FOR THE DAUGHTER I MAY NEVER HAVE

Mezzo-Soprano & Piano

daletrumbore
composer

FOR THE DAUGHTER I MAY NEVER HAVE

What can I say to you,
you who may never exist,
you who would have my eyes,
enjoy what I detest,
you who would eat tomatoes like apples,
love soccer and tennis,
and pick the olives out of your salad?

Tell me how, as if this were simple:
where to go for dinner and what to order.
Never mind how anyone decides anything
three days from an earthquake
and barely one mile from the fire;
I can hardly pick one dish,
let alone upend my life
for a girl who hates olives.

But wanting both lifetimes is not the same
as not wanting you, my dear,
who may or may not exist in the future,
you who would wrinkle our sheets,
sleep in, take large bowls of cereal
up to your room and forget
to bring them back down.

Tell me it's selfish, choosing
airplanes and grand pianos
over you, my dear.
Tell me it's selfish, you who would
inherit his teeth, smash glass on the stairs,
spit out words you'd regret,
and call me by my first name.

Sure, I would love you through broken glass,
names, teeth, and regret. But I am as certain
that I may not get the chance,
may refuse to lend you my ribcage
or say your name out loud.

(text, continued)

Teach me how to swallow a fate
defined by the absence of you.
Teach me what I would become,
who you would be, if I were your
tell me who I am. Give me
a lifetime to decide. Give me the life
I've chosen for both of us,
then forgive me and give me another.

Dale Trumbore

PROGRAM NOTE

For the Daughter I May Never Have was commissioned by the Pennsylvania State University Glee Club, Dr. Christopher Kiver, Conductor. This commission was made possible in part by a Faculty Research Grant from the Penn State College of Arts and Architecture.

The 2023 art-song arrangement of this work is dedicated to mezzo-soprano Mairin Srygley.

PERFORMANCE NOTE

When two or more notes are marked in the vocal line, either choice is equally desirable. Stick with that higher or lower choice for the entire phrase.

