Mona Lyn Reese

The Three Fat Women of Antibes

A Comic Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Thomas Hassing

Based on a story of the same name by W. Somerset Maugham.

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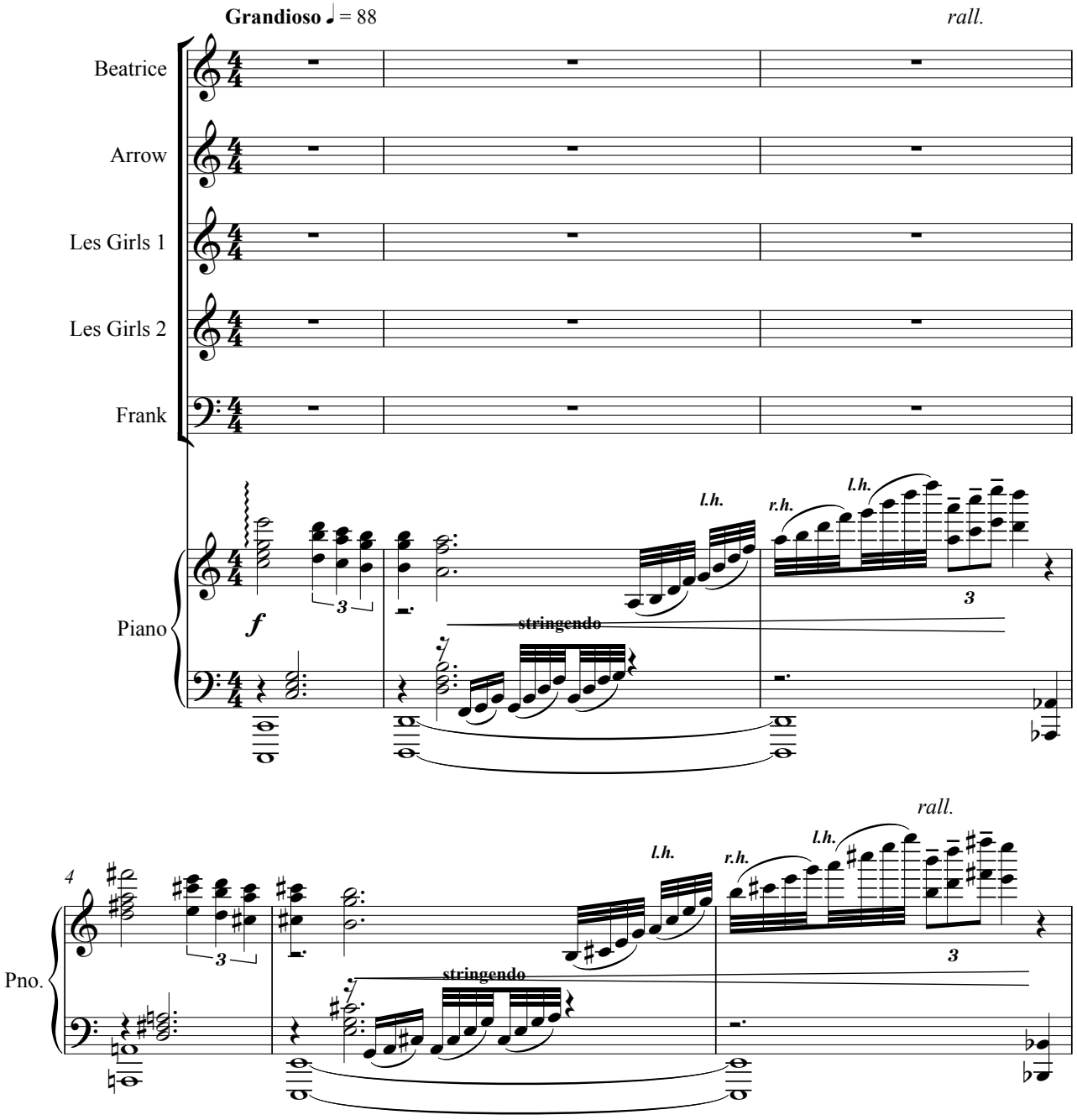
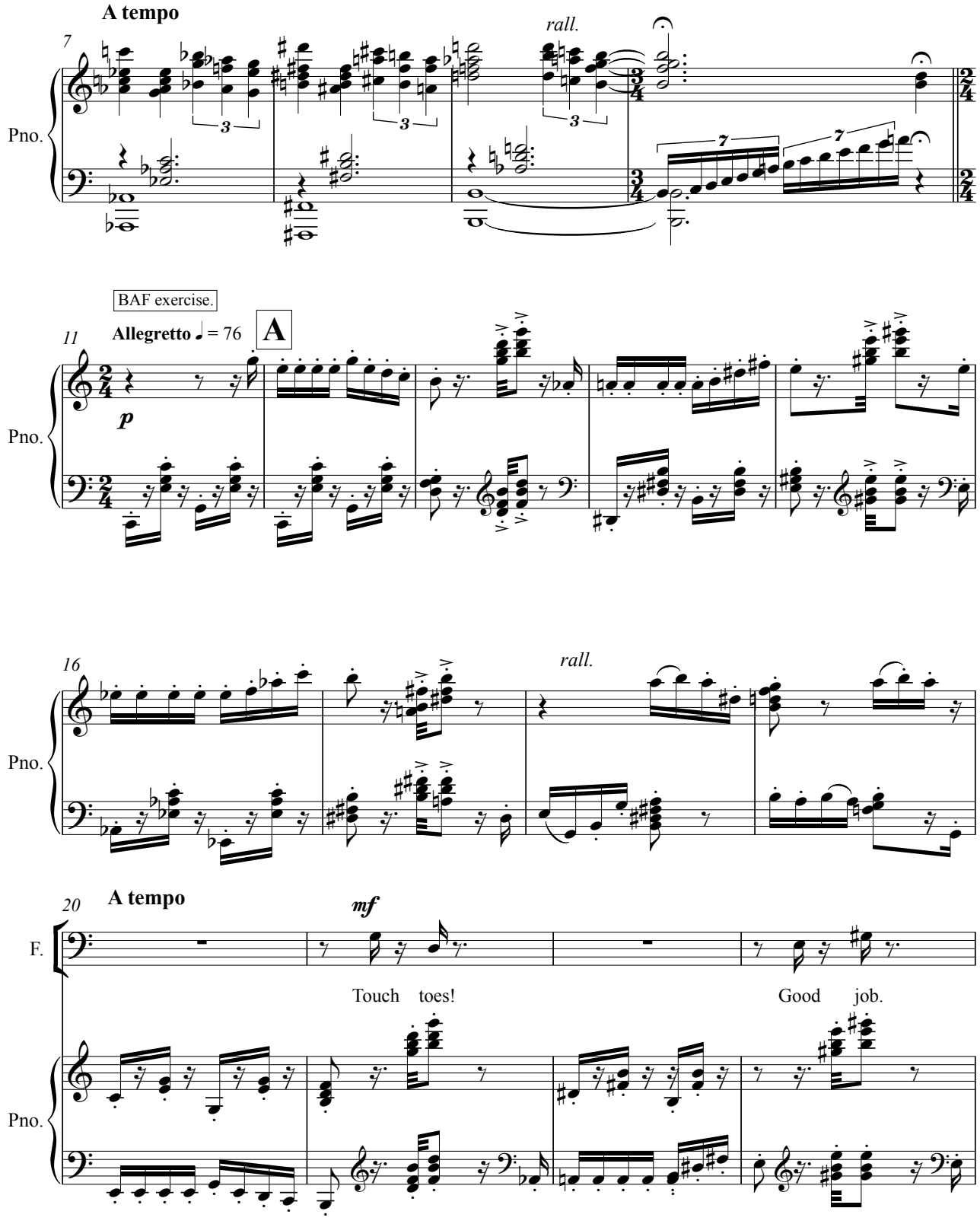
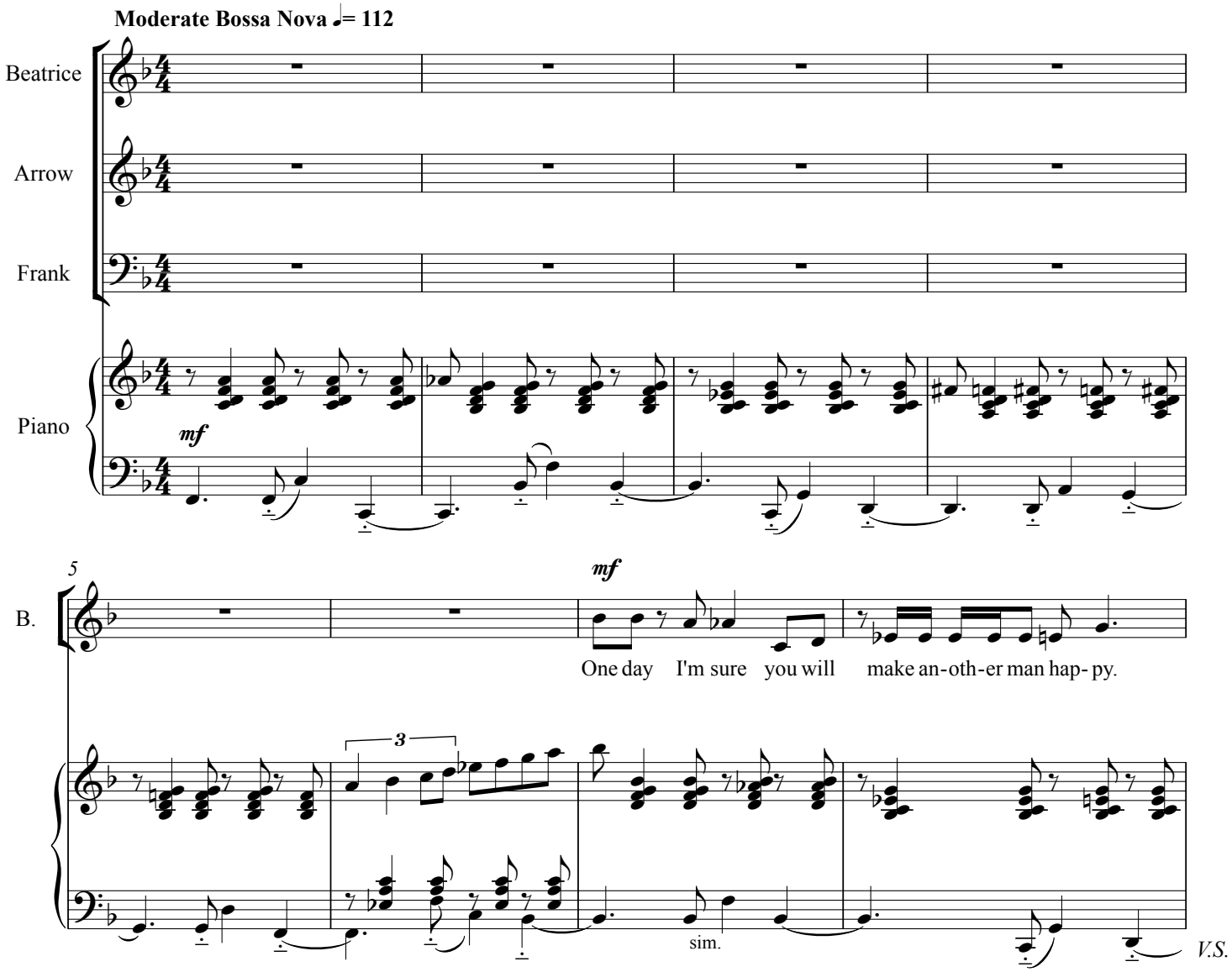
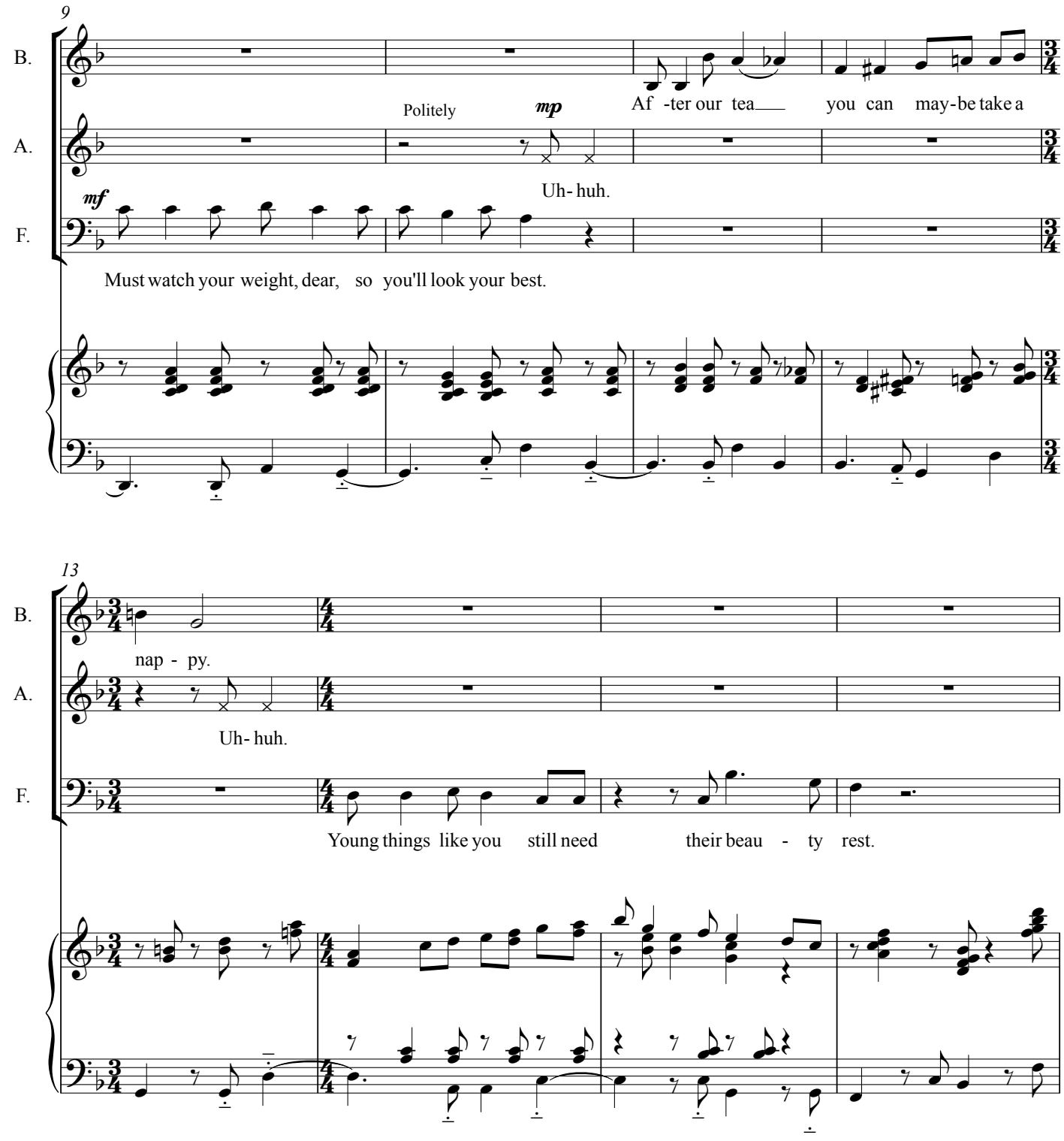
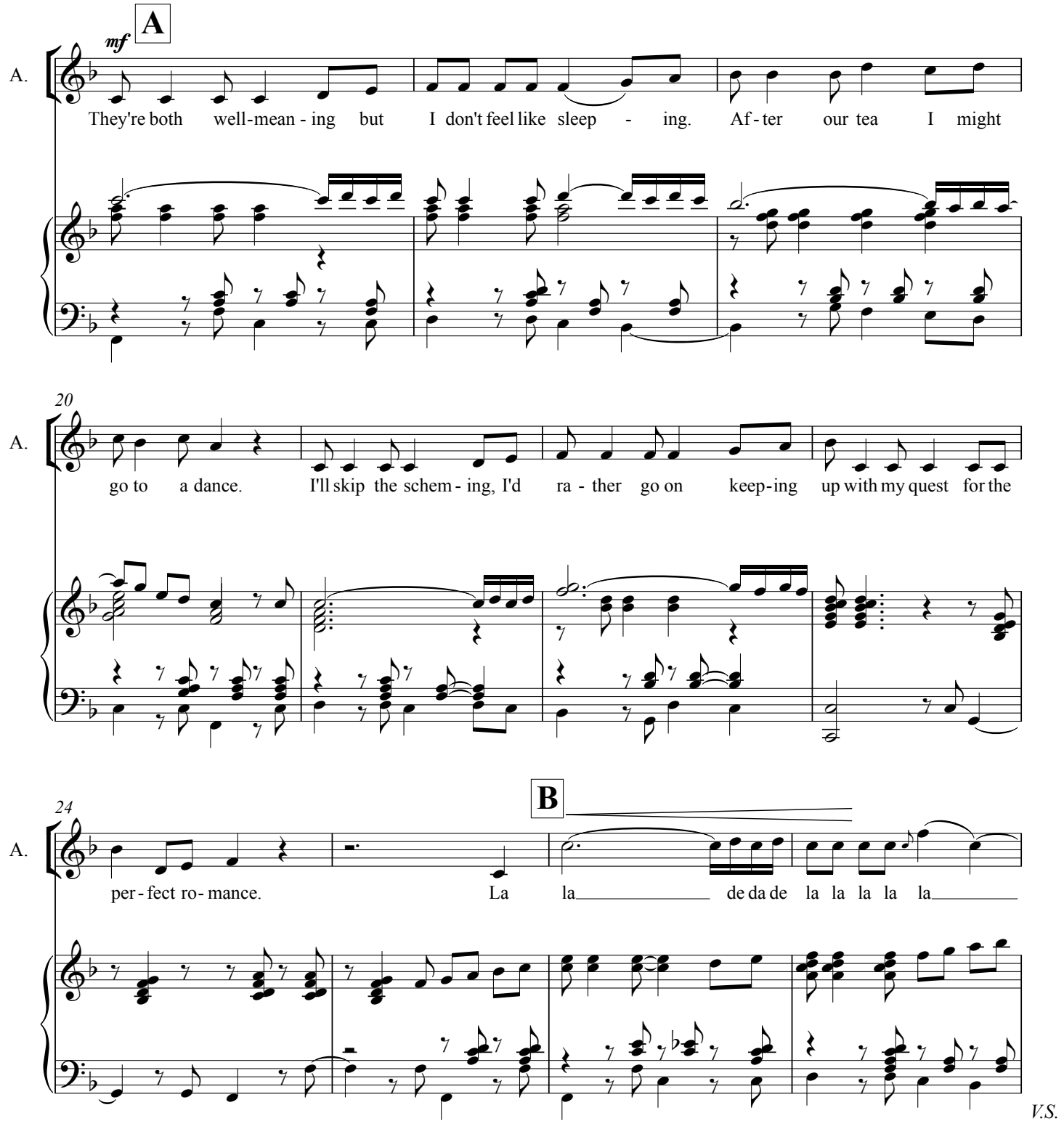
ACT I

