Libby Larsen

MOBILE / NOT MOBILE / . . .

8 Haiku from World War II Internment Camps by Japanese-American Citizens

Dedicated to Stephen and Anne Hunter

Commissioned by Schubert Club
Premier performance, November 13, 2025,
Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, St. Paul, Minnesota
Roderick Williams, Baritone and Iain Burnside, Piano

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KENWOOD EDITIONS

Libby Larsen

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by Japanese-American Citizens

For Solo Baritone and Piano

Commissioned by Schubert Club

Premiere performance, November 13, 2025
Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, St. Paul, Minnesota
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Duration: 11 min.

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For more information about this piece and other music by Libby Larsen visit www.libbylarsen.com.

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Premiered by Roderick Williams, baritone, and Iain Burnside, piano, at the Ordway Center for Performing Arts, St. Paul, Minnesota on 13 November 2025

Program Note

Mobile/Not Mobile/… is a setting of eight haiku found in Violet Kazue de Cristoforo's book *May Skies, There's Always a Tomorrow*, an Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Kaiko Haiku. Each of the volume's 130+ haiku, set in free-style (kaiko haiku), distills into a few lines the realities of the detention camps where thousands of Japanese- American citizens were incarcerated during World War II. *

In collaborating on our new work, Roderick Williams, Iain Burnside and I selected 8 haiku by Shizuku Uyemarko, Yuko Fujikawa, Neiji Ozawa, Sagara Sei, Tokuji Hirai, Tojo Fujita and Hyakuissei Okamoto. Each haiku uses something familiar to us (train, dragonfly, cloud, seasons, wind/windless) as contemplations of patience, forbearance and ability to endure.

Honoring these qualities, we thought to create a concert program which uses the 8 haiku songs to frame and inspire eight sets of Western art-song. For the Schubert Club premiere Roderick and Iain chose 23 songs to make up 8 sets. We call this a concert in the form of an Alexander Calder mobile. A visualization of the concert program is on the following page.

We intend that you perform Mobile/Not Mobile/… either in mobile form or as its own set. If you adopt mobile form, let the haiku poetry inspire your choices for each song set.

Libby Larsen, 2025

* Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, authorized the mass forced removal and incarceration of all Japanese Americans on the West Coast. As a result of this order, some 110,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast were removed from the West Coast, most to inland concentration camps. Executive Order 9066 lapsed at the end of the war and was eventually terminated by Proclamation 4417, signed by President Gerald Ford on February 19, 1976.

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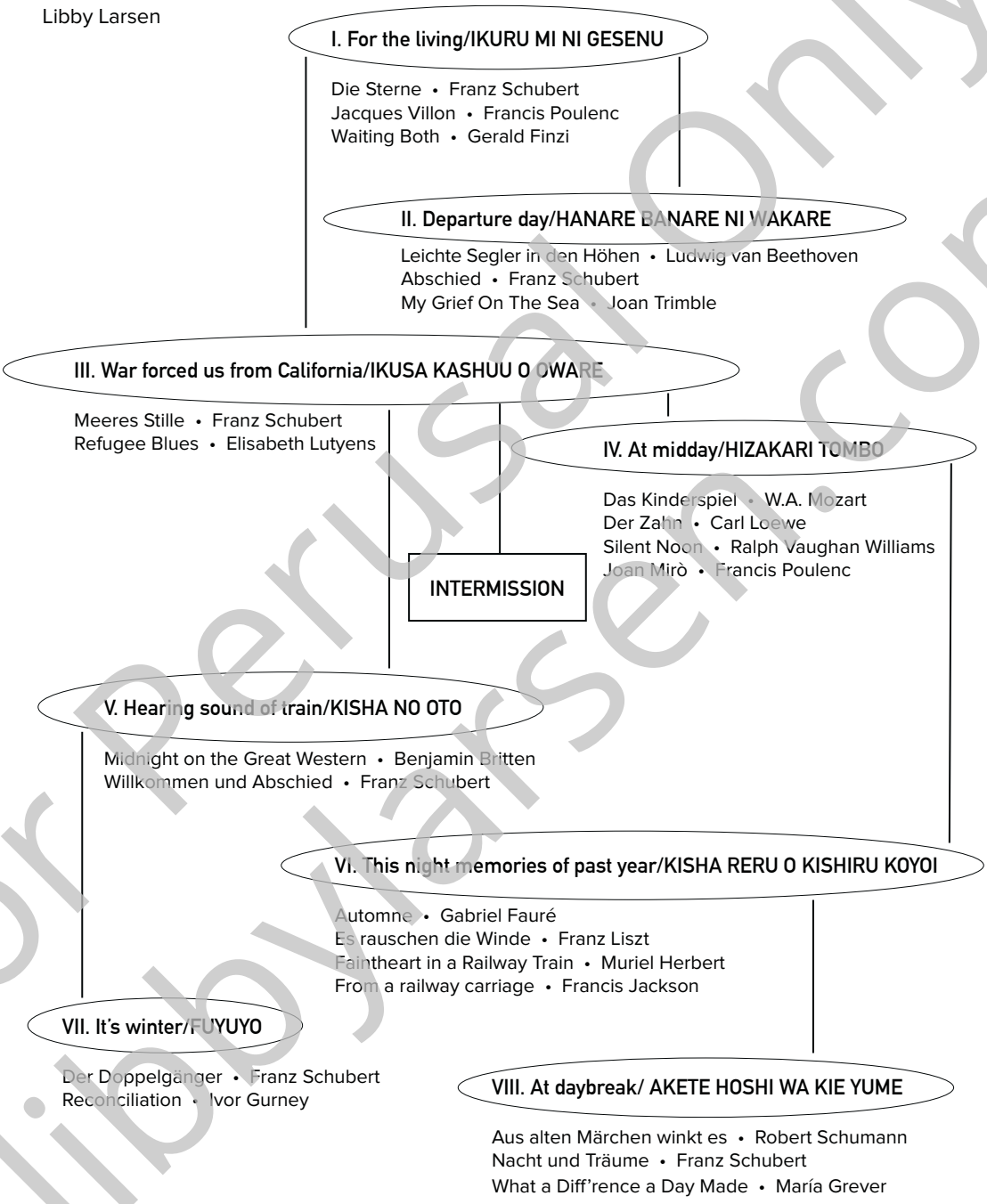
A Visualization of the Concert Program



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1. ***For the living***

IKURU MI NI GESENU KOTO OOKU NATSU-HOSHI HIKARU

For the living
many incomprehensible incidents
summer stars shine

2. ***Departure day***

HANARE BANARE NI WAKARE NO HI NO NATSU NO KUMO

Departure day
families leaving one by one
summer clouds

3. ***War forced us from California***

IKUSA KASHUU O OWARE SABAKU NO MIZUUMI NAMI TATANU HI

War forced us from California
No ripples this day
on desert lake

4. ***At midday***

HIZAKARI TOMBO OU KORA NO HA GA SHIROI

At midday
children chasing dragonflies
their teeth are white

5. ***Hearing sound of train***

KISHA NO OTO KIKOYU NAGAKI YORUO SAMETE ORI

Hearing sound of train
-AWAKE-
this endless night

6. ***This night memories of past year***

KISHA RERU O KISHIRU KOYOI OMOIDE ICHINEN NO AKIYO

Train rumbles on track
this night memories of past year
autumn evening

7. ***Winter night***

FUYUYO WAGA KATA O TATAKU OTOKO NO IRO SHIROKU

Winter night
pale faced man
taps my shoulder

8. ***At daybreak***

AKETE HOSHI WA KIE YUME WA DOKO E SUTER

At daybreak
stars disappear
where do I discard my dreams?

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Found in "May Sky: There Is Always Tomorrow: An Anthology of Japanese American Concentration Camp Kaiko Haiku"
compiled, translated and prefaced by Violet Kazue de Cristofora, Published by Sun & Moon Press, Los Angeles, 1997.

