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PORTFOLIO OF COMPOSITIONS

VOLUME 2 OF 2

IVAN-ALEXANDER MCKAY

(STUDENT ID: xxxxxxxx)

M.A.

SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MRES

SCHOOL OF CULTURE & CREATIVE ARTS

COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

MAY 2024

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Polar Counterpoint

Behind the Stars

Sandleford

20 December 2022

Toil & Tribulation

SATB chorus a cappella

2022

with words of
Sir Douglas Mawson

6 mins 30 secs (approx.)

Sir Douglas Mawson, in *The Home of the Blizzard*:

My strength was fast ebbing; in a few minutes it would be too late. It was the occasion for a supreme attempt. New power seemed to come as I addressed myself to one last tremendous effort. This time I emerged feet first and pushed myself out of the snow, on solid ground.

Then the rocks around Winter Quarters began to come into view, and lo! there were human figures! They almost seemed unreal. One of them saw me and waved an arm. I replied. There was a commotion. A terrible chapter in my life was over! The journey was at an end.

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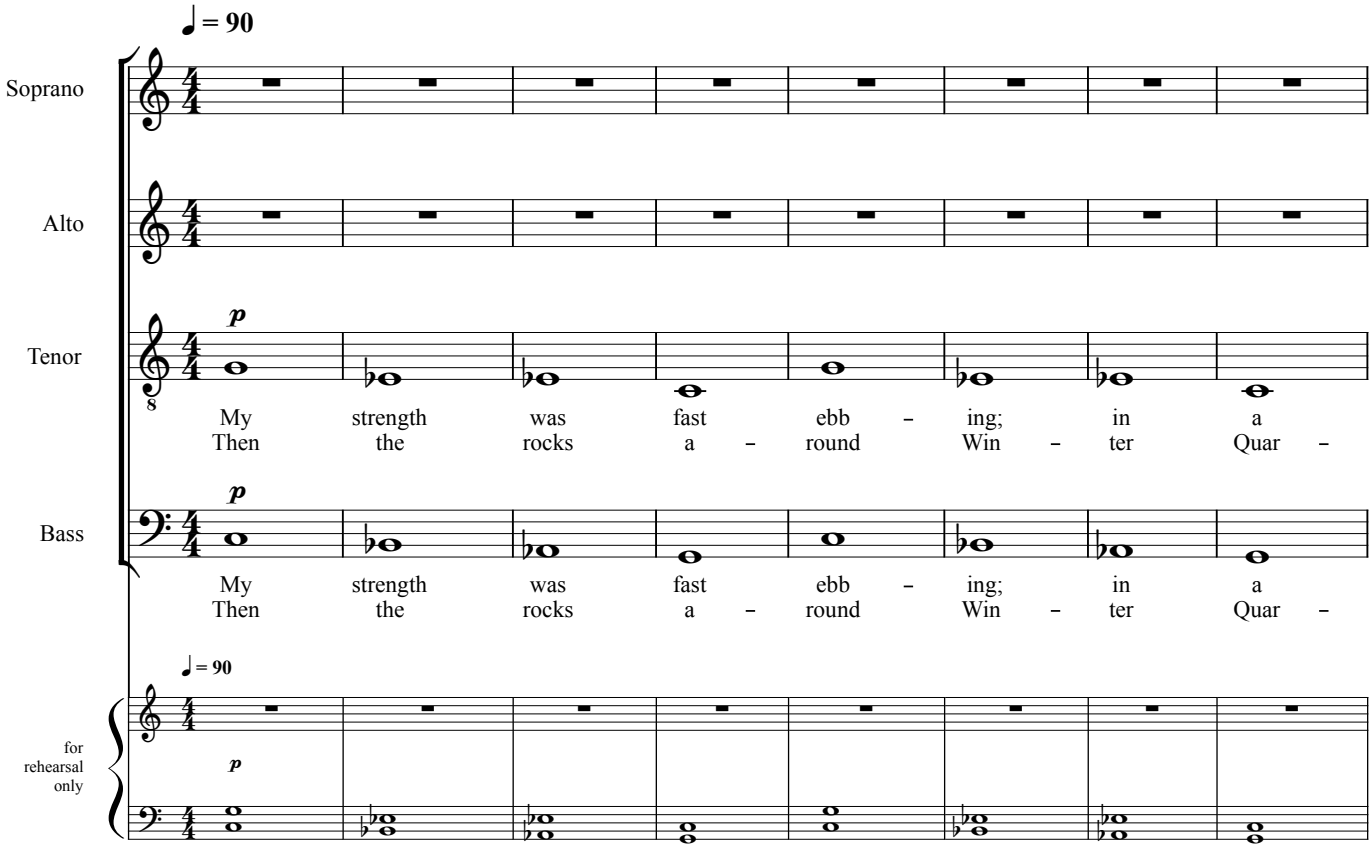
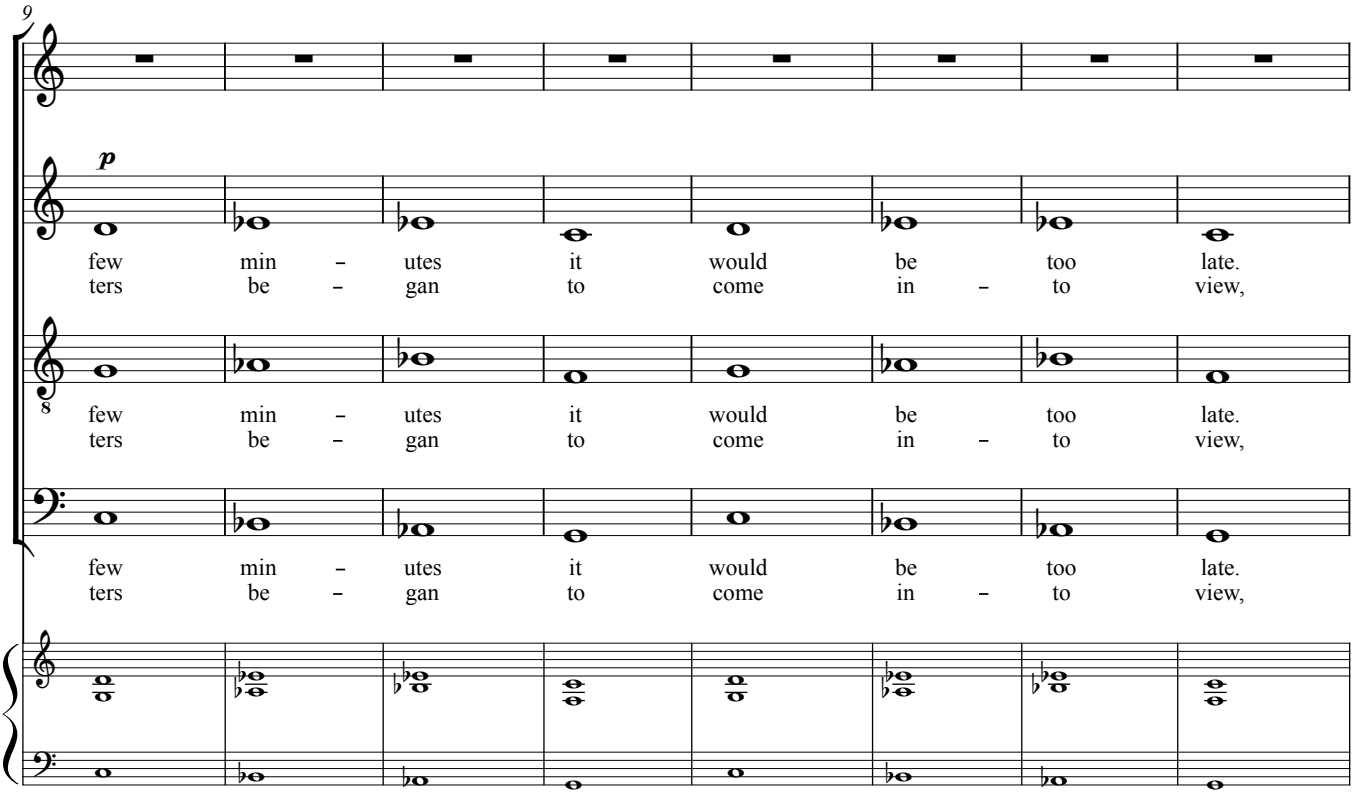
Toil & Tribulation

SIR DOUGLAS MAWSON





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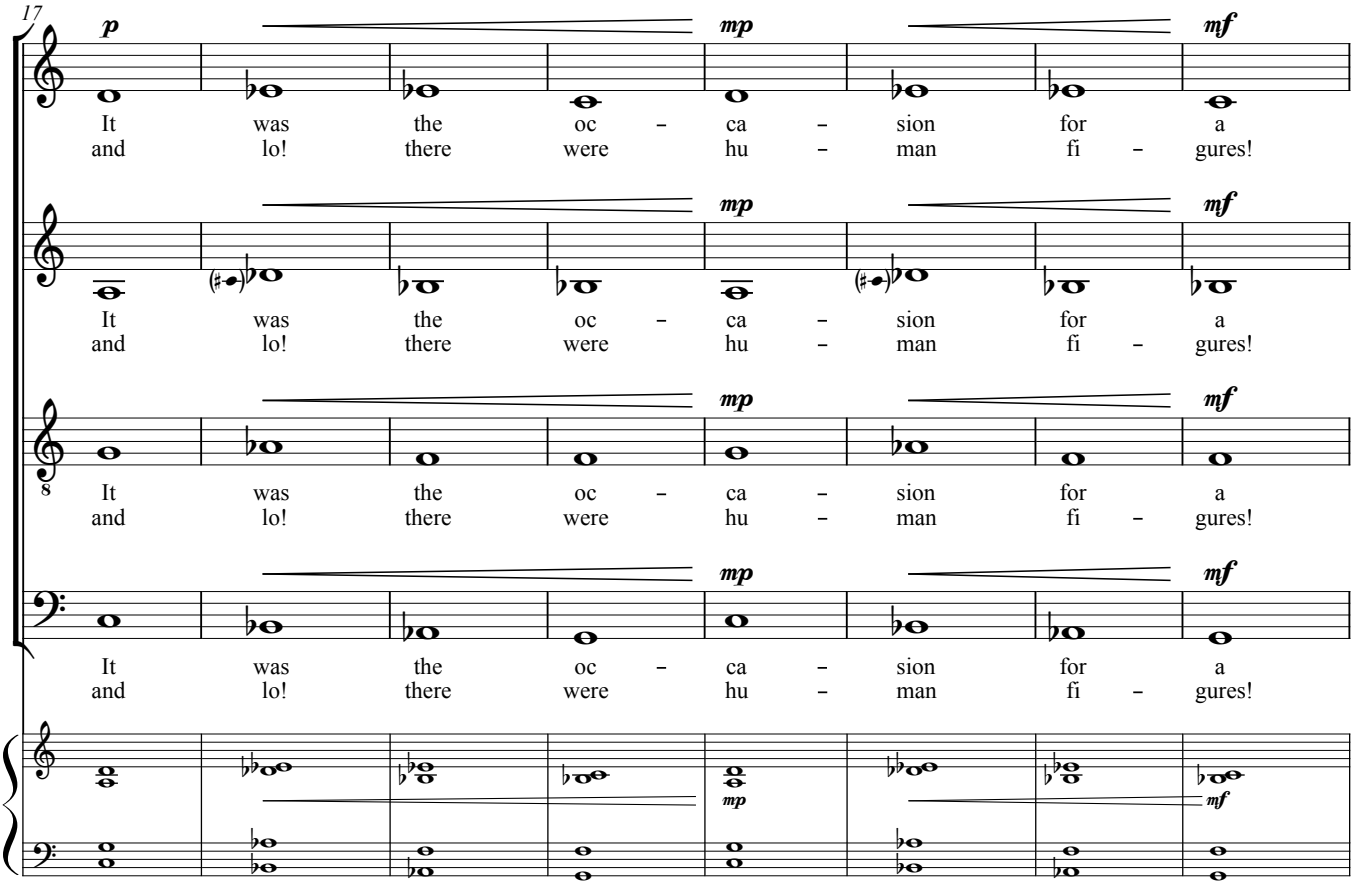
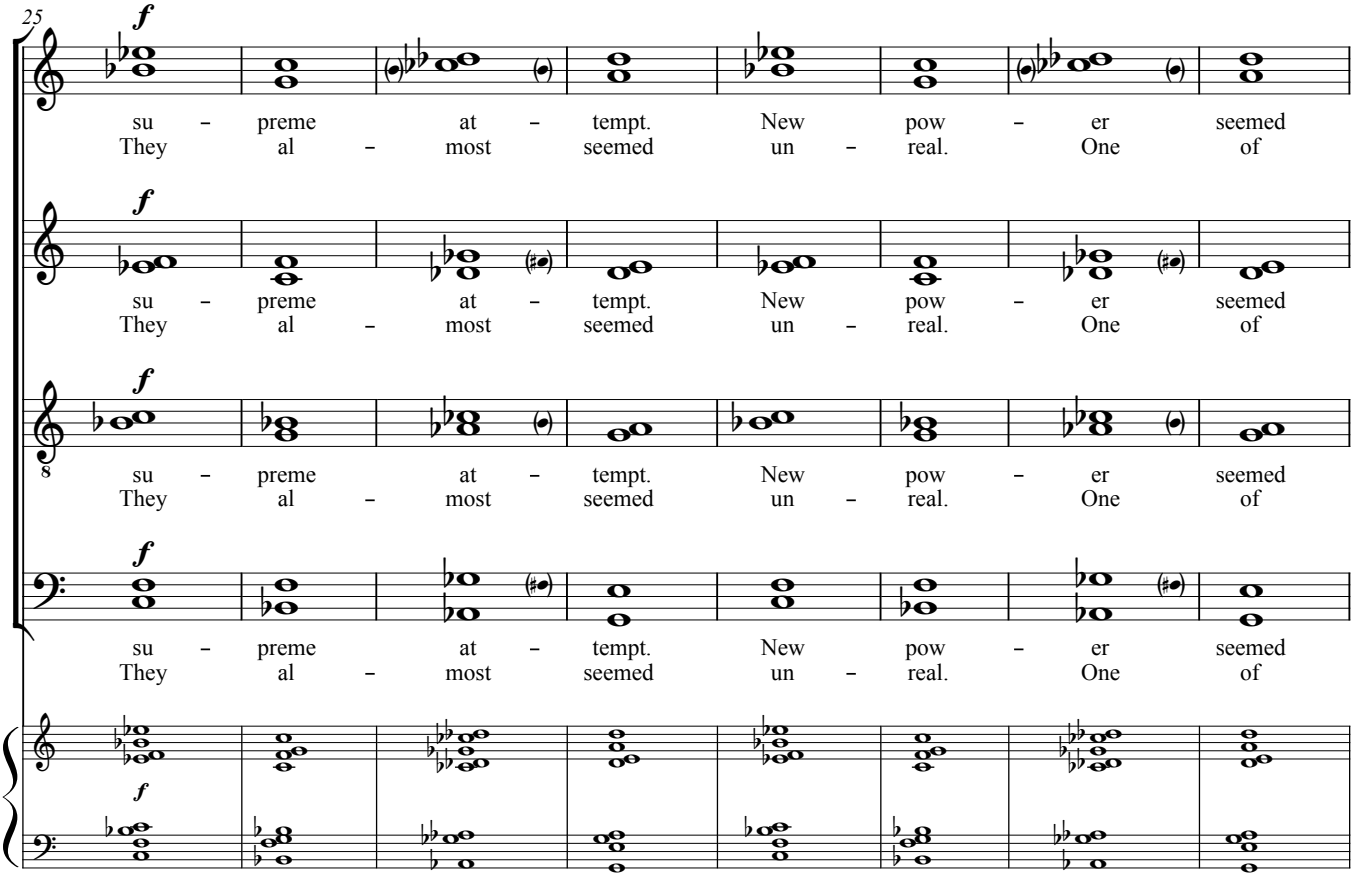
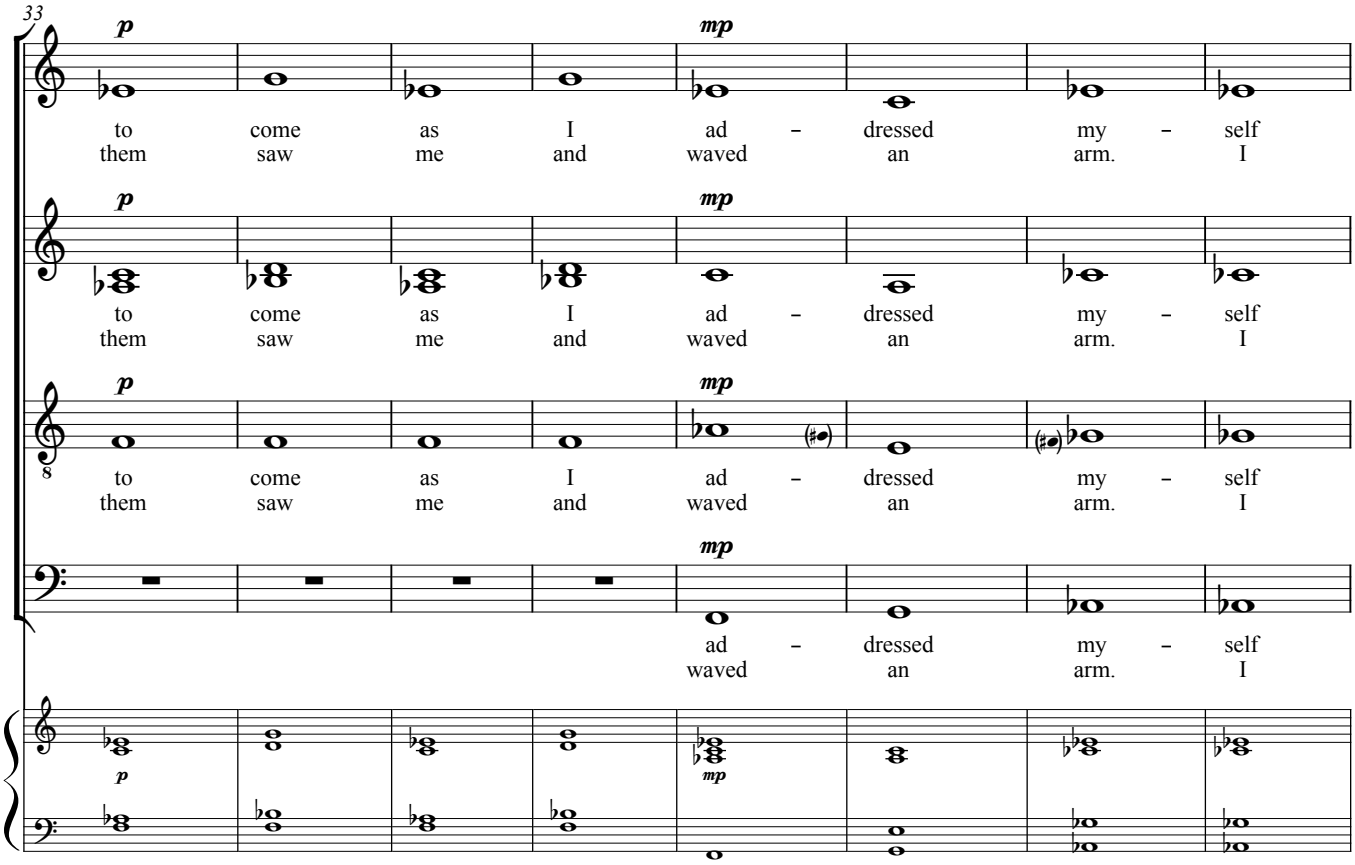
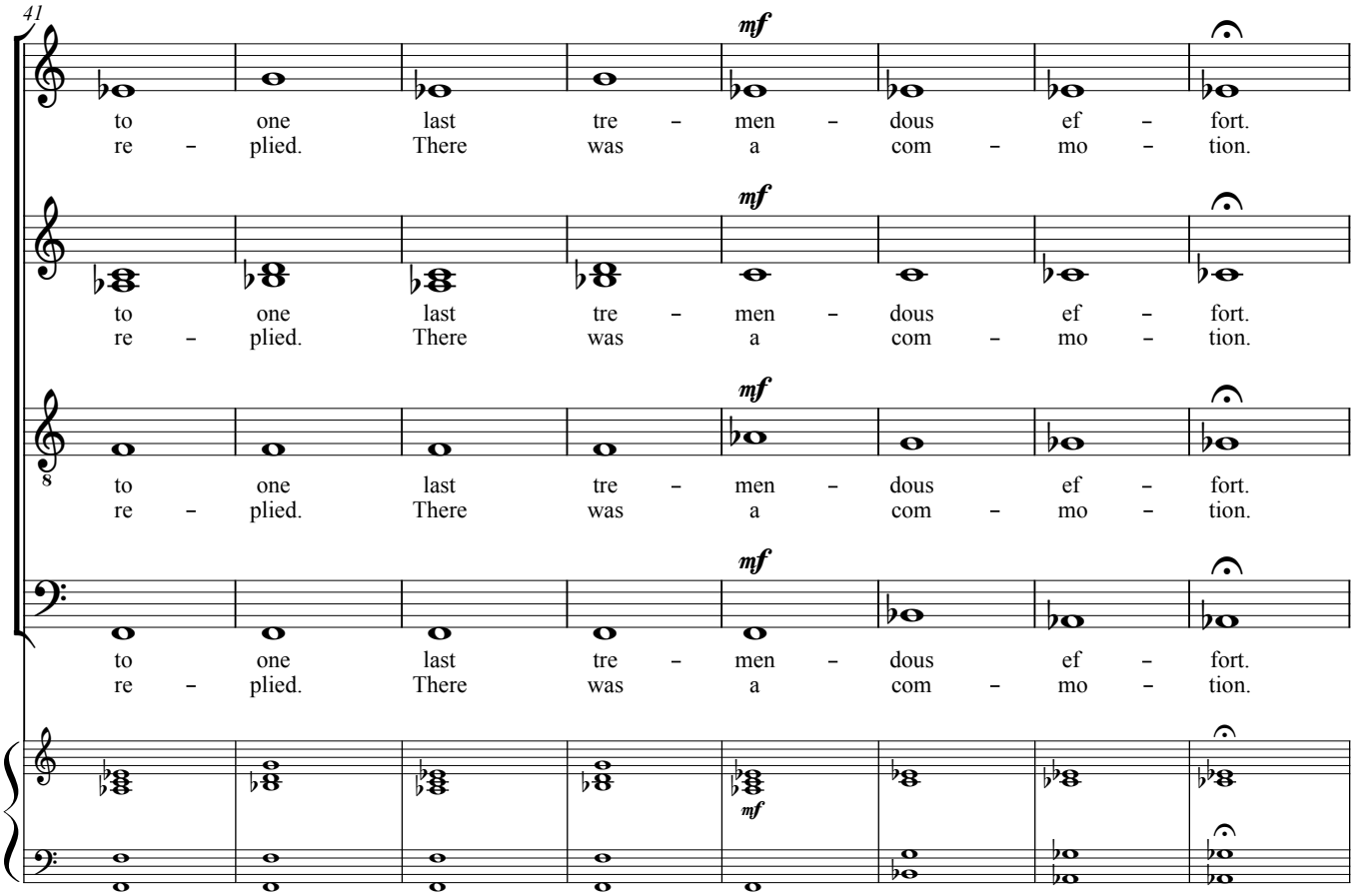
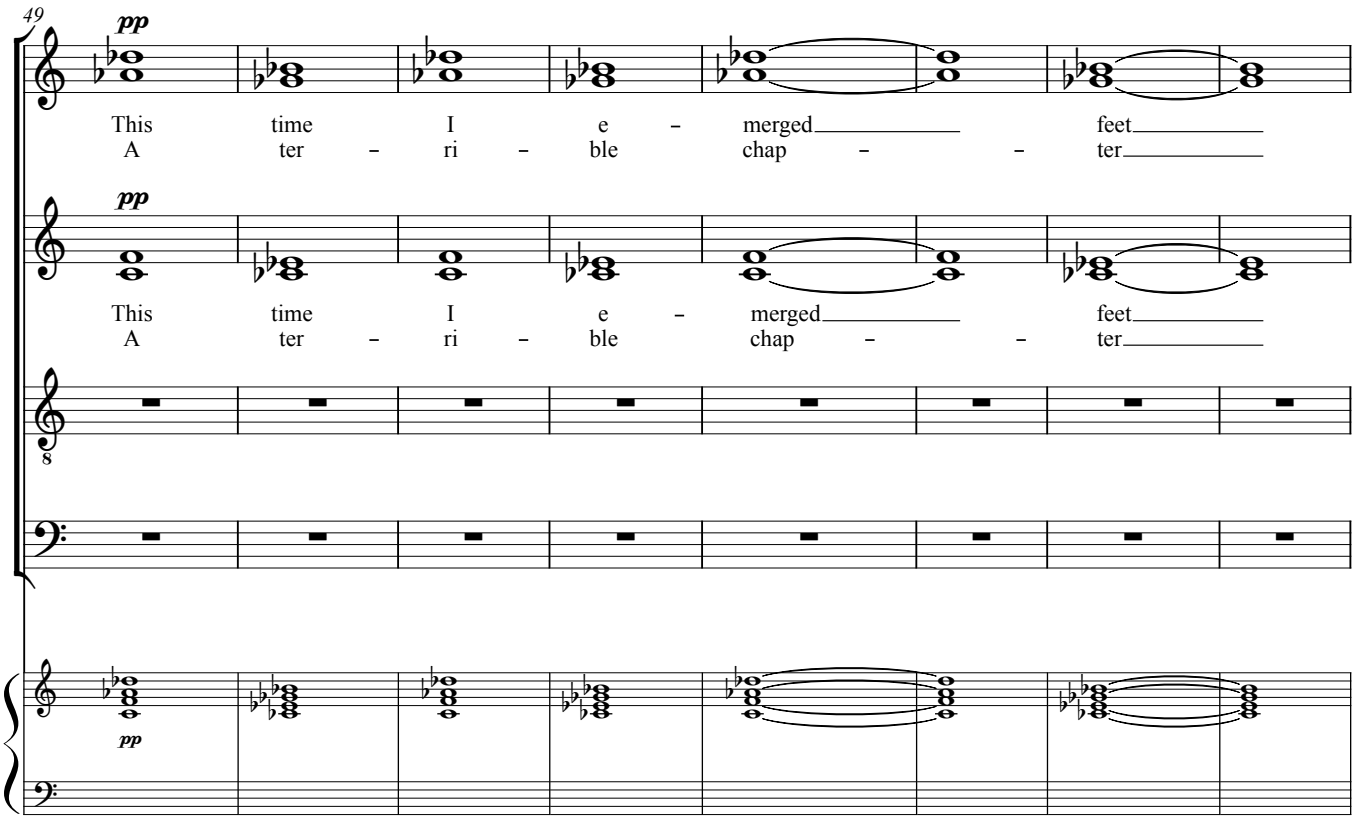
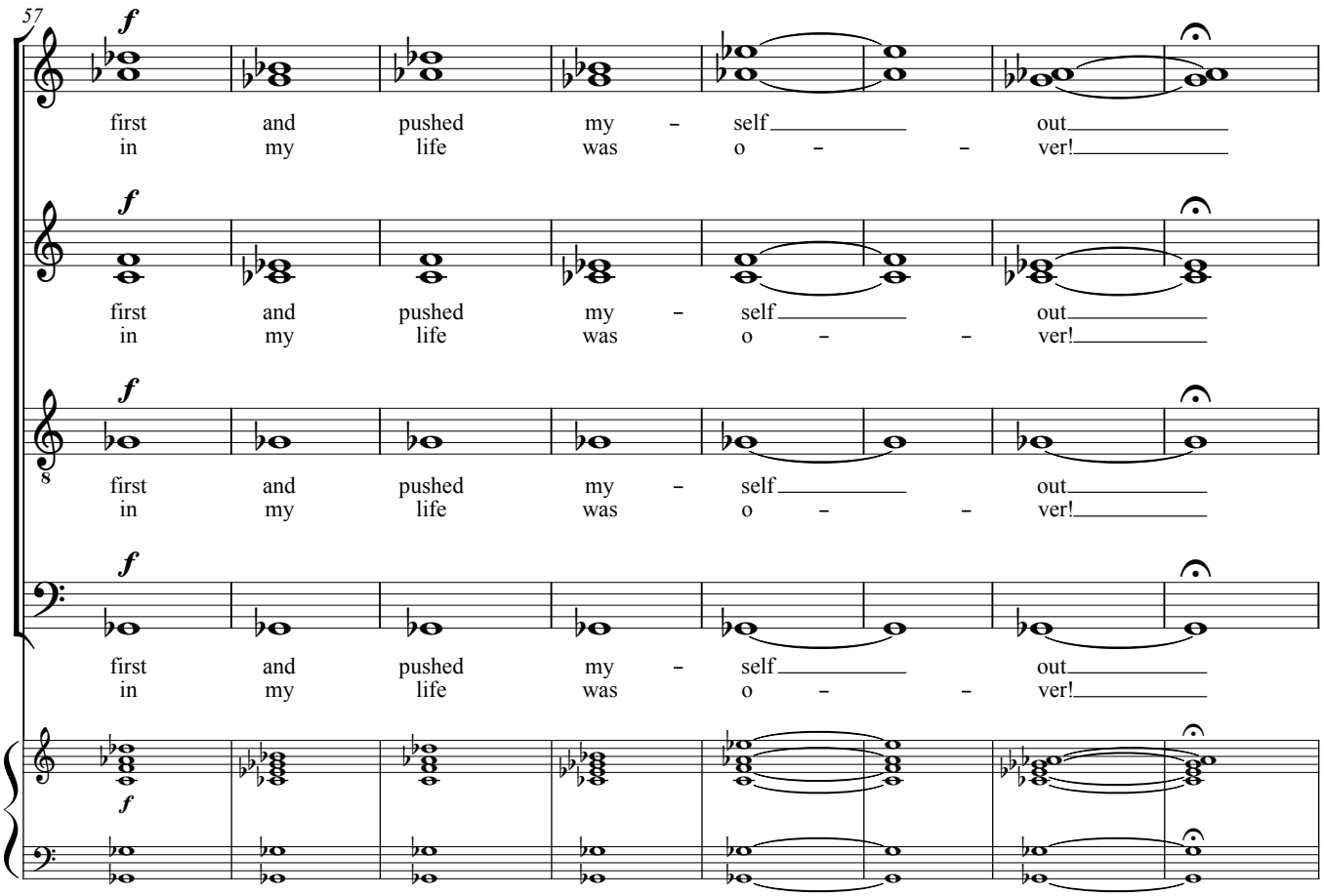

17
p
mp
mf
It was the oc – ca – sion for a
and lo! there were hu – man fi – gures!

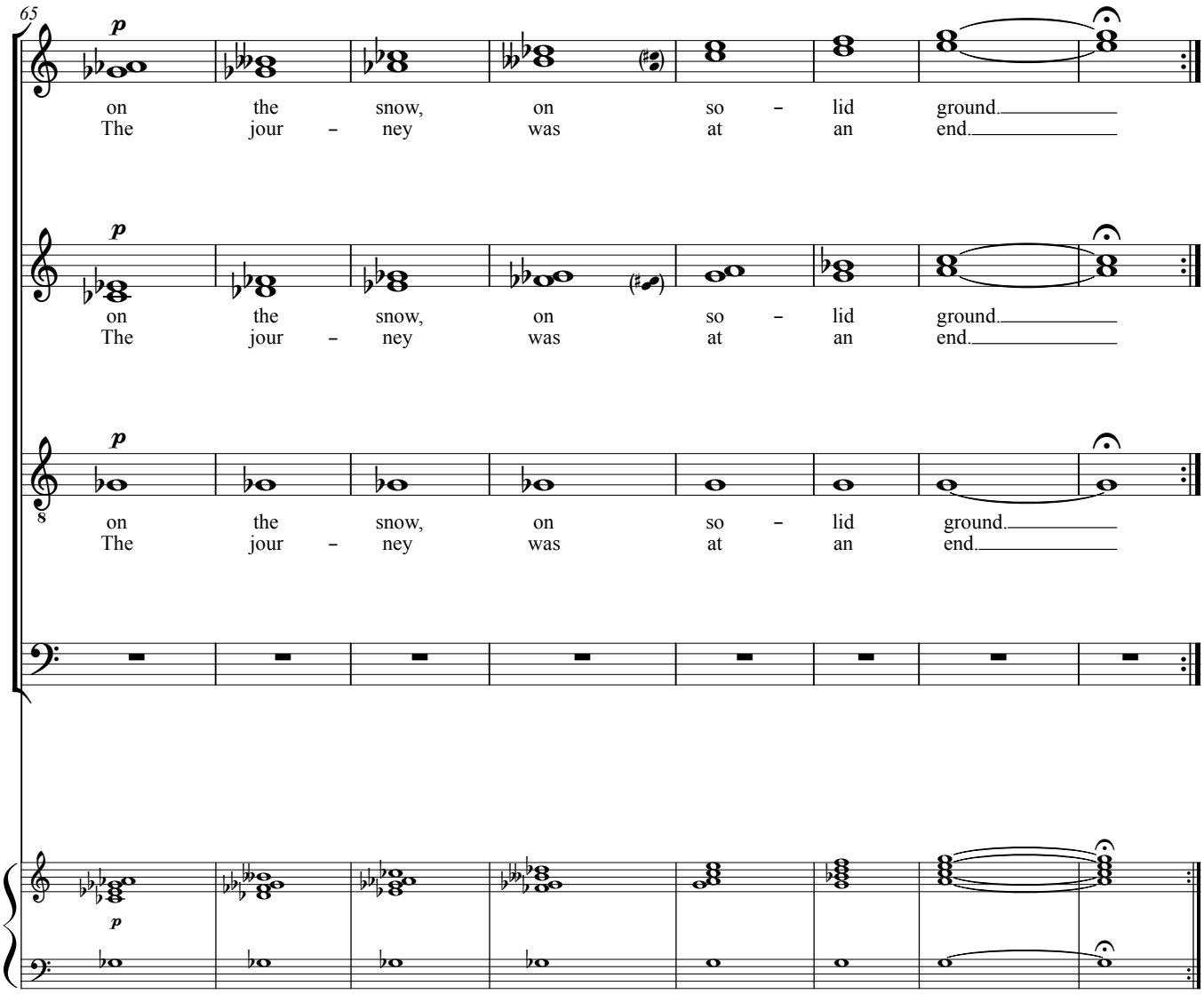

25
f
su – preme at – tempt. New pow – er seemed
They al – most seemed un – real. One of


33
p
mp
to come as I ad – dressed my – self
them saw me and waved an arm. I
ad – dressed my – self
waved an arm. I


41
mf
to one last tre – men – dous ef – fort.
re – plied. There was a com – mo – tion.


