"Rememberance

of Ann's Death"

scene v from *Ann and Abe*

by Eric Simonson (2015)

The subject of this opera concerns the legendary (and historically controversial) romance between Ann Rutledge and the young Abraham Lincoln. The characters include: Abraham Lincoln, Ann Rutledge, Mary Todd Lincoln, Ward Lamon, a French Street Peddler, law partners of Lincoln, James Rutledge, John McNamar (fiancé of Ann Rutledge), townspeople of Danville, Illinois and townspeople of New Salem, Illinois.

In this scene (scene v): Sometime in the 1850's, Lincoln has ended another day working as a lawyer in a small town in central Illinois. In reverie, he recalls the death of Ann and his resulting “melancholy.” He attempts to lighten his mood by recalling a funny story he used to tell. The story is enacted in pantomime as it is being told. A narrating chorus of female voices recalls additional details about Ann's character, as well as gives the punchline to the funny story.

The Characters:

Abraham Lincoln (tenor or lyric baritone)
3 female singers (of varying voice types, singing in unison)
2 pantomime artists (a man and an elderly woman)

Duration: 9 minutes approximately

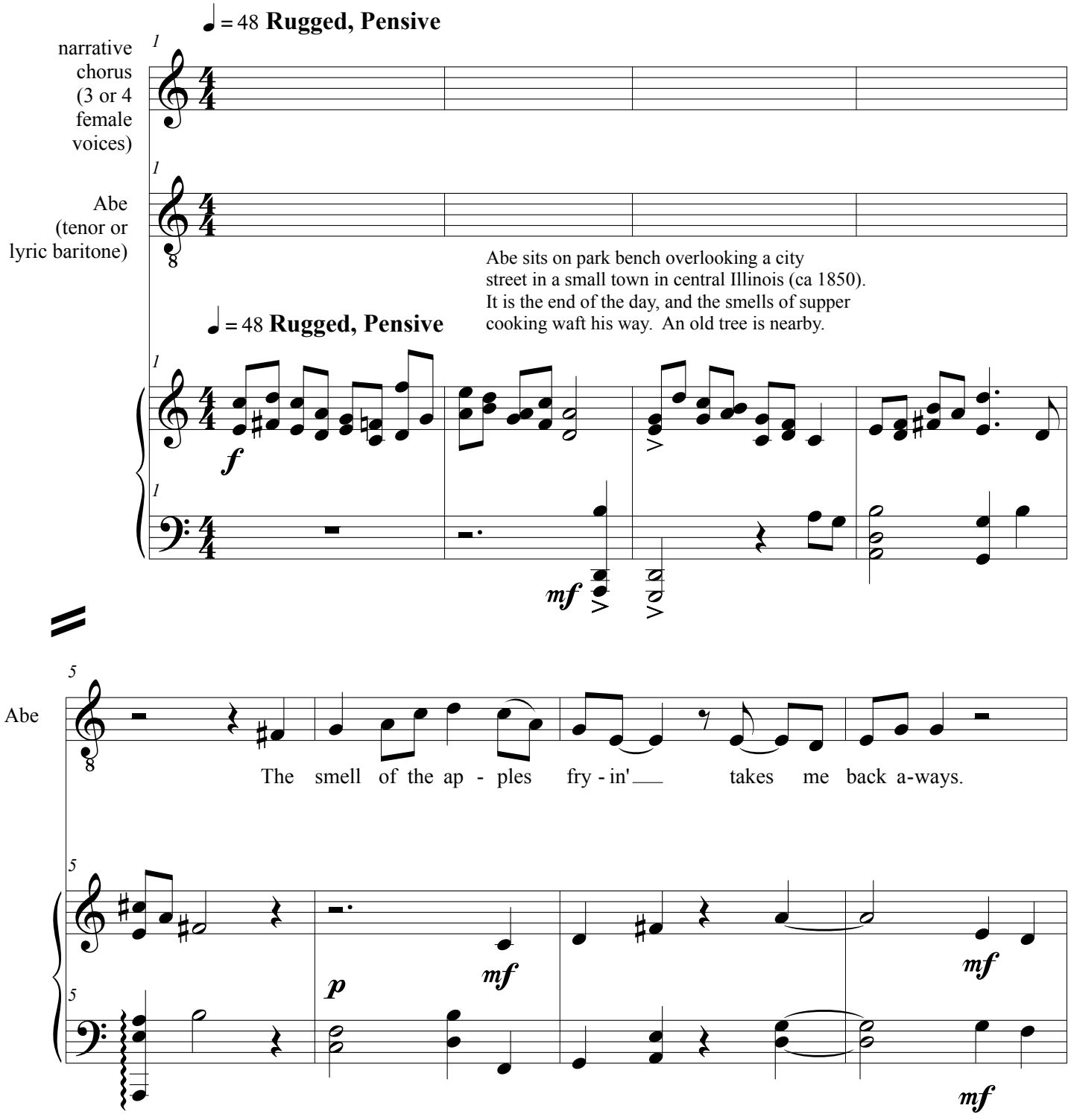
Remembrance of Ann's Death

from

Ann and Abe

Score

Eric Simonson



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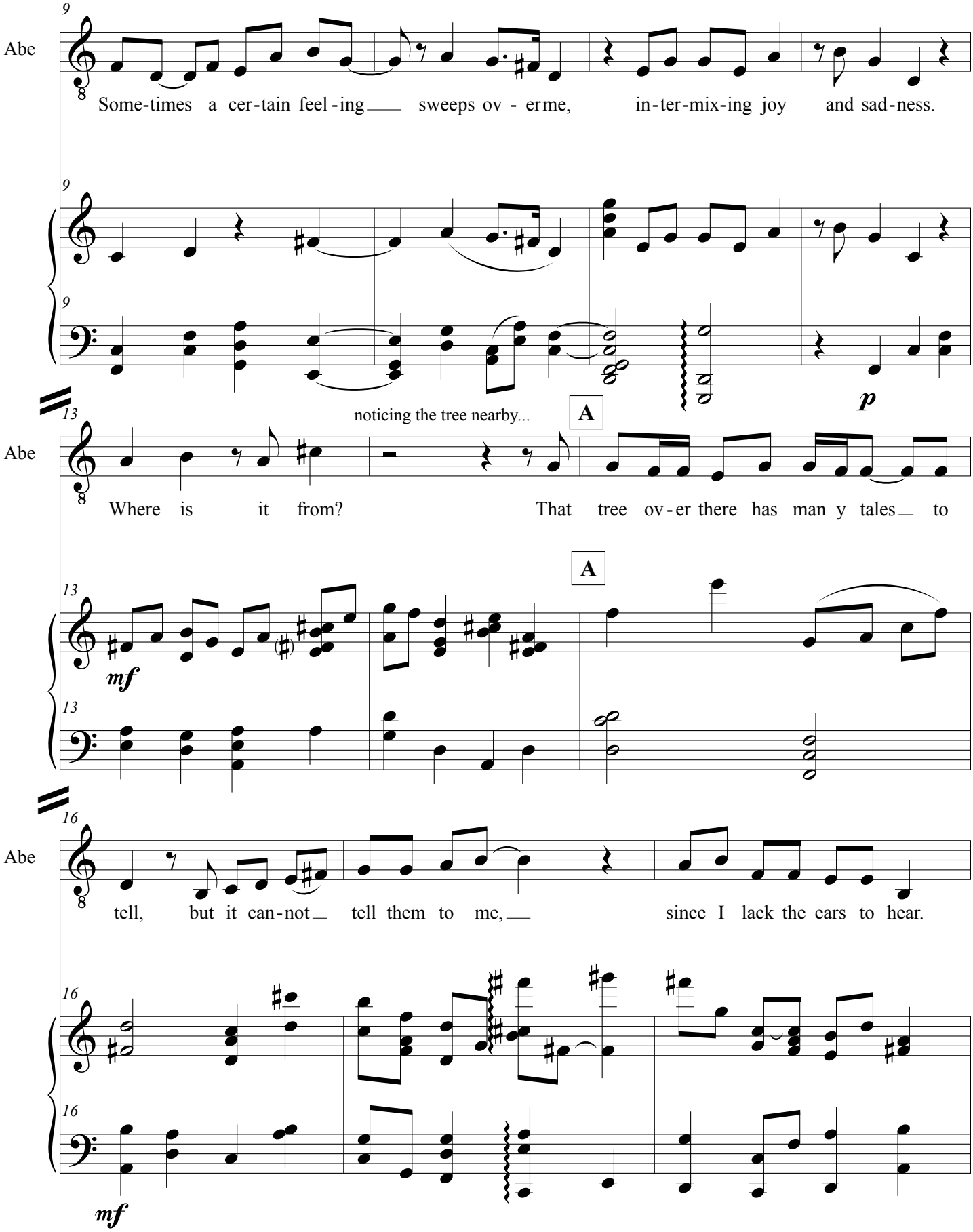
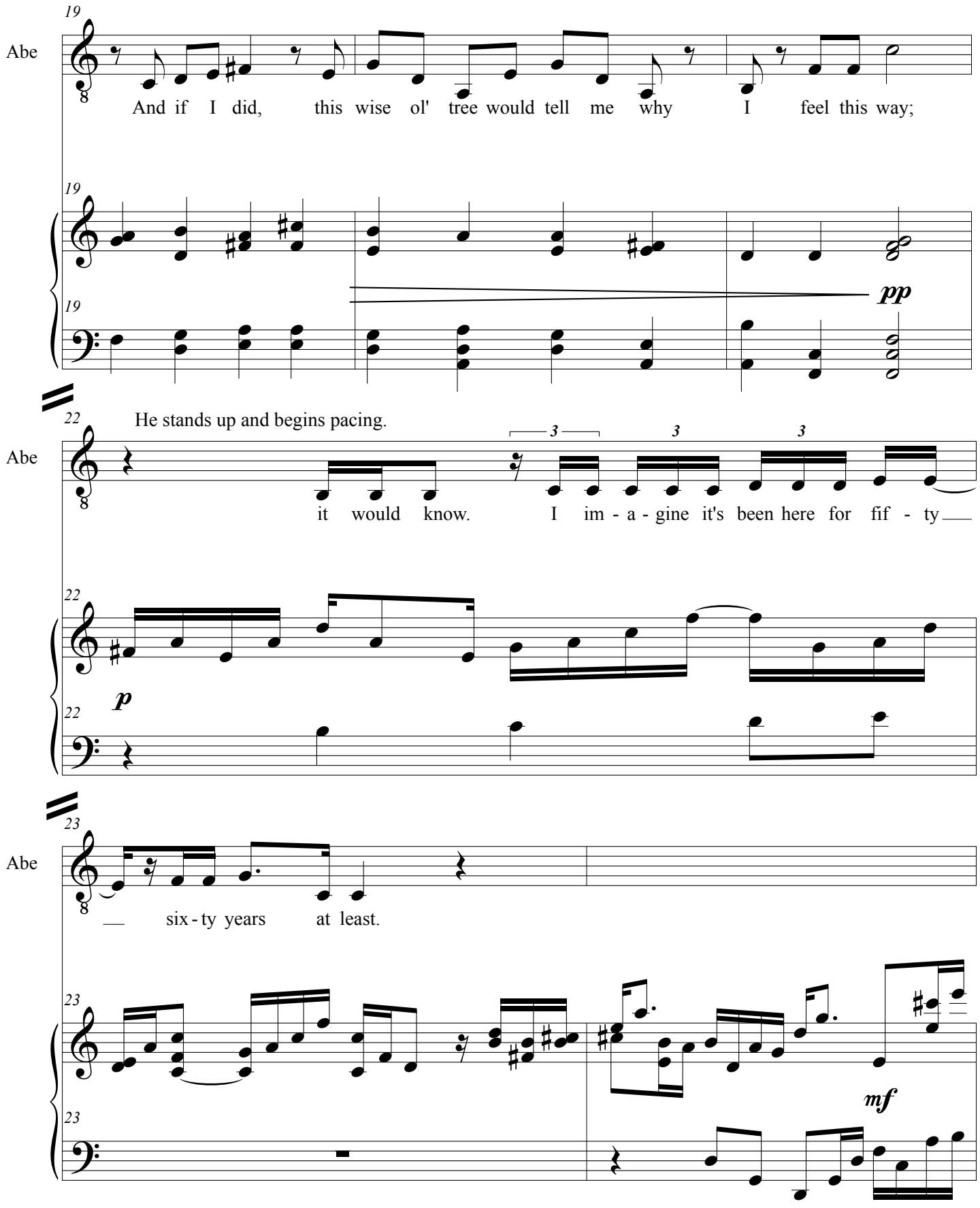
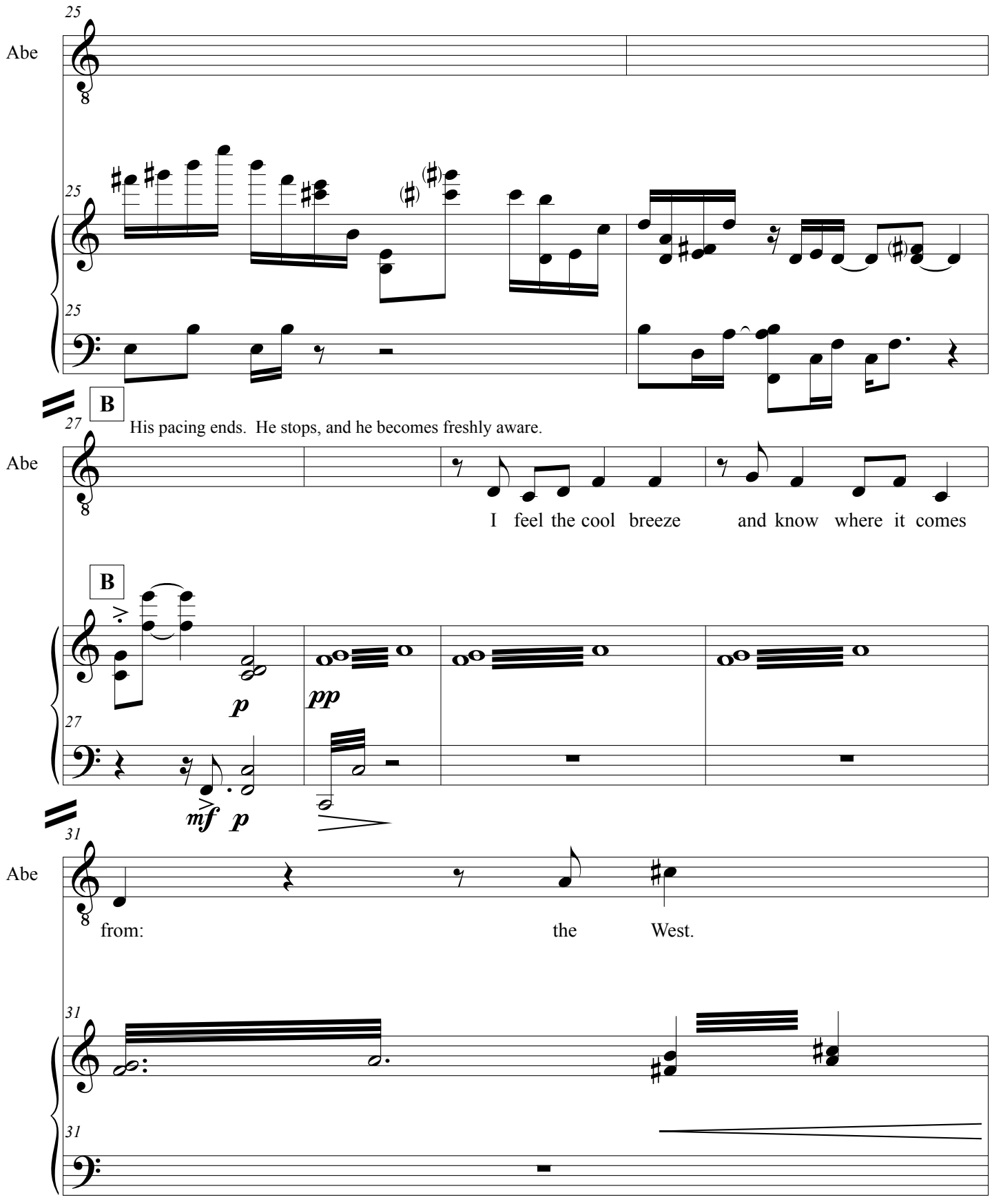
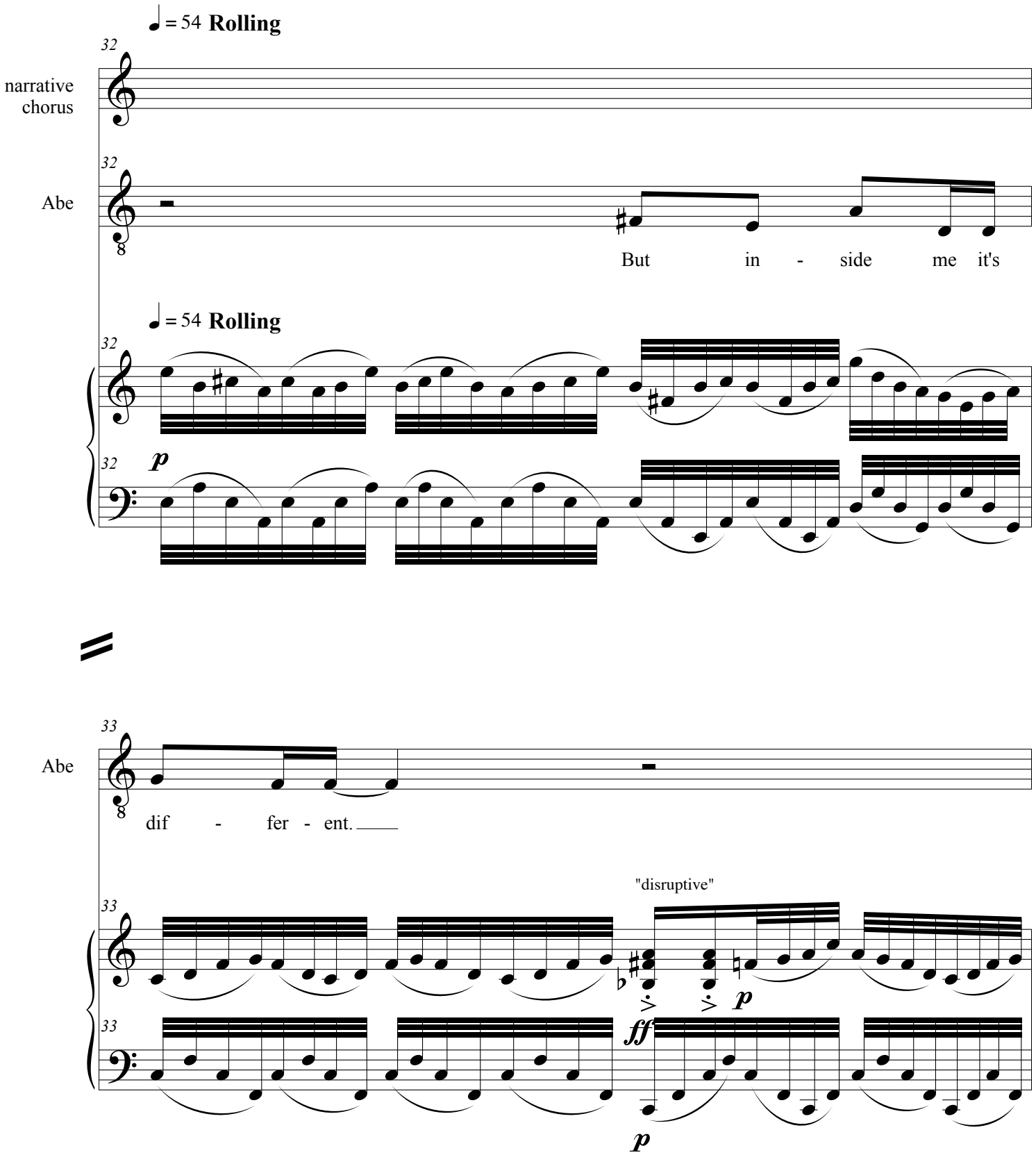
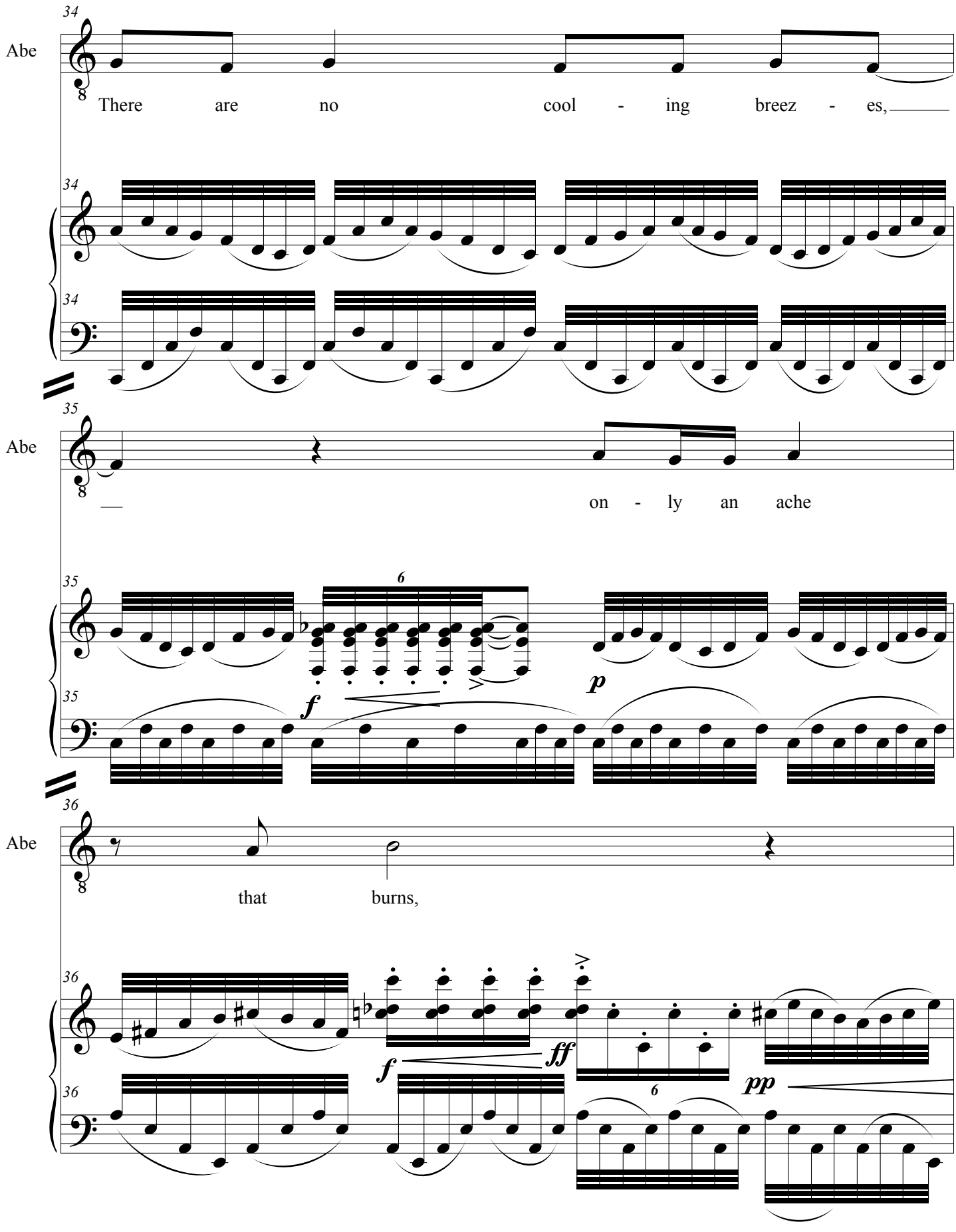
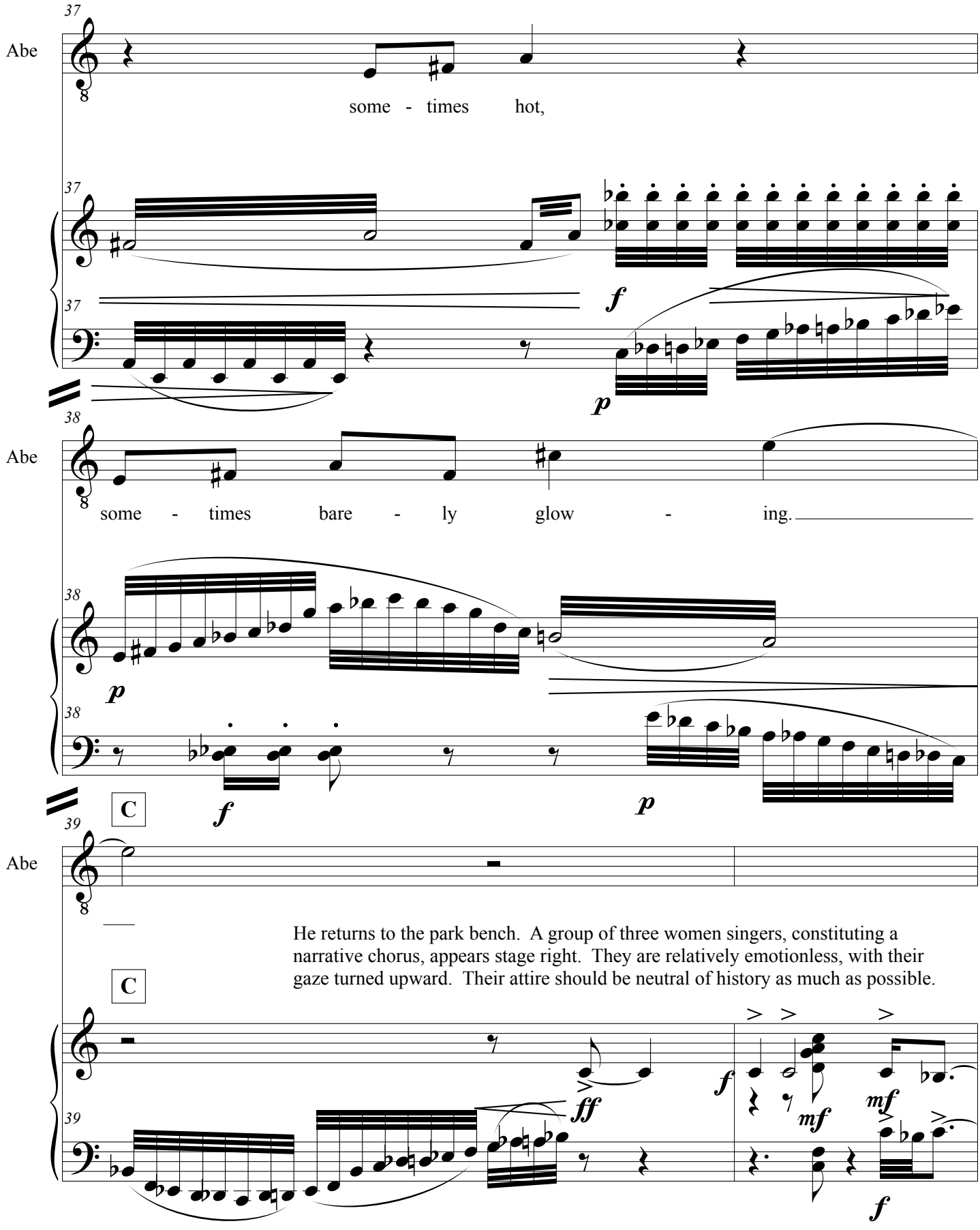

