Beauty Retire
To Bee or Not To Bee &c.

FROM THE LIBRARY OF

Samuel Pepys

England: Cambridge, Pepys Library, Magdalene College, MS.2591.

Edited & Typeset by ***Rockford Mjos***

VERSION: 020908

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"At noon, home, and Goodgroome dined with us, who teaches my wife to sing. After dinner I did give him my song 'Beauty Retire' which he has so often desired of me, and without flattery I think it is a very good song."

From the Diary of Samuel Pepys, December 5th, 1666

The edition of 'Beauty Retire' by Samuel Pepys has been typeset from the partial reproduction in James Tyler's *The Early Guitar: A History and Handbook* (OUP, 1980, p. 45) and completed from a 1936 edition by using the melody and a bass line adapted from the edition's fanciful piano accompaniment. The missing tablature was then realized with chord shapes and patterns used in the reproduction. The words were taken from Sir William Davenant's opera *Siege of Rhodes* (Act IV, Sc. ii).

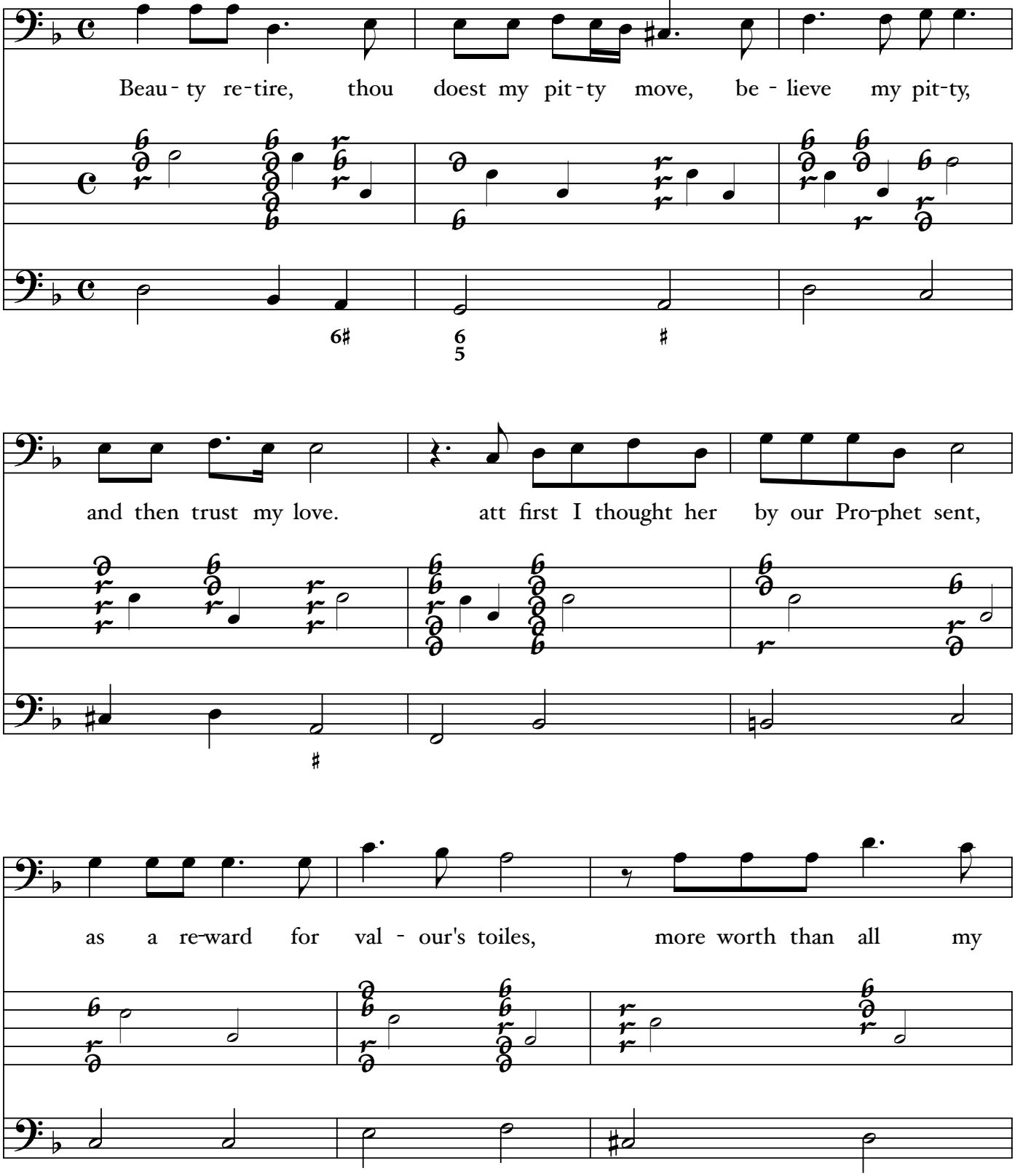
Cesare Morelli, a domestic musician in the employment of Pepys, is listed as the composer of "To Bee or Not To Bee &c." This edition is based on the transcription by Macdonald Emslie, "Pepys' Shakespeare Song", *Shakespeare Quarterly* (Volume VI, Spring 1955, Number 2, pp. 159–170). Emslie presents a seemingly accurate two-staff transcription of the *fingered* tablature letters, but does not comment on the possibility that open strings may also have sounded in the chords. Strum directions have been based on the style so regularly used in 'Beauty Retire.' The words are derived from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Rockford Mjos
Saint Paul, Minnesota
February 8, 2008
rockypeggy@earthlink.net

Beauty Retire

Music: Samuel Pepys
Lyrics: Sir William Davenant
Cambridge, Pepys Library, Magdalene College, MS.2591, pp. 210–211

Original clef.



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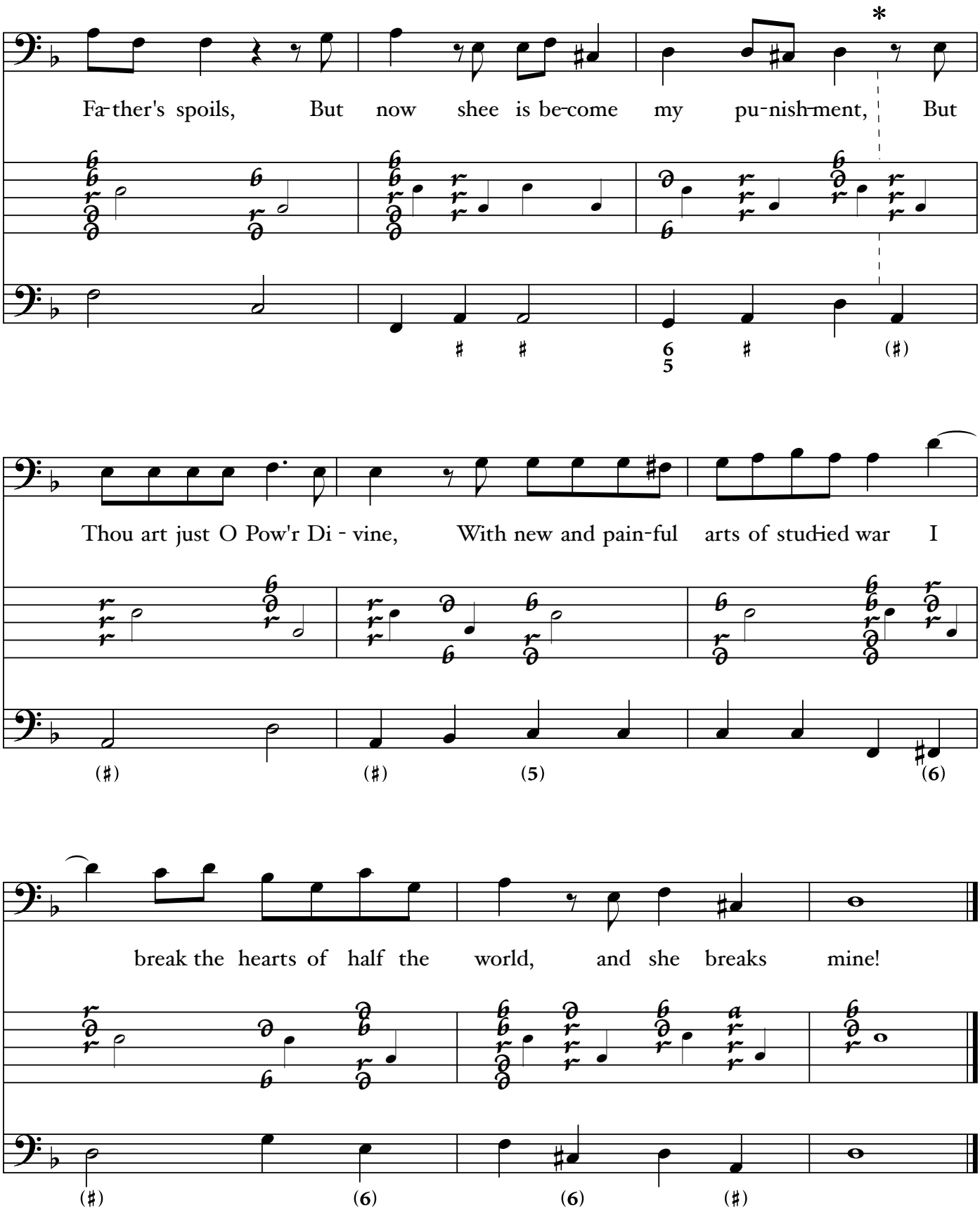

*From this point the melody, bass, and figures are adapted from a 1936 edition of the piece.
The guitar realization is based on the chords used for the earlier section.

