MICHAEL ZEV GORDON

THIRTEEN WAYS

for soprano, cello, double bass, harp
and percussion (marimba and temple bells)

Preview File Only

This work was commissioned by the
1995 Oxford Contemporary Music Festival
with funds provided by Southern Arts.

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NOTES

The score is written in C.

Accidentals apply only to the notes they directly preceed.

Grace-notes should always be performed on the beat.

NB that some movements are *attacca*, and others not.

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A BLACKBIRD

I
Among twenty snowy mountains,
The only moving thing
Was the eye of the blackbird.

II
I was of three minds,
Like a tree
In which there are three blackbirds.

III
The blackbird whirled in the autumn winds.
It was a small part of the pantomime.

IV
A man and a woman
Are one.
A man and a woman and a blackbird are one.

V
I do not know which to prefer,
The beauty of inflections
Or the beauty of innuendos,
The blackbird whistling
Or just after.

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VI
Icicles filled the long window
With barbaric glass.
The shadow of the blackbird
Crossed it, to and fro.
The mood
Traced in the shadow
An indecipherable cause.

VII
O thin men of Haddam,
Why do you imagine golden birds?
Do you not see how the blackbird
Walks around the feet
Of the women about you?

VIII

I know noble accents
And lucid inescapable rhythms;
But I know, too,
That the blackbird is involved
In what I know.

IX

When the blackbird flew out of sight,
It marked the edge
Of one of many circles.

X

At the sight of blackbirds
Flying in a green light,
Even the bawds of euphony
Would cry out sharply.

XI

He rode over Connecticut
In a glass coach.
Once, a fear pierced him,
In that he mistook
The shadow of the equipage
For blackbirds.

XII

The river is moving.
The blackbird must be flying.

XIII

It was evening all afternoon.
It was snowing
And it was going to snow.
The blackbird sat
In the cedar-limbs.

Wallace Stevens
{Collected Poems,
Faber and Faber}

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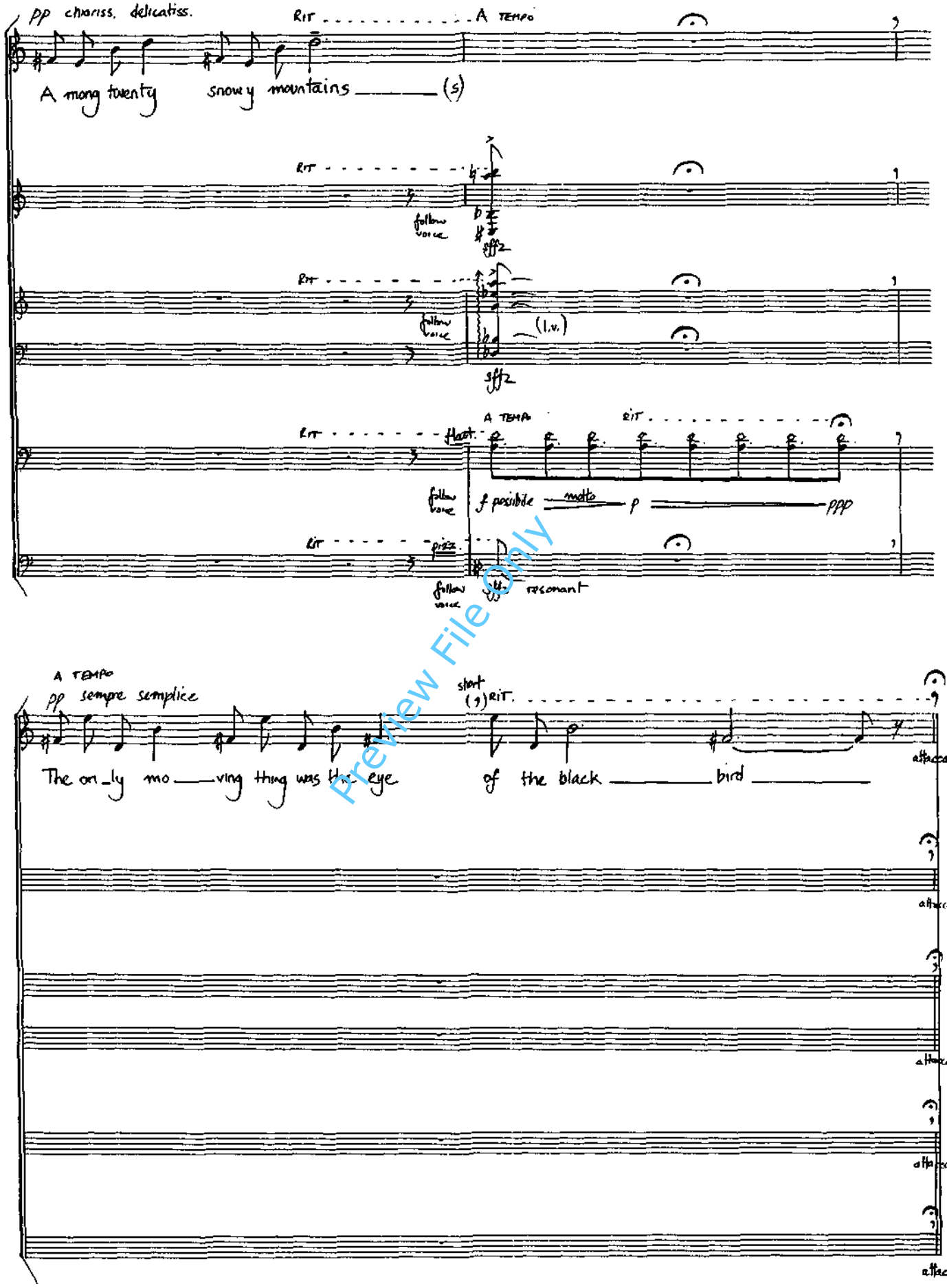
I

♩=60



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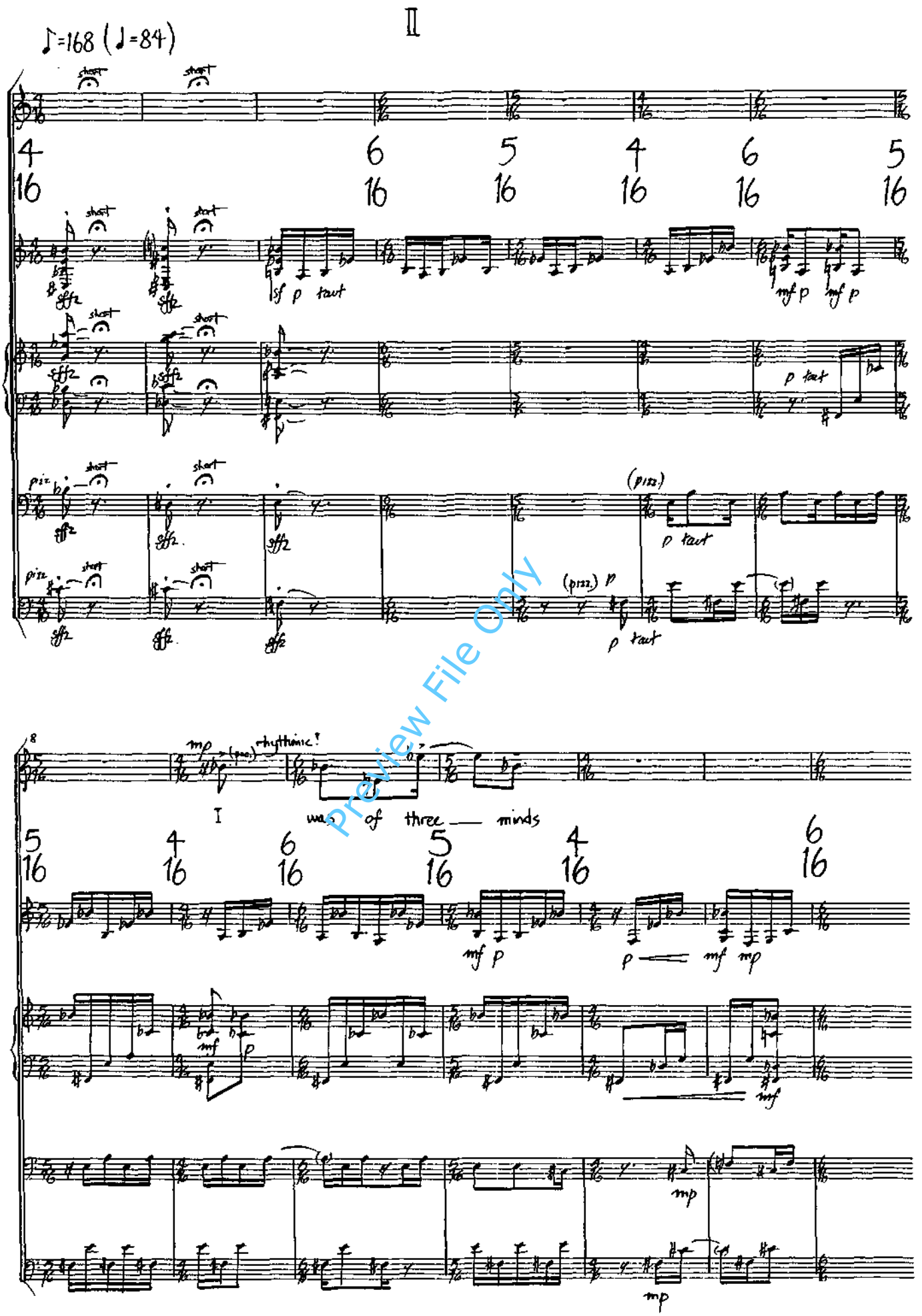

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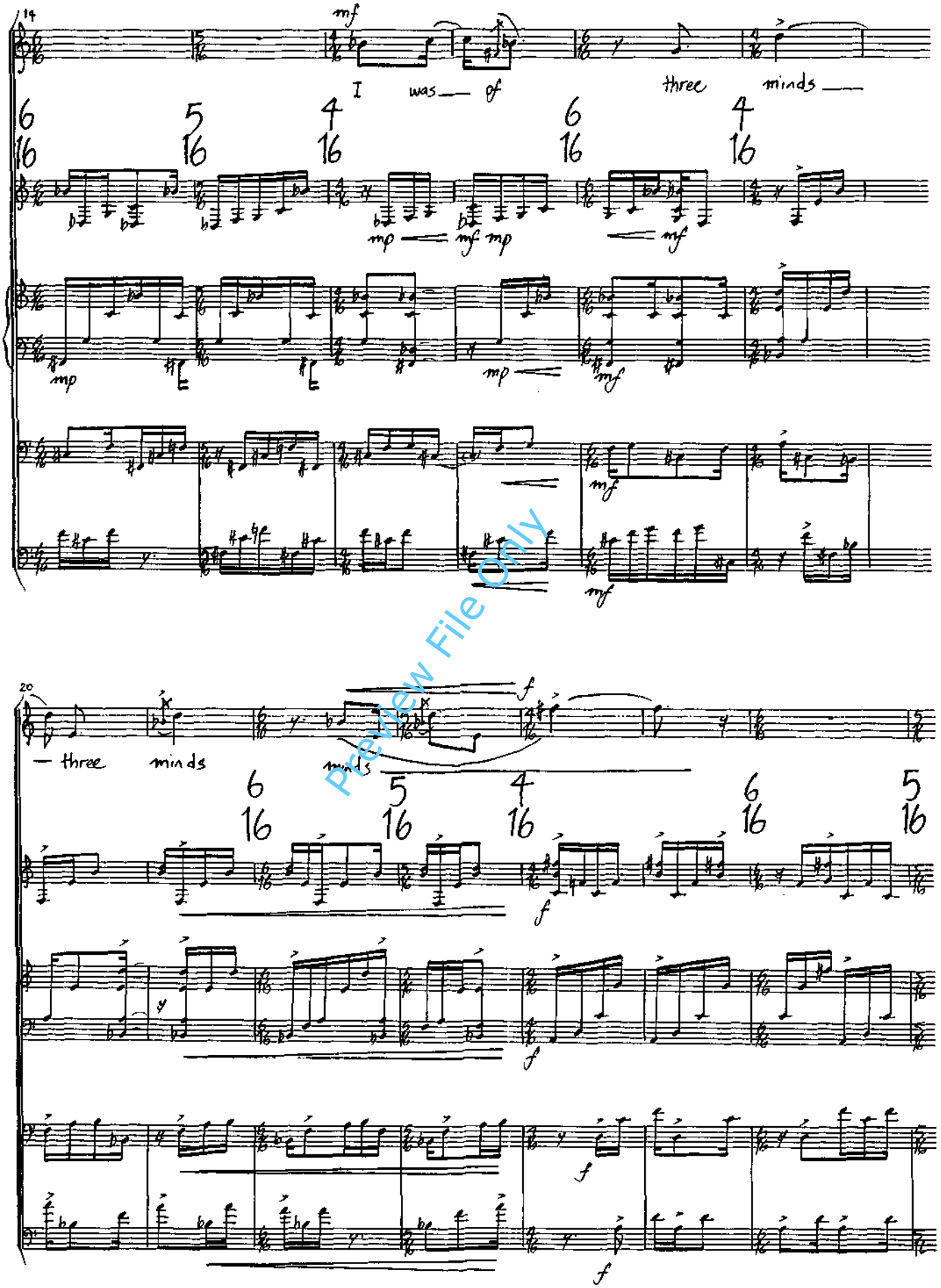

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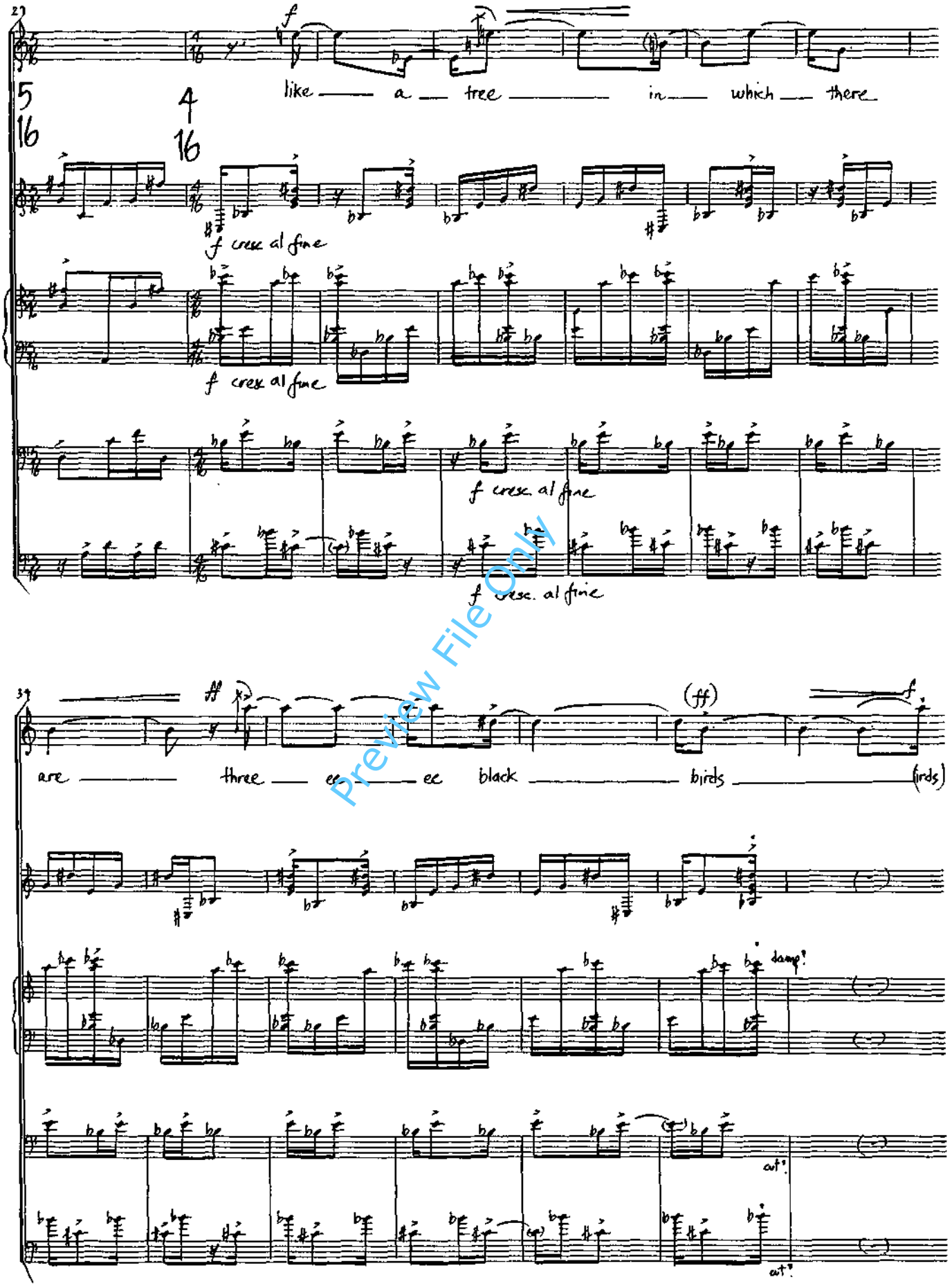

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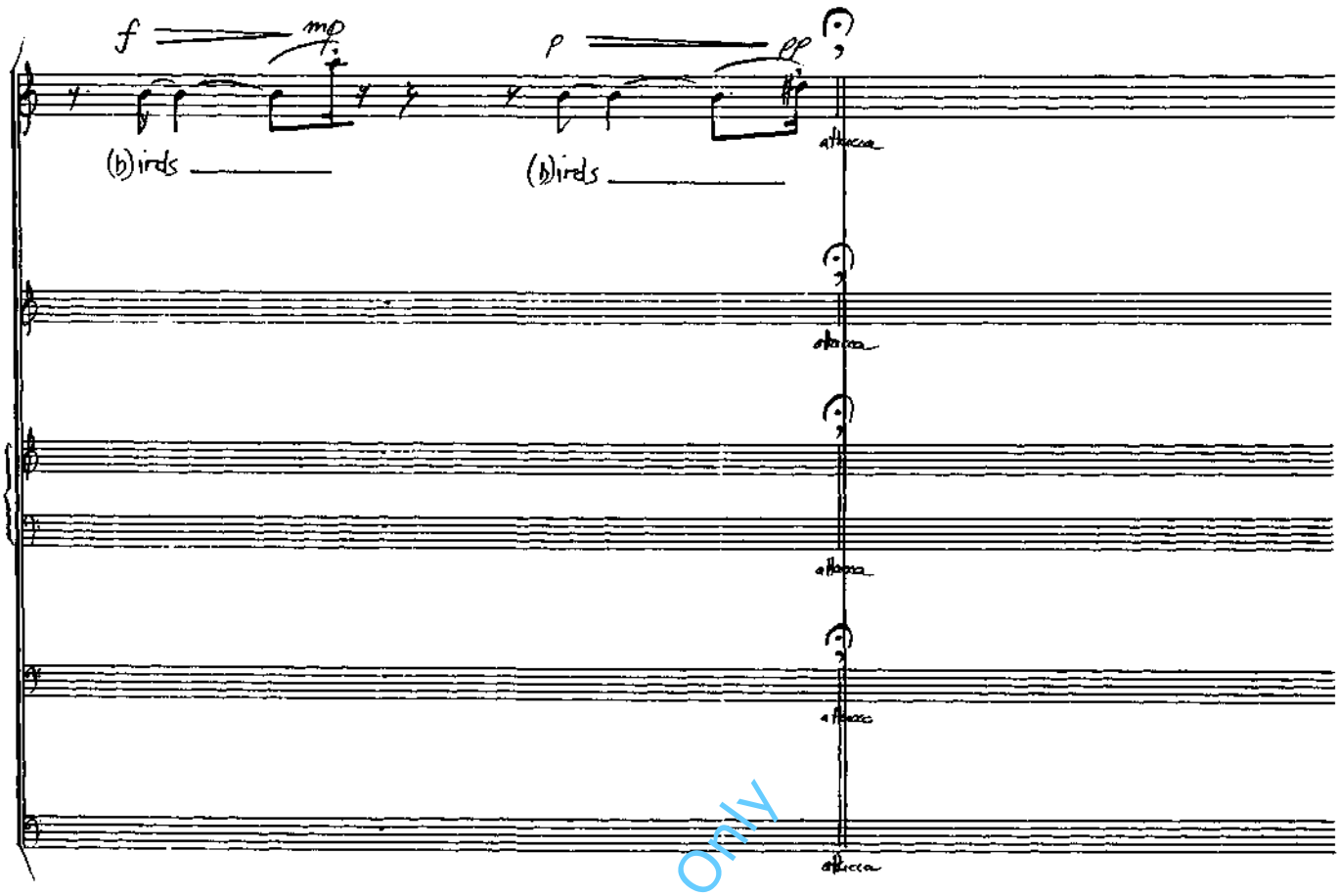

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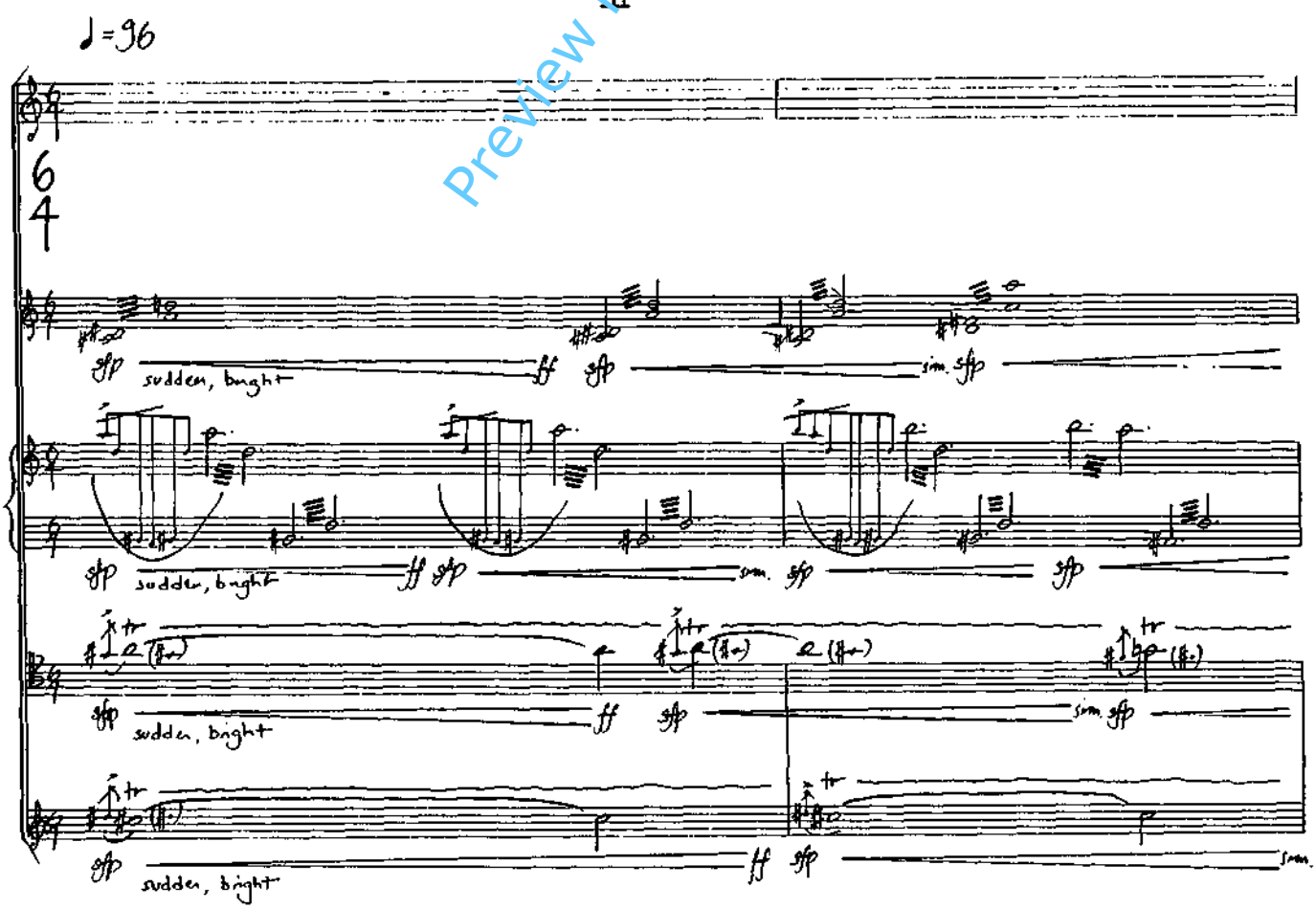

