Todd Tarantino
Shirt
for eight solo voices

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Duration: approximately 6 minutes

For further information
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Shirt

The back, the yoke, the yardage. Lapped seams,
The nearly invisible stiches along the collar
Turned in a sweatshop by Koreans or Malaysians

Gossiping over tea and noodles on their break
Or talking money or politics while one fitted
This armpiece with its overseam to the band

Of cuff I button at my wrist. The presser, the cutter,
The wringer, the mangle. The needle, the union,
The treadle, the bobbin. The code. The infamous blaze

At the Triangle Factory in nineteen-eleven.
One hundred and forty-six died in the flames
On the ninth floor, no hydrants, no fire escapes -

The witness in a building across the street
Who watched how a young man helped a girl to step
Up to the windowsill, then held her out

Away from the masonry wall and let her drop.
And then another, as if he were helping them up
To enter a streetcar, and not eternity.

A third before he dropped her put her arms
Around his neck and kissed him. then he held
Her into space, and dropped her. Almost at once

He stepped to the sill himself, his jacket flared
And fluttered up from his shirt as he came down
Air filling up the legs of his gray trousers -

Like Hart Crane's Bedlamite, "shrill shirt ballooning."
Wonderful how the pattern matches perfectly
Across the placket and over the twin bar-tacked

Corners of both pockets, like a strict rhyme
Or a major chord. Prints, plaids, checks,
Houndstooth, Tattersall, Madras. The clan tartans

Invented by mill-owners inspired by the hoax of Ossian,
To control their savage scottish workers, tamed
By a fabricated heraldry: MacGregor,

Bailey, MacMartin. The kilt, devised for workers
To wear among the dusty clattering looms.
Weavers, carders, spinners. The loader,

The docker, the navvy. The planter, the picker, the sorter
Sweating at her machine in a litter of cotton
As slaves in calico headrags sweated in fields:

George Herbert, your descendant is a Black
Lady in South Carolina, her name is Irma
And she inspected my shirt. Its color and fit

And feel and its clean smell have satisfied
Both her and me. We have culled its cost and quality
Down to the buttons of simulated bone,

The buttonholes, the sizing, the facing, the characters
Printed in black on neckband and tail. The shape,
The label, the labor, the color, the shade. The shirt.

–Robert Pinsky

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Shirt

Todd Tarantino
Text: Robert Pinsky

Come parlando, flessible ♩ = c. 80

S
mp
Lapped seams,

S
mp
The back, the yoke the yar - dage.

A
mp
The back, the yoke, the yar - dage The back, the yoke the yar - dage.

A
mp
The back, the yoke, the yar - dage the back, the yoke, the yar - dage.

T
mp
The back, the yoke, The back, the yoke,

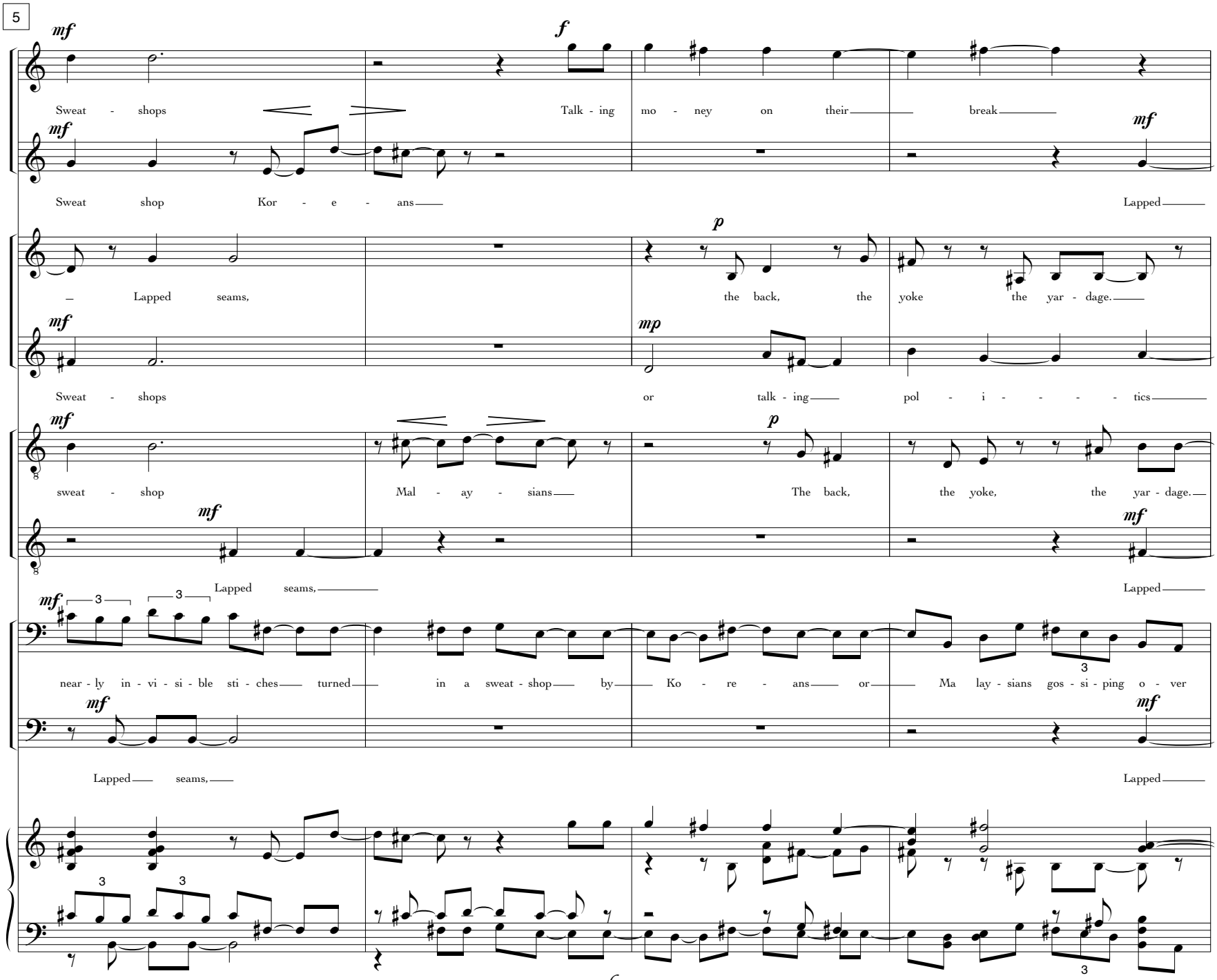
T
mp
The back, the yoke, the yar - dage.

