THE GLASS PIANO

Preview File Only

THE GLASS PIANO

AN OPERA IN ONE ACT FOR THREE PERFORMERS

LIBRETTO: *MARTIN FIRRELL*

MUSIC: *RUTH BYRCHMORE*

FORCES: *SOPRANO, SPEAKER, PIANO*

DURATION: *MINUTES*

Preview File Only

This work was commissioned with the generous support of Springpoint and premiered at the Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, London, on 13 May 1999 by Jane Manning, Katja Lebedeva and Simon Rydings.

Performance Guide:

* *The score is in C.*
* *Accidentals apply to the whole bar.*
* *General Pause bars are used as a dramatic guide and can be interpreted loosely.*
* *= short pause,* *= long pause.*
* *Pedalling is left at the discretion of the performer except for key moments where pedalling is clearly indicated.*
* *Performance instructions for the Speaker are broadly left at the discretion of performer and director.*
* *Use of microphone for the Speaker should be limited but may be necessary.*

@RMB March 1999

The Glass Piano: Martin Firrell

Simon: Tell it all,
Tell it all ruthlessly,
At your own expense if necessary,
but tell it all
for the love of a bleaching merciless truth.

Jane: And live in the hope of a greater life:
not to live here, not in this ordinary world
but in a world of brave effects and ideas...

Simon: You say, let there be transparency between us,
only transparency and good feeling always.
And you're embraced quickly, fiercely,
so that you're startled by this sudden show of feeling.
And for days afterwards you have a leaping heart.

Jane: Long silence.
Absence.
And then your sudden appearance,
just when you're the thing needed, called for.

And you said it.
In the sober early evening.

Simon: When it was still light outside.

Jane: And there were no excuses and no mitigating circumstances.
You said it.
Very quickly and simply.
There was no caution in you,
No defence left as you spoke.
And you said you hoped something of the feeling was returned.
You said you felt it and returned it and hoped that its return was felt.
You said it.
And there was no reticence in you now

Preview File Only

Simon: and no caution and no more defence.

Jane: Just you.

Just you.
And the return of feeling.
Bigger than the rest of life.

Simon: Just that.
Just that return of feeling.
And the last of the light still on the pavement outside.

Jane: And that moment on the bridge,
separate from everything else.

Simon: "A comfortable exchange of silence.
There is the river, the bridge,
is the light, the wind,
is the island and its trees.
There is Paris.
The light holds us in the moment."

Just your life.
Just your life here, now.
All about you.
And the light is on the water under the lines of the bridges,
and the trees are turning...

And you said it,
said whatever happens we will still be friends,
will always be friends until one of us dies...

Jane: And you said it,
said whatever happens we will still be friends,
Will always be friends until one of us dies...

Preview File Only

Jane: We walked all the way to the town at the top.

Simon: To the small square with tablecloths and awnings
and,

Jane: and a little way above,
the hipped and round buttresses of the church.

Simon: We didn't take the Funicular Railway
because we didn't understand the significance of it,

Jane: nor the significance of the climb.
We had our lunch under a rickshaw awning.

Simon: Snaking cables of noodle and shellfish
open like butterflies.

Jane: When hope goes.
Suddenly.
And nothing mitigates the feeling of being ballasted by grief.
Held down.
Held under.
An horrific mortal fear with no object.
Damp in the fabric of the house.
Or the sudden swing from despair to bliss.
A sweet unreasonable bliss
on the rebound from dread.
An uncontrollable, trembling bliss.
Everything is bliss.
A sudden jumping in the legs,
a hand that closes involuntarily.
Bliss...

Wet heat in the mountains.
Like Hong Kong.
The surviving clock tower
of the Paris to Kowloon railway.

Preview File Only

(Everything is the colour of an ear or a shell,
a toe, the tip of a tongue.
Turkish delight,
Arabian roses,
pomegranates,
in the failing sun.)

Or it was like Kashmir in the rain.
Green with lemons, not with tea,
and there were roses.
Thunder.
Rain.

Simon: The sea went pale as the rain fell across it...

Jane: We run for cover
and watch waiters rescue seat cushions and deckchairs.
The waiters worry about the furniture.
They close up the veranda,
and sign us to come inside.
But we stayed in the garden.
In the rain.

(The waiters sign to us come inside.
But we laugh, and say no.

Simon: But we laugh, and say no.

Jane: we will stay in the garden
in the rain.)

Preview File Only

Jane: The storm began inside us.
We couldn't contain the violence
of the feeling we had for one another.
We were in a garden.
The oleander bushes were sweet-coloured.

Simon: There was no storm.
Only rain.

Jane: There was no storm.
Hardly any rain.
Only the breaking of something inside us.
Violence and difficulty of feeling.

Simon: Be merciless.
Keep working.
Keep working.
Don't stop.
Be merciless.
Make it felt.
...hard,
fierce,
clear,
merciless,
be merciless...
be relentless...
make it felt...
keep working...
press forward...

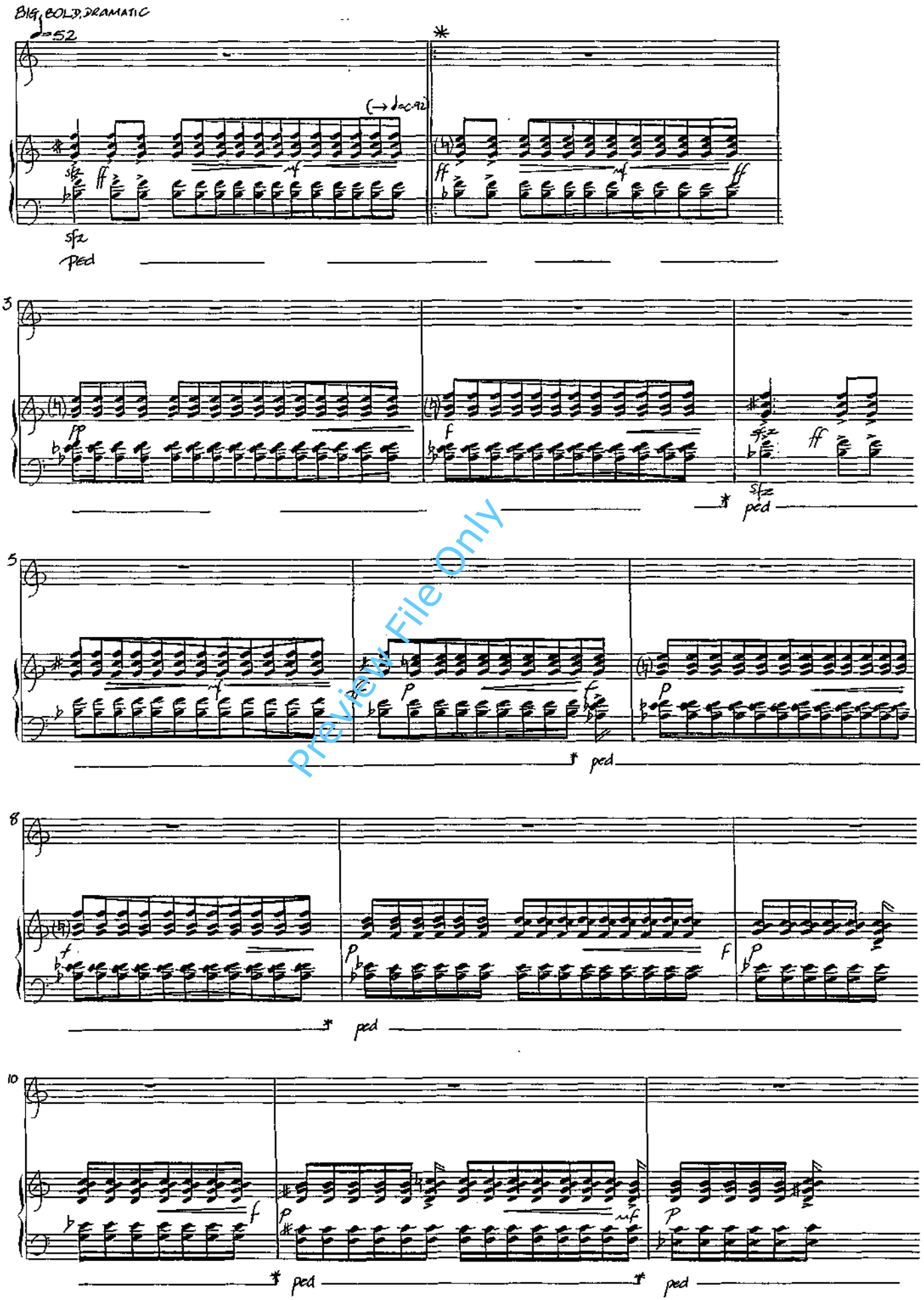
Preview File Only

Jane: Something breaks.
Something is discovered or remembered.
In the garden.
The terrace...

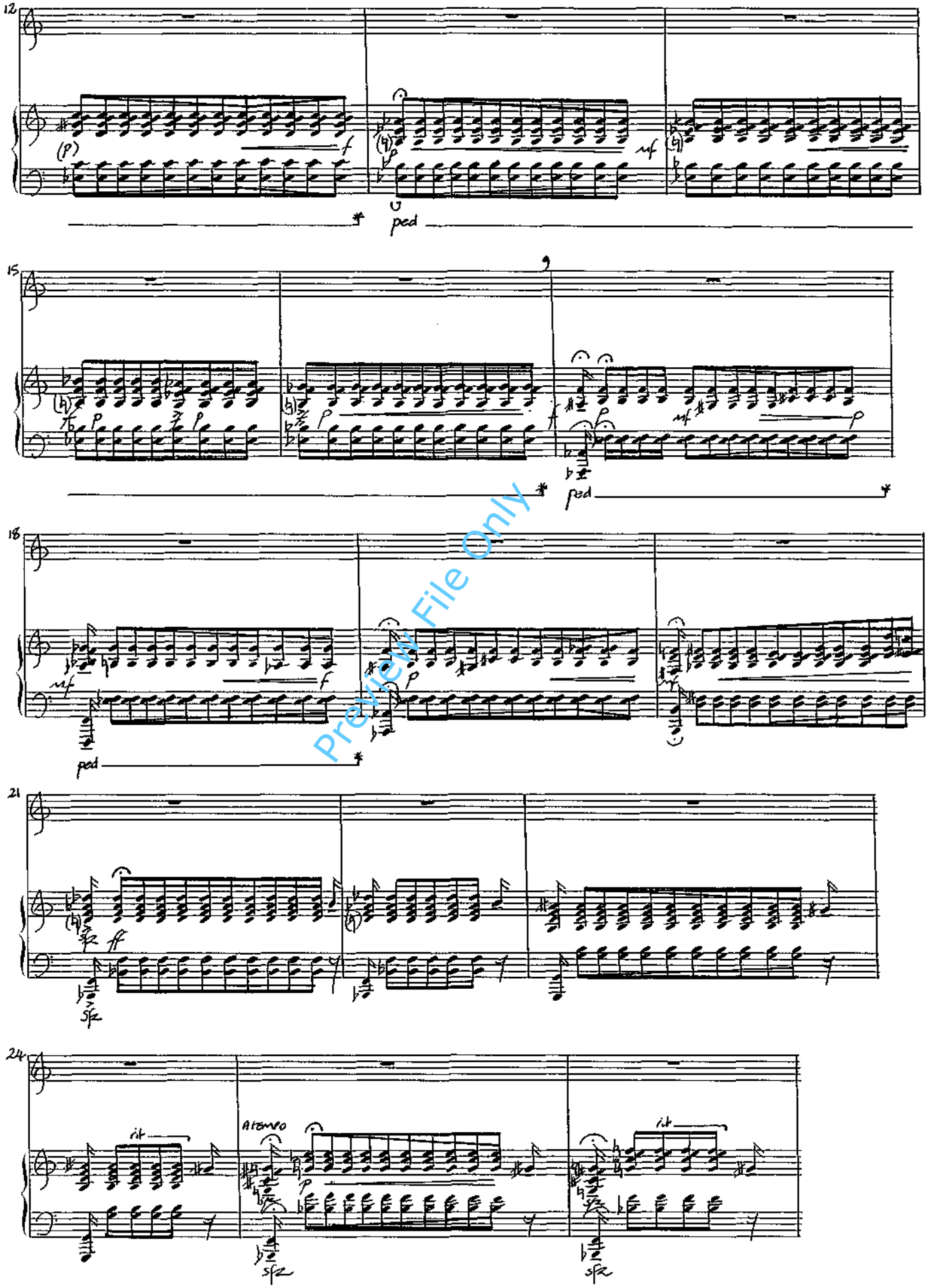
There was no storm.
Hardly any rain.
Only the breaking of something inside us.

There was no storm.

