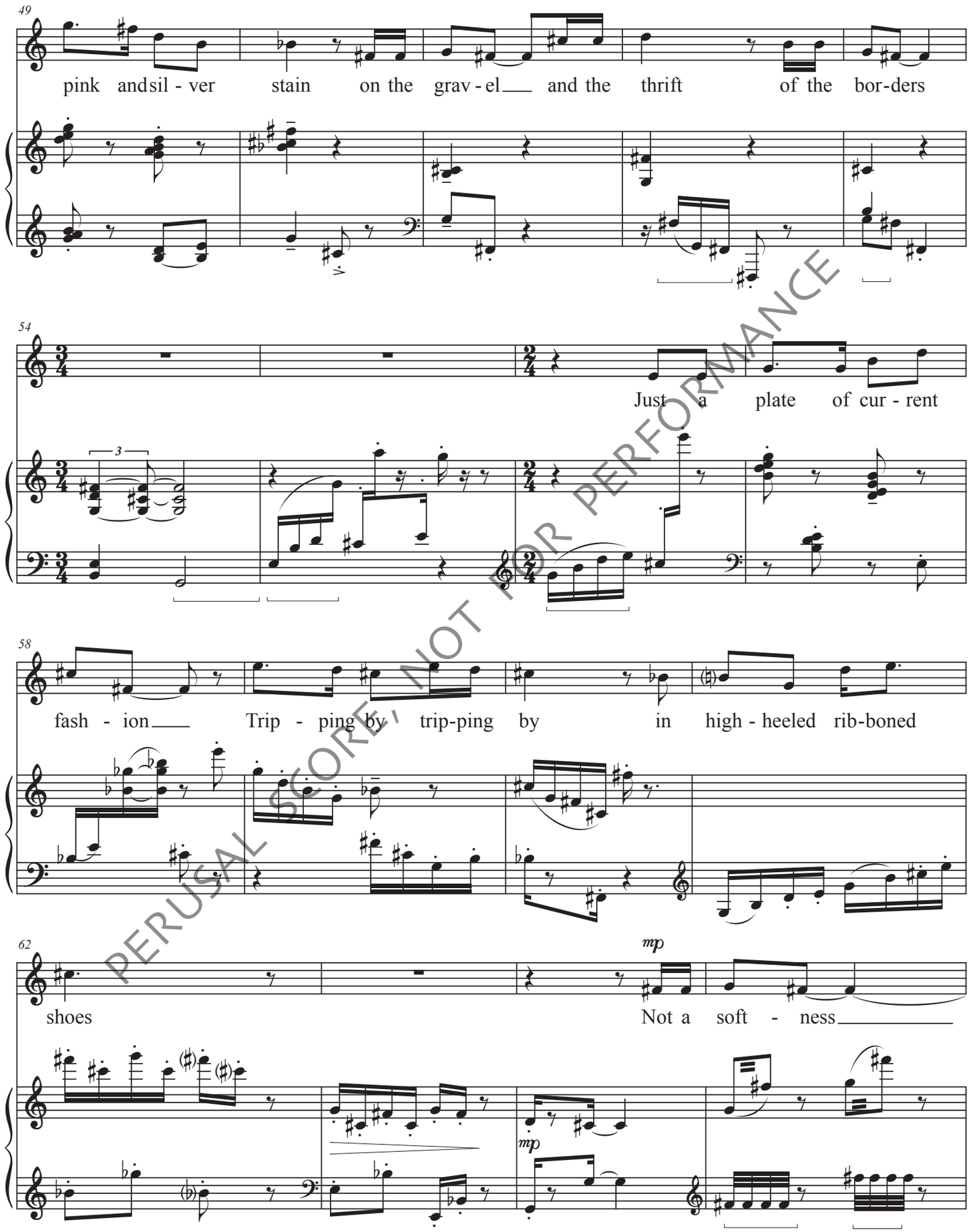
paths

40

45 **Animated**

My dress is rich - ly fig - ured and the train makes a

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

66

Sprechstimme

a - ny - where a - bout me, not a soft - ness

mf

70

Angry

ord. f

a - ny where a - bout me on-ly whale-bone andbro - cade

f

73

on-ly whale-bone and bro - cade, whale - bone and bro -

75

mf

Depressed

mp

cade, on - ly whale - bone and bro - cade. and I

mf

mp

p

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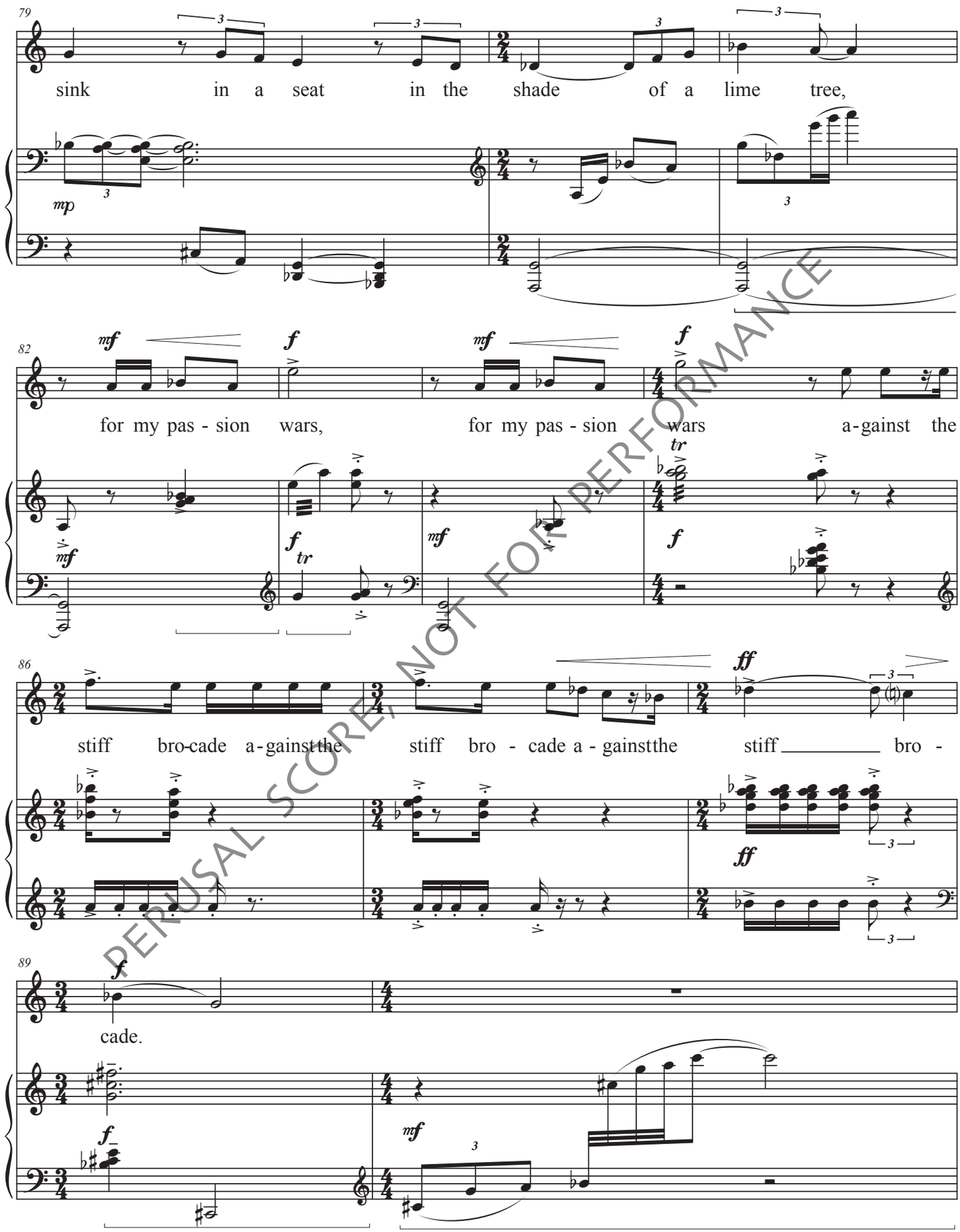


PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

91

mf

The daf - fo - dils and squills

8va

95

flut - - - ter in the breeze as they please.

8va

L.H. R.H.

L.H. R.H.

tr

98

pp

101

Dejected

mf

And I weep and I weep

f

tr

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

105

mf

and the lime tree is in

L.H. L.H.

108

blos - som and one small flow - er

L.H. L.H.

112

had dropped in - to my bo - som.

115

More Cheerful

p *mf*

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

119

mf

And the splash - ing of the

122

wa - ter drops in the mar - ble ba - sin comes

125

down the gar - den paths, the drip - ping nev-er stops.

