Johnny Mercyranks

Book by
Randolph Goodman

Music by,
Irving Schlein

CAST OF CHARACTERS

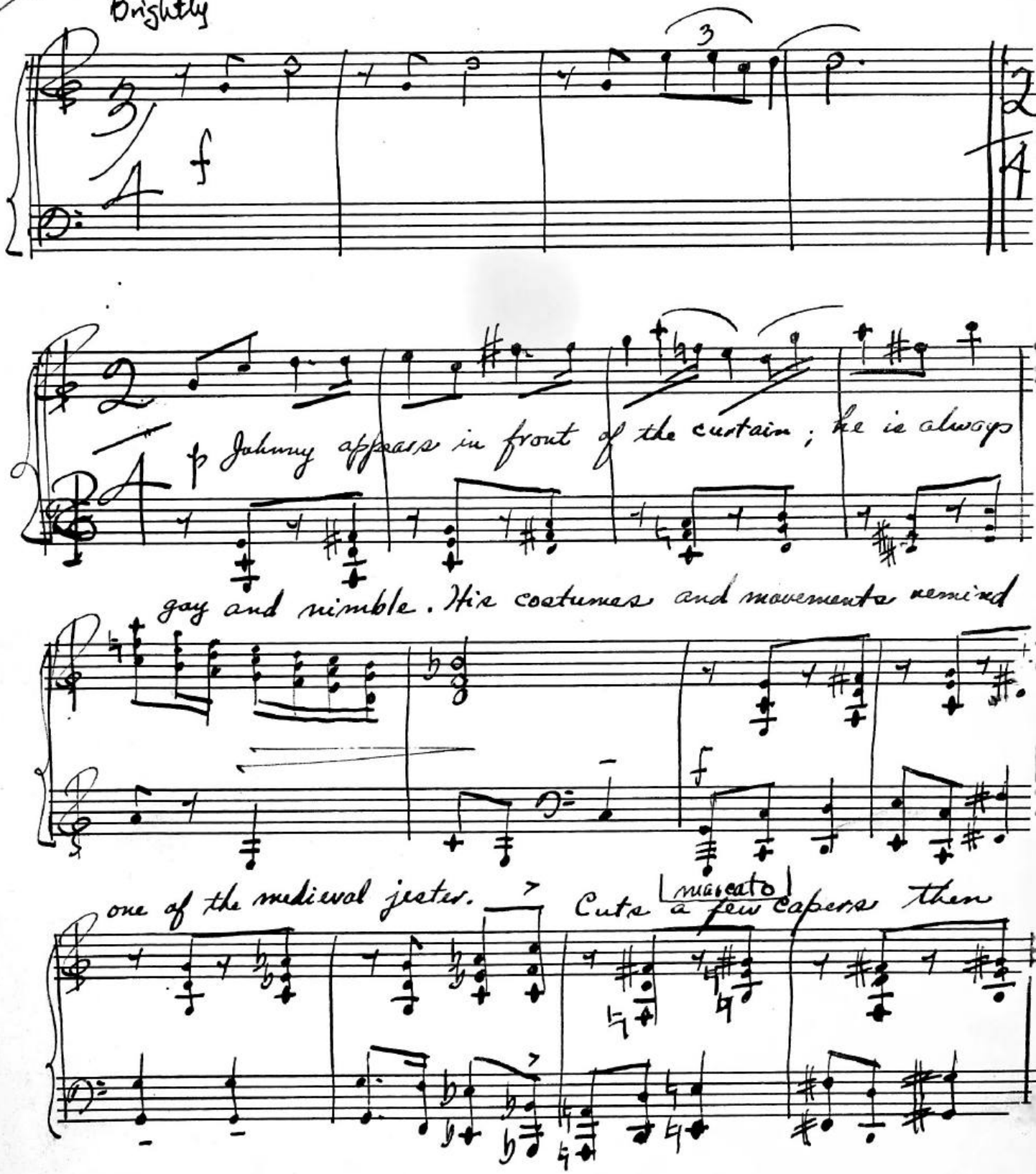
~~JOHNNY MERRIPRANKS (TENOR)~~ SIEGFRIED (BAR.)
MR. BISKIT (BASS)
MR. SEWANSEW (BARITONE)
MRS. SEWANSEW (SOP.)
~~COOK (SOP.)~~
YOUNG GIRL - SIEGLINDA (SOP.)
JUDGE GAVEL (BAR.)
FAT GIRL
~~FAT WOMAN~~
OLD MAN
FORTUNE TELLER
HAM WOMAN
~~JAM MAN~~
CHICKEN WOMAN

Words by: Johnny Merripranks Music by:
Randolph Goodman Irving Schlein

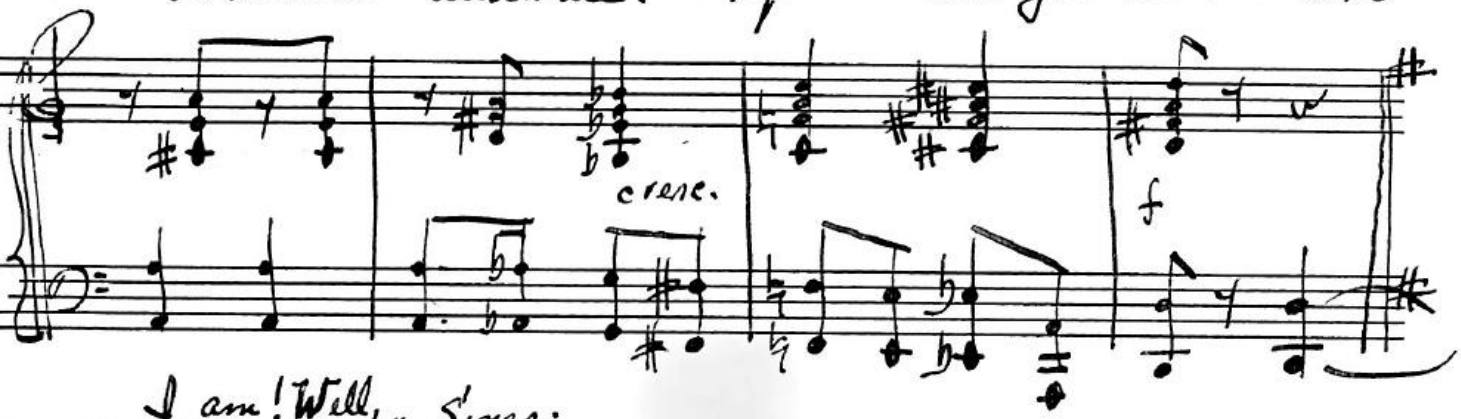
PRODUCTION NOTE: THE PLAY may be performed with as few as ~~eight~~ actors if four of them double. Sets and costumes should be as simple as possible, merely suggesting locale and character. In the costumes, a hint of Central European ~~peasantry of bygone day~~ would provide the flavor of the tales, "The Merry Pranks of Tyl Eulenspiegel", upon which this play is based.

nothing! Scott.

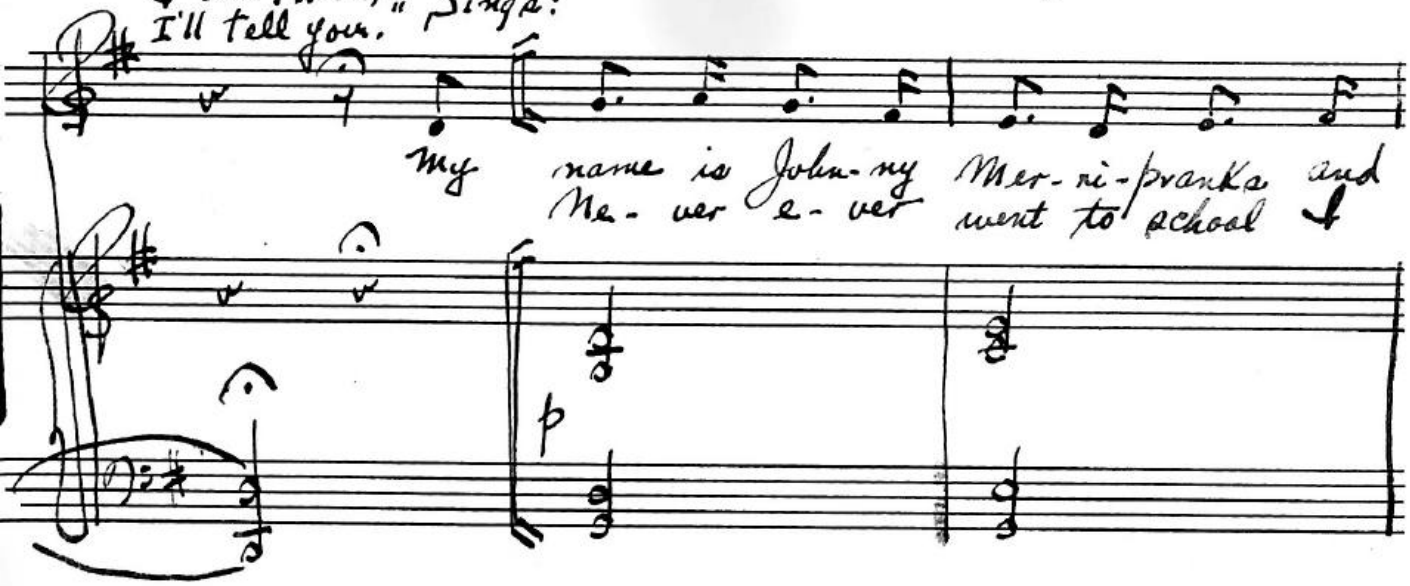
Brightly

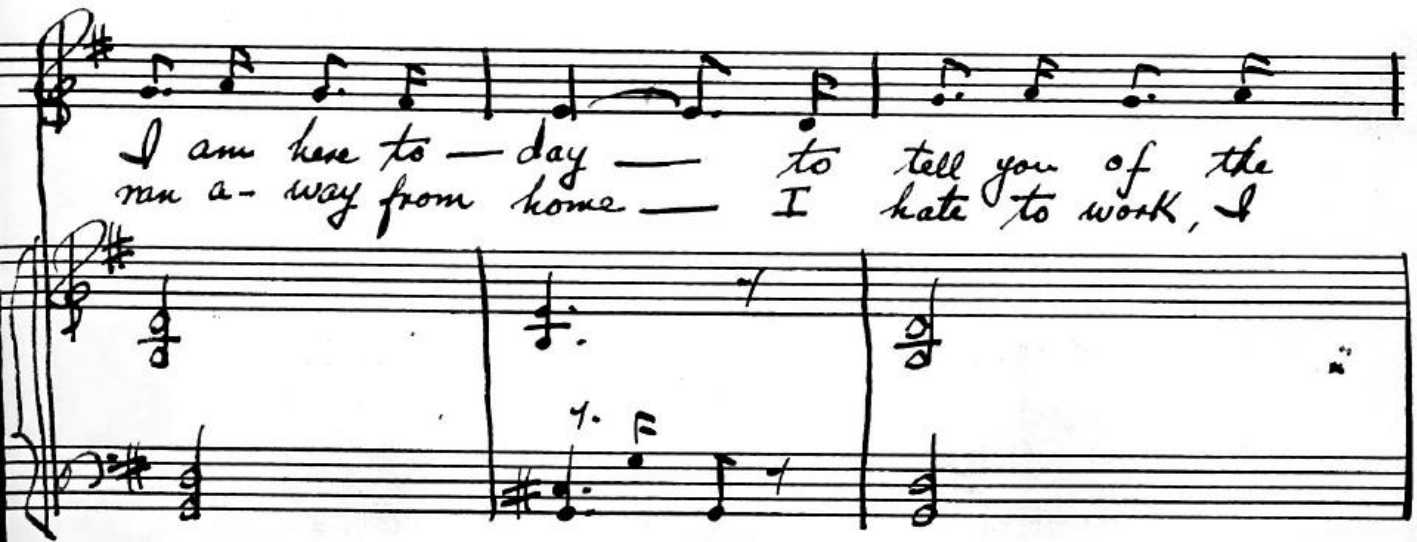


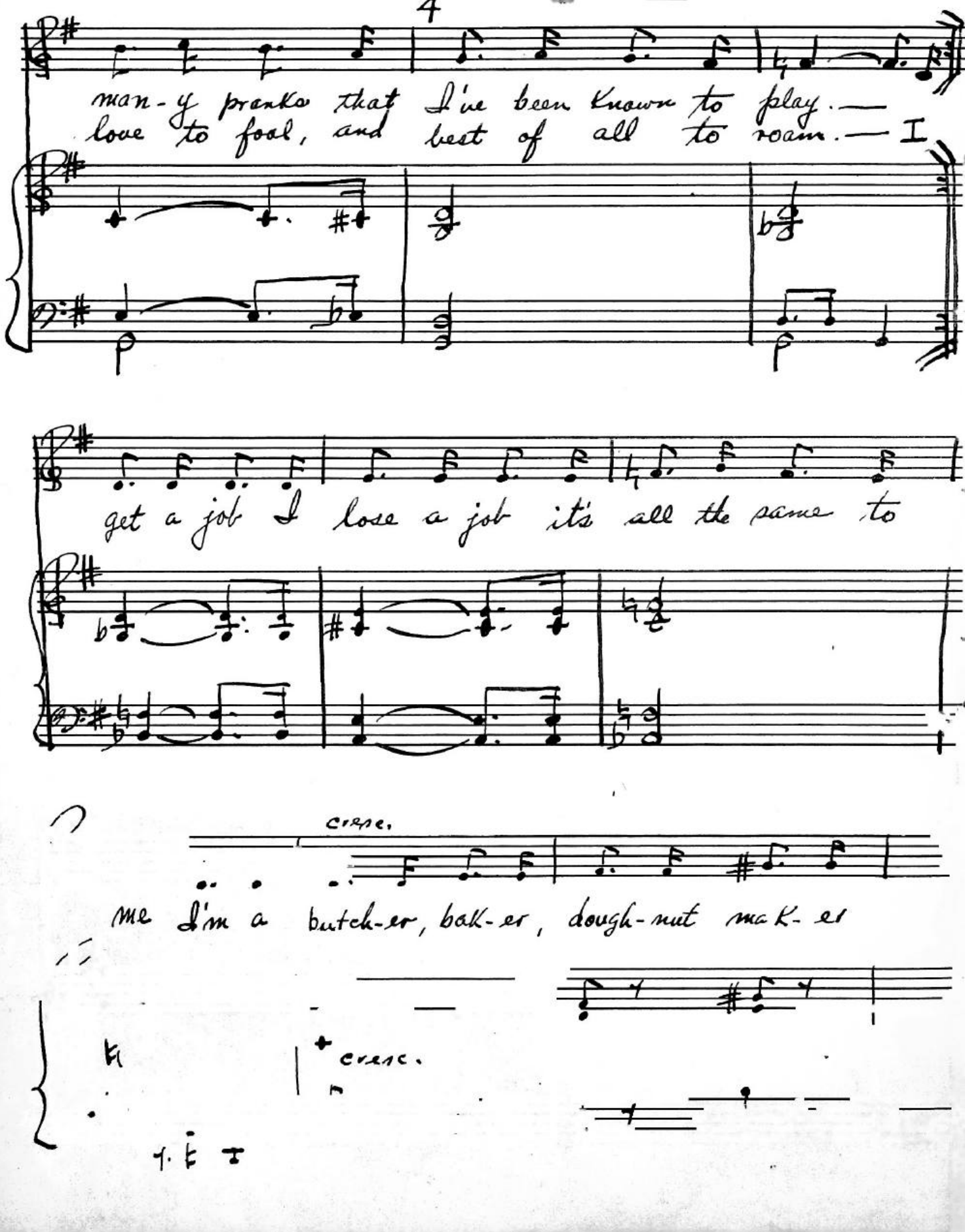
addresses audience: "Hi, folks. Bet you wonder who

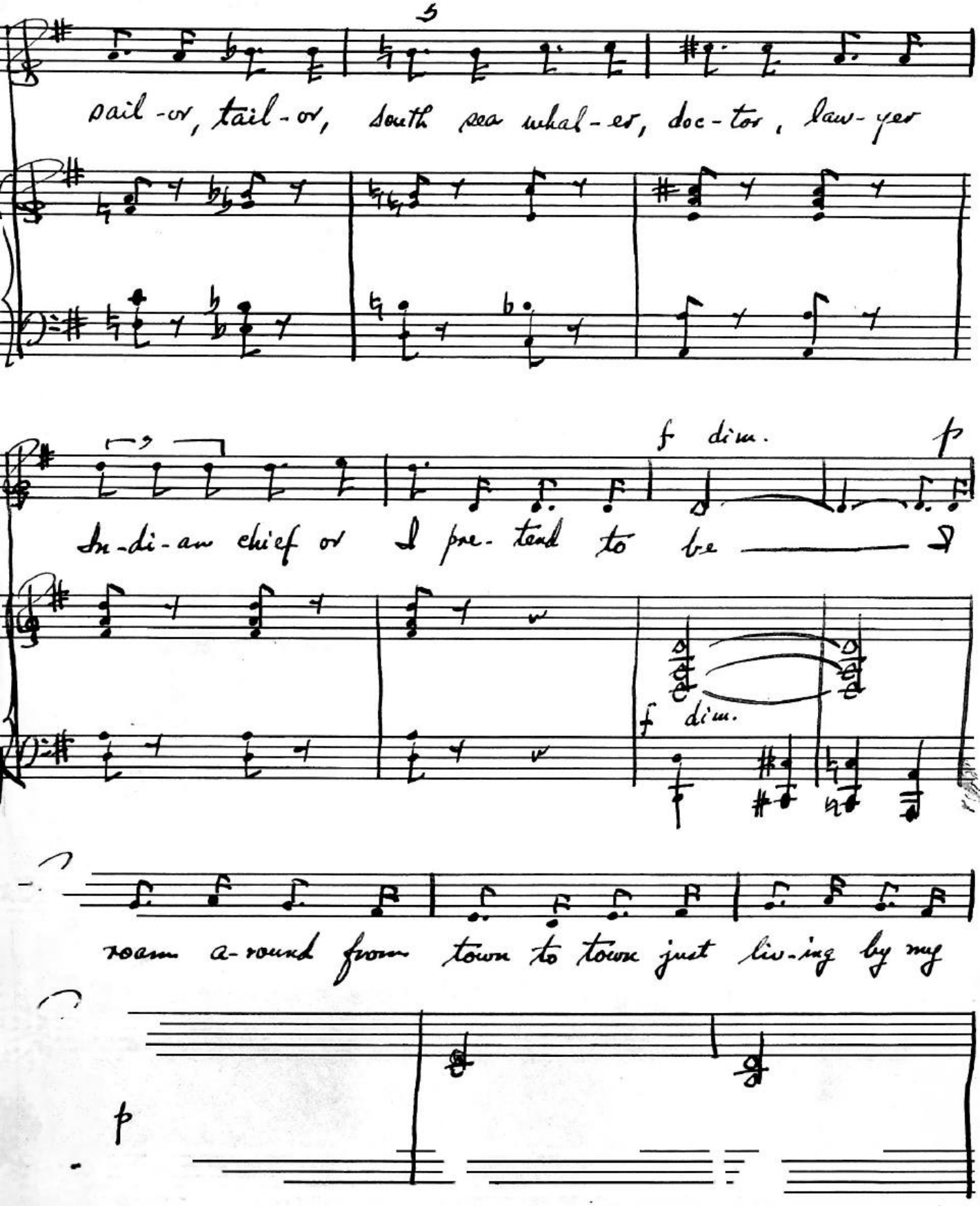


I am! Well, I'll tell you." Sings:

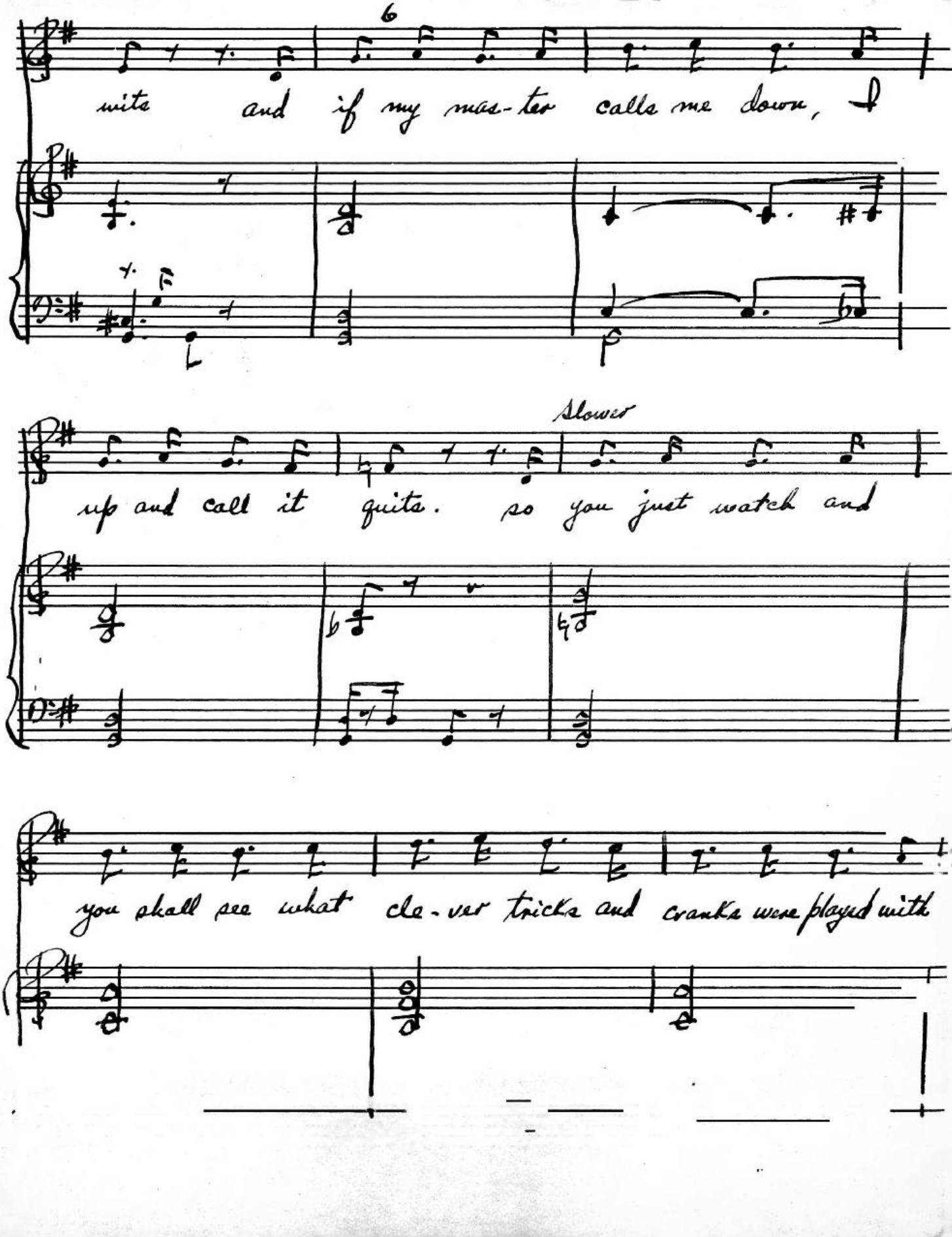


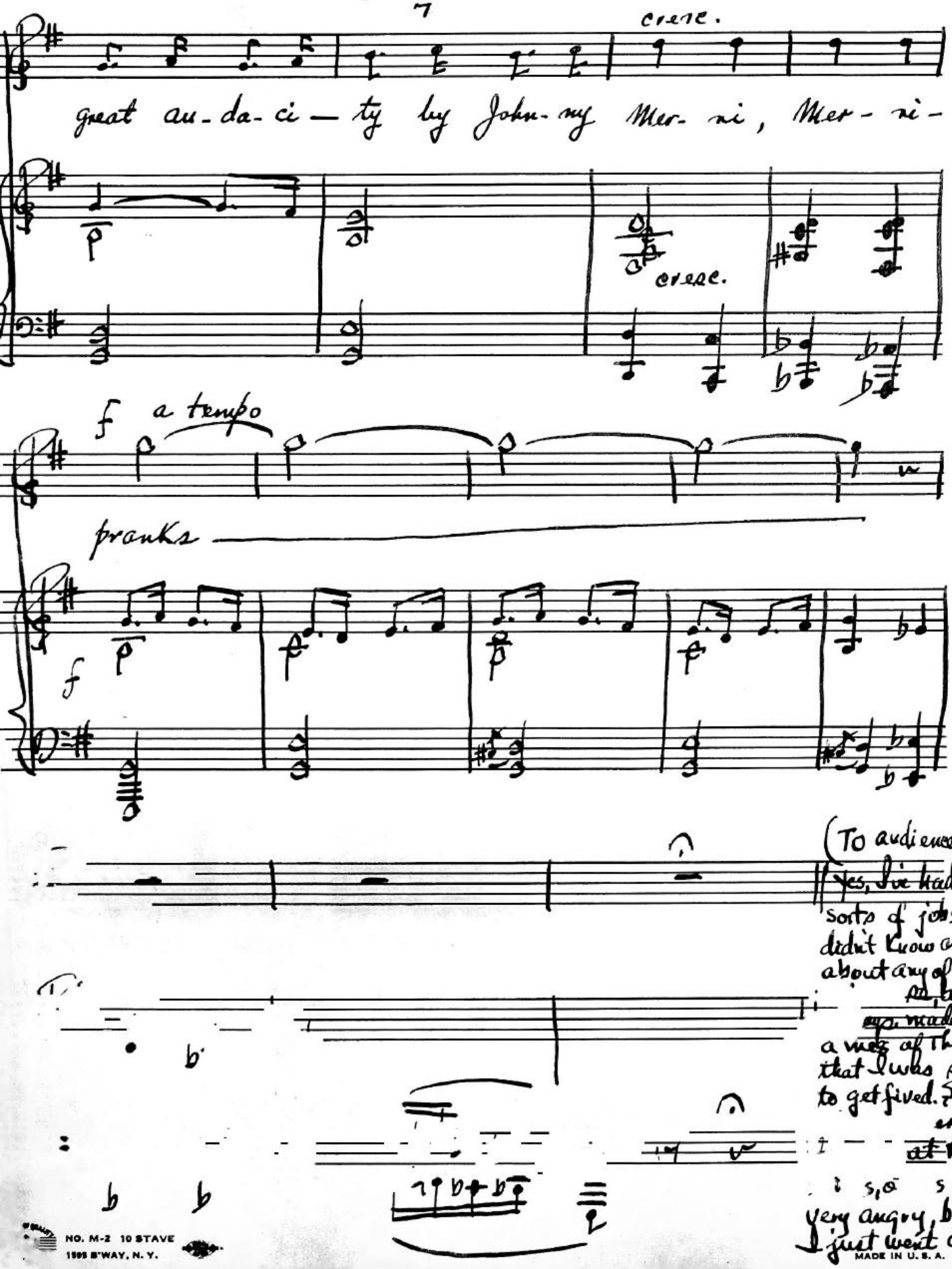



man-y pranks that I've been known to play.—
love to fool, and best of all to roam.— I
get a job I lose a job it's all the same to
cresc.
me I'm a butch-er, bak-er, dough-nut mak-er
cresc.



NO. M-2 10 STAVE
1595 B'WAY, N. Y.
MADE IN U. S. A.


6
wits and if my mas-ter calls me down,
Slower
up and call it quits. so you just watch and
you shall see what cle-ver tricks and cranks were played with



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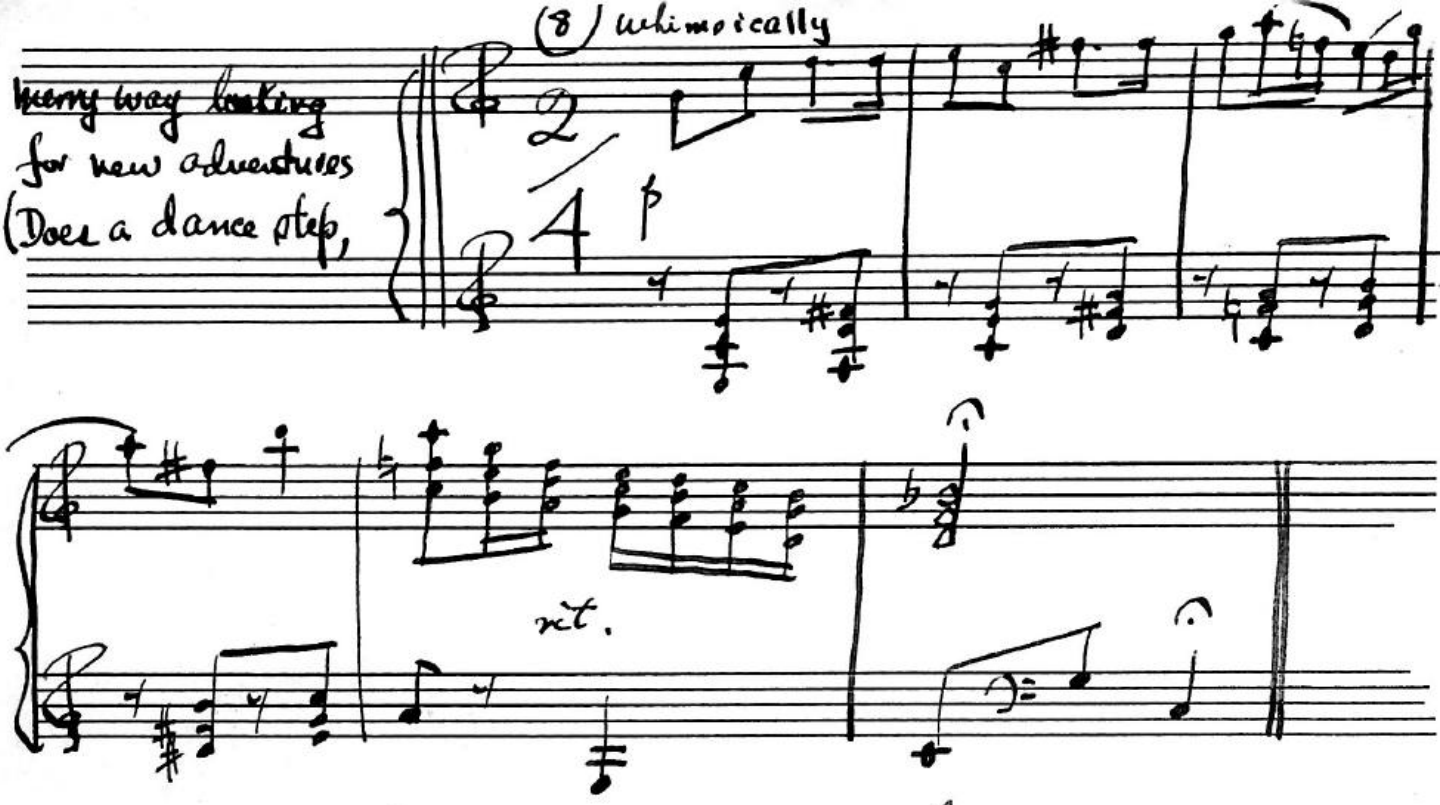
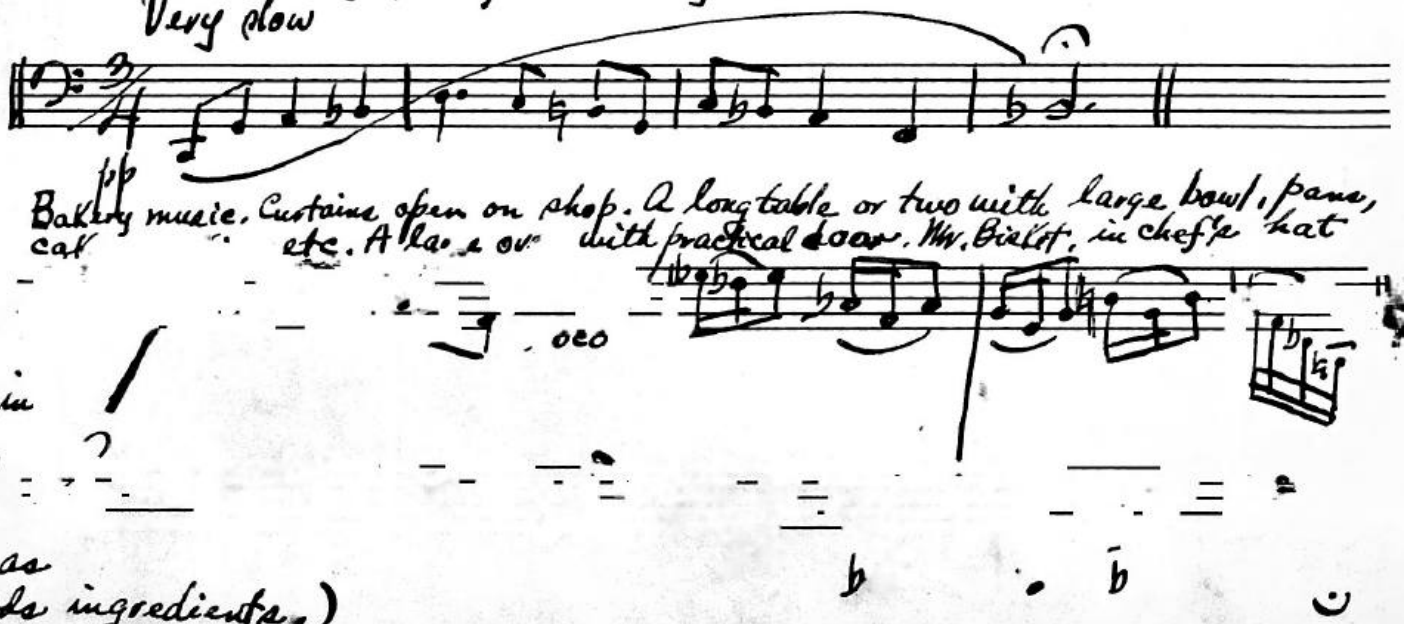
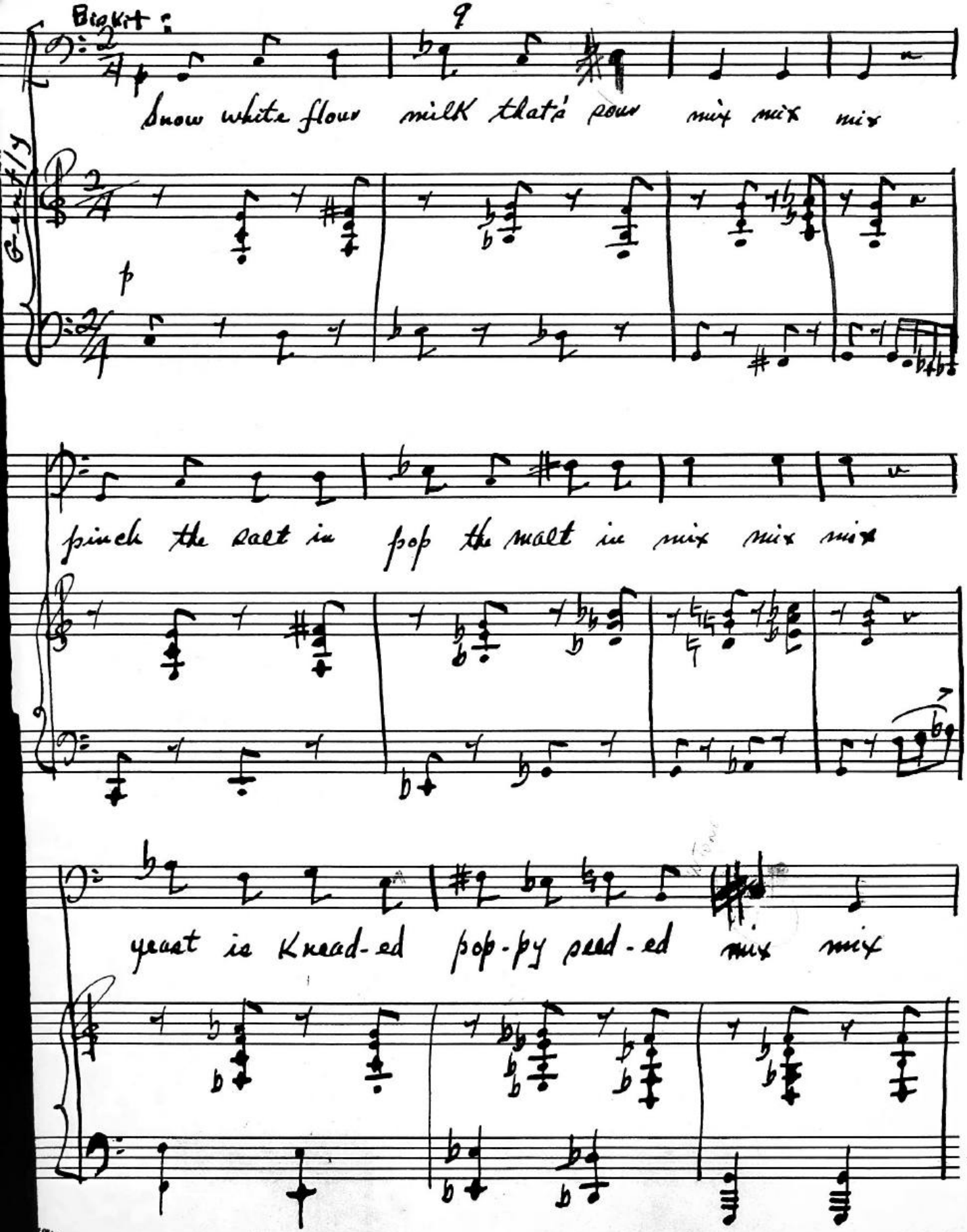


then continues) I'll never forget the time I went to work for Mr. Bialit. He owned a bakery. I thought it would be a wonderful job... all those cakes and cookies - yummy! But Mr. Bialit was a hard man to satisfy. I tried my best, but watch, and you'll see what happened.

(Lights fade. Johnny exits.





