DEATH, BE NOT PROUD

John Donne's Holy Sonnet, No. 167

by

DONALD BUSAROW

This work was composed in 1980 as an entry to a contest sponsored by the International Horn Society, for which the first prize was awarded. The basis of the musical material lies in two Easter chorales (related in their Latin origin), *Christ lag in Todesbanden* ("Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands") and *Christ ist erstanden* ("Christ Is Arisen"). These tunes, or fragments of them, appear in the above order with the first four-note motif in the horn taken from the first chorale. The soprano responds with the same pattern in the opening words "Death, be not proud". The horn extends the chorale line under the words "for thou art not so", and finally states the entire opening phrase of the chorale melody at the conclusion of the first section, "Poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me". The two middle sections of the composition are based entirely upon free material.

Immediately following the question "Why swellest thou then?", the first stanza of *Christ ist erstanden* is played by the muted horn and is heard the second time with the soprano counter-melody. The piece concludes with "Hallelujahs" added to the Donne text by the composer.

Death Be Not Proud - 1980

John Donne
(1571-1631)
(1609?)

Published IHS Manuscript Press
UMKC
KC, MO

Int. Hon Society 1st prize

Hymn To God the Father
1990 - Chautauqua
Chamber Singers, NY

Statement of faith
Story of Easter -

Death, Be not proud - - - ← "Christ ist erstanden"
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more,
Death, thou shalt die.

Because of this association, I have incorporated
"Christ ist erstanden" - (Christ is arisen) 1100
sequence hymn for Easter

The piece ends on "Alleluia" - not in the poem.
Come out of the chorale

declamatory

Dramatic work

restful { From rest + sleep ...
Rest of their bones ...

agitated { Thou art slave ...
fate, chance, kings
+ desperate men
poison, war, sickness ...

Concerts:
Augusta - April
Milwaukee - May
Austin, TX - June
Asheville NC - July

Published with 5 houses

50 + choral pieces - mostly psalm setting + hymn concertatos
50 + organ works
a dozen solos
20 pieces for organ + instruments

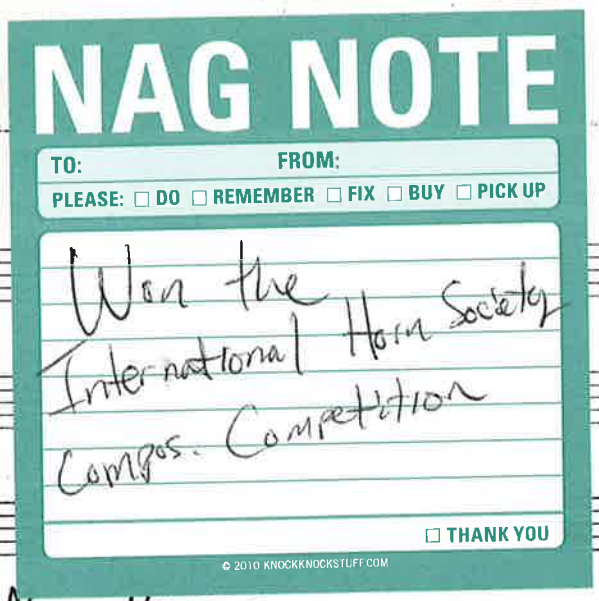
Coming:
1st Luth.
Met. Luth. Singers
Church in Cincinnati

All commissions:
1) St Peter, York PA
2) Alleluia Farewell (CPH)
3) Spanish Hymn - Oakland Pres. Spfld
4) Eternal Rules - St. John Oak Harbor, OH

1572-631

John Donne, in the latter stage of his life, wrote works which challenged death. His Holy Sonnet X "Death, Be Not Proud", comes from this period. Being a member of the clergy of the Church of England, he held firmly to the belief of an after life in the Resurrection. This belief, which I also hold, attracted me to the poem. I added the Easter motif to the music with the tune "Christ ist erstanden" (Christ is Arisen) " an eleventh century hymn with music from the hymn of the Reformation period. The ~~optist~~ for six of the hymn serves the horn motif. Near the end of the piece the chorale is heard in its entirety with the muted horns, heard a second time with the soprano, concluding with the closing "Alleluia".

opening



Death, Be Not Proud

A Composition for

Soprano, Horn, and Piano

By

Donald Busarow

on a text by

John Donne

(Holy Sonnet #167)

