Abraham Newsom

RUMI

for Chorus and Orchestra

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RUMI

for Chorus and Orchestra

A GREAT WAGON
SOLOMON'S CROOKED CROWN
WHERE EVERYTHING IS MUSIC/QUIETNESS/ON CHILDREN RUNNING THROUGH
CONSTANT CONVERSATION

1997

ABRAHAM NEWSOM

St. Gregory's Abbey
Three Rivers, Michigan

webber music - kalamazoo, michigan, u.s.a.

I
Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel
kneel and kiss the ground.

The price of kissing is your life.
What a bargain, let's buy it.

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don’t go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.

People are going back and forth across the door sill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open
where the two worlds touch.

There are hundreds of ways to kneel
kneel and kiss the ground.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel
kneel and kiss the ground.

II
Solomon was busy judging others,
when it was his personal thoughts
that were disrupting the community.
His crown slid crooked on his head.
He put it straight, but the crown went awry again.
Eight times this happened.

Solomon was busy judging others,
His crown slid crooked on his head.
Solomon was busy judging others
but the crown went awry again.
Eight times this happened.

Finally he began to talk to his headpiece.
"Why do you keep tilting over my eyes?"

"I have to. When your When your pow'r loses compassion,
I have to I have to show what such a condition looks like."

Immediately Solomon recognized the truth.
He knelt and asked forgiveness.
The crown centered itself on his on his crown.

When something goes wrong, accuse yourself first.
Even the wisdom of Plato or Solomon
can wobble and go and go blind.

Listen when your crown reminds you
of what makes you cold t'ward others,
as you pamper the greedy energy inside.
Solomon was busy judging others,
judging others,
Solomon was busy judging others.

IIII
We have fallen into the place
where every thing is music.
Your old life was a life was a frantic running from silence.
The way of love is not a subtle argument
The door there is devastation

We have fallen from silence.
Birds make great make great sky circles of their freedom
They fall, and falling, they're given wings
How do they learn it?
They fall, and falling, they're given wings

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really really want
Don't go back to sleep.
The way of love is not a subtle argument
The door there is devastation.

We have fallen We have fallen
We have fallen from silence.

Birds make great make great sky circles of their freedom
They fall, and falling, they're given wings

We have fallen We have fallen
We have fallen from silence.

IV
Who is the luckiest in the whole orchestra? The reed.
Its mouth touches your lips to learn music. The reed.
All reeds think only of this of this chance.
They sway in the canebrakes,
free in the many ways they dance.

Who is the luckiest in the whole orchestra? The reed.
Its mouth touches your lips to learn music. The reed.
All reeds think think think only of this of this chance.
They sway in the canebrakes,
free in the many ways they dance.

Without you the instruments would die.
One sits close beside.you.
Another nother takes a long kiss.
The tambourine begs, Touch my skin so I can be myself.
The tambourine begs, Touch my skin.

All verses and movement titles taken from The Essential Rumi by Coleman Barks and John Mayne, published by Harper Collins Publishers 1995.

Texts for movements I & IV used by permission of Threshold Books. These verses were first published in Open Secrets: Versions of Rumi, translated by Coleman Barks, originally published by Threshold Books, 139 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301.

Texts for movements II & III used by direct permission of the translator, Coleman Barks, Athens, Georgia.

Composer's Notes for RUMI

While I was composing the MISSA BREVIS, we received a book of English translations of poems by Rumi. I usually do not enjoy or appreciate poetry (much too concise and intense), but Rumi caught my attention and pulled me into his works. So, I decided to set some of the poems to music,as I had recently done with the Latin mass. I did get permission from the publisher and translator -a much easier process than I had anticipated.

RUMI is much in my style of repetitive, dark music spiraling in upon itself (as Andy Warhol once said: "I like being bored.") In the original composition, the order of movements was: A GREAT WAGON, followed by CONSTANT CONVERSATION segueing into SOLOMON'S CROOKED CROWN, and ending with WHERE EVERYTHING IS MUSIC, with a hint of ambiguity of whether or not the final key was Eflat major or c minor. The publisher suggested changing the order to the present configuration and making the ending more positive. I think his suggestions were wise in making the whole thing more listener friendly.

A GREAT WAGON is one of the few things I have written in a major key, and I think I did a pretty good job. Maybe I should try doing it some more. I like the almost jazzy vocal chords at the beginning.

SOLOMON'S CROOKED CROWN contains good advice: always check our own shoes for poop before complaining how bad everything smells. The opening rhythm in the women's voices is a form of the "nanny nanny boo boo" tattle tale rhythm we have all used so much in our own minds and hearts.

WHERE EVERYTHING IS MUSIC, etc...is yearning and accepting at the same time - we can't figure out what is best for us or even what we really want, we just have to fall into the arms of God and trust. One of the soprano themes from the first movement is reprised in this movement, bringing the beginning to the ending.

CONSTANT CONVERSATION starts with a long episode of canes swaying in the breeze before the voices ever come in with the words. The reeds beg for a kiss, the tambourine wants his skin touched, and no telling what the other instruments or performers are yearning for - maybe "don't ask, don't tell" is the best policy in this situation. After the main body of the movement, it goes back to the cane-swaying theme. A final triumphant ending brings the whole symphony to a close.

Jal l ad-D n Muammad R m (30 September 1207 17 December 1273), was a 13th-centur Persian poet, jurist, theologian, and Sufi mystic. R m is a descriptive name meaning "the Roman" since he lived most of his life in an area called R m because it was once ruled by the Eastern Roman Empire. He lived most of his life under the Sultanate of Rum, where he produced his works and died in 1273 AD. He was buried in Konya and his shrine became a place of pilgrimage. Following his death, his followers and his son Sultan Walad founded the Mawlaw yah Sufi Order, also known as the Order of the Whirling Dervishes, famous for its Sufi dance known as the sam ceremony.

Rumi's works are written in the New Persian language. A Persian literary renaissance (in the 8th/9th century) started in regions of Sistan, Khor s n and Transoxiana and by the 10th/11th century, it reinforced the Persian language as the preferred literary and cultural language in the Persian Islamic world. Rumi's importance is considered to transcend national and ethnic borders. His original works are widely read in their original language across the Persian-speaking world. Translations of his works are very popular in other countries. His poetry has influenced Persian literature as well as Urdu, Punjabi and other Pakistani languages written in Perso/Arabic script e.g. Pashto and Sindhi. His poems have been widely translated into many of the world's languages and transposed into various formats. In 2007, he was described as the "most popular poet in America." (The above two paragraphs are taken from the WIKIPEDIA entry on Rumi)

I like many forms and styles of music, and my favorite way of listening to music is lying on the floor with earphones on and lights out. When I do this, it is usually while listening to dark, repetitive music, and so it turns out the music that I write tends to be dark and repetitive. In fact, I write music with the intention of it being listened to by solitary listeners with earphones on and lights out, rather than as being performed live in a hall with an audience (I think it would bore the audience to death, in fact). Another aspect of my compositions is the tendency to end quietly, almost fading away. I am not sure why I do that - maybe it has something to do with the expanding universe ending in cold inertness (or is it too haughty of me to think I am that attuned to the universe?).

Overall, I am quite pleased with the way the whole thing turned out. I am also immensely appreciative of John Webber for typesetting it and making it available for others online. He patiently puts in a lot of work on my music.

Br. Abraham Newsom
St. Gregory's Abbey

RUMI

for Chorus and Orchestra

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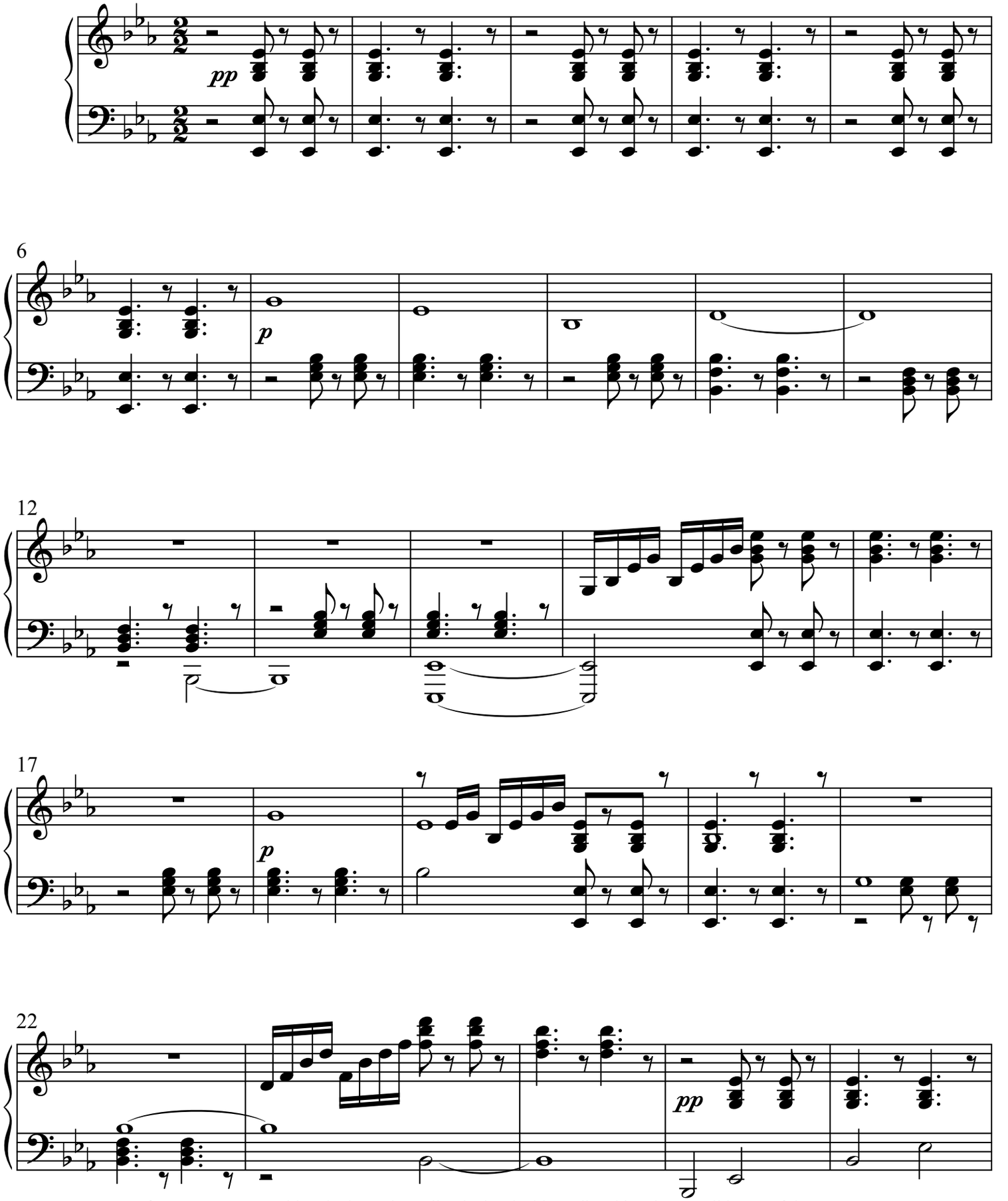
I: A GREAT WAGON

♩ = 120, **Peacefully**



Performance note: repetitive rhythm to be well articulated without disturbing the overall legato of the movement.

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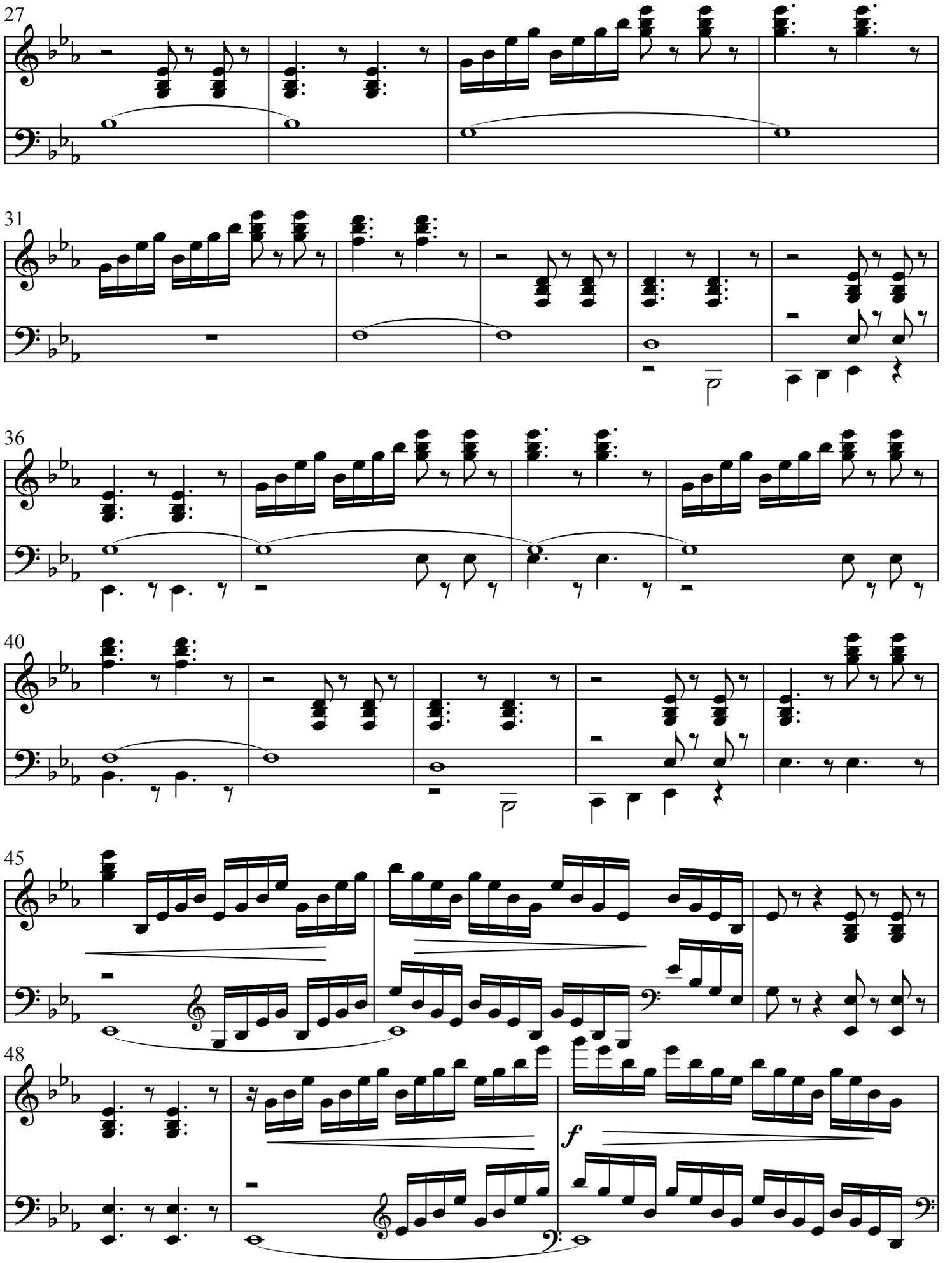
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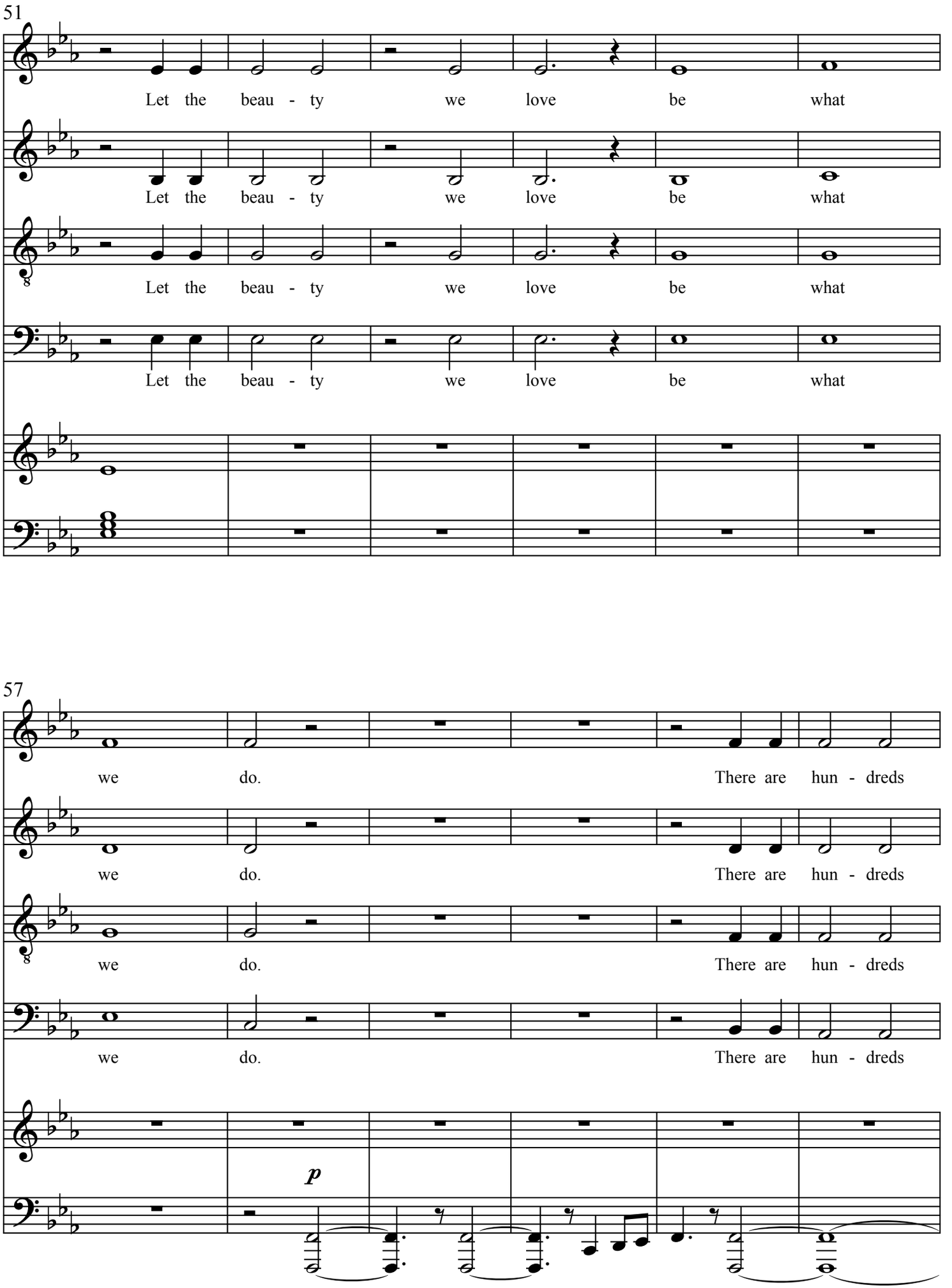
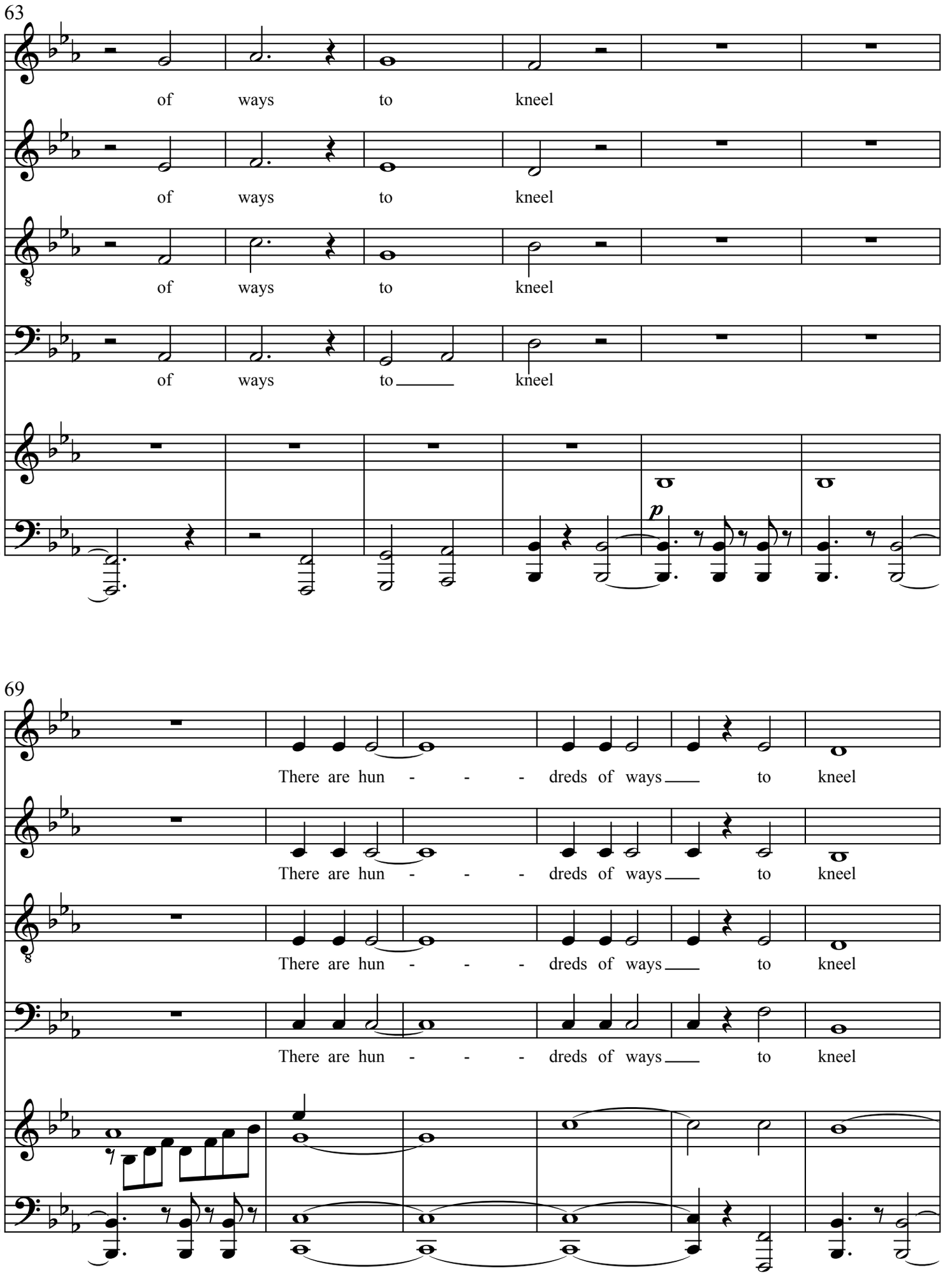
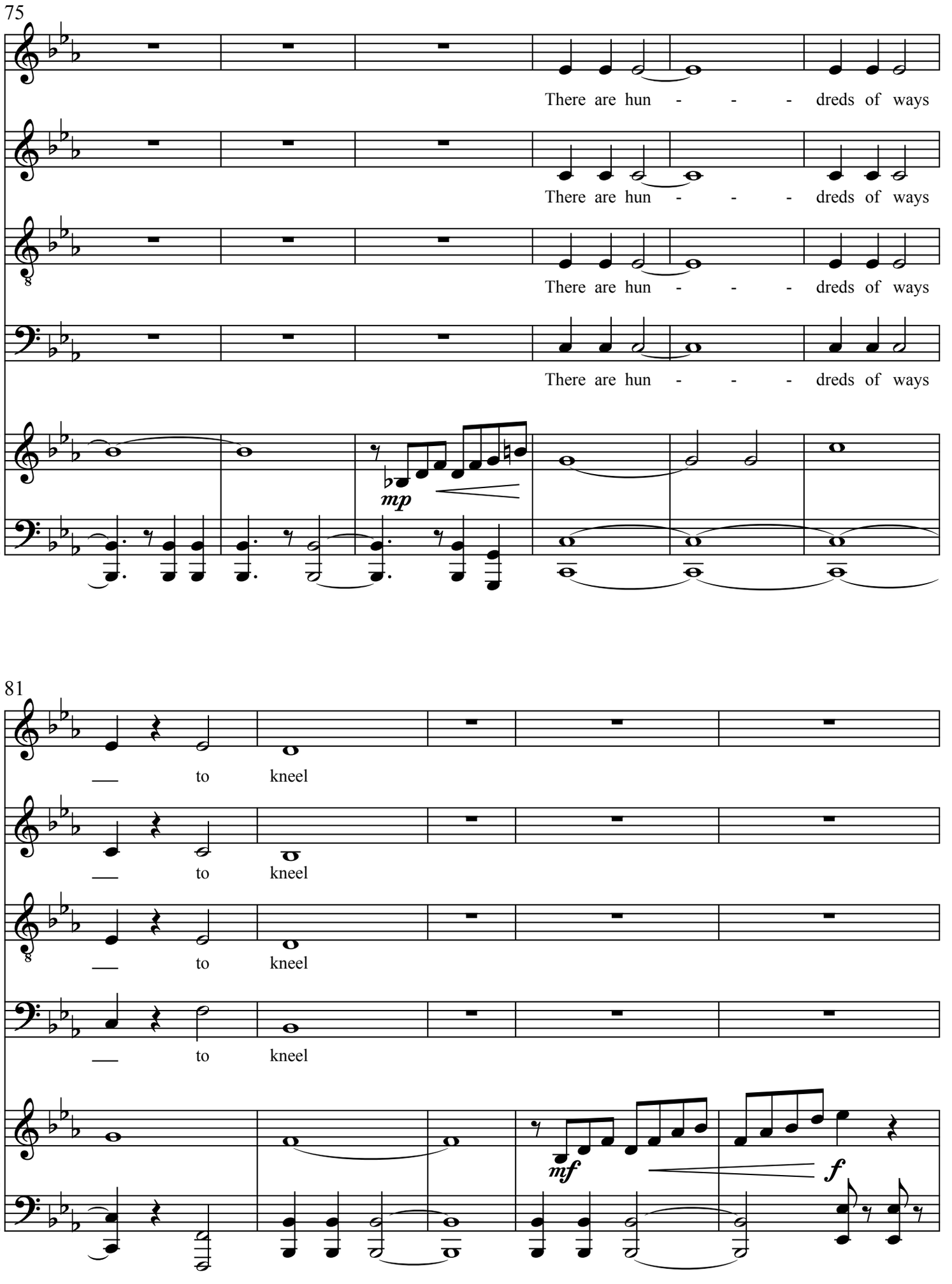
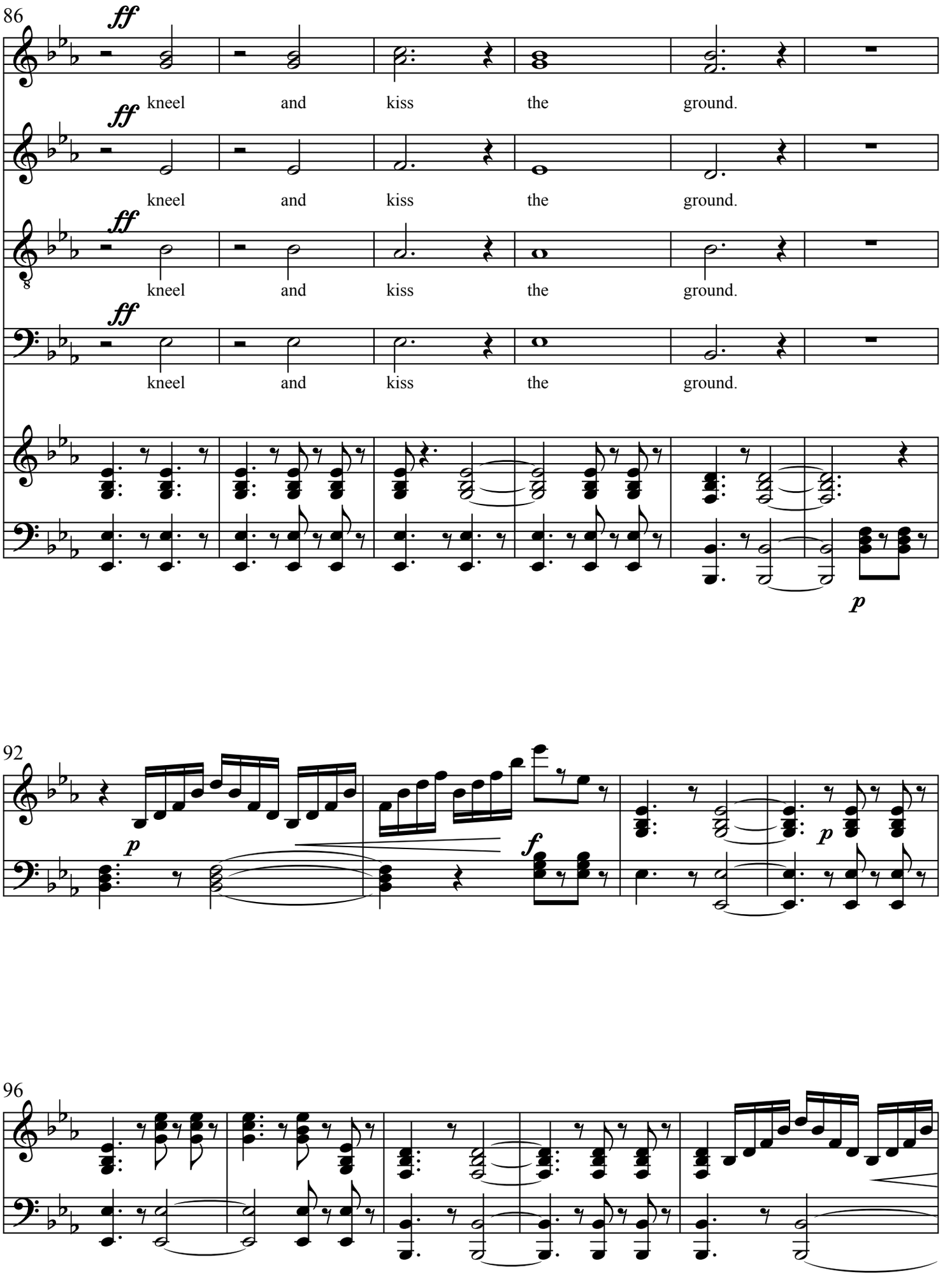
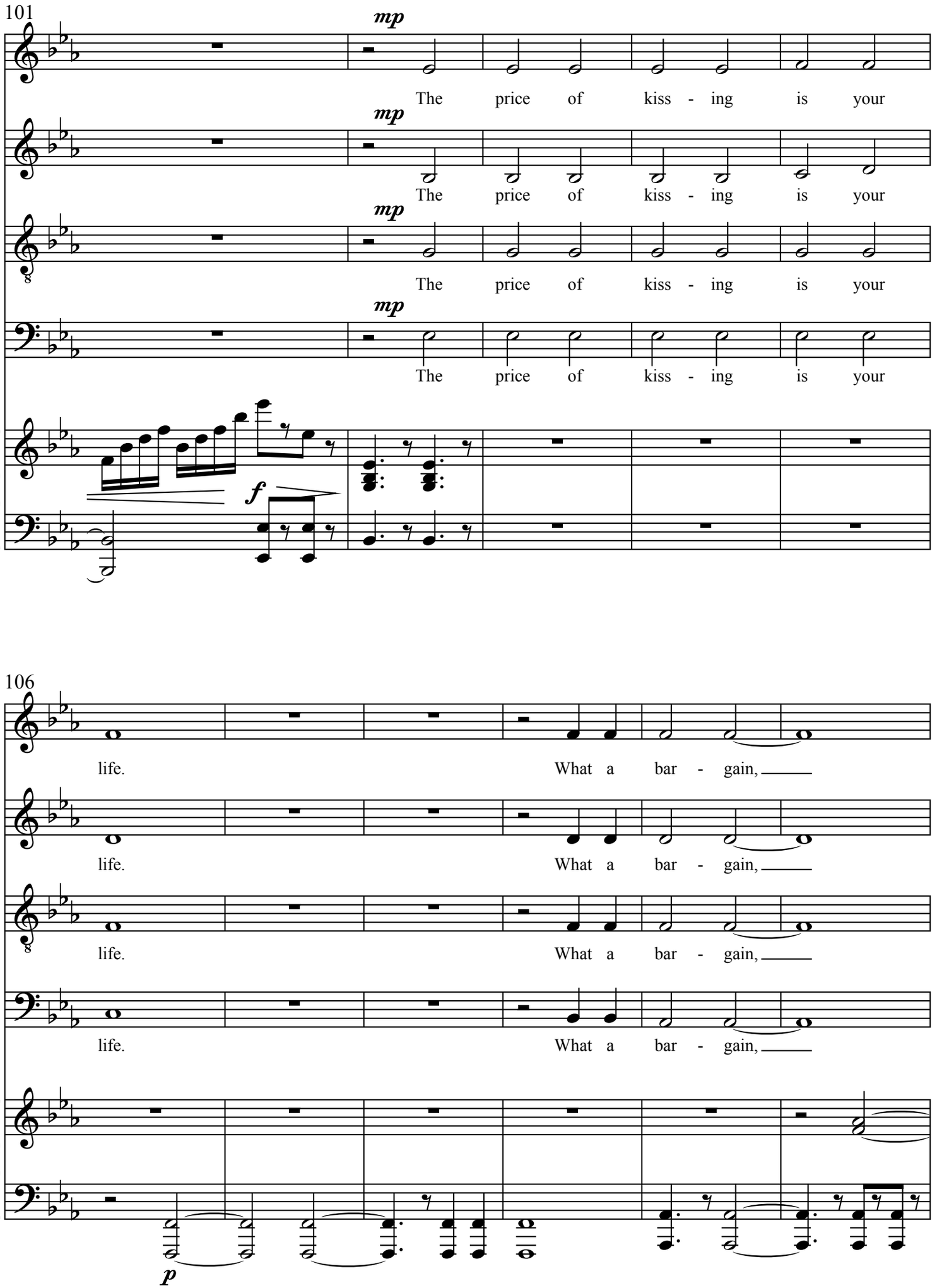
31
36
40
45
48
f

