CAROL BARNETT

NEAR ODESSA

BEADY EYES PUBLISHING
www.carolbarnett.net

Near Odessa was written for Bella Voce, a women's choir based in Reno, Nevada, and conducted by Jennifer Tibben. The poem is from a recent volume by Minneapolis writer Patricia Kirkpatrick, written during a time when she was making frequent car trips through the western Minnesota landscape to the tiny town of Odessa. The images of golden fields, clattering harvest machinery, the far-off cry of geese, the hum of tires on the highway and the waves on the river, all are fodder for sound pictures.

duration: c. 3:30

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NEAR ODESSA

Near the end of summer.
Wheatfield with lark. With swift,
longspur, and sparrow. I see the birds
opening tails and wings
above grasses
and hidden nests.
Soybeans with bells, yellowing, green
tassels of corn, geese
again and again.
I see the birds
but wind takes all the sound.
Small towns are reduced to chains or storefronts,
boarded-up.
Almost to the river called a lake, grey stones of water,
dammed, white-capped, hinge
between states.
Some fields are so gold they seem to be singing.
The gold fields lie down, flat but not empty,
and will be harvested later with blades.
Near Odessa
I come to a place where the end is beginning.
Where the light is absolute, it rises.

-Patricia Kirkpatrick *(Odessa)*

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"Near Odessa" from Odessa by Patricia Kirkpatrick (Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2012).
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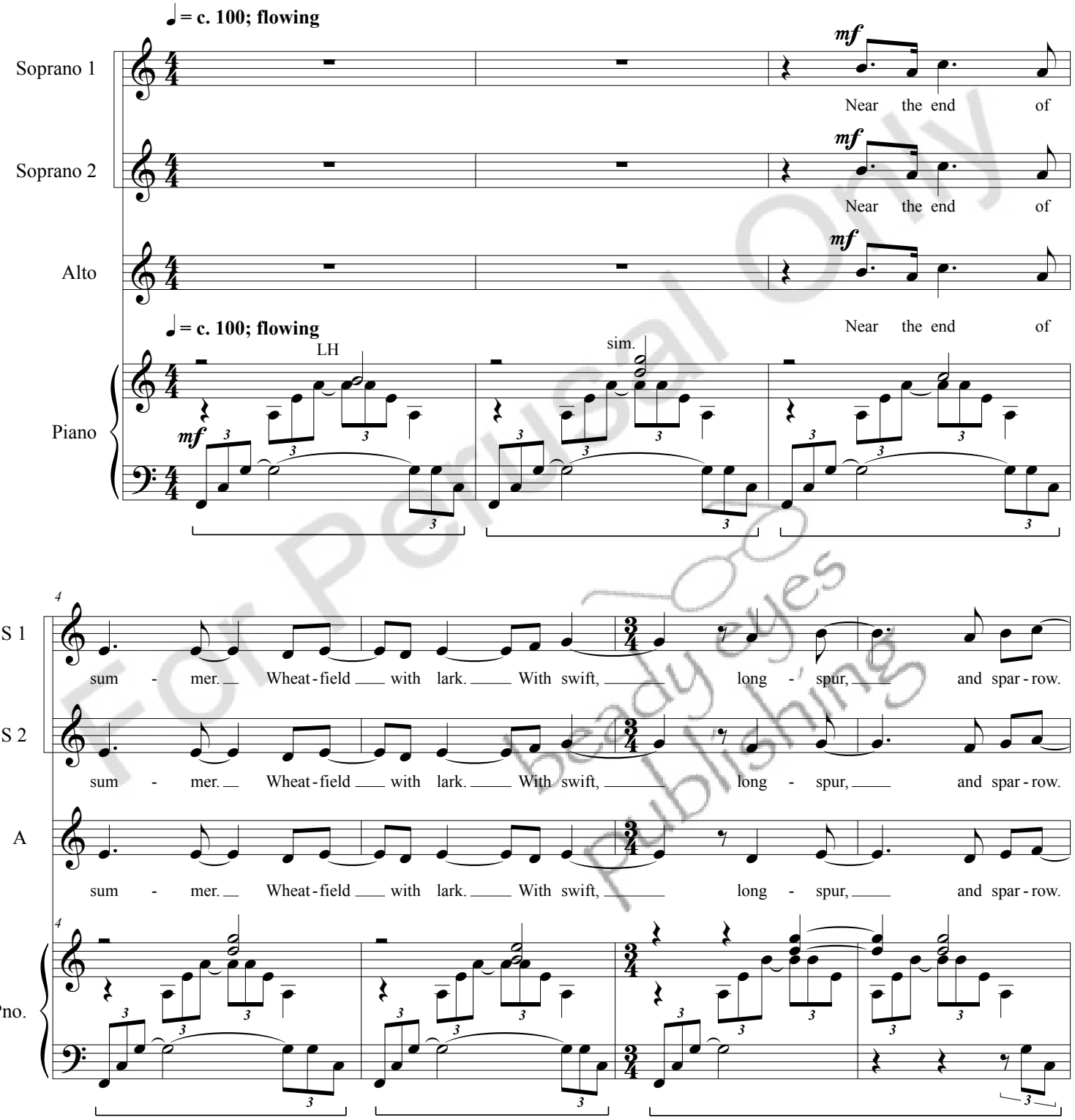
For Bella Voce; Jennifer Tibben, Artistic Director; Reno, Nevada