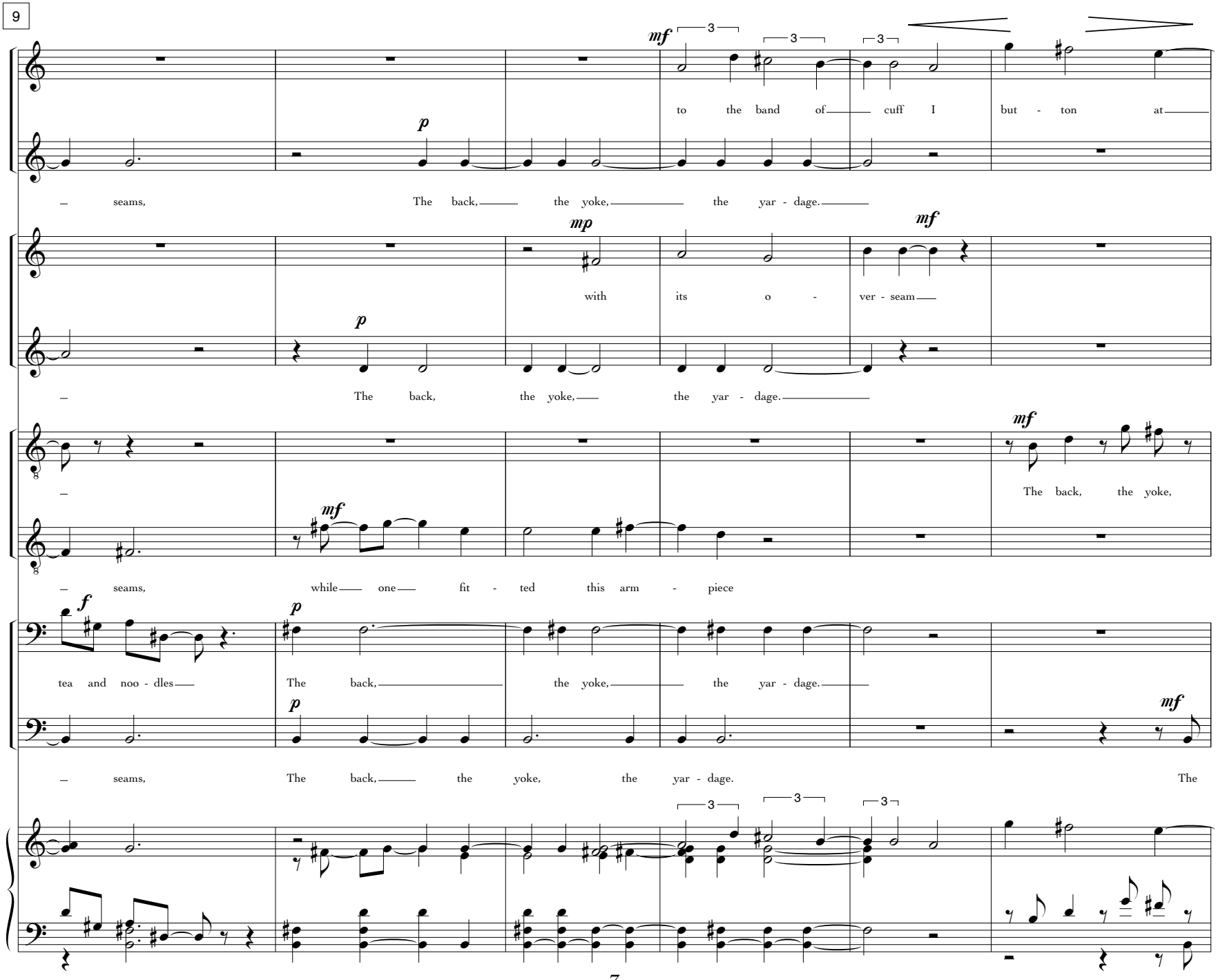
B
mp
Lapped seams,

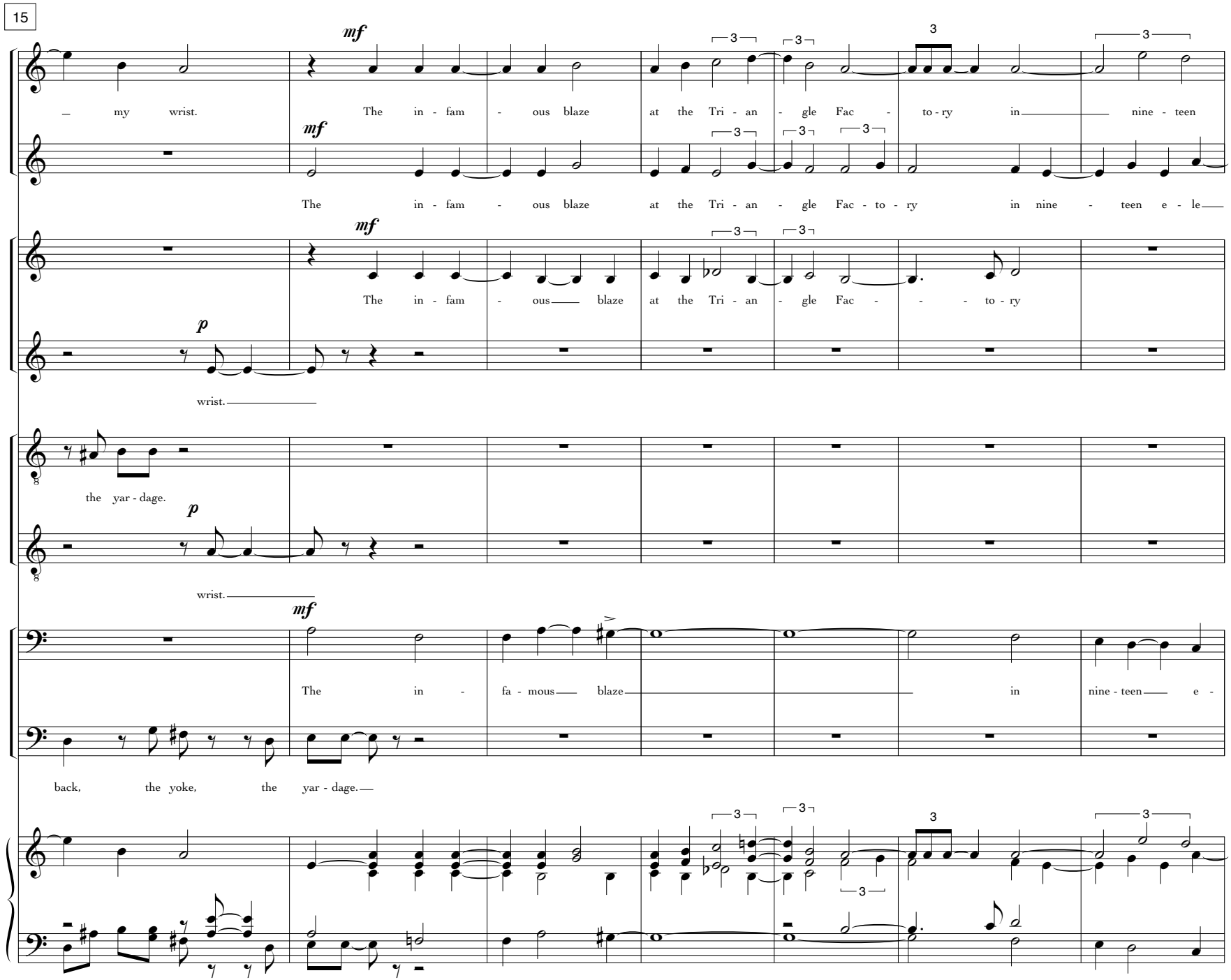
B
mp
Lapped seams,

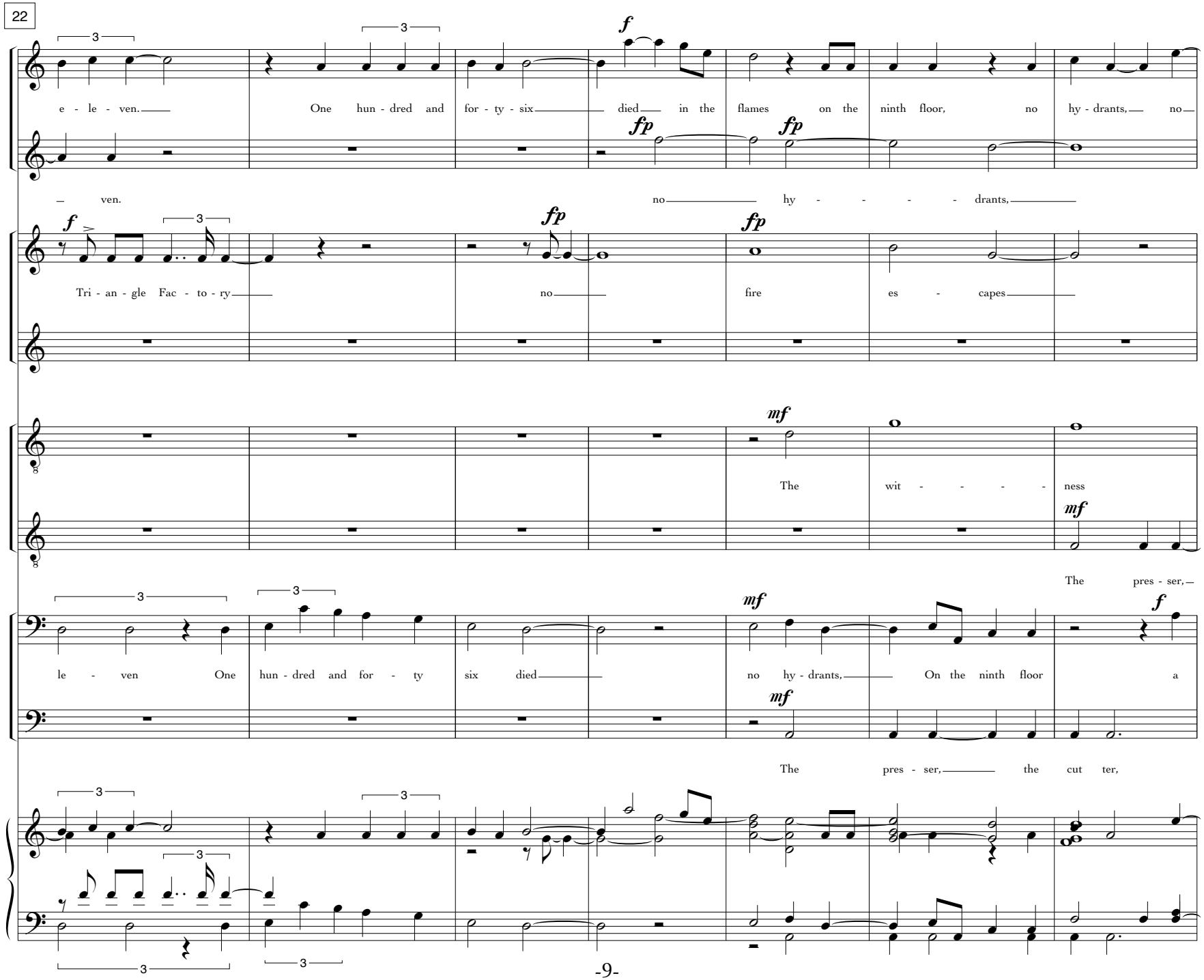
Piano (for rehearsal only)

