Davide Verotta

The Dinosaur
(two life stories)

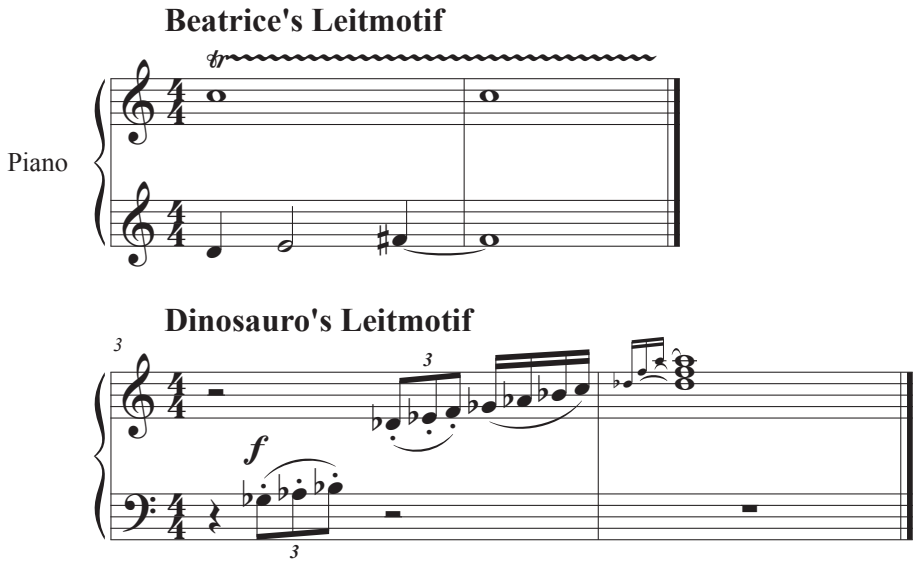
(2021)

Soprano
Pianoforte

Duzzi Press

COMPOSITION NOTES

Throughout the piece the protagonists, the Dinosaur and Beatrice, are introduced by their respective leitmotifs:



The Dinosaur sections make frequent use of octatonic, whole tone, and derived scales, and have more florid coloratura than Beatrice's sections. Beatrice is sung in English, the Dinosaur in Italian.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

All accidentals apply only at the given octave.

Duration: about 23'.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

The Dinosaur is a cantata for soprano and pianoforte that was inspired by a recurrent visit to the local Academy of Sciences that hosts the skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex. The cantata alternates between two story narratives. The first concerns a dinosaur and develops from a museum visit into a musing about impermanence, into an invective against the passing of time. The second is a partial portrait of a woman, mostly concerned with youth and love and art. The dinosaur poem is in Italian and is written by the composer, borrowing the form from the poem "Dinosaur Skeleton" by Wislawa Szymborska. The woman's portrait is sketched using a selection of poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

The text for the cantata is reported below, together with the translation of the Dinosaur sections from Italian (in italics).

PROLOGUE	
Audience! You will hear today a tale of two earthlings. The first, Beatrice, is a woman. The second was roaming the planet millions of years ago. Her name is lost in the abyss of time. We'll sing of her in Italian.	
Il DINOSAURO	**WOMAN**
Diletti Fratelli, ecco un esempio di natura grandiosa di fronte a noi si erge lo scheletro del dinosauro Cari Amici, a destra la coda va verso l'infinito a sinistra il capo fermo, feroce e spavaldo The dinosaur!	*Dear Brothers,* *here is an example of a grandiose nature* *in front of us stands a dinosaur skeletoned* *Dear friends,* *on the right, the tail goes towards infinity* *on the left the firm head, fierce and bold* *The Dinosaur!*
	Afternoon on a hill[1] I was be the gladdest thing Under the sun! I touched a hundred flowers And picked not one. I looked at cliffs and clouds With quiet eyes, Watch the wind bow down the grass, And the grass rise. And when lights begin to show Up from the town, I will mark which must be mine, And then start down!
Egregi Compari, deambulava su due zampe forti, di qua, e di lá pochi rivali, tanti conoscenti, qualche amico	*Dear Friends,* *it walked on two strong legs, on this side, on that side* *few rivals, many acquaintances, some friends*
	Being Young and Green[2] Being Young and Green, I said in love's despite: Never in the world will I to living wight Give over, air my mind To anyone, Hang out its ancient secrets in the strong wind To be shredded and faded— Oh, me, invaded And sacked by the wind and the sun!
Gentili Cittadini, questa ebbe vita bella, graziata dagli dei amor, vino e buon cibo, e qualche buon lavoro	*Dear Citizens,* *this had a beautiful life, graced by the gods* *love, wine and good food, and some good work*
	Thursday[3] And if I loved you Wednesday, Well, what is that to you? I do not love you Thursday— So much is true.

[1] From **Renascence**
[2] From **The Buck in the Snow**
[3] From **A Few Figs from Thistles.**

	And why you come complaining Is more than I can see. I loved you Wednesday,—yes—but what Is that to me?
(Spoken:) Signore, signori, look at her, think about them, they were masters	
La terra gli appartenne e forse, chi sá, anche le stelle. Fanciulli, fanciulle, ma come, vi chiedete, un(a) tal campione, filosofa, artista, scienziata. Scienza, arte, pensier.	*The earth belonged to her and perhaps, who knows, even the stars.* *Boys, girls,* *but how, you ask, such a champion,* *philosopher, artist, scientist.* *Science, art, thought.*
	The Concert[4] No, I will go alone. I will come back when it's over. Yes, of course I love you. No, it will not be long. Why may you not come with me? You are too much my lover You would put yourself Between me and song. …[5] Come now, be content. I will come back to you, I swear I will; And you will know me still. I shall be only a little taller than when I went.
Bambini, bambine, come sia lei ridotta a pietra sgretolata a sostener l'umiliazione, Ah! Le scimmie in torno a guardare. Infanti! come sia lei ridotta, le carni ai venti, le ossa scartate con poco riguardo, sepolta sotto un monte di calcite, sepolta[6] nel tempo. (**Fragment**[7]) Veined fertile egg long gone.	*Children,* *how she is reduced to crumbling stone* *to support the humiliation,* *Ah! The monkeys around to watch.* *Infants!* *how she is reduced to meat to the winds,* *bones discarded with little regard,* *buried under a calcite mountain,* *buried in time.* Veined fertile egg long gone.
	Sonnet (Fragment[8]**)** She had hazel eyes Wit and pain Lovely mouth Auburn hair that bound the subtle brain I was thin and fair and lovely Everybody looked at me

[4] From **The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems.**
[5] Stanzas omitted from the original poem.
[6] An alternative to "sepolta" (buried) is to sing "perduta" (lost).
[7] Fragment from **Epitaph for the Race of Man, Sonnet II.**
[8] Fragmentary quotation from **Sonnet in Answer to a Question**, added verses by Davide Verotta.

The Cantata is dedicated to Amy Foote.

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davide.verotta@ucsf.edu http://www.davideverotta.com

The Dinosaur

(two life stories)

Davide Verotta
Summer 2021

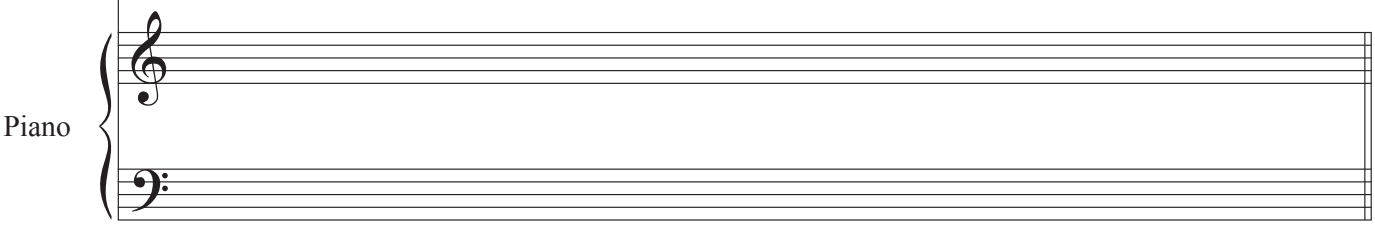
Prologue

narrated

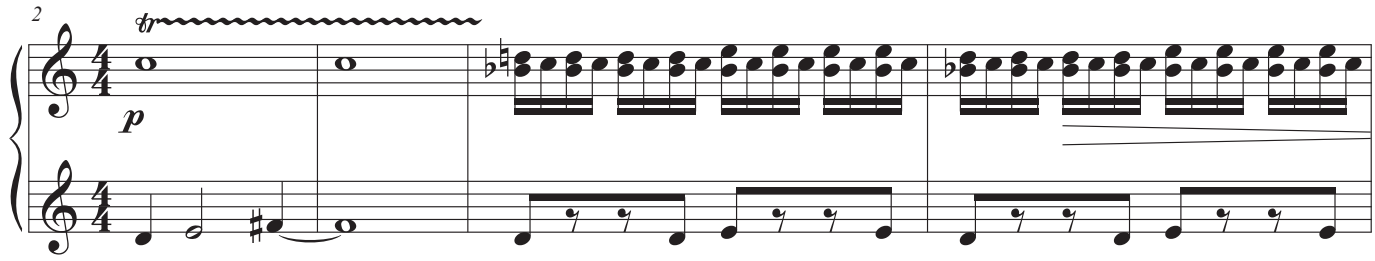
Soprano

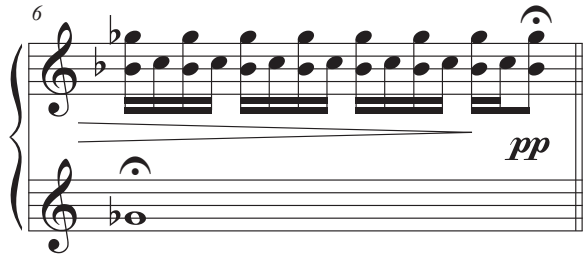
Audience! You will hear today a tale of two earthlings.
The first, Beatrice, is a woman. (Turn to the pianist who plays Beatrice's lietmotif.)

