The Raven: An Opera in One Act

A Thesis

presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

at the University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music

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by

ANNA KRAUSE

Dr. W. Thomas McKenney, Thesis Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the [thesis or dissertation] entitled

THE RAVEN
AN OPERA IN ONE ACT

presented by Anna Krause,

a candidate for the degree of master of music,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Dr. W. Thomas McKenney
Dr. Stefan Freund
Dr. Neil Minturn
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Dr. W. Arthur Mehrhoff

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The Raven

An Opera in One Act

Anna Krause
Text by Edgar Allan Poe

In a dim room, with only a weak fire keeping out the cold December wind, a poor student sits alone, slowly, painfully working himself into a frenzy of grief over the loss of his young wife, Lenore.

This is the image in my mind when I read Edgar Allan Poe's masterpiece, "The Raven." Such an elegantly dramatic image, told in such vivid, musical language, seems made to be an opera, and yet in all my research I could not find evidence that anyone had adapted it in such a way before. Setting this iconic American text as an opera is something I have dreamed of doing for years.

This is the story of a man's descent into madness over the course of a single evening. The rapidity with which he loses his mind indicates that his beloved Lenore can't have been gone long—perhaps a few weeks, or a couple of months at most. The funeral is past; his friends have stopped bringing him dinner. He realizes that a whole day has passed, and he hasn't cried for her. Her memory has already begun to fade. Her death was devastating, but this new loss, this sense of increasing distance between the man and Lenore, is unbearable.

A Raven appears at his window. She has learned to mimic the word "nevermore," perhaps from a previous owner, and she repeats this word when the man lets her into his room. At first he is glad for the company, but his thoughts return to the absent Lenore, and the Raven's single word begins to take on a new meaning. Is she taunting him? He grasps desperately at his memory of Lenore for comfort, but the Raven repeats her one word persistently until he is certain that she is tormenting him. He feels the Raven separating him from Lenore, pushing her farther and farther away. He hopes briefly for peace and reunion with Lenore after his own death, but in the end the Raven's relentless jeer is too much for him to bear.

Instrumentation: Soprano, mezzo-soprano, bass, flute, clarinet in Bb, violin, cello, percussion (chimes, vibraphone, and marimba), and piano.

Duration: about 35 minutes

Unless a tempo change is indicated, ♪ = ♪

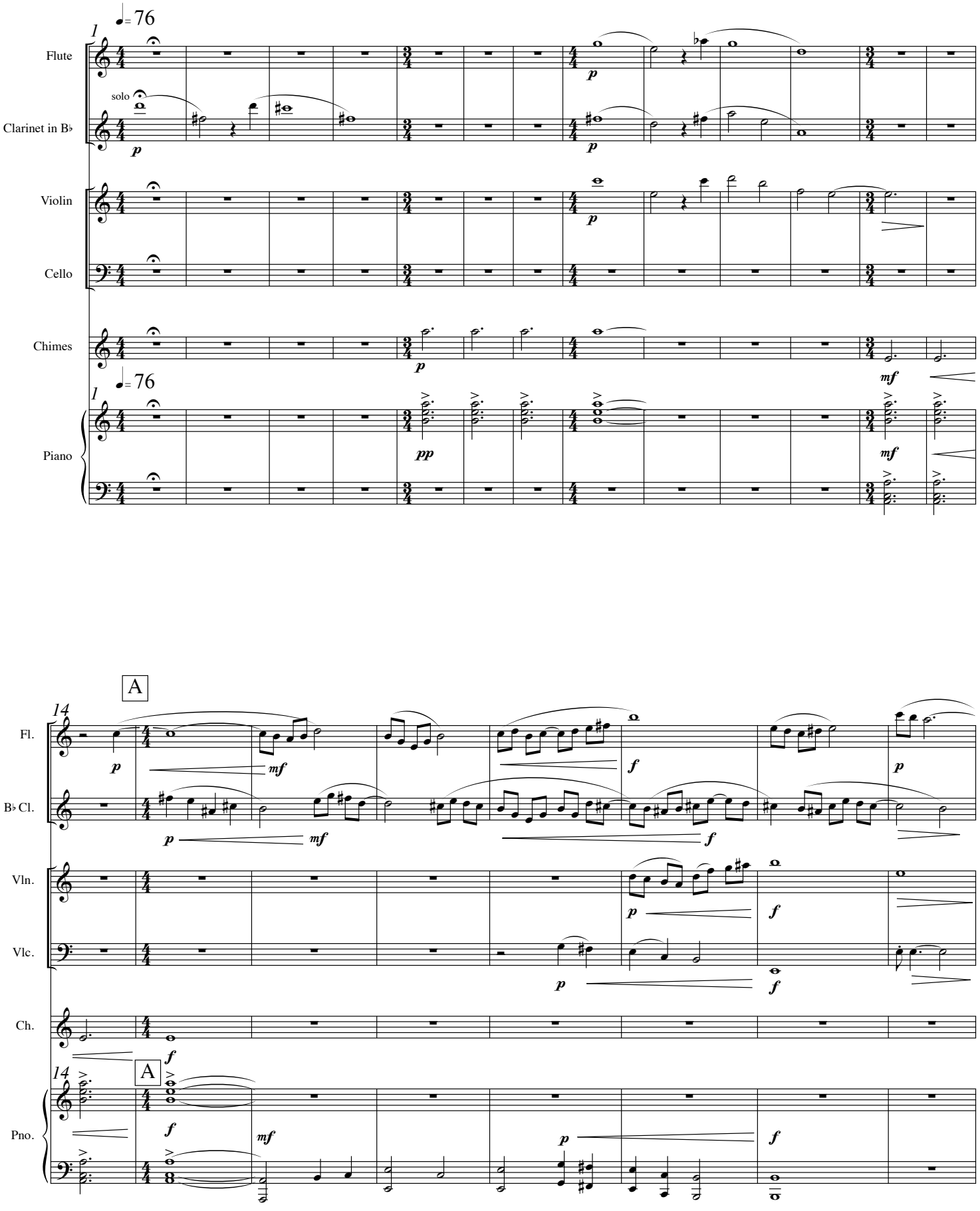
1. Overture
2. Once upon a midnight…
3. Ah, distinctly I remember…
4. And the silken sad uncertain rustling…
5. Deep into that darkness peering…
6. Back into the chamber turning…
7. This I sat engaged in guessing…
8. By that Heaven…
9. Quoth the Raven…

