1.3613
Bend - Kyle Pederson
SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Bend

Kyle Pederson

LEE NELSON choral series

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Performance Notes

1. The guiding metaphor/visual image during the creation of this piece was of a tree bending in the wind—being batted around low to the ground and then rebounding to an upright position as the wind subsides. Musically, this "bending" is accomplished by the frequent use of pitch slides (mm.1–2, for example), and the extensive use of *rubato* throughout. Frequent indications of *accel.* and *rit.* are included throughout the piece to help convey this feeling of a tree (or a person) being tossed about by various forces and circumstances.

2. Consider looping/repeating the opening four measures (with sopranos humming, rather than singing the words) and having the chorus open the piece with narration. The chorus is encouraged to craft this narration, but one option is to read the text of the piece in its entirety, with the following as a suggestion:

   Reader 1: "Bend, don't break, my child, when the winds blow wild. Lean in, then rest a while."

   Reader 2: "Bend, don't break, be brave, my child, when the gale and wave rush by."

   Reader 3: "But you will never bend alone."

   Reader 4: "No one should ever bend alone."

   Reader 5: "I'm here with you."

   Reader 6: "I'm here with you."

   Reader 7: "I'm here with you. I'm bending, too."

   Reader 8: "And when the wind subsides, you shall rise."

   Reader 9: "But for now, bend low, my child, bend low."

—Kyle Pederson

Program Notes

Bend was selected as a finalist in the 2019 Ithaca College Choral Festival and premiered there as part of the festival. The piece received its Midwest premiere at the ACDA North/North Central regional conference in 2020, performed by the Roosevelt High School Concert Choir, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, directed by Robyn Starks Holcomb. The text is addressed to anyone facing struggles—and it presents an honest affirmation that those struggles are real. Rather than deny the existence of problems or pain, the listener is encouraged to "lean into" the hardship, to name it—and to thereby reduce its power. Textually and musically, the listener is presented with the metaphor of a tree—being whipped by the wind—but built to bend in that wind and ultimately withstand the pressure-filled gales. The power of community is also affirmed—as the listener is encouraged to walk alongside—to bend along with—their neighbor.

Text

Bend, don't break
my child
when the winds
blow wild.

Lean in,
then rest a while.

Bend, don't break
be brave, my child
when the gale and wave
rush by.

But you will never bend alone.
No one should ever bend alone.

I'm here with you,
I'm bending, too.

And when the wind subsides
you shall rise.

But for now
bend low, my child;
bend low.

