JUDIT VARGA

T.H.E. L.I.F.E.

for Soprano and other things

Partitur / Score

PREVIEW

Composed in Vienna, 2003

Commissioned by Wien Modern & Alte Schmiede

World premiere: Kaoko Amano & friends, Alte Schmiede

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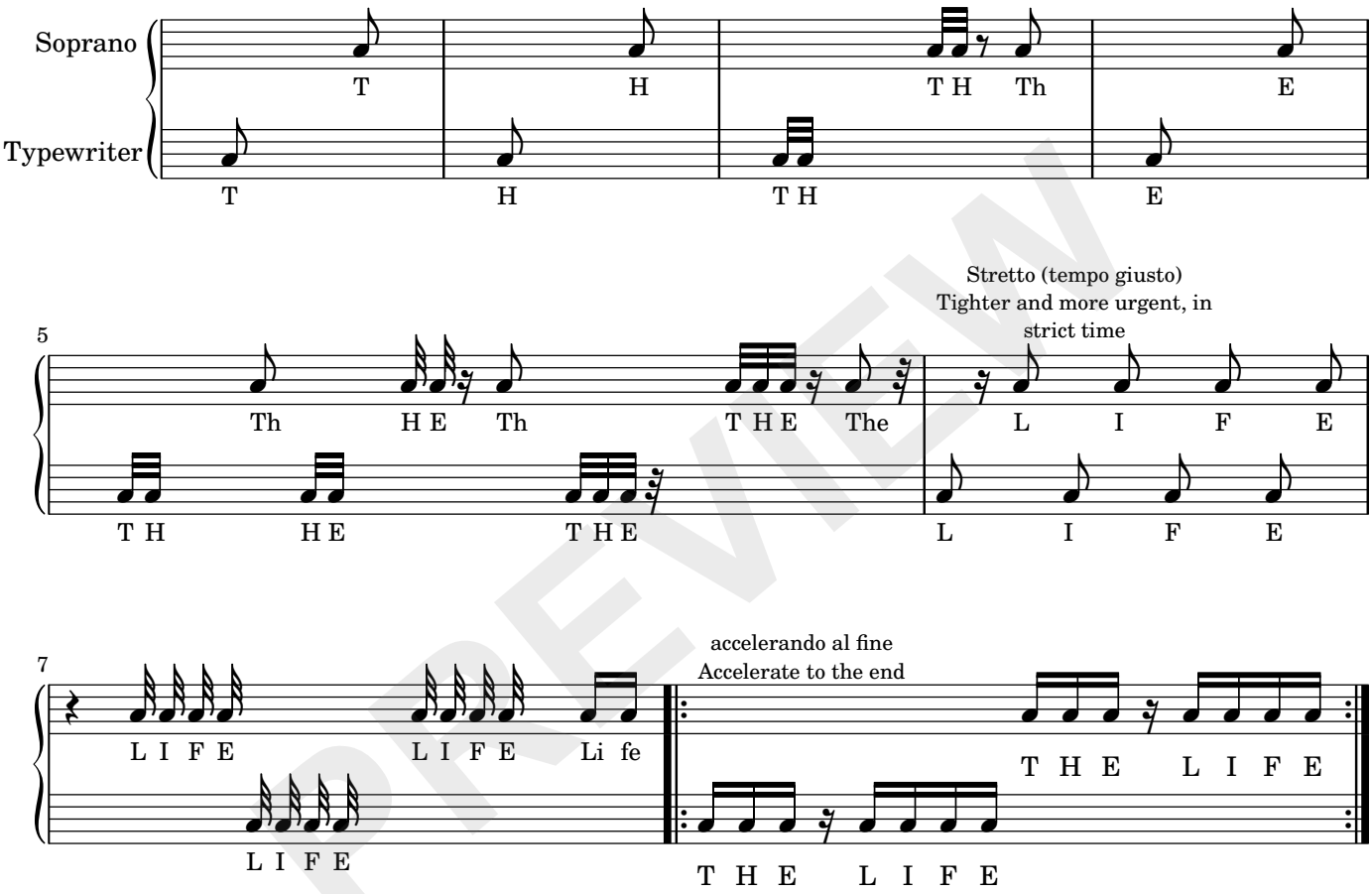
PREVIEW

I.

Judit Varga

[Ez egy angol tanító néni, akit most képeztek át orosz nyelvből, és egy leckével jár a növendékei előtt. Előtte írógép, leüti a betűt, (t) majd tanítónénisen magyarázza: T. A NAGYBETŰVEL írott betűket külön betűkként ejti ki, a kisbetűs szavakat (Th, The, Li-fe) szavakként, magyar kiejtéssel.]

The character is an English teacher who can barely speak English. Formerly a Russian teacher, she lost her job after the political changes of 1989 and enrolled in an English course the following day. She is only one lesson ahead of her pupils. An old mechanical typewriter stands on the table. She types a letter, then explains it in a schoolteacher's manner. Pronounce capital letters individually, and the lower-case groups (Th, The, Li-fe) as words, with a very poor Hungarian or German accent.



[Az utolsó ütemet többször megismételni, egyre gyorsabban. Az írógépen egyre gyorsabb tempót diktál, amit az énekes egyre kevésbé győz, ezért egyre elégedetlenebb, grimaszokat vág. Az egyes ismétlések között egyre nagyobb szünetek, majd az énekes újra és újra ráveszi magát, hogy megpróbál meg egy gyorsabb tempót. A darab úgy ér véget, hogy az énekes nyelve összegabalyodik, leénekelhetetlennek ítéli meg az írógép tempóját, és nem ismétli meg az írógép betűit.]

Repeat the final bar several times, increasingly fast. The typewriter dictates a tempo the singer can follow less and less successfully. She becomes dissatisfied and pulls faces. The pauses between attempts grow longer; each time she gathers herself and tries an even faster tempo. At the end her tongue becomes tied. She judges the tempo impossible to sing, gives up in a furious, frantic state, and finally stops repeating the typewriter's letters.
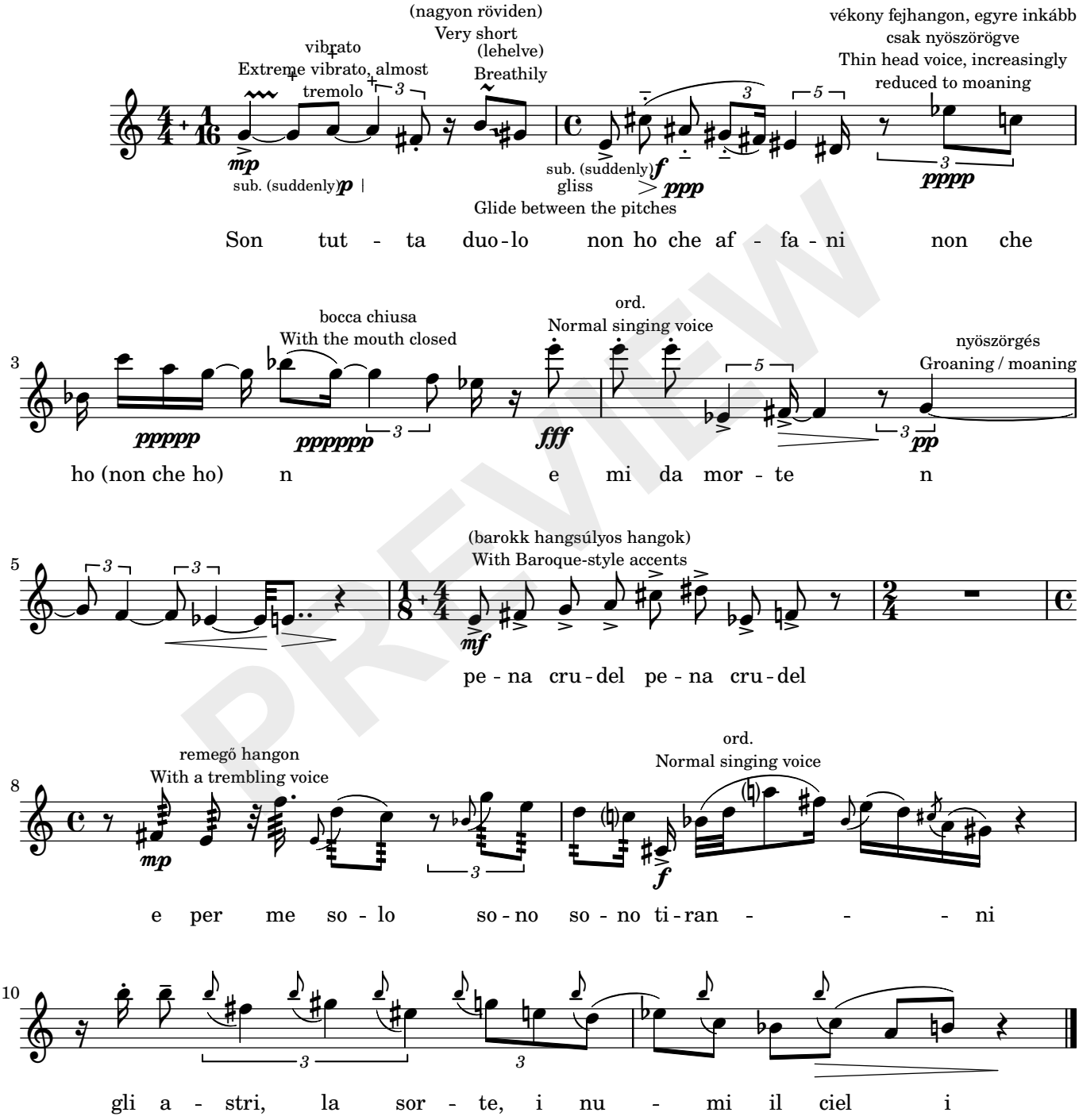
PREVIEW

III.

