

# Five Love Songs

for soprano, baritone and piano

on texts by Marvin Bell

David Gompper

## Five Love Songs, on texts by Marvin Bell

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### The Admission

If you love me,  
 say so.  
 Snow piles; bridges burn  
 behind me; I  
 imagine  
 that I am alone  
 and have not  
 turned toward you so  
 before. I forget  
 openings I had not thought of  
 turning toward,  
 to tell you, and to tell you  
 to tell me.  
 The surroundings affect us;  
 it is a cause  
 for love  
 that you call it  
 something logical,  
 taking pleasure in  
 our finding  
 ourselves here.  
 Tell me landscapes  
 are frames of mind.  
 I believe words have meaning.  
 No gift will do.  
 Tell me what it means  
 to you.

### To Dorothy

You are not beautiful, exactly.  
 You are beautiful, inexactly.  
 You let a weed grow by the mulberry  
 and a mulberry grow by the house.  
 So close, in the personal quiet  
 of a windy night, it brushes the wall  
 and sweeps away the day till we sleep.

A child said it, and it seemed true:  
 "Things that are lost are all equal."  
 But it isn't true. If I lost you,  
 the air wouldn't move, nor the tree grow.  
 Someone would pull the weed, my flower.  
 The quiet wouldn't be yours. If I lost you,  
 I'd have to ask the grass to let me sleep.

## **Being in Love**

with someone who is not in love with  
 you, you understand my predicament.  
 Being in love with you, who are not  
 in love with me, you understand my dilemma.  
 Being in love with your being in love  
 with me, which you are not, you understand

the difficulty. Being in love with your  
 being, you can well imagine how hard it is.  
 Being in love with your being you,  
 no matter you are not your being being in  
 love with me, you can appreciate and pity  
 being in love with you. Being in love

with someone who is not in love, you know  
 all about being in love when being in love  
 is being in love with someone who is not  
 in love being with you, which is  
 being in love, which you know only too well,  
 Love, being in love with being in love.

## **Whatever We Were Going to Tell Each Other Won't Mean As Much**

You were brushing your hair.  
 Interminably, you brushed your soft hair.  
 How could you know what it was doing to me?  
 You knew. You kept brushing your hair.

I watched. I watched. I turned away,  
 hearing the sound of your hairbrush  
 soften as your hair found its place,  
 very like the sound of a rough hand on a dress.

How could you know I went on listening?  
 You knew. Even when you were finished,  
 you kept on brushing. Even when it was over,  
 you kept on brushing. You knew. You knew.

**Five Oh's**

Five oh's are but a single line of our life together.  
Five ah's but a moment of our peace.  
Five eureka's cannot contain what you have taught me.  
Five aha's cannot express our expectations.  
There are five ouch's for every oops!  
And five oops's for every please.  
And five please's for every don't.  
And most of all, a dozen wills for every won't.  
Love, you and I are more than one plus one.  
Though we are two, two too is too few.  
Love has defeated reason by all who tried.  
No, we are like an hourglass upon its side.  
It seems that one and one at times make three.  
We overlap throughout Eternity.  
A thousand oh's could not bespeak our wooing.  
True love's surprised to know just what it's doing.

This cycle, completed at a Copland House residency during December 2011, was written for a recital of works, by the composer, on texts by the poet Marvin Bell. Tony Arnold and John Muriello premiered this composition on February 19, 2012 at the University of Iowa. It is dedicated to my friends and colleagues Judith and Richard Hurtig.

for Judith and Richard Hurtig  
**Five Love Songs**  
for soprano, baritone and piano

I. The Admission

Marvin Bell

David Gompper (2012)

♩=92

Soprano

Piano

*mp* *p*

Ped.

6

S.

Pno.

*pp* *pp* *mf*

(like bells)

Ped.

10

S.