130

Gentle

mp

Un - der - neath my stif-fened gown is the

mp

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

134

soft - ness of a wo - - - man bath - ing in a

137

mar - ble ba - sin a ba - sin in the

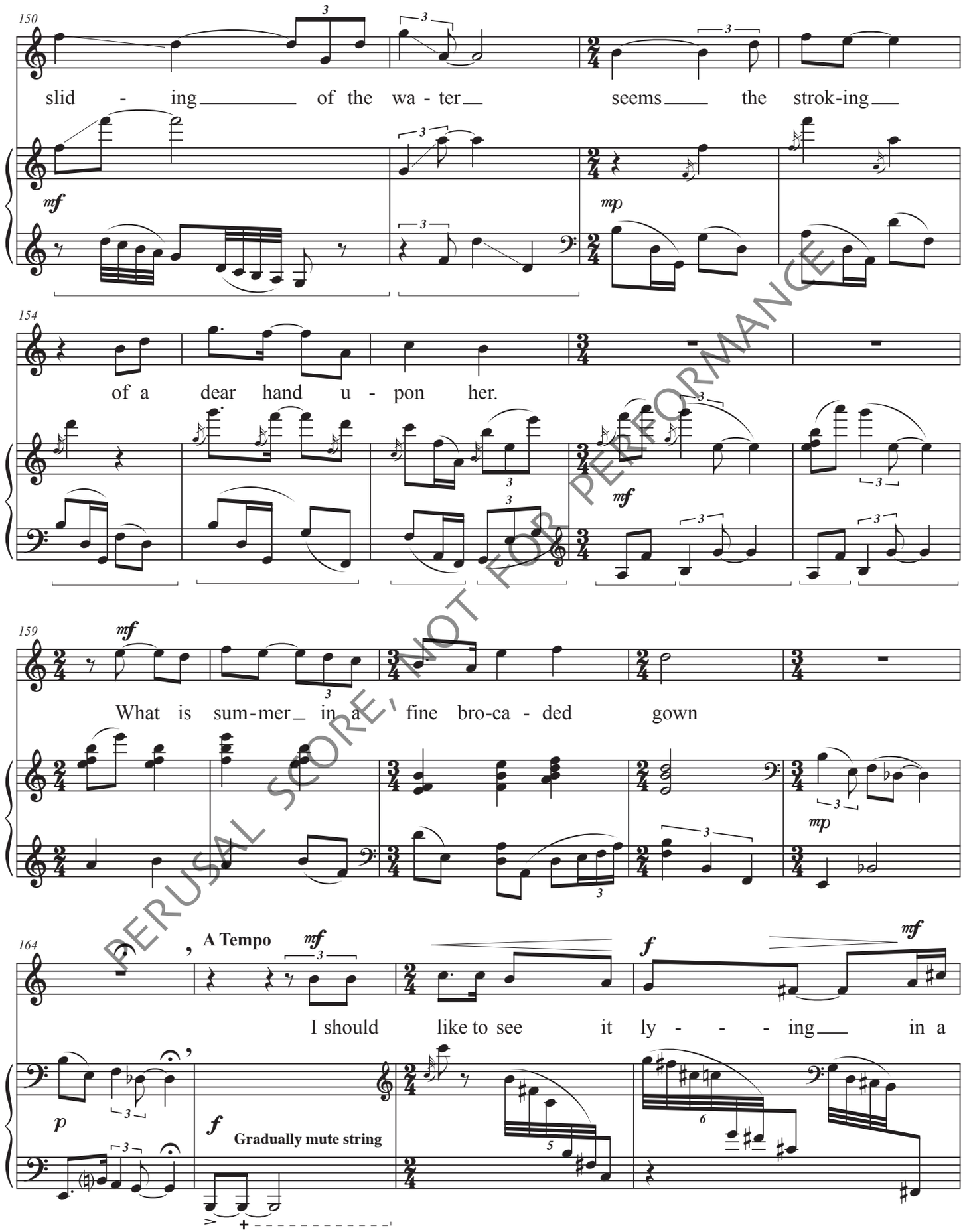
141

midst of hedg - es grown so thick she can - not

145

see her lov - er hid - ing but she gues - ses he is near for the

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

168

heap u-pon the ground, all the pink and sil-ver crum-pled on the

172

ground.

Freely
Flexible duration, ca. 8"