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The choral version of this piece was commissioned for the Pennsylvania State University Glee Club, Dr. Christopher Kiver, Conductor, and made possible in part by a Faculty Research Grant from the Penn State College of Arts and Architecture.
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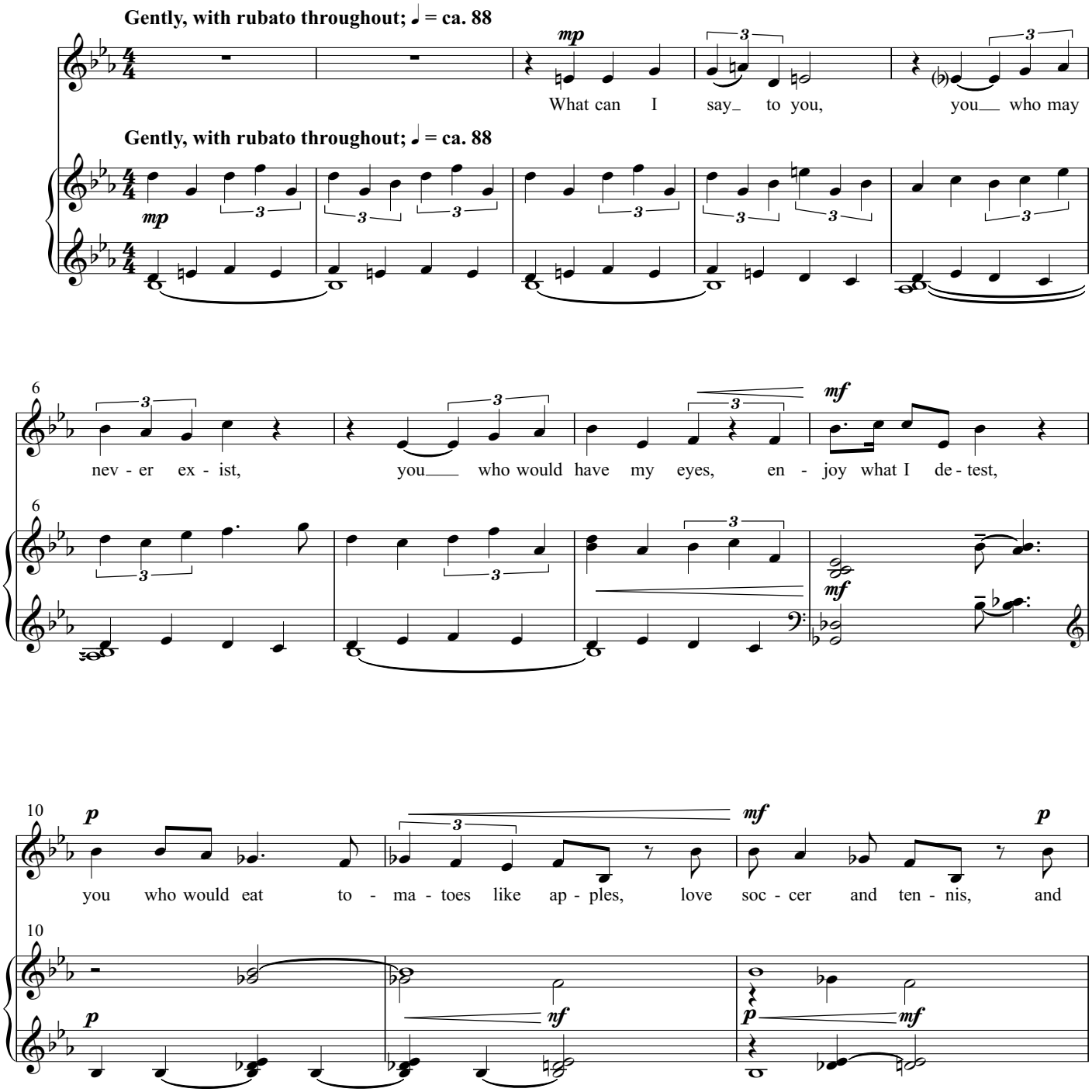

