Editor's Note

Giovanni Gastoldi (c.1554-1609) was a very popular Italian composer in the Renaissance period. He spent most of his career serving as maestro di cappella for the Gonzaga family in Mantua. Although he completed a variety of sacred works, madrigals, and instrumental pieces, his two sets of balletti were his most famous and influential. The editions of both the *Balletti a cinque voci (Balletti for five voices)*, first printed in 1591, and *Balletti a tre voci (Balletti for three voices)*, first printed in 1594, were homophonic settings for voices with passages of nonsense syllables (such as fa, la, la). They were quite popular because of their tunefulness and simplicity, and were intended to be sung, played, and danced.

Originally scored for three-part voices in Gastoldi's 1594 collection, this arrangement features the editor's English setting below the original Italian text. Although it would be very effective to perform the work a cappella, it would also be acceptable to use recorders, other woodwinds, strings, or the optional flute, keyboard, and hand drum parts. Instruments were often used in the Renaissance period for doubling or replacing vocal parts.

Perform "Sonatemi un Balletto" lightly and energetically with a feeling of two pulsations for each measure. Performers should emphasize the normally stressed syllables of the Italian words, indicated with accent marks below.

Translation and Pronunciation Guide

So-na-te-mi un bal-let-to,
Soh-náh-tay-mee oon bah-láyt:taw,
Play a dance for me,

col mio a-mor vo-glio dan-zar!
kohl meéaw ah-móhr váw-lyaw dahn-tsáhr!
I want to dance with my love!

Ch'io pren-do grá pia-cer,
Keéaw préhn-daw grah peeah-cháyr,
As I have great pleasure in dancing,

nel bal-lo a dir-vi il ver.
nehl báhl-law ah deér-vee eel vayr.
I am telling the truth.

Hor via che sta-te a far? Co-min-cia-te a so-nar.
Hohr veéah keh stáh-teh ah fahr? Koh-meen-cháh-teh ah soh-náhr.
What are you going to do? Begin playing.

Già pron-ta è la mia nin-fa
Djah próhn-tah eh la meéah neén-fah
Already my Nymph is ready

per vo-ler me-co bal-lar!
payr voh-láyr máy-kaw bahl-láhr!
for wanting to dance for me!

E per far-mi fa-vor, la man mi strin-ge an-cor.
Ay payr fáhr-mee fah-vóhr, lah mahn mee streén-djeh ahn-kóhr.
And to favor me, my hand is still shaking.

Pronunciation Suggestions:

When singing the word "balletto" [bah-láyt:taw], the singer should briefly stop on the first "t," creating a slight silence before the sounding of the second "t." When singing the word "voglio" [váw-lyaw], the "ly" in this transliteration indicates a similar sound to the "li" in the second syllable of the word "million," requiring only one tongue action. The double "ll" consonants in the words "balletto," "ballo," and "ballar" can be sustained on a pitch while maintaining a legato line.

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SONATEMI UN BALLETTO
(Play a Dance for Me)

for S.S.A. voices with optional piano,
flutes, and hand drum, or PianoTrax CD*

English Words by
PATRICK M. LIEBERGEN

Music by **GIOVANNI GASTOLDI** (1554-1609)
Edited and Arranged by **PATRICK M. LIEBERGEN**

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* Also available for S.A.B. (39737) and T.B.B. (39739).
PianoTrax 5 accompaniment CD available (39670).

Please visit *alfred.com/choralparts* to download free parts for flutes and hand drum.