—Kyle Pederson

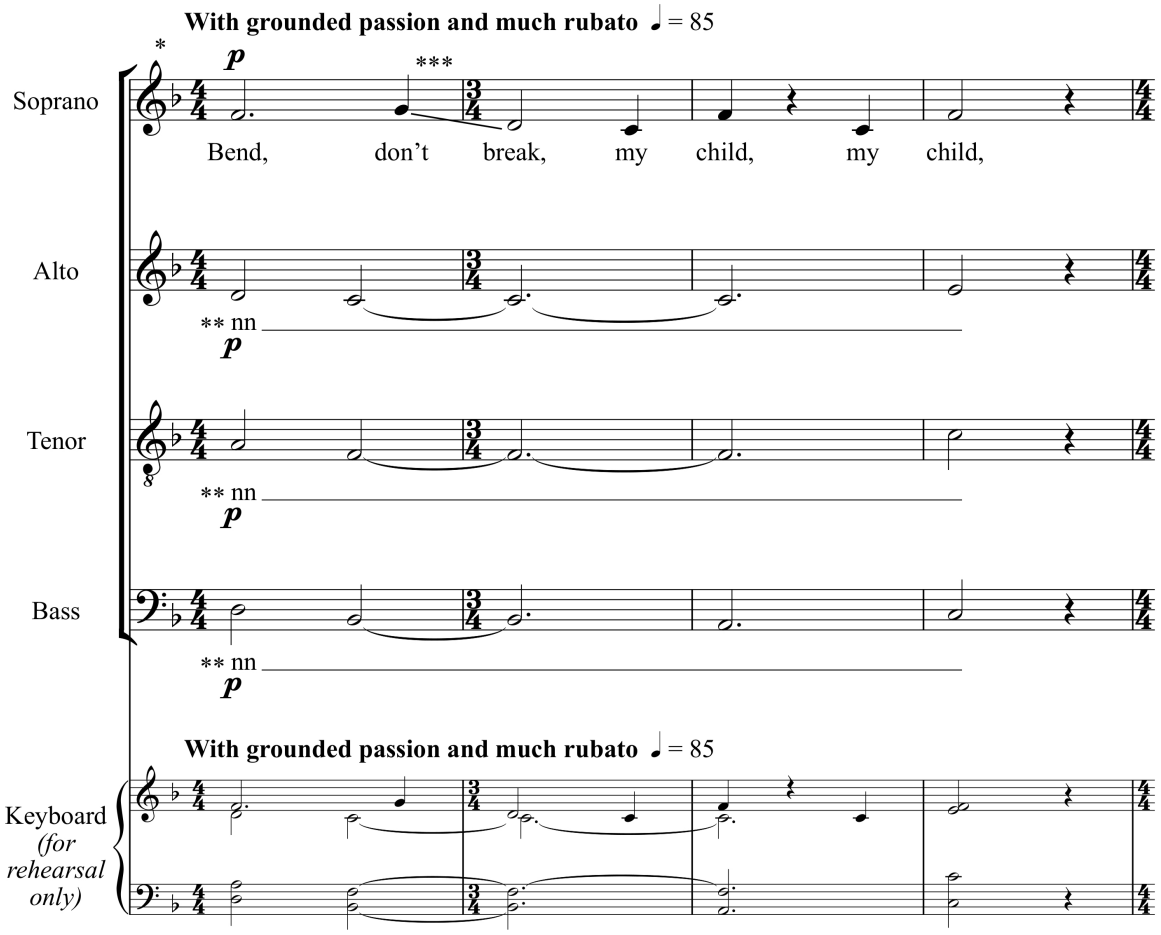
Catalog No. 1.3613

Dedicated to honor the grace, hope, and compassion of the Roosevelt High School Concert Choir, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, who are directed, mentored, and inspired by Robyn Starks Holcomb

Bend

for SATB Chorus (divisi) unaccompanied

Music and Words by
Kyle Pederson (ASCAP)



* See the **Performance Notes** for optional narration as an introduction.
** or "mm" or "oo"
*** always use a gradual slide throughout

