From The Song of Songs

Texts edited and compiled by
Julie Dalton Williamson

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1998

Gary Bachlund

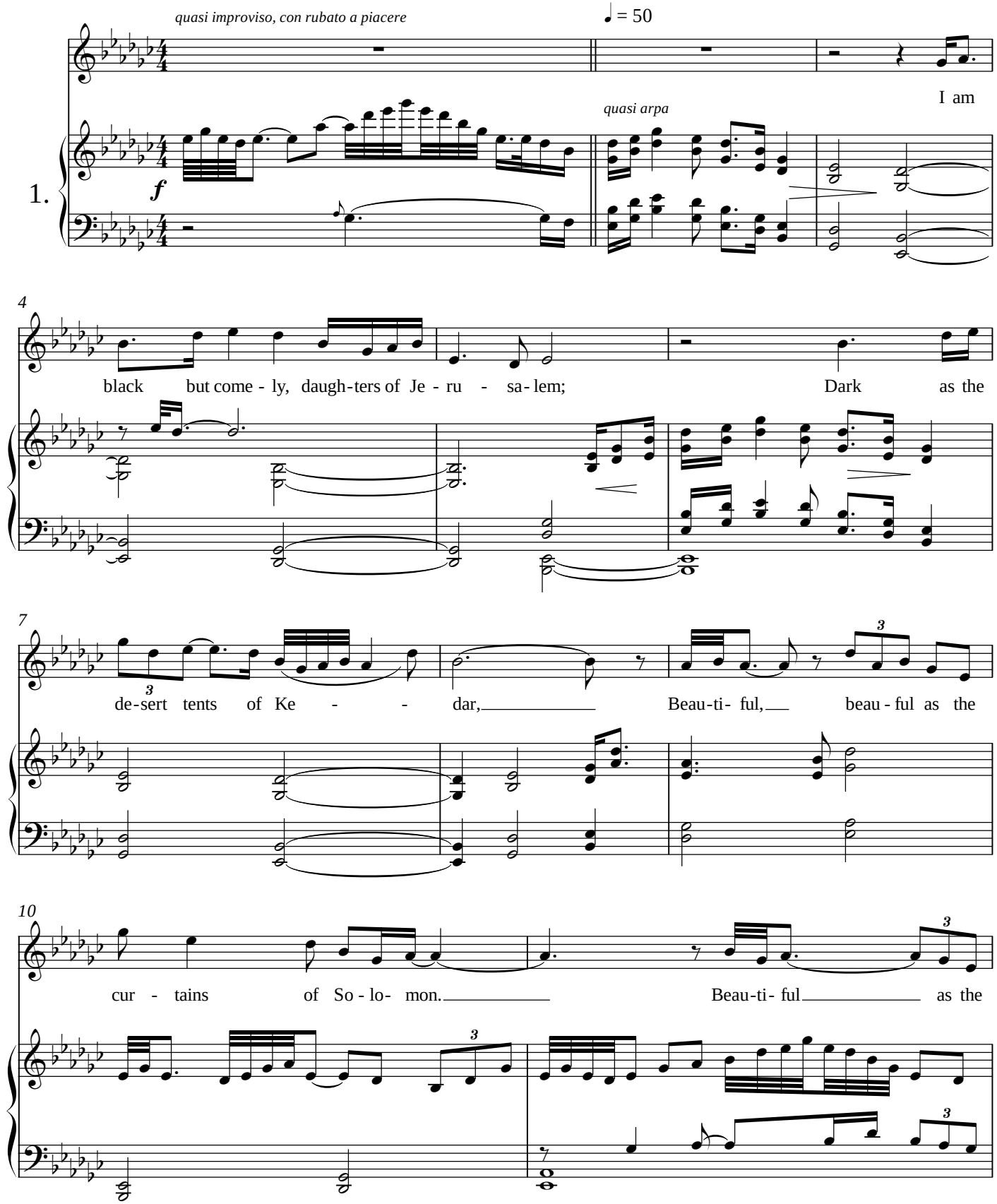
From the Song of Songs

Five songs for soprano or mezzo soprano and piano

I am black, but comely

