Frank Stemper

THE SENSATION OF WAKING

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for
Baritone
Flute/piccolo – Clarinet/bass clarinet – Trumpet
Violin – Cello – C. bass
Piano

Original Text

for the Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players

Notes

•Accidentals DO carry through the measure, but there are often additional clarifying accidentals.

•Staccatos should all be played the same, no matter the written duration: short and sharp.

Voice:

•When singing, the voice should always be heard as the principal voice, i.e., dynamics may need to be adjusted in the voice and/or the ensemble.

•The baritone is asked to sing using various different types of vocal quality:

••normal, full baritone

••falsetto

••head voice:

When in the higher range, it is OK to blend between head voice and falsetto as the singer feels comfortable and natural. The desire is a lighter sound, rather than the full baritone voice. Of course, when it is very high in the range, it must be falsetto.

••á la Jazz

This is more of a "cool" pop sound, slightly nasal or from the throat, with some words over-pronounced, for stylistic effect.

••Sprechstimme:

The single use of traditional Sprechstimme should be more theatrical with a gliss on the final word, as the building energy of the music suddenly recharges for the final push to the climax of the piece.

••Flustern-Stimme (whisper singing):

A very breathy singing – something like Marilyn Monroe singing "Happy Birthday" to JFK – but without the sexual innuendo, more like trying to sing without waking others who are sleeping. It should be executed directly to the audience – as if letting them in on private thoughts. Similar to Sprechstimme, it should be equal parts singing and whispering. Therefore in order to project the effect to the audience, the singer should almost yell the whispering, sacrificing part of the song quality when necessary. *(It's an invention that makes Ms. Monroe forever connected to Mr. Schönberg, and who knows, maybe this is the first time that a composer has incorporated such an effect into a "legitimate," "serious" piece of "music," and so the two Los Angeles icons may allow me to tag along to their hide-away, although Gertrud and The Yankee Clipper are probably unhappy with me for making the introduction.)*

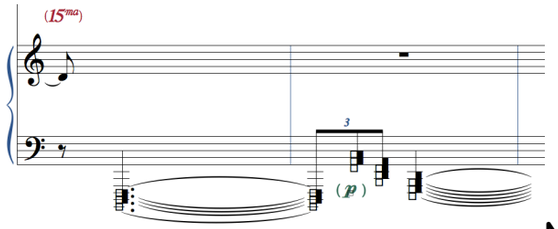
•Occasionally, I have written in the final consonant at the conclusion of a word/phrase using an "X" for the notehead.
If the consonant is a *small* letter, i.e. (t), it merely is there for clarity and, although it should be heard, it shouldn't necessarily be exaggerated.
If the consonant is a *capital* letter, i.e. (T), the consonant sound at the end of that phrase should be exaggerated.
The use of this concept for words ending in "S" actually becomes thematic in the piece. See "Ringing" below, for details.

Piano:

•The piano often has different dynamics in the right and left hands.

•The sustain pedal is ad lib, unless specifically indicated. It is often indicated to be depressed for long periods of time. See "Adjusting the "mushy echo," – below.

•Piano clusters:



Notated by several black and white square noteheads in the score, the pianist is asked to perform clusters throughout the piece – mostly in the lowest end of the piano. These low clusters should be sounded by "pushing" (never striking) the keys with the hand, usually very quietly, with the sustain Pedal depressed. The result is something that will sound like a "mushy echo," that seems to be present during much of this piece. As the sustain Pedal remains depressed, this echo might change its overall sound as further clusters are played, as the material in the piano RH is performed, and as some of the sounds from the ensemble and singer are picked up sympathetically by the already vibrating piano strings. However, this echo should never become overwhelming or superior to the other music, but just remain in the background, often coming into focus during phrase endings or other quiet parts in the music, possibly not even being heard when there is lots of activity in the ensemble.

•Adjusting the "mushy echo:"

Because the sustain pedal is often held for long periods of time, it may be necessary to "feather" the pedal to (a) tone down the dynamic of the vibrating strings if there is too much sound buildup, and/or (b) increase the echo if it disappears too soon. The goal is to have, during much of this piece, a continuous echo or "mush," that is well in the background – most of the time. If there is too much sound, either because of the piano's RH activity or because of the sounds from the ensemble adding too much sympathetic vibration to the piano strings, the pianist should "feather" the pedal, i.e. quickly and repeatedly release and depress the pedal, in order to *partially* dampen the vibrating strings. It is also possible to physically hold the low cluster, after it is performed, WITHOUT holding the pedal at all, while performing with the RH; this will limit the number of open piano dampers to only the held keys.

However, it may also be necessary to INCREASE the volume in the "mushy echo." This can be done by brushing or lightly slapping the lowest strings of the piano, with the sustain pedal remaining depressed. This should be syncopated during times when there is more activity in the ensemble, so the attack isn't noticed, just the resulting echo.

All of this can only be determined by the ensemble in a particular performing space, and therefore, much of these dynamic adjustments will need to be improvised by the pianist, as his/her ear, or the conductor's ear, sees fit. This particular sound will be a very important thematic identity for this piece, perhaps the most important.

<u>Trumpet:</u>

Dynamics may have to be adjusted so the trumpet blends with the non-brass ensemble: this may mean playing slightly under the written dynamic, so the trumpet doesn't dominate the ensemble, but, in the case of the mutes – especially the Harmon, the performer might need to play louder than the written dynamic. The "jazzy" lines should be played with obvious jazz inflection and may be partly improvised to add to the effect.

<u>Strings:</u>

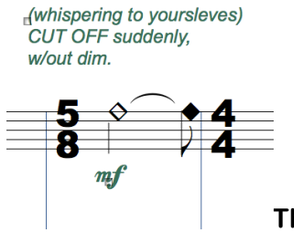
•Sul tasto – harmonics

Pitches notated with an enlarged harmonic symbol, i.e. **O**, are meant to sound like the thinner, pure, non-vibrato sound of a flautando (sul tasto) or a harmonic – natural or artificial. Therefore either using a harmonic or bowing sul tasto is acceptable, depending on the situation and performer's preference. All of these pitches are written with a quiet dynamic – they should be just floating above the rest of the music, coming in and out of focus.

C. Bass:

In some parts of the piece the c.b. player is asked to perform pizz. “á la Jazz.” The desire is for the clipped sound of older Jazz, and for the performer to pay particular attention to the syncopation and swung 8th notes, even though they are written as triplets in the score. This is particularly true for the duet with the baritone in measures 137-152. If the player is a jazzer, this should be no problem, and a bit of added improv is OK, especially if it adds to the effect and pulls some jazz out of the singer.

•Whispering (improvised)



The symbol above, a larger diamond, is used to represent improvised whispering. Several times during the piece all members of the ensemble are asked improvise whispering, either alone or as a group. The whispering should be improvised in such a way that it sounds like something is actually being said. This should be a little bewildering to the audience at first, as they what the members of the ensemble are whispering – and why. However, the actual words cannot be understood, but the emotion of the implied words can be understood. Therefore, all of the performers, when they whisper, become actors! The successful inaudible whisper will be accomplished in two ways:

1. By articulately whispering, with an assortment of consonant sounds; you may even actually whisper real words, whether they make sense together or not.
2. By thinking the emotion that is to be implied, i.e. fear, anger, telling a secret, gossiping, worry, etc.

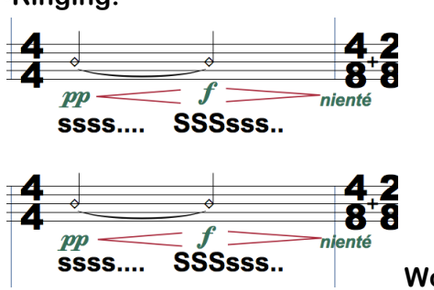
The emotion of the whispering falls into many categories: anger directed out, anger directed in and whispering quietly to yourself. There is limited direction in the score, because, obviously, you, the musicians, will be busy with the music, and because I am not an actor either, so your improvisation will probably be as good as or better than any help I might give. Just try to make it seem like you are REALLY whispering.

MOST IMPORTANT:

Execute this whisper louder than you think is necessary, as a stage actor learns to do – this is the only way it will become part of the music and obvious to the audience.

And in mm. 289-90, there is a single occurrence of speech added to the whispering. It should VERY loud at first, exploding on the AND OF BEAT ONE, then, through the measure, dissipating to whispering and then disappearing altogether.

•Ringing:



Words that end in “s” often exaggerate that last letter, creating a *hissing* sound, which becomes thematic (“ringing in my ears”) in this piece. Not only does the singer do this, but in meas. 177, several members of the ensemble briefly but emphatically do it. This thematic “ringing” is notated by small diamond noteheads in the score, accompanied with “SSSSSSS…” Again, it should be loud enough to be heard easily by the audience.

for The Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players

THE SENSATION OF WAKING

Words and Music by Frank Stemper

Ethereal and quiet ♪ = 84 **(very quiet!)**

falsetto

baritone

Float - - - ing with - in a sus - pen - sion of shim-mer - ing_

continuous, like snow falling

flute

clarinet

trumpet

senza vibrato
flaut./harmonics

violin

senza vibrato
flaut./harmonics

'cello

c. bass

15ma
crisply, in contrast to the LH

piano

quiet but audible
(a mushy echo)

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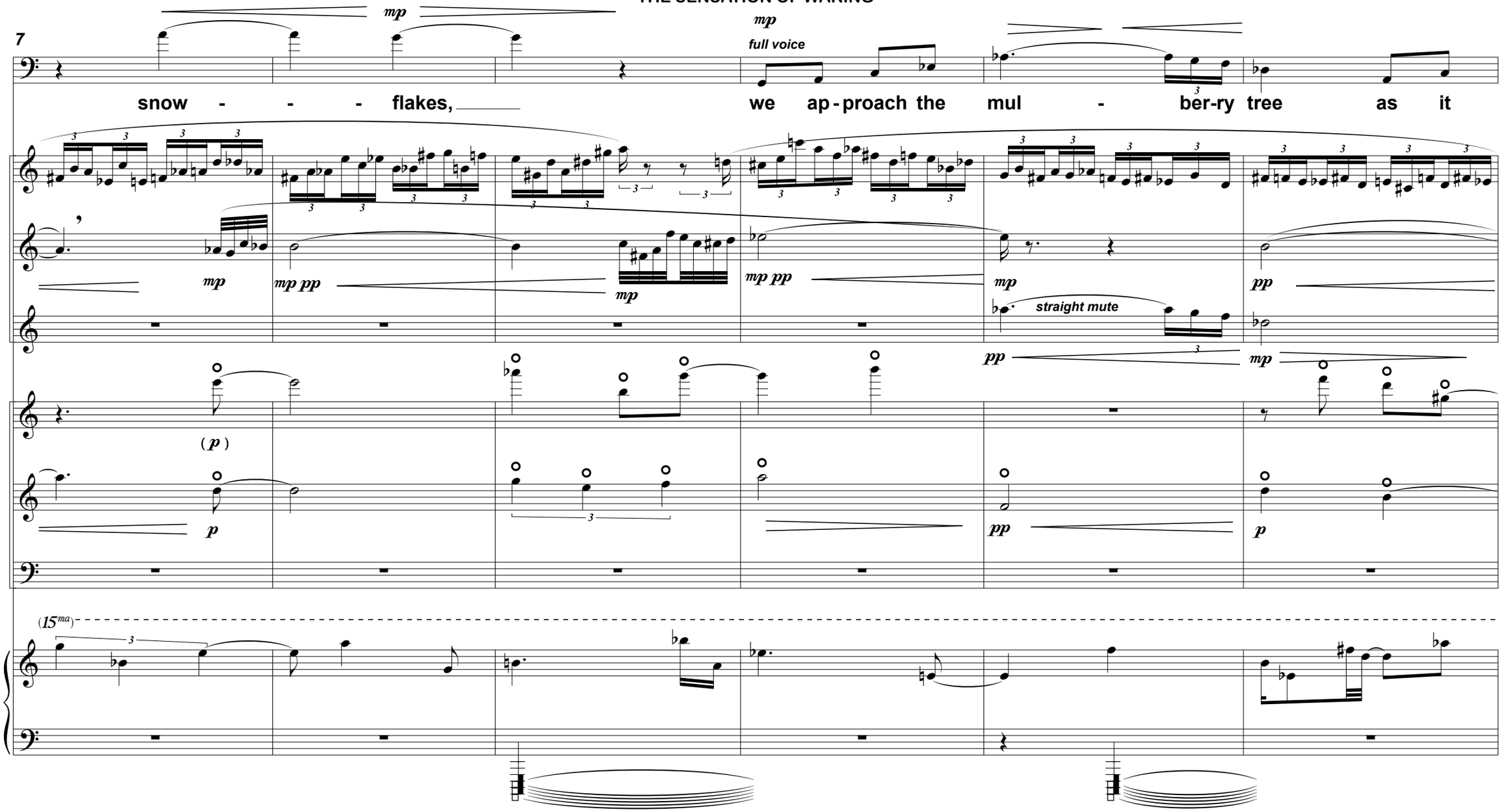
THE SENSATION OF WAKING



13

glis - tens on Christ-mas night.

mp

mp pp

mp

mf

pp

norm. arco.

mp

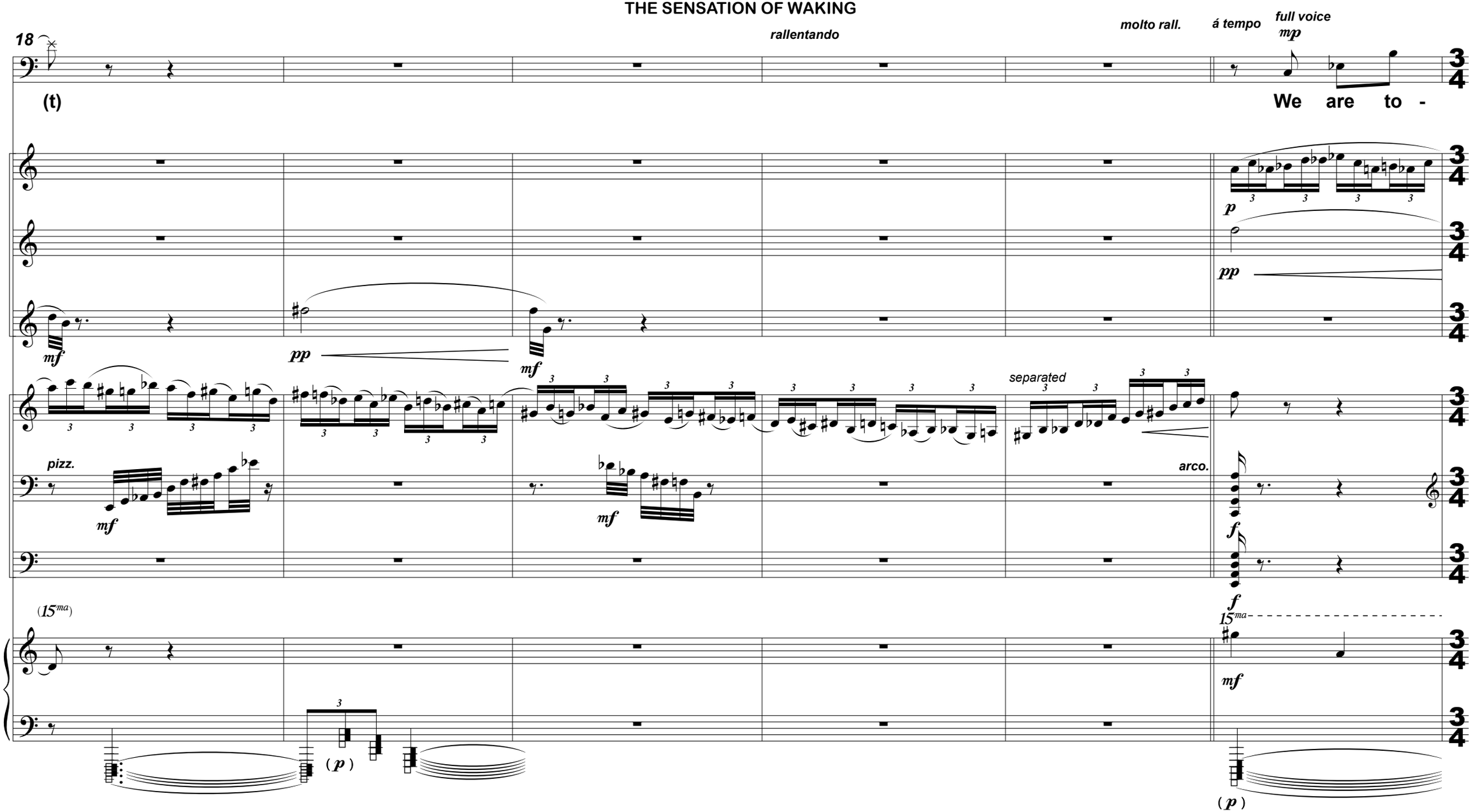
pp

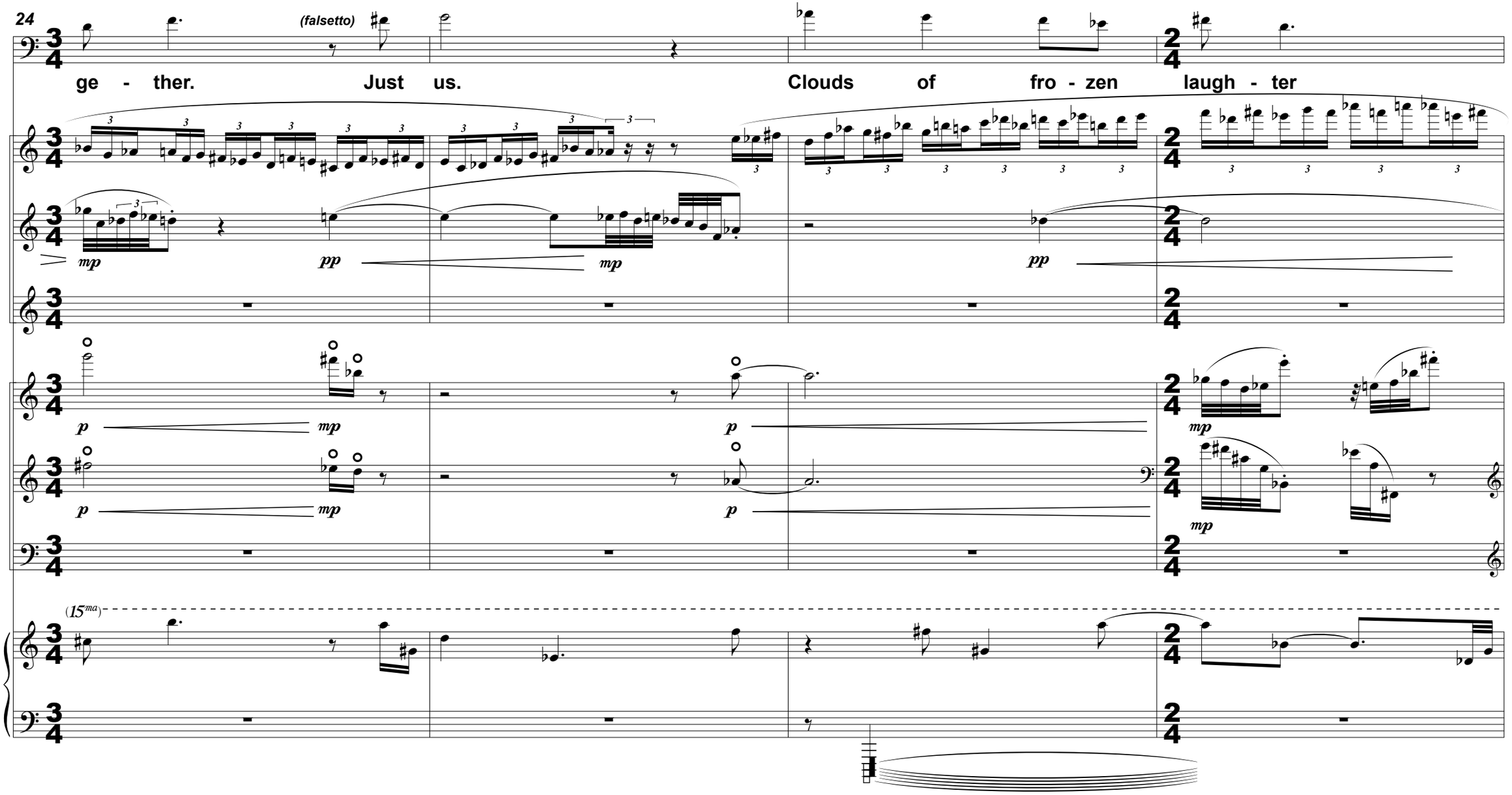
p

pp

(15ma)

THE SENSATION OF WAKING




24
(falsetto)
ge - ther.
Just us.
Clouds of fro - zen laugh - ter
mp
pp
mp
pp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
(15ma)

28

falsetto to norm. baritone

spar-kle as we drift a - way.

p espress.

Where now is that

mp

p

mf

pp

mf

loco (only this harmonic)

pp

mf

pp

(15ma)

35

take a sharp, audible breath as if scared

breath we_ breathed?