Near Odessa

Patricia Kirkpatrick

Carol Barnett



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music © 2013 Carol Barnett
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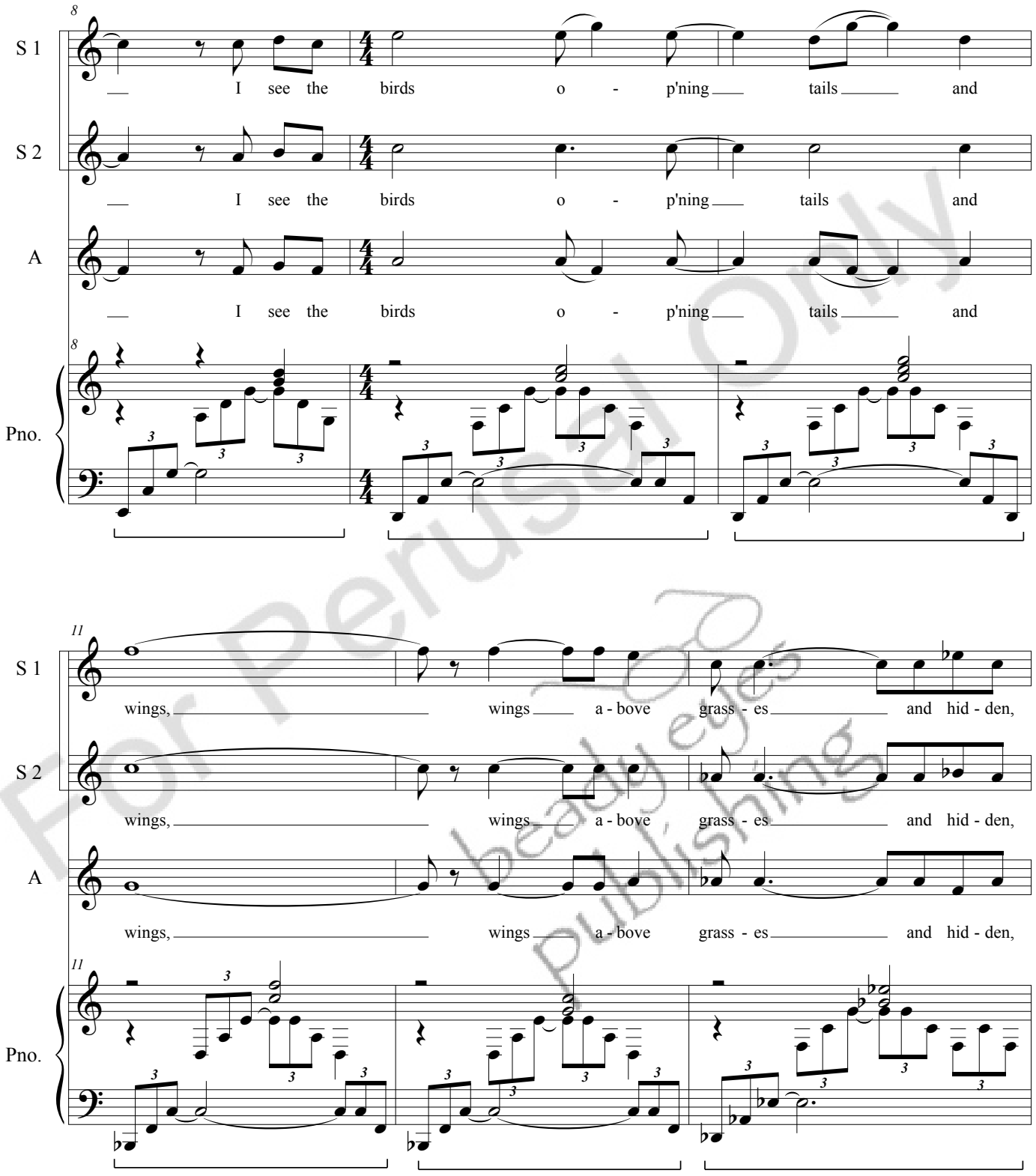

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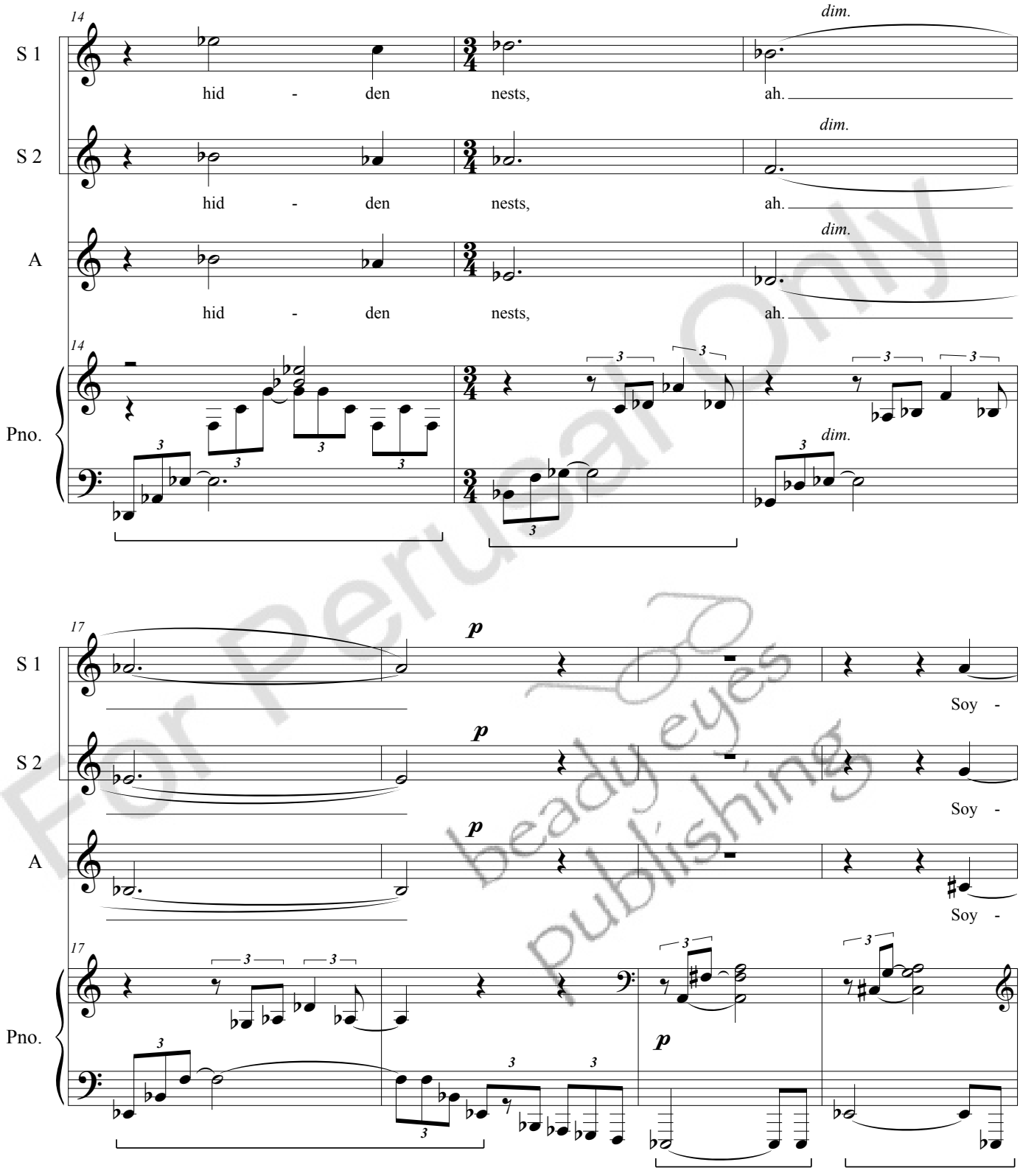