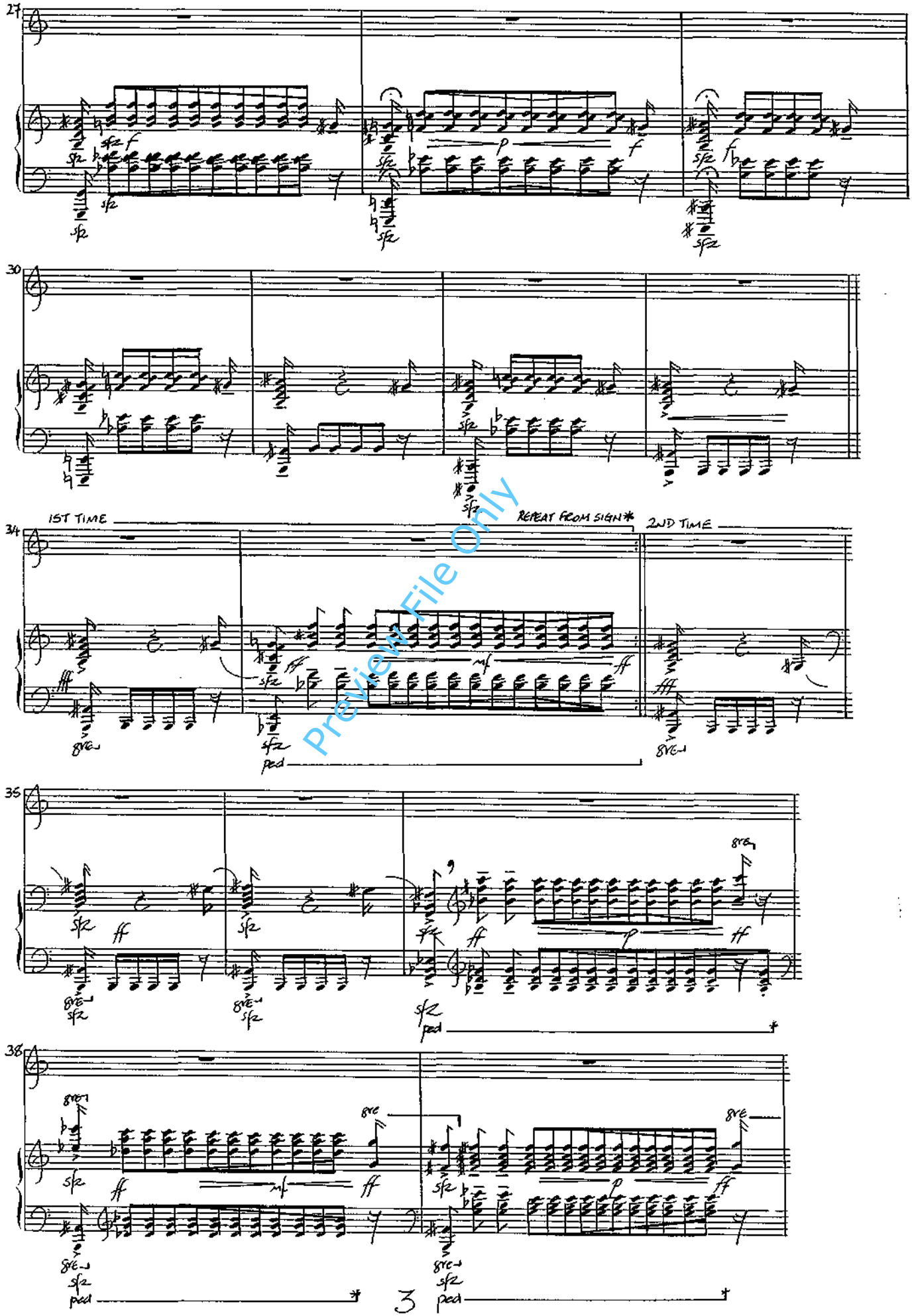
THE GLASS PIANO



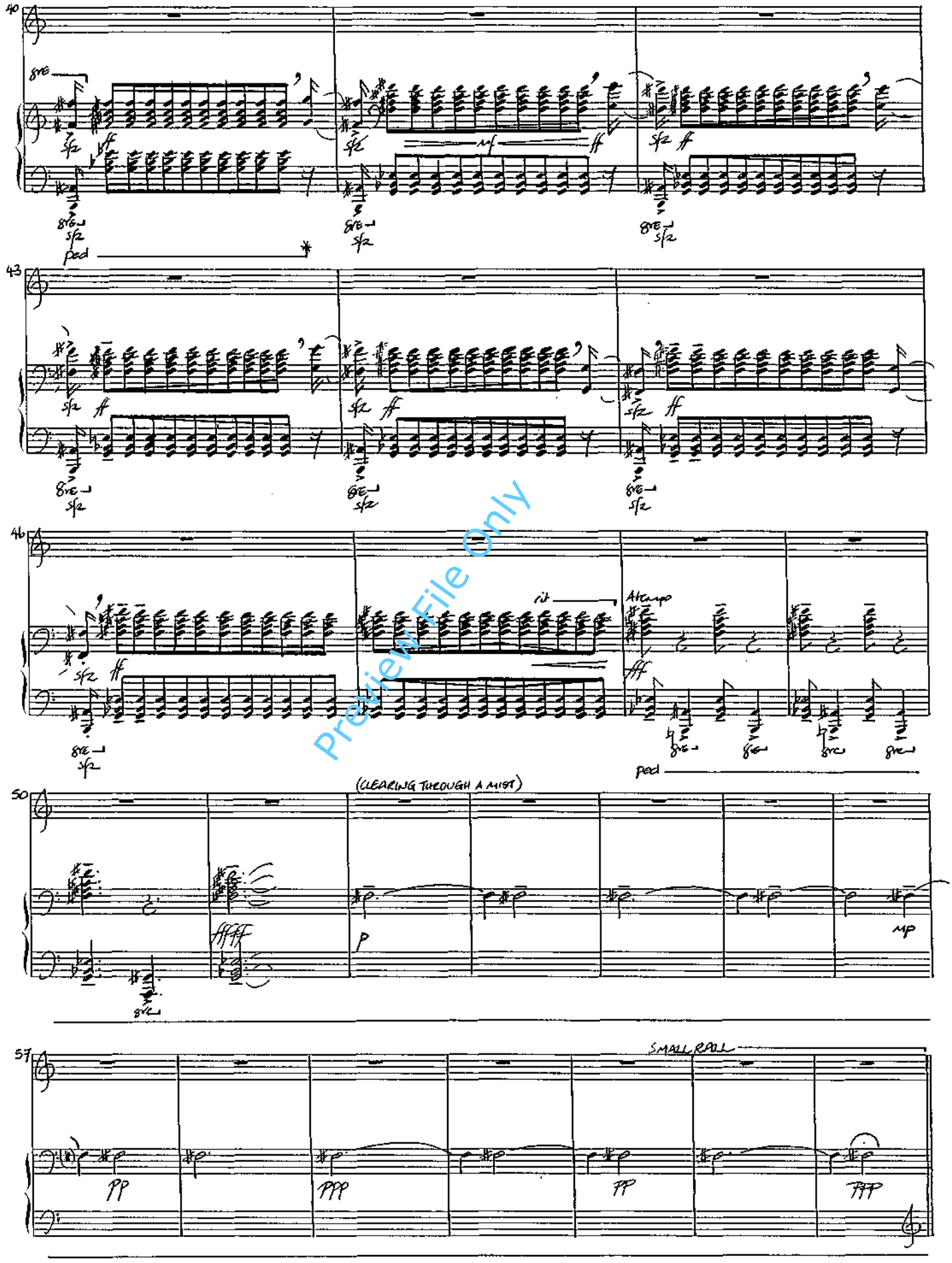
Preview File Only



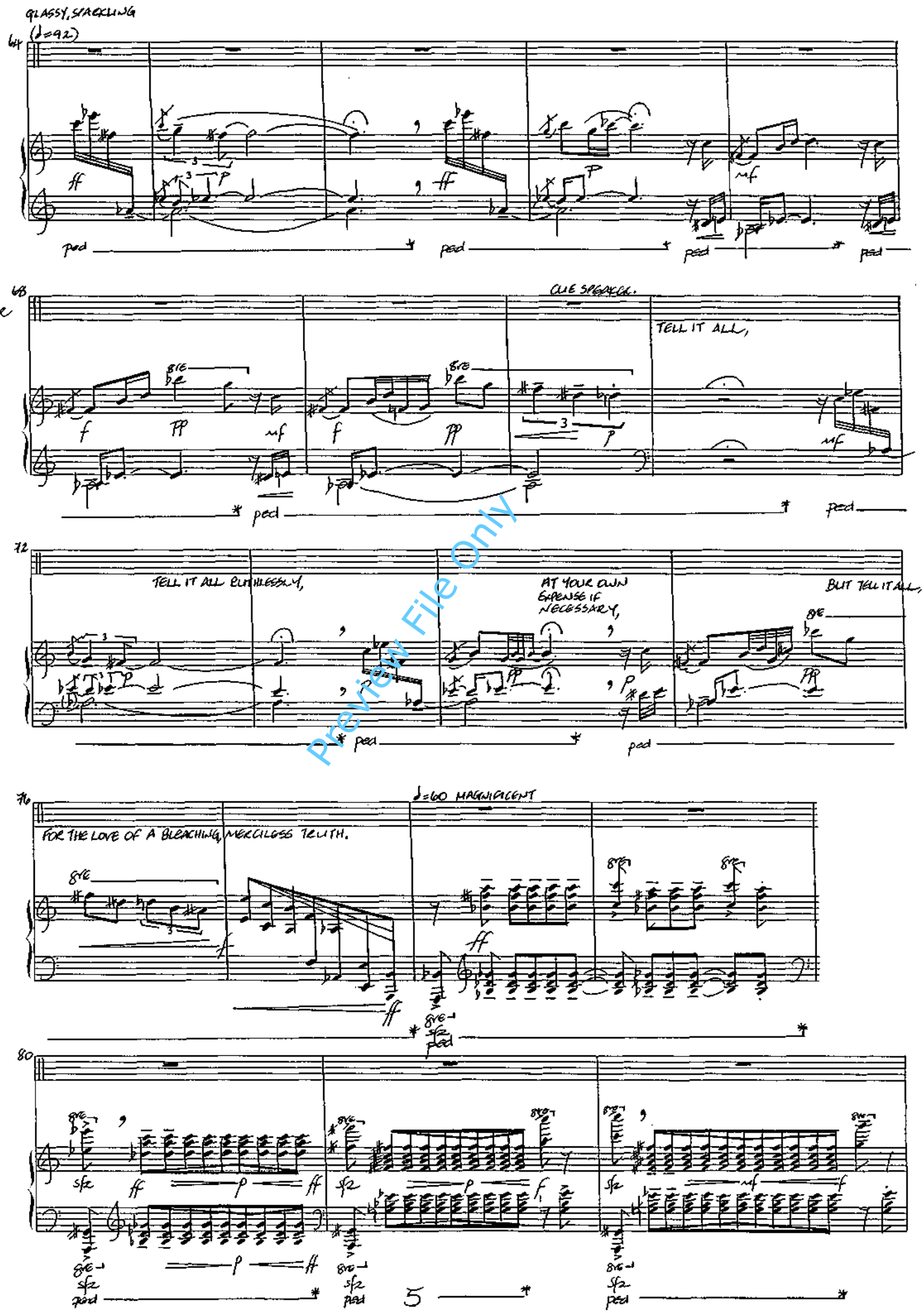
Preview File Only



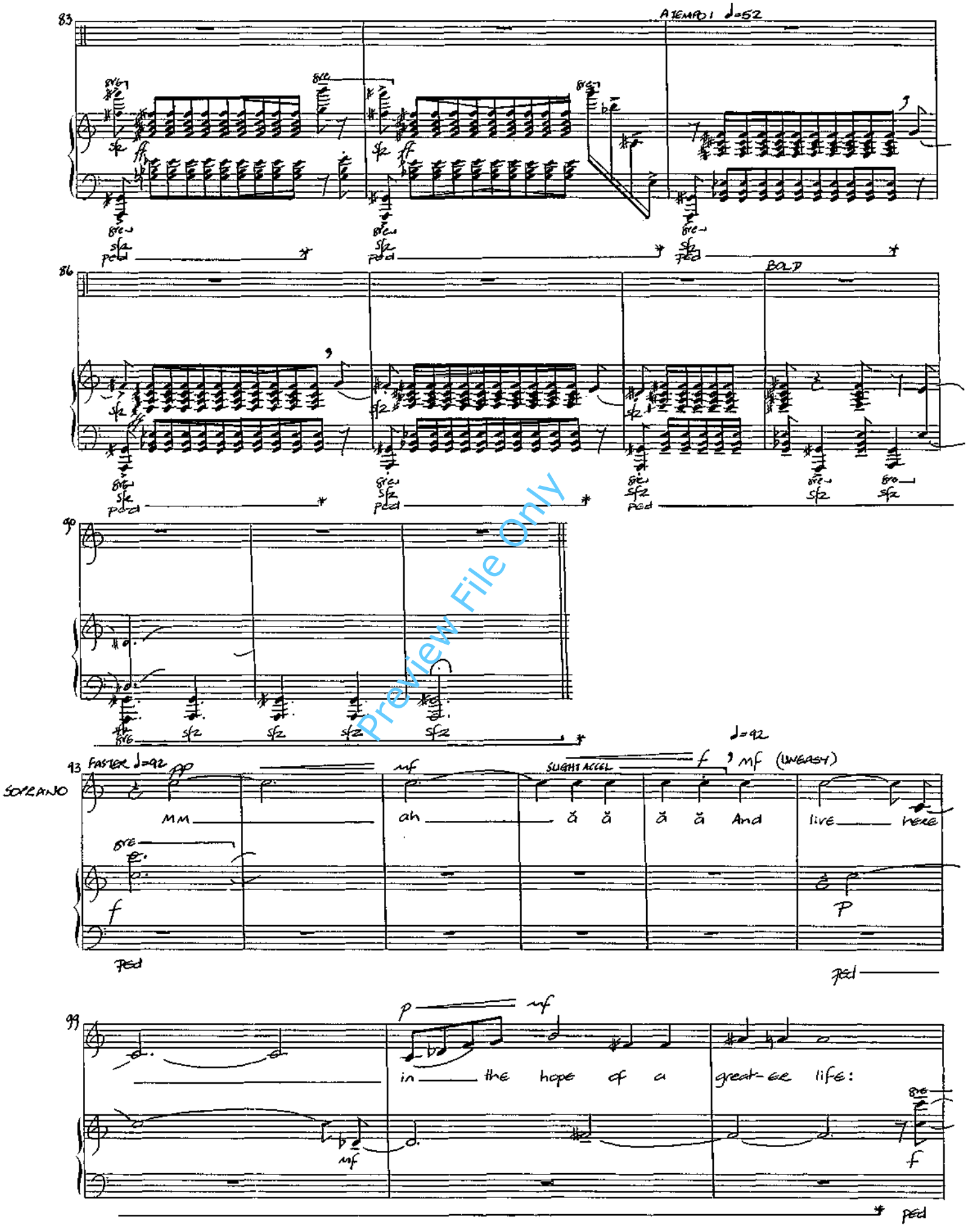
Preview File Only



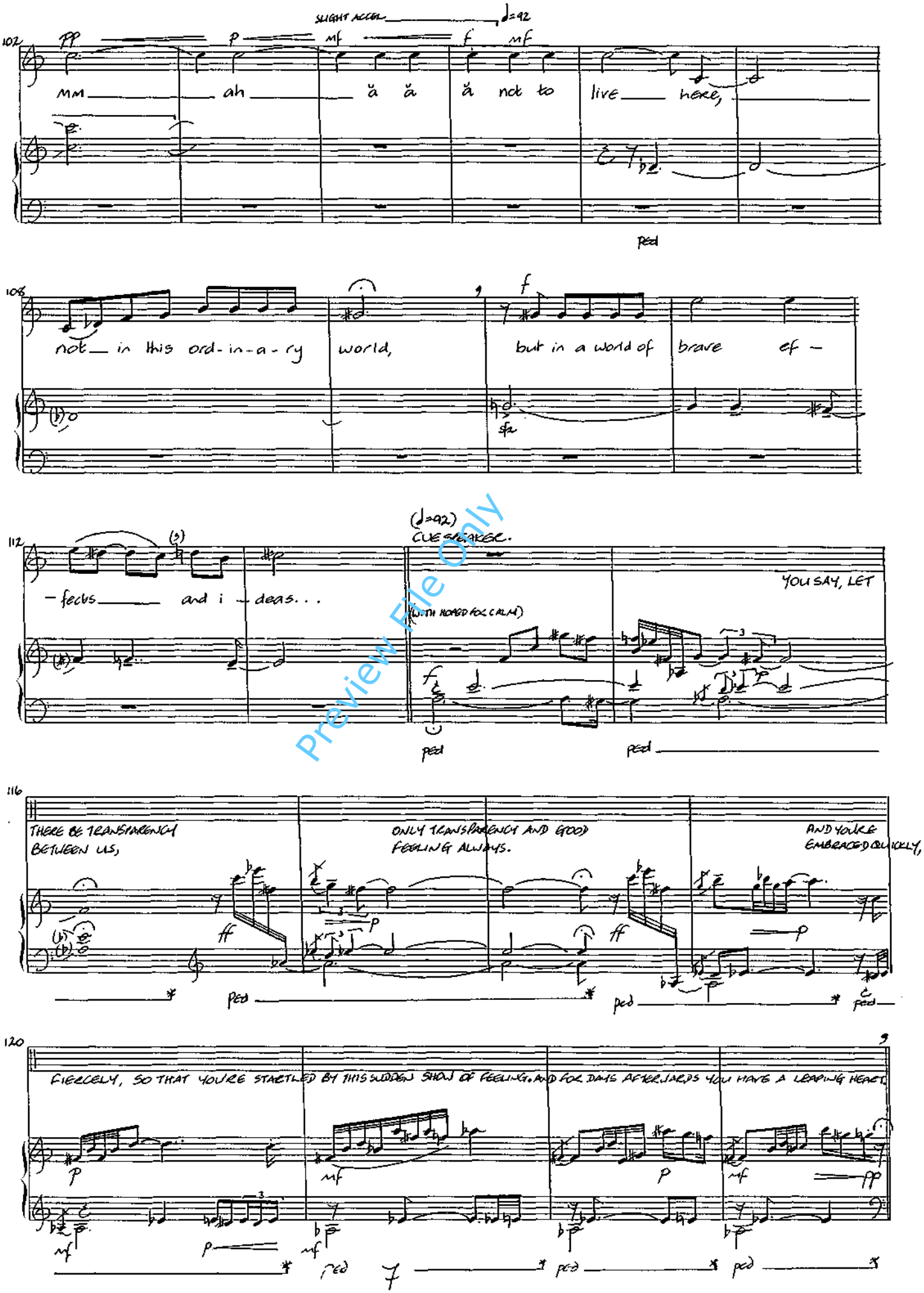
Preview File Only



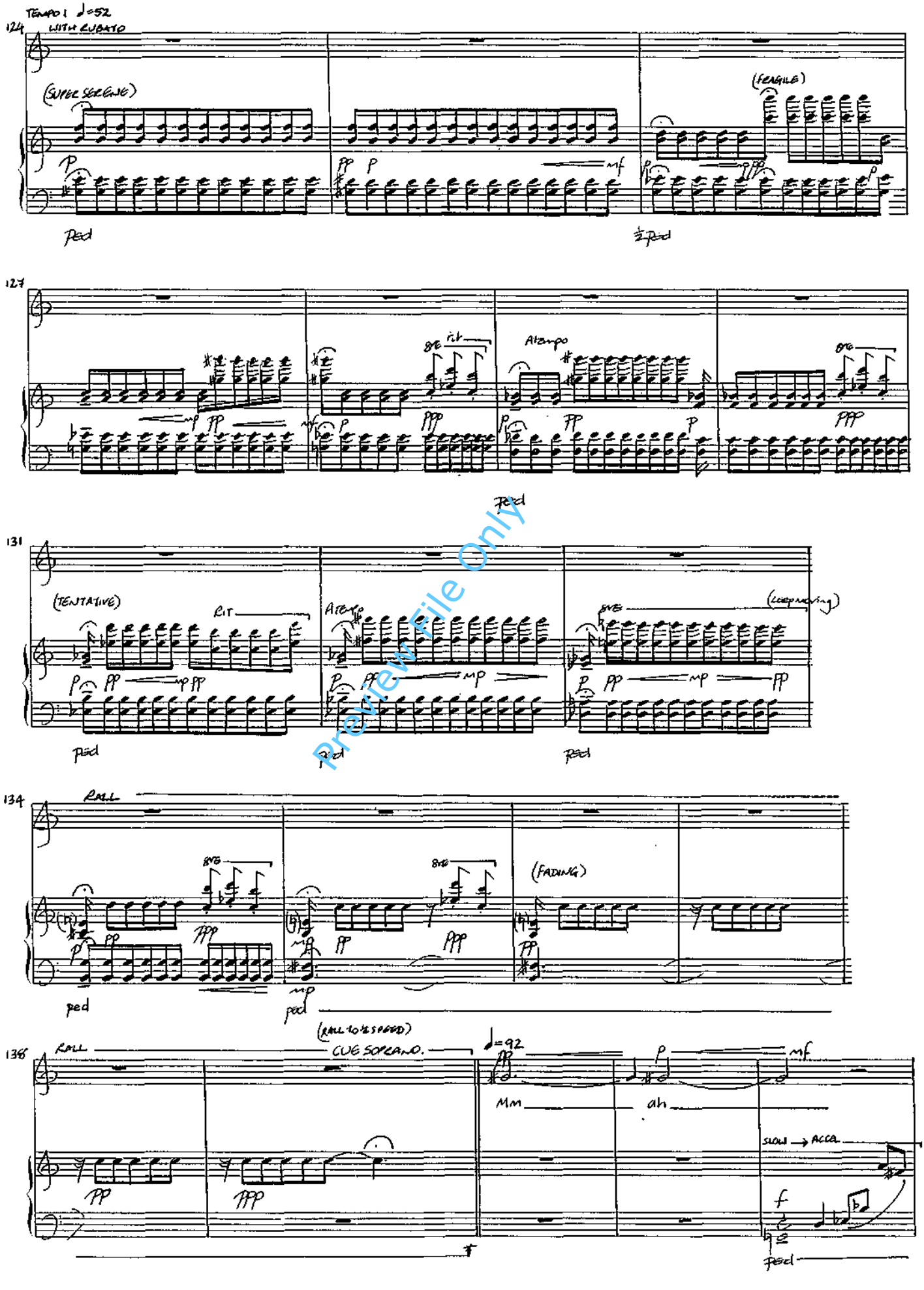
Preview File Only



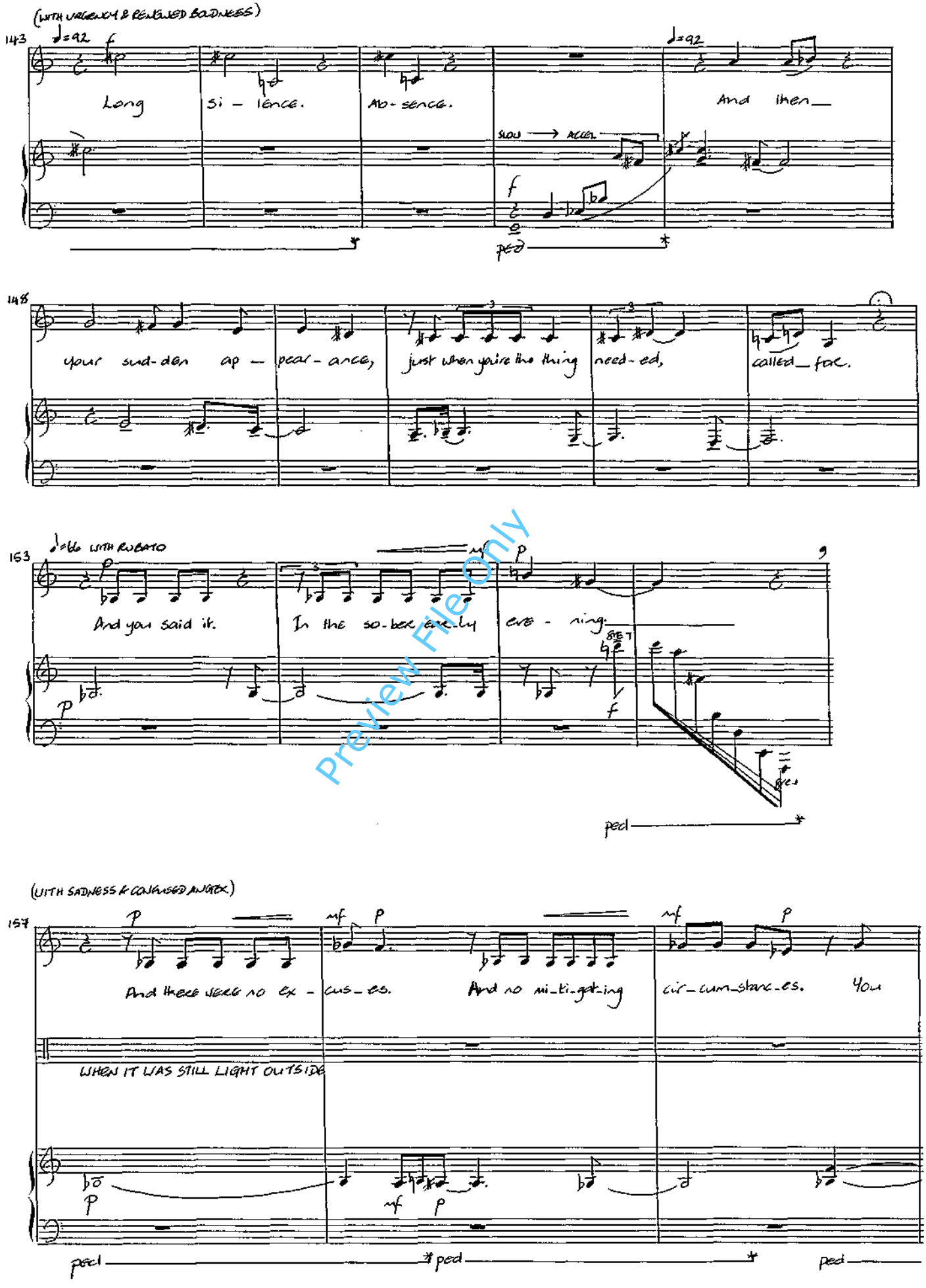
Preview File Only