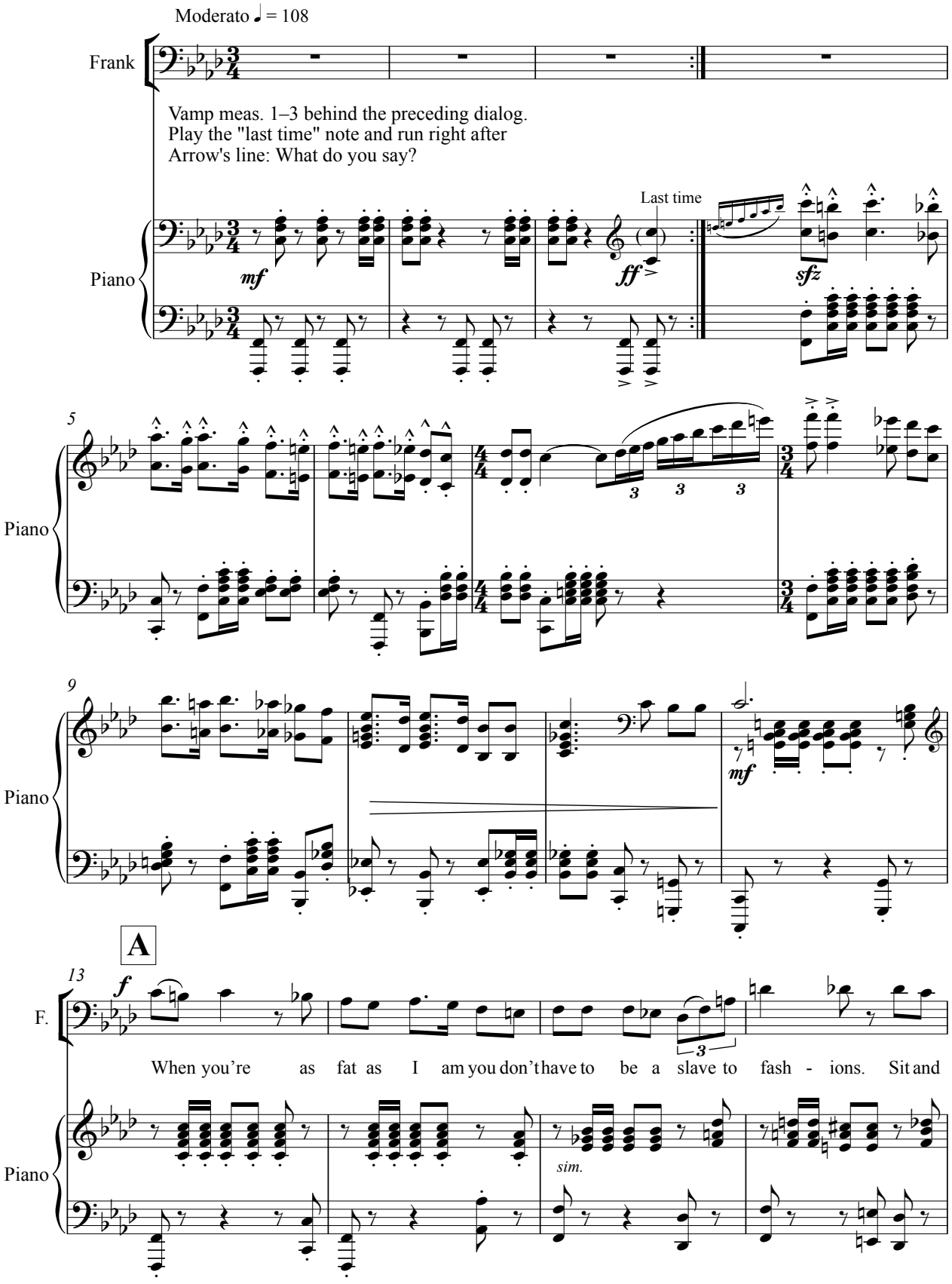
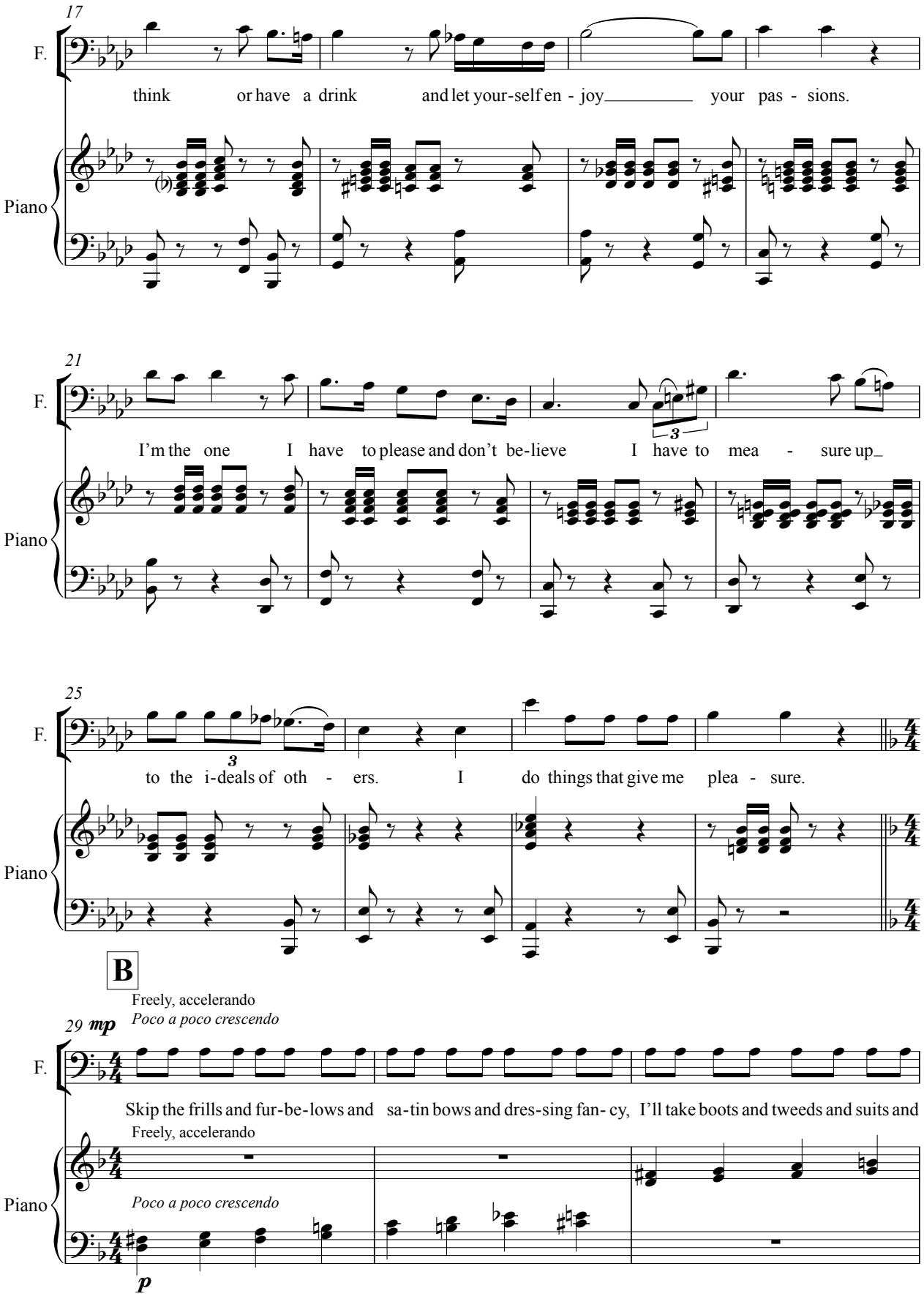
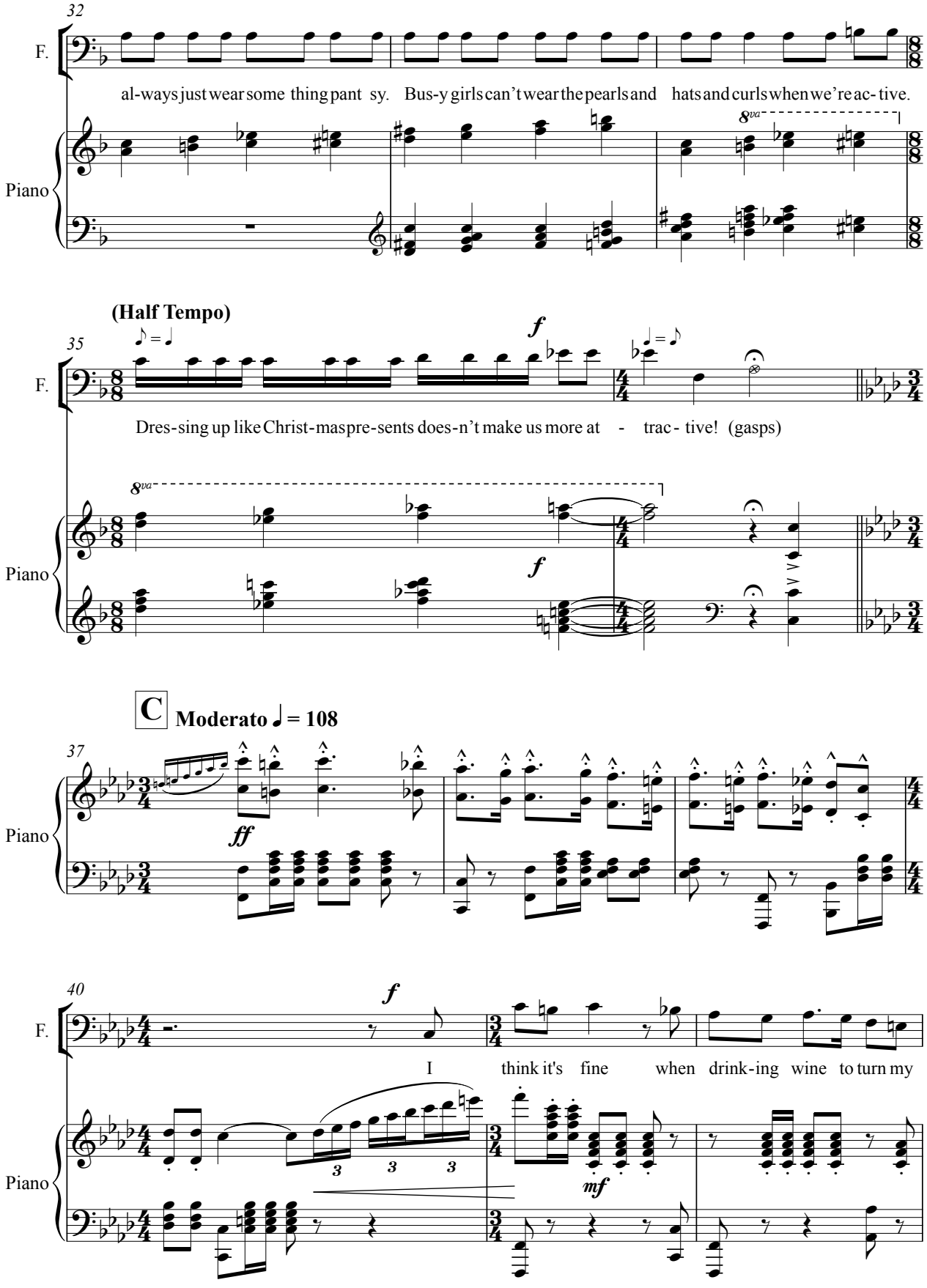
Scene 1:
A house and surrounding grounds on the French Riviera in Antibes, France. 1930. A large scale is on one side.
The women are exercising. Arrow and Beatrice and Les Girls wear chic feminine outfits, Frank a no-nonsense men's ensemble.
Frank performs the exercises with gusto; Arrow, Beatrice, and Les Girls are less enthusiastic. At the instructions *weigh-in*,
each woman gets on the scale, then stands in a silly way to make the scale read a lower weight.

1. Ballet and Weigh

A tempo
7
rall.
Pno.
BAF exercise.
Allegretto ♩ = 76
A
11
p
16
rall.
20
A tempo
mf
F.
Touch toes!
Good job.

2. Beau and Arrow

9
B.
A.
F.
Politely
mp
Af -ter our tea
you can may-be take a
Uh- huh.
mf
Must watch your weight, dear, so you'll look your best.
13
B.
A.
F.
nap - py.
Uh- huh.
Young things like you still need their beau - ty rest.

A
mf
A.
They're both well-mean - ing but I don't feel like sleep - ing. Af - ter our tea I might
20
A.
go to a dance. I'll skip the schem - ing, I'd ra - ther go on keep-ing up with my quest for the
B
24
A.
per - fect ro- mance. La la de da de la la la la la

V.S.

3. When You're As Fat As I Am

If a note is marked "falsetto", you may sing it falsetto or in your regular voice. The last note must be sung falsetto for comic effect.

17
F.
think or have a drink and let your-self en - joy your pas - sions.
Piano
21
F.
I'm the one I have to please and don't be-lieve I have to mea - sure up
Piano
25
F.
to the i-deals of oth - ers. I do things that give me plea - sure.
Piano
B
Freely, accelerando
Poco a poco crescendo
29 mp
F.
Skip the frills and fur-be-lows and sa-tin bows and dres-sing fan- cy, I'll take boots and tweeds and suits and
Freely, accelerando
Piano
Poco a poco crescendo
p

32
F.
al-ways just wear some thing pant sy. Bus-y girls can't wear the pearls and hats and curls when we're ac- tive.
8va
Piano
(Half Tempo)
35
f
F.
Dres-sing up like Christ-mas pre-sents does-n't make us more at - trac- tive! (gasps)
8va
f
Piano
C
Moderato ♩ = 108
37
ff
Piano
40
f
F.
I think it's fine when drink-ing wine to turn my
3
3
3
mf
Piano

4. Bridge Mix

DIALOG:
Beatice!

Recitative ♩ = 100

Vamp till ready.

Lena

Beatrice

Arrow

Frank

Piano

Do you play Van-der-built or Cul-bert- son?

Recitative ♩ = 100

Vamp till ready.

Lightly

L.

I have no con-ven- tions.

B.

Puzzled

How can that be?

A.