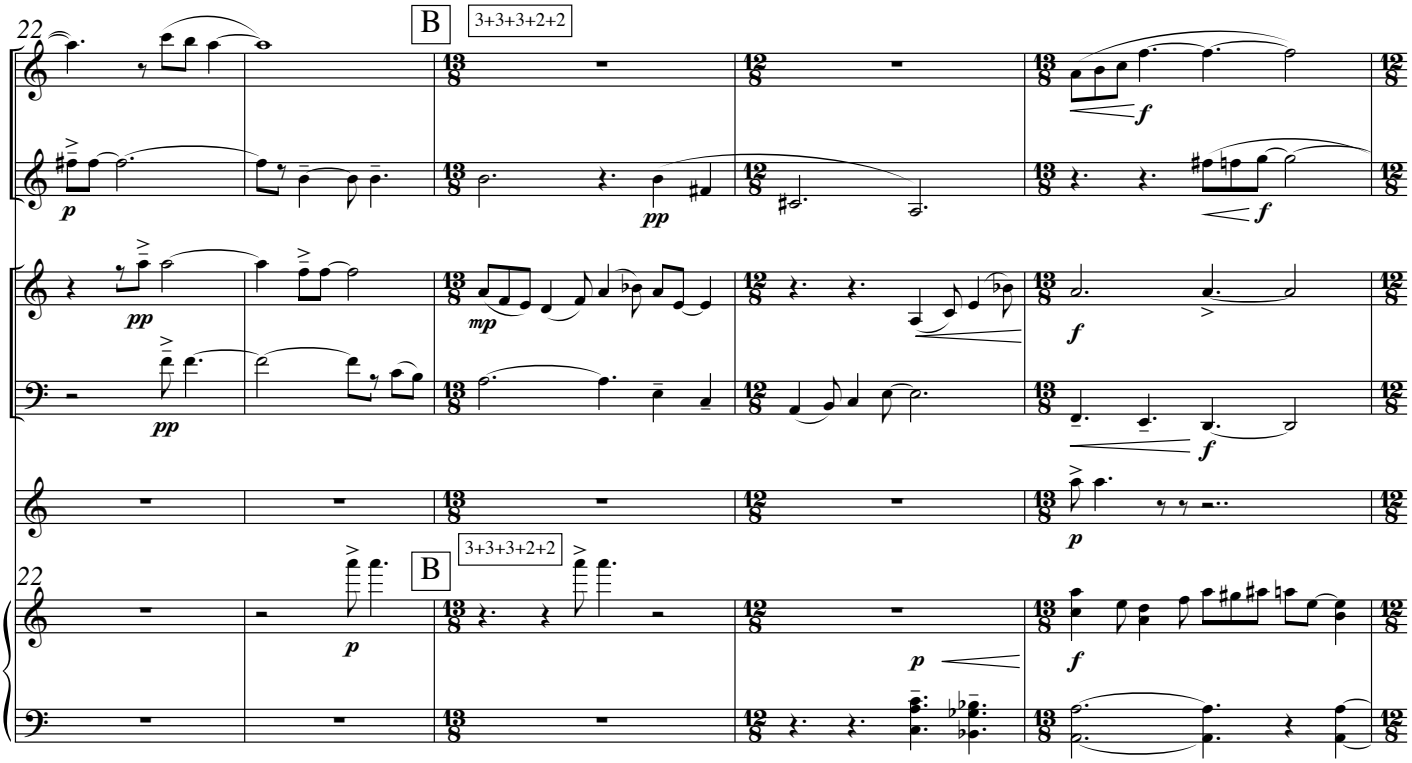
Transposed Score

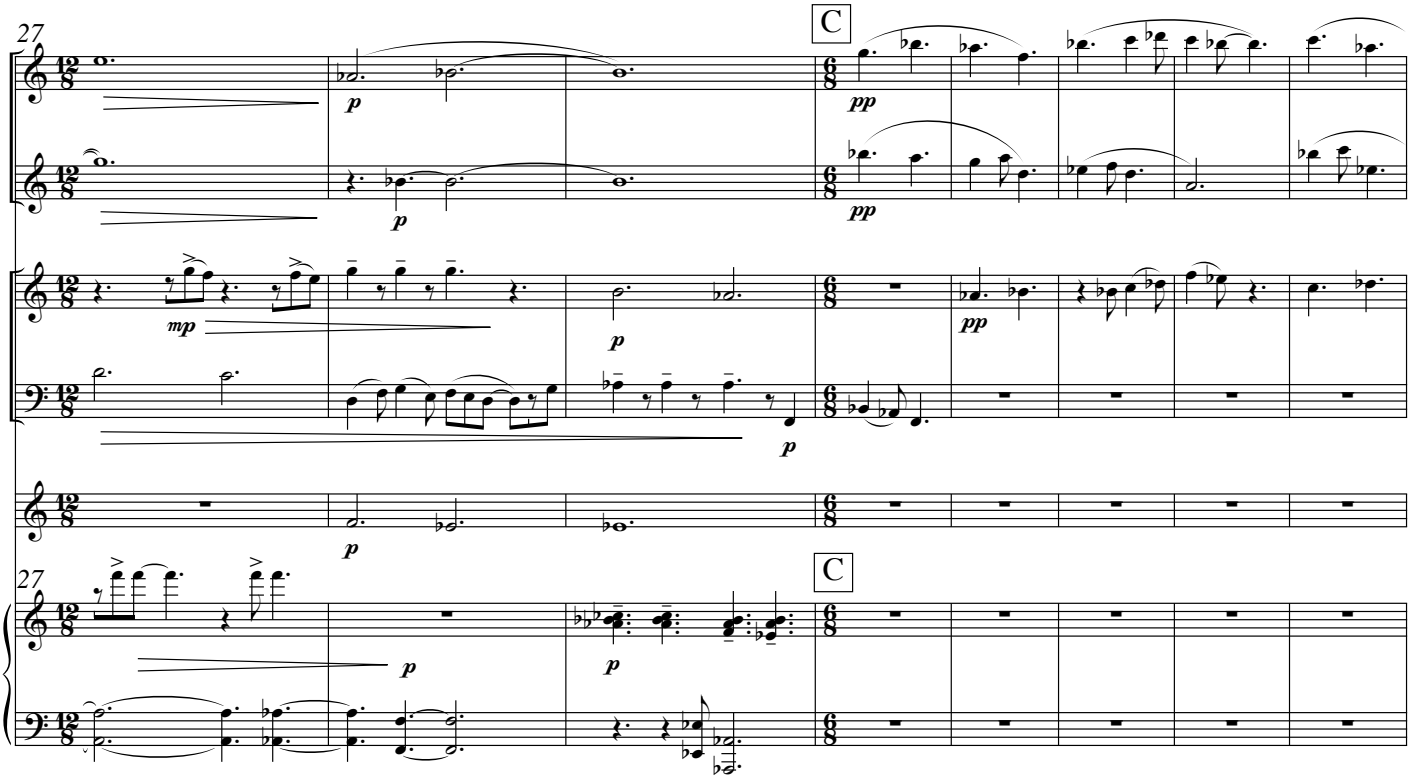
1. Overture

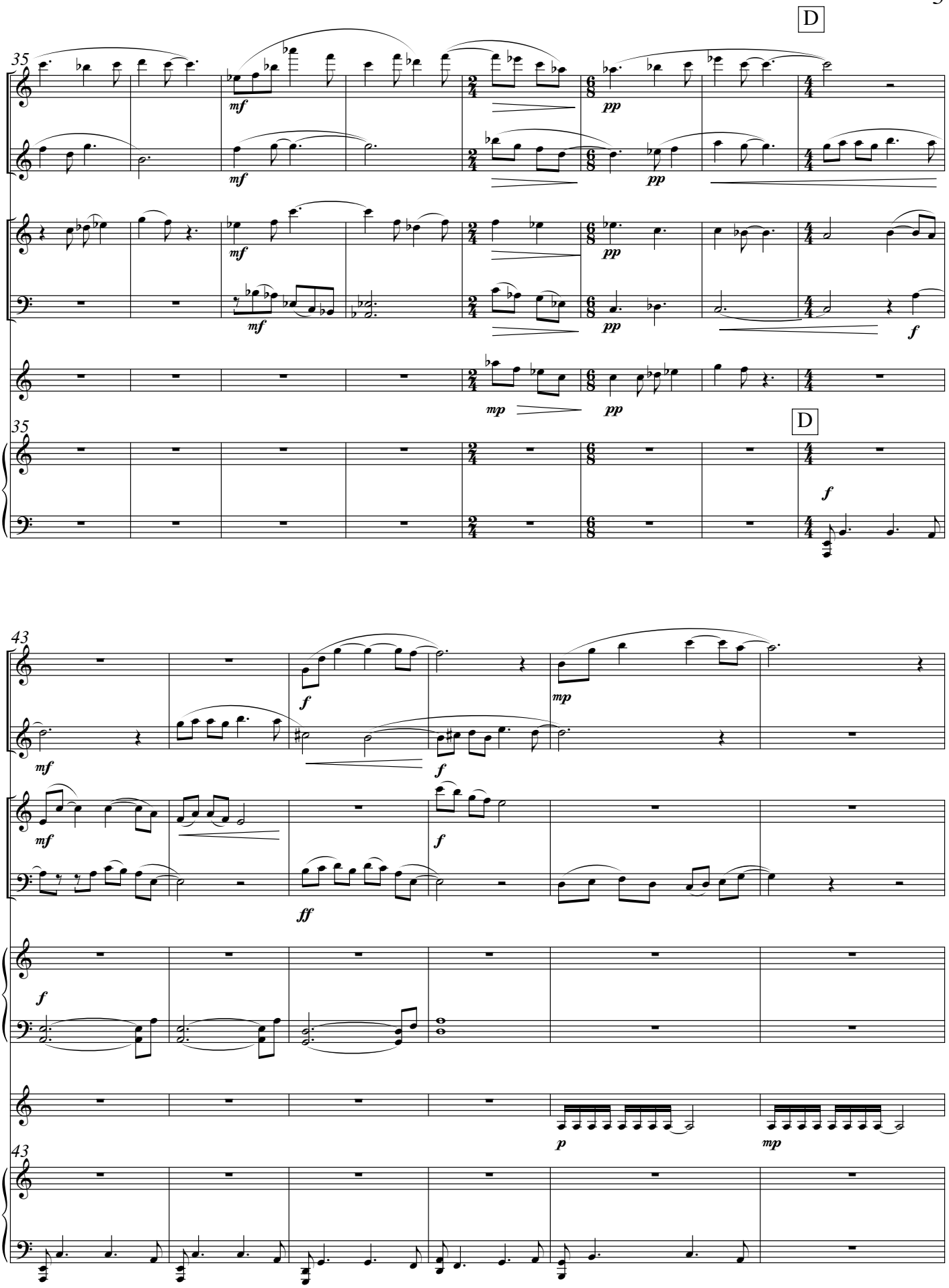
Edgar Allan Poe

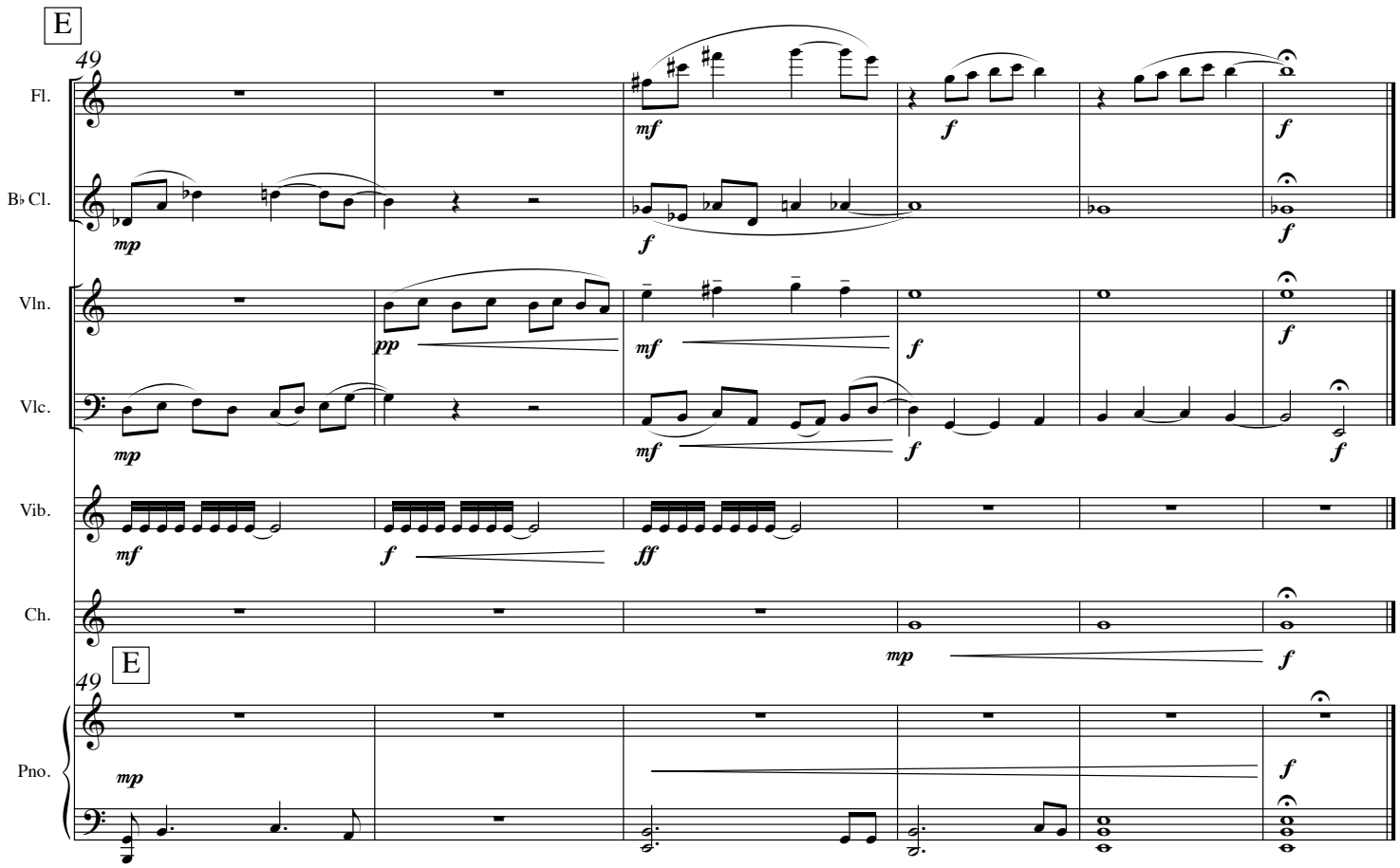
Anna Krause



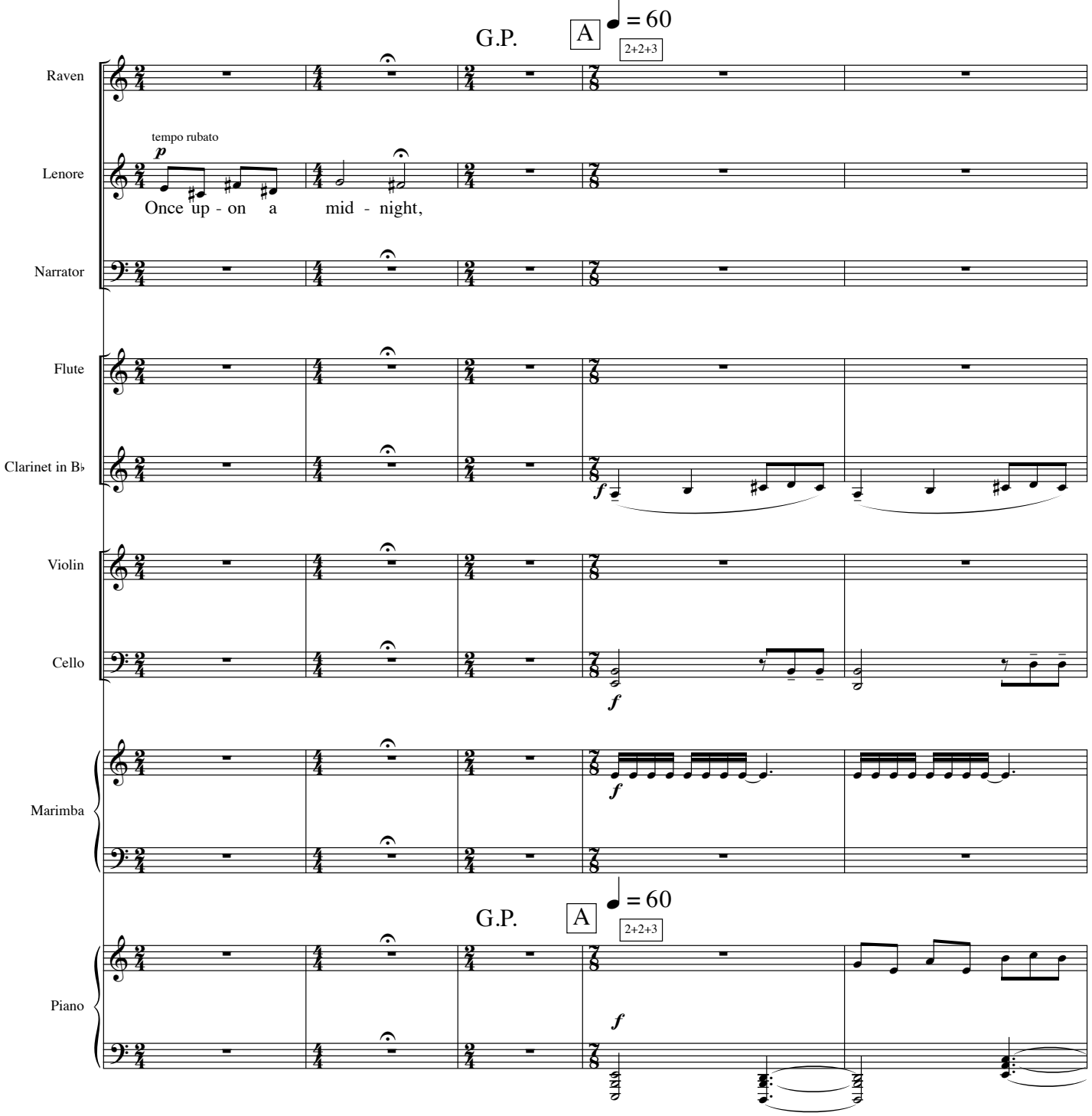

22
B
3+3+3+2+2
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vlc.
Ch.
Pno.

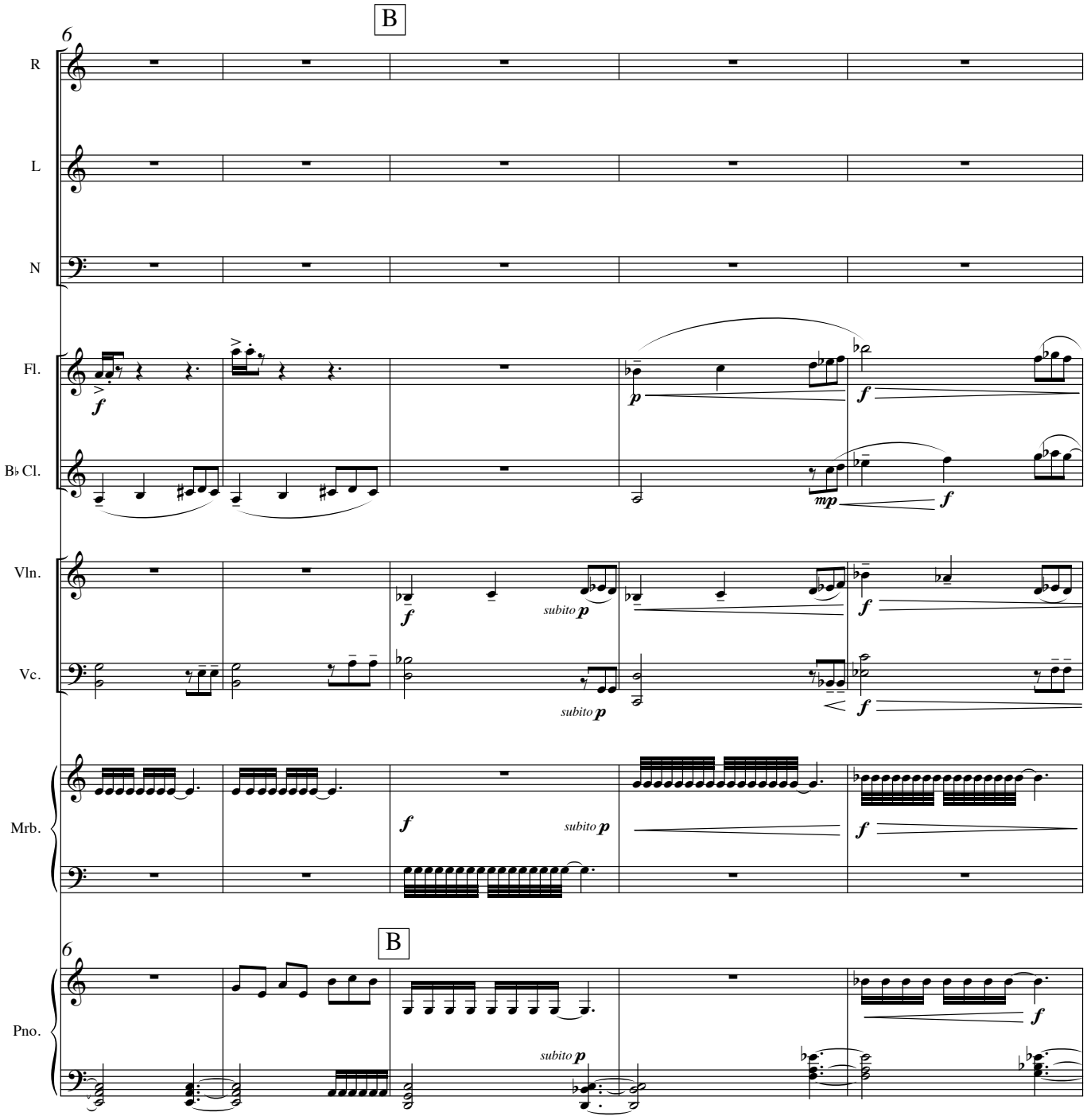

27
C
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vlc.
Ch.
Pno.

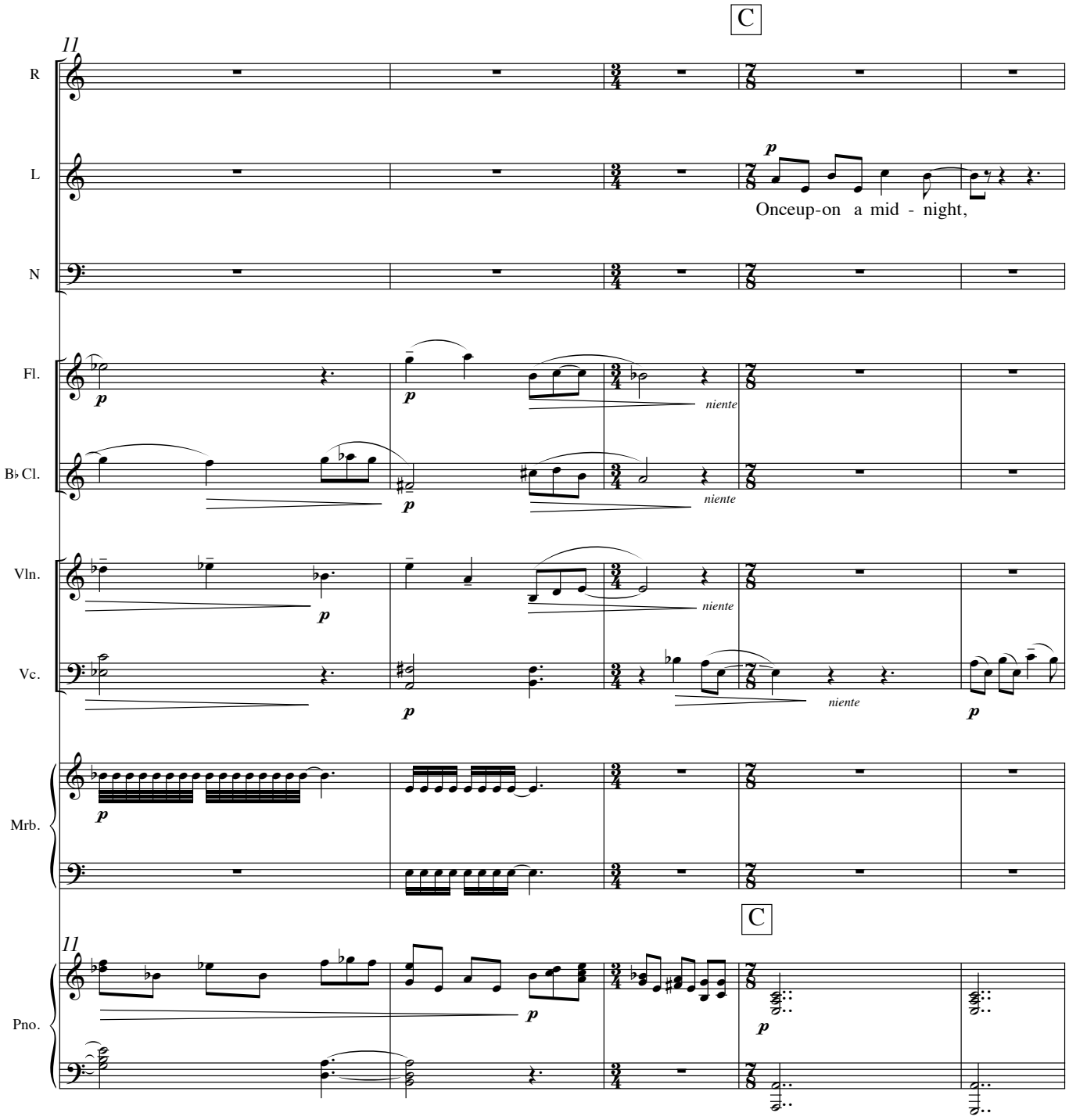

D
35
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vlc.
Vib.
Pno.
mf
pp
mp
f
D
43
ff
Mrb.
p

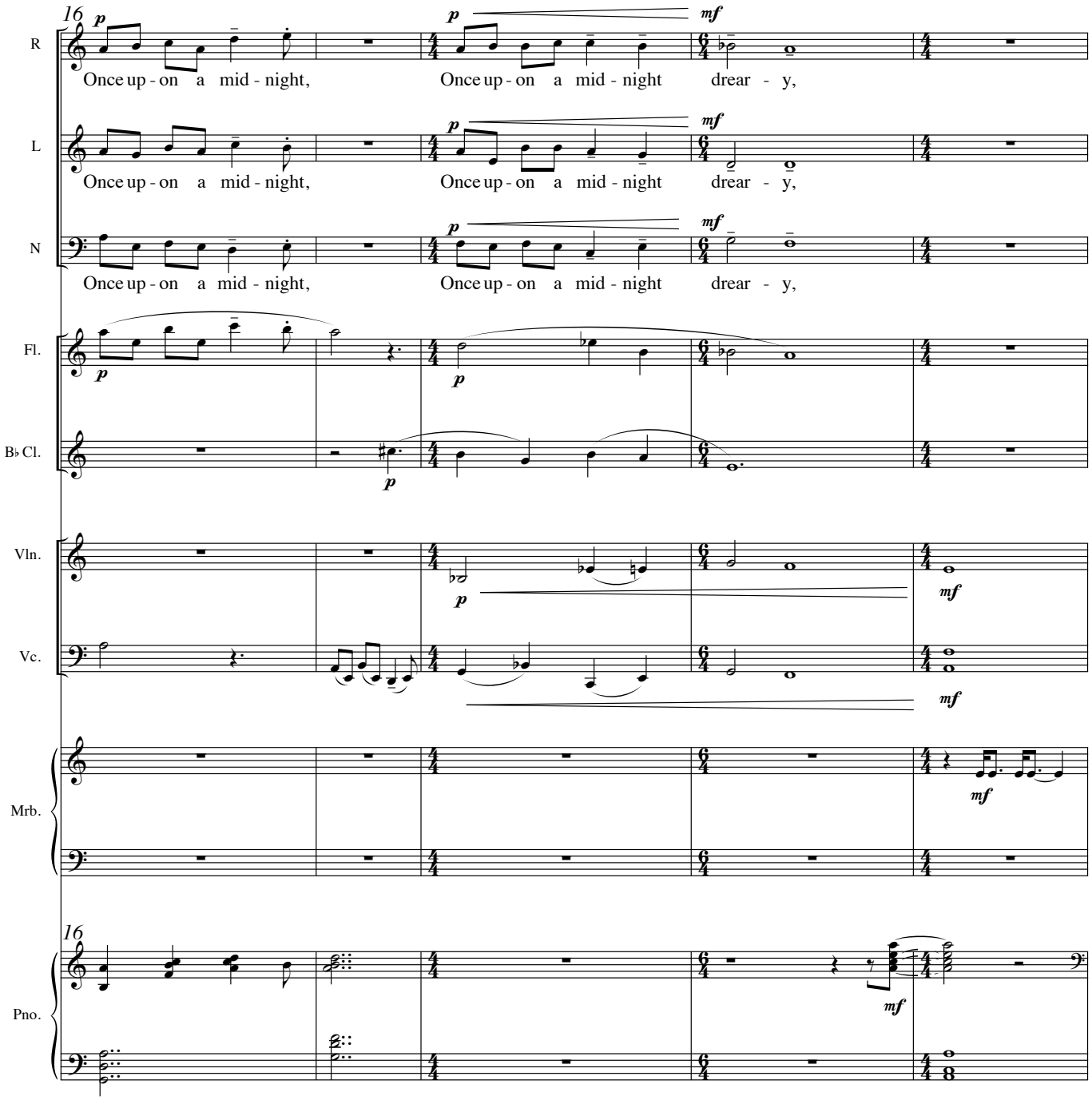

E
49
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vlc.
Vib.
Ch.
E
49
Pno.
mp
mf
f
pp
ff