Mobile/Not Mobile/…

I. For the living

Shizuku Uyemarko

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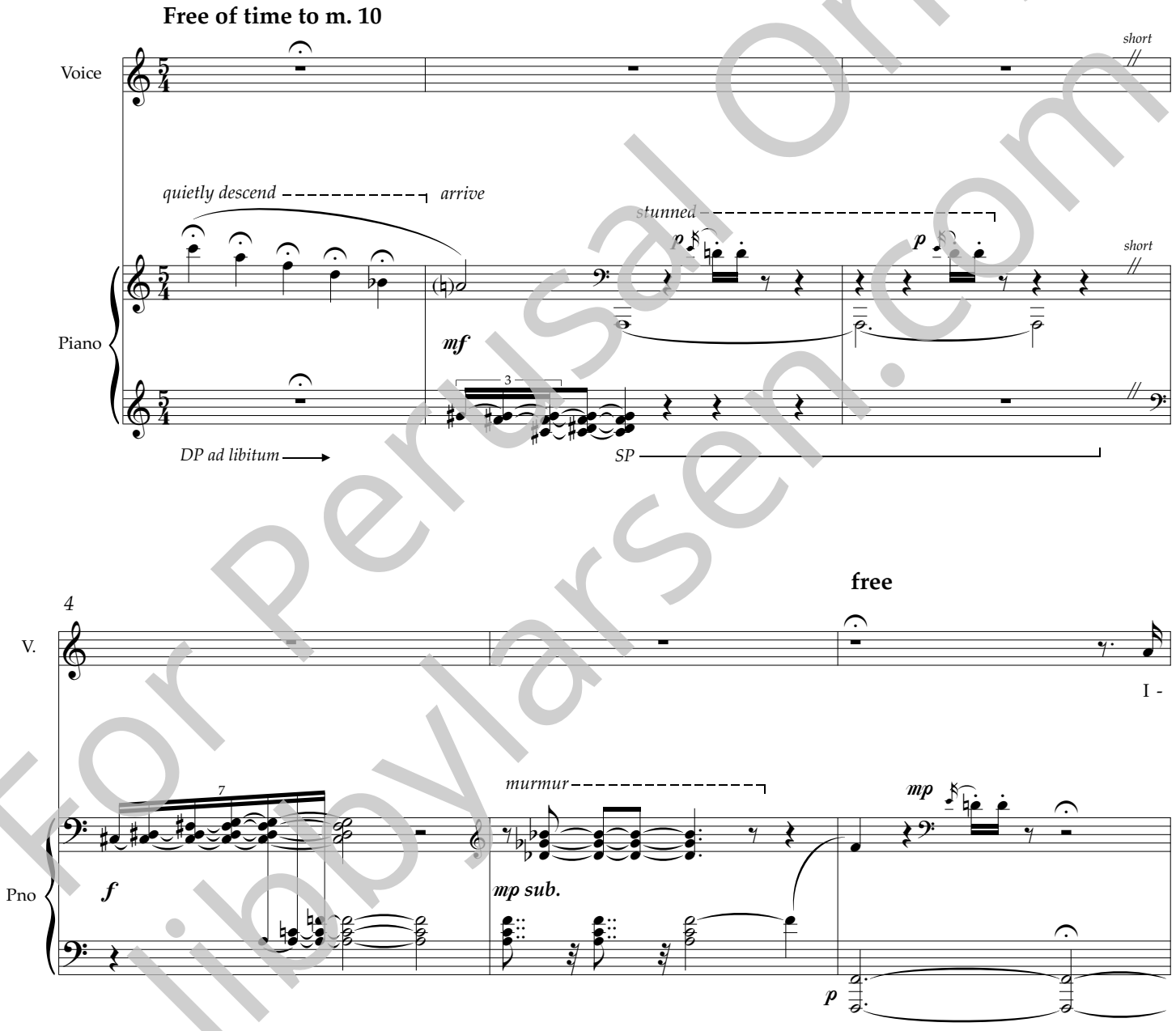

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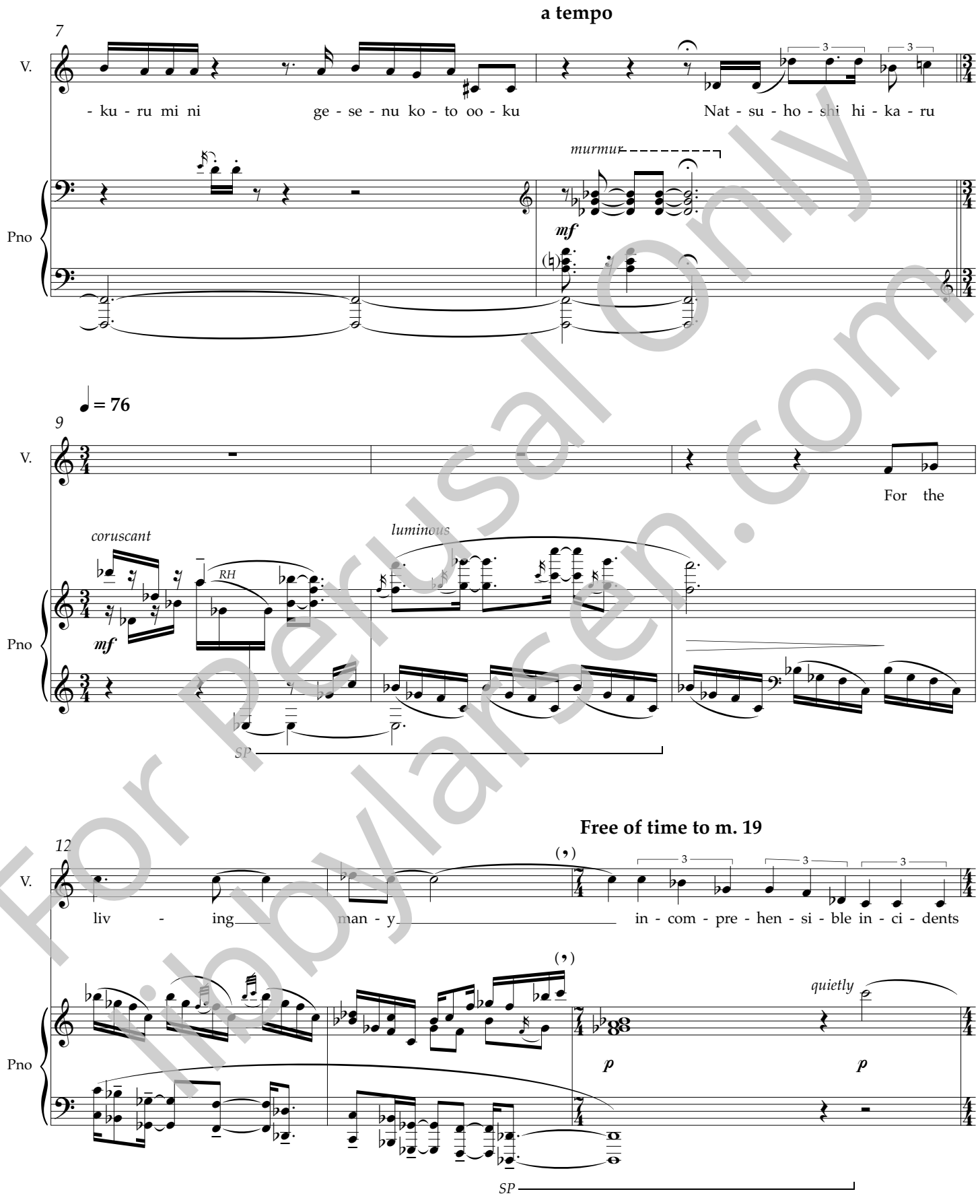

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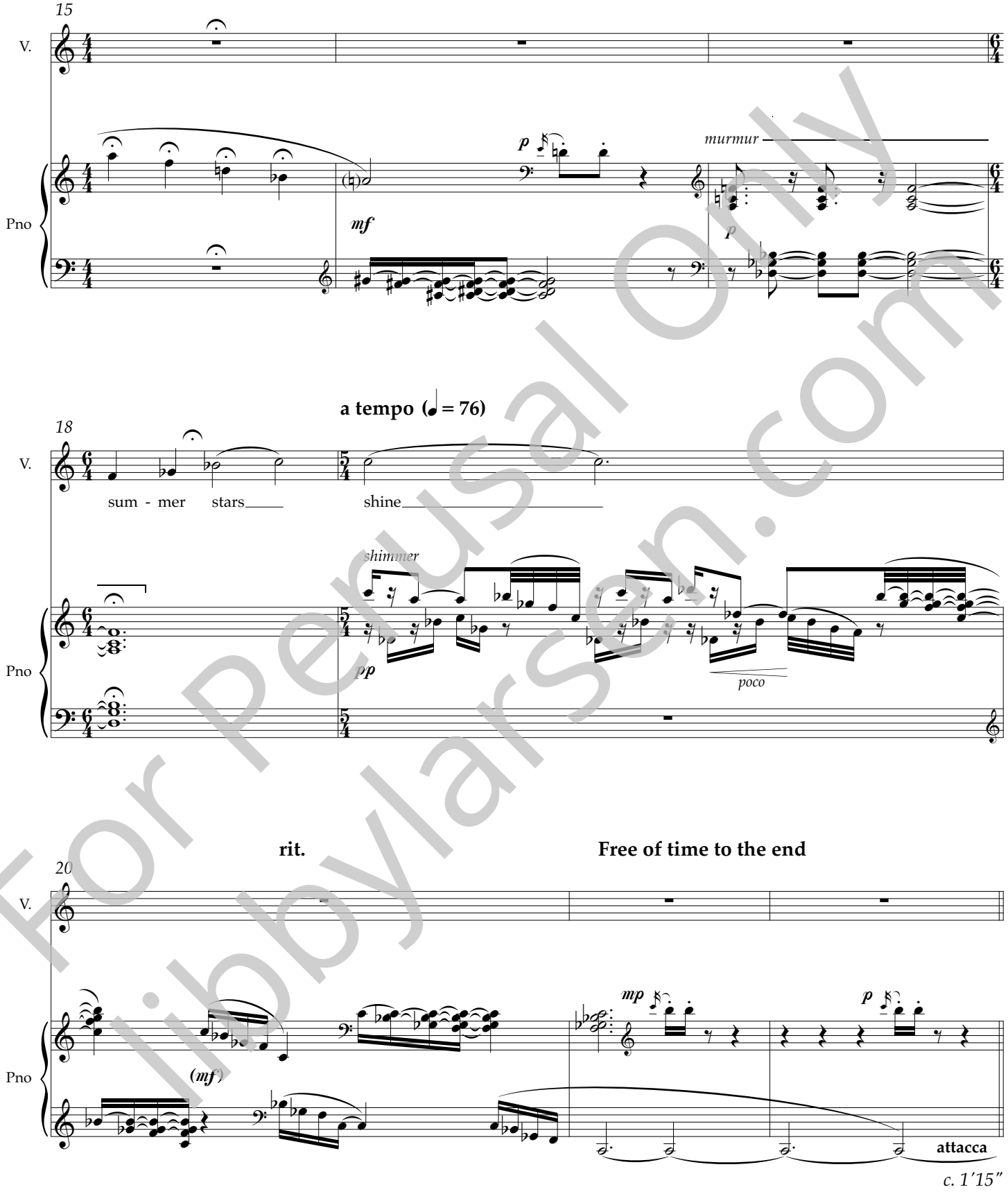

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II. Departure day

Yuko Fujikawa

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♩. = c. 80–86

Voice

Piano

mf

steam locomotive whistle →

p sub.

LH detached through m 13 1/2

5

V.