Biblical texts edited by Julie Dalton-Willliamson

Gary Bachlund



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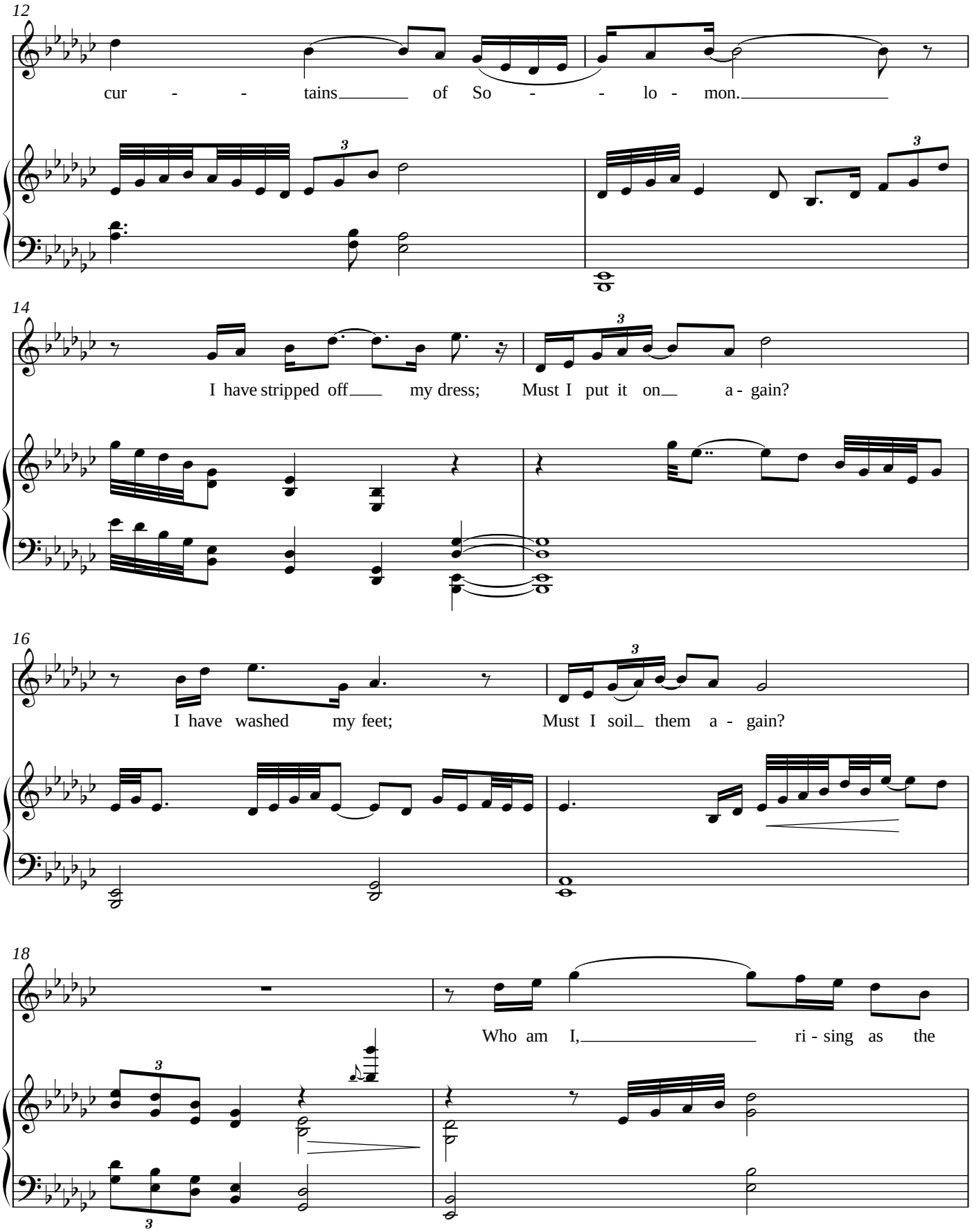
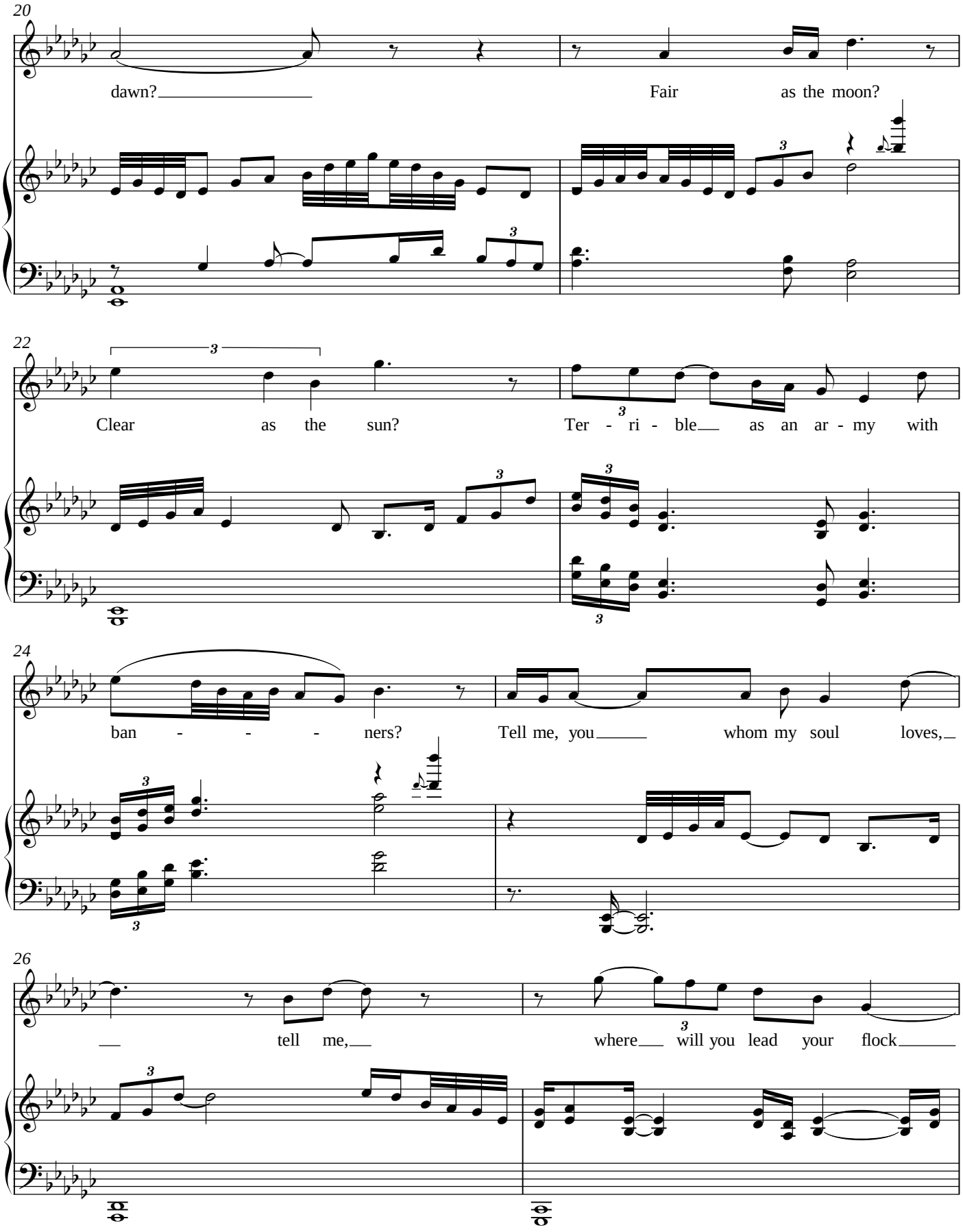
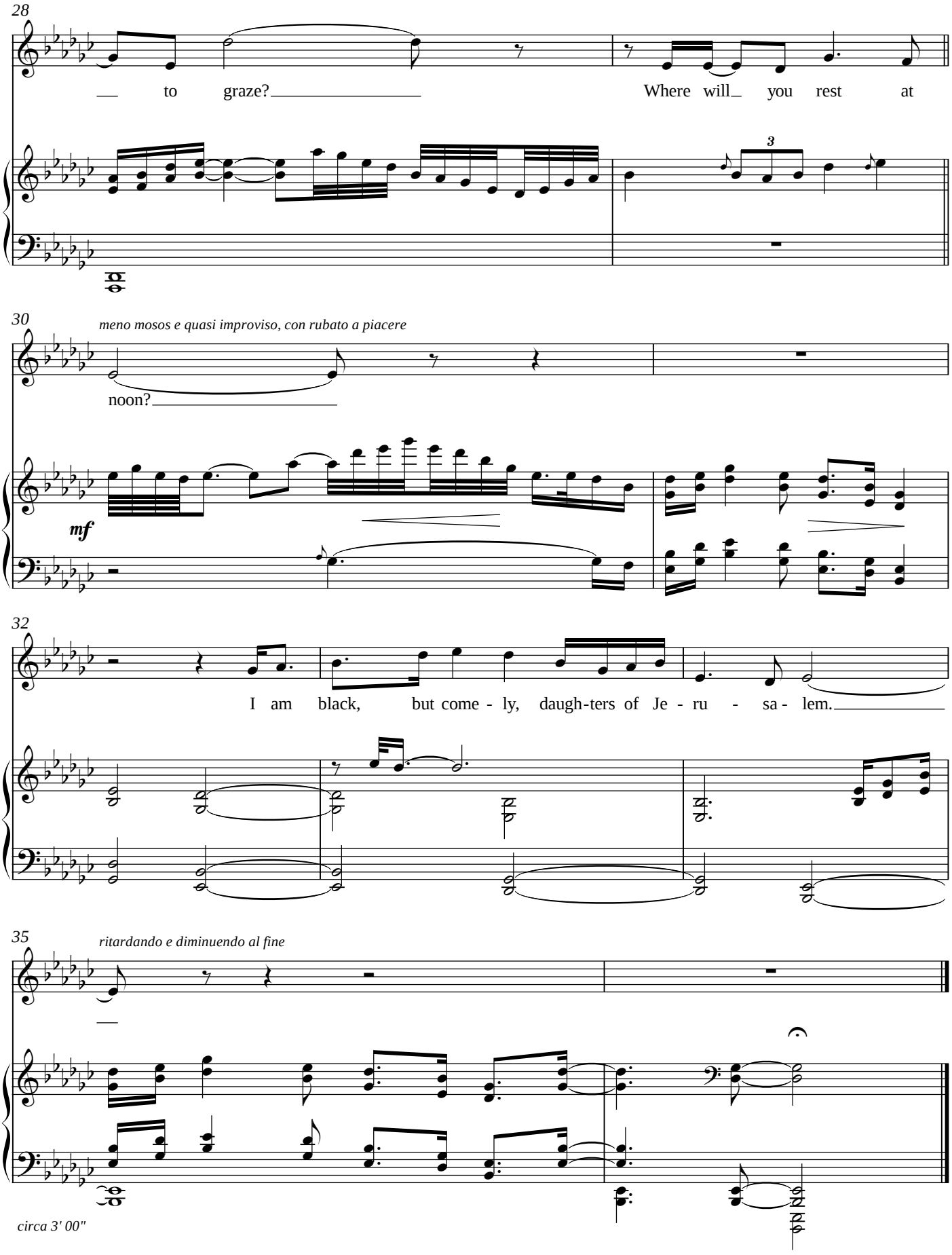
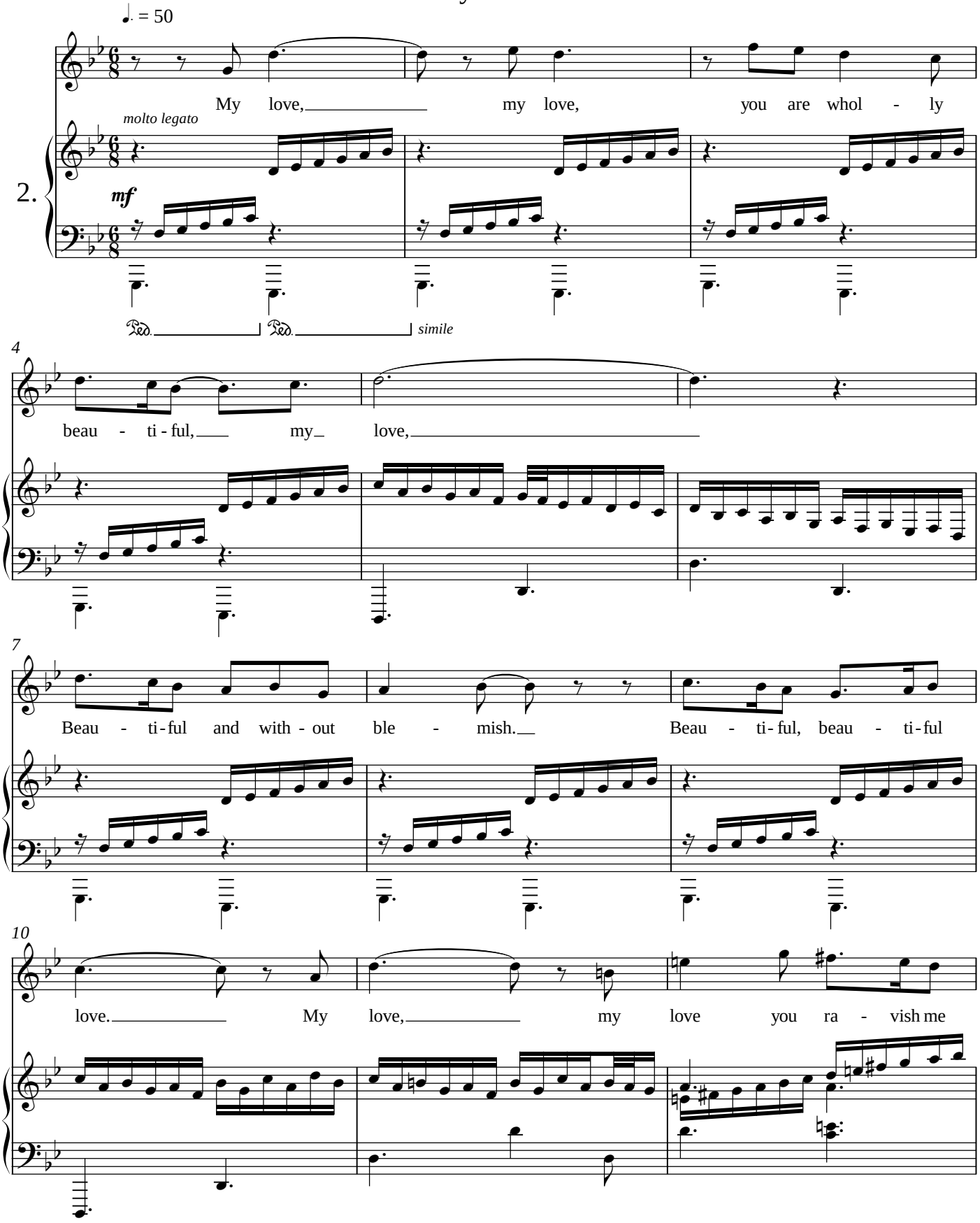
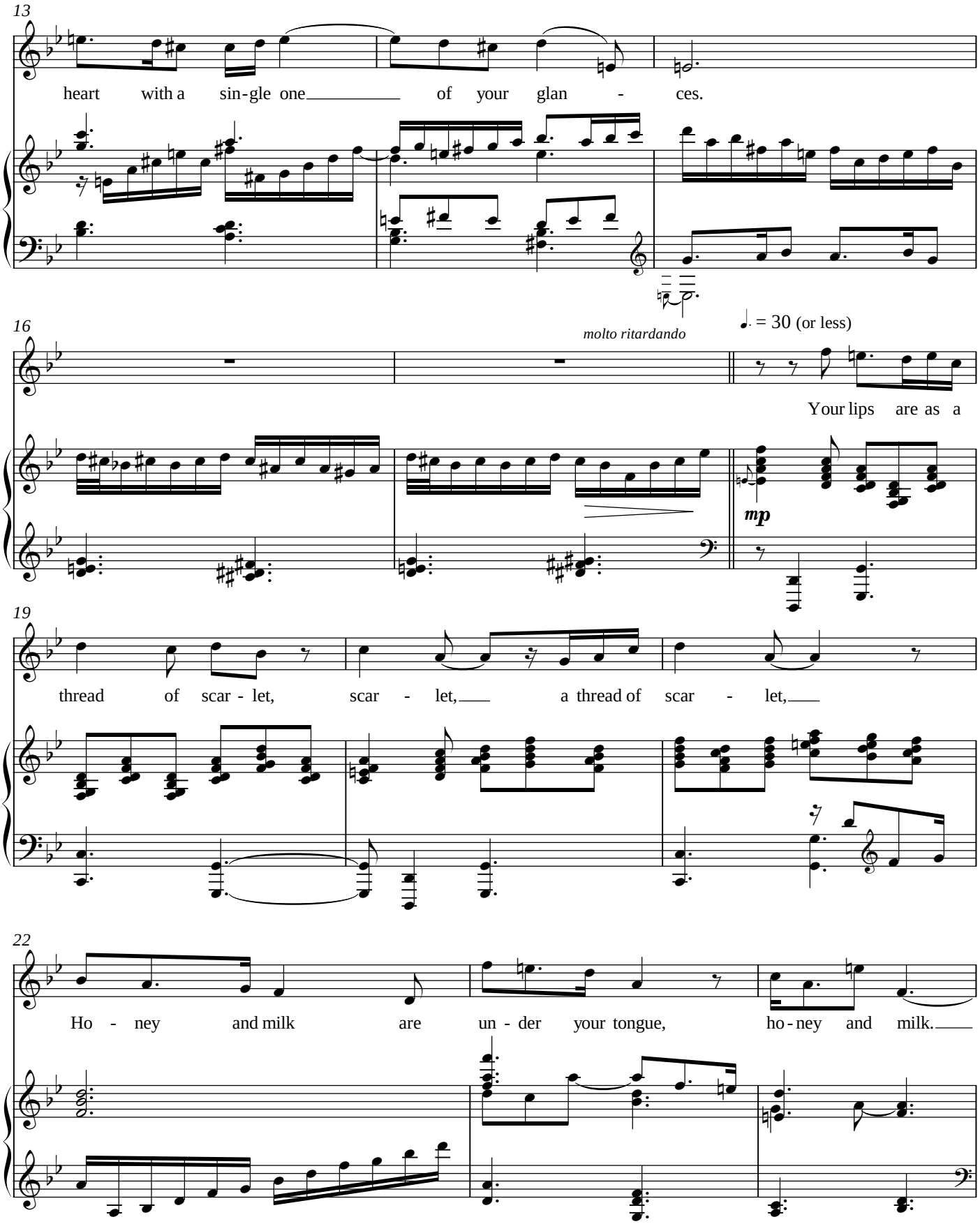