A Tempo

mf

I will be the

Start at a relaxed tempo
Increase to mumuring
32nd notes

p

mp

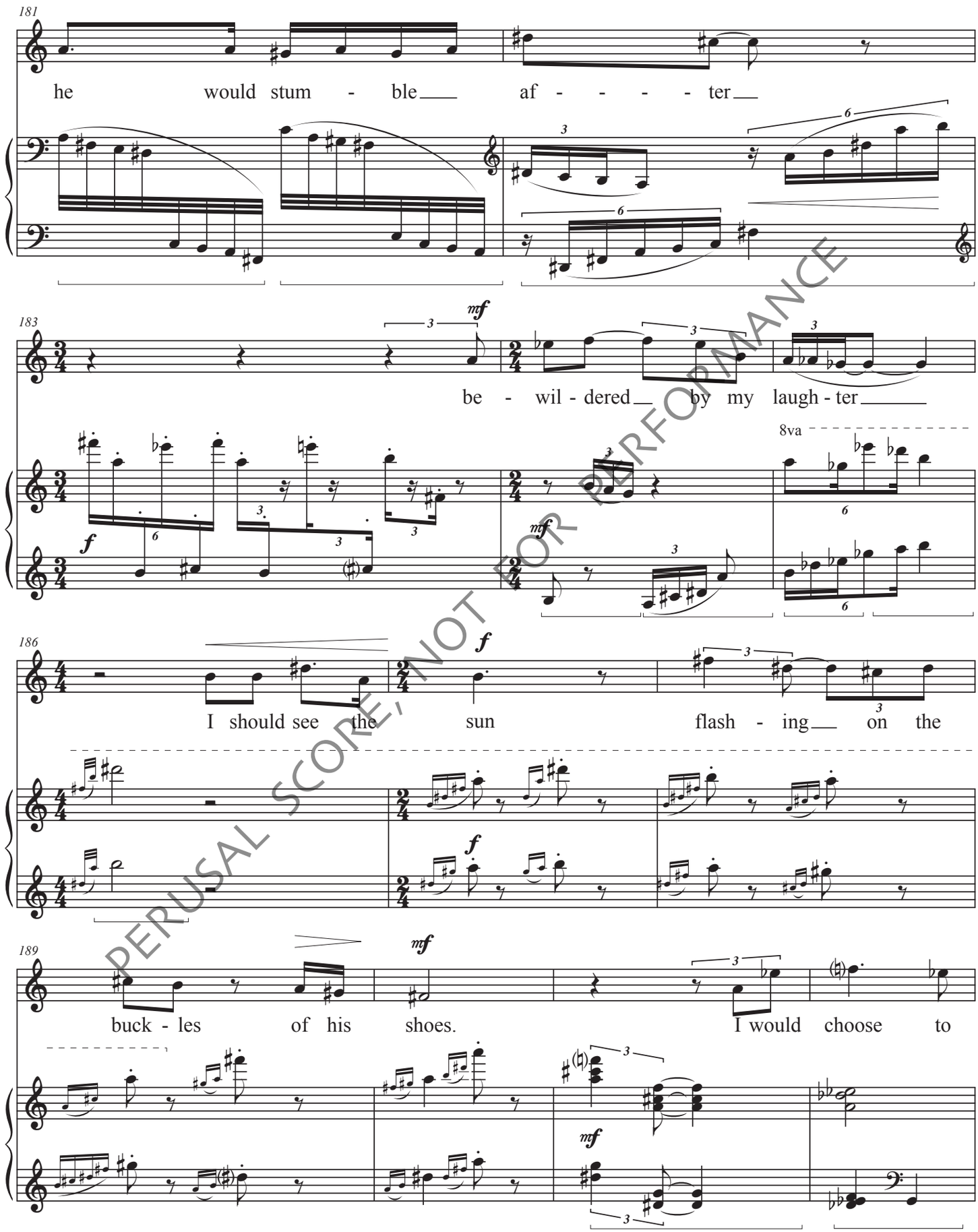
176

pink and sil-ver as I run a-

179

long the paths. and

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

193

lead him in a maze a bright and laugh-ing maze til he

197

caught me in the shade and the but-tons of his waist-coat bruised my

Broaden?