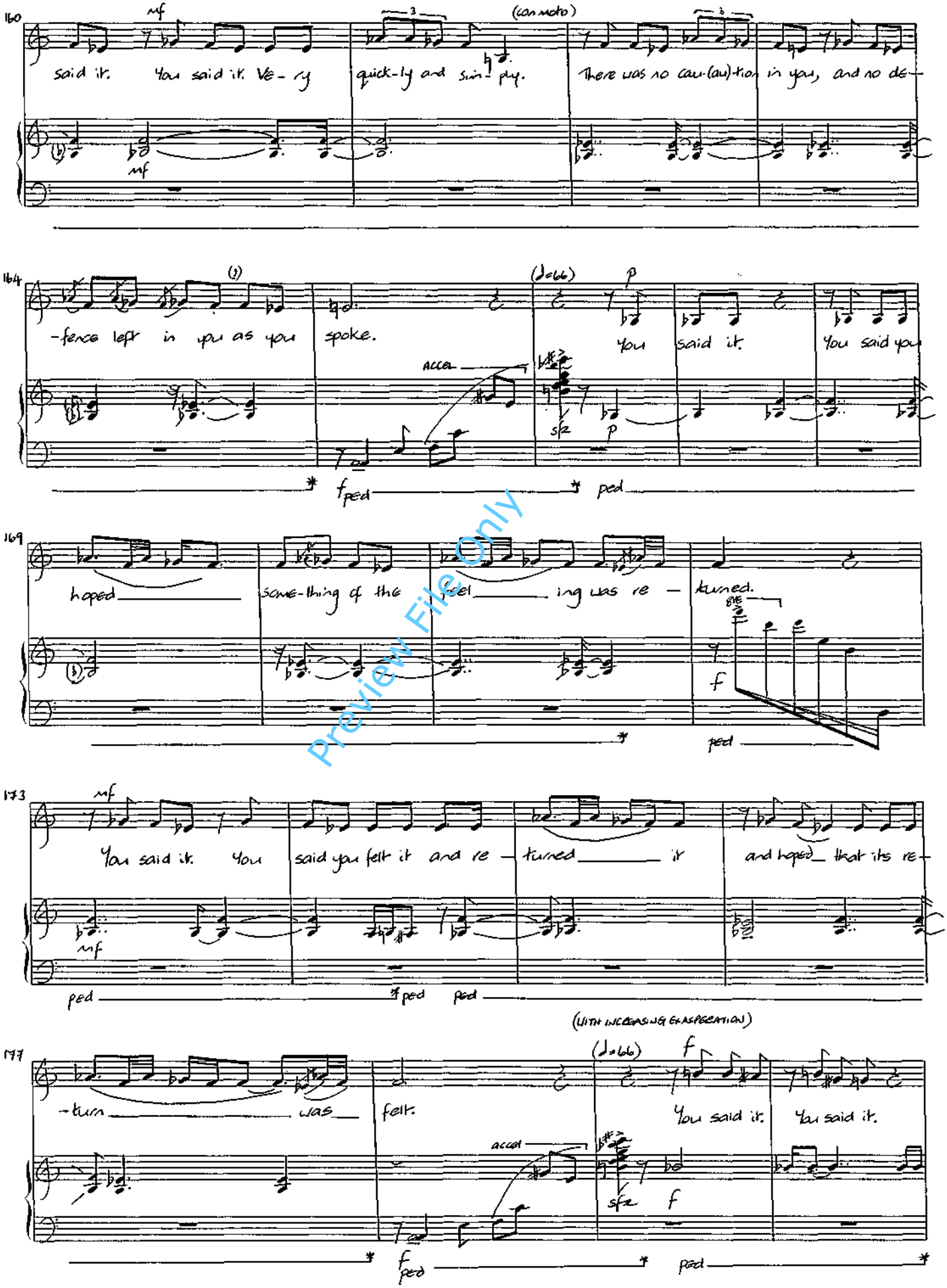
Preview File Only



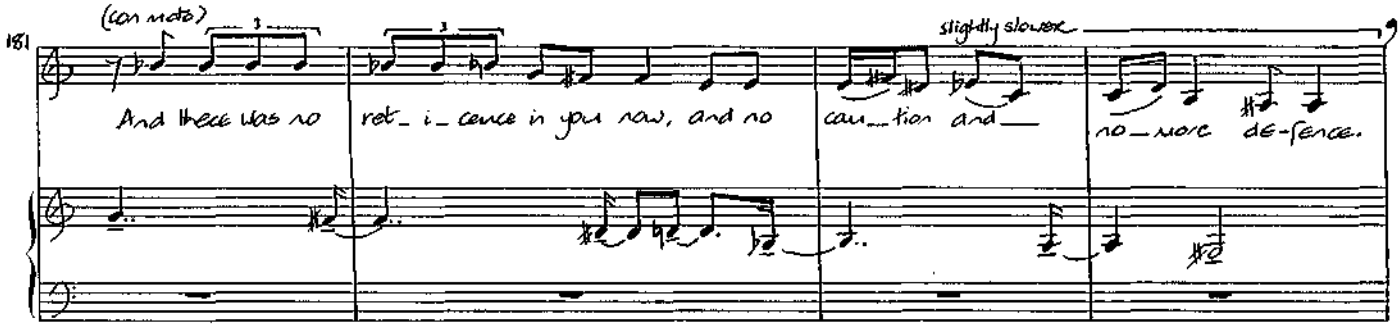
Preview File Only

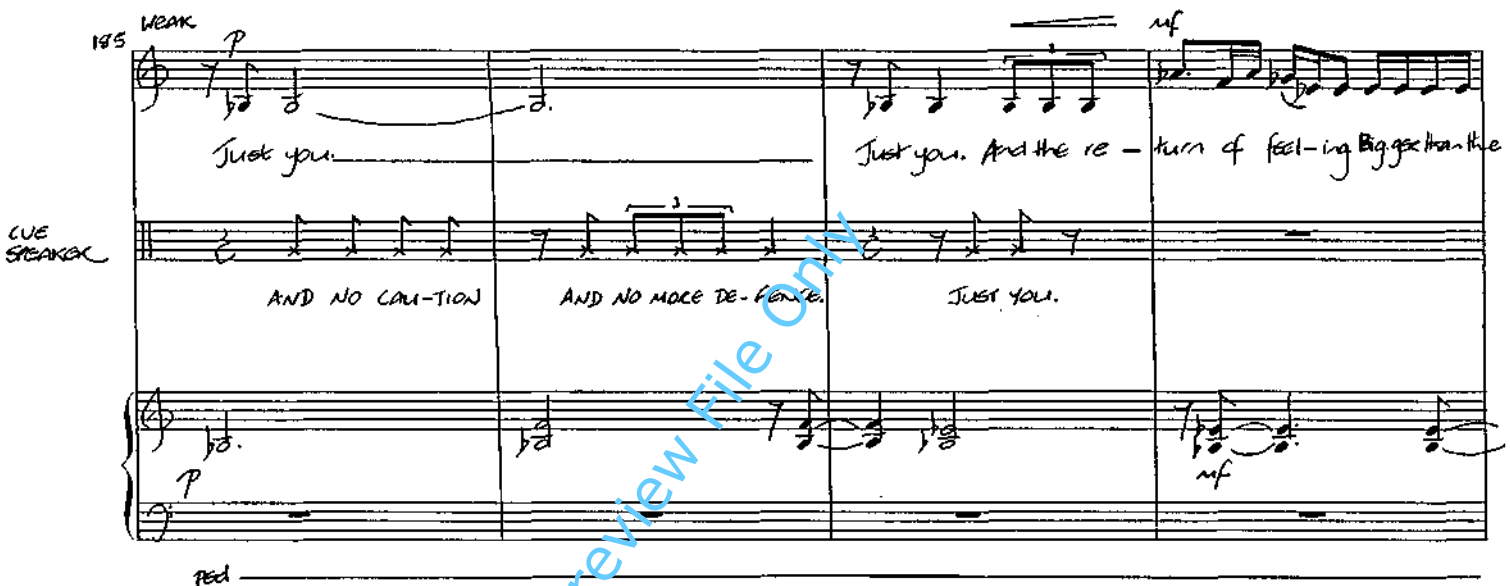


Preview File Only

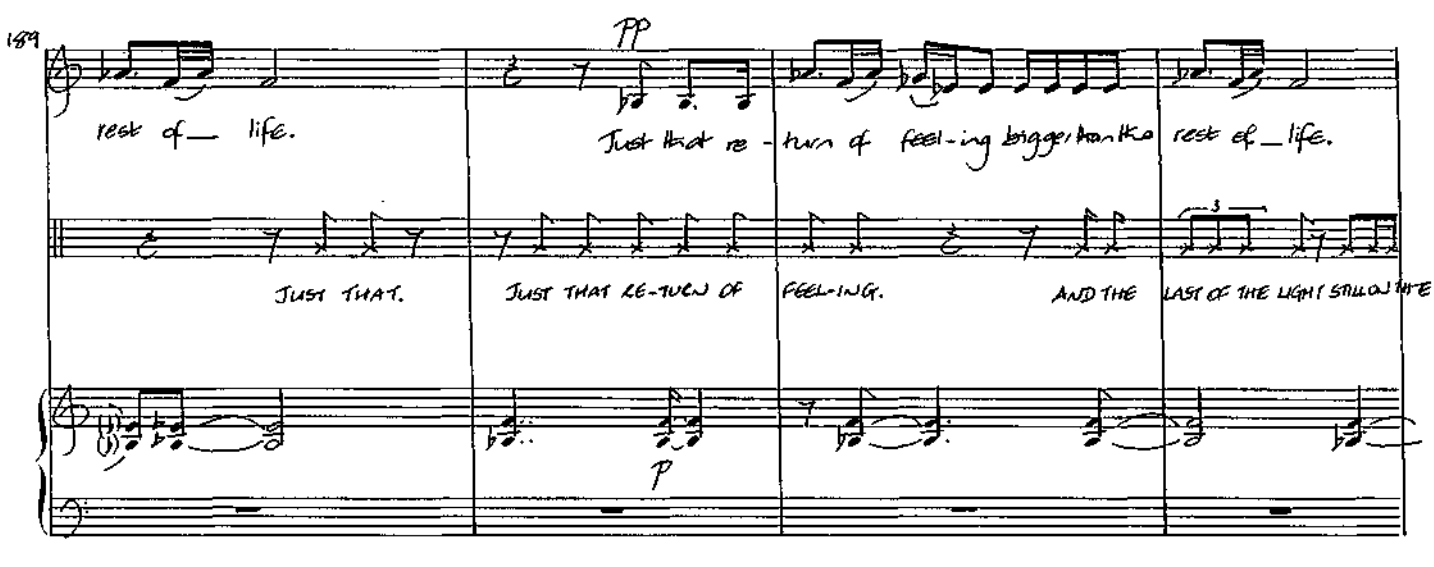


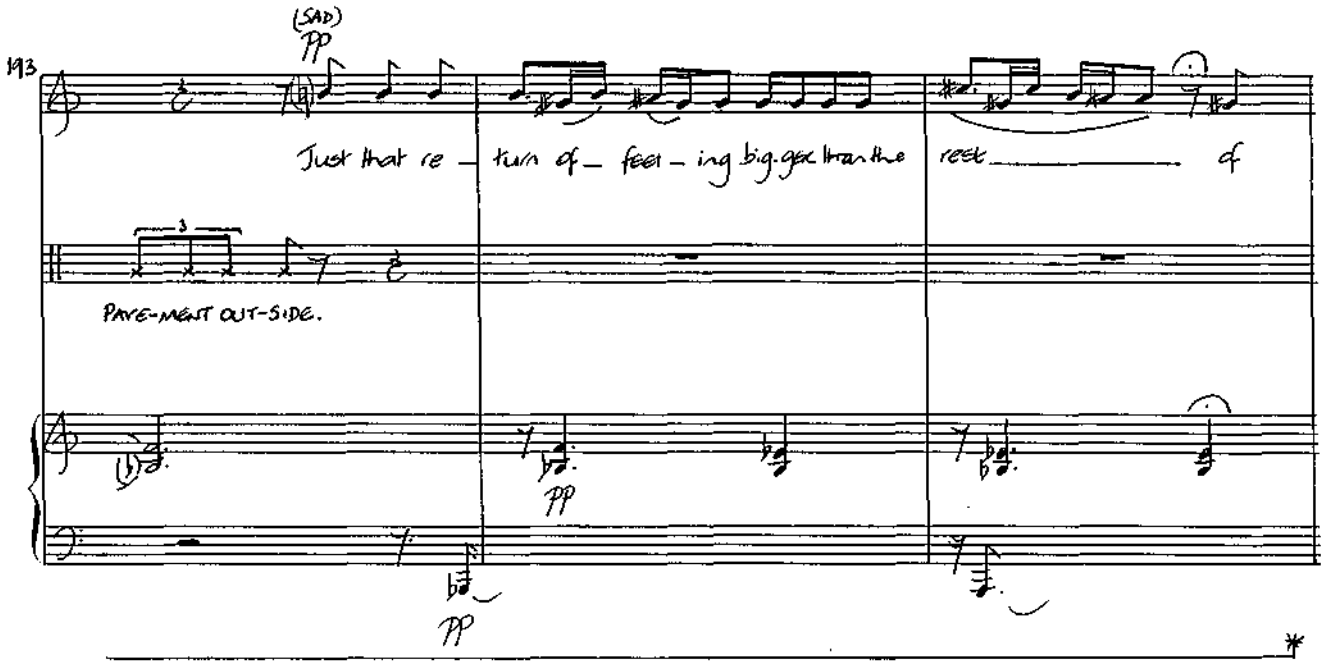
Preview File Only

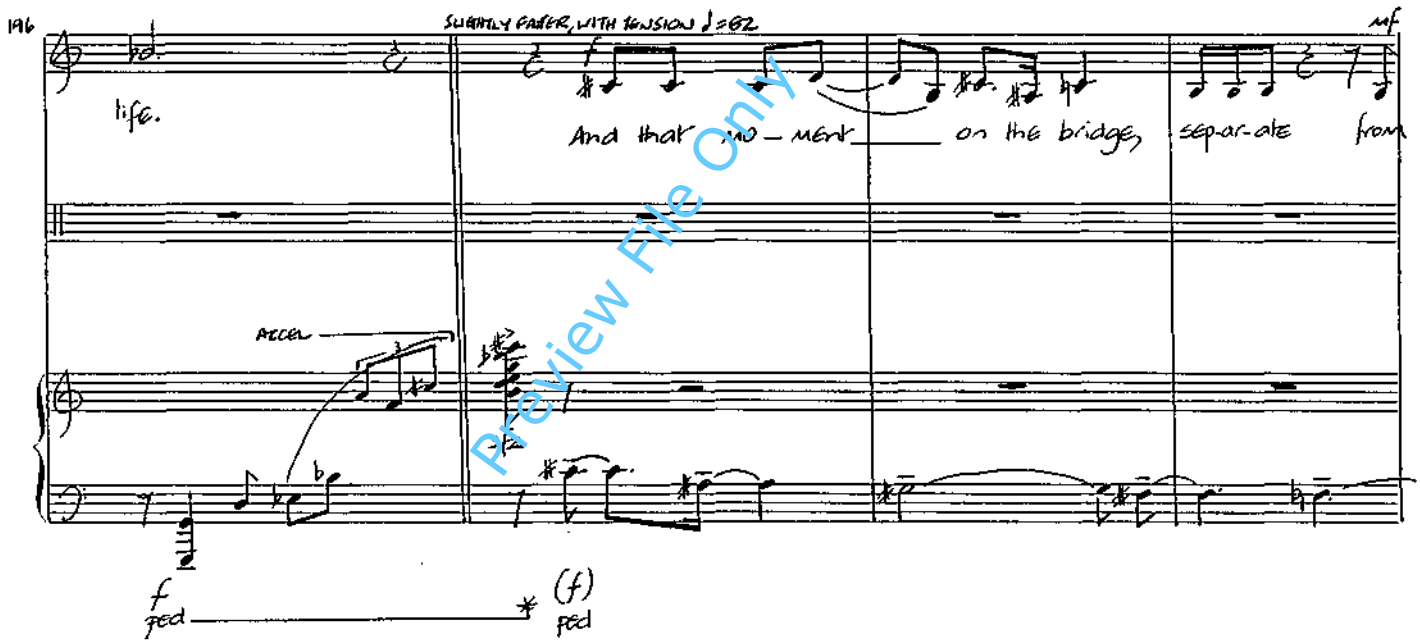


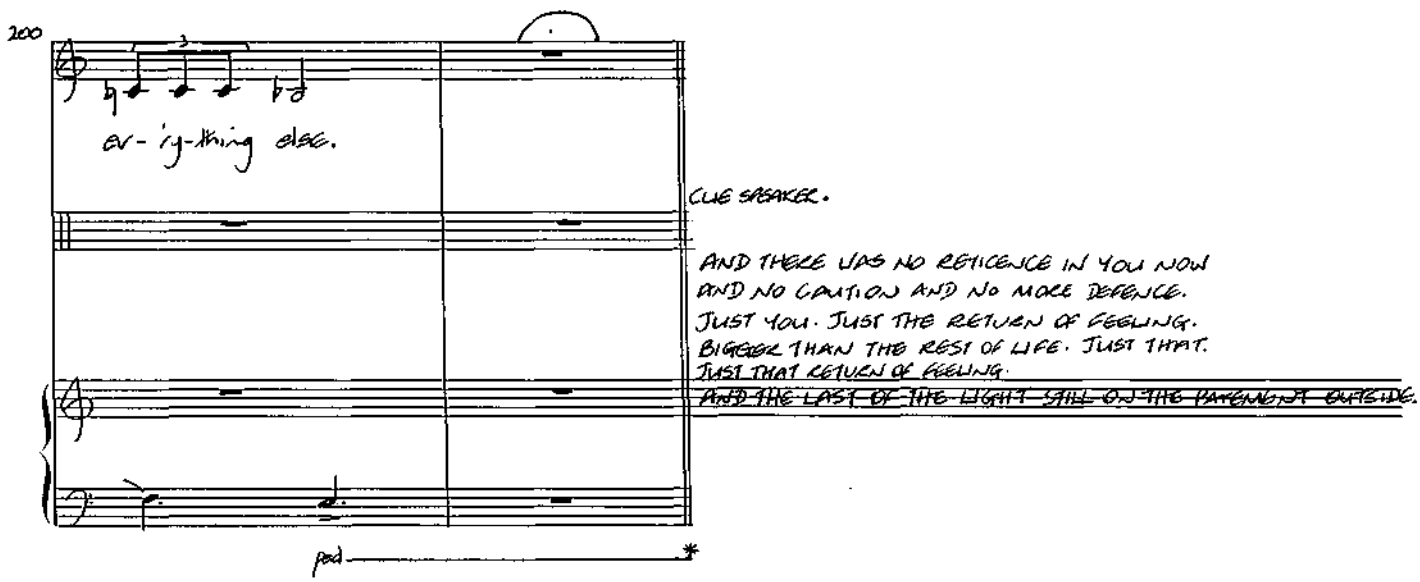


Preview File Only

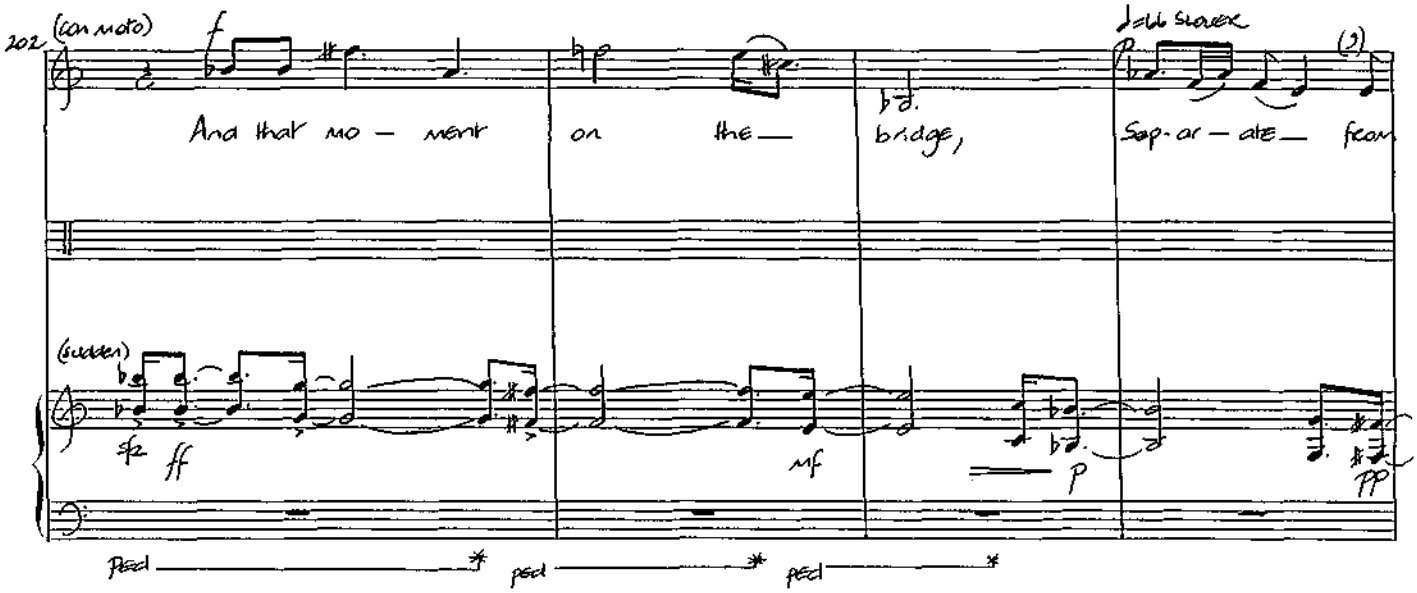


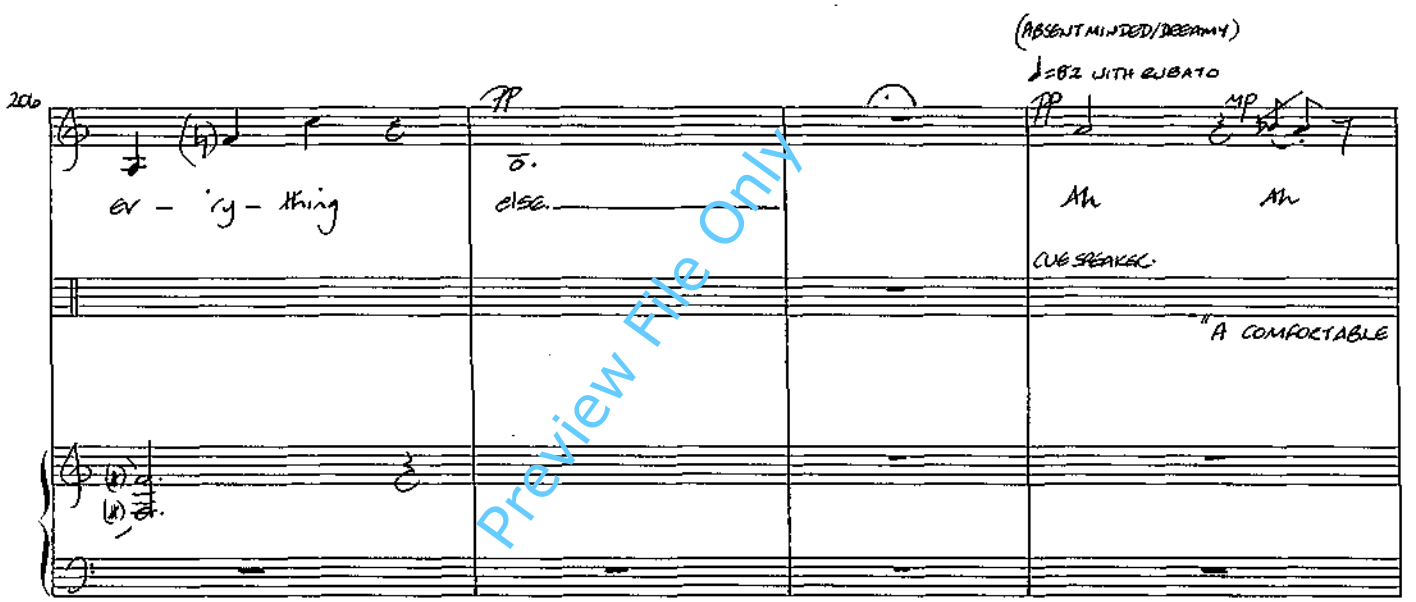




