5 Carols For Beginning Ringers

for 2-3 Octave Handbell or Handchime Choir

Arranged by **Anna Laura Page**

Contains 5 carol settings:

O Come, All Ye Faithful 4
Away in A Manger 8
On This Day Earth Shall Ring 12
Silent Night, Holy Night 16
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen 21

Foreword

Christmas is a magical time of year when we remember the Christ Child and what His birth has meant to the world from that time to the present. We love to sing and ring carols of the season as we celebrate and *5 Carols for Beginning Ringers* offers new ringers the opportunity to participate in the Christmas celebration. Each carol is written for Level One (beginning) ringers and each setting is written with no bell changes, no note values smaller than the quarter note, and no difficult rhythms. All articulations included may be played while keeping the bells in hand, and there are suggestions in the performing notes to help handchime choirs with articulations that may not work as well with chimes. Have fun ringing and celebrating during the holiday season!

Anna Laura Page

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Jubilate Handbell

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O Come, All Ye Faithful is an exciting setting of this familiar carol that includes full chords, articulations that beginning ringers will enjoy, and an opportunity for learning to ring musically with changing dynamics.

The shake (**Sk**) and the martellato-lift (▾) work well when ringing with handbells, but handchime choirs may want to simply ring the notes without playing these articulations. Chimes can shake, but the sound will not be as satisfying with chimes as it is with handbells. Handbell choirs should take great care with the martellato-lift by holding the bell by the handle, gently striking the entire casting horizontally on a well-padded table, then immediately lifting the bell to allow it to continue to ring. Never begin the martellato more than a few inches above the table.

Away in A Manger is a quiet, expressive arrangement that also includes the carol, *Cradle Song*. The ringers must listen for the melodies throughout the piece and learn to make a difference dynamically between the melody and accompaniment.

The echo (⤴), the **LV** and the vibrato (***vib.***) appear often. In executing the echo, ring the bell on the given beat, then gently touch the rim of the bell on the table each time the (⤴) is indicated. The first of many times the echo appears is in measure 9: G4 and D4 will ring on beat one, then they will gently touch the table on beats 2 and 3.

The ***vib.*** appears in the treble clef over several chords. To achieve the wavering sound, ring the bell, then gently move it from side to side with the wrist. If you are ringing with handchimes, the vibrato is achieved by ringing the chime then touching the base of the tine with the index finger. This technique also is used with handchimes to produce the echo (⤴) by ringing the chime then touching the base of the tine each time the echo is indicated.

The **LV** suggests that the bells are allowed to ring, regardless of their note value, until that **LV** is canceled by another **LV** or an **R**, which restores normal ringing technique.

On This Day Earth Shall Ring, also known as *Personet Hodie*, is an energetic setting of the early carol that appeared in *Piae Cantiones* in 1582. The melody enters in measure 9 and continues through measure 27. Pay close attention to dynamics and make noticeable differences between the different markings.

Treble bells have the Thumb Damp (**TD**) that begins in measure 36. It is indicated with a staccato dot and is played by placing the thumb on the outside of the bell casting while ringing the bell, producing a stopped sound. When the R follows, ring normally.

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In the final measure a martellato (▼) appears over the third beat. At this point, all bells from the previous chord must damp precisely as the G4, G5 and G6 play the final beat with the martellato. Take great care by gently striking the entire casting horizontally on the padded table and holding it there to completely stop the sound.

Silent Night, Holy Night is probably the most beloved Christmas carol of all. This setting for beginners will teach the ringers to ring quietly and musically by following dynamic markings and listening to the melody throughout the piece.

The echo (♪) appears in both clefs and is clearly marked. If ringing with chimes, the vibrato works beautifully where the echo is indicated.

The tempo slows in measures 27-30 and 73-76. Listen to each other and be sensitive to the tempo changes; make the most of dynamic markings and strive for a beautiful, musical performance.

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen is an exciting arrangement of this familiar carol and will provide beginning ringers the opportunity to ring energetically and precisely.

The martellato-lifts (▼↟) first occur in measures 13-15 in the middle and low registers while the melody appears above them. In measures 26-29 the melody appears in the low to middle register while the treble bells play the mart-lifts. Be careful and play the marts gently.

Stress marks appear in measures 2-4 and 46-47 and should be treated with a little more emphasis. Do not exaggerate the markings.

Strive for a precise, musical performance and enjoy!

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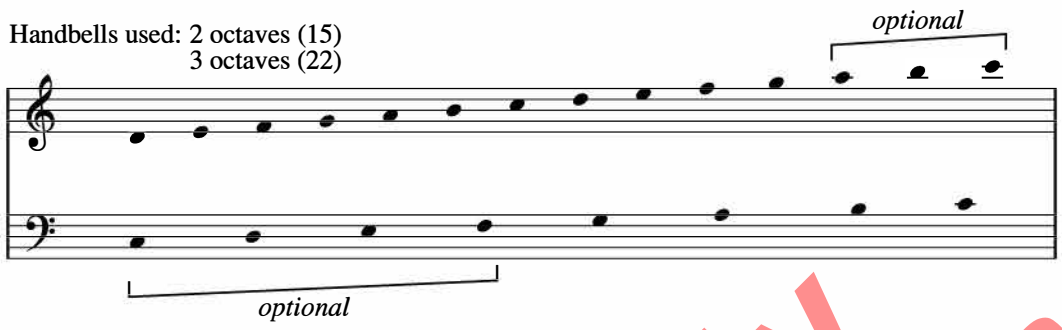
1. O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL



2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

***ADESTE FIDELES**

With joy (♩ = ca. 104-108)

* Music from **John F. Wade's** ***CANTUS DIVERSI,*** 1751

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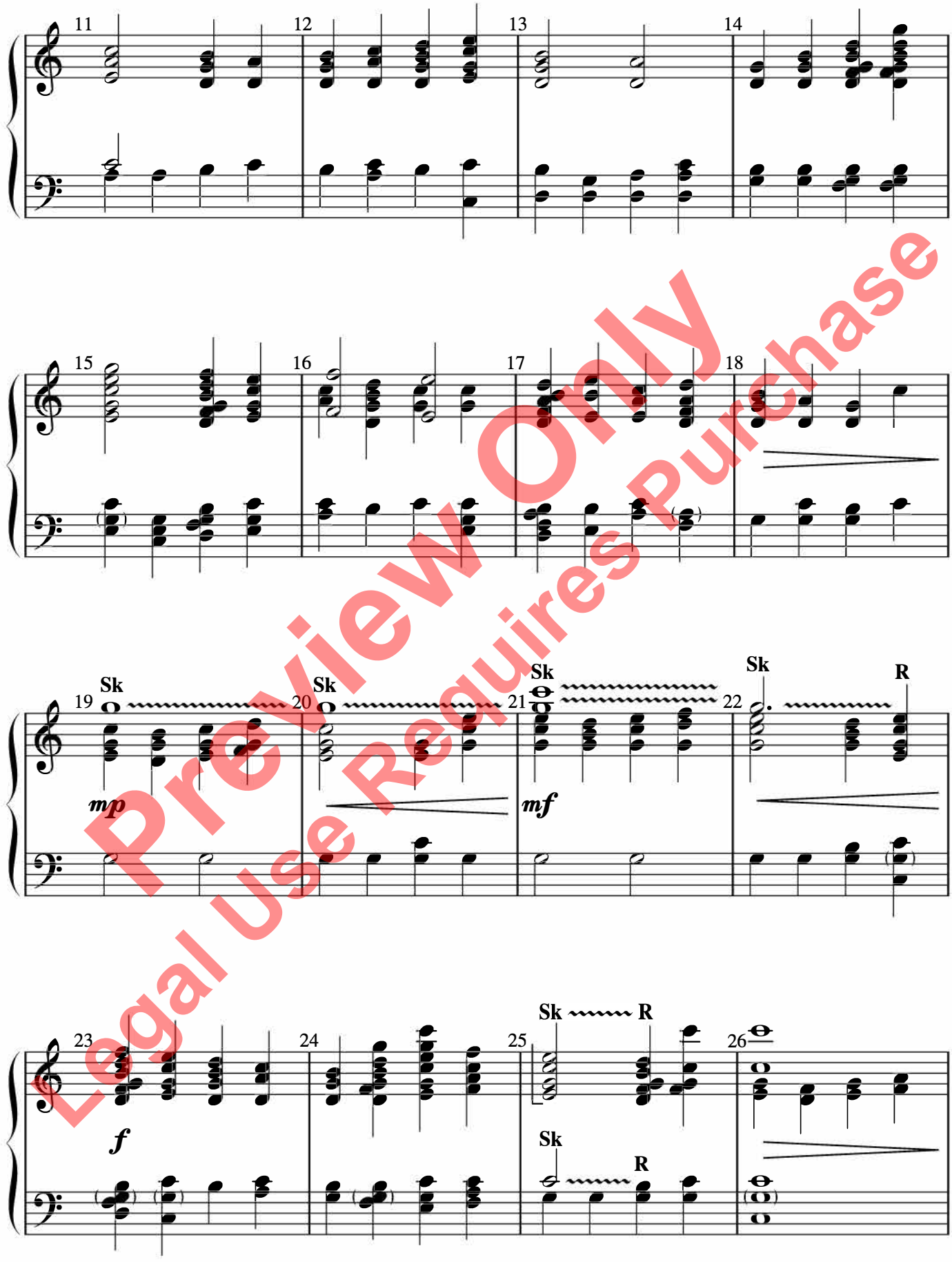

