(duration c. 15 minutes)

Preview File Only

Commissioned by the BBC for the 1995 "Toward the Millenium" series. First performance given by Mary King and the Kreutzer Quartet at Pebble Mill, Birmingham, 17/3/95.

Slow Movement

Waking, he found himself in a train, andante,
With wafers of early sunlight blessing the unknown fields
And yesterday cancelled out, except for yesterday's papers
    Huddling under the seat.

It is still very early, this is a slow movement;
The viola-player's hand like a fish in a glass tank
Rises, remains quivering, darts away
    To nibble invisible weeds.

Great white nebulae lurch against the window
To deploy across the valley, the children are not yet up
To wave us on - we pass without spectators,
    Braiding a voiceless creed.

And the girl opposite, name unknown, is still
Asleep and the colour of her eyes unknown
Which might be wells of sun or moons of wish
    But it is still very early.

The movement ends, the train has come to a stop
In buttercup fields, the fiddles are silent, the whole
Shoal of silver tessellates the aquarium
    Floor, not a bubble rises...

And what happens next on the programme we do not know,
If, the red line topped on the gauge, the fish will go mad in the tank
Accelerando con forza, the sleeper opens her eyes
    And, so doing, open ours.

Preview File Only

Corner seat

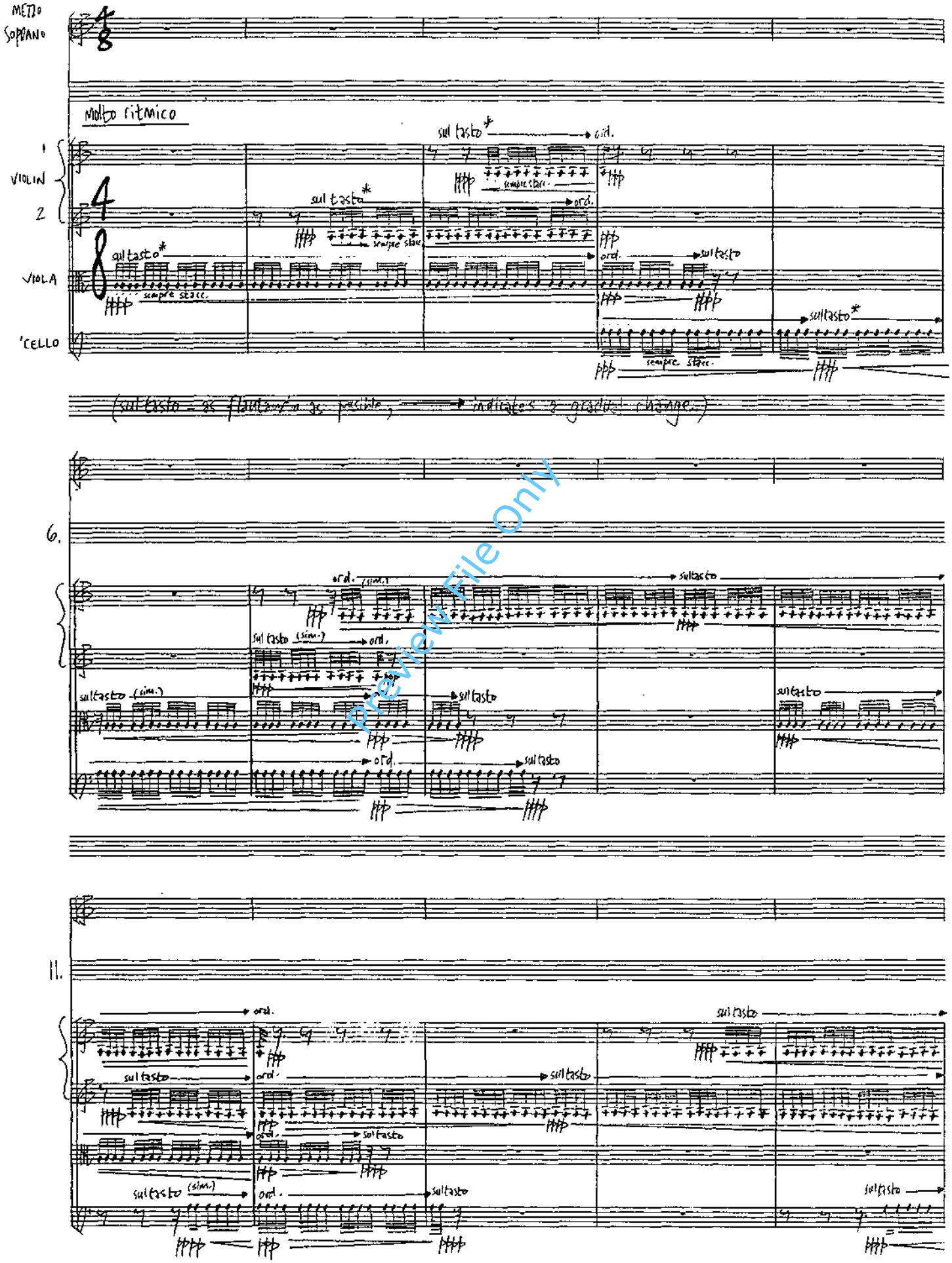
Suspended in a moving night
The face in the reflected train
Looks at first sight as self-assured
As your own face - But look again:

Windows between you and the world
Keep out the cold, keep out the fright;
Then why does your reflection seem
So lonely in the moving night?

Louis MacNeice

i. Slow movement

♪ = c.152



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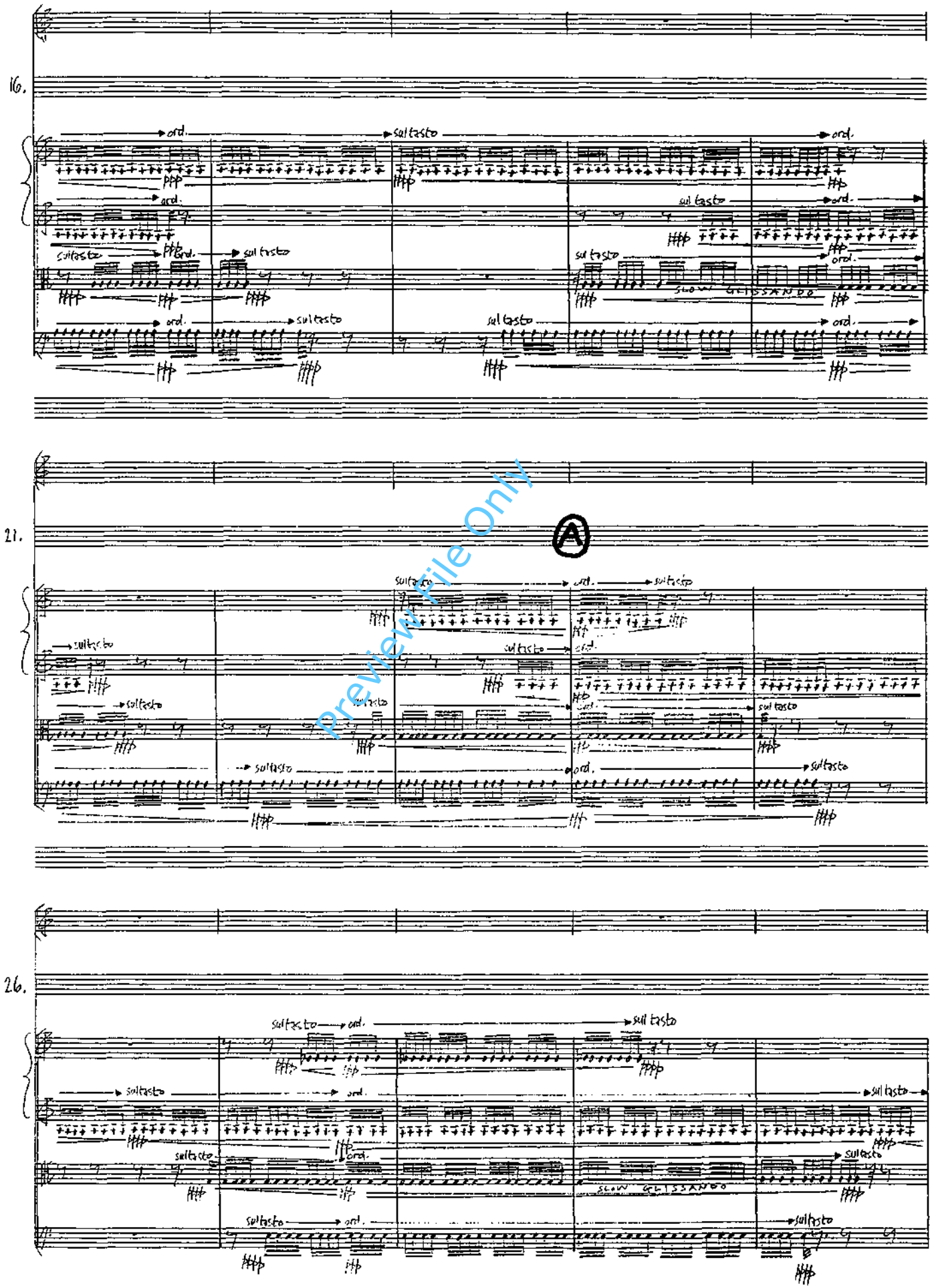

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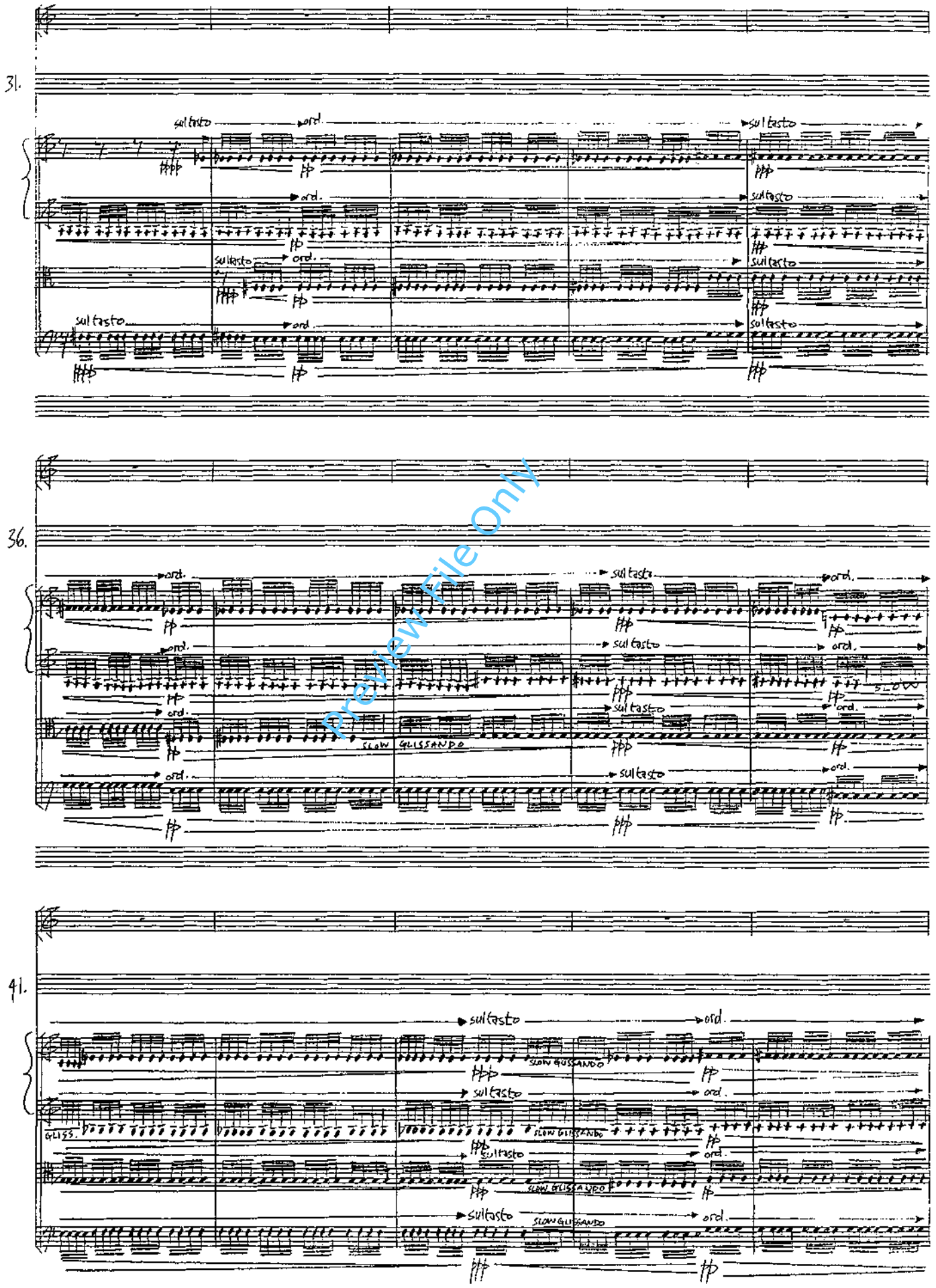