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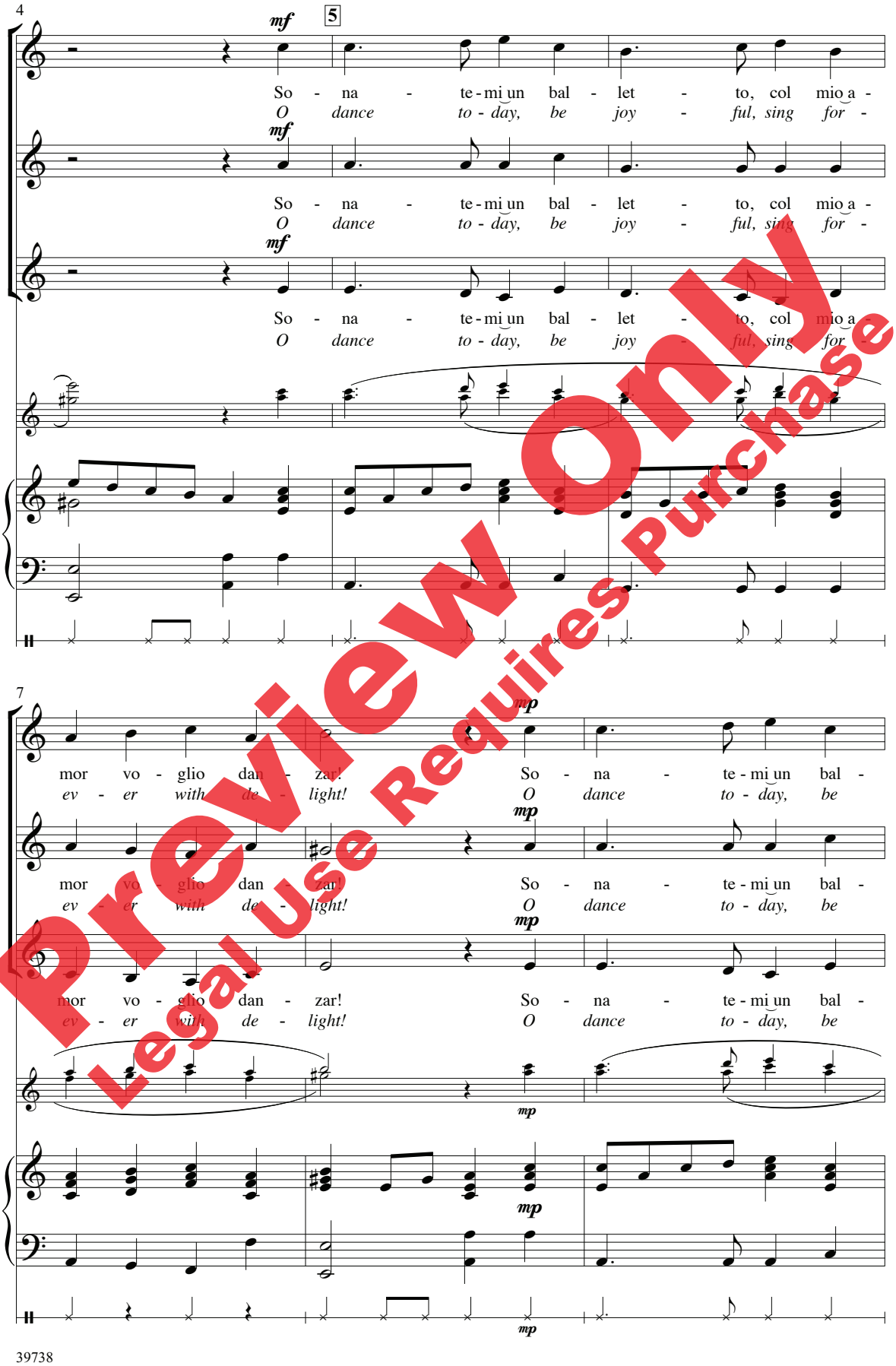

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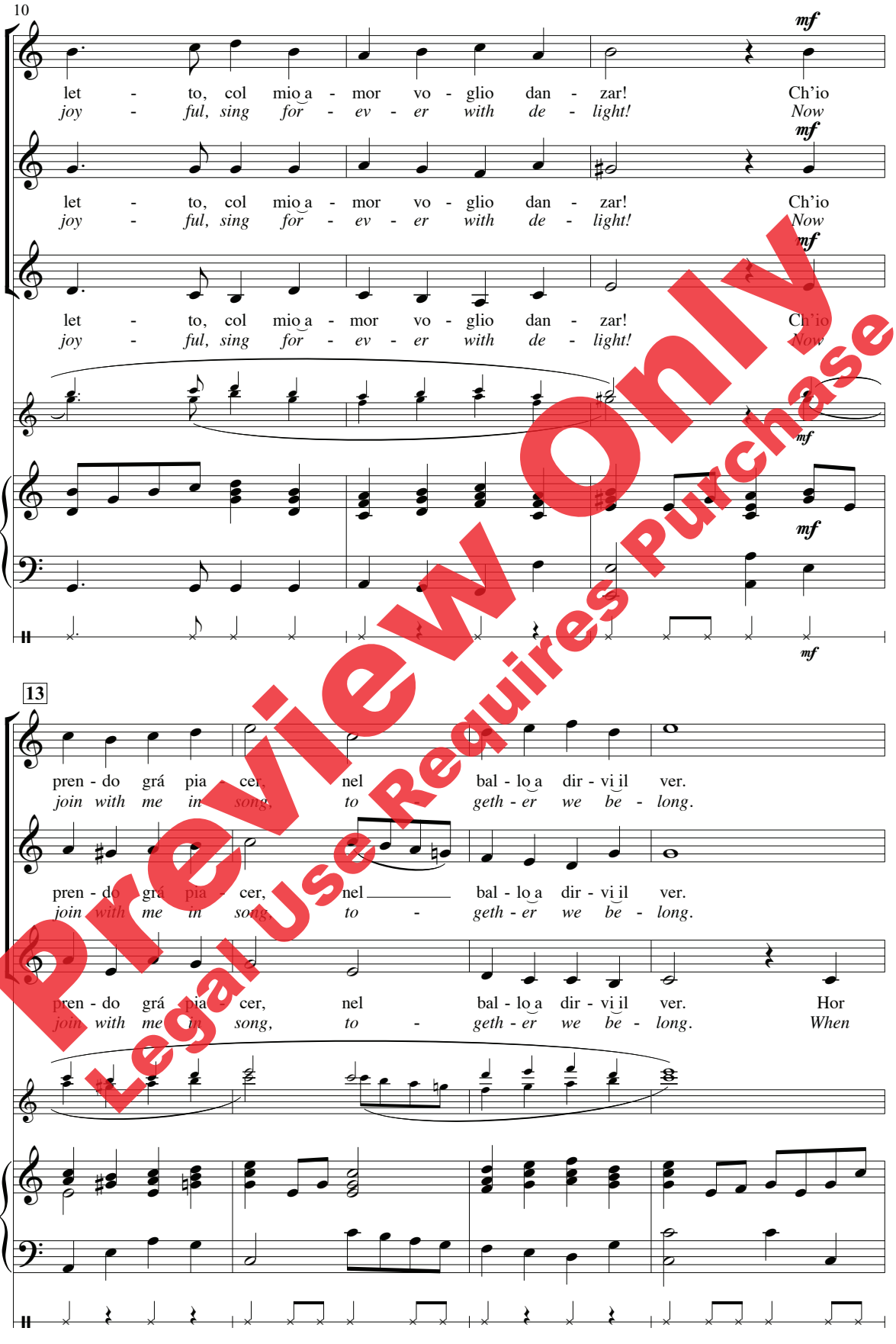