♩ = 60 Harsher, sudden - panicked

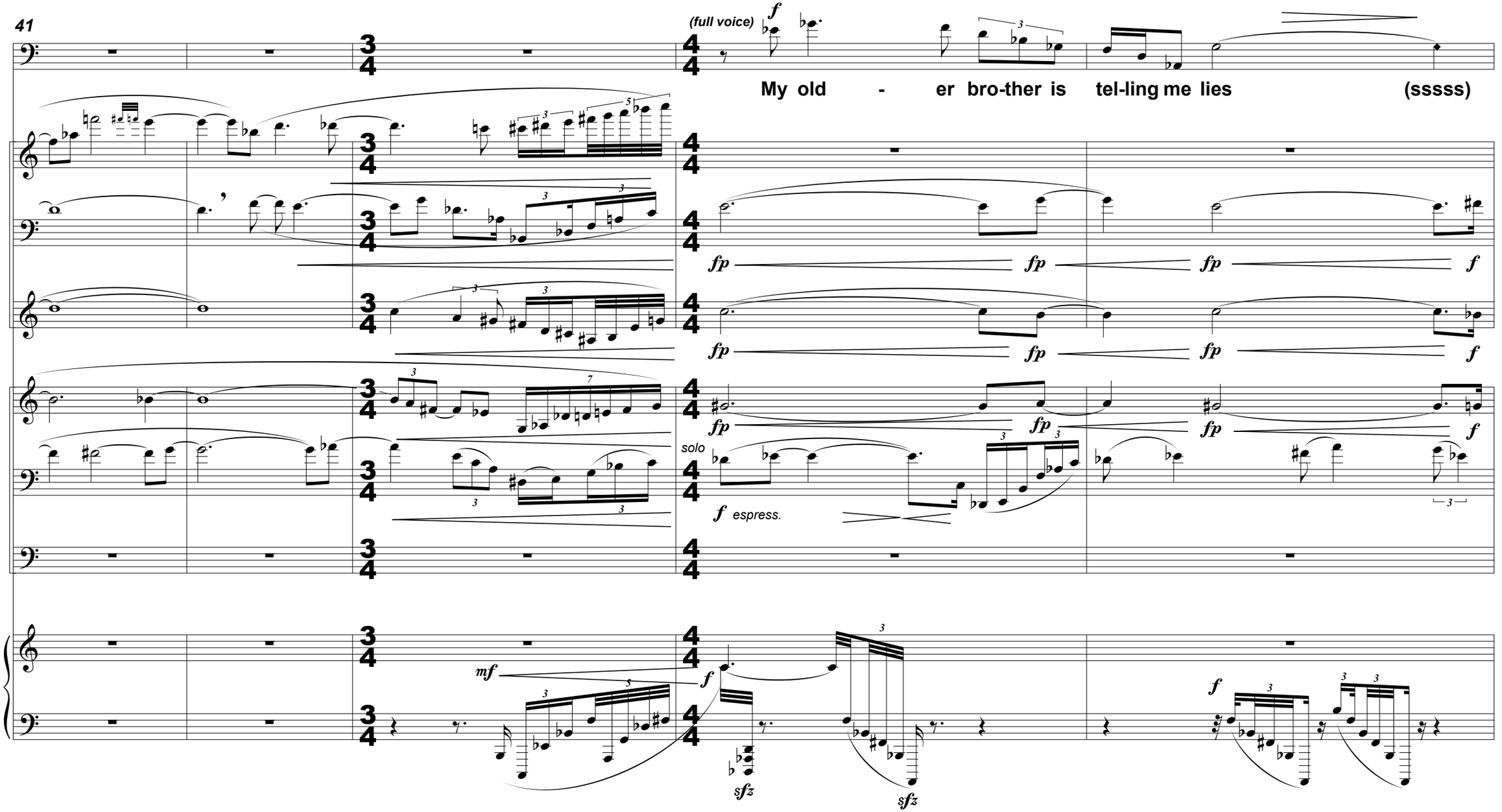
piccolo

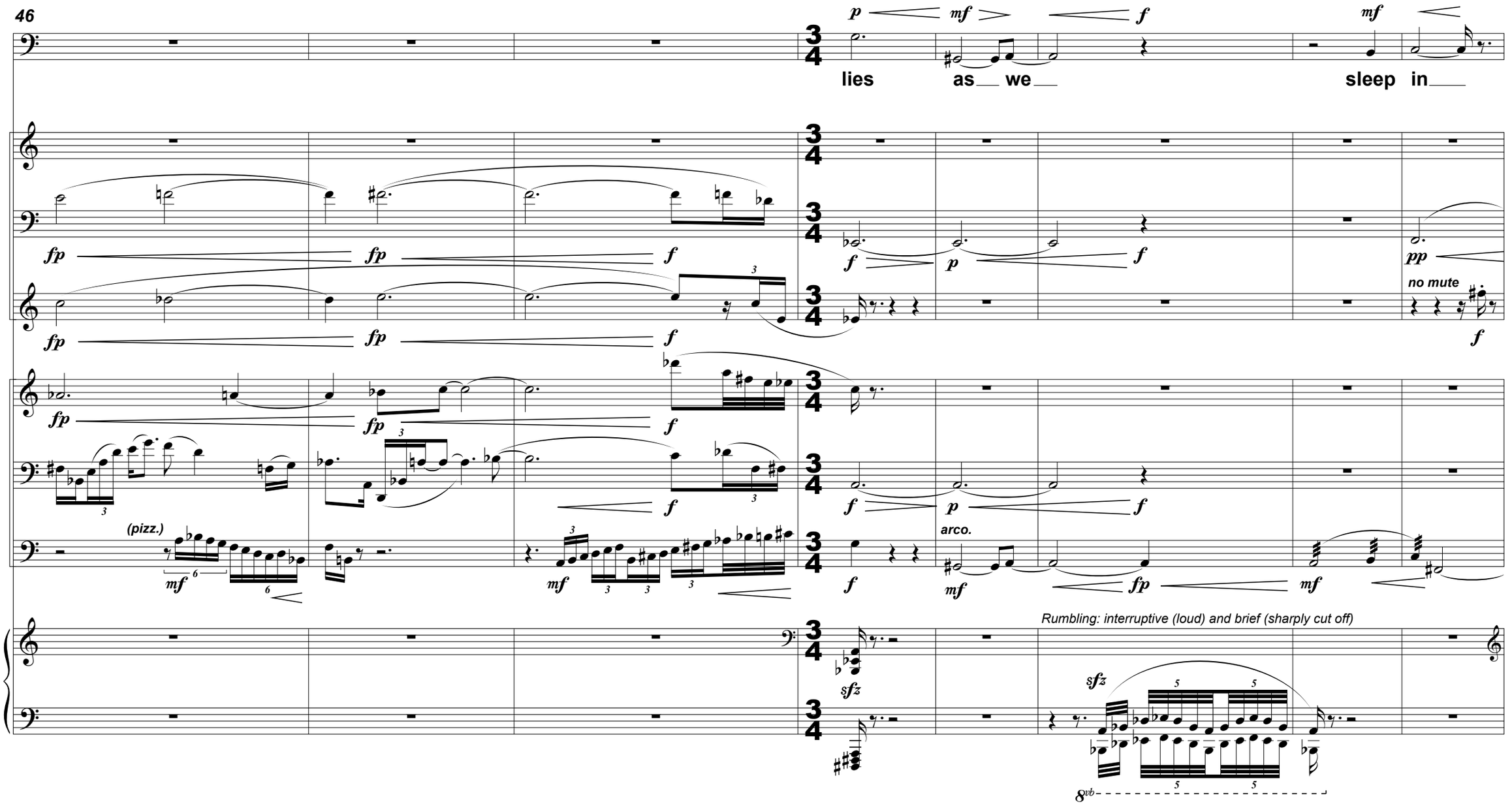
bass clarinet

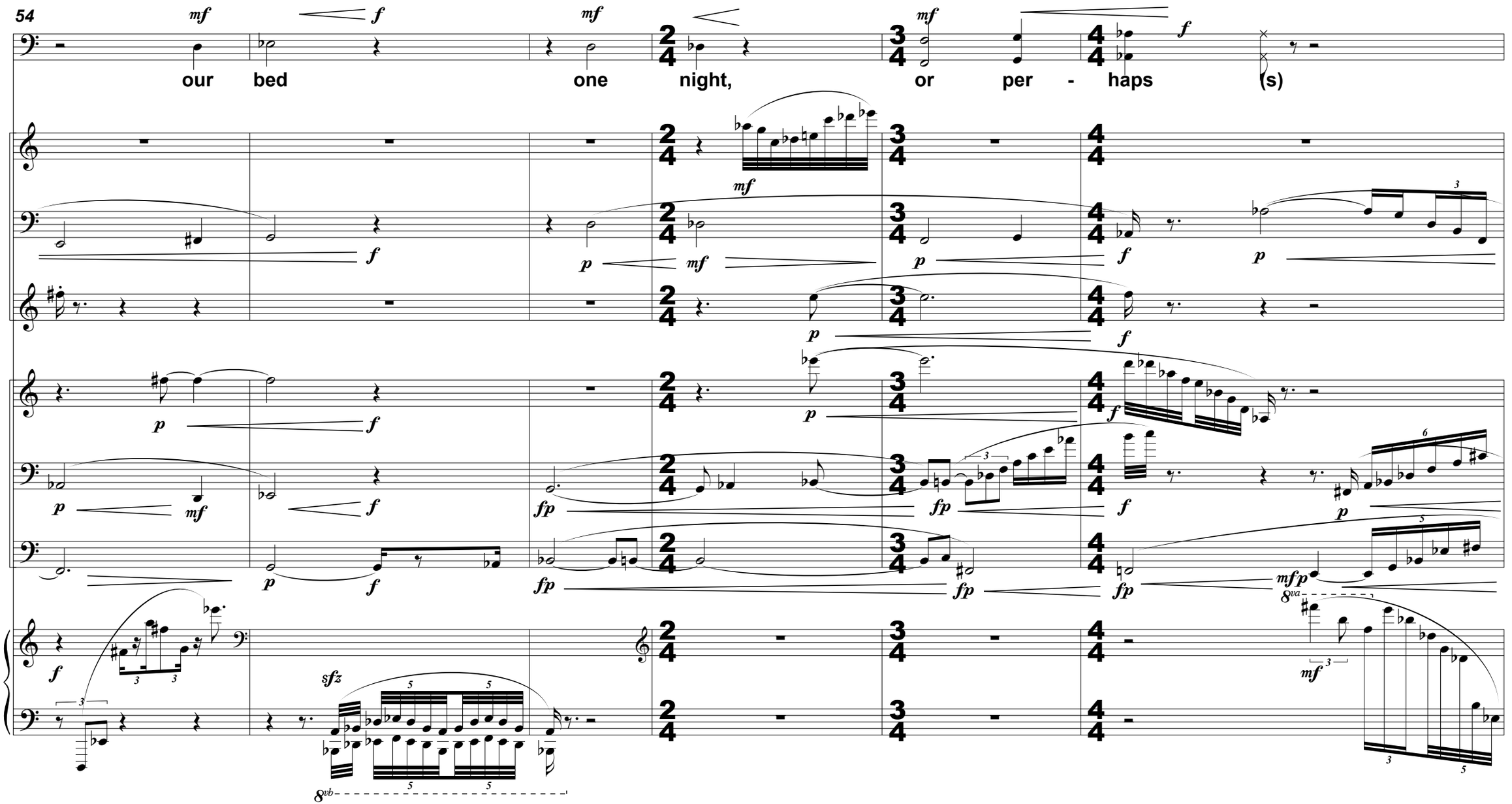
(straight mute)

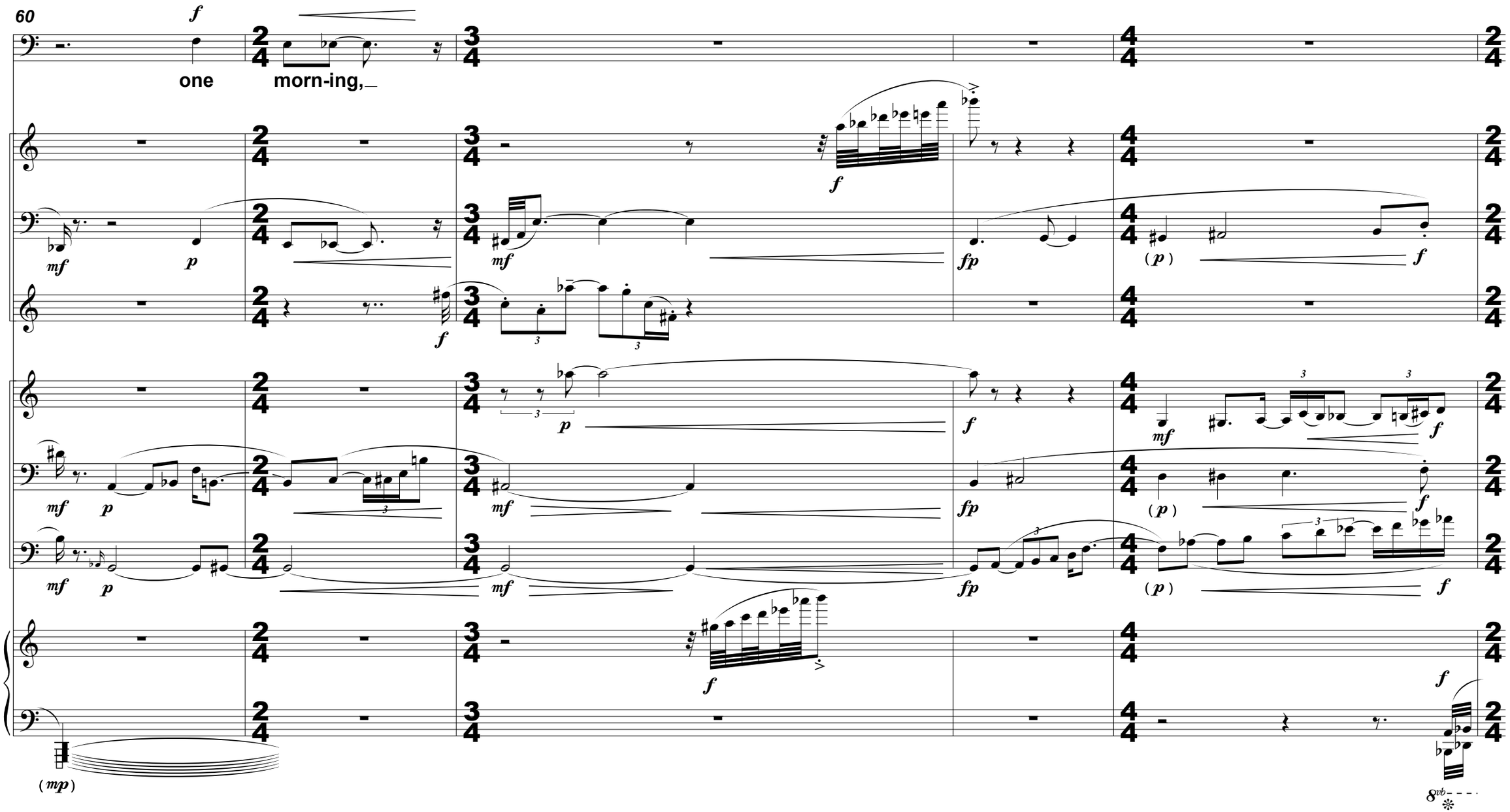
pizz.

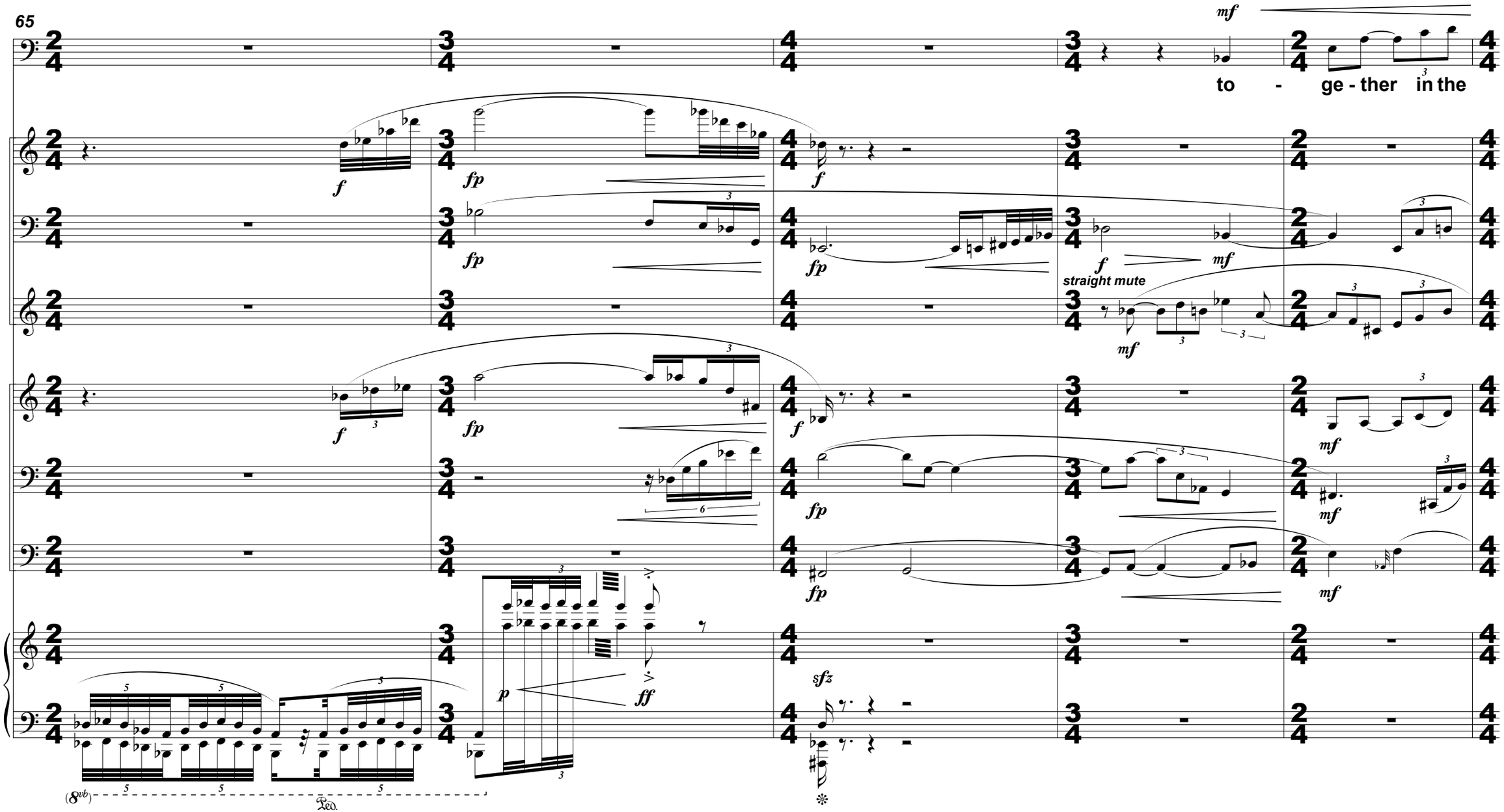
❊ sustain pedal finally OFF

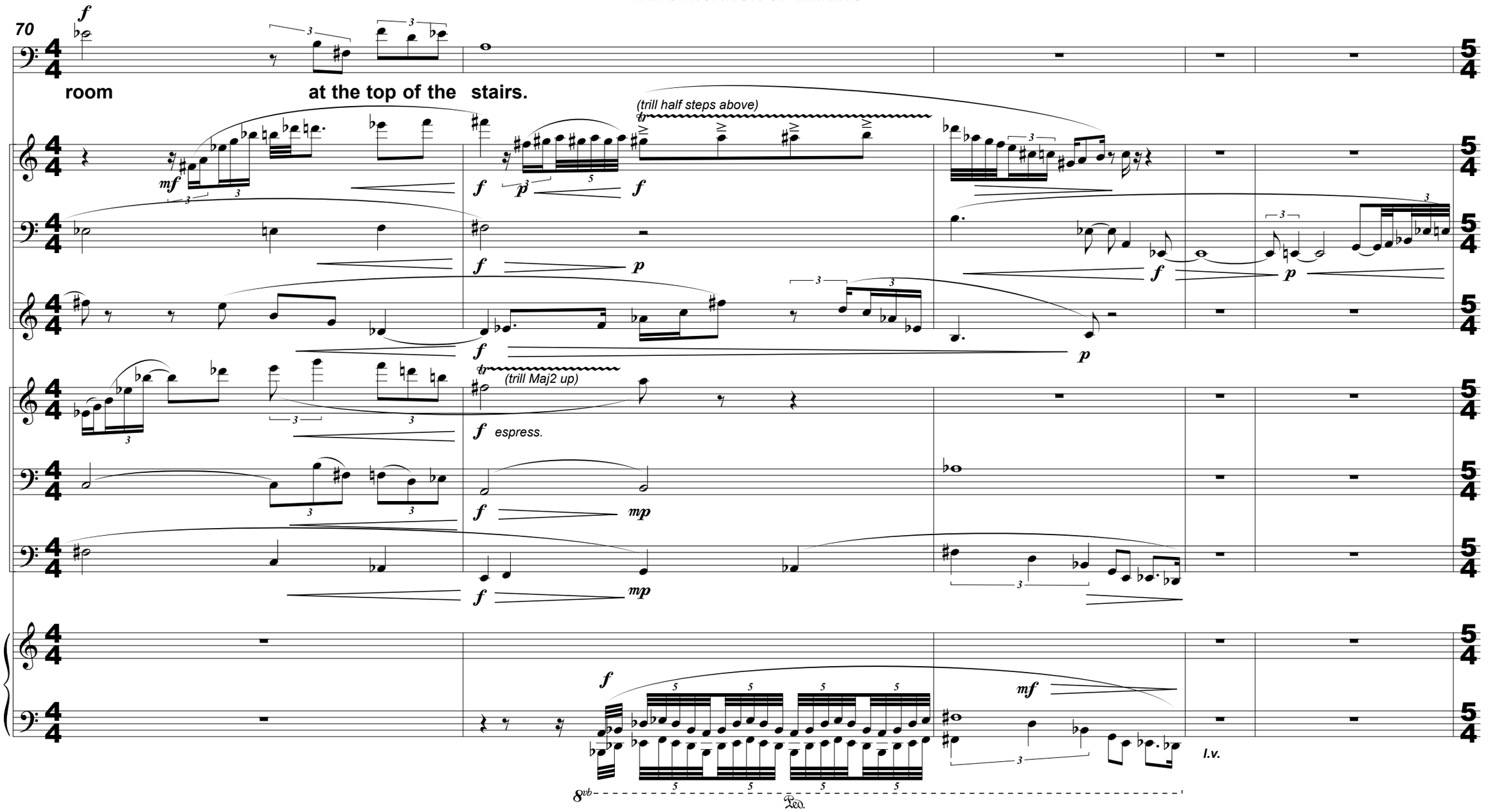

41
(full voice)
f
My old - er bro-ther is tel-ling me lies (sssss)
fp
f
solo
f espress.
mf
sfz


46
lies as we sleep in
(pizz.)
arco.
no mute
Rumbling: interruptive (loud) and brief (sharply cut off)

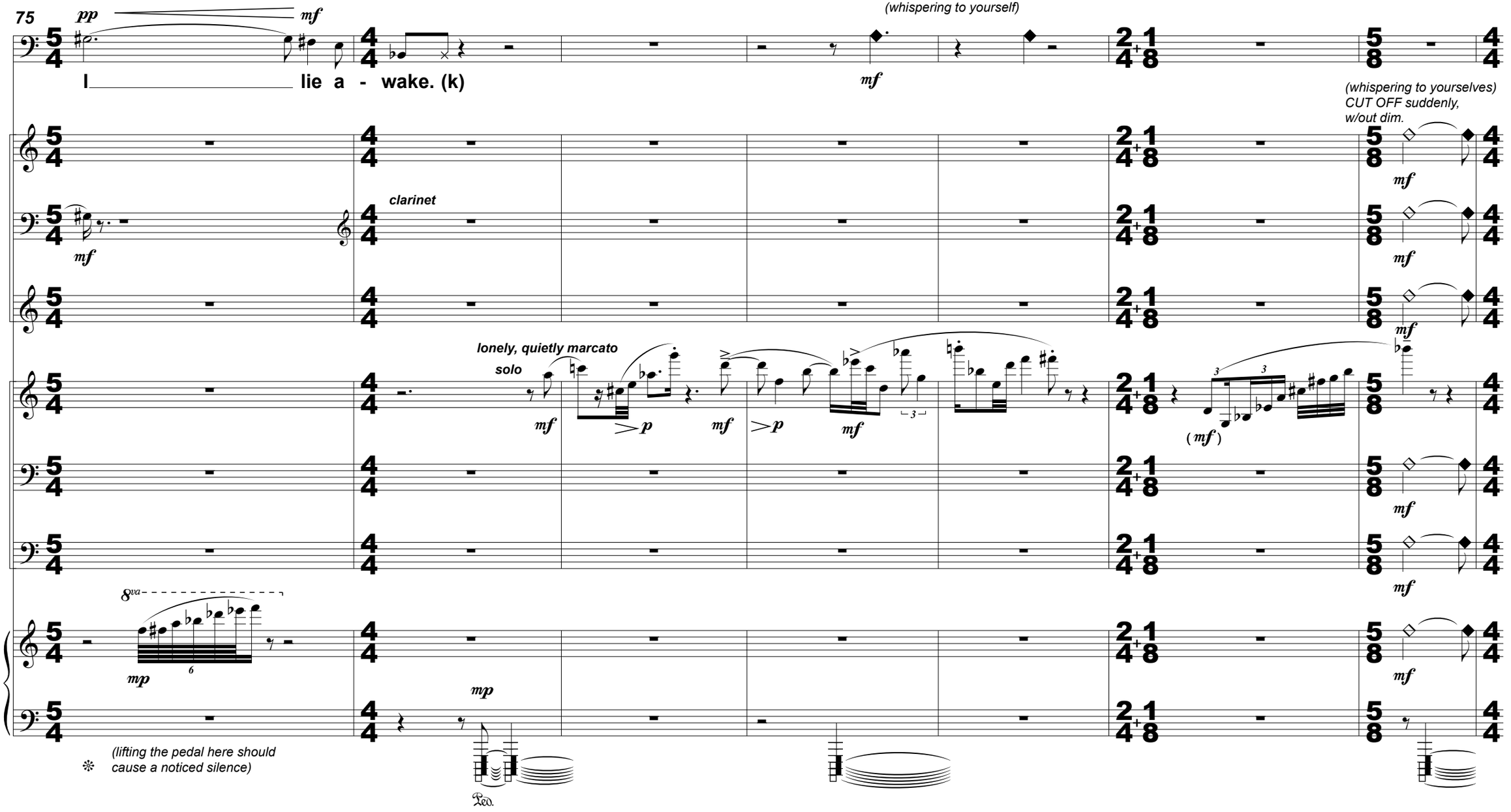

54
our bed
one night,
or per - haps (s)

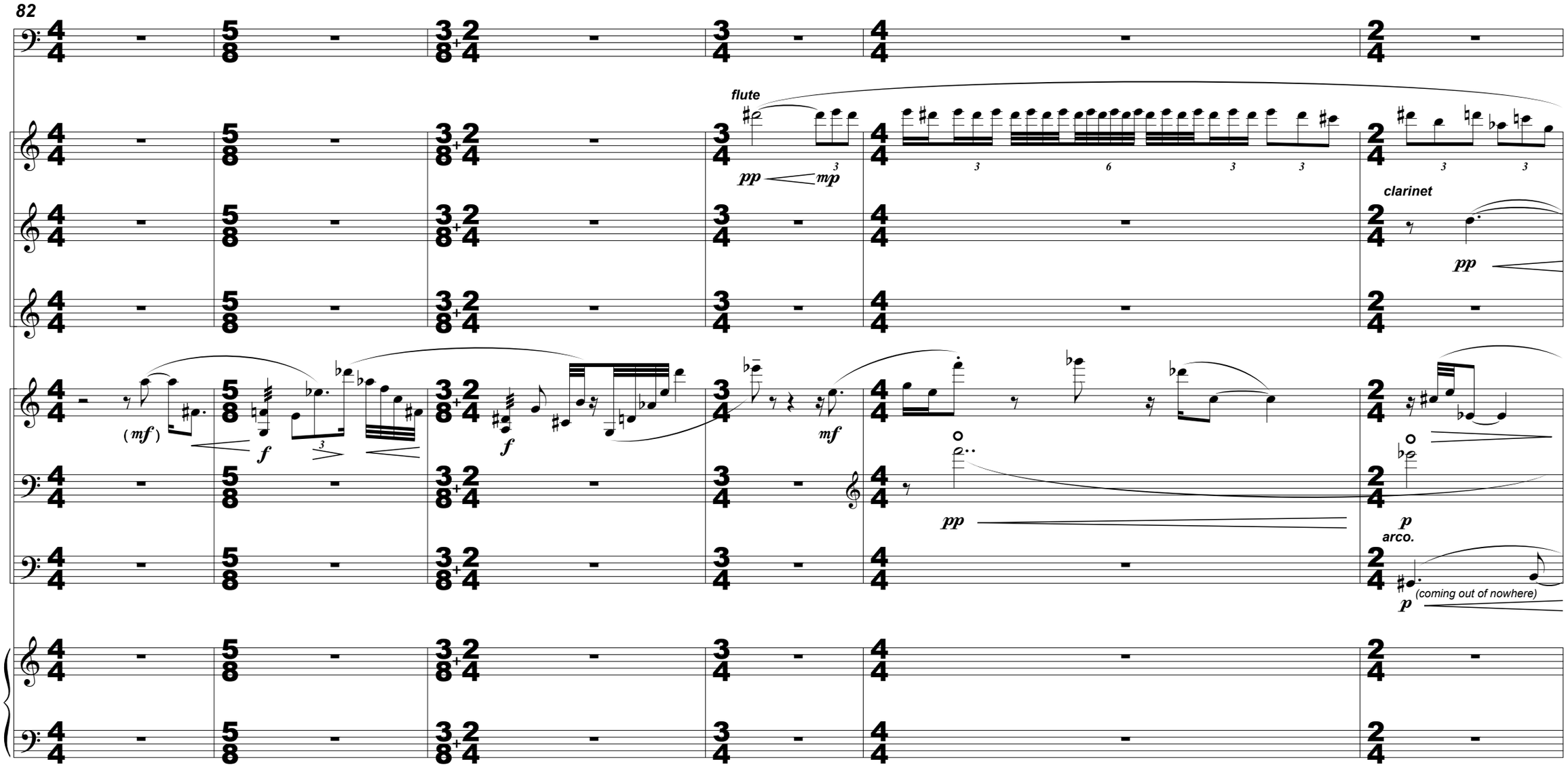

60
one morn-ing,
8vb

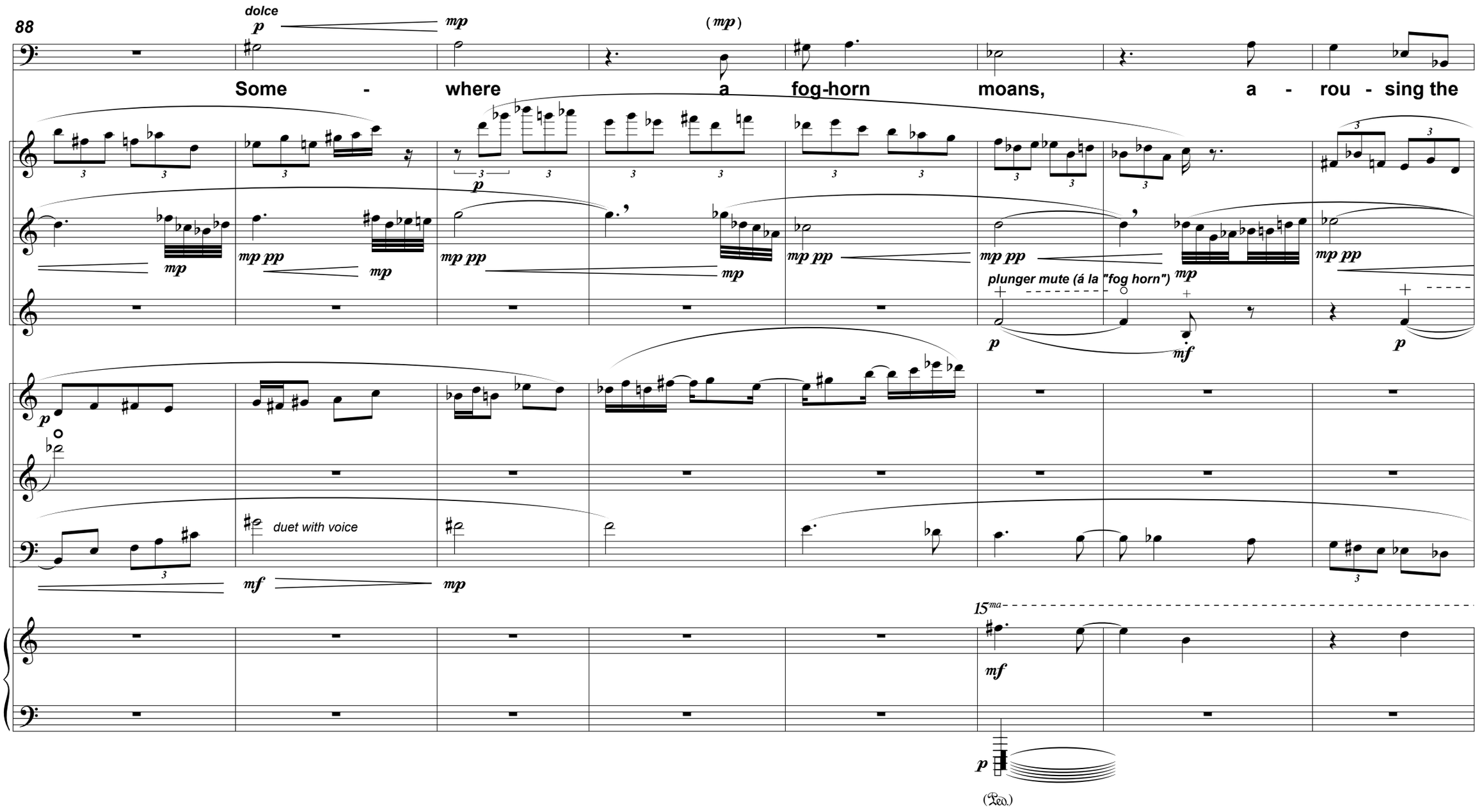

65
mf
to - ge - ther in the
straight mute
(8vb)
Ped.