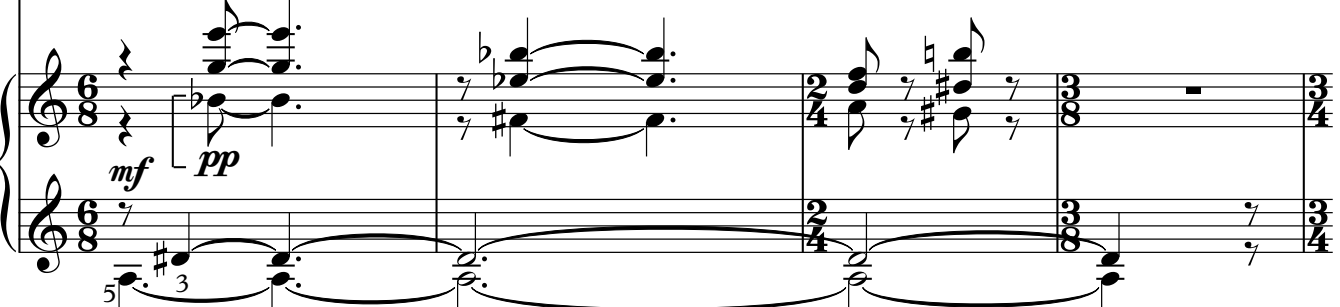
Pno.

If you love me, say so. Snow piles;

Ped.

6 15  
S.   
brid-ges burn be - hind me; I i - ma-gine that I am a-lone  
Pno.   
*p*

19  
S.   
and have not turned toward you so be-fore  
Pno.   
*mf* *pp*  
5 3

23 *Red.*  
S.   
I for-get o - pen-ings I had not thought of turn-ing toward,  
Pno.   
*mf* *pp*  
5 3

27 *Red.*  
S.   
to tell you and to tell me to tell you  
Pno.   
*p*

poco rall. . . . . ♩=92 A tempo

31

S. 

Pno.  *f*

The sur-round-ings af-

36

S.  *f*

Pno. 

fect us; it is a cause — for love that you

40

S. 

Pno. 

call it, call it, some-thing lo-gi-cal, tak-ing plea-sure in our

44

S. 

Pno.  *p* *pp*

find-ing our-selves here.

Ped.

8 48

S.  Tell me land - scapes — are frames of mind.

Pno. 

52 Led.

S.  I be - lieve words have mean - ing.

Pno.  *mp*

56

S.  No gift will do.

Pno.  *p*

62

S.  Tell — me what it means to

Pno. 



65 9

S. *you*

Pno.

## II. To Dorothy

68  $\text{♩} = 72$

Pno. *2x p legato*

70

Bar. *You are not beau - ti - ful, ex - act - ly*

Pno.

72

Bar. *You are beau - ti - ful, in - ex - act - ly.*

Pno.

10 74

Bar. You let a weed grow by the mul-ber-ry

Pno.

76

Bar. and a mul-ber-ry grow by the house. So close, in the

Pno.

79 **A tempo**  
**poco rall.** . . . ♩ = 72

Bar. per-son - al qui - et of a wind - y

Pno.

83

Bar. night, it brush - es the wall and sweeps a -

Pno.

85 11

Bar.

way the day till we sleep

Pno.

88

Bar.

Pno.

93

Bar.

A child said it, and it seemed true:

Pno.

98

Bar.

"Things that are lost are all equal." But

Pno.



112

Bar. *f* 13

yours. If I lost

Pno. *f*

114

Bar. you,

Pno.

116

Bar. If I lost...

Pno.

118

Bar. I'd have to ask the grass to let me

Pno. *poco rit.* bring out "B" in RH  
Ped. sempre

14 121 *ppp* in one breath and 'under your breath'

Bar. *ppp* sleep

Pno. *pp* *pp* *pp* 8va 3

# Ped.

125

Bar.

Pno. *ppp* 8va

# Ped.

127

Bar.

Pno. 8va *pppp* 3 3

# Ped.

## III. Being in Love

129  $\text{♩} = 72$

S.

Pno.

*mf* 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

131 *mf*

S.

Pno.

*p* 6 6 6 6 6 6

Be-ing in Love with some- one who is not in love with

133

S.

Pno.

6 6 6

you, you un - der - stand my pre - di - ca - ment

16 134

S.

Pno.

136

S.

Pno.

Be-ing in love with you, who are not in love with me,

138

S.

Pno.

you un - der - stand my di - lem - ma.

139

S.

Pno.

Be - ing in love with your



141 17

S.

be-ing\_ in love with me which you are not, you un-der-stand the

Pno.

144

S.

dif-fi-cul-ty.

Pno.

145

S.

Pno.

146

S.

Be-ing in love with your be-ing, you can i-ma-gine

Pno.

18 148

S.

Pno.

150

S.

Pno.

$\leftarrow \text{6th note} = \text{8th note} \rightarrow = 86$

*f* *p*

*Ped.* the LH accented "As" in 149 are the same tempo of the 8th-note "As" in bar 150

*Ped.*

154

S.

