Un racconto d'amore a due (A tale of love for two) was commissioned by Katherine McGillivray and first performed 24 August 2000, Port Erin, Isle of Man.

Performance notes

Un racconto d'amore a due is conceived as a slightly strange conversation between two viola d'amore. As the score indicates, the d'amore meet, form a friendship, one leaves, the other laments and finally the friendship is restored (this all happens very quickly as the work lasts c.3 minutes). Therefore, the viola players should try and play their parts as if they were speaking, or as if they were a pair of rather curious (and slightly ungainly) birds performing a strange mating ritual. Whatever their preferred scenario, these players should attempt to make their music sound like vocalisations (the only exception to this is b63-80 for d'amore 2; here this d'amore 'leaves' the conversation and musically joins the harpsichord and gamba). There are minimal markings on music, but their absence does not indicate that the music should be played at one dynamic, with one type of articulation (etc). Rather, I leave the performers to work out how to achieve the vocalisation effect and would expect them to interpret the vocalisations in a manner that would have been almost impossible for me to write down (not to mention, extremely tedious). In other words, the lack of markings does not mean the music should not be played musically, it rather allows the performers to make their own interpretive decisions within the context of the piece.

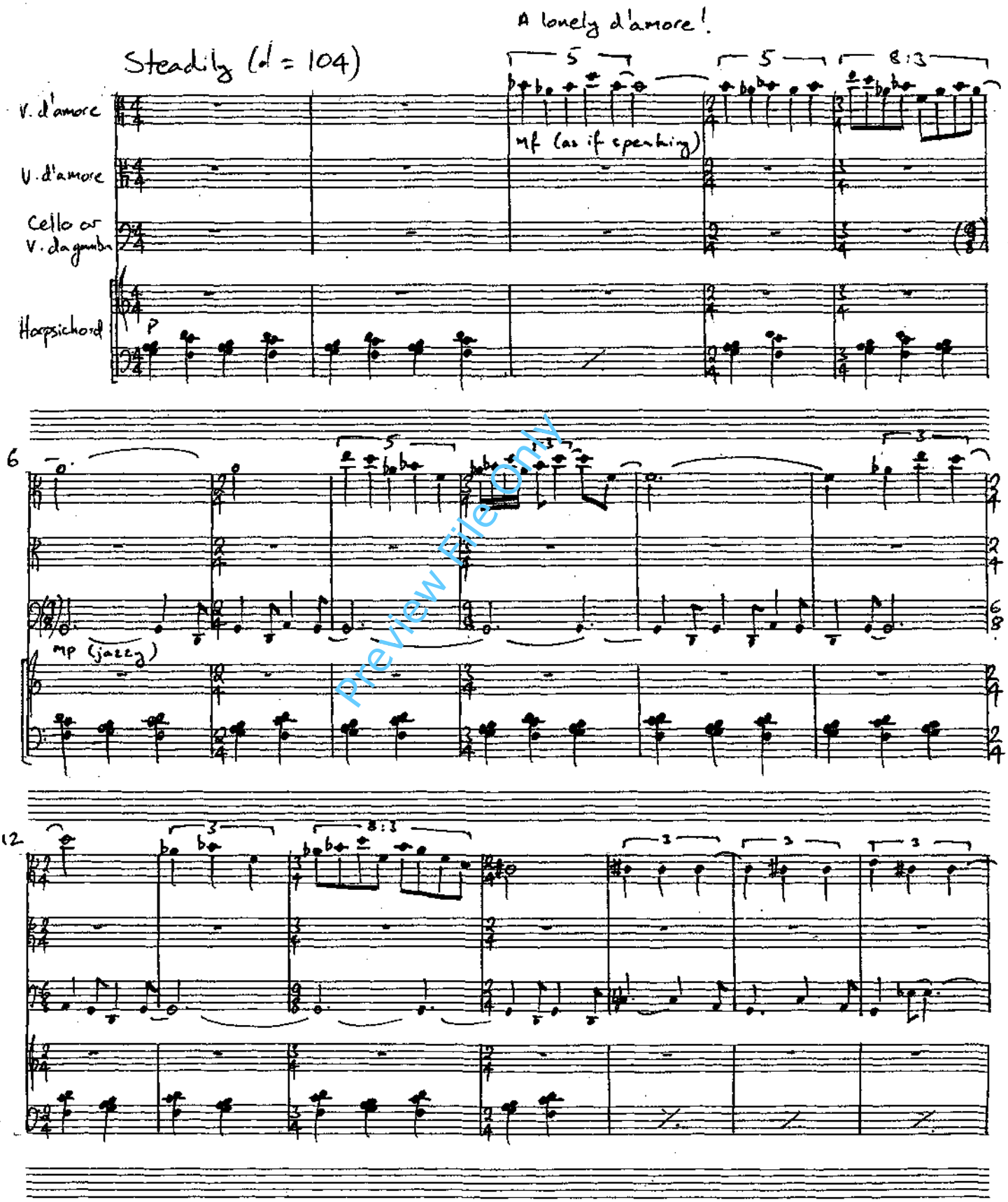
The term 'cow' refers to the mooing sound which can be created on the d'amore's lowest open strings. The sound is used at points where the two violas coo affectionately together.