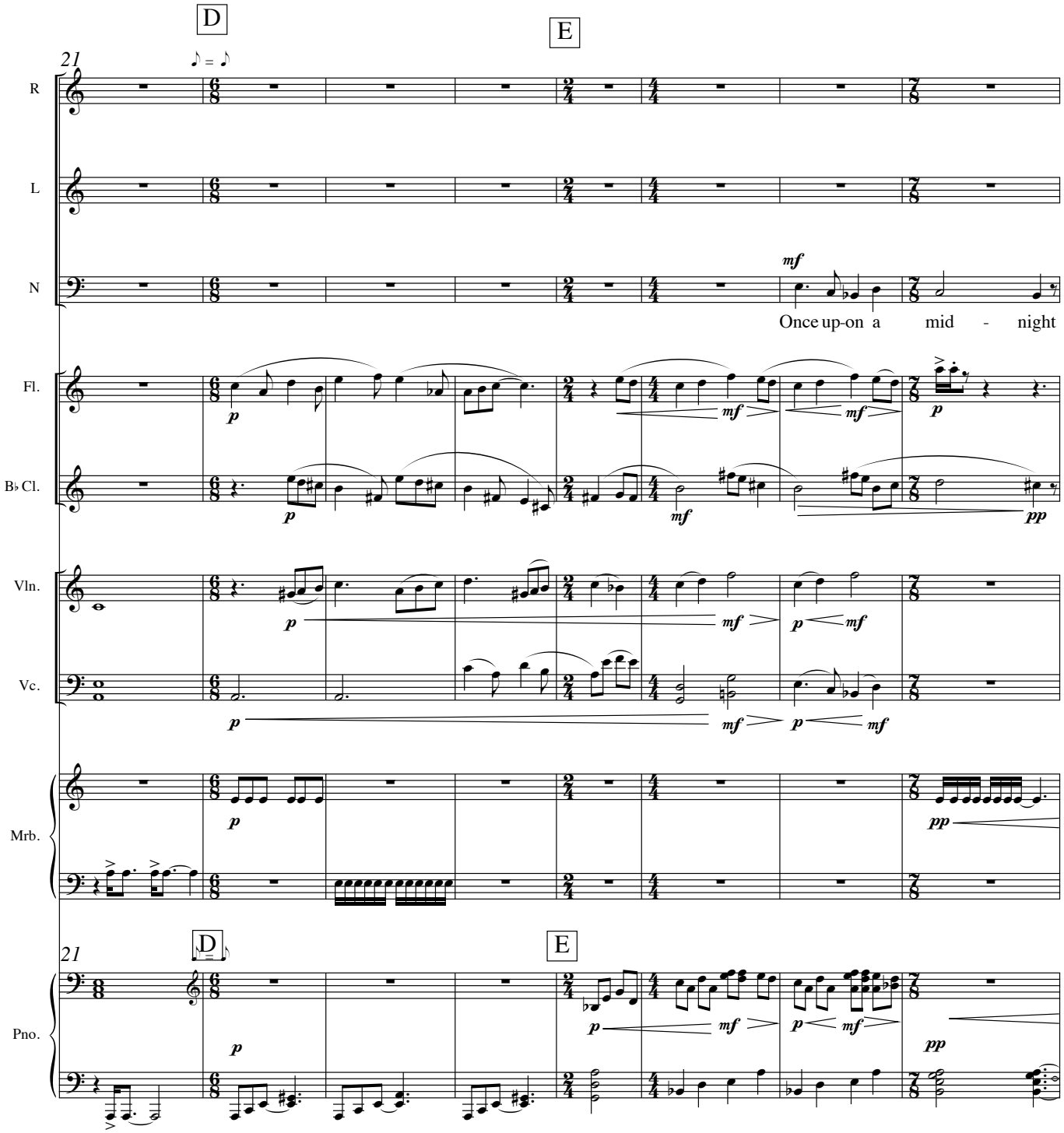
2. Once upon a midnight

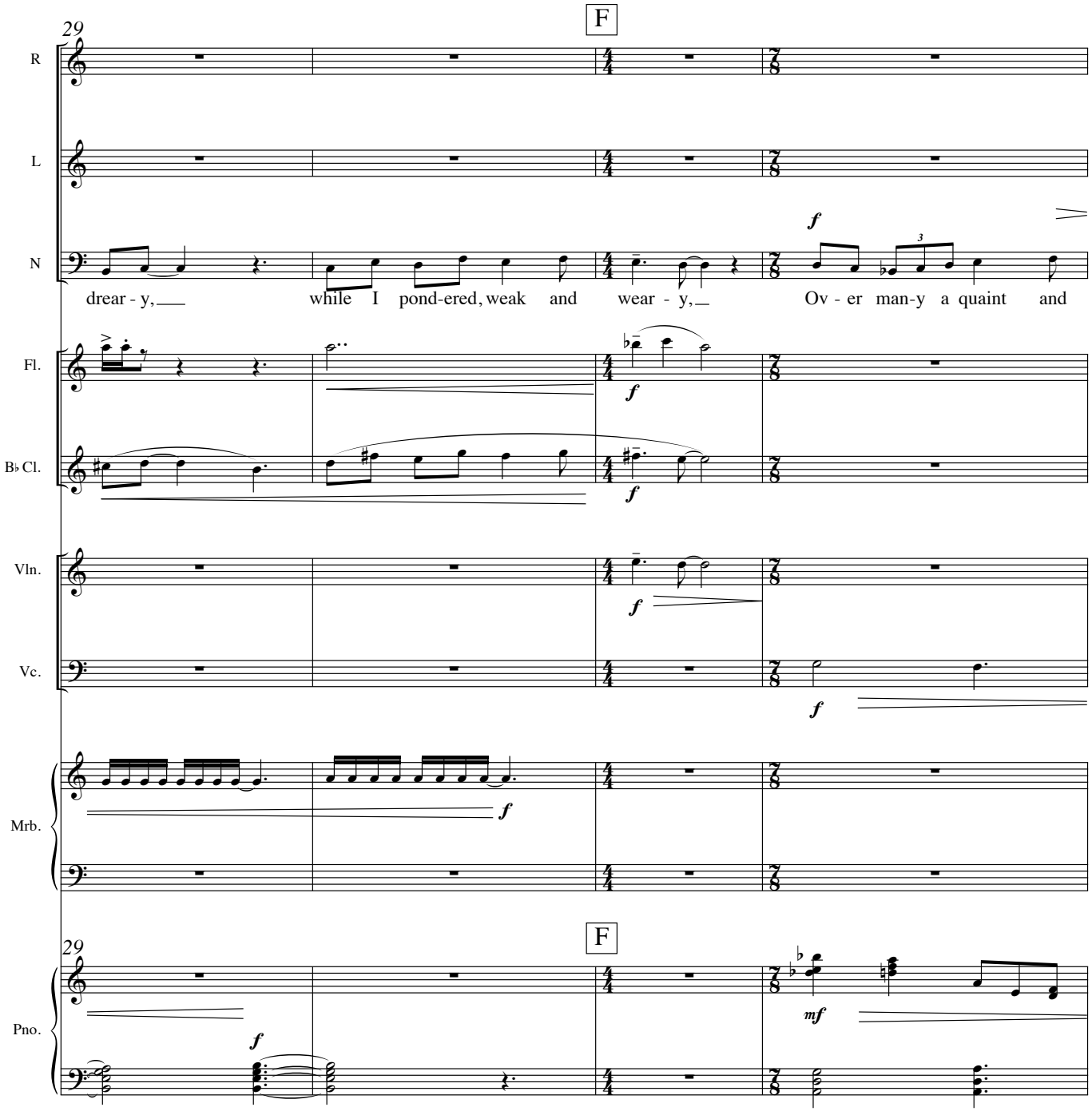


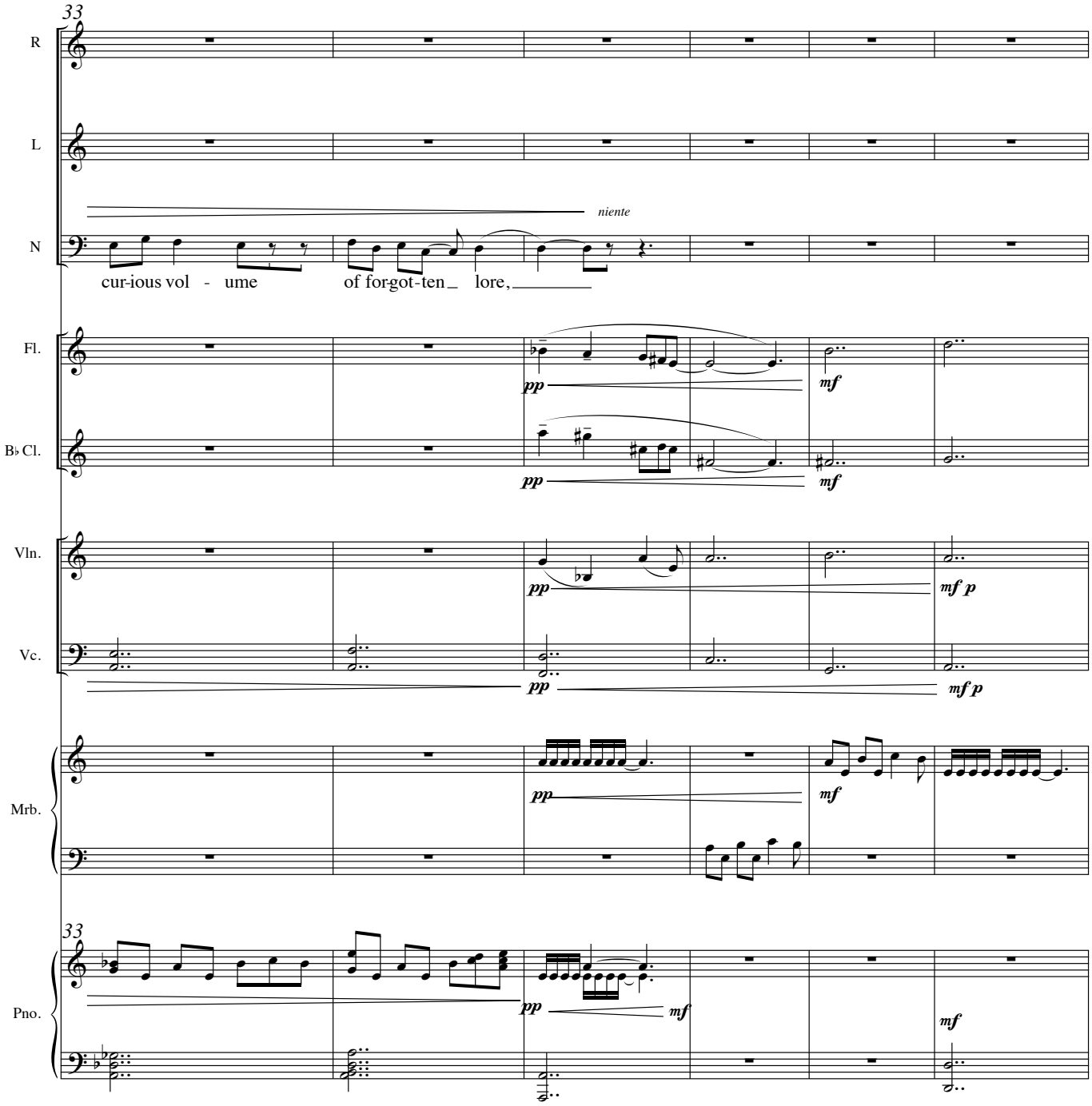

B
6
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
f
p
mp
subito p

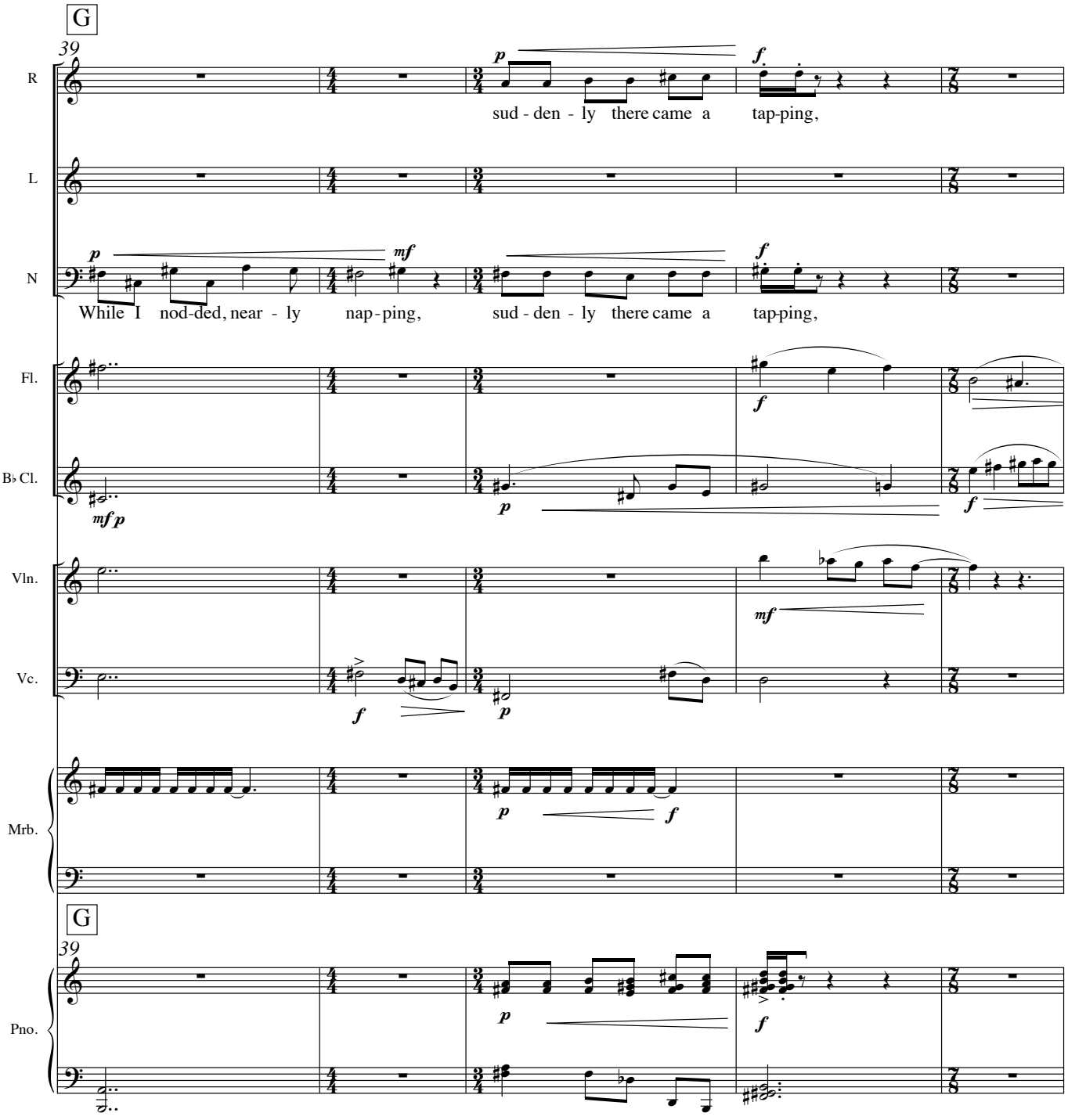

C
11
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
p
Onceup-on a mid - night,
niente
C
11

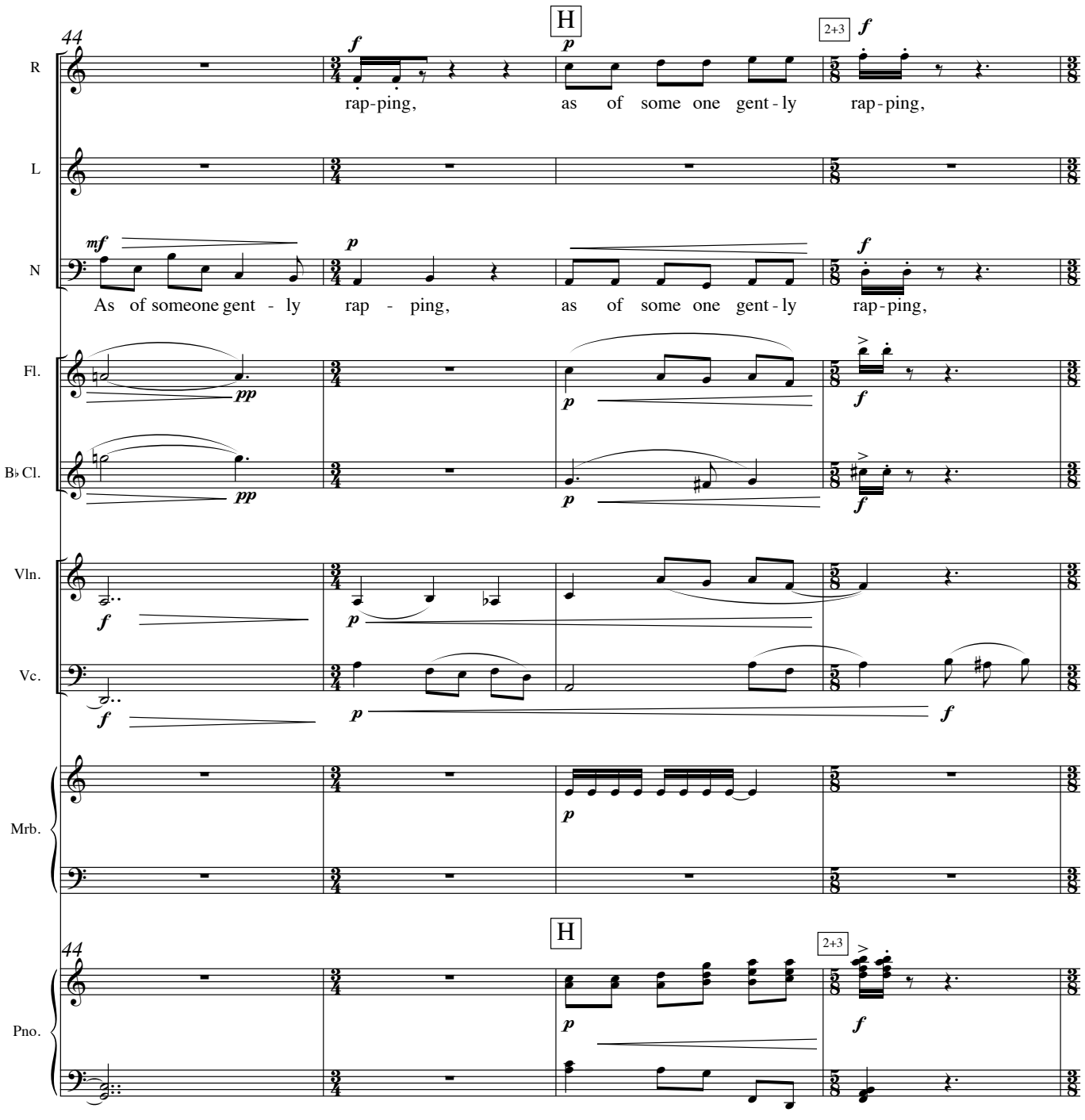

16
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
Once up - on a mid - night,
Once up - on a mid - night drear - y,
p
mf