49
pp
This time I e - merged feet
A ter - ri - ble chap - - ter
pp
This time I e - merged feet
A ter - ri - ble chap - - ter
8
pp


57
f
first and pushed my - self out
in my life was o - - ver!
f
first and pushed my - self out
in my life was o - - ver!
f
8
first and pushed my - self out
in my life was o - - ver!
f
first and pushed my - self out
in my life was o - - ver!
f


65
p
on the snow, on so - lid ground.
The jour - ney was at an end.
p
on the snow, on so - lid ground.
The jour - ney was at an end.
p
8
on the snow, on so - lid ground.
The jour - ney was at an end.
p

Everyday Tasks

solo piano

2022

1. Brushing Teeth

2. Dressing

3. Looking in the Mirror

4. Defecating

5. Showering

6. Dining

7. Sleeping

5 mins 30 secs (approx.)

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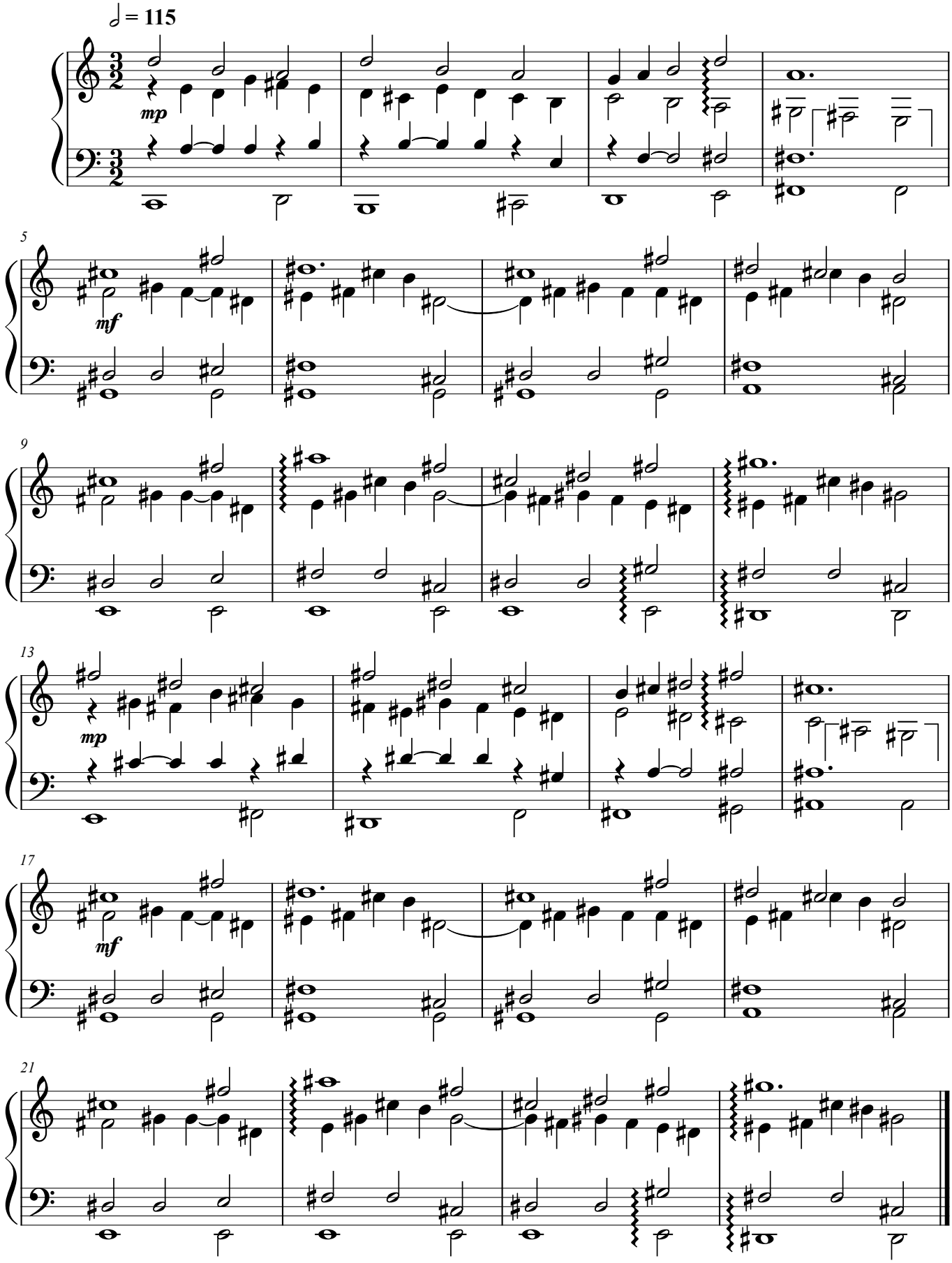
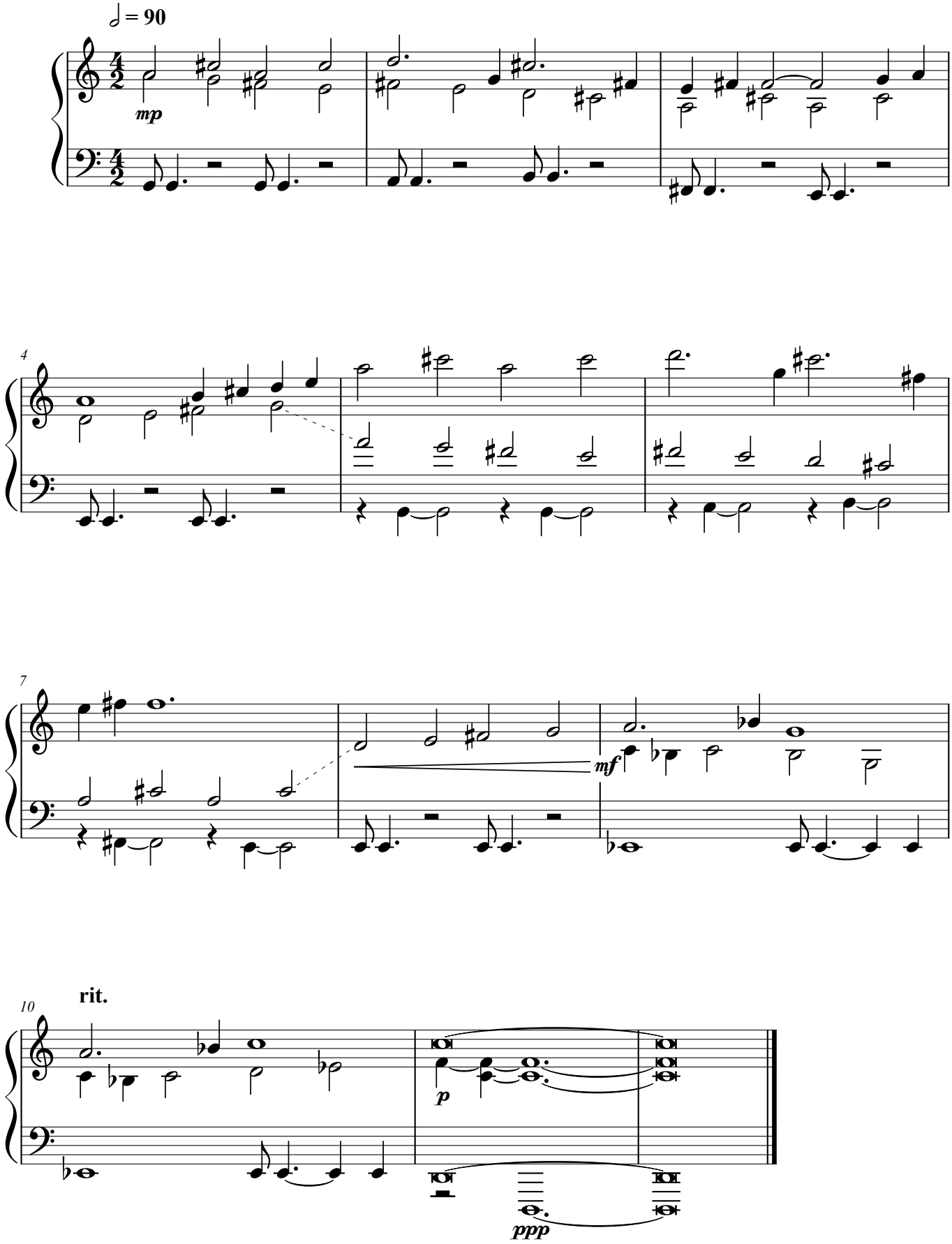
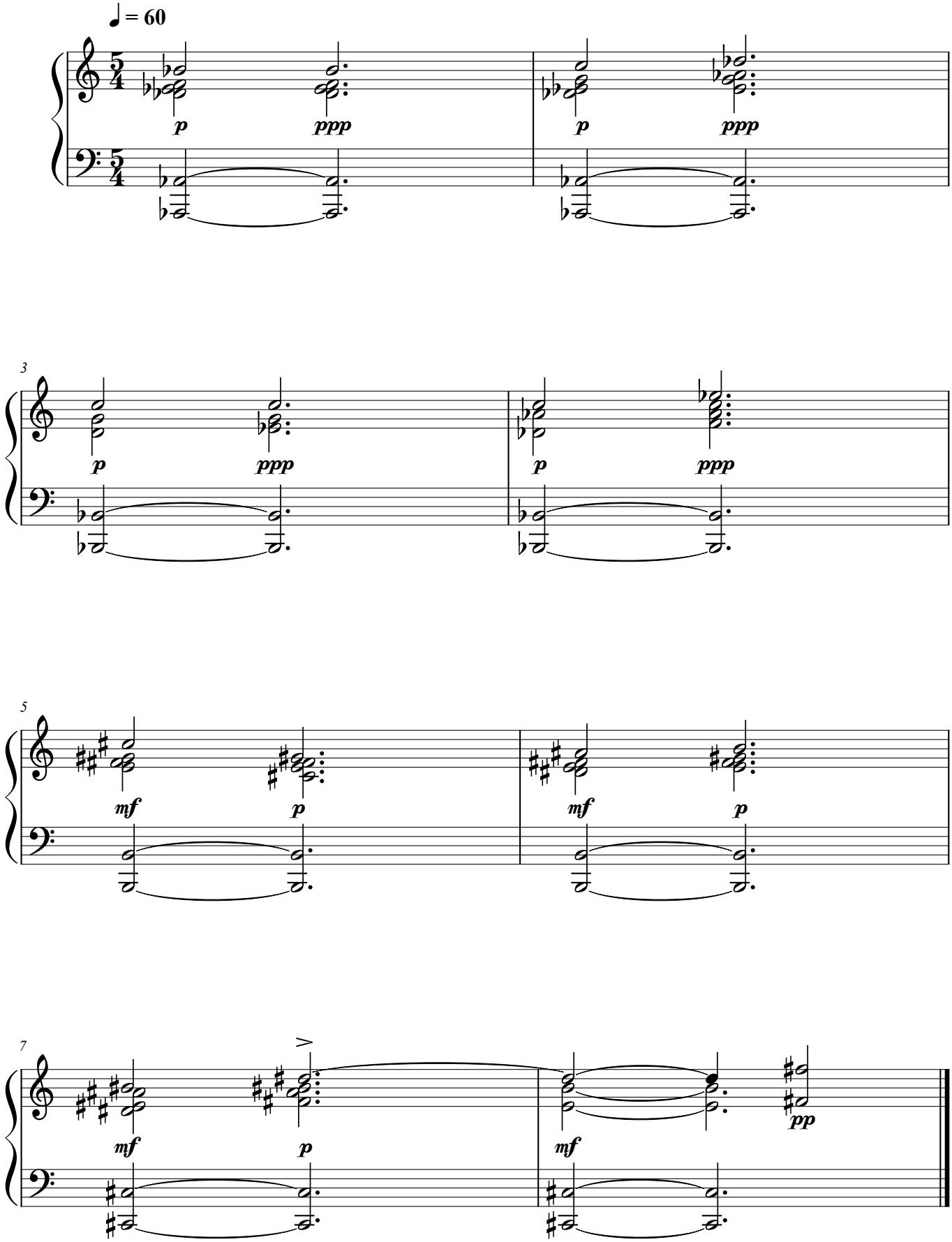
1. Brushing Teeth



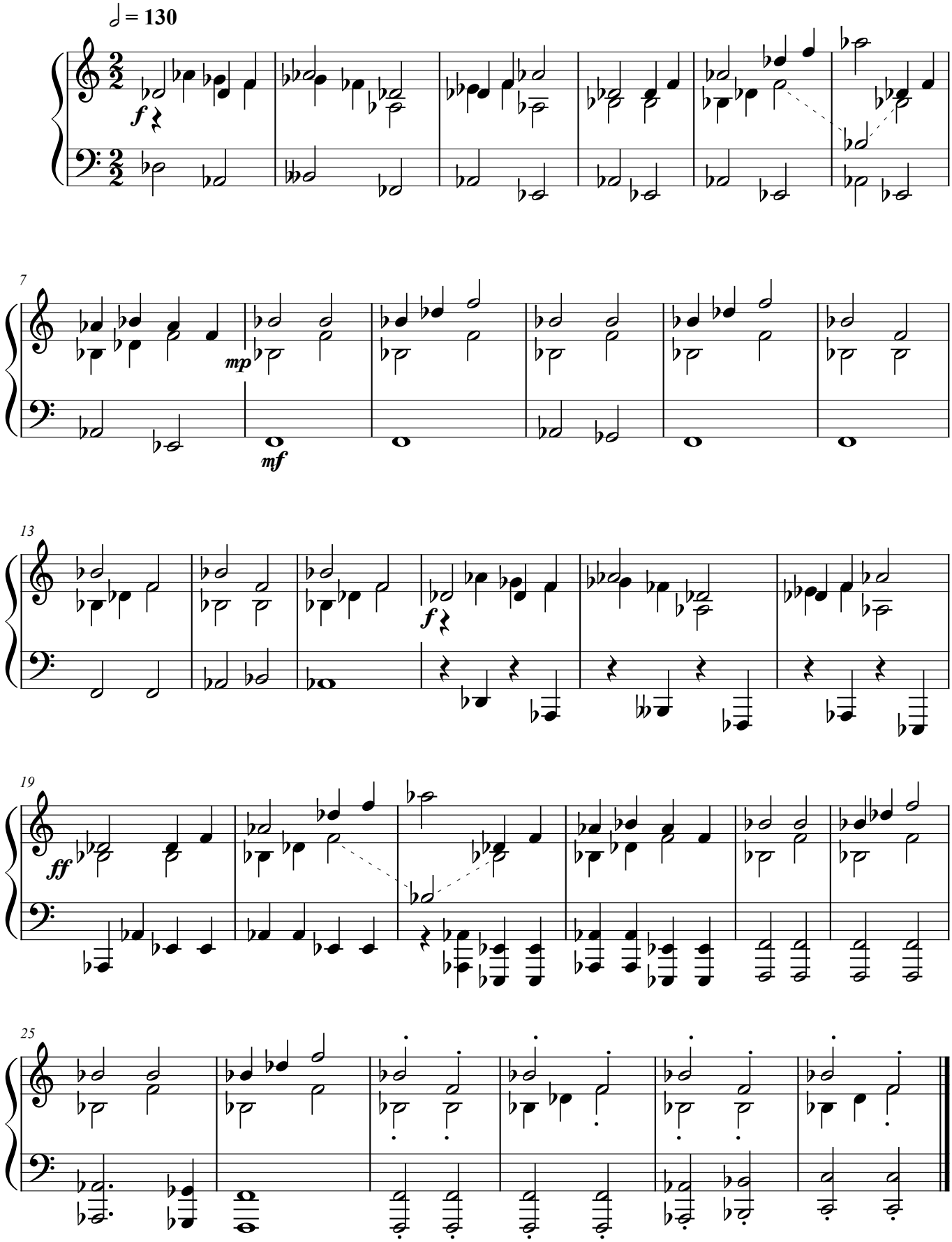
2. Dressing



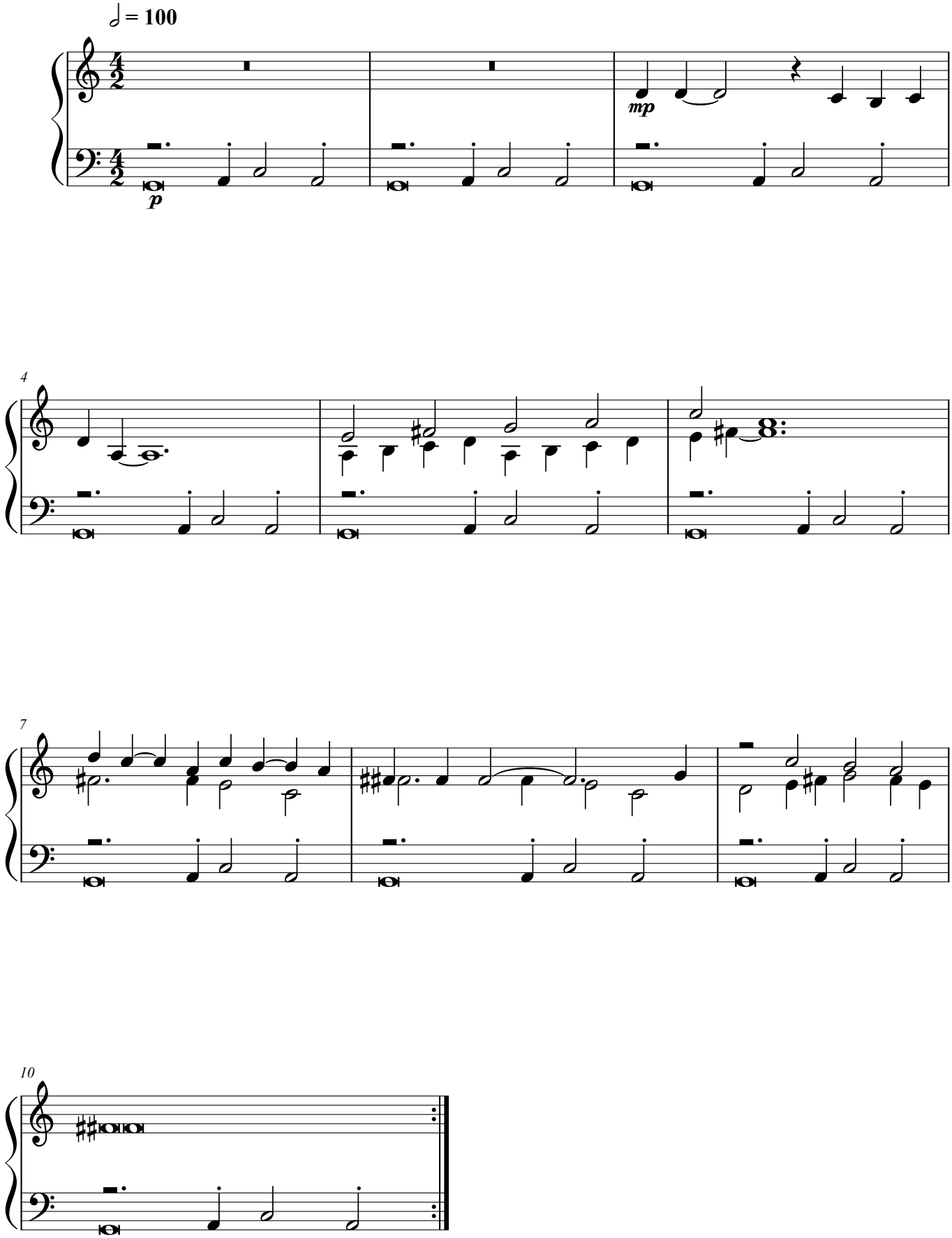
3. Looking in the Mirror



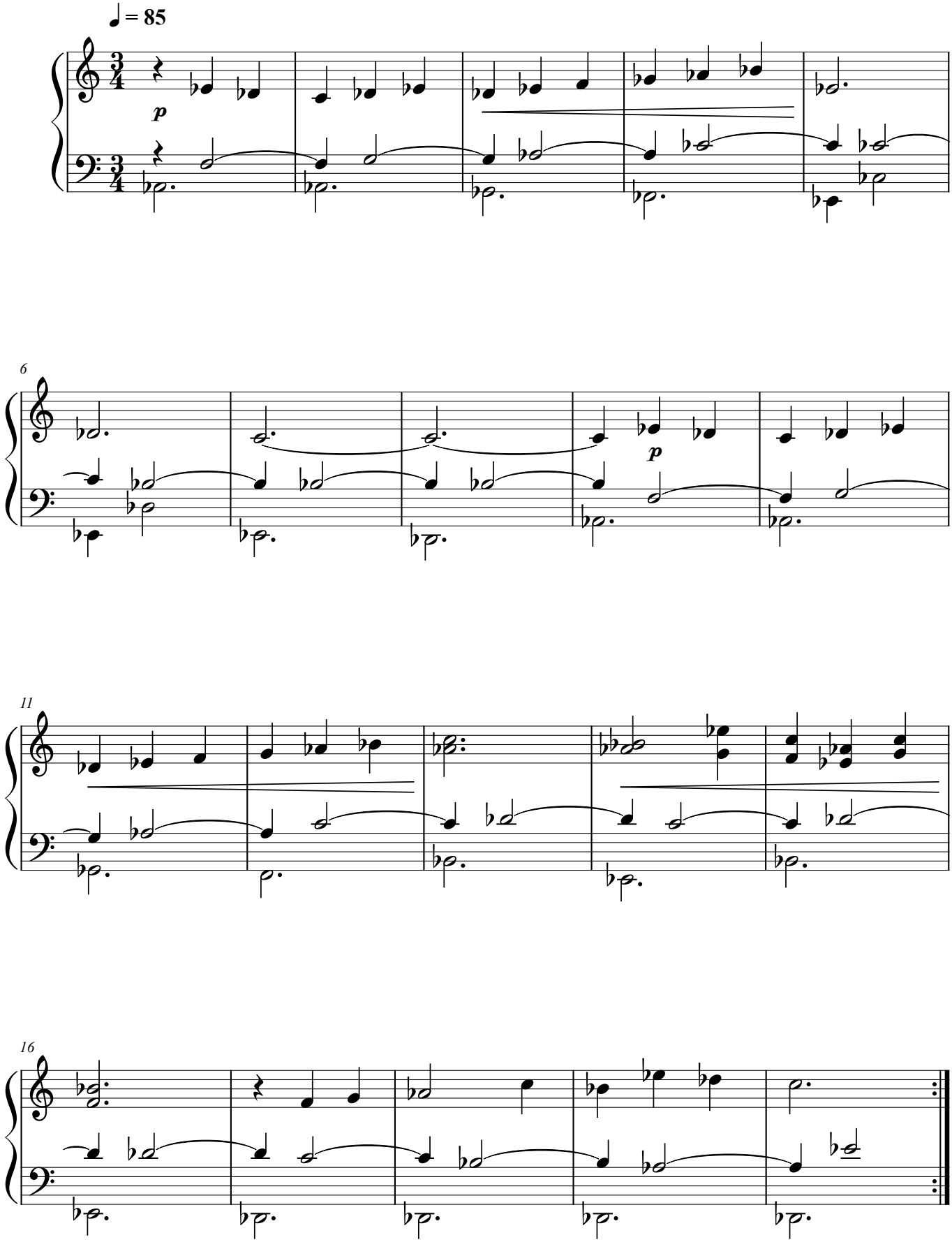
4. Defecating



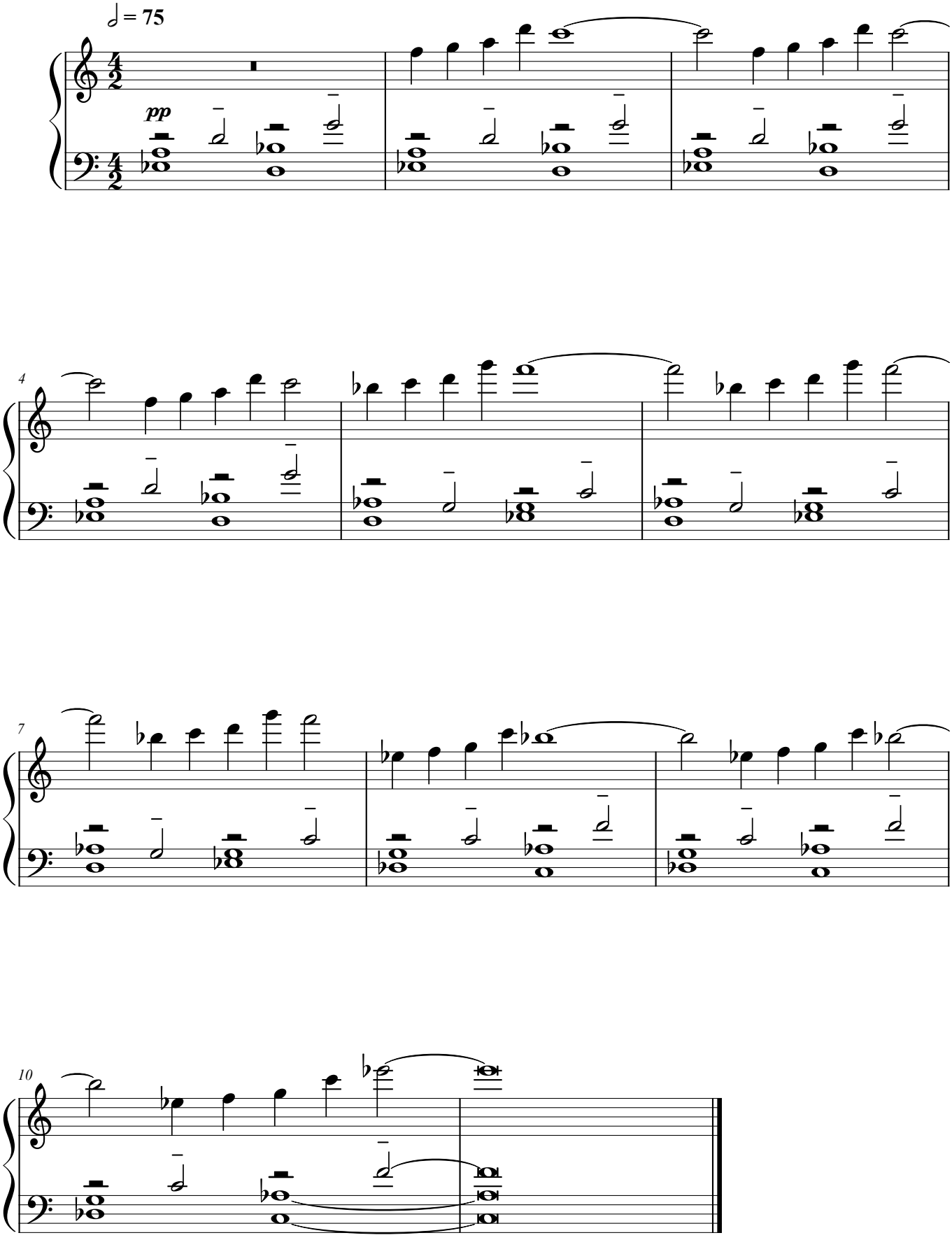
5. Showering



6. Dining



7. Sleeping



Fugue

two soprano recorders

2023

1 min 35 secs (approx.)

TRANSPOSED SCORE

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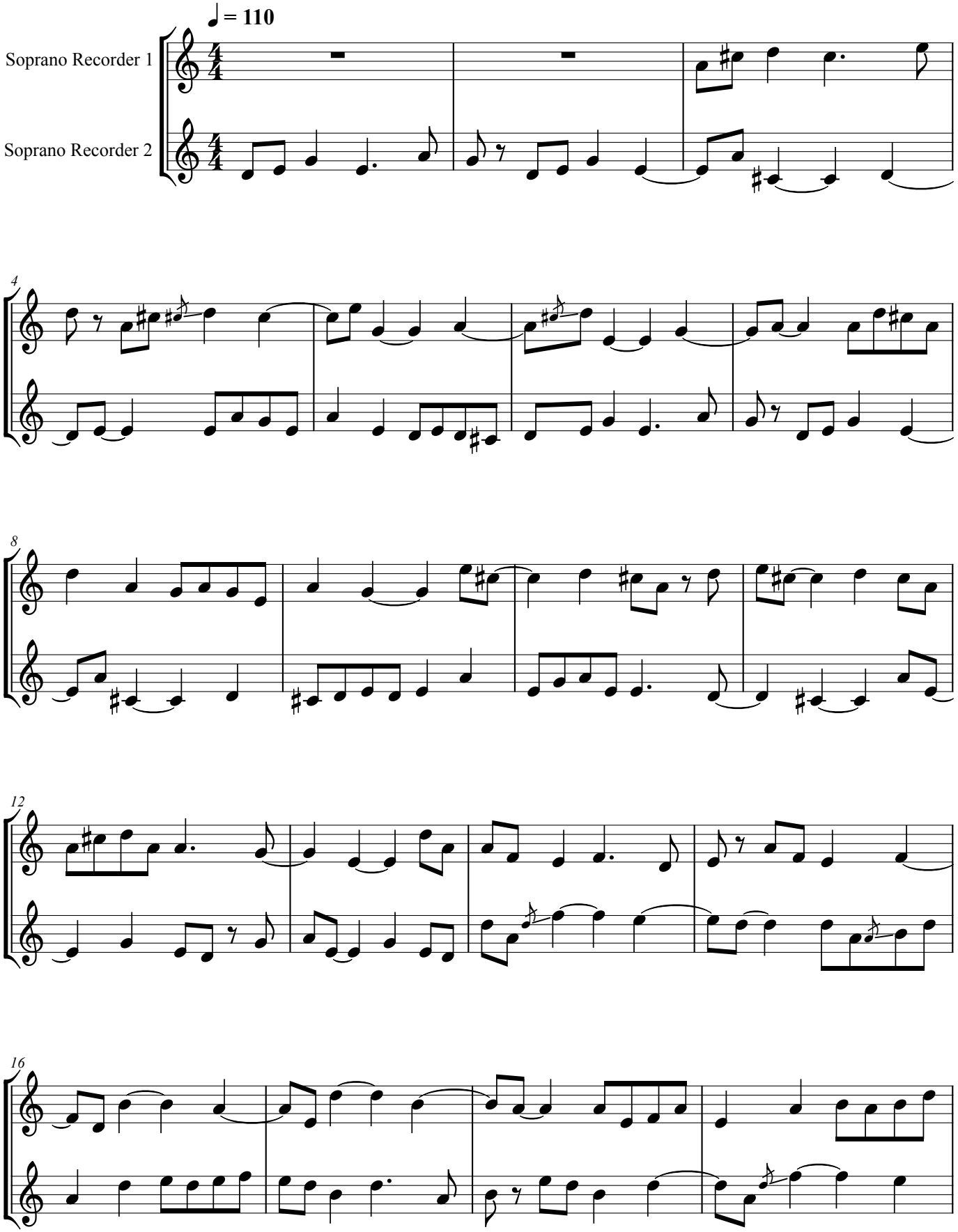
Fugue



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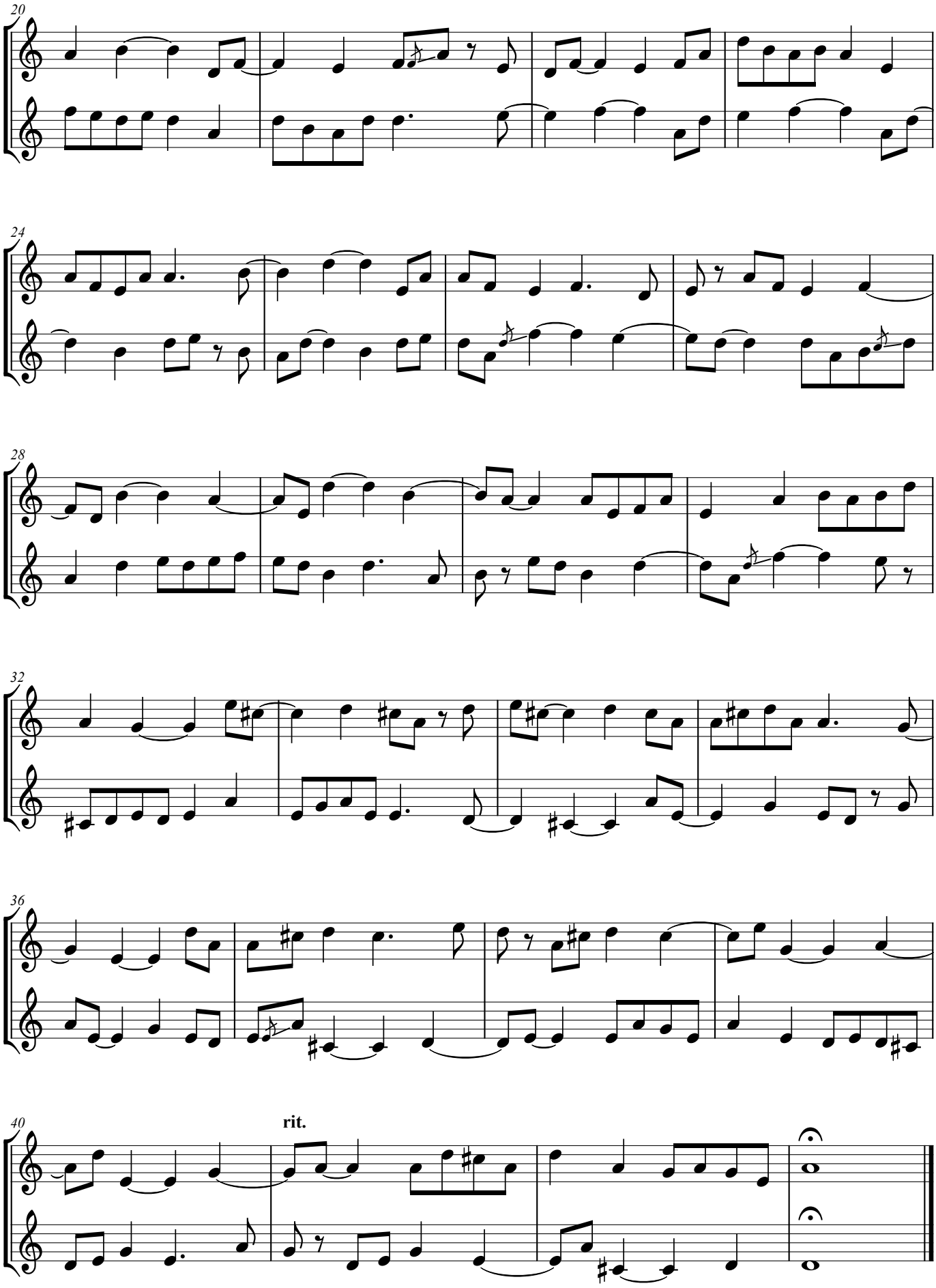
20
24
28
32
36
40
rit.