Piano



Beatrice (Leitmotif) ♩ = 112

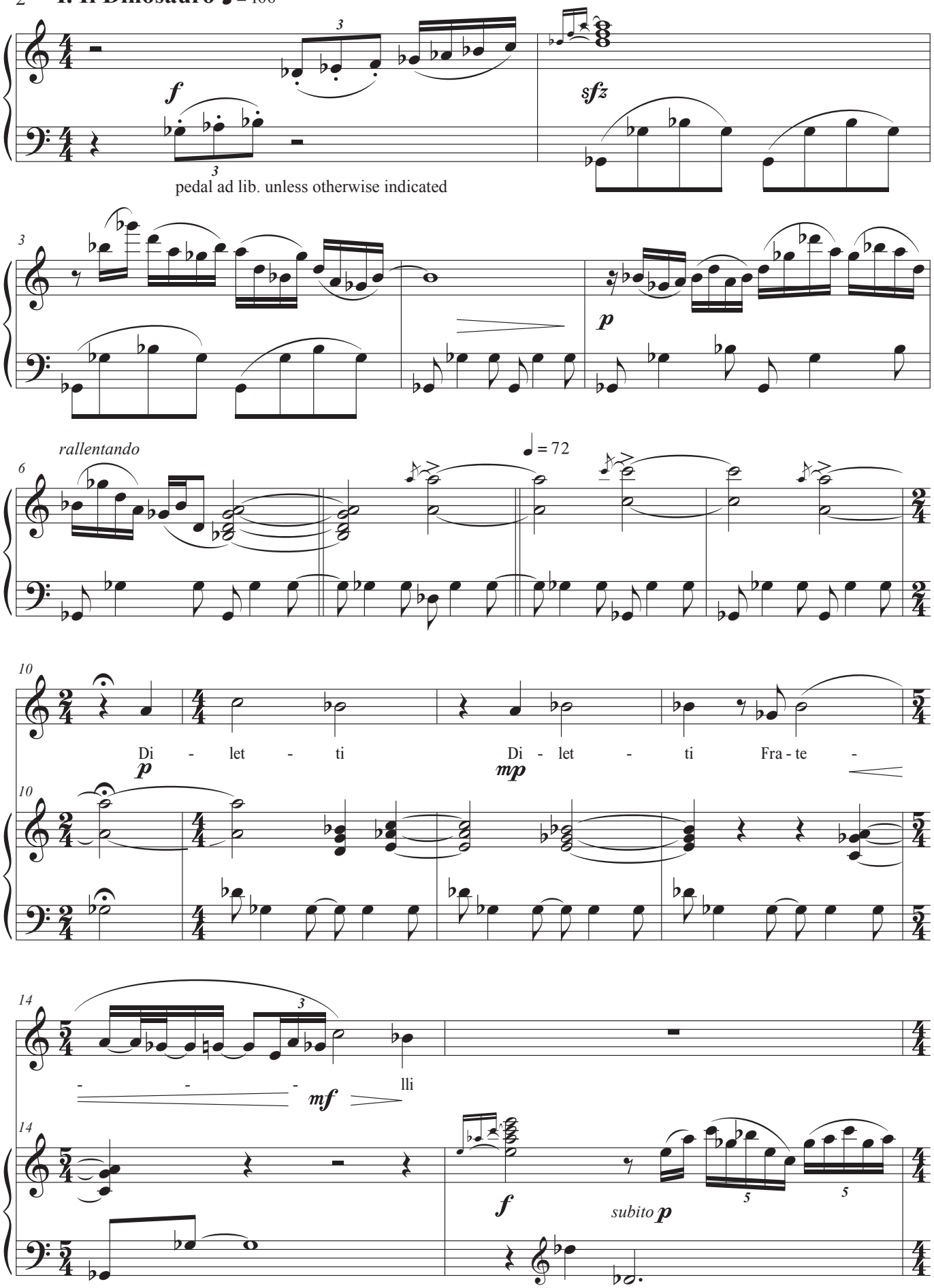


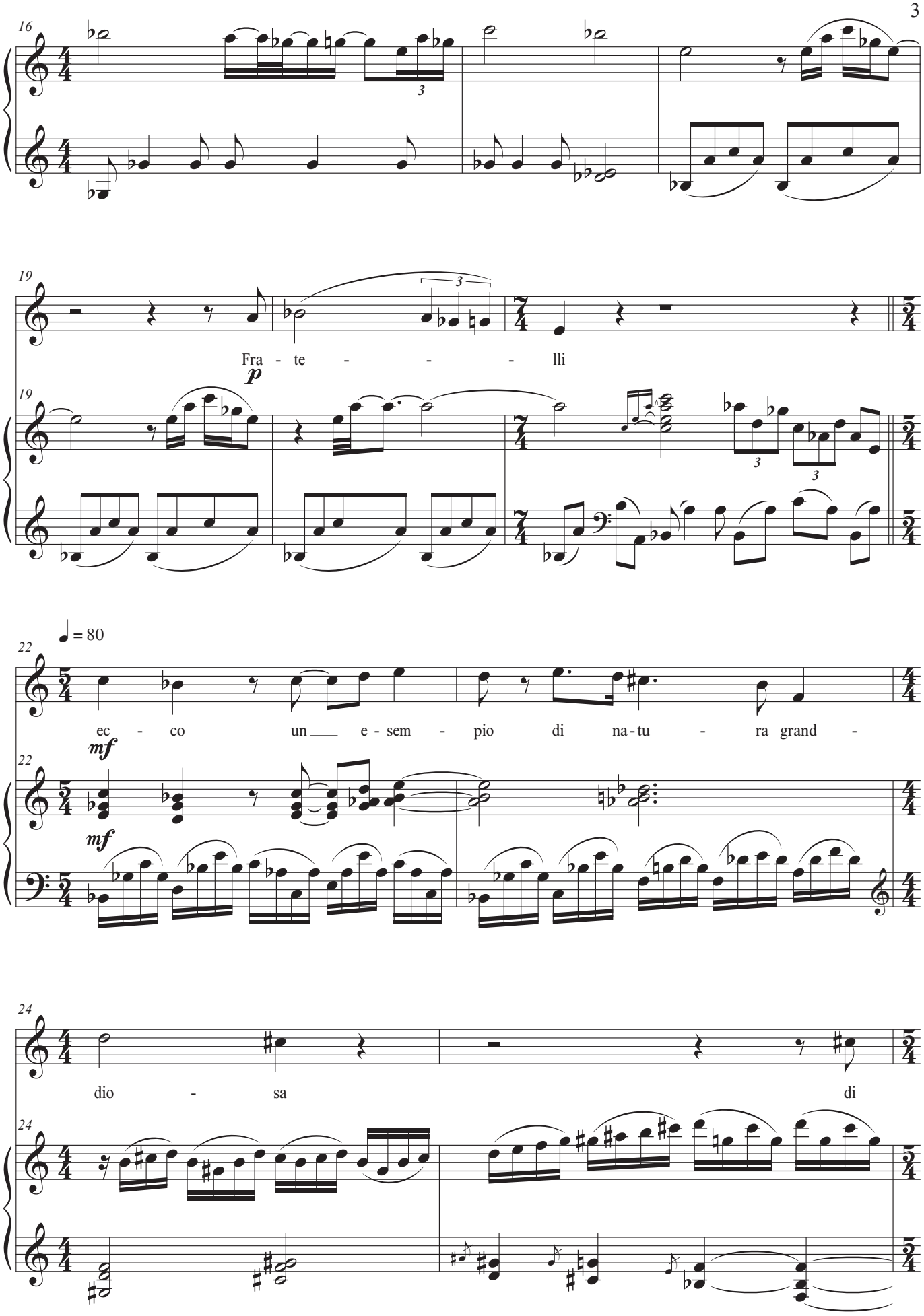


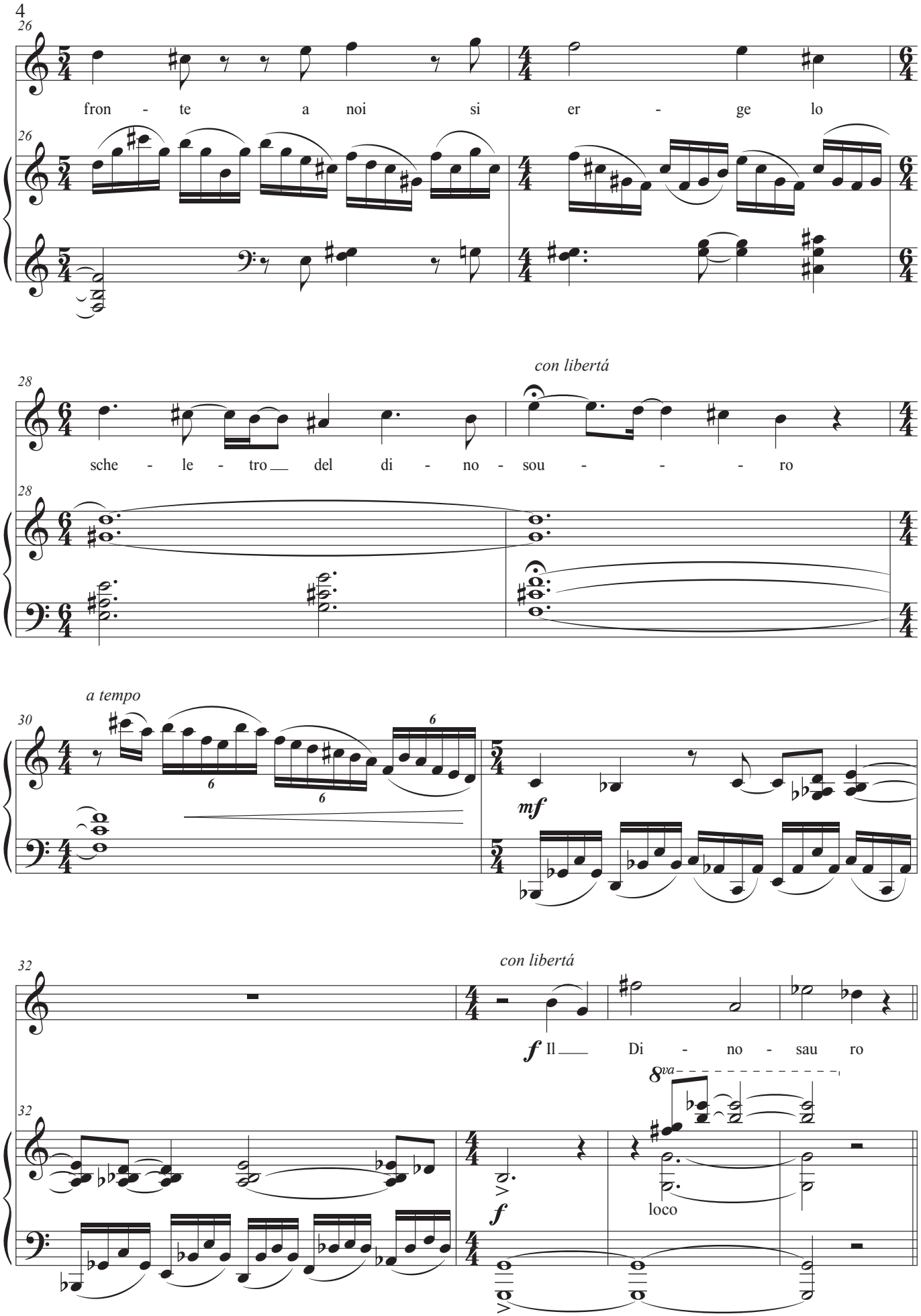
7 narrated

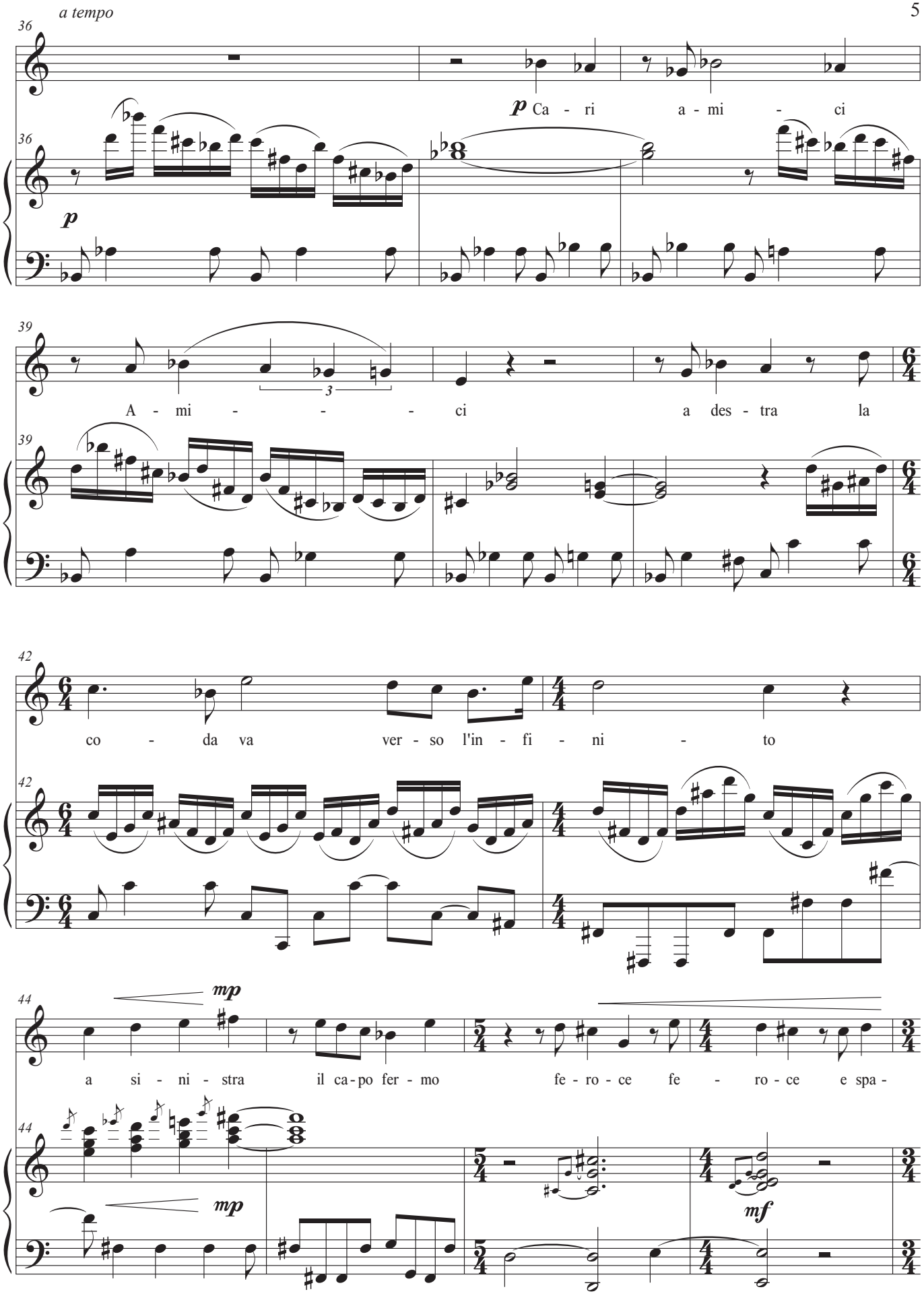
The second was roaming the planet millions of years ago.
Her name is lost in the abyss of time. We'll sing of her in Italian.
(Turn to the pianist who starts the Dinosaur.)

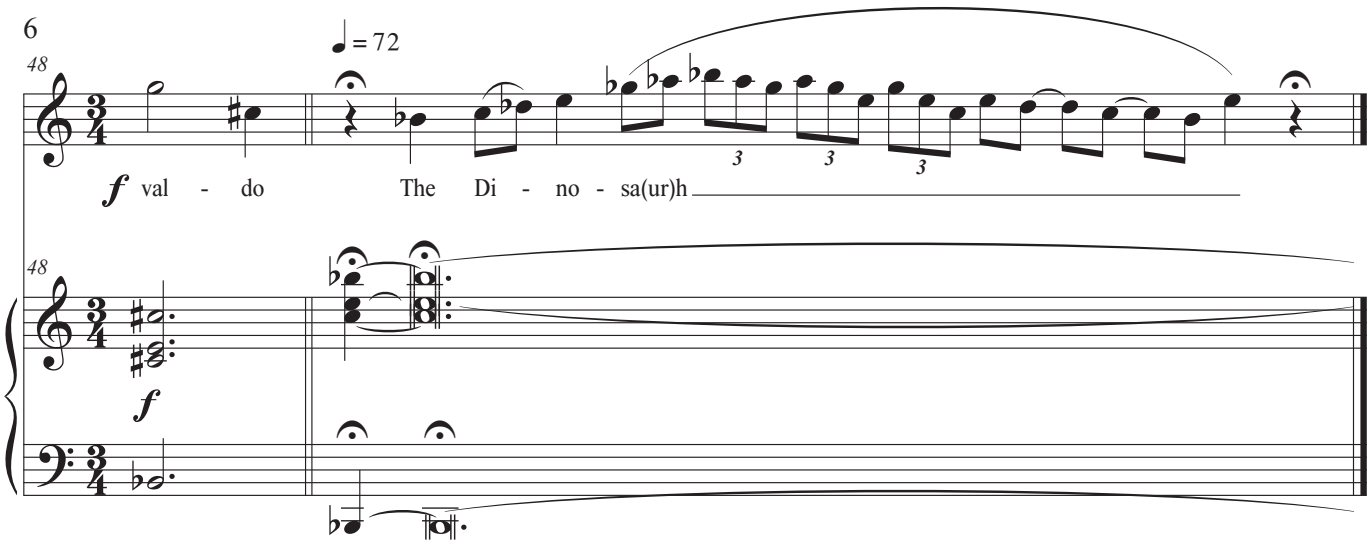
I. Il Dinosauro ♩ = 100



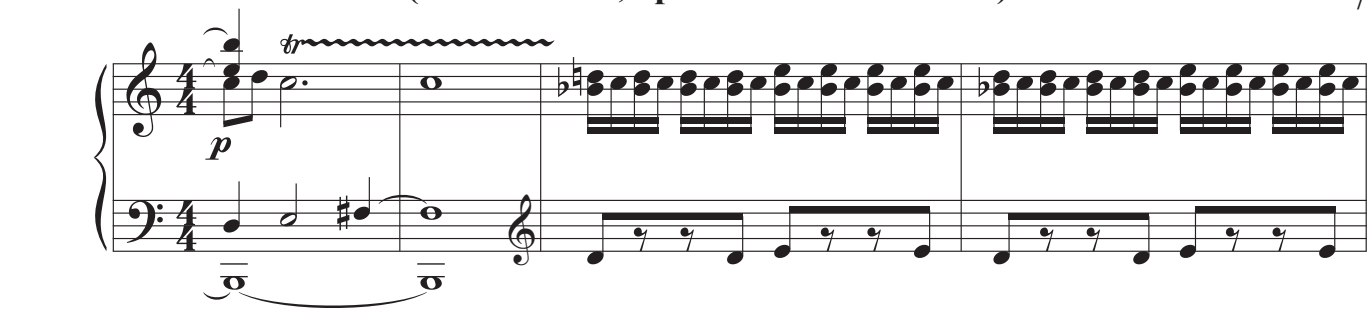

16
19
Fra - te - - - - lli
p
19
22
♩ = 80
ec - co un e - sem - pio di na - tu - ra grand -
mf
mf
22
24
dio - sa di
24

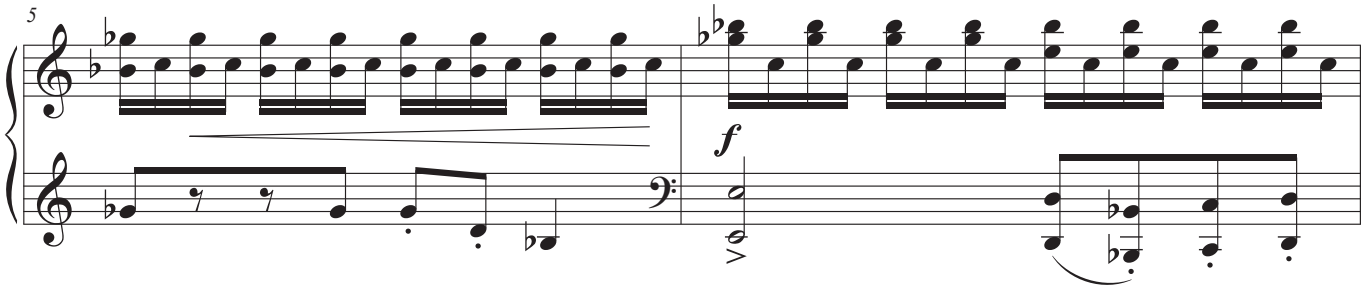

26
fron - te a noi si er - ge lo
28
con libertá
sche - le - tro del di - no - sou - - - ro
30
a tempo
mf
32
con libertá
f Il Di - no - sau ro
8va
loco
f

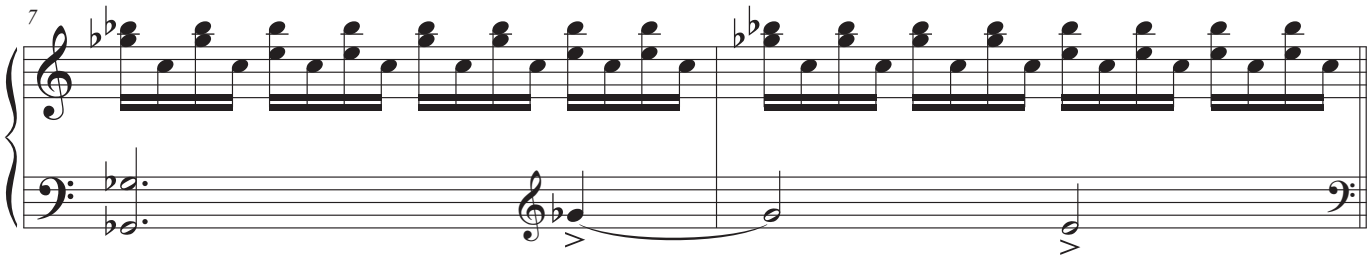

a tempo
36
p Ca - ri a - mi - ci
39
A - mi - - - ci a des - tra la
42
co - da va ver - so l'in - fi - ni - to
44
mp
a si - ni - stra il ca-po fer - mo fe - ro - ce fe - ro - ce e spa -
mf


48
♩ = 72
f val - do The Di - no - sa(ur)h
3
3
3
48
f

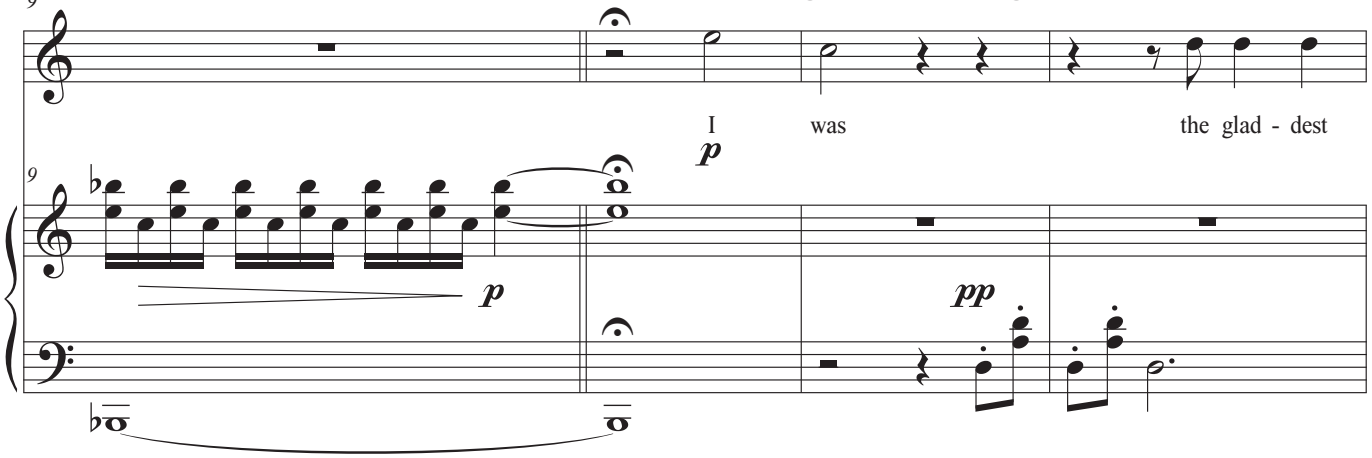
Beatrice ♩ = 112 **(introduction, optional to measure 10)**

