Stone and Flower

For voice and keyboard

Words by Kathleen Raine

Music by Nigel Morgan

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ISMN 979-0-57043-087-1 (Full Score)

. . . such delight I found
To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower
That intermixture of delicious hues,
Along so vast a surface, all at once
In one impression, by connecting force
Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.

To Joanna from *Poems on the Naming of Places* – William Wordsworth

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For Voice and Keyboard

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About the music

I discovered the poetry of Kathleen Raine's through Ian Skelly's radio feature *A Note Struck by the Stars* broadcast in 2001. It was a revelation. How had I missed such poetry? I immediately set out to read what I could and soon discovered so much was out of print. A gift of her *Autobiographies* began unwrapping what so often has felt like the voice of a kindred spirit. In those pages I discovered her connection with Barbara Hepworth. In some sense *Stone and Flower* chose itself as a focus for musical attention.

When the opportunity came to consider presenting *Stone and Flower* as part of the Hepworth Centenary Exhibitions it was the time and location described in the poetry and the backdrop to Hepworth's sculpture of that period that engaged me. In the late 1930s both women escaped to a rural isolation, balancing the demands of young children with their need to survive financially and develop as artists. Kathleen Raine 'escaped' to the remote valley of Martindale near Ullswater in the northern part of the Lake District. She lived for three years with her two children in Martindale vicarage, *'the most beautiful white house imaginable, stood in its own field, with a great lime tree at the gate and a beck fringed with birch and alder bounding its little domain. It stood empty, waiting for me'*. It was here she wrote her first book of poems, *Stone and Flower*, subsequently published with drawings by Barbara Hepworth.

Performance Instructions

The accompaniment is scored for the somewhat unusual medium of an electric piano, ideally one having a Fender Rhodes type of velocity-sensitive timbre change where *piano* is a soft timbre, *forte* is a hard-edged timbre. There were two good reasons for this choice: much of the composer's work with voices has used this instrument (BBC commissions *Schizophonia* and *Conversations in Colour*); the first performance was to take place in a gallery rather than a recital hall. These reasons should not prevent the use of a conventional acoustic piano, although the electric instrument remains the composer's preferred choice. Throughout articulations, dynamics and tempo markings should be seen as a guide, no more.

As an introduction to this cycle of poems it is strongly recommended that a reading of *Parting*, the final poem in the collection *Stone and Flower*, be performed either by the singer or pre-recorded as 'the poet's voice'. An electroacoustic treatment of this poem with projected images of Martindale is available from the composer.

Stone and Flower was written for the mezzo soprano Philippa Reeves and keyboard player Robert Court. The music was commissioned by Yorkshire Sculpture Park with funds from the Britten-Pears Foundation for the Barbara Hepworth Centenary Exhibition and received its first performance on Kathleen Raine's birthday 14 June 2003.

The poems were selected and arranged by the poet Margaret Morgan.

The Fall

It is the fall, the eternal fall of water,
of rock, of wounded birds, and the wounded heart,
the waterfall of freedom. Angels fall
like lovers from the azure, separate,
and die by that same death that ends us all.

Falling ten million years, we fling ourselves
again into the inviting arms of time;
our nuptial flight must end again in death
that serves for freedom time and time again
while the hard labouring mystic holds his breath.

The watching surface of the living sea
ever intact, smiles with the face of love,
where living blood drowns in its ecstasy,
impelled by nature that can mountains move,
feeling most freedom when it least is free.

Shall we go down, shall we go down together ?
here on the mountain top, the wind and snow
urge us to fall, and go the way they go.
The way is clear, the end we shall not know,
the sea will carry us where tides run and currents flow.

Far-darting Apollo

I saw the sun step like a gentleman
dressed in black and proud as sin.
I saw the sun walk across London
like a young M.P. risen to the occasion.

His step was light, his tread was dancing,
his lips were smiling, his eyes glancing.
Over the Cenotaph in Whitehall
the sun took the wicket with my skull.

The sun plays tennis in the court of Geneva
with the guts of a Finn and the head of an Emperor,
the sun plays squash in a tomb of marble,
the horses of the Apocalypse are in his stable.

The sun plays a game of darts in Spain,
three by three in flight formation,
The invincible wheels of his yellow car
are the discs that kindle the Chinese war.

The sun shows the world to the world,
Turns its own ghost on the terrified crowd,
then plunges all images into the ocean
of the nightly mass emotion.

Games of chance, and games of skill,
all his sports are games to kill.
I saw the murderer at evening lie
bleeding on the deathbed sky.

His hyacinth breath, his laurel hair,
his blinding sight, his moving air,
my love, my grief, my weariness, my fears
hid from me in a night of tears.

Leaving Martindale

Shall I be true
as these hills bind me
as these skies find me
as waters weather me,
as leaves crown me?
My kiss keep faith
with death and birth,
my joy with pain,
my heaven with earth?

I love you as the air
enfolds the earth,
as darkness holds a star,
as waters, life.
You are the smiling heart,
the sunlit noon
of one who soon must sleep
her death alone.

Shall I be true?
Love binds in vain
whom death must loose--
the flesh, the pain
that knows you now
soon will not know
that love must pass,
that times must go.

London Revisited

Haunting these shattered walls, hung with our past
That no electron and no sun can pierce,
We visit rooms in dreams
Where we ourselves are ghosts.

There is no foothold for our solid world,
No hanging Babylon for the certain mind
In rooms tattered by wind, wept on by rain.

Wild as the tomb, wild as the mountainside
A storm of hours has shaken the finespun world
Tearing away our palaces, our faces, and our days.

The Sphere

O the happy ending, the happy ending
That the fugue promised, that love believed in,
That perfect star, that bright transfiguration,

Where has it vanished, now that the music is over,
The certainty of being, the heart in flower,
Ourselves, perfect at last, affirmed as what we are ?

The world, the changing world stands still while lovers kiss,
And then moves on--what was our fugitive bliss,
The dancer's ecstasy, the vision, and the rose ?

There is no end, no ending--steps of a dance, petals of flowers
Phrases of music, rays of the sun, the hours
Succeed each other, and the perfect sphere
Turns in our hearts the past and future, near and far,
Our single soul, atom, and universe.

The Silver Stag

My silver stag is fallen--on the grass
Under the birth-trees he lies, my king of the woods,
That I followed on the mountain, over the swift streams,
He is gone under the leaves, under the past.

On the horizon of the dawn he stood,
The target of my eager sight ; that shone
Oh from the sun, or from my kindled heart--
Outlined in sky, shaped on the infinite.

What, so desiring, was my will with him,
What wished-for union of blood and thought
In single passion held us, hunter and victim ?
Already gone, when into the branched woods I pursued him.

Mine he is now, my desired, my awaited, my beloved,
Quiet he lies, as I touch the contours of his proud head,
Mine, the horror, this carrion of the wood,
Already melting underground, into the air, out of the world.

Oh, the stillness, the peace about me
As the garden lives on, the flowers bloom,
The fine grass shimmers, the flies burn,
And the stream, the silver stream, runs by.

Lying for the last time down on the green ground
In farewell gesture of self-love, softly he curved
To rest the delicate foot that is in my hand,
Empty as a moth's discarded chrysalis.

My bright yet blind desire, your end was this
Death, and my winged heart murderous
Is the world's broken heart, buried in his,
Between whose antlers starts the crucifix.

Tu non se' in terra, si come tu credi . . .

Not upon earth, as you suppose
tower these rocks that turn the wind,
for on their summits angels stand.

Nor from the earth these waters rise-
to quench not thirst, but ecstasy
the waterfall leaps from the sky.

Those nameless clouds that storm and swirl
about the mountain are the veil
that from these sightless eyes shall fall

when senses faint into the ground,
and time and place go down the wind.

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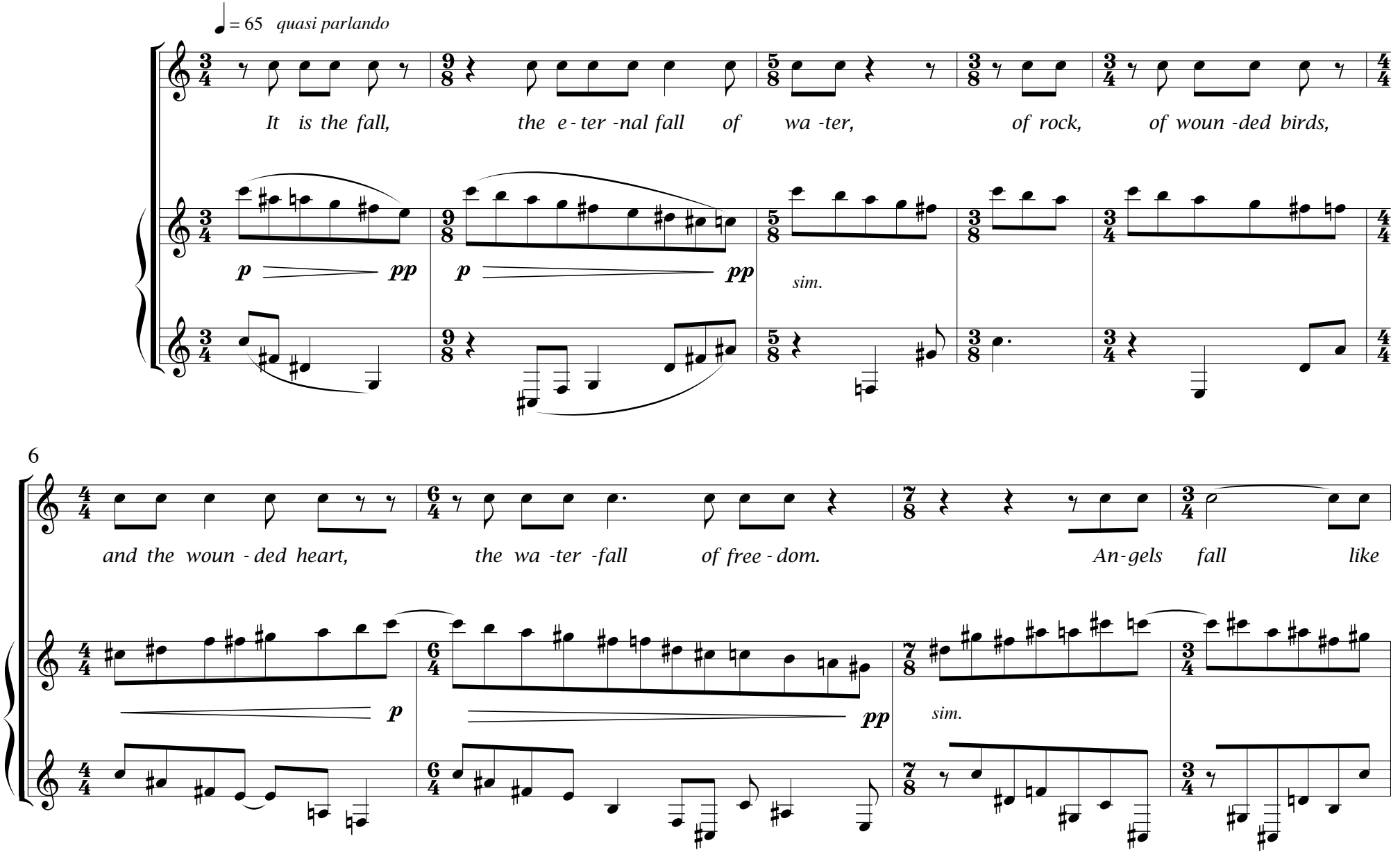
The Fall



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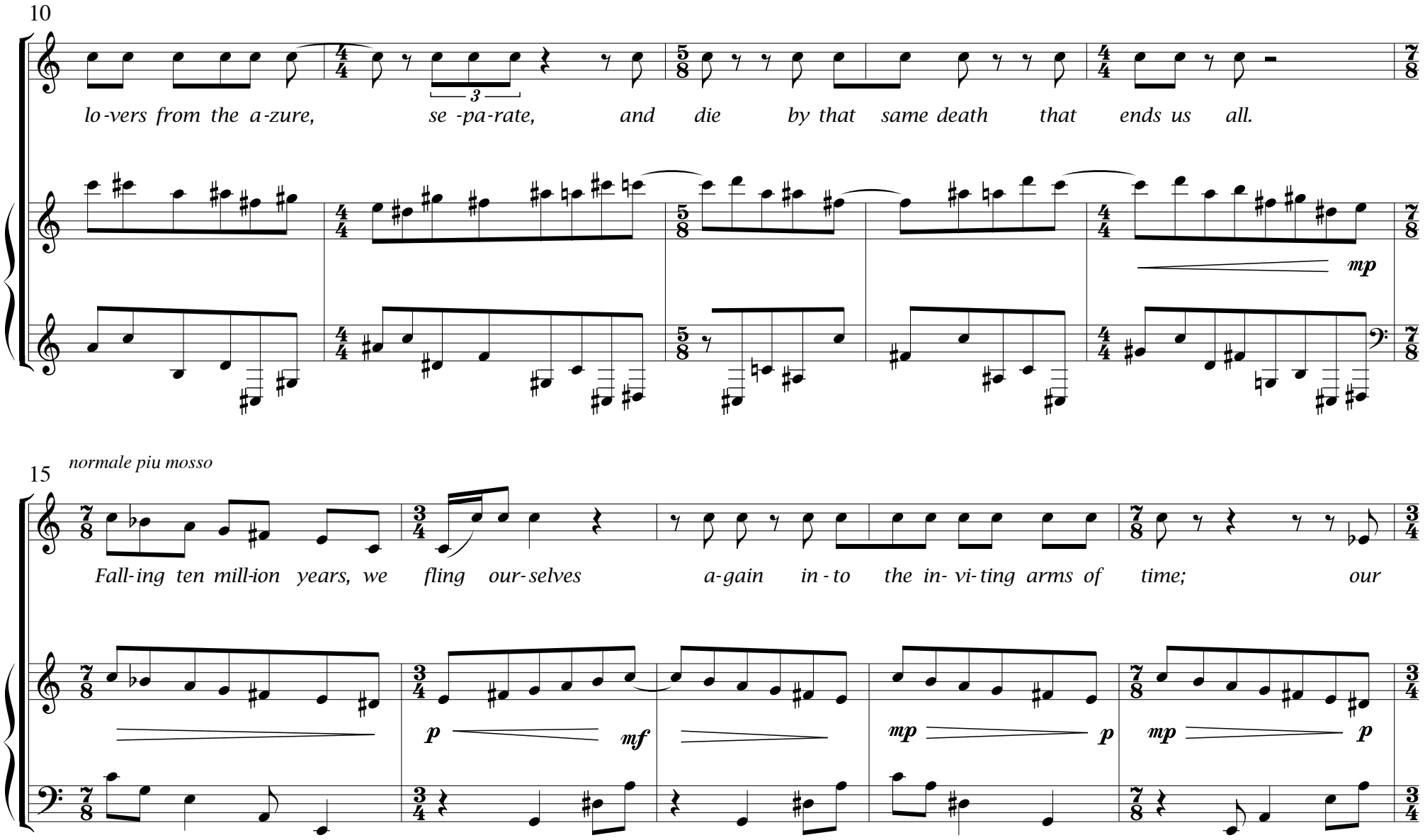
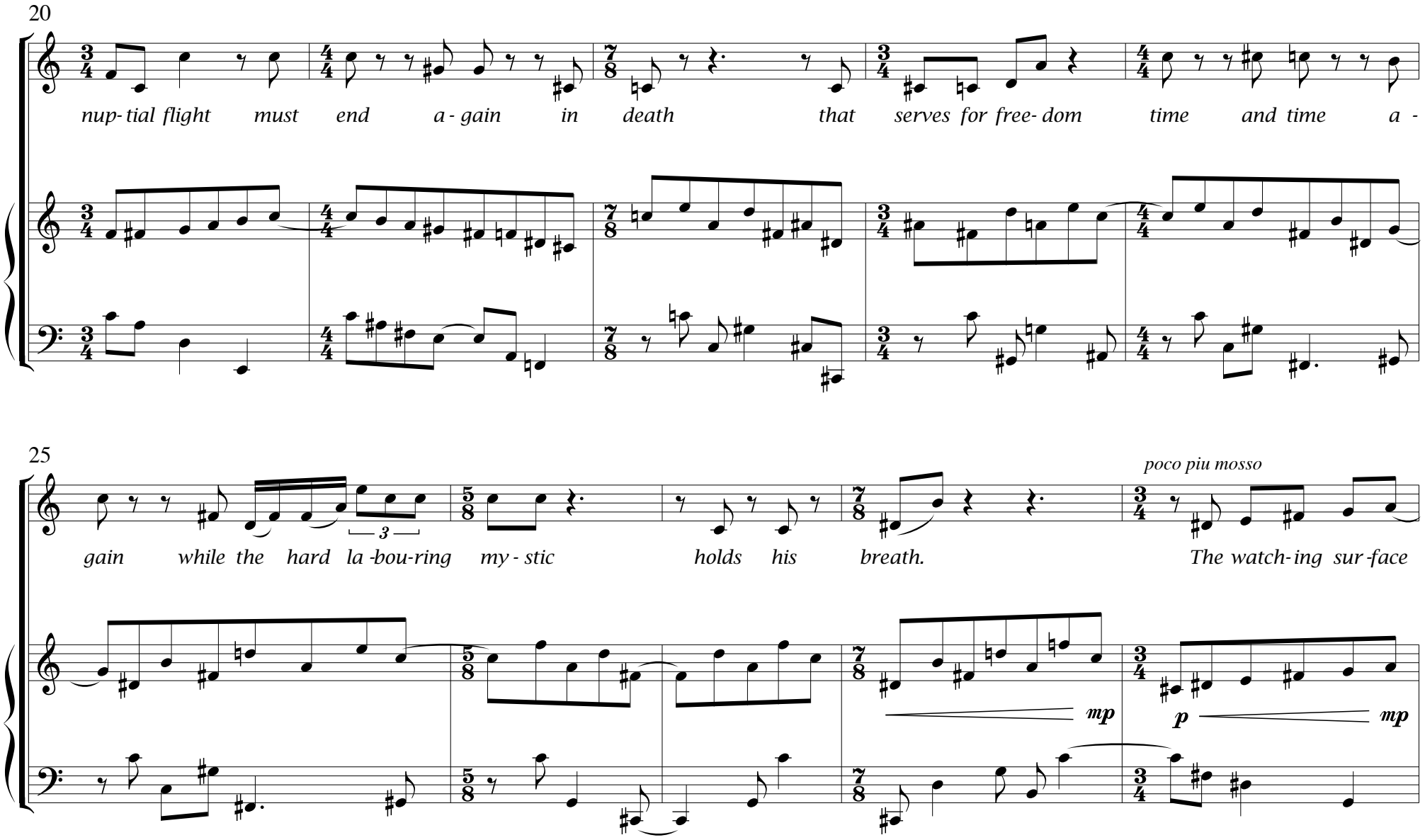
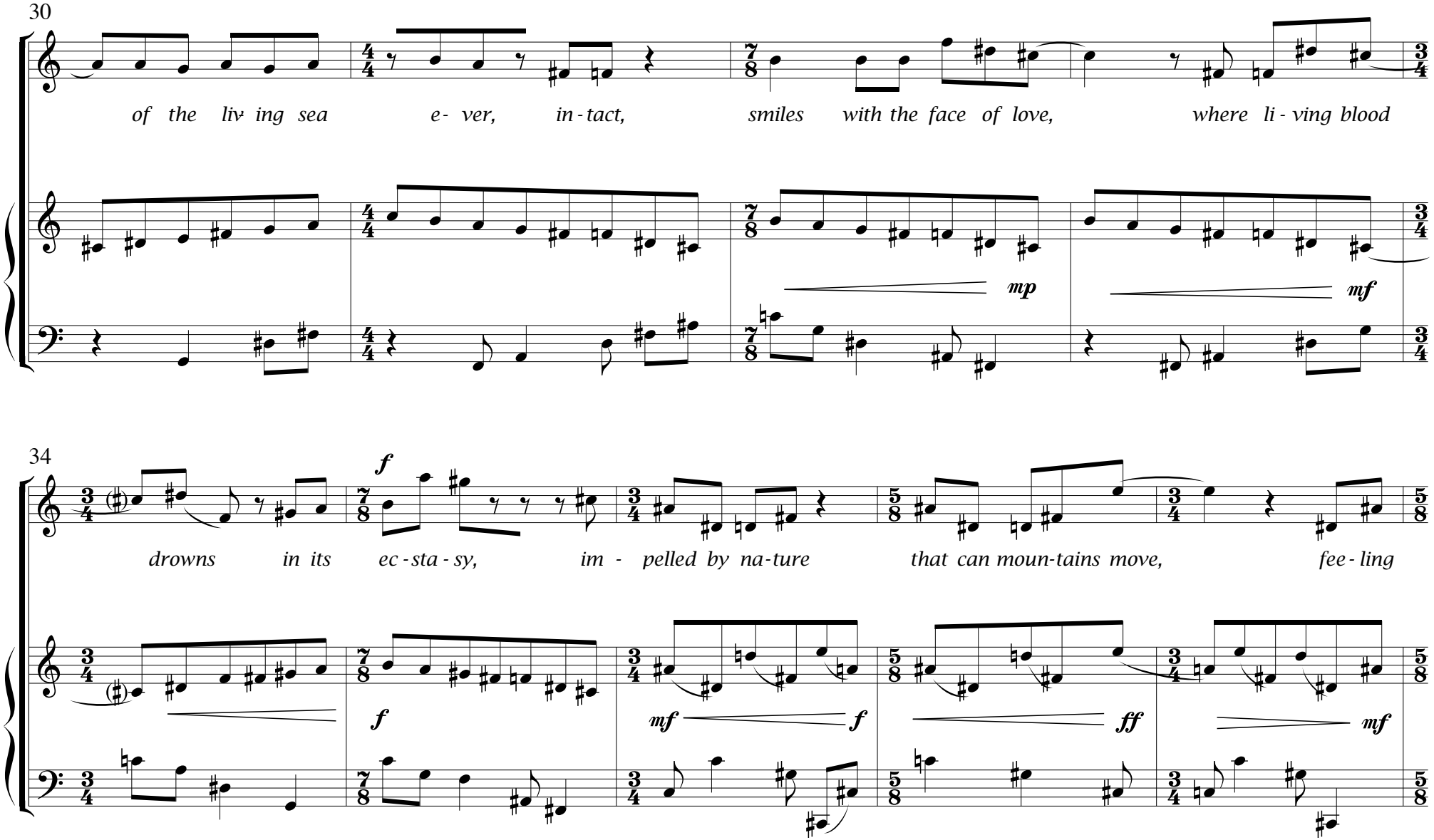
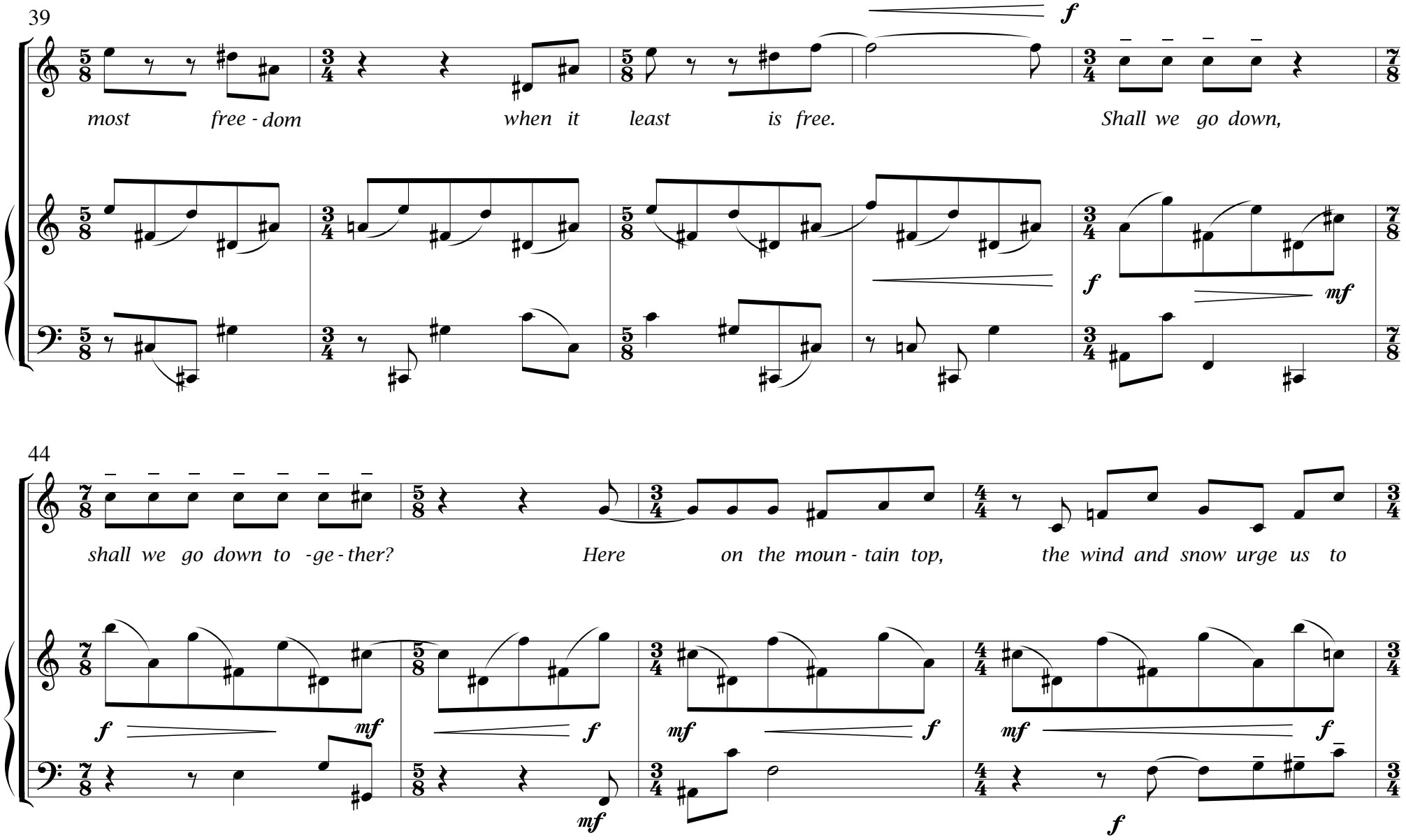
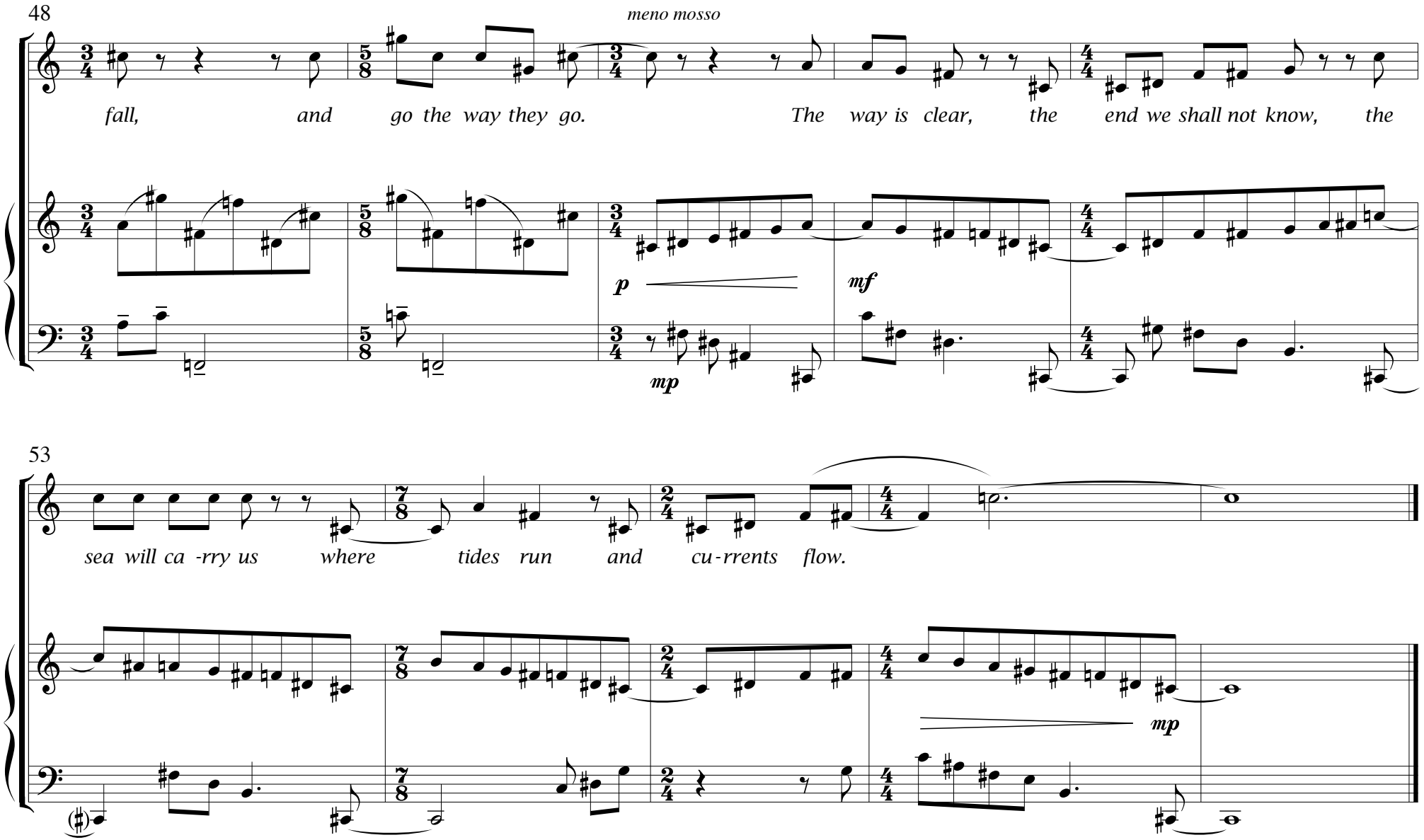