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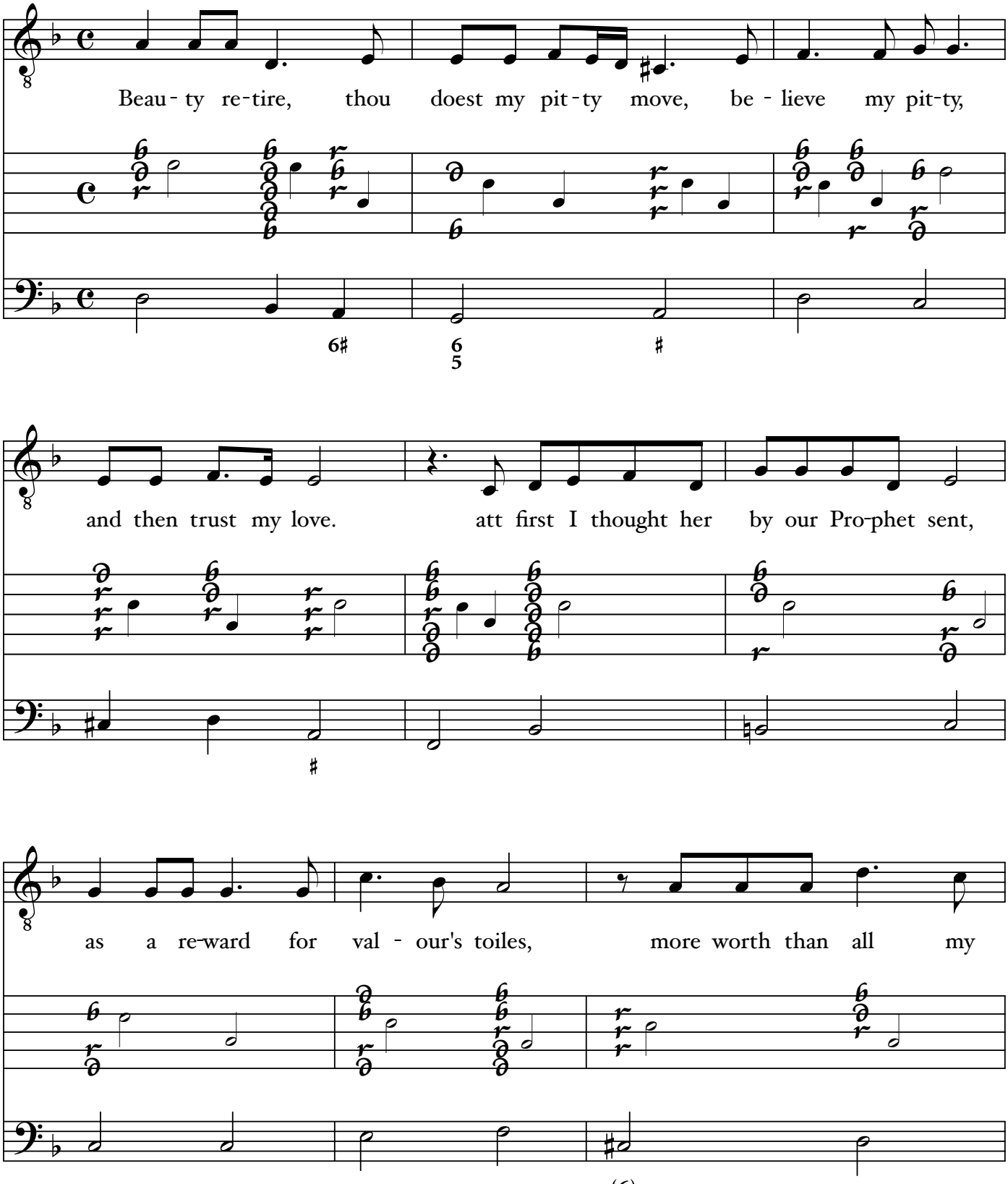
Original used bass clef.



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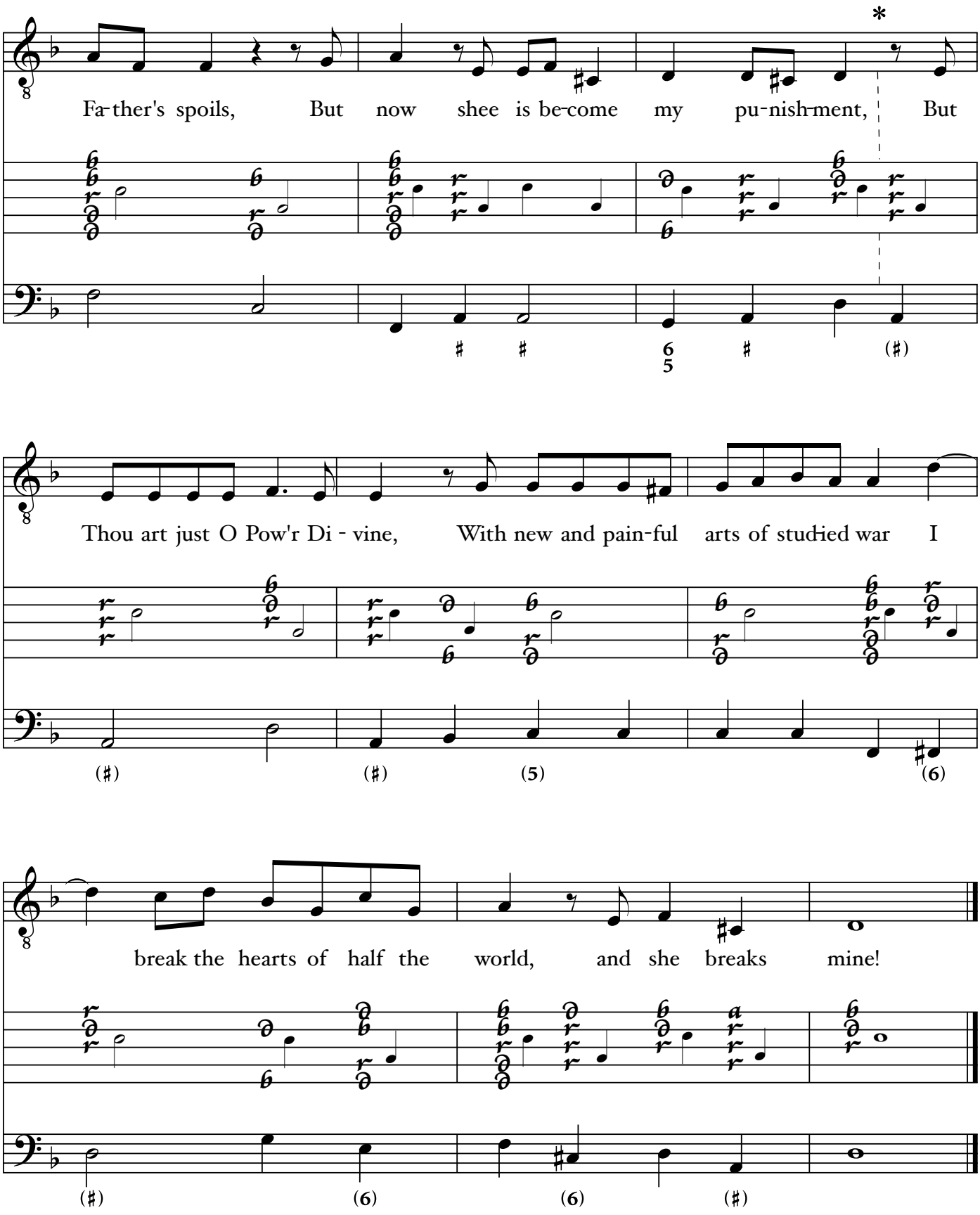