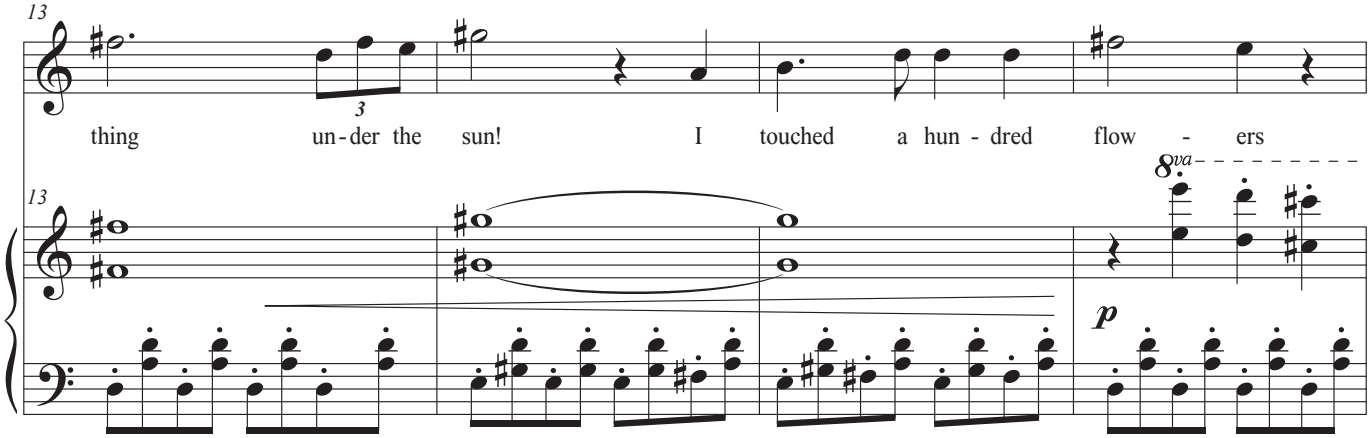


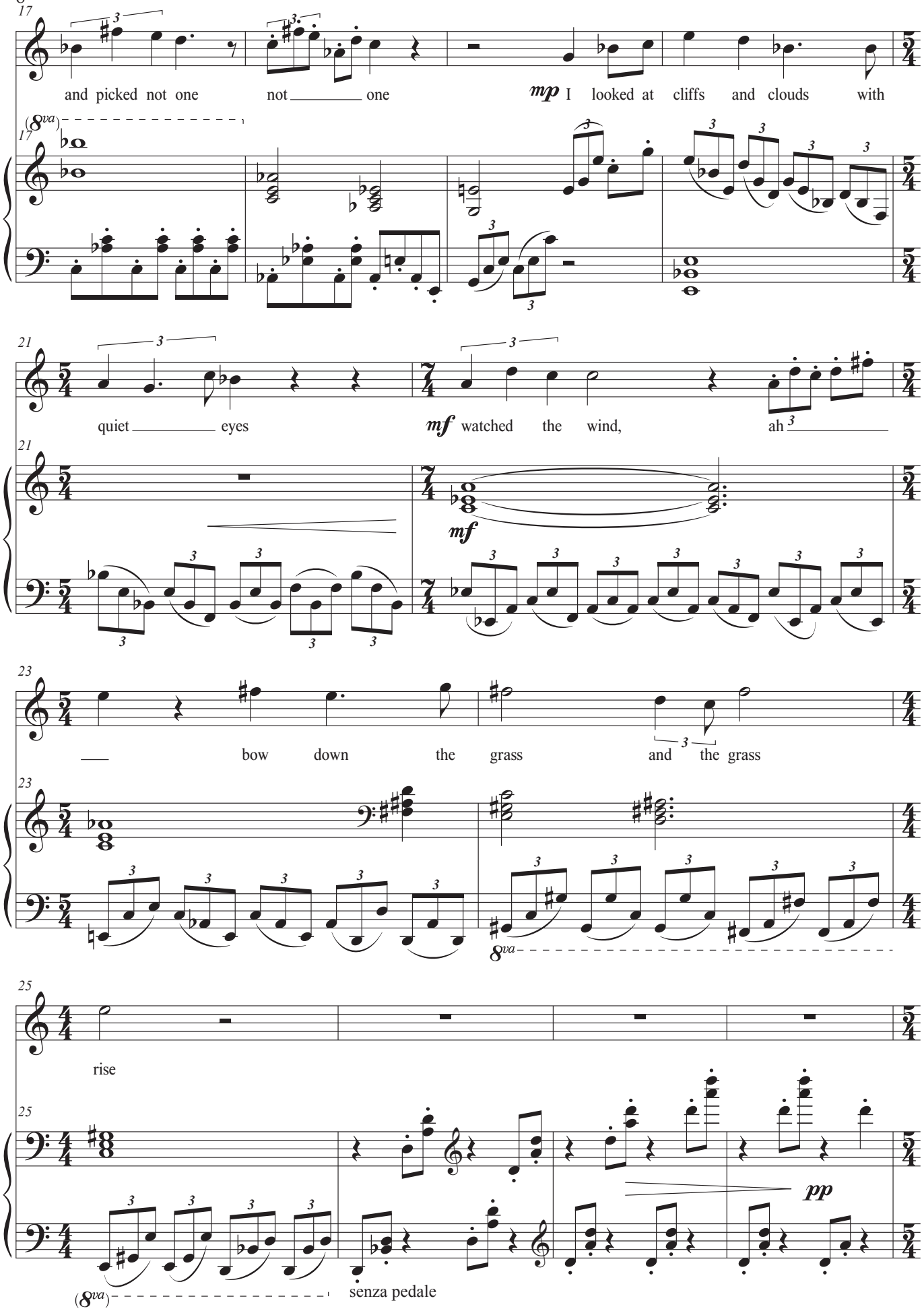


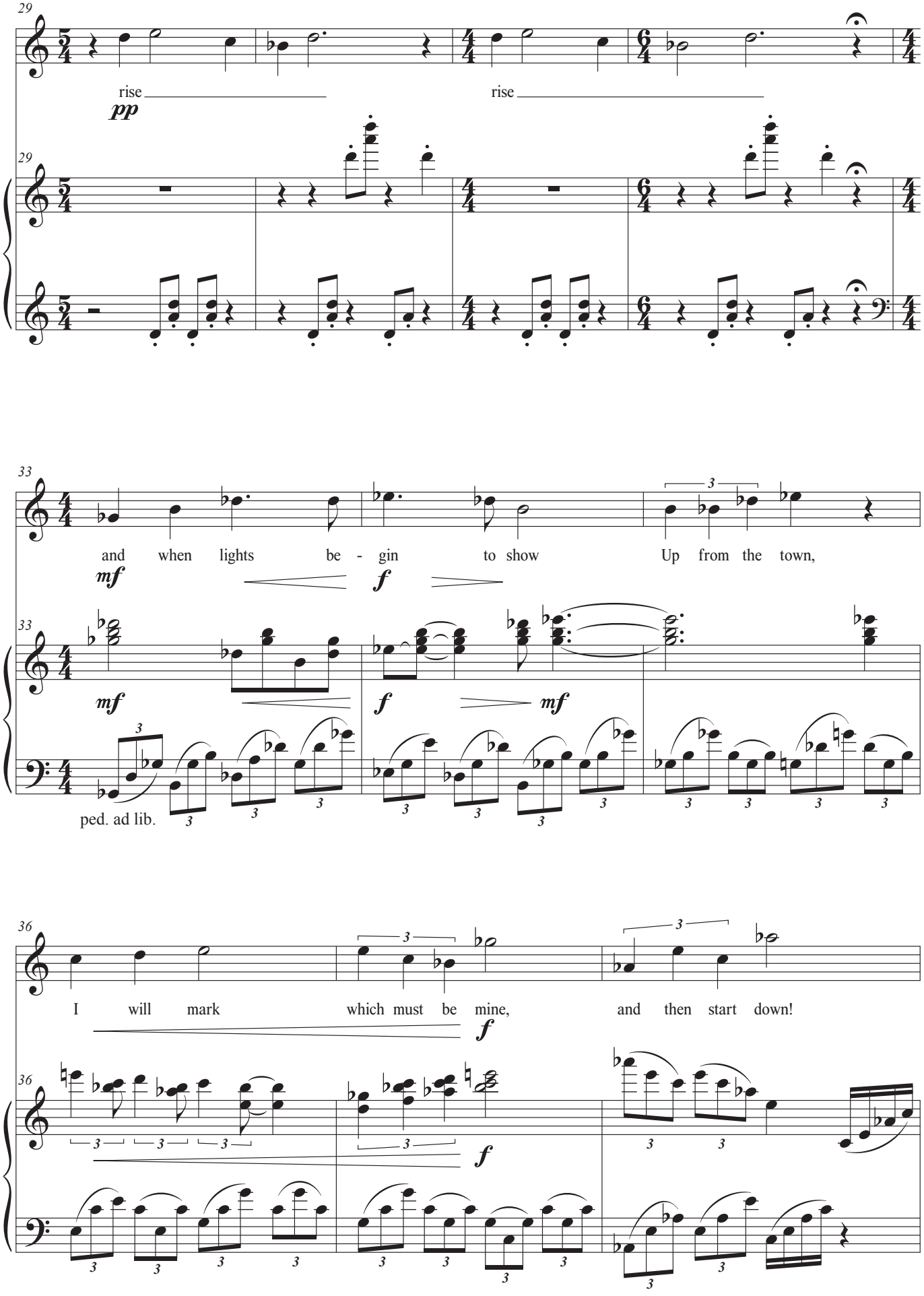


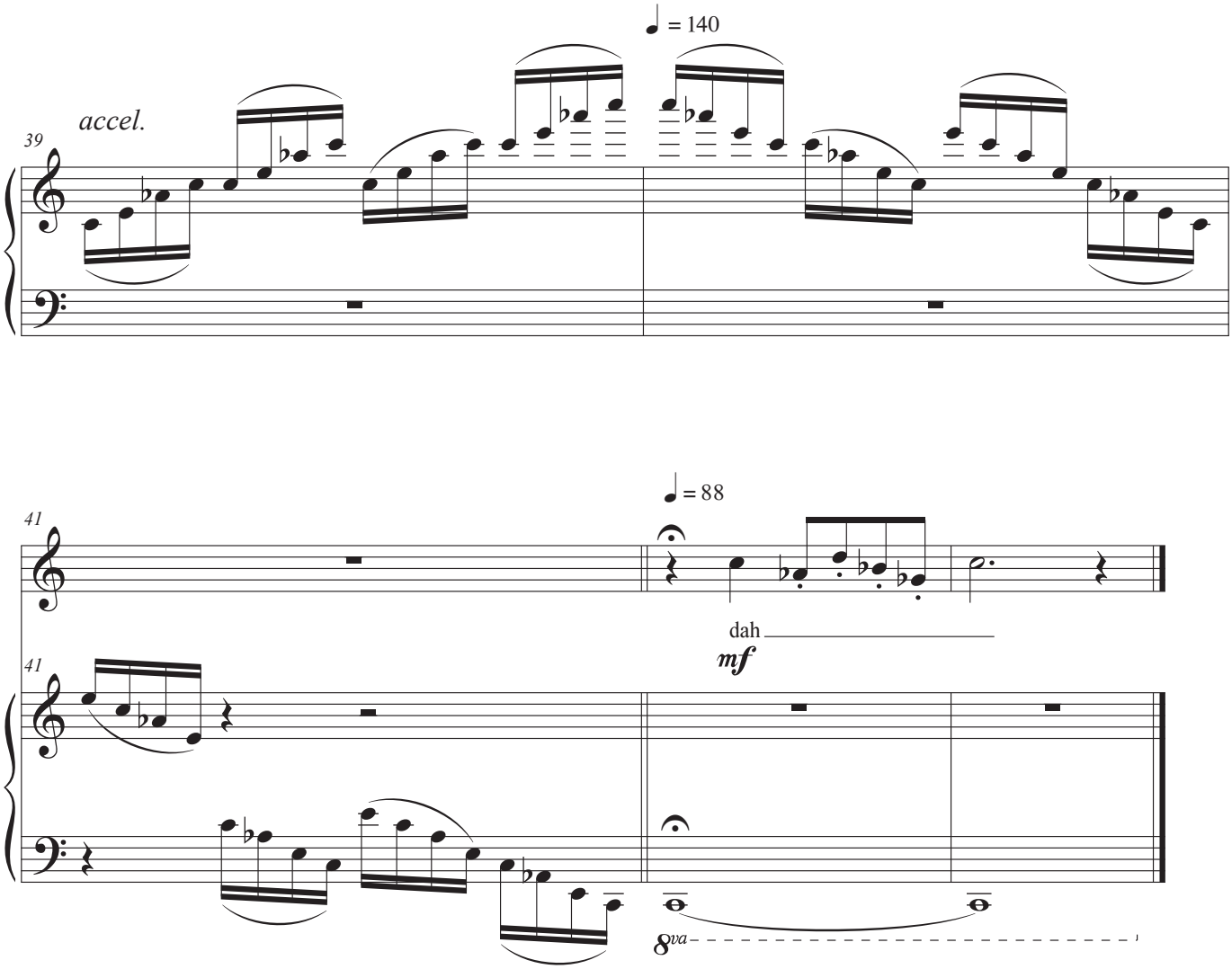
II. I was the gladdest thing ♩ = 88



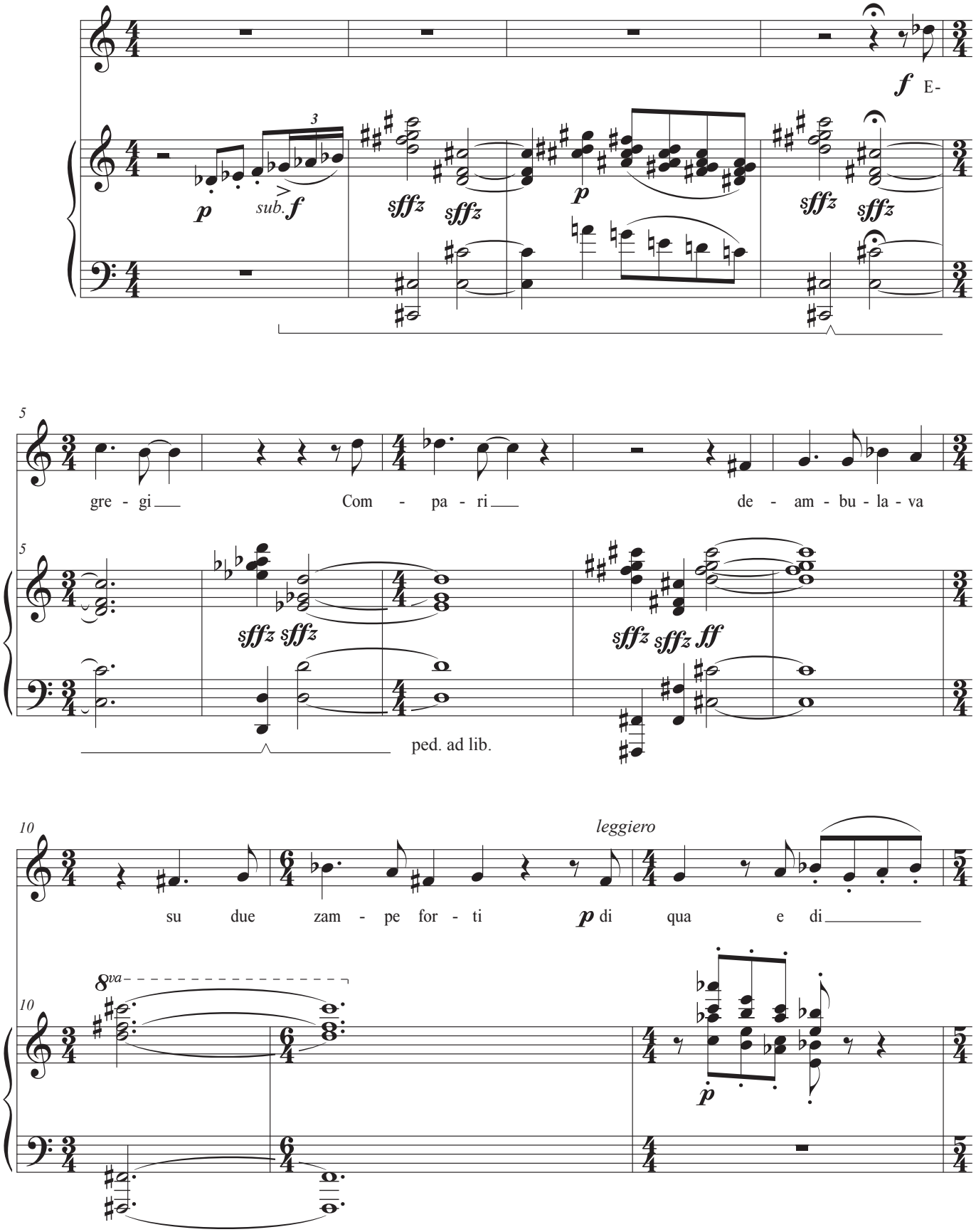


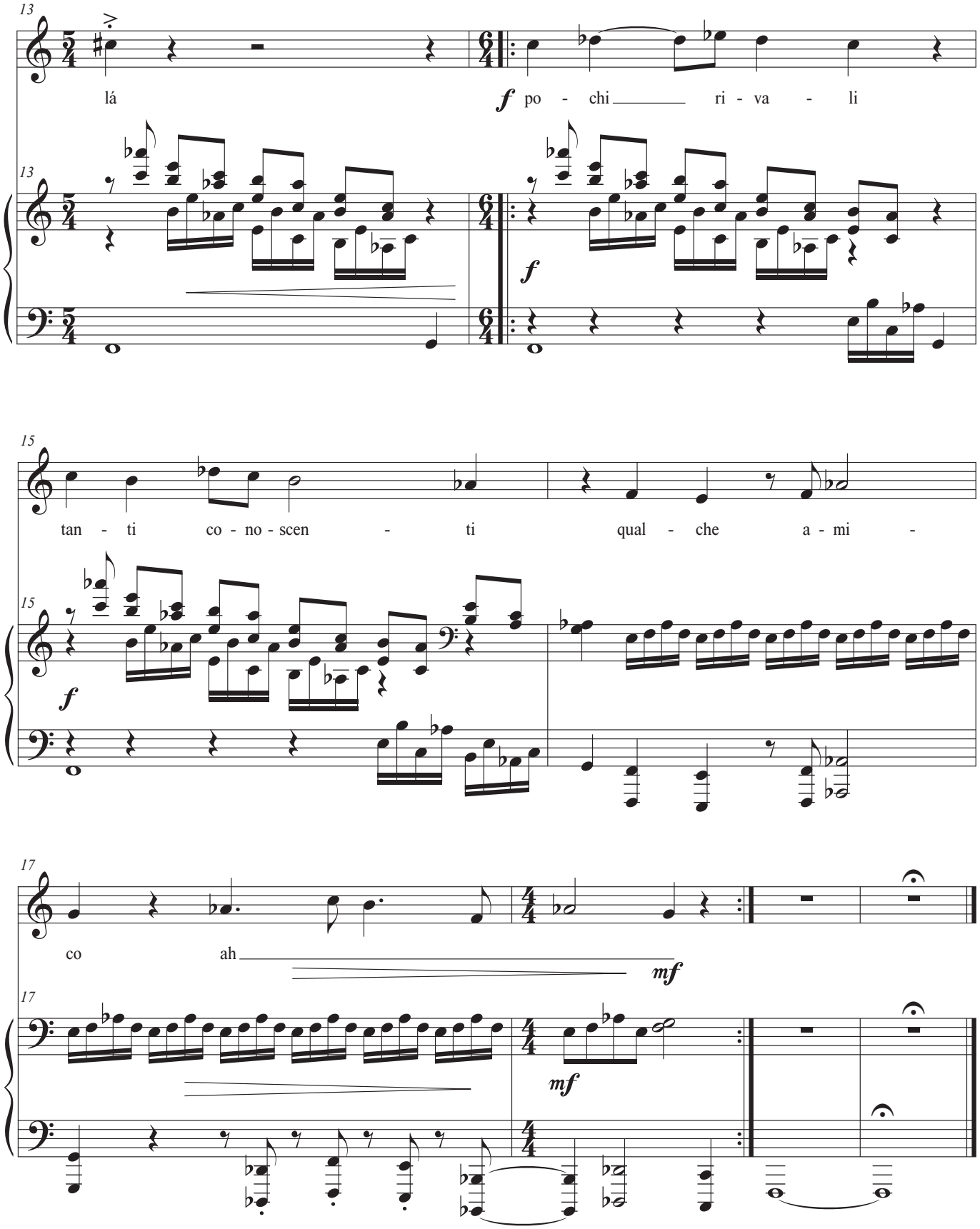

17
and picked not one not one
mp I looked at cliffs and clouds with
(8va)
21
quiet eyes
mf watched the wind, ah
mf
23
bow down the grass and the grass
8va
25
rise
pp
(8va)
senza pedale


29
rise
pp
rise
33
and when lights be - gin to show Up from the town,
mf
f
mf
f
mf
ped. ad lib.
36
I will mark which must be mine, and then start down!
f
f