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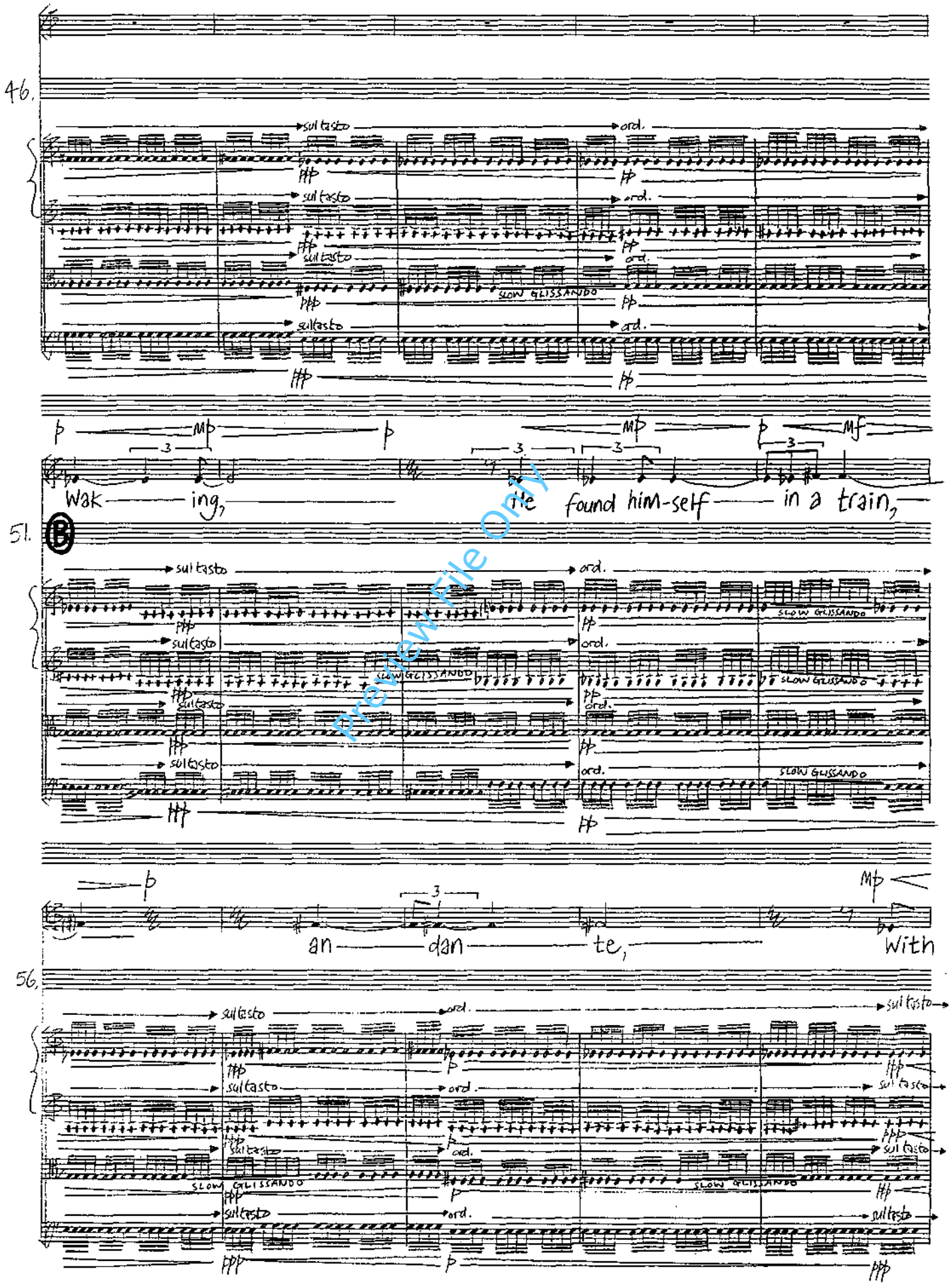

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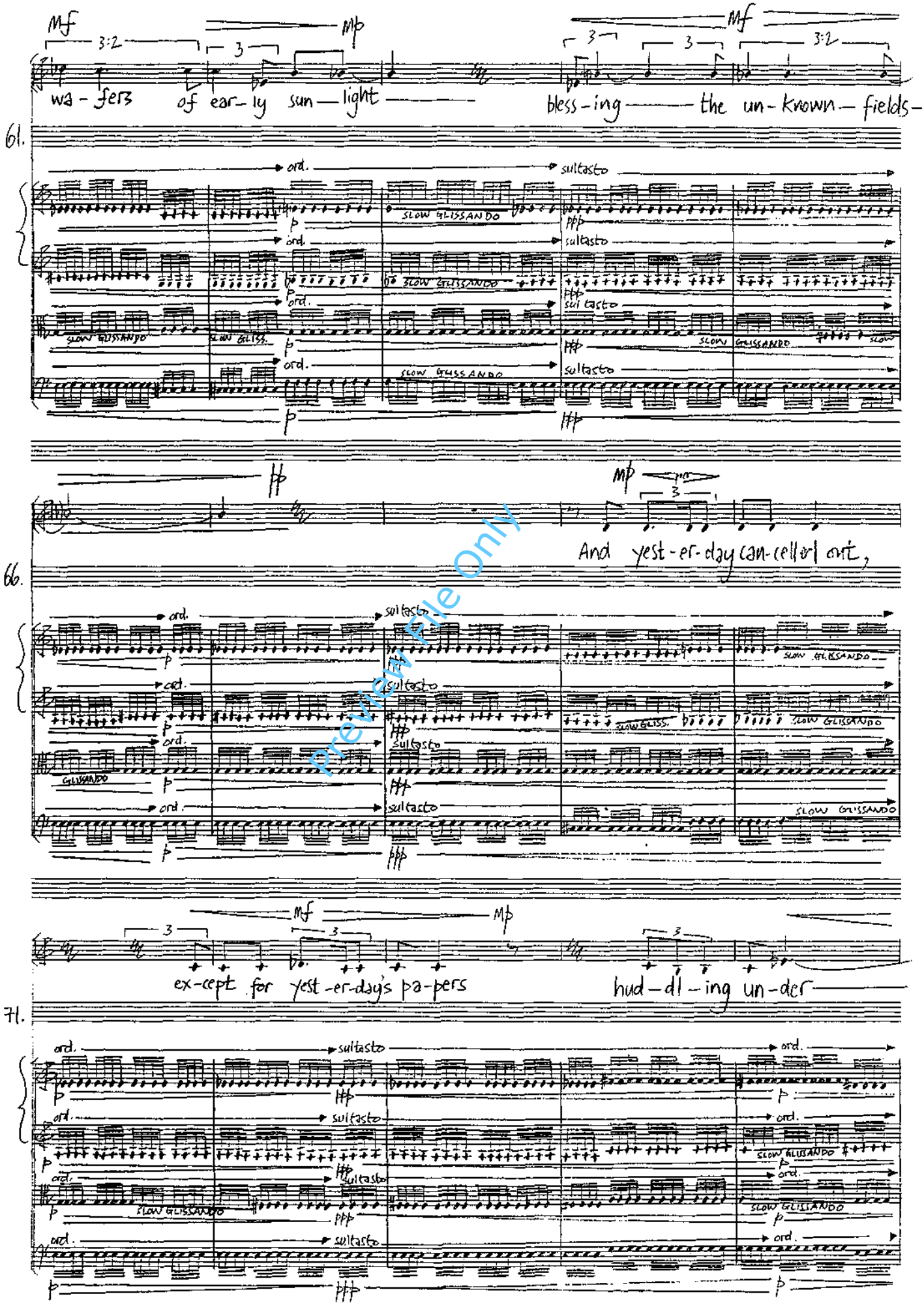