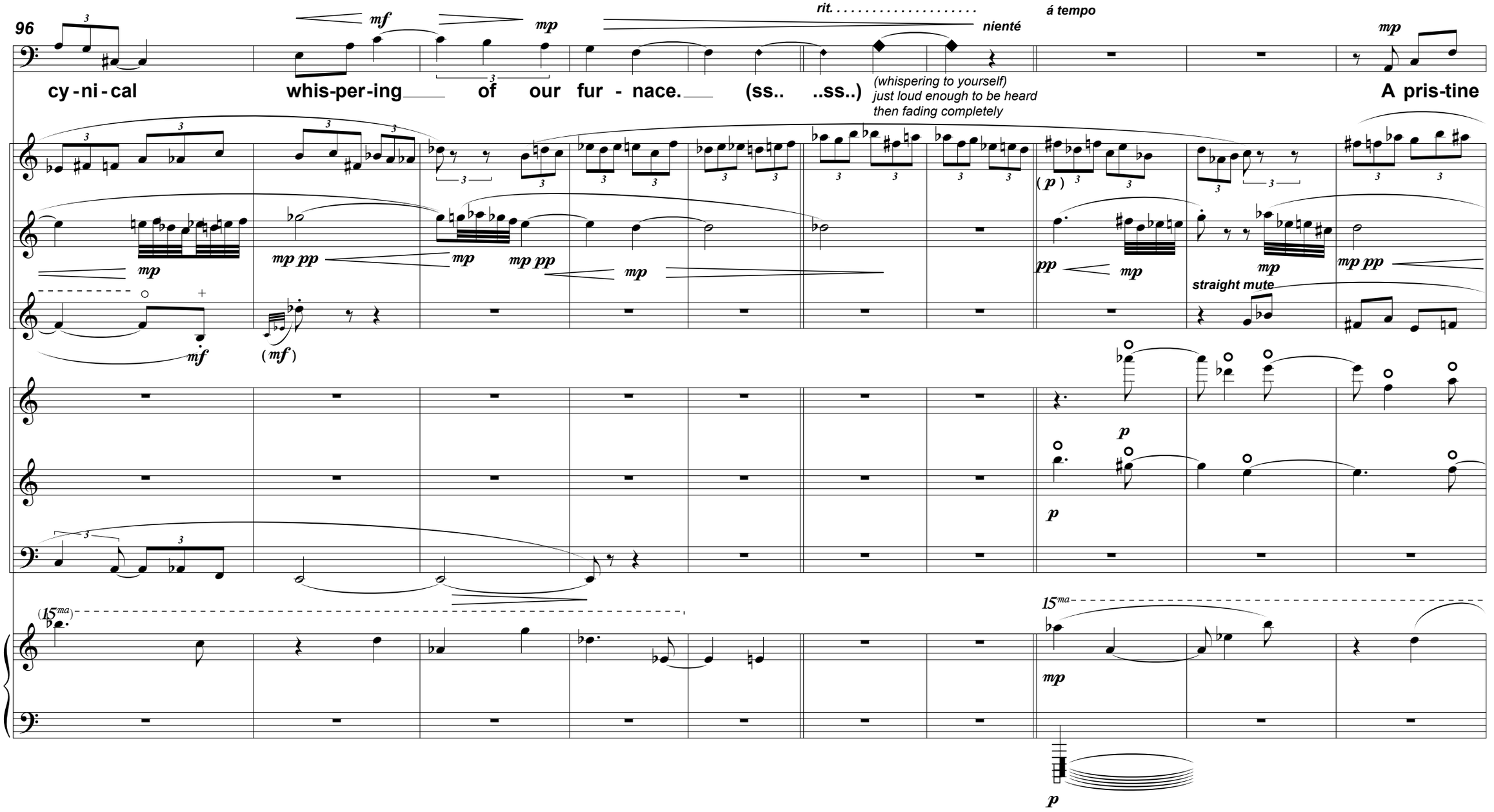

70
room
at the top of the stairs.
(trill half steps above)
(trill Maj2 up)
espress.
l.v.
8vb
Ped.

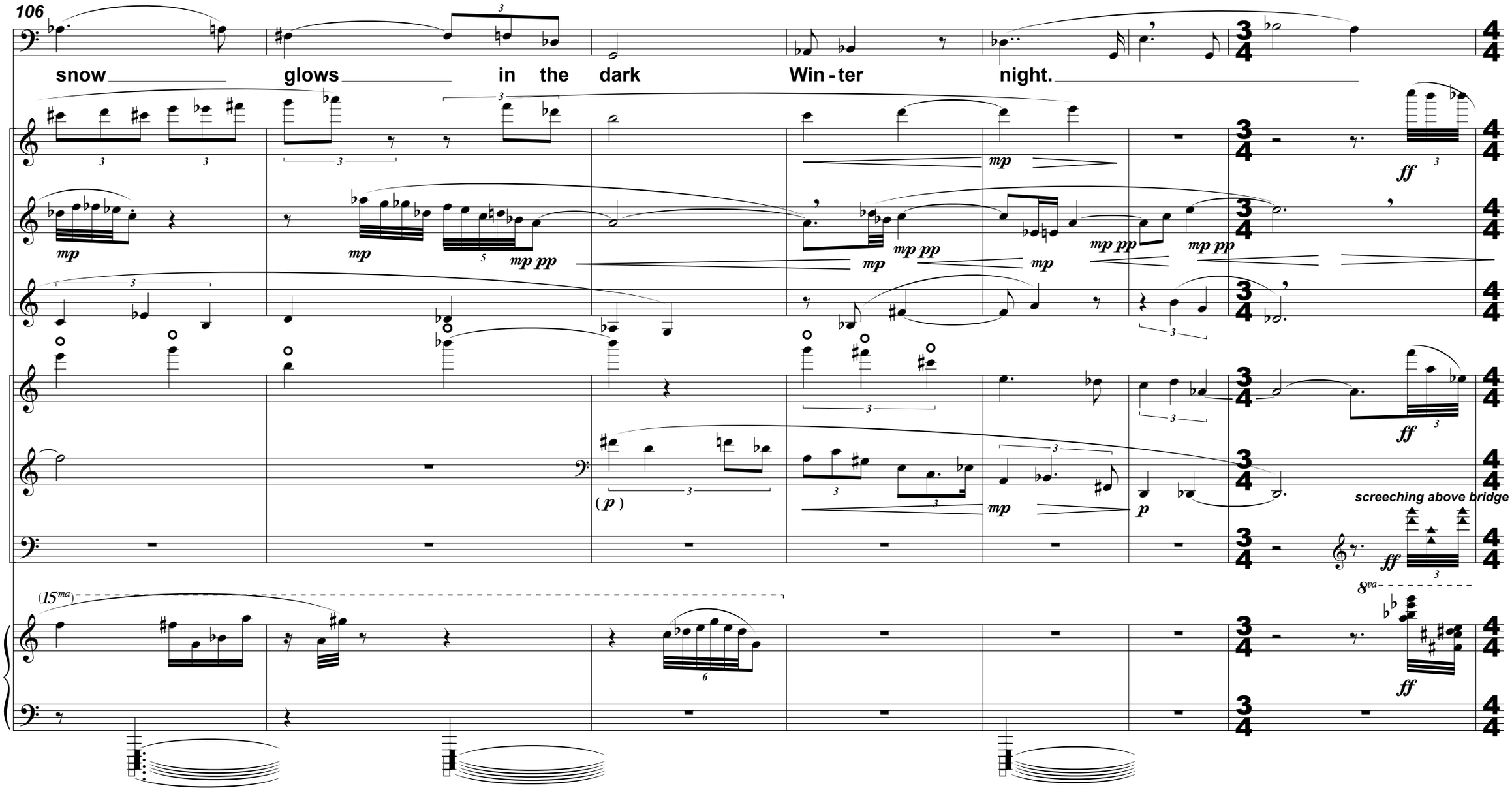
THE SENSATION OF WAKING

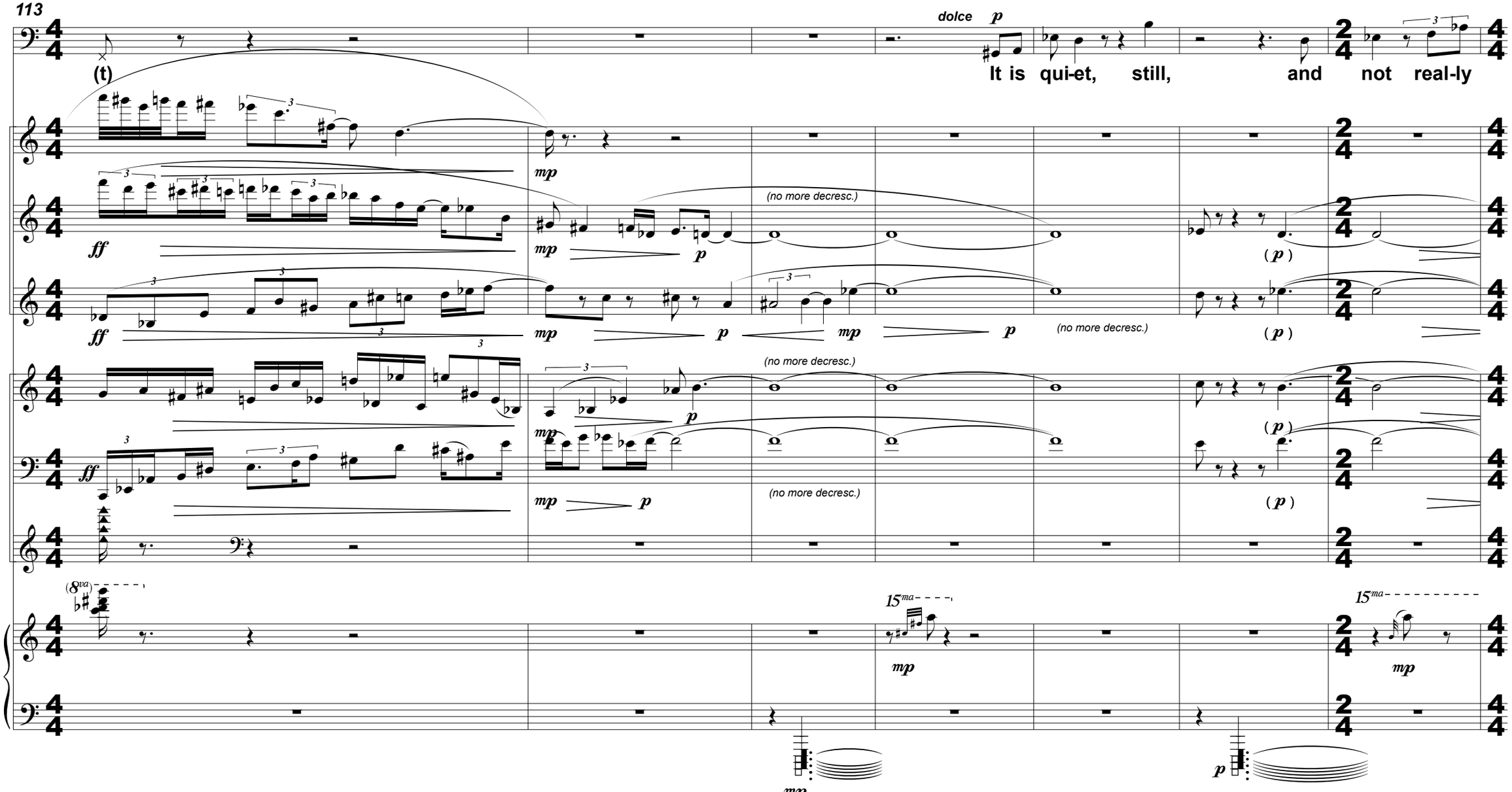


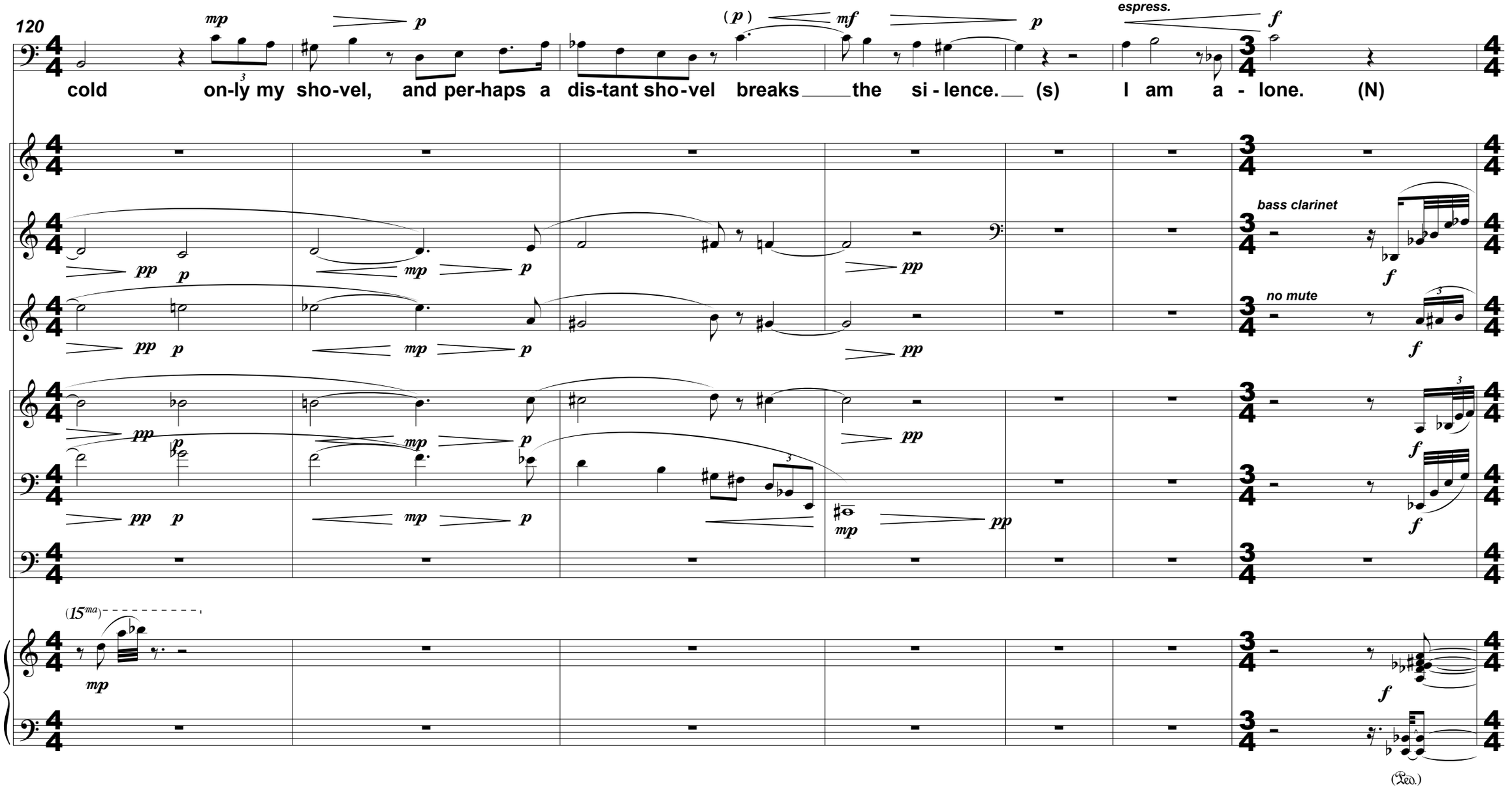

82
flute
pp
mp
clarinet
pp
(mf)
f
f
mf
pp
p
arco.
(coming out of nowhere)
p

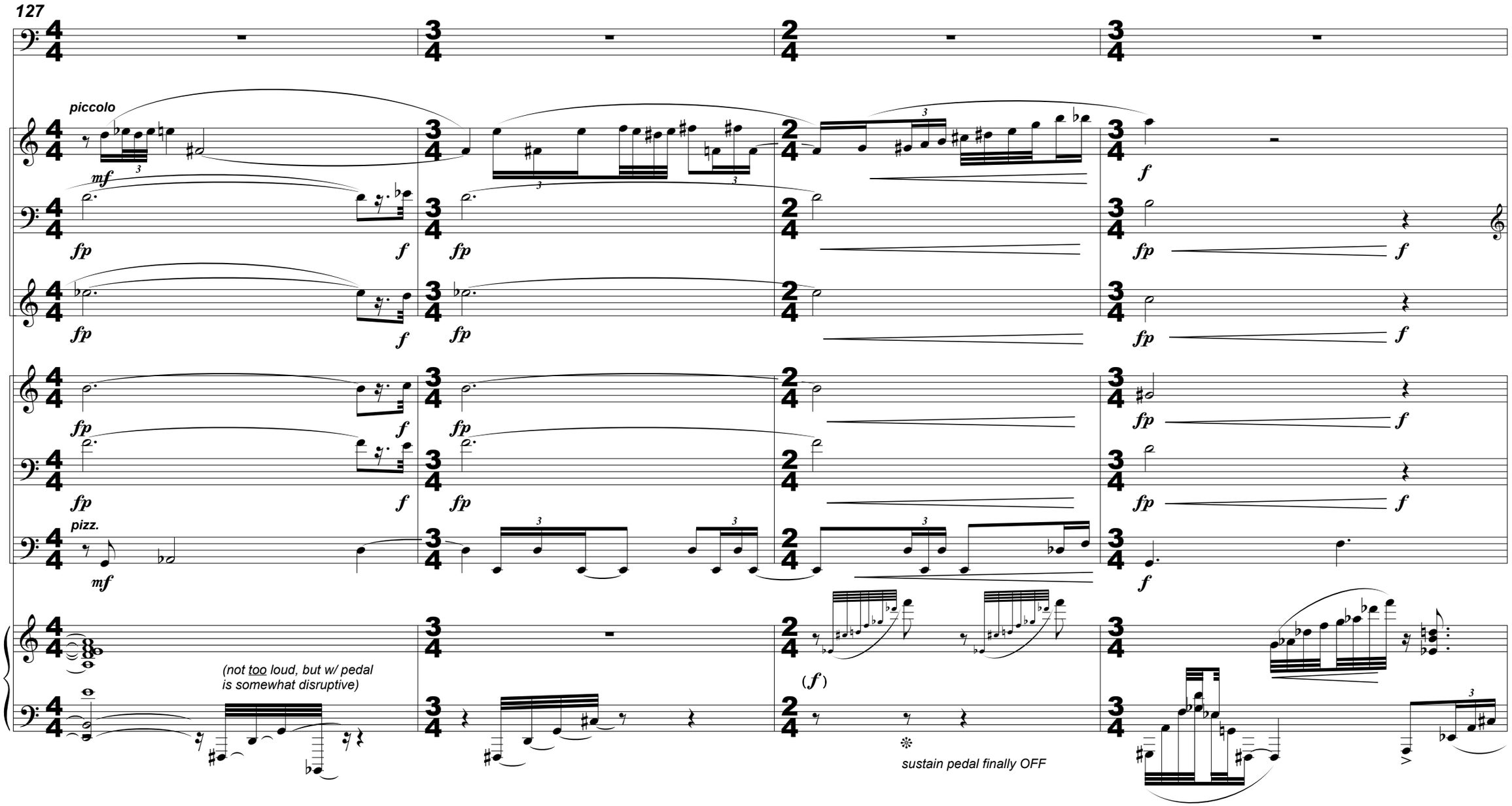

88
dolce
p
mp
(mp)
Some - where a fog-horn moans, a - rou - sing the
mp pp
mp
plunger mute (á la "fog horn")
mf
duet with voice
15ma
(Ped.)

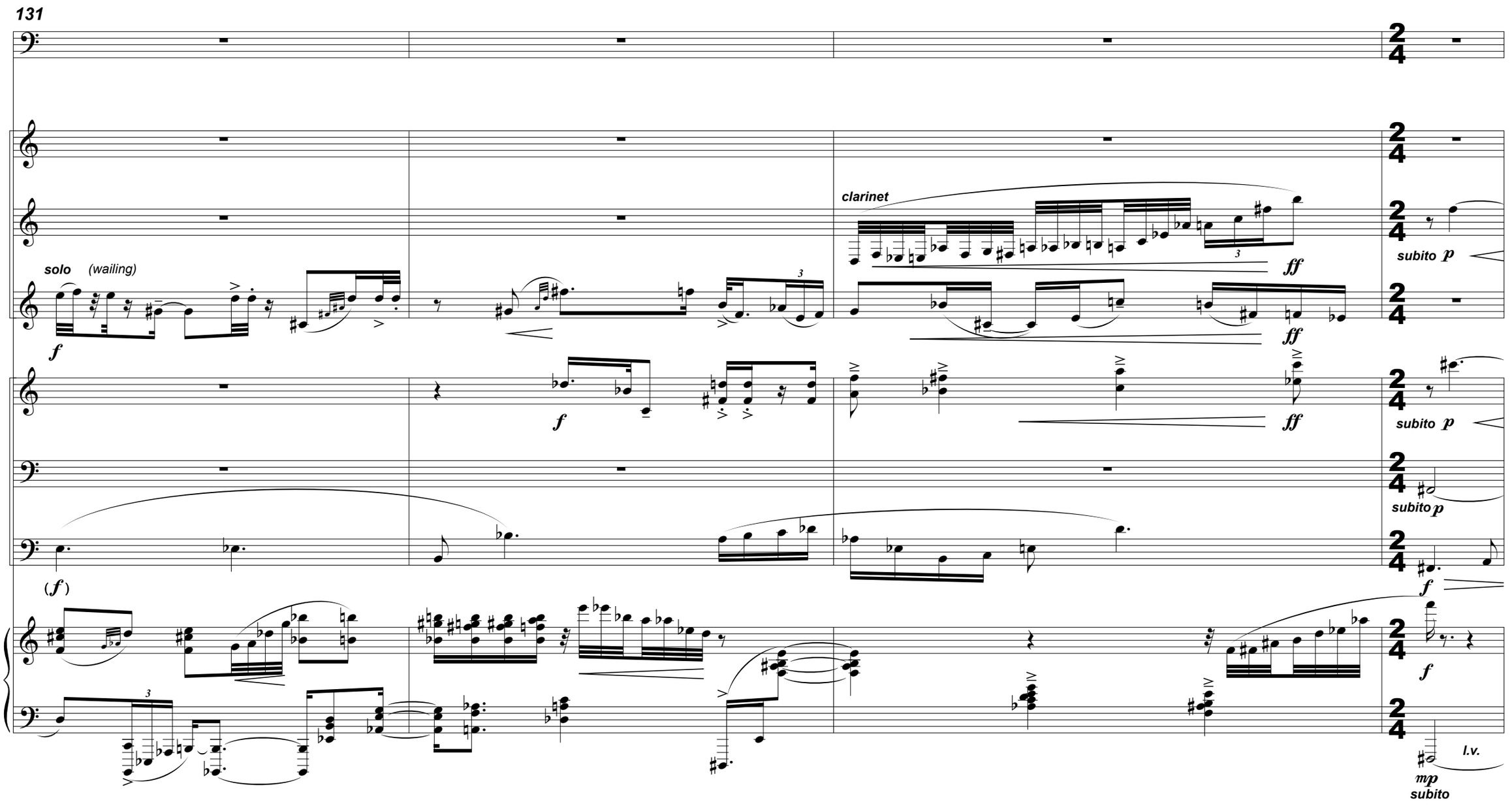

96
mf
mp
rit.
nienté
á tempo
cy - ni - cal
whis-per-ing
of our fur - nace.
(ss.. ..ss..)
(whispering to yourself)
just loud enough to be heard
then fading completely
A pris-tine
straight mute
15ma


106
snow glows in the dark Win - ter night.
mp
mp pp
ff
(p)
p
screeching above bridge
(15ma)
8va


113
(t)
dolce
p
It is qui-et, still, and not real-ly
ff
mp
p
(no more decresc.)
(p)
(8va)
15ma


120
mp
p
(p)
mf
p
espress.
f
cold on-ly my sho-vel, and per-haps a dis-tant sho-vel breaks the si - lence. (s) I am a - lone. (N)
bass clarinet
no mute
(15ma)
(Ped.)


127
piccolo
mf
fp
f
pizz.
(not too loud, but w/ pedal
is somewhat disruptive)
(f)
sustain pedal finally OFF


131
solo
(wailing)
clarinet
subito p
l.v.
mp
subito

Cool. Jazzy, light, yet almost "hammy"
words over-articulated
(and with a look of mischieve, at first)