Judit Varga

[ahol vibrato áll, extrém vibrato, quasi tremolo + = görcsös, szorított hang bocca chiusa= zárt szájjal ord= rendes énekhang amúgy sok effektszerű hangzással, nyöszörgés, halálfélelem, bármi belefér. ez a dal halálosan komoly]
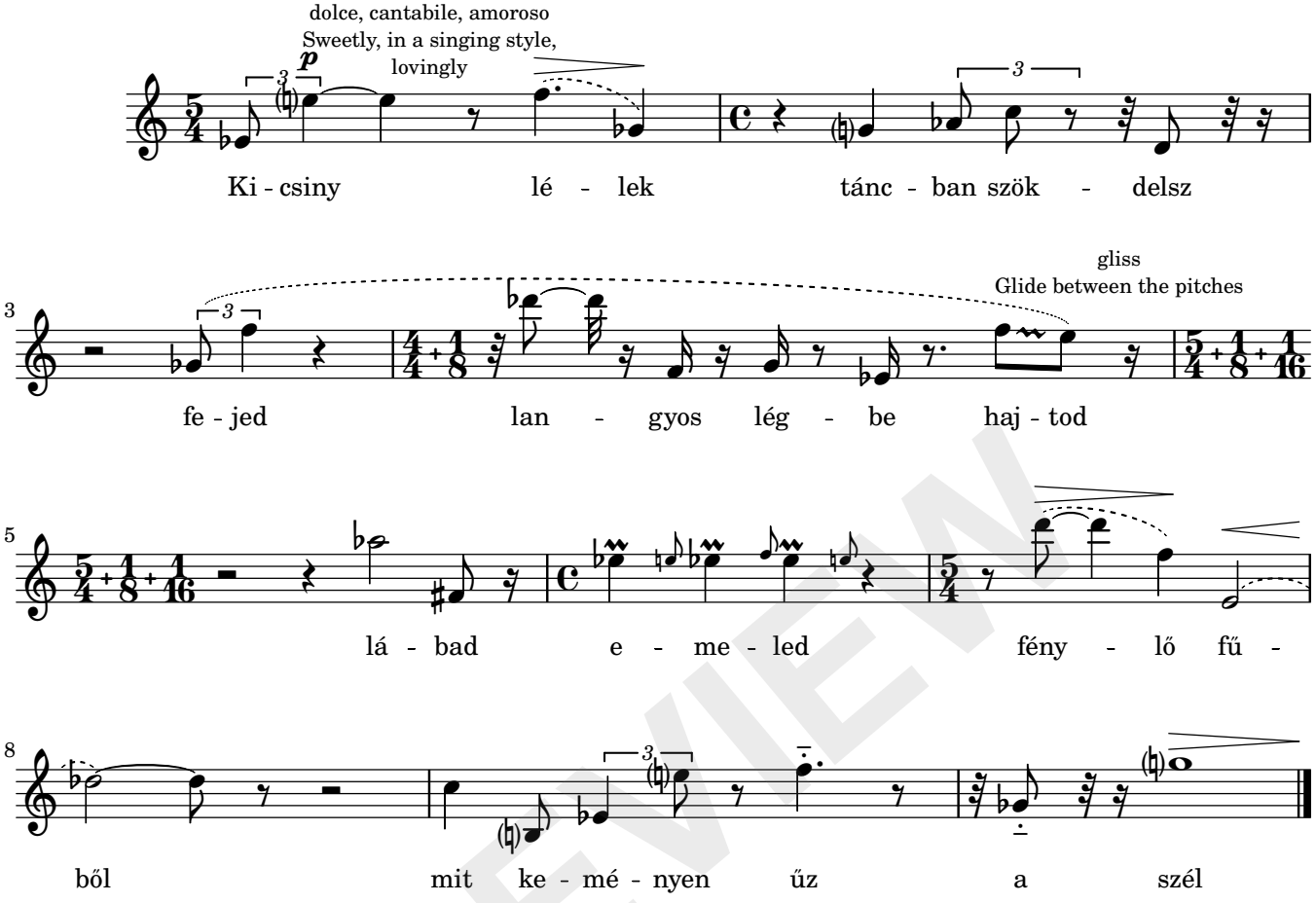
Wherever vibrato is marked, use extreme vibrato, almost tremolo. The + sign means a tense, constricted, pressed voice. Bocca chiusa means with the mouth closed; ord. means the normal singing voice. Use a broad range of vocal effects: moaning, groaning, mortal fear - anything may be included. This song is deadly serious.



PREVIEW

IV.

Judit Varga



PREVIEW

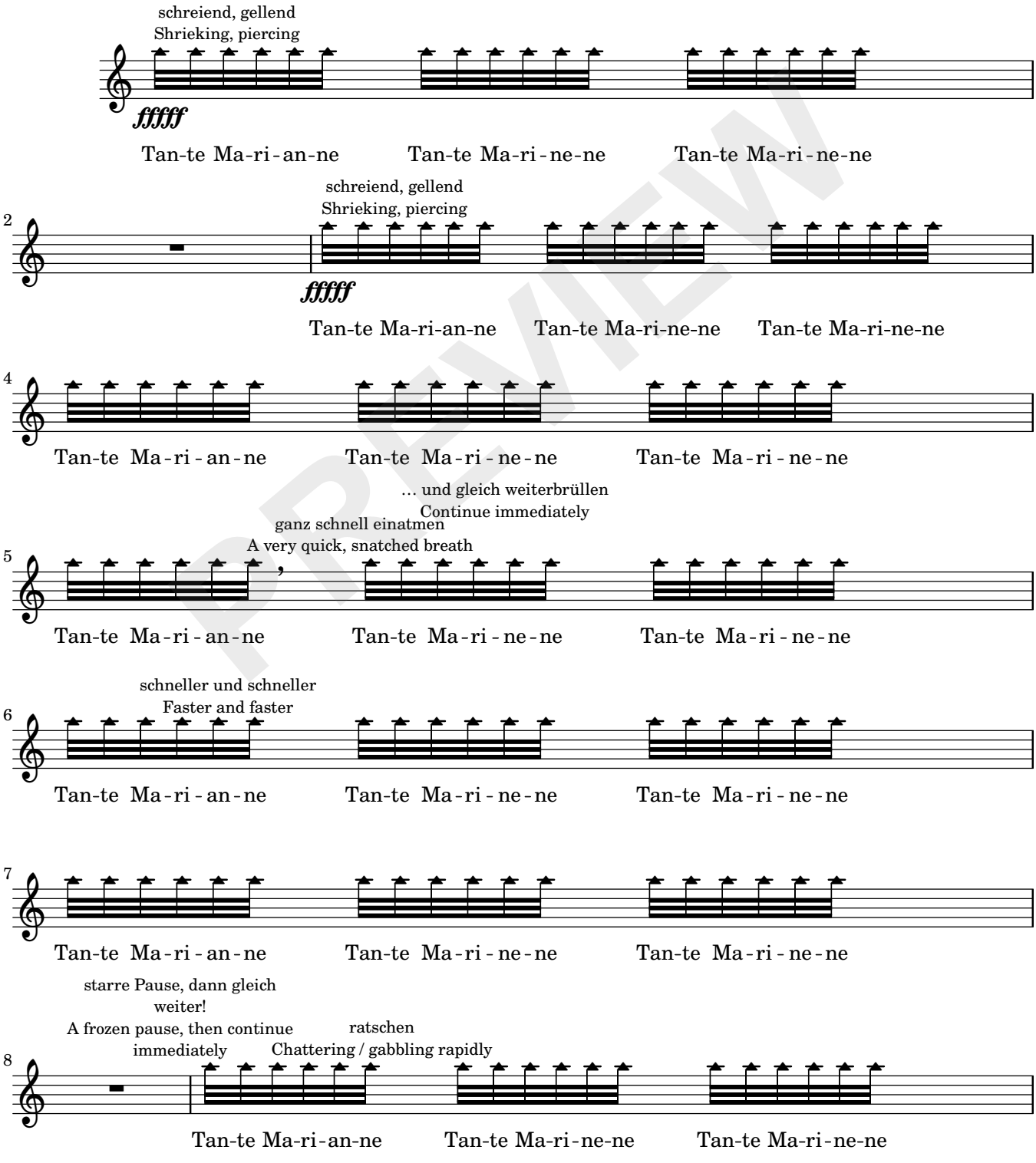
V.

