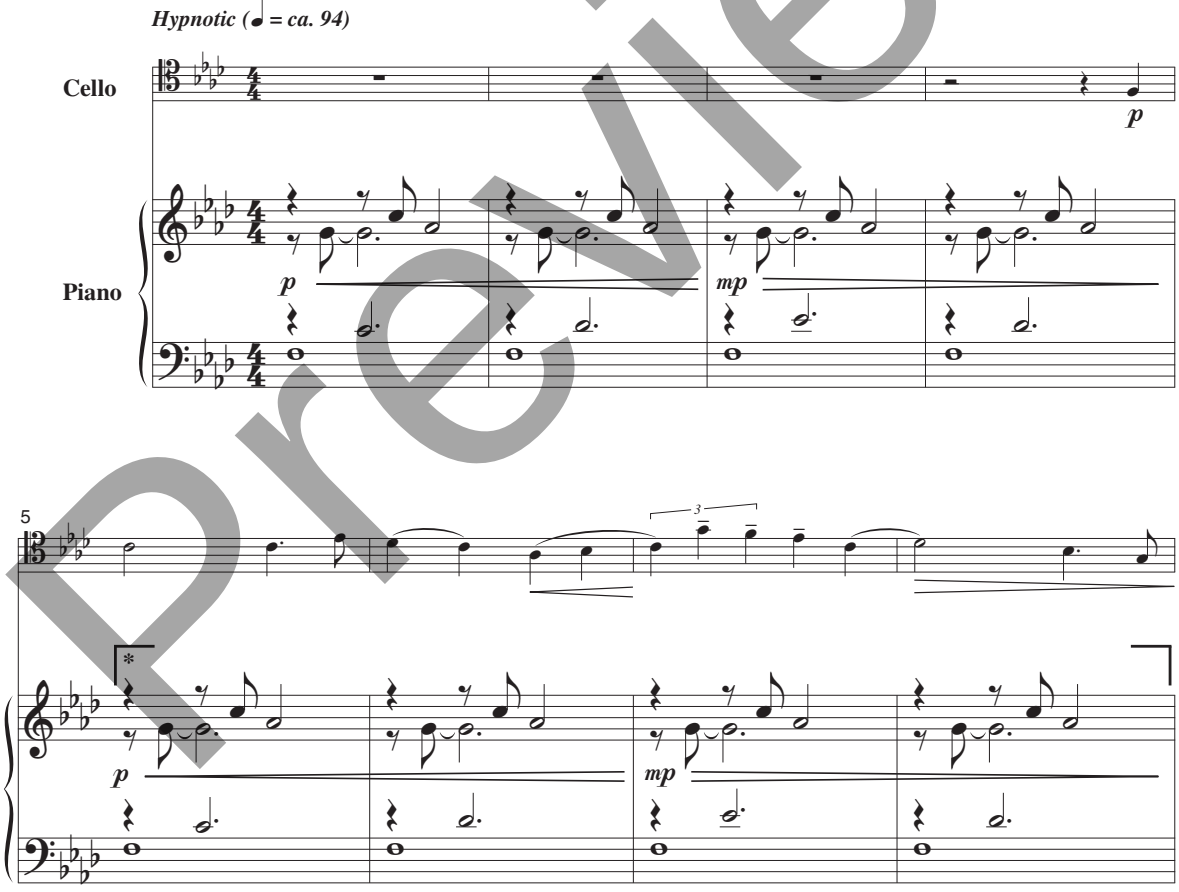
THE SPIRITUALS SERIES

Remembering Home

Super flumina Babylonis, Psalm 137;
"Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child," traditional Spiritual