10
lo-vers from the a-zure, se-pa-rate, and die by that same death that ends us all.
3
mp
15
normale piu mosso
Fall-ing ten mill-ion years, we fling our-selves a-gain in-to the in-vi-ting arms of time; our
p
mf
mp
p
mp
p

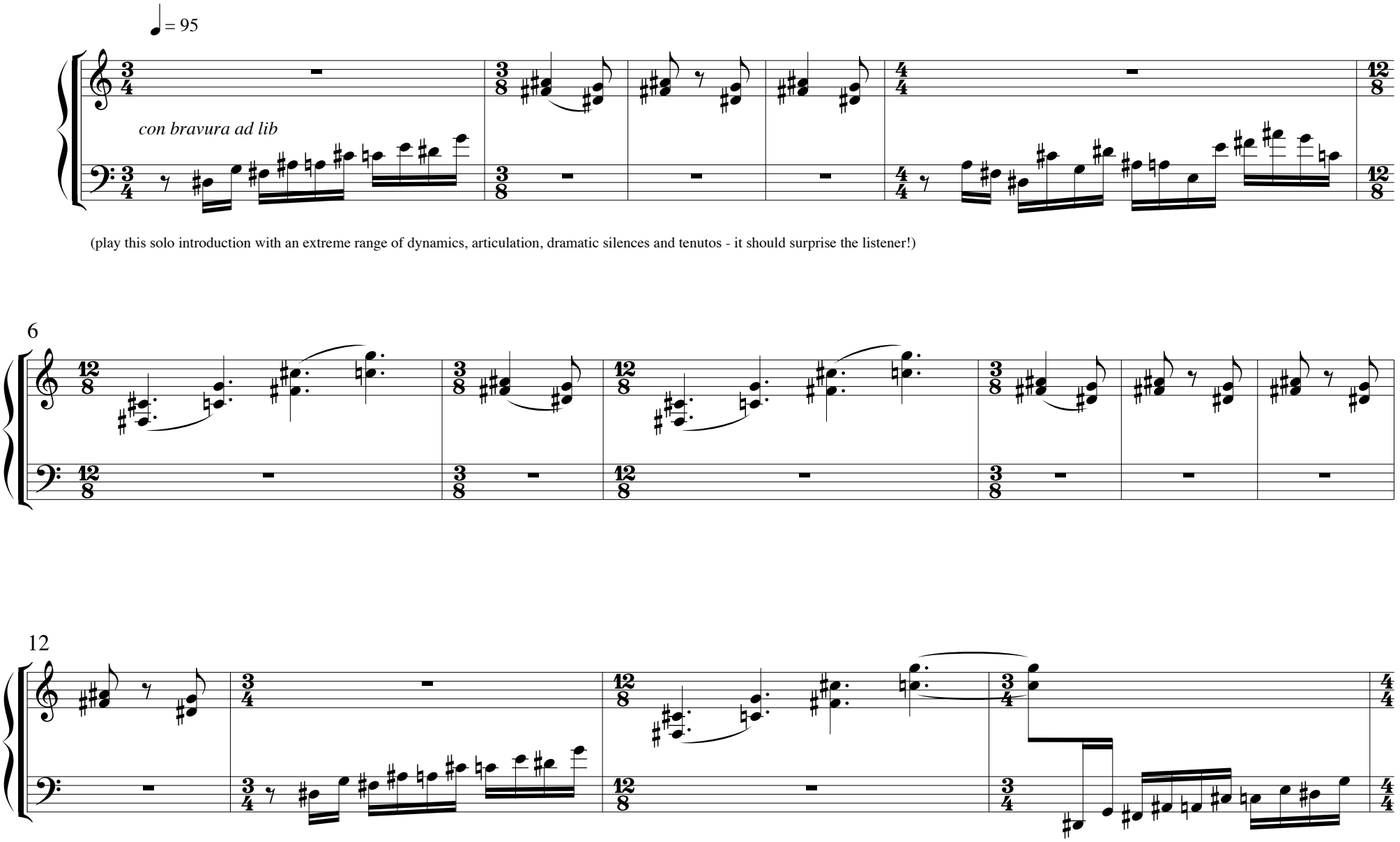

20
nup- tial flight must end a - gain in death that serves for free- dom time and time a -
25
gain while the hard la -bou-ring my - stic holds his breath.
poco piu mosso
The watch- ing sur -face
3
mp
p
mp


30
of the liv- ing sea e- ver, in - tact, smiles with the face of love, where li - ving blood
mp
mf
34
drowns in its ec - sta - sy, im - pelled by na - ture that can moun-tains move, fee - ling
f
f
mf
f
ff
mf

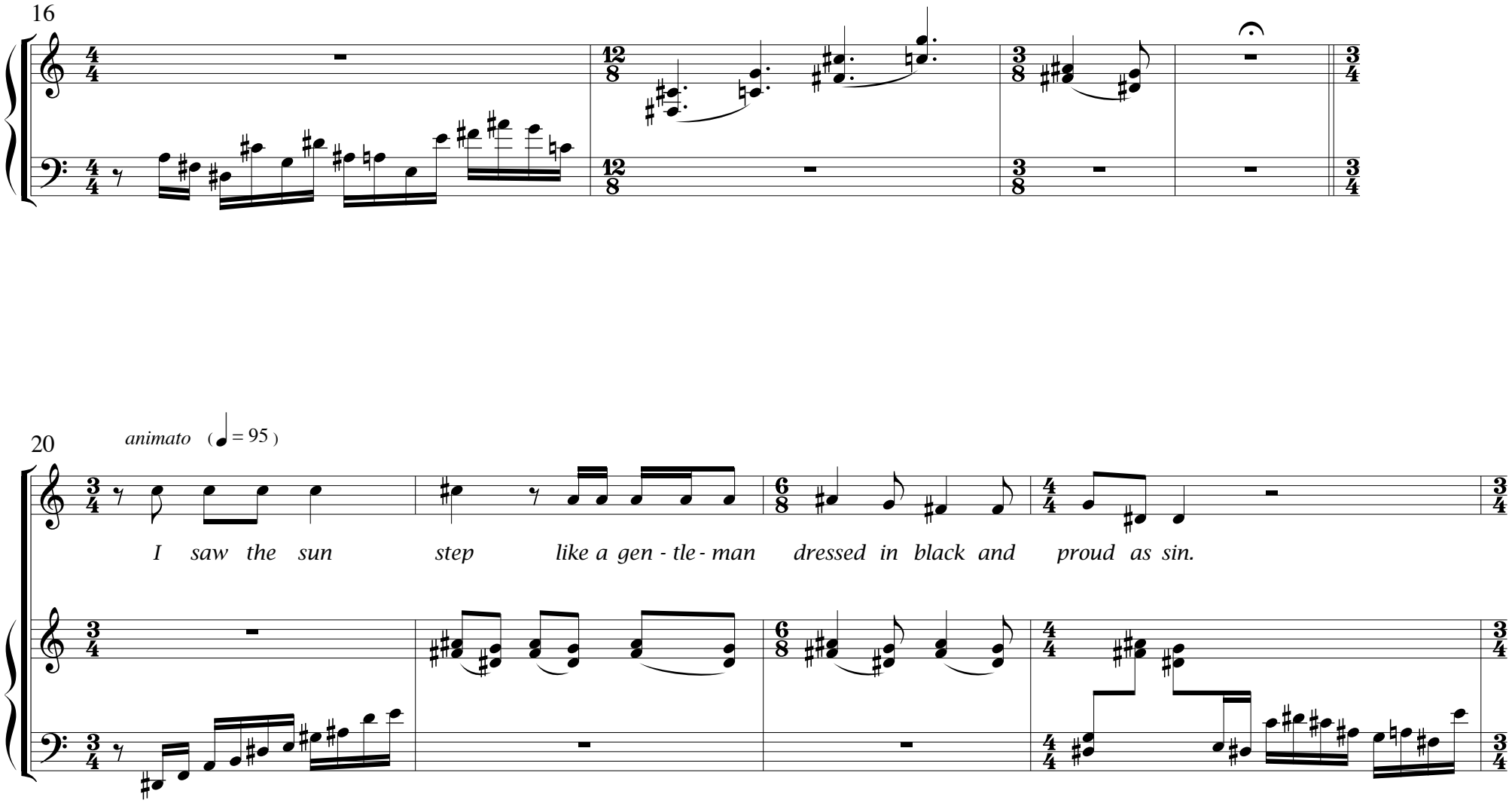

39
most free - dom when it least is free. Shall we go down,
44
shall we go down to -ge - ther? Here on the moun - tain top, the wind and snow urge us to

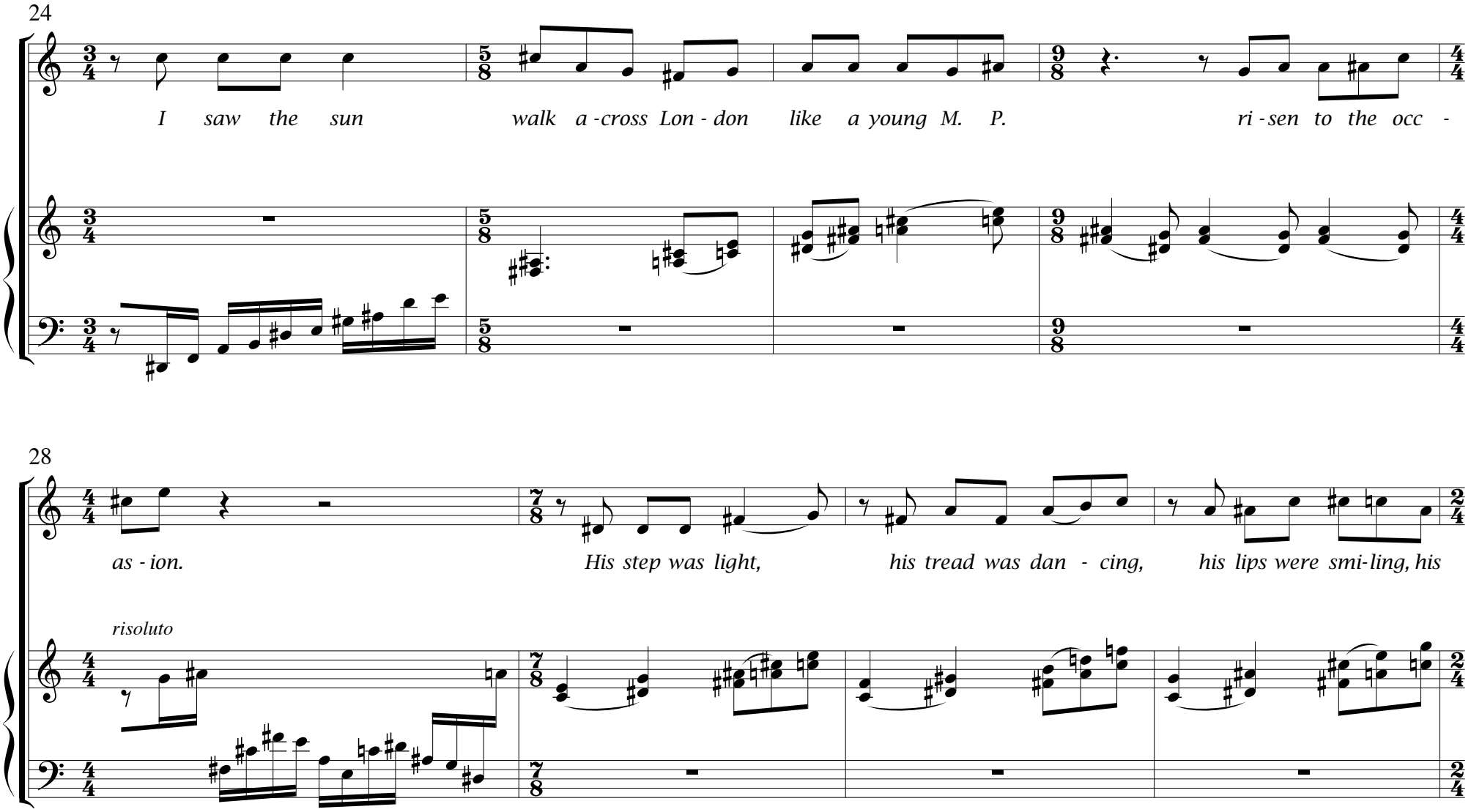

48
meno mosso
fall, and go the way they go. The way is clear, the end we shall not know, the
p
mf
mp
53
sea will ca -rry us where tides run and cu-rrents flow.
mp

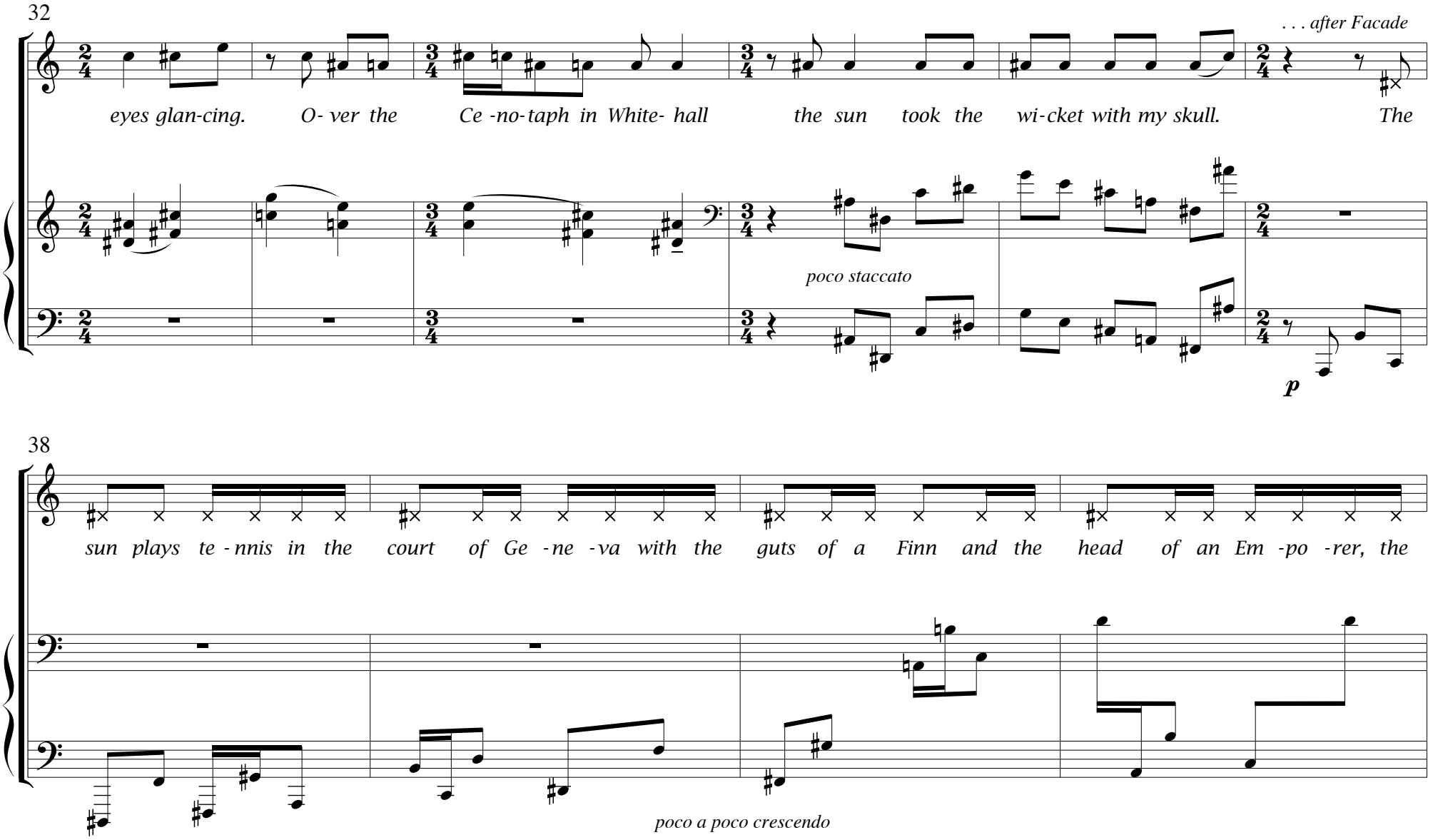
Far-darting Apollo

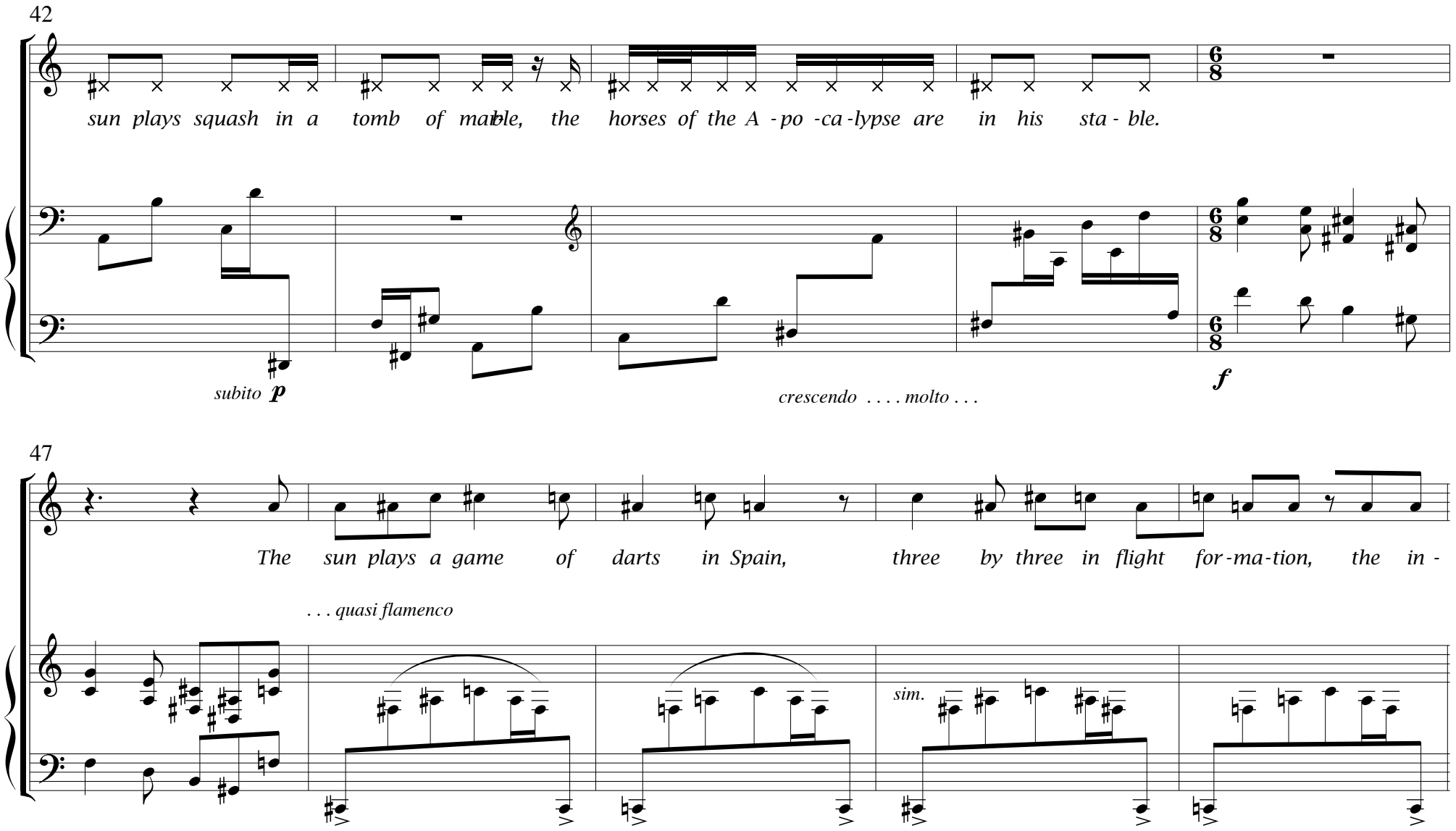


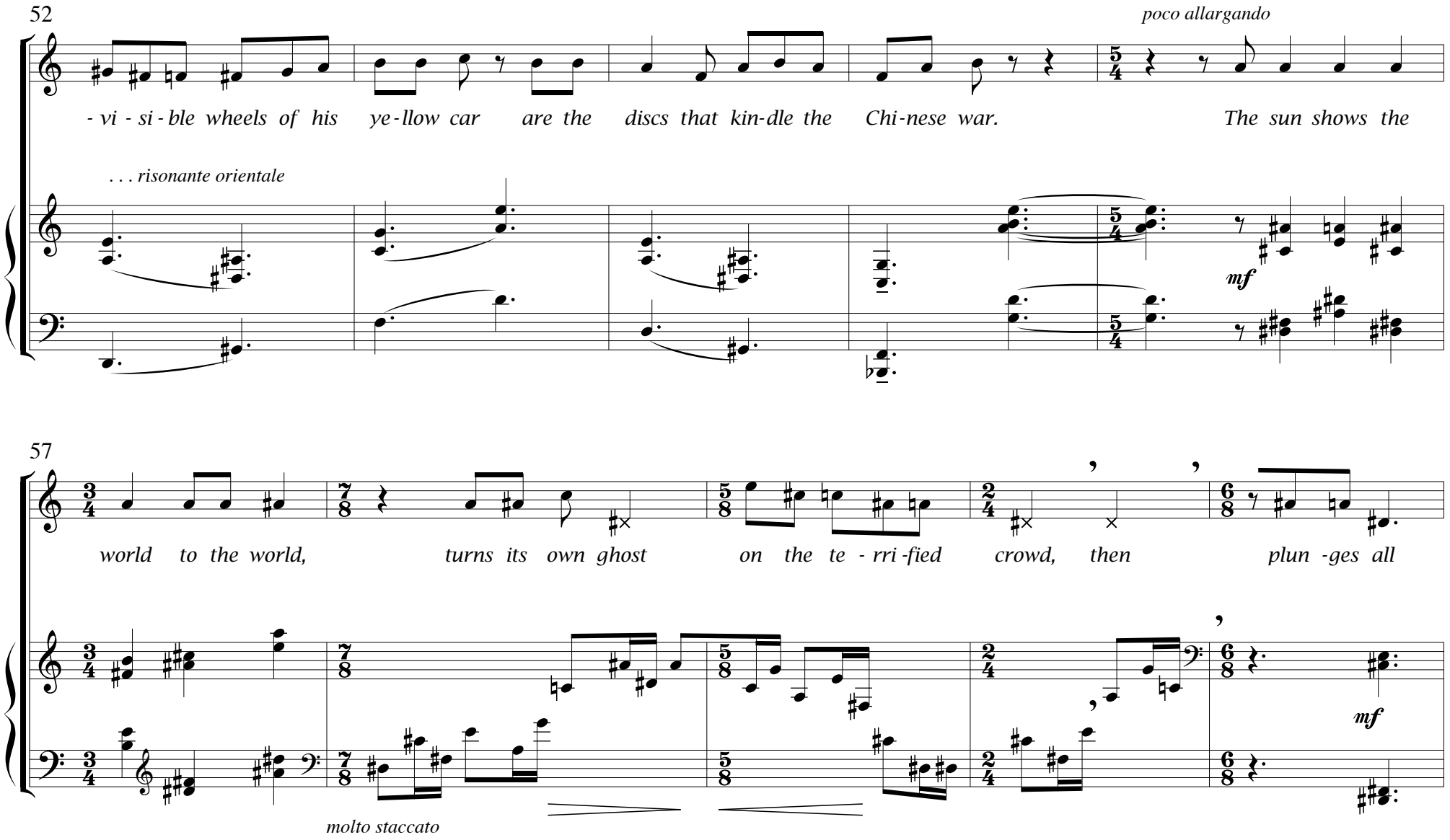
(play this solo introduction with an extreme range of dynamics, articulation, dramatic silences and tenutos - it should surprise the listener!)

