Full Score

Carol Barnett

THE DARKLING THRUSH

BEADY EYES PUBLISHING
www.carolbarnett.net

The Darkling Thrush

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

Thomas Hardy - 1900

Duration: c. 8:00

Hardy's poem captures so well the gloomy thoughts of late winter, when everything is grey and all nature seems dead. But little incongruities catch our attention and lift our spirits. The tiny thrush, with its bedraggled appearance and joyous song, won't banish seasonal affective disorder, but perhaps coaxes forth a gentle smile.

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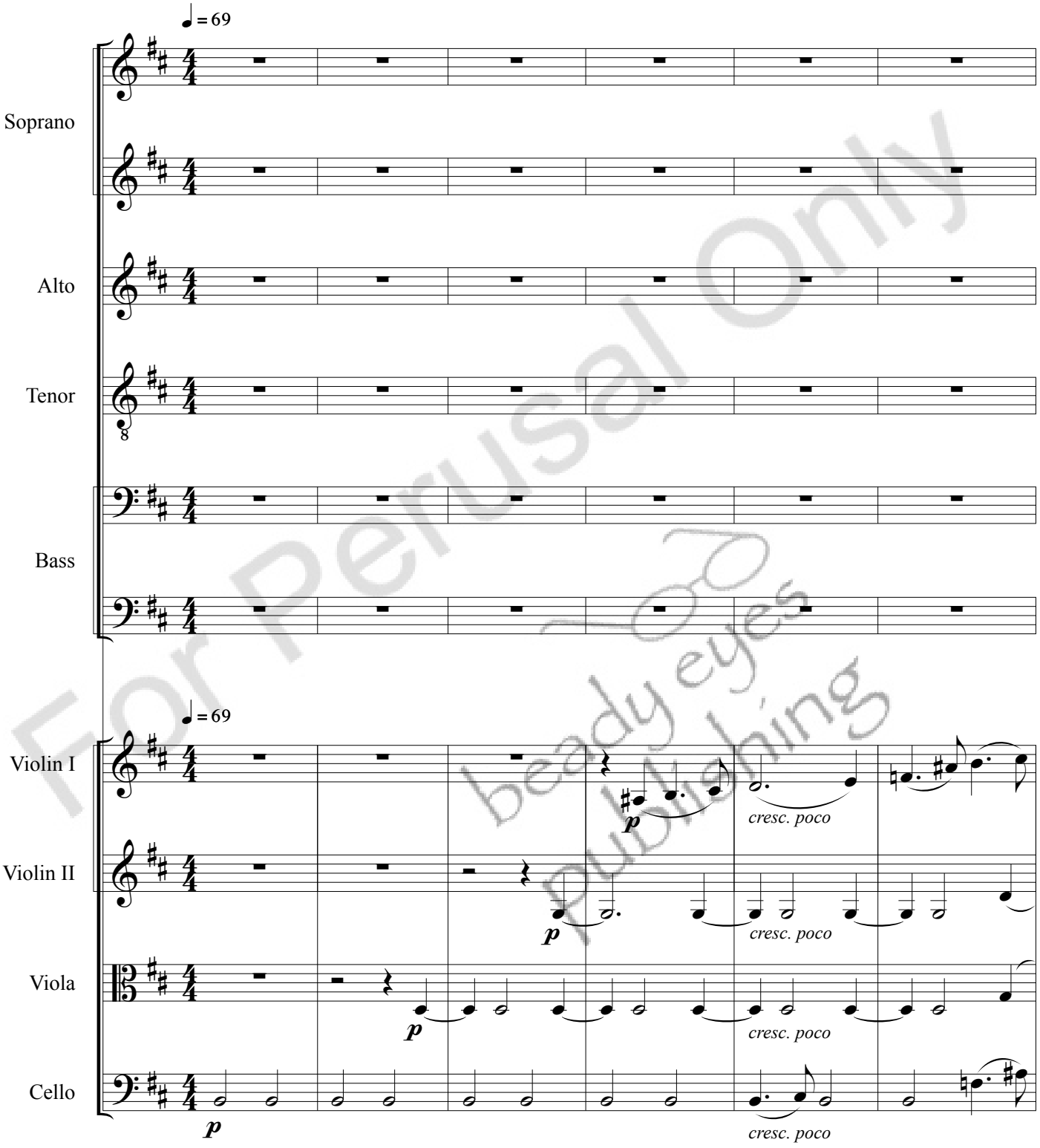
Commissioned by New Amsterdam Singers in honor of its founder and Music Director Clara Longstreth, on the occasion of the chorus's 50th Anniversary.

The Darkling Thrush

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

Carol Barnett



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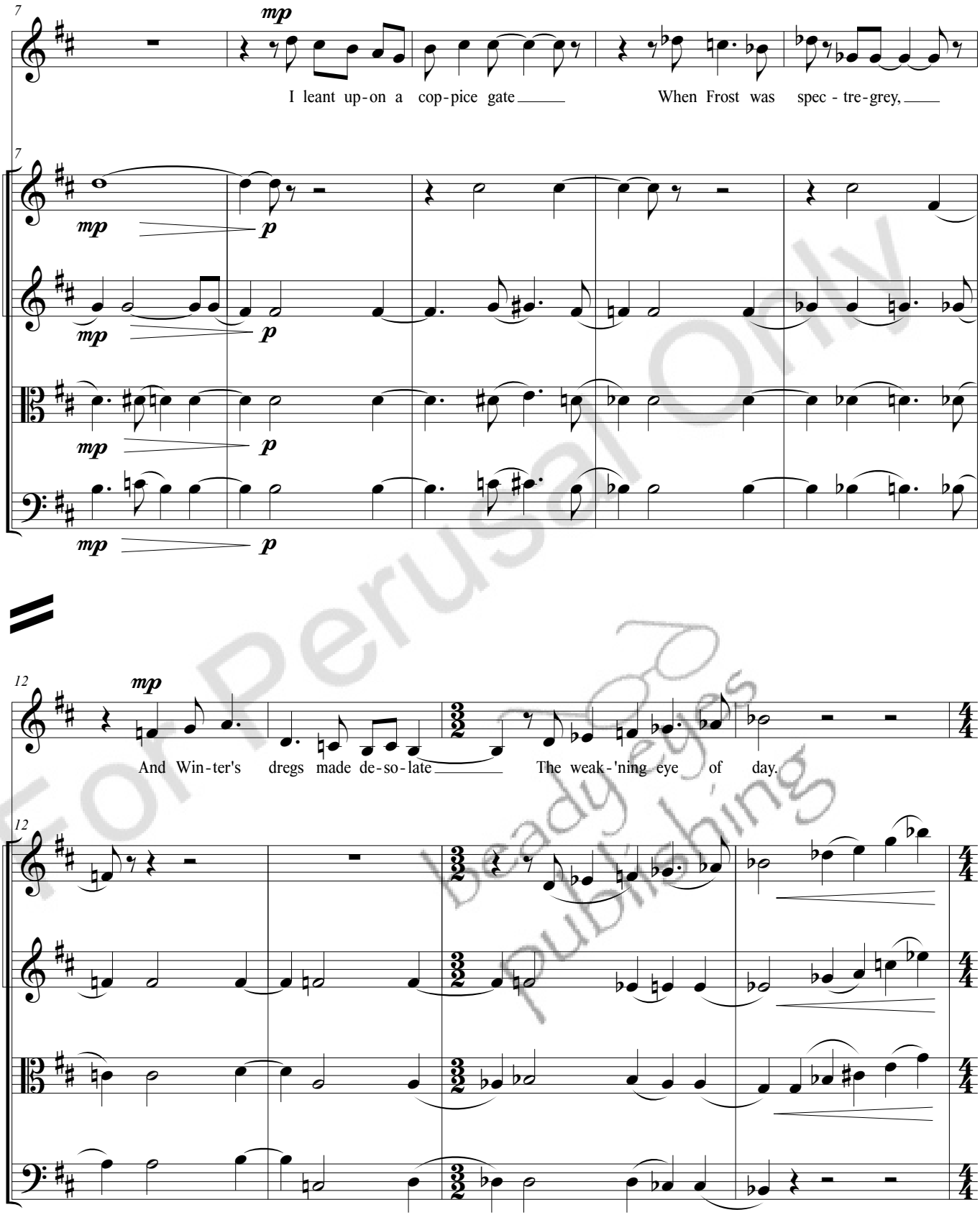

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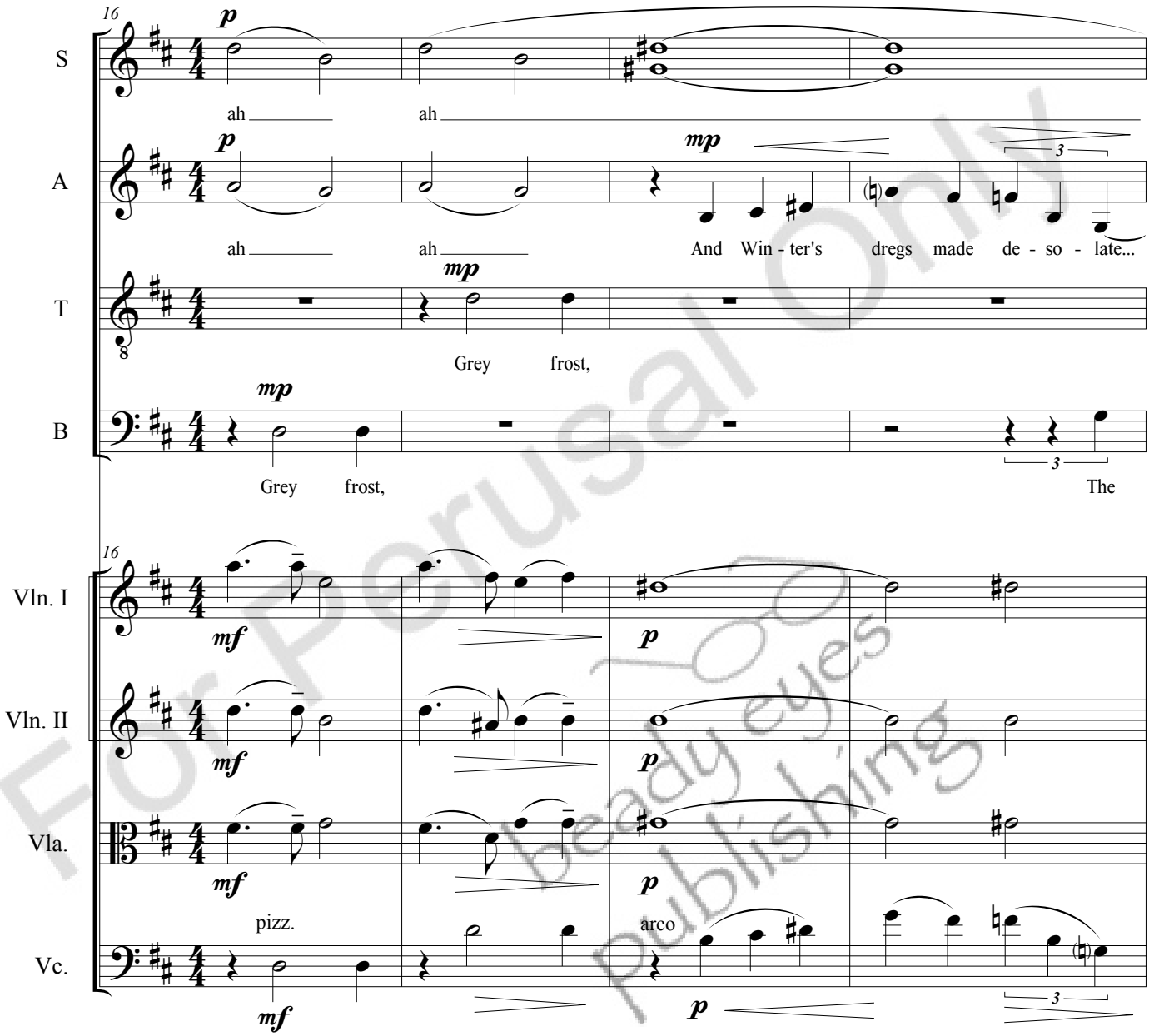

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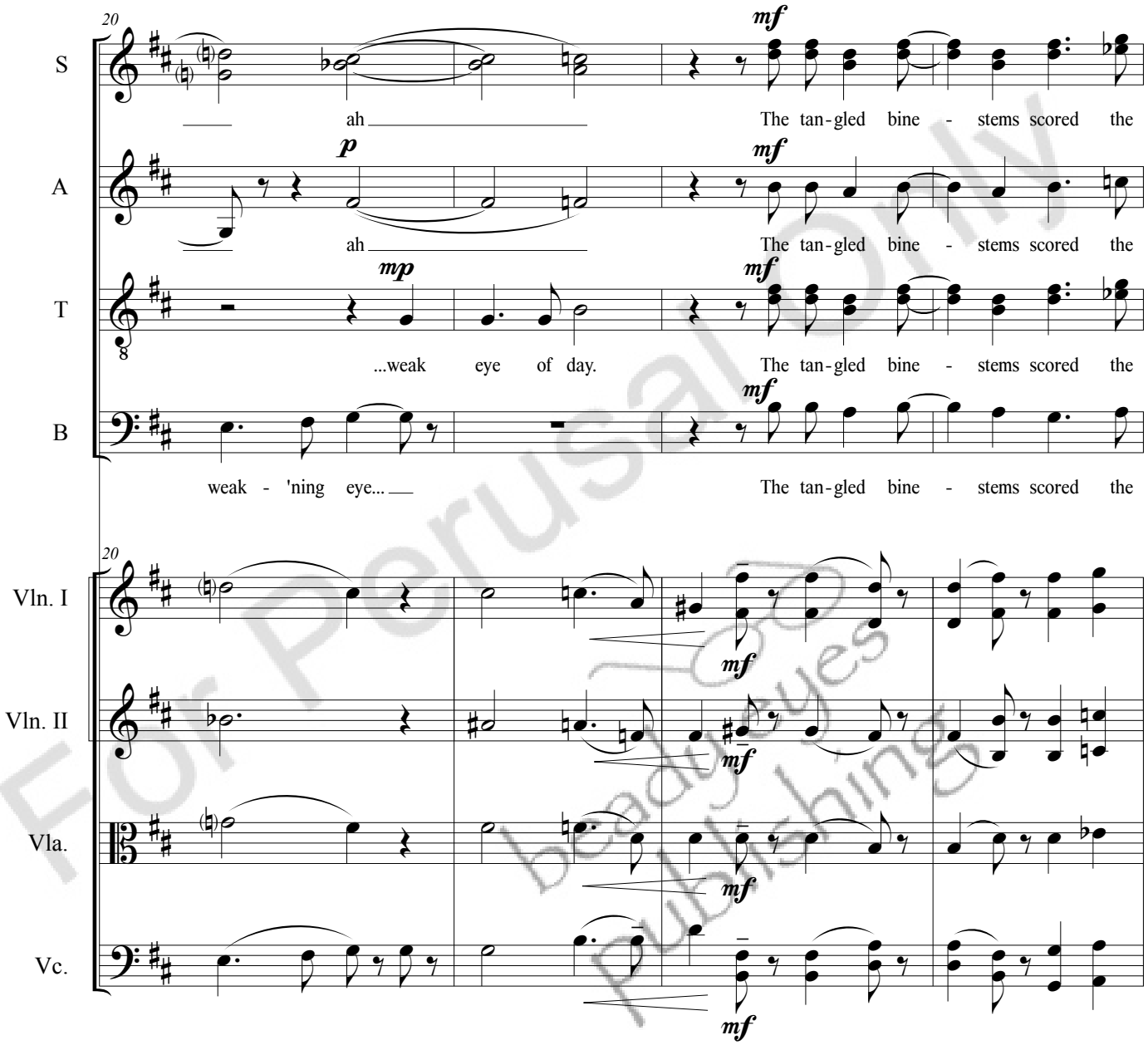