Deutsche Fassung / German version
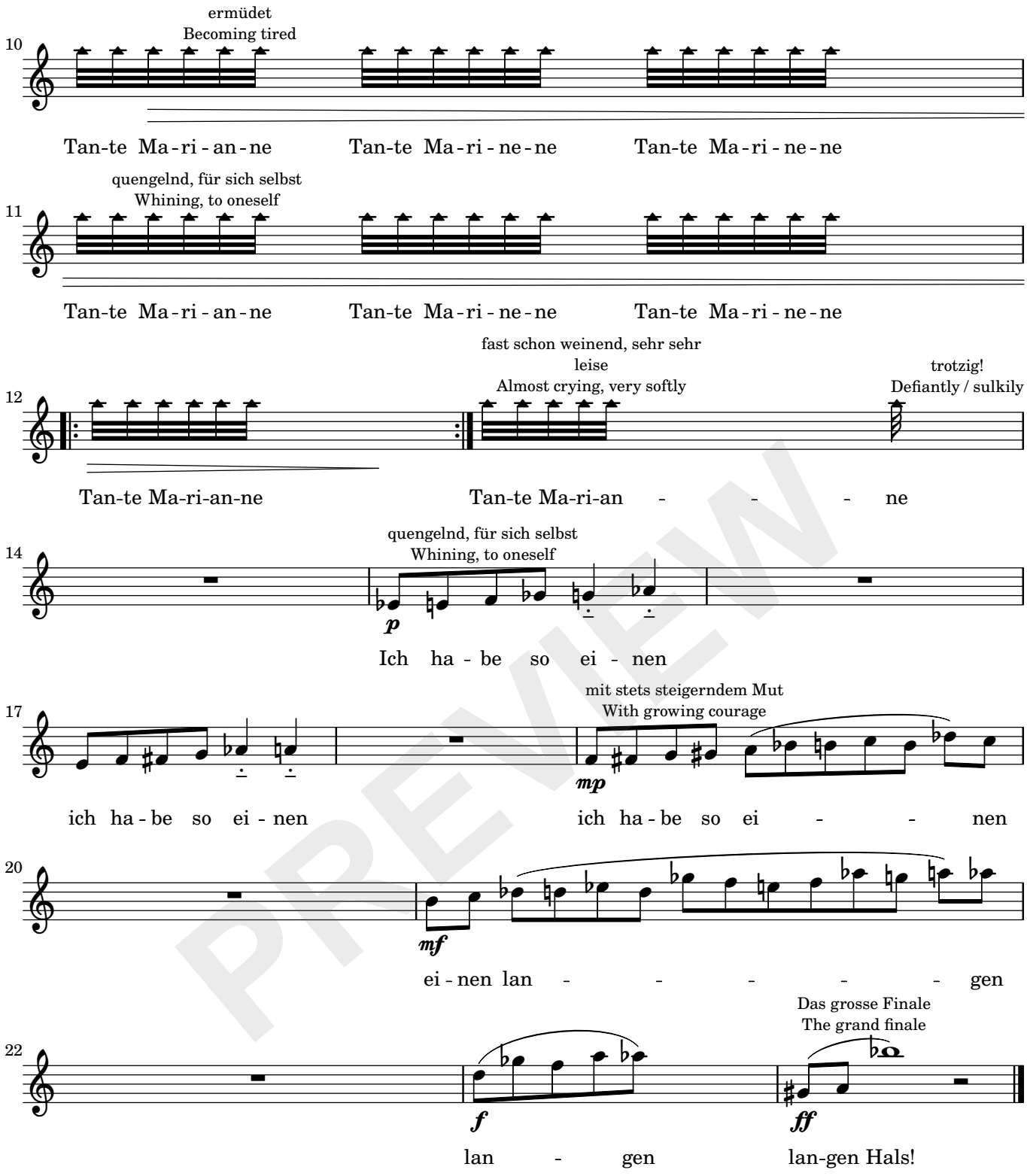
Judit Varga

Auf der Bühne, im Publikum (ad libitum) beginnen ein Paar Spieluhren, Baby- und Kinderspielzeuge zu klingen. Im idealen Fall verklingen diese am Ende dieses Satzes. Aus der Stimme eines Kindes wird bis zum Schluss der Stückes eine reife Opernsängerin.

Wind-up musical toys, music boxes and baby or children's toys begin to sound on stage and, optionally, among the audience. Ideally they die away at the end of the movement. The character is a nursery-school boy whose teacher pays no attention, however loudly he shouts; he desperately wants to say something. The child's voice gradually becomes a dramatic soprano - a mature opera singer by the end. He decides to become a singer: with such a beautifully long neck, at least people will then pay attention.



PREVIEW


ermüdet
Becoming tired
10
Tan-te Ma-ri-an-ne Tan-te Ma-ri-ne-ne Tan-te Ma-ri-ne-ne
quengelnd, für sich selbst
Whining, to oneself
11
Tan-te Ma-ri-an-ne Tan-te Ma-ri-ne-ne Tan-te Ma-ri-ne-ne
fast schon weinend, sehr sehr leise
Almost crying, very softly
trotzig!
Defiantly / sulkily
12
Tan-te Ma-ri-an-ne Tan-te Ma-ri-an - - - ne
quengelnd, für sich selbst
Whining, to oneself
14
p
Ich ha - be so ei - nen
mit stets steigerndem Mut
With growing courage
17
mp
ich ha - be so ei - nen ich ha - be so ei - - nen
20
mf
ei - nen lan - - - - - gen
Das grosse Finale
The grand finale
22
f ff
lan - gen lan-gen Hals!

PREVIEW

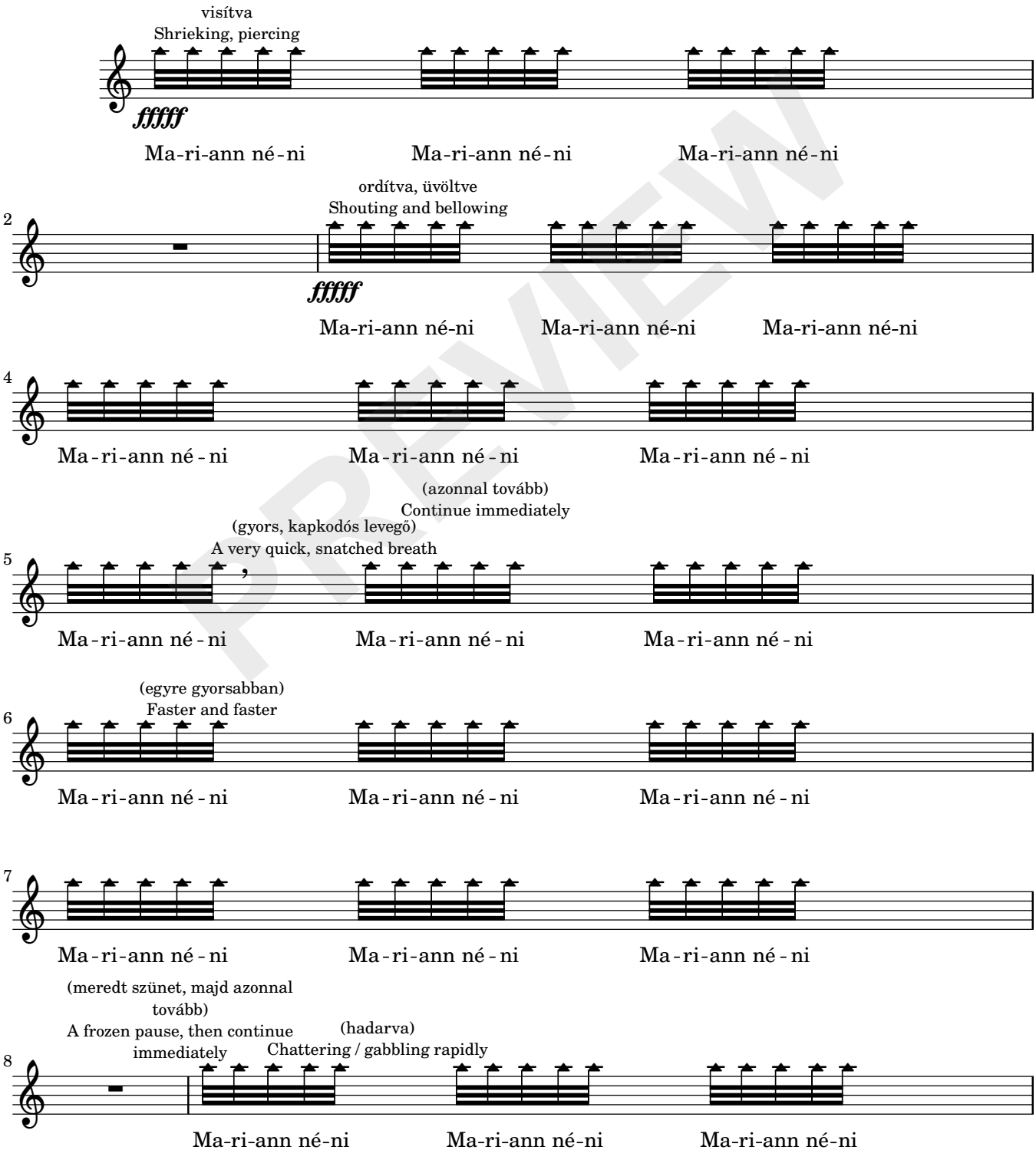
V.