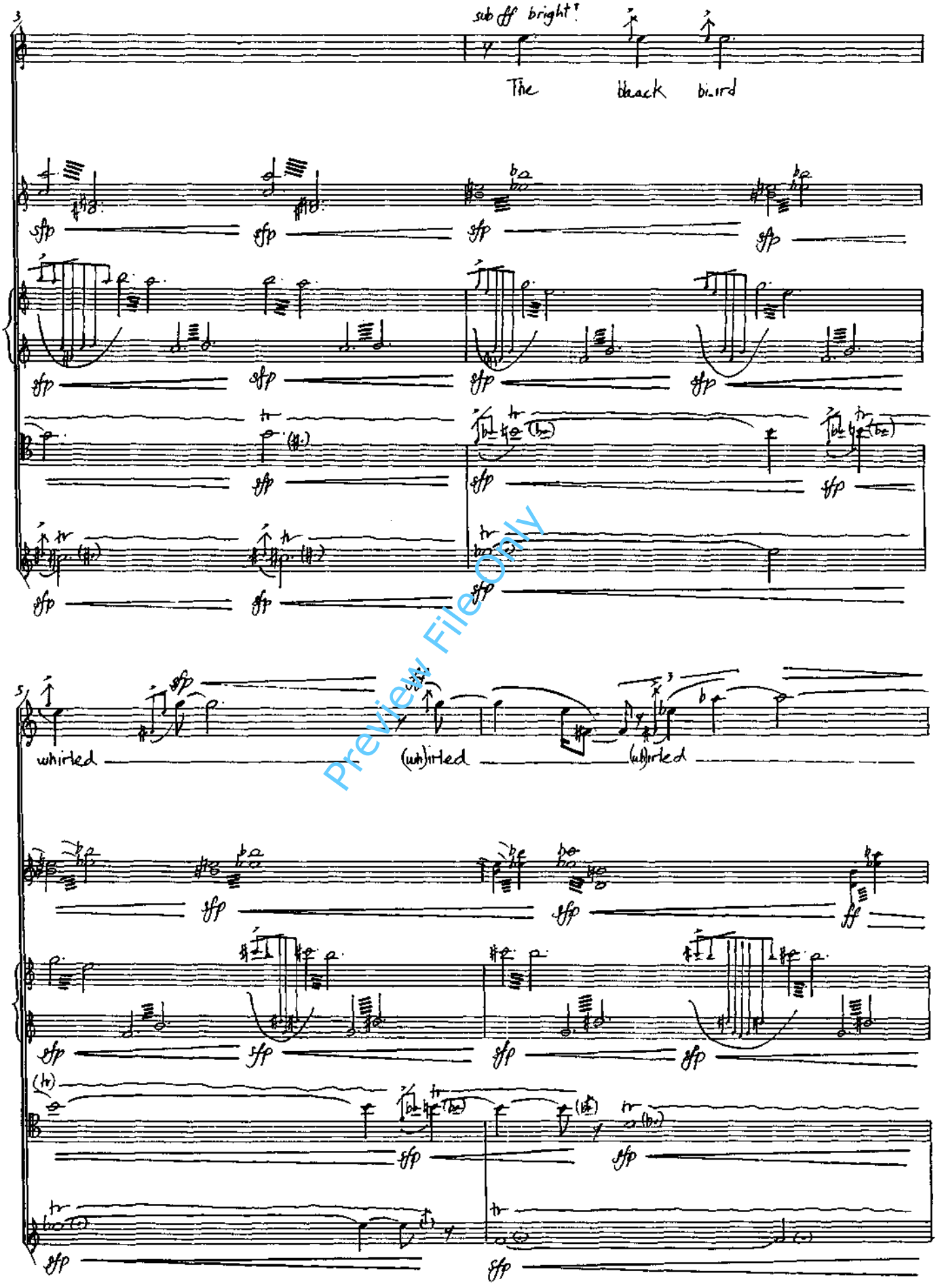

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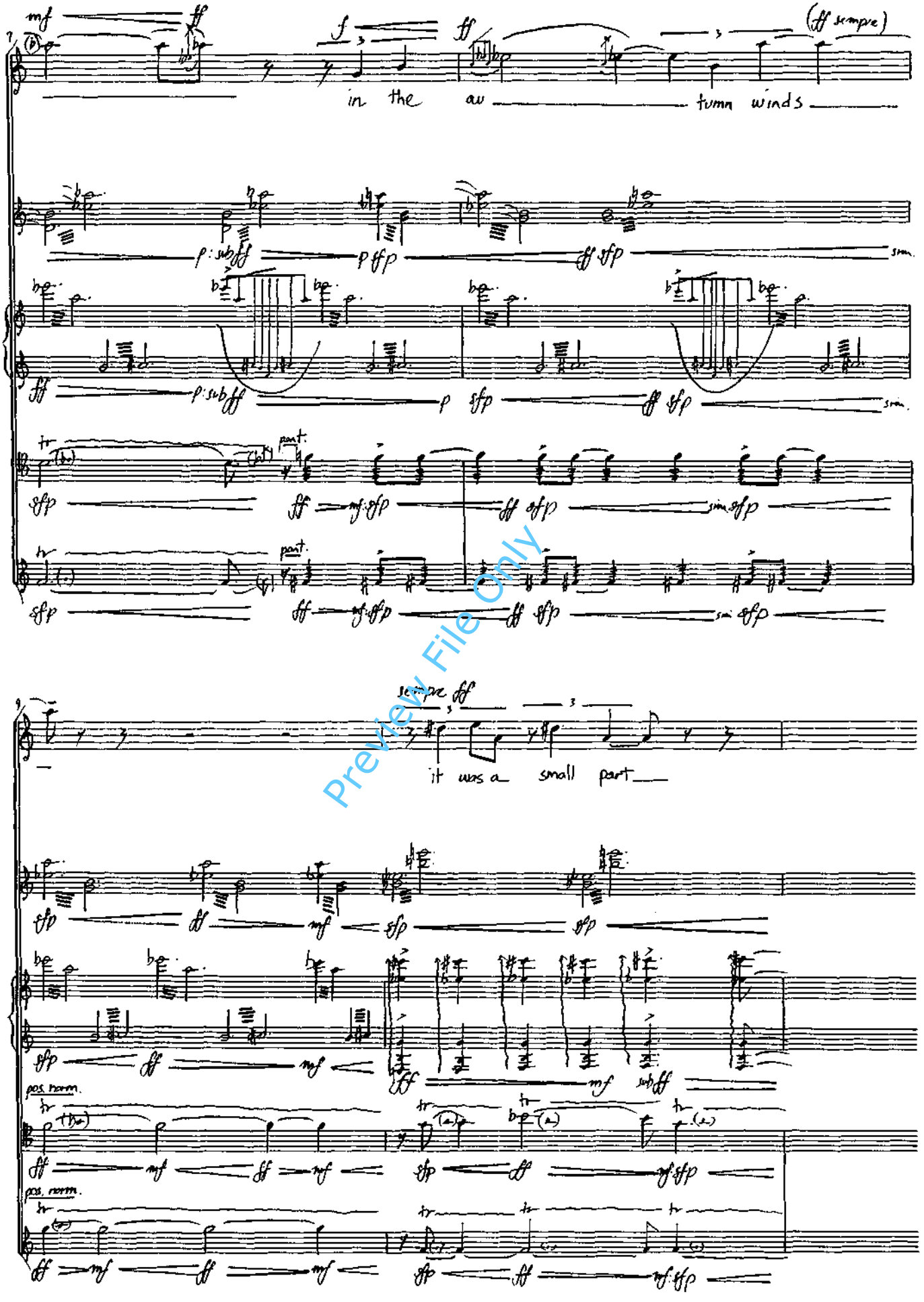

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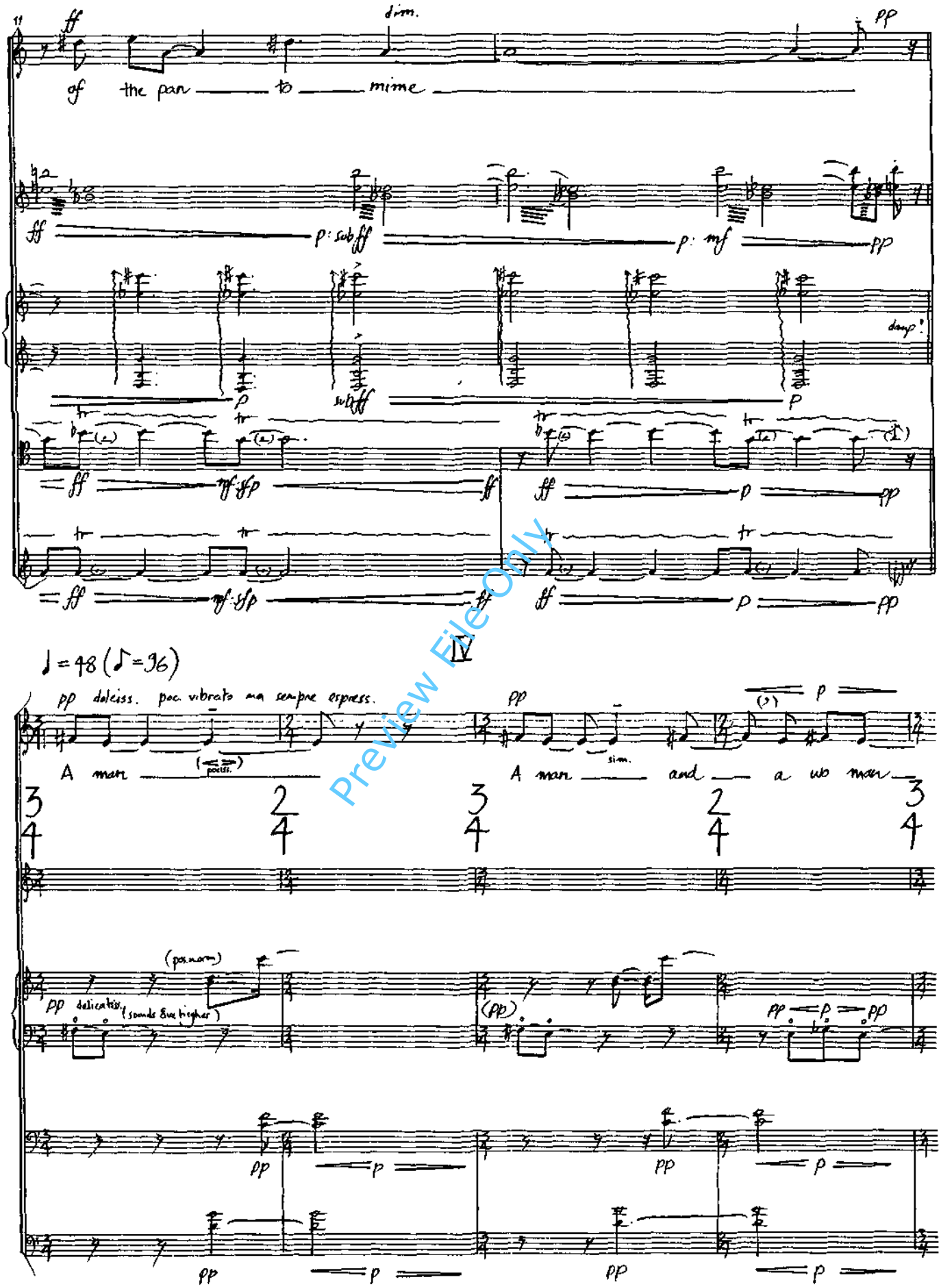

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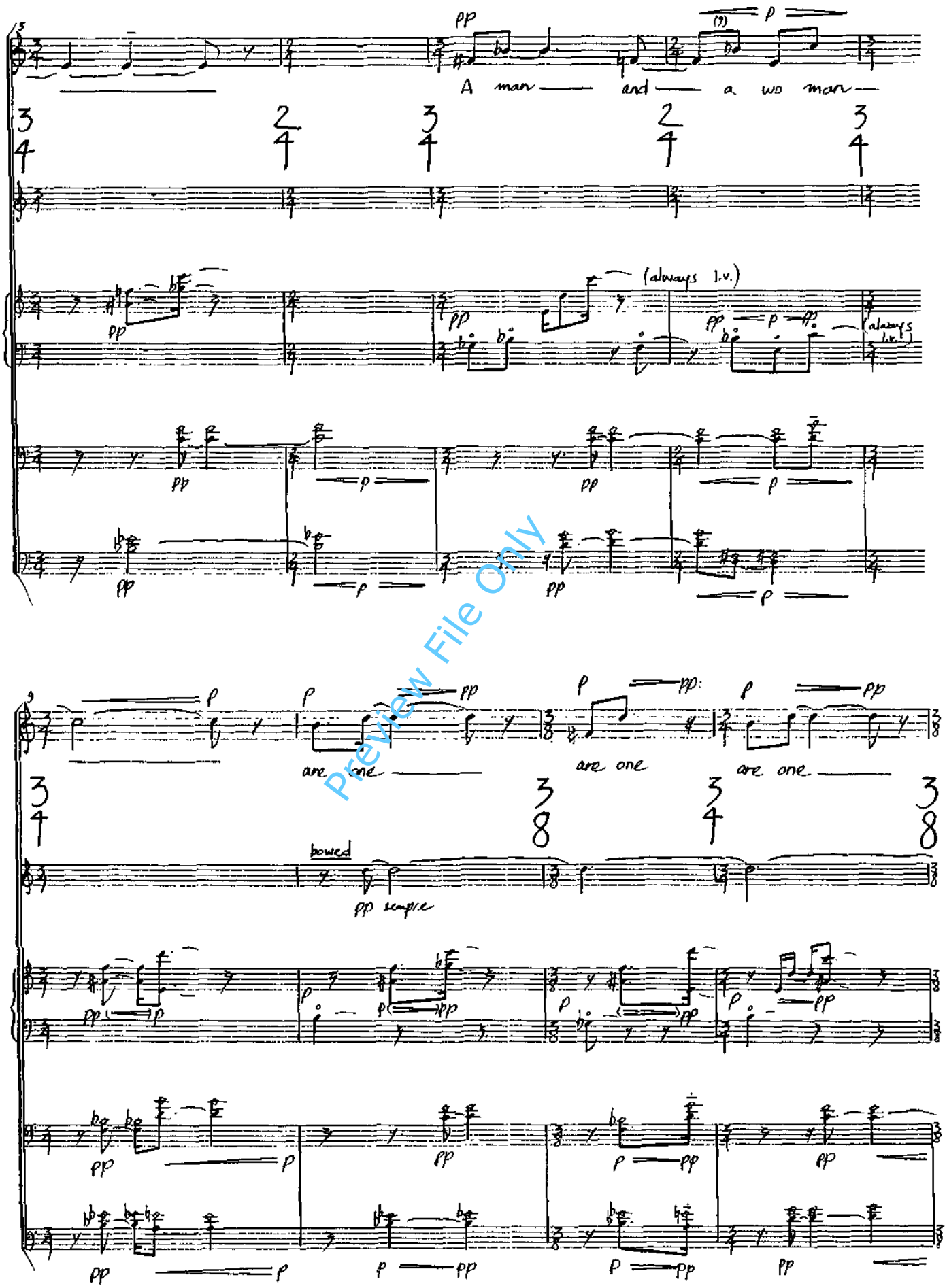

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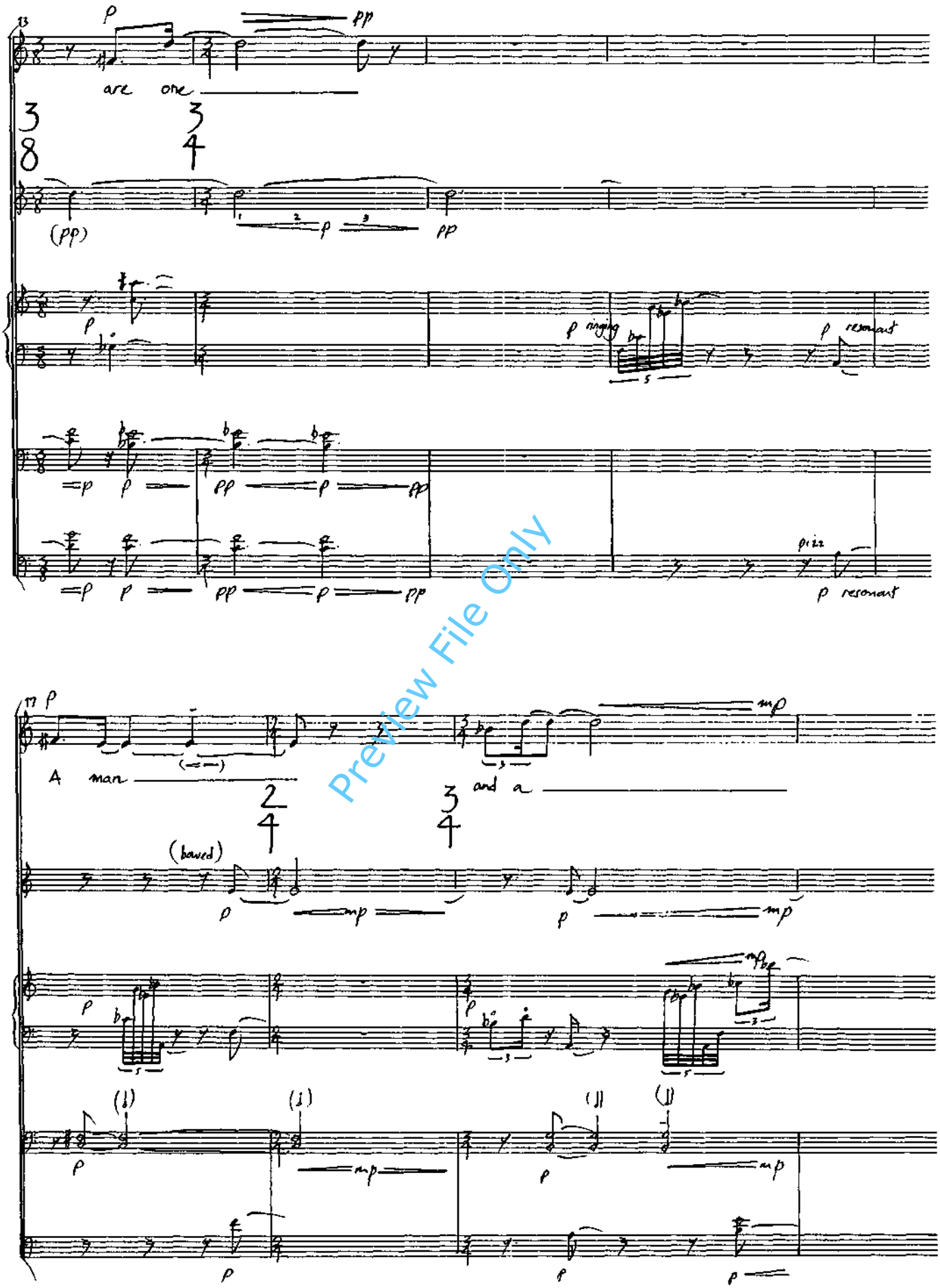

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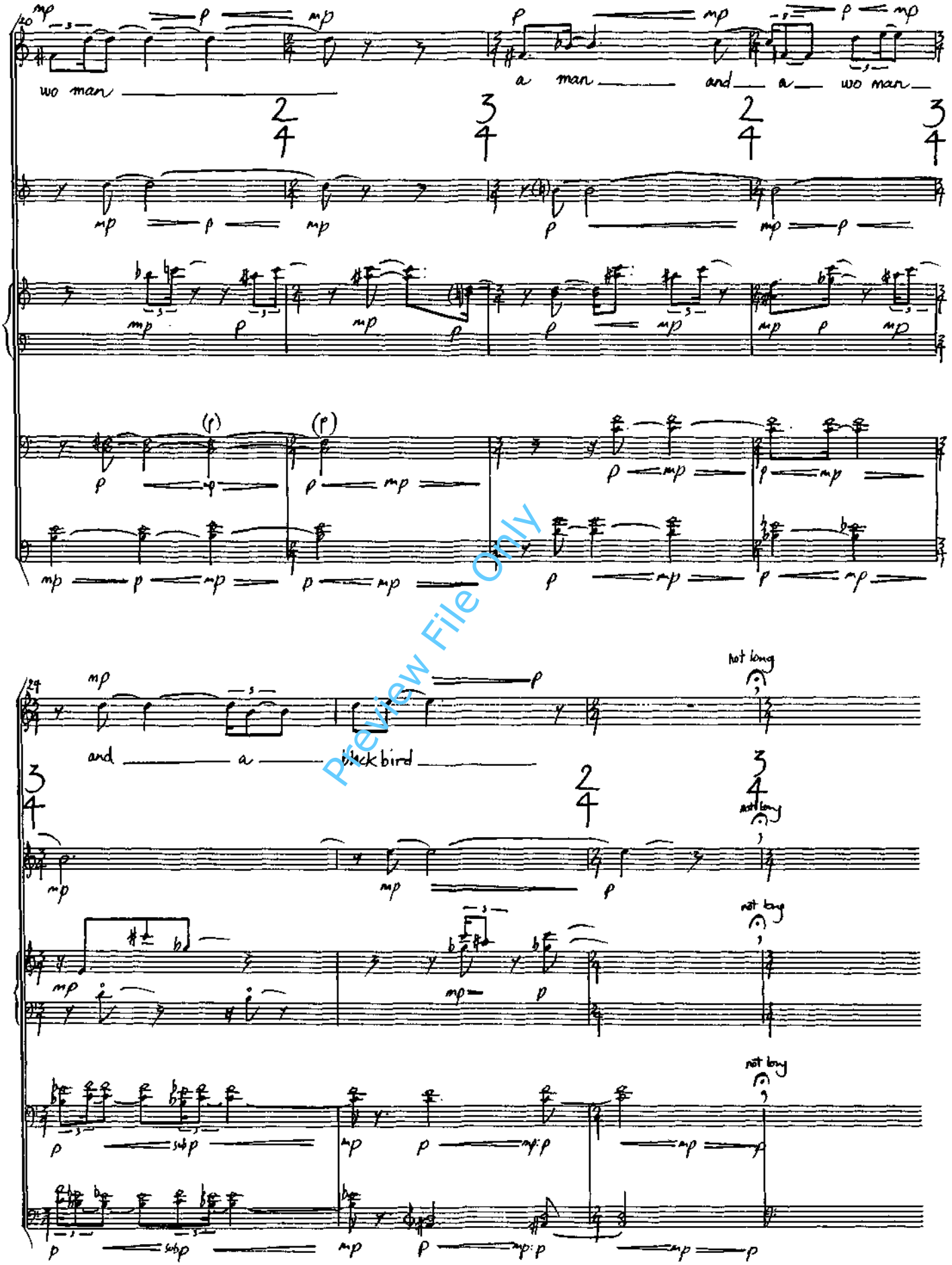

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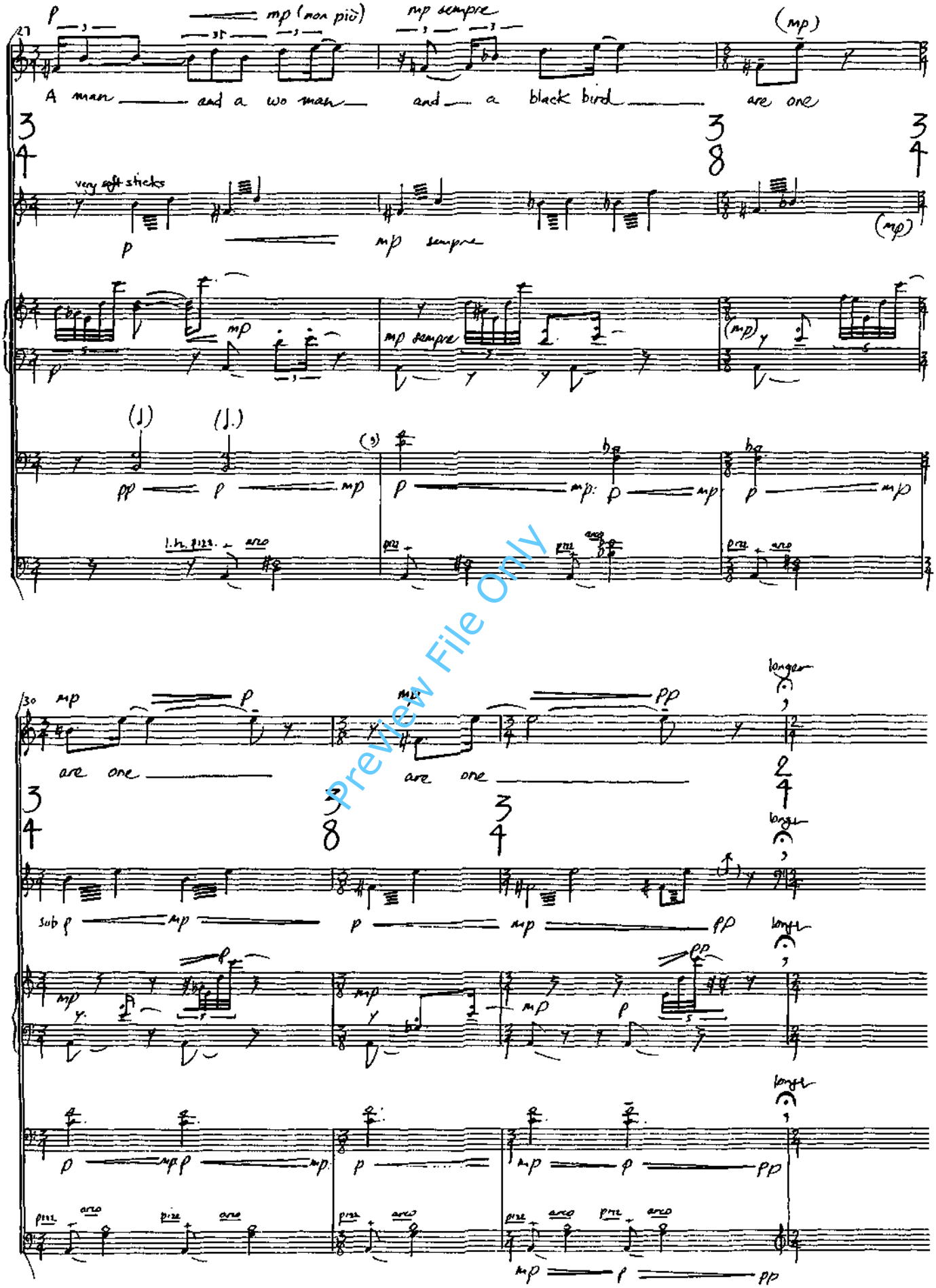