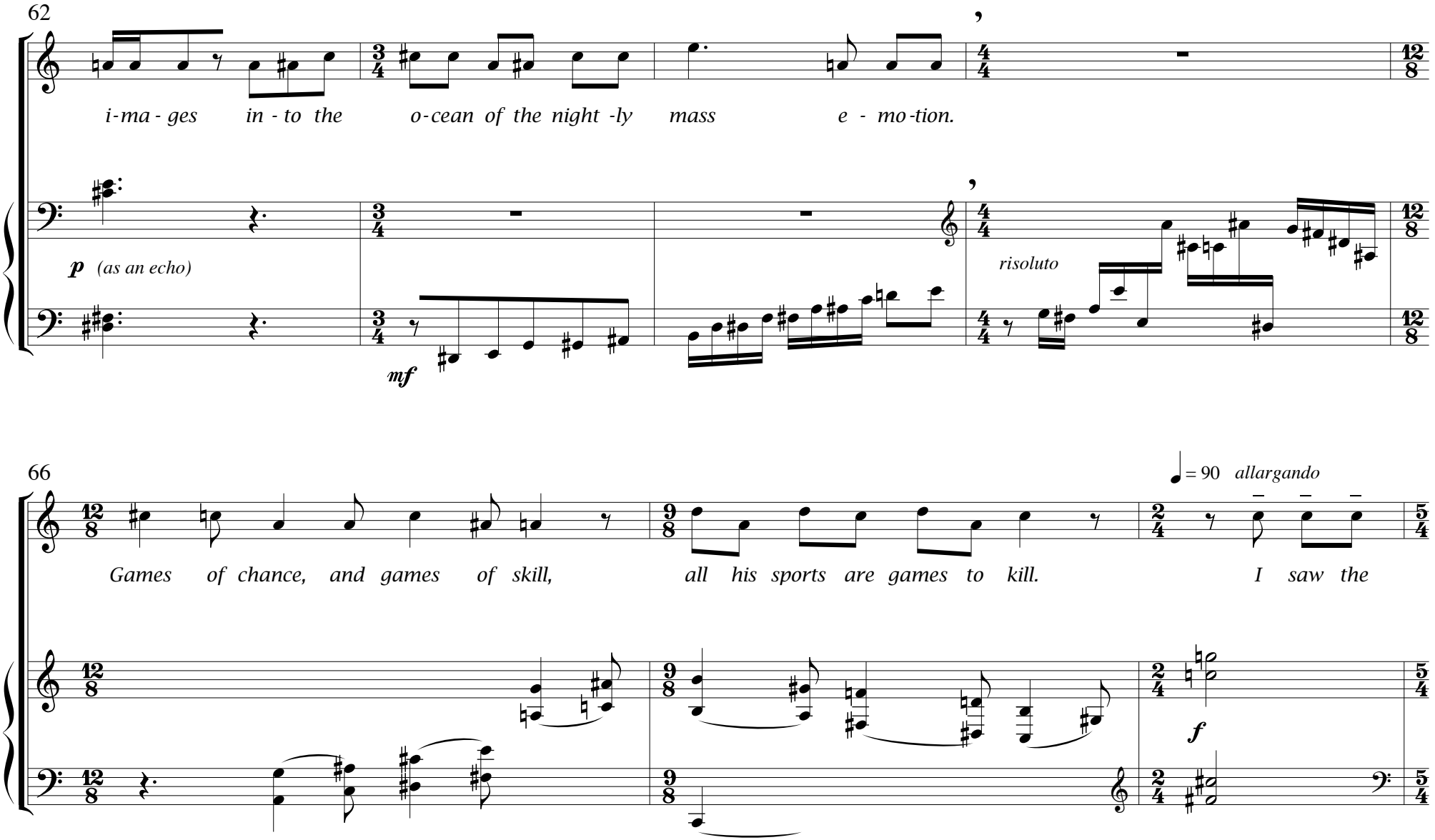

16
20
animato
(= 95)
I saw the sun step like a gen - tle - man dressed in black and proud as sin.

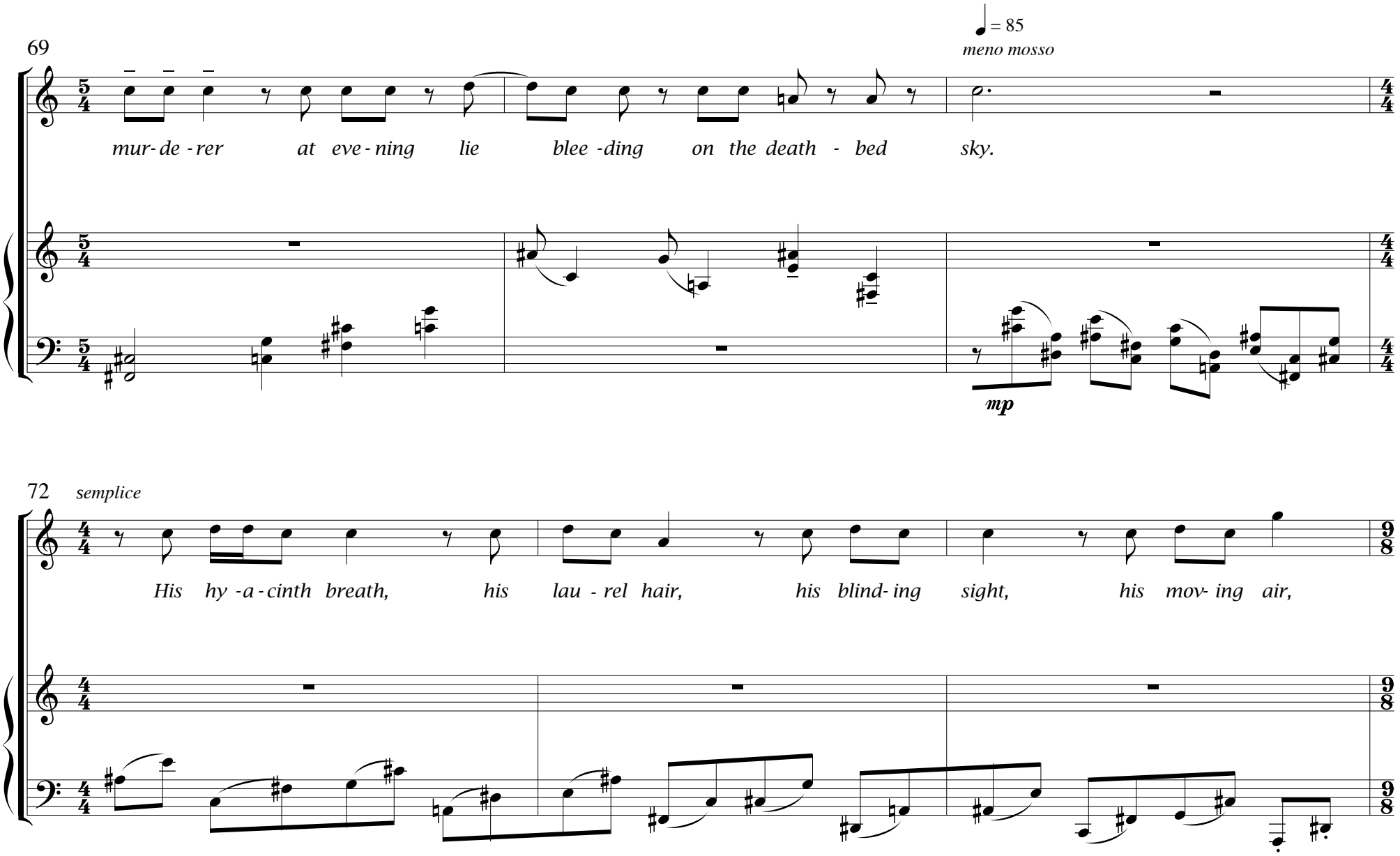

24
I saw the sun walk a-cross Lon-don like a young M. P. ri-sen to the occ-
28
as-ion. His step was light, his tread was dan-cing, his lips were smi-ling, his
risoluto

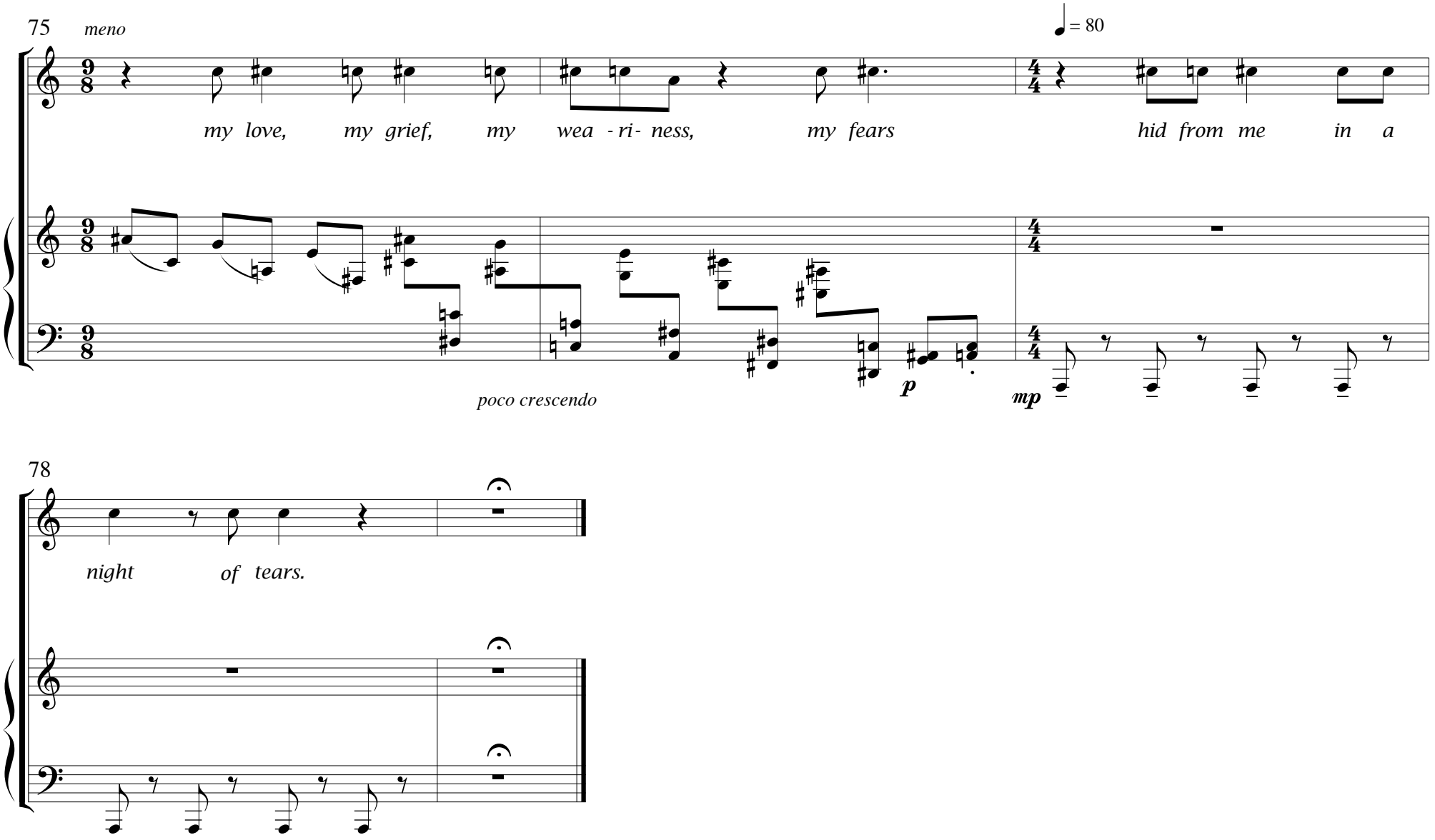

32
. . . after Facade
eyes glan-cing. O- ver the Ce -no-taph in White- hall the sun took the wi-cket with my skull. The
poco staccato
p
38
sun plays te - nnis in the court of Ge -ne -va with the guts of a Finn and the head of an Em -po -rer, the
poco a poco crescendo


42
sun plays squash in a tomb of marble, the horses of the A - po - ca - lypse are in his sta - ble.
subito p
crescendo . . . . molto . . .
f
47
The sun plays a game of darts in Spain, three by three in flight for - ma - tion, the in -
. . . quasi flamenco
sim.

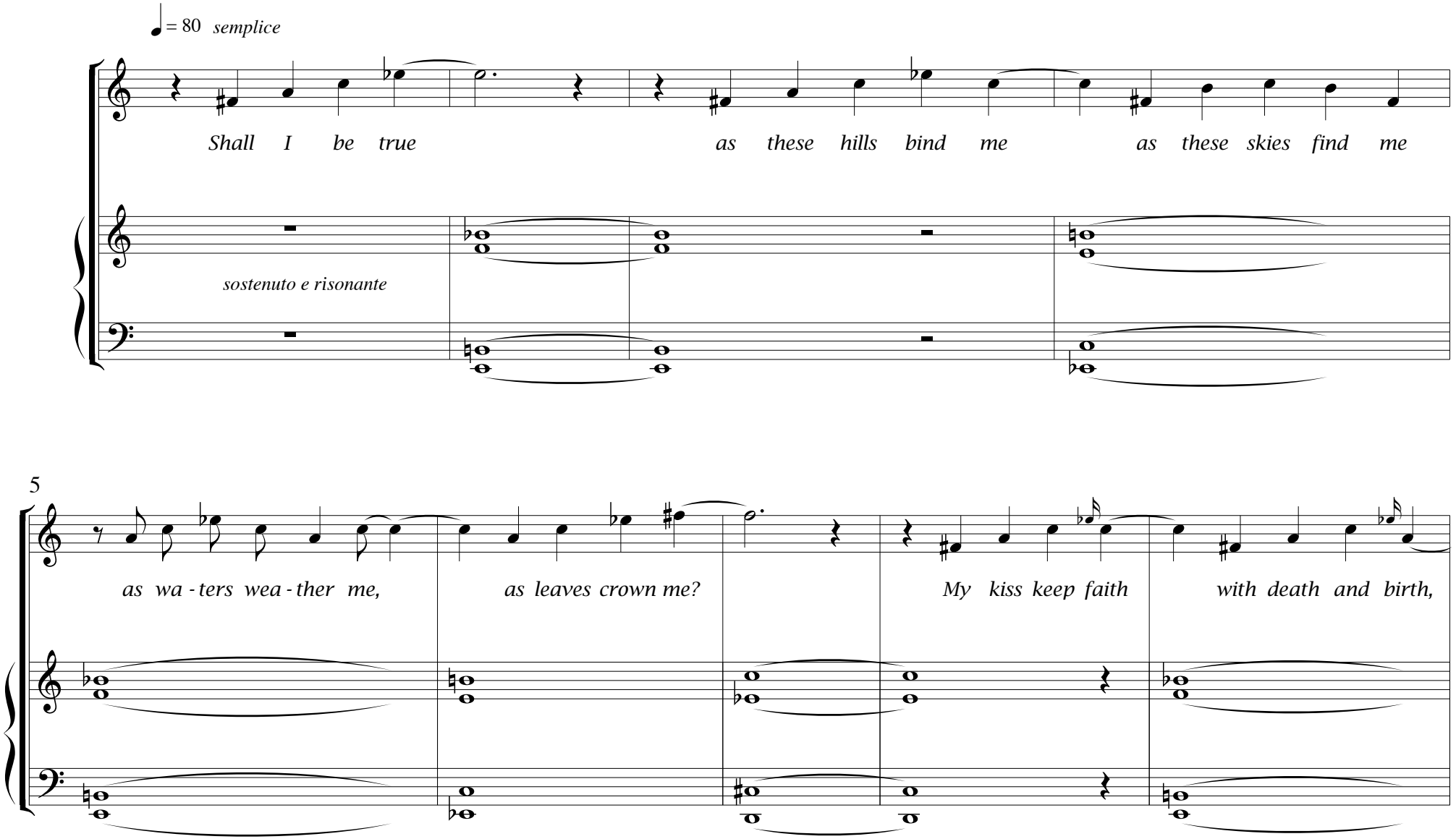

52
poco allargando
- vi - si - ble wheels of his ye - llow car are the discs that kin-dle the Chi - nese war. The sun shows the
. . . risonante orientale
mf
57
world to the world, turns its own ghost on the te - rri - fied crowd, then plun - ges all
mf
molto staccato

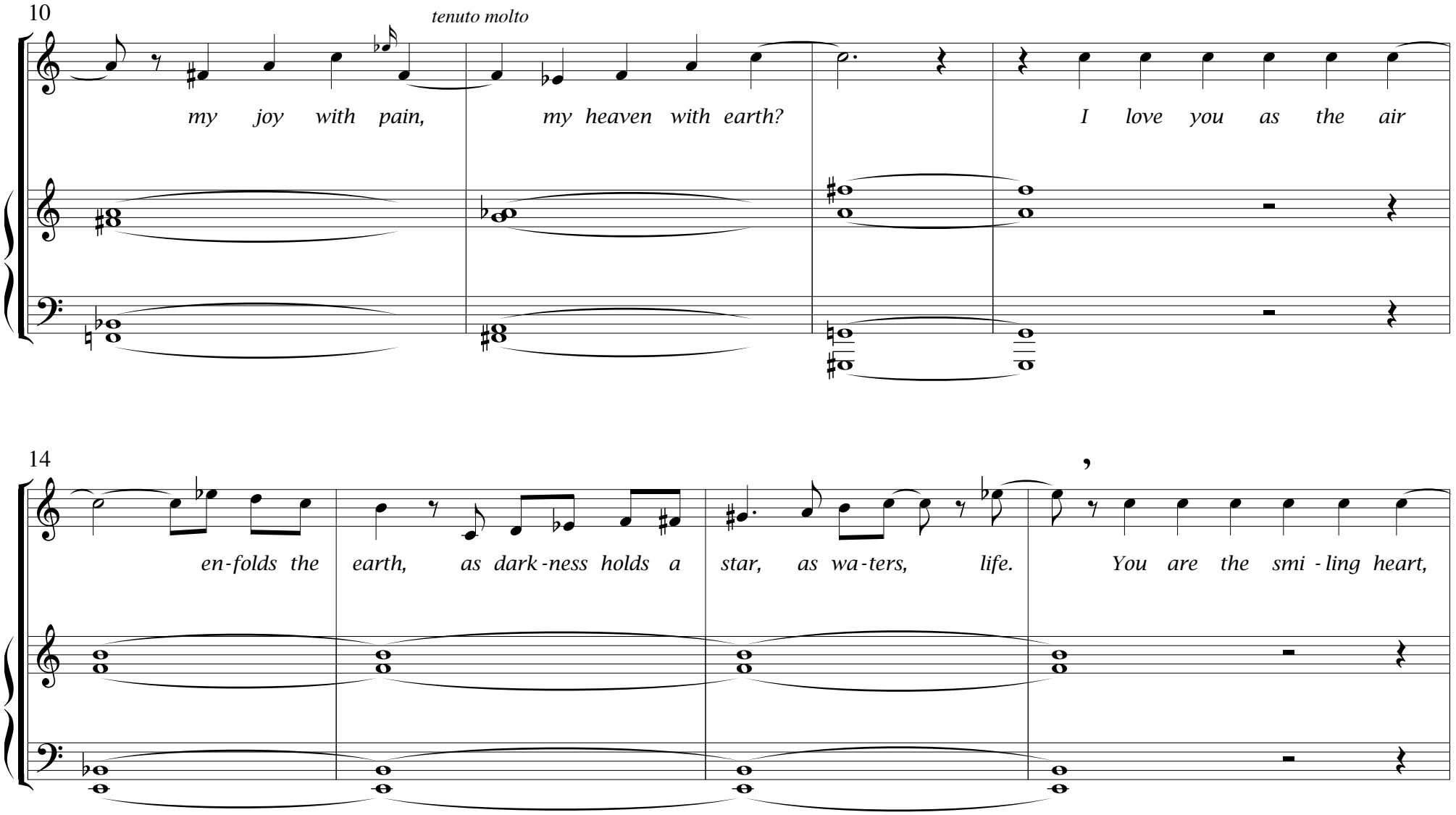

62
i-ma - ges in - to the o-cean of the night -ly mass e - mo-tion.
p (as an echo)
mf
risoluto
66
= 90 allargando
Games of chance, and games of skill, all his sports are games to kill. I saw the
f