Pno.

*Ped.*

158

S.

Pno.

3

162 19

S. *6 6 6 3*

you can ap-pre-ci-ate and pi-ty be-ing in love with you.

Pno. *3 3 3 3 3*

165 ♩.=66

Pno. *mf p*

[ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ]

169

Pno. *mf*

*the dotted-16th rhythm in 171 is the same as 8th notes in 172*

171

Pno. *6 6*

20  $\text{♩} = 72$  **A tempo**

172

Pno. *f*

173

S.

Pno.

Be-ing in love with some one who

175

S.

Pno.

is not in love, you know all a-bout be-ing in love


179

S.

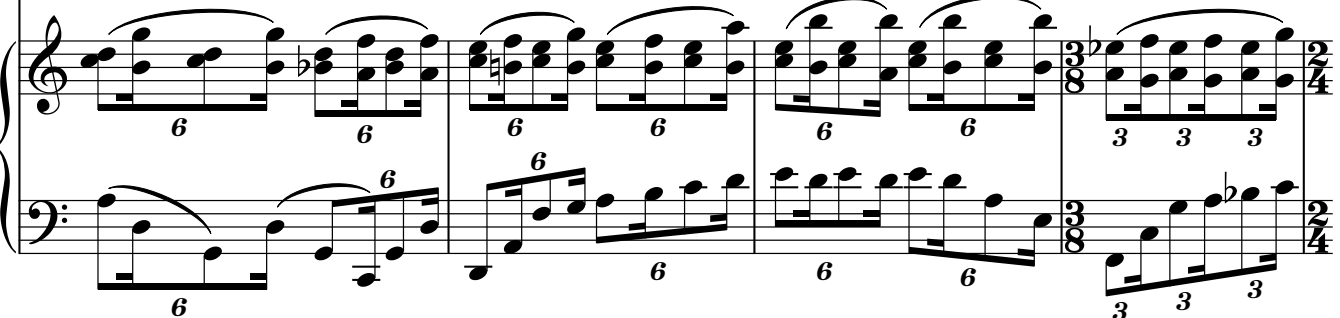
Pno.

when be-ing in love is be-ing in love with


182 21

S. 

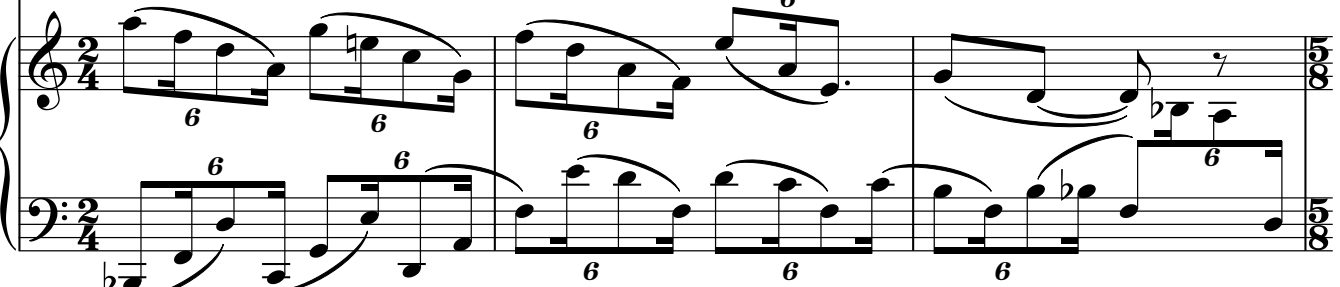
some-one who is not in love be-ing with you, which is be - ing in

Pno. 

186

S. 

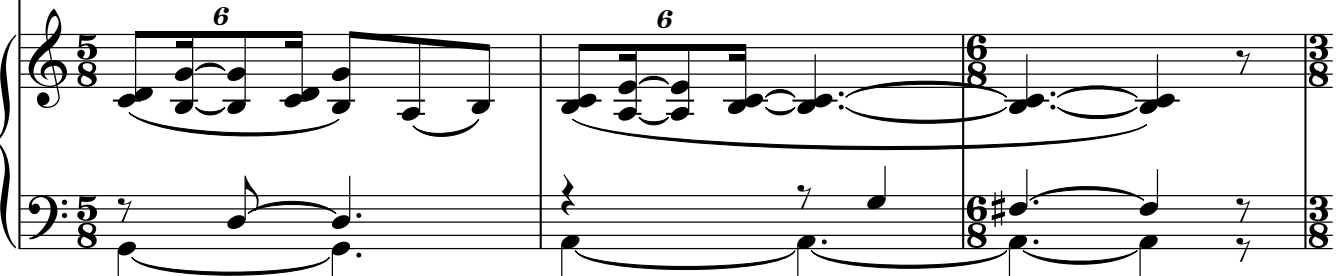
love, which you know on - ly too well

Pno. 