9
Abe
Some-times a cer-tain feel-ing sweeps ov - er me, in-ter-mix-ing joy and sad-ness.
9
9
p
13
noticing the tree nearby...
A
Abe
Where is it from? That tree ov-er there has man y tales to
A
13
mf
13
16
Abe
tell, but it can-not tell them to me, since I lack the ears to hear.
16
16
mf

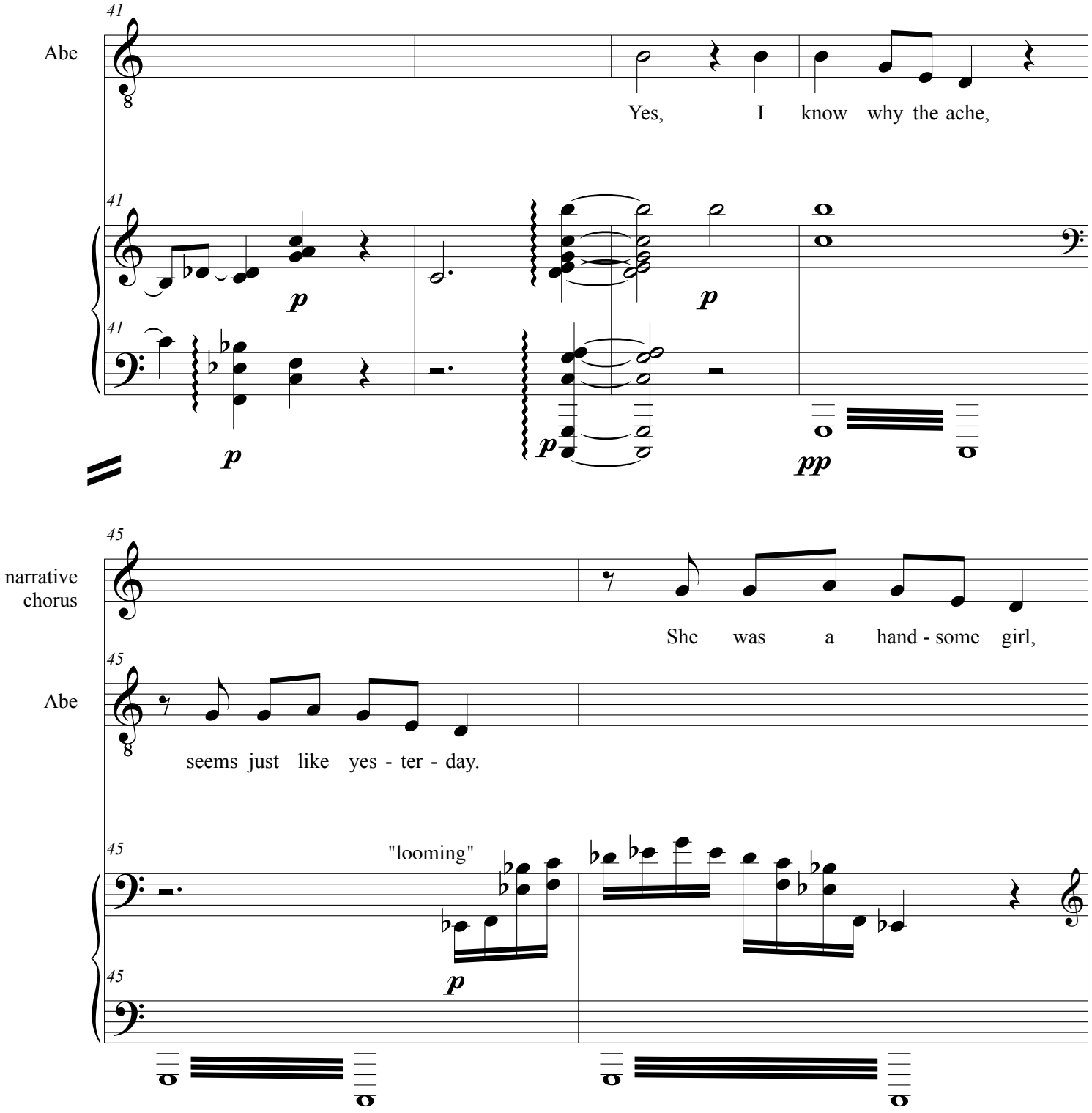

19
Abe
And if I did, this wise ol' tree would tell me why I feel this way;
19
19
pp
22
He stands up and begins pacing.
Abe
3
3
3
it would know. I im - a - gine it's been here for fif - ty
22
22
p
23
Abe
six - ty years at least.
23
23
mf