Orin Johnson



Preview

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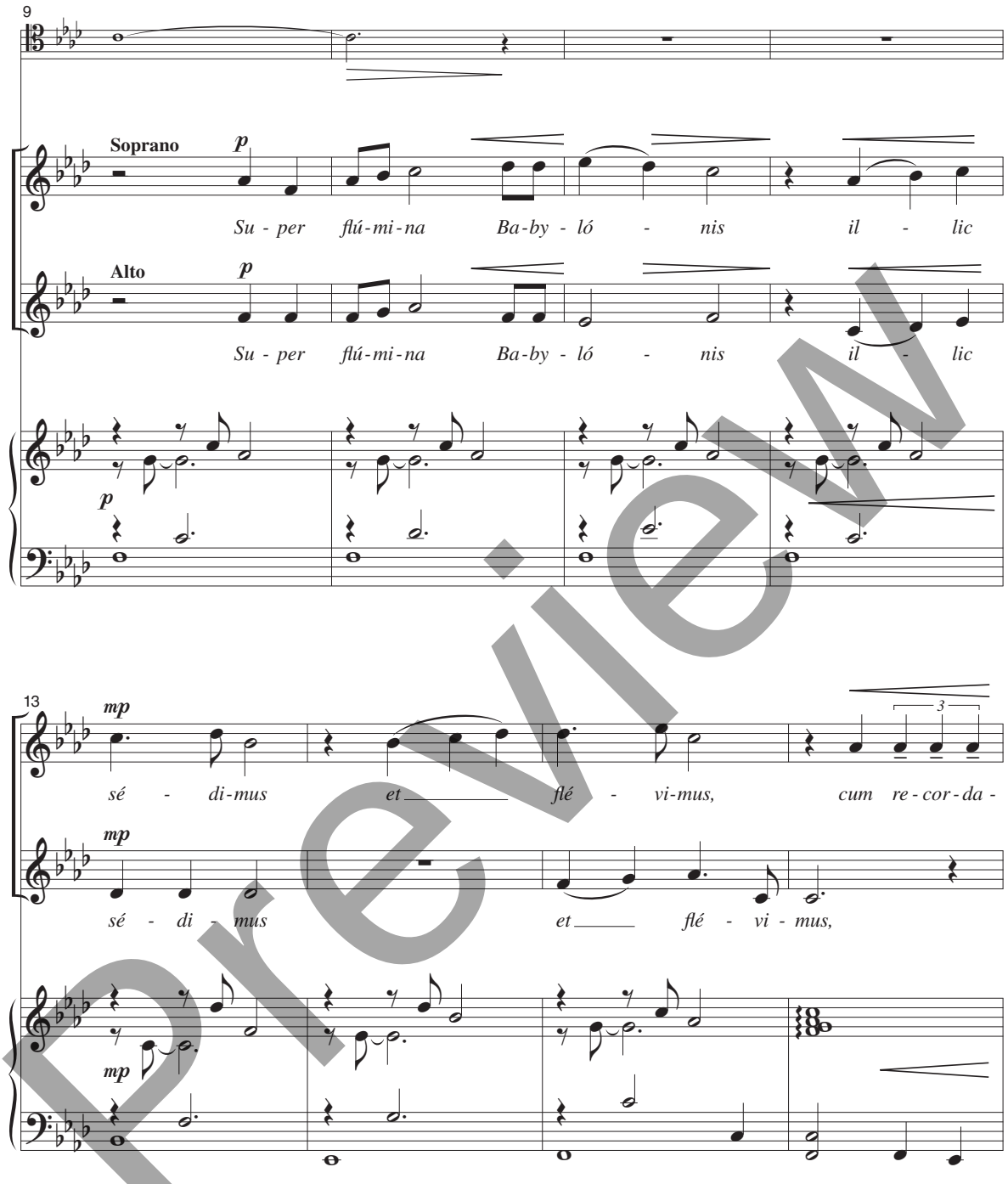
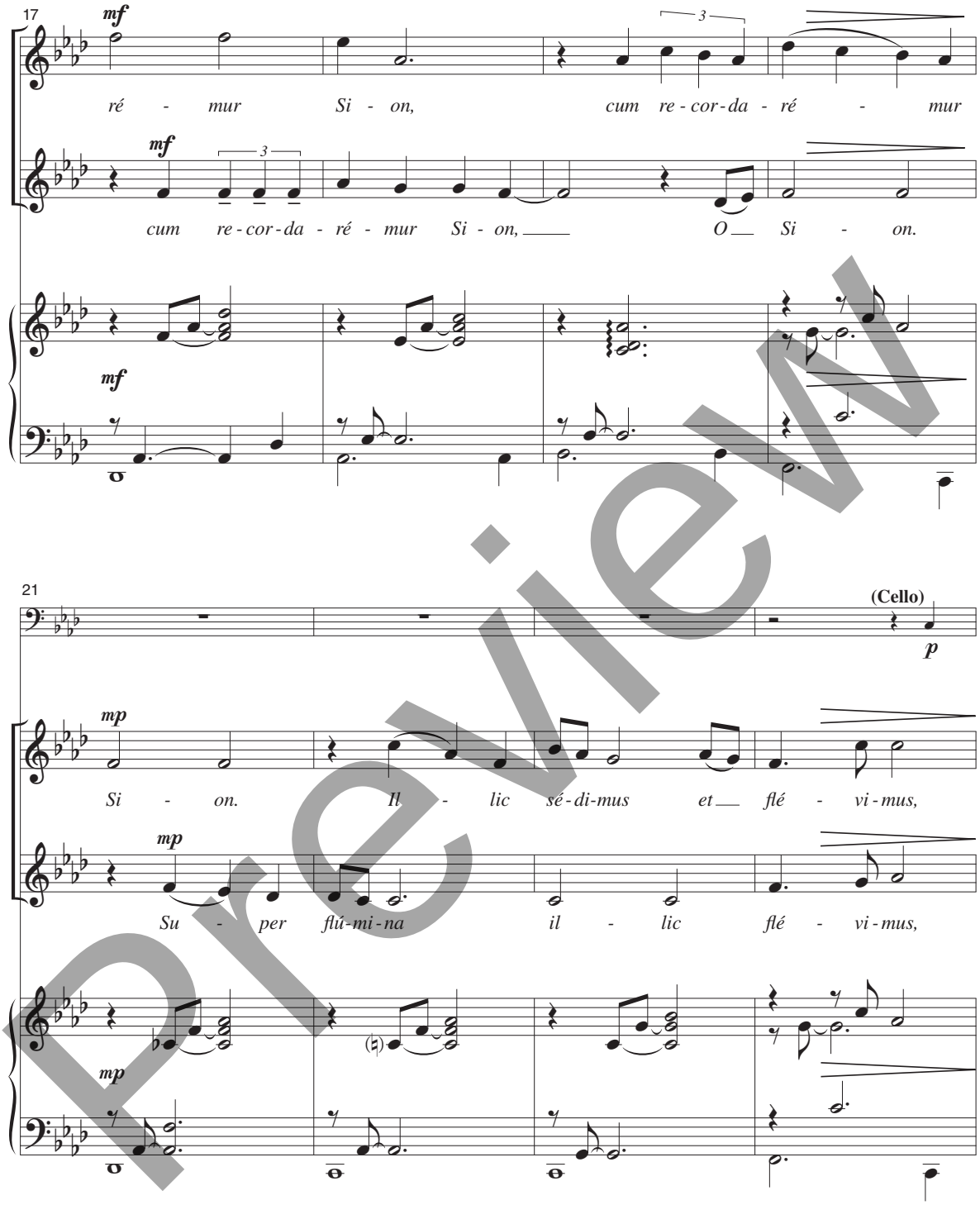
***If no cello is playing, measures 5–8 may be omitted.**