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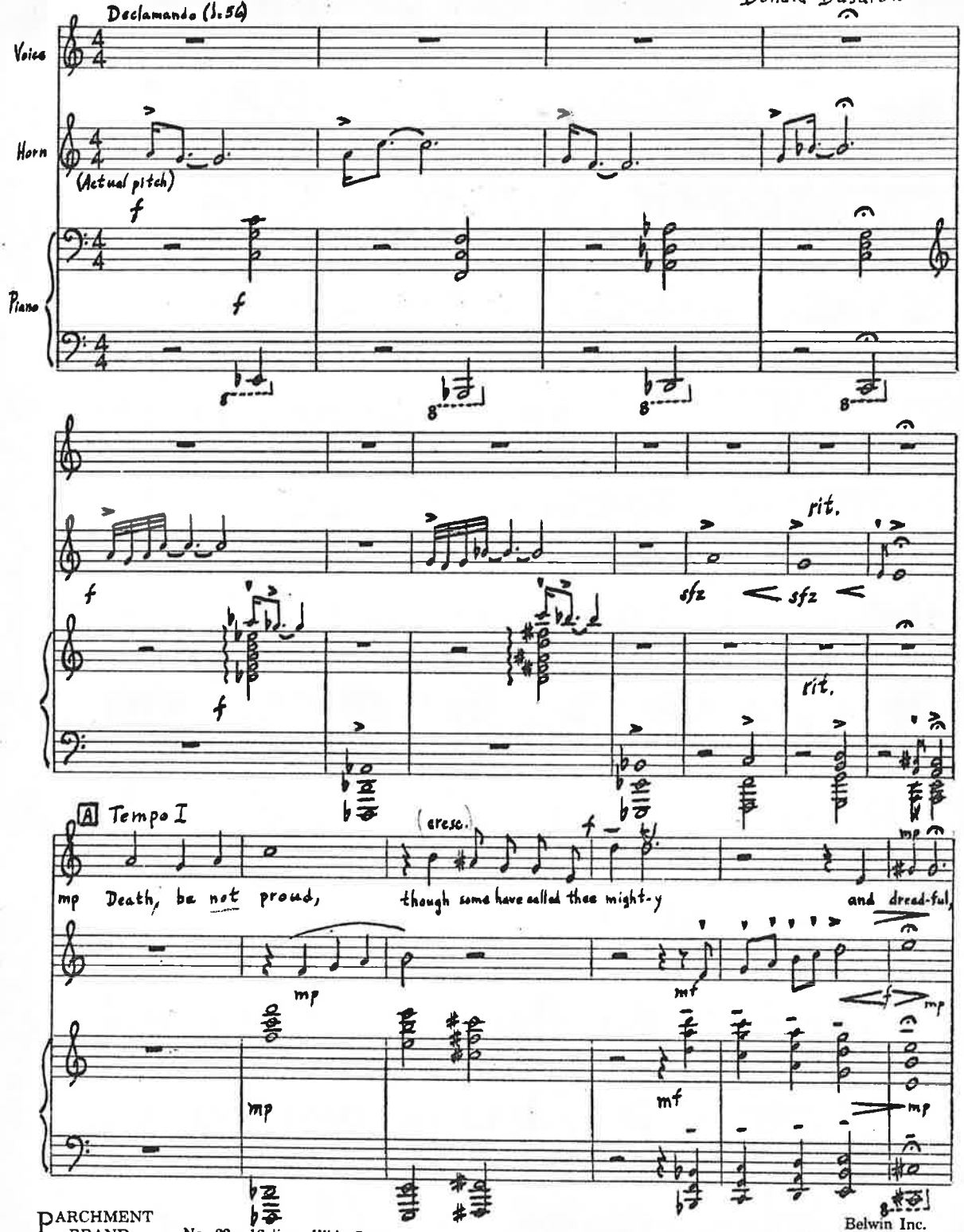
Death, Be Not Proud

John Donne

Donald Busarow



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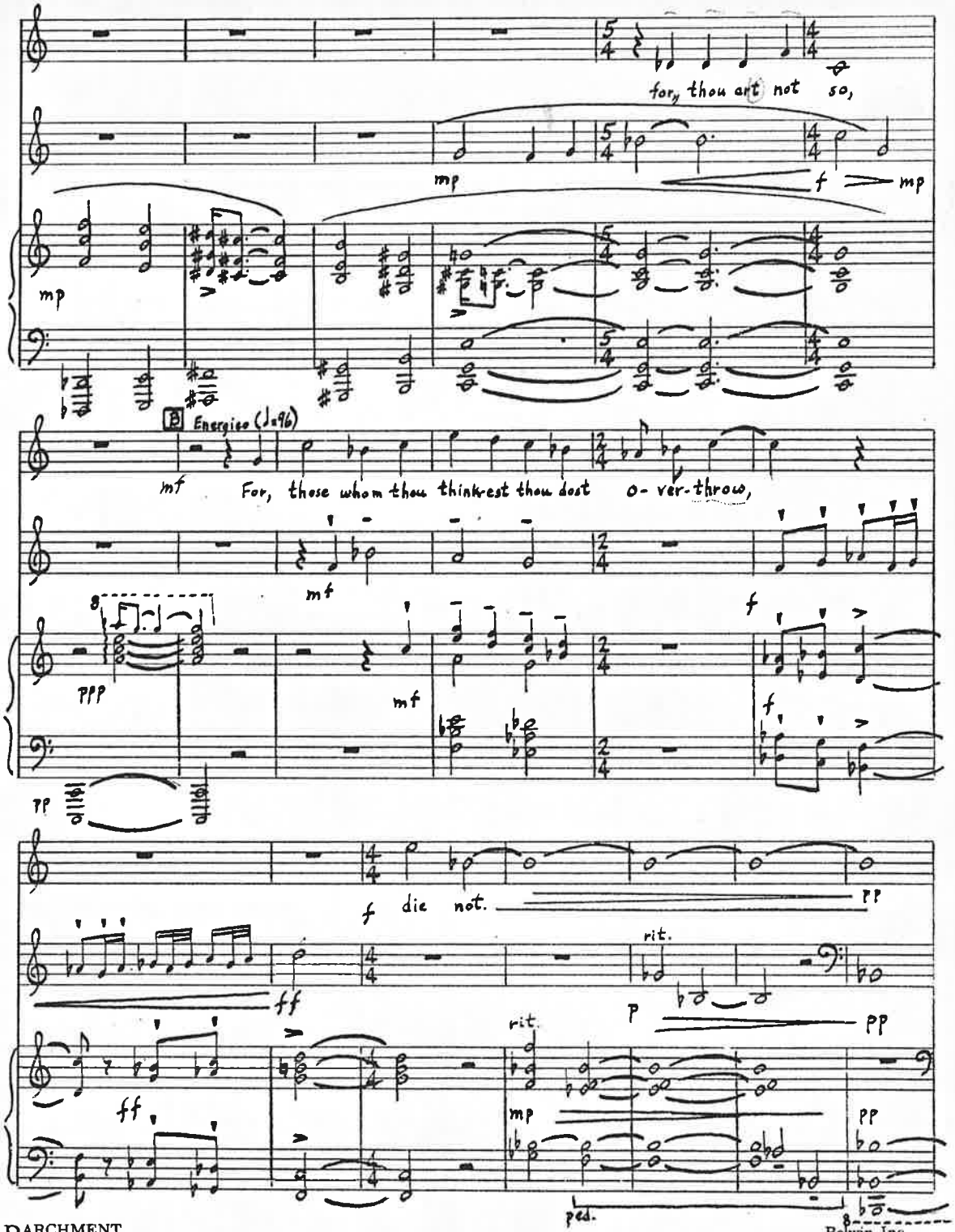