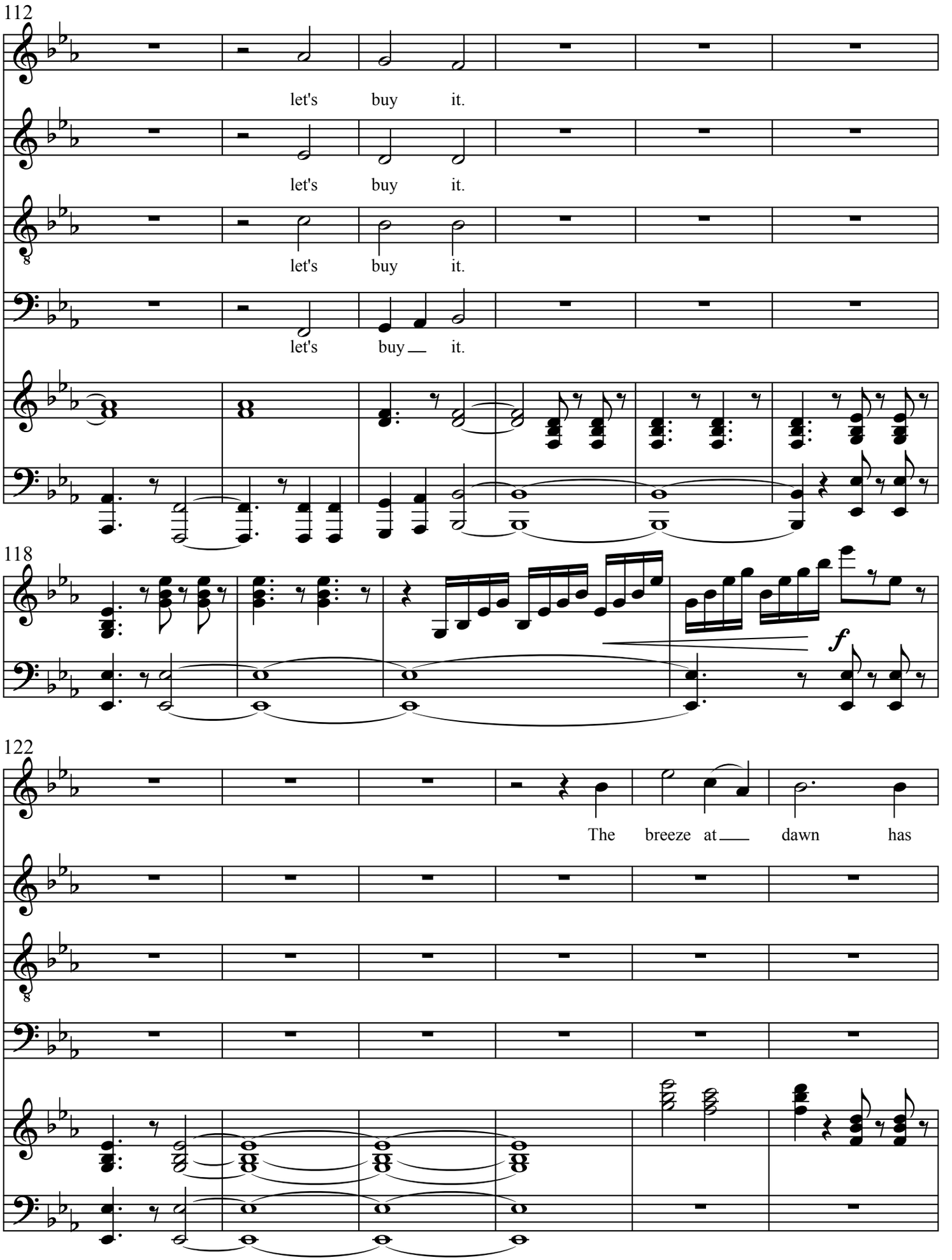

51
Let the beau - ty we love be what
Let the beau - ty we love be what
Let the beau - ty we love be what
Let the beau - ty we love be what
57
we do. There are hun - dreds
we do. There are hun - dreds
we do. There are hun - dreds
we do. There are hun - dreds
p

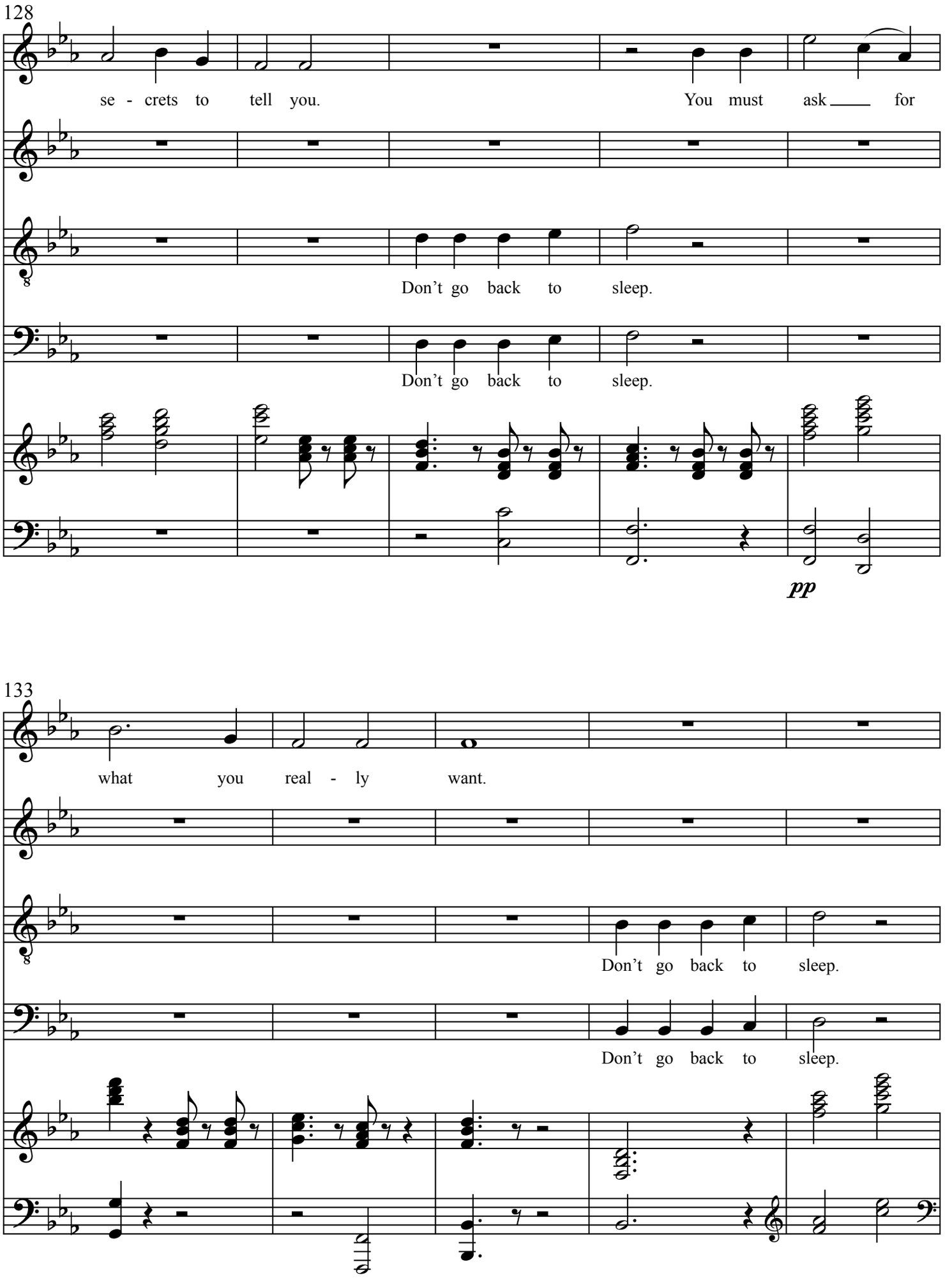

63
of ways to kneel
of ways to kneel
of ways to kneel
of ways to kneel
p
69
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel

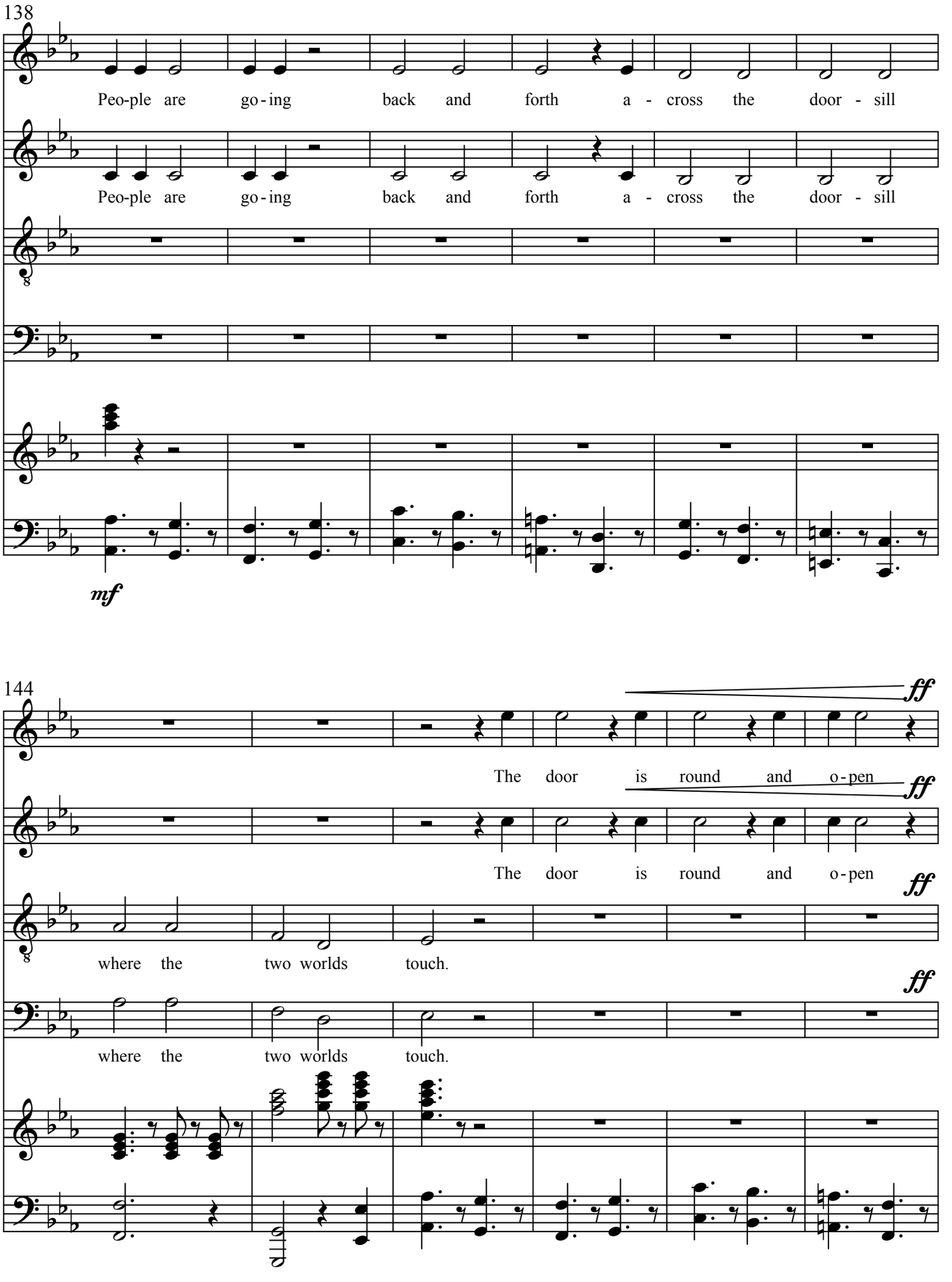

75
There are hun - - - dreds of ways
There are hun - - - dreds of ways
There are hun - - - dreds of ways
There are hun - - - dreds of ways
mp
81
to kneel
to kneel
to kneel
to kneel
mf
f

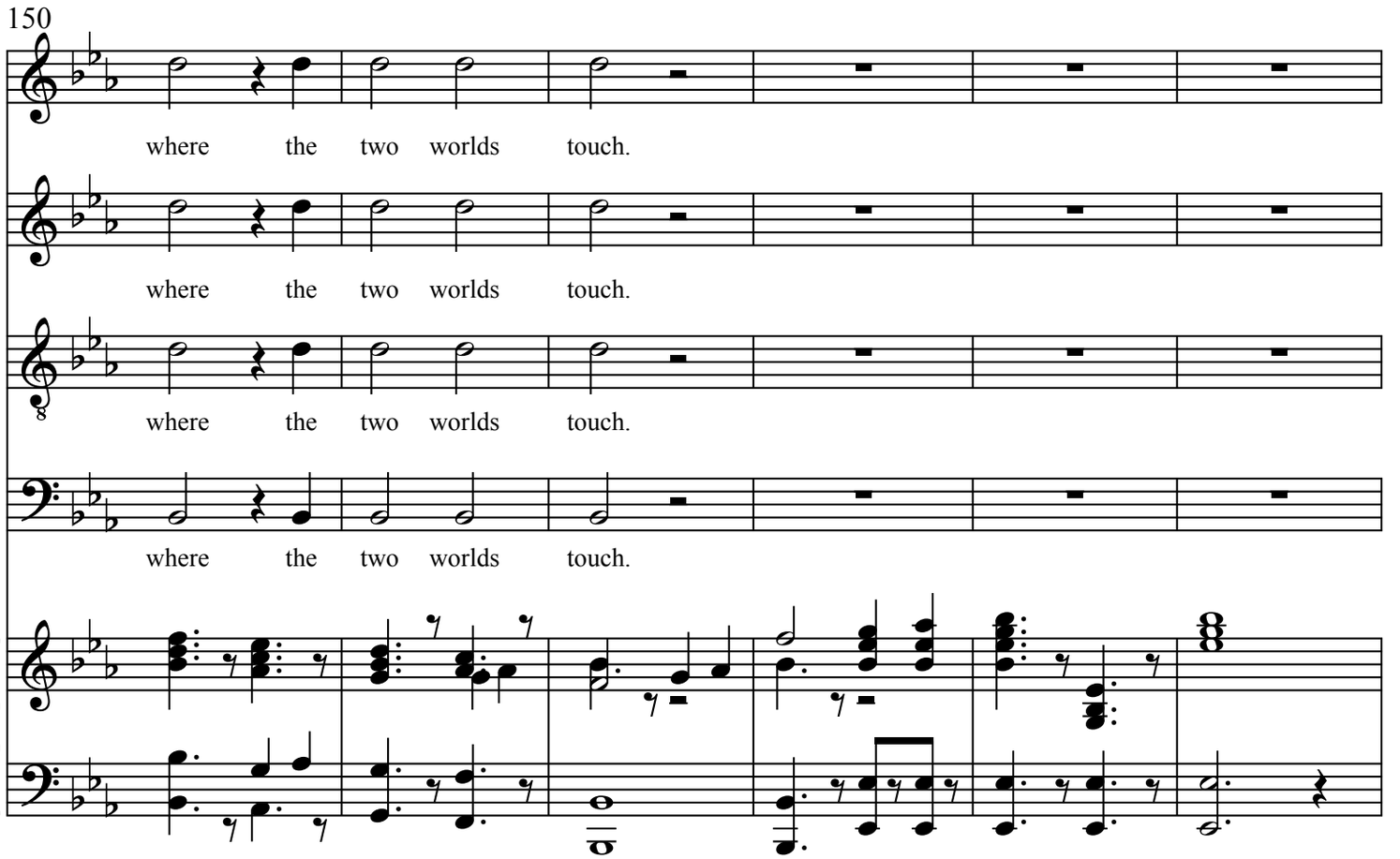

86
ff
kneel and kiss the ground.
ff
kneel and kiss the ground.
ff
kneel and kiss the ground.
ff
kneel and kiss the ground.
p
92
p
f
p
96

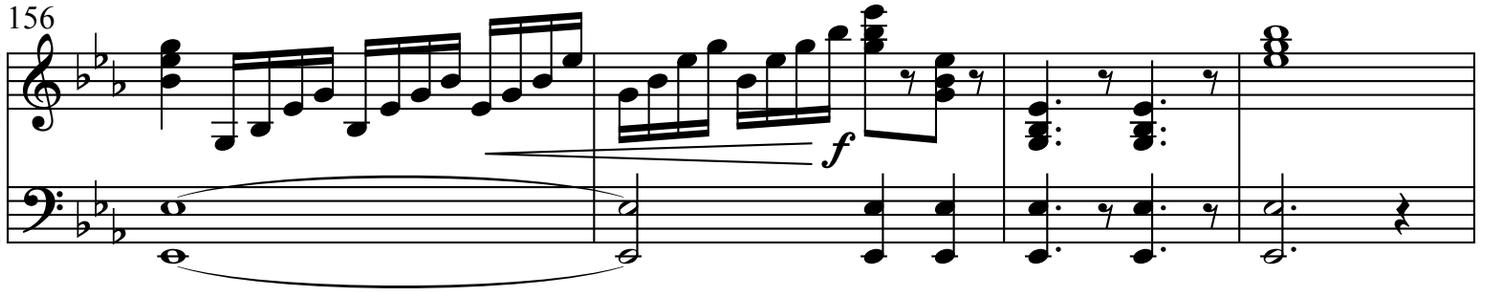

101
mp
The price of kiss - ing is your
mp
The price of kiss - ing is your
mp
The price of kiss - ing is your
mp
The price of kiss - ing is your
f
106
life.
What a bar - gain,
life.
What a bar - gain,
life.
What a bar - gain,
life.
What a bar - gain,
p


112
let's buy it.
let's buy it.
let's buy it.
let's buy it.
118
f
122
The breeze at dawn has


128
se - crets to tell you.
You must ask for
Don't go back to sleep.
Don't go back to sleep.
pp
133
what you real - ly want.
Don't go back to sleep.
Don't go back to sleep.


138
Peo-ple are go-ing back and forth a-cross the door-sill
Peo-ple are go-ing back and forth a-cross the door-sill
mf
144
ff
The door is round and o-pen
ff
The door is round and o-pen
ff
where the two worlds touch.
ff
where the two worlds touch.


150
where the two worlds touch.
where the two worlds touch.
where the two worlds touch.
where the two worlds touch.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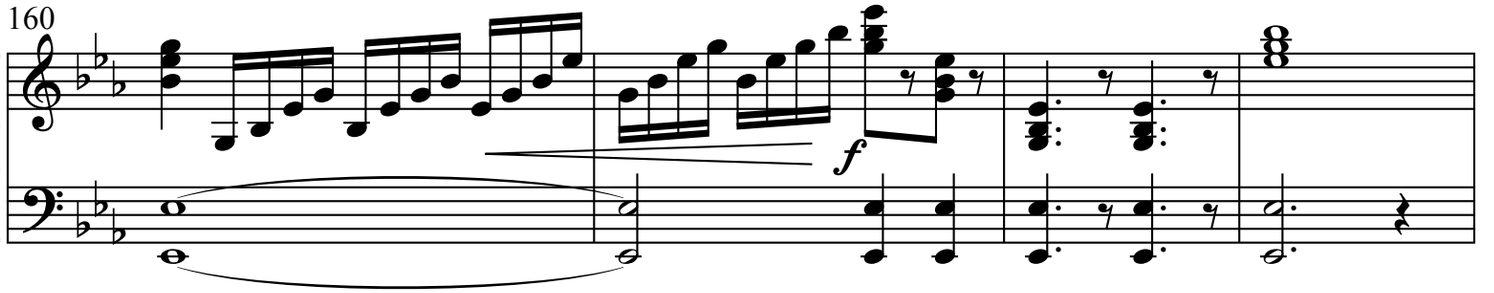
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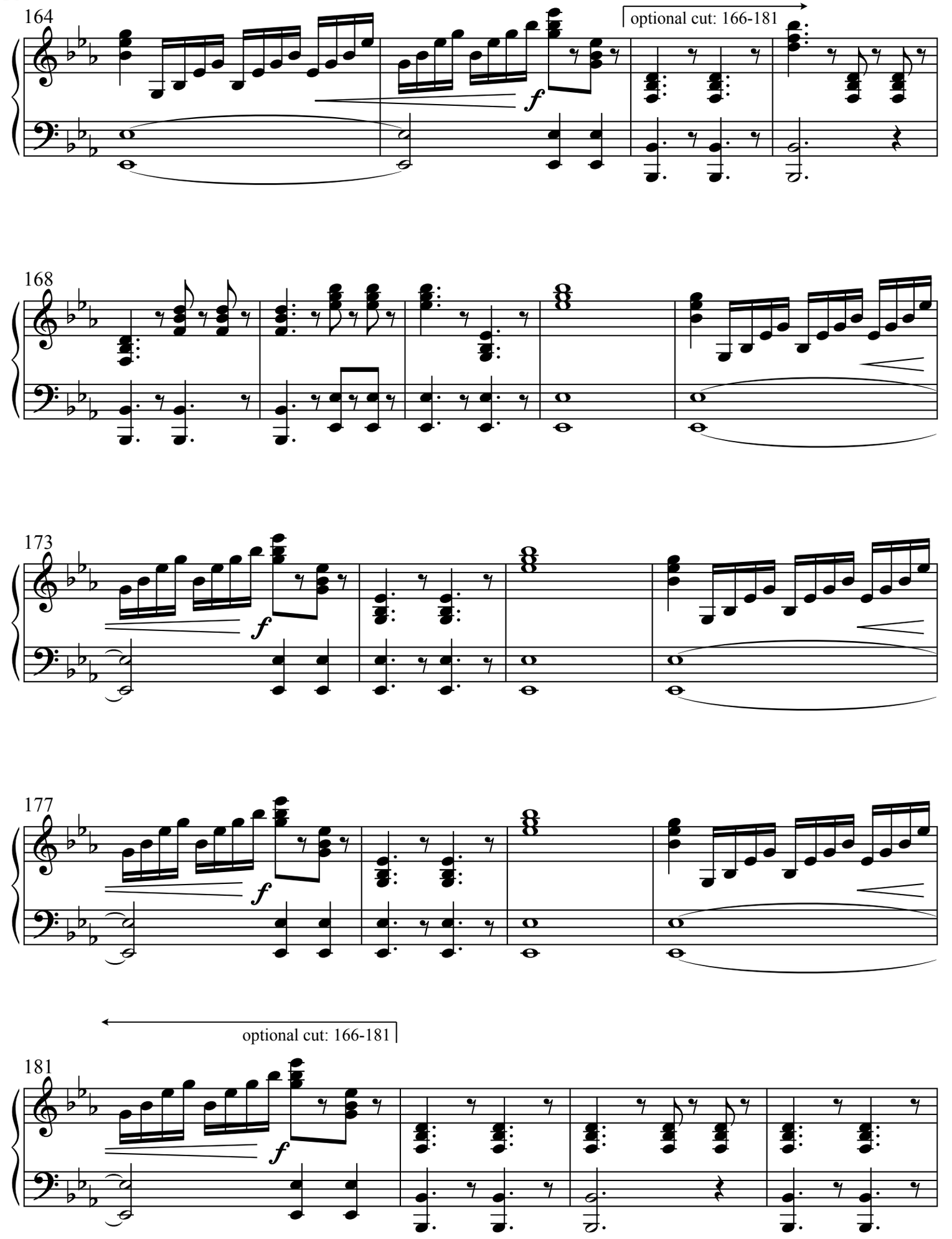
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optional cut: 166-181
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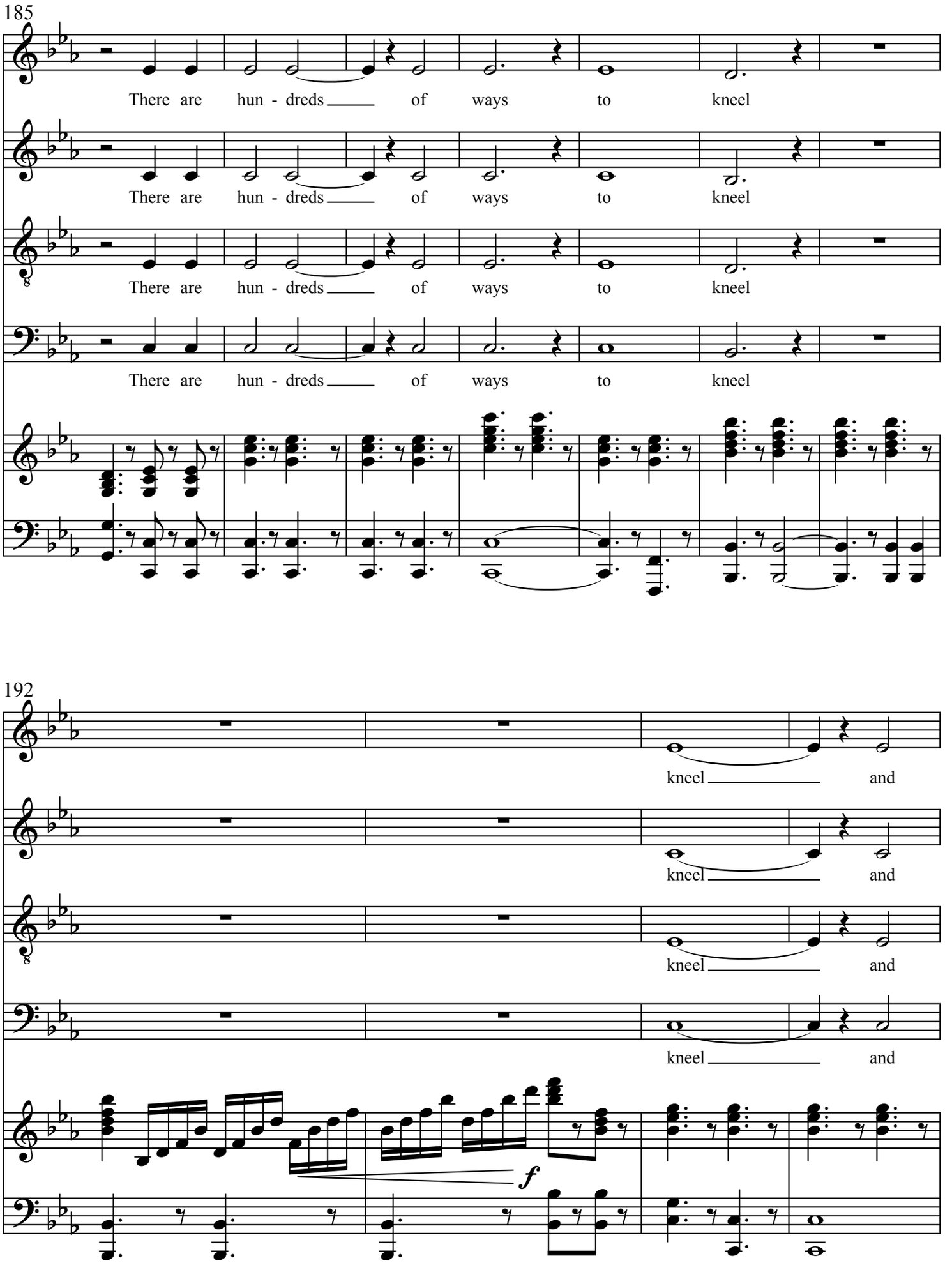
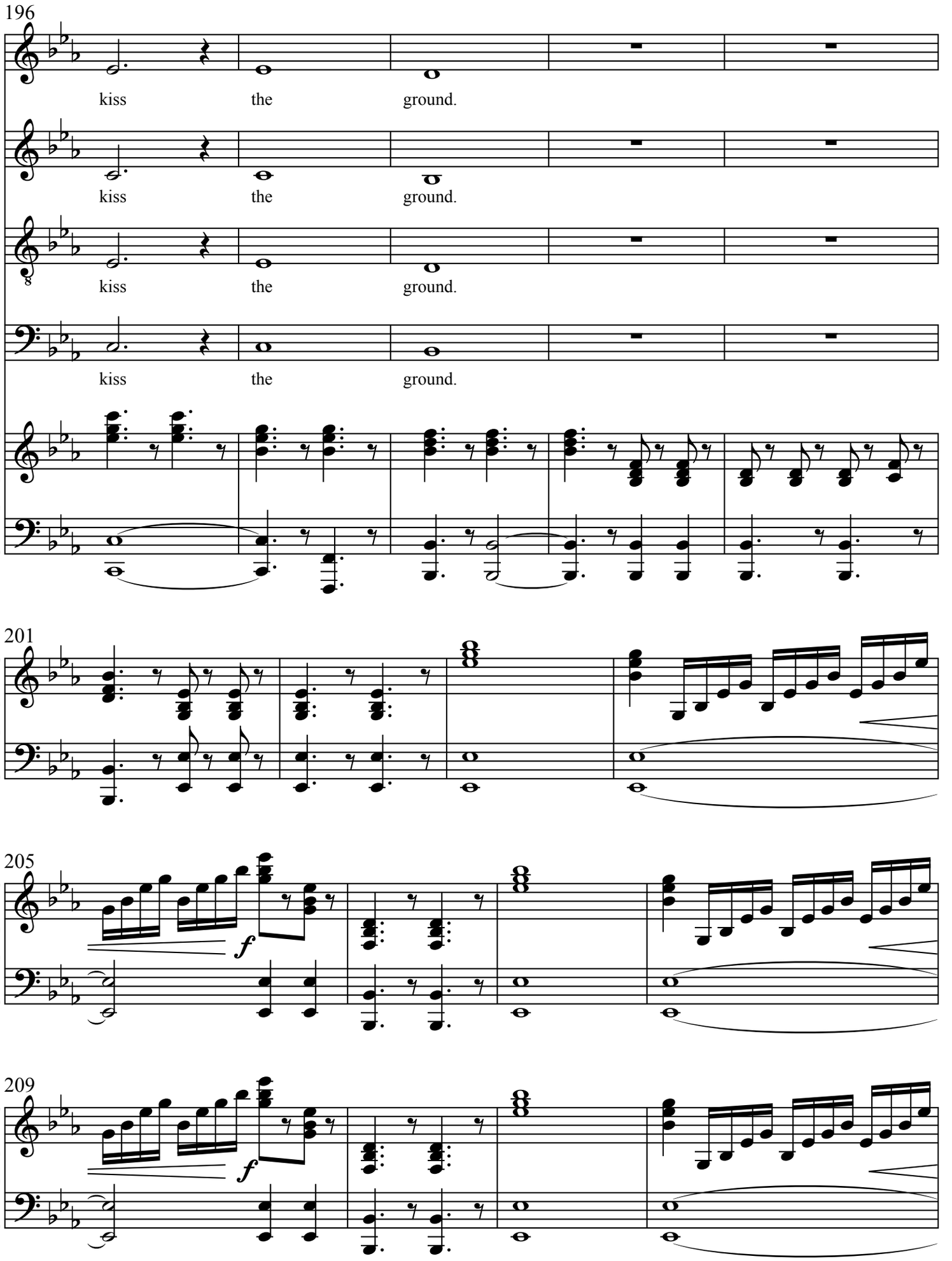
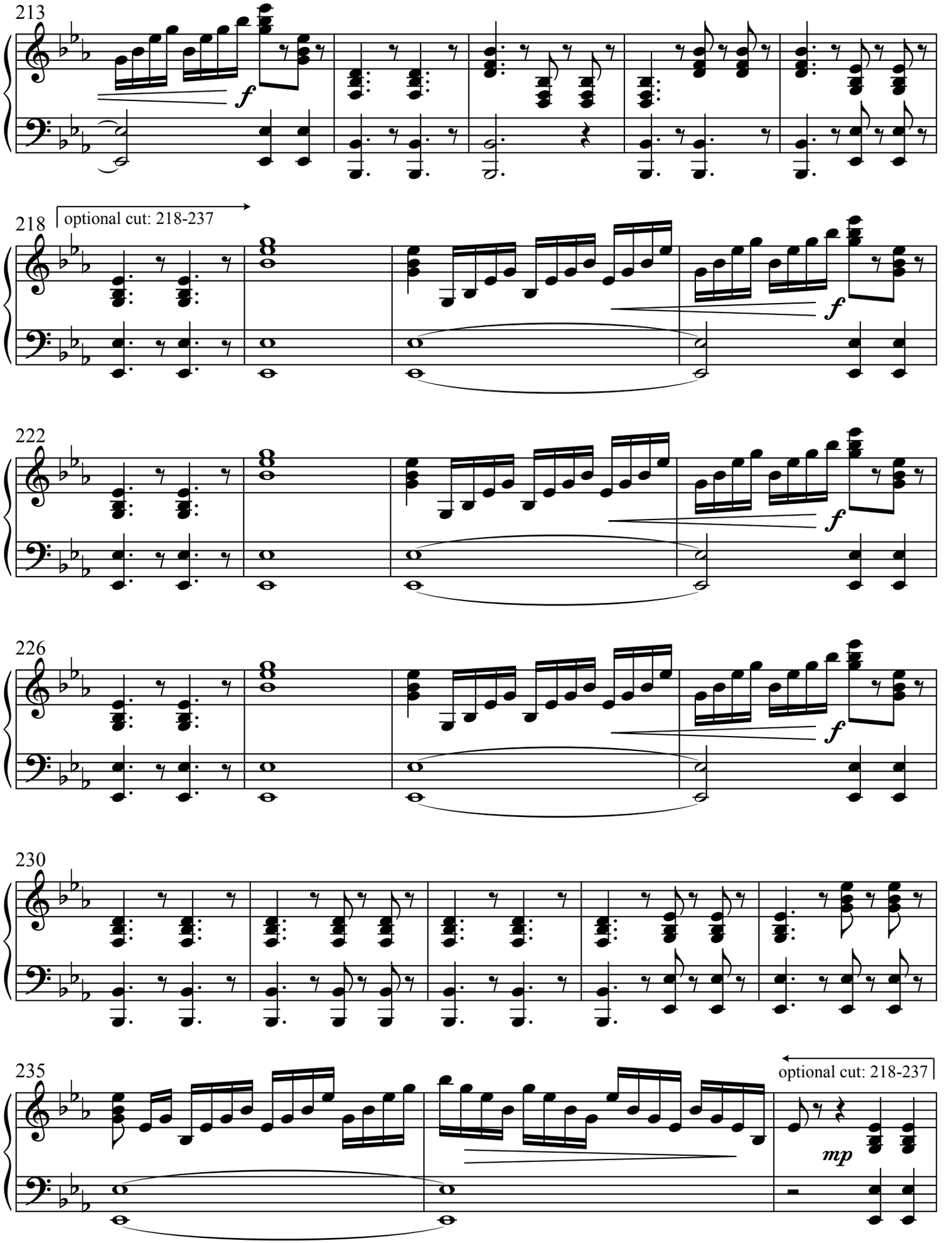
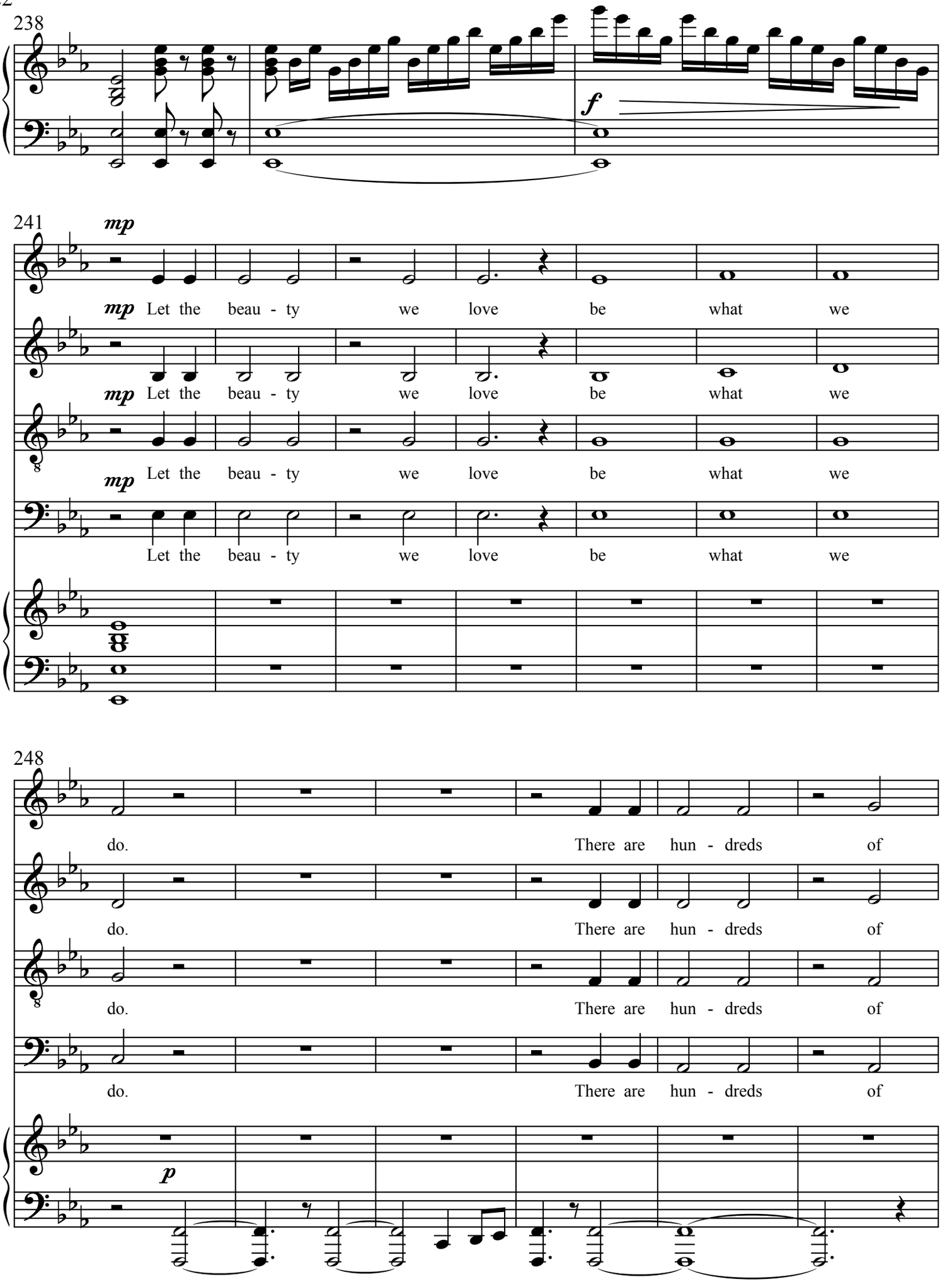
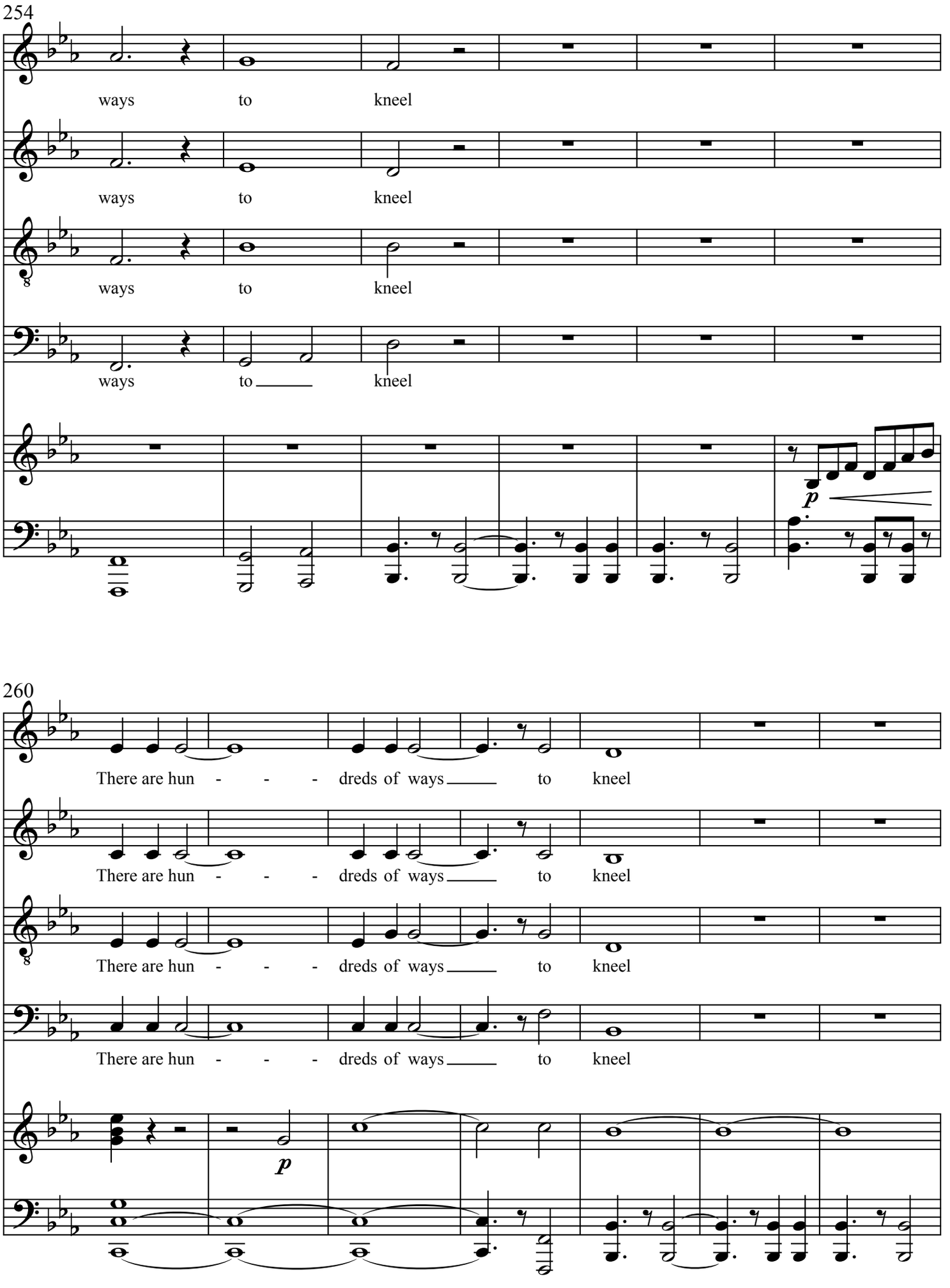
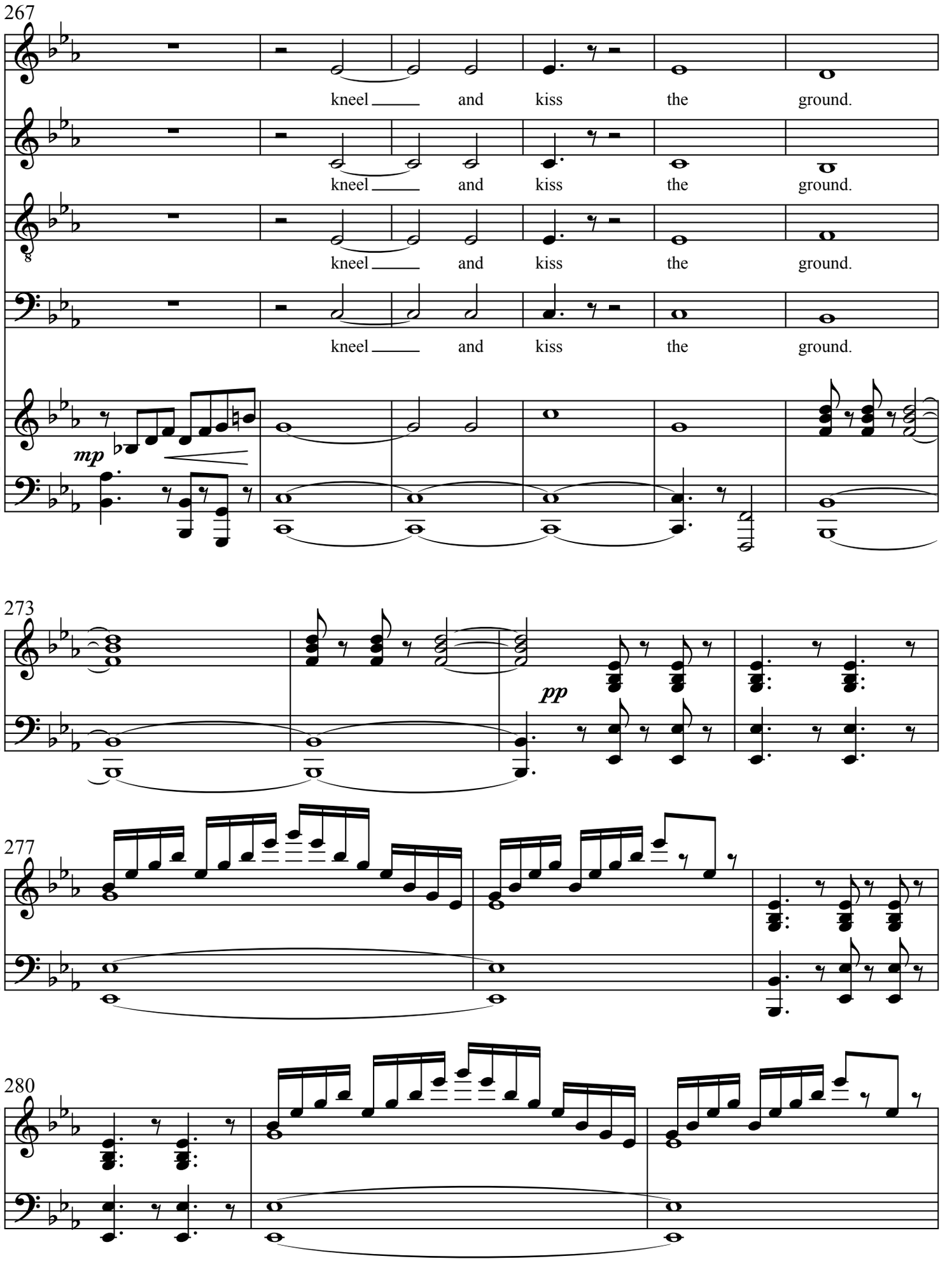