Magyar változat / Hungarian version
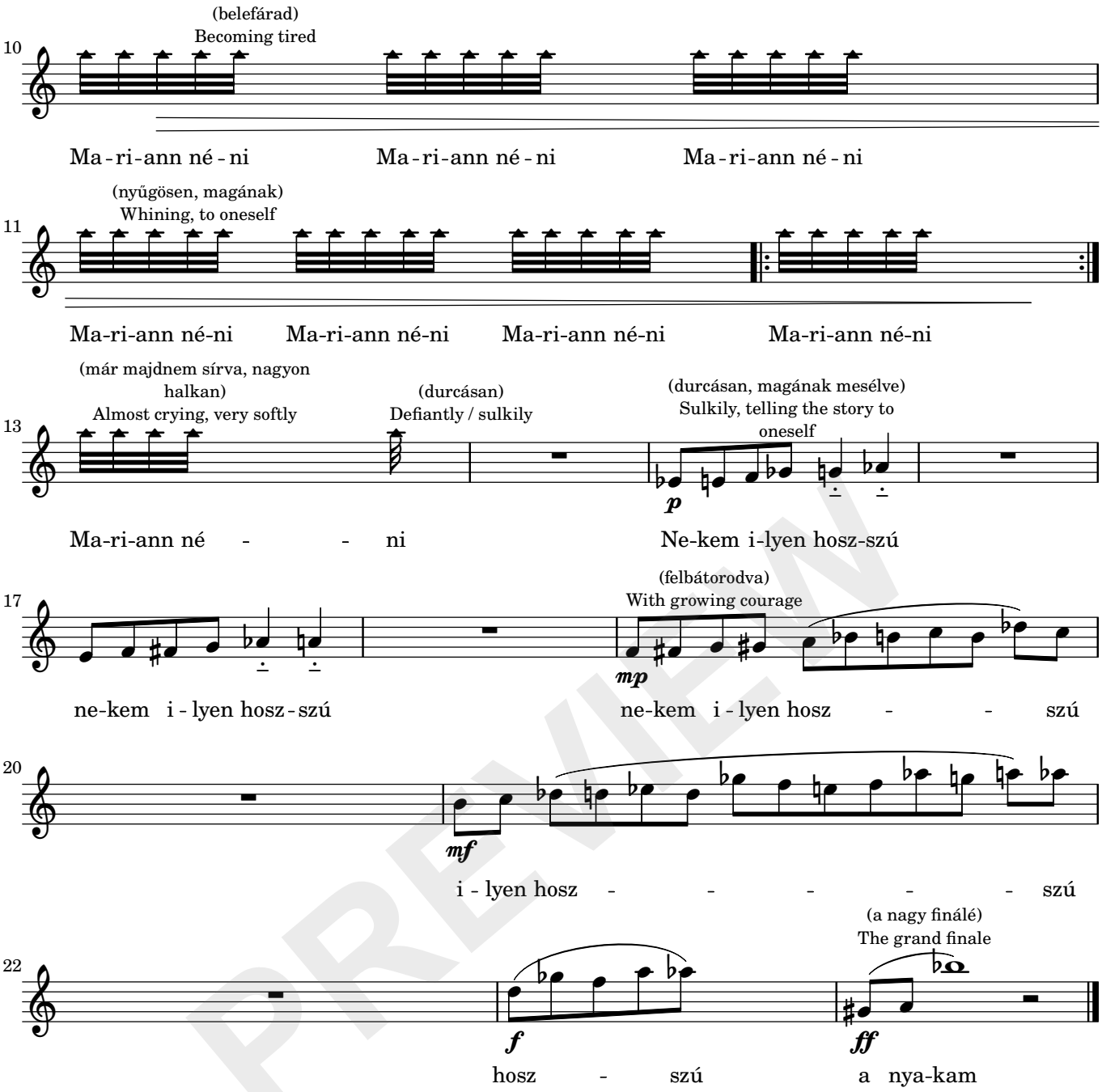
Judit Varga

A színpadon, a közönség soraiban elindul pár felhúzhatós, zenélős játék. [A szereplő egy óvodás kisfiú, akire az óvónéni nem figyel, akárhogy ordibál. Ő viszont nagyon akar valamit mondani] A gyerekhangból fokozatosan drámai szoprán válik (eldönti, hogy énekes lesz, hamar ilyen szép hosszú a nyaka, akkor legalább majd figyelnek rá]

Wind-up musical toys, music boxes and baby or children's toys begin to sound on stage and, optionally, among the audience. Ideally they die away at the end of the movement. The character is a nursery-school boy whose teacher pays no attention, however loudly he shouts; he desperately wants to say something. The child's voice gradually becomes a dramatic soprano - a mature opera singer by the end. He decides to become a singer: with such a beautifully long neck, at least people will then pay attention.



PREVIEW


(belefárad)
Becoming tired
10
Ma - ri - ann né - ni Ma - ri - ann né - ni Ma - ri - ann né - ni
(nyűgösen, magának)
Whining, to oneself
11
Ma-ri-ann né-ni Ma-ri-ann né-ni Ma-ri-ann né-ni Ma-ri-ann né-ni
(már majdnem sírva, nagyon halkan)
Almost crying, very softly
(durcásan)
Defiantly / sulkily
(durcásan, magának mesélve)
Sulkily, telling the story to oneself
13
p
Ma-ri-ann né - - ni Ne-kem i-lyen hosz-szú
(felbátorodva)
With growing courage
17
mp
ne-kem i - lyen hosz - szú ne-kem i - lyen hosz - - szú
20
mf
i - lyen hosz - - - - - szú
(a nagy finálé)
The grand finale
22
f ff
hosz - szú a nya-kam
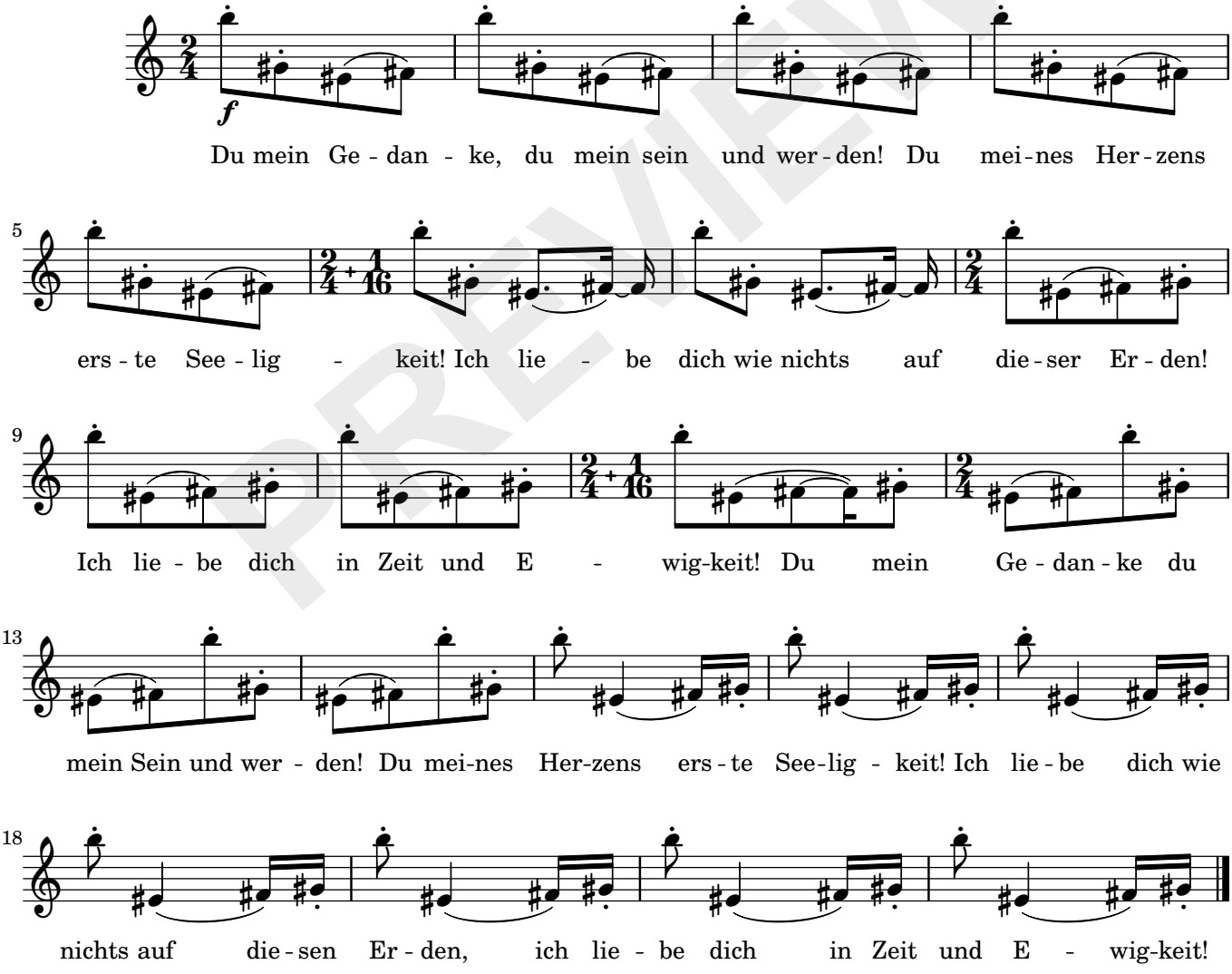
PREVIEW