3 Solos

soprano recorder

2023

1 min 40 secs (approx.)

TRANSPOSED SCORE

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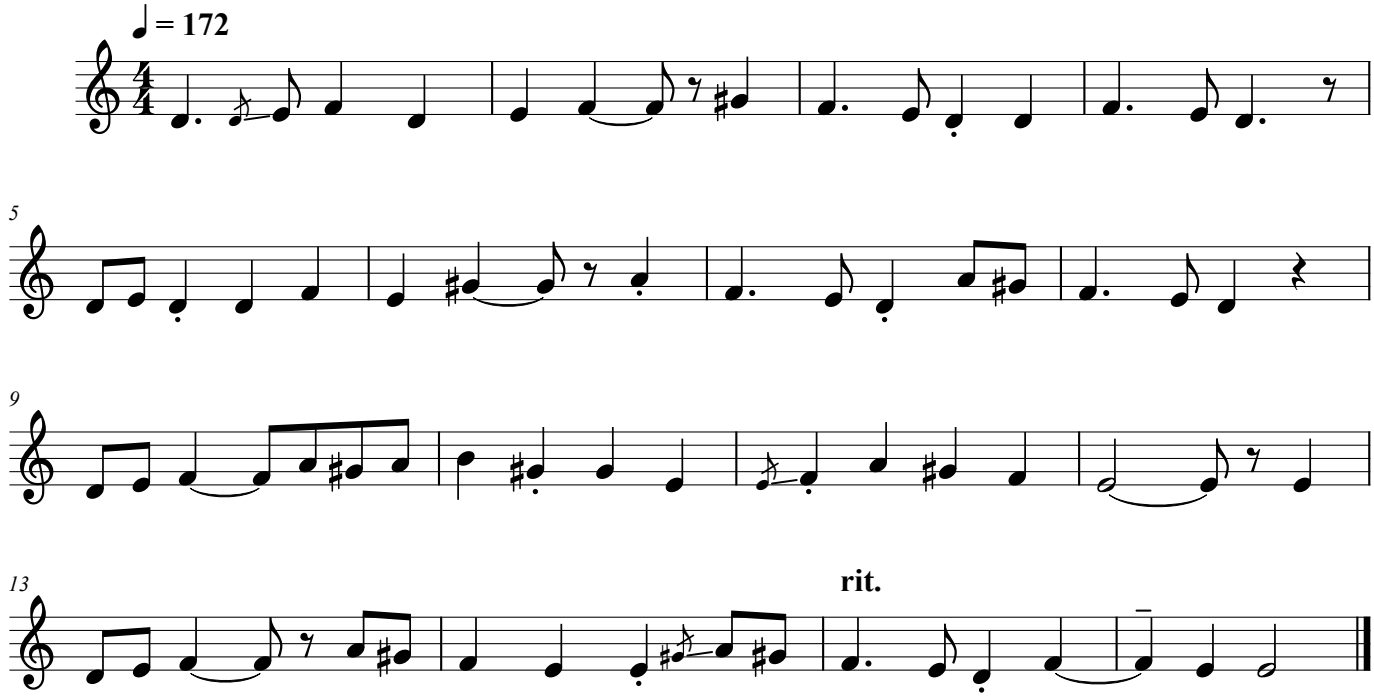
No. 1



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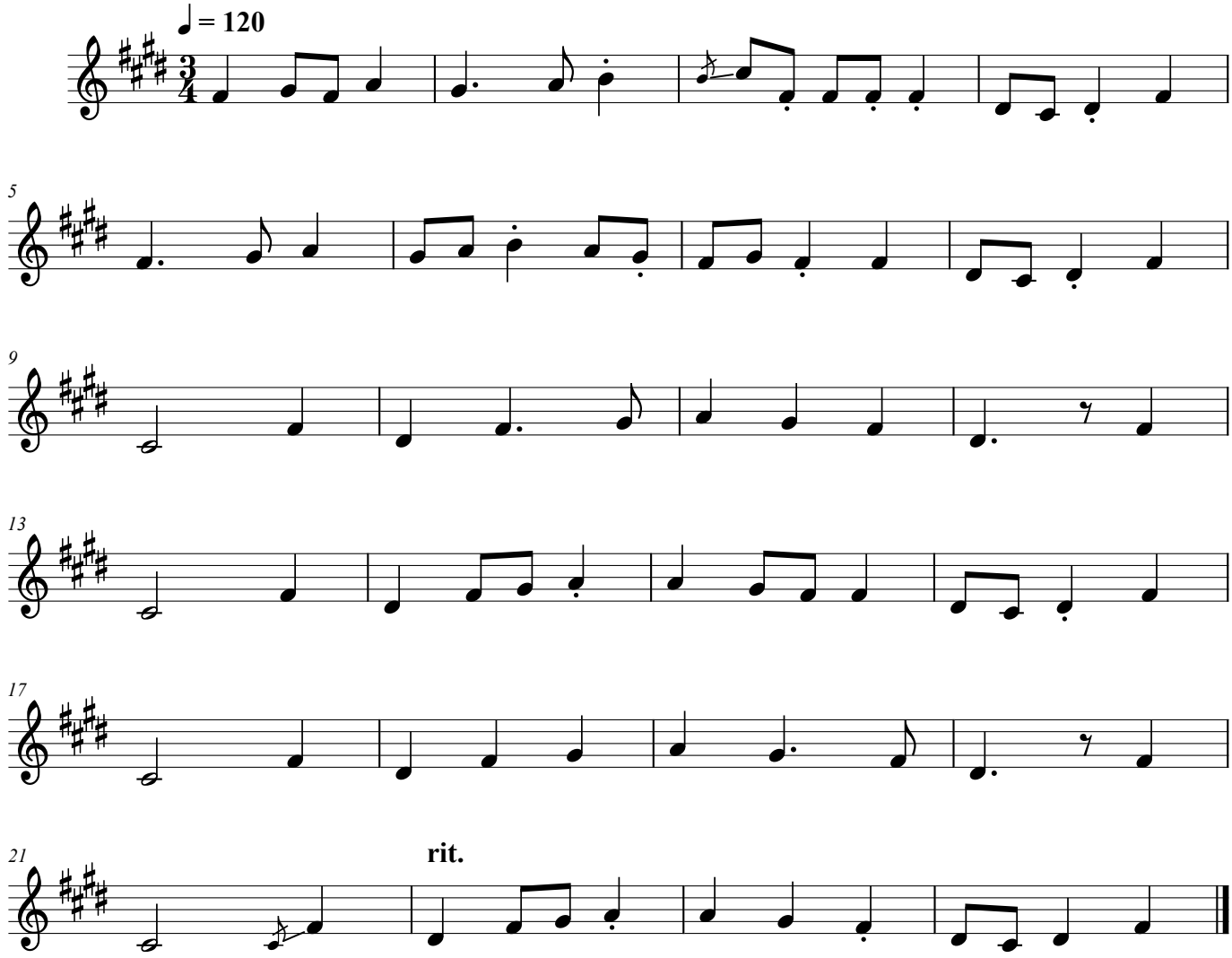

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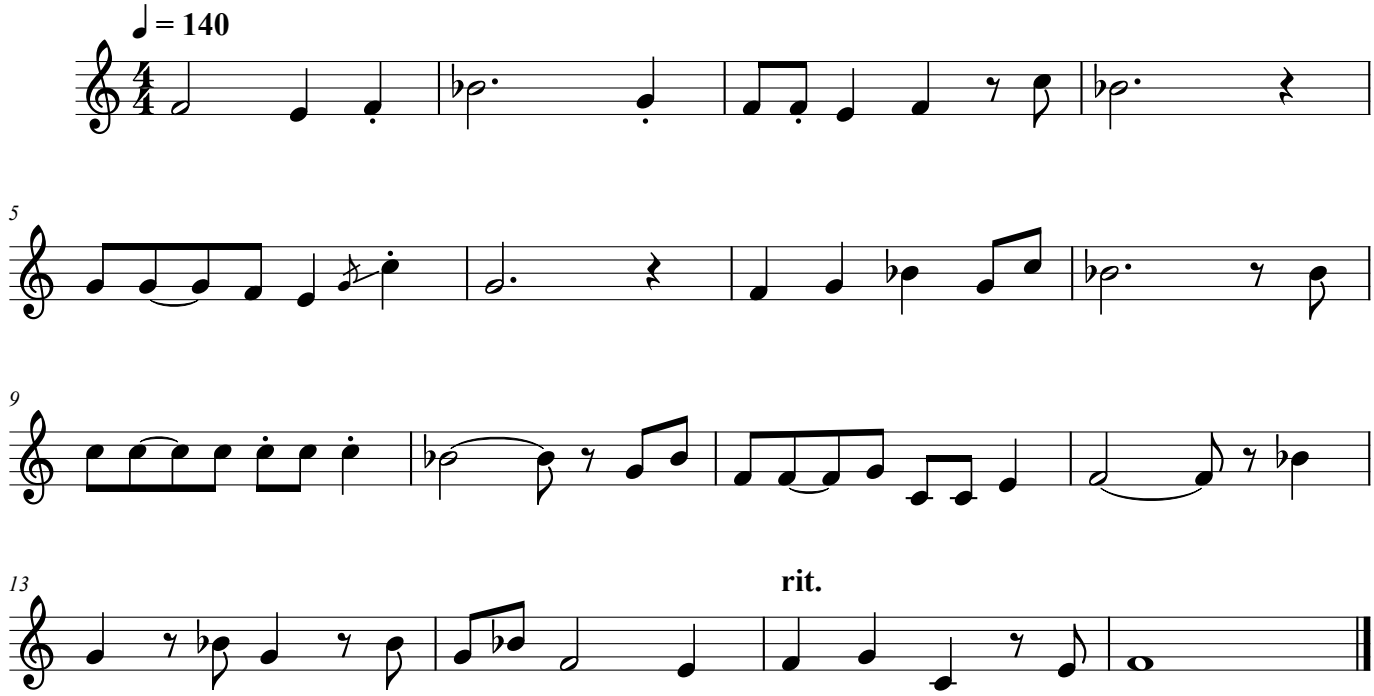

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Sonata No. 3

solo piano

2022

8 mins 40 secs (approx.)

As regards variants of the theme *Lost* (e.g., bars 17–24), play first the notes of the lowest voice quickly and then those of the upper voices together – tempo rubato as necessary.

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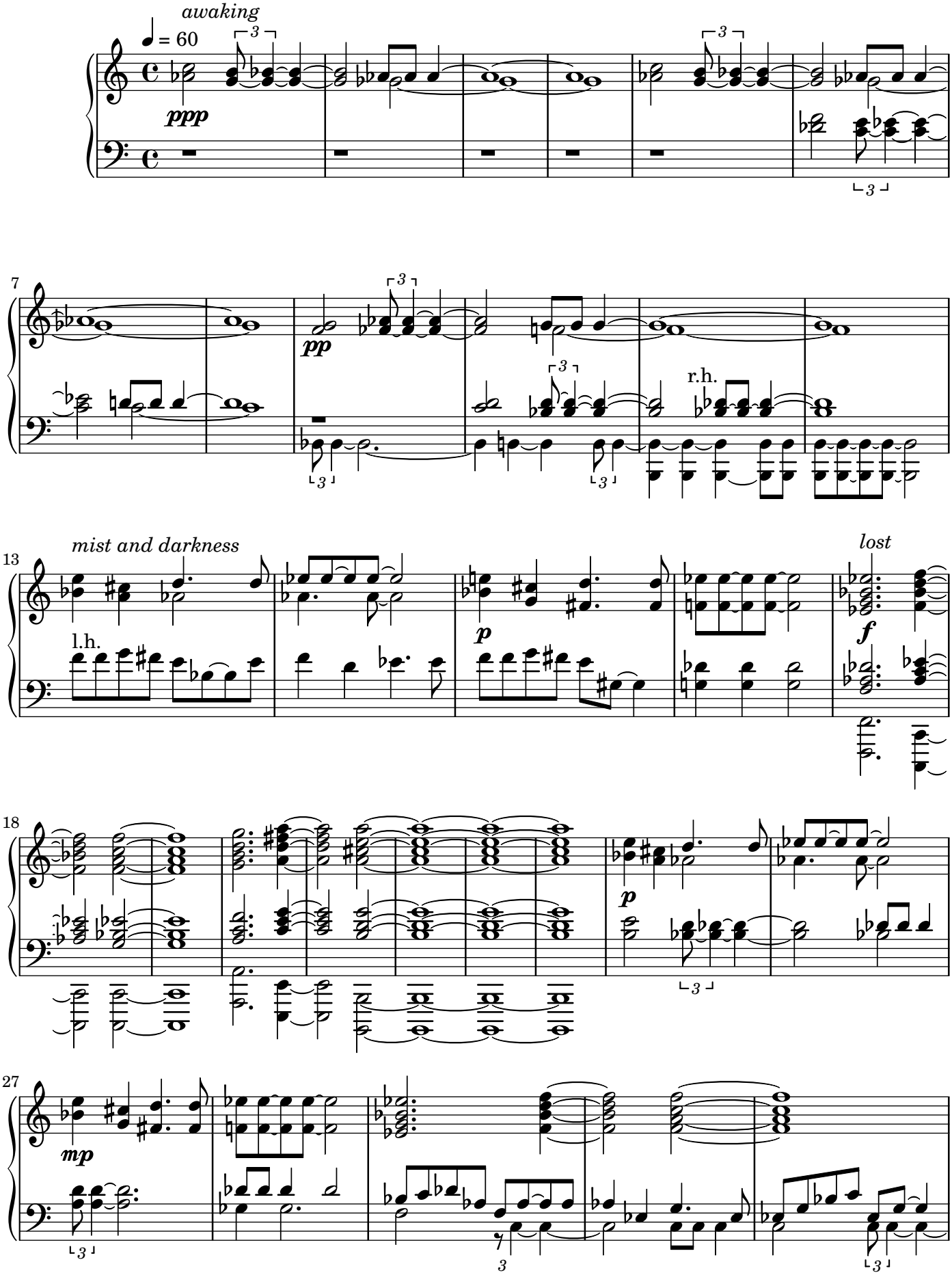
Sonata No. 3



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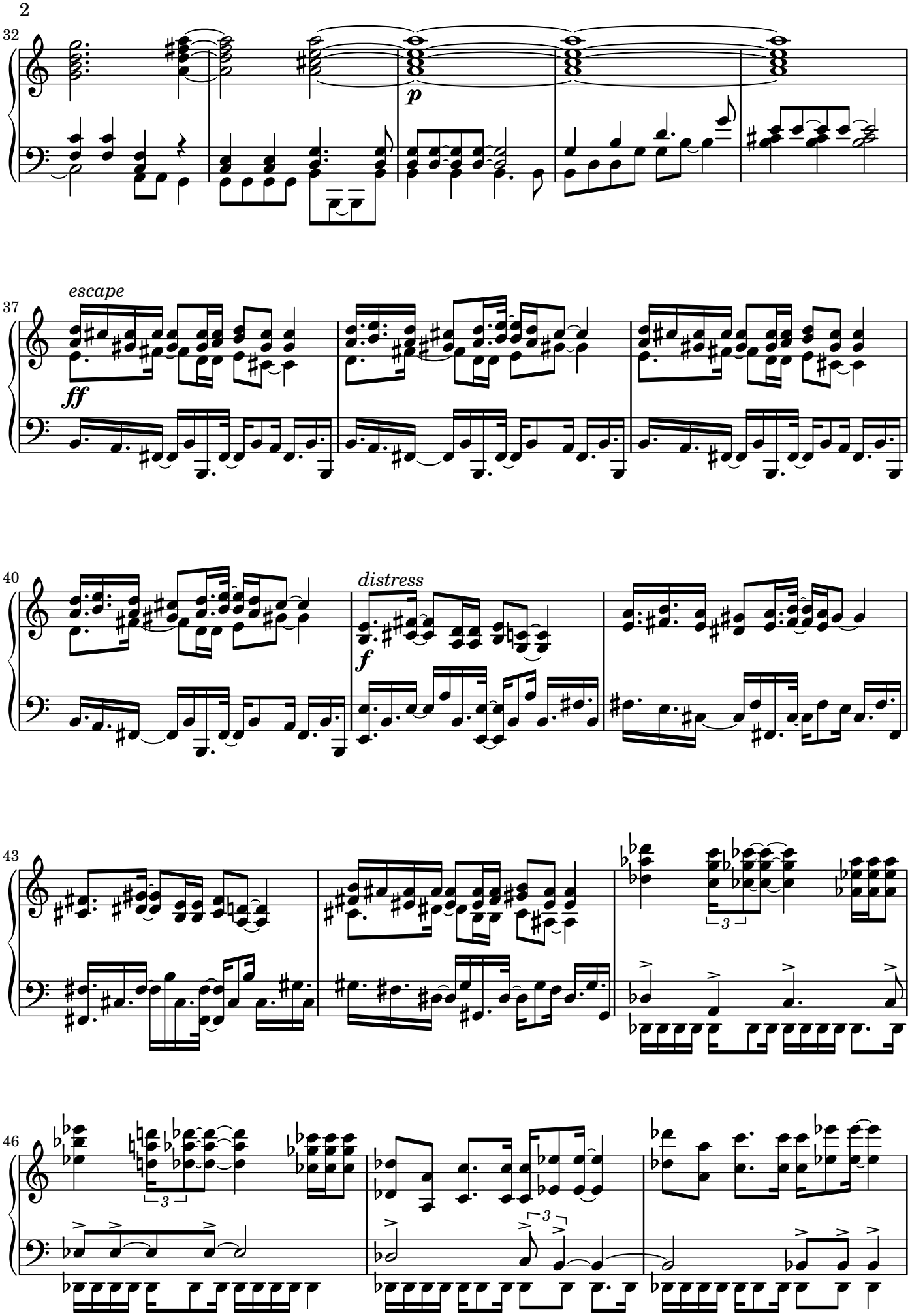
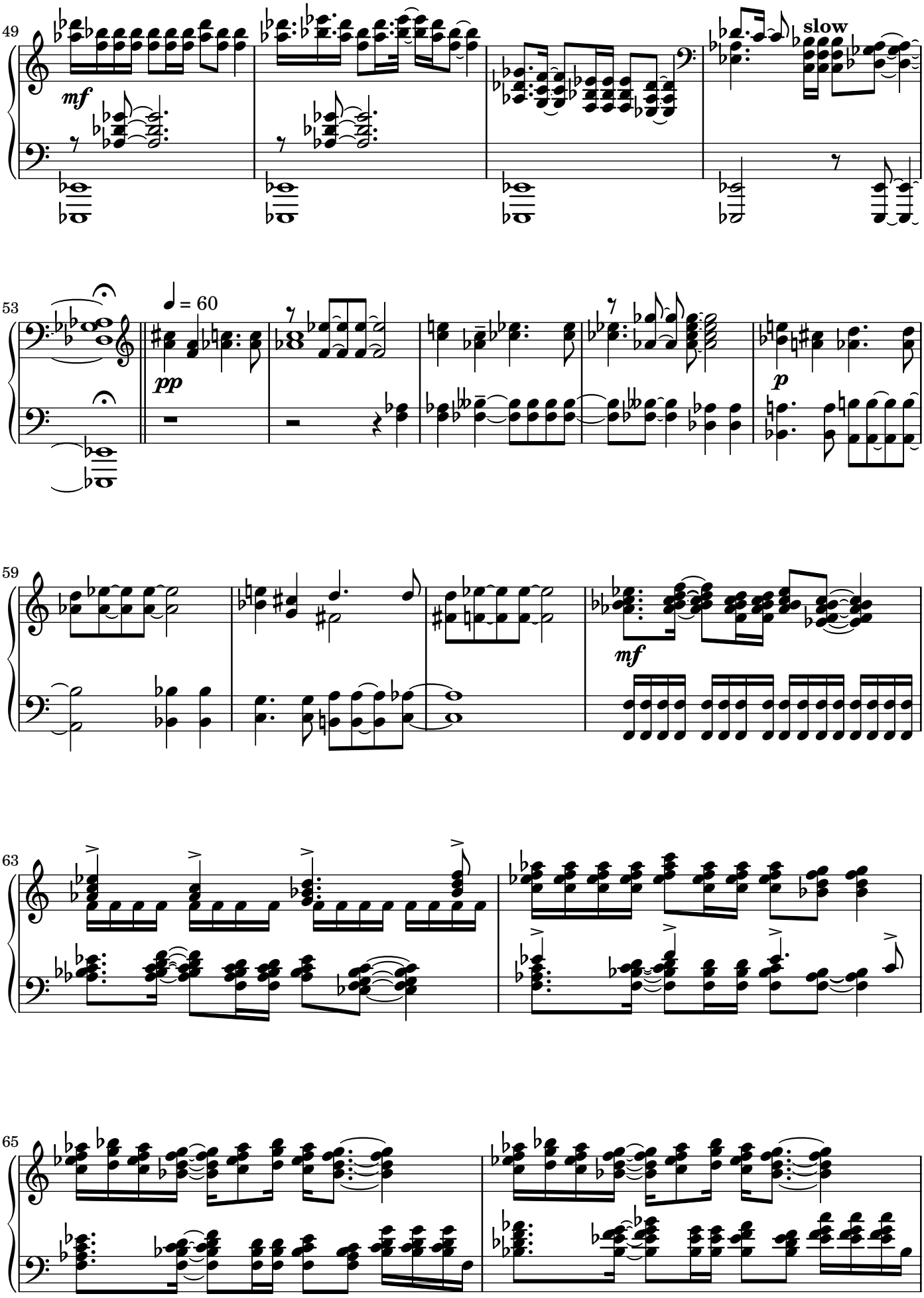
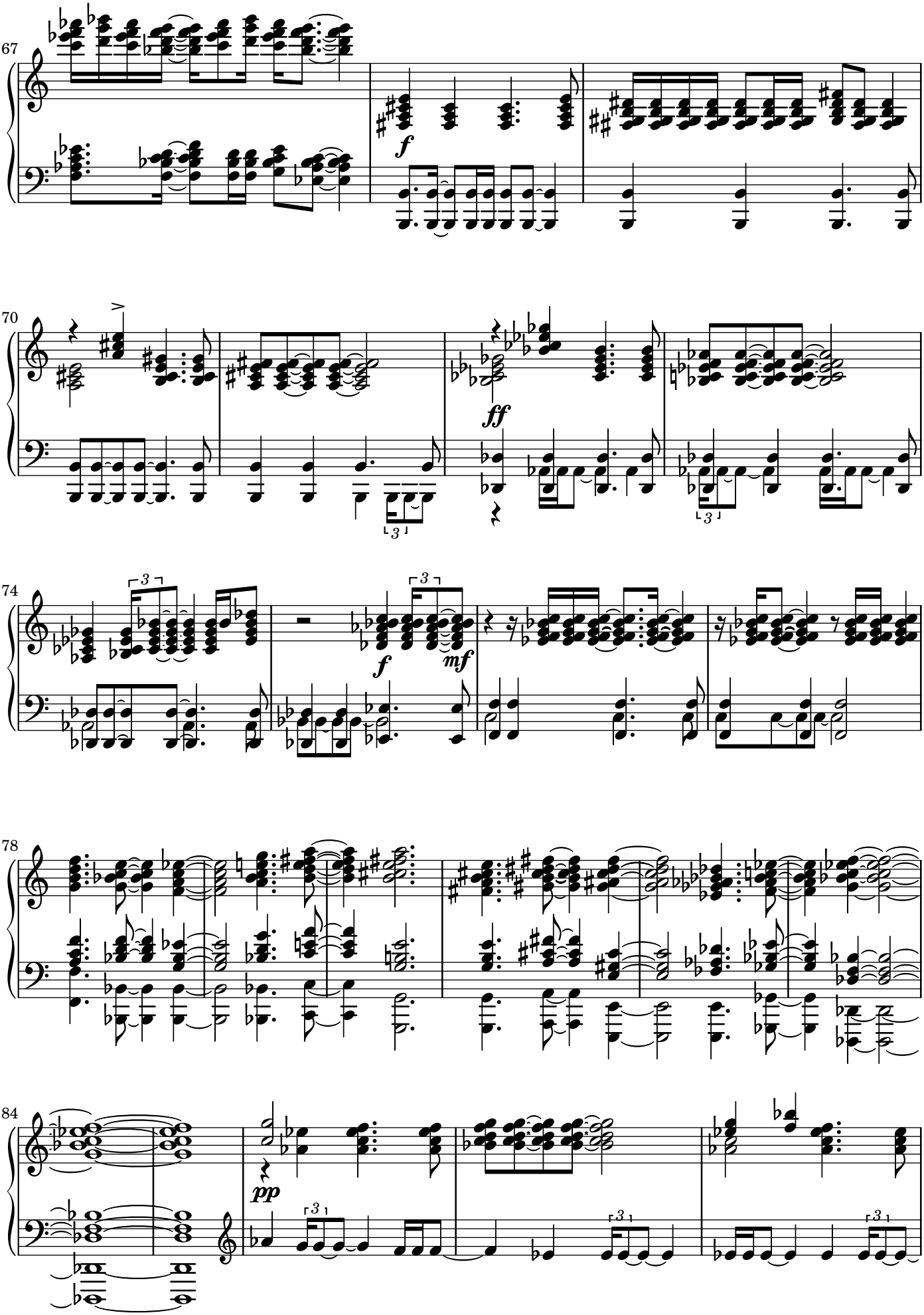
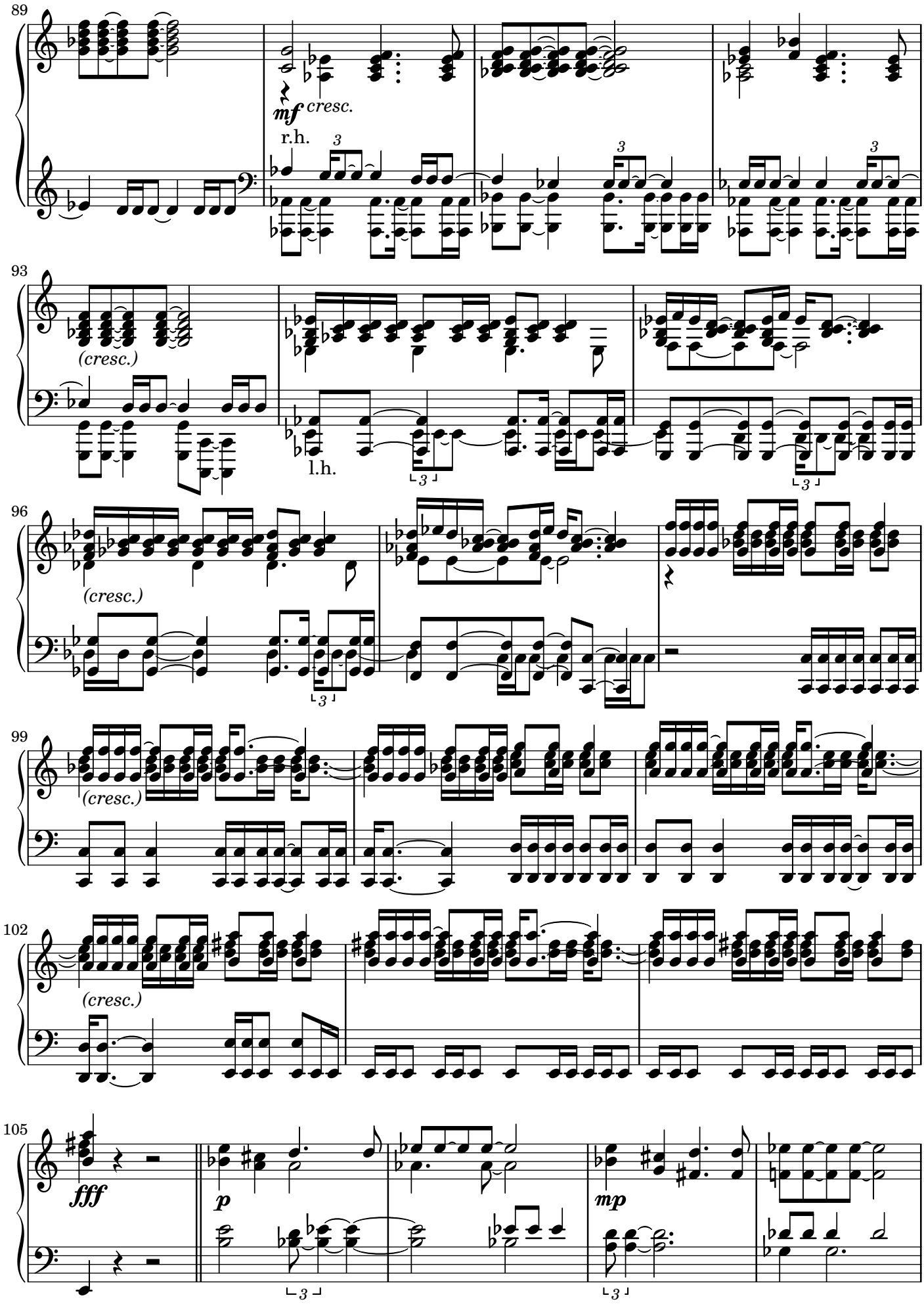
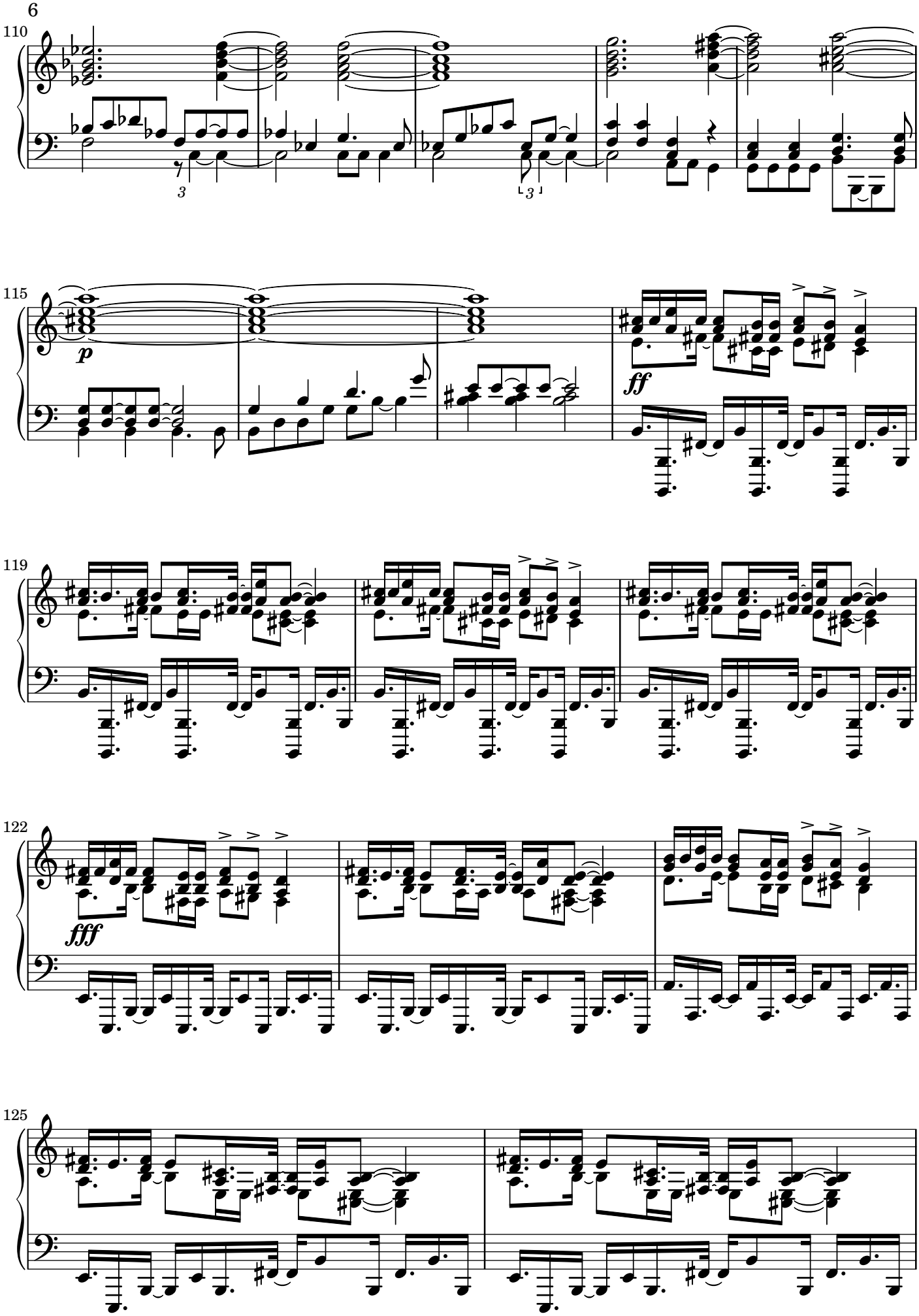
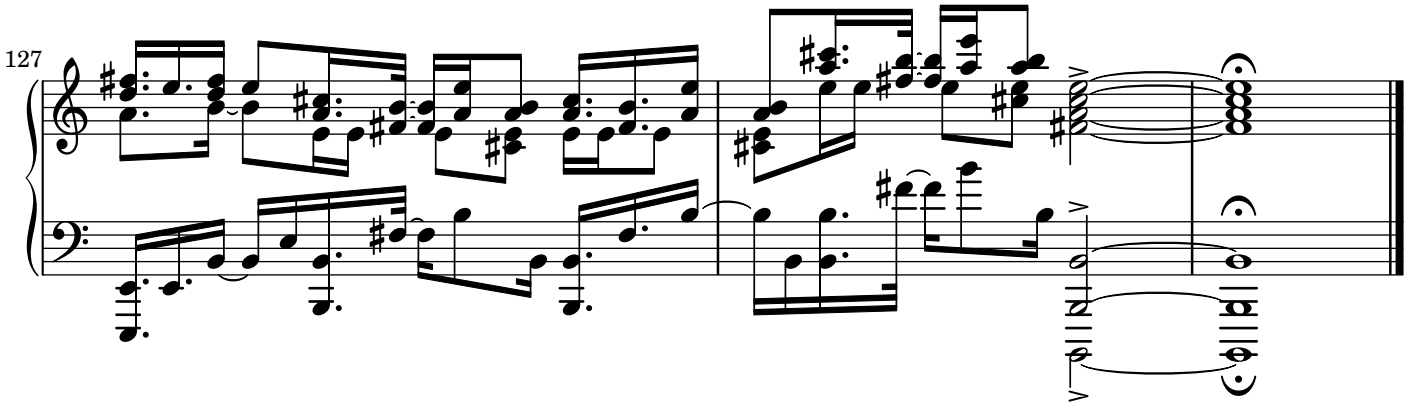