(3+3+2)

Ha - na - re ba - na - re ni wa - ka - re no hi no

Pno

ff

mp sub

9

V.

na - tsu no ku - mo

Pno

pp

ff

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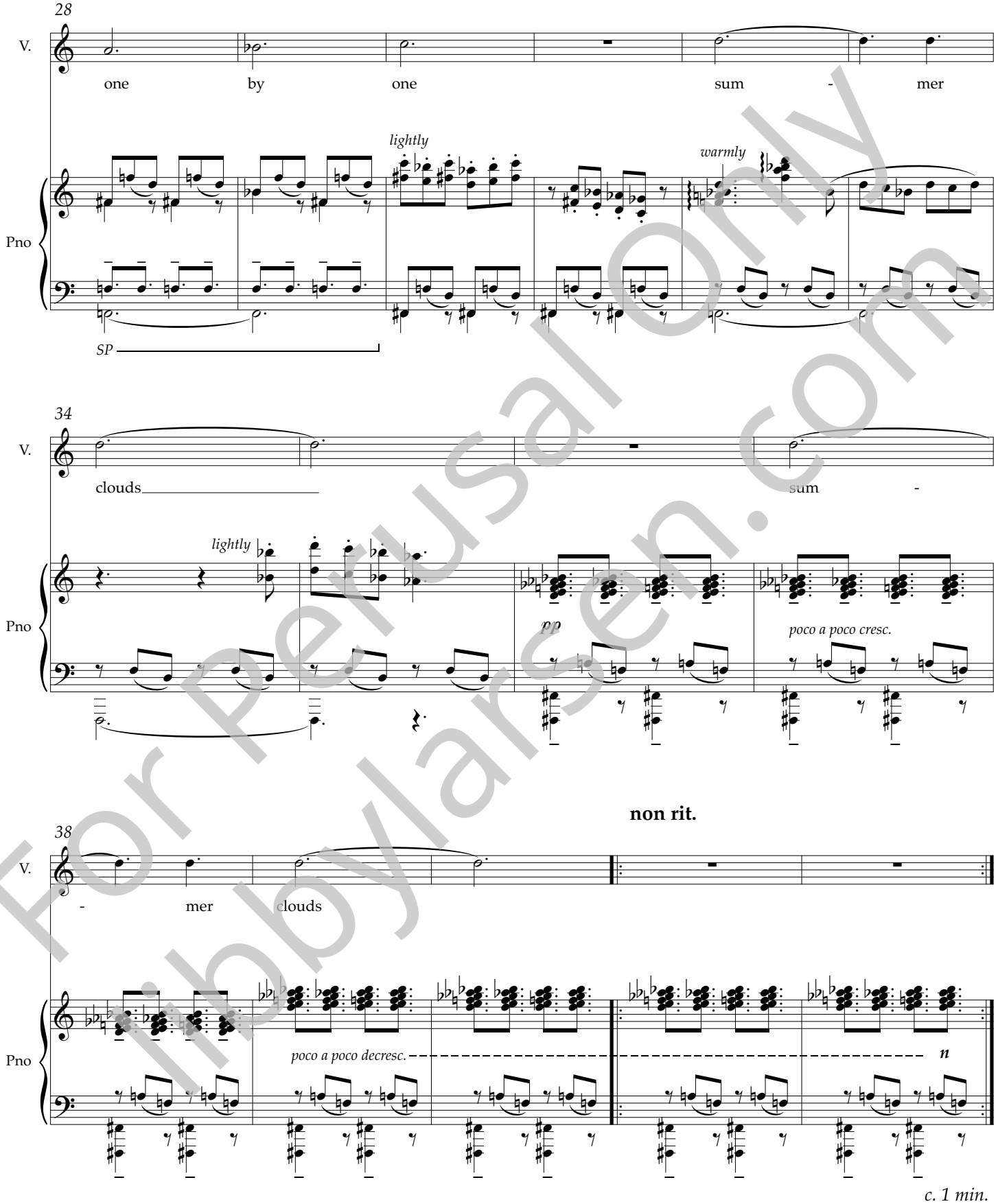

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III. War forced us from California

Neiji Ozawa

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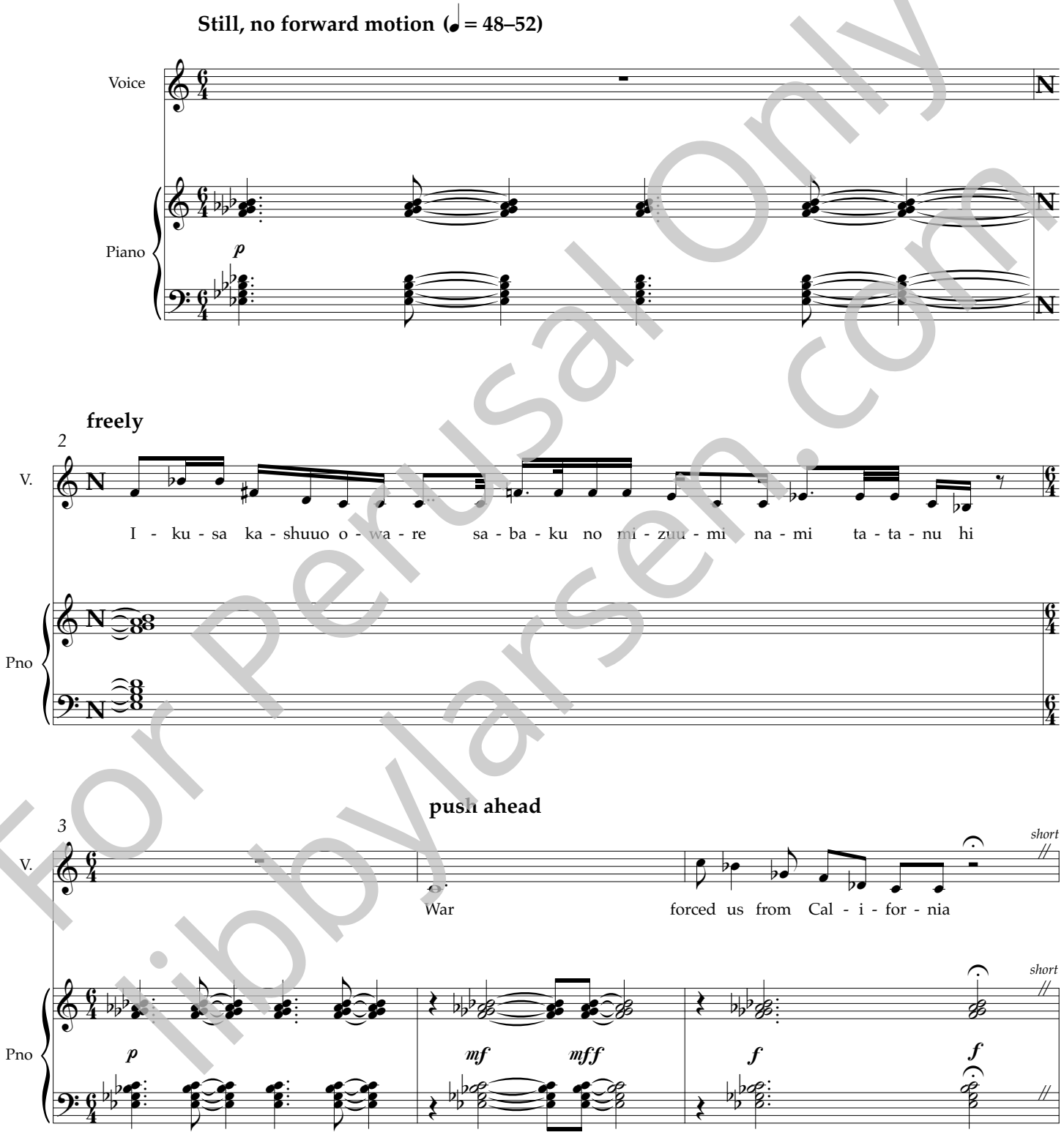