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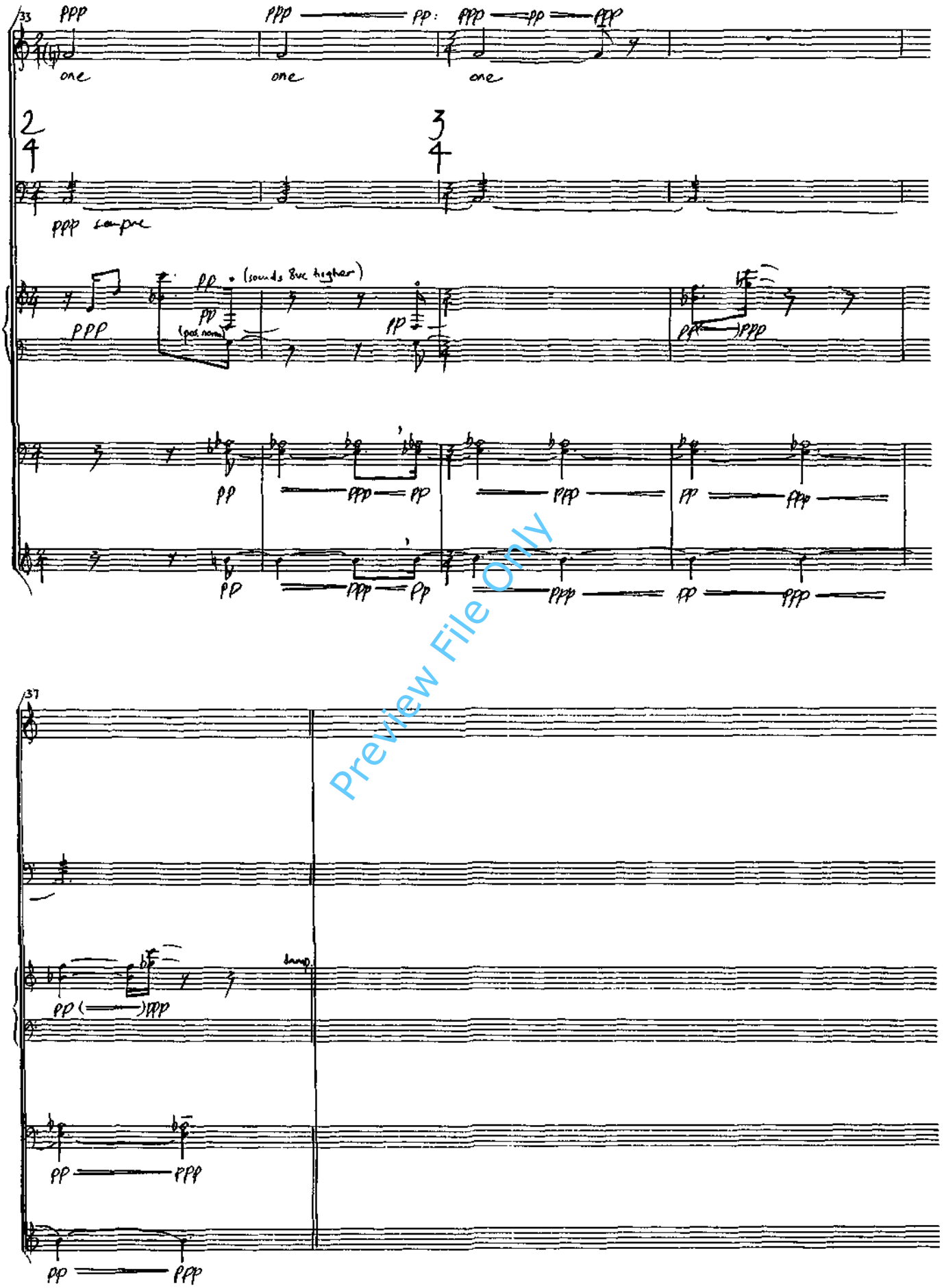

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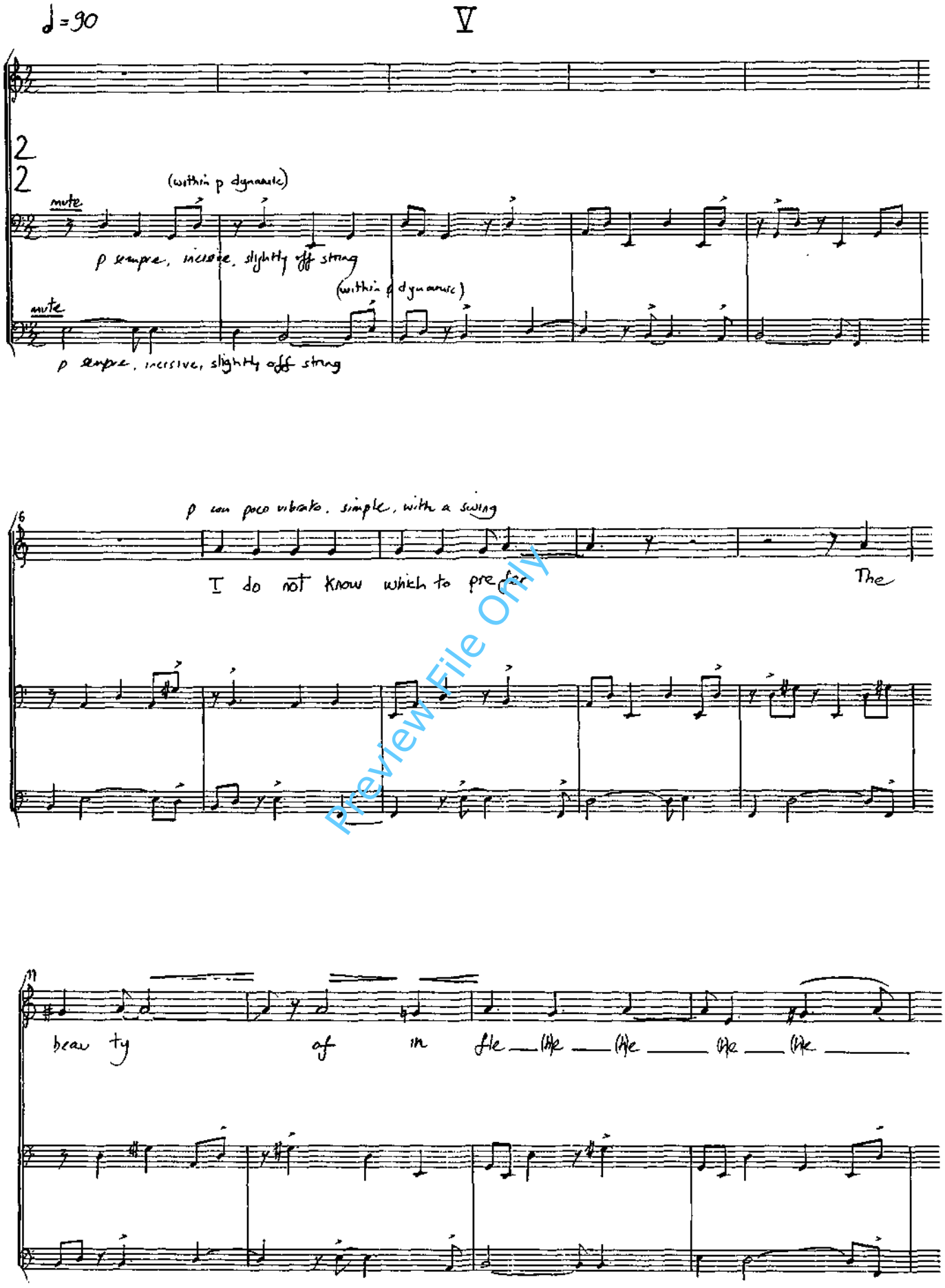

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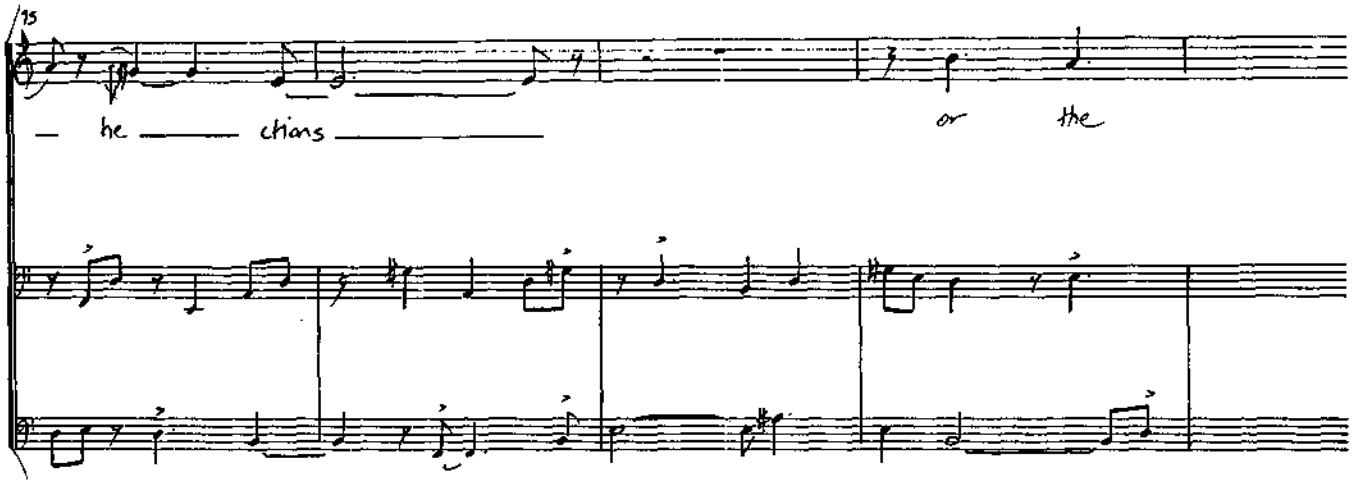

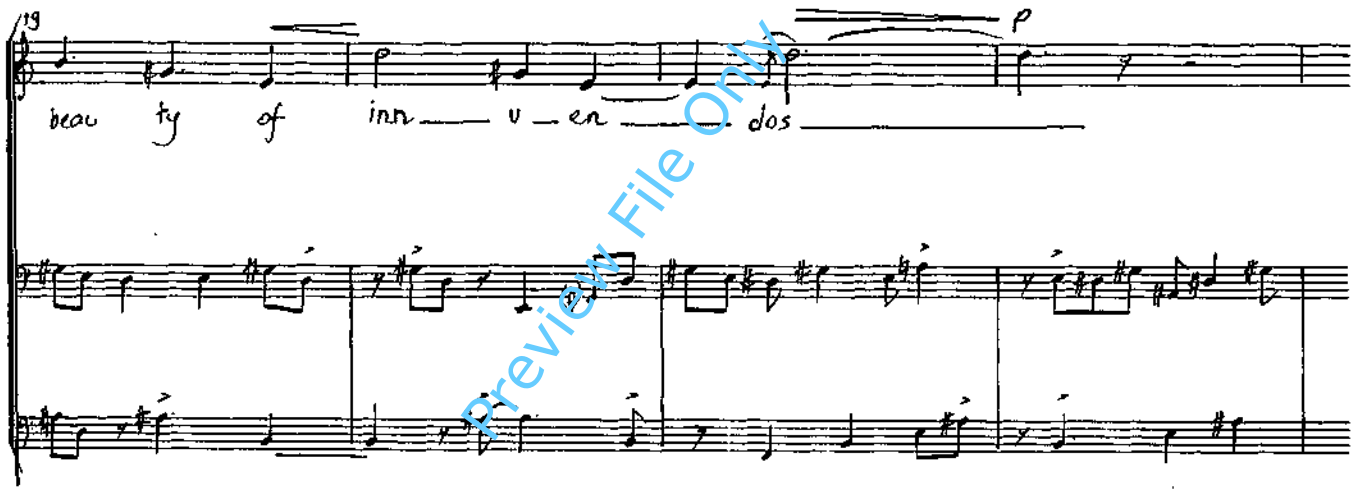

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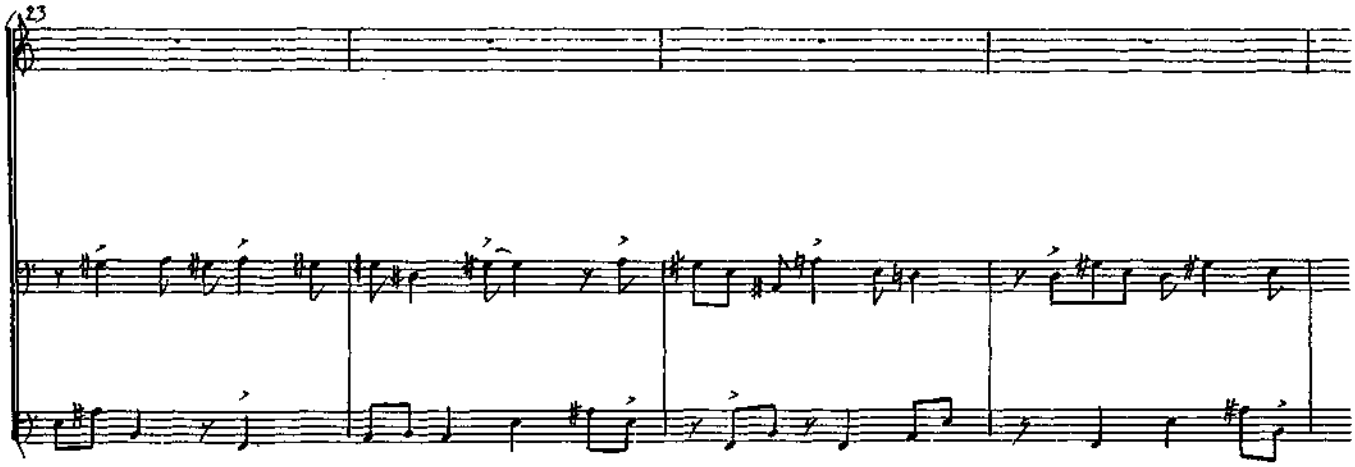

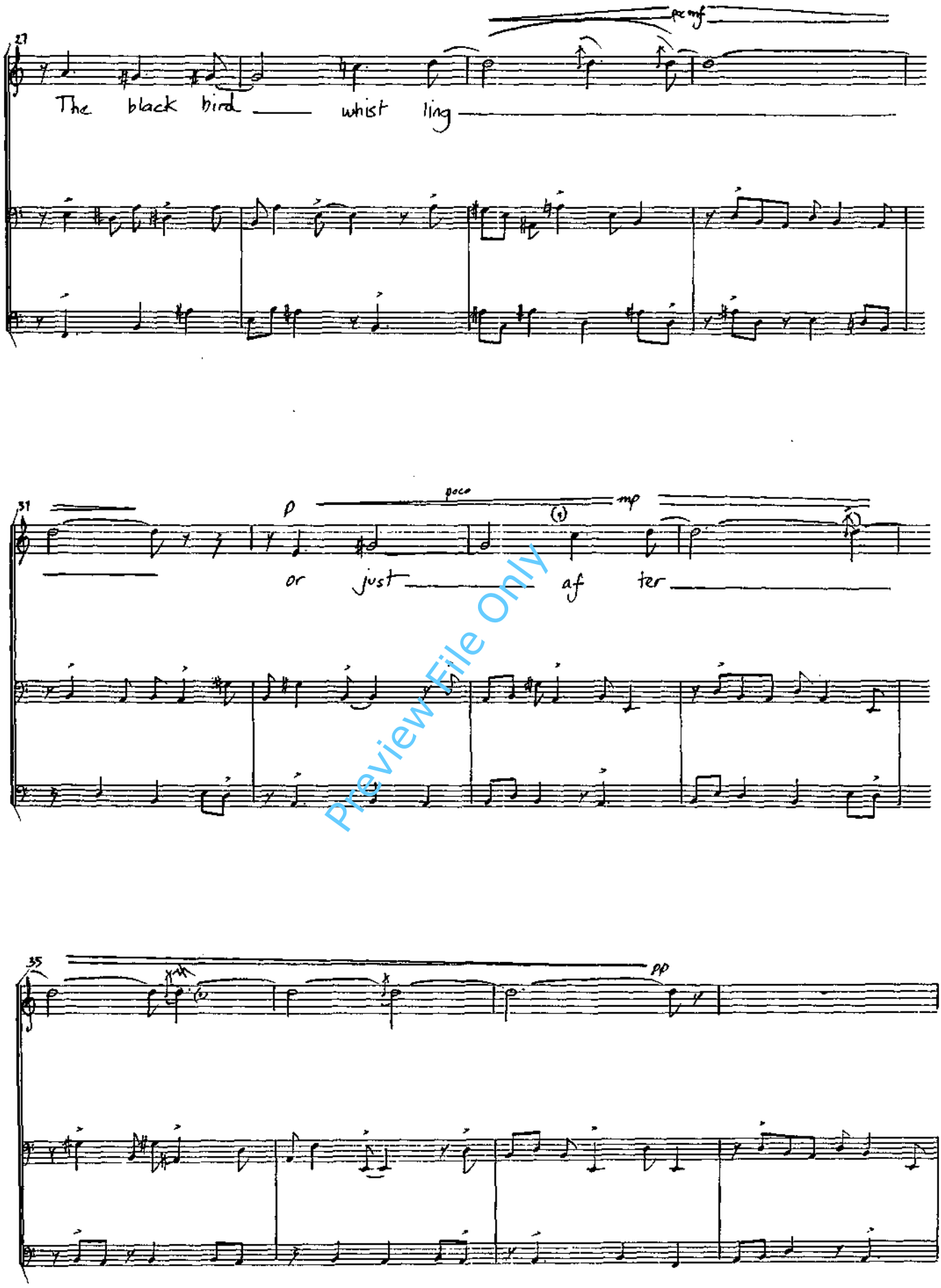

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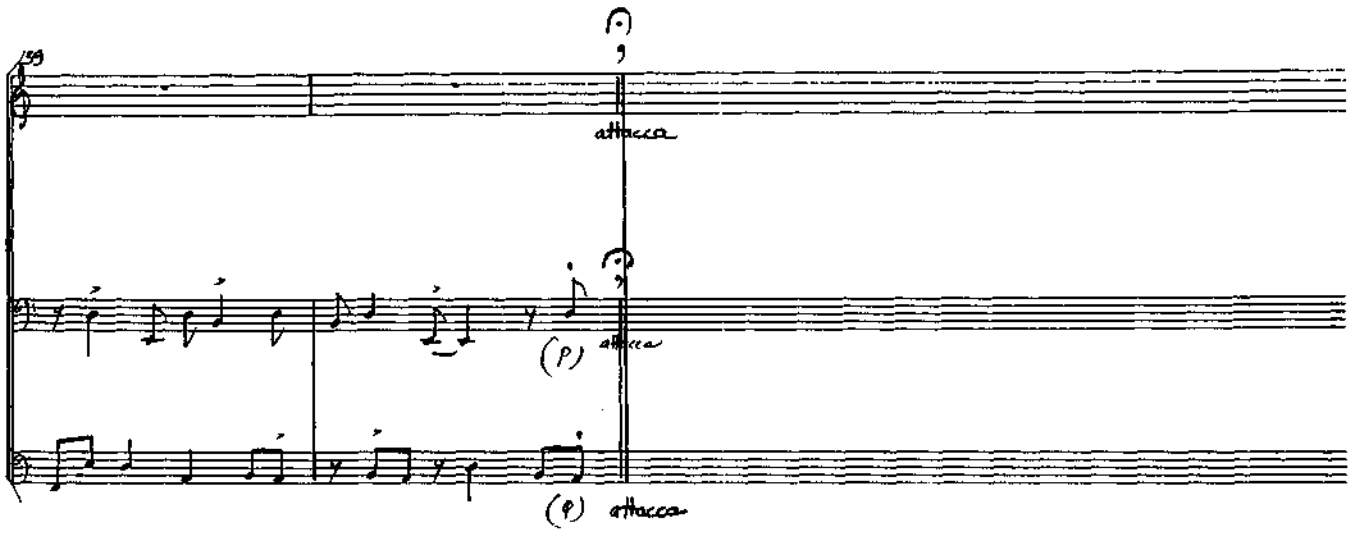

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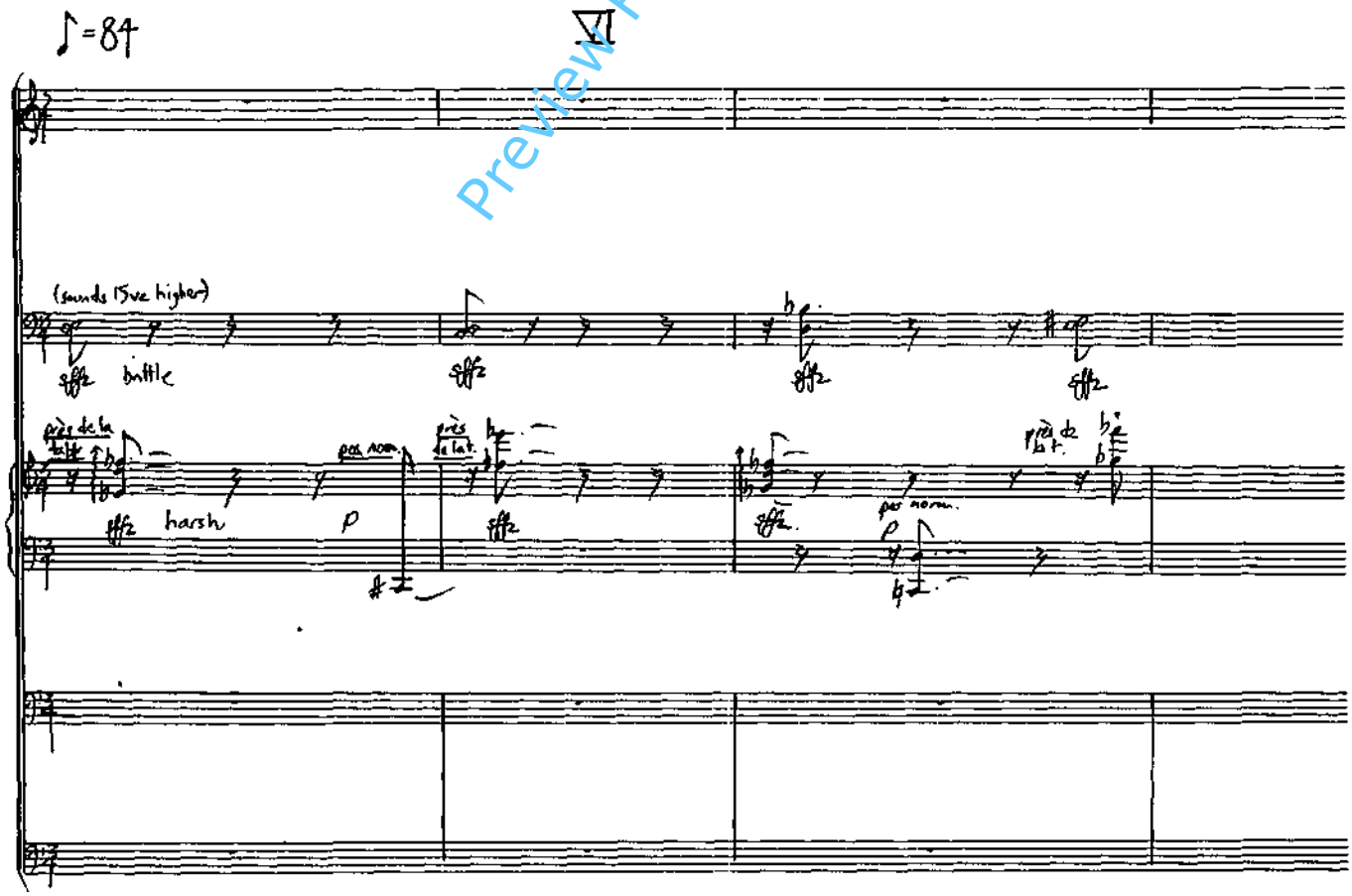

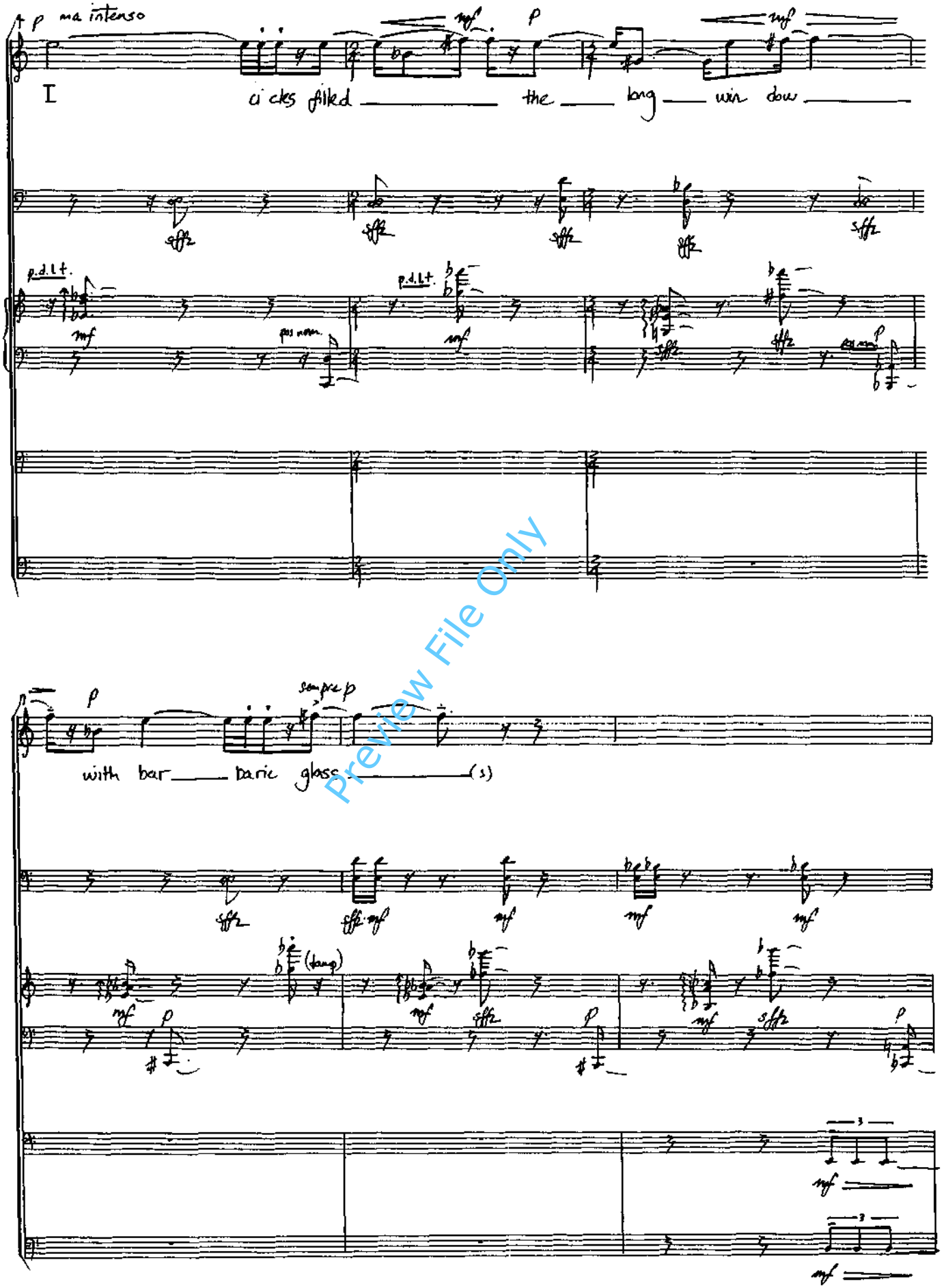

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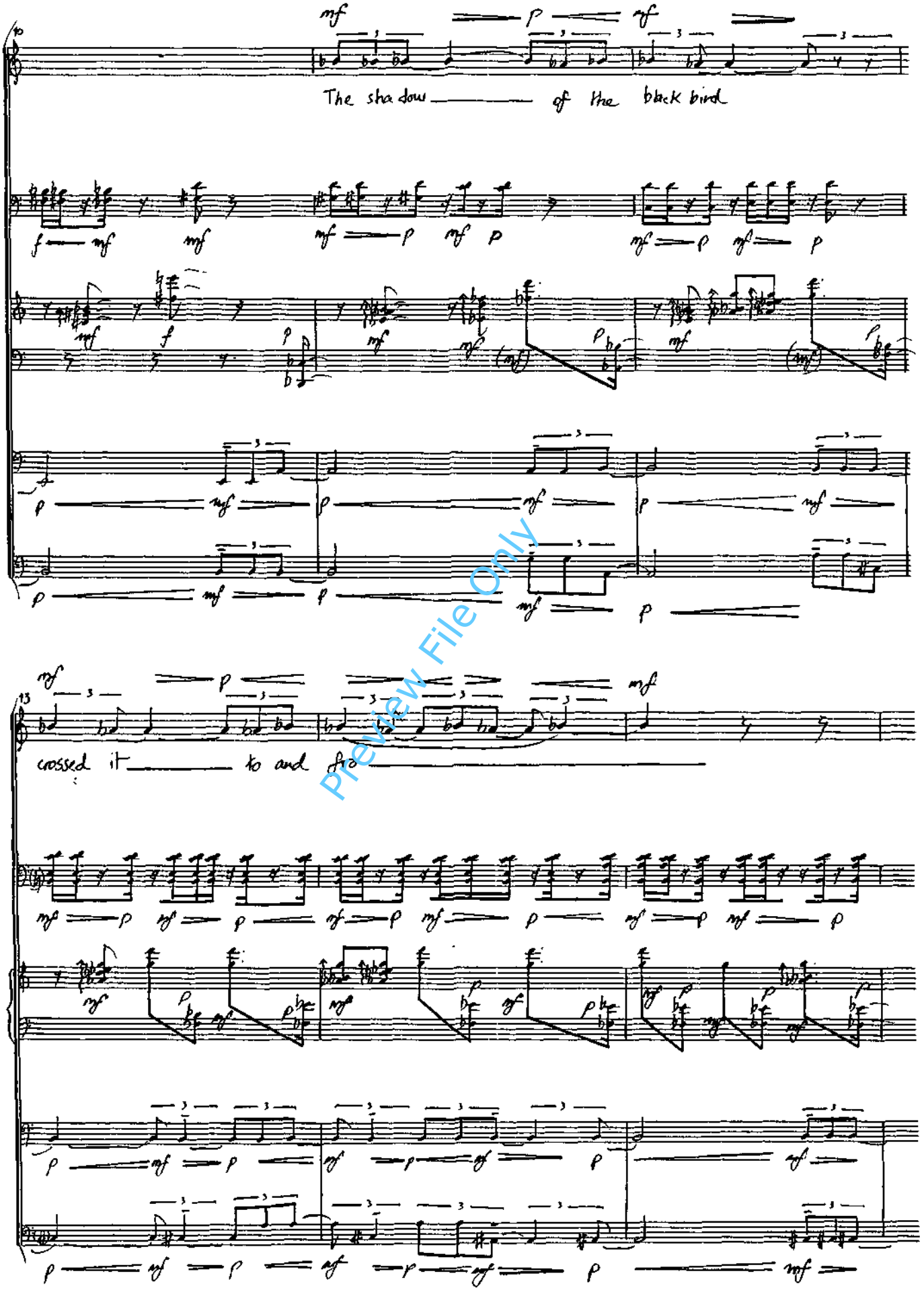

