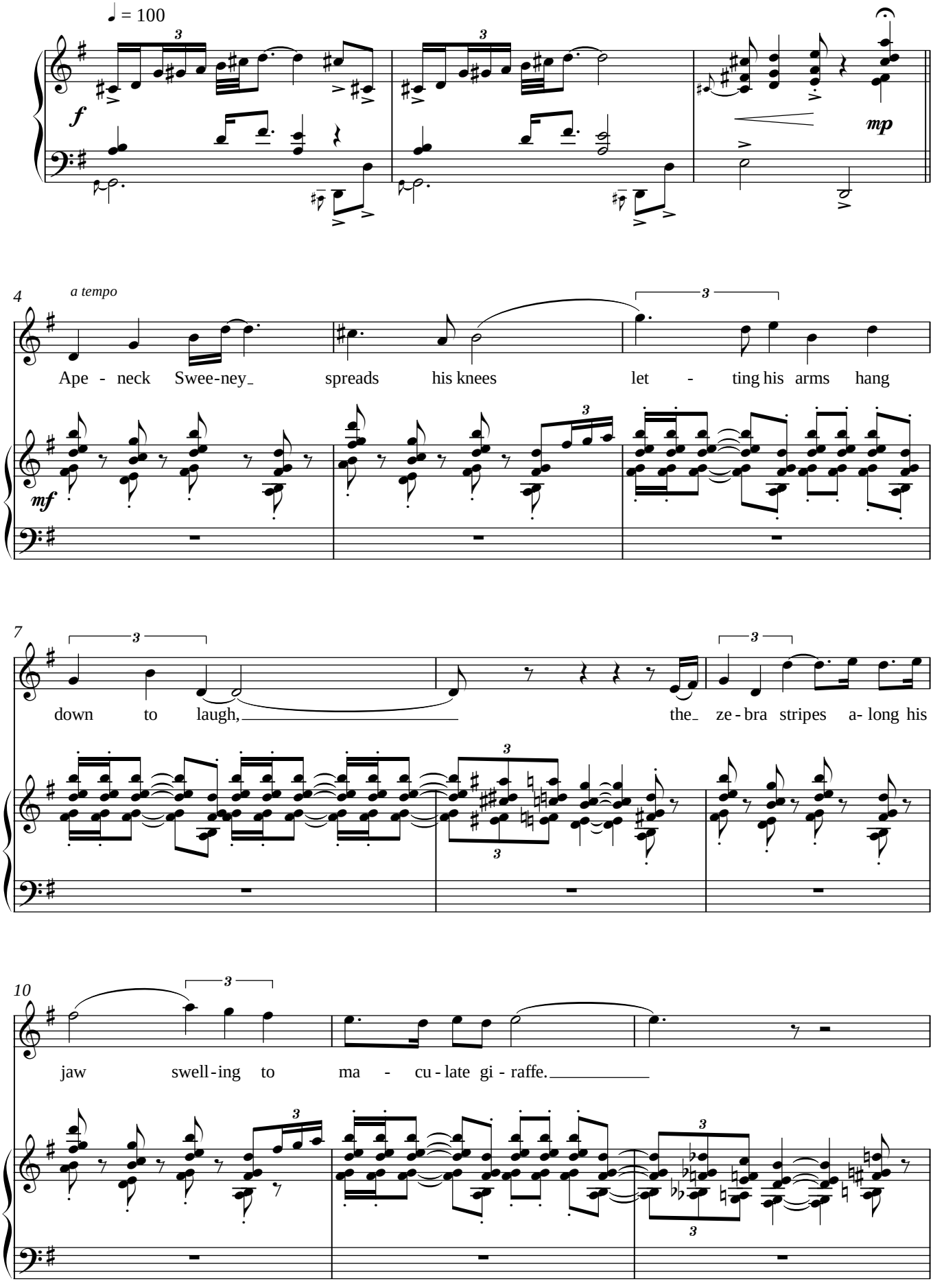
Sweeney Among the Nightingales

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)

for Irina Popova

Gary Bachlund



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13

The cir cles of the storm- y moon slide

16

west-ward to the Ri-ver Plate, Death and the Ra-ven

19

drift a - bove and Sween - ey guards the horn - éd gate.