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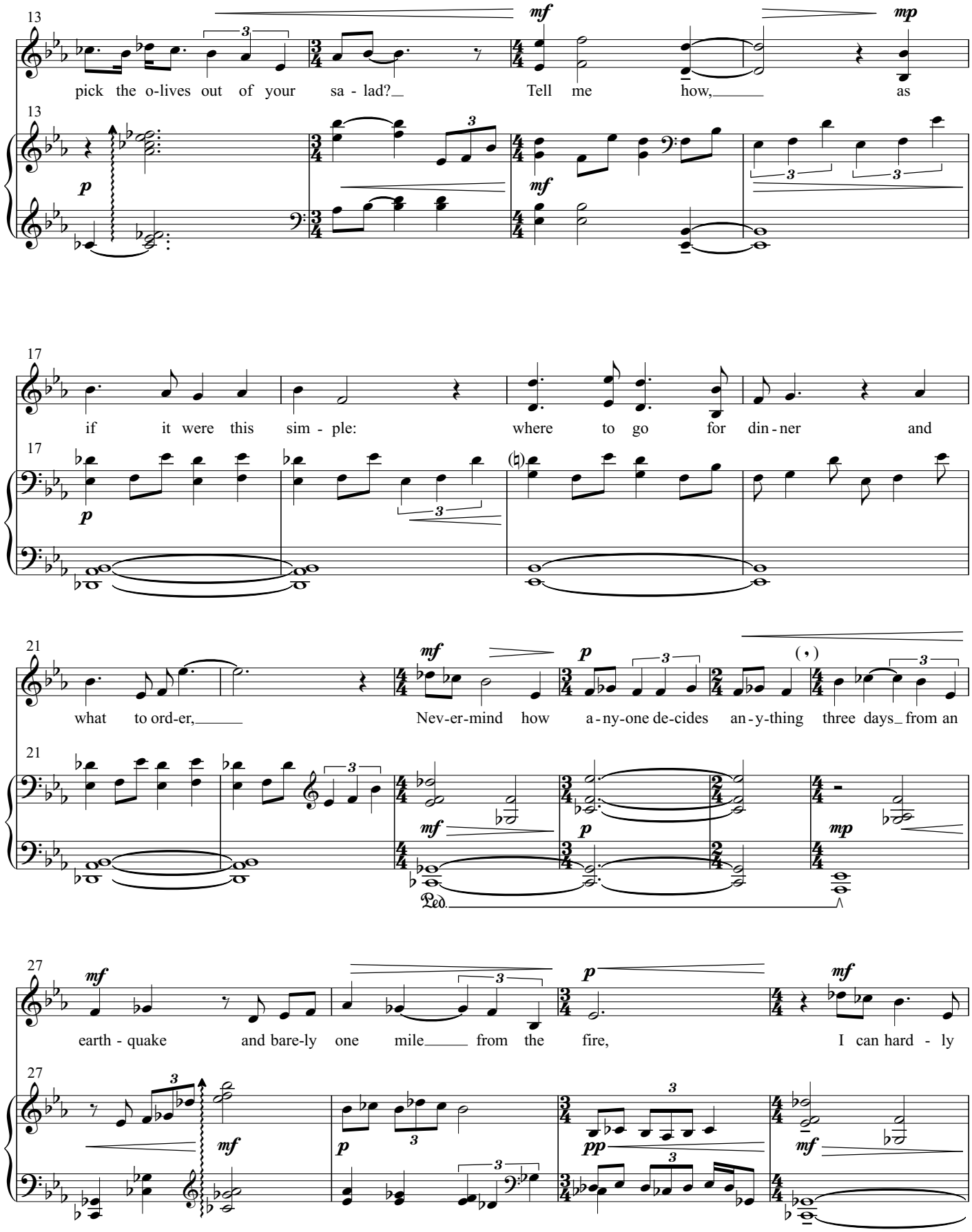
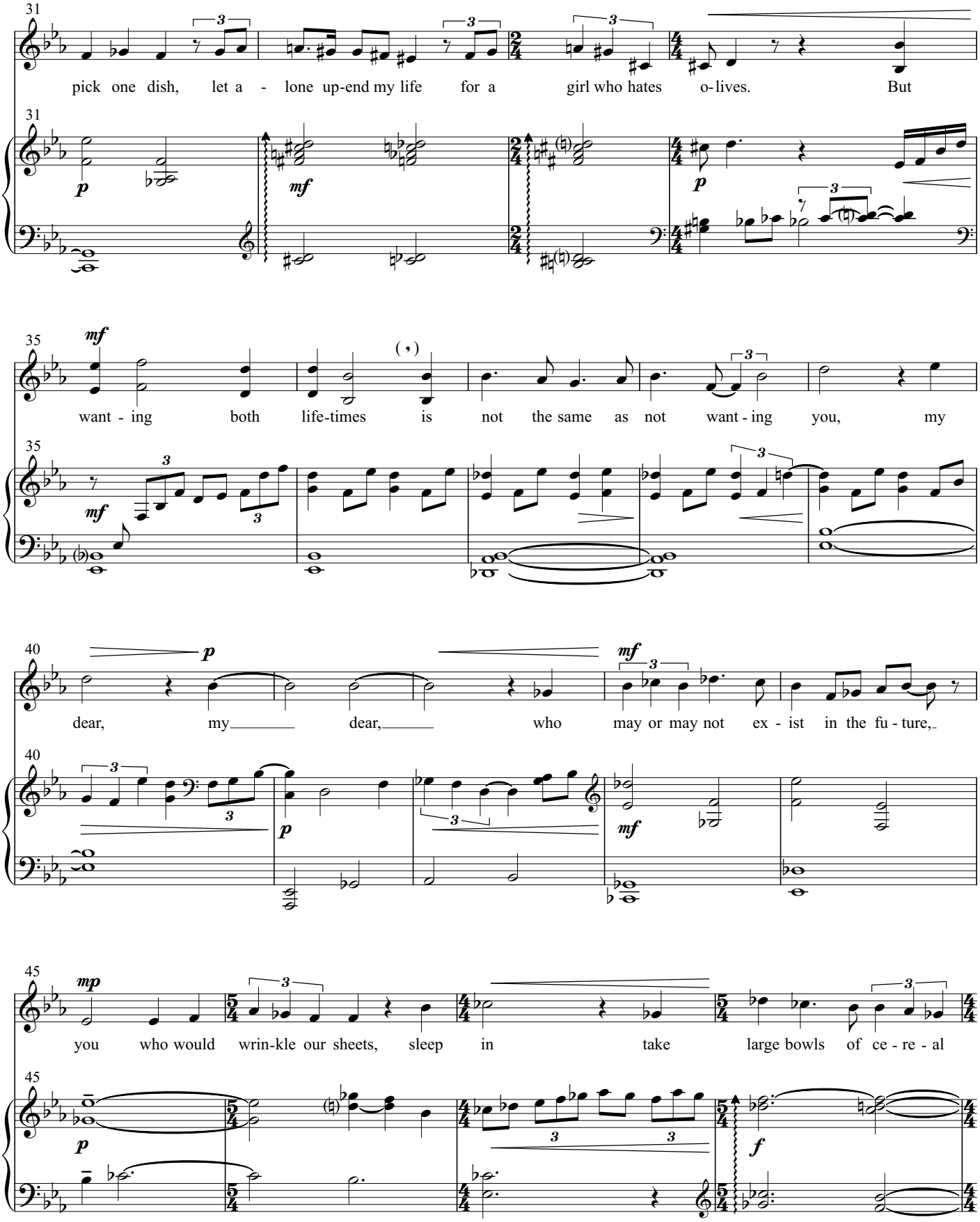