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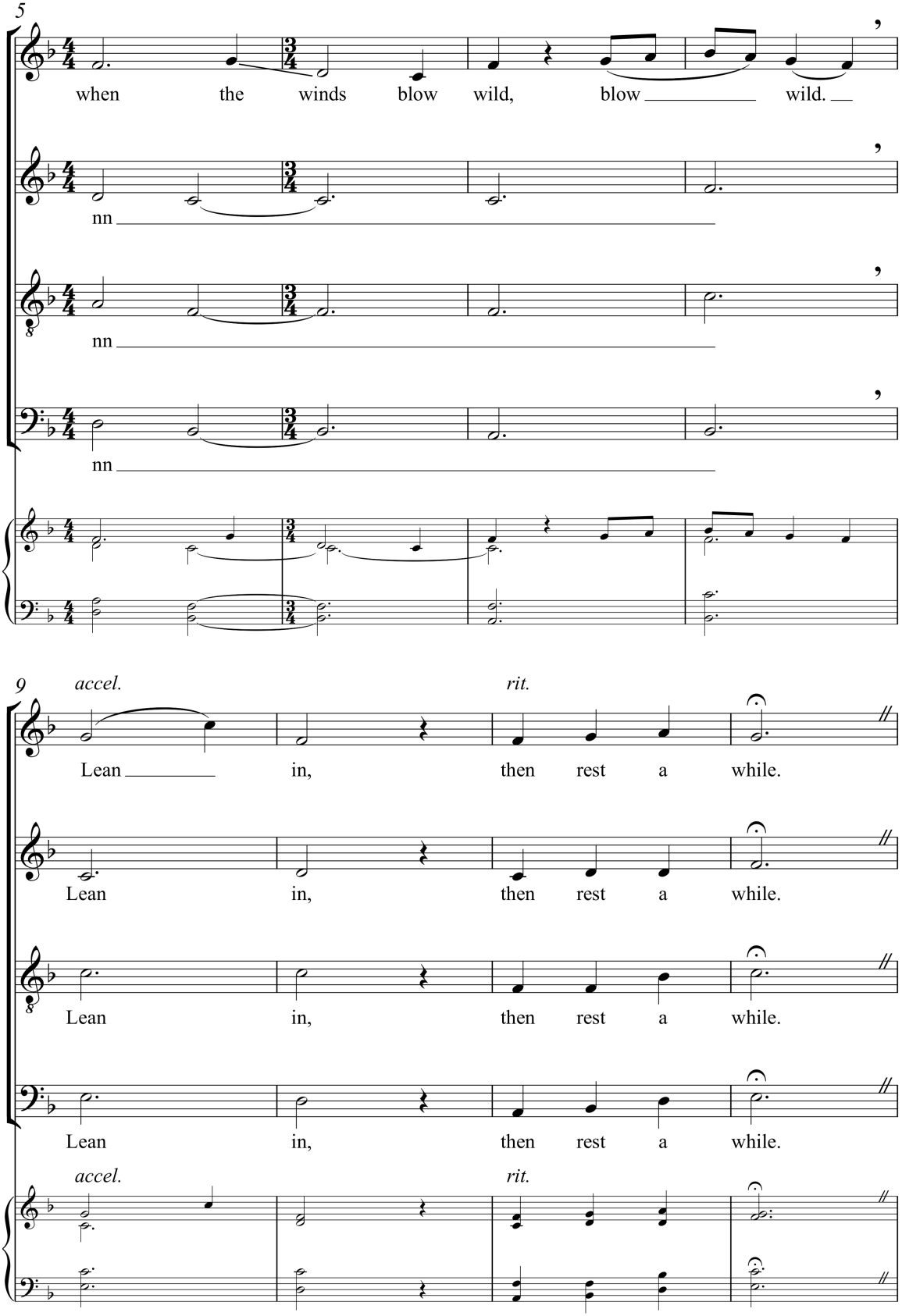
