VIDEOGAME MUSIC NO. 1

MUSIC FOR A VIDEOGAME THAT DOESN'T EXIST

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FOR

Violin & Piano

Summer 2021

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Notes on the Piece:

Having first found my way into concert music through videogames as a child and teenager, I have always had a fondness for the genre of videogame music from the oldest and most computerized to the newest. It certainly is a genre of music that is often overlook and frequently scorned in academia. Even today, most university music schools offer no education in videogame music: it's uses, sub-genres, methods of composition and utilization, player participation and interaction, or history. However, much can be learned from videogame music's style and history that teaches us much about classical and concert music. I have never (yet) written music for a videogame, but it is a dream of mine. Thus, here are some short, fun, and relatively accessible works that reflect a stylized videogame music for a videogame that does not exist.

Each piece in this first set is a stand-alone work, and thus any number and any combination can be played. Once there are further sets, theoretically works from additional sets can be selectively played with works of this set.

Note on Magnetic Tape Technique (in Piece III):

The tape technique first involves the pianist acquiring two to three feet of magnetic tape (like that found in cassette or VHS tapes – the composer recommends the thicker tape of a VHS, but either will suffice). If the pianist requires, the composer can be contacted for magnetic tape, though blank reels of tape can be easily purchased very cheaply online.

This tape will then by secured to the indicated string by gently tying the tape around the string. While the tape can be tied anywhere to the string's resonating length, the primary nodes are recommended (1st, 2nd, or 3rd partials). For this work, you will need to attached tapes to the lowest B string only. The loose end of the tape can either be tied (or taped - recommended) to the upper end of the piano's lid support peg (creating approximately a 45-degree angle against the piano's horizontal plane). The tape should be quite taught.

While depressing the sustain pedal, the pianist will run their fingers across the tape from the low end (near the strings) to the upper end. This should be a relatively slow and continuous motion with medium to heavy pressure on the tape (taking care not to unduly stretch or break the tape). The performer is encouraged to find their best grip, but the composer offers these suggestions:

1. One side of the tape is often more frictional. It is to this side that the most pressure should be applied.
2. The effectiveness of the technique is sometimes determined by the oil consistency on the hands. Often the technique is more difficult to execute after one wash their hands.
3. It might be helpful to apply counter torsion presser by pushing down on the tape with the index and/or middle finger while also applying upward pressure with the thumb, but slightly offset from the index/middle fingers.
4. More pressure will produce a fuller sound, but too much pressure will slowly stretch the tape, making it more difficult to work with over the course of the rehearsal/performance. The tape works best when taught. Should the tape be affixed to the peg and become loose in a performance due to stretching, one can use the free right hand (assuming it is free) to reign in the slack of the tape.
5. The tape can also the stroked from top-to-bottom as well as from bottom-to-top. Starting at the top will produce a more whiney timbre at the outset of the sound and move towards a broader low-pitched resonant sound, whereas the reverse is true should the tape be stroked bottom-to-top. One can execute the technique with a continue motion from bottom-top-bottom, but this may take some practice to satisfactorily execute. The more continuous the sound is over the sound's required duration the better. However, if one needs to start and stop, following a bottom-top + bottom-top motion, this is fine.

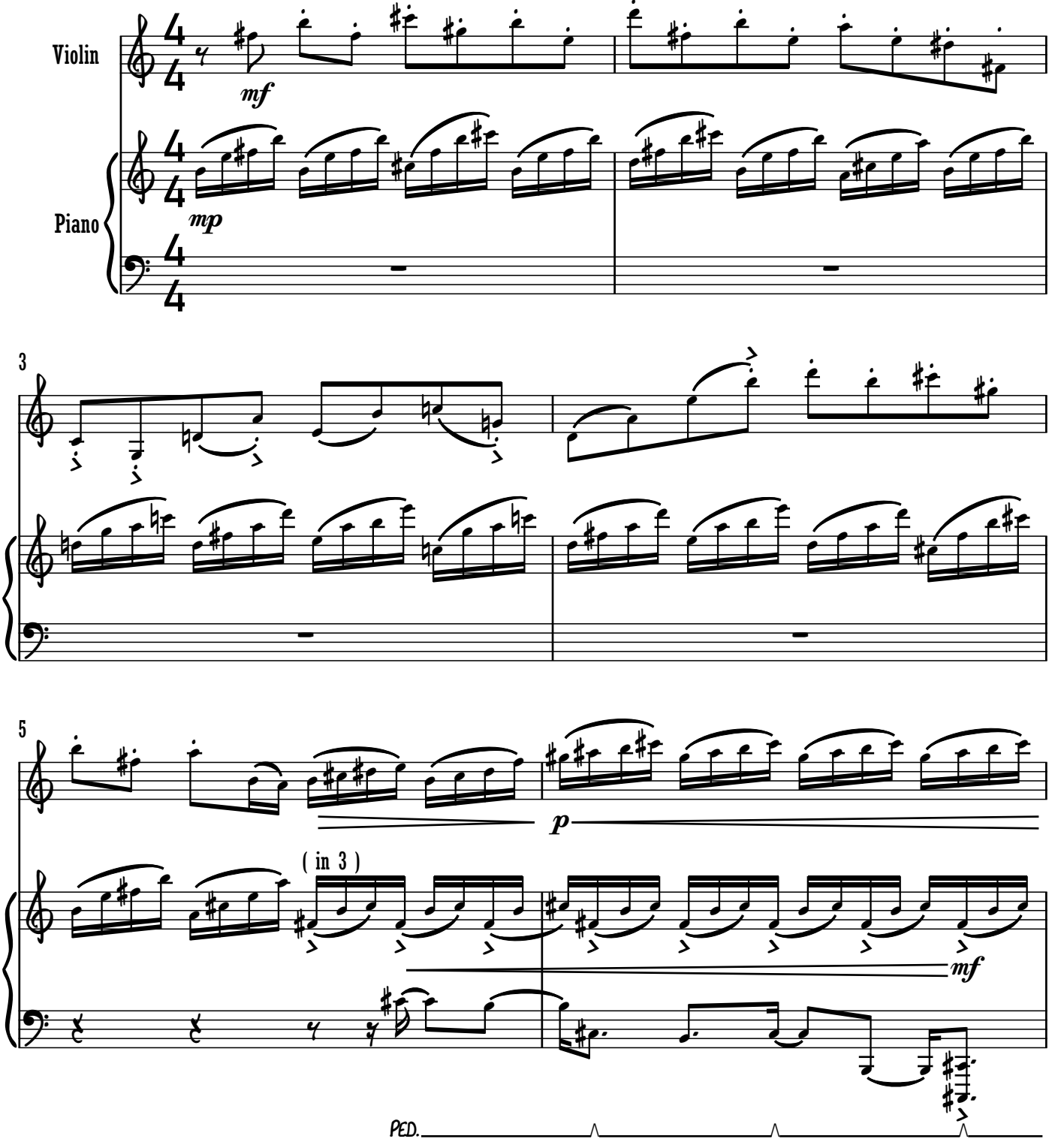
Have fun and experiment with the technique to find the sound that you like most within the sound world of this magnetic tape and the piano. This should sound somewhat like a sitar with extra whininess.

Videogame Music No. 1

1. Innocent Propositions

Jordan Alexander Key
September 2021

Effervescent (♩ = c. 100)