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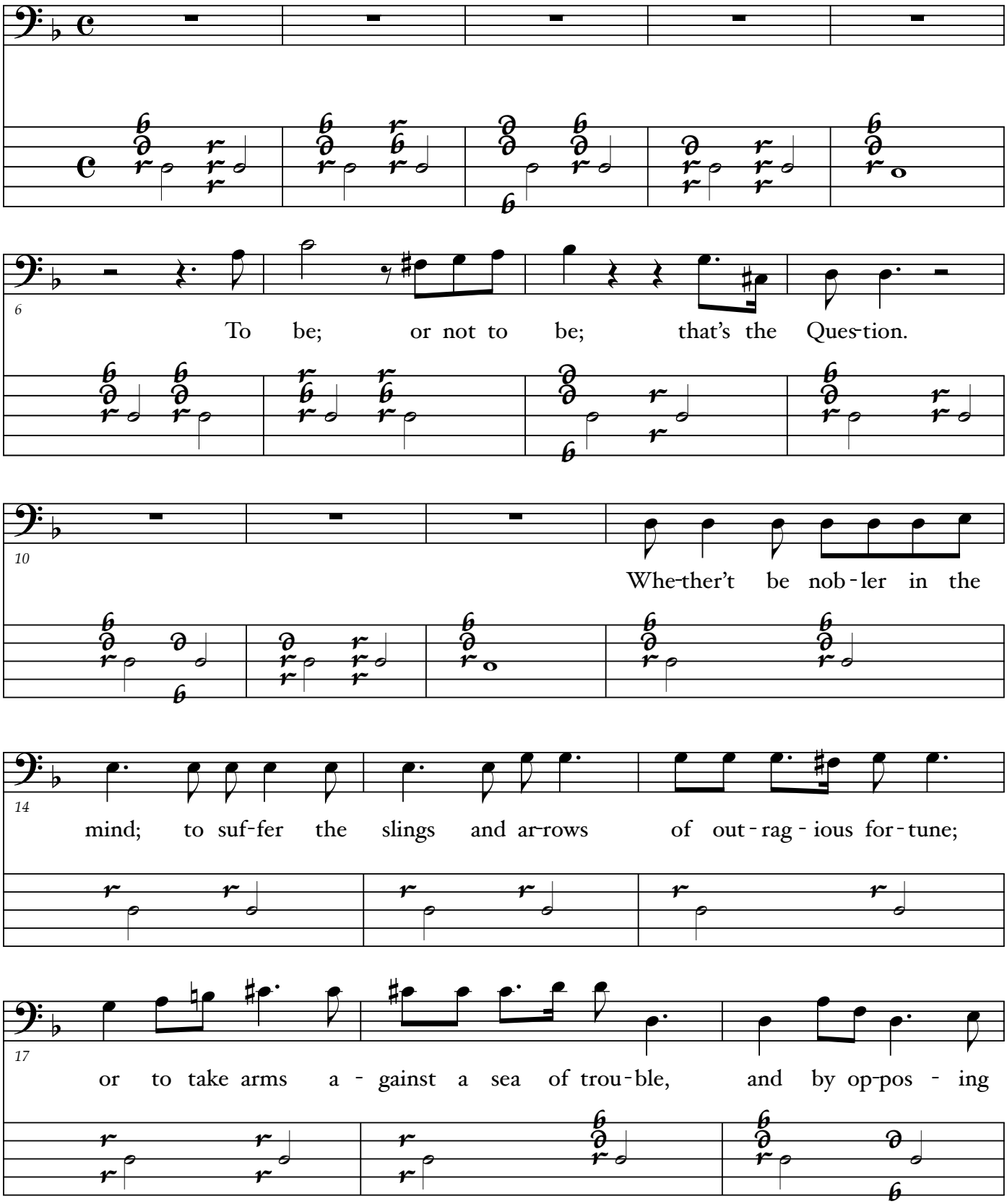

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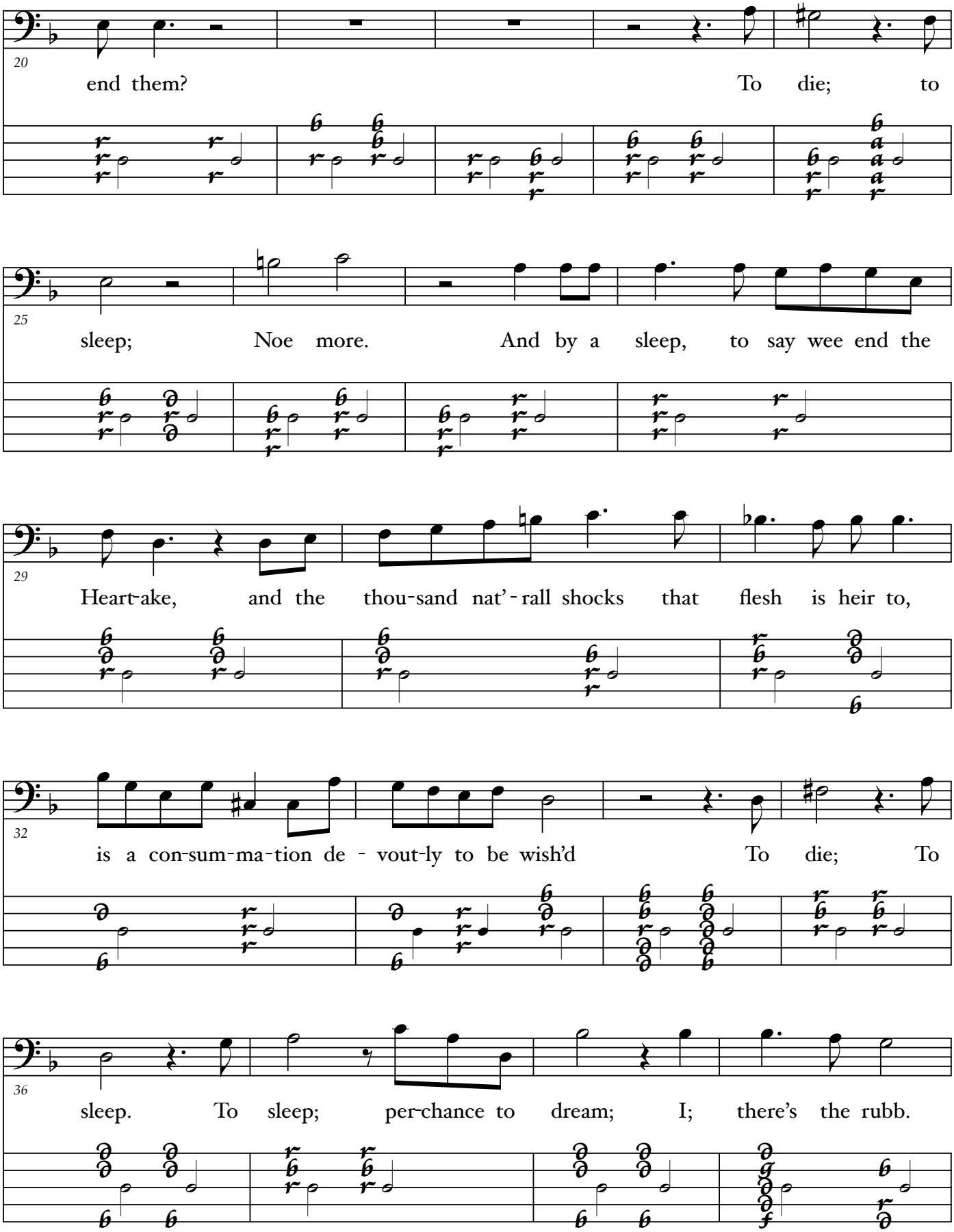
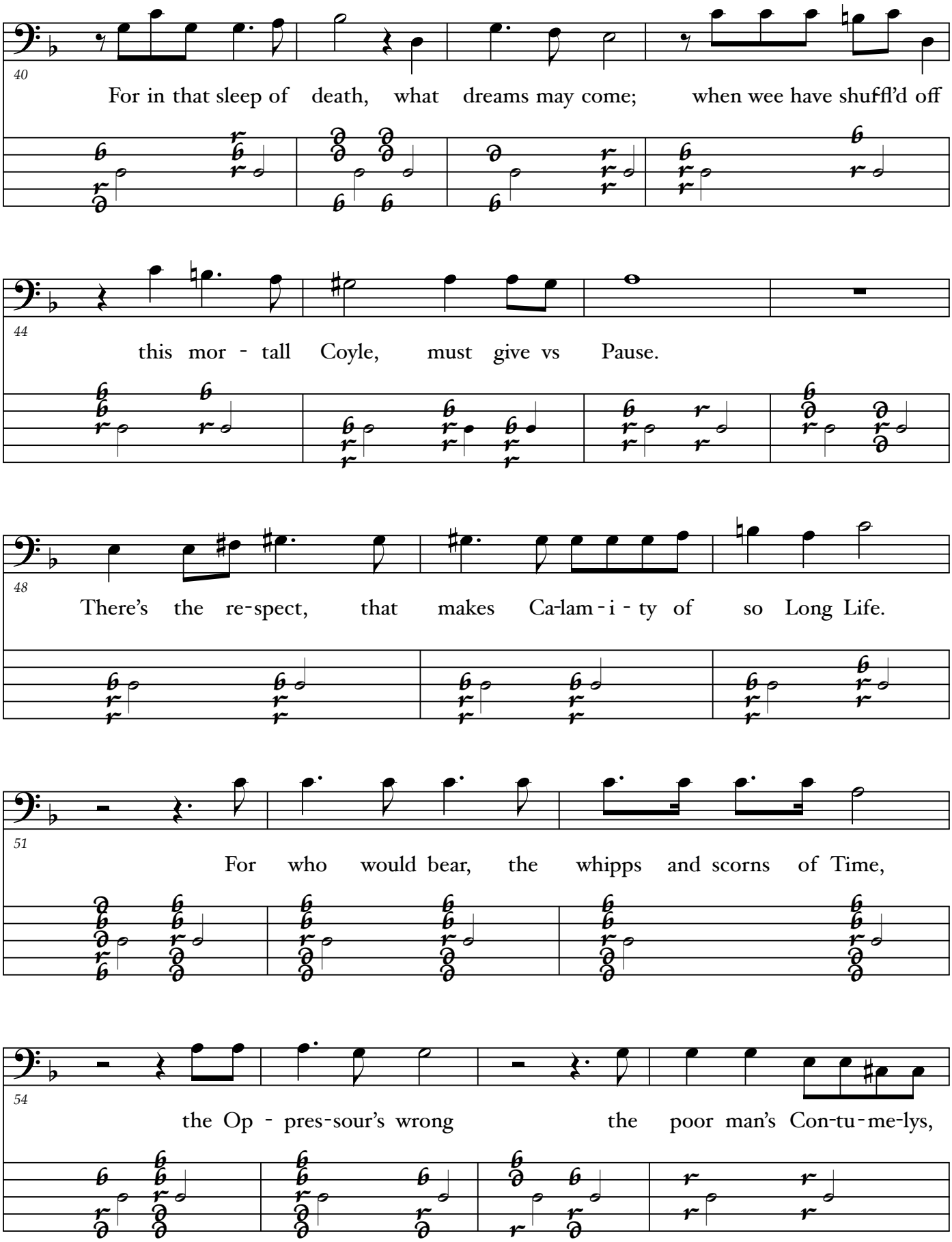

