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HENRY MOLLICONE

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

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Commissioned by The Redwood Symphony, Eric Kujawsky, Music Director
for a California premiere in their 2015–2016 season

NOTES

When asked to compose this work, I asked myself what the meaning of "concerto" is in the twenty-first century.

The modern concerto had its roots in the Baroque period, and further developed in form in the Classical period, with the development of sonata form. Further expansion of the form developed in the Romantic period, leaving us in the 20th century with more freedom. So for me, a concerto simply means a work for solo instrument (or instruments) with accompaniment of orchestra or band.

With this in mind, I felt free to follow my muse in writing a four movement work (most concertos are in three movements). Although the solo violin is spotlighted, there is a good deal of give and take between the violin and the orchestra.

I have written two fast bravura movements, and two more contemplative and melodic slow movements. The first movement is a Tarantella, a dance which can be traced all the way back to 1100 BC! If bitten by a tarantula, it was thought that this dance was a kind of musical exorcism. Over time, it became a common popular dance, usually fast and in 6/8 time. (I have always had a creepy feeling about tarantulas, so perhaps my composing this movement was a kind of personal exorcism!)

Next is a Meditation—a slow movement based on a long lyrical melody developed mainly in the violin.

The third movement is fast and technically challenging for the violin. It is a Toccata, which can be defined as a virtuoso piece, generally emphasizing dexterity of fingering. The form first appeared in Northern Italy during the late Renaissance.

The finale, "In Paradiso," is another slow and lyrical movement based on a long tonal melody. It is dedicated to a dear friend, the brilliant late Canadian-American composer, Robert Frederick Jones. As Robert was deeply religious and spiritual, this is an attempt to portray the beauty of heaven through music, as is with a chorus in a Requiem Mass.

—Henry Mollicone

October, 2014

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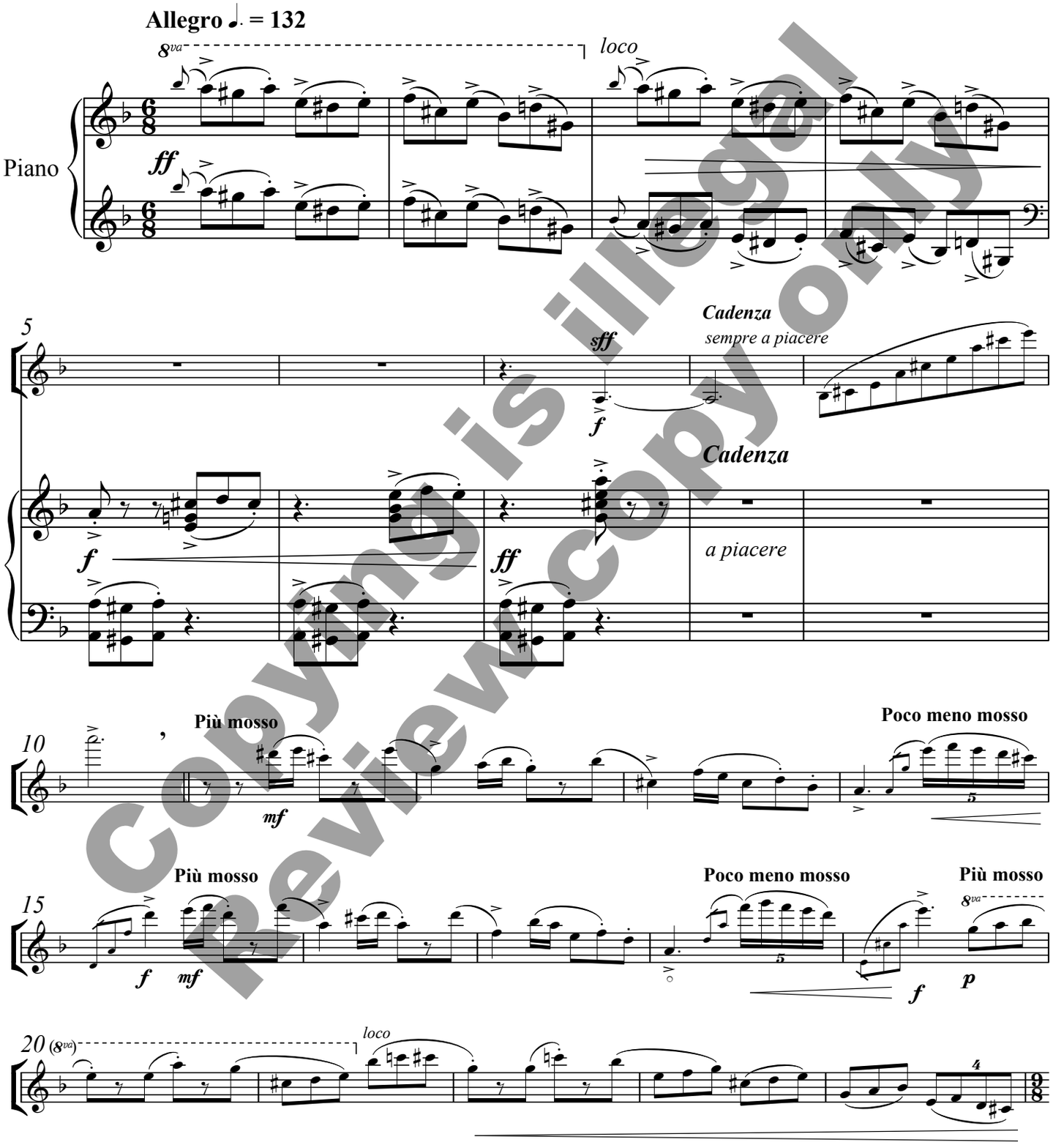
Commissioned by the Redwood Symphony, Eric Kujawsky, Music Director