12
cur - - tains of So - - lo - mon.
14
I have stripped off my dress; Must I put it on a - gain?
16
I have washed my feet; Must I soil them a - gain?
18
Who am I, ri - sing as the

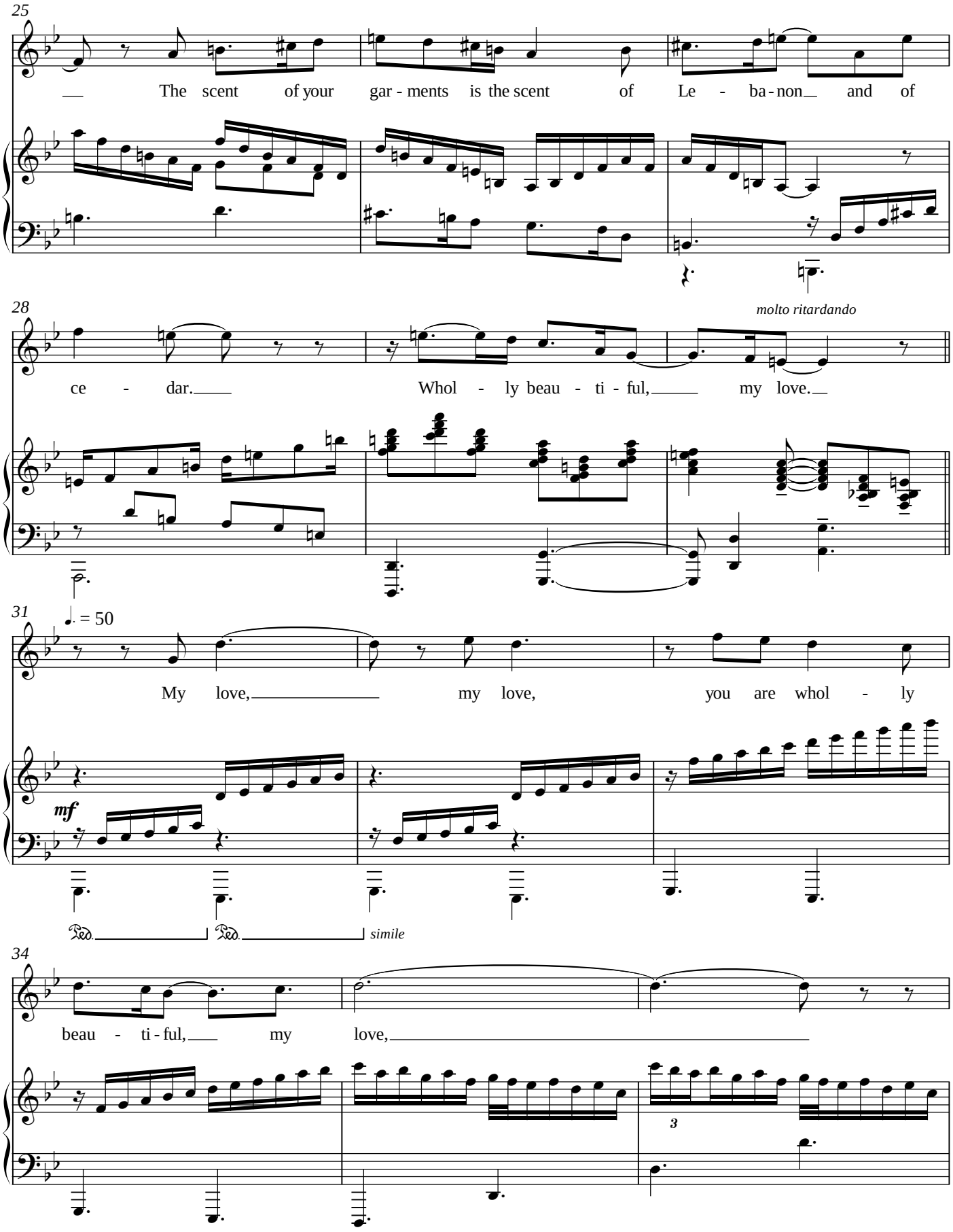

20
dawn?
Fair as the moon?
22
Clear as the sun?
Ter - ri - ble as an ar - my with
24
ban - - - - ners?
Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
26
tell me,
where will you lead your flock

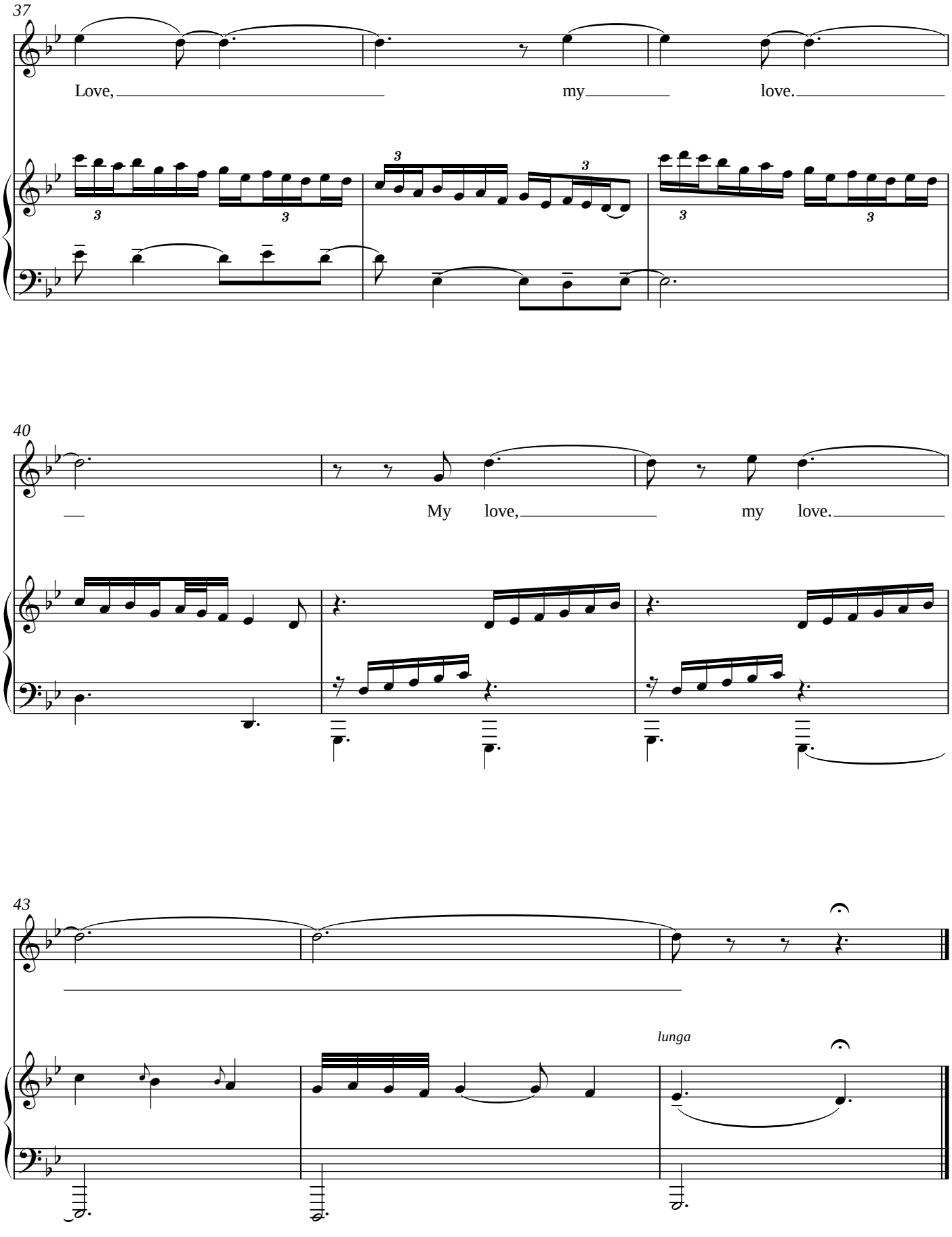

28
to graze?
Where will you rest at
3
30
meno mosos e quasi improviso, con rubato a piacere
noon?
mf
32
I am black, but come - ly, daugh-ters of Je - ru - sa - lem.
35
ritardando e diminuendo al fine
circa 3' 00"

My Love

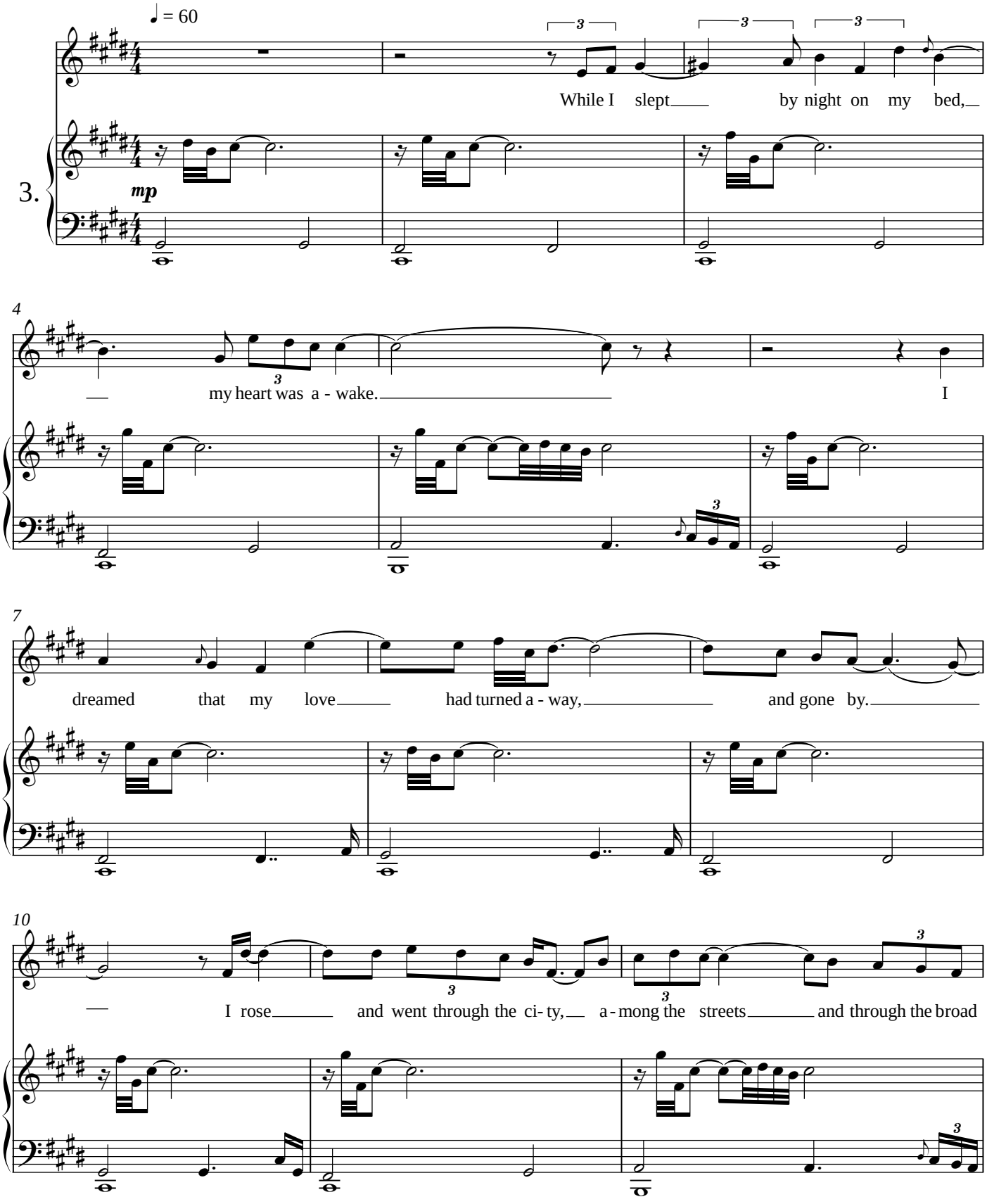

♩. = 50
My love, my love, you are whol - ly
molto legato
2.
mf
simile
4
beau - ti - ful, my love,
7
Beau - ti - ful and with - out ble - mish. Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful
10
love. My love, my love you ra - vish me