201

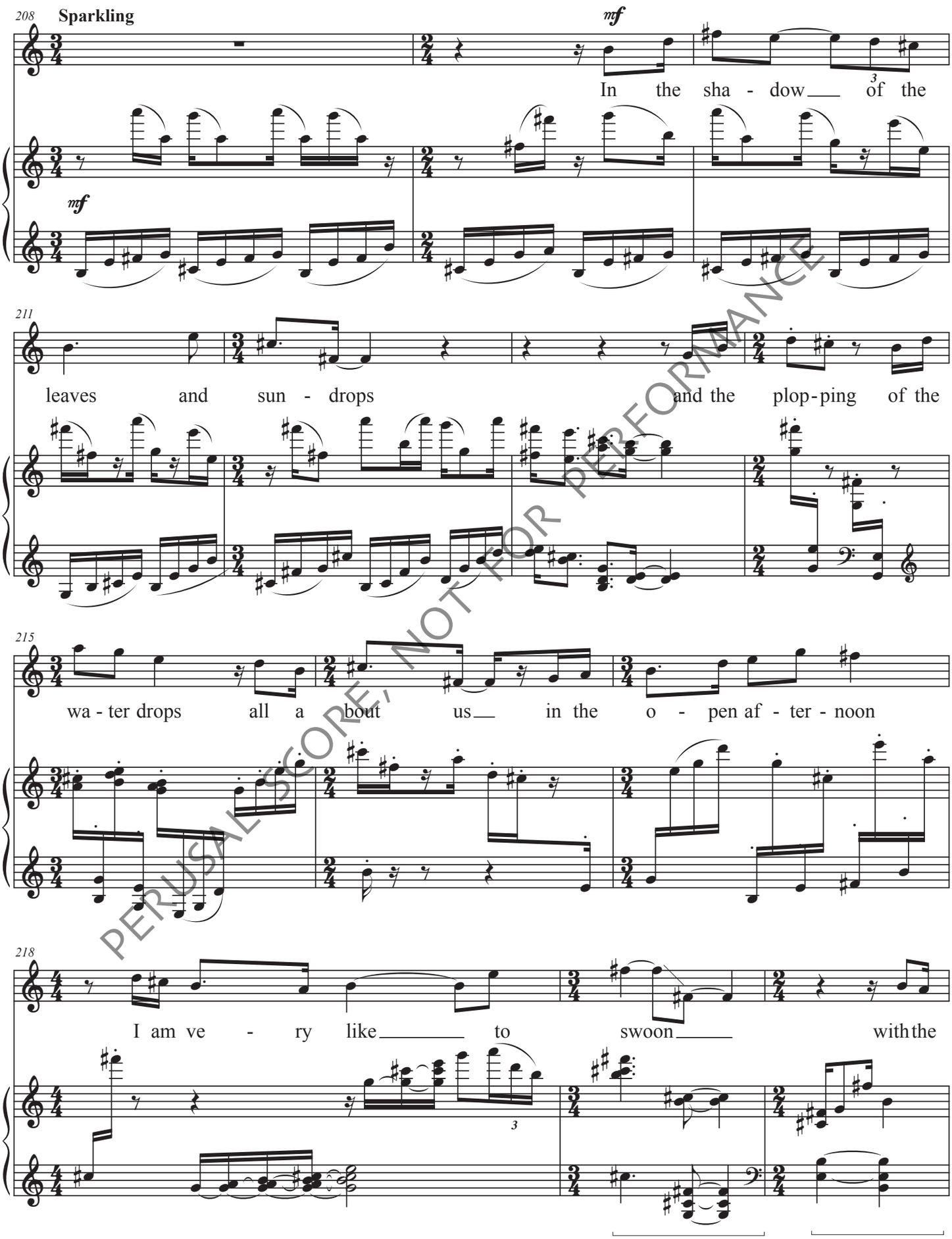
bod-y as he clasped me ach-ing

205

melt-ing, un-a-fraid

8va

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

221

weight of this bro - cade for the sun shifts through the shade.

225

Agitated

Un-der - neath the fal-len blos-som in my bos-om is a

229

let-ter I have hid It was brought to me this morn-ing by a

233

rid - er from the Duke. "Ma-dam

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

238

we re - gret to in - form you that Lord Hart - well

N.S.

N.S. + ord.

242

ff

died in ac - tion Thurs - day sev - en

ff

f

f

246

night."

mp

f

249

mf

As I read in the

N.S.

mf

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

253

white morn - ing sun - light the let - ters squirmed

8va

tr

256

like snakes

Dark

"An - y an - swer

261

Agonized

Ma-dam," "No" I told him "No."