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Henry Mollicone

I. Tarantella



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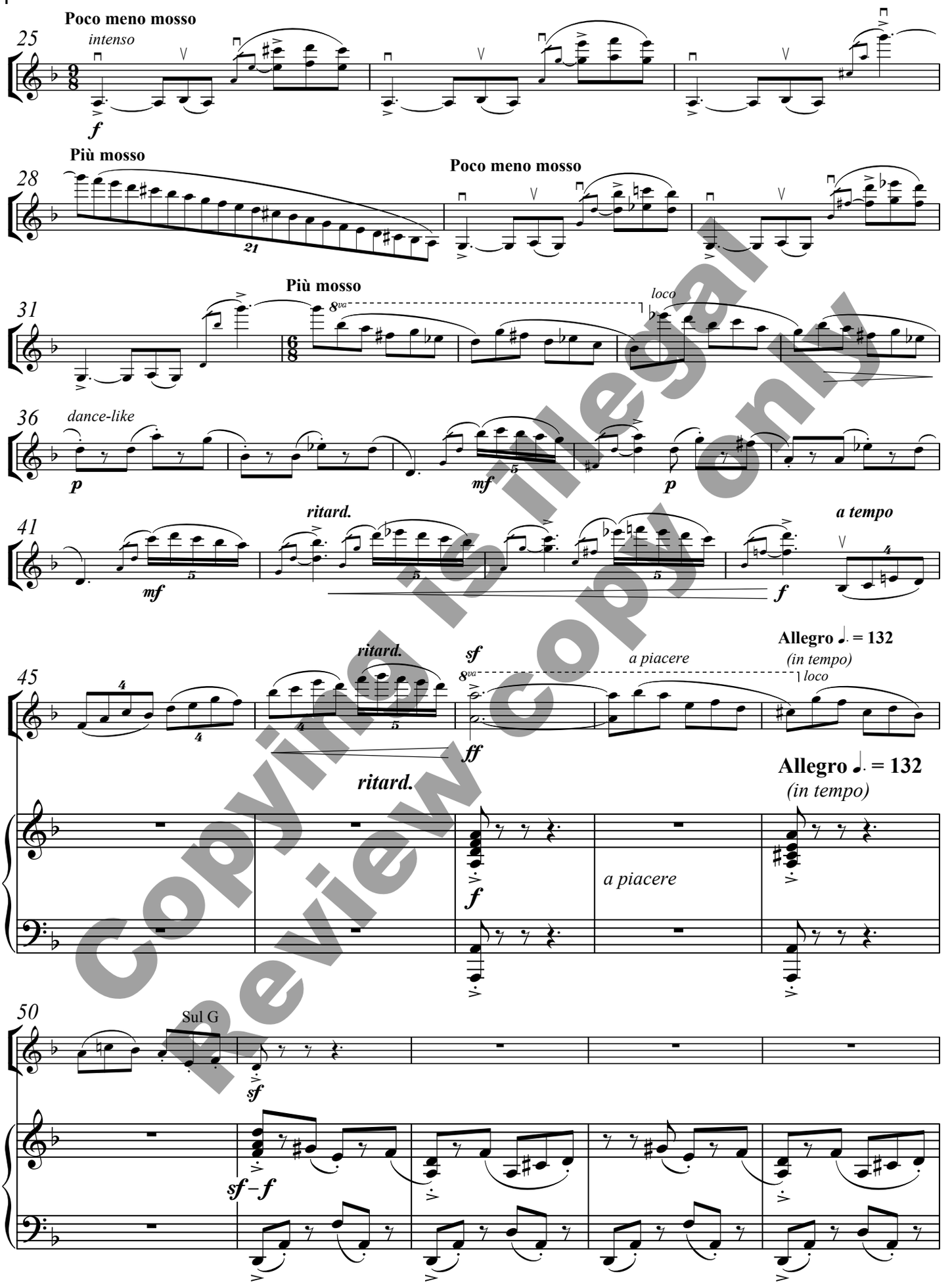