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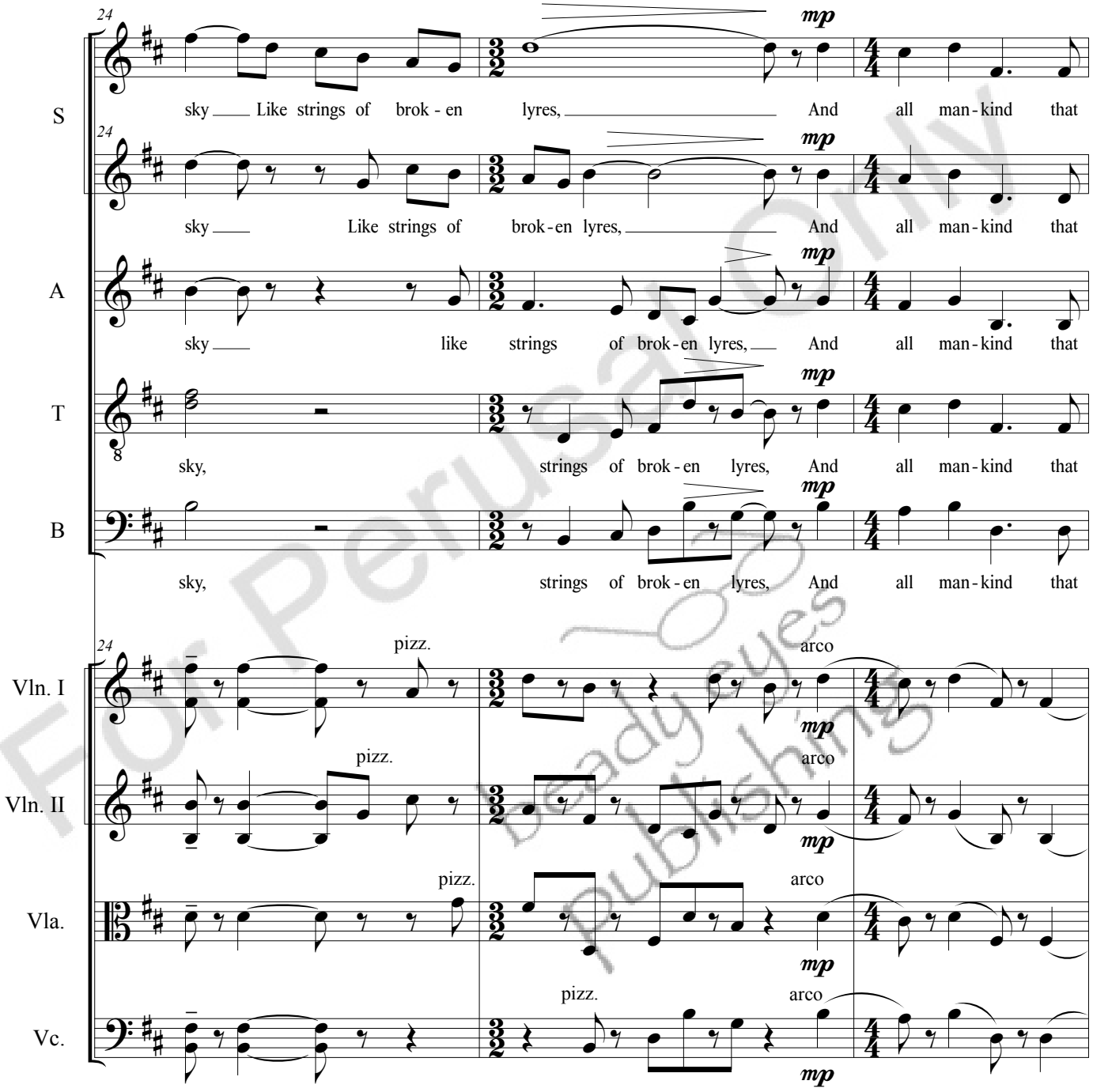

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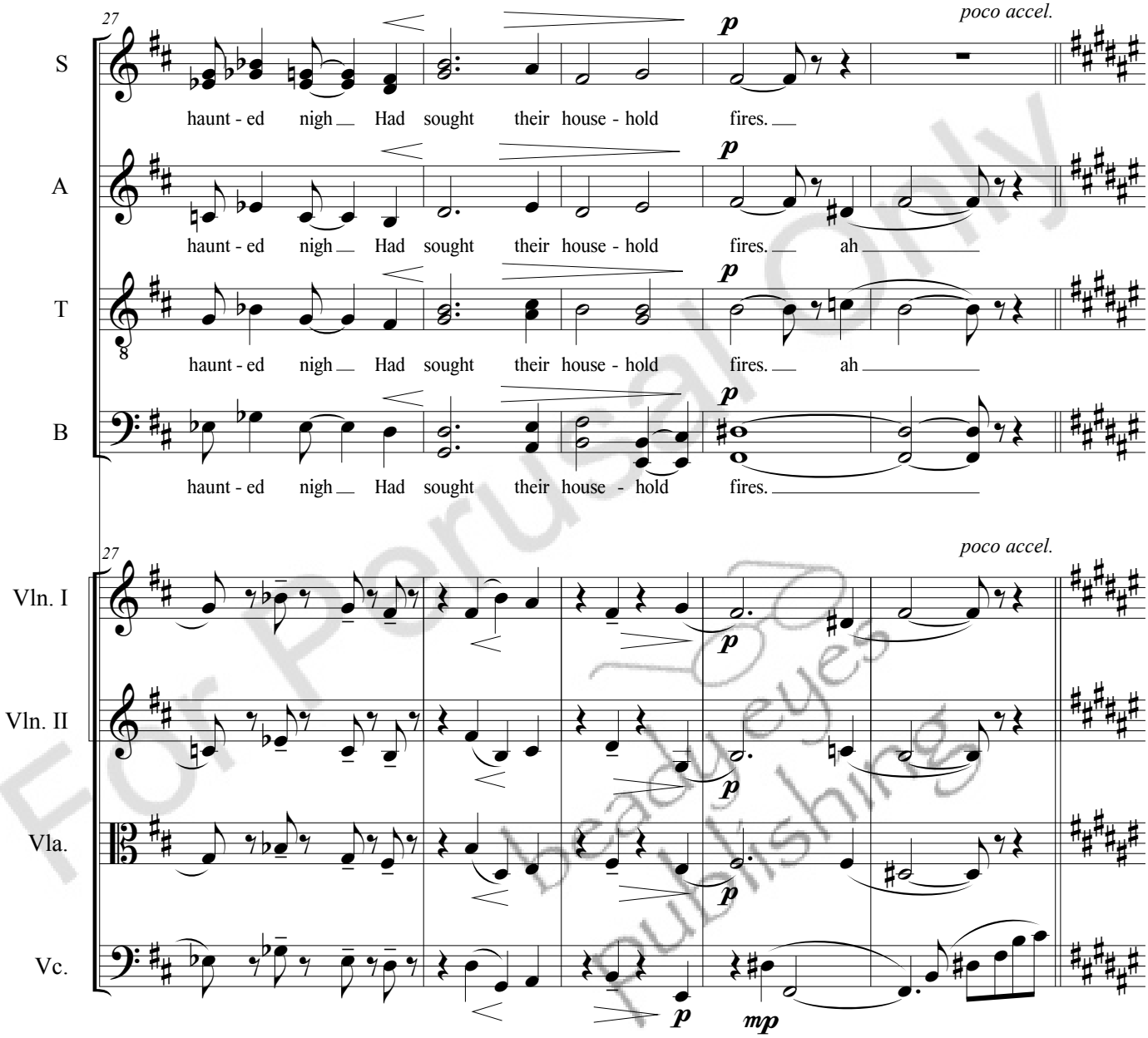

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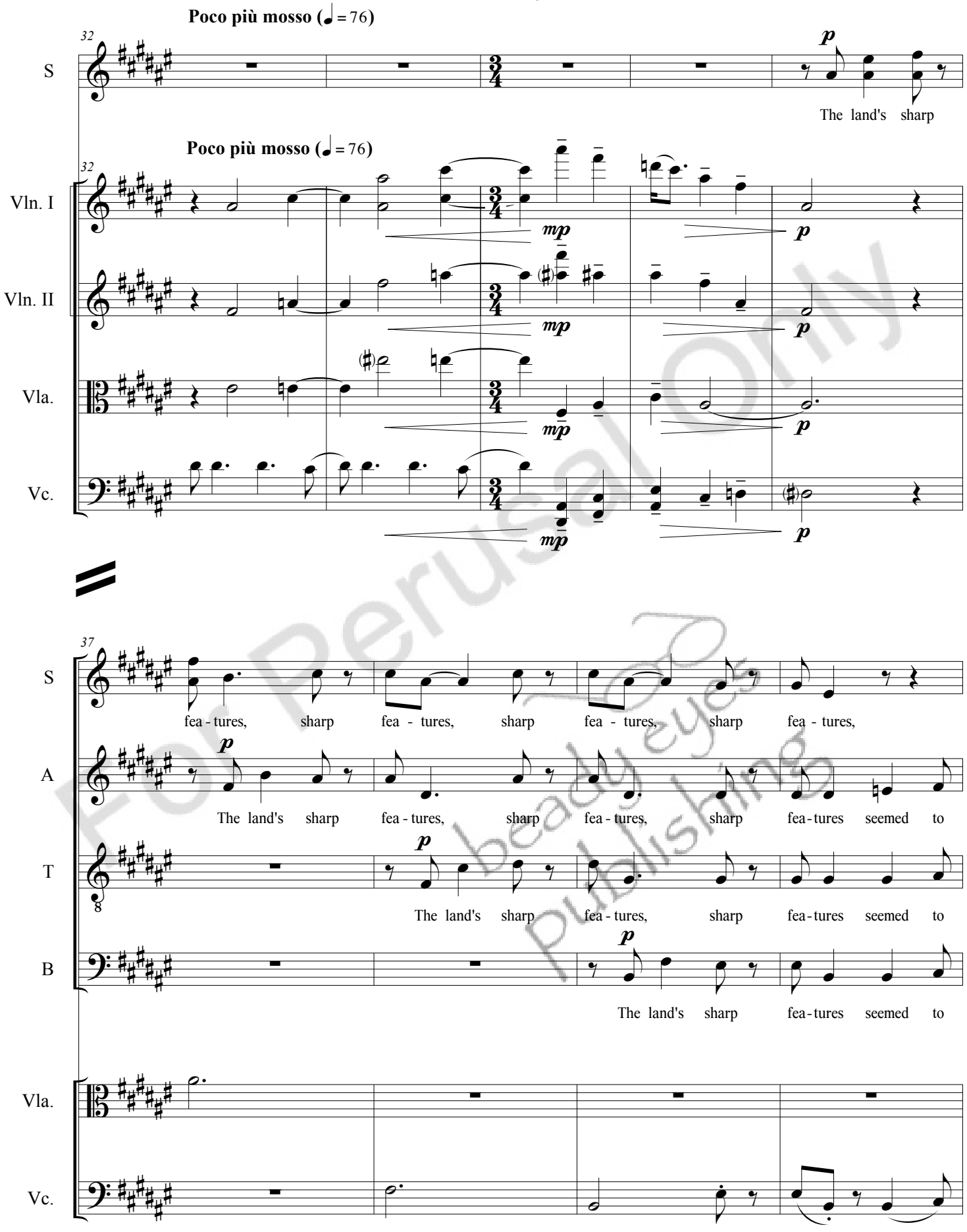

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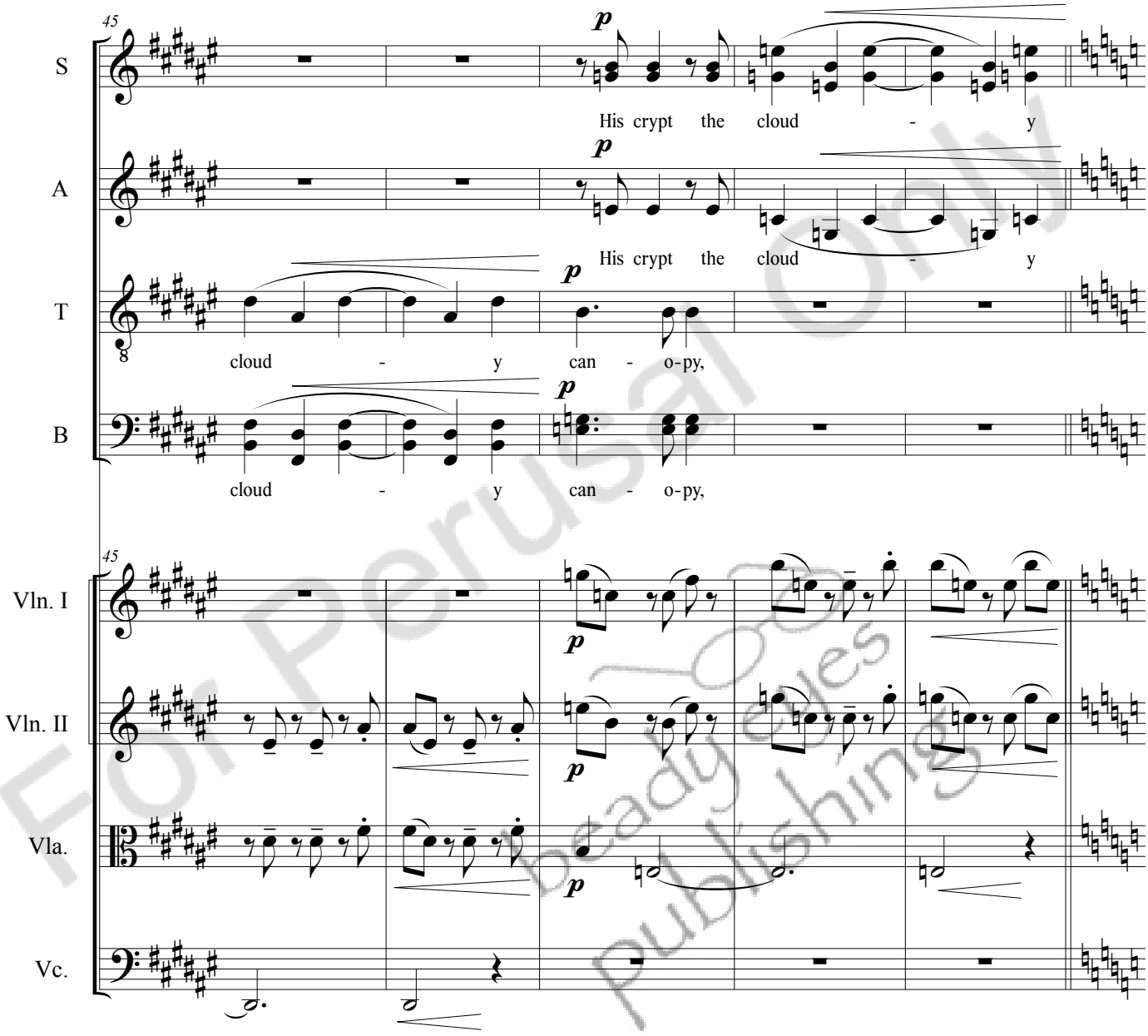