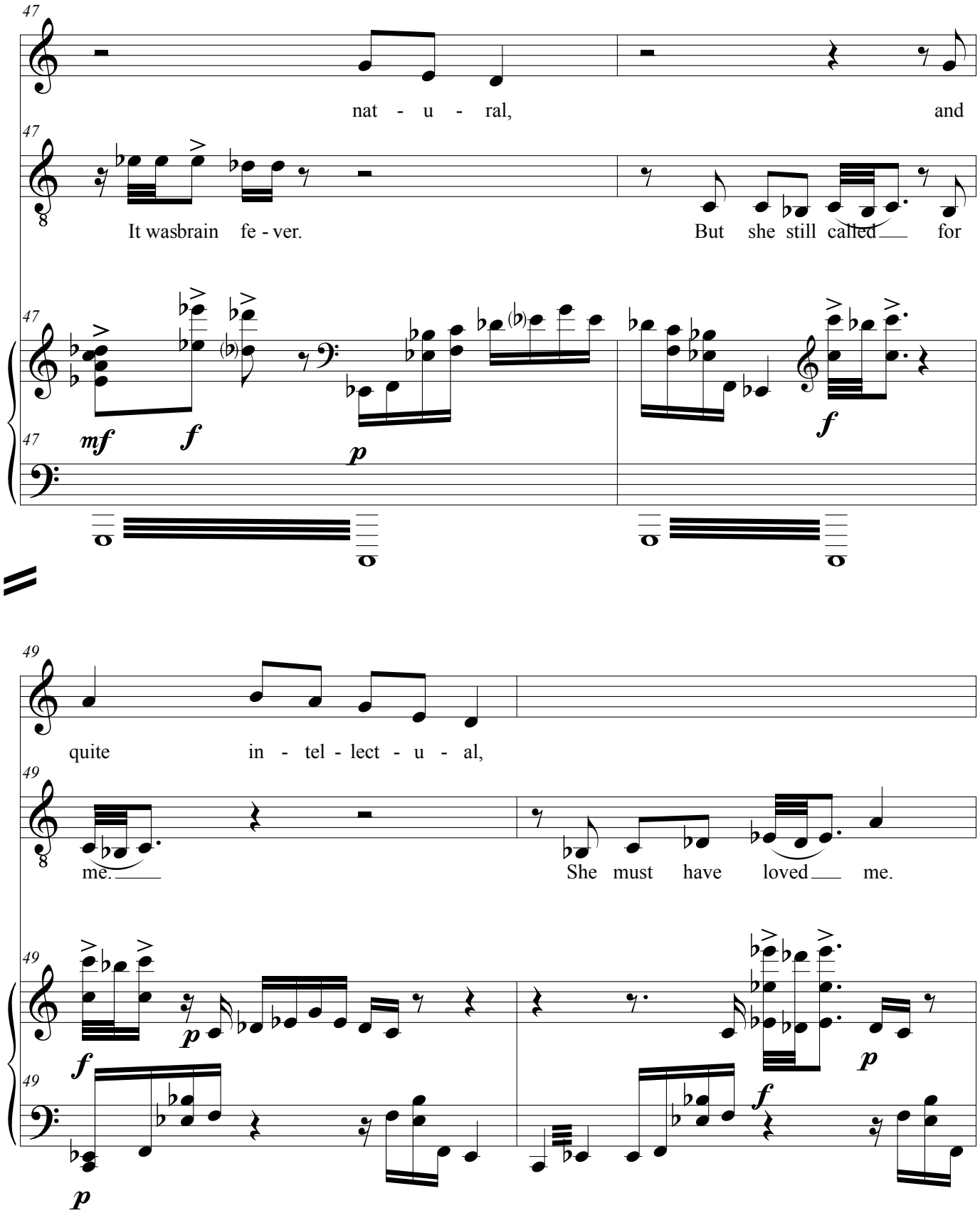

25
Abe
25
25
B
27
His pacing ends. He stops, and he becomes freshly aware.
Abe
I feel the cool breeze and know where it comes
B
p
pp
27
mf
p
31
Abe
from: the West.
31
31

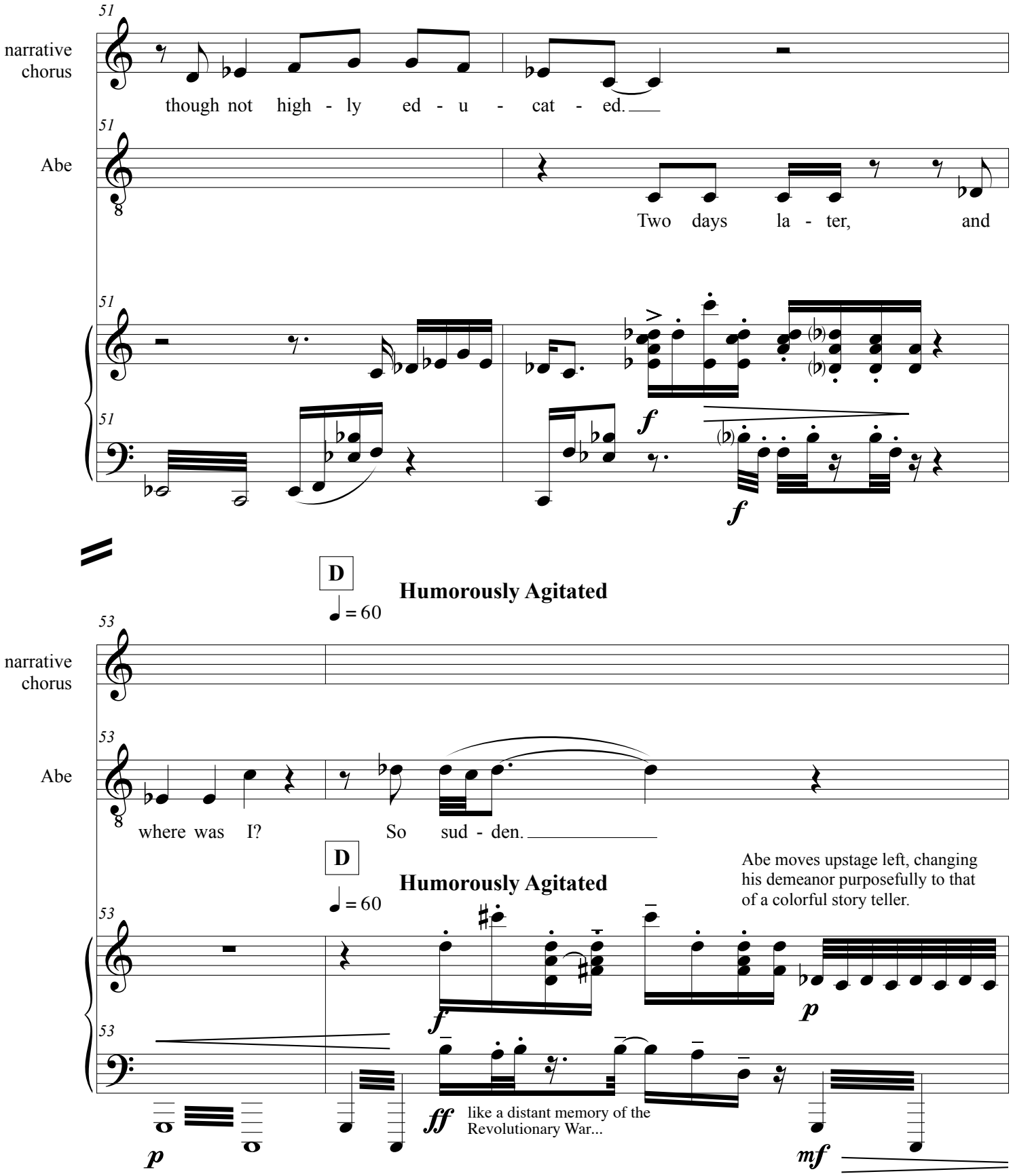

♩ = 54 Rolling
32
narrative chorus
32
Abe
But in - side me it's
♩ = 54 Rolling
32
32
p
33
Abe
dif - fer - ent.
"disruptive"
33
33
ff
p
p