JW 25/7/00

Preview File Only

Un racconto d'amore a due

John Webb



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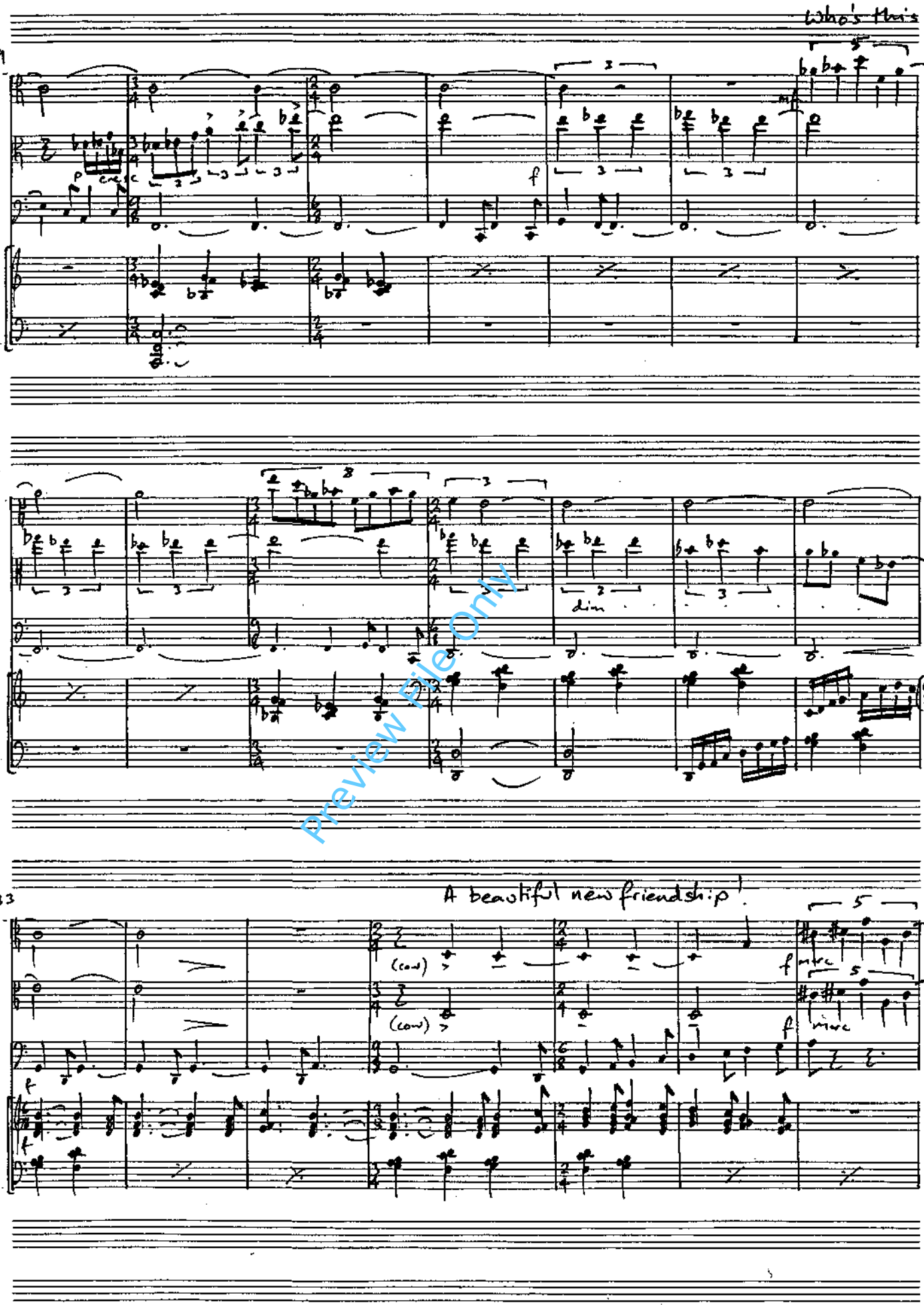
BOOSEY & HAWKES