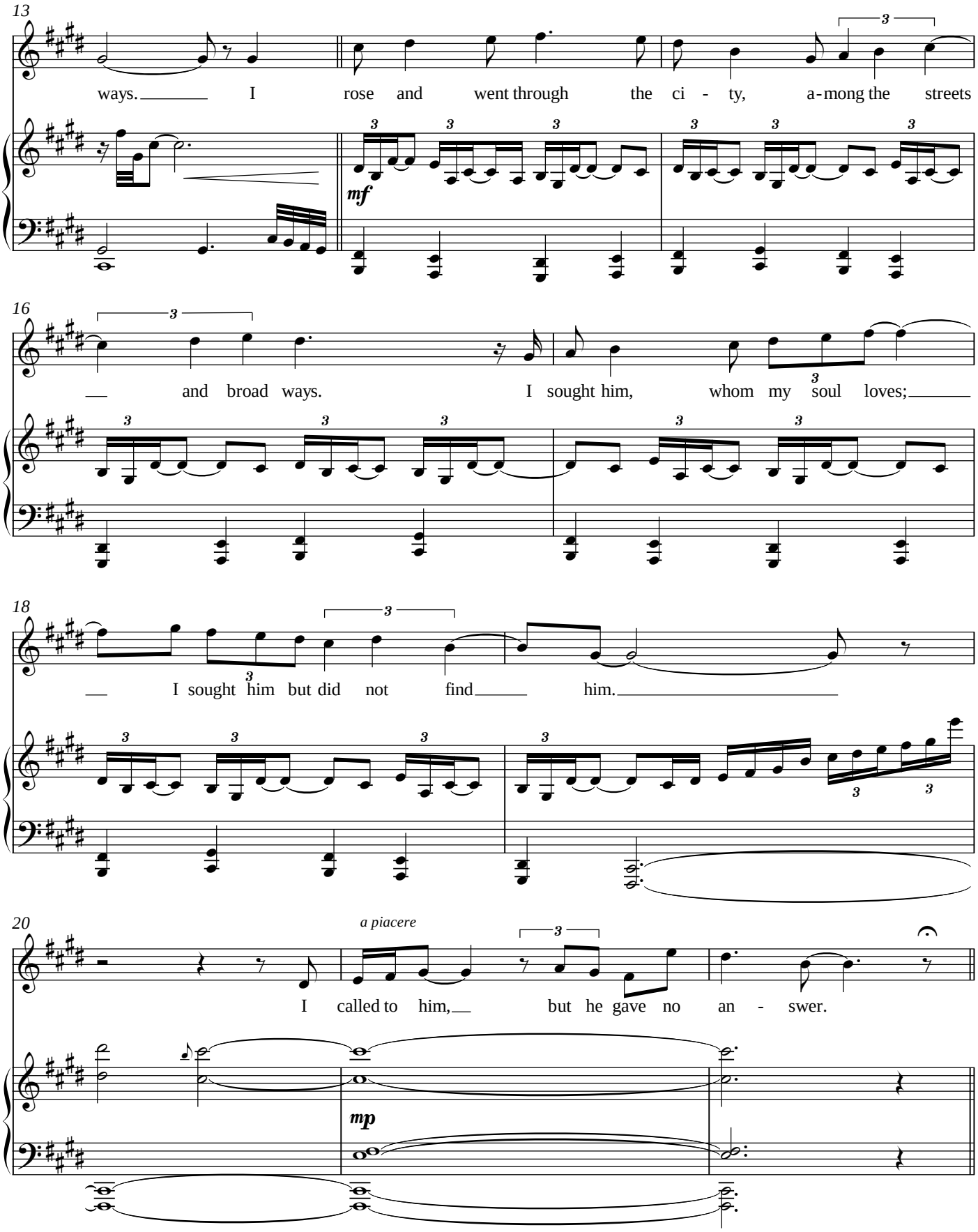

13
heart with a sin-gle one of your glan - ces.
16
molto ritardando
♩. = 30 (or less)
Your lips are as a
mp
19
thread of scar - let, scar - let, a thread of scar - let,
22
Ho - ney and milk are un - der your tongue, ho-ney and milk.

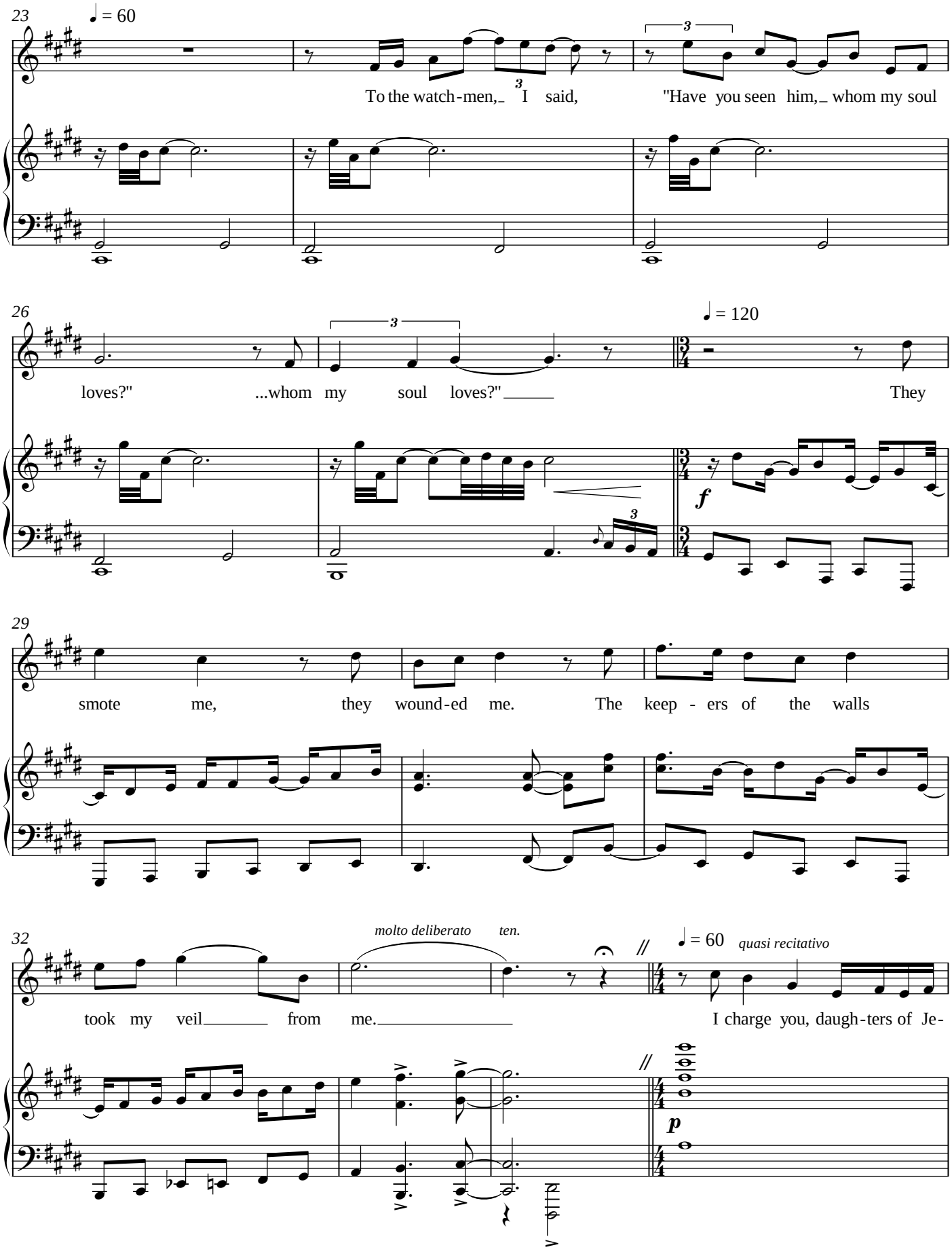

25
The scent of your gar - ments is the scent of Le - ba - non and of
28
molto ritardando
ce - dar. Whol - ly beau - ti - ful, my love.
31
♩. = 50
My love, my love, you are whol - ly
mf
Ped. Ped. simile
34
beau - ti - ful, my love,
3