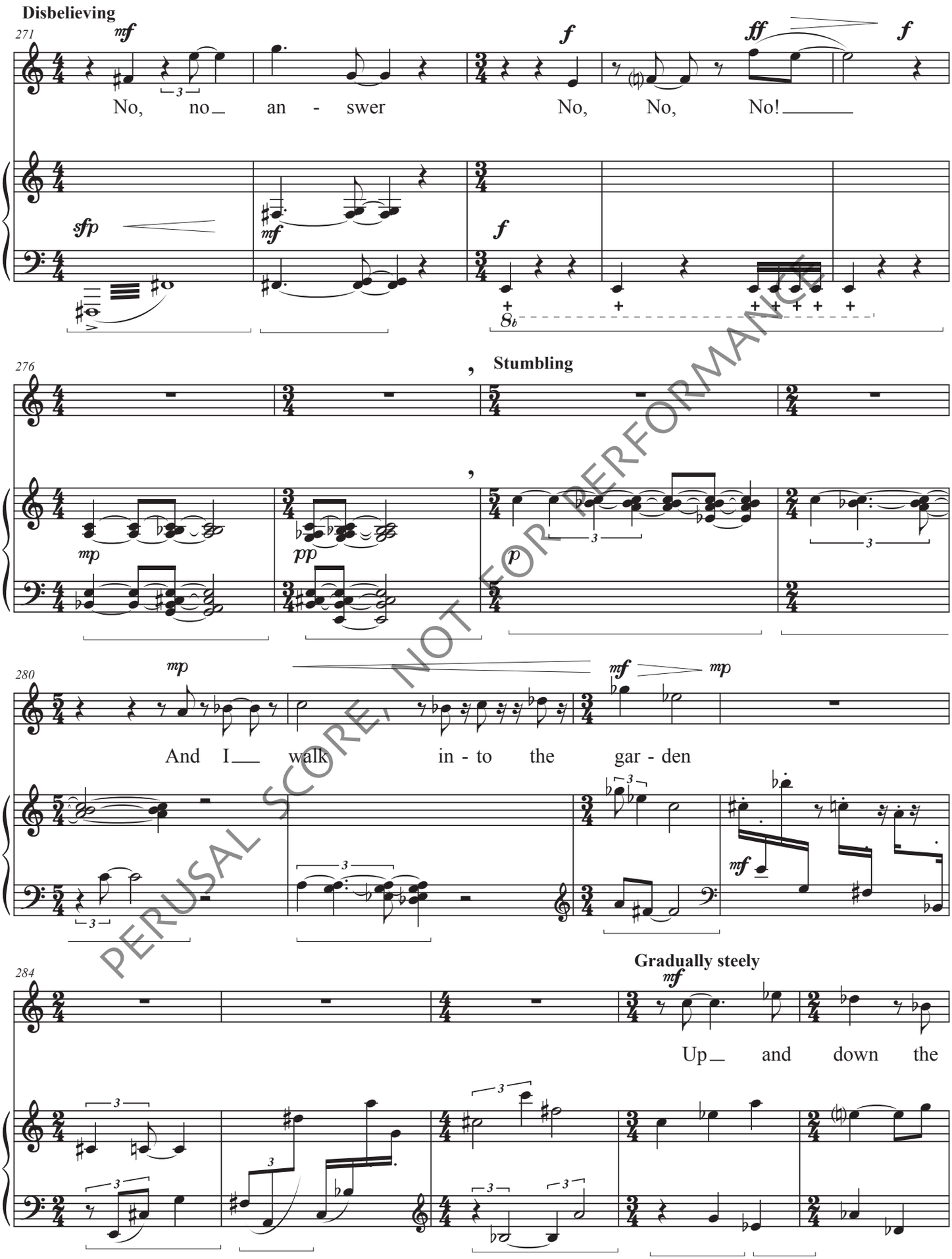
Listless

8va

267

See that the mes-sen - ger takes some re - fresh - ment.

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

289

pat - terned path in my stiff cor - rect bro - cade

L.H.

mf

295

mf

The blue and yel-low flow - ers

L.H.

L.H.

298

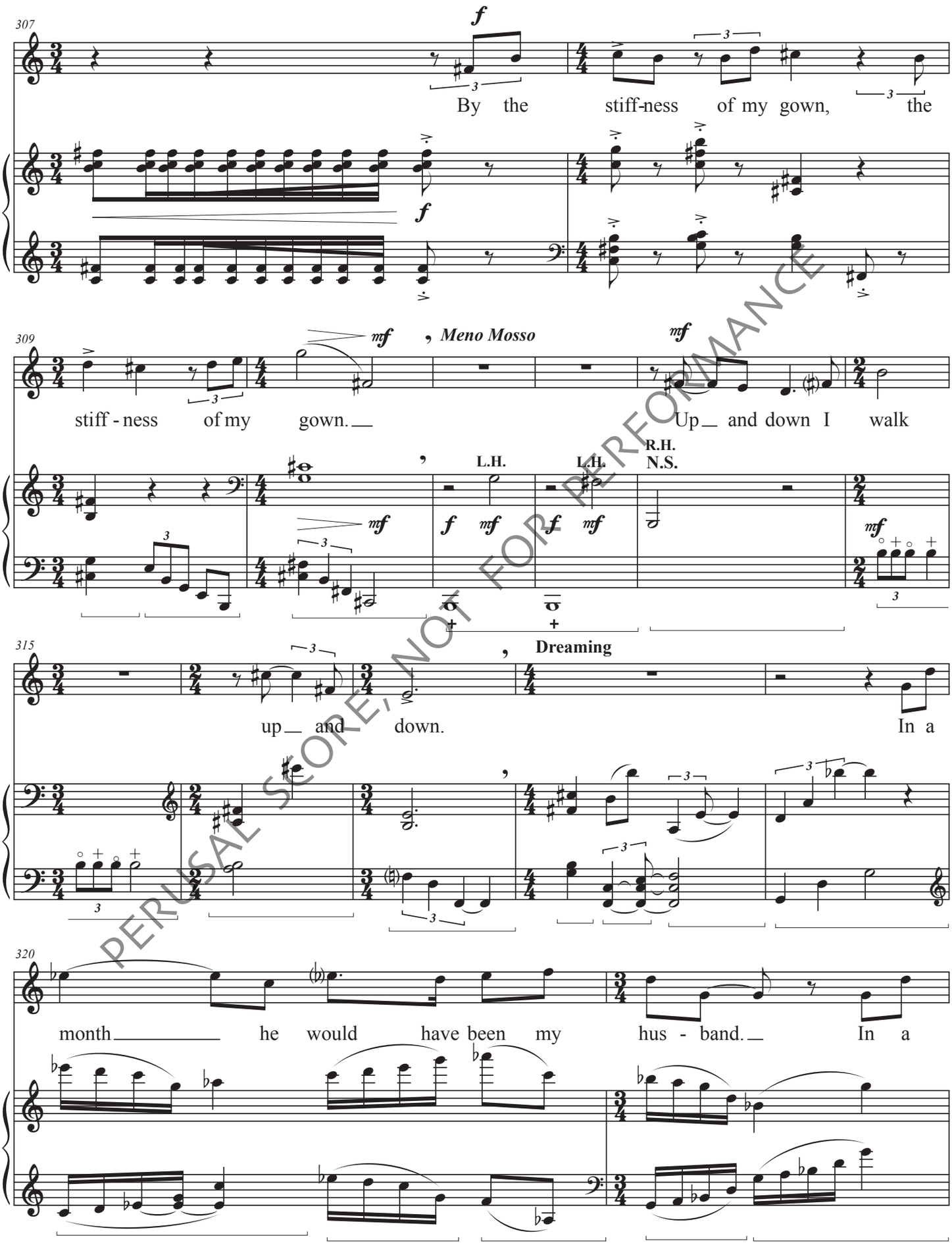
stood up proud - ly in the sun, Each one.