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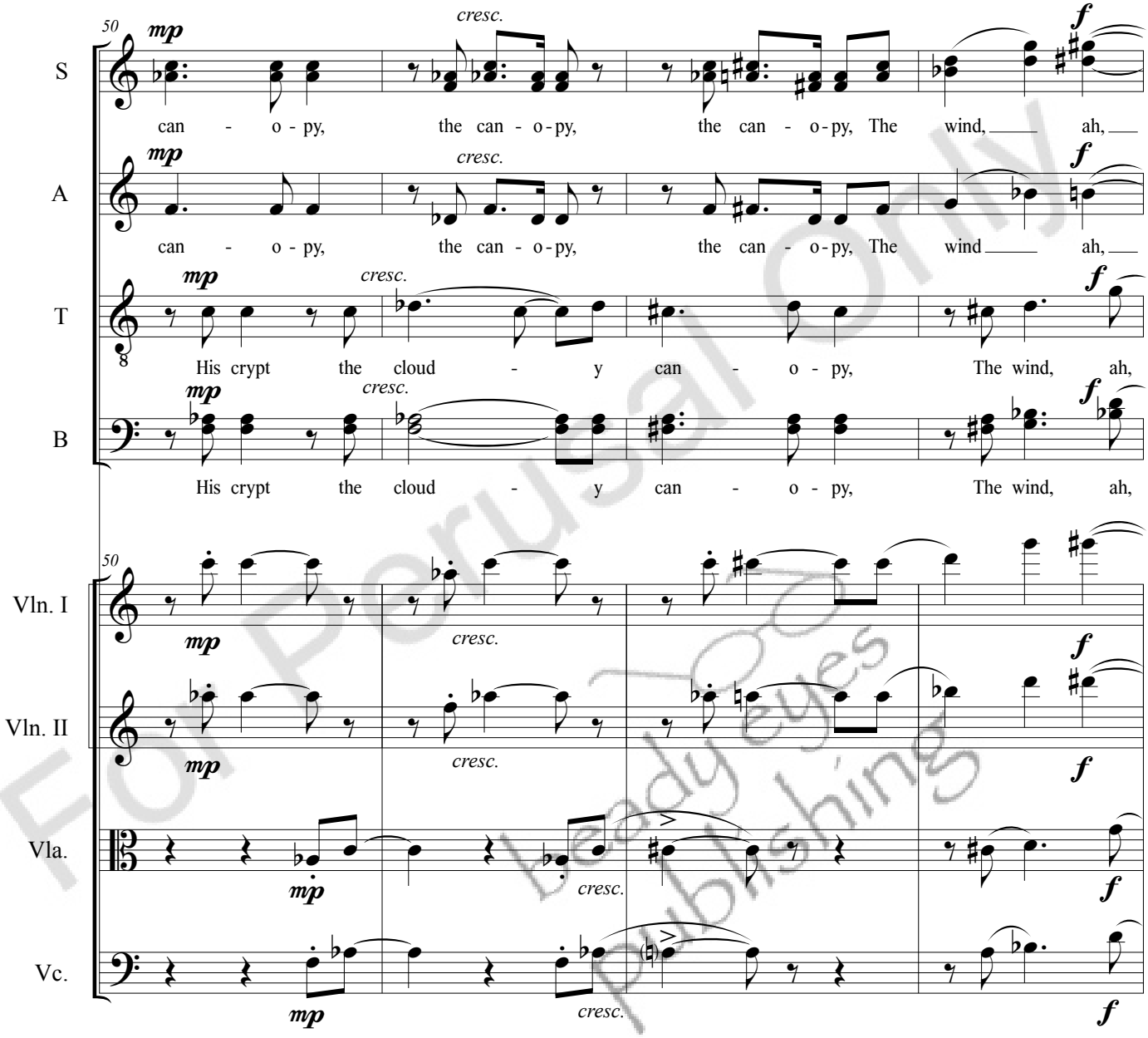

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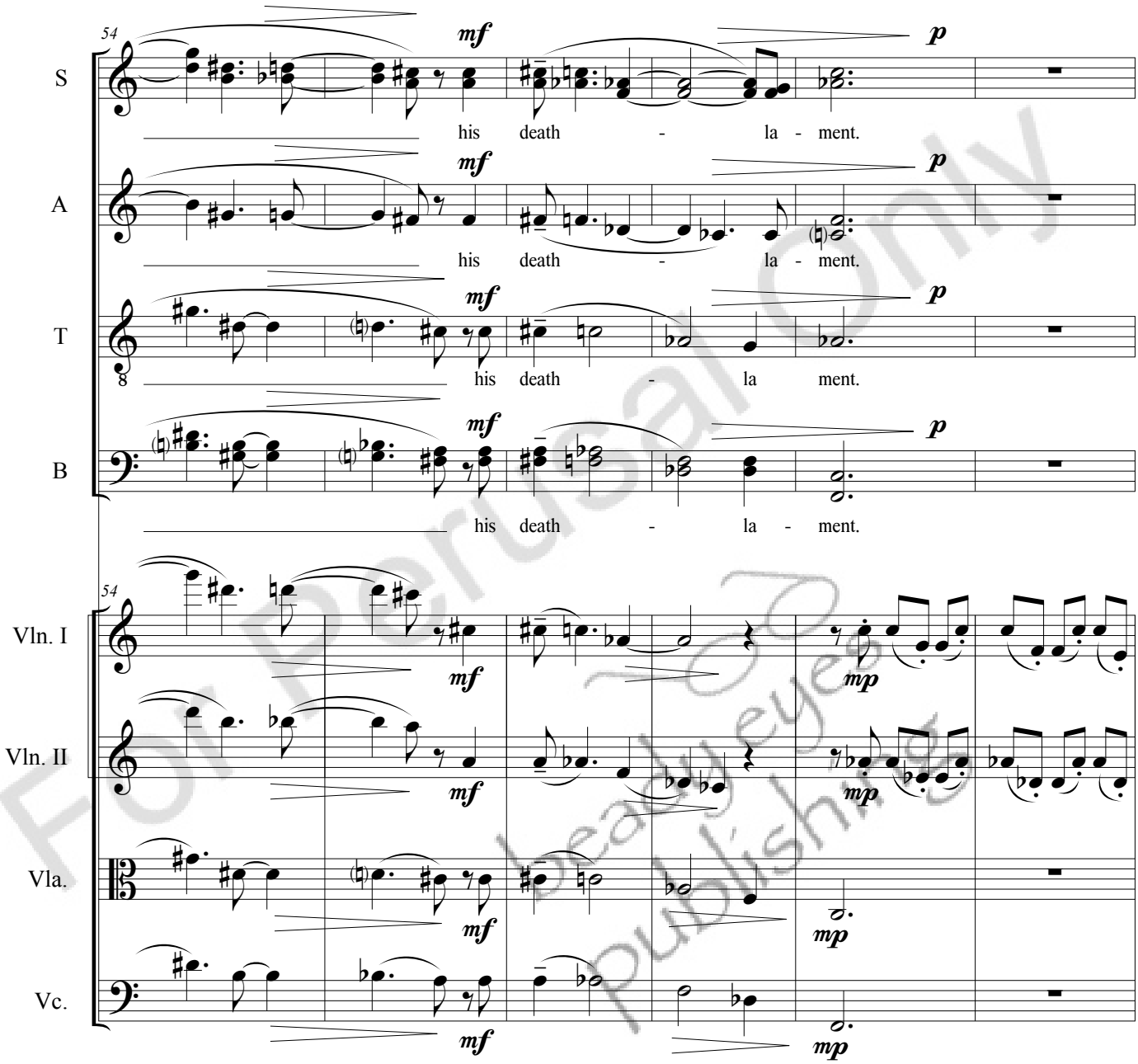

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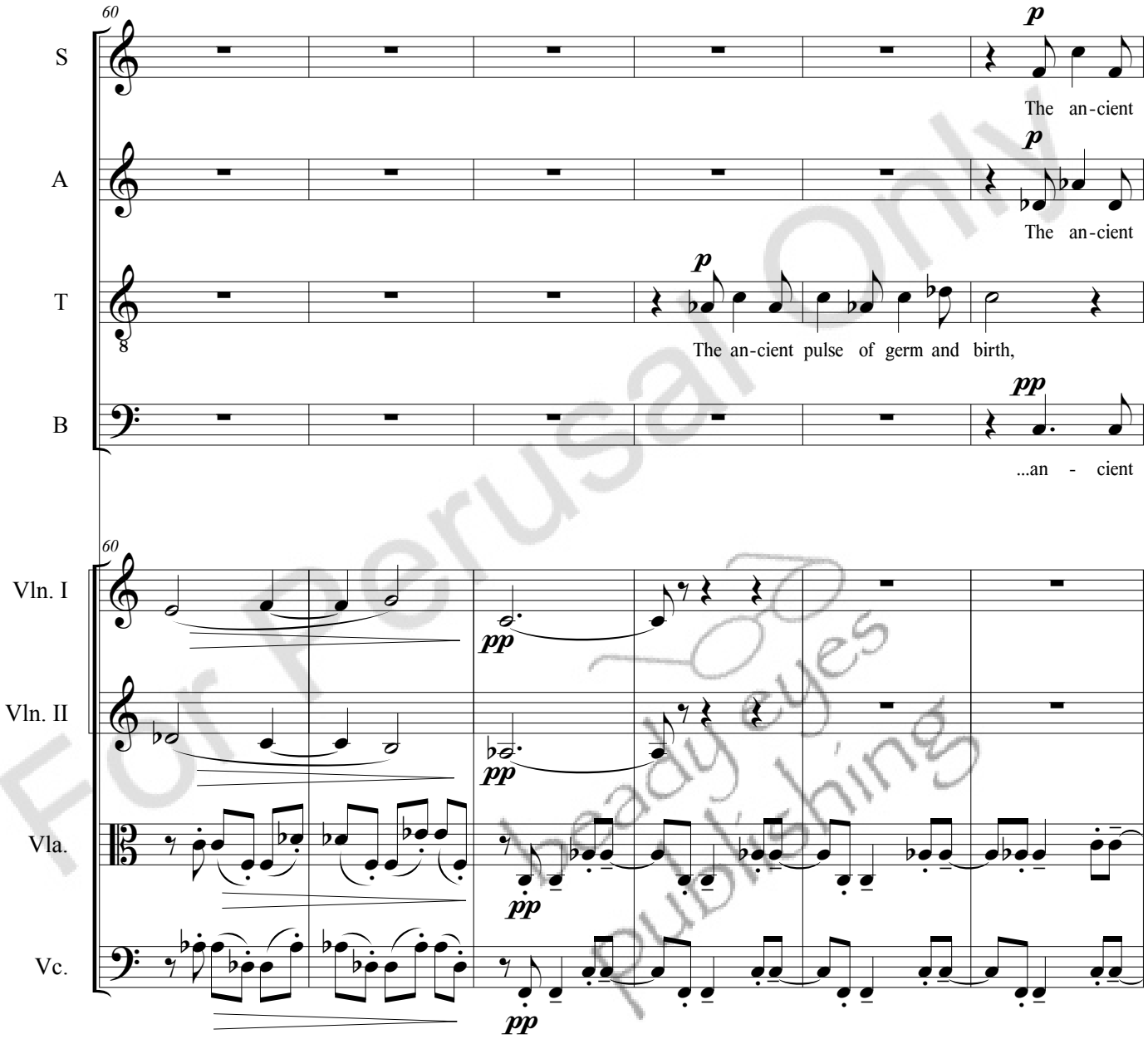

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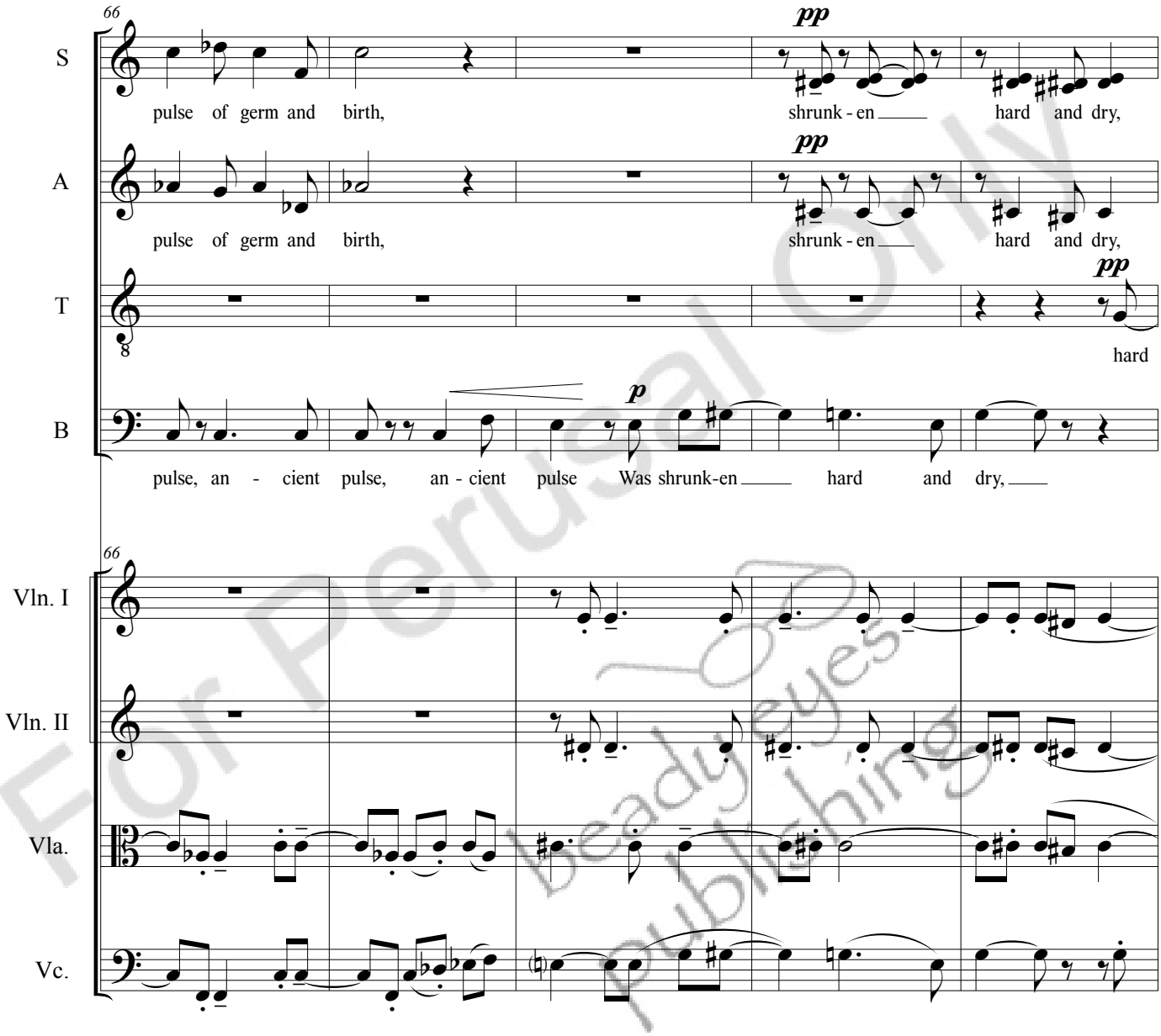