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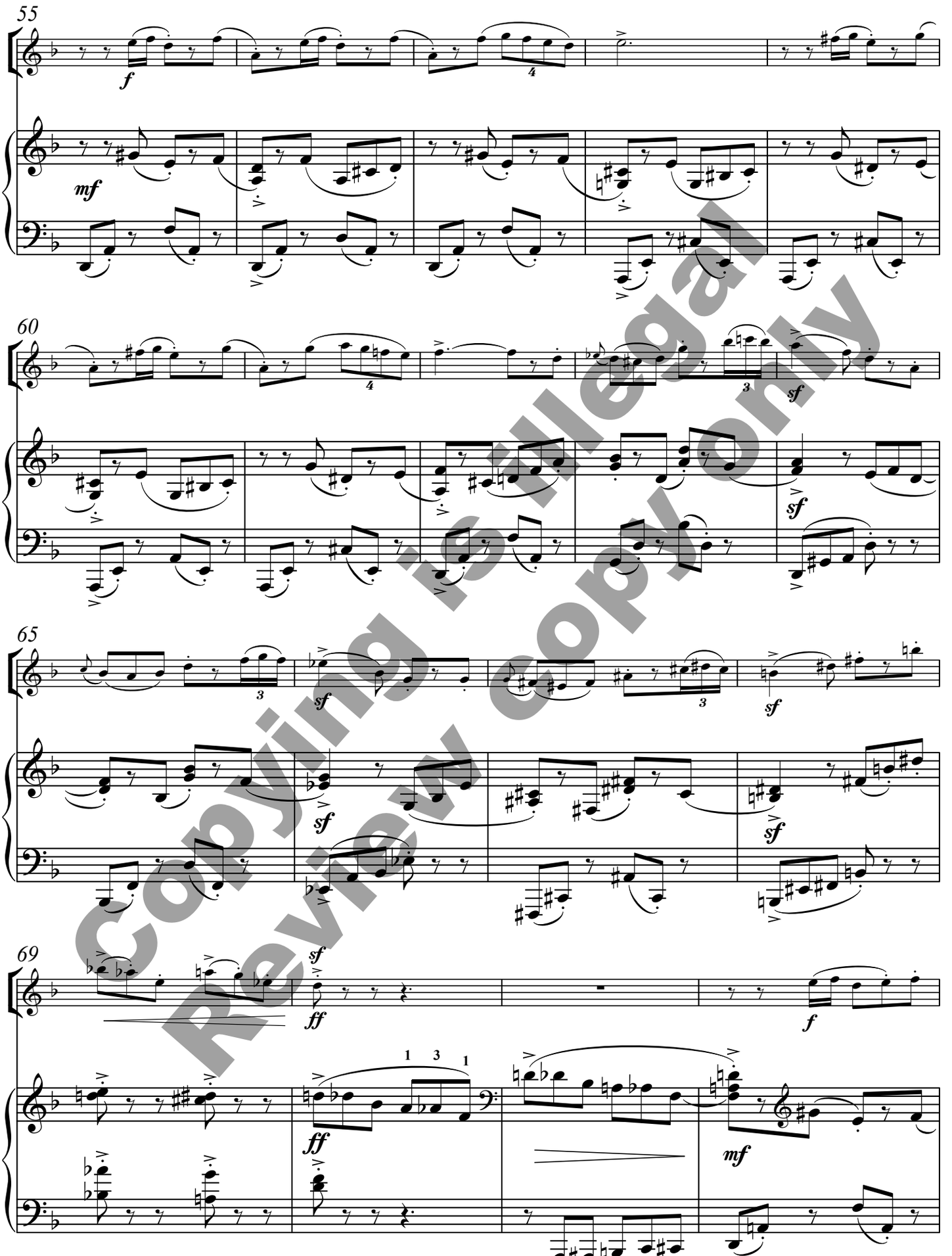

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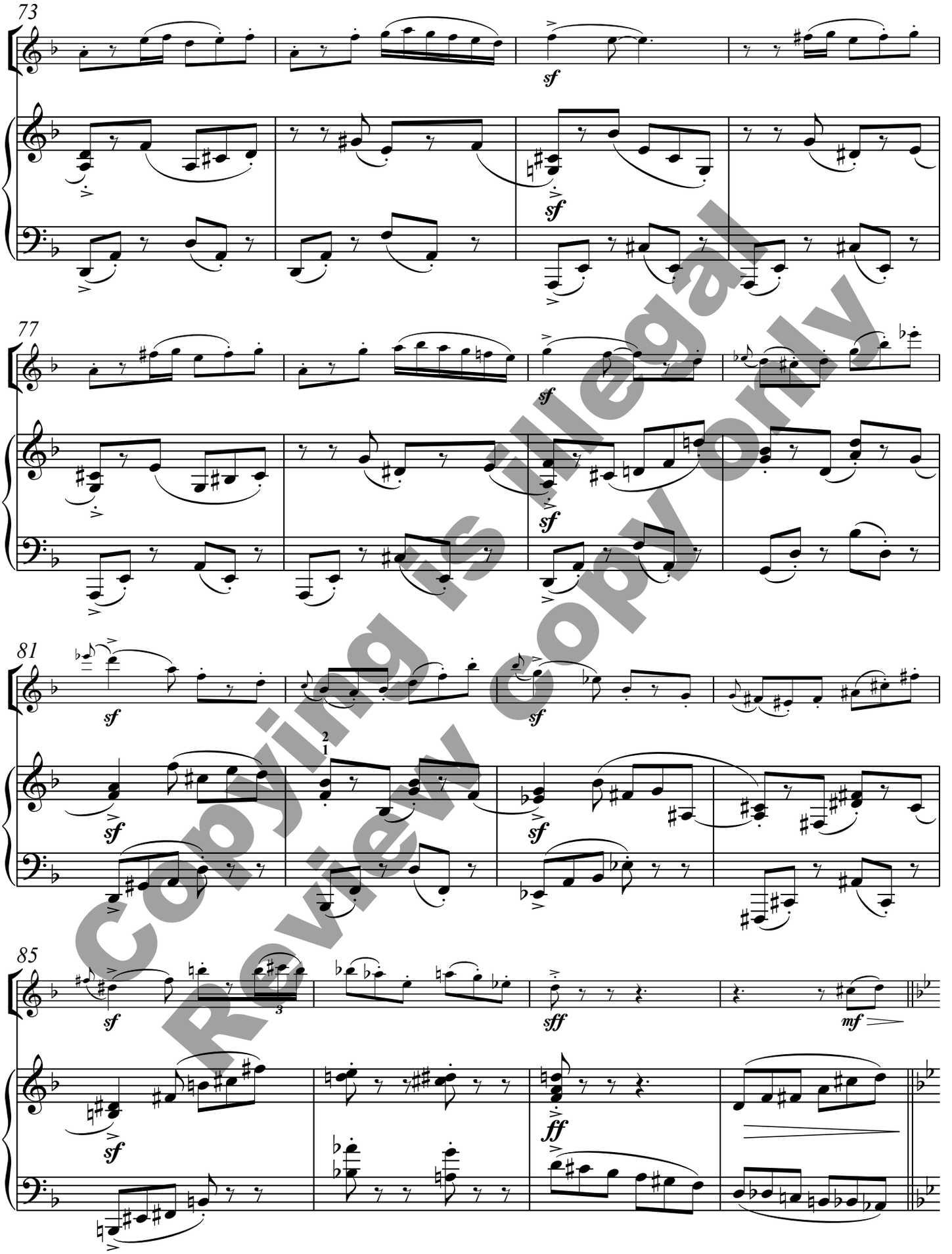