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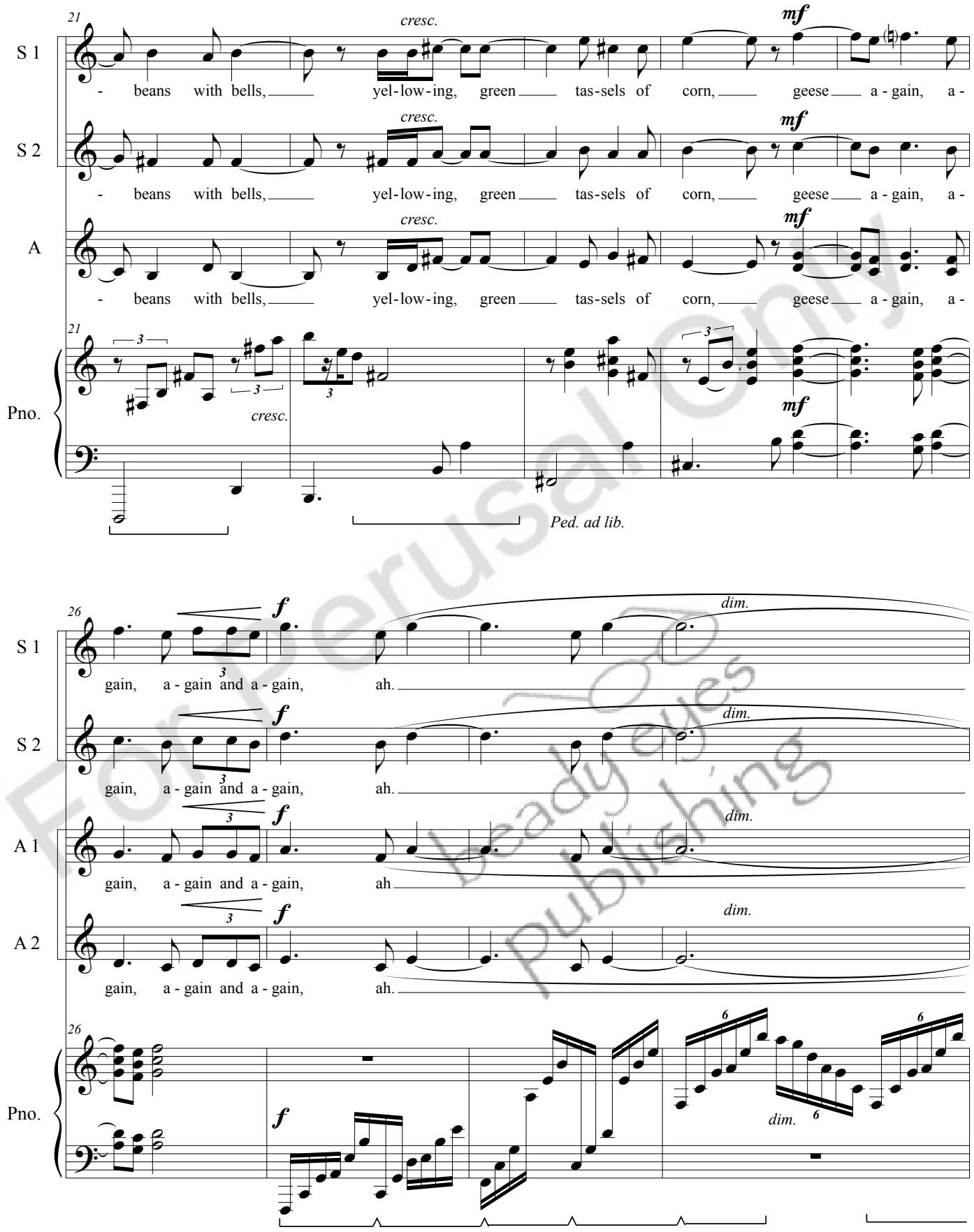

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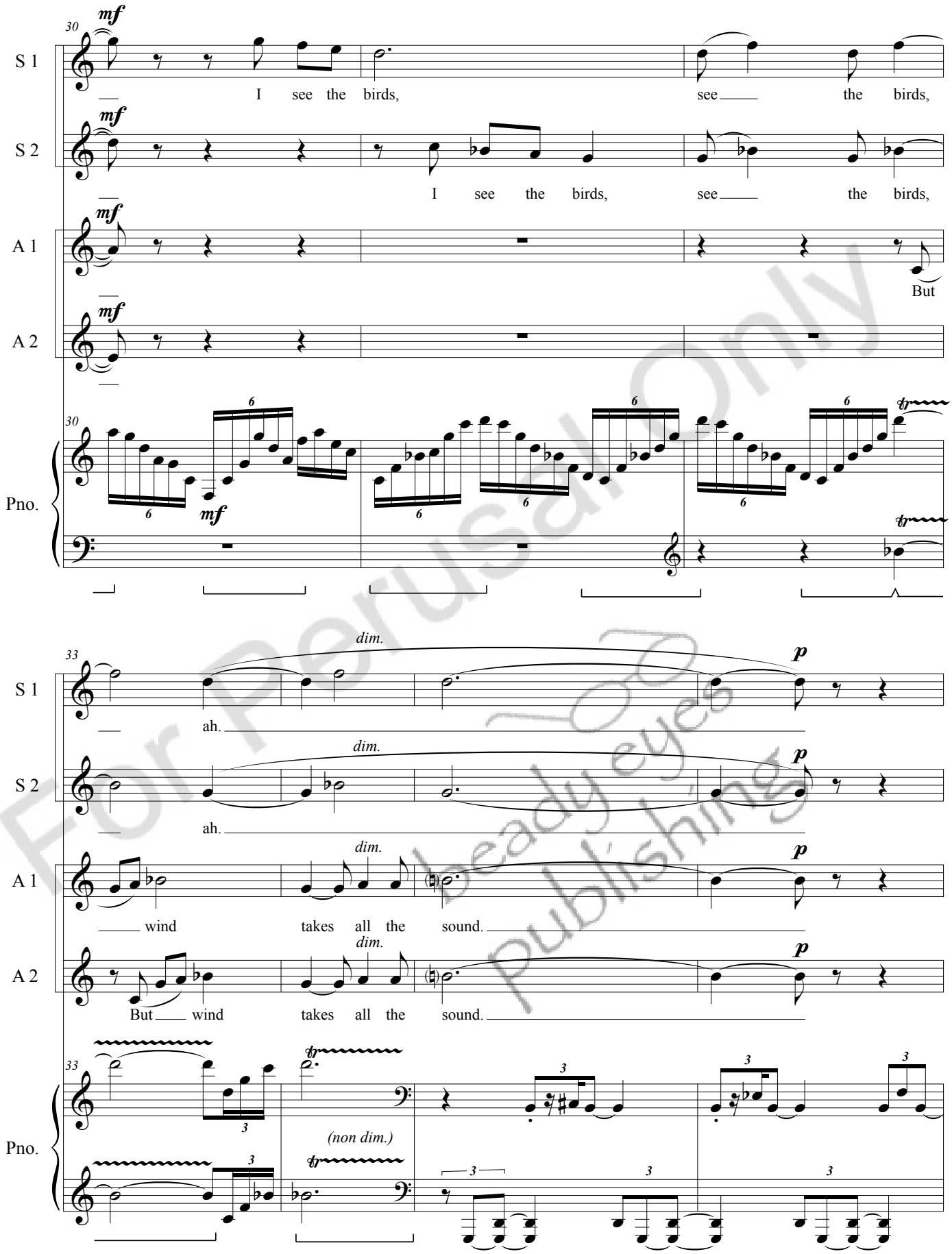