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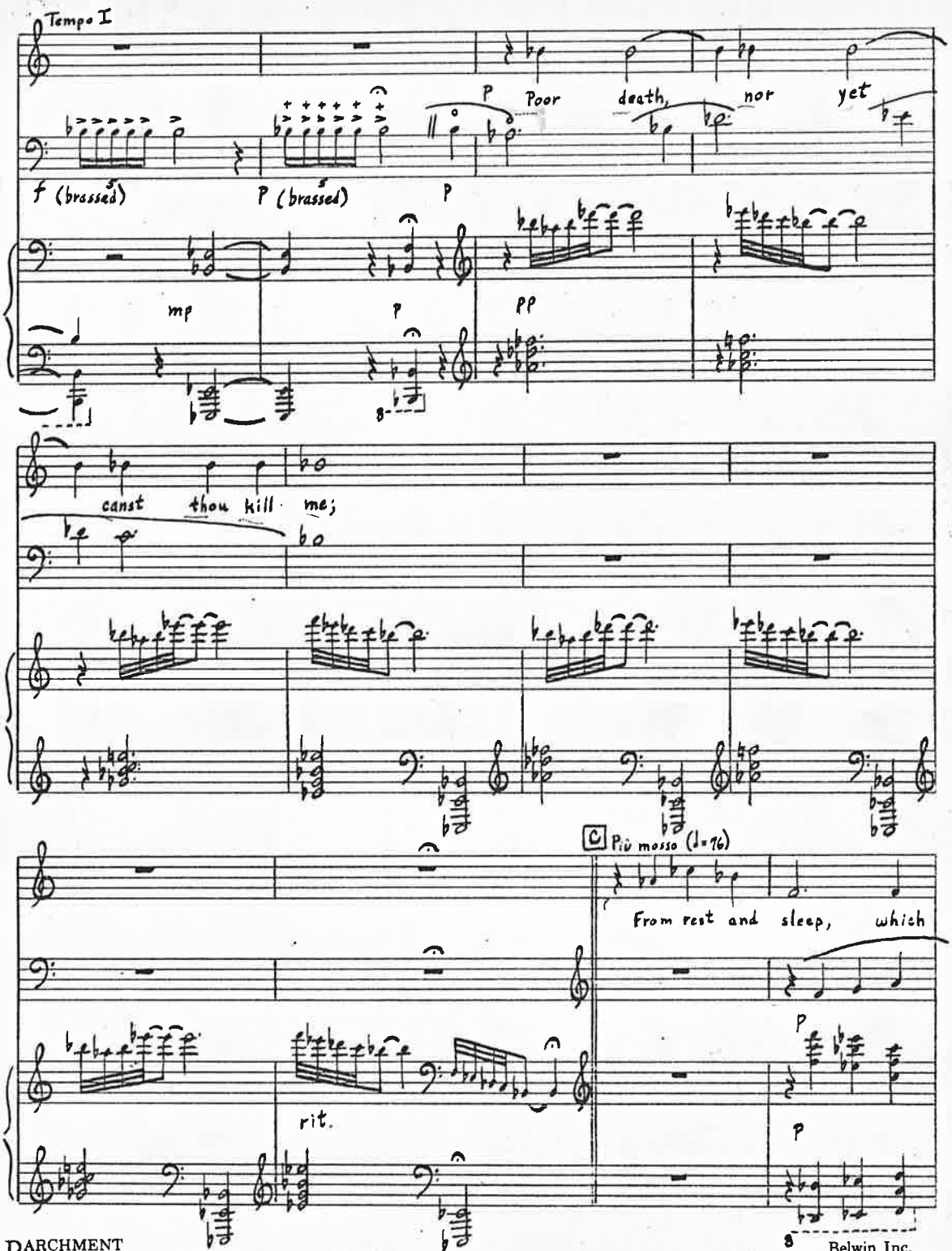