THE SENSATION OF WAKING

135

mp

E - v'ry-one is a-sleep, and a street-light peers

flute

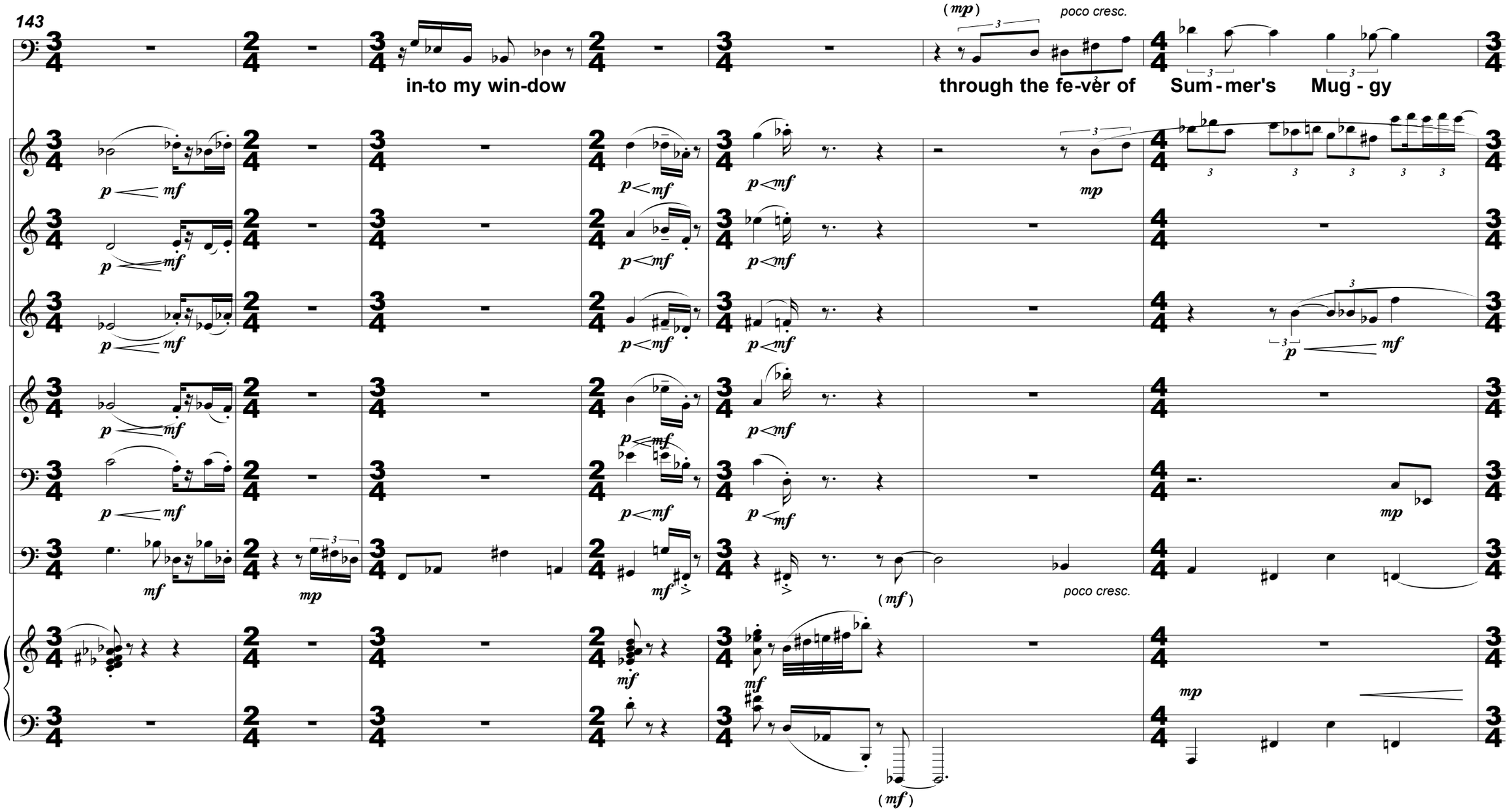
p mf

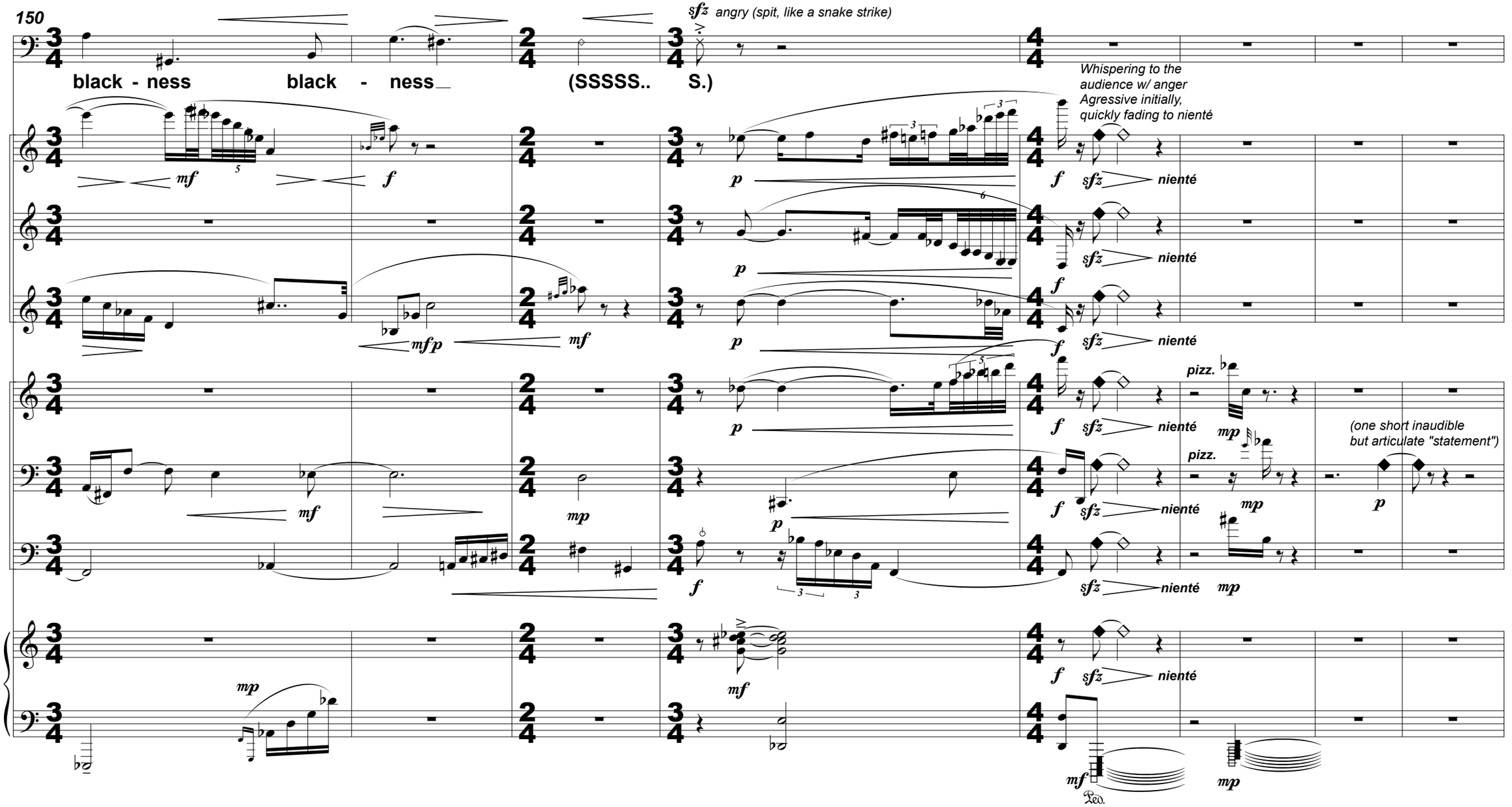
harmon mute

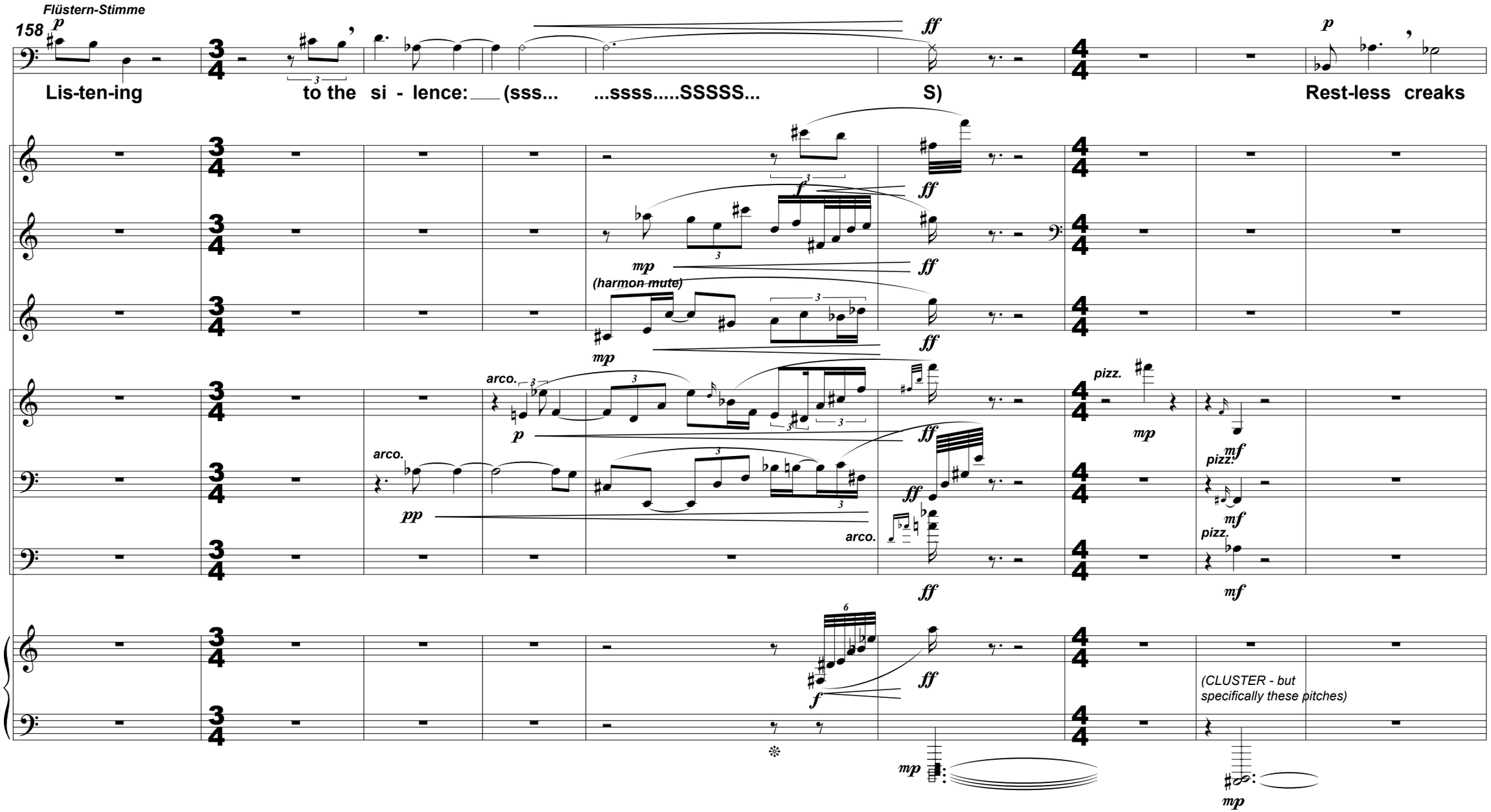
Cool, á la Jazz

(mp)

mf


143
in-to my win-dow
through the fe-ver of
Sum - mer's
Mug - gy
poco cresc.
poco cresc.


150
sfz angry (spit, like a snake strike)
black - ness black - ness (SSSSS.. S.)
Whispering to the audience w/ anger Agressive initially, quickly fading to nienté
nienté
pizz.
(one short inaudible but articulate "statement")
Ped.


Flüstern-Stimme
158
p
Lis-ten-ing to the si - lence: (sss... ...ssss.....SSSSS... S)
Rest-less creaks
ff
mp
(harmon mute)
arco.
pp
pizz.
mf
(CLUSTER - but specifically these pitches)

167

(Flüstern-Stimme) ---------- no

(p)

in-side my wall,

the in-ti-mate drip-ping that fol-lows rain,

p mf

(harmon mute)

pp mf

like dripping rain

mf

like dripping rain

(two quick, distinct yet different clicks on the c.bass w/ end of bow)

p

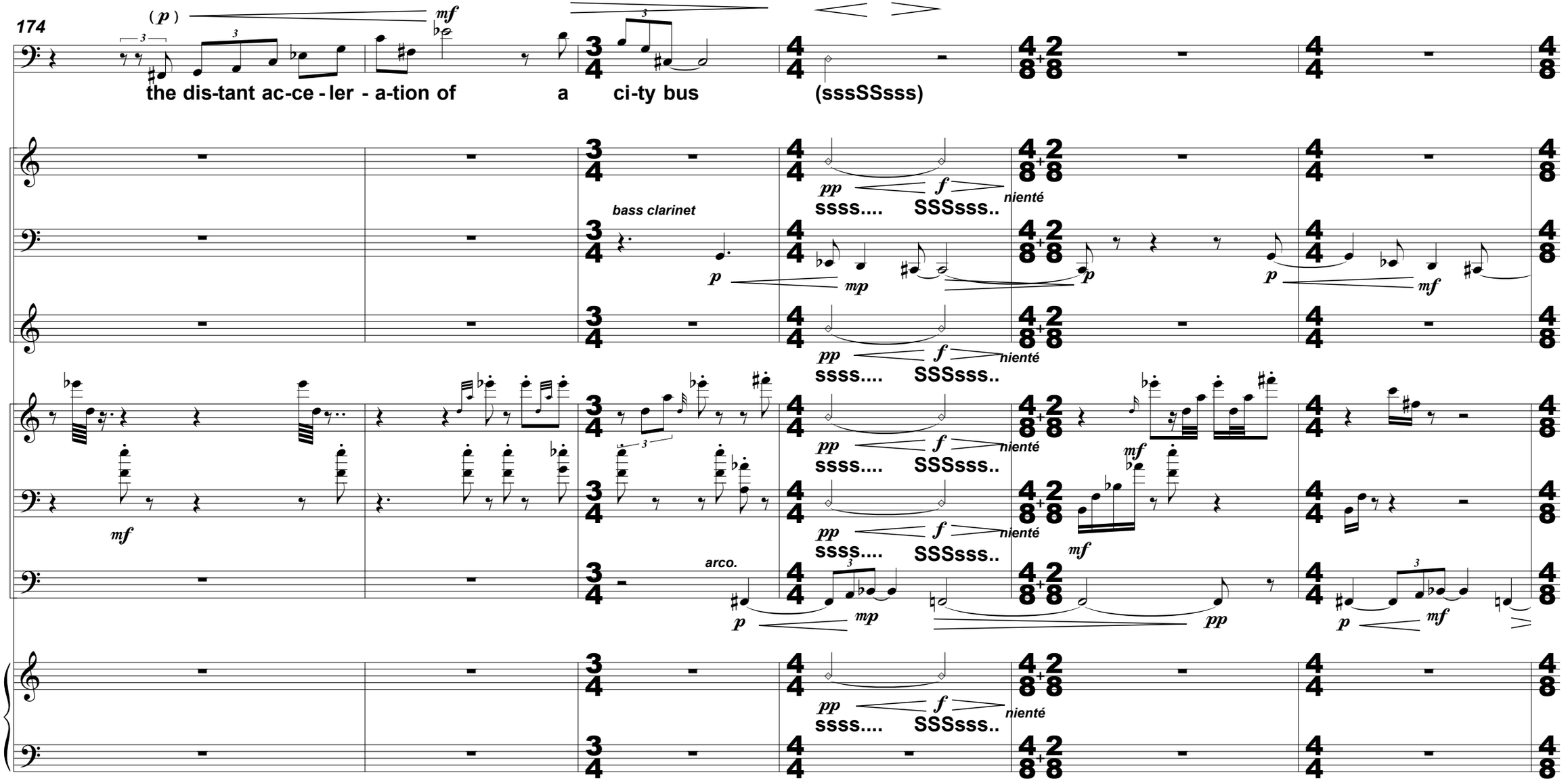
mf

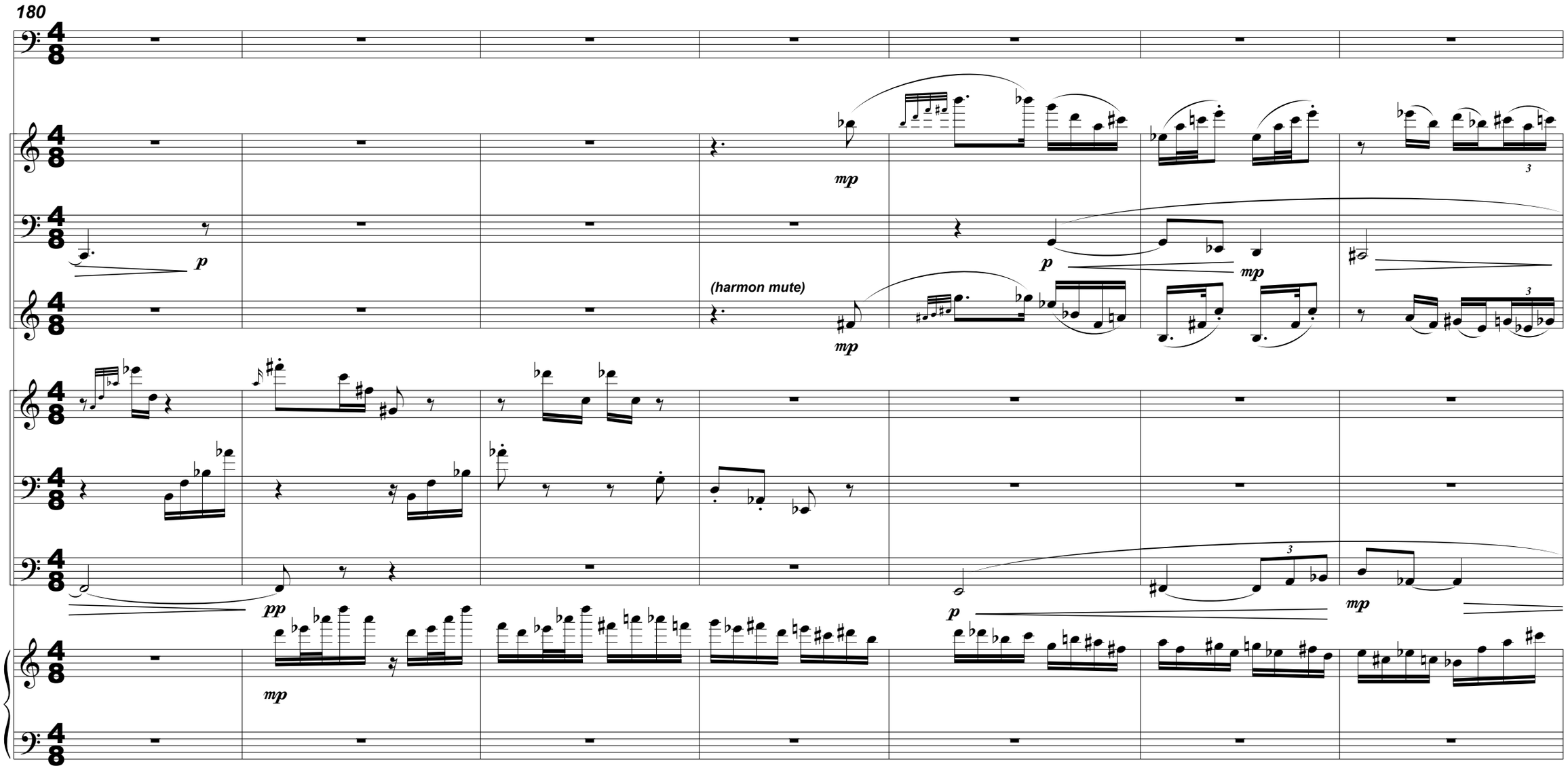
mf

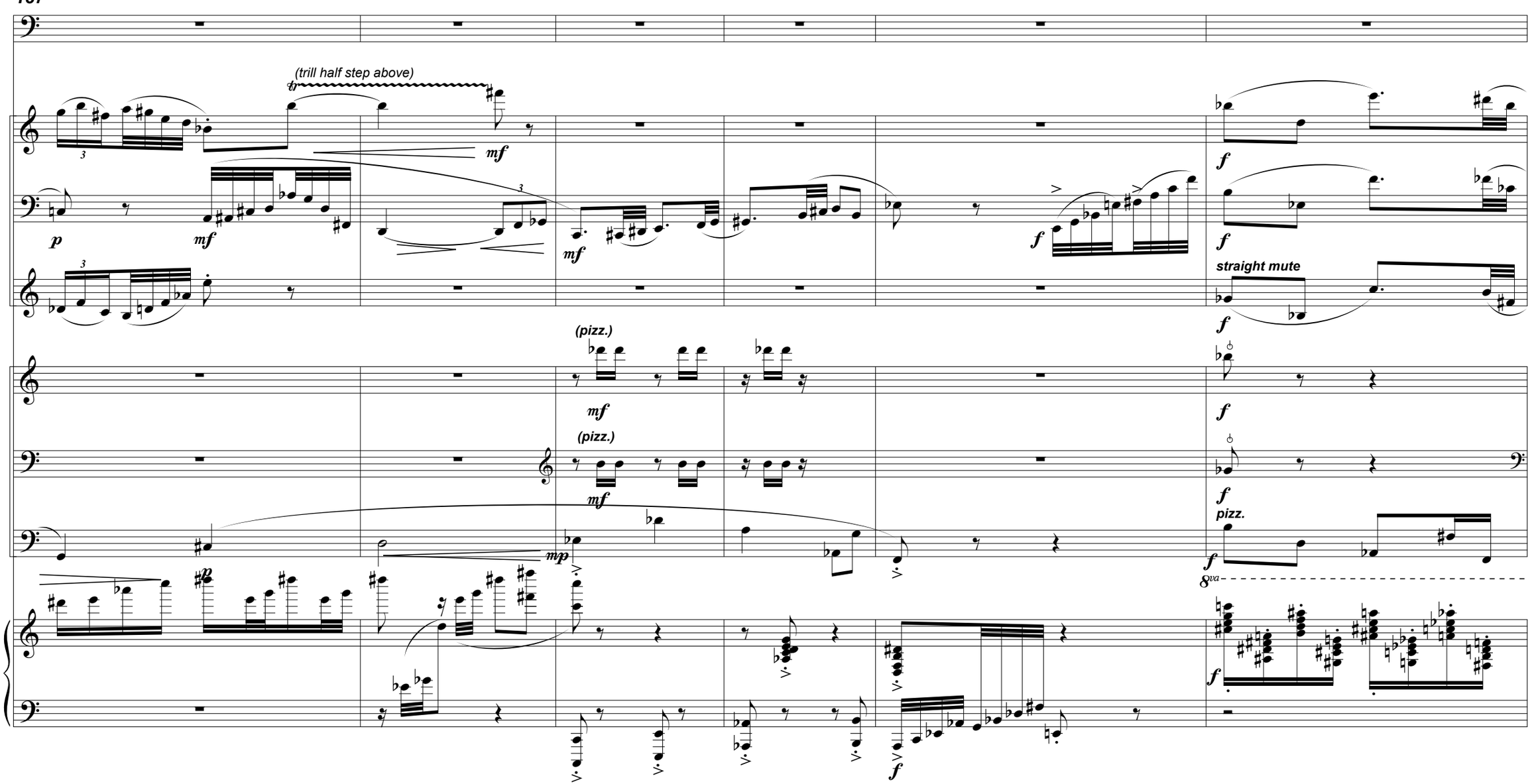
mf

mp

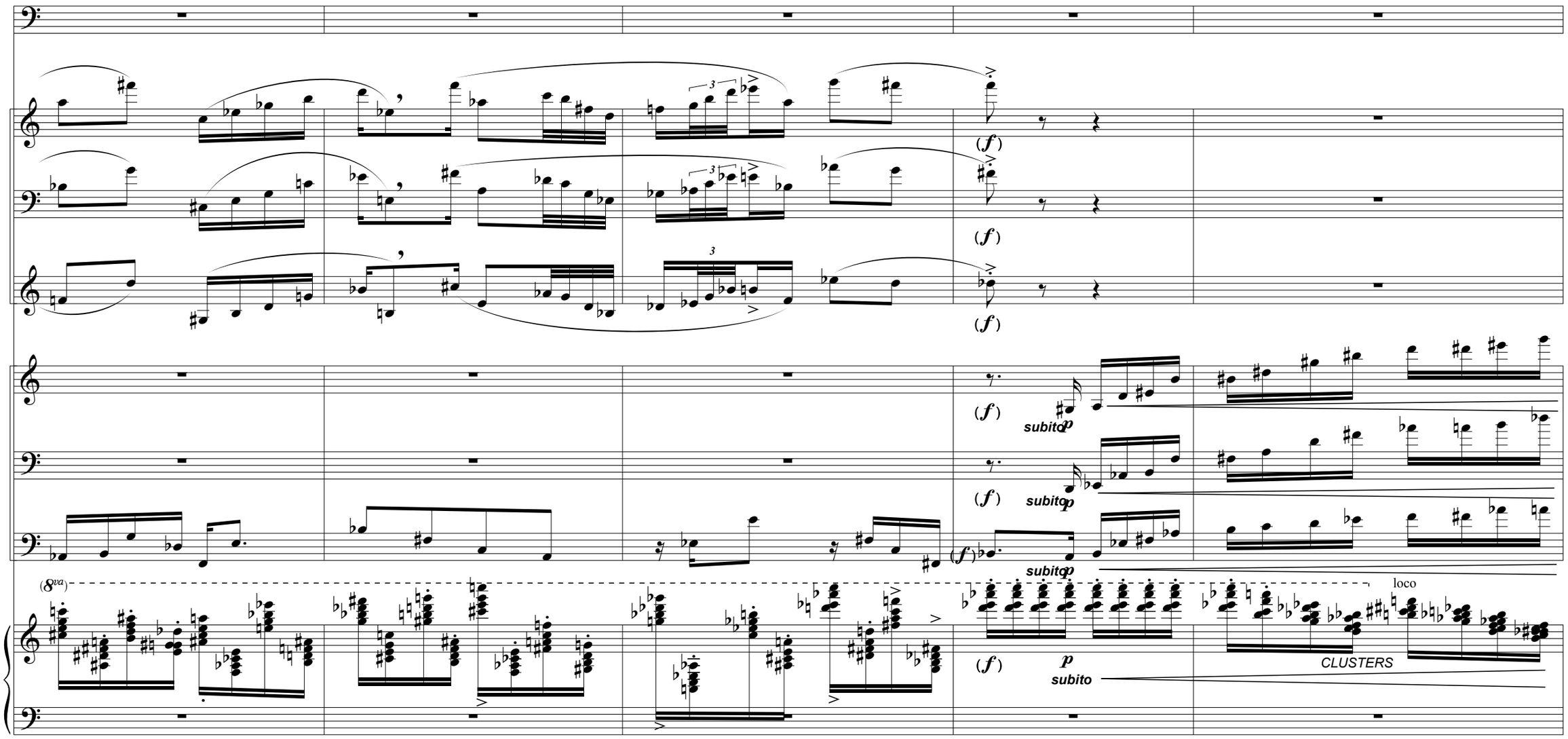
sustain pedal finally OFF

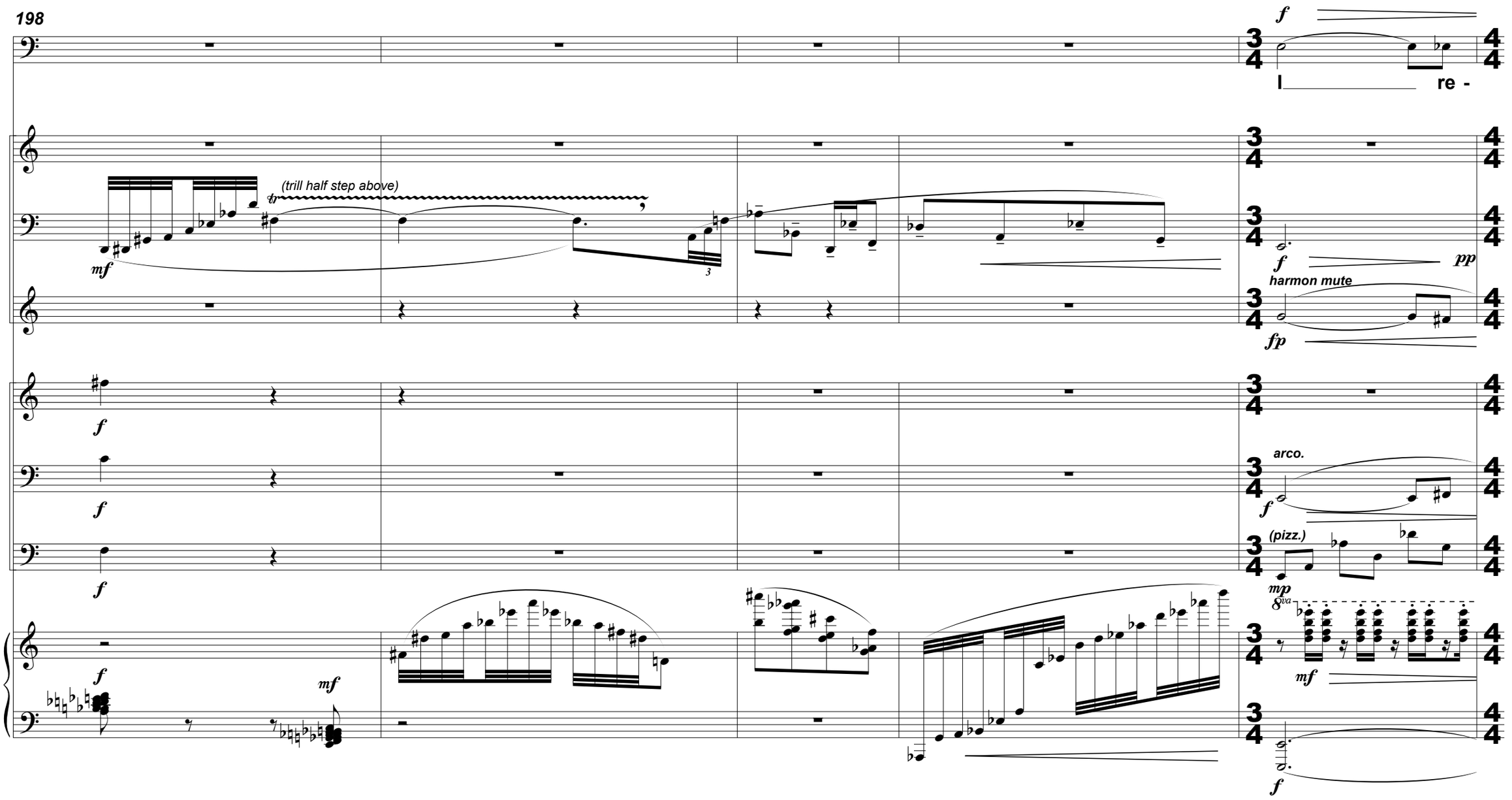

174
(p)
mf
the dis-tant ac-ce - ler - a-tion of a ci-ty bus (sssSSsss)
bass clarinet
pp
f
nienté
ssss.... SSSsss..
p
mp
mf
arco.
pp