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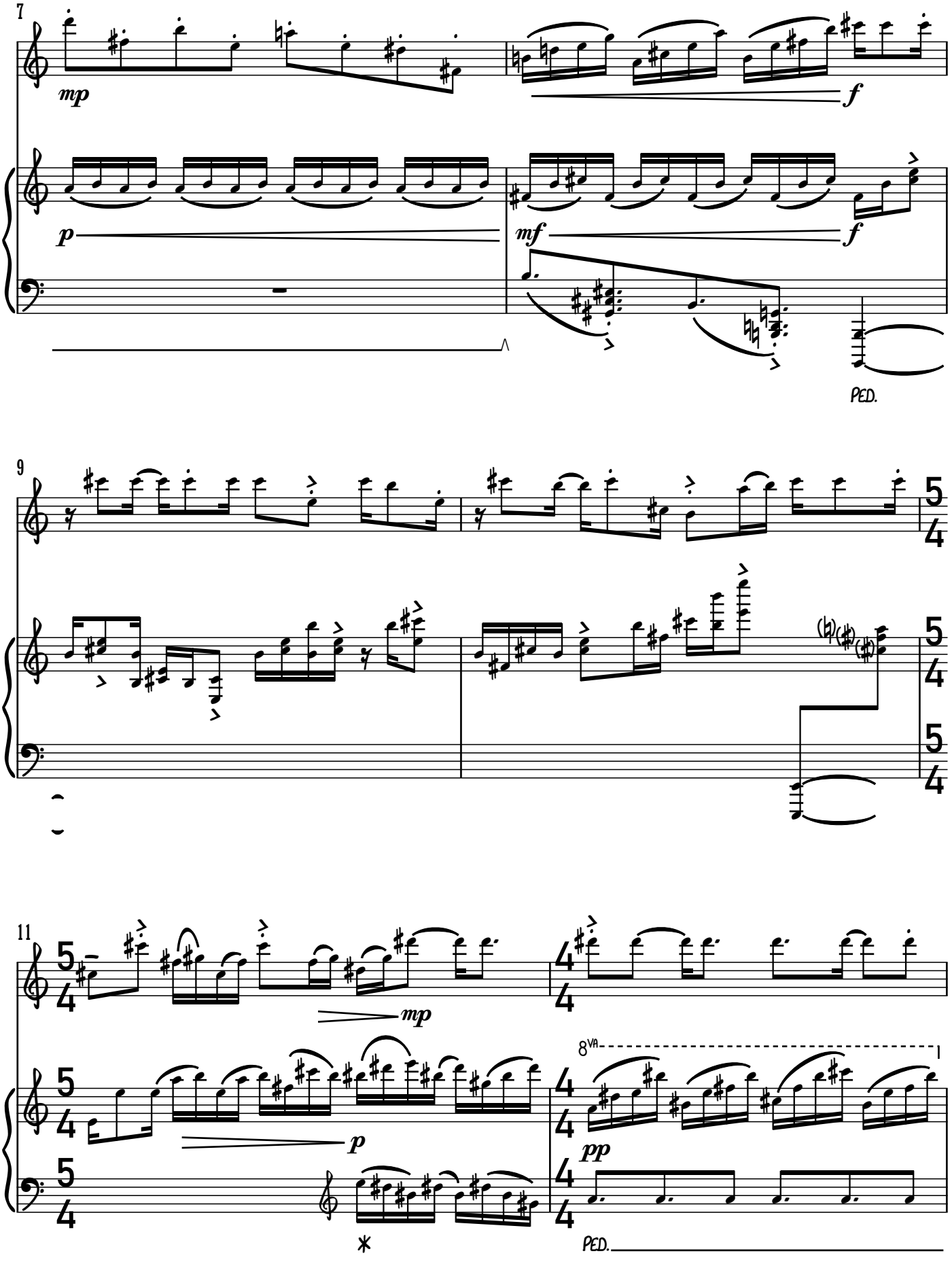
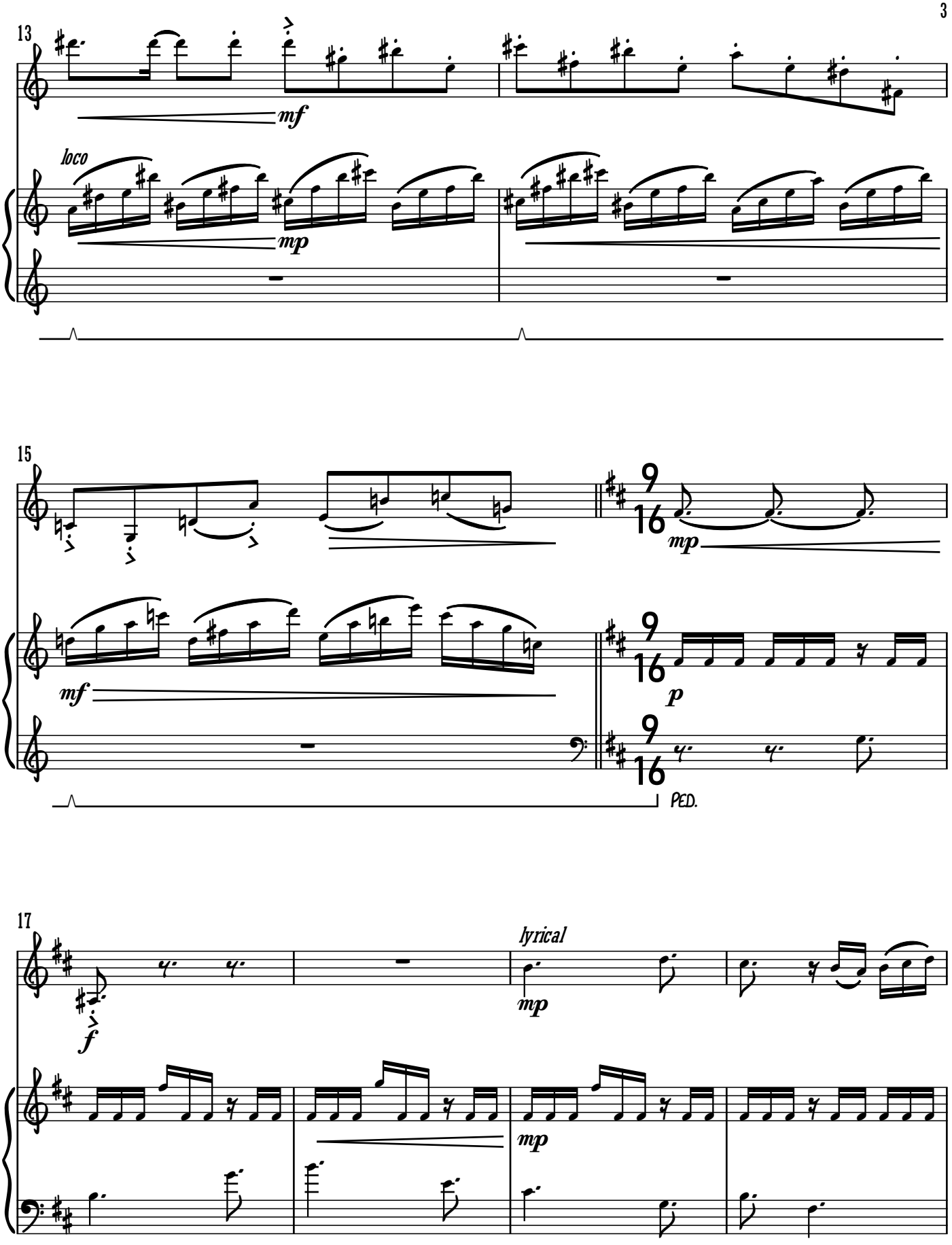
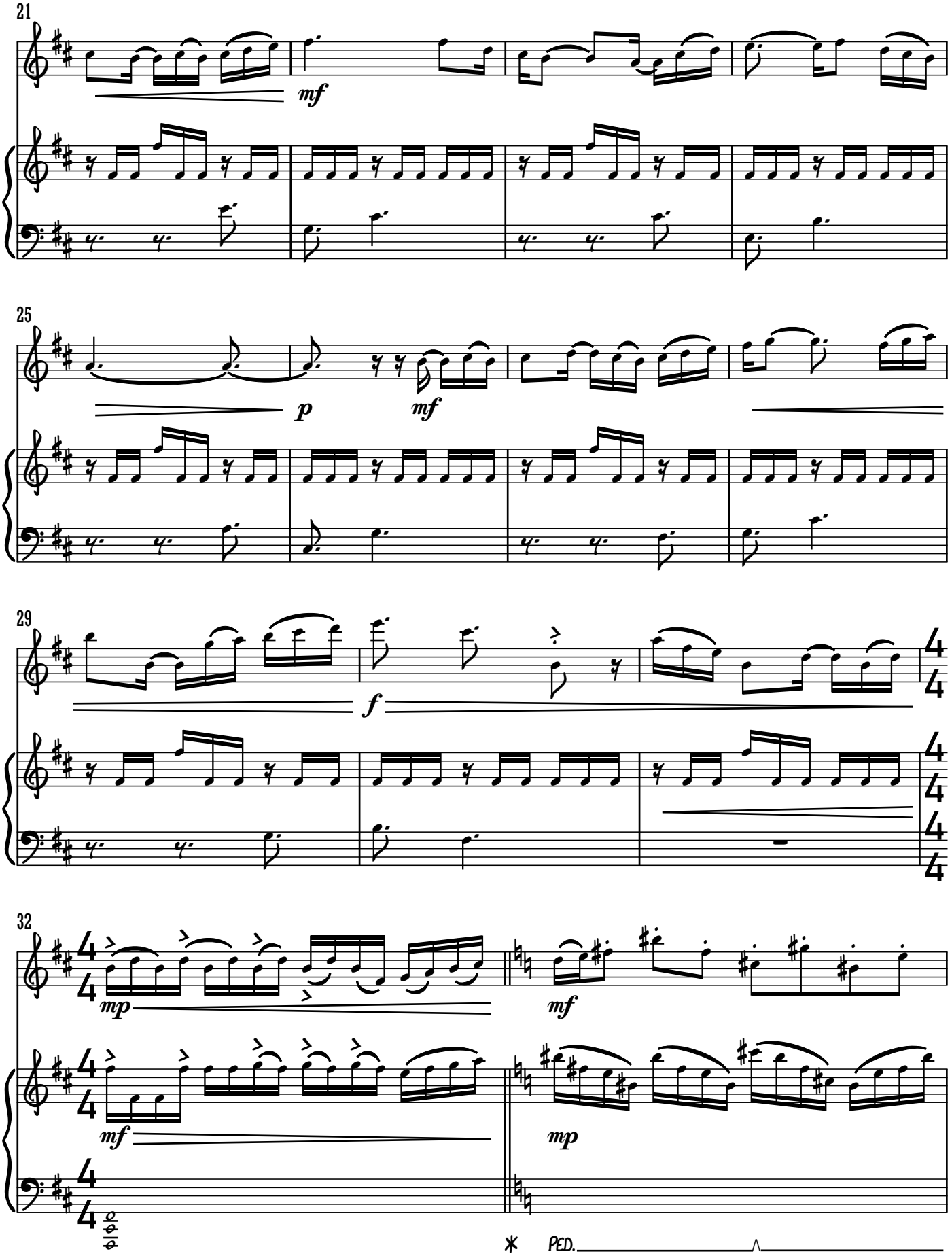
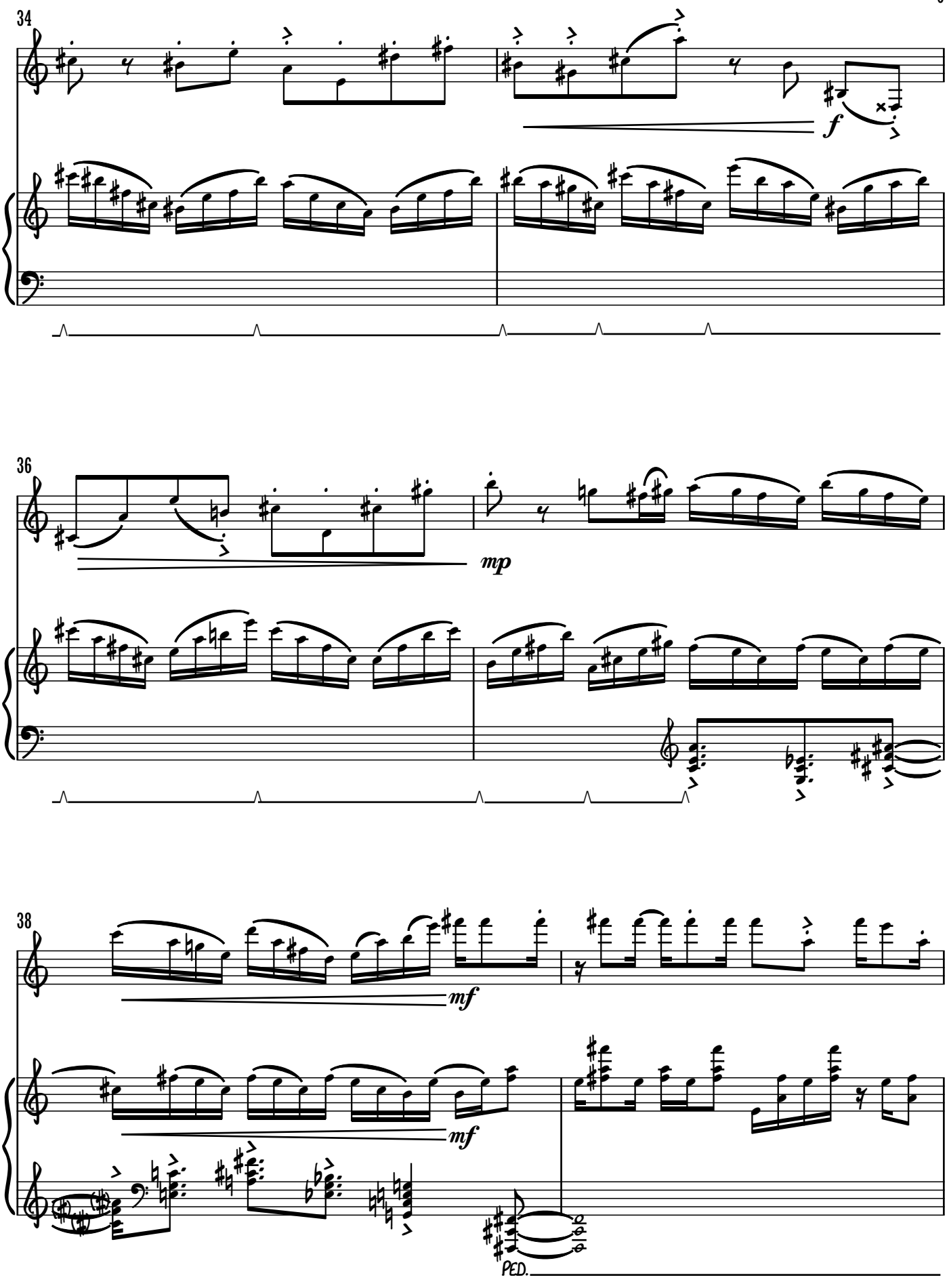
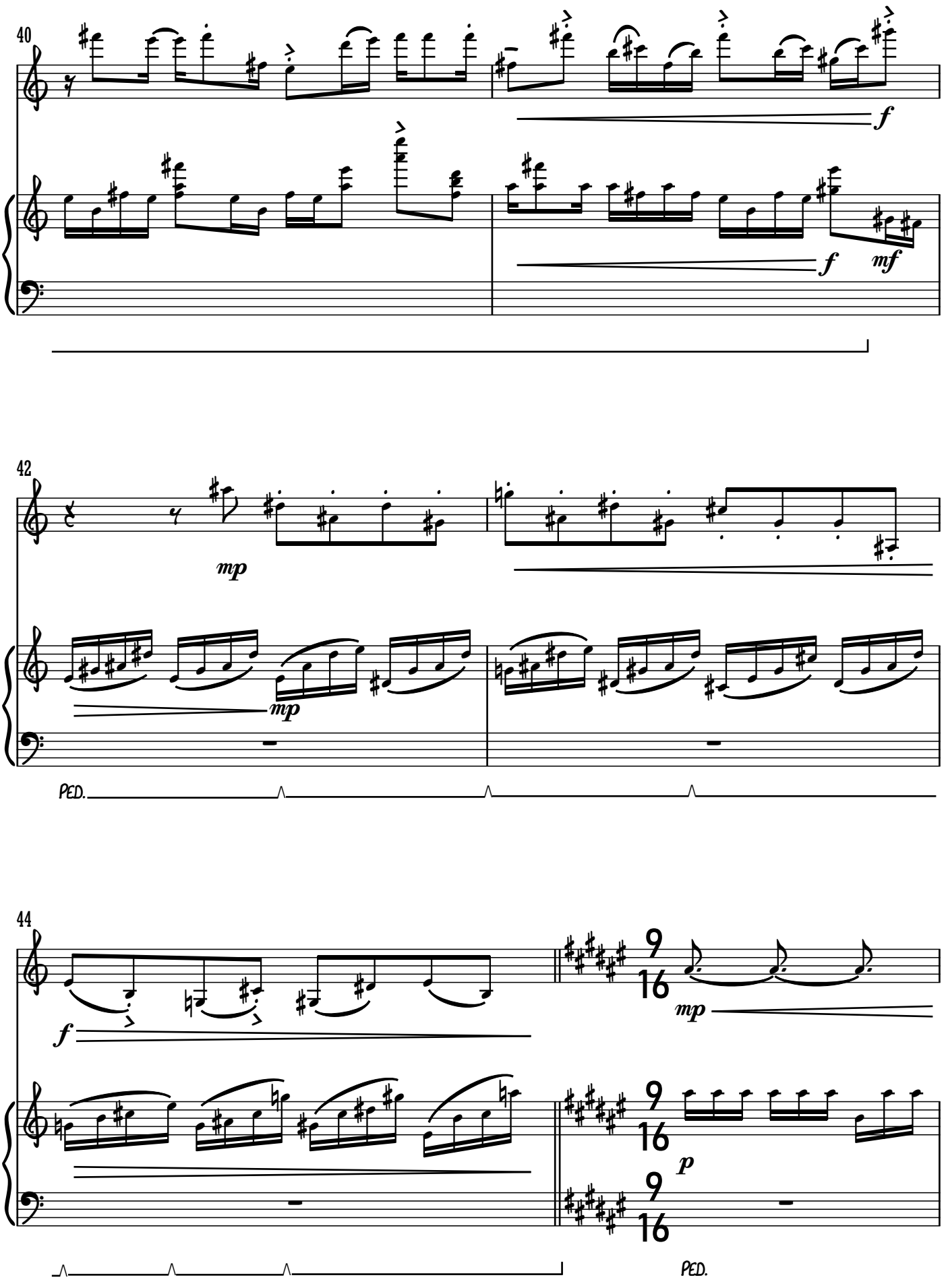
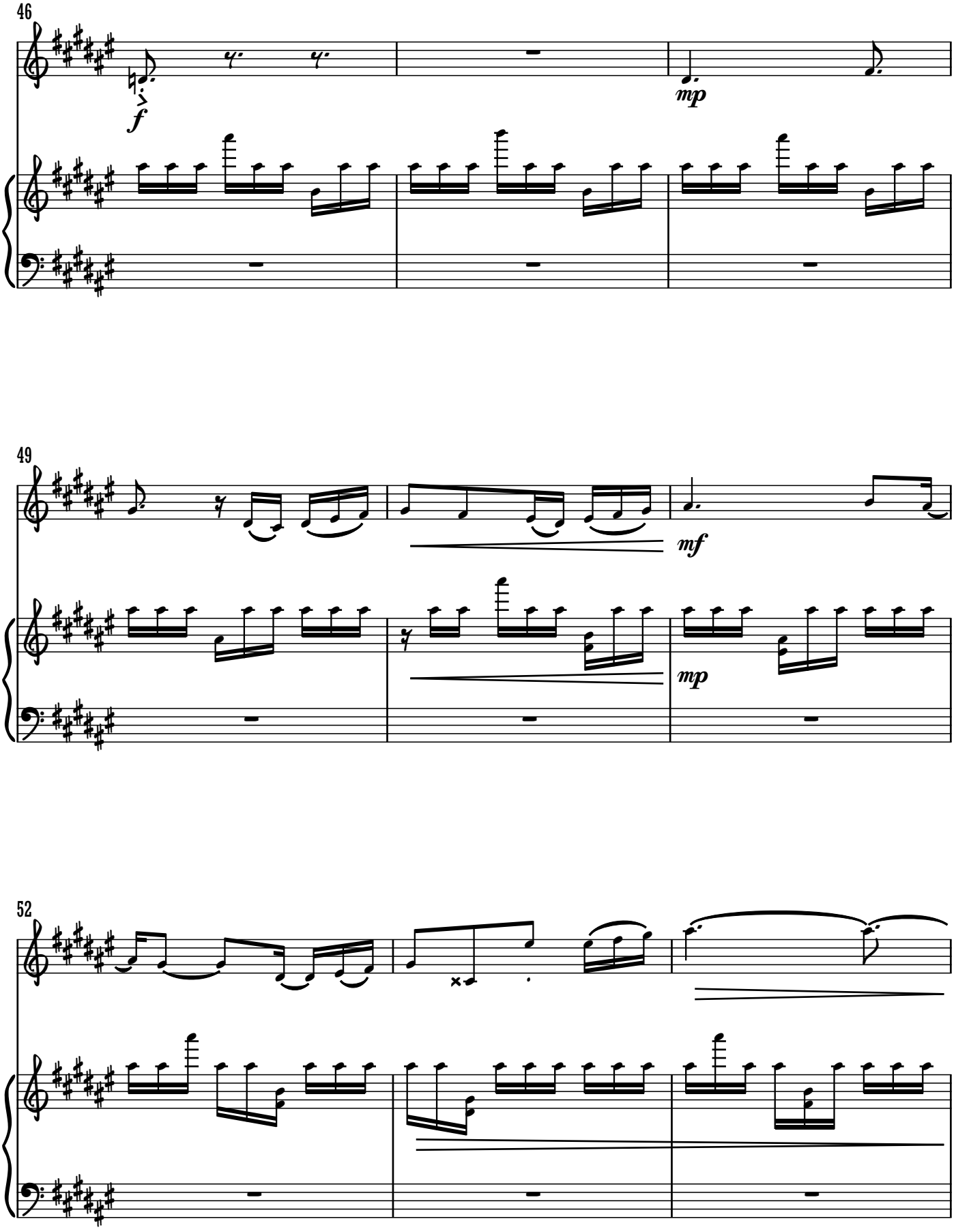

7
mp
f
p
mf
f
PED.
9
5
4
11
mp
p
8va
pp
PED.

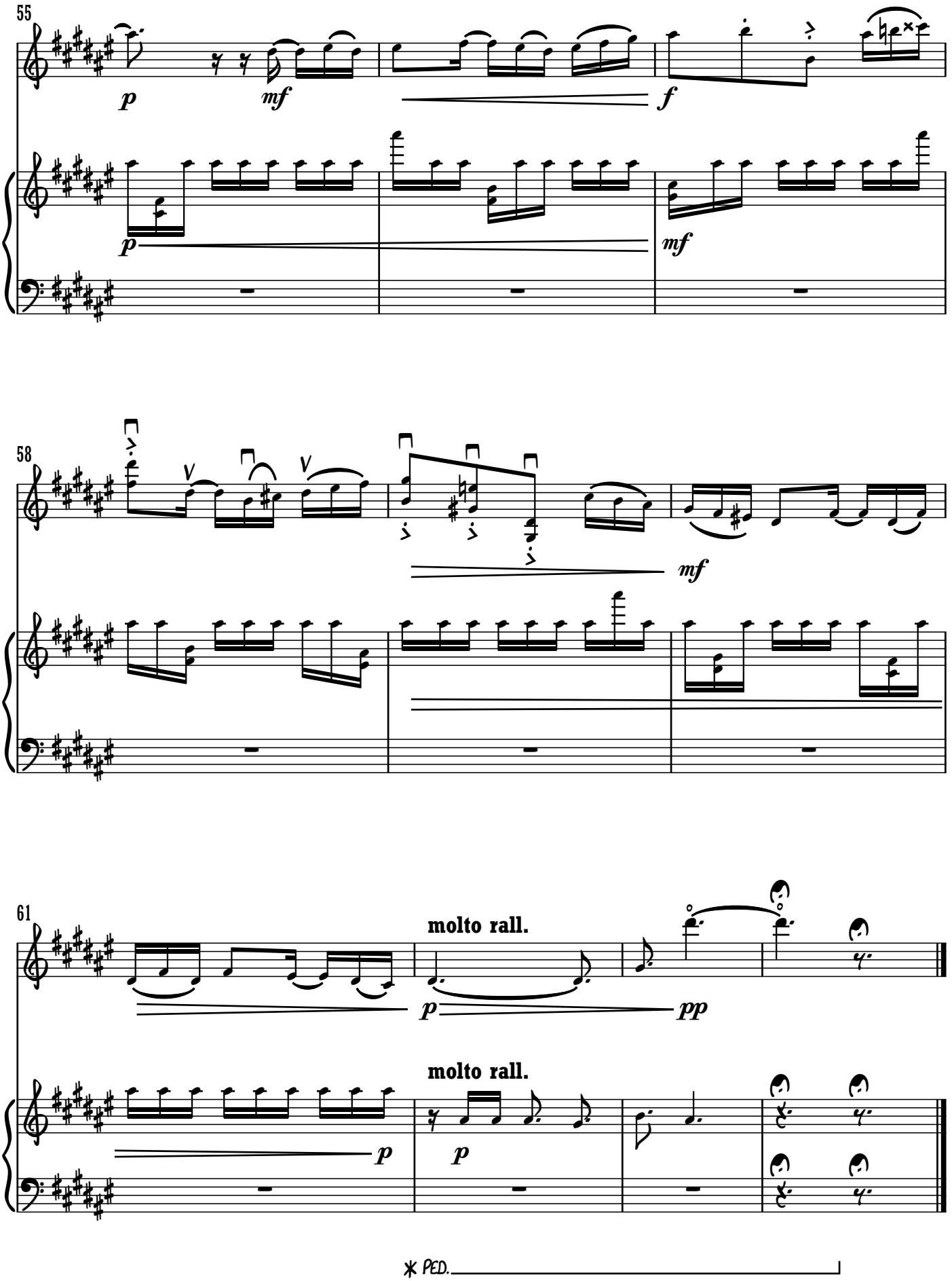

13
mf
loco
mp
15
mf
9
16
mp
9
16
p
9
16
PED.
17
f
lyrical
mp
mp


21
mf
25
p
mf
29
f
32
mp
mf
mf
mp
PED.