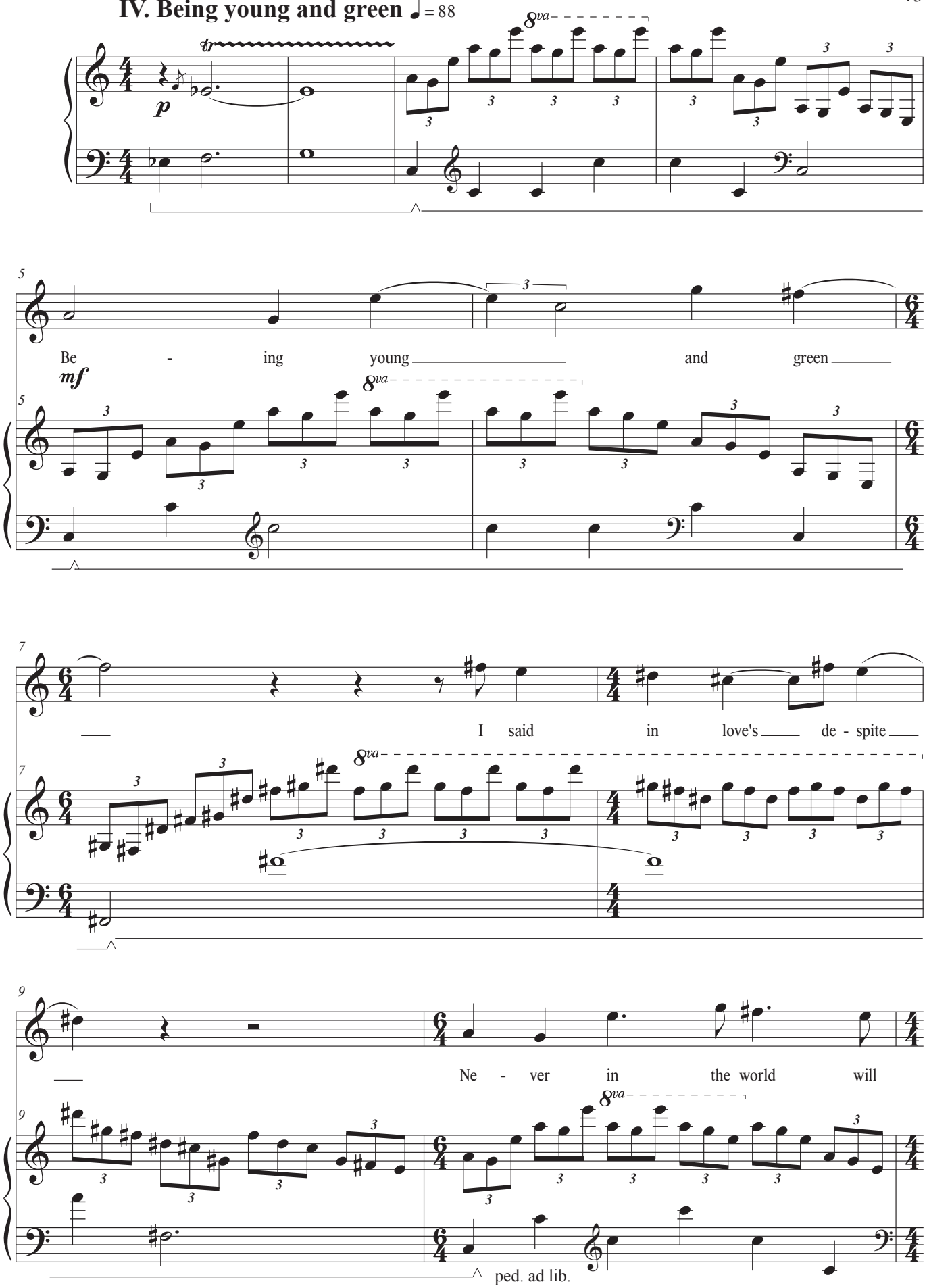

♩ = 140
accel.
39
41
♩ = 88
dah
mf
41
8va

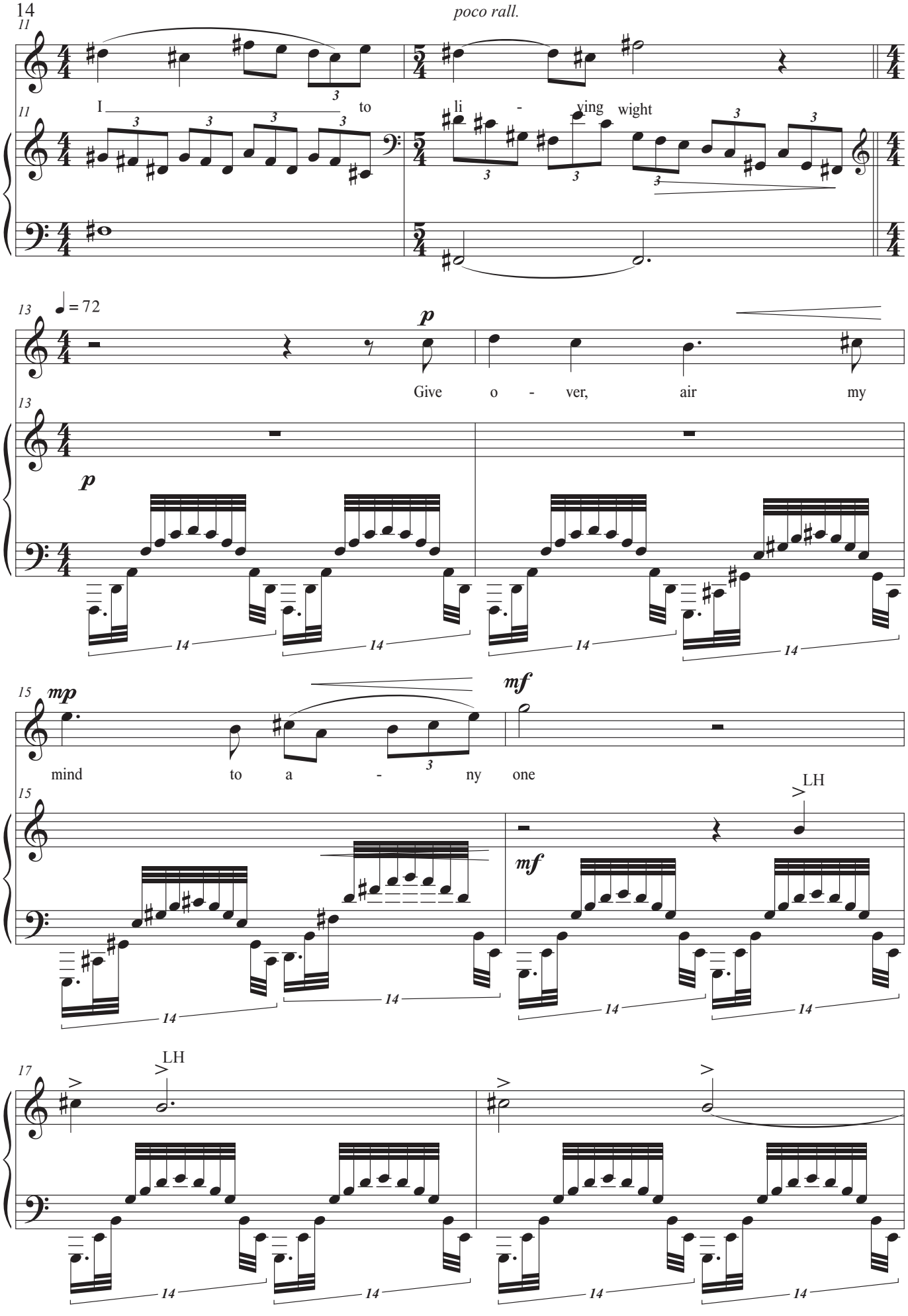
III. Il Dinosauro ♩ = 69

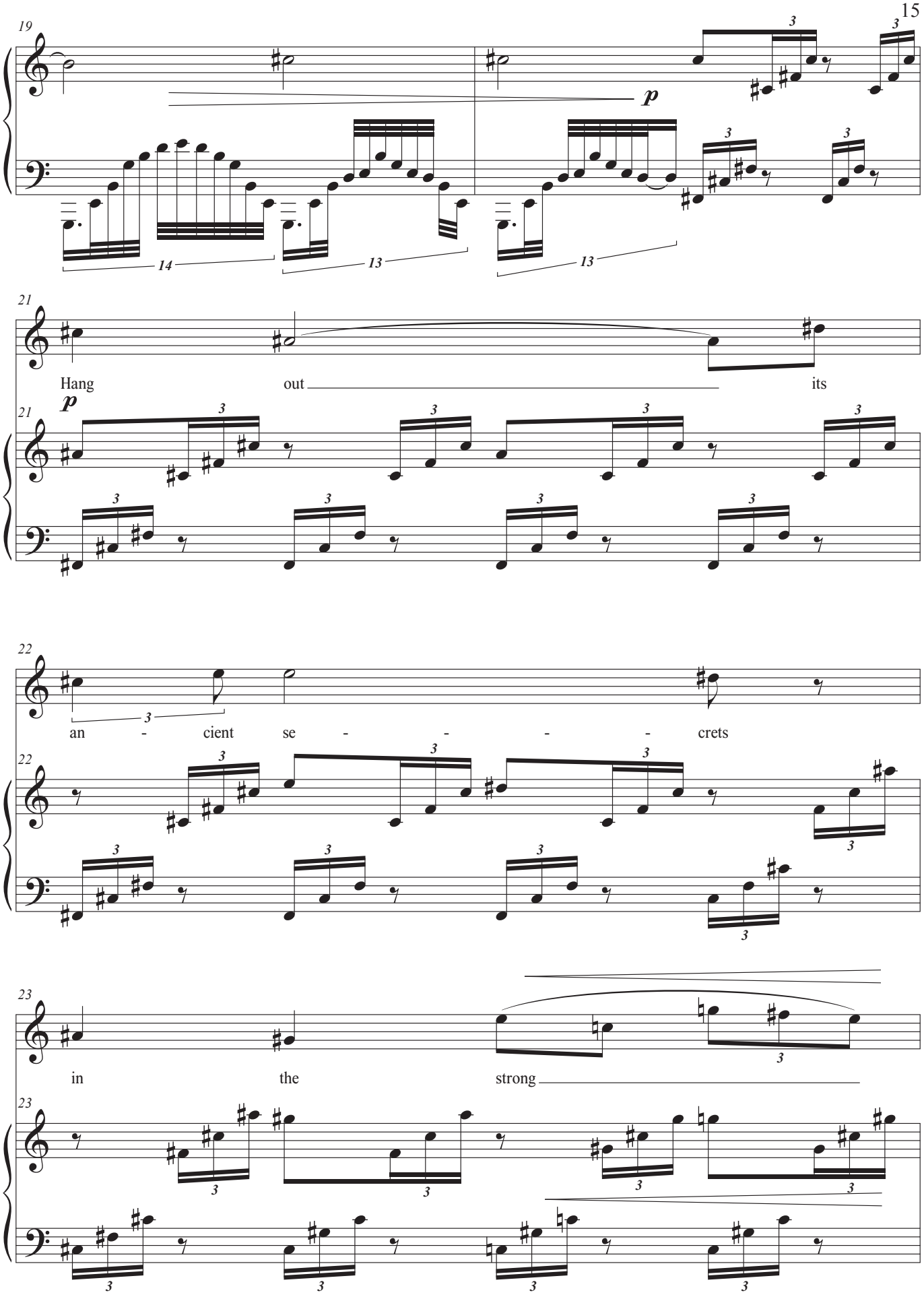


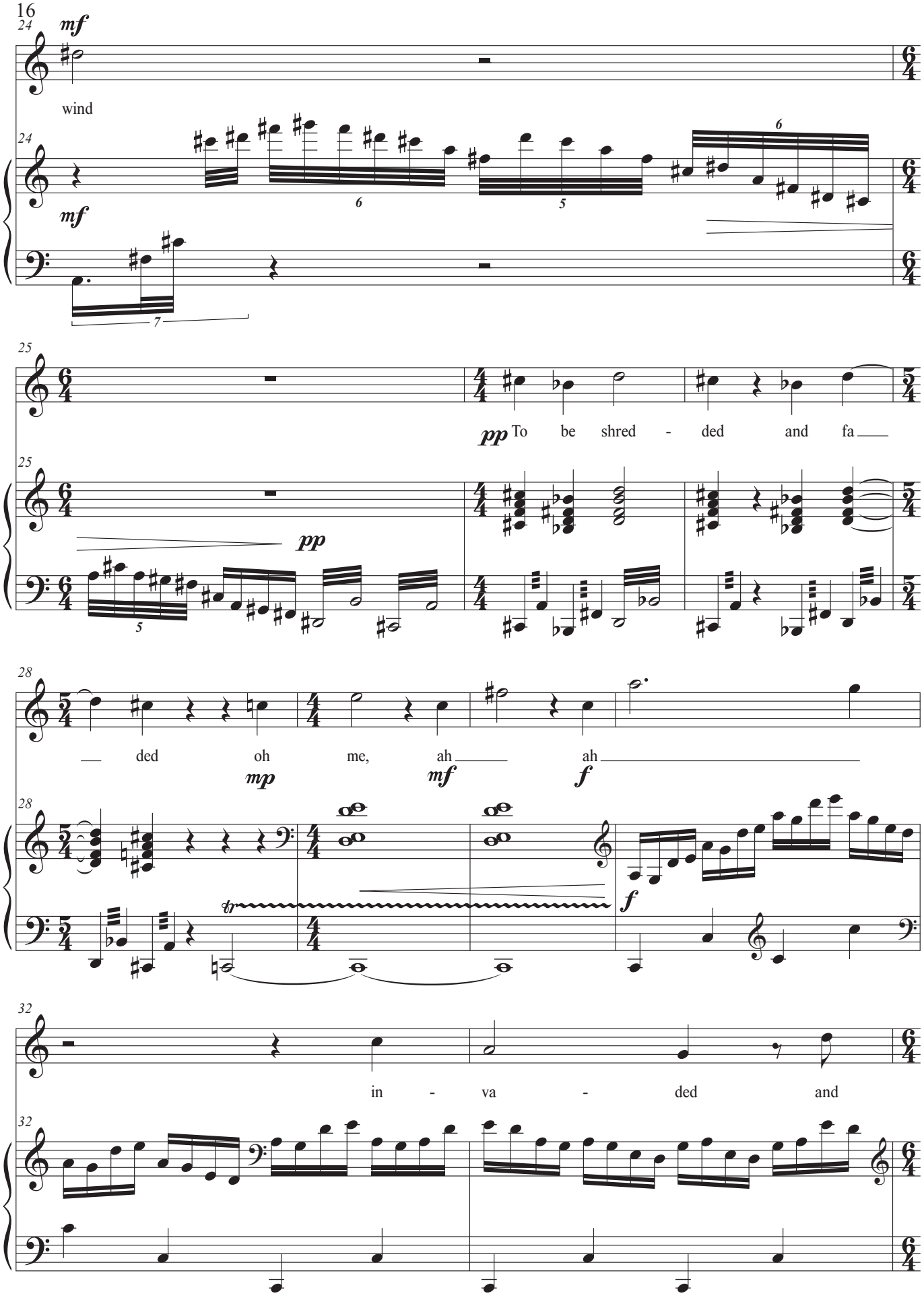

13
lá
f po - chi ri - va - li
13
f
15
tan - ti co - no - scen - ti qual - che a - mi -
15
f
17
co ah
mf
17
mf

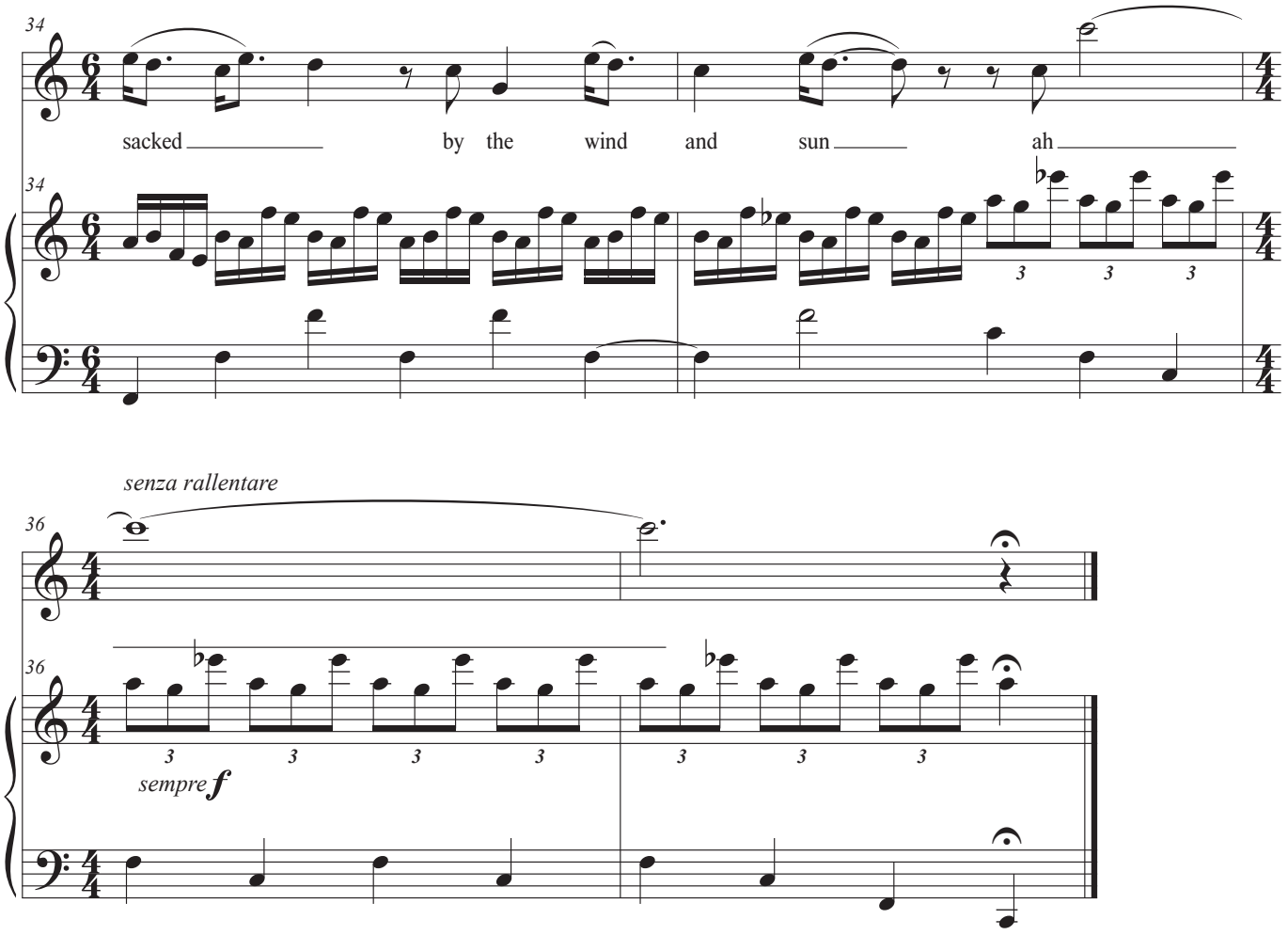
IV. Being young and green ♩ = 88



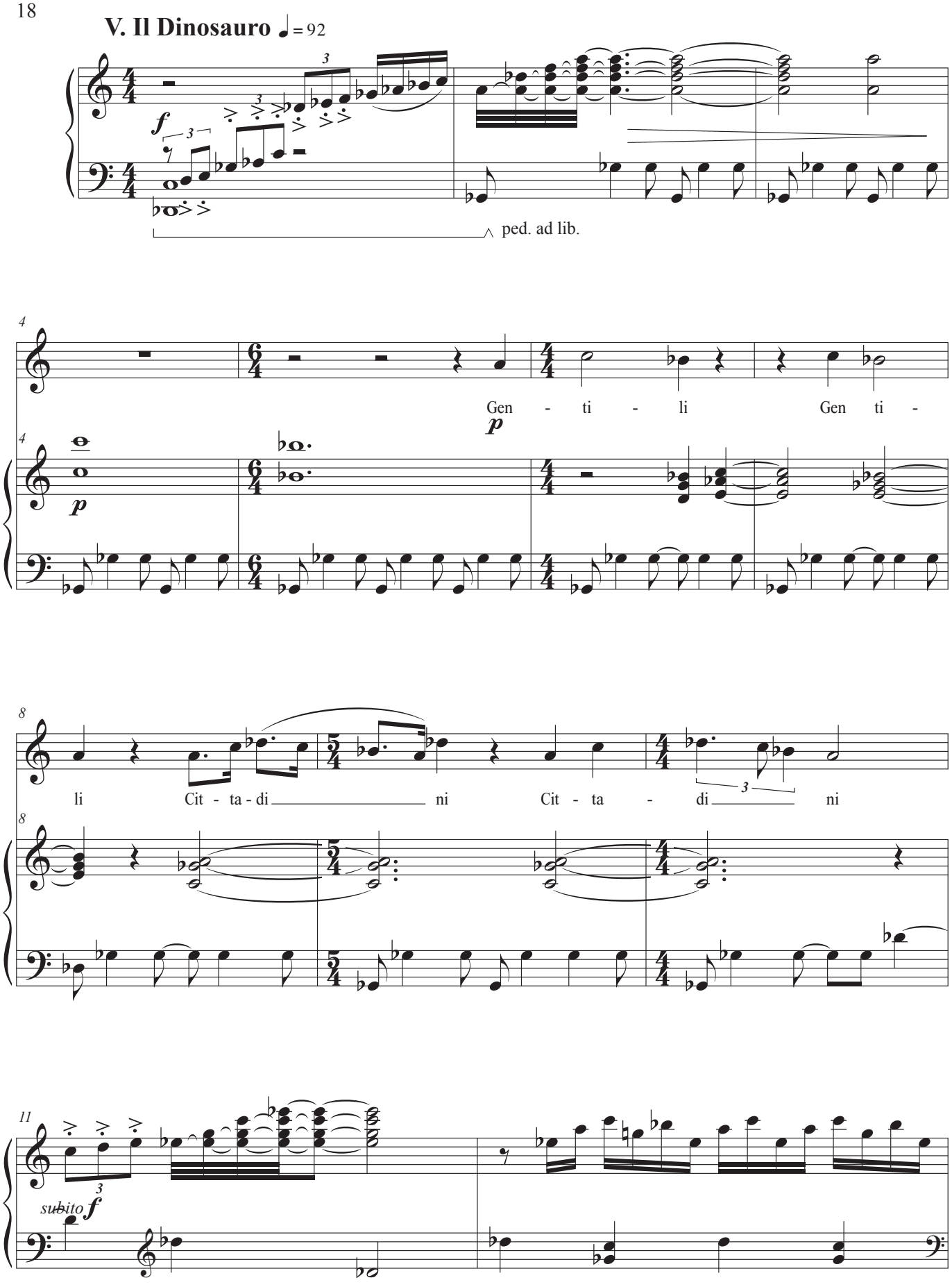

poco rall.
I to li - ying wight
Give o - ver, air my
mind to a - ny one
LH
LH

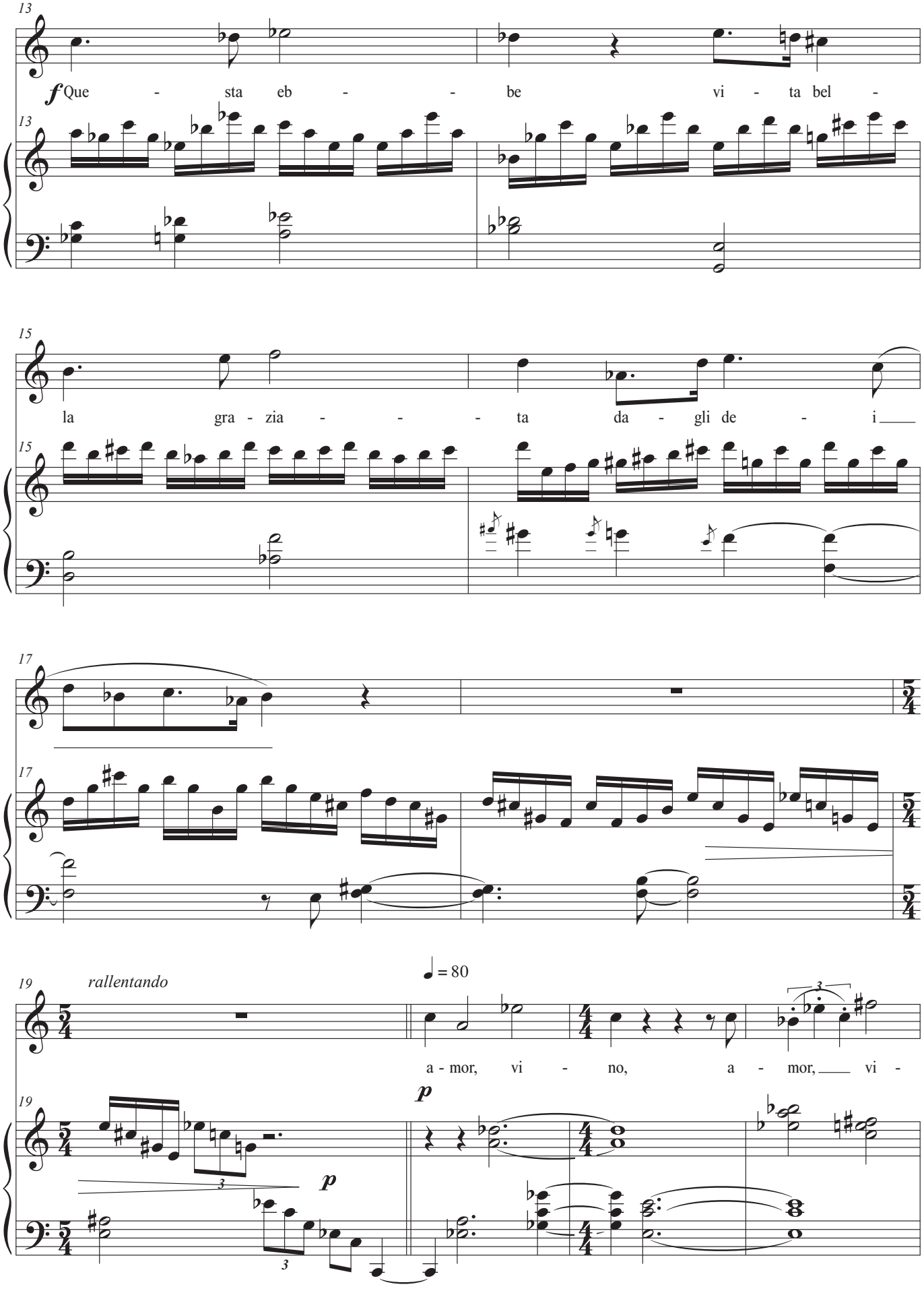

19
p
14
13
13
21
Hang
out
its
21
p
22
an - cient se - - - - crets
22
23
in
the
strong
23

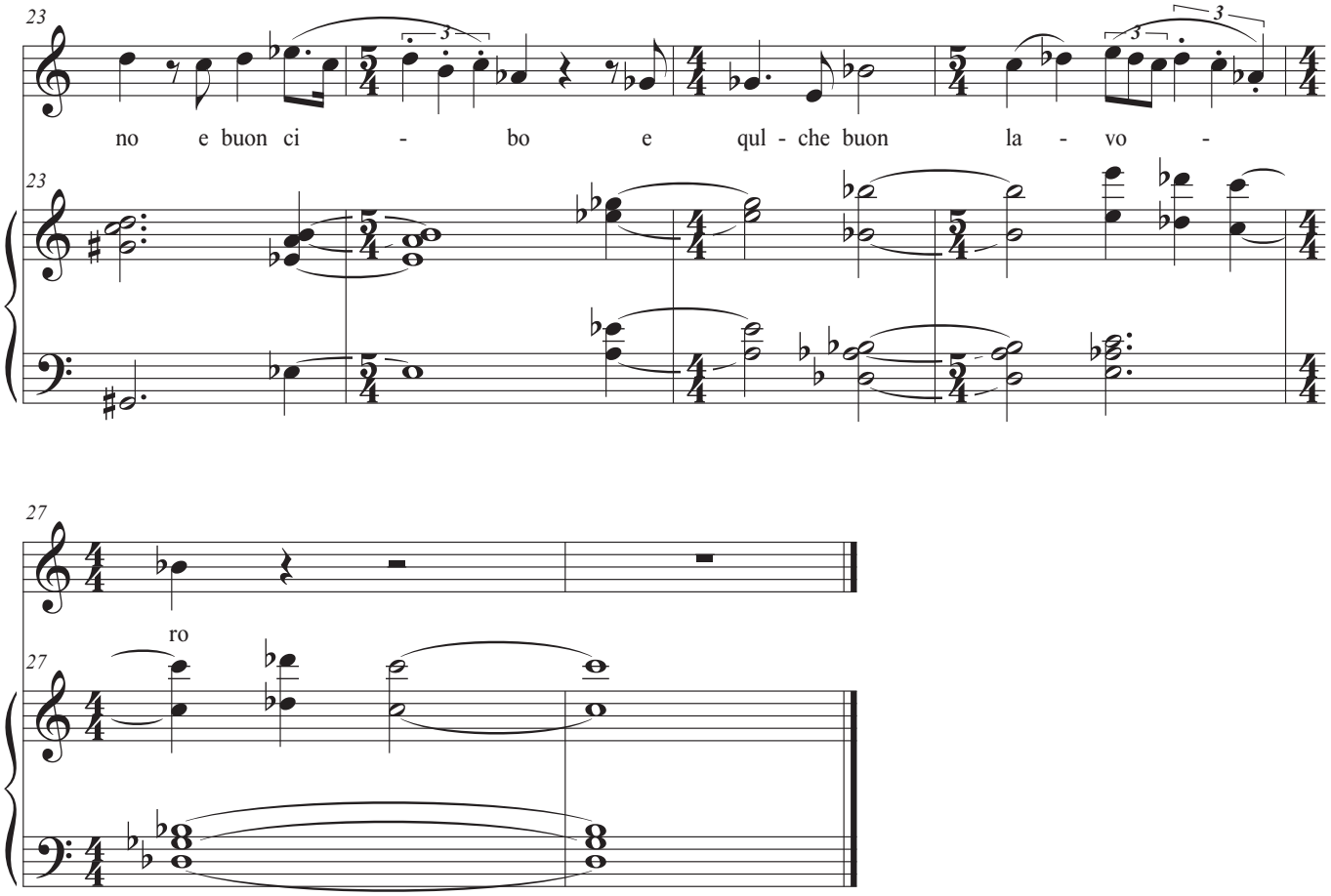

24
mf
wind
24
mf
6
6
5
7
25
pp To be shred - ded and fa
25
pp
5
28
ded oh me, ah ah
mp
mf
f
28
tr
f
32
in - va - ded and
32