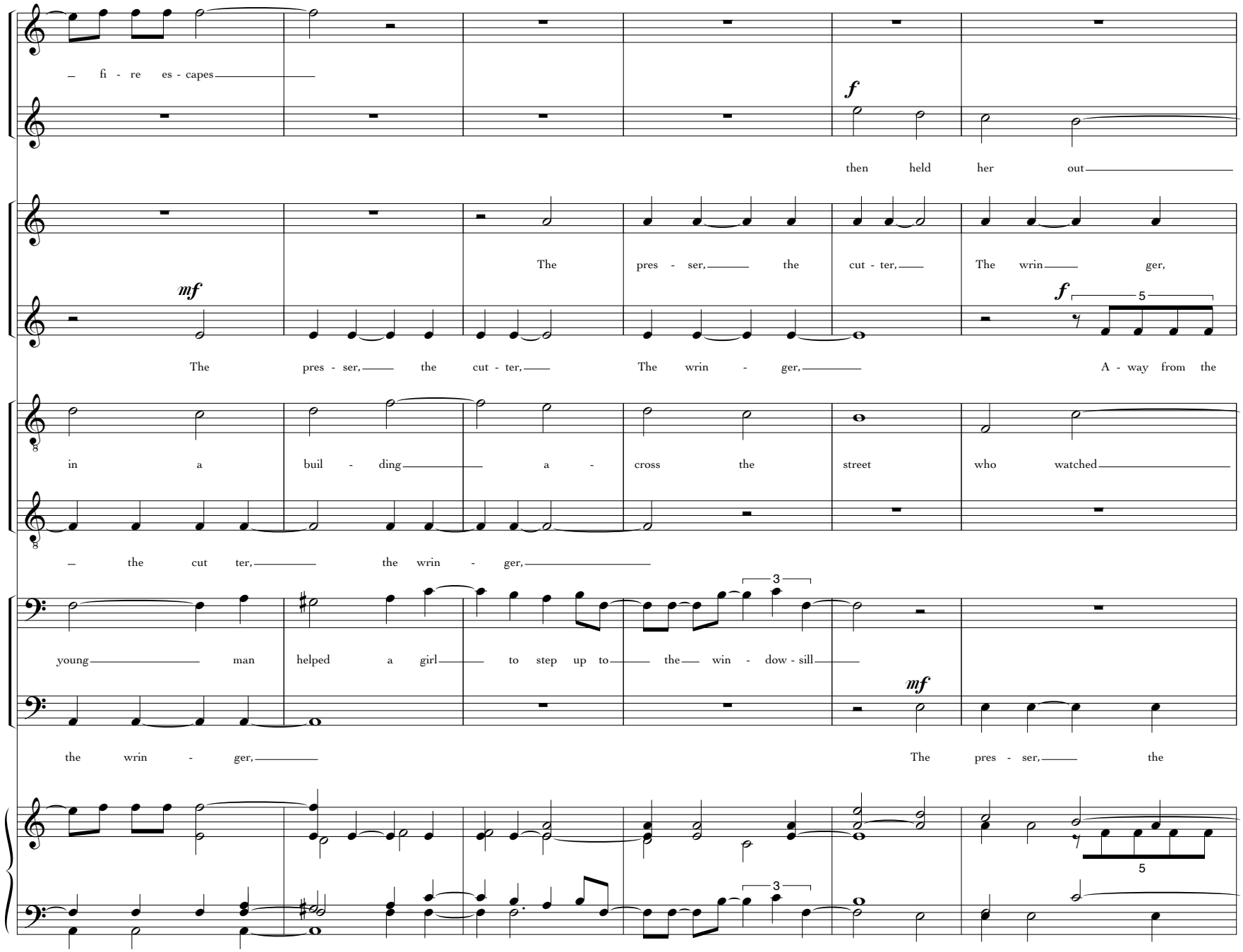
Music © 1994 Todd Tarantino

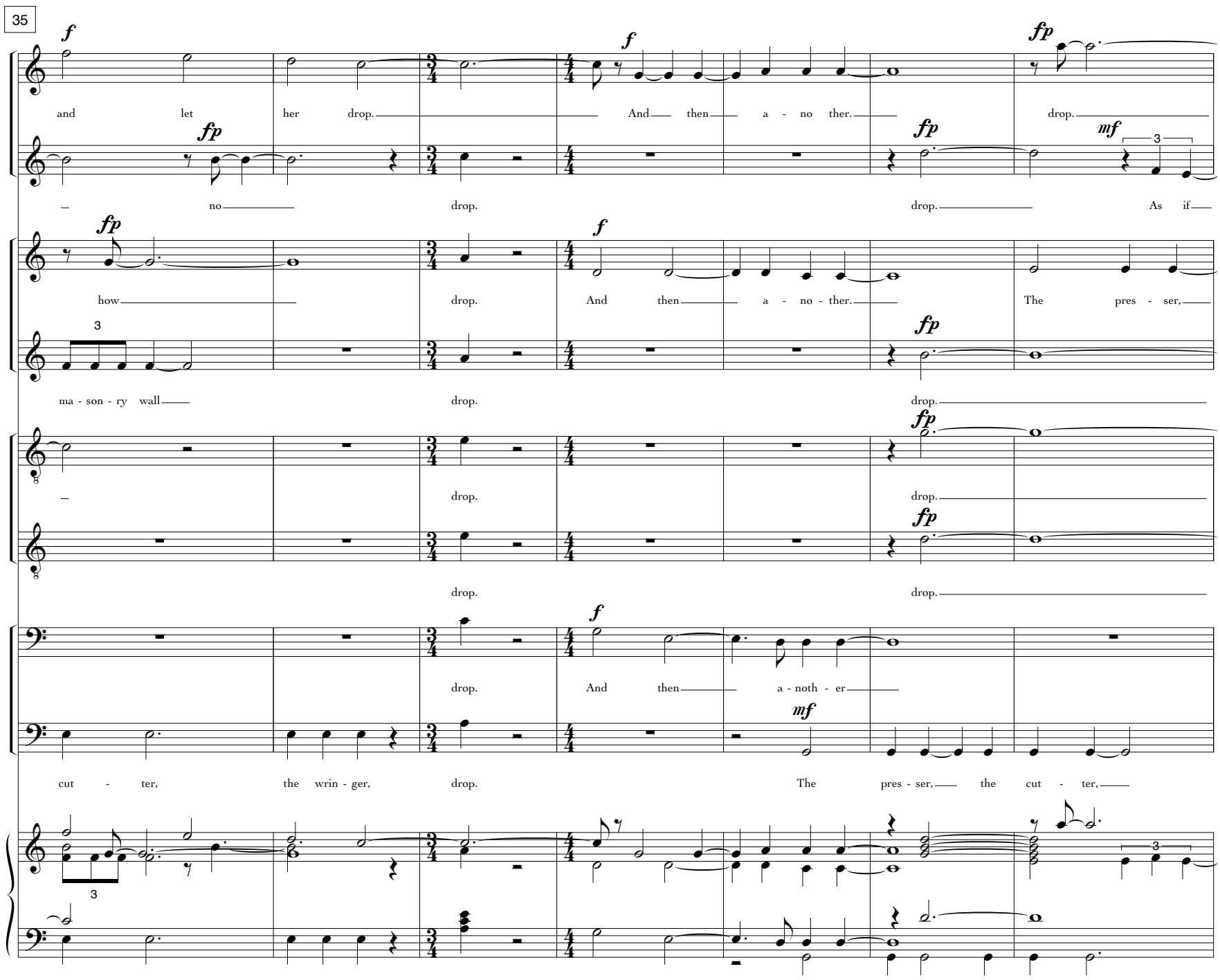

5
mf
f
Sweat - shops
Talk - ing mo - ney on their break
mf
Sweat shop Kor - e - ans
Lapped
p
Lapped seams,
the back, the yoke the yar - dage.
mf
mp
Sweat - shops
or talk - ing pol - i - - - - tics
mf
p
sweat - shop
Mal - ay - sians
The back, the yoke, the yar - dage.
mf
mf
Lapped seams,
Lapped
mf
near - ly in - vi - si - ble sti - ches turned in a sweat - shop by Ko - re - ans or Ma lay - sians gos - si - ping o - ver
mf
Lapped seams,
Lapped

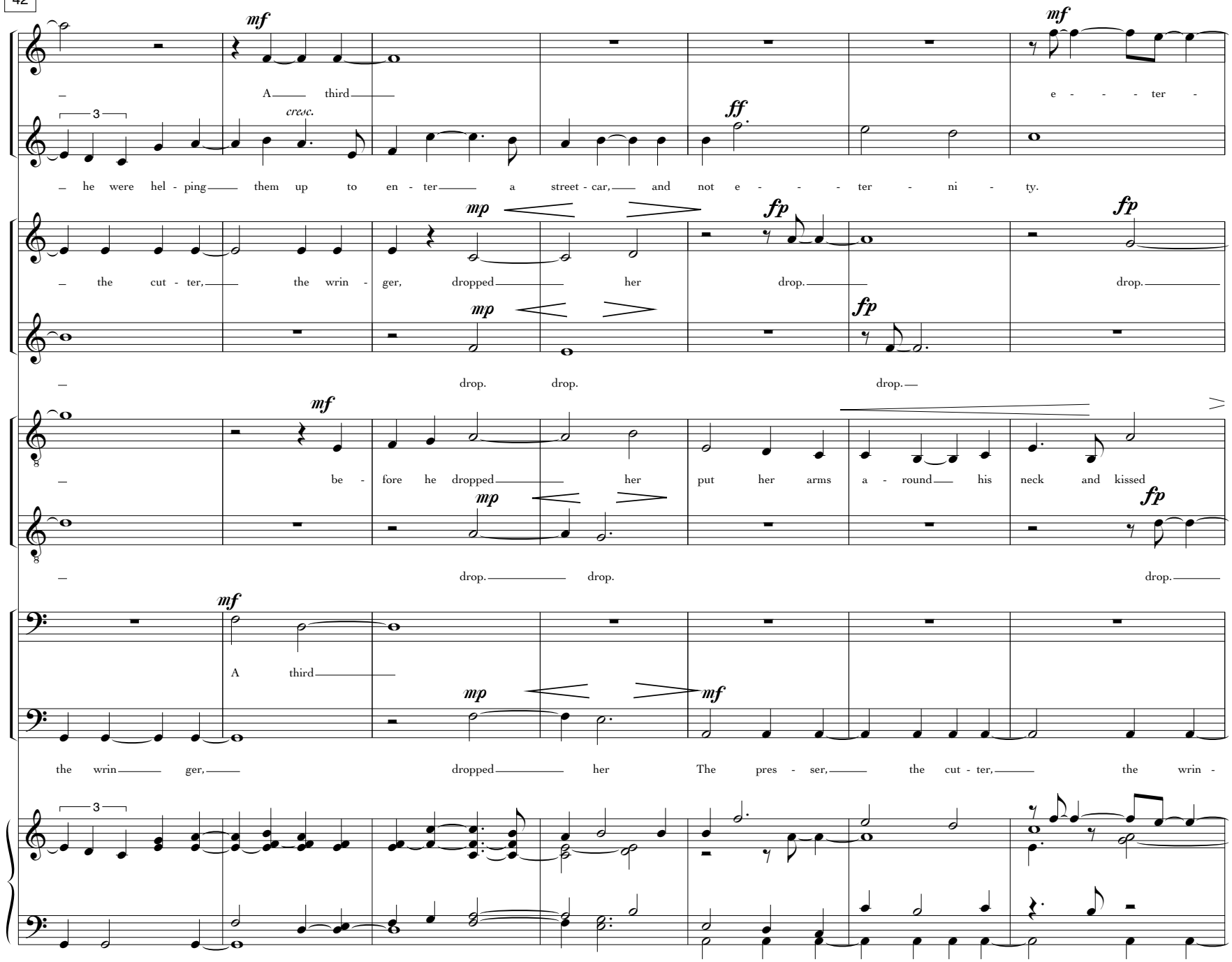

mf
3
3
3
to the band of cuff I but - ton at
p
– seams, The back, the yoke, the yar - dage.
mp
mf
with its o - ver - seam
p
– The back, the yoke, the yar - dage.
mf
The back, the yoke,
mf
– seams, while one fit - ted this arm - piece
f
p
tea and noo - dles The back, the yoke, the yar - dage.
p
mf
– seams, The back, the yoke, the yar - dage. The
3
3
3