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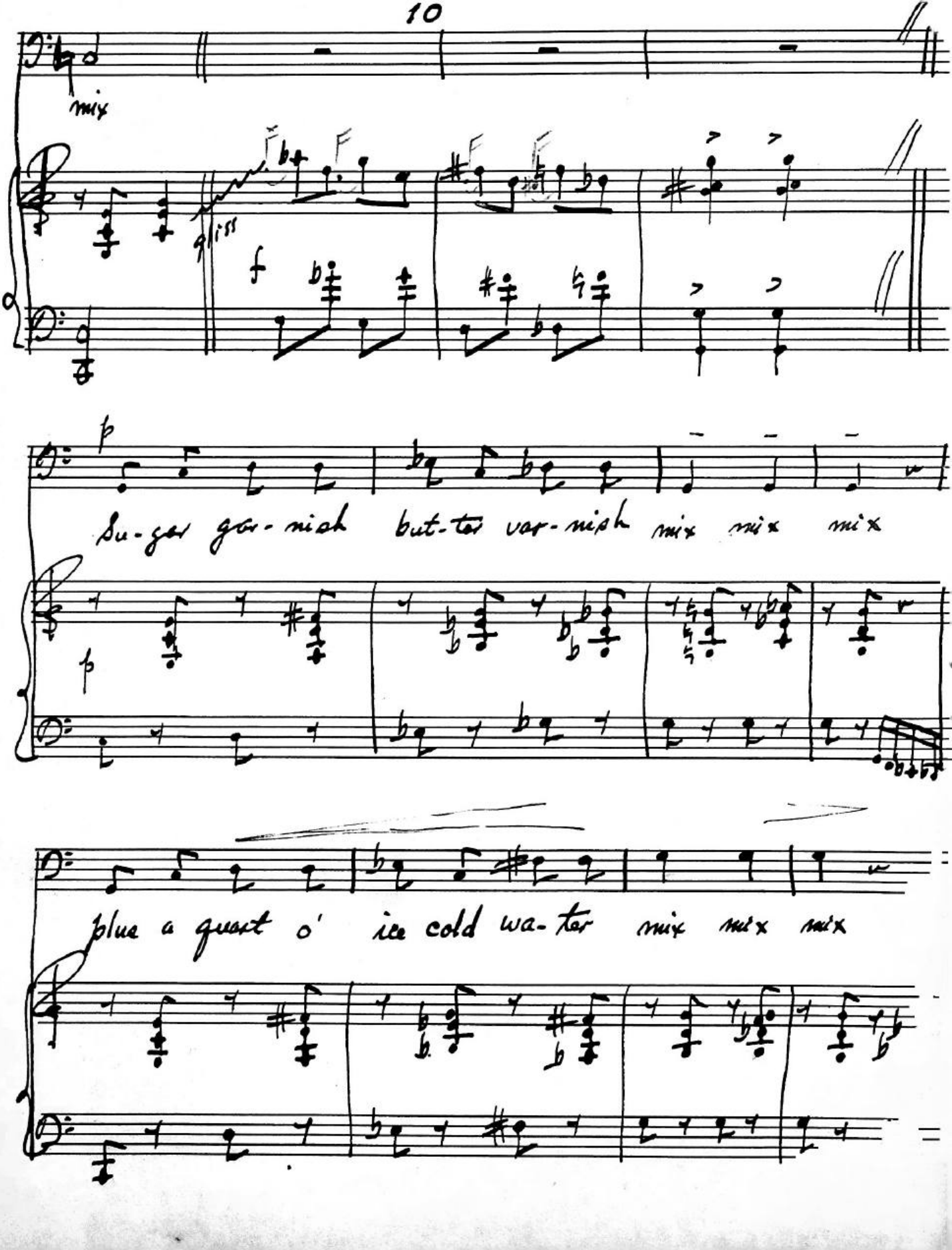
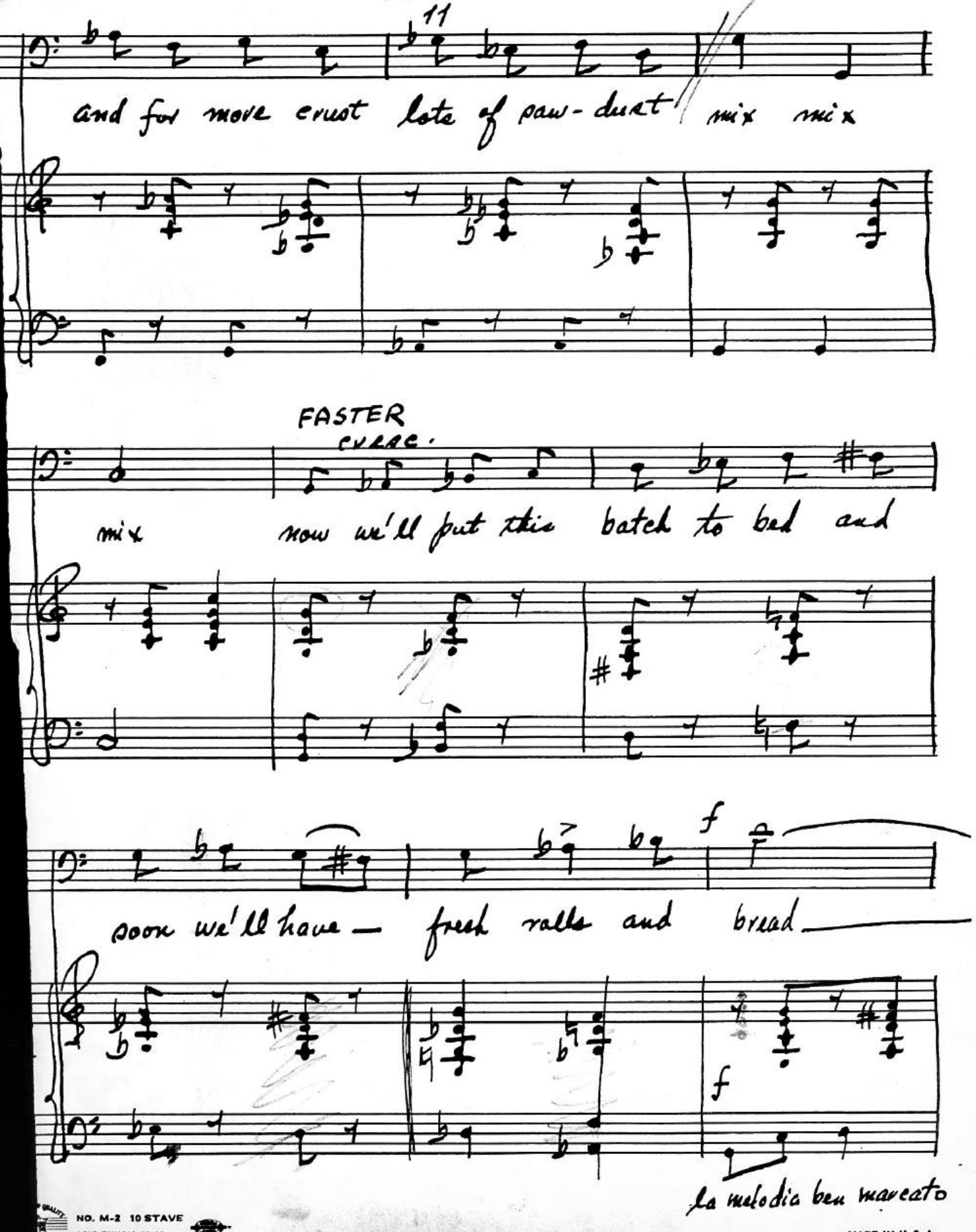

mix
gliss
f
p
Su-gar gra-nish but-ter var-nish mix mix mix
Blue a quart o' ice cold wa-ter mix mix mix



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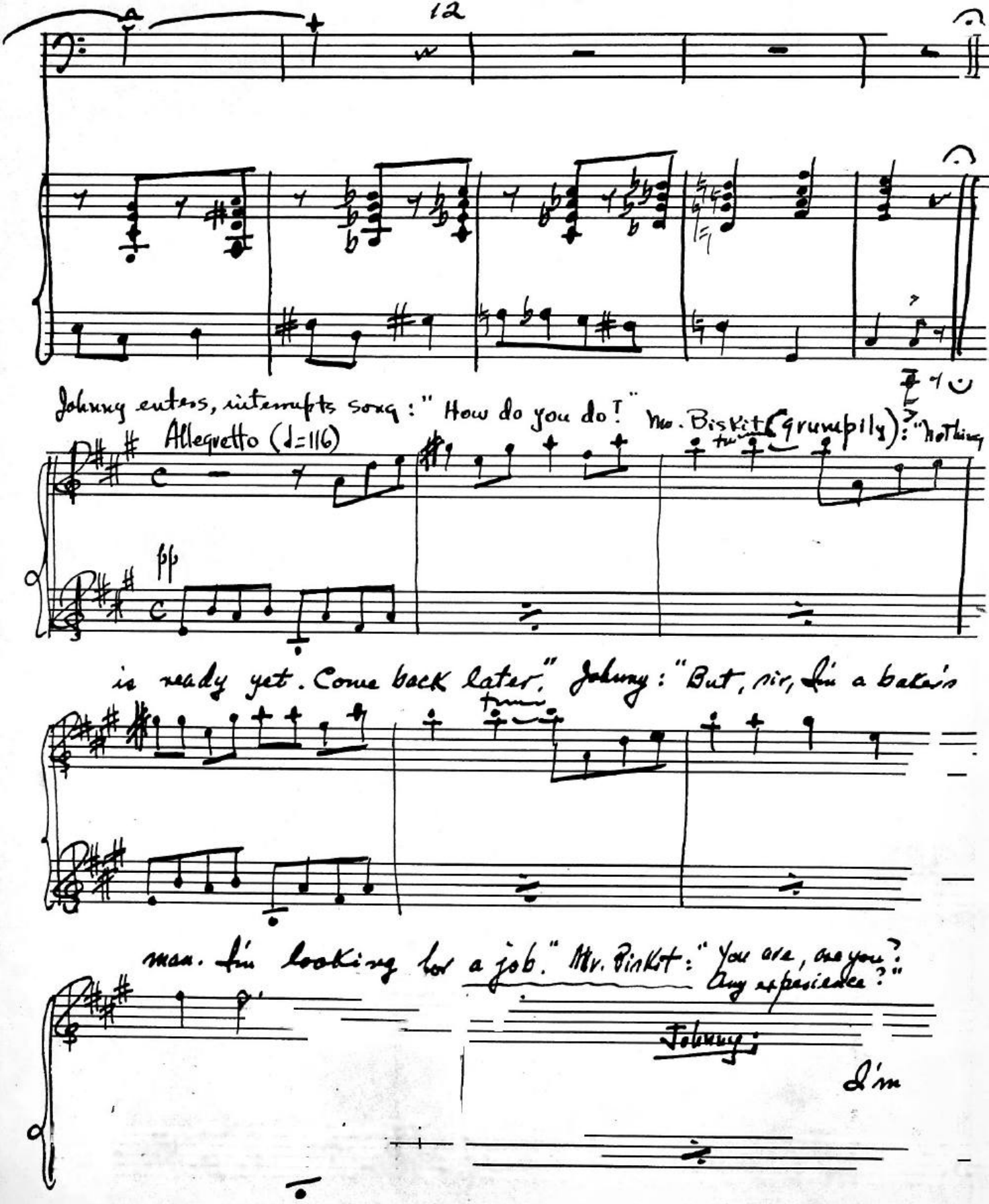
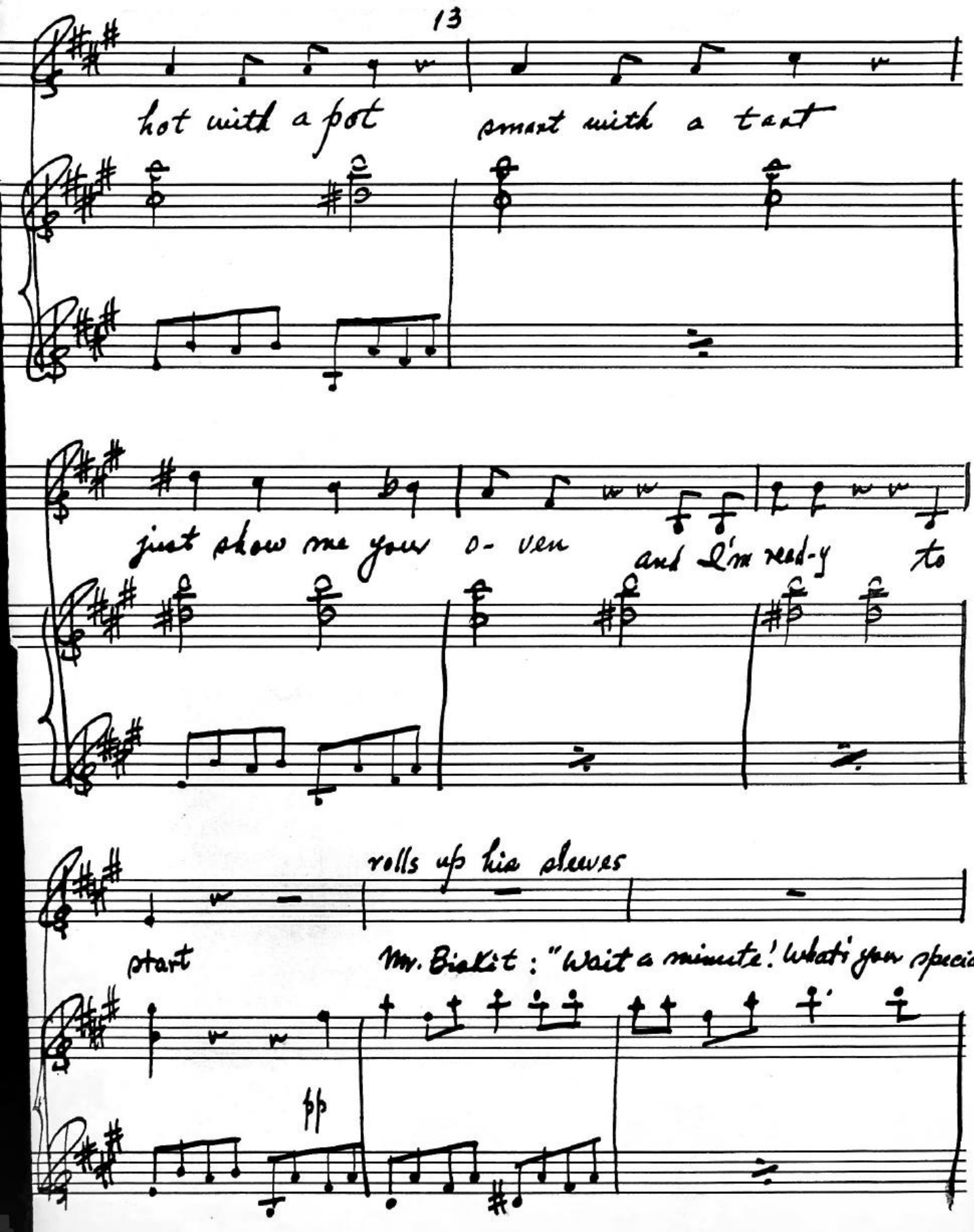

Johnny enters, interrupts song: "How do you do!"
Mr. Biskit (grumpily): "Nothing
Allegretto (♩=116)
pp
is ready yet. Come back later." Johnny: "But, sir, I'm a baker's
man. I'm looking for a job." Mr. Biskit: "You are, are you?
Any experience?"
Johnny:
I'm



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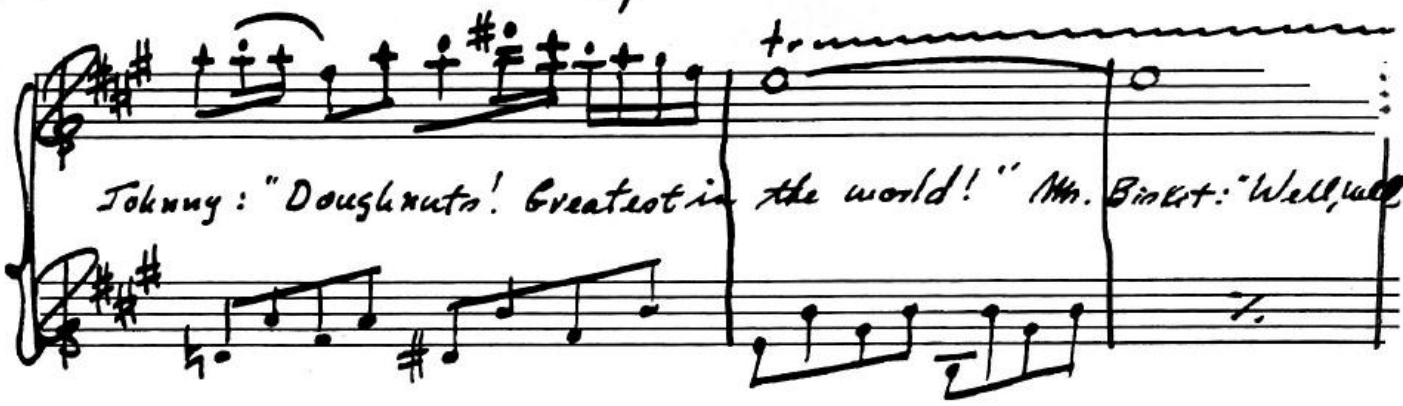
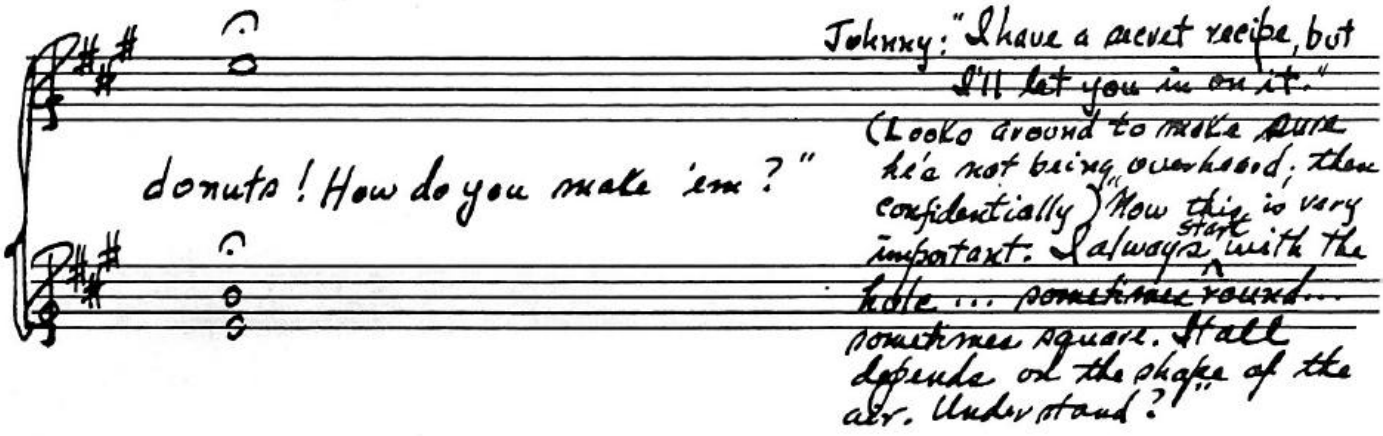
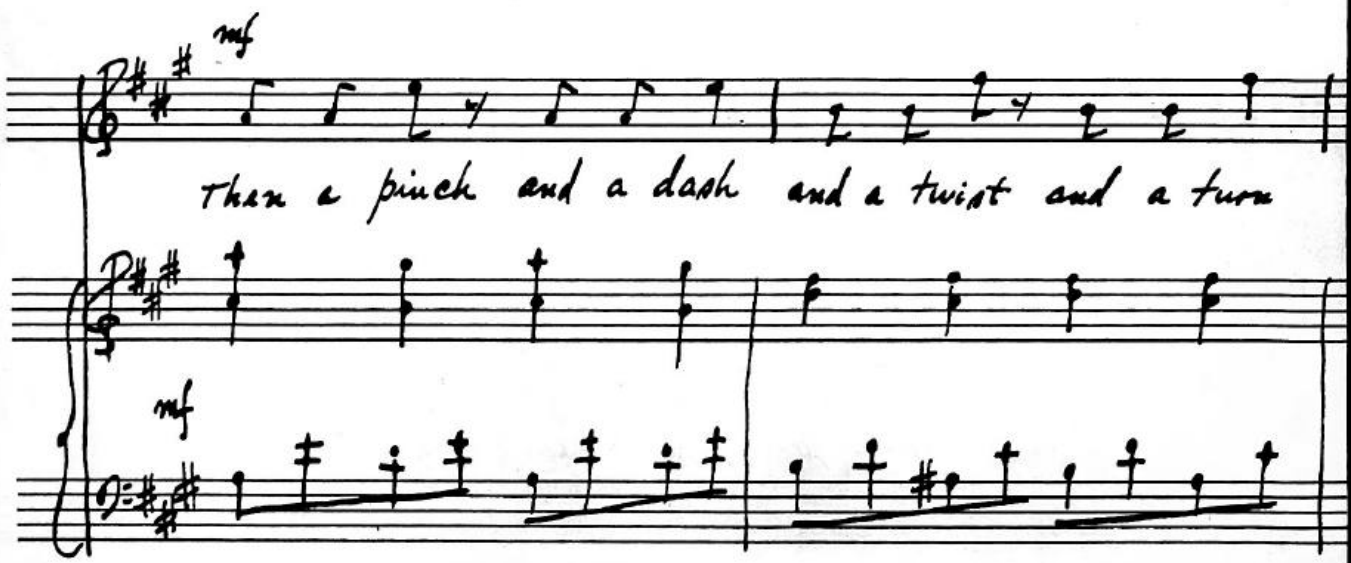
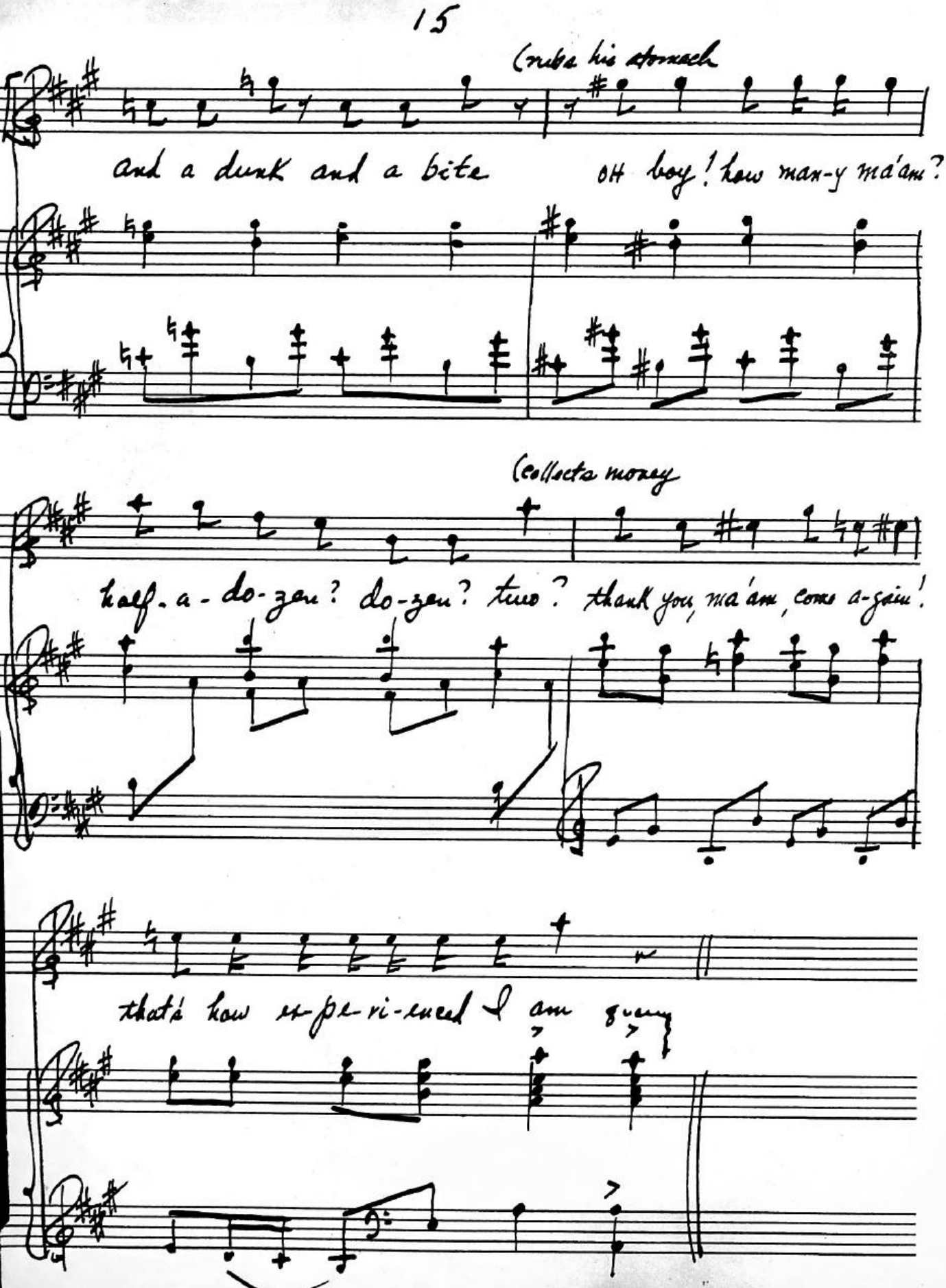




Mr. Bisket: (Frowns in deep thought) "Umhmm! Then what?"




(rubs his stomach
and a dunk and a bite
oh boy! how man-y ma'am?
(collects money
half-a-do-zen? do-zen? two? thank you, ma'am, come a-gain!
that's how ex-pe-ri-enced I am

Mr. Biskit

Well, I can use a bright assistant. What's your name?

Johnny

Johnny Merripranks, sir.

Mr. Biskit

And I'm Mr. Biskit. (Glances at watch) I've got to go out for a little while. With all your experience, do you think you can do the baking tonight by yourself?

Johnny

Just leave it to me.

Mr. Biskit

Good. (Takes off hat and apron and puts them on Johnny as he speaks) You see, the dough is all ready. All you have to do is shape it, and put it in the oven.

Johnny

(Repeats) Shape it--and put it in the oven. Yes, sir.

Mr. Biskit

(Puts on jacket and hat) I won't be gone long. Anything you want to know before I leave?

Johnny

Yes, sir. What do you want me to bake?

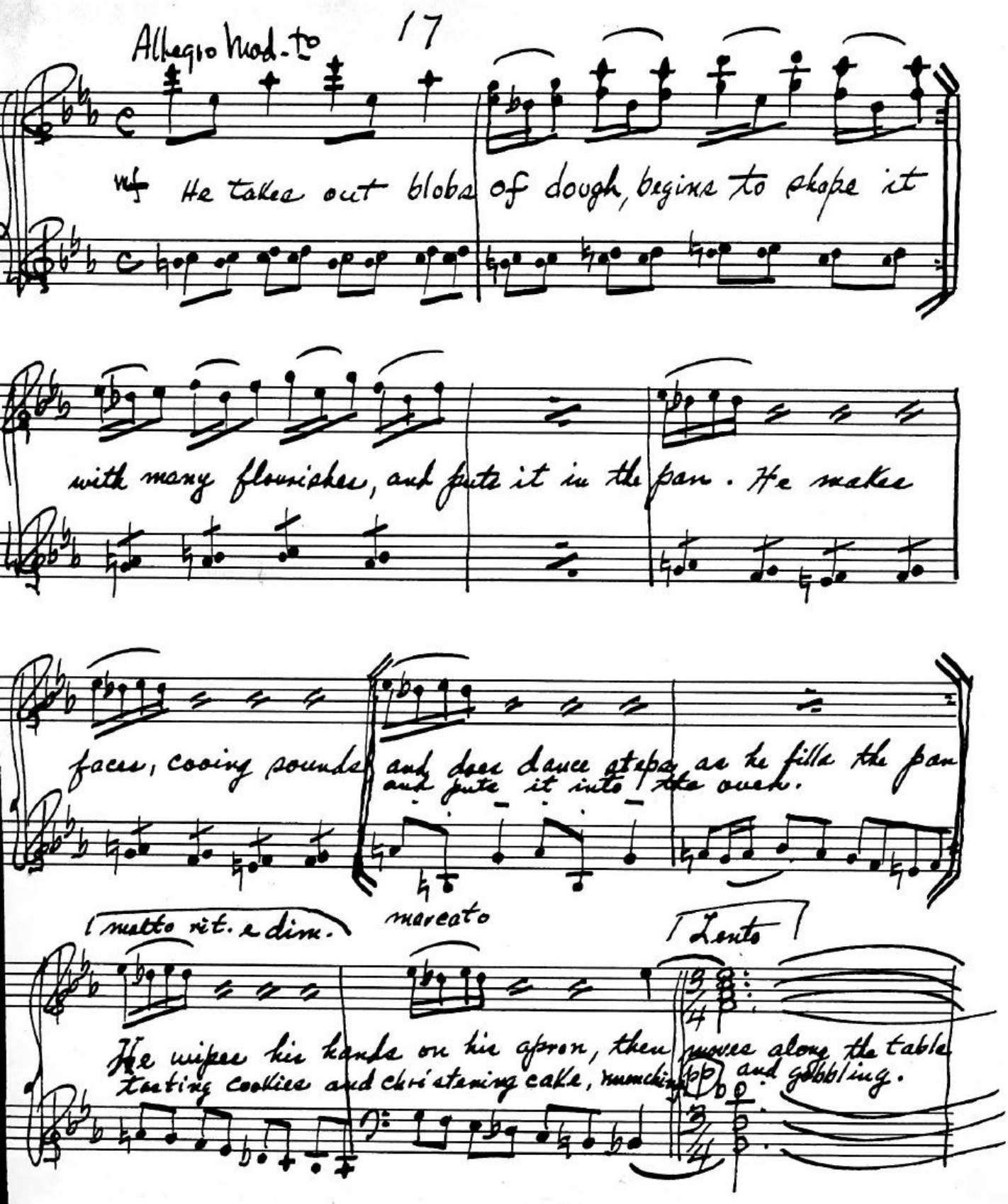
Mr. Biskit

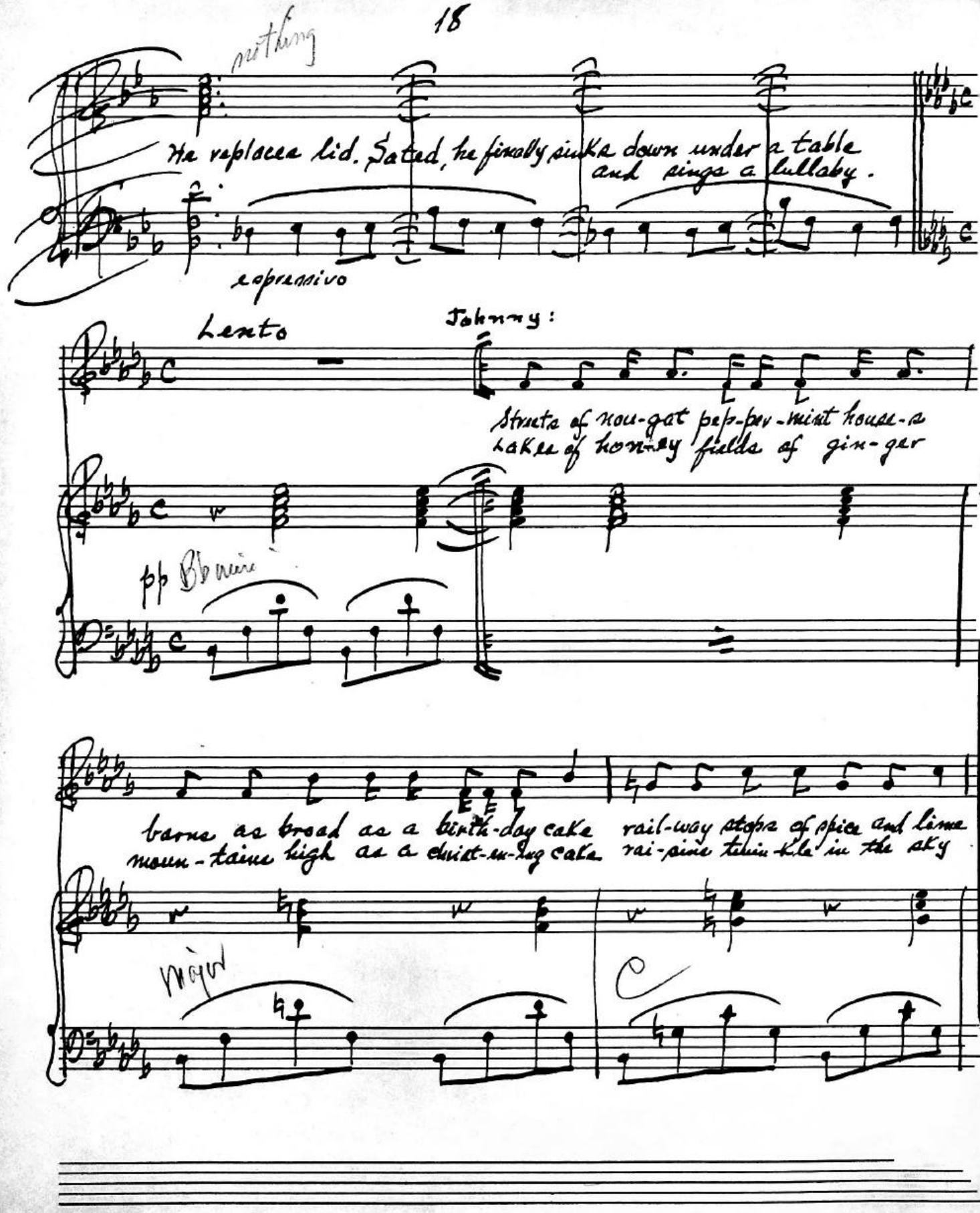
(Furious, throws hat on floor, shouts) What do I want you to bake! You ask me that---and you call yourself a baker? What do you bake? Owls and monkeys?

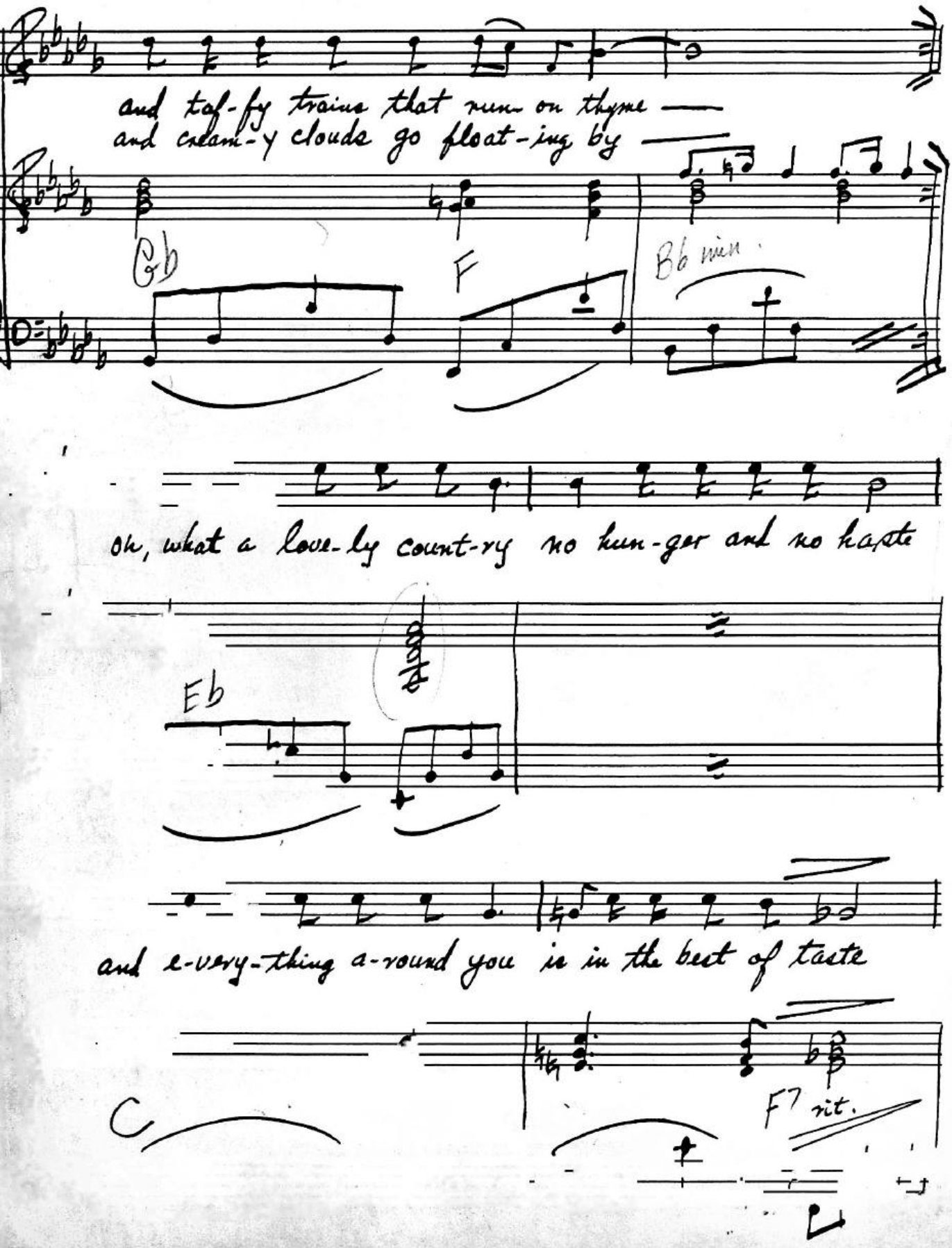
Johnny

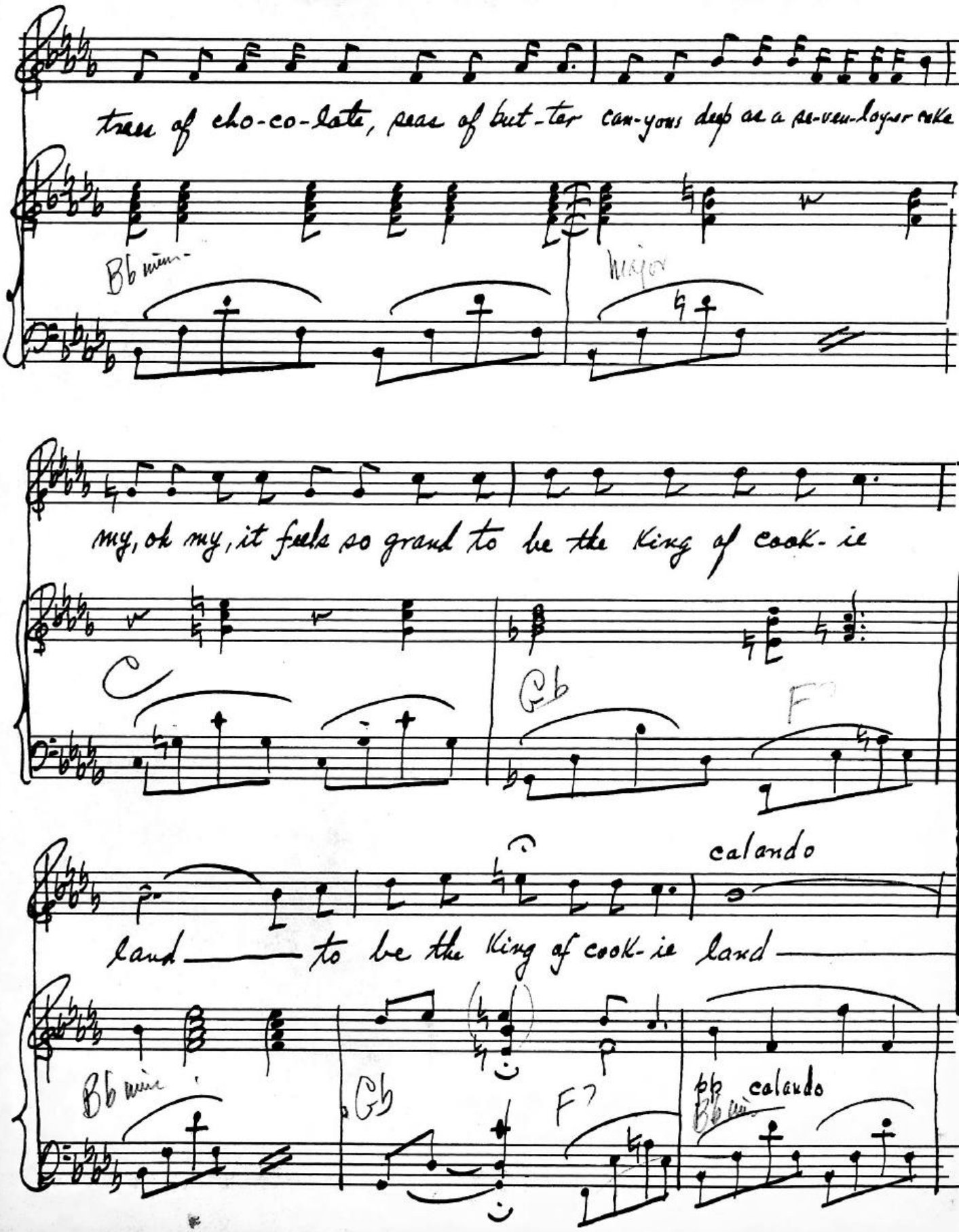
Oh, I see, sir. Thank you, sir.