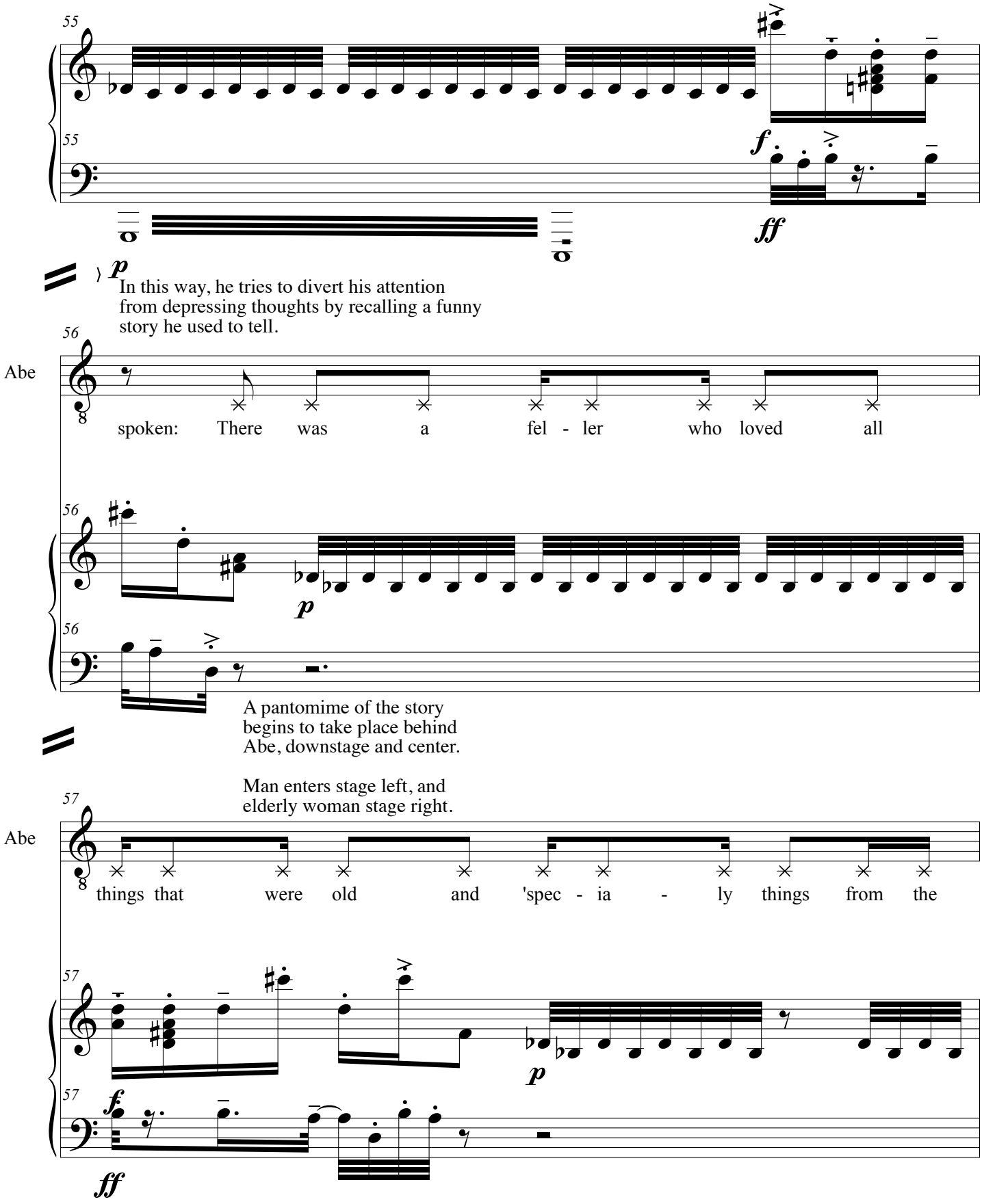

34
Abe
There are no cool - ing breez - es,
34
34
35
Abe
on - ly an ache
35
6
f
p
35
36
Abe
that burns,
36
f
ff
6
pp
36

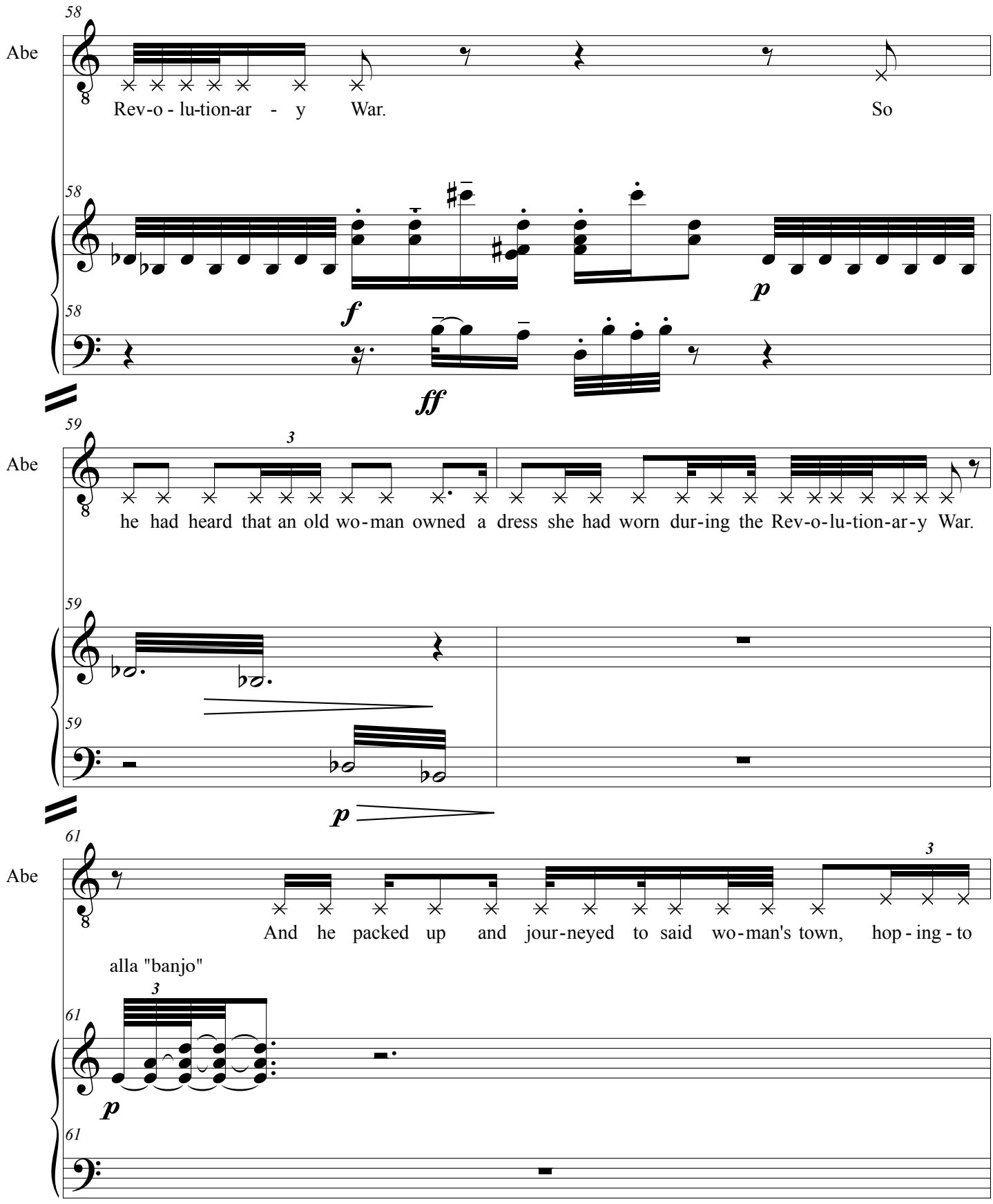

37
Abe
some - times hot,
37
37
f
p
38
Abe
some - times bare - ly glow - ing.
38
p
38
f
p
C
39
Abe
He returns to the park bench. A group of three women singers, constituting a narrative chorus, appears stage right. They are relatively emotionless, with their gaze turned upward. Their attire should be neutral of history as much as possible.
C
39
ff
f
mf
mf
f

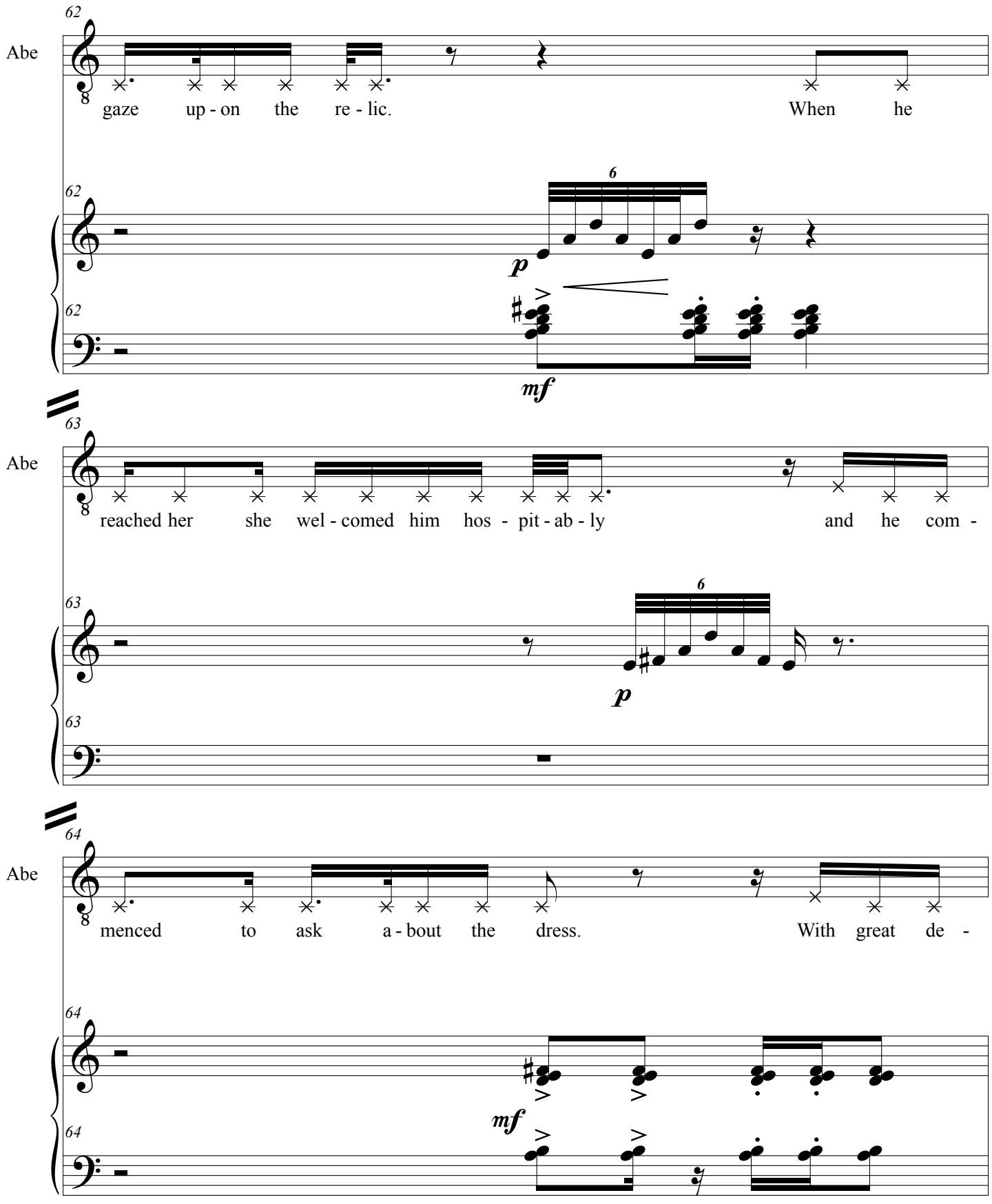

41
Abe
Yes, I know why the ache,
41
p
p
41
p
p
pp
45
narrative chorus
She was a hand - some girl,
45
Abe
seems just like yes - ter - day.
45
"looming"
p
45