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IV. At midday

Sagara Sei

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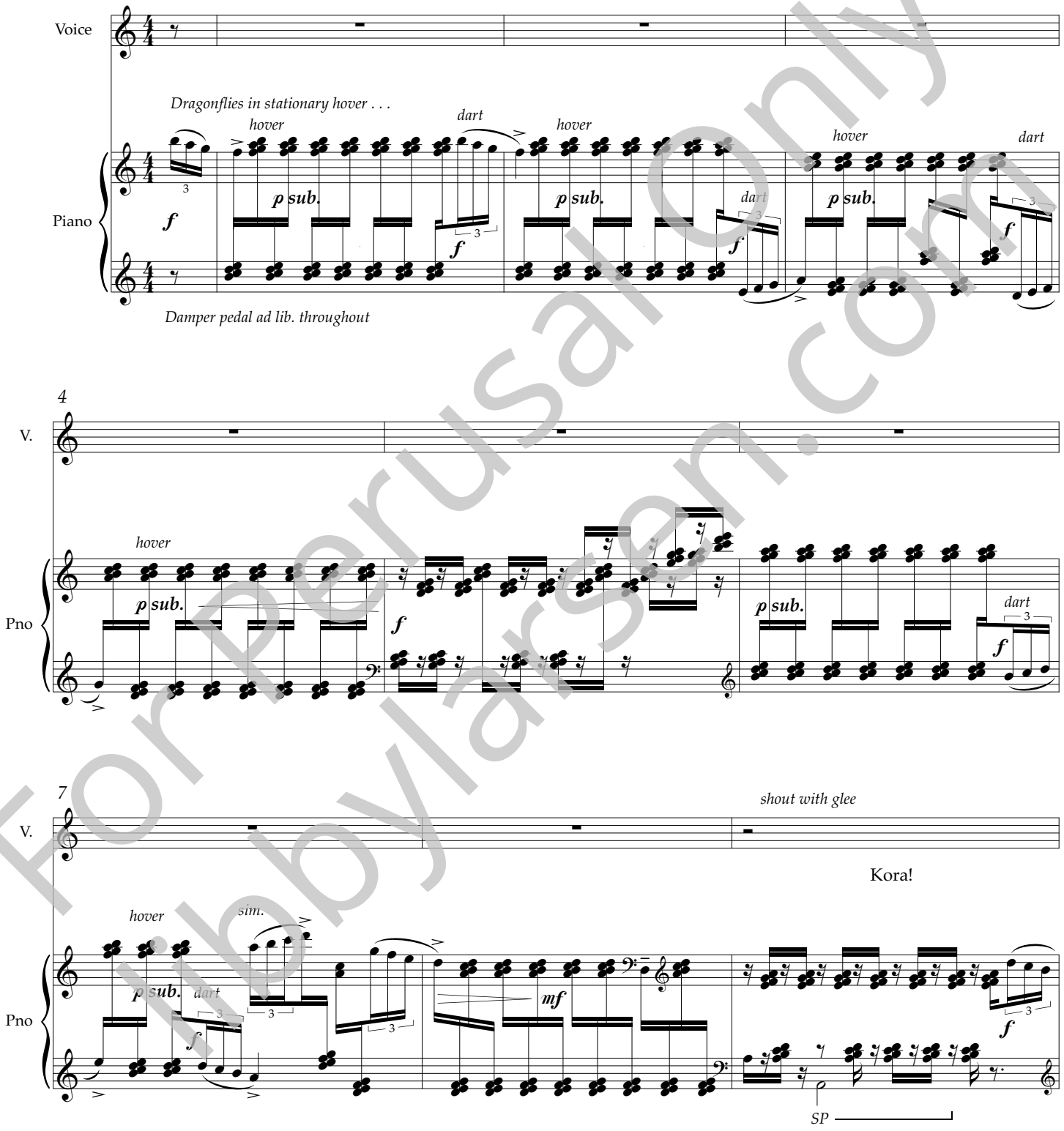
as fast as possible, yet precise



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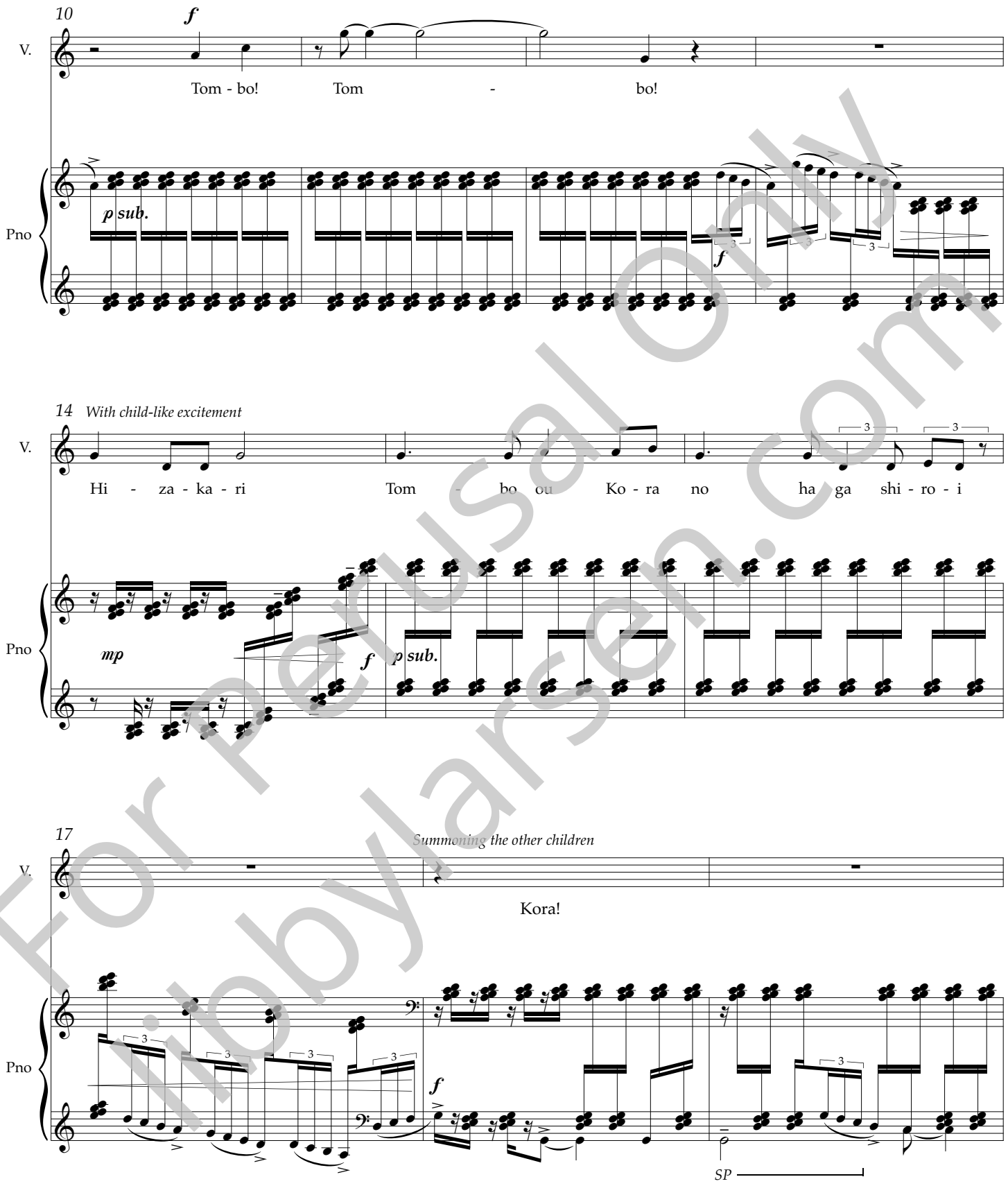

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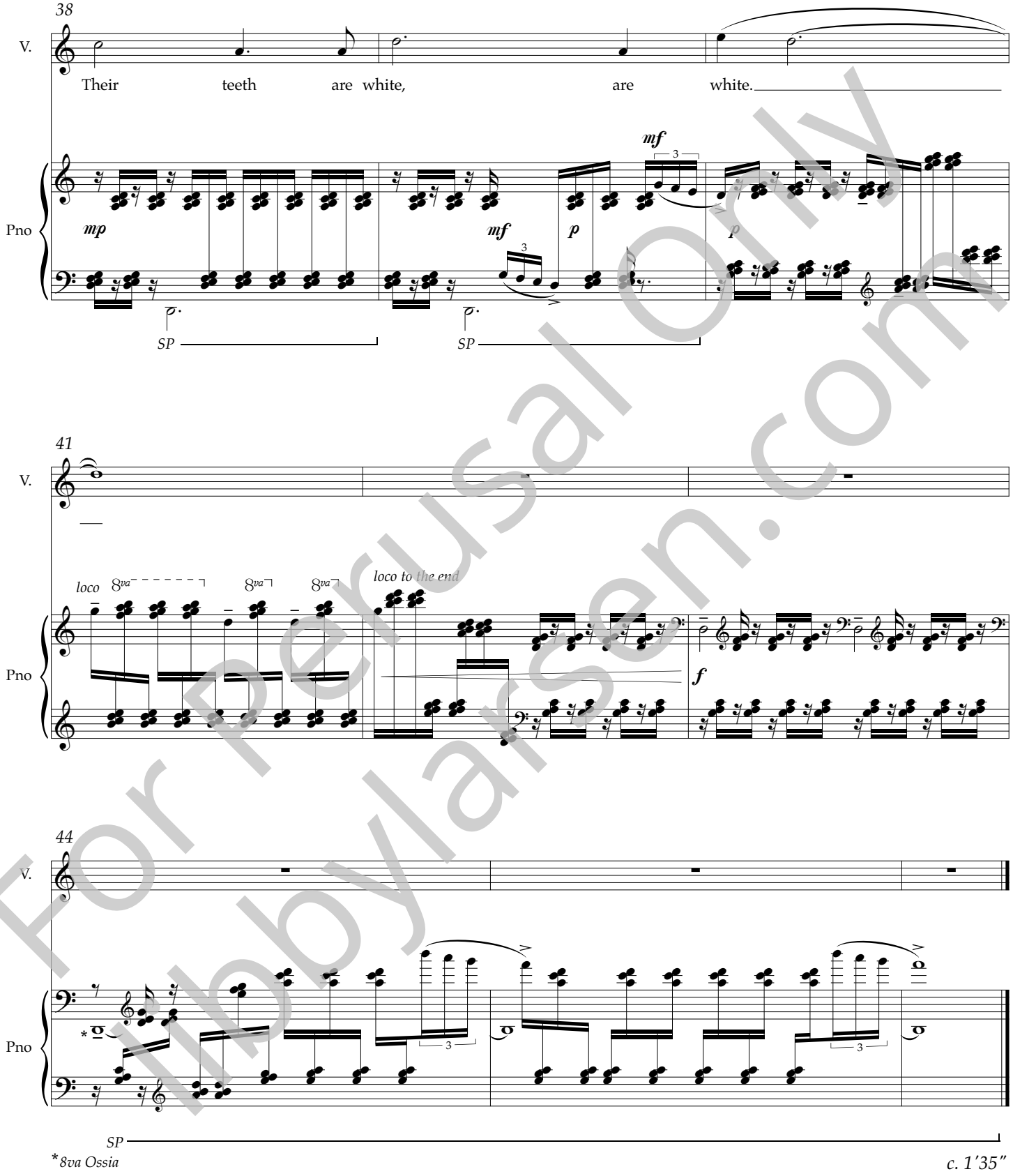