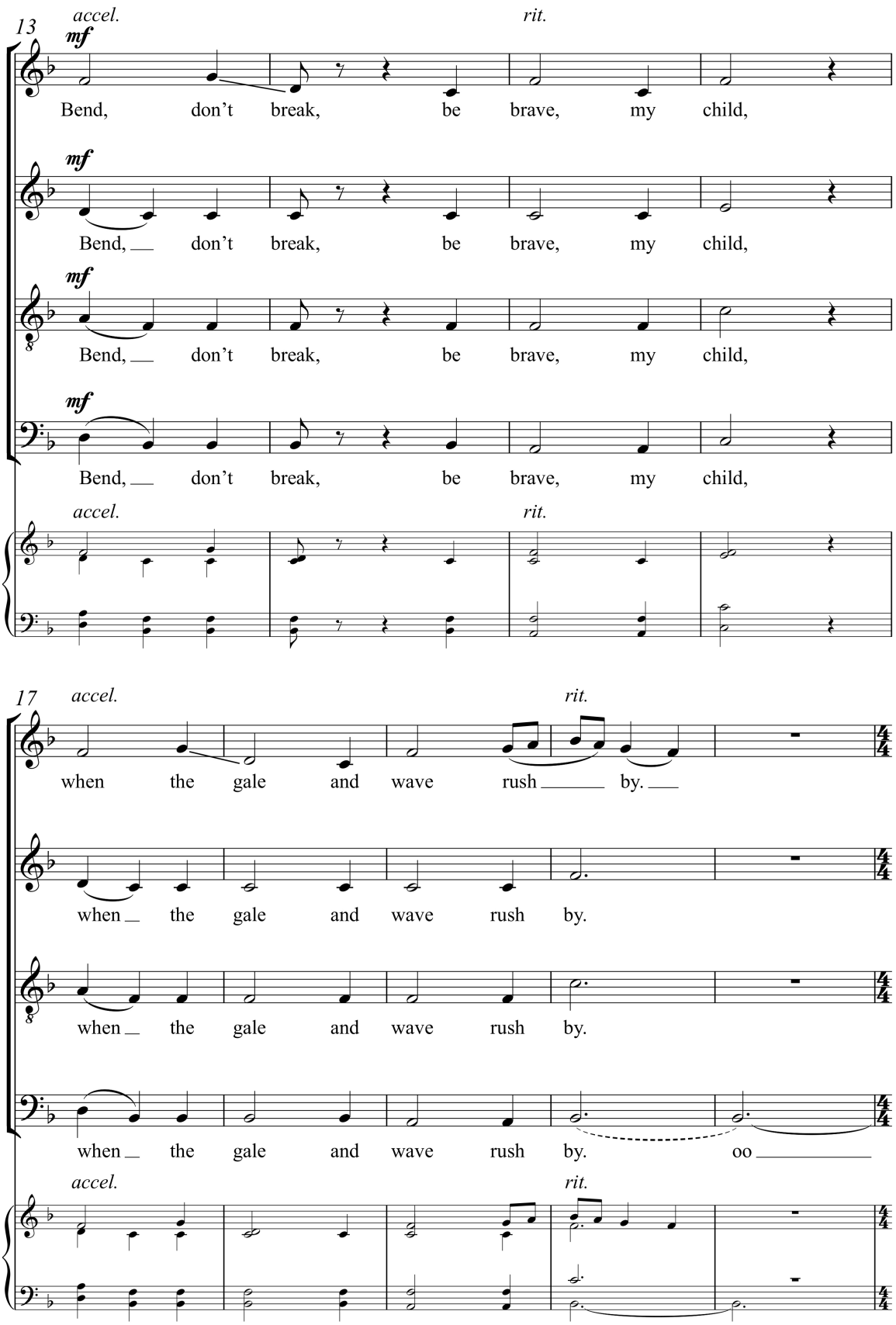