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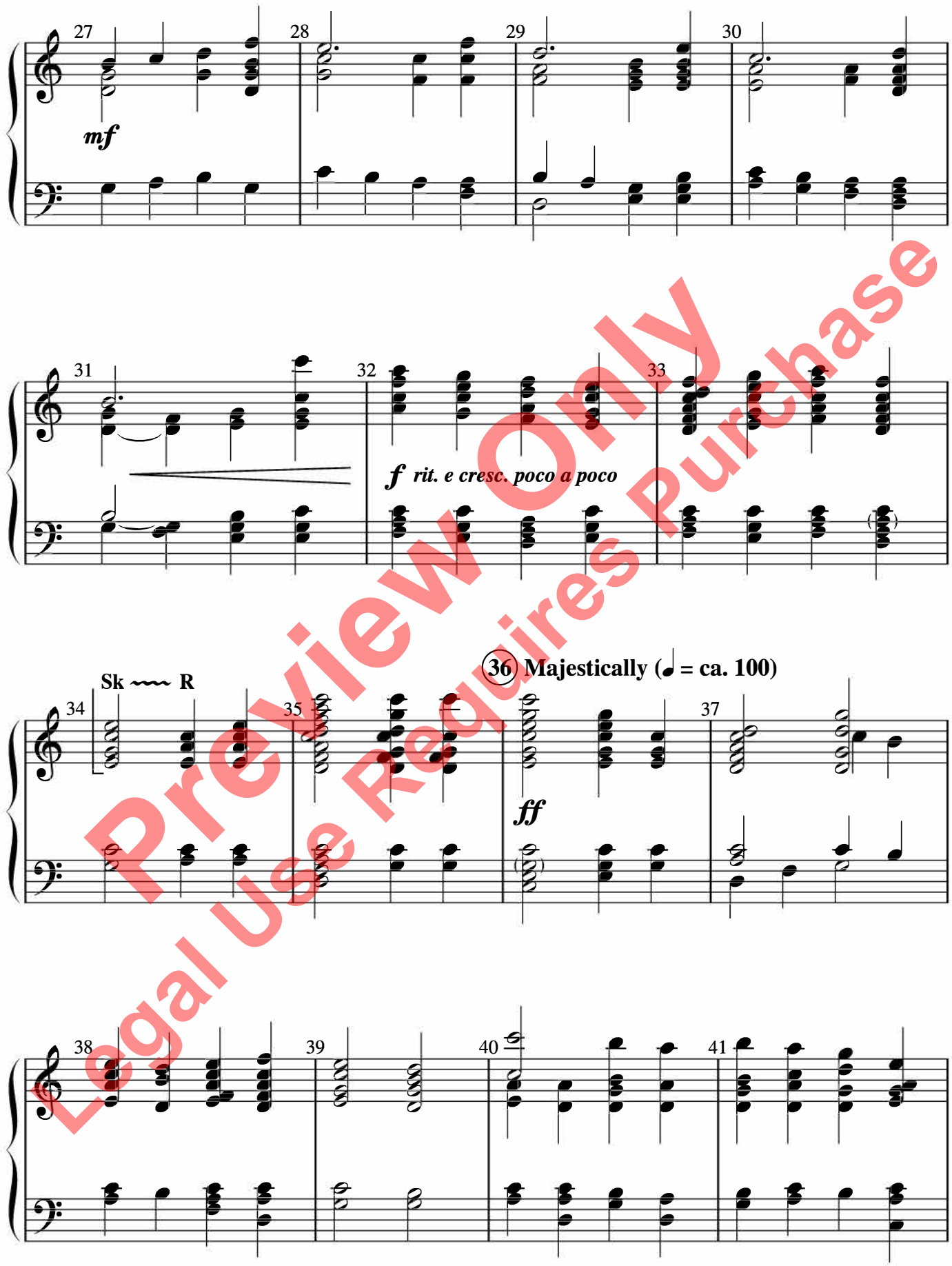

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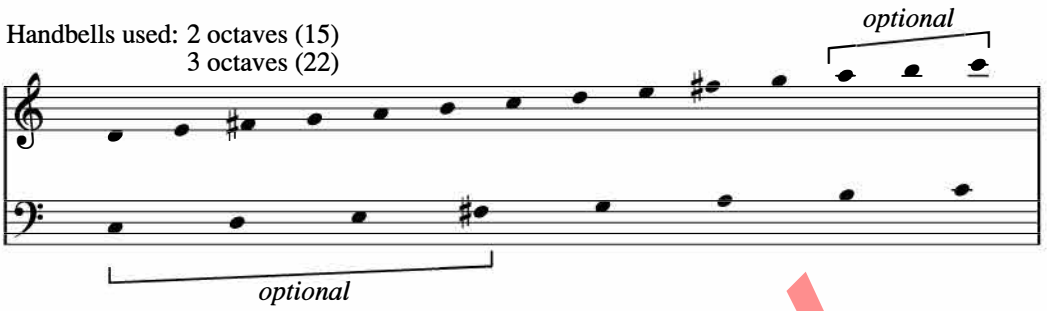
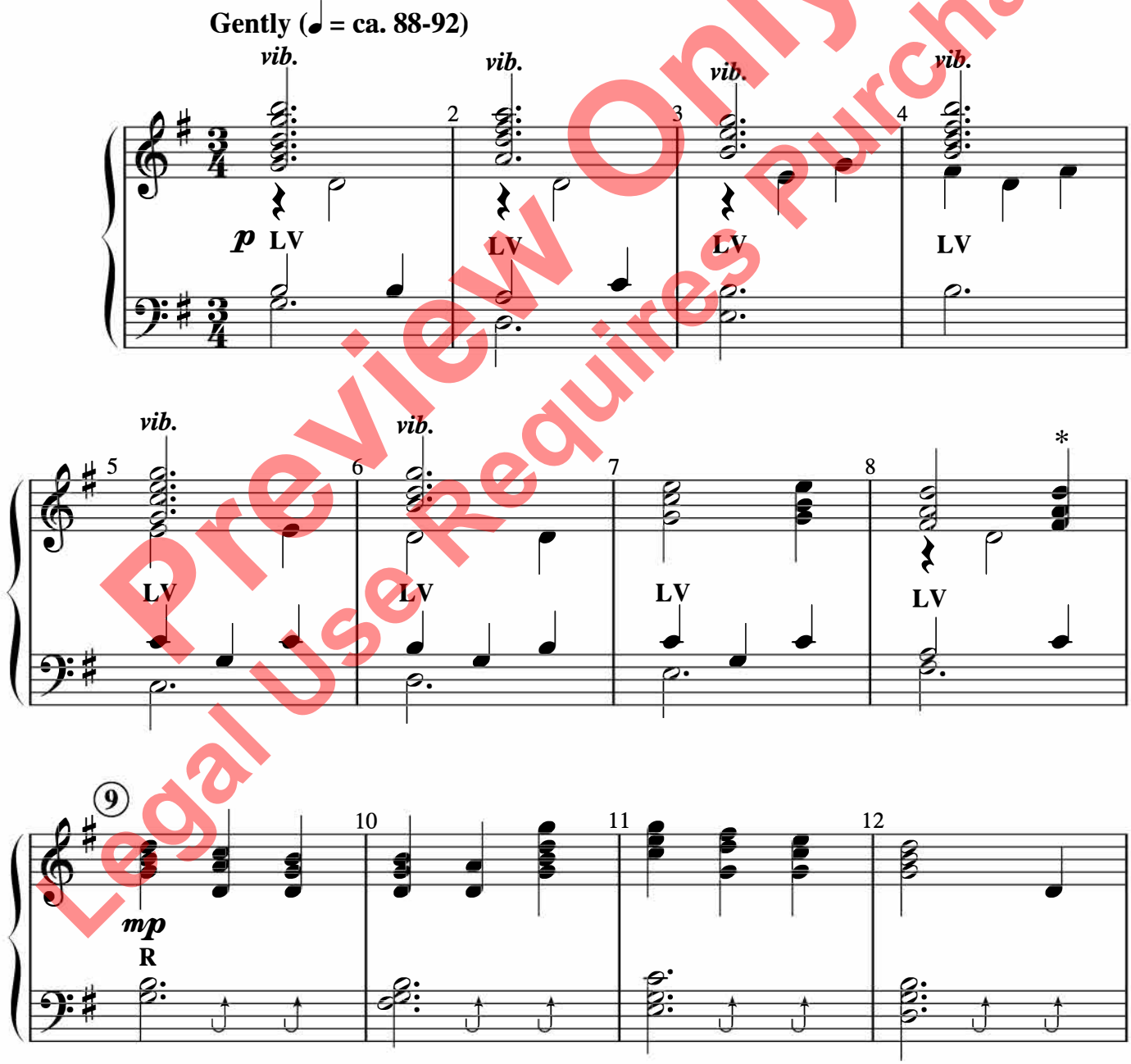
2. AWAY IN A MANGER



2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

*AWAY IN A MANGER



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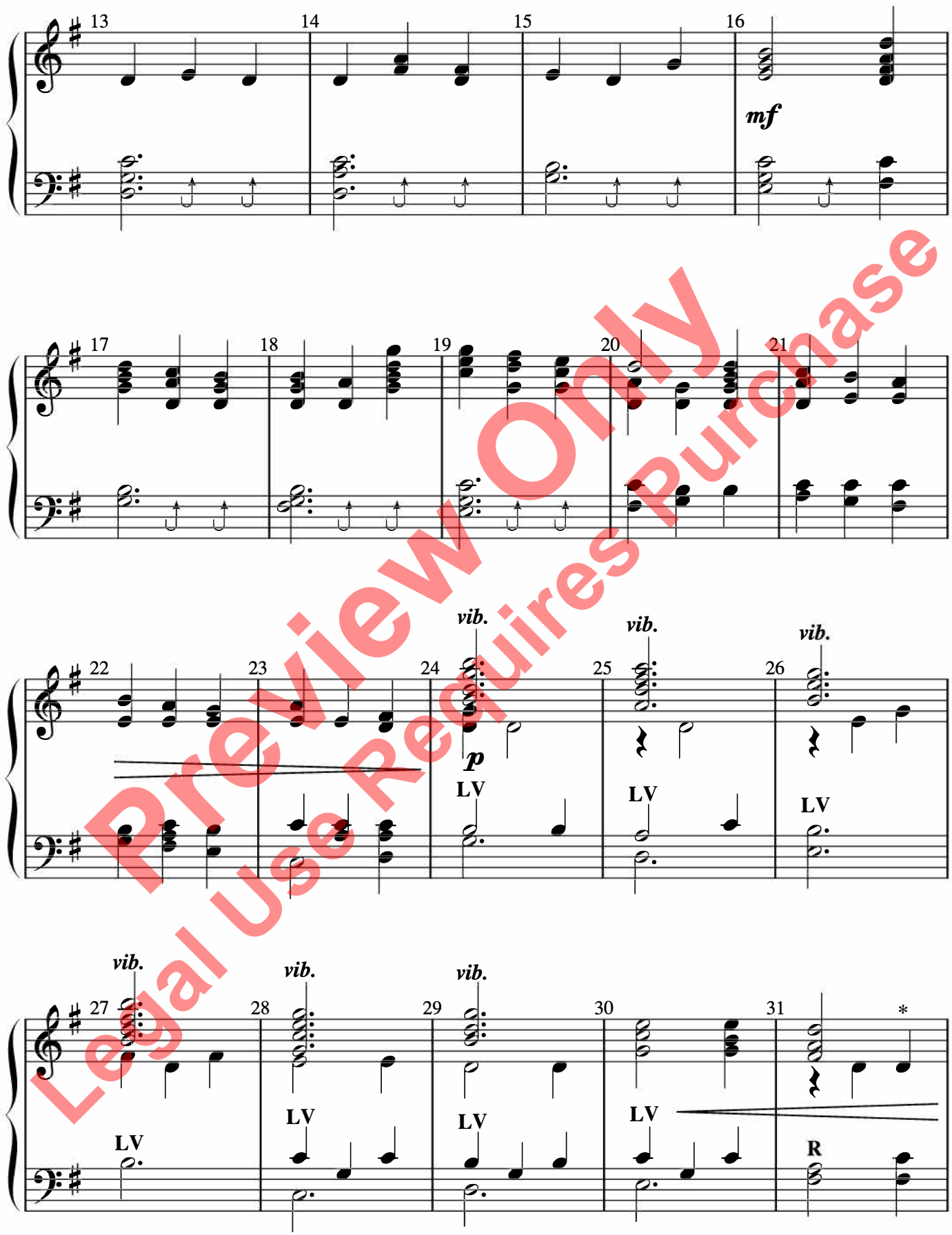
* Music attr. to James R. Murray, 1887