9
Soprano
p
Su - per flú-mi-na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic
Alto
p
Su - per flú-mi-na Ba-by - ló - nis il - lic
p
13
mp
sé - di-mus et flé - vi-mus, cum re-cor-da -
3
mp
sé - di - mus et flé - vi - mus,
mp

Preview



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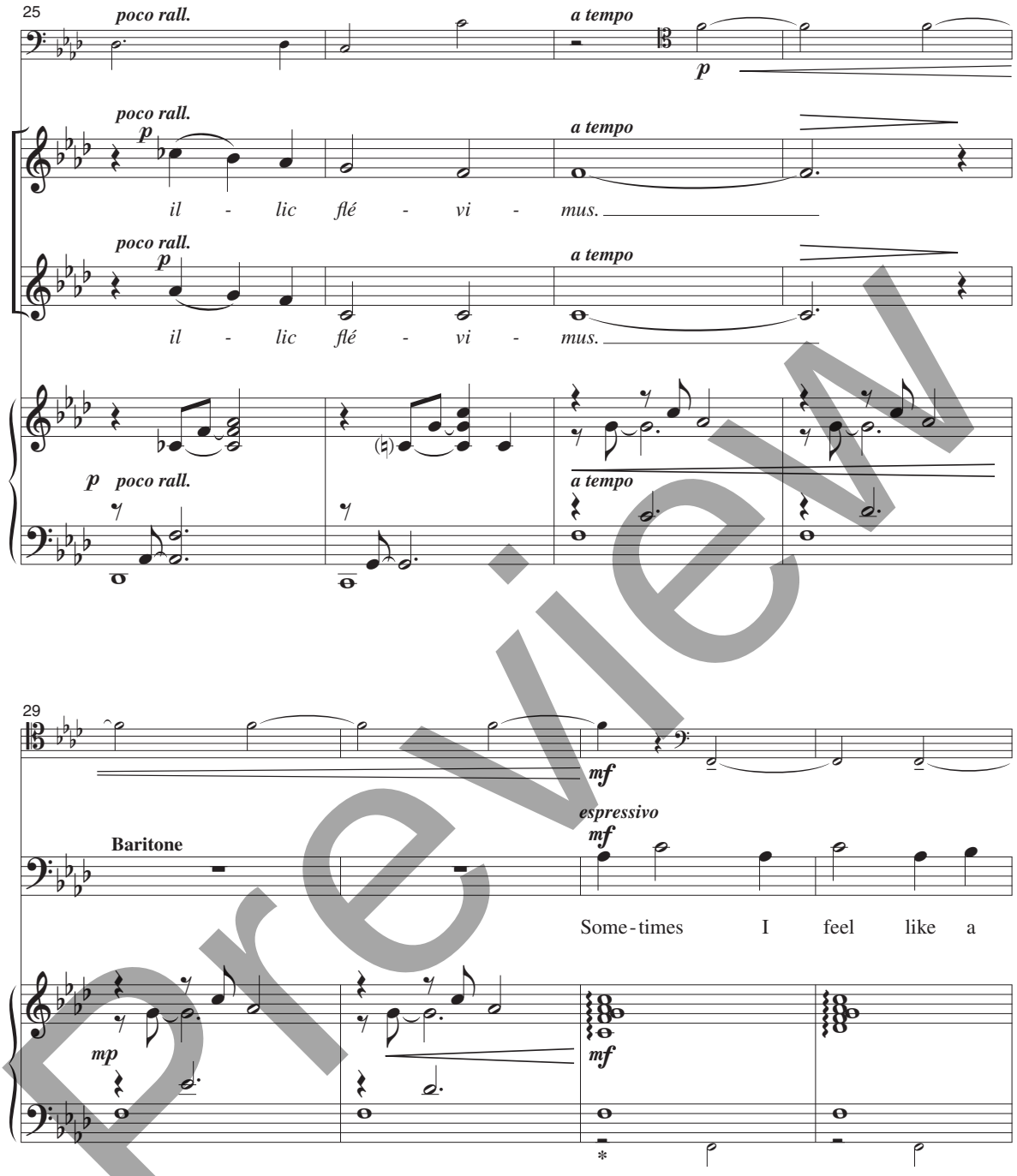