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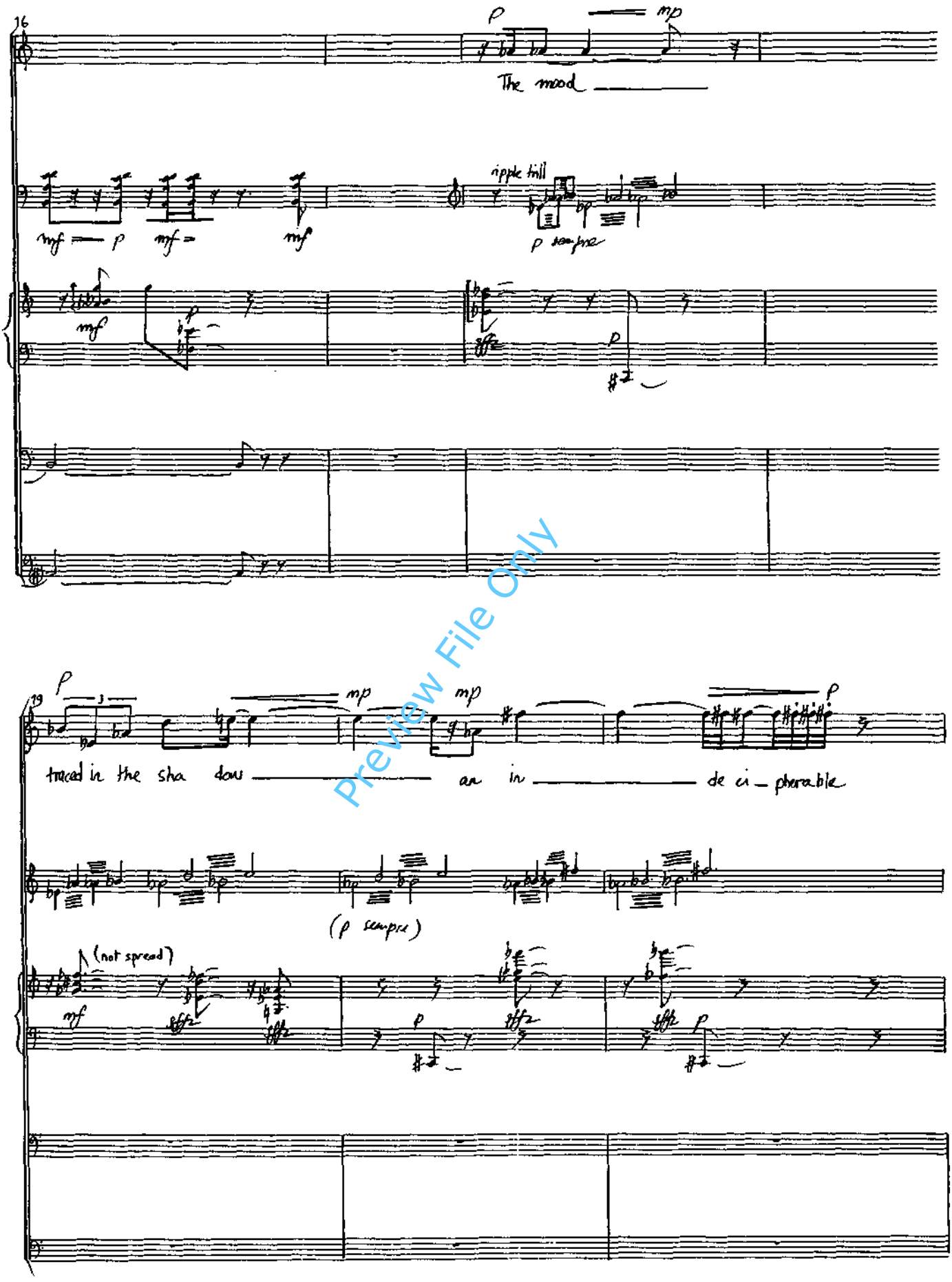

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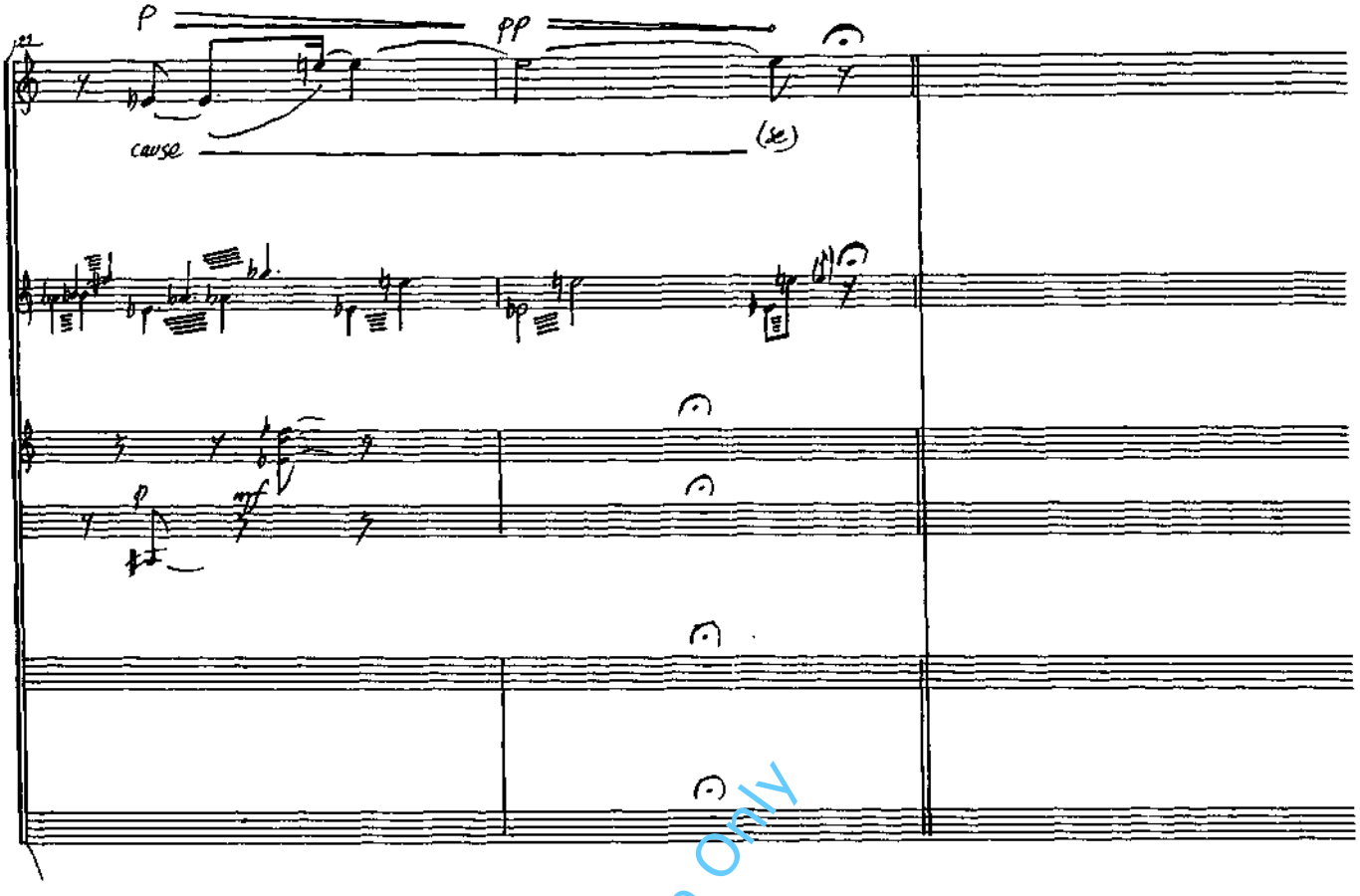

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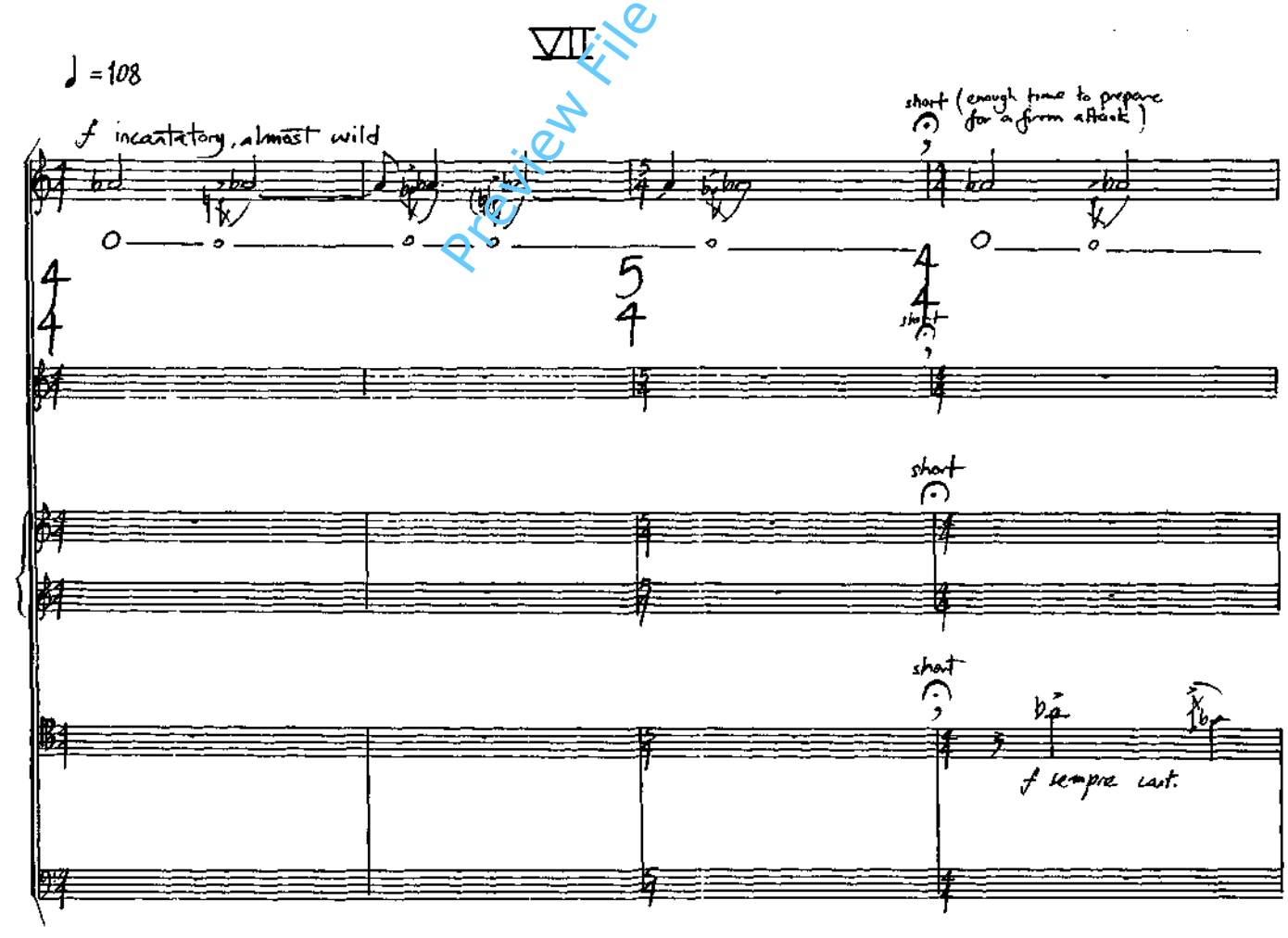

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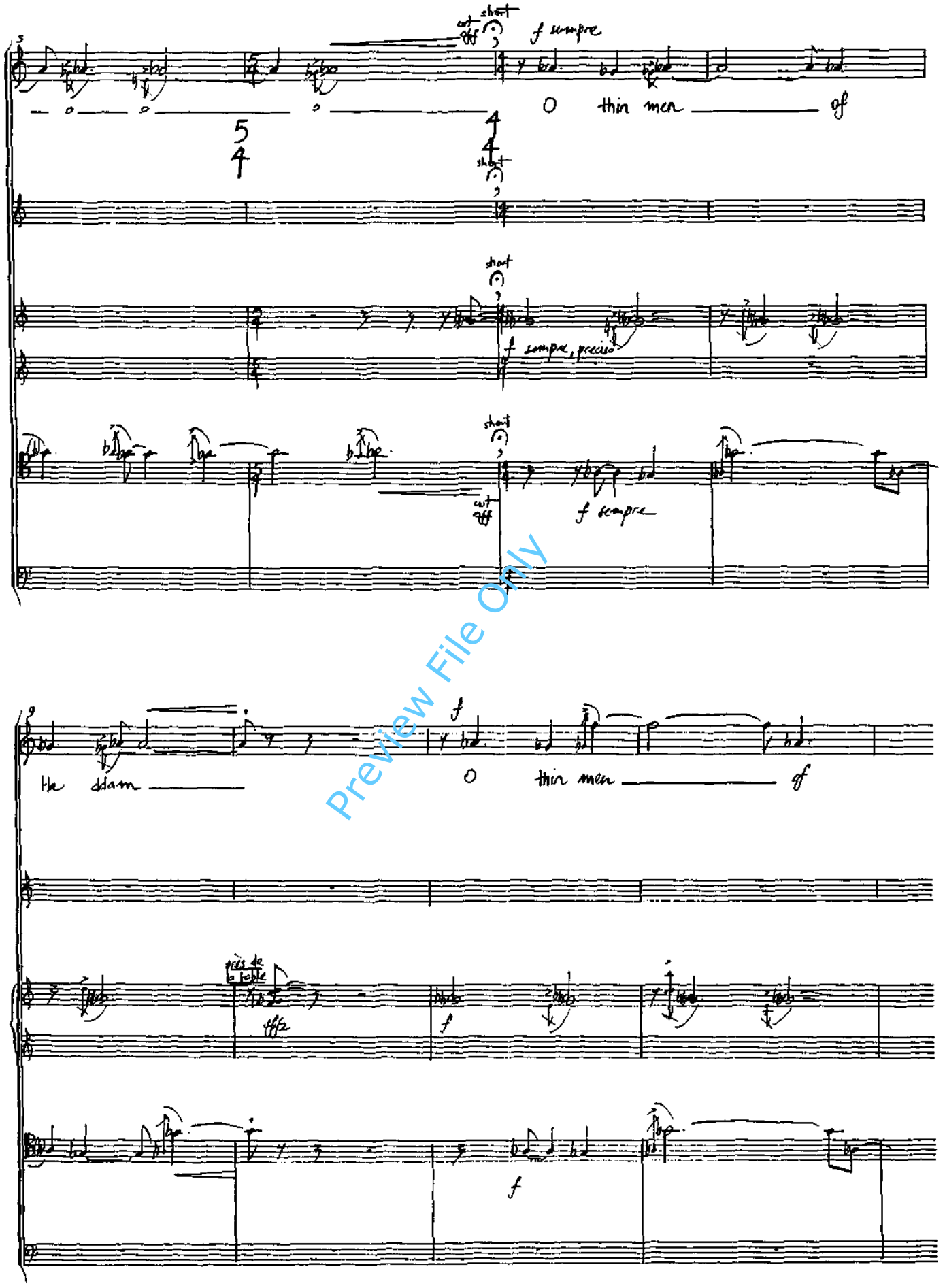

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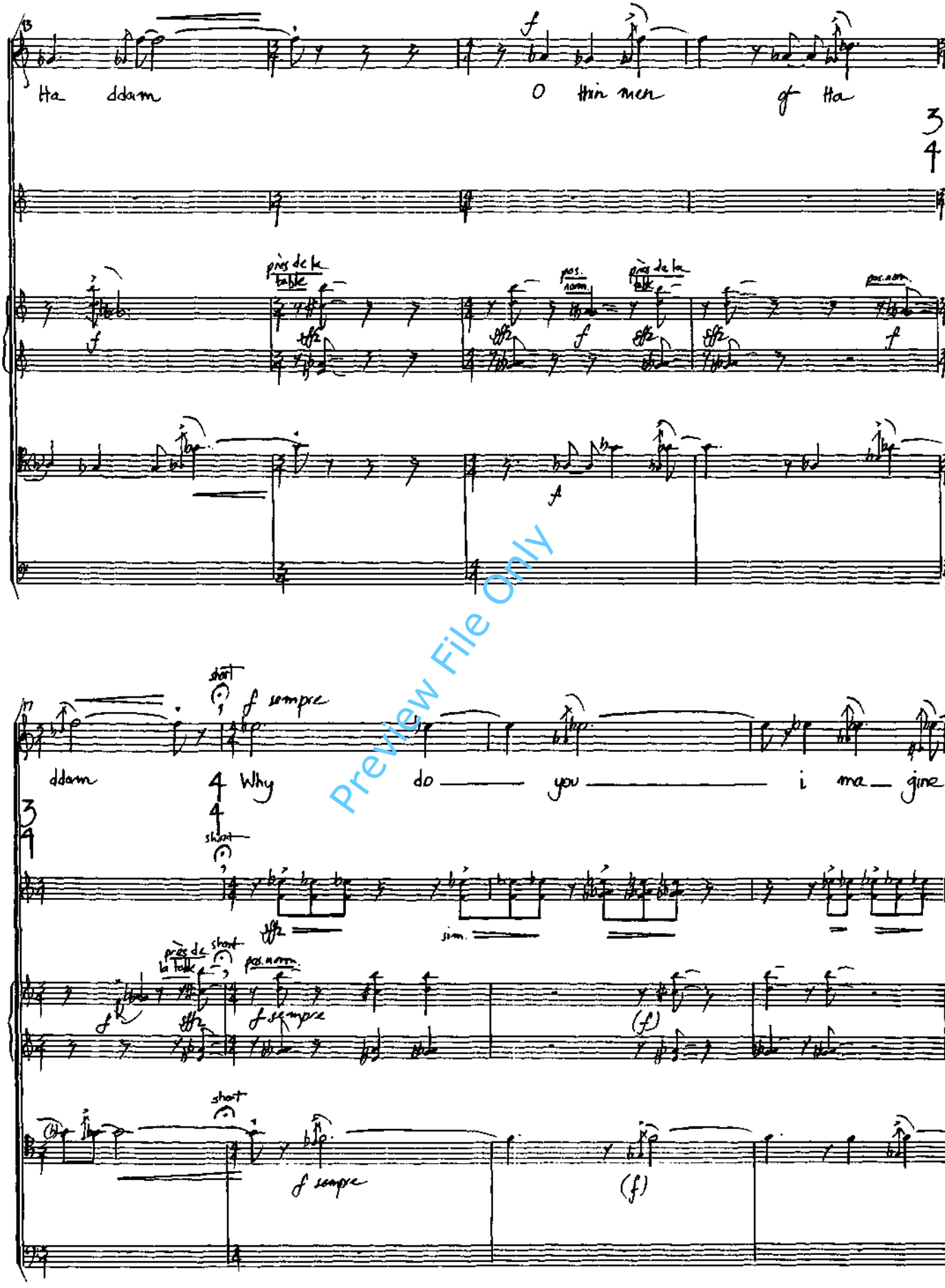

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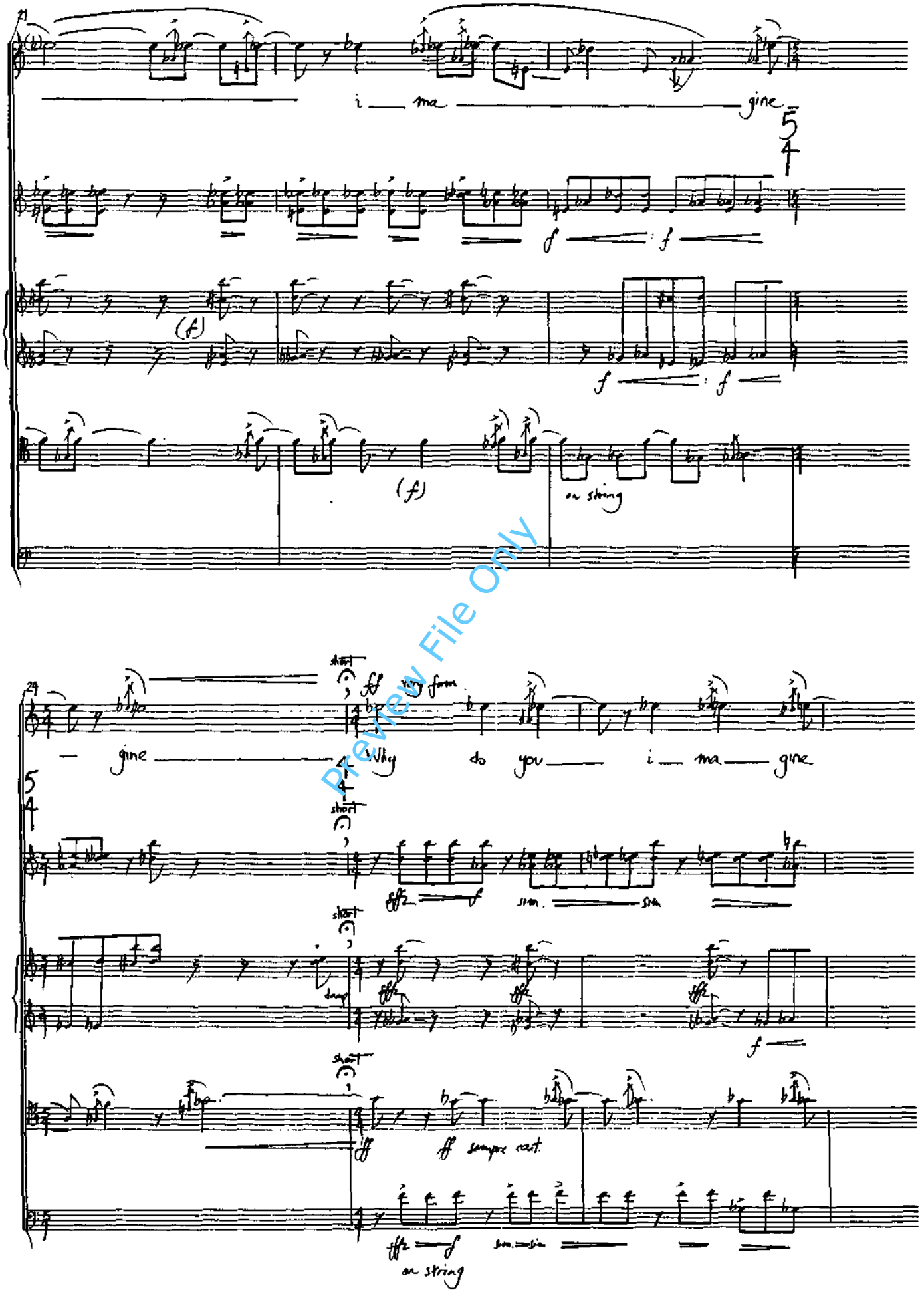