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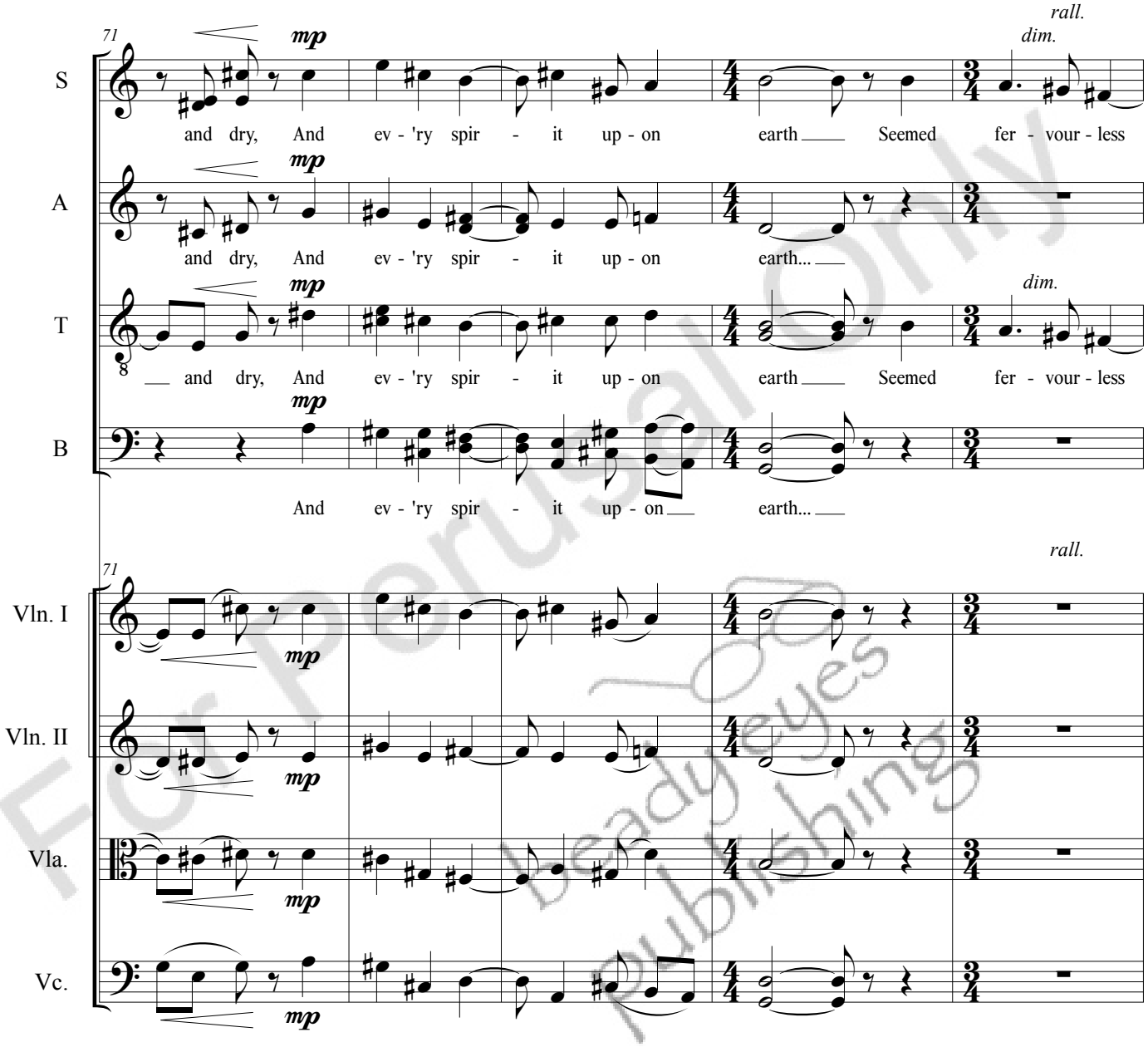

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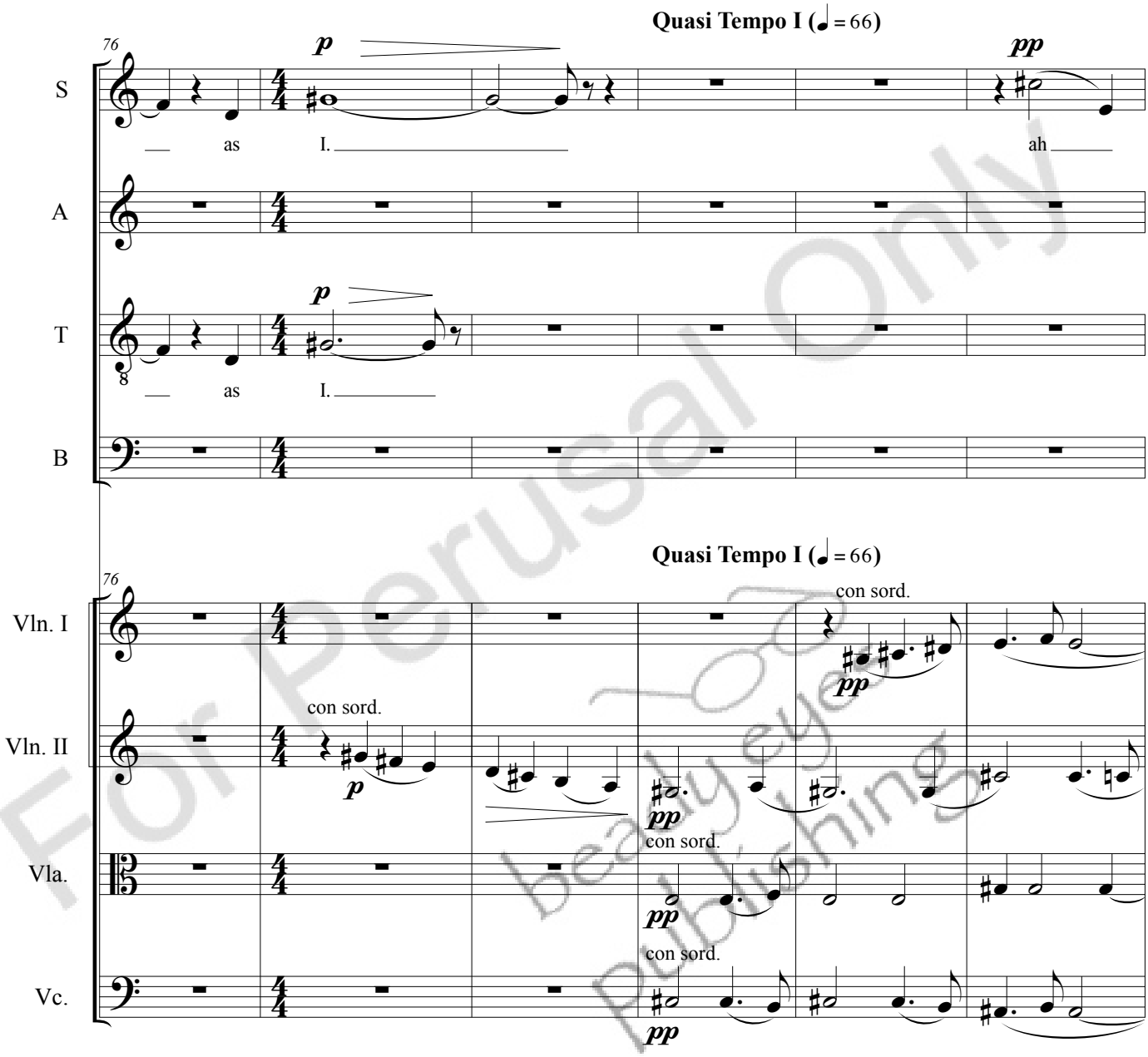

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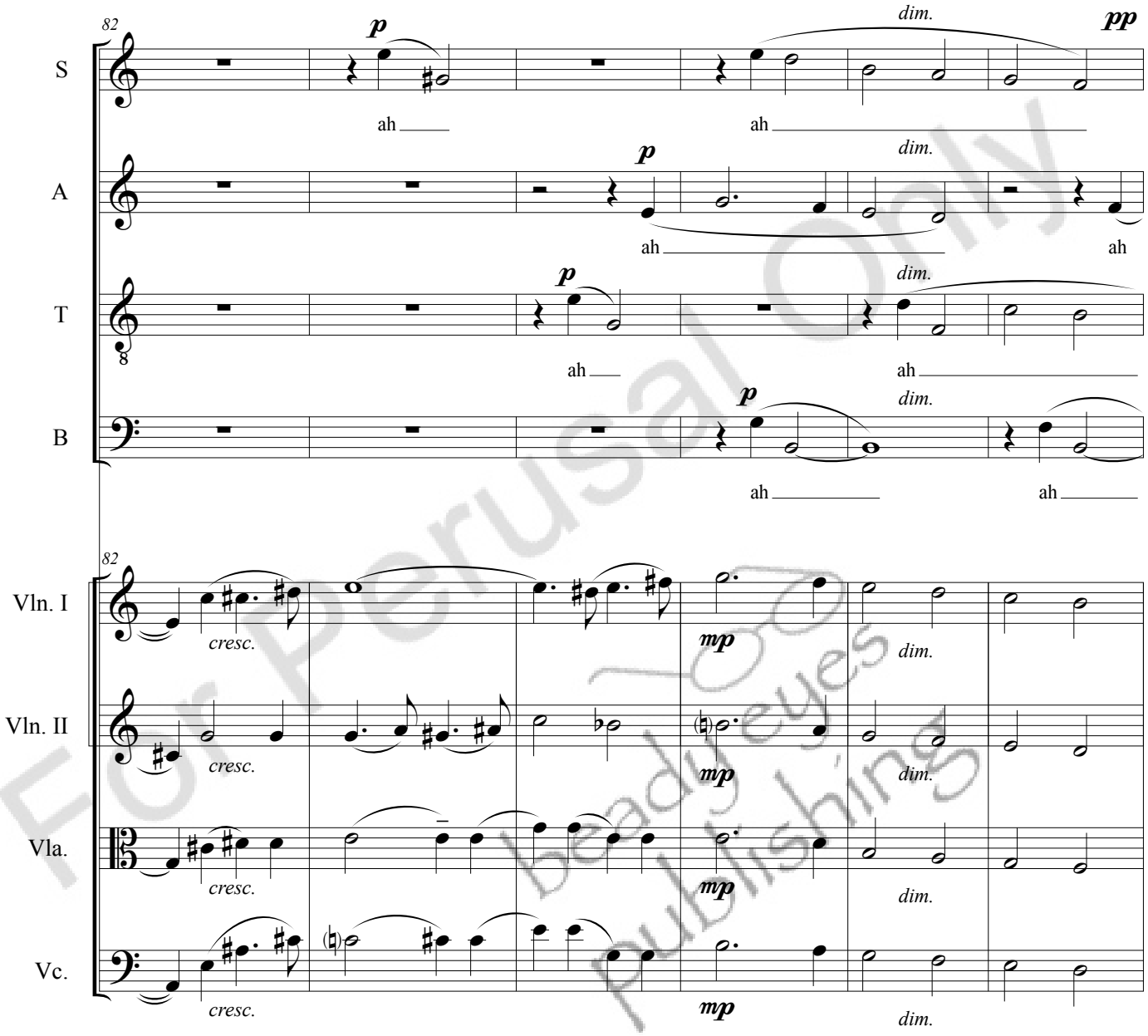