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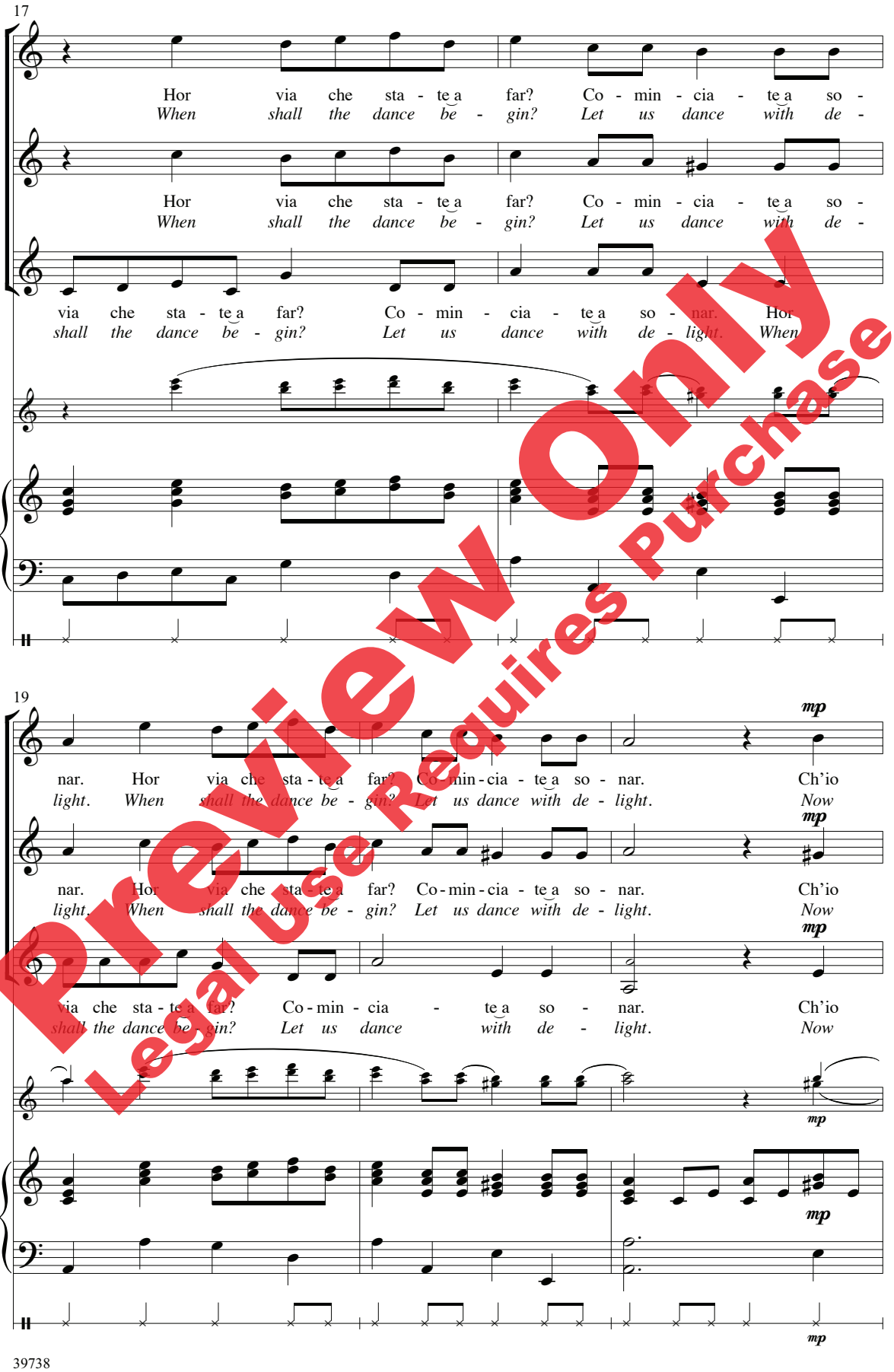

