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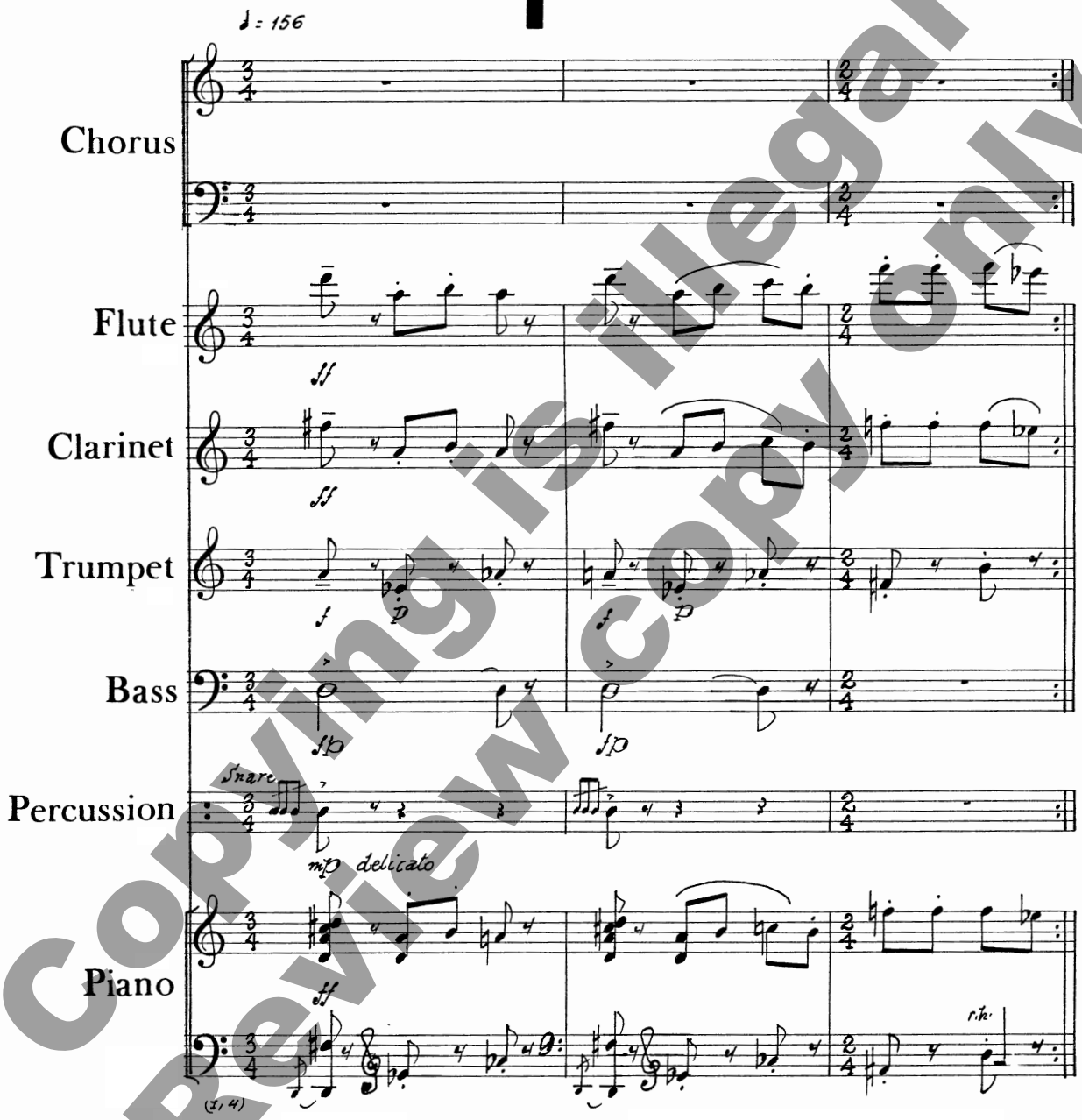
THE DREADFUL DINING CAR

Daniel Pinkham

1



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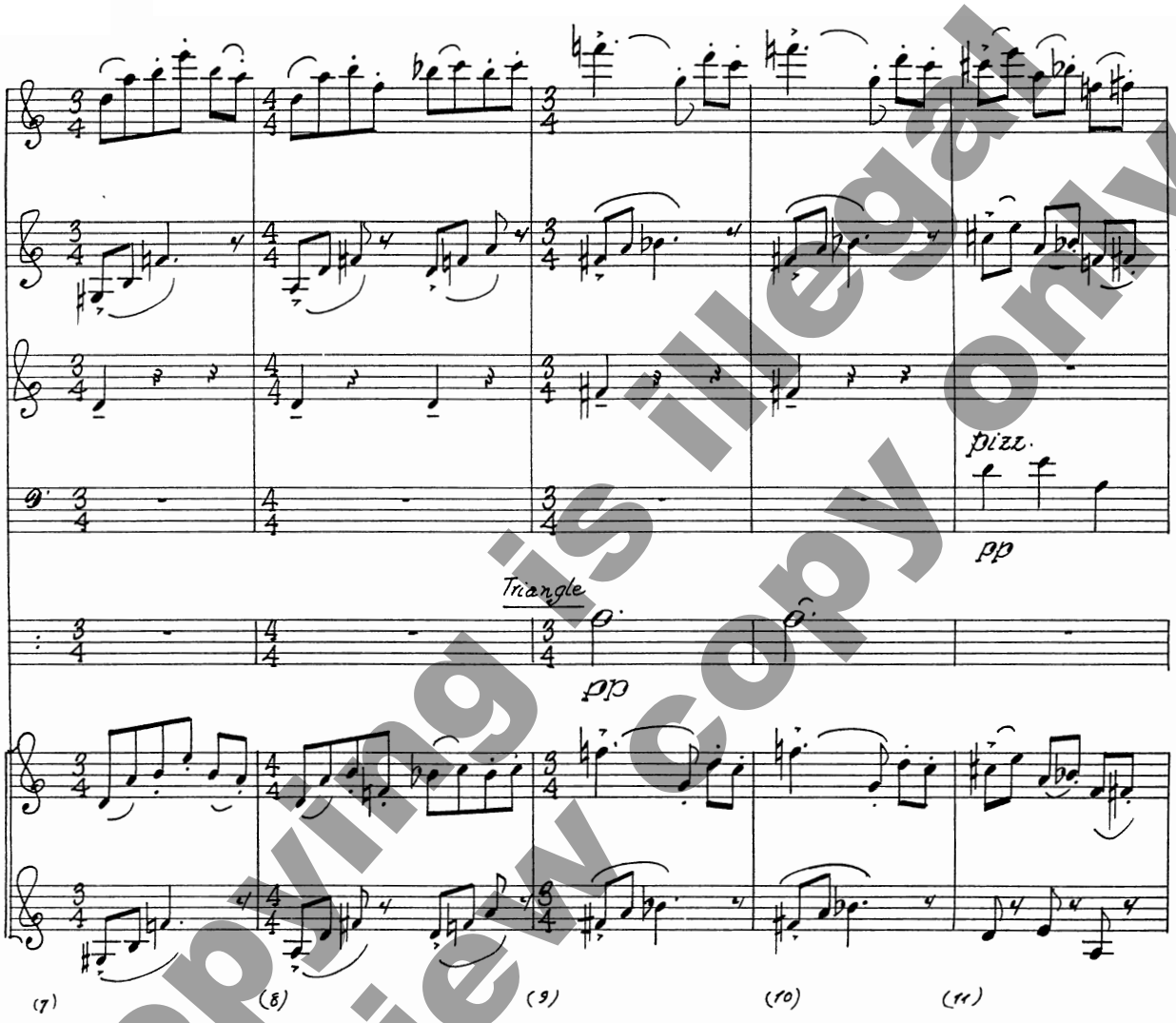

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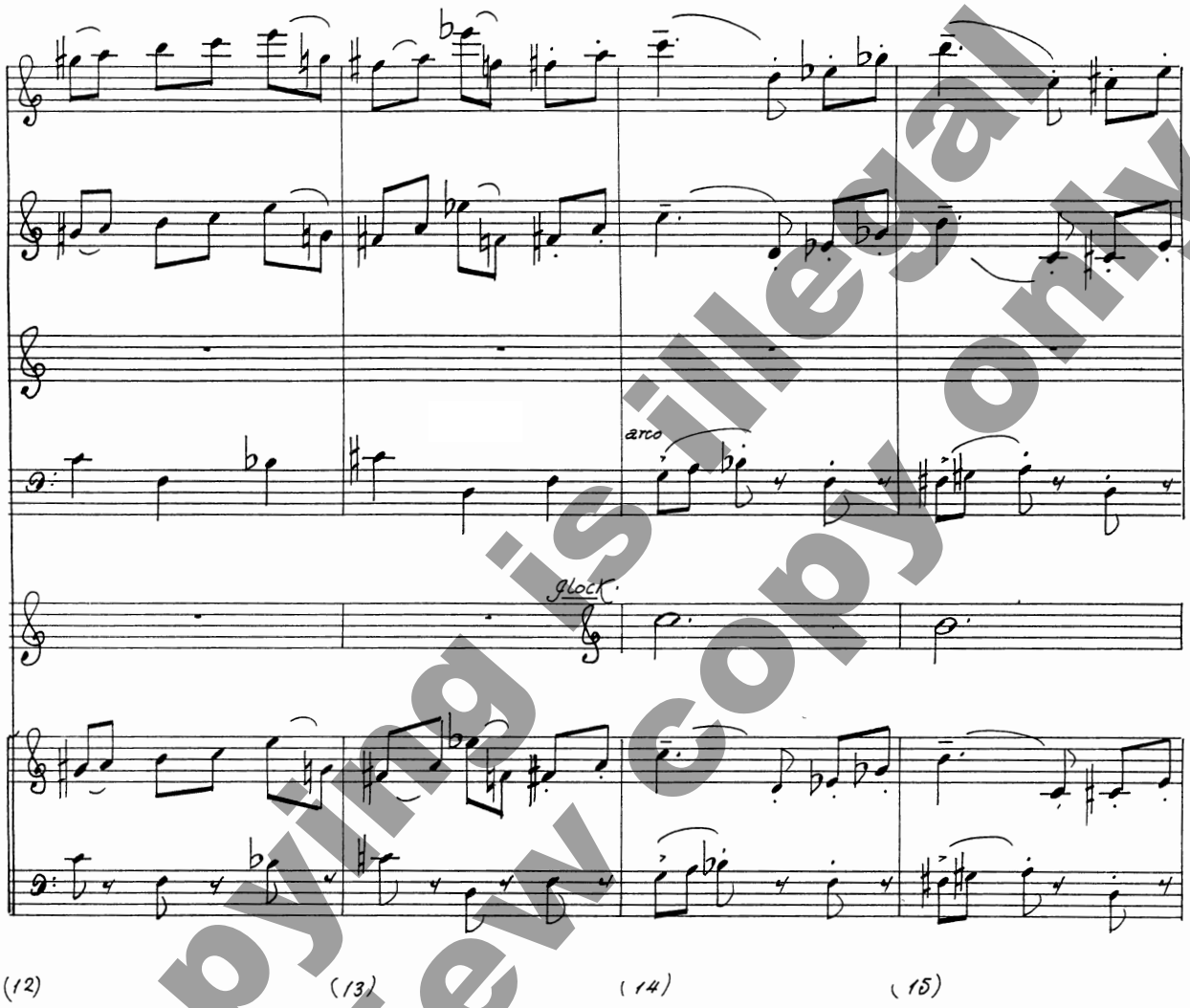