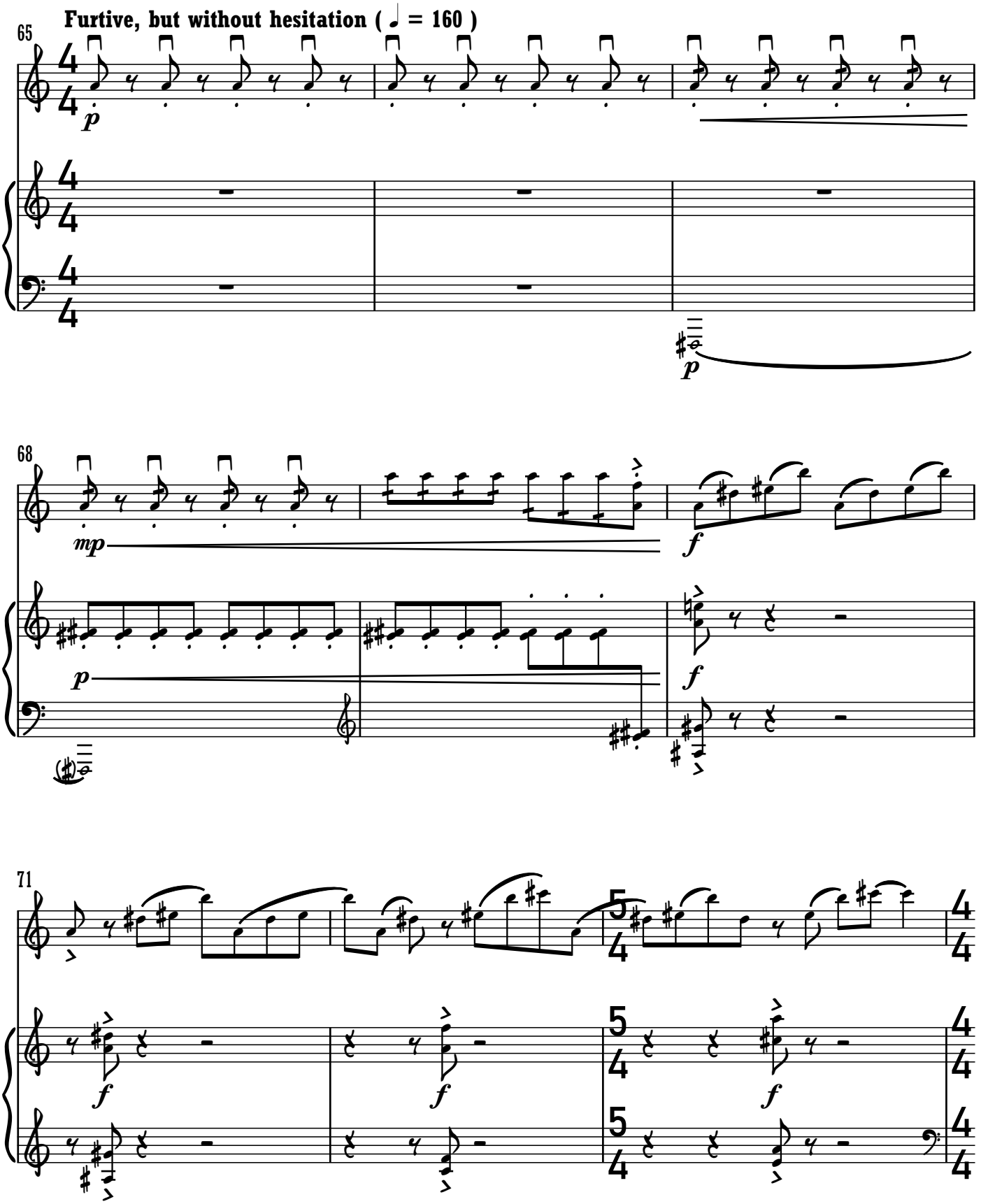

34
f
36
mp
38
mf
mf
PED.

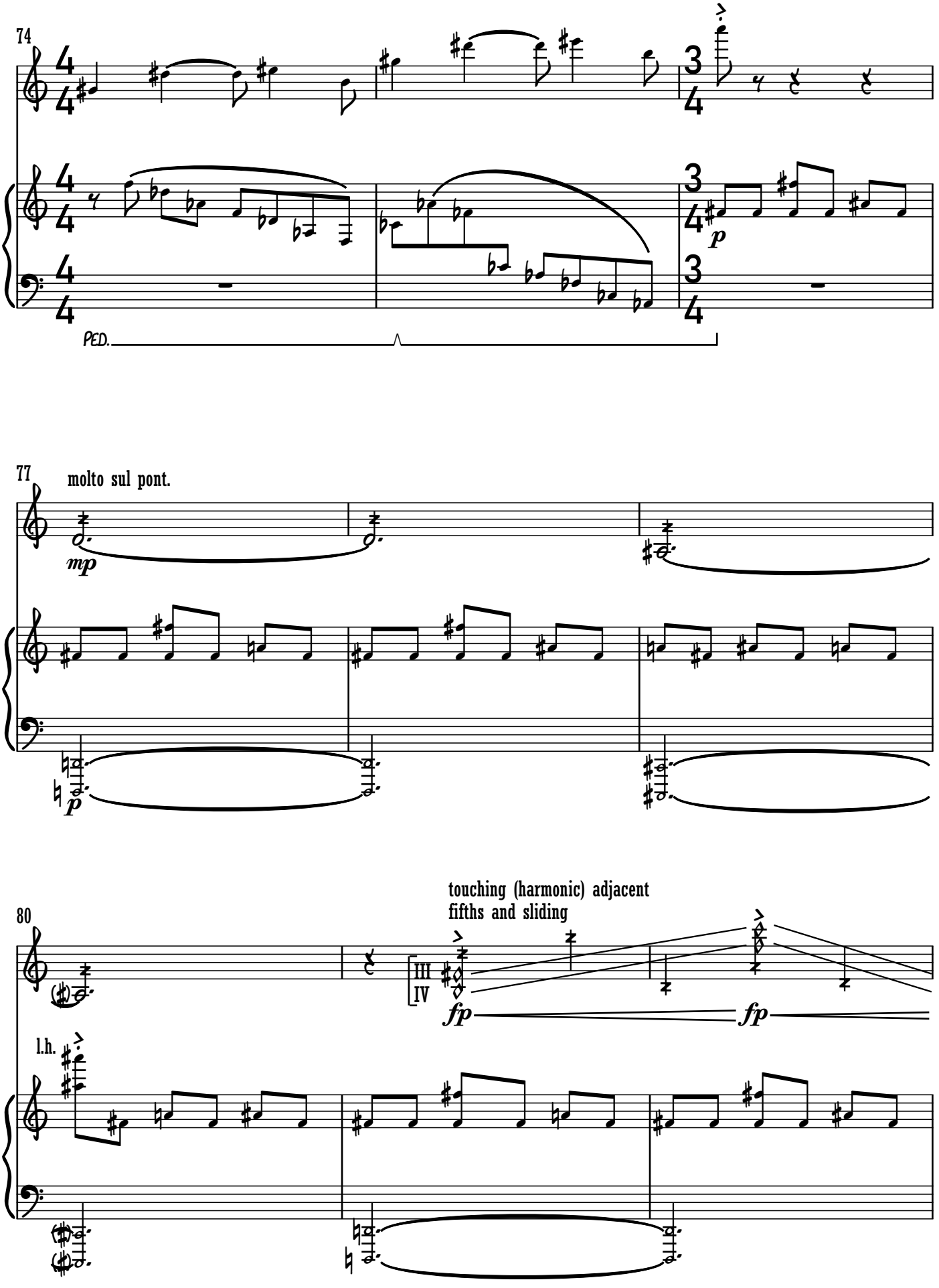

40
f
f
mf
42
mp
mp
PED.
44
f
mp
9
16
p
PED.

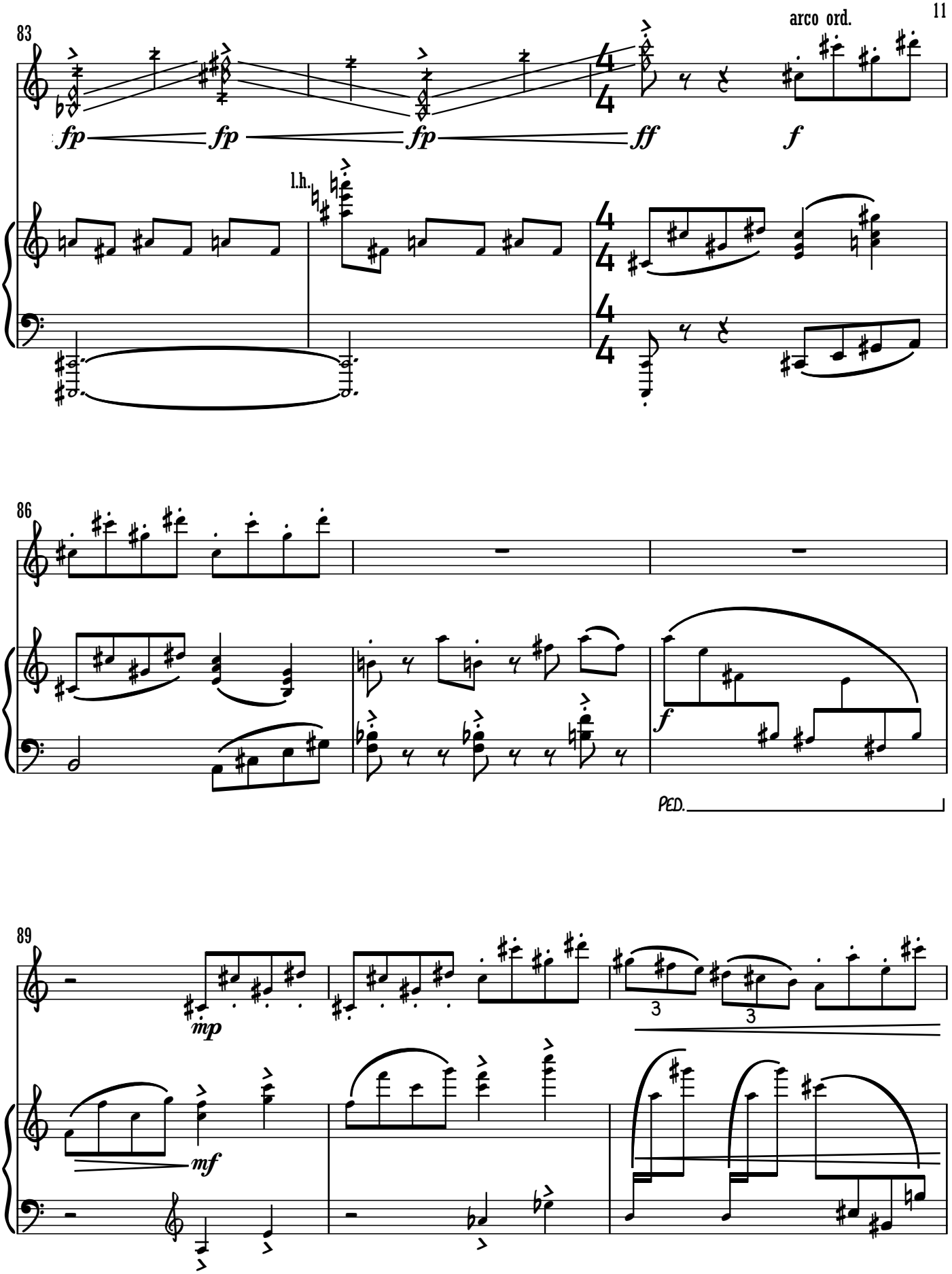

46
f
mp
49
mf
mp
52

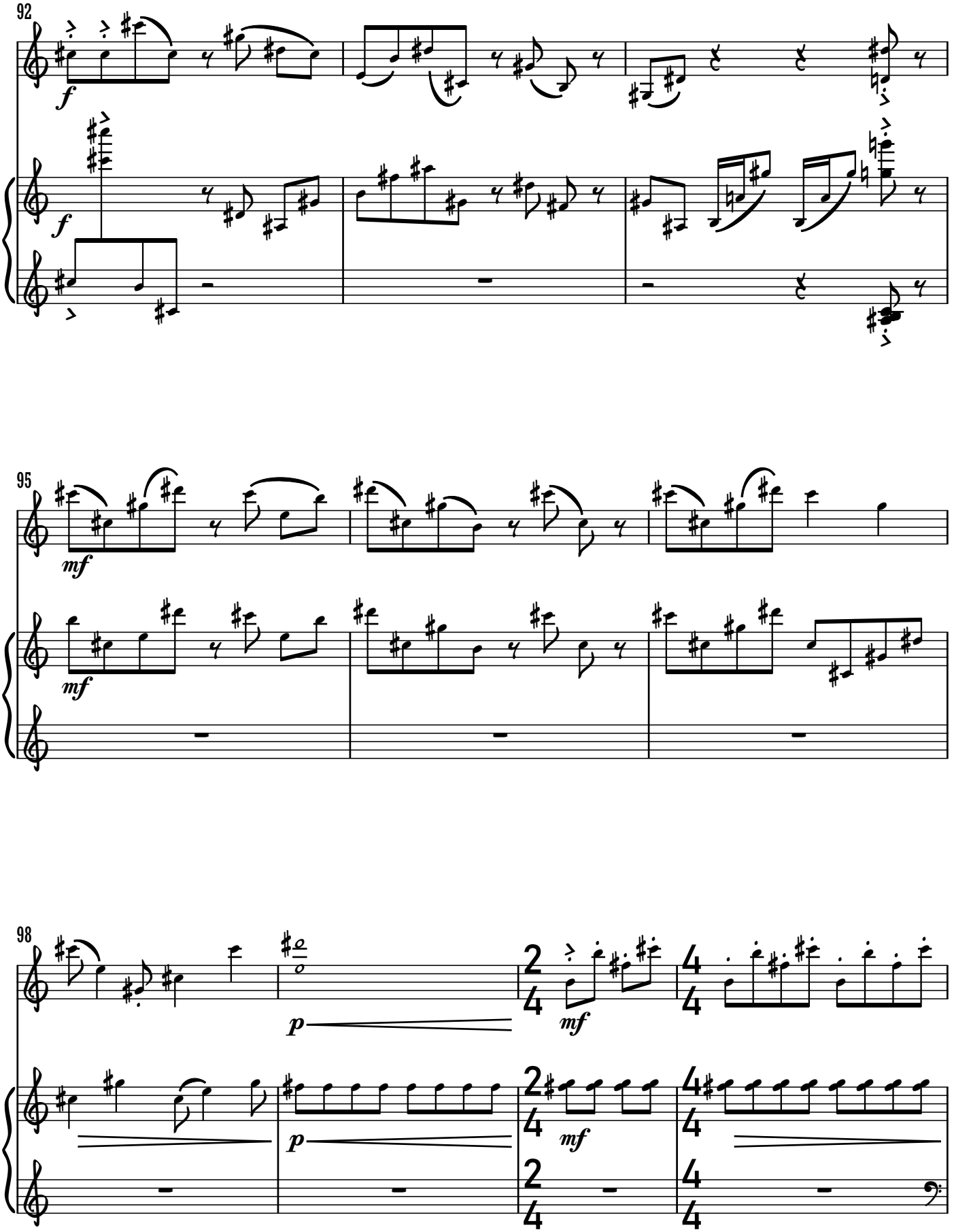

55
p
mf
f
p
mf
58
mf
61
molto rall.
p
pp
molto rall.
p
p
* PED.