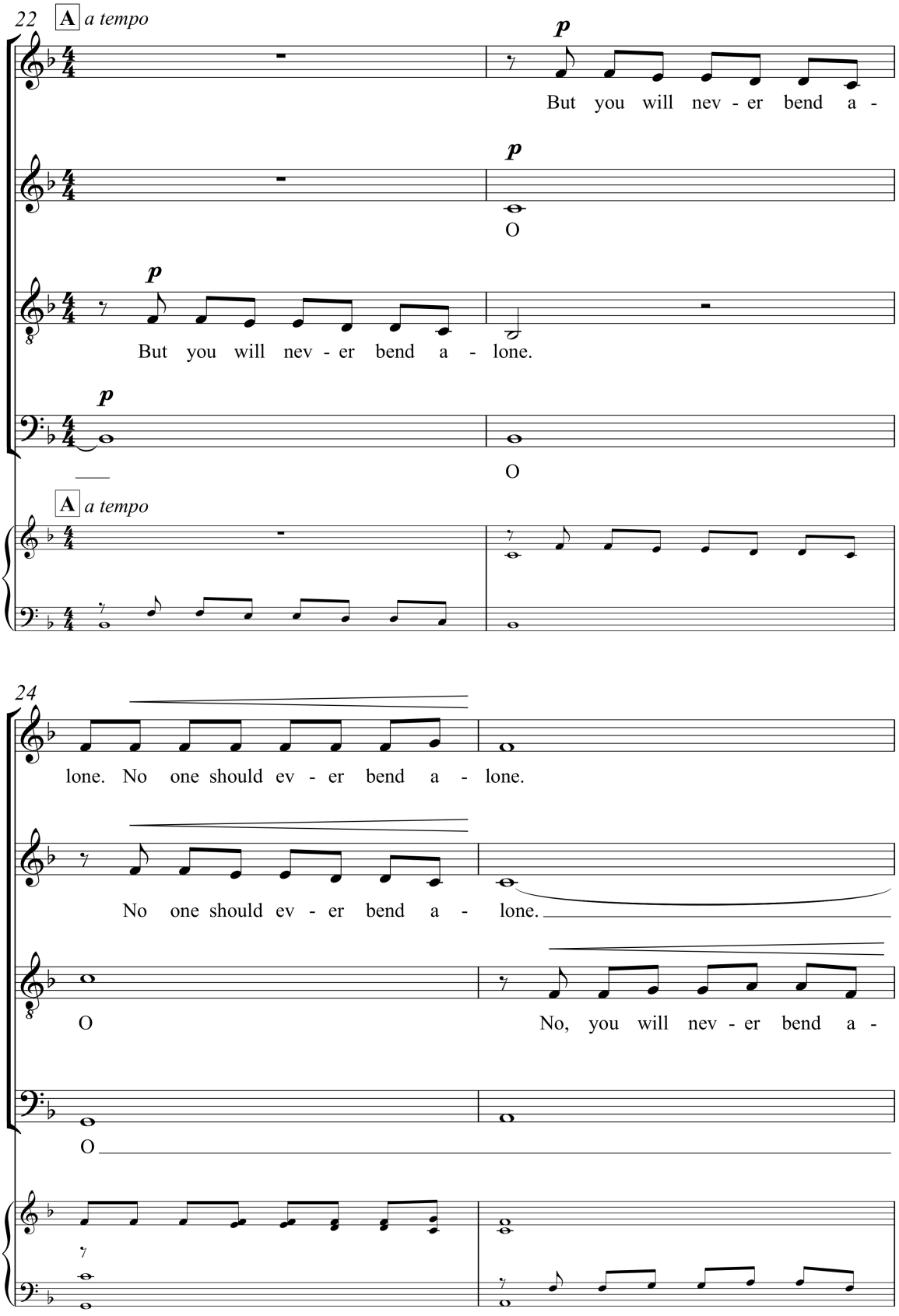
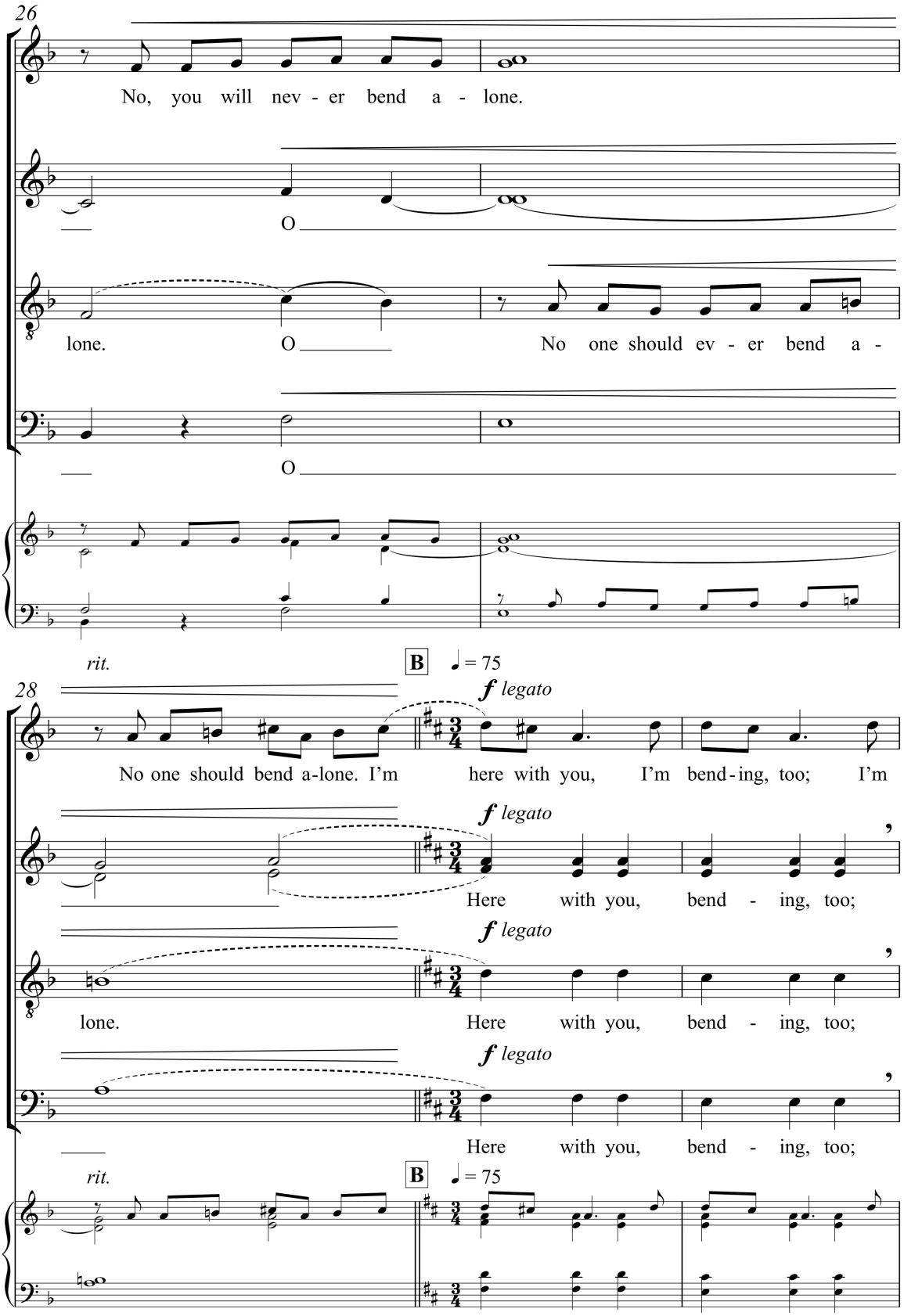