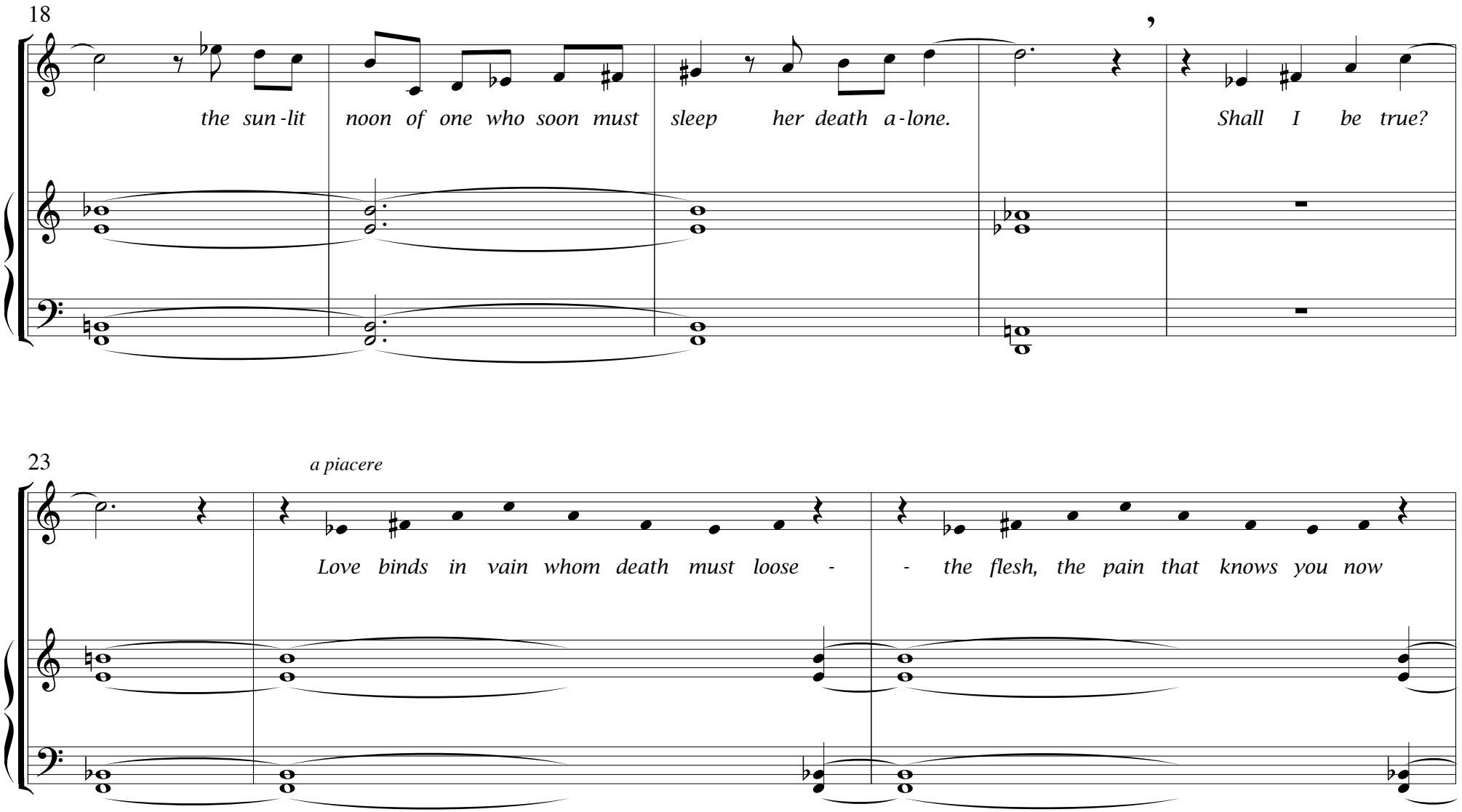

69
♩ = 85
meno mosso
mur- de - rer at eve - ning lie blee -ding on the death - bed sky.
mp
72
semplice
His hy -a - cinth breath, his lau - rel hair, his blind- ing sight, his mov- ing air,

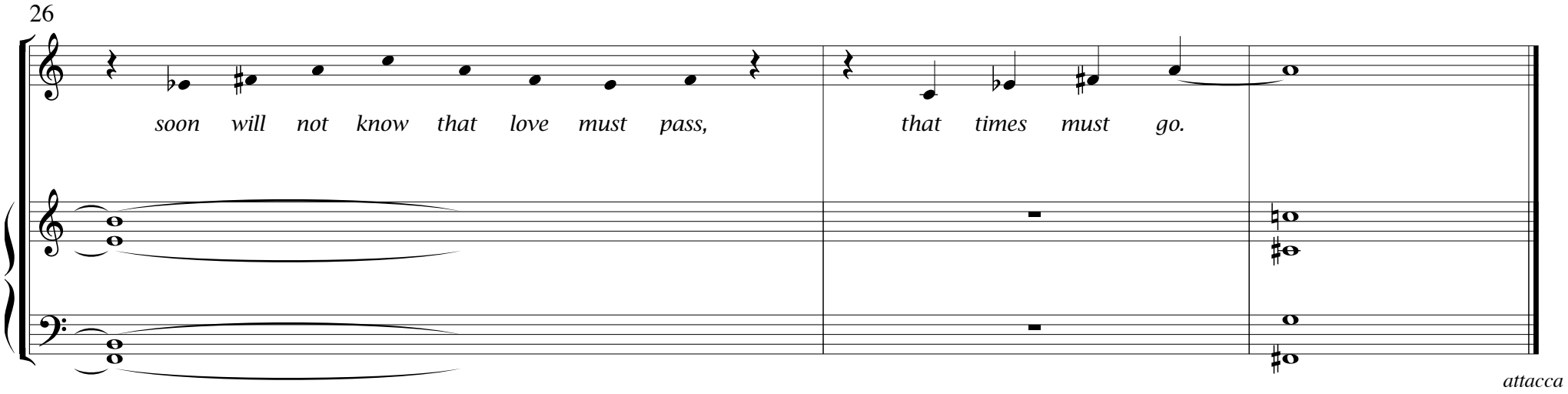

75
meno
♩ = 80
my love, my grief, my wea - ri - ness, my fears hid from me in a
poco crescendo
p
mp
78
night of tears.

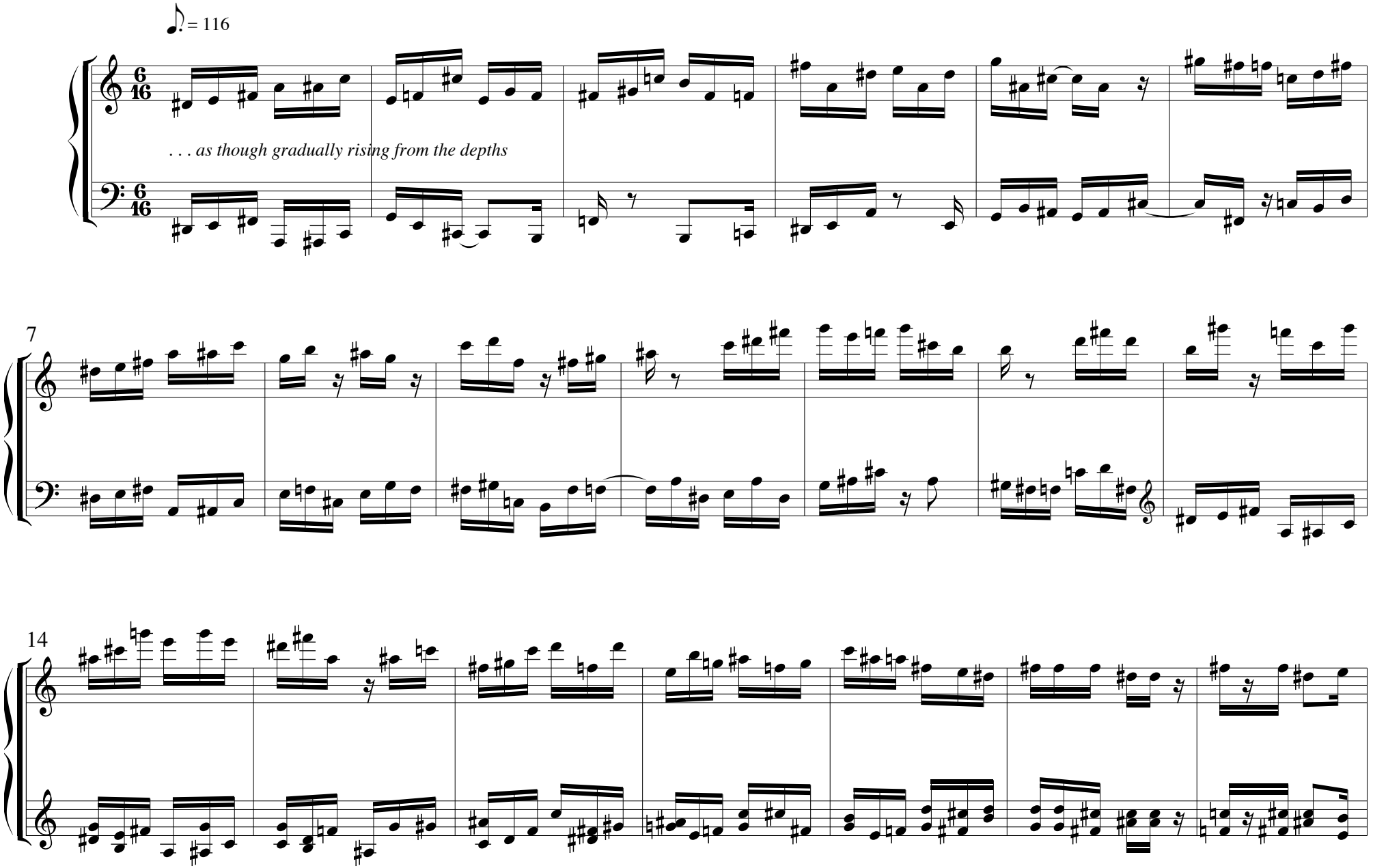
Leaving Martindale

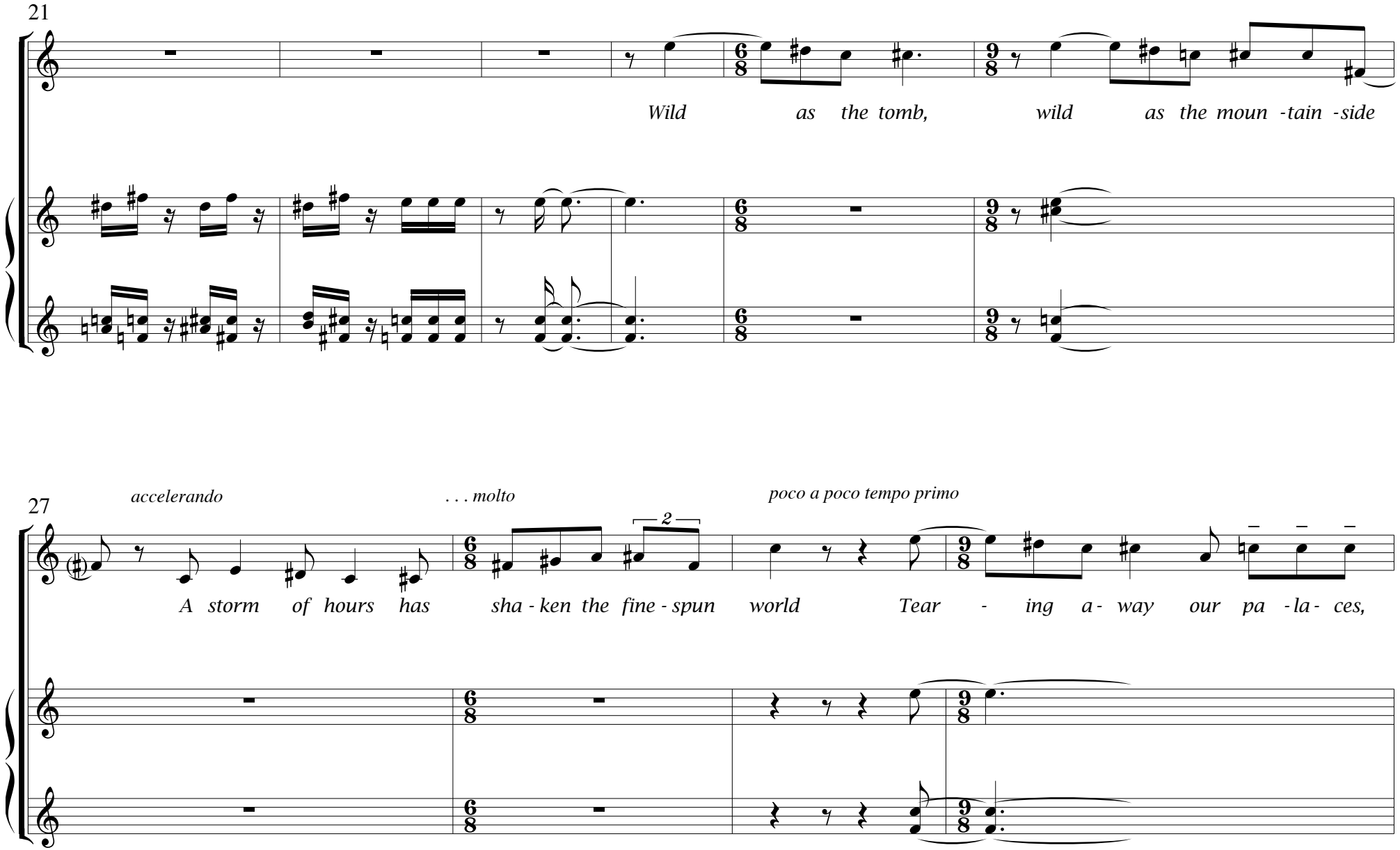


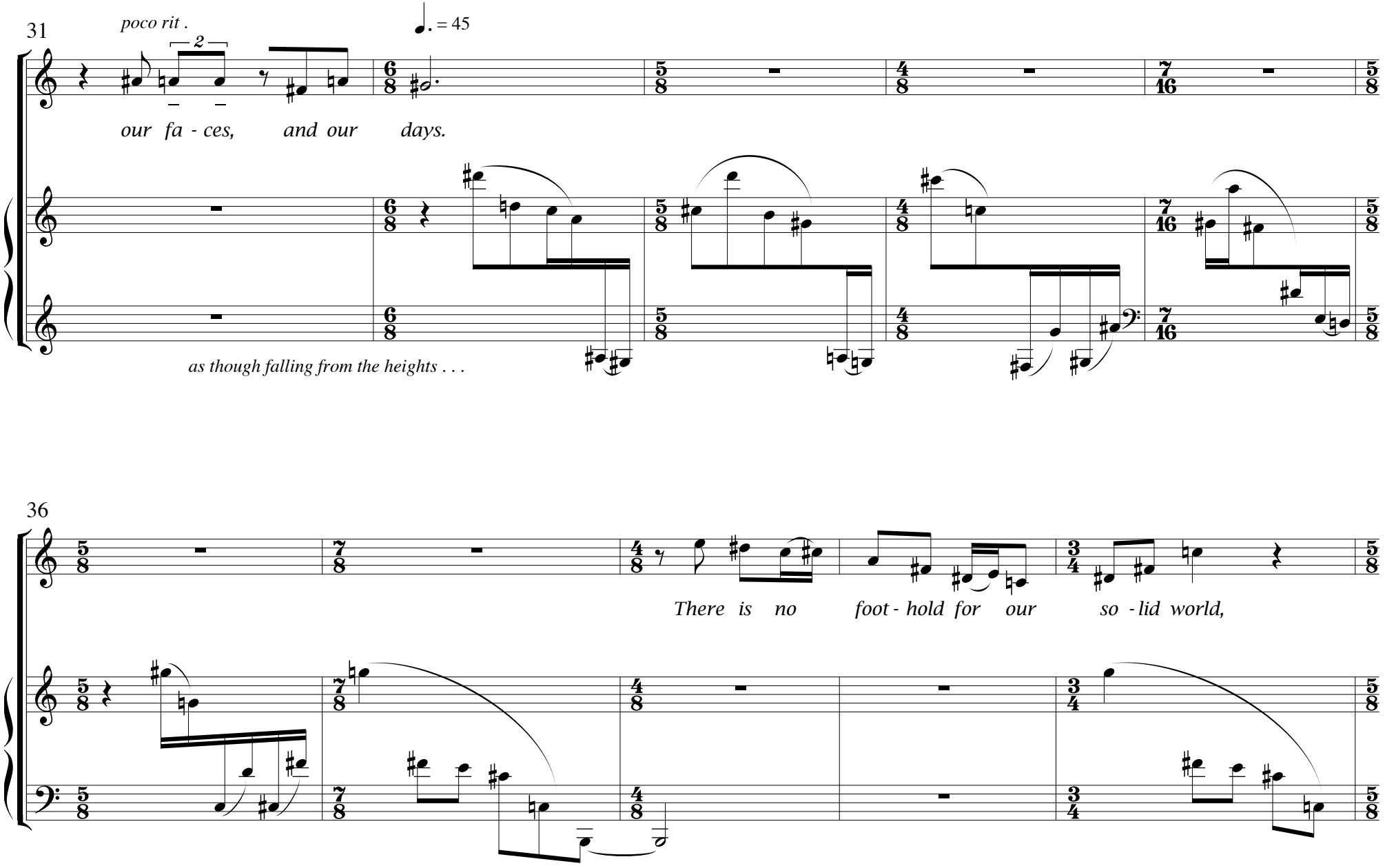

10
tenuto molto
my joy with pain, my heaven with earth? I love you as the air
14
en-folds the earth, as dark-ness holds a star, as wa-ters, life. You are the smi-ling heart,

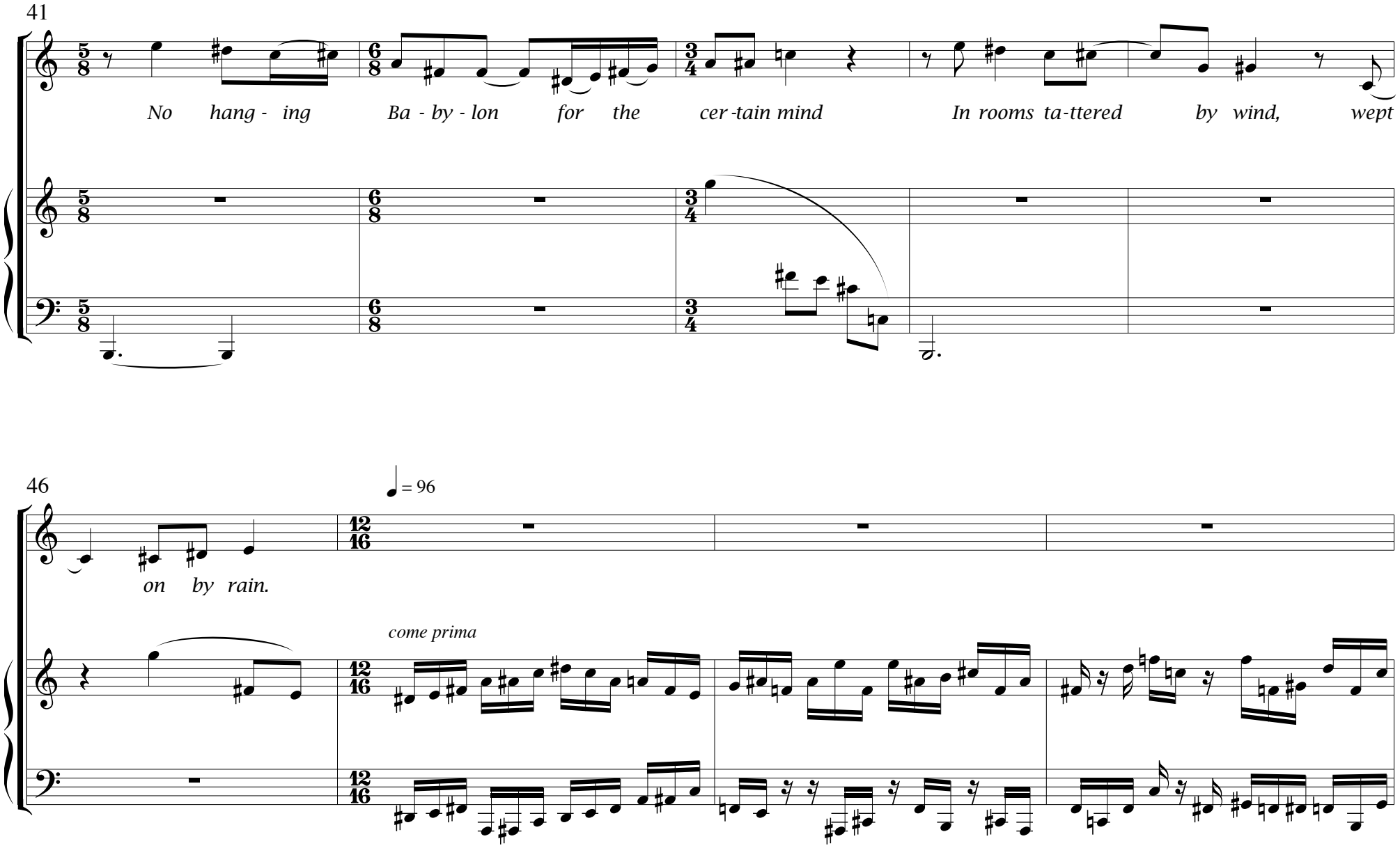

18
the sun-lit noon of one who soon must sleep her death a-lone.
Shall I be true?
23
a piacere
Love binds in vain whom death must loose - - the flesh, the pain that knows you now