22

Gloom - y O - ri - on and the Dog are veiled; and

25

hushed the shrunk-en seas, the per - son in the Spa-nish cape tries to

f

29

sit on Swee-ney's knees. slips

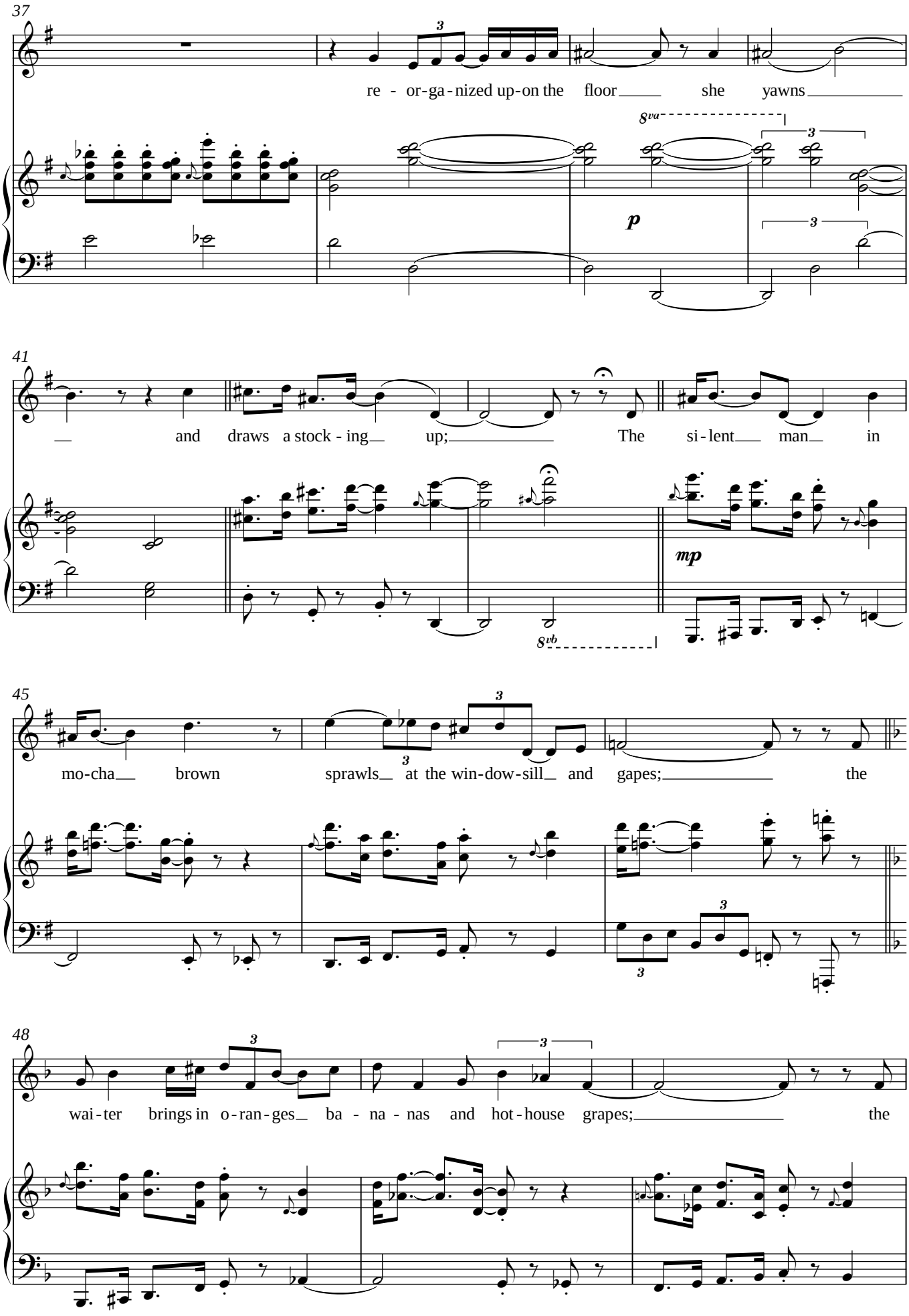
32

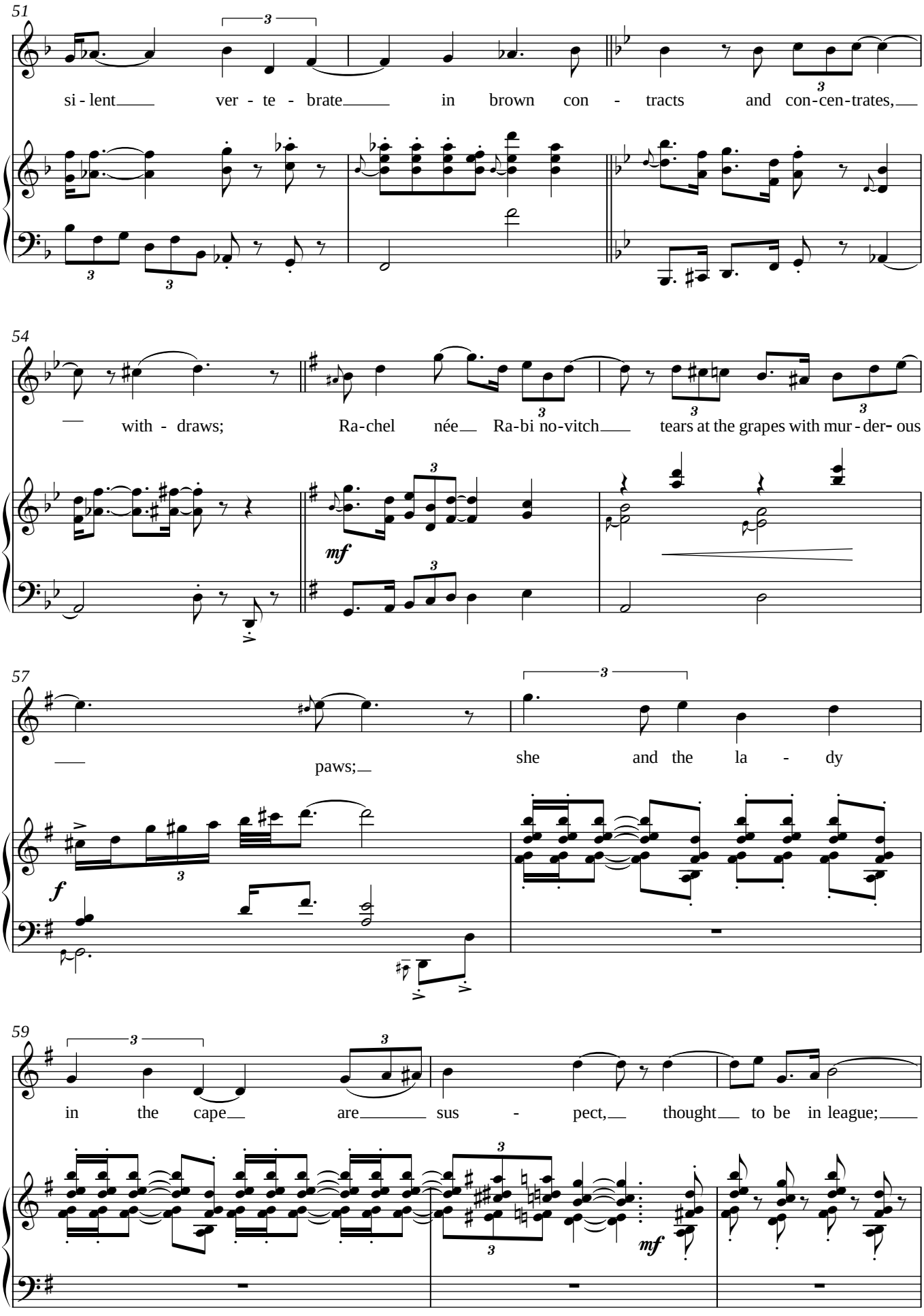
and pulls and pulls the

34

ta - ble - cloth o - ver - turns a cof-fee cup

mp


37
re - or-ga-nized up-on the floor she yawns
8va
p
41
and draws a stock - ing up; The si-lent man in
mp
8vb
45
mo-cha brown sprawls at the win-dow-sill and gapes; the
48
wai-ter brings in o-ran-ges ba - na - nas and hot-house grapes; the


51
si - lent ver - te - brate in brown con - tracts and con-cen-trates,
54
with - draws; Ra-chel née Ra-bi no-vitch tears at the grapes with mur - der- ous
mf
57
paws; she and the la - dy
f
59
in the cape are sus - pect, thought to be in league;
mf