189

S. 

Love,

Pno. 

22 192 2x

Pno.

*p*

199

S.

be-ing in love\_\_with be-ing\_\_in love.\_\_\_\_\_

Pno.

206

Pno.

*p* LH play before RH

use pedal to link the two-note phrases

*pp* 8<sup>vb</sup>

212

Pno.

215

Pno.

*fff*

IV. Whatever We Were Going to Tell Each Other  
Won't Mean As Much


219  $\text{♩} = 50$

Bar. 

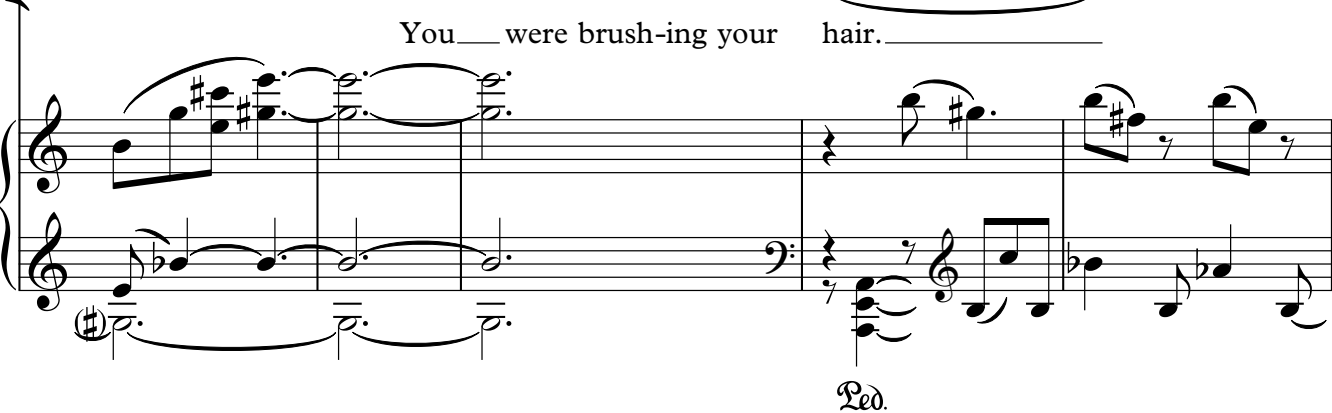
Pno. 

*pp*  
*p*  
Ped. *8<sup>vb</sup>*

225


Bar. 

You were brush-ing your hair.

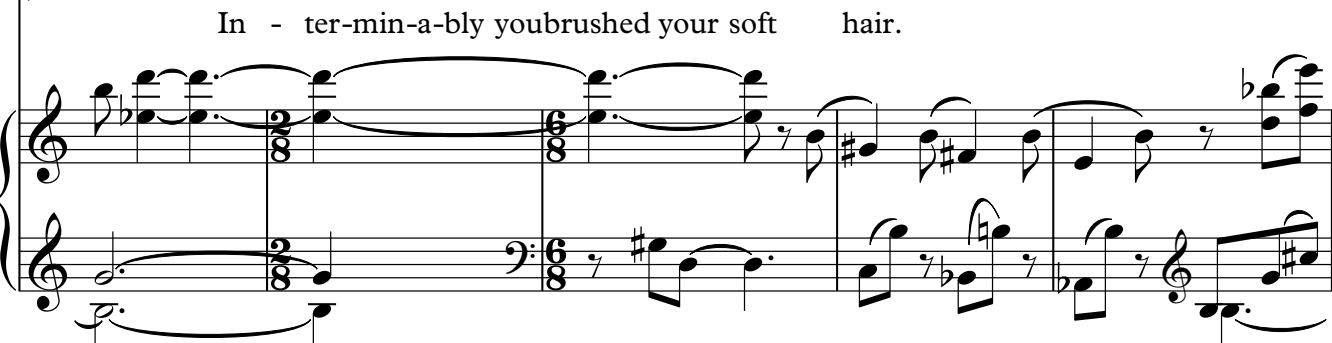
Pno. 