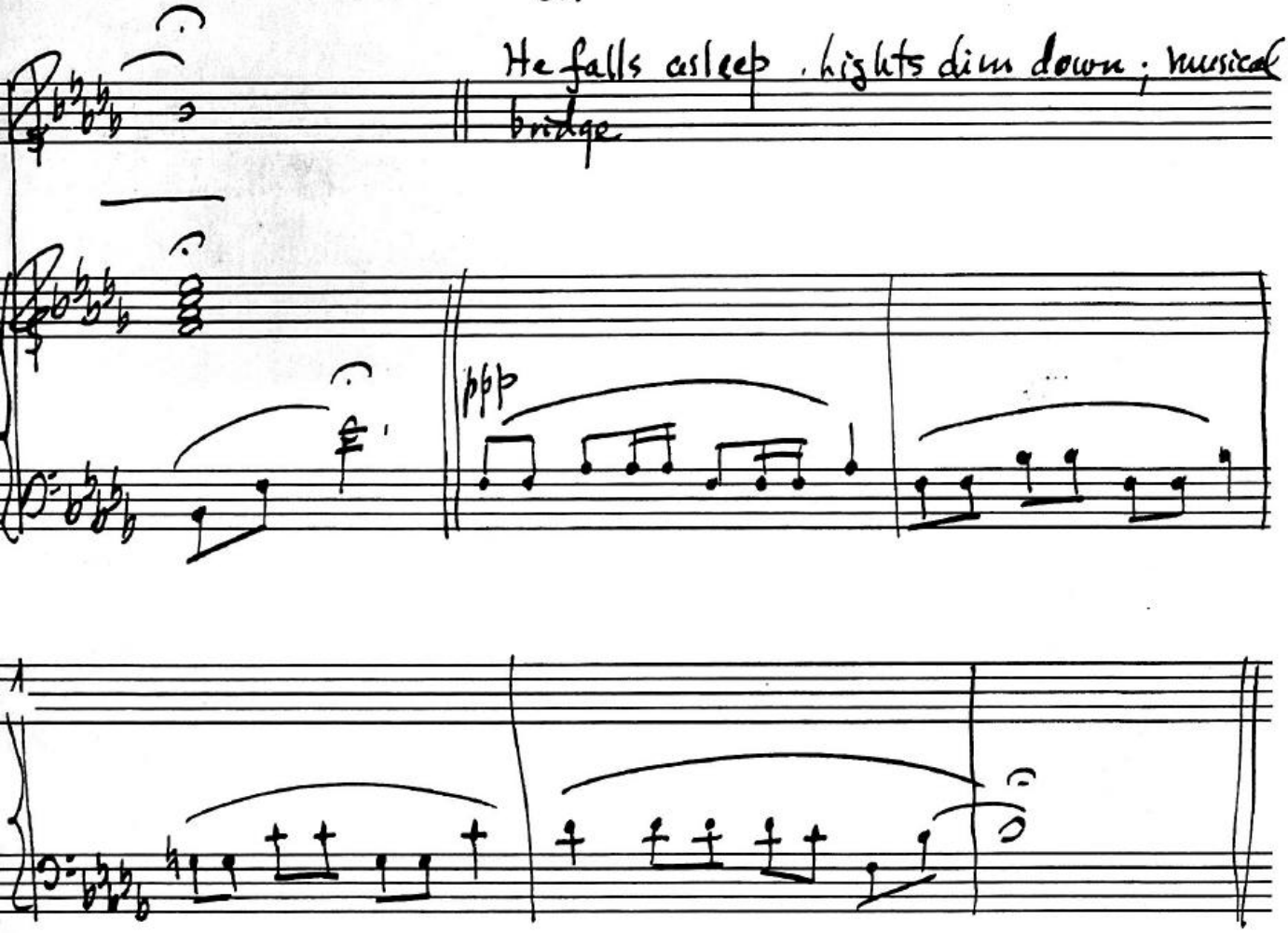
(Biskit gives Johnny a nasty look, picks up hat and storms out. Johnny turns and sets to work at the bowl


Allegro mod.to
He takes out blobs of dough, begins to shape it
with many flourishes, and puts it in the pan. He makes
faces, cooing sounds and does dance steps as he fills the pan
and puts it into the oven.
molto rit. e dim.
marcato
Lento
He wipes his hands on his apron, then moves along the table
tasting cookies and christening cake, munching and gobbling.


nothing
He replaces lid. Seated, he finally sinks down under a table and sings a lullaby.
espressivo
Lento
Johnny:
Streets of nou-gat pep-per-mint house-s
Lakes of hon-ey fields of gin-ger
pp Bb voice
barns as broad as a birth-day cake
moun-tains high as a christ-mas cake
rail-way stops of spice and lime
rai-sins twin-kle in the sky
major


and taf-fy trains that run on thyme
and cream-y clouds go float-ing by
Gb
F
Bb min.
oh, what a love-ly count-ry no hun-ger and no haste
Eb
and e-very-thing a-round you is in the best of taste
C
F7 rit.


trees of cho-co-late, seas of but-ter can-yons deep as a se-ven-layer cake
Bb min-
major
my, oh my, it feels so grand to be the King of cook-ie
C
Gb
F7
land — to be the King of cook-ie land —
calando
Bb min
Gb
F7
calando
Bb min



lights come up and Mr. Birkit bustles in.

Mr. Birkit

(Sniffs) Mm... smells good. Well, boy... Hey, where is he? (Looks around and spies Johnny under table.) Oh-oh! Asleep on the job! (Kicks Johnny) Get up there! Up!

Johnny

(Sits up and rubs his eyes) Oh, good morning, sir.

Mr. Birkit

~~Phew! Nice smell in here! Let's see if the batch~~ is finished!

(Puts aside his hat and coat. ~~Takes hat and~~ on from Johnny.

opens oven door, pulls out long pan, and turns it over on table. Owls and monkeys fall out.)

(Taken aback) Hey, what's this? Where are the rolls and bread? (Picks up figures.) What are these things?

Johnny

Owls and monkeys, sir.

Mr. Biskit

(Shouts) Owls and monkeys!!

Johnny

Just what you ordered, sir!

Mr. Biskit

(Screams) Owls and monkeys???

Johnny

Your very words!

Mr. Biskit

(Grabs Johnny by his collar) What'll I do with this trash? Who'll buy it? (Shakes him) You spoiled the dough...and you'll pay me for it.

Johnny

All right, all right...I'll pay you for it-- (Biskit lets go) On one condition--

Mr. Biskit

What's that?

Johnny

If I pay you for them, they'll all belong to me.

Mr. Biskit

Suits me! What do I care for bread like that!

Johnny

(Takes money from pocket) Here you are... (Hands him some extra coins) ...and this is for a basket...

(Biskit pockets money and tosses a basket to Johnny who fills it with the owls and monkeys. Johnny puts basket on his arm then starts for the door, turns, and doffs hat.)

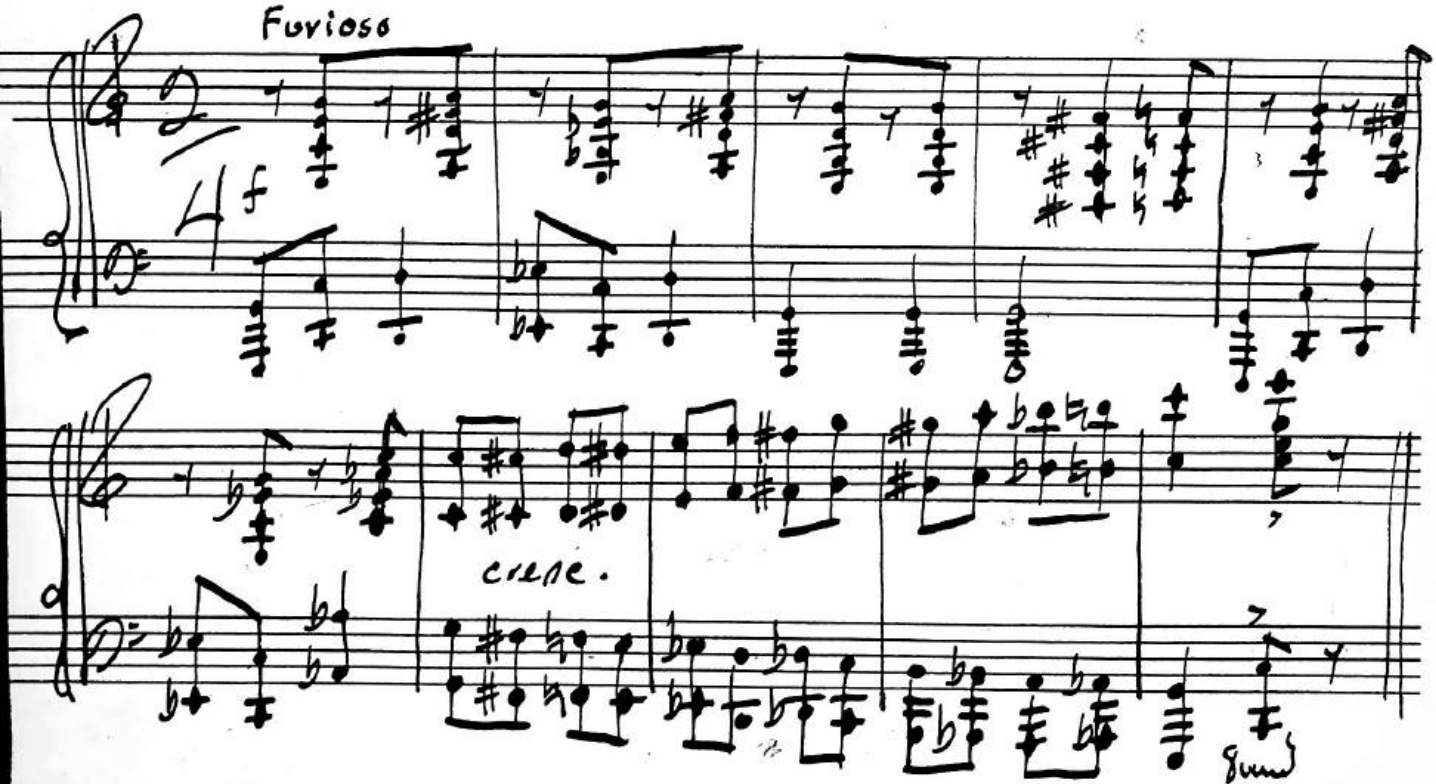
So long, Mr. Biskit. It's off to the Faiv.

Mr. Biskit

(Starts after him) And don't you ever show your face around here again, or I'll... (He levels a kick at Johnny, who runs out. Biskit begins to slam pots and pans around) Not a roll or a bun in this place! What'll I do when my customers come in?

(He looks under the lid. Sees the christening cake in ruins and shouts)

Oh, he ruined my stock, and the christening cake is a wreck! (He shakes his fist.) I'll get you for this! (He seizes his hat and starts out.)



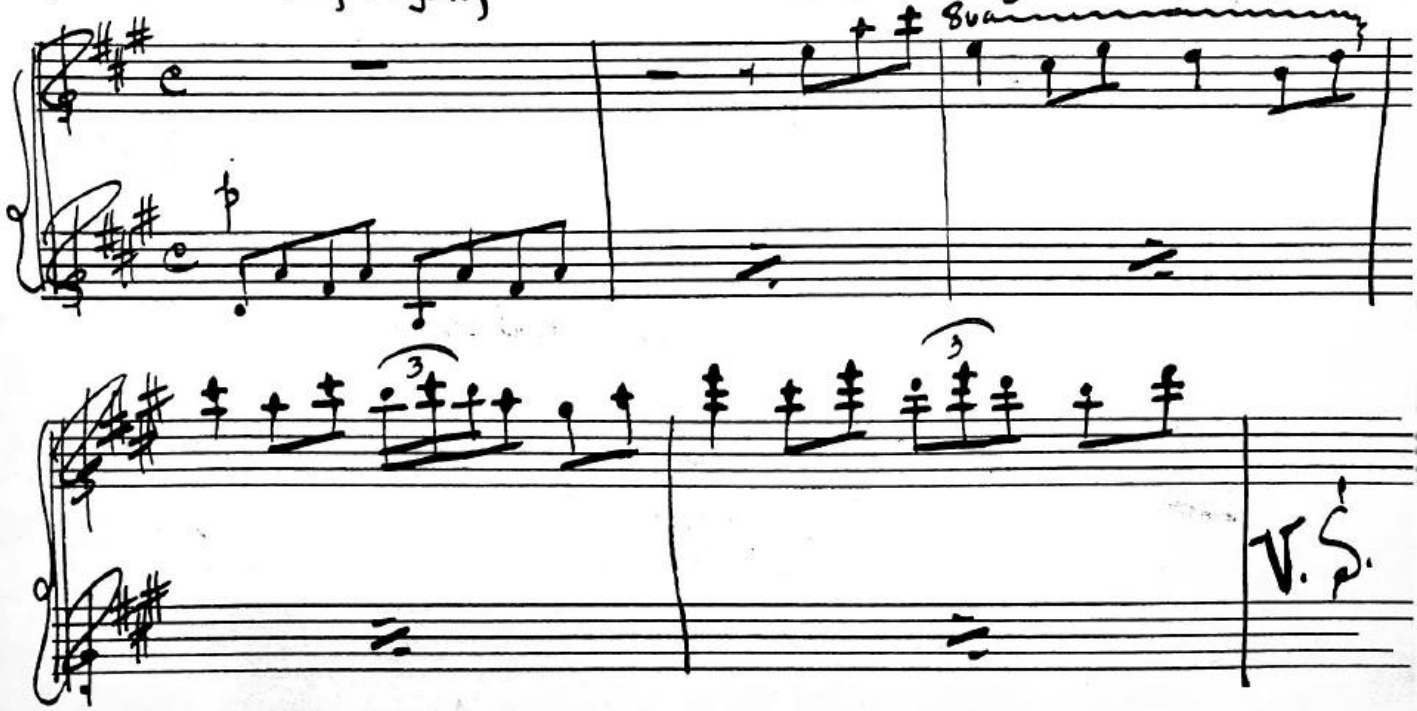
(Curtains close. Johnny crosses stage with the basket on his arm.)

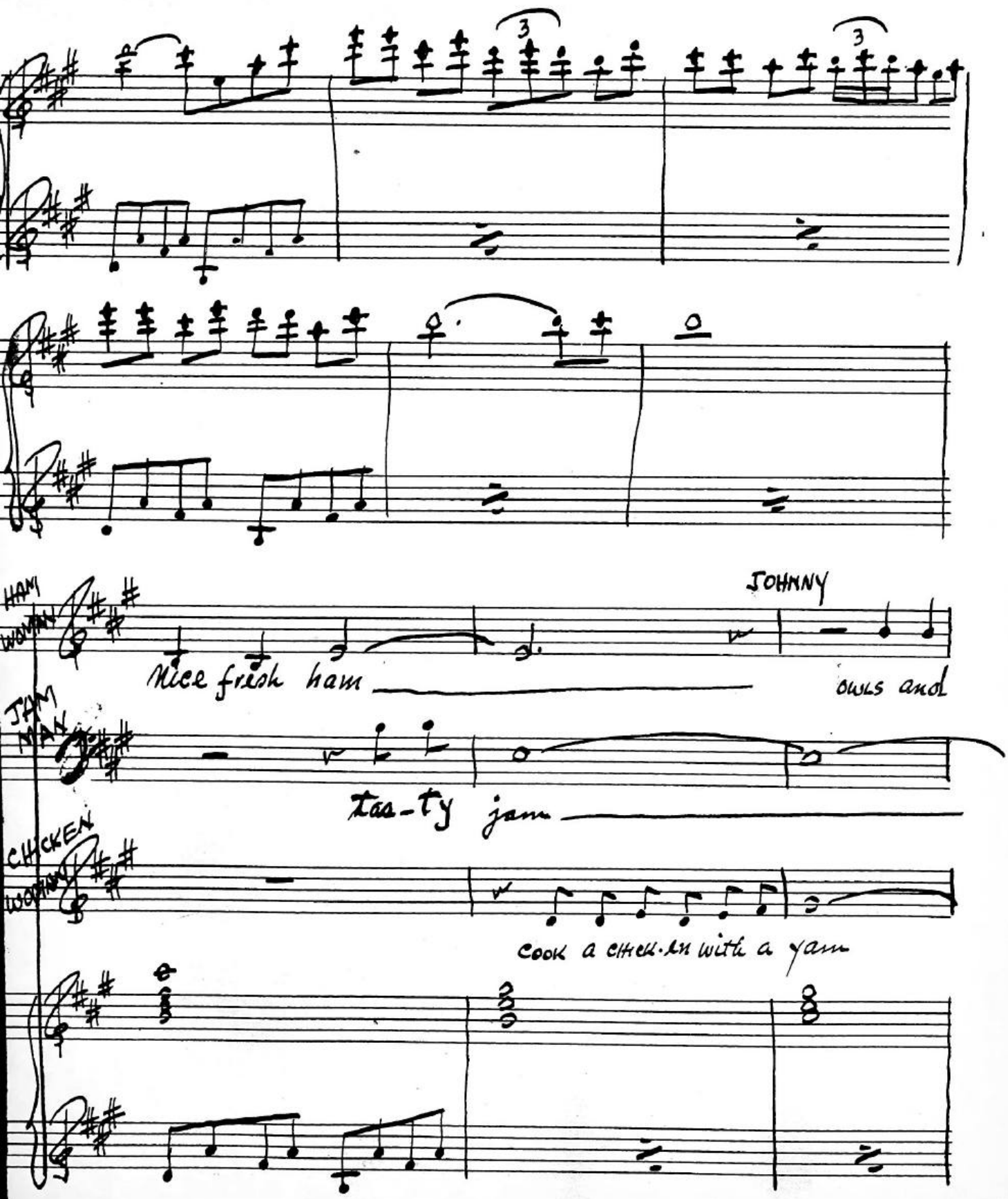
Johnny

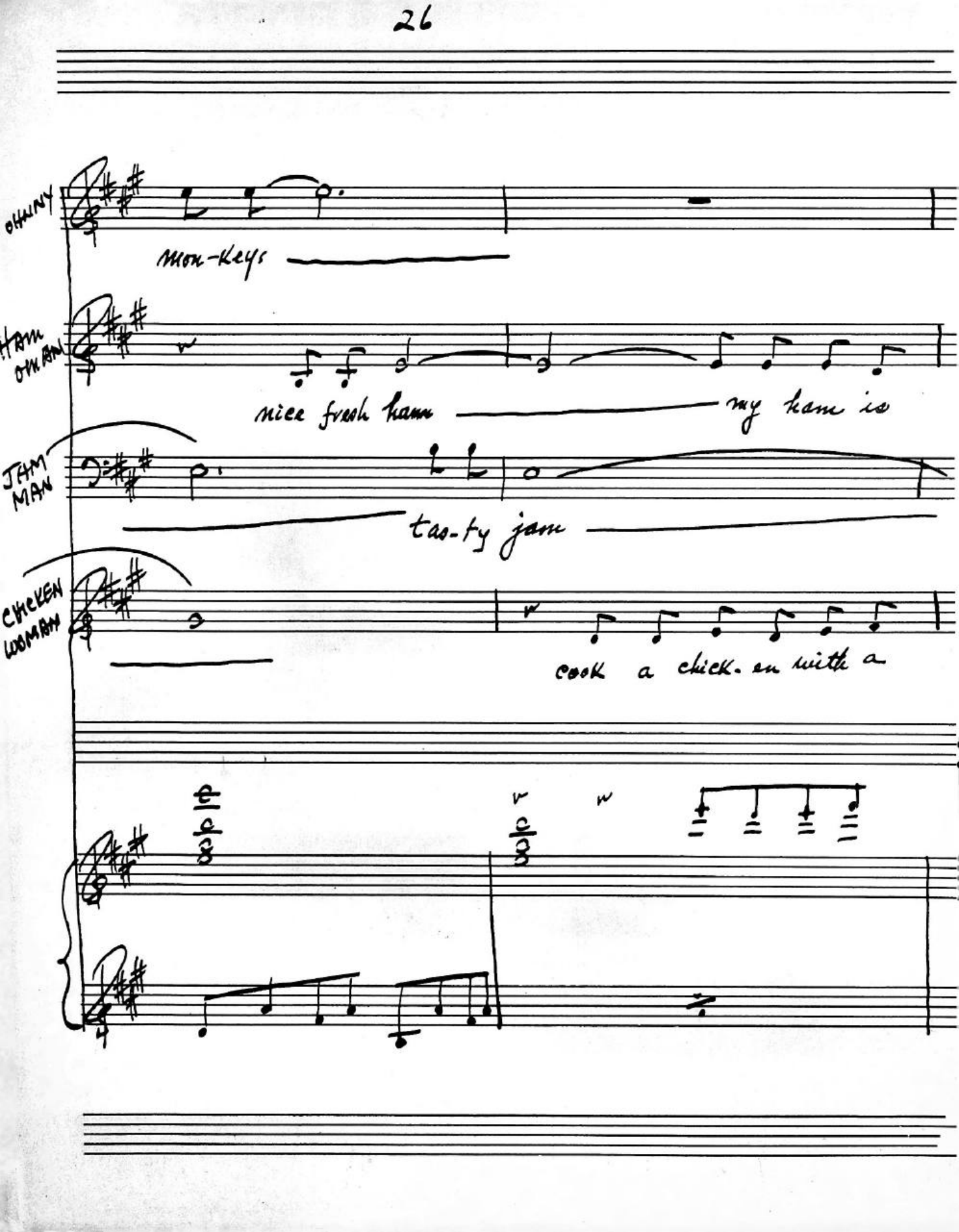
(To audience) Well, Ive just about sold all those monkeys and owls to the people coming out of St. Stephen's Church. Made a great hit, they did. (Shakes his heavy purse.) Just a few more left --- and I'm still on my way to the Fair --- That looks like Mr. Birkit following me.

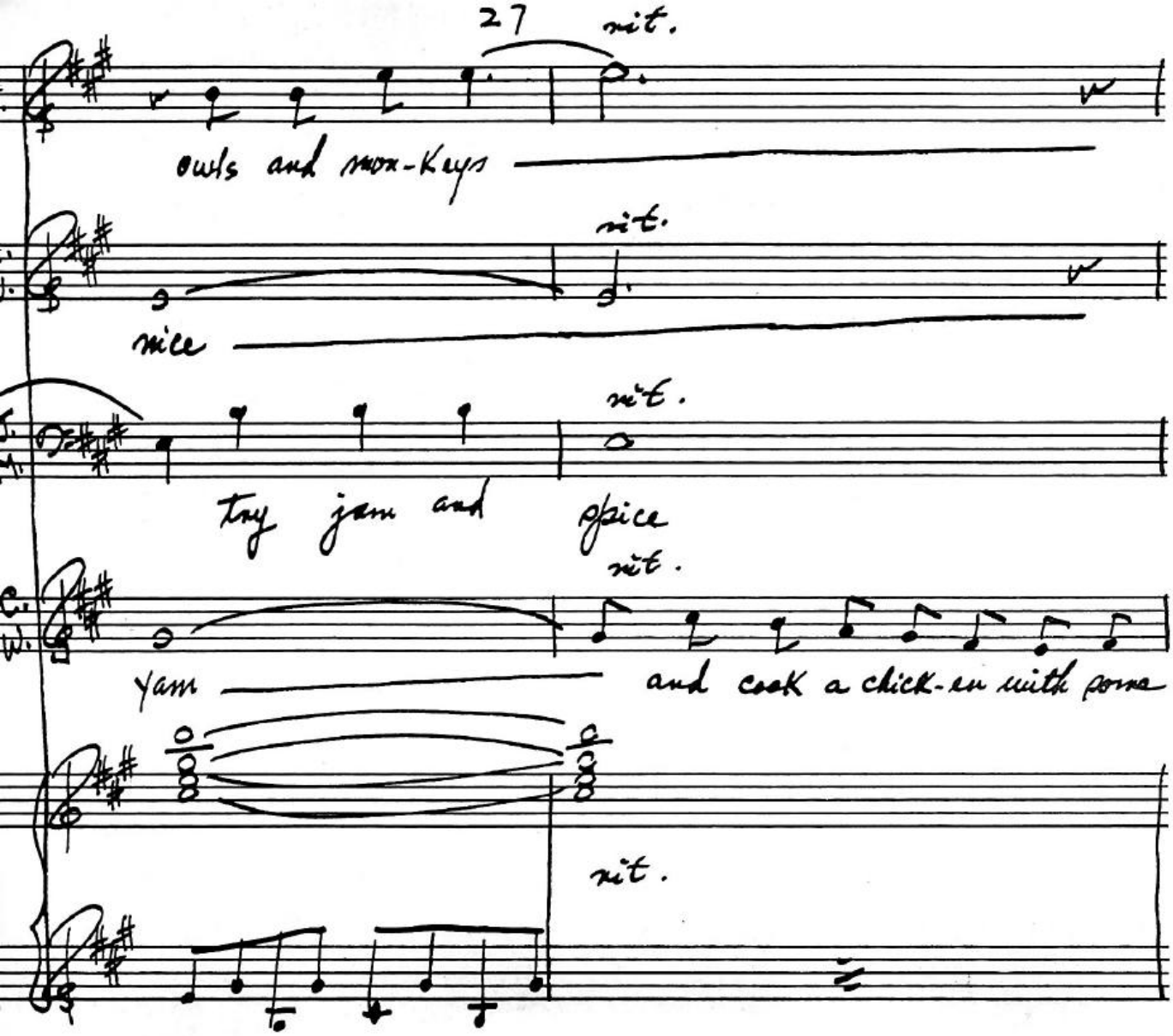
(Lights fade. Fair Music starts. Johnny exits. Curtains open. People walk back and forth in holiday dress and holiday mood: horns, balloons, etc. Fortune Teller's tent on Right. Fortune Teller sits on stool waiting for customers, he wears tall pointed hat and long blue gown with silver stars all over it. Men and women with baskets cry their wares.)

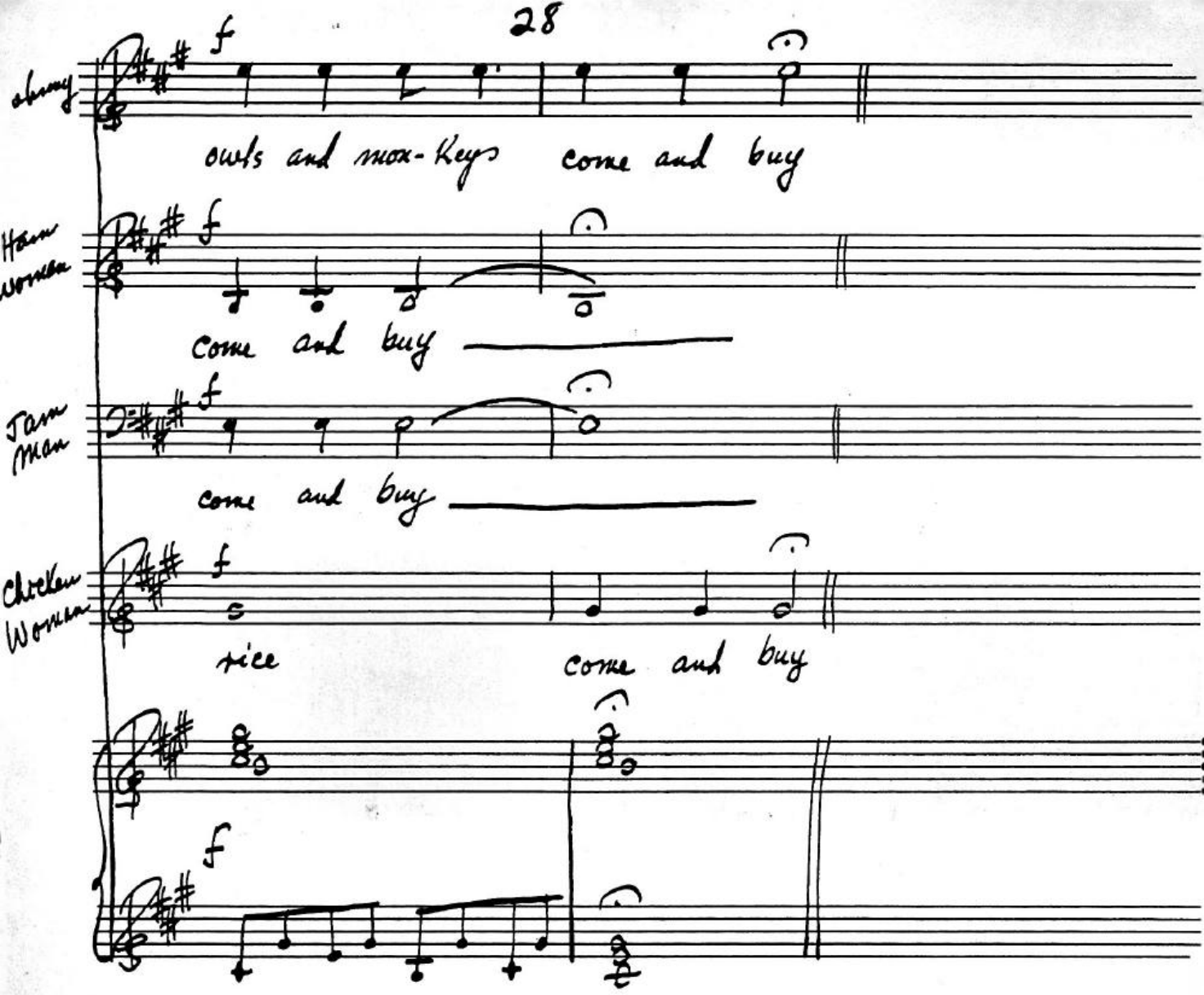
Fair Music - Very brightly




HAM WOMAN
Nice fresh ham
JOHNNY
owls and
JAM MAN
tas-ty jam
CHICKEN WOMAN
Cook a chick-en with a yam


OHHHNY
Mon-keys
HAM OMAN
nice fresh ham
my ham is
JAM MAN
tas-ty jam
CHICKEN WOMAN
cook a chick-en with a


27
rit.
owls and mon-keys
rit.
rice
rit.
try jam and
spice
rit.
yam
and cook a chick-en with some
rit.



Jam Man

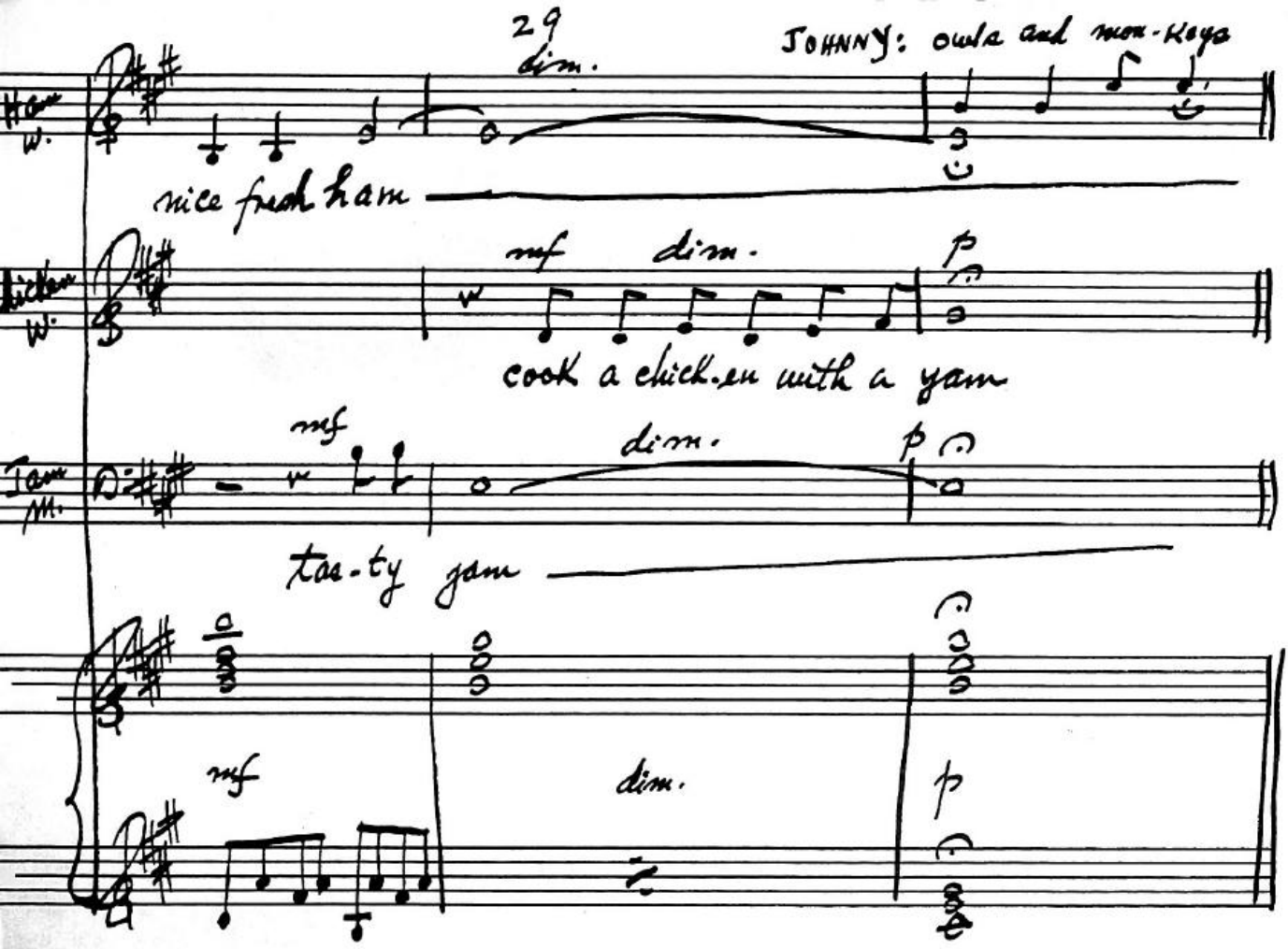
(Approaches Johnny belligerently) What are you doing... making fun of us?

Johnny

No. I'm selling owls and monkeys. (Ham Woman and Chicken Woman come up and all look into Johnny's basket.)

All

Oh, look! Very smart! Let us have one! Me, too! (Johnny hands out owls and monkeys and collects money.)



Johnny

~~(Mr. Birkit comes striding through~~ the fair grounds as if looking for someone. Johnny sees him and makes a bee-line for the Fortune Teller's tent.~~)~~

Fortune Teller

You want your fortune told?

(Peeping out of tent) Can you tell me what's gonna happen in the next five minutes?

~~(Birkit makes his way among~~ ~~idlers, looks them full~~ in, face, then starts off.)

Fortune Teller

(Takes out watch) I'm sorry but it's lunch time. I can't tell fortunes on an empty stomach.

Johnny

(Touches Fortune Teller's stomach.) You've run out of inside information, eh?

Fortune Teller

(Laughs) Say, how would you like to mind the crystal ball until I get back?

Johnny

(Glances out of tent to see if Biskit is around) Fine, fine.

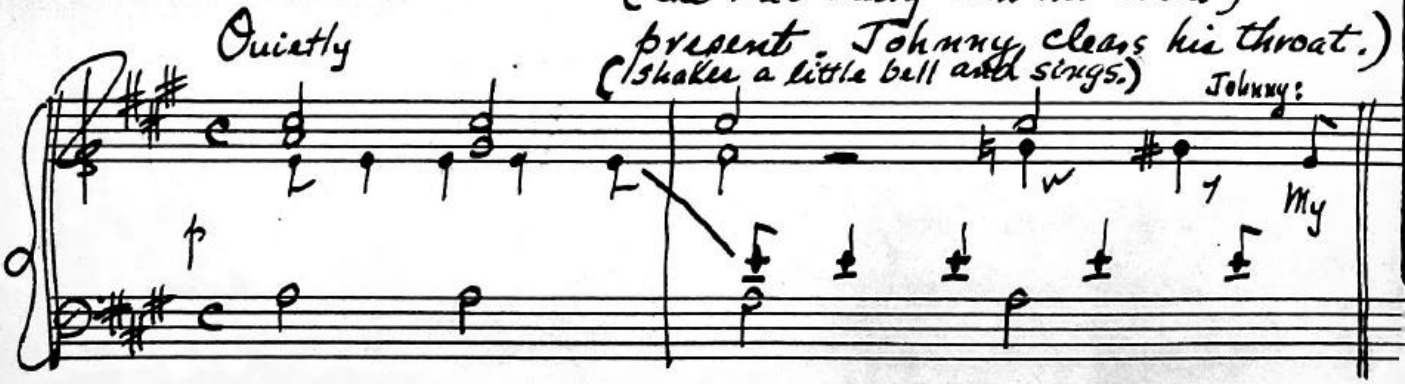
Fortune Teller

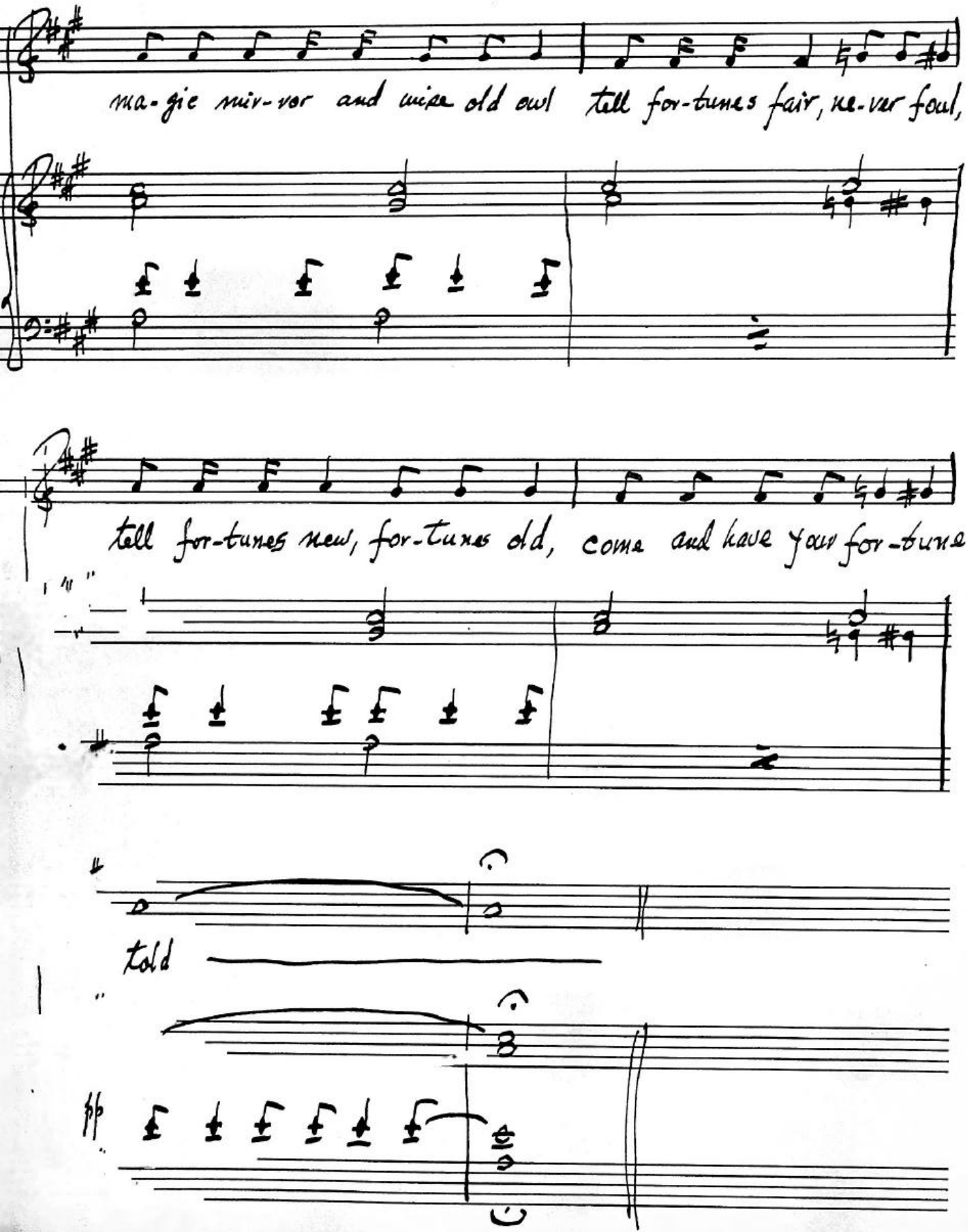
(Takes off hat and gown and Johnny puts them on.) I take a full hour for lunch.