VII. Liebeslied

Judit Varga

Das ist ein echtes Liebeslied. Aber hier wird ja nix schöngemacht oder idealisiert, nein, in diesem Lied zeigt die Liebe ihr wahres Gesicht. Denn es gibt nichts schöneres auf der Welt als Lieben und geliebt zu werden, bloss was macht man, wenn der Geliebte einem nicht mag? Nun, manche sind in dem Fall vernünftig, und geben es auf, suchen sich einen anderen. Nicht unsere Protagonistin. Sie zieht es durch, durch dem ganzen Lied. So wie auch den schlechten Prosodie, die viele (unsingbare und wahrscheinlich eh falsch gesungene, gebrüllte, gejammerte hohen h-s). Egal was. Sie gibt nicht auf. Sie beginnt noch ganz nüchtern und erreicht am Ende des Liedes eine derartige Aggression, die nur die Liebe erzeugen kann. Denn Liebe unterscheidet sich kaum vom Hass, das ist praktisch das gleiche Gefühl, bloss im negativen.

This is a real love song. Nothing is prettified or idealised: love shows its true face. Love is beautiful, but when it is not returned one could even feel like killing the beloved. There is nothing more beautiful than loving and being loved, but what happens when the beloved does not love you back? Some people sensibly give up and find someone else. This protagonist does not. She persists through the entire song, through the bad prosody and the unsingable high B naturals, which may be shrieked or cracked like those of a bad singer; accurate intonation is not required. Begin quite soberly; by the end reach the kind of aggression that only love can produce. Here love and hatred are almost the same feeling, with the sign reversed. The near-impossibility is intentional: try to sing compulsively and at any cost. By the end she is so worked up that the bad prosody no longer matters. She may have slipped somewhere, but will finish out of sheer stubbornness - the sulky obstinacy of a nursery-school child in an adult.



PREVIEW

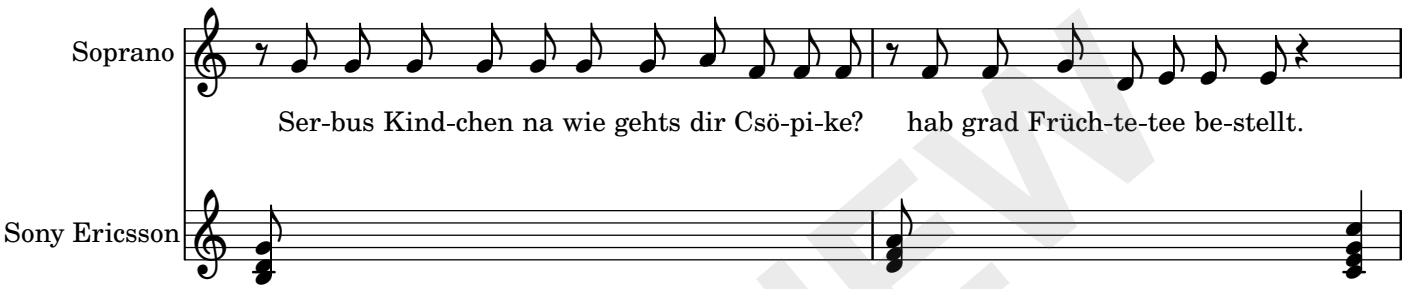
VIII. Recitativ

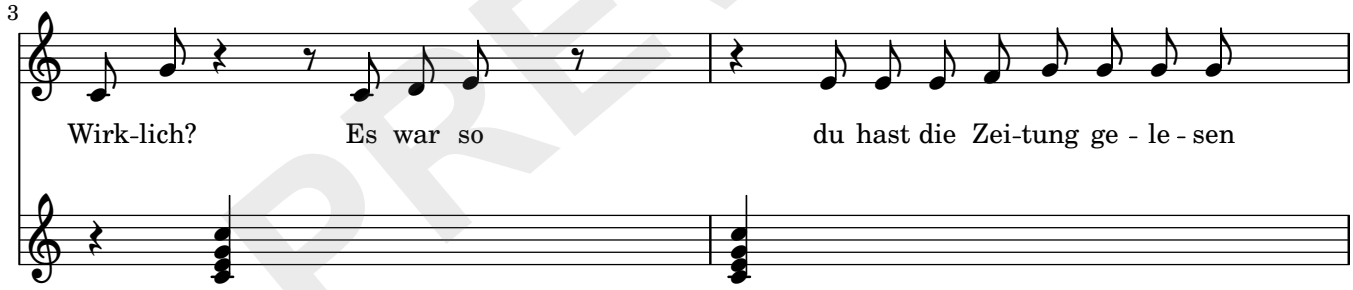
Deutsche Fassung / German version · an Adrienne Csengery

Judit Varga

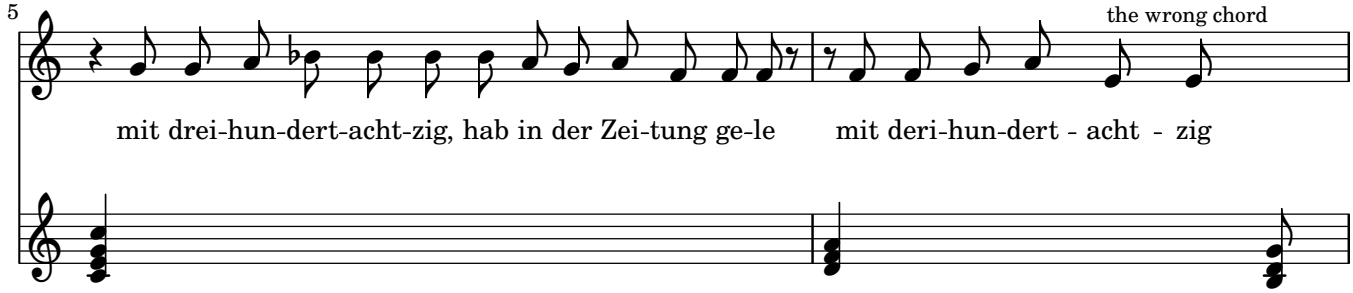
Ein Handy, im Idealfall ein uraltes Nokia erklingt, es spielt Bach Badinerie. Die Sängerin ist etwas irritiert, wartet dass das Klingeln aufhört, dann nach etwas Zeit sagt sie: Hallo? Ab hier Rezitativ, die Begleitung sollte als Klingelton in ein Handy programmiert sein und live abgespielt sein. Im Notfall kann es auch von einem Band kommen.

A mobile phone rings among the audience, ideally an ancient Nokia playing Bach's Badinerie in B minor in a dreadful Nokia timbre. The singer is irritated and waits, with a small grimace, for the ringing to stop. It does not. After a while she says the greeting printed above. From here the music is recitative. Programme the accompaniment into a phone as a ringtone and play it live; a recording may be used if necessary. In the Hungarian note the composer will "play" the accompaniment on a Sony Ericsson phone. The dedication to Adrienne Csengery recalls that she once left her phone switched on at a concert.
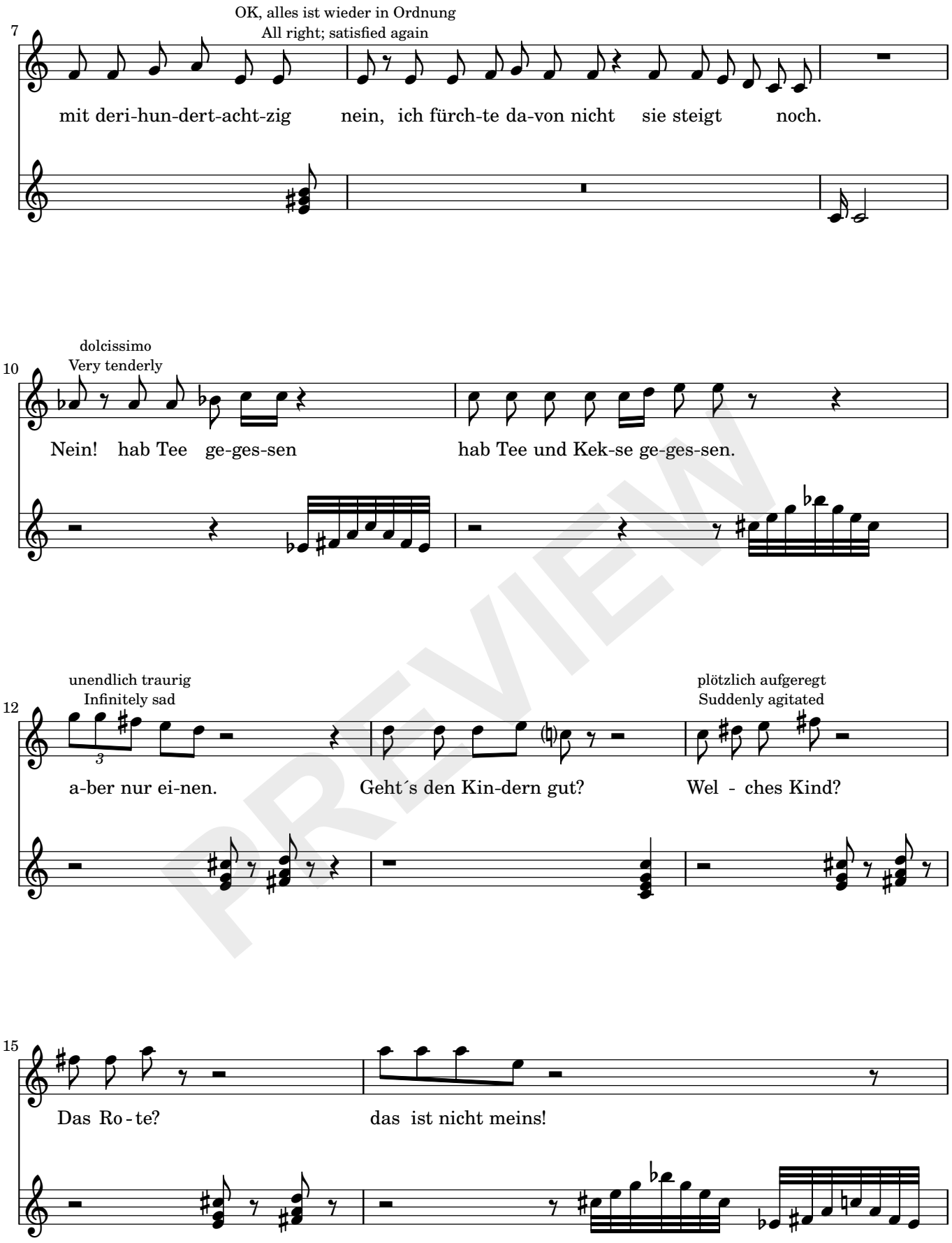