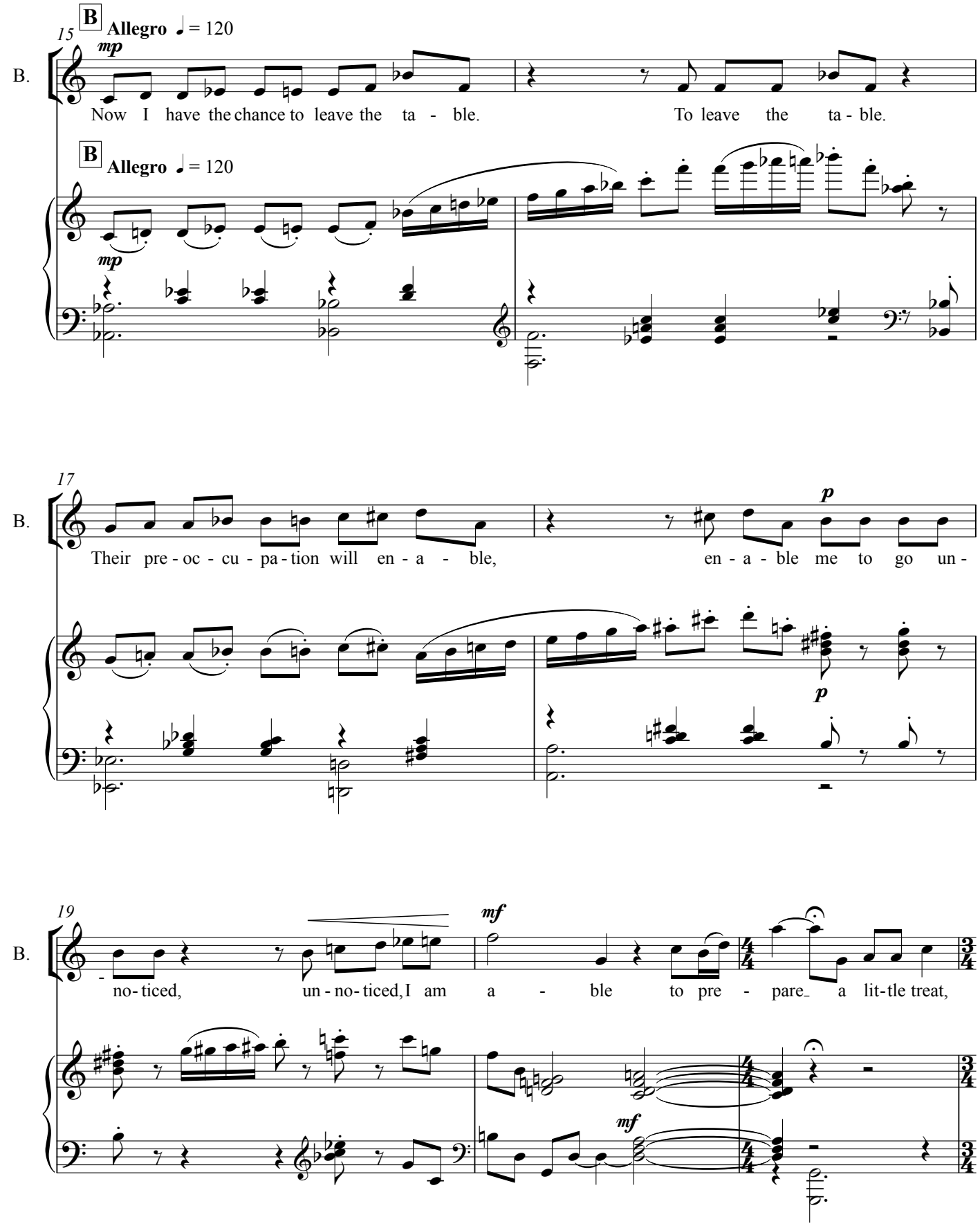
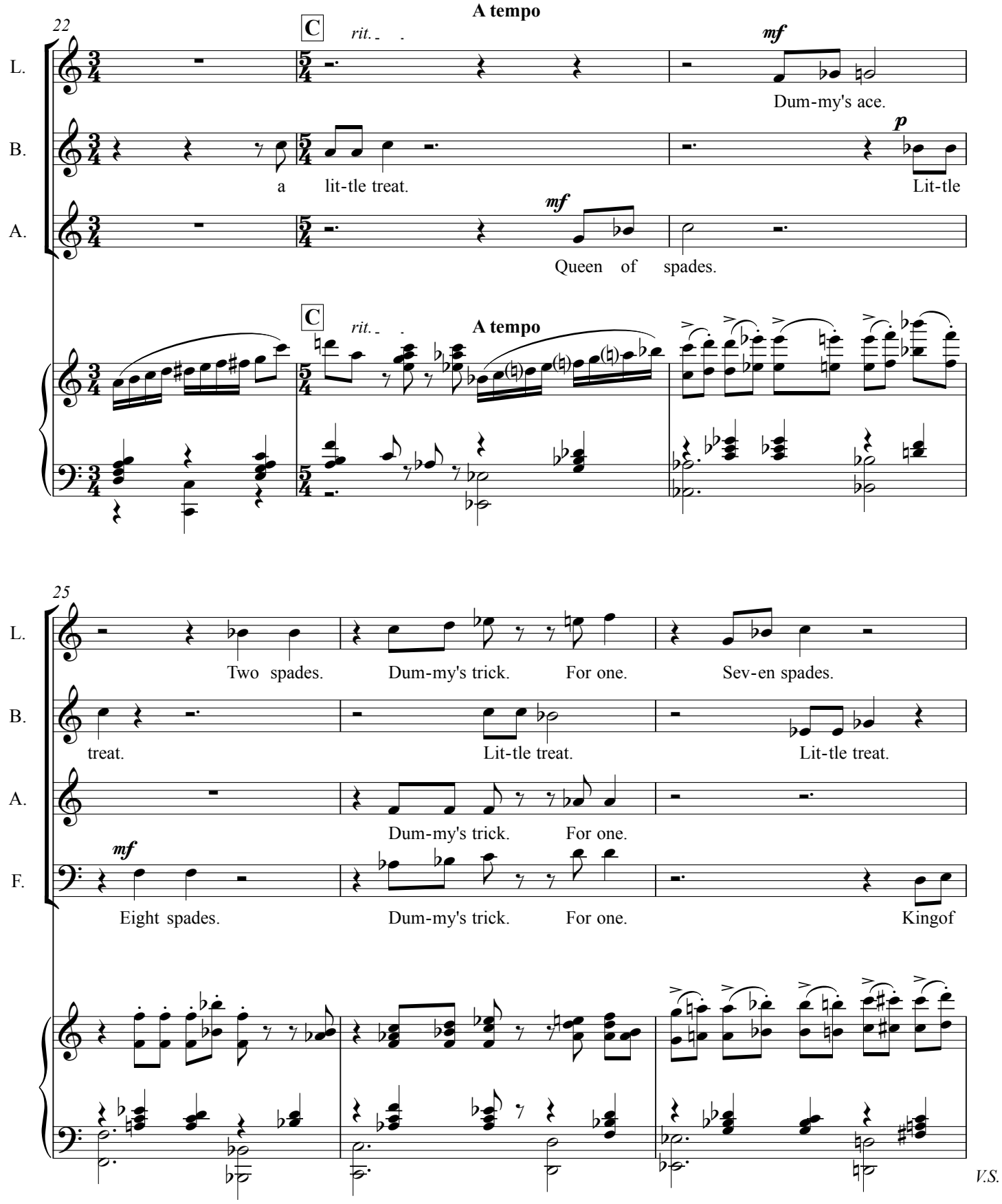
Shocked

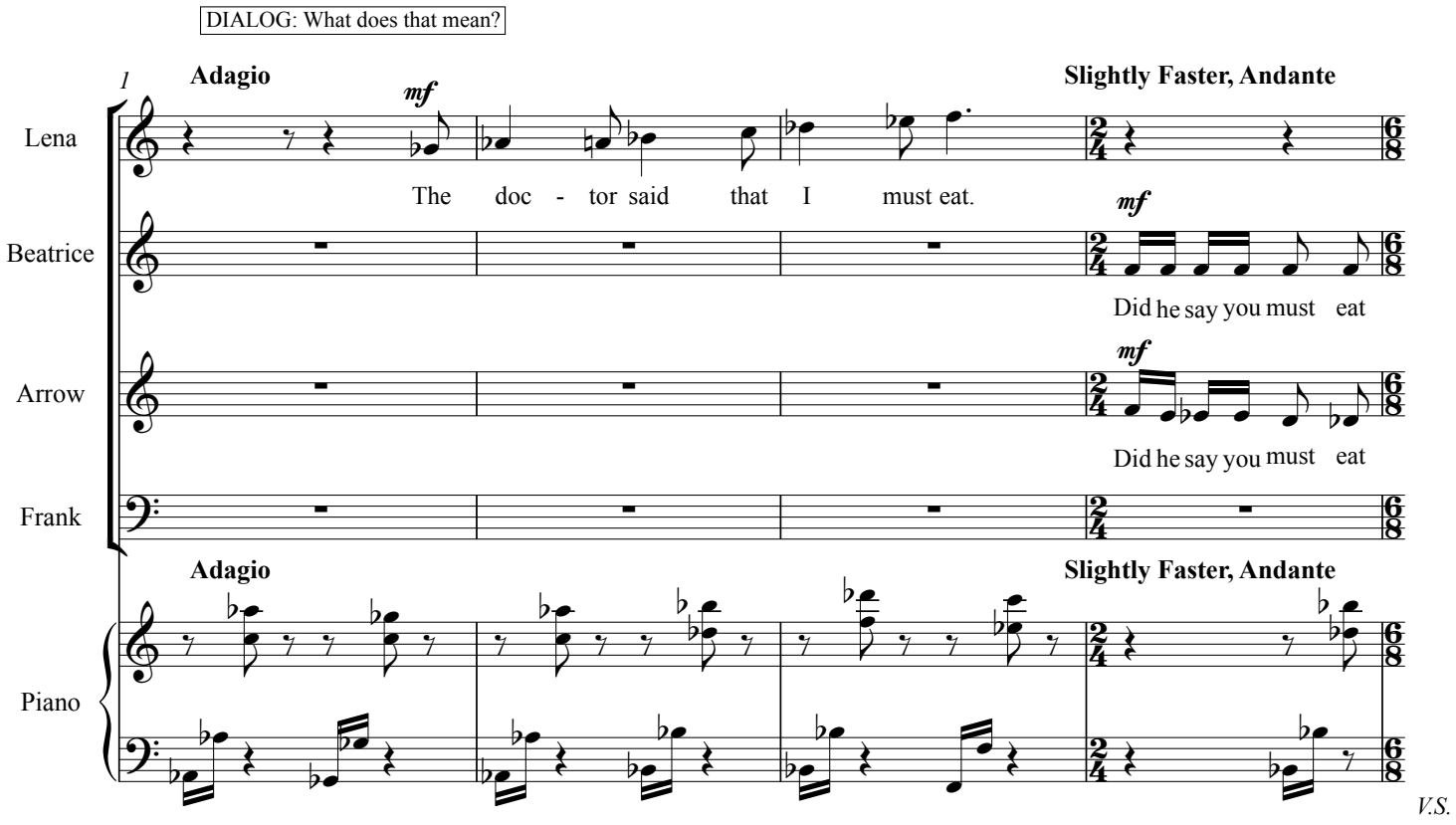
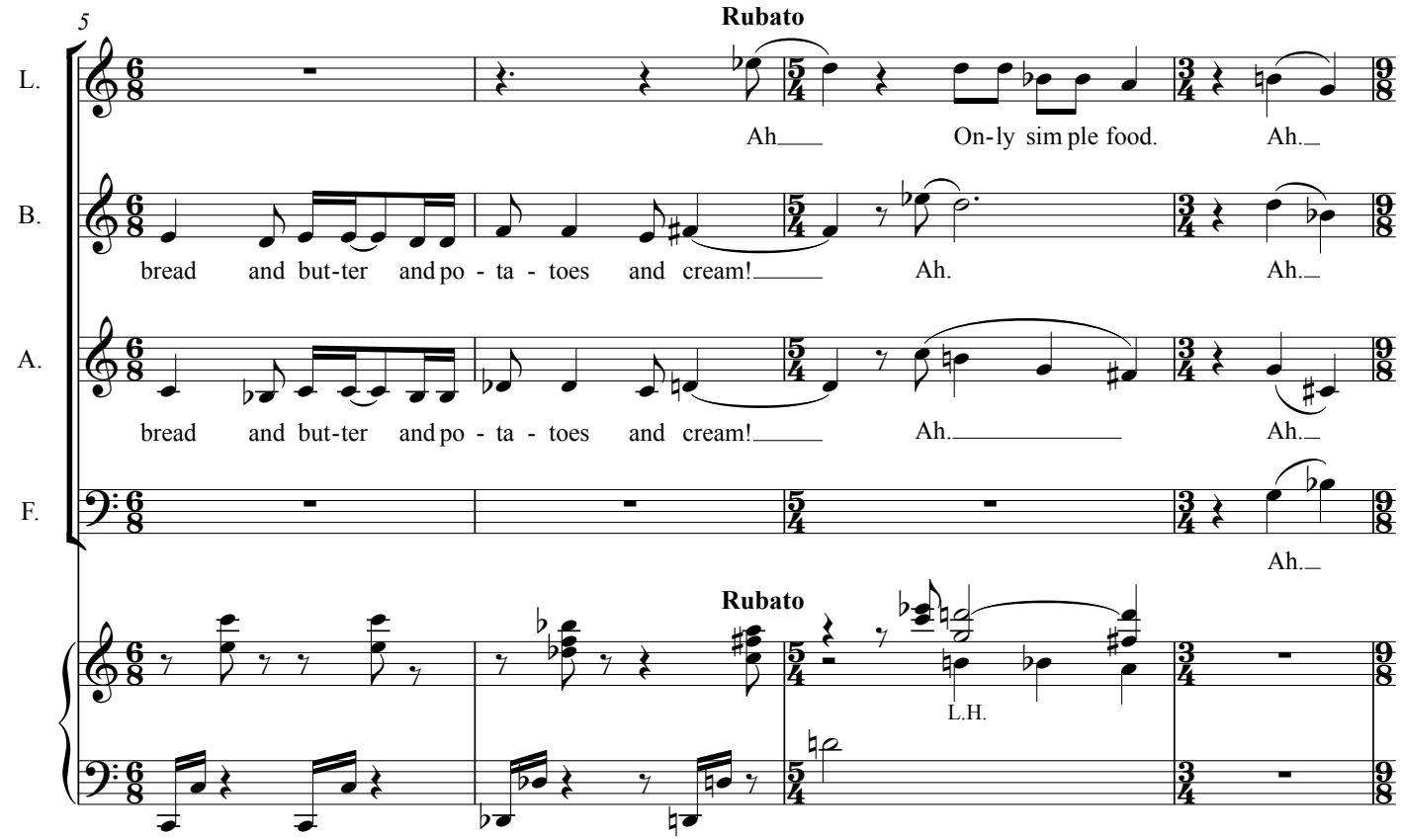
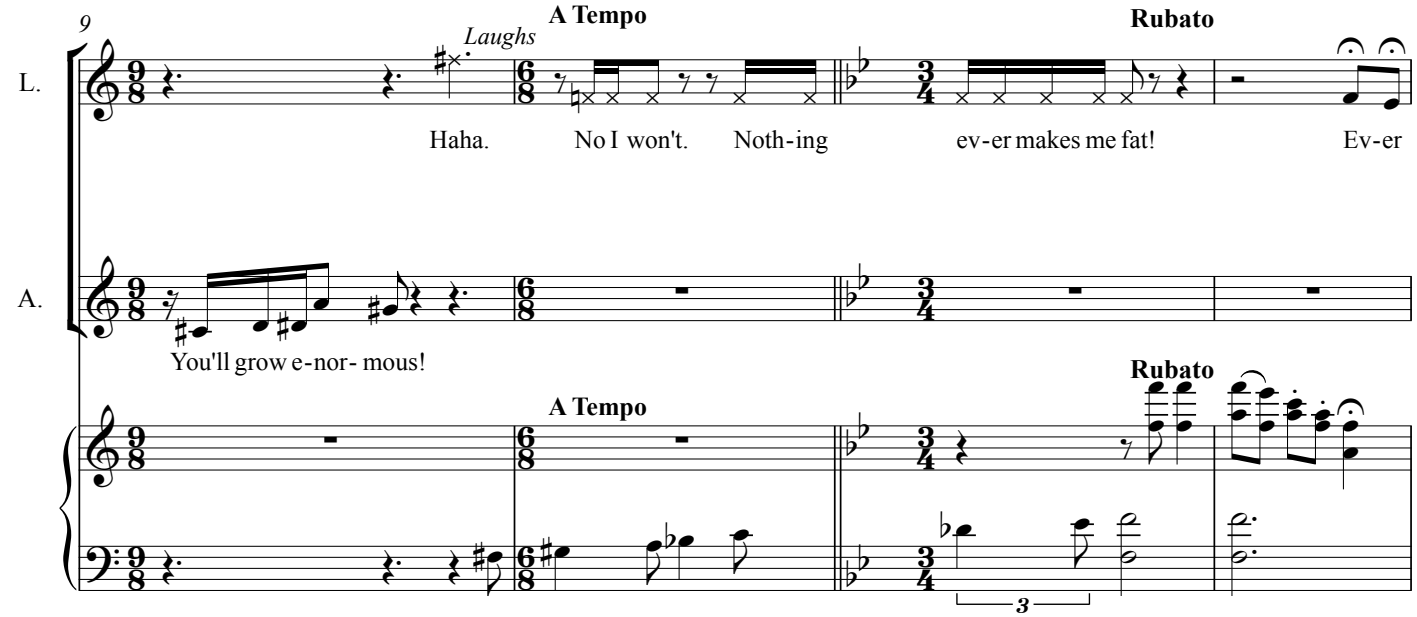
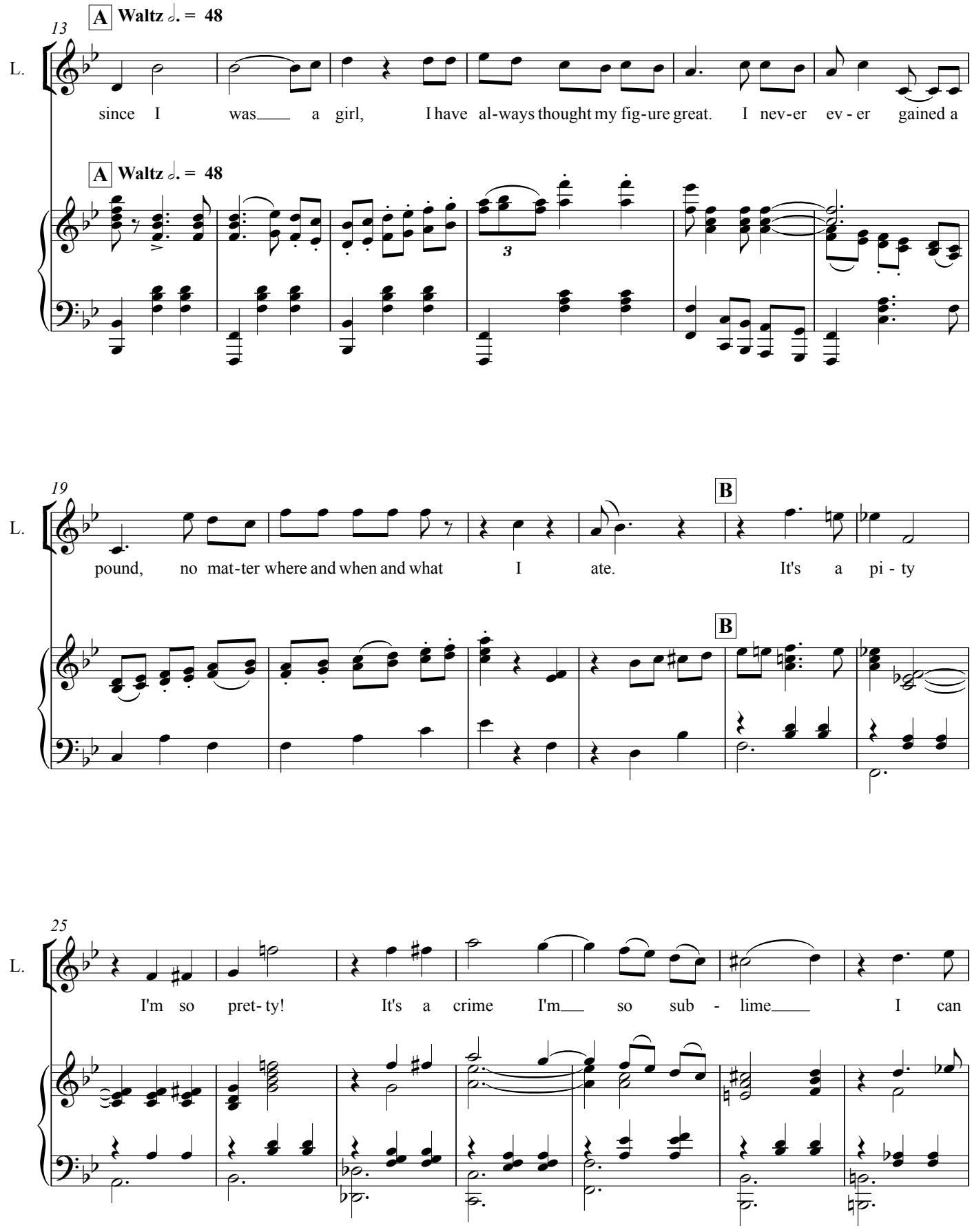
No con-ven- tions?!