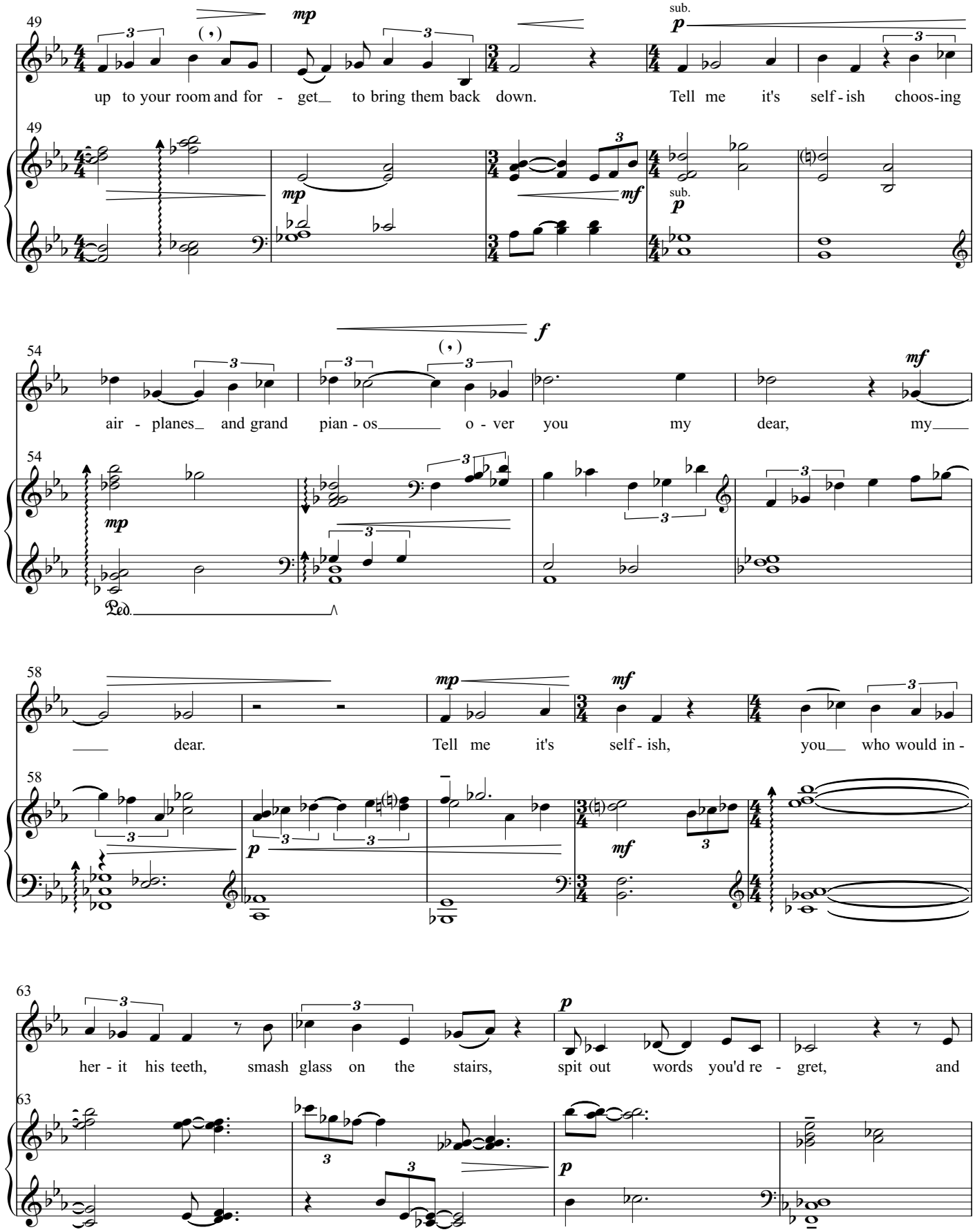