185
There are hun - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - dreds of ways to kneel
192
kneel and
kneel and
kneel and
kneel and
f


196
kiss the ground.
kiss the ground.
kiss the ground.
kiss the ground.
201
205
f
209
f


213
f
218
optional cut: 218-237
f
222
f
226
f
230
235
mp
optional cut: 218-237


238
f
241
mp
mp Let the beau - ty we love be what we
mp Let the beau - ty we love be what we
mp Let the beau - ty we love be what we
Let the beau - ty we love be what we
248
do. There are hun - dreds of
do. There are hun - dreds of
do. There are hun - dreds of
do. There are hun - dreds of
p


254
ways to kneel
ways to kneel
ways to kneel
ways to kneel
p
260
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
There are hun - - - dreds of ways to kneel
p


267
kneel and kiss the ground.
kneel and kiss the ground.
kneel and kiss the ground.
kneel and kiss the ground.
mp
273
pp
277
280

283

287

II: Solomon's Crooked Crown

♩ = 88 **didactic**

f So - lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers, when it was

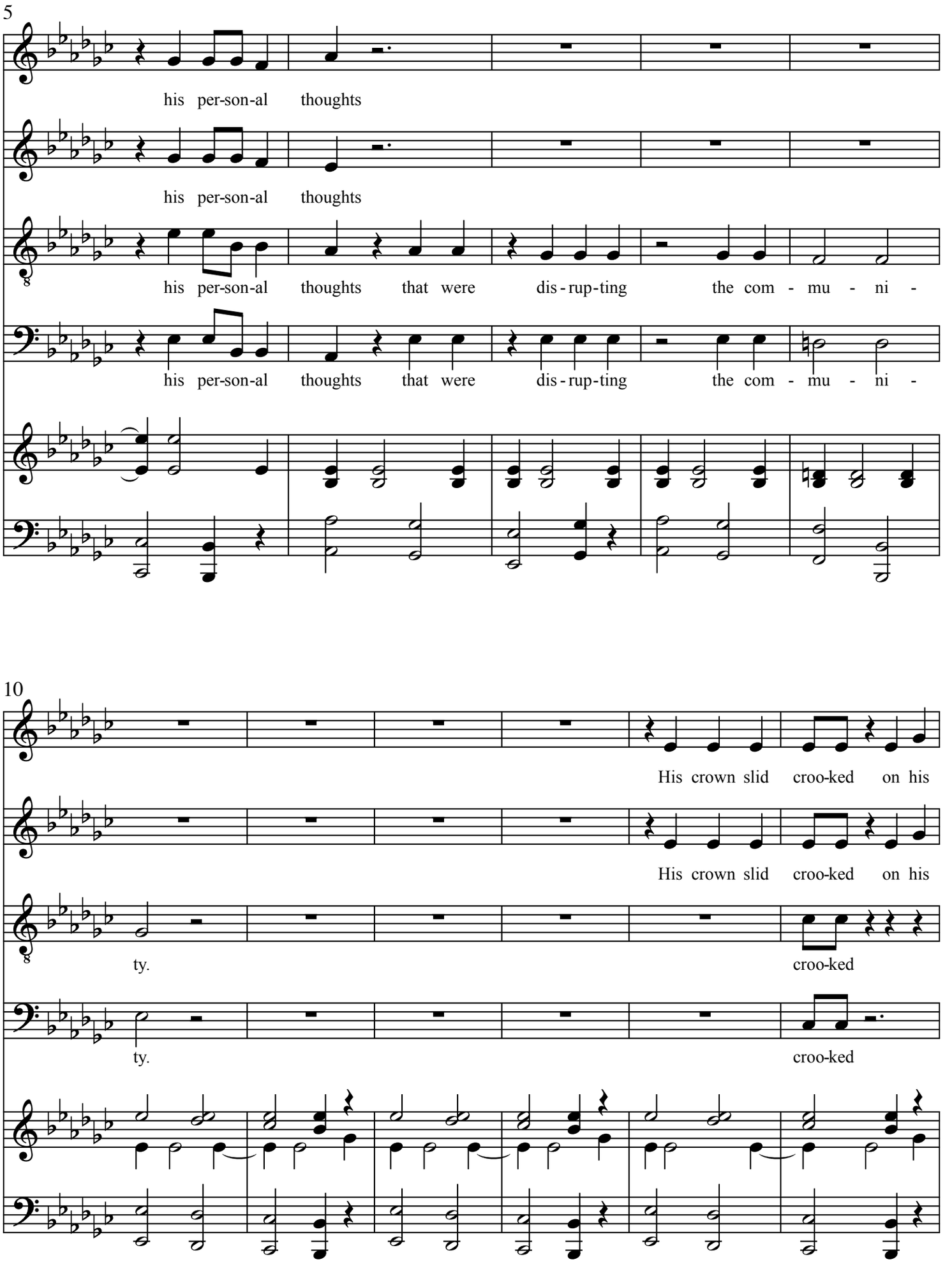
f So - lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers, when it was

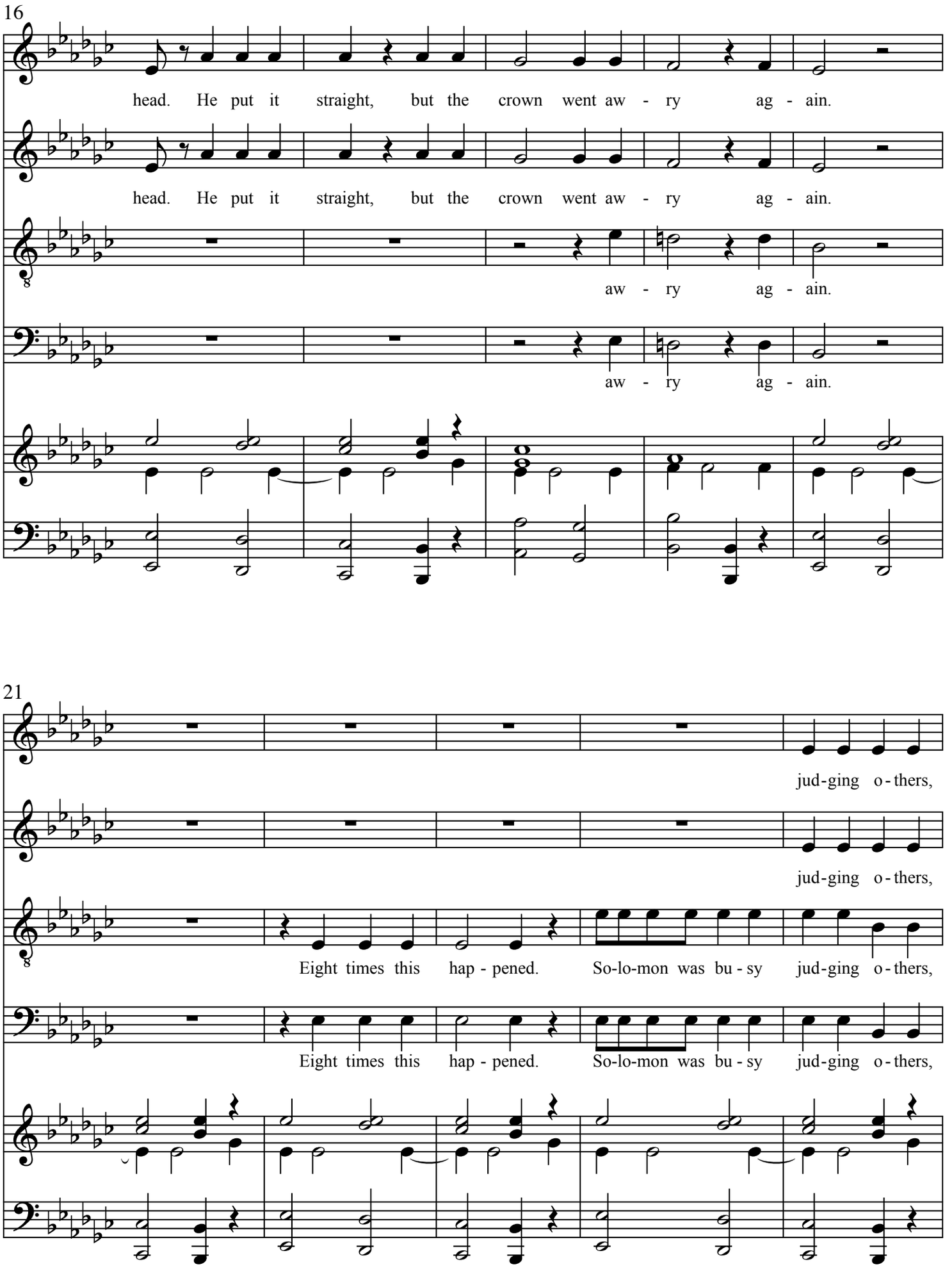
f jud-ging o - thers,

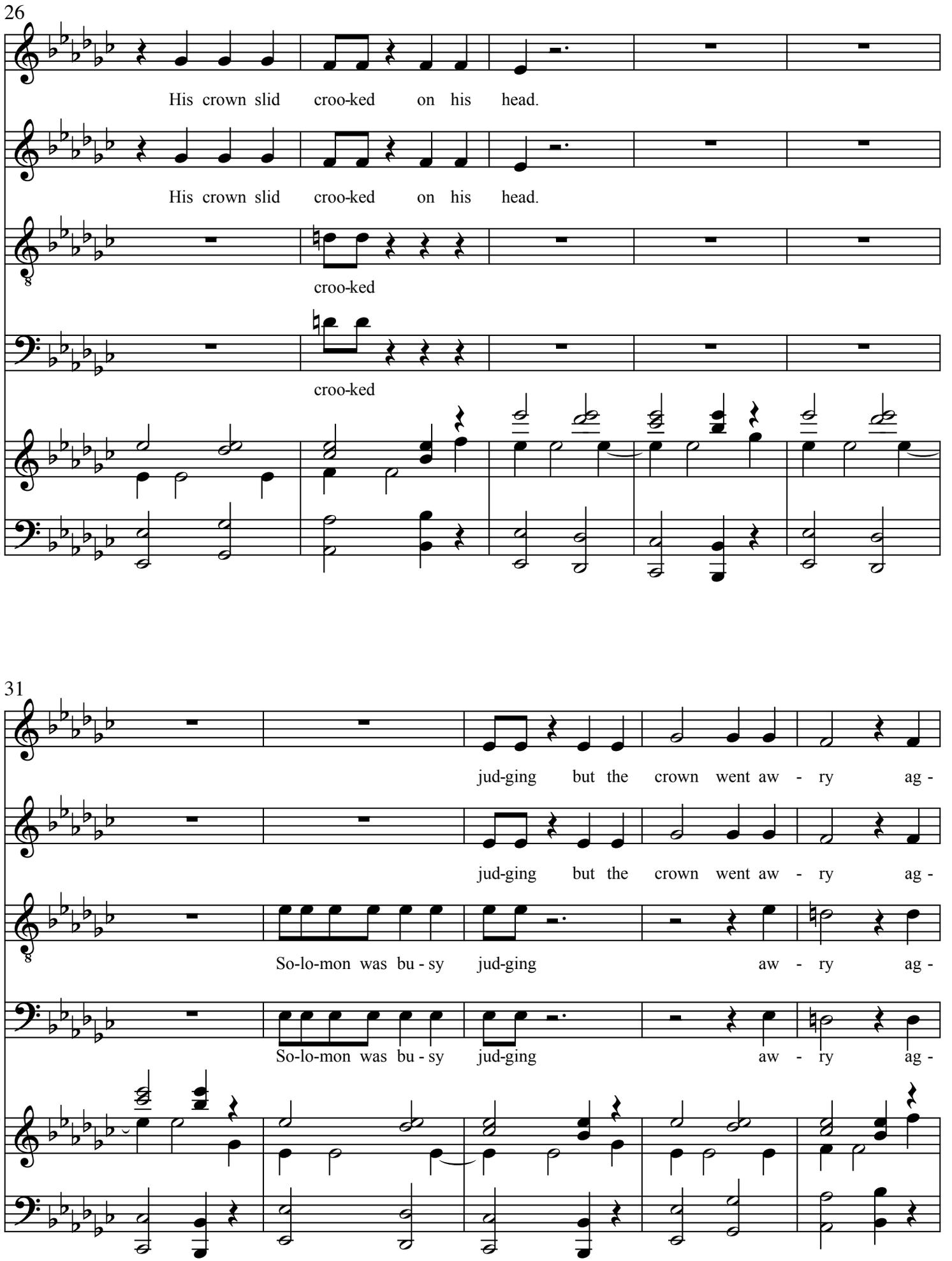
f jud-ging o - thers,

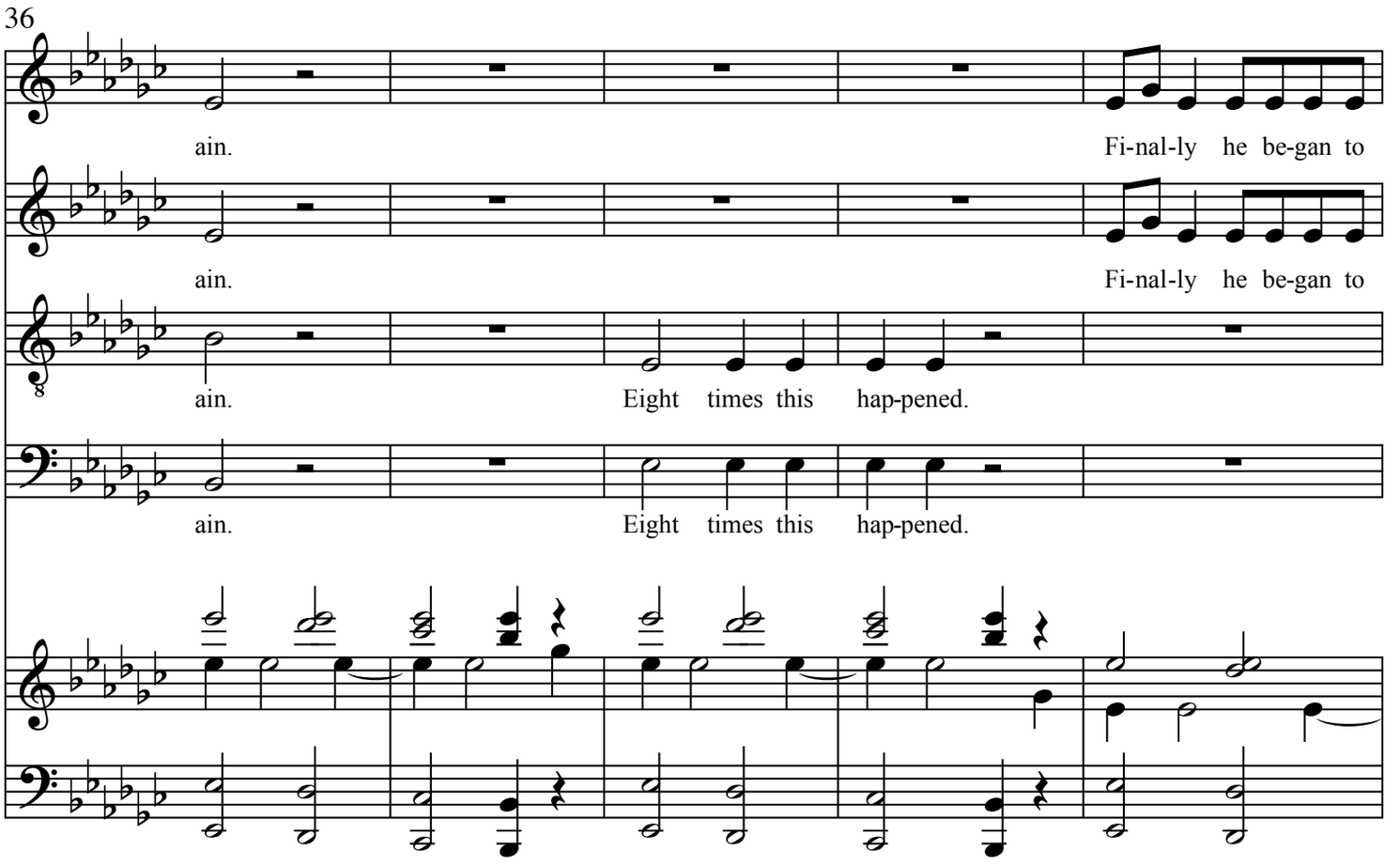
II: Solomon's Crooked Crown

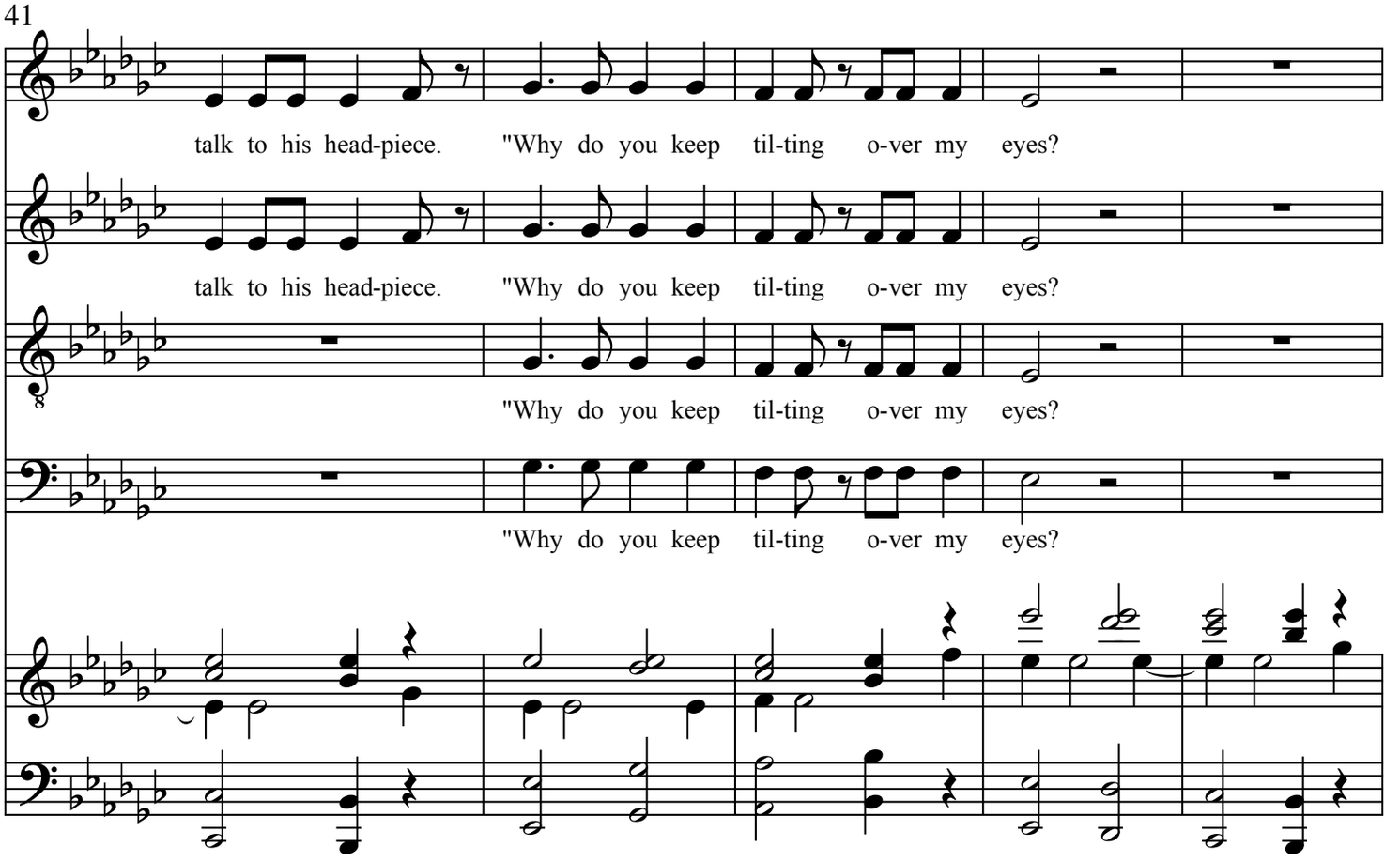
♩ = 88 **didactic**

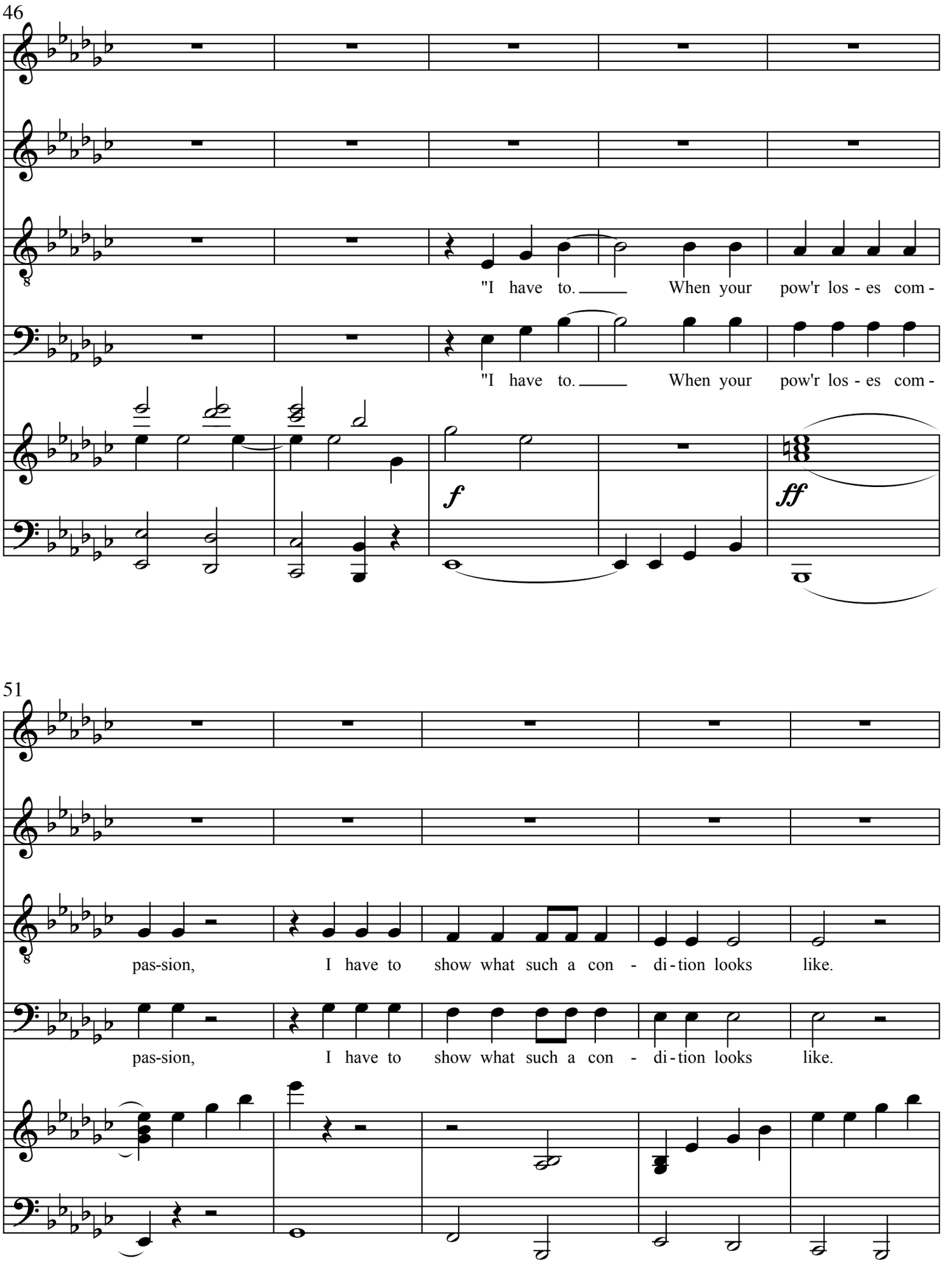

5
his per-son-al thoughts
his per-son-al thoughts
his per-son-al thoughts that were dis-rup-ting the com-mu-ni-
his per-son-al thoughts that were dis-rup-ting the com-mu-ni-
10
His crown slid croo-ked on his
His crown slid croo-ked on his
ty.
croo-ked
ty.
croo-ked