Die Sängerin schaut böse, wegen dem falschen Akkord
Look angrily at the accompanist: the wrong chord



PREVIEW


7
OK, alles ist wieder in Ordnung
All right; satisfied again
mit deri-hun-dert-acht-zig nein, ich fürch-te da-von nicht sie steigt noch.
10
dolcissimo
Very tenderly
Nein! hab Tee ge-ges-sen hab Tee und Kek-se ge-ges-sen.
12
unendlich traurig
Infinitely sad
plötzlich aufgeregt
Suddenly agitated
a-ber nur ei-nen. Geht´s den Kin-dern gut? Wel - ches Kind?
15
Das Ro - te? das ist nicht meins!

PREVIEW



PREVIEW

Dieses Telefongespräch habe ich im Zug gehört, und wortwörtlich notiert. Es war ein tüchtig gekleideter eleganter Mann um die 70. Klein und etwas nervös, und ich bin mir sicher, er hat auch einen Rum zu seinem Tee in seiner Tasche gefunden. Es war 7:50 in der früh, wir reisten von Budapest nach Wien.

The composer overheard and transcribed this conversation word for word in the dining car of an early-morning train from Budapest to Vienna, at 7:50 a.m. The caller, probably speaking to his wife, was an elegant, well-dressed man of about seventy, small and rather nervous. The composer was sure he had also found some rum for his tea in his pocket.
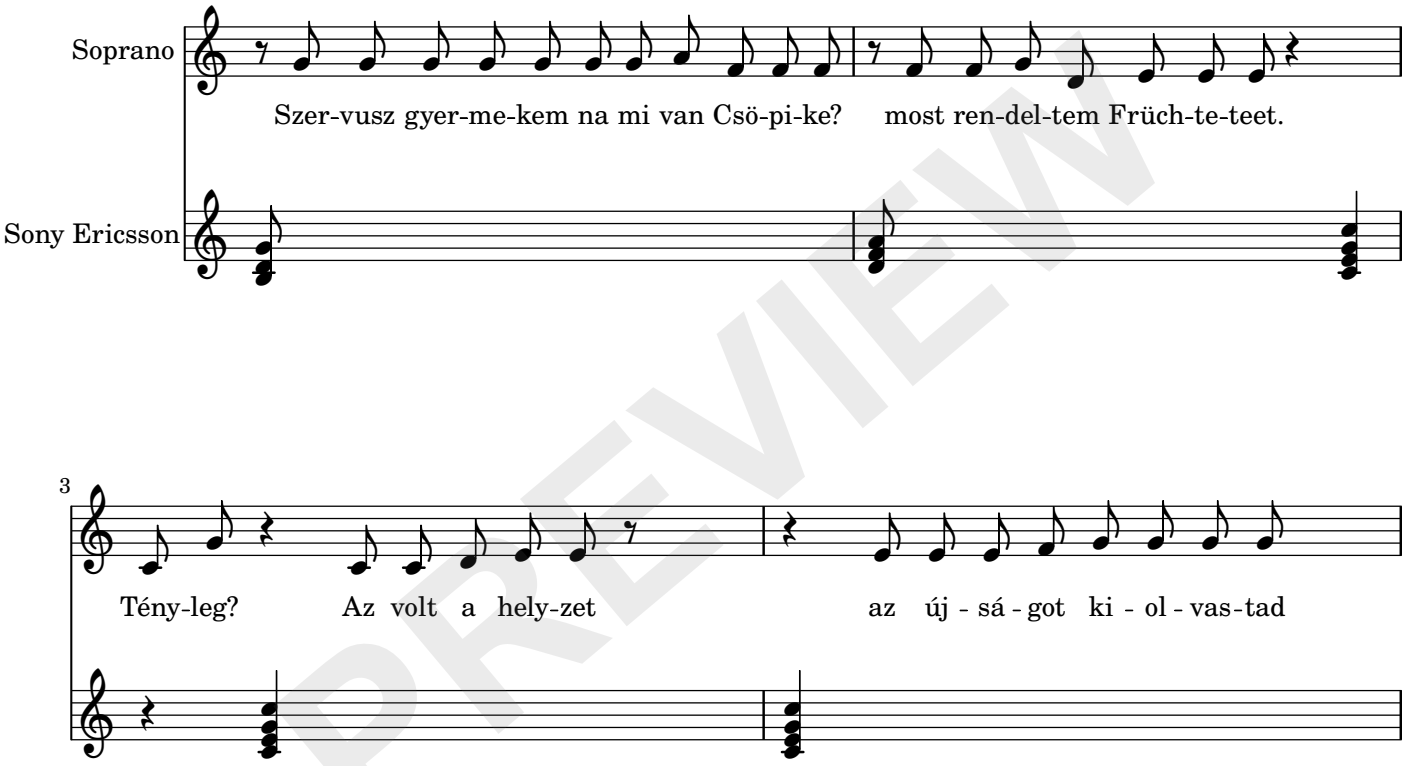
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Magyar változat / Hungarian version · an Adrienne Csengery
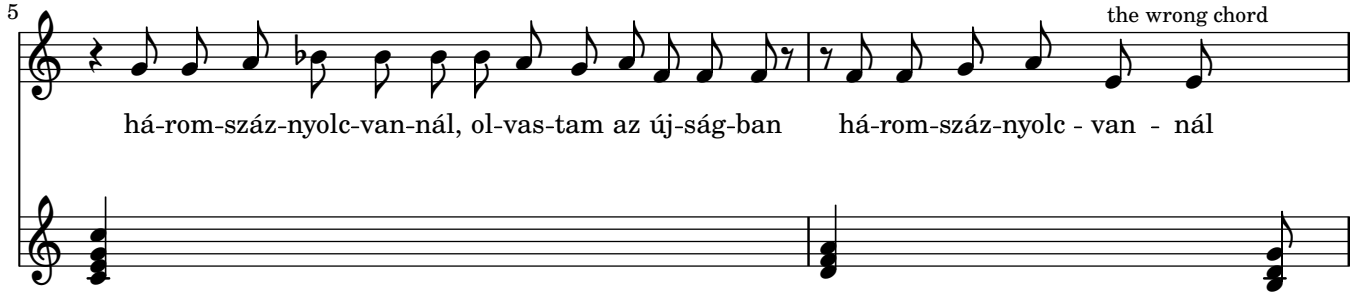
Judit Varga