*p*  
Ped.

230

Bar. 

In - ter-min-a-bly youbrushed your soft hair.

Pno. 

*p*  
Ped.

24 235  
Bar.

Pno. 

239  
Bar.

Pno. 

243  
Bar.

Pno. 

247  
Bar.

Pno.




251 25

Bar. 

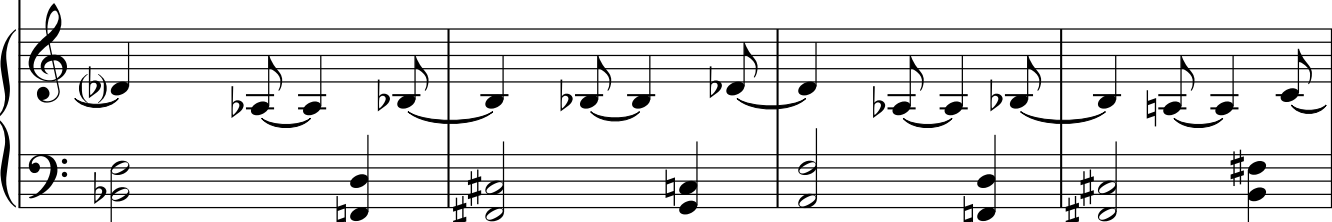
soft-en as your

Pno. 


255

Bar. 


hair found its place, ve-ry like the

Pno. 

259

Bar. 

the sound of a roughhand on a dress.

Pno. 

264

Bar. 

How could you know I went on lis-ten-ing? You knew.

Pno. 

26 269 *f*

Bar.

E-ven when you were fin-ished, you kept onbrush-ing.

Pno.

*8<sup>vb</sup>* *Ped.* *loco* *Ped.*

274 *mf* *mp*

Bar.

E - ven when it was o - ver, — you kept on brush-ing.

Pno.

*mf* *Ped.*

278 *p*

Bar.

You knew. You knew. —

Pno.

*mp* *Ped.* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

V. The Five Oh's

283  $\text{♩} = 60$

S.  Five oh's\_ are but a sin-gle line\_ of our

Bar. 

Pno.  *p*

286  $\text{♩} = 80$

S.  life\_ to-ge-ther. Five eu-re-ka's

Bar.  Five ah's\_ but a mo-ment of our peace.

Pno. 


291

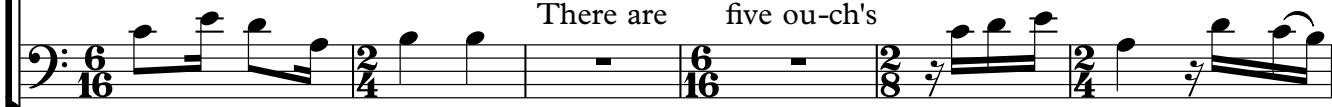
S.  can-not con-tain what you have taught me.

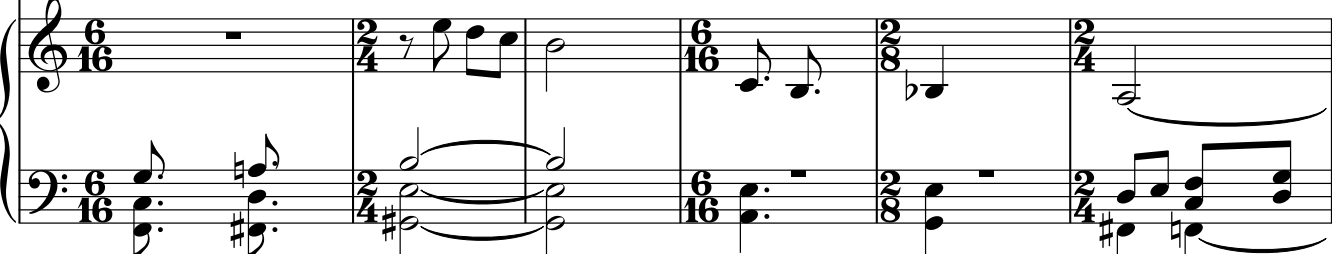
Bar.  Five a-ha's can-not ex

Pno. 

28 296

S.  There are five ou-ch's

Bar.  press our ex - pec - ta - tions for e - very oops! And five

Pno. 

302

S.  for ev-ery please. And five\_ plea-se's

Bar.  o-op's for ev-ery don't.