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V. Hearing sound of train

Tokuji Hirai

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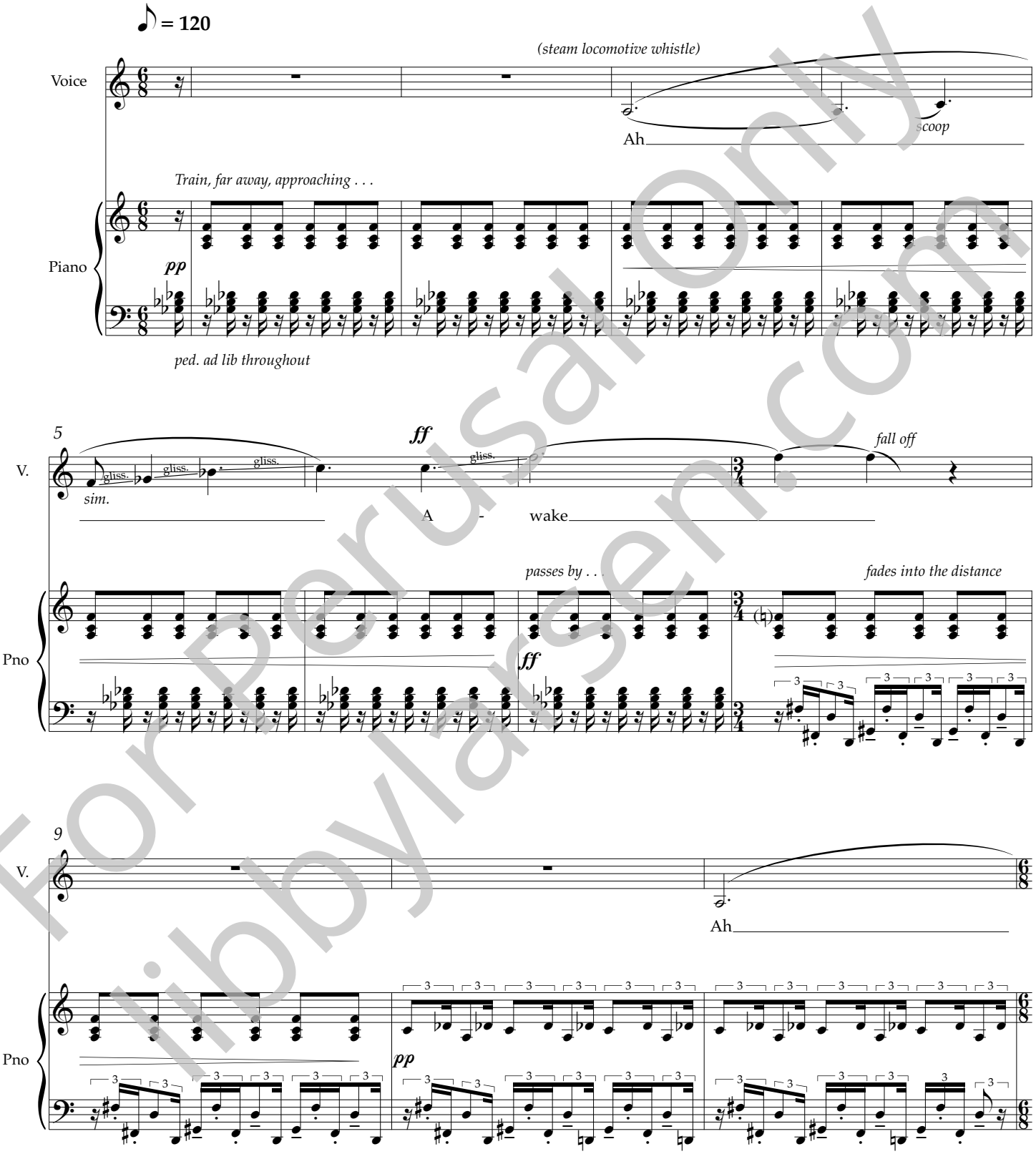

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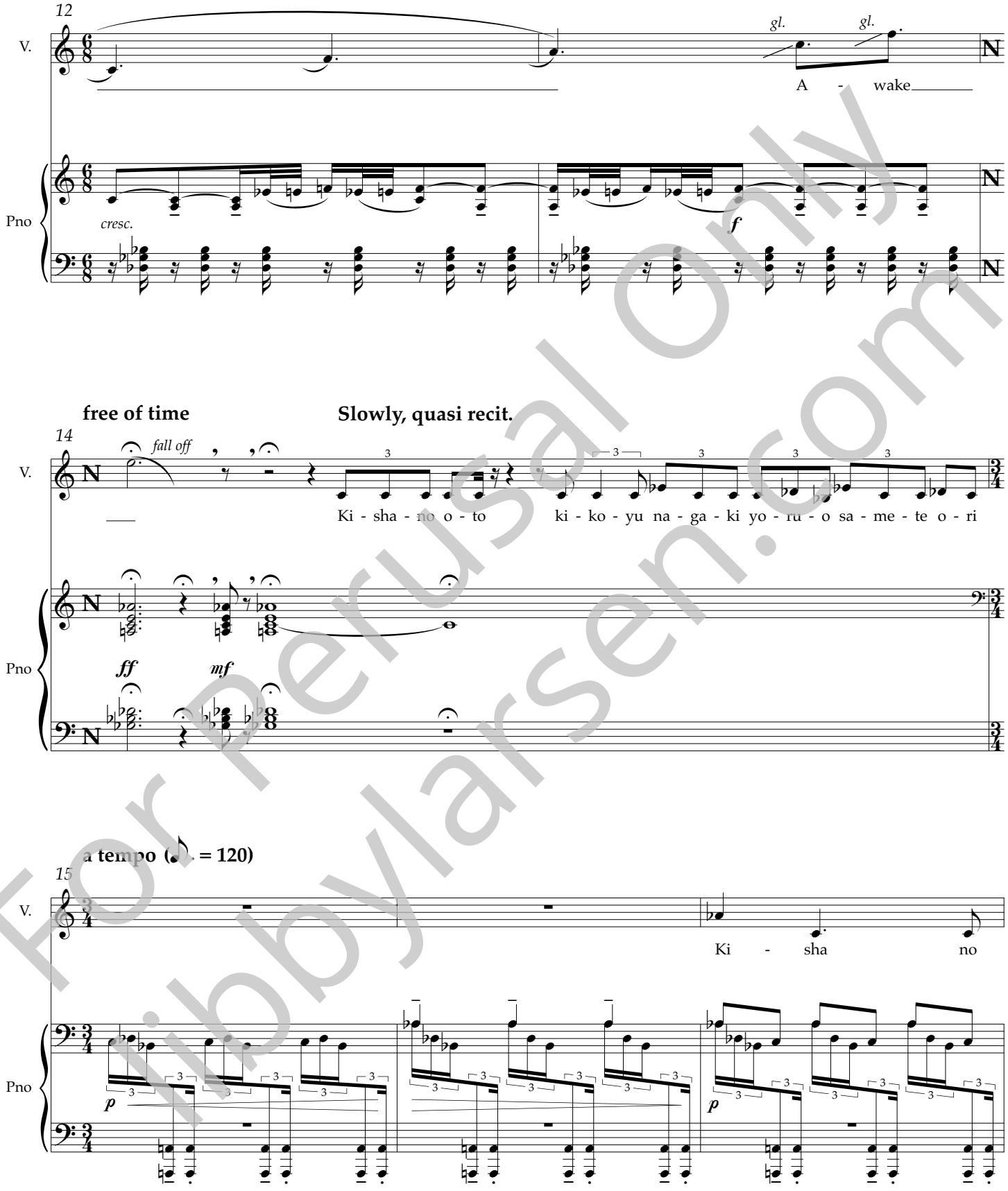

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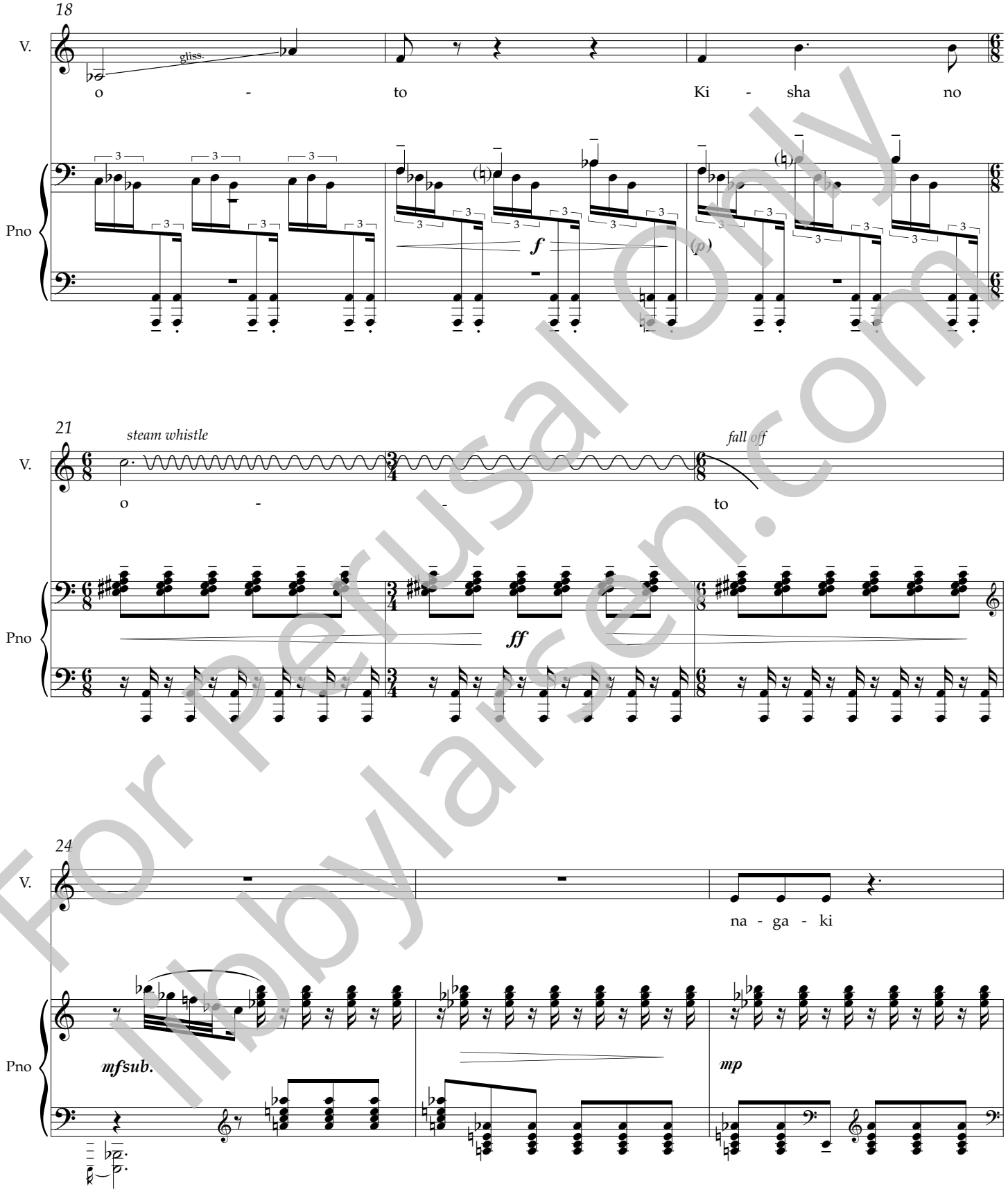