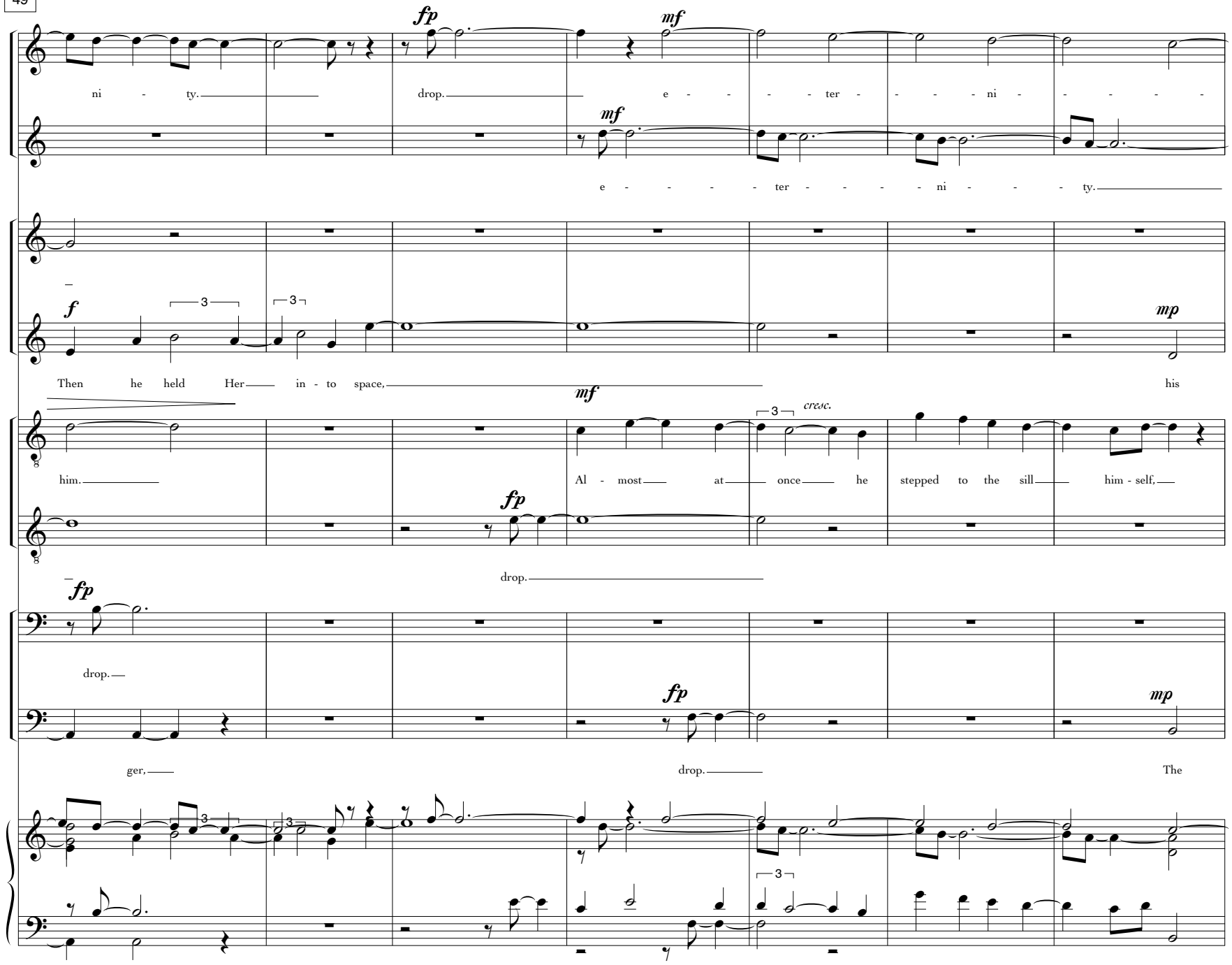

15
mf
– my wrist.
The in - fam - ous blaze at the Tri - an - gle Fac - to - ry in nine - teen
mf
The in - fam - ous blaze at the Tri - an - gle Fac - to - ry in nine - teen e - le
mf
The in - fam - ous blaze at the Tri - an - gle Fac - - - to - ry
p
wrist.
the yar - dage.
p
wrist.
mf
The in - fa - mous blaze in nine - teen e -
back, the yoke, the yar - dage.

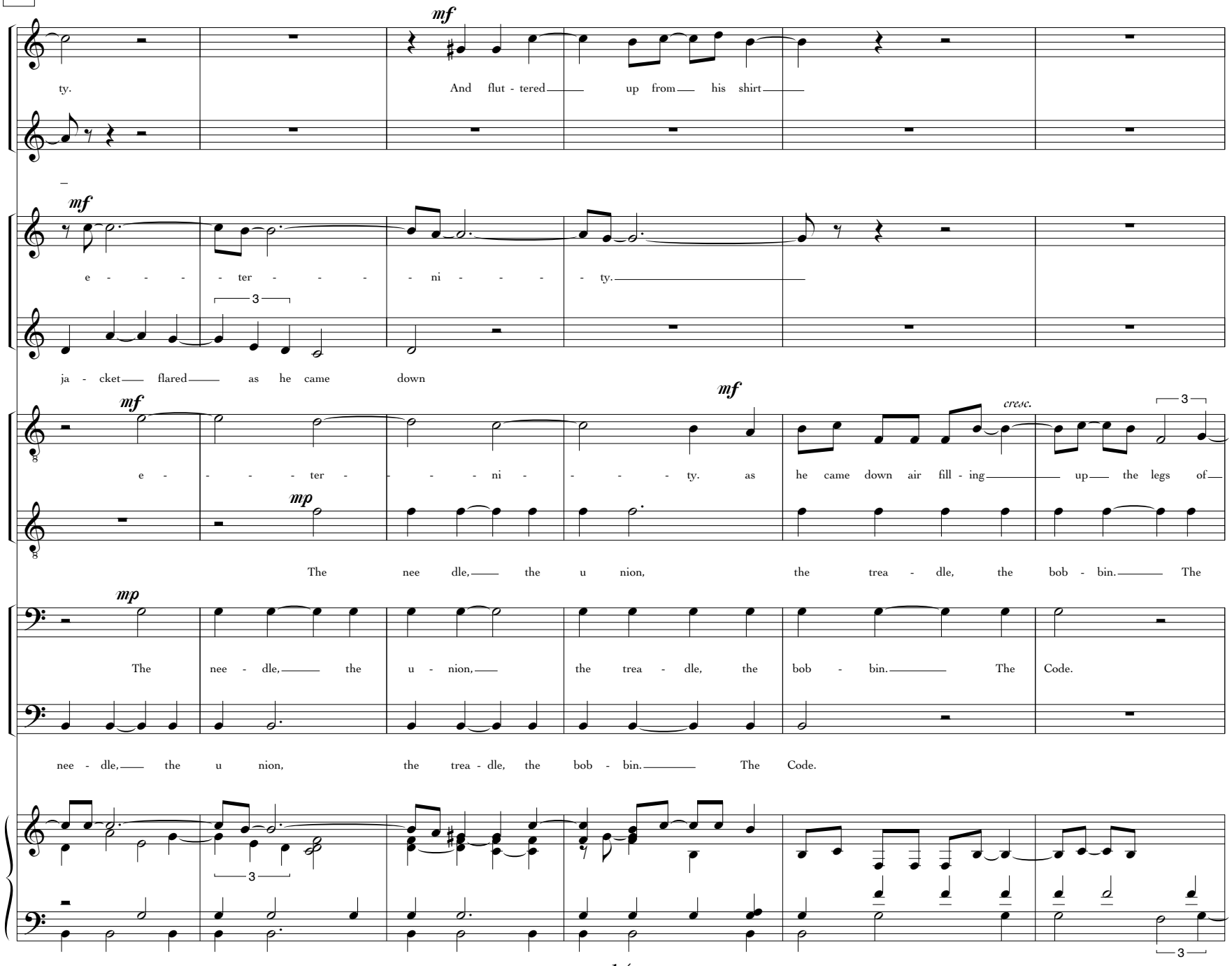

e - le - ven.
One hun - dred and for - ty - six
died
in the
flames
on the
ninth floor,
no
hy - drants,
no
ven.
no
hy - - - - drants,
Tri - an - gle Fac - to - ry
no
fire
es - capes
The
wit - - - - ness
The
pres - ser,
le - ven
One
hun - dred and for - ty
six
died
no hy - drants,
On the ninth floor
a
The
pres - ser,
the
cut
ter,

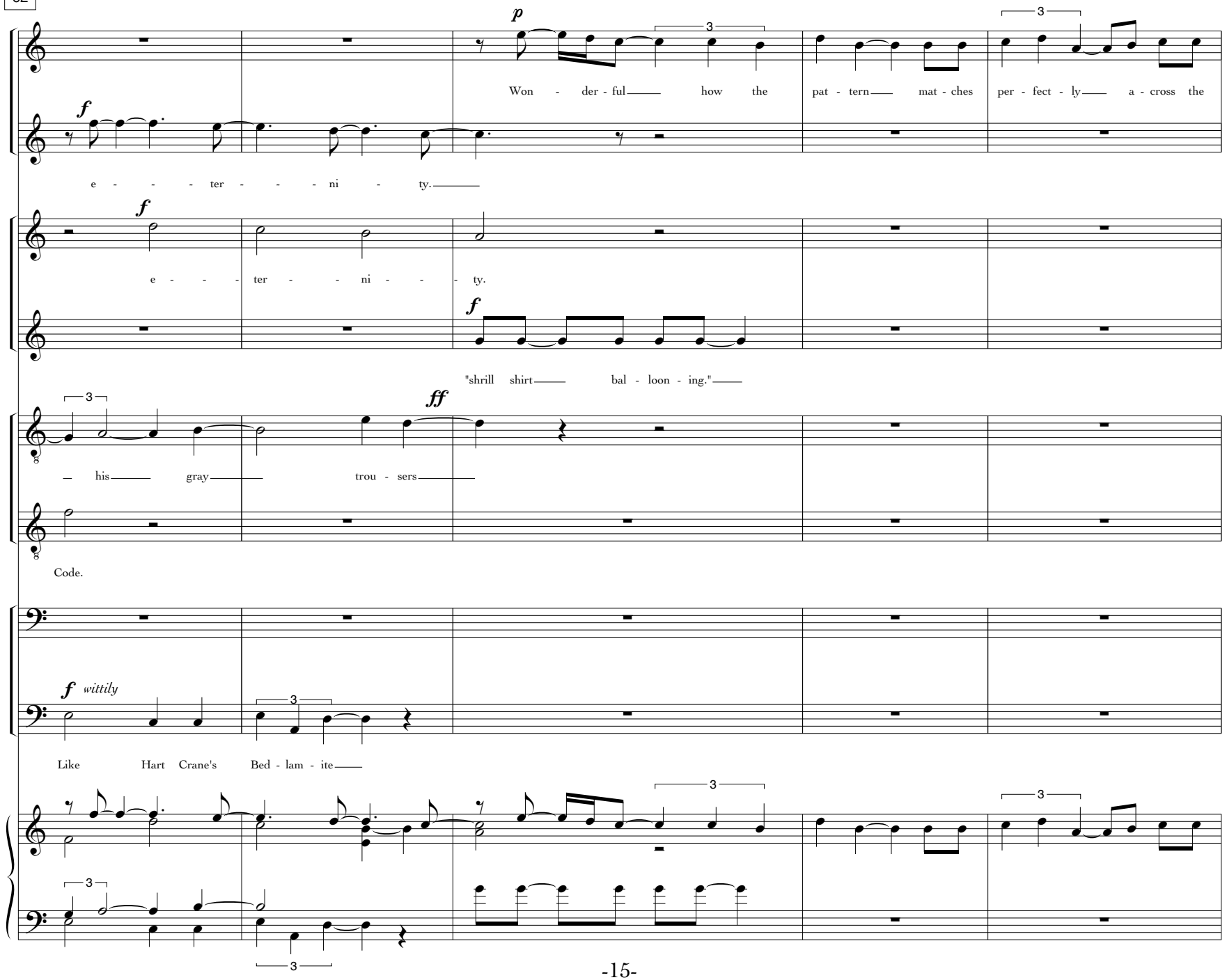

– fi - re es - capes
f
then held her out
The pres - ser, the cut - ter, The wrin ger,
mf
f
5
The pres - ser, the cut - ter, The wrin - ger, A - way from the
in a buil - ding a - cross the street who watched
– the cut ter, the wrin - ger,
3
young man helped a girl to step up to the win - dow - sill
mf
the wrin - ger, The pres - ser, the
3
5