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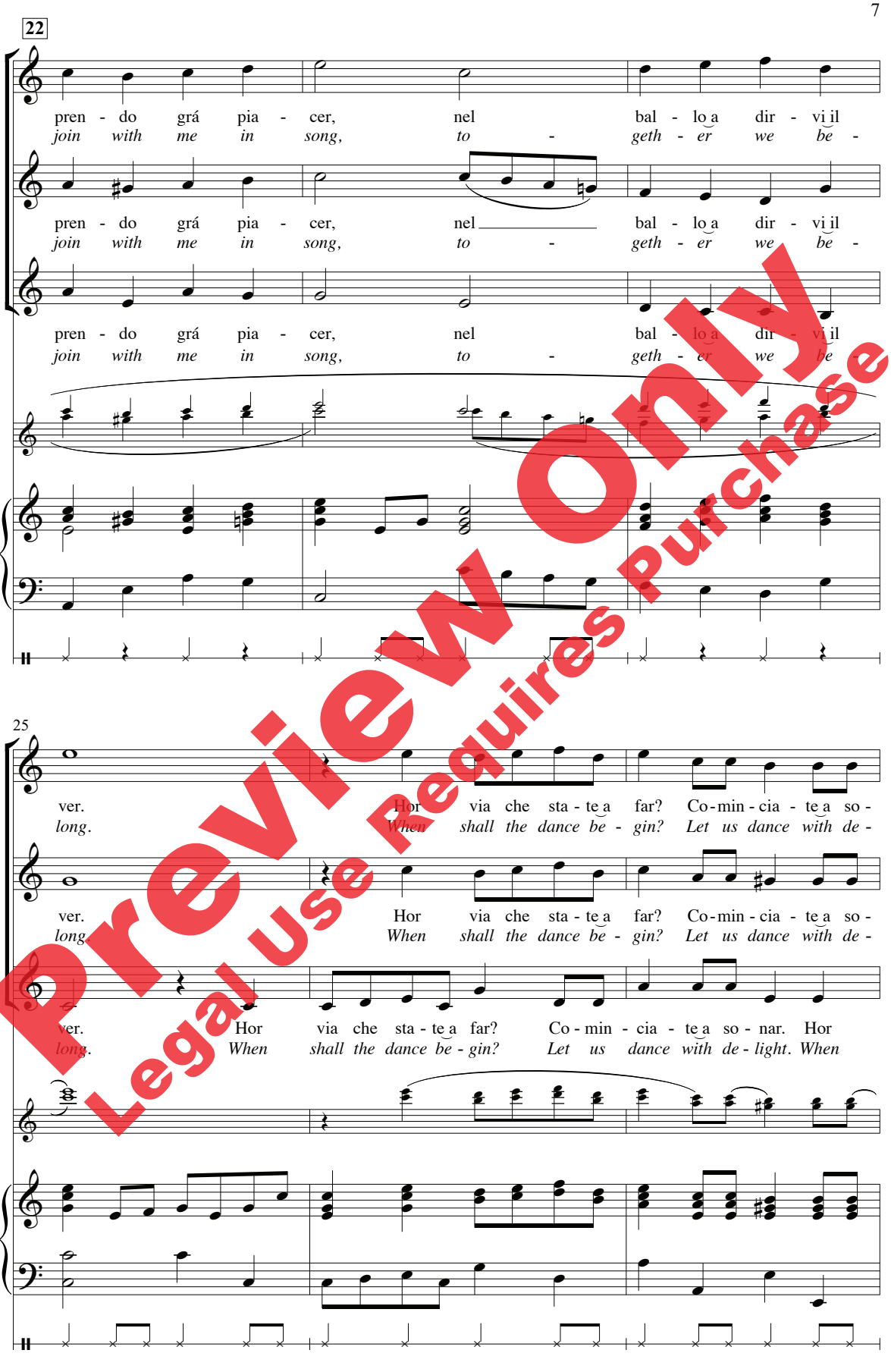