[A közönség soraiban megszólal egy mobiltelefon, Bach h moll Badinerie, de valami rettenetes Nokia hangszínen Az énekes ideges, kis grimasszal a szája szélén várja, hogy abbamaradjon a csörgés, de nem... majd megszólal (az énekes): Hallo? Innen recitativo, a kíséretet én "játszom" majd egy Sony Ericsson telefonon]
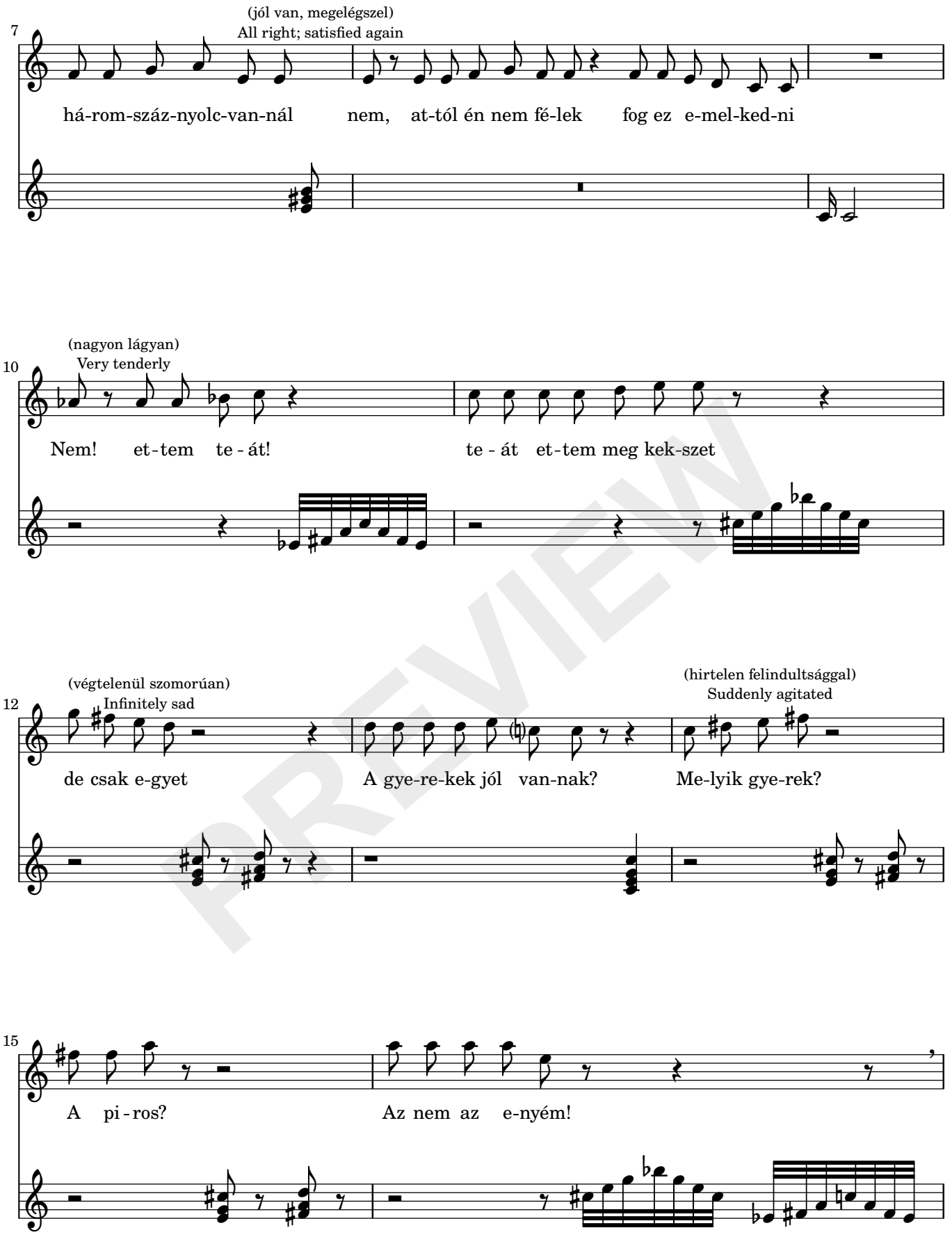
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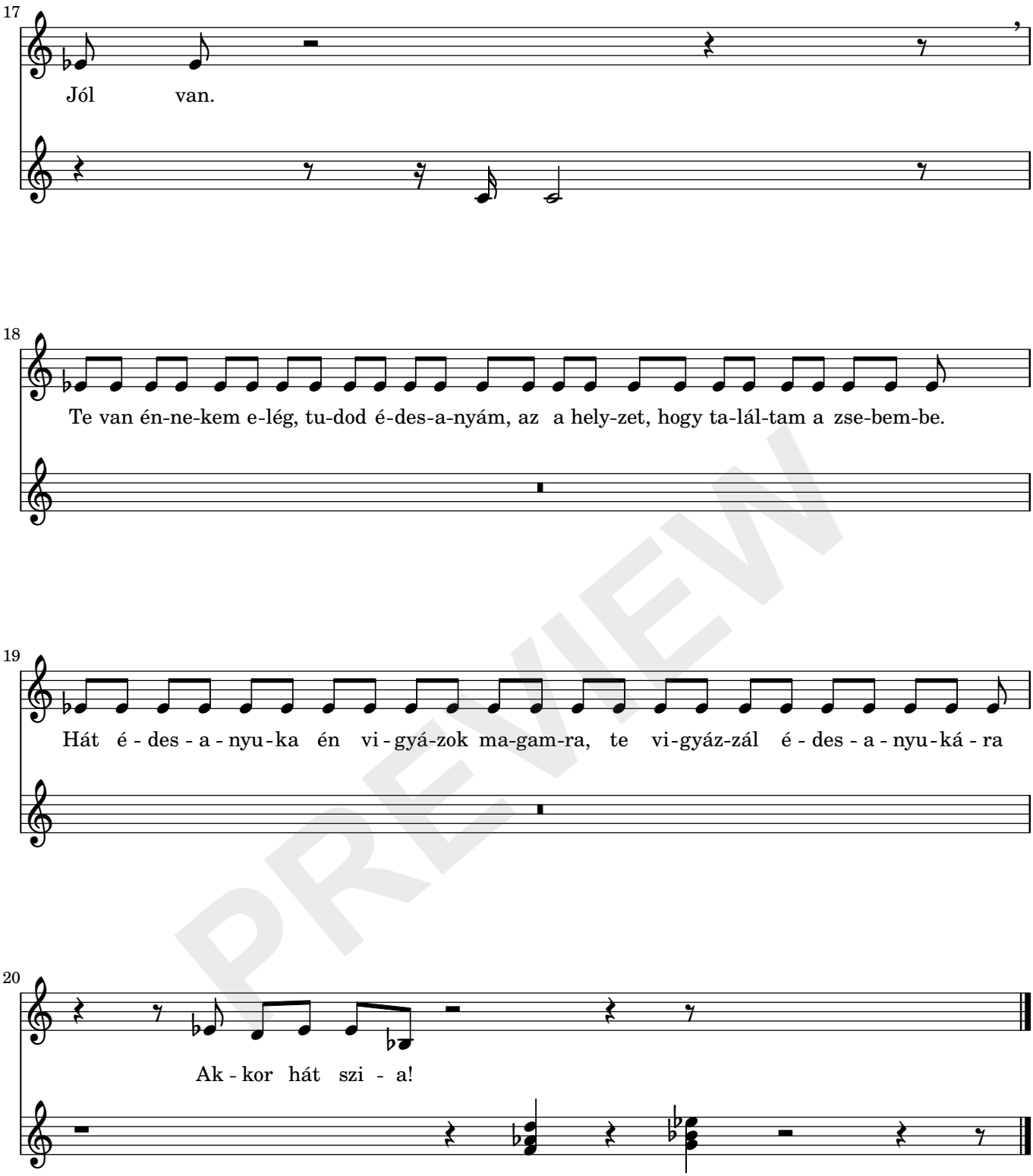


(a rossz akkord miatt dühösen nézzél ram :-))
Look angrily at the accompanist: the wrong chord



PREVIEW


7
(jól van, megelégszel)
All right; satisfied again
há-rom-száz-nyolc-van-nál nem, at-tól én nem fé-lek fog ez e-mel-ked-ni
10
(nagyon lágyan)
Very tenderly
Nem! et-tem te-át! te-át et-tem meg kek-szet
12
(végtelenül szomorúan)
Infinitely sad
de csak e-gyet
A gye-re-kek jól van-nak?
(hirtelen felindultsággal)
Suddenly agitated
Me-lyik gye-rek?
15
A pi-ros?
Az nem az e-nyém!