20
end them? To die; to
25
sleep; Noe more. And by a sleep, to say wee end the
29
Heart-ake, and the thou-sand nat'-rall shocks that flesh is heir to,
32
is a con-sum-ma-tion de - vout-ly to be wish'd To die; To
36
sleep. To sleep; per-chance to dream; I; there's the rubb.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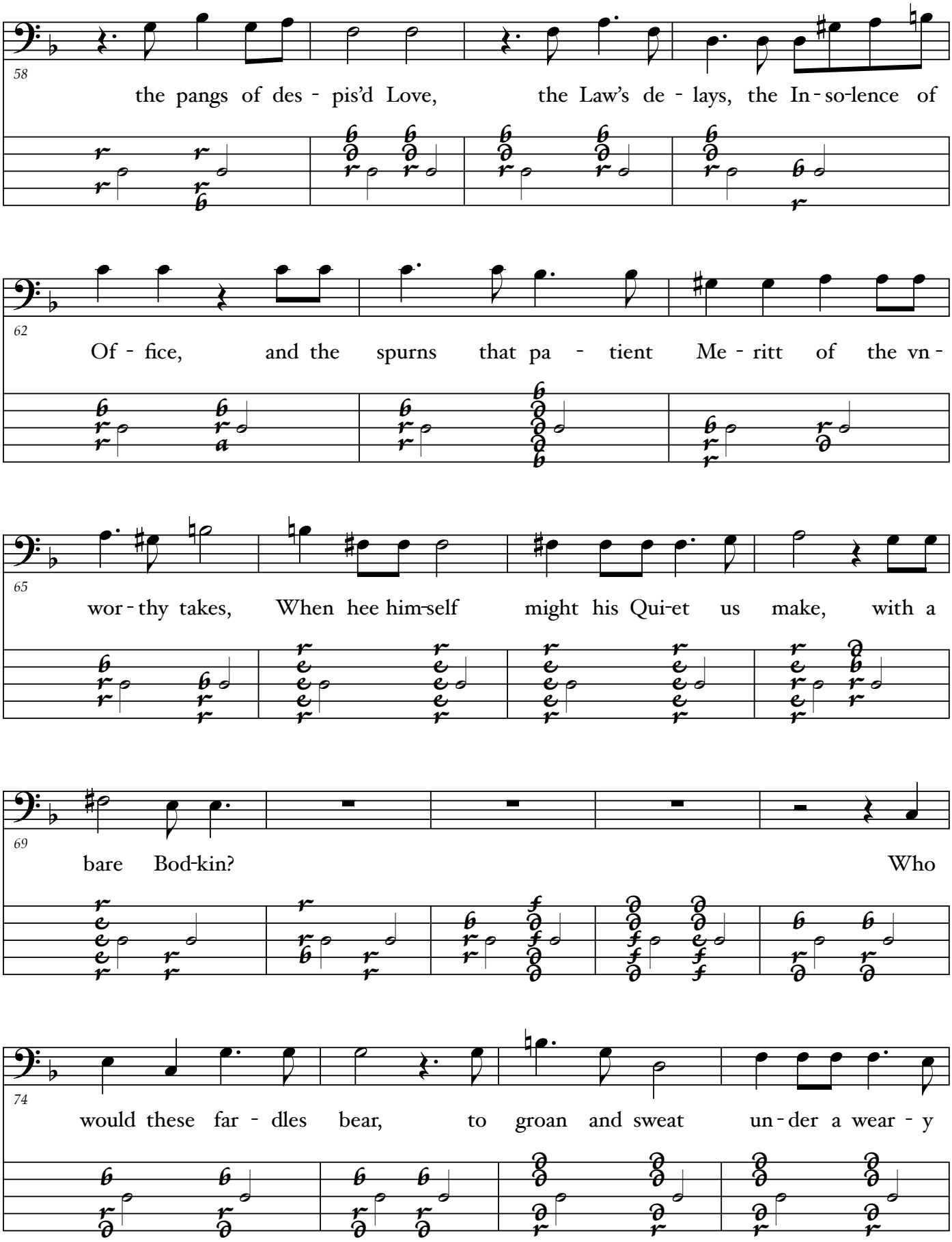
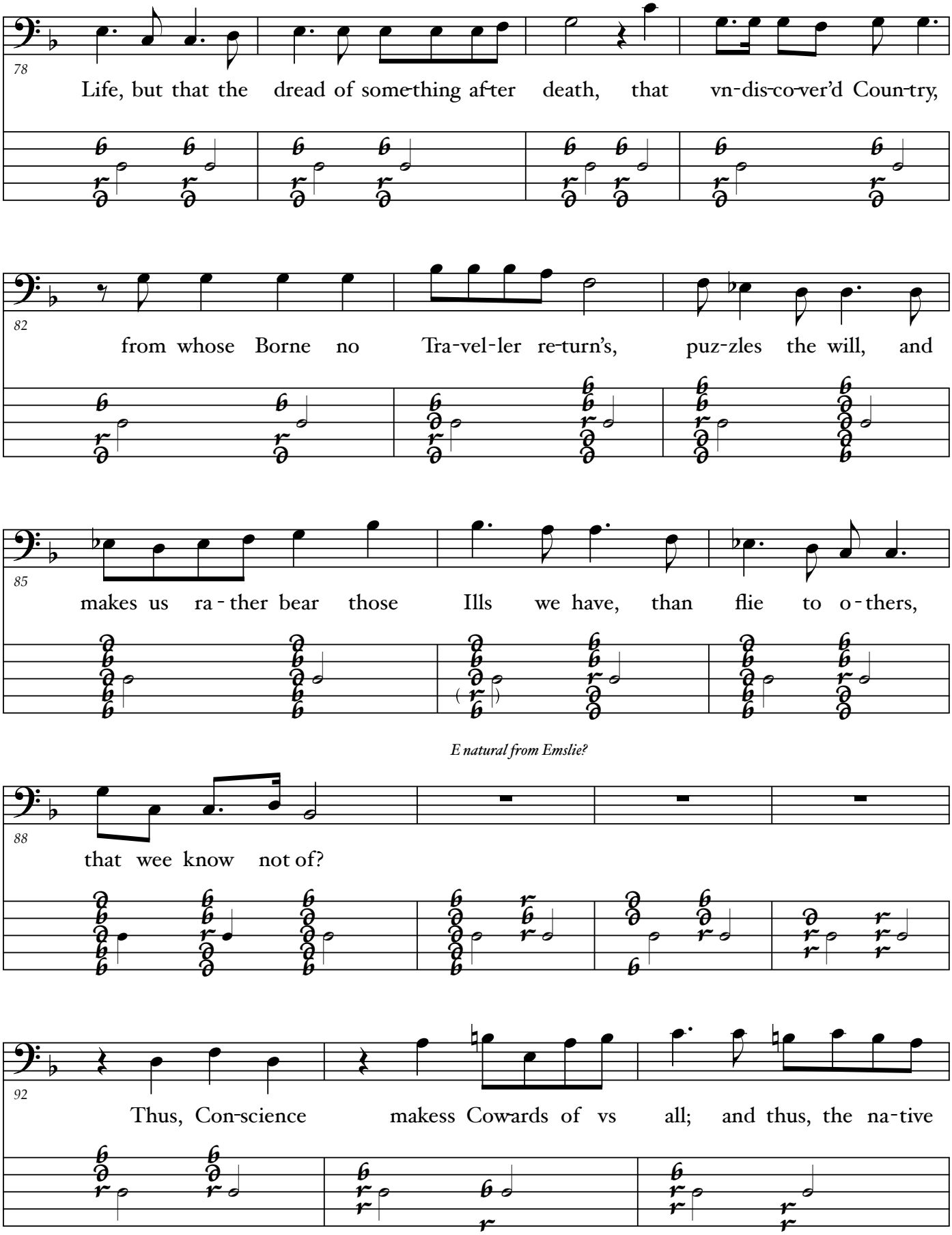
For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come; when wee have shuffl'd off
44
this mor - tall Coyle, must give vs Pause.
48
There's the re-spect, that makes Ca-lam-i-ty of so Long Life.
51
For who would bear, the whipps and scorns of Time,
54
the Op - pres-sour's wrong the poor man's Con-tu-me-lys,