***Play cue notes only in the absence of cello.**

Preview

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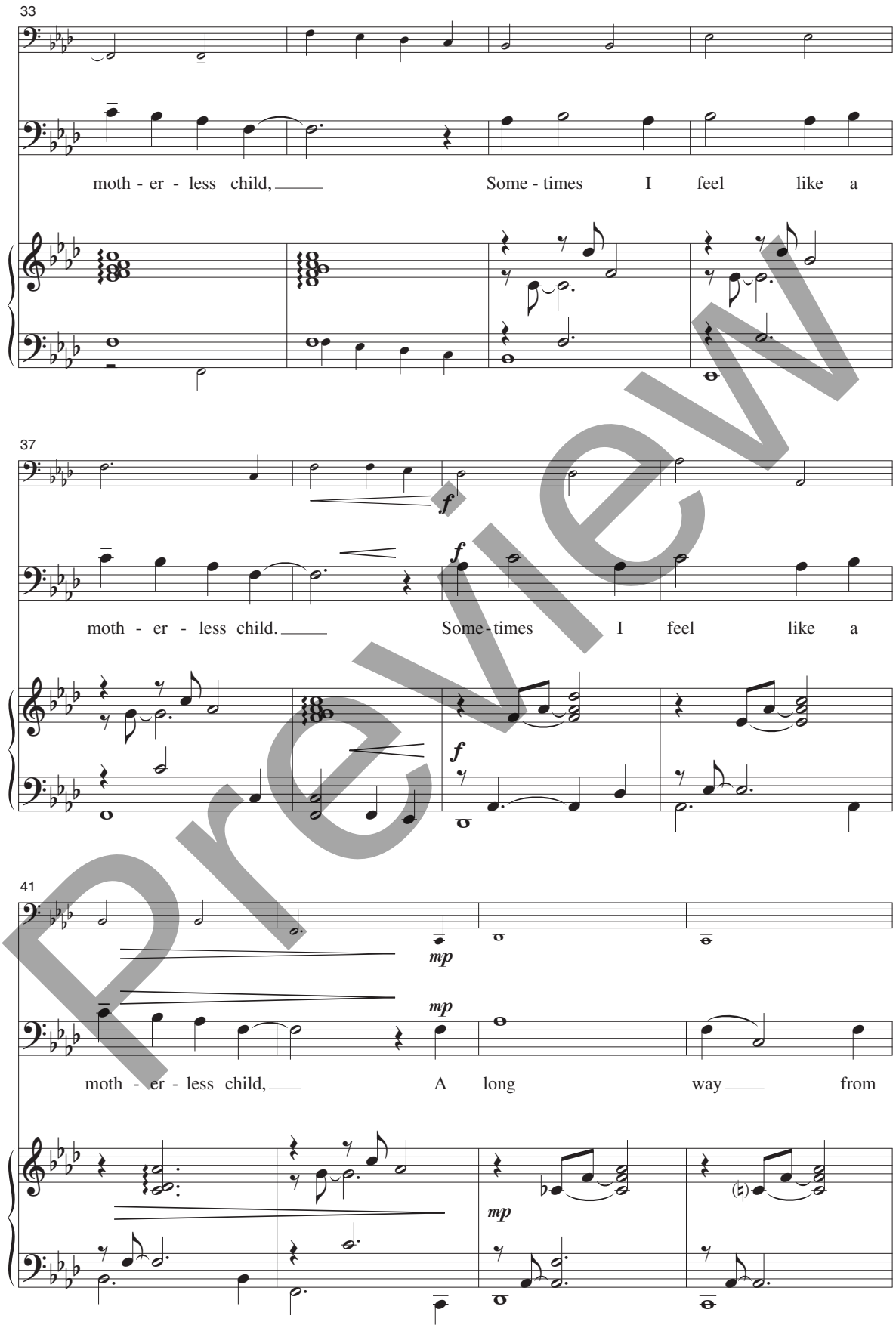

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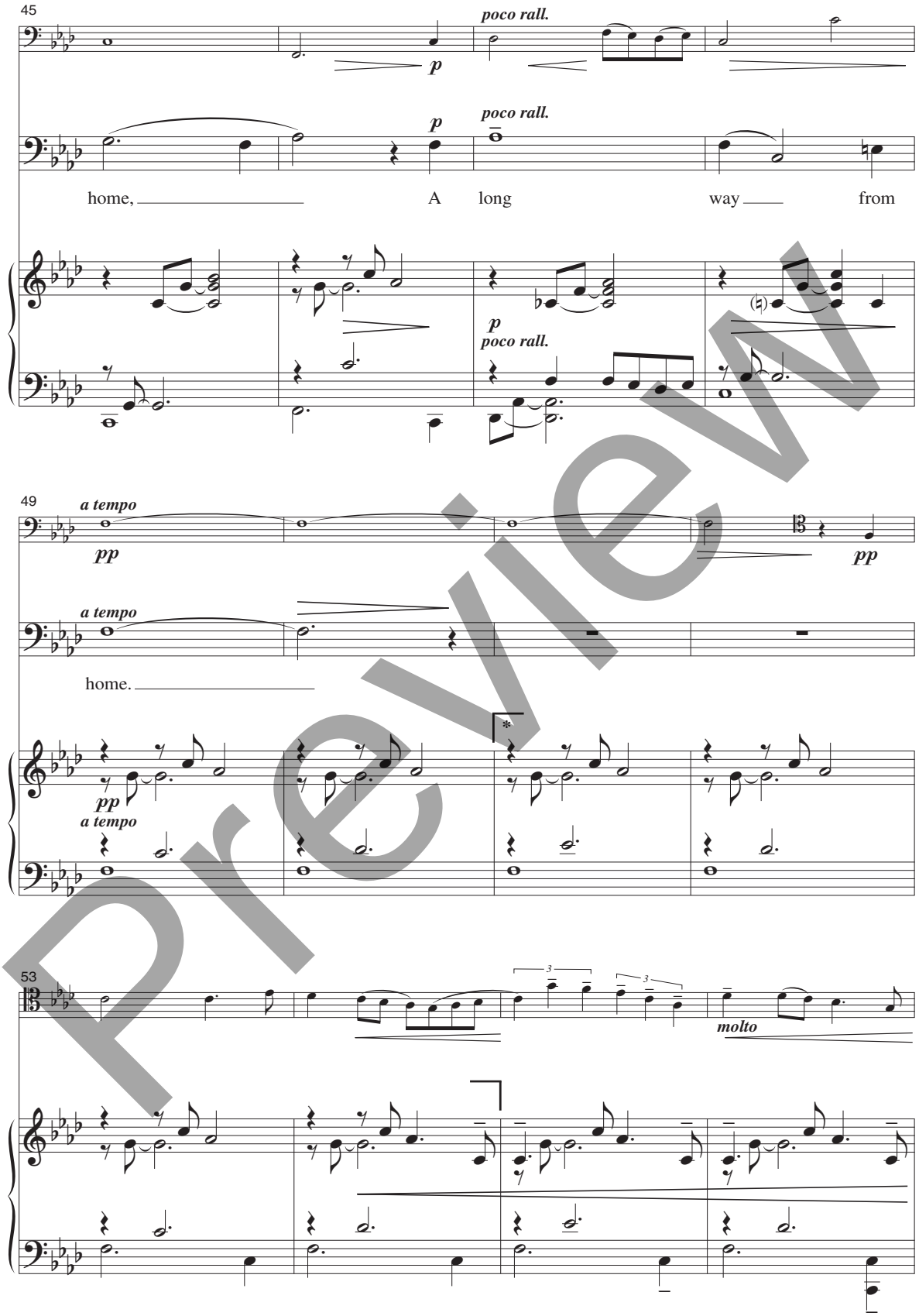