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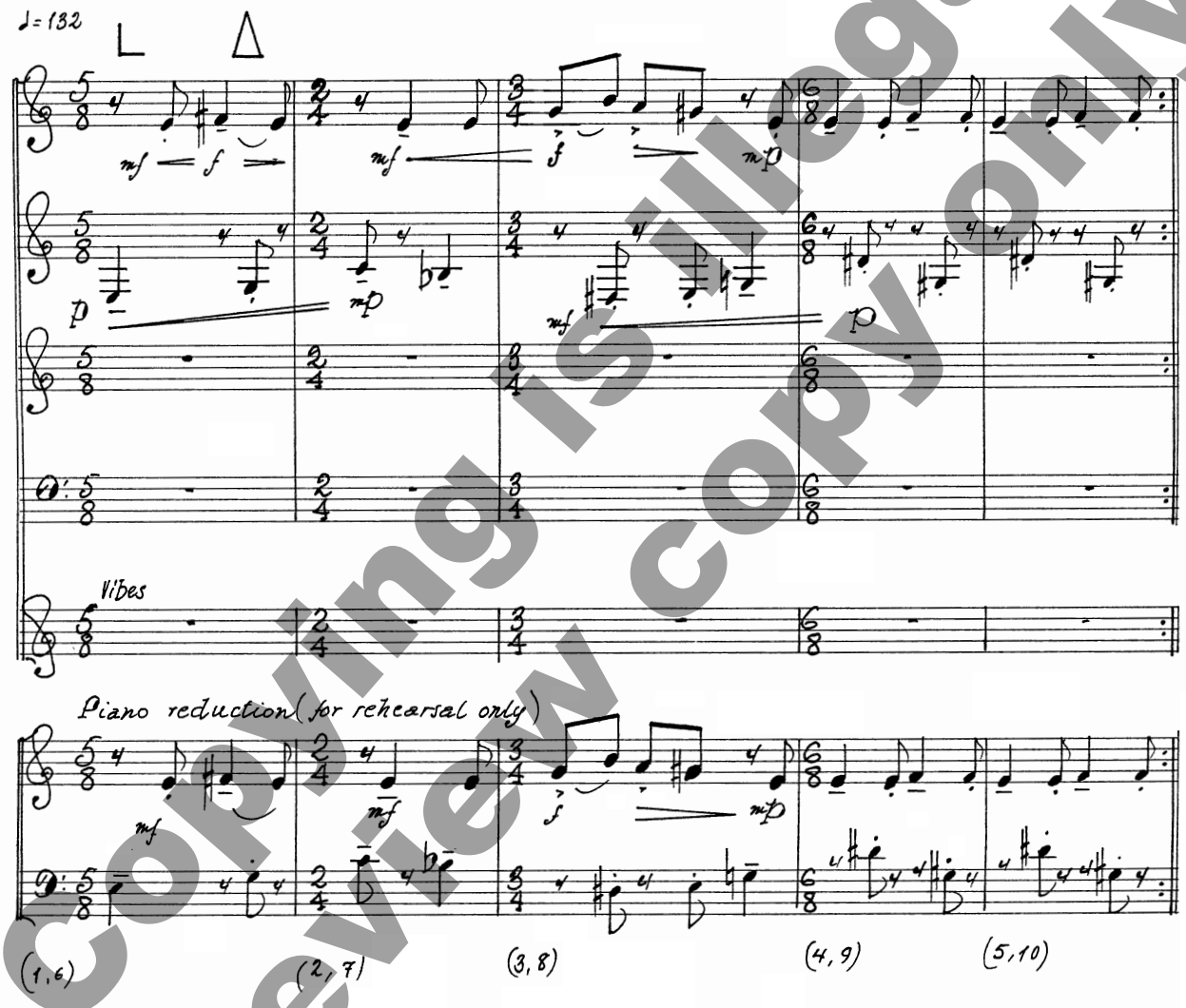

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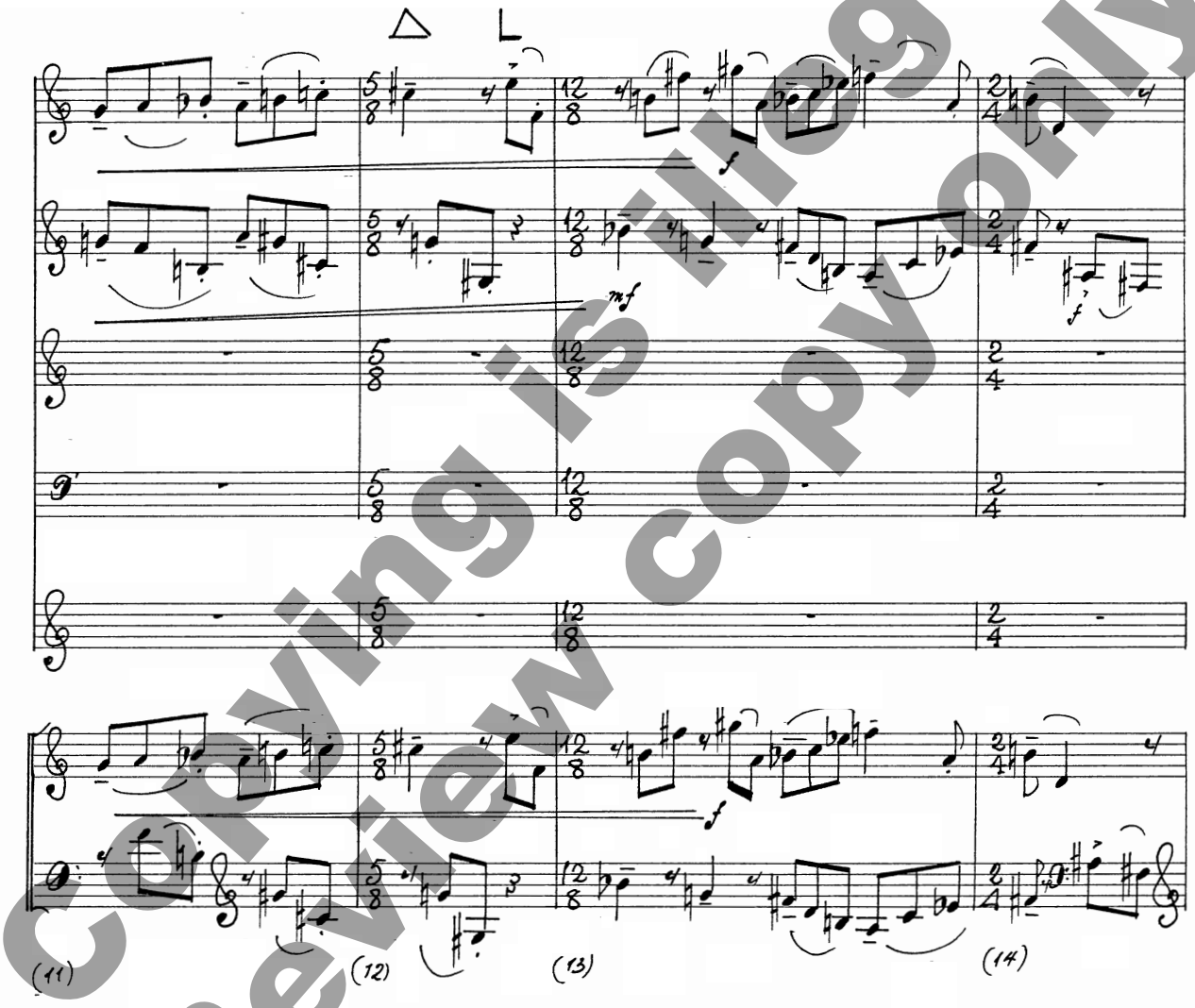