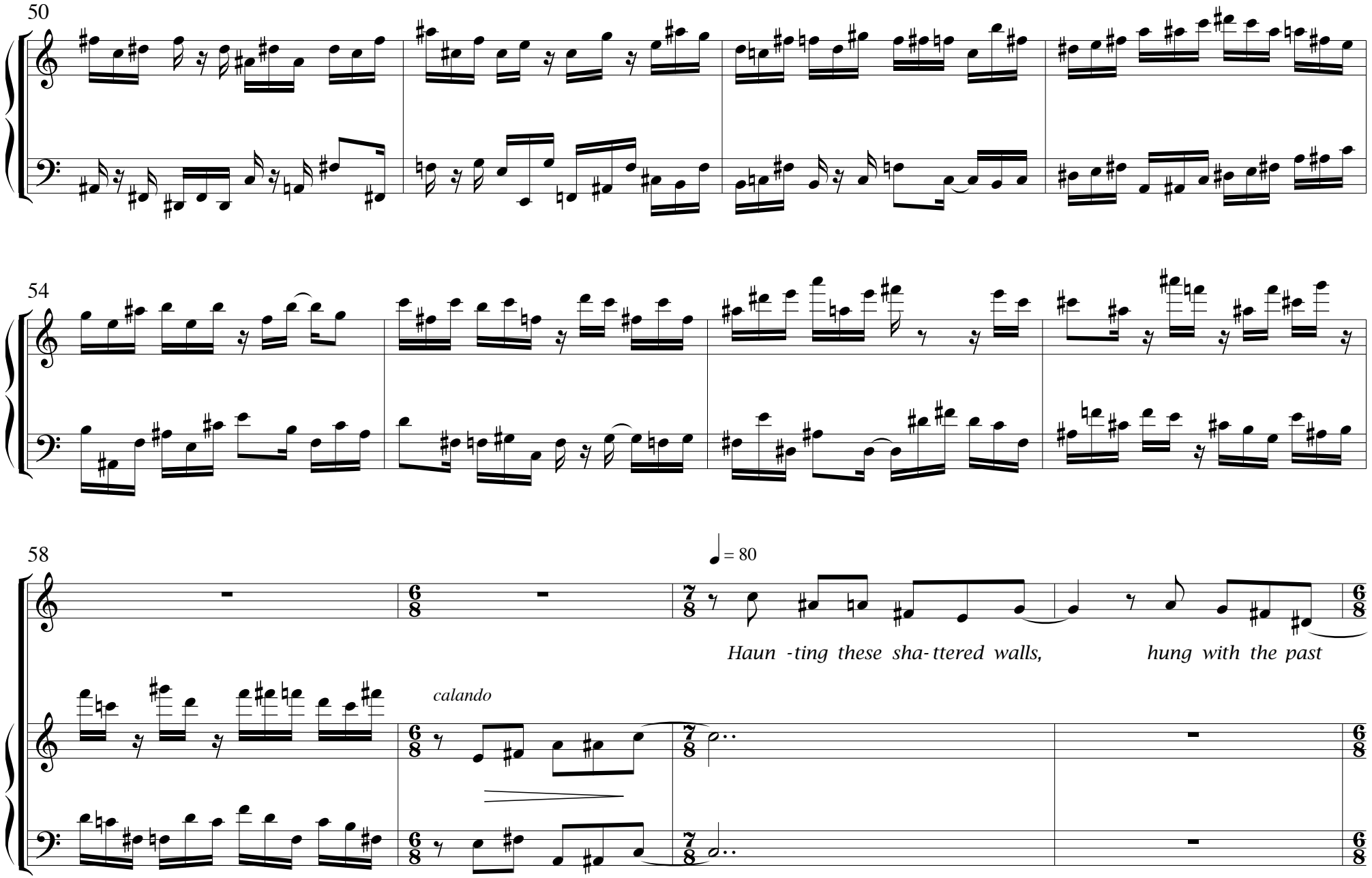

26
soon will not know that love must pass,
that times must go.
attacca

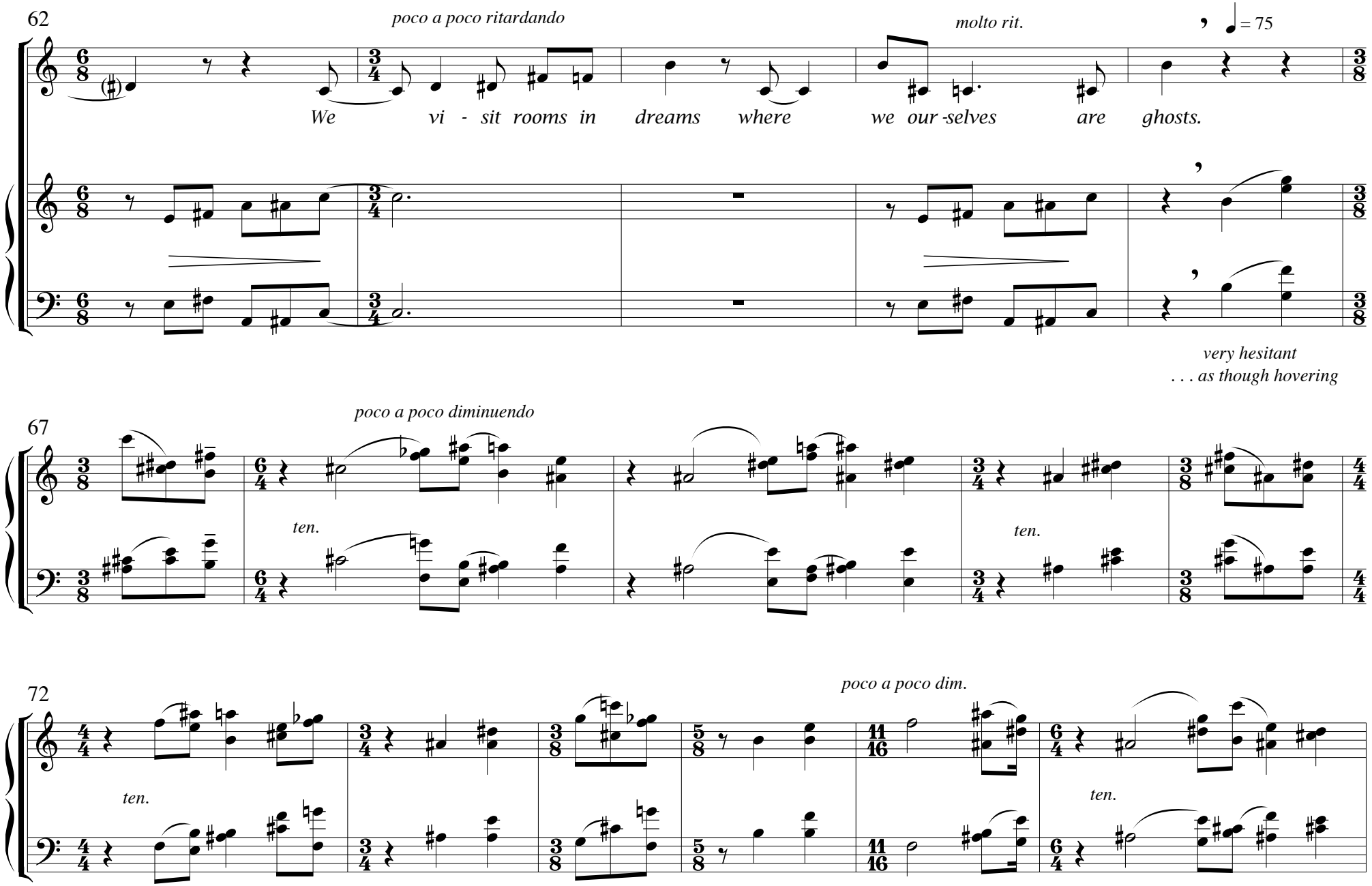

♪. = 116
6/16
. . . as though gradually rising from the depths
7
14

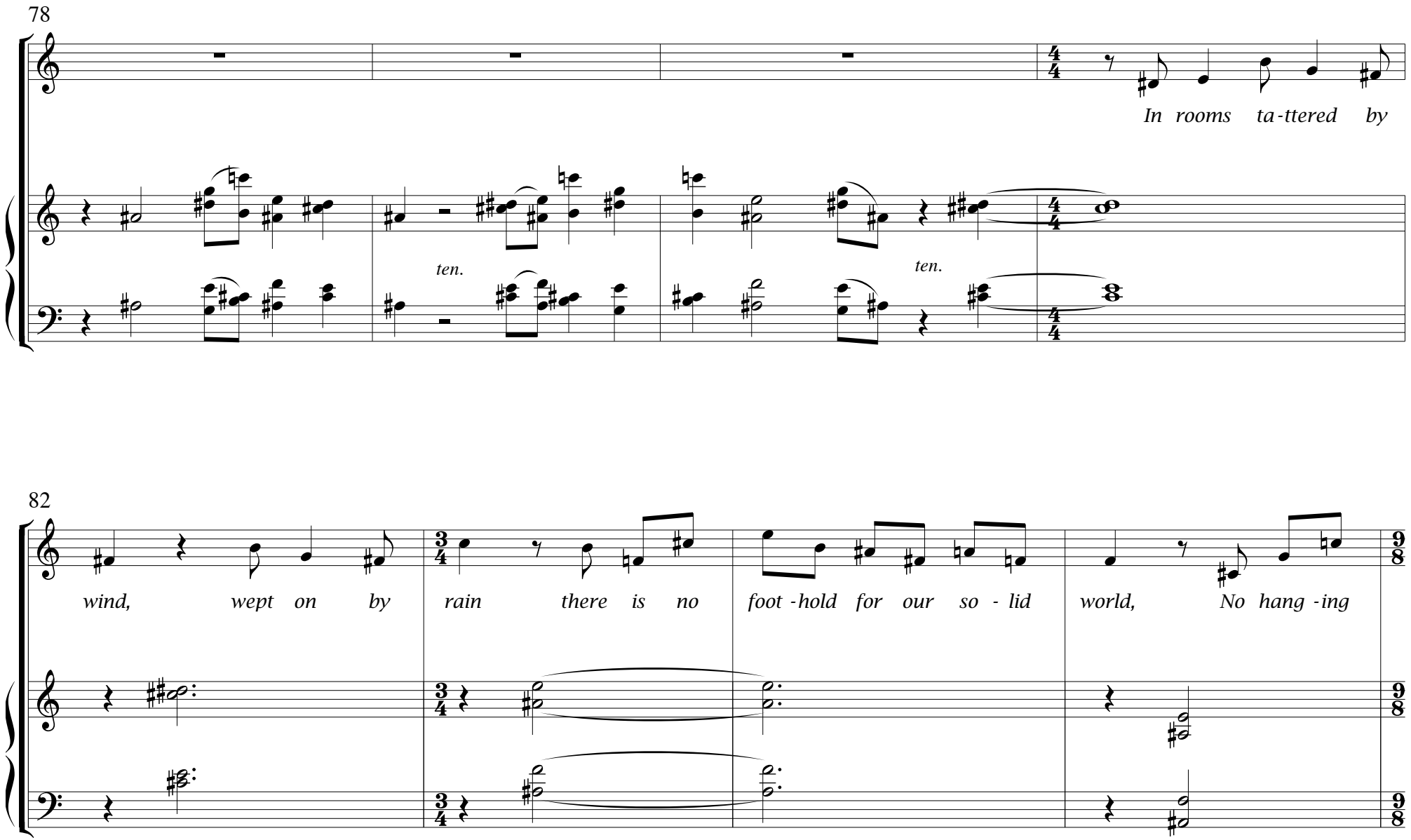

21
Wild as the tomb, wild as the moun - tain - side
27
accelerando
. . . molto
poco a poco tempo primo
2
A storm of hours has sha - ken the fine - spun world Tear - ing a - way our pa - la - ces,

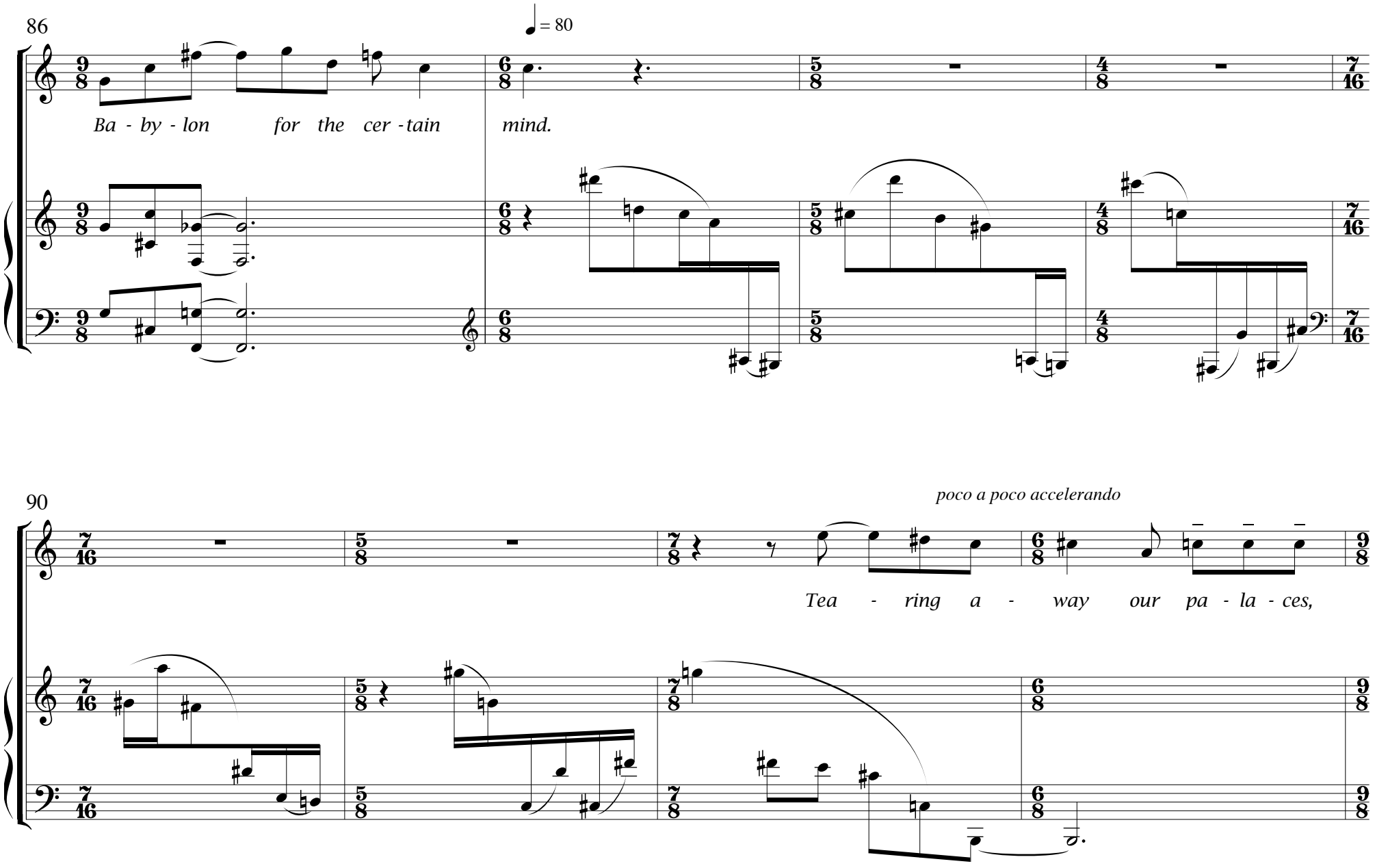

31
poco rit .
2
♩. = 45
our fa - ces, and our days.
as though falling from the heights . . .
36
There is no foot - hold for our so - lid world,

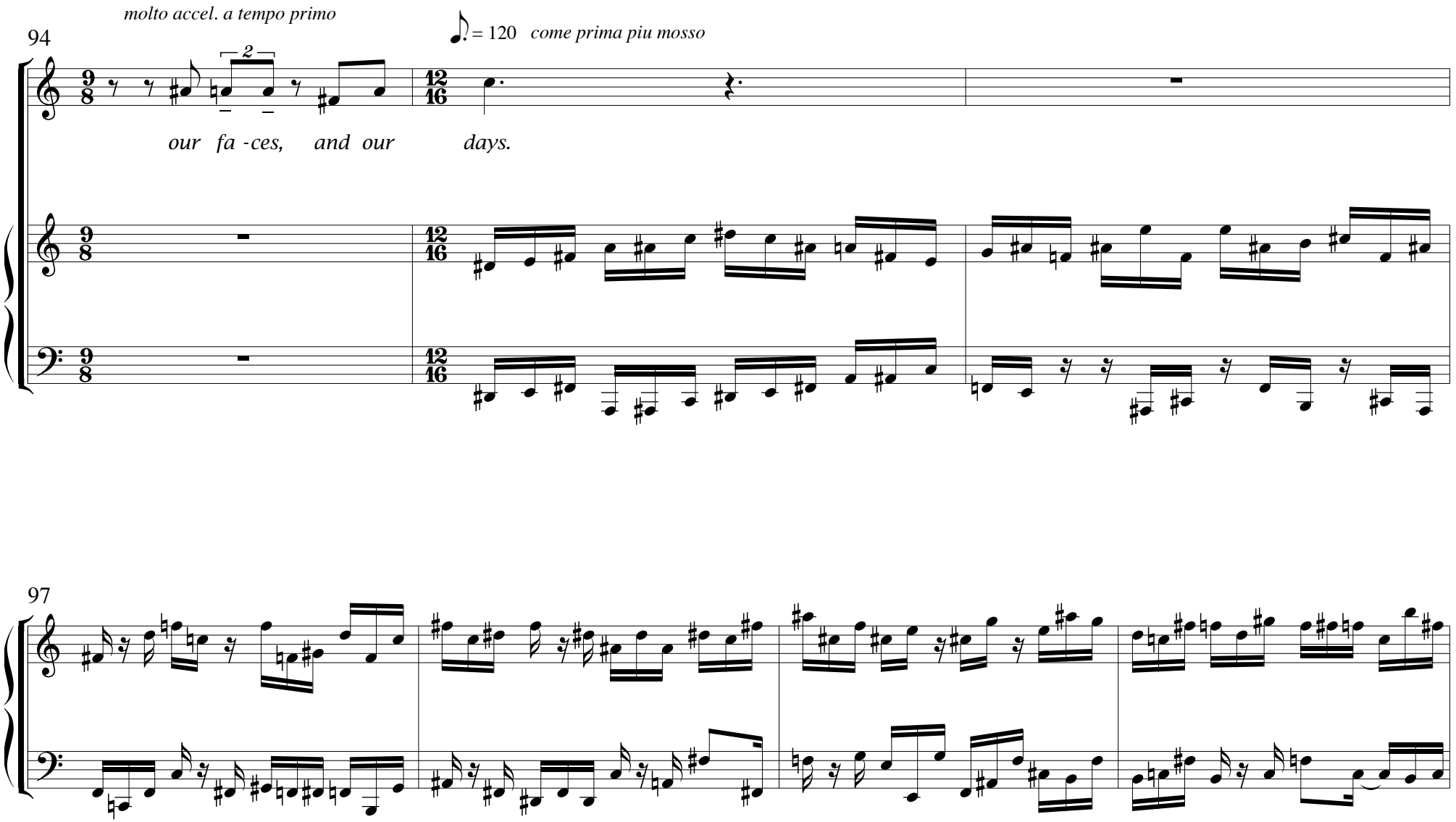

41
No hang - ing Ba - by - lon for the cer-tain mind In rooms ta-ttered by wind, wept
46
= 96
on by rain.
come prima

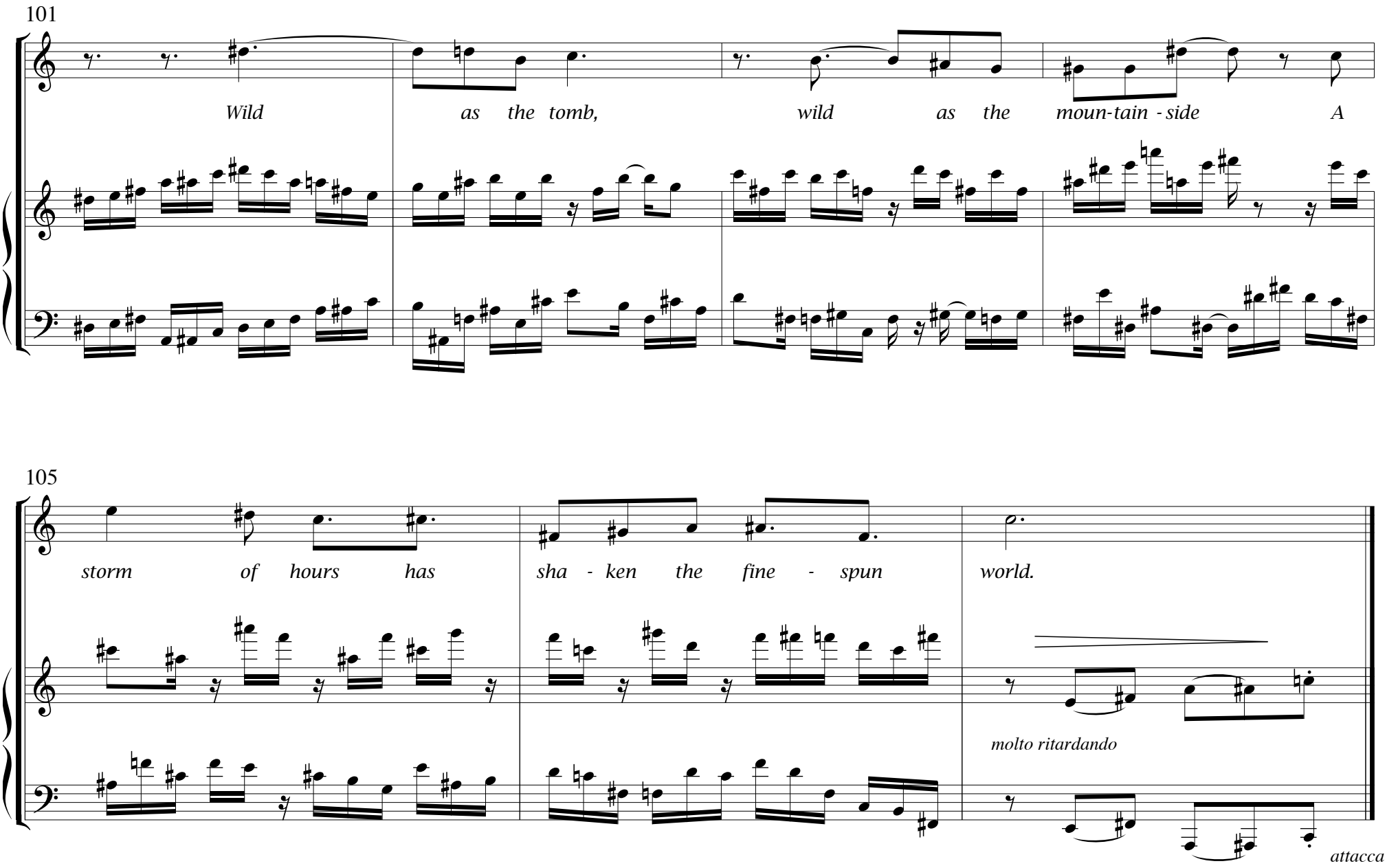

50
54
58
♩ = 80
Haun -ting these sha- ttered walls, hung with the past
calando

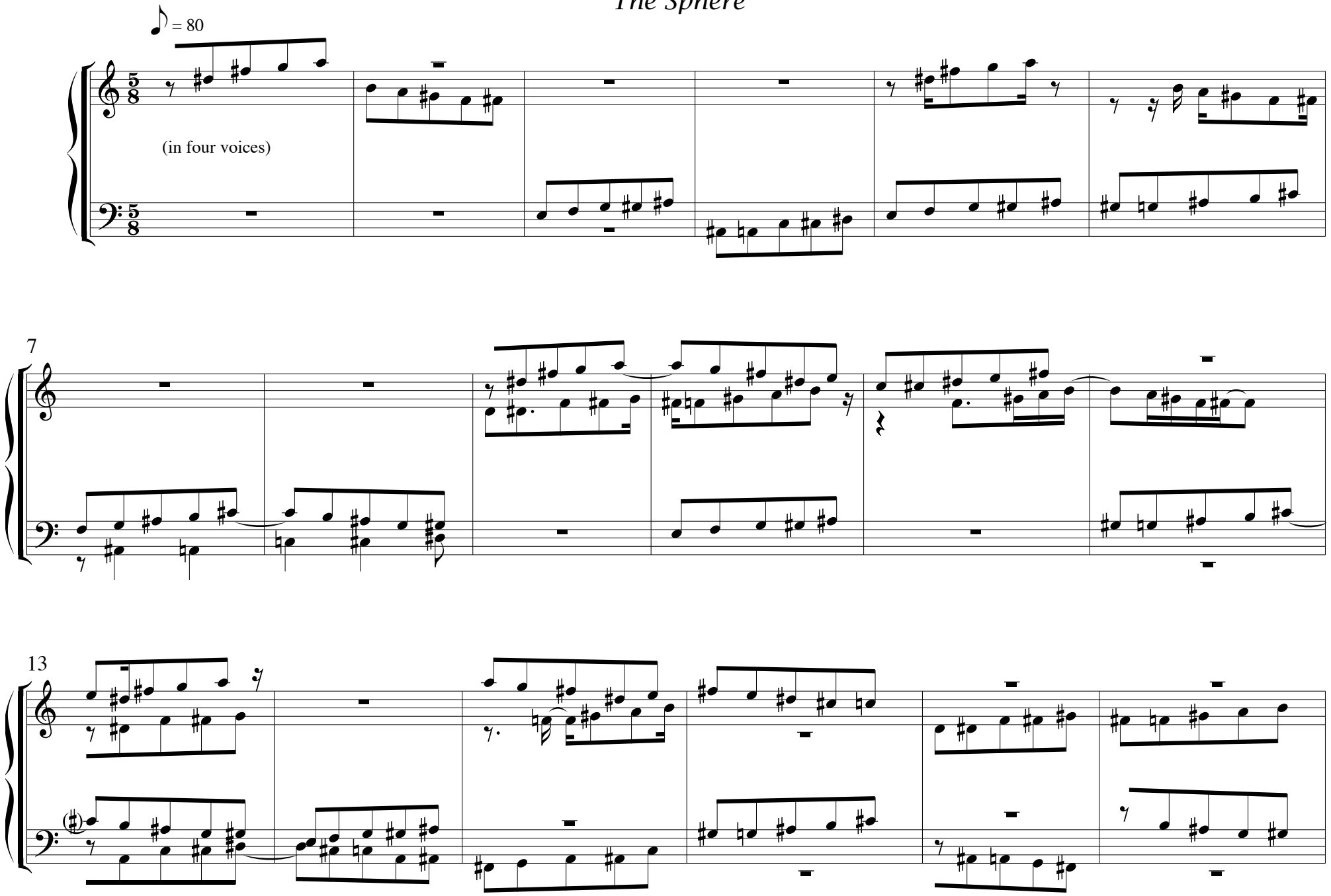

62
poco a poco ritardando
molto rit.
♩ = 75
We vi - sit rooms in dreams where we our-selves are ghosts.
very hesitant
. . . as though hovering
67
poco a poco diminuendo
ten.
ten.
72
poco a poco dim.
ten.
ten.