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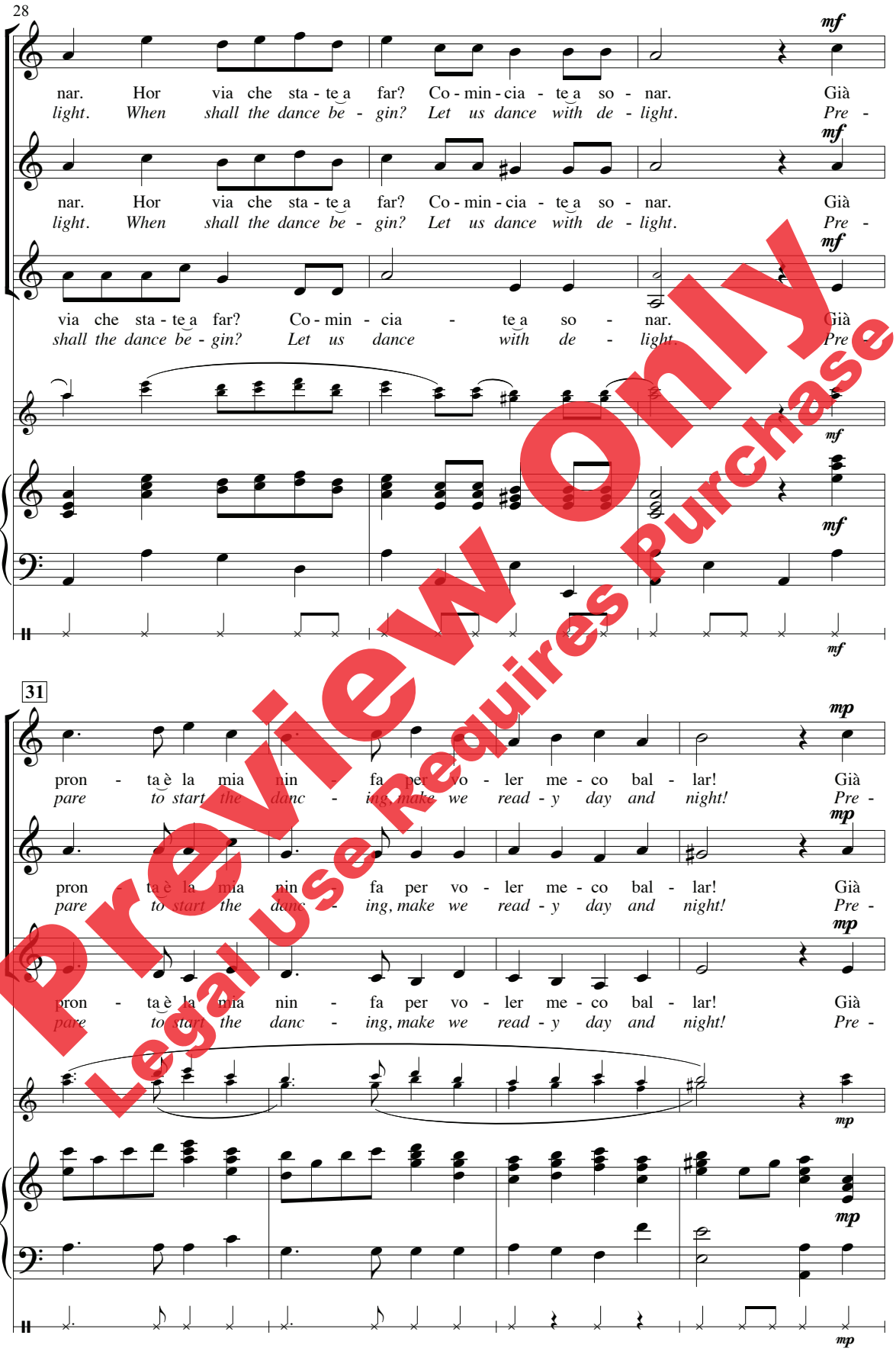