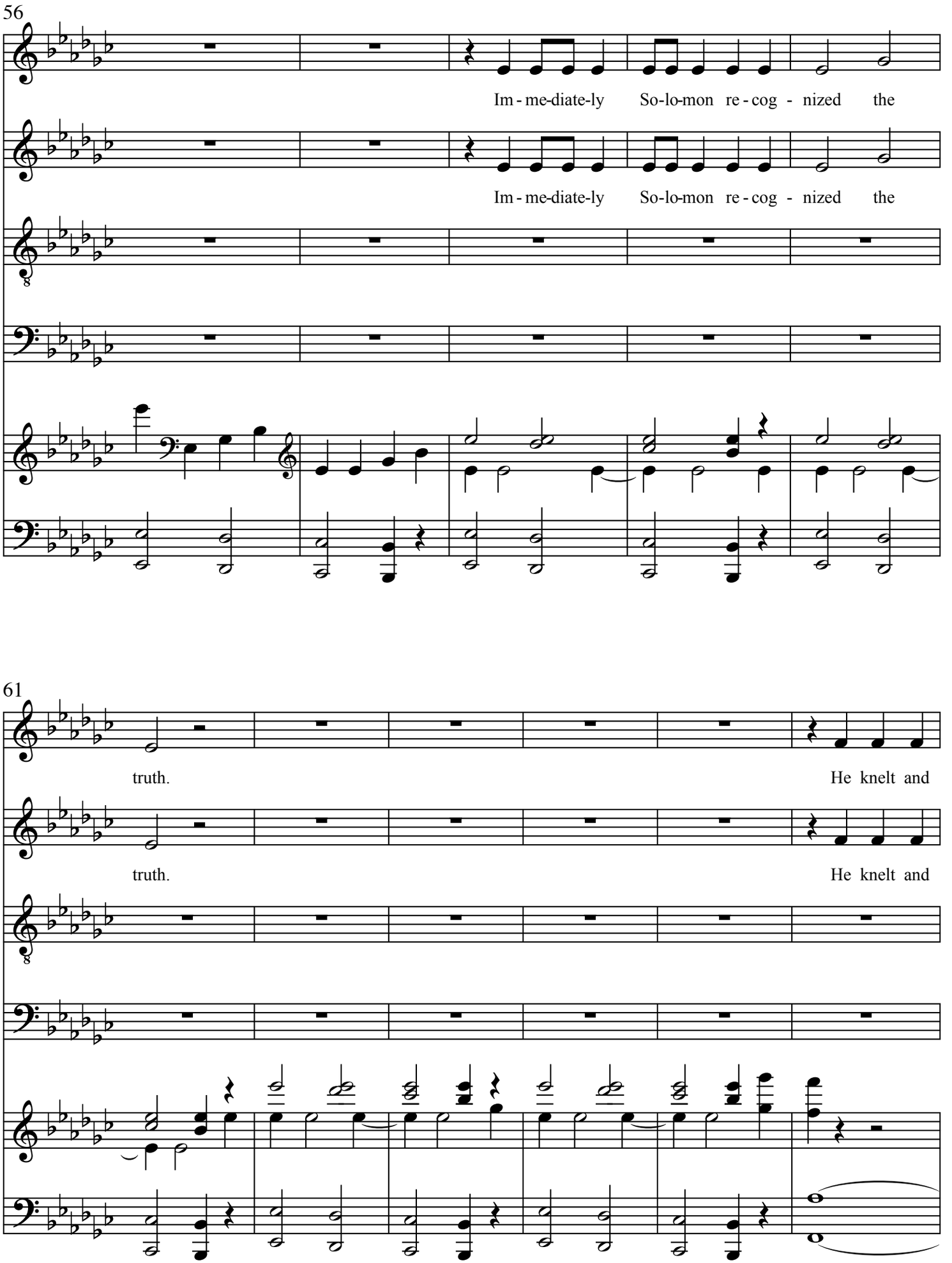

16
head. He put it straight, but the crown went aw - ry ag - ain.
head. He put it straight, but the crown went aw - ry ag - ain.
aw - ry ag - ain.
aw - ry ag - ain.
21
jud-ging o-thers,
jud-ging o-thers,
Eight times this hap - pened. So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o-thers,
Eight times this hap - pened. So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o-thers,

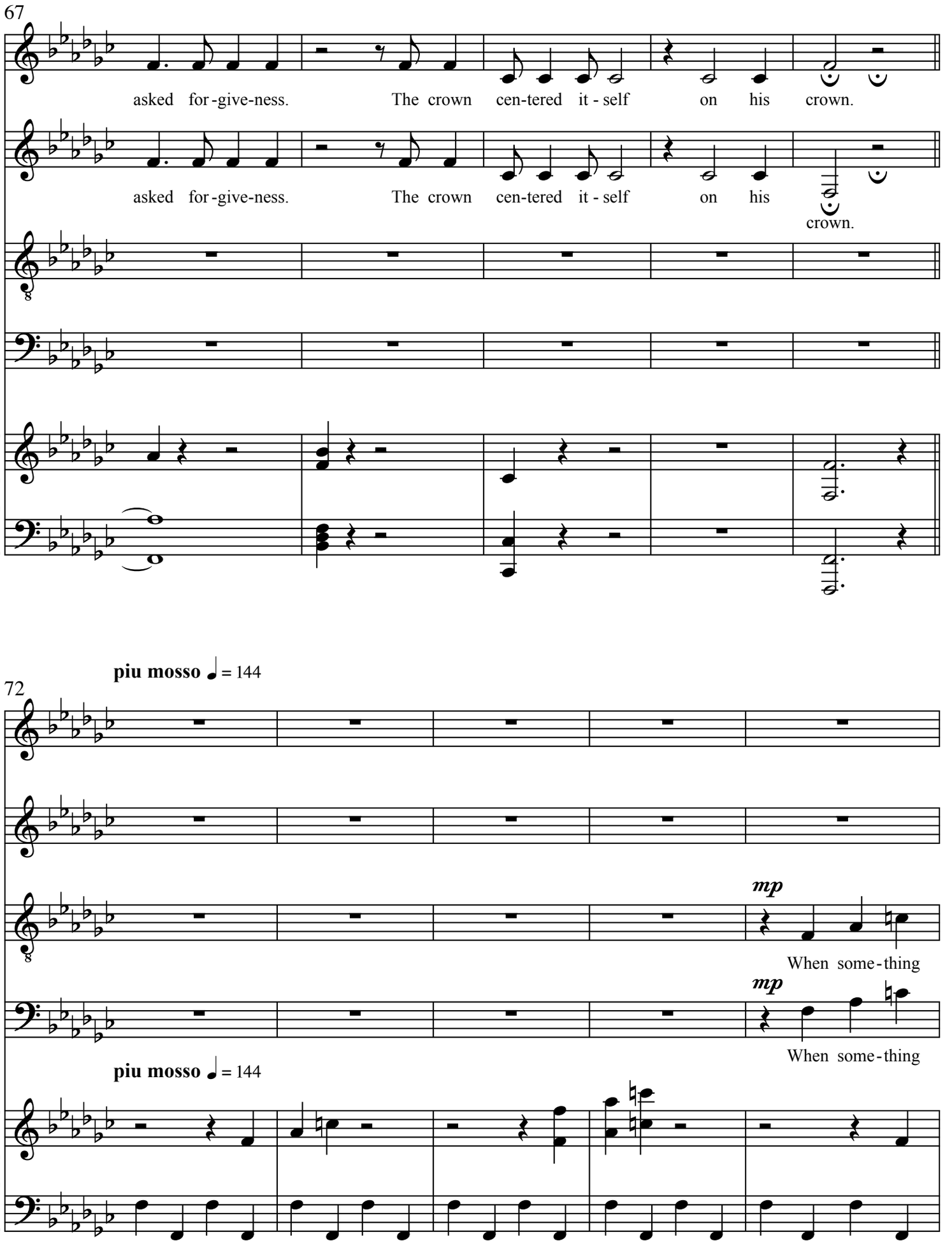

26
His crown slid croo-ked on his head.
His crown slid croo-ked on his head.
croo-ked
croo-ked
31
jud-ging but the crown went aw - ry ag -
jud-ging but the crown went aw - ry ag -
So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging aw - ry ag -
So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging aw - ry ag -

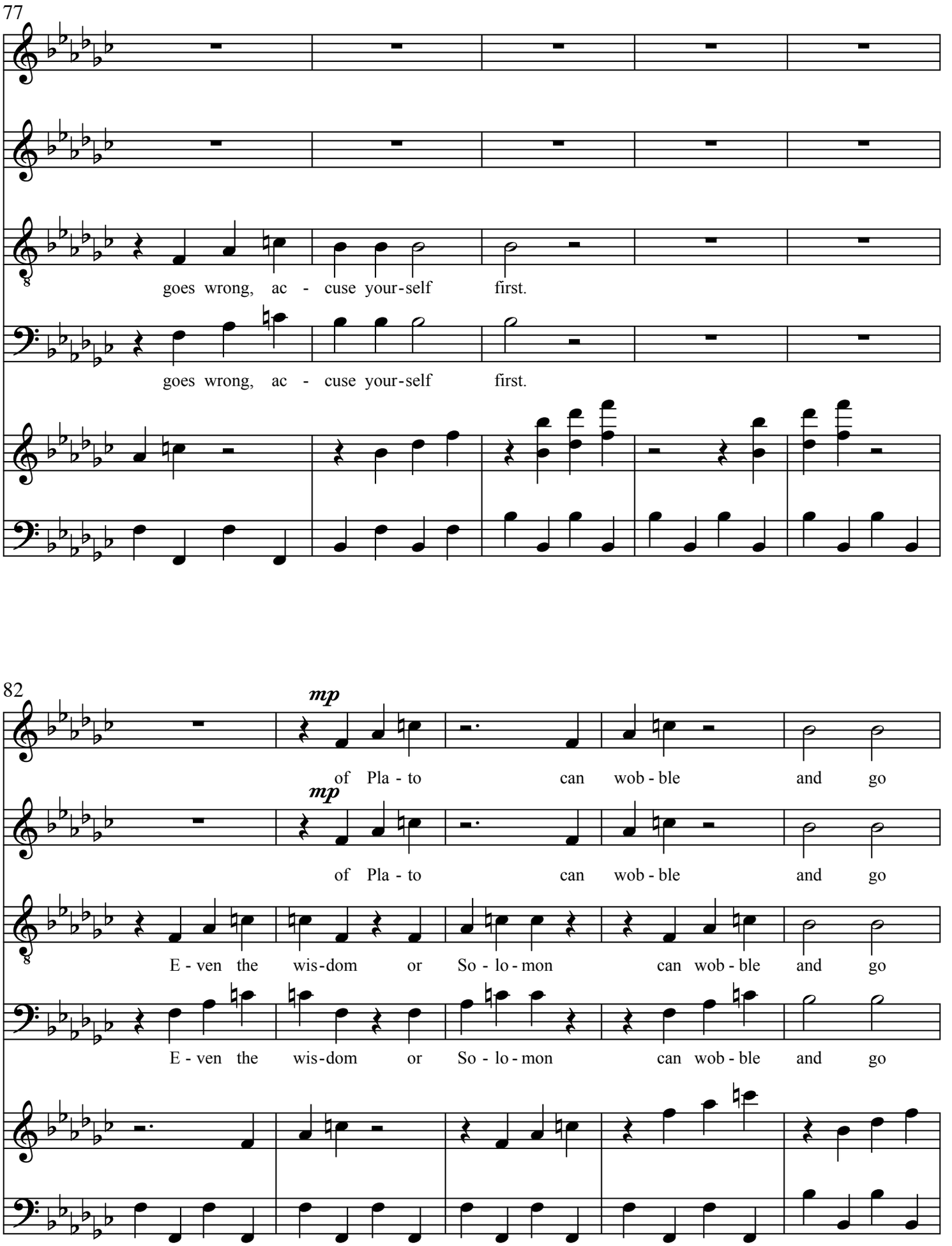

36
ain.
Fi-nal-ly he be-gan to
ain.
Fi-nal-ly he be-gan to
ain.
Eight times this hap-pened.
ain.
Eight times this hap-pened.

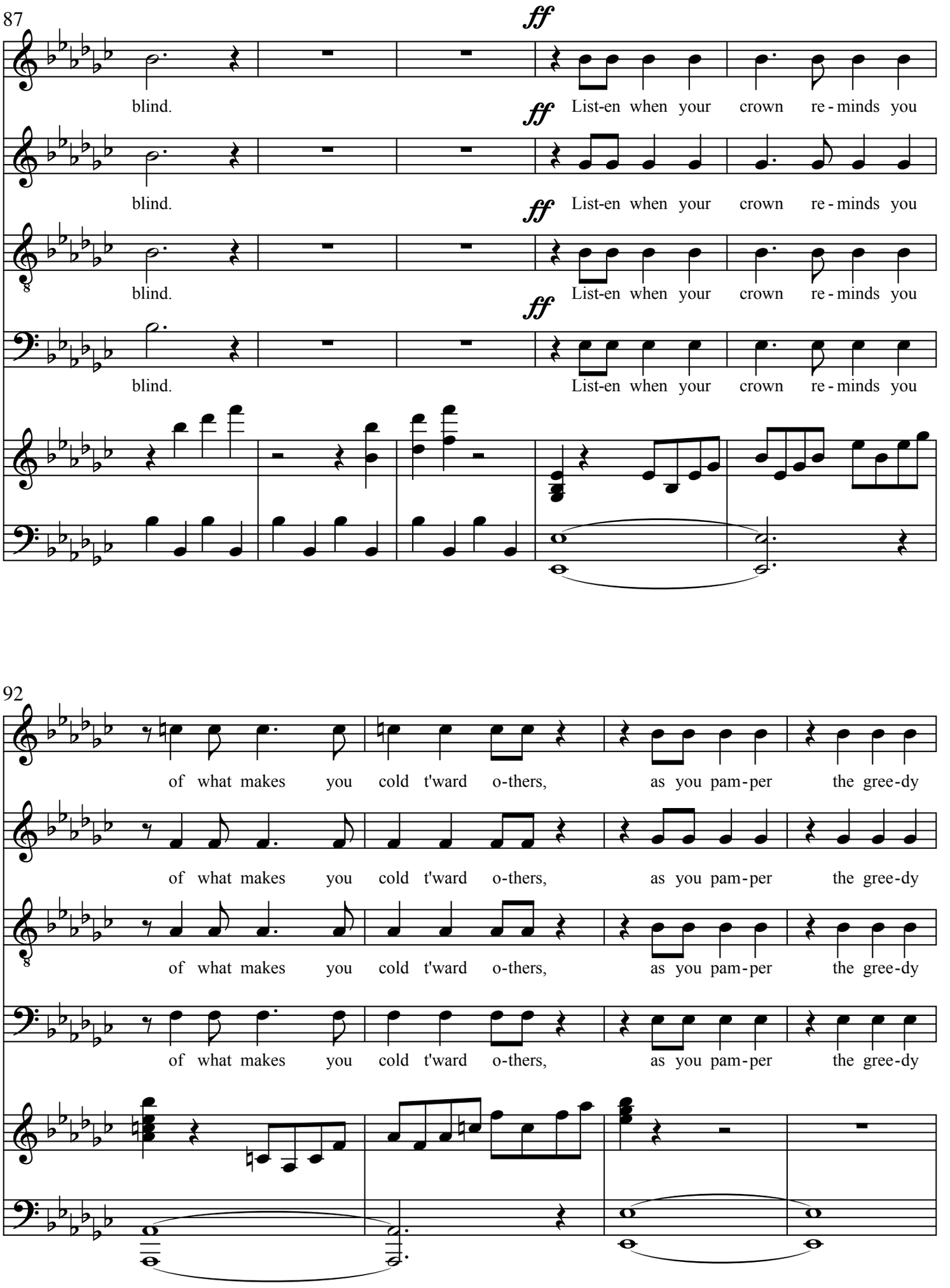

41
talk to his head-piece. "Why do you keep til-ting o-ver my eyes?
talk to his head-piece. "Why do you keep til-ting o-ver my eyes?
"Why do you keep til-ting o-ver my eyes?
"Why do you keep til-ting o-ver my eyes?

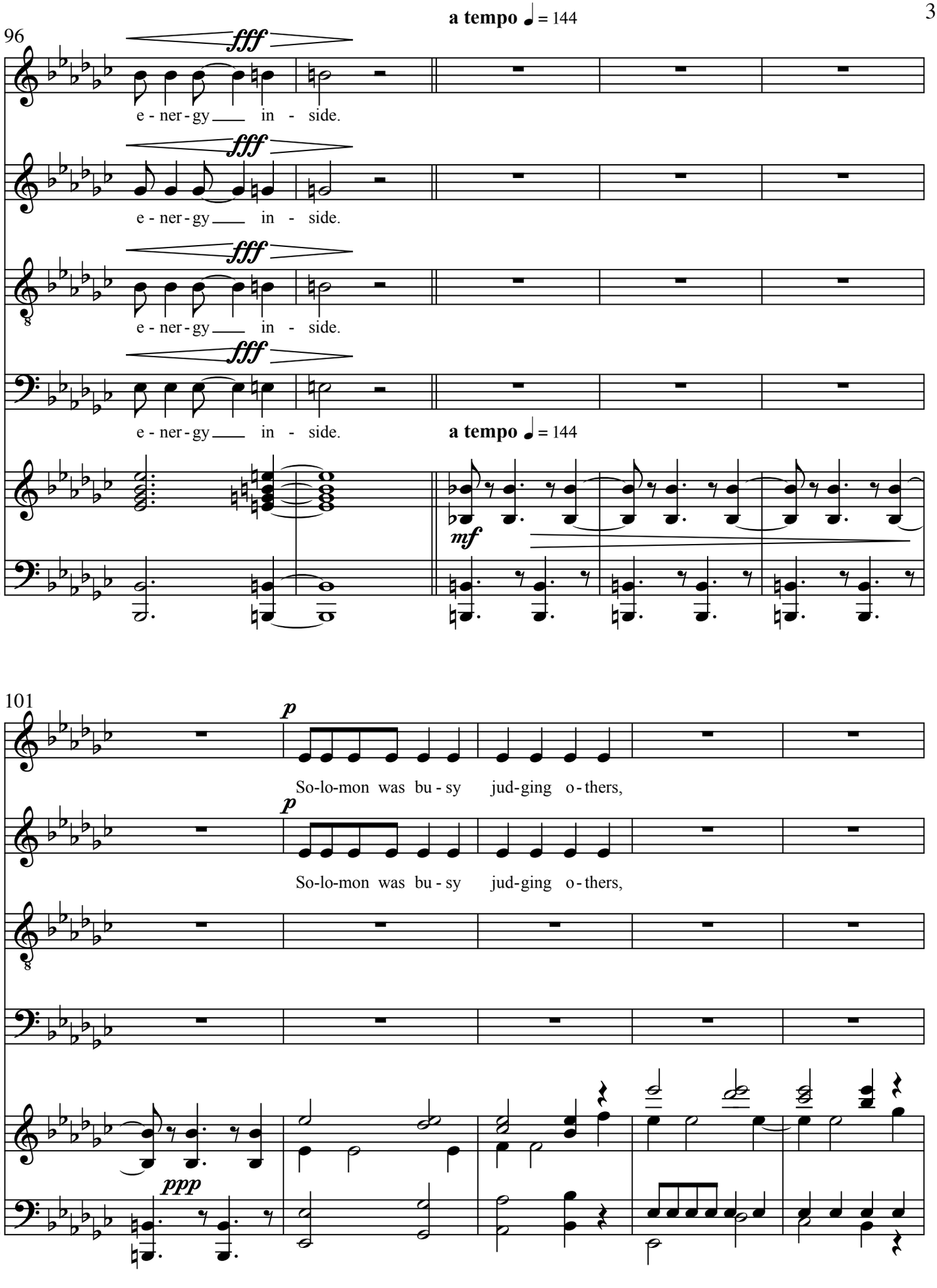

46
"I have to. When your pow'r los - es com -
"I have to. When your pow'r los - es com -
f
ff
51
pas-sion, I have to show what such a con - di - tion looks like.
pas-sion, I have to show what such a con - di - tion looks like.


56
Im - me-diate-ly So-lo-mon re - cog - nized the
Im - me-diate-ly So-lo-mon re - cog - nized the
61
truth. He knelt and
truth. He knelt and


67
asked for-give-ness. The crown cen-tered it-self on his crown.
asked for-give-ness. The crown cen-tered it-self on his
crown.
72
piu mosso ♩ = 144
mp
When some-thing
mp
When some-thing
piu mosso ♩ = 144


77
goes wrong, ac - cuse your-self first.
goes wrong, ac - cuse your-self first.
82
mp
of Pla - to can wob - ble and go
mp
of Pla - to can wob - ble and go
E - ven the wis-dom or So - lo - mon can wob - ble and go
E - ven the wis-dom or So - lo - mon can wob - ble and go


87
ff
blind.
List-en when your crown re - minds you
92
of what makes you cold t'ward o-thers, as you pam-per the gree-dy


a tempo ♩ = 144
96
fff
e - ner - gy ___ in - side.
fff
e - ner - gy ___ in - side.
fff
e - ner - gy ___ in - side.
fff
e - ner - gy ___ in - side.
a tempo ♩ = 144
mf
101
p
So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers,
p
So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers,
ppp

106

rall.

p So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers,

p So-lo-mon was bu - sy jud-ging o - thers,

rall.

III: Where Everything is Music/Quietness/On Children Running Through
Sublime, with subdued ecstasy. ♩ = 80

f We have fal - len int - o the place where eve - ry thing is

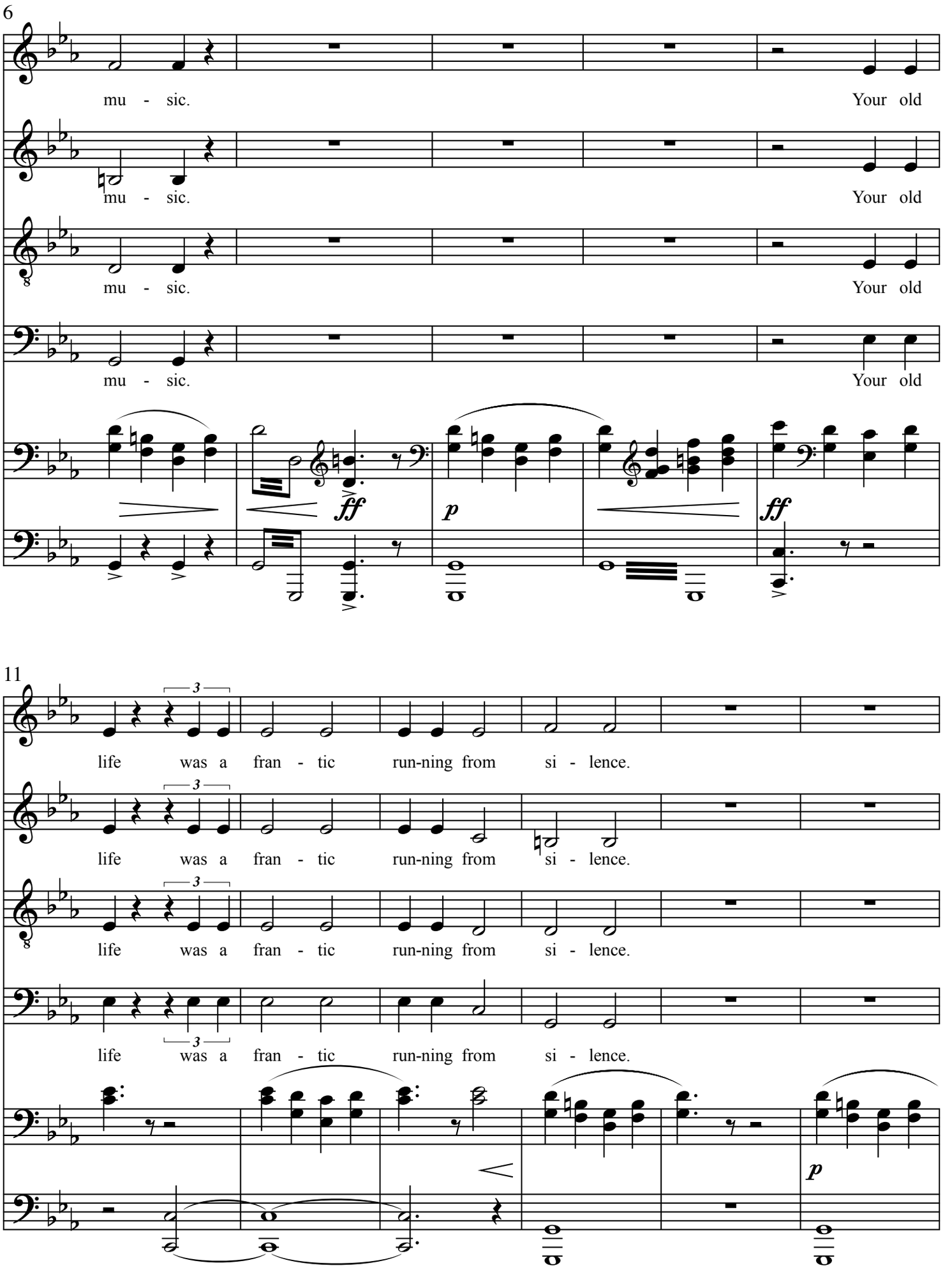
f We have fal - len int - o the place where eve - ry thing is

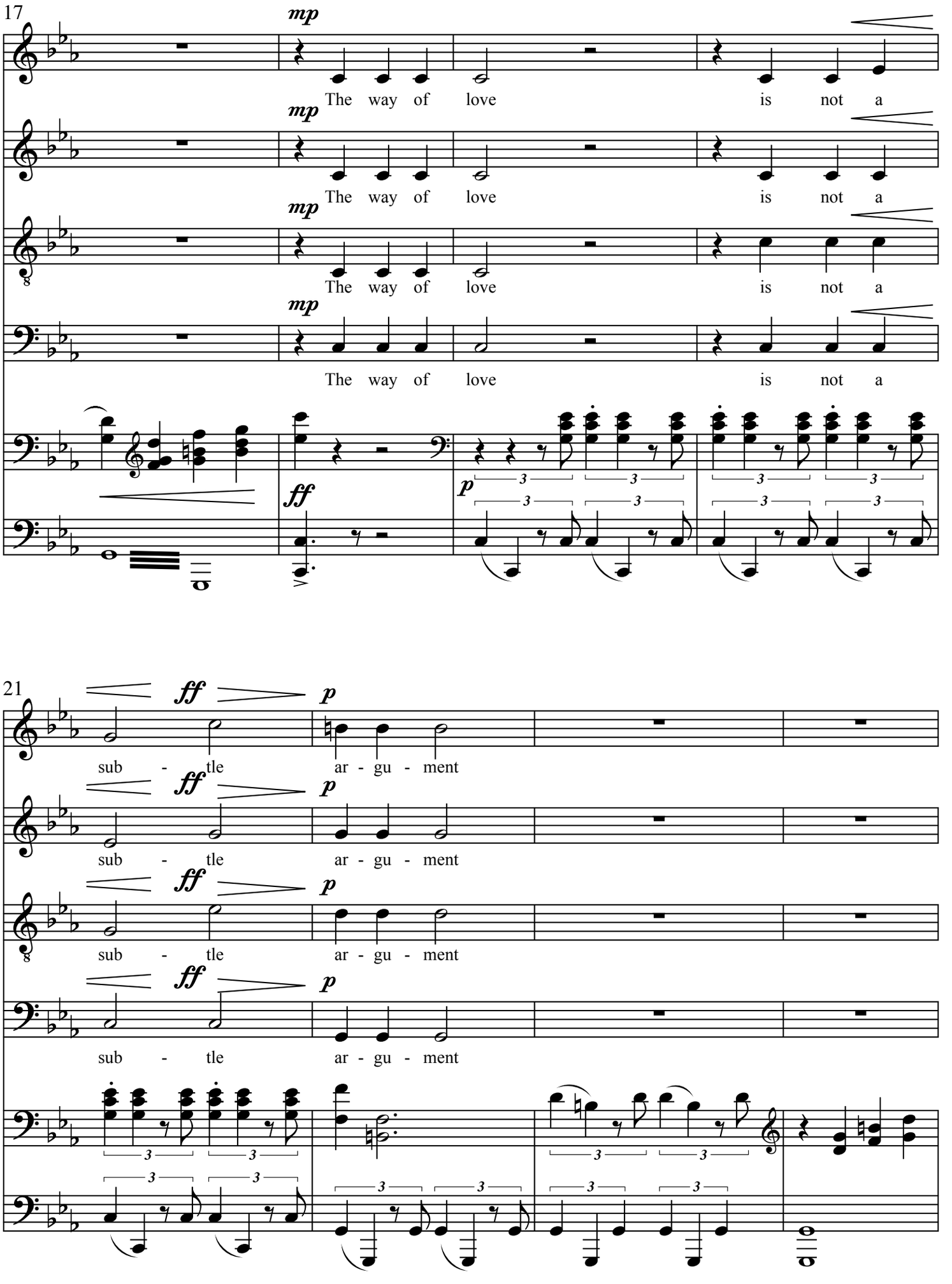
f We have fal - len int - o the place where eve - ry thing is

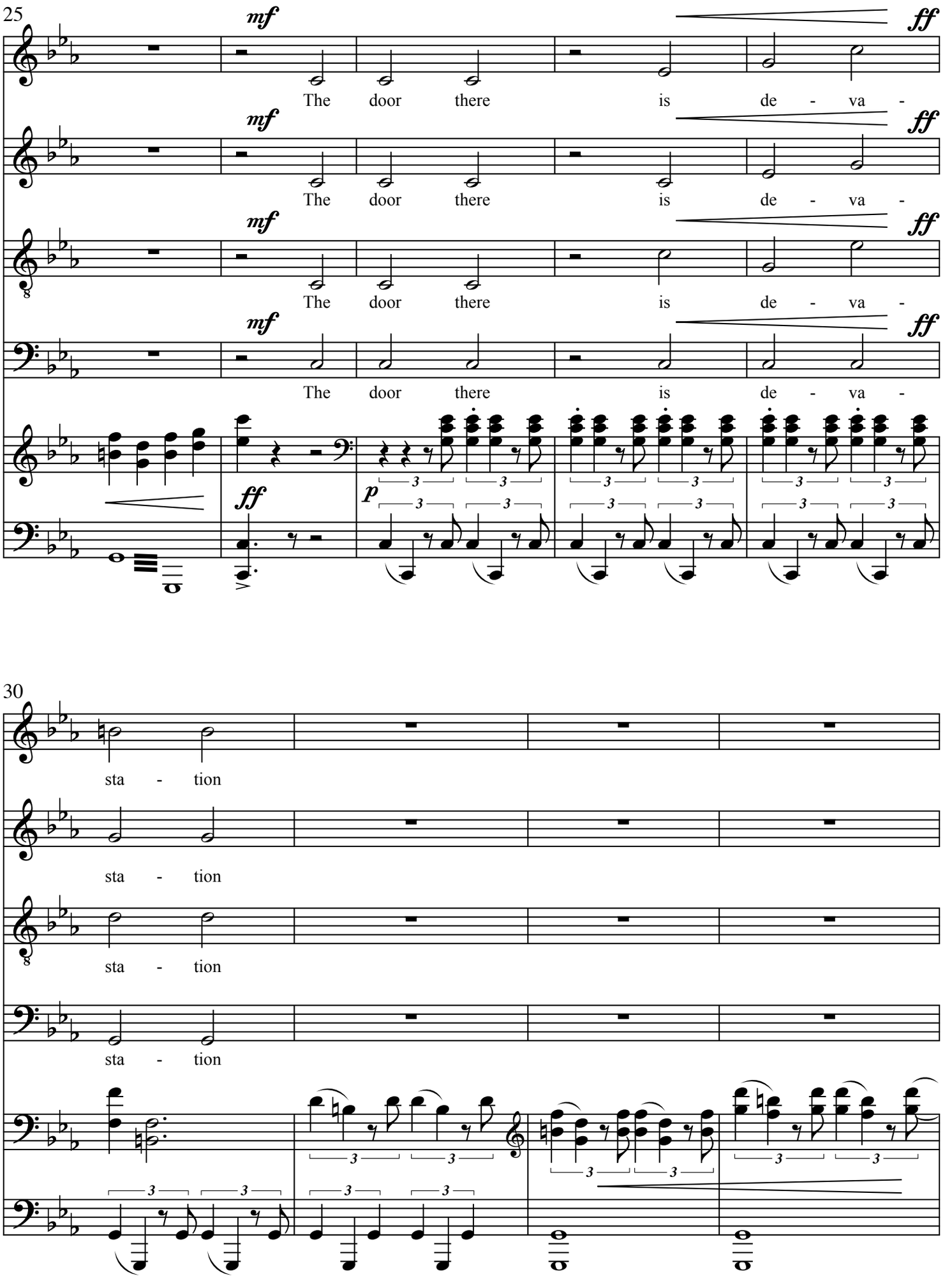
f We have fal - len int - o the place where eve - ry thing is