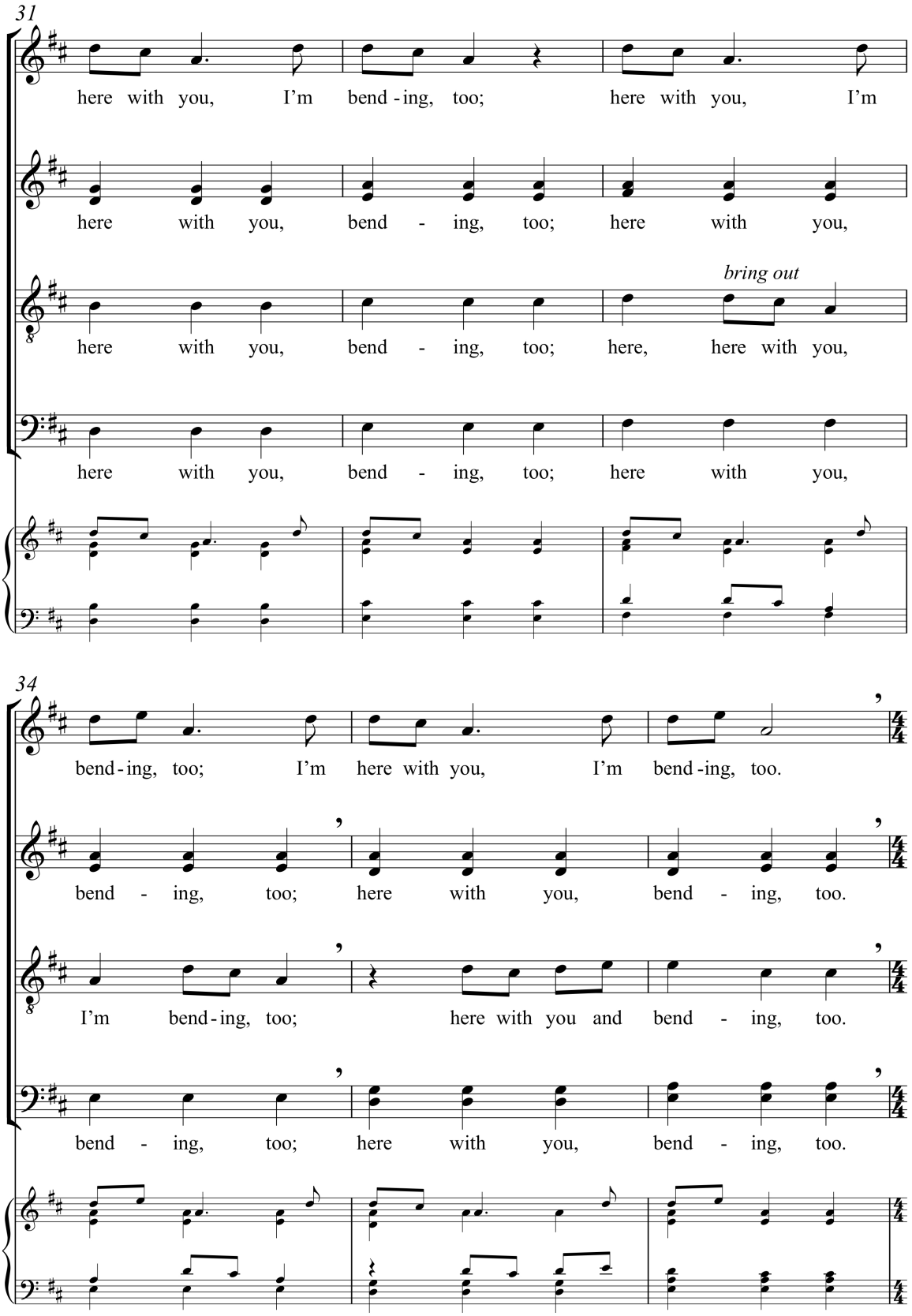
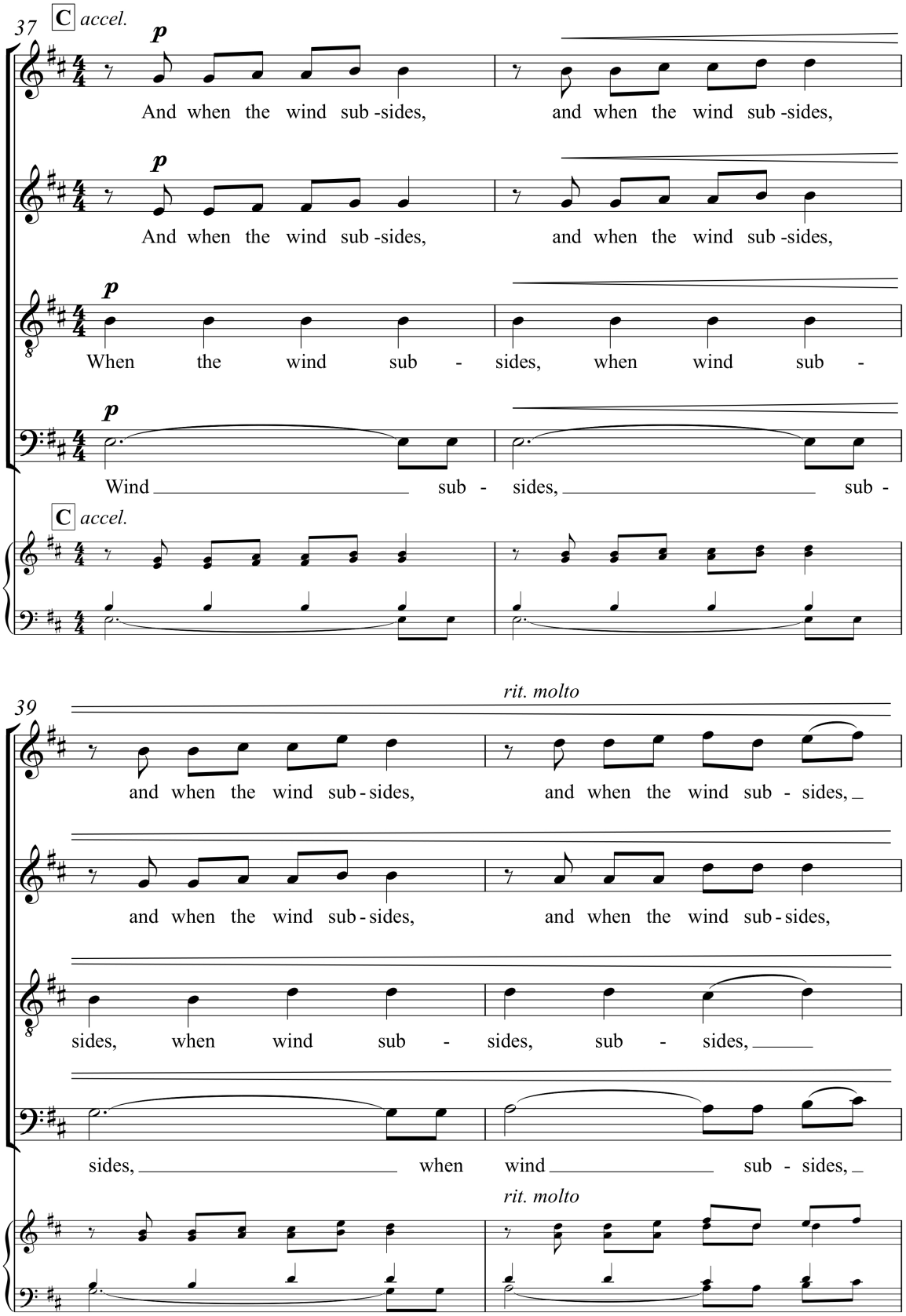