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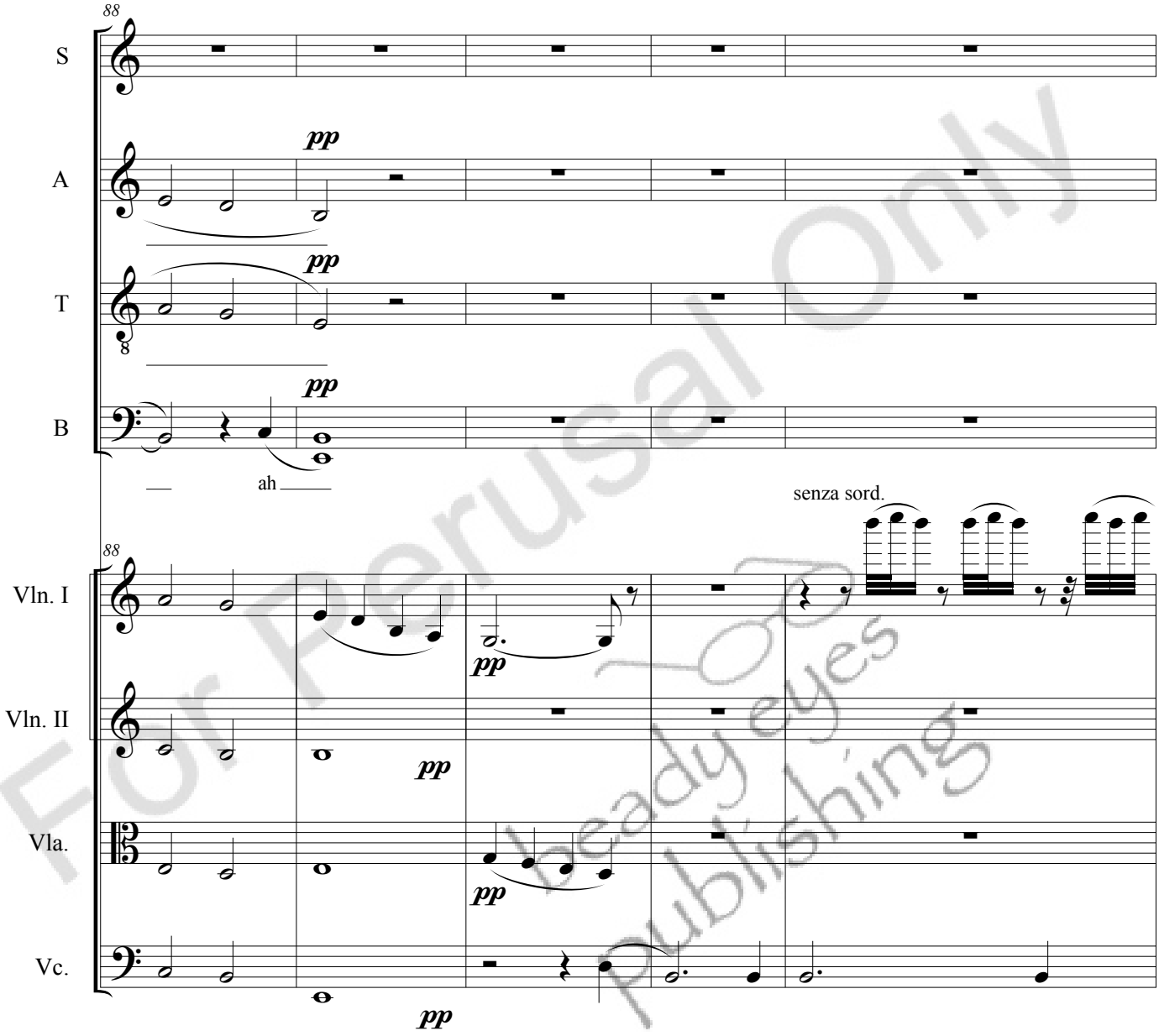

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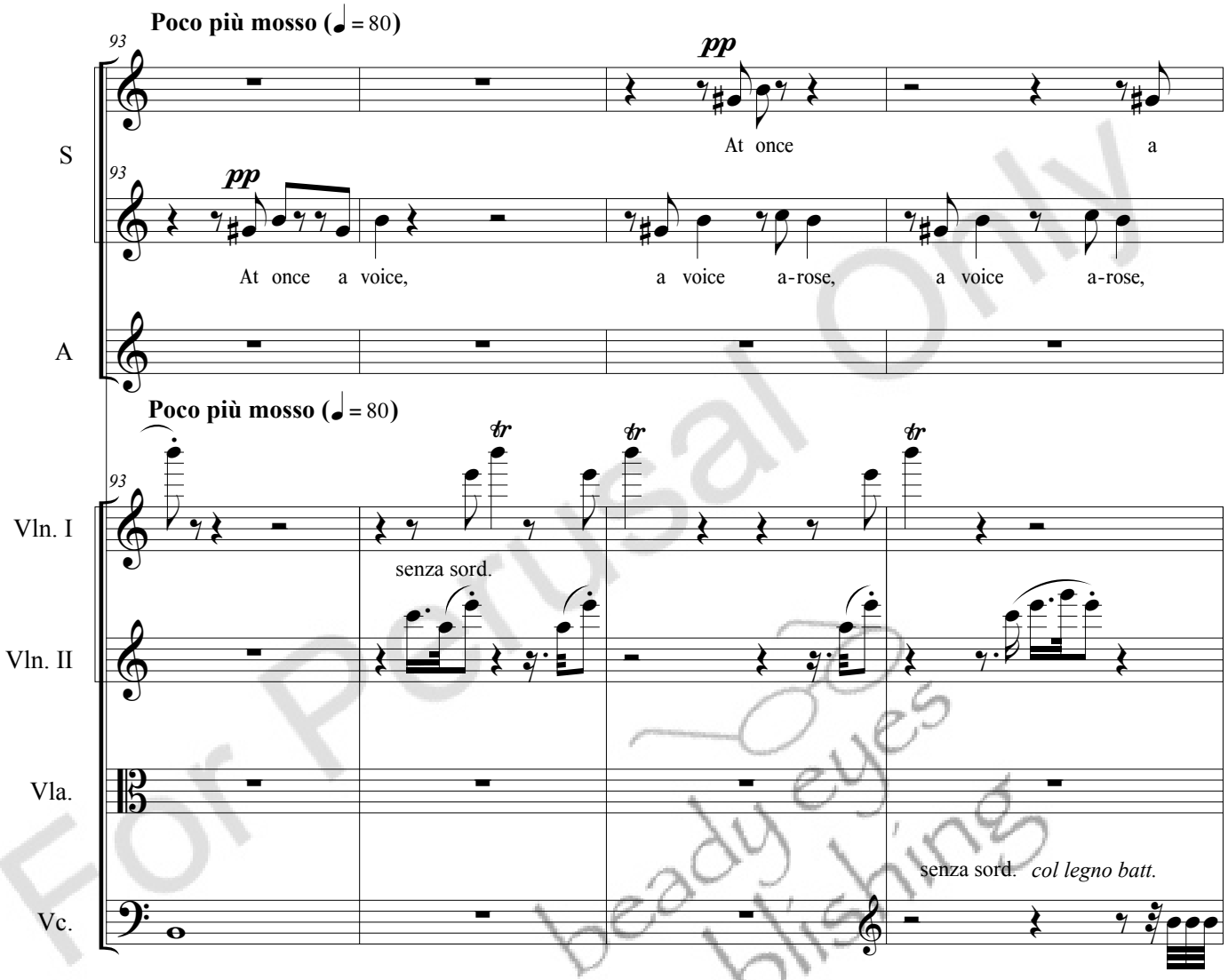

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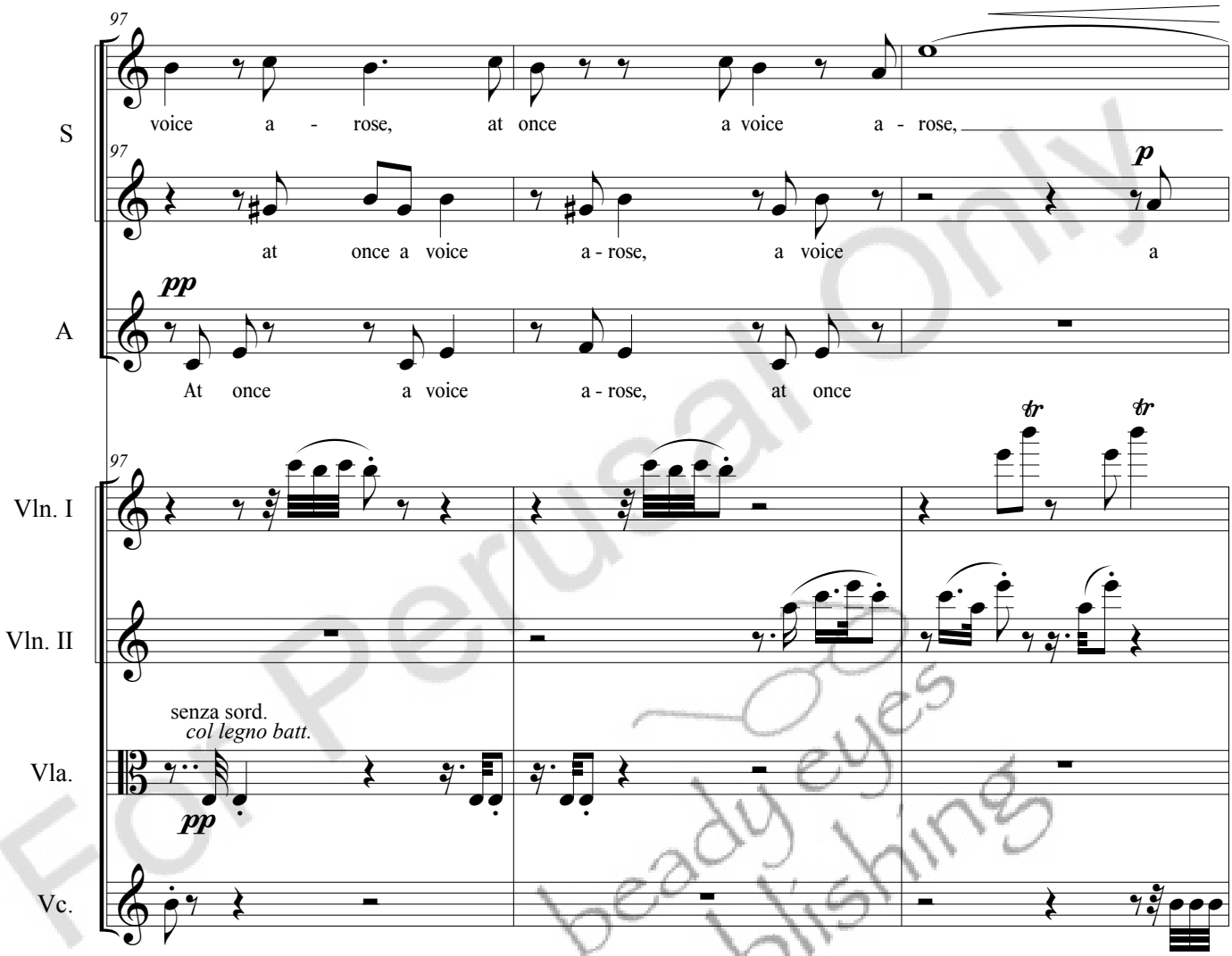

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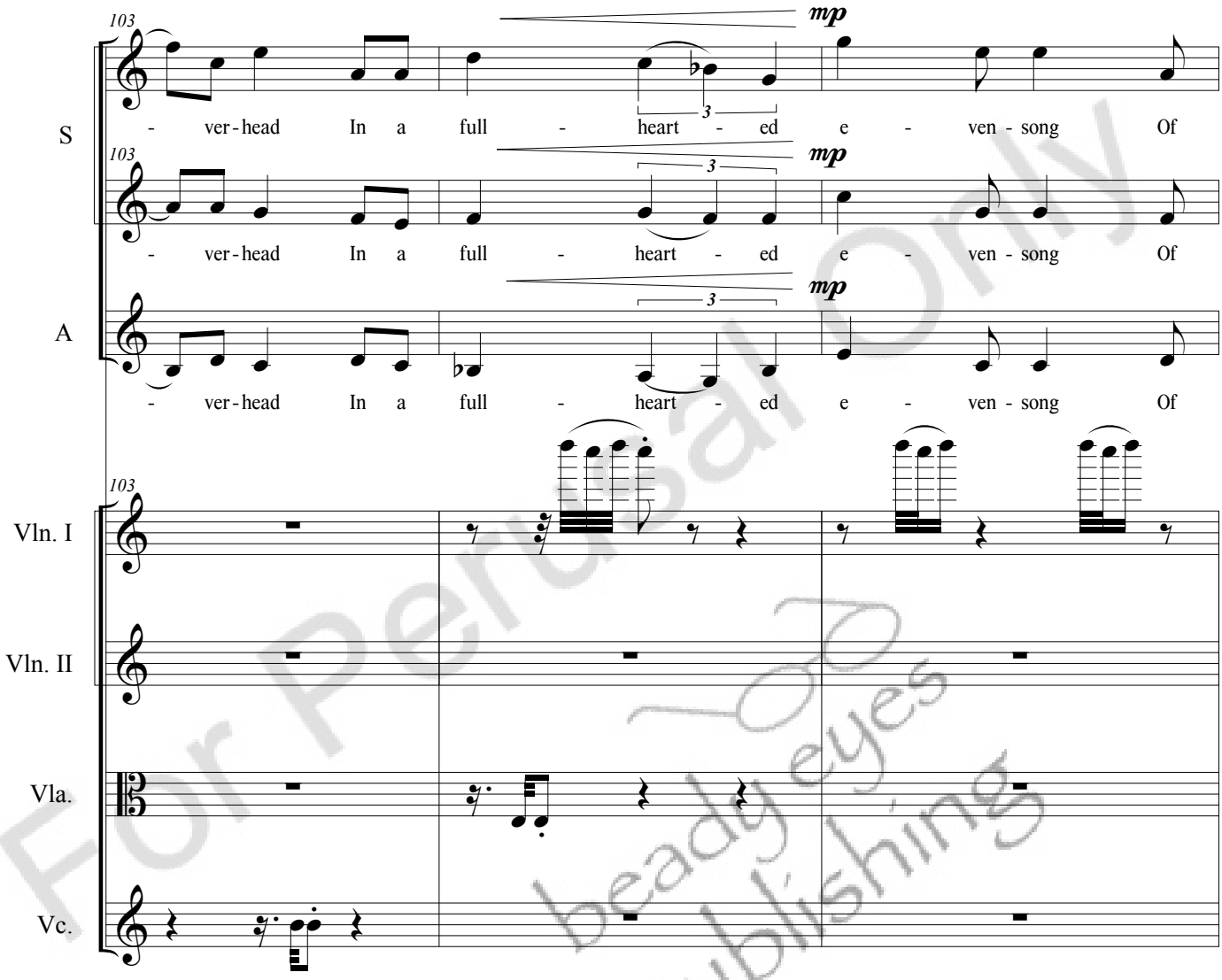