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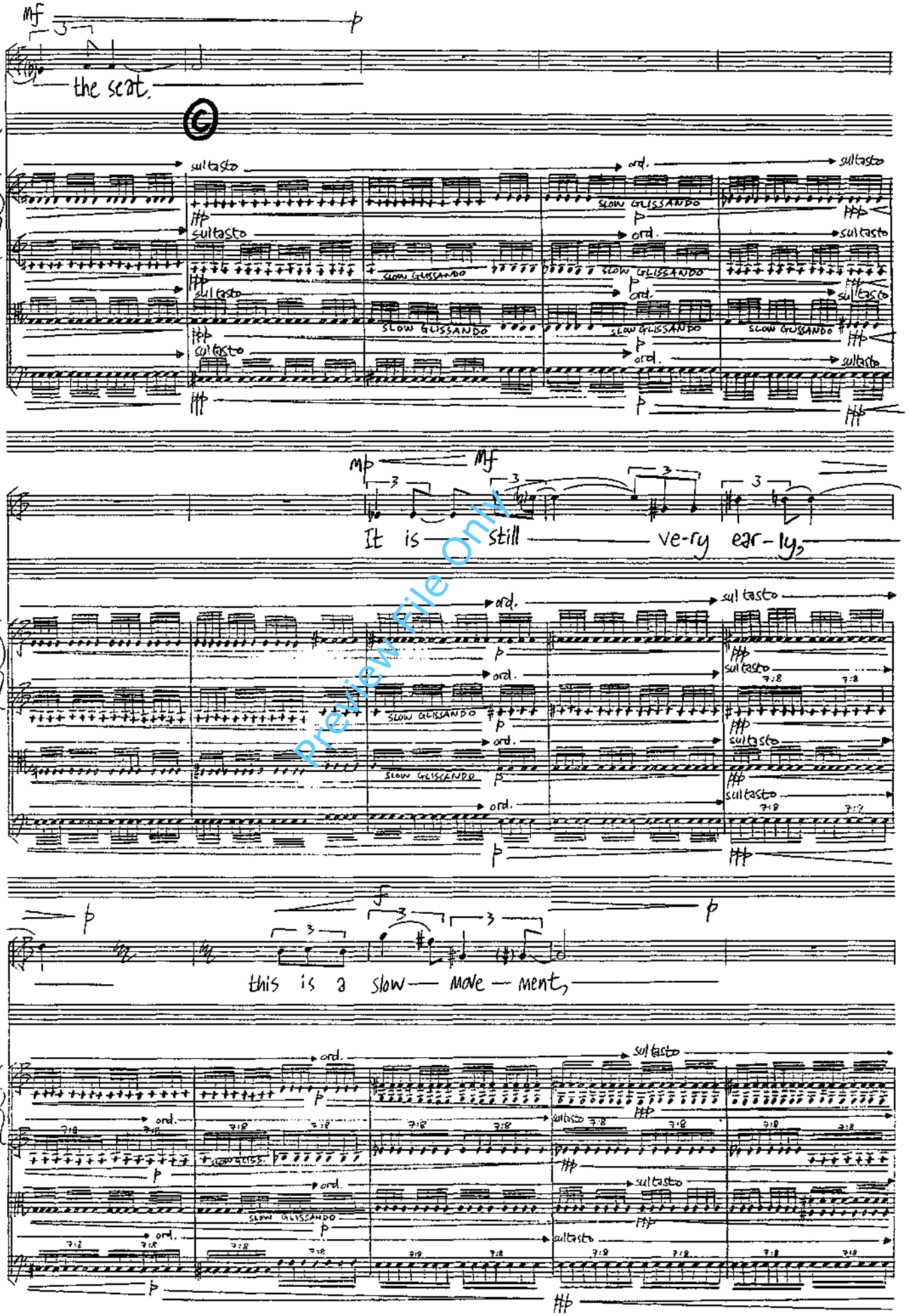

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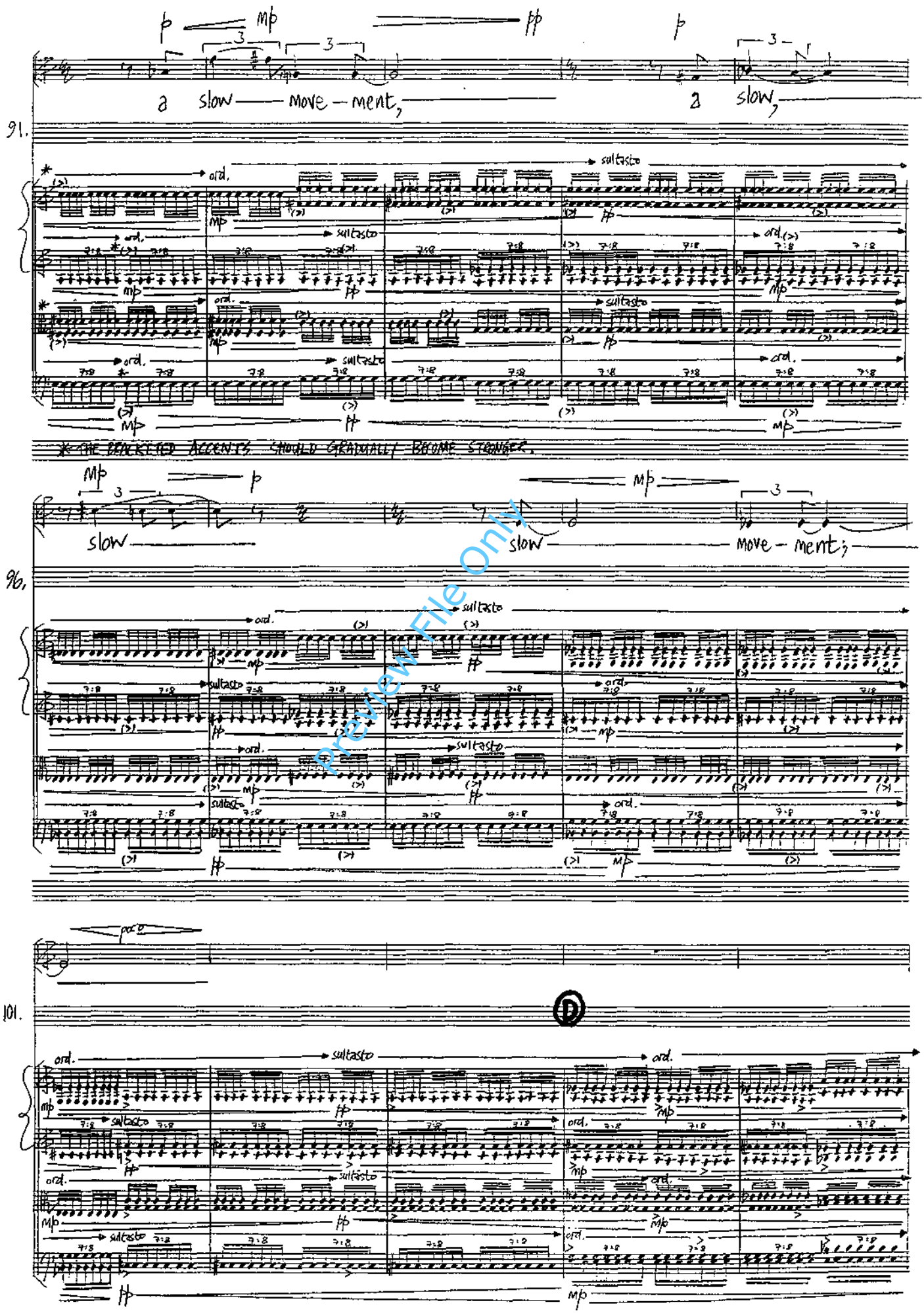

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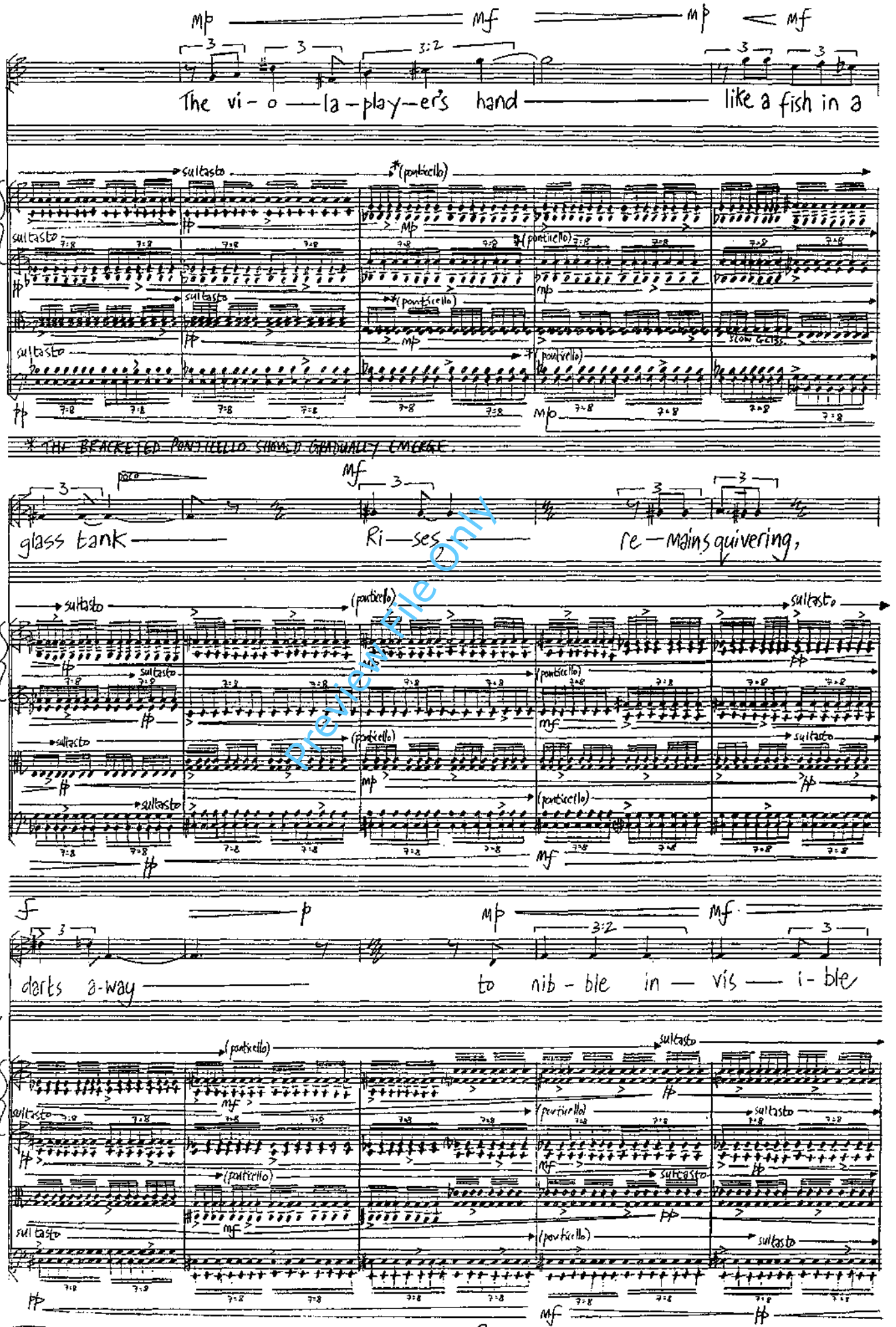