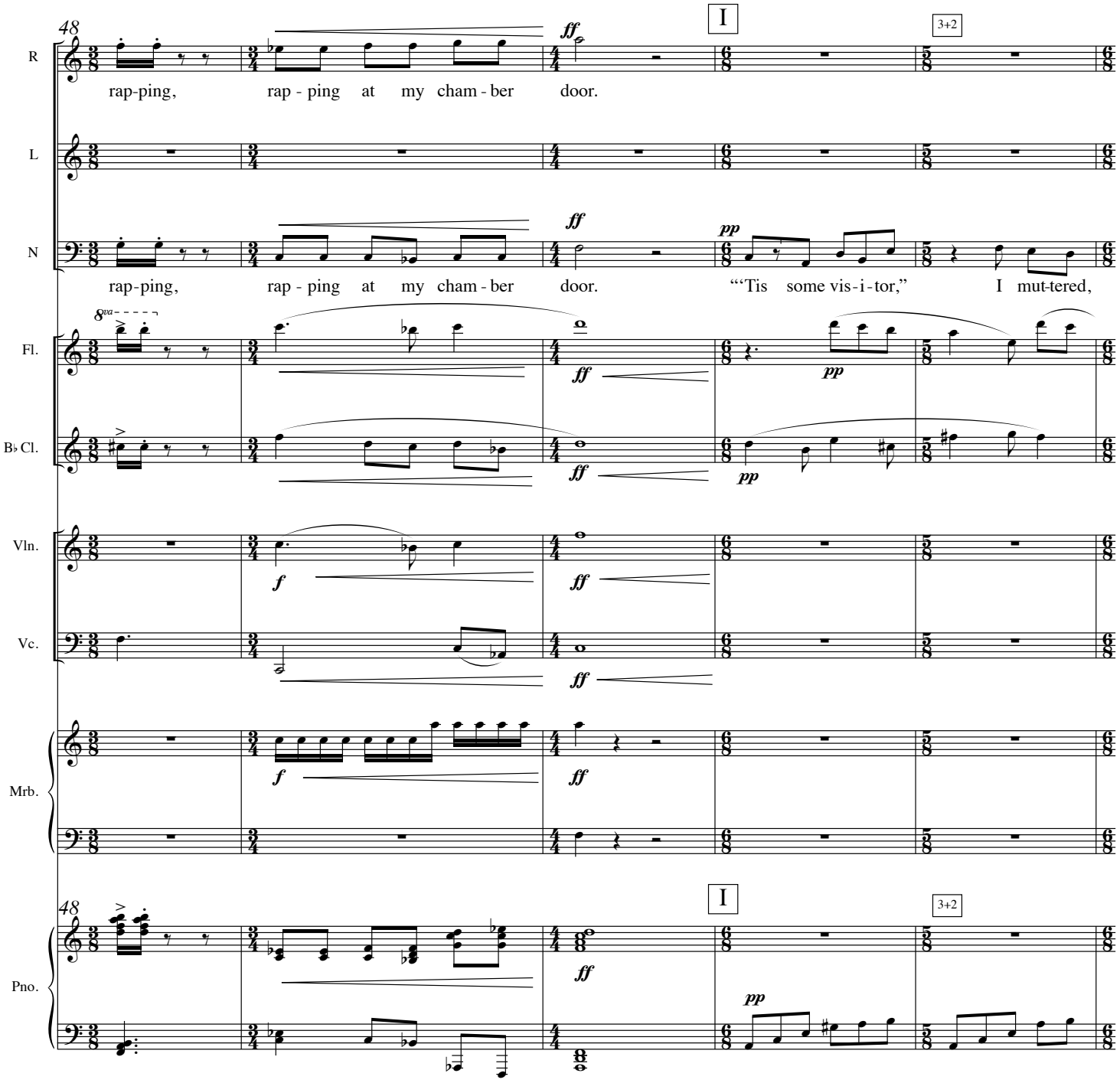

D
E
21
R
L
N
mf
Once up-on a mid - night
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
p
mf
pp

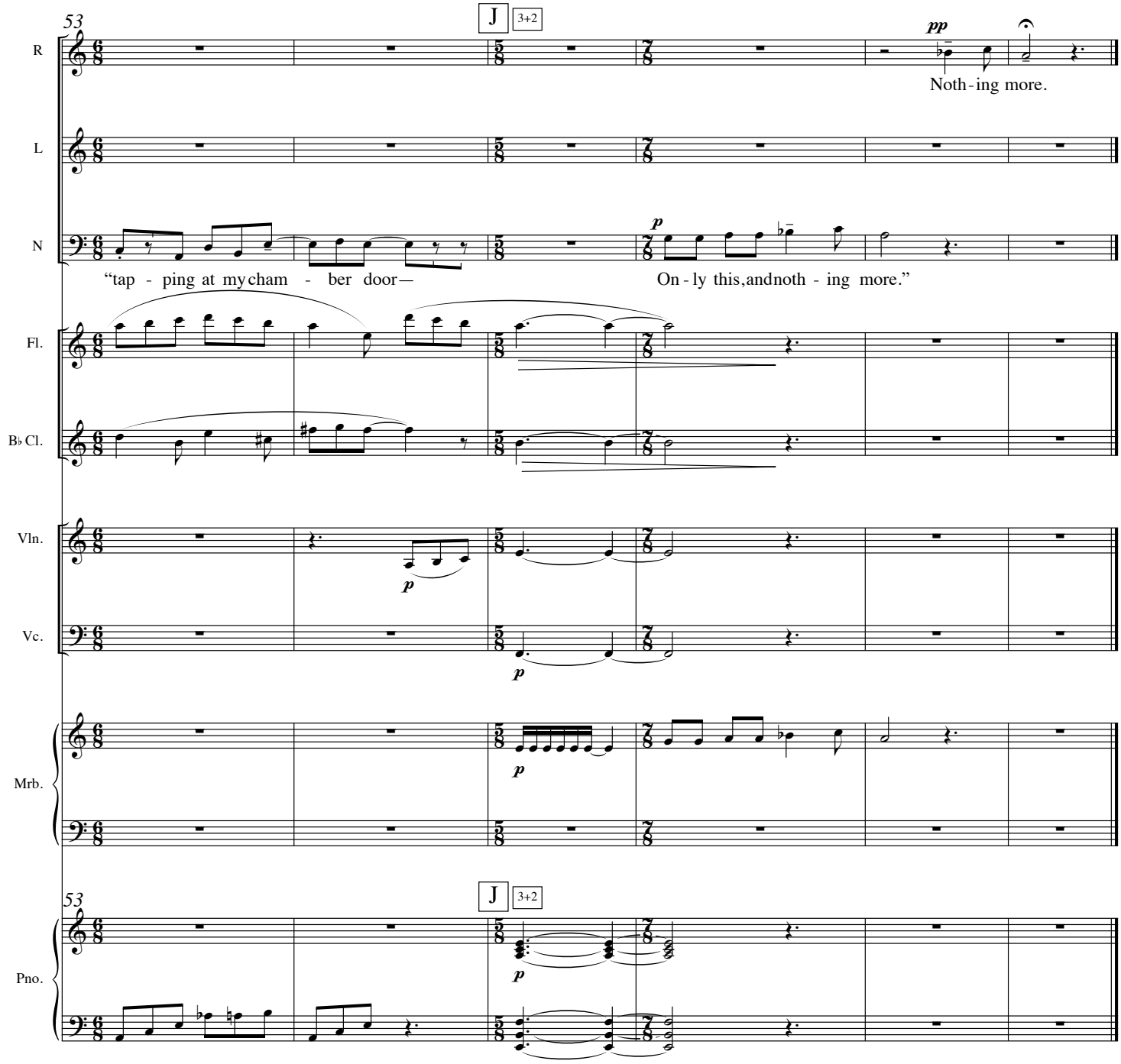

29
F
R
L
N
drear - y,
while I pond-ered, weak and wear - y,
Ov - er man-y a quaint and
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
29
F
Pno.

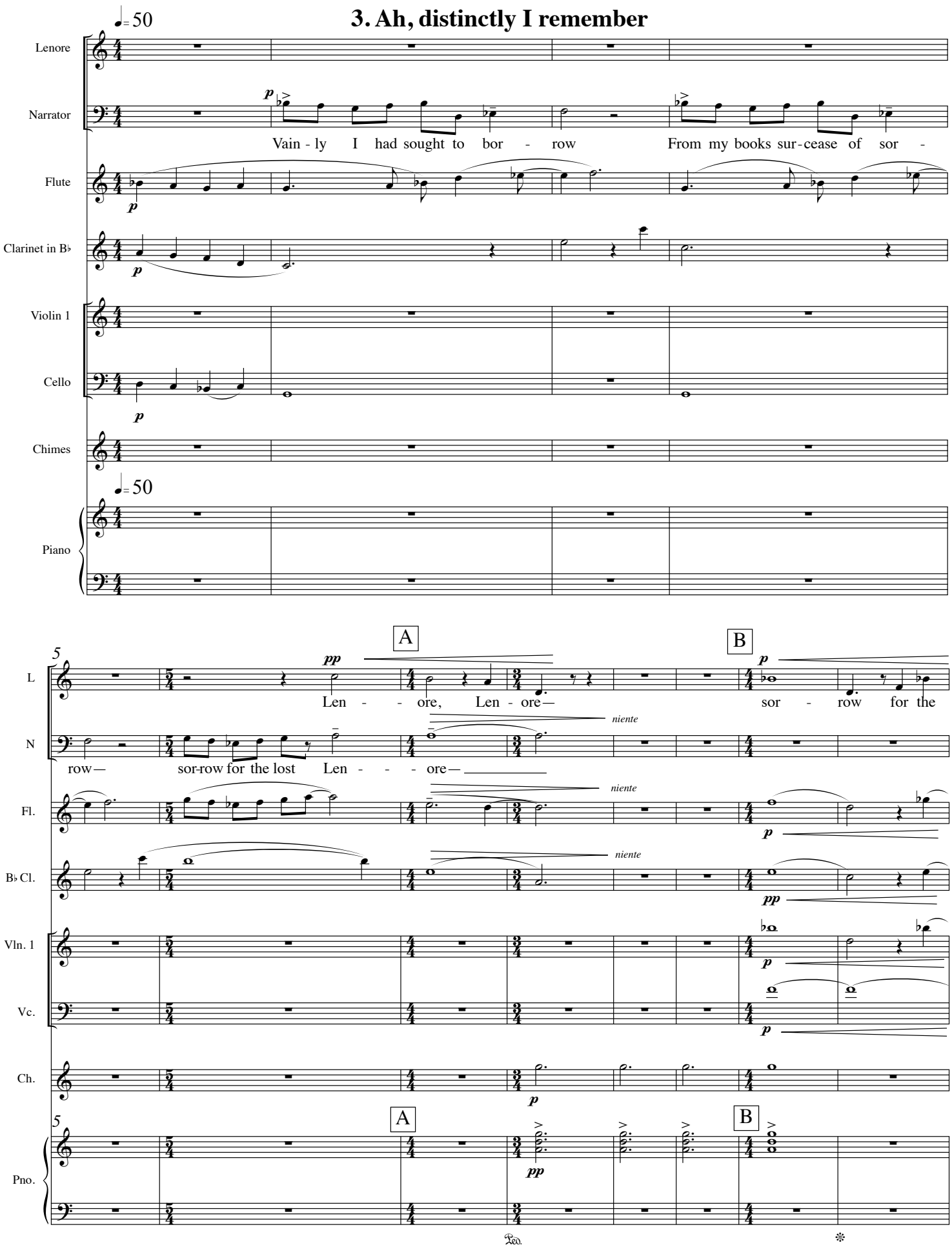

33
R
L
niente
N
cur-ious vol - ume
of for-got-ten lore,
Fl.
pp
mf
B♭ Cl.
pp
mf
Vln.
pp
mf p
Vc.
pp
mf p
Mrb.
pp
mf
33
Pno.
pp
mf
mf


G
39
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
sud - den - ly there came a tap-ping,
While I nod-ded, near - ly nap - ping,
sud - den - ly there came a tap-ping,

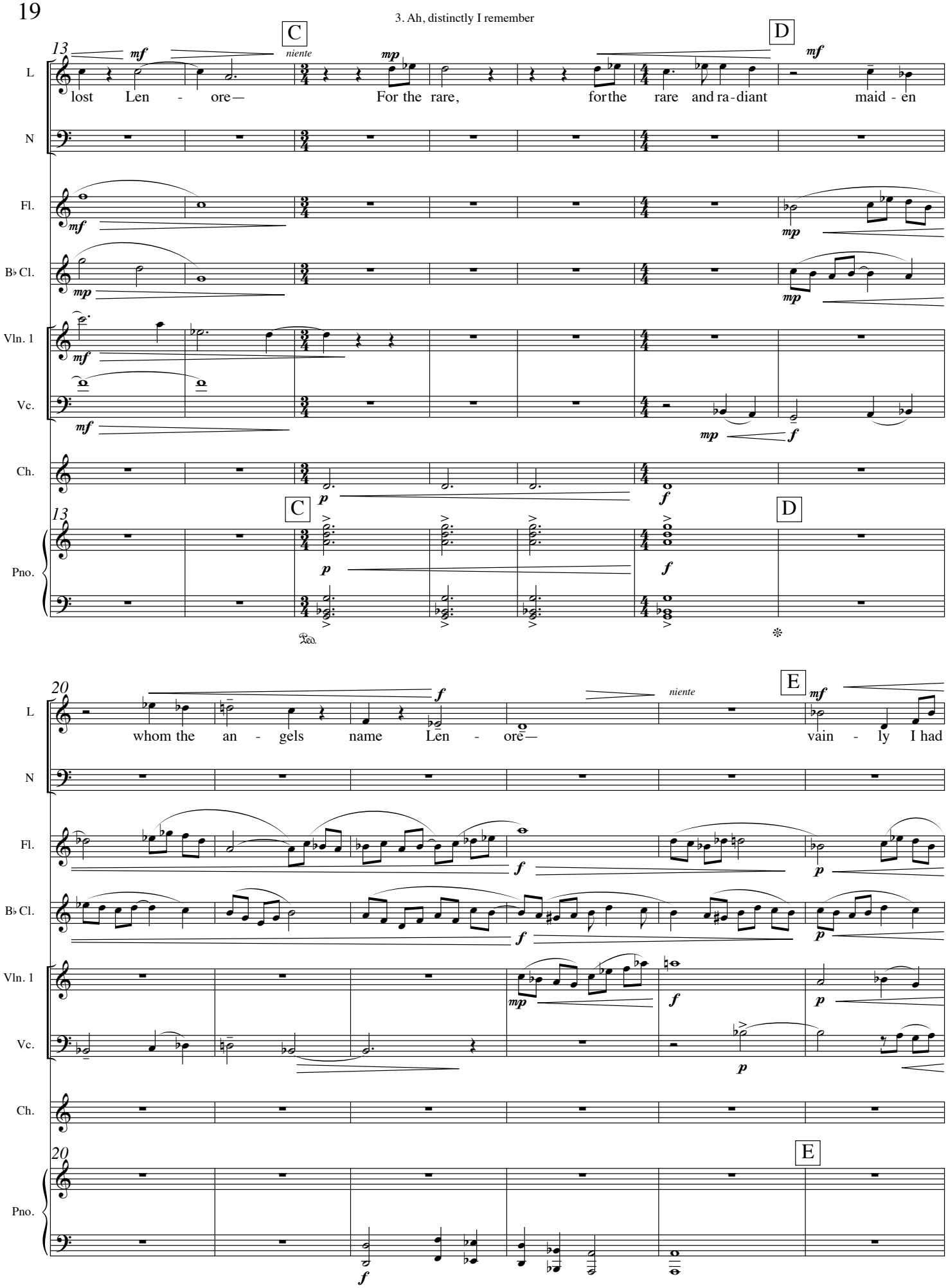

44
H
2+3
R
rap-ping, as of some one gent-ly rap-ping,
L
N
As of someone gent - ly rap - ping, as of some one gent-ly rap-ping,
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.