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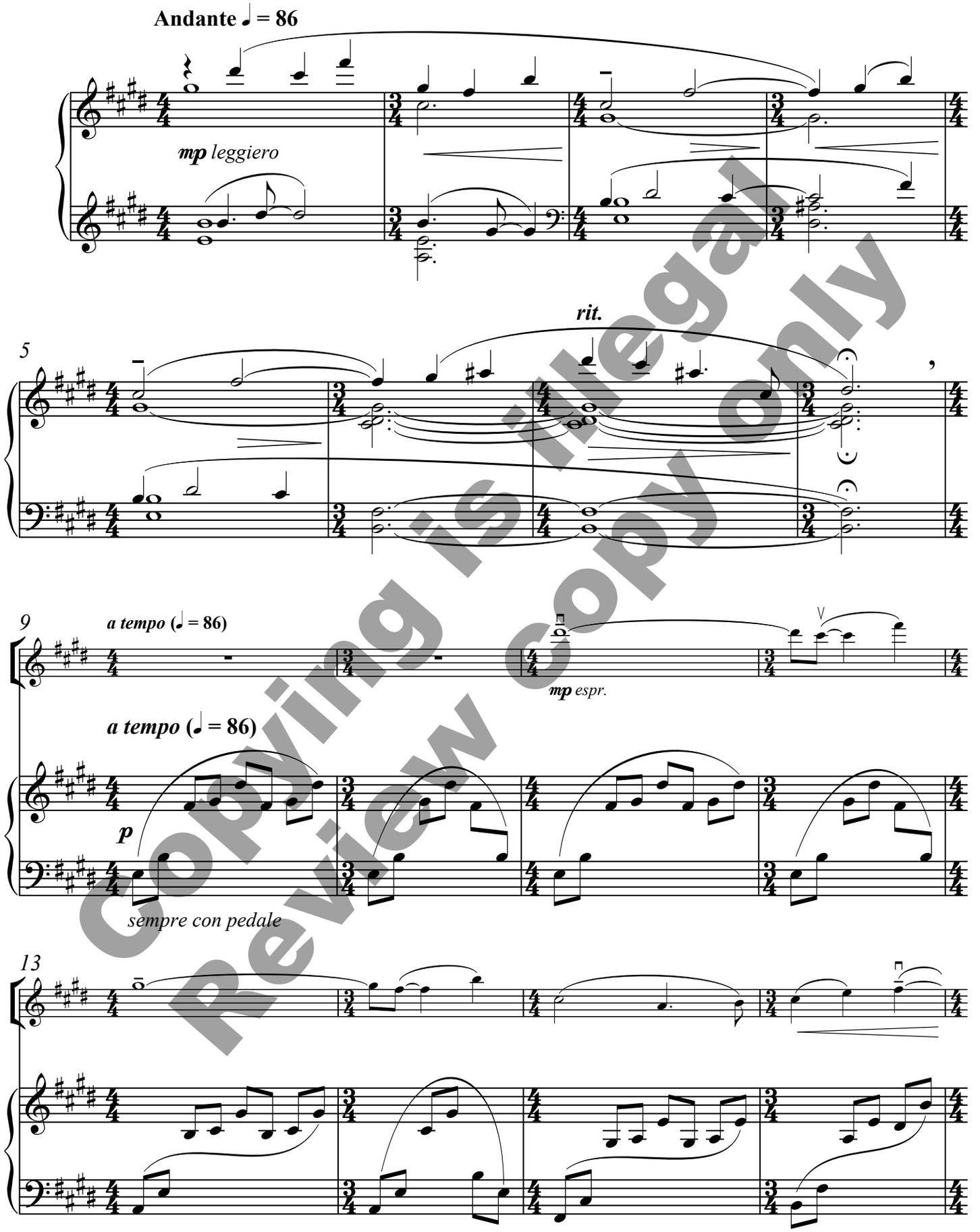
II. Meditation