34
sacked by the wind and sun ah
34

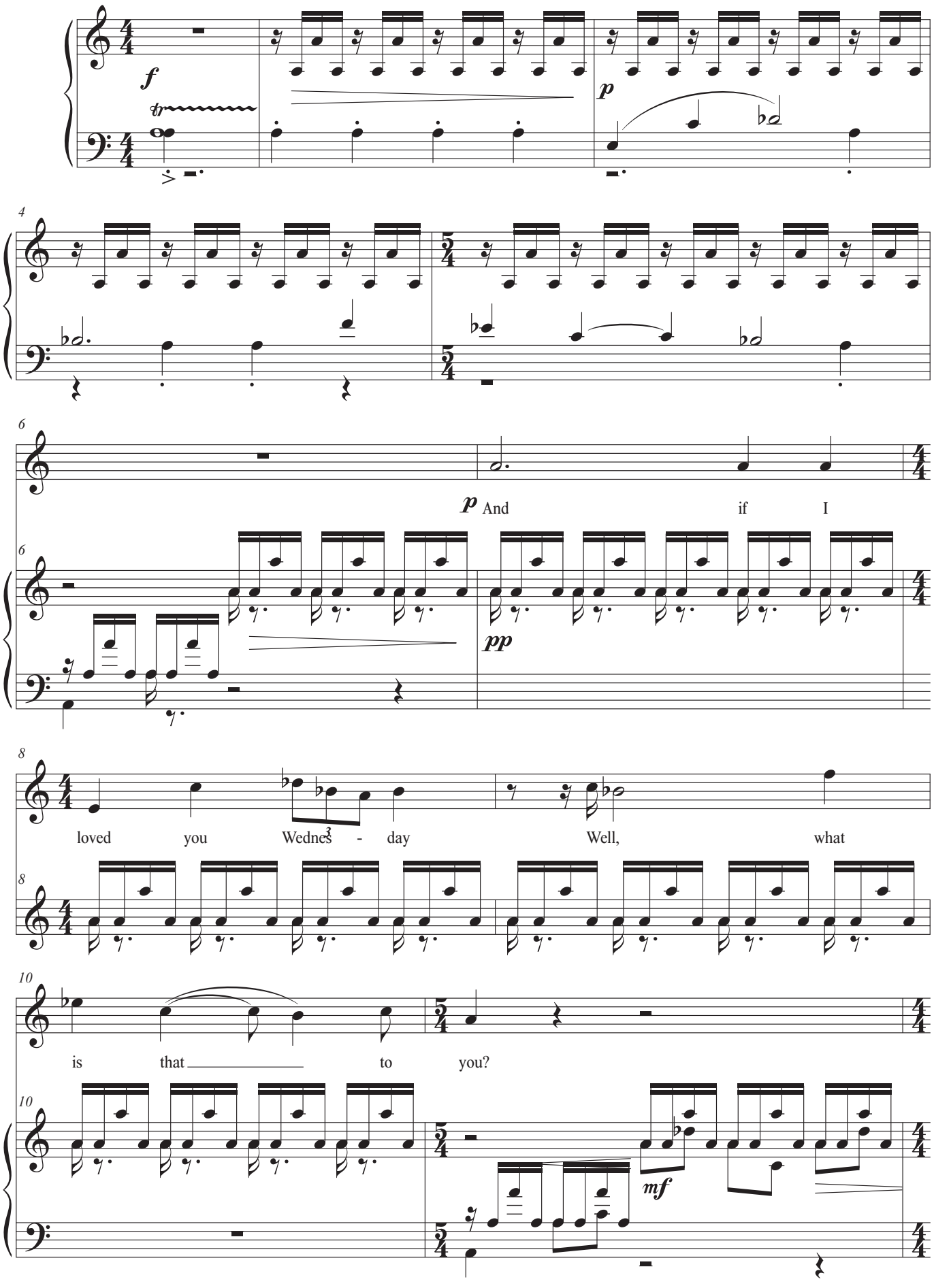
senza rallentare
36
36
sempre f

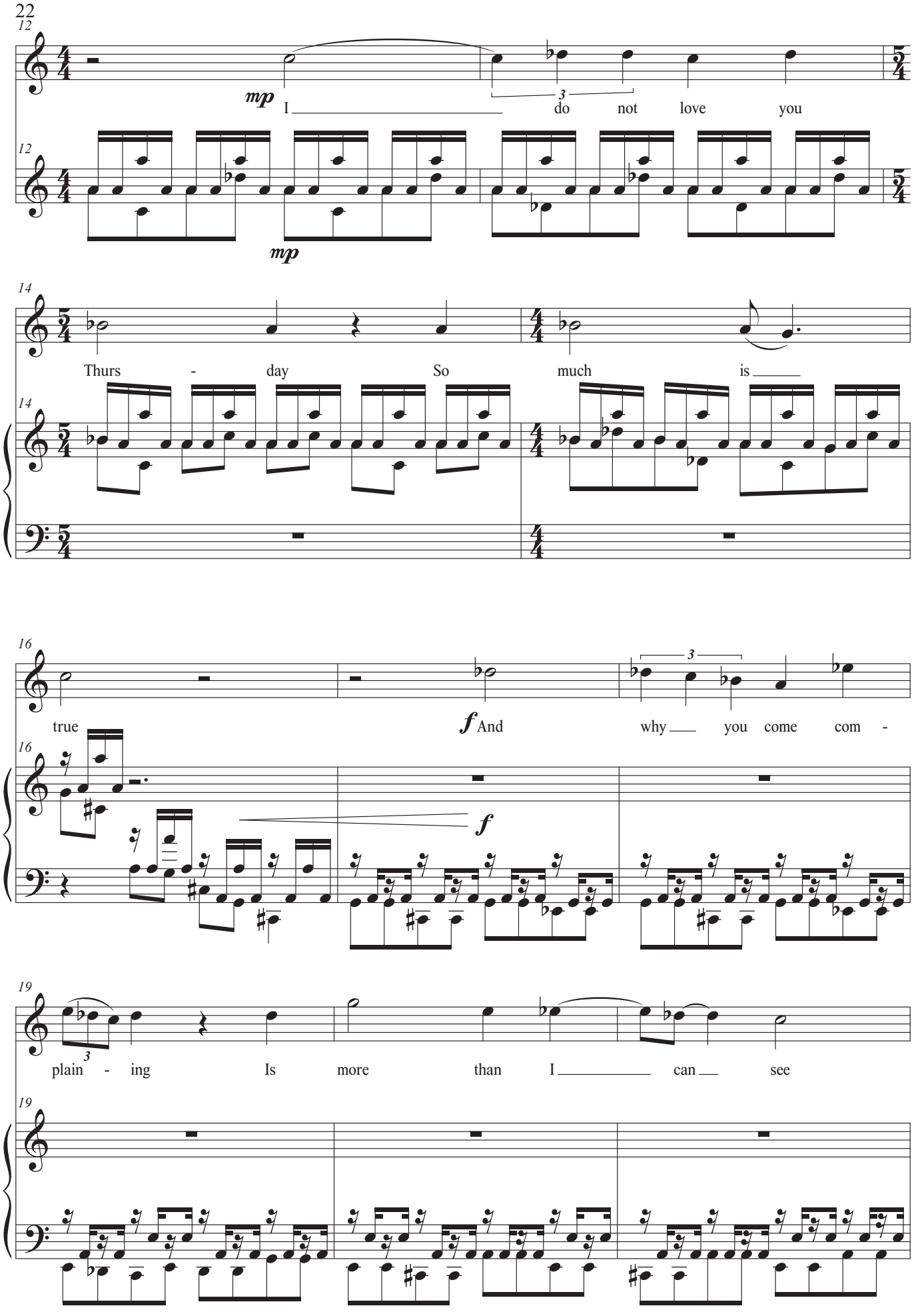

V. Il Dinosauro ♩= 92
ped. ad lib.
Gen - ti - li Gen ti -
li Cit - ta - di ni Cit - ta - di ni
subito

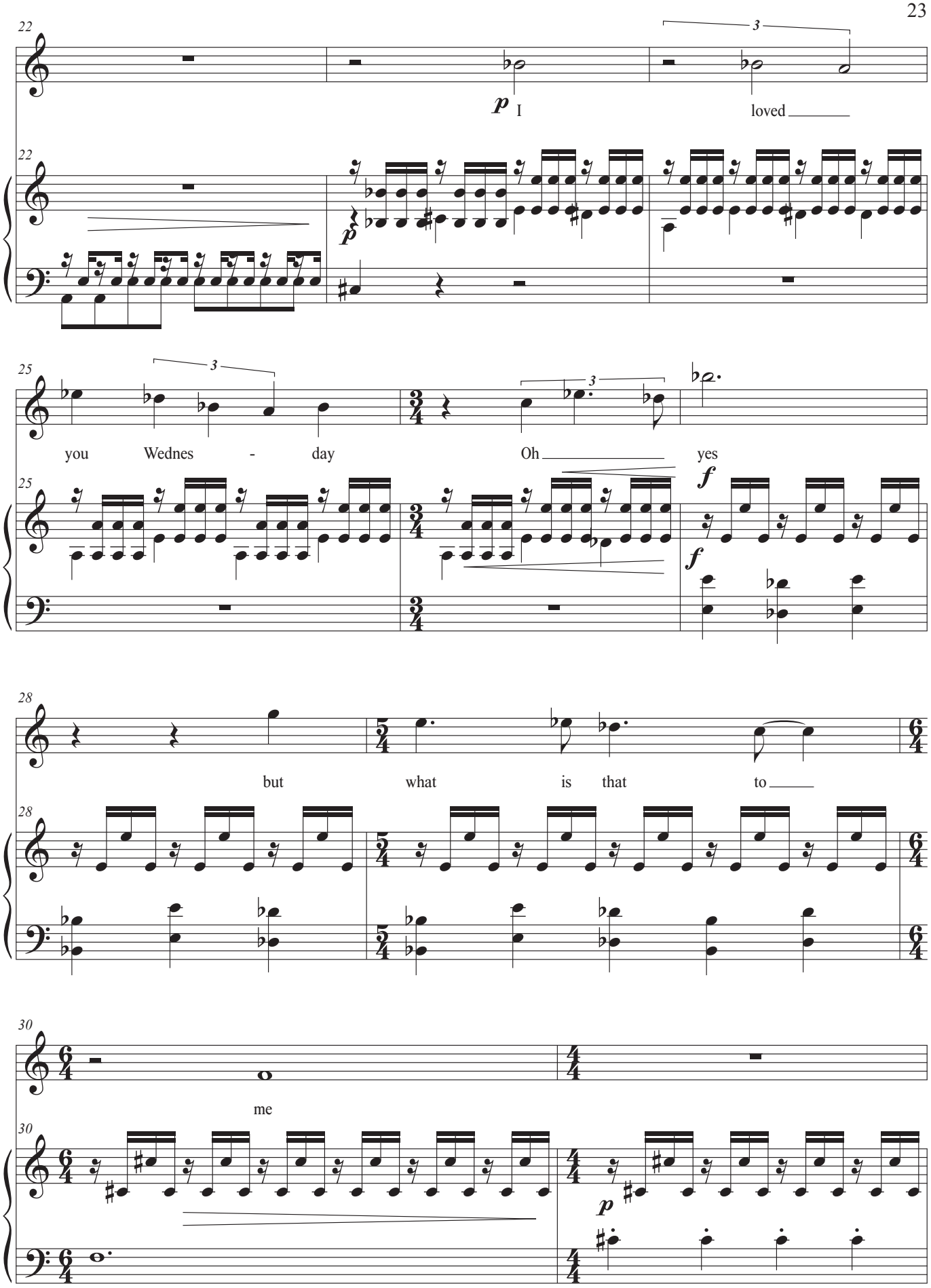

13
f Que - sta eb - - be vi - ta bel -
15
la gra - zia - - - ta da - gli de - i
17
19
rallentando
♩ = 80
a - mor, vi - no, a - mor, vi -
p
p

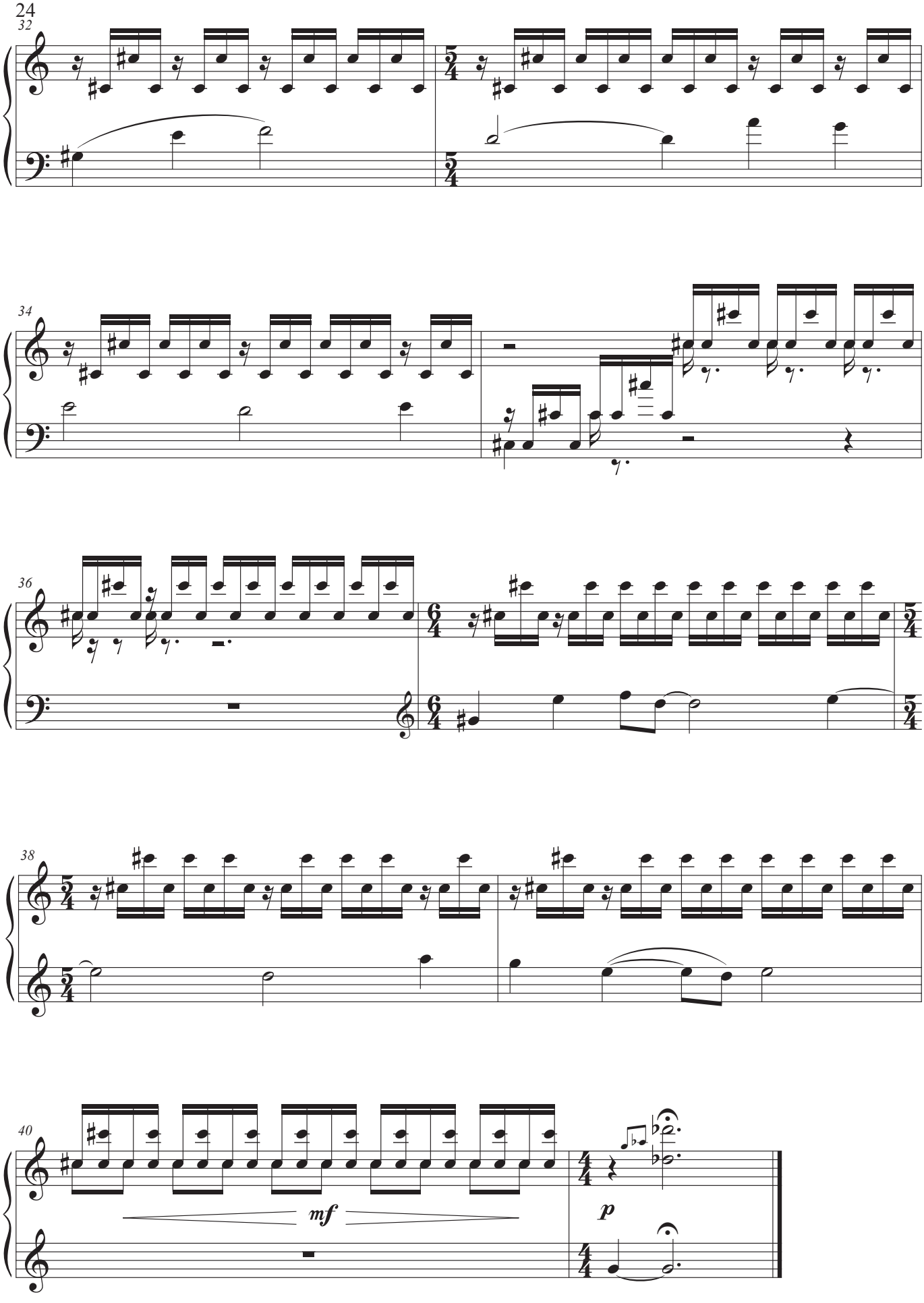

23
no e buon ci - bo e qul - che buon la - vo -
23
27
ro
27

VI. Thursday ♩ = 80

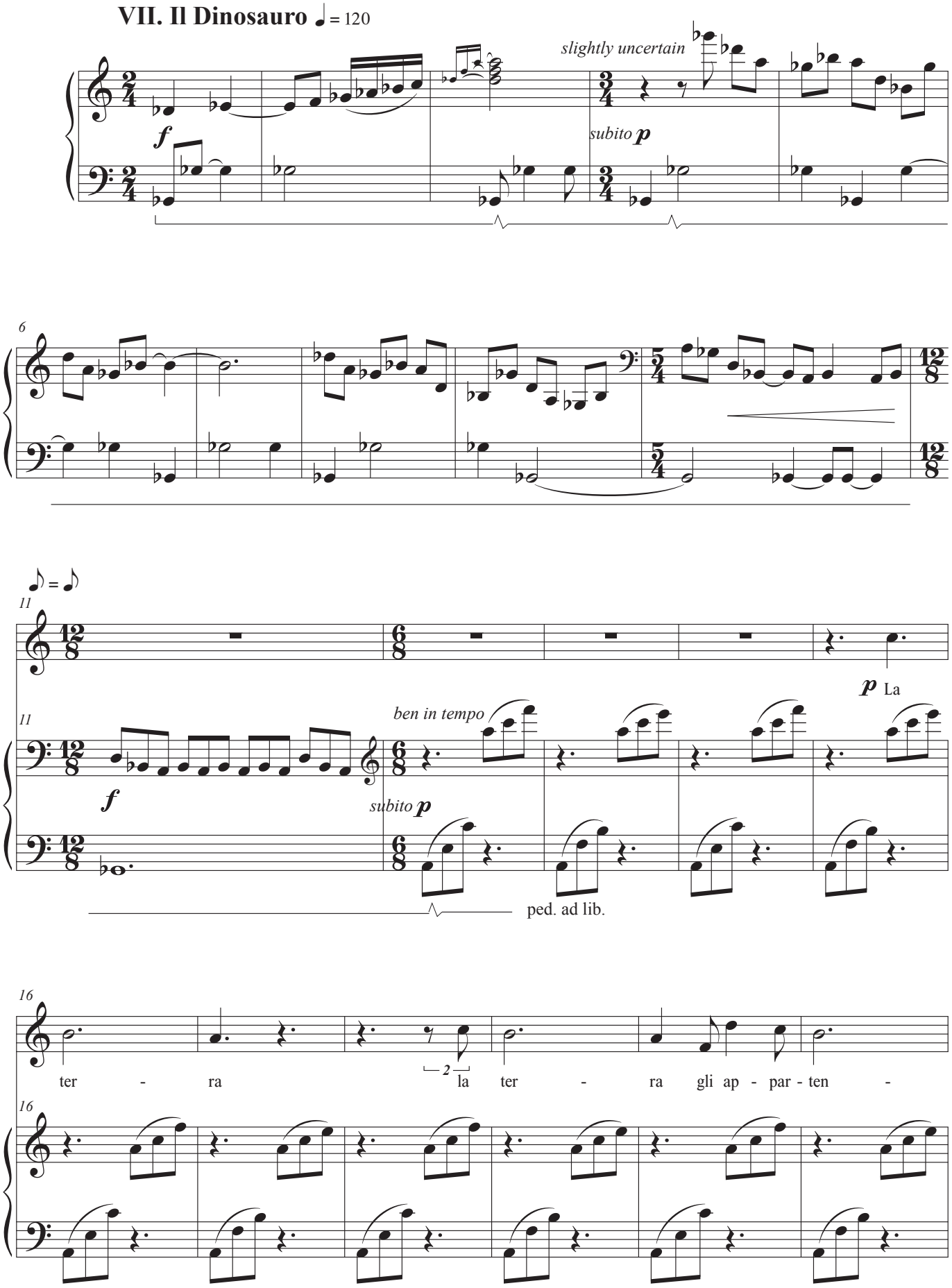


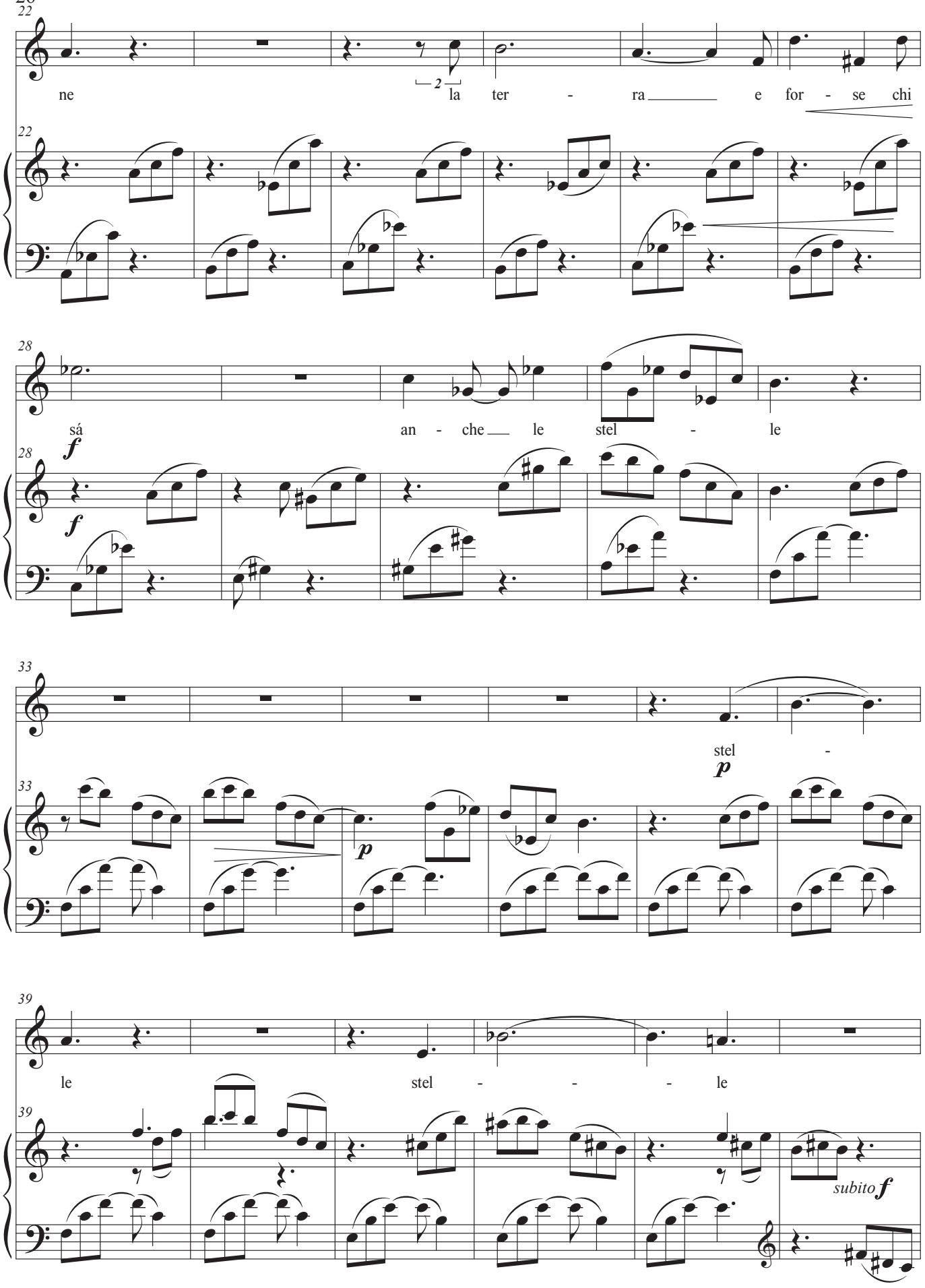

12
mp
I do not love you
12
mp
14
Thurs - day So much is
14
16
true
f And
why you come com -
16
f
19
plain - ing Is more than I can see
19