32
p
37
escape
ff
40
distress
f
43
3
46
3
3


49
mf
slow
53
♩ = 60
pp
p
59
mf
63
65


67
f
70
ff
74
f
mf
78
84
pp


89
mf cresc.
r.h.
93
(cresc.)
l.h.
96
(cresc.)
99
(cresc.)
102
(cresc.)
105
fff
p
mp


110
115
p
ff
119
122
fff
125


127

Epilogue

soloist & SATB chorus a cappella

2022

with words of
Richard Adams

4 mins 50 secs (approx.)

Richard Adams, in *Watership Down*:

They went out past the young sentry, who paid the visitor no attention. The sun was shining and in spite of the cold there were a few bucks and does at silflay, keeping out of the wind.

It seemed to Hazel that he would not need his body any more, so he left it lying on the edge of the ditch. He stopped to watch his rabbits for a moment.

He tried to get used to the extraordinary feeling that strength and speed were flowing inexhaustibly out of him into their sleek young bodies and healthy senses.

'You needn't worry about them. They will be all right and thousands like them. If you'll come along, I'll show you what I mean.'

His companion reached the top of the bank in a single, powerful leap. Hazel followed; and together they slipped away, running easily down through the wood, where the first primroses were beginning to bloom.

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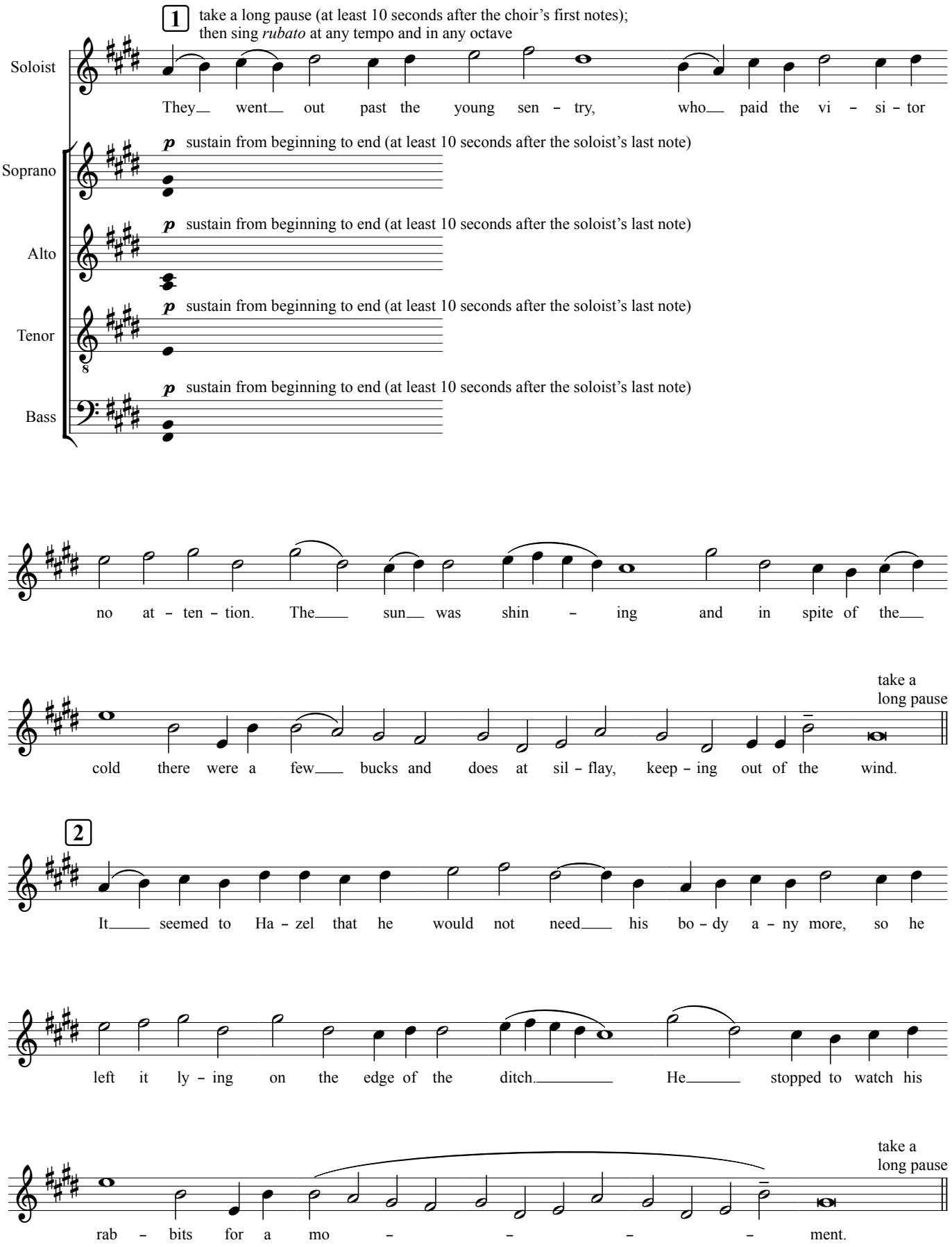
Epilogue

RICHARD ADAMS



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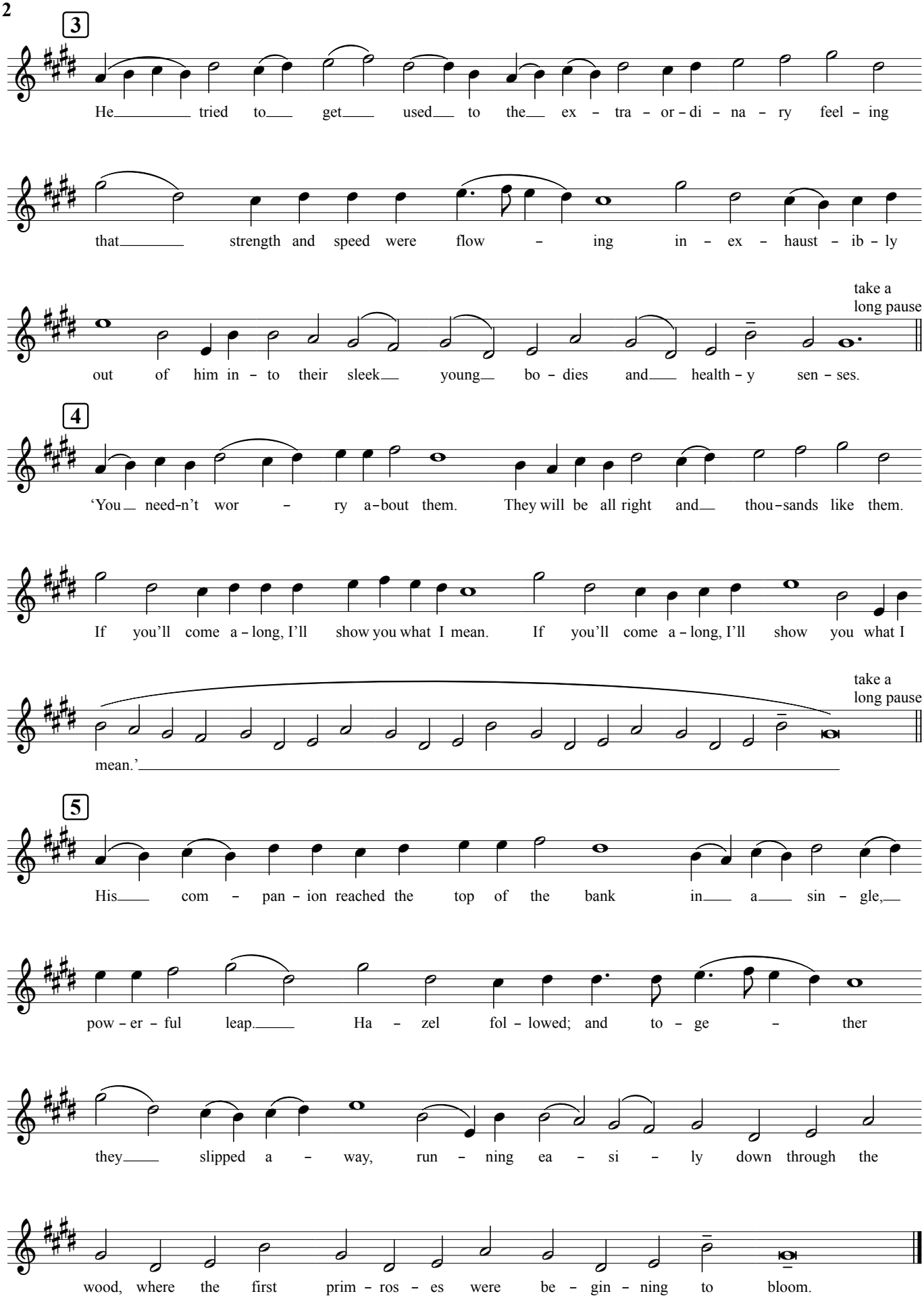
3
He tried to get used to the ex - tra - or - di - na - ry feel - ing
that strength and speed were flow - ing in - ex - haust - ib - ly
take a long pause
out of him in - to their sleek young bo - dies and health - y sen - ses.
4
'You need-n't wor - ry a-bout them. They will be all right and thou-sands like them.
If you'll come a - long, I'll show you what I mean. If you'll come a - long, I'll show you what I
take a long pause
mean.'
5
His com - pan - ion reached the top of the bank in a sin - gle,
pow - er - ful leap. Ha - zel fol - lowed; and to - ge - ther
they slipped a - way, run - ning ea - si - ly down through the
wood, where the first prim - ros - es were be - gin - ning to bloom.

The Burn of the Stars

solo piano

2022

9 mins 5 secs (approx.)

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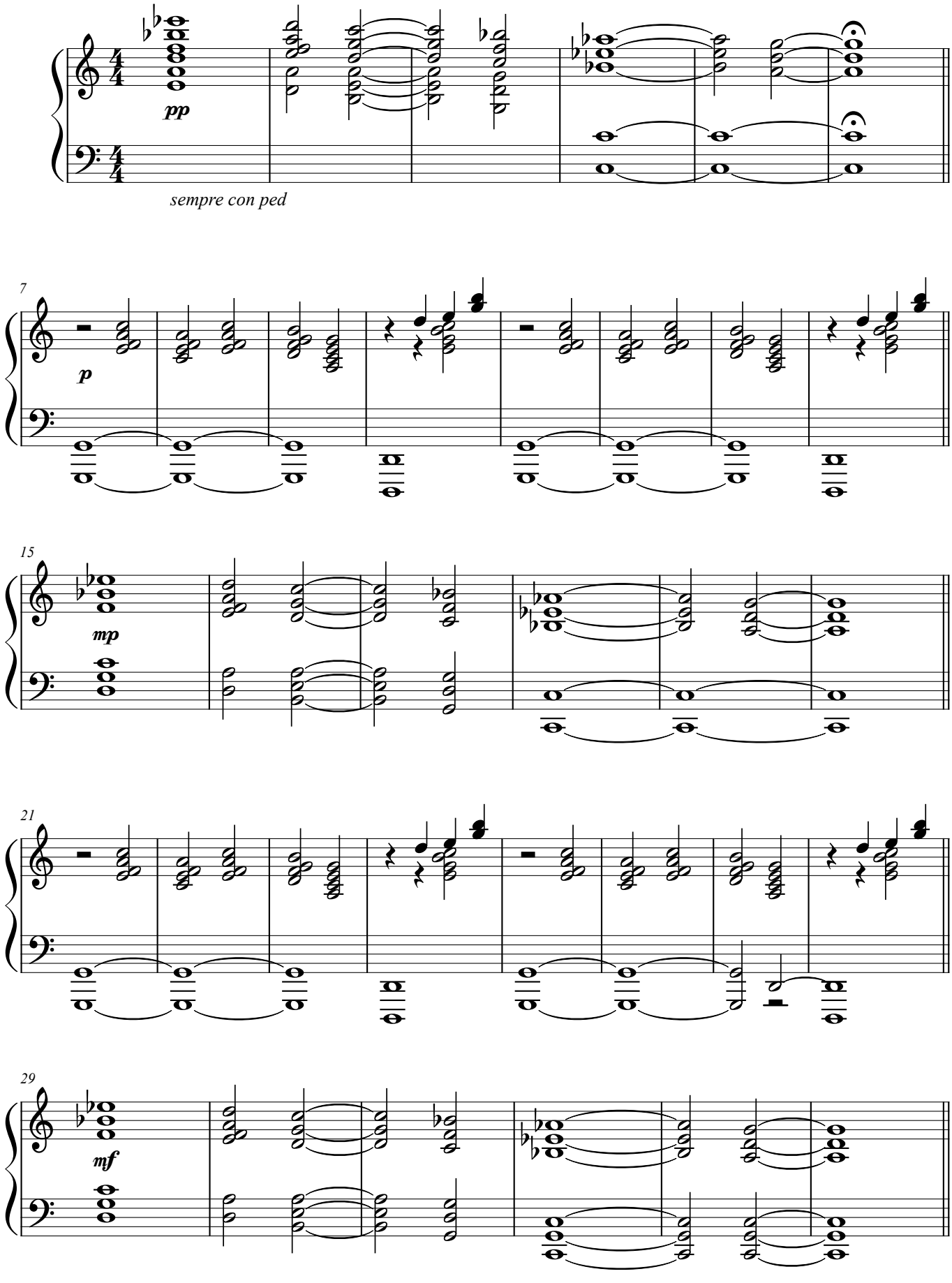
The Burn of the Stars



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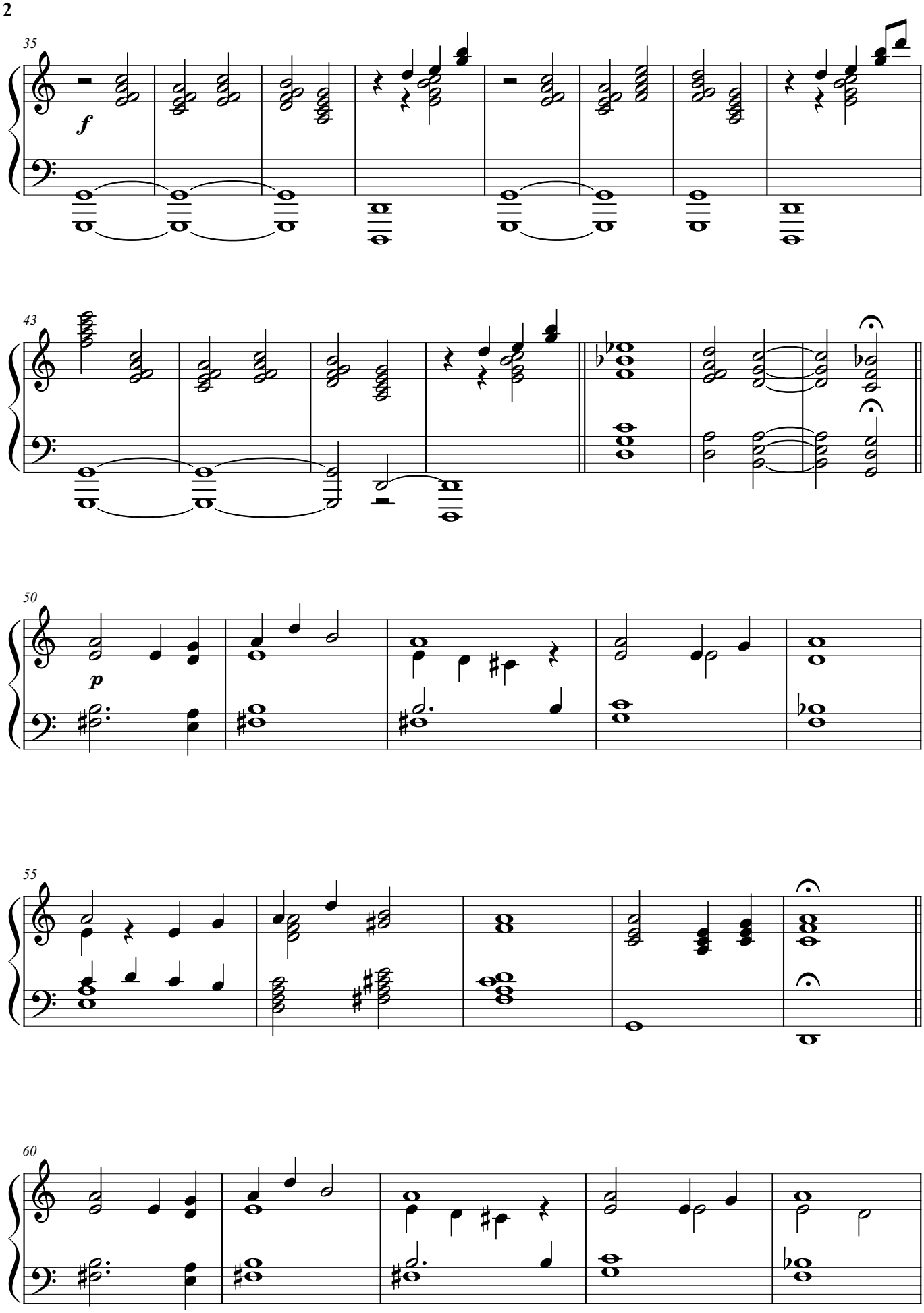
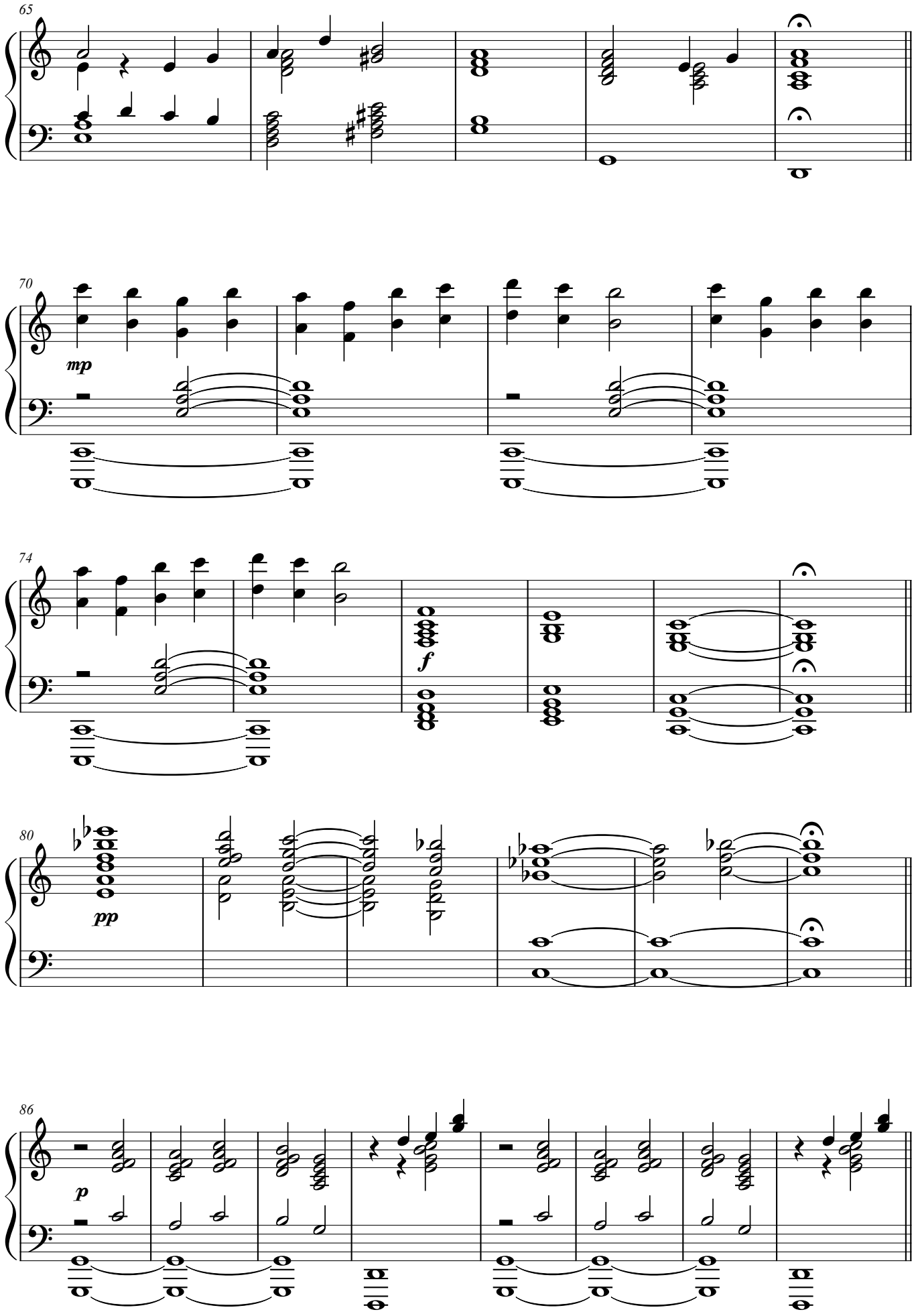
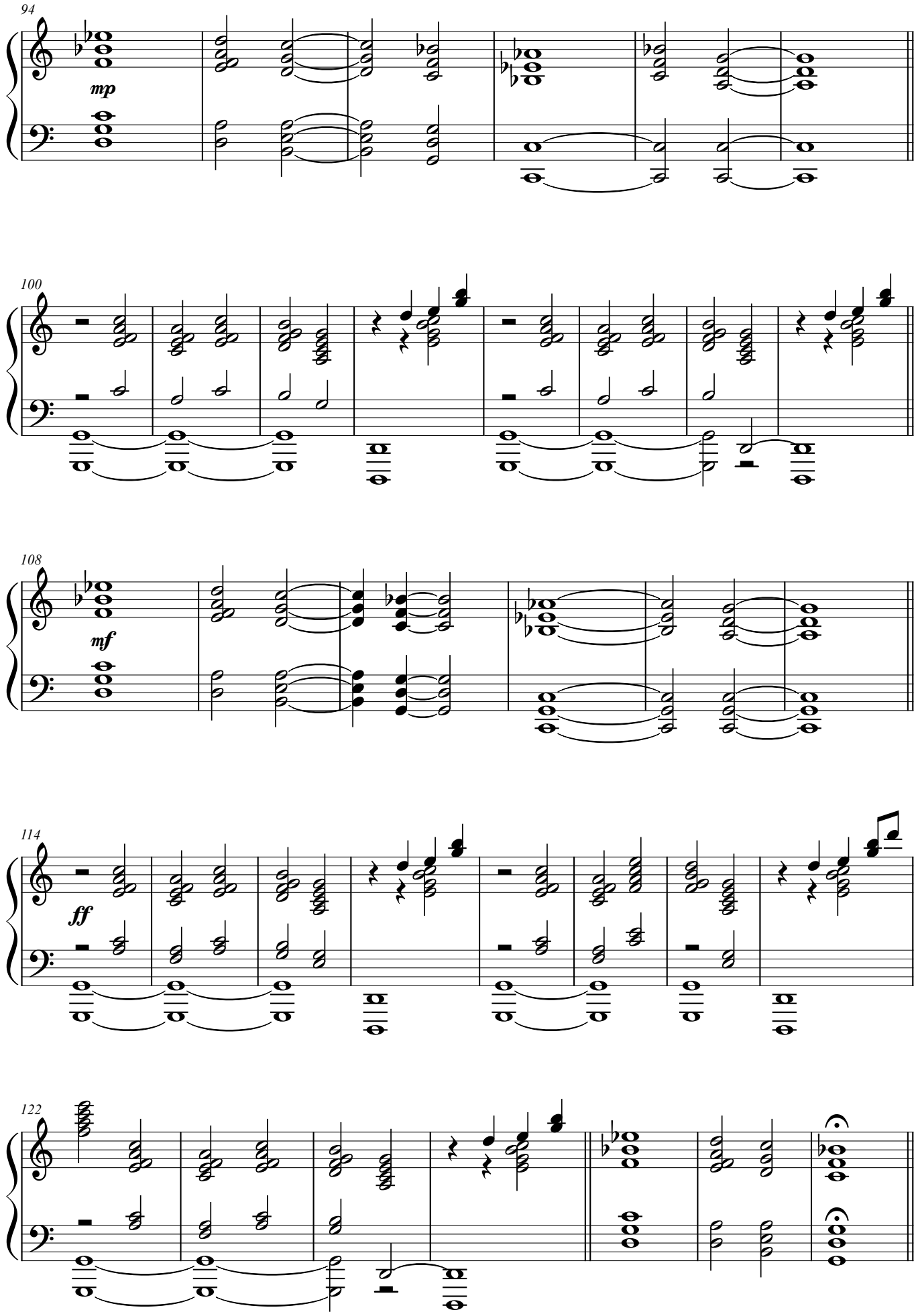
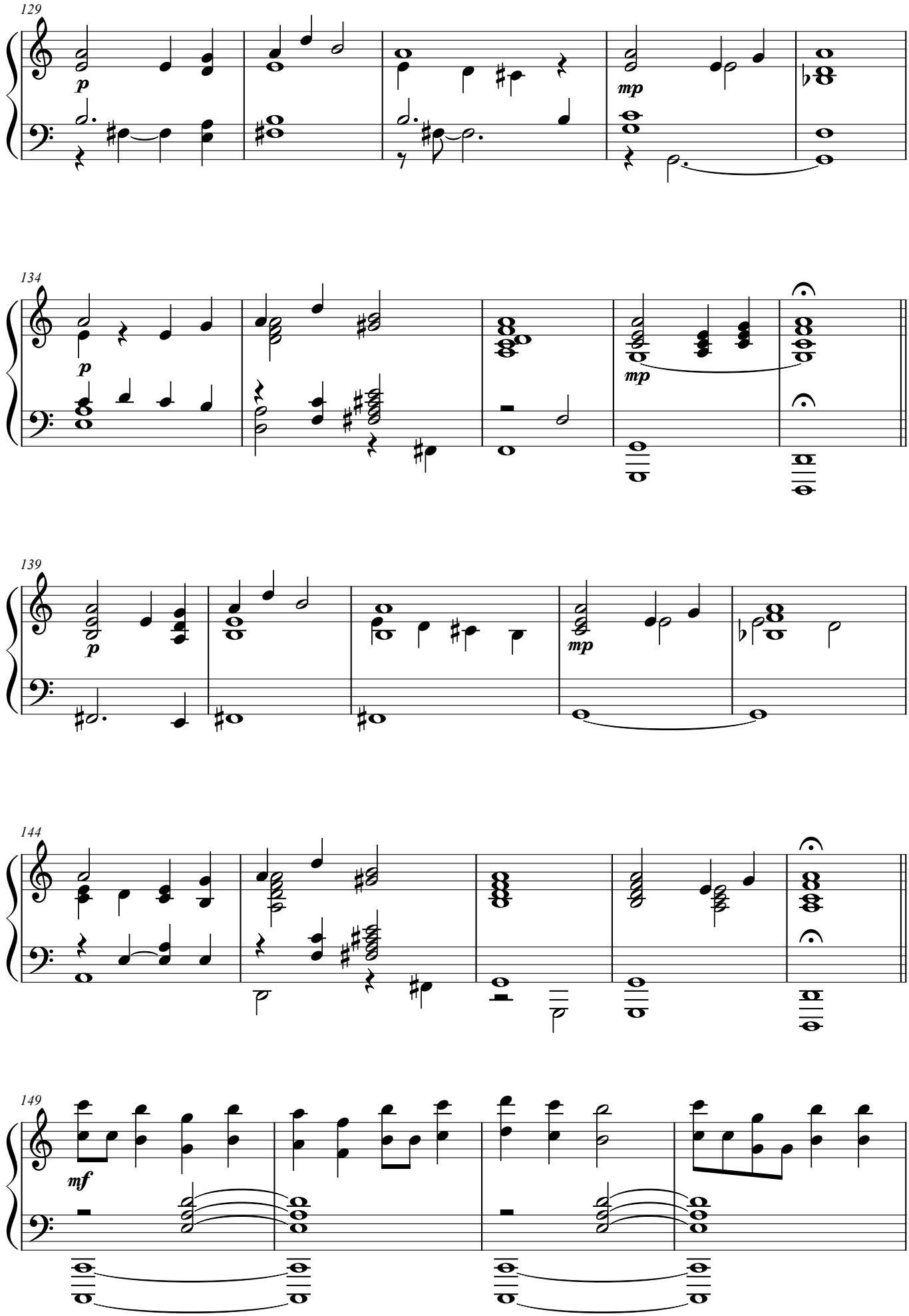
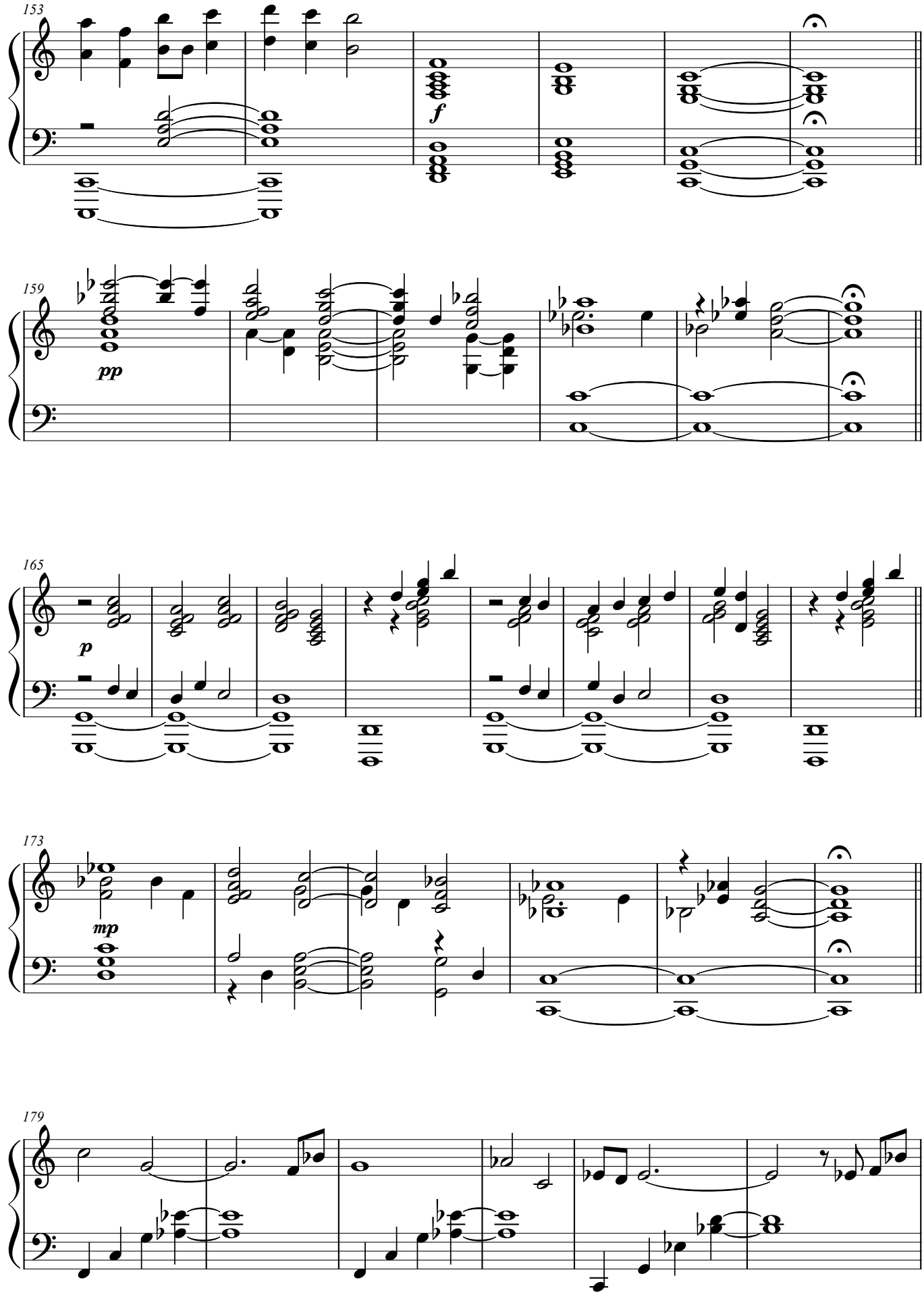