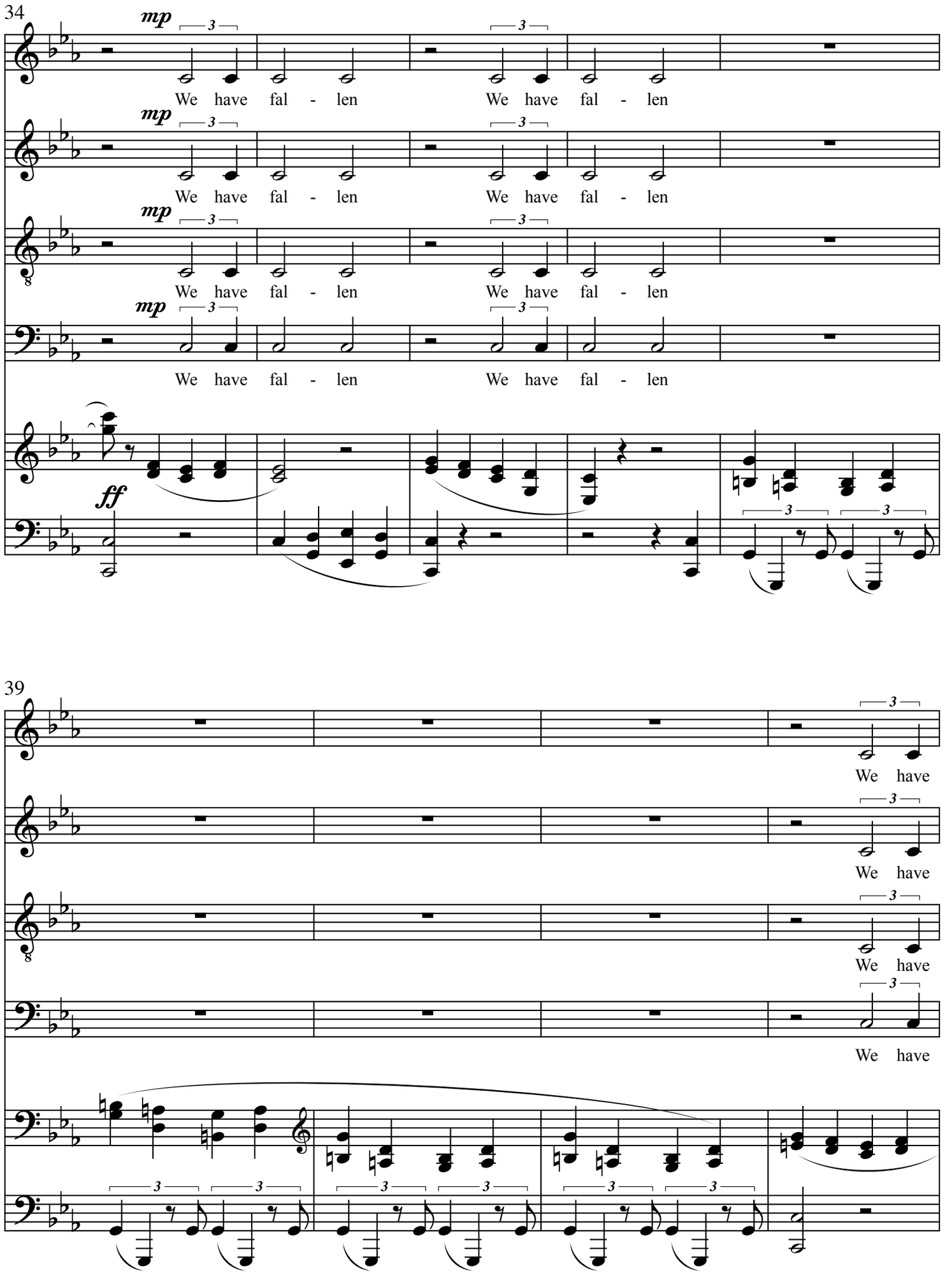
III: Where Everything is Music/Quietness/On Children Running Through
Sublime, with subdued ecstasy. ♩ = 80

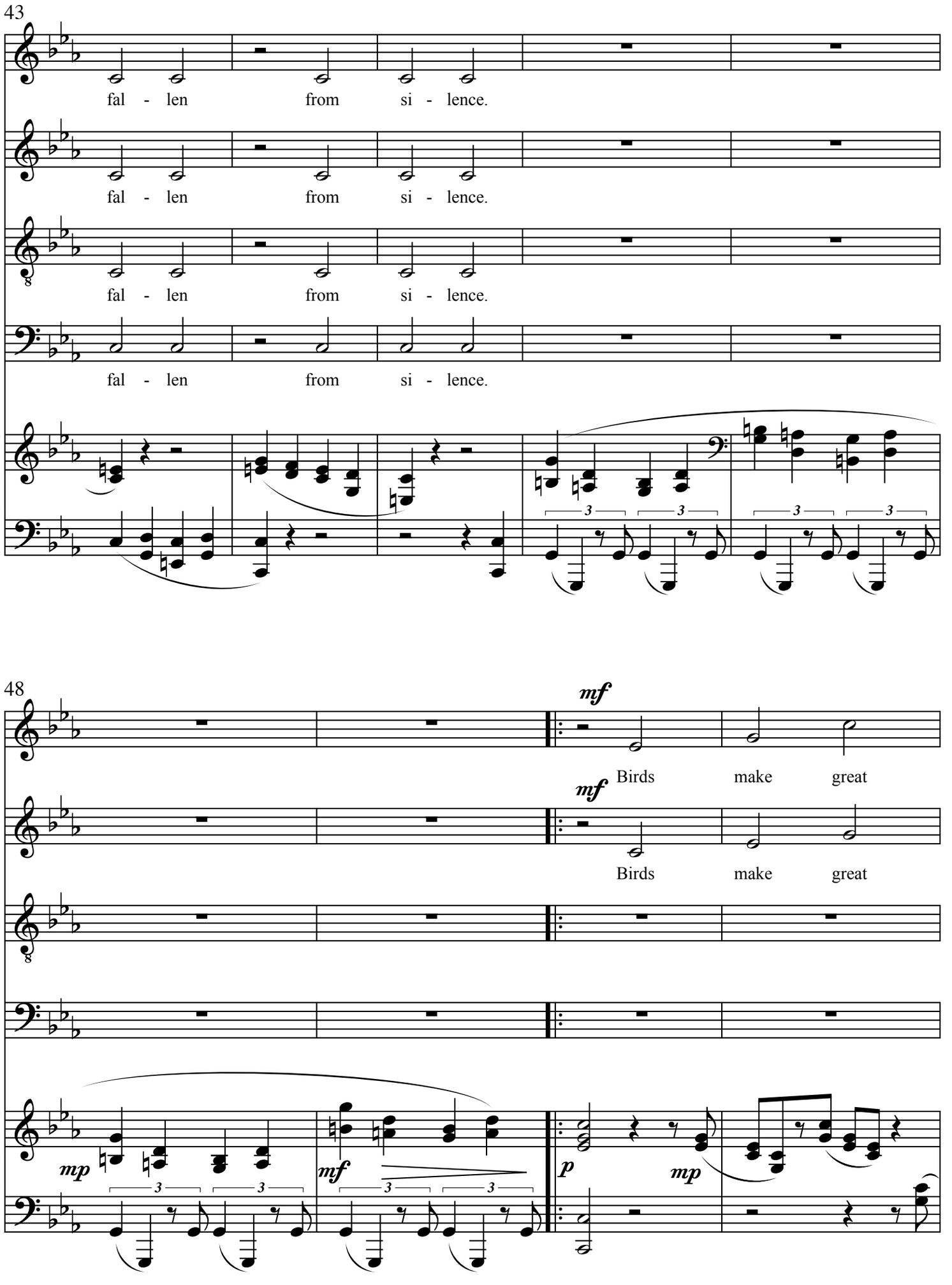
ff *mf* *p*

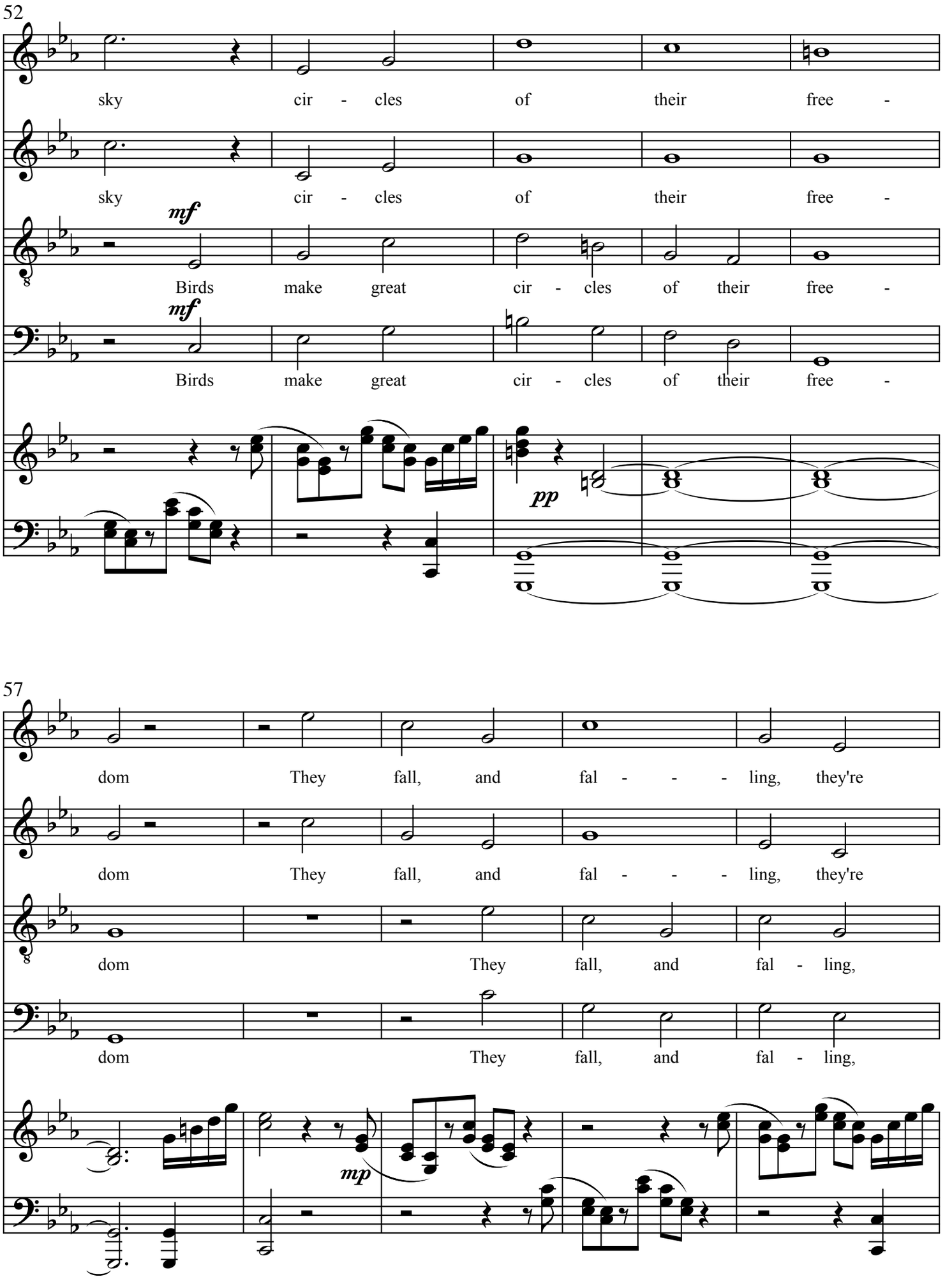

6
mu - sic.
Your old
mu - sic.
Your old
mu - sic.
Your old
mu - sic.
Your old
ff
p
ff
11
3
life was a fran - tic run-ning from si - lence.
life was a fran - tic run-ning from si - lence.
life was a fran - tic run-ning from si - lence.
life was a fran - tic run-ning from si - lence.
p

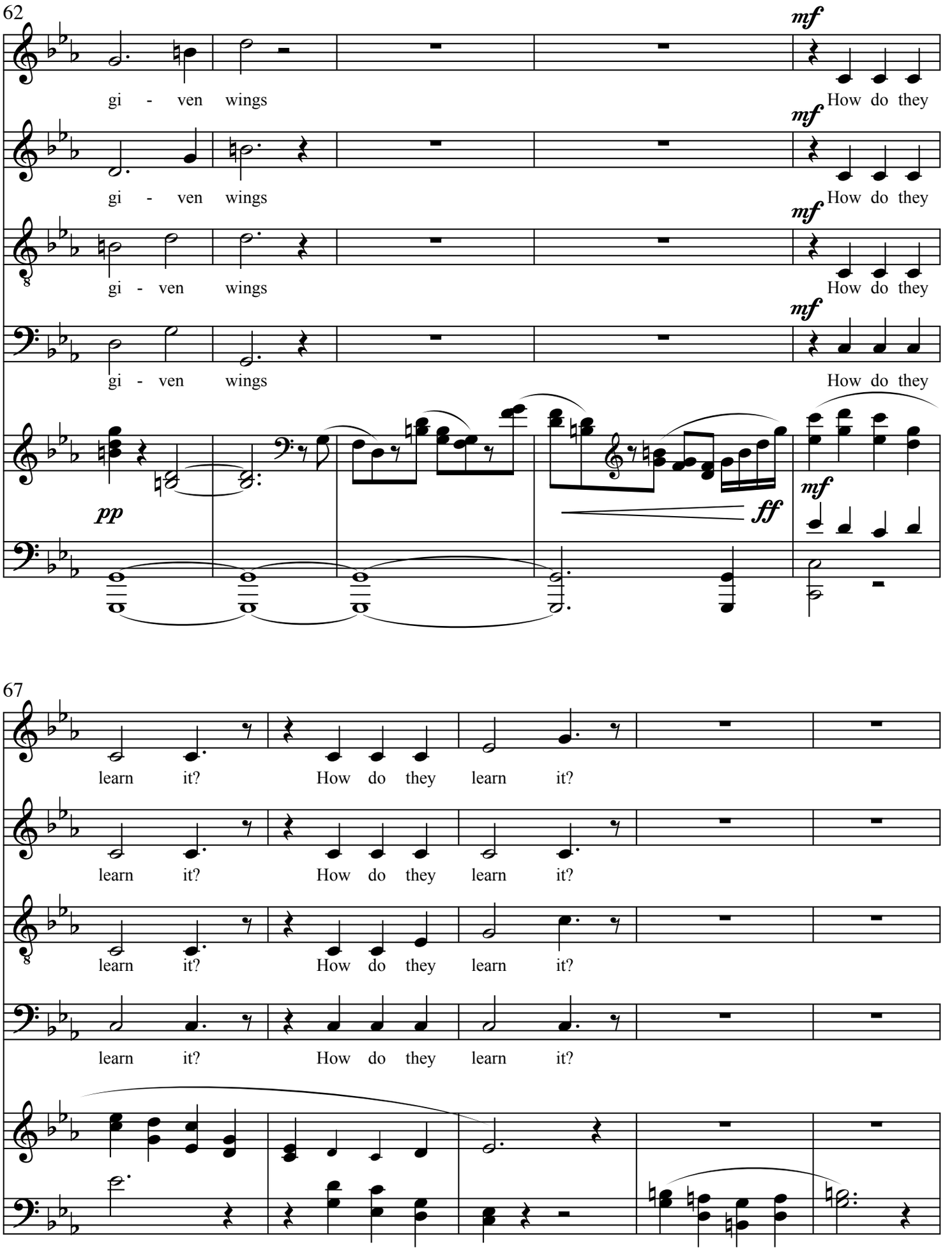

17
mp
The way of love is not a
mp
The way of love is not a
mp
The way of love is not a
mp
The way of love is not a
ff
p
21
ff
p
sub - tle ar - gu - ment
ff
p
sub - tle ar - gu - ment
ff
p
sub - tle ar - gu - ment
ff
p
sub - tle ar - gu - ment

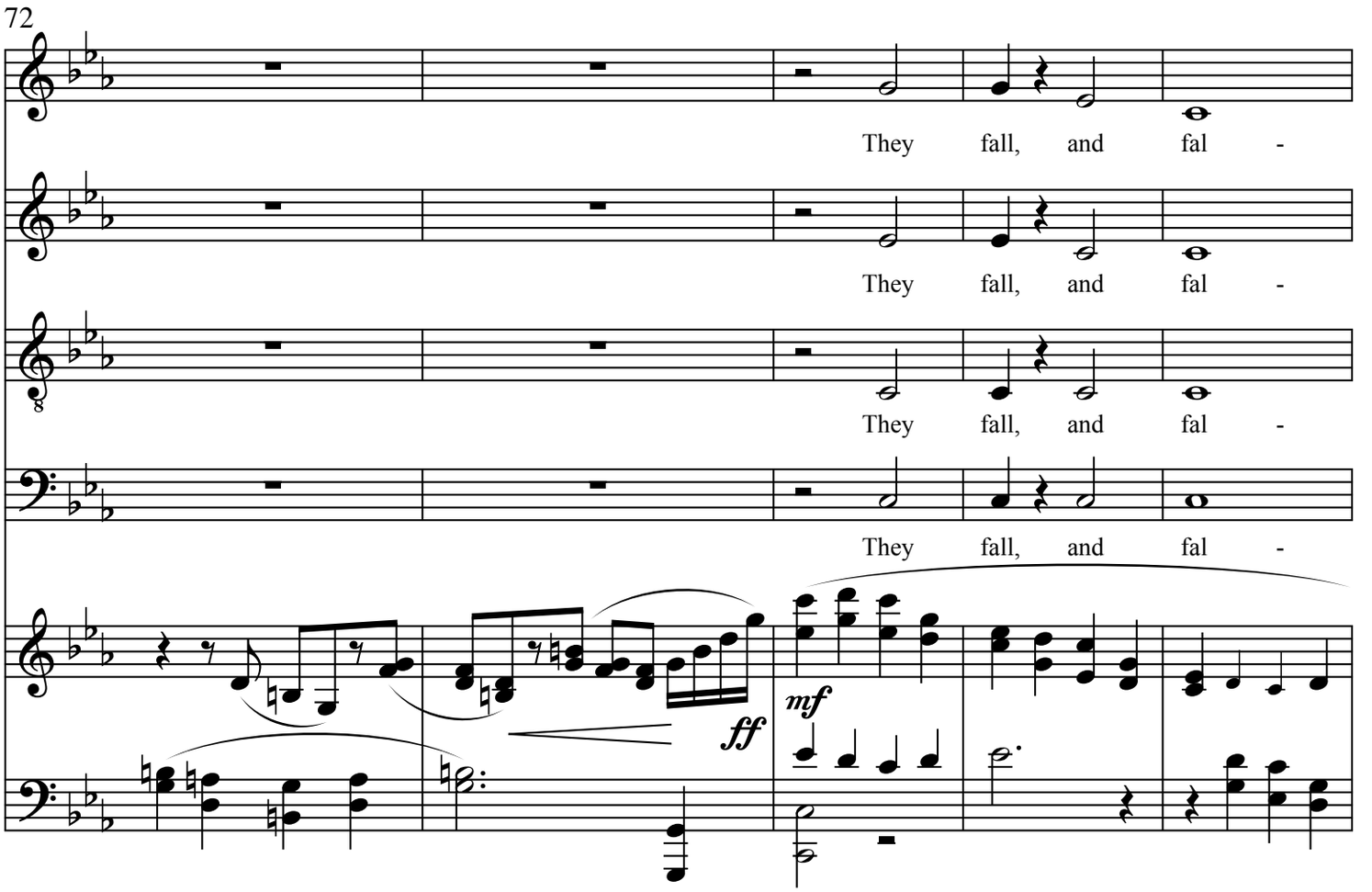

25
mf
ff
The door there is de - va -
The door there is de - va -
The door there is de - va -
The door there is de - va -
ff
p
30
sta - tion
sta - tion
sta - tion

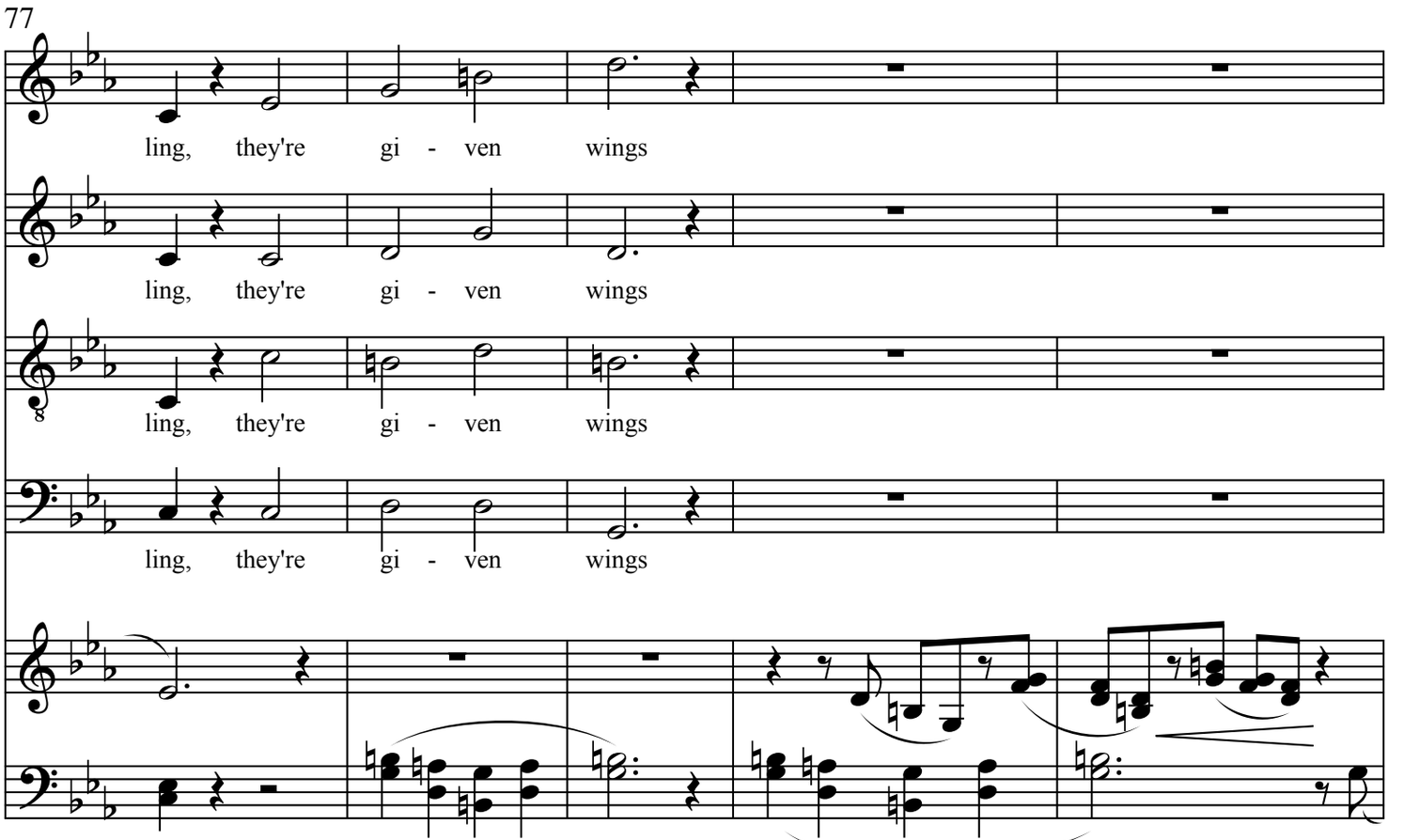

34
mp
We have fal - len We have fal - len
mp
We have fal - len We have fal - len
mp
We have fal - len We have fal - len
mp
We have fal - len We have fal - len
ff
39
We have
We have
We have
We have

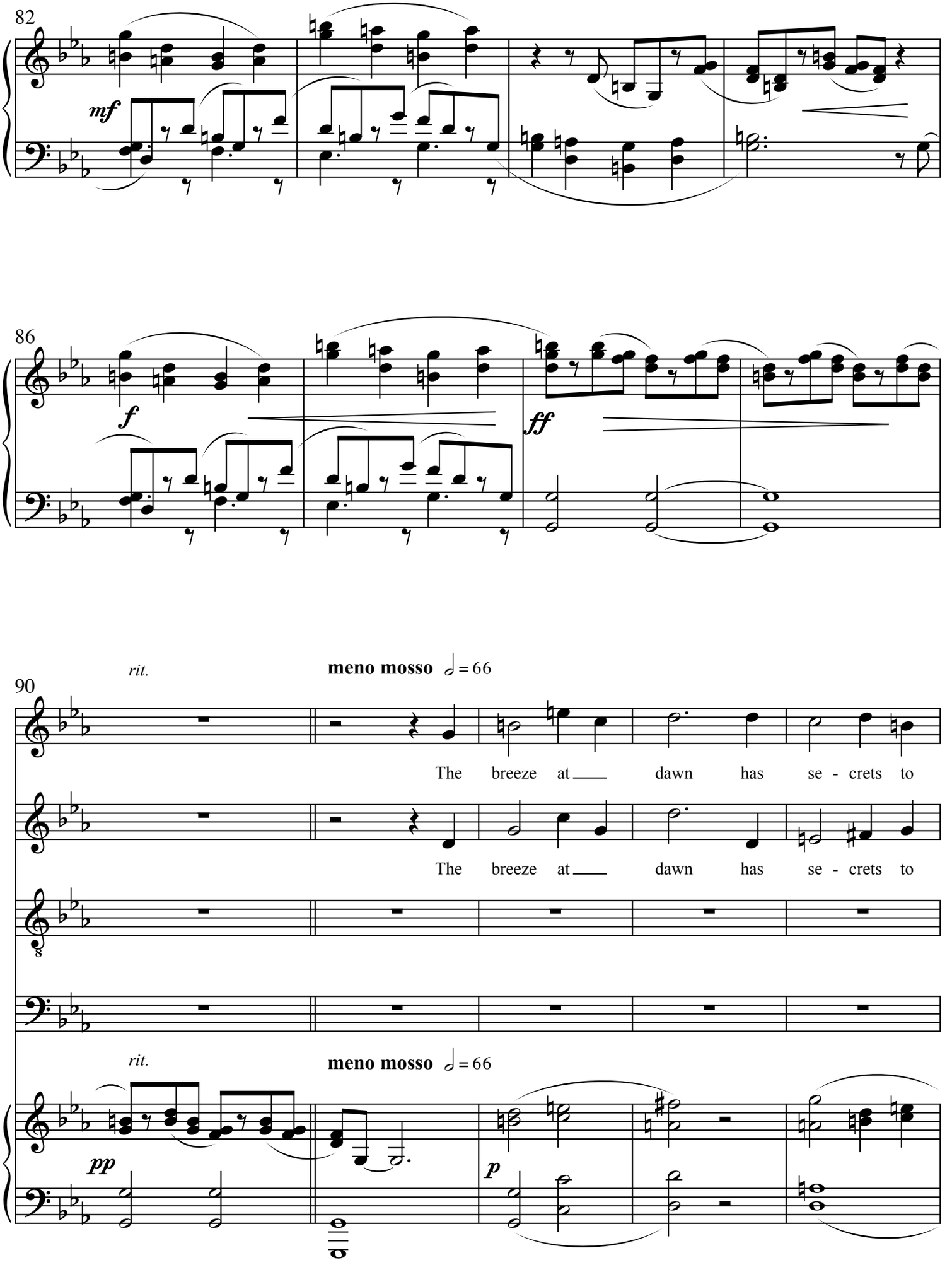

43
fal - len from si - lence.
fal - len from si - lence.
fal - len from si - lence.
fal - len from si - lence.
48
mf
Birds make great
mf
Birds make great
mp
mf
p
mp


52
sky cir - cles of their free -
sky cir - cles of their free -
mf
Birds make great cir - cles of their free -
mf
Birds make great cir - cles of their free -
pp
57
dom They fall, and fal - - - ling, they're
dom They fall, and fal - - - ling, they're
dom They fall, and fal - ling,
dom They fall, and fal - ling,
mp


62
gi - ven wings
How do they
mf
pp
ff
67
learn it? How do they learn it?


72
They fall, and fal -
They fall, and fal -
They fall, and fal -
They fall, and fal -
ff
mf


77
ling, they're gi - ven wings
ling, they're gi - ven wings
ling, they're gi - ven wings
ling, they're gi - ven wings


82
mf
86
f
ff
90
rit.
meno mosso ♩= 66
The breeze at dawn has se - crets to
The breeze at dawn has se - crets to
rit.
meno mosso ♩= 66
pp
p

95

tell you. You must ask for what you real - ly

tell you. You must ask for what you real - ly

Don't go back to sleep.