302

I stood up - right too, held ri - gid to the pat - tern

tr

PERUSAL SCORE NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



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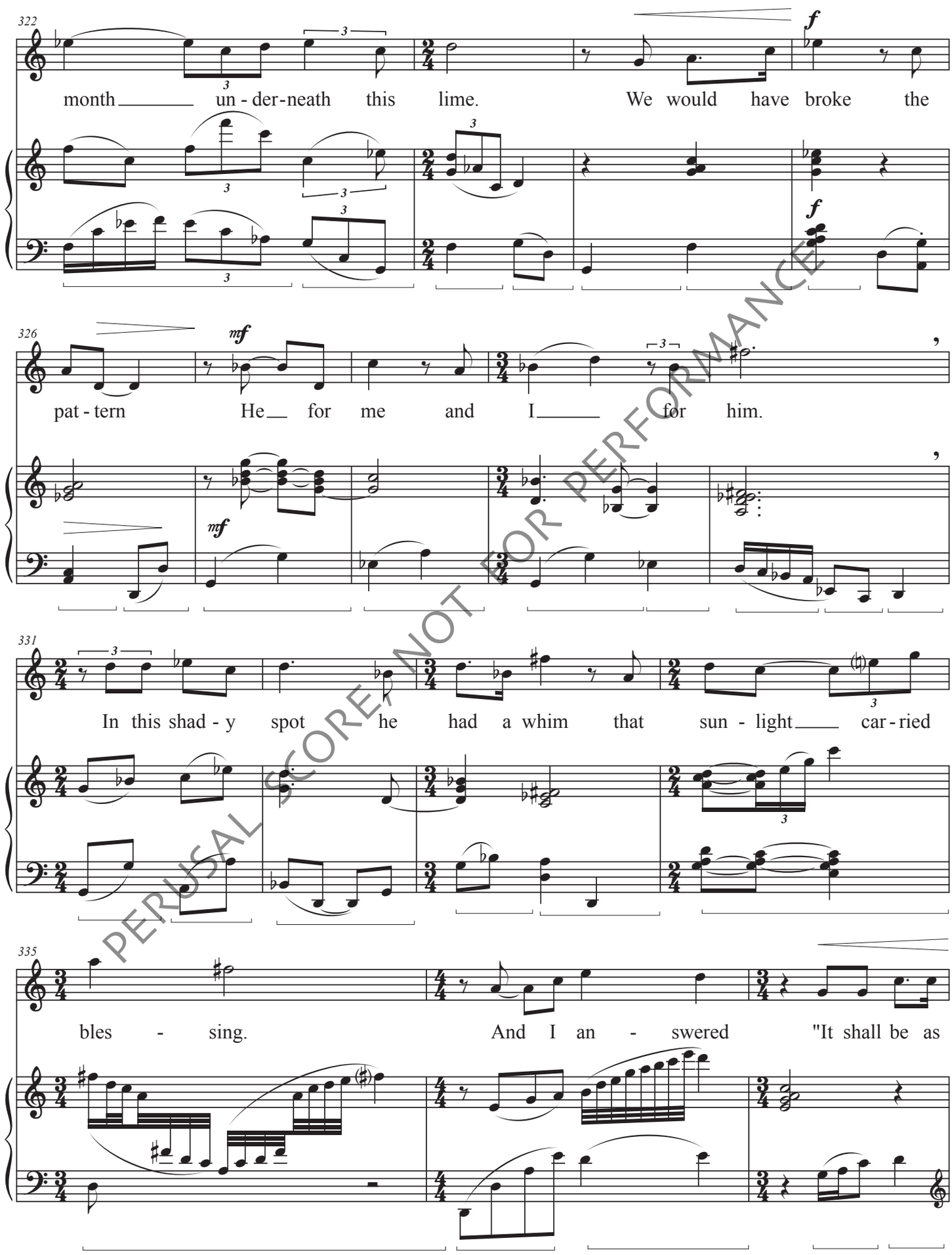


PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

338

f

you have said."

f

341

Poco Meno Mosso

mp

mf

Disbelieving

344

mf

Now he is dead.

ff

Resigned ♩ = 72

mp

In

8va

mf

ff

S

mp

349

sum-mer and in win - ter I shall walk

mf

Up and down the pat-terned gar - den

mf

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

353

paths in my stiff bro - ca - ded gown.