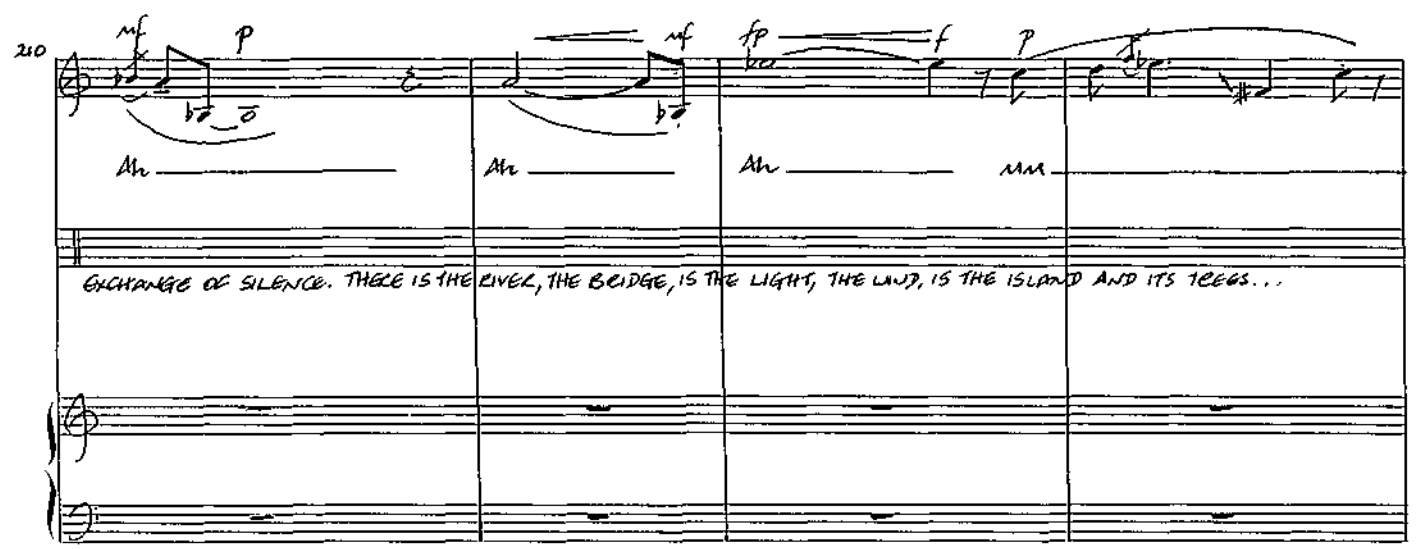


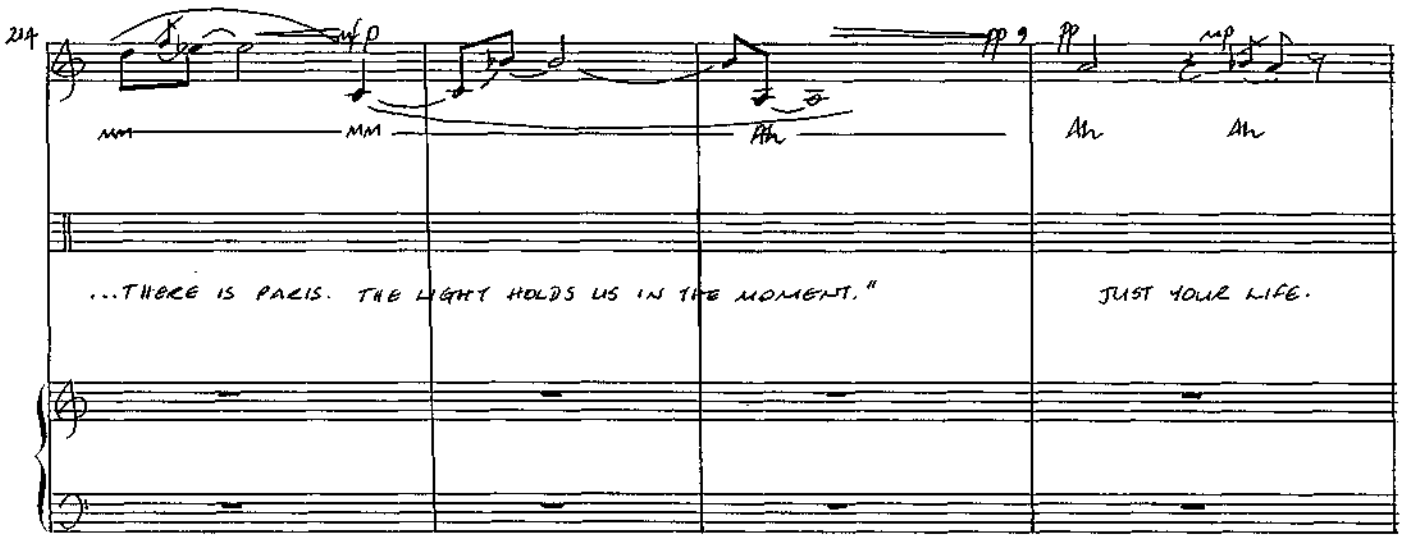
Preview File Only

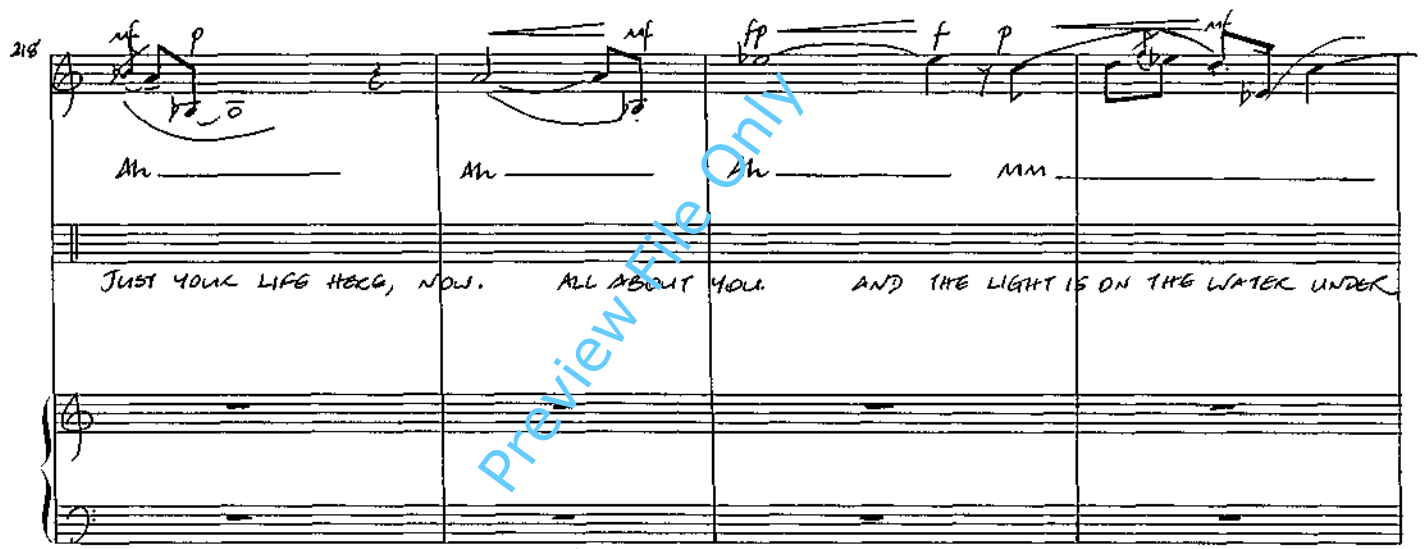


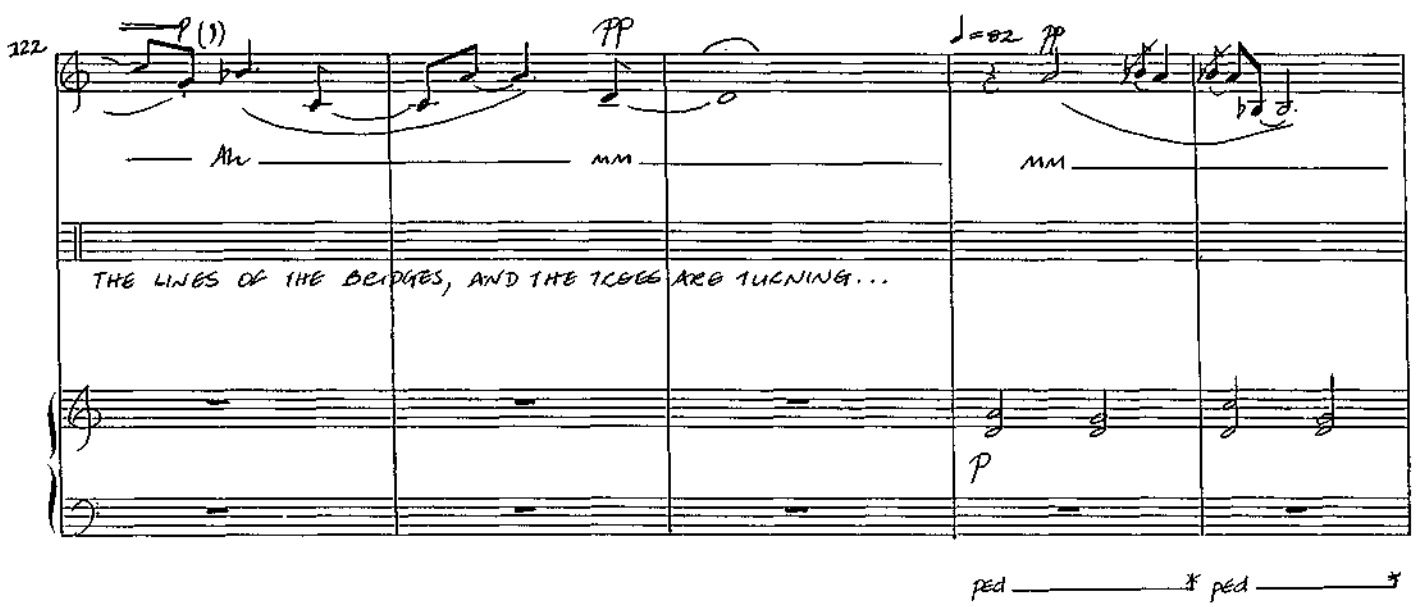


Preview File Only

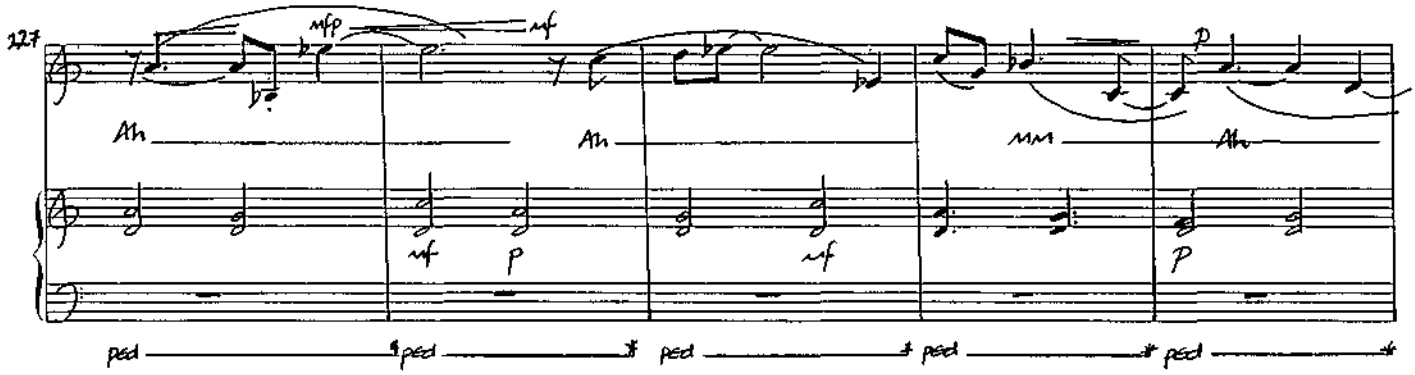


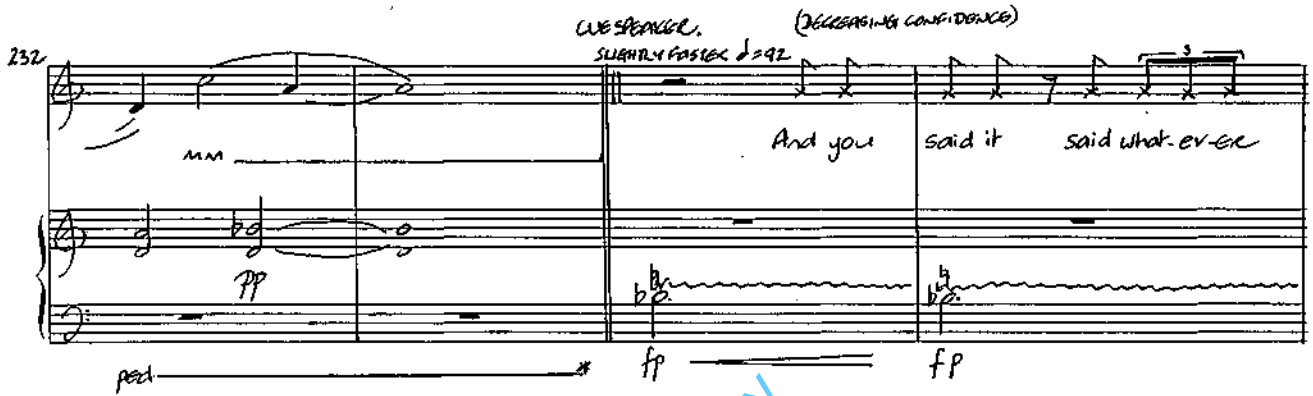


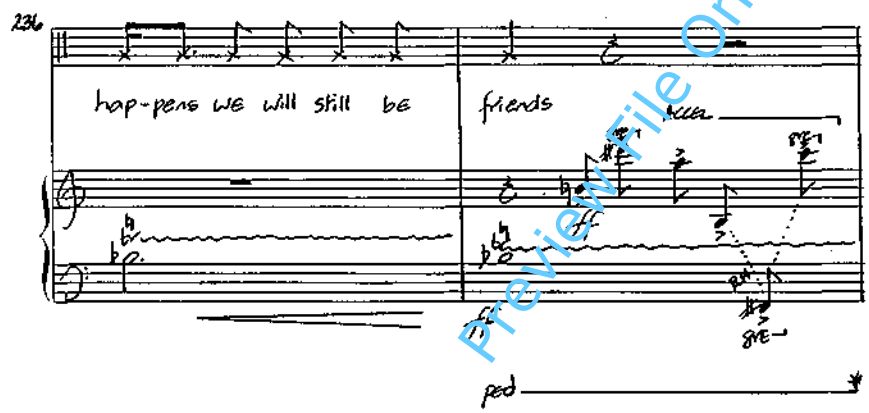


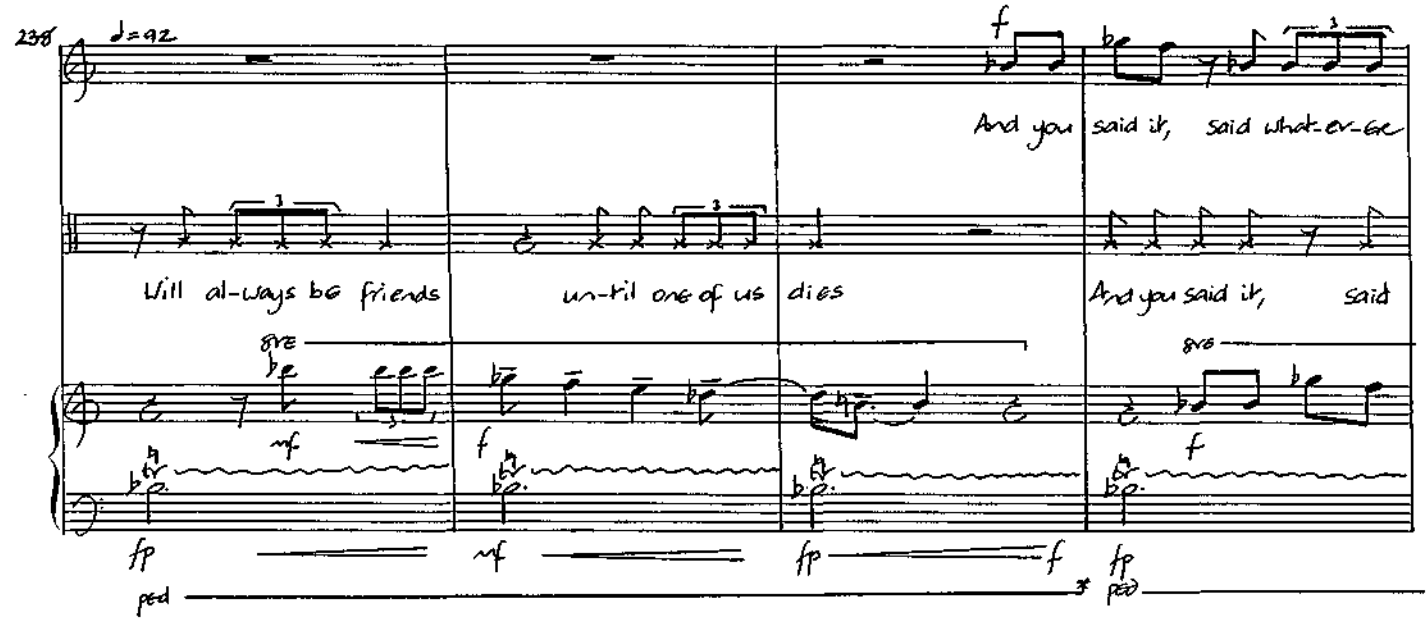


Preview File Only

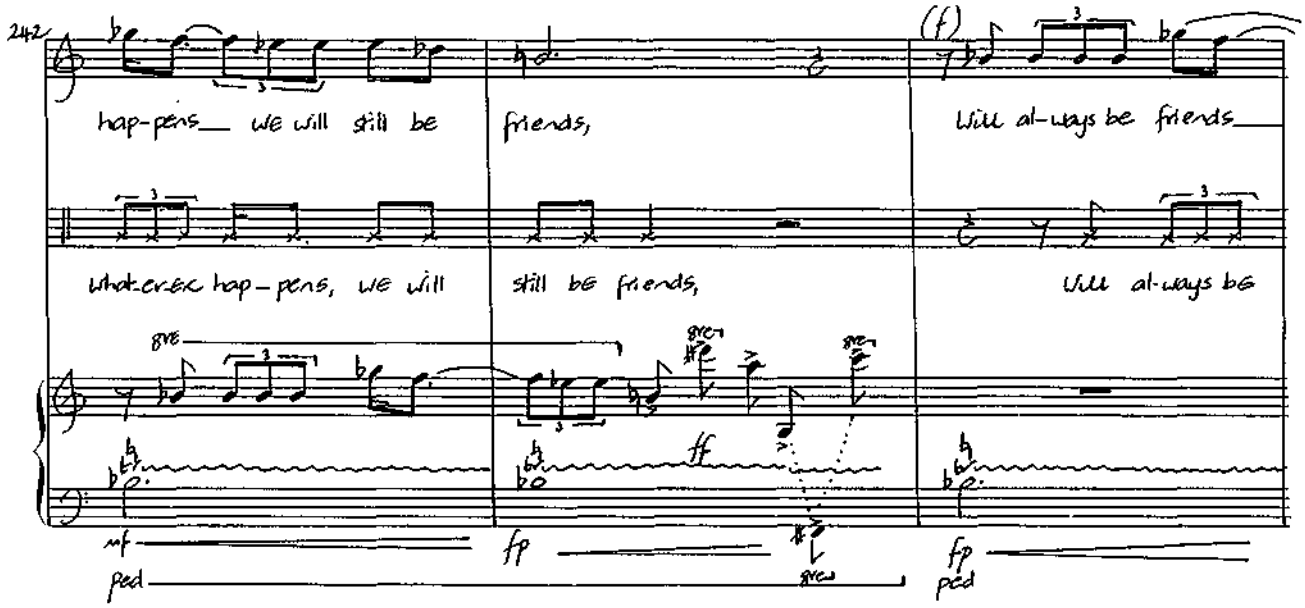