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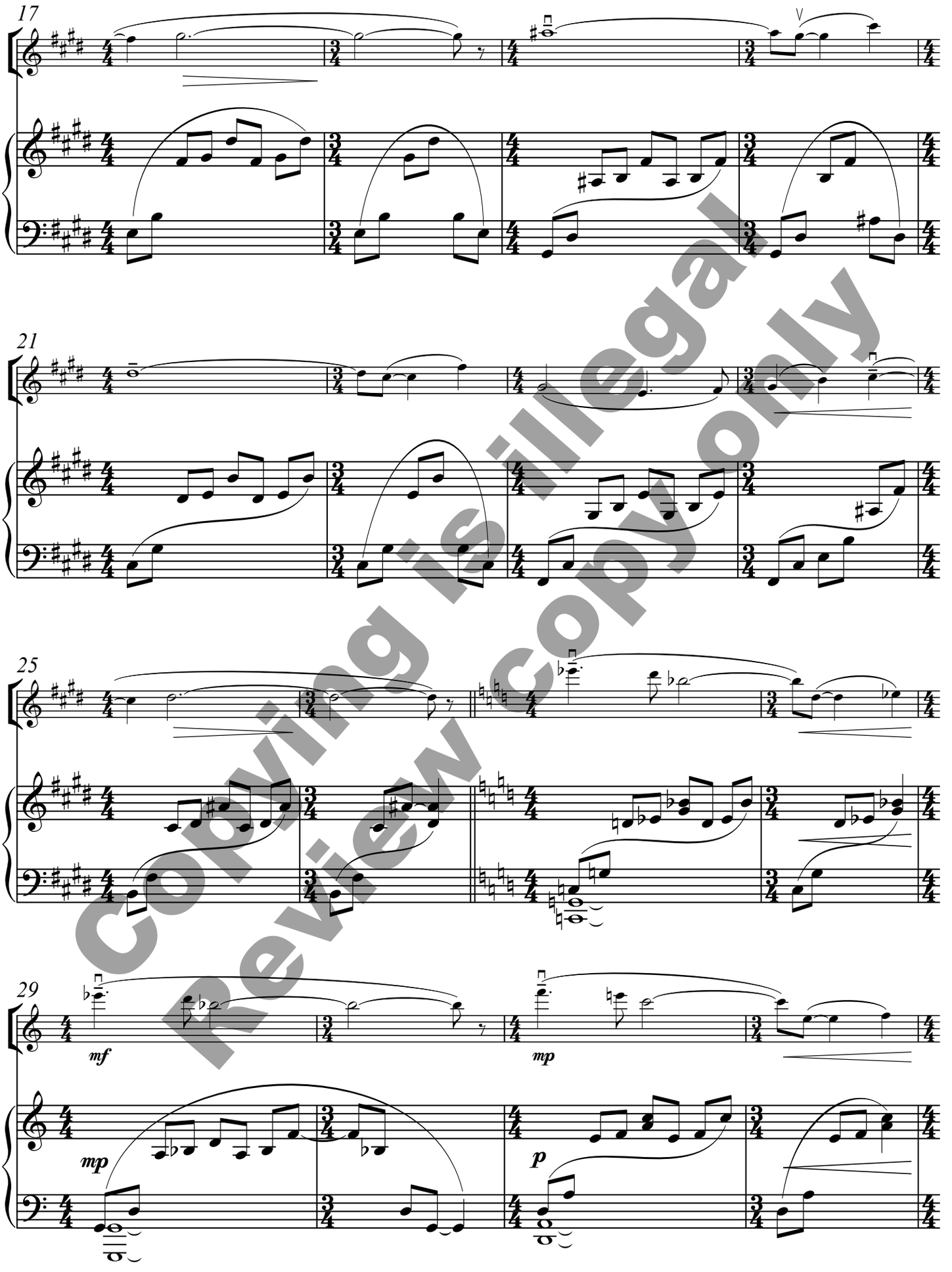

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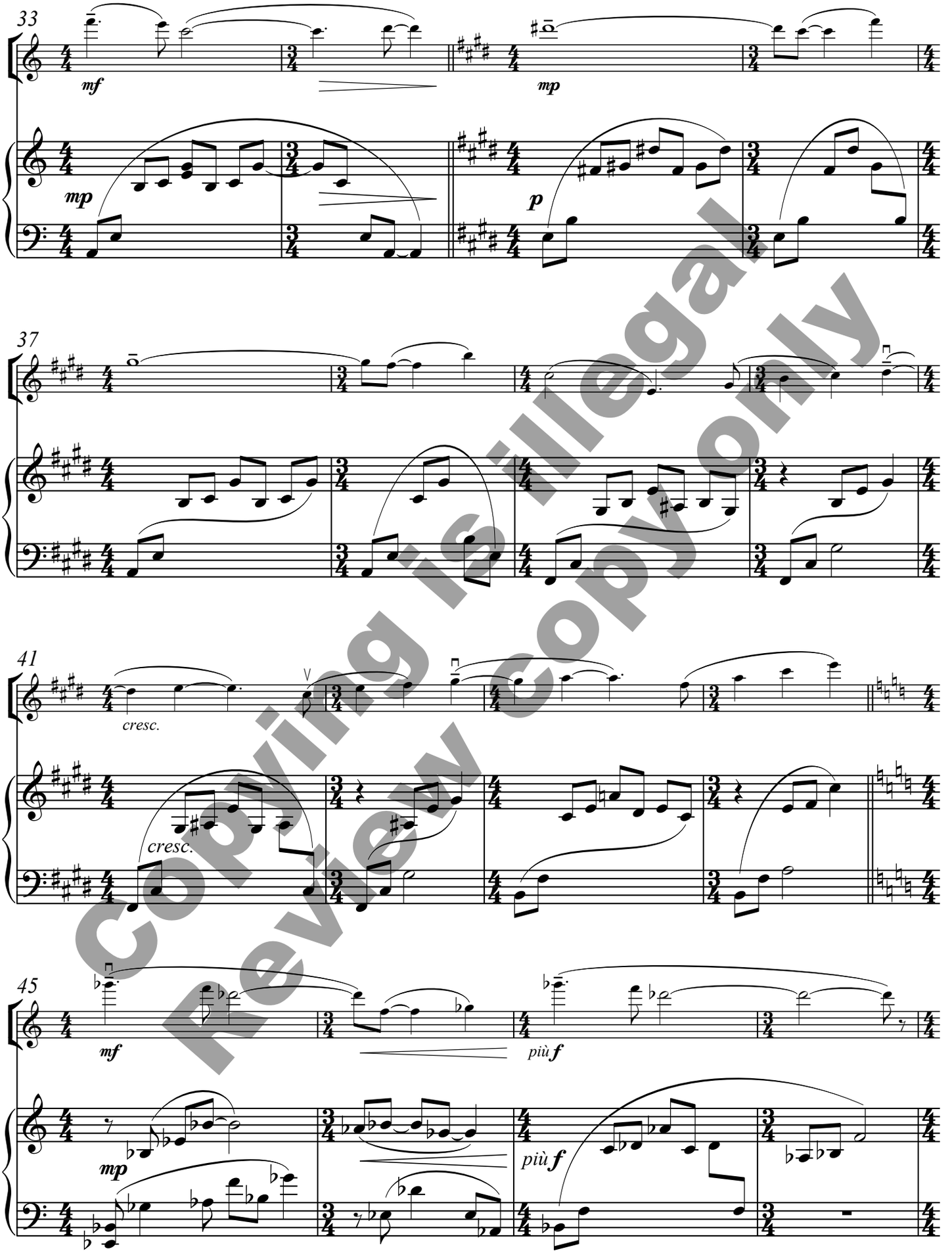