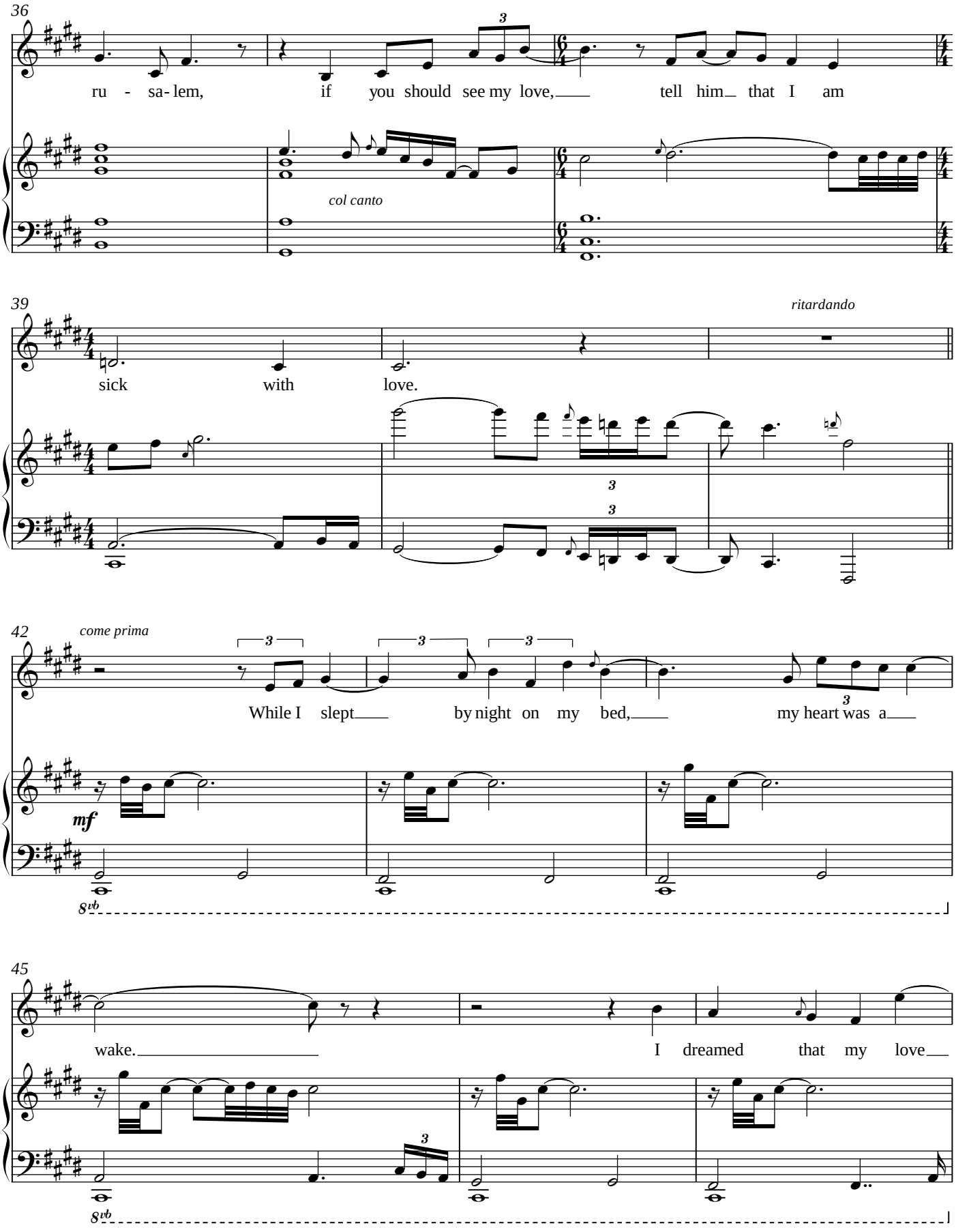

37
Love, my love.
40
My love, my love.
43
lunga
circa 2' 15"

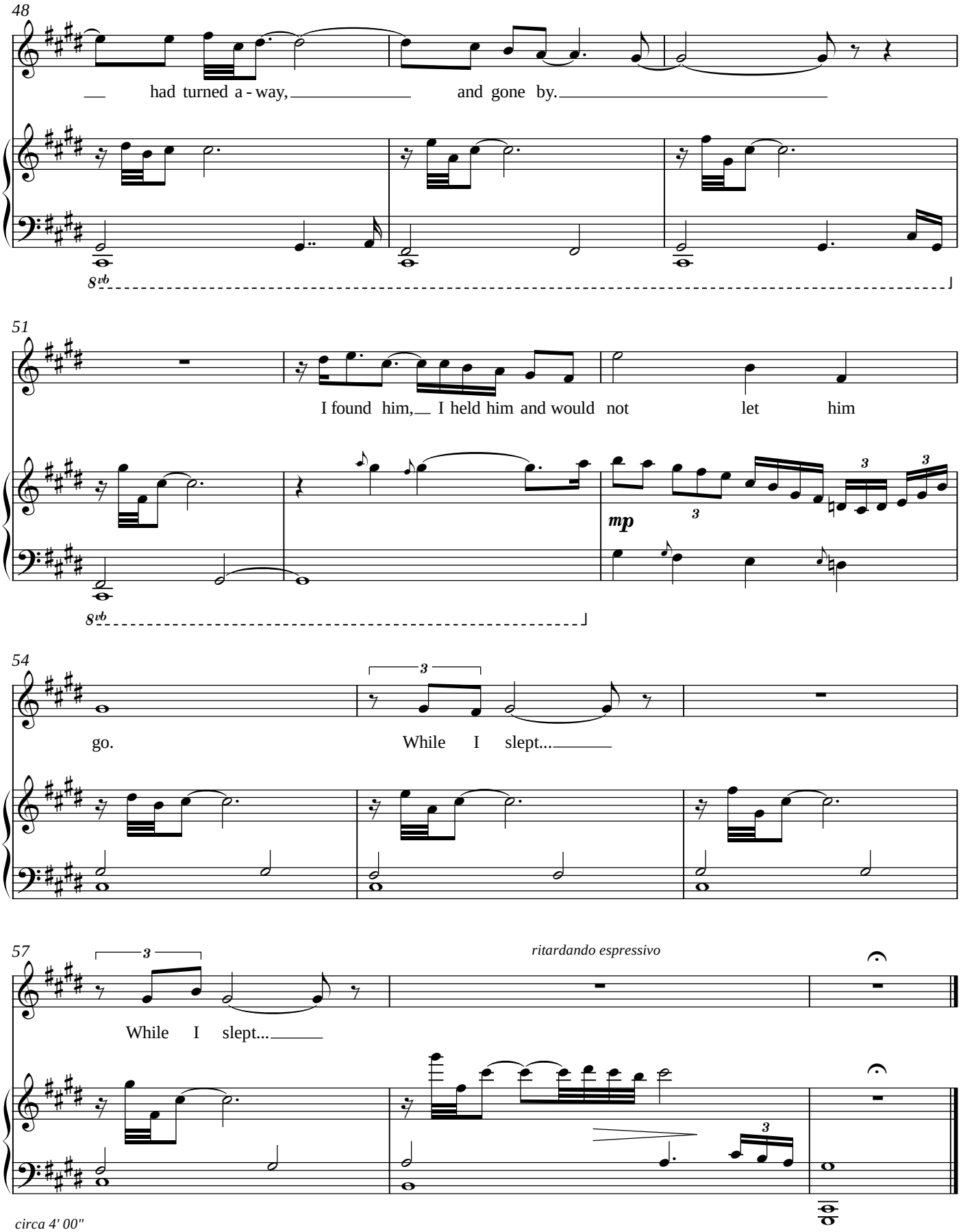
I am sick with love



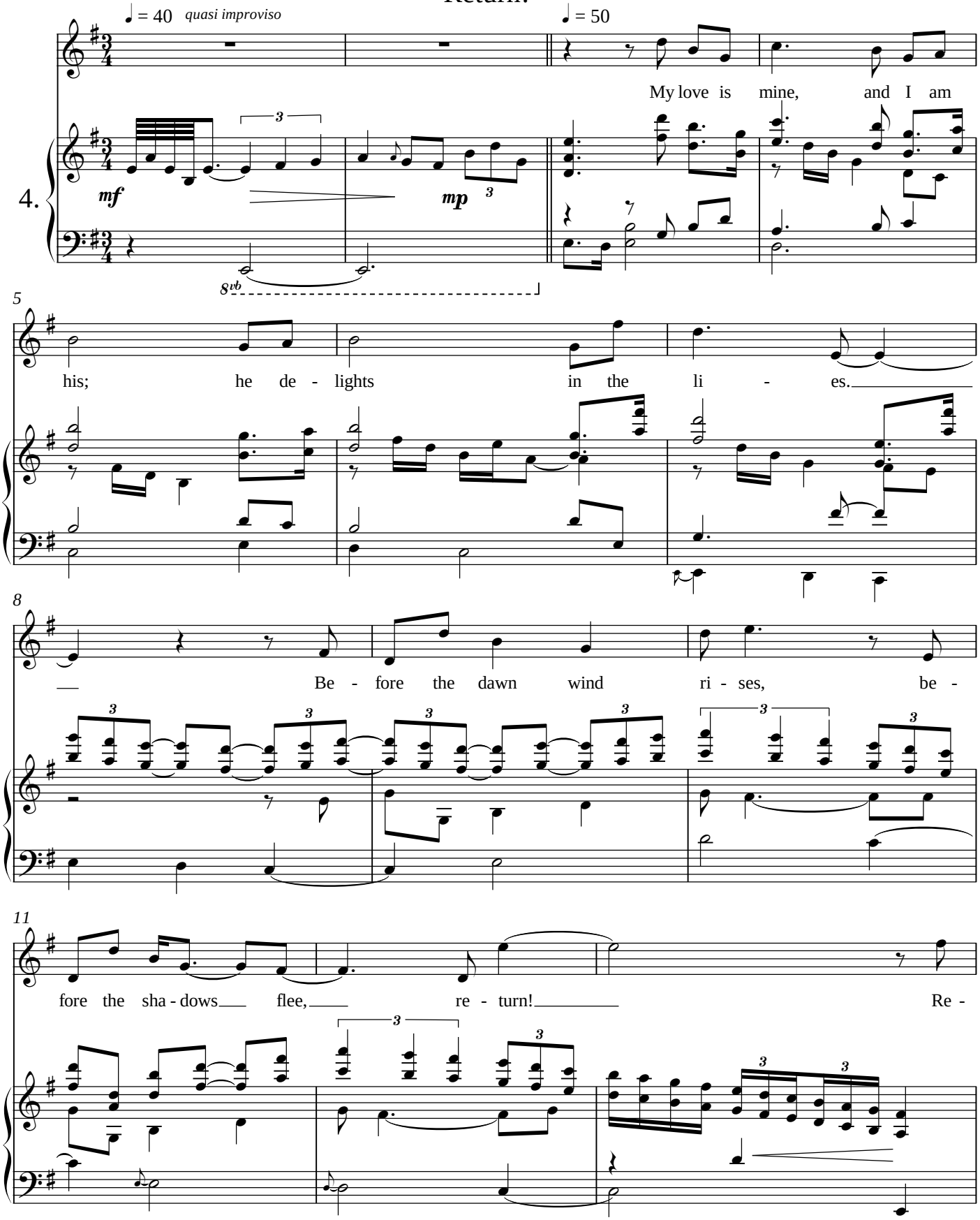

13
ways. I rose and went through the ci - ty, a-mong the streets
mf
16
and broad ways. I sought him, whom my soul loves;
18
I sought him but did not find him.
20
a piacere
I called to him, but he gave no an - swer.
mp