F.

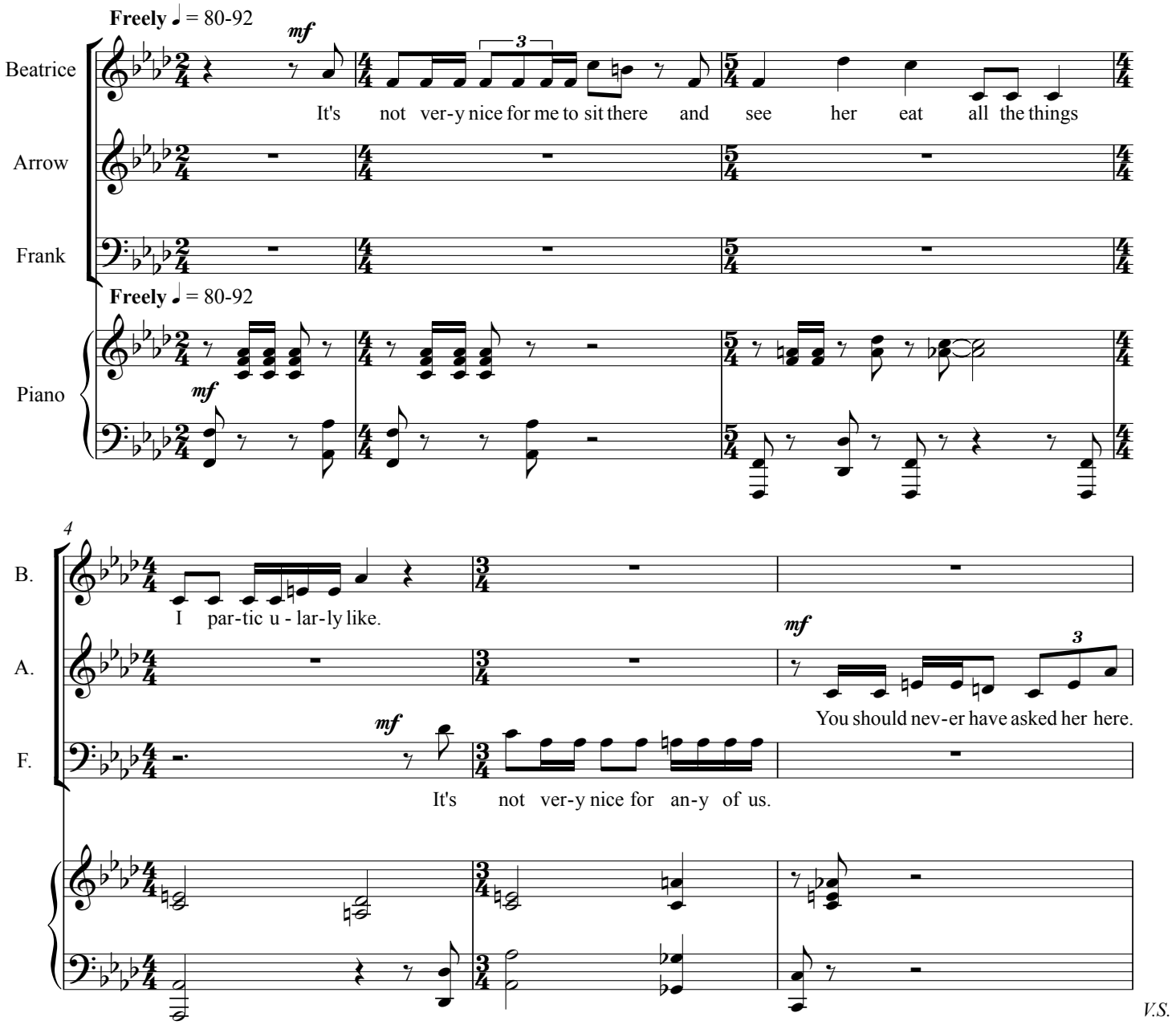
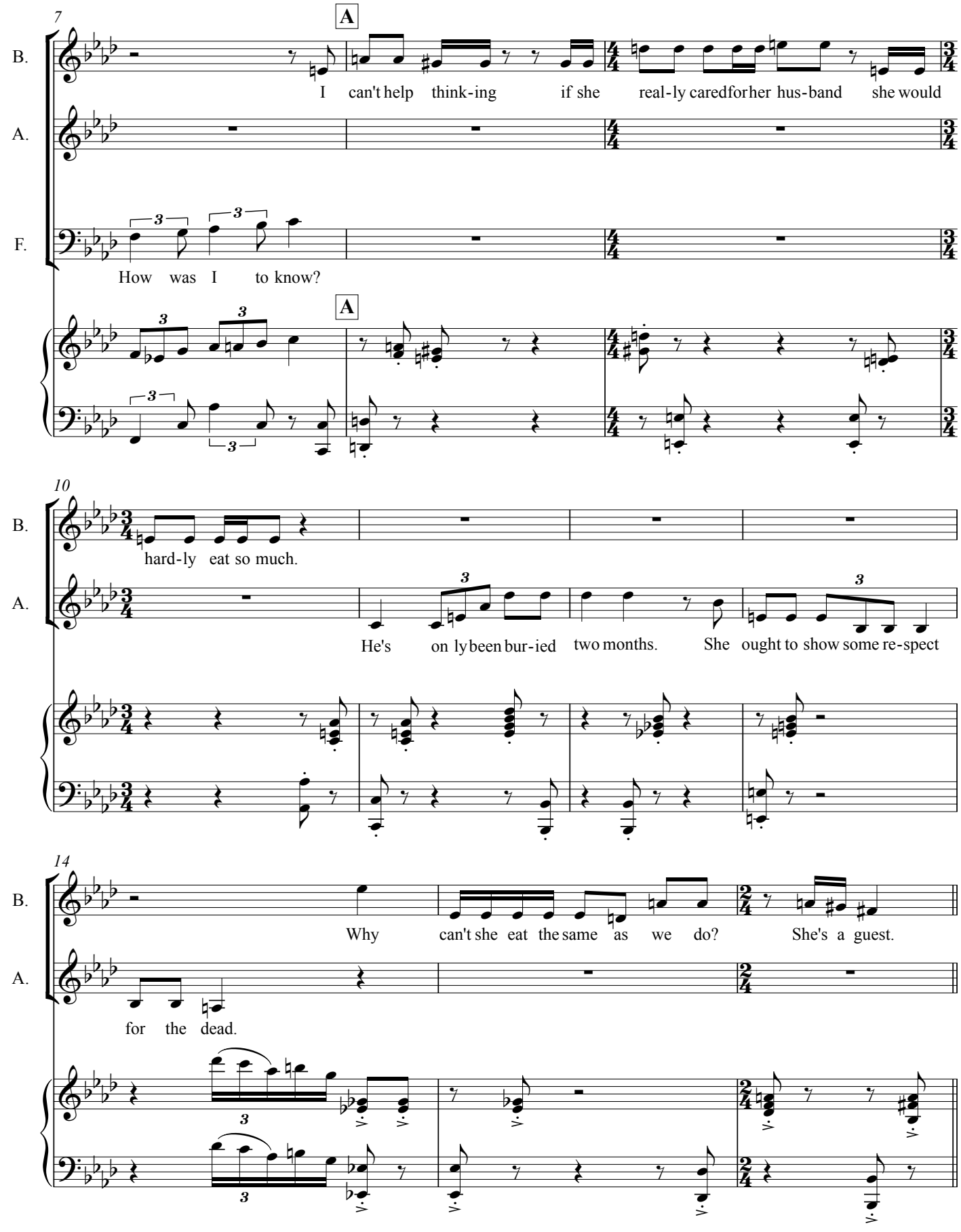
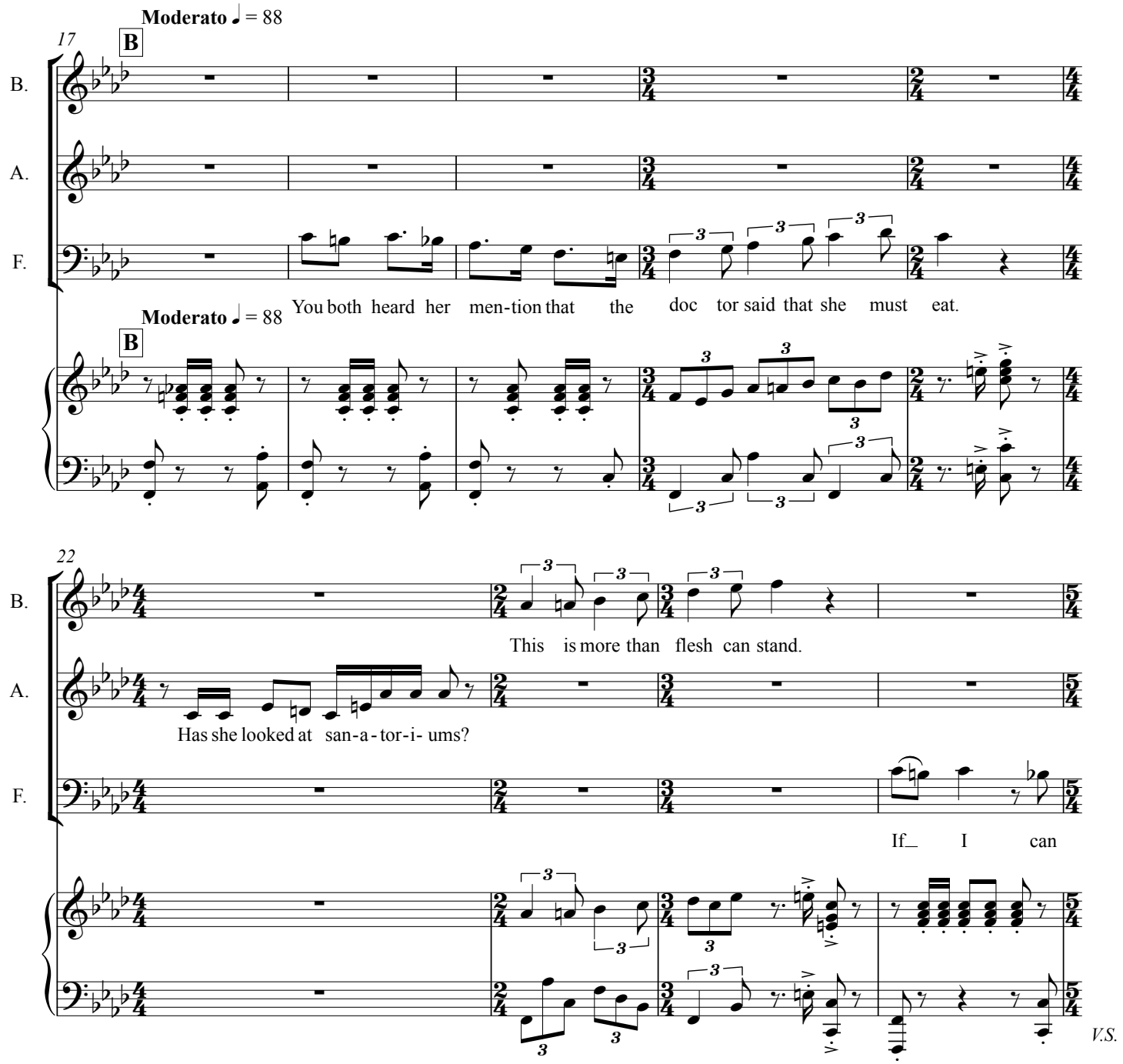
Astonished

What?!

V.S.

15
B
Allegro ♩= 120
mp
B.
Now I have the chance to leave the ta - ble.
To leave the ta - ble.
B
Allegro ♩= 120
mp
17
B.
Their pre - oc - cu - pa - tion will en - a - ble,
p
en - a - ble me to go un -
p
19
B.
- no - ticed,
un - no - ticed, I am
mf
a - ble to pre - pare a lit - tle treat,
mf

A tempo
22
C
rit.
mf
Dum-my's ace.
L.
B.
a lit-tle treat.
p
Lit-tle
A.
mf
Queen of spades.
C
rit.
A tempo
25
L.
Two spades.
Dum-my's trick.
For one.
Sev-en spades.
B.
treat.
Lit-tle treat.
Lit-tle treat.
A.
Dum-my's trick.
For one.
mf
F.
Eight spades.
Dum-my's trick.
For one.
Kingof
V.S.