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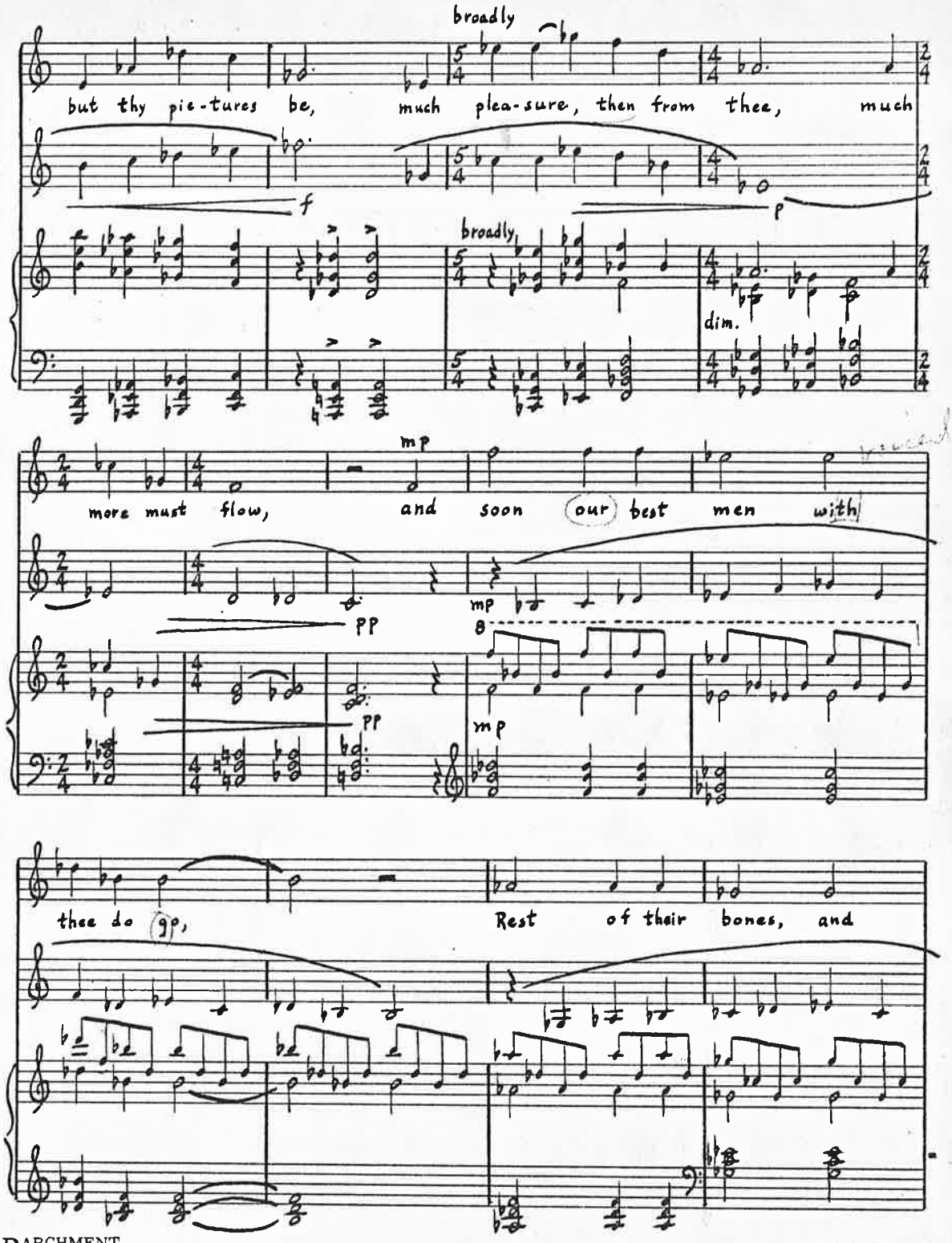