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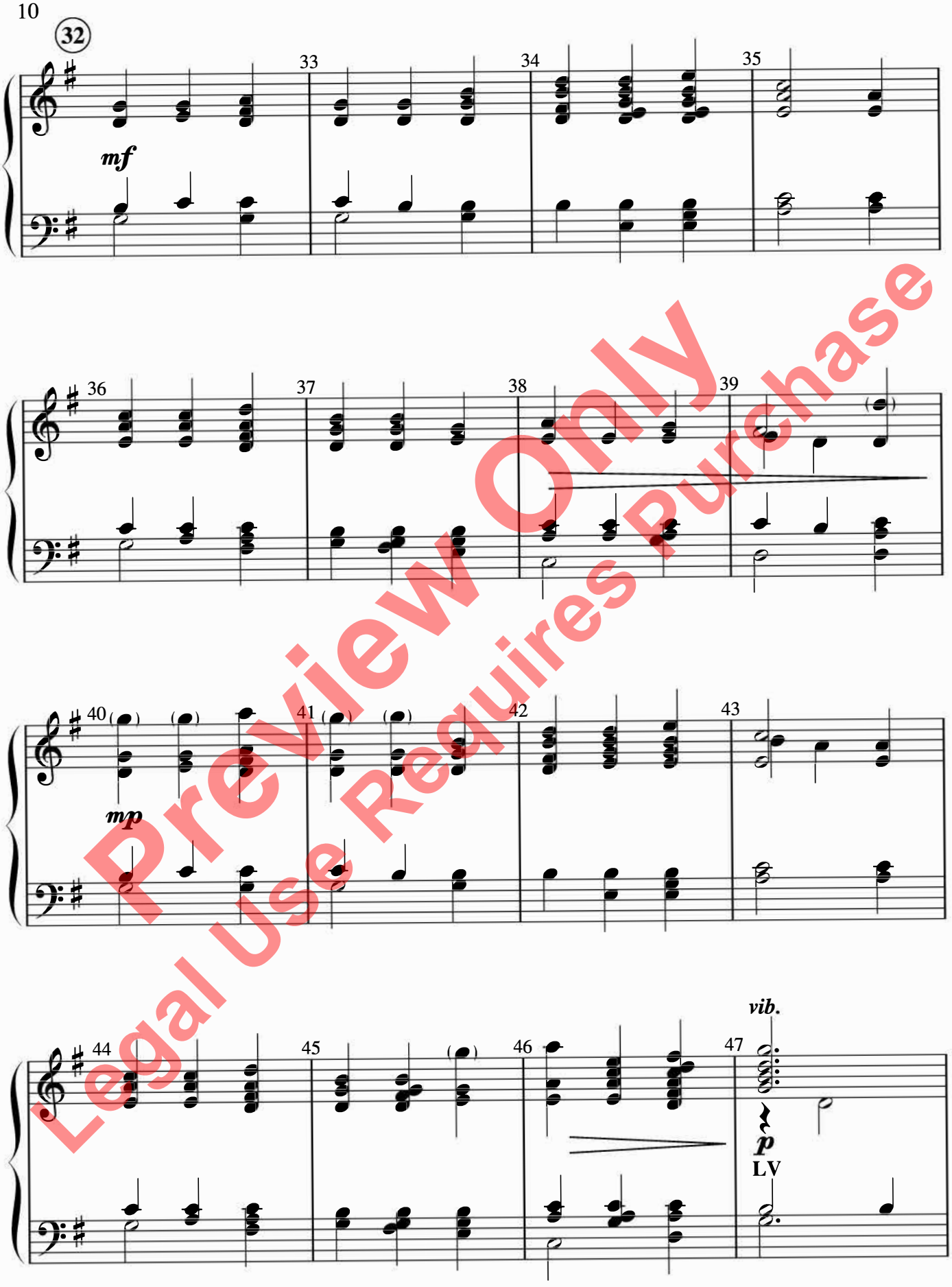
* **Cradle Song**, Music by William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895



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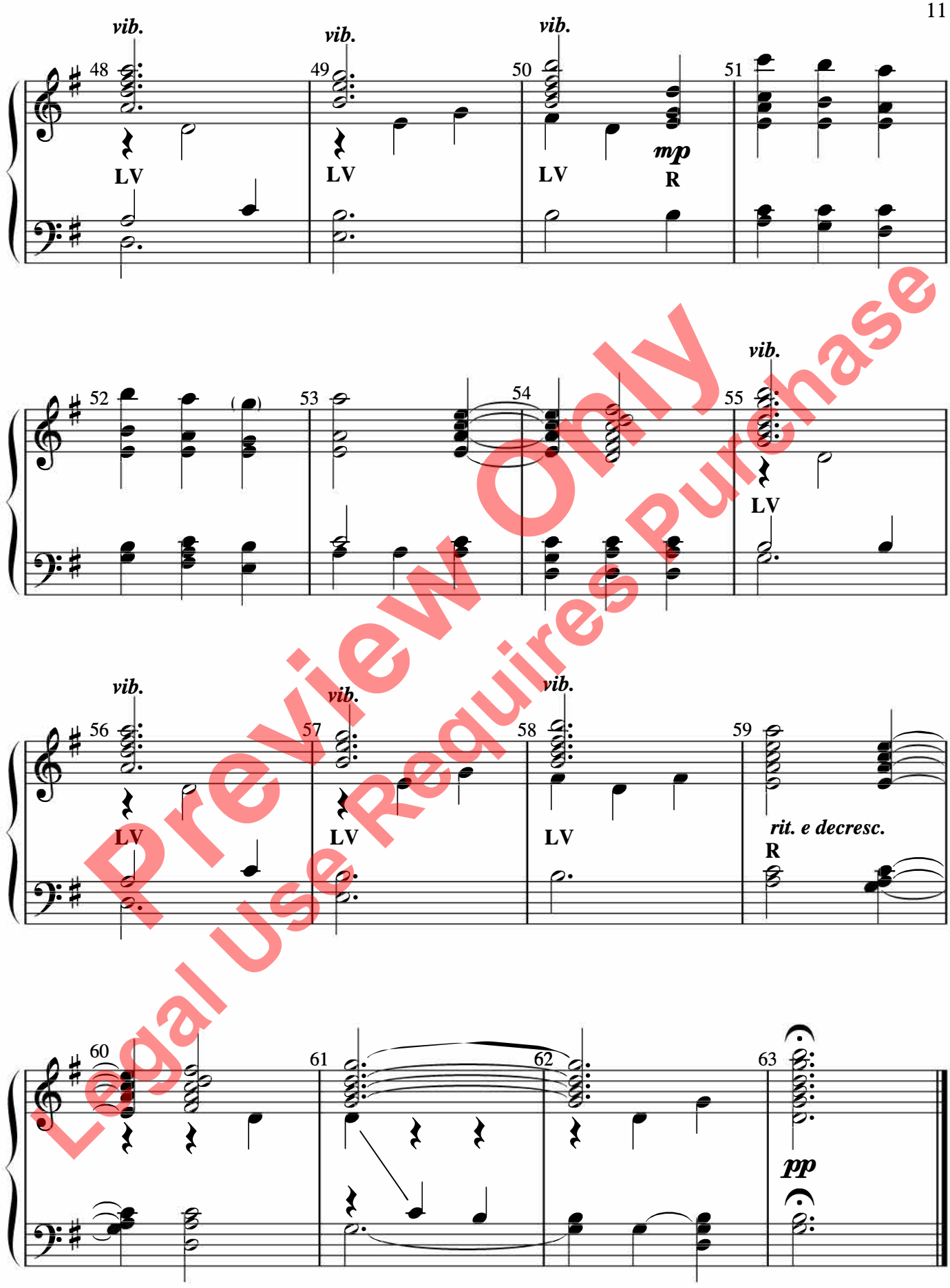