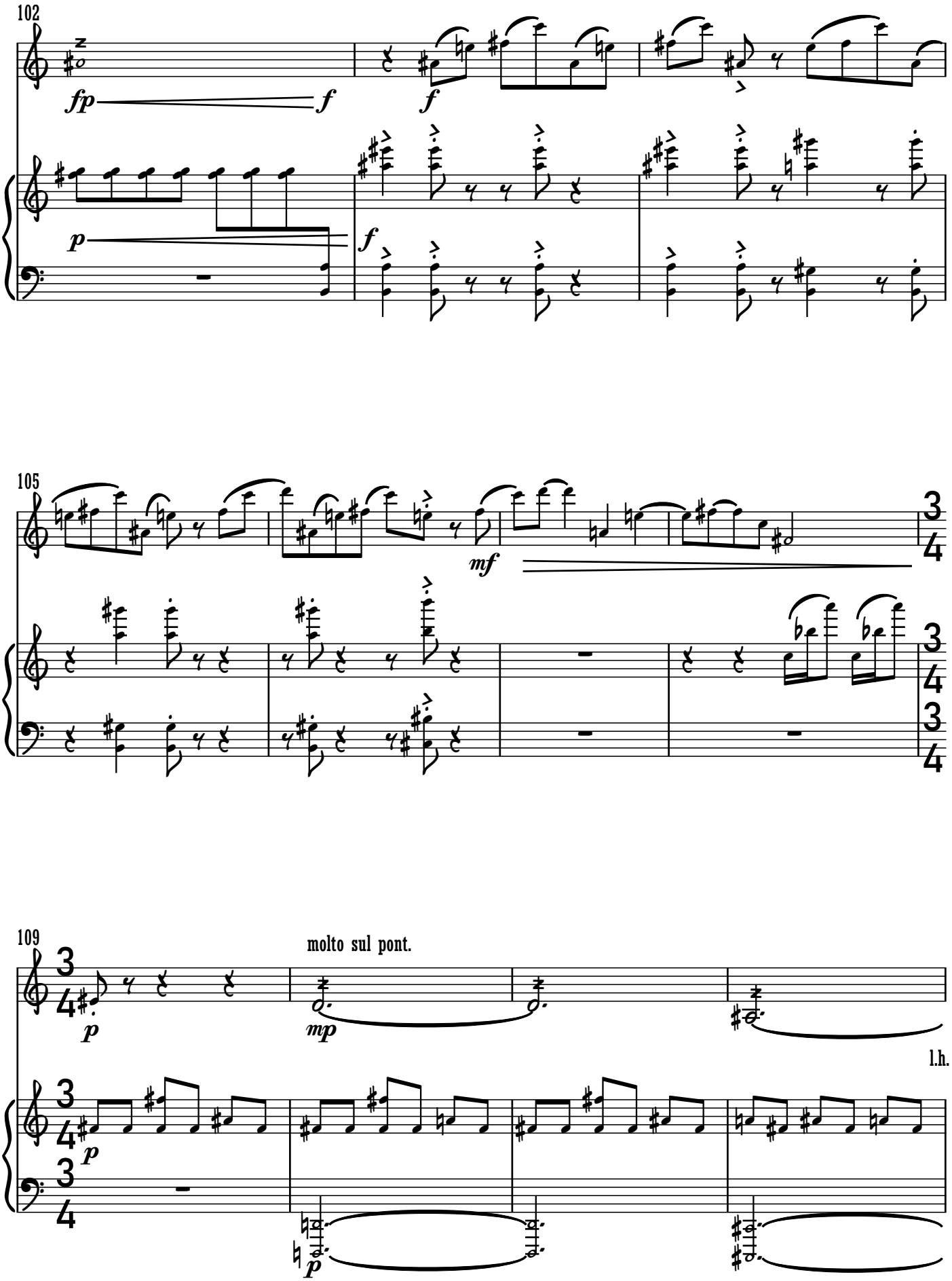
II. Unexpected Meeting

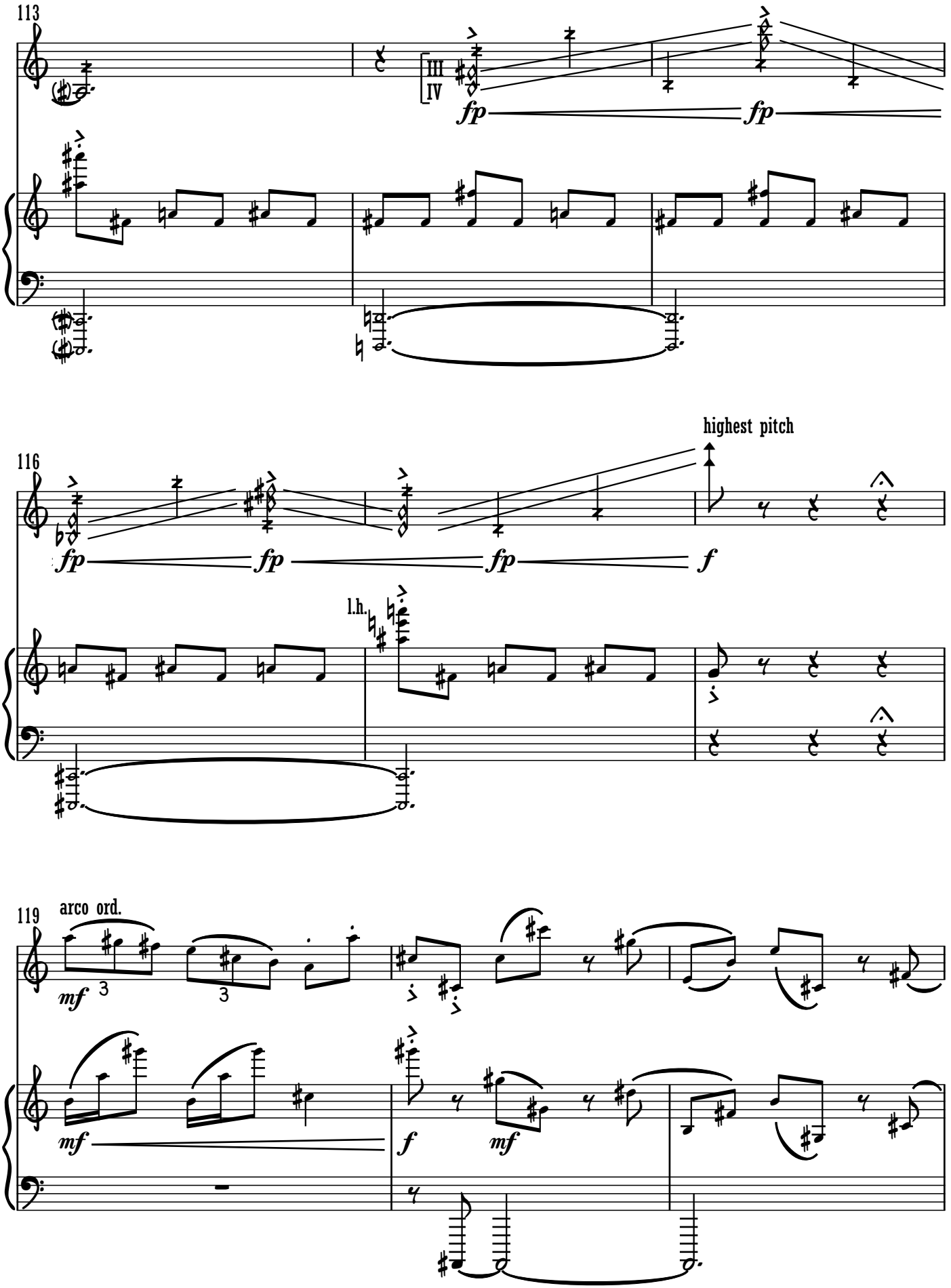


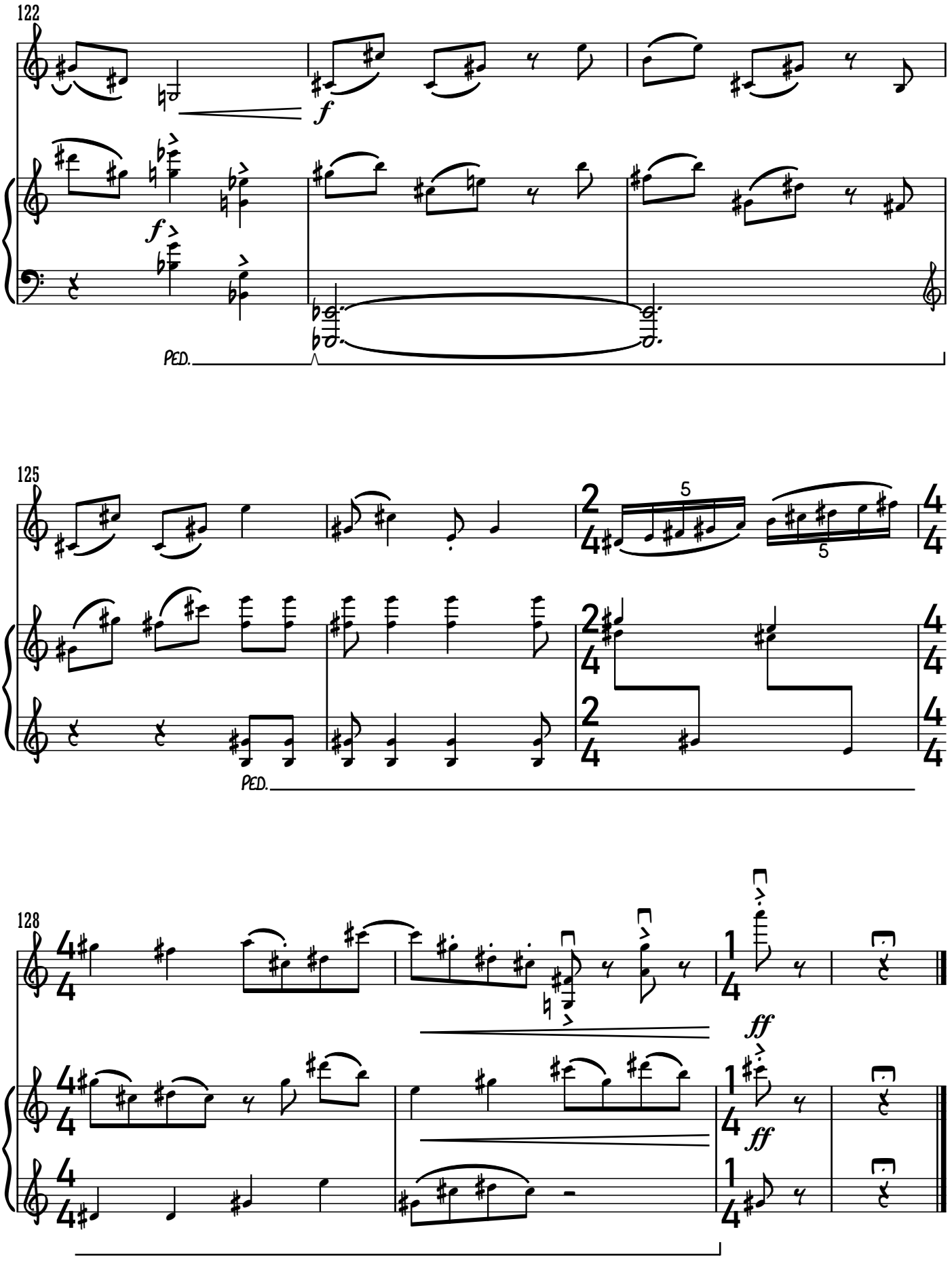

74
PED.
77
molto sul pont.
mp
p
80
touching (harmonic) adjacent
fifths and sliding
III
IV
fp
fp
l.h.


83
arco ord.
fp
fp
fp
ff
f
l.h.
86
f
PED.
89
mp
mf
3
3

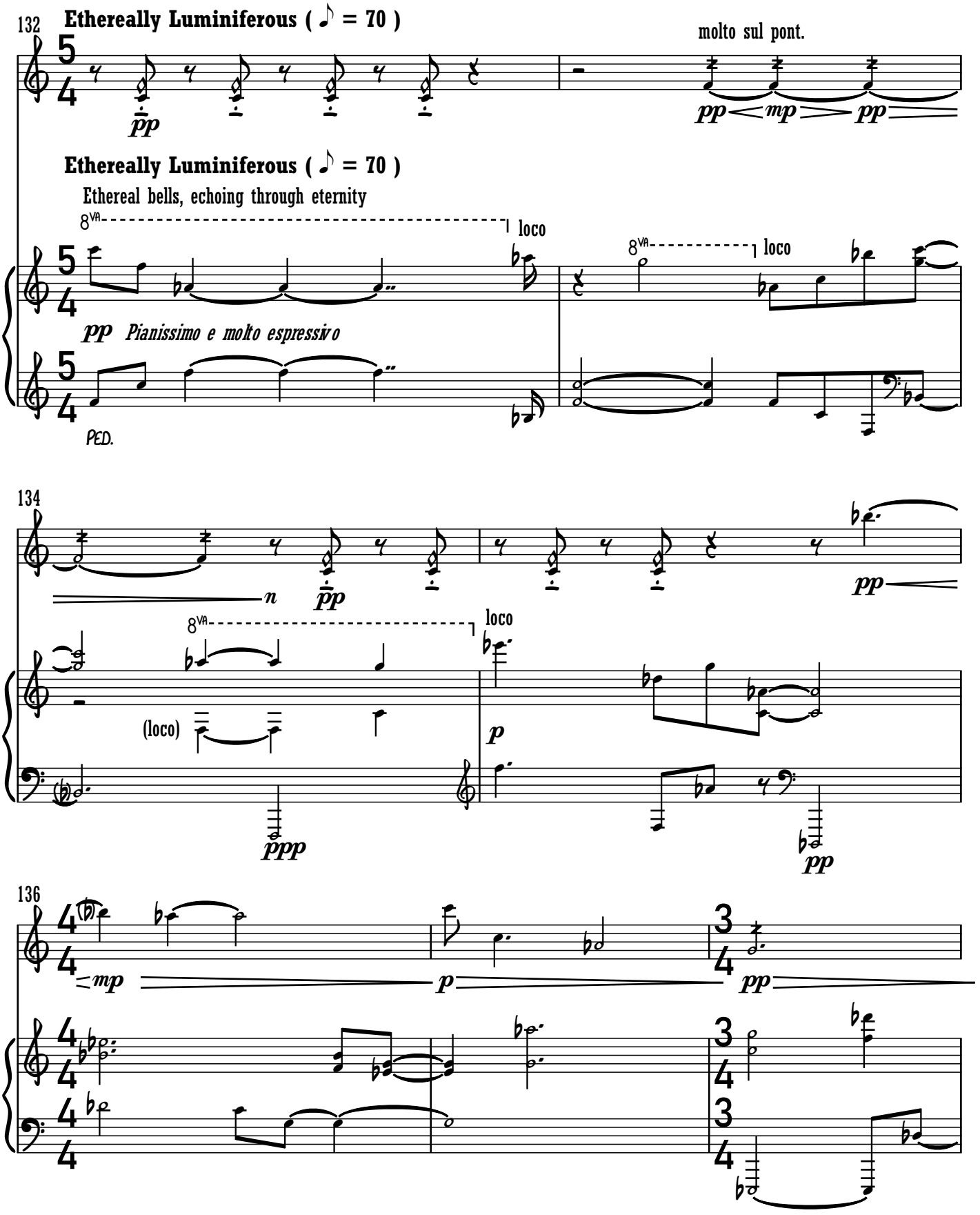

92
f
f
95
mf
mf
98
p
mf
p
mf

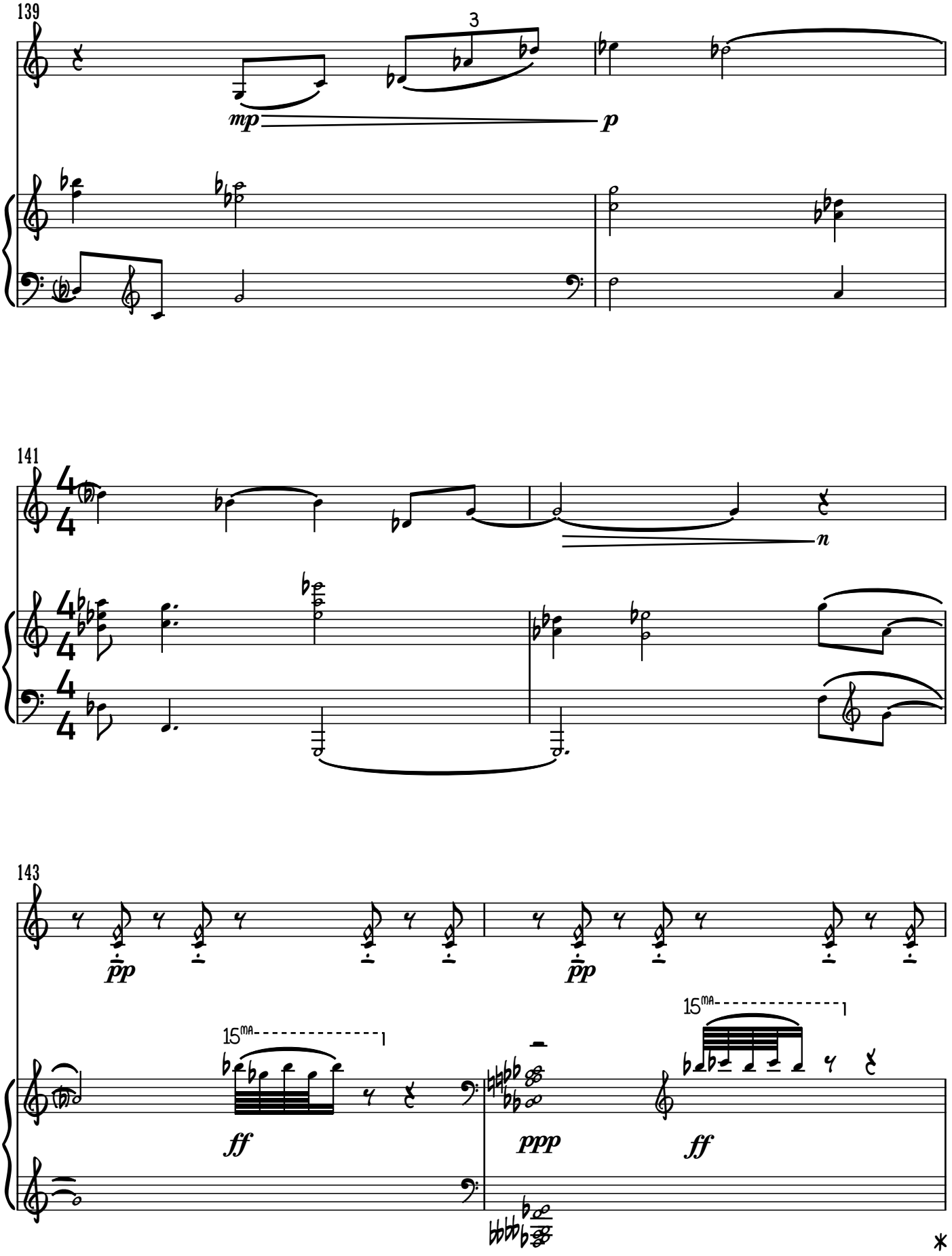

102
fp
f
f
p
f
105
mf
3
4
109
molto sul pont.
p
mp
l.h.
p
p