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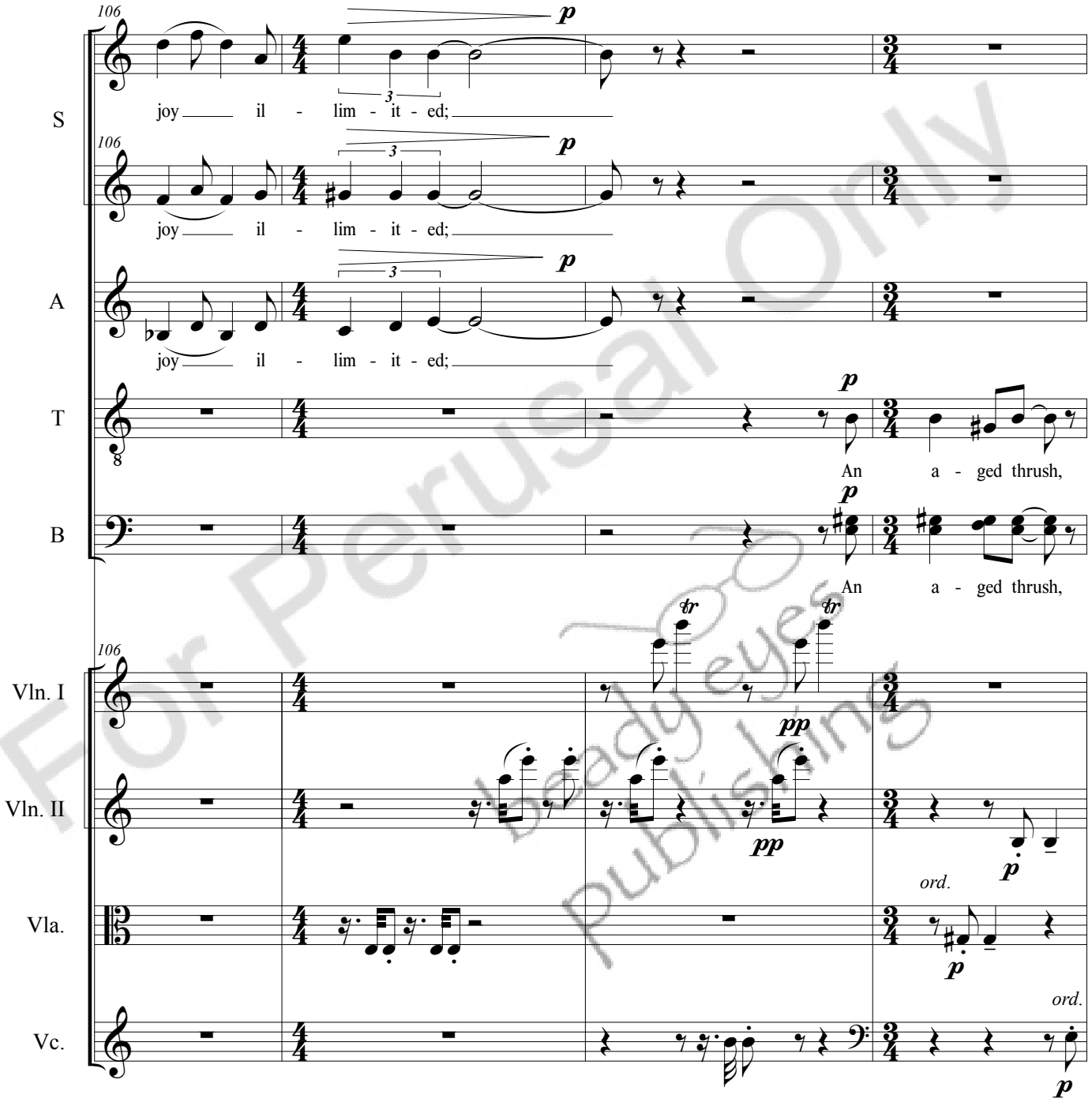

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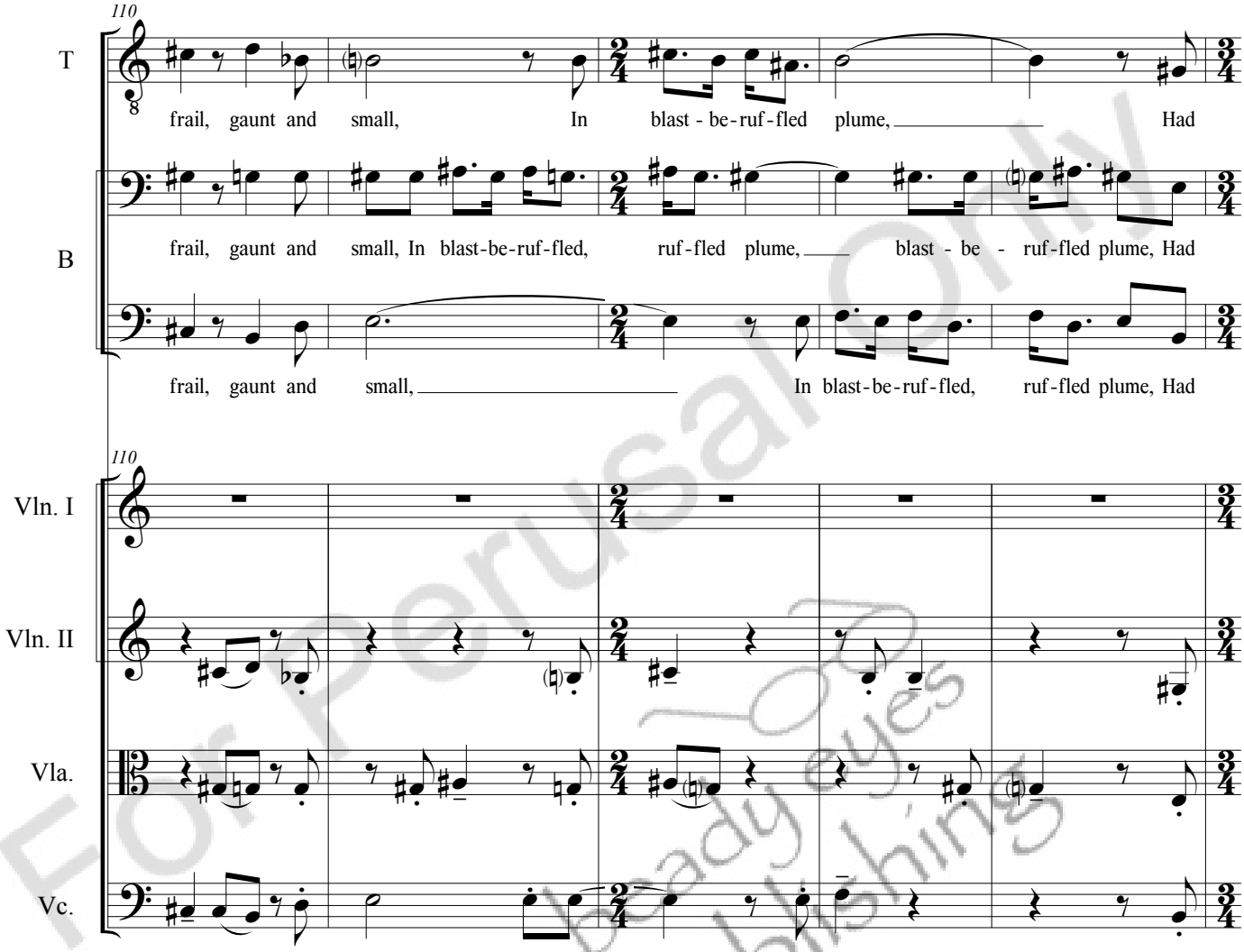

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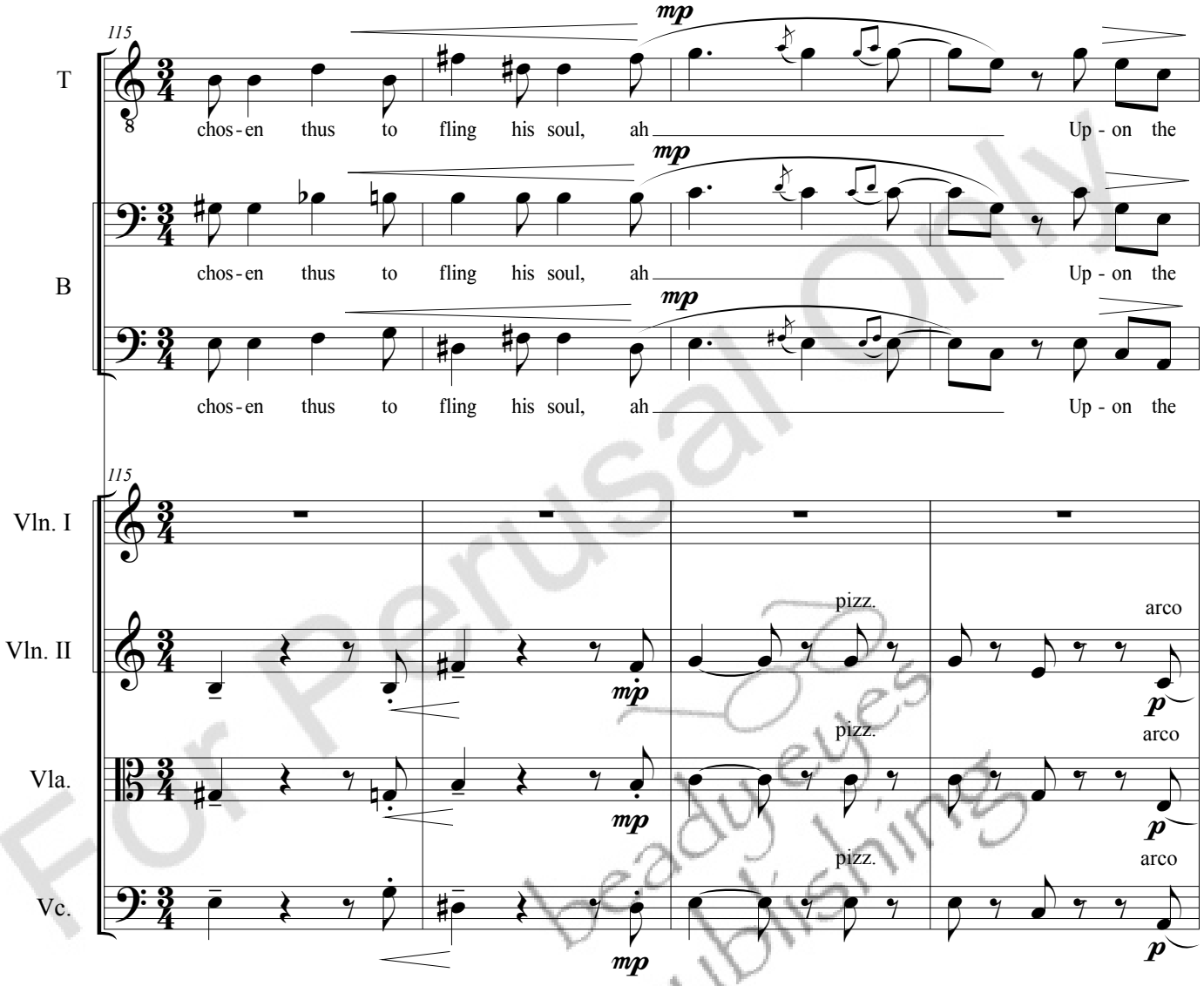

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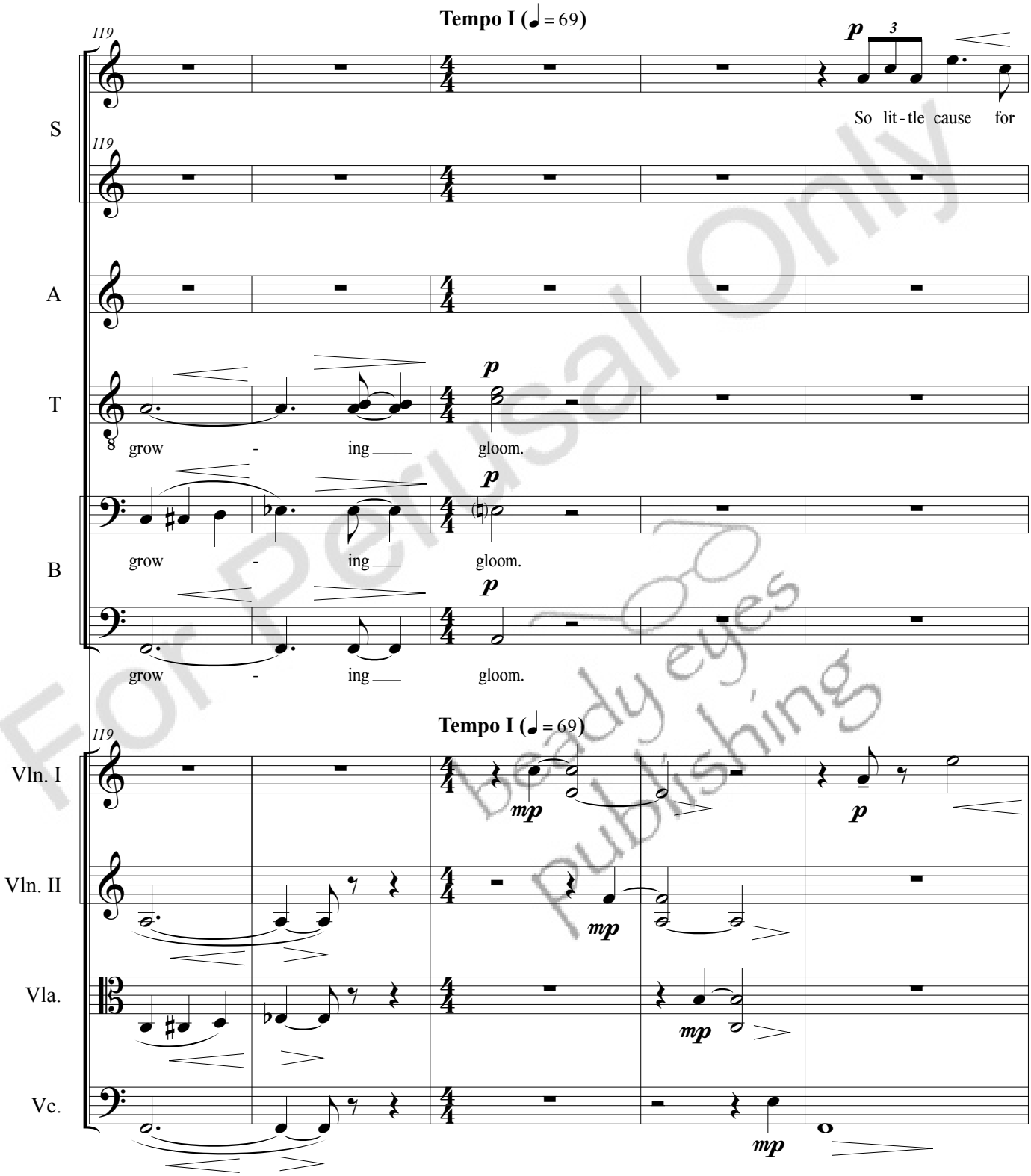