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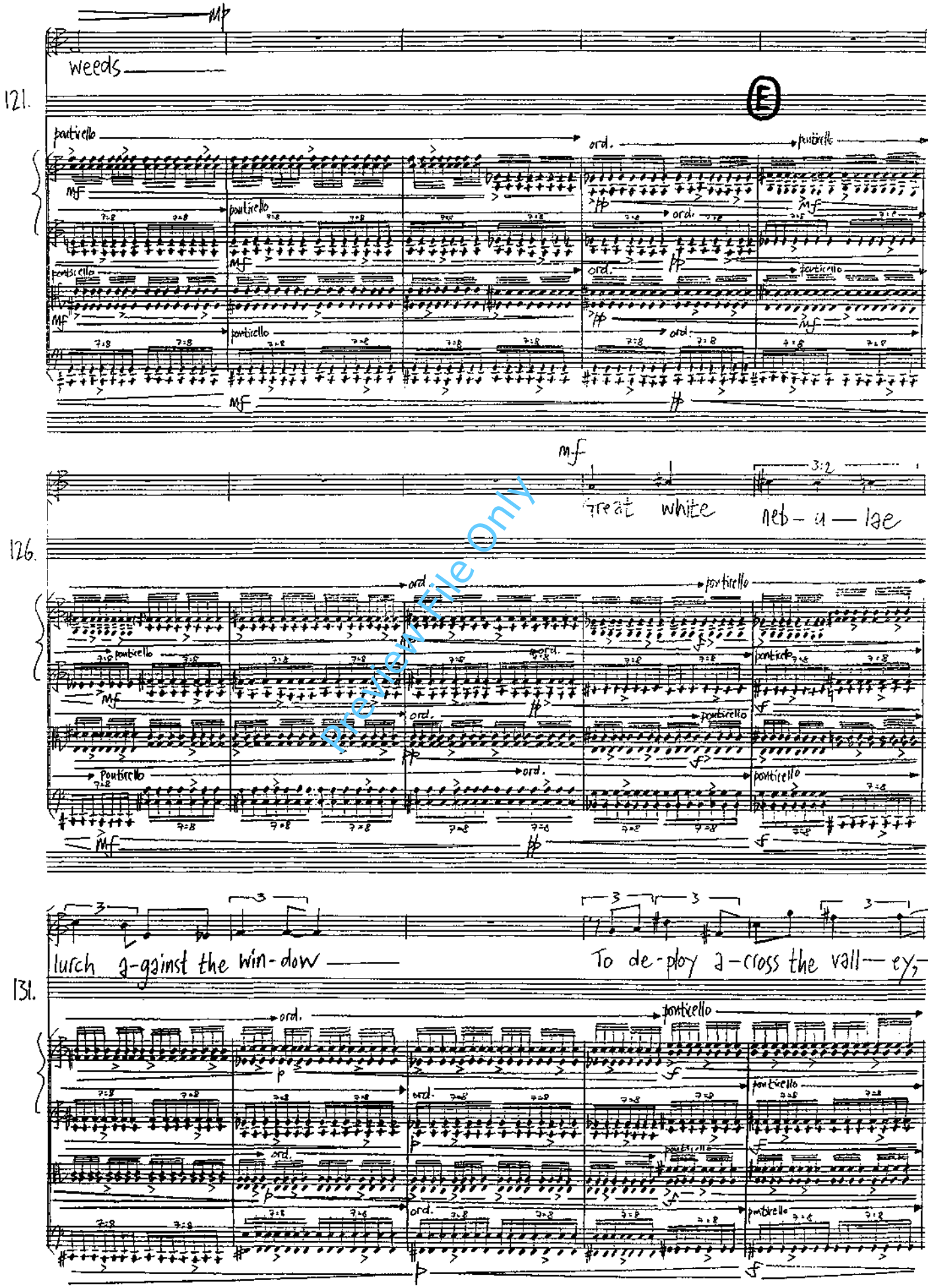

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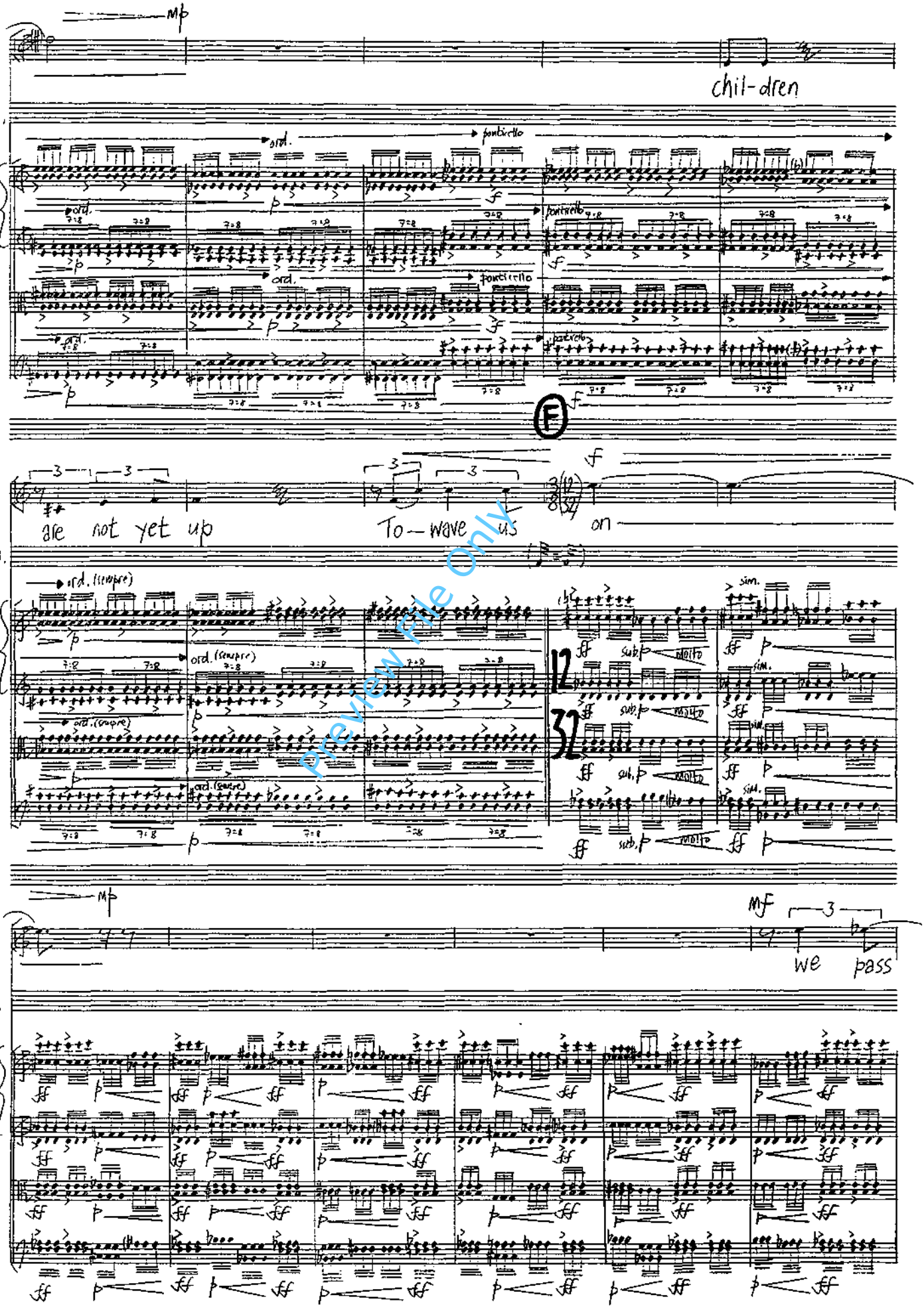

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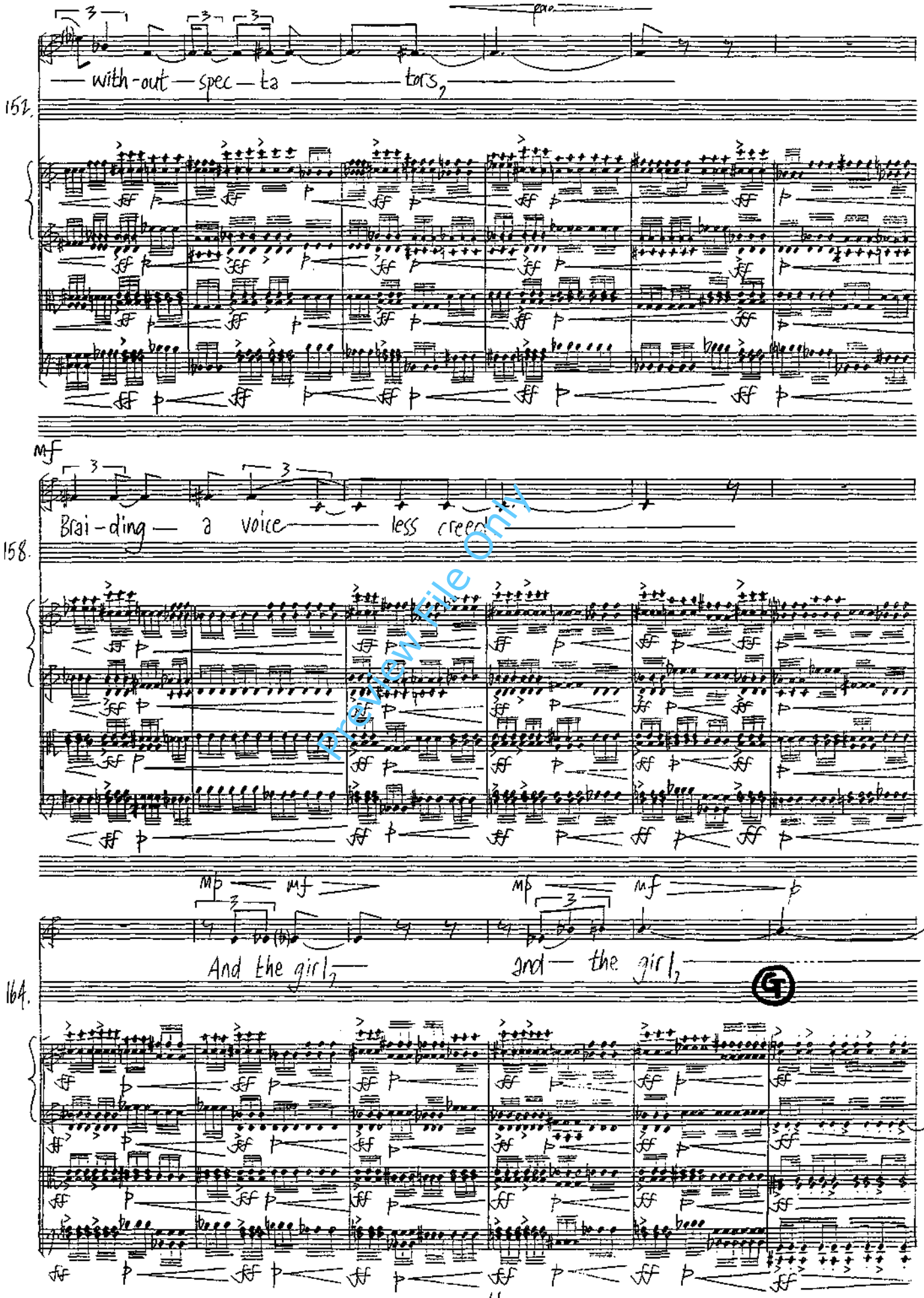