5
when the winds blow wild, blow wild.
nn
nn
nn
9
accel.
rit.
Lean in, then rest a while.
Lean in, then rest a while.
Lean in, then rest a while.
Lean in, then rest a while.
accel.
rit.

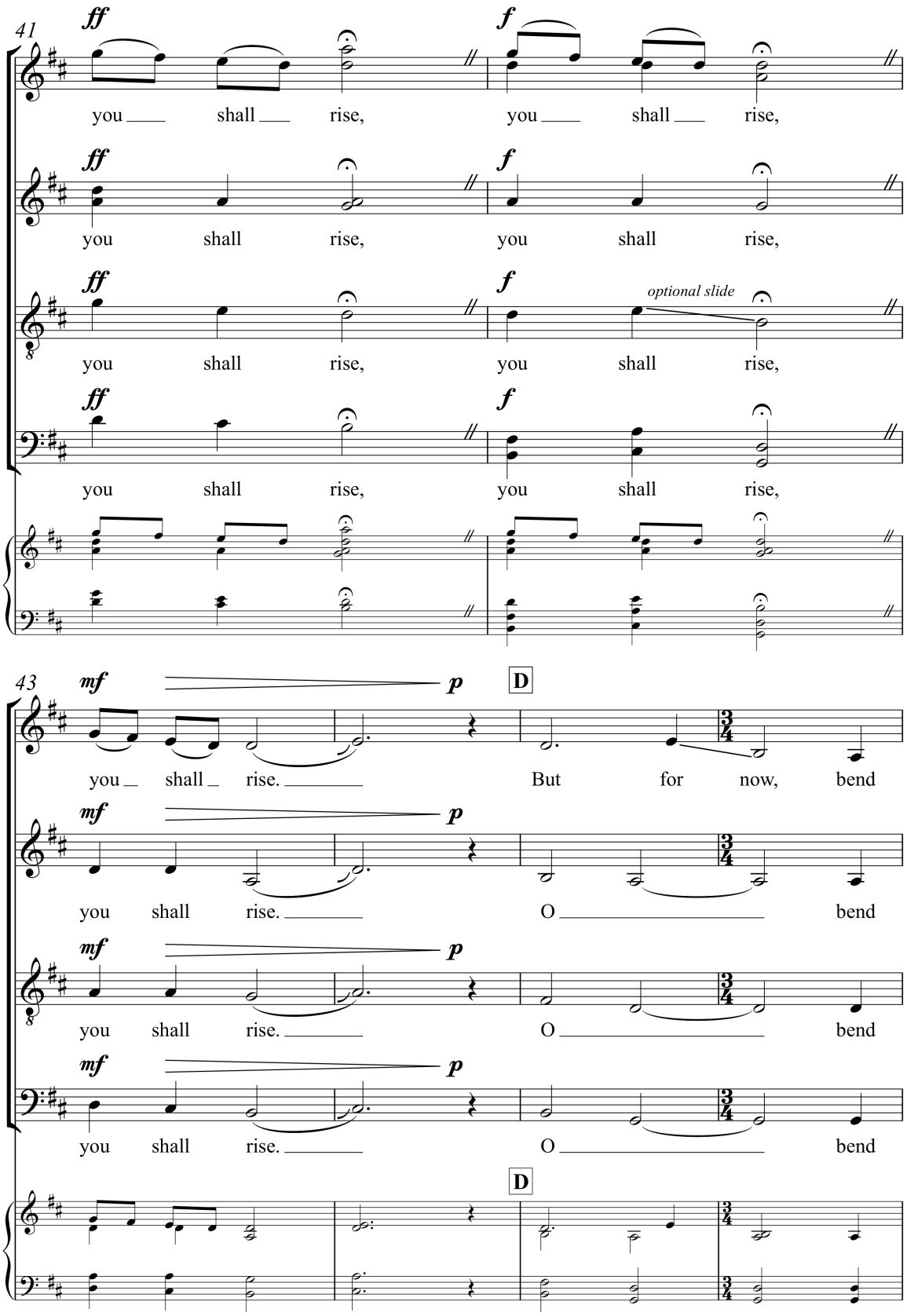

13
accel.
rit.
mf
Bend, don't break, be brave, my child,
Bend, don't break, be brave, my child,
Bend, don't break, be brave, my child,
Bend, don't break, be brave, my child,
17
when the gale and wave rush by.
when the gale and wave rush by.
when the gale and wave rush by.
when the gale and wave rush by. oo