***If no cello is playing, measures 51–54 may be omitted.**

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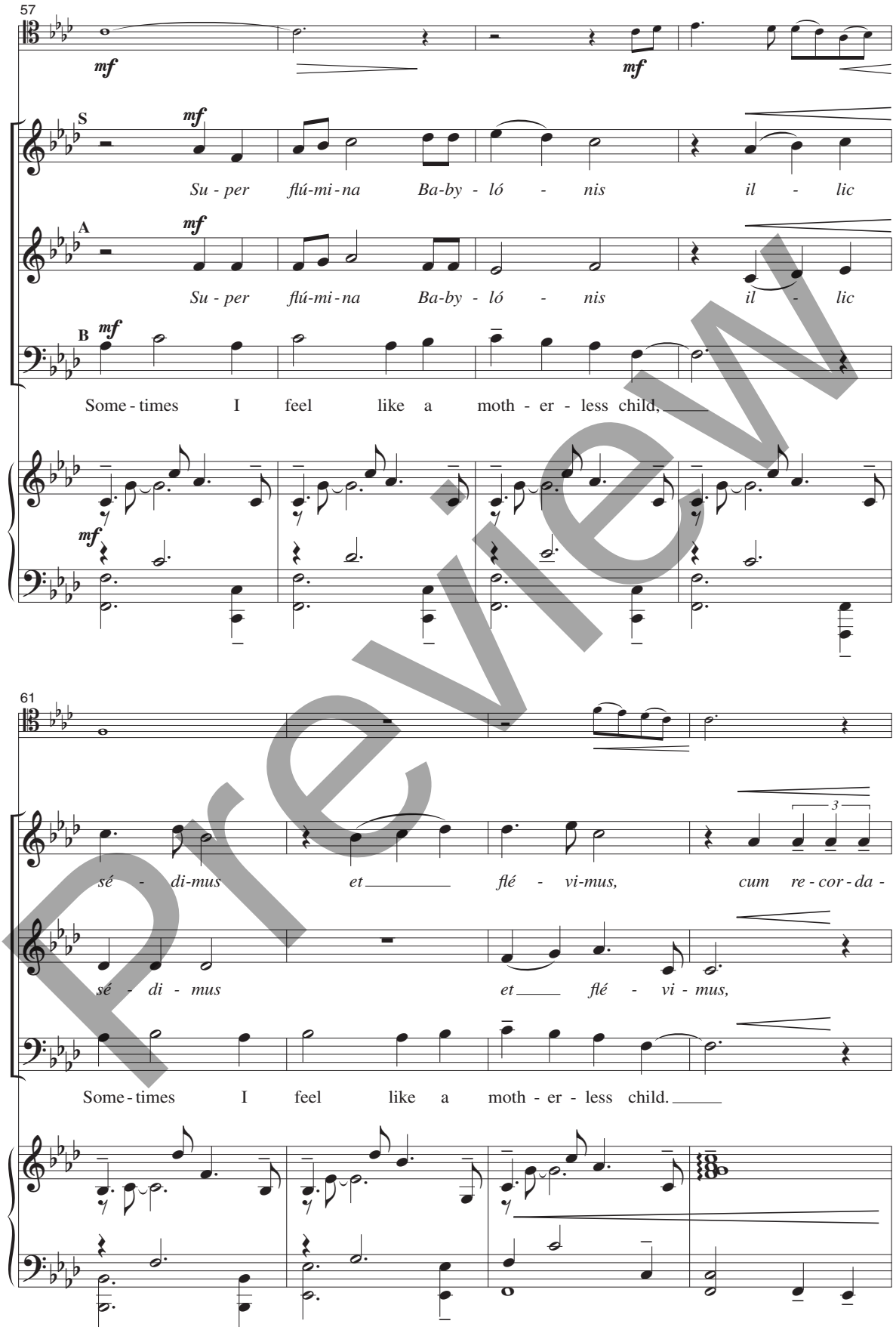
Preview