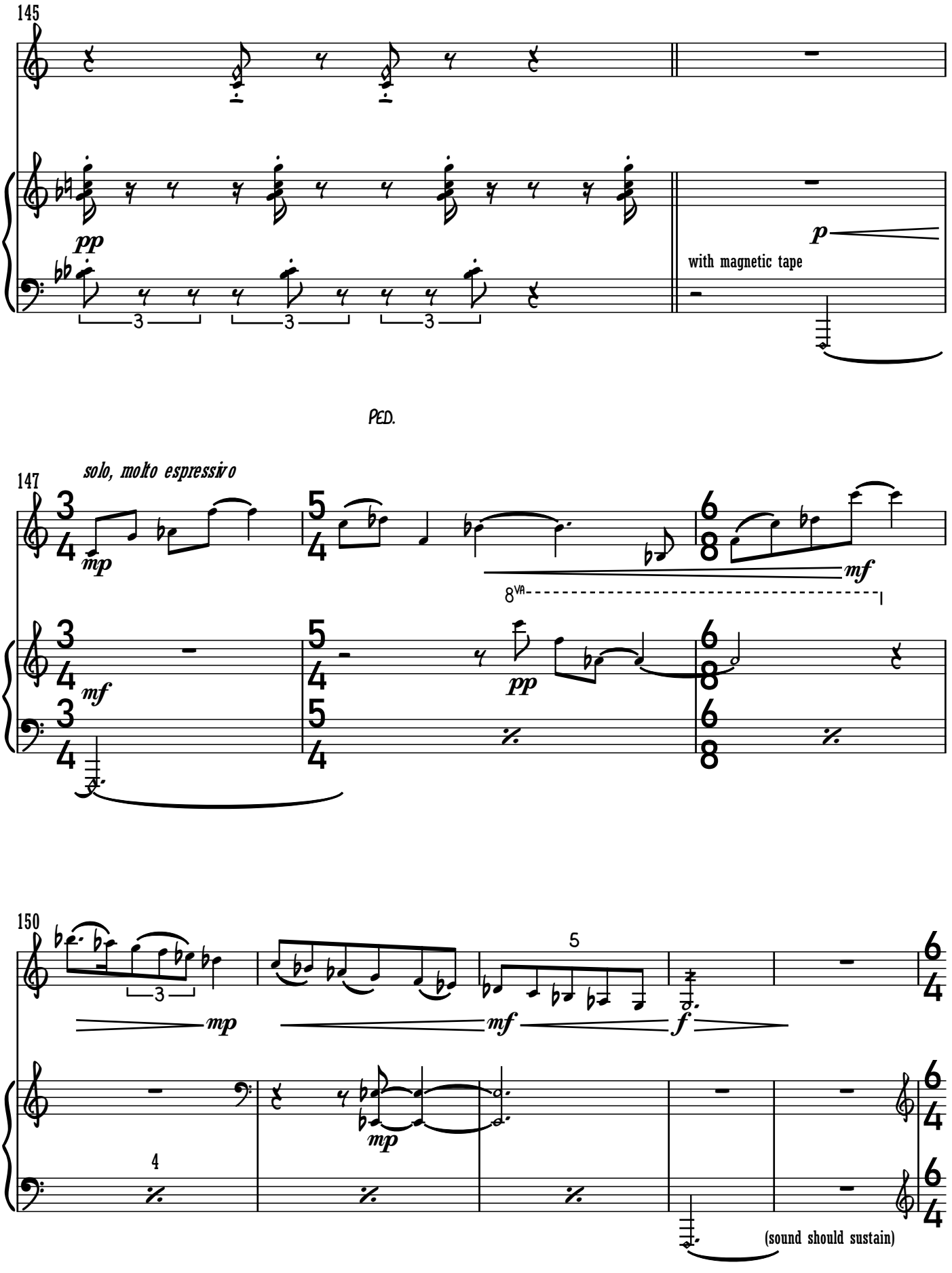

113
III
IV
fp
fp
116
highest pitch
fp
fp
fp
f
l.h.
119
arco ord.
mf
3
3
mf
f
mf

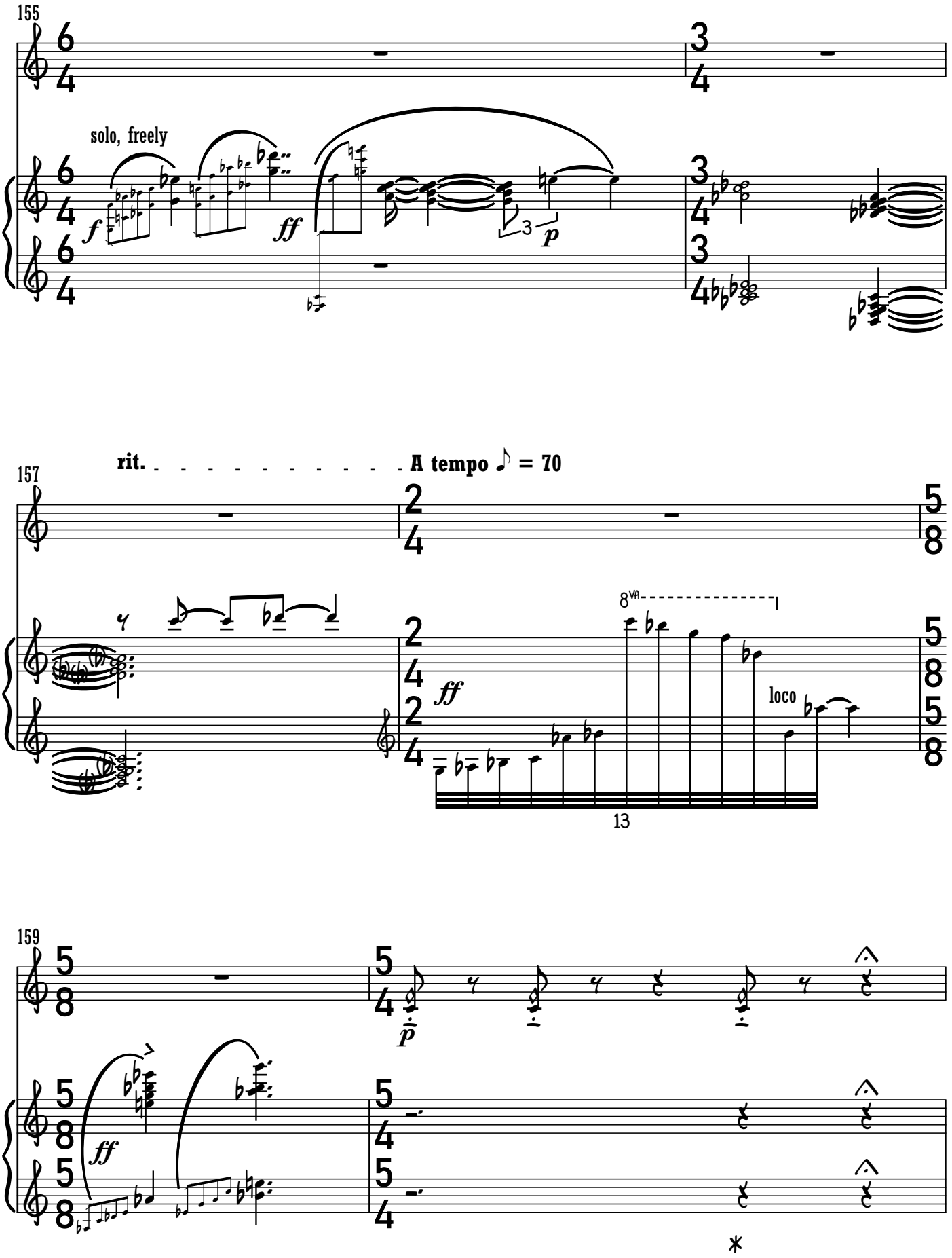

122
f
f
PED.
125
5
5
PED.
128
ff
ff

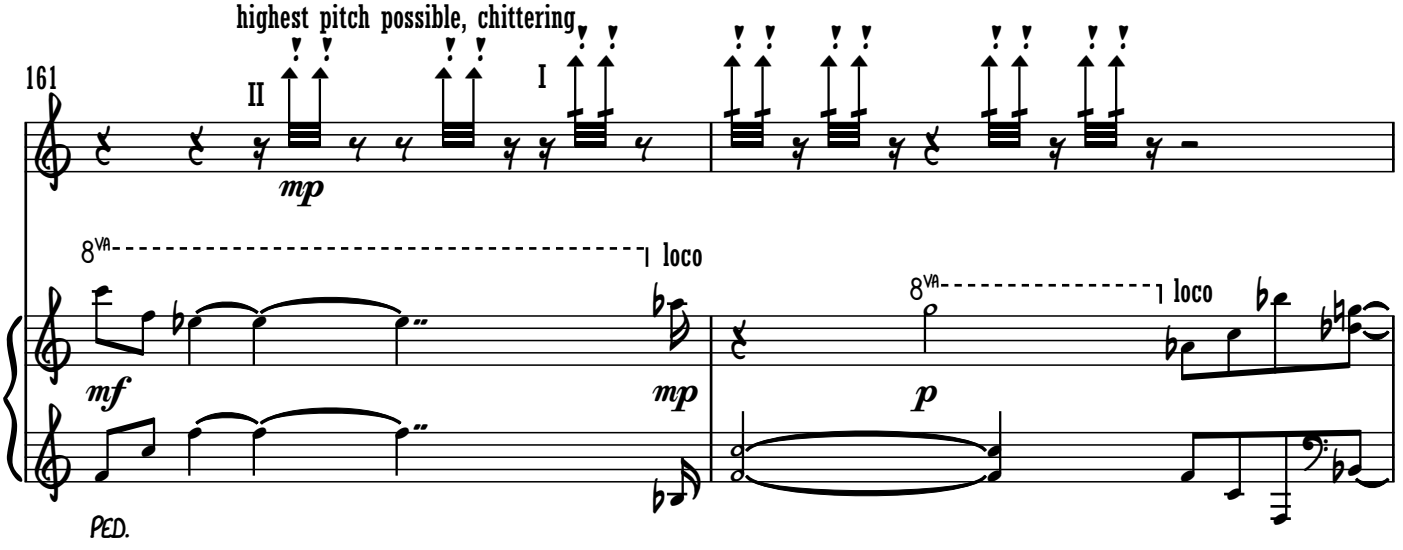
III. More than You Know

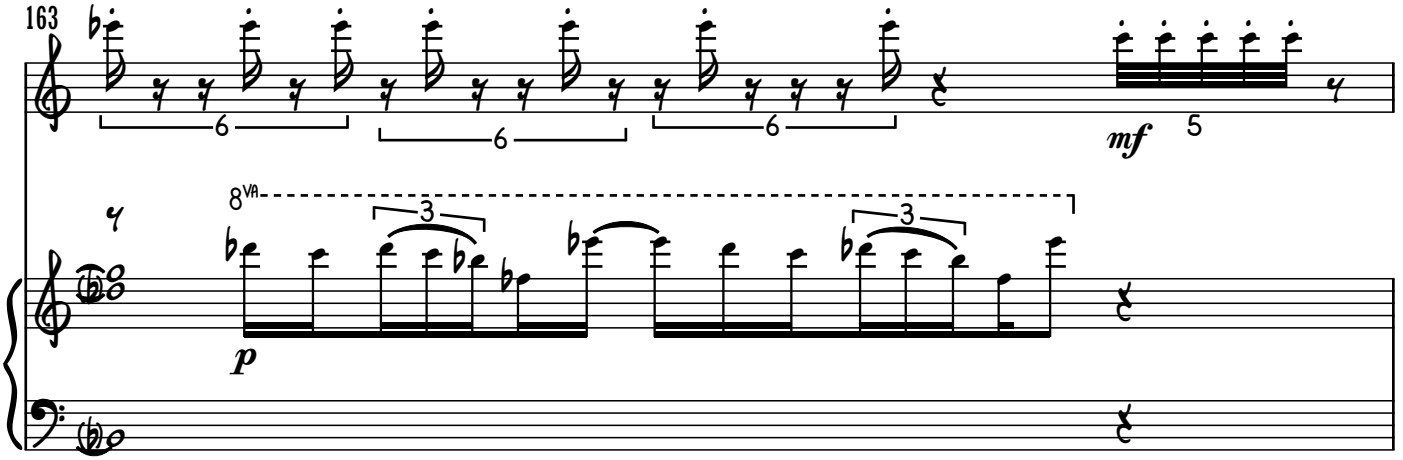



139
3
mp
p
141
n
143
pp
pp
15ma
ff
ppp
15ma
ff

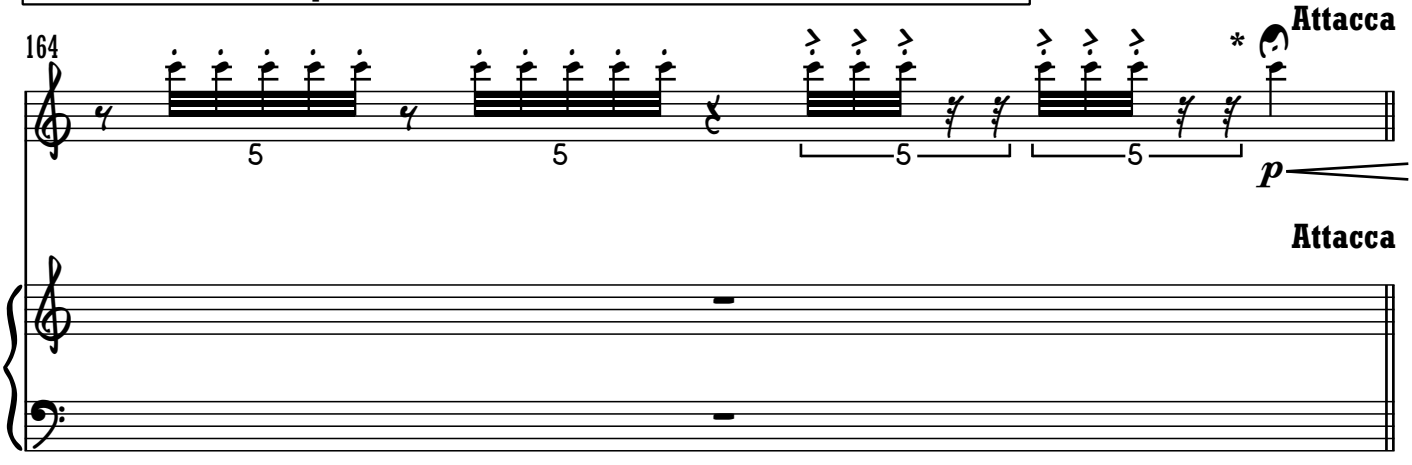

145
pp
p
with magnetic tape
PED.
147
solo, molto espressivo
mp
mf
8va
mf
pp
150
mp
mf
f
mp
(sound should sustain)