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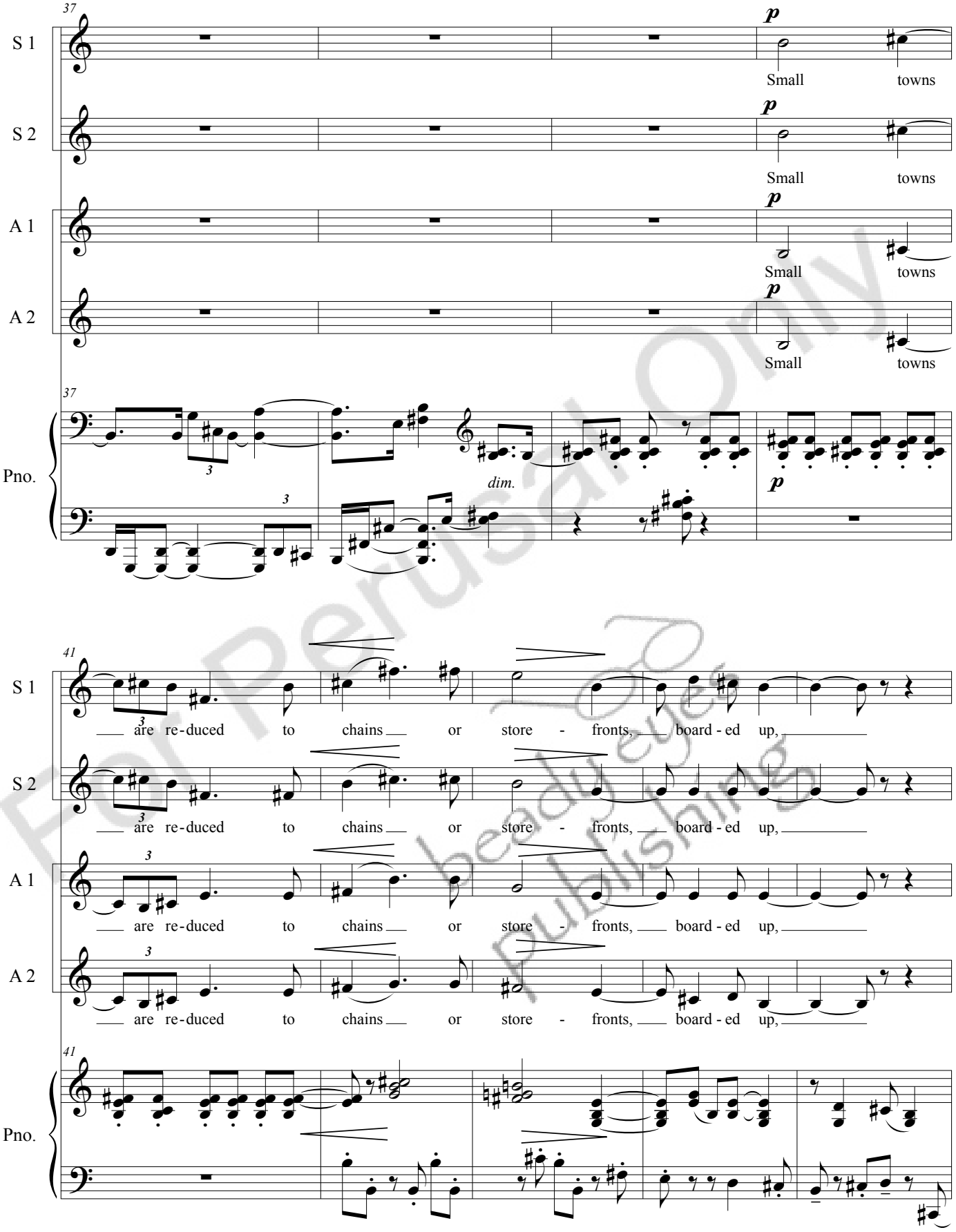

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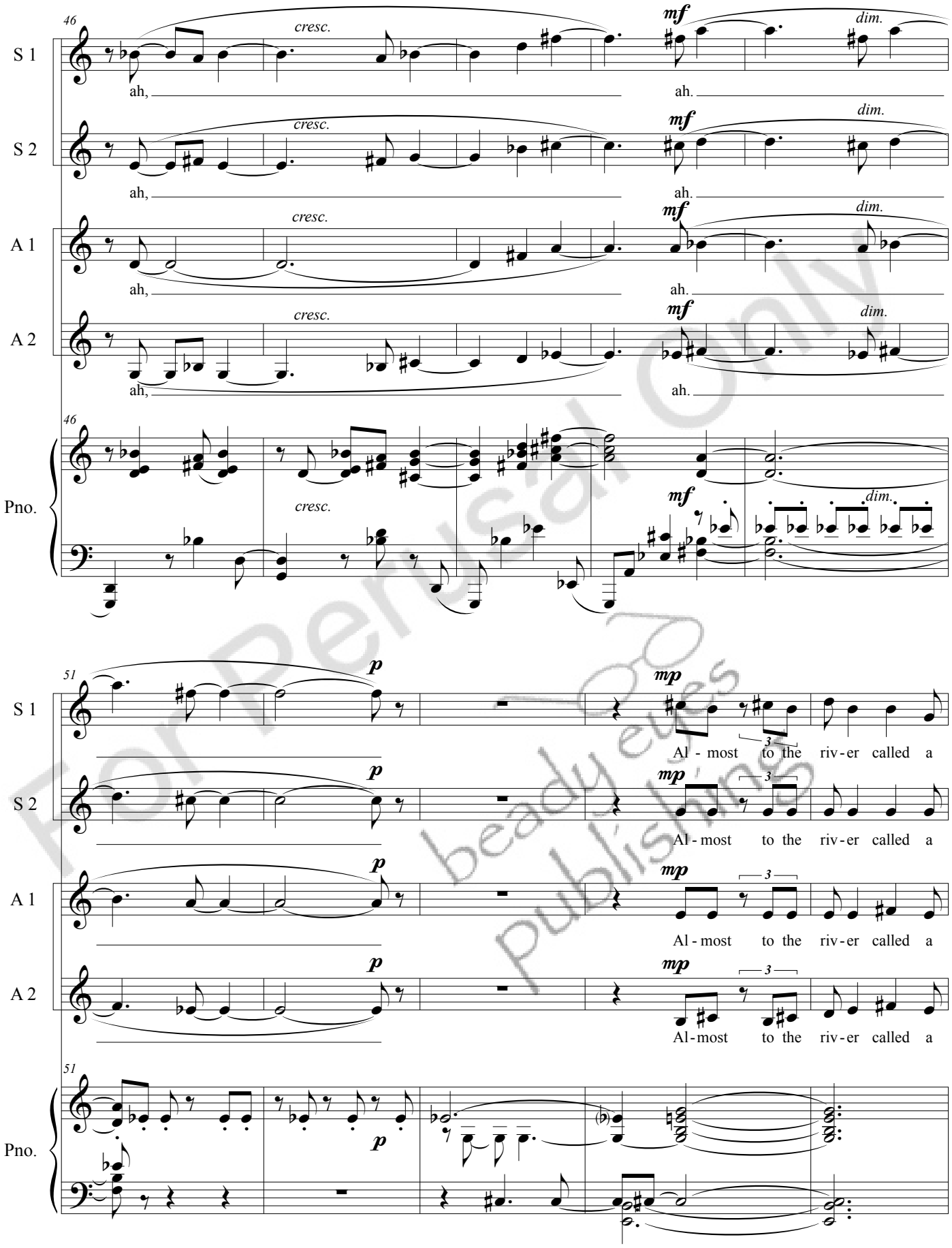