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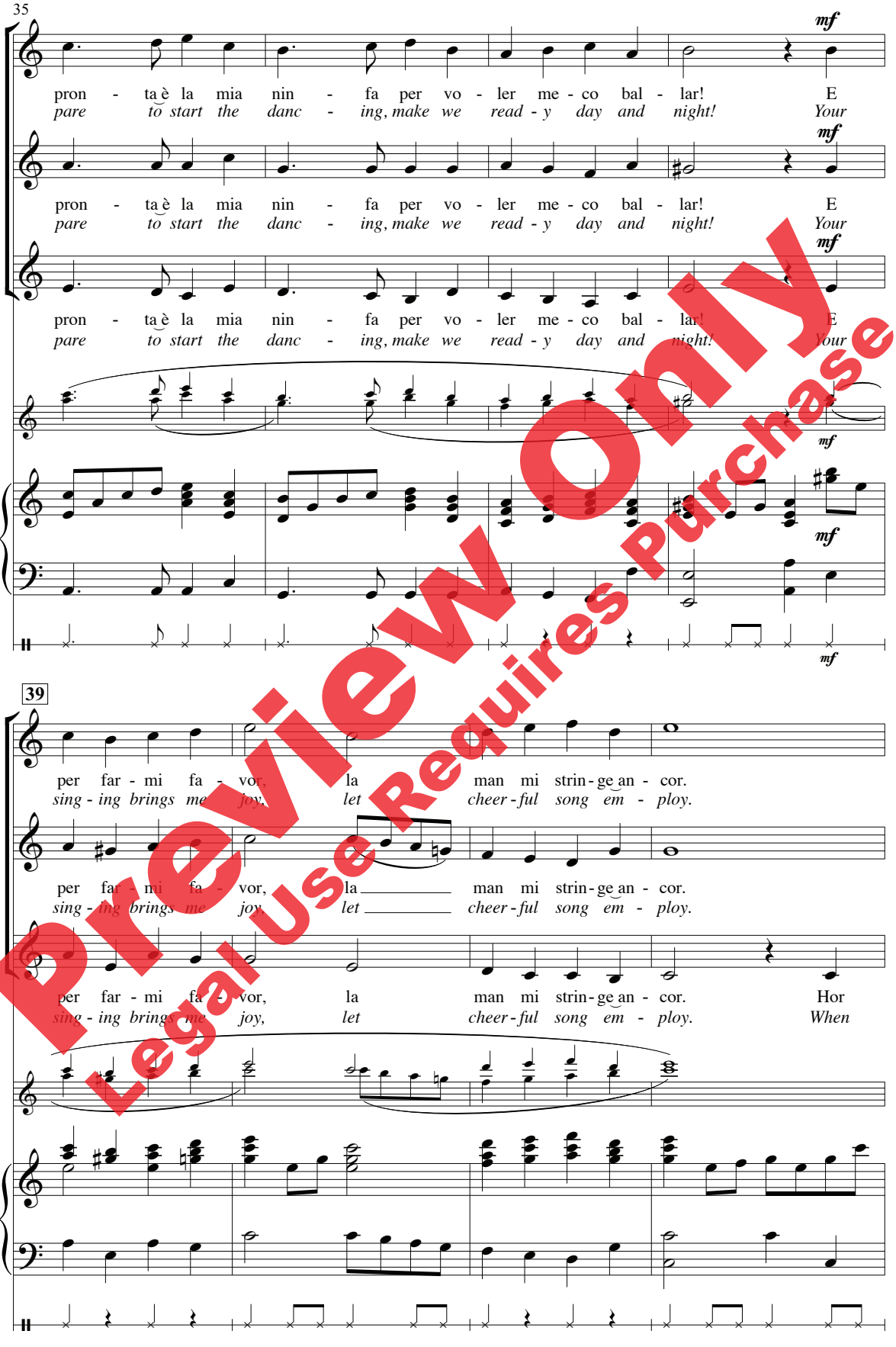

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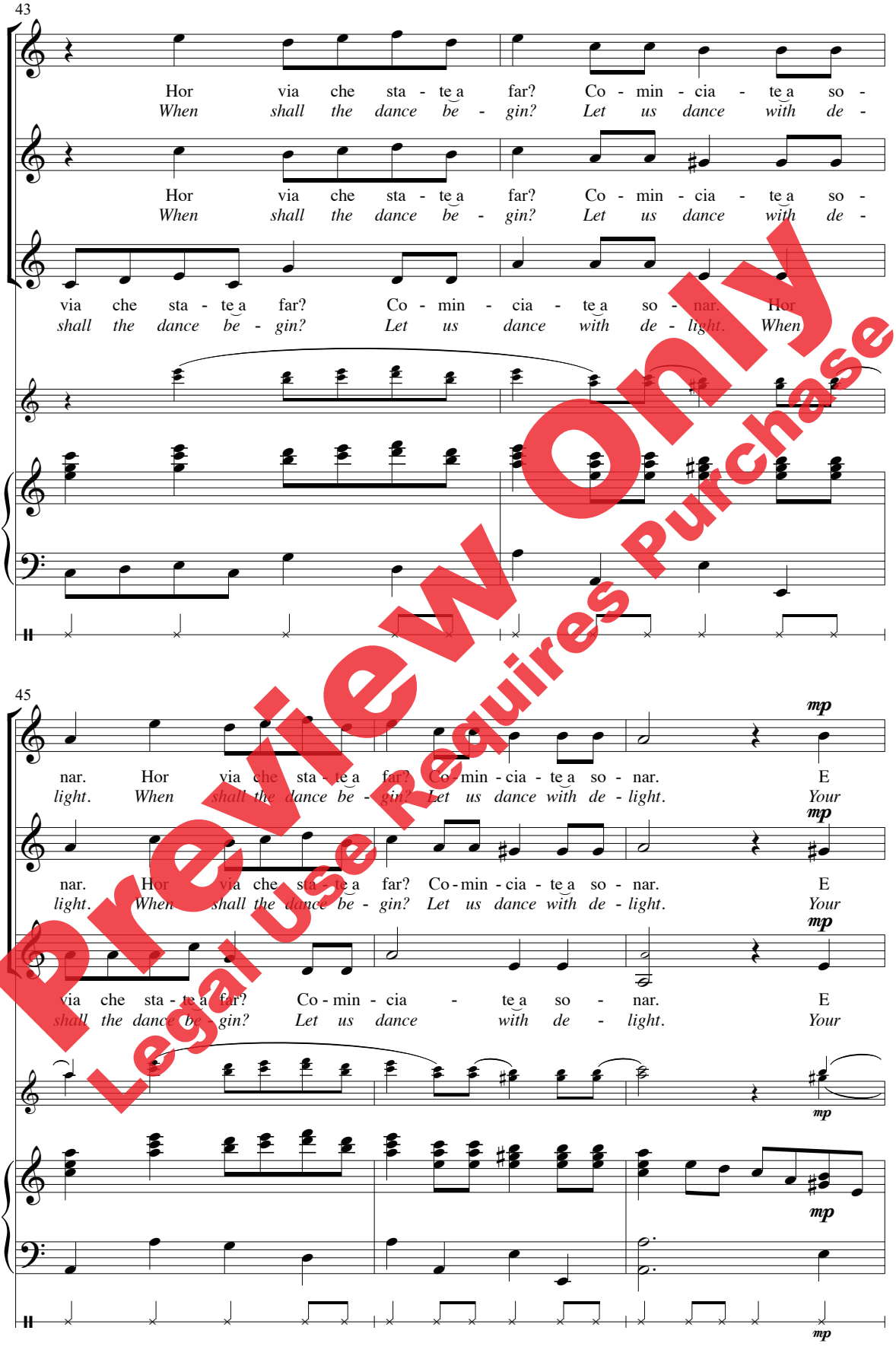