Don't go back to sleep.

p

101

a tempo ♩ = 80

want The way of love

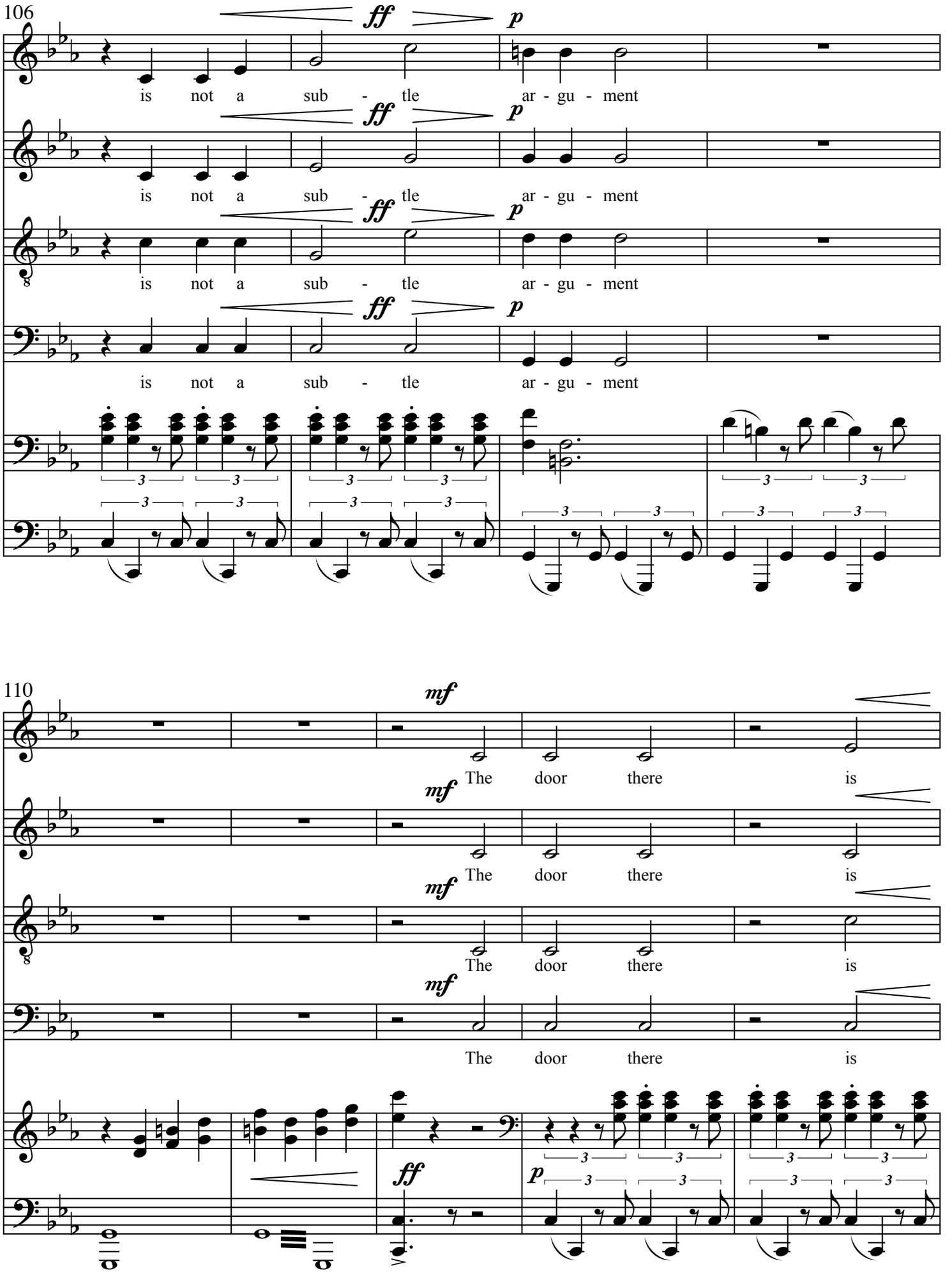
want The way of love

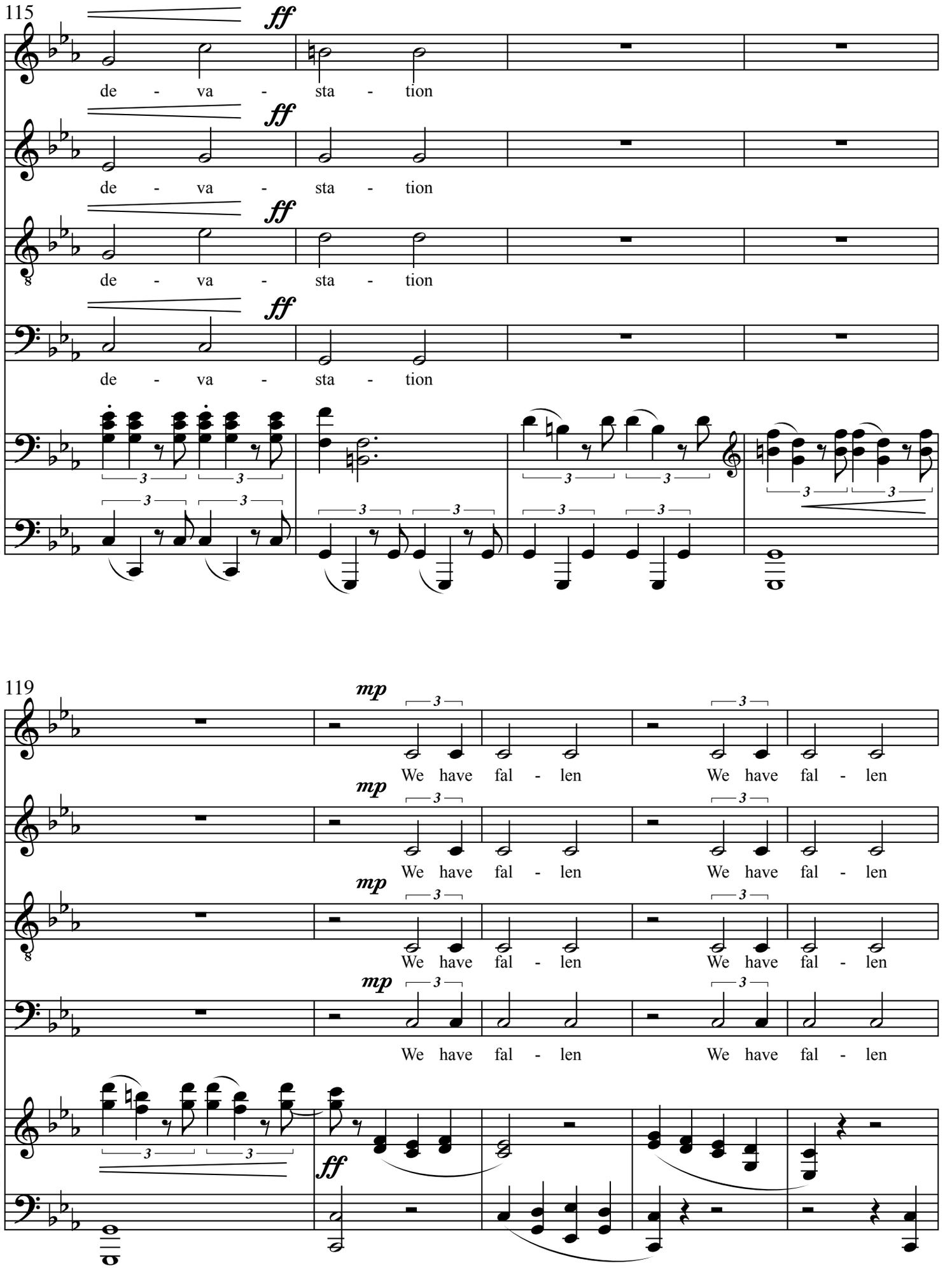
Don't go back to sleep. The way of love

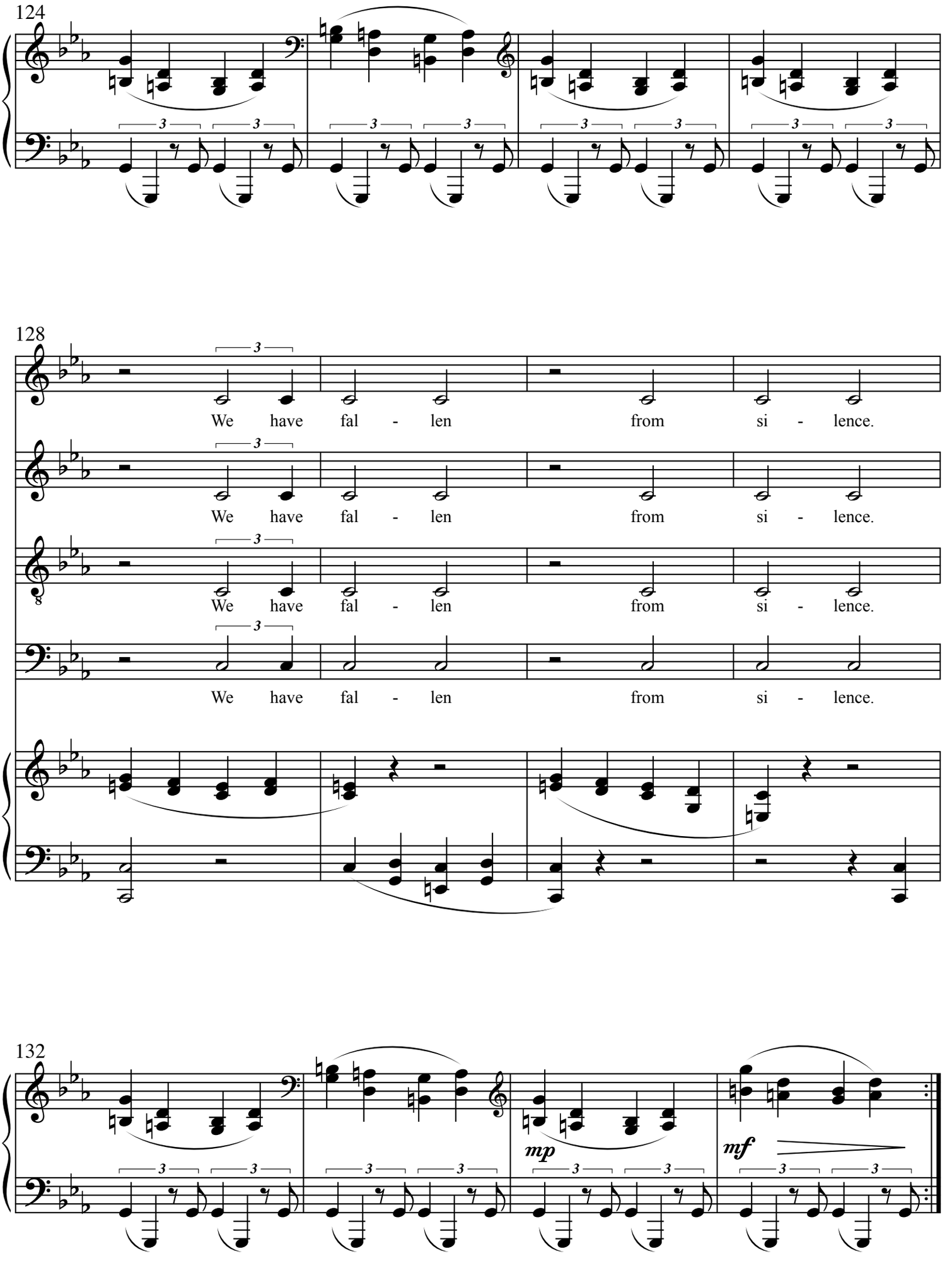
Don't go back to sleep. The way of love

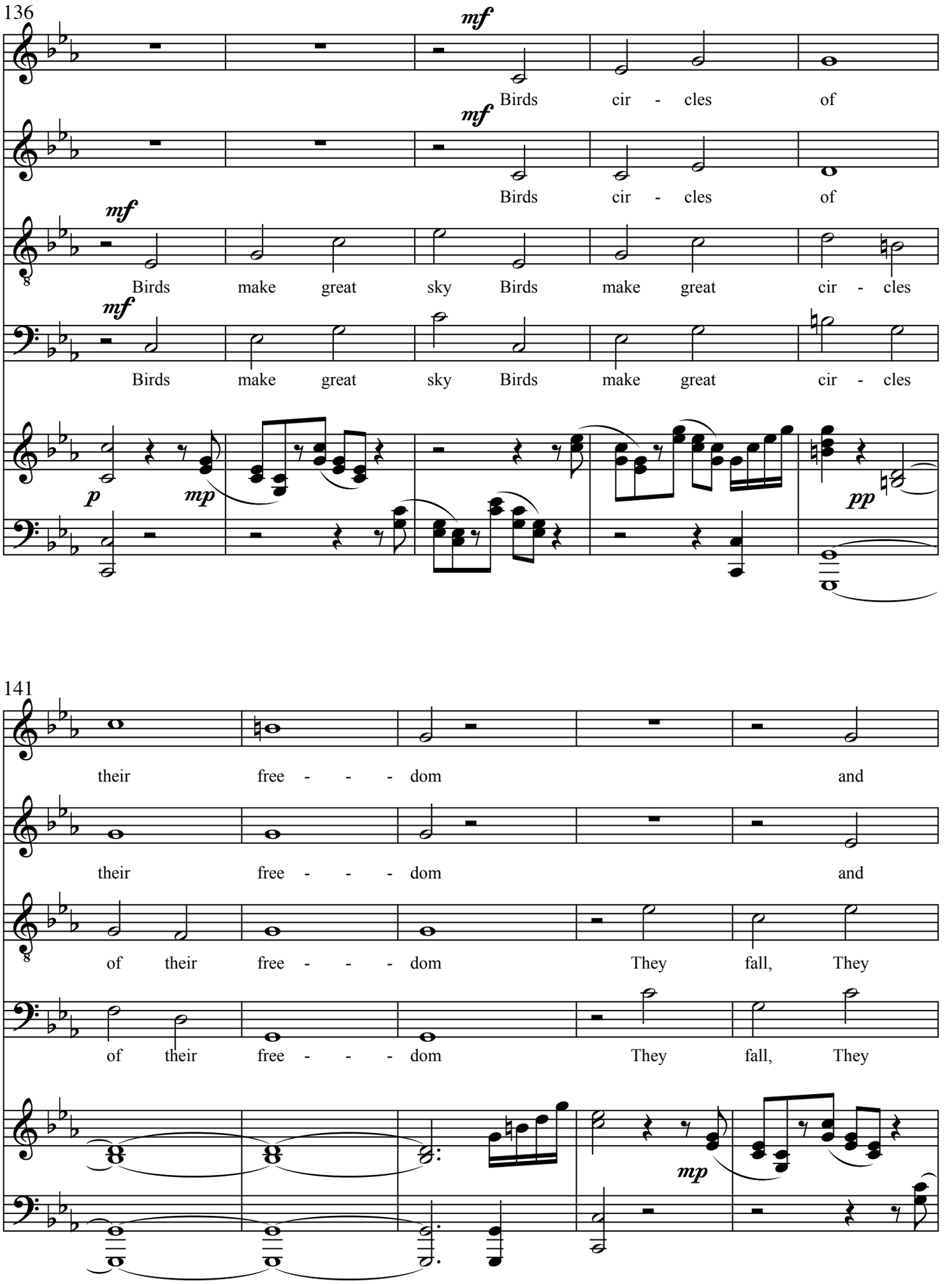
a tempo ♩ = 80

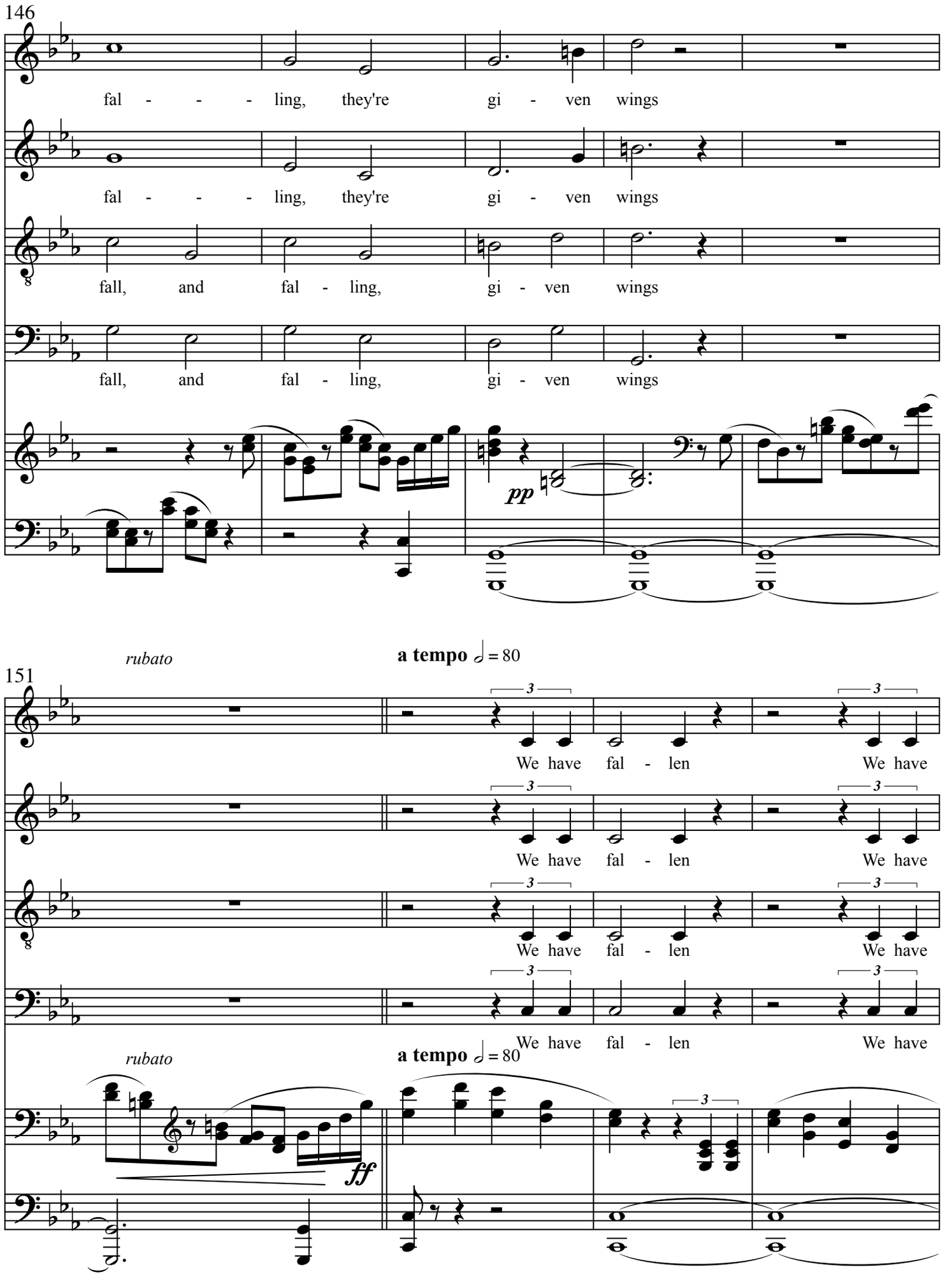
p


106
ff
p
is not a sub - tle ar - gu - ment
is not a sub - tle ar - gu - ment
is not a sub - tle ar - gu - ment
is not a sub - tle ar - gu - ment
110
mf
The door there is
The door there is
The door there is
The door there is
ff
p


115
ff
de - va - sta - tion
de - va - sta - tion
de - va - sta - tion
de - va - sta - tion
119
mp
We have fal - len
We have fal - len
We have fal - len
We have fal - len
ff


124
128
We have fal - len from si - lence.
We have fal - len from si - lence.
We have fal - len from si - lence.
We have fal - len from si - lence.
132
mp
mf


136
mf
Birds cir - cles of
mf
Birds cir - cles of
mf
Birds make great sky Birds make great cir - cles
mf
Birds make great sky Birds make great cir - cles
p
mp
pp
141
their free - - - dom and
their free - - - dom and
of their free - - - dom They fall, They
of their free - - - dom They fall, They
mp


146
fal - - - ling, they're gi - ven wings
fal - - - ling, they're gi - ven wings
fall, and fal - ling, gi - ven wings
fall, and fal - ling, gi - ven wings
pp
rubato
a tempo ♩ = 80
151
We have fal - len We have
We have fal - len We have
We have fal - len We have
We have fal - len We have
rubato
a tempo ♩ = 80
ff

155

fal - len

fal - len

fal - len

fal - len

pp

159

We have fal - len from si - lence.

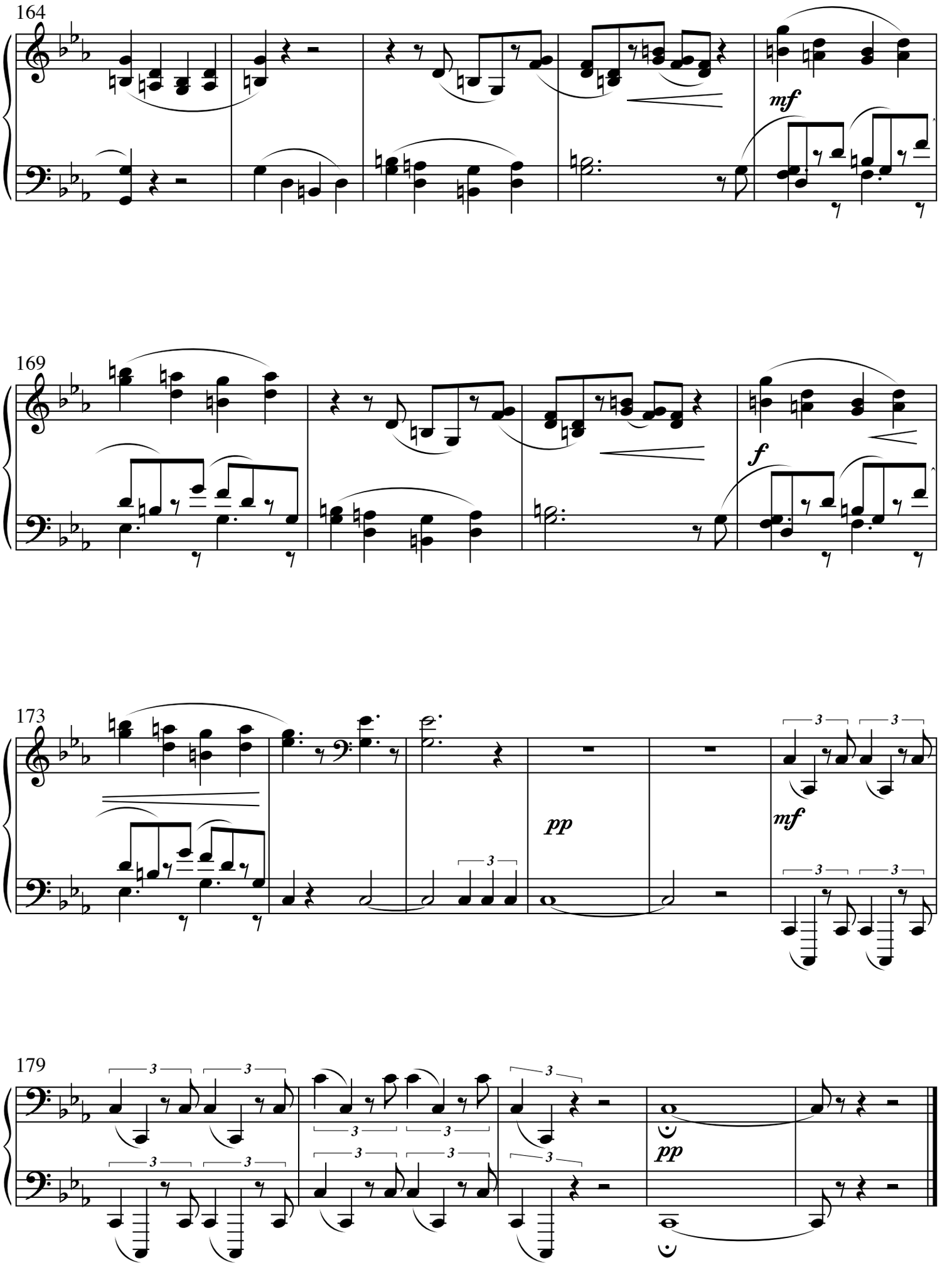
We have fal - len from si - lence.

We have fal - len from si - lence.

We have fal - len from si - lence.