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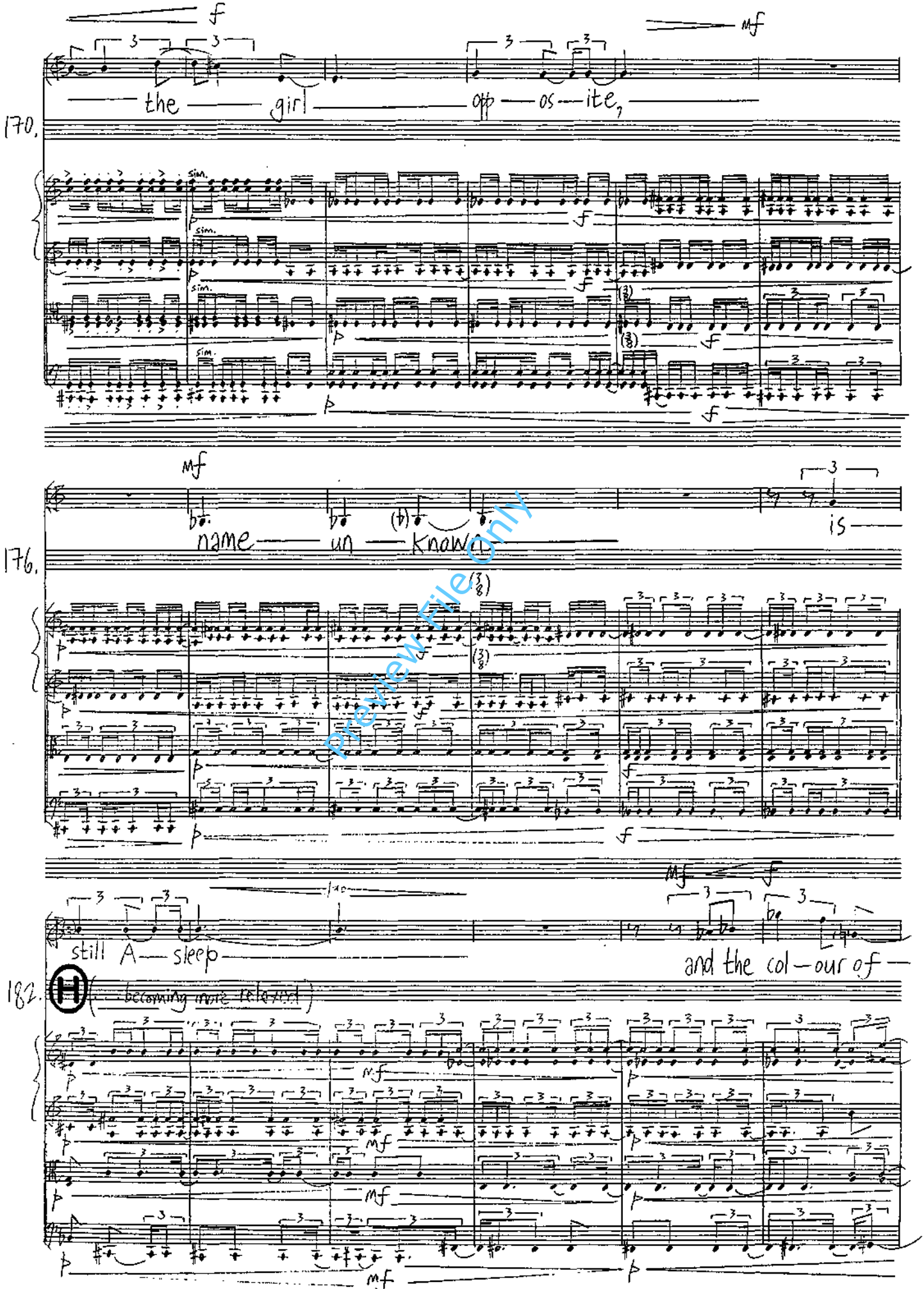

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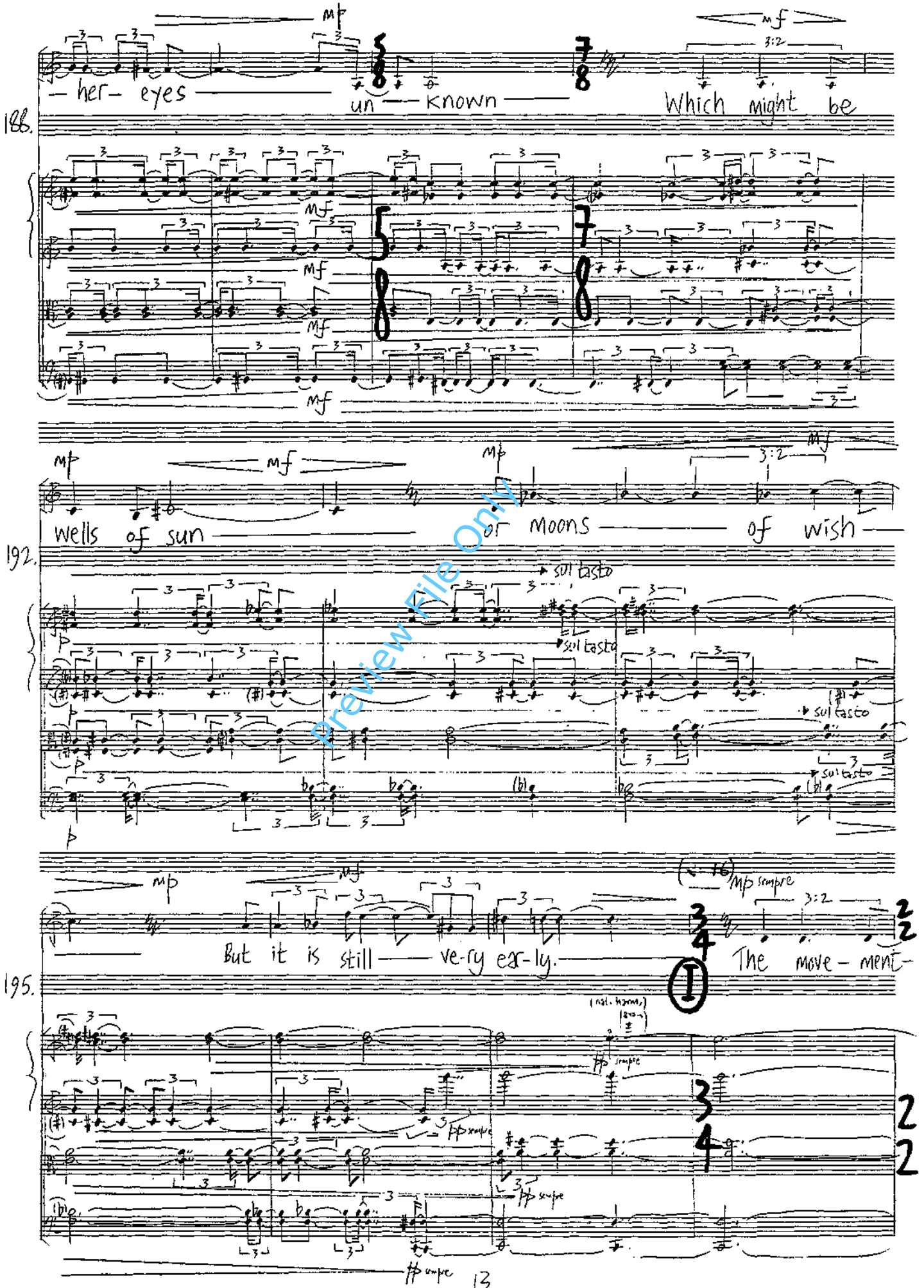

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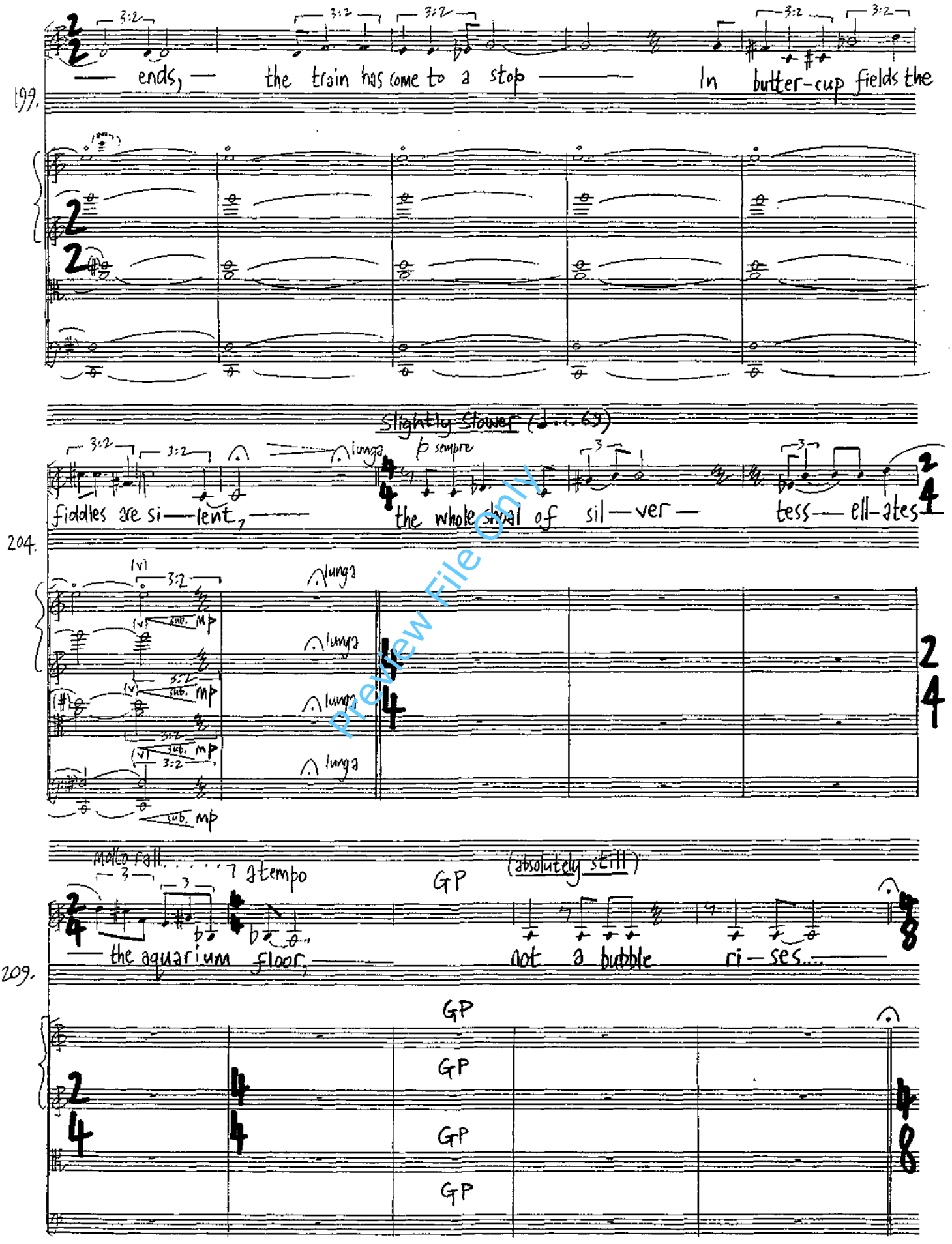

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a tempo (♩=c. 152)

214.

sempre molto stacc.

poco

219.

sub.

poco

224.