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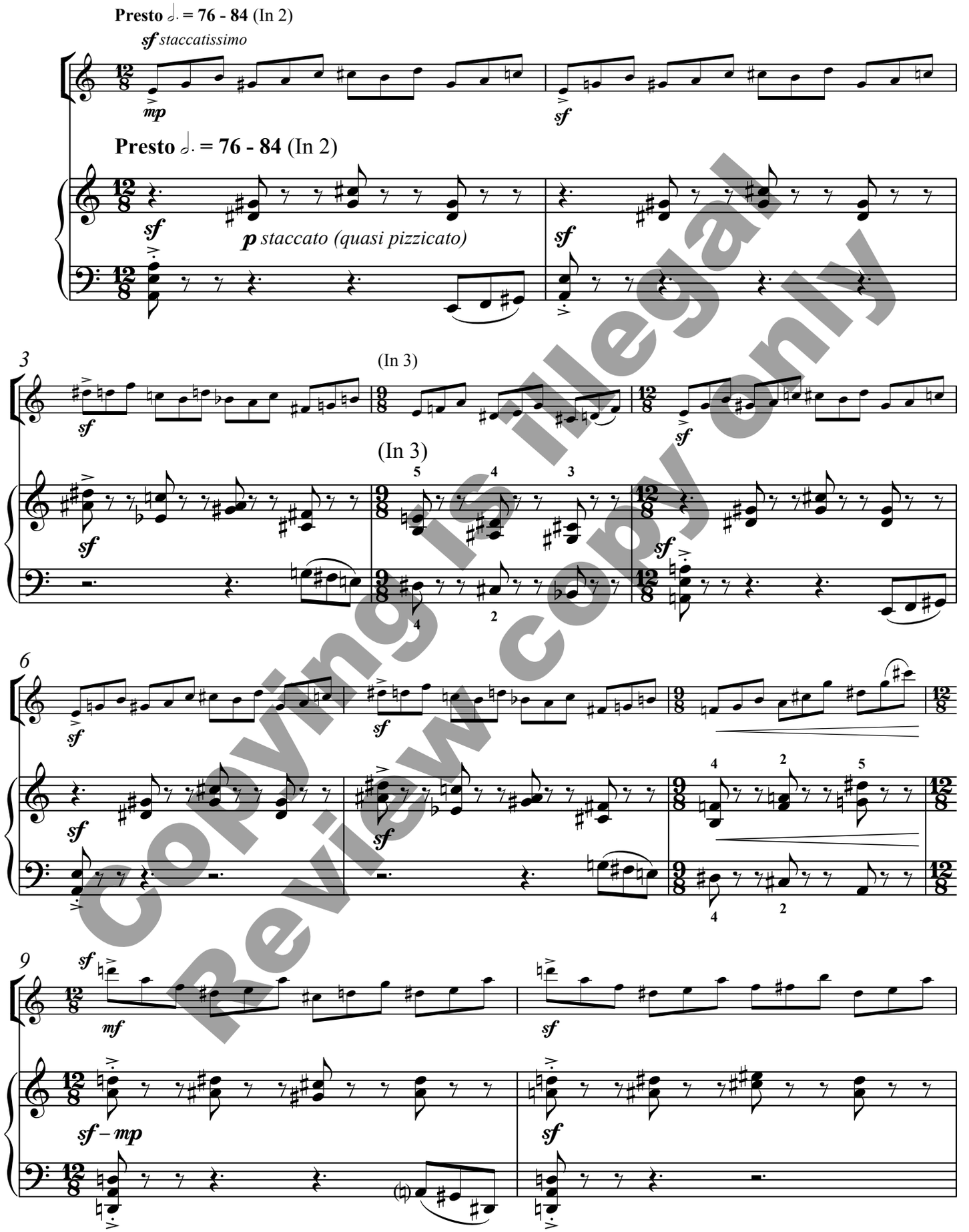
III. Toccata