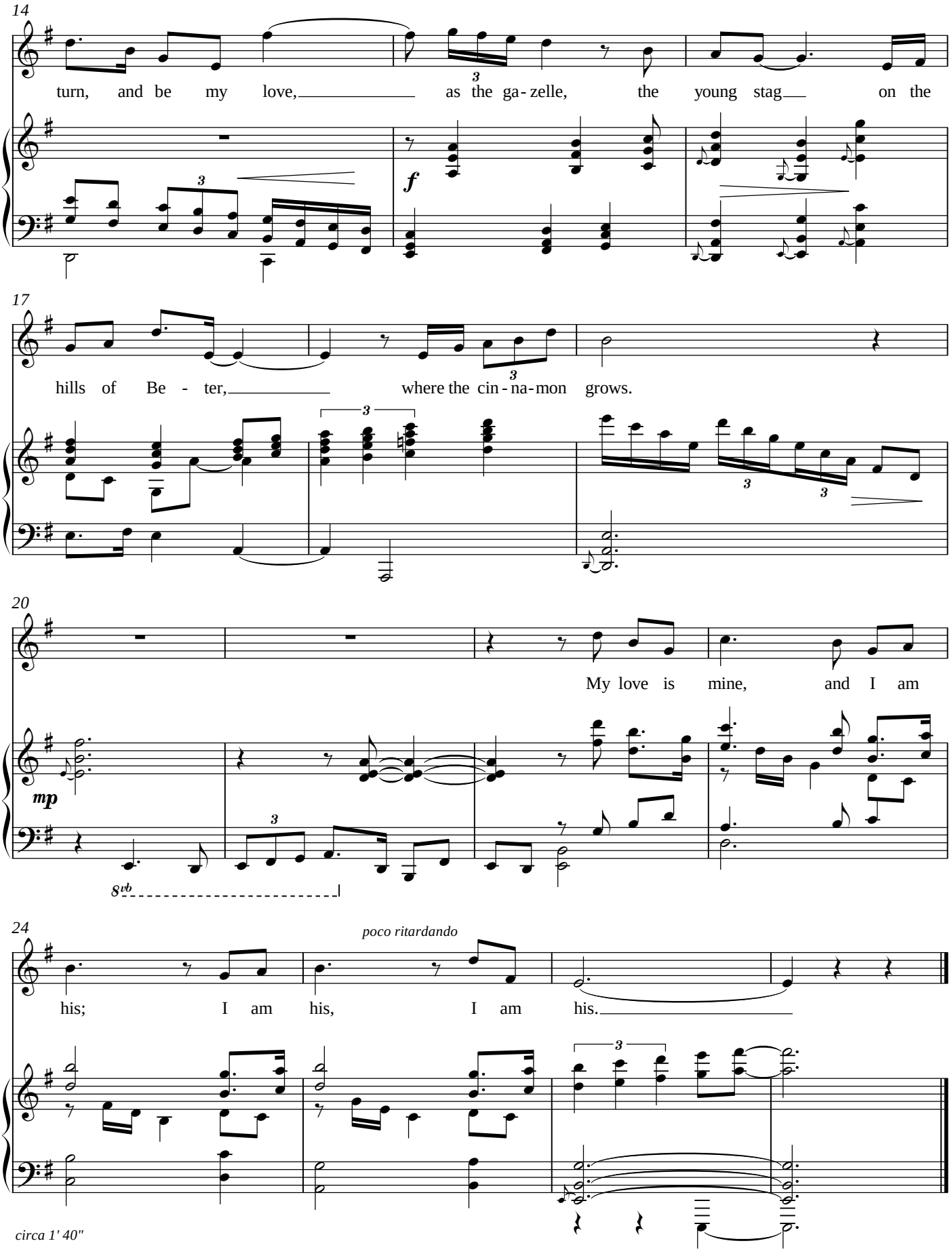

23
♩ = 60
To the watch-men, I said, "Have you seen him, whom my soul
26
loves?" ...whom my soul loves?" They
♩ = 120
f
29
smote me, they wound-ed me. The keep - ers of the walls
32
molto deliberato
ten.
took my veil from me.
♩ = 60
quasi recitativo
I charge you, daugh-ters of Je-
p


36
ru - sa- lem, if you should see my love, tell him that I am
col canto
39
ritardando
sick with love.
42
come prima
While I slept by night on my bed, my heart was a
mf
8vb
45
wake. I dreamed that my love
8vb

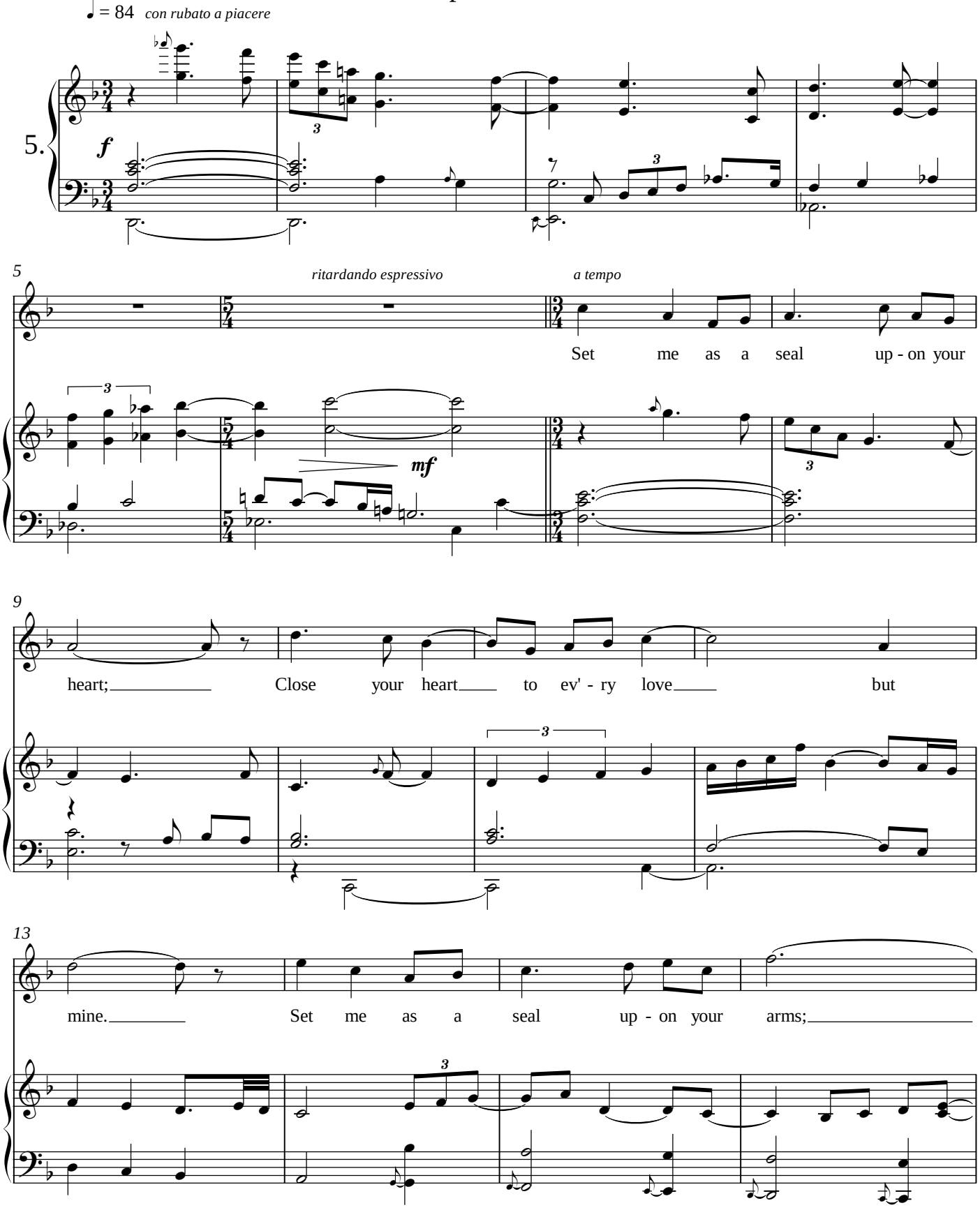

48
had turned a - way, and gone by.
8vb
51
I found him, I held him and would not let him
mp
8vb
54
go.
While I slept...
57
While I slept...
ritardando espressivo
circa 4' 00"

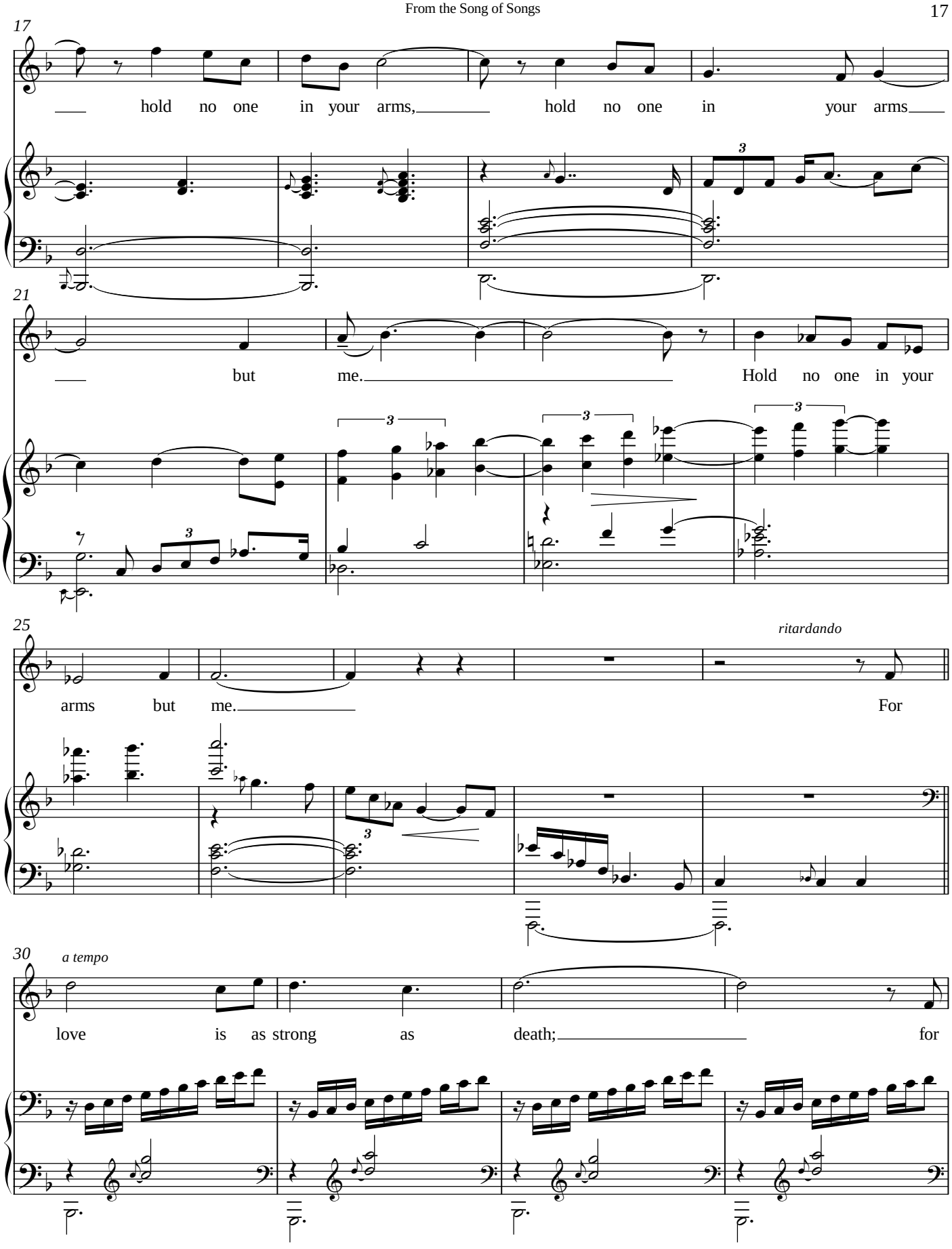
Return!