J

sempre molto stacc

poco

poco

poco

poco

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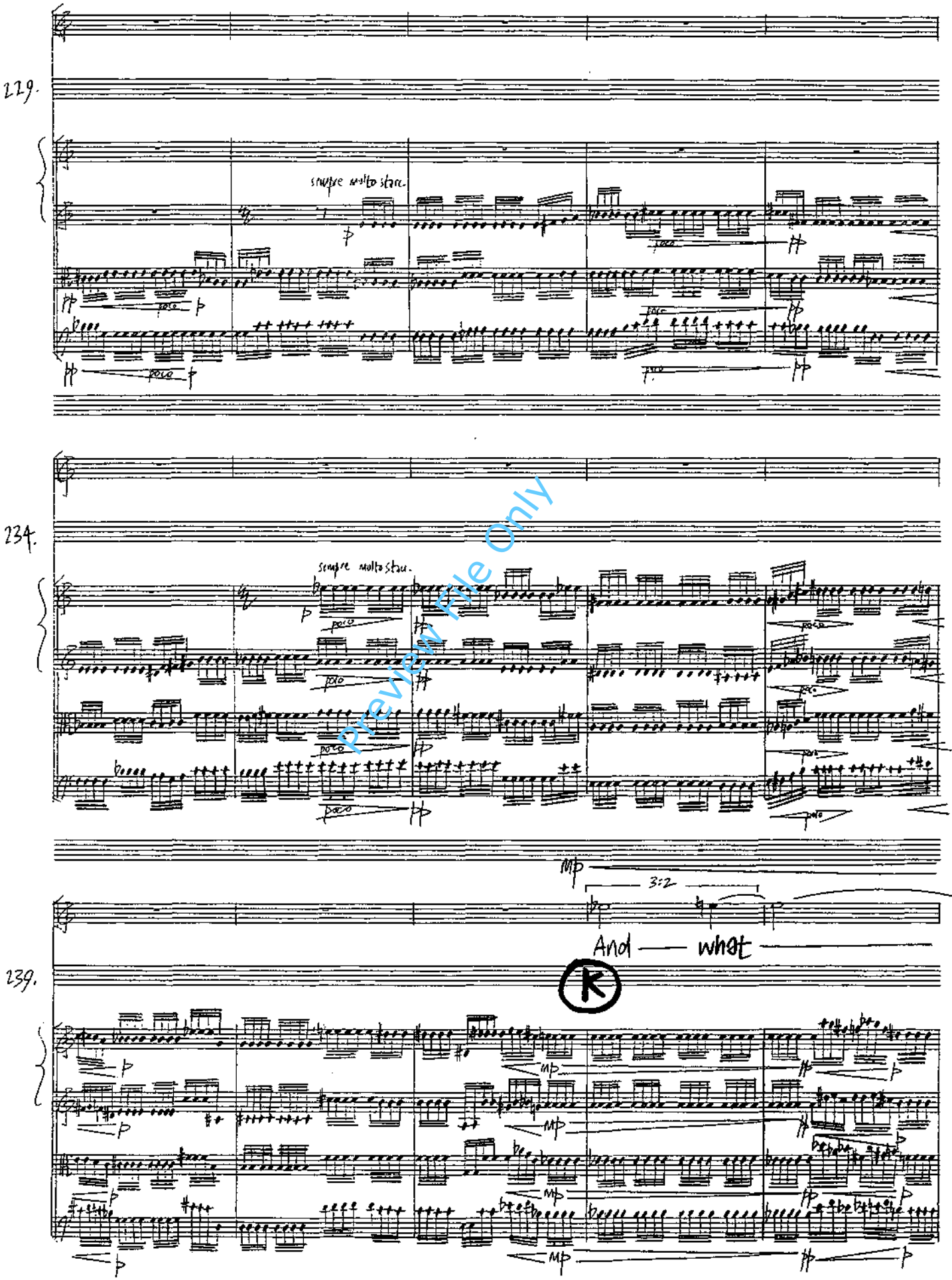

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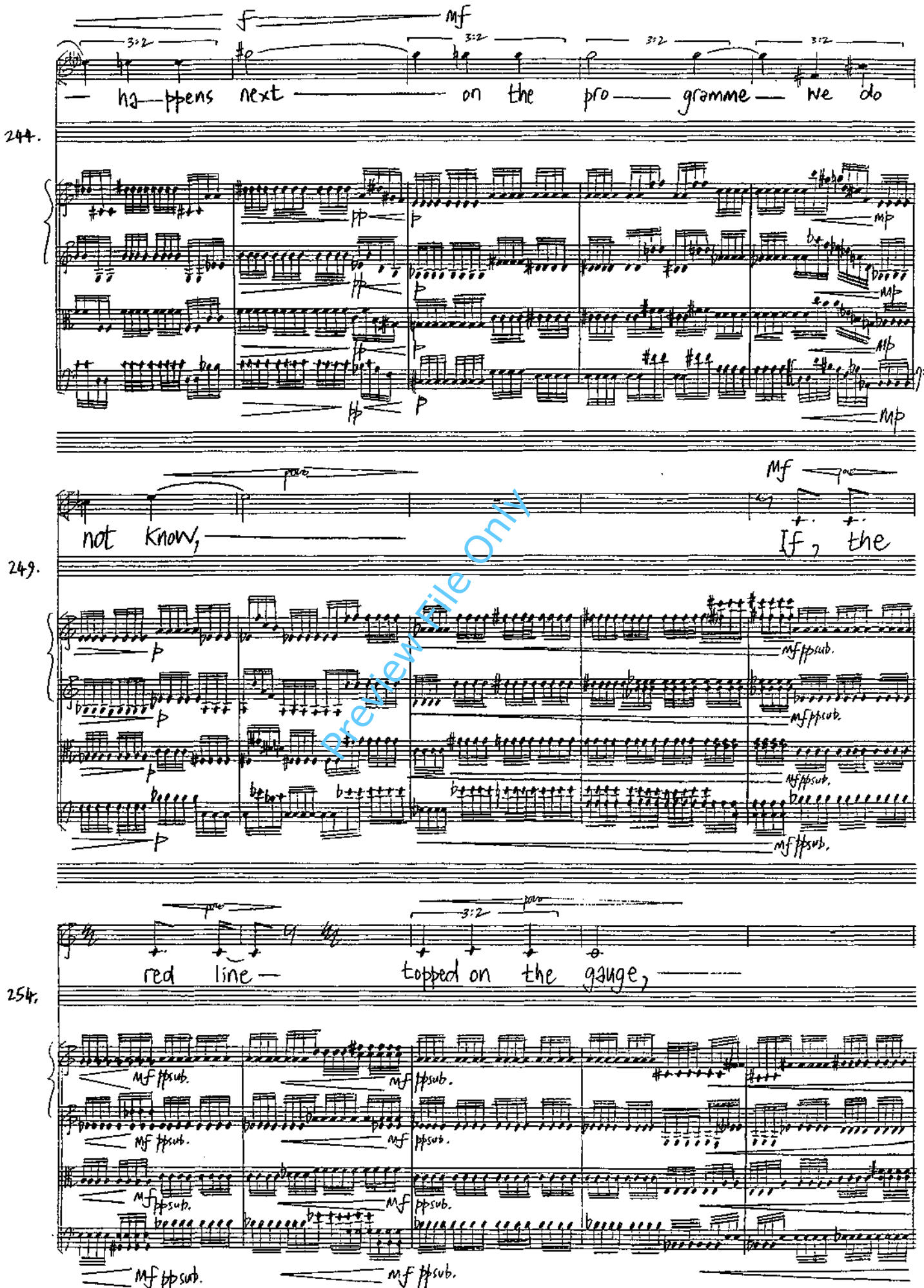

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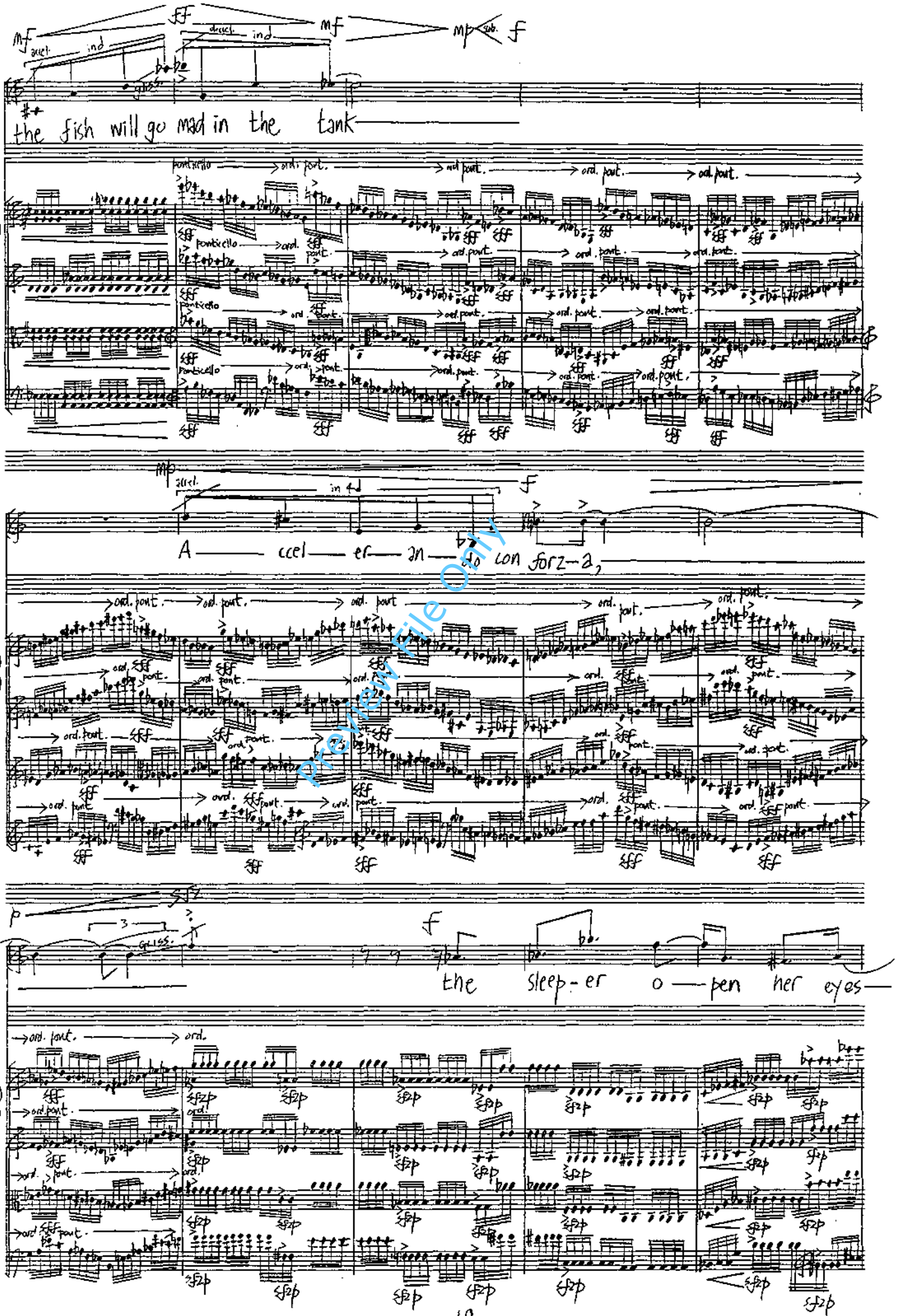