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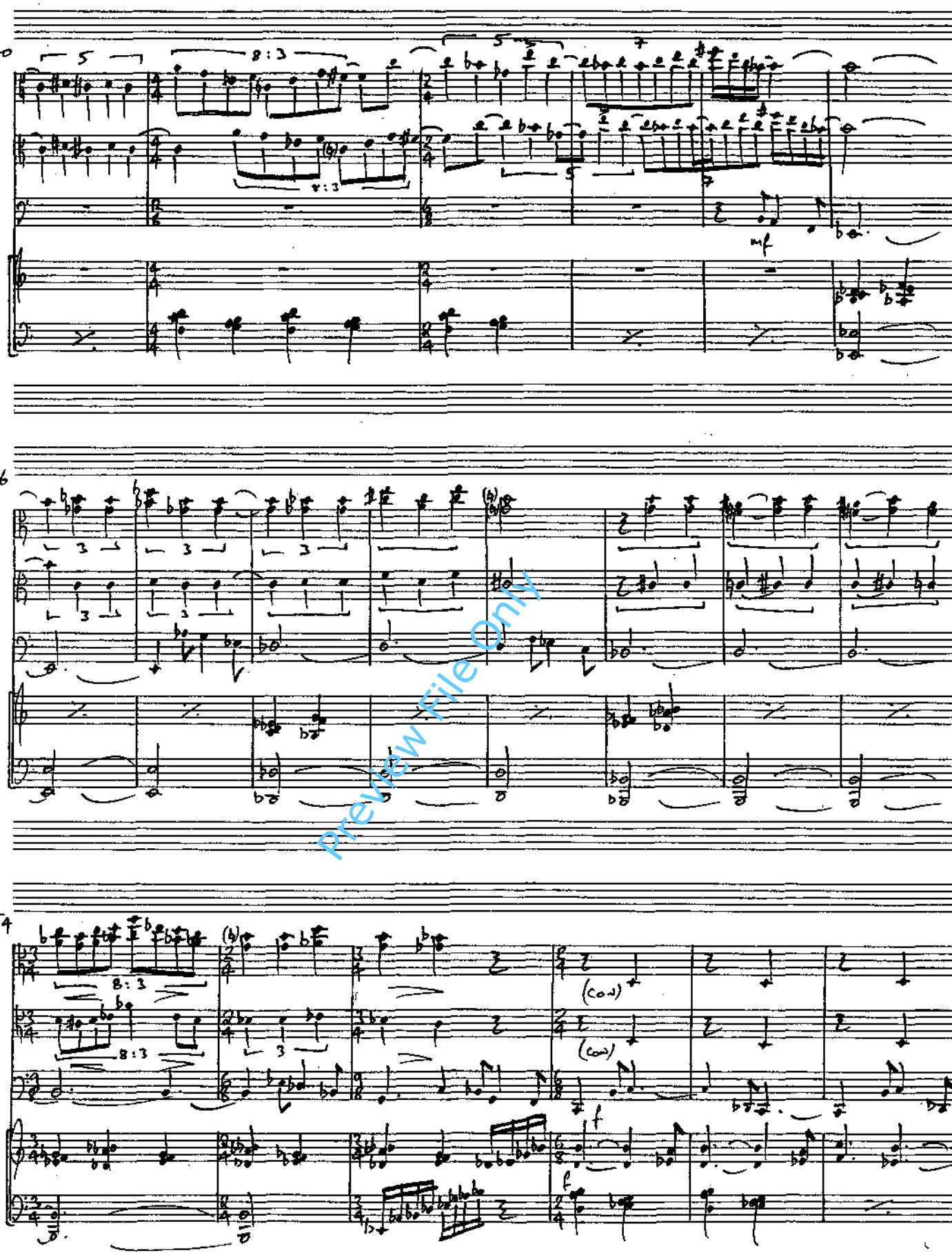