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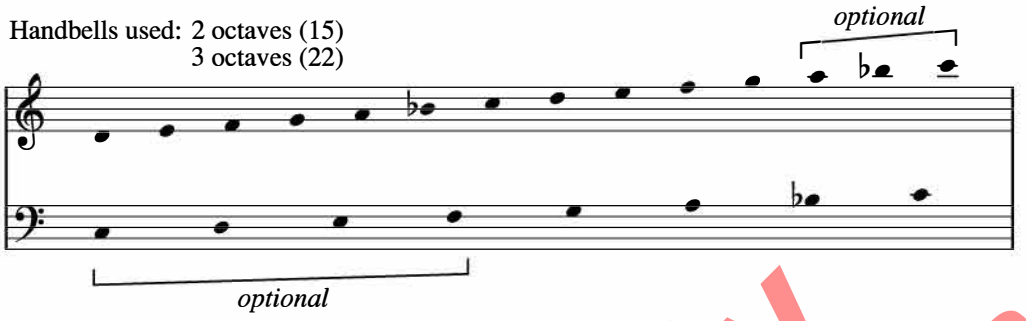
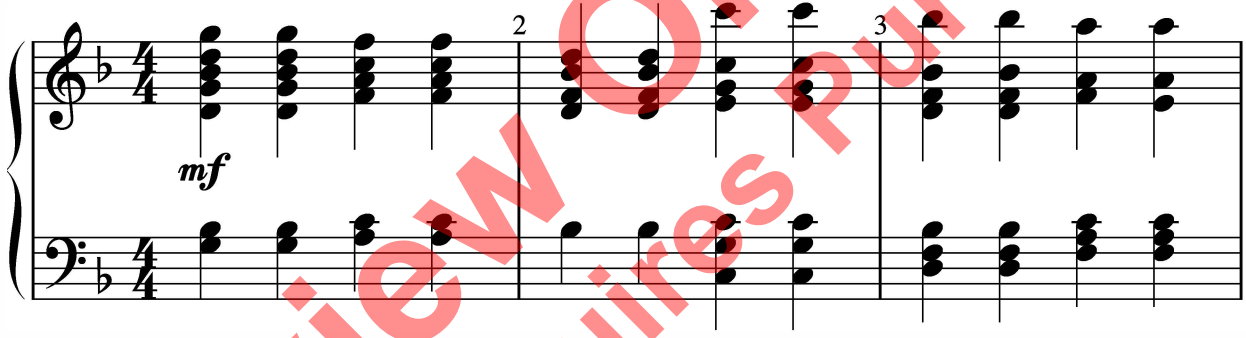
3. ON THIS DAY EARTH SHALL RING

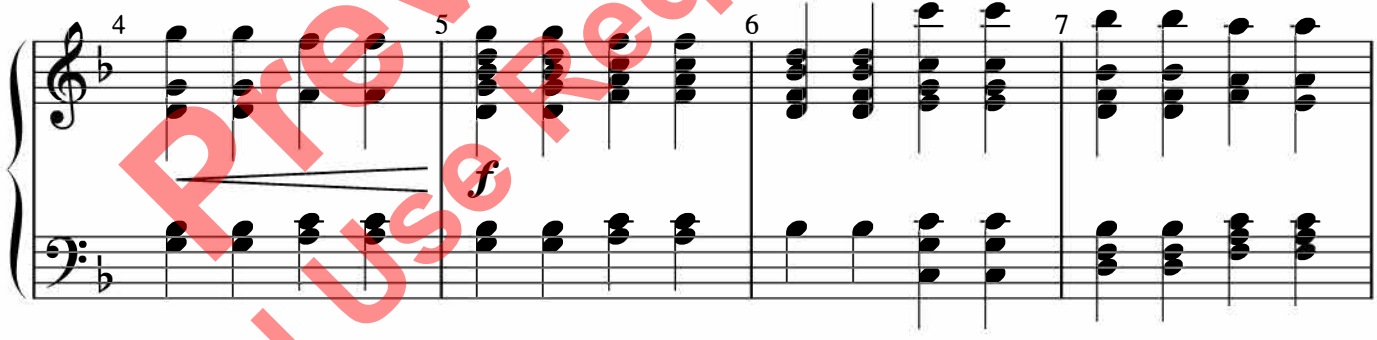


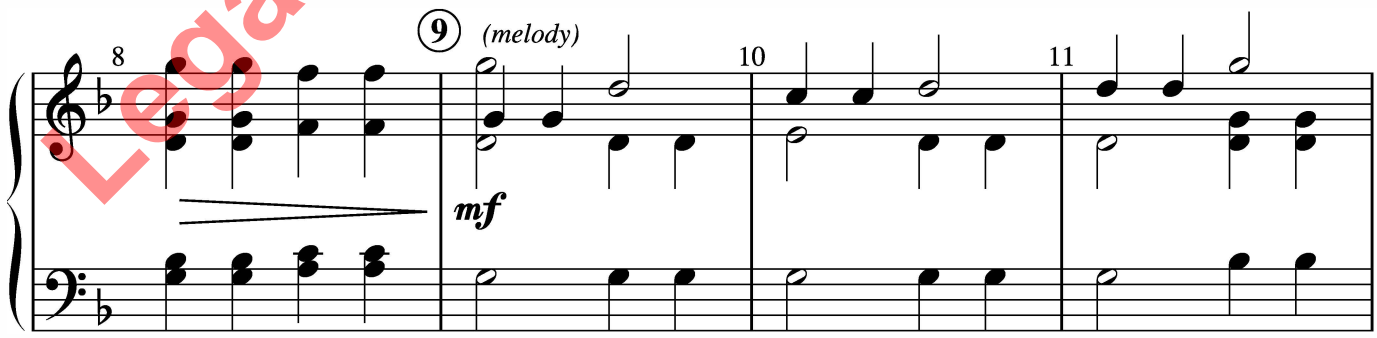
2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

***PERSONET HODIE**

With energy (♩ = ca. 104-112)







* from ***PIAE CANTIONES,*** 1582

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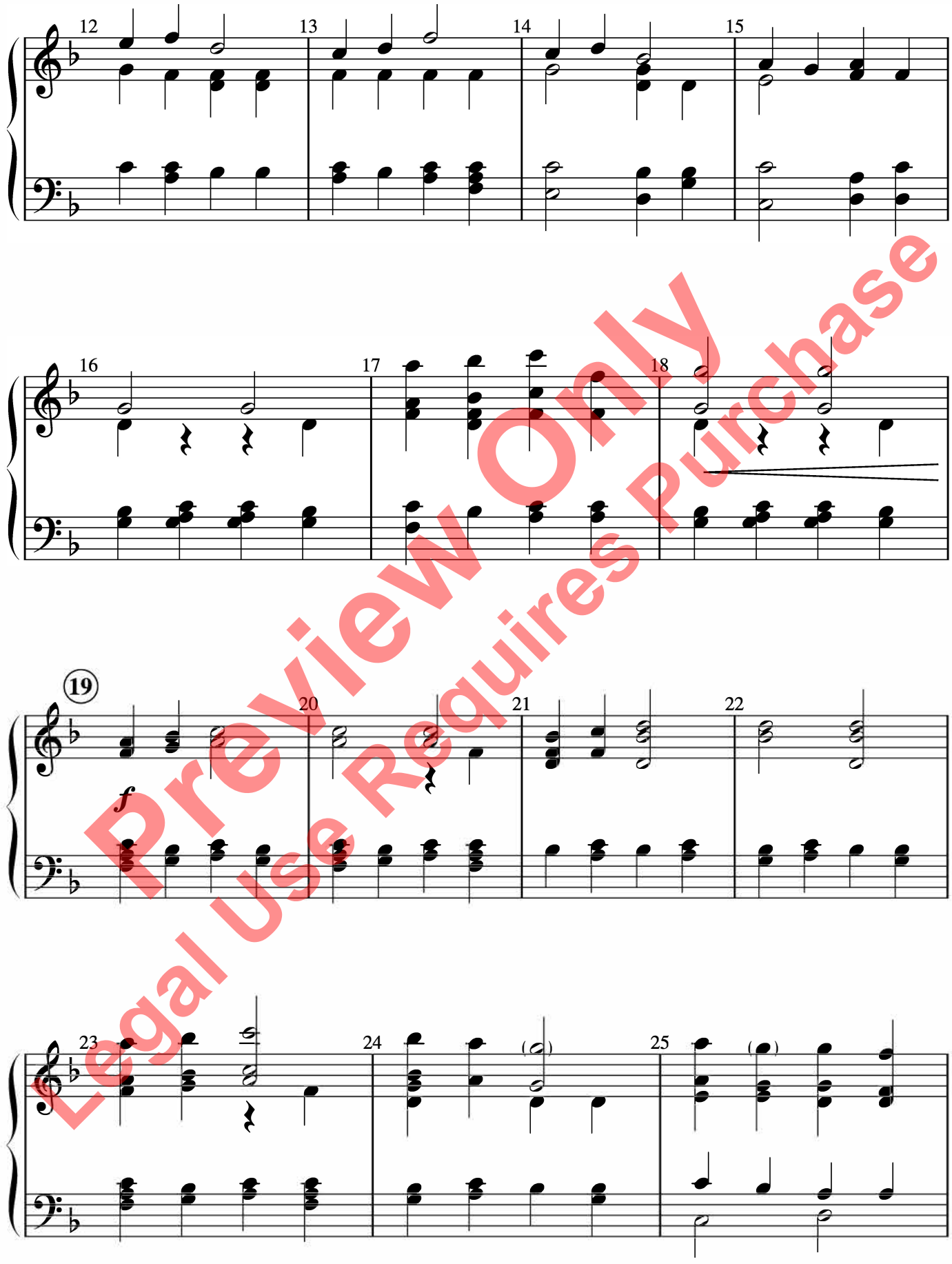