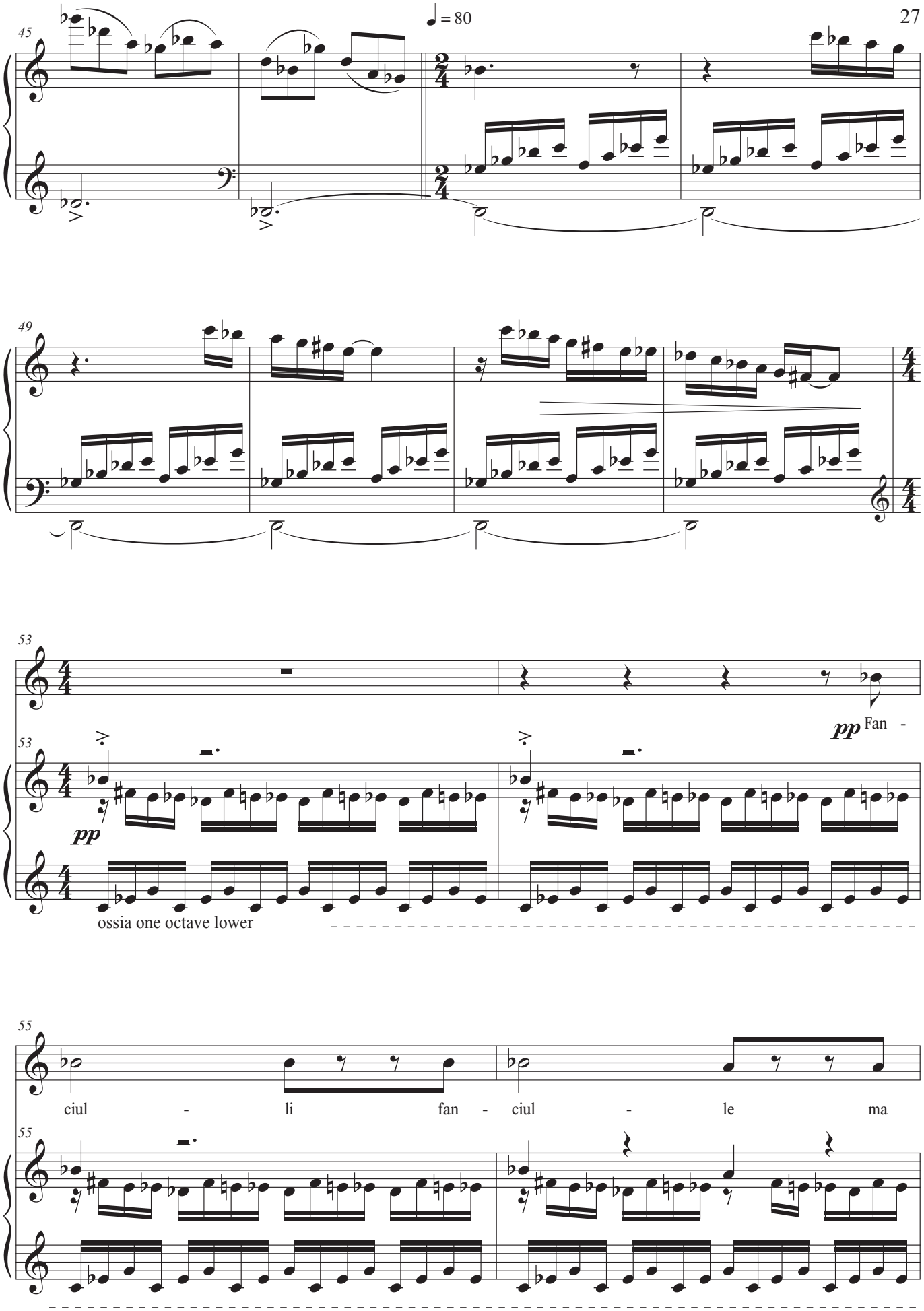

22
p I
loved
25
you Wednes - day
Oh
yes
f
28
but what is that to
30
me
p

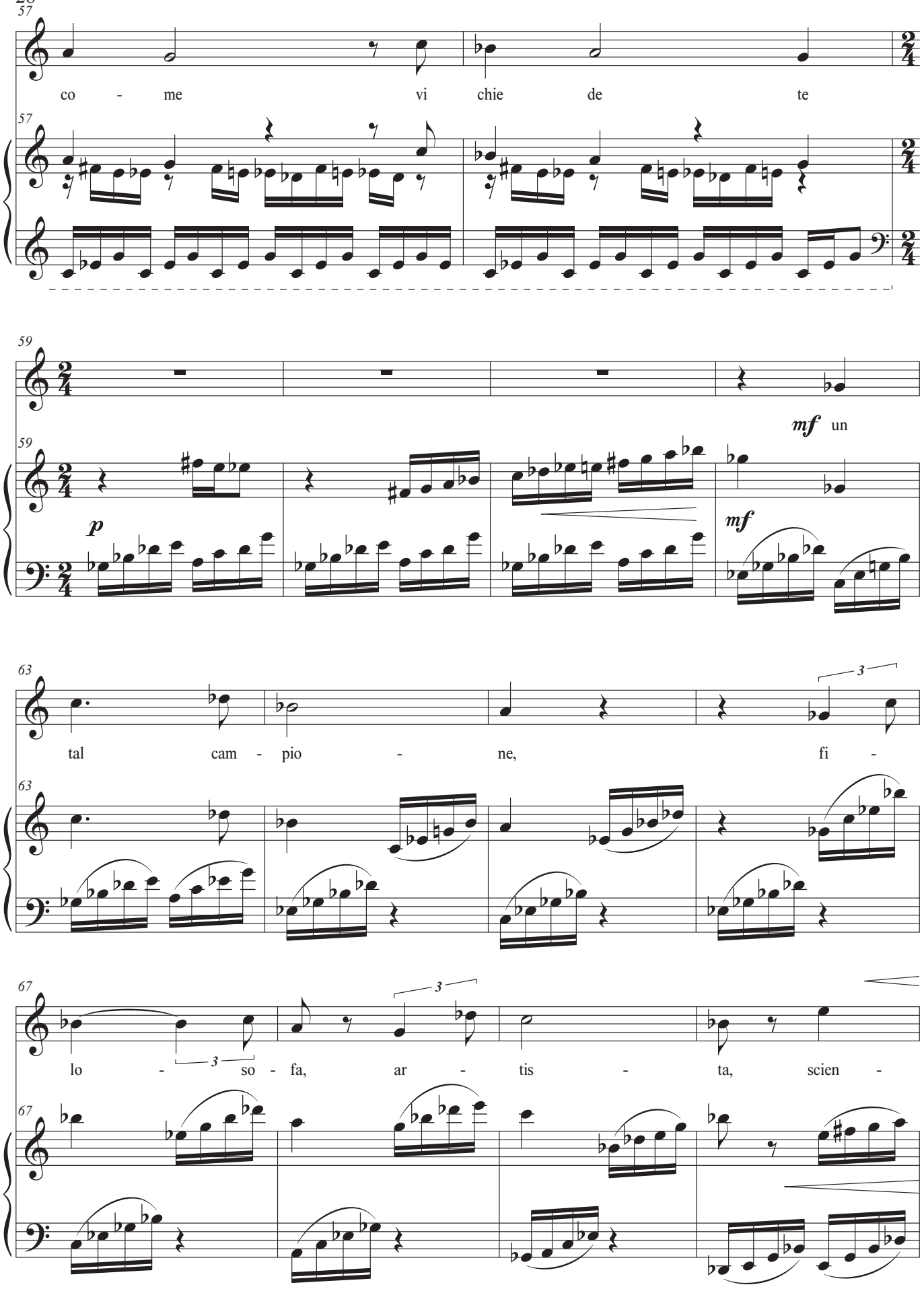

32
34
36
38
40
mf
p

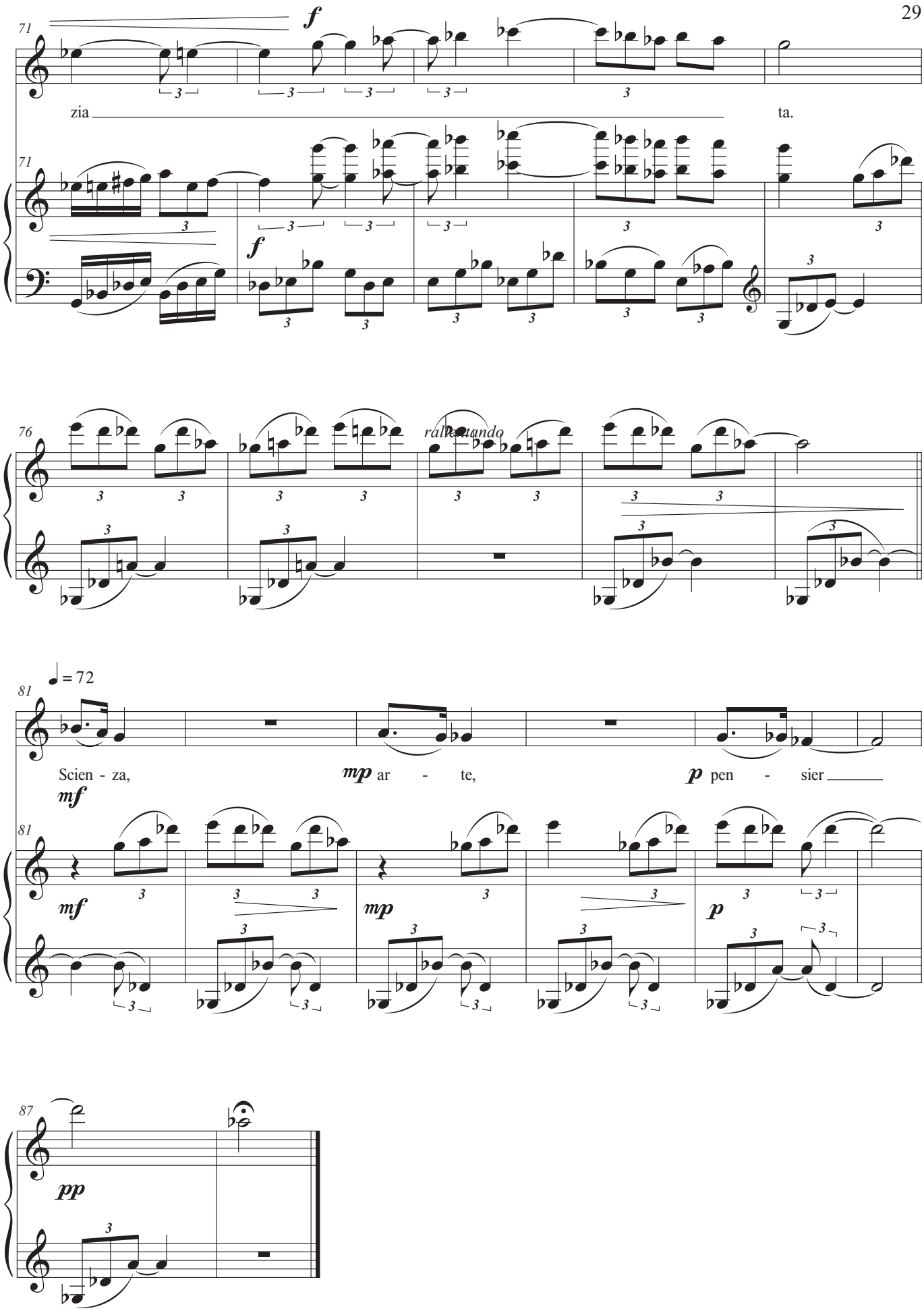
VII. Il Dinosauro ♩ = 120



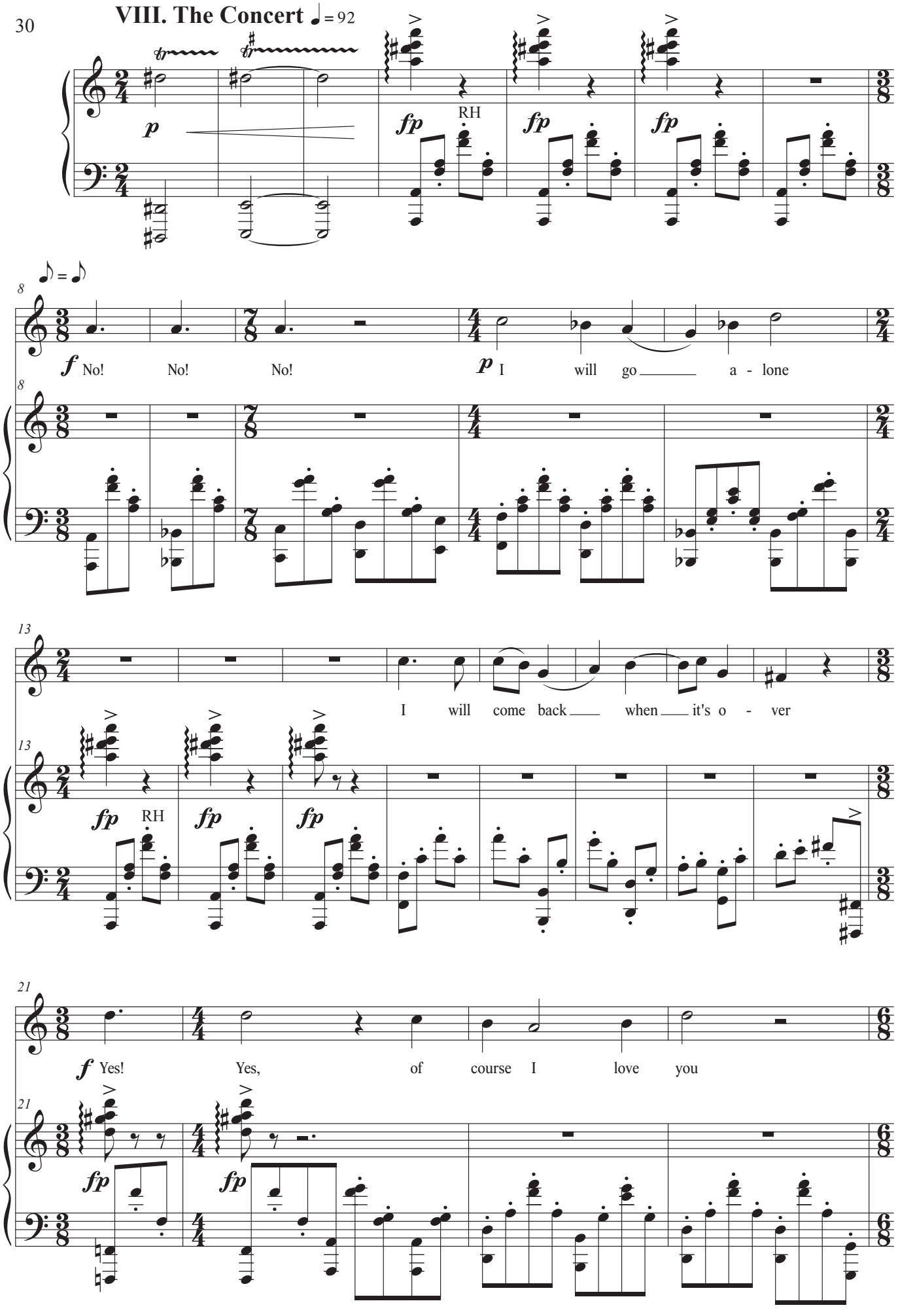

22
ne
2
la ter - ra e for - se chi
22
28
sá an - che le stel - le
28
f
f
33
stel -
33
p
p
39
le stel - - - le
39
subito f

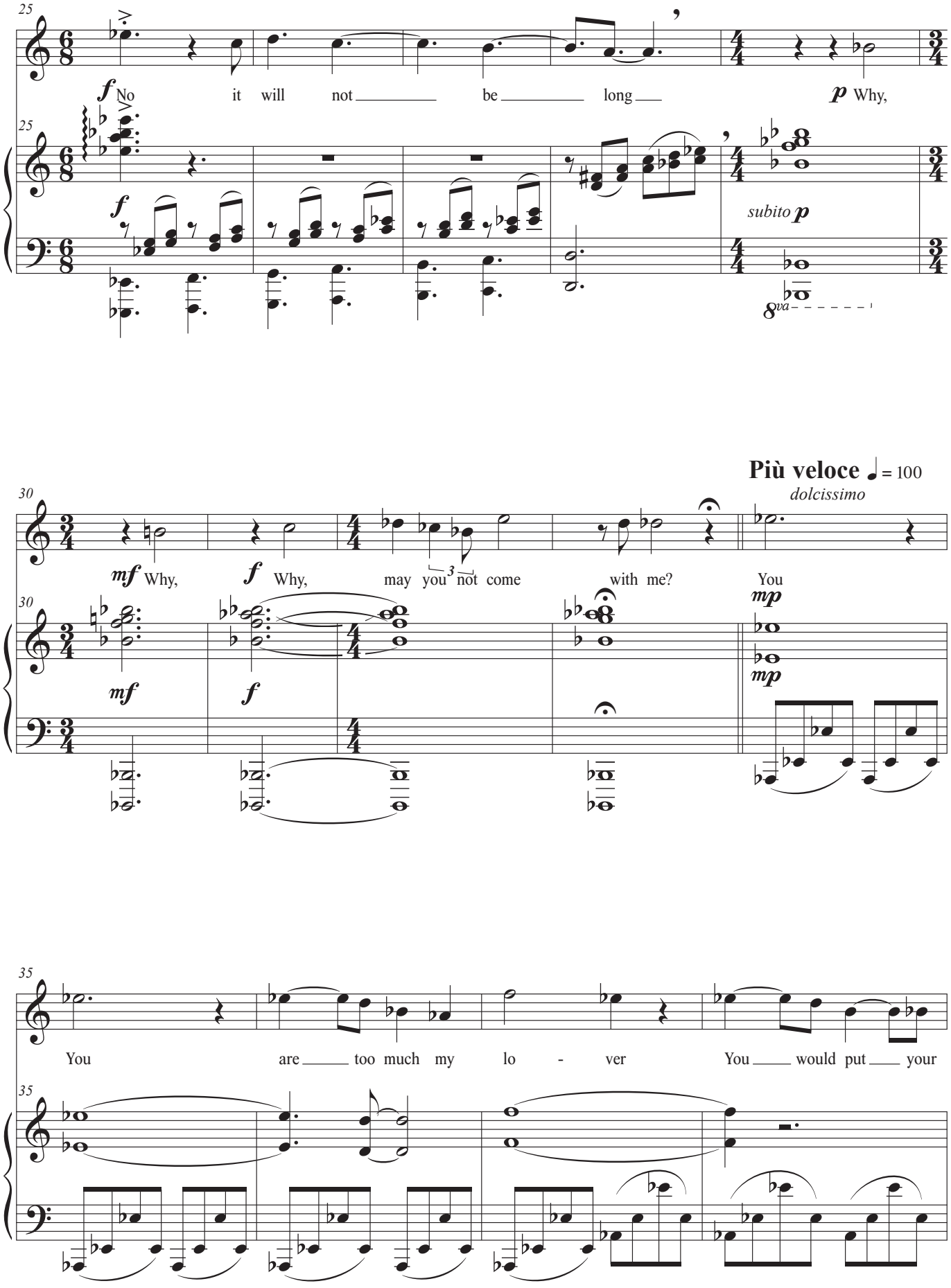

♩ = 80
45
49
53
53
pp
Fan -
pp
ossia one octave lower
55
ciul - li fan - ciul - le ma
55