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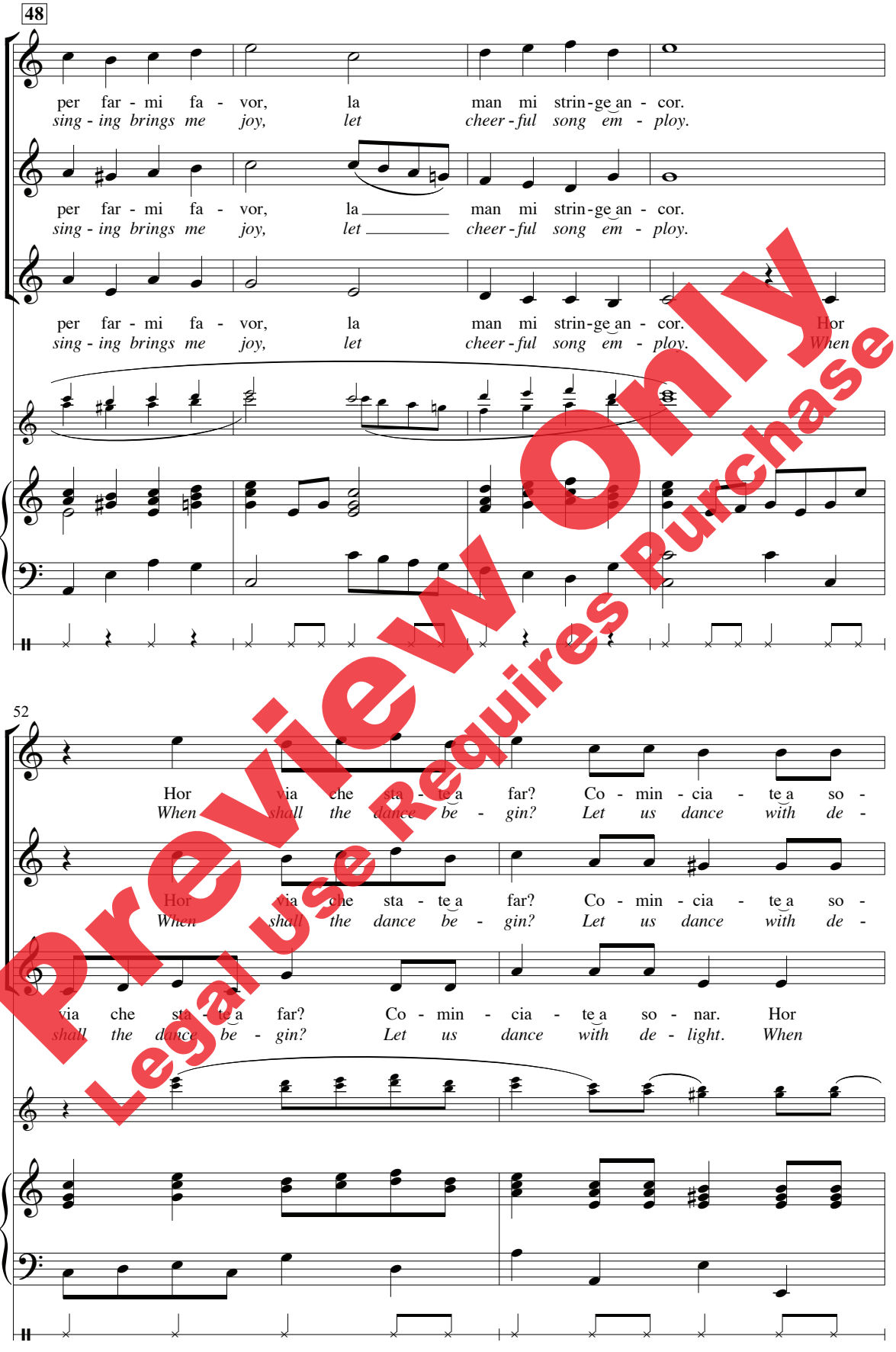