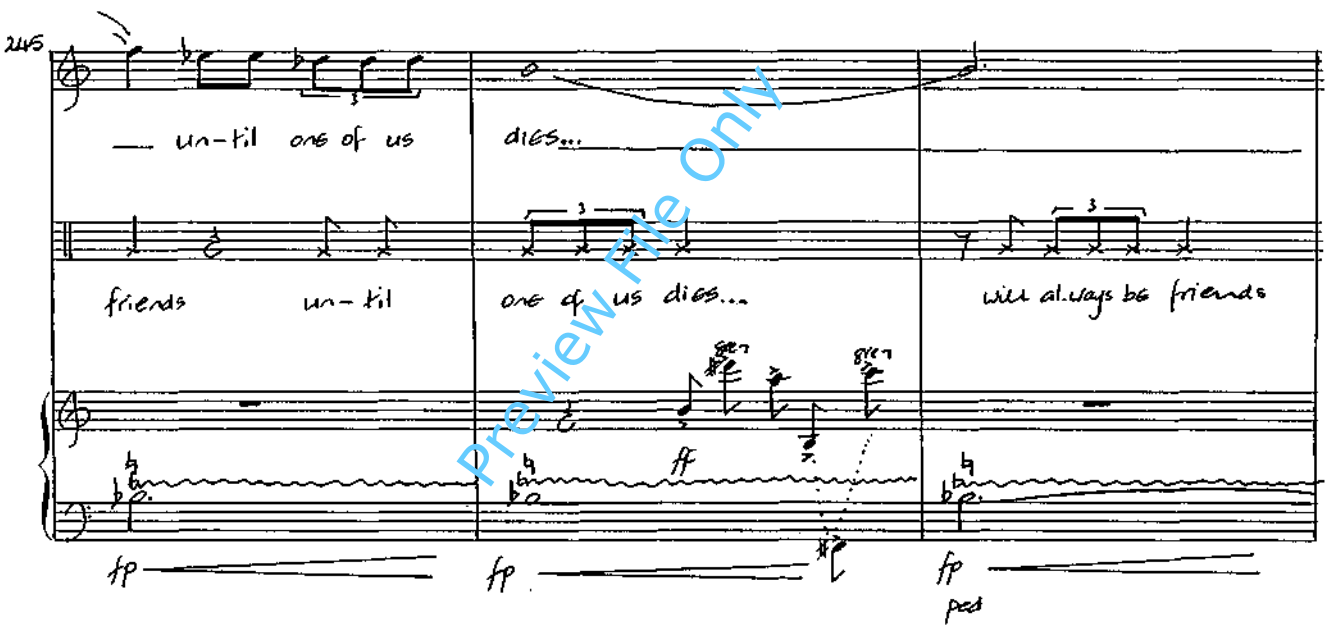


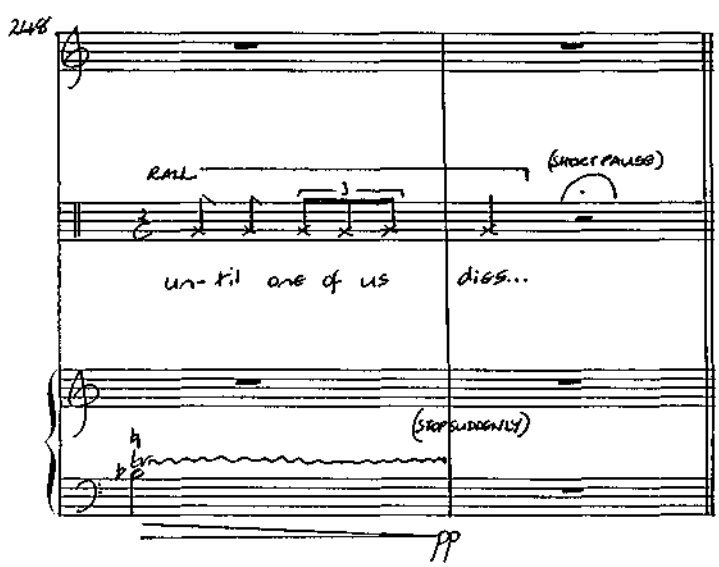




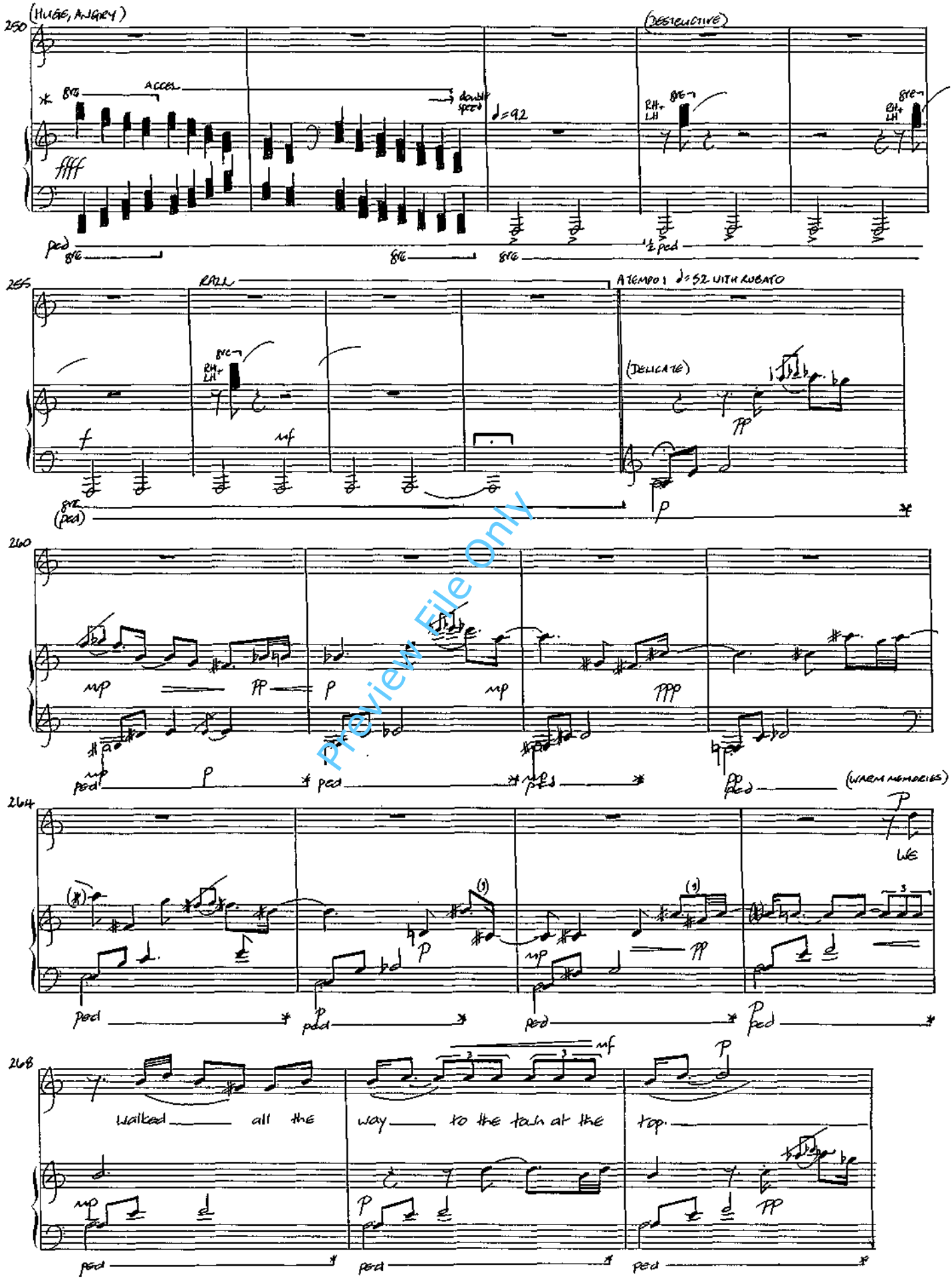
Preview File Only



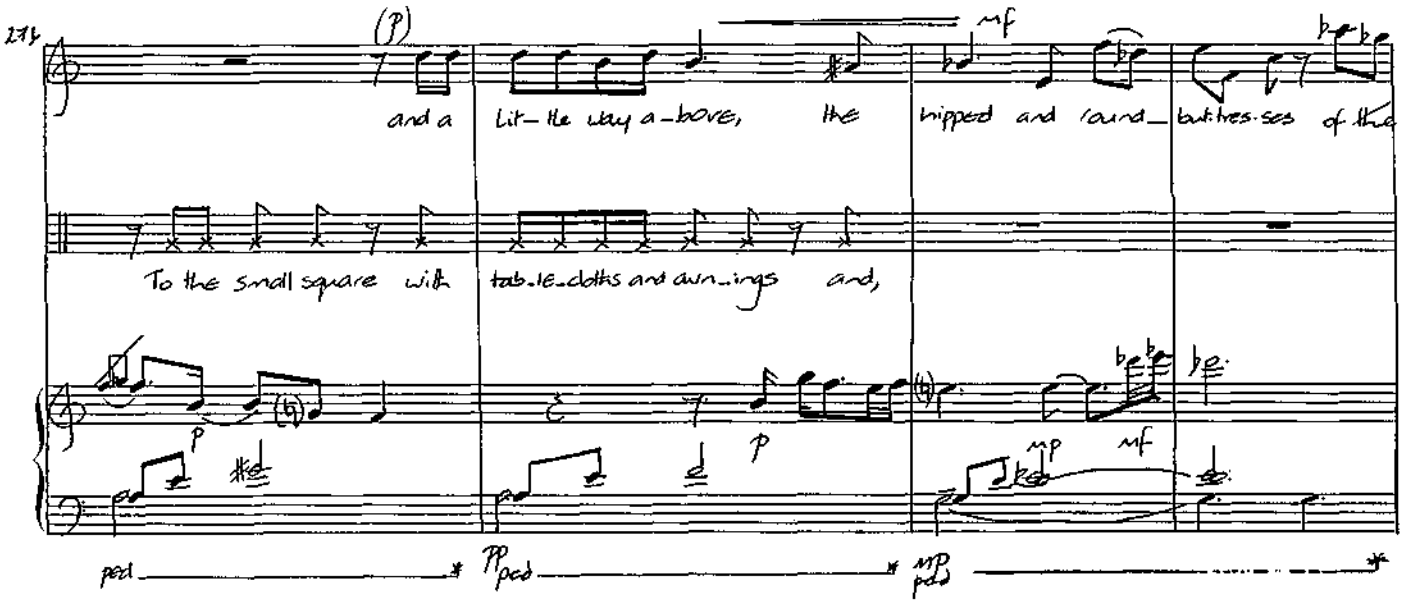


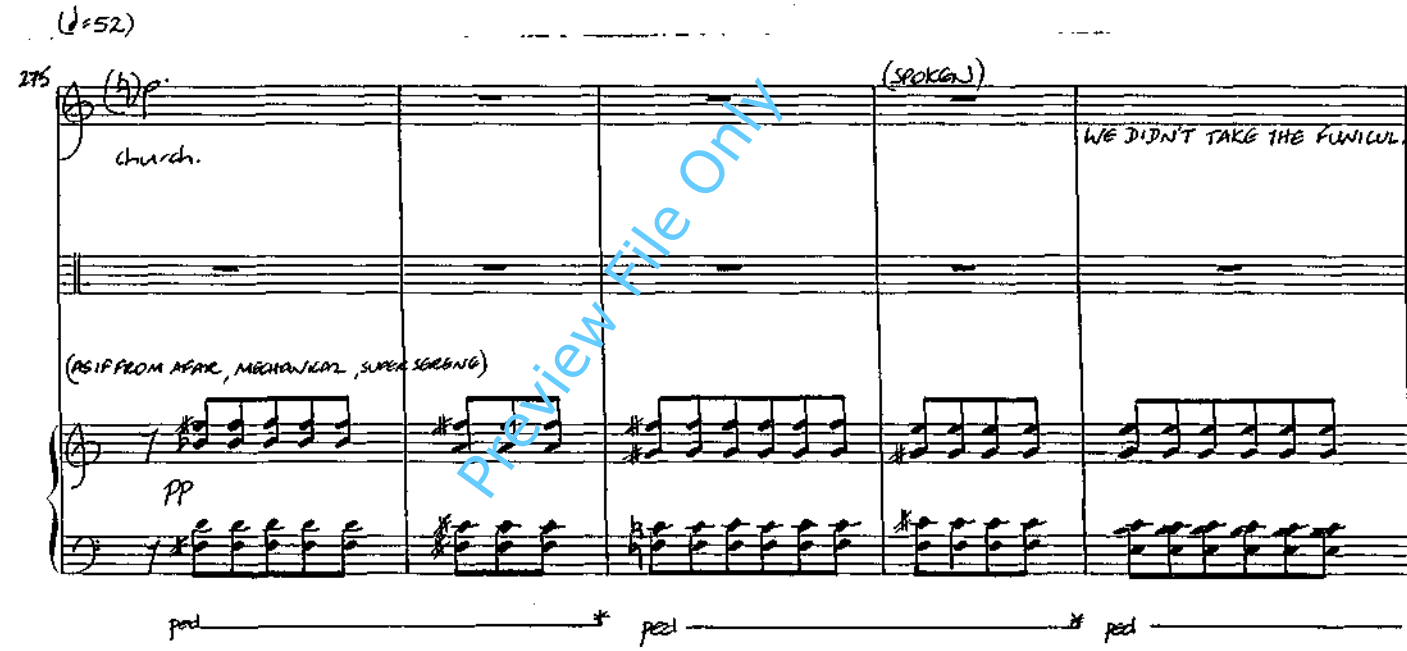


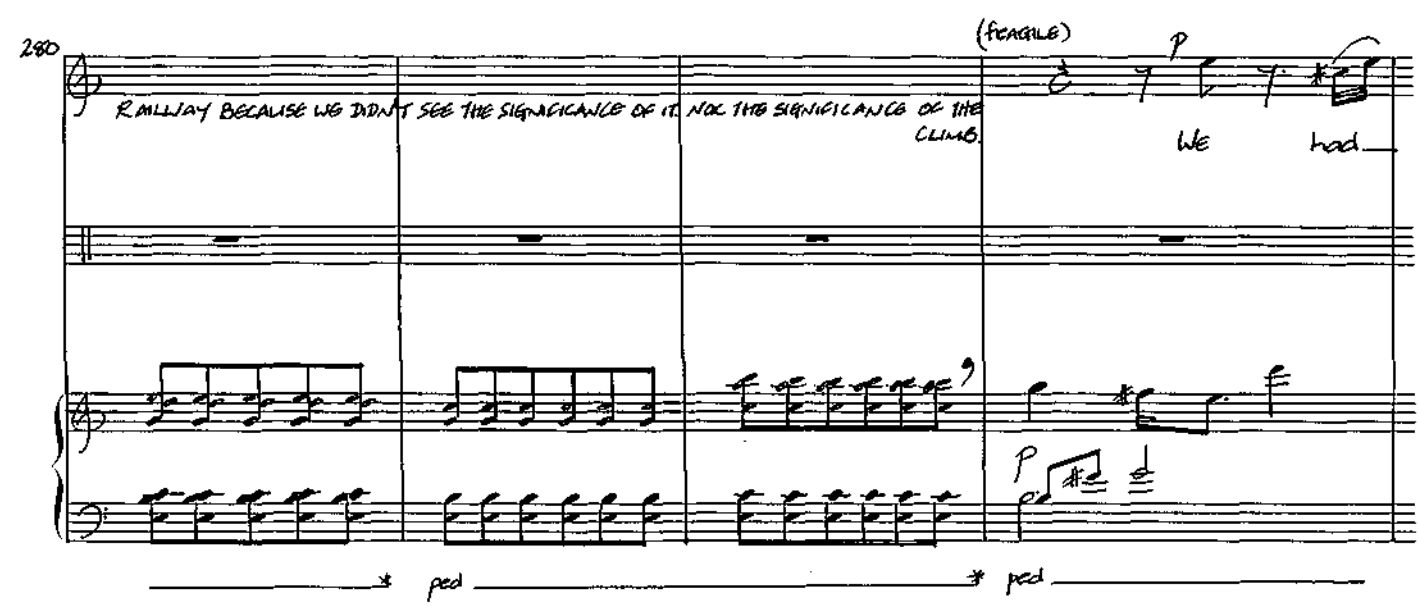
Preview File Only



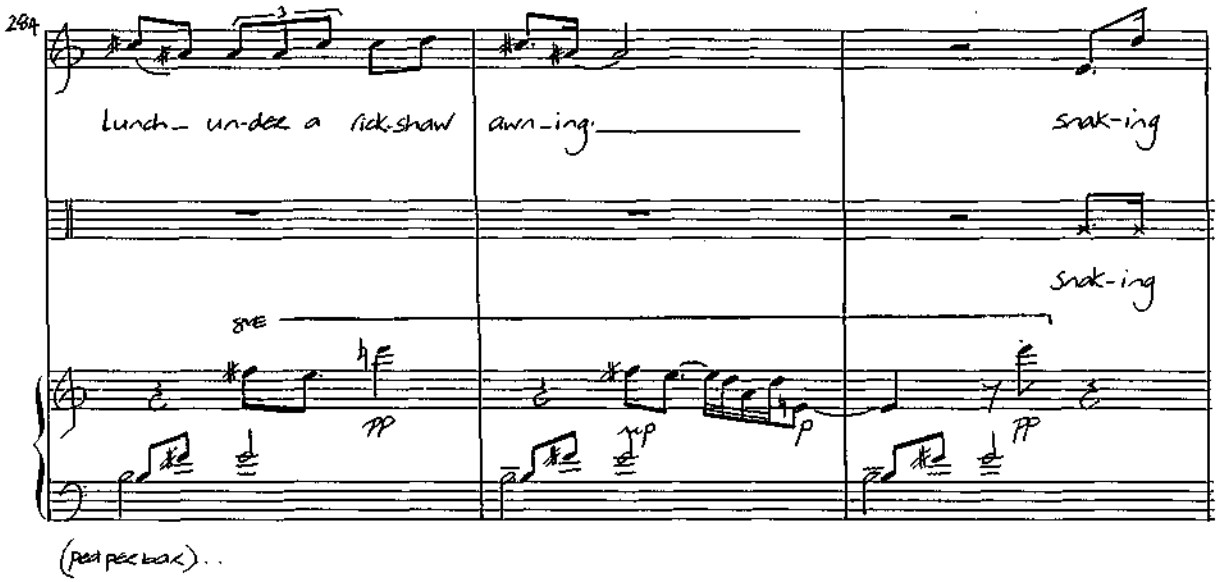
Preview File Only

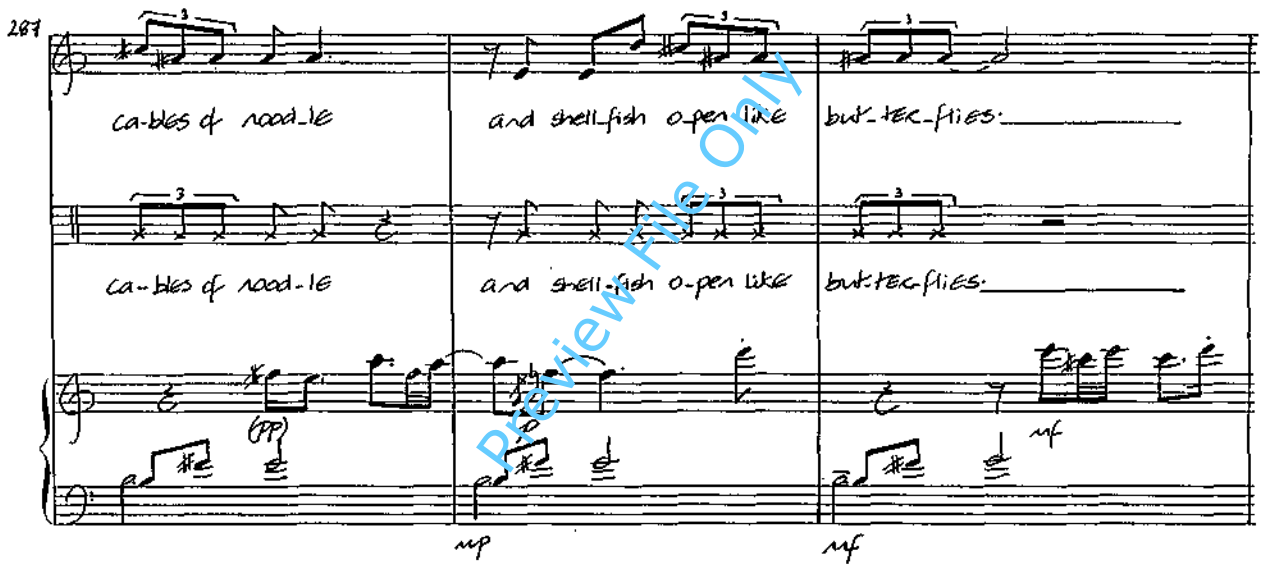


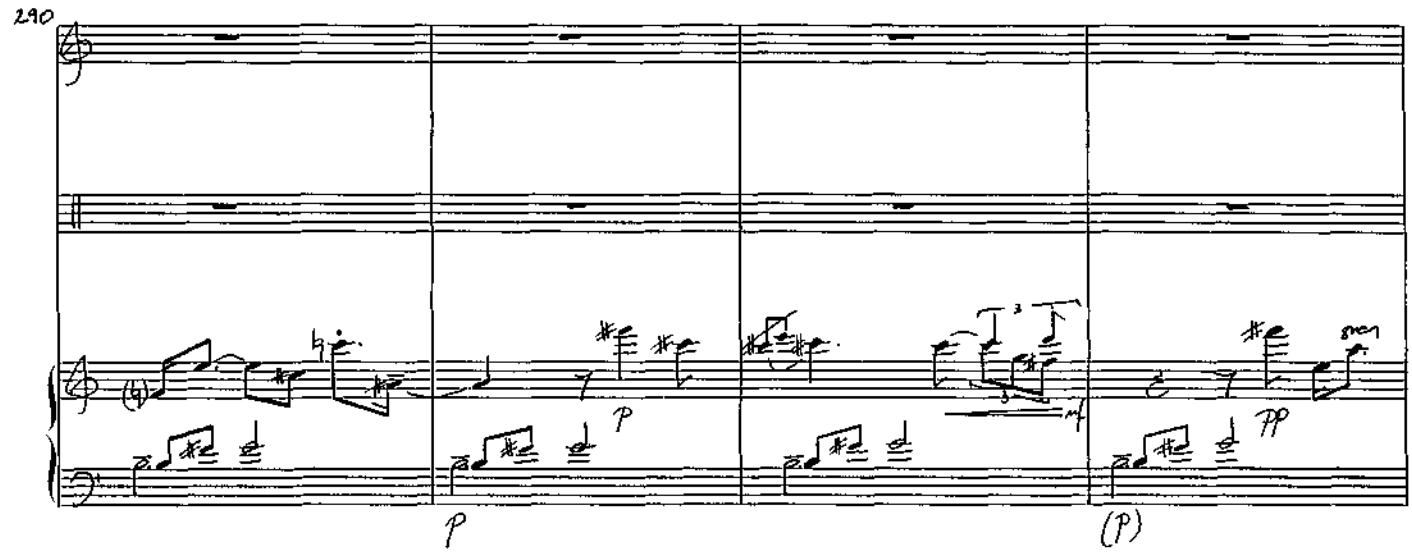