180
mp
p
p
mp
(harmon mute)
mp
pp
mp
p
mp

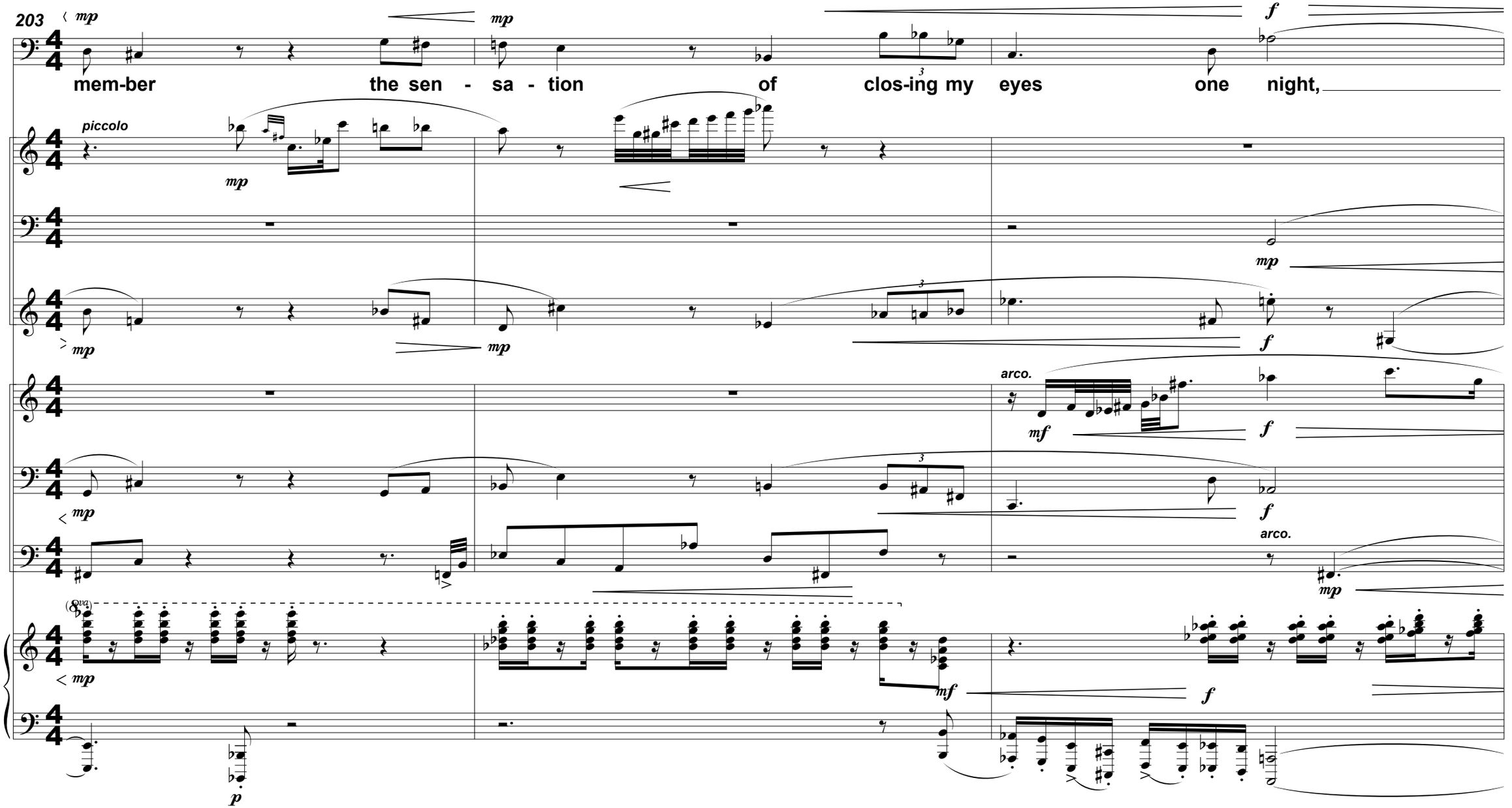

187
(trill half step above)
straight mute
(pizz.)
pizz.
8va

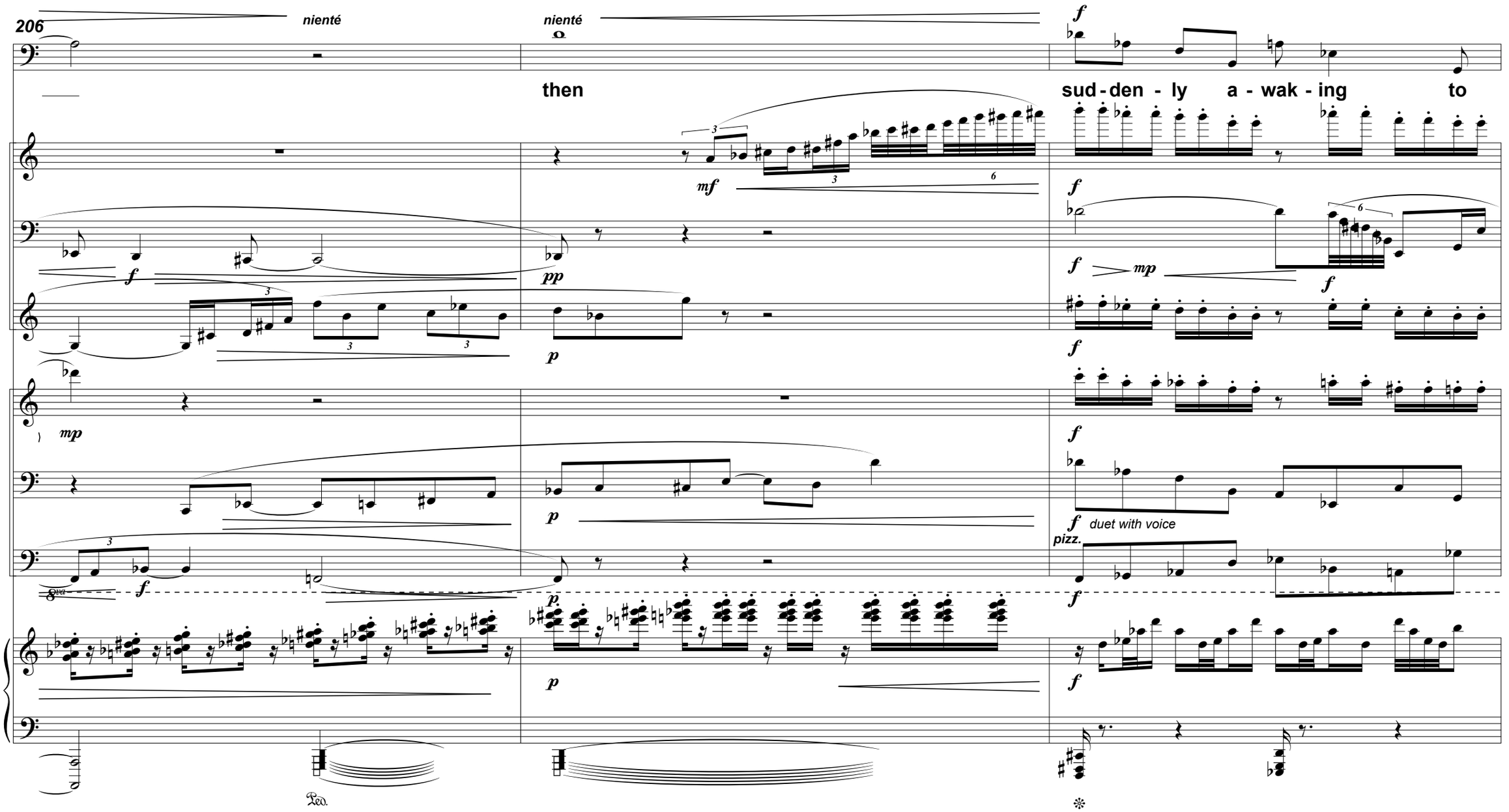
193

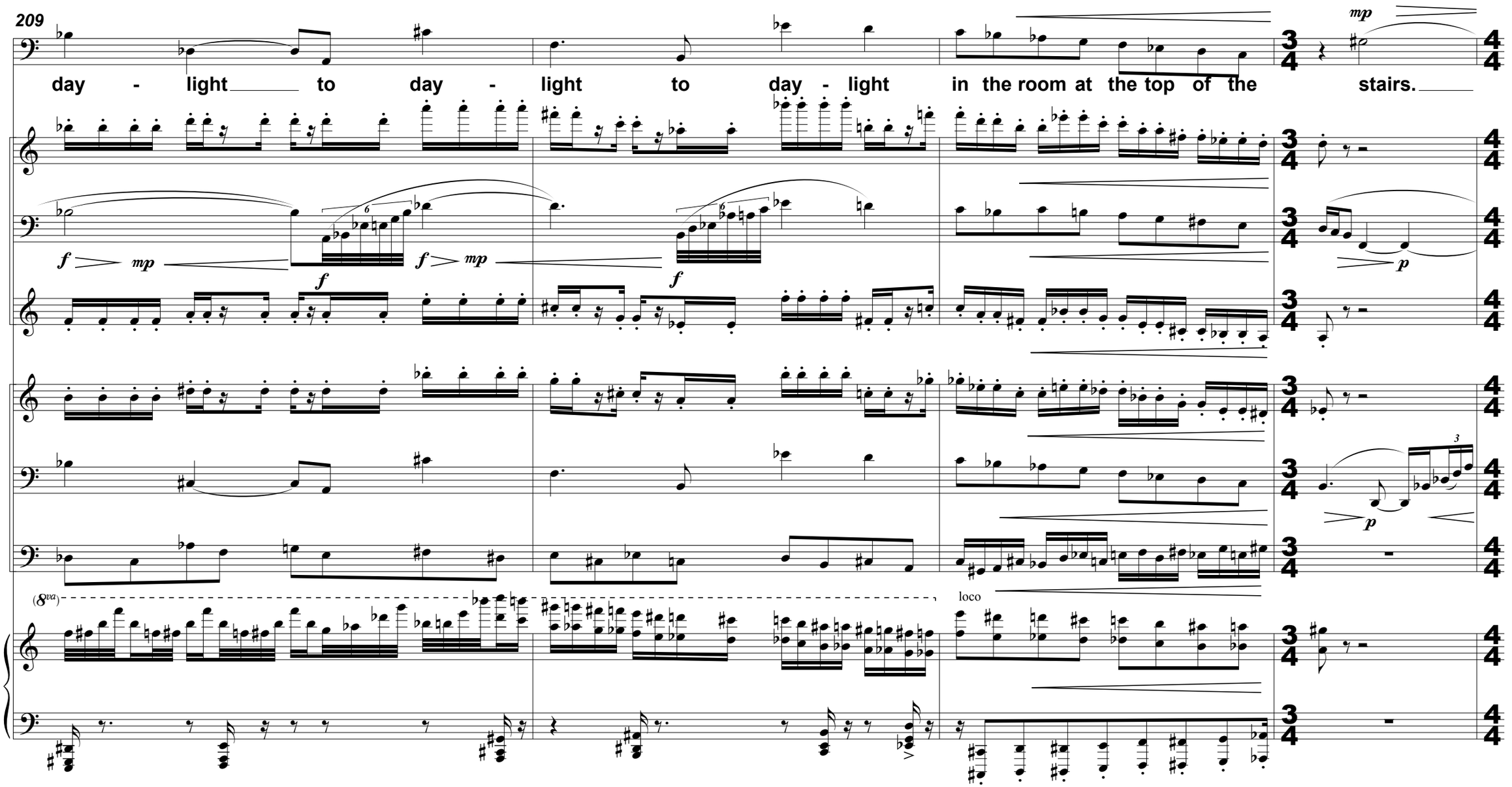



198
f
I
re -
(trill half step above)
mf
3
f
pp
harmon mute
fp
f
arco.
(pizz.)
mp
8va
mf
f

THE SENSATION OF WAKING




206
nienté
nienté
then
sud - den - ly a - wak - ing to
duet with voice
pizz.
Ped.


209
day - light to day - light to day - light in the room at the top of the stairs.
mp
f
mp
f
mp
f
p
p
(8va)
loco

213

Flüstern-Stimme

(sss... ...sss) But now I am an age - less prow-ler wan - der - ing

normal voice

(piccolo)

(harmon mute)

pizz.

(pizz.) 8va

arco.

legato

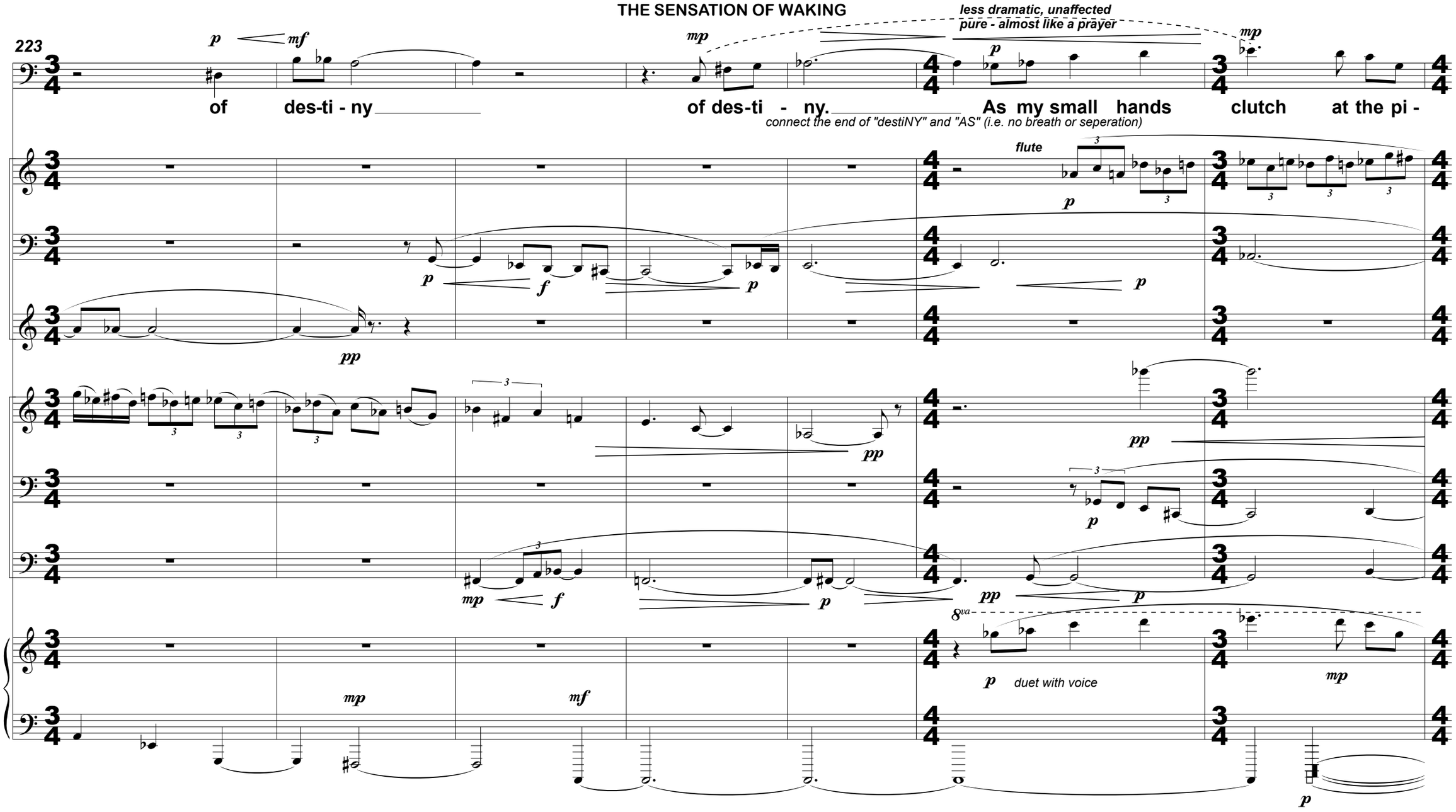
hold keys in LH to sustain cluster
and allow sound to ring sympathetically

219

through grey em - pty rooms, a - ware of the ap - proach-ing in - va - sion

espress.

arco.


223
less dramatic, unaffected
pure - almost like a prayer
of des-ti - ny
of des-ti - ny.
As my small hands clutch at the pi -
connect the end of "destiNY" and "AS" (i.e. no breath or seperation)
flute
duet with voice
8va

- - - - - - - normal voice - - - full, big voice

230

a - no, I sense the mir - ror be - hind me. It gives a Christ-mas feel to the

clarinet

straight mute

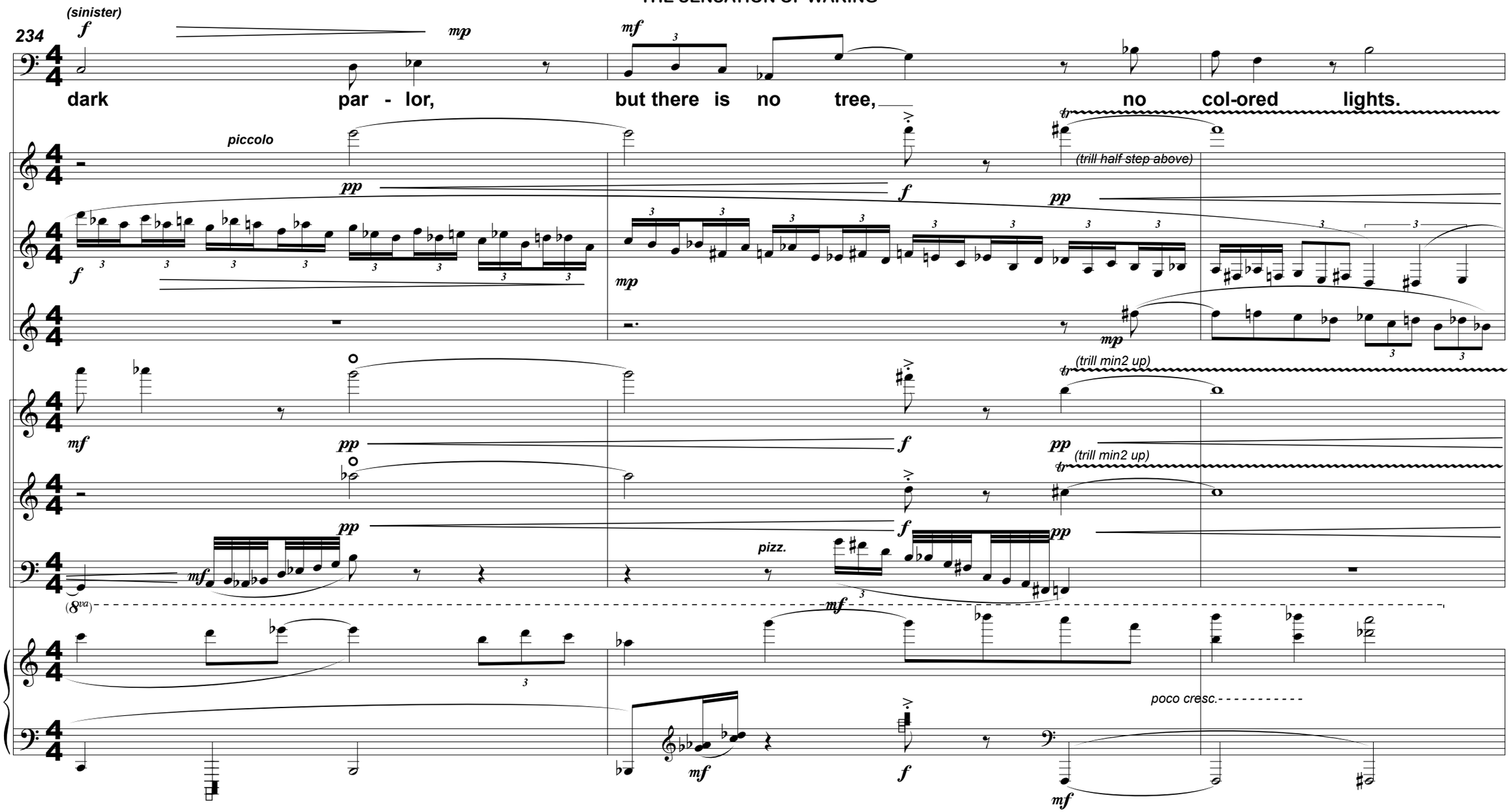
mp *mp pp* *mp* *mp pp* *mp* *mp pp*

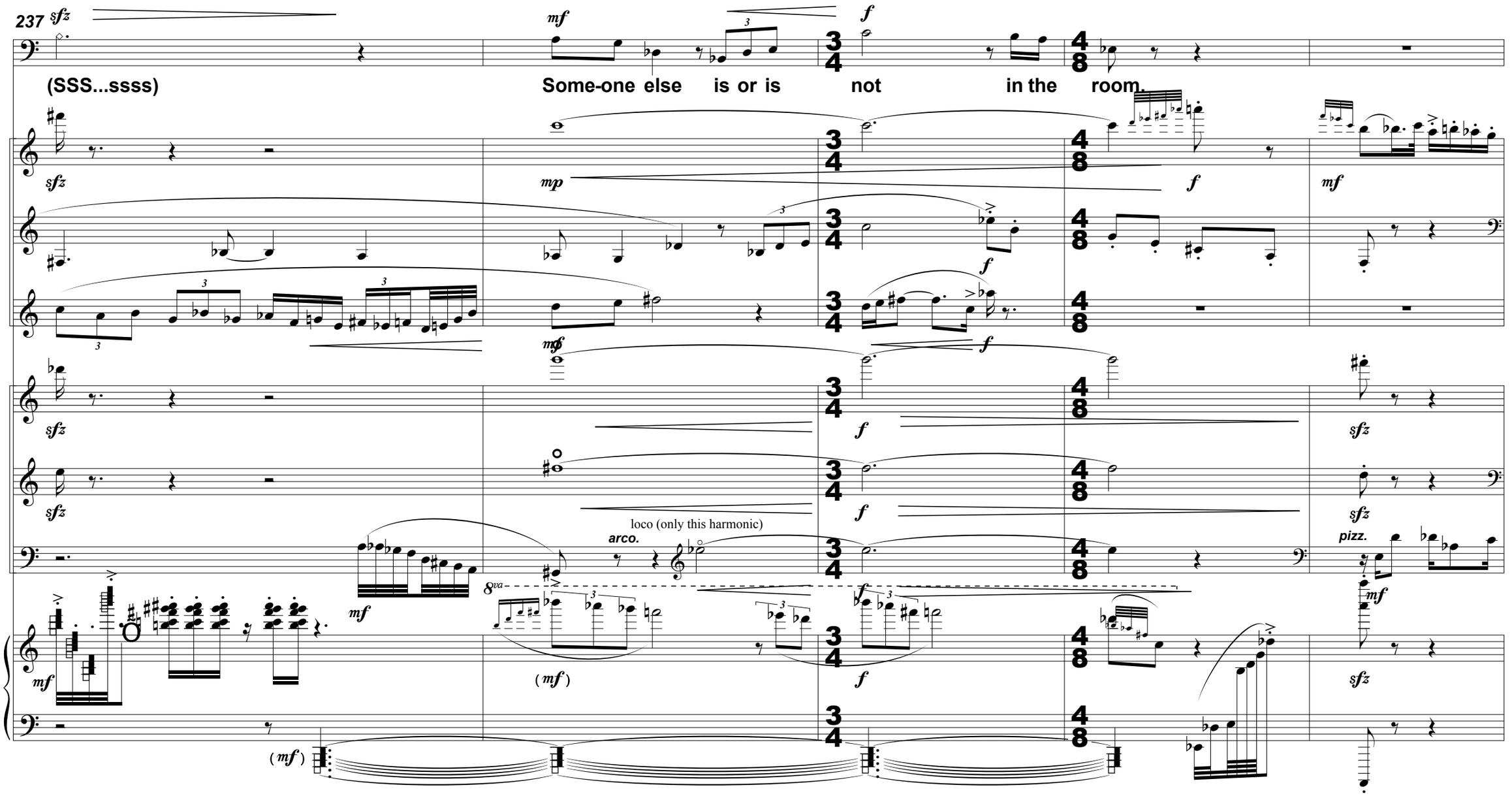
p *f* *pp*

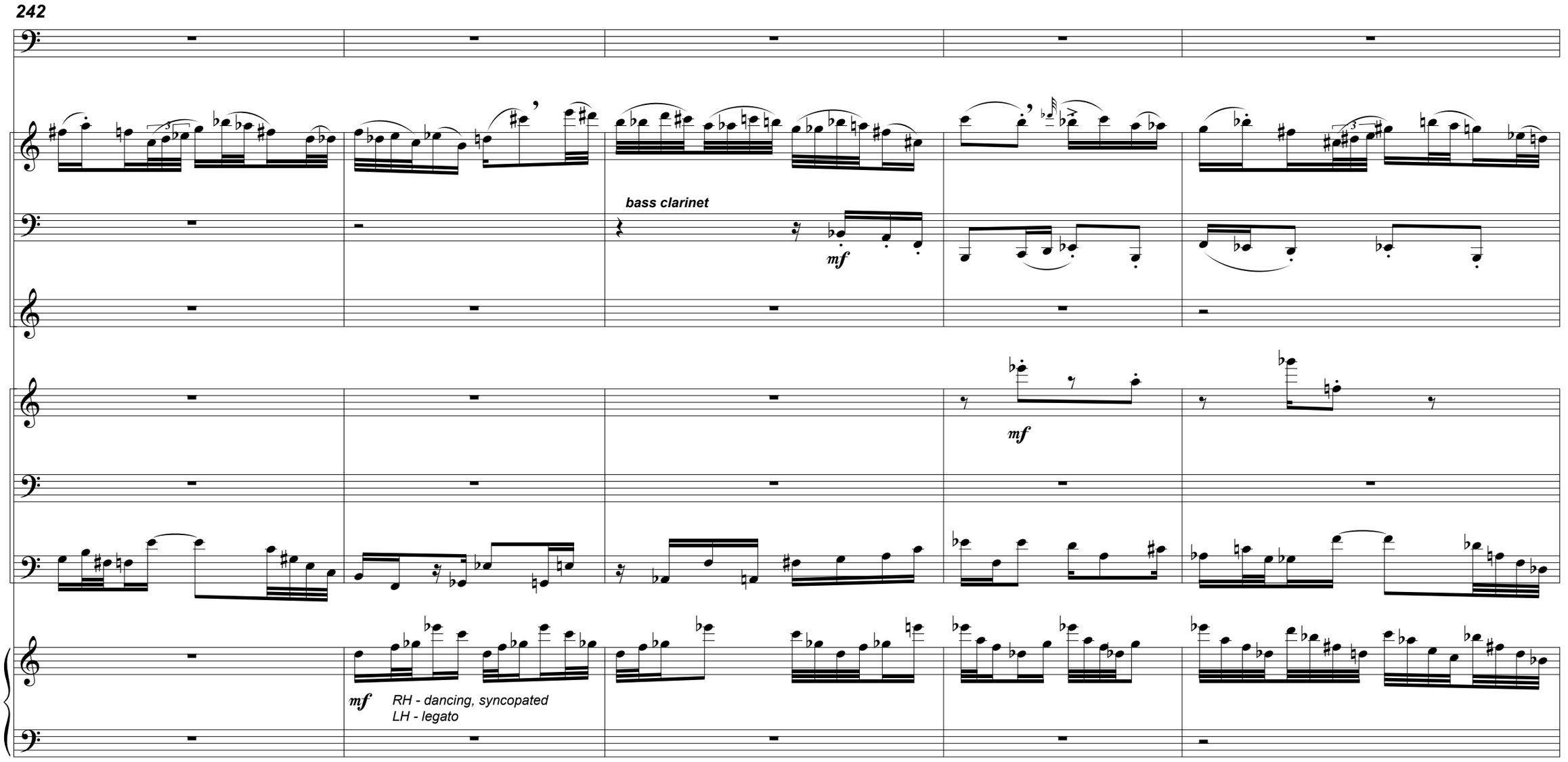
(8va) (*p*)