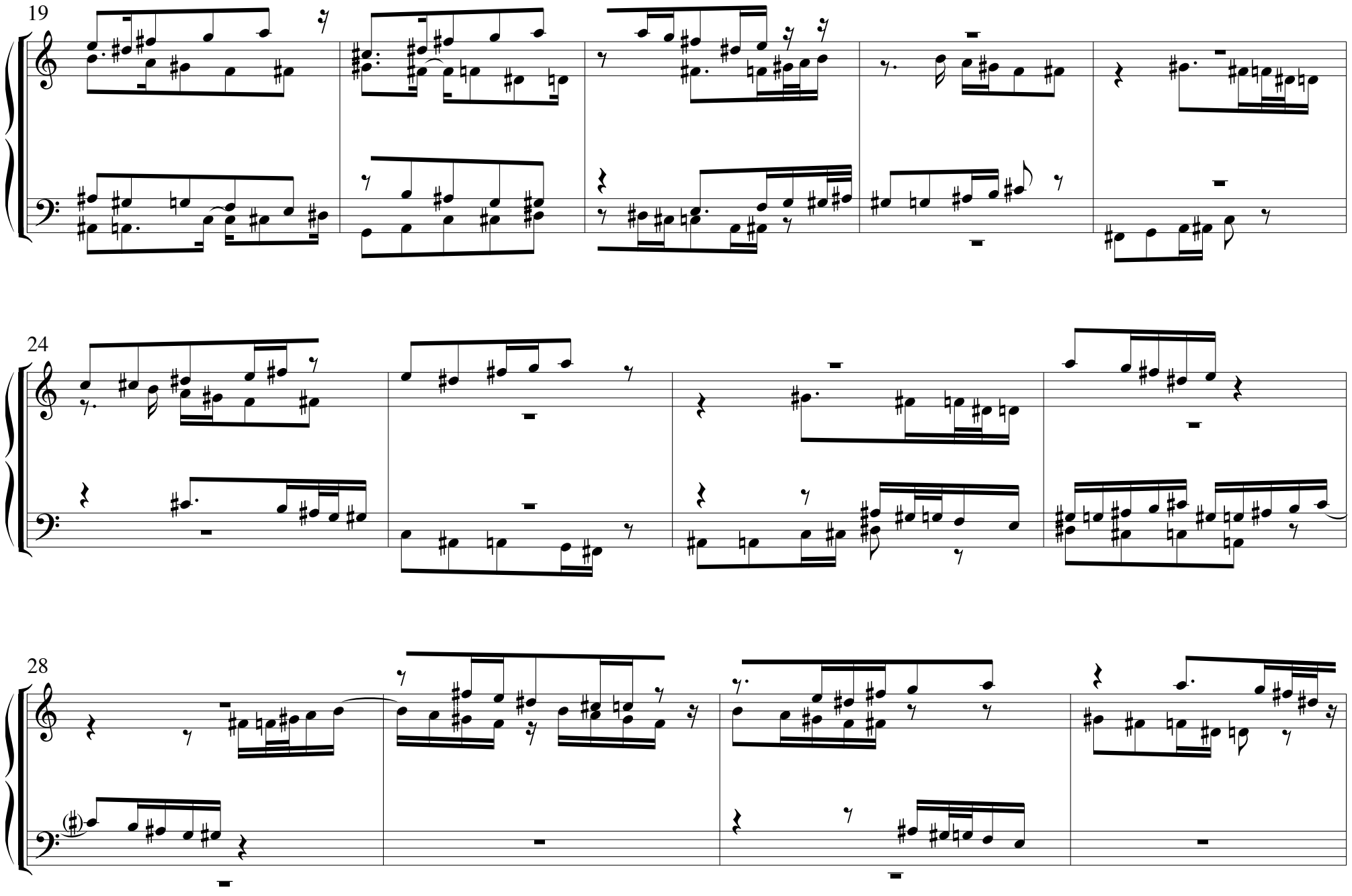

78
In rooms ta-ttered by
ten.
ten.
82
wind, wept on by rain there is no foot-hold for our so-lid world, No hang-ing

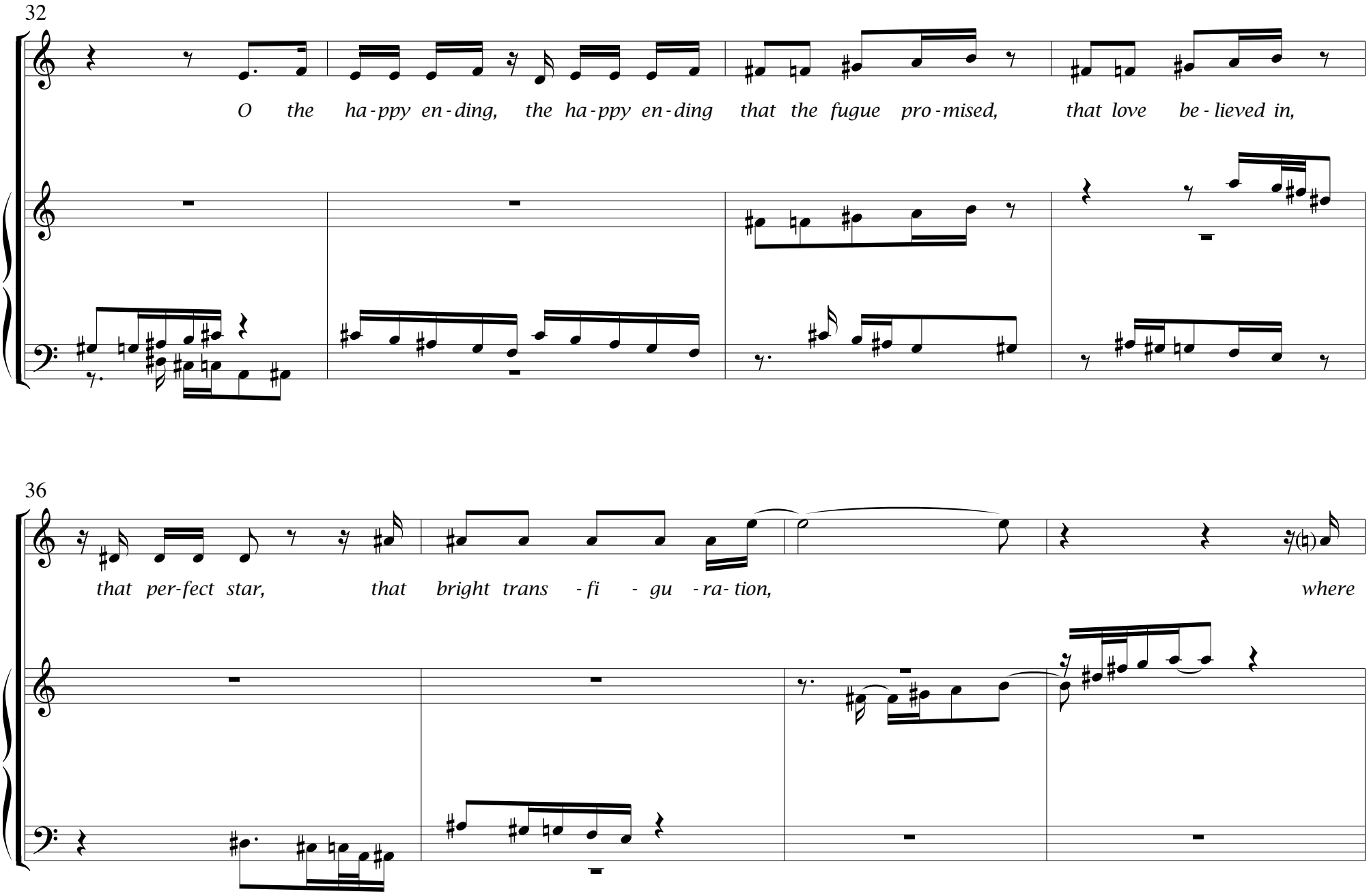

86
♩ = 80
Ba - by - lon for the cer - tain mind.
90
poco a poco accelerando
Tea - ring a - way our pa - la - ces,


molto accel. a tempo primo
94
= 120 come prima piu mosso
our fa -ces, and our days.
97

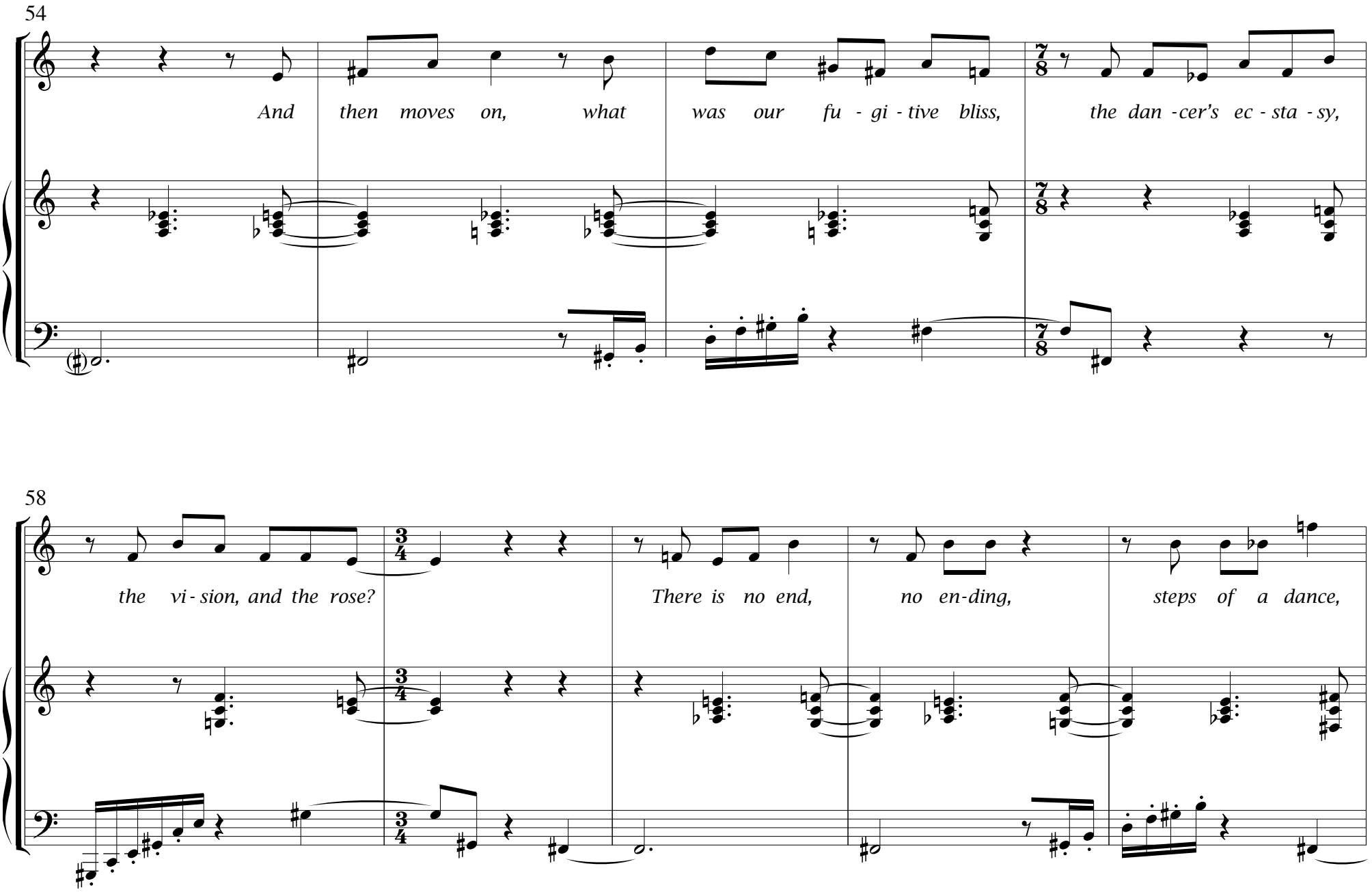

101
Wild as the tomb, wild as the moun-tain - side A
105
storm of hours has sha - ken the fine - spun world.
molto ritardando
attacca

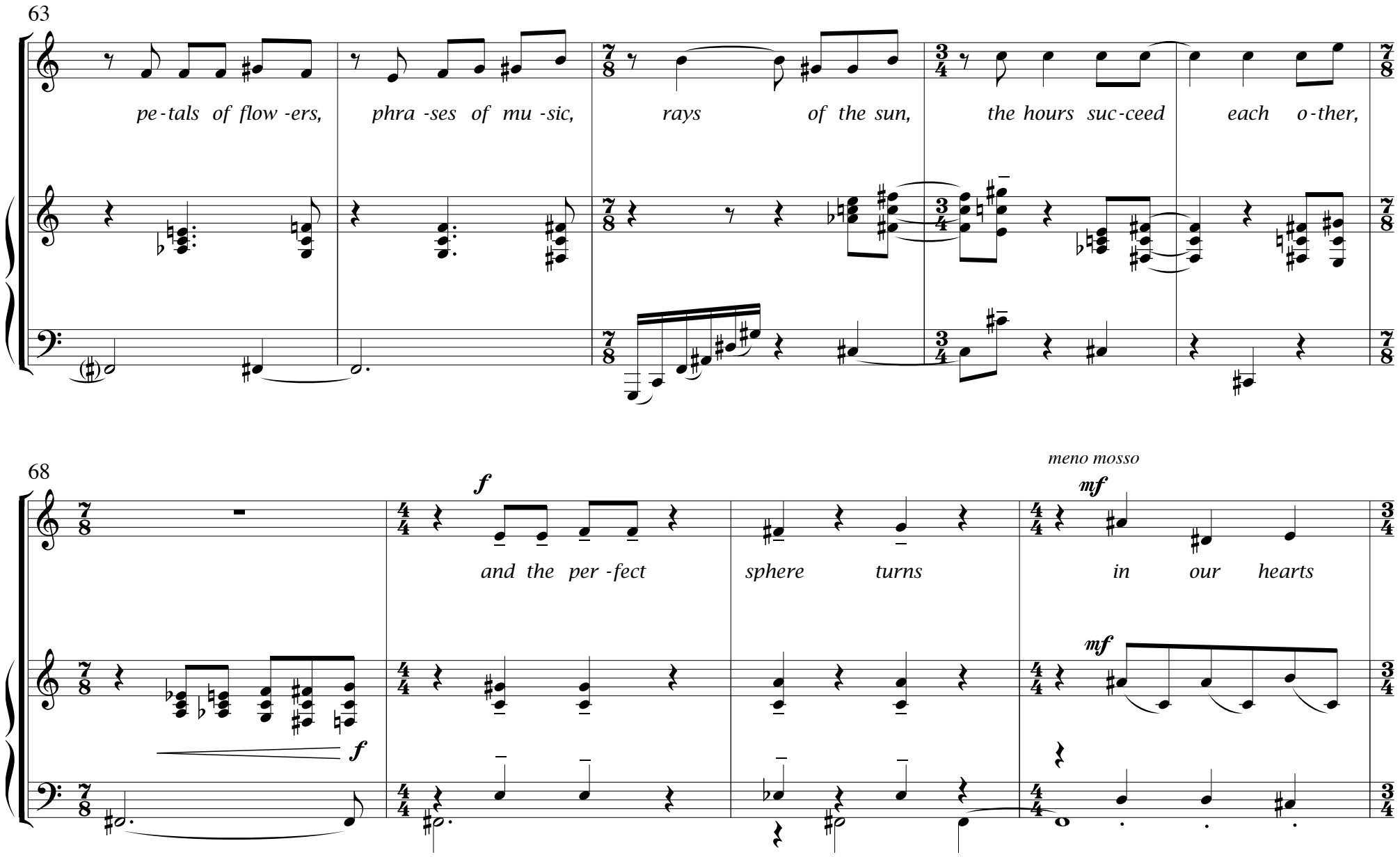

♪ = 80
(in four voices)
7
13

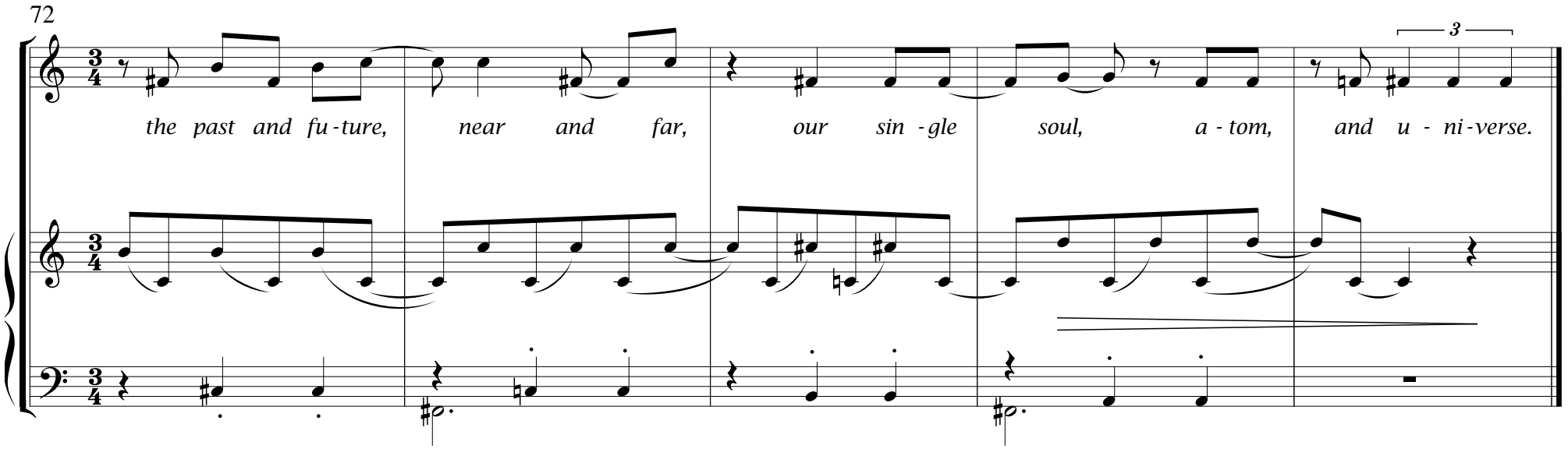

19
24
28


32
O the ha-ppy en-ding, the ha-ppy en-ding that the fugue pro-mised, that love be-lieved in,
36
that per-fect star, that bright trans-fi-gu-ra-tion, where

40
has it va-nished, now that the mu-sic is o-ver? Where has it va-nished, the cer-tain-ty of be-ing,
45
poco ritardando ed allargando
the heart in flo-wer, our-selves, per-fect at last, af-firmed as what we are?
49
= 90 semplice
mf
The world, the chan-ging world stands still while lo-vers kiss,
mf Like a dance

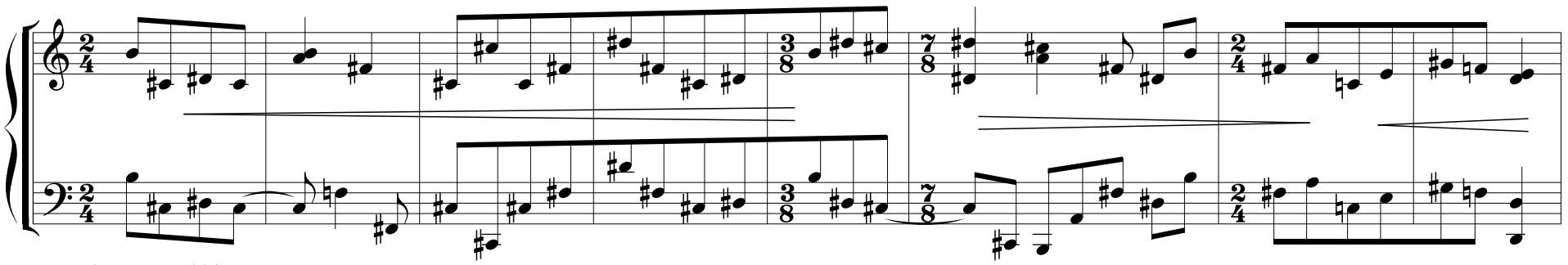

54
And then moves on, what was our fu - gi - tive bliss, the dan - cer's ec - sta - sy,
58
the vi - sion, and the rose? There is no end, no en - ding, steps of a dance,


63
pe-tals of flow-ers,
phra-ses of mu-sic,
rays of the sun,
the hours suc-ceed each o-ther,
68
f
and the per-fect
sphere turns
meno mosso
mf
in our hearts
f
mf

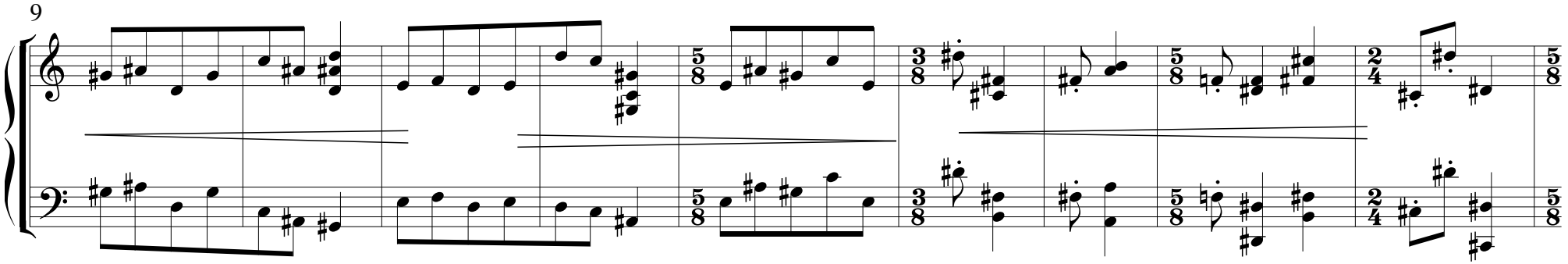

72
3
the past and fu-ture, near and far, our sin-gle soul, a-tom, and u-ni-verse.

The Silver Stag

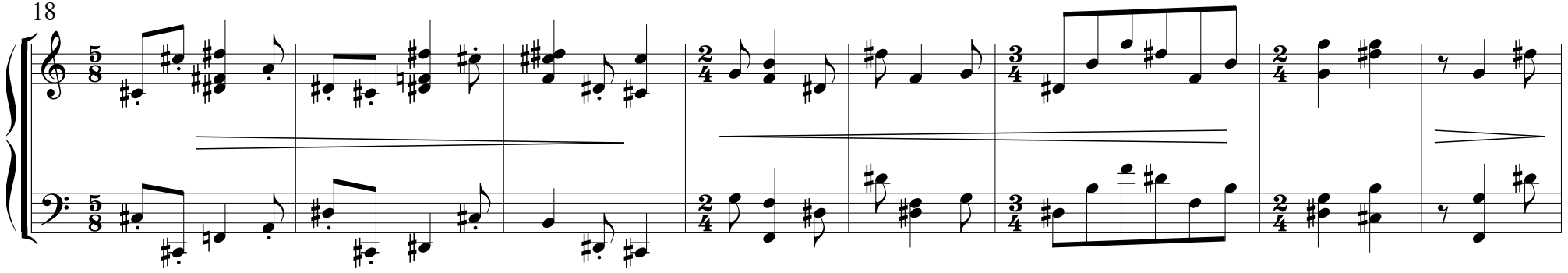
♩ = 85 *moving constantly between gentleness and passion*