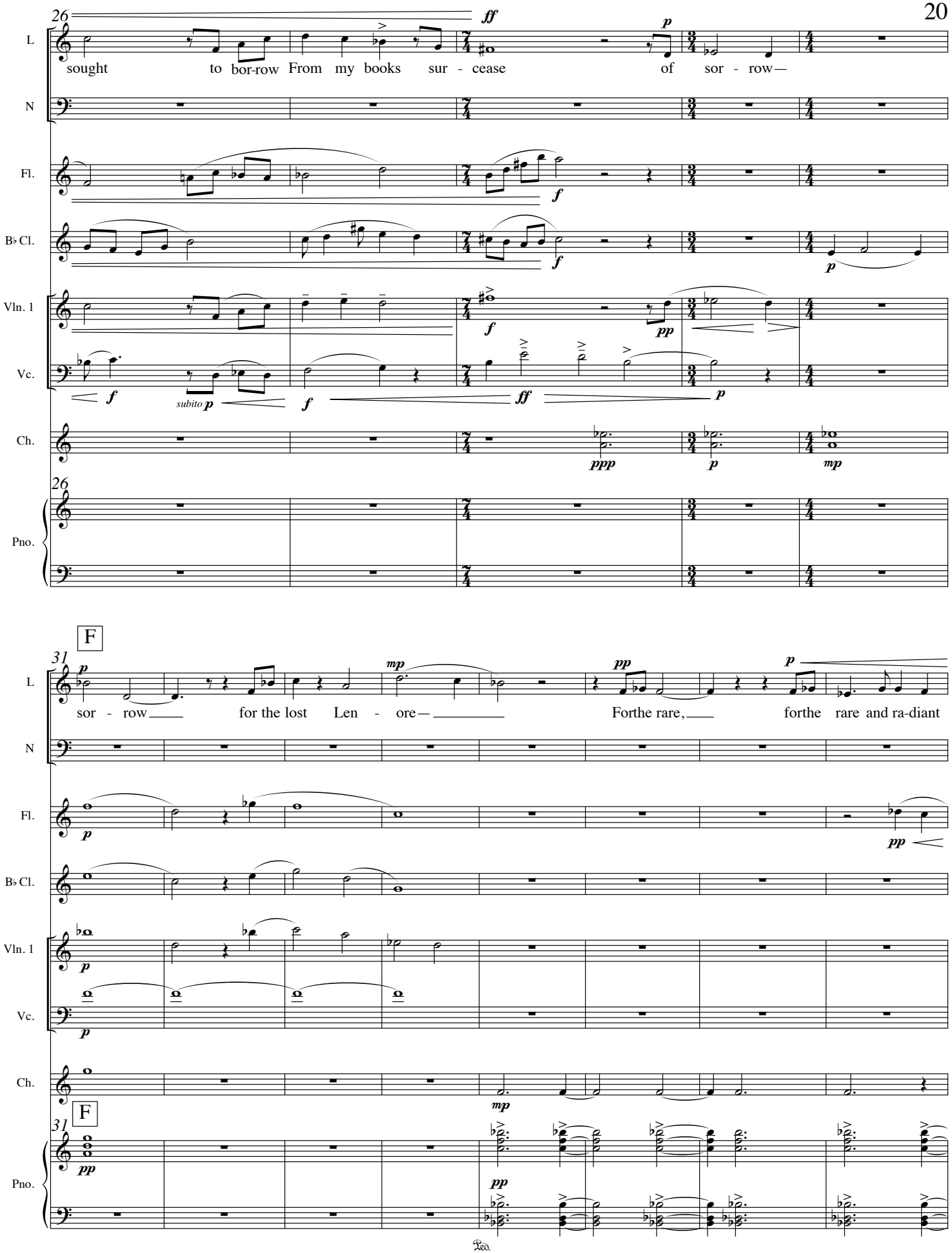

48
I
3+2
R
rap-ping, rap - ping at my cham - ber door.
L
N
rap-ping, rap - ping at my cham - ber door. "'Tis some vis-i-tor," I mut-tered,
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
48
I
3+2
Pno.

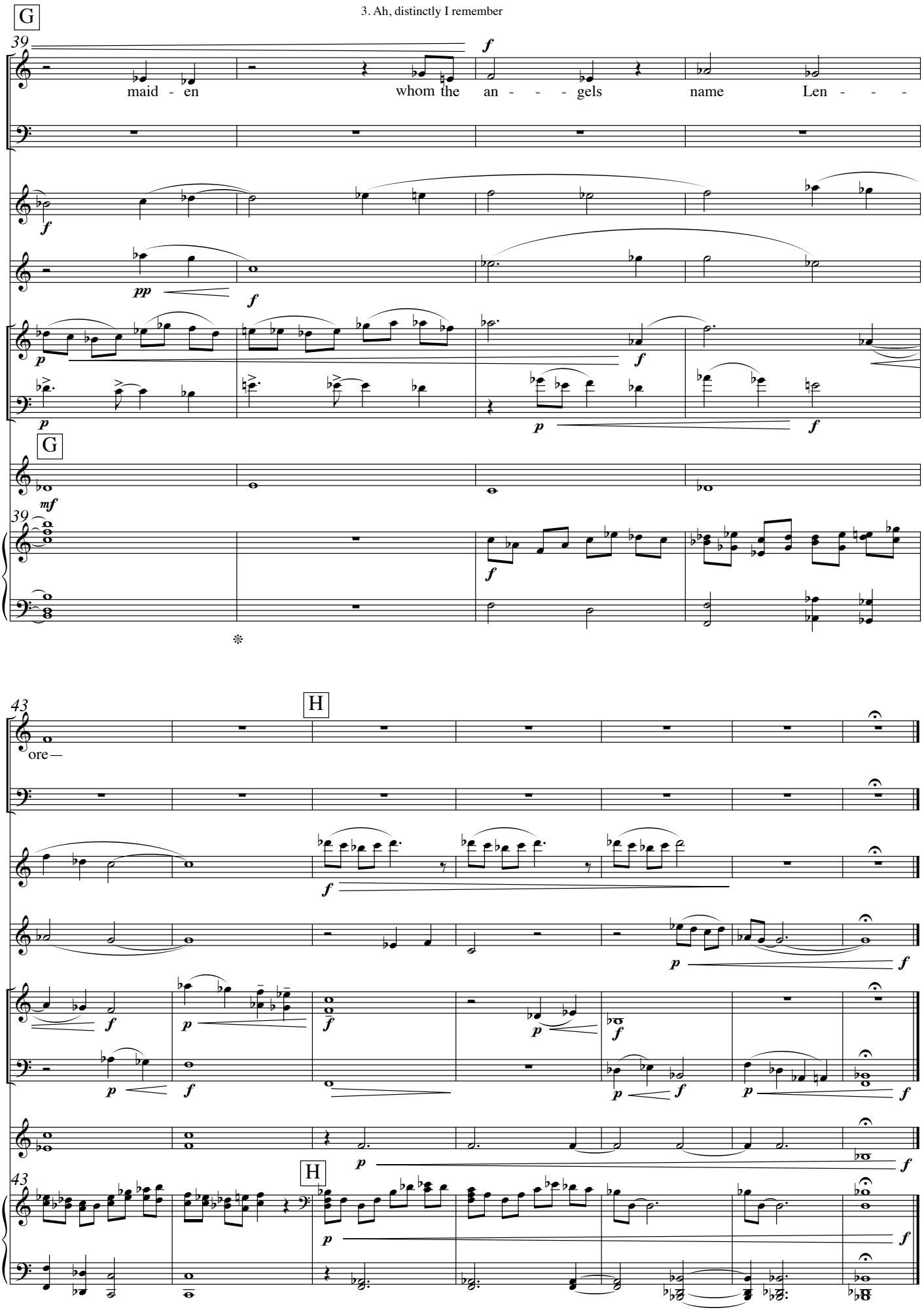

53
J
3+2
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
pp
Noth - ing more.
p
“tap - ping at my cham - ber door—
On - ly this, and noth - ing more.”


3. Ah, distinctly I remember
♩= 50
Lenore
Narrator
Vain - ly I had sought to bor - row From my books sur - cease of sor -
Flute
Clarinet in B♭
Violin 1
Cello
Chimes
♩= 50
Piano
A
B
Len - - ore, Len - ore—
sor - row for the
row— sor-row for the lost Len - - - ore—
niente
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln. 1
Vc.
Ch.
Pno.

3. Ah, distinctly I remember

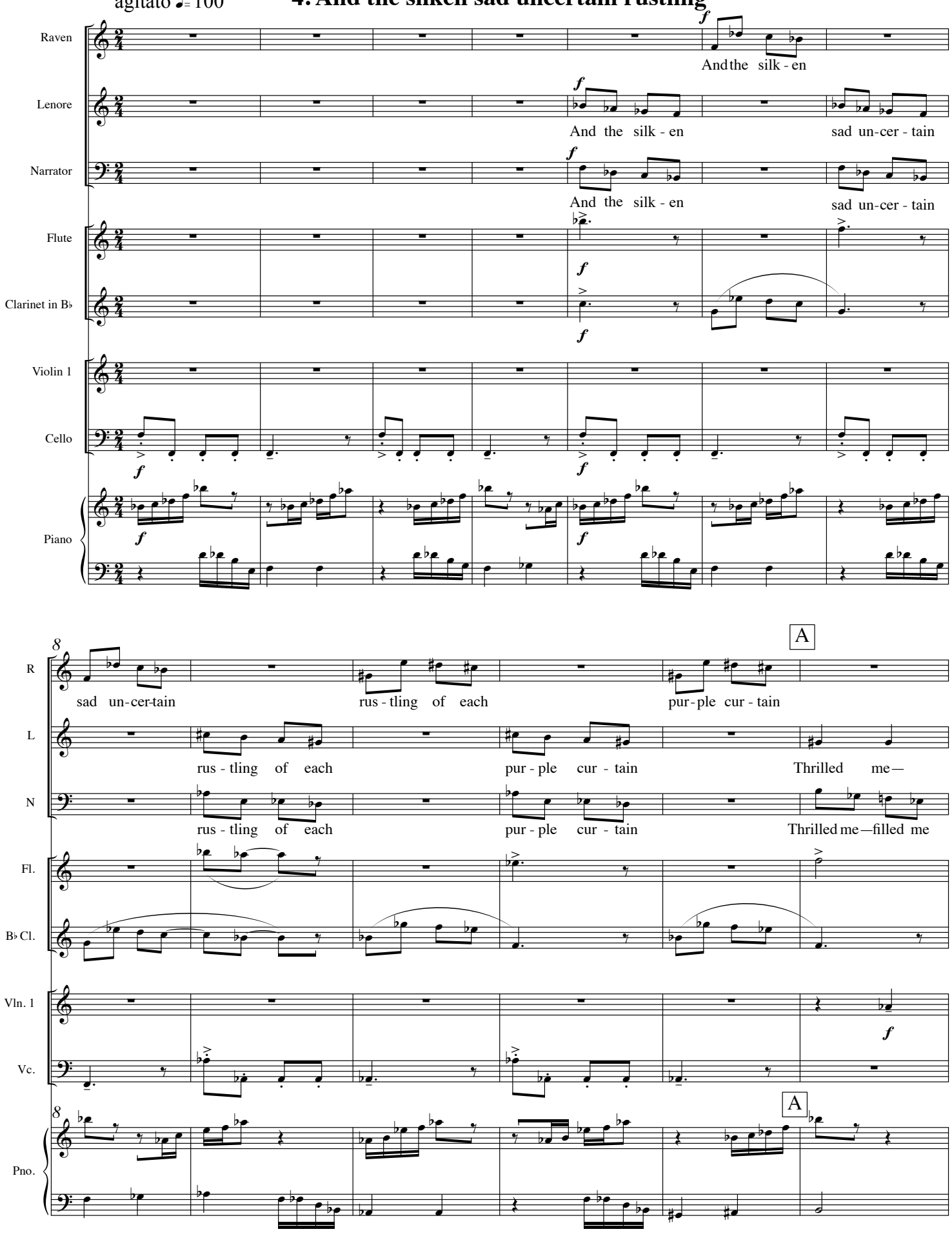



26
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln. 1
Vc.
Ch.
Pno.
sought to bor-row From my books sur - cease of sor - row—
ff
p
f
pp
subito p
ppp
mp
F
31
sor - row for the lost Len - ore— Forthe rare, forthe rare and ra-diant
Ped.


G
39
f
L
maid - en whom the an - - - gels name Len - - -
N
Fl.
f
B♭ Cl.
pp
f
Vln. 1
p
f
Vc.
p
p
f
G
Ch.
mf
39
Pno.
f
43
H
L
ore—
N
Fl.
f
B♭ Cl.
p
f
Vln. 1
p
f
p
f
Vc.
p
f
p
f
p
f
Ch.
p
f
43
H
Pno.
p
f

agitato ♩= 100

4. And the silken sad uncertain rustling



23

14

R: Thrilled me — filled me with fan - tas - tic ter - rors nev - er felt be-fore;

L: filled me with fan - tas - tic ter - rors nev - er felt be-fore;

N: with fan - tas - tic ter - rors nev - er felt be - fore;

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln. 1

Vc.: *f*

14

Pno.

21

B

R

L: Still, still, beat - ing of my heart,

N: So that now, to still the beat - ing of my heart, I stood re-peat-ing

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln. 1

Vc.

21

B

Pno.: *p*

C

29

R

L

N

p

“‘Tis some vis - i - tor en - treat - ing en - trance at my cham-ber door—

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

p

Vln. 1

f

Vc.

f

p

f

C

29

Pno.

38

R

L

N

p

Some late vis - i - tor en - treat - ing en - trance at my cham-ber door—

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

p

Vln. 1

f

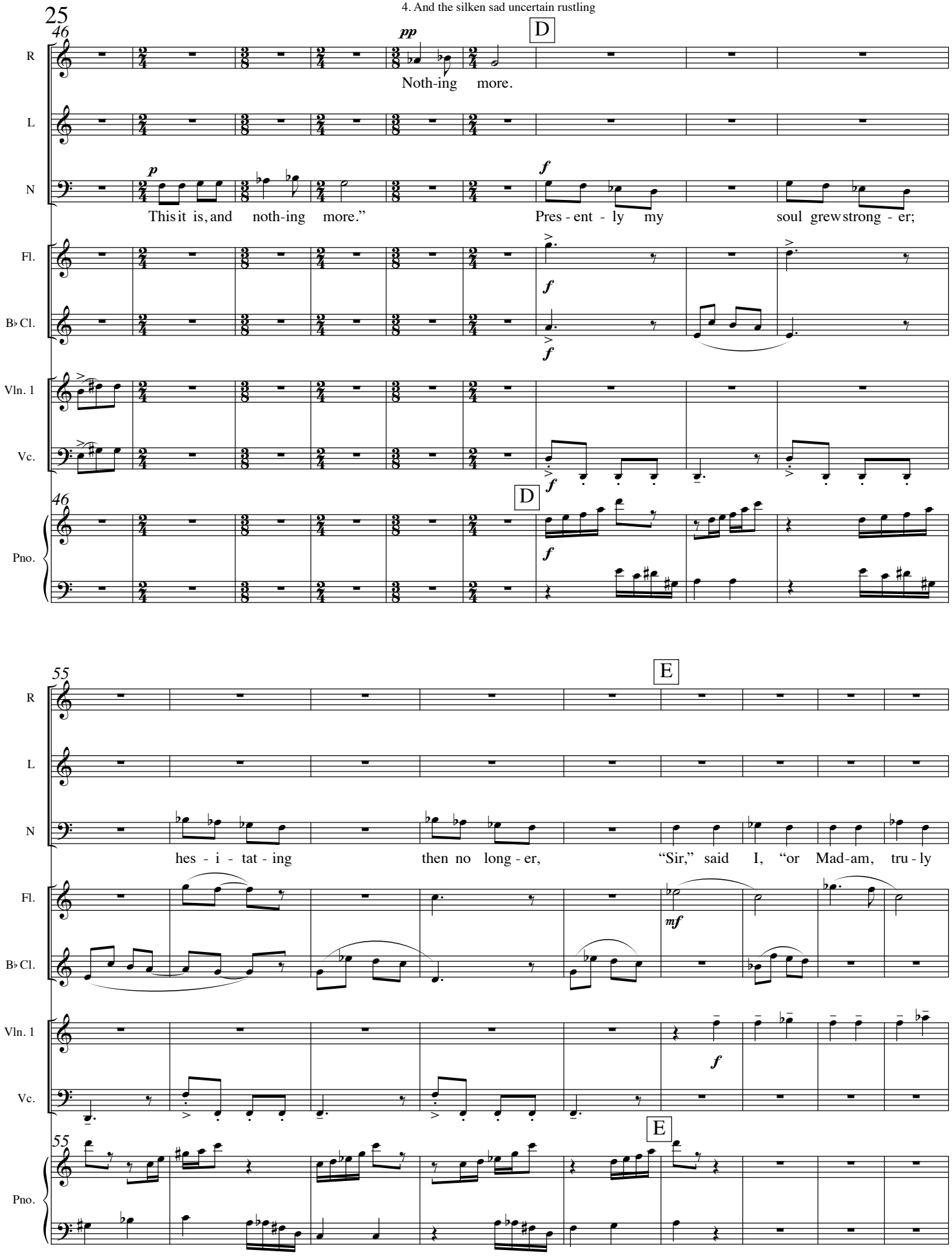
Vc.

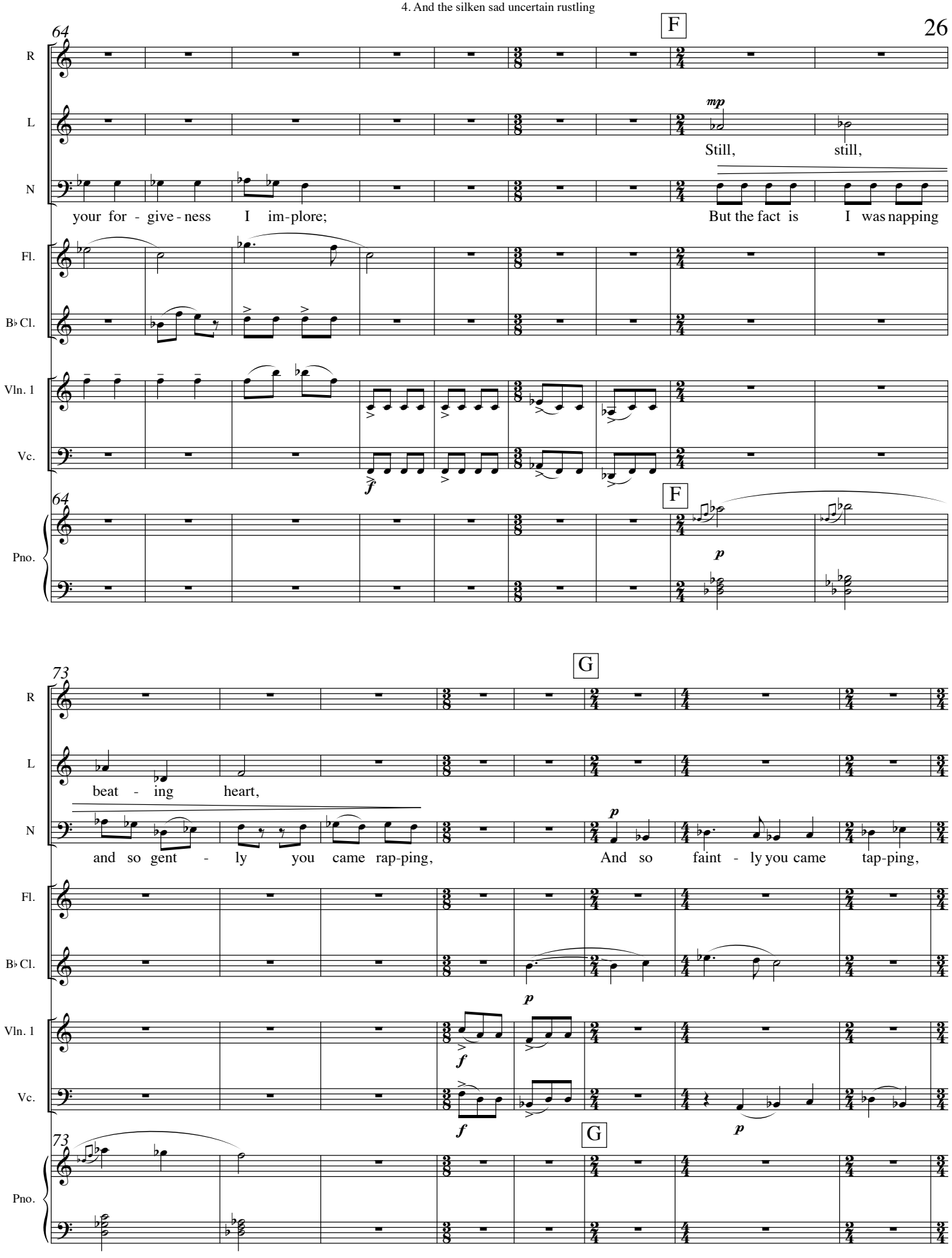
p

f

38

Pno.