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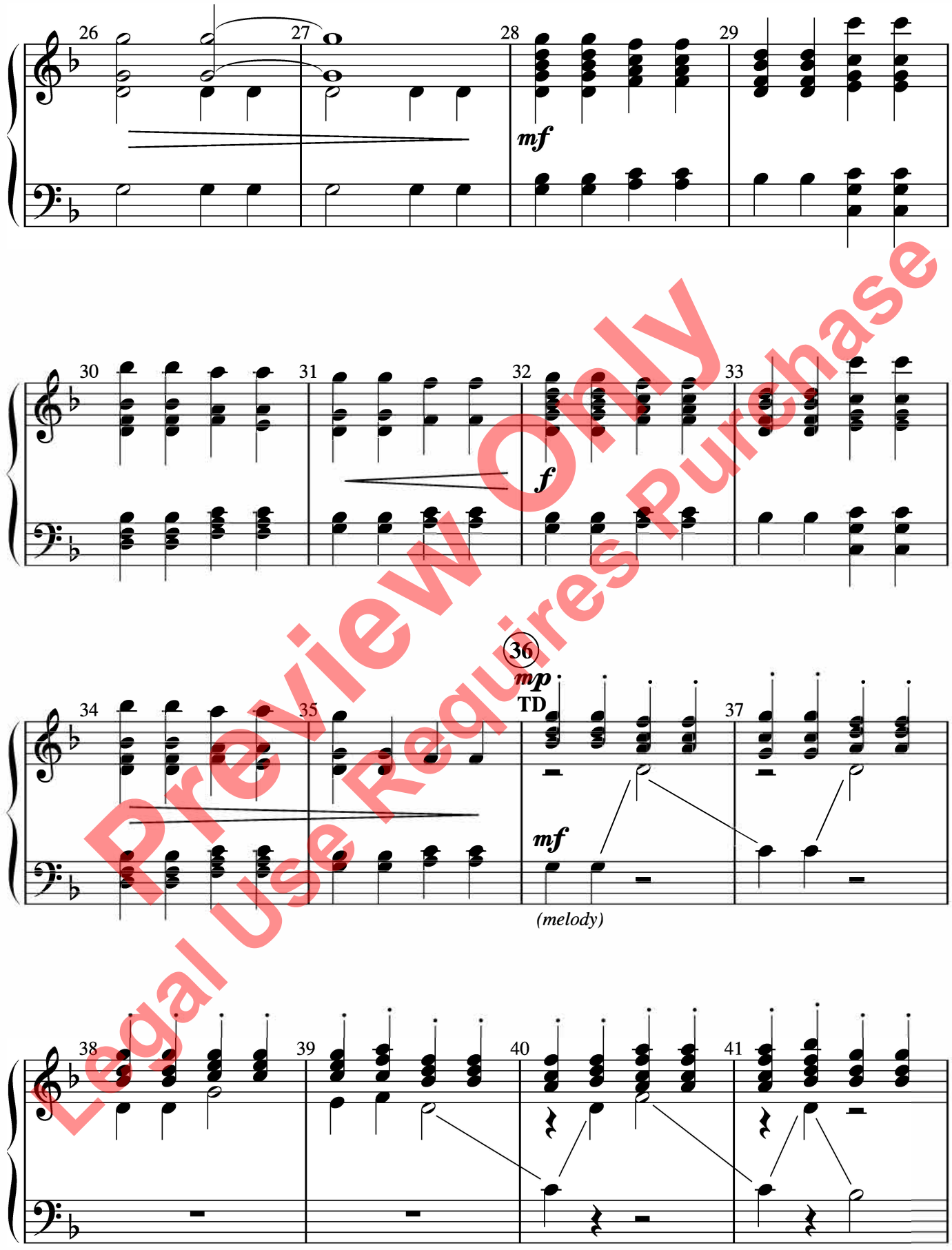

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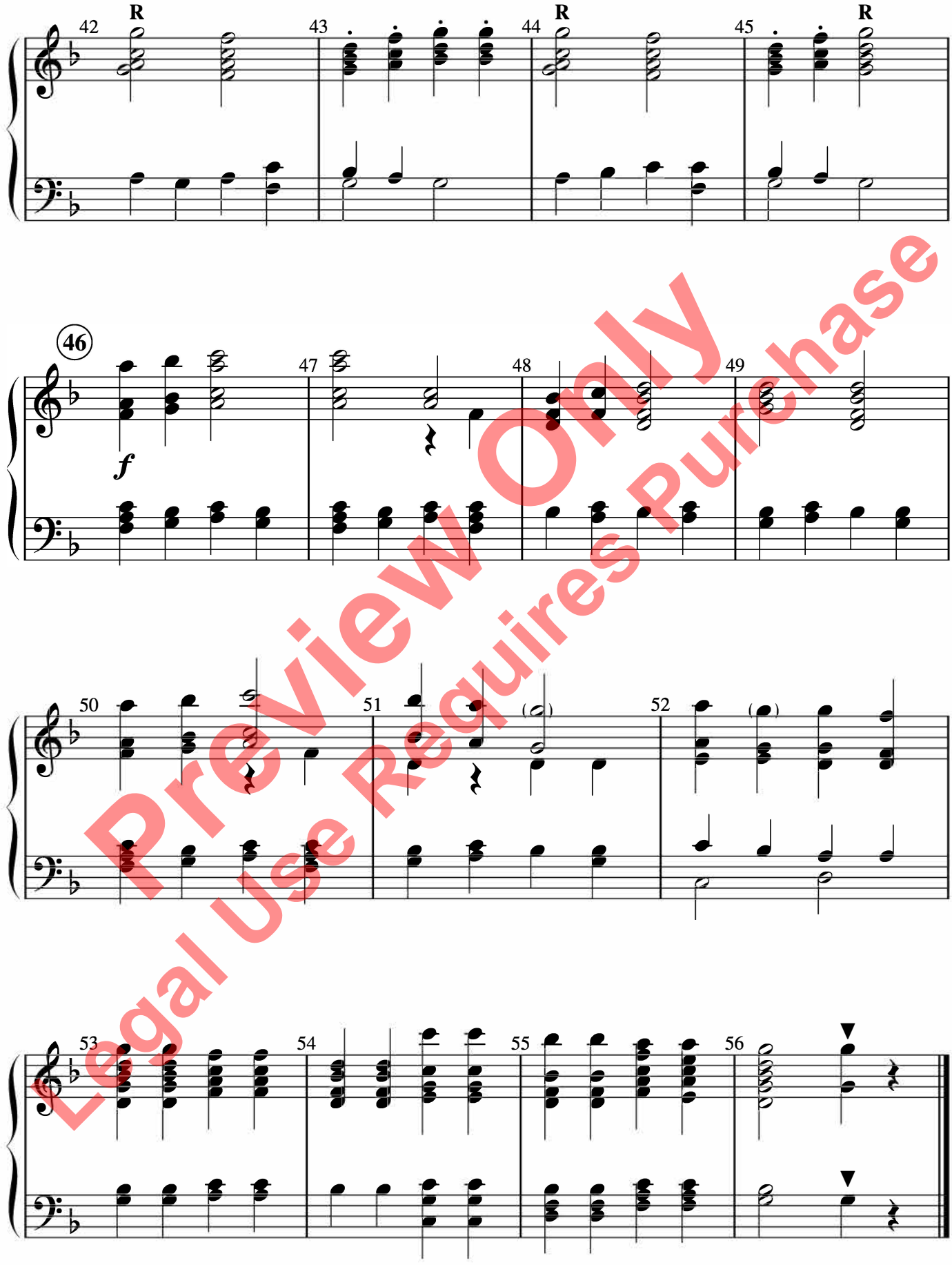

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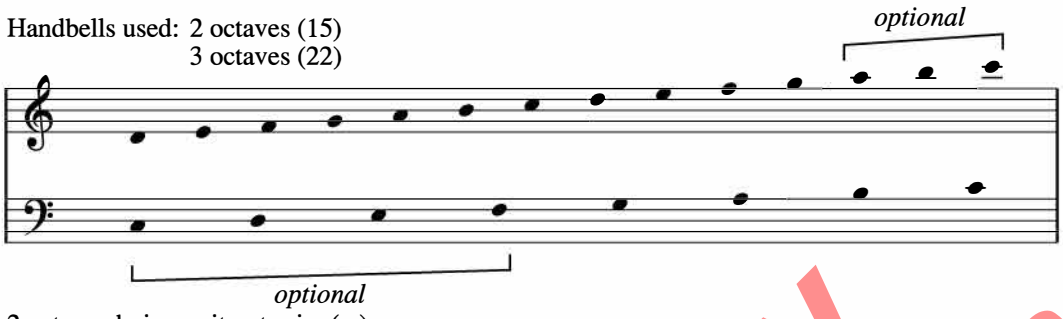
4. SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT



***STILLE NACHT**

* Music by Franz Gruber, 1818

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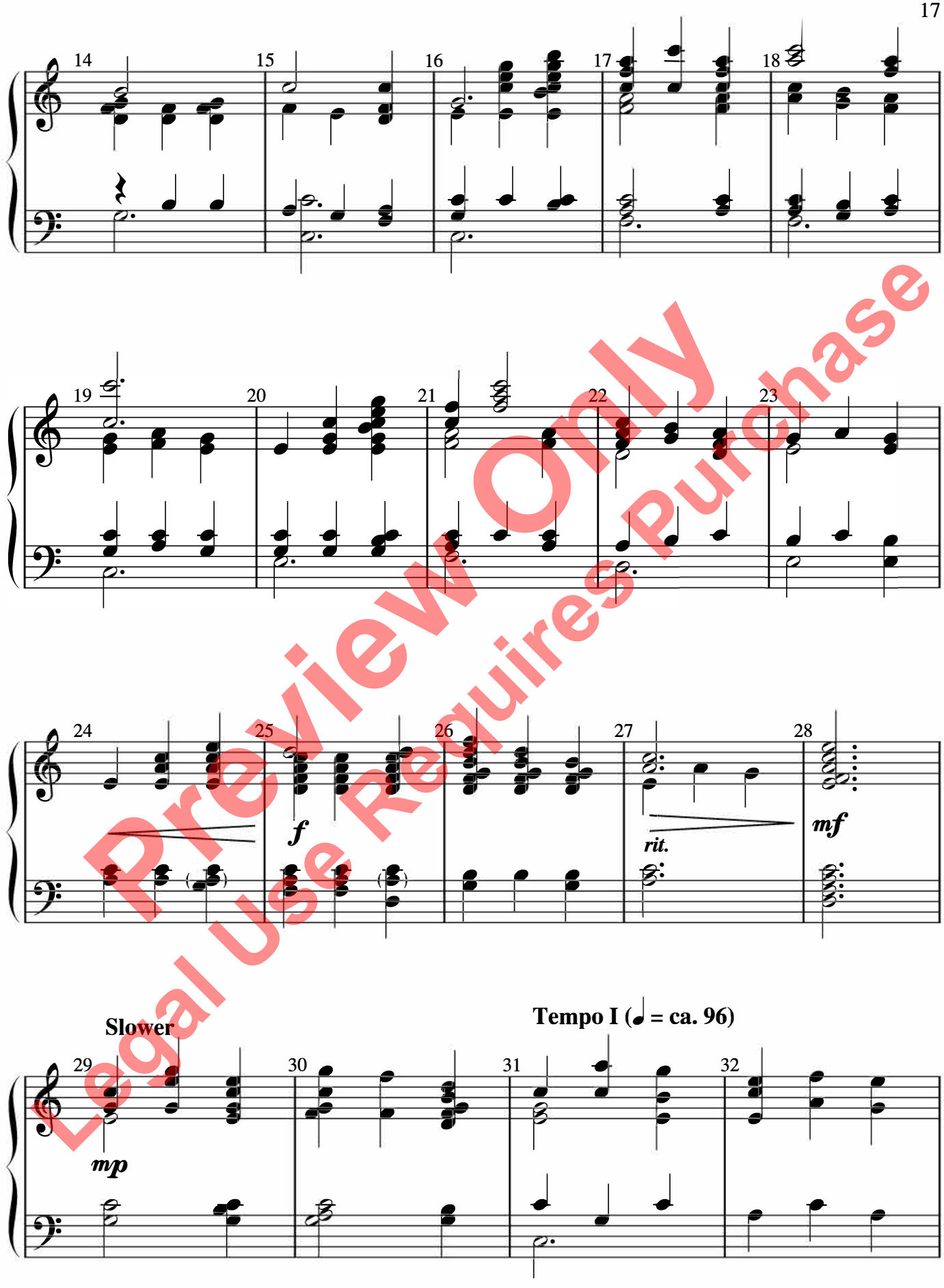