35
f
43
50
p
55
60


65
70
mp
74
f
80
pp
86
p


94
mp
100
108
mf
114
ff
122


129
p
mp
134
p
mp
139
p
mp
144
149
mf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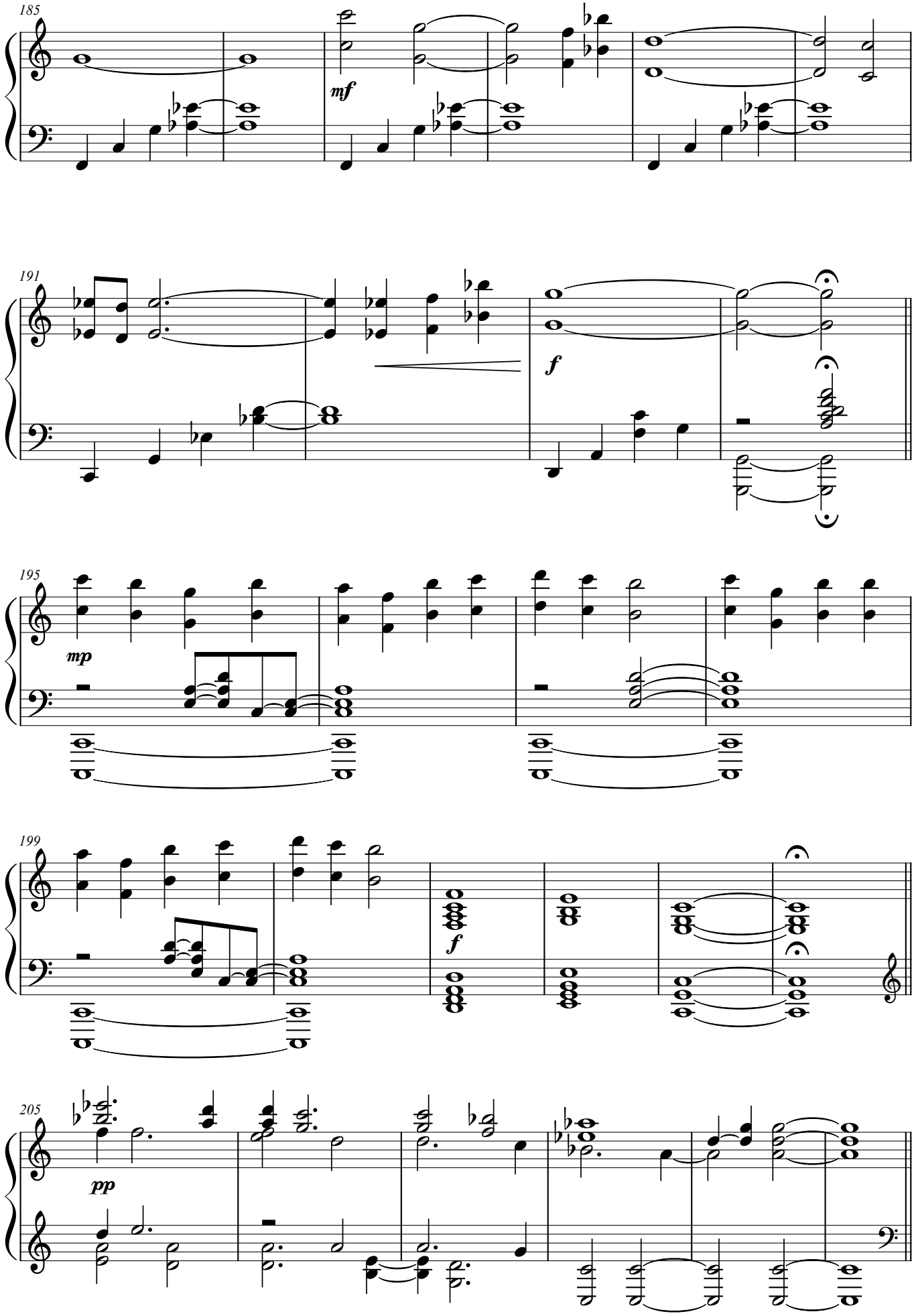
f
159
pp
165
p
173
mp
179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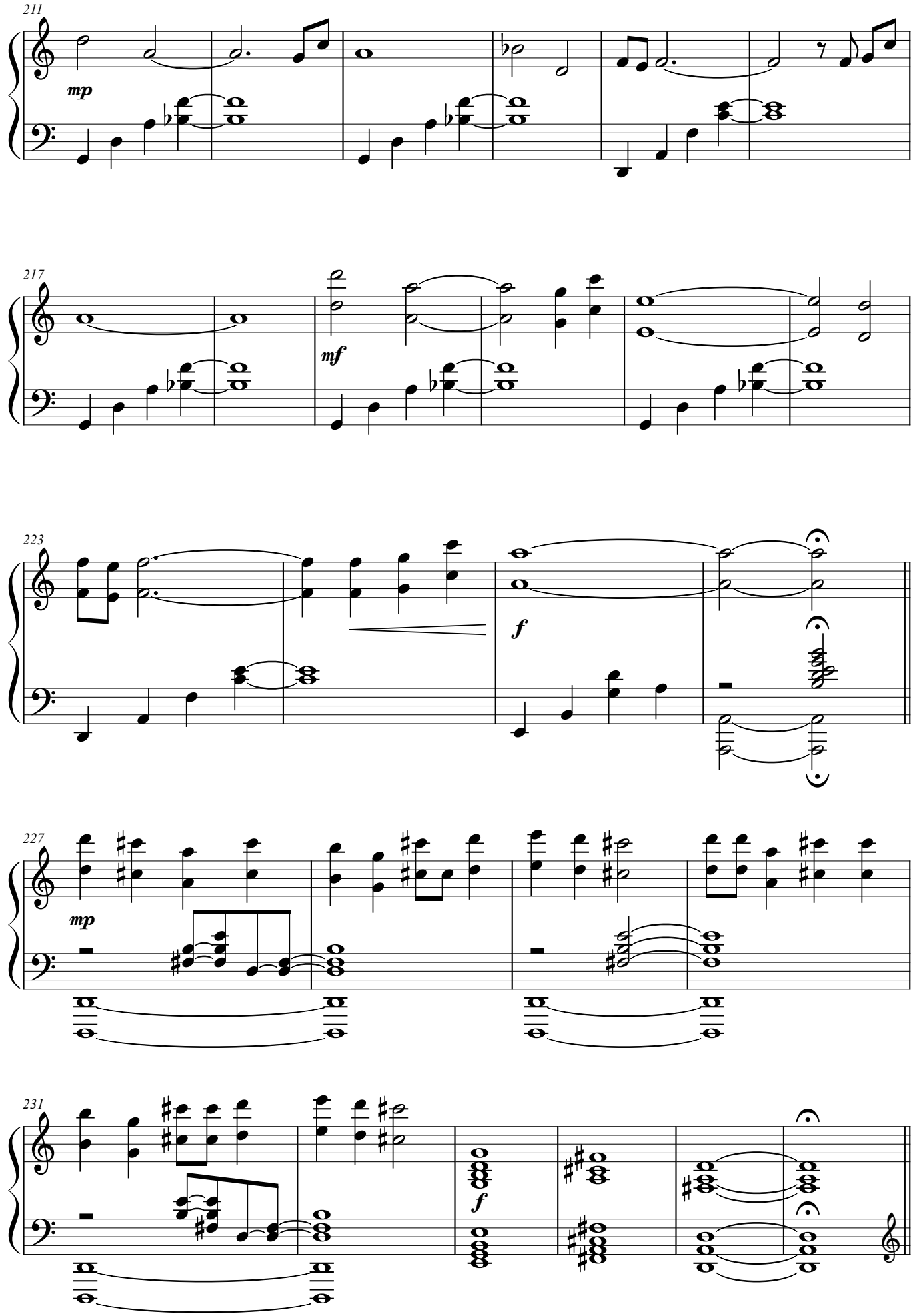
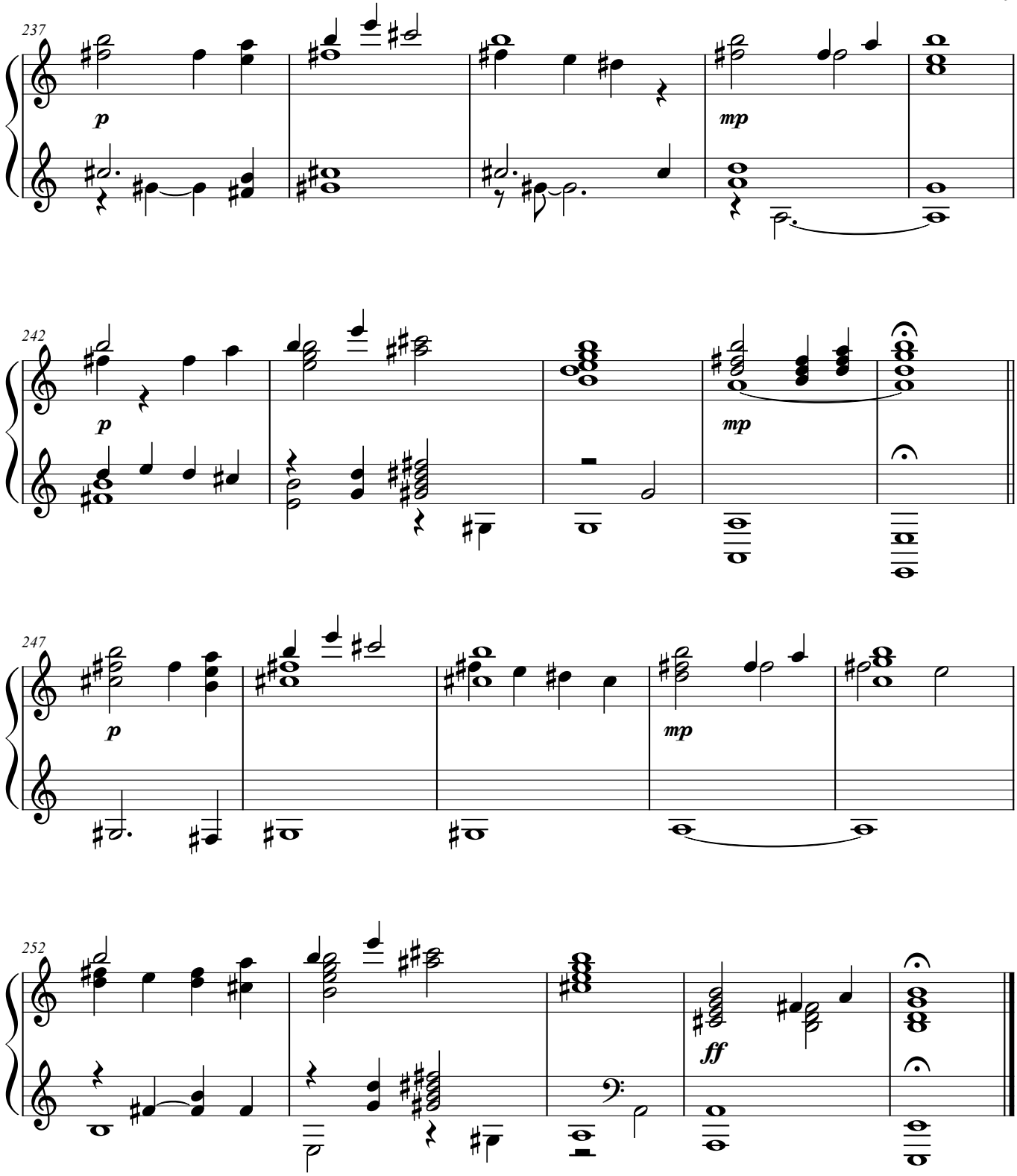
mf
191
f
195
mp
199
f
205
pp


211
mp
217
mf
223
f
227
mp
231
f


237
p
mp
242
p
mp
247
p
mp
252
ff

Polar Counterpoint

pure composition
(no prescribed instruments)

2022

Polar Counterpoint:

Apophthegm

Counterpoint is the pleasing co-ordination of independent melodies.

Key Harmony Class

A polar-harmony class that characterises a passage of music.

E.g., 47d25b (2:2)

Polar Consonance

Any constituent of the key harmony class (KHC).

E.g., 2b or 7d (of 47d25b)

Polar Dissonance

Any constituent not of the key harmony class.

E.g., 3d (not of 47d25b)

Good Old Rule

Avoid direct motion into a traditional perfect consonance (unison, 5th, 8ve).

Good New Rule

Leap to a note only if the pitch class from which you leap appears in the succeeding harmony.

Polar Cantus Firmus

The melody to which one composes polar counterpoint. (It can be anything.)

Principle of Unity

The object tones' progression (i.e., the melody of the lowest pitches) determines the transpositions of harmonies. Depending on the key harmony class, certain progressions (melodies) will yield different effects. Some will yield adjacent harmonies most of whose pcs are the same. This is a tranquil, unifying effect. Some will yield adjacent harmonies most of whose pcs are different. This is a disruptive, individualising effect.

Principle of Presence

Aim to include each constituent of the key harmony class in each harmony. Without them, the tonal ear may fill in the gaps in undesirable ways.

First Species

Composition of two or more voices that 1) use coinciding notes of equal length and 2) form only polar consonances. Use at least once each constituent of the key harmony class (so as to confirm it).

Ex. 1: bar 4 beat 2 – 2b, 5b and 7d of KHC (47d25b)

Second Species

Composition of two or more voices one of which uses two notes for every one of the others'. The second of the shorter notes may be a polar dissonance. In each case, step onto it; then step off of it and onto a polar consonance.

Ex. 2: bar 31 beat 2 – here 6b, not of KHC (47d25b), is reached from 7d and steps to 2b

Third Species

Composition of two or more voices one of which uses four notes for every one of the others'. The second and fourth of the shorter notes may be a polar dissonance. The third of the shorter notes may be a polar dissonance if the second and fourth are polar consonances. In each case, step onto it; then step off of it and onto a polar consonance.

Ex. 3: bar 15 beats 3–4 – 3d, not of KHC (47d25b), is reached from OT and 2b and steps to 4d

Fourth Species

Composition of two or more voices one of which uses syncopated notes. The syncopated note may be a polar dissonance on the downbeat (its second half). In this case, step off of it downward and onto a polar consonance.

Ex. 4: Bar 17 beats 1–2 – 4d becomes 3b, not of KHC (4d2567b), via OT movement and resolves by downward step to 2b

3 mins 40 secs (approx.)

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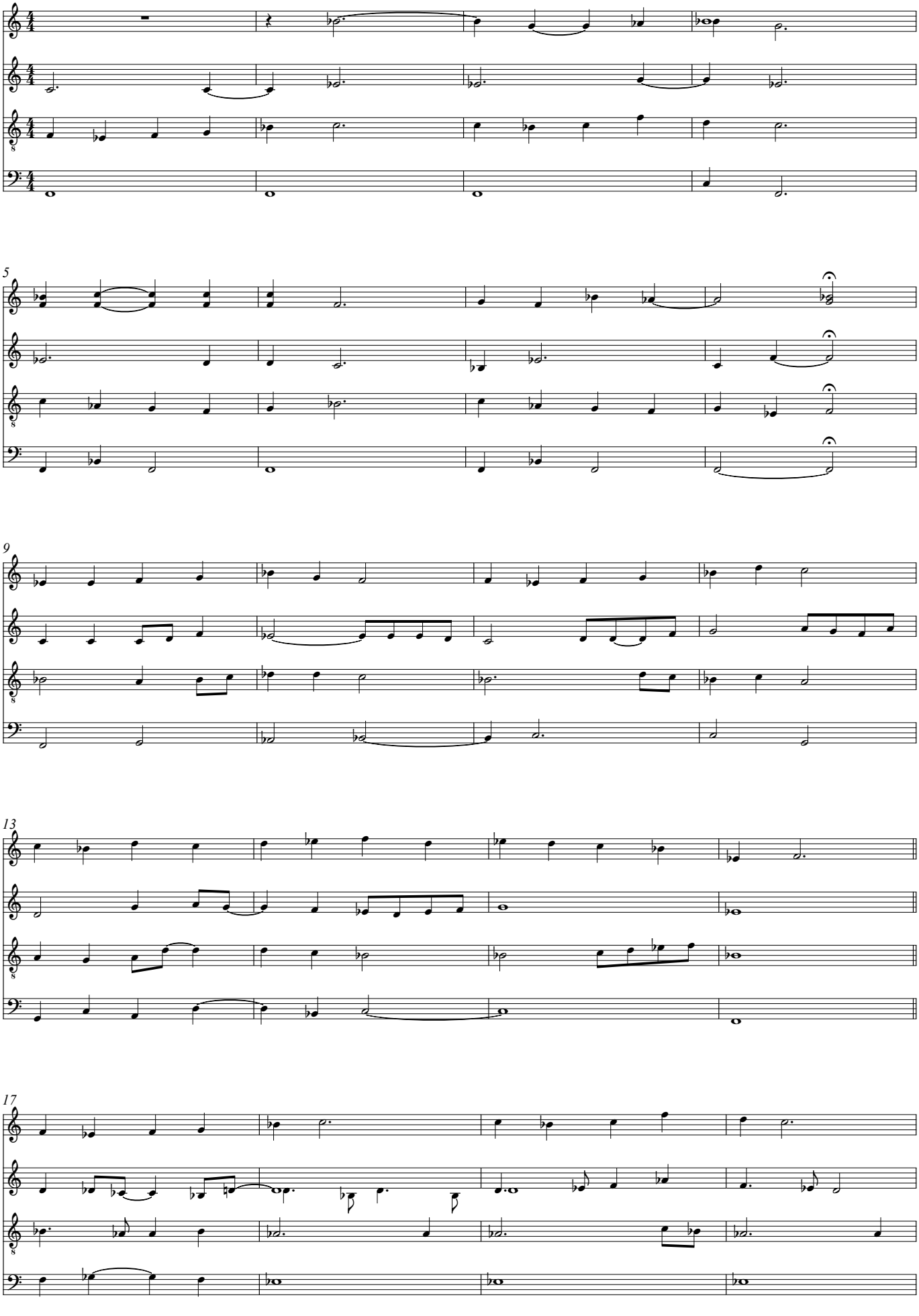

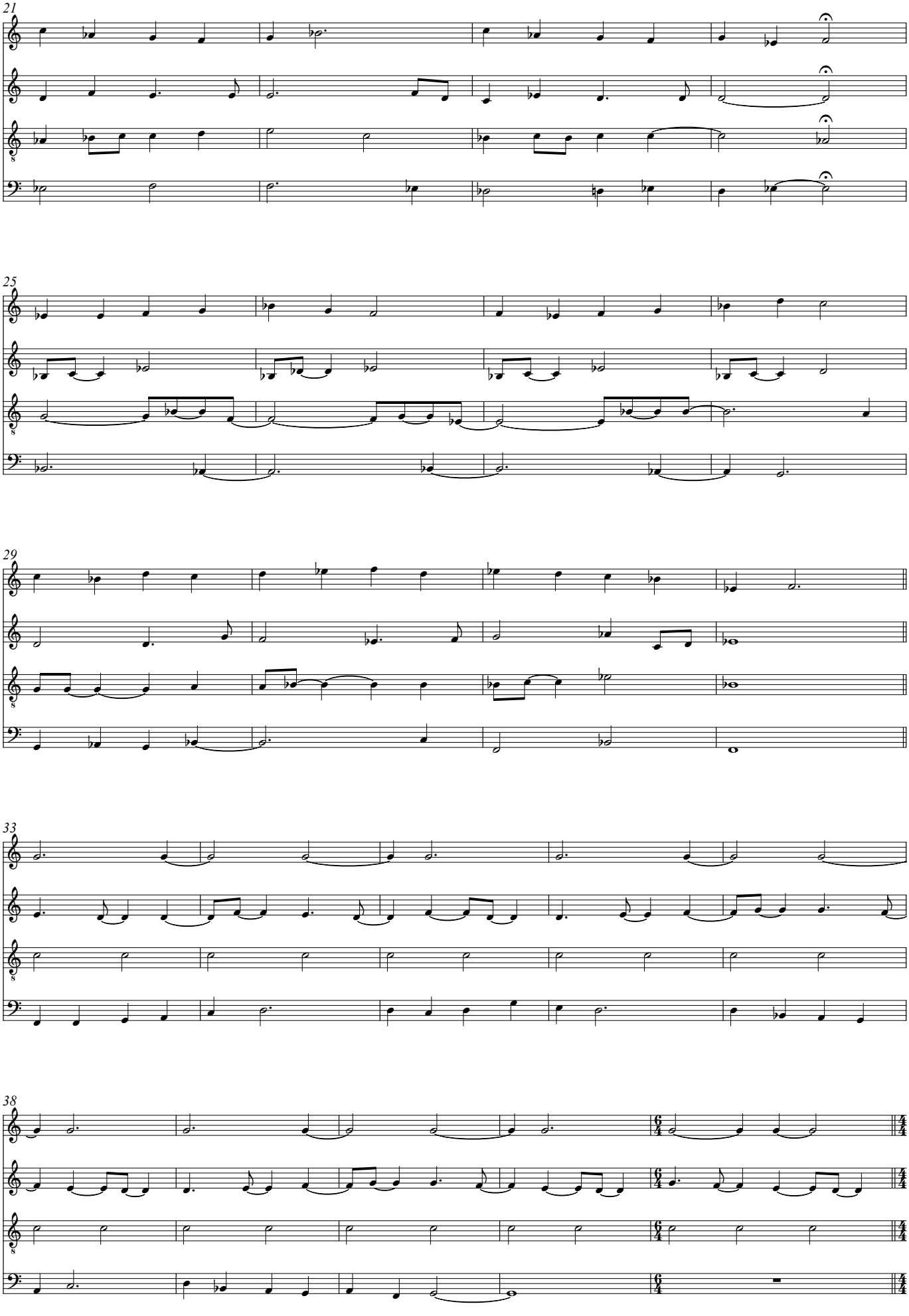
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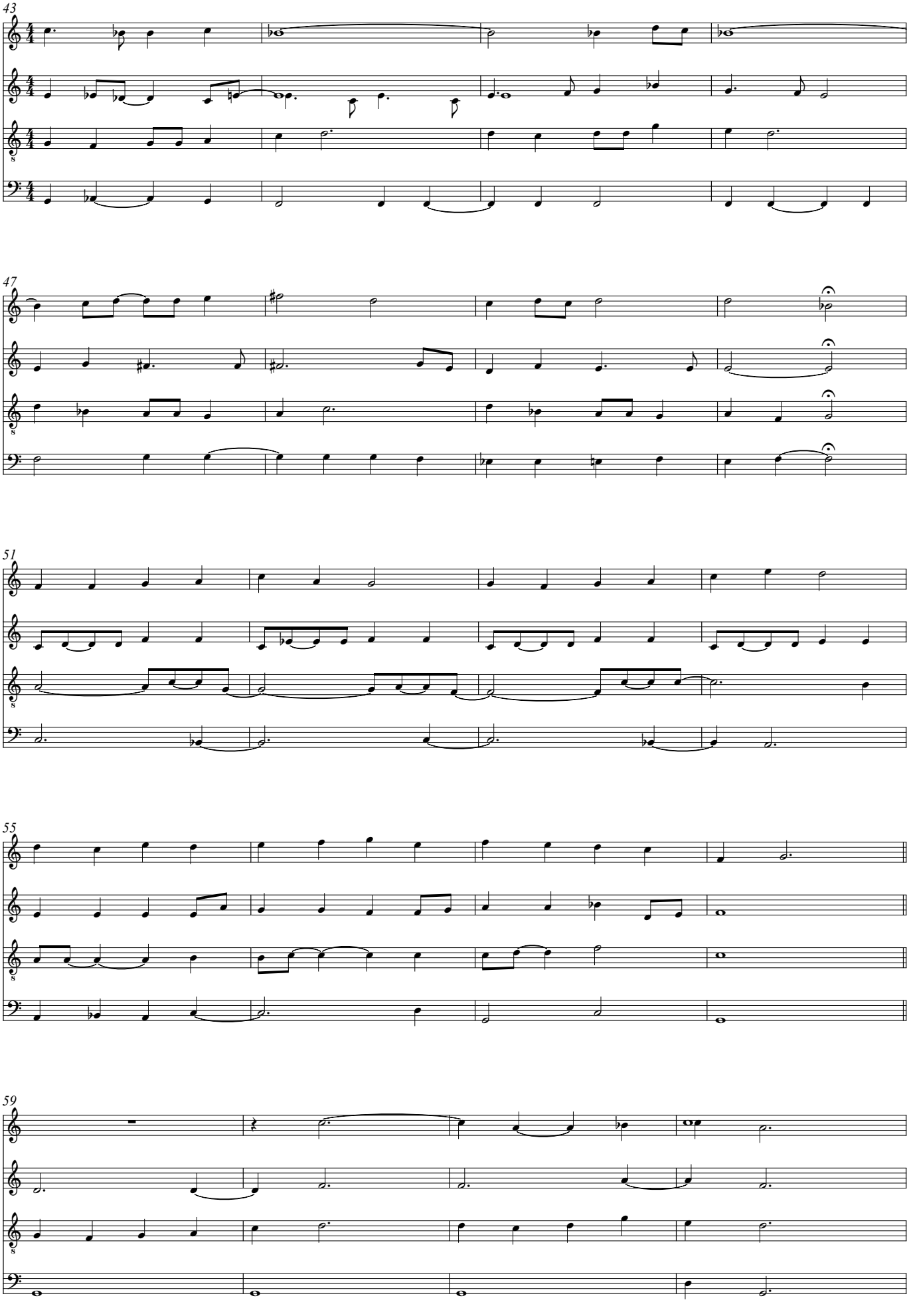
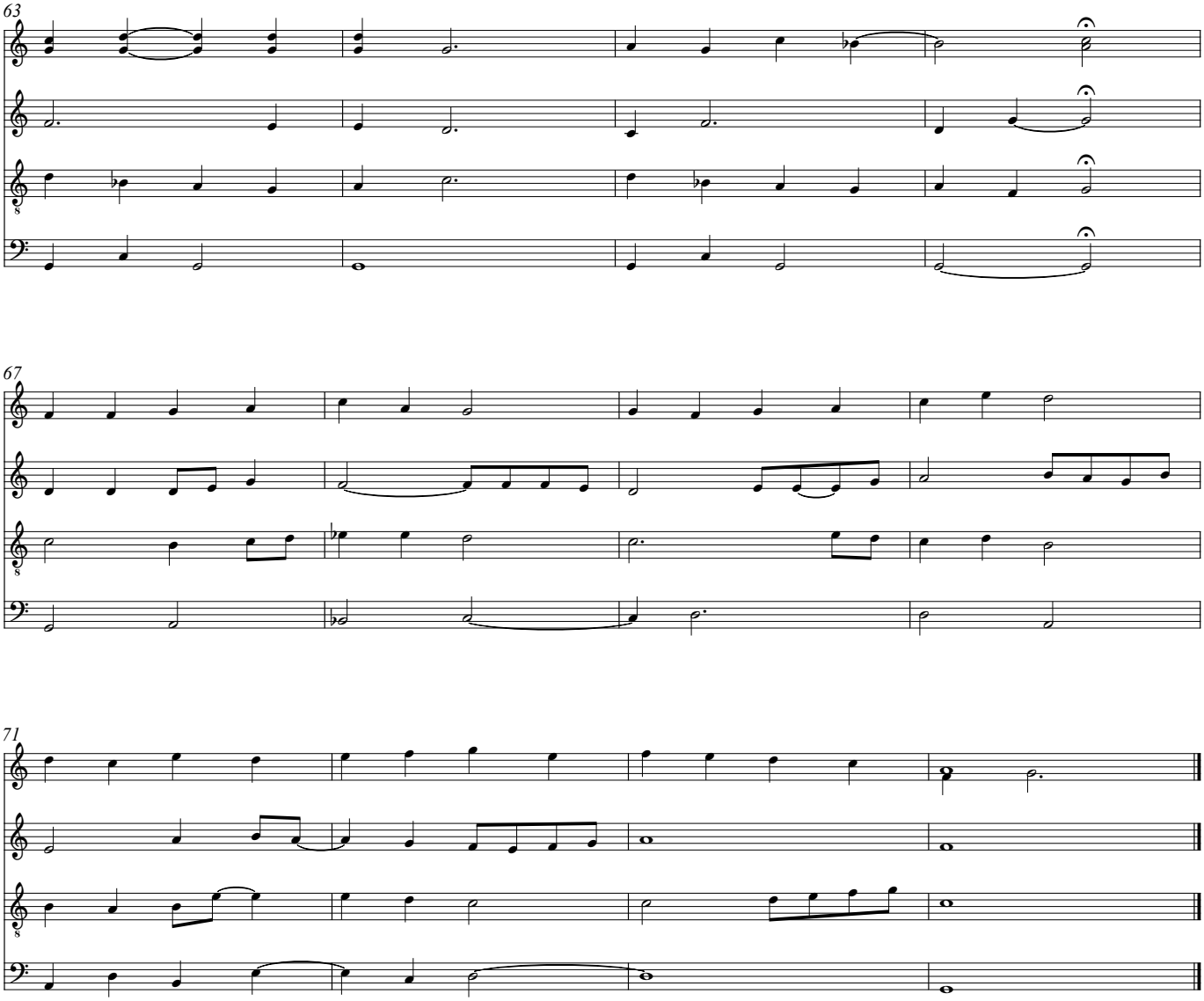
25
29
33
38


43
47
51
55
59


63
67
71

Behind the Stars

solo piano

2022

5 mins 10 secs (approx.)