58
the pangs of des - pis'd Love, the Law's de - lays, the In - so-lence of
62
Of - fice, and the spurns that pa - tient Me - ritt of the vn -
65
wor - thy takes, When hee him-self might his Qui-et us make, with a
69
bare Bod-kin? Who
74
would these far - dles bear, to groan and sweat un - der a wear - y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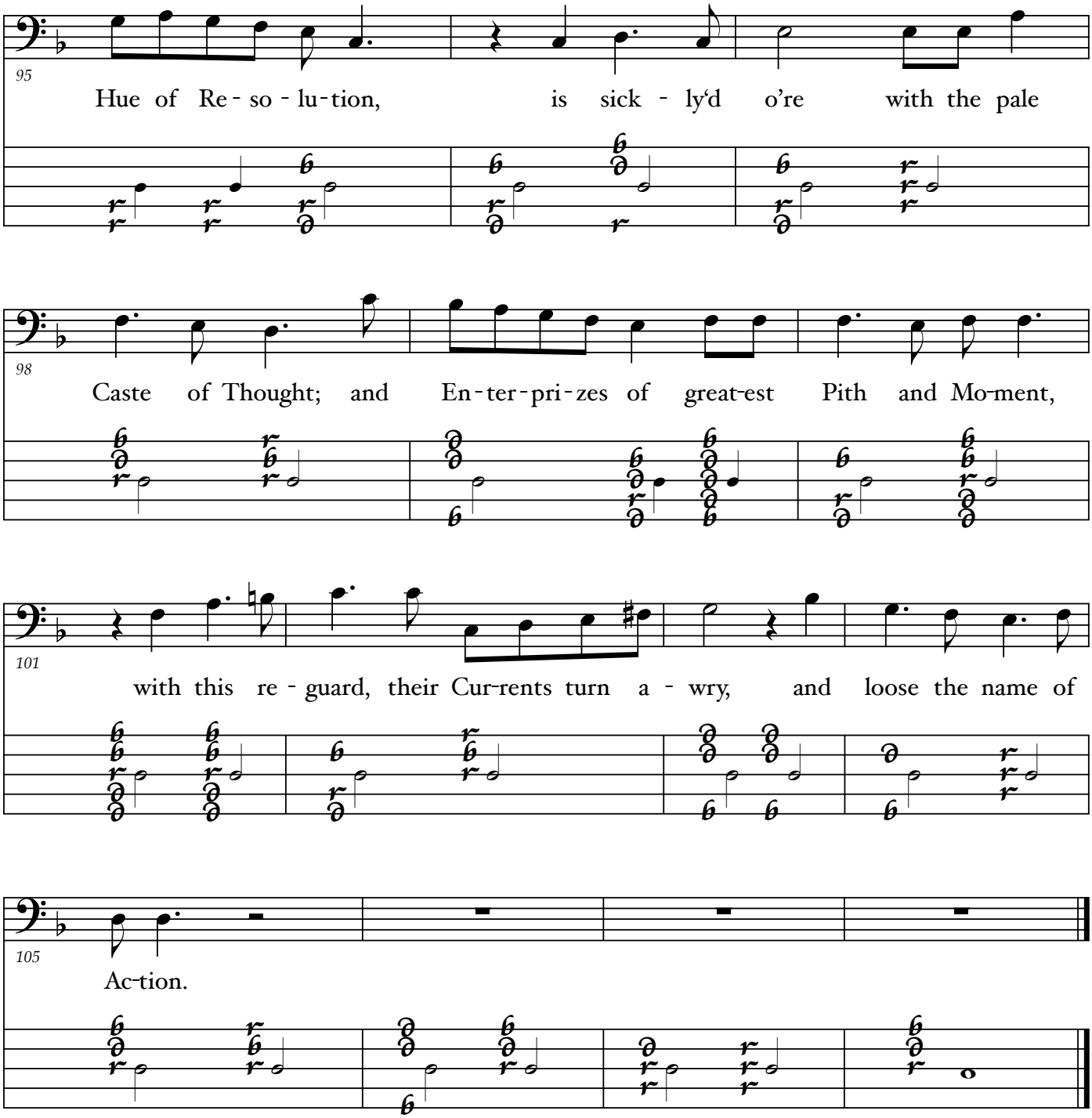
Life, but that the dread of some-thing af-ter death, that vn-dis-co-ver'd Coun-try,
82
from whose Borne no Tra-vel-ler re-turn's, puz-zles the will, and
85
makes us ra-ther bear those Ills we have, than flie to o-thers,
E natural from Emslie?
88
that wee know not of?
92
Thus, Con-science makess Cowards of vs all; and thus, the na-tive


95
Hue of Re - so - lu - tion, is sick - ly'd o're with the pale
98
Caste of Thought; and En - ter - pri - zes of great - est Pith and Mo - ment,
101
with this re - guard, their Cur - rents turn a - wry, and loose the name of
105
Ac - tion.

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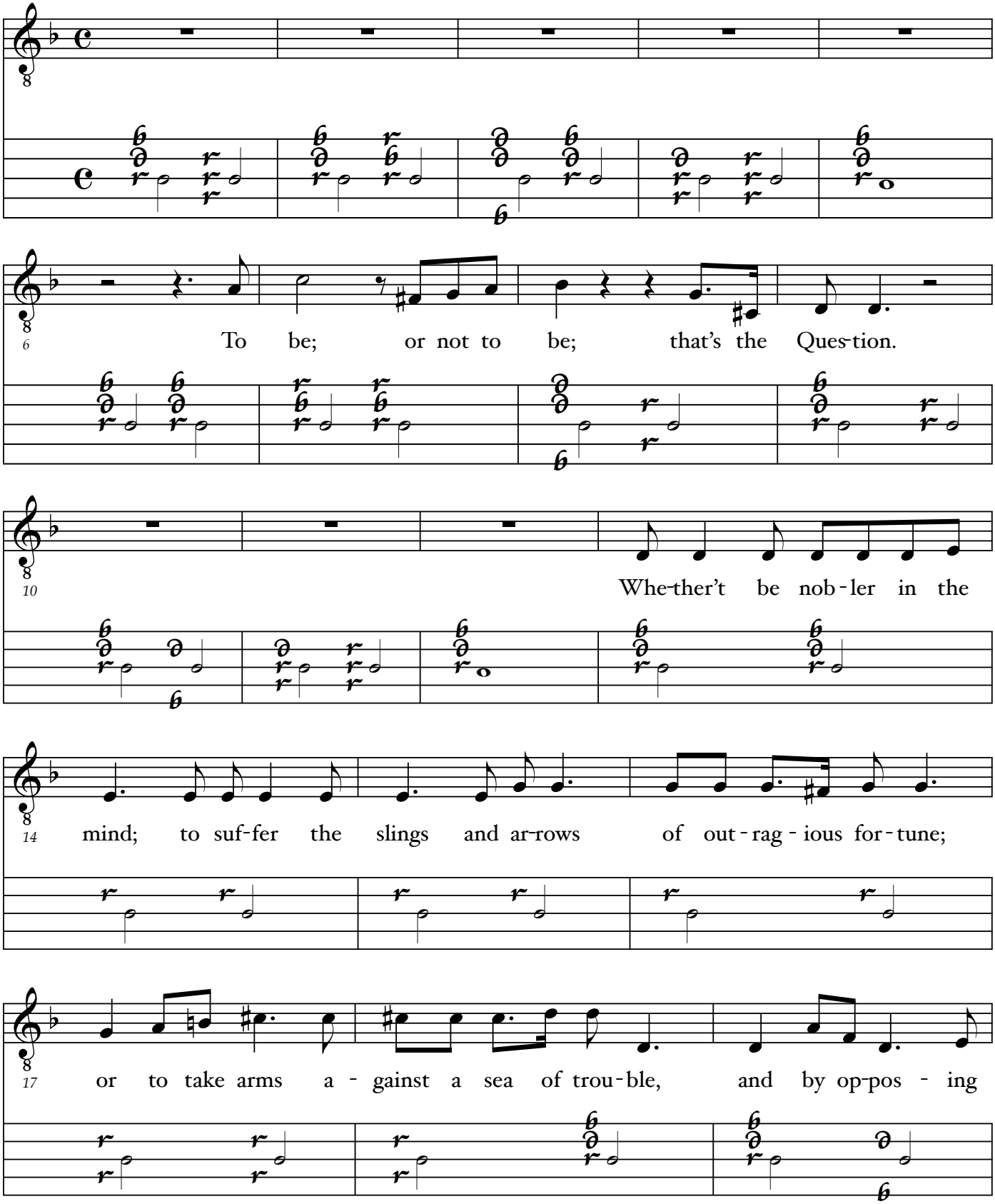