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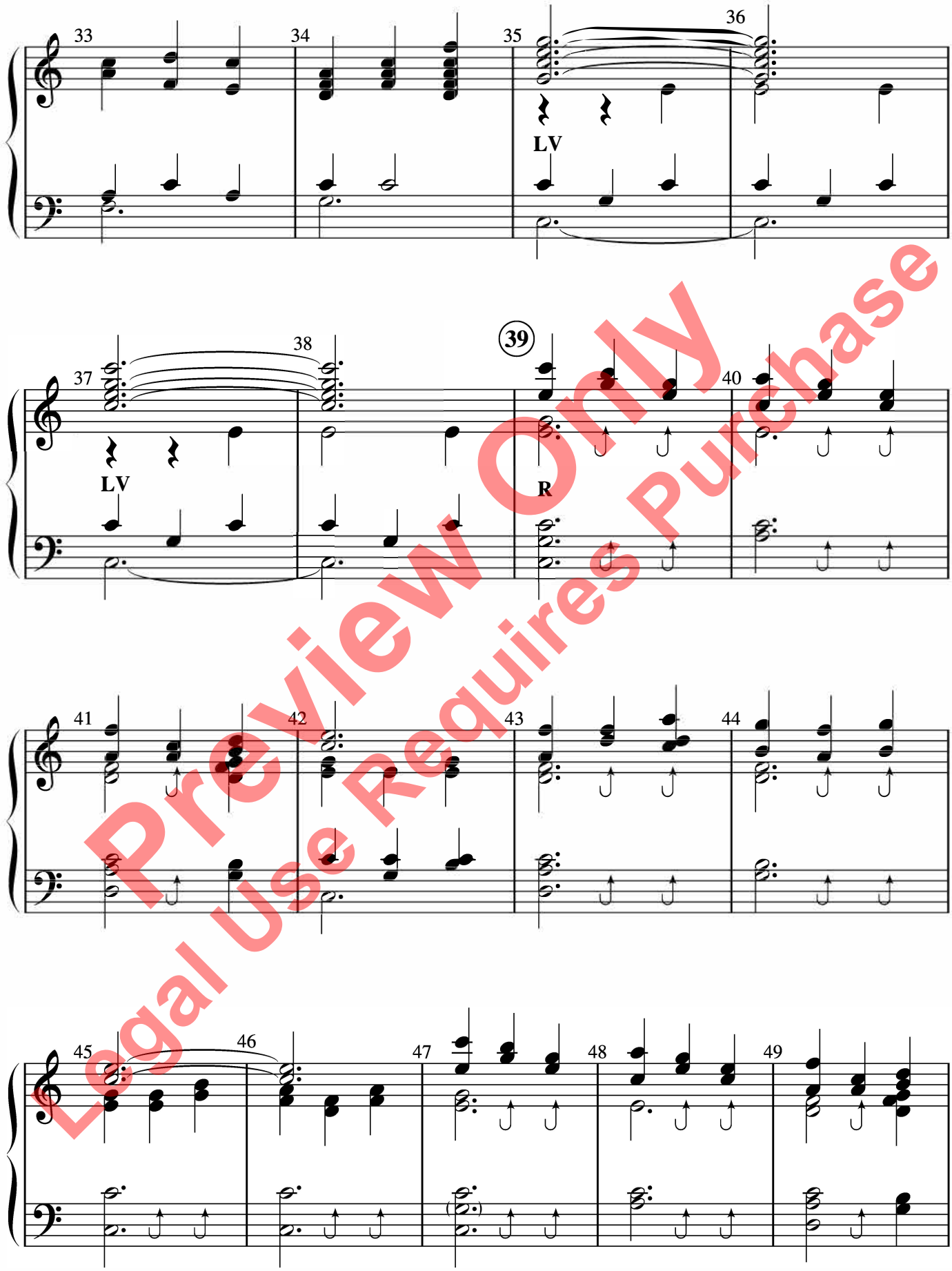

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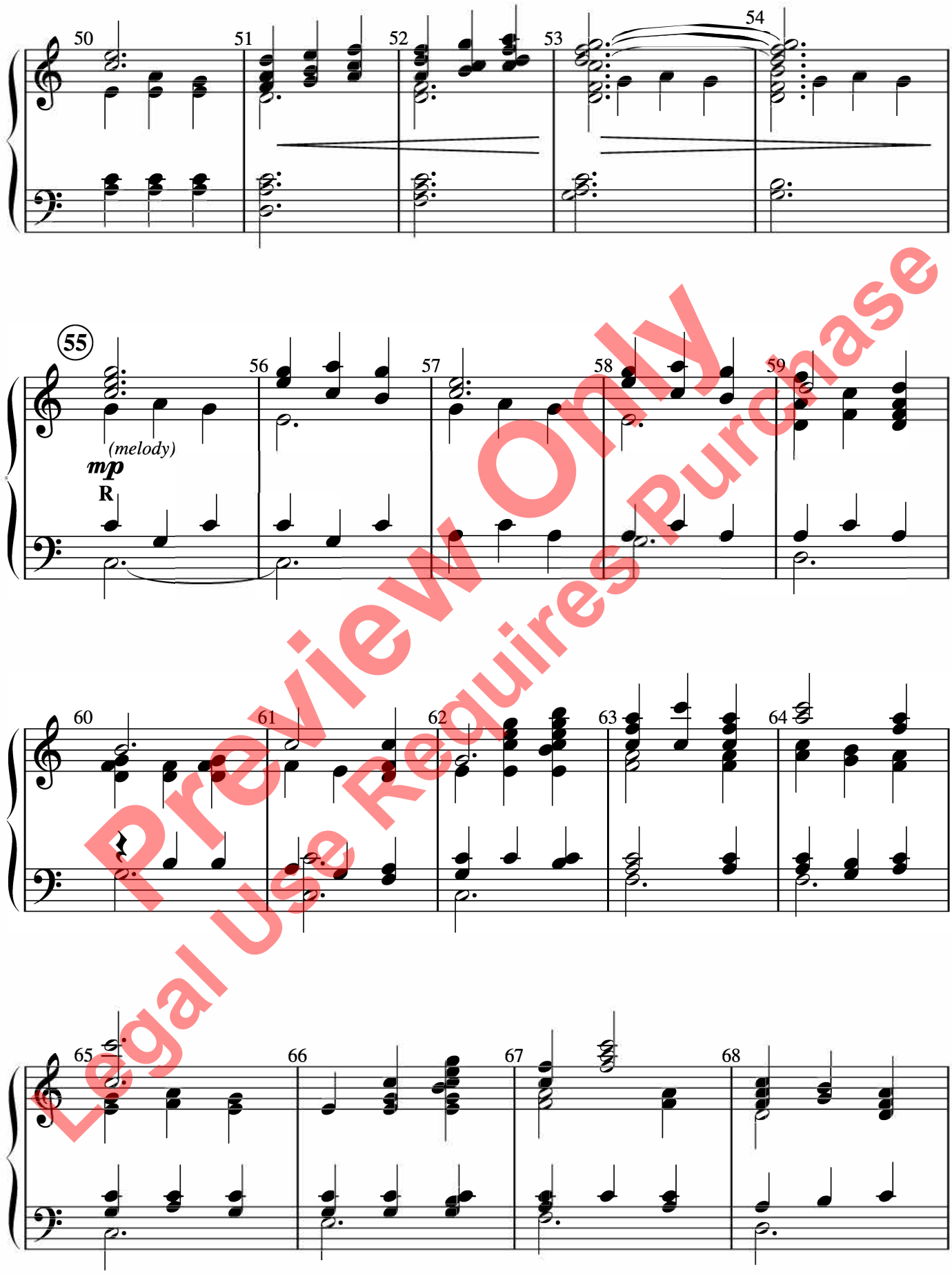