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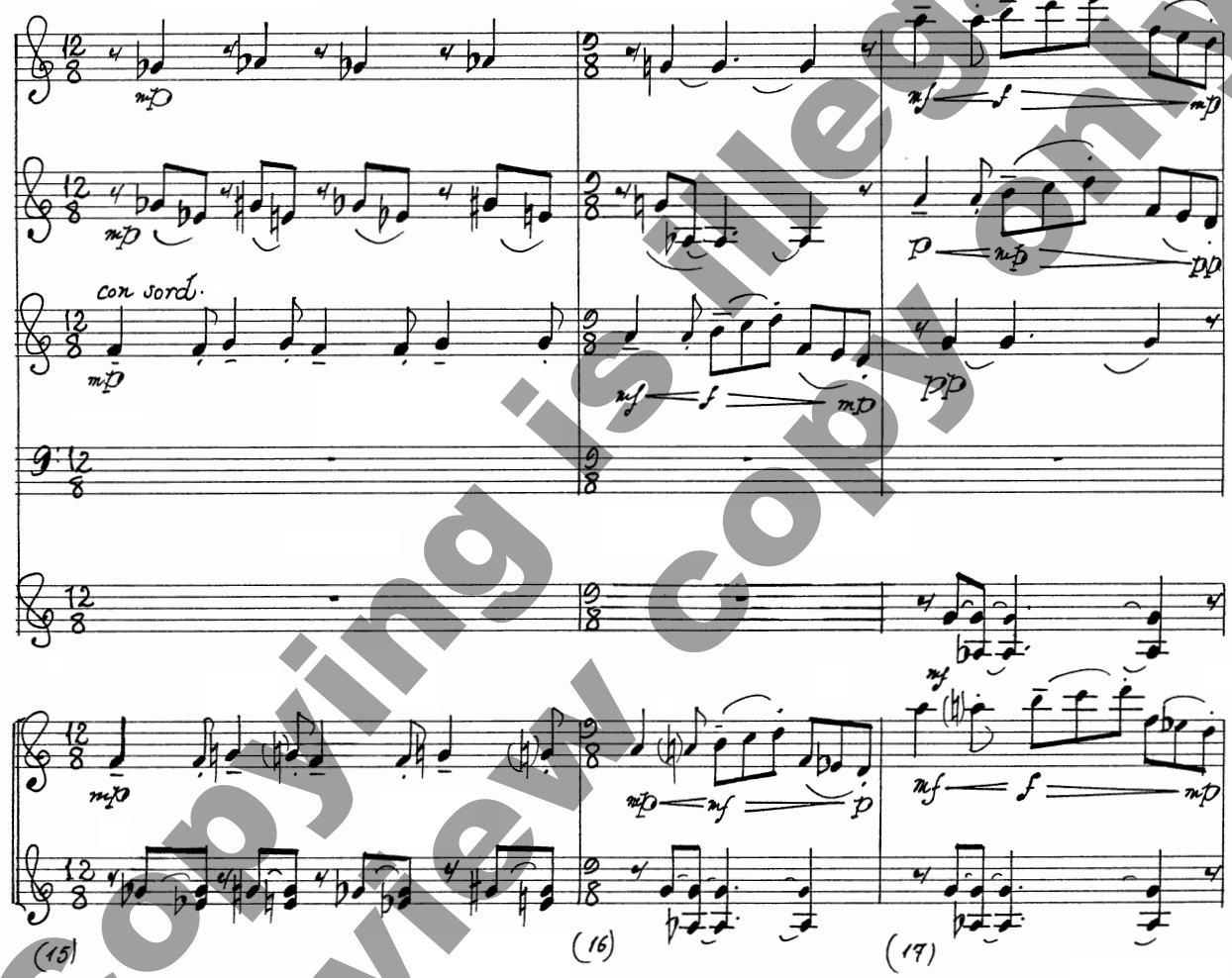

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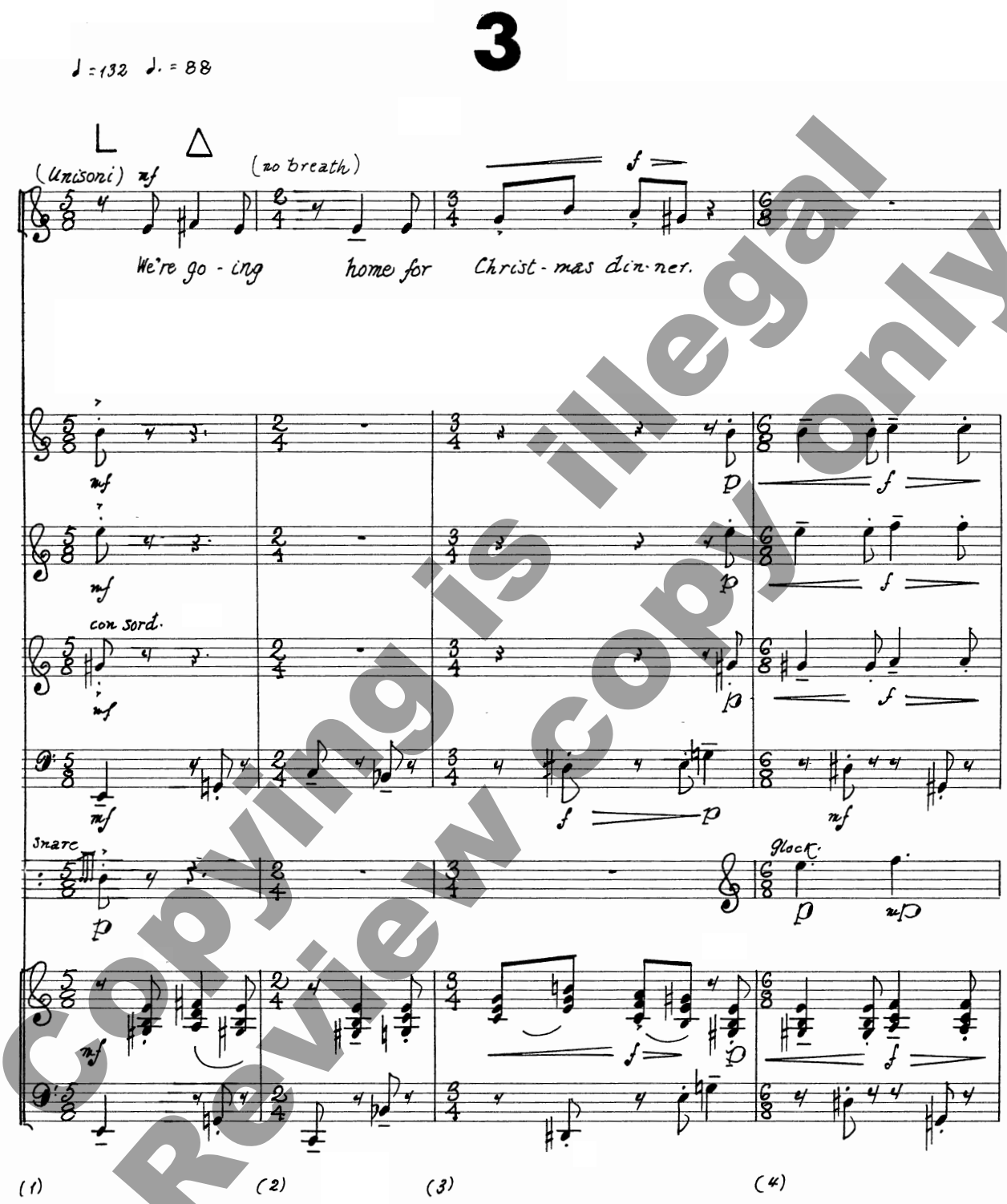

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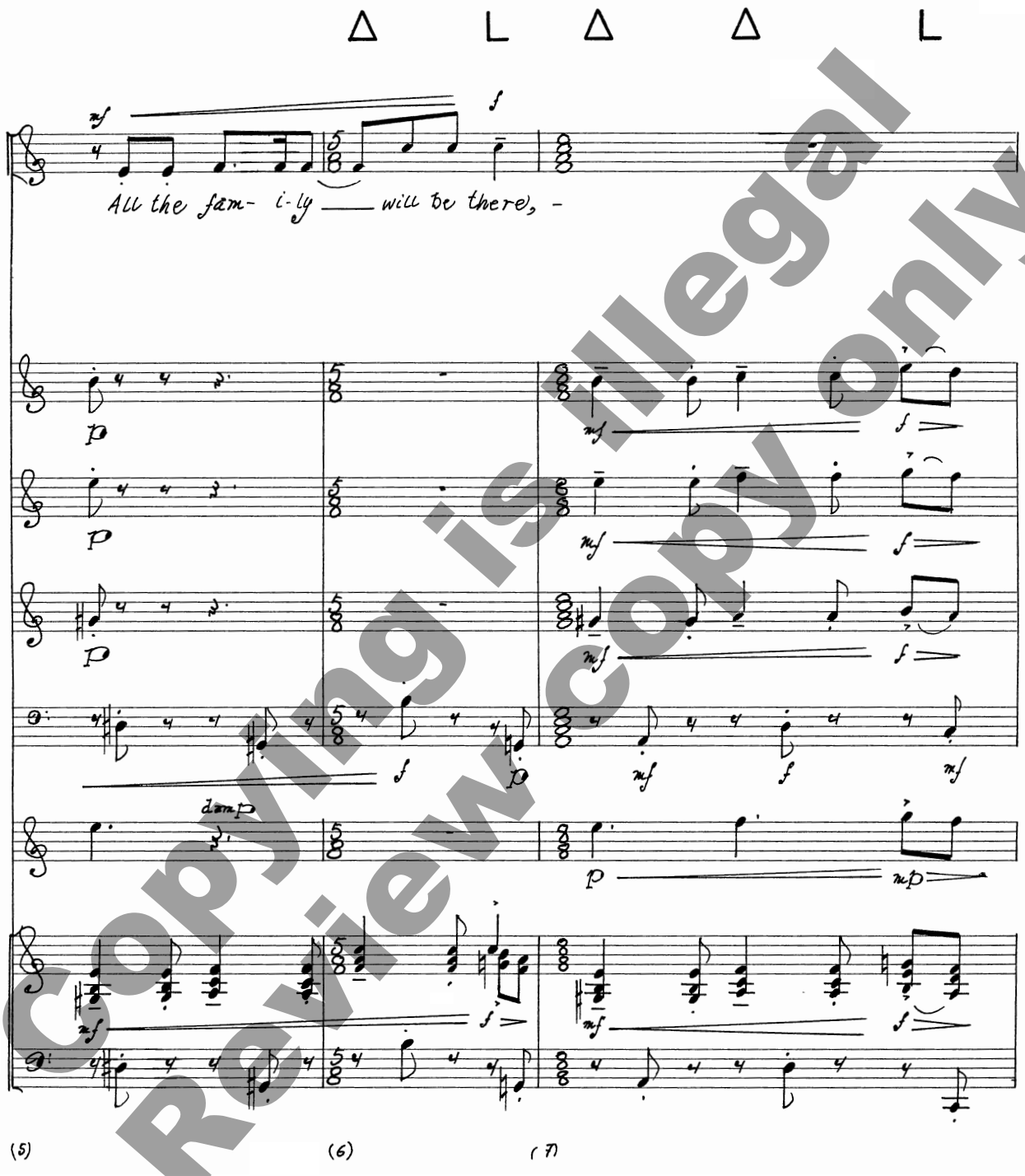