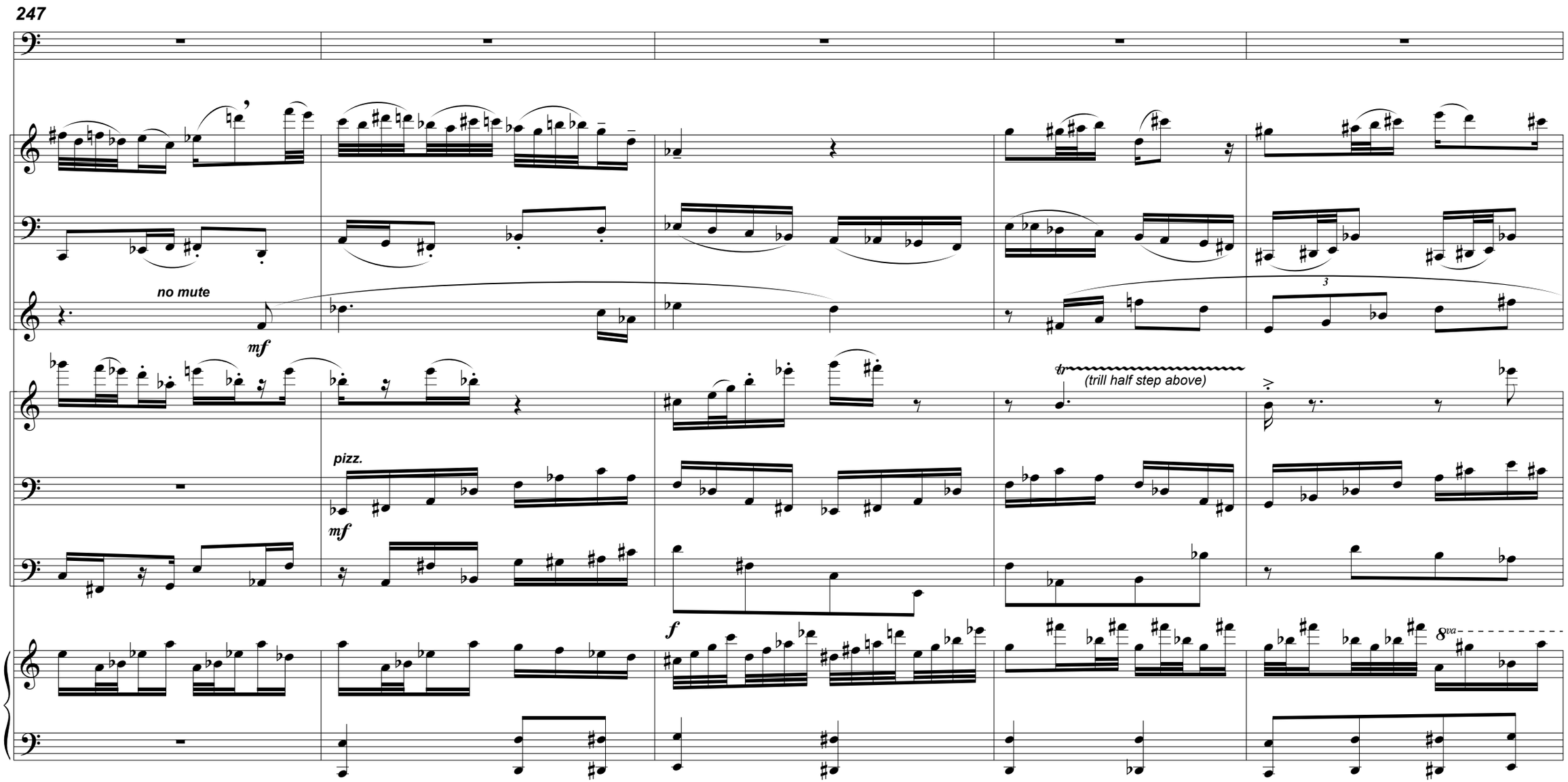
sharp

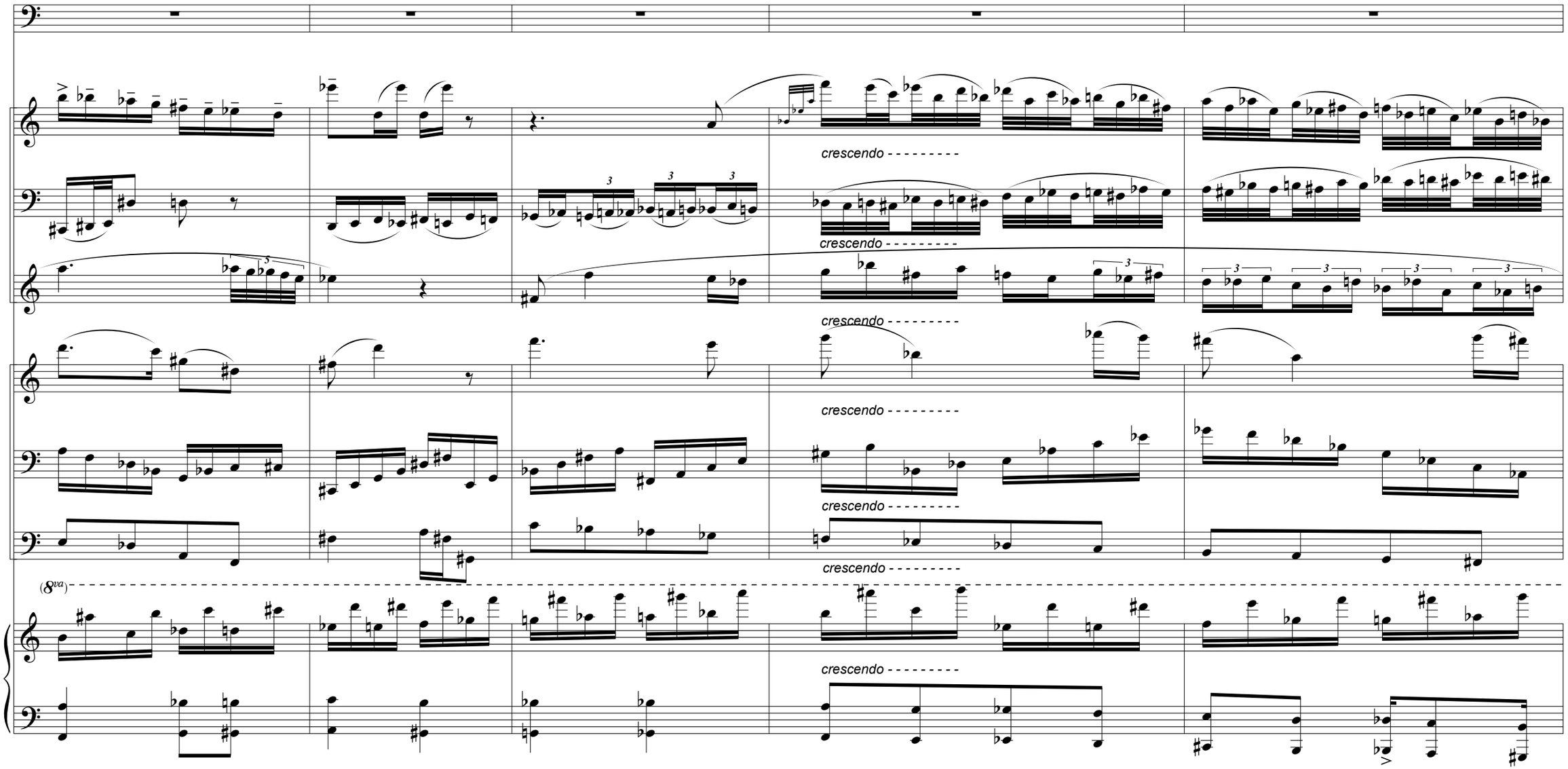
mp *playful - like a child* *mp*

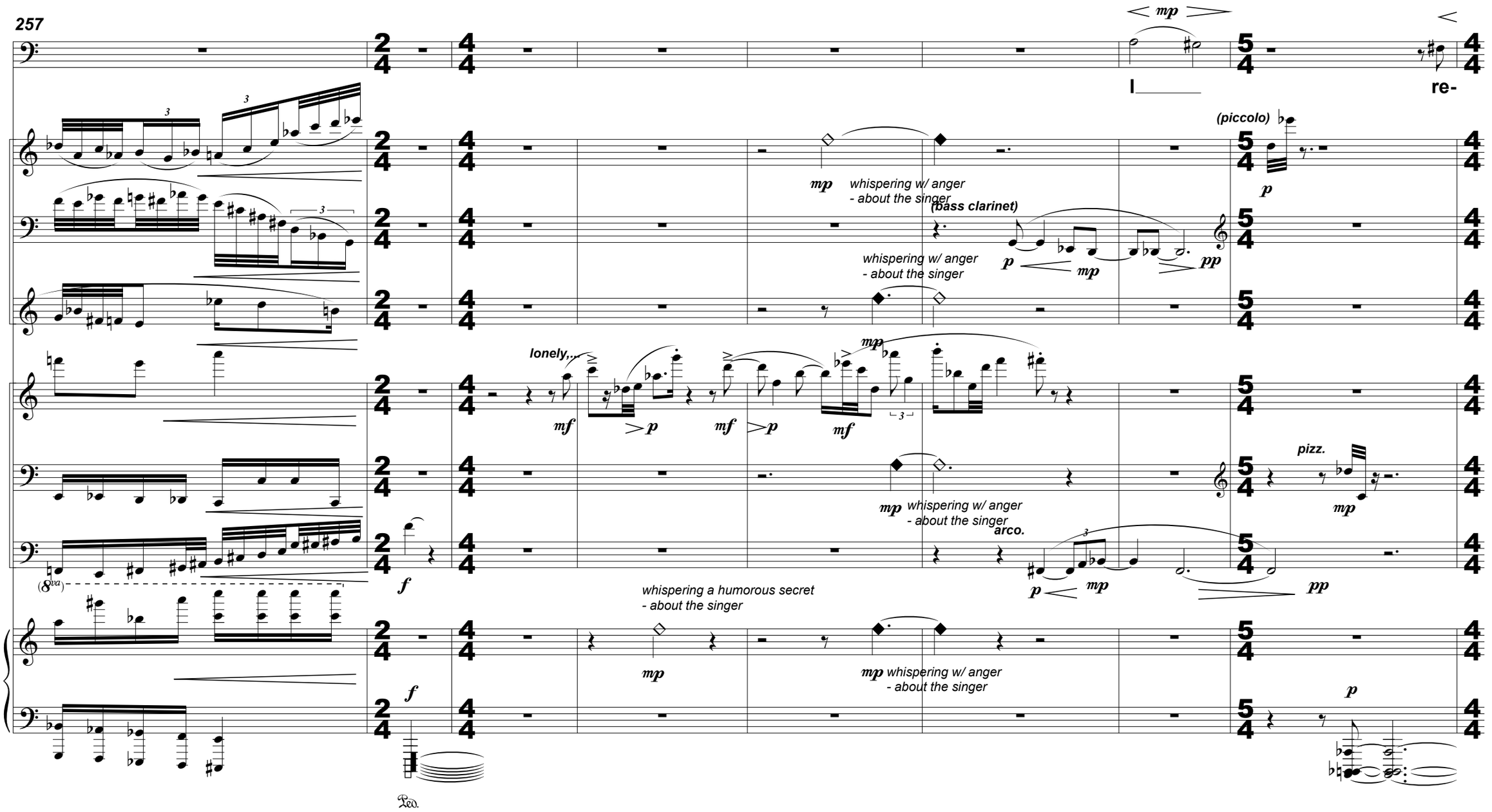

(sinister)
234
dark par - lor, but there is no tree, no col-ored lights.
piccolo
(trill half step above)
(trill min2 up)
(trill min2 up)
pizz.
poco cresc.

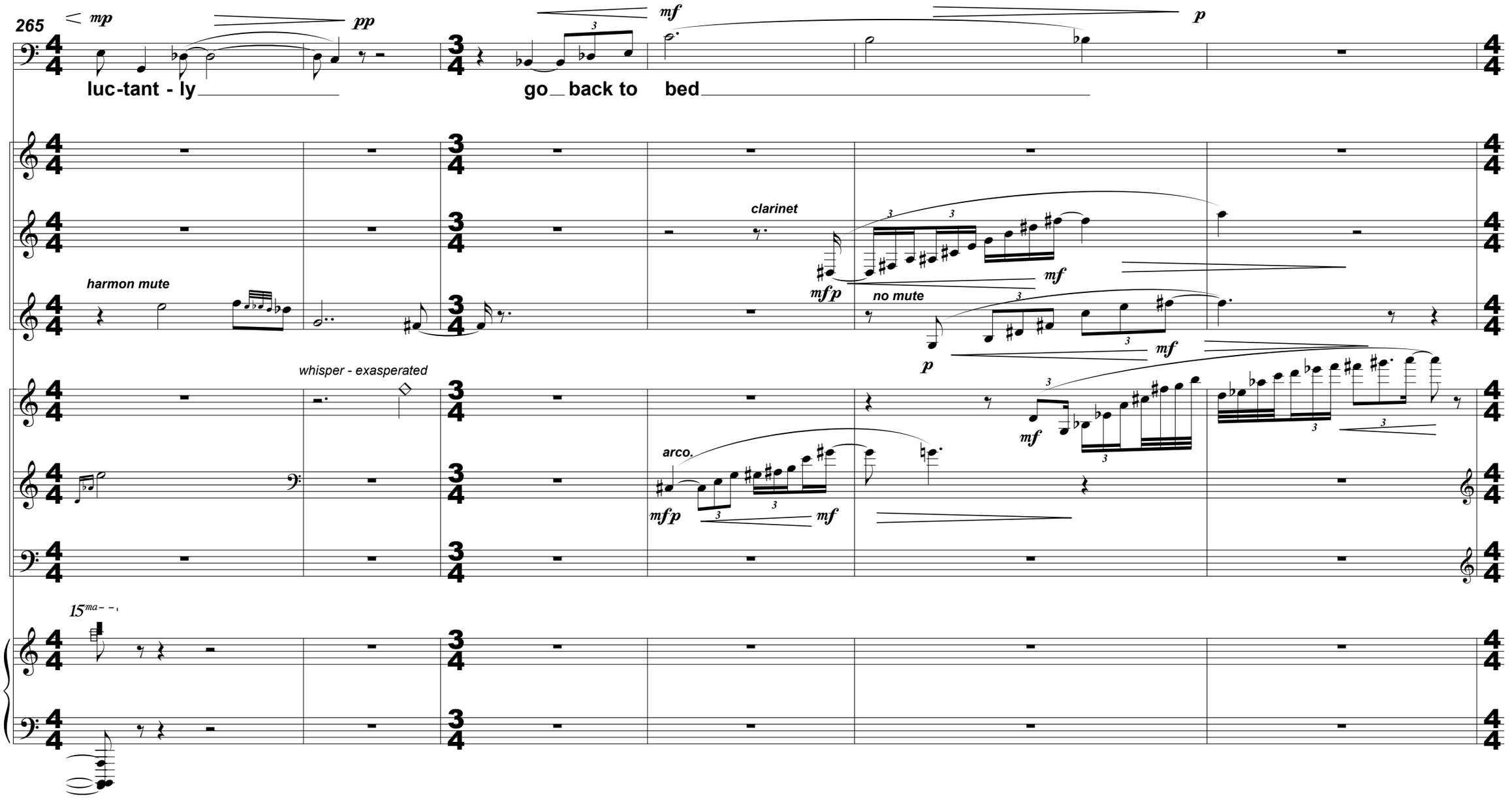

237
(SSS...ssss)
Some-one else is or is not in the room.
loco (only this harmonic)
arco.
pizz.
8va

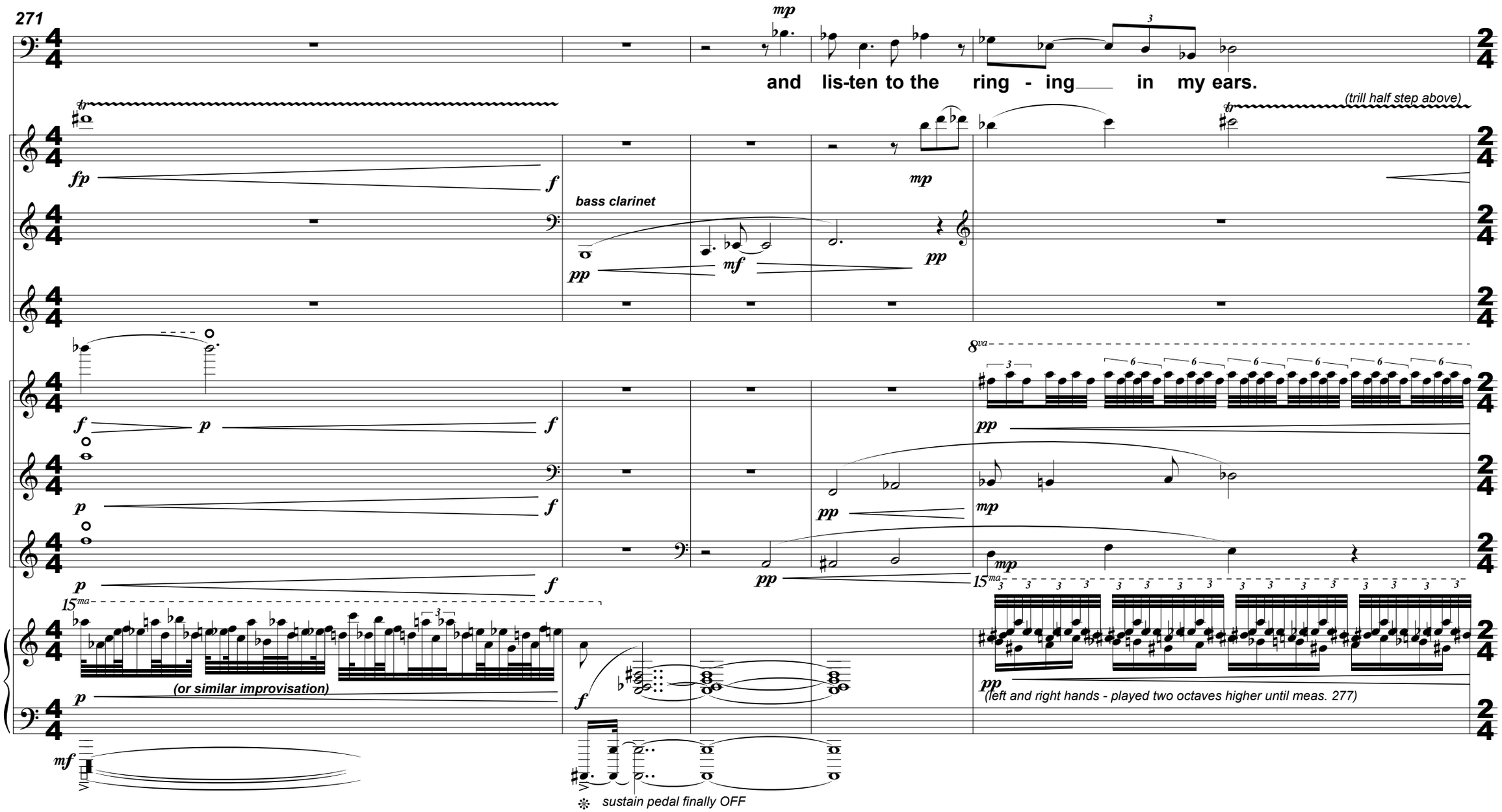

242
bass clarinet
mf
mf
mf
RH - dancing, syncopated
LH - legato

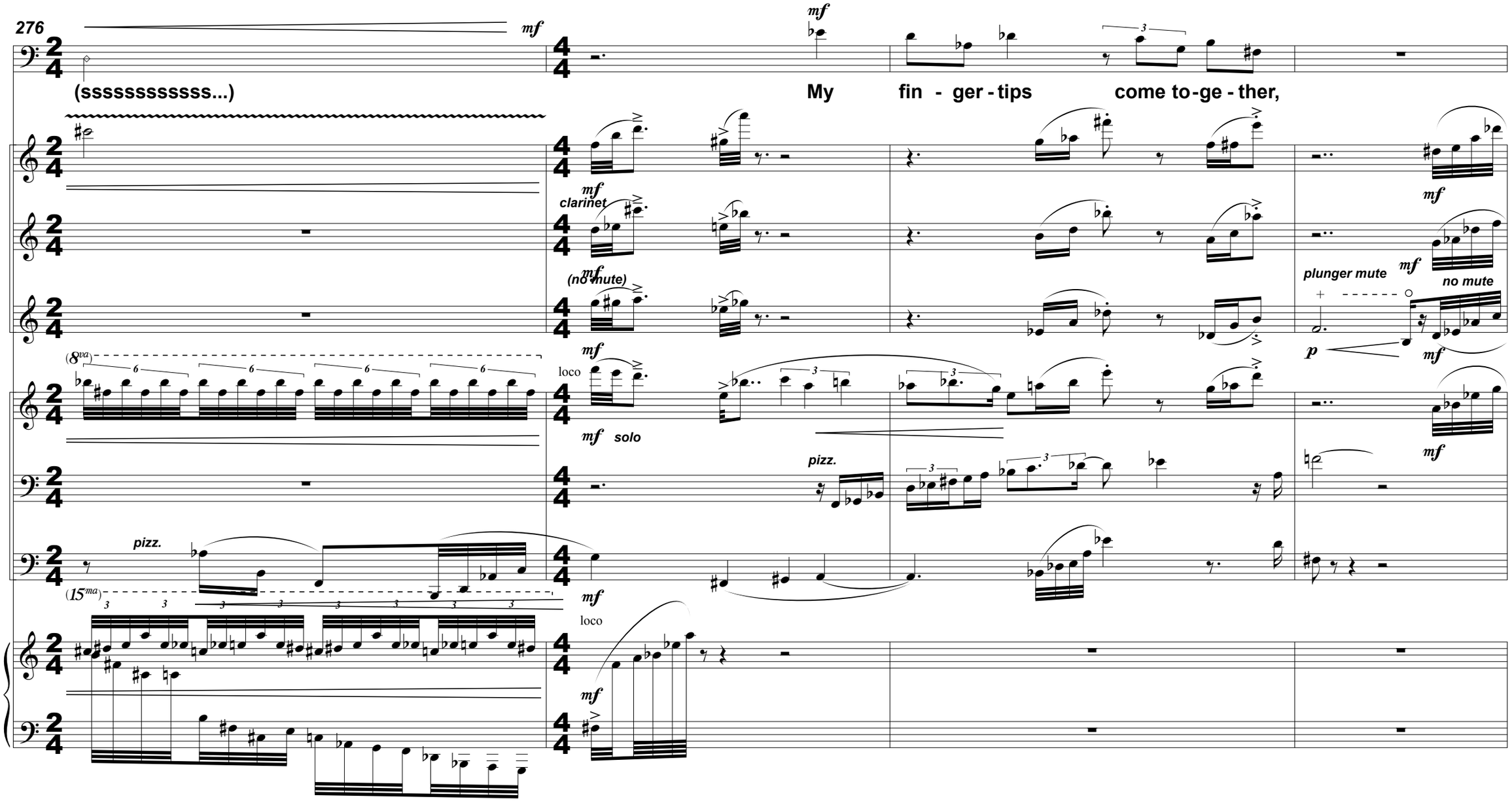

247
no mute
mf
pizz.
mf
(trill half step above)
f
8va

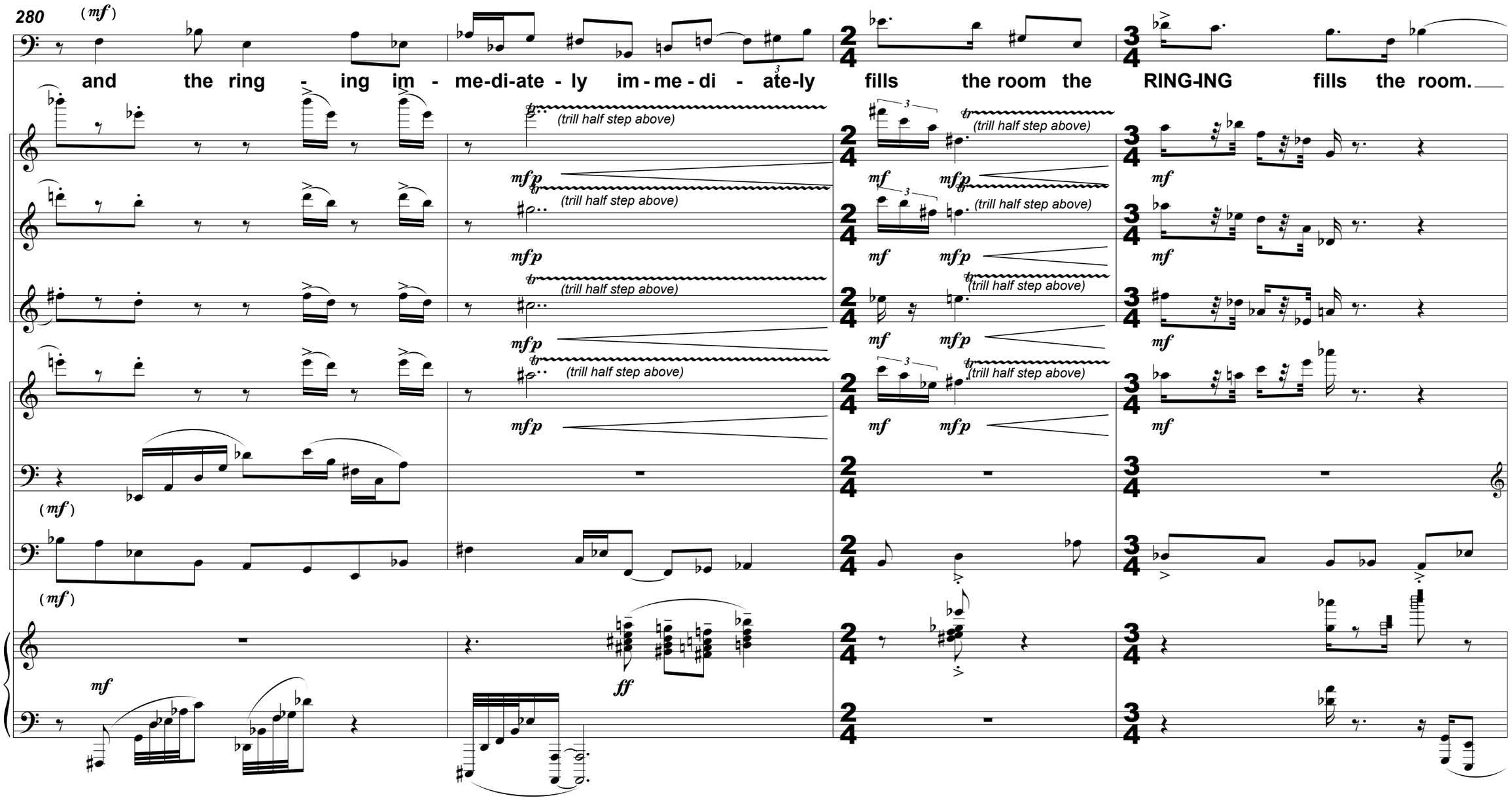

252
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
crescendo - - - - - - - - -
(8va)
crescendo - - - - - - - - -


257
mp
I
re-
(piccolo)
p
mp whispering w/ anger
- about the singer
(bass clarinet)
p
mp
pp
whispering w/ anger
- about the singer
lonely,...
mf
p
mf
p
mf
mp
pizz.
mp
mp whispering w/ anger
- about the singer
arco.
p
mp
pp
(8va)
f
whispering a humorous secret
- about the singer
mp
mp whispering w/ anger
- about the singer
f
p
Ped.