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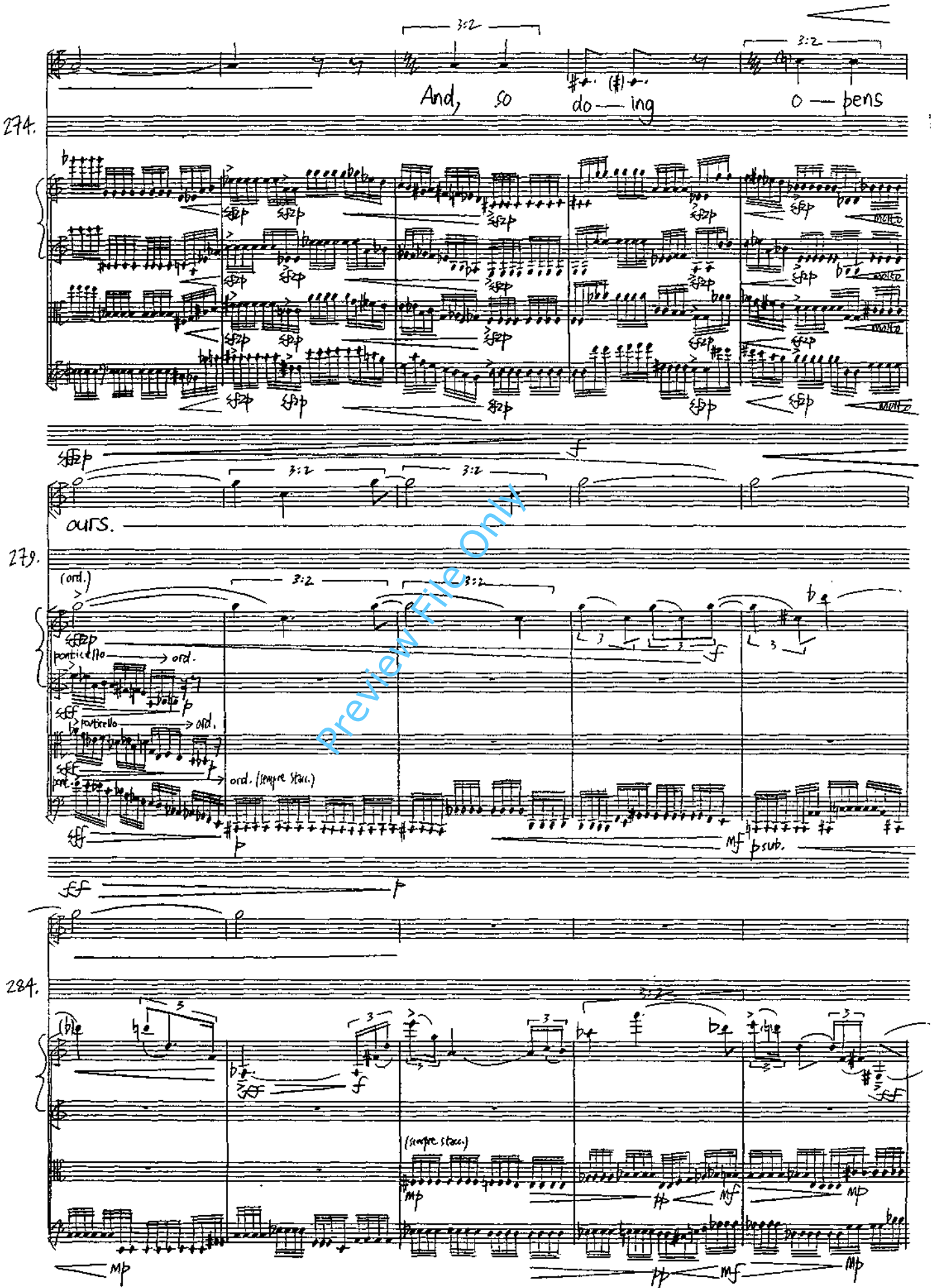

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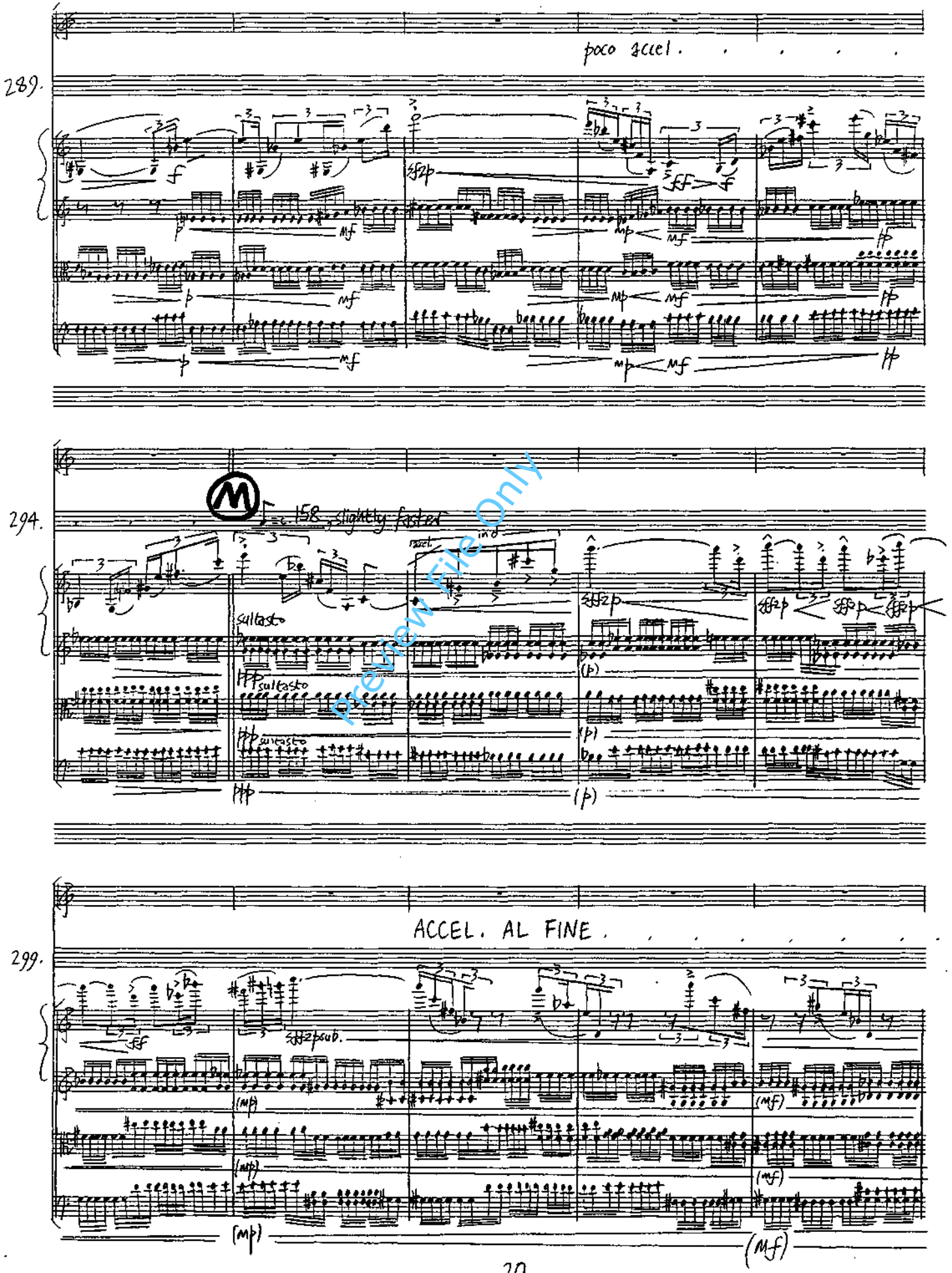

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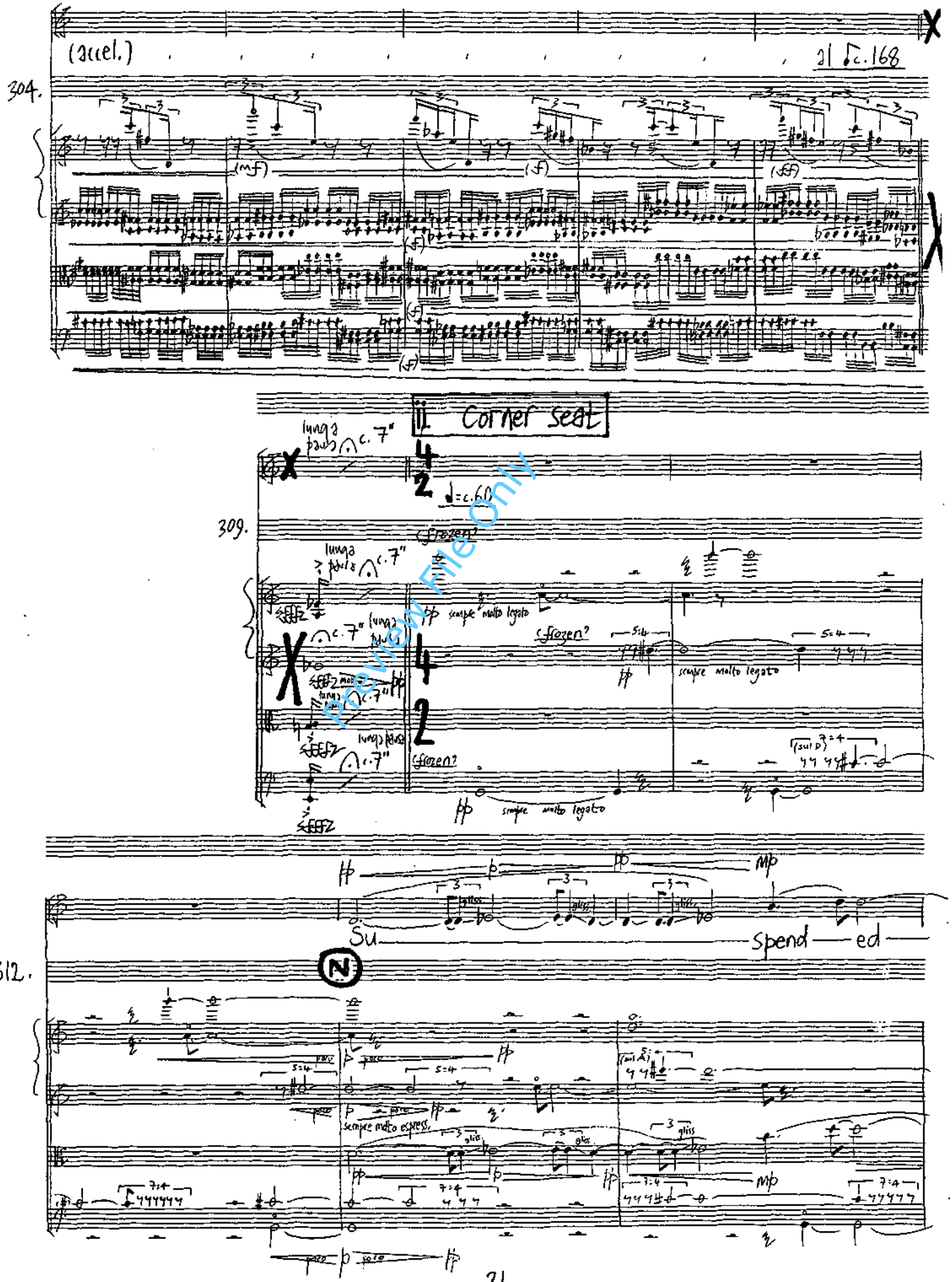