PREVIEW



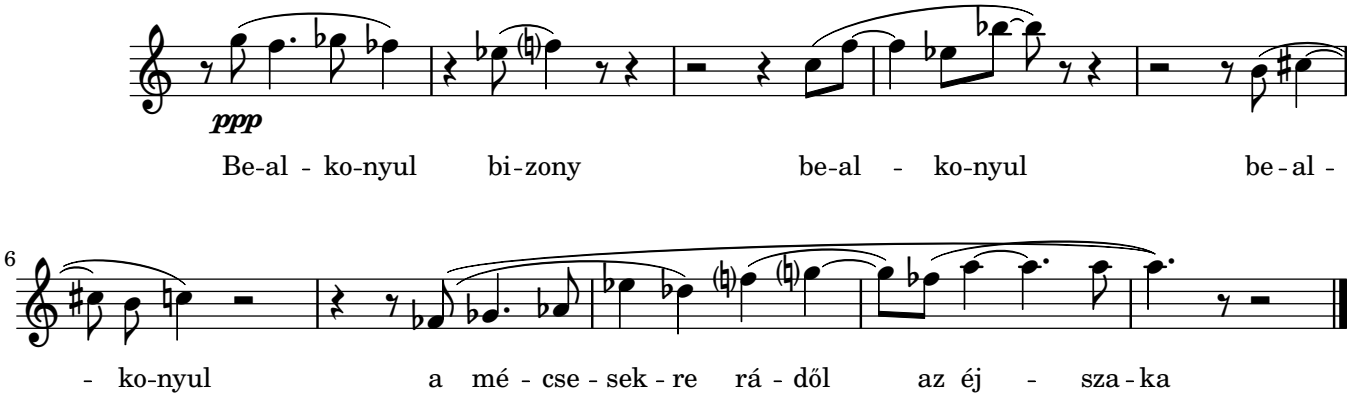
PREVIEW

(Ezt a szöveget egy reggeli vonaton, az étkezőkocsiban írtam fel, egy bácsi telefonált valószínűleg a feleségével, és ezt mondta, szóról szóra)

The composer overheard and transcribed this conversation word for word in the dining car of an early-morning train from Budapest to Vienna, at 7:50 a.m. The caller, probably speaking to his wife, was an elegant, well-dressed man of about seventy, small and rather nervous. The composer was sure he had also found some rum for his tea in his pocket.

IX.

Judit Varga
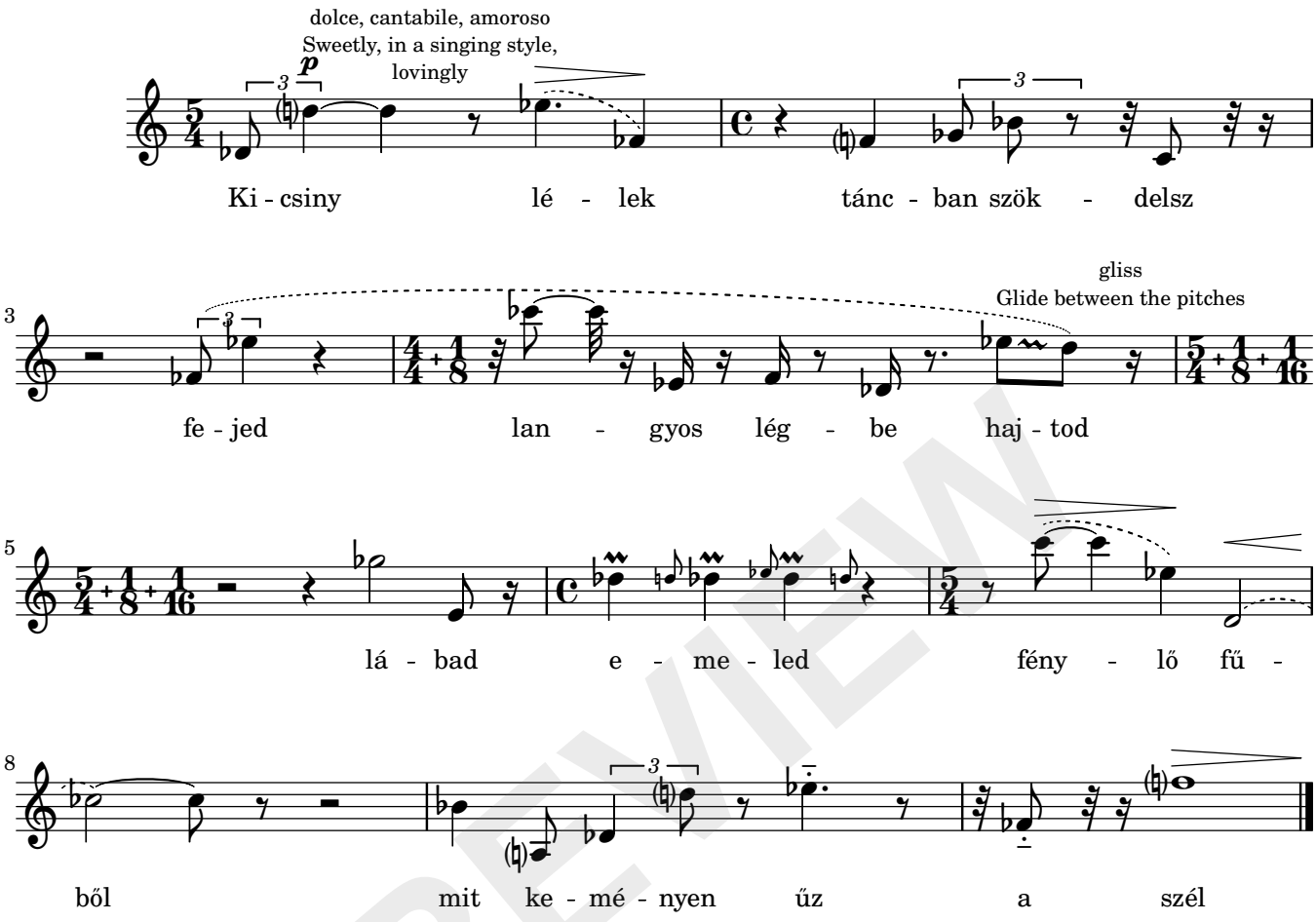


PREVIEW

IV.

Transponierte Fassung / transposed version (-2)

Judit Varga



PREVIEW
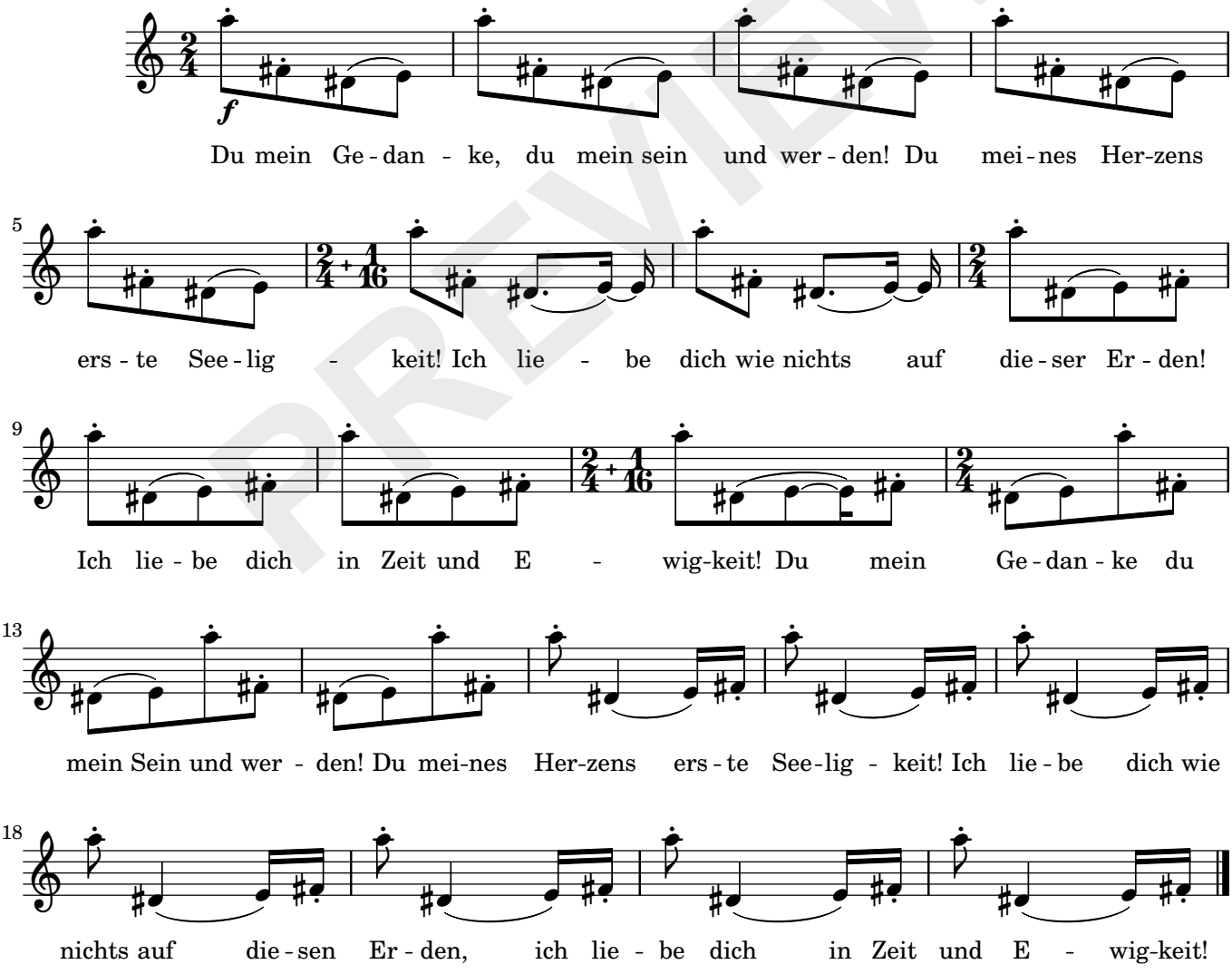
VII. Liebeslied

Transponierte Fassung / transposed version (-2)

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PREVIEW