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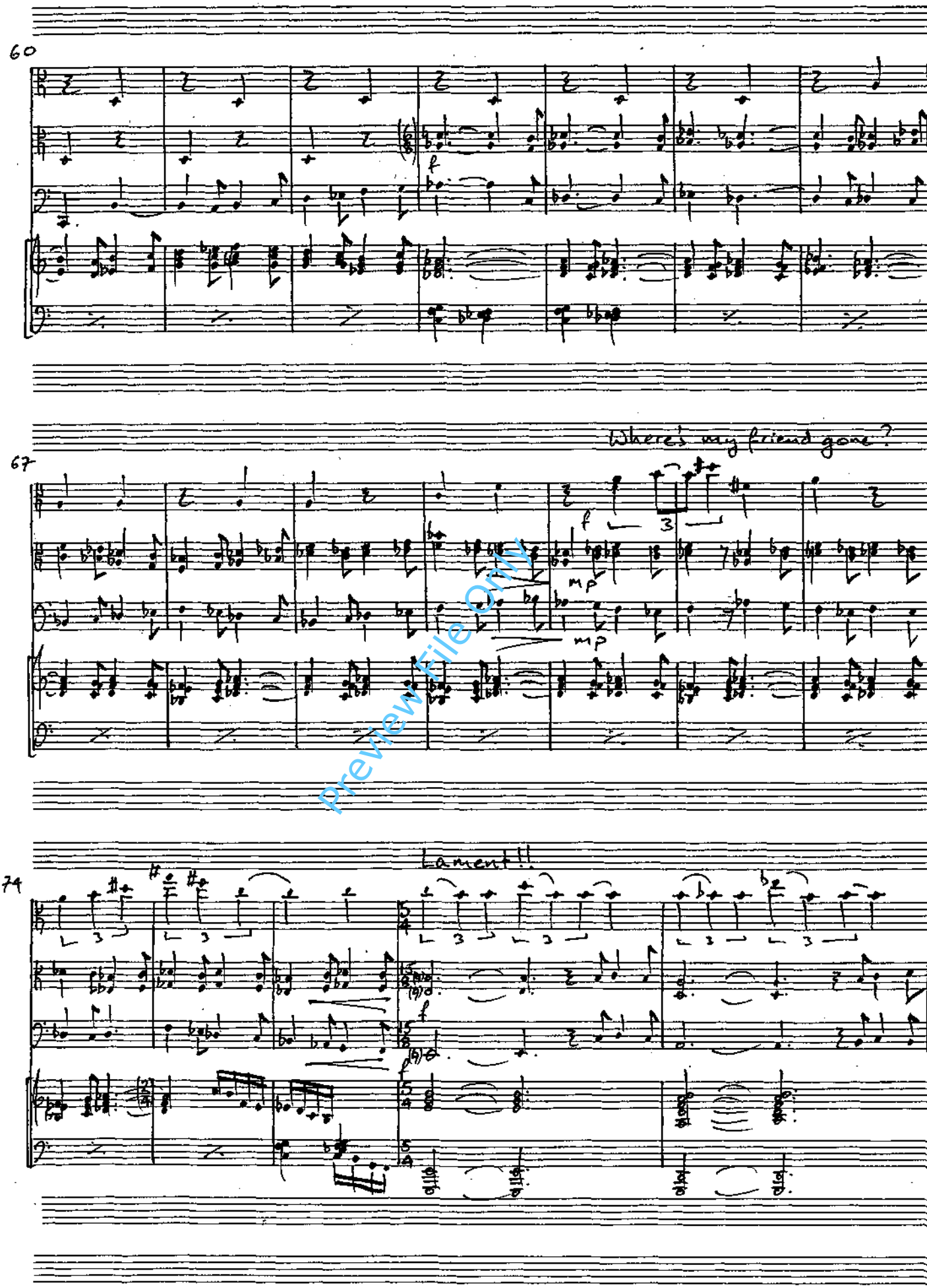