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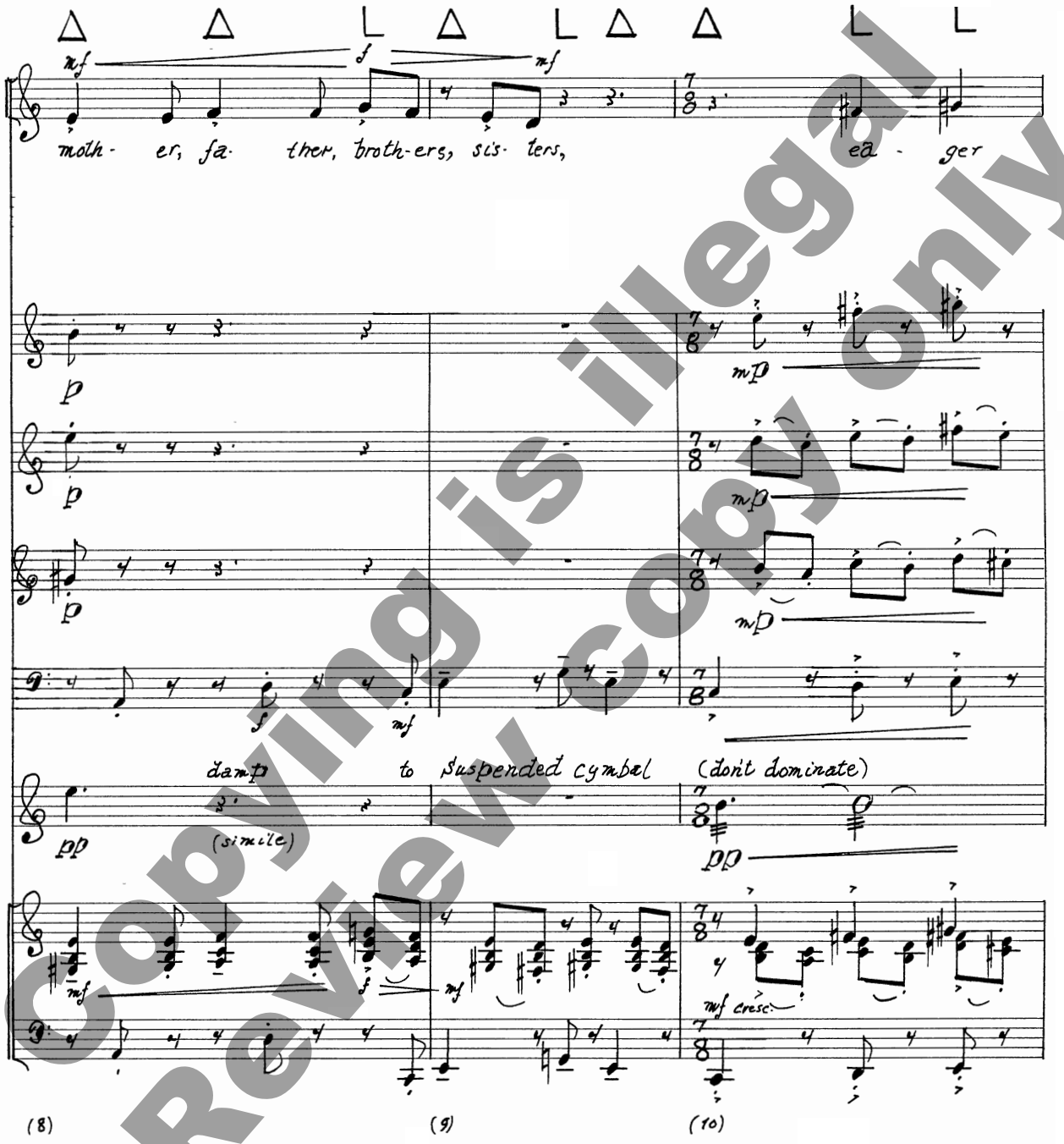

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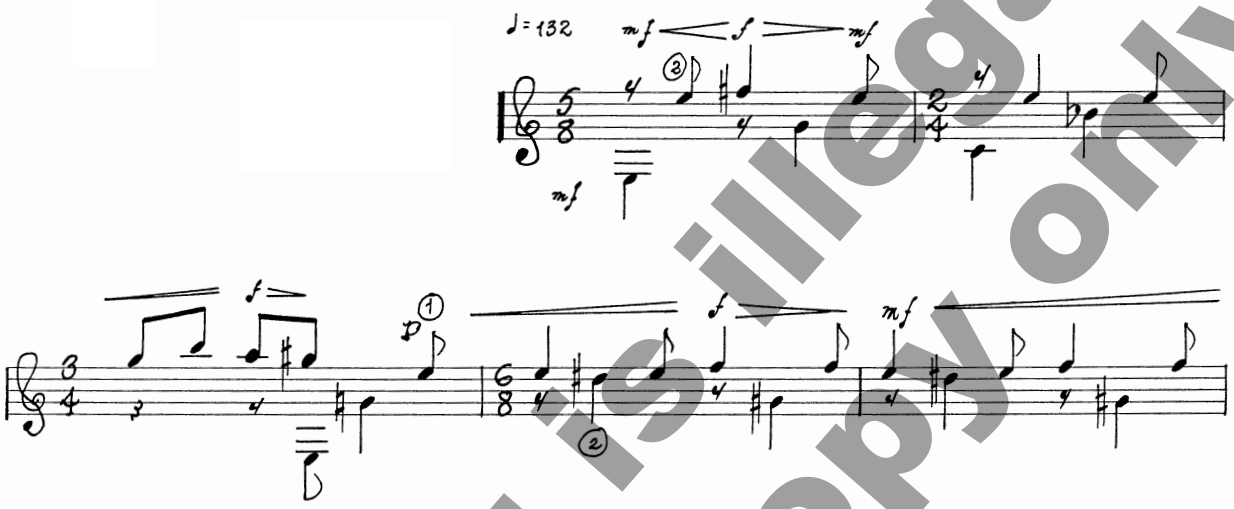

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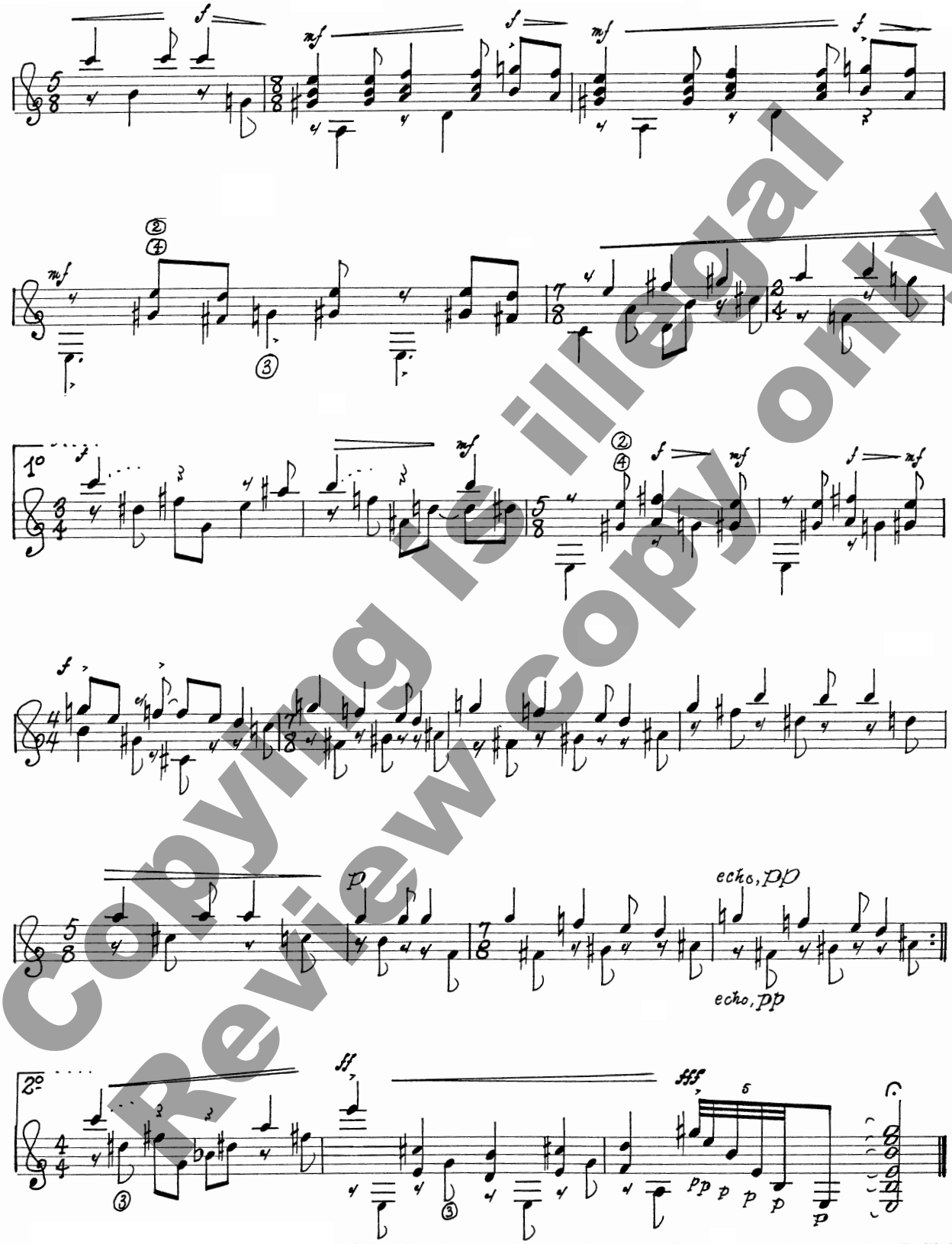

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(A properous-looking gentleman extolls his profession to another man)
(The guitar plays MUSIC 5 in the background.)