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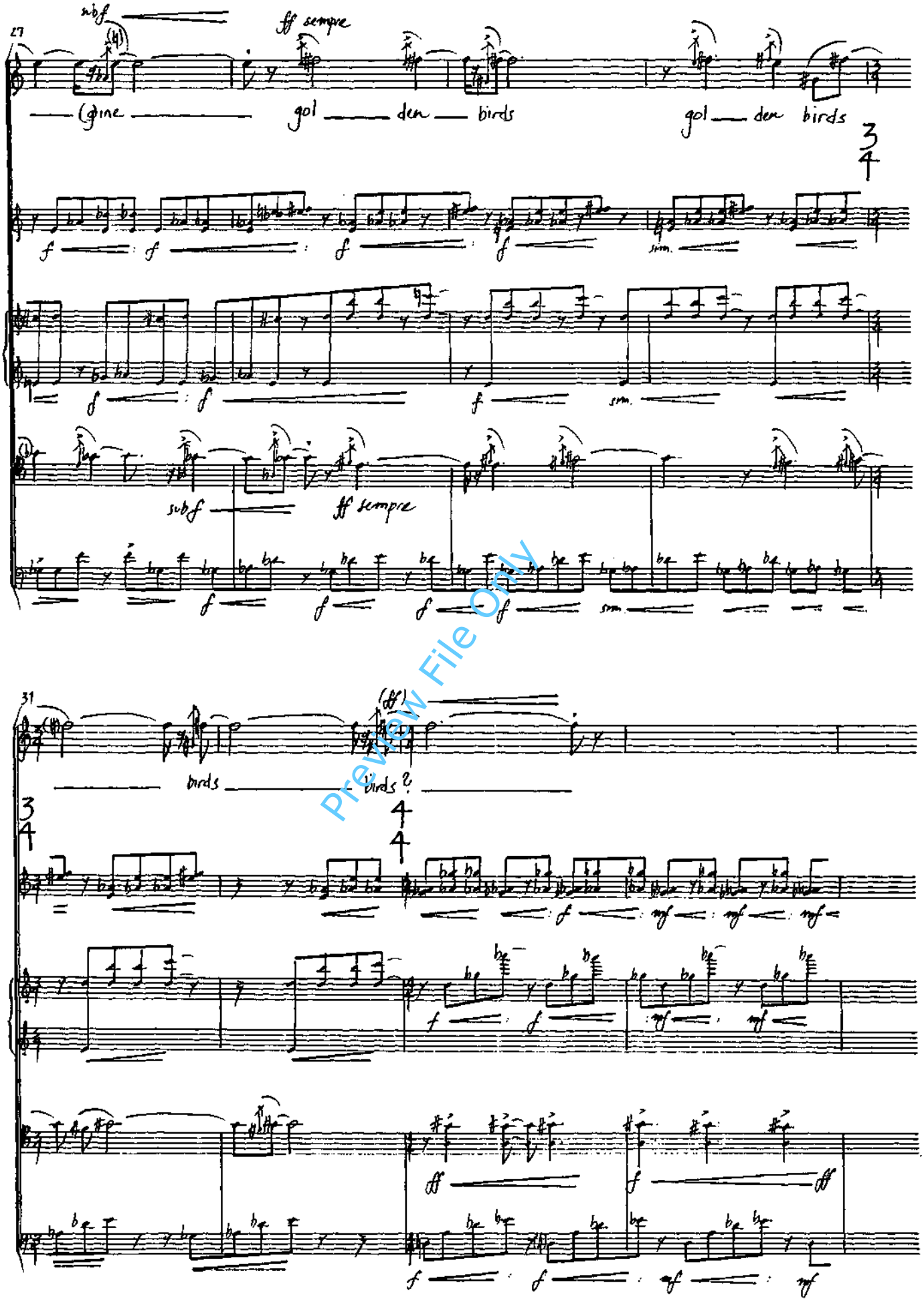

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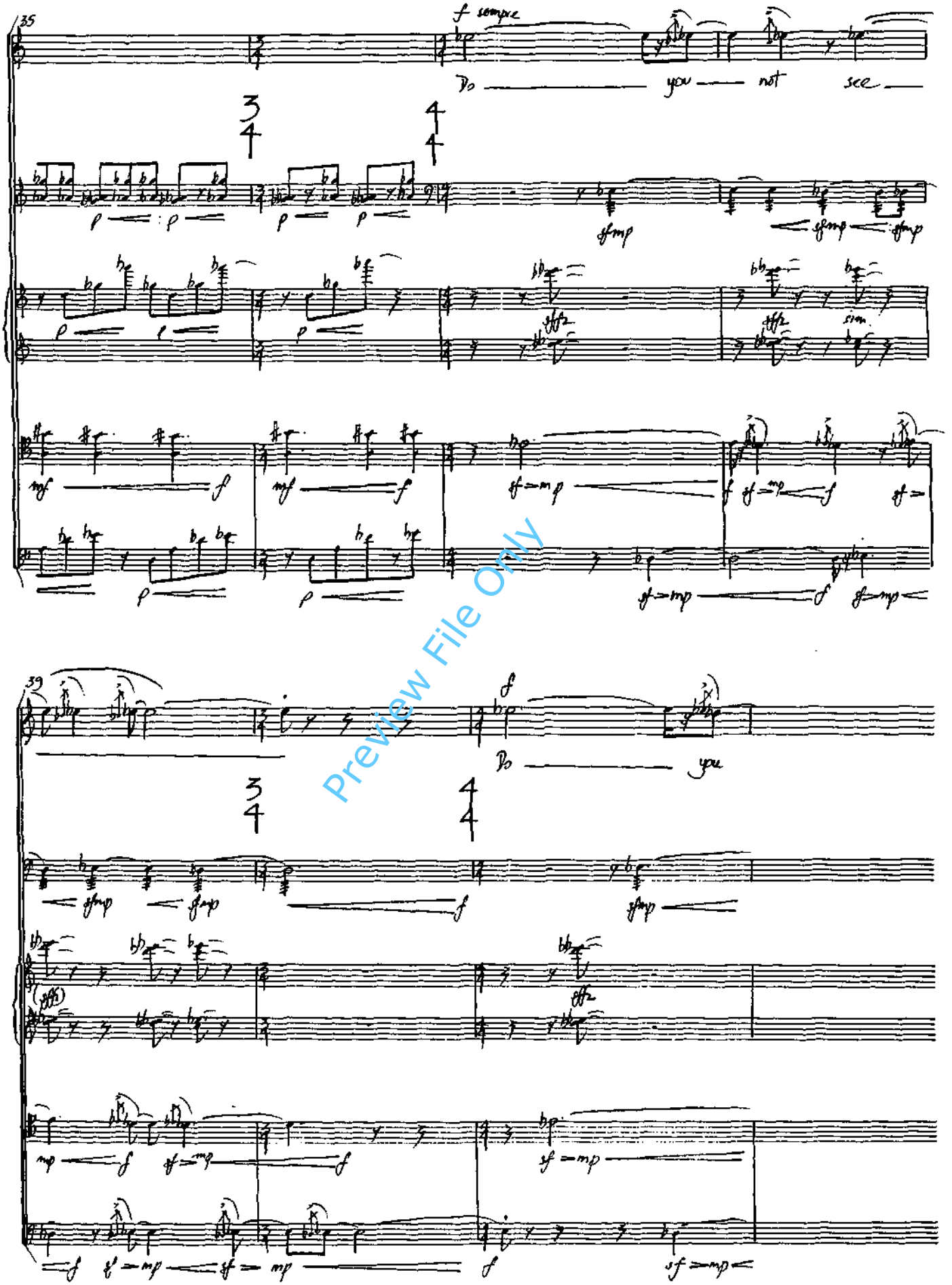

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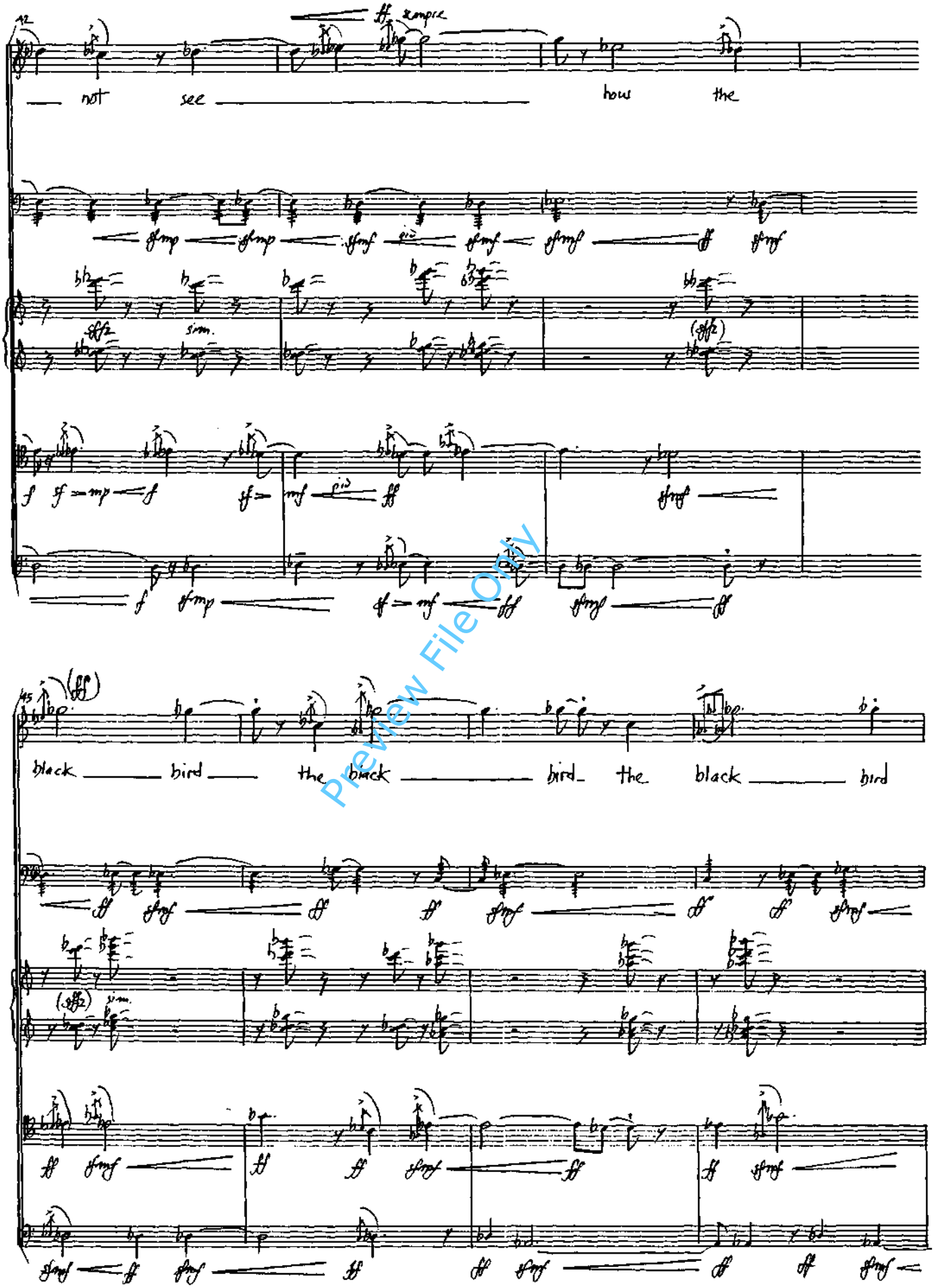

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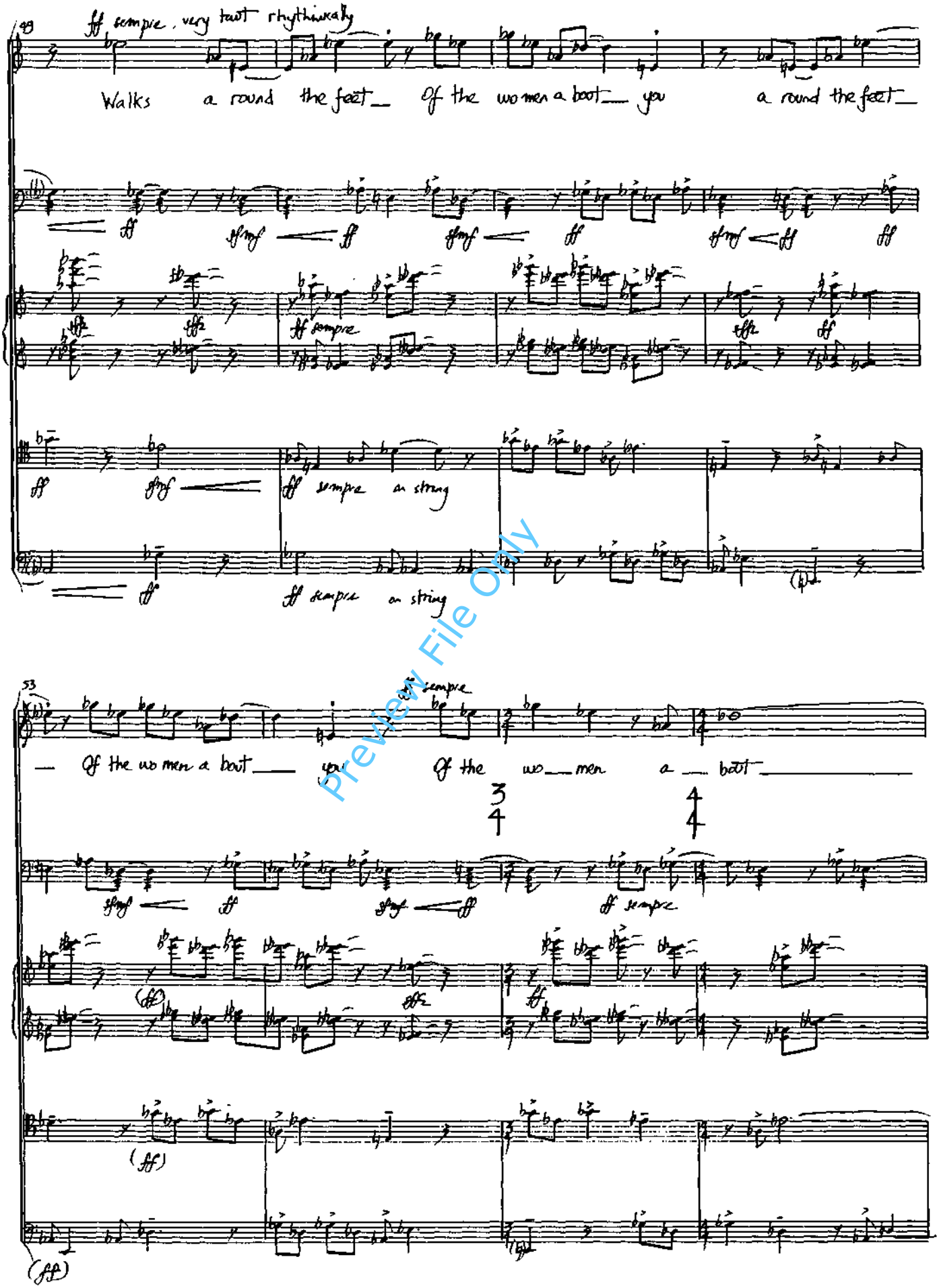

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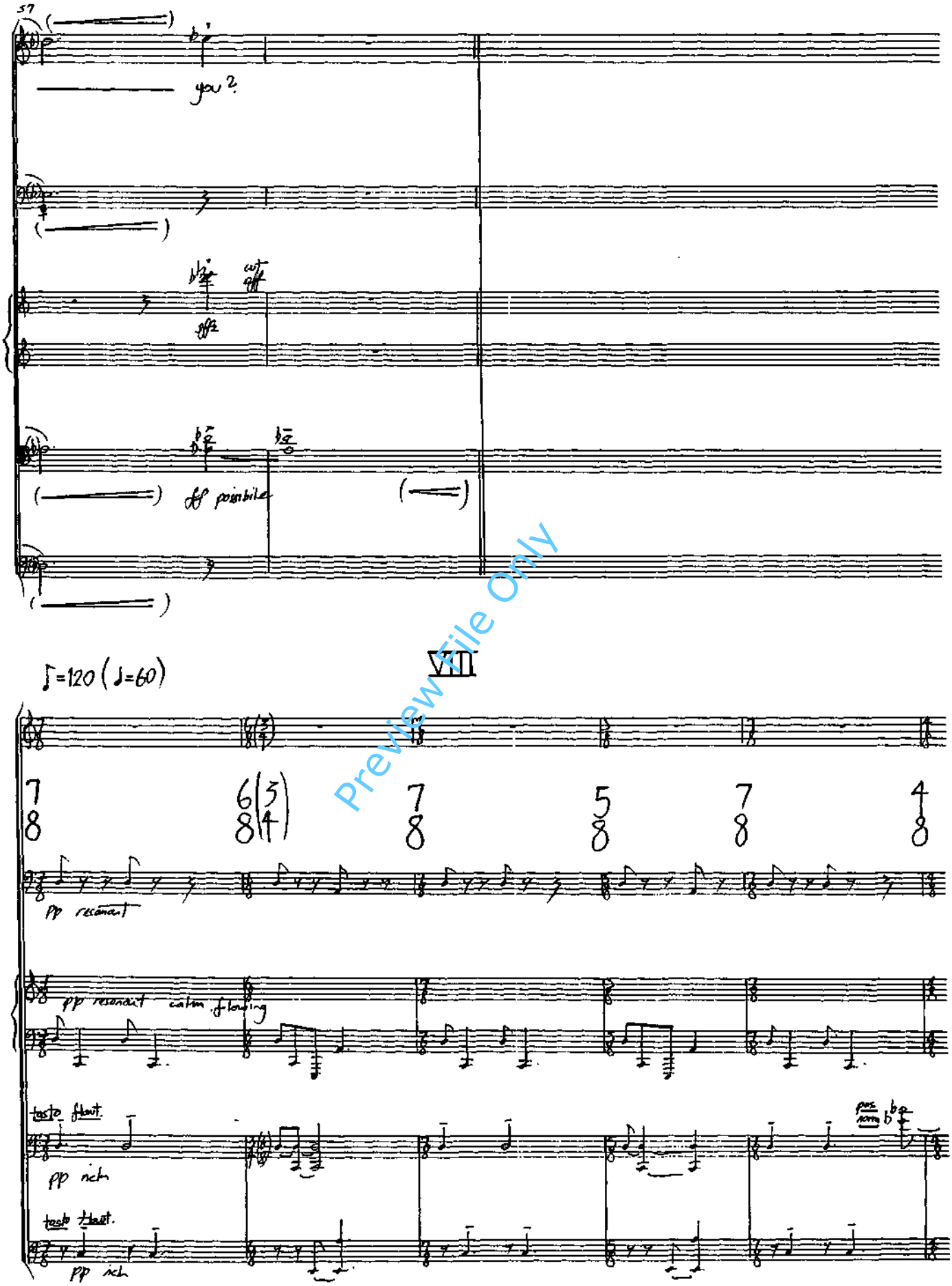

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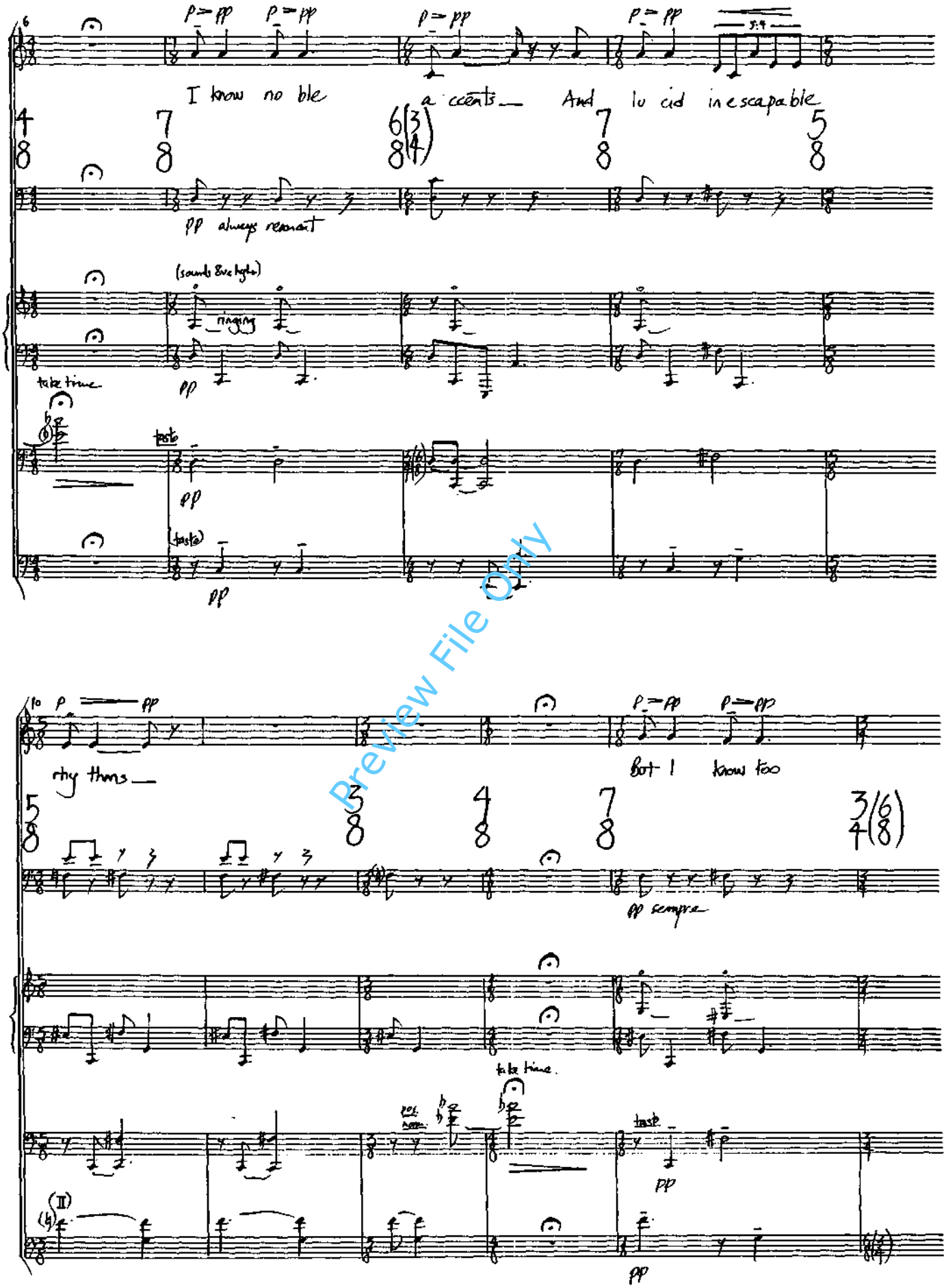

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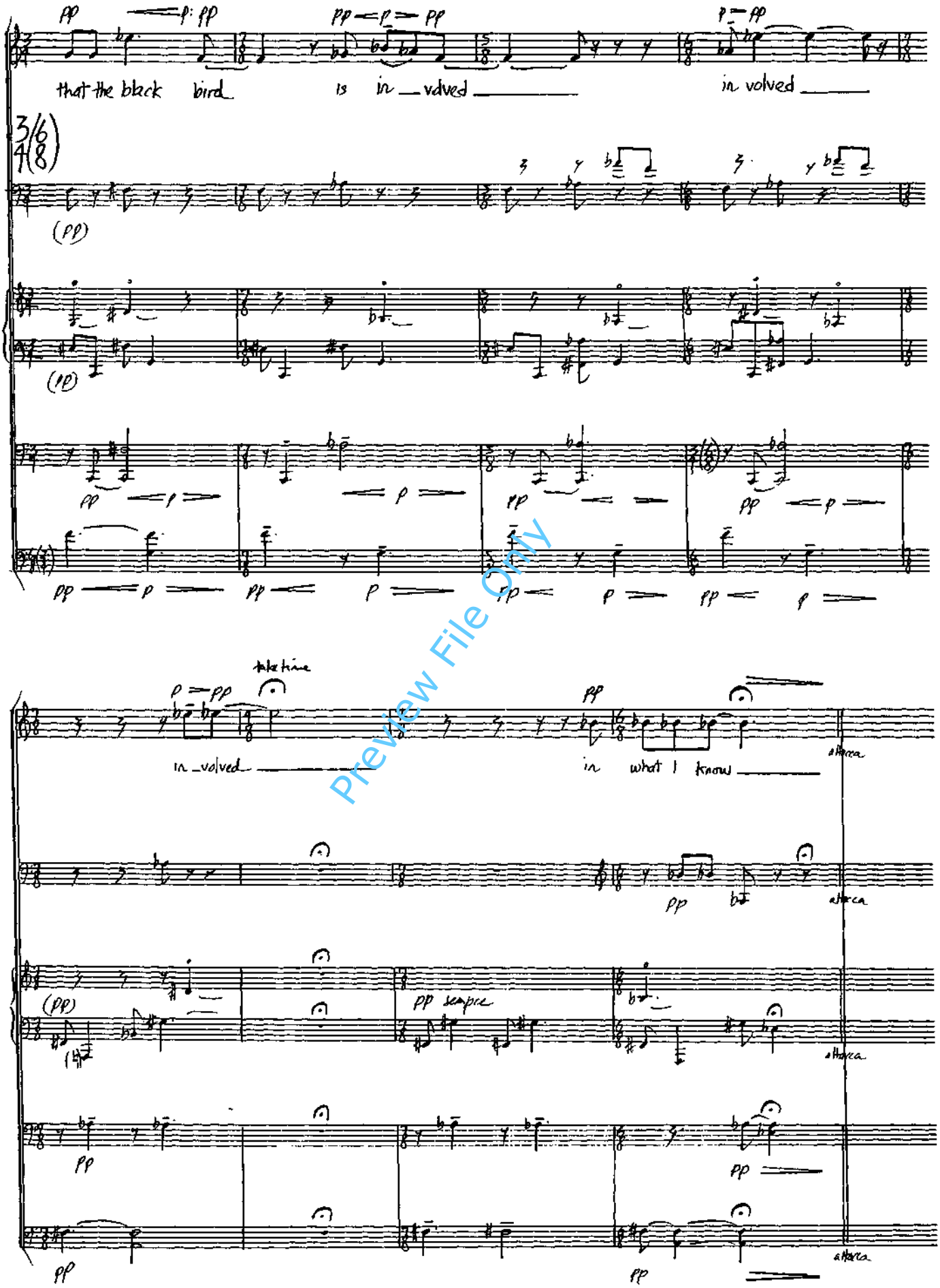