Johnny

That's right. You mustn't eat too fast. It's not good for the digestion.

(The Fortune Teller goes. Johnny examines the magic mirror and stuffed owl. He comes out of the tent and looks around. Mr. Biskit has gone; the peddlers wander off during the scene. The Cook is making her last purchases (a chicken, etc.) Mrs. Swanson and her daughter (the Fat Lady and her Child) are present. Johnny clears his throat.)




ma-gic mir-ror and wise old owl tell for-tunes fair, ne-ver foul,
tell for-tunes new, for-tunes old, come and have your for-tune
told

Johnny (Contd)

Come on, folks. Only two coppers. Same price for past, present, and future! Look in the magic mirror and see the truth! Only two coppers.

Fat Girl

(Sucks lollipop; pulls mother toward tent) Mama...mama... I wanna look in the magic mirror!

Fat Woman

We've got a mirror at home.

Fat Girl

(Blubbers) But it ain't magic.

Fat Woman

Isn't magic!

Fat Girl

That's what I said!

Johnny

My mirror talks. Step right in.

(Fat Girl pulls mother to the entrance of the tent.)

Fat Woman

How much does it cost?

Johnny

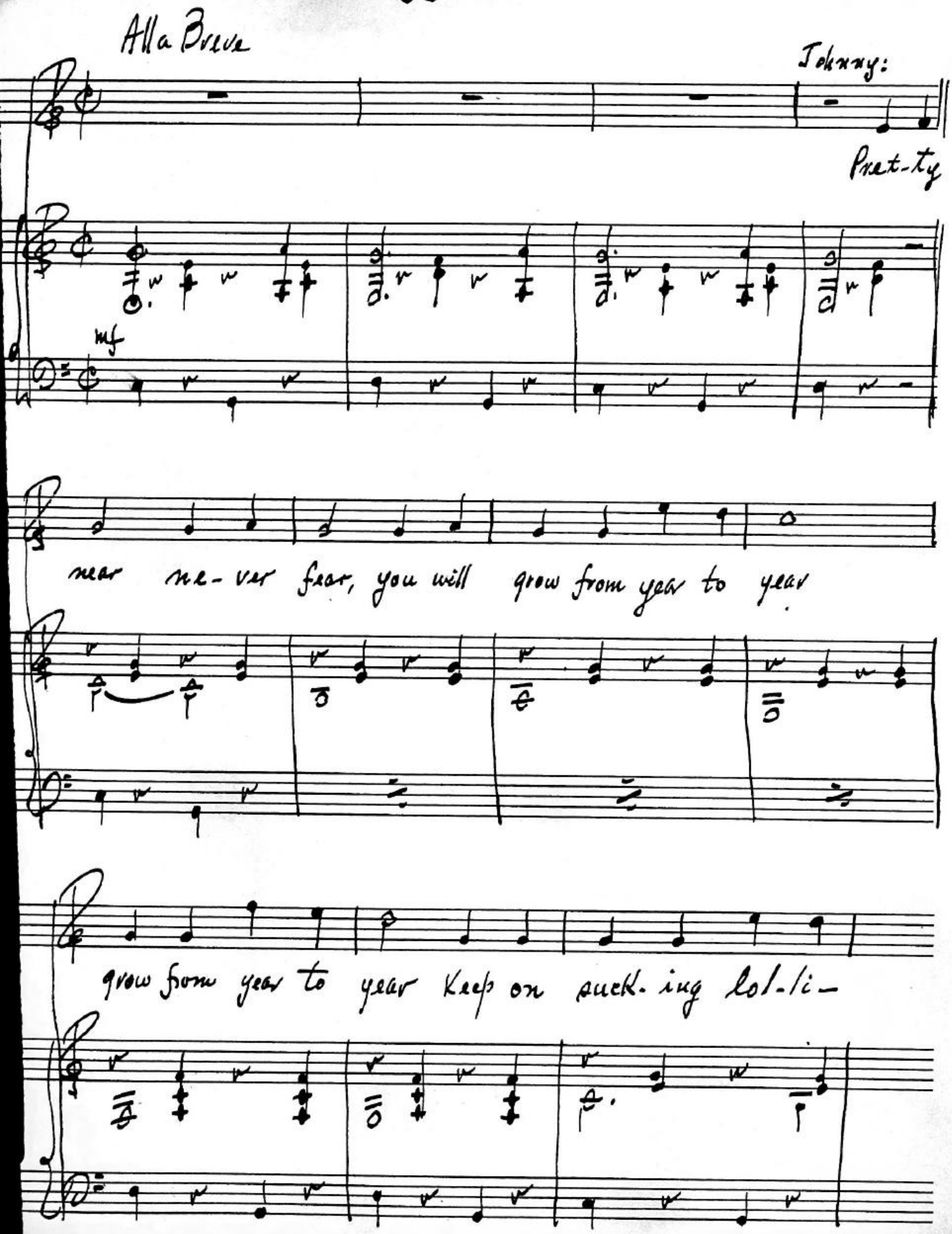
(Holds out money bag) Only two coppers.

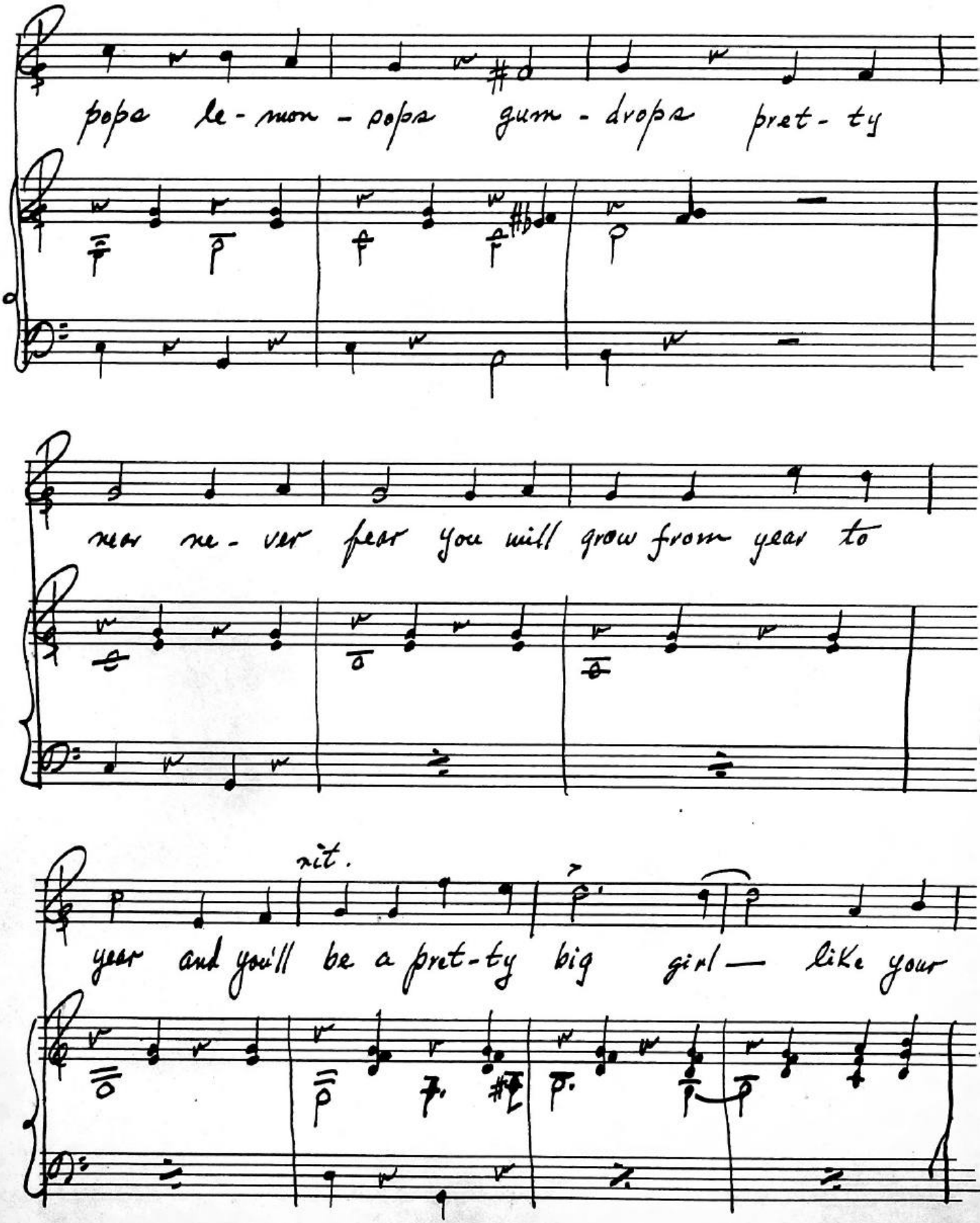
(Fat Woman drops coins into bag. Johnny takes the picture frame and holds it in front of the child. He looks through the frame as if he were her reflection.)

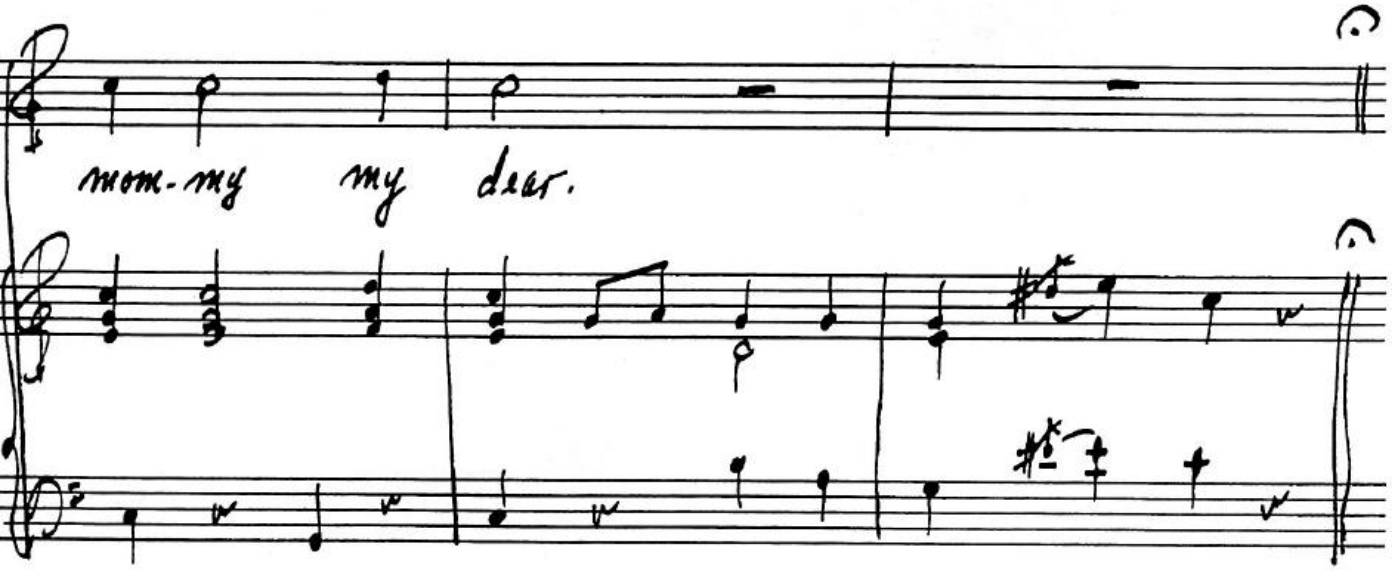
Ask me a question.

Fat Girl

Will I be as pretty as my mommy when I grow up?


Alla Breve
Johnny:
Pret-ty
mf
near ne-ver fear, you will grow from year to year
grow from year to year Keep on suck-ing lol-li-


pops le-mon-pops gum-drops pret-ty
nev ne-ver fear you will grow from year to
rit.
year and you'll be a pret-ty big girl— like your



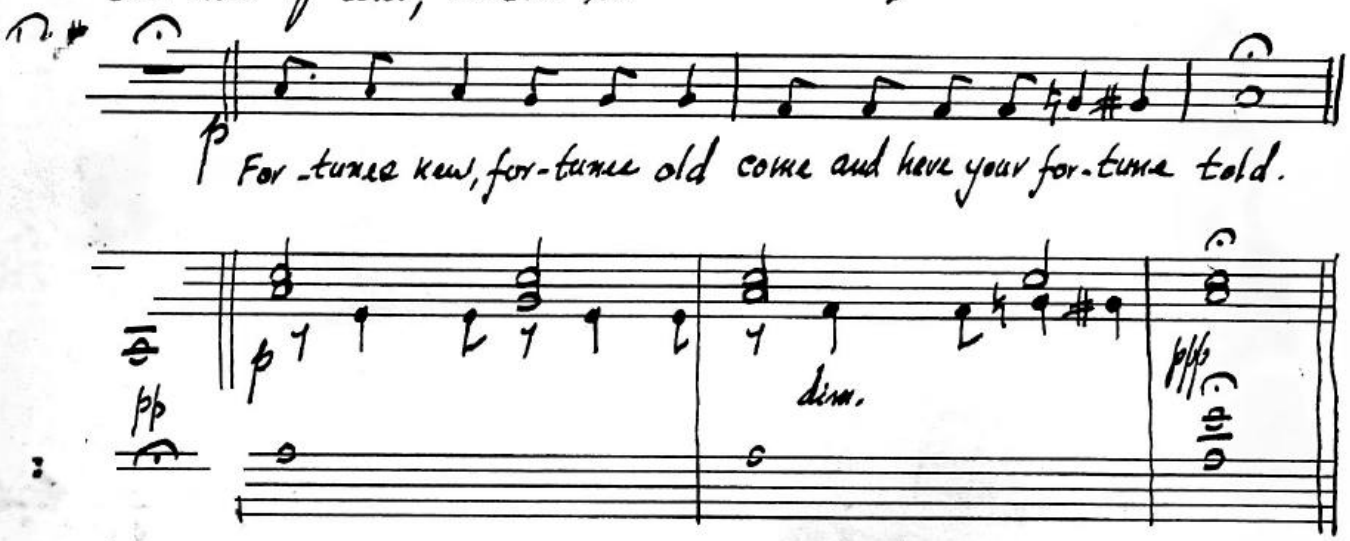
(She puffs up his cheeks until he is red in the face.)

Fat Woman

(Seizes child's hand and drags her away) Come on, Ermingarde, the man is insulting us! (They exit. Johnny laughs and puts down picture frame.)

Johnny

(At door of tent, calls to)



Judge Gavel

(Struts up, speaks very pompously) So you are a fortune-teller!

Johnny

Yes, sir.

Judge Gavel

Well, I am a judge!

Johnny

(Swallows hard) Yes, your honor!

Judge Gavel

You say you know all about the past, the present, and the future?

Johnny

Yes, your excellency!

Judge Gavel

And you always tell the truth?

Johnny

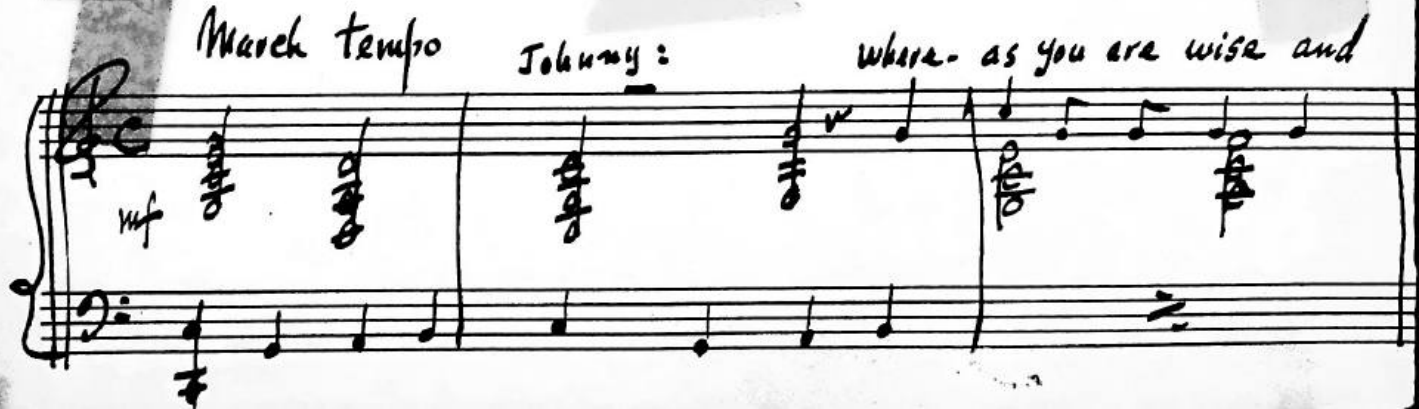
Yes, your highness!

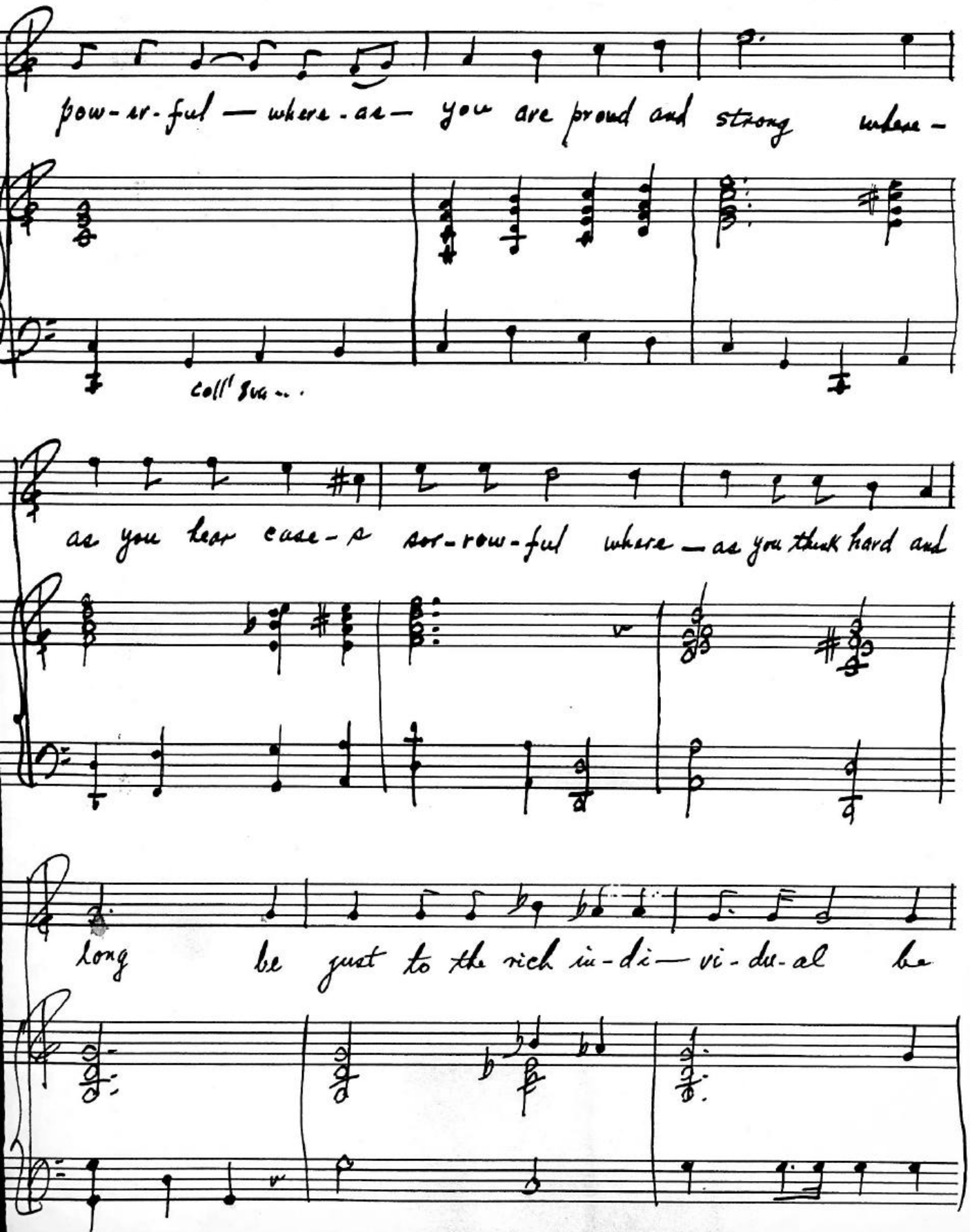
Judge Gavel

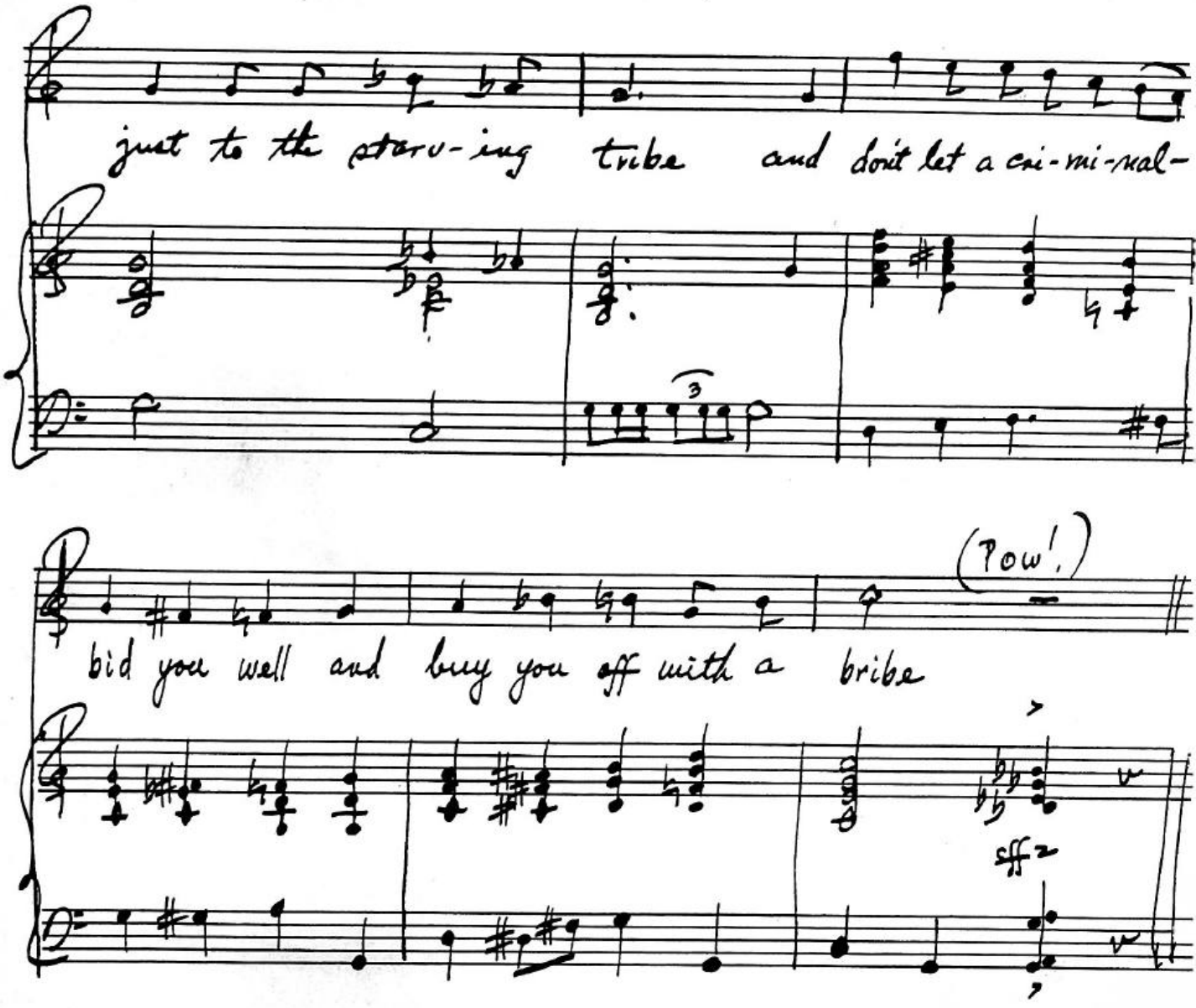
(Heading for tent; ominously) We'll see!!

Johnny

(Meekly) That will be two coppers...please...in advance...your Lordship... (Judge gives him a stern look; drops coins in bag) Thank you ...your reverence! (Johnny holds up frame, puts on a pompous expression, and chants in a sententious tone in imitation of the Judge)




pow-er-ful — where-as— you are proud and strong where-
coll' 8va...
as you hear ease-a sor-row-ful where — as you think hard and
long be just to the rich in-di— vi-du-al be



(Who has drawn himself up to his full height, strikes the frame aside angrily) You insolent rascal! I can tell fortunes as well as you! If they ever bring you up before me on charges, I'll predict your future for you! I'll put you away for six months! (He storms out Left)

Johnny

(Wipes his brow) Whew! The truth hurts! He almost broke my mirror... (Picks up frame from ground) That would have meant seven years of bad luck! (Dusts off frame and sets it down carefully. Steps out of tent and calls) Come on, folks, look in the magic mirror.

Old Man

(Drags a pretty young girl by the hand) Come on, Poopsy, let's have our fortunes told...

Young Girl

(Holding back) No...no...

Old Man

Oh, Poopsy-oopsy, pretty please...

Johnny

(Imitates Old Man's baby-talk) Poopsy-oopsy, it won't hurt! I promise oo! Come on in!

Old Man

(Dragging her) You see the magic mirror?

[redacted]

Johnny

(Holds it up) Yes, oo see it? (Looks through frame with a disgusted expression, then puts frame down; to Old Man) Is Poopsy-oopsy your grand-daughter?

Old Man

(Shakes stick in fury) My grand-dau...My grand...!!! She's going to be my wife!

Young Girl

(A long drawn out wail) Oh, I love Siegfried!!

Old Man

Now, Poopsy, you promised never to mention that name!

Johnny

What's wrong with that name? Siegfried was a great hero!

Old Man

This Siegfried is a barber!

Young Girl

(Wails) I love Siegfried!

Old Man

(Soothingly) Look, Poopsy, I'll buy you a dog and we'll name him Siegfried!

Johnny

(Barks) Arf! Arf!

Old Man

Now let's have our fortunes told! We're going to be married and we'll be very happy because I'm very rich... (He suddenly totters, almost falls)

Johnny

(Holds the Old Man up) You're not carrying your money-bags with you, are you? Do you think you can stand up by yourself?

Old Man

(Pushes Johnny away) Get on with the fortunes, boy!

Johnny

(Holds out his hand) That will be four coppers.

Old Man

(Who has been looking into his purse like a miser) Four coppers? You said two coppers!

Johnny

Two coppers apiece.

Old Man

Too dear! (Takes Young Girl by hand) Come on, Poopsy.

Johnny

(Bars their way) All right...the two of you will soon be one...

Young Girl

(Wails) I love Siegfried!

Johnny

(Holds up money-bag) Two coppers!

Old Man

(Drops coins in bag; to Young Girl) You see what a clever husband you are going to have!

Young Girl

(Begins to wail) I love--

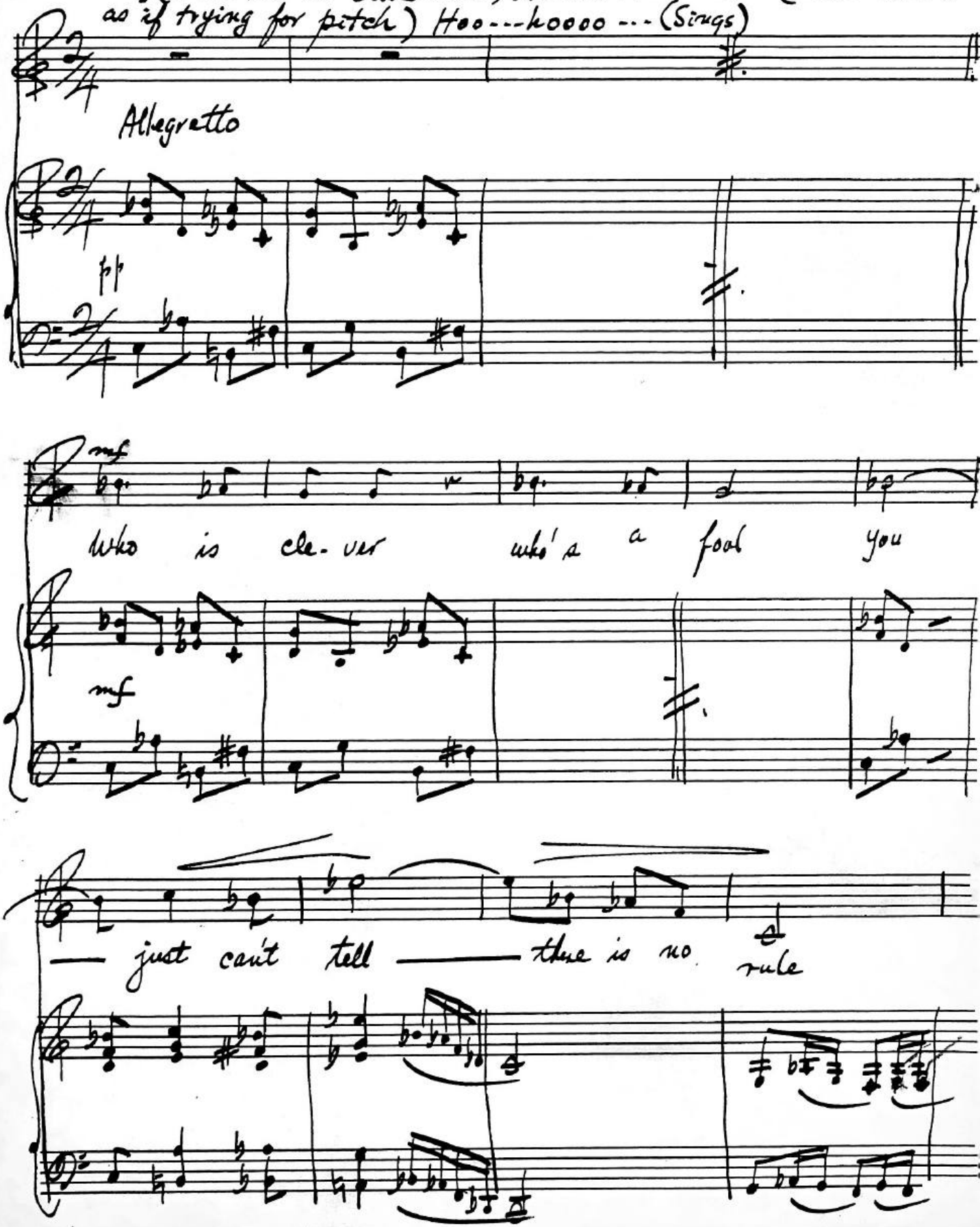
Johnny

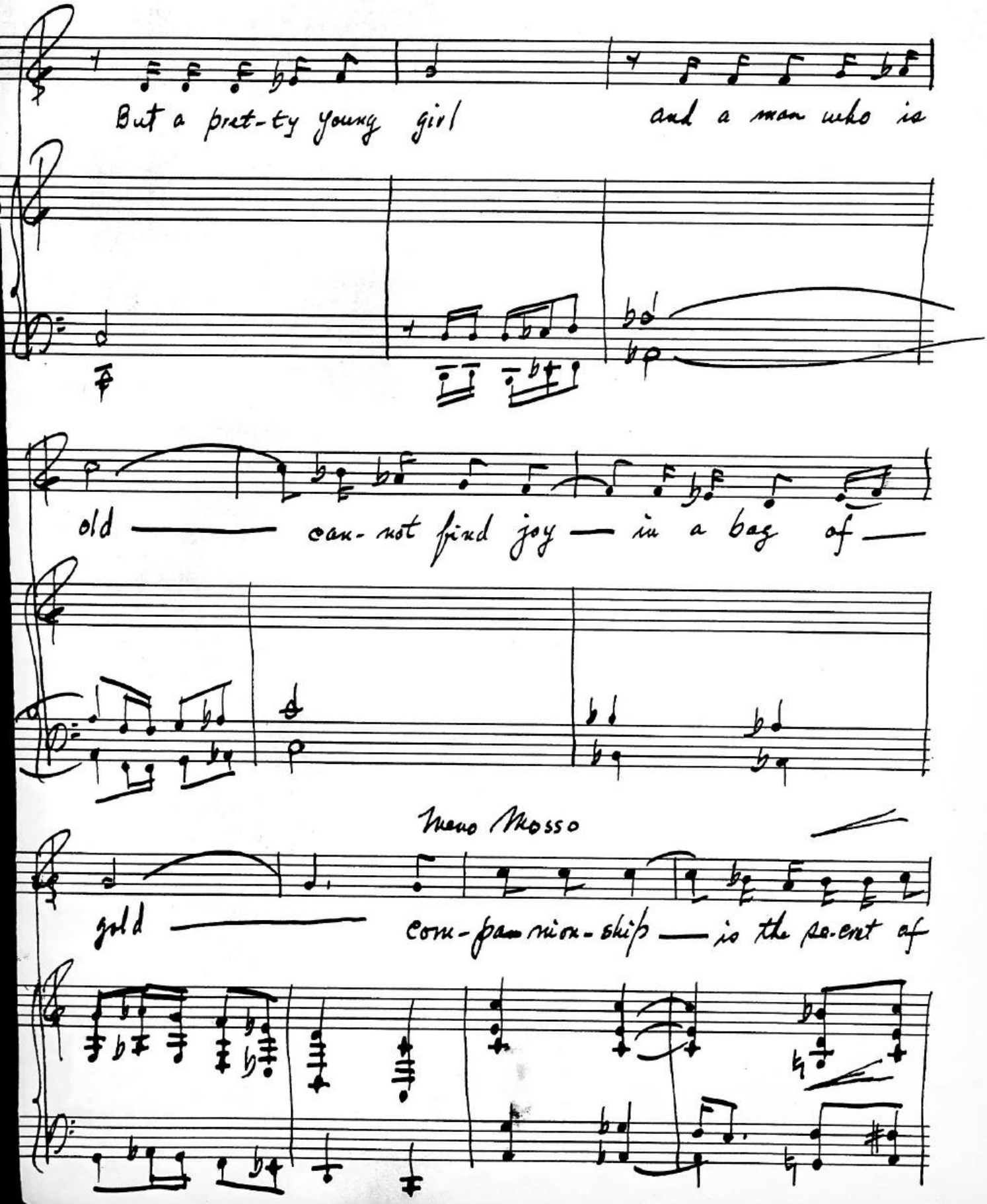
(Sharply) Quiet! (Holds up frame and makes a sickly face)

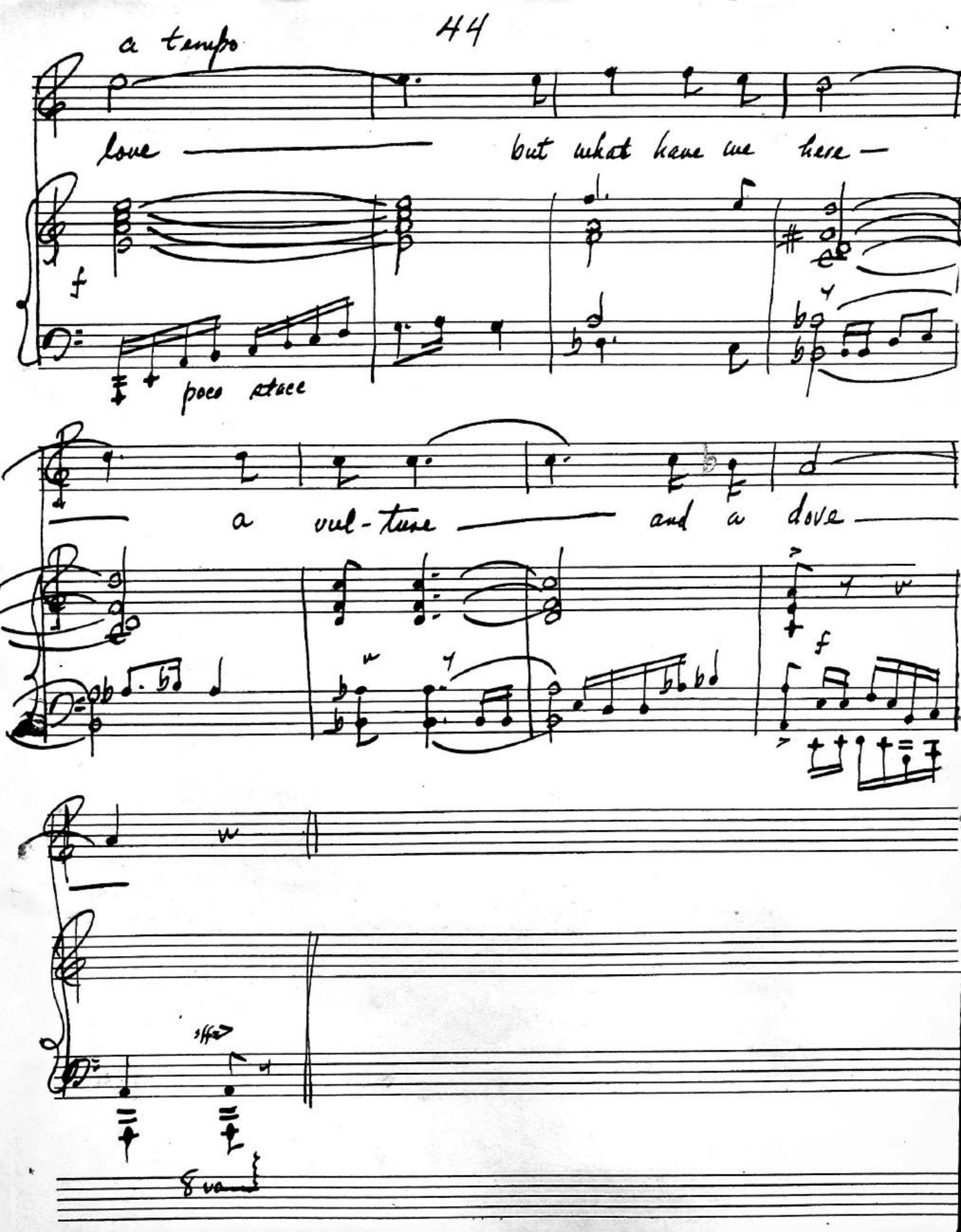
Owl

Hoo! Hoo!

Johnny (Puts ear to Owl's beak) Uh - huh ... uh - huh ... (Clears throat, as if trying for pitch) Hoo---hoooo --- (Sings)




But a pret-ty young girl
and a man who is
old — can-not find joy — in a bag of —
Meno Mosso
gold — com-pan-ion-ship — is the re-ent of


a tempo
love
but what have we here —
f
poco stacc
a vul-ture
and a dove
f
8va

Old Man

(Starts to beat Johnny with his stick) You're a faker, a cheat!

Owl

Hoo? Hoo?

Johnny

(Warding off blows) Oh, no...Oh...Ouch....!