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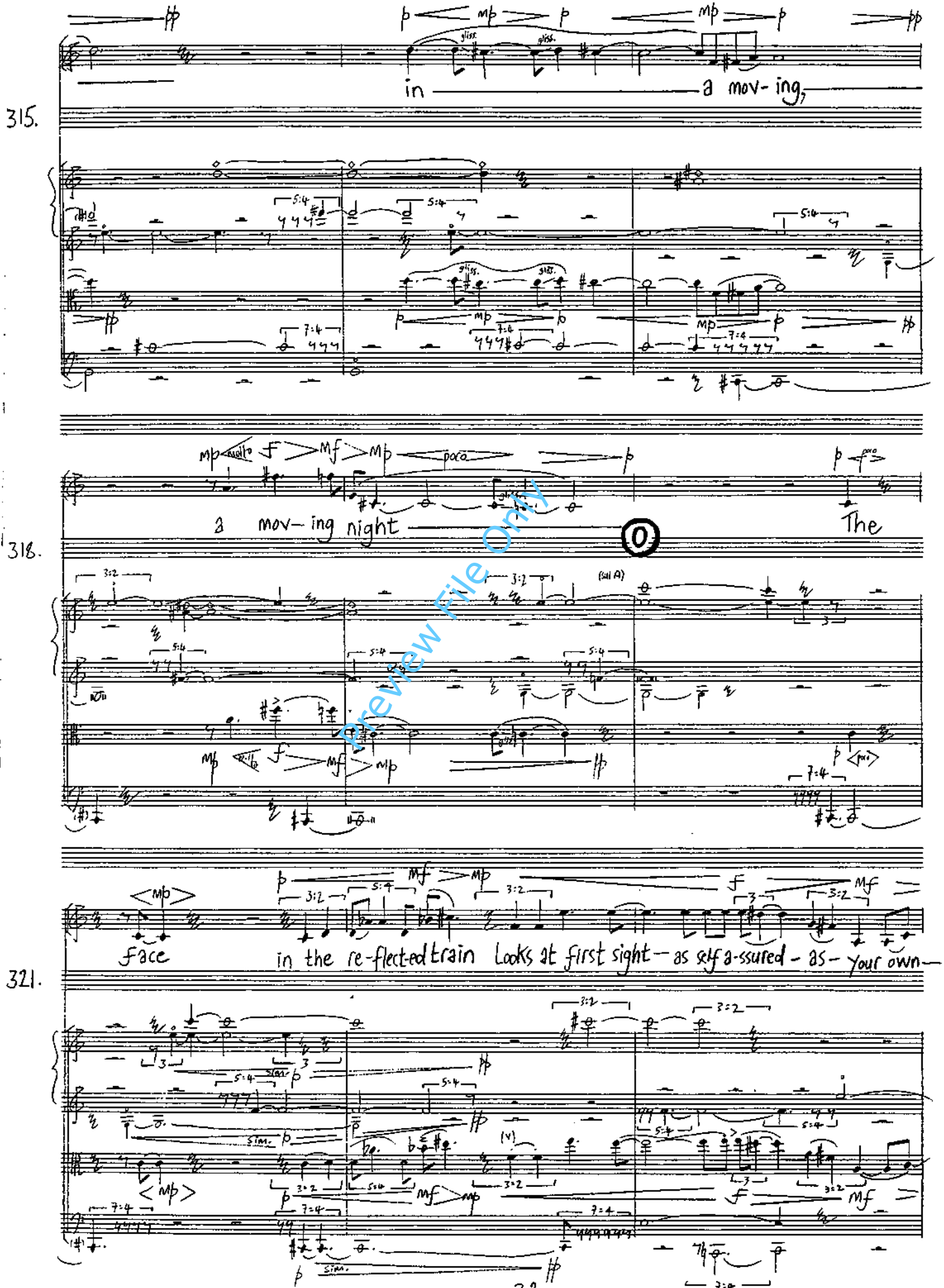

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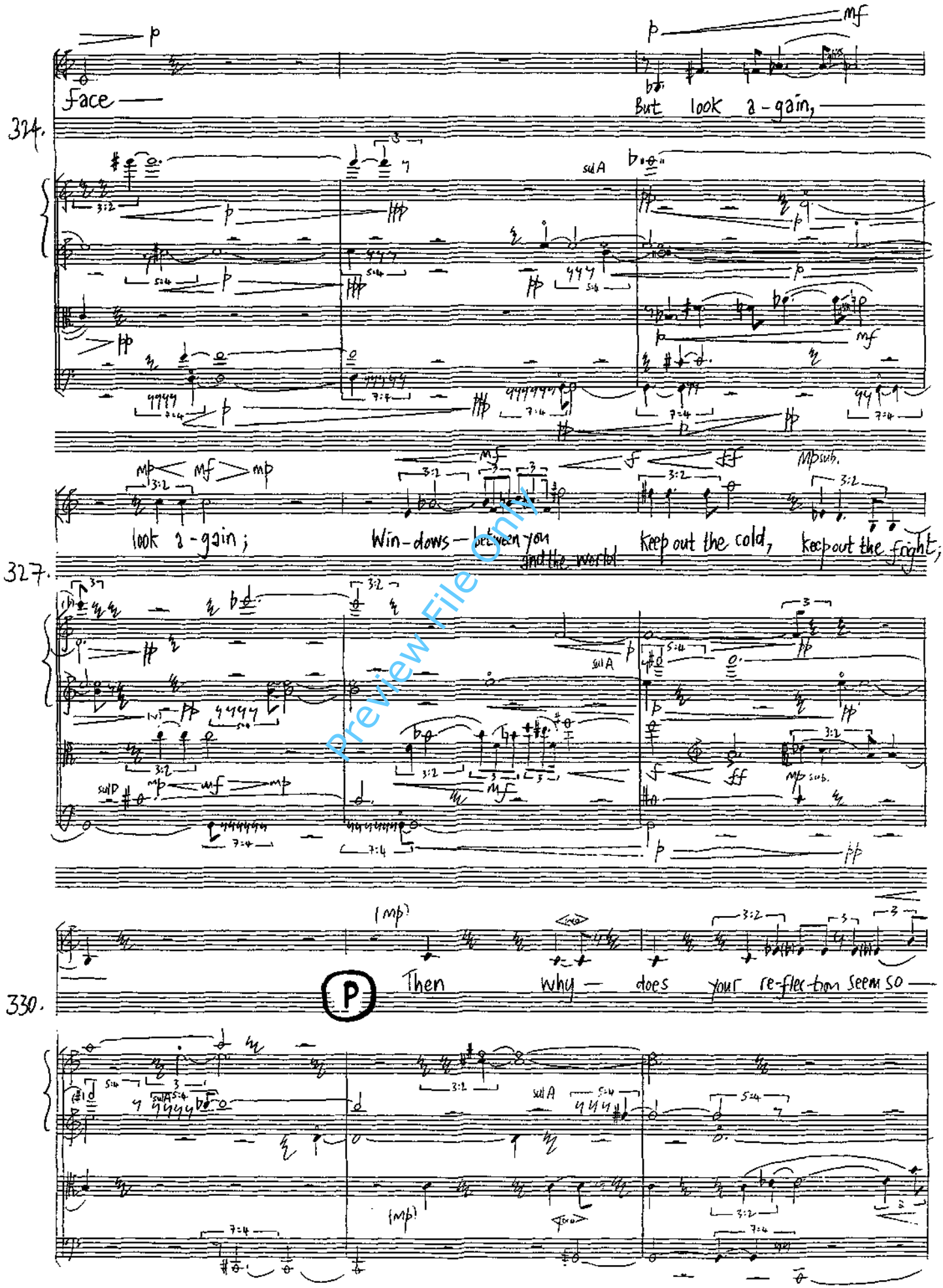

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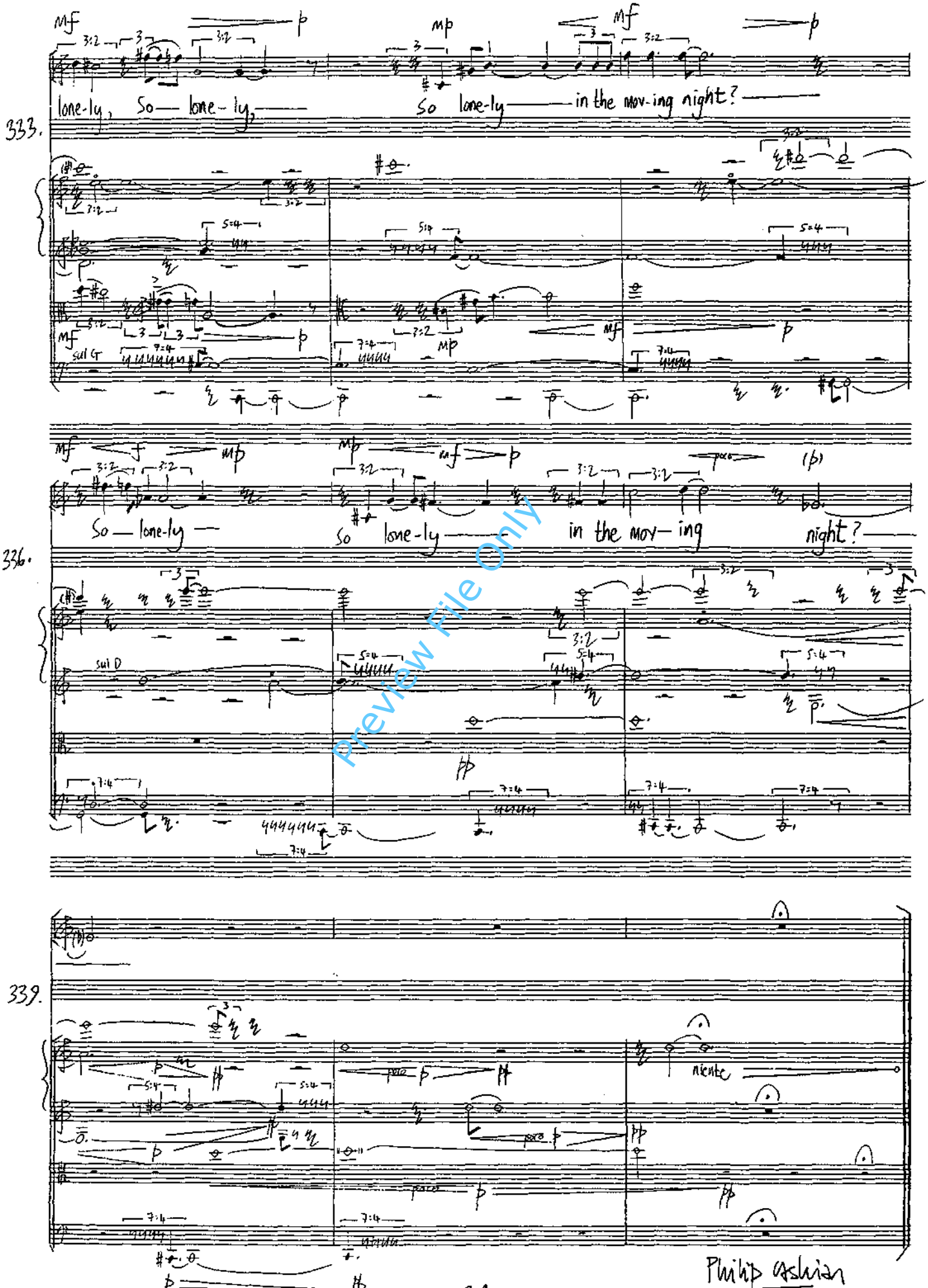

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Philip Cashian
23/11/95

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