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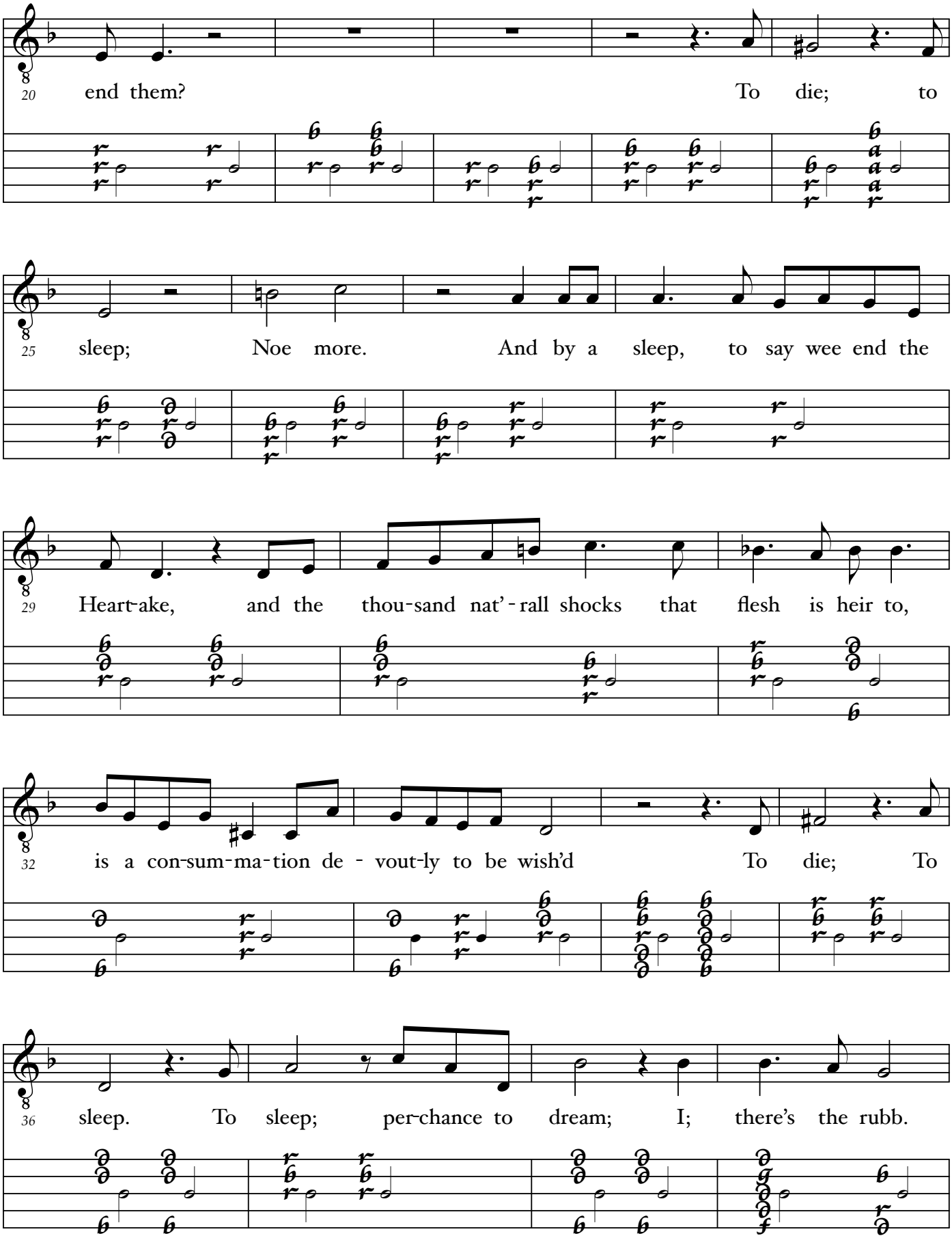
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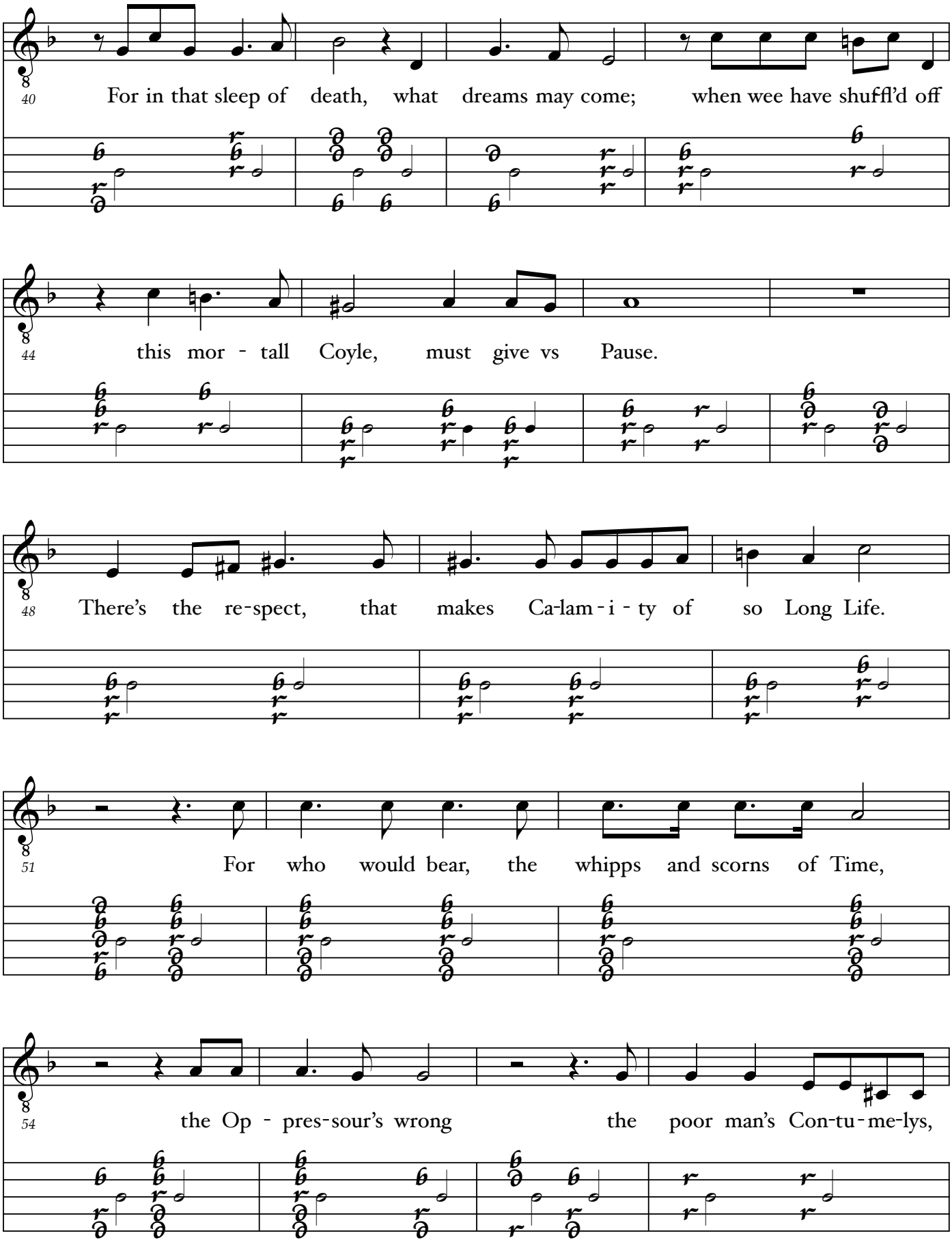
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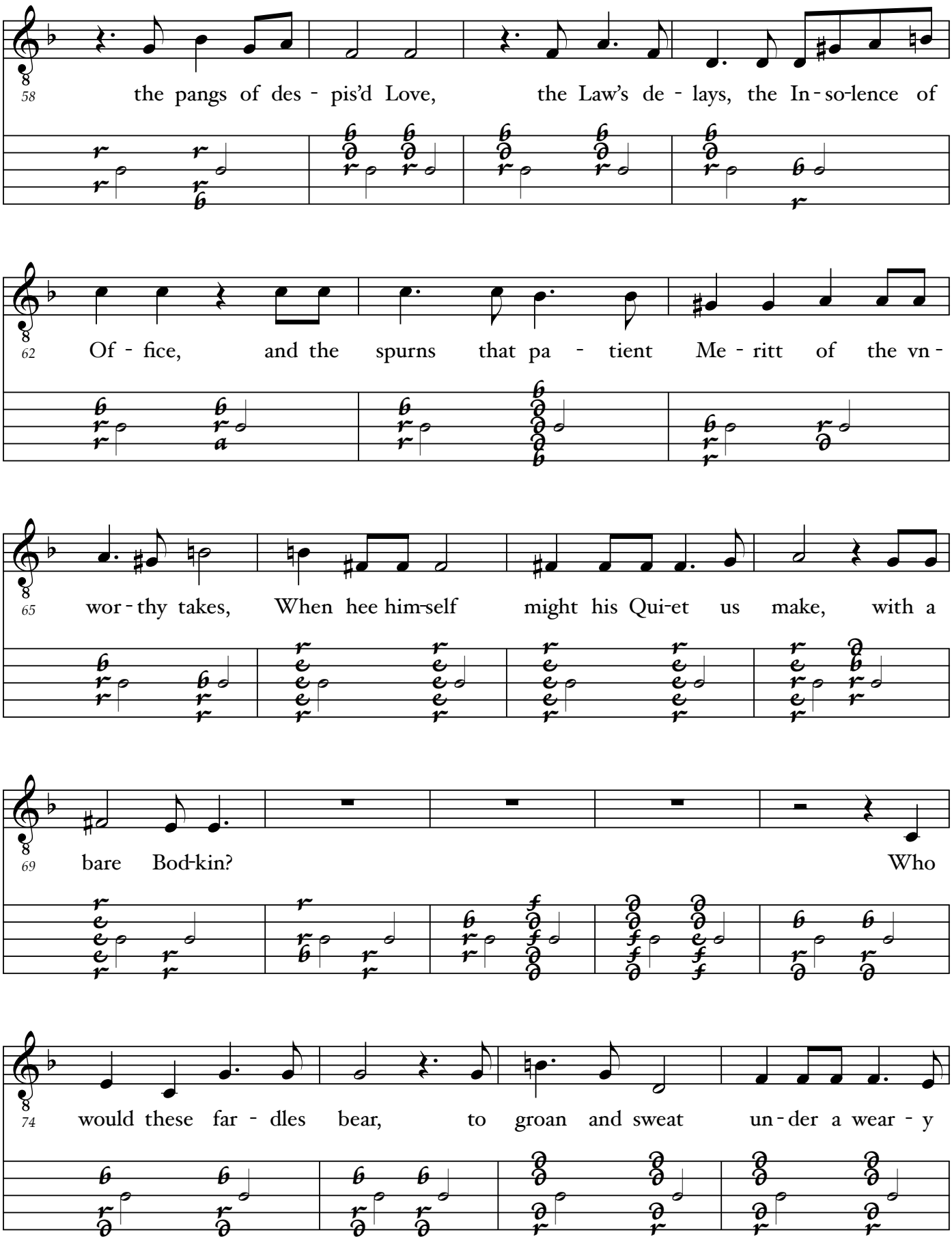