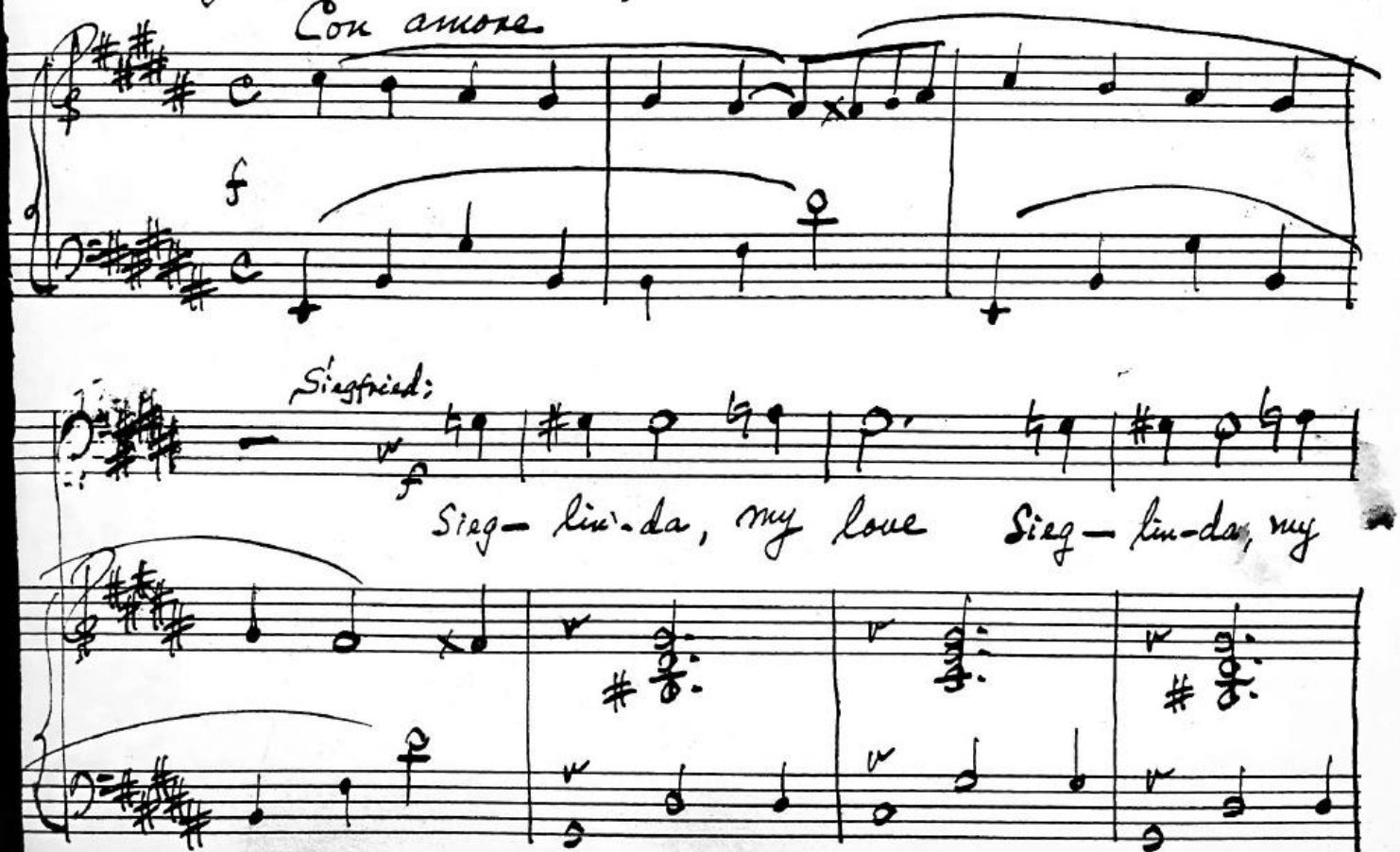
Old Man

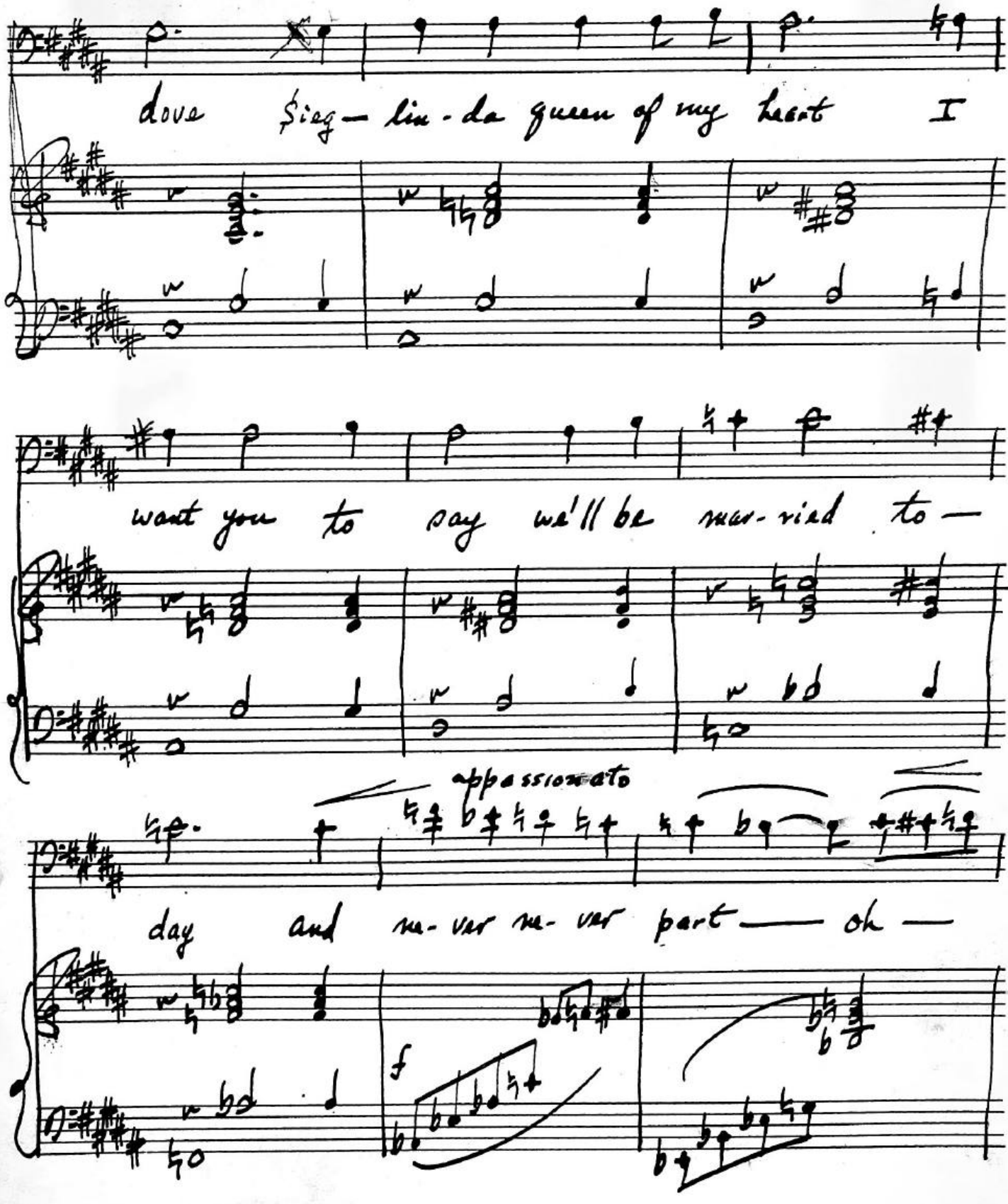
I'll have you arrested. You'll see who's clever! Come on, Poopsy! (He drags her out of the tent and leads her a few feet toward the Left) You wait here. I'm going for the Judge. (Points off Left) He's right over there. I'll lodge a complaint. (Old Man hobbles out Left)

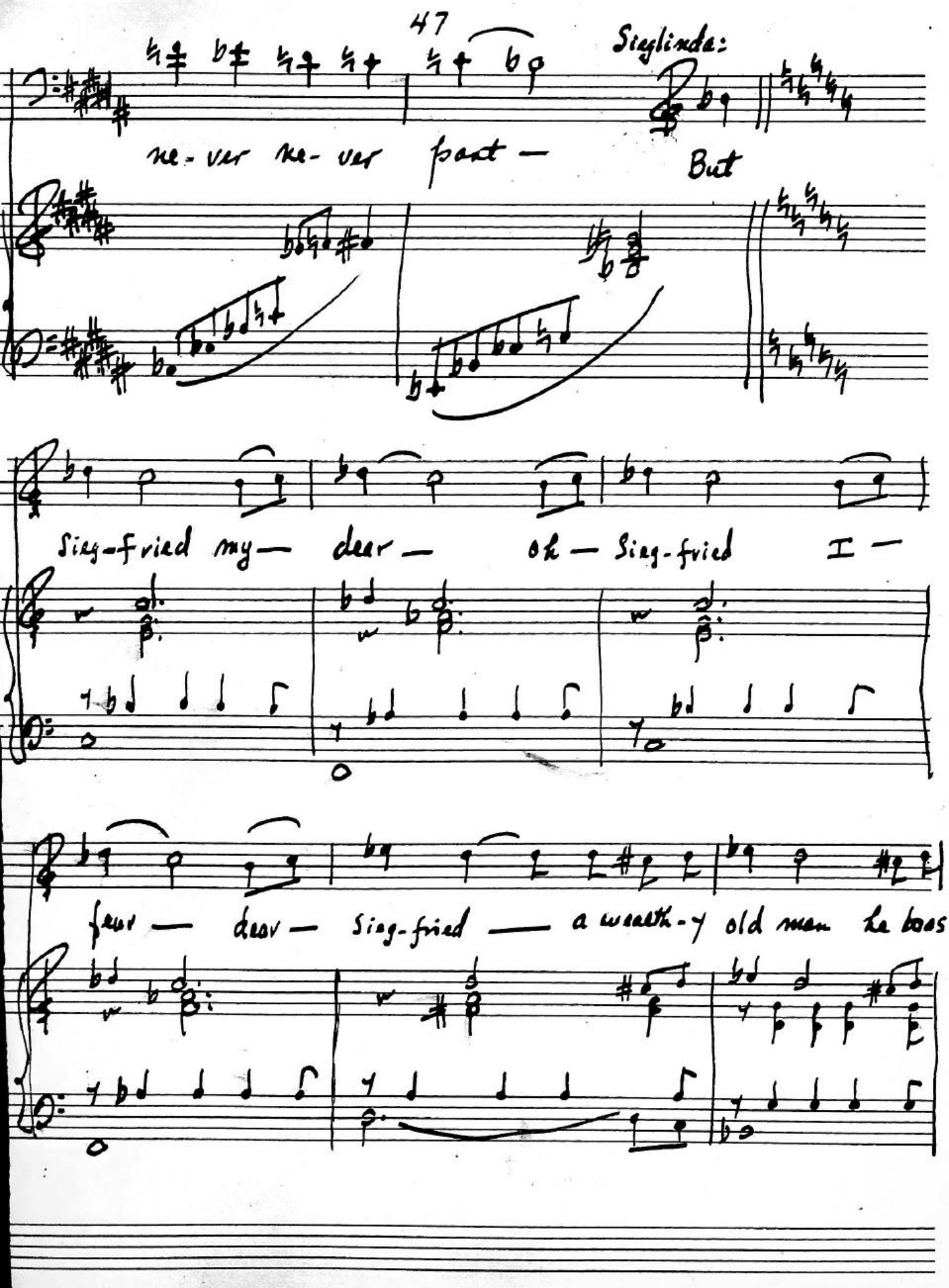
(Siegfried, a handsome young man enters from the right, takes a few steps and sees the young Girl.)

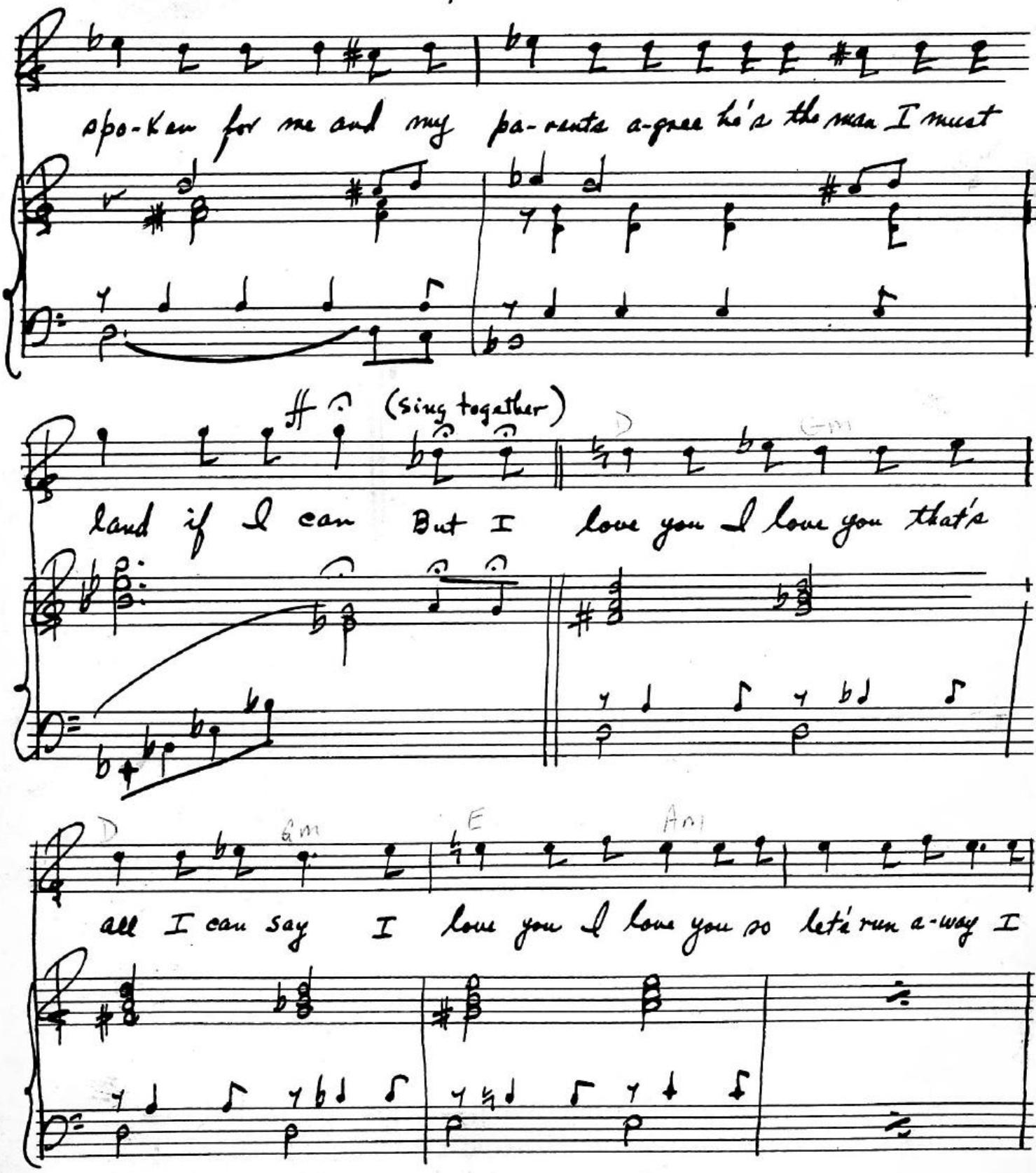
Siegfried: "Sieglinda!"

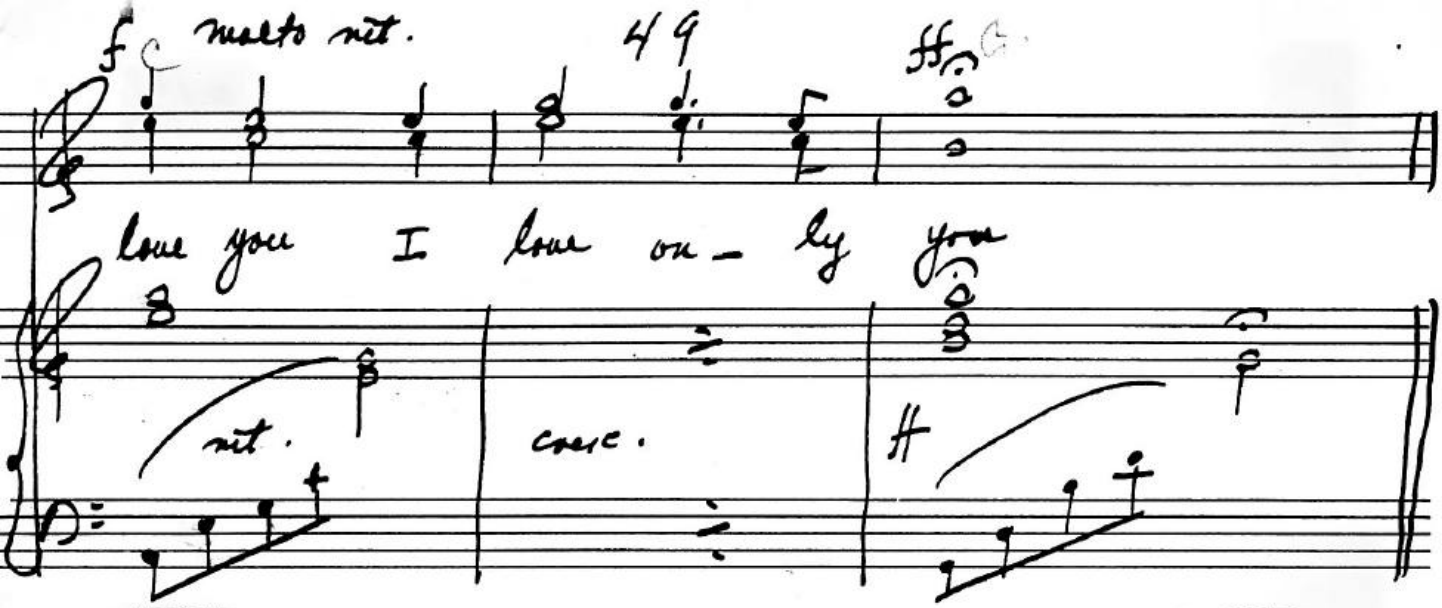
Sieglinda: "Oh, Siegfried!" (They embrace warmly)




dove Sieg- lin-da queen of my heart I
want you to say we'll be mar-ried to-
appassionato
day and ne-ver ne-ver part — oh —
f


Sieglinde:
ne-ver ne-ver part — But
Sieg-fried my — dear — oh — Sieg-fried I —
fear — dear — Sieg-fried — a wealth-y old man he does


spo-ken for me and my pa-rents a-gree he's the man I must
ff (sing together)
land if I can But I love you I love you that's
D
Gm
E
Am
all I can say I love you I love you so let's run a-way I



Johnny

(Who has been standing at the tent door watching and listening)
Not so fast! See what your futures hold, come have your fortunes told!
Look in the magic mirror. Only two coppers.

Siegfried

Come, Sieglinda, let's have our fortunes told! (Arms around each other's waist, they go into tent.)

Johnny

(To Girl) Say, you look very much like a girl by the name of Poopsy.

Sieglinda

(Giggles) My name is Sieglinda!

Johnny

(Looks closely at Siegfried, puts hand to brow as if thinking)
Now, don't tell me... (Suddenly) Your name is Siegfried!

Siegfried

Right!

Johnny

And you are a barber!

Siegfried

(Amazed) Right, again. How do you know?

Johnny

I'm a fortune-teller! (Holds up frame) Now look in the mirror.

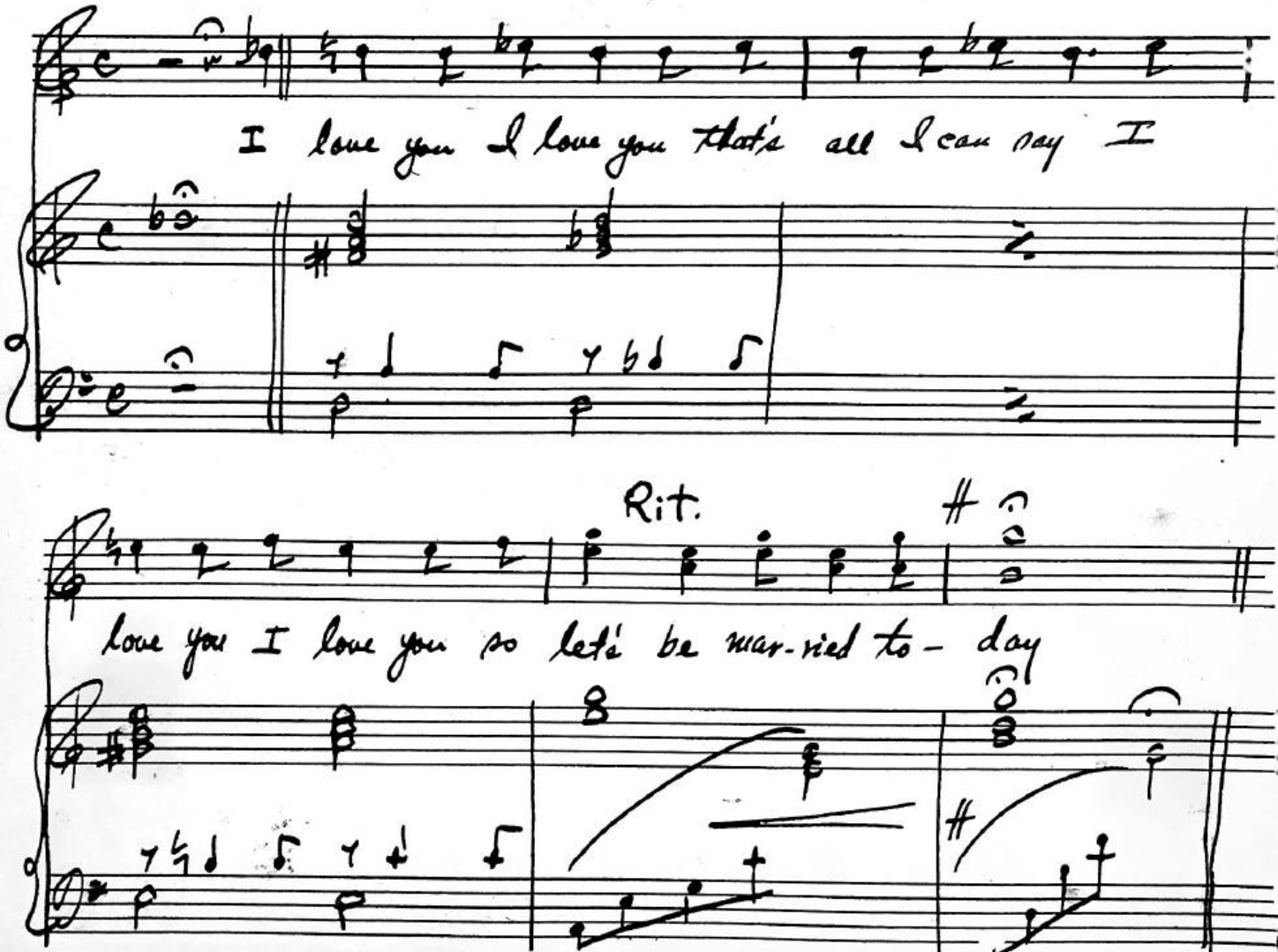
Siegfried

Wait! I must pay you first. (Extends money) Here are four coppers, for the two of us.

Johnny

(Waves money away) No, keep your money. This one is free. (He looks through the frame and smiles.) There is an old wolf who has his eye on your little dove...and he'll gobble her up if you don't marry her quickly.

Siegmund and Sieglinda embrace and kiss, then sing their duet as they dance



Old Man

(Enters Left with Judge; shouting) He's a cheat! A faker! I want him arrested!

Judge Gavel

(Rubs his hands in anticipation) Fine. Fine. I'll take care of him.

Johnny

(Sticks his head out of the tent, sees Old Man and Judge) I thought I heard familiar voices!! (To Siegfried and Sieglinde) Let's get out of here. There's a back way. (He leaves the frame by [illegible]es up the stuffed owl) This is a wise old bird...I'll take h[illegible] (All three exit through a back flap.)

Old Man

(Looks into tent, a note of triumph in his voice) [illegible] tune-teller! (To Judge) There's no one here! (Looks [illegible] tent) And where's my Poopsy? (Starts to hobble around i[illegible]ng) Poopsy! Yoo-hoo, Poopsy!! Oh, Poop[illegible]

Judge Gavel

(Angrily) If you don't pipe down, I'll haul you in for disturbing the peace! And who's Poopsy, anyway?

(The Old Man breaks into noisy wails and sobs. Mr. Biskit rushes in from Right, sees Old Man and Gavel.)

Mr. Biskit

(Mops his brow; out of breath) Did you see him? Did you see him? He went that way— (Points off left)

Old Man

(Stops bawling abruptly) Who? The Fortune Teller?

Old Man and Mr. Biskit

(Simultaneously) Aaaahhhh!!!

(Biskit rushes out left; Old Man abruptly resumes wails and rushes out Right.)

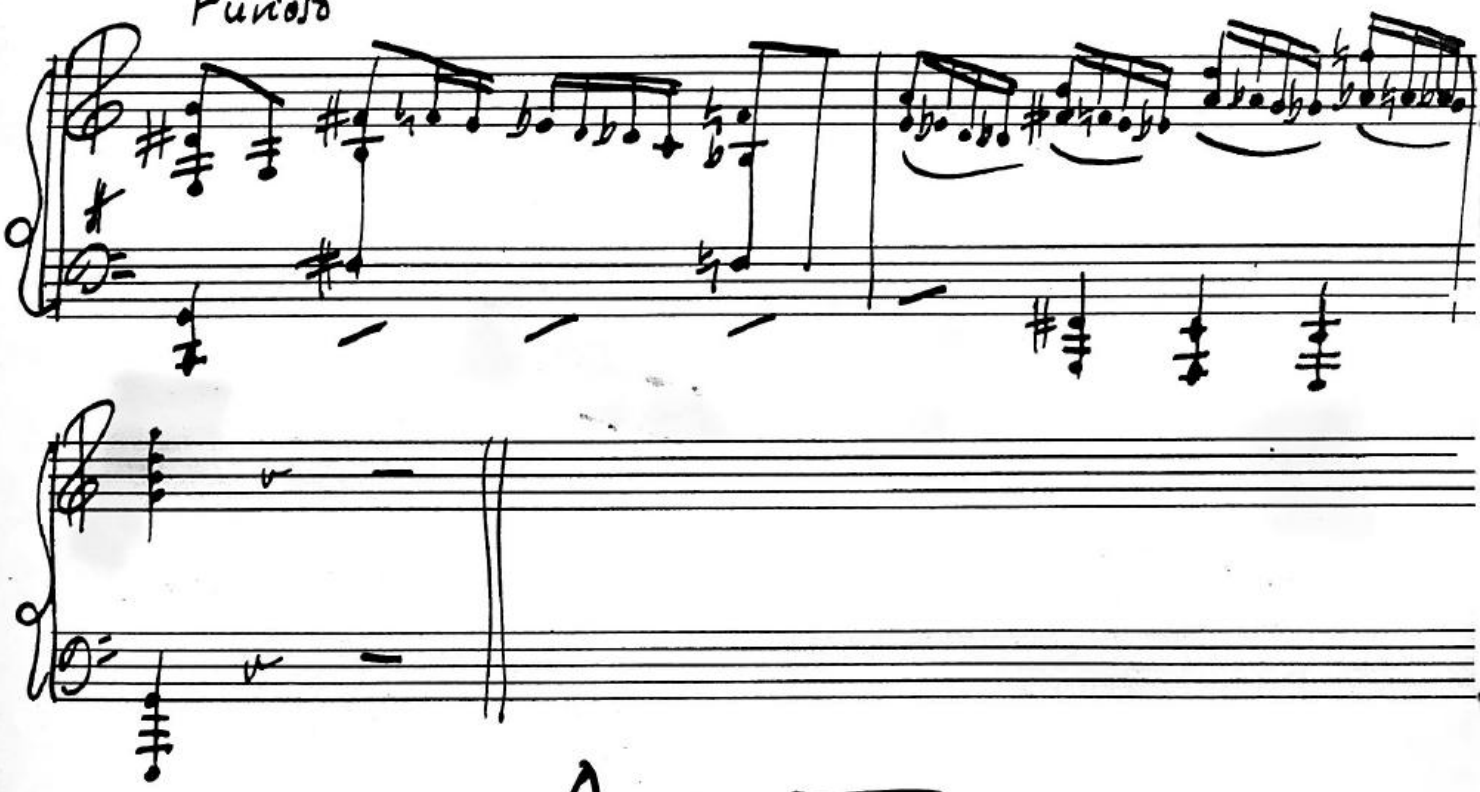
Judge Gavel

(Furious, shakes fist) Just let me lay my hands on the rogue and I'll-- (Suddenly makes horrible noises and gestures as of strangling someone.)

(Johnny dashes out Left. (Mr. Pistit enters Right, he is in a lather, lumbers across the stage, and disappears left.)

Blackout Music

Furioso

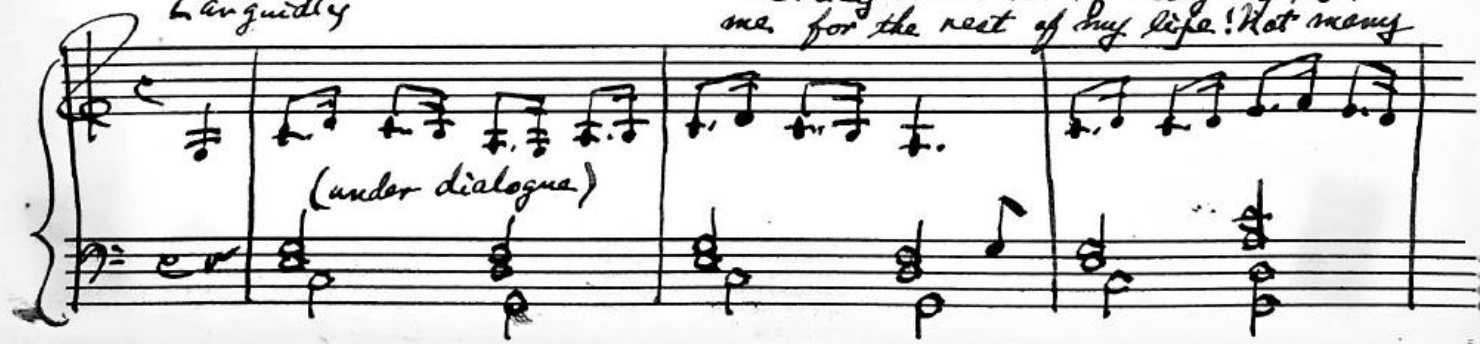


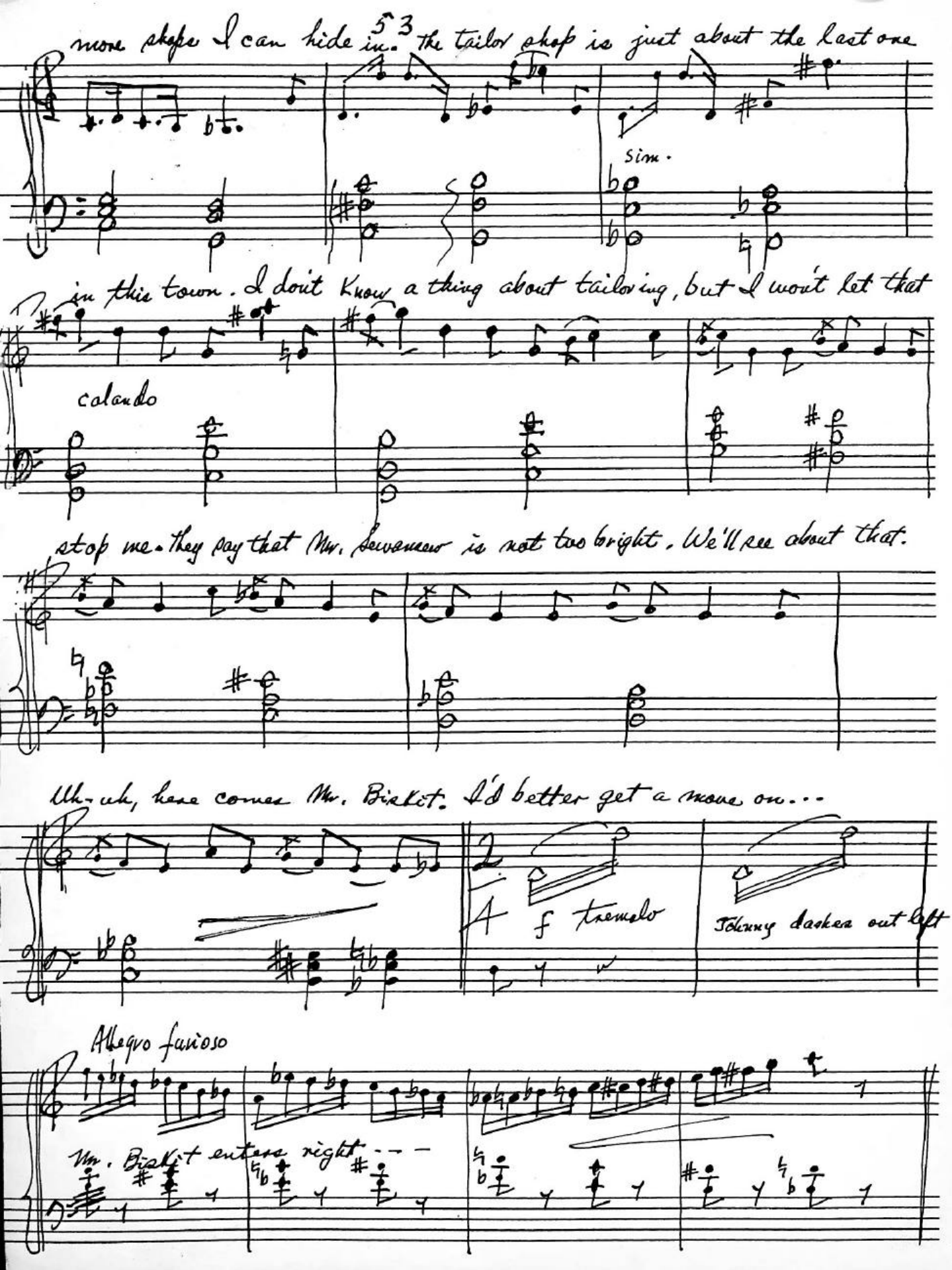
Act II

(The light come up in front of the curtains. Johnny runs in from the Right, the suit under his arm; he looks cautiously behind him. (Johnny: "I've been dodging Mr. Pistit all day ... wonder if he's going to trail me for the rest of my life! Not many

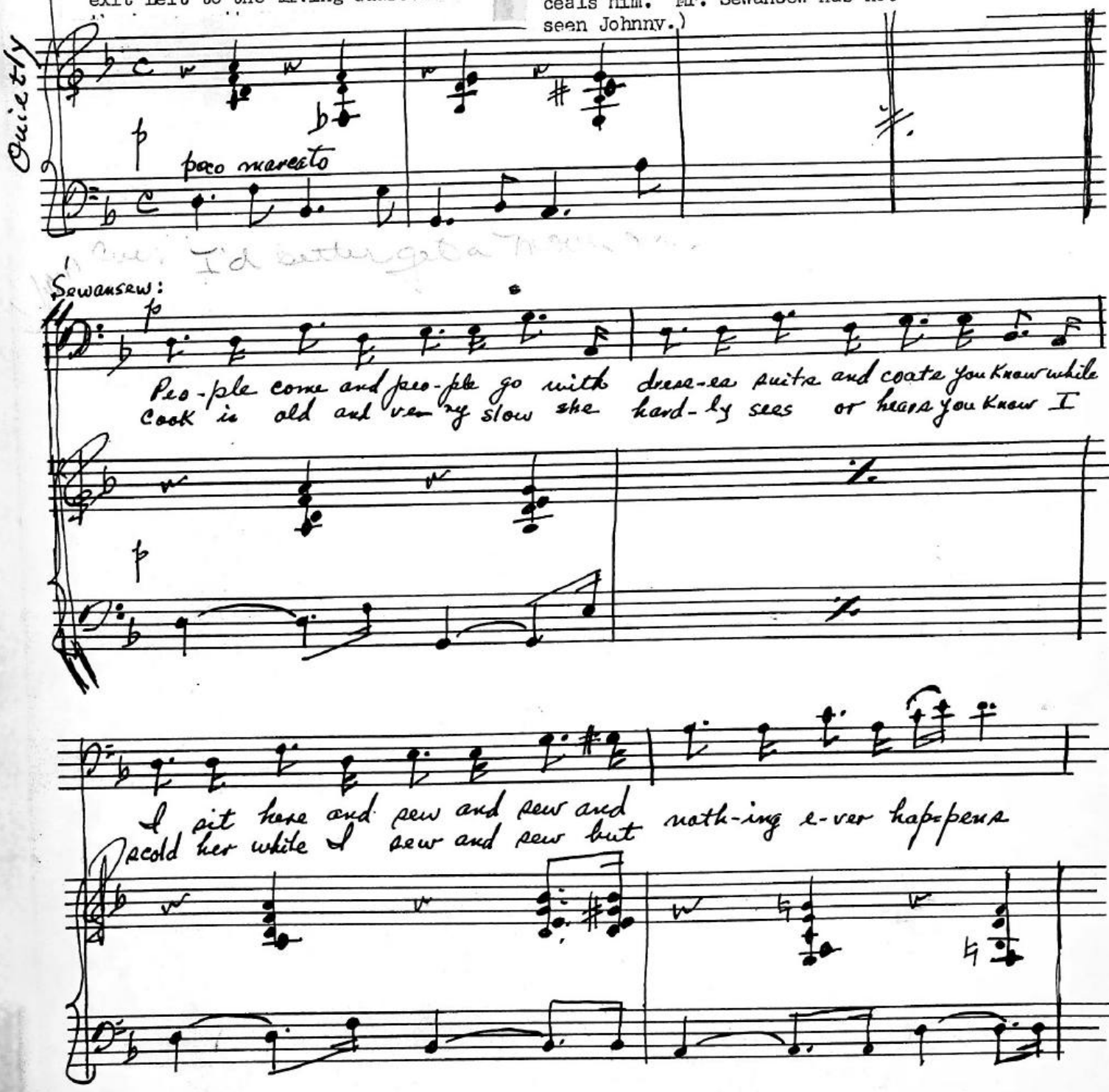
Languidly

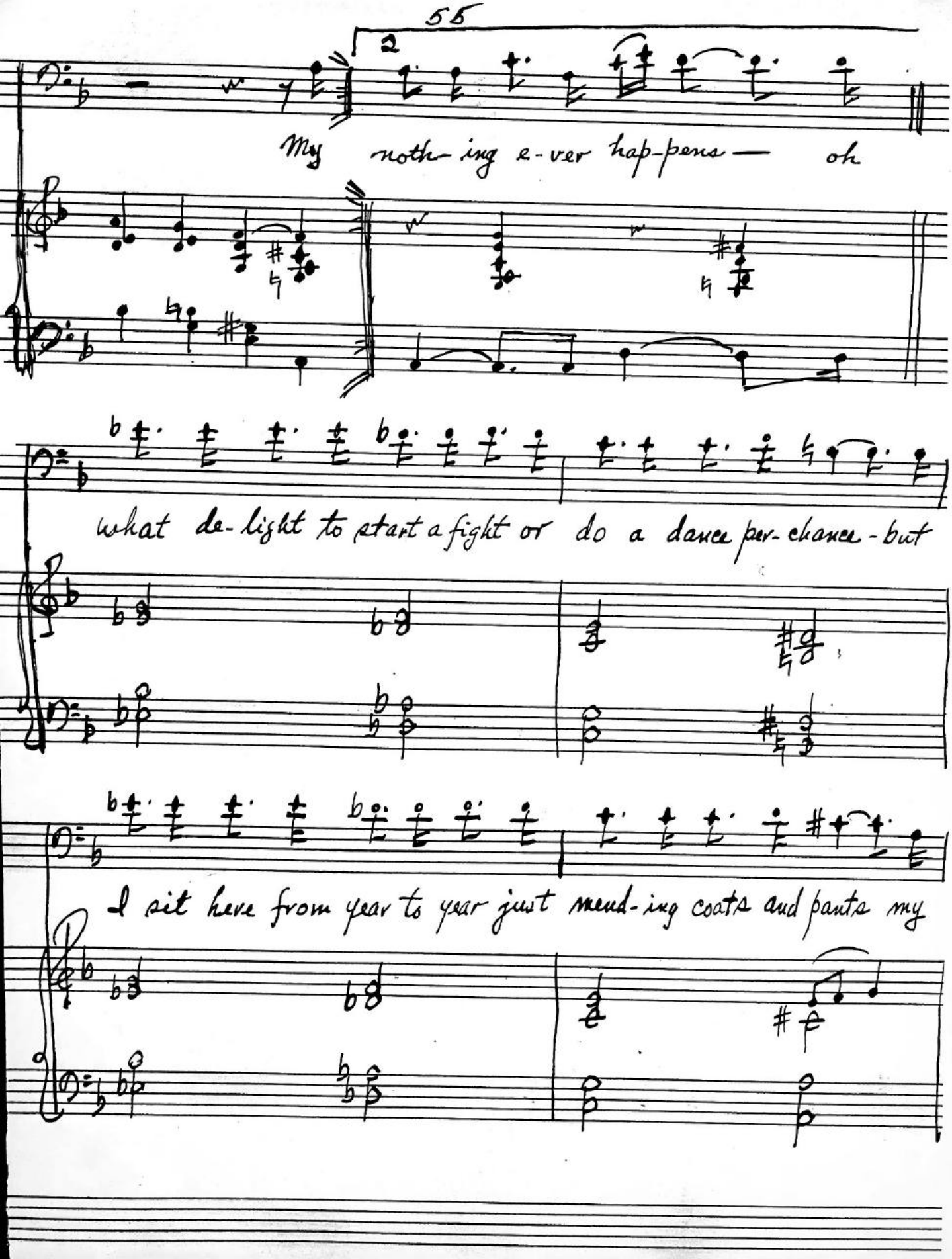
(under dialogue)