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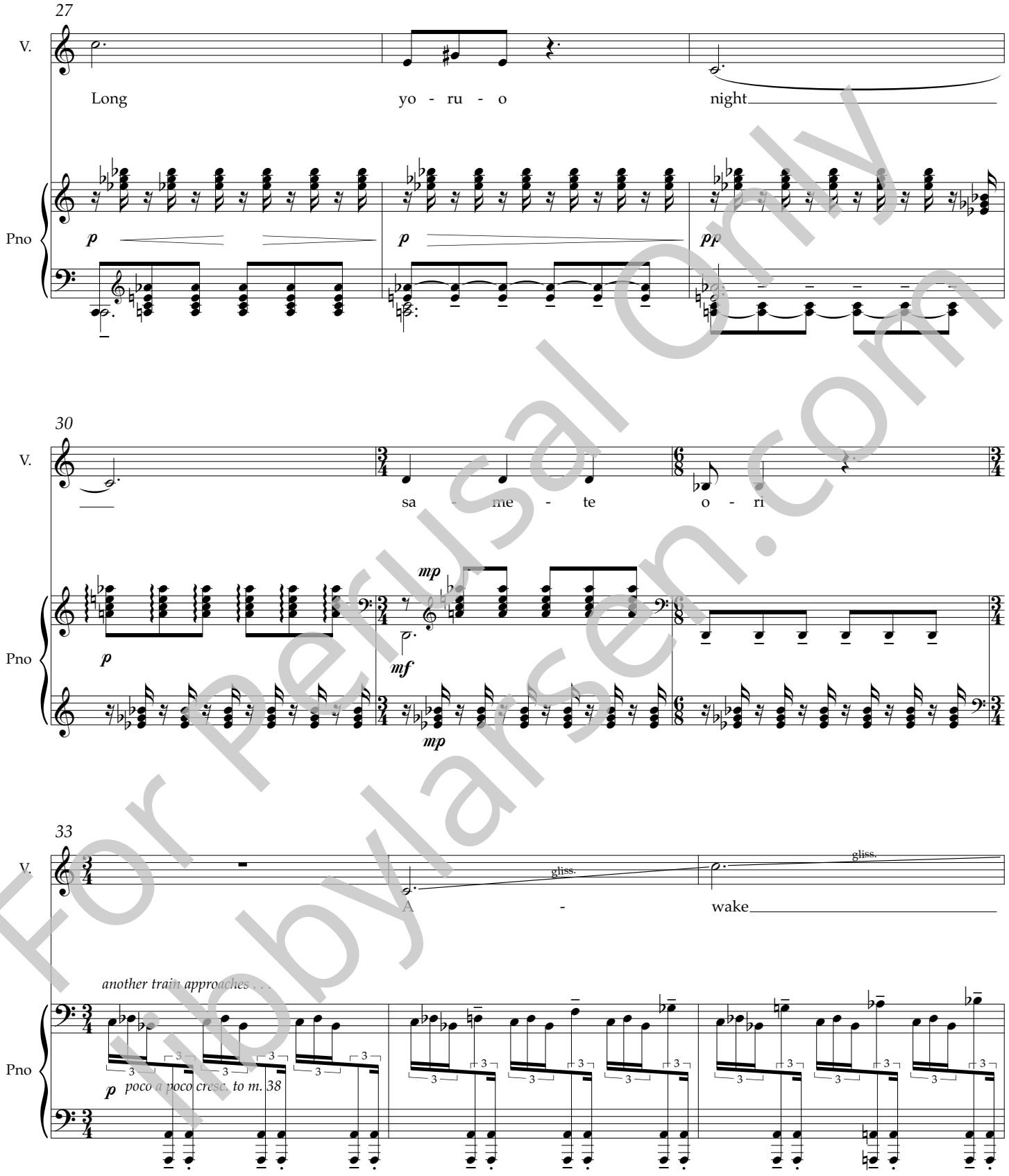

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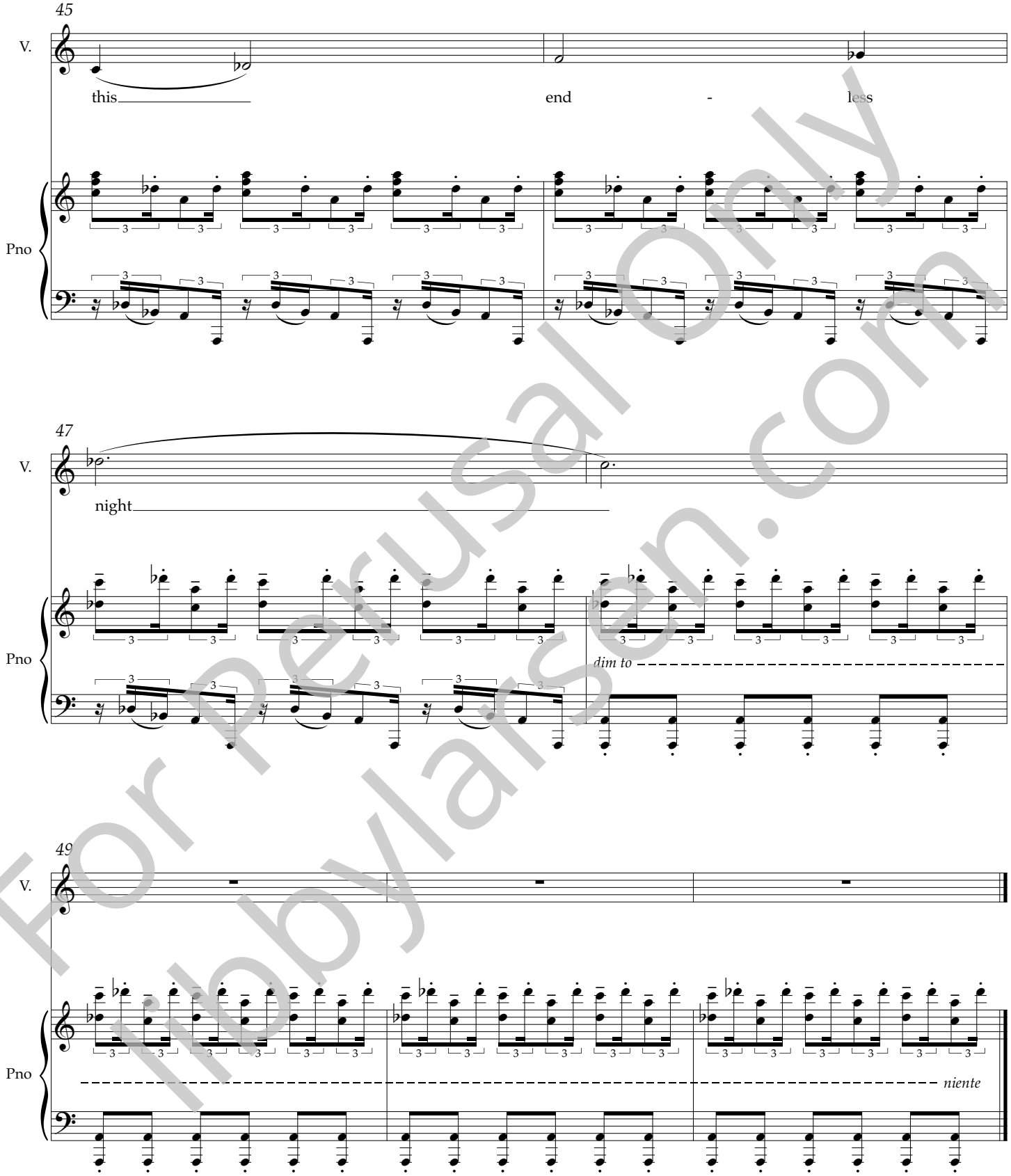

c. 2 min.