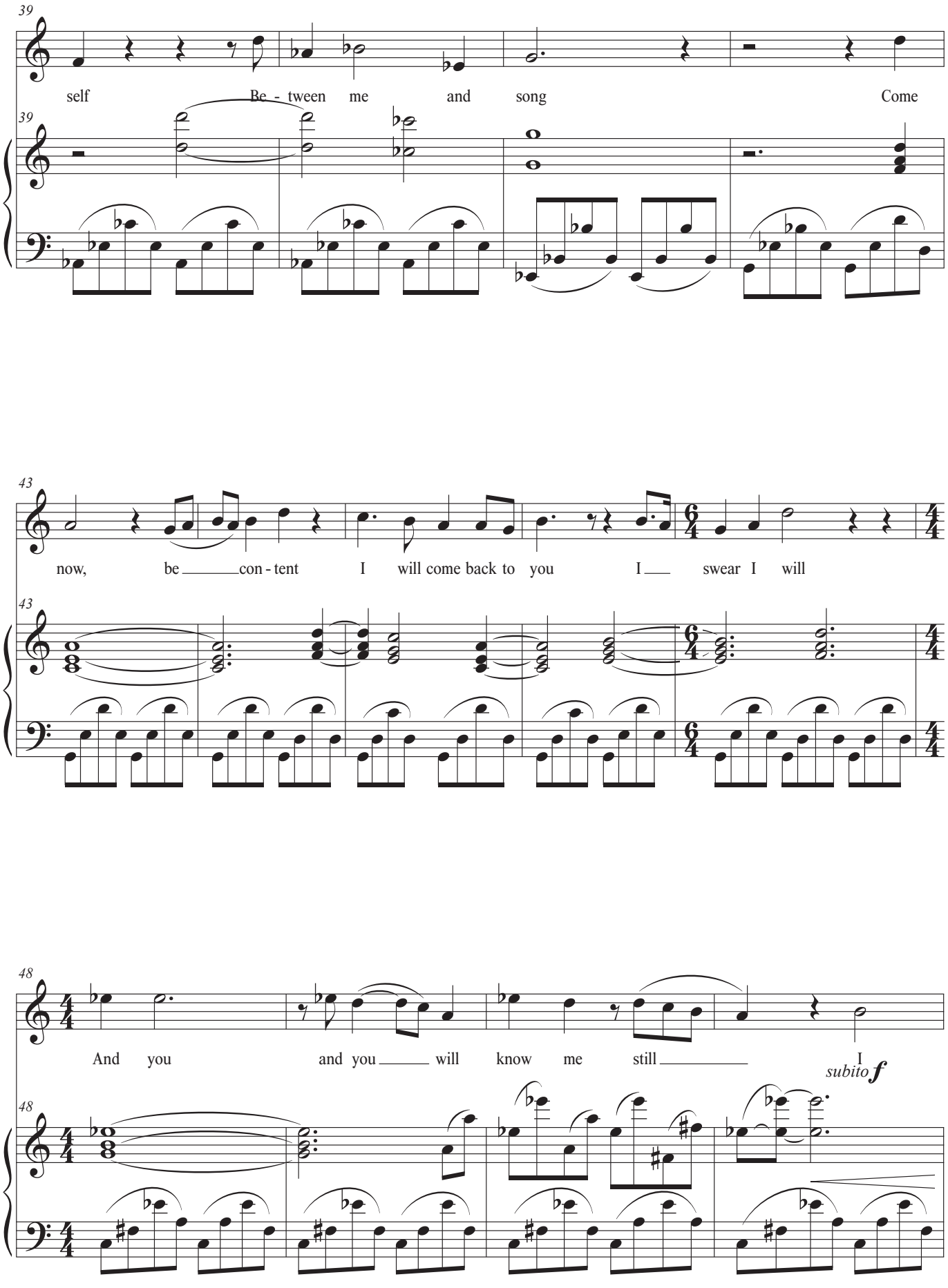

57
co - me vi chie de te
59
mf un
p
mf
63
tal cam - pio - ne, fi -
3
67
lo - so - fa, ar - tis - ta, scien -
3
3

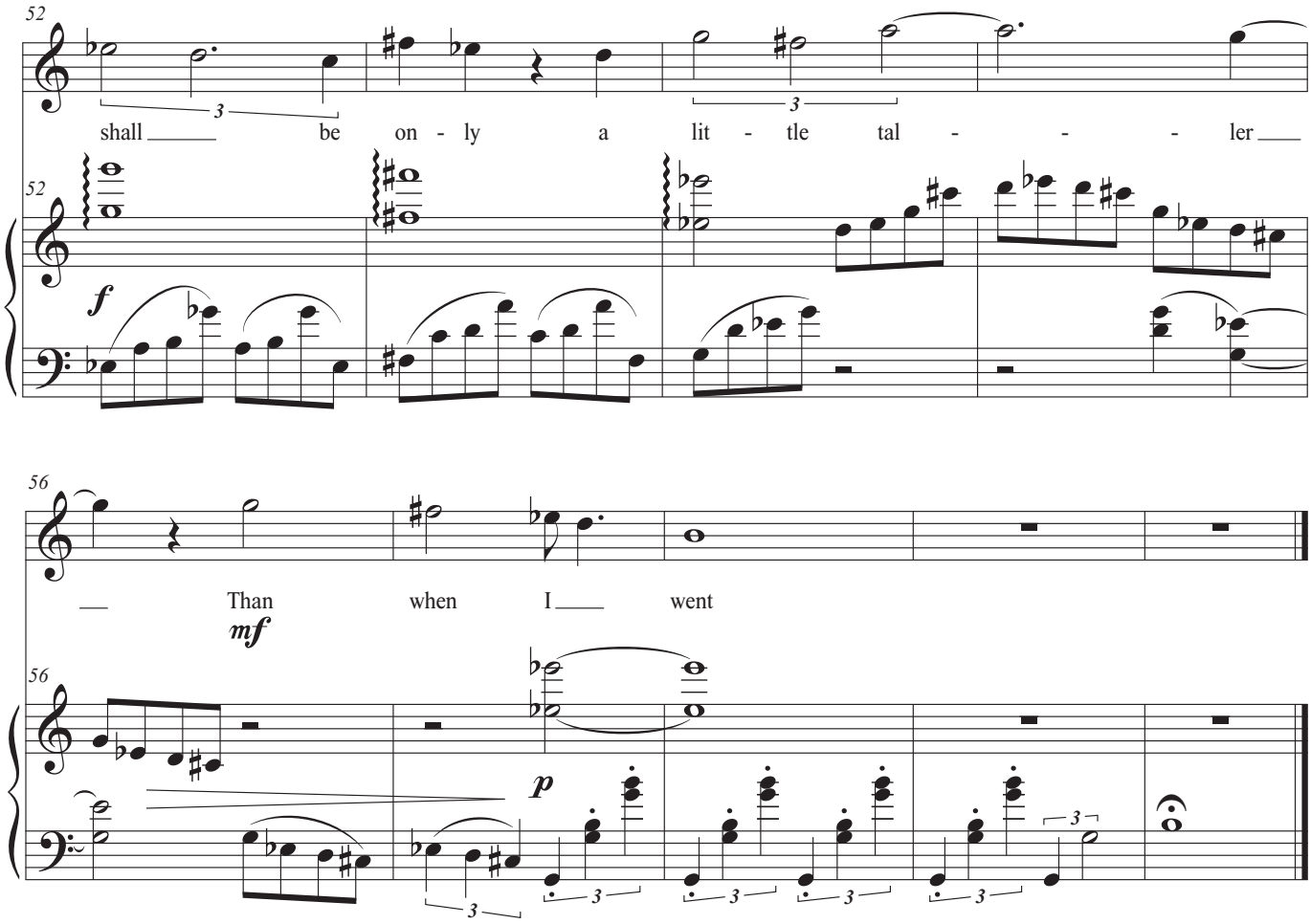

71
f
zia
ta.
71
f
76
ralentando
81
♩ = 72
Scien - za,
mp ar - te,
p pen - sier
mf
81
mf
mp
p
87
pp

VIII. The Concert ♩ = 92

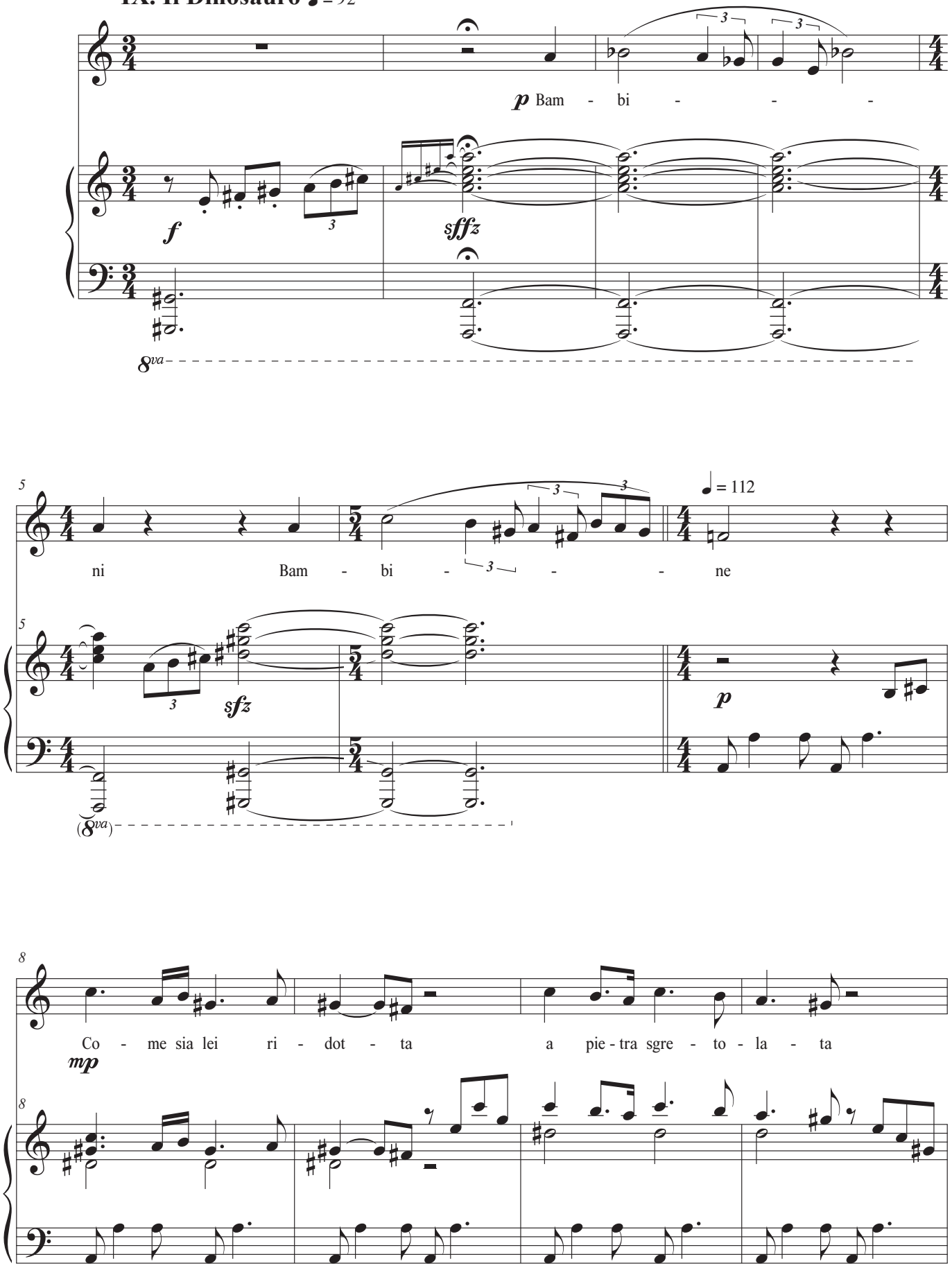


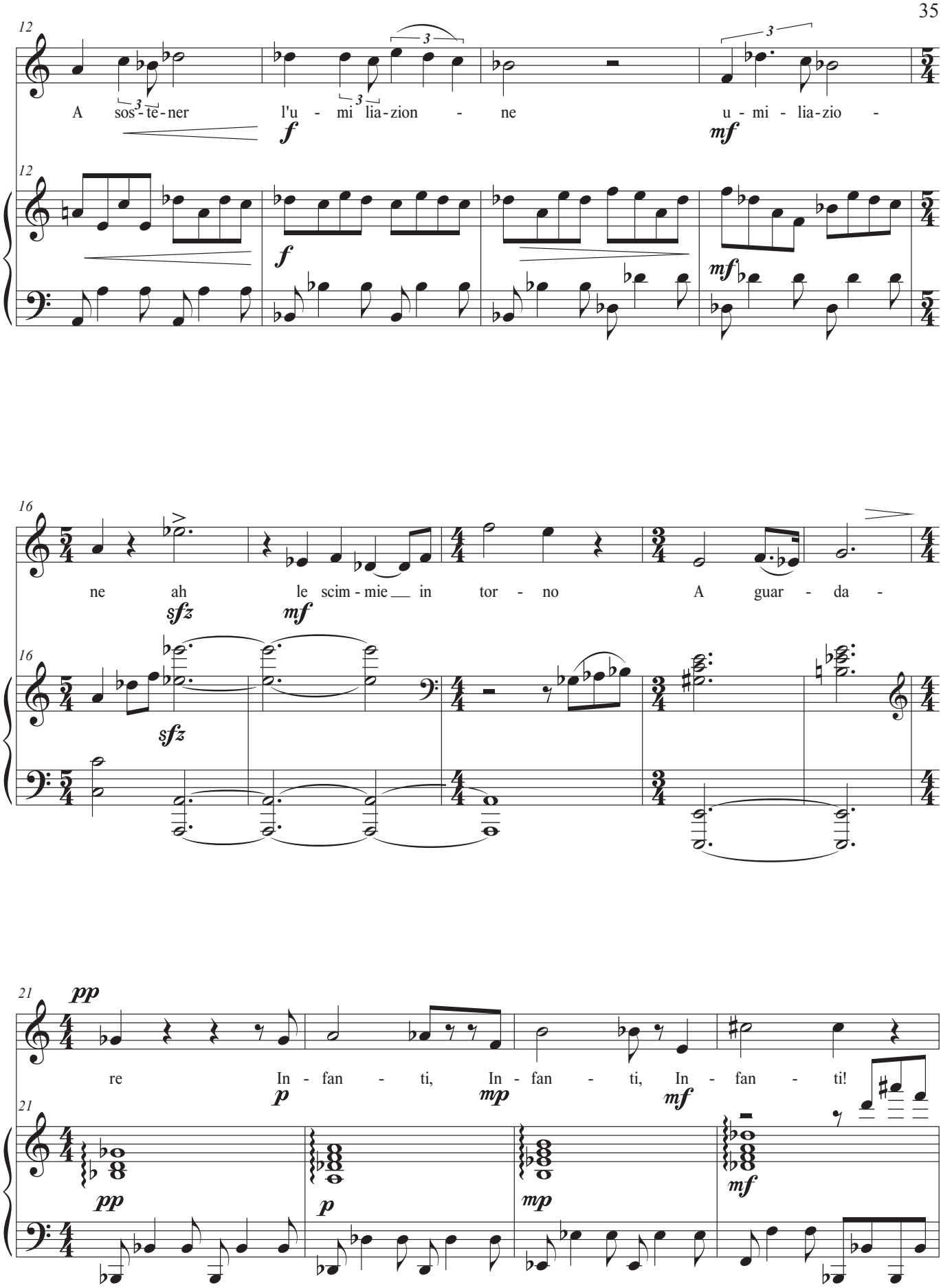

25
f No it will not be long
p Why,
subito p
8va
Più veloce ♩ = 100
dolcissimo
30
mf Why,
f Why, may you not come with me?
You
mp
35
You are too much my lo - ver
You would put your

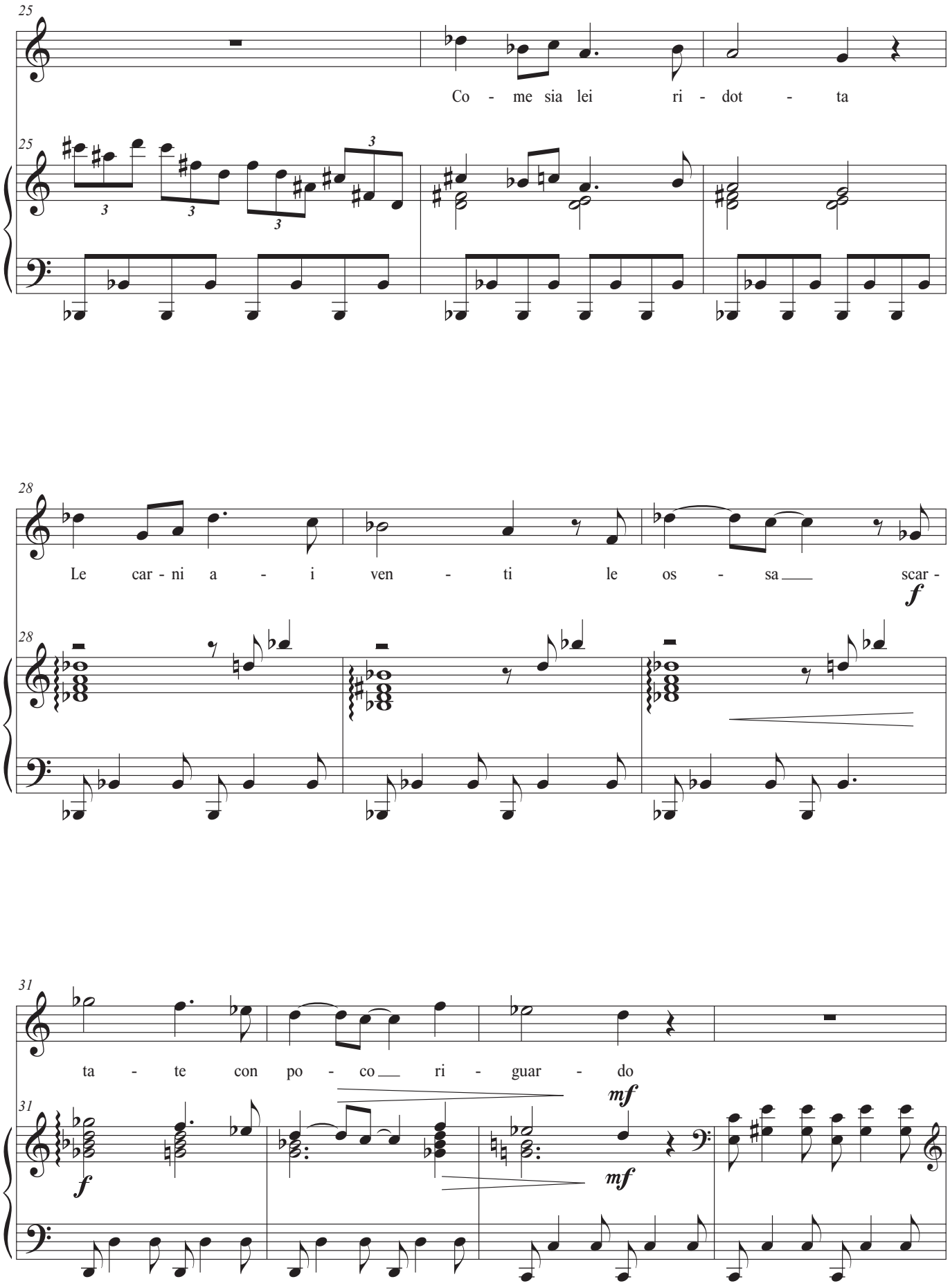

39
self Be - tween me and song Come
43
now, be con - tent I will come back to you I swear I will
48
And you and you will know me still I
subito f