5. The Doctor Said I Must Eat

V.S.

5
Rubato
L.
B.
A.
F.
Ah.
On-ly sim ple food.
Ah.
bread and but-ter and po - ta - toes and cream!
Ah.
Ah.
bread and but-ter and po - ta - toes and cream!
Ah.
Ah.
Ah.
Rubato
L.H.

9
A Tempo
Laughs
Rubato
L.
A.
Haha.
No I won't.
Noth-ing
ev-er makes me fat!
Ev-er
You'll grow e-nor- mous!
A Tempo
Rubato
3

13
A Waltz ♩. = 48
L.
since I was a girl, I have al-ways thought my fig-ure great. I nev-er ev - er gained a
A Waltz ♩. = 48
3
19
L.
pound, no mat-ter where and when and what I ate. It's a pi - ty
B
B
25
L.
I'm so pret- ty! It's a crime I'm so sub - lime I can

DIALOG: Have a good time, dear. Goodbye.

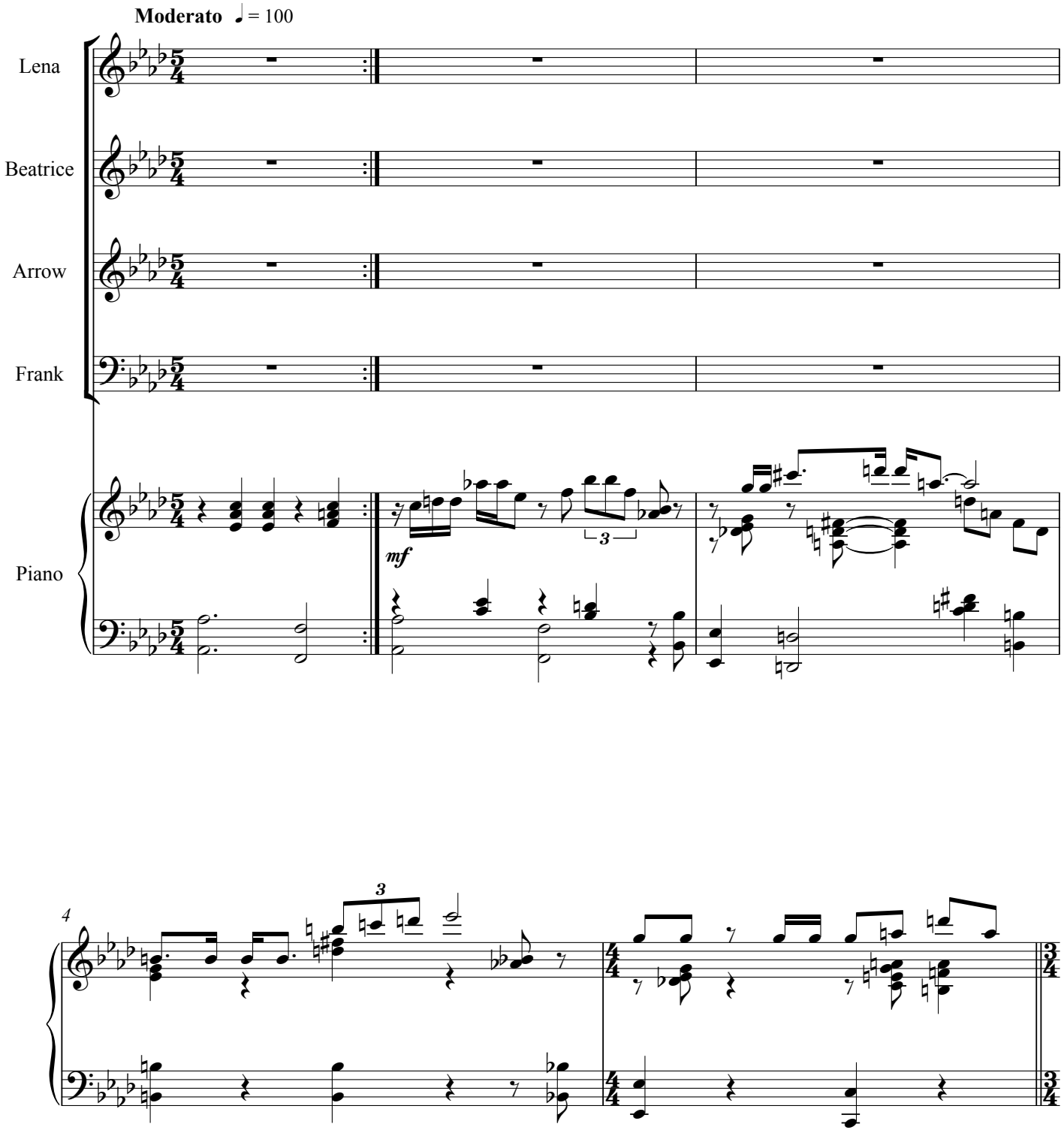
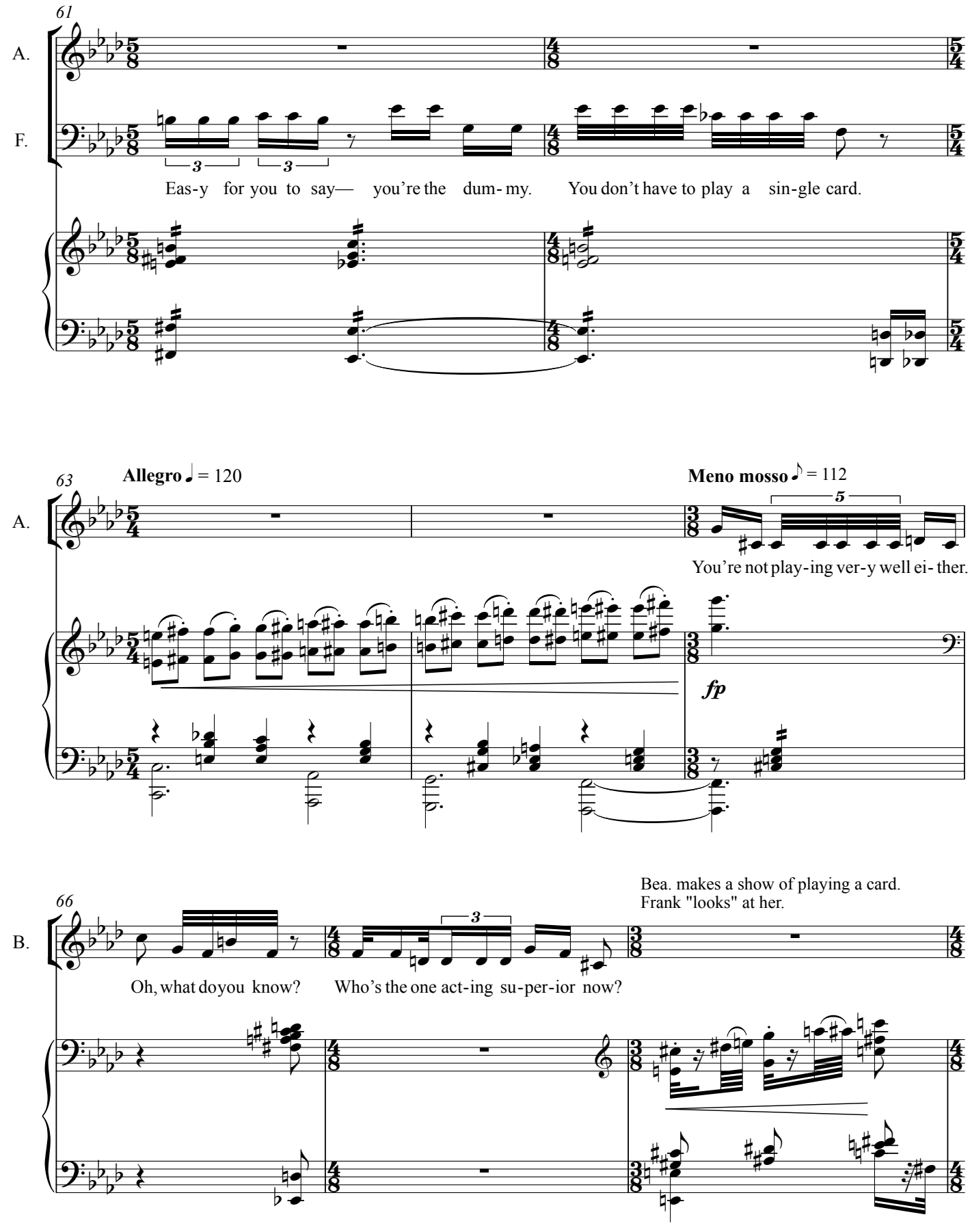
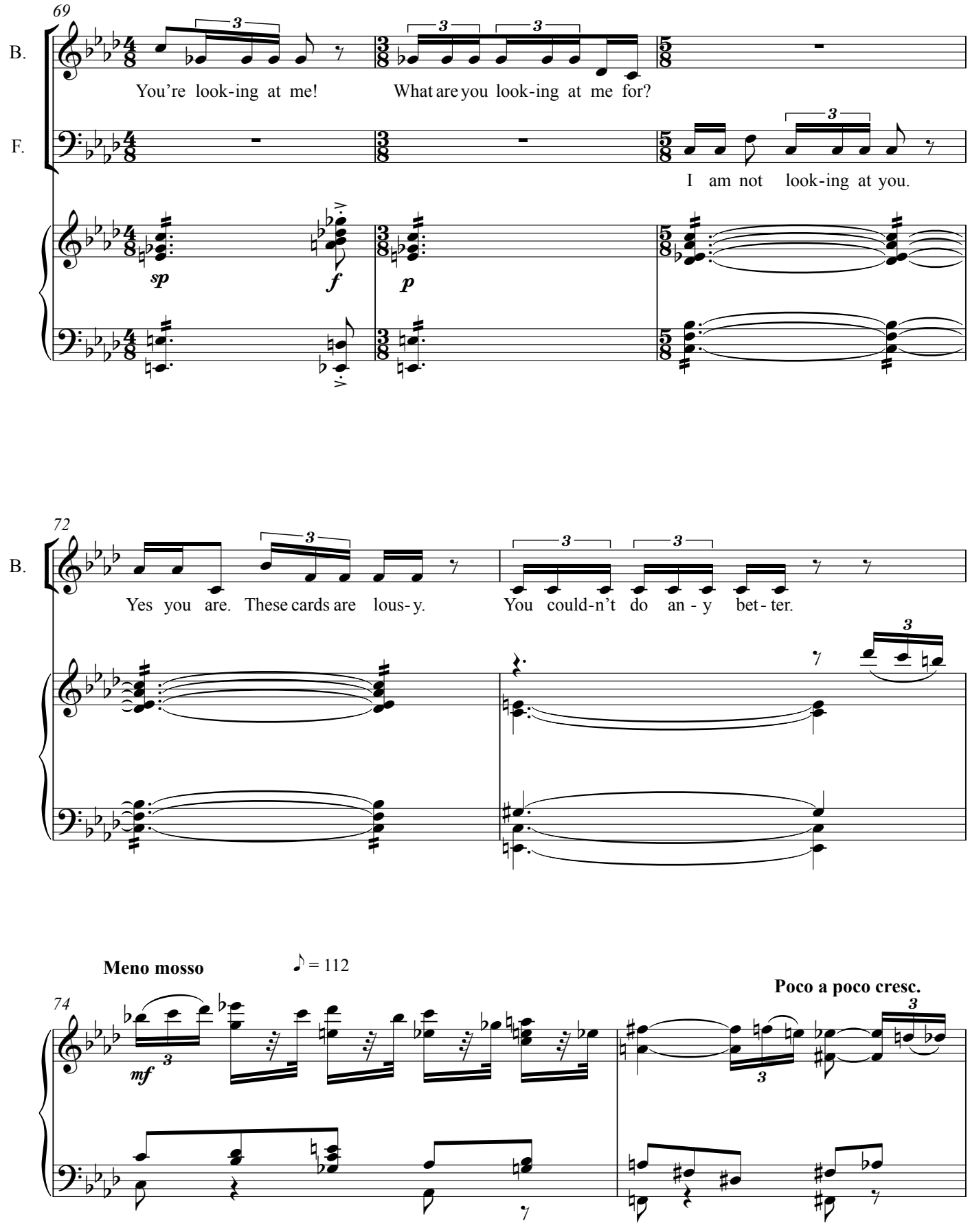
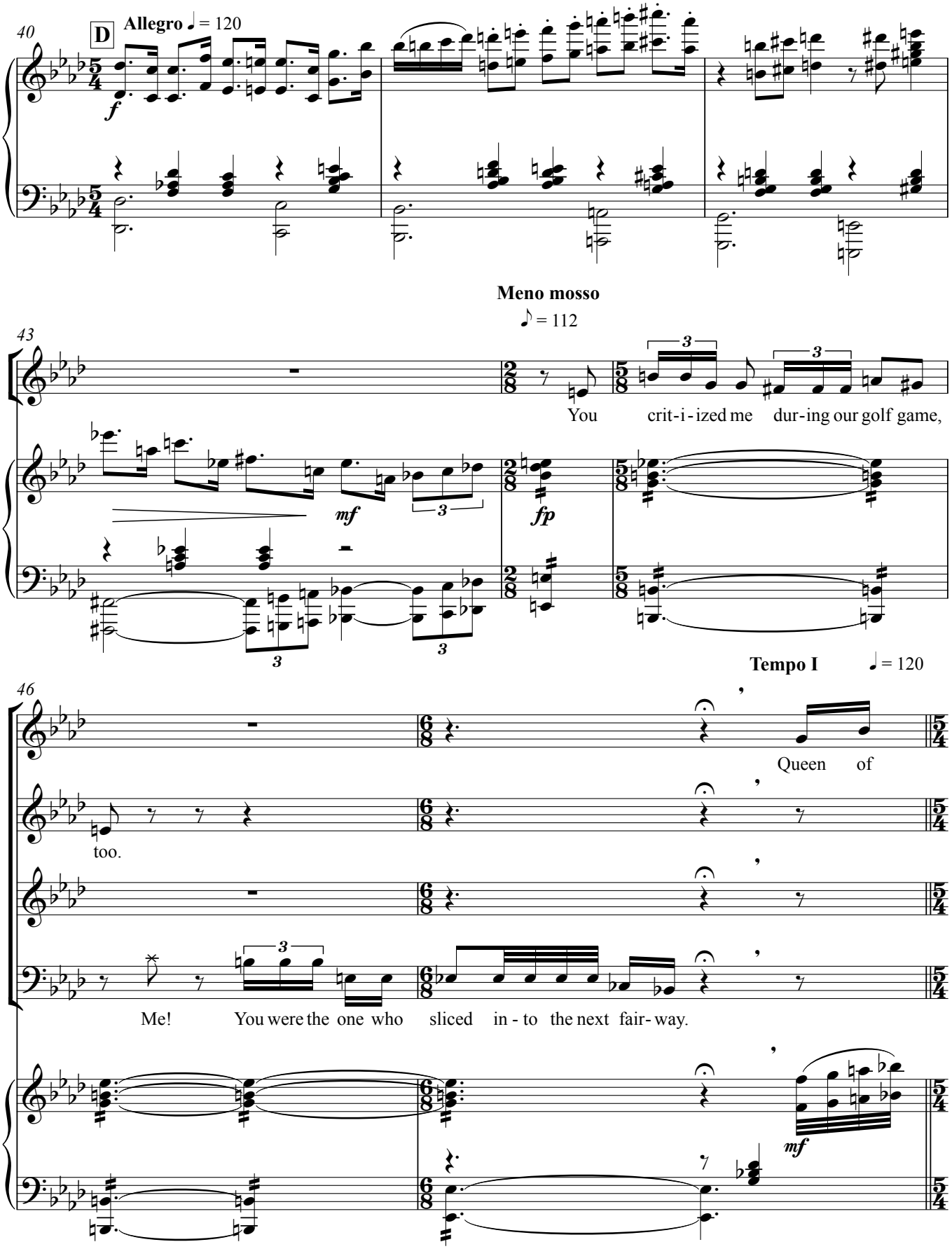
6. Heart to Heart

V.S.

7
A
B.
I can't help think-ing if she real-ly caredforher hus-band she would
A.
F.
How was I to know?
A
10
B.
hard-ly eat so much.
A.
He's on lybeen bur-ied two months. She ought to show some re-spect
14
B.
Why can't she eat the same as we do? She's a guest.
A.
for the dead.