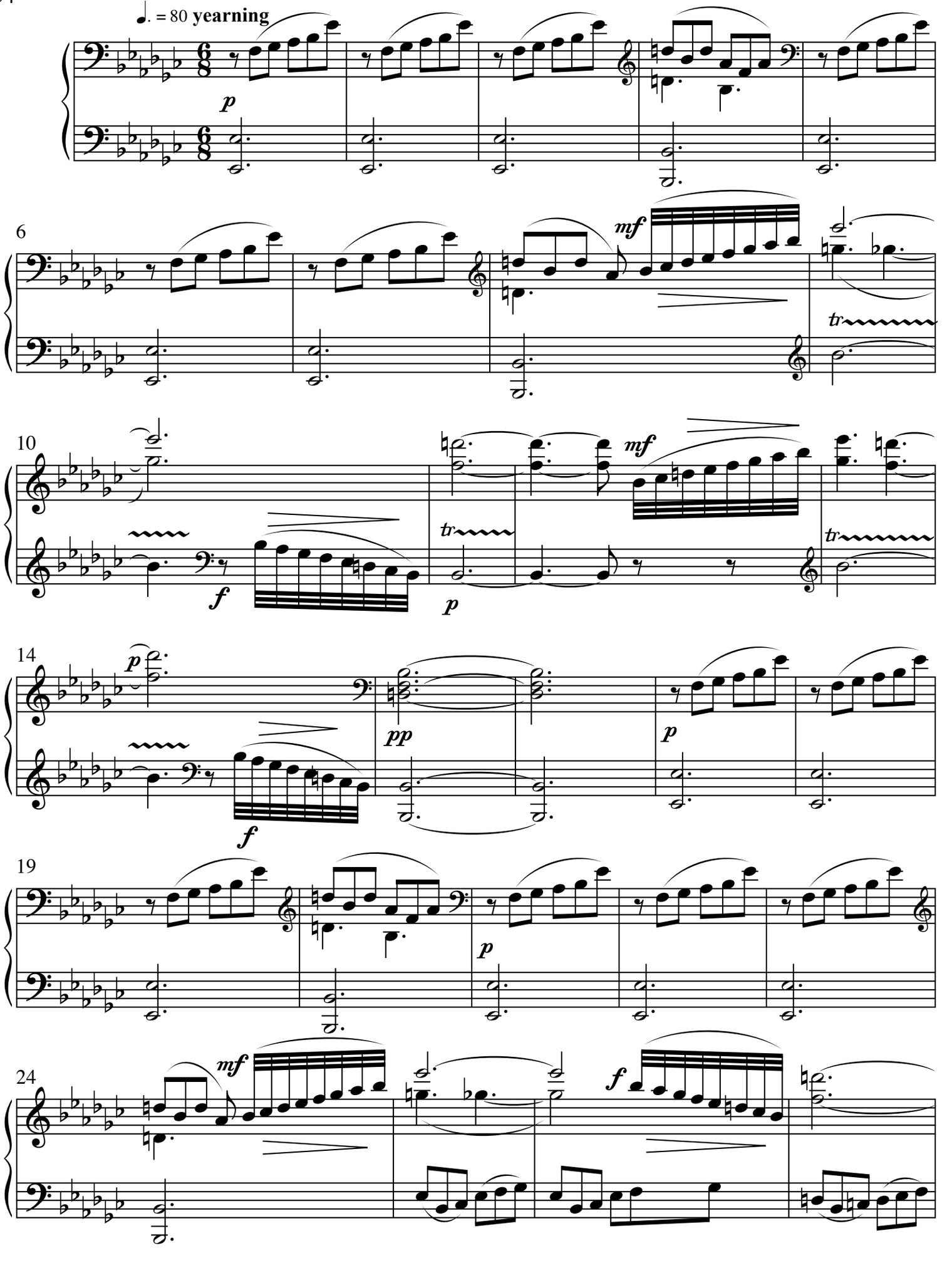
mf

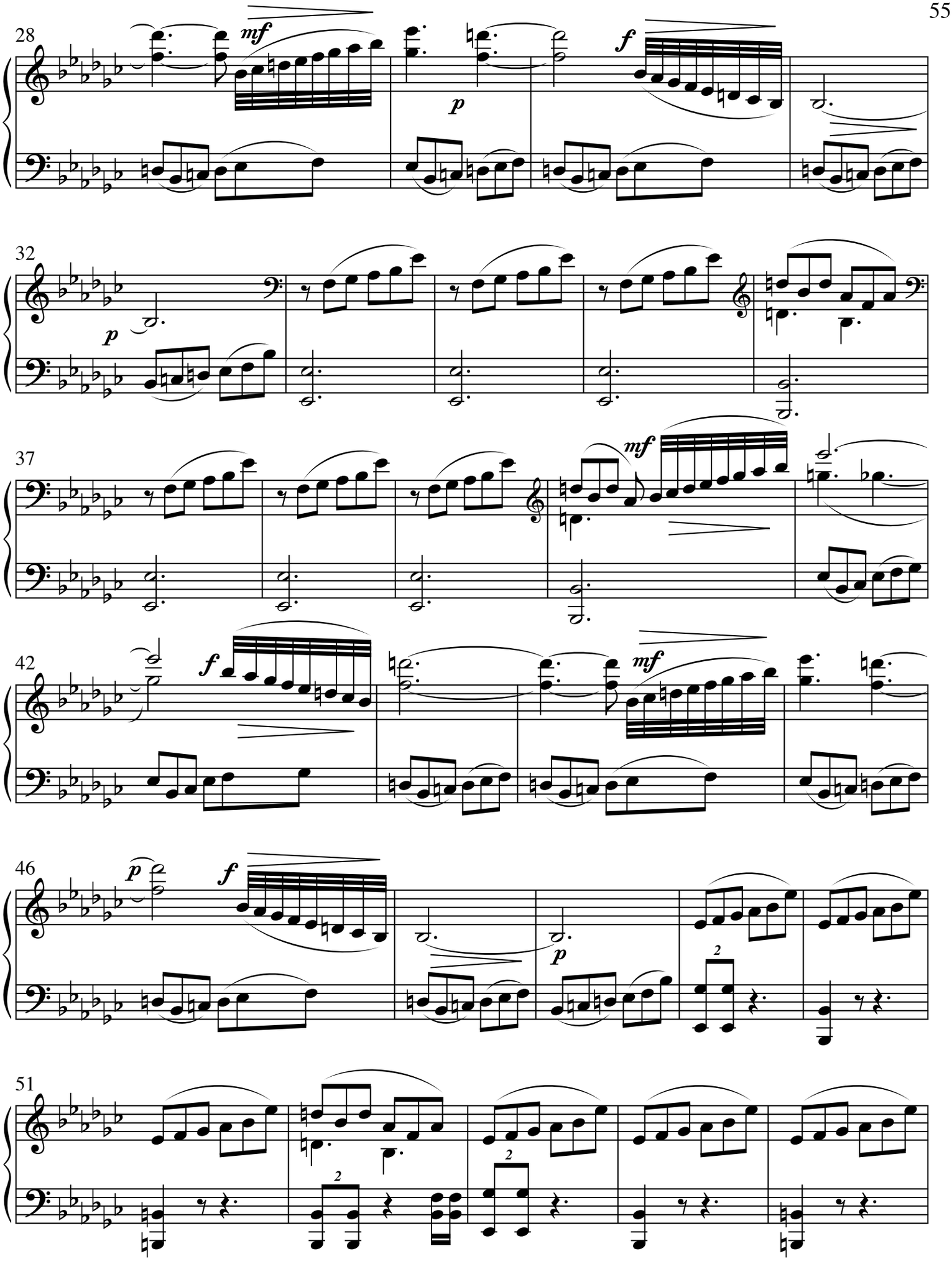
ff

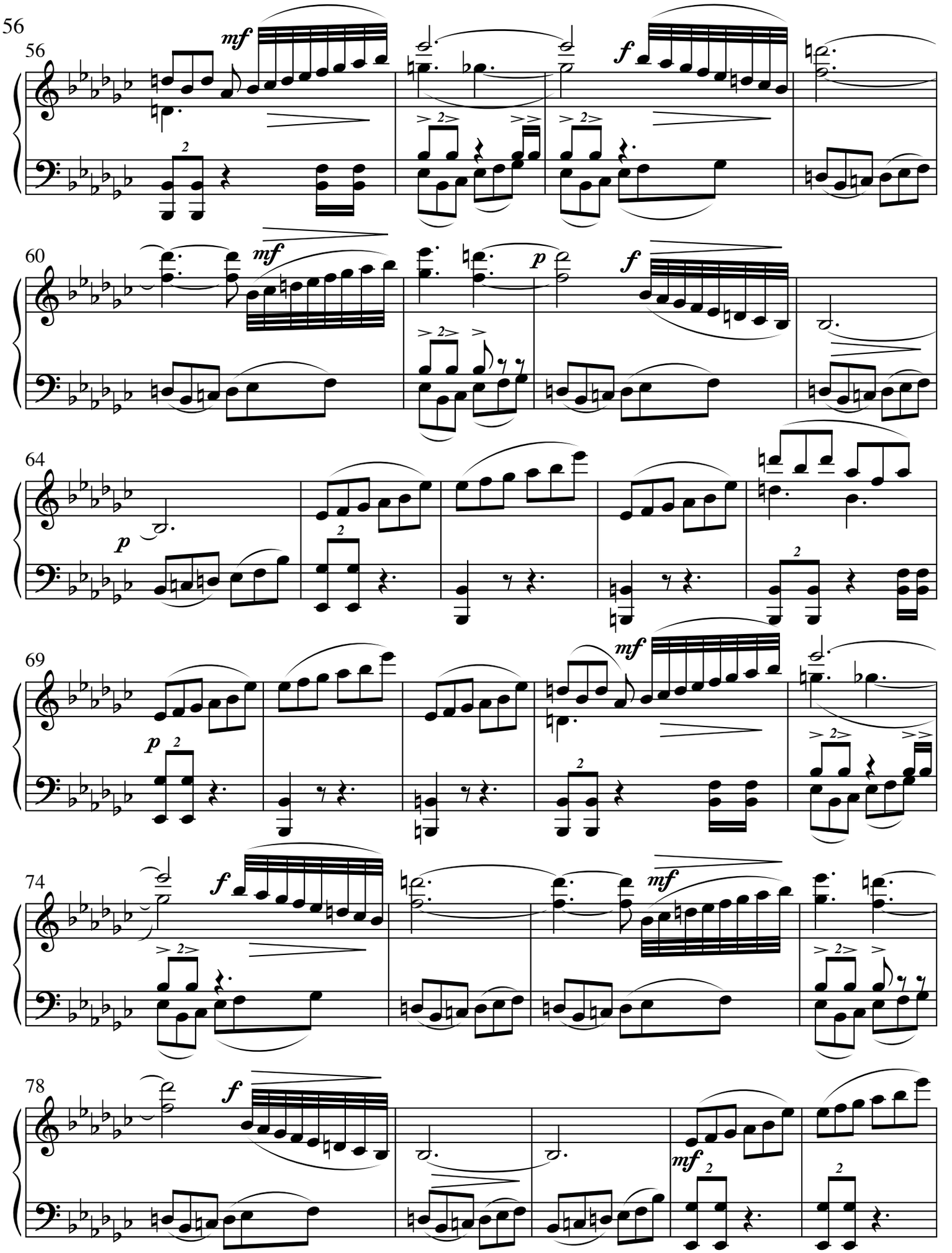

164
mf
169
f
173
pp
mf
179
pp

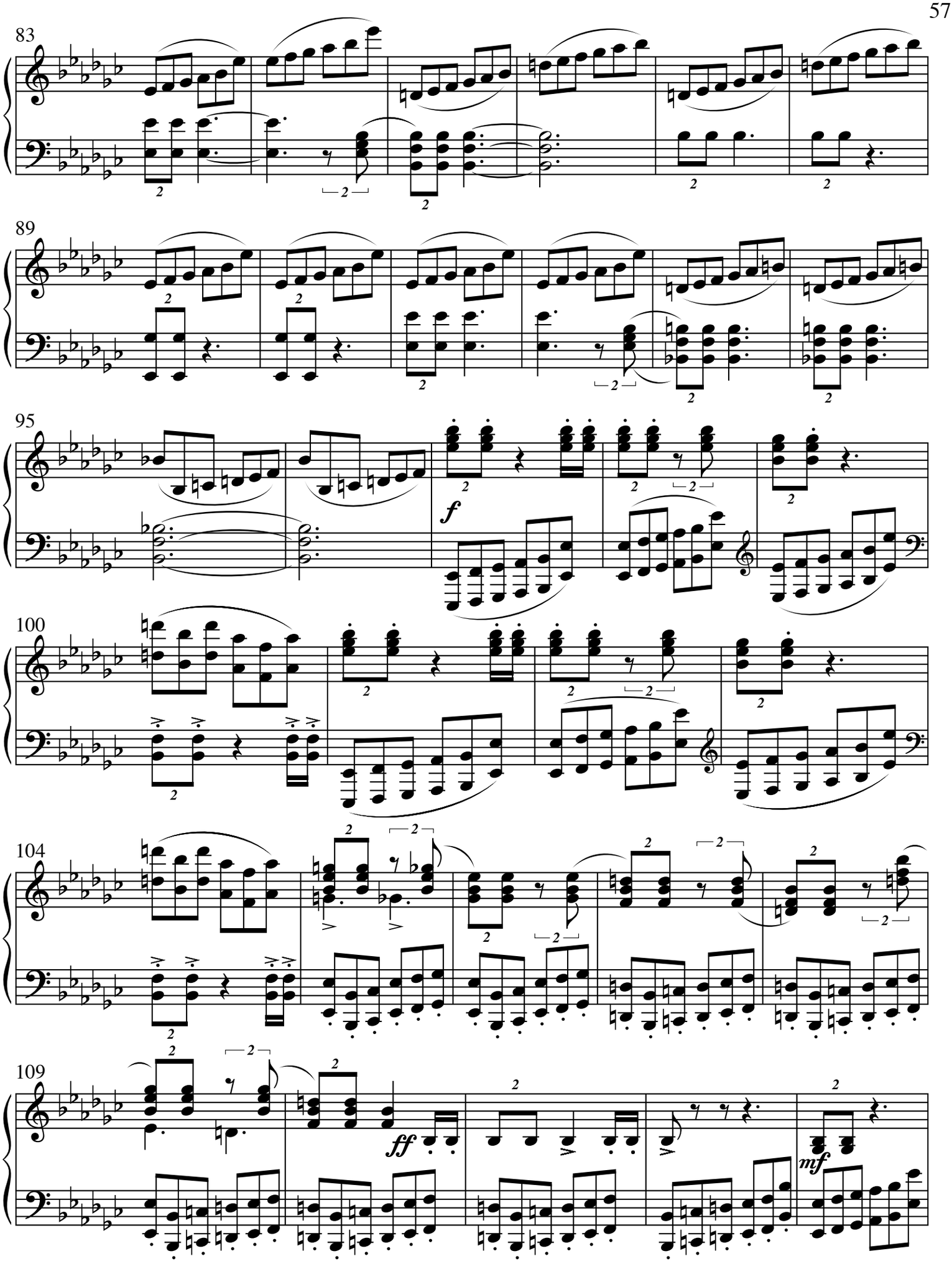
IV: Constant Conversation

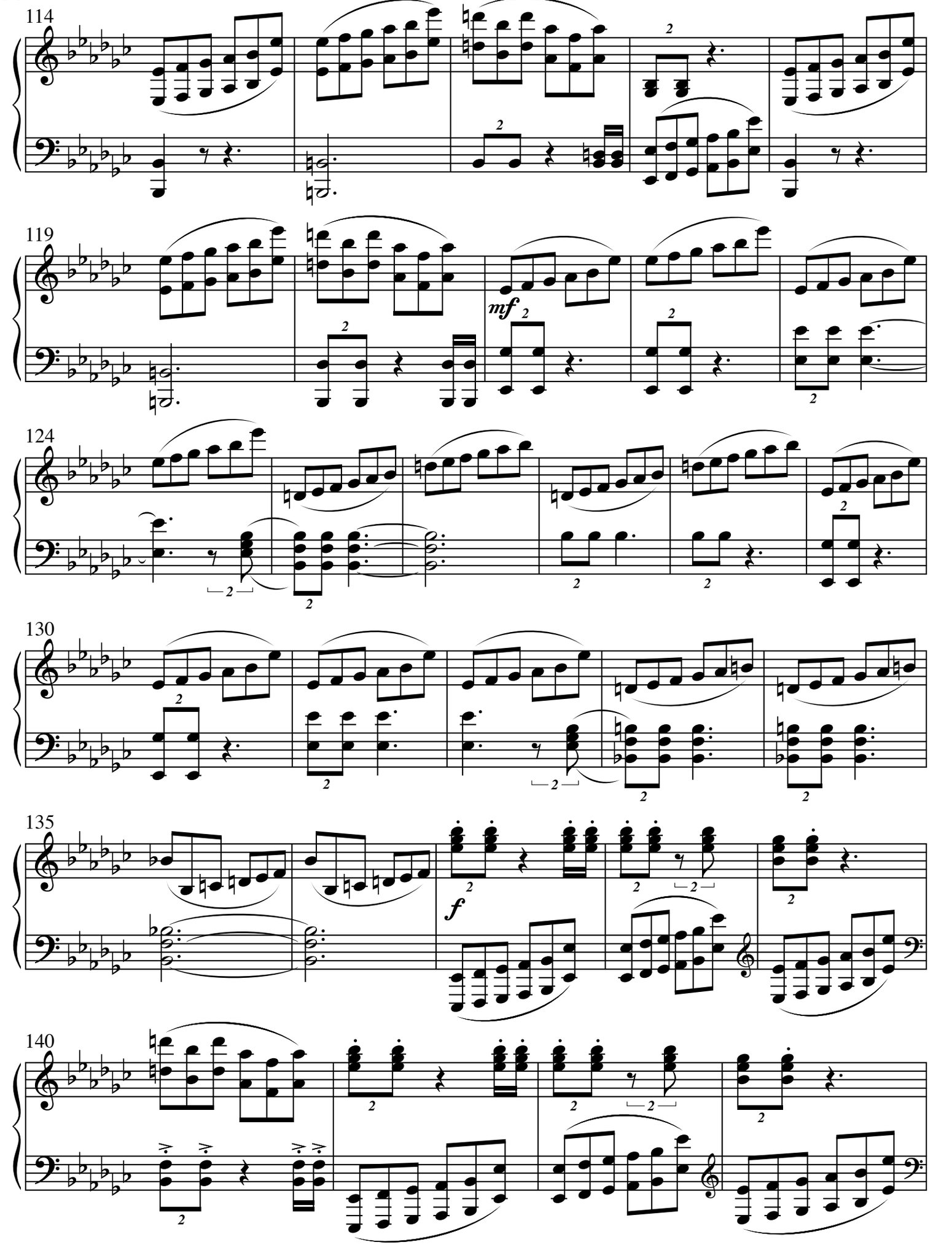
♩. = 80 **yearning**

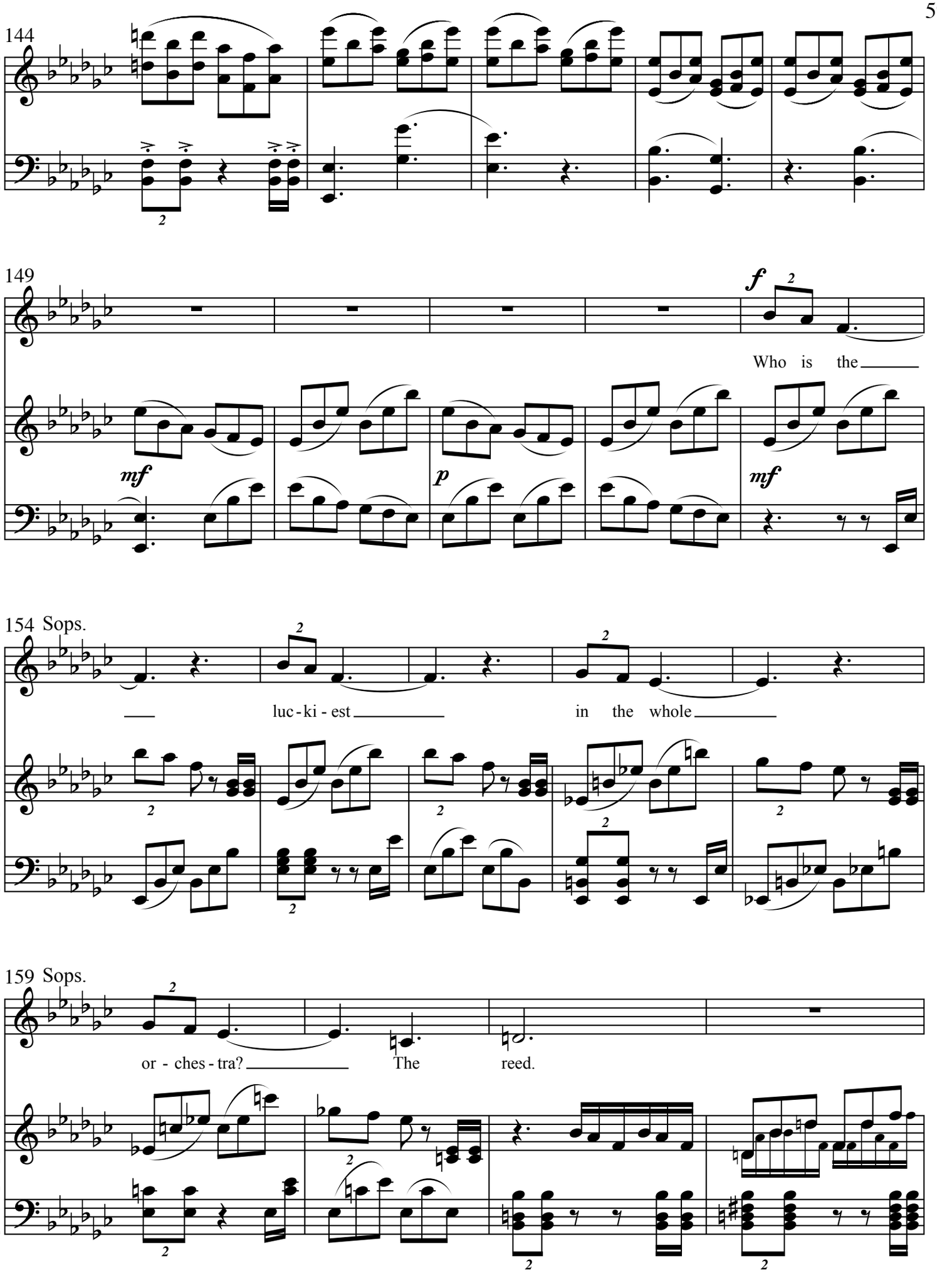


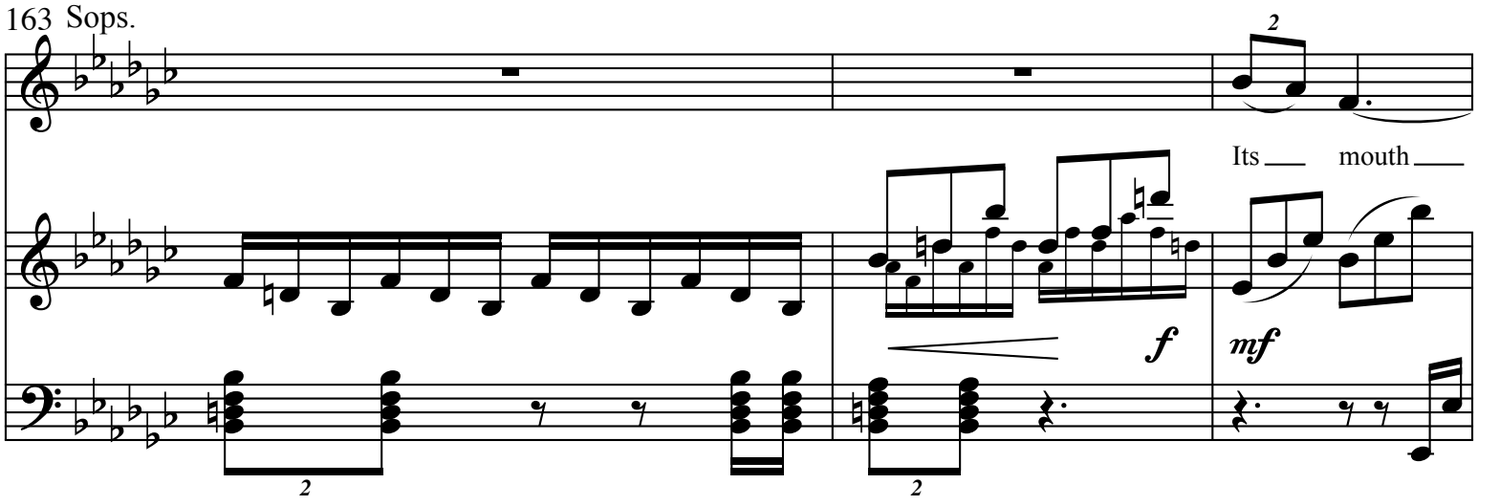

28
mf
p
f
32
p
37
mf
42
f
mf
46
p
f
p
2
51
2
2

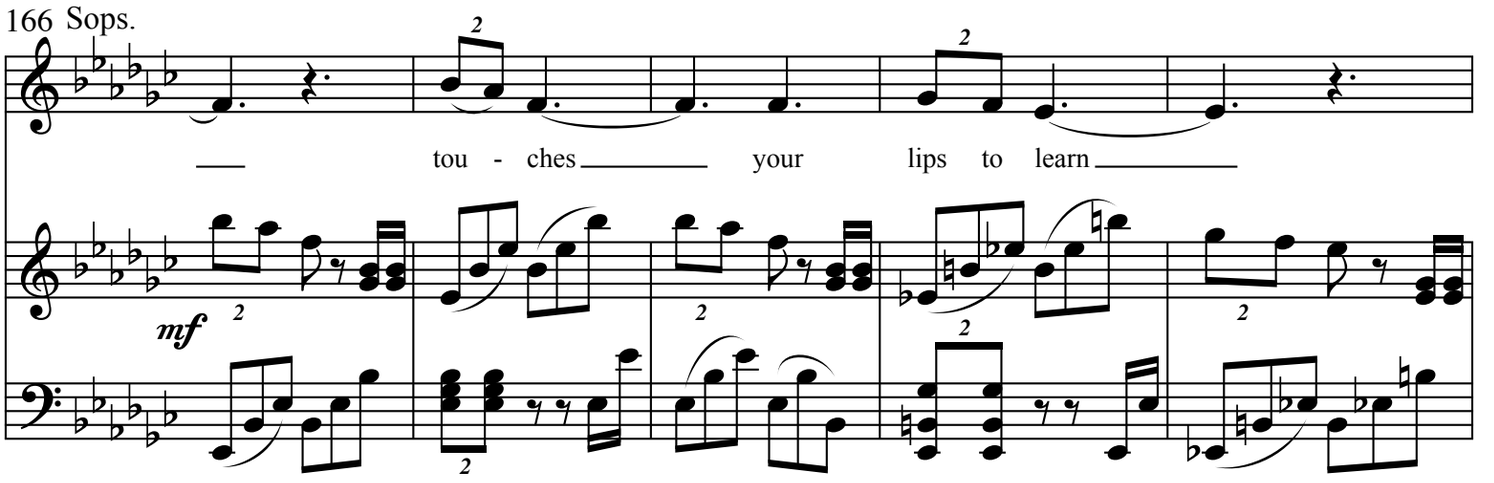

56
mf
f
60
mf
p
f
64
p
69
p
mf
74
f
mf
78
f
mf

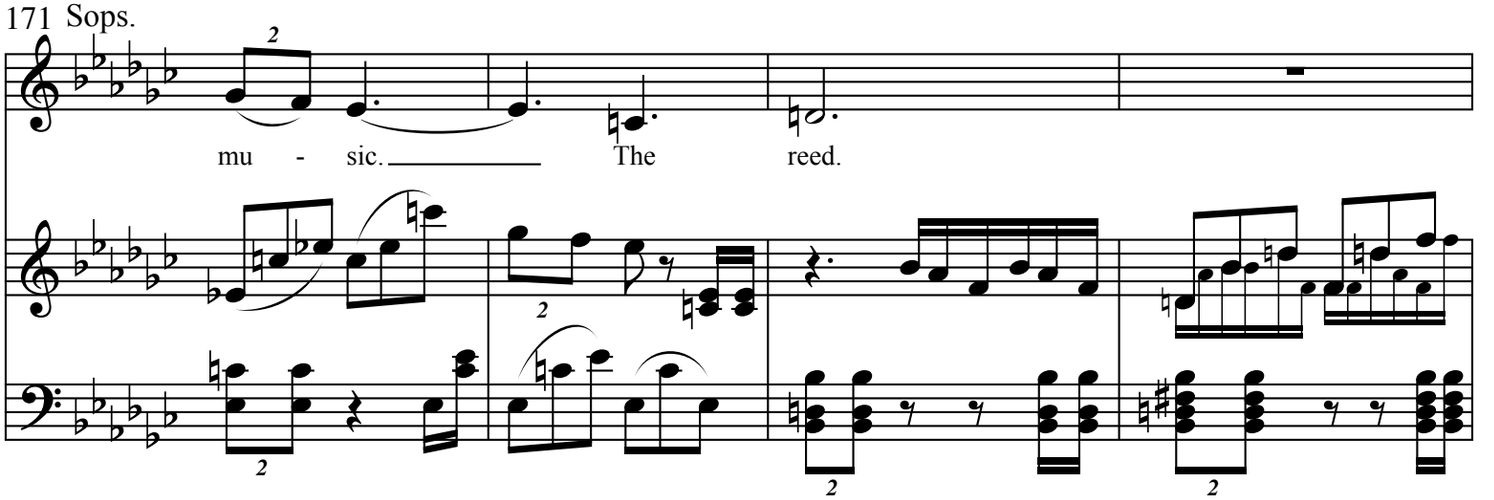

83
89
95
f
100
104
109
ff
mf

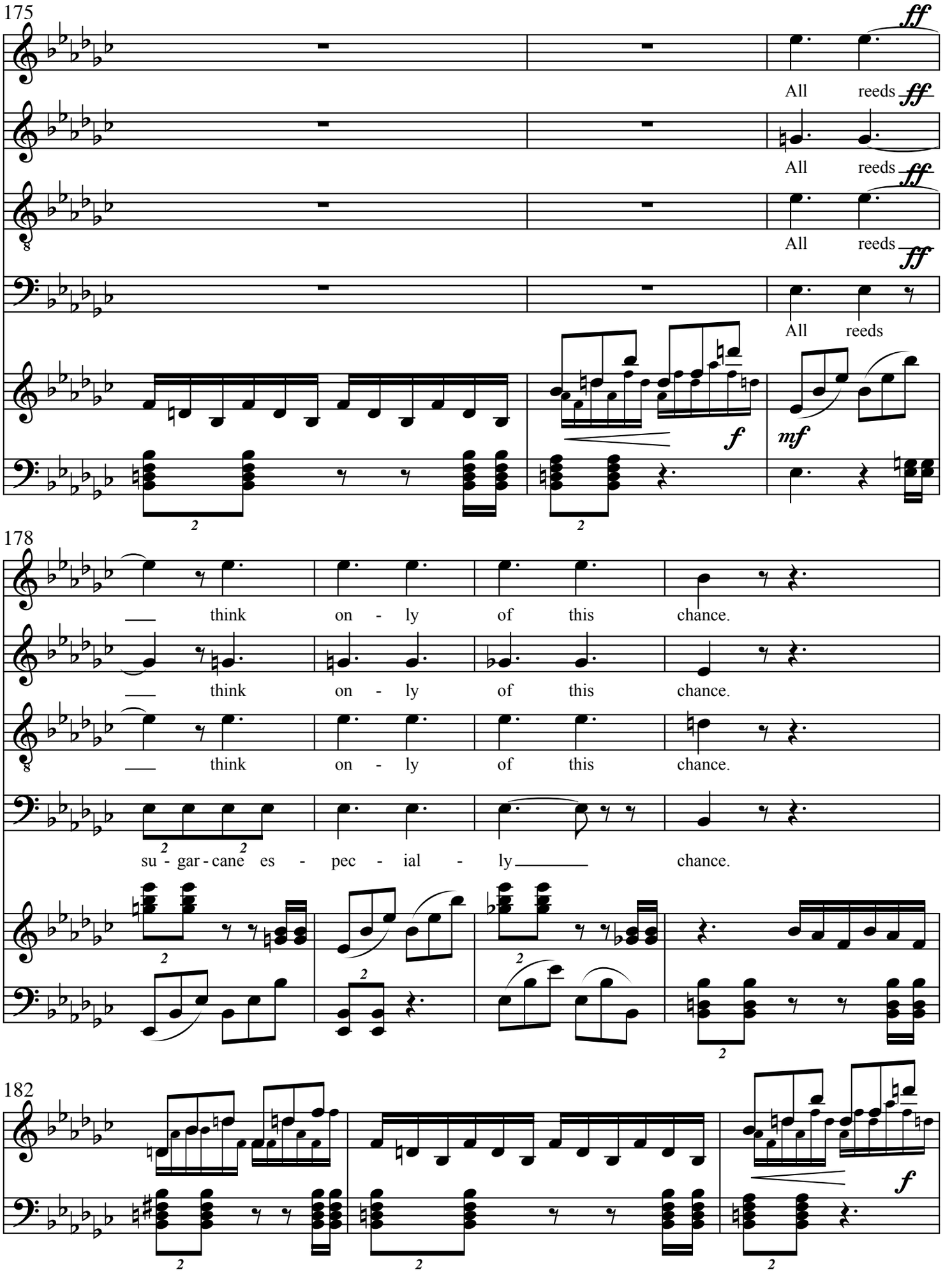

114
119
mf
124
130
135
f
140


144
149
Who is the
154 Sops.
luc - ki - est
in the whole
159 Sops.
or - ches - tra?
The
reed.


163 Sops.
Its mouth
f
mf


166 Sops.
tou - ches your lips to learn
mf


171 Sops.
mu - sic. The reed.


175
ff
All reeds
ff
All reeds
ff
All reeds
ff
All reeds
f
mf
178
think on - ly of this chance.
think on - ly of this chance.
think on - ly of this chance.
su - gar - cane es - pec - ial - ly chance.
182
f

185

They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the ma - ny ways they

They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the ma - ny ways they

They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the ma - ny ways they

They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the ma - ny ways they

mf

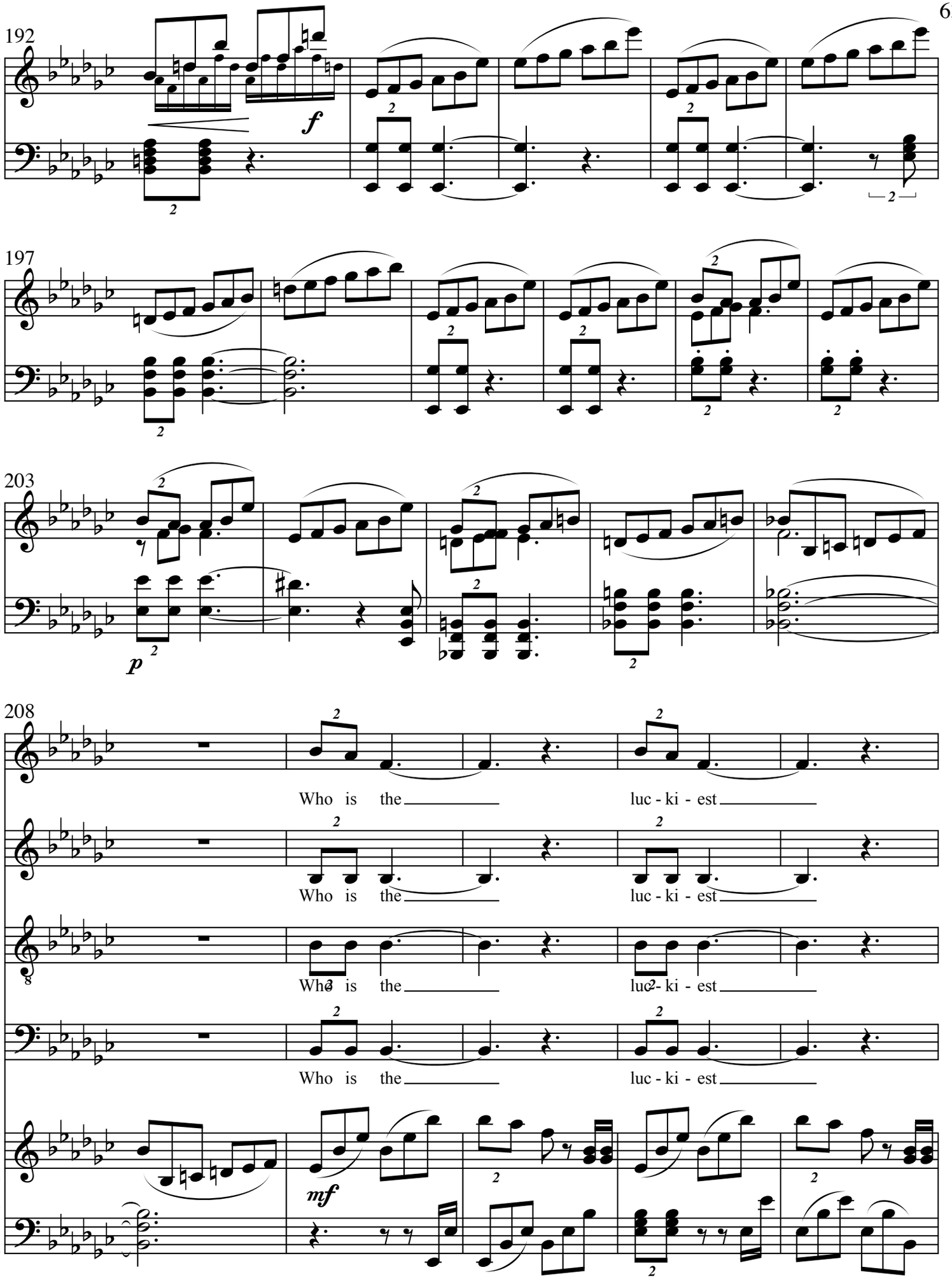
189

dance.

dance.

dance.

dance.


192
f
197
203
p
208
Who is the luc - ki - est
Who is the luc - ki - est
Who is the luc - ki - est
Who is the luc - ki - est
mf

213

in the whole or - ches - tra? The

in the whole or - ches - tra? The

in the whole or - ches - tra? The

in the whole or - ches - tra? The

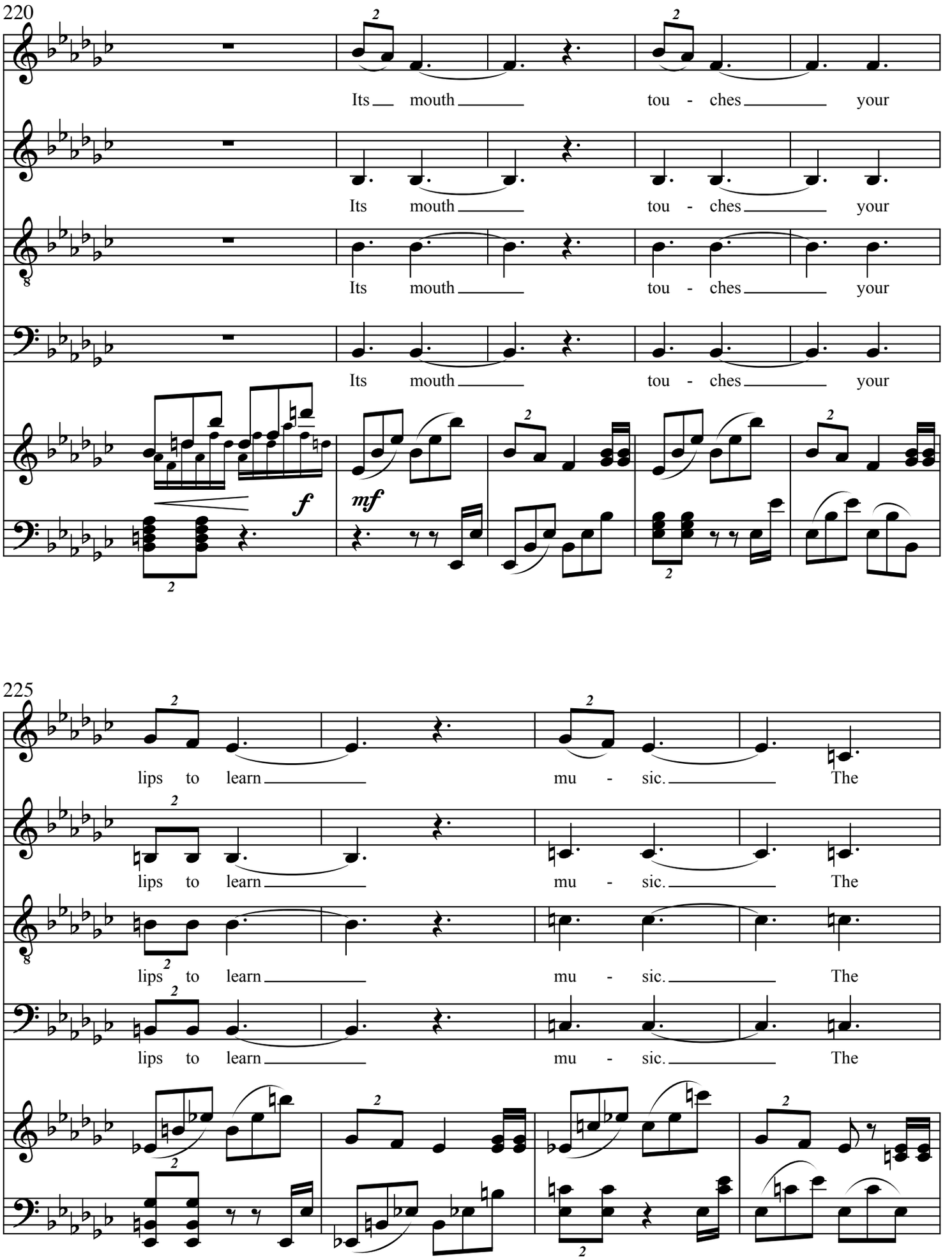
217

reed.

reed.

reed.

reed.


220
Its mouth tou - ches your
Its mouth tou - ches your
Its mouth tou - ches your
Its mouth tou - ches your
f
mf
225
lips to learn mu - sic. The
lips to learn mu - sic. The
lips to learn mu - sic. The
lips to learn mu - sic. The

229

reed.

reed.

reed.

reed.