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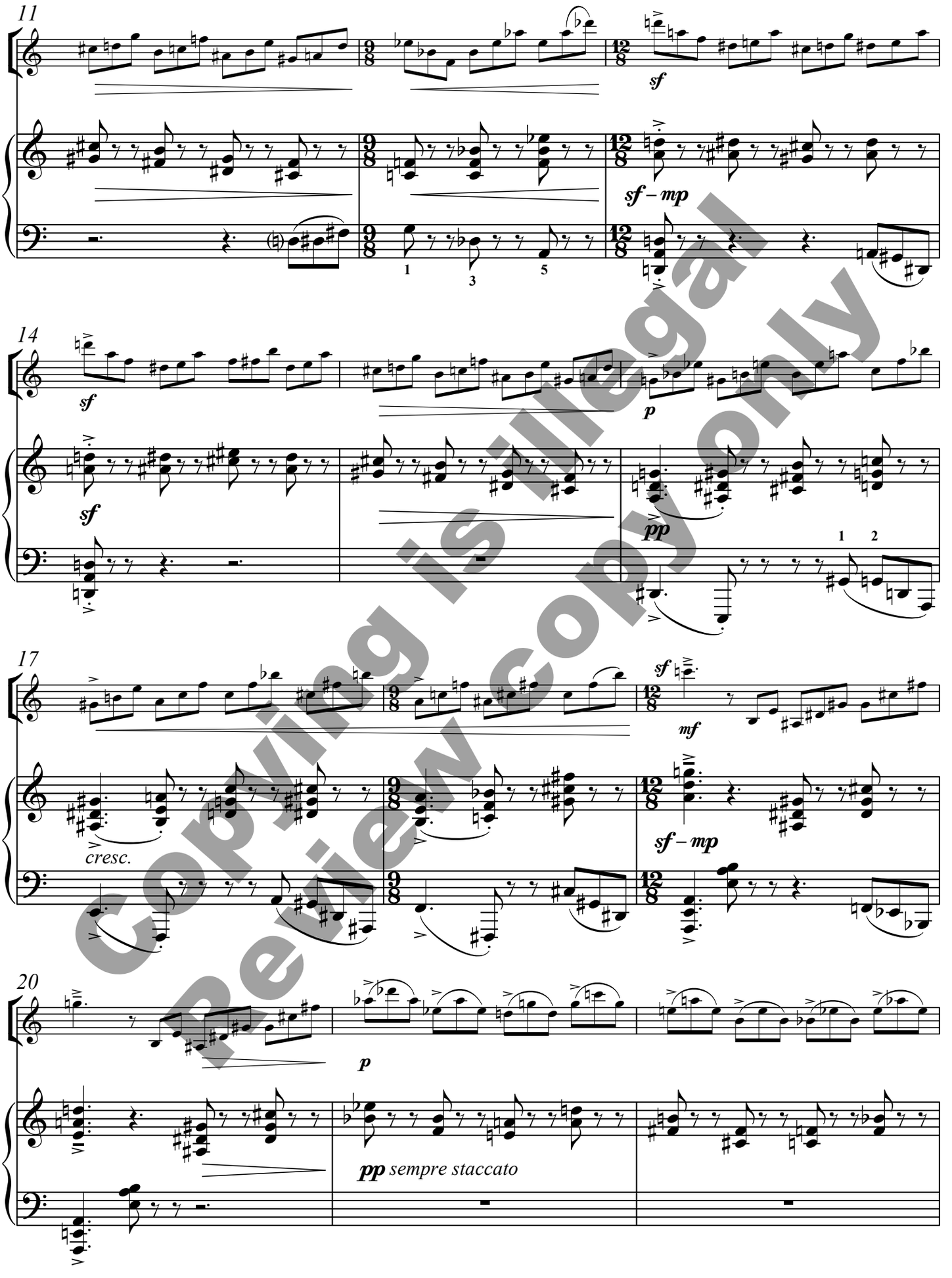

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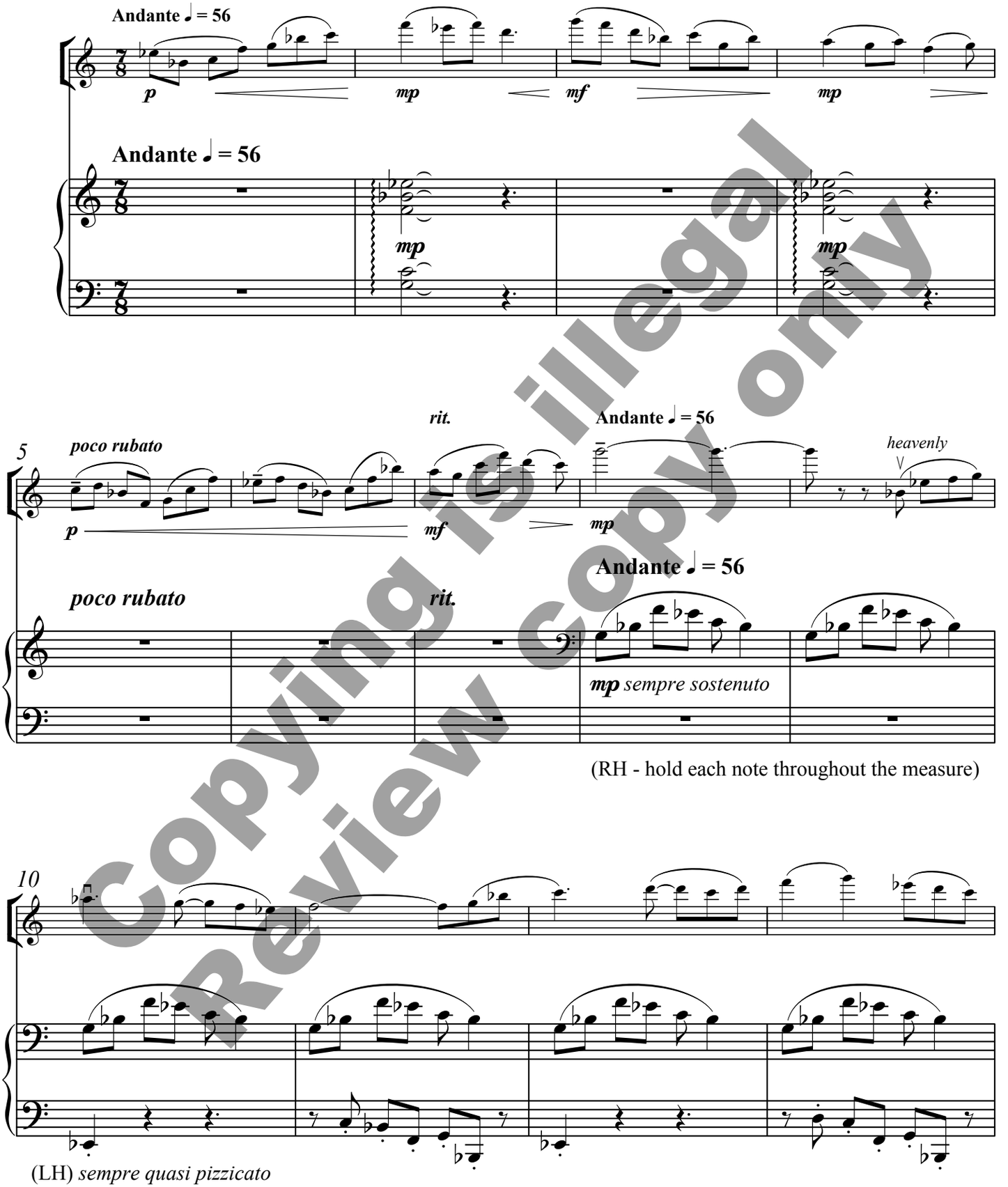
In memory of Robert F. Jones