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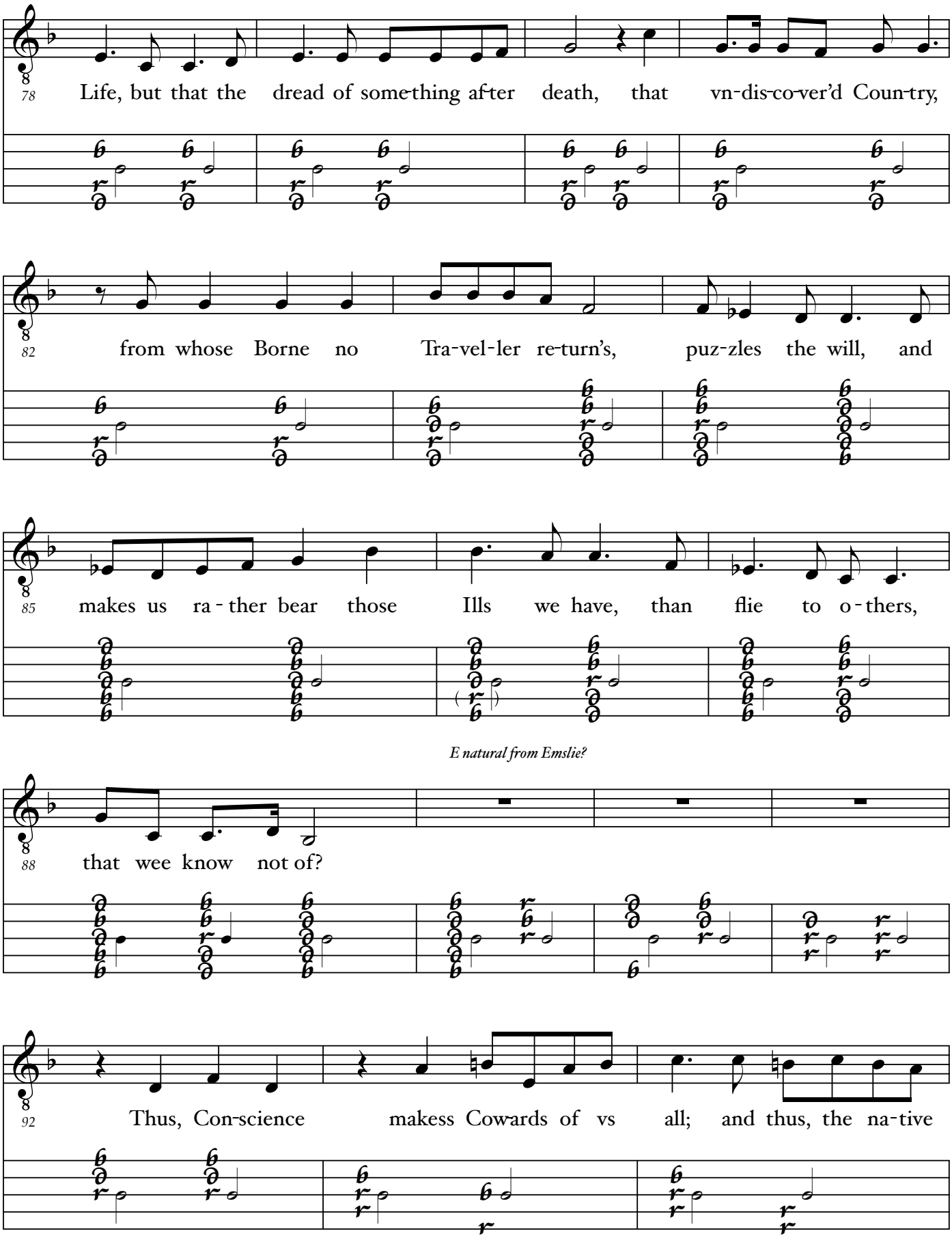
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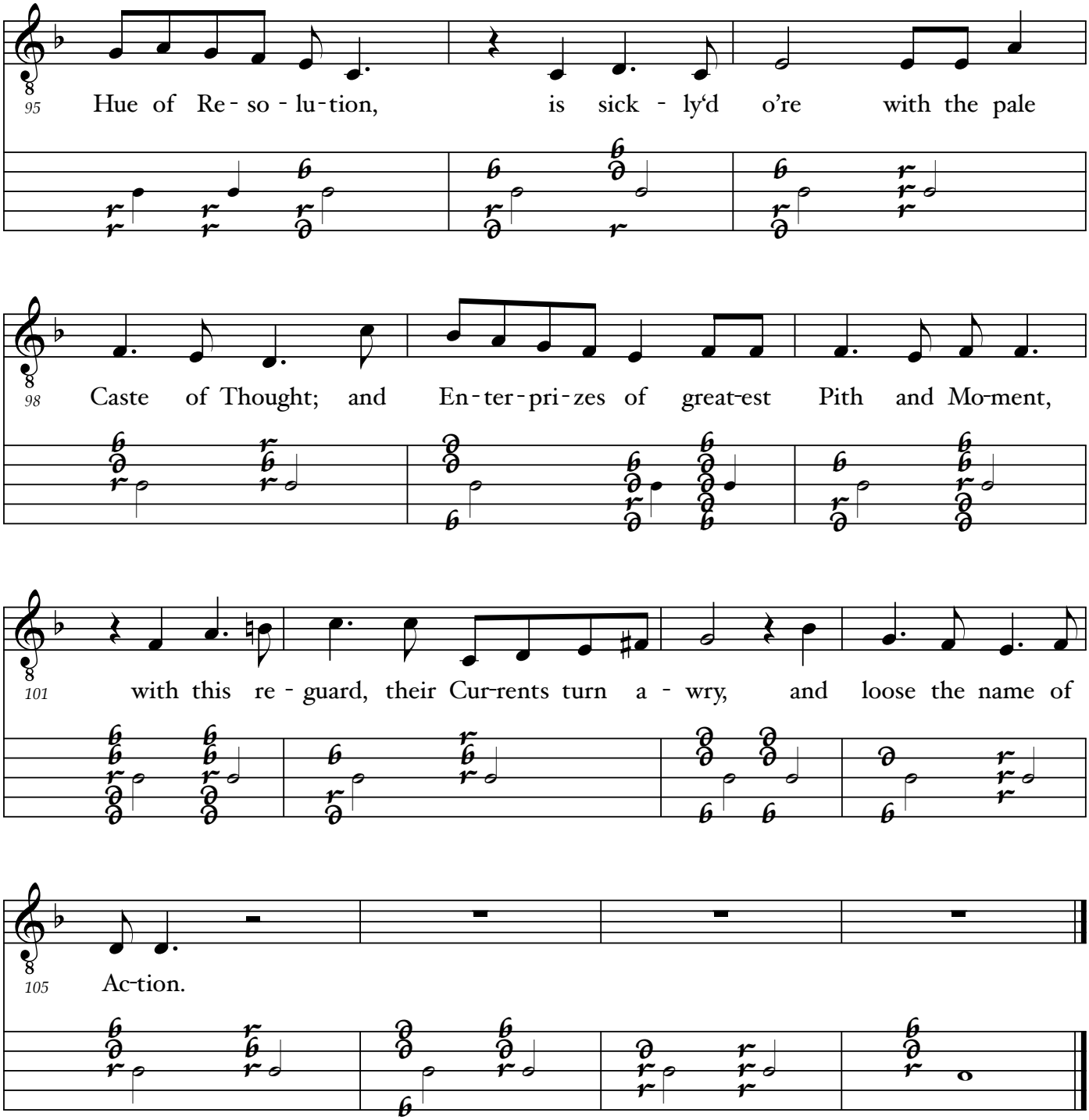
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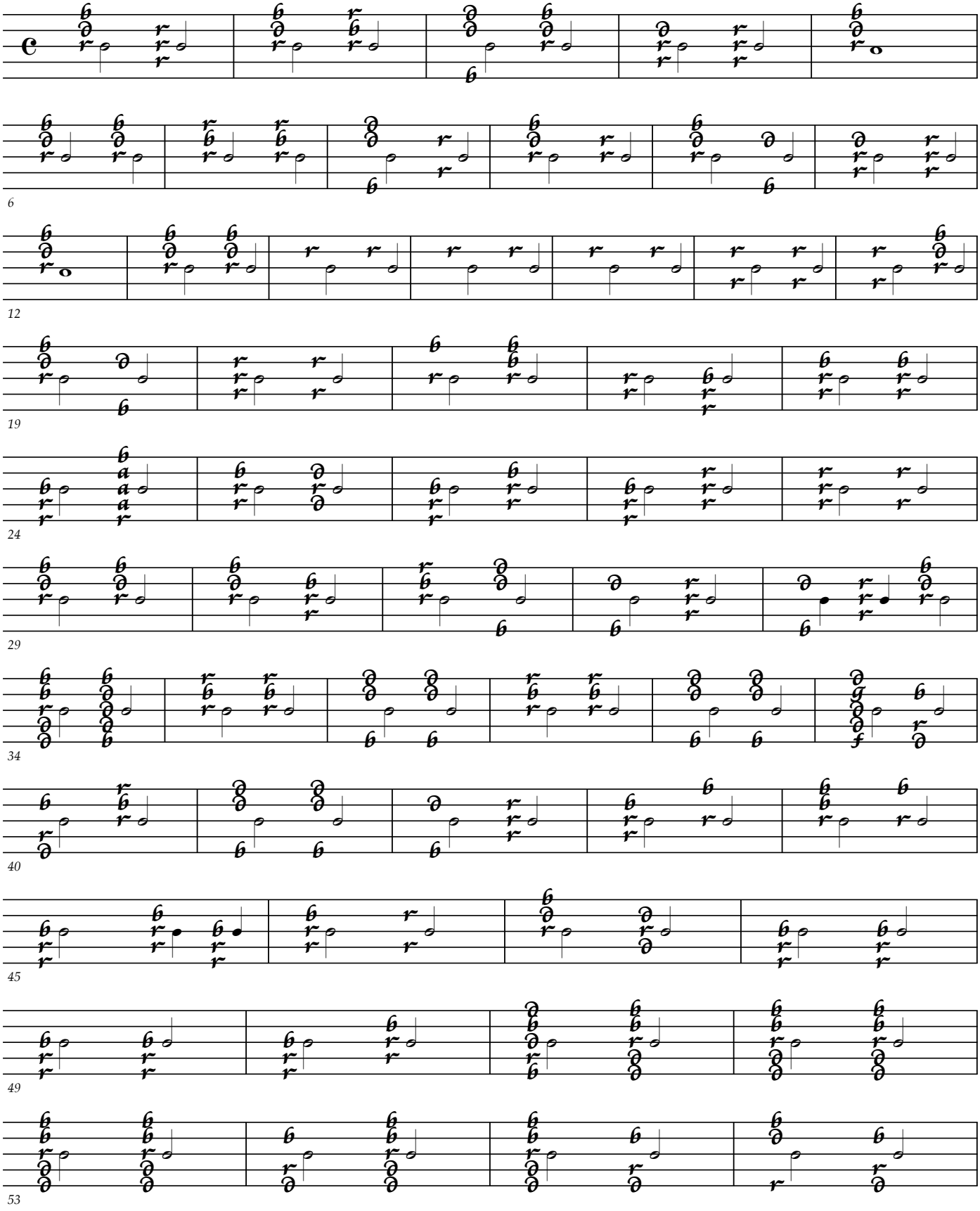