25
46
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln. 1
Vc.
Pno.
pp
D
Noth-ing more.
p
f
This it is, and noth-ing more."
Pres - ent - ly my soul grew strong - er;
55
E
hes - i - tat - ing then no long - er,
"Sir," said I, "or Mad-am, tru - ly
mf


64
F
R
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln. 1
Vc.
Pno.
mp
Still, still,
your for - give - ness I im-plore;
But the fact is I was napping
f
p
73
G
beat - ing heart,
and so gent - ly you came rap-ping,
And so faint - ly you came tap-ping,

81

R

L

N

tap - ping at my cham-ber door— That I scarce was sure I heard you,"—

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

p

Vln. 1

f

Vc.

f *p*

81

Pno.

89

pp

R

Noth-ing more.

L

N

p

here I o - pened wide the door— Dark-ness there, and noth-ing more.

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln. 1

f

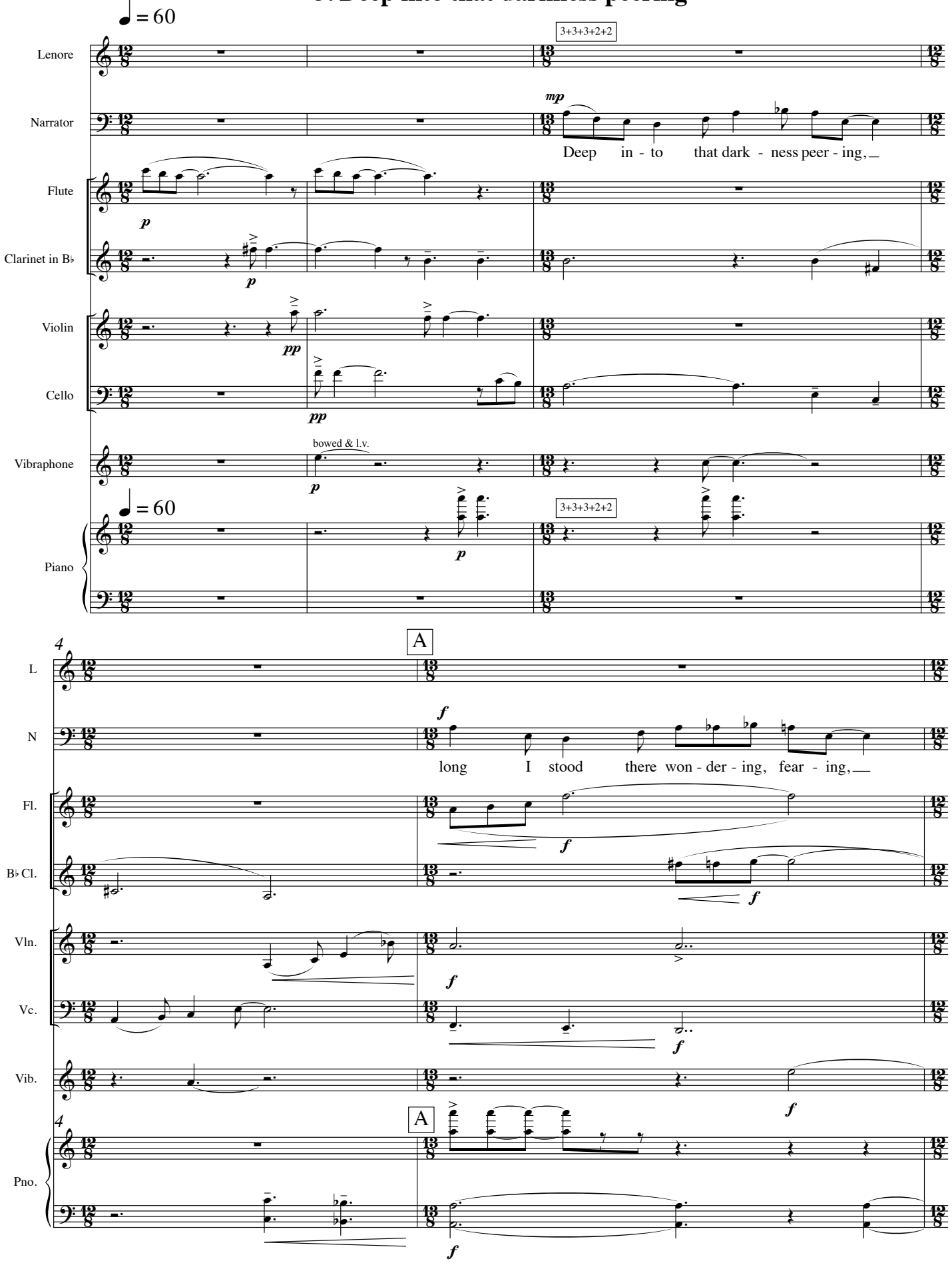
Vc.

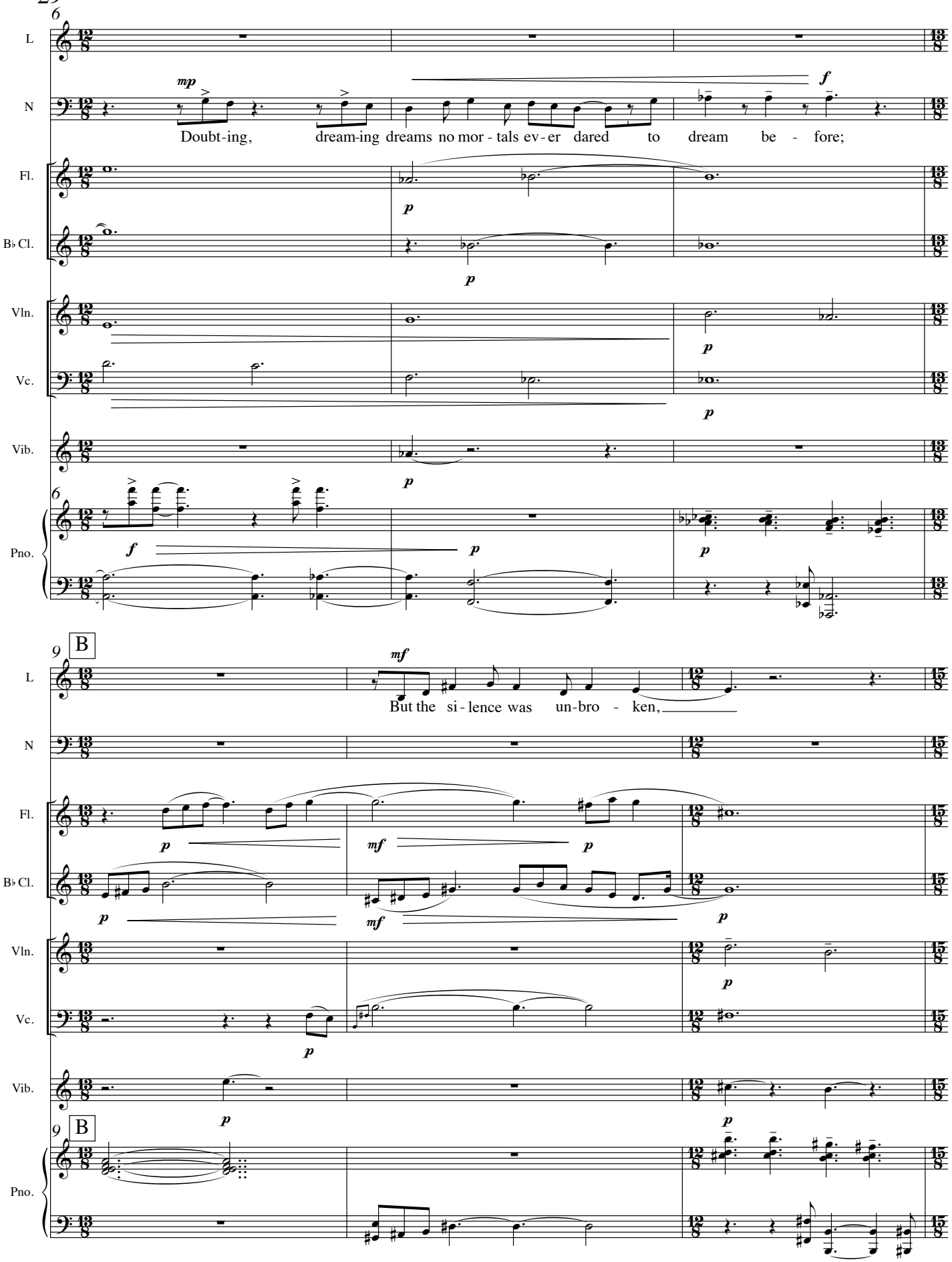
f

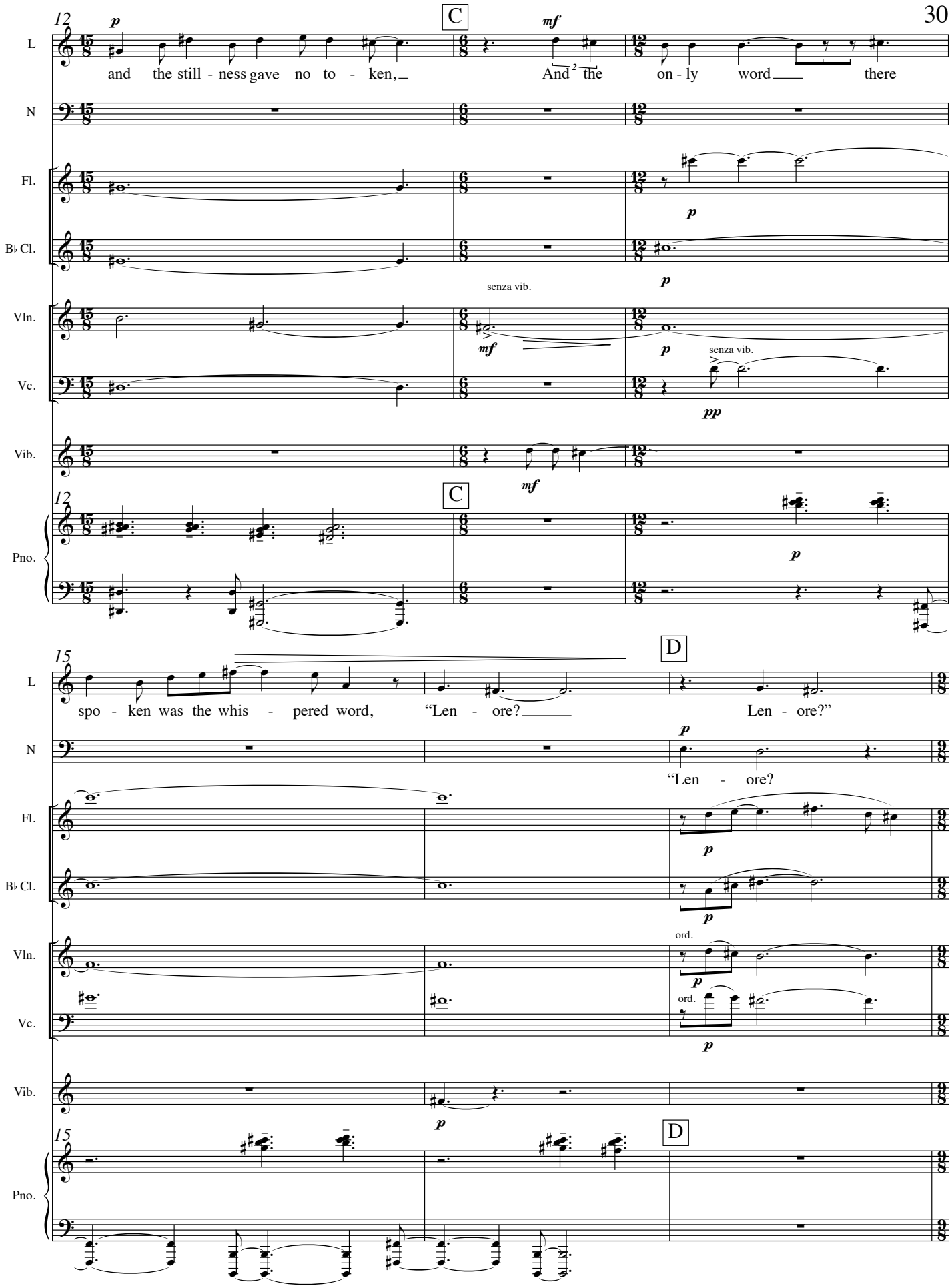
89

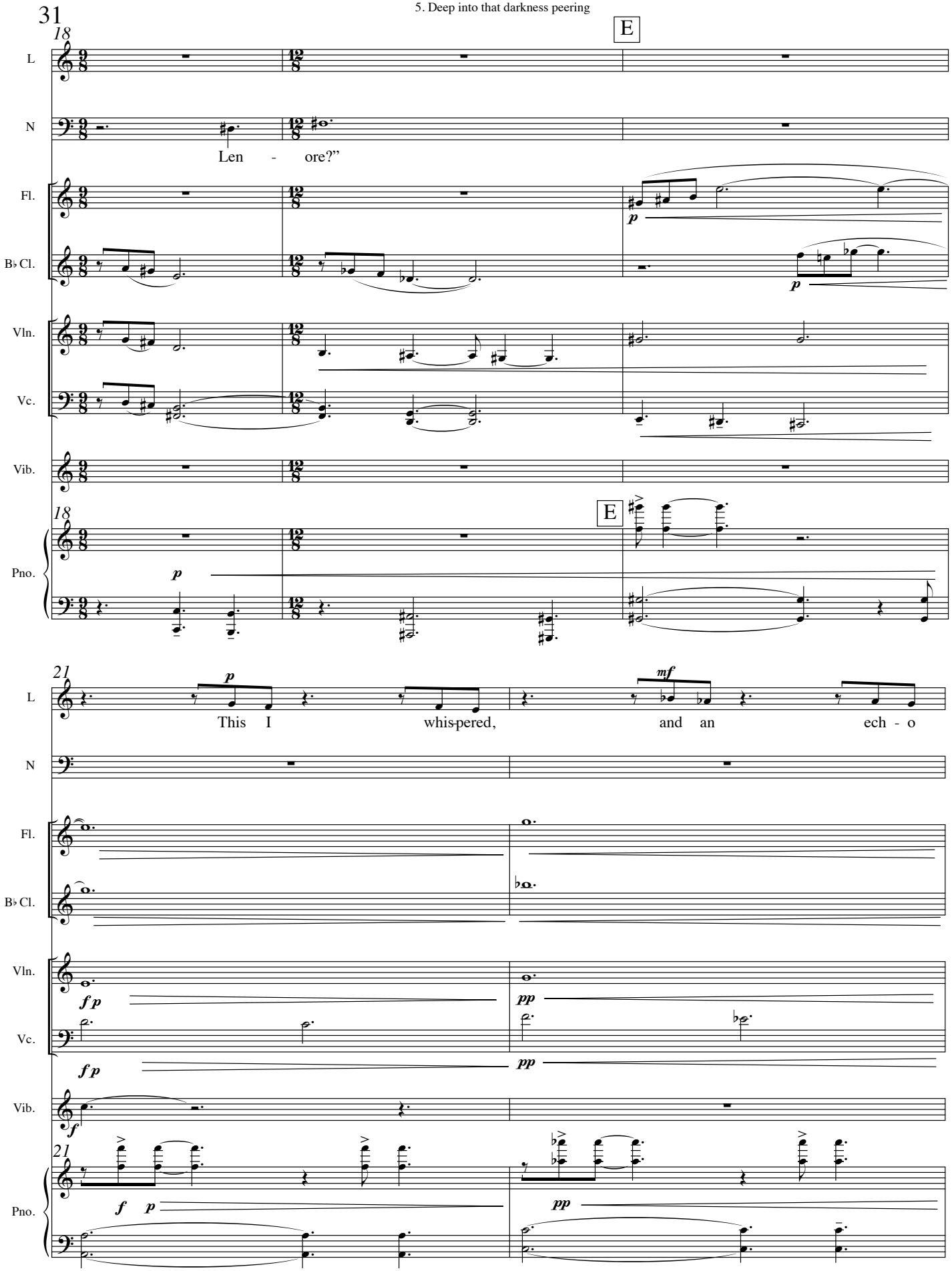
Pno.