GENTLEMAN Certainly there is no nobler field for human effort than the insurance line of business—especially accident insurance. Ever since I have been director in an accident-insurance company I have felt that I am a better man. Life has seemed more precious. Accidents have assumed a kindlier aspect. Distressing special providences have lost half their horror. I look upon a cripple now with affectionate interest—as an advertisement. I do not seem to care for poetry any more. I do not care for politics—even agriculture does not excite me. But to me now there is a charm about a railway collision that is unspeakable.

There is nothing more beneficent than accident insurance. I have seen an entire family lifted out of poverty and into affluence by the simple boon of a broken leg. I have had people come to me on crutches, with tears in their eyes, to bless this beneficent institution. In all my experience of life, I have seen nothing so seraphic as the look that comes into a freshly mutilated man's face when he feels in his vest pocket with his remaining hand and finds his accident ticket all right. And I have seen nothing so sad as the look that came into another splintered customer's face when he found he couldn't collect on a wooden leg.

The company of which I am a director is an institution which is peculiarly to be depended upon. A man is bound to prosper who gives it his custom. No man can take out a policy in it and not get crippled before the year is out. Now there was one indigent man who had been disappointed so often with other companies that he had grown disheartened, his appetite left him, he ceased to smile—said life was but a weariness. Three weeks ago I got him to insure with us, and now he is the brightest, happiest spirit in this land—has a good steady income and a stylish suit of new bandages every day, and travels around on a shutter.

(segue reprise of MUSIC 3)

The above vignette is based on ACCIDENT INSURANCE ETC. by Mark Twain.

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5

Tune ① down to d♯ and ③ down to f♯.
These two strings are always played open and allowed to ring without damping.

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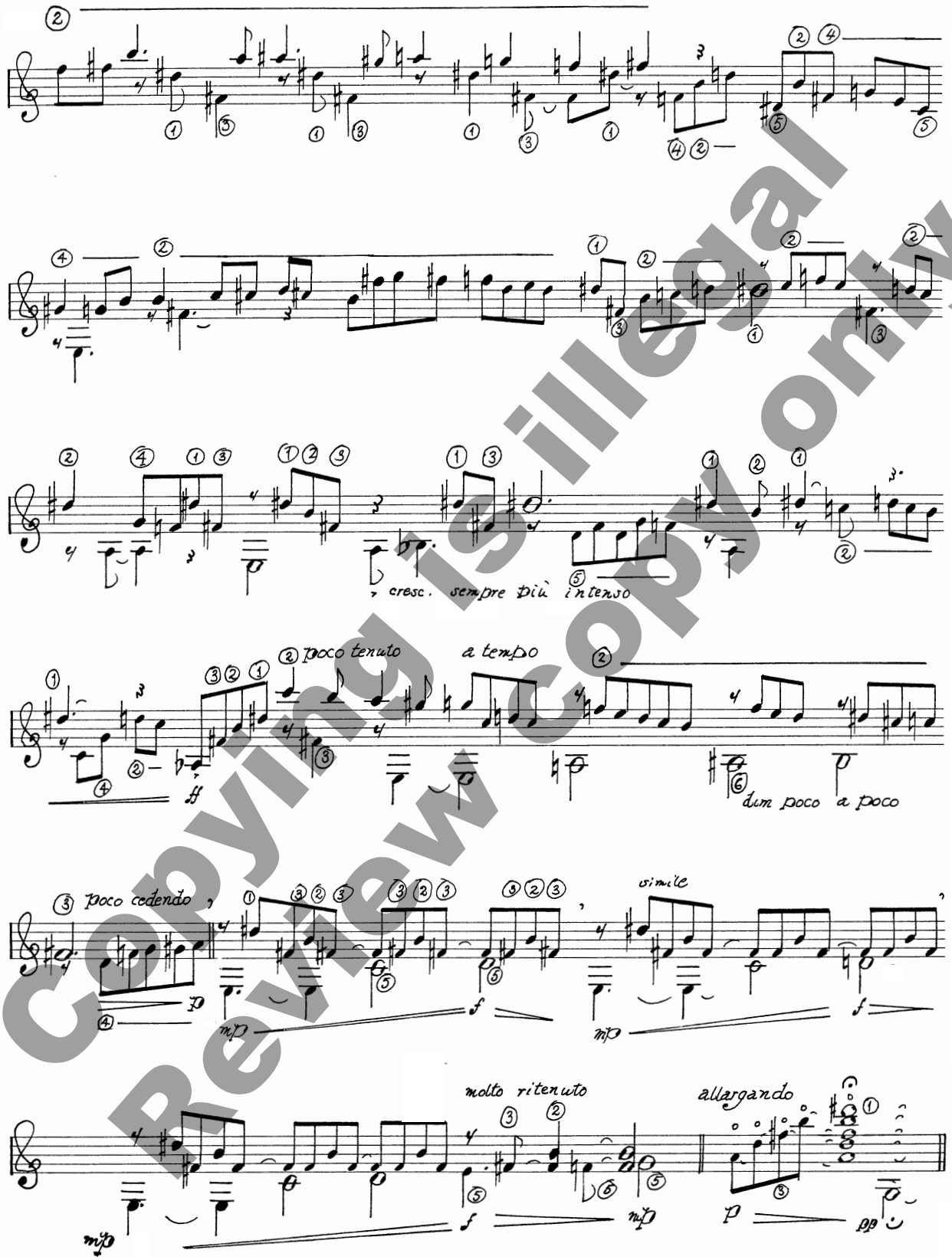

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(A middle-aged couple. Their small child is chewing a pine stick.)
(The guitar plays MUSIC 6 in the background.)

HE Darling, I wouldn't let that child be chewing that pine stick, if I were you.

SHE Precious, where is the harm in it?

HE Love, it is notorious that pine is the least nutritious wood that a child can eat.

SHE *(Her hand pausing, in the act of taking the stick, and then returning to her lap. Bridling perceptibly.)* Hubby, you know better than that. You know you do. Doctors *all* say that turpentine in pine wood is good for weak back and the kidneys.

HE Ah—I was under a misapprehension. I did not know that the family physician had recommended—

SHE Who said the child's spine and kidneys were affected?

HE My love, you intimated it.

SHE The idea! I never intimated anything of the kind.

HE Why, my dear, it hasn't been two minutes since you said—

SHE Bother what I said! I don't care what I say. There isn't any harm in the child's chewing a bit of pine stick if she wants to, and you know it perfectly well. And she *shall* chew it, too. So there, now!

HE Say no more, my dear. I now see the force of your reasoning, and I will go and order two or three cords of the best pine wood when we get home. No child of mine shall want while I—

SHE Oh, *please* read your newspaper and let me have some peace. A body can never make the simplest remark but you must take it up and go arguing and arguing and arguing till you don't know what you are talking about, and you *never* do.

HE Very well, it shall be as you say. But there is a want of logic in your last remark which—

(segue reprise of MUSIC 3)

The above vignette is based on EXPERIENCE OF THE McWILLIAMSES WITH MEMBRANOUS CROUP, Mark Twain, 1875

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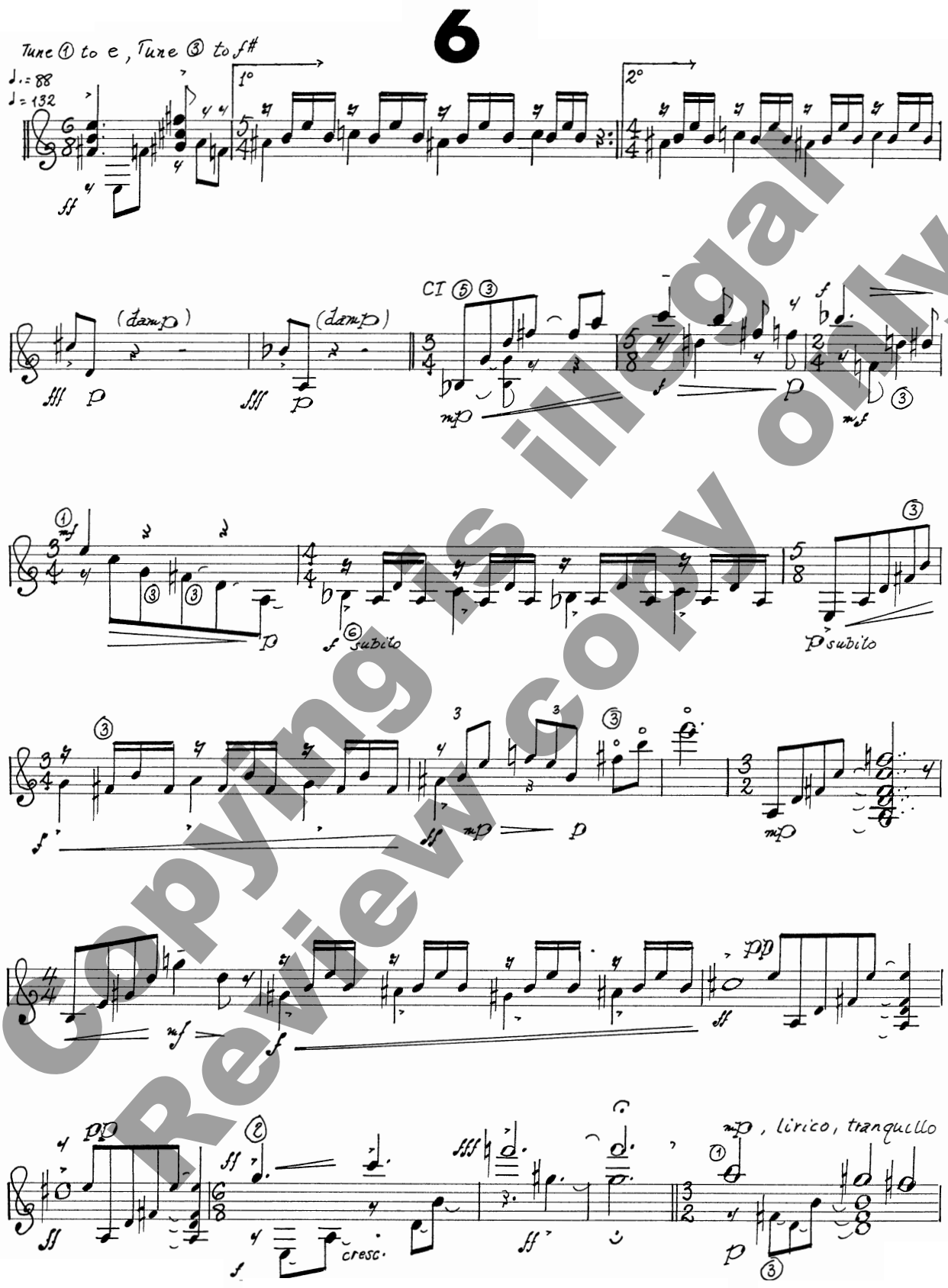