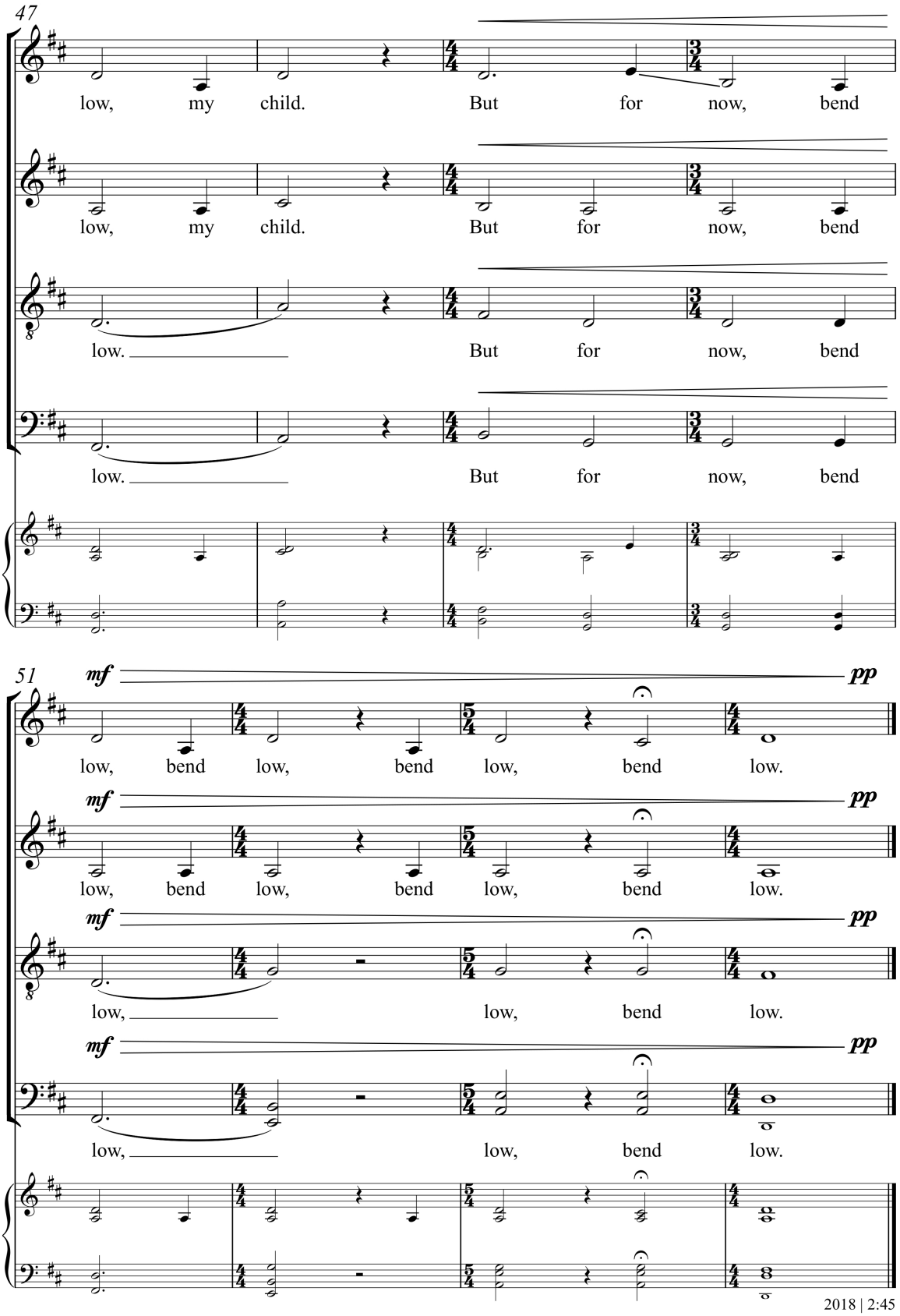

22
A a tempo
p
But you will nev - er bend a -
p
O
p
But you will nev - er bend a - lone.
p
O
A a tempo
24
lone. No one should ev - er bend a - lone.
No one should ev - er bend a - lone.
O
No, you will nev - er bend a -
O


26
No, you will nev - er bend a - lone.
O
lone. O
No one should ev - er bend a -
O
rit.
B
♩ = 75
28
f legato
No one should bend a-lone. I'm here with you, I'm bend-ing, too; I'm
f legato
Here with you, bend - ing, too;
f legato
lone. Here with you, bend - ing, too;
f legato
Here with you, bend - ing, too;
rit.
B
♩ = 75


31
here with you, I'm bend-ing, too; here with you, I'm
here with you, bend - ing, too; here with you,
bring out
here with you, bend - ing, too; here, here with you,
here with you, bend - ing, too; here with you,
34
bend-ing, too; I'm here with you, I'm bend-ing, too.
bend - ing, too; here with you, bend - ing, too.
I'm bend-ing, too; here with you and bend - ing, too.
bend - ing, too; here with you, bend - ing, too.


37
C accel.
p
And when the wind sub -sides, and when the wind sub -sides,
p
And when the wind sub -sides, and when the wind sub -sides,
p
When the wind sub - sides, when wind sub -
p
Wind sub - sides, sub -
C accel.
39
rit. molto
and when the wind sub - sides, and when the wind sub - sides,
and when the wind sub - sides, and when the wind sub - sides,
sides, when wind sub - sides, sub - sides,
sides, when wind sub - sides,
rit. molto


41
ff
f
you shall rise, you shall rise,
optional slide
43
mf
p
D
you shall rise. But for now, bend
O bend


47
low, my child. But for now, bend
low, my child. But for now, bend
low. But for now, bend
low. But for now, bend
51
mf pp
low, bend low, bend low, bend low.
mf pp
low, bend low, bend low, bend low.
mf pp
low, low, bend low.
mf pp
low, low, bend low.

2018 | 2:45

LEE NELSON choral series

The focus of this series is to provide outstanding choral music appropriate for all state and festival choirs, high school ensembles as well as college/university, and community choirs. The series seeks to promotes interesting and innovative works composed by both established and new composers.

Dr. Lee Nelson is the Patricia R. Zahn Chair in Choral Conducting and serves as the Director of Choral Activities at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. He conducts the Wartburg Choir and Ritterchor (tenor/bass choir), teaches conducting, and is the artistic director of Christmas with Wartburg. Under Nelson's direction, the Wartburg Choir has performed both nationally and internationally and they have been featured at both regional and national conferences of the American Choral Director's Association. The choir was chosen as the national winner of the American Prize in Choral Performance (College/University division) and have performed in many of the country's most well-known concert halls and cathedrals including an invitation to perform at the White House and the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. An active guest conductor and clinician, Nelson has conducted at Carnegie Hall on multiple occasions and has directed all-state choirs, honor choirs, and festival choirs throughout the United States and internationally. A champion of contemporary music, he regularly commissions and performs new works of choral literature and frequently works with both emerging and established composers.

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