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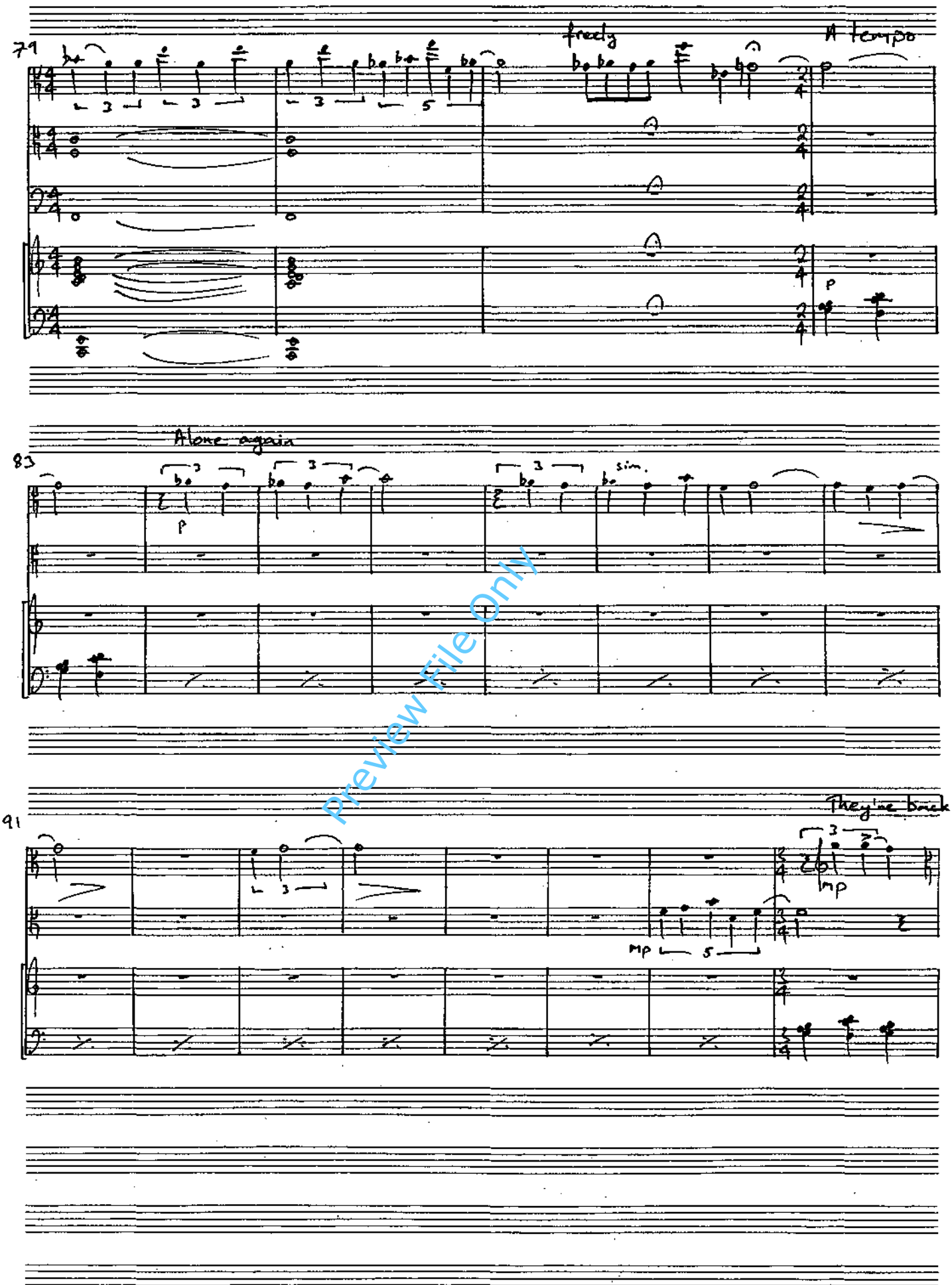