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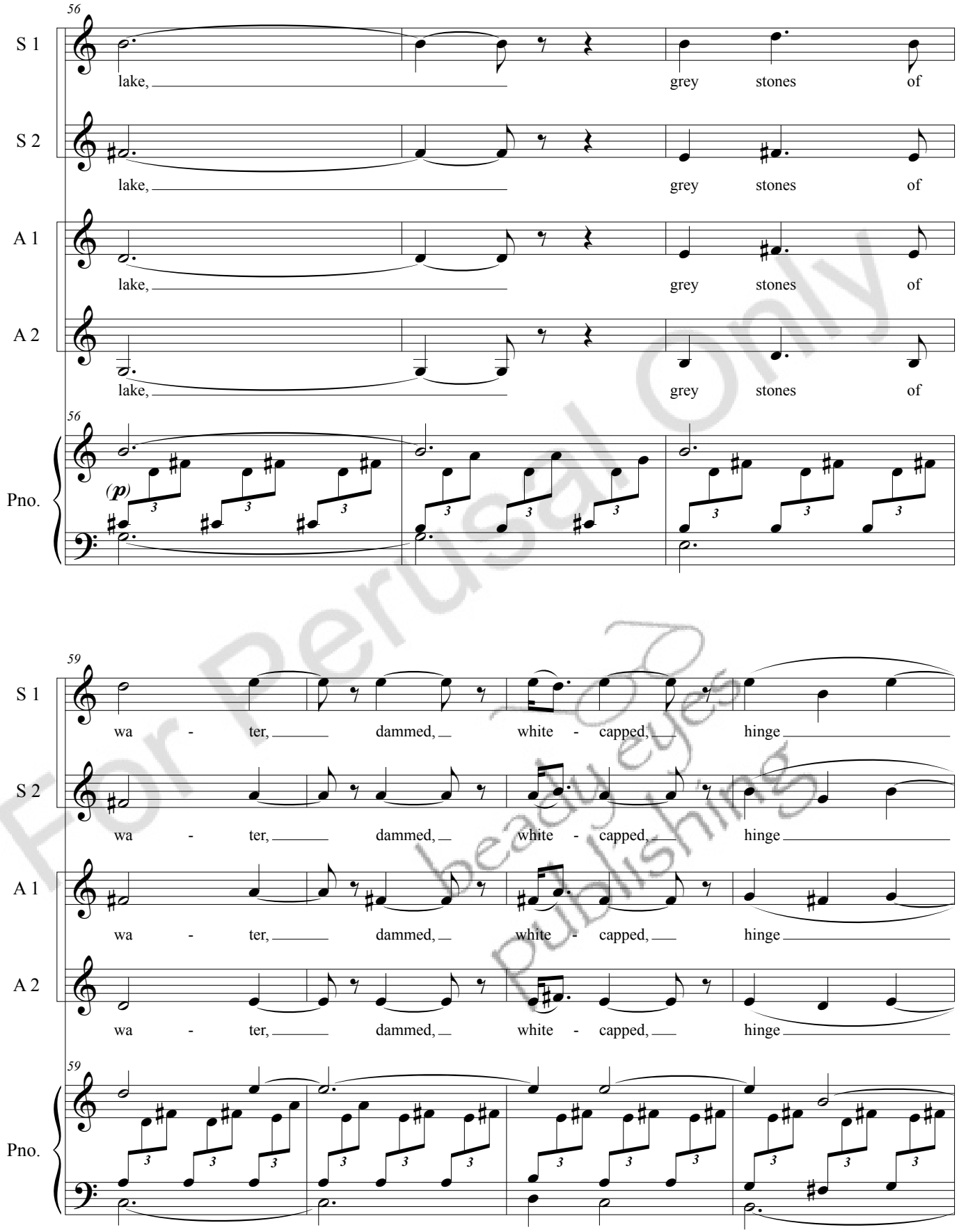

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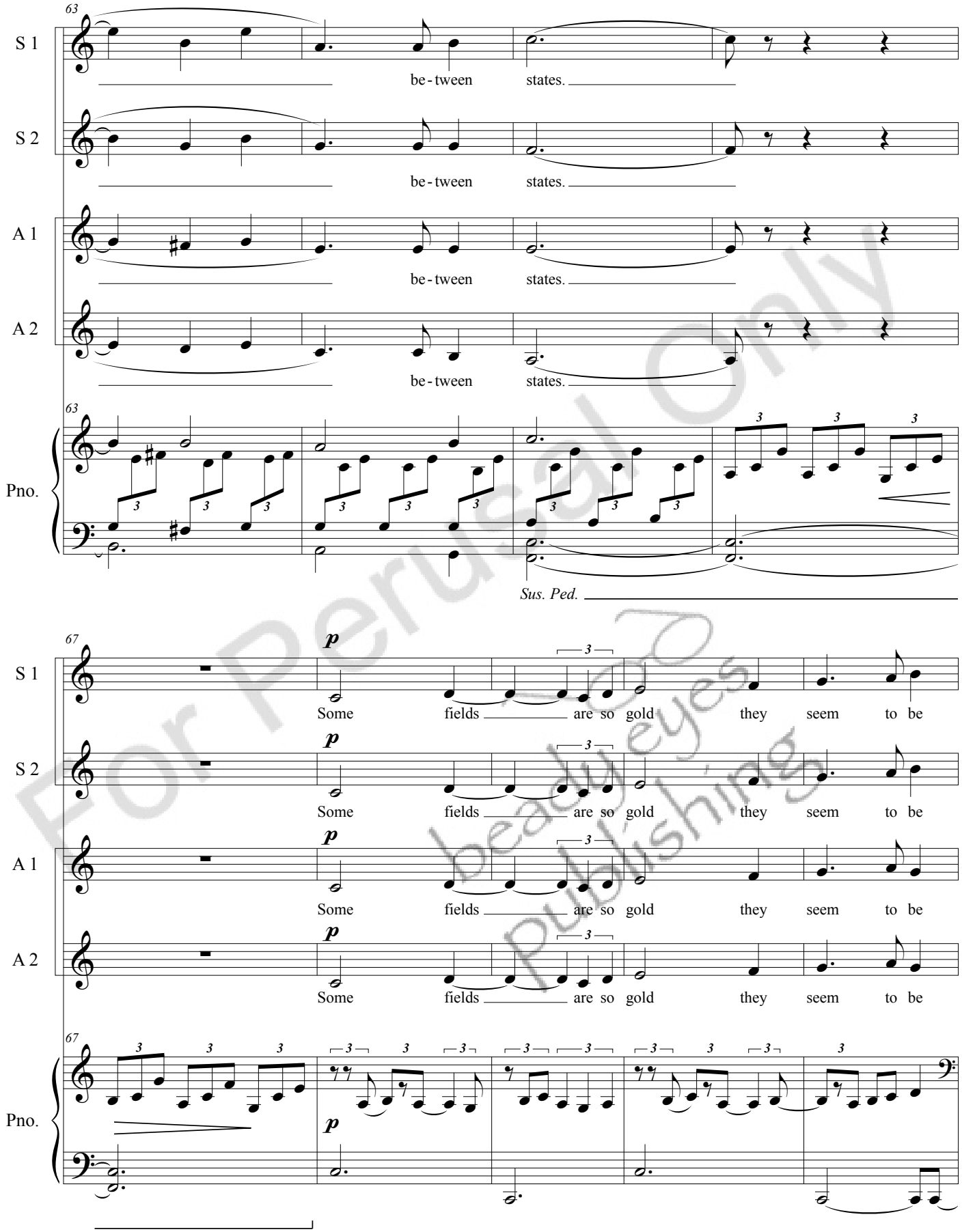