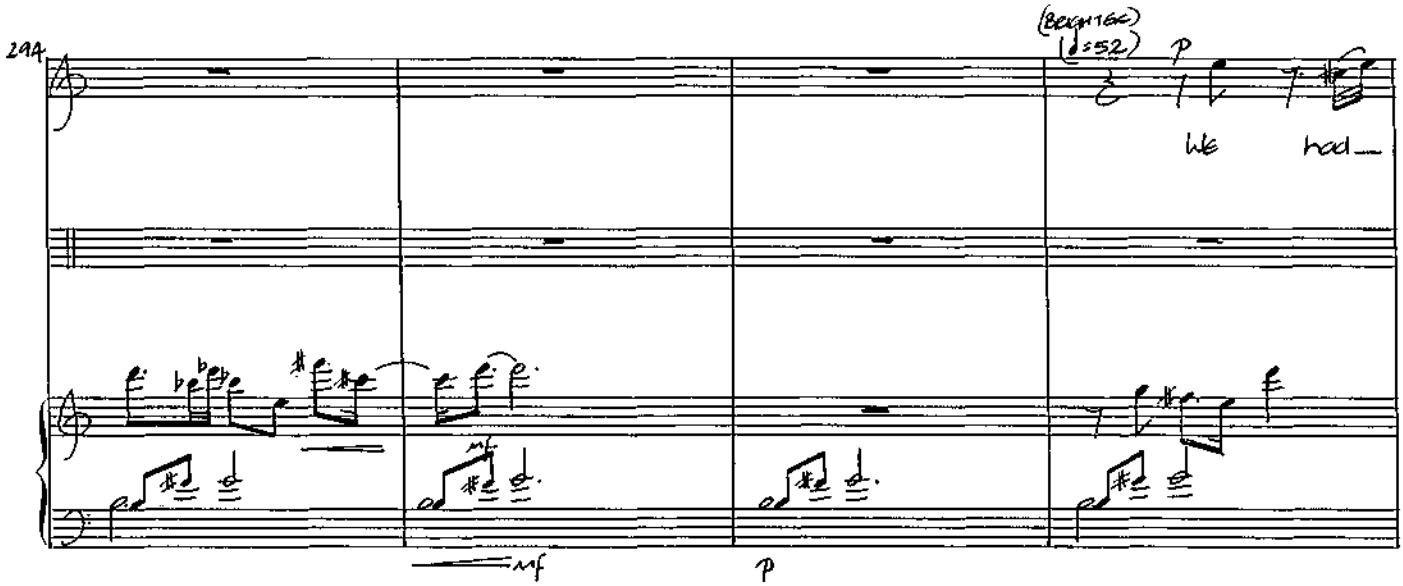
Preview File Only

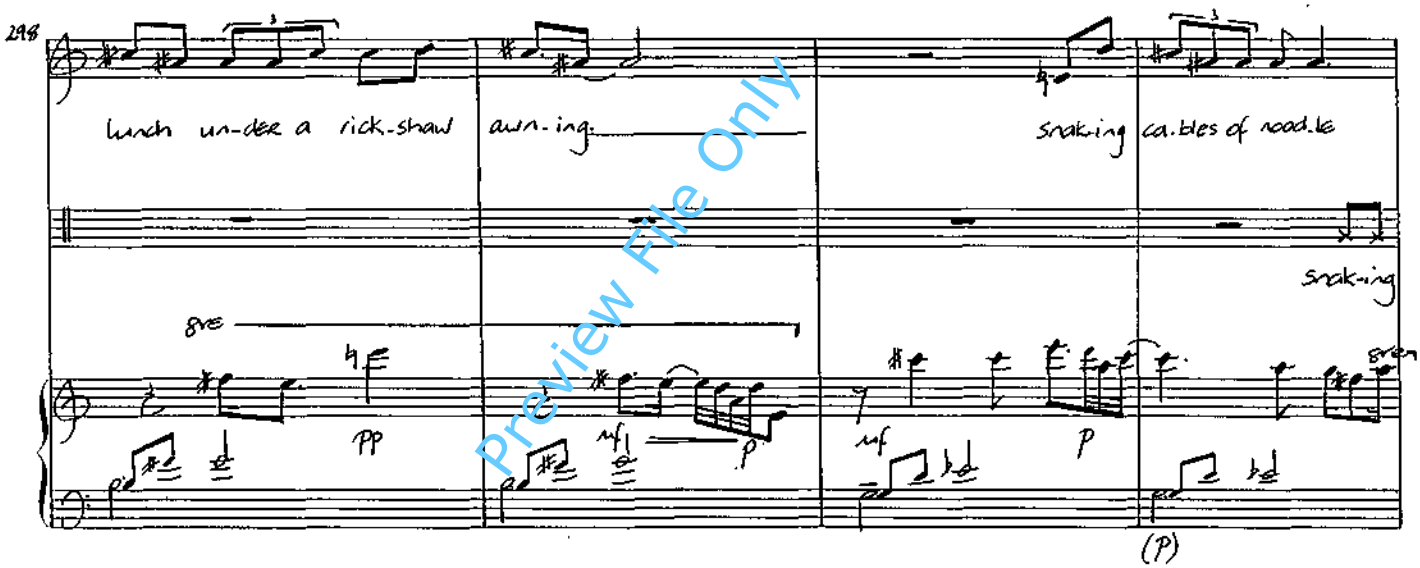


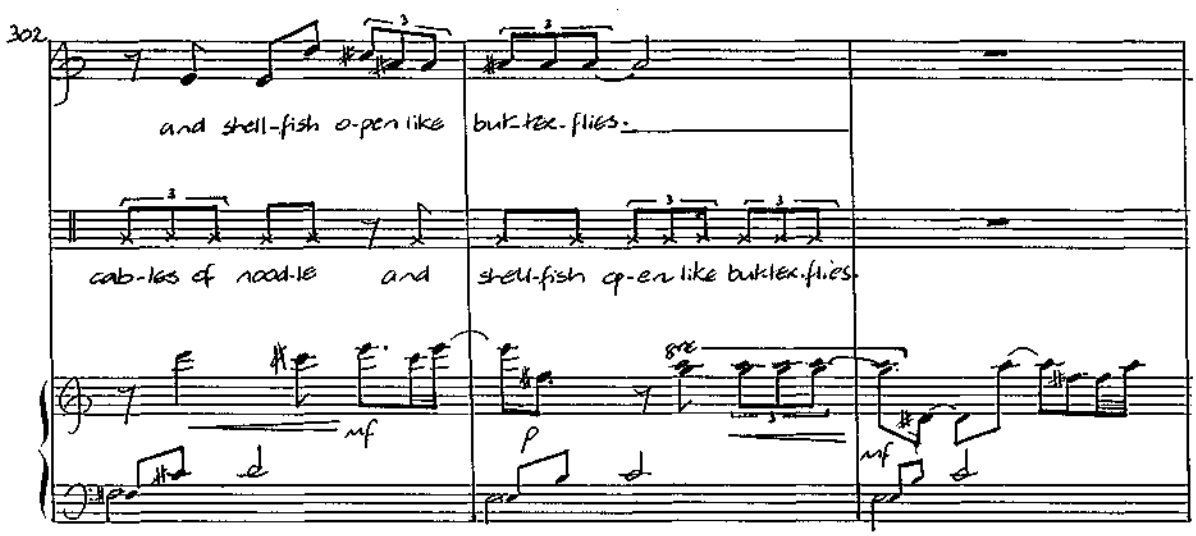




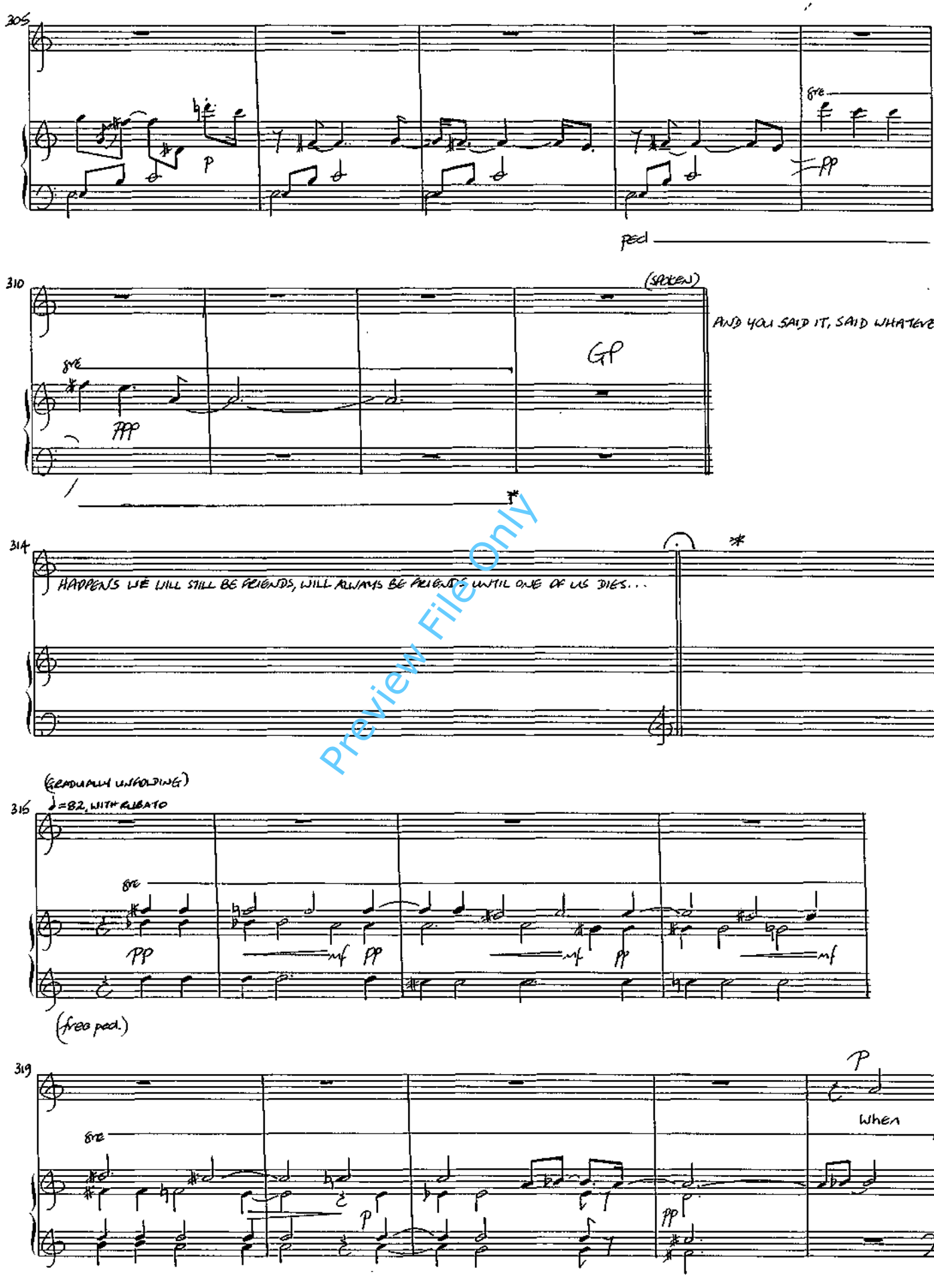
Preview File Only







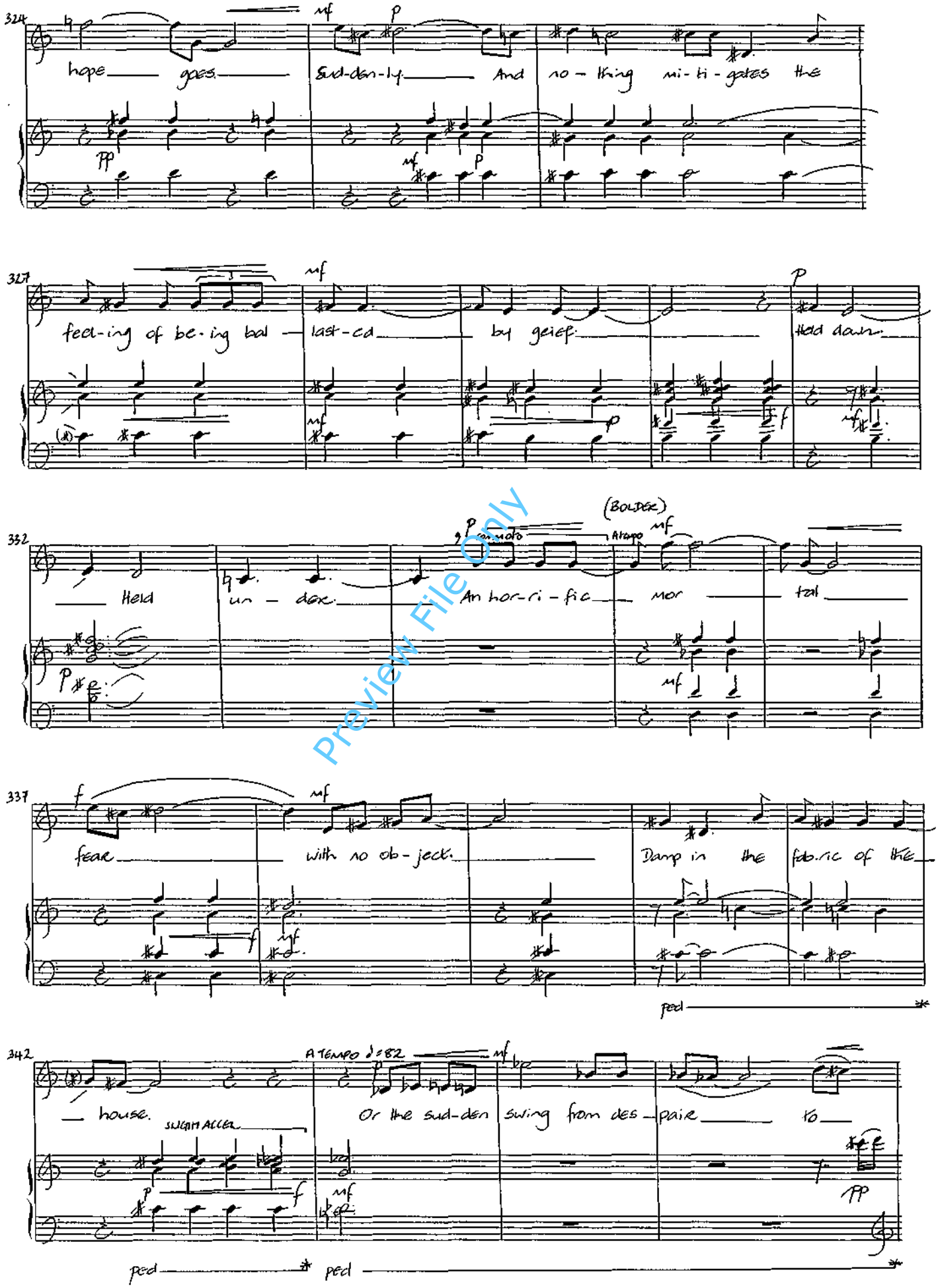
Preview File Only



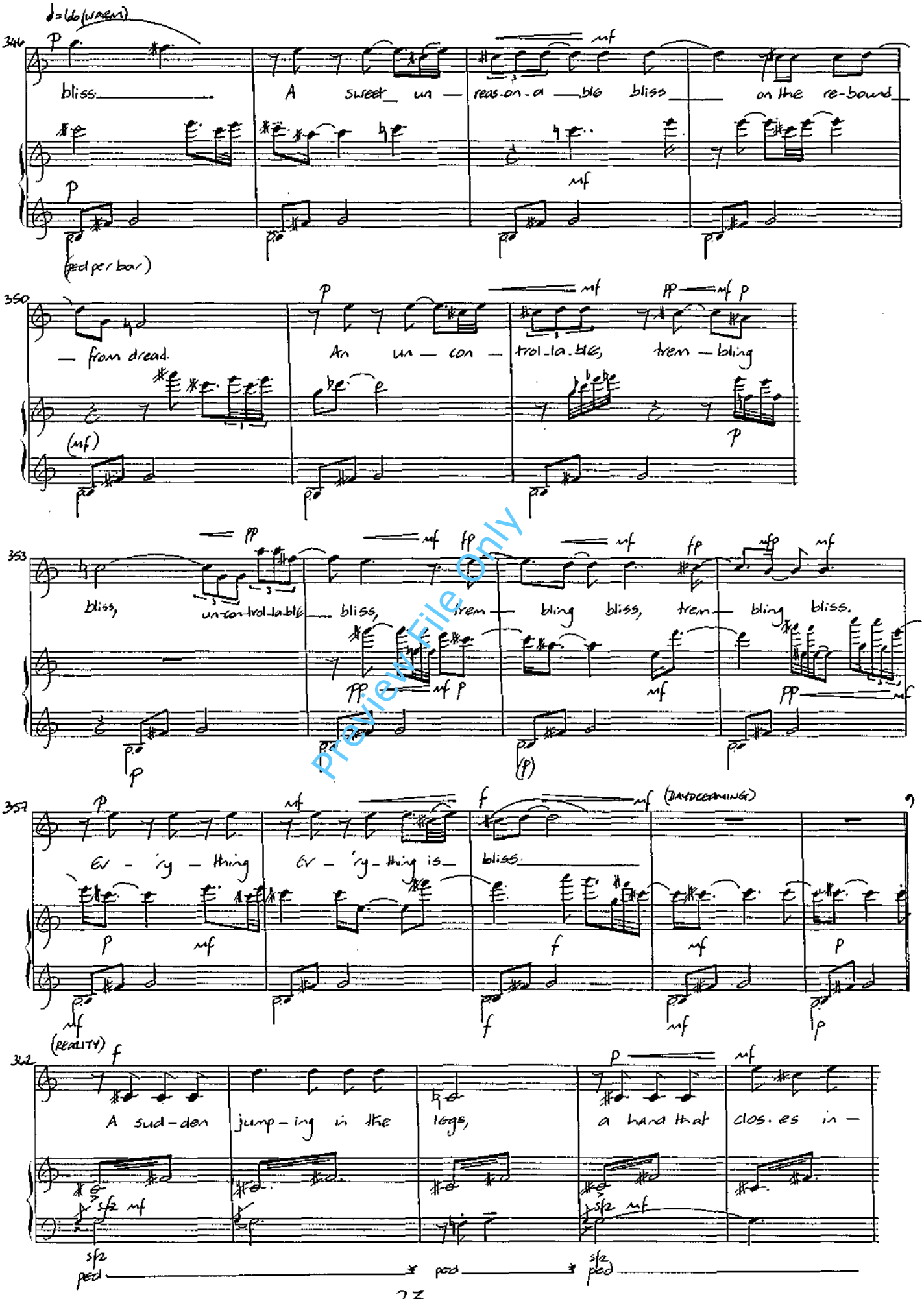
* DRAMATIC PAUSE IF NECESSARY

Preview File Only

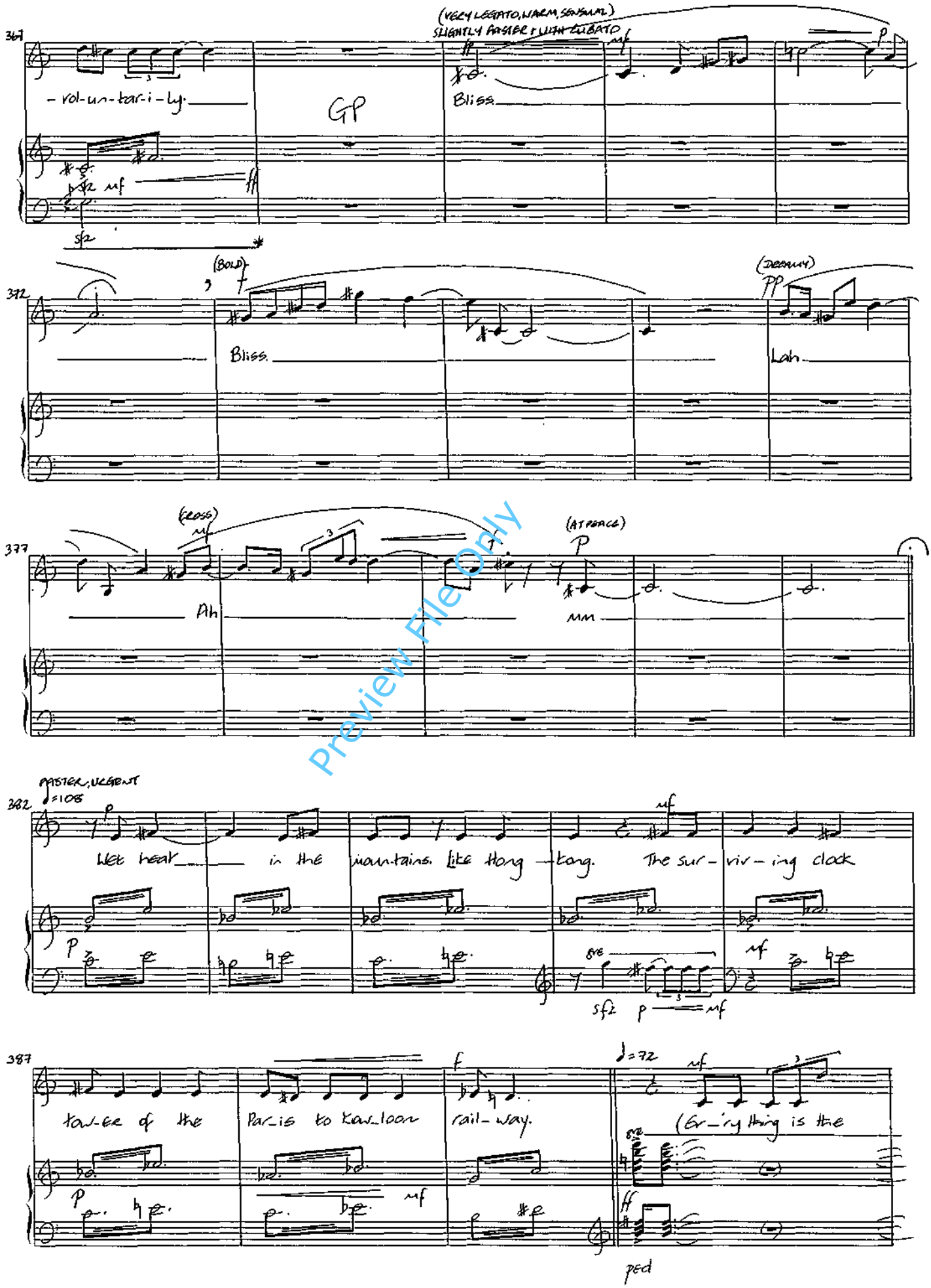
DVD-SIBELIUS SCORE-SYSTEM