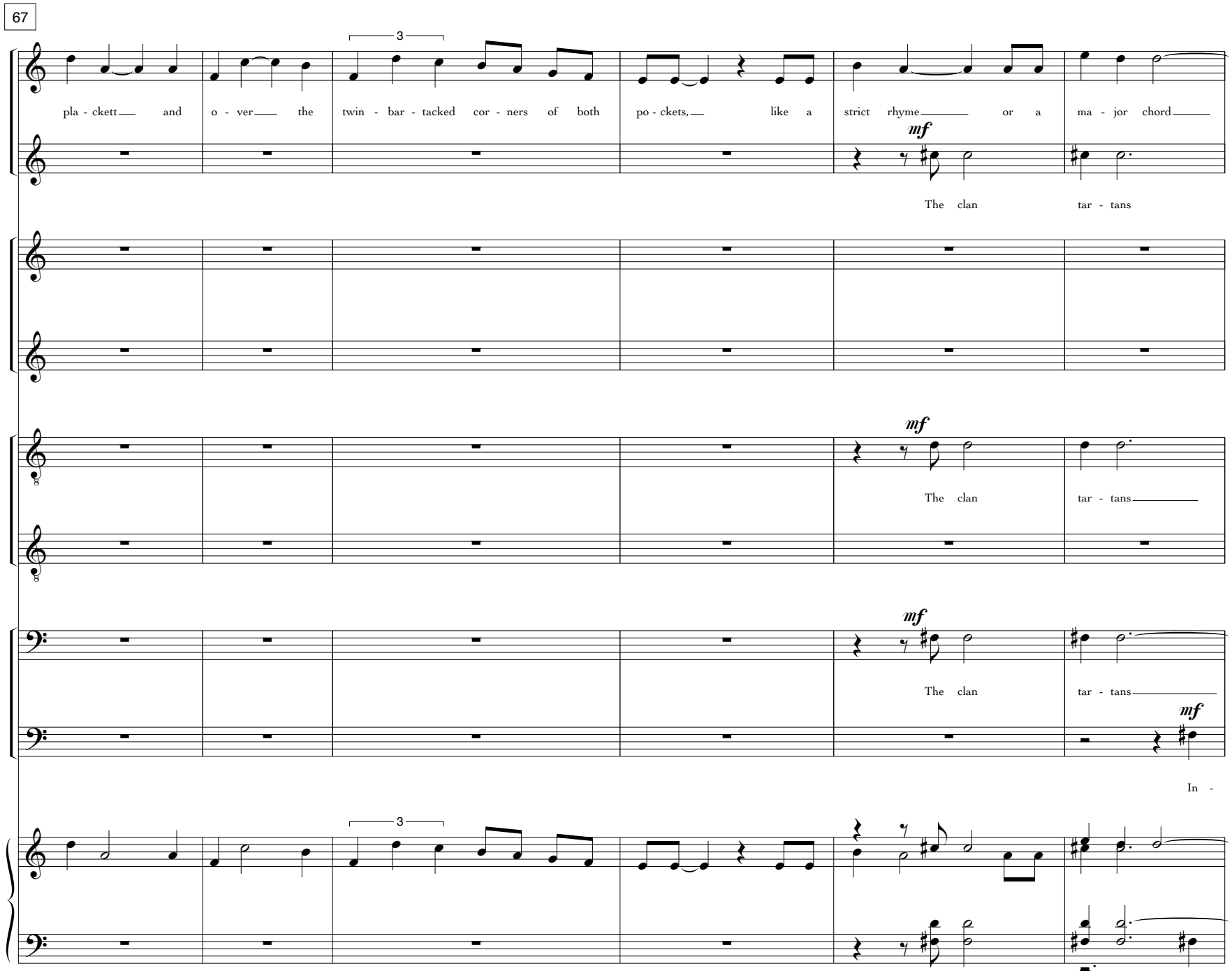

35
and let her drop. And then a - no ther. drop.
– no drop. drop. As if
how drop. And then a - no - ther. The pres - ser,
ma - son - ry wall drop. drop.
– drop. drop.
drop. drop.
drop. And then a - noth - er
cut - ter, the wrin - ger, drop. The pres - ser, the cut - ter,

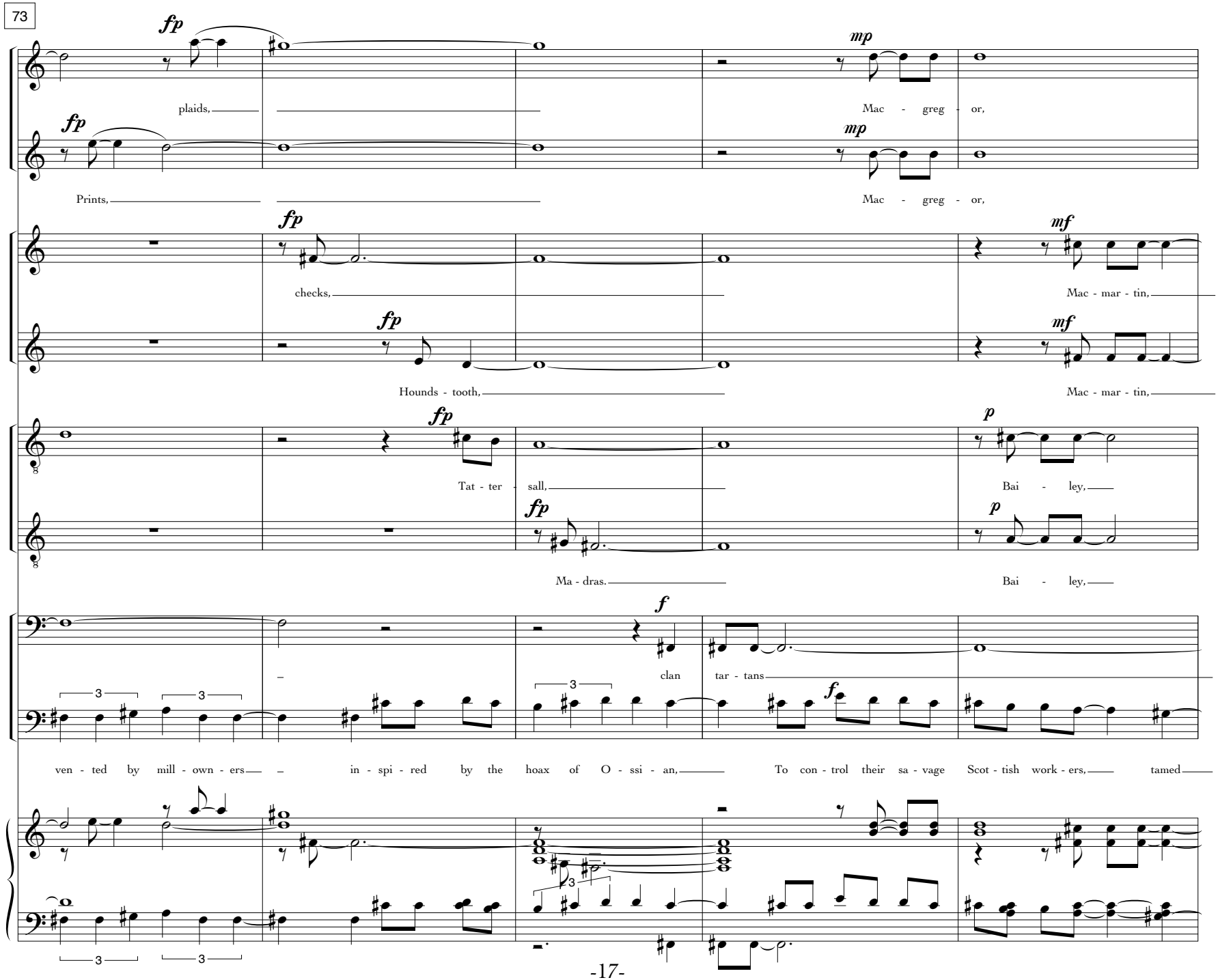

mf
A third
cresc.
ff
e - - - ter -
he were hel - ping them up to en - ter a street - car, and not e - - - ter - ni - ty.
mp
fp
the cut - ter, the wrin - ger, dropped her drop.
drop.
drop. drop.
drop.
be - fore he dropped her put her arms a - round his neck and kissed
drop. drop.
drop.
A third
the wrin - ger, dropped her The pres - ser, the cut - ter, the wrin -