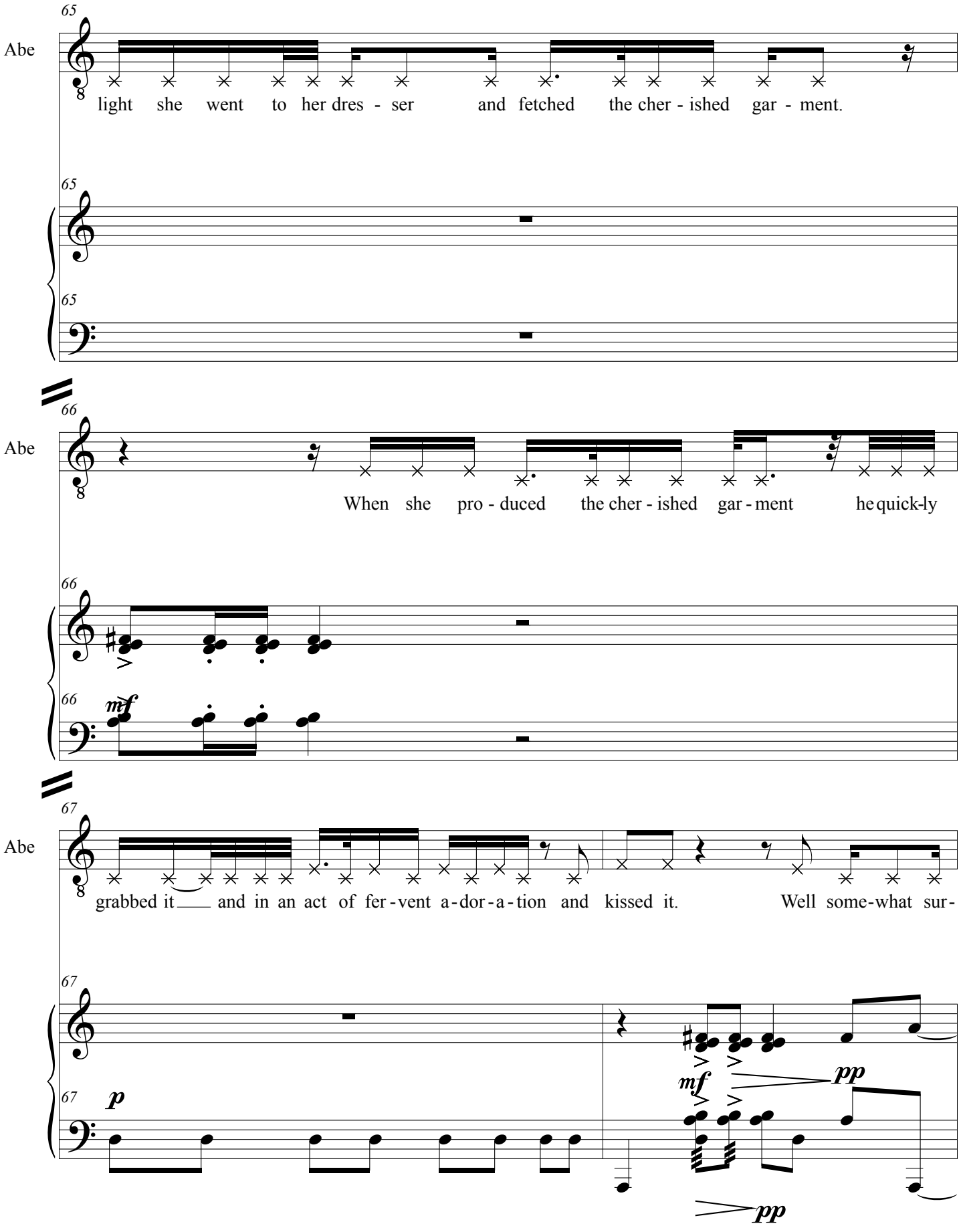

47
narrative chorus
nat - u - ral, and
47
Abe
It wasbrain fe - ver. But she still called for
47
mf f p f
47
49
narrative chorus
quite in - tel - lect - u - al,
49
Abe
me. She must have loved me.
49
f p p f p
49
p

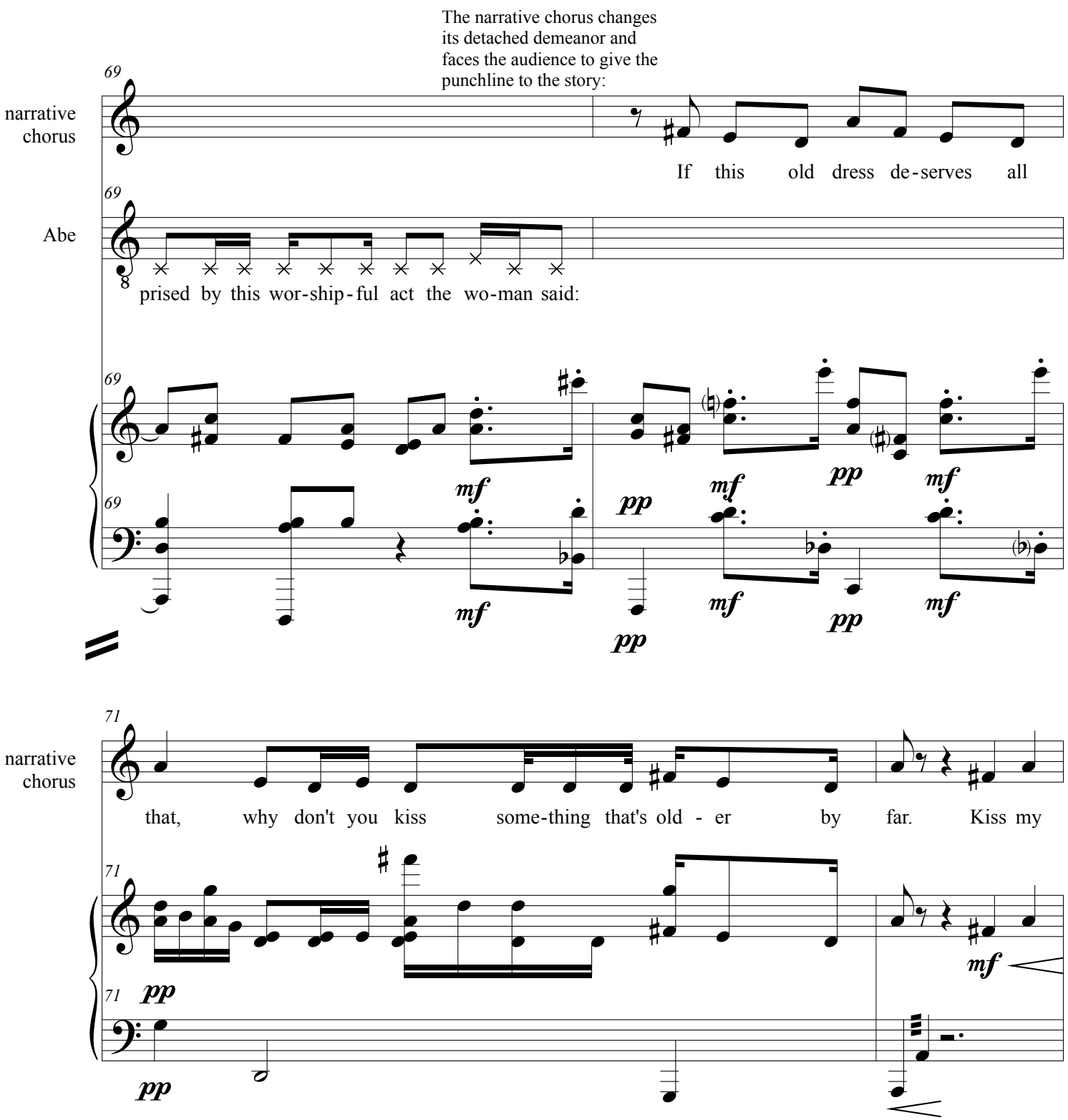

51
narrative chorus
though not high - ly ed - u - cat - ed.
51
Abe
Two days la - ter, and
51
51
f
f
D
Humorously Agitated
♩ = 60
53
narrative chorus
53
Abe
where was I? So sud - den.
D
Humorously Agitated
♩ = 60
Abe moves upstage left, changing his demeanor purposefully to that of a colorful story teller.
53
53
f
p
p
ff
like a distant memory of the Revolutionary War...
mf

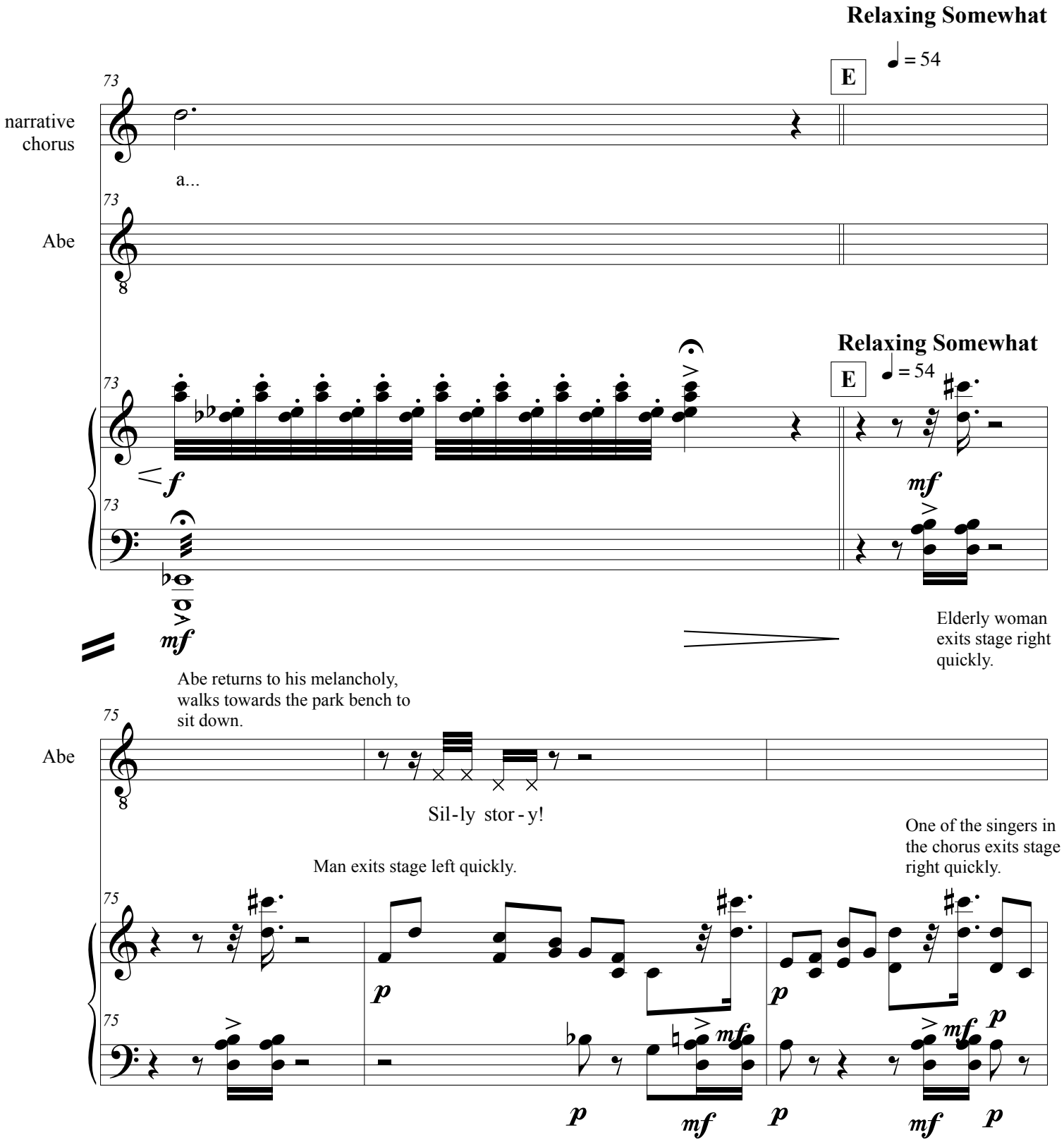

55
55
f
ff
p
In this way, he tries to divert his attention from depressing thoughts by recalling a funny story he used to tell.
56
Abe
spoken: There was a fel - ler who loved all
56
56
p
A pantomime of the story begins to take place behind Abe, downstage and center.
Man enters stage left, and elderly woman stage right.
57
Abe
things that were old and 'spec - ia - ly things from the
57
57
p
f
ff