IV. In Paradiso



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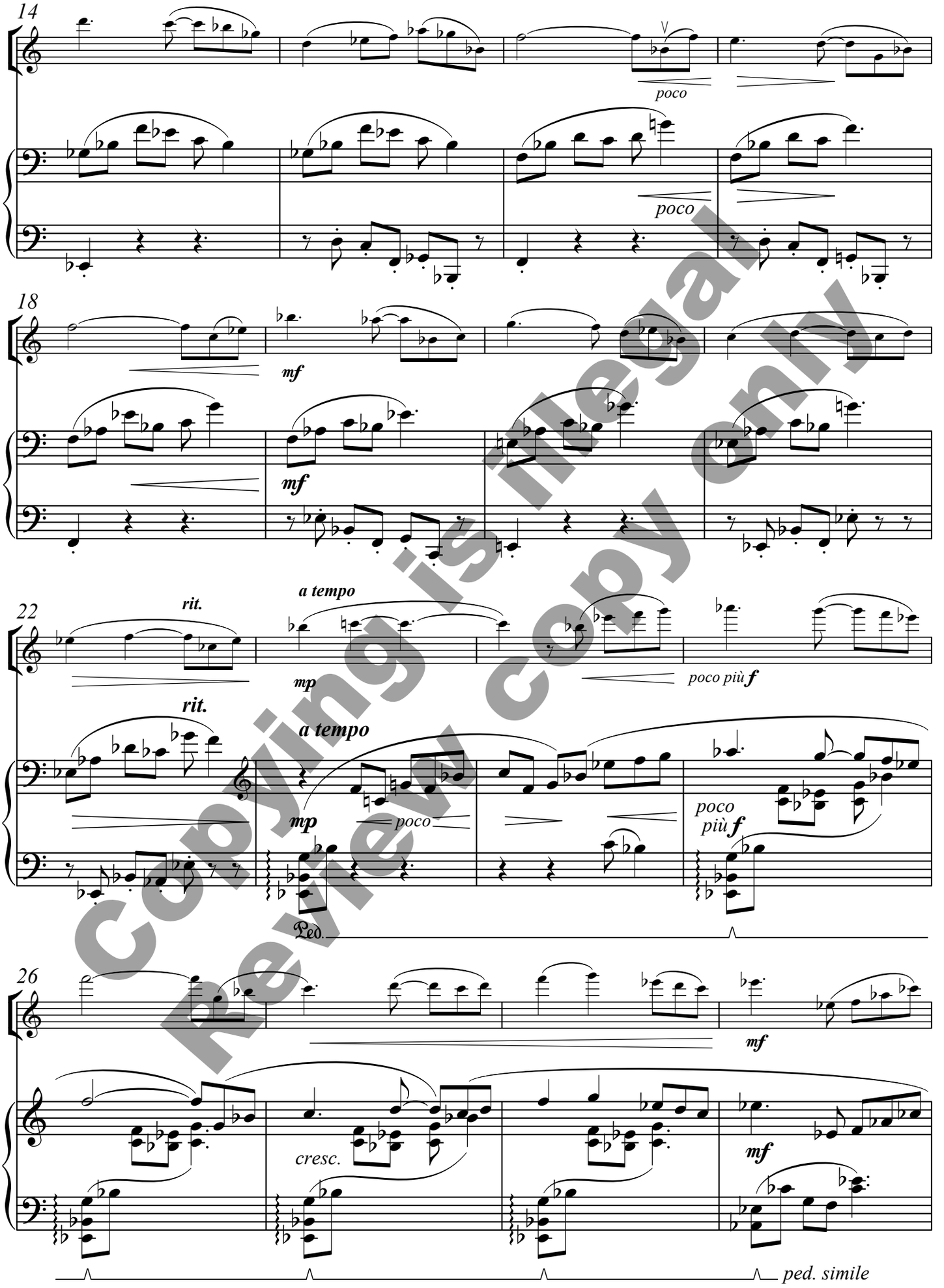

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