Moderato ♩ = 88
17
B
B.
A.
F.
You both heard her men-tion that the doc tor said that she must eat.
Moderato ♩ = 88
B
22
B.
A.
F.
This is more than flesh can stand.
Has she looked at san-a-tor-i- ums?
If_ I can
V.S.

ACT II

Scene 1:
One week later. The terrace and veranda of the villa.
ARROW, BEATRICE, FRANK and LENA are at the bridge table. ARROW is downstage center, FRANK is stage right, LENA is upstage center, and BEATRICE is stage left. There is a lot of money on the table.

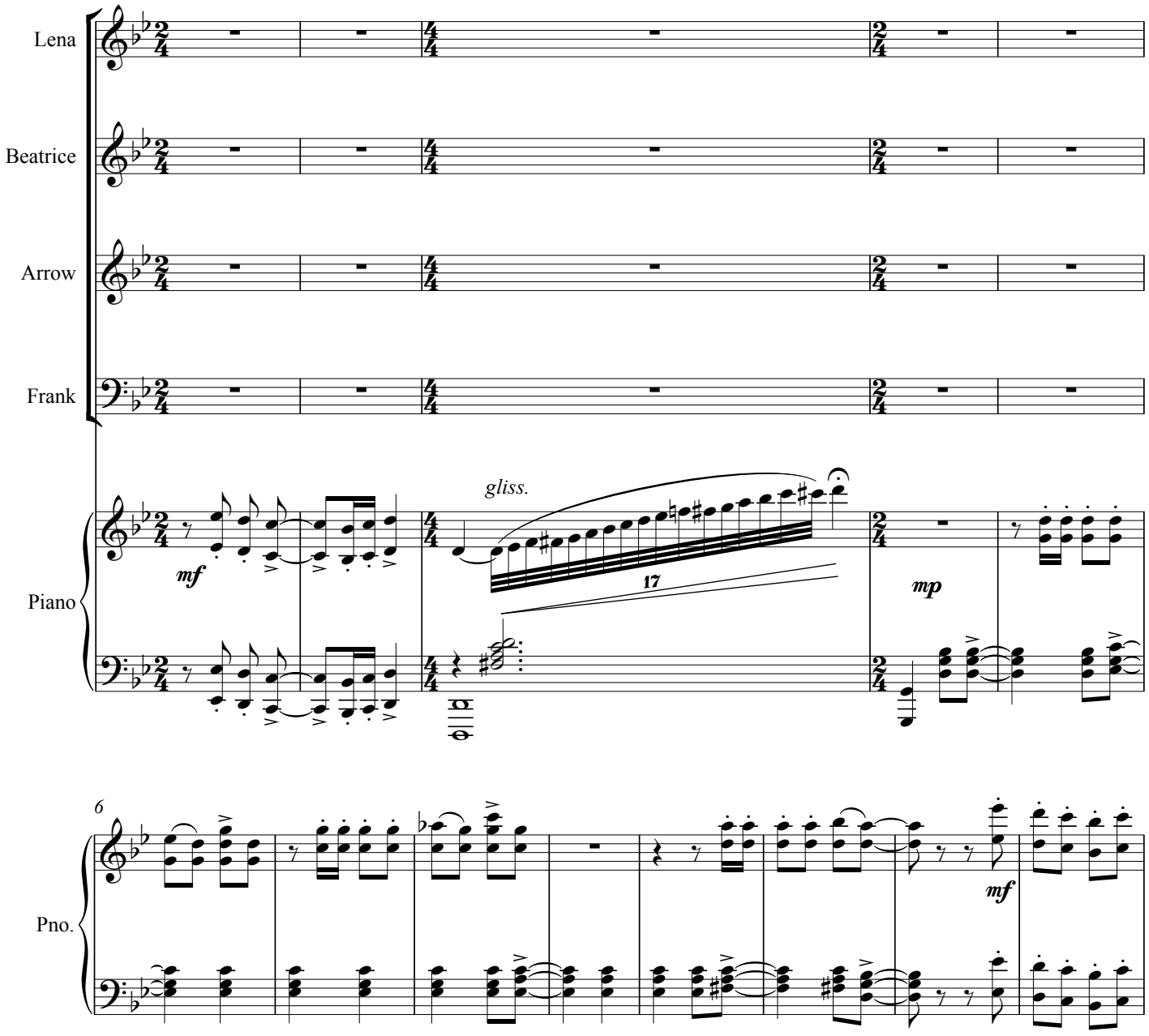
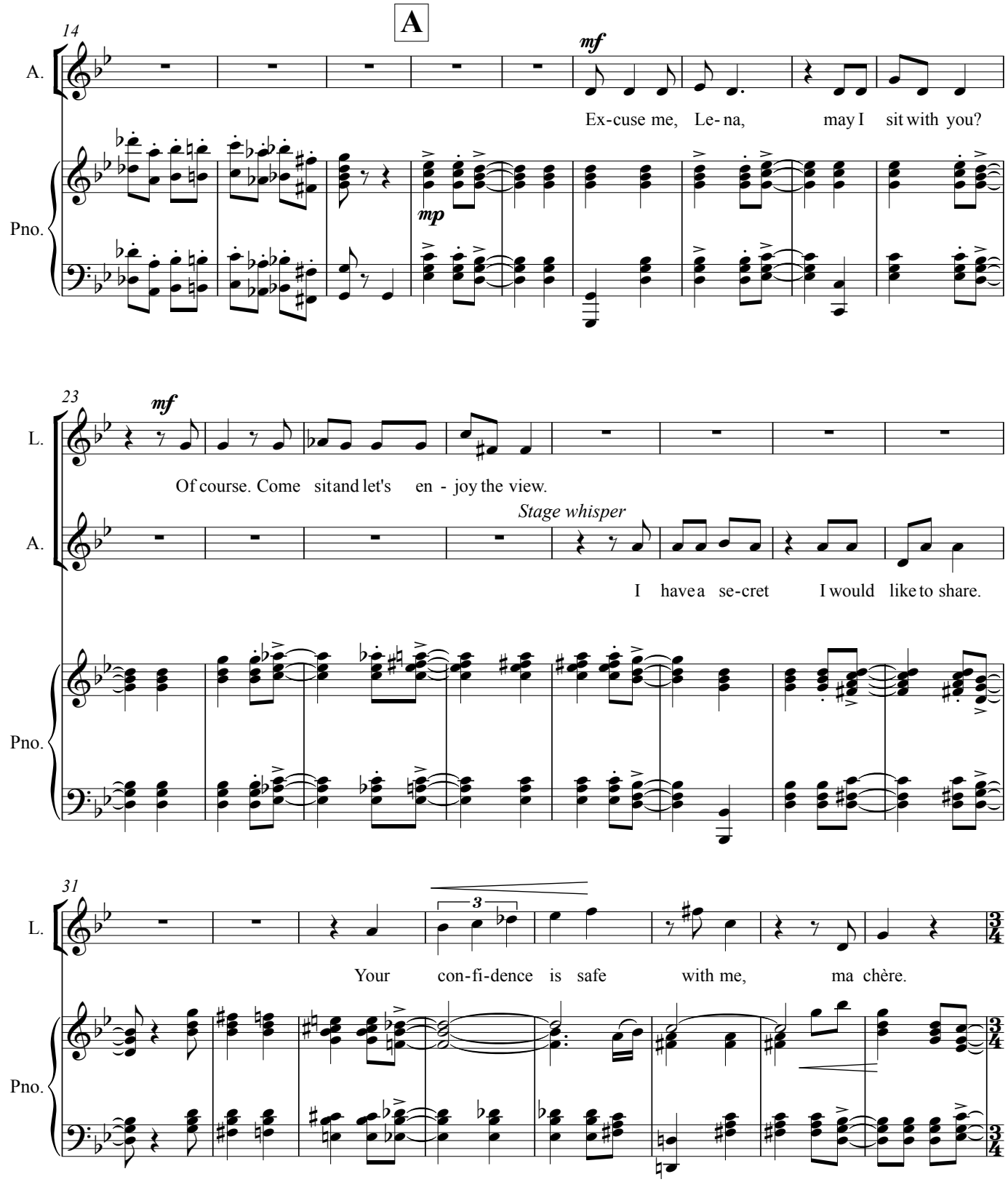
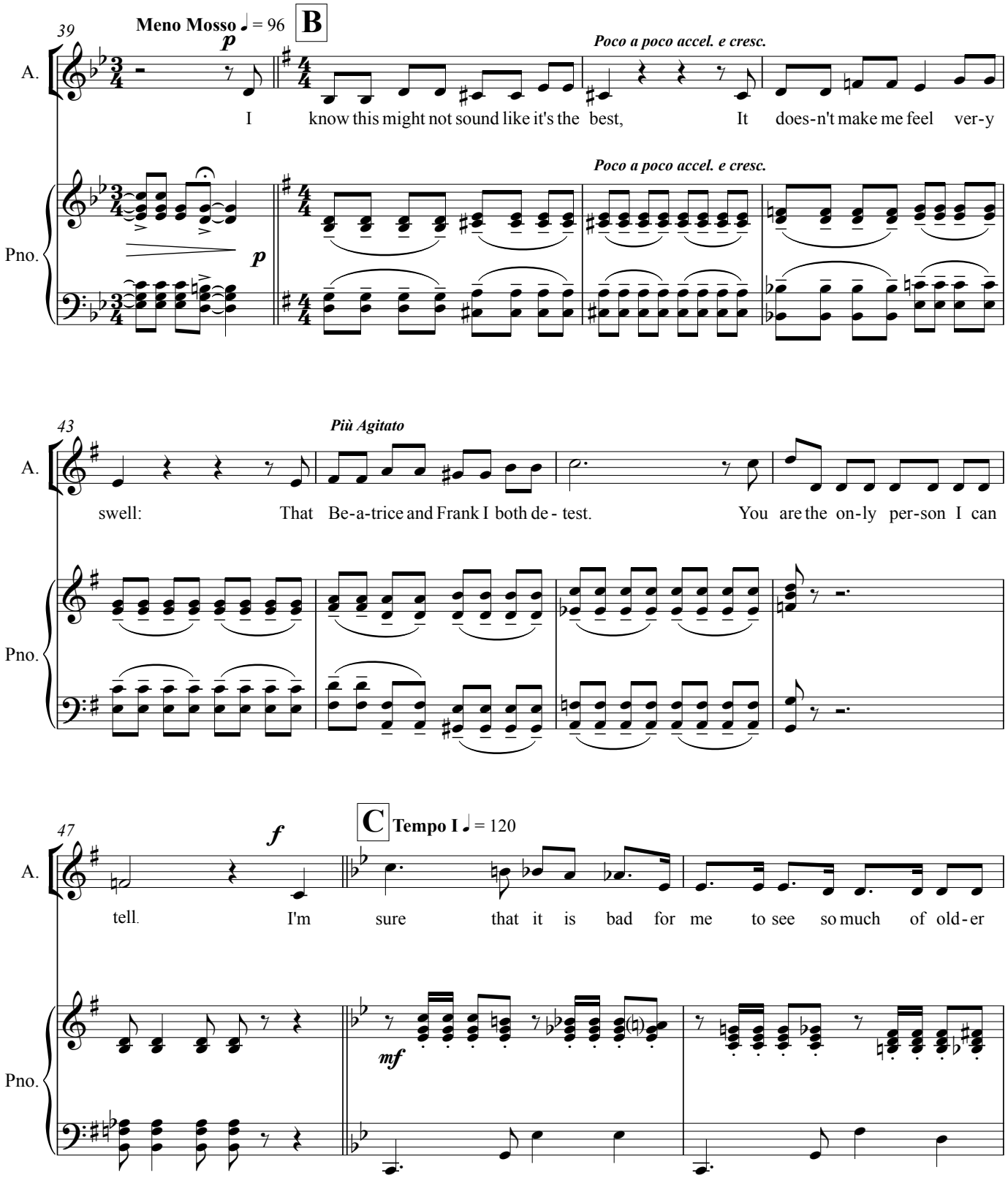
During the opening music, Beatrice, Arrow, and Frank play intensely and without enjoyment. They exchange evil looks with each other and glare at Lena. Lena is uncomfortable. She smiles bravely, but can't resist smirking when she takes the pot, which is often.

Wicked Bridge

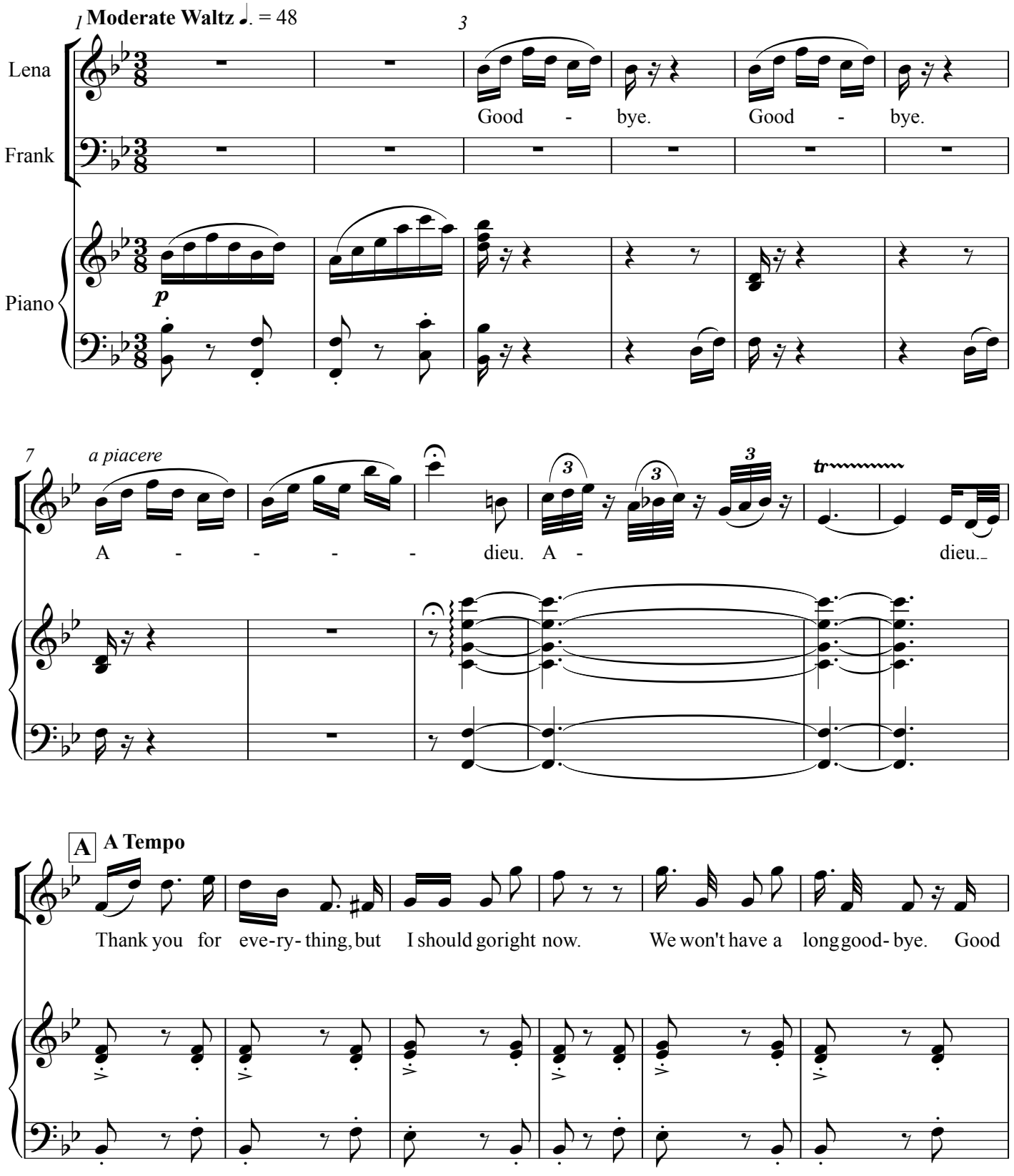
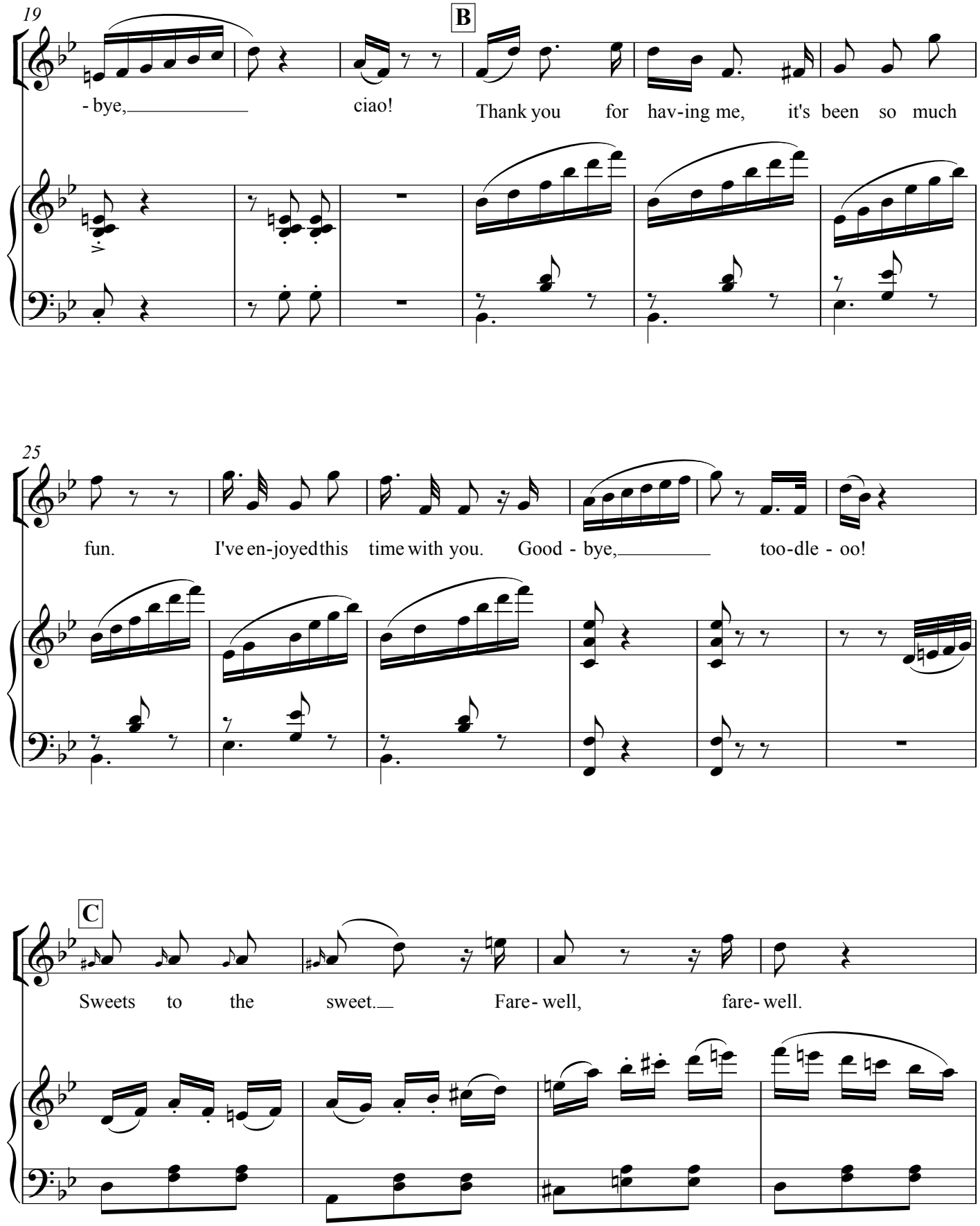
Vamp until ready.