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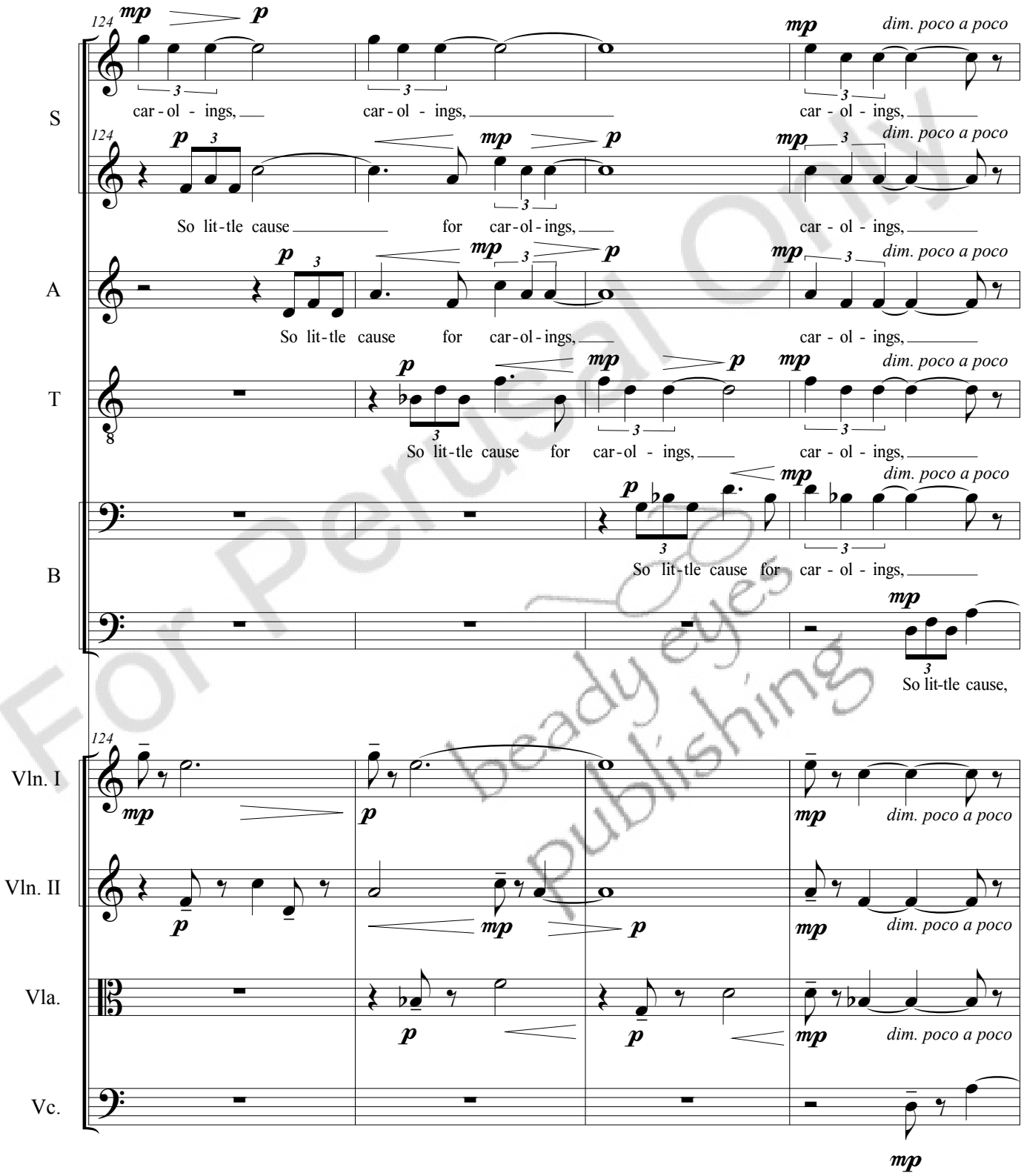

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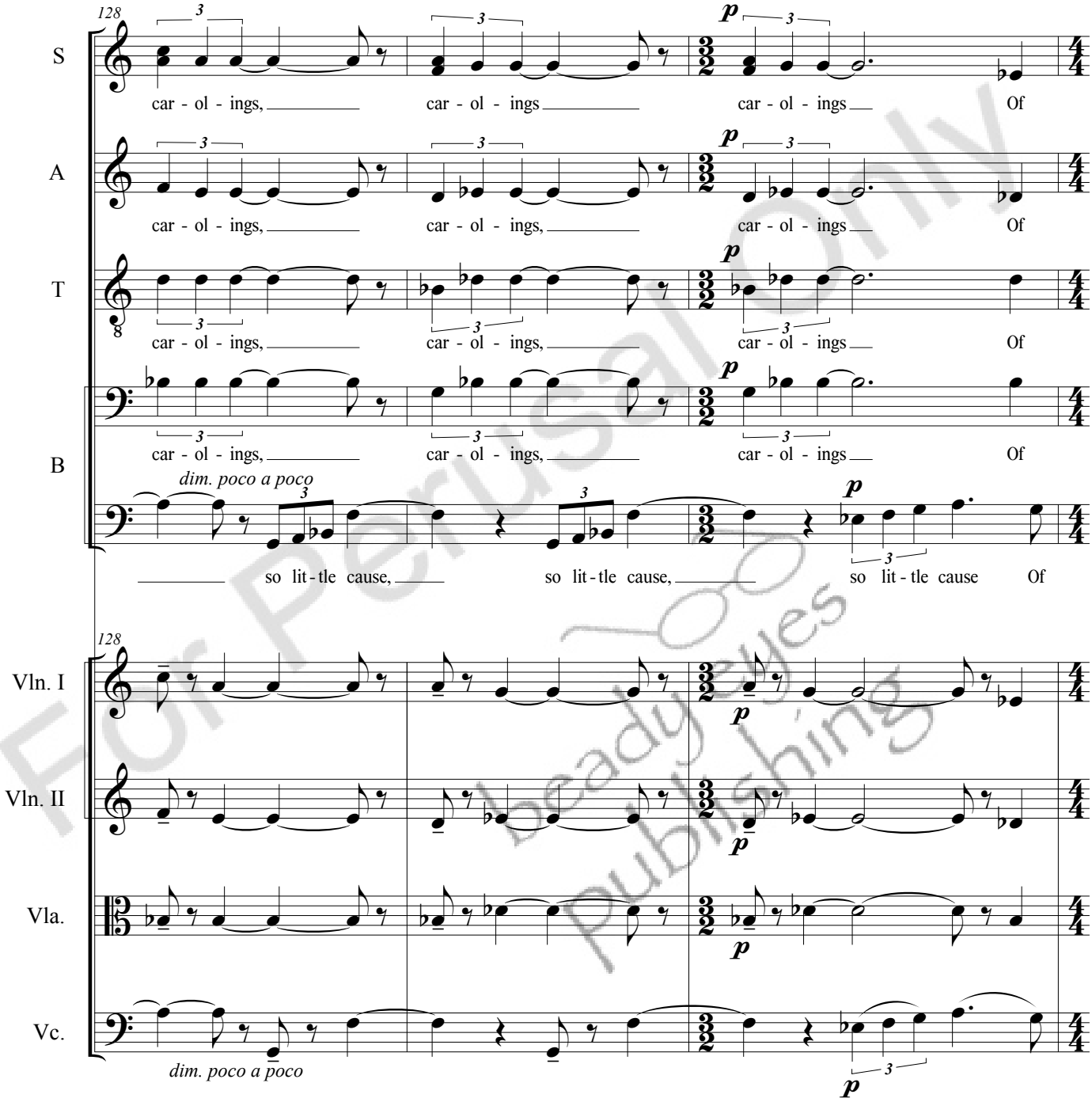

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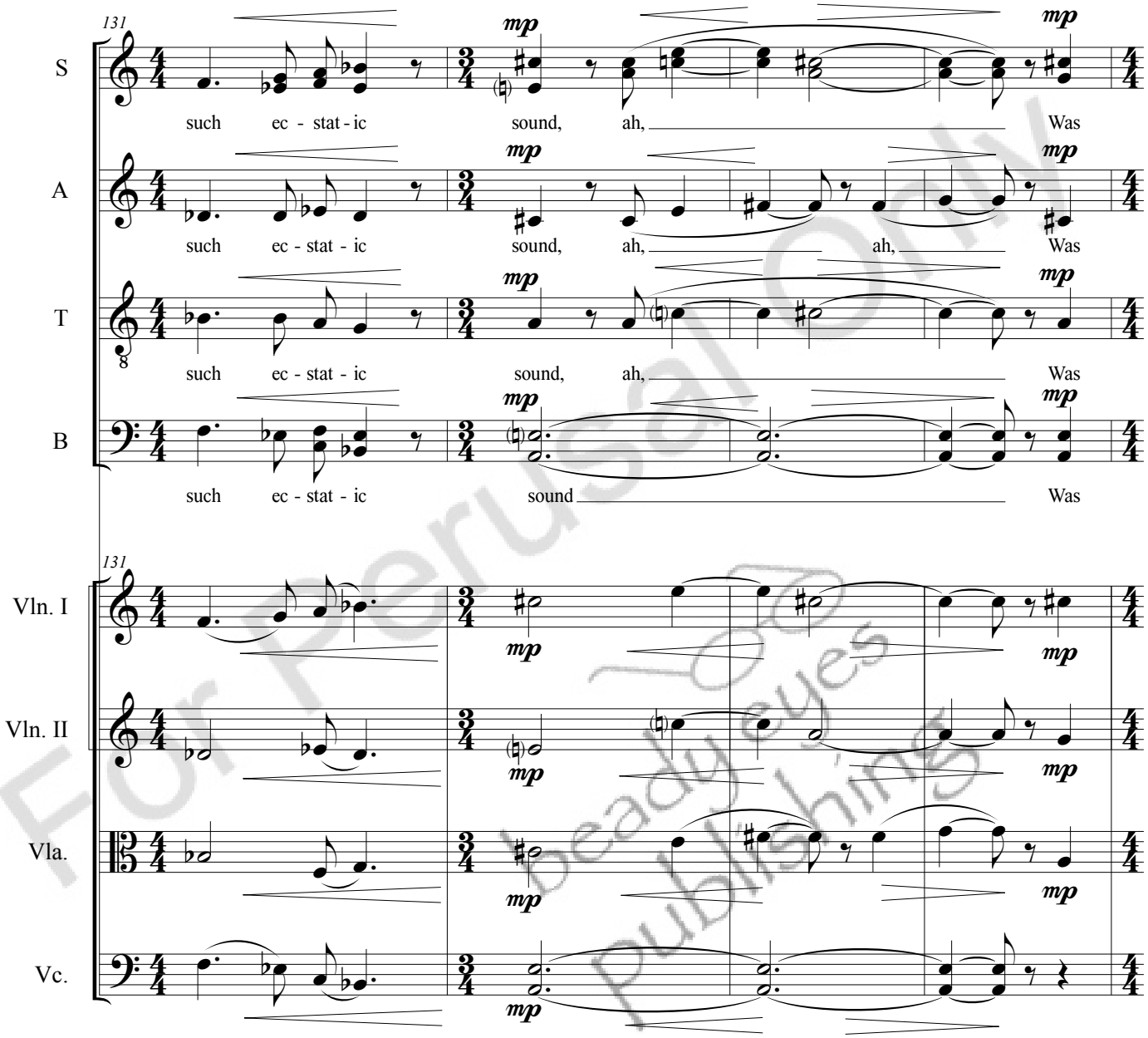

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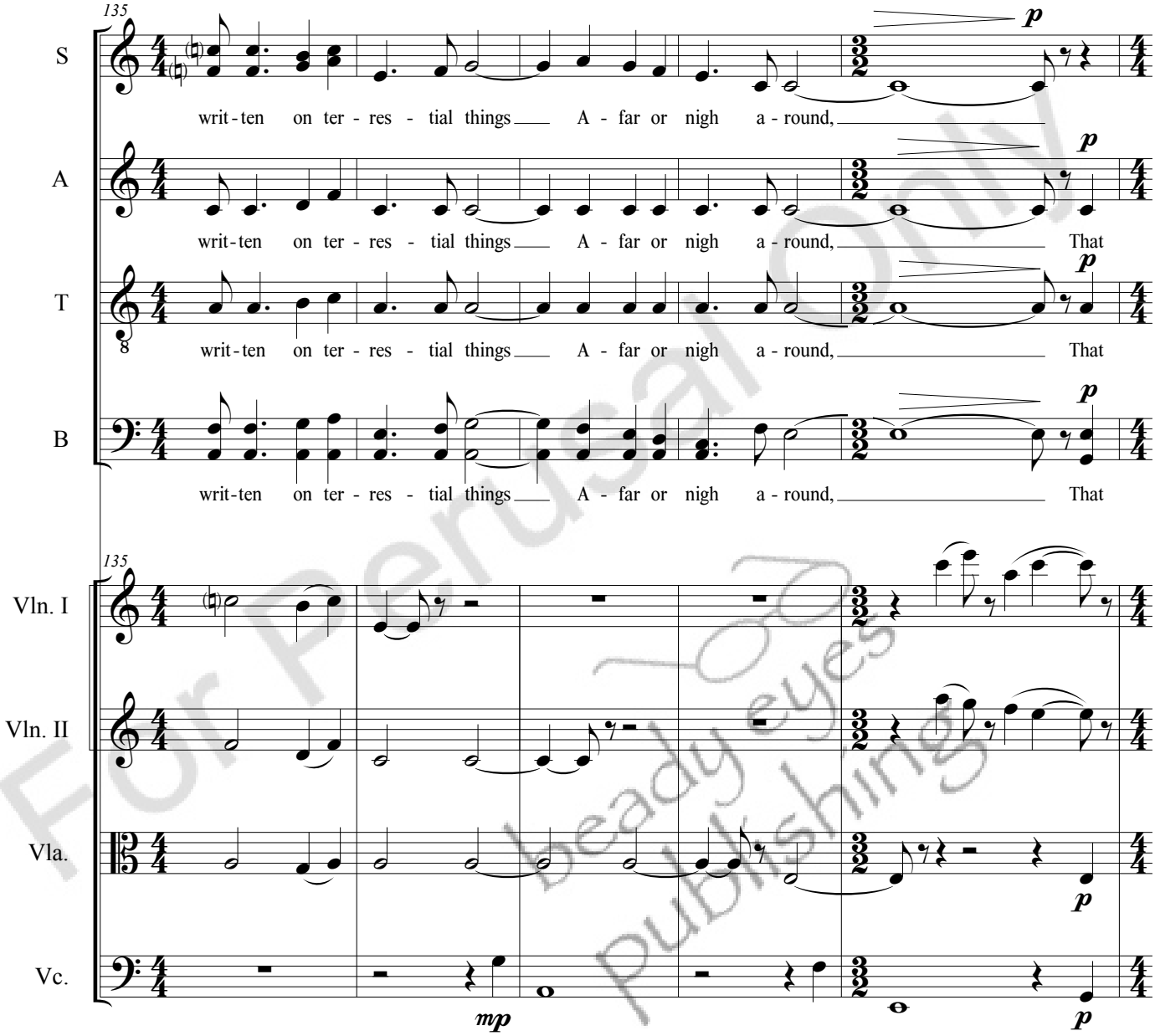