Pno. 

306

S.  And most of all, a do-zen wills for e - very won't.

Bar.  And most of all, a do-zen wills for e - very won't.

Pno.  *8va*

312 *8va* ←  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$  →

Pno.

315  $\text{♩} = 100$

Pno.

320

S.

Bar.

Pno.

Love\_\_

325 *mf*

S.

Bar.

Pno.

you and I are more than one plus one. (plus

30 330

S. *p*

one) *mf* (a do-zenwills for ev - ery) (and most of all two

Bar.

Though, we are two, two too is too few.

Pno.

334

S.

two too is too *mf* few)

Bar.

Love \_\_\_\_\_ has de - feat - ed rea - son

Pno.

338

S.

Love \_\_\_\_\_ *mf*

Bar.

by all who tried. *p* and

Pno.

341 31

S. 

Bar. 

Pno. 

343

S. 

Bar. 

Pno. 

347 ← ♩ = ♩ →

S. 

Bar. 

Pno. 

← ♩ = ♩ →

No we are like an ho - ur -

32 350

S.  It seems that one and

Bar.  glass up - on its side.

Pno. 

353

S.  one at times make three.

Bar.  We ov - er -

Pno. 

356


S.  We ov - er -

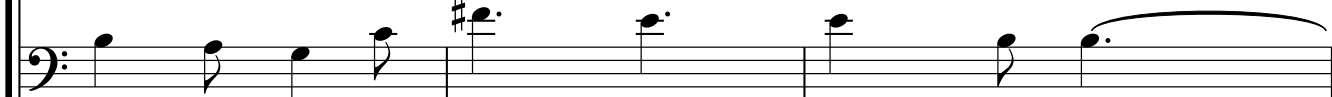
Bar.  lap through - out e - ter - ni - ty We

Pno. 



359 33

S.   
lap through-out e - ter - ni - ty

Bar.   
ov - er - lap through - out e - ter - ni - ty

Pno. 

362

S. 

Bar. 

Pno. 

364

Pno. 

34 368

S.

Bar.

Love, — you and I are more than one plus

Pno.

373

S.

Bar.

Love, — you and I are more than one plus  
one. A thou - sand oh's could not be - speak our

Pno.

377

S.

Bar.

one at times make three. True love's sur -  
woo - ing. True love's sur -

Pno.

382 35

S. prised to know just what it's do - ing

Bar. prised to know just what it's do - ing

Pno.

387

S. True love's to know just what it's

Bar. surprised to to know just what it's

Pno.

392

S. do - ing True

Bar. do - ing True

Pno.

36 395

S. love True love

Bar. love True love

Pno.

15/16 15/16 15/16

Detailed description: This system contains musical notation for measures 36-38. It features three staves: Soprano (S.), Baritone (Bar.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano and Baritone parts have lyrics 'love True love' with long horizontal lines indicating sustained notes. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves with a complex, flowing melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 15/16. Measure numbers 395, 15/16, and 15/16 are indicated at the top and bottom of the system.

398

S. Love you and I are more than

Bar. Love you and I are more than

Pno.

15/16 12/16 9/16 15/16 12/16 9/16

Detailed description: This system contains musical notation for measures 398-400. It features three staves: Soprano (S.), Baritone (Bar.), and Piano (Pno.). The Soprano and Baritone parts have lyrics 'Love you and I are more than' with horizontal lines under 'Love' and 'I are more than'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves with a complex, flowing melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 15/16. Measure numbers 398, 15/16, 12/16, 9/16, 15/16, 12/16, and 9/16 are indicated at the top and bottom of the system.

400 *f* 37 *mf*

S. *f* *mf*

one plus one at times True

Bar. *f* *mf*

one plus one at times. True

Pno. *ff*

404

S. love's sur- prised to know just what it's do - ing.

Bar. love's sur- prised to know just what it's do - ing.

Pno. *Ped.*

**♩=60 - rhythm can be played somewhat freely**

408

Pno. *pp*

38 411

Pno.

413

Pno.

415

Pno.

*ppp*

418

S.

Bar.

*p* Five are a -gle

*p* oh's but sin- line

*connect the line*

419

Pno.

*pp* 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

*pp* Ped.

S. of life to - -

Bar. our to - -

Pno. (8) 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

S. - ge - - - ther. —

Bar. - ge - - - ther. —

Pno. (8) 5 5 5 5 5 5 5