62

— there - fore the man with the hea - vy eyes de - clines the gam - bit,

mp

67

shows fa - tigue; — leaves the room and re-ap-pears — out-side the win - dow,

crescendo a piacere

71

lean - ing — in, — branch - es — of wis -

mp

p

74

ter - i - a — cir - cum-scribe a gold - en grin; — the

78

host with some-one in-dis - tinct con - ver-ses at the door a - part, the

mp

82

night-in - gales are sing - ing

crescendo

f

85

sing-ing

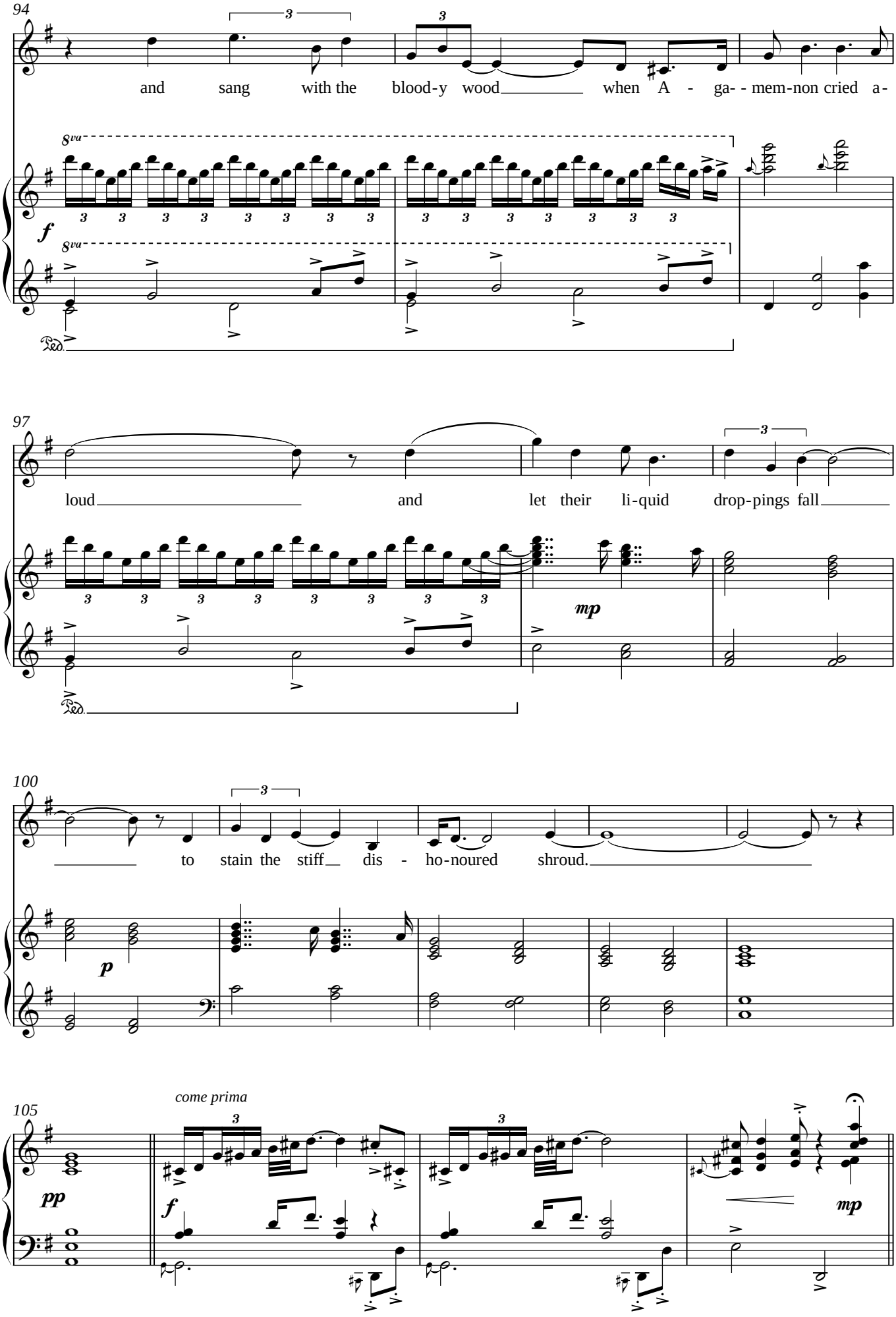
8va

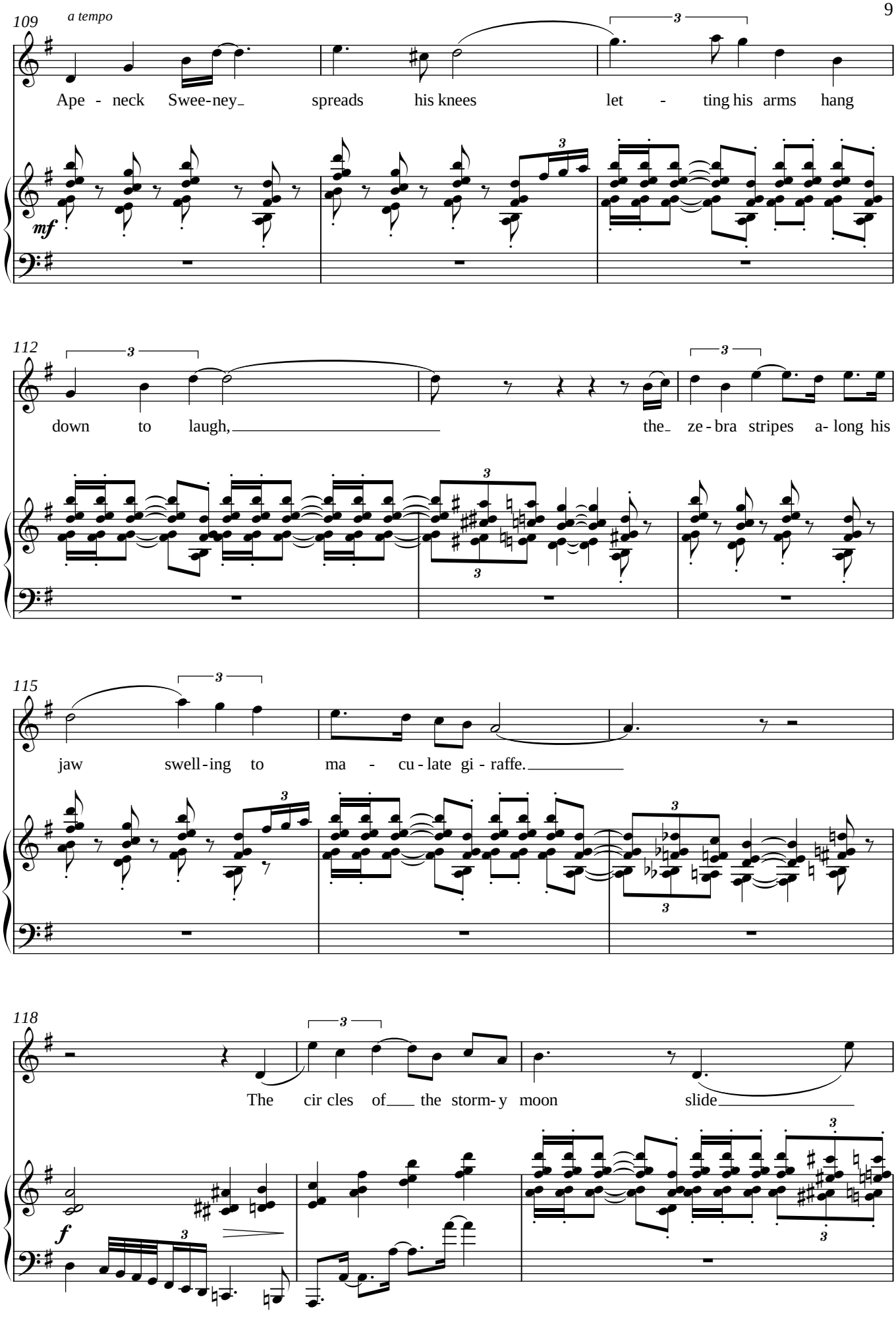
88

sing-ing near the Con - vent of the Sa - cred Heart,

(8)

mp


94
and sang with the blood-y wood when A - ga- - mem-non cried a-
8va
f
8va
Ped.
97
loud and let their li-quid drop-pings fall
mp
Ped.
100
to stain the stiff dis - ho-noured shroud.
p
105
come prima
pp
f
mp


109
a tempo
Ape - neck Swee-ney spreads his knees let - ting his arms hang
mf