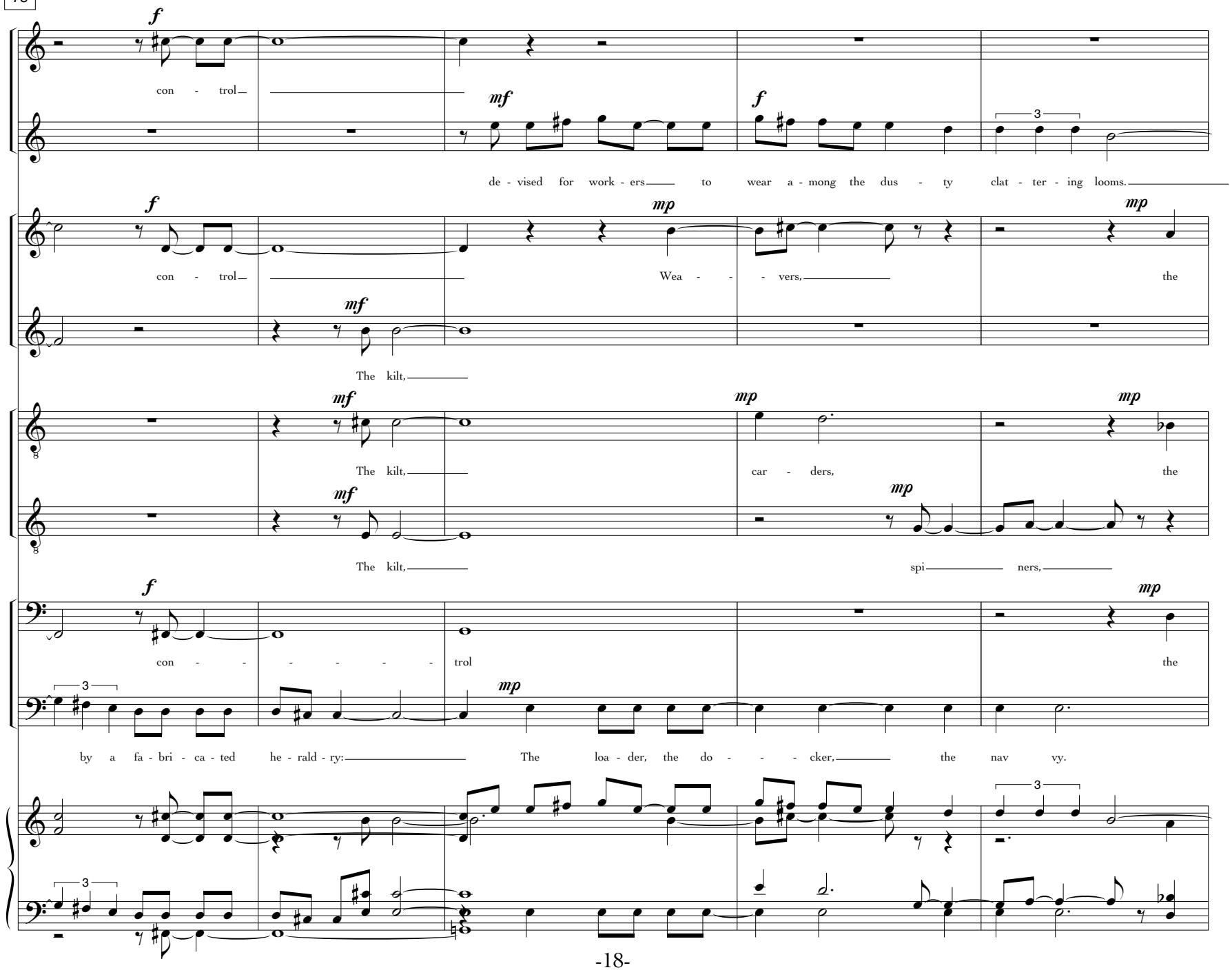

fp
mf
ni - ty.
drop.
e - - - - ter - - - - ni - - - - -
mf
e - - - - ter - - - - ni - - - - ty.
f
3
3
mp
Then he held Her in - to space,
his
mf
cresc.
3
him.
Al - most at once he stepped to the sill him - self,
fp
drop.
fp
drop.
fp
mp
ger,
drop.
The
3
3
3

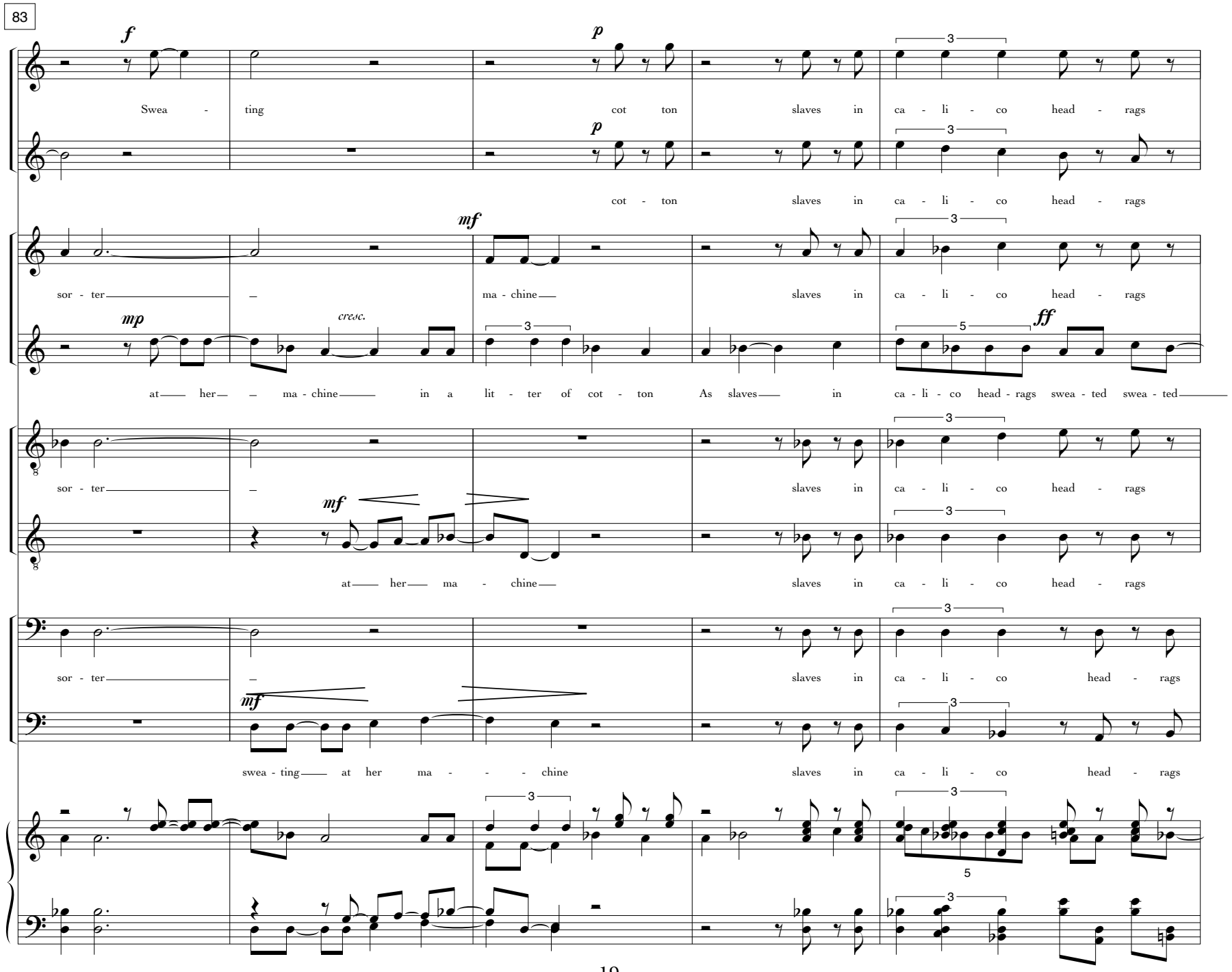

mf
ty.
And flut - tered up from his shirt
mf
e - - - - ter - - - - ni - - - - ty.
3
ja - cket flared as he came down
mf
e - - - - ter - - - - ni - - - - ty. as
mf
cresc.
he came down air fill - ing up the legs of
3
mp
The nee dle, the u nion, the trea - dle, the bob - bin. The
mp
The nee - dle, the u - nion, the trea - dle, the bob - bin. The Code.
nee - dle, the u nion, the trea - dle, the bob - bin. The Code.
3
3

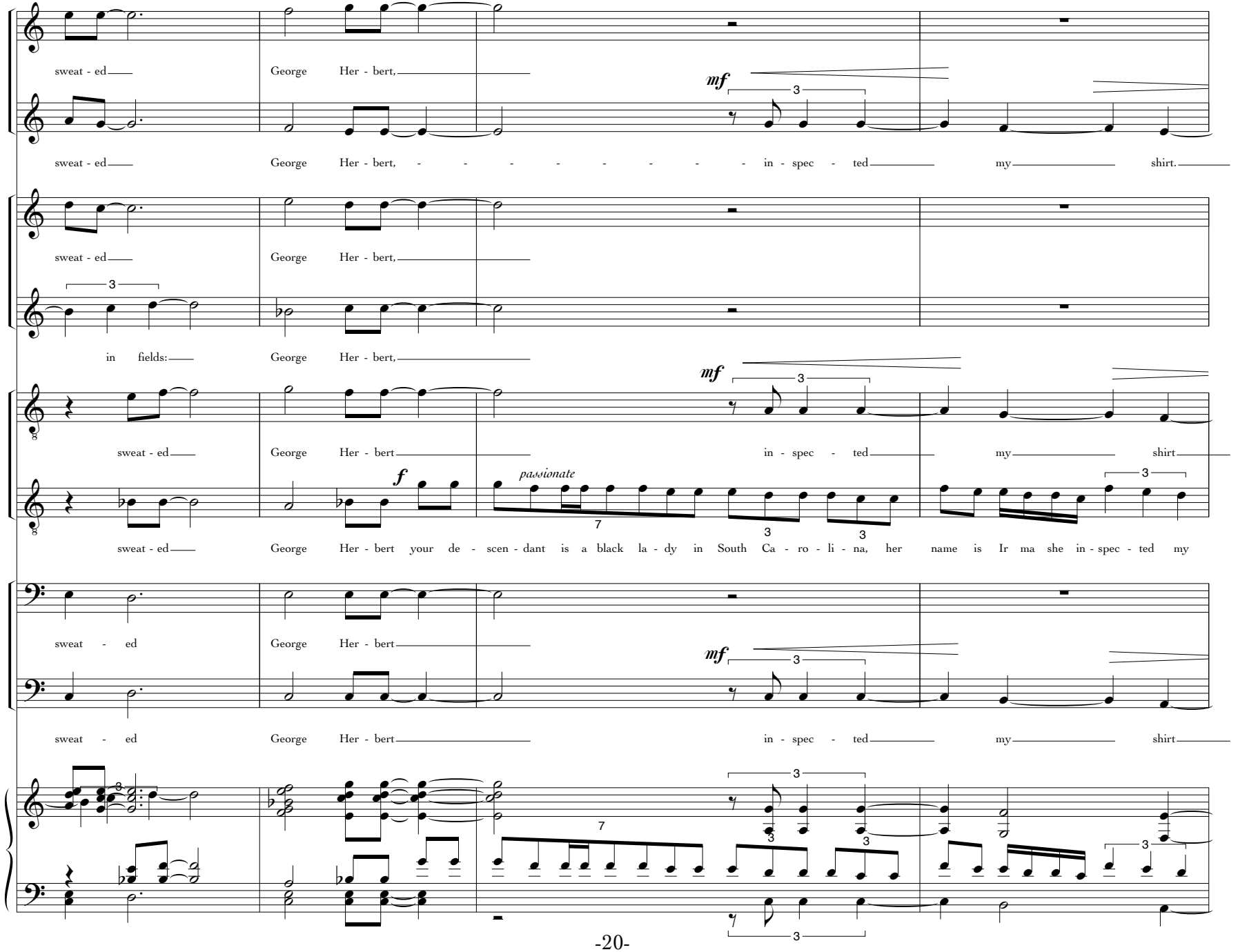

p
Won - der - ful how the pat - tern mat - ches per - fect - ly a - cross the
f
e - - - ter - - - ni - ty.
f
e - - - ter - - - ni - - - ty.
f
"shrill shirt bal - loon - ing."
ff
his gray trou - sers
Code.
f wittily
Like Hart Crane's Bed - lam - ite