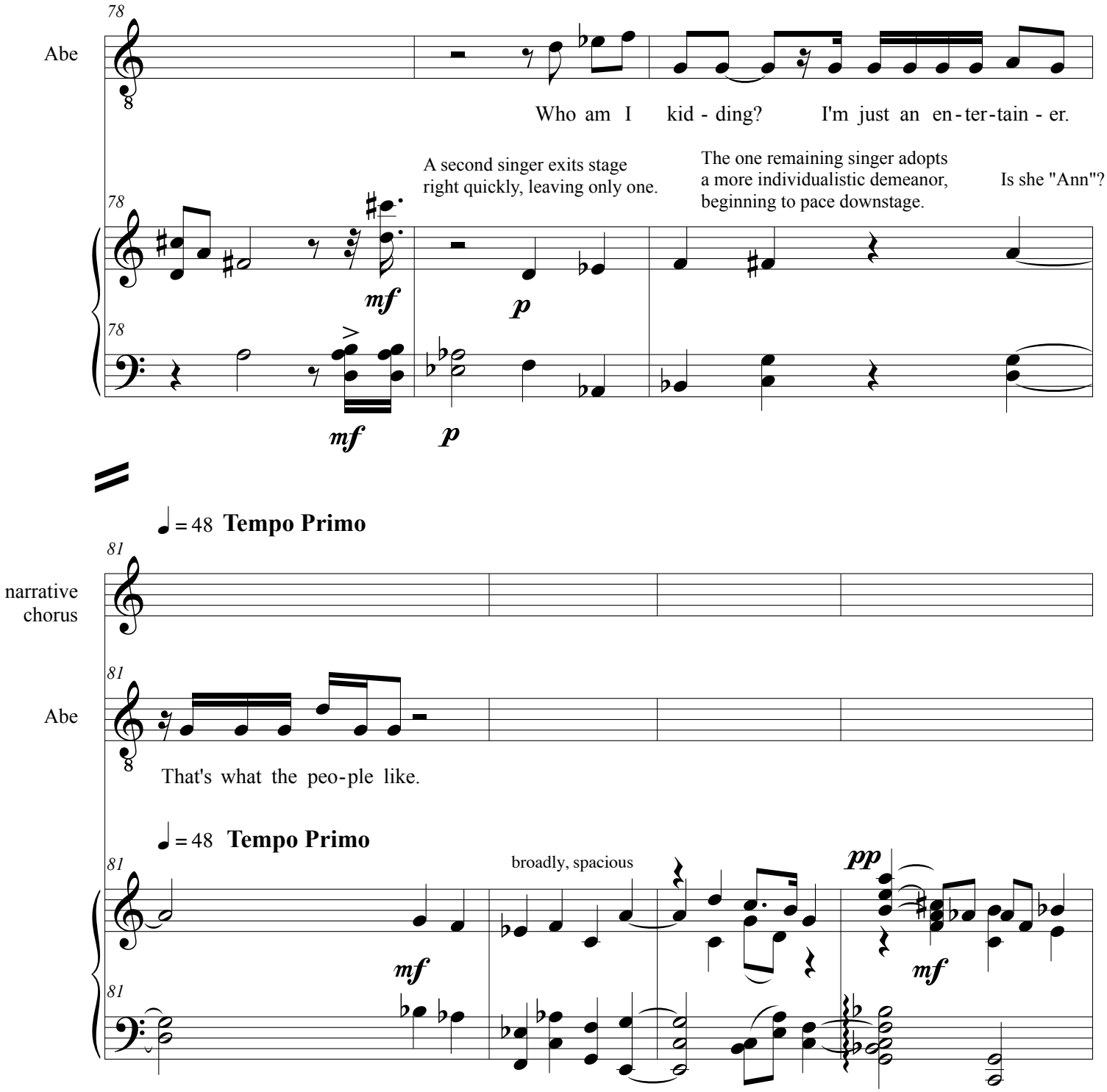

58
Abe
Rev-o - lu-tion-ar - y War.
So
58
58
f
p
ff
59
Abe
3
he had heard that an old wo-man owned a dress she had worn dur-ing the Rev-o-lu-tion-ar-y War.
59
59
p
61
Abe
3
And he packed up and jour-neyed to said wo-man's town, hop - ing - to
alla "banjo"
3
61
p
61

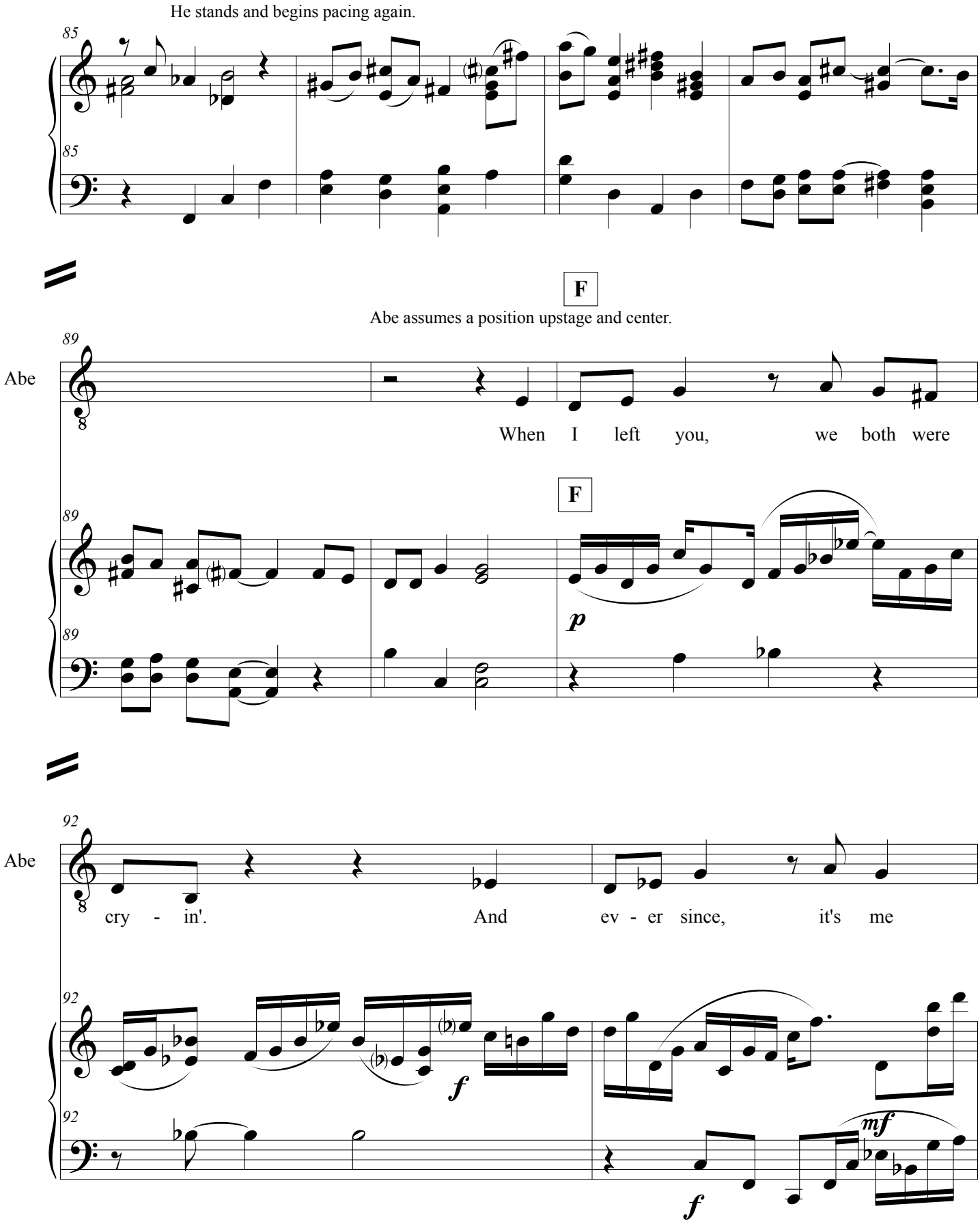

62
Abe
gaze up - on the re - lic. When he
6
p
mf
63
Abe
reached her she wel - comed him hos - pit - ab - ly and he com -
6
p
64
Abe
menced to ask a - bout the dress. With great de -
mf

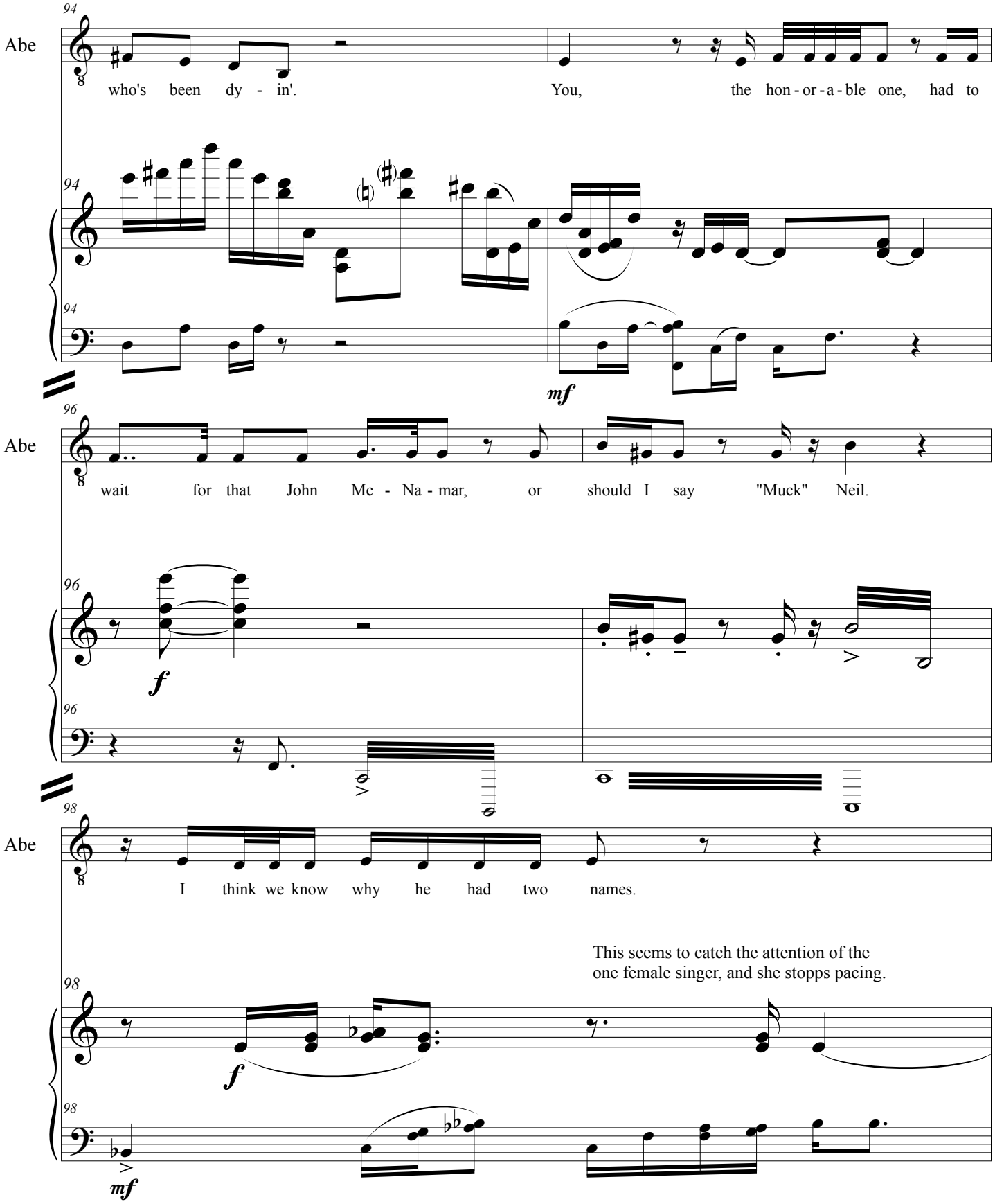

65
Abe
light she went to her dres - ser and fetched the cher - ished gar - ment.
65
65
66
Abe
When she pro - duced the cher - ished gar - ment he quick-ly
66
mf
66
67
Abe
grabbed it and in an act of fer - vent a - dor - a - tion and kissed it. Well some-what sur -
67
p
67
mf
pp
pp