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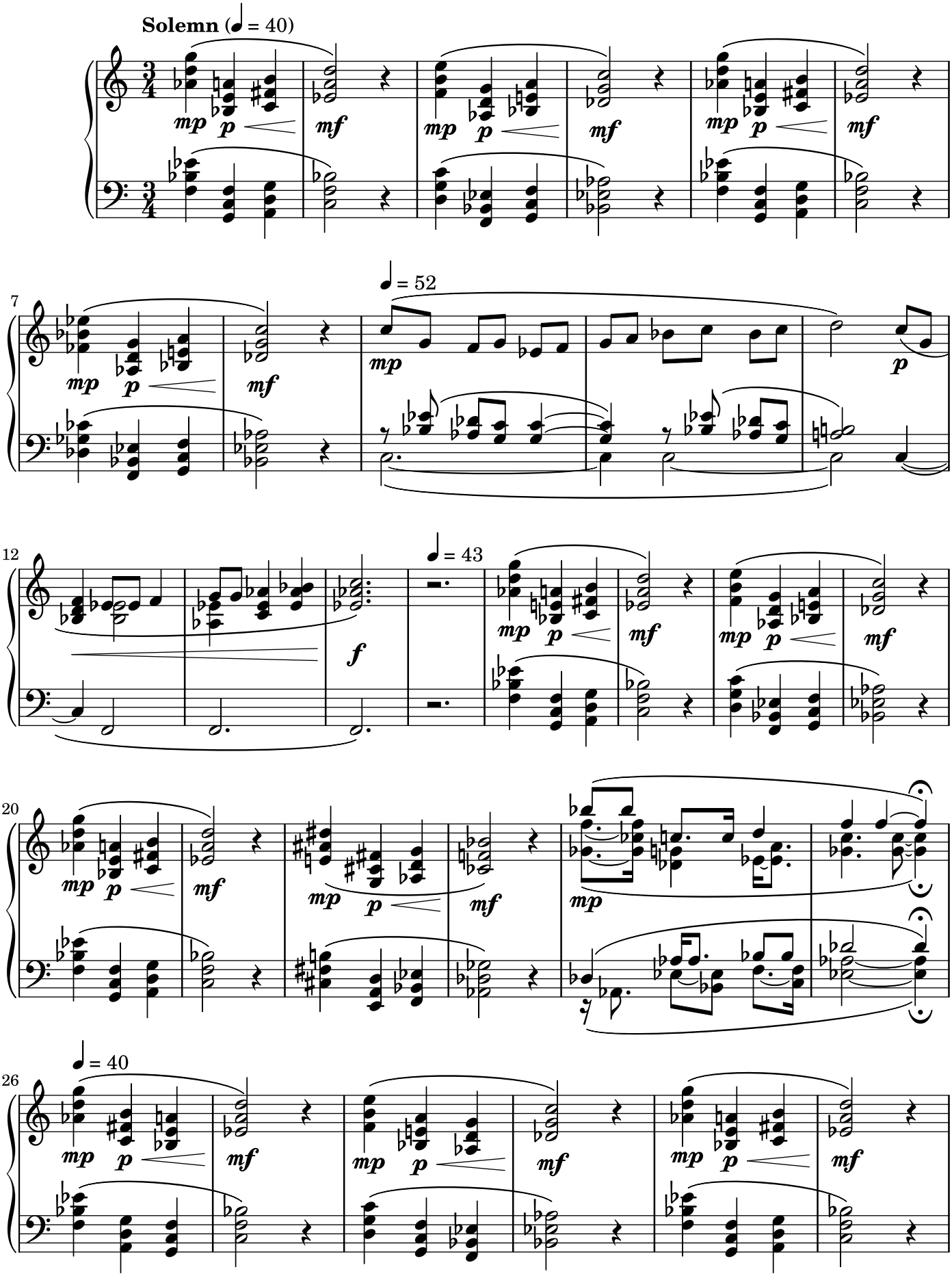
Behind the Stars

2408109



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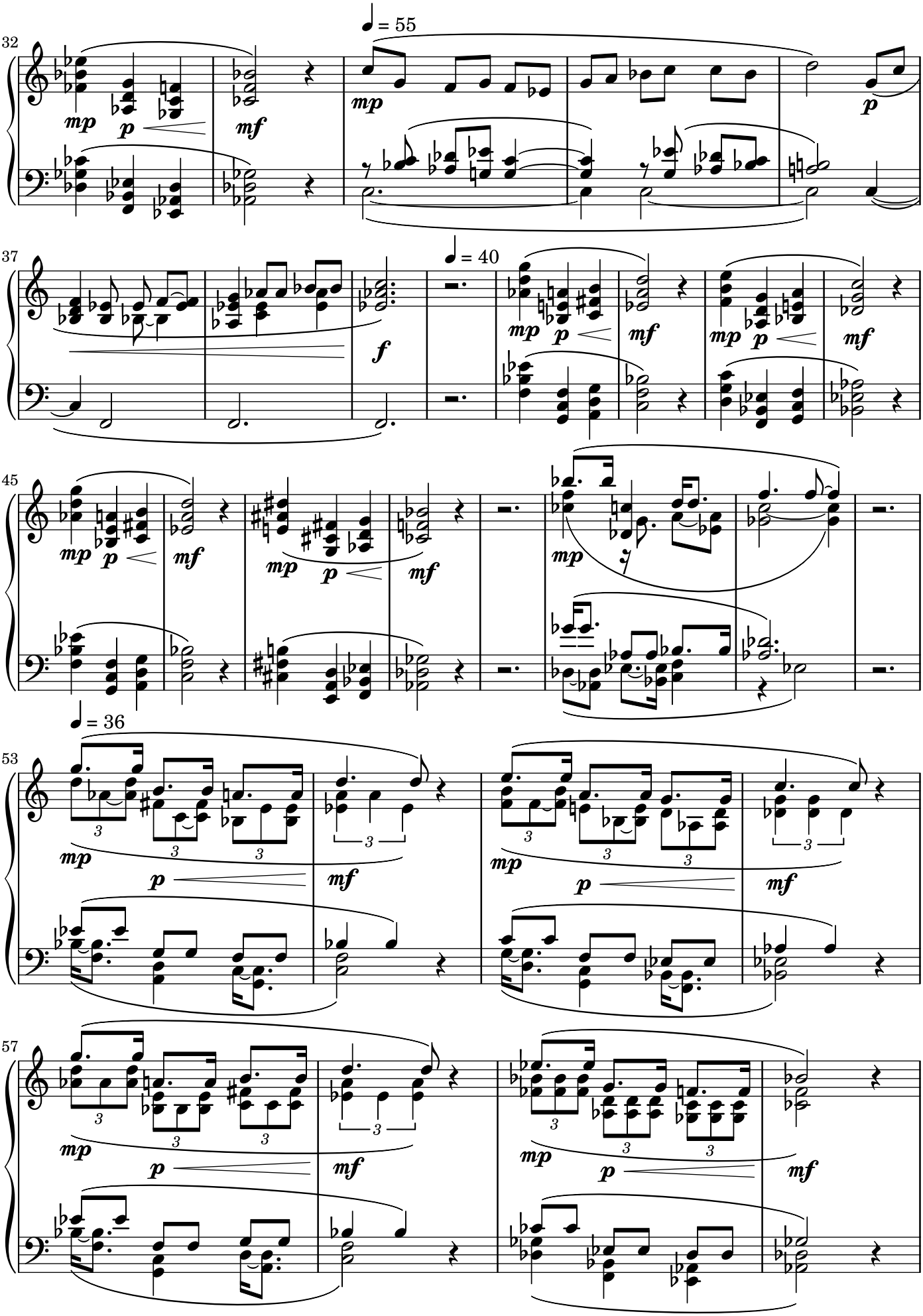
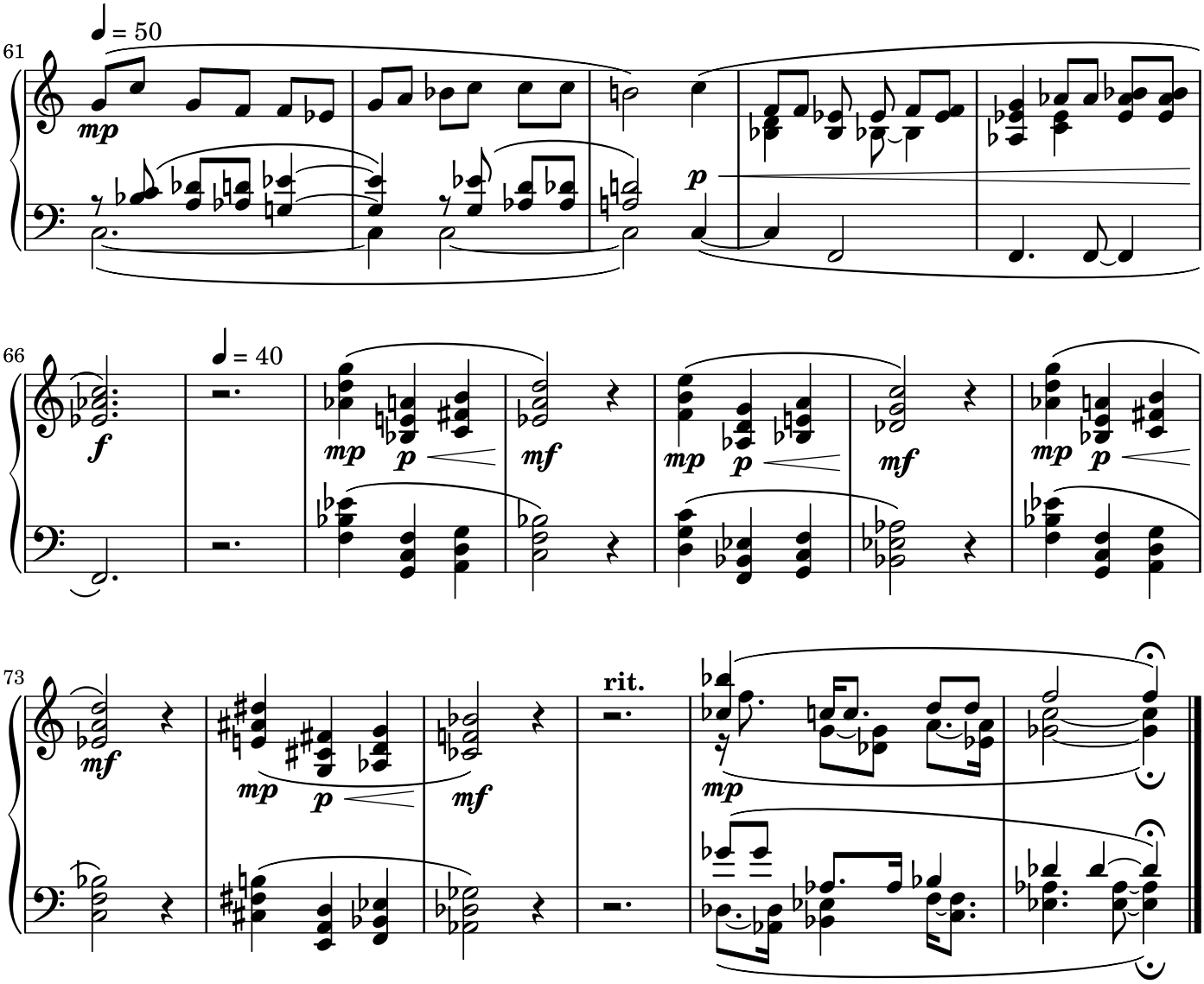

32
♩ = 55
mp
p
mf
mp
p
37
f
♩ = 40
mp
p
mf
mp
p
mf
45
mp
p
mf
mp
p
mf
mp
♩ = 36
53
mp
p
mf
mp
p
mf
57
mp
p
mf
mp
p
mf


61
♩ = 50
mp
p
66
♩ = 40
f
mp
p
mf
73
rit.

Sandleford

two solo sopranos & SATB chorus a cappella

2023

with words of
Richard Adams

12 mins (approx.)

Characters:

Bluebell – first (uppermost) stave

Holly – second stave

Richard Adams, in *Watership Down*:

(Holly)
The night you left the warren the Owsla were turned out to look for you. We followed your scent down to the brook, but you appeared to have set off downstream. I called off the search.

Nothing unusual happened the next day. Everyone knew that Fiver had said that something bad was going to happen. Willow and I talked things over with the Threarah. 'To evacuate a warren is a tremendous business,' he said. 'At the best, you've got a big bunch of hlessil trailing round the open. The remedy's worse than the disease. It's better for the warren if rabbits sit tight and dodge their dangers underground.'

The next day it began to rain. I saw some men come through the gate. Whenever they came to a rabbit-hole, one of them would prod at it. I slipped underground. I went to sleep and when I woke there was no sound up above.

The next morning was clear and fine. I wanted to see if there were any early carrots. It can't have been long before ni-Frith when I came back through the wood. I noticed a hrududu in the lane. Men were getting out.

(Bluebell)
I heard the commotion beginning before I smelt the stuff myself. The does seemed to get it first. Very soon the runs were crammed with rabbits clawing and clambering over each other. They went up the runs and found them blocked. Some managed to turn around. They couldn't get back because of the rabbits coming up. The runs began to get blocked with dead rabbits and the live rabbits tore them to pieces.

I was so deep down that I must have been beyond the worst of the bad air. There was another rabbit with me. It was Pimpernel. He was spluttering and gasping. I followed him. He kept forgetting where we were. I was terrified that he was going to die and block the run. We'd got into one of those runs that led out into the wood. I could smell fresh air.

(Holly)
After a long time the men finished. They took the bramble things out of the holes. A boy put the bodies on a stick. A great hrududu came into the field from the lane. It held a great silver, shining thing in its huge front paws.

It tore the field to bits. It destroyed the field. It buried itself into the ground and pushed great masses of earth in front of it until the field was destroyed. I went back through the wood. Three rabbits joined me. Bluebell had been saying the men hated us. Toadflax answered, 'That wasn't why. They killed us to suit themselves.'

Soon after he went to sleep. A little later we tried to wake him and realised he was dead.

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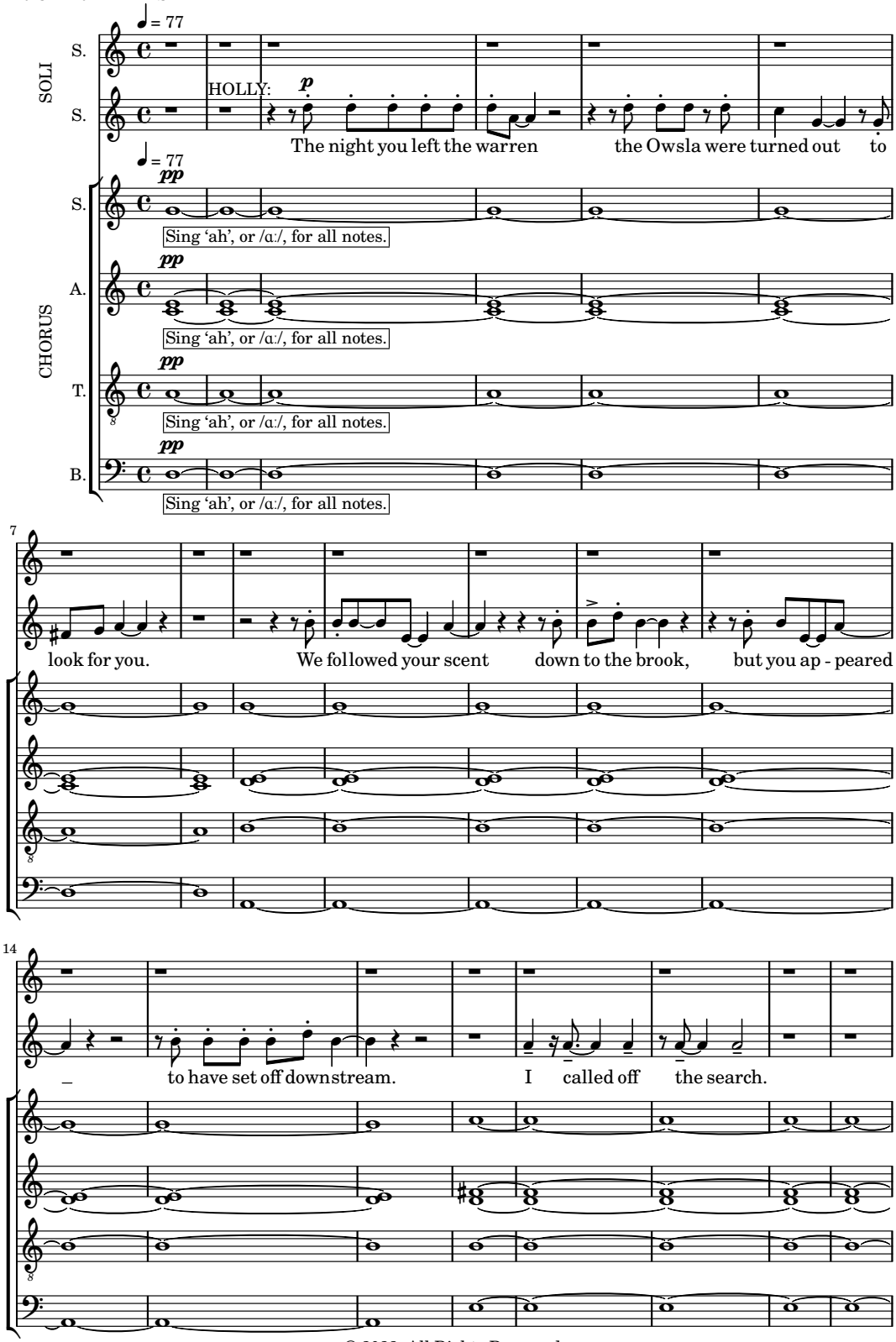
Sandleford

RICHARD ADAMS



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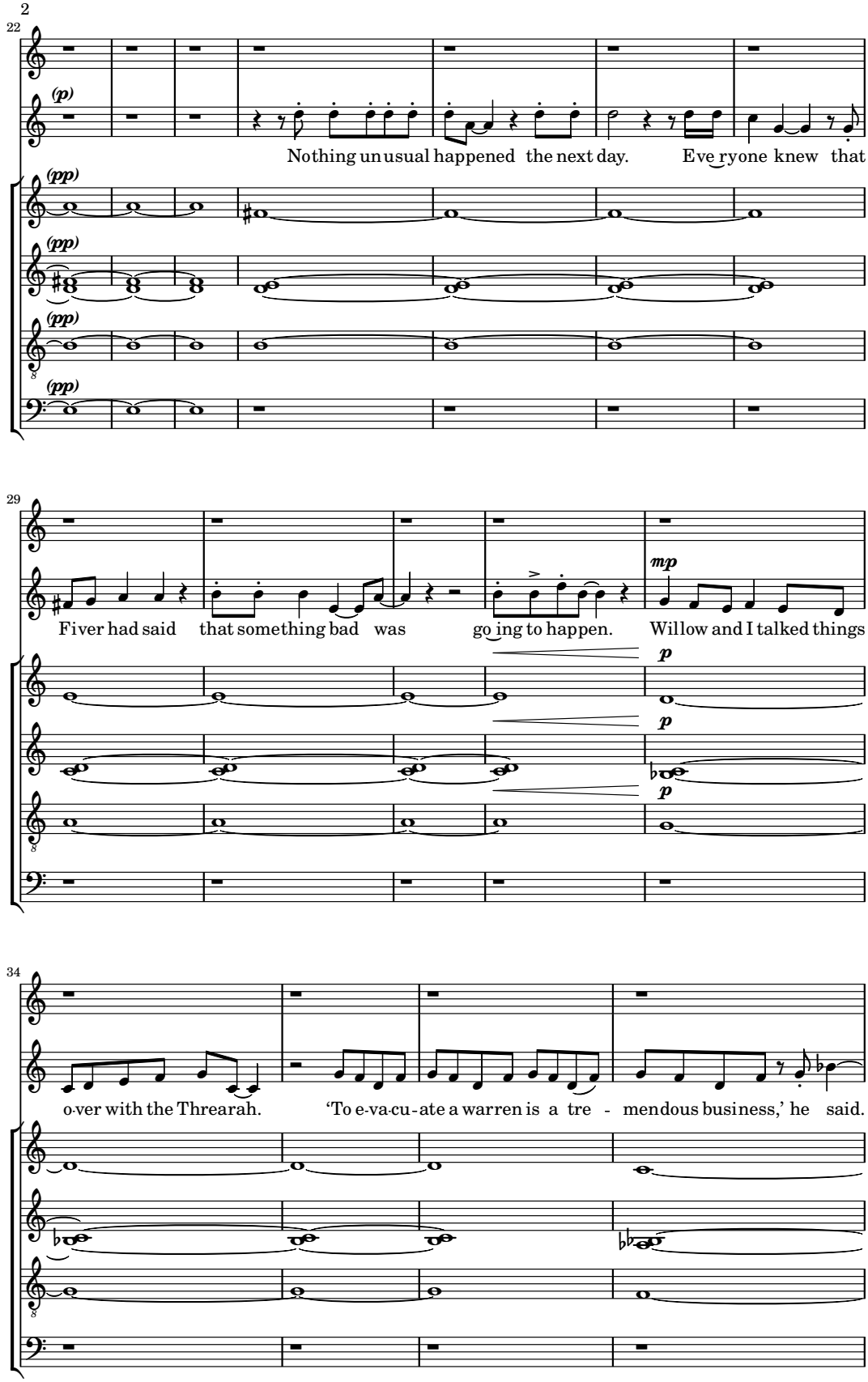
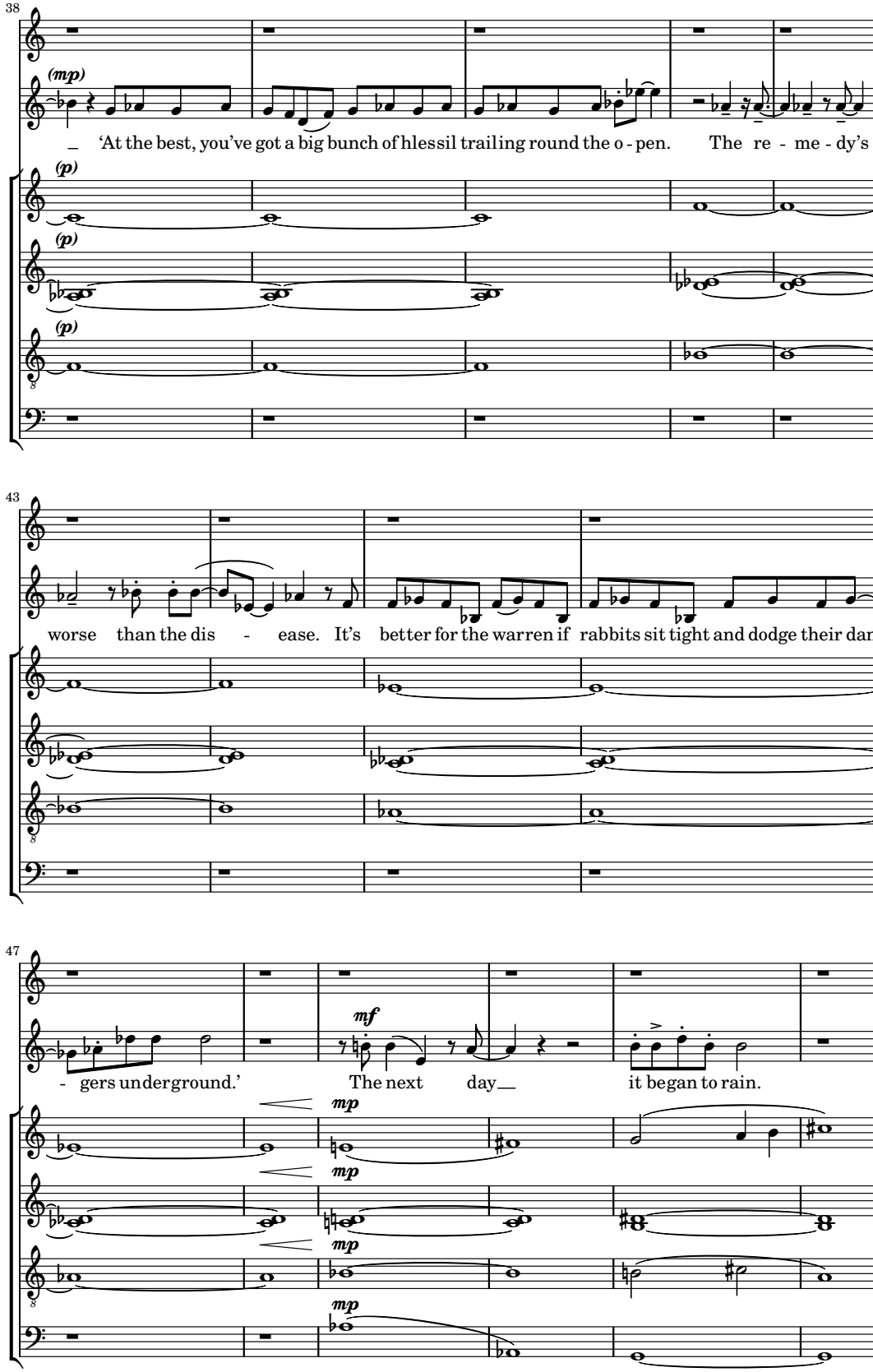
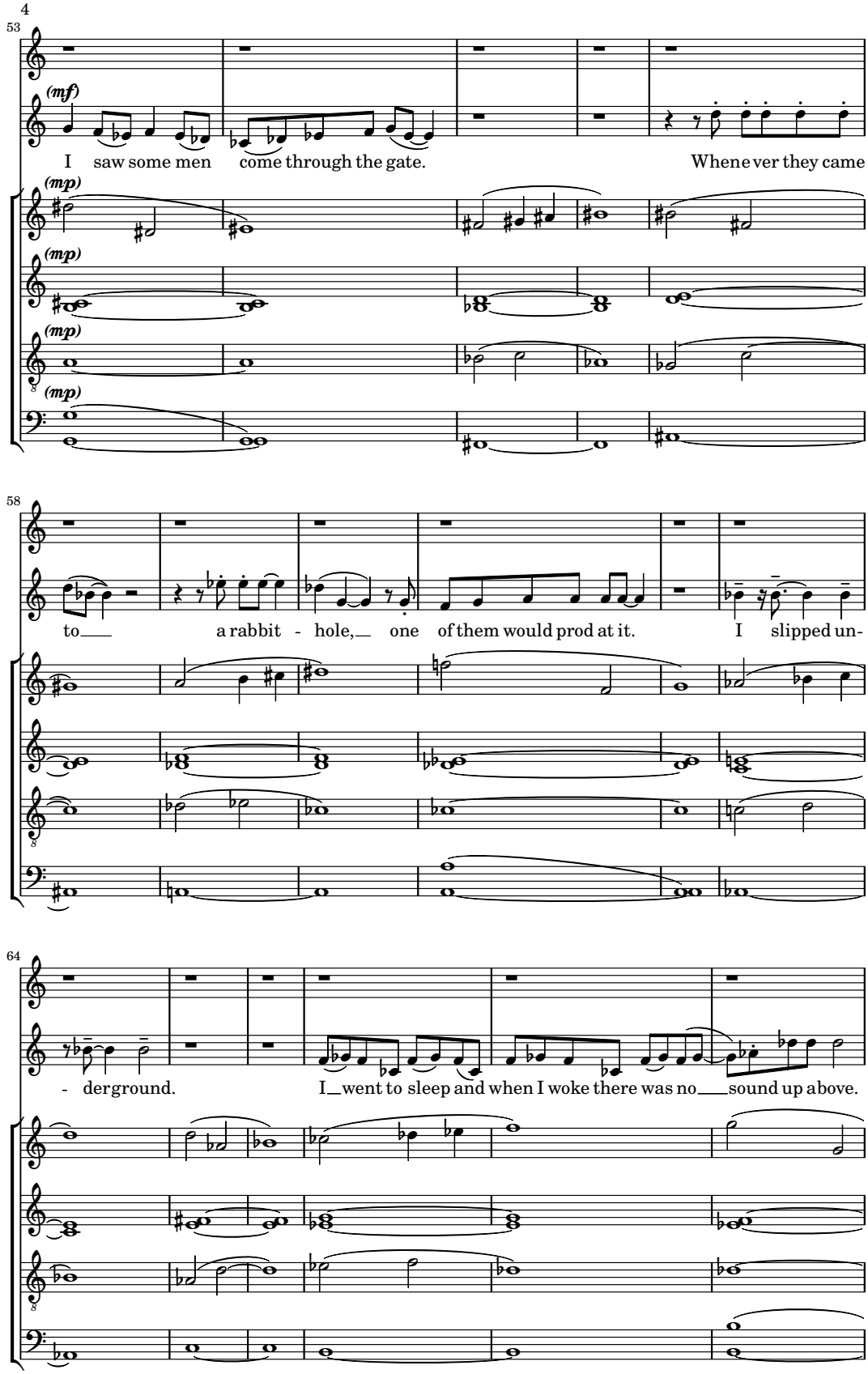
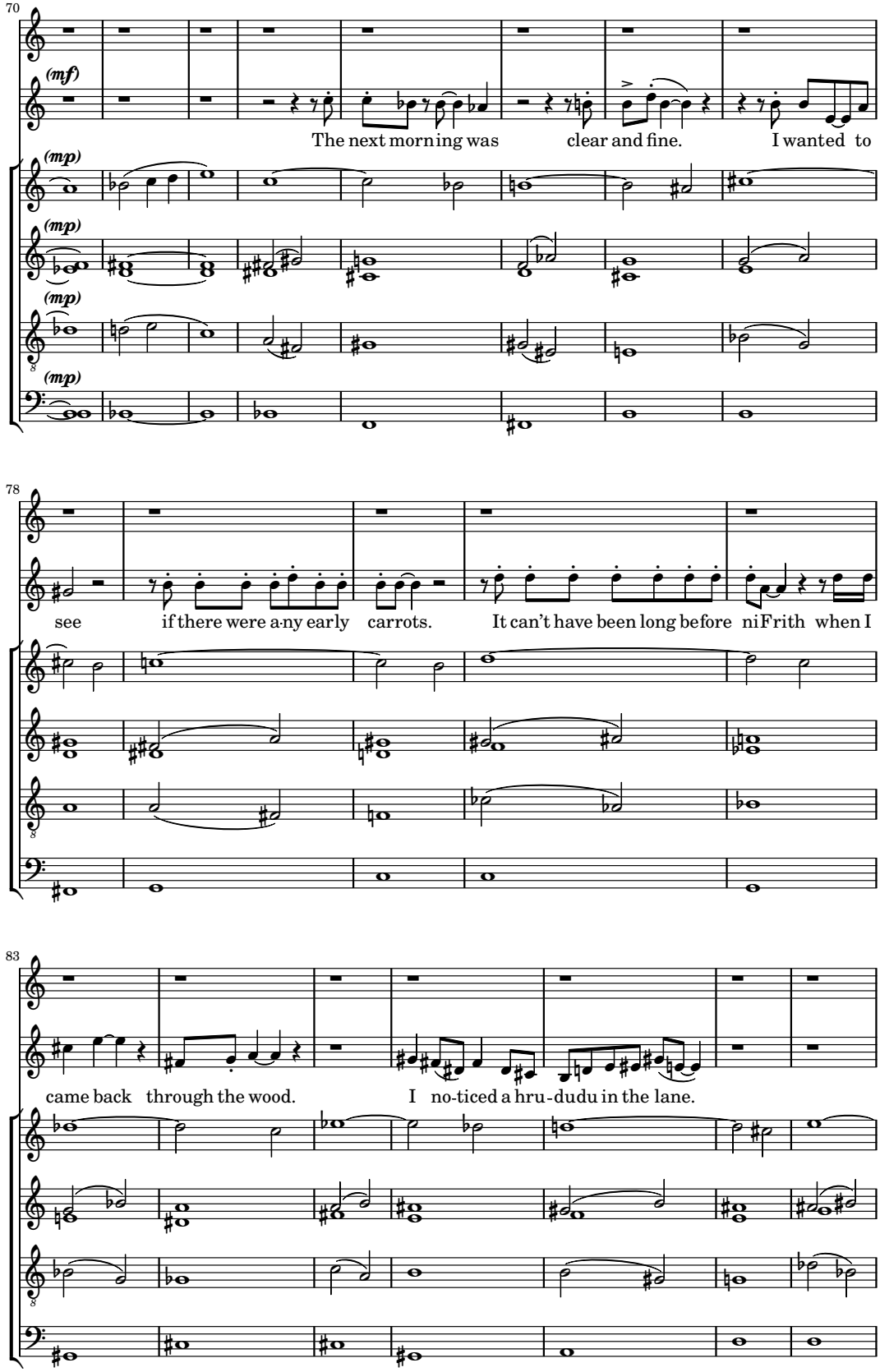
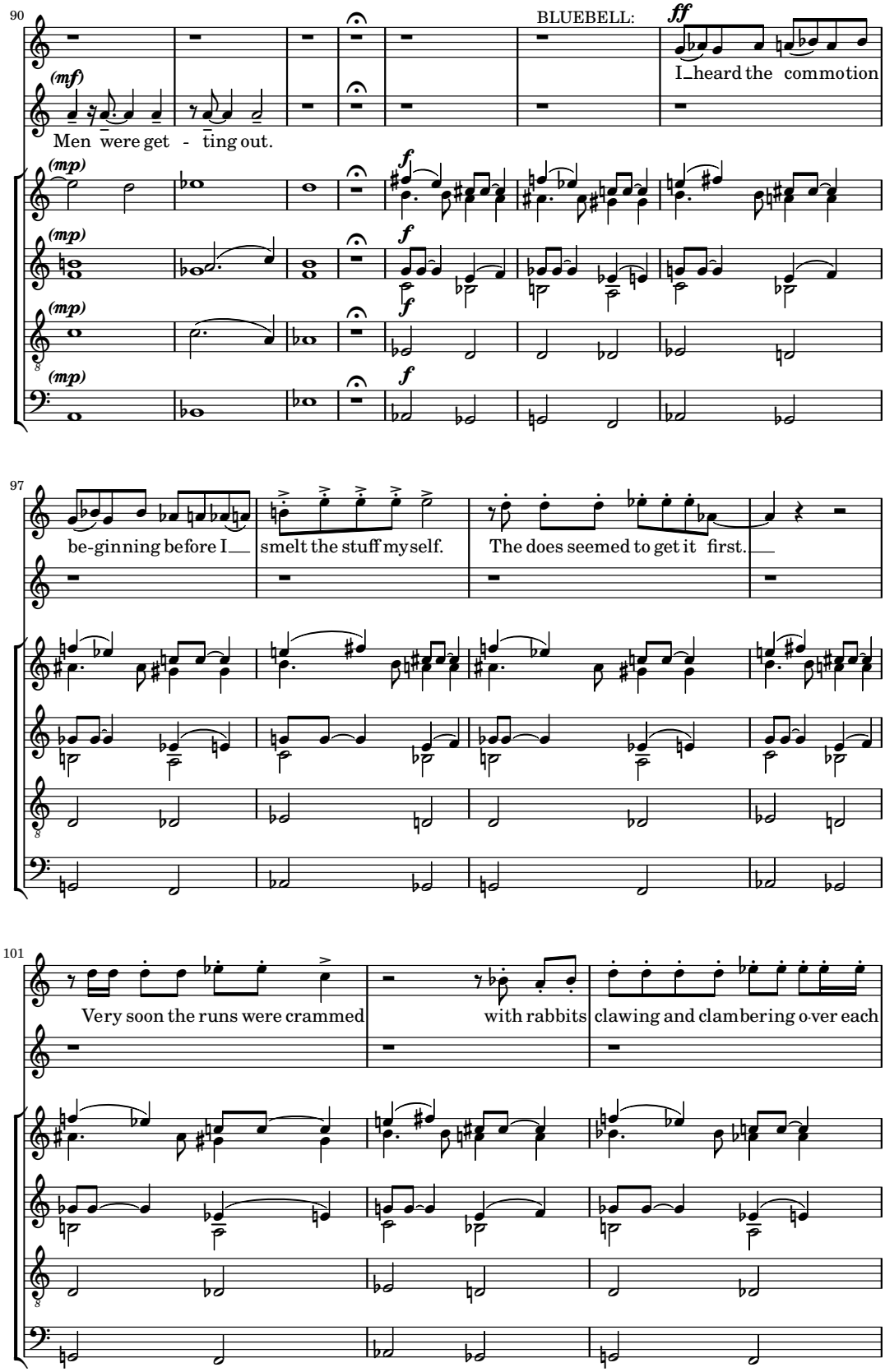
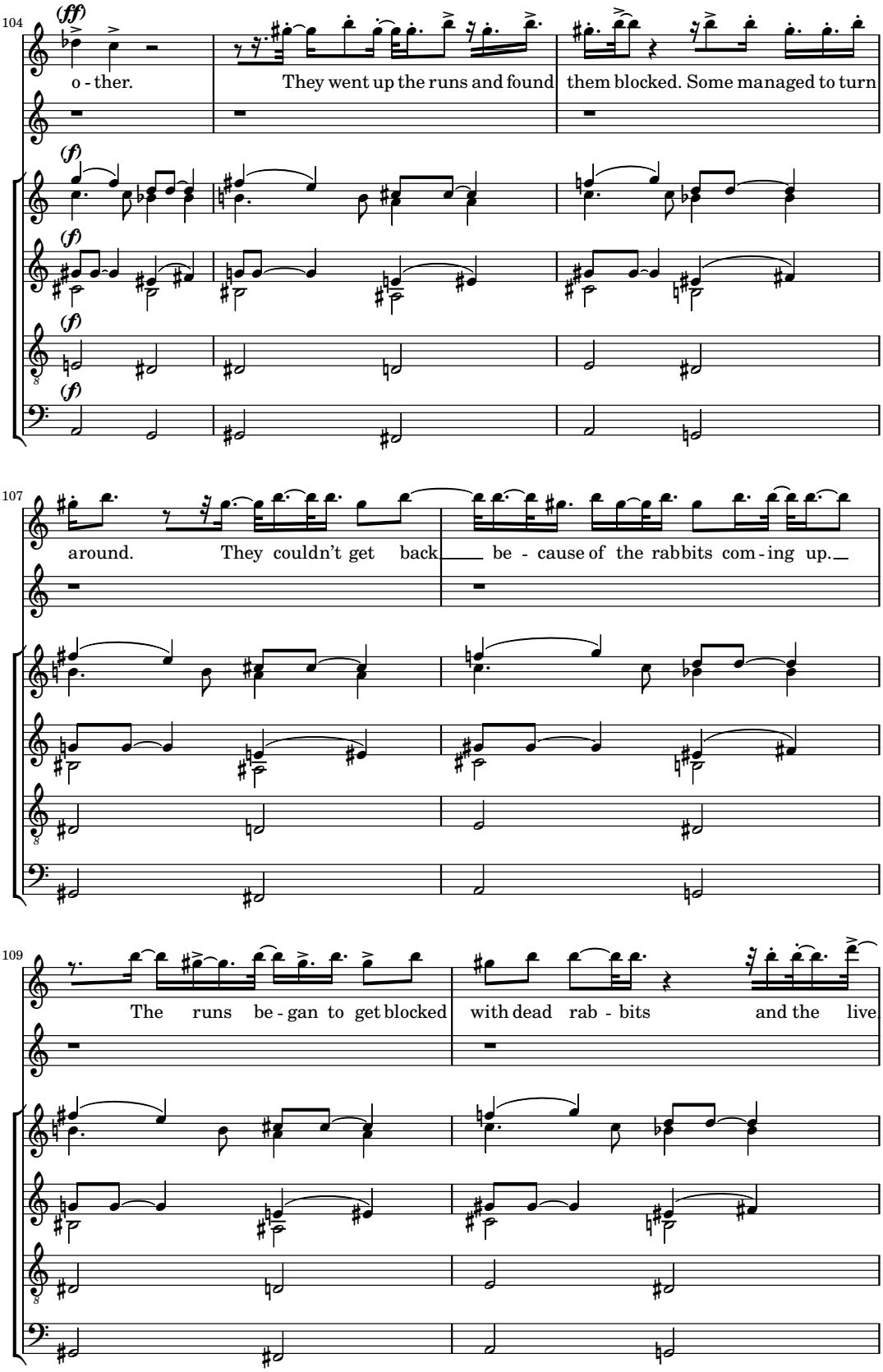