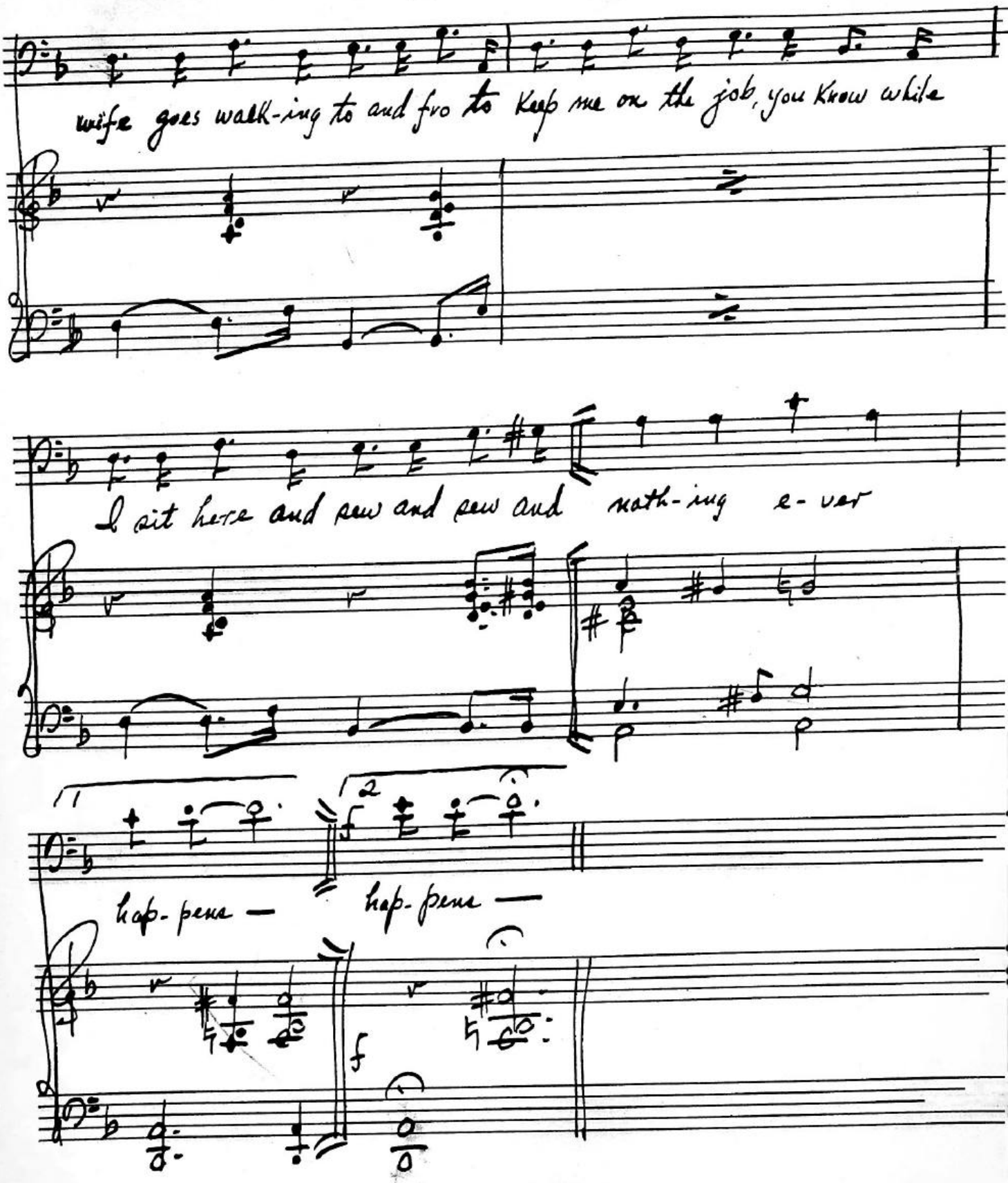



more shops I can hide in. 5 3 the tailor shop is just about the last one
Sim.
in this town. I don't know a thing about tailoring, but I won't let that
calando
stop me. they say that Mr. Sevenacre is not too bright. We'll see about that.
Uh-uh, here comes Mr. Biskit. I'd better get a move on...
A
f tremolo
Johnny dashes out left
Allegro furioso
Mr. Biskit enters right - - -

(Lights fade out ~~on Johnny~~ and curtains open on center stage. ~~Johnny has evidently~~ We see the interior of Mr. Sewansew's tailor shop—two tables, a rack on which clothing hangs, one or two chairs. A door Rear leads to the street; exit Right to the kitchen; exit Left to the living quarters of the house. At Rise: Mr. Sewansew is sitting cross-legged on a table, sewing. After a brief pause, Johnny enters Rear as if he has been running; he looks about quickly, sees Mr. Sewansew and darts behind the clothing-rack which completely conceals him. Mr. Sewansew has not seen Johnny.)




2
My noth-ing e-ver hap-pens — oh
what de-light to start a fight or do a dance per-chance - but
I sit here from year to year just mend-ing coats and pants my


wife goes walk-ing to and fro to Keep me on the job, you Know while
I sit here and sew and sew and noth-ing e-ver
hap-pens —
hap-pens —
f

(Suddenly Mr. Biskit ap ears in the doorway Rear; he is excited and breathless.)

Mr. Biskit

(Glances wildly about, shouts) Where is he? Have you got him?

Mr. Sewansew

(Looks up from sewing; startled) What? What's that? Oh, Mr.Biskit, what are you doing in this part of town? I haven't seen you in months.

Mr. Biskit

This is not a socialvisit. I saw him come in here. Where is he?

Mr. Sewansew

Calm yourself, Mr. Biskit. Are you feeling all right?

Mr. Biskit

I'm feeling fine. Never was calmer in my life! Where is that knave?

Mr. Sewansew

I don't know what you're talking about. There's no one here but me, my wife, and the cook.

Mr. Biskit

But I saw him! He ran in here a minute ago. I saw him with my own eyes.

Mr. Sewansew

When did you last have your eyes examined? (Smiles) And where were you last night?

Mr. Sewansew

That's always a good place to start.

Mr. Biskit

Yesterday afternoon this ~~young whippersnapper~~ fellow came into my shop and said, "I'm a baker's man." I said, "Fine. I need an assistant. Will you work for me?" He said, "Yes." So I took him on.

Mr. Sewansew

Oh, that's nice. I'm sure you'll be very happy.

Mr. Biskit

Will you please be quiet and listen!

Mr. Sewansew

I won't say a word!

Mr. Biskit

Well, last night when it was time to go to my grandchild's christening, I decided to see what sort of assistant I'd hired. I thought I'd let him bake the bread and rolls for this morning. I asked the Knave, "Do you think you can do the baking tonight by yourself?"

Mr. Sewansew

What did he say?

Mr. Biskit

(His temper rising) Say? He said, "What do you want me to bake?"

Mr. Sewansew

Very willing!

Mr. Biskit

(His anger rising) To be sure! I'm a very calm man. Perfect control at all times. I said... (Screams) "You call yourself a baker and you ask me what to bake!!!" What do you bake!! Do you bake owls and monkeys???" And I went out and slammed the door.

Mr. Sewansew

Oh, you shouldn't have done that! Your cakes won't rise!

Mr. Biskit

Be quiet!

Mr. Sewansew

I won't say a word!

Mr. Biskit

When I went into the shop this morning, what did I find?

Mr. Sewan sew

(Raises his hand) May I answer that question?

Mr. Biskit

(Ignores him) No bread...no rolls...but all the dough baked into little owls and monkeys.

Mr. Sewansew

That was clever!

Mr. Biskit

I yelled at him, "What did you bake here?" And he said, "Just what you told me to!"

Mr. Sewansew

So you did!

Mr. Biskit

(Scowls) "What will I do with this trash?" I said. "No one will buy it!" I grabbed him by the collar and said, "Pay me for the dough you spoiled!"

Mr. Sewansew

This is exciting.

Mr. Biskit

I said, "If I pay you for the dough, will the goods be mine?" And I said, "What do I care for bread like that!" So he paid me and put all those owls and monkeys in a basket and went down to St. Stephens Church just as the people were coming out after Mass---and what do you think happened?

Mr. Sewansew

How many guesses?

Mr. Biskit

They bought up all those owls and monkeys for ten times the price of ordinary rolls. Everybody went by my shop with an owl or a monkey in his hand. I didn't make a sale all day!

Mr. Sewansew

Amazing!

Mr. Biskit

But worse than that, he ruined my grandchilds christening cake! That was too much! He couldn't get away with that. I rushed down to the church but that knave saw me coming and he started to run. I lost him at the fair. After chasing him all day, I caught up with him at the corner and saw him pop in here.
(He looks around sharply)

Mr. Sewansew

(Glances around) You don't say so! Well, it seems he outsmarted you, that's what! Now, why don't you go home and bake some owls and monkeys for tomorrow!

Mr. Biskit

(Goes to the door; furious) Oh, you blithering idiot! (He exits)

Mr. Sewansew

(Has followed him to the door; looks out and calls) Say, what was that fellow's name?

Johnny

(Comes out from behind clothes-rack) Johnny Merripranks, sir!

Mr. Sewansew

(Turns around) What? What's that?

Johnny

I said, "My name is Johnny Merripranks."

Mr. Sewansew

And I'm Master Sewansew.

Johnny

(Seizes his hand and shakes it) How do you do?

Mr. Sewansew

I didn't see you come in.

Johnny

Oh, I've been here for some time...browsing among the suits...

Mr. Sewansew

(Goes to rack) Is there anything in particular that interests you here?

Johnny

Yes...a job.

Mr. Sewansew

Oh, you're looking for work!

Johnny

Sort of... I'm an assistant.



Mr. Sewansew

What sort of assistant?

Johnny

An assorted sort. I have lots of experience. (Begins to sing reprise)

I'm a butcher, baker,
Doughnut maker—

Mr. Sewansew

(Interrupts) A baker? Hey, wait a minute. Did you say a baker?

Johnny

Yes, I said a baker.

Mr. Sewansew

Then I'll tell you a story that will make you laugh. Yesterday, my friend, Mr. Biskit, hired an assistant...an old fellow who said he was a baker's man. Well, Biskit had to go out to be christened so he told this old man to put up the rolls and bread for breakfast. Well, this morning Biskit discovered the old boy had baked all sorts of elephants and lions and was selling them like hot-cakes. Now what do you think of that?

Johnny

That's a great story. I'll bet you made it up!

Mr. Sewansew

Oh, no, it's true. So help me!

Johnny

That's just what I'm here for...to help you.

Mr. Sewansew

That's right, you were giving me your references. You said you assisted a butcher, a baker—

Johnny

And a candlestick maker!

Mr. Sewansew

All good, honest trades!

Johnny

And there were lots more. I've also assisted a trickster, a faker, and a counterfeit-maker...

Mr. Sewansew

(Beams) I must say, you've served a nice, well-rounded apprenticeship! Do you know anything about sewing?

Johnny

Certainly. I can even sew behind my back.

Mr. Sewansew

How do you do that?

Johnny

I put stitches in my britches! (He bends over to show the seat of his pants, then straightens up and explains) But you need very long arms...

Mr. Sewansew

You'll have to show me how to do that some time!

Johnny

With pleasure! (Raises Sewansew's arm) But this will have to be stretched! (Drops the arm and starts to lecture) Now, to be a tailor you need a pair of shears, a yardstick, needle and thread, and a thimble...

Mr. Sewansew

It seems there is very little I can teach you about my trade.

Johnny

But there is something I can teach <u>you</u>...a little trick that comes in handy. Listen carefully...

Mr. Sewansew

(Screws up his face in concentration) I'm listening...

Johnny

(Pantomimes as he speaks) After you have threaded your needle...(Tries several times, finally gets it threaded)...make a little knot at the end of the thread... (makes knot)...so it won't slip out when you sew! (He beams as if he has related startling news)

Mr. Sewansew

(Amazed) Well, what's new about that? Tailors knew your little trick a thousand years ago!

Johnny

(Offended) No one can remember what happened a thousand years ago! I quit! (He starts toward door Rear)

Mr. Sewansew

You can't quit. I haven't hired you yet. Come back here.

(Johnny comes back. Mrs. Sewansew enters from Left; ignores Johnny)

Mrs. Sewansew

(To husband) Are you working on that coat, dear? The gentleman will be here soon and it won't be ready.

Mr. Sewansew

The coat is almost finished, dear. Oh, I'd like you to meet Johnny Merripranks. He's looking for a job. Johnny, this is Mrs. Sewansew.

Johnny

(Bows) I'm glad to know...Mrs. Sewansew.

Mrs. Sewansew

How do you do. We don't need any help. Now, dear, you get back to work. (She starts out Right)

Mr. Sewansew

(Calls after her) Maybe he can help the cook. (Louder) How about Cook?

Cook

(Appears at Right; a patch over one eye, a chicken dangling in her hand) Did you call me, sir?

Mr. Sewansew

(annoyed) No, I did not! And how many times have I told you not to bring our food into the shop!

Cook

Oh, you will have your dinner in the shop!

Mr. Sewanseu

No, you goose. You do everything wrong. It's time we let you go.

Cook

(lets out a howl, then sings tearfully)

Allegro Moderato

Cook:

f

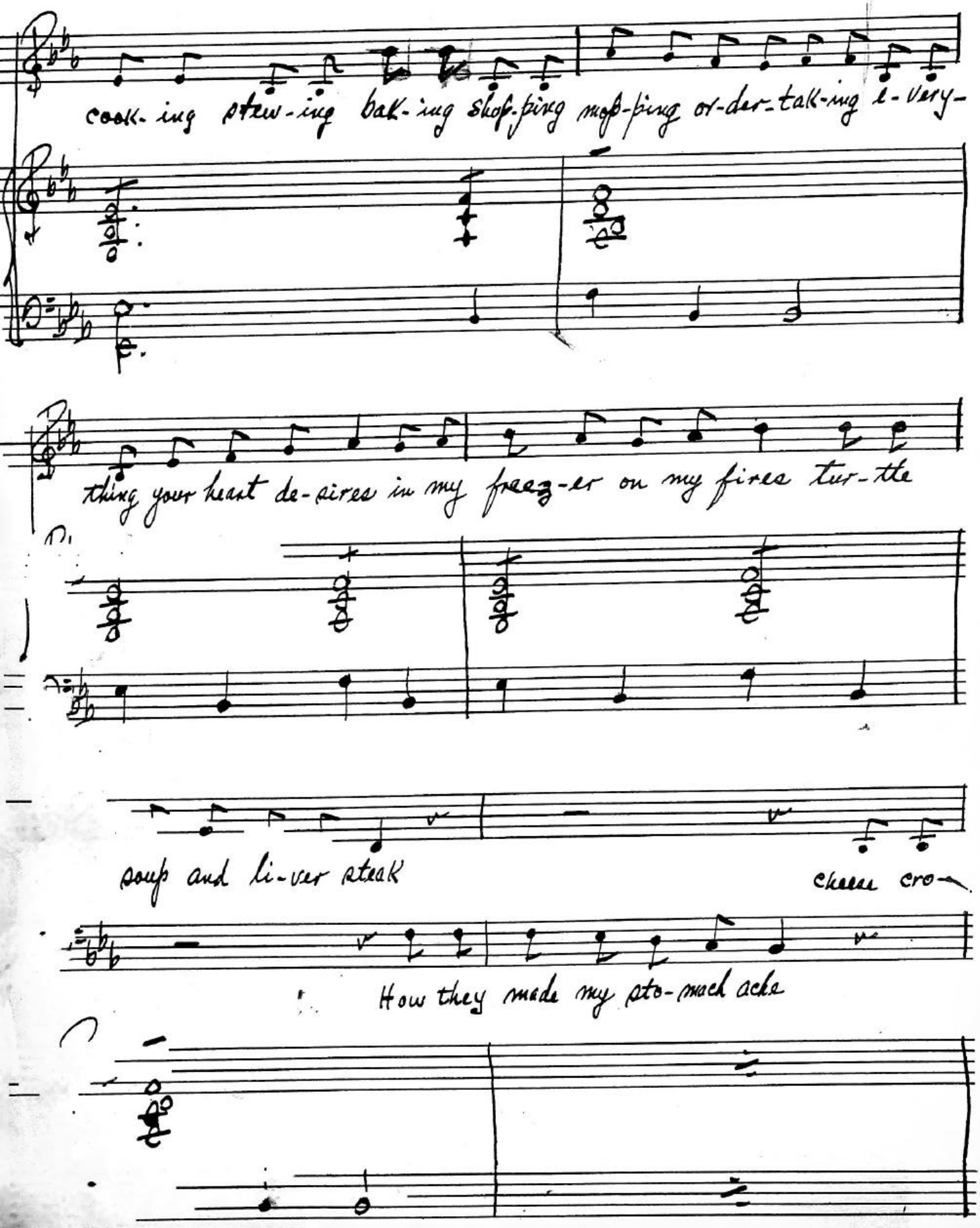
Let me

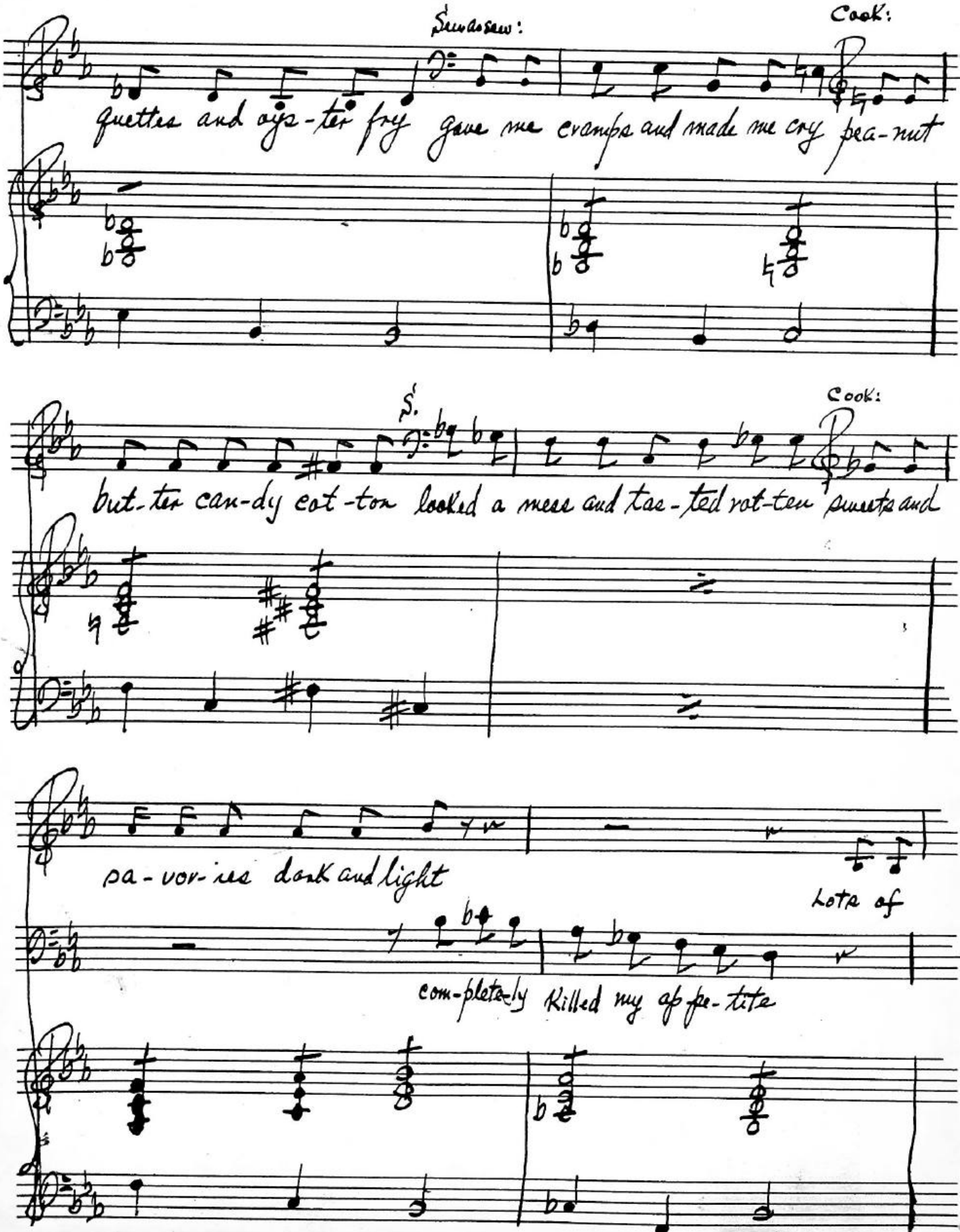
mf

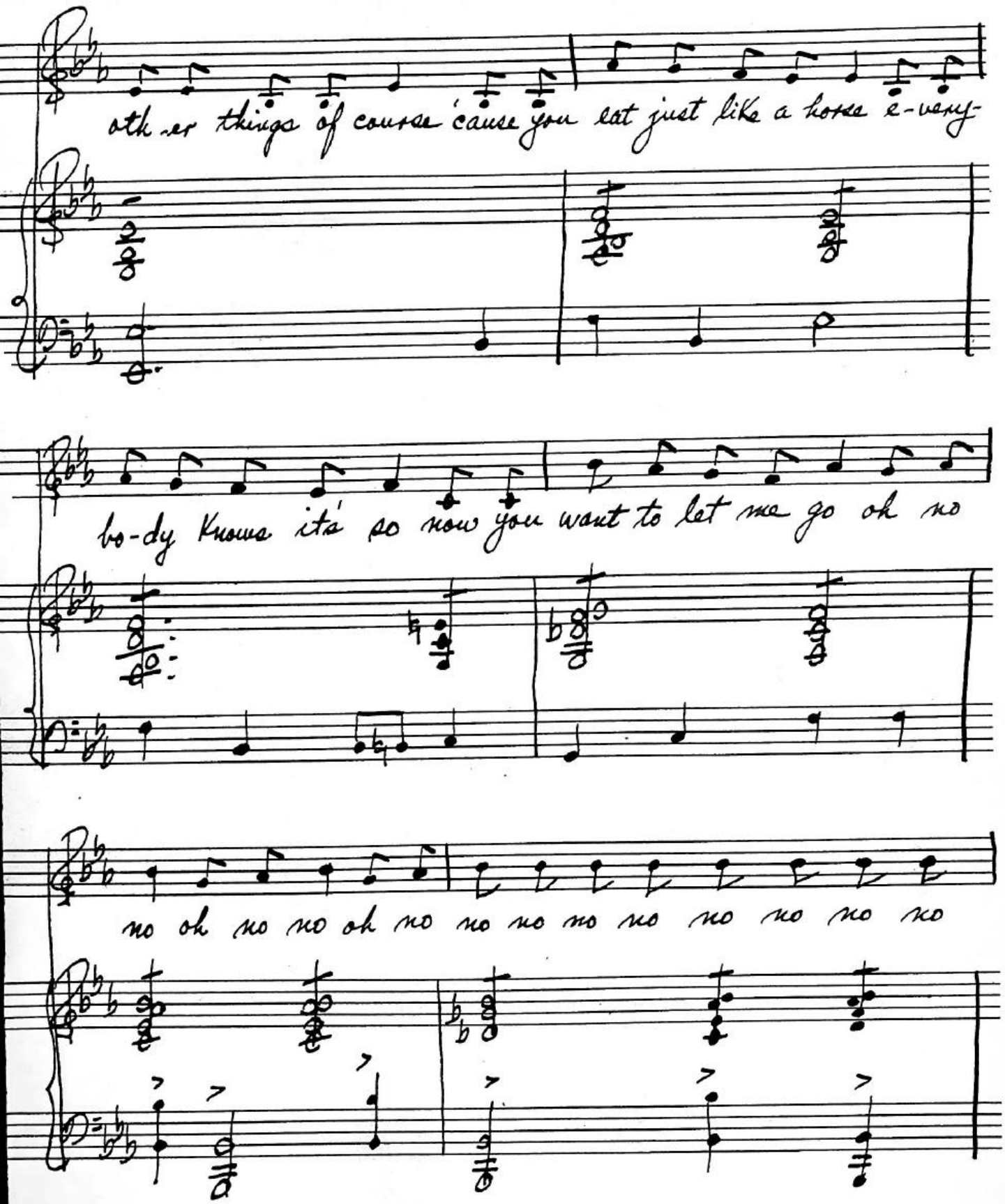
go let me go af-ter for-ty years or so I've been

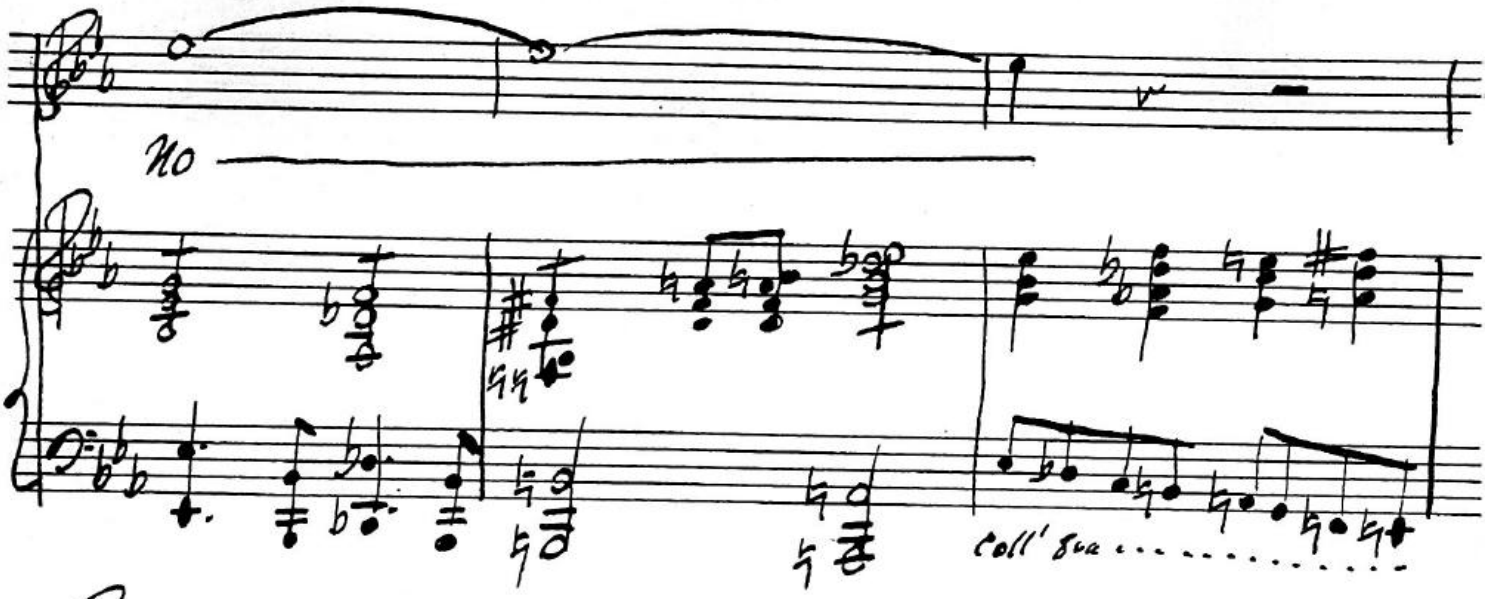
V.S.

V.S.


cook-ing stew-ing bak-ing shop-ping mop-ping or-der-tak-ing e-very-
thing your heart de-sires in my freez-er on my fires tur-tle
soup and li-ver steak
cheese cro-
How they made my sto-mach ache


Sawdust:
Cook:
quettes and oys-ter fry gave me cramps and made me cry pea-nut
S.
Cook:
but-ter can-dy cot-ton looked a mess and tas-ted rot-ten sweets and
pa-vor-ies dark and light
Lots of
com-plete-ly killed my ap-pe-tite


oth-er things of course 'cause you eat just like a horse e-very-
bo-dy knows it's so now you want to let me go oh no
no oh no no oh no no no no no no no no no



(During this song Johnny has been dancing a jig, Mr. Sewansew has been clutching his head, while Mrs. Sewansew has her around the cook's shoulder and is trying to quiet her. At the end of the song, the cook exits, weeping.)

Mrs. Sewansew

(To her husband) Let her go? I should say not! Cook suits me to a T!

Mr. Sewansew

Well, she's not here when you want her and can't hear when you do!

Mrs. Sewansew

The poor woman is doing the best she can. I'll tend to my business and you tend to yours! (Exits Right)

~~Merriprenks—22~~

Johnny

A servant is like a broom: When she's busy she raises a great clatter and dust, and when she's idle she's of no use.

Mr. Sewansew

You're a clever fellow! How would you like to work for me? You'll have an easy time of it...eat and drink as one of the family...just half work ... If you're willing, let's shake hands on it.

Johnny

Agreed! (They shake hands)

Mrs. Sewansew

(Hurries in from Right) Aren't you working on that coat? (Pause) I have to send Cook on an errand and there are two chickens roasting on the spit. I can't watch the chickens because I haven't finished my housework. What am I going to do?

Mr. Sewansew

Take it easy! Johnny'll watch the chickens, and you can go about your work.

Mrs. Sewansew

(To Johnny) You'd like that, wouldn't you!

Johnny

(Rubs stomach) I'd love it!

(Mrs. Sewansew scowls and exits Left)

Mr. Sewansew

(Points off Right) Tell Cook you'll take care of the chickens.

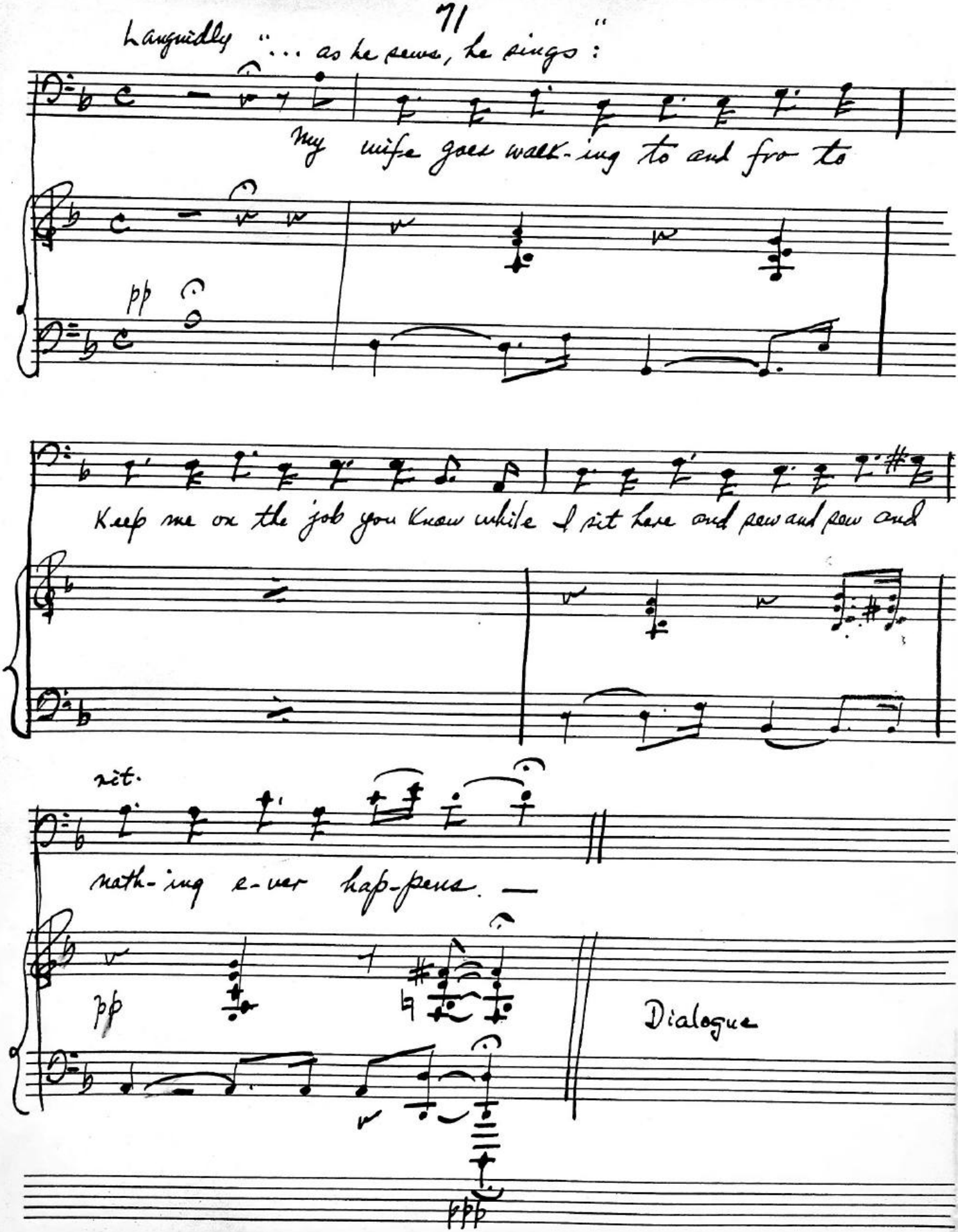
Johnny

Yes, sir, I'll do that! (Exits Right, quickly)

Mr. Sewansew

(Beams) Bright boy!

(He glances about with satisfaction and straightens the clothes on the rack. Then he sits on the table and goes to work on the coat.


Languidly "... as he sews, he sings:"
My wife goes walk-ing to and fro to
pp
Keep me on the job you know while I sit here and sew and sew and
rit.
noth-ing e-ver hap-pens.
pp
Dialogue
ppp

Cook

(Wrings hands and shouts) Oh, sir, sir, we won't have any dinner!

Mr. Sewansew

You're talking so loud, I can't hear a word you're saying! What's the matter?

Cook

When I went out I left two chickens on the spit and when I came back I found only one. That nasty boy ate one...and then he made fun of me. (Weeps loudly)

Mr. Sewansew

He wouldn't do that!

Cook

(Sobbing) He did! And when I asked him where the other chicken was... he said I could see it if I opened my other eye! Ooooh!!

Mr. Sewansew

You go back to the kitchen and send Johnny to me!

(Cook exits. Sewansew assumes a stern expression. Johnny enters.)

Johnny

You sent for me, sir?

Mr. Sewansew

Yes. We had two chickens on the spit and now there is only one--

Johnny

Yes, sir, I ate one.

Mr. Sewansew

You ate one!!

Johnny

I'm one of the family now, remember; you promised, Daddy.

Mr. Sewansew

Well, if I don't say any more about the chickens, will you watch out hereafter?

Johnny

I'll keep our agreement, sir.

Mr. Sewansew

Good. (Calls) Cook! Cook!!

Johnny

(Cups hands around mouth and calls) COOK!

Cook

(Enters from Right, carrying bucket) What is it, sir?

Mr. Sewansew

Everything is settled. Johnny will apologize. Go ahead, Johnny.

Johnny

I'm sorry you misunderstood me. I forgive you.

Cook

Give you what? (Holds out bucket) Here, go out to the well and fill this bucket. (Johnny takes pail and starts toward exit Rear. Cook calls after him.) And bring in two logs for the fire. (He goes out.)

Mr. Sewansew

(Gets back on table) Now, I'll have some peace.

Cook

Piece? A piece of what, sir?

Mr. Sewansew

(Shouts) Quiet, woman, quiet!

Cook

Yes, sir, it is very quiet!

Mr. Sewansew

Oh, Jumping Jupiter! (He sews and pays no attention to her. She whimpers. Johnny returns Rear. Mr. Sewansew looks up.) Well, that was pretty quick.

JOHNNY

(With bucket and a log) Yes, sir. (To Cook) Here you are.

Cook

(Takes bucket and log) What's this? Half a bucket of water...one log! I said, fill the bucket and fetch two logs! Well, it will have to do! Master, can you let me have a clean linen cloth?

Mr. Sewansew

(Selects a piece of cloth from the table) Here, Johnny, hand this to Cook.

Johnny

(Holds cloth up with both hands, then tears it down the middle, throws one half away and offers other half to Cook.) Here you are.

Cook

(Screams) Did you see that? Did you see what he did?

Mr. Sewansew

(Almost simultaneously) What's the meaning of that? What are you up to?

Johnny

But, sir--

Mr. Sewansew

You promised to do as the cook ordered!

Johnny

And so I have, sir. But when you hired me you said everything I do will be half work. It's not so easy to divide everything by two.

Cook

(Furious) He's a rascal!

Mr. Sewansew

Enough! Enough!

Cook

I won't stand for it another minute. If you don't get rid of him, I'll leave.

Mr. Sewansew

Quiet, I tell you. Go back to the kitchen. You'll have nothing more to do with him...from now on he'll work with me.

Cook

(Goes off Right, muttering) That nasty boy...

Mr. Sewansew

I know you are trying your best...and if you do just as you are told you won't get into trouble. Pay close attention to what I say and some day you may be a first-class tailor. (He hands Johnny a garment, needle, thread, etc.) Here, take this dress and sew up the seam. Here's a needle and thread. Here's a thimble. Sit over there on that table. (Johnny gets up on the table and sits cross-legged.) Fine. Fine. You'll make a grand tailor. Now, go ahead.

(Mr. Sewansew gets up on his own table and starts to sew. In pantomime, Johnny threads the needle and makes a knot at the end of the thread. He looks across to Mr. Sewansew, who has been watching him, and they nod to each other smilingly. Then both start to sew.)

Mr. Sewansew

(Suddenly) You know, Johnny, the best kind of sewing is the sewing that can't be seen.

Johnny

Yes, sir. (He jumps down, takes needle, thread, and dress, and gets under the table; then he goes on sewing.)

Mr. Sewansew

(Gets down from table and crosses to Johnny; he bends down to talk) What are you doing under there? Hiding?

Johnny

(Under table) Yes, sir. You just said the best kind of sewing is the sewing that can't be seen. No one can see me under here.

Mr. Sewansew

Come out of there! And listen to me! (As Johnny crawls out) Don't hide yourself...hide the stitches!

Johnny

Oh! Now I understand!! (He gets up on his table.)