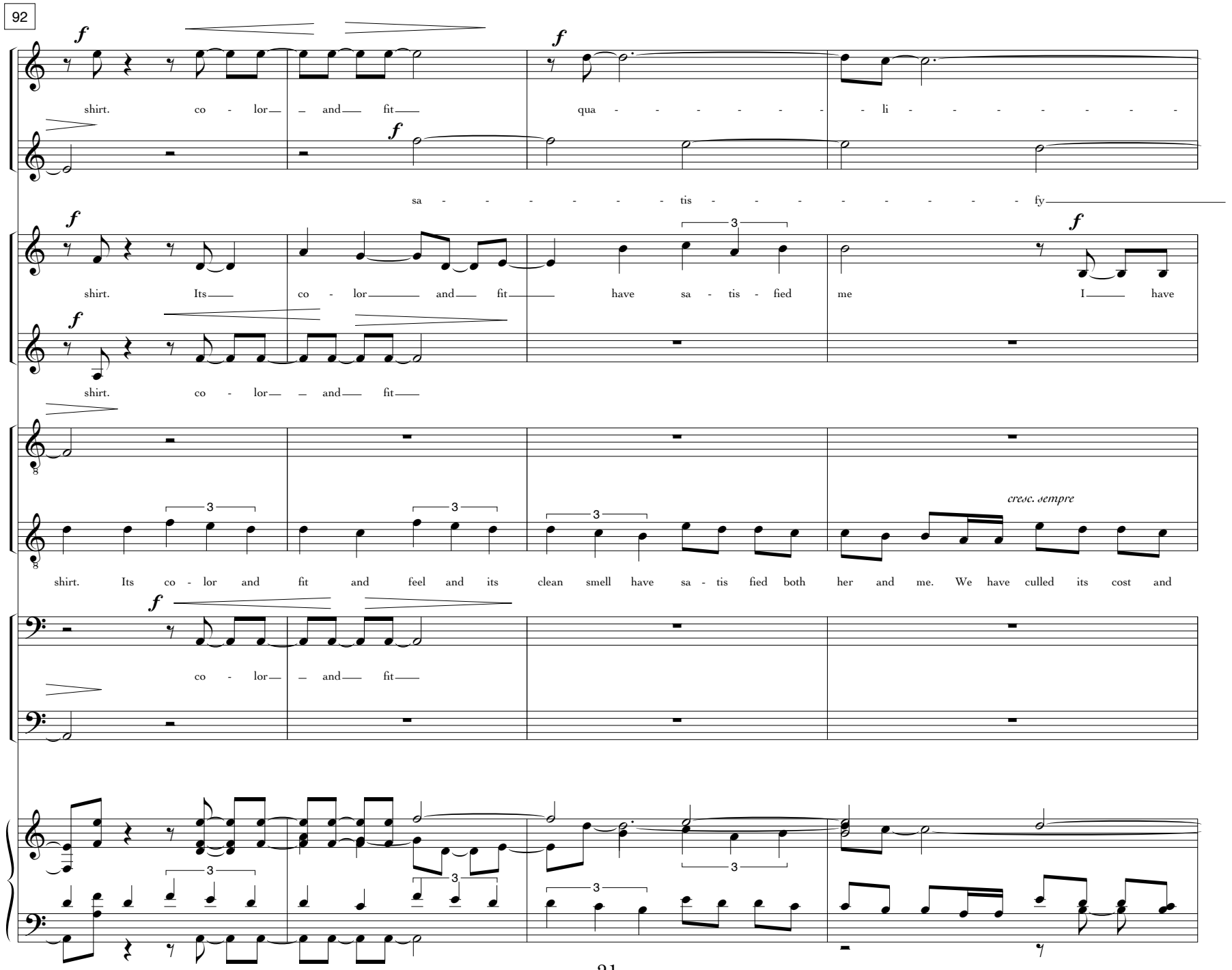

67
3
pla - ckett and o - ver the twin - bar - tacked cor - ners of both po - ckets, like a strict rhyme or a ma - jor chord
mf
The clan tar - tans
mf
The clan tar - tans
mf
The clan tar - tans
mf
In -
3

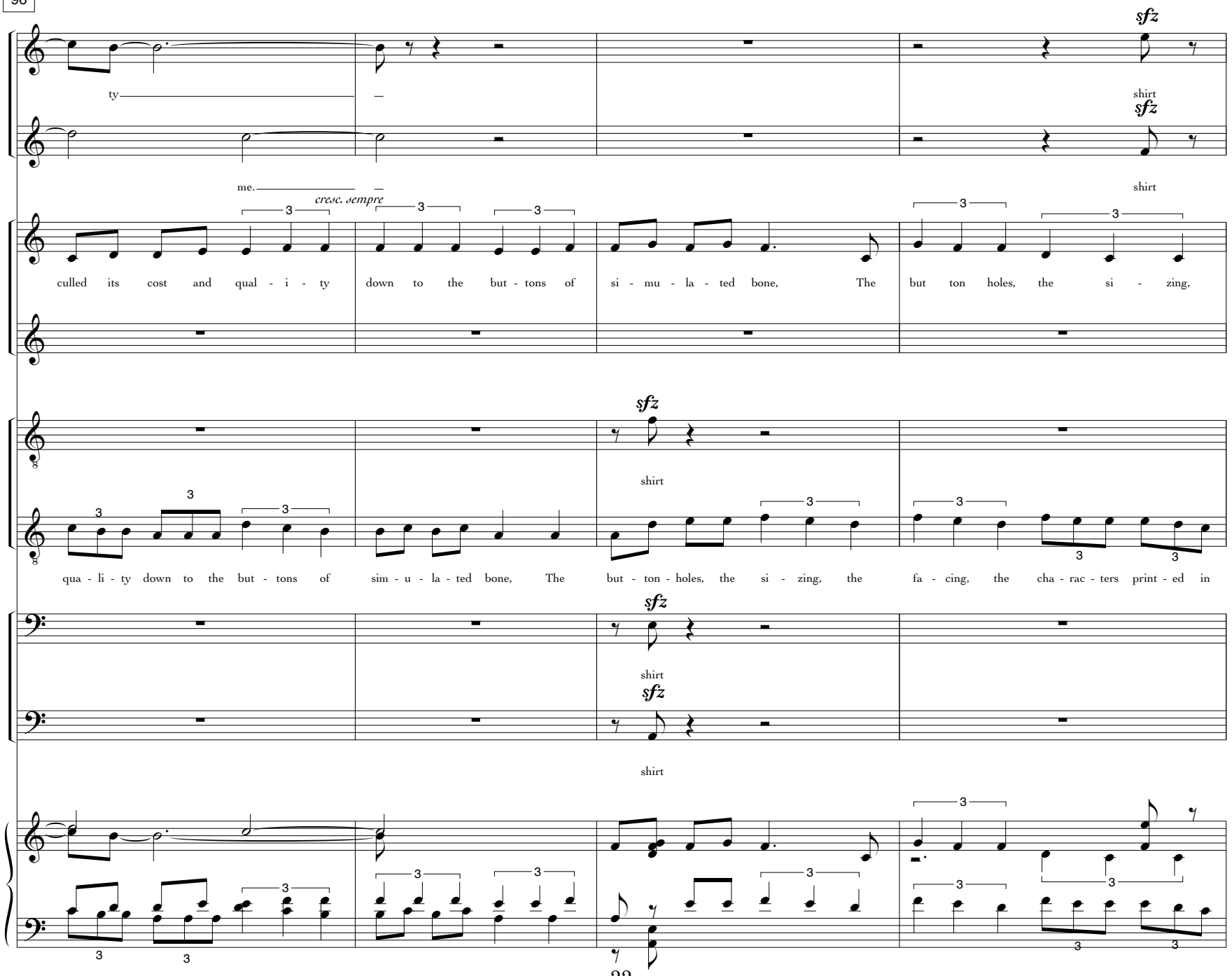

73
fp
plaids,
mp
Mac - greg - or,
fp
Prints,
mp
Mac - greg - or,
fp
checks,
mf
Mac - mar - tin,
fp
Hounds - tooth,
mf
Mac - mar - tin,
fp
Tat - ter - sall,
p
Bai - ley,
fp
Ma - dras.
p
Bai - ley,
f
clan
tar - tans
f
ven - ted by mill - own - ers in - spi - red by the hoax of O - ssi - an, To con - trol their sa - vage Scot - tish work - ers, tamed
3
3
3
3
3