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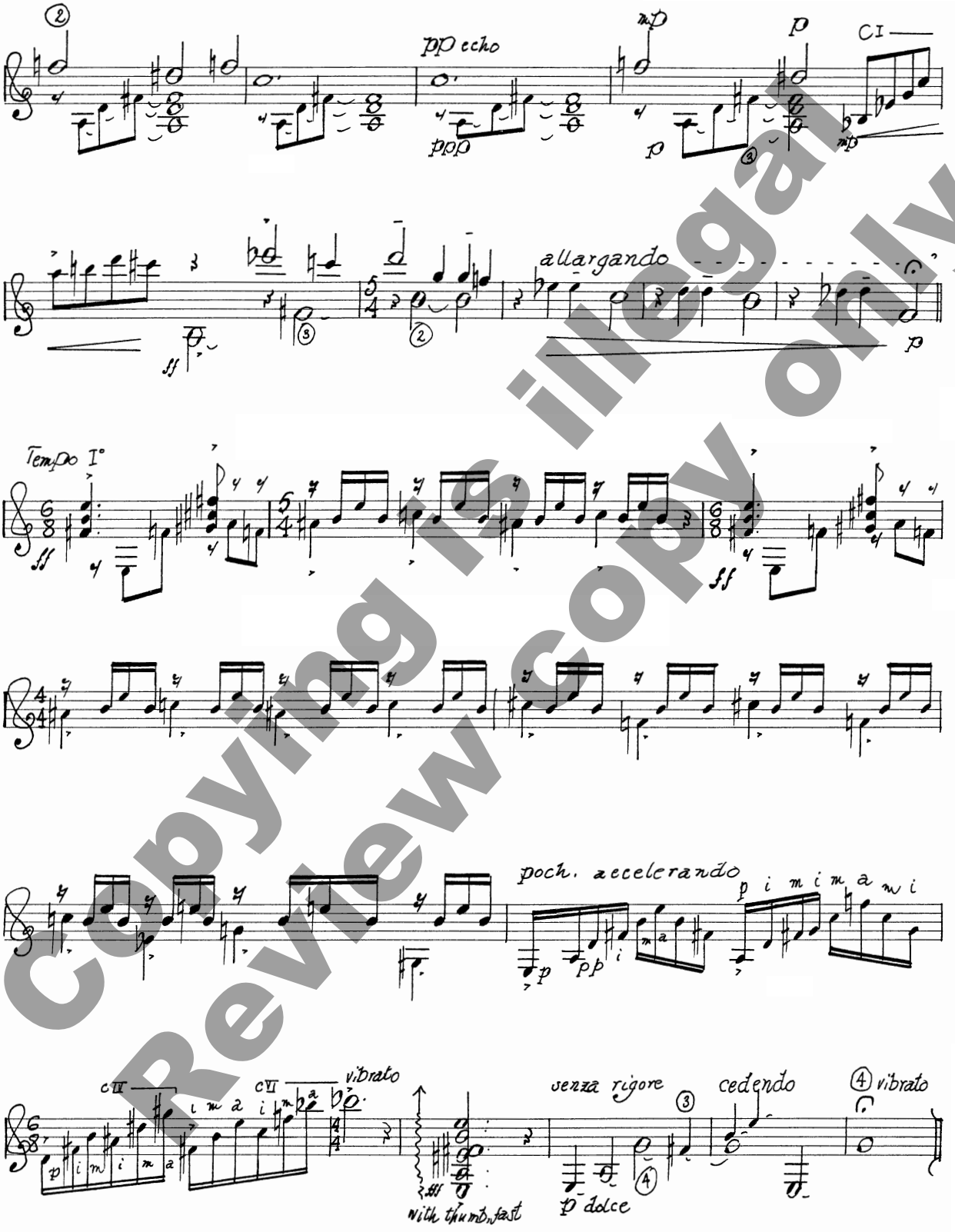

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(Two elderly gentlemen are engaged in religious speculation)
(The guitar plays MUSIC 7 in the background.)

FIRST I wonder what became of that Brooklyn preacher by the name of Talmage? Every once in a while in his sermons he said that the first thing he'd do when he got to heaven would be to fling his arms around Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and kiss them and weep on them. There's millions of people on earth that are promising themselves the same thing. As many as sixty-thousand people arrive in heaven every single day that want to run straight to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and hug them and weep on them.

SECOND Sounds silly to me.

FIRST Now mind you, sixty-thousand a day is a pretty heavy contact for those old people. If they were a mind to allow it, they wouldn't ever have anything to do, year in and year out, but stand up and be hugged and wept on thirty-two hours in the twenty-four. They would be tired out and as wet as muskrats all the time. What would heaven be, to *them*?

SECOND Very soggy.

FIRST It would be a mighty good place to get out of—you know that, yourself. Those are kind and gentle old Jews, but they ain't any fonder of kissing the emotional highlights of Brooklyn than you be. You mark my words, Mr. T's endearments are going to be declined, with thanks. Why, if Adam was to show himself to every newcomer that wants to call and gaze at him and strike him for his autograph, he would never have time to do anything else but just that. Talmage said he would give Adam some of his attentions, as well as A., I., and J.—But he will have to change his mind about that.

(segue reprise of MUSIC 3)

The above vignette is based on EXTRACT FROM CAPTAIN STORMFIELD'S VISIT TO HEAVEN, Mark Twain, 1907

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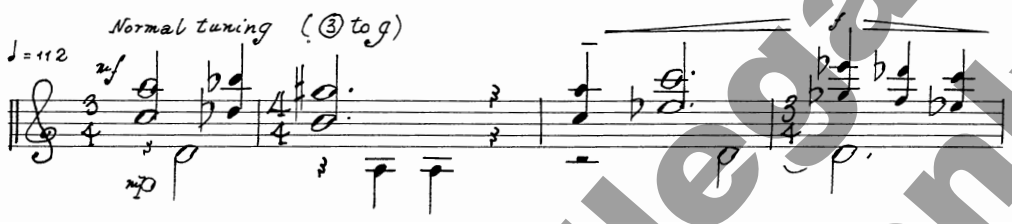

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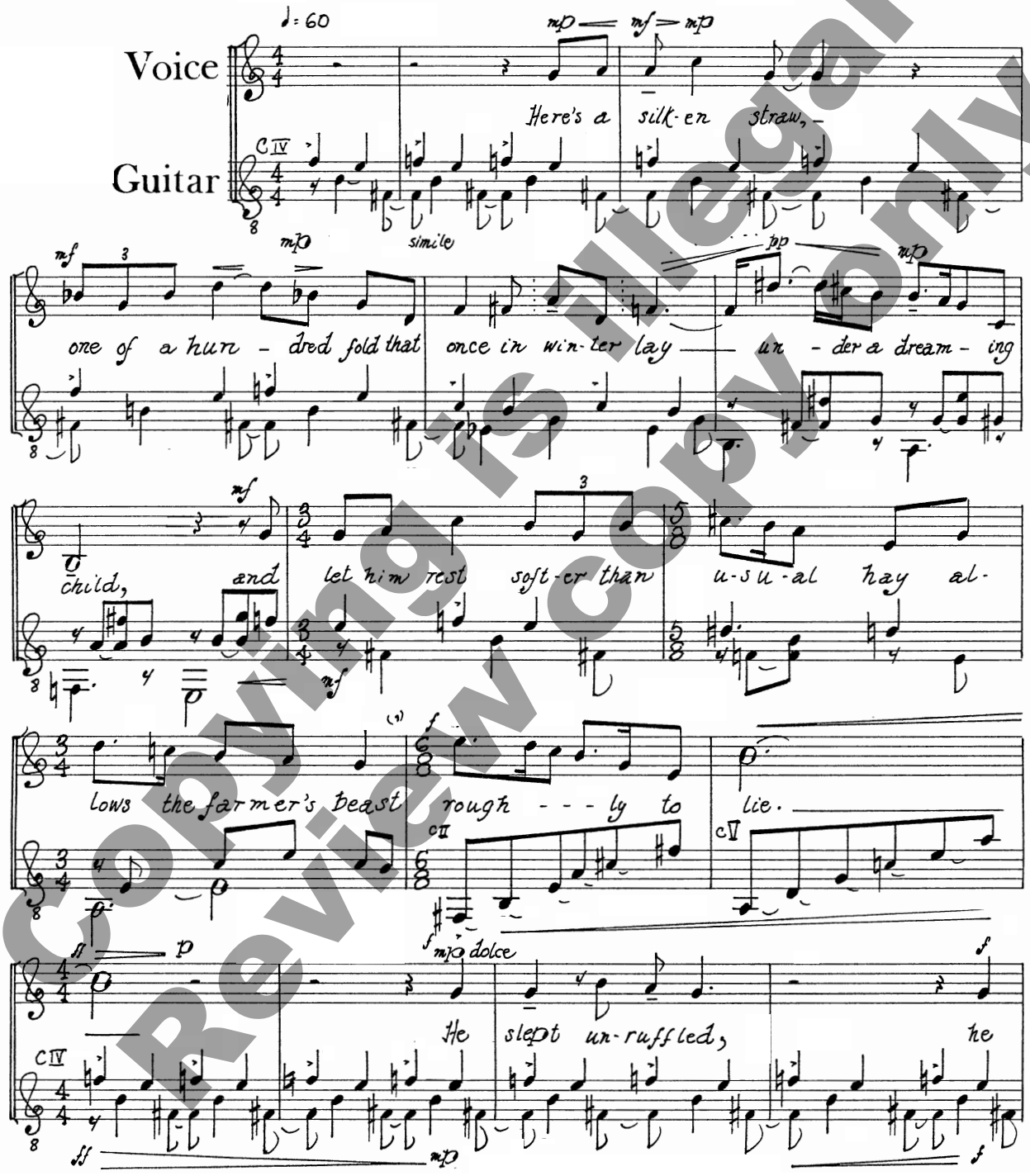
CAROLS