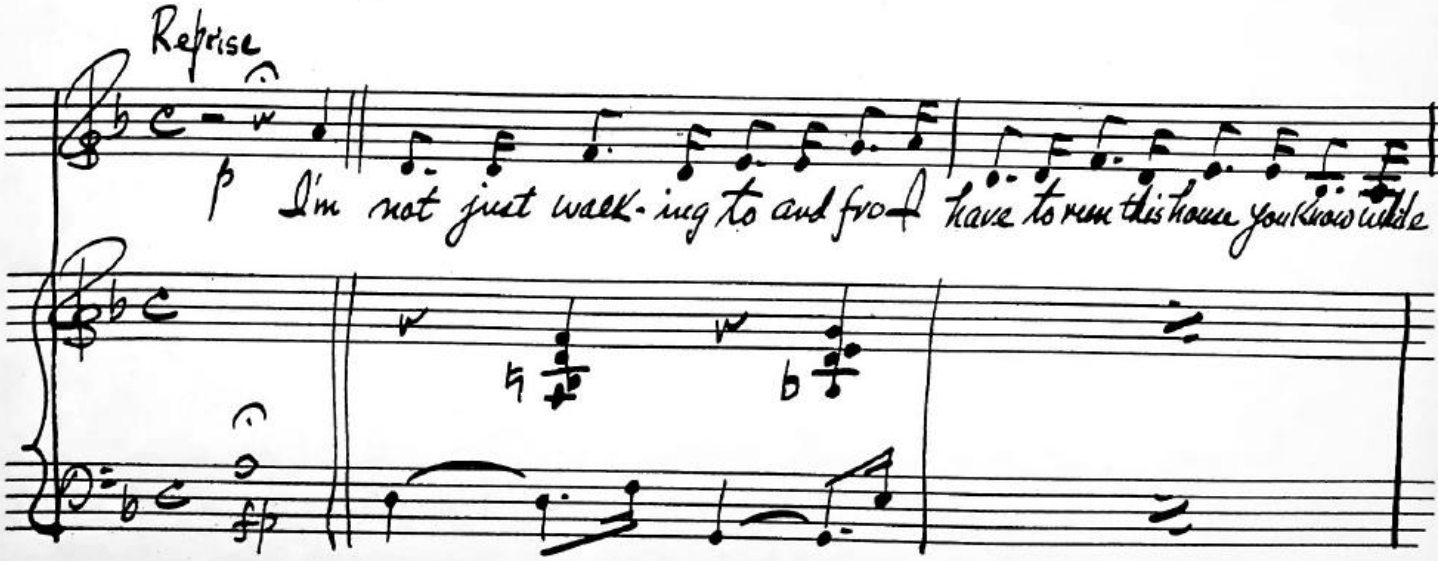
Mrs. Sewansew

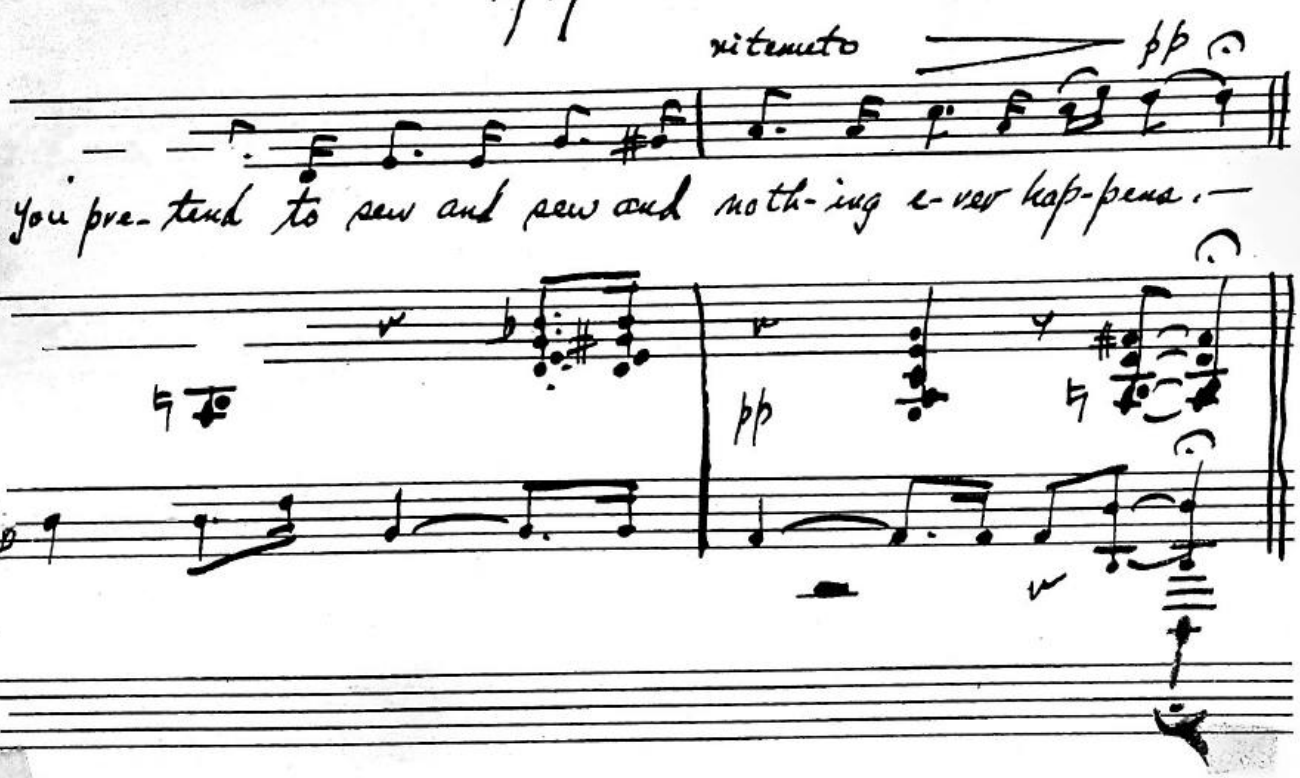
(Enters Left) Is dinner ready, dear?

Mr. Sewansew

(Curtly) How would I know, darling? Ask the cook!

Mrs. Sewansew
(annoyed, sings)





(She goes out Right. Mr. Sewansew is about to get up on his table when his wife returns.) Yes...dinner is ready. Let's get it over with...

Mr. Sewansew

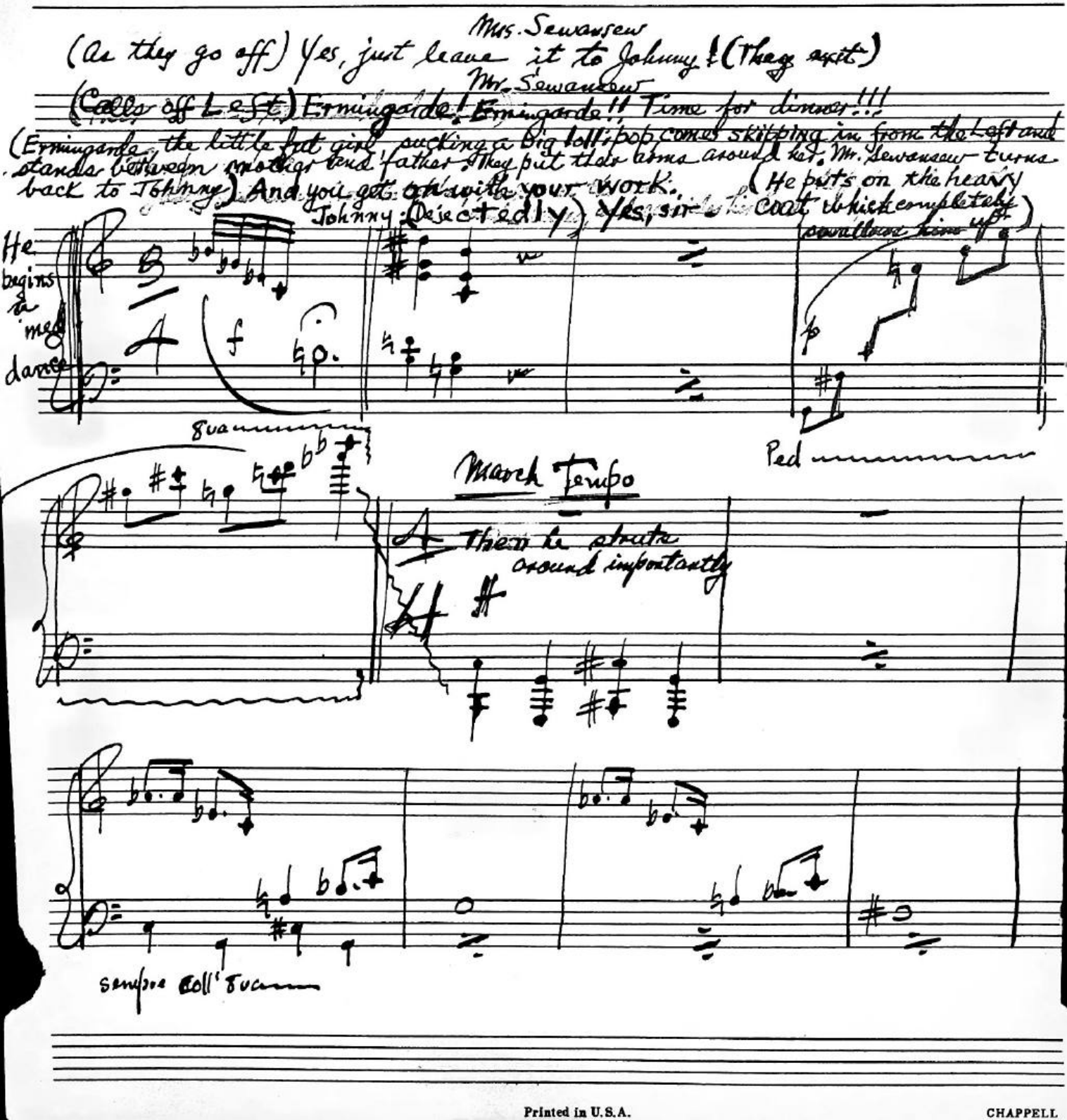
Not just now, dear. You know I've got to finish this coat. If it's not ready when the gentleman calls for it, there'll be an awful row.

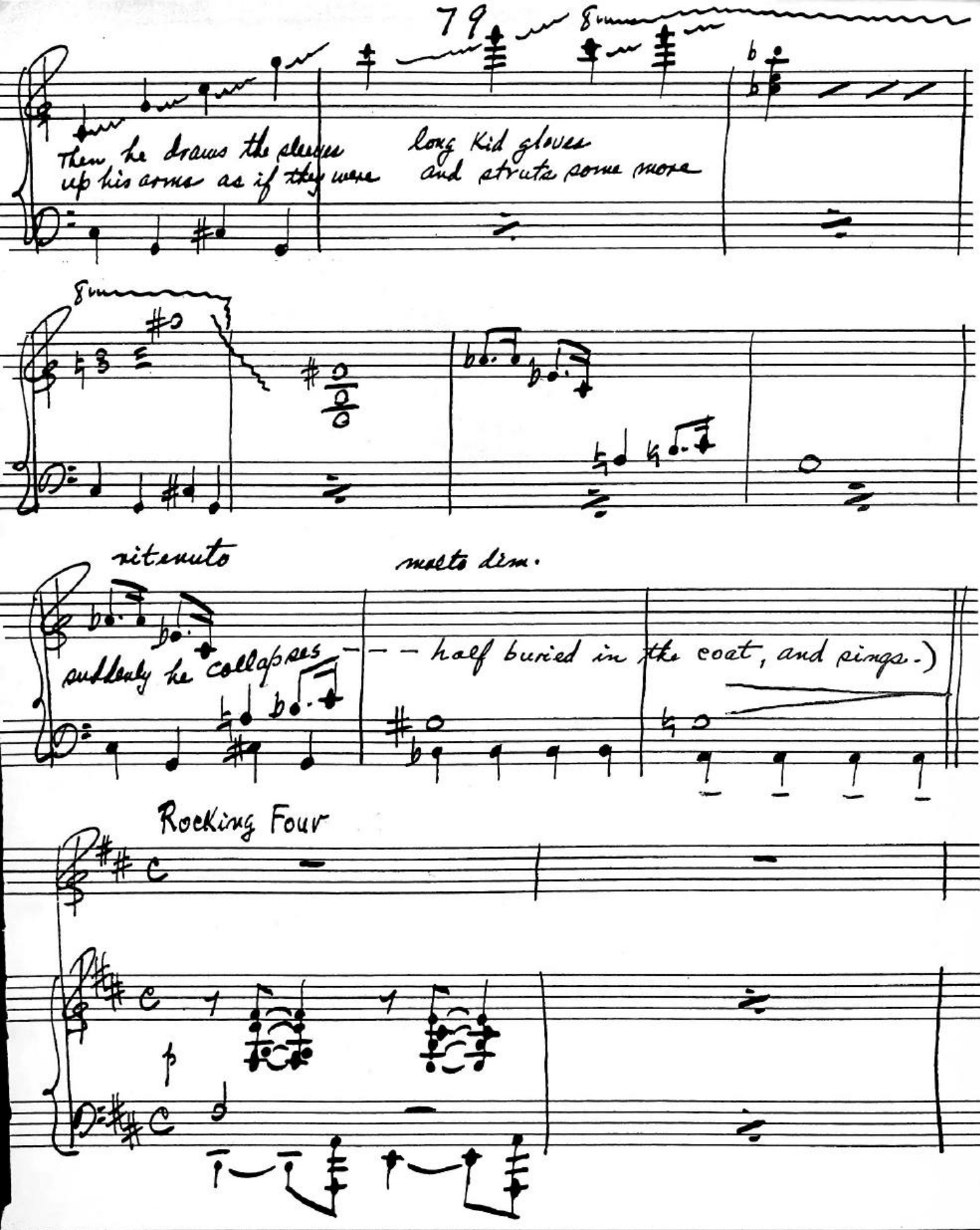
Mrs. Sewansew

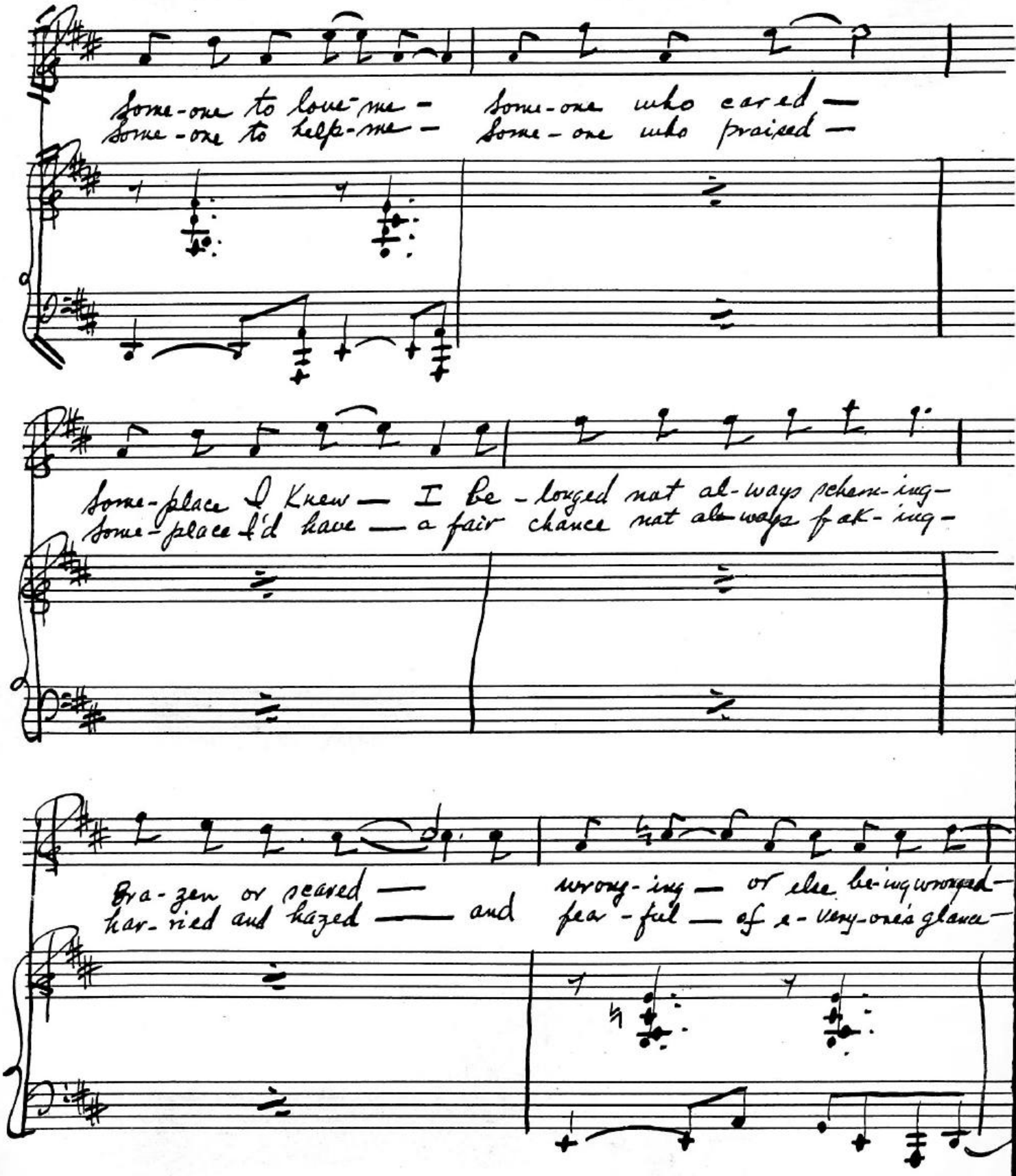
You had all morning to finish it. I won't have the dinner getting cold.

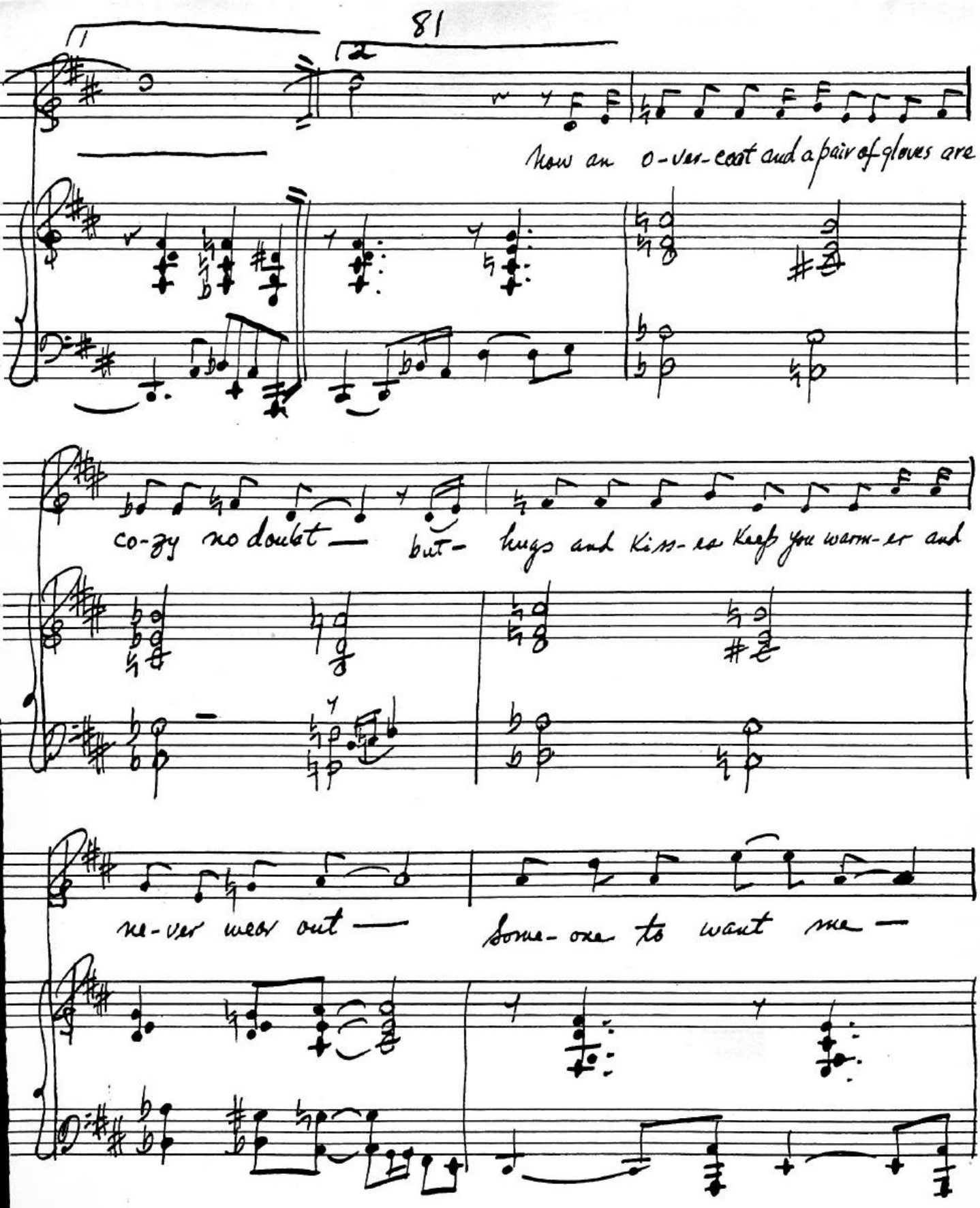
Mr. Sewansew

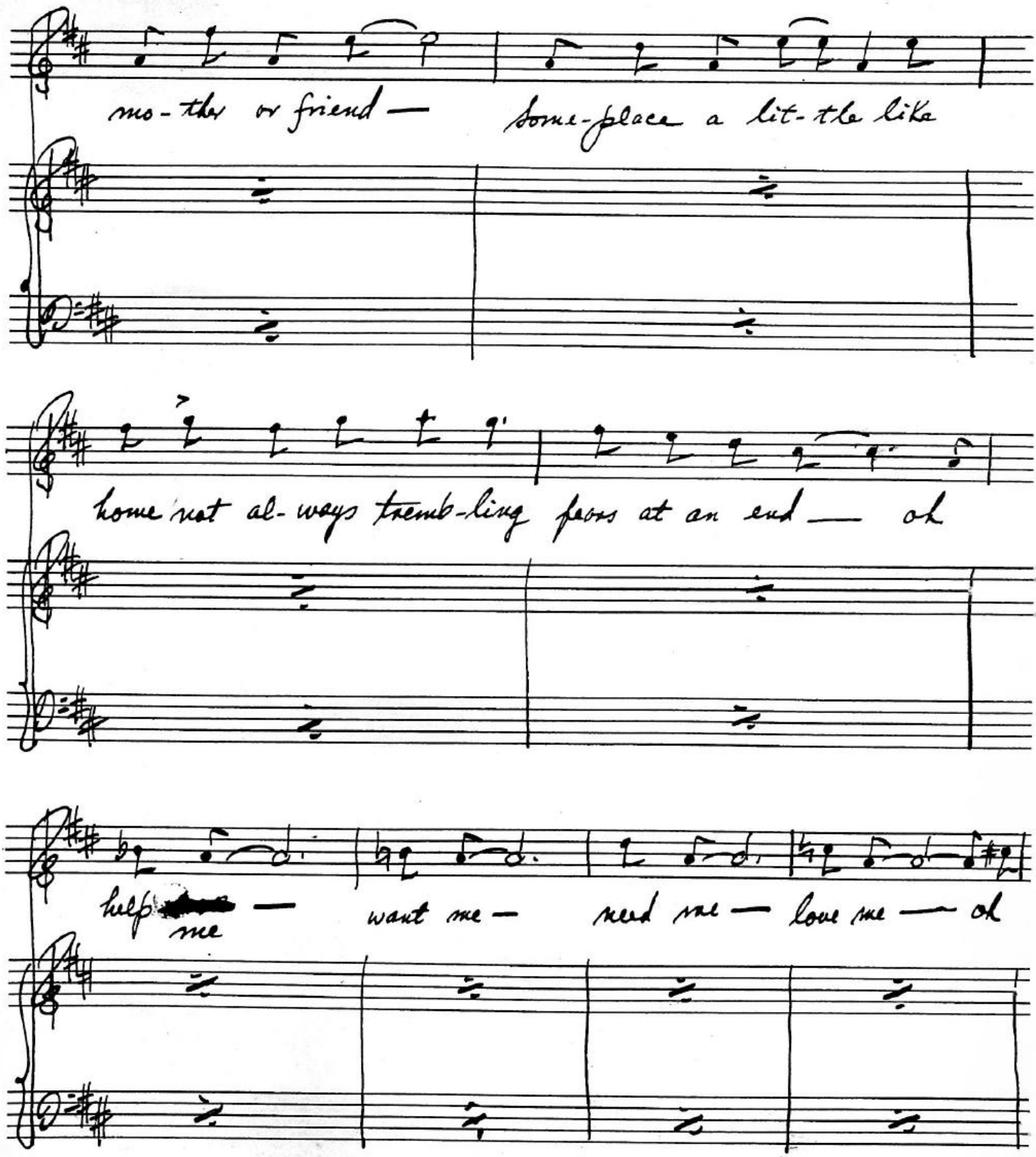
Well, it's all ready except for the sleeves. (He gets an idea.) Ah! Here, Johnny, you ought to be able to do this. (Handing them to Johnny) The coat...the sleeves... While I'm having my dinner, just throw them together. (To wife) Come, dear, it will be done!




79
8va
Then he draws the sleeves up his arms as if they were
long Kid gloves and struts some more
8va
ritenuto
suddenly he collapses
molto dim.
– – half buried in the coat, and sings.)
Rocking Four
p


Some-one to love me — Some-one who cared —
Some-one to help me — Some-one who praised —
Some-place I knew — I be-longed not al-ways scheme-ing —
Some-place I'd have — a fair chance not al-ways fight-ing —
Bra-zen or scared — wrong-ing — or else be-ing wronged —
har-ried and hazed — and fear-ful — of e-very-one's glance —


1
2
how an o-ver-coat and a pair of gloves are
co-zy no doubt— but- hugs and kiss-es keep you warm-er and
ne-ver wear out— some-one to want me—



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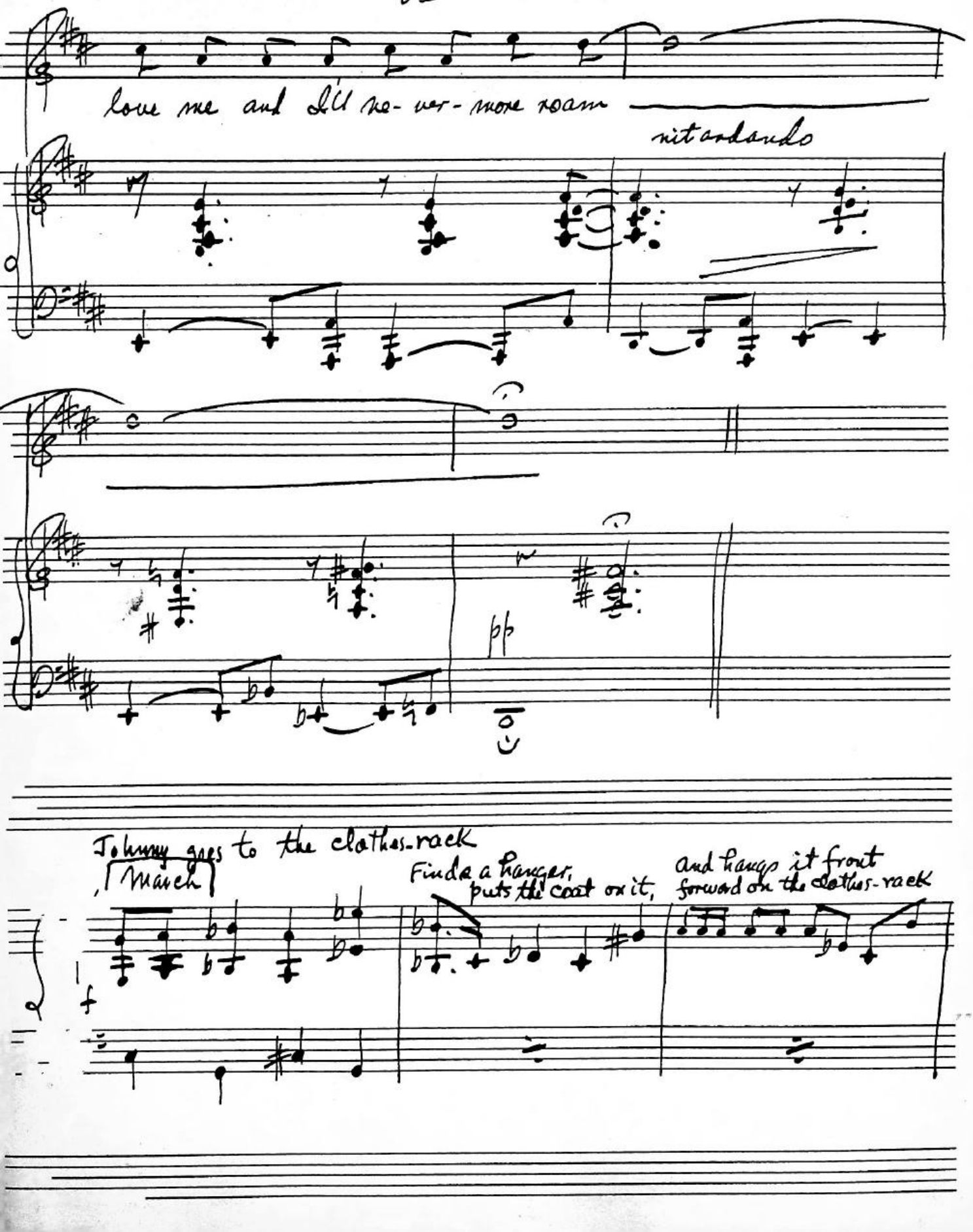

love me and I'll ne-ver-more roam
ritardando
pp
Johnny goes to the clothes-rack
March
Finds a hanger,
puts the coat on it,
and hangs it front
forward on the clothes-rack
f

then he takes the sleeves and goes several paces off from the coat, he aims carefully and throws a sleeve

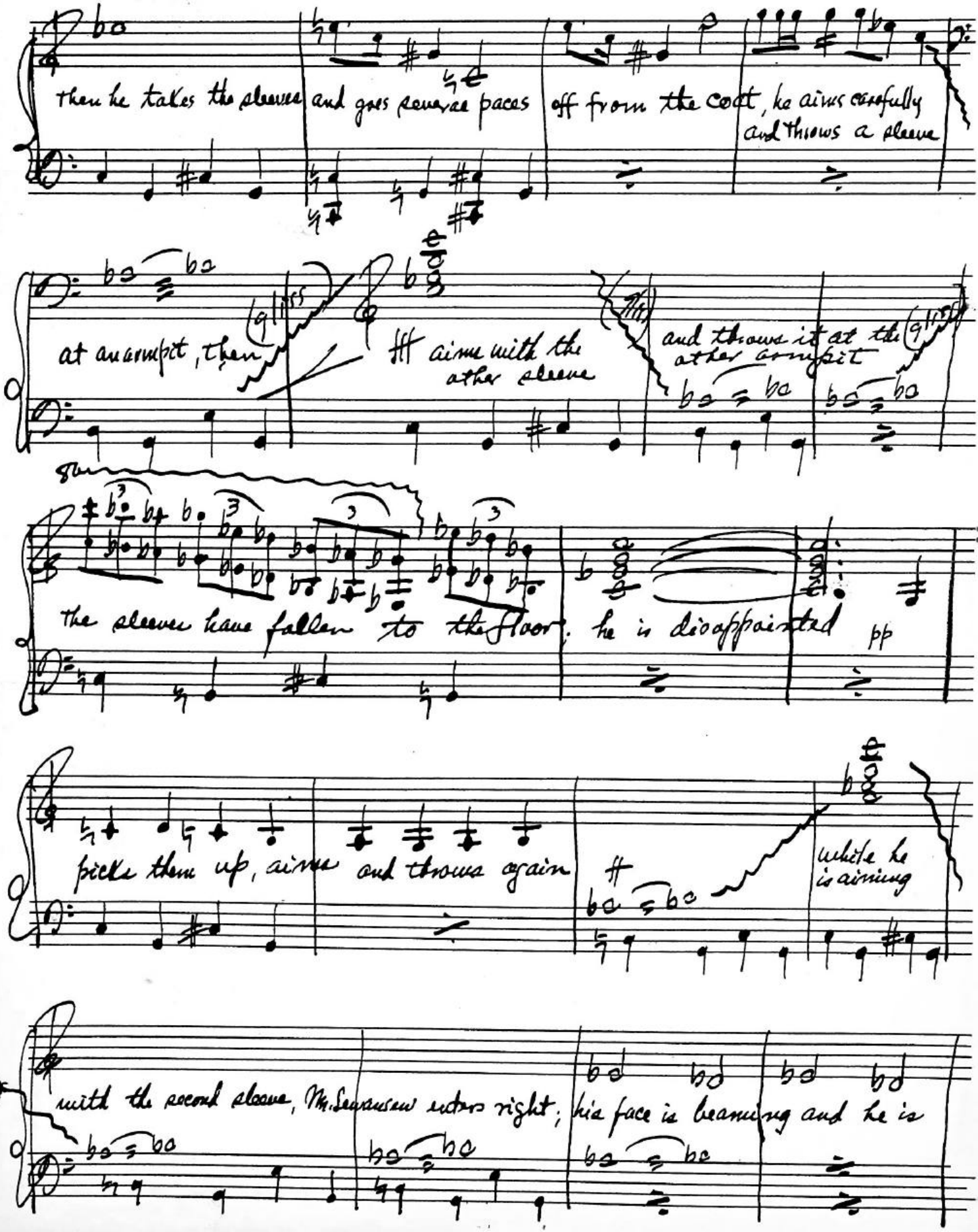
at an armpit, then (glissa) aims with the other sleeve and throws it at the other armpit (glissa)

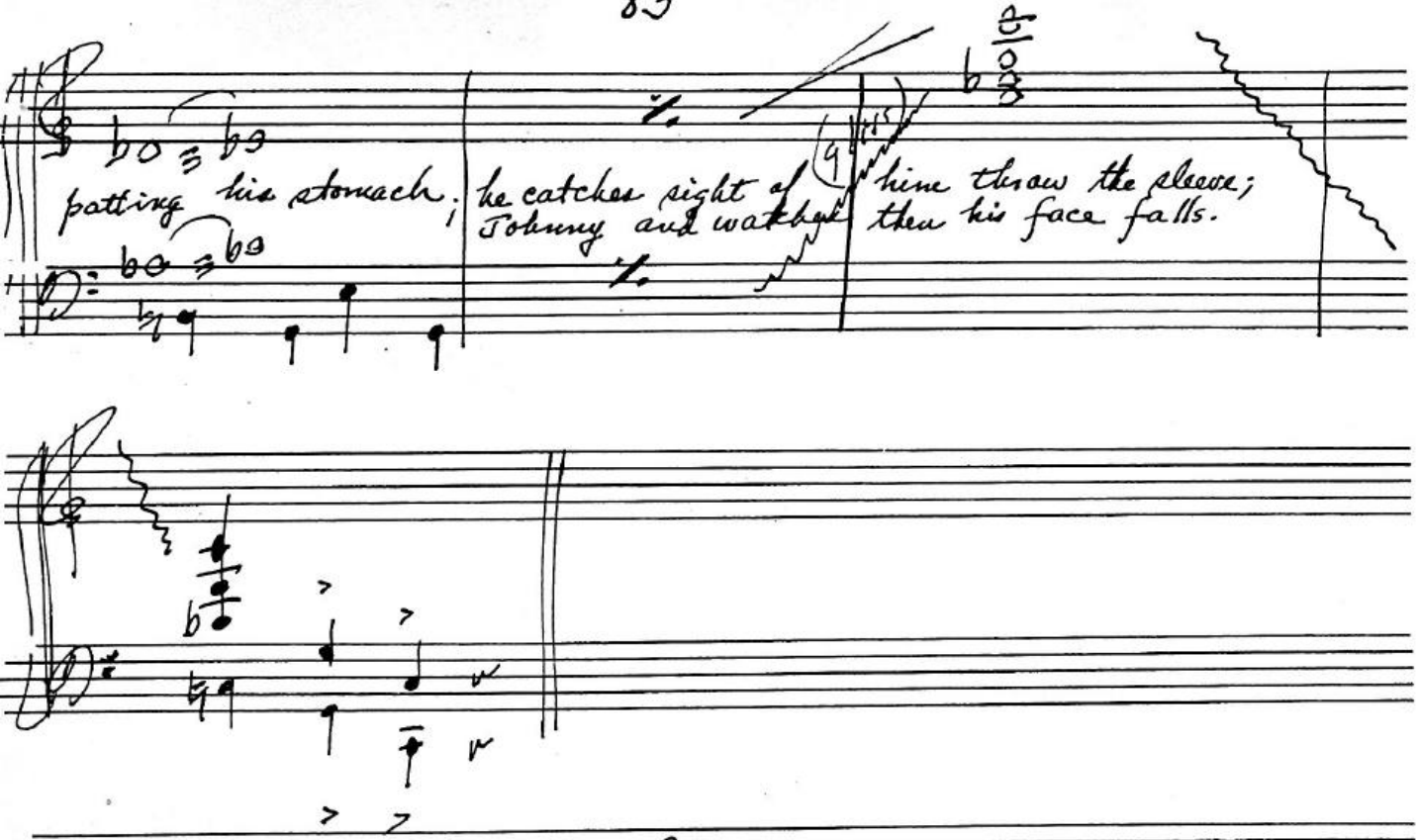
8va

the sleeves have fallen to the floor; he is disappointed pp

picks them up, aims and throws again while he is aiming

with the second sleeve, Mr. Sewansew enters right; his face is beaming and he is





Mr. Scrooge
(Angrily) Now, what are you up to?

Johnny
(Looks up) Just what you ordered, sir!

Mr. Scrooge
I ordered these monkey-shines??

~~Merrimranks - 3~~

Johnny

(Stops short, shouts and points at Cook) Look! (Mr. Sewansew stops and looks around) Remember what I said? A servant and a broom... (He laughs)

Mr. Sewansew

(Snatches broom from Cook and brandishes it at Johnny) You raise a clatter and dust, you lout, and do nothing! Let me at you!

(He weaves in and out among tables and chairs after Johnny, striking him occasionally with the broom.)

Johnny

You ordered it, sir. Have pity!

Cook

(Wringing her hands) Oh, mercy! Mercy me!

(Johnny makes for the door Rear. As Mr. Sewansew goes after him from behind a table, Mrs. Sewansew enters.)

Mrs. Sewansew

(Amazed) What's the meaning of this?

Johnny

Oh, Mrs. Sewansew, save my life. I only did as I was told!

Mr. Sewansew

(As if prodded) Ohhh! Let me at him! Let me at him!

(Johnny jumps out the door Rear, but sticks his head in. Mrs. Sewansew snatches the broom from her husband. She swings suddenly and hits Johnny in the head just as he is drawing it out.)

Mrs. Sewansew

(After the blow) There, you monstrous imp, remember that!. (Then she turns on her husband, raising the broom) And you, Mr. Butt-in, get back to your work or I'll--

~~Merripranks 29~~

Johnny

(Offended) I don't think they're monkey-shines! This is hard work. Instead of asking me to throw sleeves on a coat, it would have been better if you had let me go in and have my dinner. I knew right off it would be a useless job!

Mr. Sewansew

(Furious) You mean, you knew right off you were going to twist my words, you villain! Besides, you had your dinner before I had mine. (He makes as if to strike Johnny.)

(Chase music begins.)

Johnny

(Moves out of reach, behind table) Sir, sir! I did just as you told me! How was I to know you meant sew them, not throw them?