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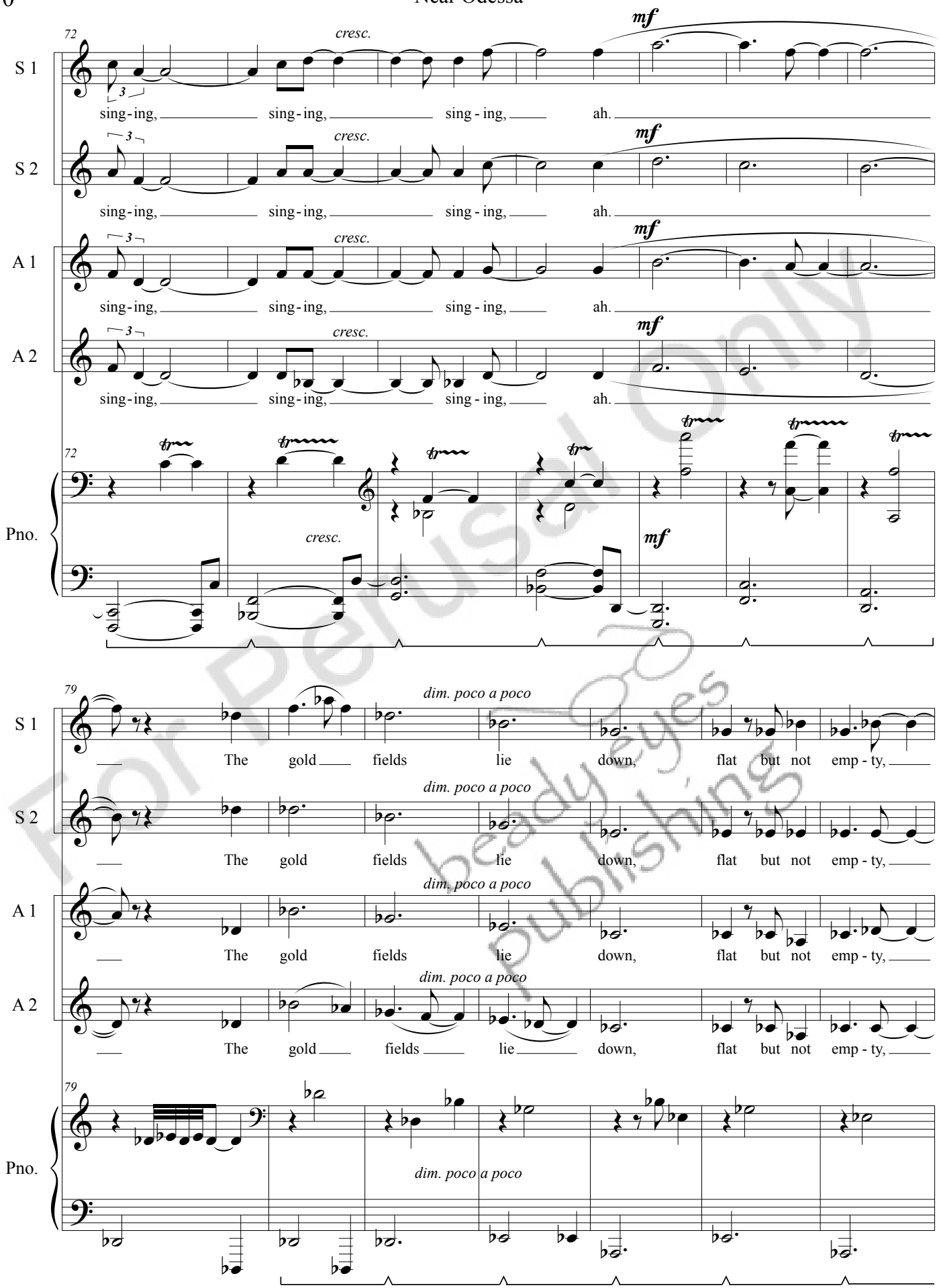