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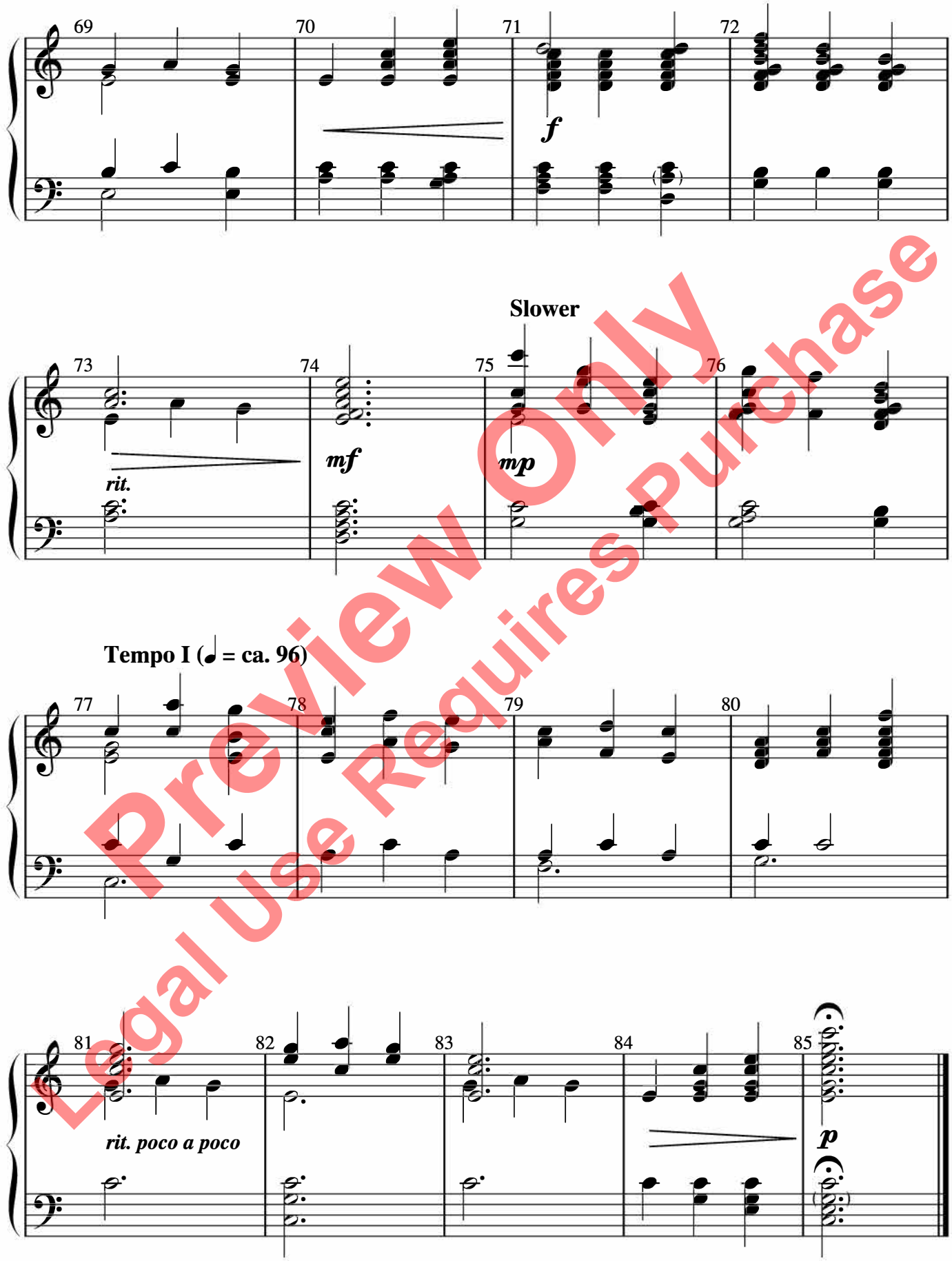

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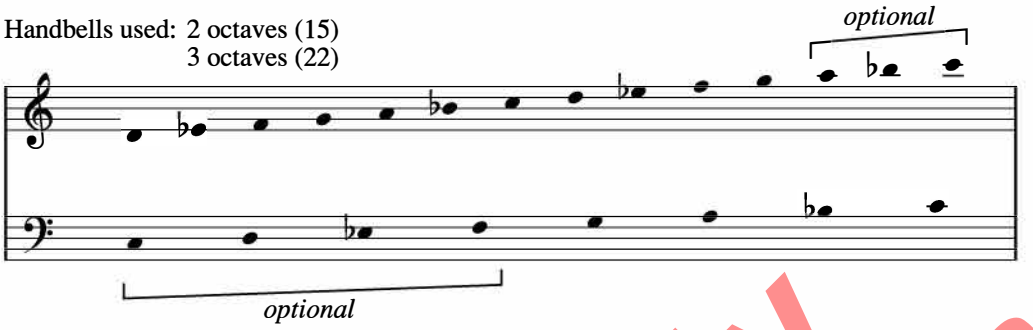
5. GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN

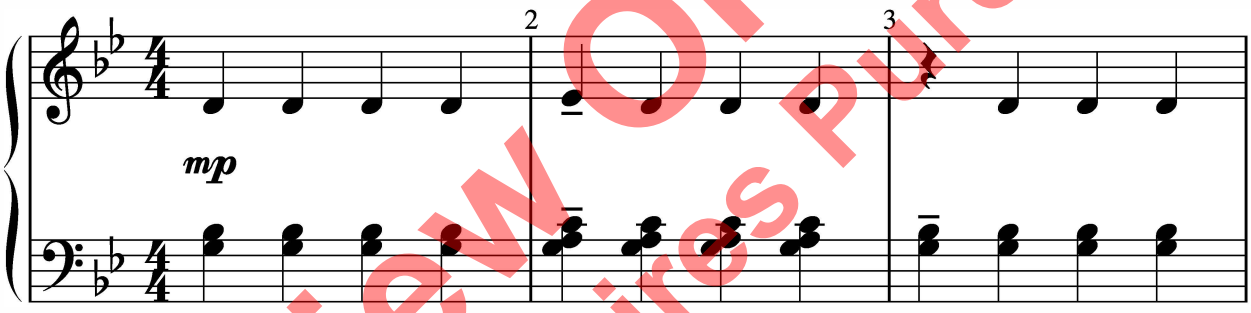
Handbells used: 2 octaves (15)
3 octaves (22)

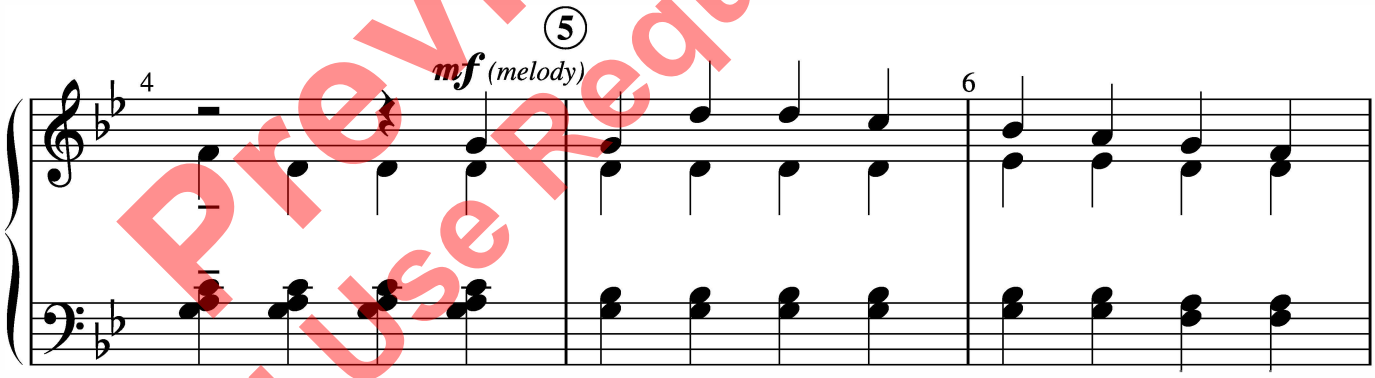


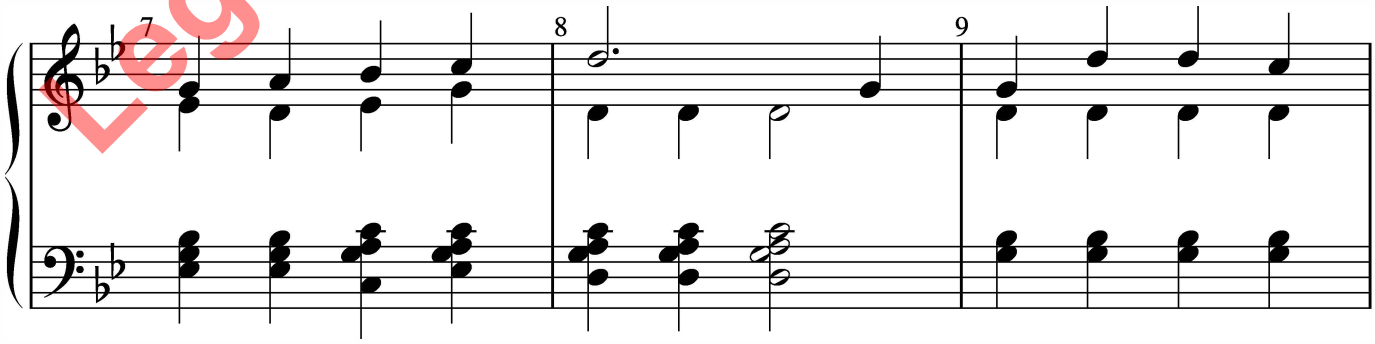
2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

TRADITIONAL ENGLISH CAROL

With excitement (♩ = ca. 112-120)