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VI. This night memories of past year

Tojo Fujita

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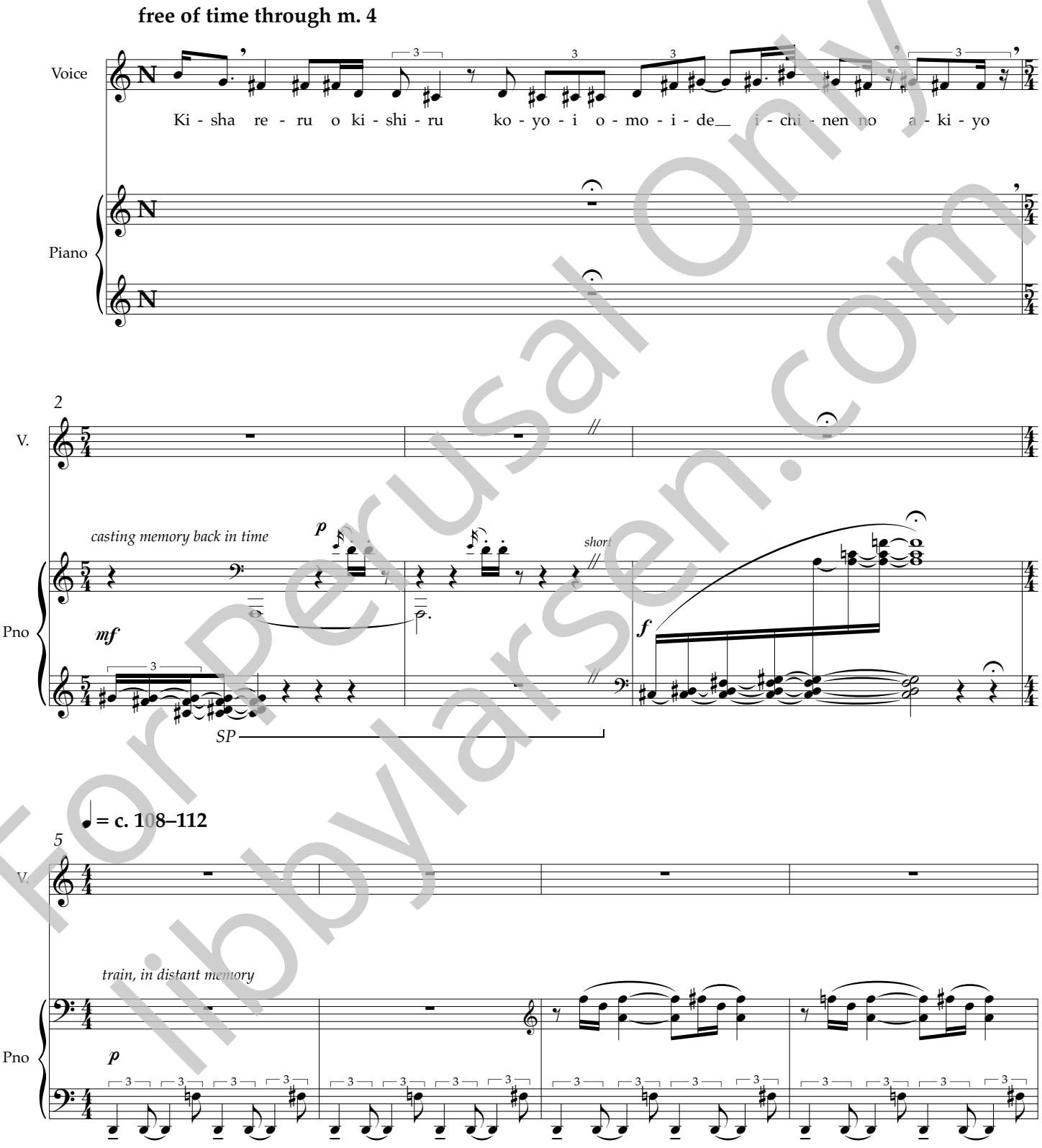

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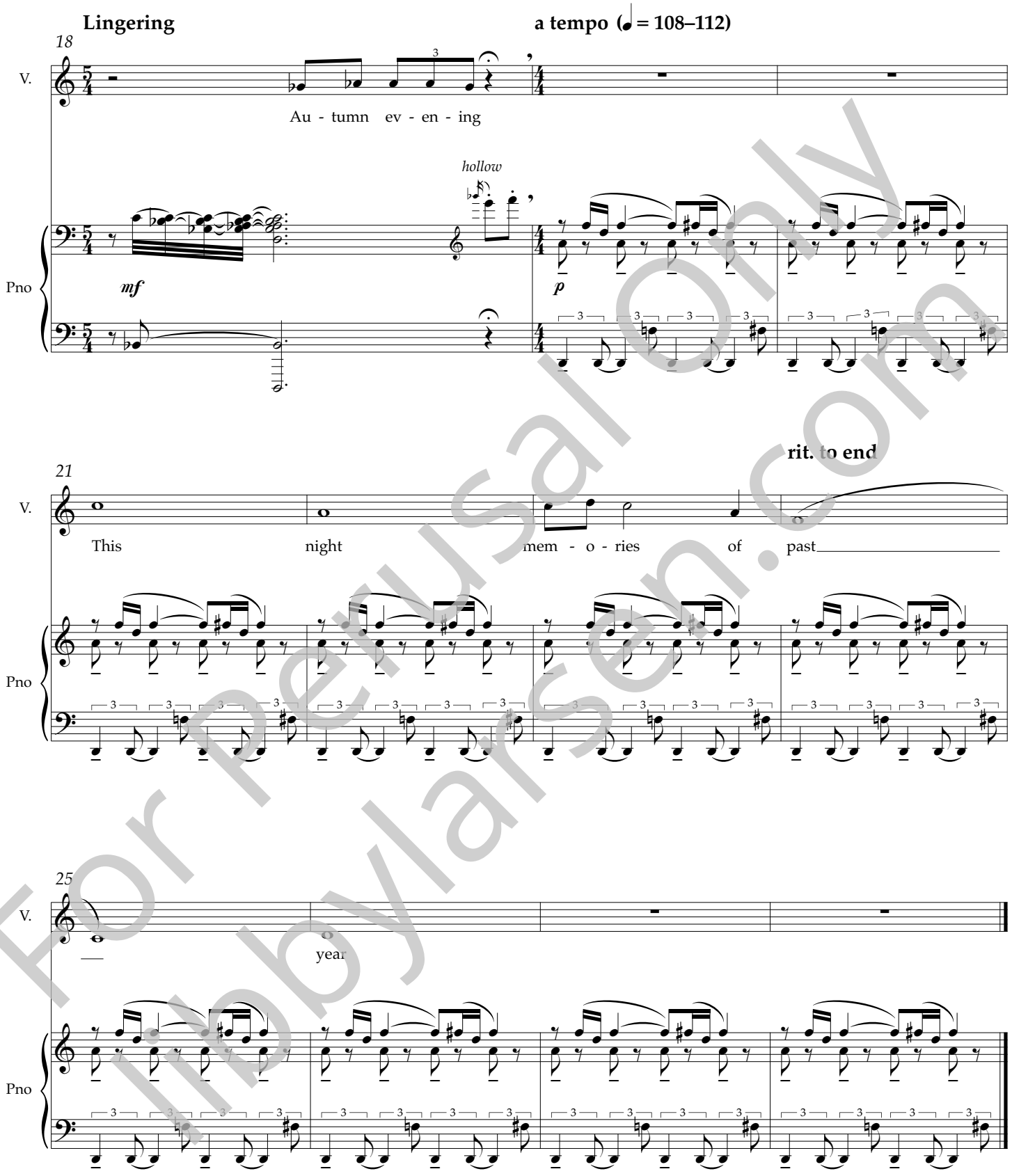

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VII. It's winter

Hyakuissei Okamoto

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as a windless, steady snowfall

Voice

Piano

semi-legato

glisten

mf

Ped. ad libitum

poco rall. **a tempo**

8

V.

Pno

mf

It's win - ter win - ter night

5

freely **a tempo**

15

V.

Pno

p

mf

The man

slide

pale faced man The man who taps my shoul - der is

slowly

poco

p sub.