112
down to laugh, the ze - bra stripes a- long his
115
jaw swell-ing to ma - cu - late gi - raffe.
118
The cir cles of the storm- y moon slide
f

121

west-ward to the Ri-ver Plate, Death and the Ra-ven

124

drift a - bove and Sween - ey guards the horn - éd gate.

8va

127

Ape - neck Swee-ney spreads his knees let - ting his arms hang

f

130

down to laugh.

8va

ff

circa 5' 30"

Ped.

17 VIII 2007
Aachen

Sweeney Among the Nightingales

T. S. Eliot
from *Poems* (1920)

Apeneck Sweeney spreads his knees
Letting his arms hang down to laugh,
The zebra stripes along his jaw
Swelling to maculate giraffe.

The circles of the stormy moon
Slide westward toward the River Plate,
Death and the Raven drift above
And Sweeney guards the horned gate.

Gloomy Orion and the Dog
Are veiled; and hushed the shrunken seas;
The person in the Spanish cape
Tries to sit on Sweeney's knees

Slips and pulls the table cloth
Overturns a coffee-cup,
Reorganized upon the floor
She yawns and draws a stocking up;

The silent man in mocha brown
Sprawls at the window-sill and gapes;
The waiter brings in oranges
Bananas figs and hothouse grapes;

The silent vertebrate in brown
Contracts and concentrates, withdraws;
Rachel née Rabinovitch
Tears at the grapes with murderous paws;

She and the lady in the cape
Are suspect, thought to be in league;
Therefore the man with heavy eyes
Declines the gambit, shows fatigue,

Leaves the room and reappears
Outside the window, leaning in,
Branches of wisteria
Circumscribe a golden grin;

The host with someone indistinct
Converses at the door apart,
The nightingales are singing near
The Convent of the Sacred Heart,

And sang within the bloody wood
When Agamemnon cried aloud,
And let their liquid droppings fall
To stain the stiff dishonoured shroud.