155
solo, freely
f
ff
p
3
157
rit.
A tempo ♪ = 70
ff
8VA
loco
13
159
p
ff
*



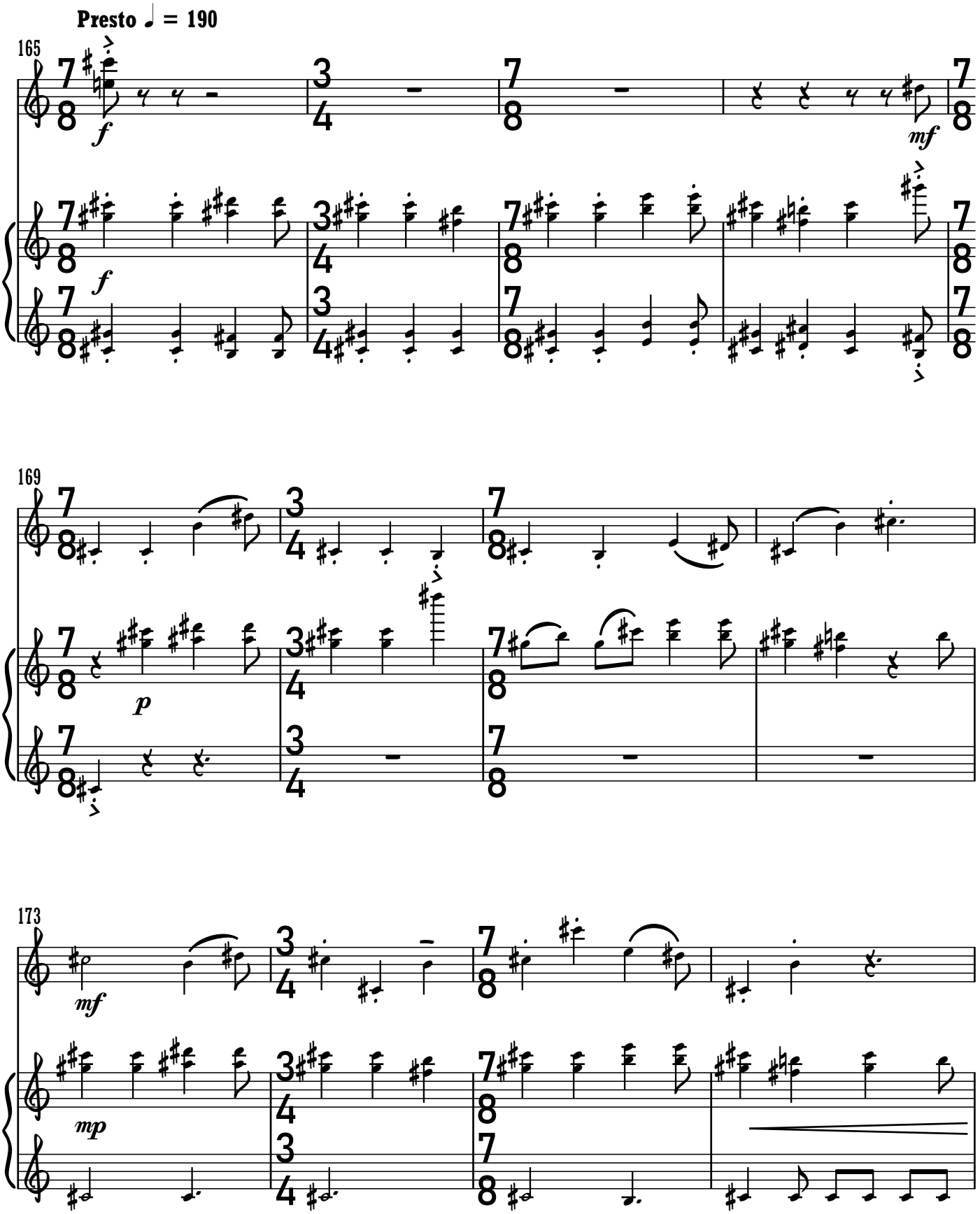


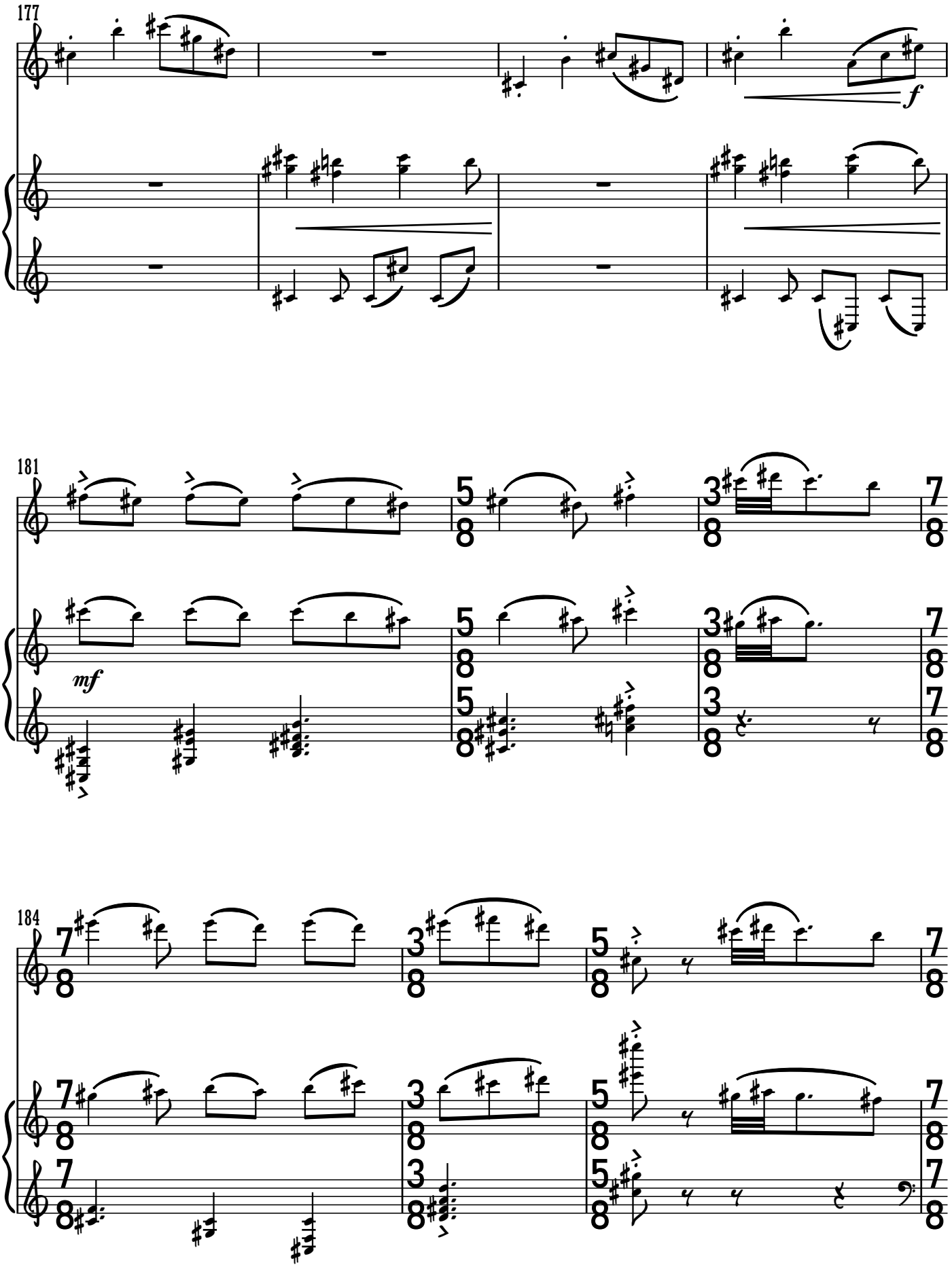
***Note: If one is not playing the fourth piece in this set, do not play the last note in this piece. Rather, stop after the final quintuplet. The pianist should allow all resonating notes to fade in the piano (assuming any are still resounding. If need be, the pianist can softly damped the notes with their hands inside the piano.**