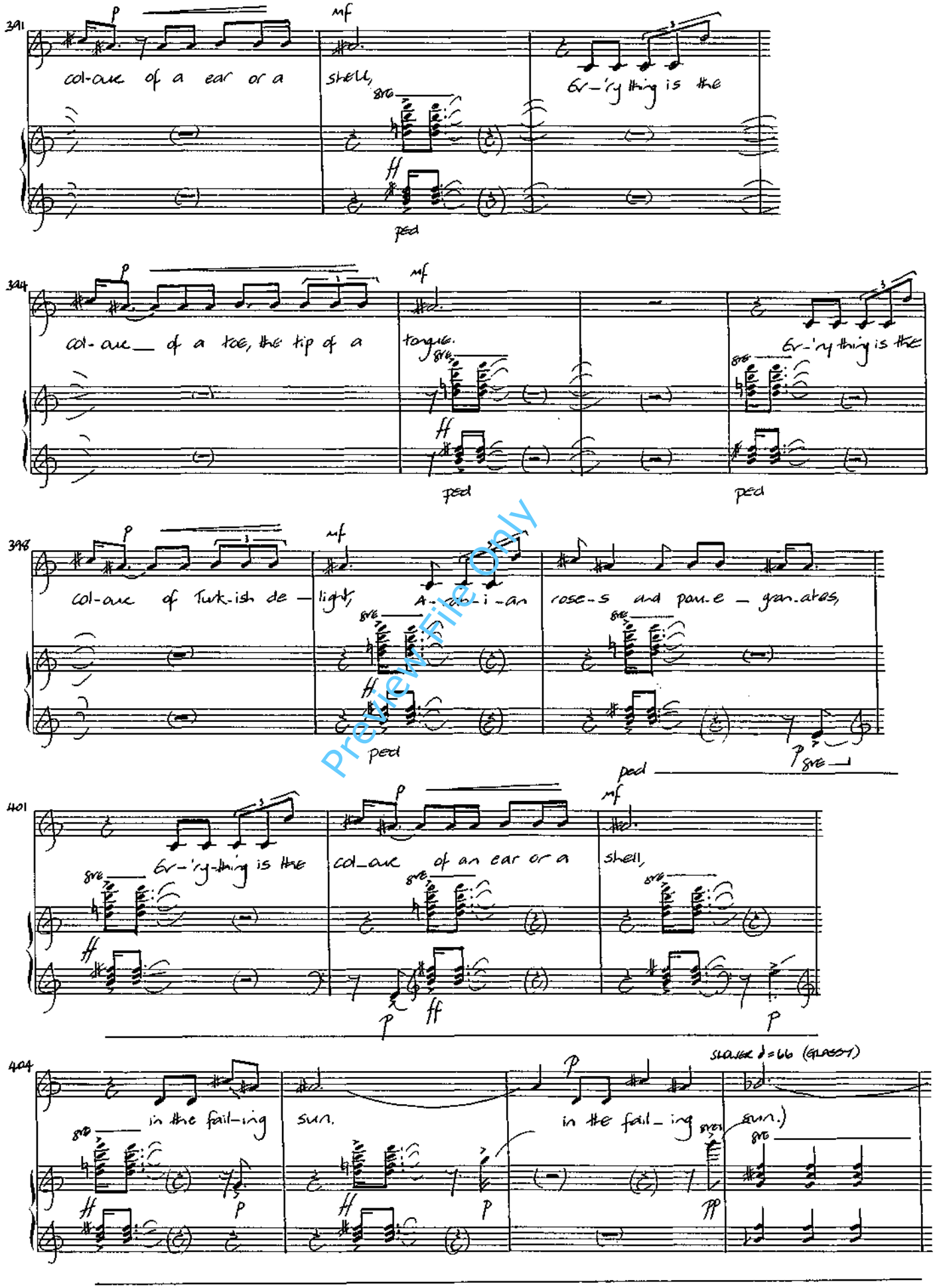
Preview File Only



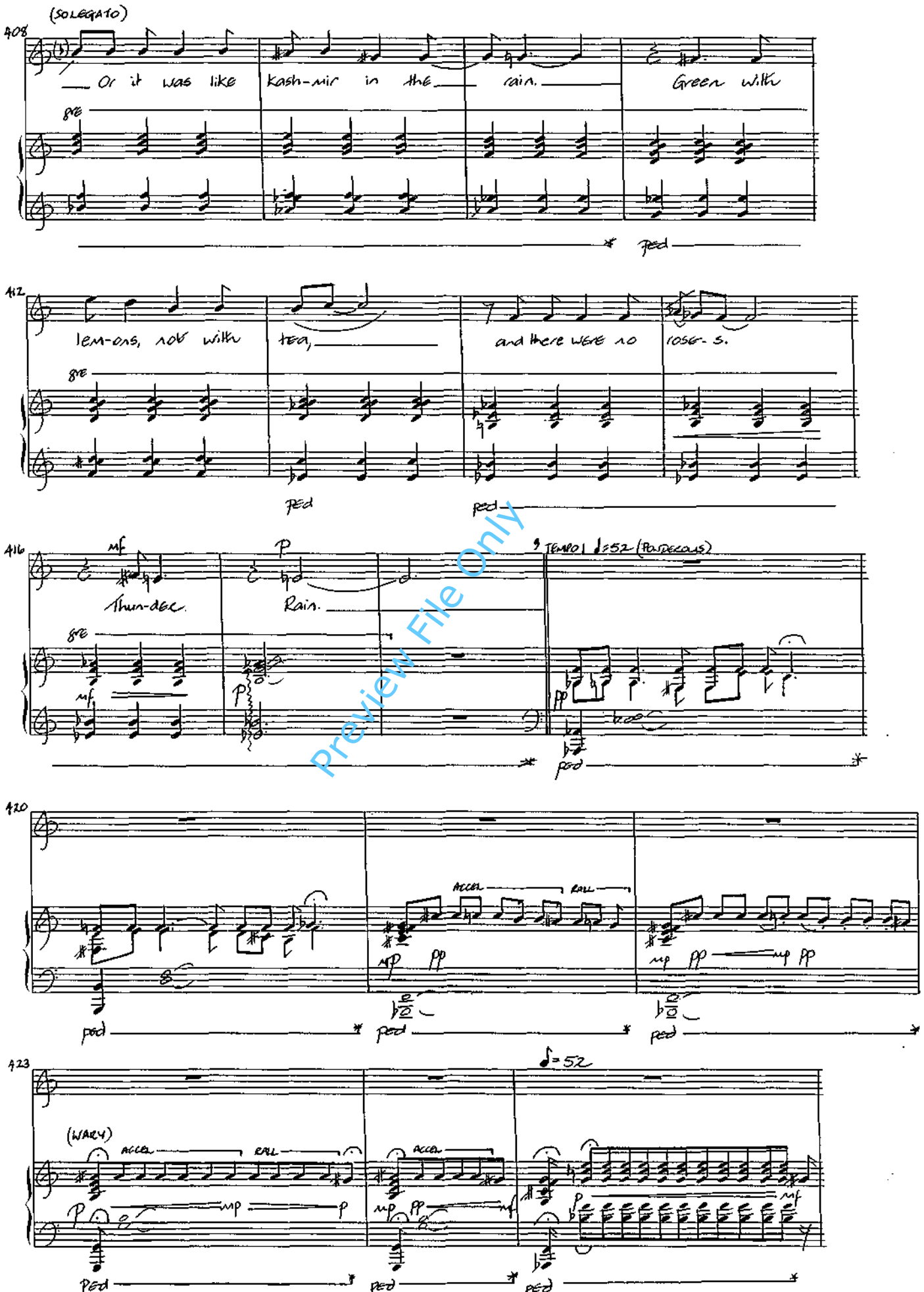
Preview File Only



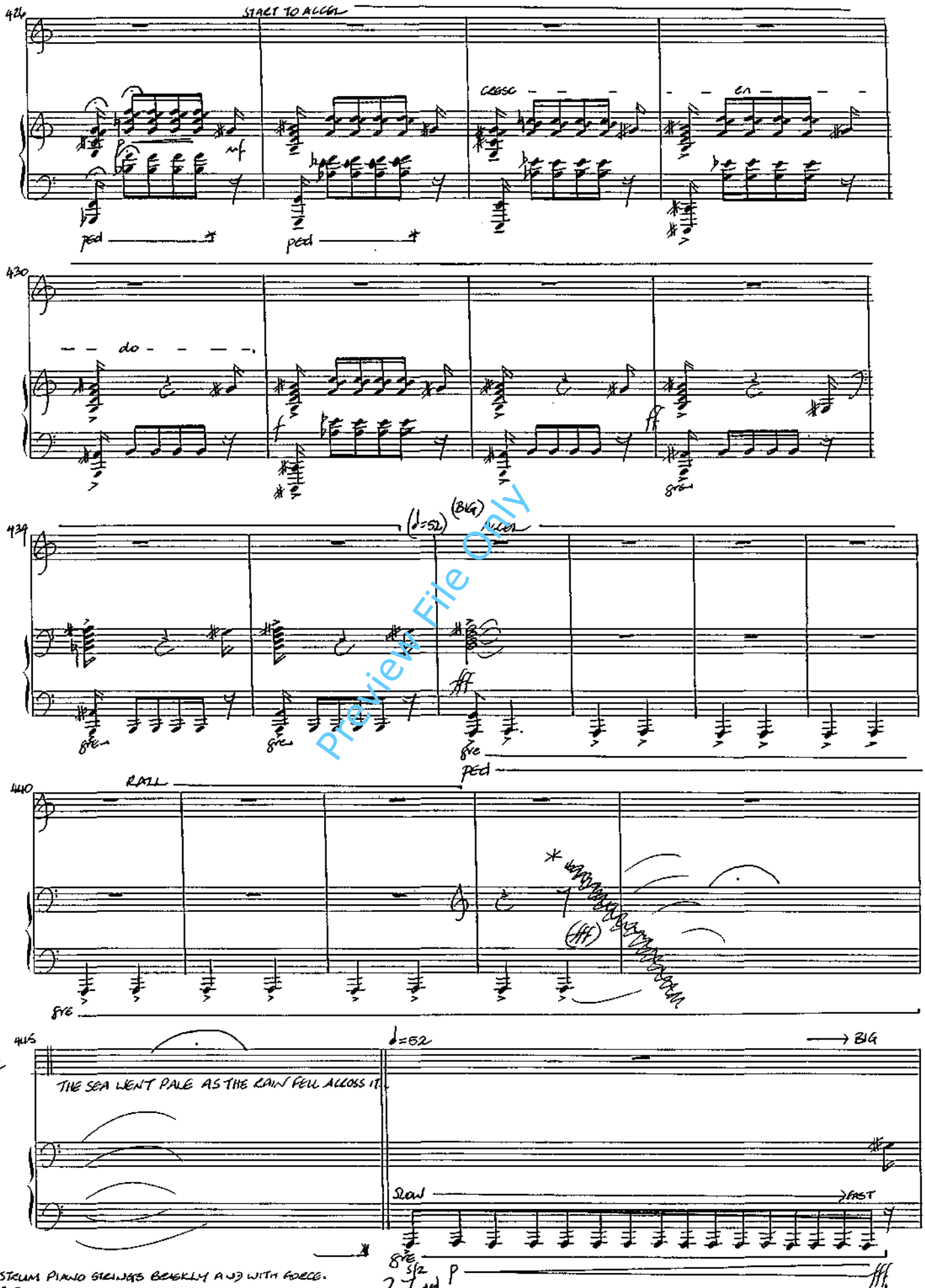
Preview File Only



Preview File Only

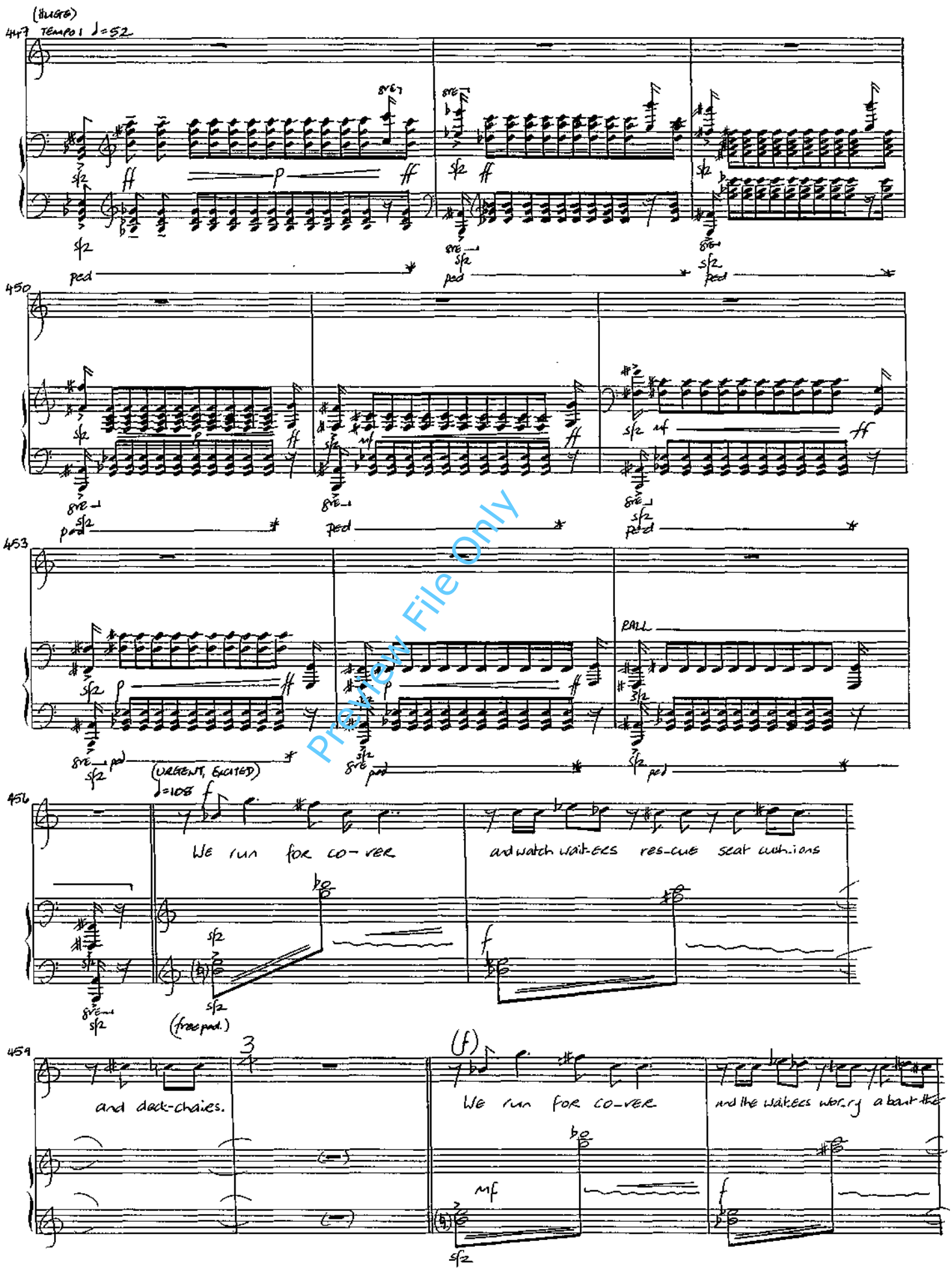


Preview File Only

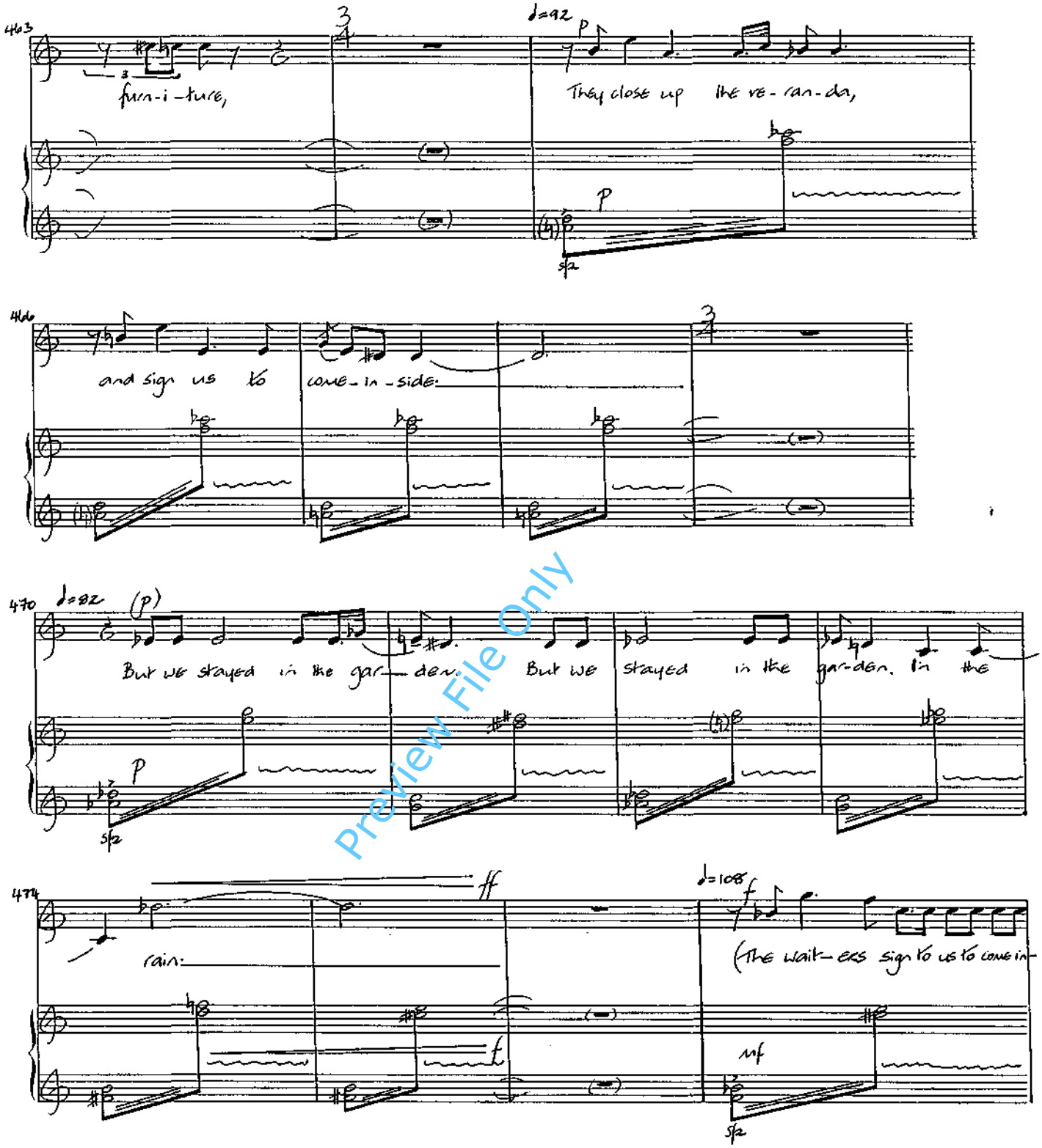


* STRUM PIANO STRINGS BRISKLY AND WITH FORCE. PEDAL APPLIED THROUGHOUT

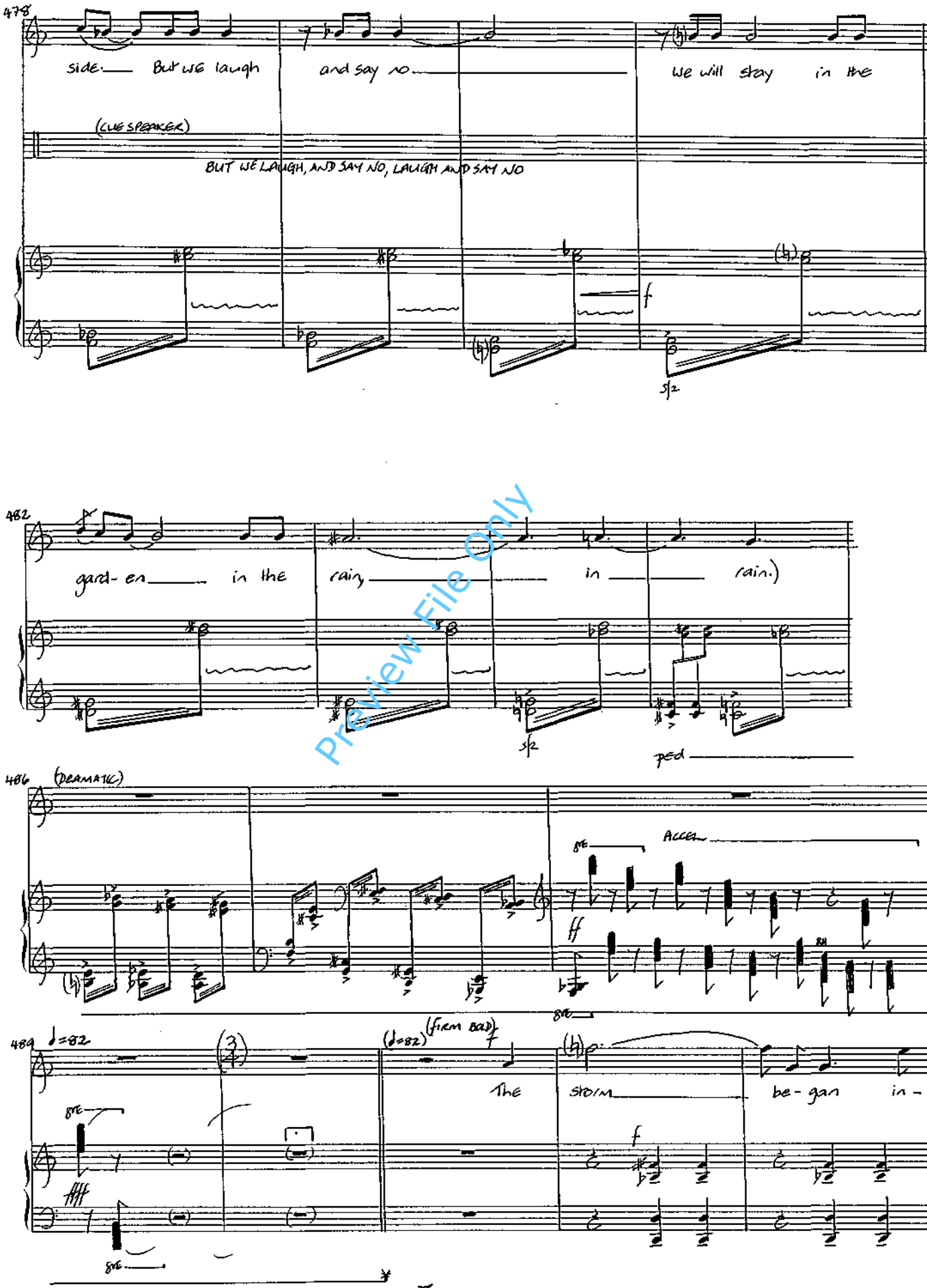
Preview File Only