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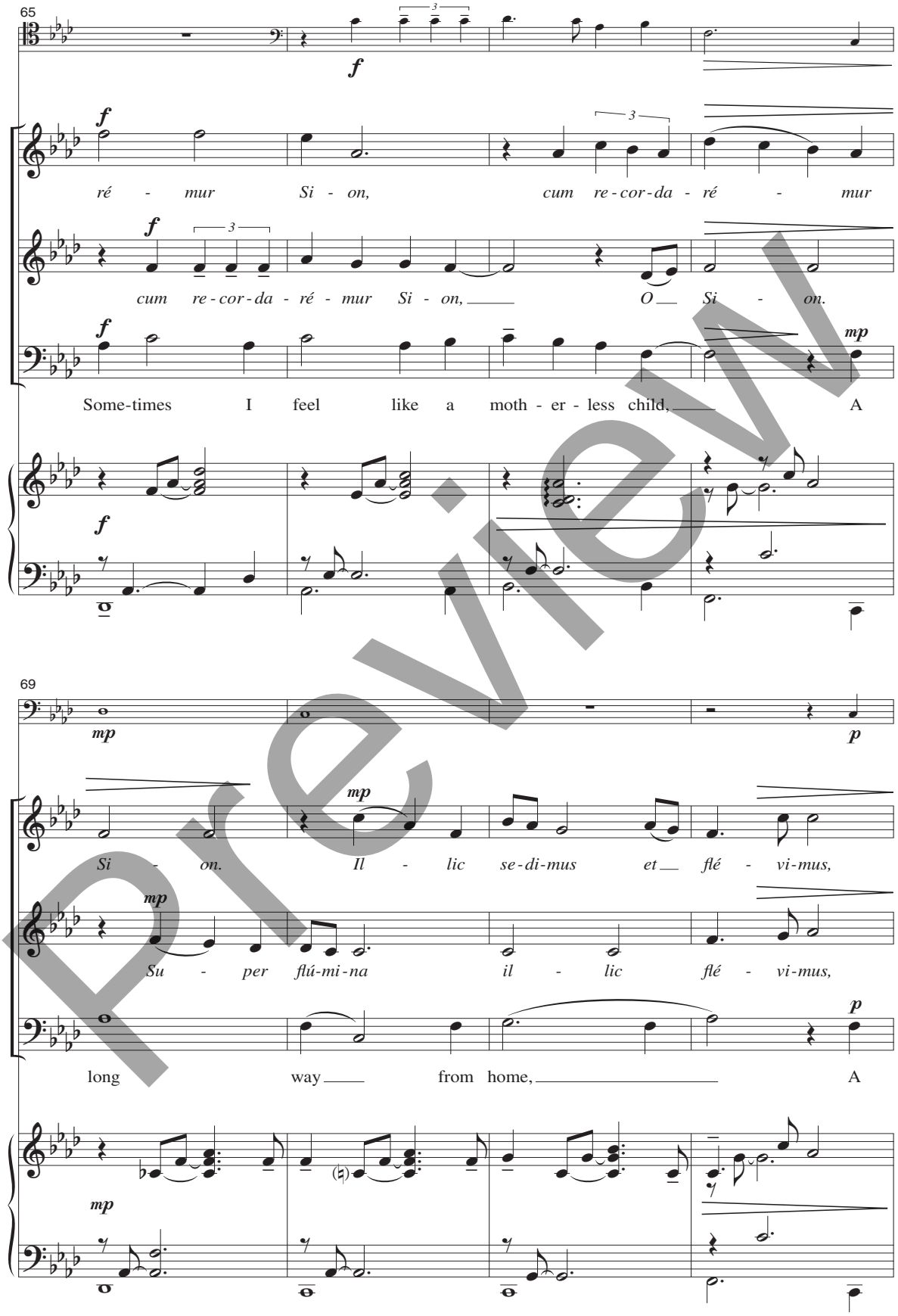