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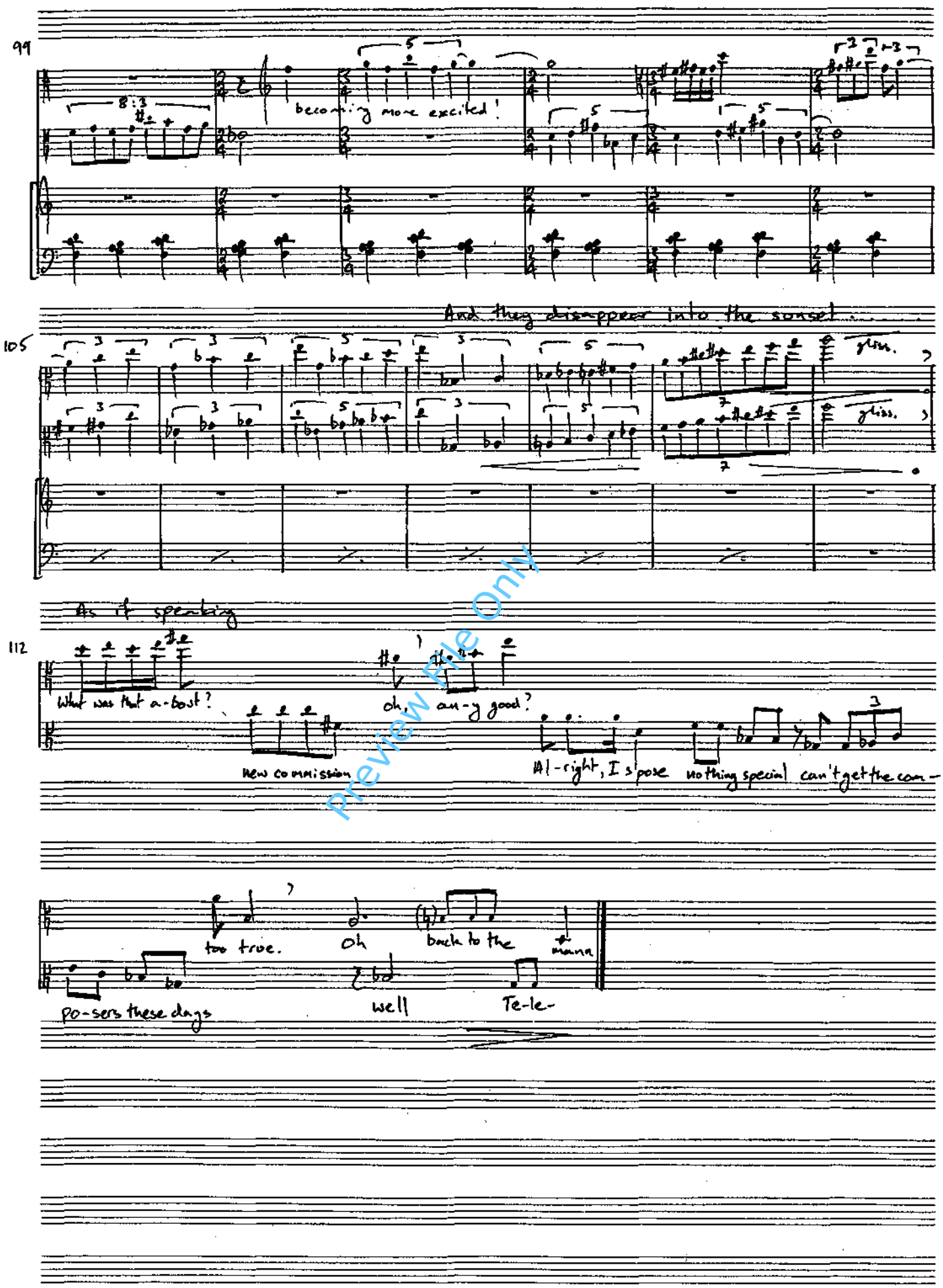

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