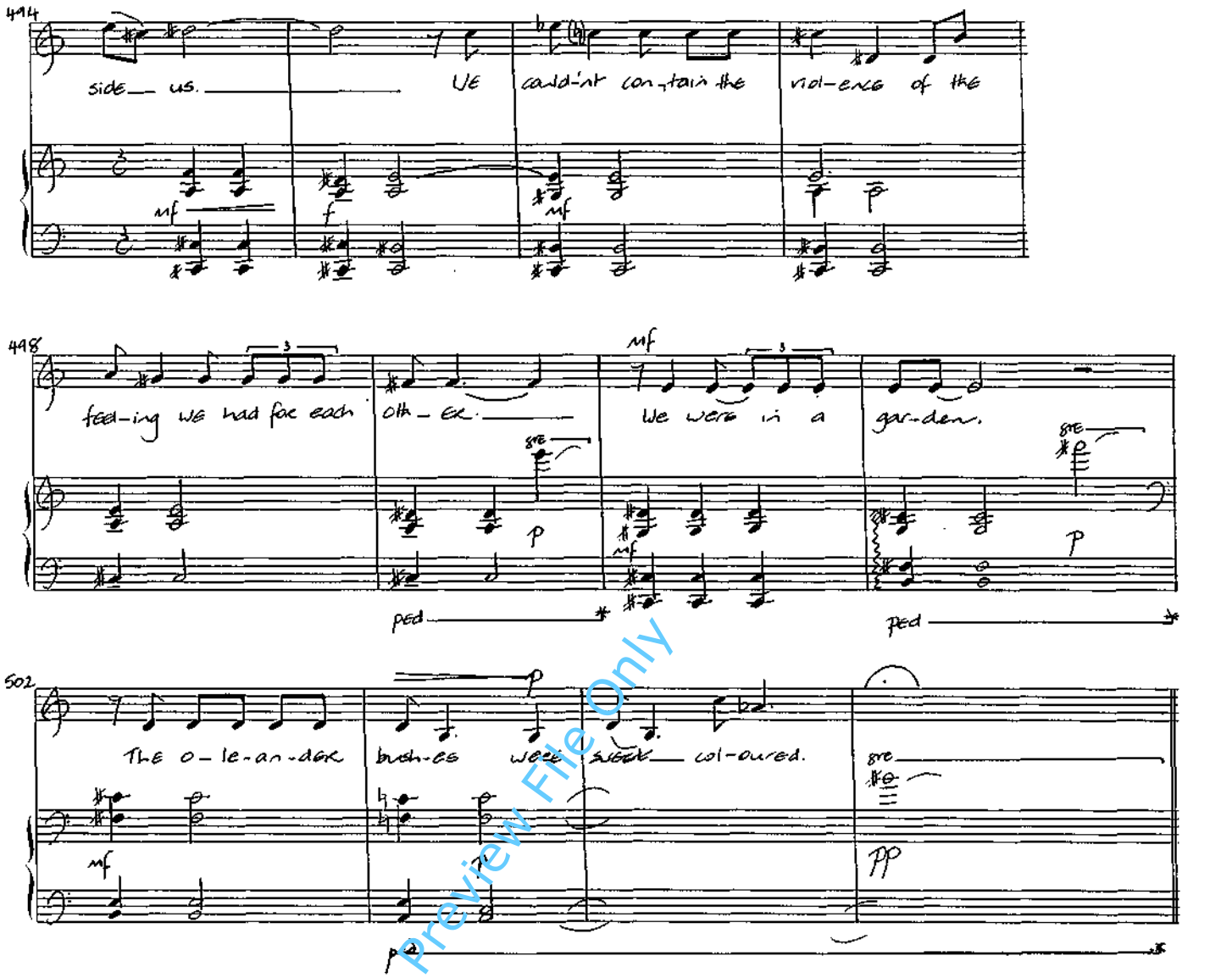
Preview File Only



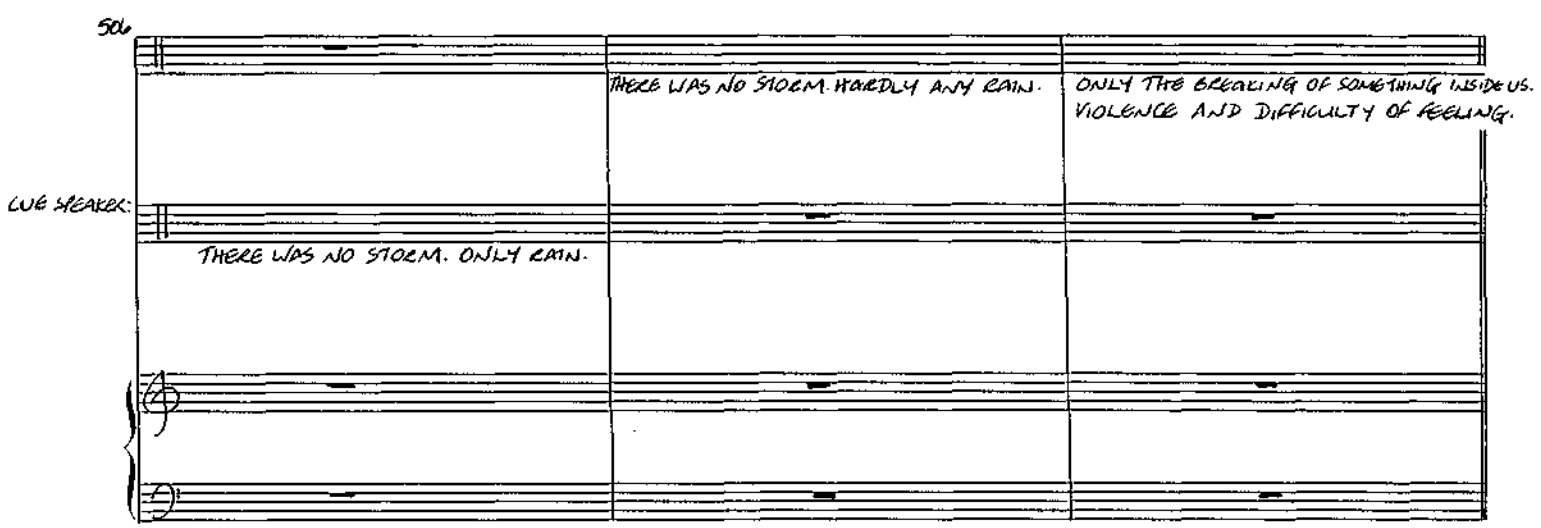
Preview File Only

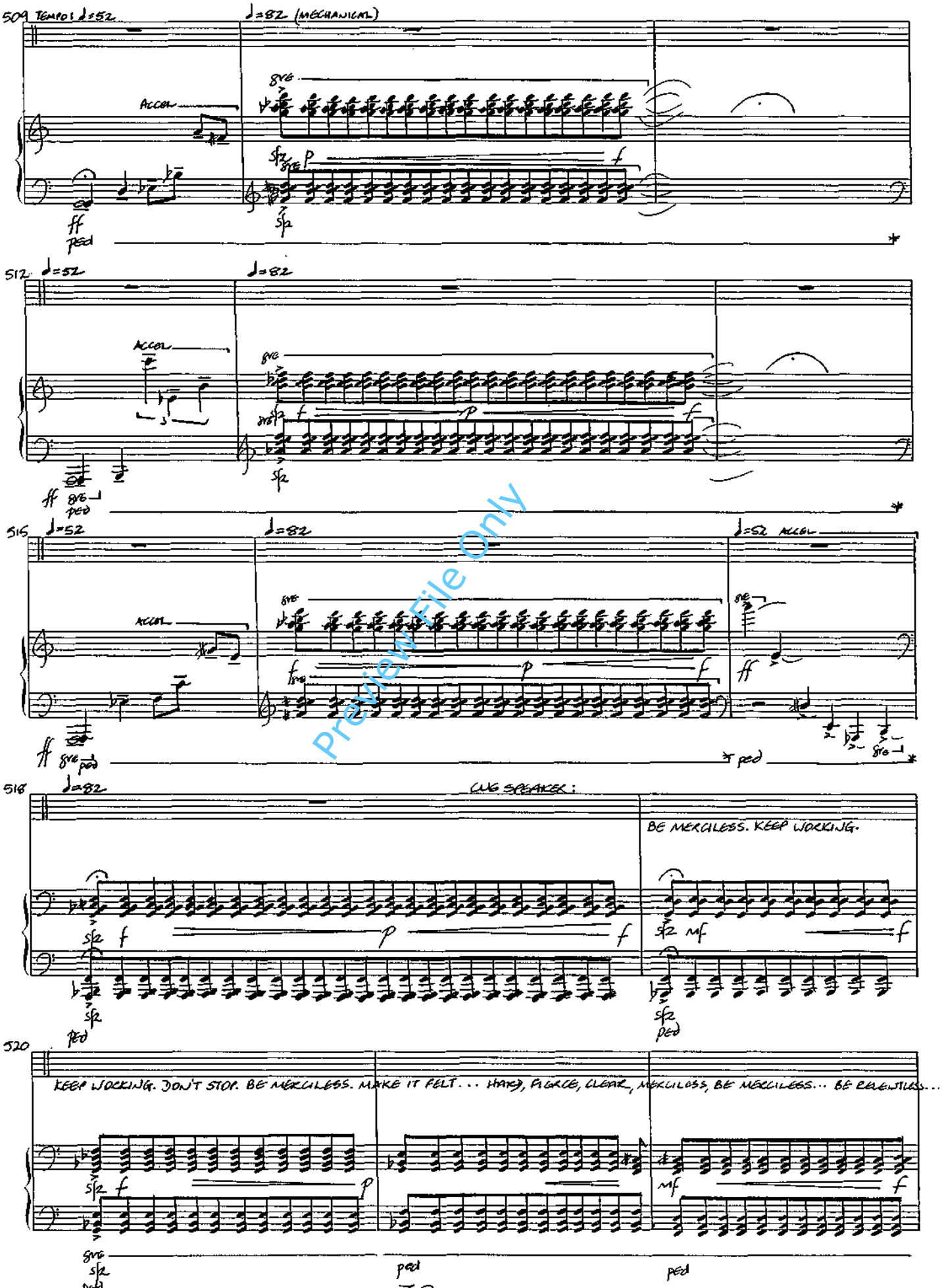


Preview File Only

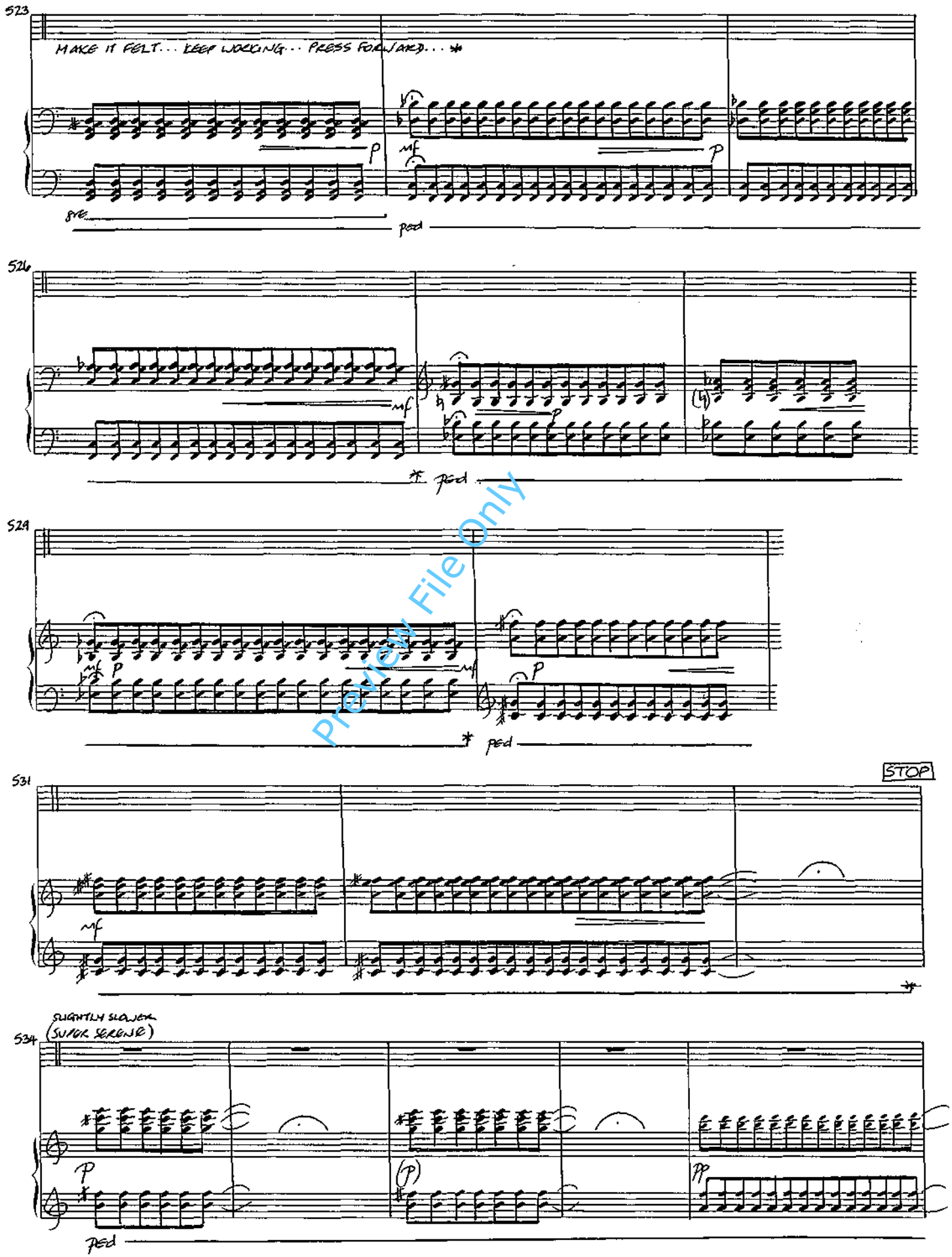


Preview File Only



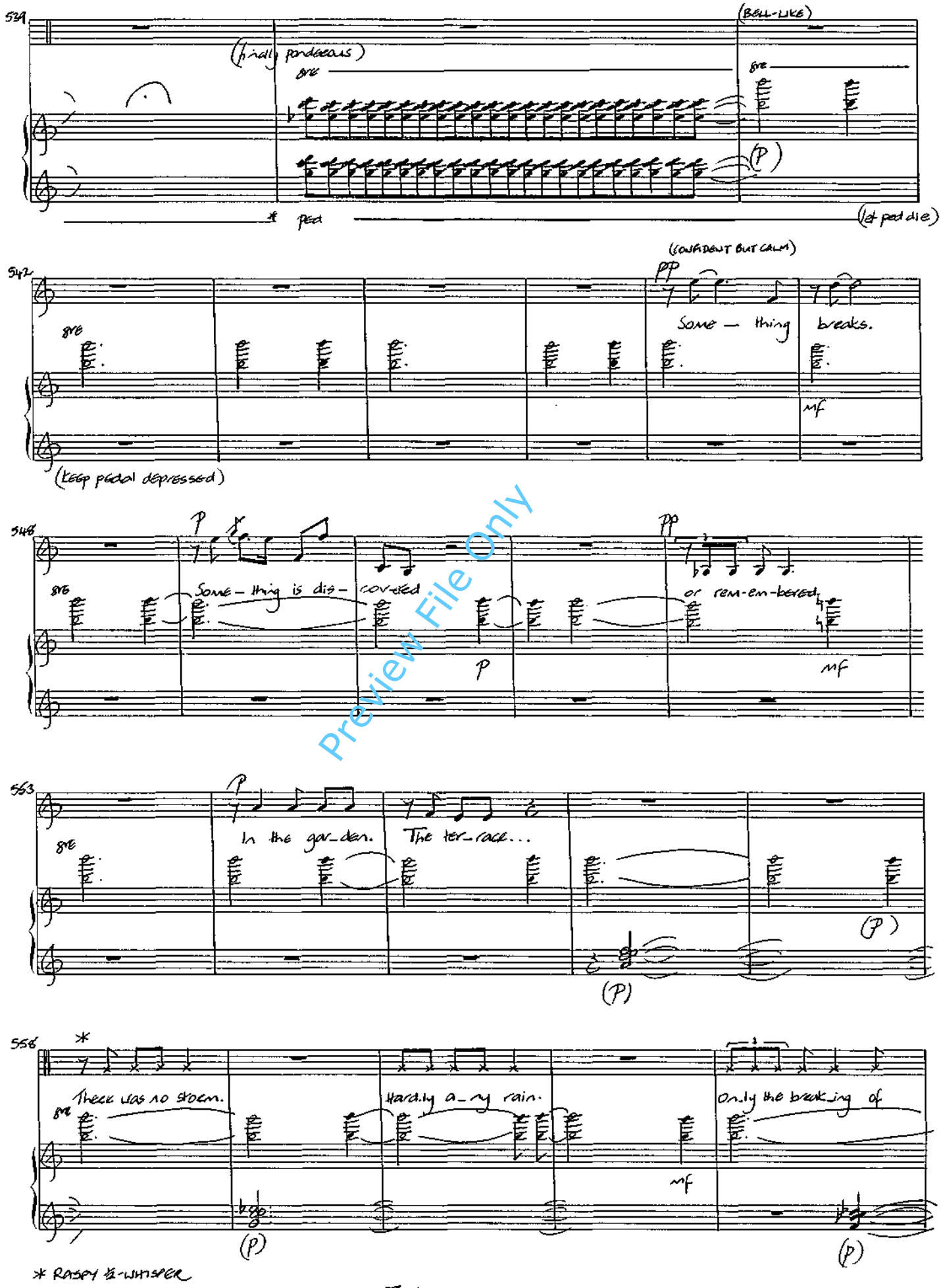


Preview File Only

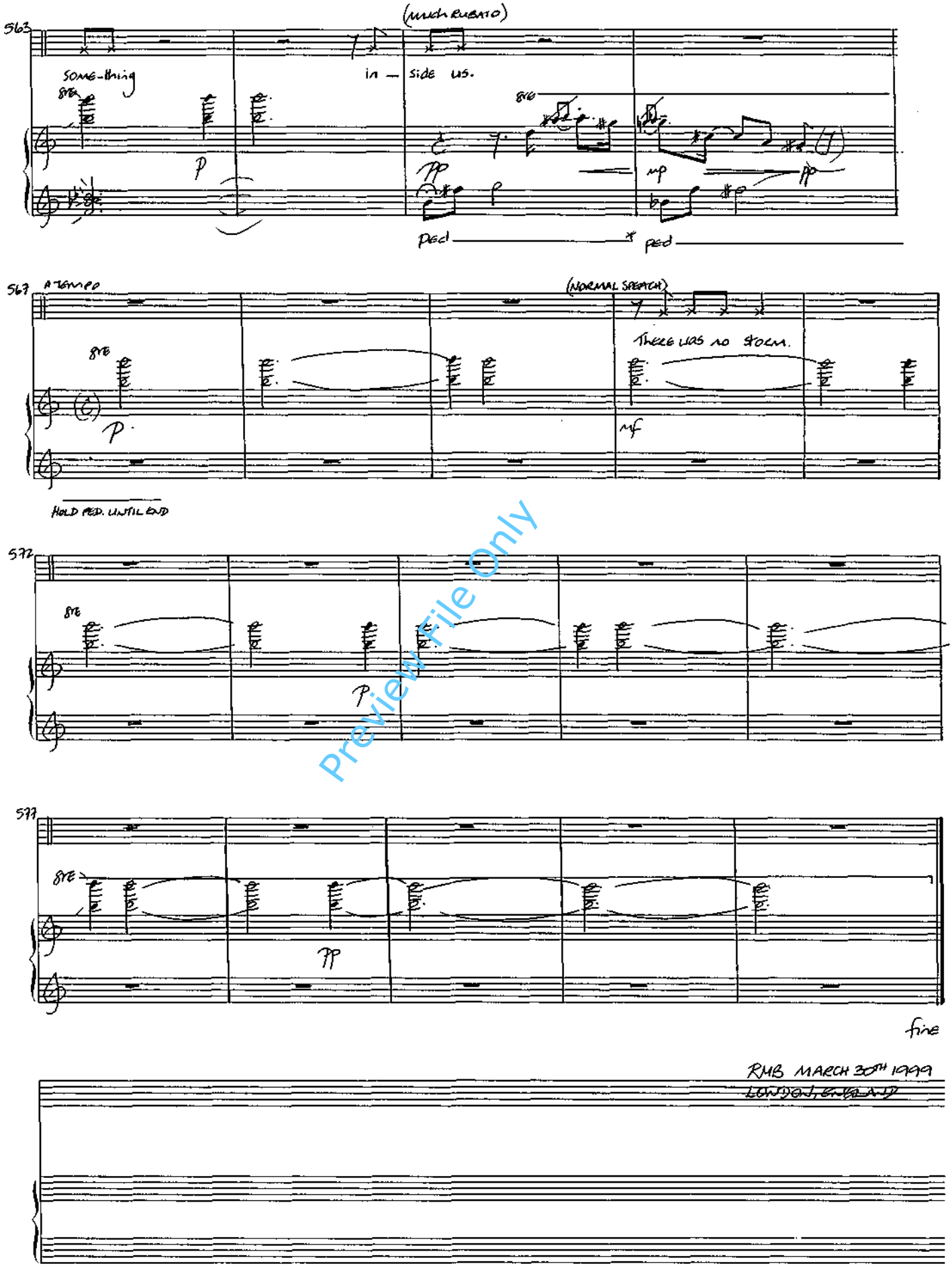


Preview File Only

* REPEAT TEXT FROM BAR 519 ONWARDS UNTIL CUE TO STOP



Preview File Only



Preview File Only