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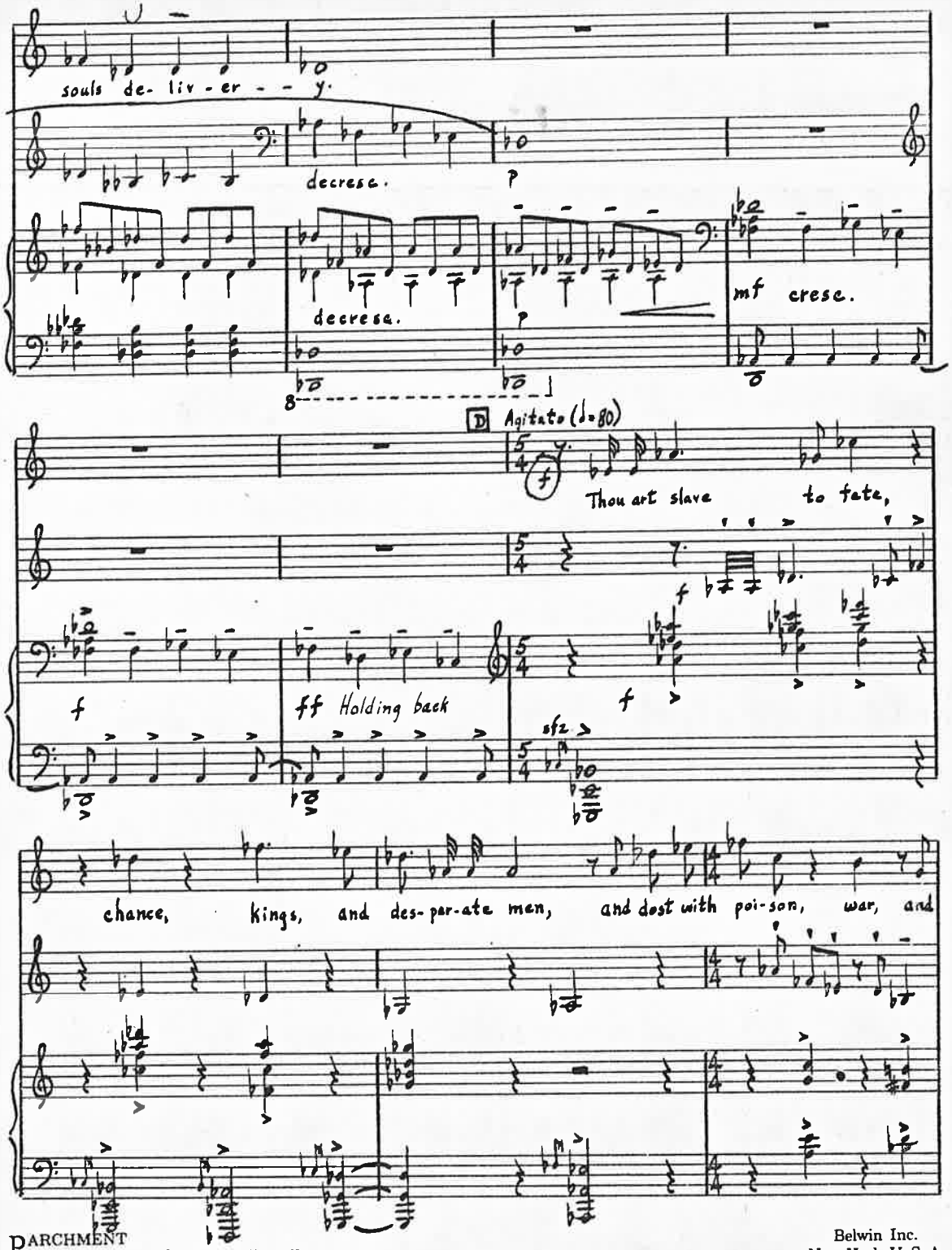