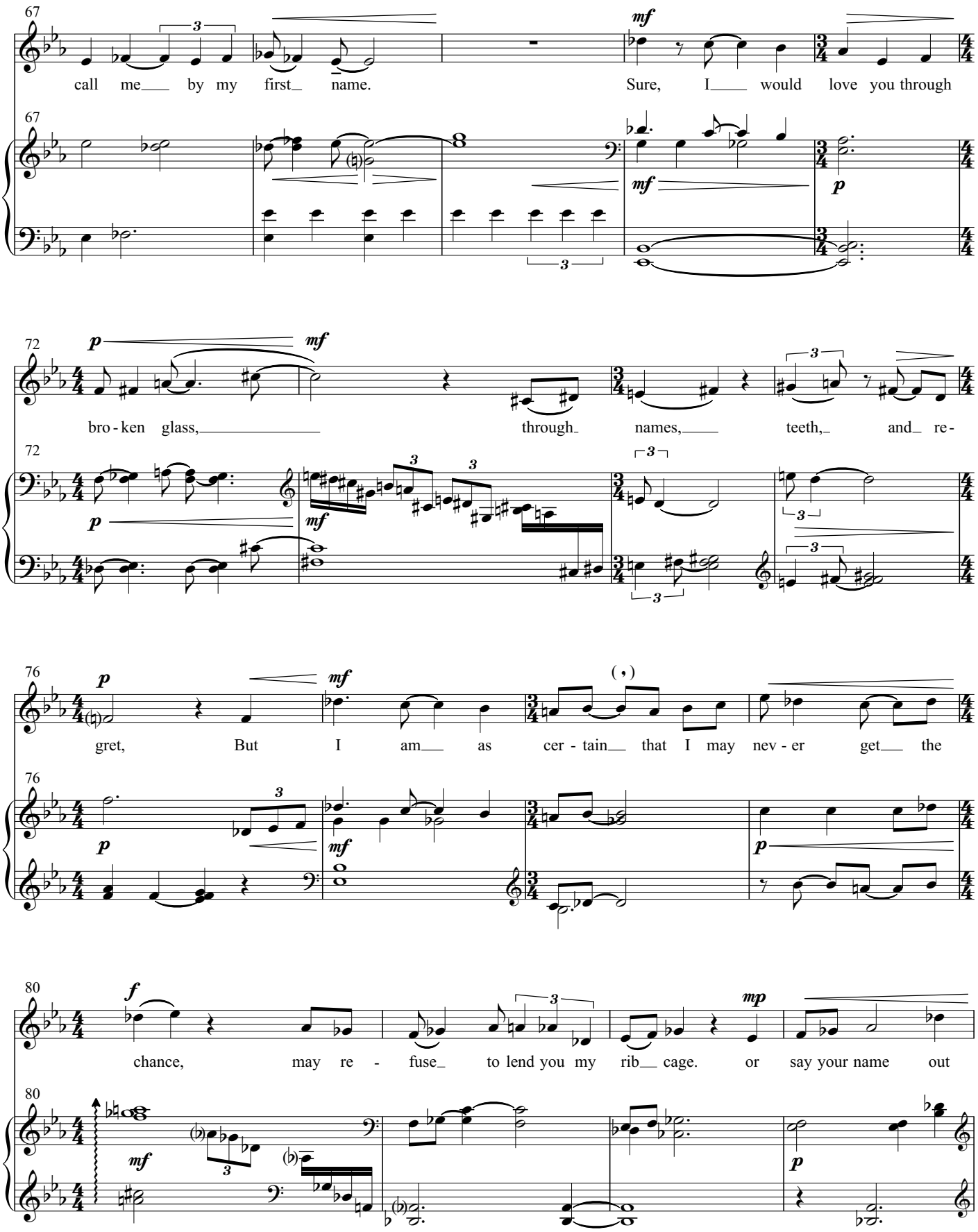
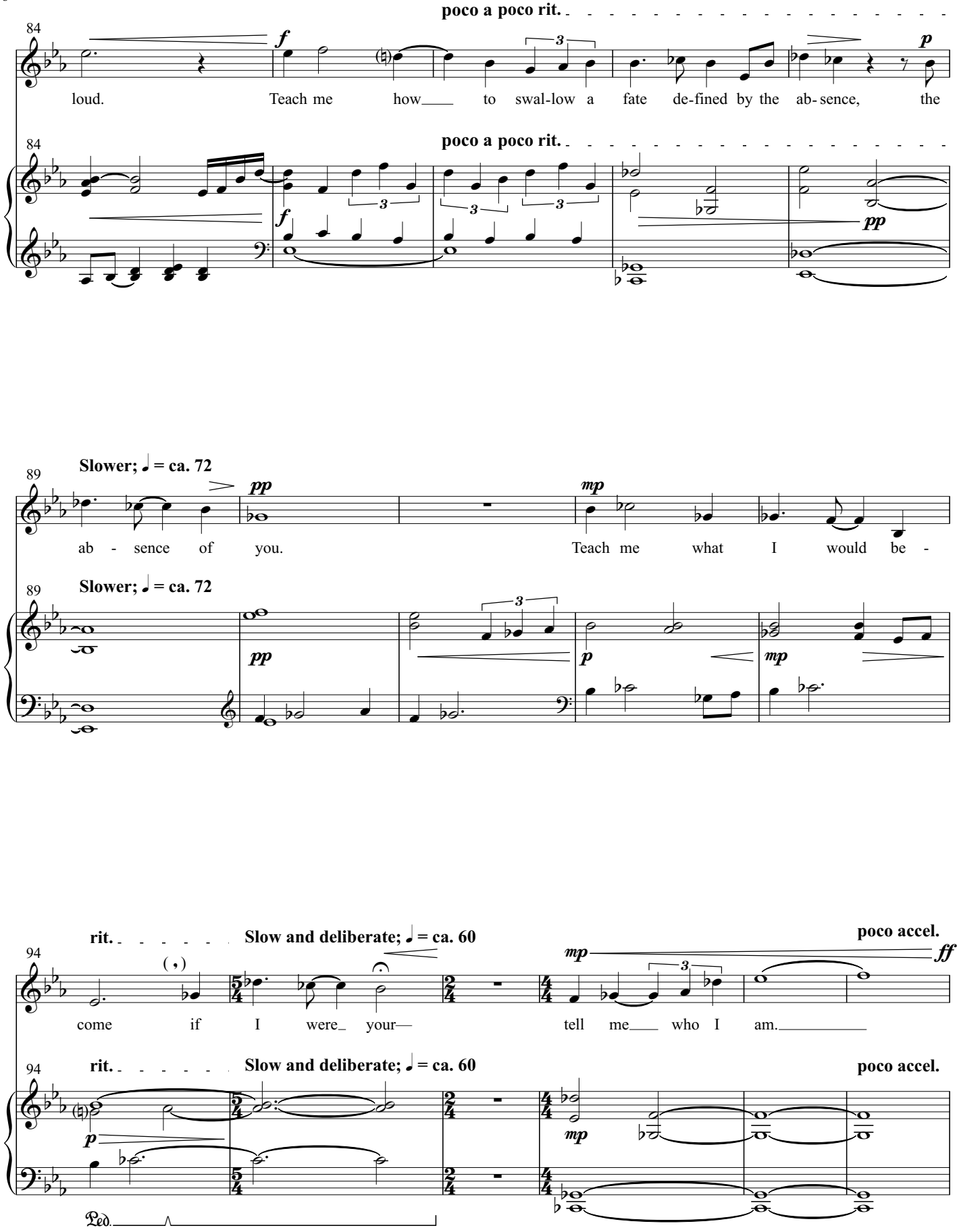