265
mp
pp
mf
p
luc-tant - ly
go back to bed
harmon mute
clarinet
mfp
mf
no mute
p
whisper - exasperated
arco.
15ma


271
and lis-ten to the ring - ing in my ears.
(trill half step above)
bass clarinet
(or similar improvisation)
(left and right hands - played two octaves higher until meas. 277)
sustain pedal finally OFF


276
mf
(sssssssssss...)
My fin - ger - tips come to - ge - ther,
clarinet
(no mute)
plunger mute
no mute
p
(8va)
loco
solo
pizz.
(15ma)


280
(mf)
and the ring - ing im - me-di-ate - ly im - me - di - ate-ly fills the room the RING-ING fills the room.
(trill half step above)
mfp
mf
(mf)
ff

284

At the top of the stairs un - known e-ne-mies speak about

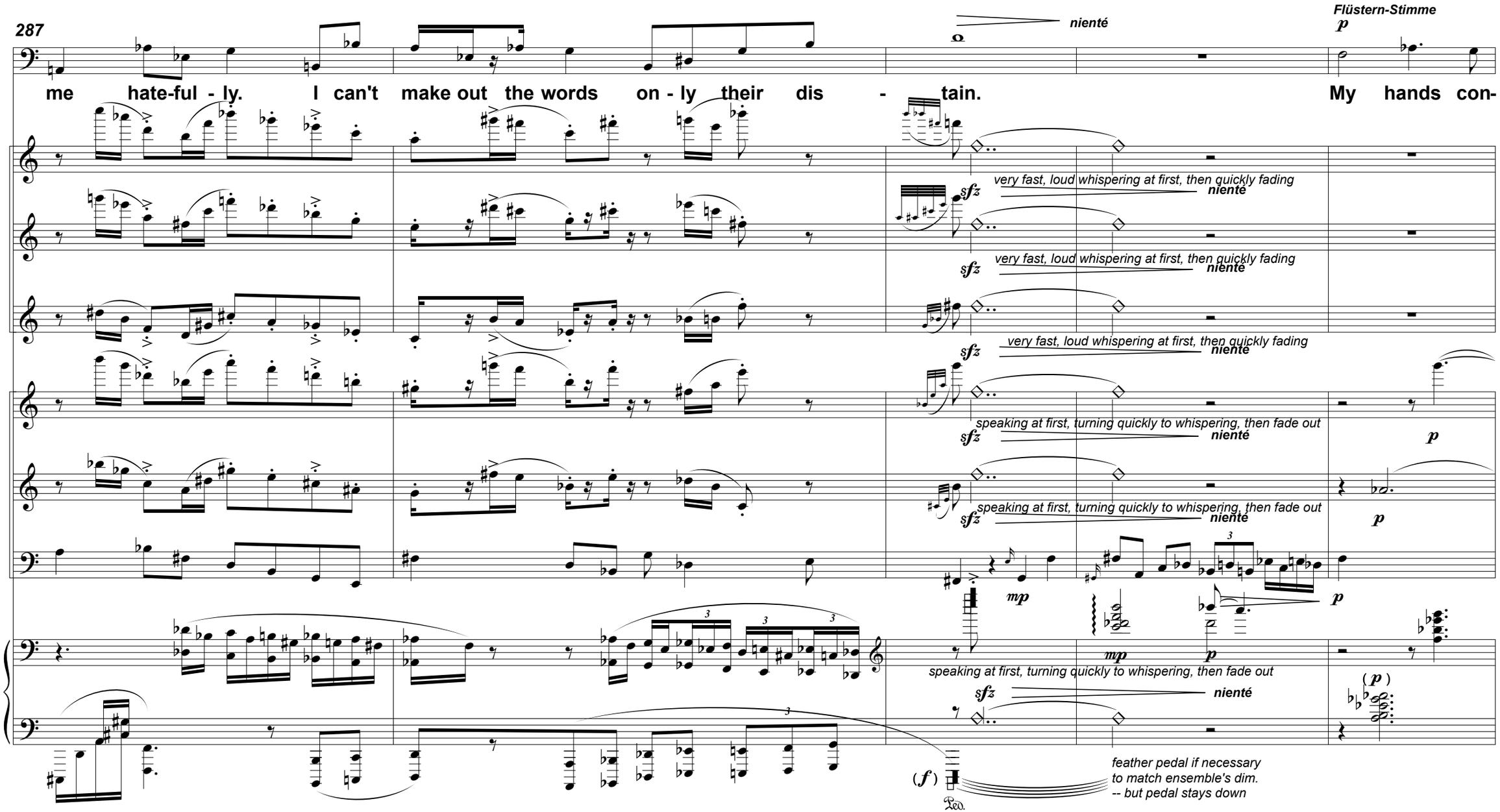
(trill half step above)

(trill half step above)

(trill half step above)

(or similar improvisation)

feather sus. ped. as it is released


287
me hate-ful - ly. I can't make out the words on - ly their dis - tain. My hands con-
Flüstern-Stimme
p
nienté
very fast, loud whispering at first, then quickly fading
sfz
nienté
very fast, loud whispering at first, then quickly fading
sfz
nienté
very fast, loud whispering at first, then quickly fading
sfz
nienté
speaking at first, turning quickly to whispering, then fade out
sfz
nienté
p
speaking at first, turning quickly to whispering, then fade out
sfz
nienté
p
mp
mp
p
speaking at first, turning quickly to whispering, then fade out
sfz
nienté
(p)
(f)
feather pedal if necessary
to match ensemble's dim.
-- but pedal stays down

292

- - - - - - - normal voice

mp

full voice

mf

f *full norm. voice*
words over-articulated

spire with this ter-ror TER - ROR TER - ROR! GRO-TESQUE-LY swelling di - gits touch and

p

f

f

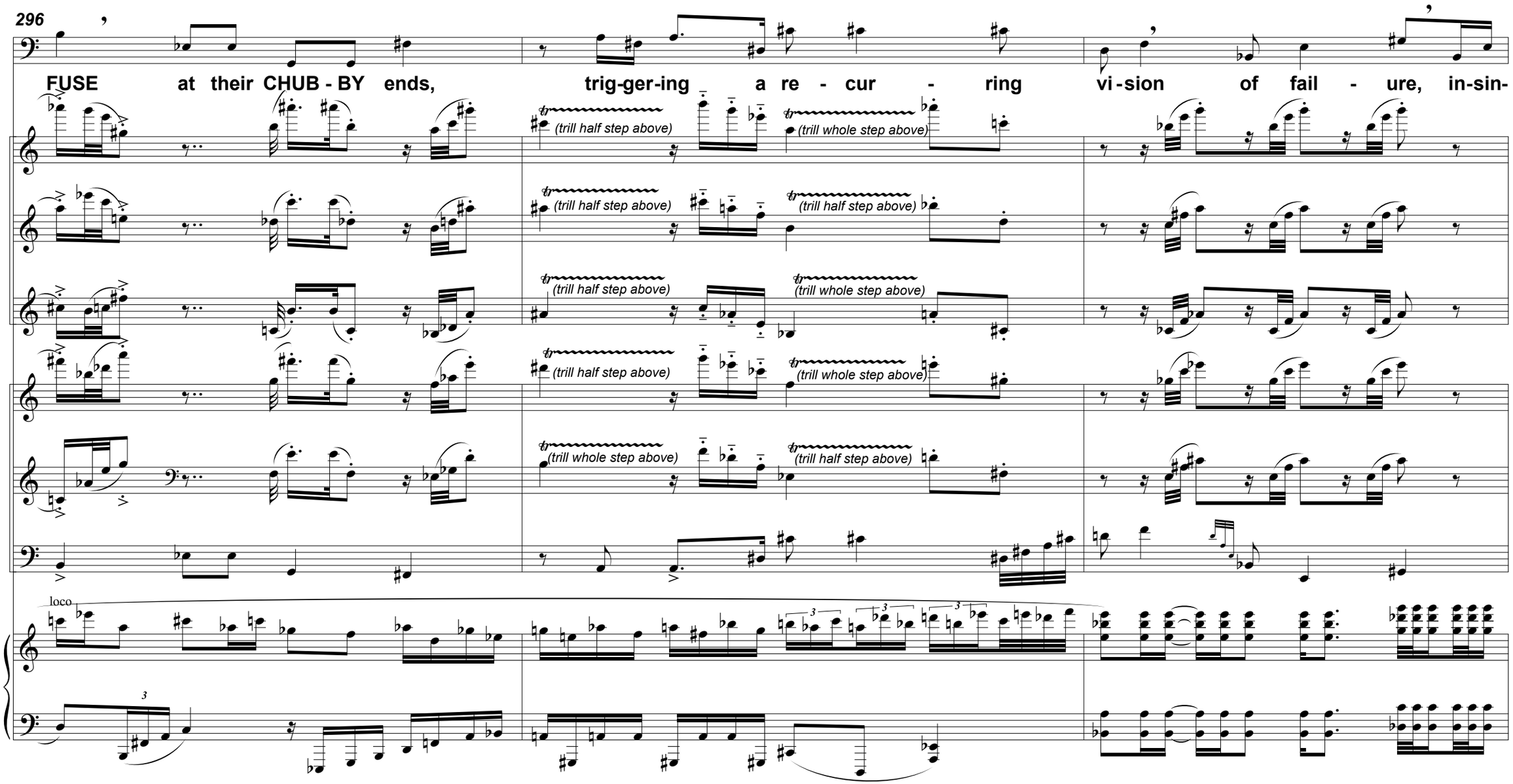
f

f

f *duet with voice*

8va

f


296
FUSE at their CHUB - BY ends, trig-ger-ing a re - cur - ring vi - sion of fail - ure, in-sin-
(trill half step above)
(trill whole step above)
loco

299

cer - e - ty, and wast - ed op - por - tu - ni - ty. I FEEL THEIR

sprechstimme (with wild eyes)

mf

(trill whole step above)

(trill half step above)

mp p

(trill Maj2 up)

(trill half step above)

(trill whole step above)

(trill Maj2 up)

(trill half step above)

(trill whole step above)

(trill Maj2 up)

(trill Maj2 up)

mp p

solo

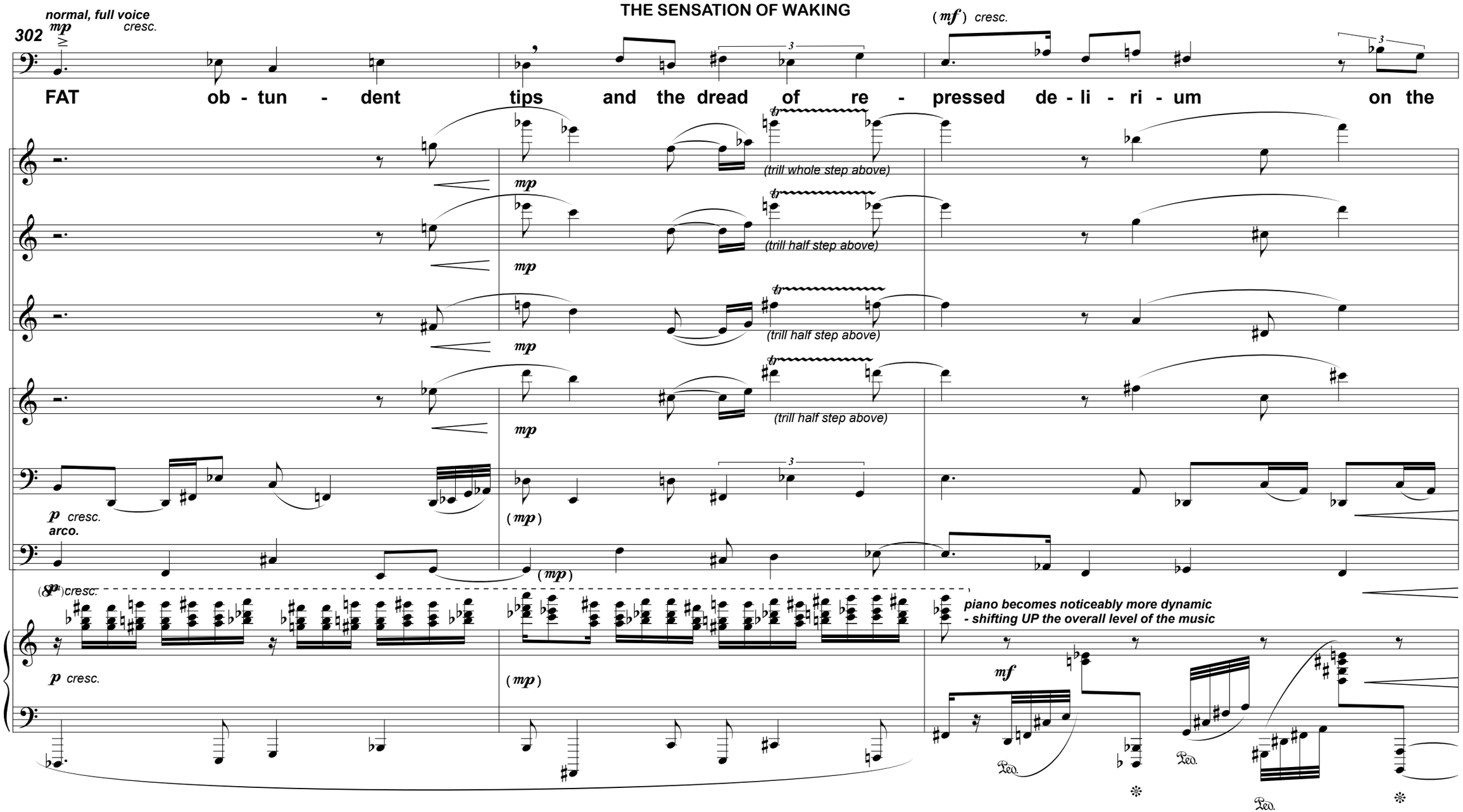
with voice

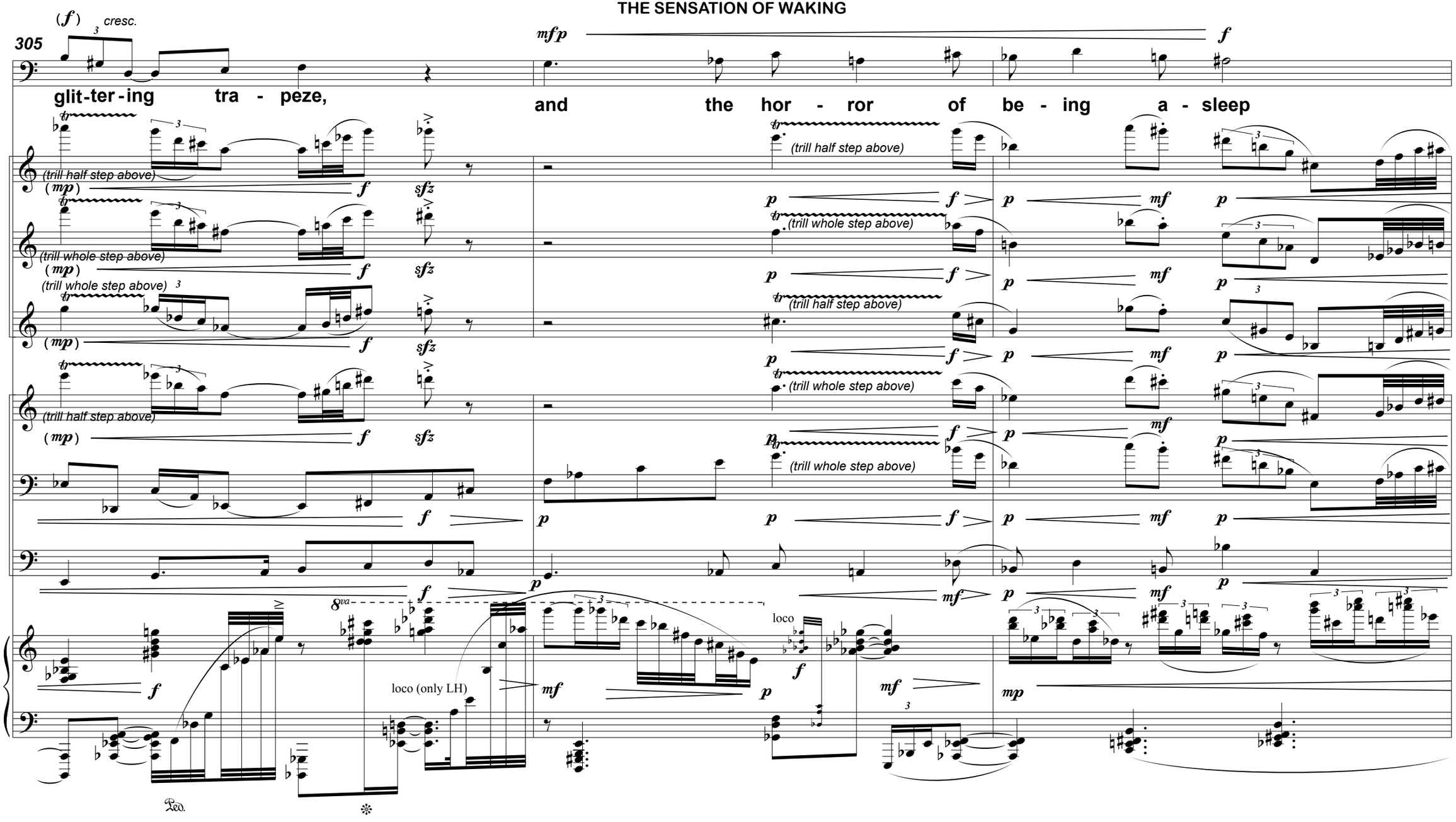
mf

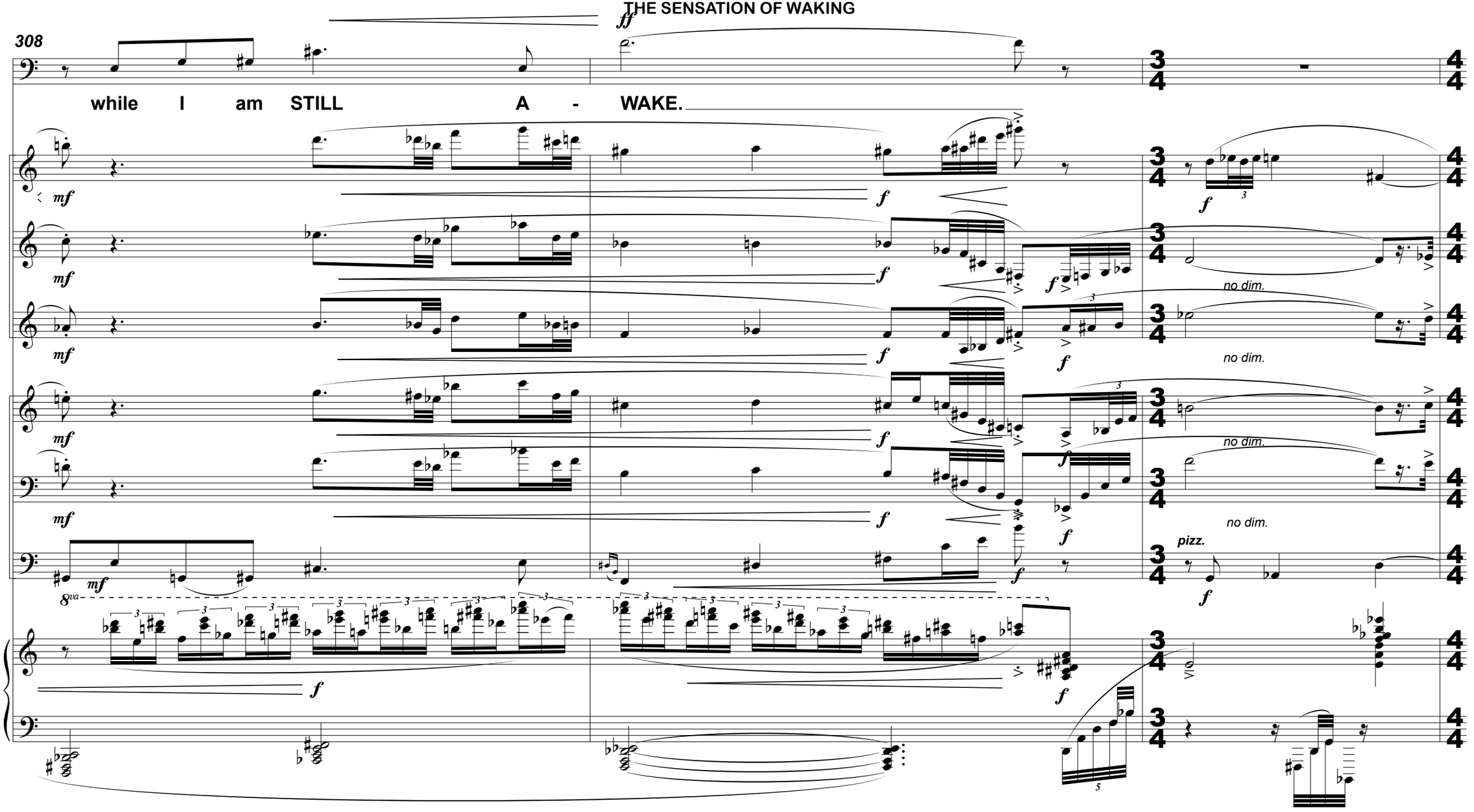
8va

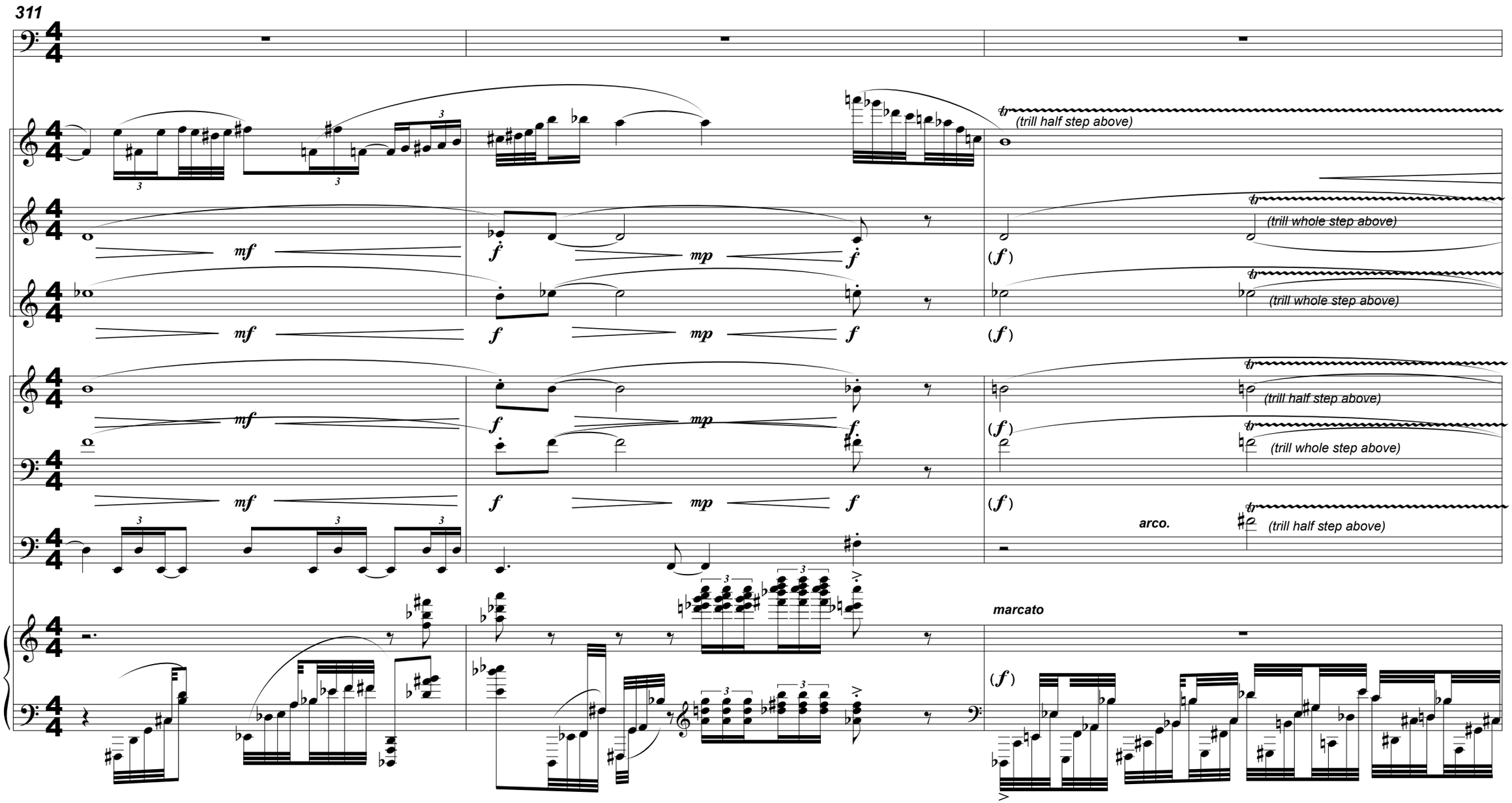
mf p

bring out RH here, as \ ensemble gets quieter

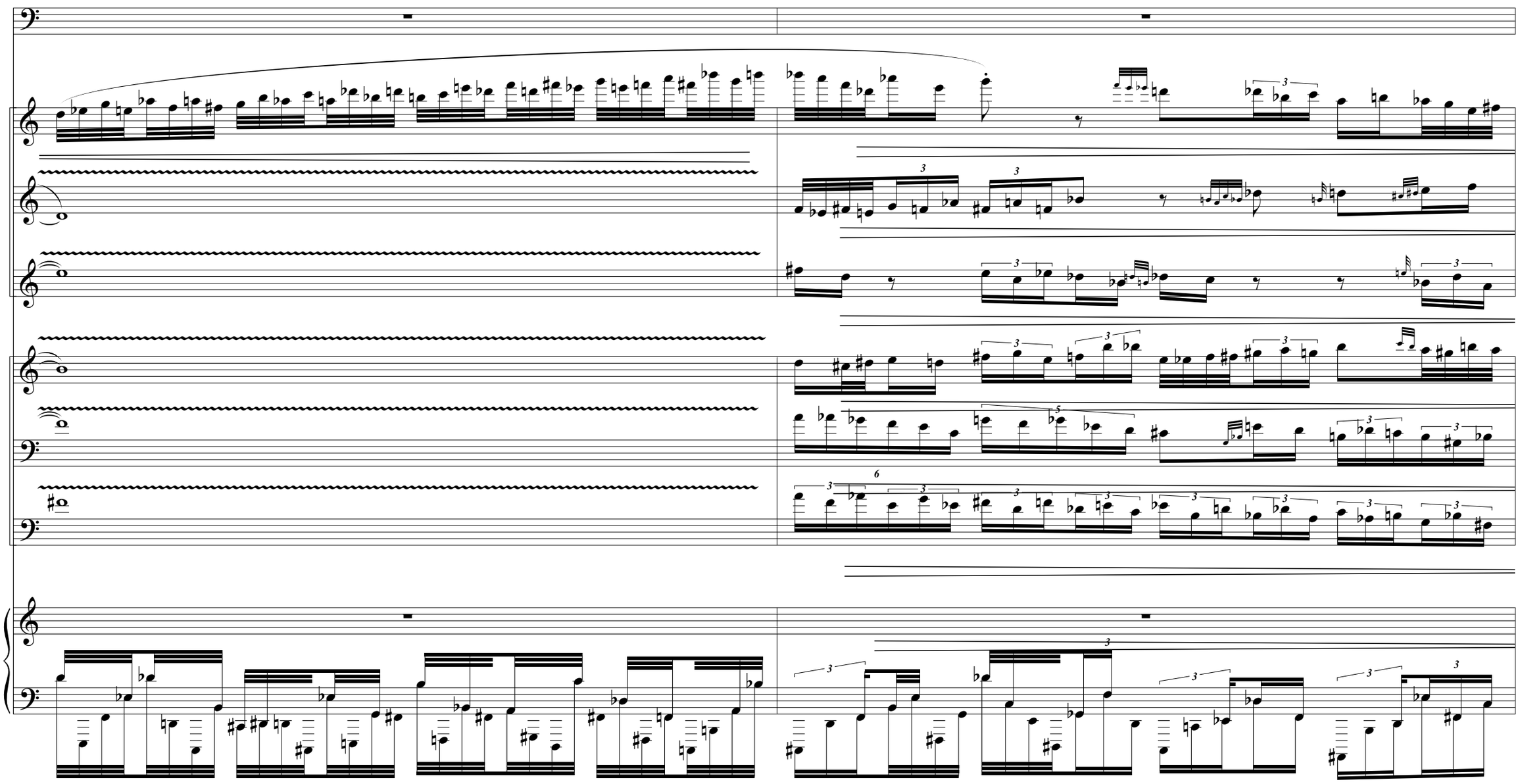

normal, full voice
302
mp
cresc.
FAT ob - tun - dent tips and the dread of re - pressed de - li - ri - um on the
(mf) cresc.
(trill whole step above)
(trill half step above)
(trill half step above)
(trill half step above)
p cresc.
arco.
(mp)
(mp)
(8va) cresc.
p cresc.
(mp)
piano becomes noticeably more dynamic
- shifting UP the overall level of the music
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.


305
(f) cresc.
mfp
f
glit-ter-ing tra - peze,
and the hor - ror of be - ing a - sleep
(trill half step above)
(trill whole step above)
(mp)
sfz
p
mf
8va
loco (only LH)
loco
mp
Ped.