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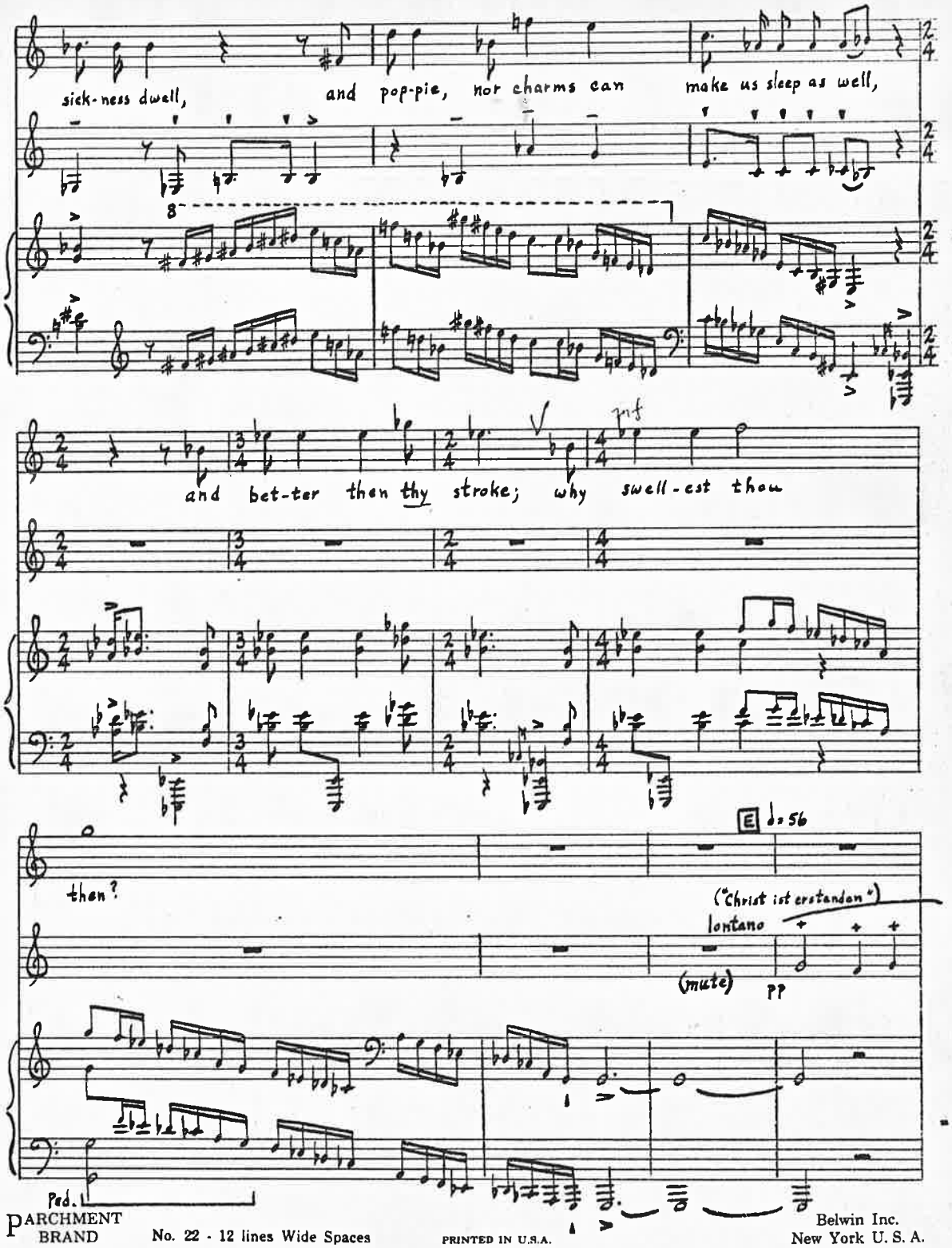

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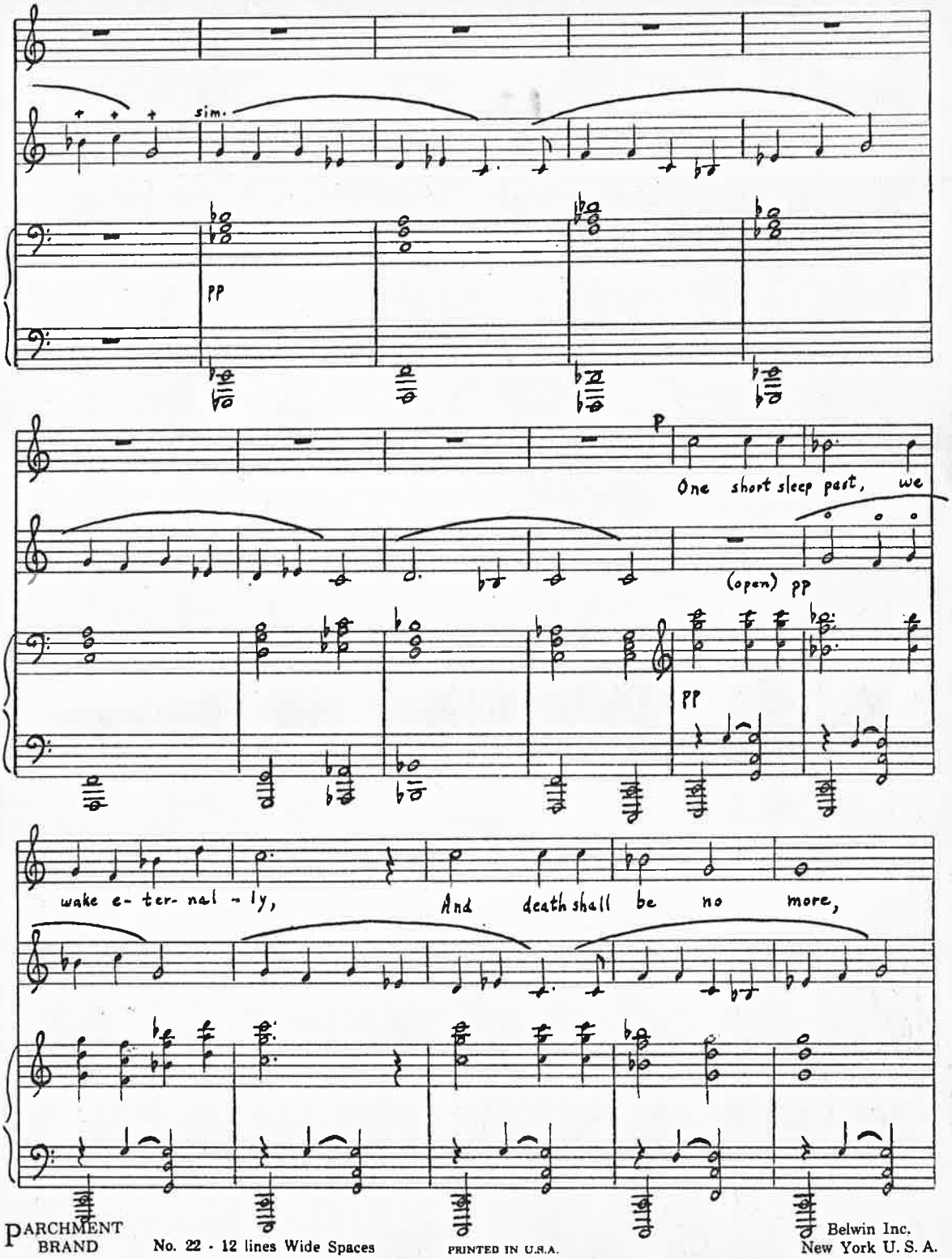