357

mf

The squills and daf - fo - dils will give

p *mf*

363

place to pil - lared ro - ses and to as - ters and to snow

p

367

mp *mf*

I shall walk up and down in my gown

8vb *mp*

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

372

gor - geous-ly ar-rayed, boned and stayed, and the

374

soft-ness of my bod-y will be

L.H. p L.H. L.H. L.H.

376

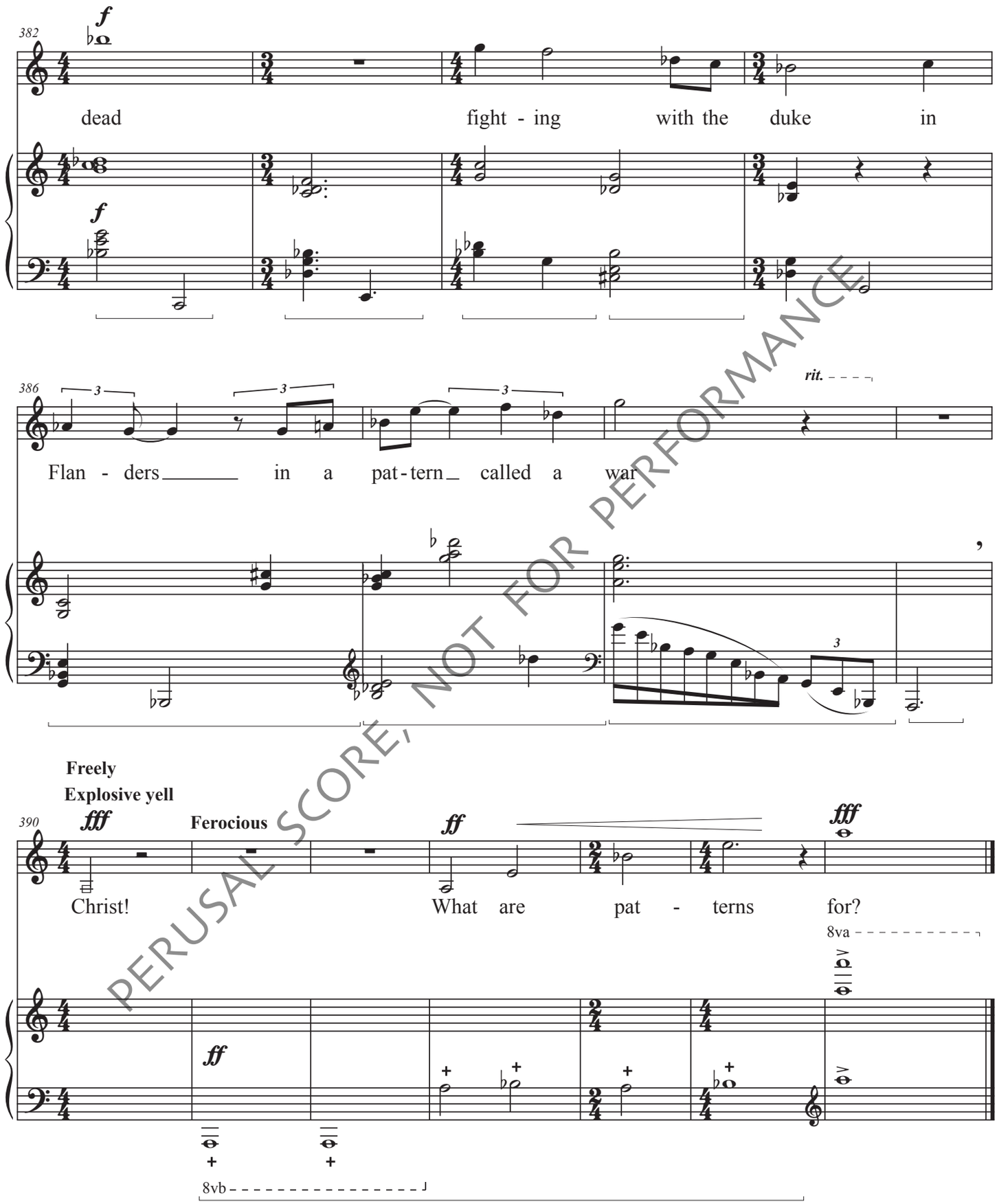
guard - ed from em - brace by each but-ton hook and

mp mf

379

lace. For the man who should loose me is

PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE



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