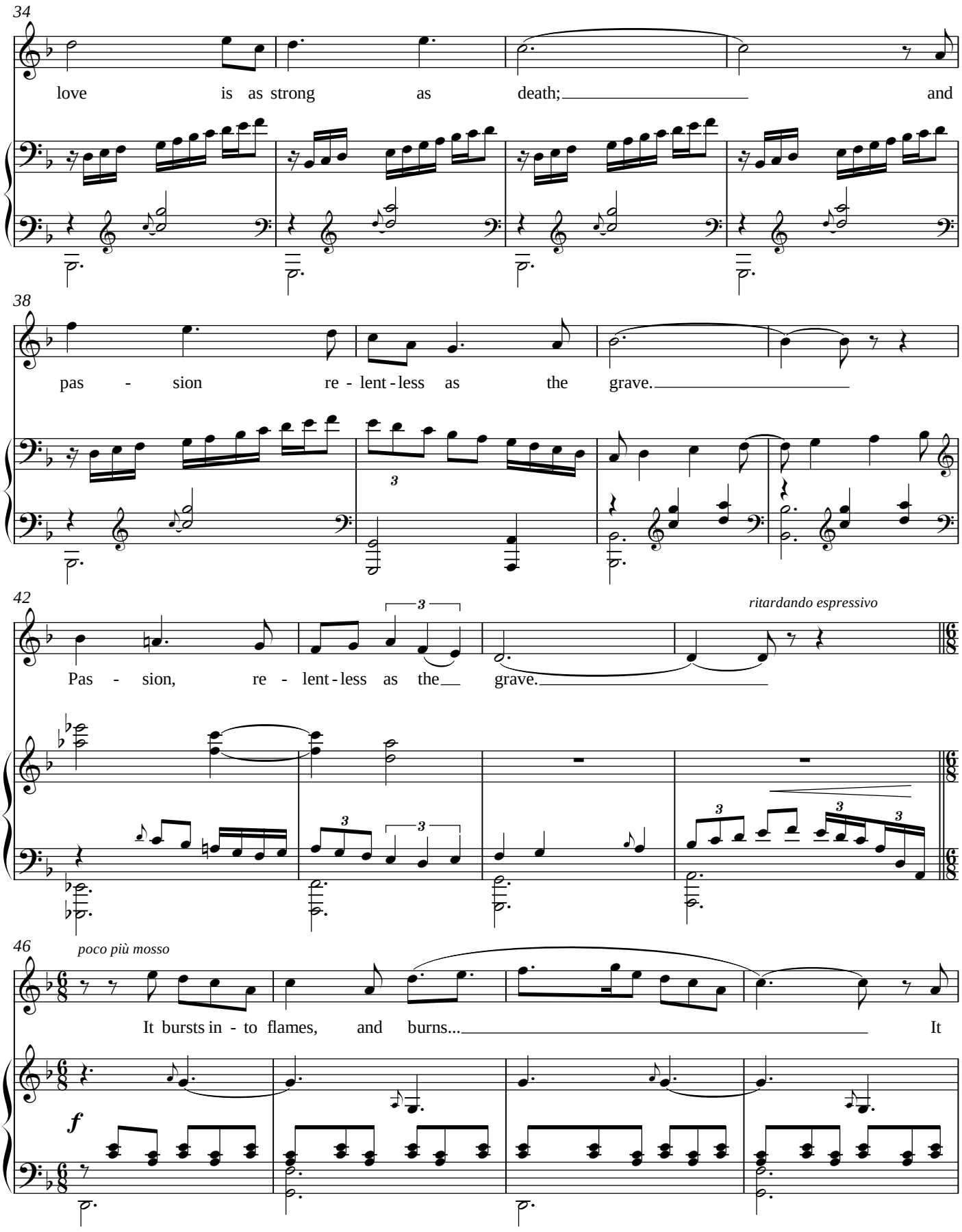

♩ = 40 quasi improviso
♩ = 50
My love is mine, and I am
4.
mf
mp
8vb
5
his; he de - lights in the li - es.
8
Be - fore the dawn wind ri - ses, be -
11
fore the sha - dows flee, re - turn! Re -

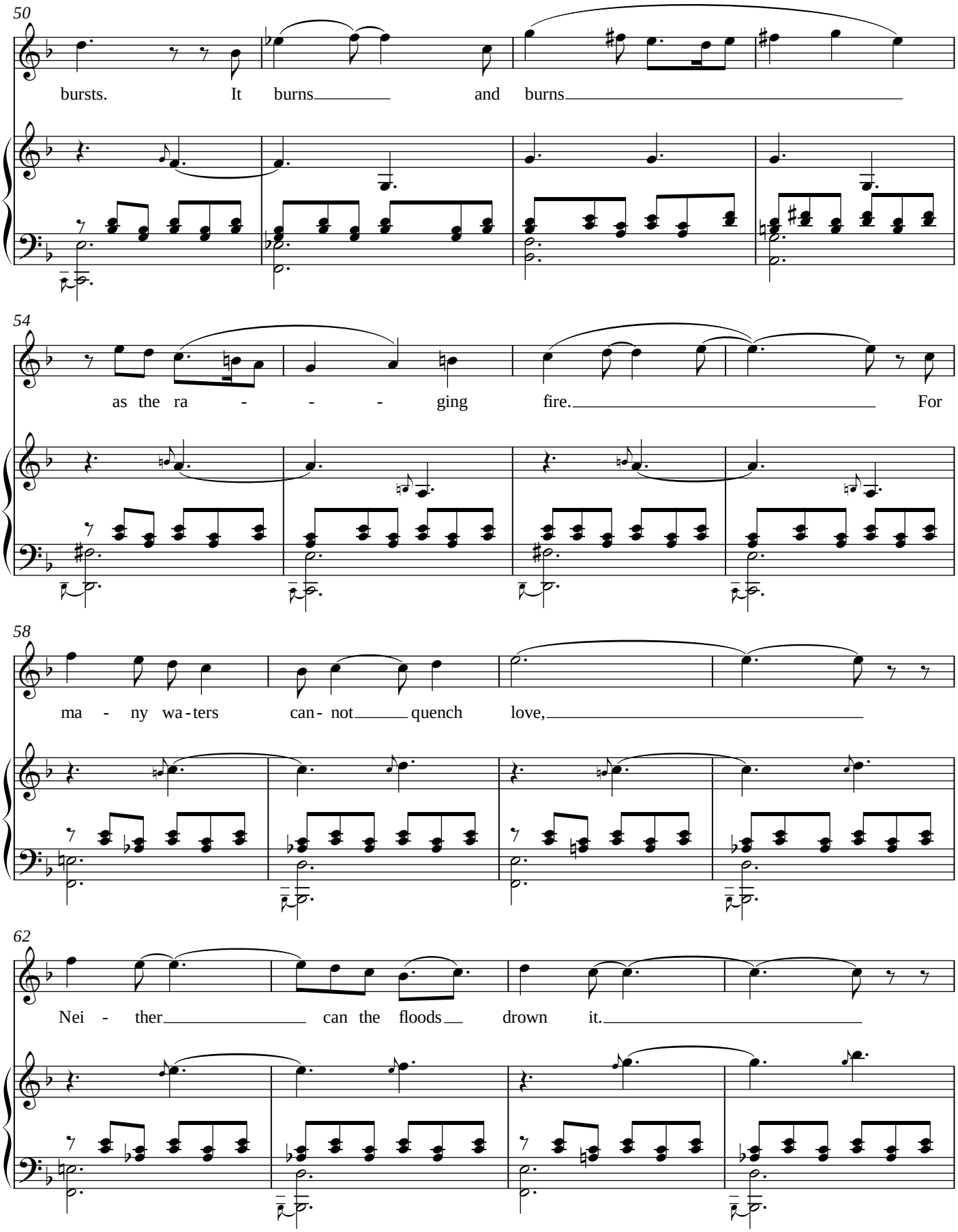

14
turn, and be my love, as the ga - zelle, the young stag on the
f
17
hills of Be - ter, where the cin - na - mon grows.
20
My love is mine, and I am
mp
8vb
24
poco ritardando
his; I am his, I am his.
circa 1' 40"