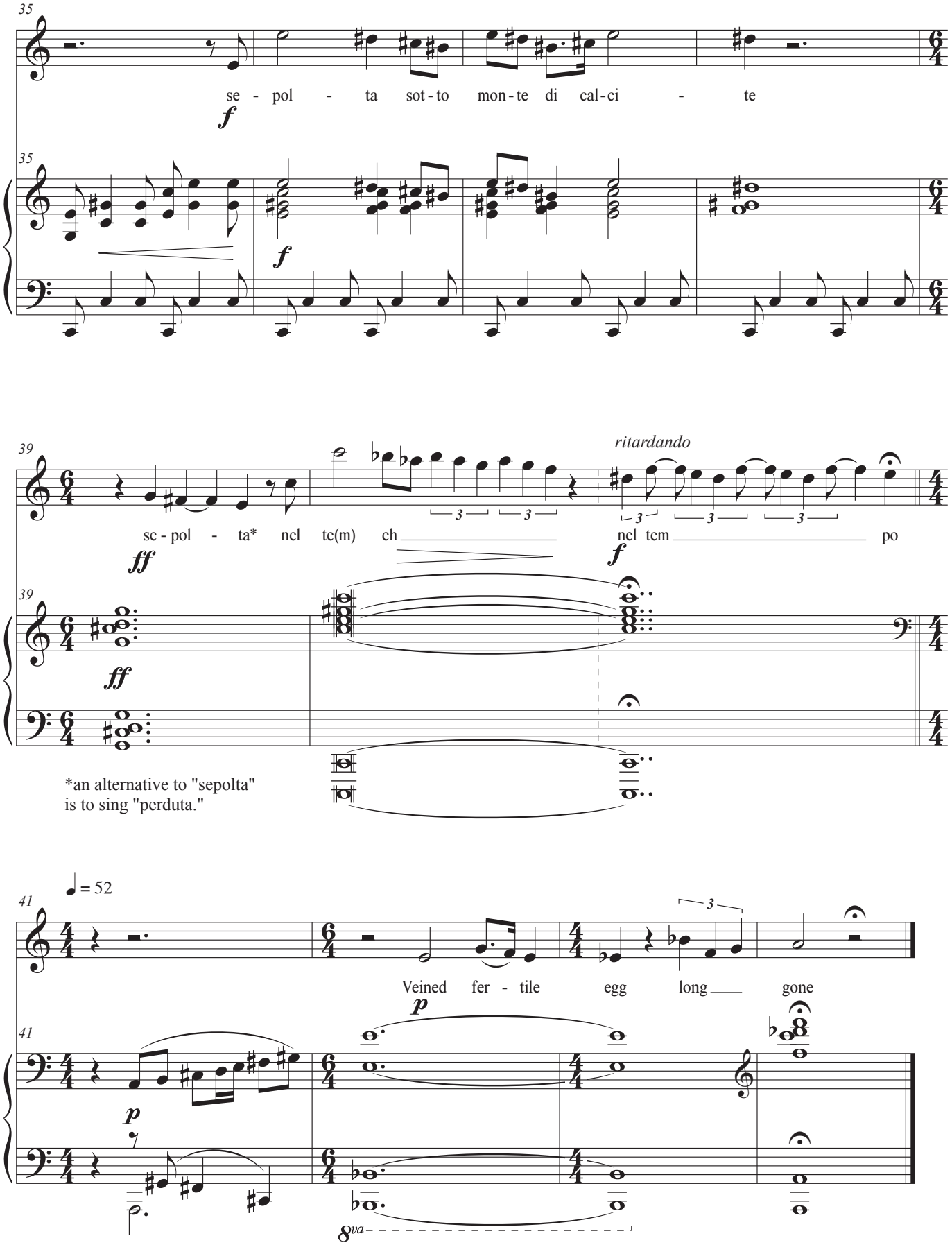

52
shall be on - ly a lit - tle tal - - - ler
f
56
Than when I went
mf
p

IX. Il Dinosauro ♩ = 92

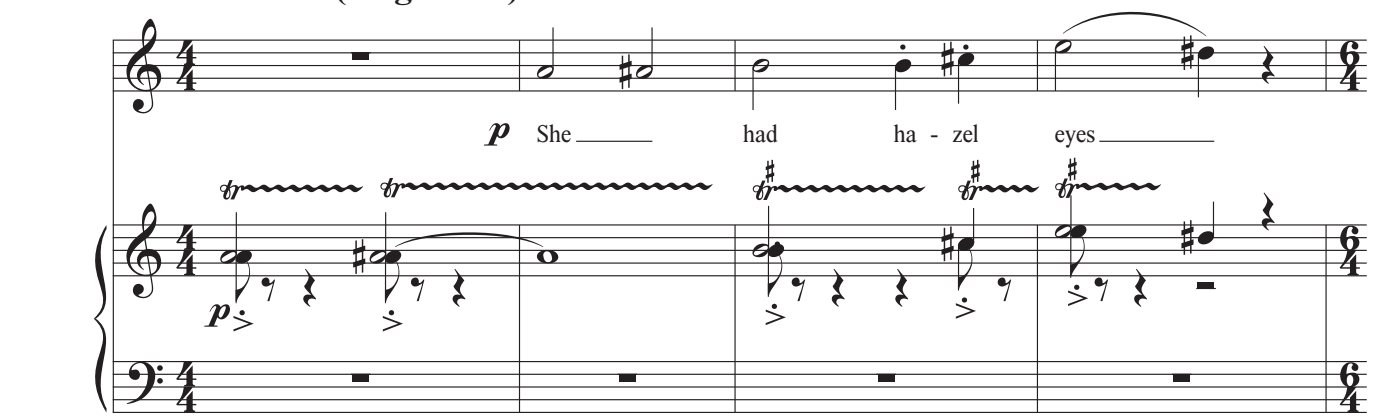



12
A sos-te-ner l'u - mi lia-zion - ne u - mi - lia-zio -
f
mf
12
f
mf
16
ne ah le scim - mie in tor - no A guar - da -
sfz
mf
16
sfz
21
pp
re In - fan - ti, In - fan - ti, In - fan - ti!
p
mp
mf
21
pp
p
mp
mf

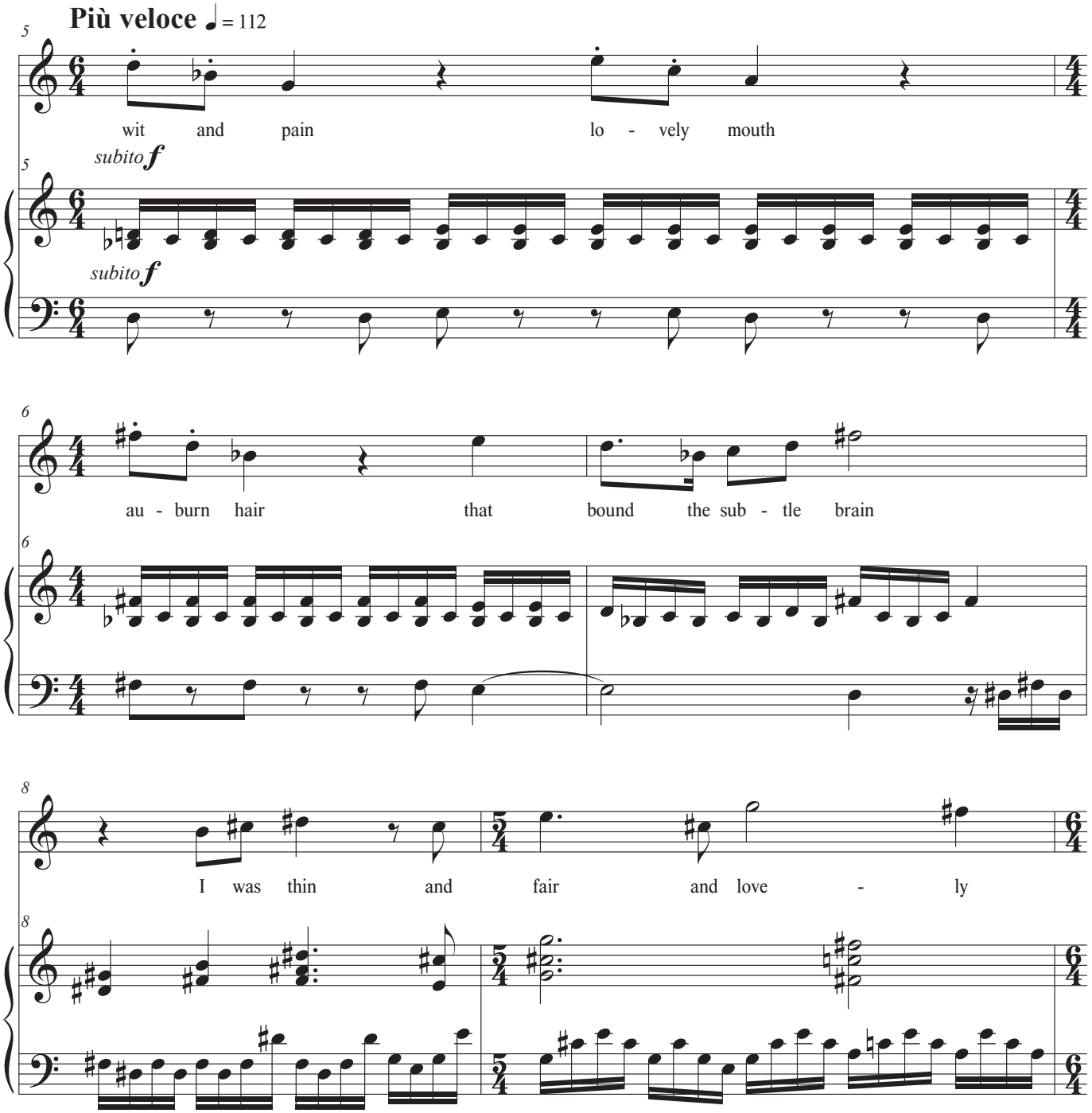

25
Co - me sia lei ri - dot - ta
28
Le car - ni a - i ven - ti le os - sa scar -
f
31
ta - te con po - co ri - guar - do
mf
f
mf

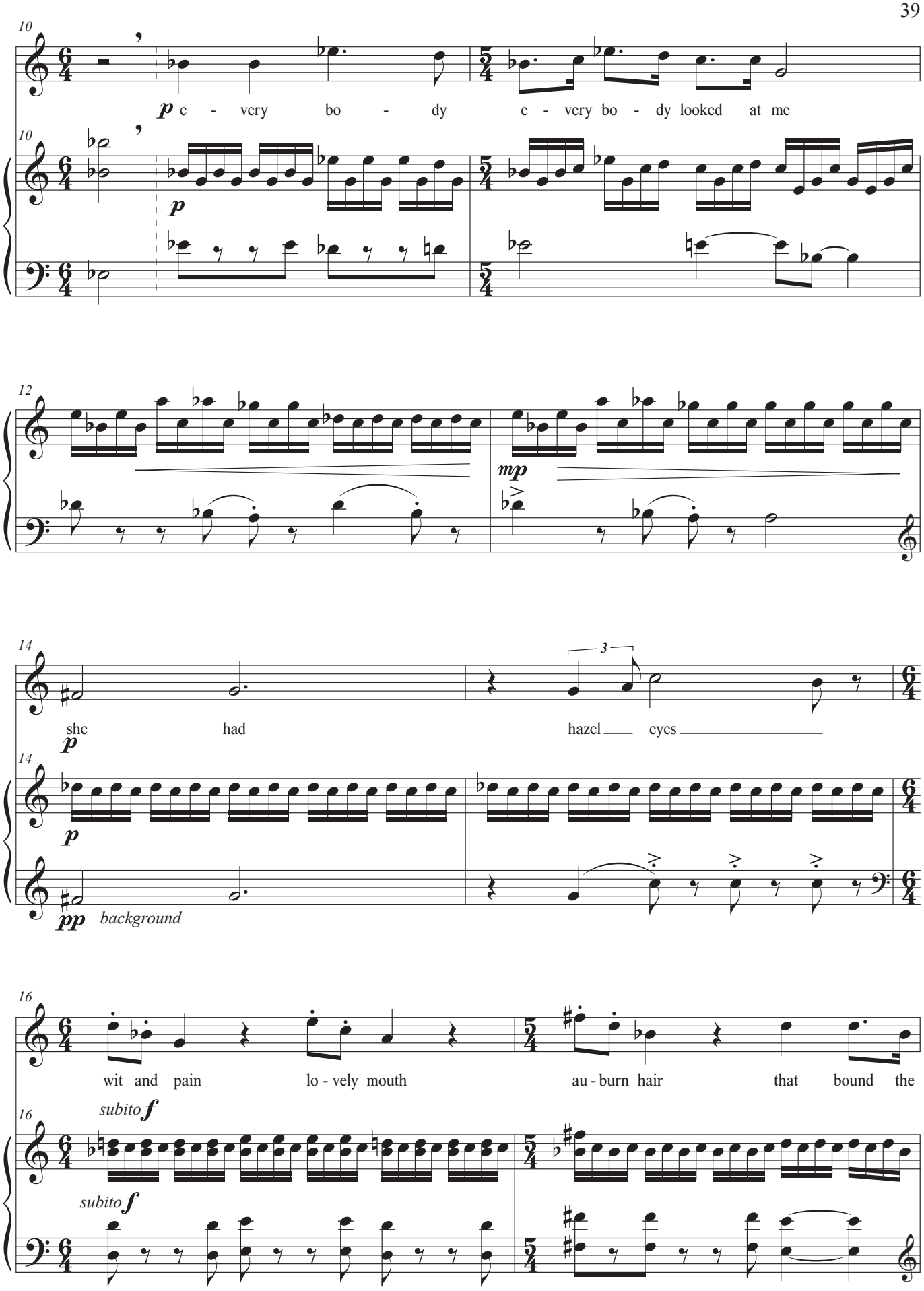

35
se - pol - ta sot - to mon - te di cal - ci - te
f
35
f
39
se - pol - ta* nel te(m) eh
ritardando
nel tem po
ff
39
ff
*an alternative to "sepolta"
is to sing "perduta."
41
♩ = 52
Veined fer - tile egg long gone
p
41
p
8va

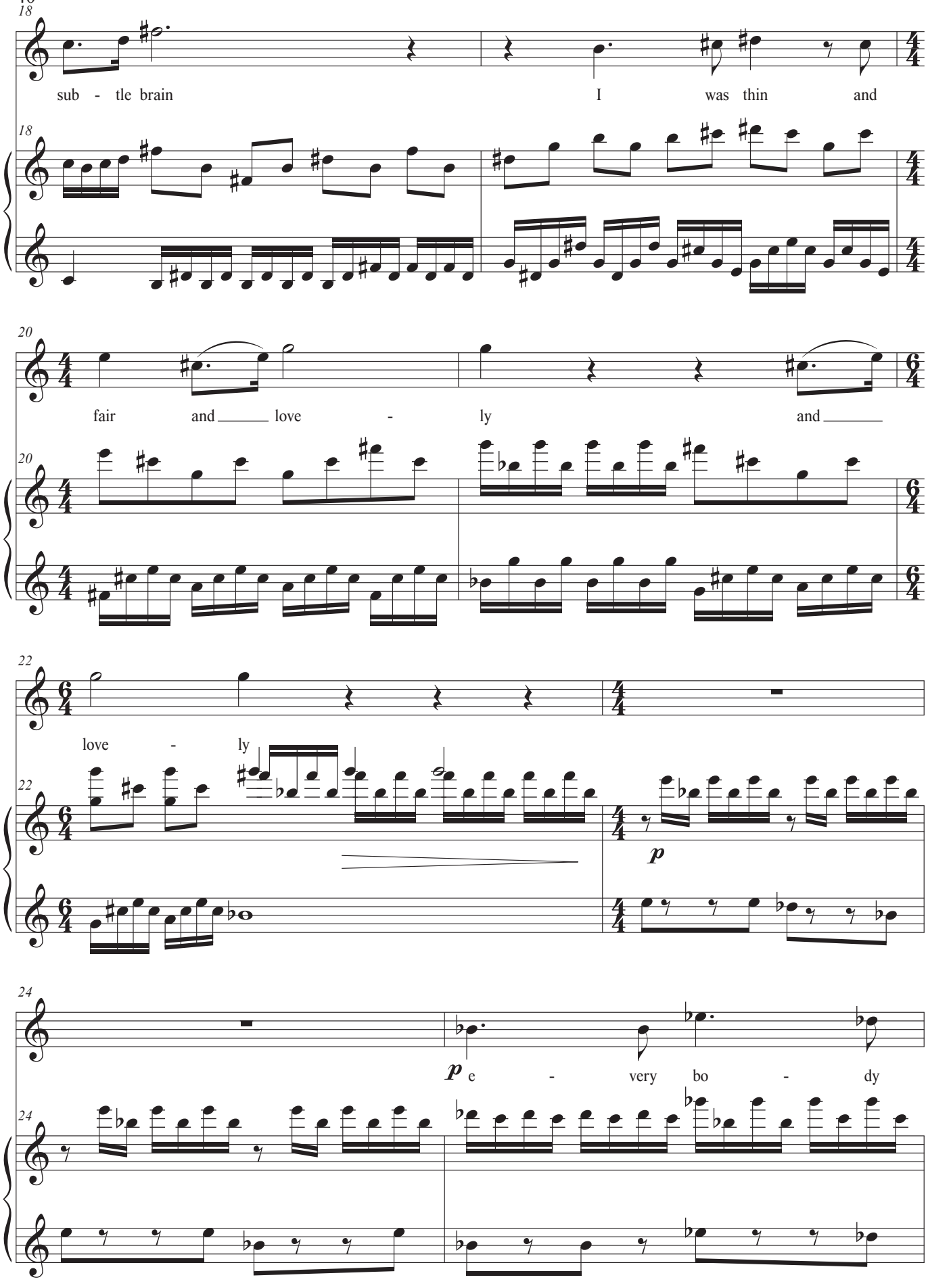
X. Sonnet (fragments) ♩ = 100

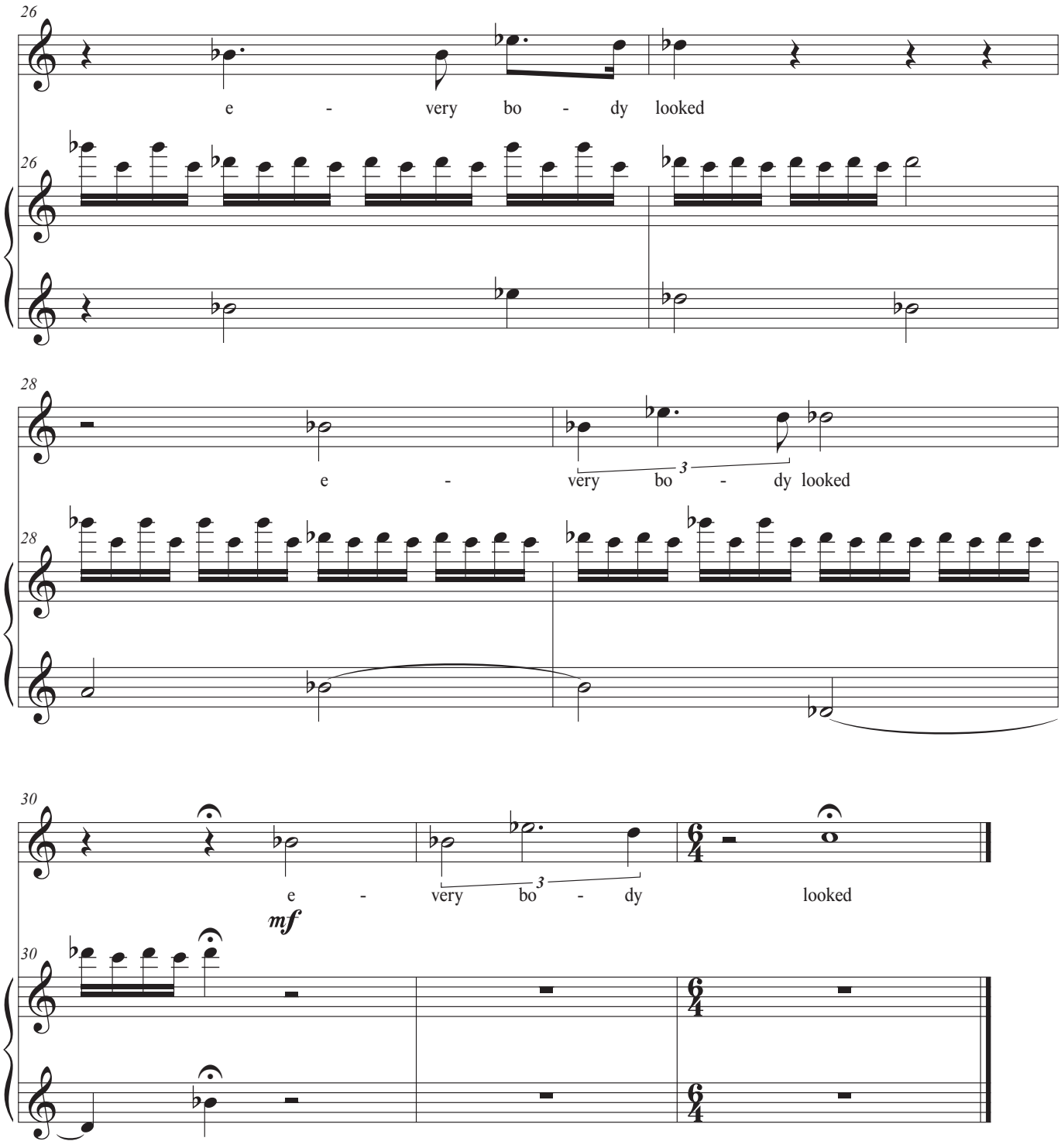


Più veloce ♩ = 112




10
p e - very bo - dy e - very bo - dy looked at me
10
p
12
mp
14
she had hazel eyes
3
p
14
p
pp background
16
wit and pain lo - vely mouth au - burn hair that bound the
16
subito f
subito f


18
sub - tle brain
I was thin and
20
fair and love - ly and
22
love - ly
p
24
p e - very bo - dy


26
e - very bo - dy looked
26
28
e - very bo - dy looked
28
30
e - very bo - dy looked
mf
30