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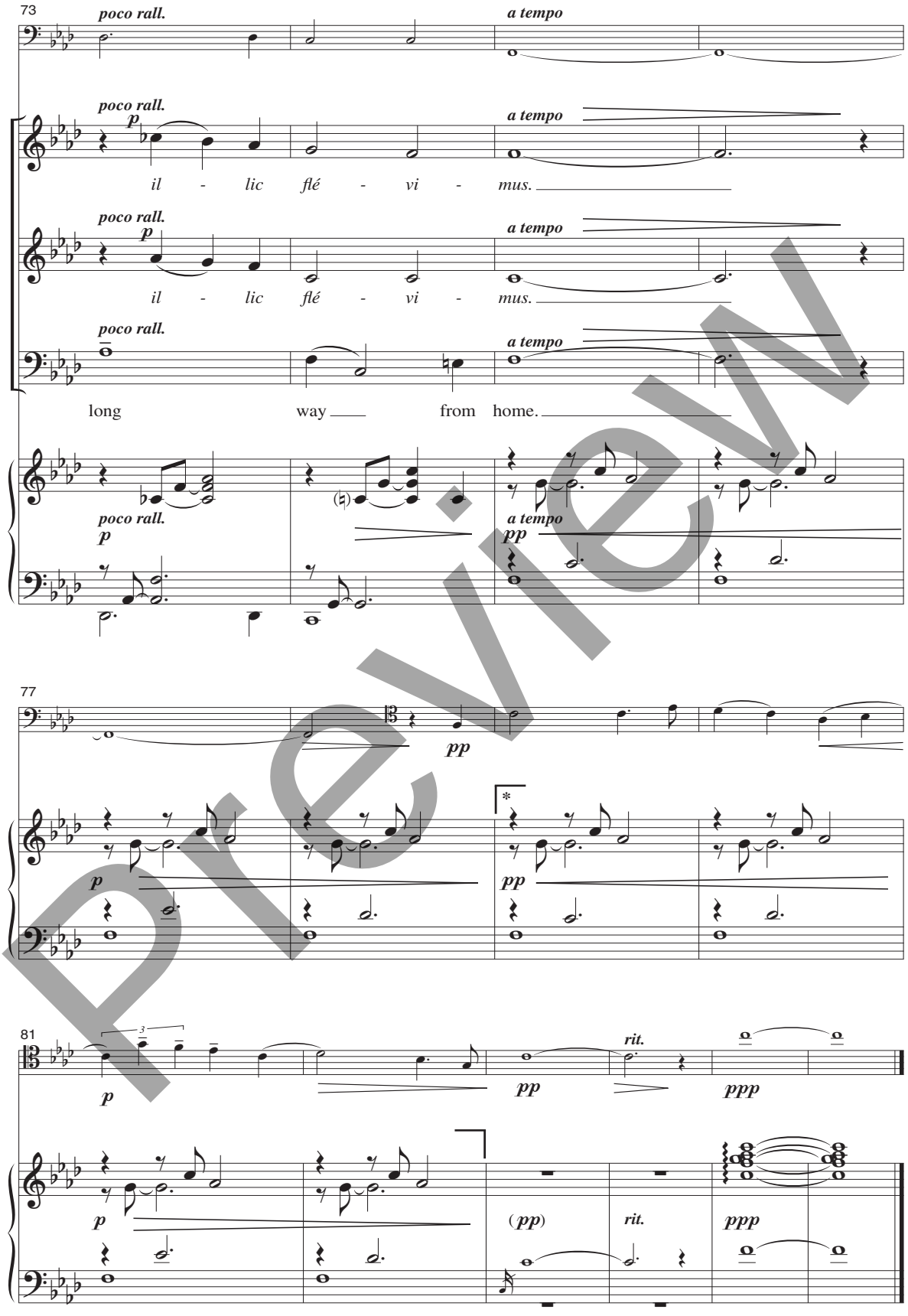

Preview

***If no cello is playing, measures 79–82 may be omitted; play cue notes in measures 83–84 only in the absence of cello.**

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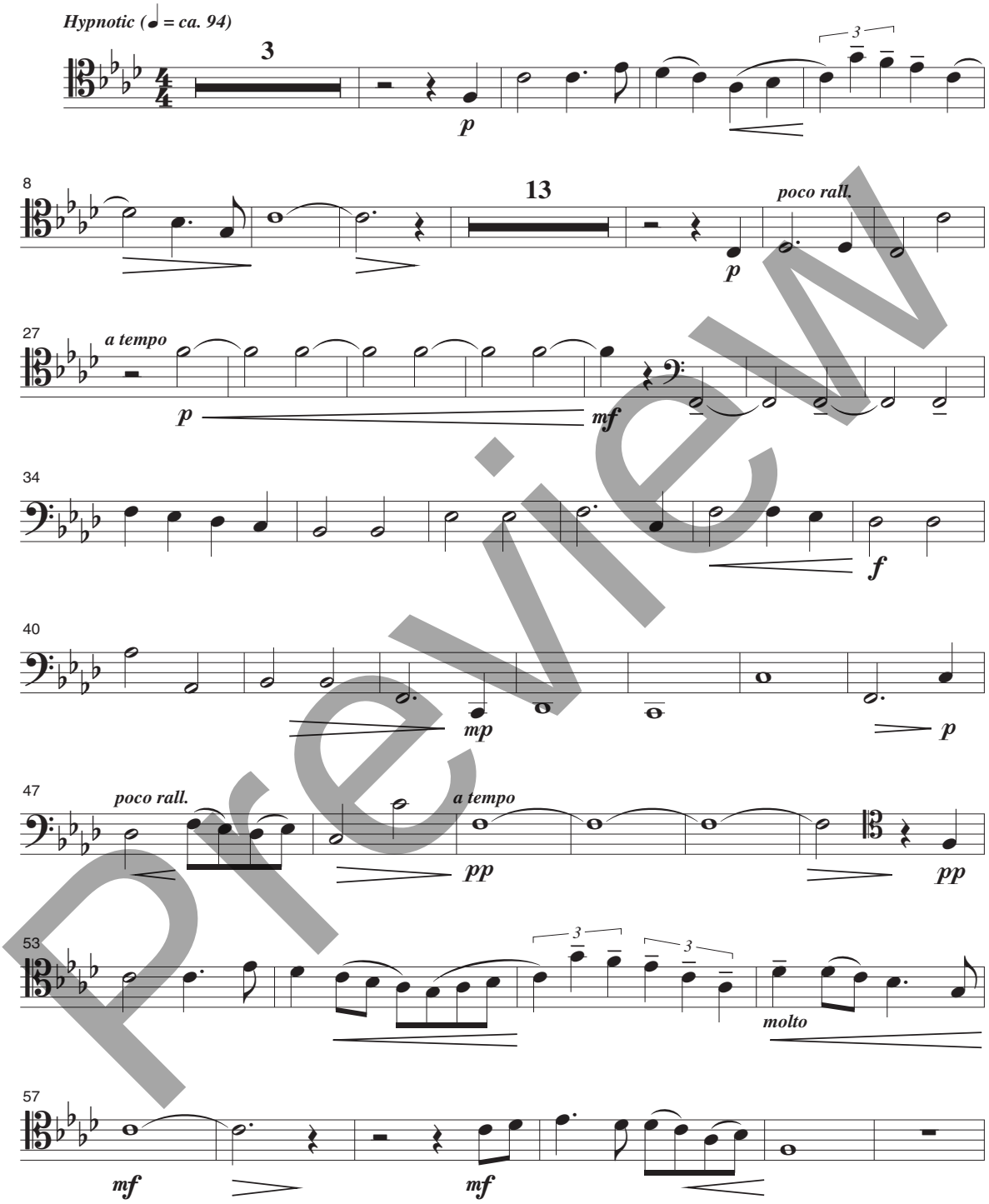
Remembering Home