22
(p)
Nothing unusual happened the next day. Everyone knew that
(pp)
(pp)
(pp)
(pp)
29
Fiver had said that something bad was going to happen. Willow and I talked things
mp
p
p
p
34
over with the Threarah. 'To evacuate a warren is a tre - mendous business,' he said.

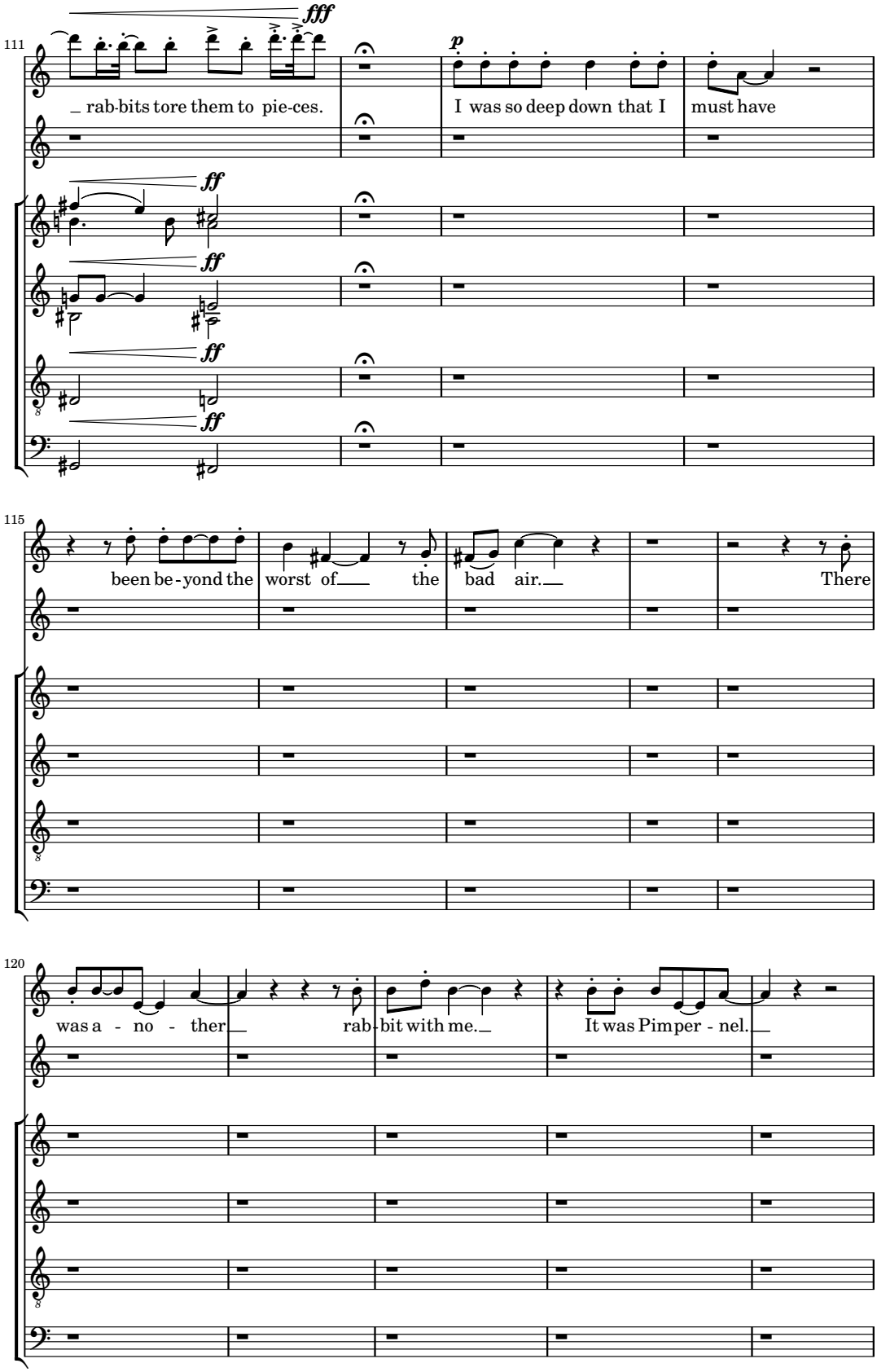

38
(mp)
(p)
(p)
(p)
'At the best, you've got a big bunch of hlessil trailing round the o - pen. The re - me - dy's
43
worse than the dis - ease. It's better for the warren if rabbits sit tight and dodge their dan-
47
mf
mp
mp
mp
mp
- gers underground.' The next day it began to rain.

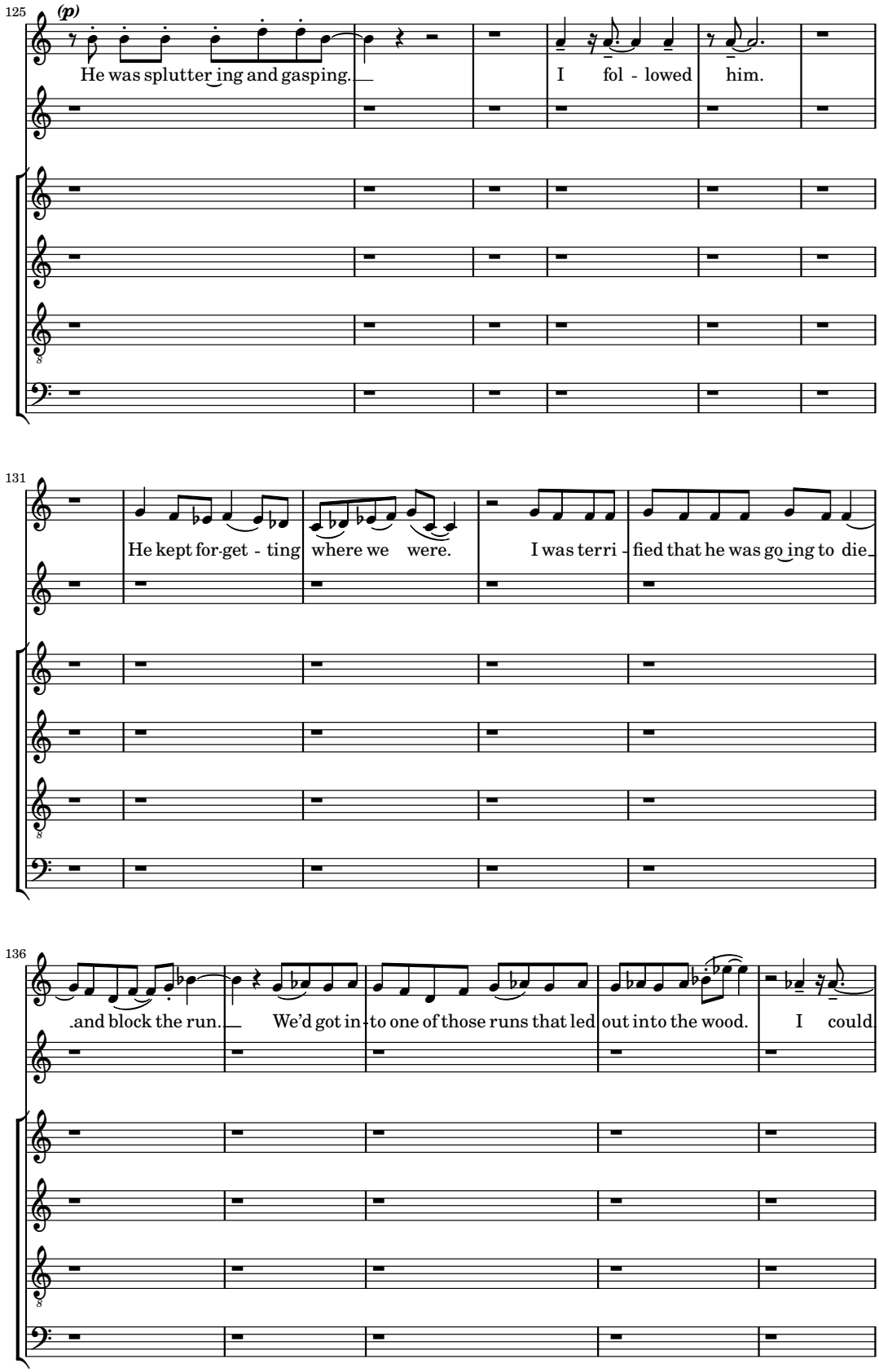

53
(mf)
I saw some men come through the gate. Whene ver they came
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
58
to a rabbit - hole, one of them would prod at it. I slipped un-
64
- derground. I went to sleep and when I woke there was no sound up above.

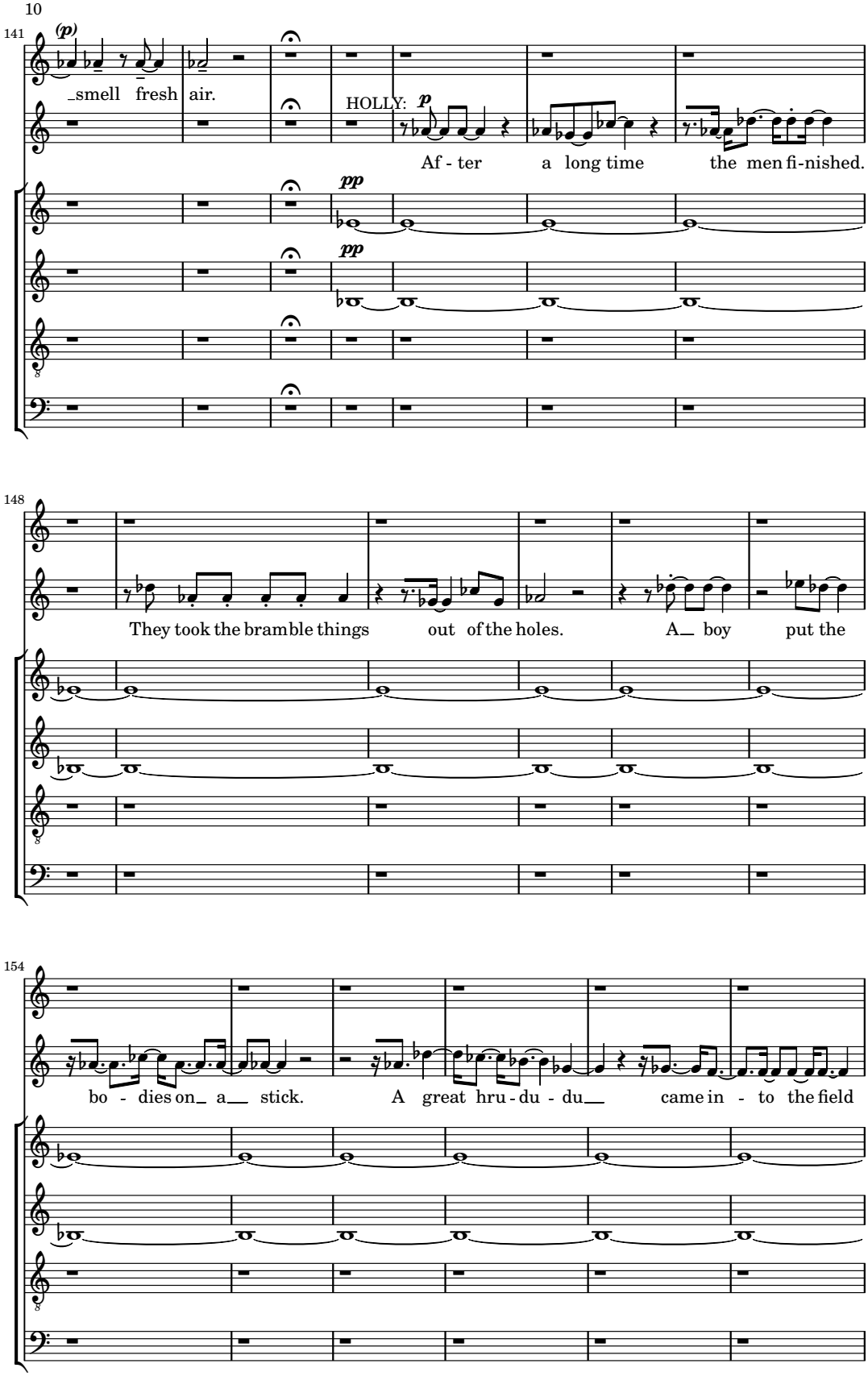

70
(mf)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
The next morn ing was clear and fine. I wanted to
78
see if there were a ny early carrots. It can't have been long be fore ni Frith when I
83
came back through the wood. I no-ticed a hru - dudu in the lane.

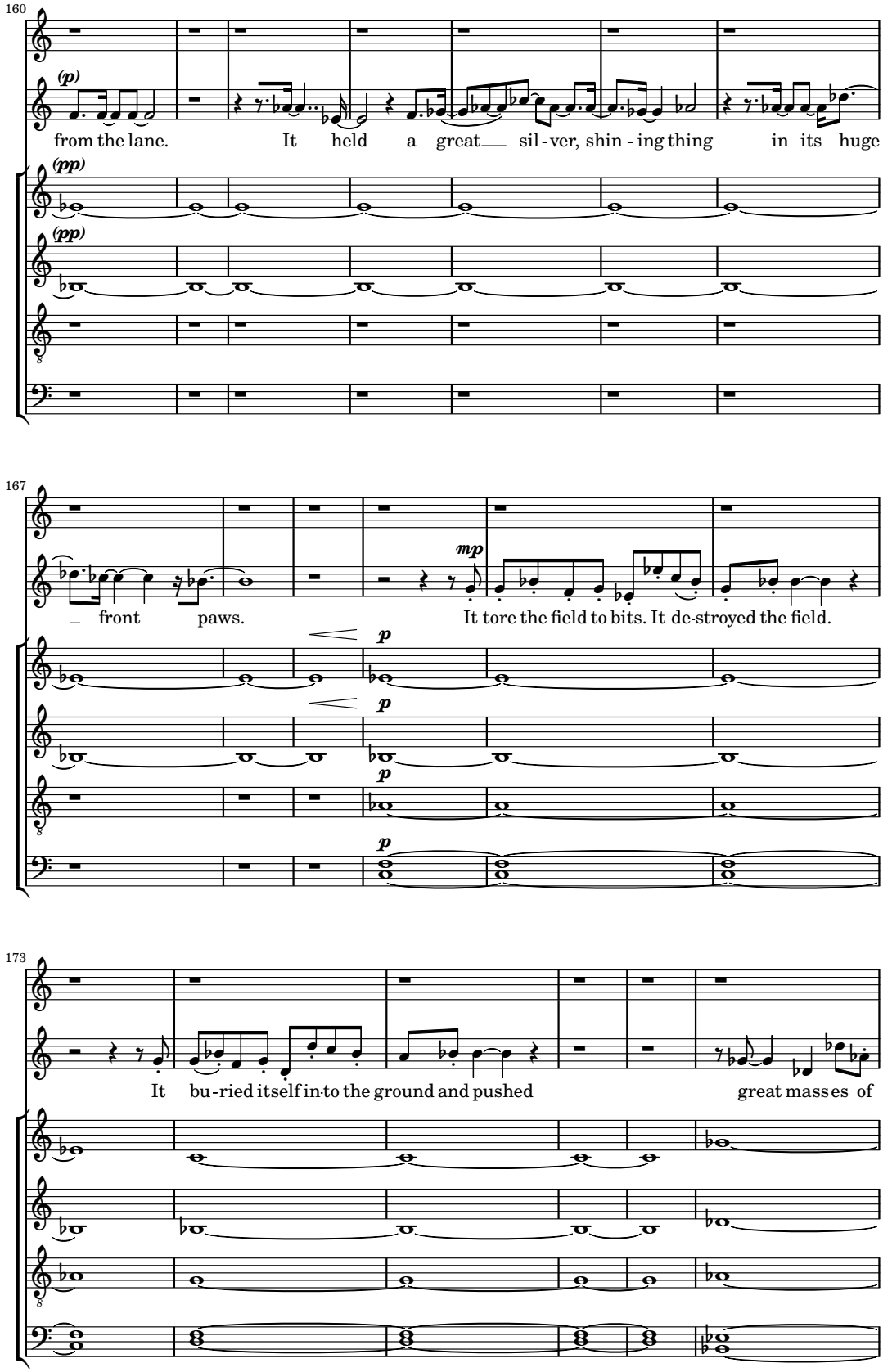

90
BLUEBELL:
ff
I_heard the commotion
(mf)
Men were get - ting out.
(mp)
f
97
be-gin ning before I__
smelt the stuff myself.
The does seemed to get it first.__
101
Very soon the runs were crammed
with rabbits
clawing and clambering o-ver each

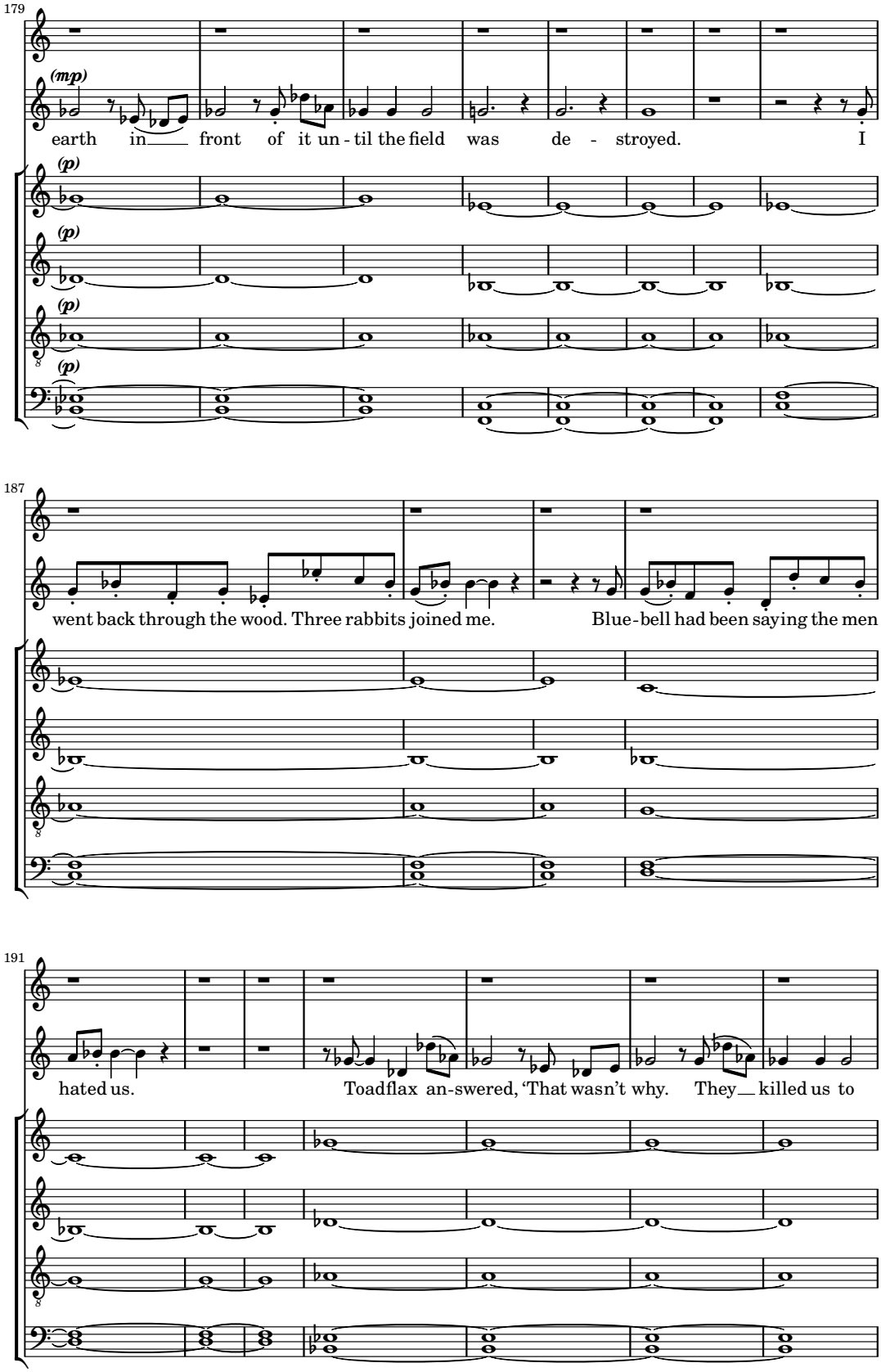

104
(ff)
o - ther.
They went up the runs and found
them blocked. Some managed to turn
(f)
(f)
(f)
(f)
107
around.
They couldn't get back
be - cause of the rab bits com - ing up.
109
The runs be - gan to get blocked
with dead rab - bits
and the live

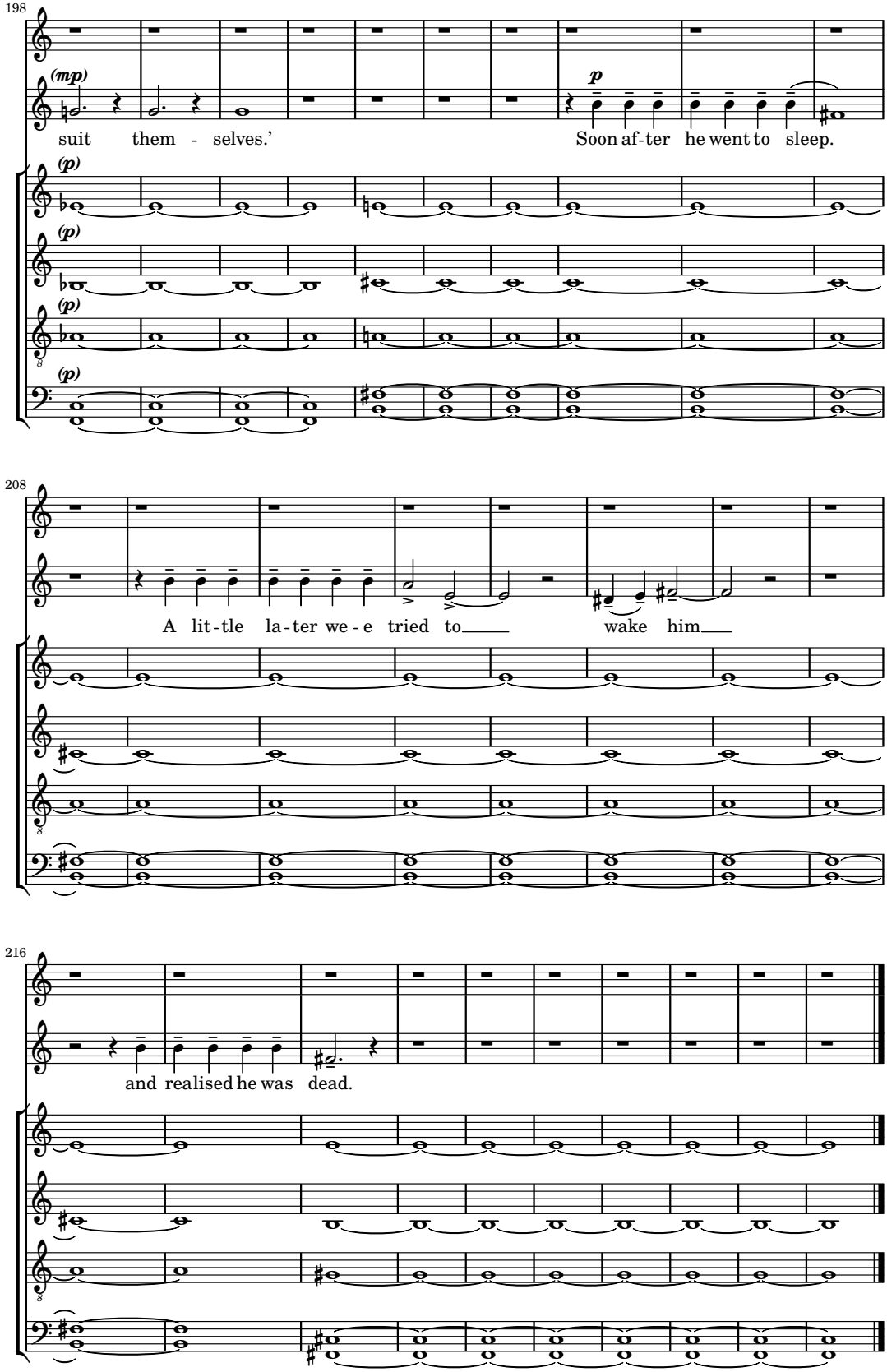

111
fff
_ rab-bits tore them to pie-ces.
p
I was so deep down that I
must have
ff
ff
ff
ff
115
been be-yond the
worst of
the
bad air.
There
120
was a - no - ther
rab-bit with me.
It was Pimper - nel.