8

Norma Farber

Manger Memento

Daniel Pinkham



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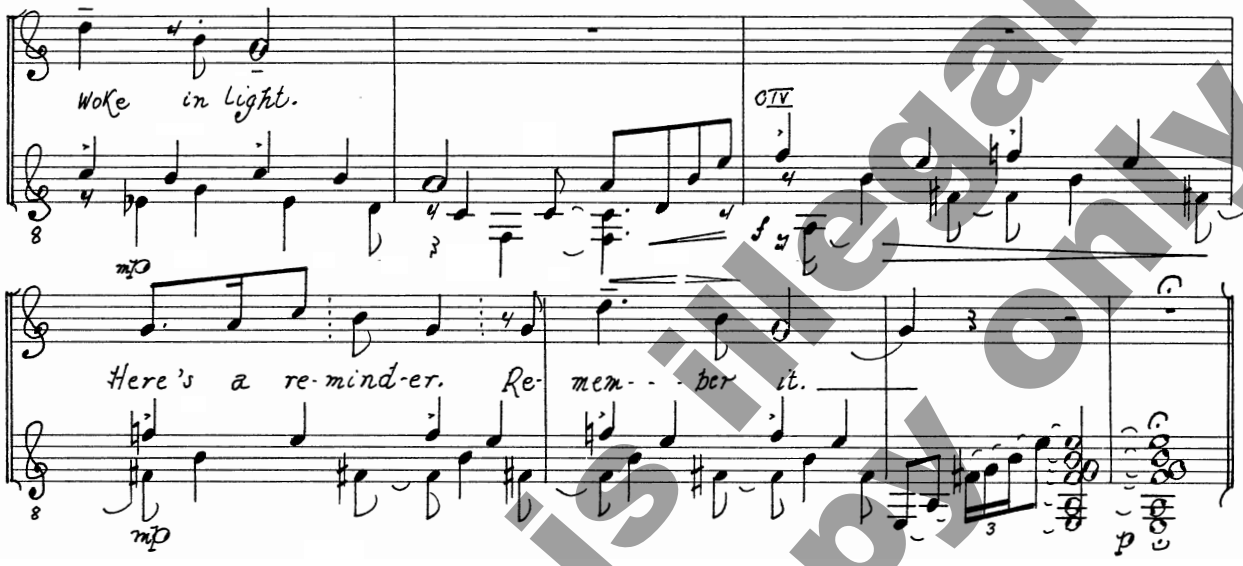

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Sing for baby!

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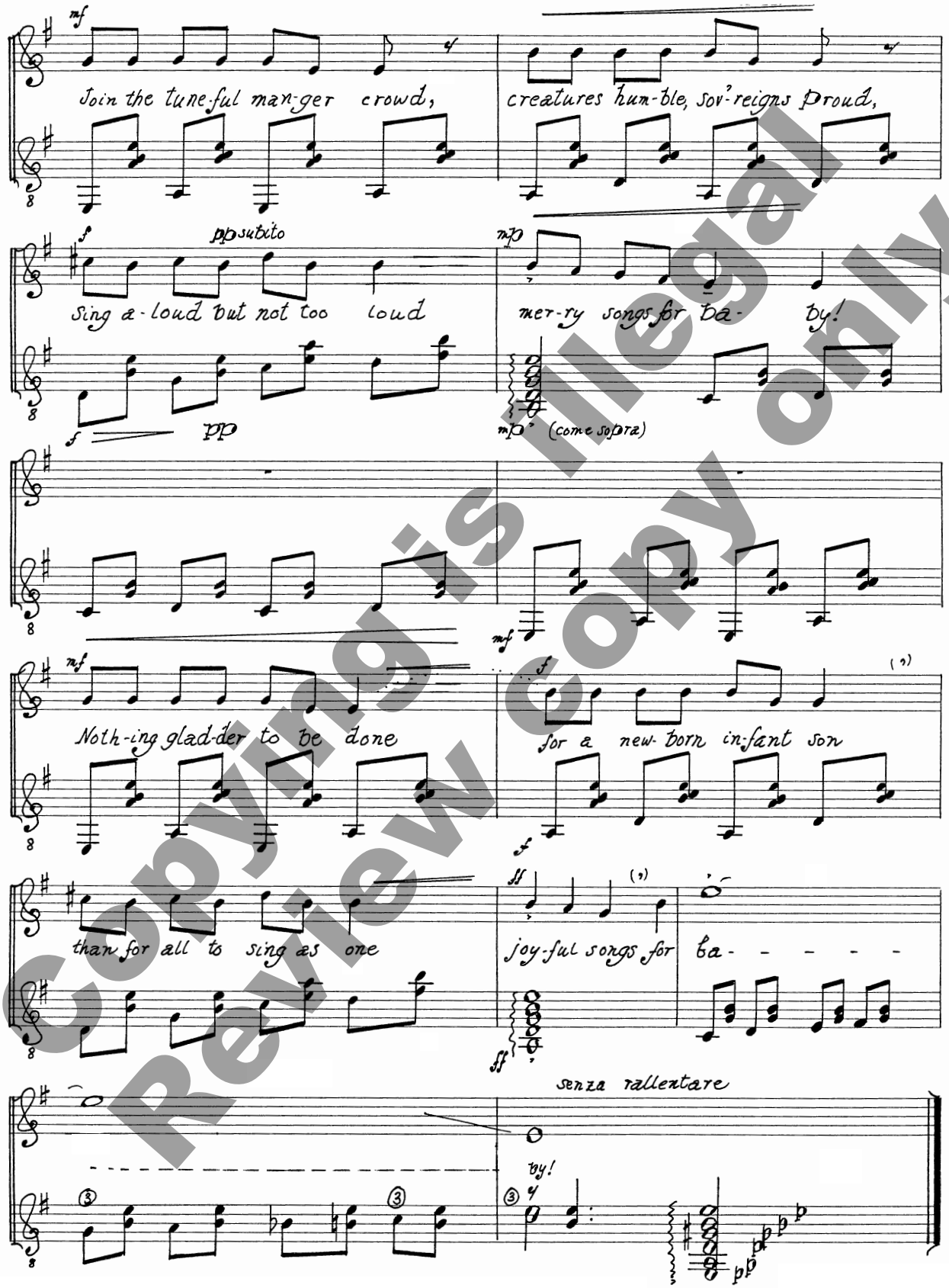

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(The three passengers are won over by the Carol, Sing for Baby! *and its popular appeal. The third passenger begins visibly, but of course not audibly, to tap his foot to the music)*

ALL *(Applause, much more enthusiastic than for the earlier carol)*

SECOND PASSENGER That's more like it.

THIRD PASSENGER At least my foot didn't go to sleep!

MISS THORPE *(addressing all of the passengers)* Come on, now—let's all sing! Join me in the Moon Carol. You remember it,—"Away on a planet, a baby's born".

(segue to MUSIC 10)

During this carol the actors should appear to be joining in and singing, as though they had always known the tune.