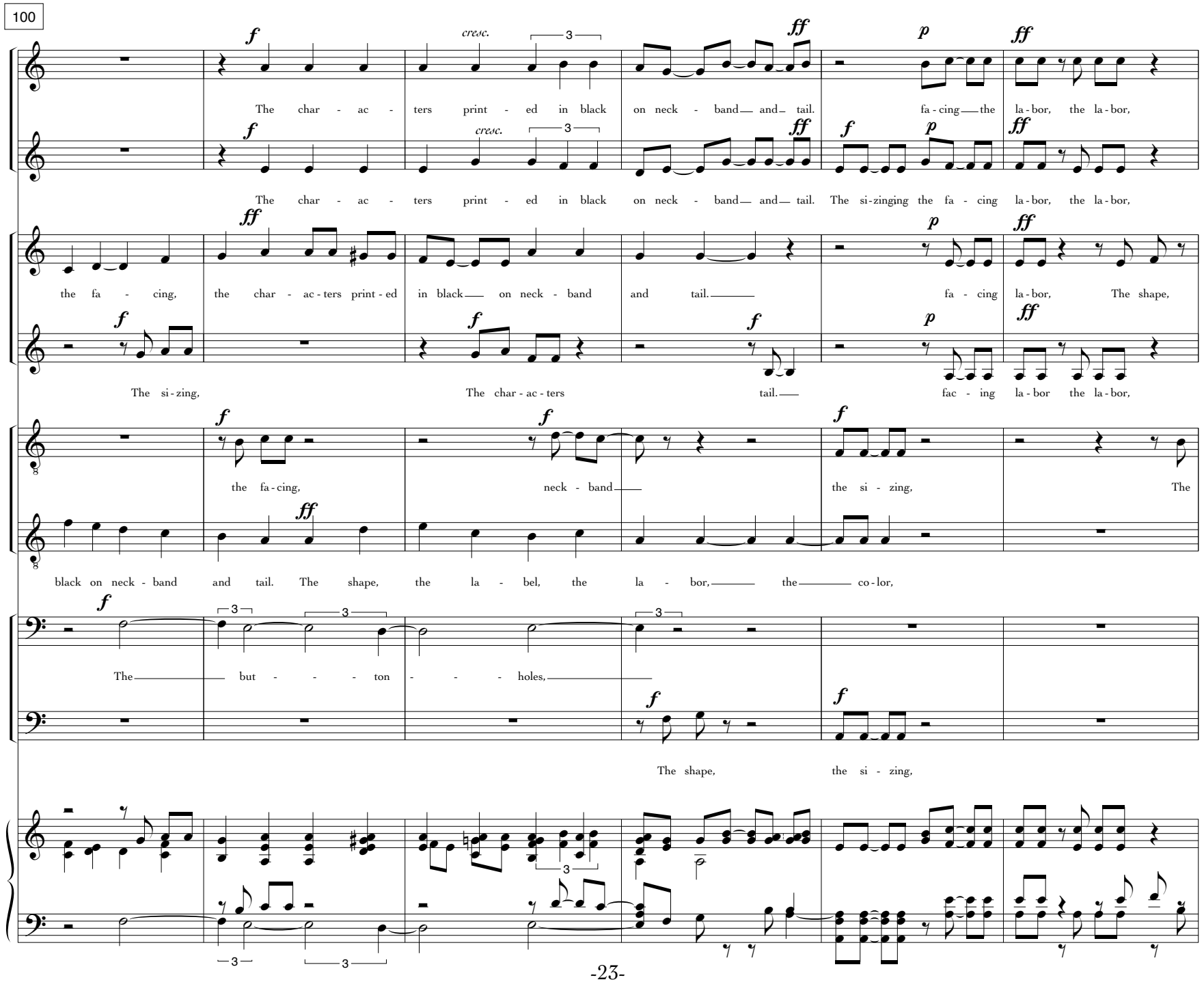

f
con - trol
mf
f
de - vised for work - ers to wear a - mong the dus - ty clat - ter - ing looms.
3
f
con - trol
mf
mp
Wea - - - vers,
mp
the
The kilt,
mf
mp
mp
The kilt,
car - ders,
the
mf
mp
The kilt,
spi - ners,
f
con - - - - - - trol
mp
mp
the
3
by a fa - bri - ca - ted he - rald - ry:
The loa - der, the do - - - cker,
the nav vy.
3
3

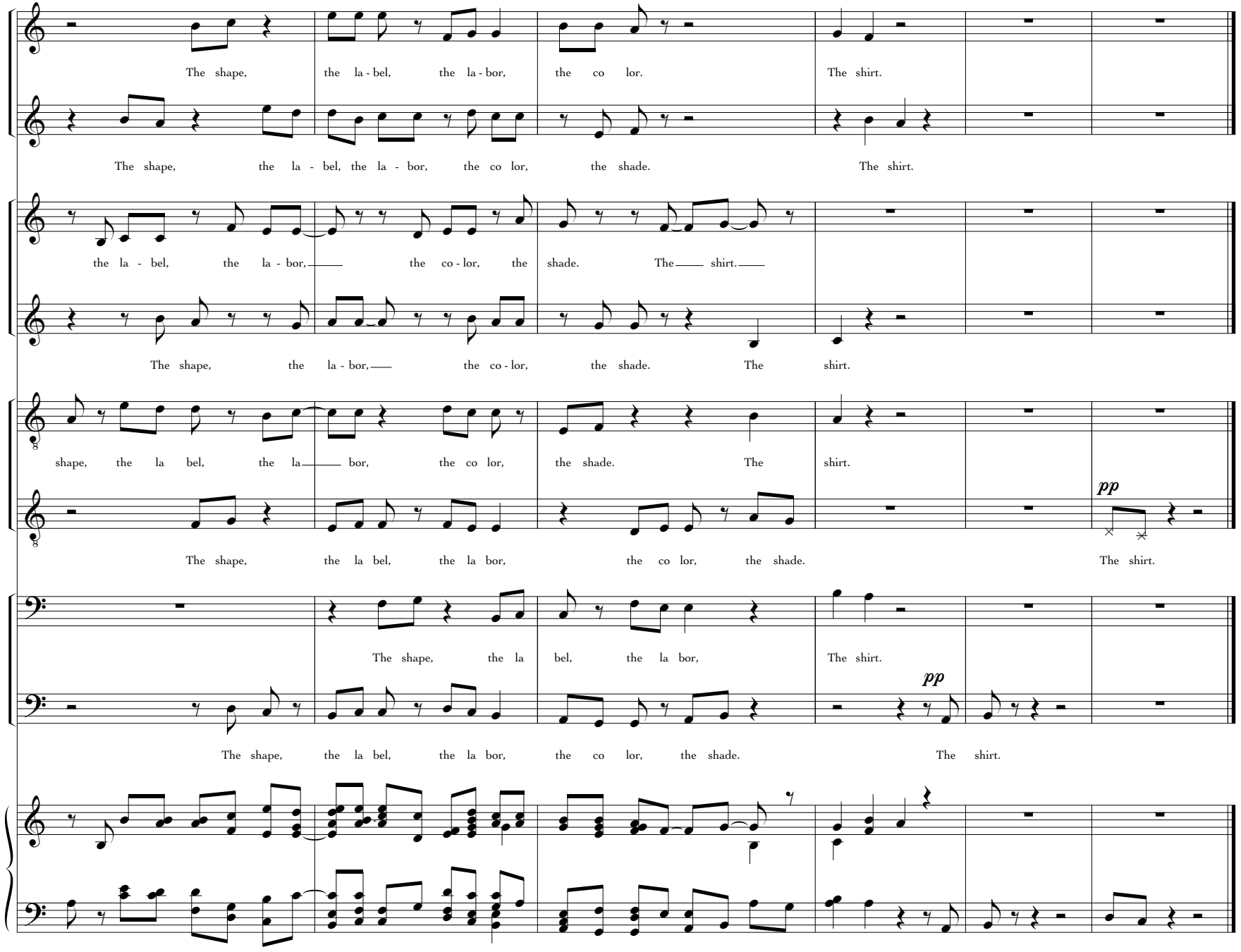

83
f
Swea - ting
p
cot ton
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
p
cot - ton
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
mf
sor - ter
ma - chine
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
mp
cresc.
ff
at her ma - chine in a lit - ter of cot - ton
As slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags swea - ted swea - ted
sor - ter
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
mf
at her ma - chine
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
sor - ter
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags
mf
swea - ting at her ma - - - chine
slaves in
ca - li - co head - rags


sweat - ed George Her - bert,
mf
sweat - ed George Her - bert, - - - - - - - - - in - spec - ted my shirt.
sweat - ed George Her - bert,
in fields: George Her - bert,
sweat - ed George Her - bert
mf
in - spec - ted my shirt
f
passionate
sweat - ed George Her - bert your de - scen - dant is a black la - dy in South Ca - ro - li - na, her name is Ir ma she in - spec - ted my
sweat - ed George Her - bert
mf
sweat - ed George Her - bert in - spec - ted my shirt


92
shirt. co - lor — and — fit —
qua - - - - - - - li - - - - - - - -
sa - - - - - - - tis - - - - - - - - - fy
shirt. Its — co - lor — and — fit — have sa - tis - fied me I — have
shirt. co - lor — and — fit —
cresc. sempre
shirt. Its co - lor and fit and feel and its clean smell have sa - tis fied both her and me. We have culled its cost and
co - lor — and — fit —


sfz
ty
shirt
sfz
me.
cresc. sempre
shirt
culled its cost and qual - i - ty down to the but - tons of si - mu - la - ted bone, The but ton holes, the si - zing,
sfz
shirt
qua - li - ty down to the but - tons of sim - u - la - ted bone, The but - ton - holes, the si - zing, the fa - cing, the cha - rac - ters print - ed in
sfz
shirt
sfz
shirt


100
The char - ac - ters print - ed in black on neck - band and tail. fa - cing the la - bor, the la - bor,
The char - ac - ters print - ed in black on neck - band and tail. The si - zinging the fa - cing la - bor, the la - bor,
the fa - cing, the char - ac - ters print - ed in black on neck - band and tail. fa - cing la - bor, The shape,
The si - zing, The char - ac - ters tail. fac - ing la - bor the la - bor,
the fa - cing, neck - band the si - zing, The
black on neck - band and tail. The shape, the la - bel, the la - bor, the co - lor,
The but - - - ton - - - holes,
The shape, the si - zing,


The shape, the la - bel, the la - bor, the co lor. The shirt.
The shape, the la - bel, the la - bor, the co lor, the shade. The shirt.
the la - bel, the la - bor, the co - lor, the shade. The shirt.
The shape, the la - bor, the co - lor, the shade. The shirt.
shape, the la bel, the la bor, the co lor, the shade. The shirt.
pp
The shape, the la bel, the la bor, the co lor, the shade. The shirt.
The shape, the la bel, the la bor, The shirt.
pp
The shape, the la bel, the la bor, the co lor, the shade. The shirt.