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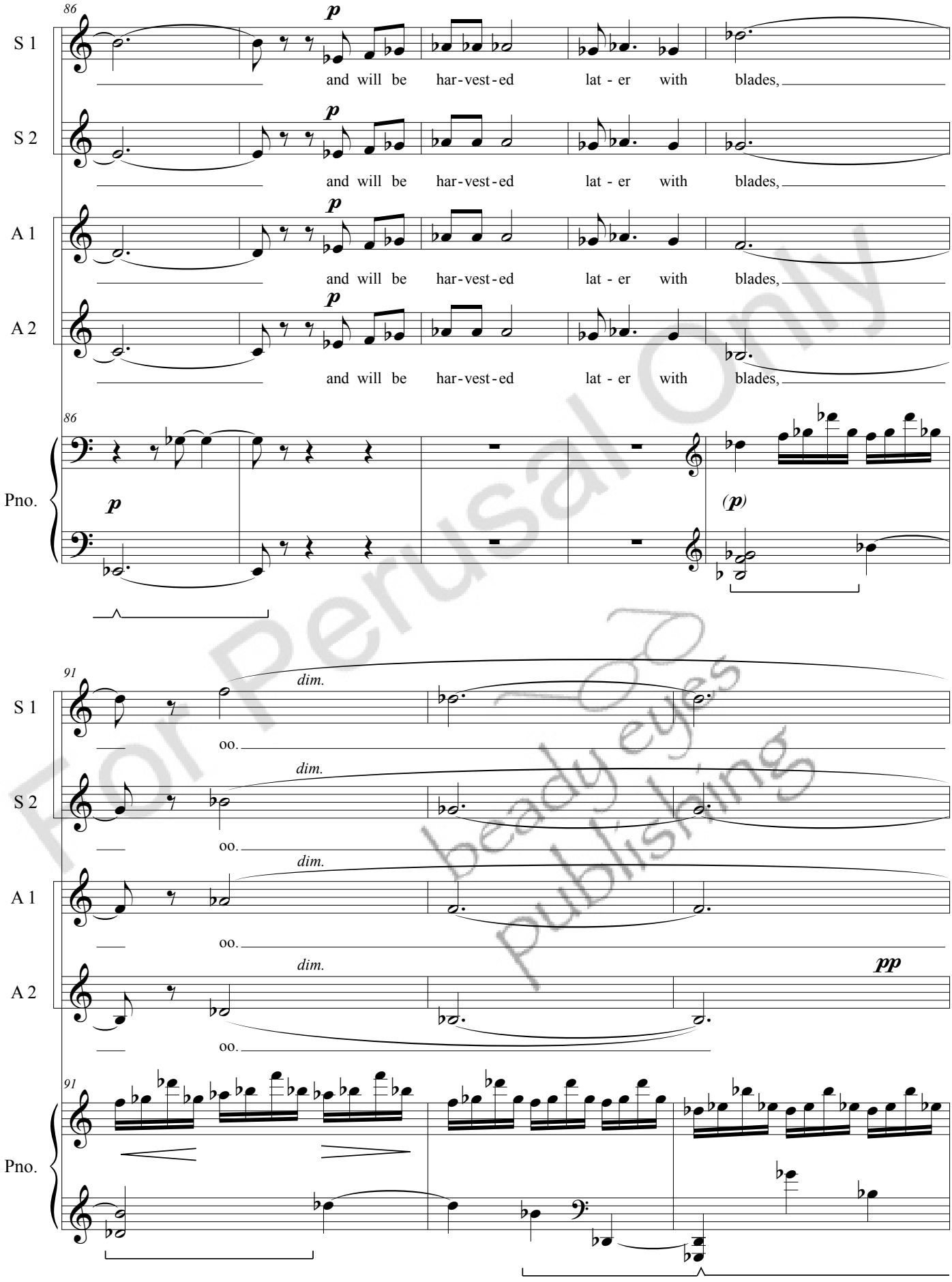

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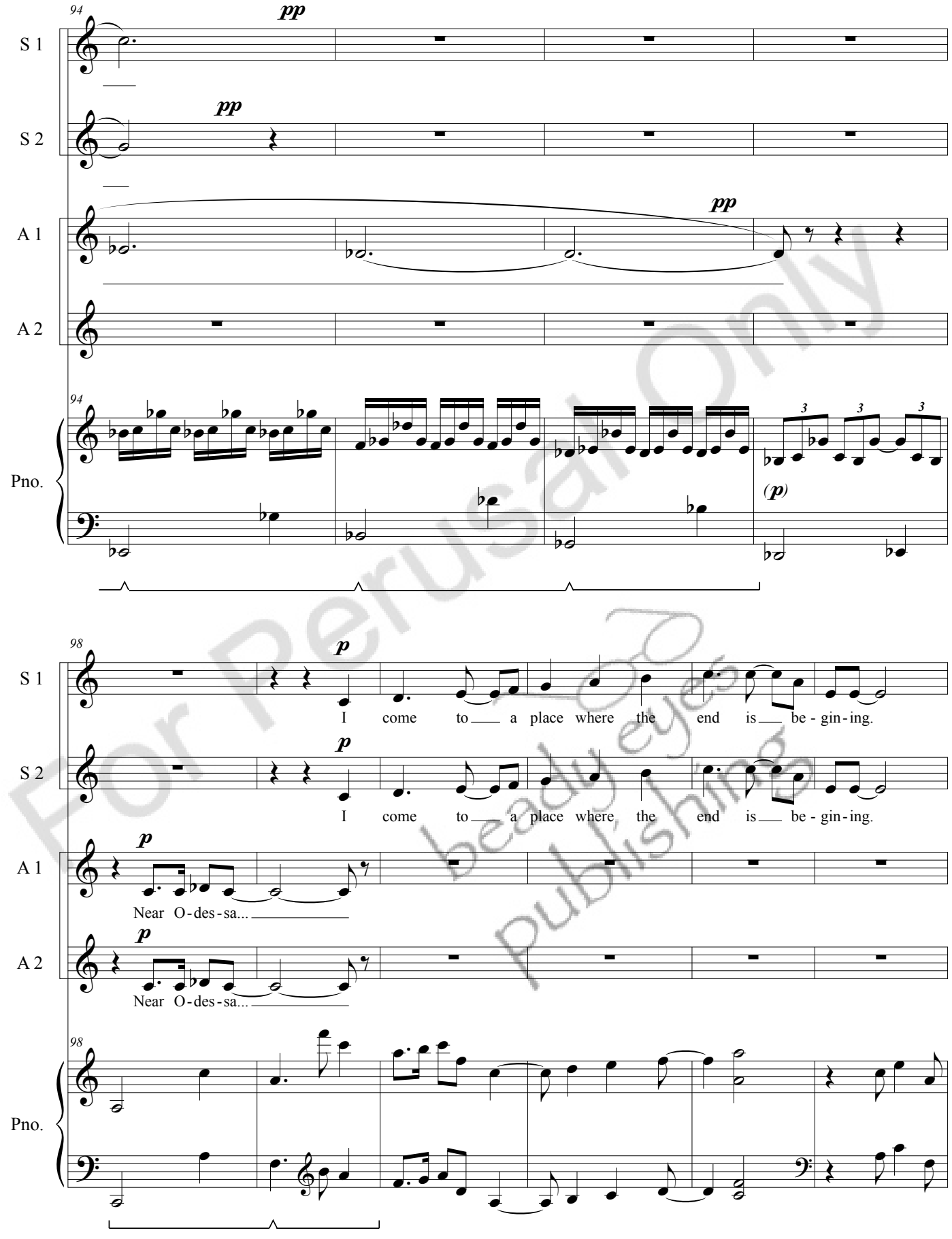