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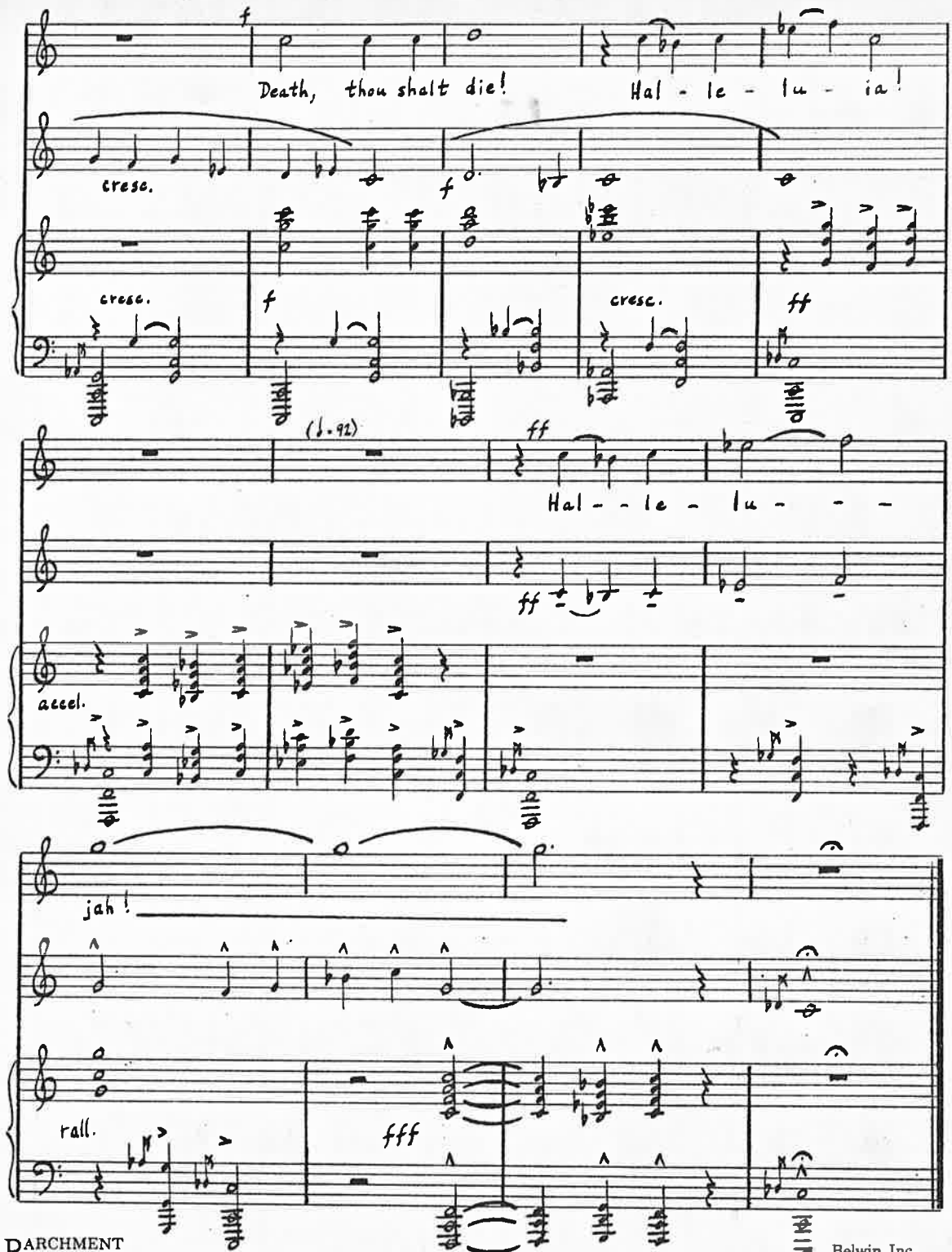