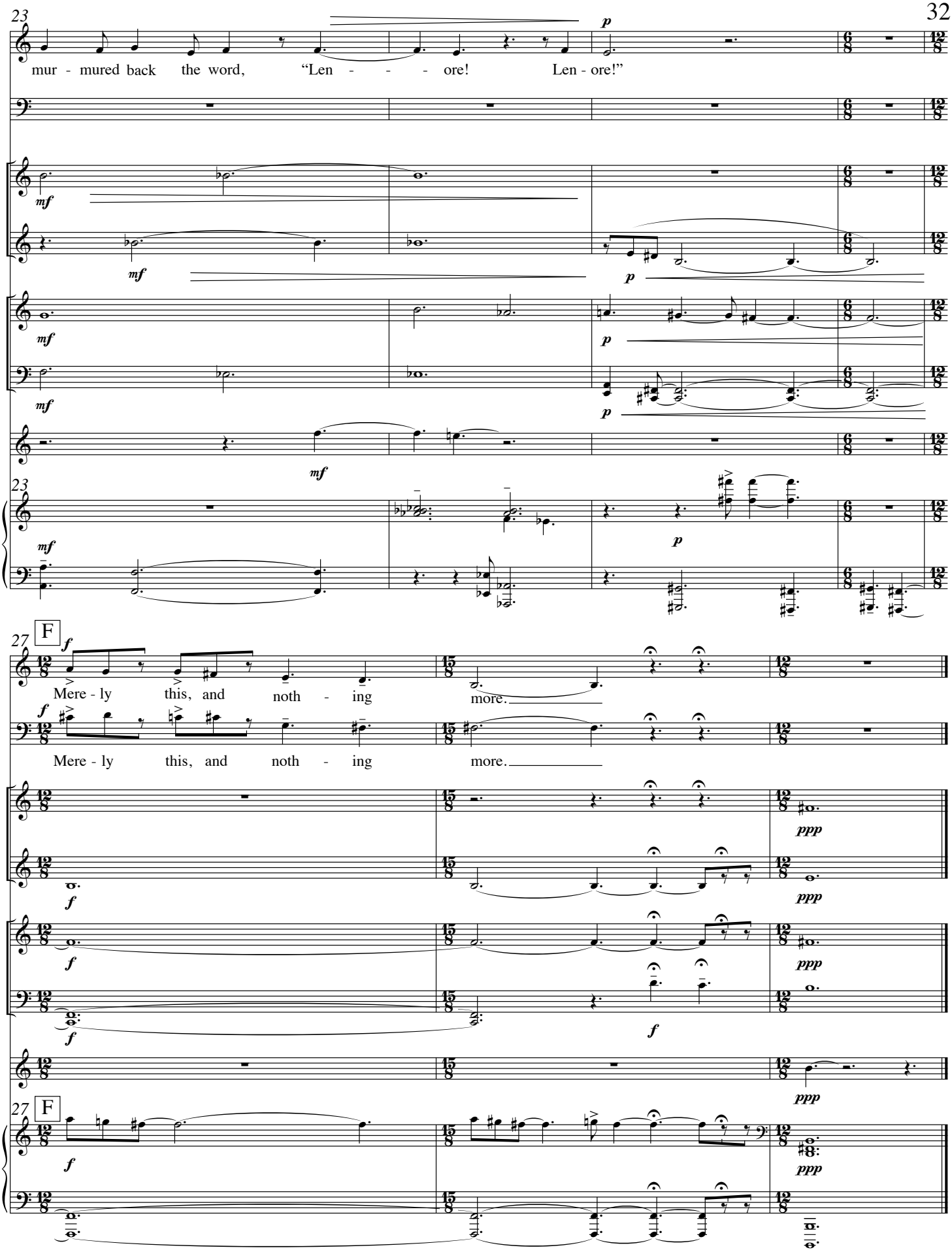
5. Deep into that darkness peering



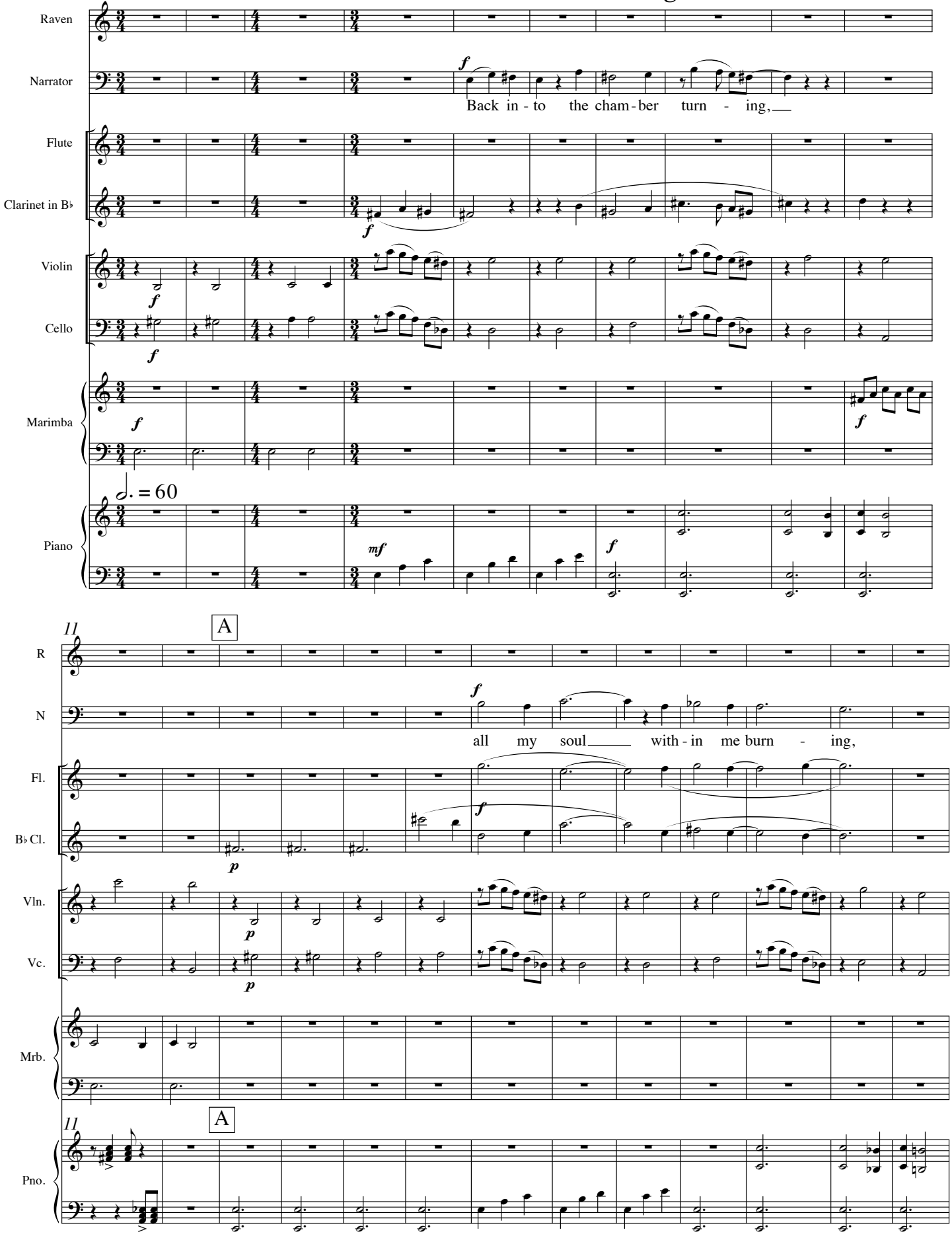

6
L
N
mp
f
Doubt-ing, dream-ing dreams no mor - tals ev - er dared to dream be - fore;
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
p
f
9
B
mf
But the si - lence was un-bro - ken,

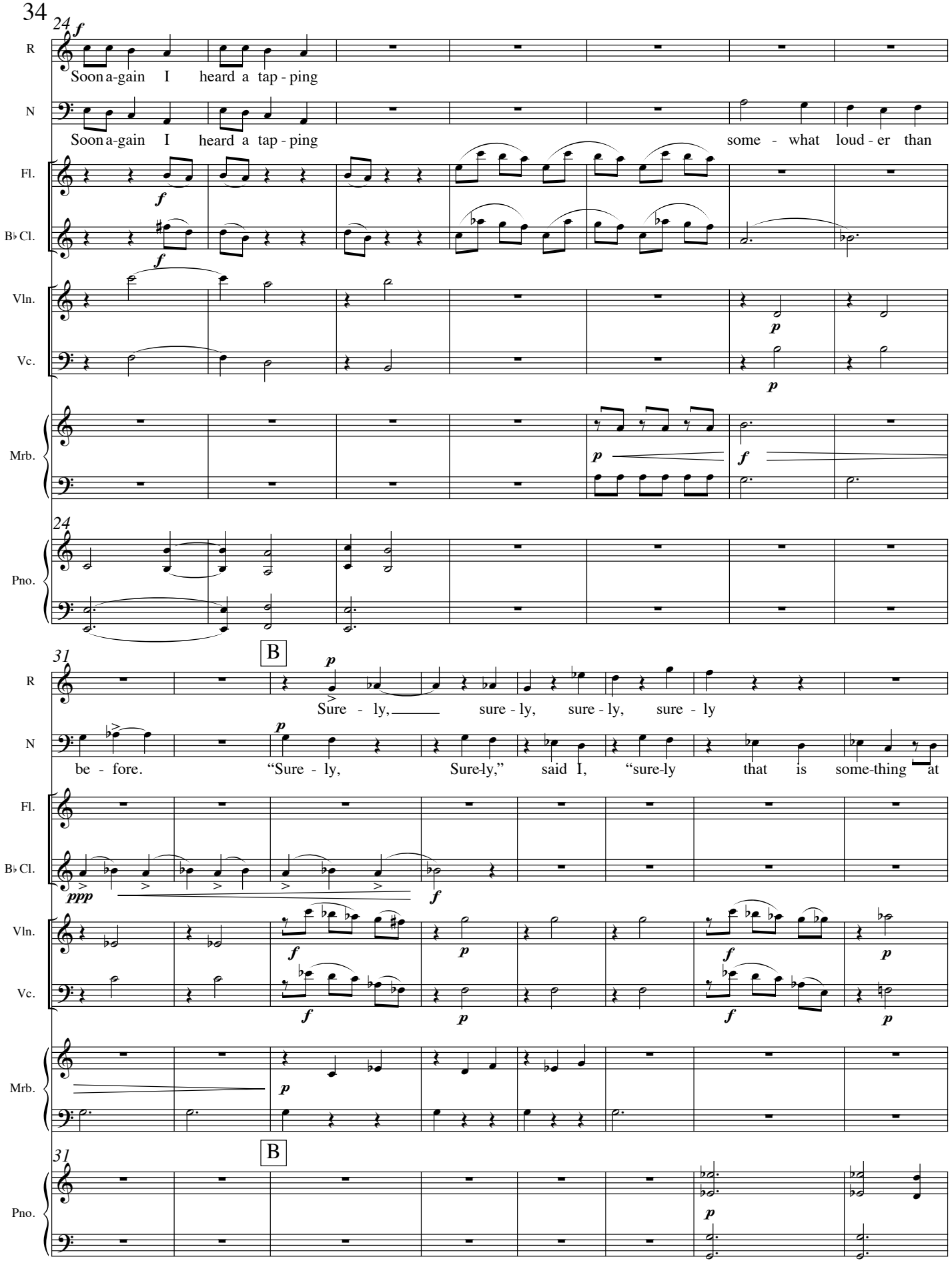

12
C
L
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
and the still - ness gave no to - ken,
And the on - ly word there
senza vib.
senza vib.
15
D
spo - ken was the whis - pered word, "Len - ore?
Len - ore?"
"Len - ore?
ord.
ord.


E
18
L
N
Len - ore?"
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
p
E
21
This I whis-pered, and an ech - o
mf
f p
pp
f
f p
pp


23
L
mur - mured back the word, "Len - - - ore! Len - ore!"
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
27
F
Mere - ly this, and noth - ing more.
Mere - ly this, and noth - ing more.

6. Back into the chamber turning




34
24
f
R
Soon a-gain I heard a tap - ping
N
Soon a-gain I heard a tap - ping some - what loud - er than
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
B
31
Sure - ly, sure - ly, sure - ly, sure - ly
be - fore. "Sure - ly, Sure-ly," said I, "sure-ly that is some-thing at
ppp

39

R

N

my win - dow lat - tice; Let_ me see, then, what there - at is,

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.

47

C

R

N

and this mys - - ter - y ex -

Fl.

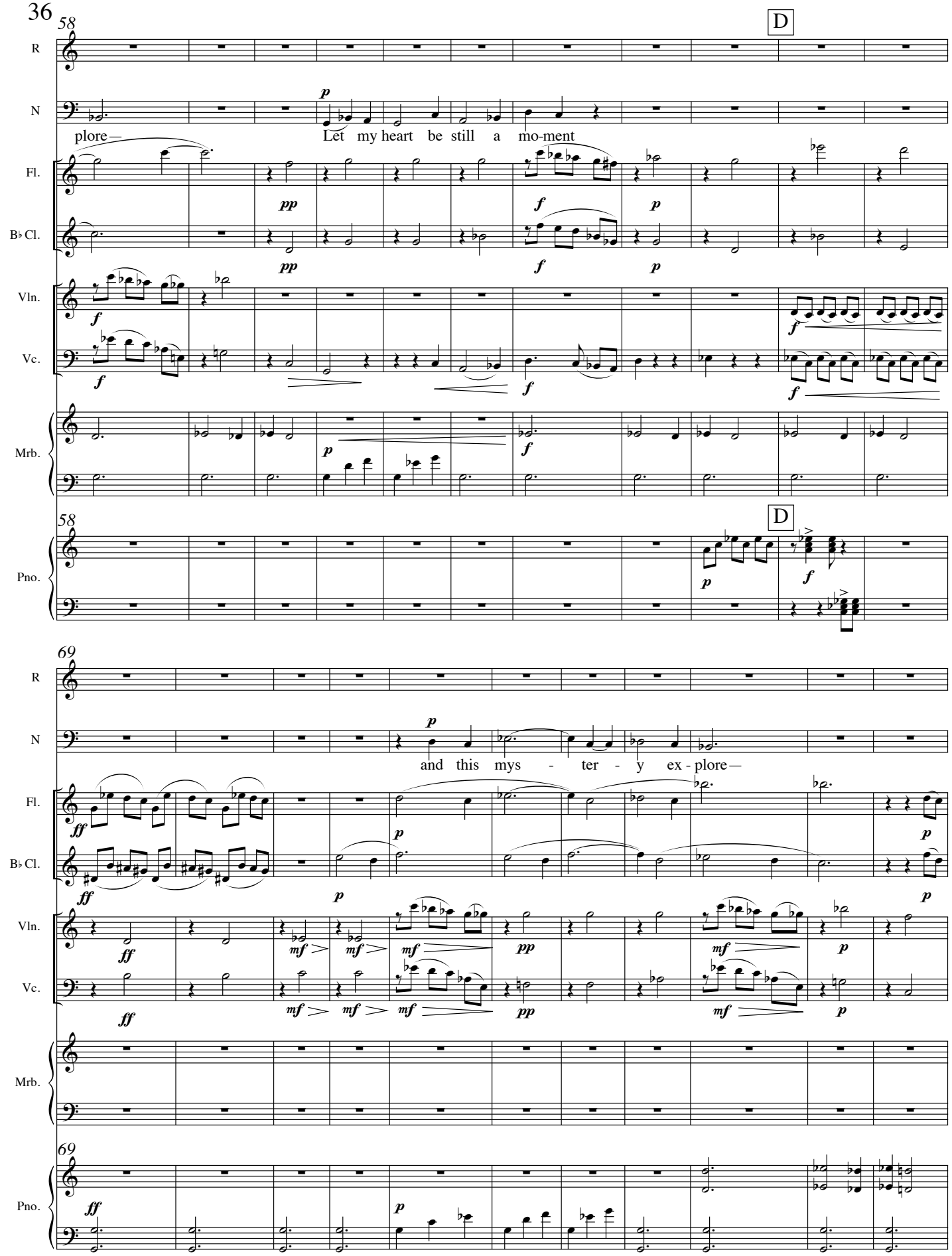
B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.


36
58
D
R
N
plore—
Let my heart be still a mo-ment
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
58
D
69
R
N
and this mys - ter - y ex - plore—
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
69

80

E

R

N

'Tis the wind and noth - ing more."

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

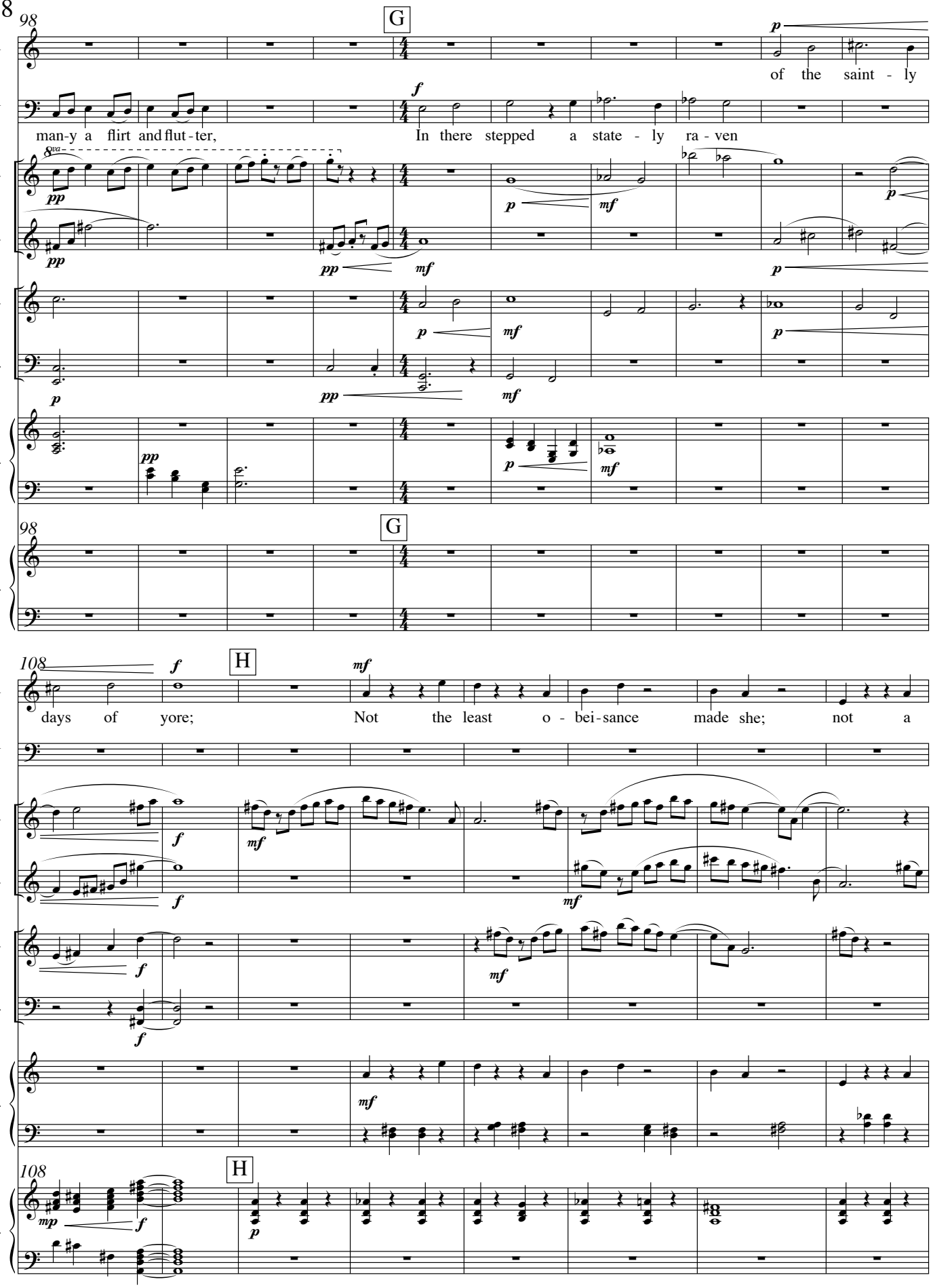
Pno.