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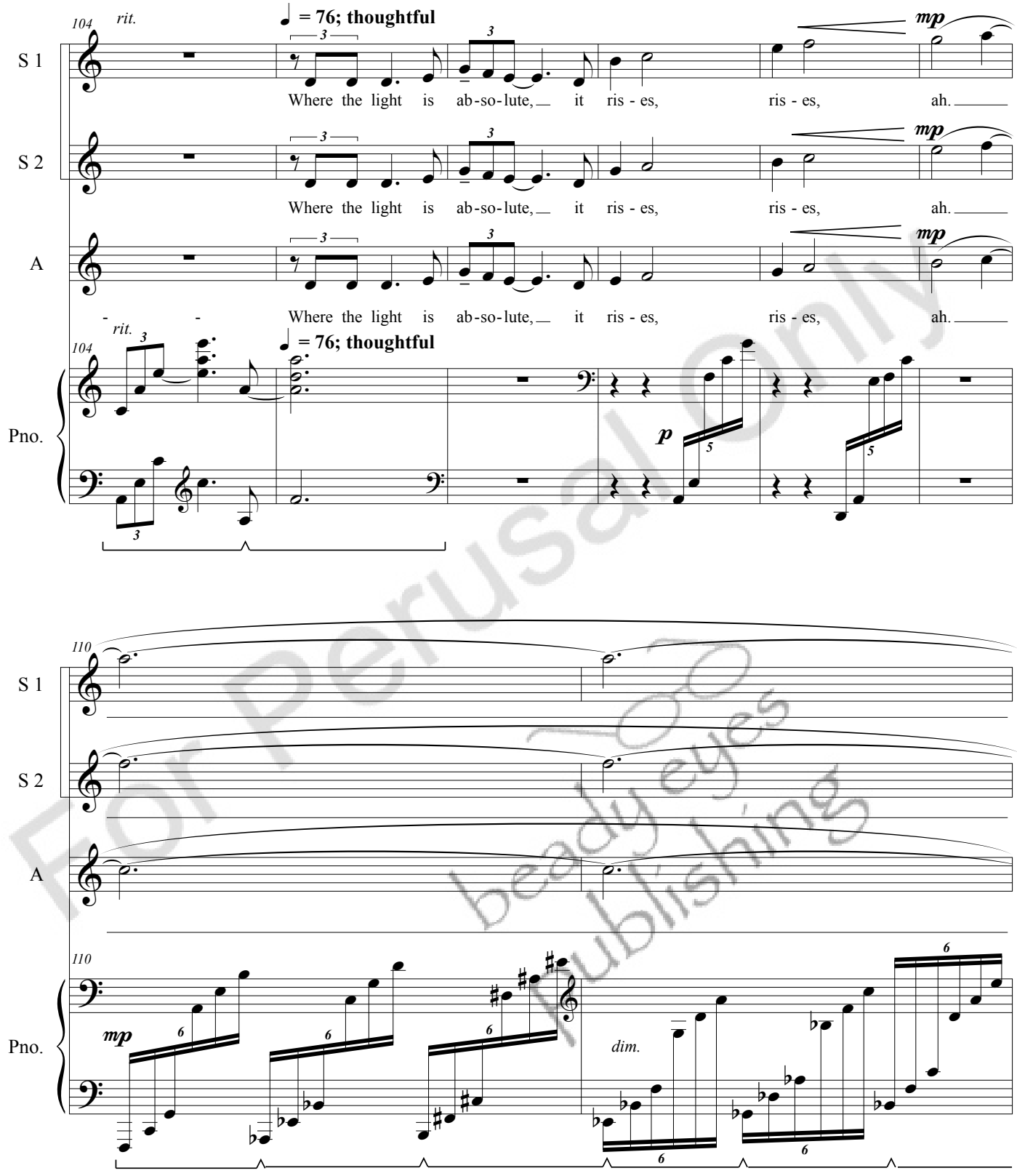

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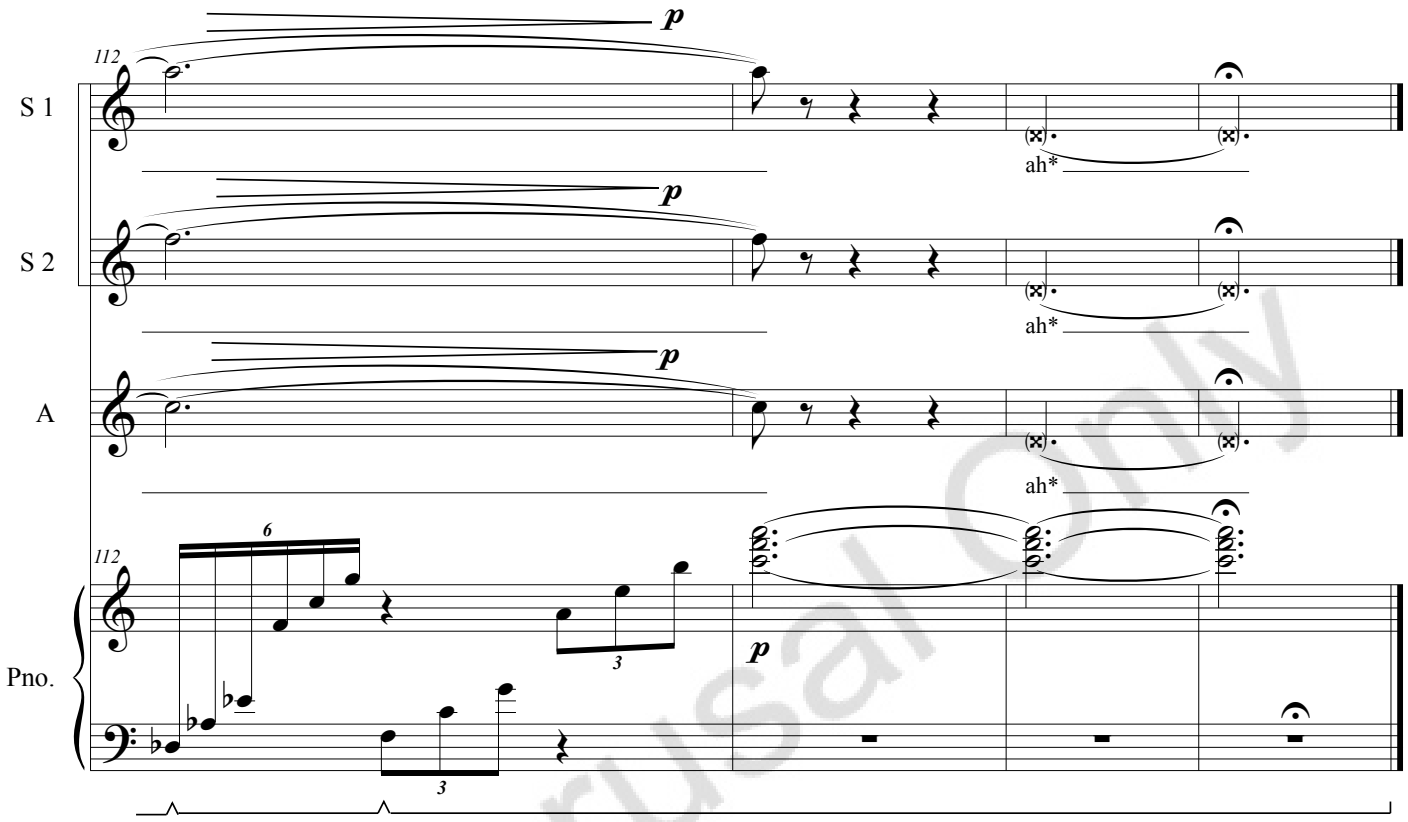

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