232

All reeds think on - ly of this

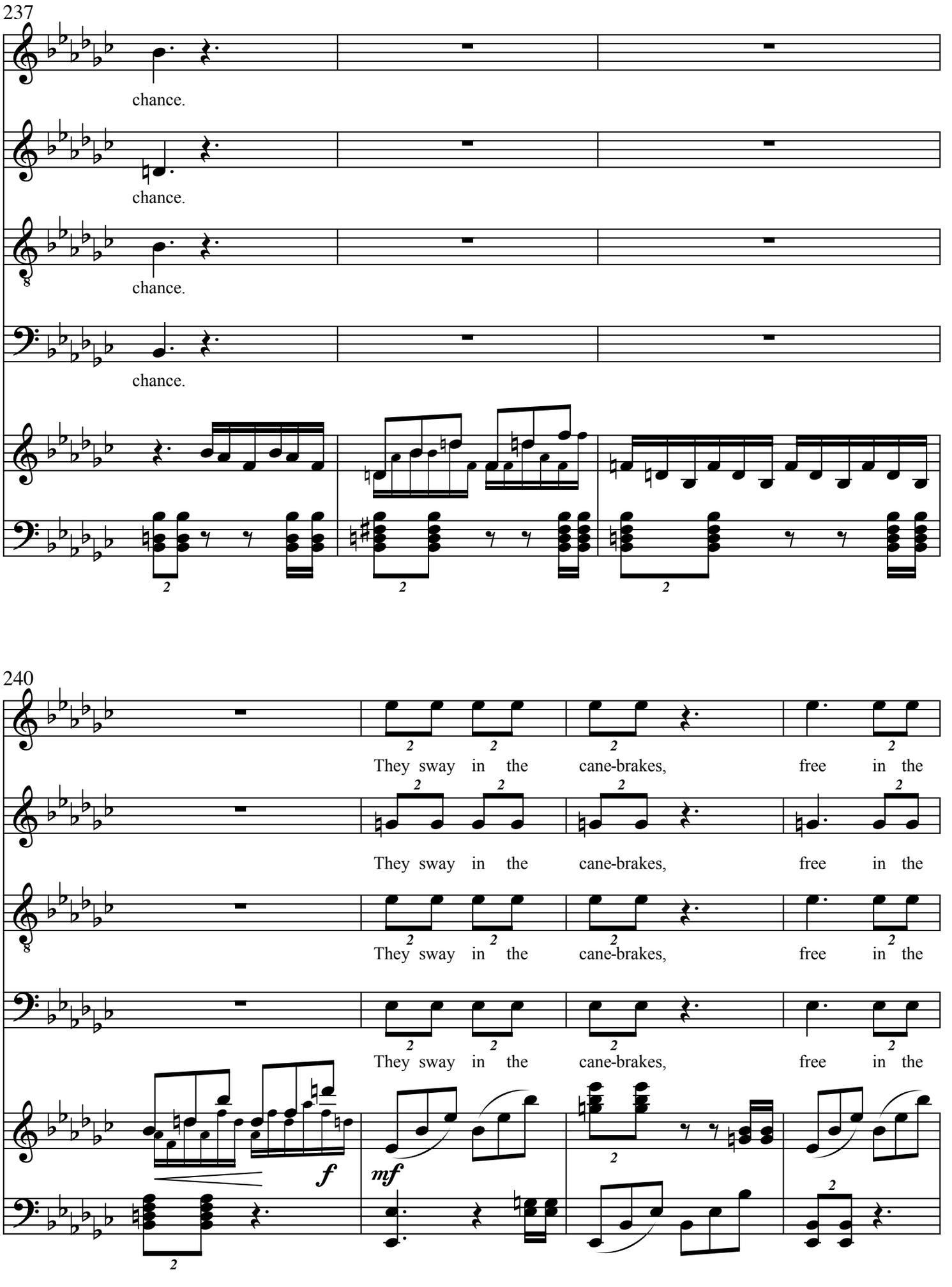
All reeds think on - ly of this

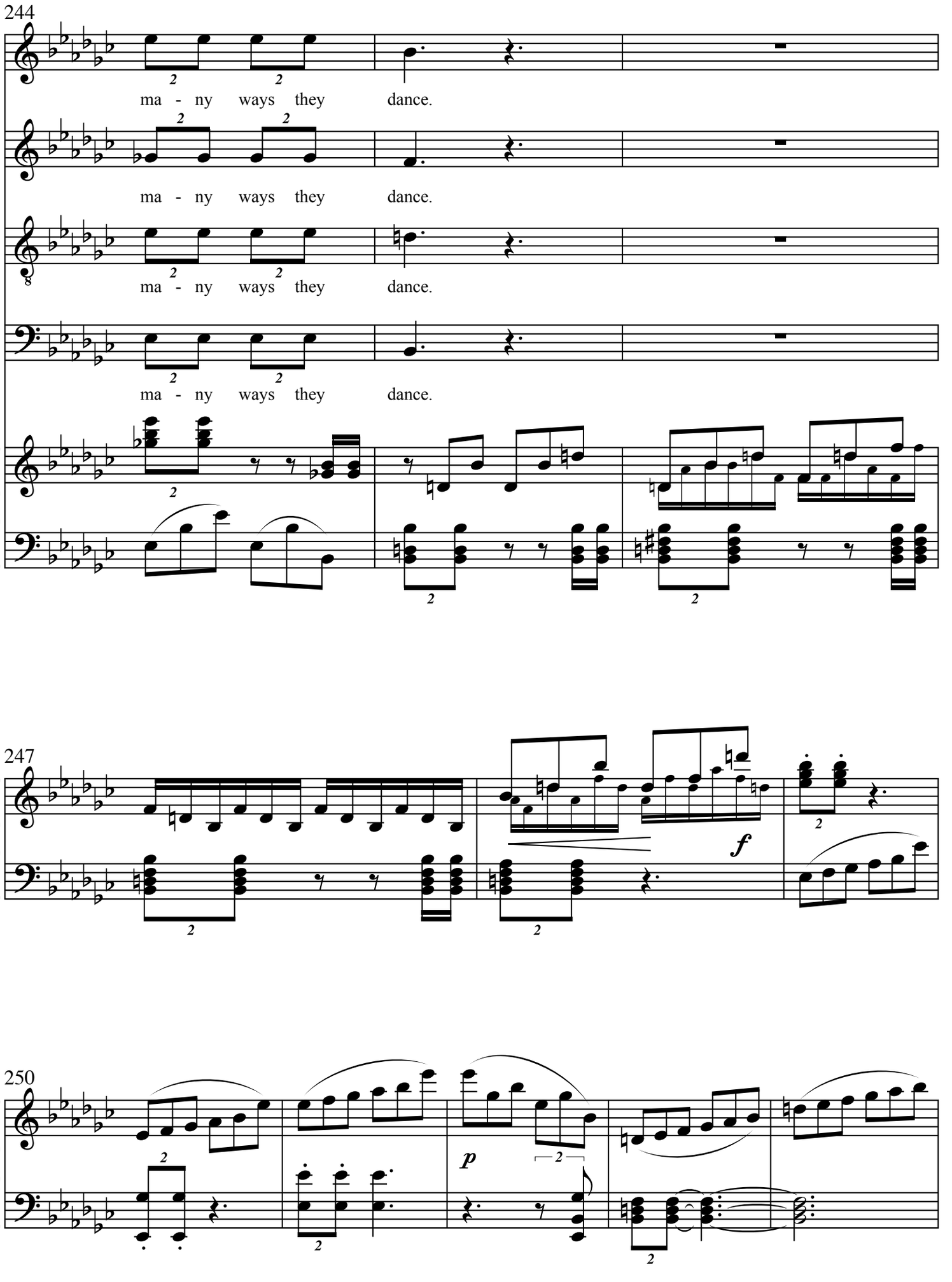
All reeds think on - ly of this

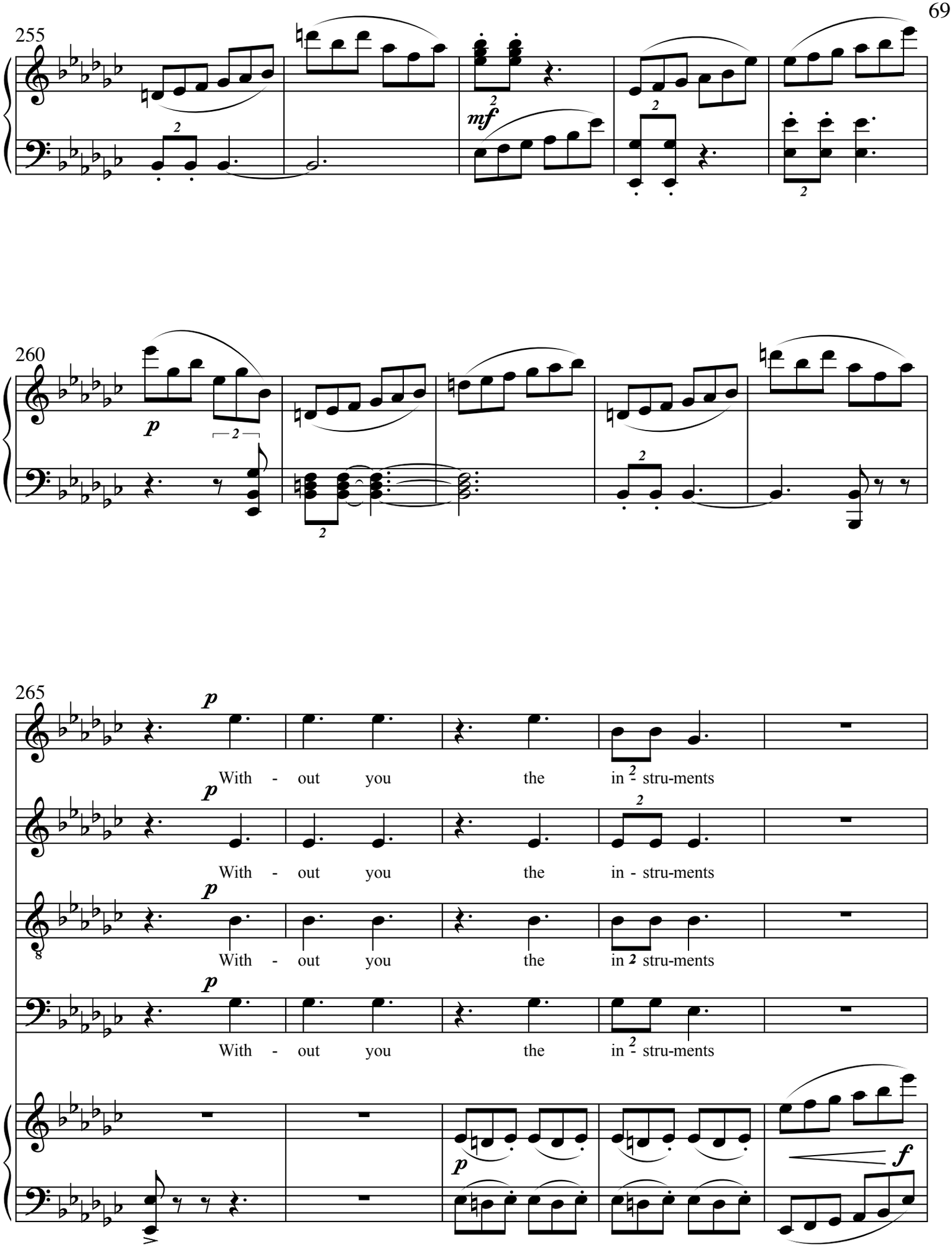
All reeds su - gar-cane es - pec - ial - ly

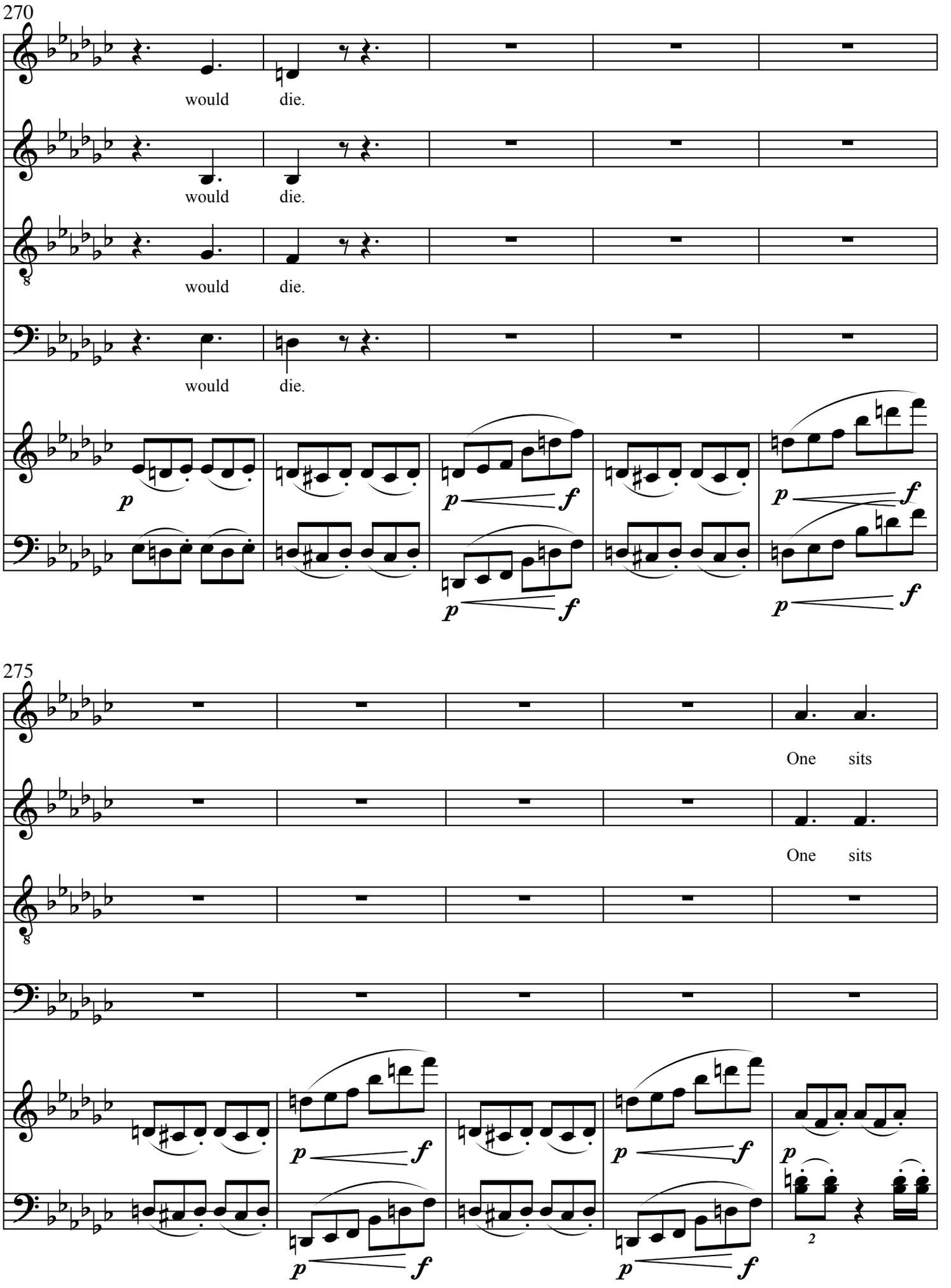
f

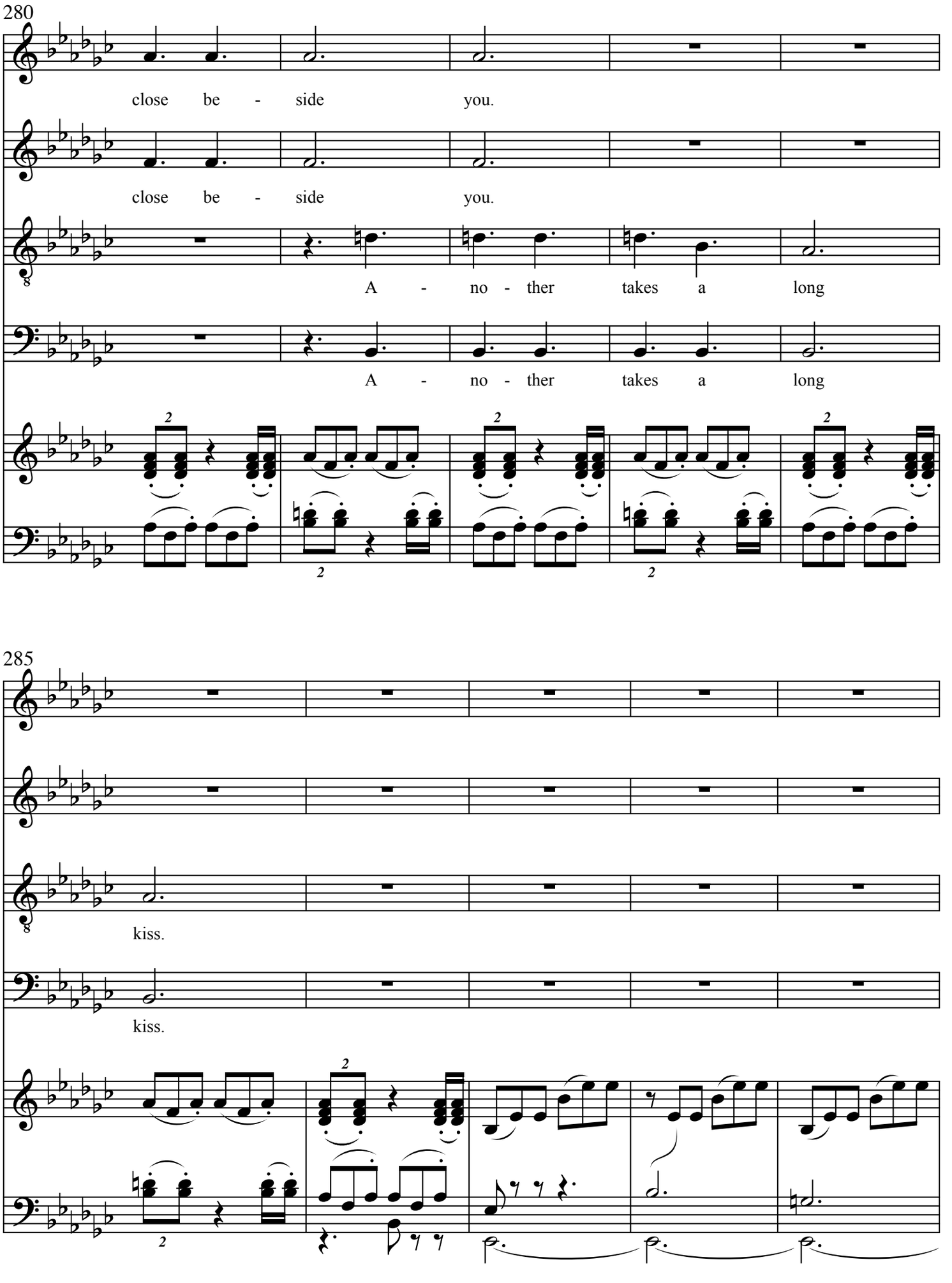
mf


237
chance.
chance.
chance.
chance.
240
They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the
They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the
They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the
They sway in the cane-brakes, free in the
f
mf


244
ma - ny ways they dance.
ma - ny ways they dance.
ma - ny ways they dance.
ma - ny ways they dance.
247
f
250
p


255
mf
260
p
265
p
With - out you the in - stru-ments
p
With - out you the in - stru-ments
p
With - out you the in - stru-ments
p
With - out you the in - stru-ments
p
f


270
would die.
would die.
would die.
would die.
p f
p f
p f
275
One sits
One sits
p f
p f
p f
2


280
close be - side you.
close be - side you.
A - no - ther takes a long
A - no - ther takes a long
285
kiss.
kiss.

290

The tam - bou - rine begs,

The tam - bou - rine begs,

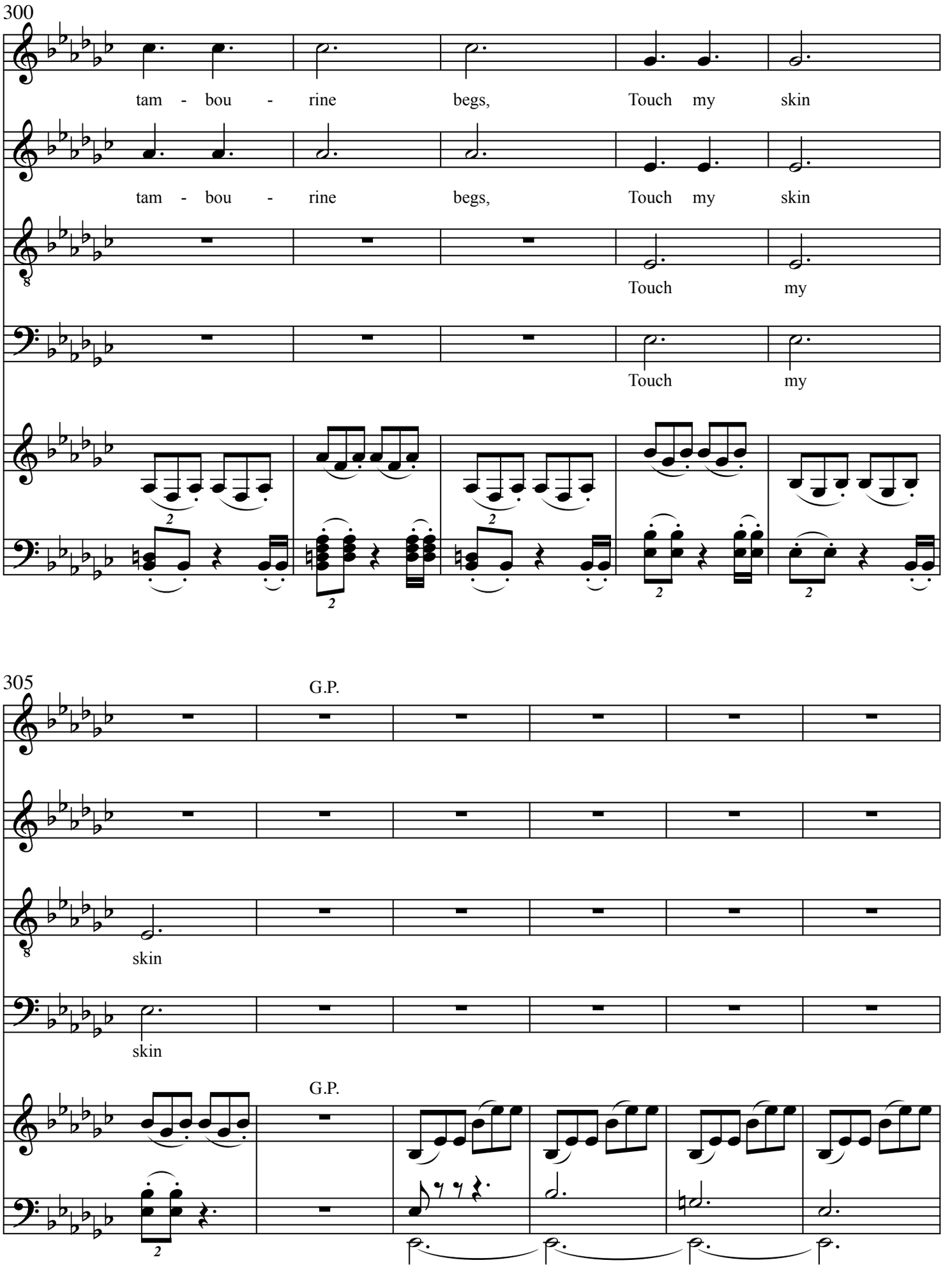
295

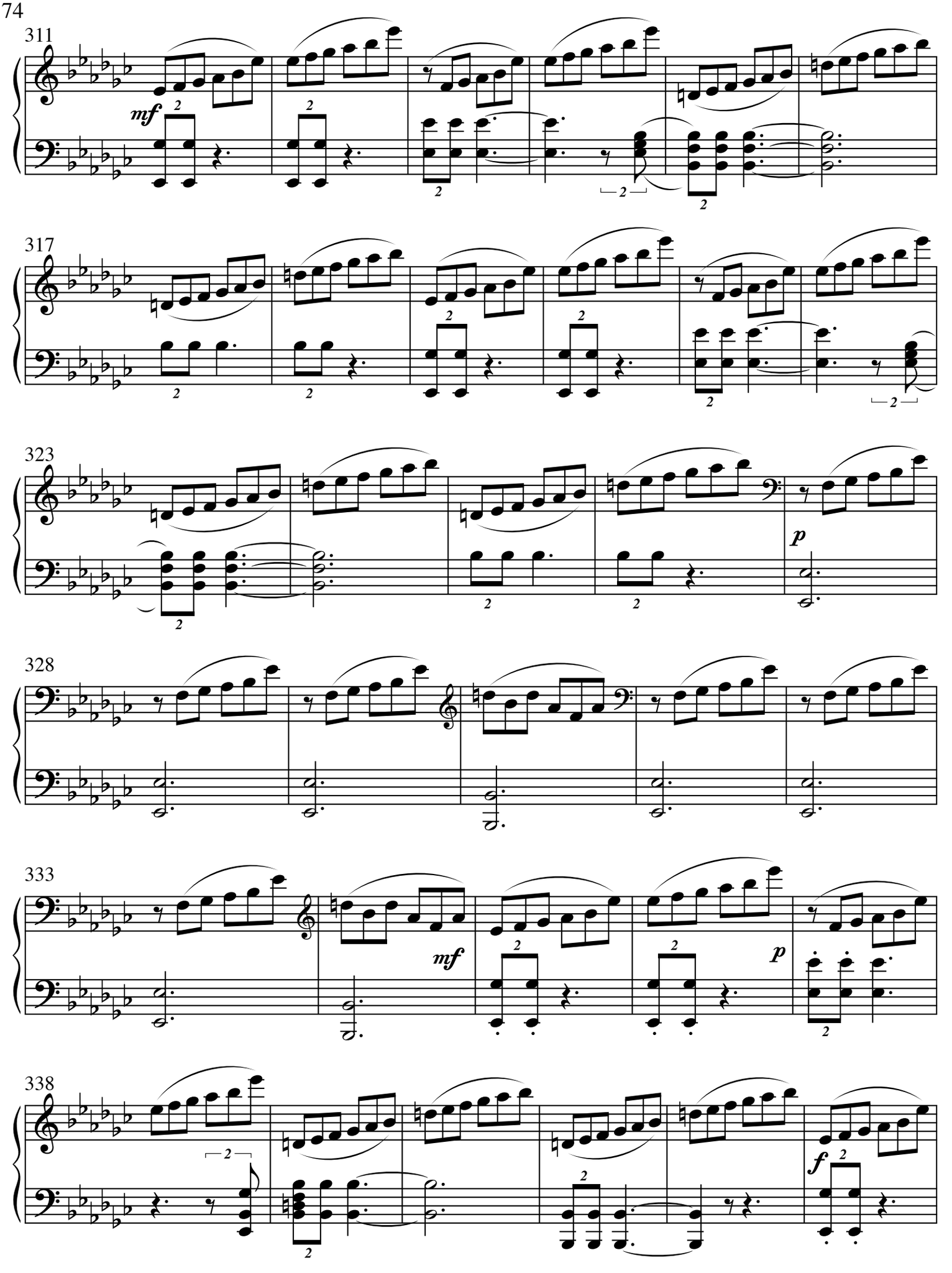
Touch my skin The

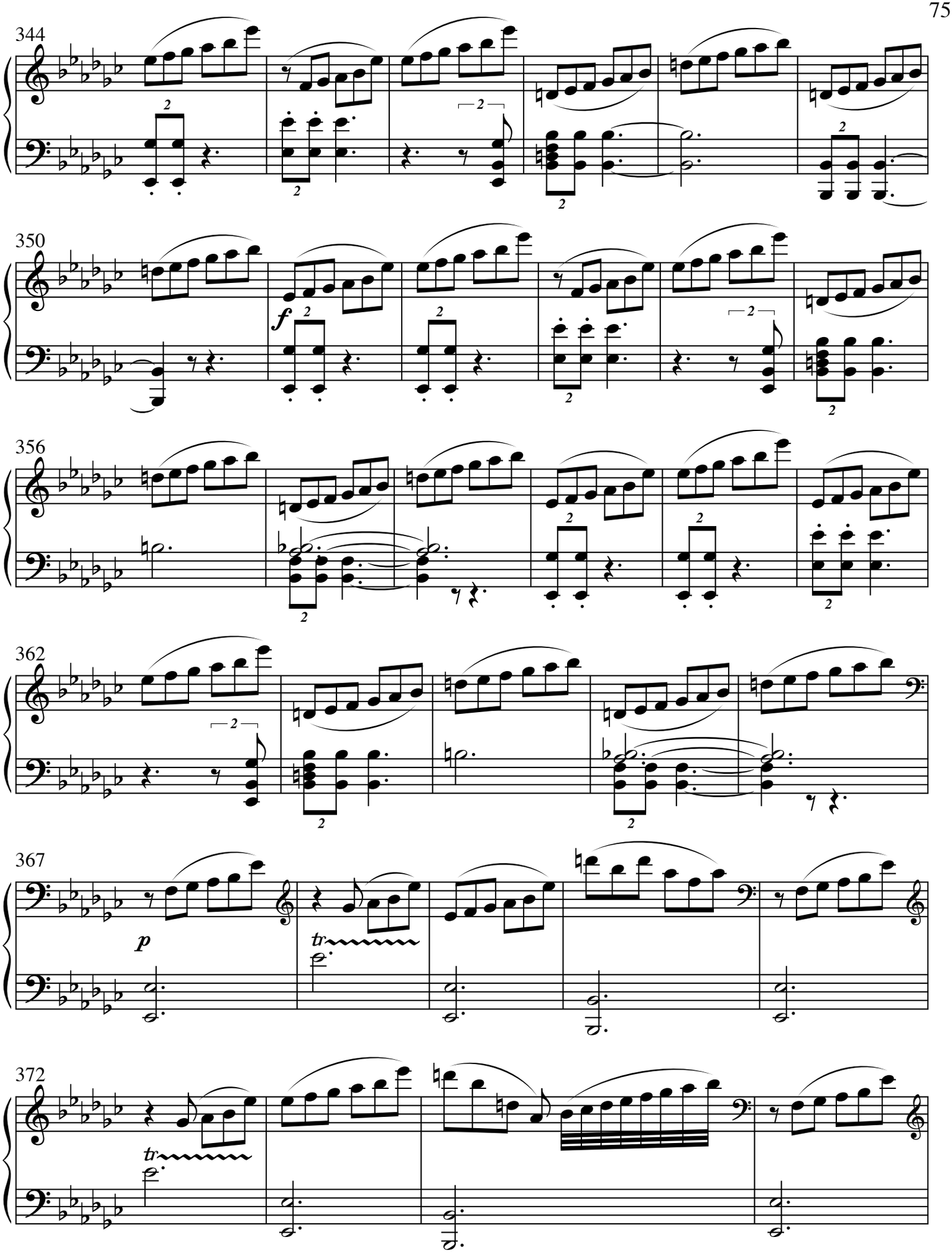
Touch my skin The

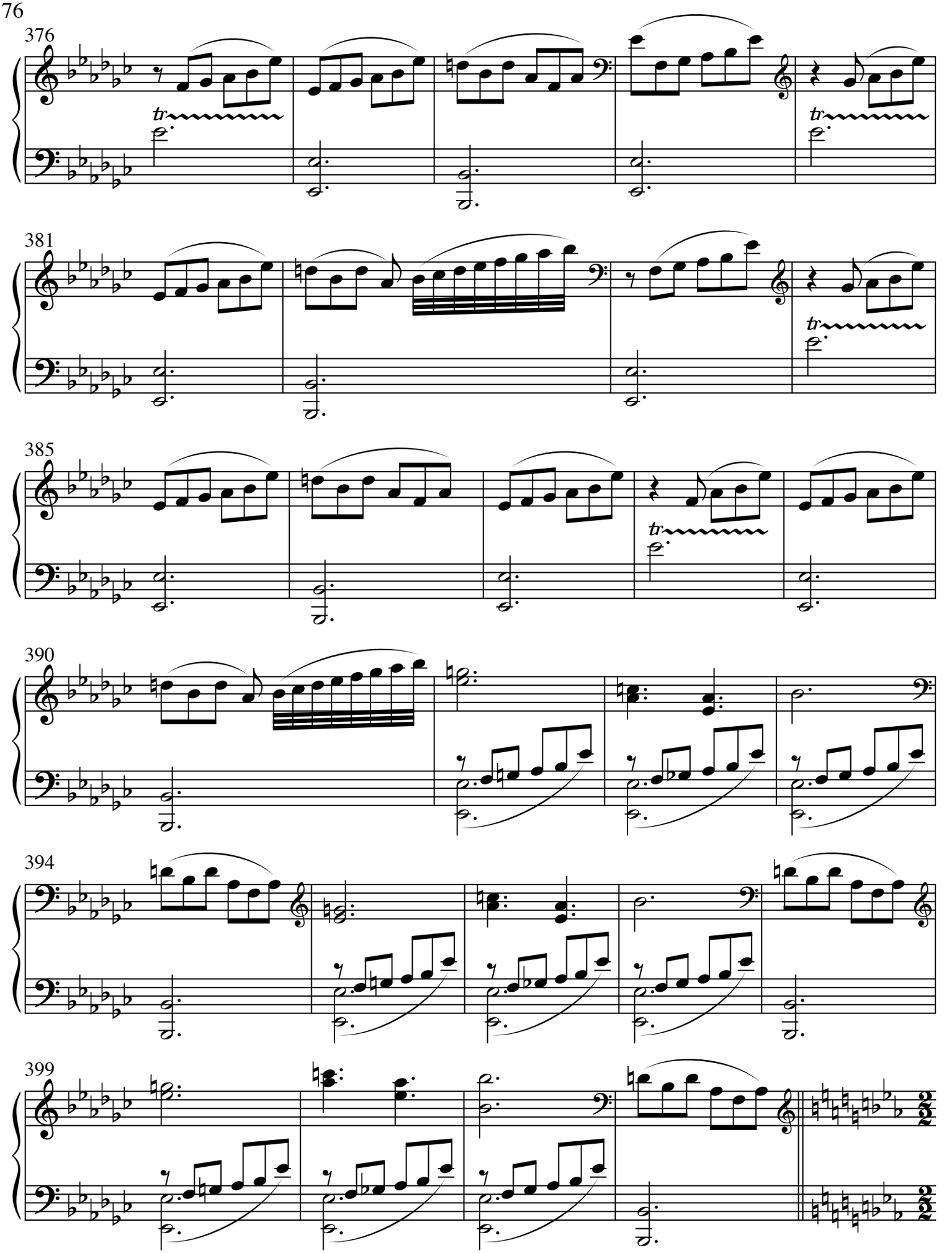
so I can be my - self

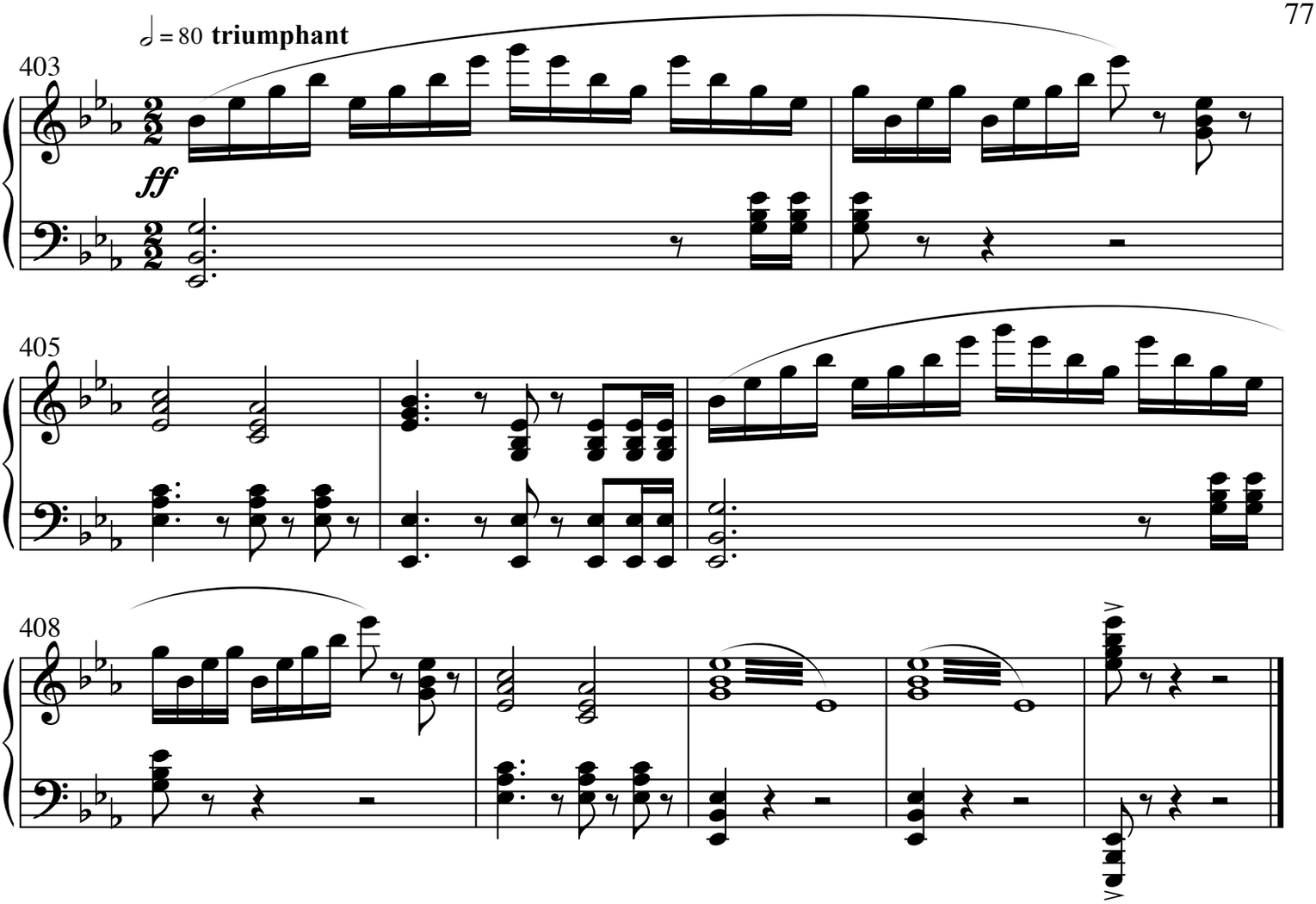
so I can be my - self


300
tam - bou - rine begs, Touch my skin
tam - bou - rine begs, Touch my skin
Touch my
Touch my
305
G.P.
skin
skin
G.P.


311
mf
317
323
p
328
333
mf
p
338
f


344
350
356
362
367
372


376
381
385
390
394
399


♩ = 80 triumphant
403
ff
405
408