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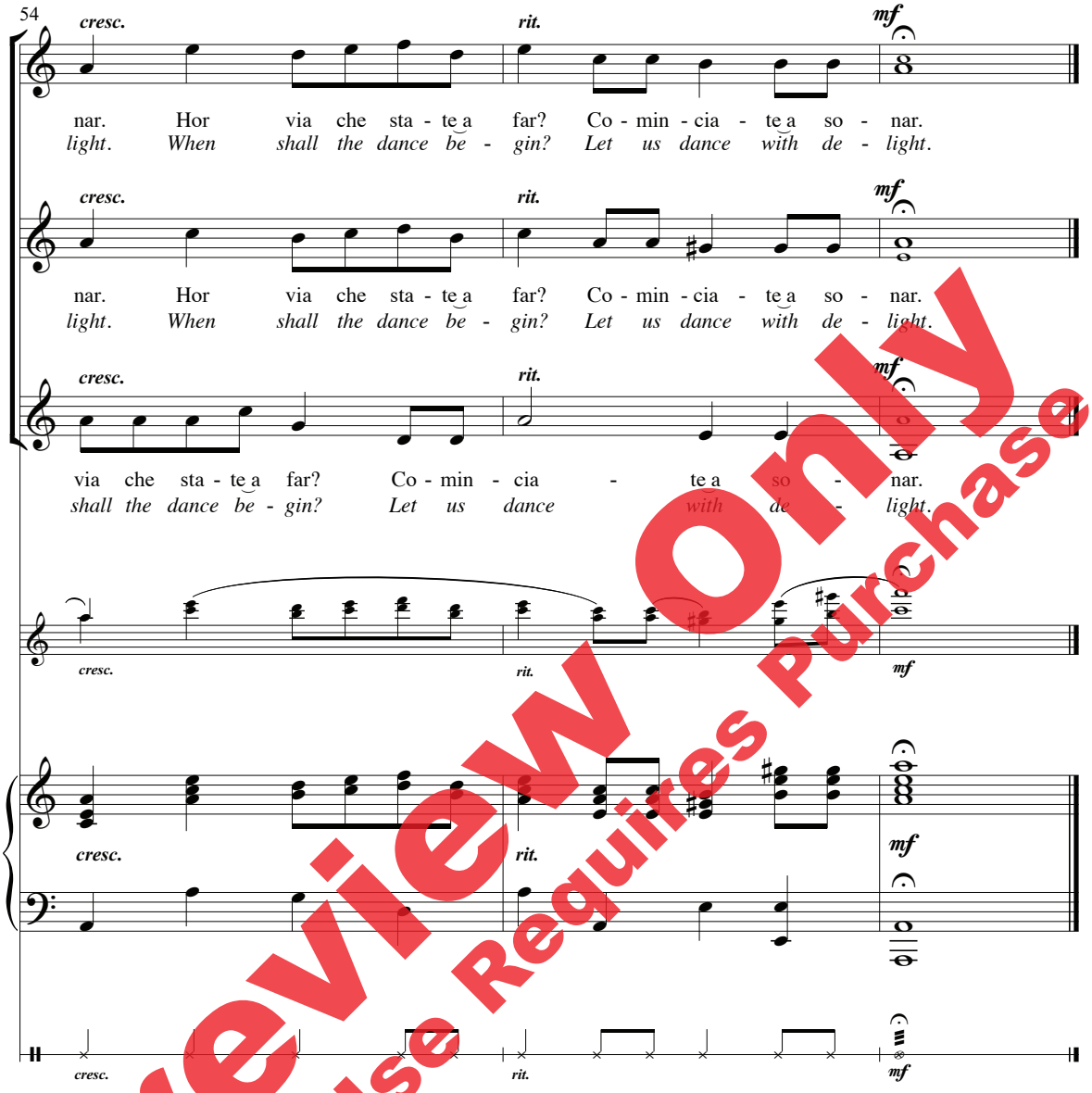

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