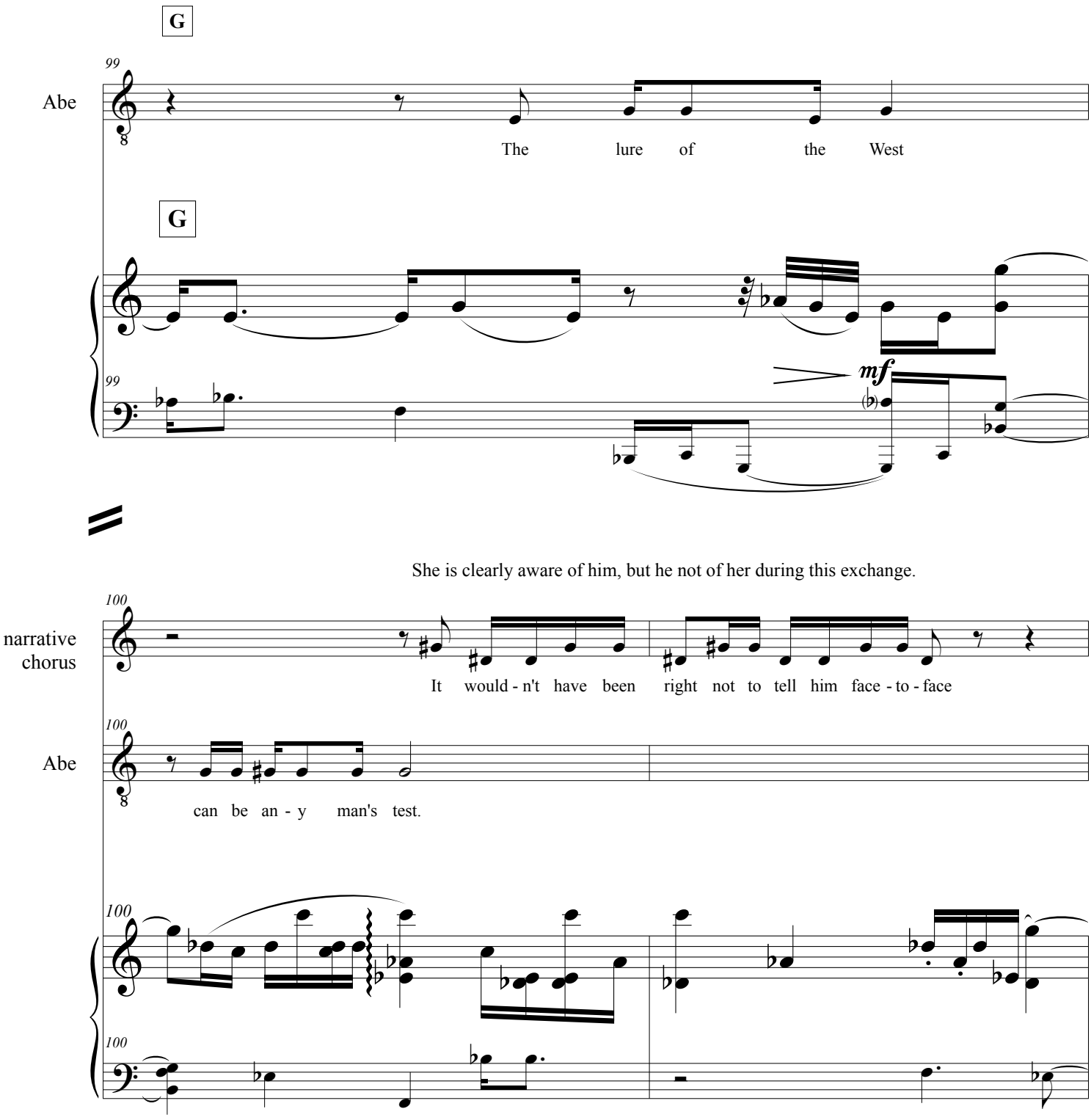

The narrative chorus changes its detached demeanor and faces the audience to give the punchline to the story:
69
narrative chorus
If this old dress de-serves all
69
Abe
prised by this wor-ship-ful act the wo-man said:
69
69
mf
pp
mf
pp
mf
mf
pp
mf
pp
mf
71
narrative chorus
that, why don't you kiss some-thing that's old - er by far. Kiss my
71
71
pp
pp
mf

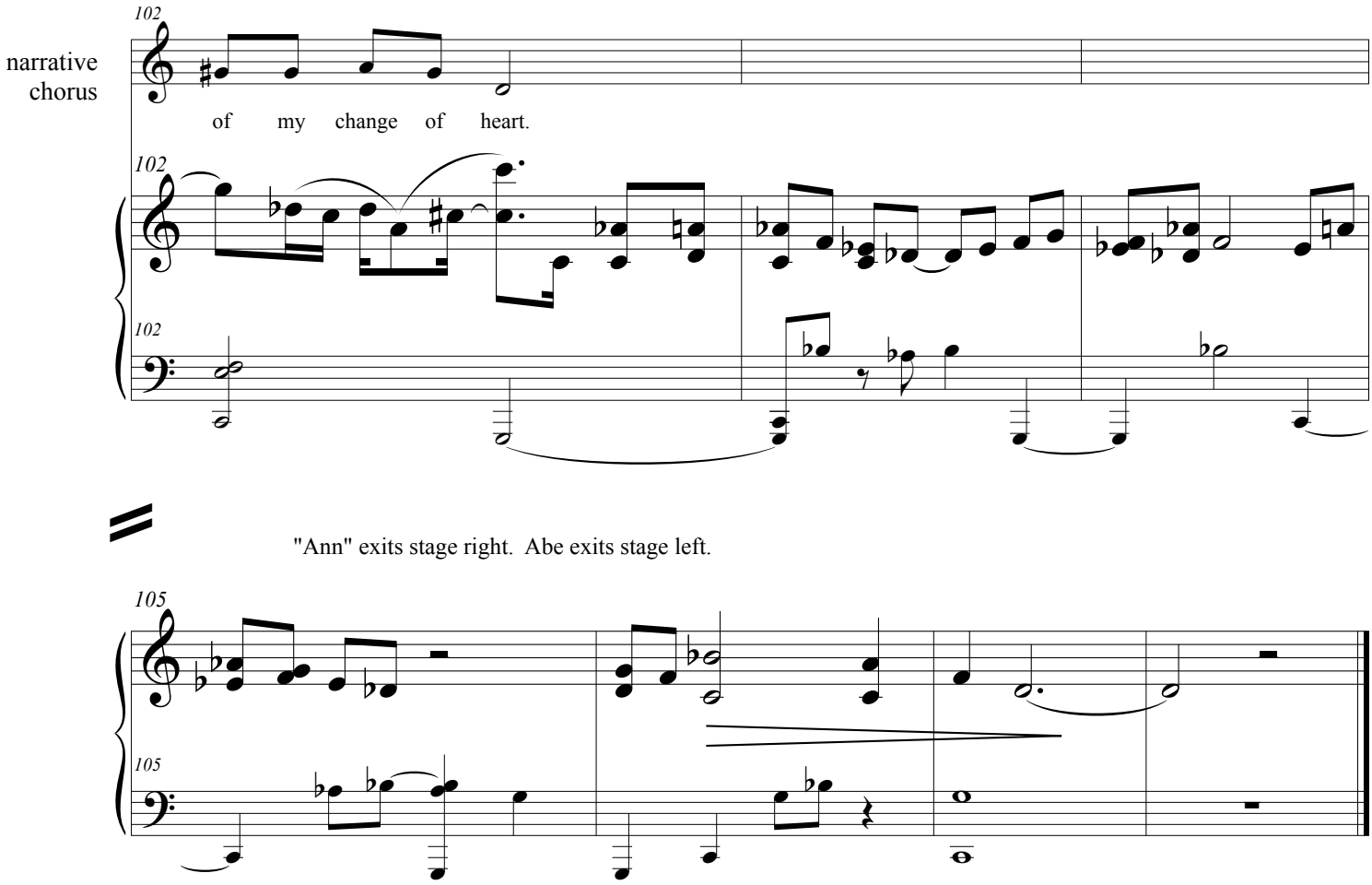

Relaxing Somewhat
E
= 54
73
narrative chorus
a...
Abe
Relaxing Somewhat
E
= 54
f
mf
Elderly woman exits stage right quickly.
Abe returns to his melancholy, walks towards the park bench to sit down.
75
Abe
Sil-ly stor-y!
Man exits stage left quickly.
One of the singers in the chorus exits stage right quickly.
p
mf


78
Abe
Who am I kid - ding? I'm just an en - ter - tain - er.
A second singer exits stage right quickly, leaving only one.
The one remaining singer adopts a more individualistic demeanor, beginning to pace downstage.
Is she "Ann"?
mf
p
mf
p
♩ = 48 Tempo Primo
81
narrative chorus
Abe
That's what the peo - ple like.
♩ = 48 Tempo Primo
broadly, spacious
pp
mf
mf


He stands and begins pacing again.
85
85
F
Abe assumes a position upstage and center.
89
Abe
When I left you, we both were
F
89
89
p
92
Abe
cry - in'. And ev - er since, it's me
92
92
f
mf
f


94
Abe
who's been dy - in'.
You, the hon - or - a - ble one, had to
94
94
mf
96
Abe
wait for that John Mc - Na - mar, or should I say "Muck" Neil.
96
f
96
98
Abe
I think we know why he had two names.
This seems to catch the attention of the one female singer, and she stopps pacing.
98
f
98
mf


G
99
Abe
The lure of the West
G
99
mf
She is clearly aware of him, but he not of her during this exchange.
100
narrative chorus
It would - n't have been right not to tell him face - to - face
100
Abe
can be an - y man's test.
100
100


102
narrative chorus
of my change of heart.
102
102
"Ann" exits stage right. Abe exits stage left.
105
105