308
while I am STILL A - WAKE.
ff
mf
f
no dim.
pizz.
8va


311
mf
mp
f
(f)
tr
(trill half step above)
(trill whole step above)
arco.
marcato

314



316

♪ = 84

falsetto - as pure as possible

mp

My old-er bro-ther and I were

(trill half step above)

(trill whole step above)

(trill half step above)

(trill half step above)

(trill half step above)

p

ff

323 *normal voice*

(*mp*) **Ethereal and quiet (very quiet!)**

sleep - - - ing in a big bed in the room at the top of the stairs.

flute

continuous, like snow falling

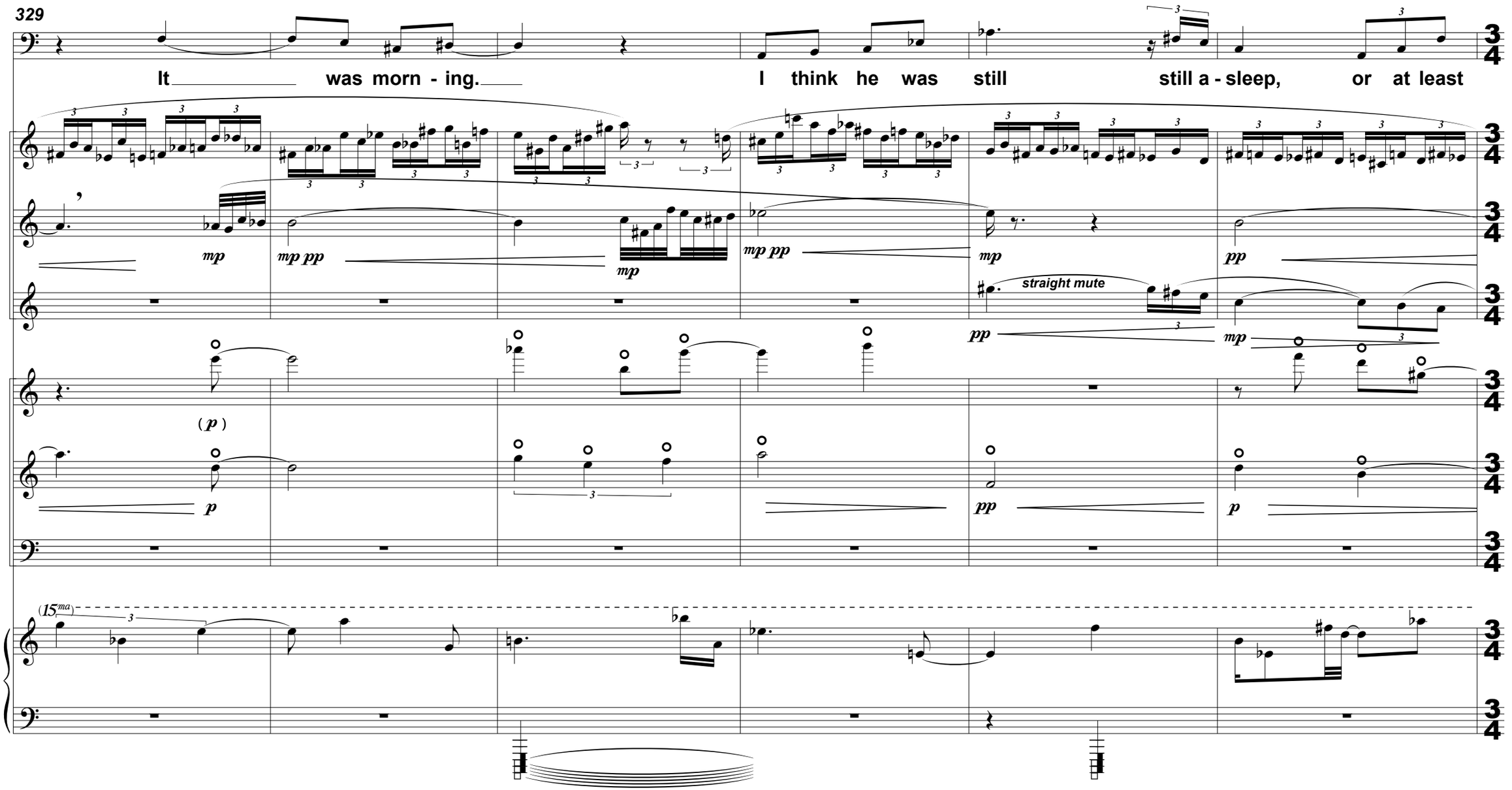
senza vibrato

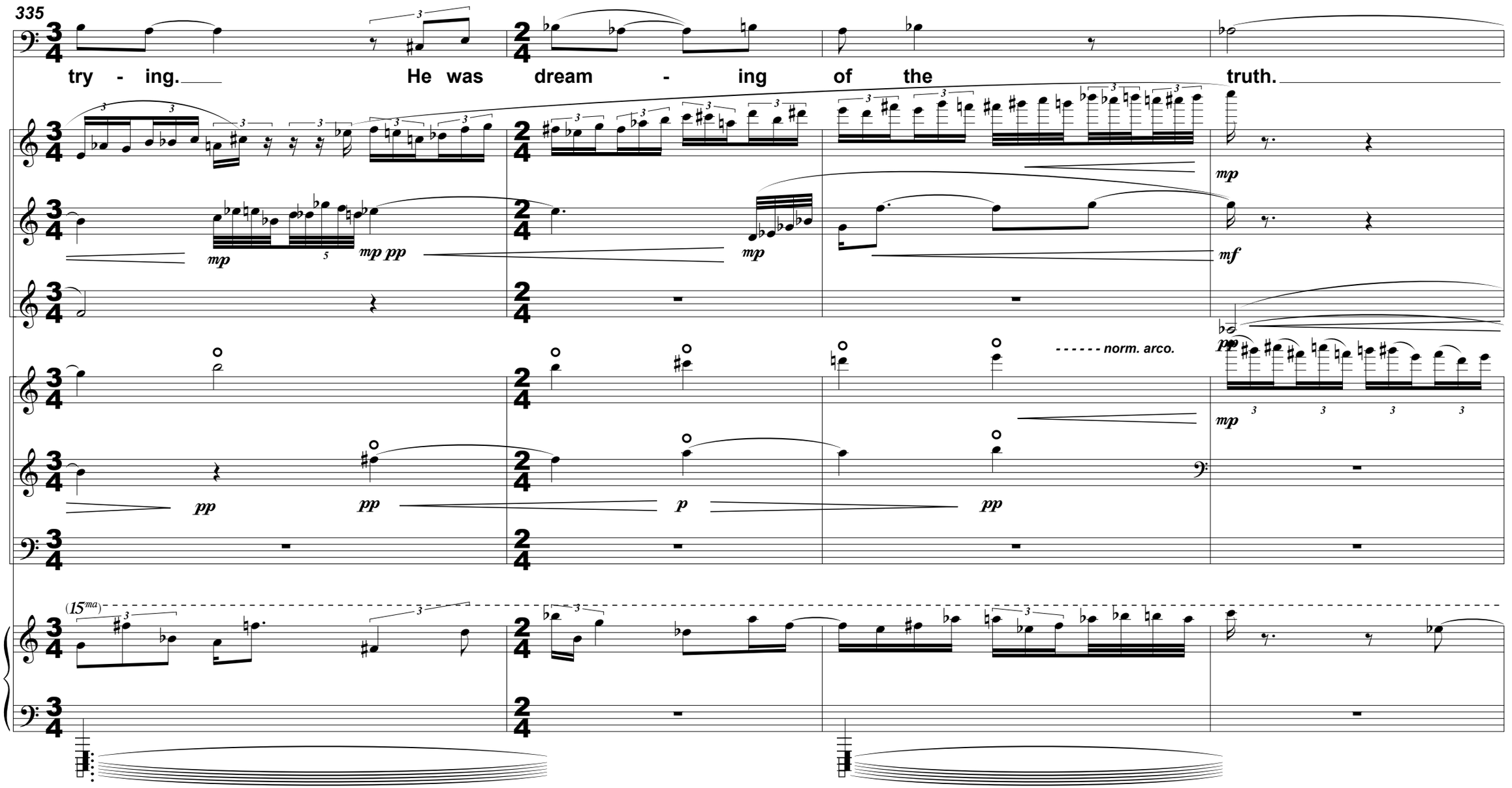
flaut./harmonics

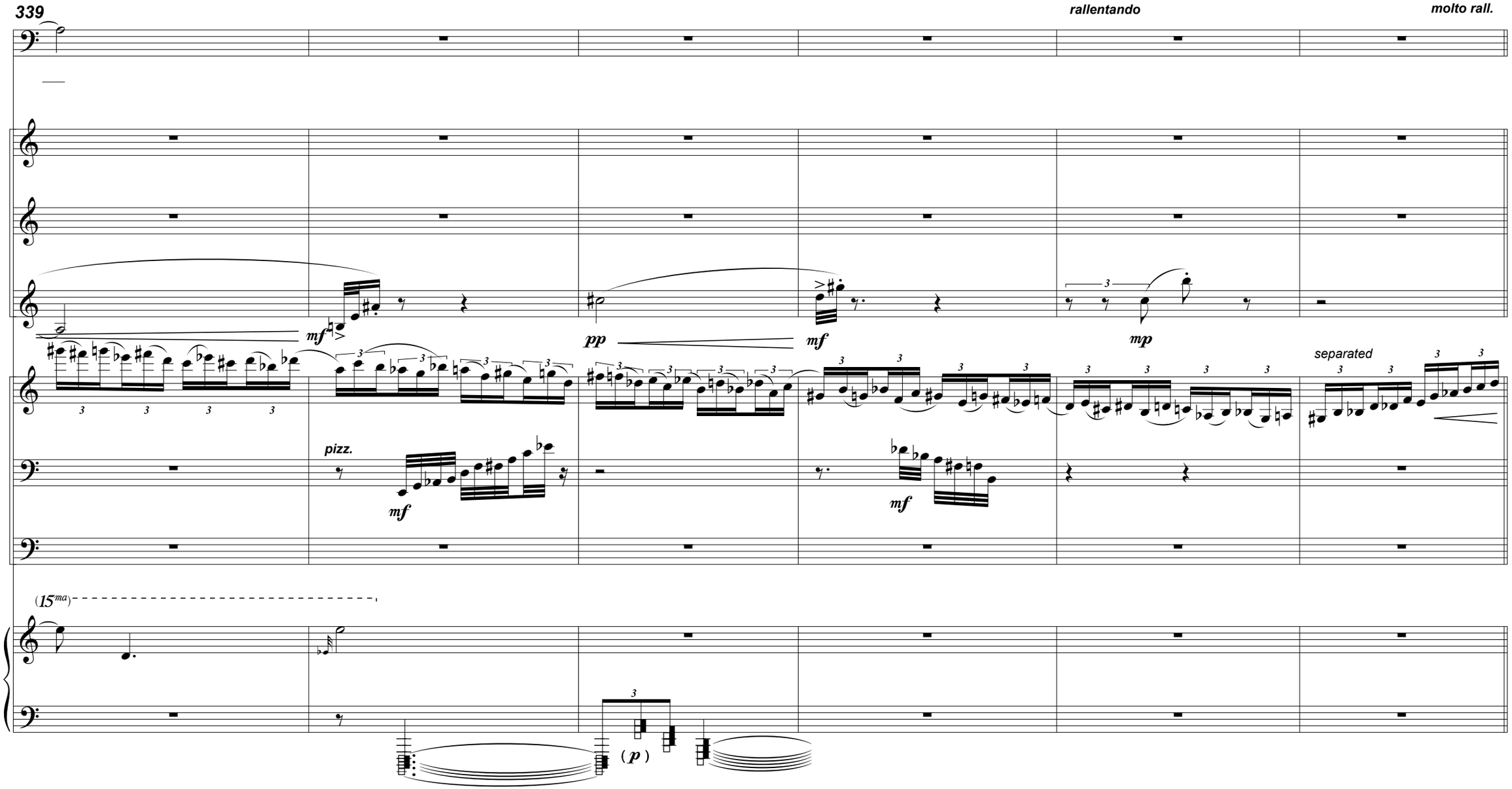
15ma

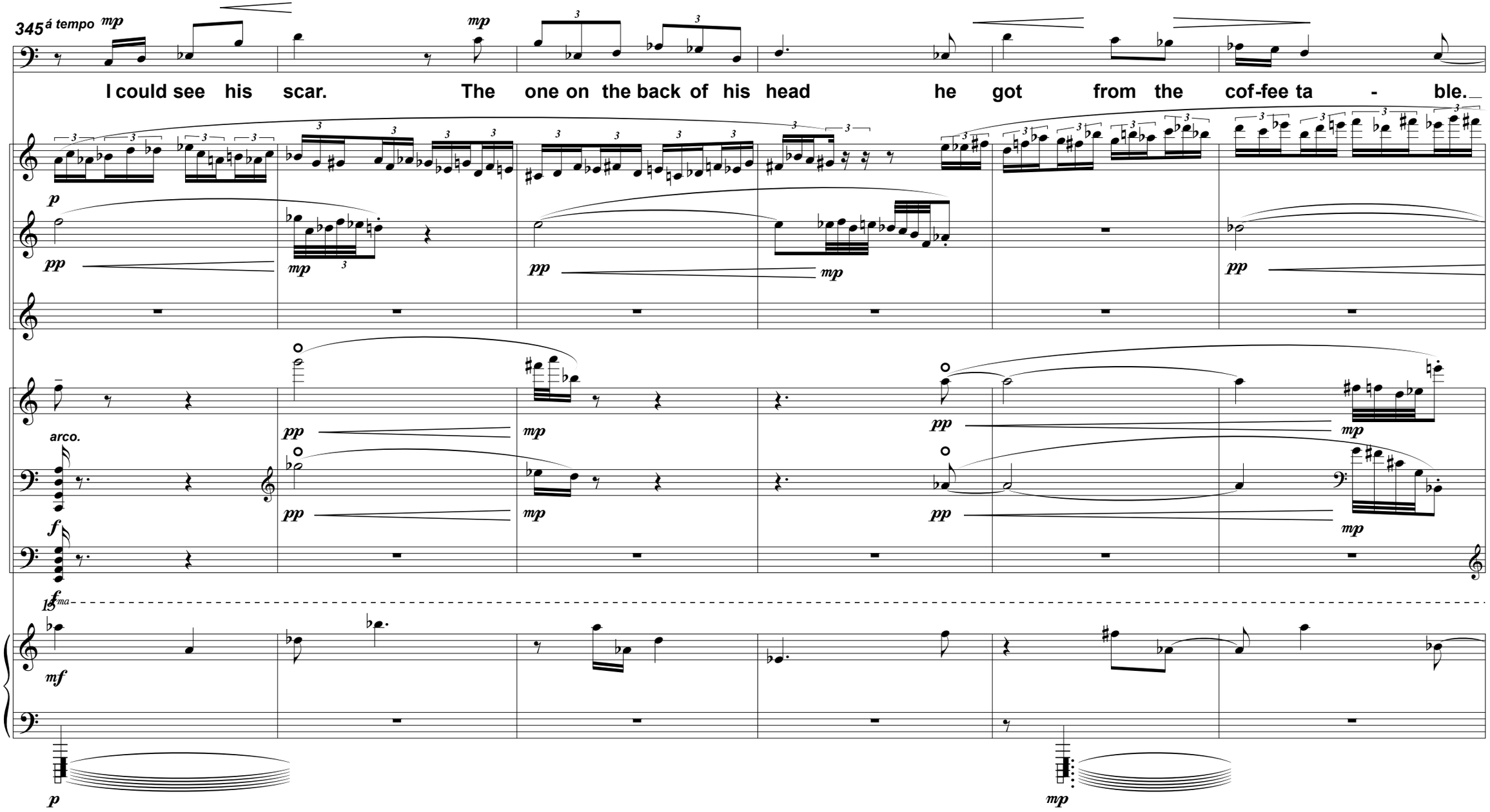
quiet but audible

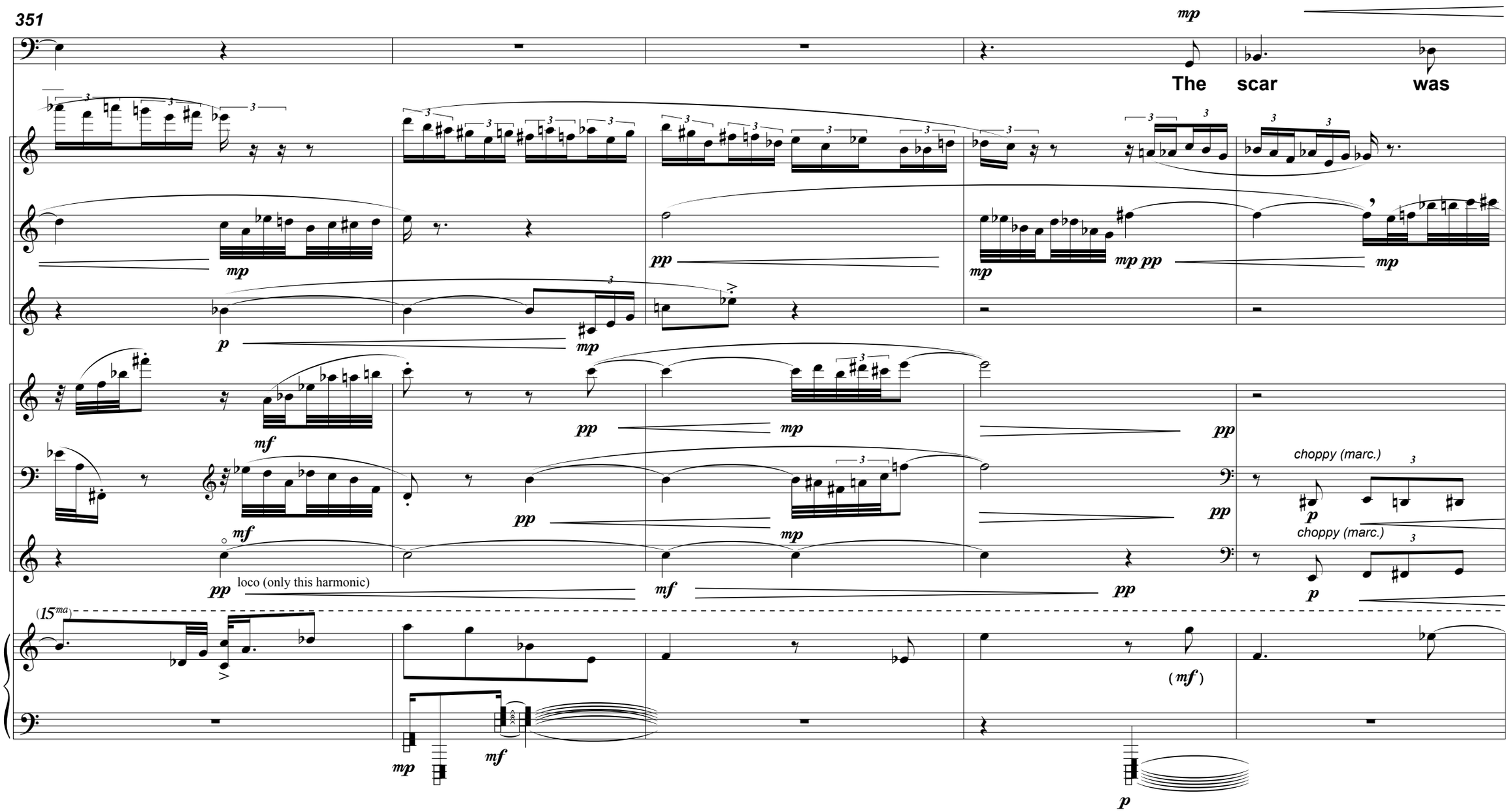
(a mushy echo)

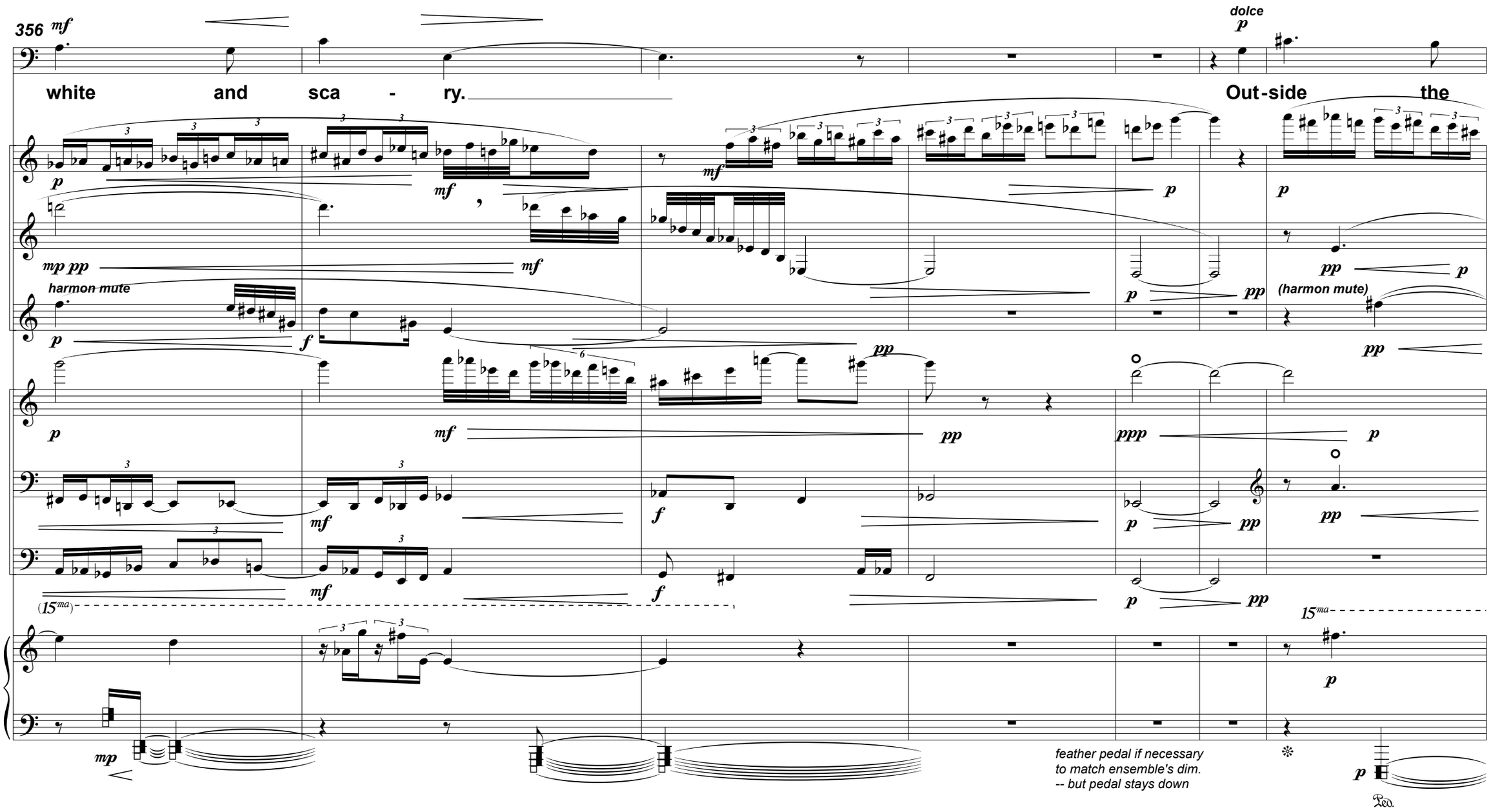

329
It was morn - ing. I think he was still still a - sleep, or at least
straight mute
(15ma)

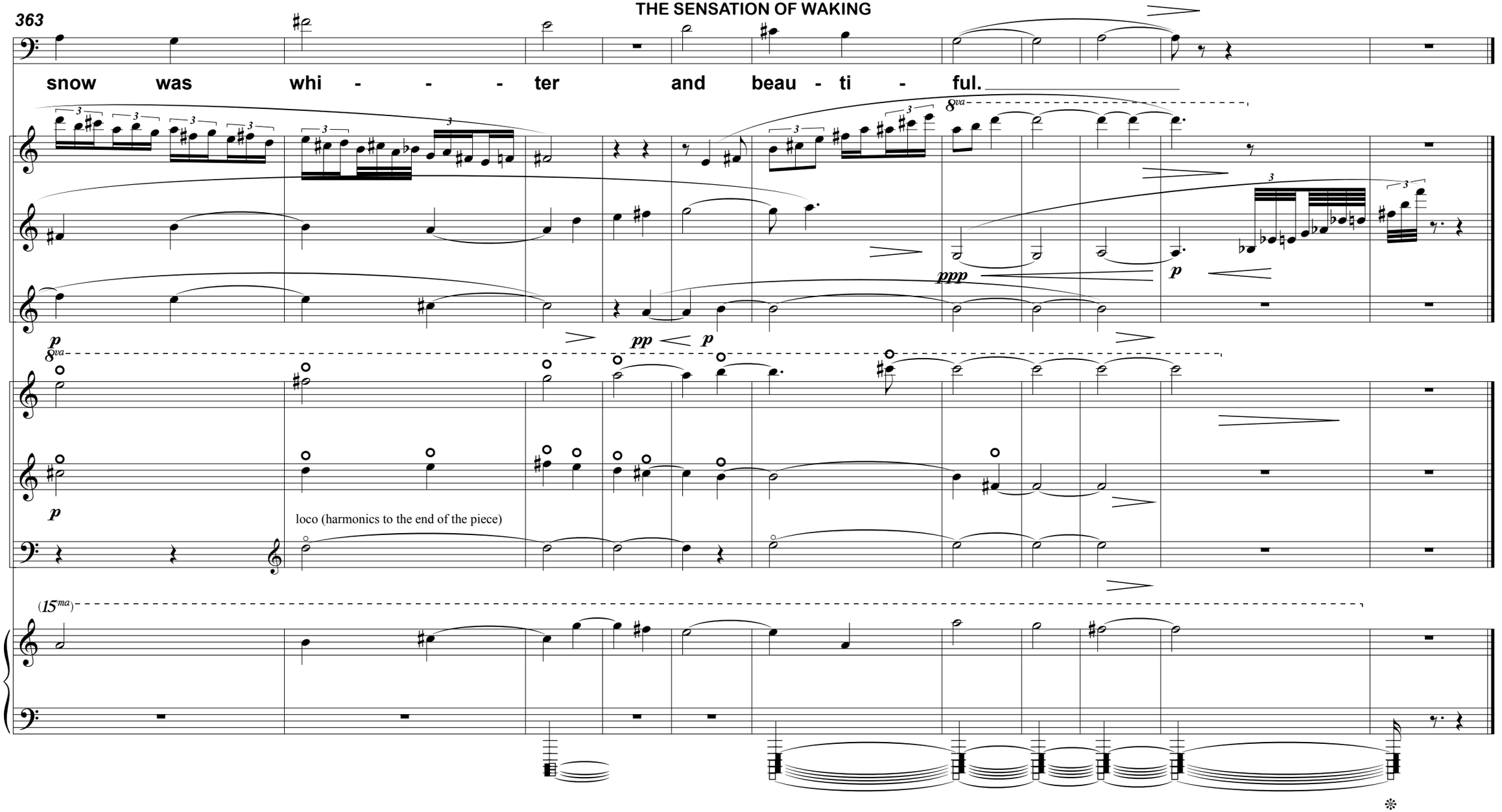

335
try - ing.
He was dream - ing of the truth.
mp
mp pp
mp
mf
pp
mp
pp
pp
p
pp
norm. arco.
(15ma)


339
rallentando
molto rall.
mf
pp
mf
mp
separated
pizz.
mf
mf
(15ma)
(p)


345 á tempo mp
mp
I could see his scar. The one on the back of his head he got from the cof-fee ta - ble.
p
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
arco.
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
f
15ma
mf
p
mp


351
mp
The scar was
mp
p
mp
pp
mp mp pp
mp
mf
pp
mp
pp
pp
choppy (marc.)
p
choppy (marc.)
p
mf
pp
loco (only this harmonic)
mf
pp
(15ma)
(mf)
mp
mf
p


356
mf
white and sca - ry.
dolce
p
Out-side the
harmon mute
(harmon mute)
(15ma)
15ma
feather pedal if necessary
to match ensemble's dim.
-- but pedal stays down


363
snow was whi - - - ter and beau - ti - ful.
8va
ppp
p
pp
p
8va
p
loco (harmonics to the end of the piece)
(15ma)