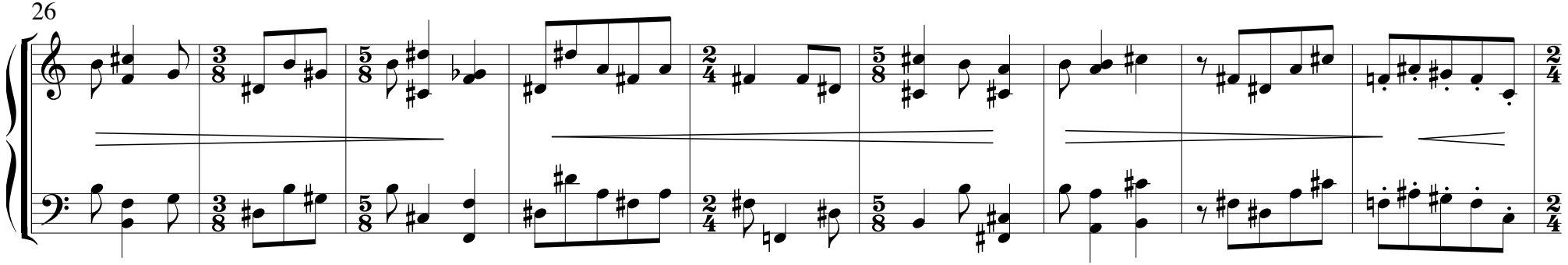
dynamics ad lib

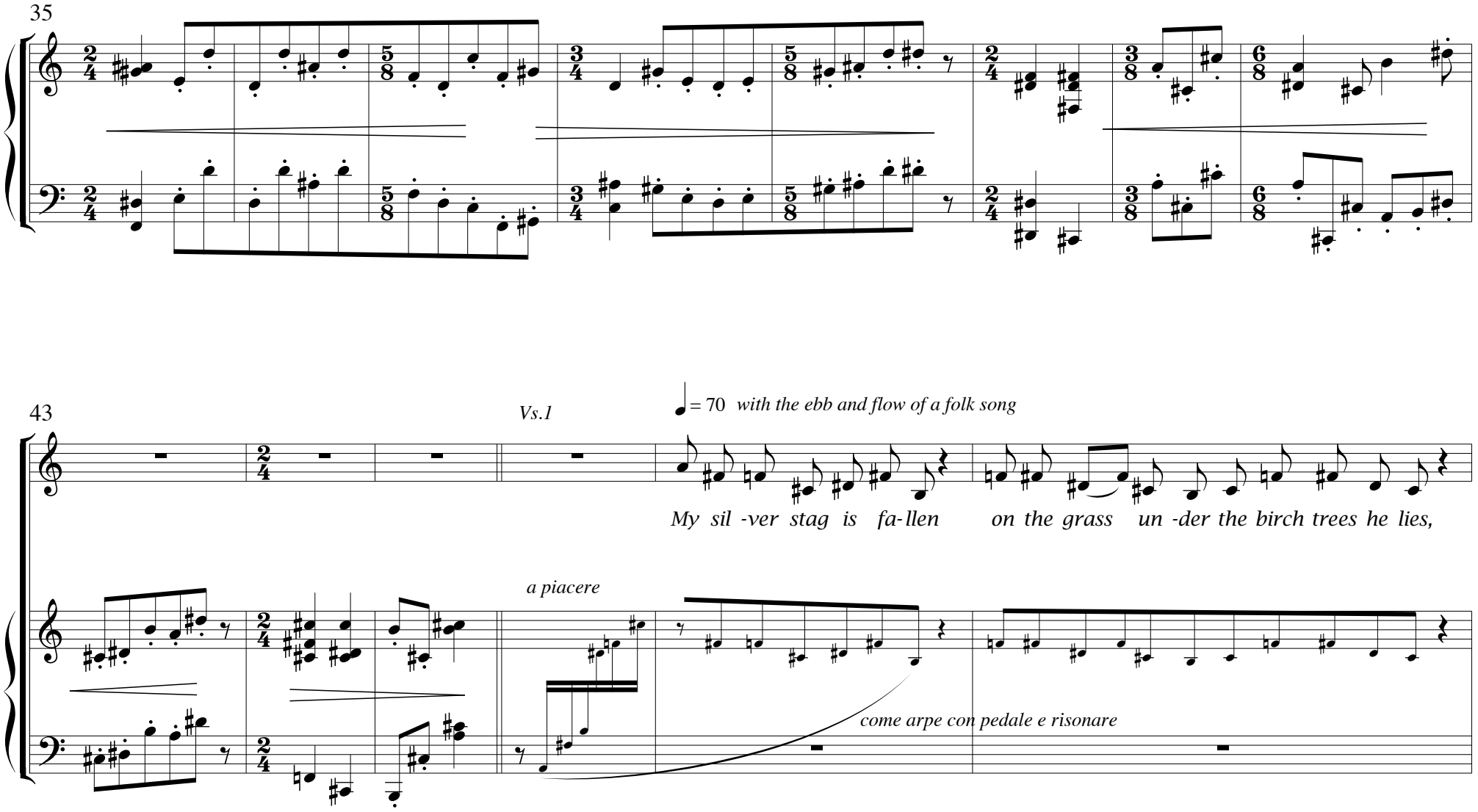


18

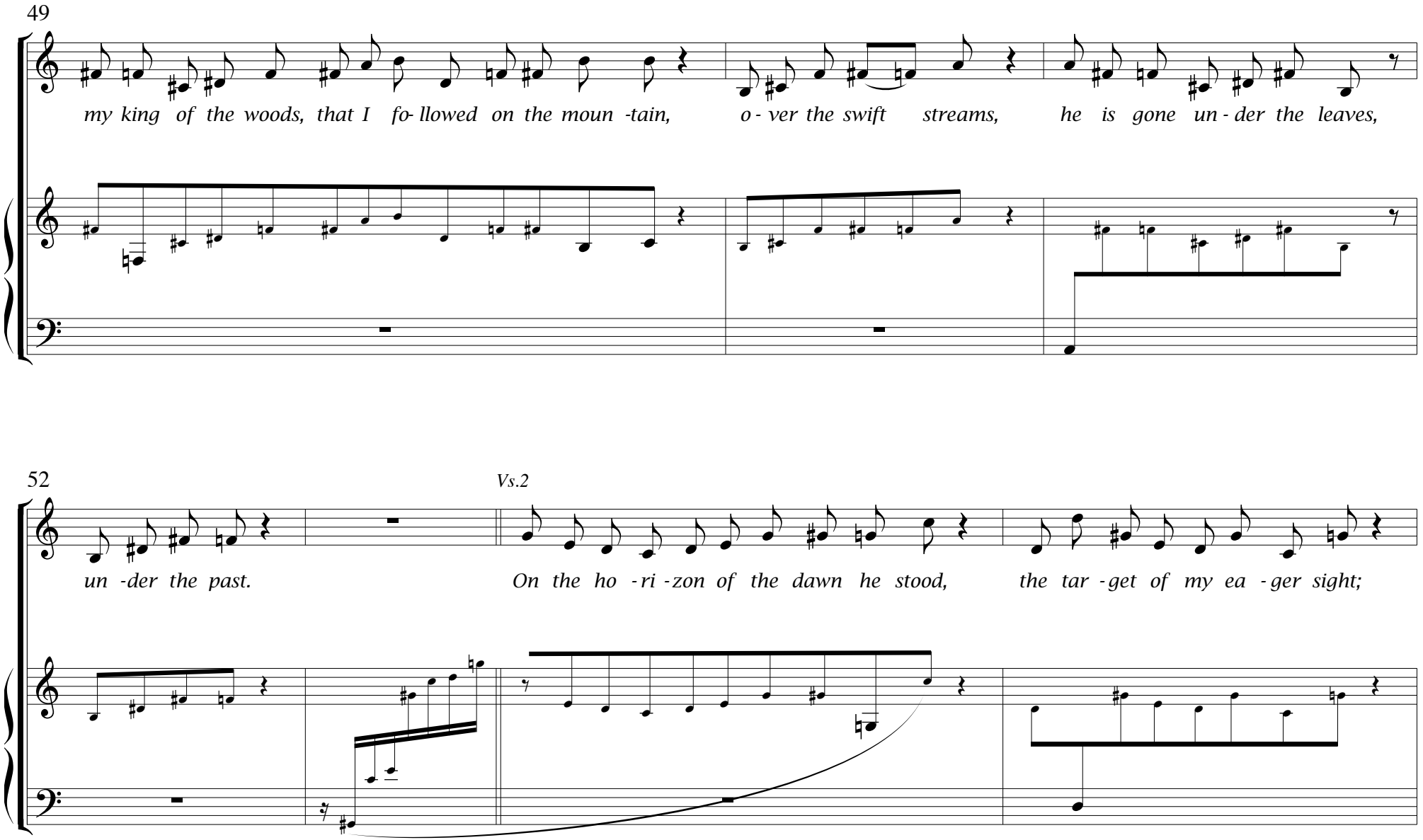


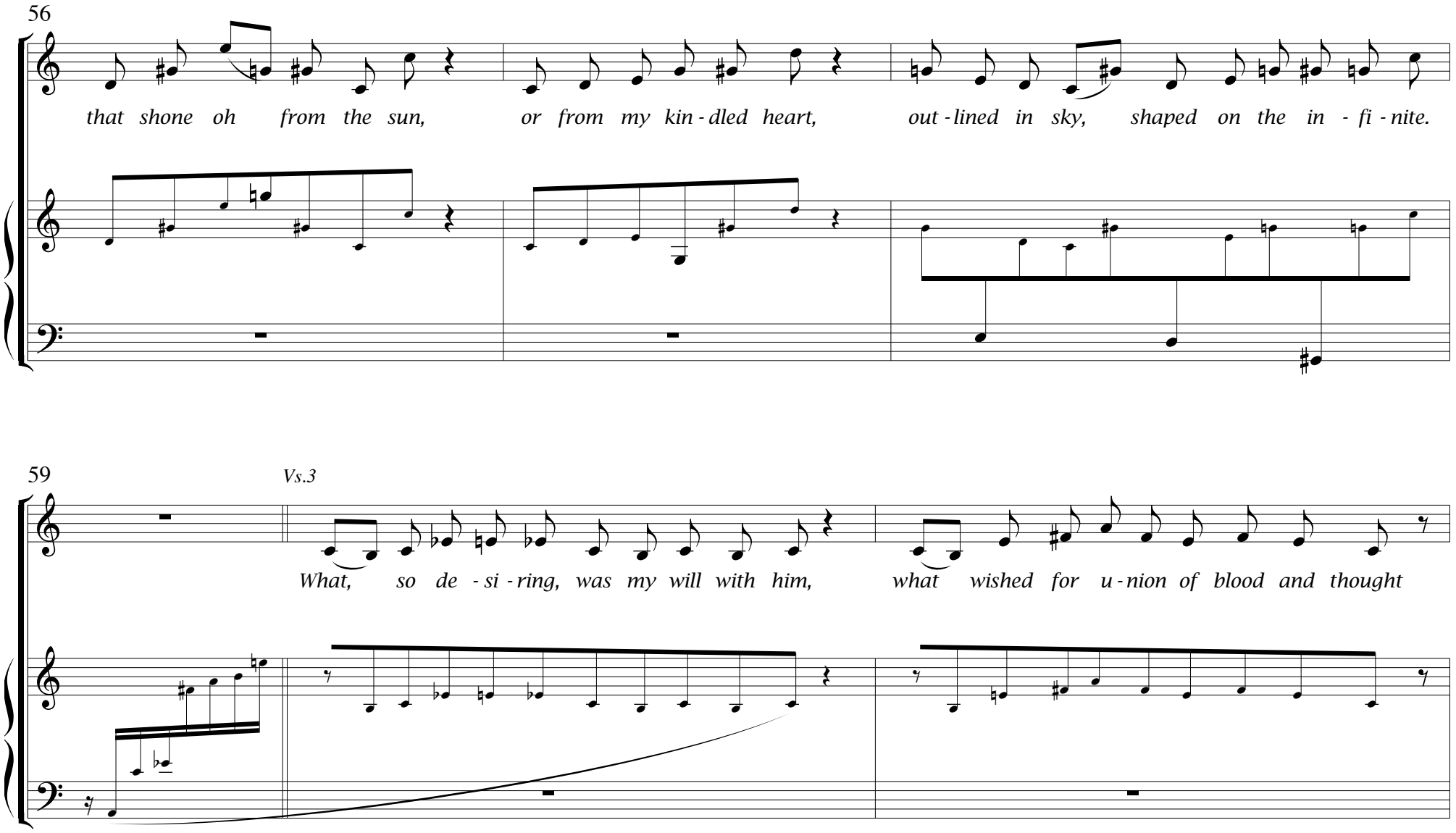
26

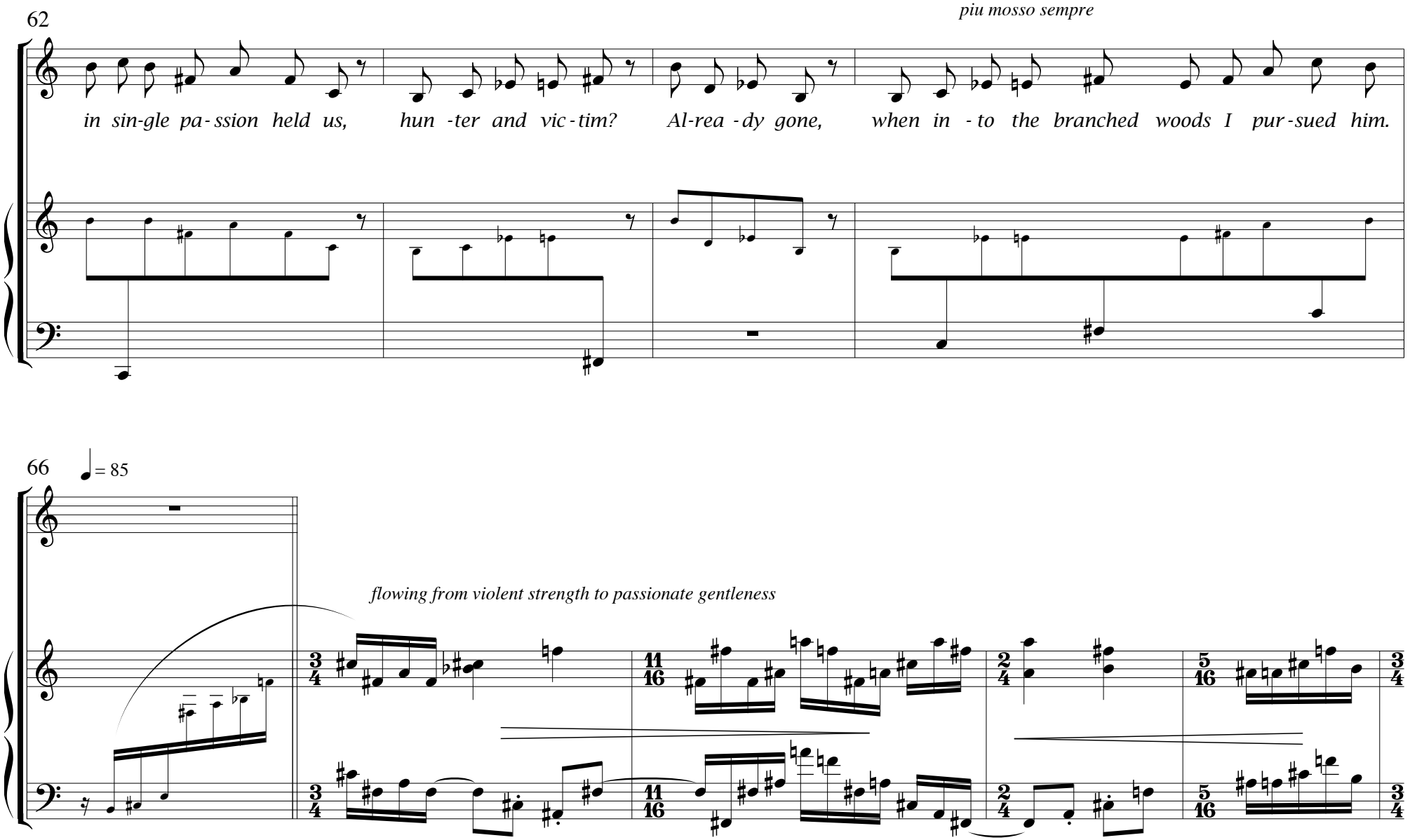


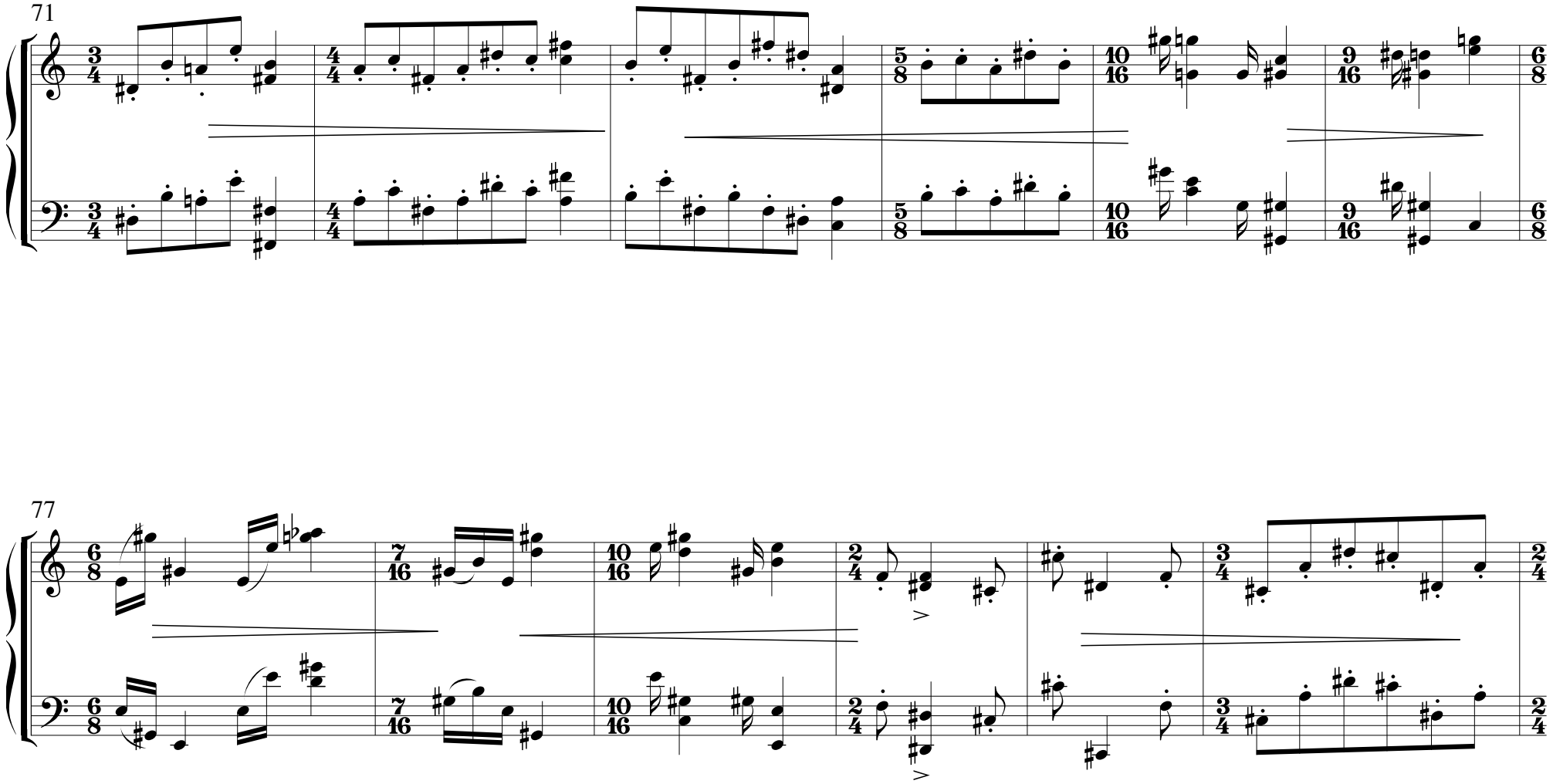


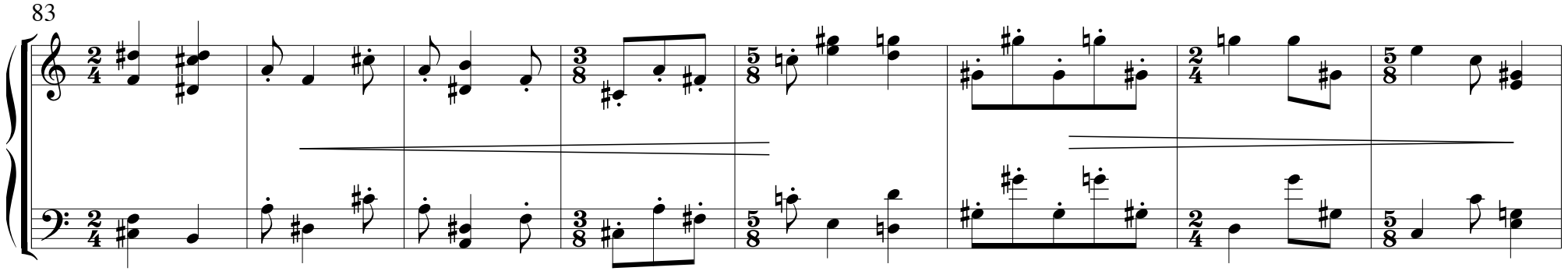
(throughout each verse all rhythmic values are approximate - hold notes and pauses as the words and interpretation dictate)

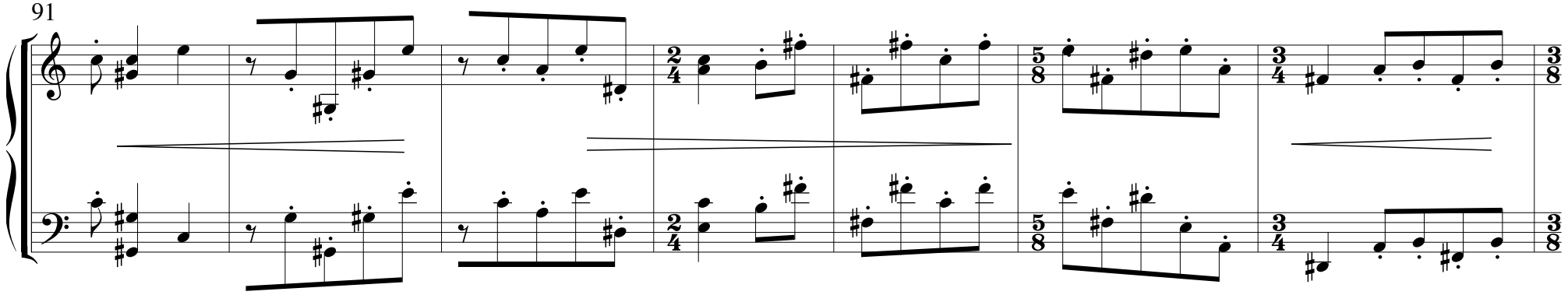

49
my king of the woods, that I fo- llowed on the moun -tain, o - ver the swift streams, he is gone un - der the leaves,
52
Vs.2
un -der the past. On the ho - ri - zon of the dawn he stood, the tar - get of my ea - ger sight;


56
that shone oh from the sun, or from my kin - dled heart, out - lined in sky, shaped on the in - fi - nite.
59
Vs.3
What, so de - si - ring, was my will with him, what wished for u - nion of blood and thought

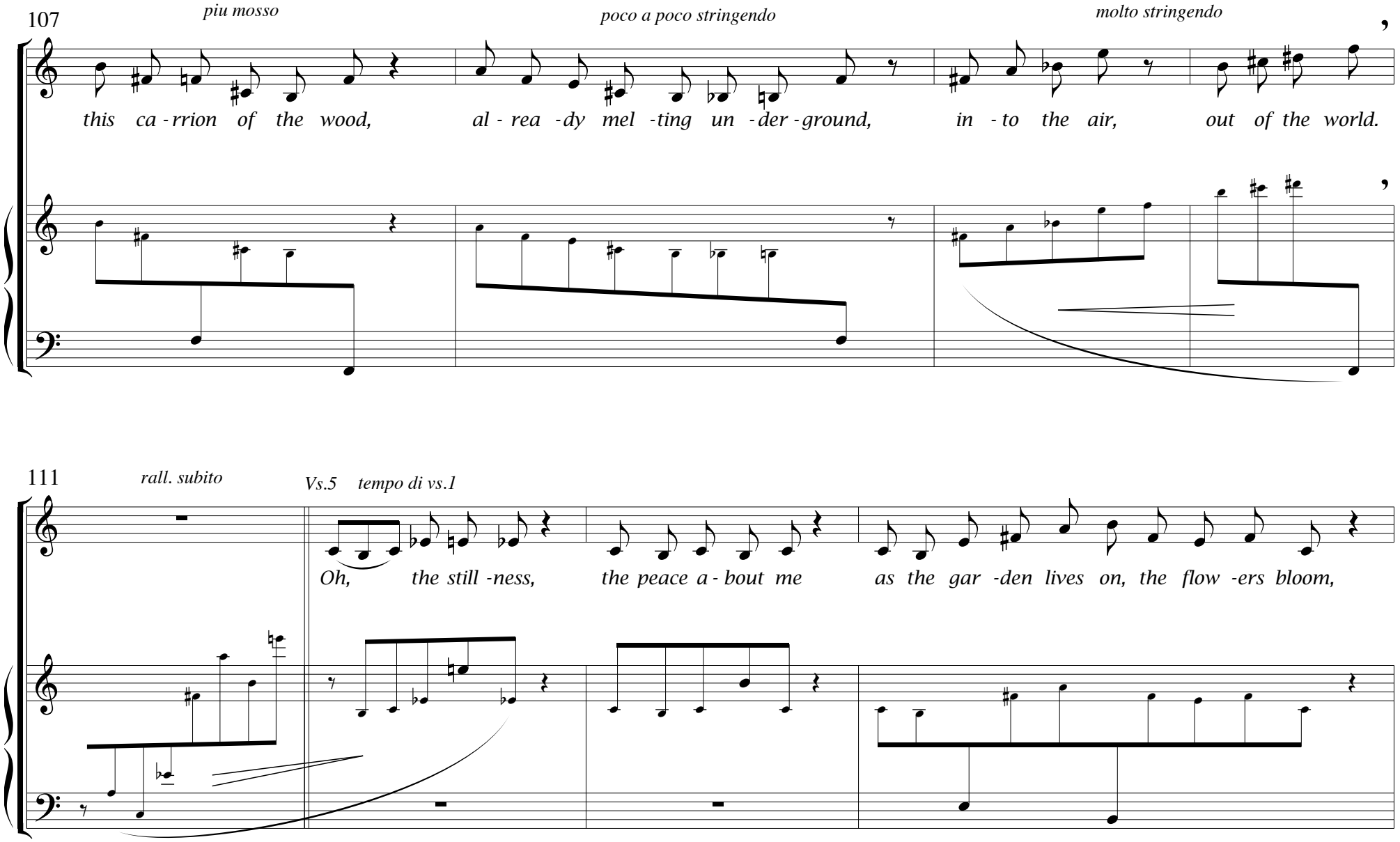

62
piu mosso sempre
in sin-gle pa-ssion held us, hun-ter and vic-tim? Al-rea-dy gone, when in-to the branched woods I pur-sued him.
66
= 85
flowing from violent strength to passionate gentleness