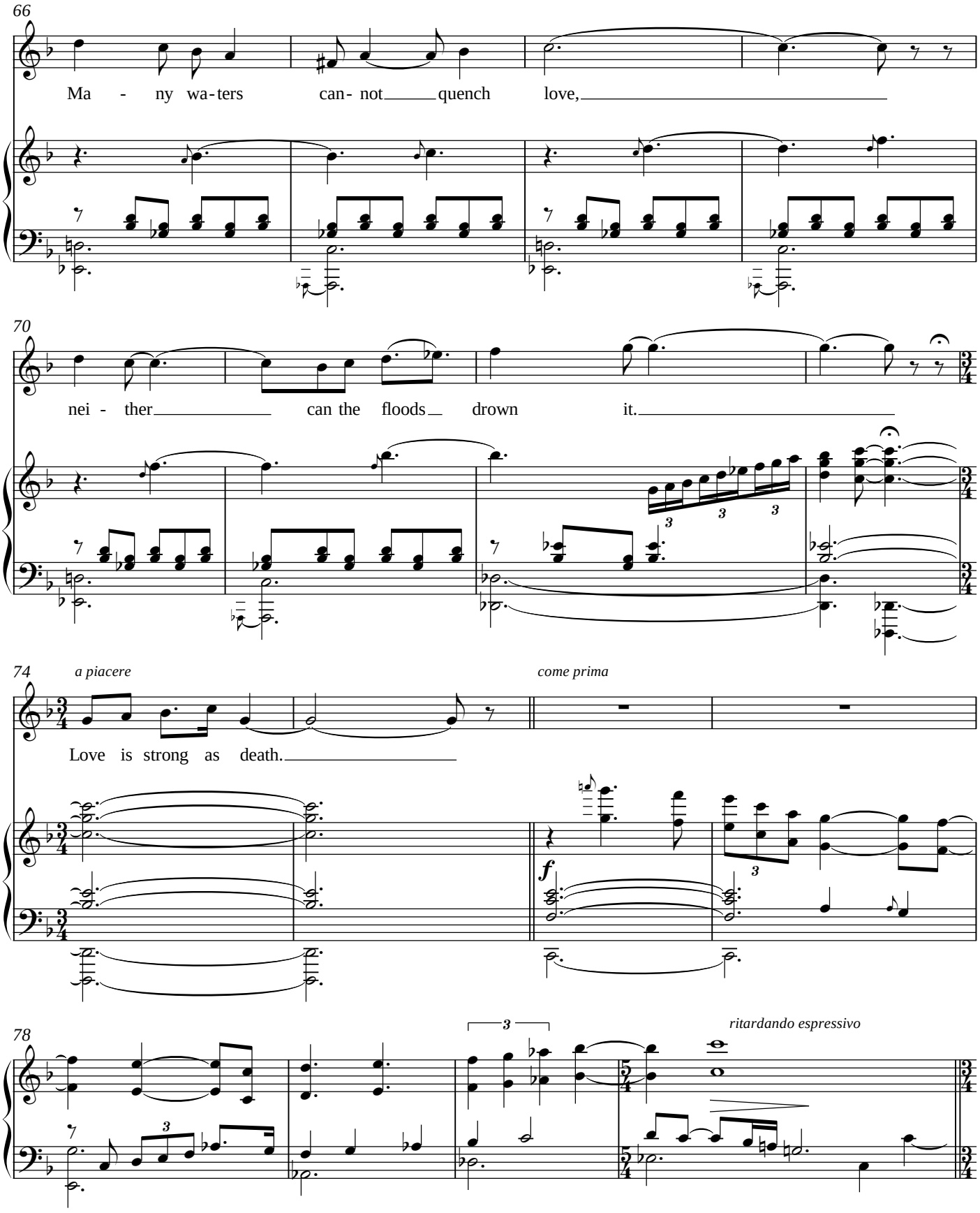
A Seal Upon Your Heart

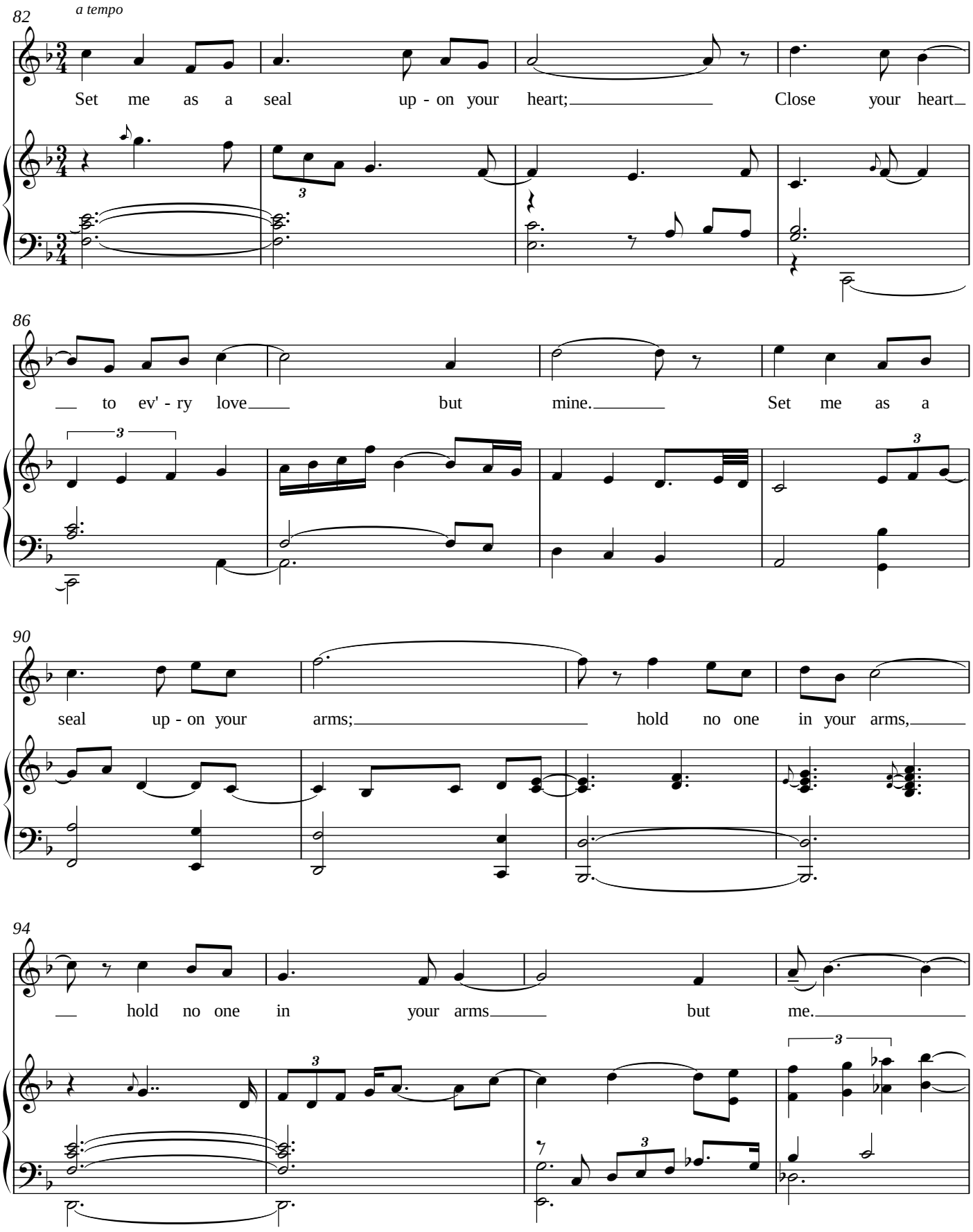


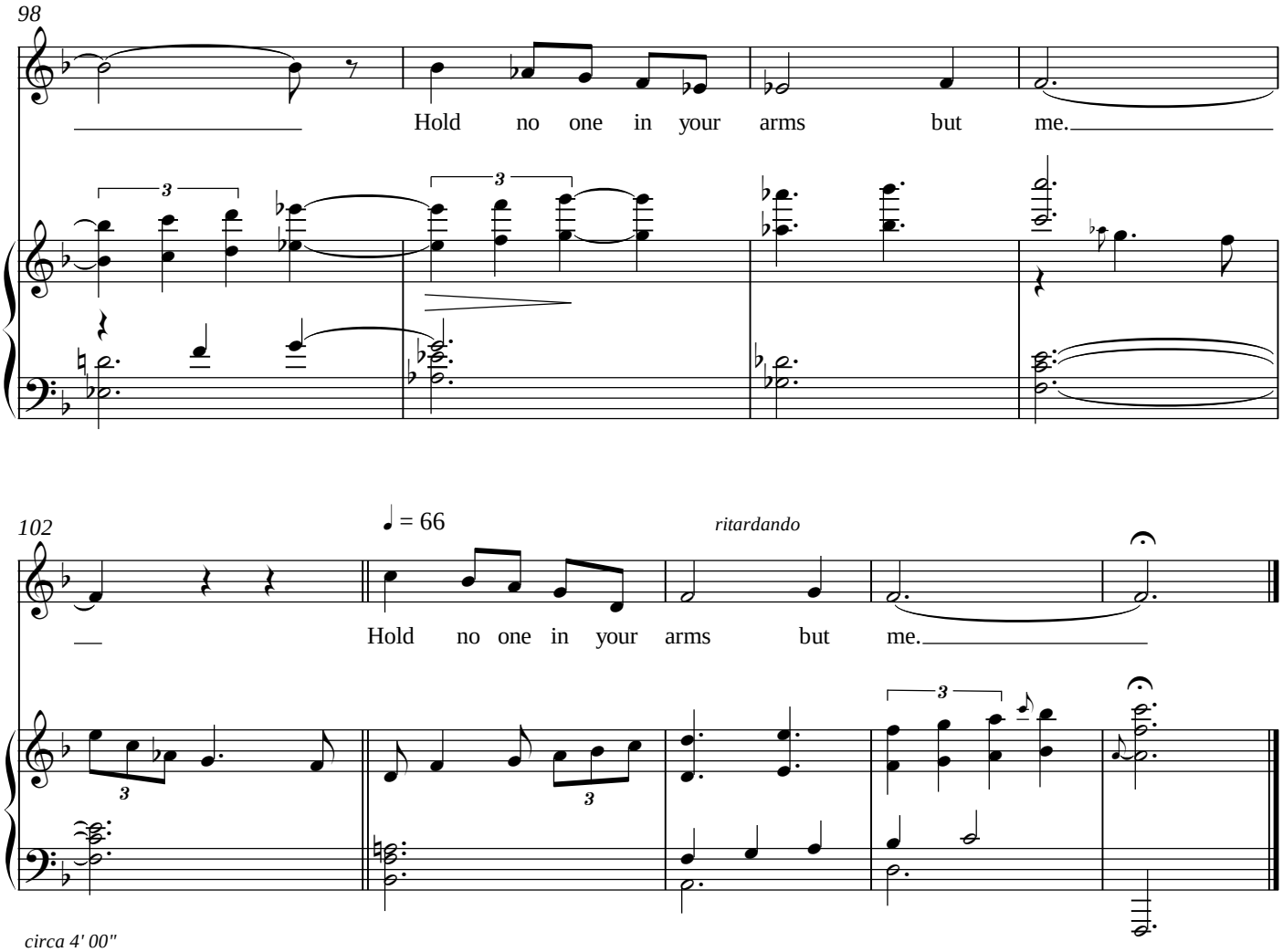

17
hold no one in your arms, hold no one in your arms
21
but me. Hold no one in your
25
ritardando
arms but me. For
30
a tempo
love is as strong as death; for


34
love is as strong as death; and
38
pas - sion re - lent - less as the grave.
42
Pas - sion, re - lent - less as the grave.
ritardando espressivo
46
poco più mosso
It bursts in - to flames, and burns... It
f


50
bursts. It burns and burns
54
as the ra - - - ging fire. For
58
ma - ny wa - ters can - not quench love,
62
Nei - ther can the floods drown it.


66
Ma - ny wa-ters can- not quench love,
70
nei - ther can the floods drown it.
74
a piacere
come prima
Love is strong as death.
f
78
ritardando espressivo


82
a tempo
Set me as a seal up - on your heart; Close your heart
86
to ev' - ry love but mine. Set me as a
90
seal up - on your arms; hold no one in your arms,
94
hold no one in your arms but me.



i. I am black but comely

I am black but comely, daughters of Jerusalem;
Beautiful as the desert tents of Kedar,
Beautiful as the curtains of Solomon.
I have stripped of my dress;
Must I put it on again?
I have washed my feet;
Must I soil them again?
Who am I, rising as the dawn?
Fair as the moon?
Clear as the sun?
Terrible as an army with banners?
Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
Where will you lead your flocks to graze?
Where will you rest at noon?

ii. My Love

You are wholly beautiful, my love,
Beautiful and without blemish.
You ravish my heart
With a single one of your glances.
Your lips are as a thread of scarlet,
Honey and milk are under your tongue.
The scent of your garments
Is the scent of Lebanon
And of cedar.

iii. I am sick with love

While I slept by night on my bed,
My heart was a wake.
I dreamed that my love had turned away,
And gone by.
I rose and went through the city,
Among the streets and
through the broad ways.
I sought him, whom my soul loves;
I sought him, but did not find him.
I called him,
but he gave no answer.
To the watchmen, I said,
"Have you seen him,
whom my soul loves?"
They smote me; they wounded me.
the keepers of the walls
took my veil from me.
I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem,
If you should see my love,
Tell him I am sick with love.
While I slept by night on my bed,
My heart was awake.
I dreamed that my love had turned away,
And gone by.
I found him; I held him and
Would not let him go.

iv. Return!

My love is mine, and I am his;
He delights in the lilies.
Before the dawn wind rises,
Before the shadows flee, return!
Return, and be, my love,
As the gazelle,
The young stag
On the hills of Beter,
Where the cinnamon grows.

v. A Seal Upon Your Heart

Set me as a seal upon your heart;
Close your heart to every love but mine.
Set me as a seal upon your arms;
Hold no one in your arms but me.
For love is strong as death;
And passion, relentless as the grave.
It bursts into flames, and burns
As the raging fire.
For many waters cannot quench love.
Neither can the floods drown it.
Set me, then, as a seal upon your heart;
Close your heart to every love but mine.
Set me as a seal upon your arms;
Hold no one in your arms but me.