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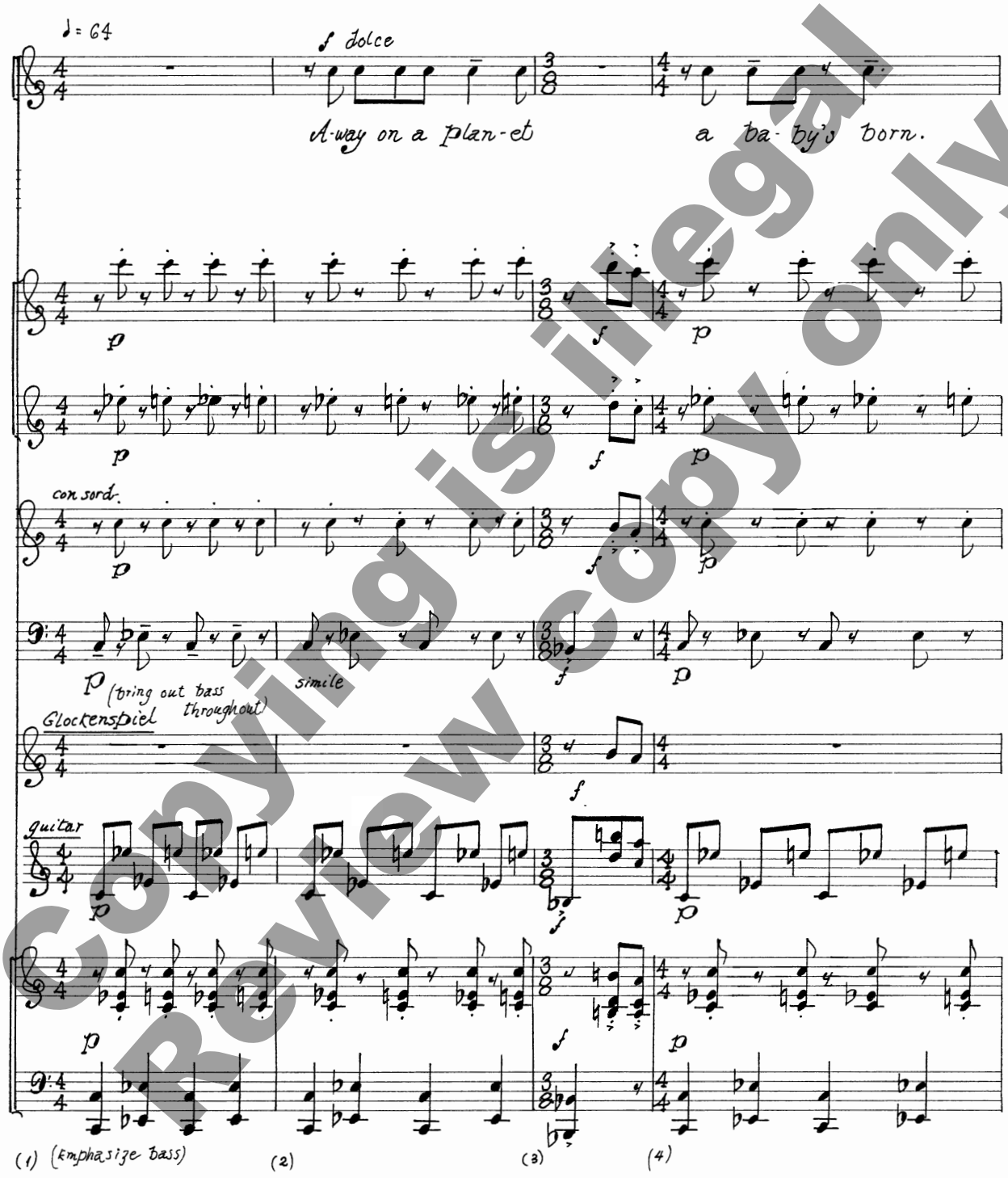
10

Moon Carol



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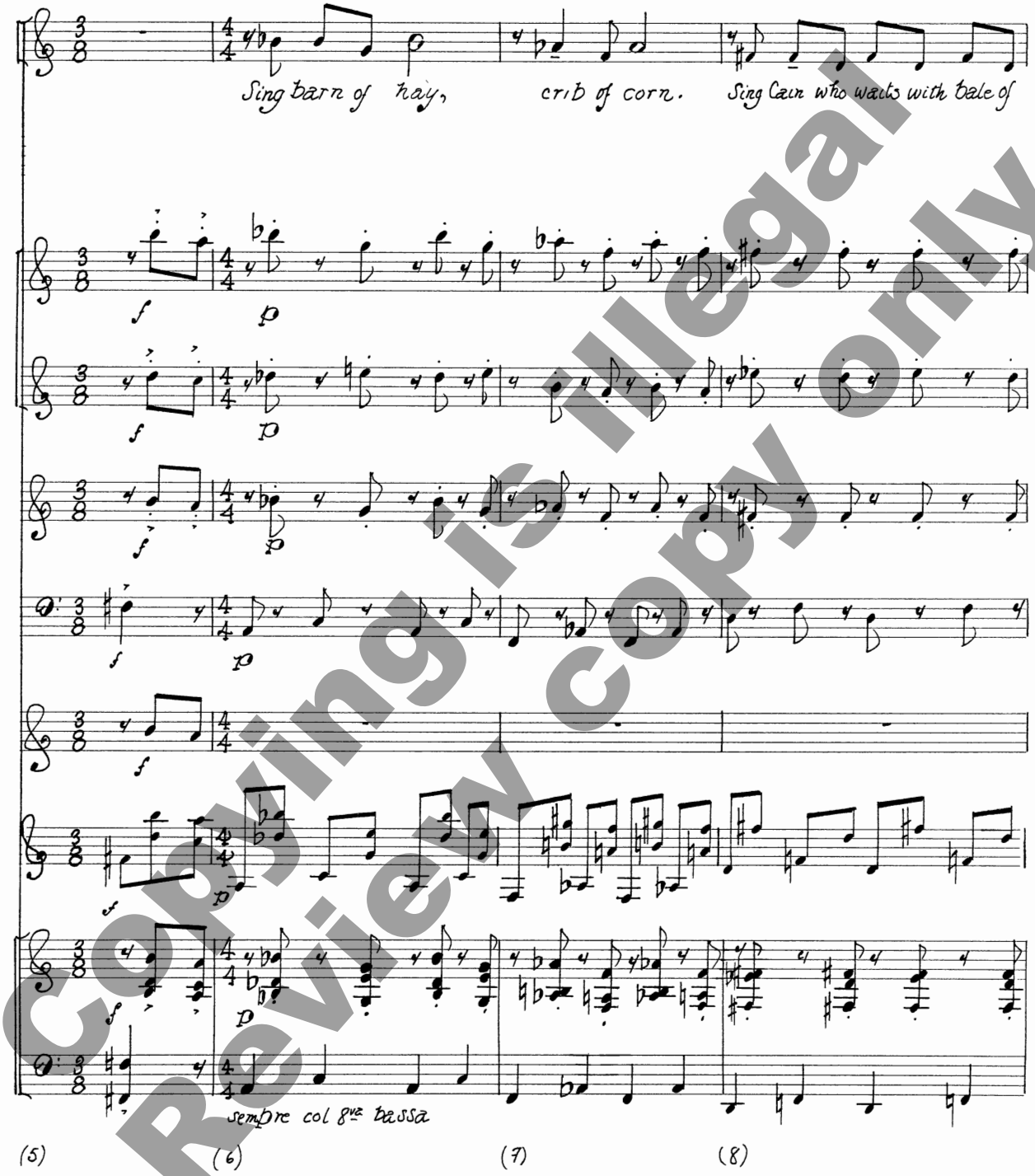

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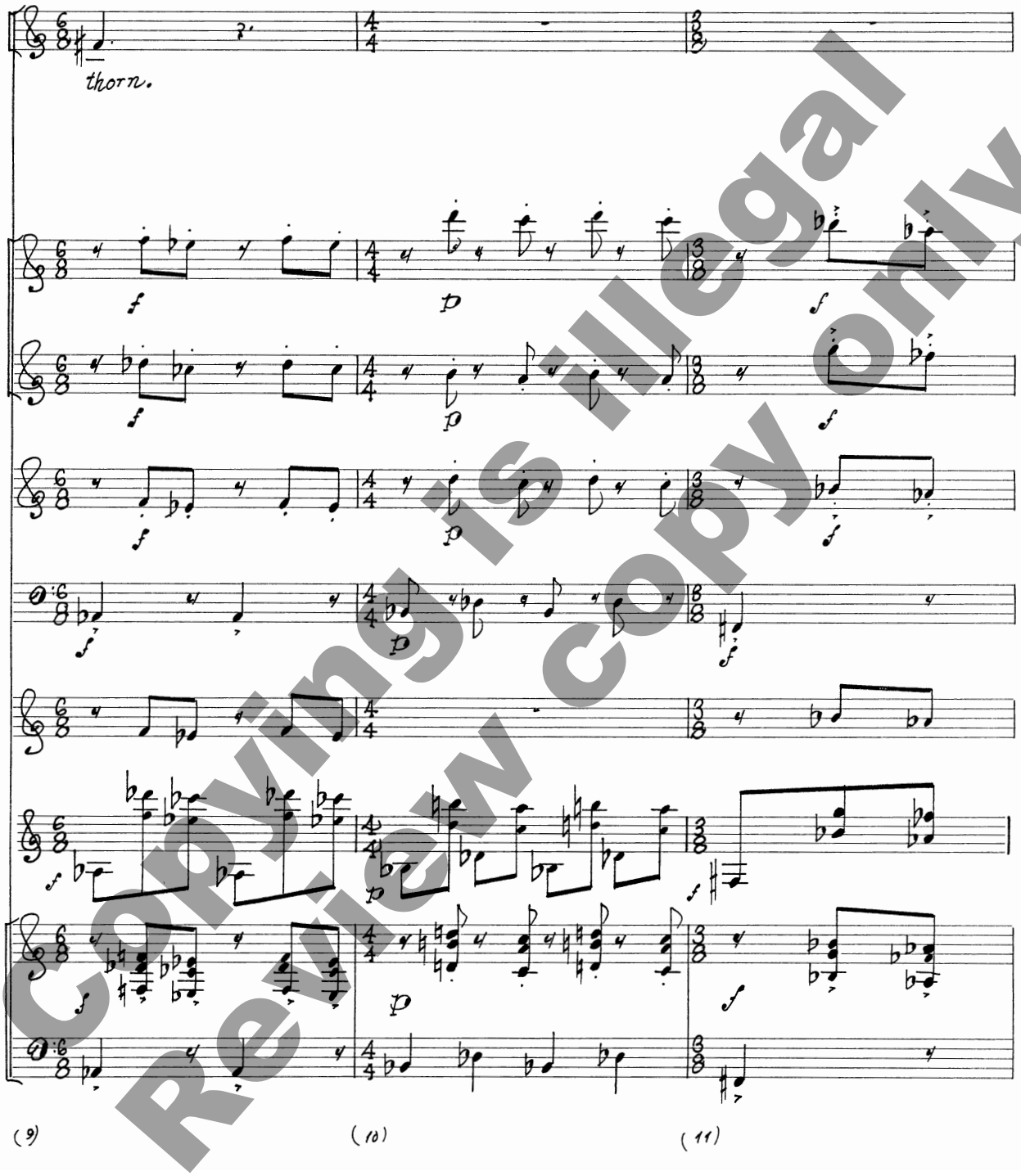

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