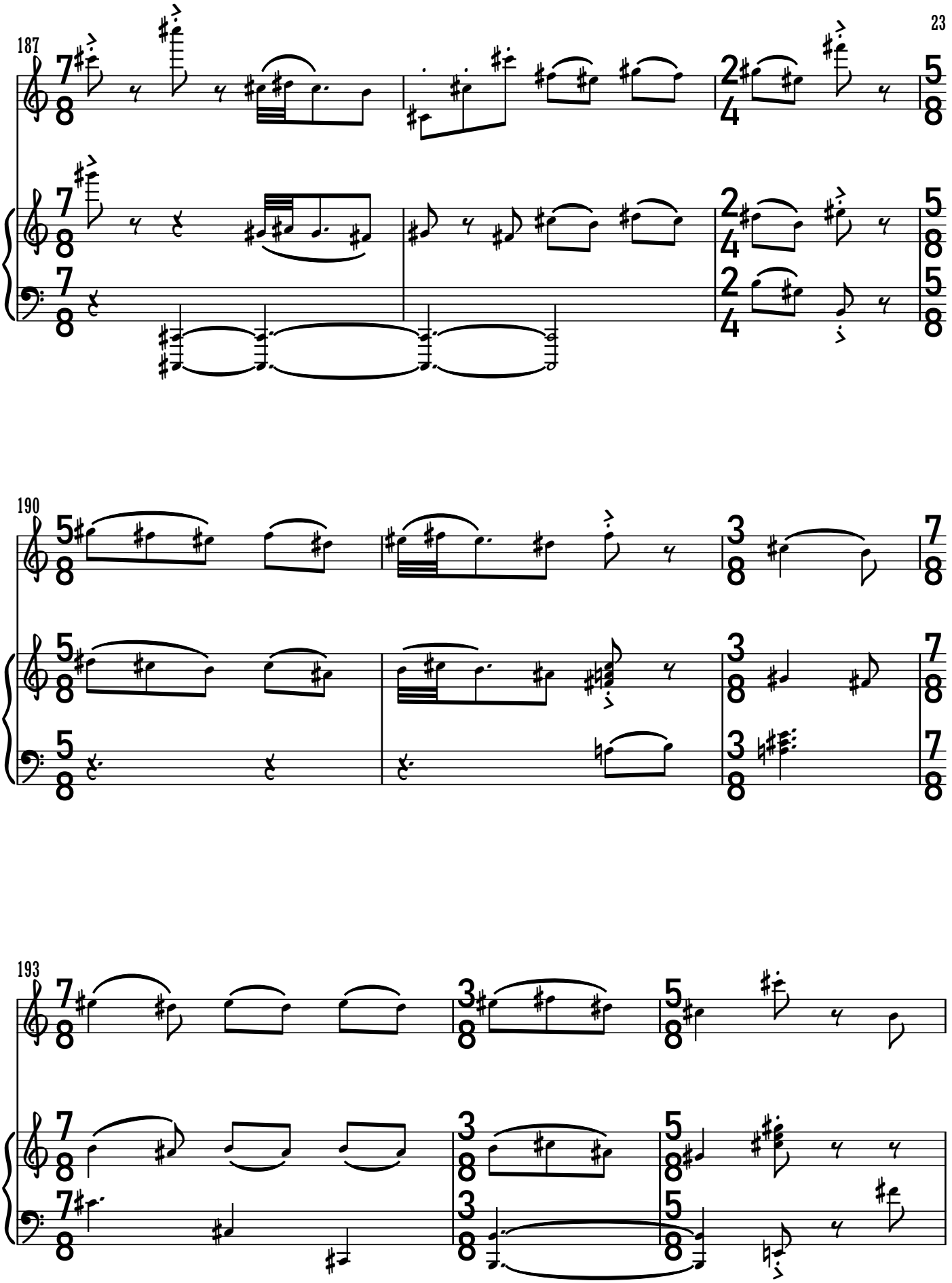


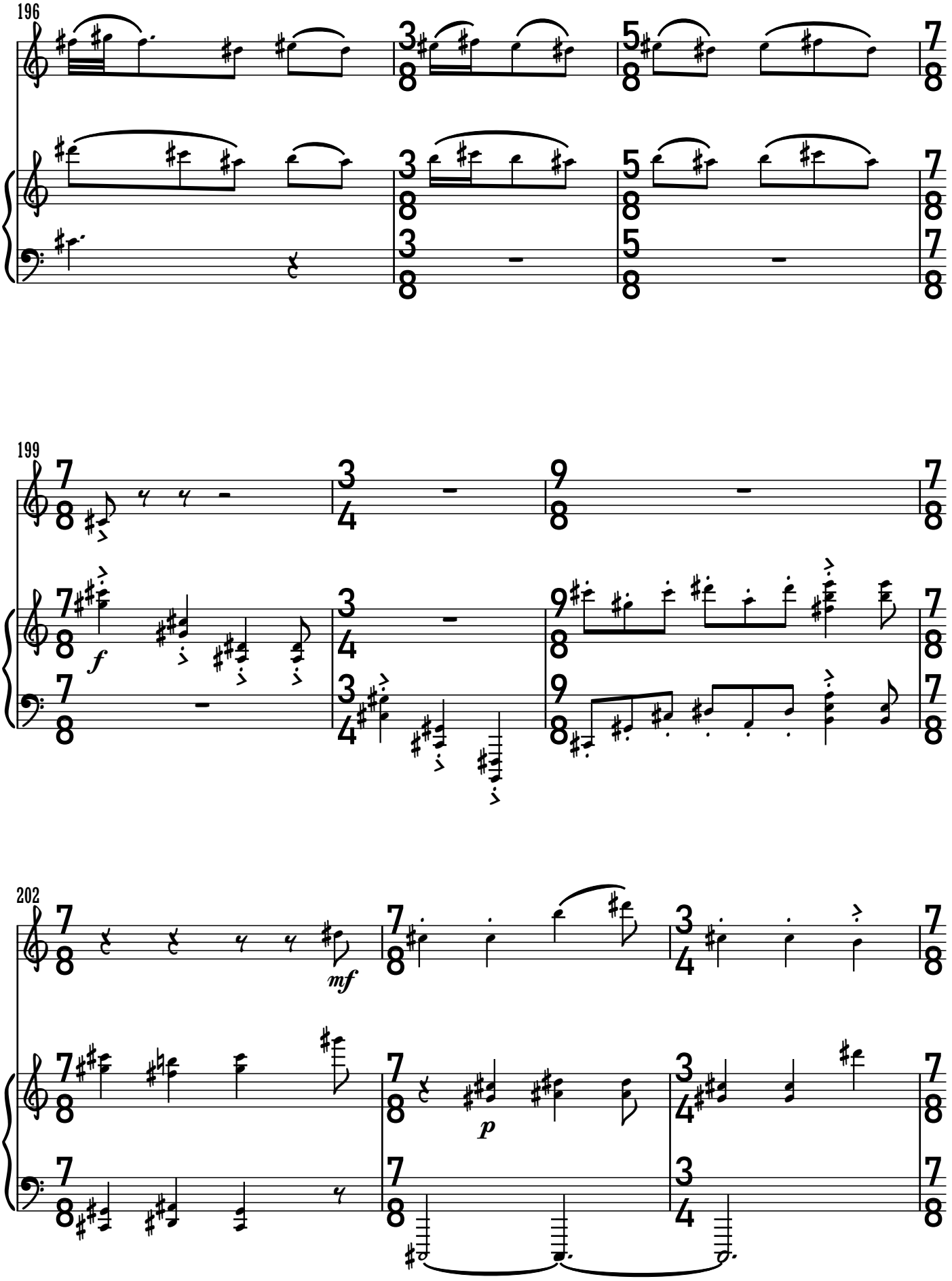
*

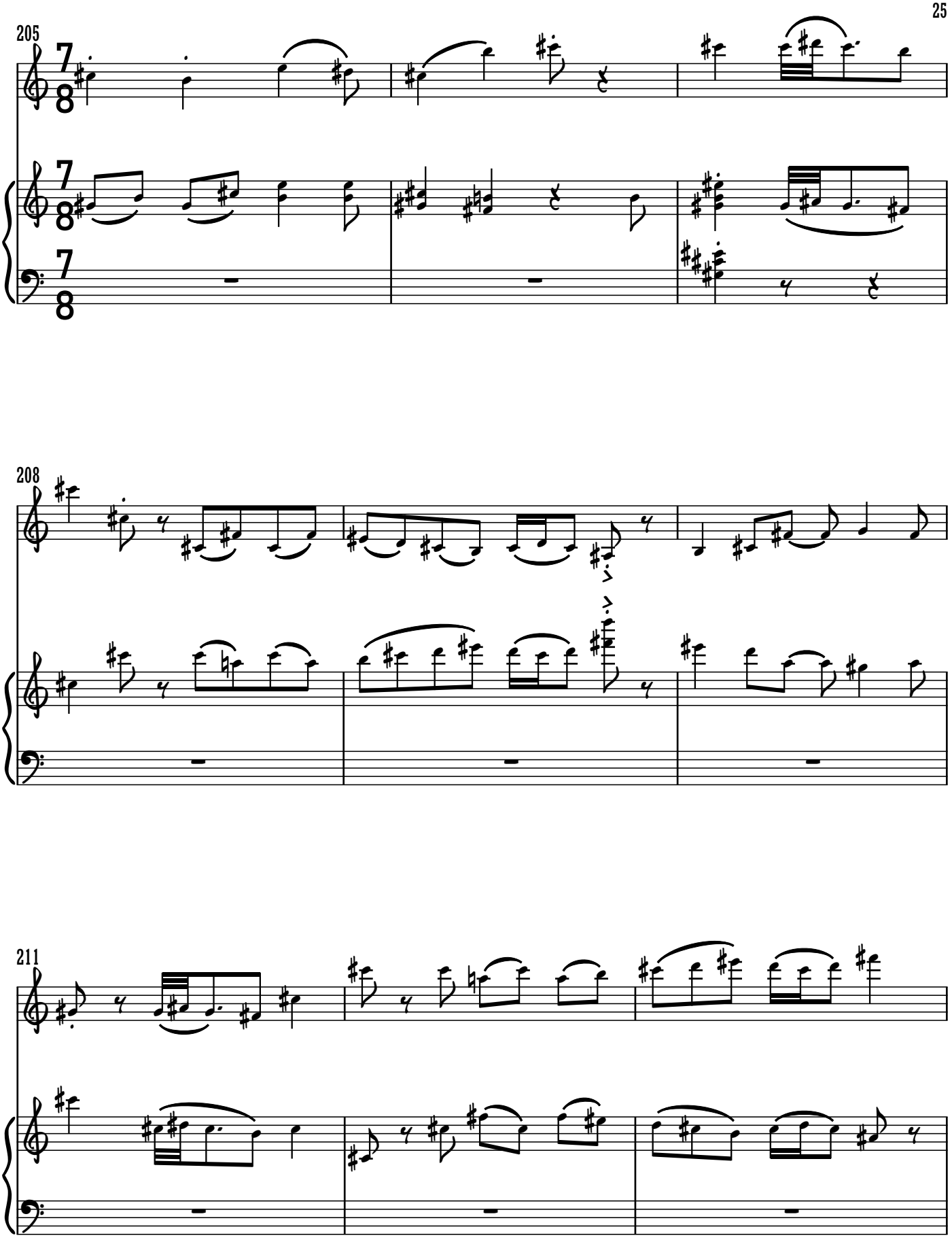
IV. The Adventure Begins

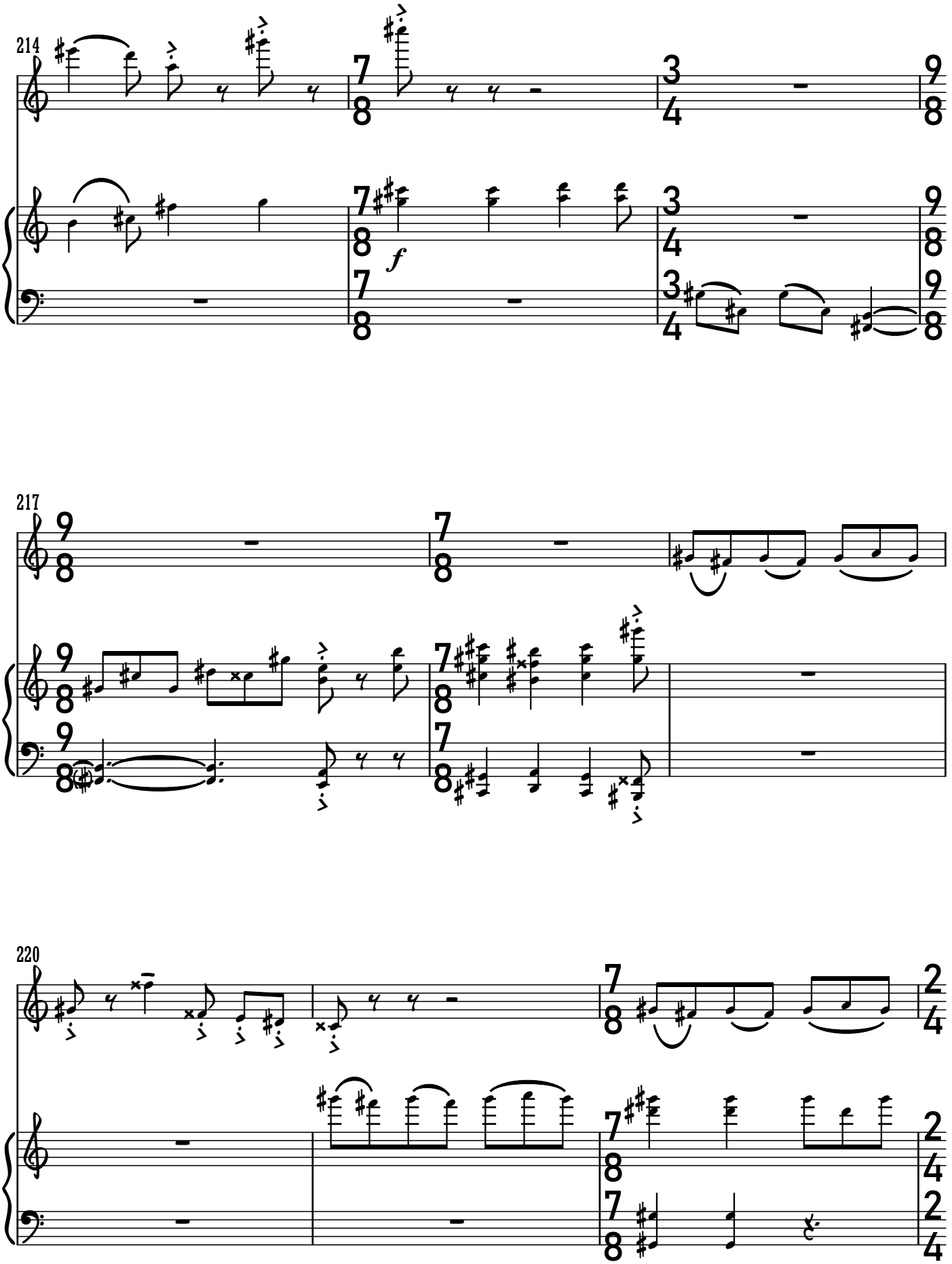


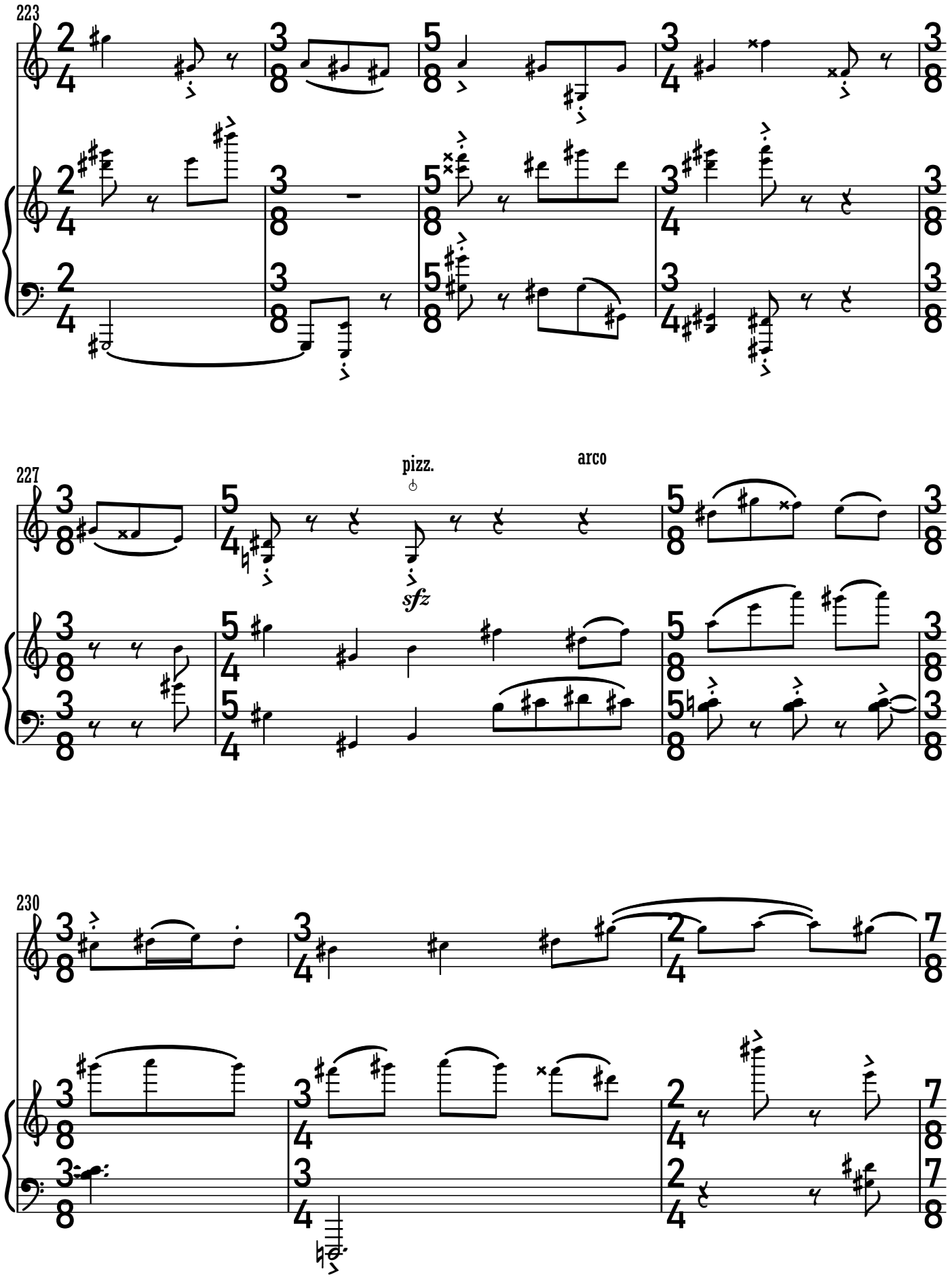

177
f
181
mf
184

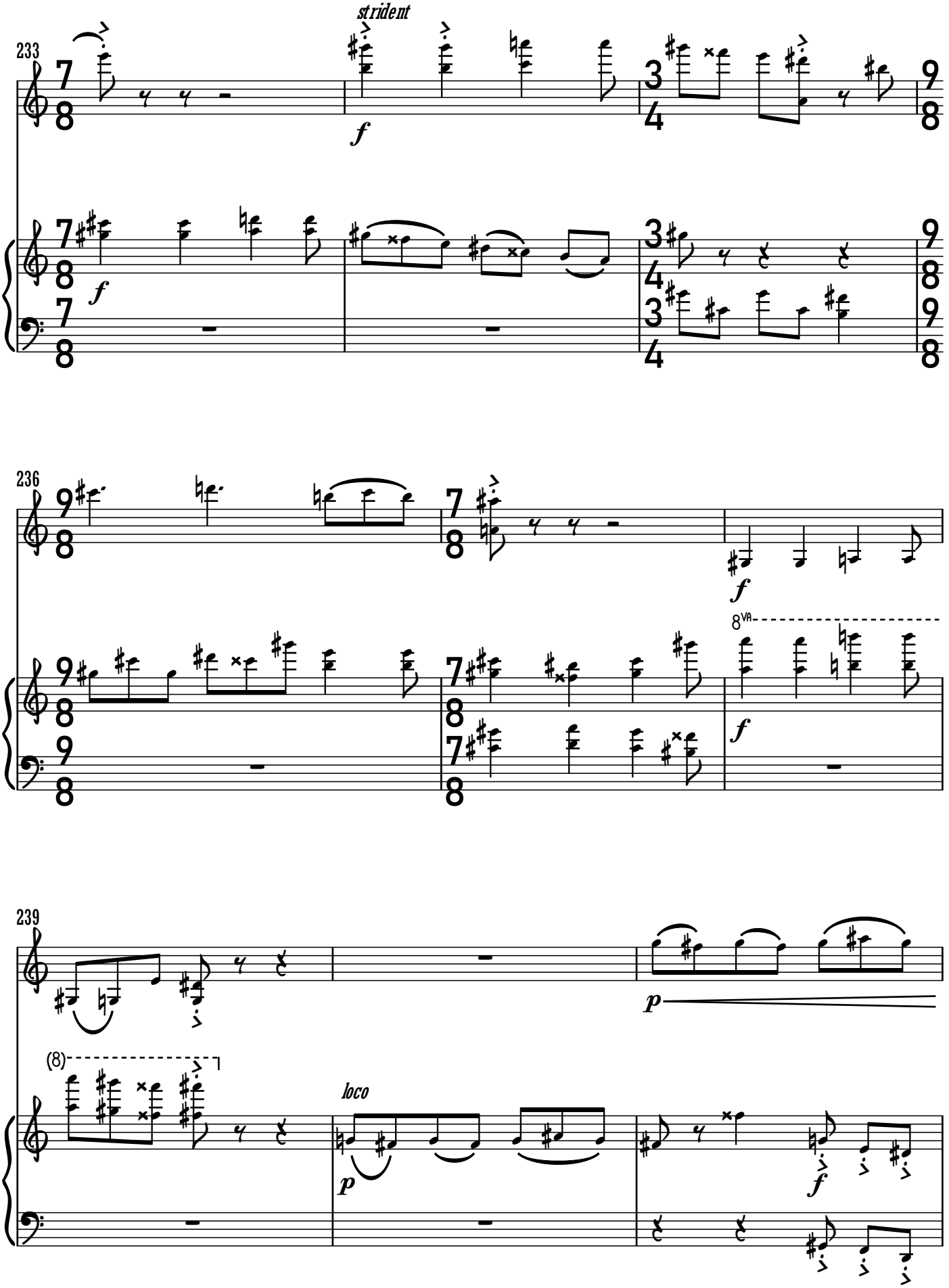

187
190
193

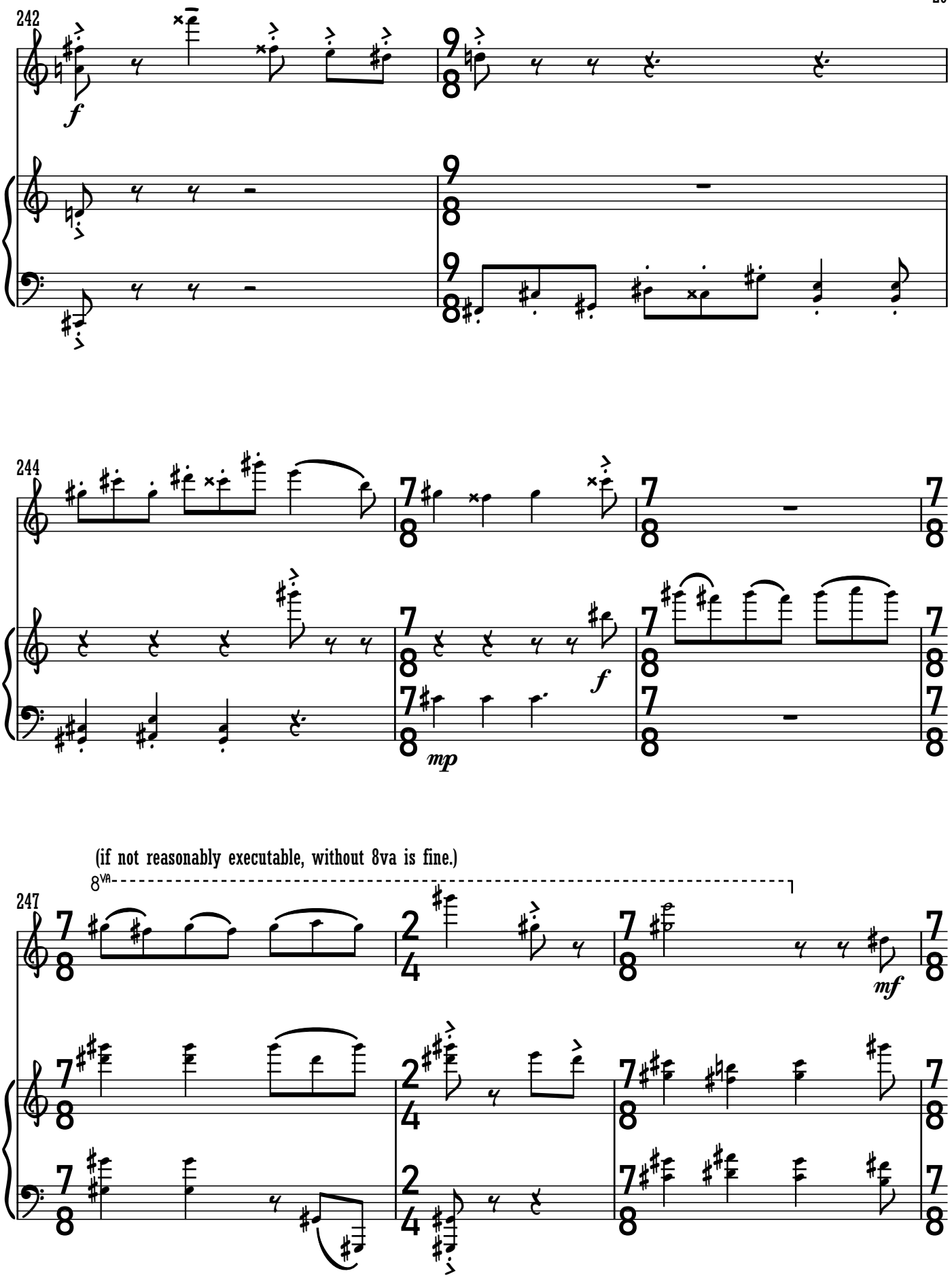

196
199
f
202
mf
p