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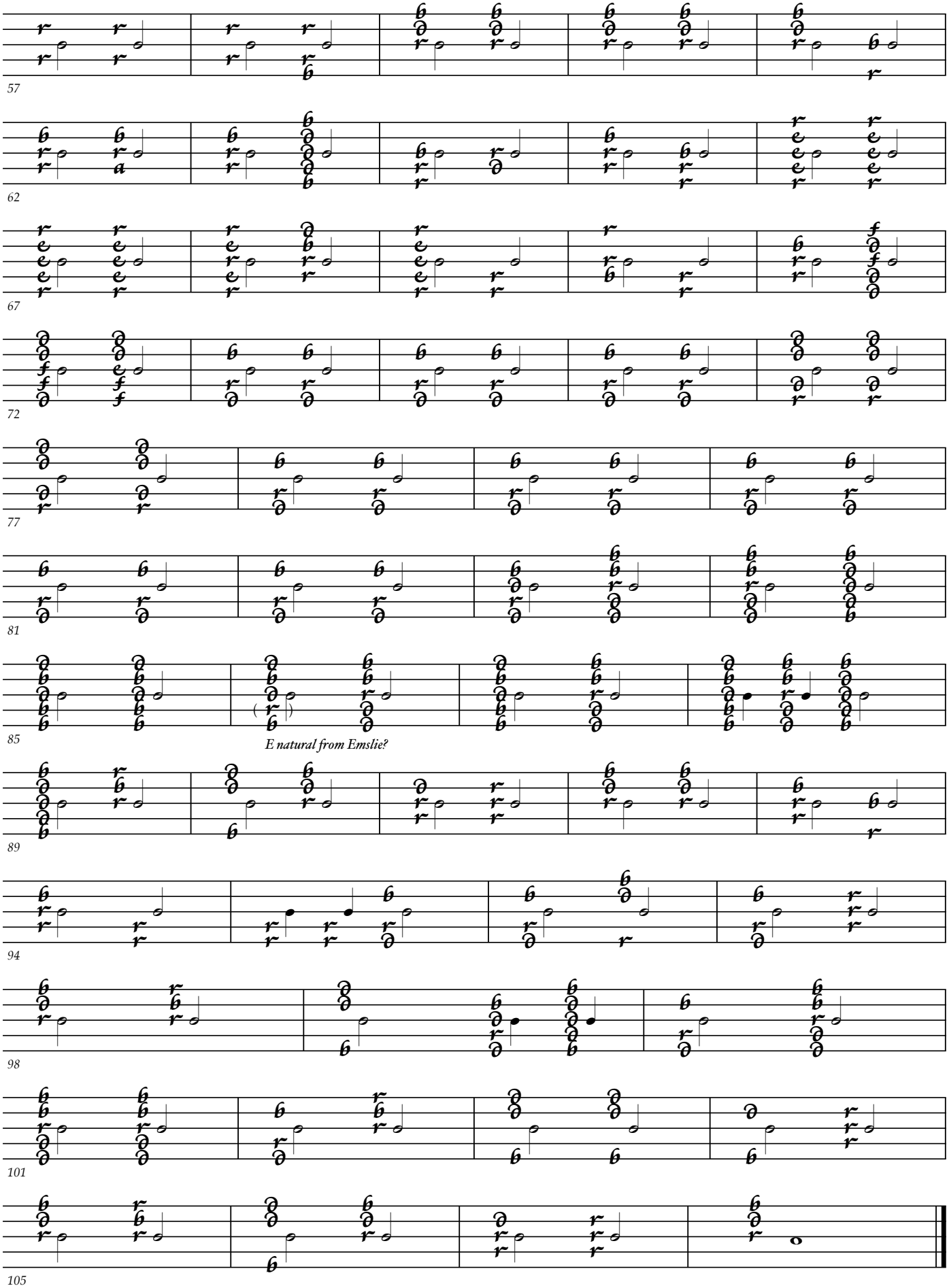

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