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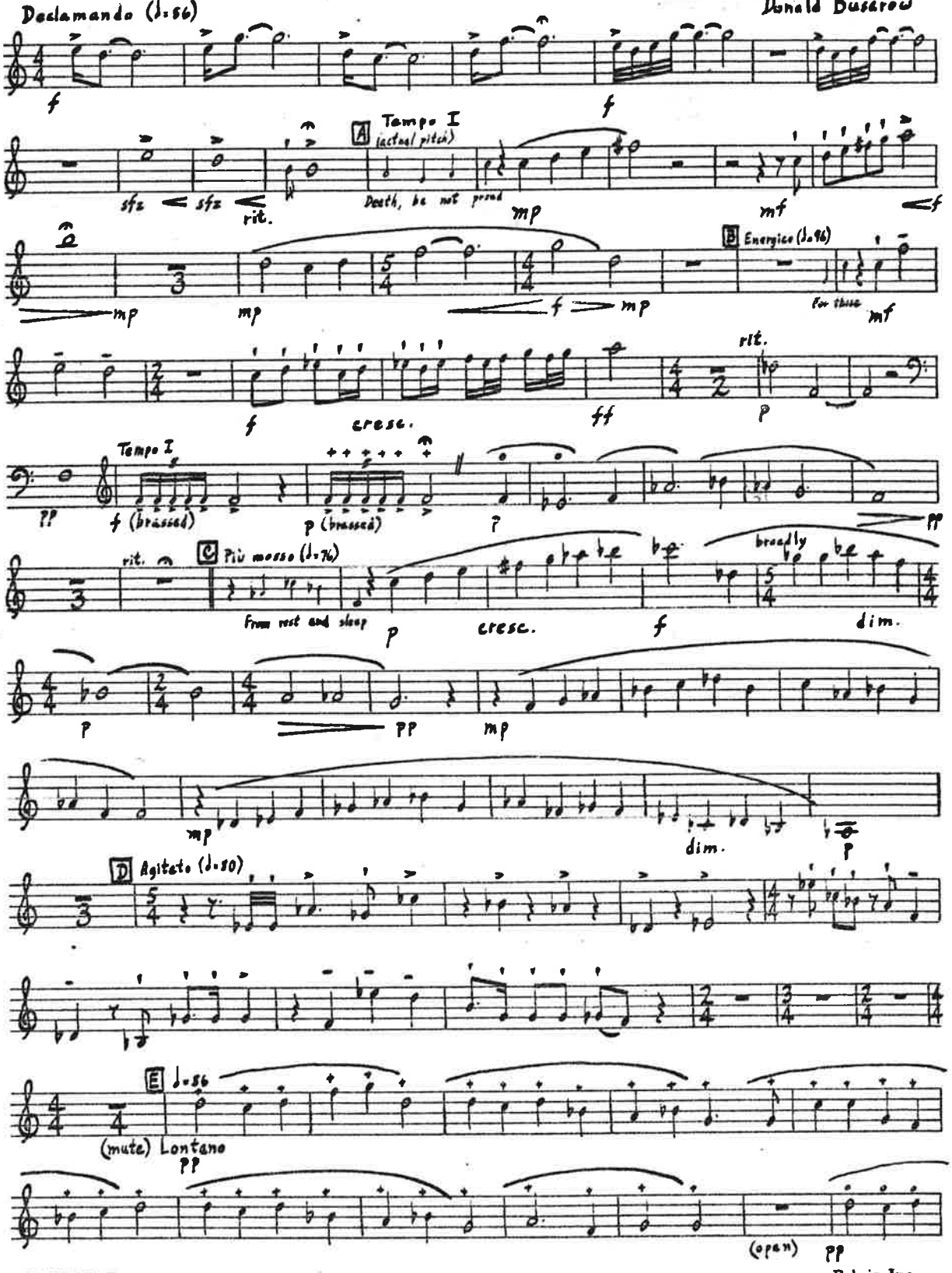
Horn in F

Death, Be Not Proud

Declamando (♩.56)

Donald Busarow



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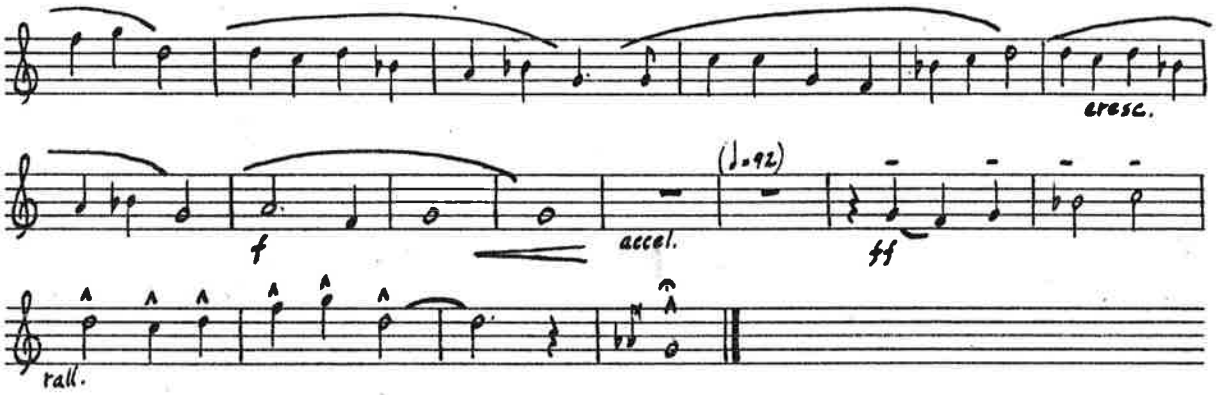

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