61
A.
F.
Eas-y for you to say— you're the dum-my. You don't have to play a sin-gle card.
63
Allegro ♩ = 120
Meno mosso ♪ = 112
You're not play-ing ver-y well ei-ther.
fp
66
B.
Bea. makes a show of playing a card.
Frank "looks" at her.
Oh, what doyou know? Who's the one act-ing su-per-ior now?

69
B.
F.
You're look-ing at me!
What are you look-ing at me for?
I am not look-ing at you.
sp
f
p
72
B.
Yes you are. These cards are lous- y.
You could-n't do an - y bet - ter.
Meno mosso
♪ = 112
Poco a poco cresc.
74
mf

40
D
Allegro ♩ = 120
f
Meno mosso
♪ = 112
43
B.
You crit-i-ized me dur-ing our golf game,
mf
fp
Tempo I
♩ = 120
46
L.
Queen of
B.
too.
A.
F.
Me! You were the one who sliced in-to the next fair-way.
mf

Lena is sitting on the veranda. A, B, and F separately approach her for a confidence.
When Lena finishes her advice, the two women embrace.
Lena stays on the veranda, the other woman leaves, but stays on stage.

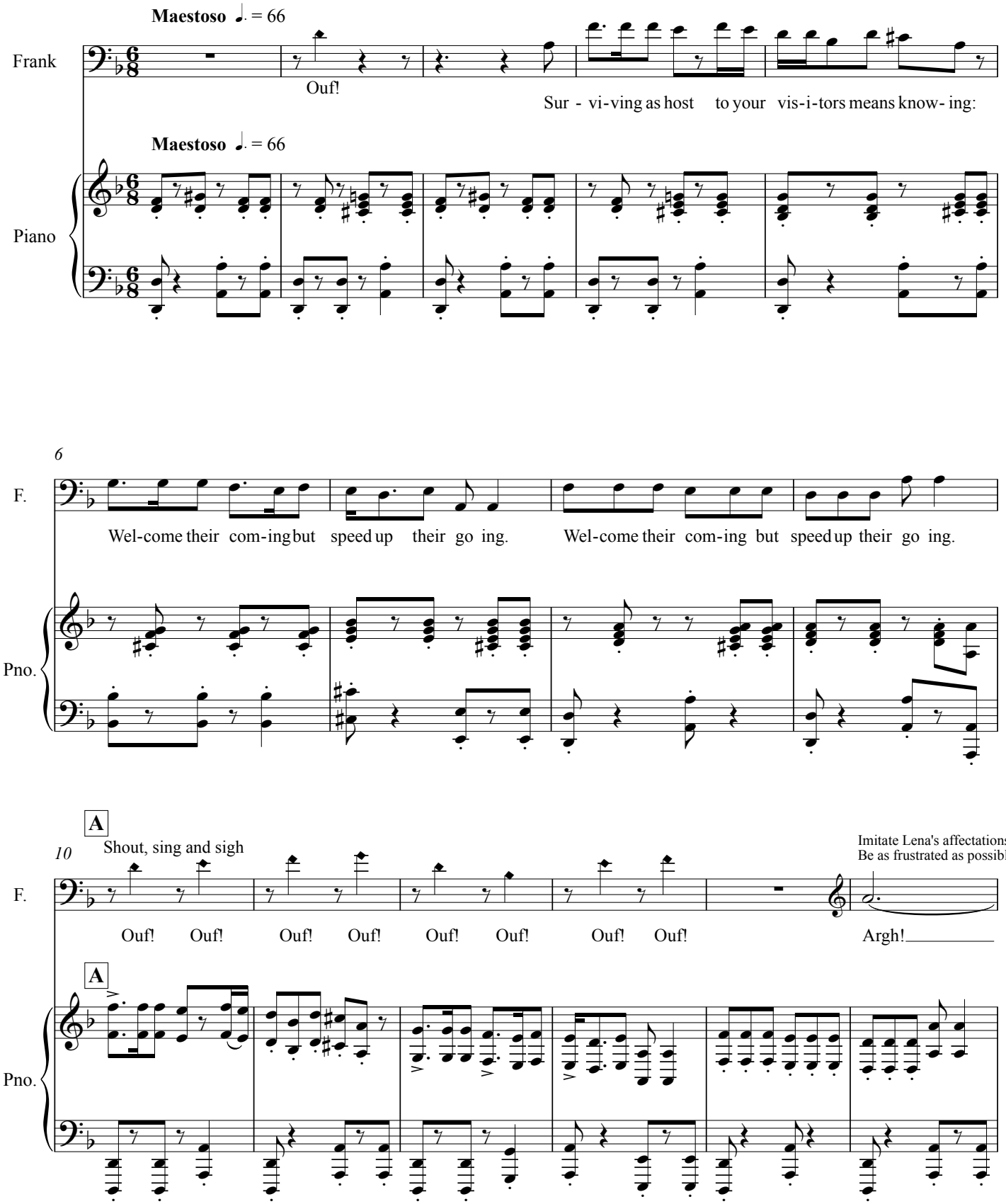
Confidences

Mysterioso, Moderate Tango ♩ = 120

A
14
A.
mf
Ex-cuse me, Le- na, may I sit with you?
Pno.
mp
23
L.
mf
Of course. Come sit and let's en - joy the view.
A.
Stage whisper
I have a se-cret I would like to share.
Pno.
31
L.
3
Your con-fi-dence is safe with me, ma chère.
Pno.

39
Meno Mosso ♩ = 96
B
p
Poco a poco accel. e cresc.
A.
I know this might not sound like it's the best, It does-n't make me feel ver-y
Poco a poco accel. e cresc.
Pno.
p
43
Più Agitato
A.
swell: That Be-a-trice and Frank I both de - test. You are the on-ly per-son I can
Pno.
47
f
C
Tempo I ♩ = 120
A.
tell. I'm sure that it is bad for me to see so much of old-er
Pno.
mf

Scene 2. A train platform and Eden Roc, a garden restaurant.
Frank and Lena are on the train platform. Frank holds Lena's suitcase. Lena stands in the train door.

9. Good-bye!

V.S.

19
B
- bye,
ciao!
Thank you for hav-ing me, it's been so much
25
fun.
I've en-joyed this time with you.
Good - bye,
too-dle - oo!
C
Sweets to the sweet.
Fare- well,
fare- well.

10. Ouf! Ouf!

FRANK slouches off stage, periodically addressing audience.

Restaurant Eden Roc: ARROW and PRINCE stroll arm in arm.

ARROW

Oh, Prince Roccamare, your skin is so soft!

PRINCE

Thank you, my little cabbage. The blue of your eyes makes the Mediterranean look like pea soup.

ARROW

(*laughing*) And you are so tall and strong!

PRINCE

Thank you, my little lamb chop. Your laugh is like the tinkling of a little bell in a candy shop.

ARROW

And your hair is so silky smooth!

PRINCE

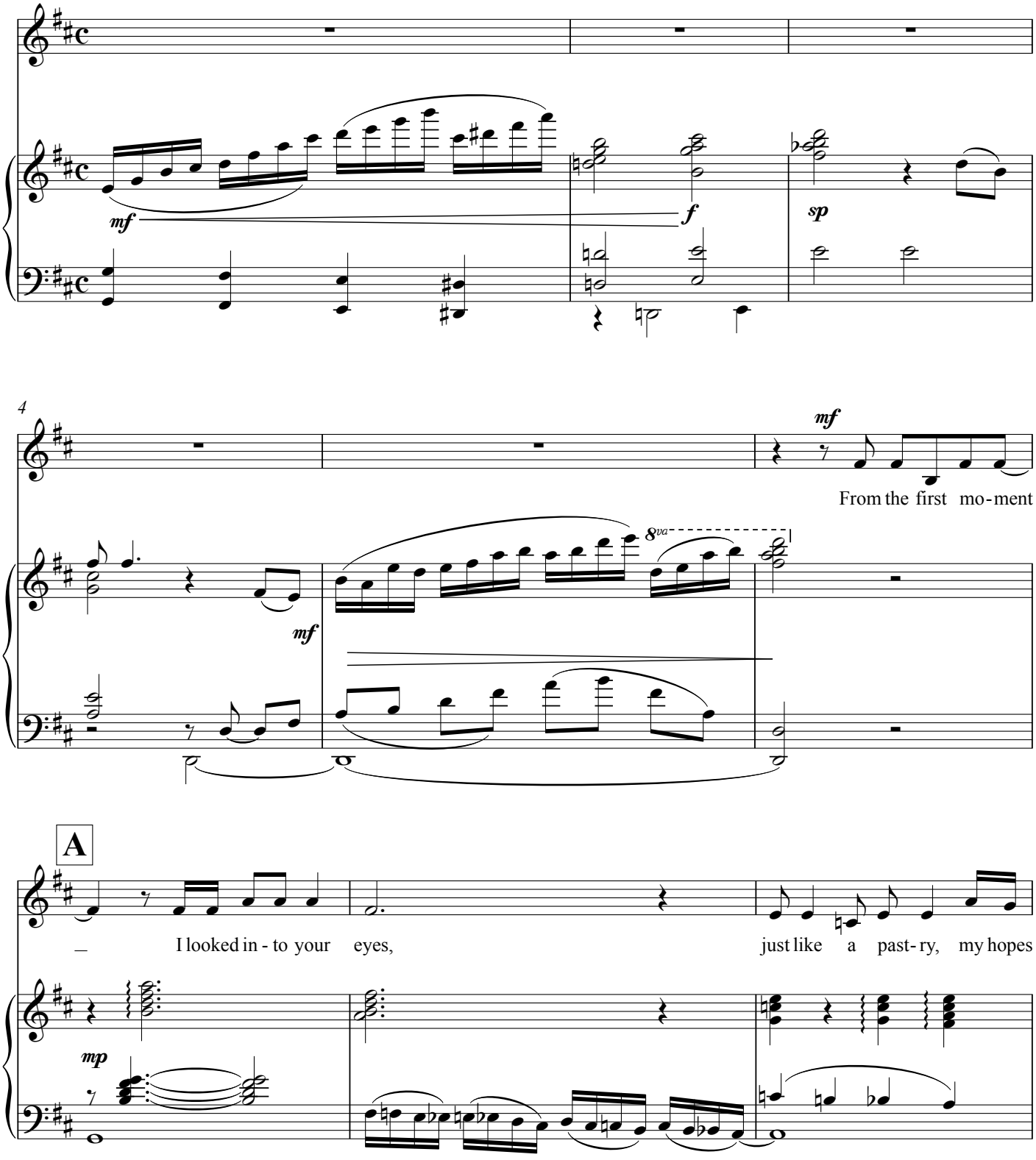
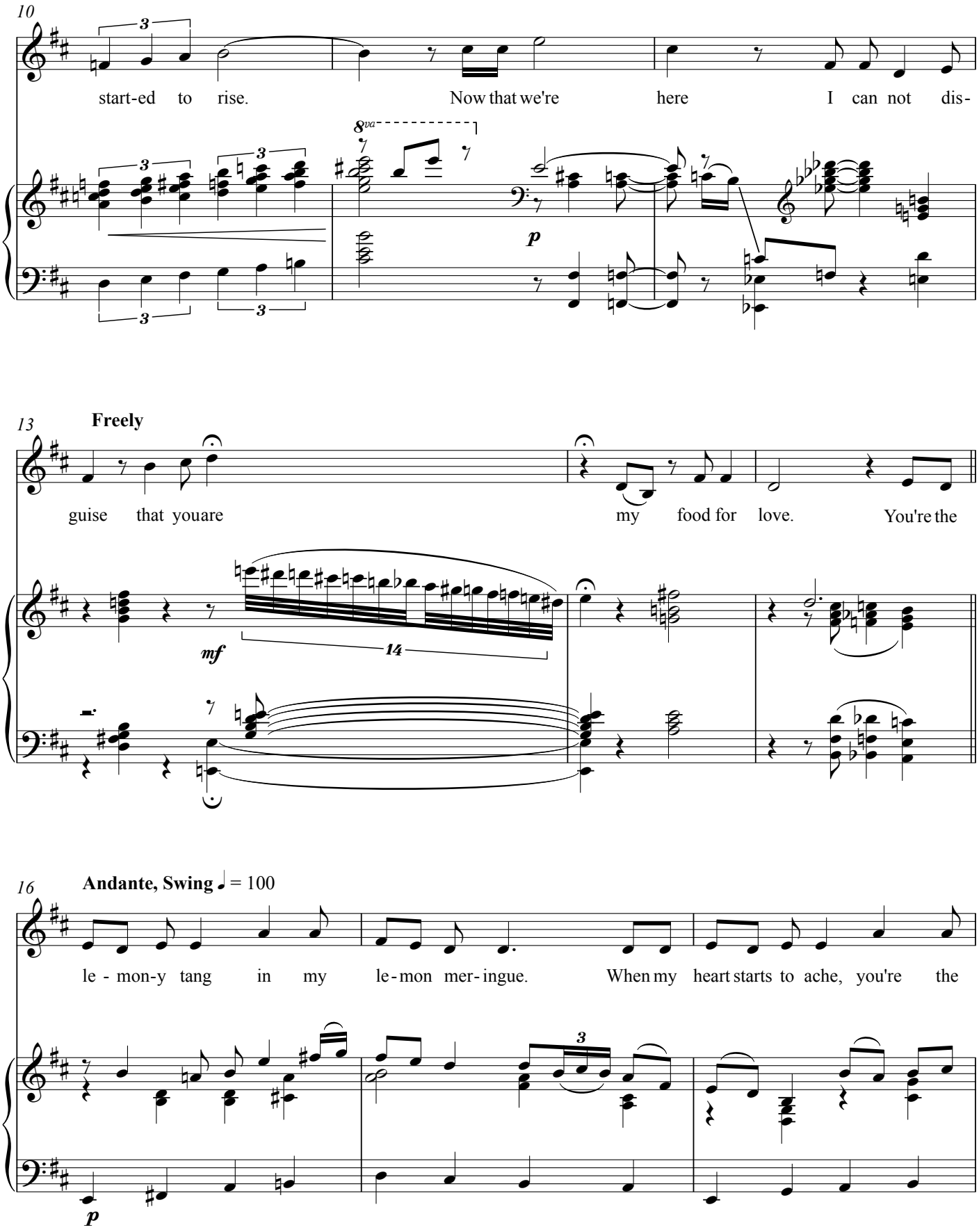
Thank you, my little truffle. The red of your lips is like fresh cherries. And your voice is so musical!