Mr. Sewansew

(Angrier; moves slowly after Johnny) You knave! On your account I'll lose my trade. Because of your foolishness, the coat won't be ready when the gentleman calls.

Johnny

(Moves faster round the table) But sir, I did just as you said... nothing more...

Mr. Sewansew

(Still angrier; follows faster) Say that again...just say that again! Oh, if I could lay my hands on you, I'd give you a sound box on the ear...

Johnny

(Dodges to other table) Oh, I'm so unlucky! I do just as I'm told and...

Mr. Sewansew

Just let me get at you and I'll tell you something that will stick in that empty noodle of yours...

Cook

(Enters Right, with broom) Oh, Heavens! Sir! What's wrong? (She stands clutching the broom.)

Mr. Sewansew

(Cowers) Don't you strike me!

Johnny

(Sticks his head in) Give him one for me!

Mrs. Sewansew

(Strikes with broom at Johnny as he disappears) What!!!

Mr. Sewansew

Outside, you rogue!!

Mrs. Sewansew

(Hits husband in the seat) Back to your work, I said.

Johnny

(In again) Goodbye, my friends... (Mrs. Sewansew swings on him; cries, "Out" as he disappears.)

Mr. Sewansew

Out, villain, out! (Mrs. Sewansew swings in opposite direction, mechanically. She cries, "Work!" and swings back toward the door, crying, "OUT!" at which moment Mr. Biskit enters and gets the broom full in the face.)

Mrs. Sewansew

(Cries) There, take that! (Then notices her mistake; shrieks) Oh, Mr. Biskit, I'm sorry!!

(Chase music ends) ——— STOP

Mr. Biskit

(Dragging Johnny in by the collar) Madam, you struck me! (To Mr. Sewansew) And you, sir, have been harboring a criminal! You told me this knave wasn't hiding in your shop! I'll charge you as an accomplice!

Mr. Sewansew

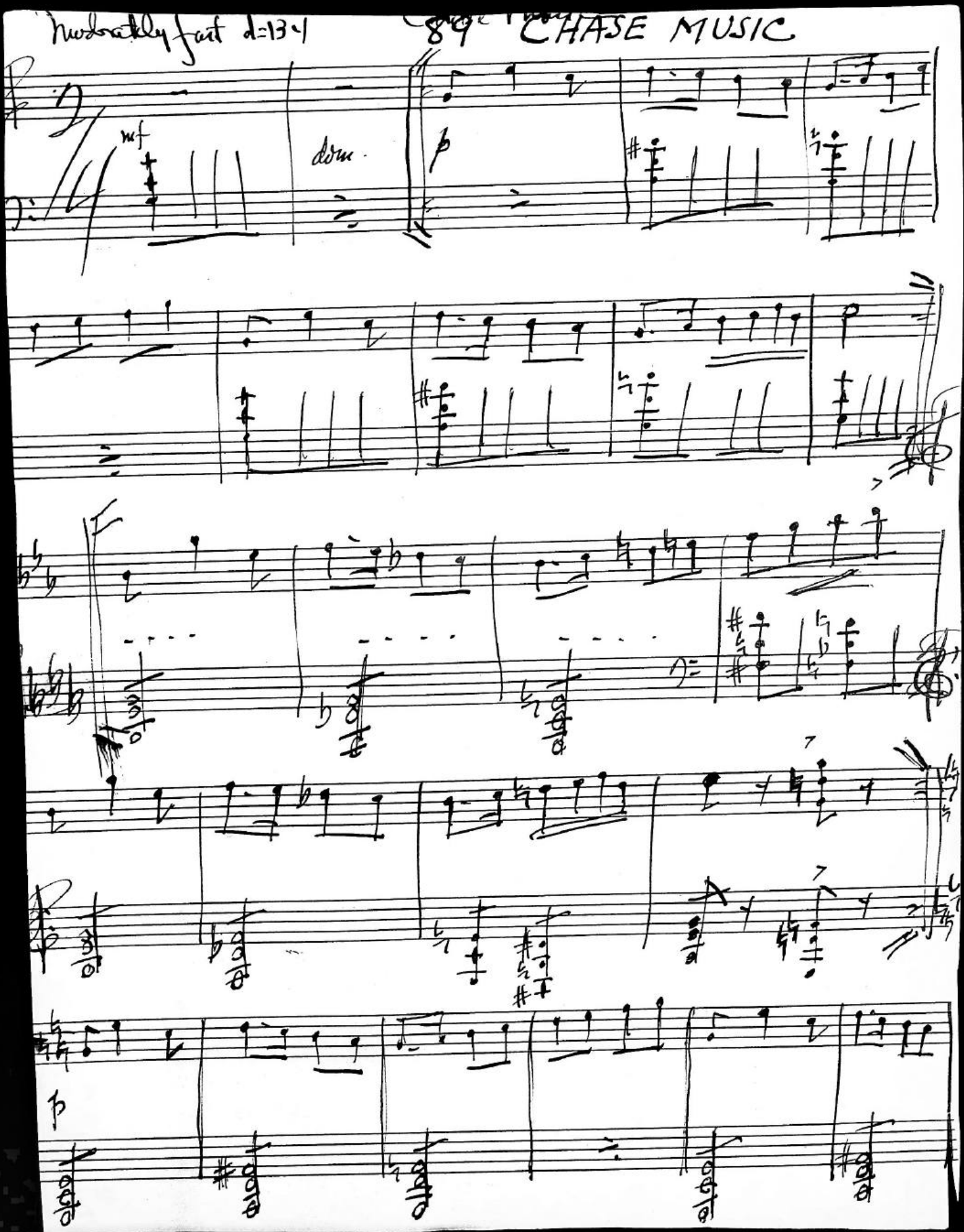
I don't know what you are talking about!

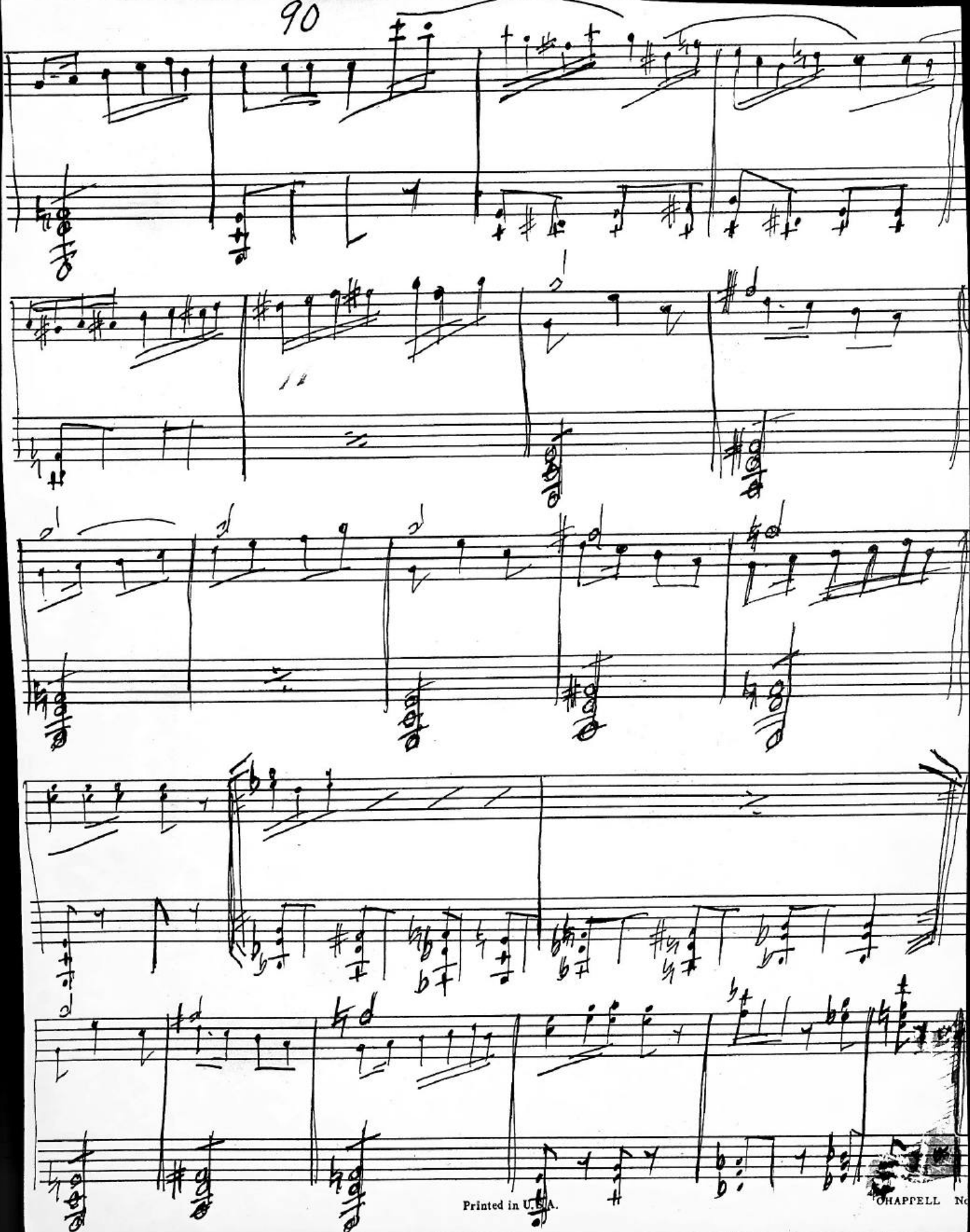
Mr. Biskit

Now, don't pretend you're innocent! (Shakes Johnny roughly) This is the rascal who made owls and monkeys out of my dough!

Moderately fast d=134

89 CHASE MUSIC





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CHAPPELL

Mrs. Sewansew

He's made monkeys of all of us!

Judge Gavel

(Enters pompously and roars) Mr. Sewansew, I've come for my coat! Is it ready?

(Everyone freezes. Johnny edges behind Mr. Biskit; Mr. Sewansew begins to tremble. The Judge, in a louder voice)

I say, is my coat ready? (Looks at frozen figures) What's going on here?

Mr. Biskit

I've caught a gang of thieves and I want them all arrested!

Mr. Sewansew

(Pleads) Oh, Judge, I'm an honest man! (Points at Johnny) That rascal kept me from finishing your coat!

Mrs. Sewansew

(Points at Johnny) And he ate a whole chidken!

Cook

(Points at Johnny) And he made fun of me!

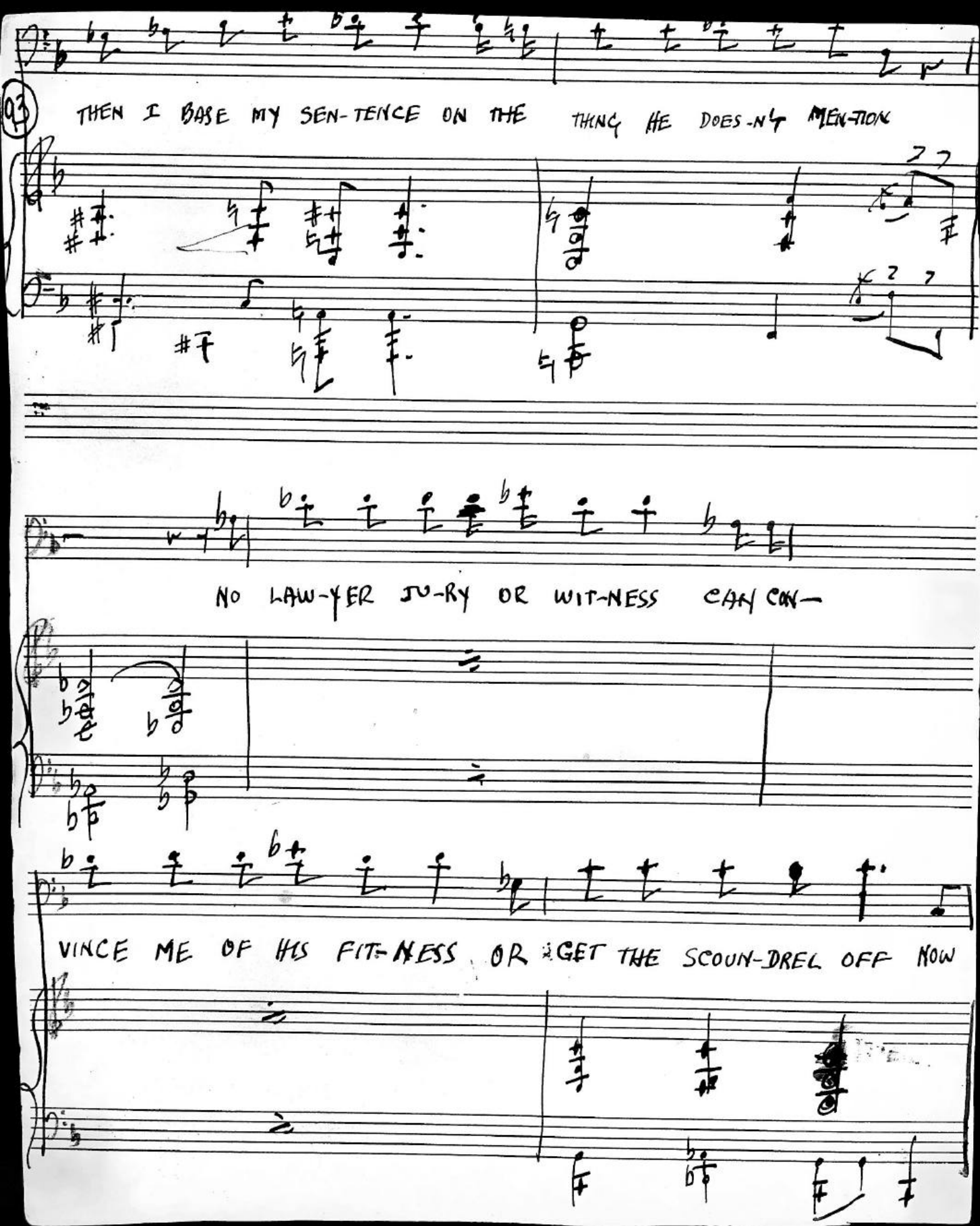
Mr. Biskit

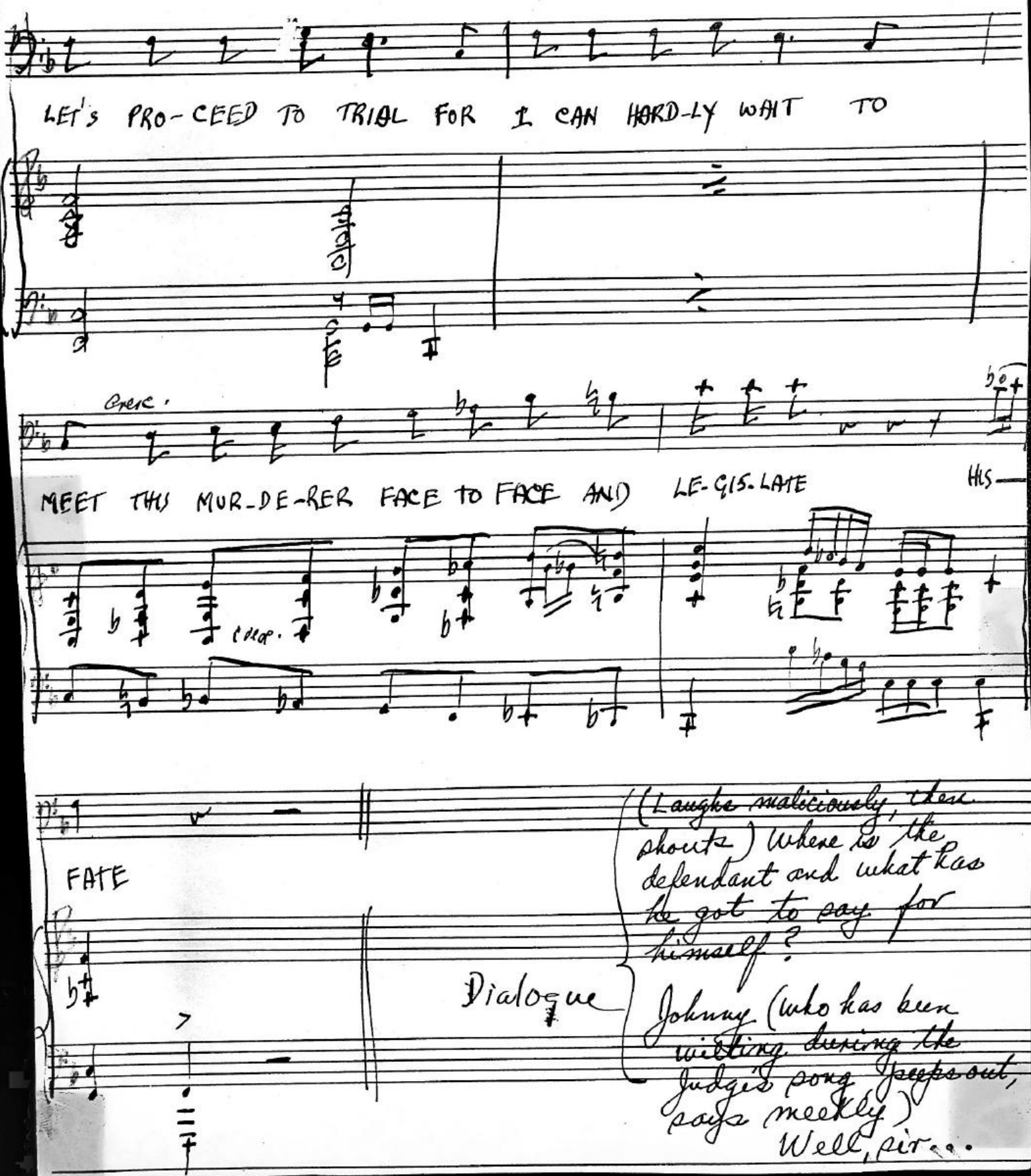
(Shaking Johnny) And he made owls and monkeys of--

Judge Gavel

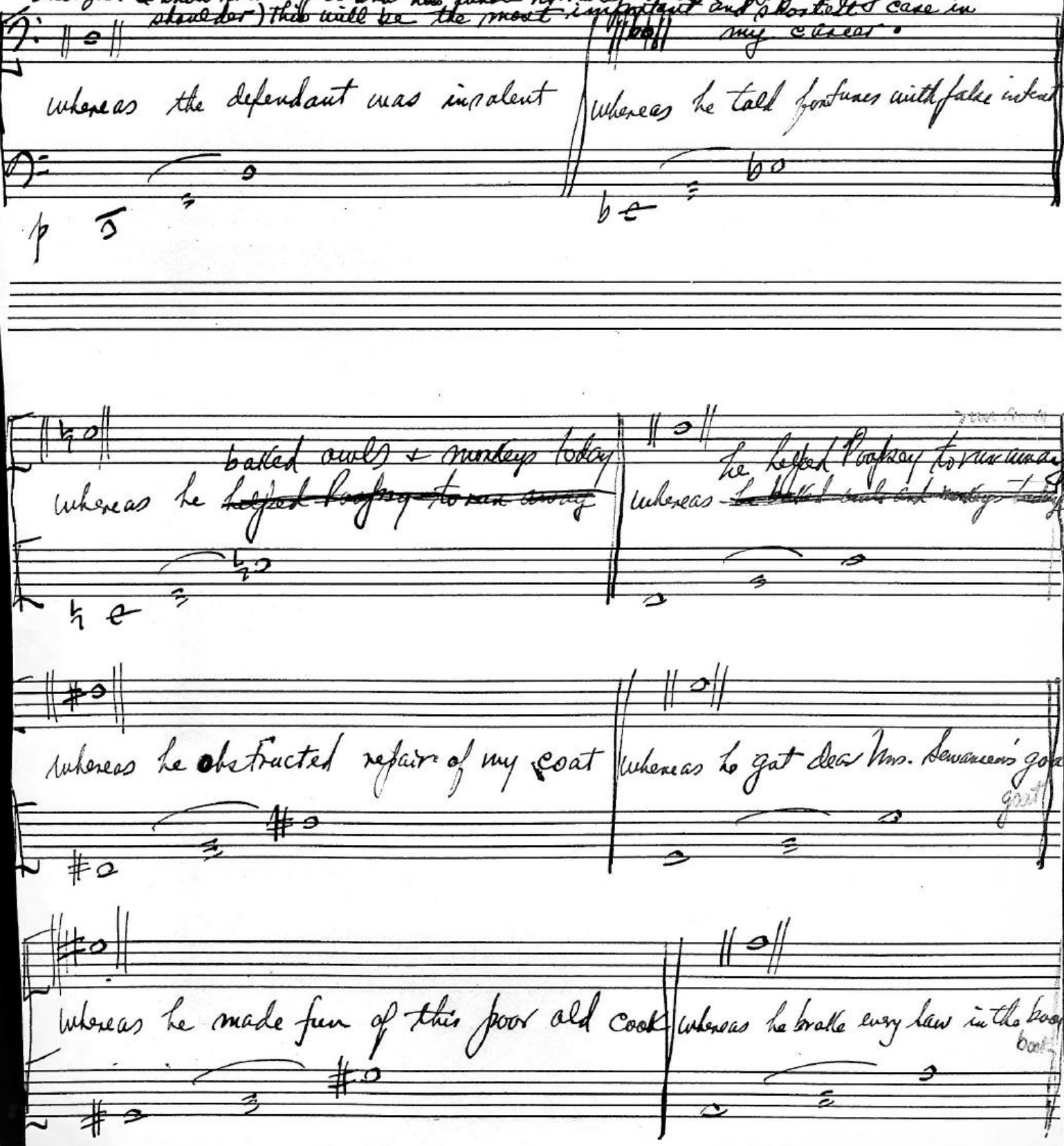
(Bangs on table with gavel he has taken from pocket) Order in the courtroom! (Sings in a pompous voice)

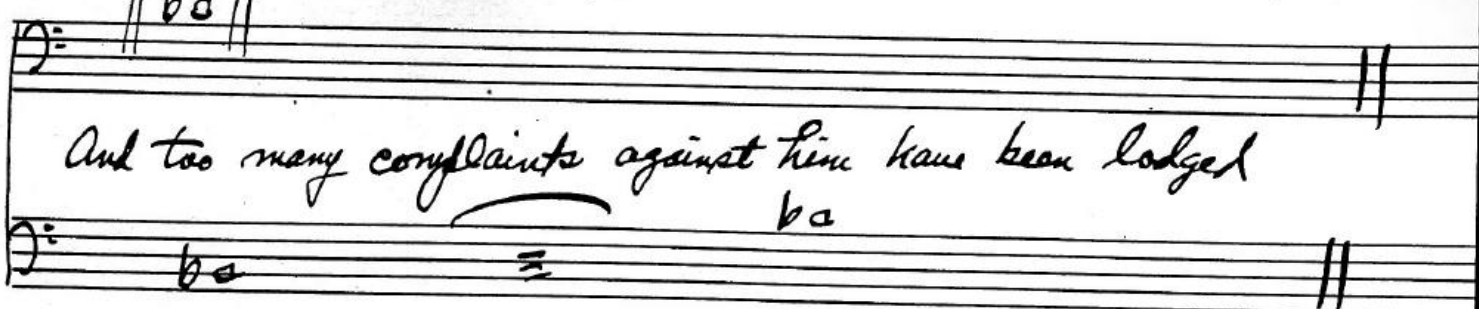
92
mf I RE-PRE-SENT THE LAW — SO LET'S HAVE SI-LENCE HERE IT'S
mf
KNOWN THAT WHEN I TRY A CASE I STAND WITH-OUT A PEER THE
CRI-MI-NAL GETS A CHANCE I LIS-TEN WITH AT-TEN-TION AND

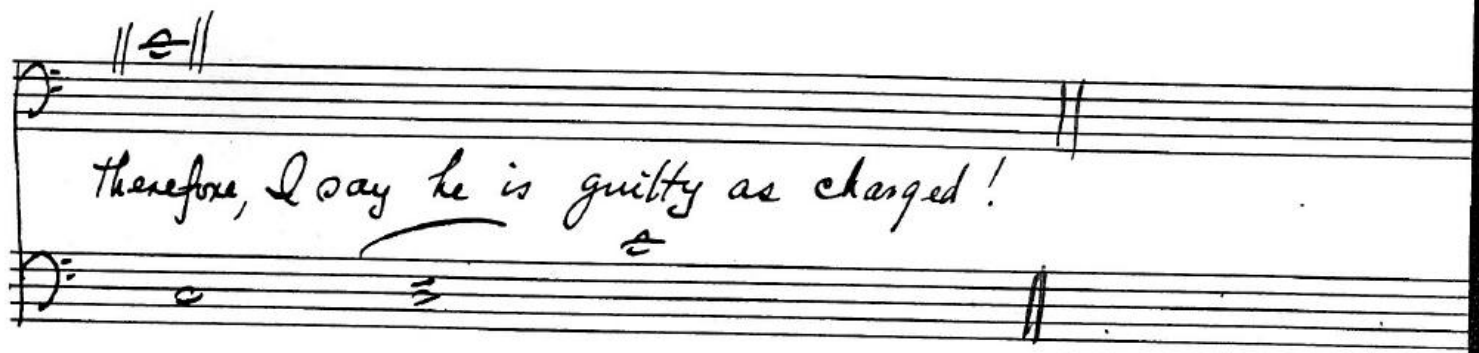

93
THEN I BASE MY SEN-TENCE ON THE THING HE DOES-N'T MEN-TION
NO LAW-YER JU-RY OR WIT-NESS CAN CON—
VINCE ME OF HIS FIT-NESS OR GET THE SCOUN-DREL OFF NOW

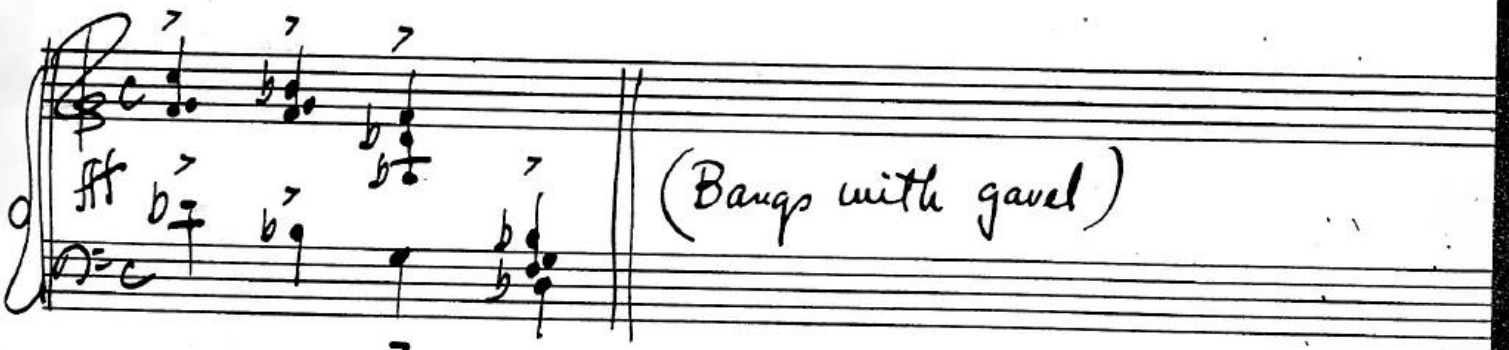

LET's PRO-CEED TO TRIAL FOR I CAN HARD-LY WAIT TO
Orch.
MEET THIS MUR-DE-RER FACE TO FACE AND LE-GIS-LATE
HIS
FATE
Dialogue
(Laughs maliciously, then shouts) Where is the defendant and what has he got to say for himself?
Johnny (who has been waiting during the Judge's song peeps out, says meekly)
Well, sir...

Judge Javel (looks closely at Johnny) Enough! I know this culprit and his juicy horrible record! (Seizes Johnny by the other shoulder) This will be the most important and shortest case in my career.



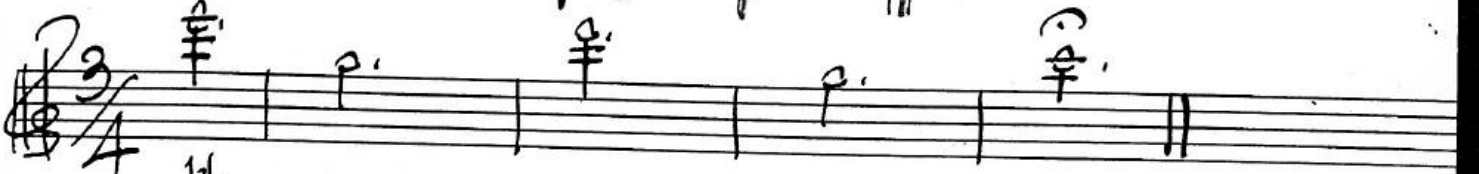


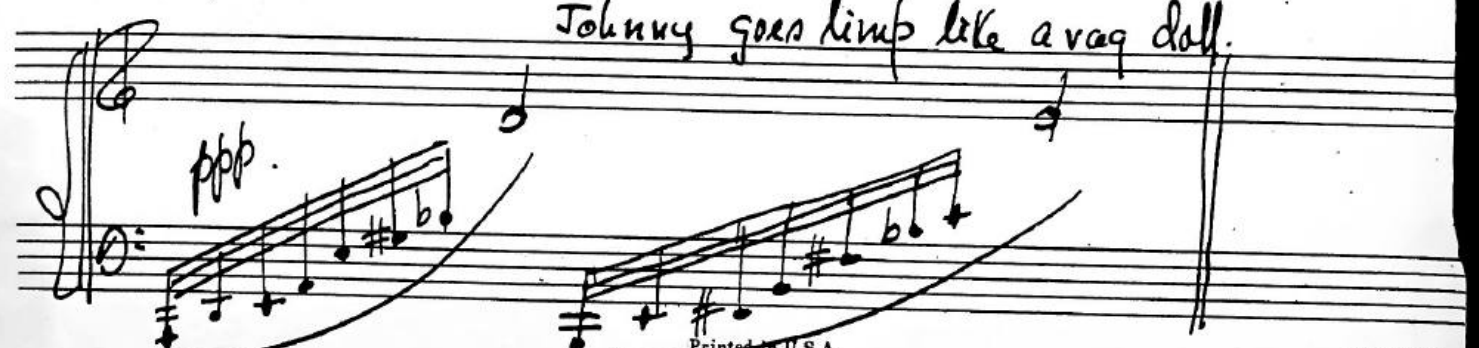




I sentence him to six months in ... school!

~~This is the end of Johnny Manypranks.~~





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CHAPPELL

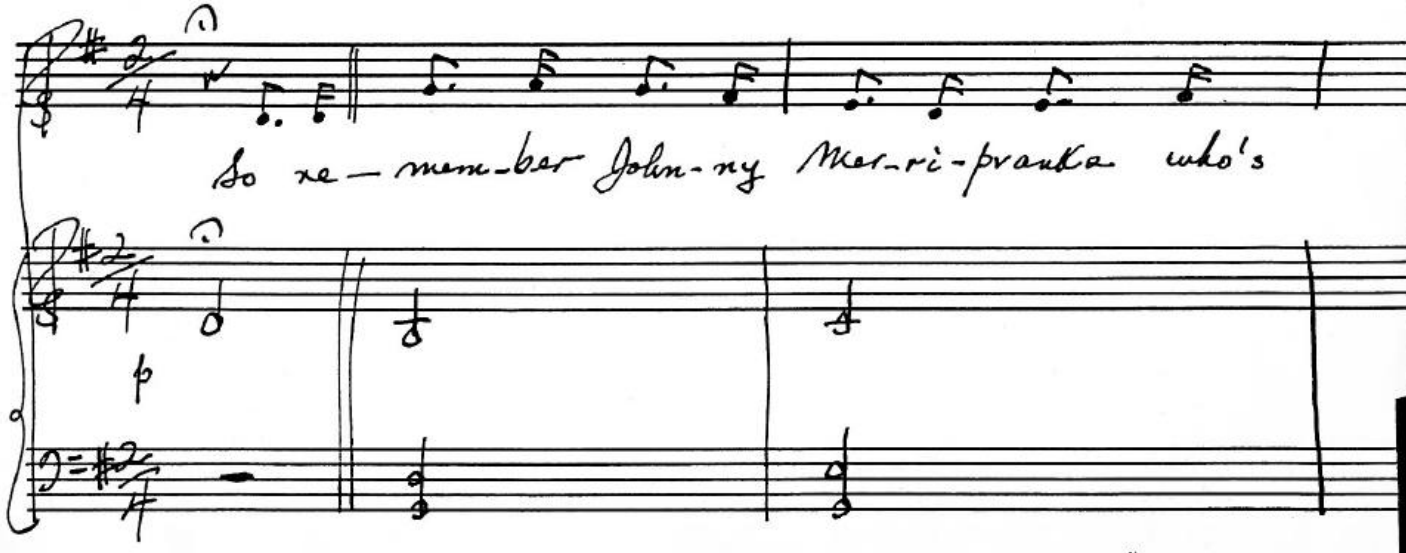
Johnny
Now class, how do you spell cat?

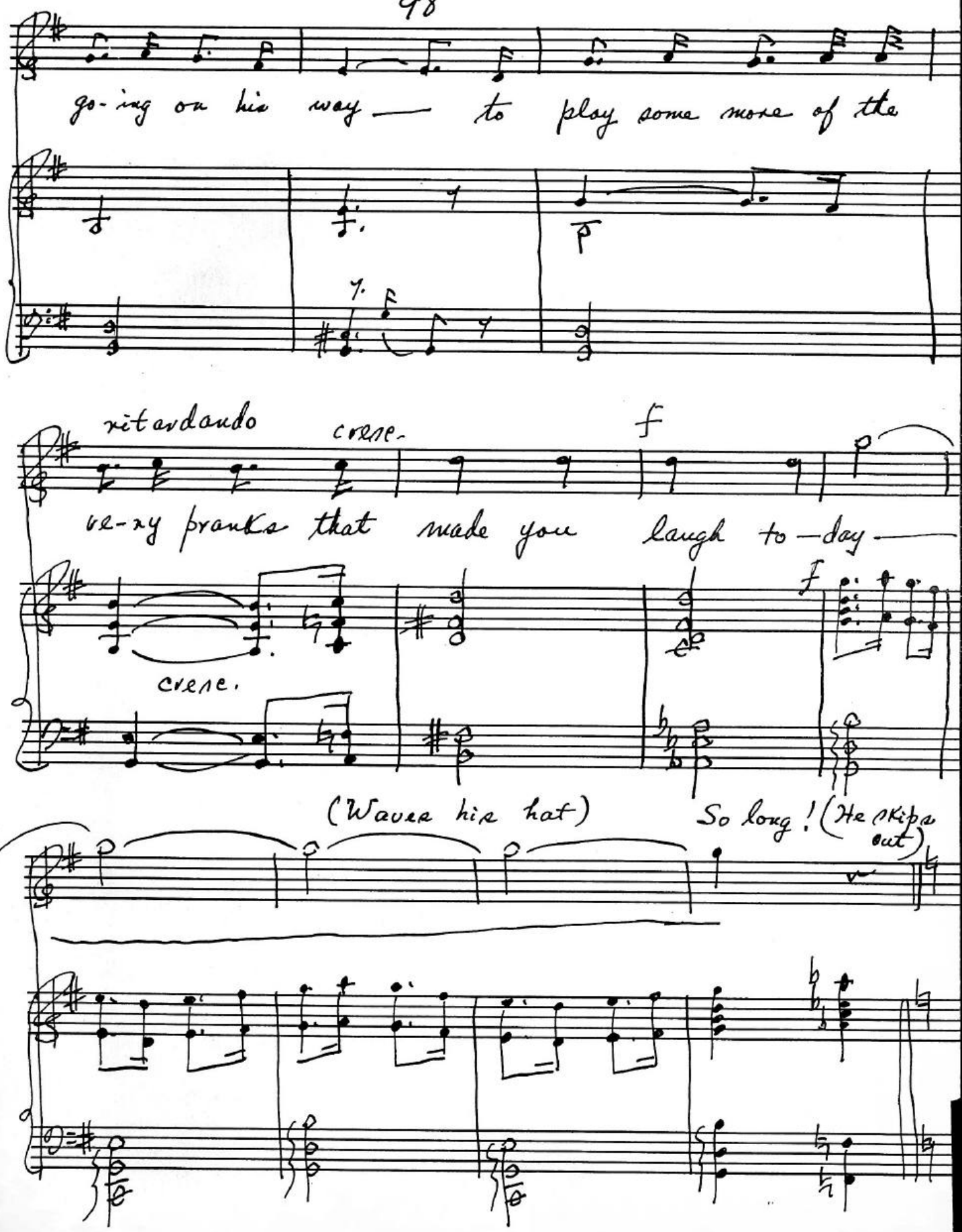
ALL [Let me see: oh - - - - - - - "cat"]

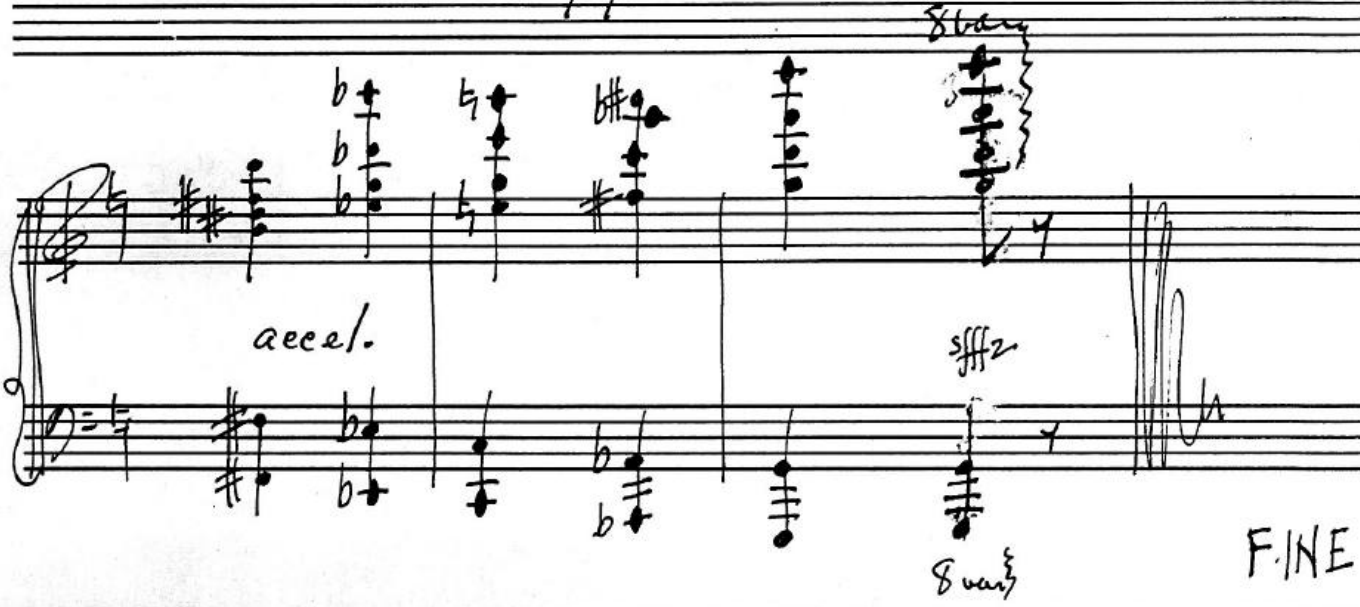
Johnny
No, no, no; repeat after me: cat: KAT

(Blackout)

Johnny
(In front of the curtains; laughs) But it wasn't the end at all! Here I am, you see! I had lots of jobs - - - And played lots of tricks after that! And I'm still around. Some day we may meet - - - and I'll play a trick on you! (Sings, to tune of opening song)




go-ing on his way — to play some more of the
p
rit ardando
cresc.
f
ve-ry pranks that made you laugh to-day —
cresc.
f
(Waves his hat)
So long! (He skips out)



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