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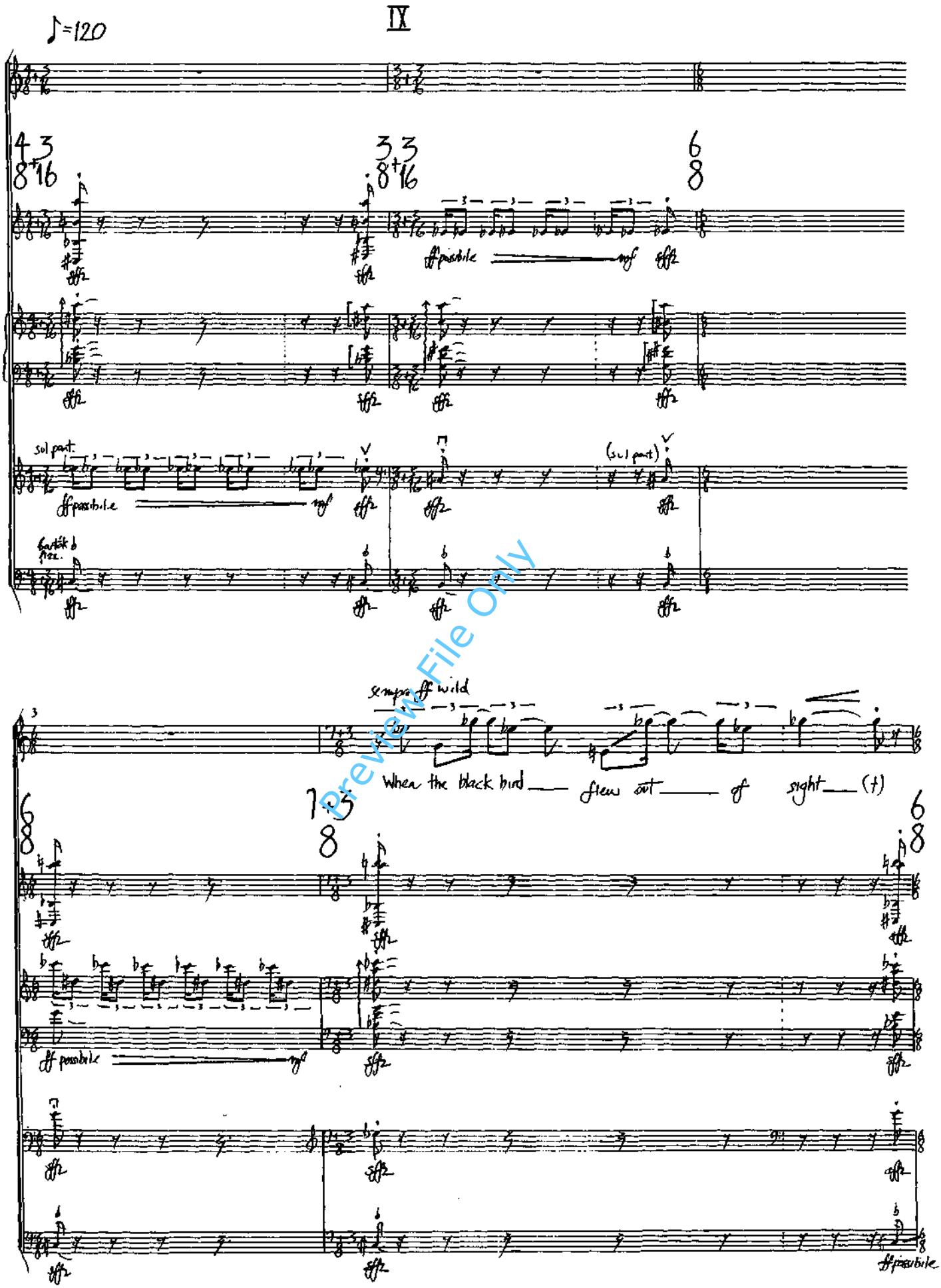

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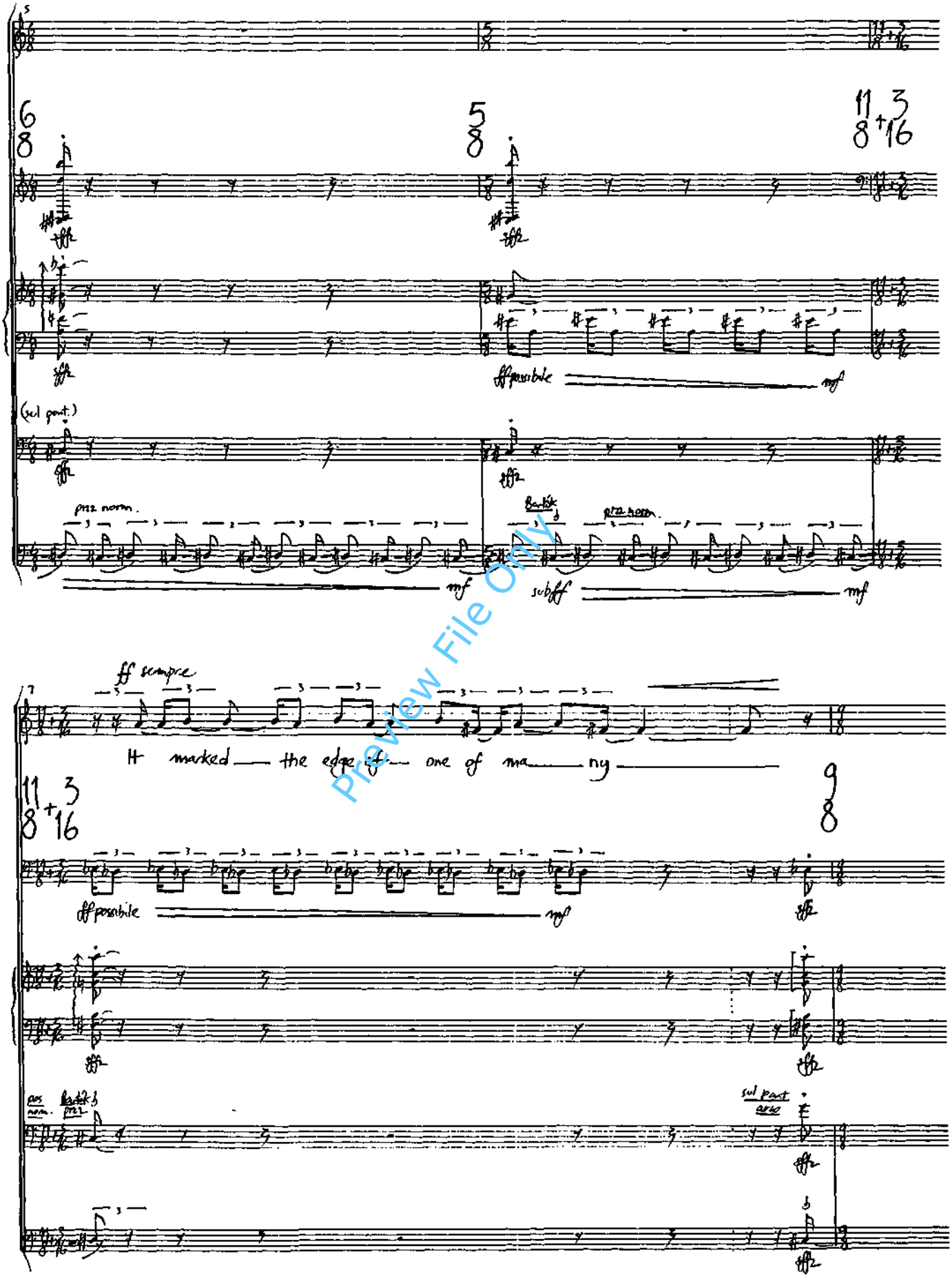

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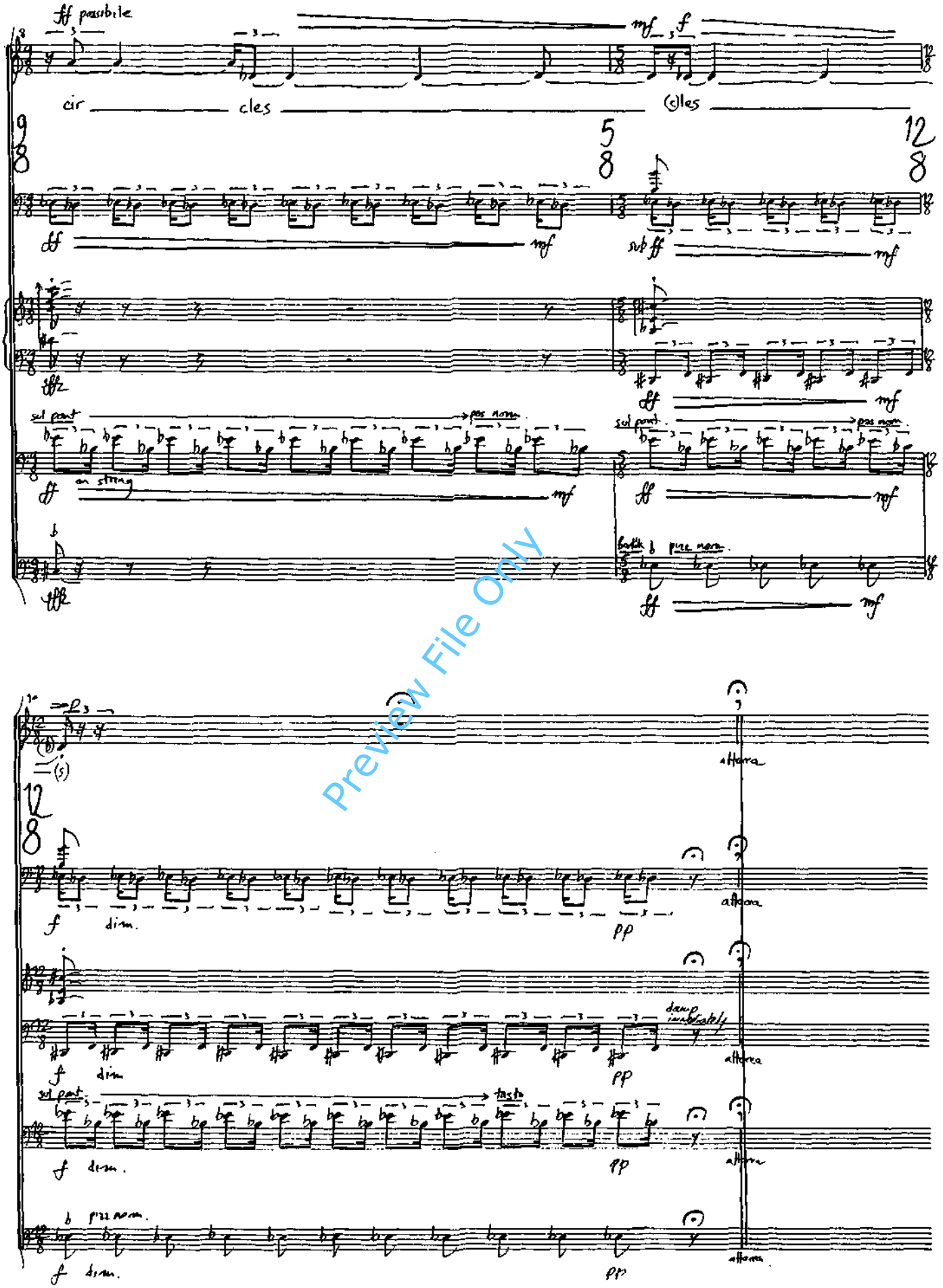

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X

♩=90

p cresc subito

POC ACCEL . . . . mf submf

ACCEL POC A POC . . . f firmly

At the sight of black birds fly

f cresc. sub f cresc (cresc.)

(ff)y (ff)y (ff)y

♩=120

ff (ff)

ing fly ing in a

(♩=120)

ff sempre

RIT POC. A POC. . . . . .

green light(+) E ver the bawds of euphony

dim. P immediately

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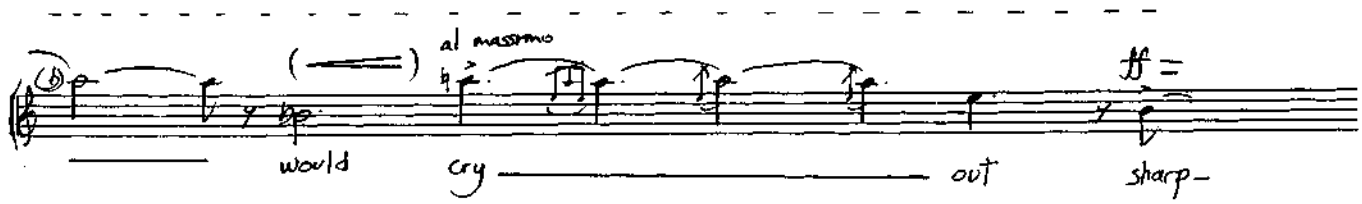

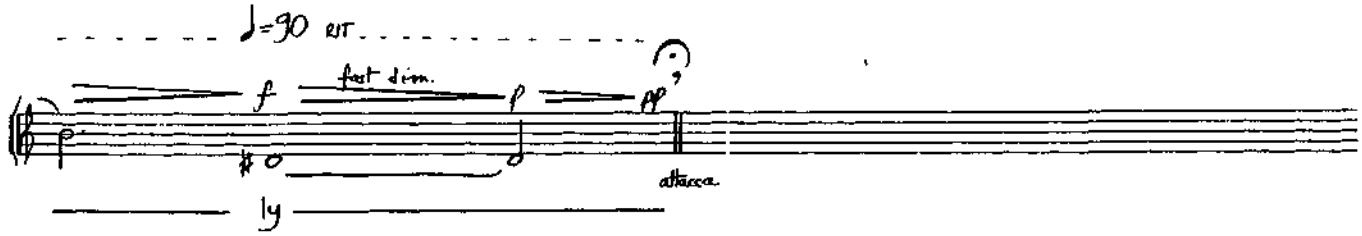

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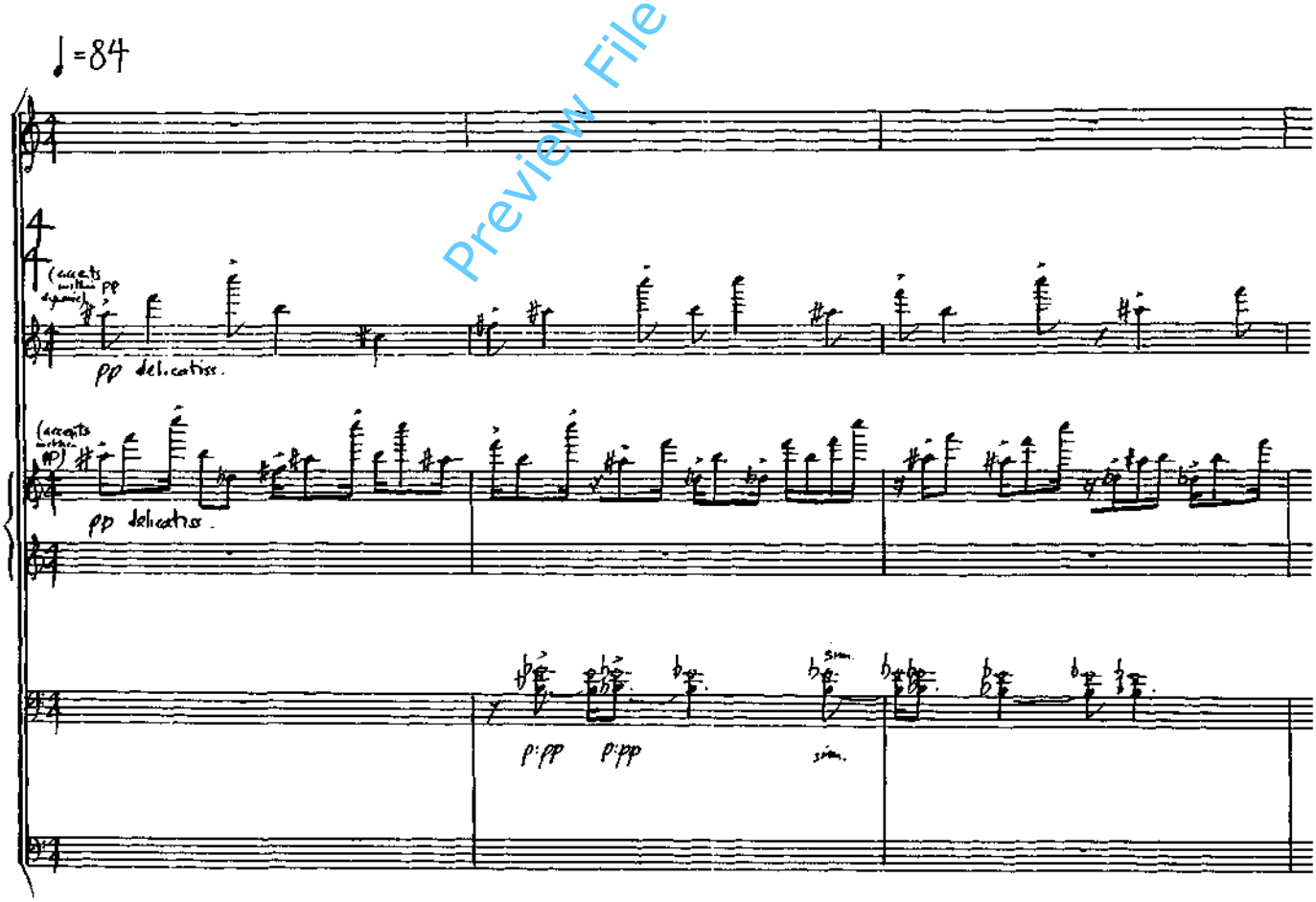

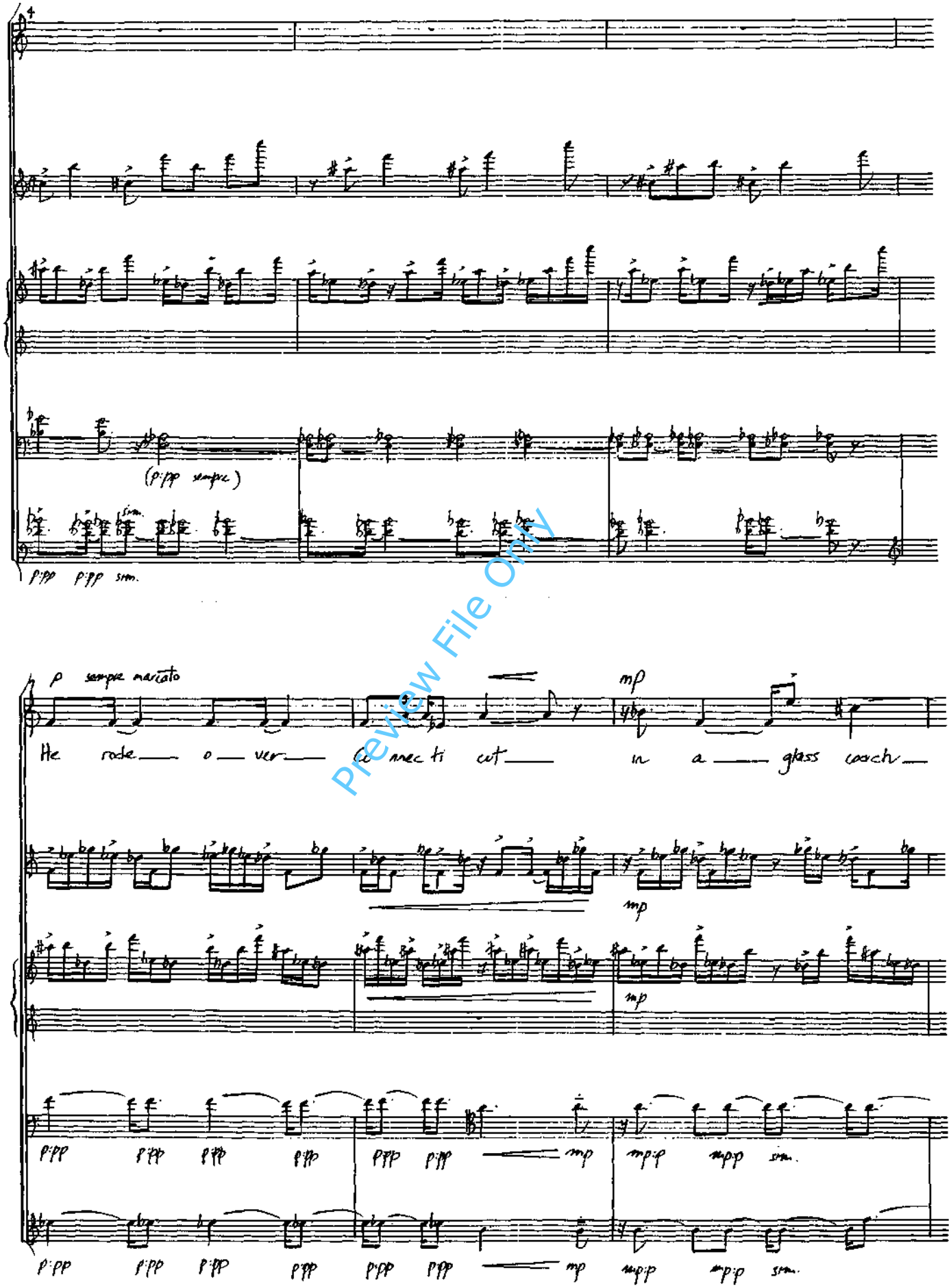

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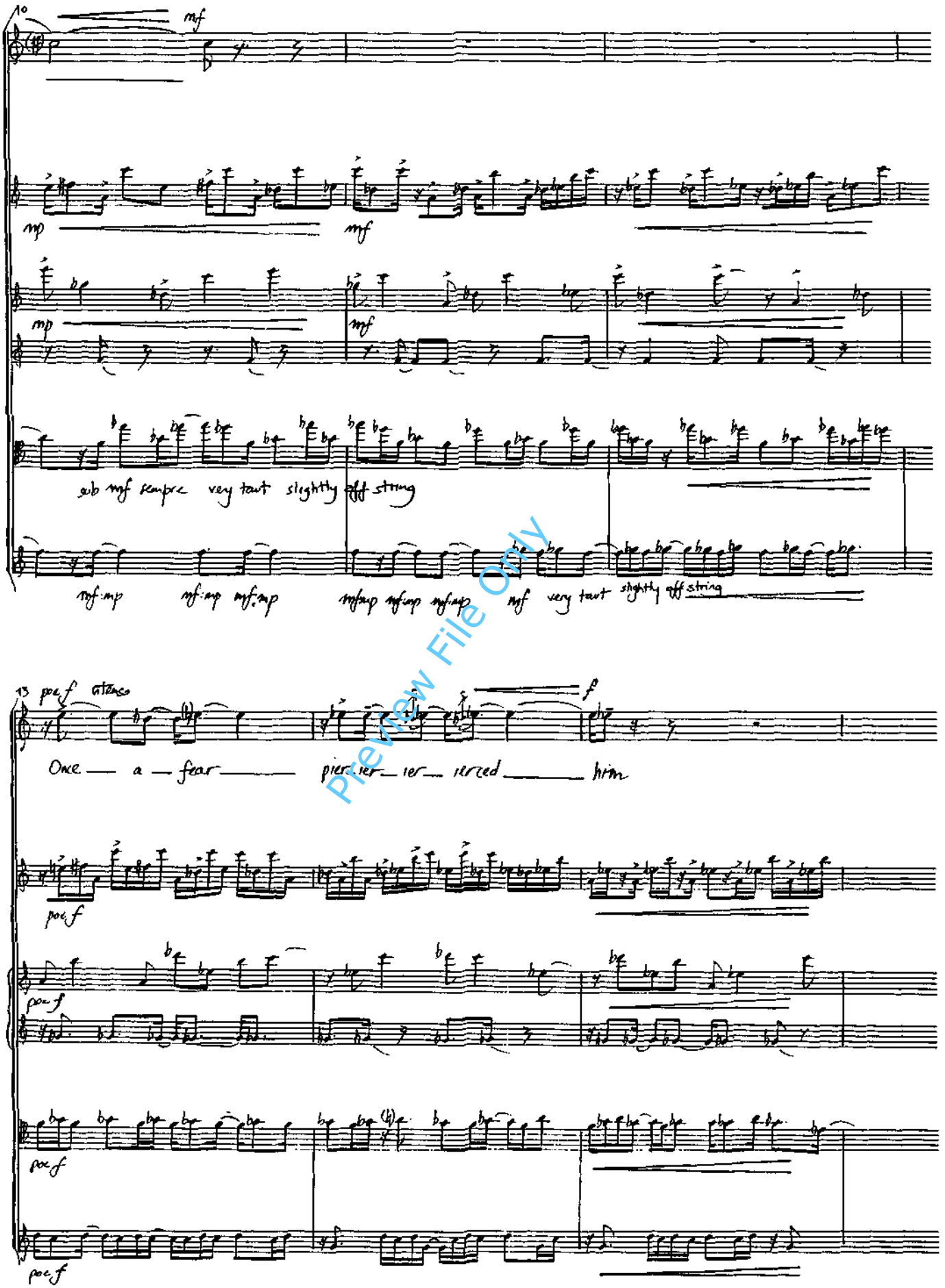