ARROW

Oh! Really?! In America, when a woman wants a man to want the woman to want the man want the woman, she tells him how he makes her feel. This is how you make me feel.

None of the rhythms should be played exactly as written. Anticipate the downbeat, play two eighth notes as a quarter-eighth triplet.

11. Food For Love

Andante, Rubato ♩ = 100

V.S.

10
start-ed to rise. Now that we're here I can not dis-
8va
p
13
Freely
guise that youare my food for love. You're the
mf
14
16
Andante, Swing ♩ = 100
le - mon-y tang in my le-mon mer-ingue. When my heart starts to ache, you're the
p

19

an - gel-food cake. You're the cream in my cof- fee, the sweet Eng-lish tof- fee, the

22

ice cream be-stowed on my pie à la mode. I'm so glad you're my food for love.

Slow arpeggio low to high

B **Swing**

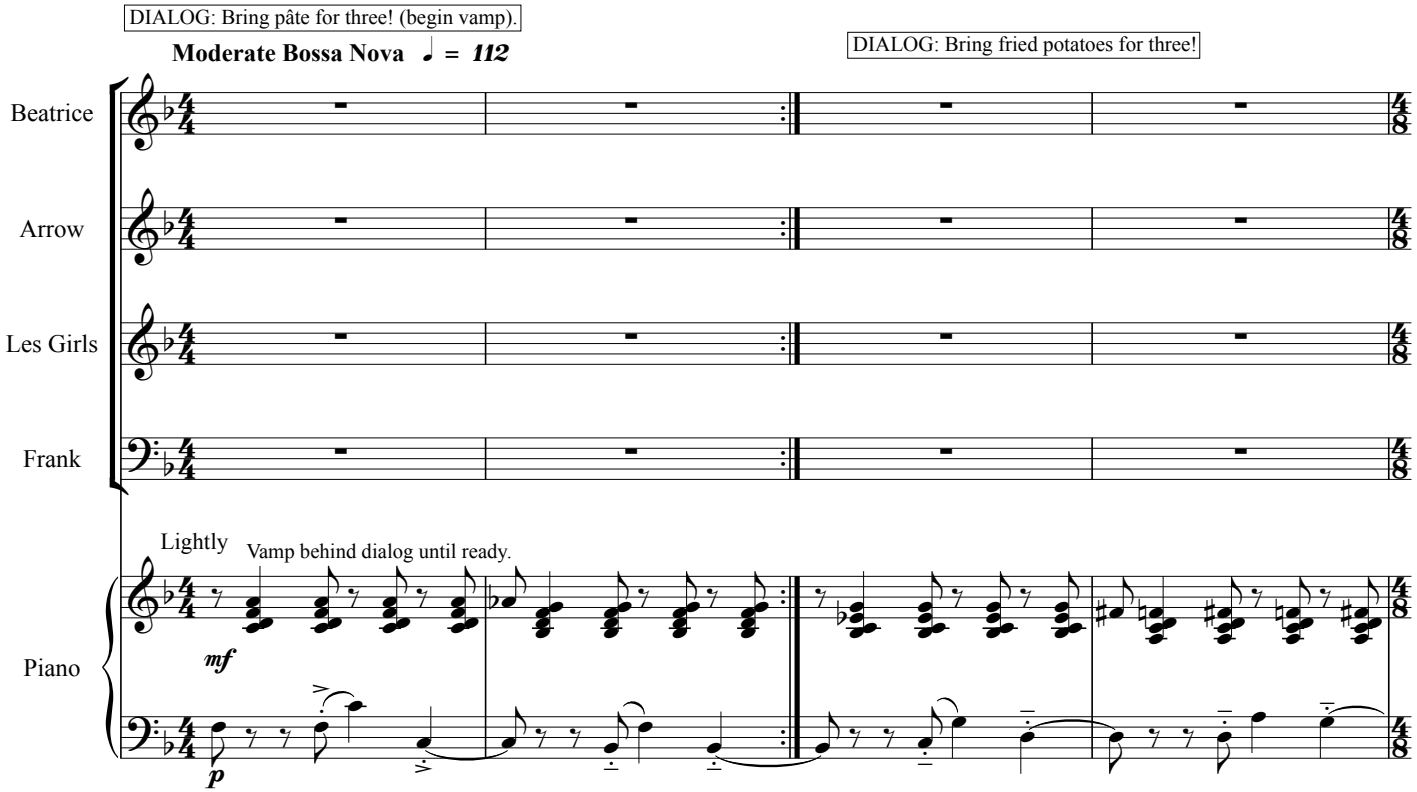
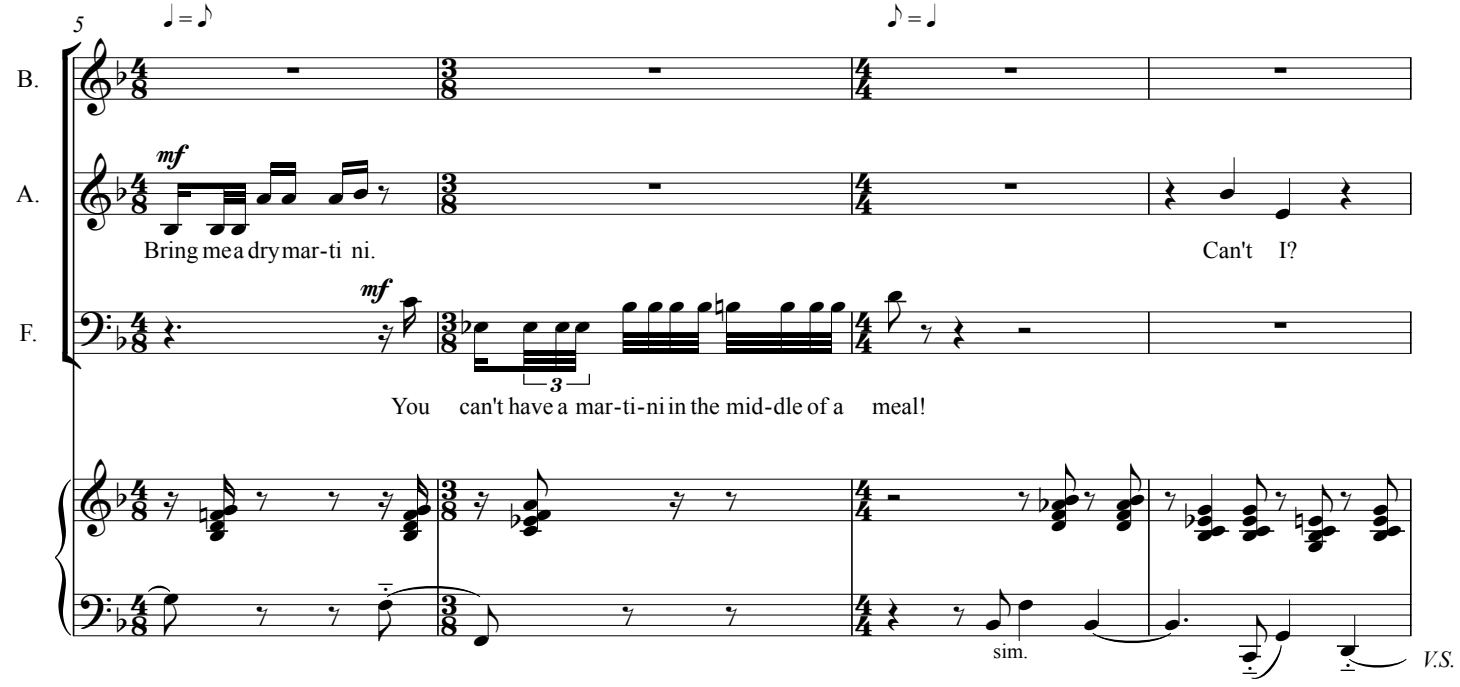
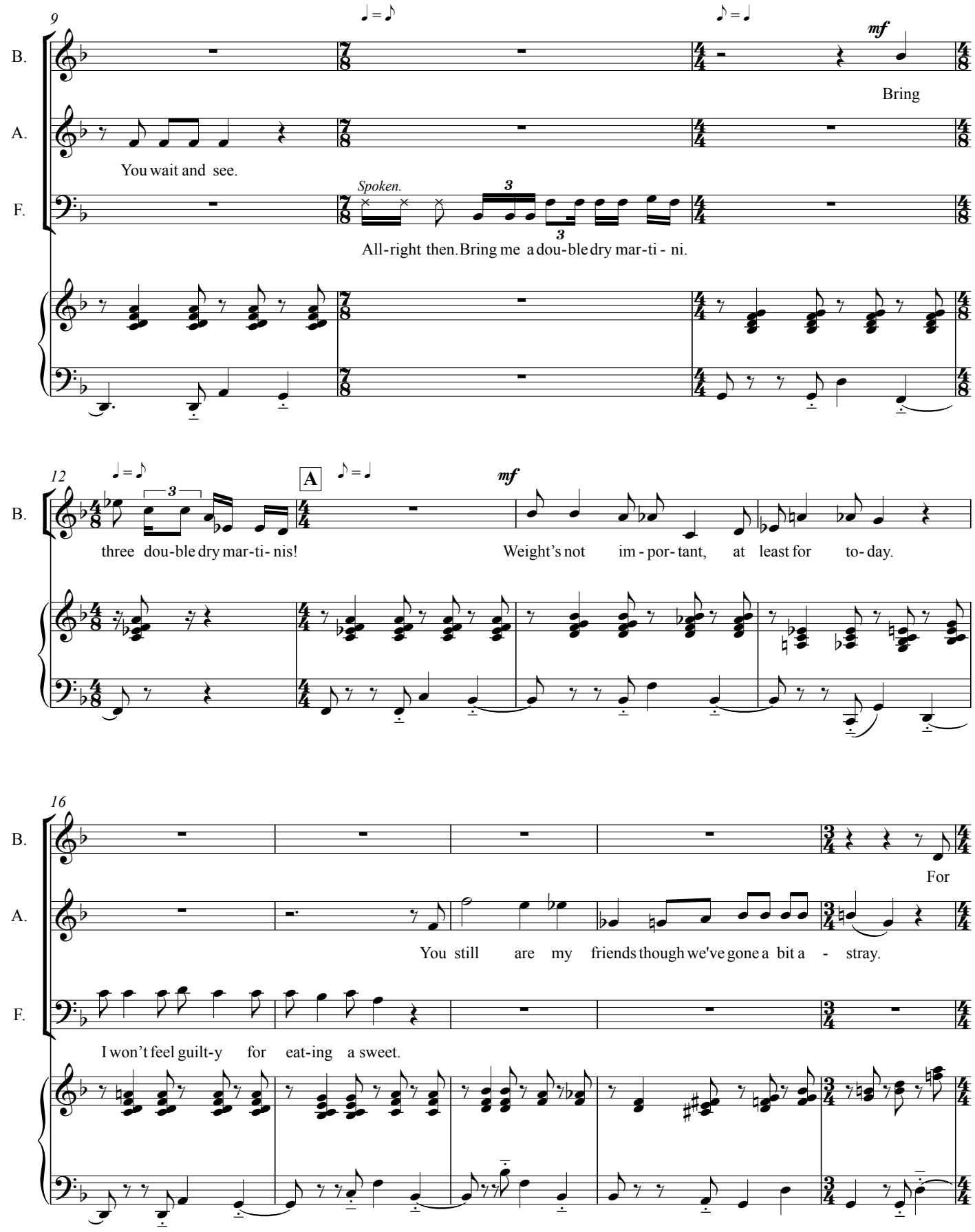
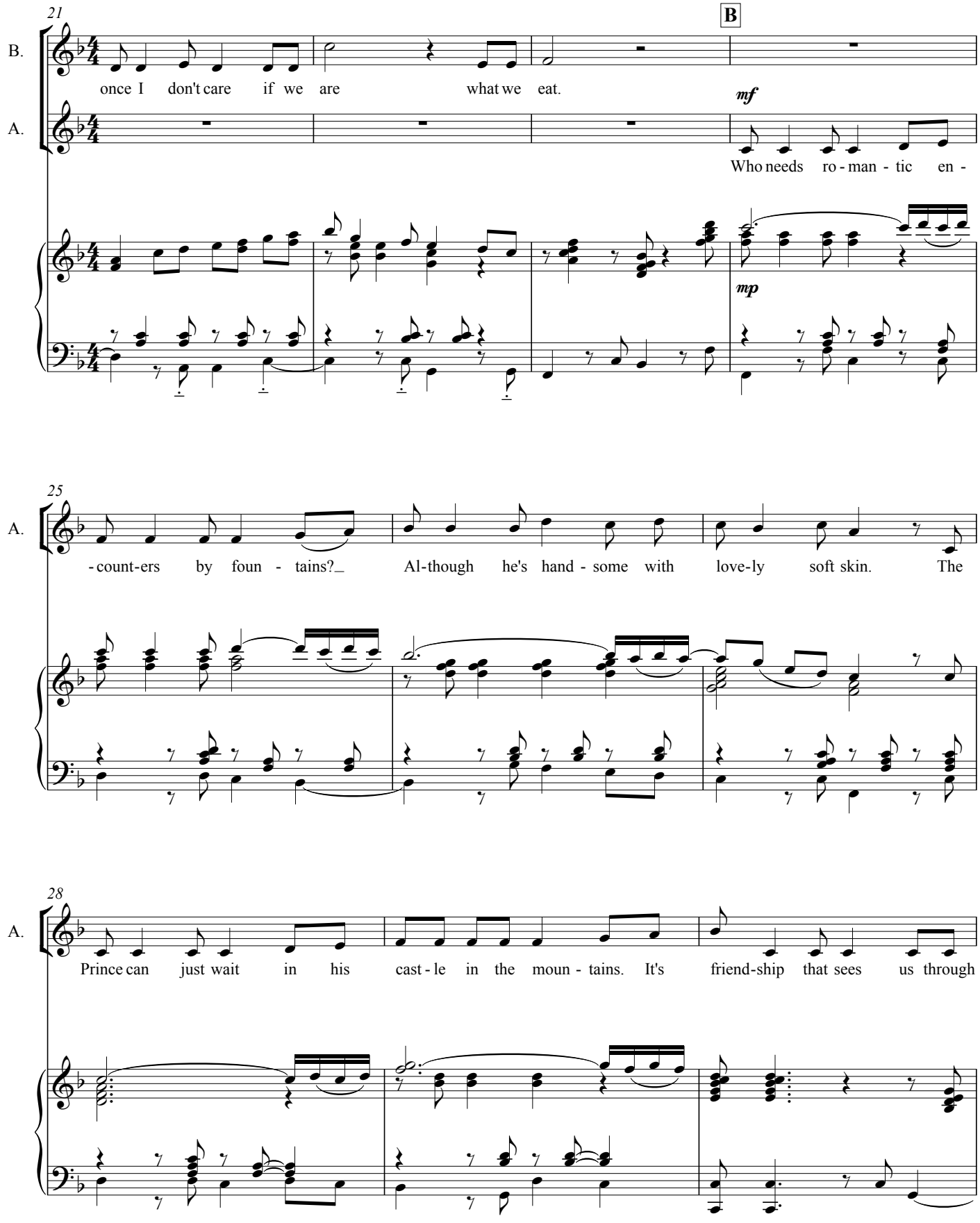
A-lone or to-geth-er,

Fill in chord with arpeggio or other ornament.

V.S.

Ignore spoken text rhythms. Speak naturally.
In recitative passages (x/8), the singer interprets the text and rhythm.

The three friends eat with great enjoyment.

12. Finale

9
B.
A.
F.
mf
Bring
You wait and see.
Spoken.
All-right then. Bring me a dou-ble dry mar-ti - ni.
12
A
mf
three dou-ble dry mar-ti- nis!
Weight's not im - por- tant, at least for to- day.
16
B.
A.
F.
For
You still are my friends though we've gone a bit a - stray.
I won't feel guilt-y for eat-ing a sweet.

21
B.
A.
B
once I don't care if we are what we eat.
mf
Who needs ro - man - tic en -
mp
25
A.
- count-ers by foun - tains?_ Al-though he's hand - some with love-ly soft skin. The
28
A.
Prince can just wait in his cast - le in the moun - tains. It's friend-ship that sees us through