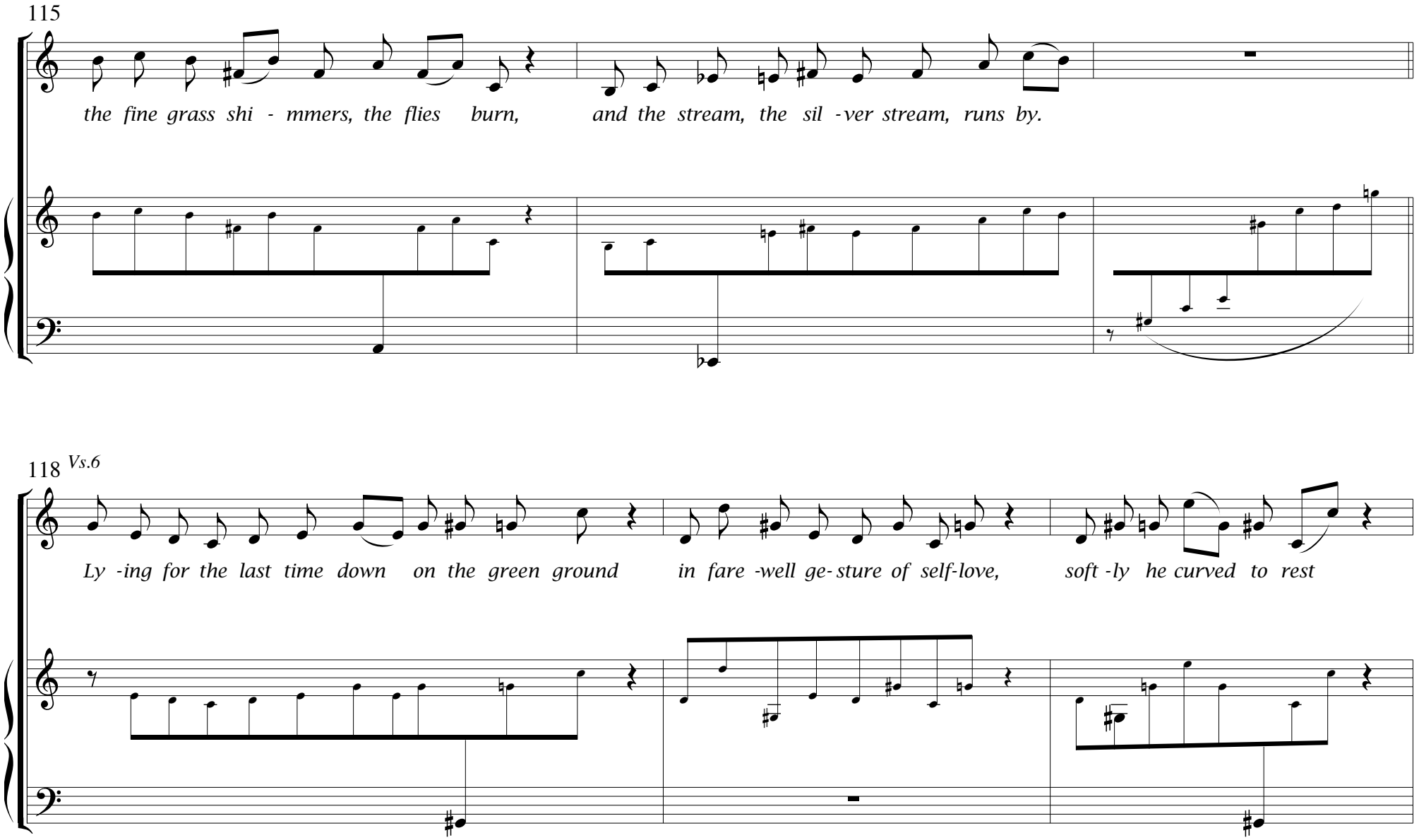

71
77

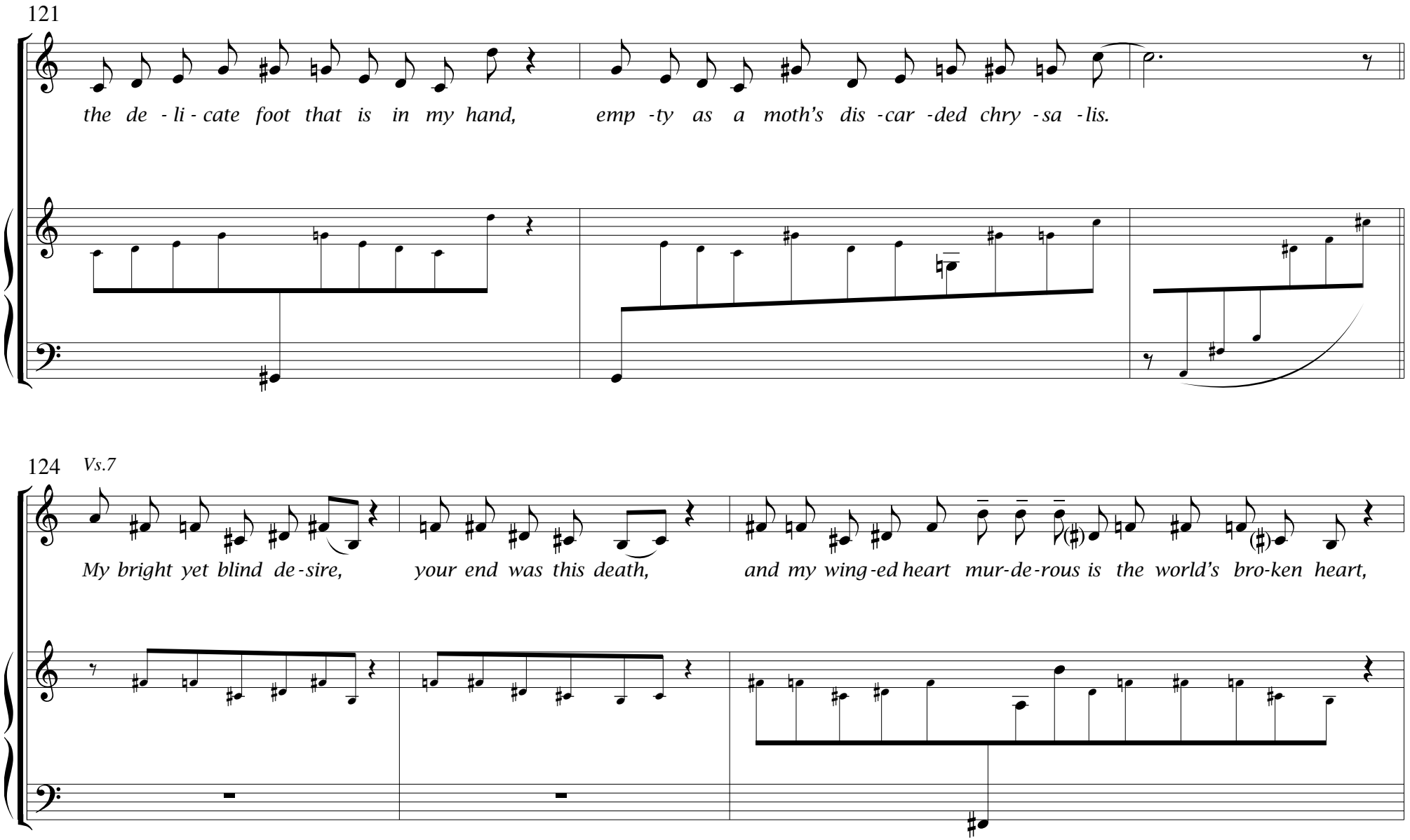

83

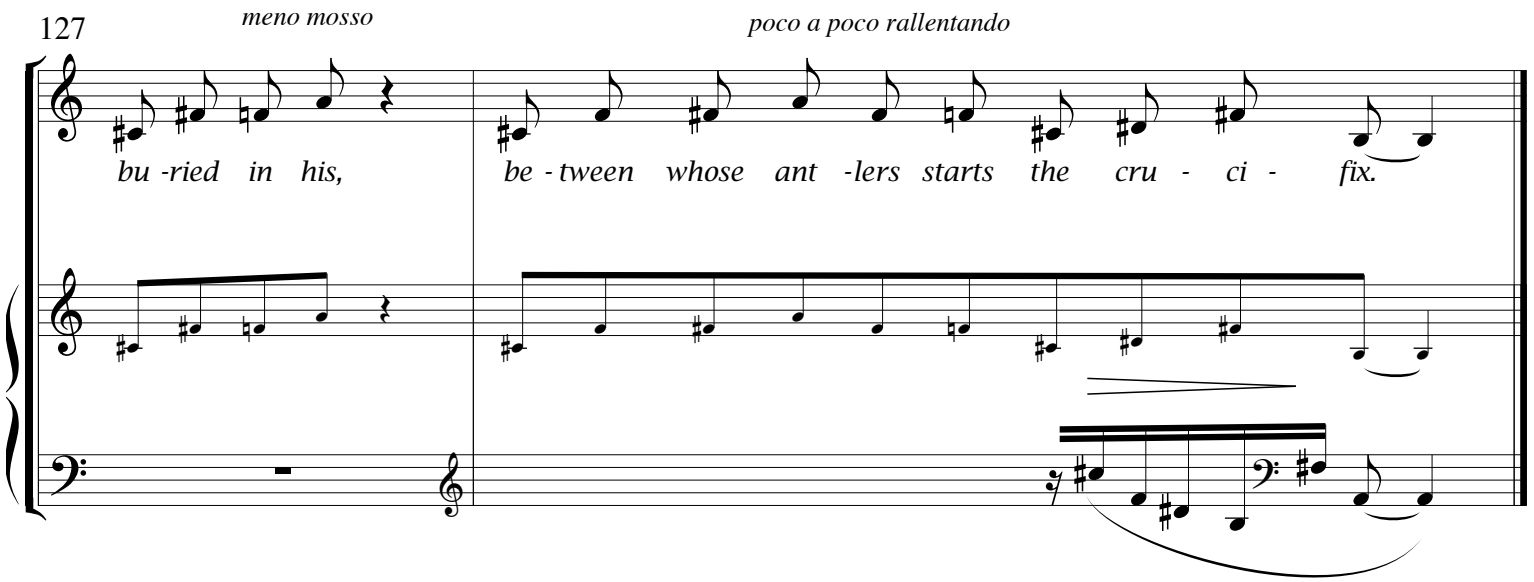

91

98
Vs.4
♩= 80 meno mosso
Mine he is now, my de - si - red, my a - wai - ted,
103
poco allargando
allargando
piu mosso
my be - lov - ed quiet he lies, as I touch the con - tours of his proud head, Mine, the ho - rror,

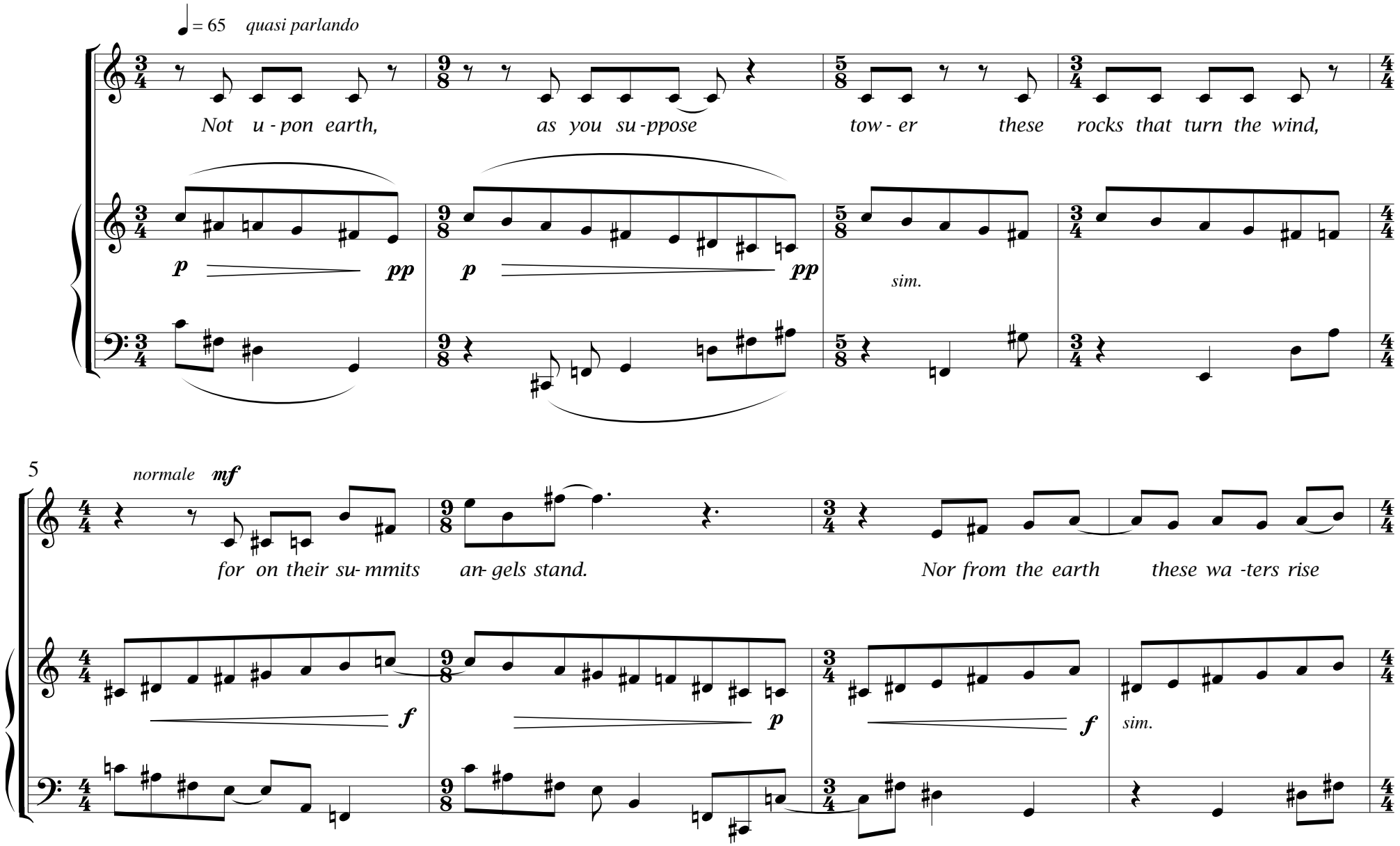

107
piu mosso
poco a poco stringendo
molto stringendo
this ca - rrion of the wood,
al - rea - dy mel - ting un - der - ground,
in - to the air,
out of the world.
111
rall. subito
Vs.5 tempo di vs.1
Oh, the still - ness,
the peace a - bout me
as the gar - den lives on, the flow - ers bloom,

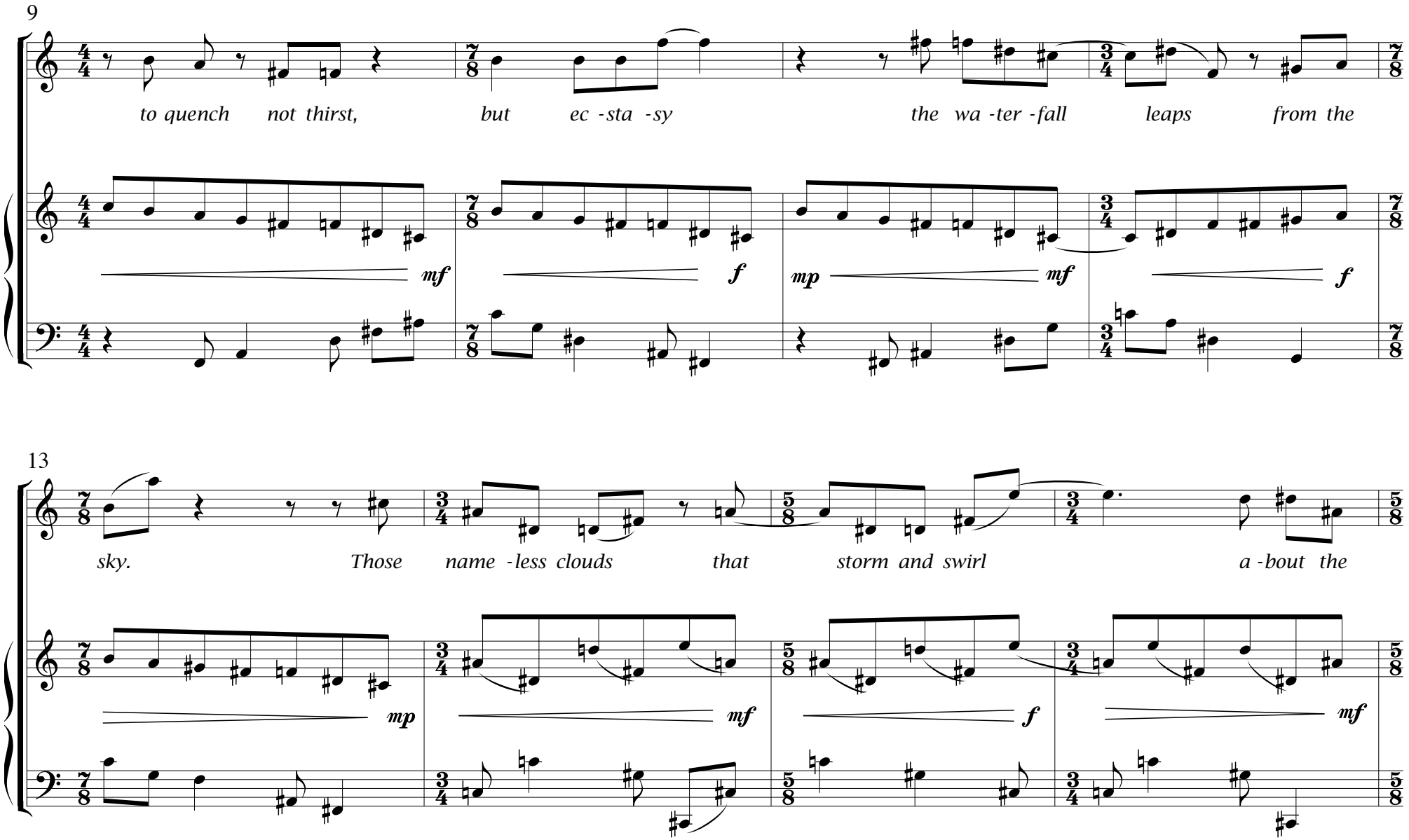

115
the fine grass shi - mmers, the flies burn, and the stream, the sil -ver stream, runs by.
118 Vs.6
Ly -ing for the last time down on the green ground in fare -well ge- sture of self-love, soft -ly he curved to rest

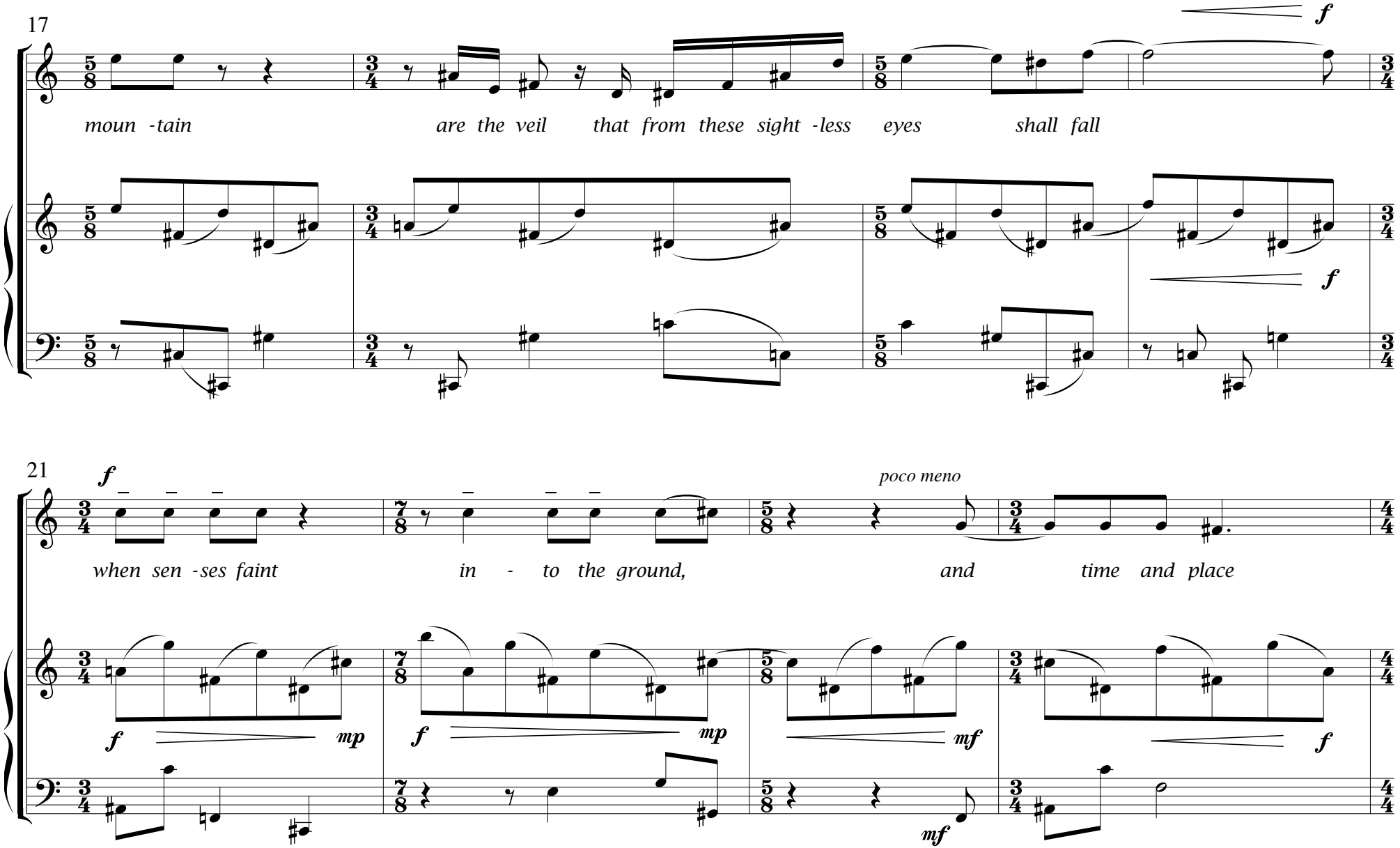

121
the de - li - cate foot that is in my hand,
emp - ty as a moth's dis - car - ded chry - sa - lis.
124
Vs.7
My bright yet blind de - sire,
your end was this death,
and my wing - ed heart mur - de - rous is the world's bro - ken heart,

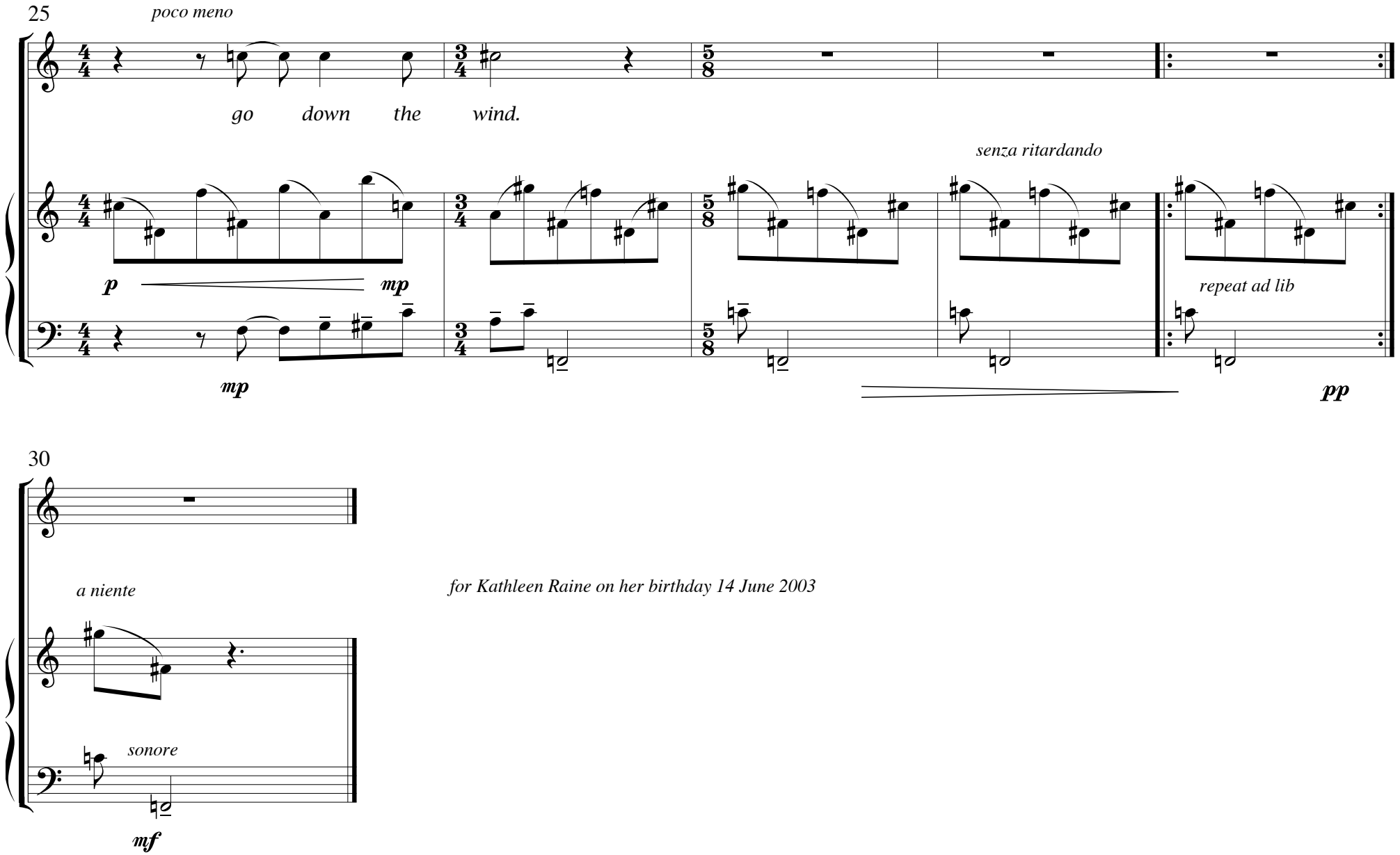

127
meno mosso
poco a poco rallentando
bu -ried in his,
be - tween whose ant -lers starts the cru - ci - fix.

Tu non se' in Terra, si come tu credi . . .




9
to quench not thirst, but ec -sta -sy the wa -ter -fall leaps from the
mf
f
mp
mf
f
13
sky. Those name -less clouds that storm and swirl a -bout the
mp
mf
f
mf


17
f
moun -tain
are the veil
that from these sight -less
eyes
shall fall
f
21
f
when sen -ses faint
in - to the ground,
poco meno
and
time and place
f
mp
f
mp
mf
f
mf



for Kathleen Raine on her birthday 14 June 2003