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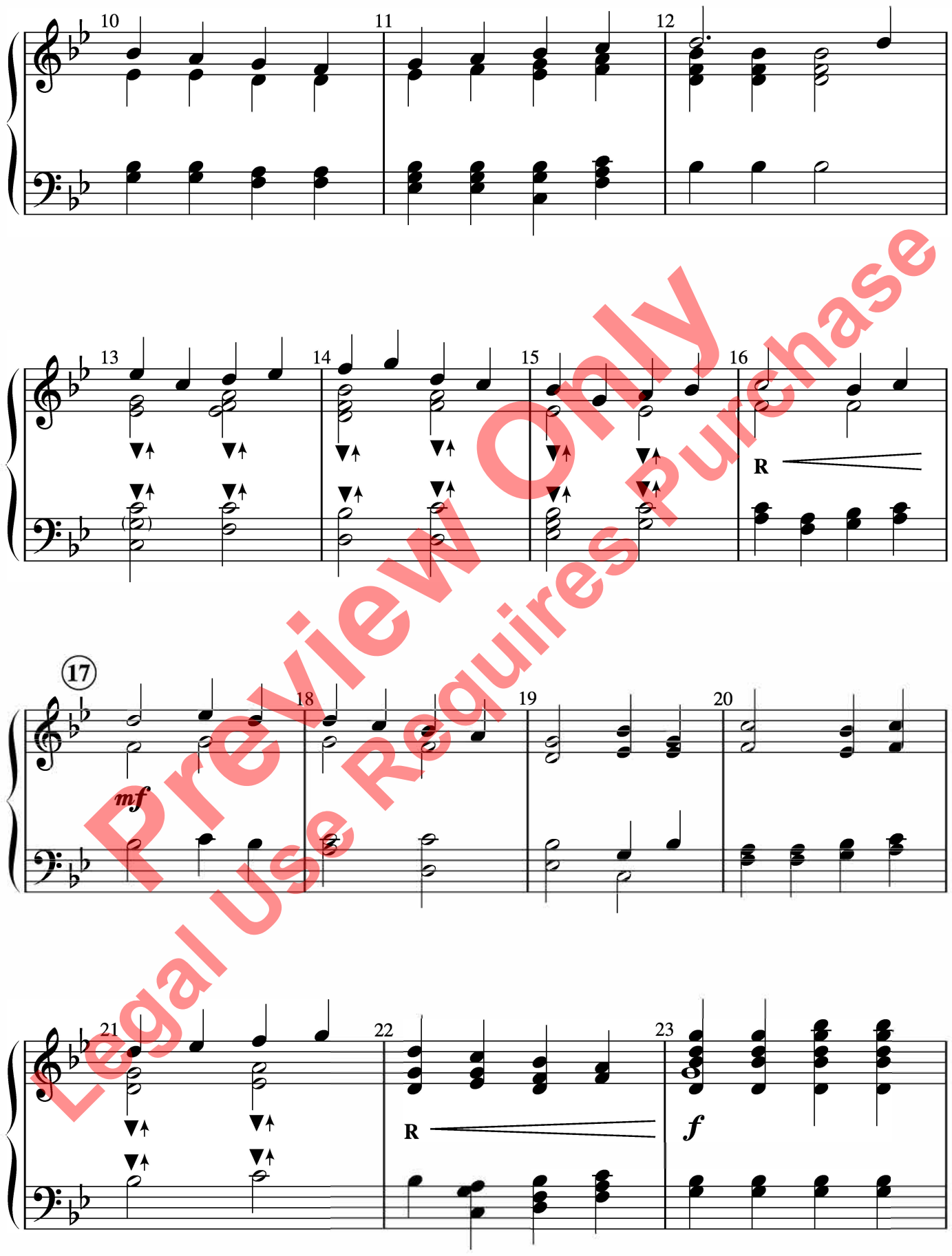

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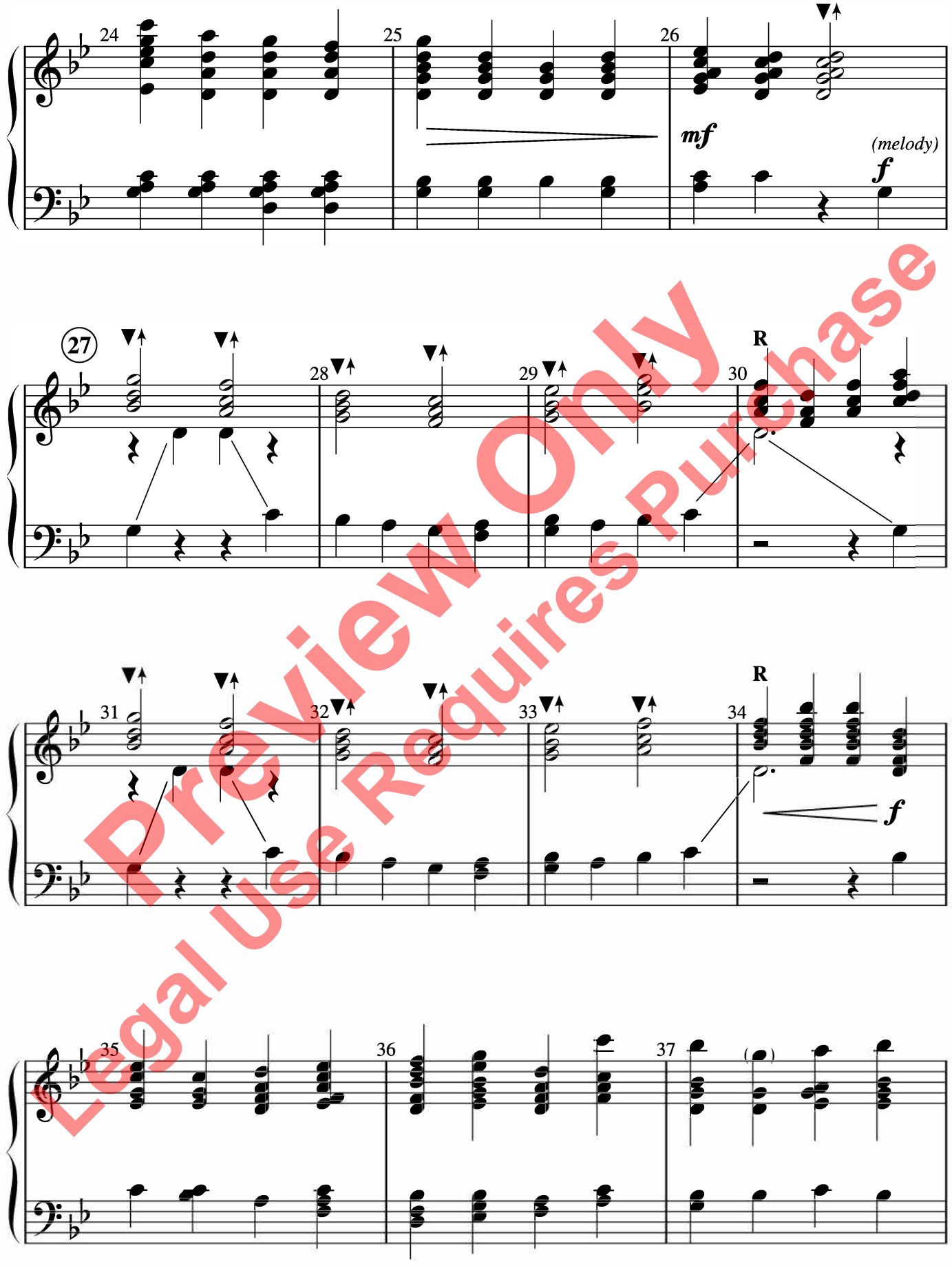

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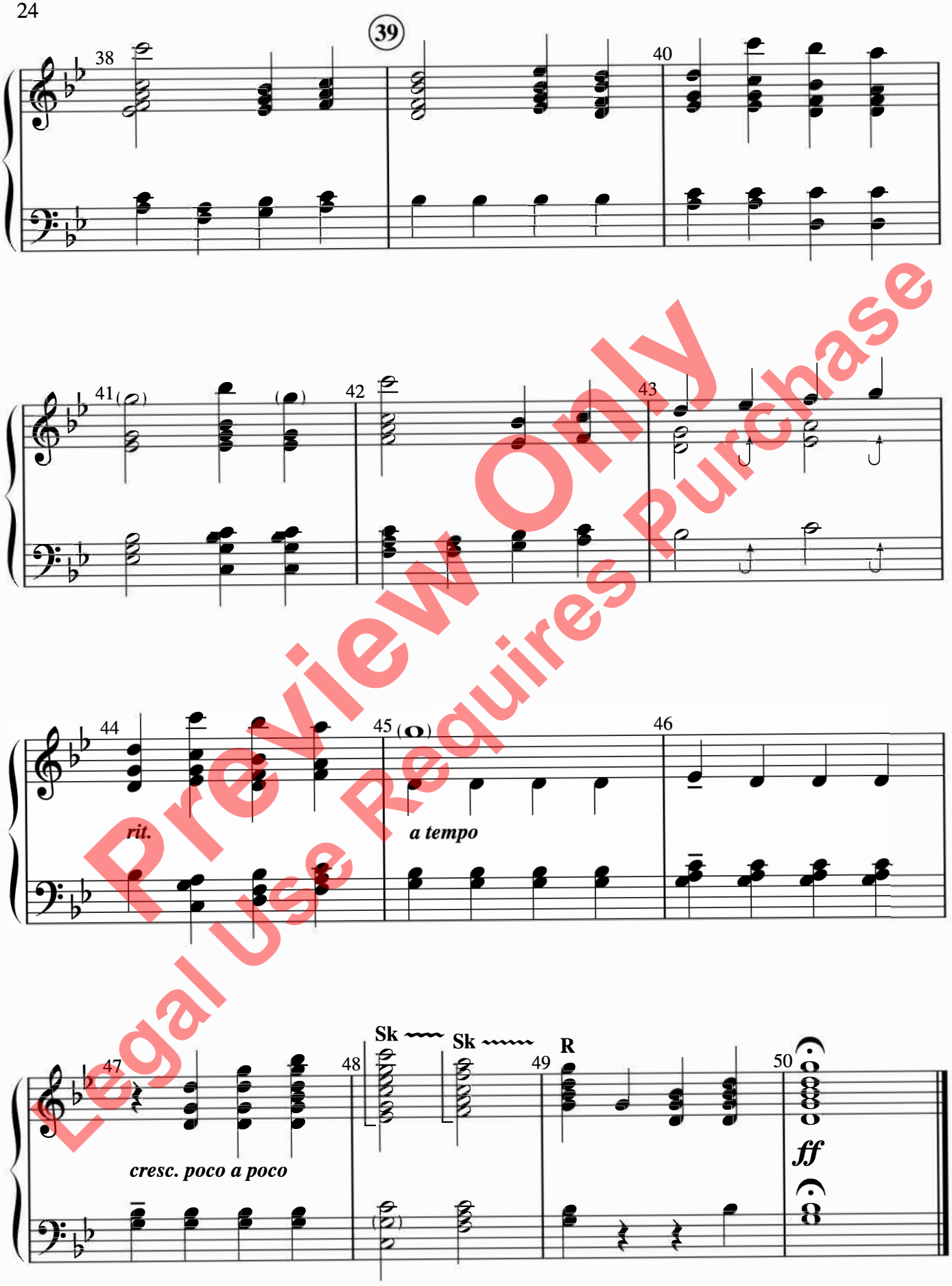

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