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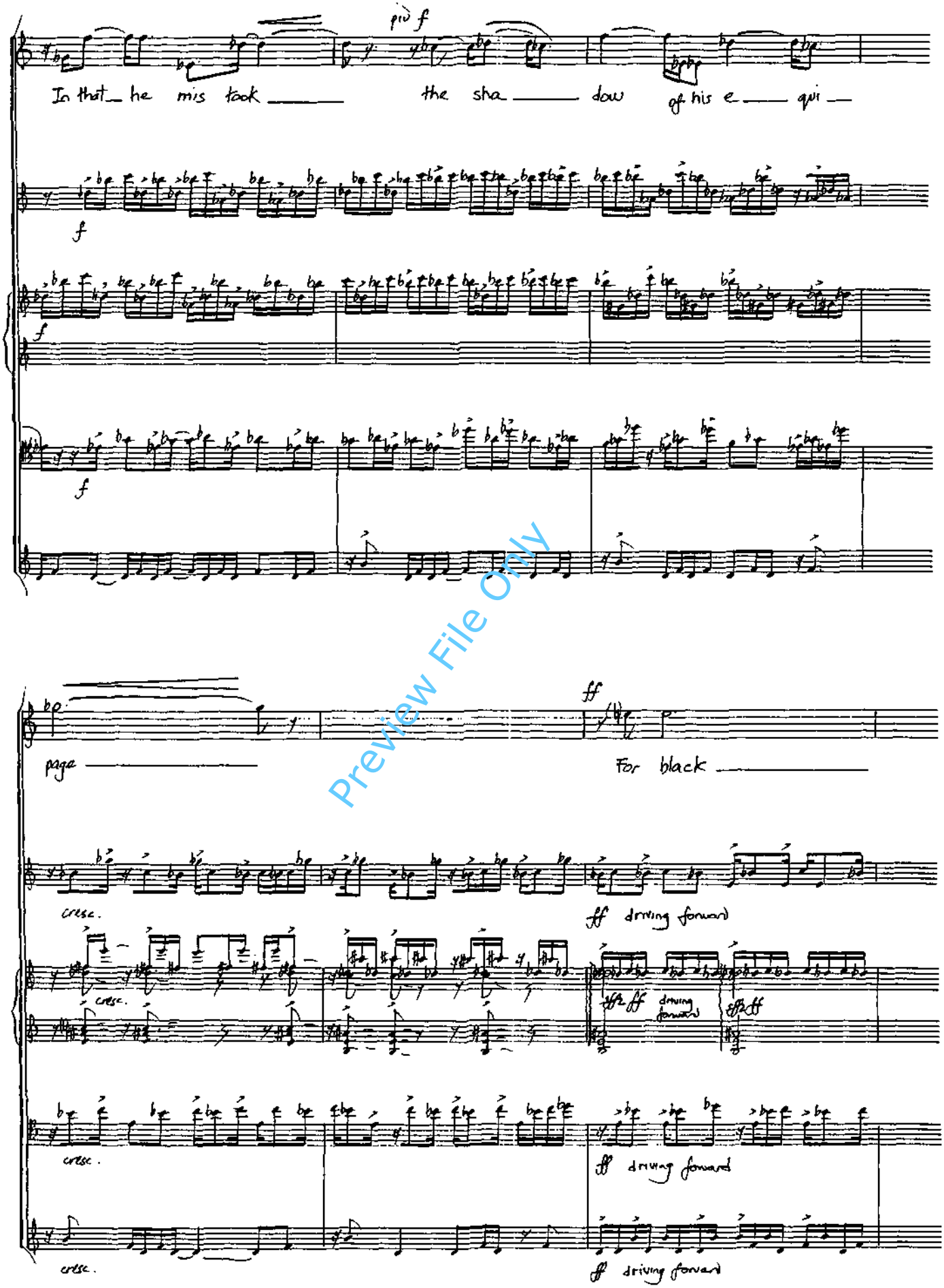

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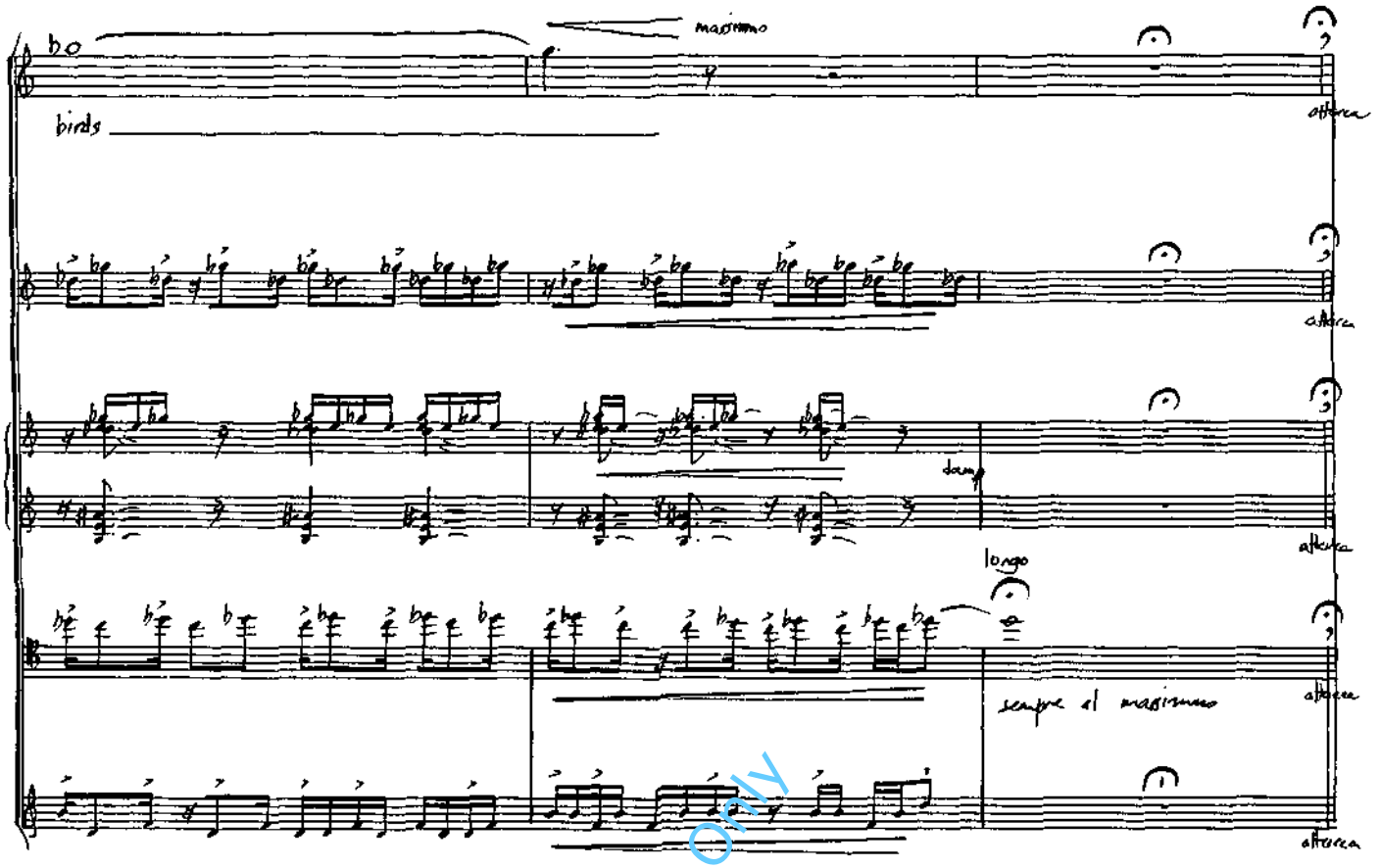

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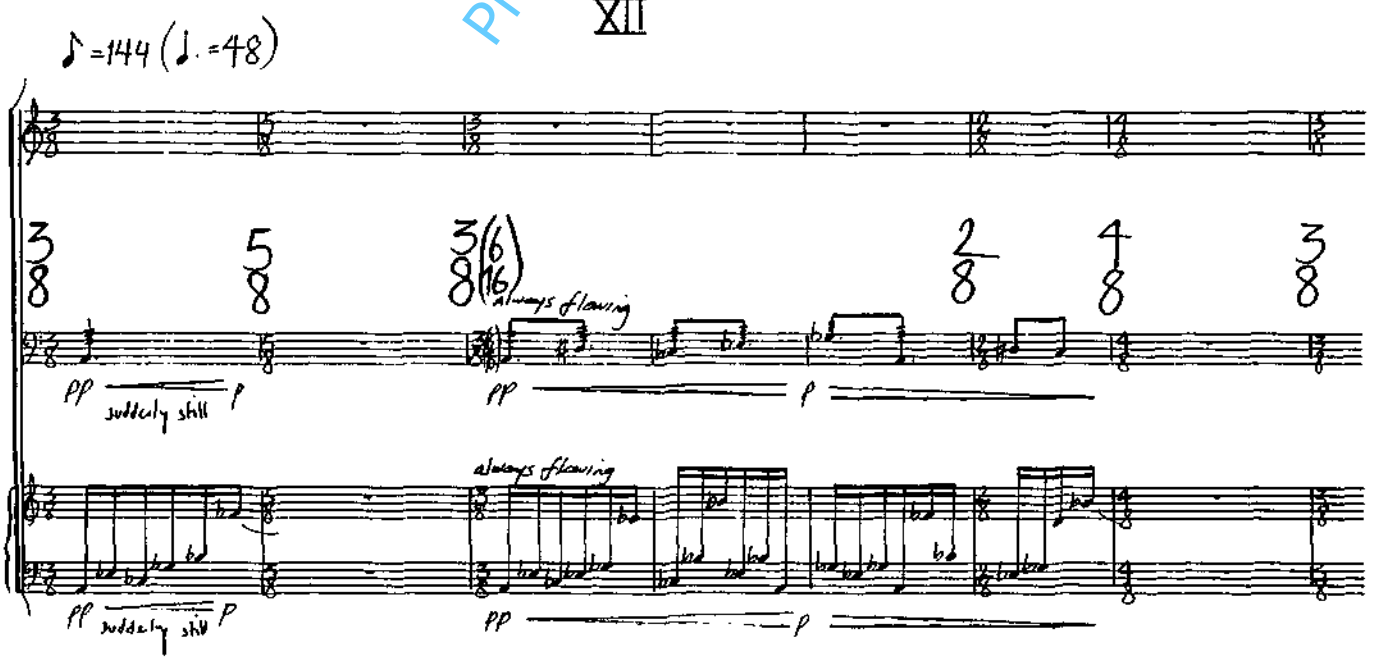
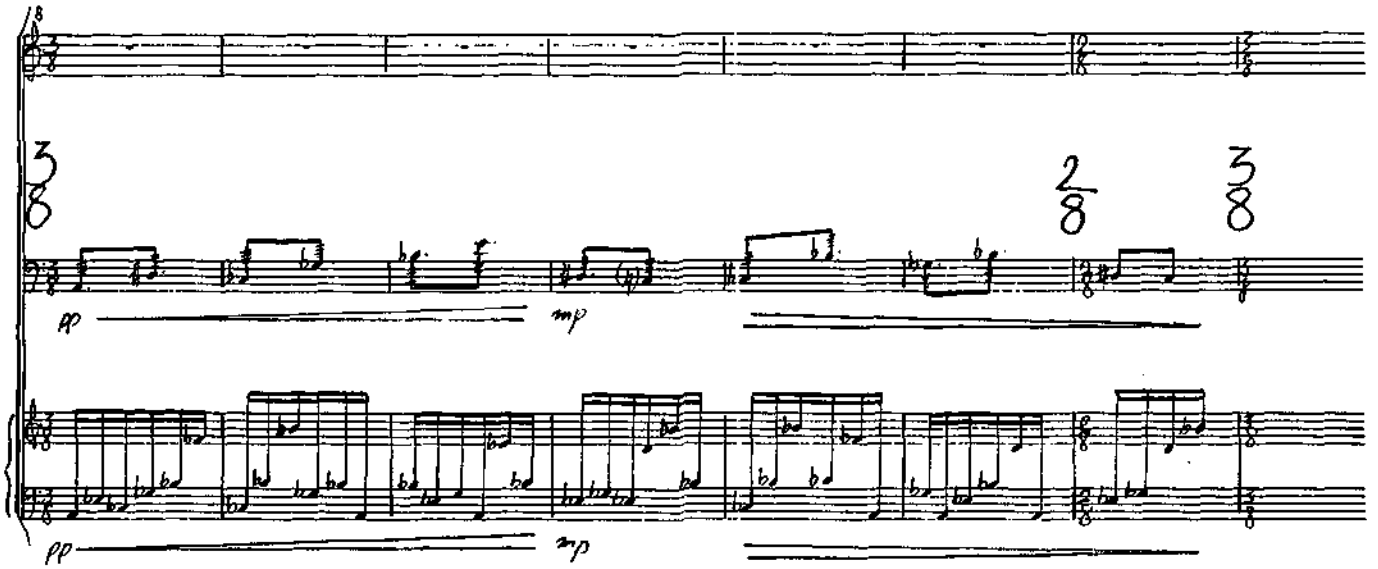
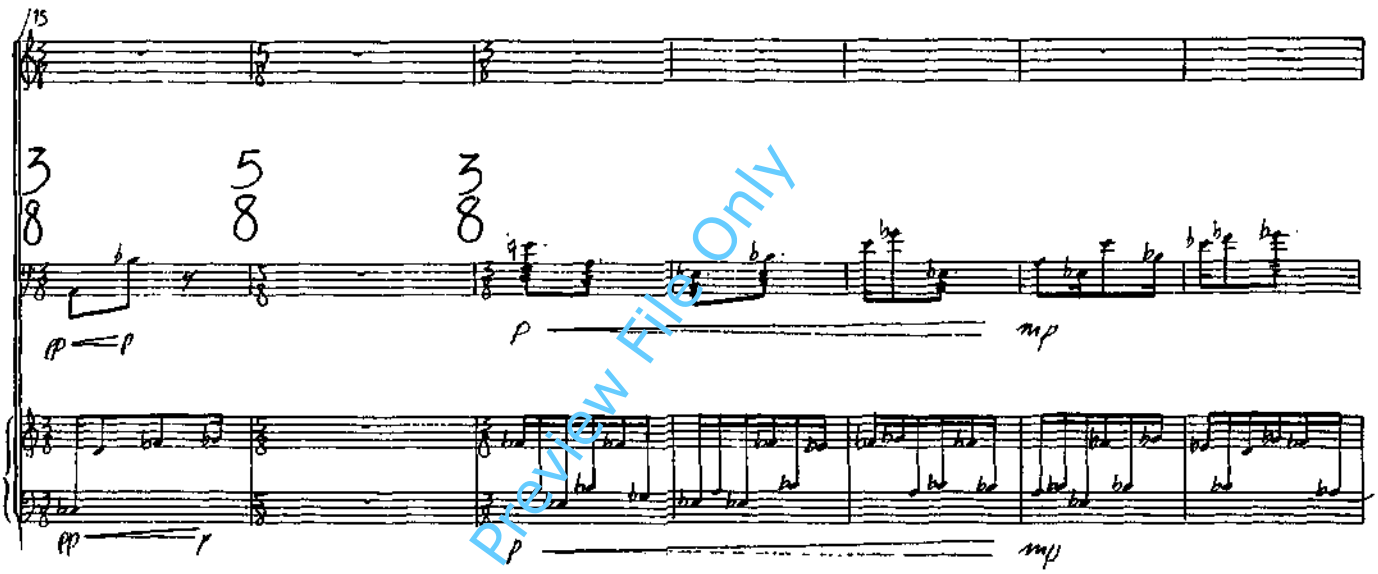
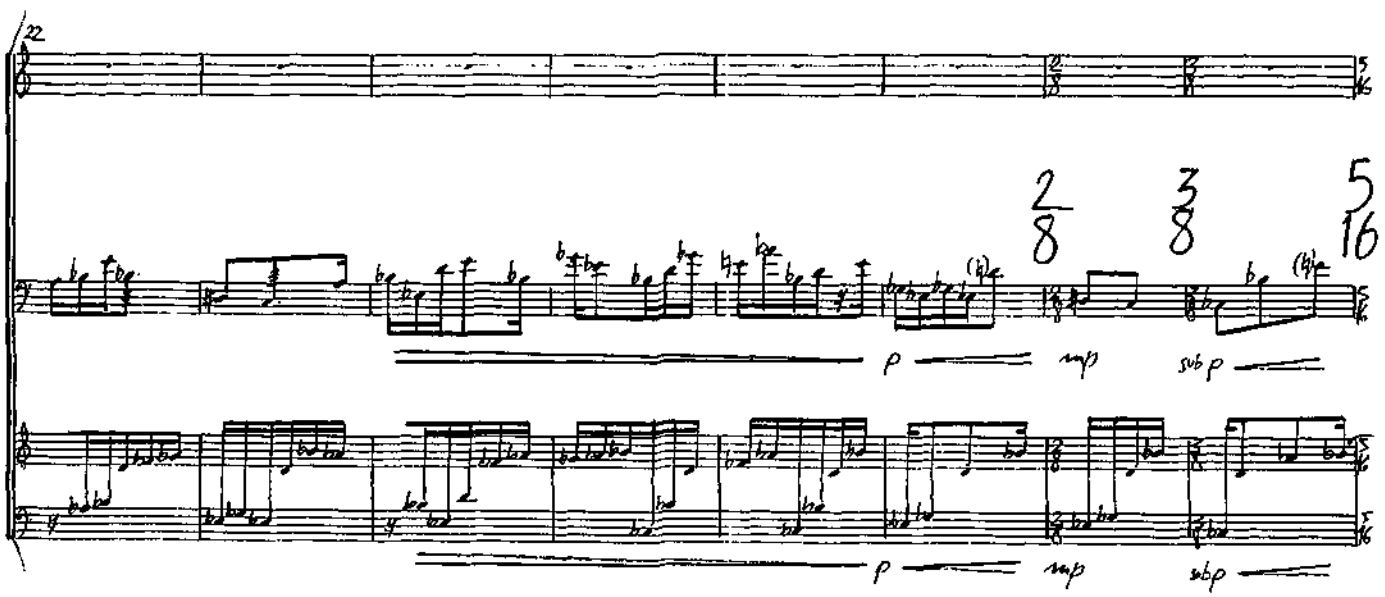
XII









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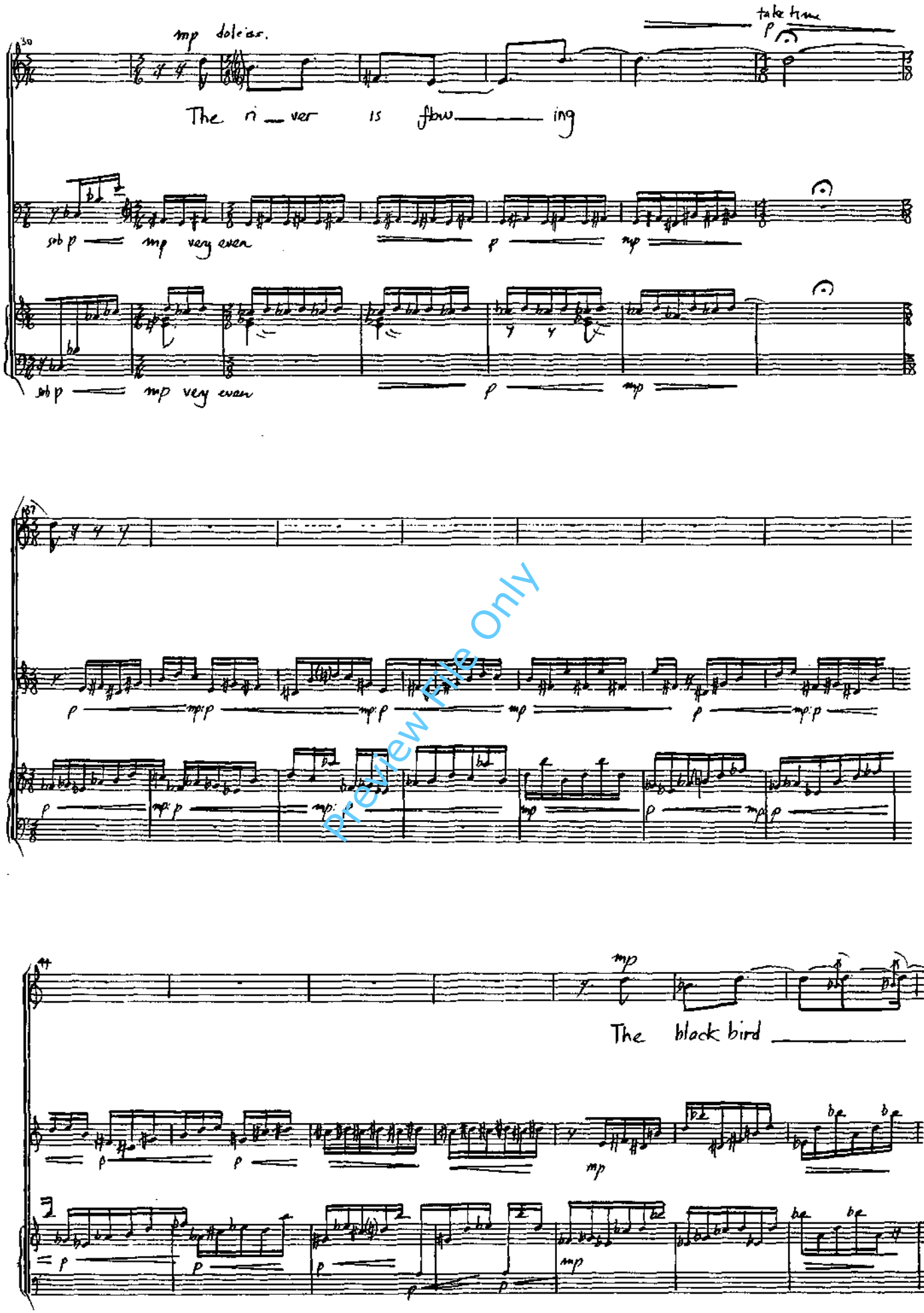

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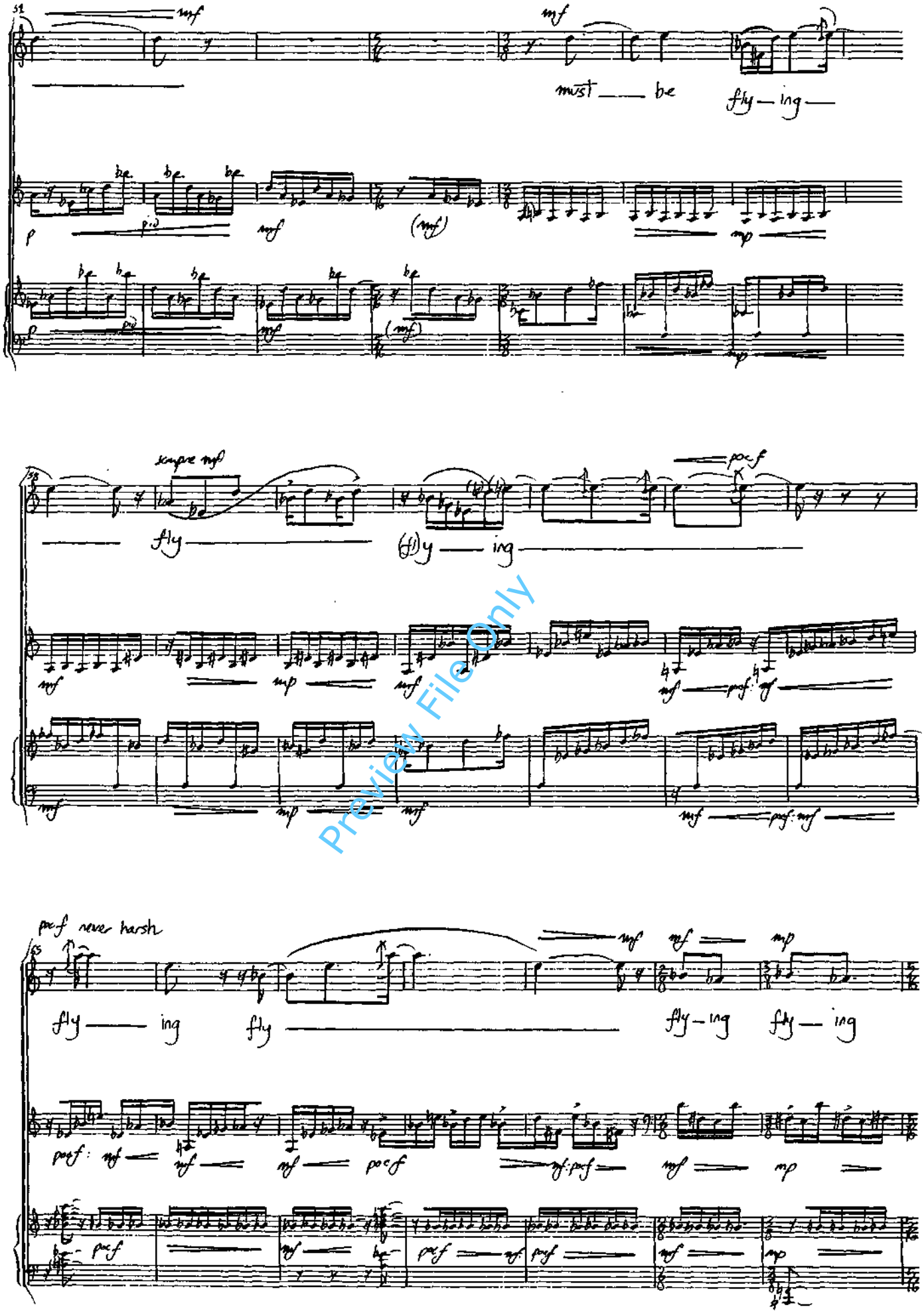