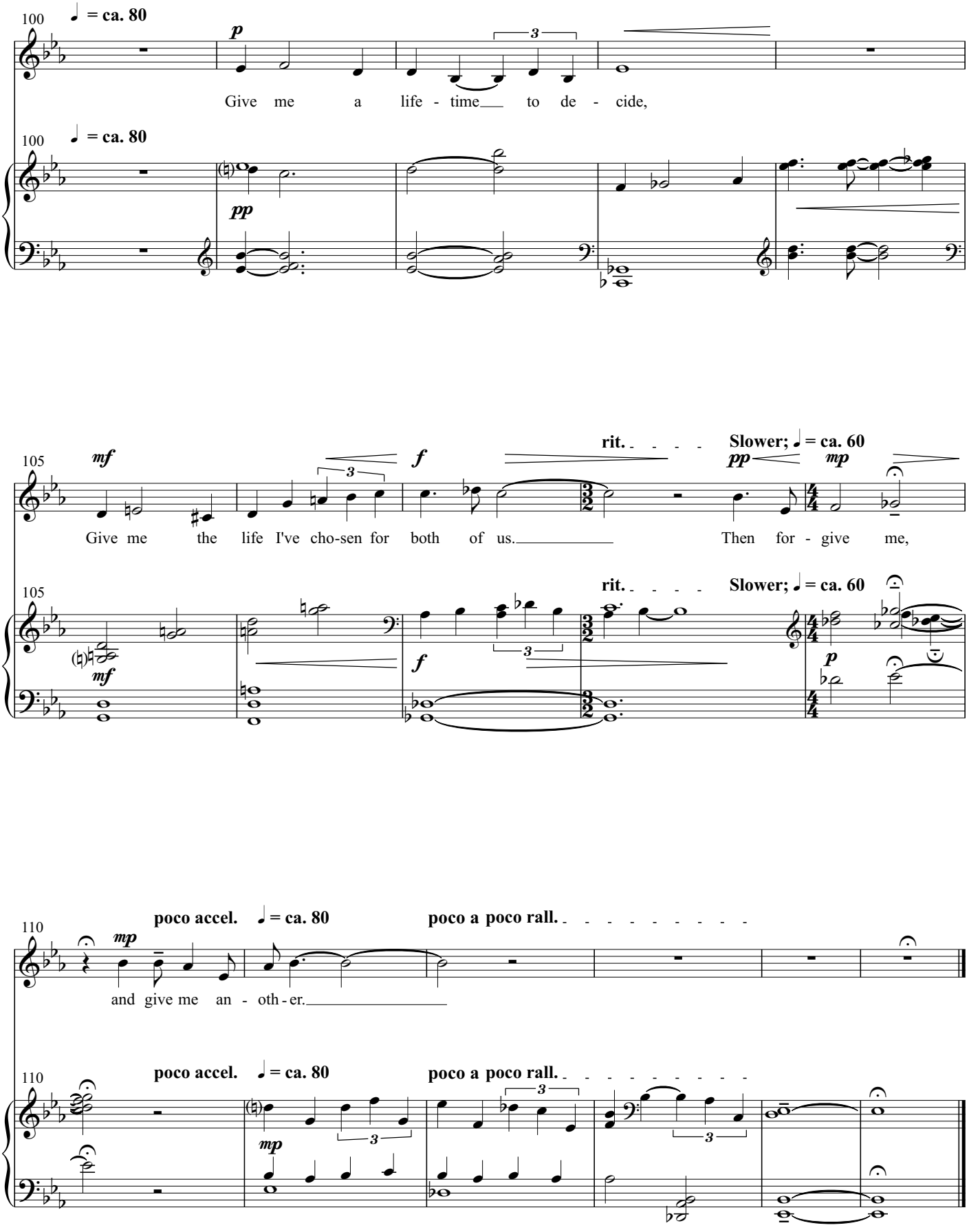