mf

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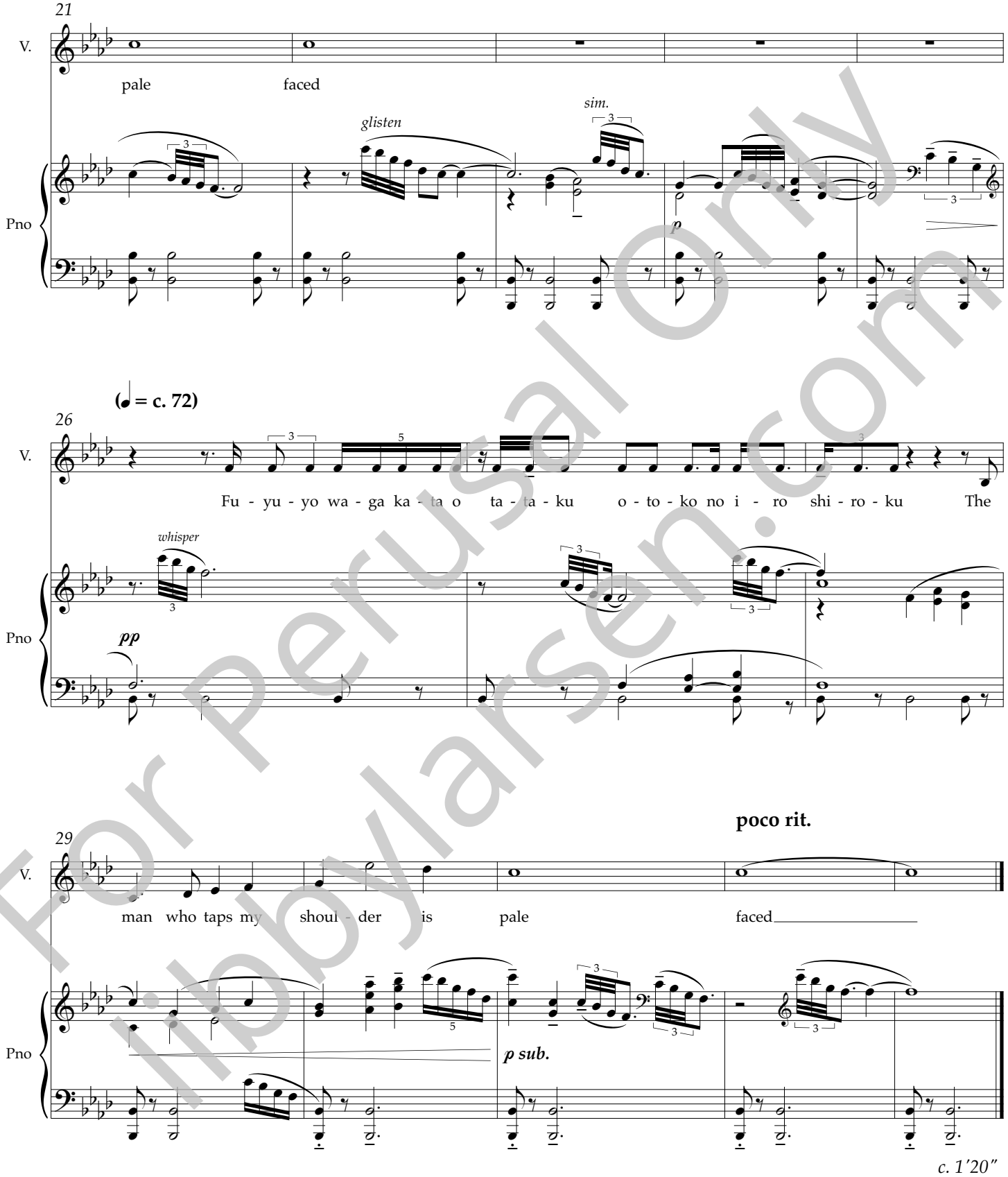

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VIII. At daybreak

Neiji Ozawa

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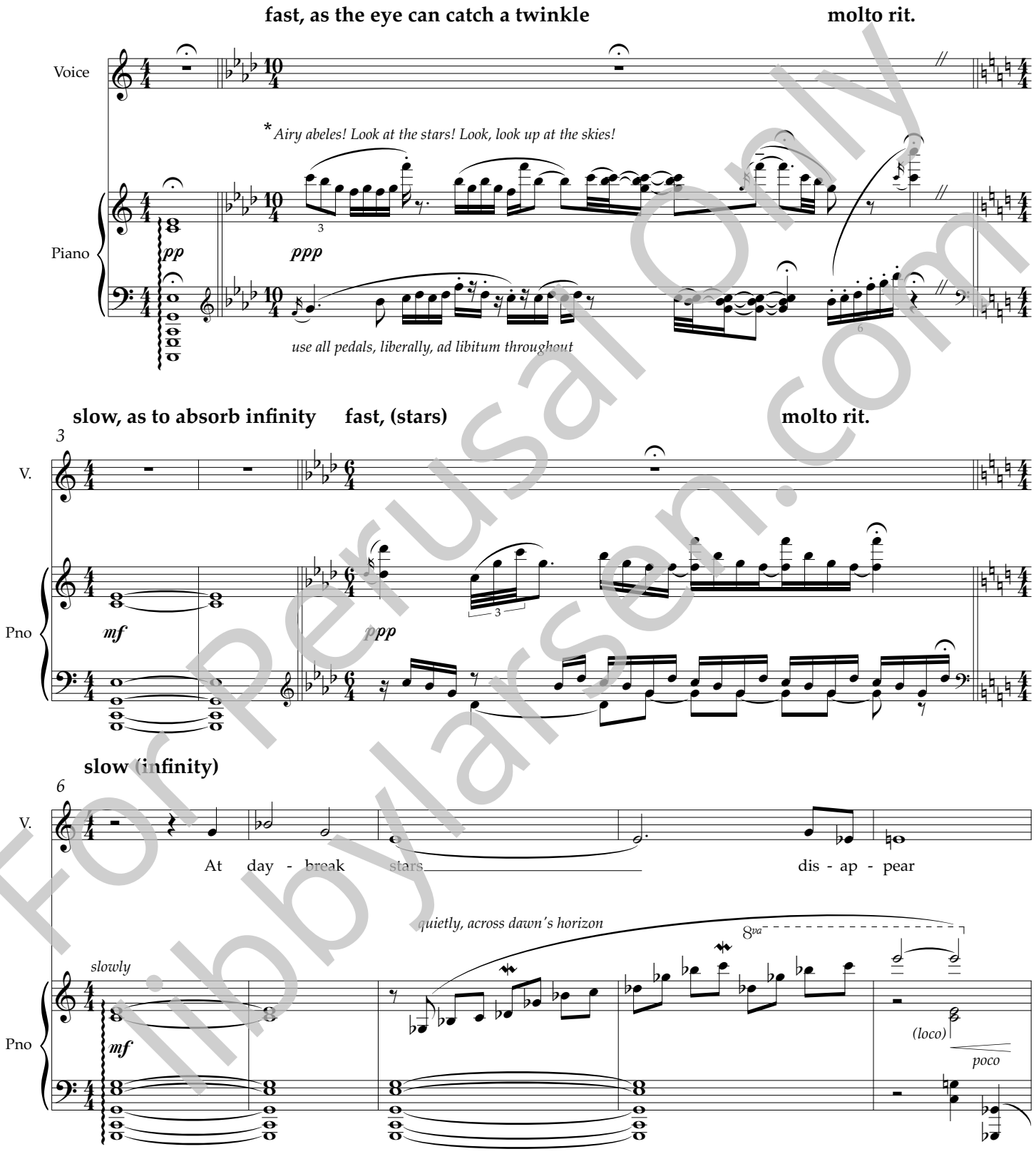

*The Starlight Night, Gerard Manley Hopkins

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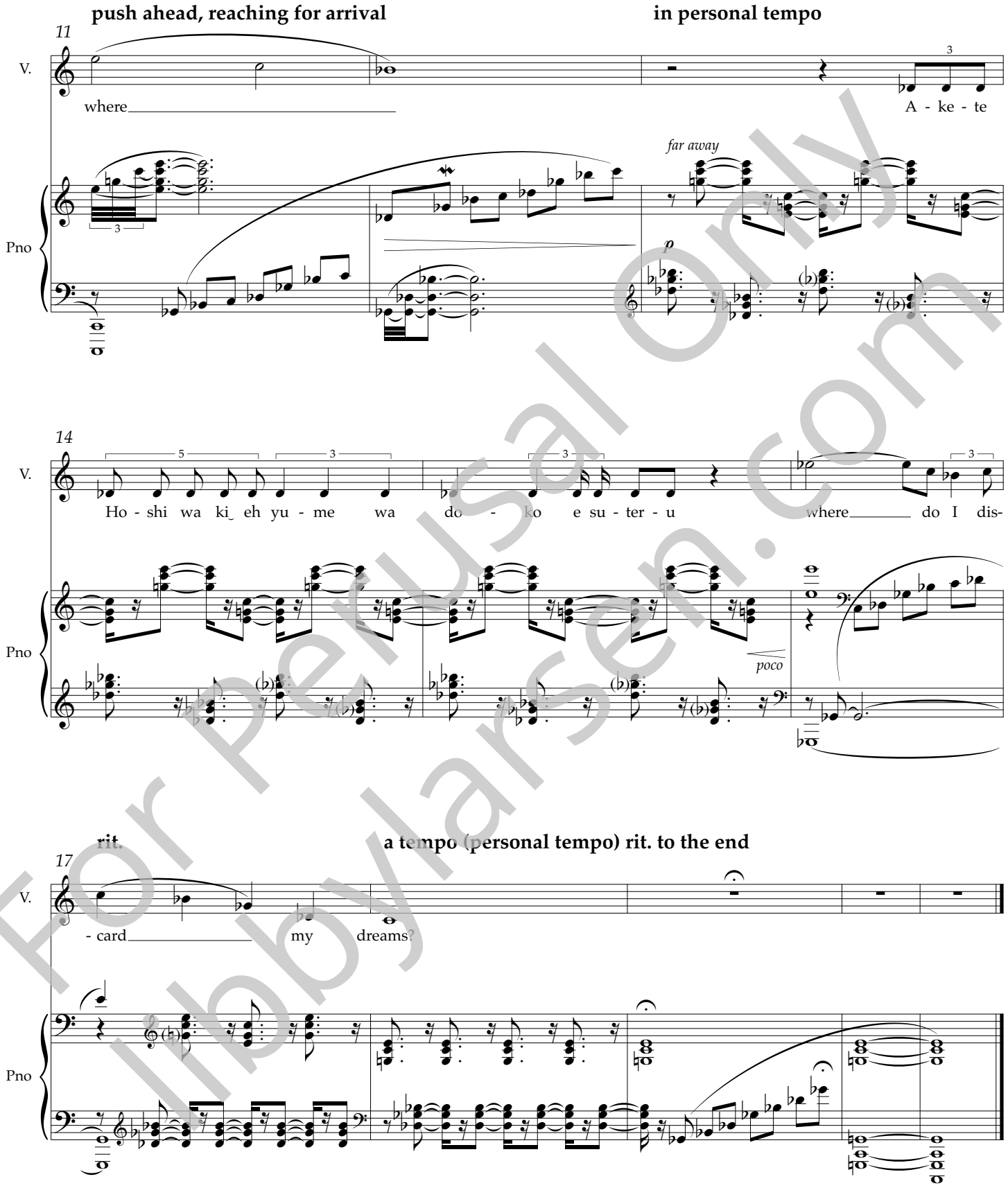

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