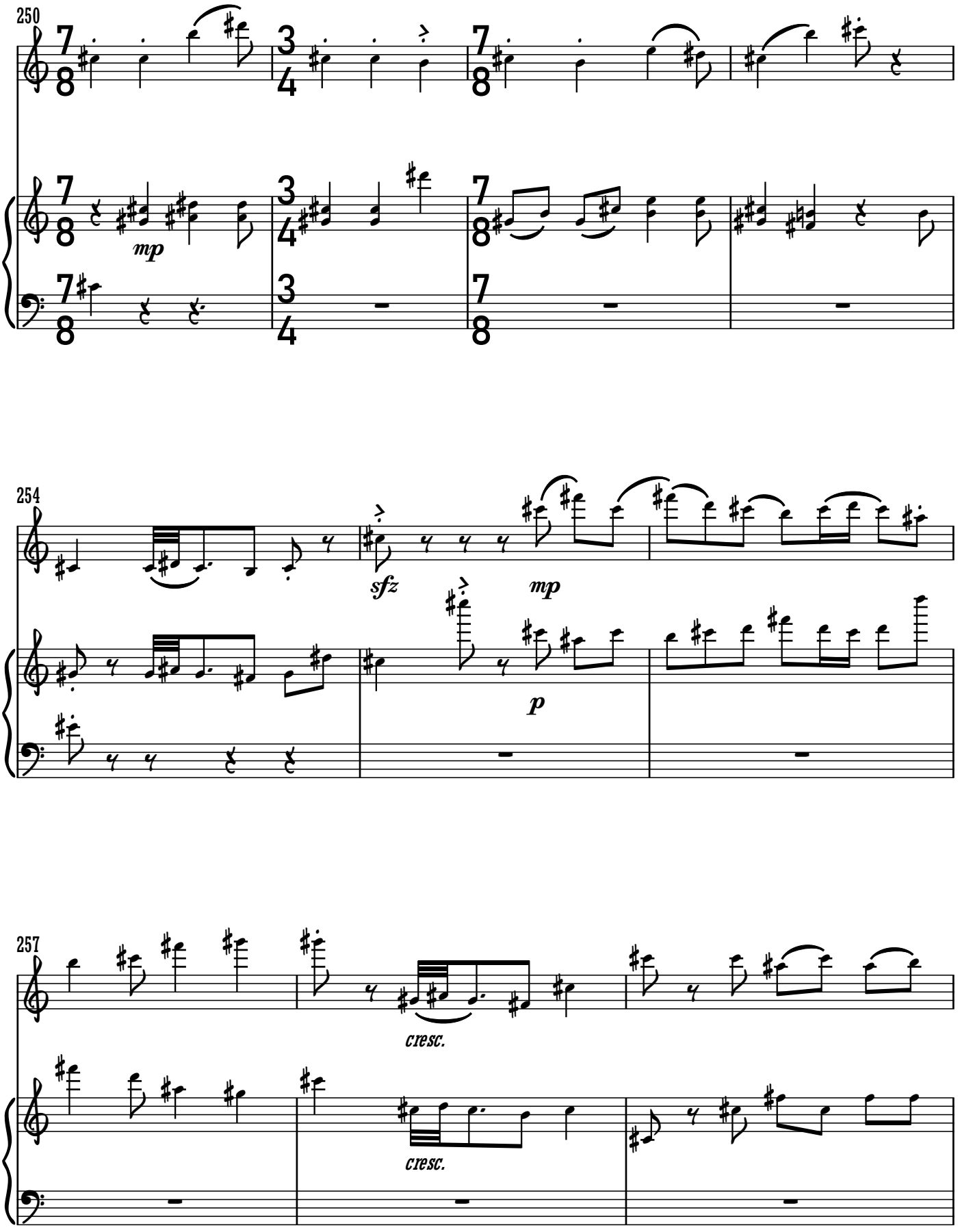

205
208
211

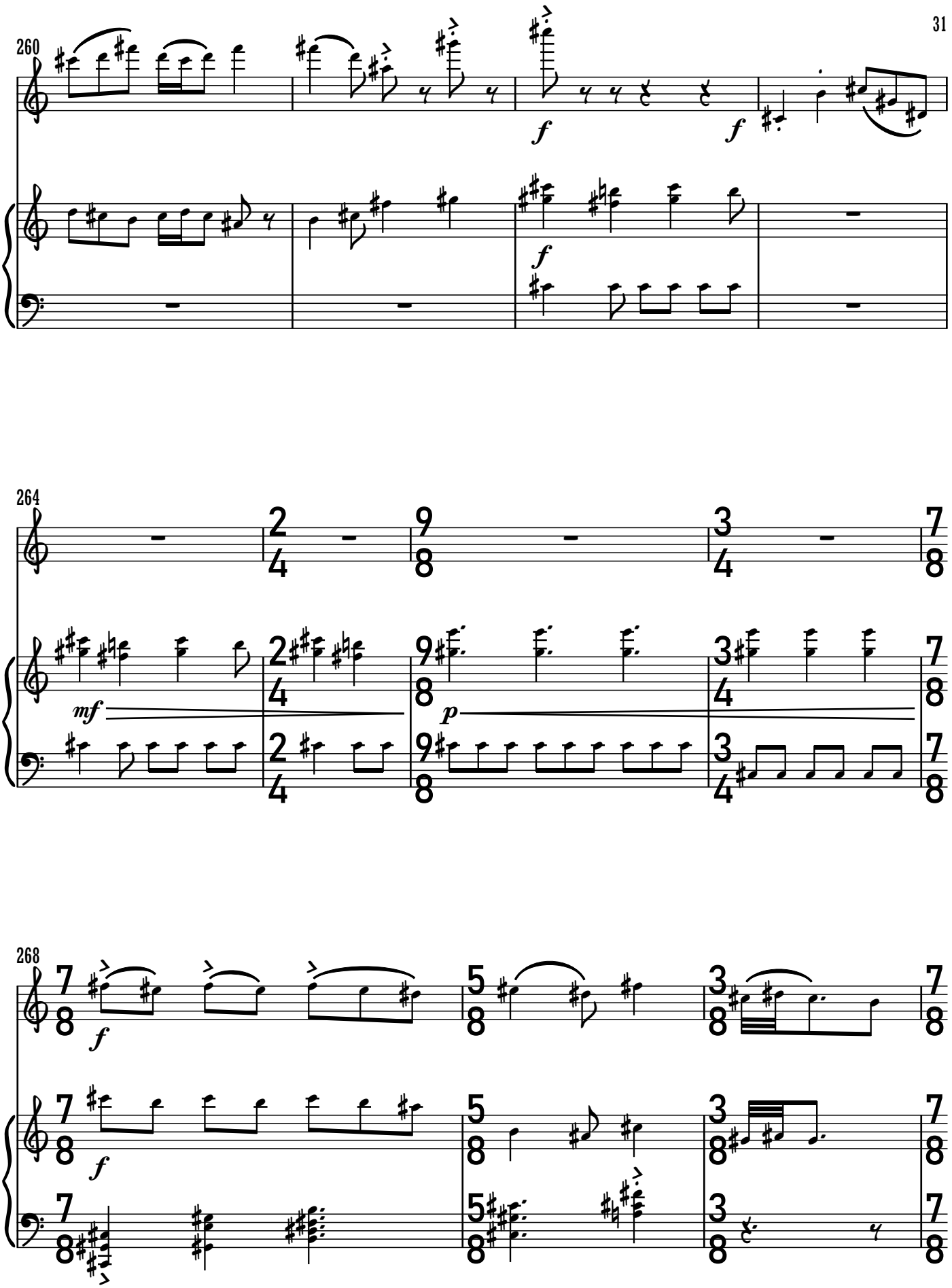

214
f
217
220

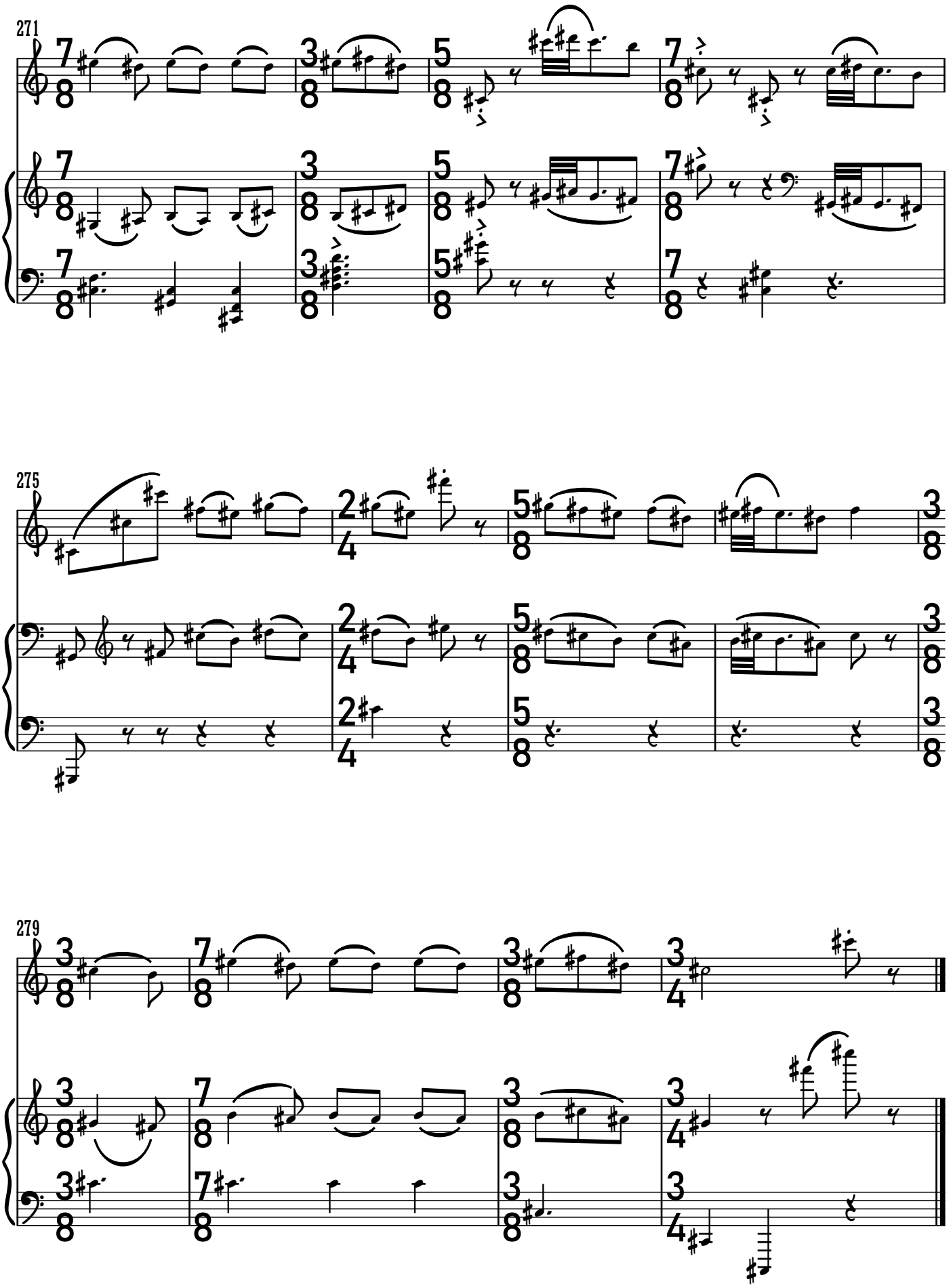

223
227
pizz.
arco
sfz
230


strident
233
f
f
236
f
8va
f
239
p
(8)
loco
p
f


242
f
244
mp
f
(if not reasonably executable, without 8va is fine.)
8va
247
mf


250
mp
254
sfz
mp
p
257
cresc.
cresc.


260
f
f
f
264
mf
p
268
f
f


271
275
279