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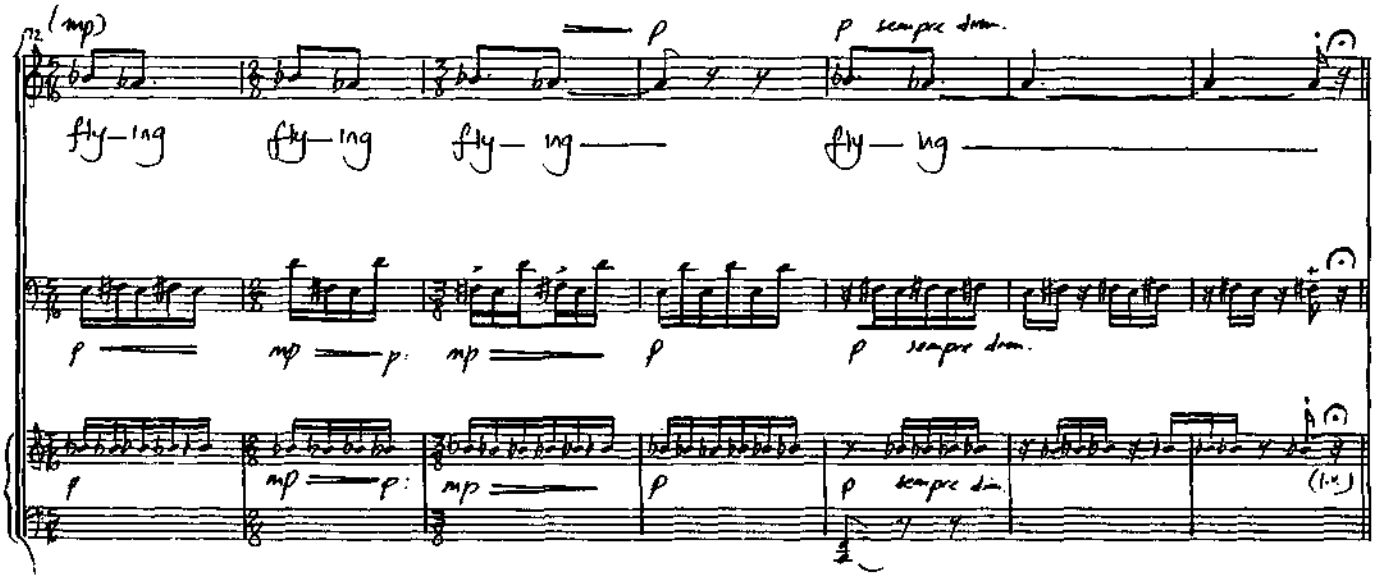
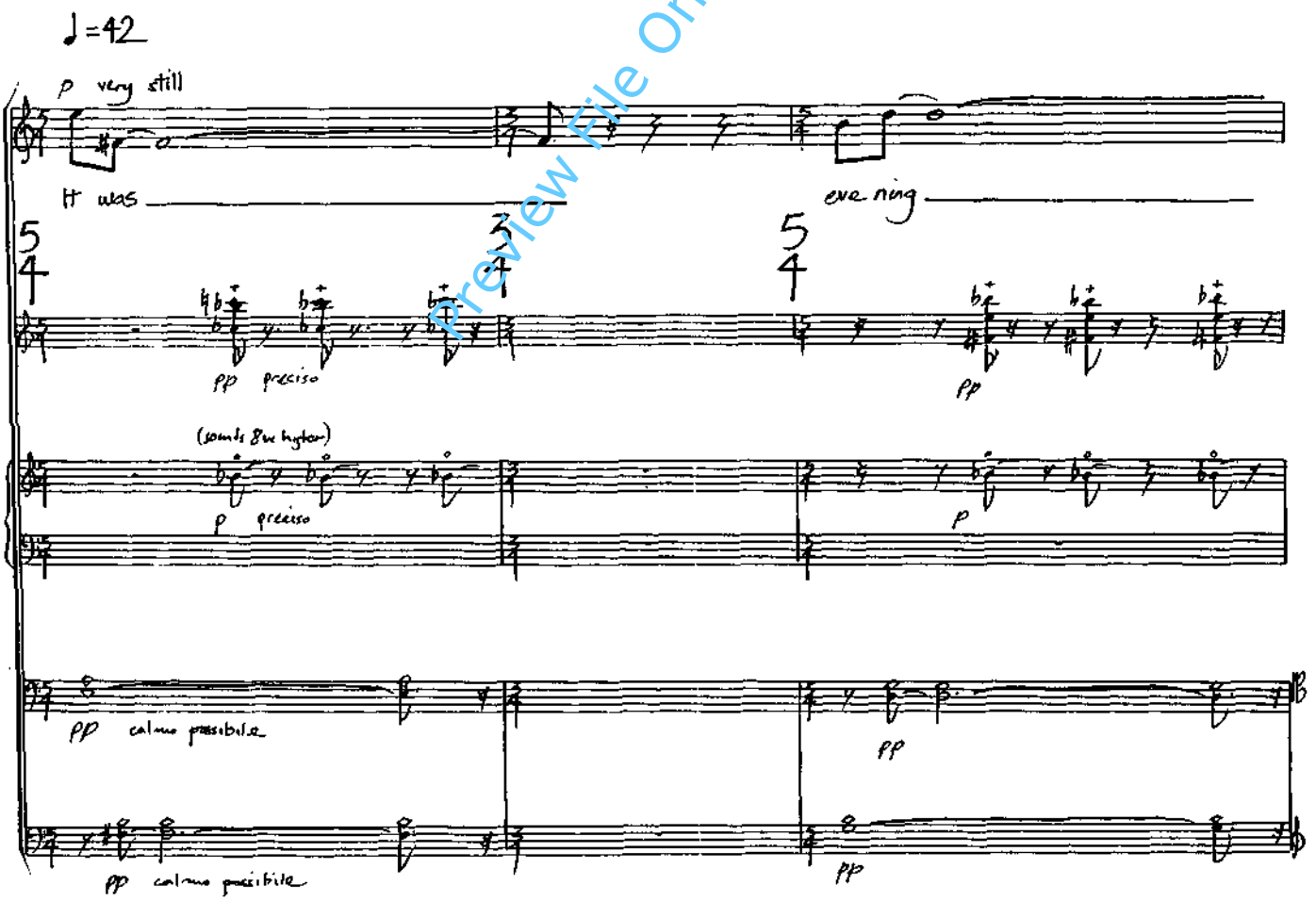


XIII



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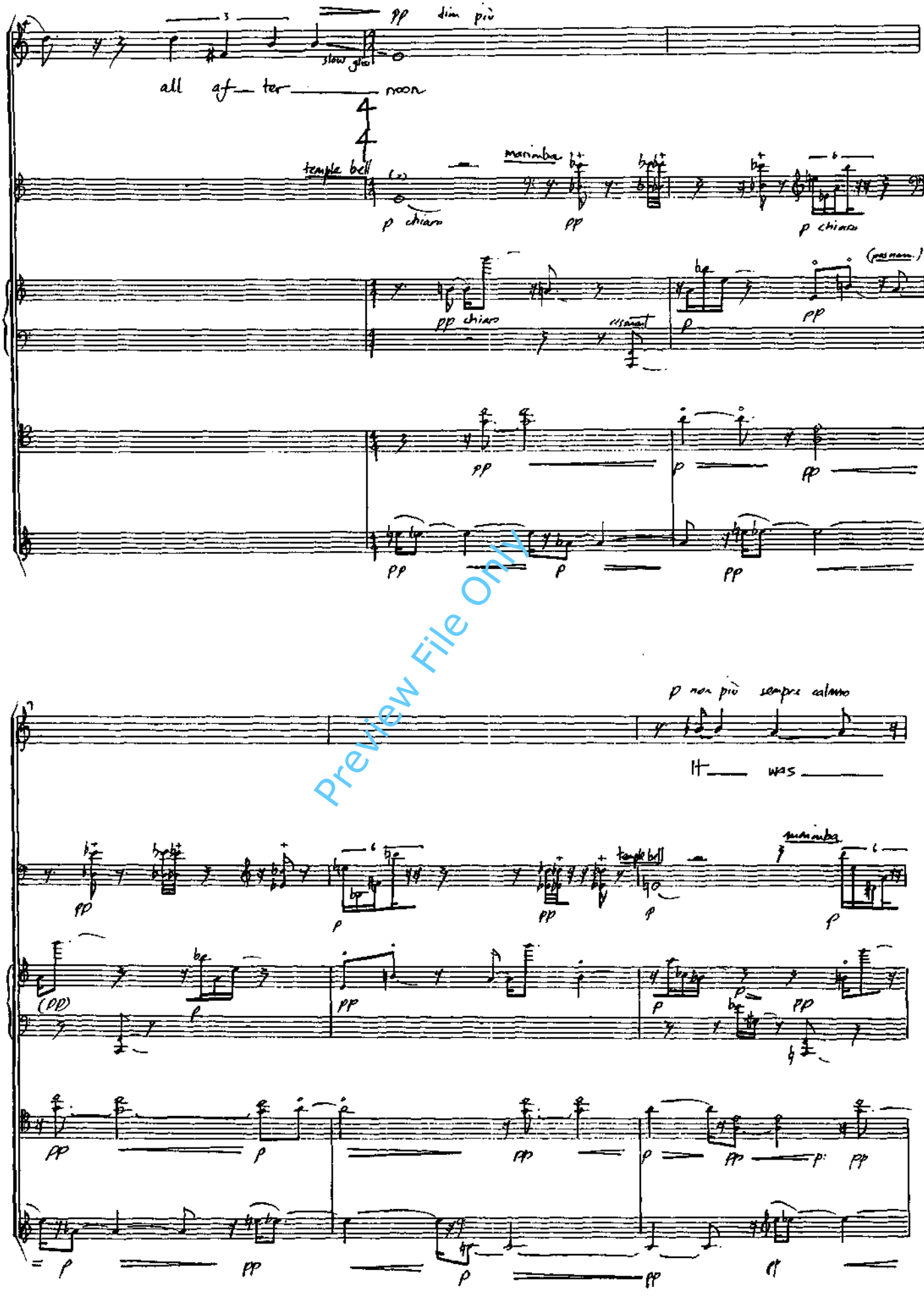

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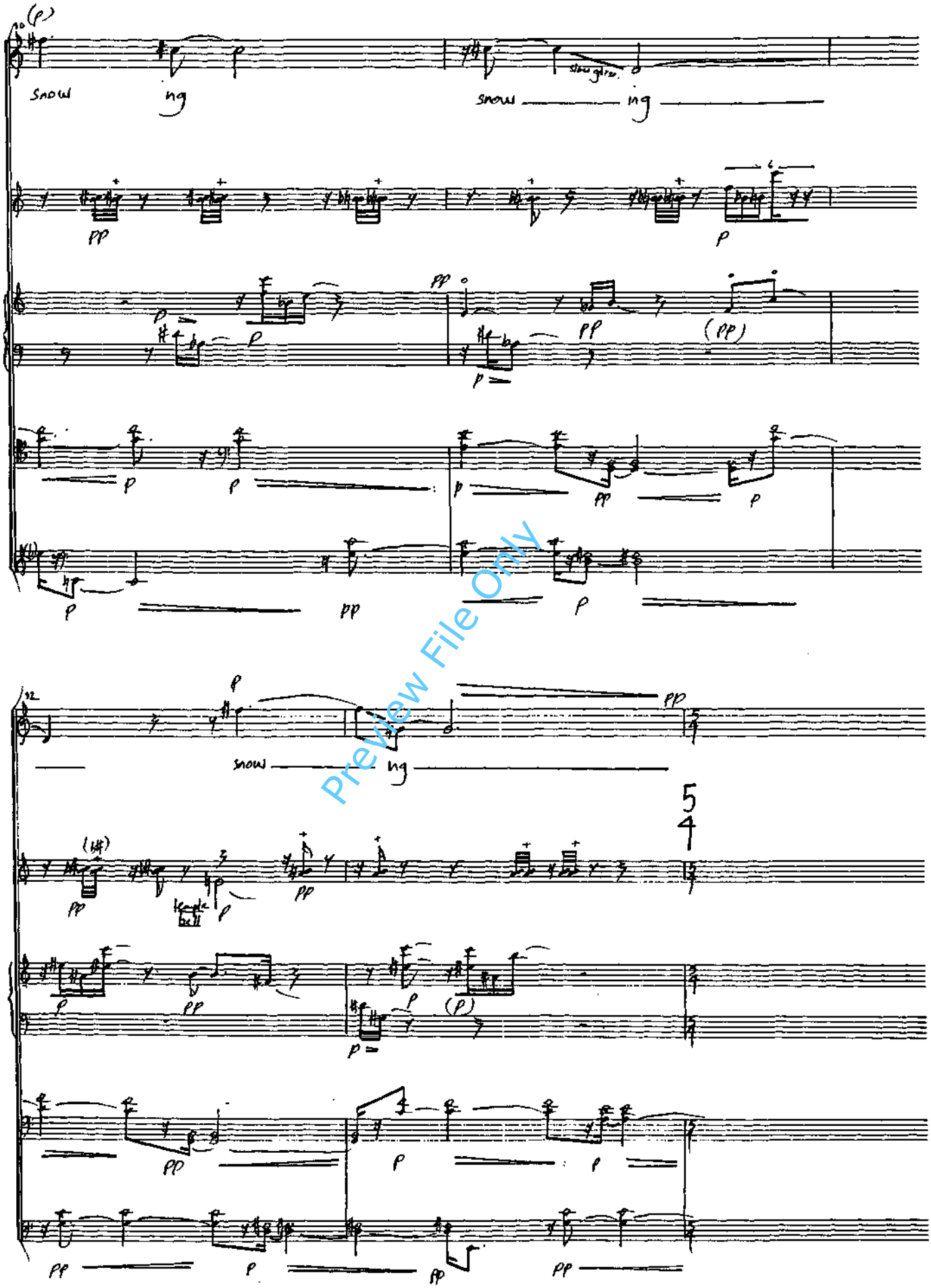

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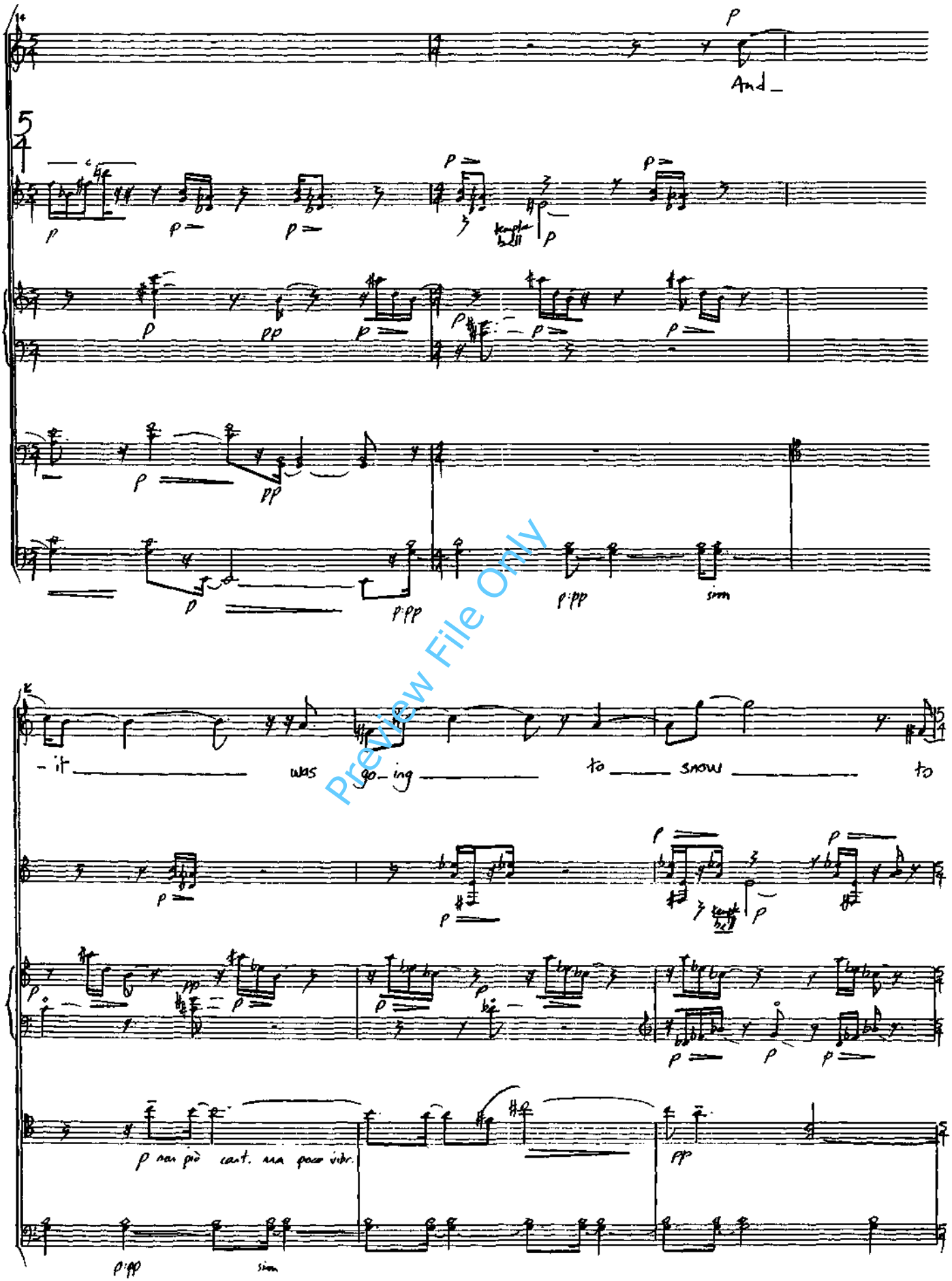

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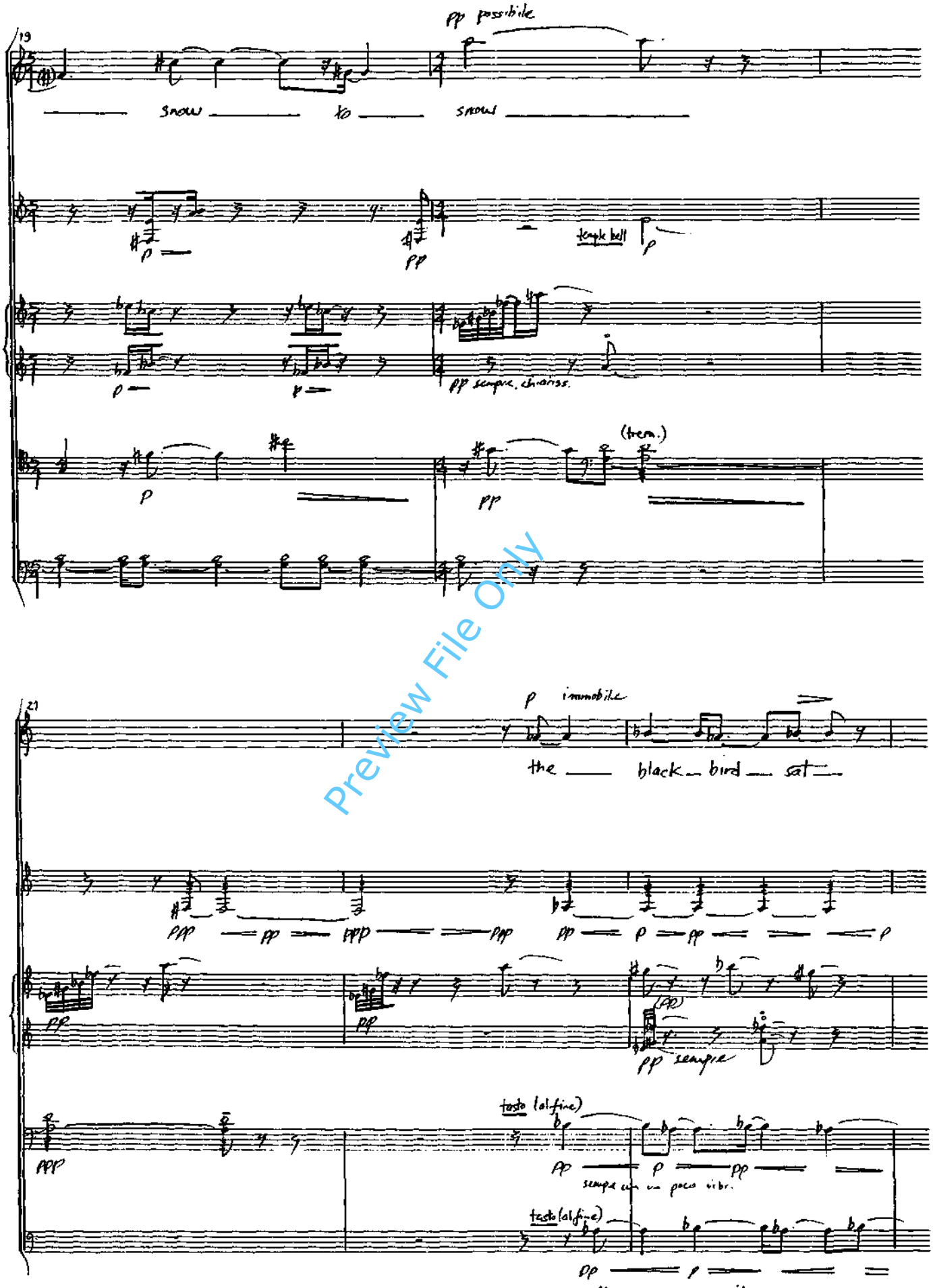

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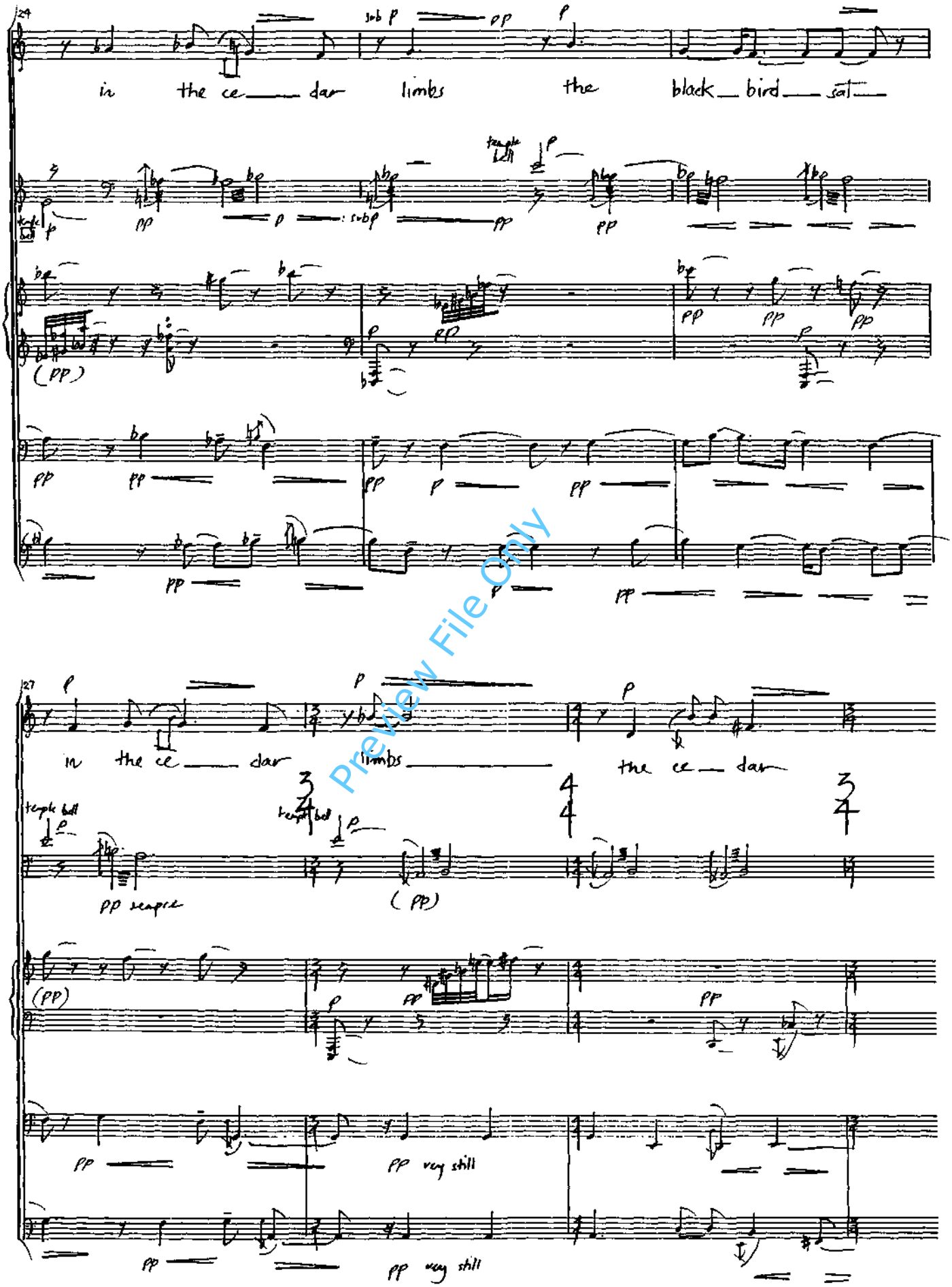

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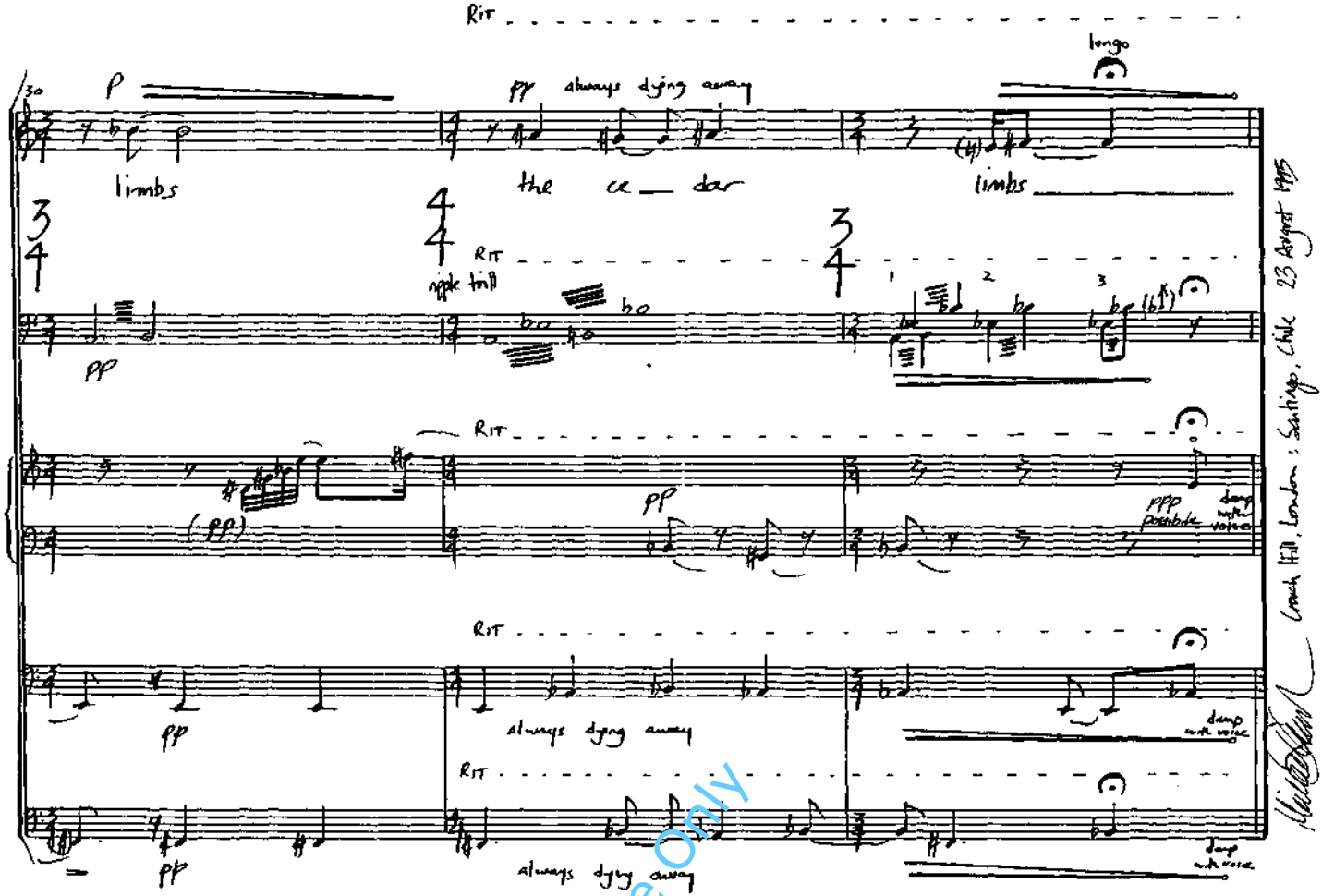

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