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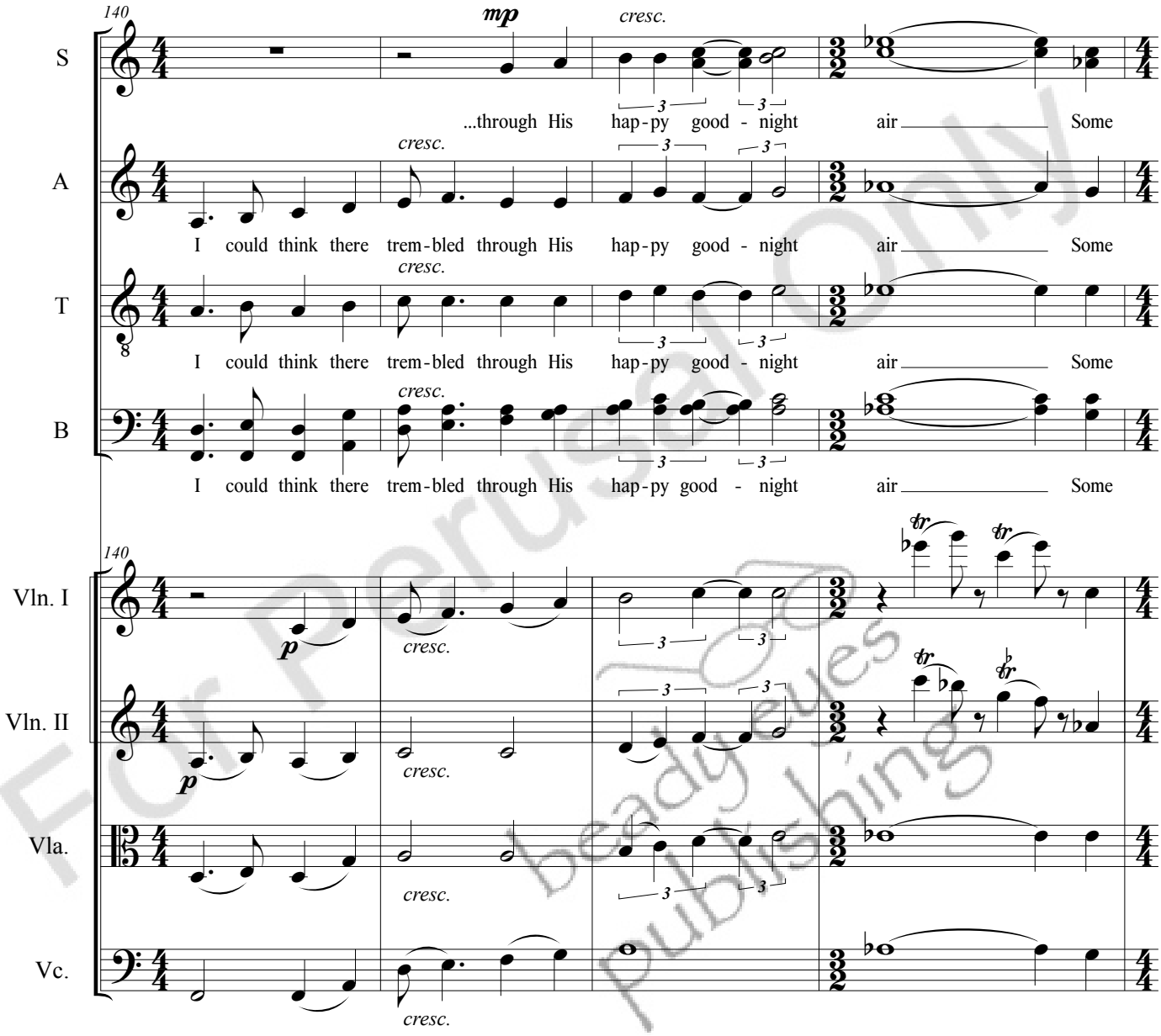

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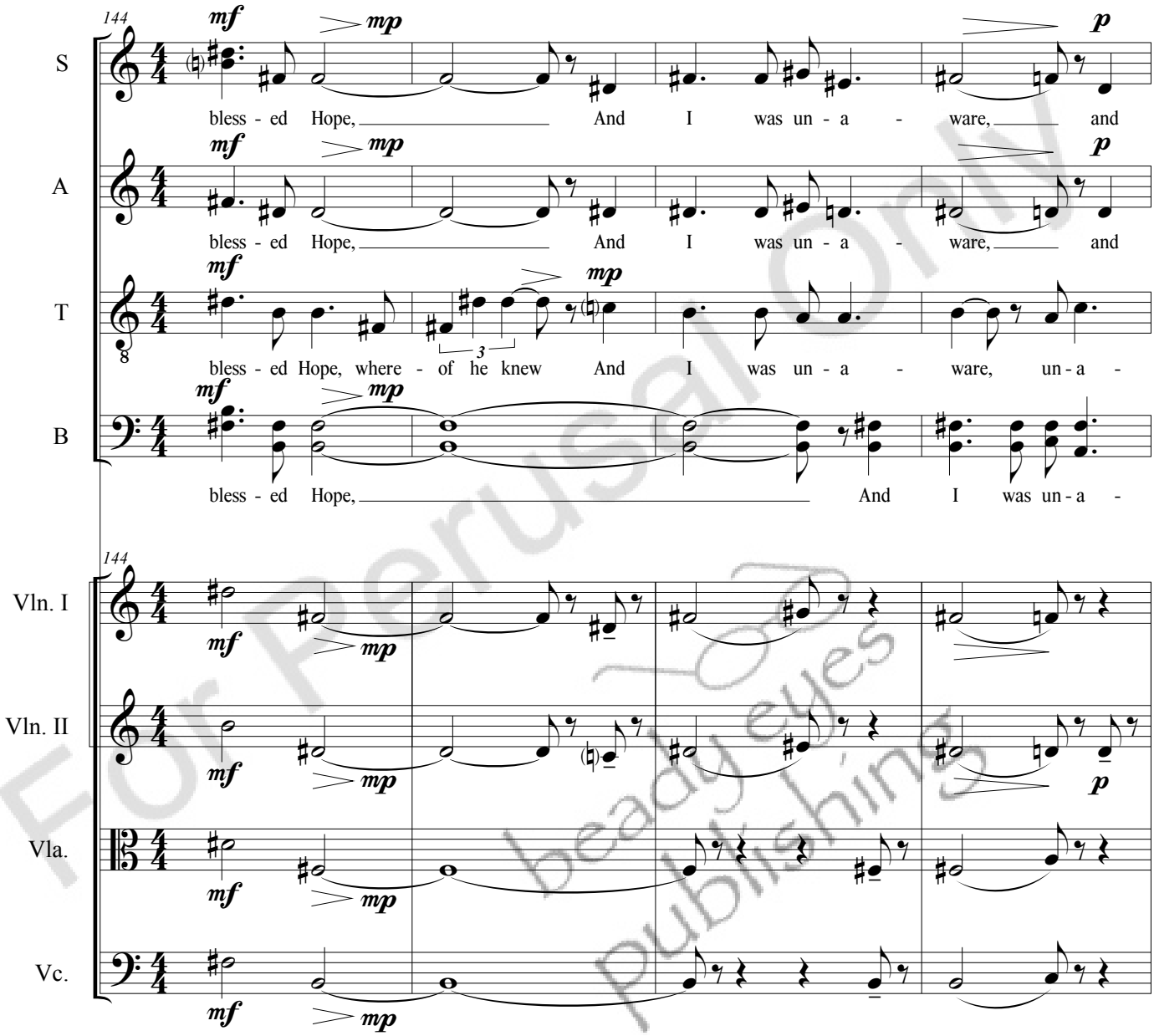

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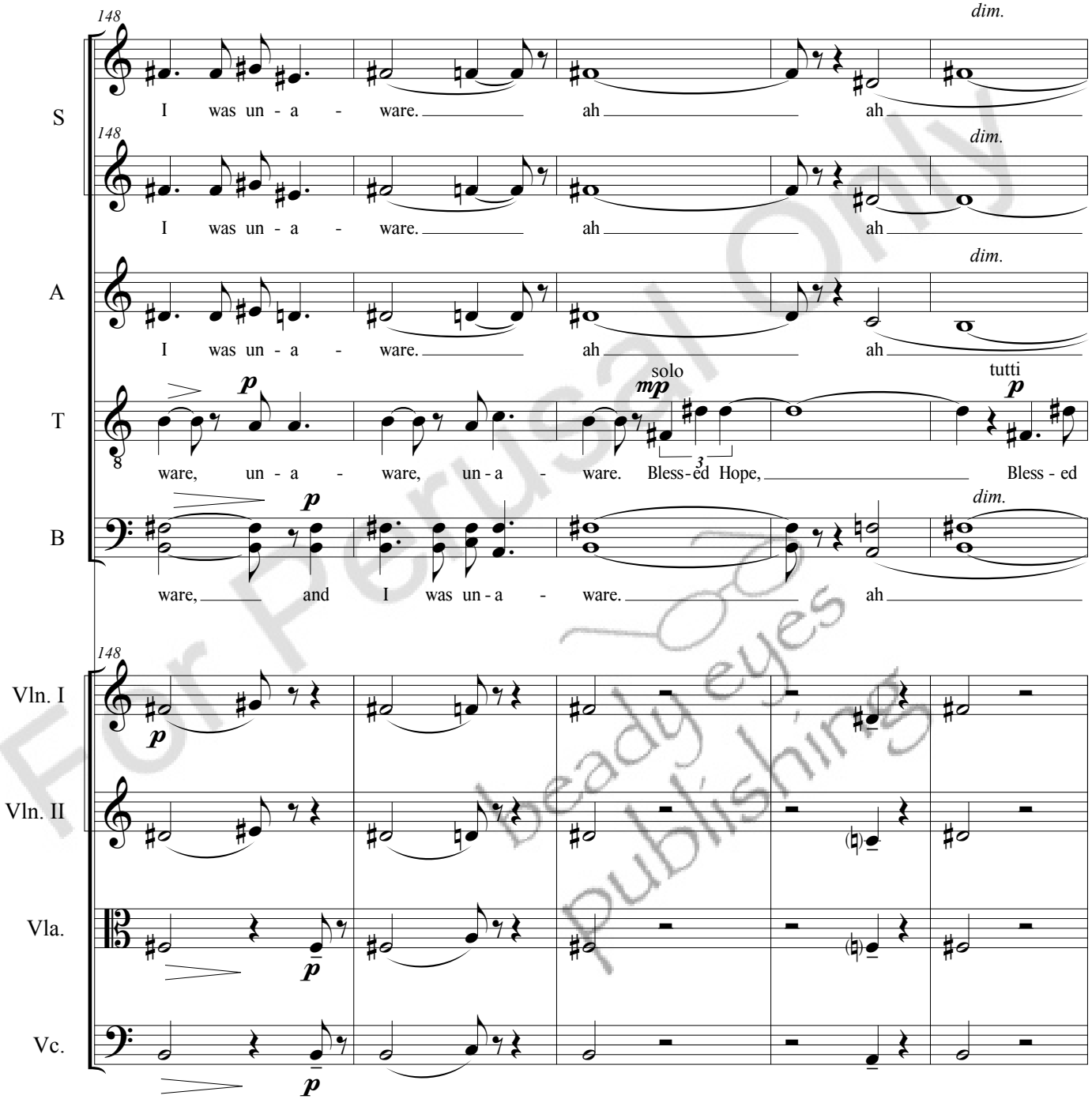

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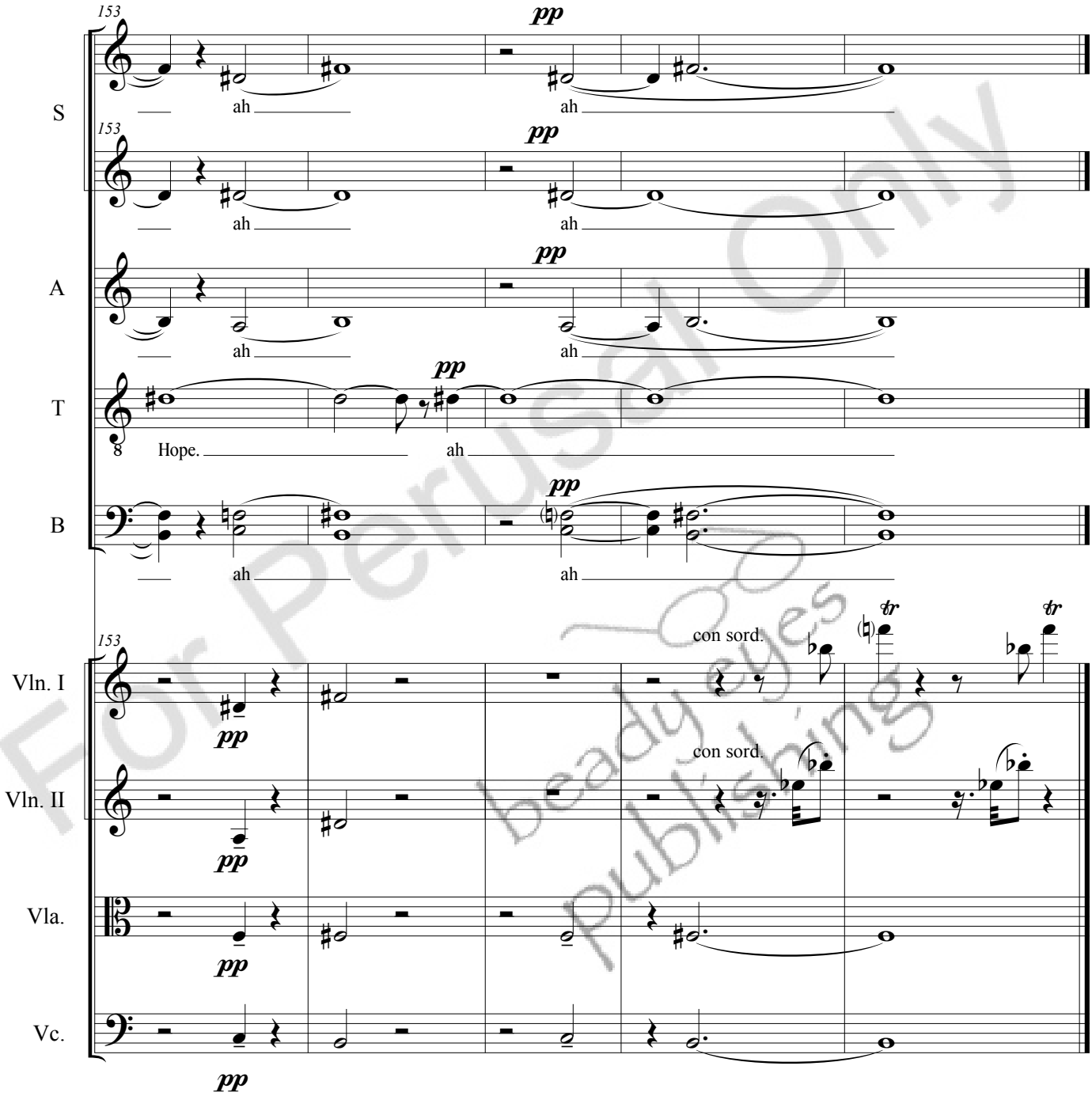

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