CELLO

Orin Johnson



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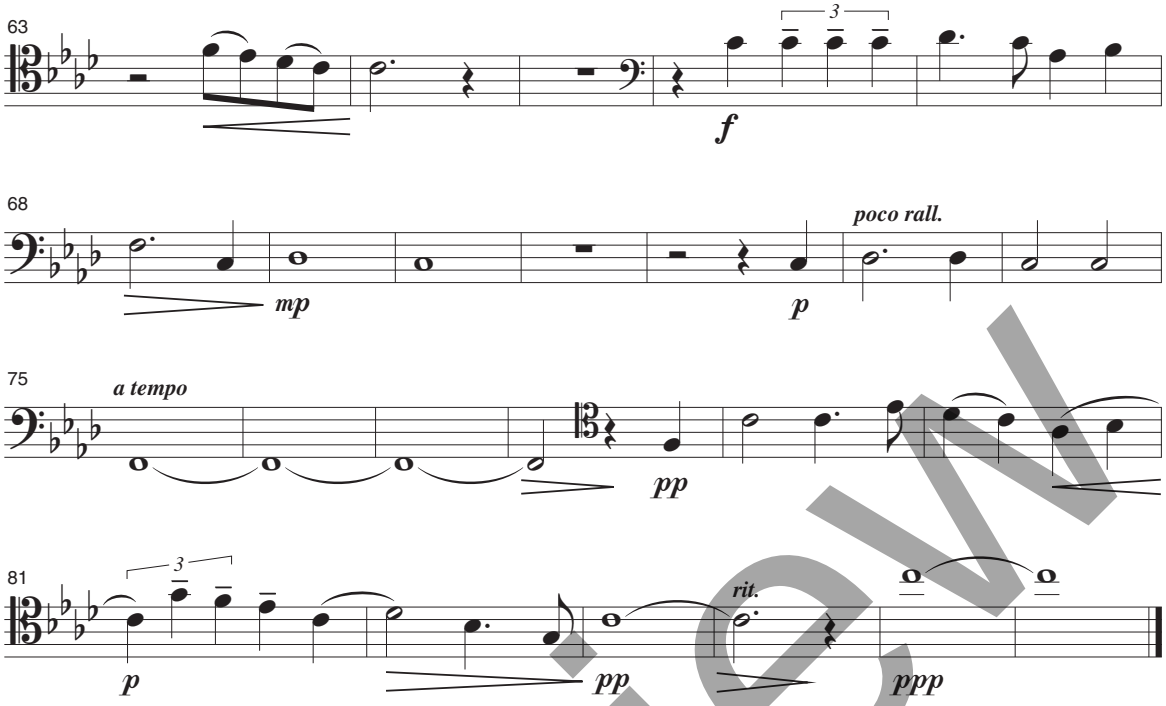

Composer Notes

"Remembering Home" pairs two profound songs of exile: Psalm 137, the Israelites' lament from their exile in Babylon, and the spiritual dating from Civil War times, "Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child." The former speaks of being forcibly separated from a geographic and sacred homeland; the latter is borne from not only that experience but from the separation of parents and children often suffered by enslaved persons. An optional cello part* adds a third plaintive melody of sadness and longing, while a hypnotic piano part underpins it all, almost as if in a daze.

While very few of us have had such dramatic experiences of exile, that feeling of being far from home—and not by one's own choice—is in some ways universal and is part of every Christian's journey to again, one day, see God face to face. This piece would fit in well during any season or service of lament, or when worshipping with those whose people have experienced such devastation, or indeed with any people forced from their homeland by war, hunger, or any lack of freedom.

—Orin Johnson

*If necessary, this piece may be performed satisfactorily without a cello. In the absence of a cello, performers may omit mm. 5–8, 51–54, and 79–82. Pianists should play cue notes as well, and only in the absence of a cello.

Latin text:
Super flumina Babylonis
illic sedimus et flevimus,
cum recordaremur Sion.

English Translation:
By the waters of Babylon
there we sat and wept
when we remembered Zion.

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