13
pick the o-lives out of your sa - lad?
Tell me how,
as
17
if it were this sim - ple:
where to go for din - ner
and
21
what to ord-er,
Nev-er-mind how a - ny-one de-cides an - y-thing three days from an
27
earth - quake
and bare-ly one mile
from the fire,
I can hard - ly


31
pick one dish, let a - lone up-end my life for a girl who hates o-lives. But
35
want - ing both life-times is not the same as not want - ing you, my
40
dear, my dear, who may or may not ex - ist in the fu - ture,
45
you who would wrin-kle our sheets, sleep in take large bowls of ce - re - al


49
mp
sub.
p
up to your room and for - get to bring them back down.
Tell me it's self - ish choos-ing
mp
mf
sub.
p
54
f
mf
air - planes and grand pian - os o - ver you my dear, my
mp
Ped.
58
mp
mf
dear.
Tell me it's self - ish, you who would in -
p
mf
63
her - it his teeth, smash glass on the stairs, spit out words you'd re - gret, and
p


67
call me by my first name.
Sure, I would love you through
67
72
bro - ken glass, through names, teeth, and re -
72
76
gret, But I am as cer - tain that I may nev - er get the
76
80
chance, may re - fuse to lend you my rib cage. or say your name out
80


poco a poco rit.
84
f
p
loud. Teach me how to swal-low a fate de-fined by the ab- sence, the
poco a poco rit.
84
f
pp
Slower; ♩ = ca. 72
89
pp
mp
ab - sence of you. Teach me what I would be -
Slower; ♩ = ca. 72
89
pp
p
mp
rit.
Slow and deliberate; ♩ = ca. 60
poco accel.
94
mp
ff
come if I were your— tell me who I am.
rit.
Slow and deliberate; ♩ = ca. 60
poco accel.
94
p
mp
Ped.


100
♩ = ca. 80
p
Give me a life - time to de - cide,
pp
105
mf
Give me the life I've cho-sen for both of us.
f
rit.
Slower; ♩ = ca. 60
pp
mp
Then for - give me,
mf
f
p
110
poco accel.
♩ = ca. 80
poco a poco rall.
mp
and give me an - oth - er.