125
(p)
He was splutter ing and gasping.
I fol - lowed him.
131
He kept for-get - ting where we were.
I was terri - fied that he was go ing to die
136
and block the run.
We'd got in - to one of those runs that led out into the wood.
I could


141
(p)
smell fresh air.
HOLLY:
p
Af - ter a long time the men fi-nished.
pp
pp
148
They took the bramble things out of the holes. A boy put the
154
bo - dies on a stick. A great hru - du - du came in - to the field


160
(p)
from the lane. It held a great sil - ver, shin - ing thing in its huge
(pp)
(pp)
167
mp
front paws. It tore the field to bits. It de-stroyed the field.
p
p
p
p
173
It bu - ried itself in-to the ground and pushed great mass es of


179
(mp)
earth in front of it un - til the field was de - stroyed. I
(p)
(p)
(p)
(p)
187
went back through the wood. Three rabbits joined me. Blue - bell had been saying the men
191
hated us. Toadflax an-swered, 'That wasn't why. They killed us to


198
(mp)
p
suit them - selves.'
Soon af-ter he went to sleep.
(p)
(p)
(p)
(p)
208
A lit-tle la-ter we-e tried to wake him
216
and realised he was dead.

20 December 2022

TTBB chorus a cappella

2022

with words of
Erik Satie

5 mins 40 secs (approx.)

Erik Satie:

The practice of an art bids us live in a state of[…] complete renunciation.

With syllables like ‘The’ (bars 2–34), re-articulate the vowel for each note.

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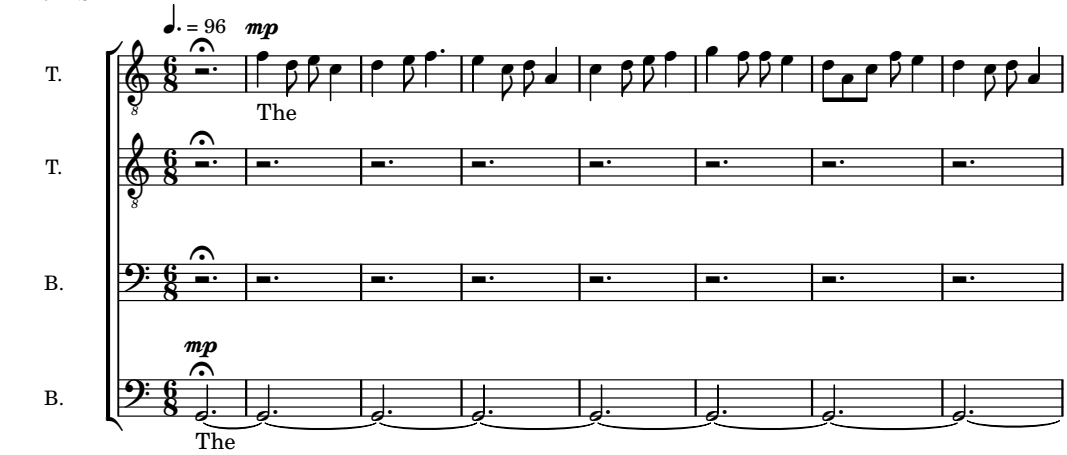
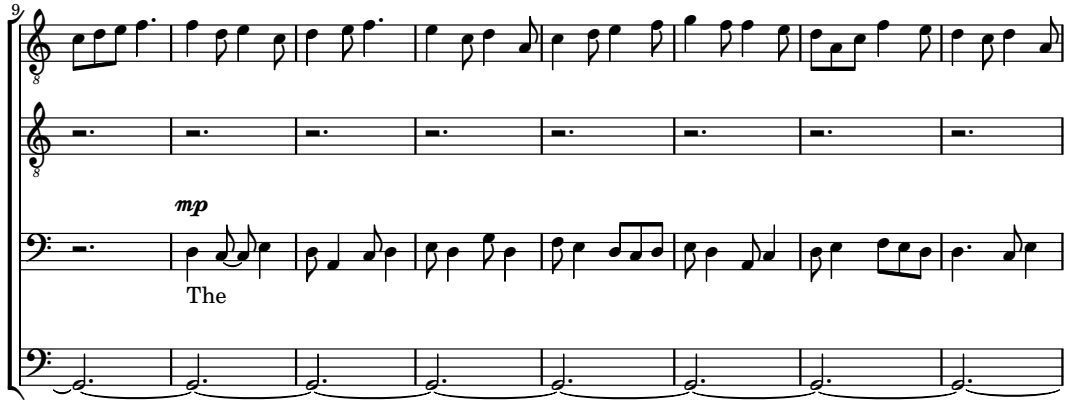
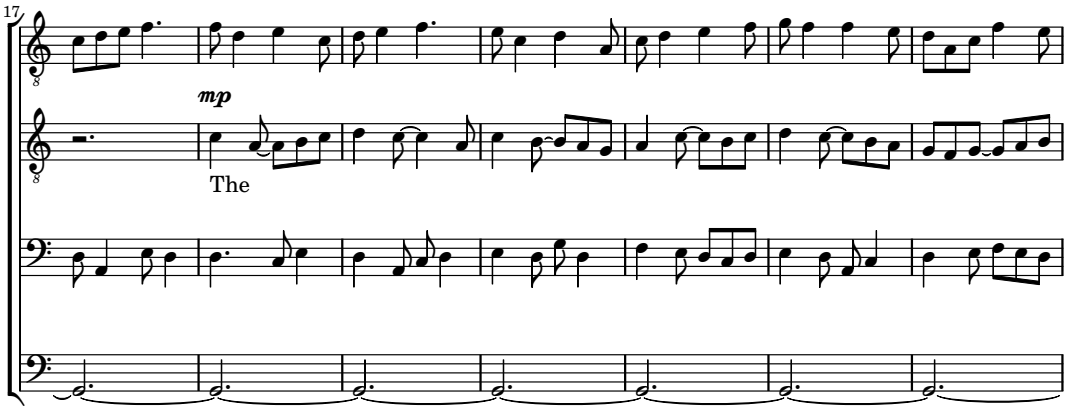
20 December 2022

ERIK SATIE







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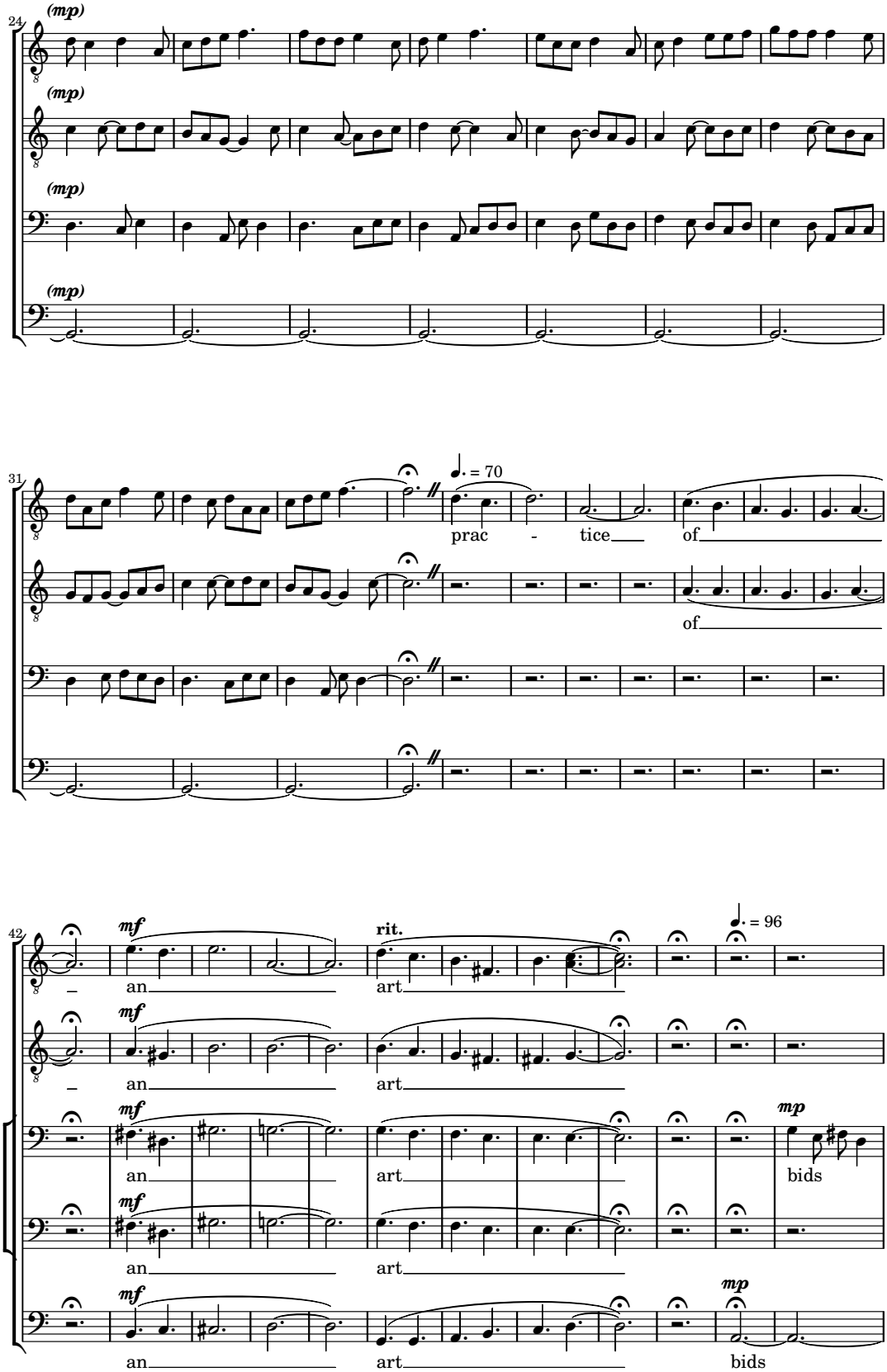
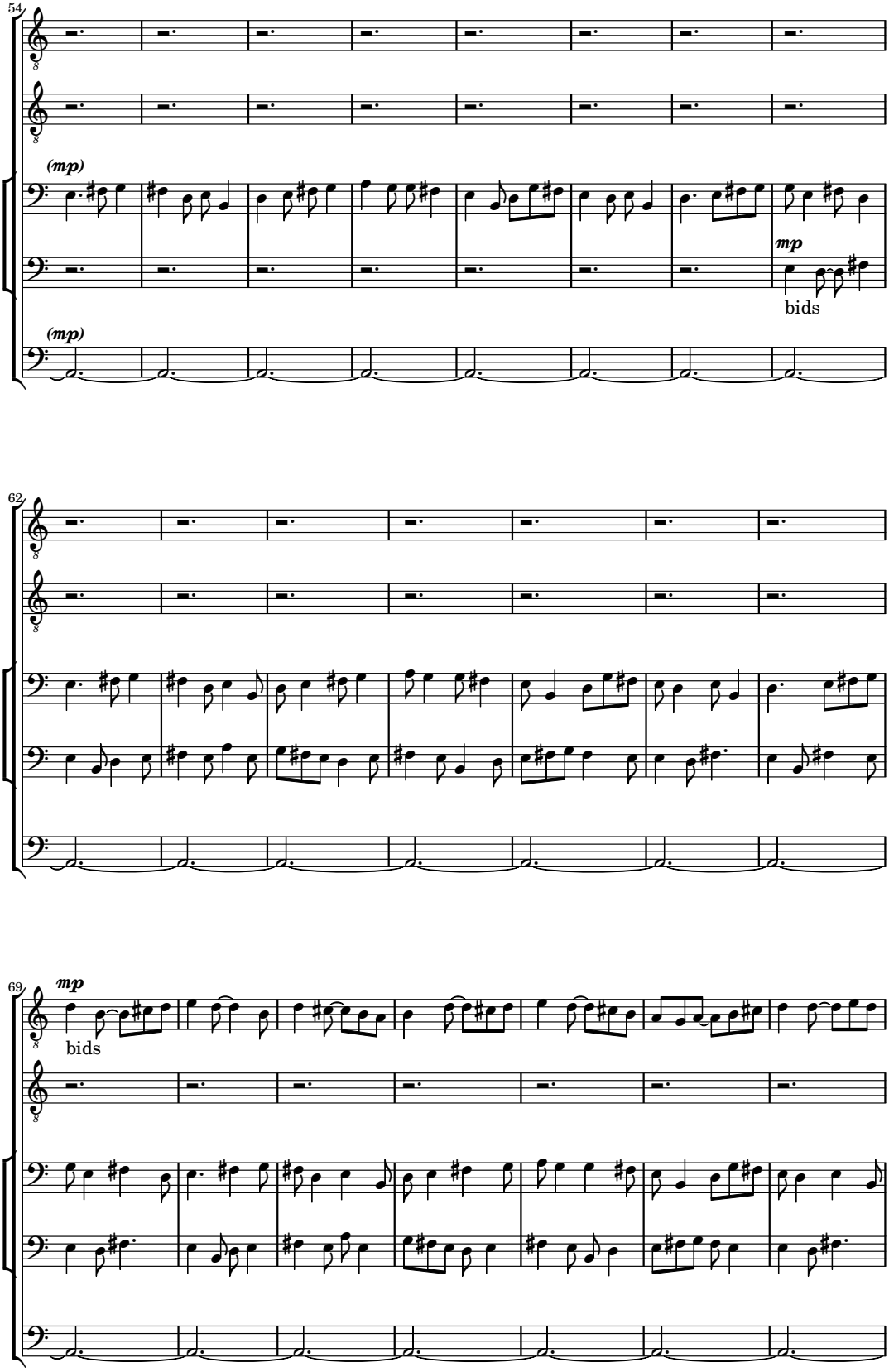
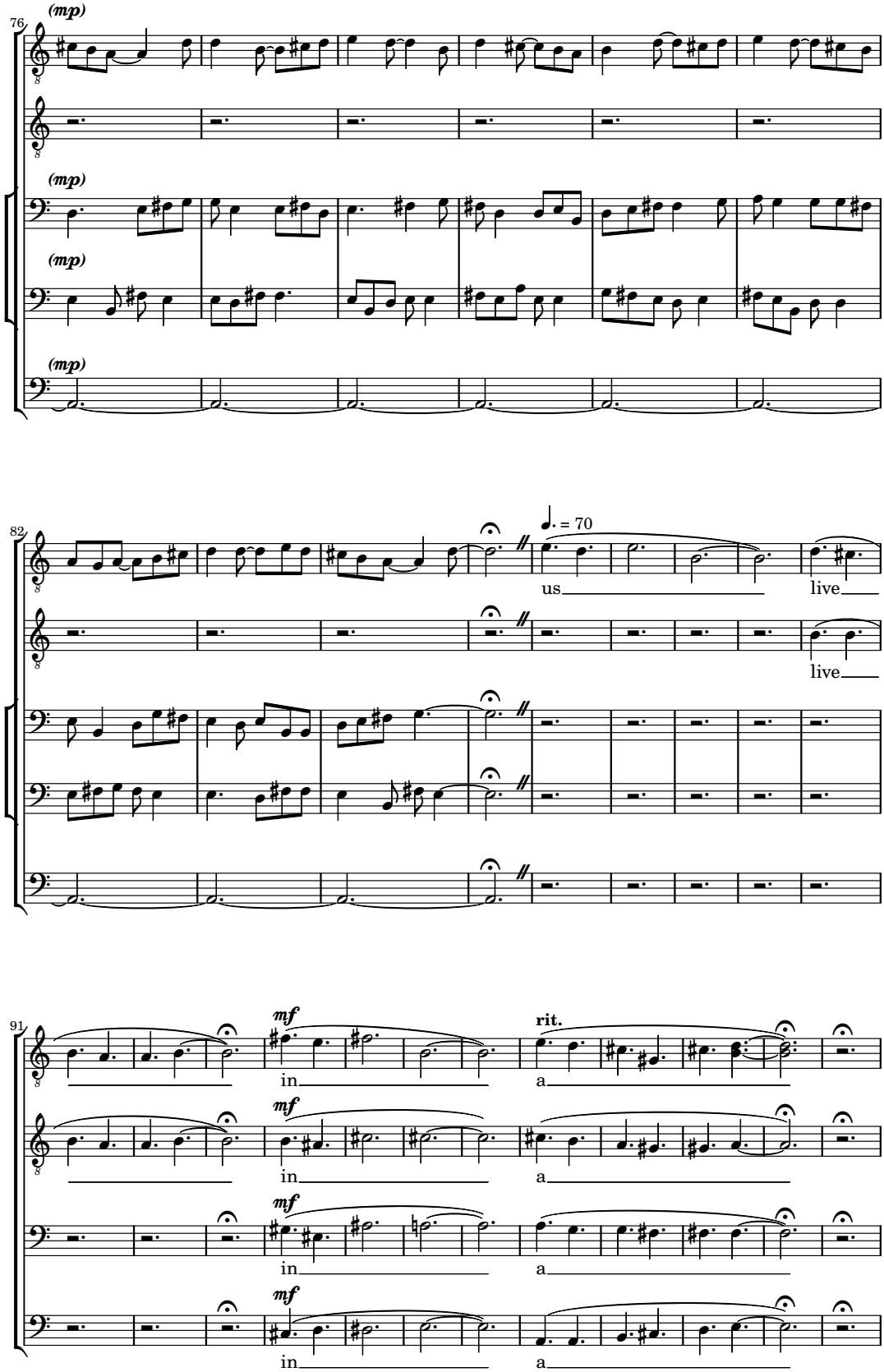
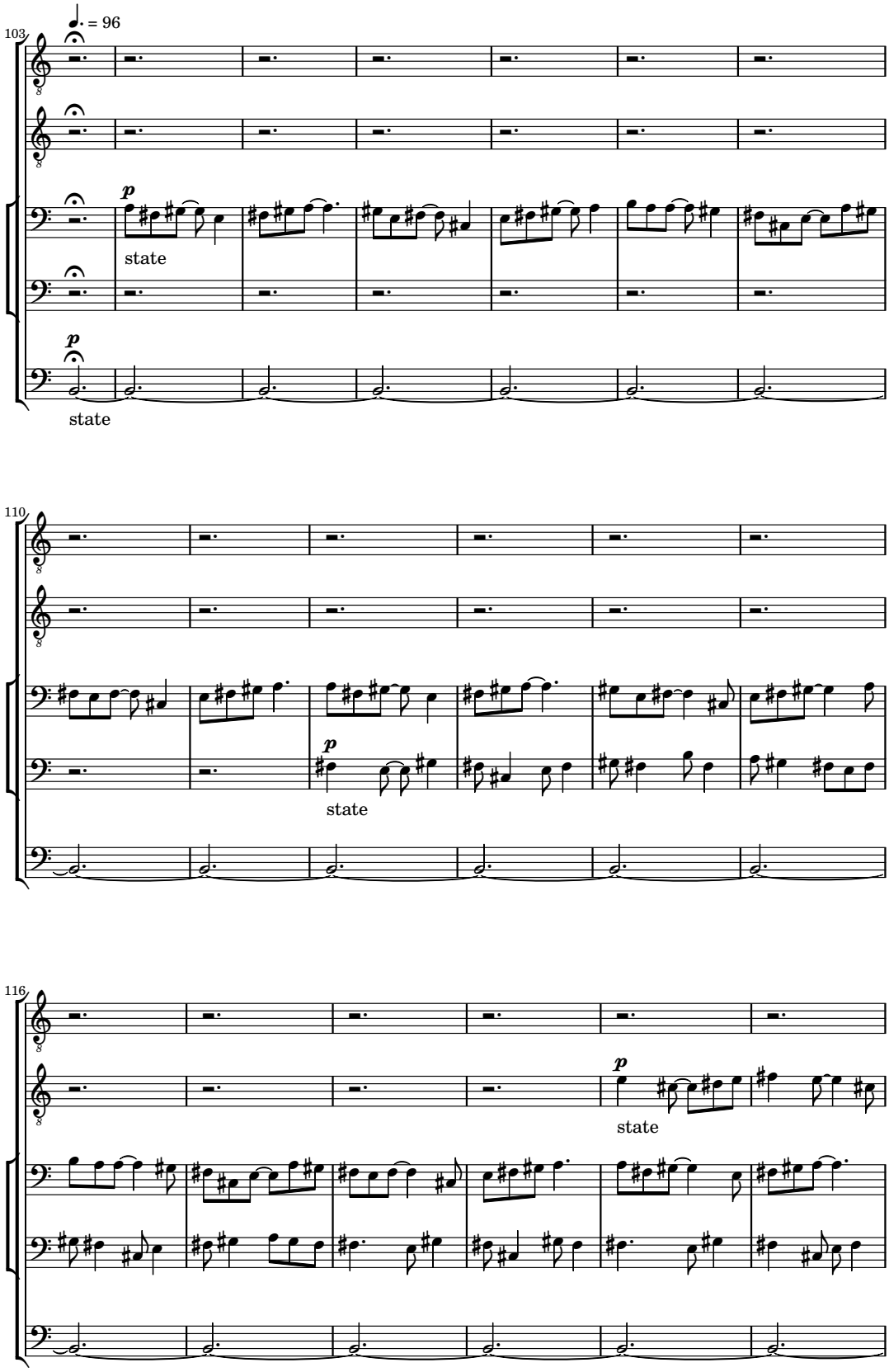
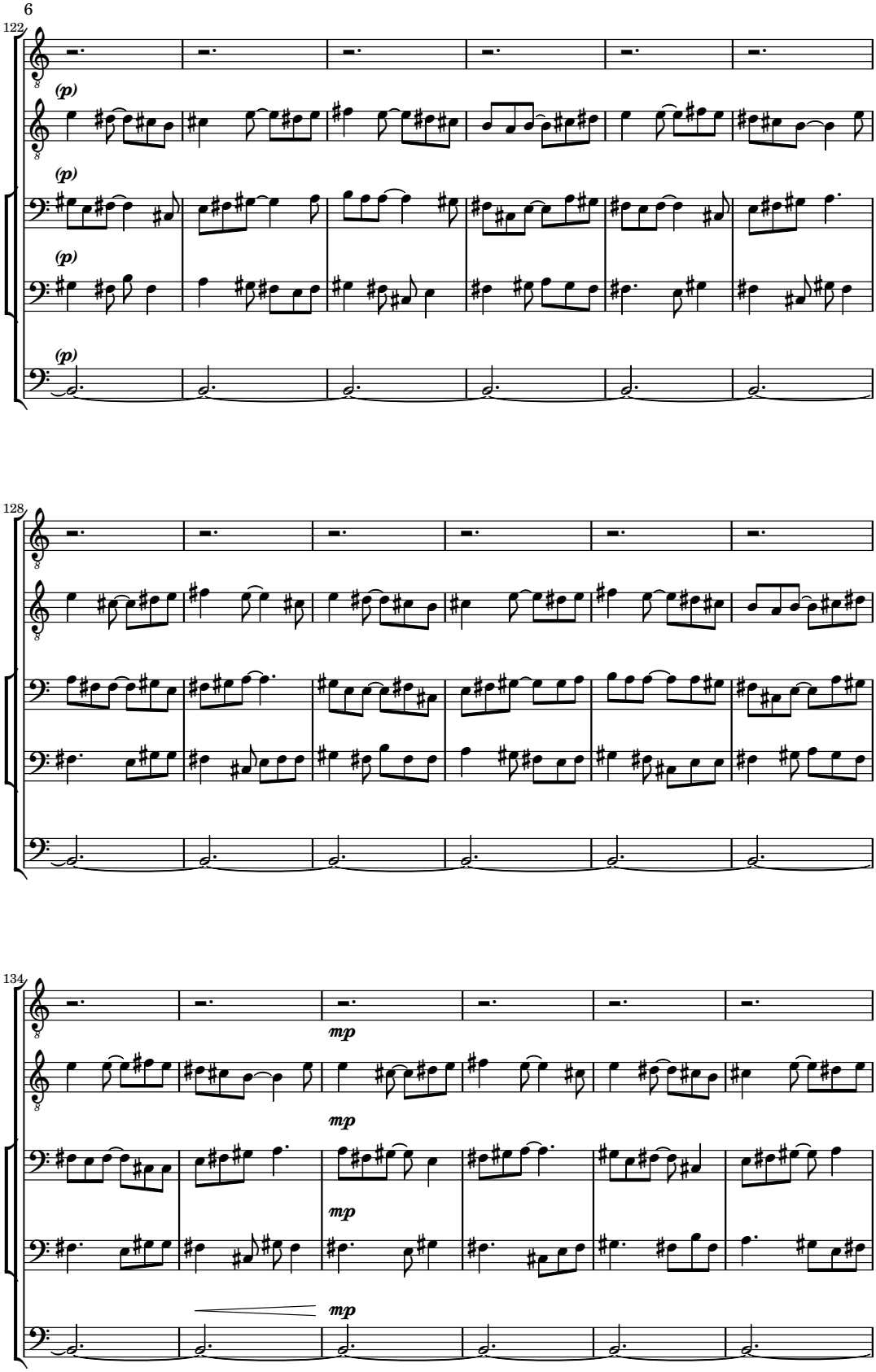
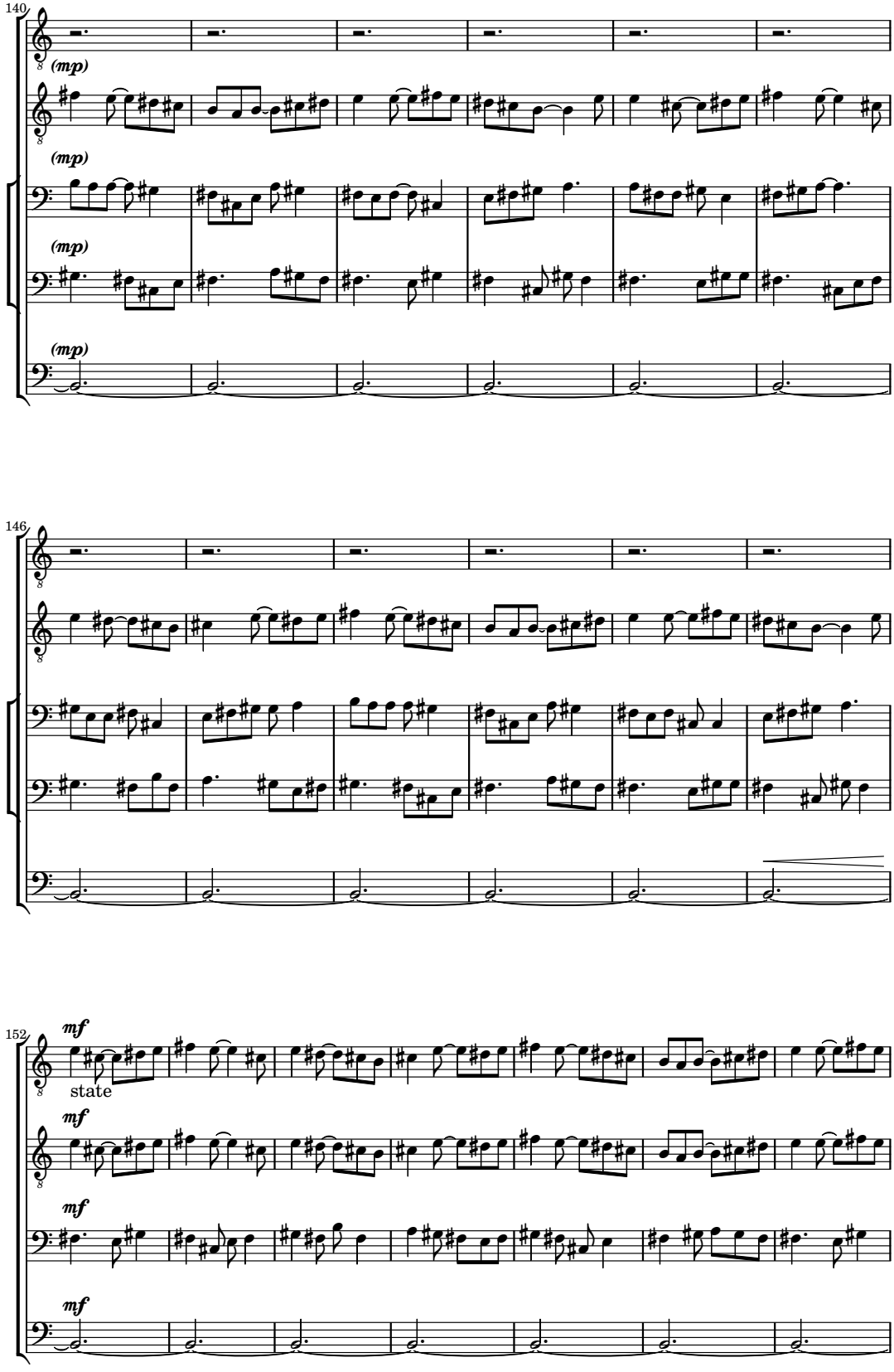

24
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
31
♩. = 70
prac - tice of
of
42
mf
an
rit.
art
♩. = 96
mp
bids

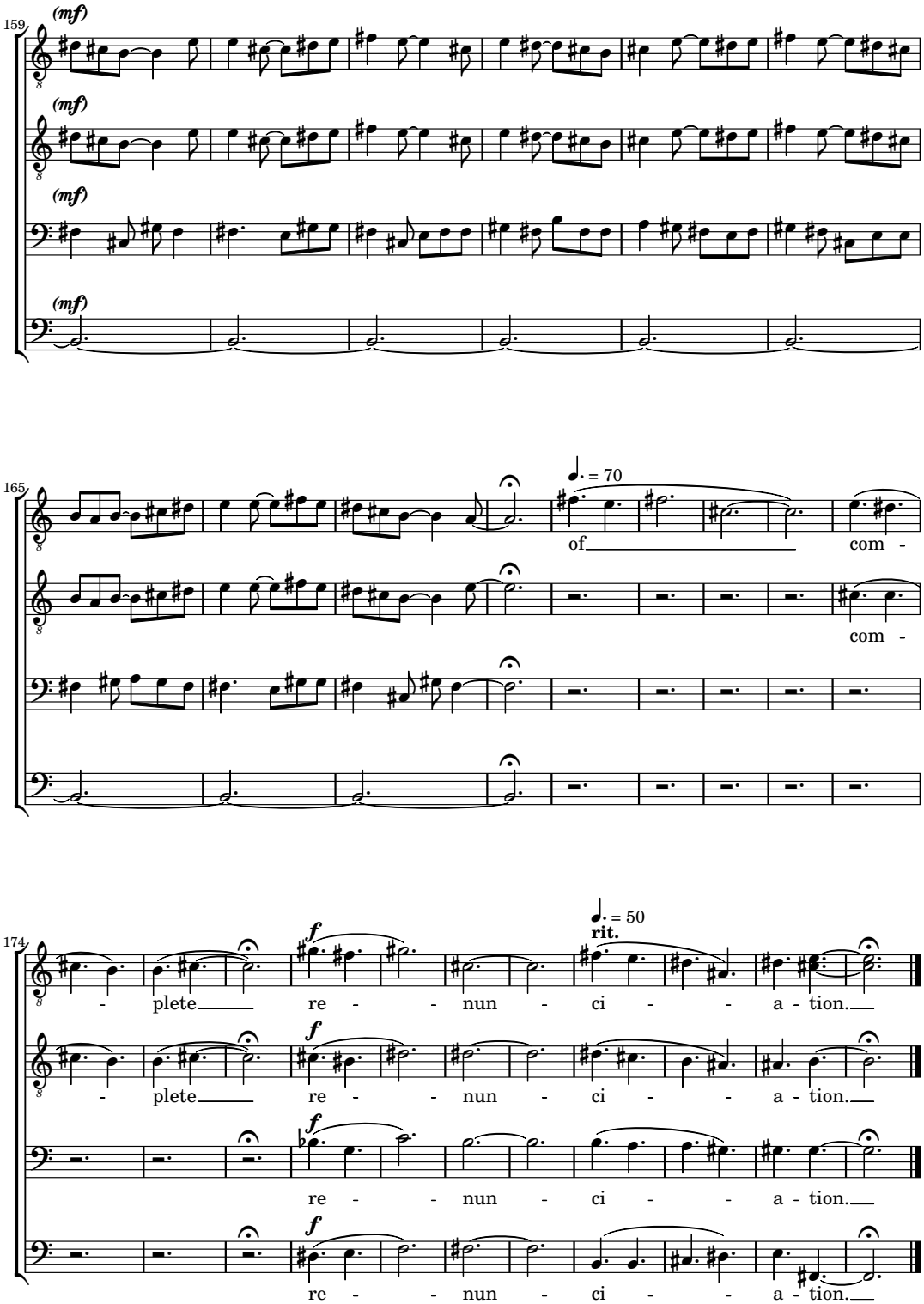

54
(mp)
mp
bids
(mp)
62
69
mp
bids


76
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
82
♩. = 70
us
live
live
91
mf
in
a
rit.
mf
in
a
mf
in
a
mf
in
a


103
♩. = 96
p
state
p
state
110
p
state
116
p
state


122
(p)
(p)
(p)
128
134
mp
mp
mp
mp


140
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
(mp)
146
152
mf
state
mf
mf
mf


159
(mf)
(mf)
(mf)
(mf)
165
♩. = 70
of
com -
com -
174
f
f
f
f
♩. = 50
rit.
- plete re - - nun - ci - - a - tion.
- plete re - - nun - ci - - a - tion.
re - - nun - ci - - a - tion.
re - - nun - ci - - a - tion.