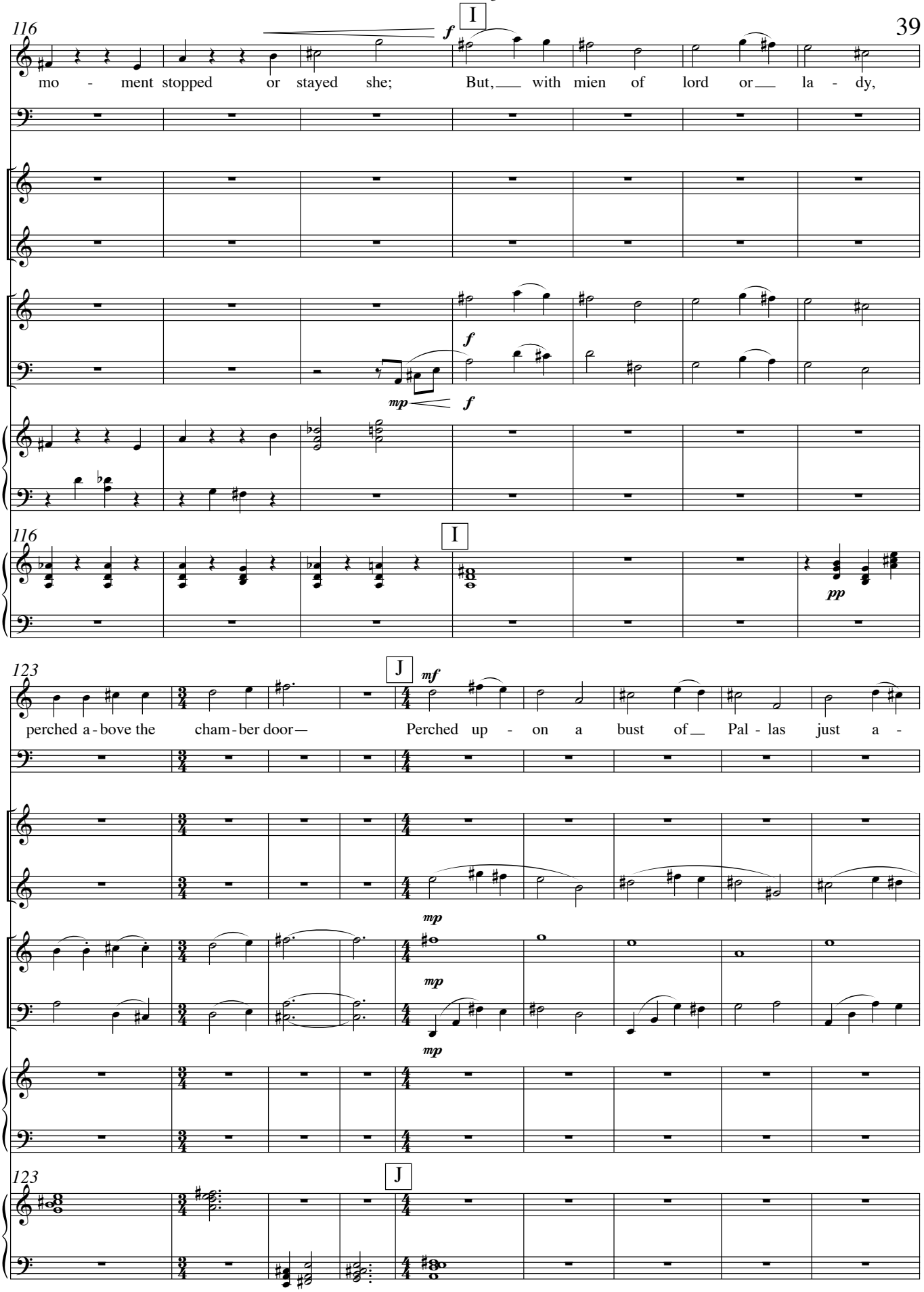
90

F

O - pen here I flung the shut-ter, when, with

38


98
G
R
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
of the saint - ly
man-y a flirt and flut - ter,
In there stepped a state - ly ra - ven
108
H
days of yore;
Not the least o - bei - sance made she; not a


116
I
f
R
mo - ment stopped or stayed she; But, with mien of lord or la - dy,
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
f
Vc.
mp
f
Mrb.
116
I
Pno.
pp
123
J
mf
R
perched a - bove the cham - ber door— Perched up - on a bust of Pal - las just a -
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
mp
Vln.
mp
Vc.
mp
Mrb.
123
J
Pno.

132

K

R

bove my cham - ber door— Perched, and sat, and noth - - - ing more.

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.

132

K

139

R

Then this eb - on - y bird be - guil - ing your sad fan - cy

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.

139

145

L

R

in - to__ smil - ing, By the grave and stern de - co - rum of the coun - te - nance it

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

f

Vln.

Vc.

f

Mrb.

145

L

Pno.

154

M

R

wore,

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

mp

p

f

p

f

Vln.

Vc.

p

f

p

f

Mrb.

f

p

154

M

Pno.

p

42

163 N

R

N

"Though thy crest be shorn and shav - en, thou," I said, "art sure

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

163 N

Pno.

172

R

N

— no craven, Ghast - ly grim and an - cient ra - - - ven

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

172

Pno.

O

183

R

N

wan - d'ring from the Night-ly shore— Tell me, tell me, tell me what thy lord - ly

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

183 O

Pno.

194

P

R

N

name is, tell me, tell me what thy lord-ly name is on the Night's Plu -

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

194

P

Pno.

204

Q

R

ff

Quoth the Ra - - ven, "Nev - er - more."

N

to - - - nian shore!"

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.

215

R

mf

Much I mar - velled this un - gain - ly fowl to hear dis - -

mp

f

p

224

R

N

course so plain - ly, Though its an - - - swer lit - tle

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

224

Pno.

233

S

R

For_ we can - not help a - gree - ing that no liv - ing

N

mean - ing— lit-tle rel - e - van - cy bore;

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

233

S

Pno.

242

R

hu - man be - ing ev - er yet was blest with see - ing bird a - bove his cham - ber door—

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

242

Pno.

248 T

R

Bird or beast up - on the sculp-tured bust a - bove his cham - ber door,

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

248 T

Pno.

253

U

R

N

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

Pno.

pp

ff

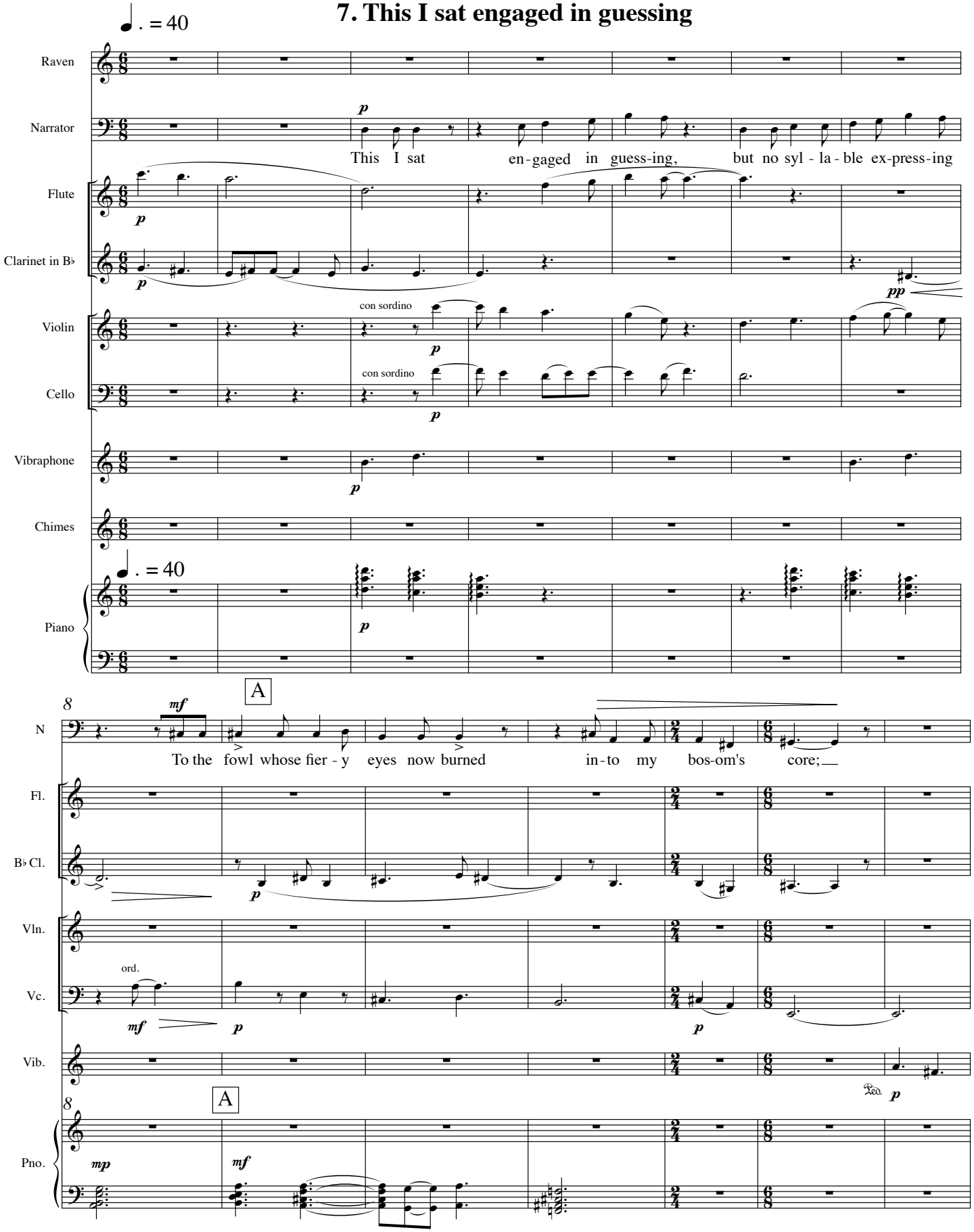
258

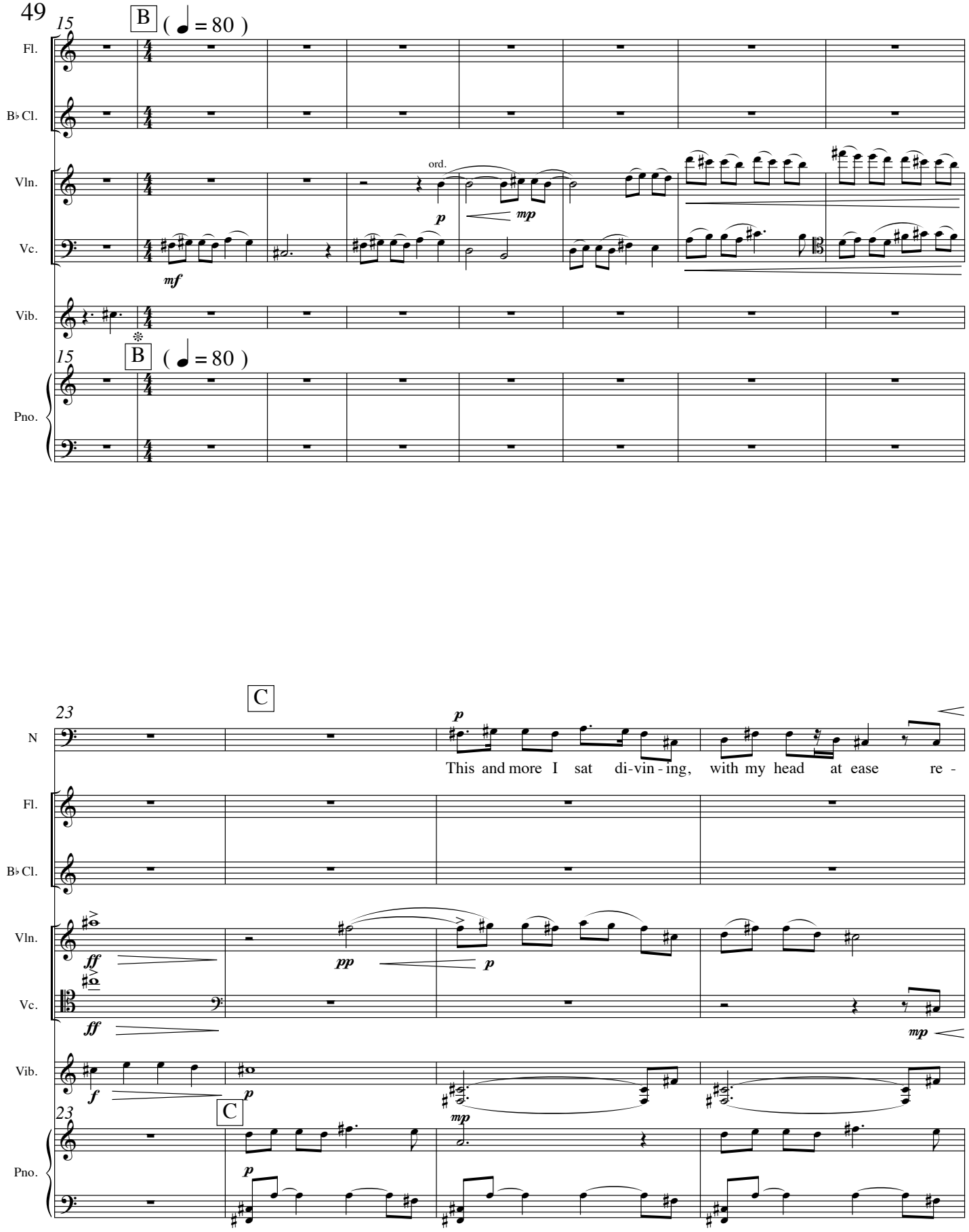
f

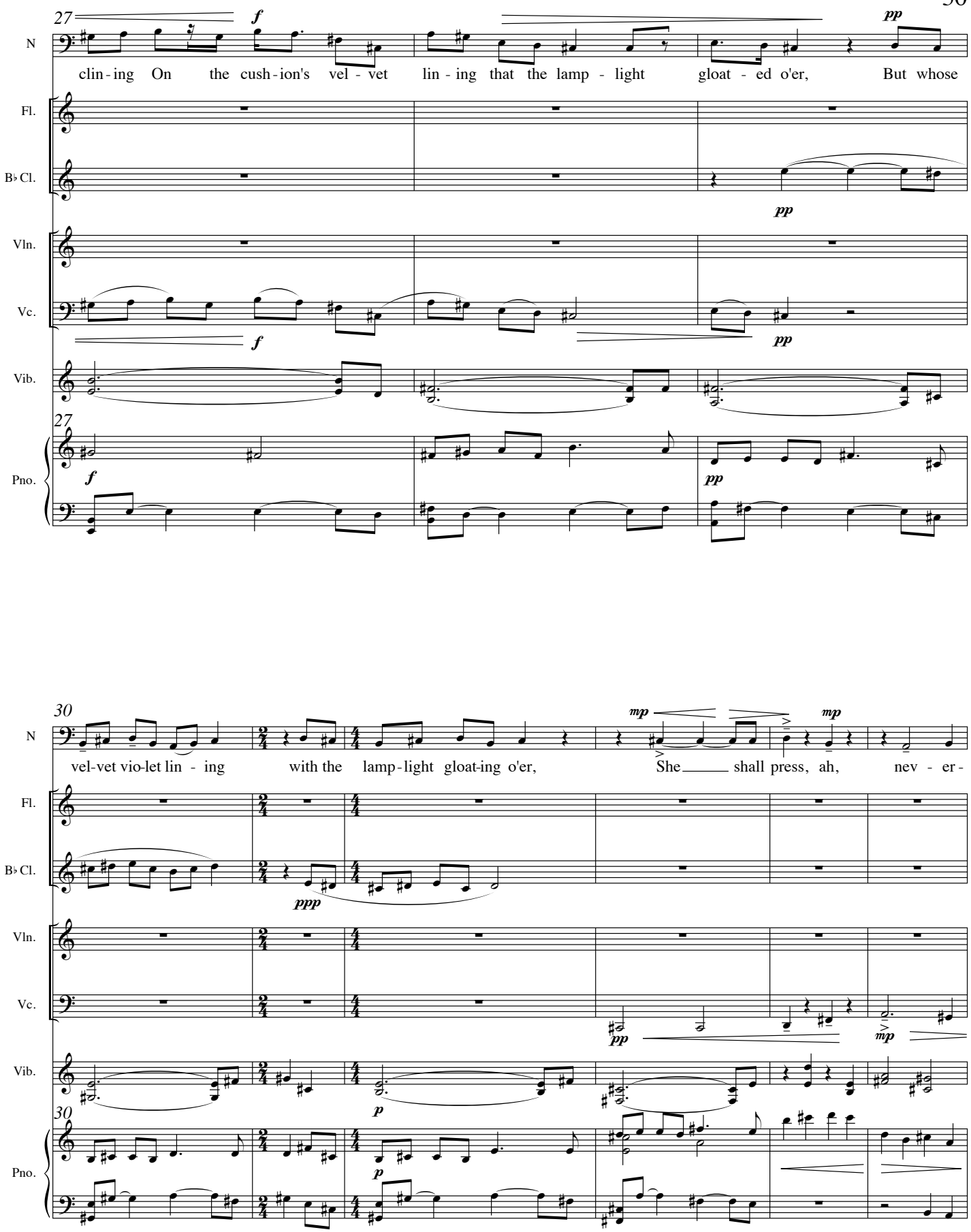
With such name as Nev - er - more.

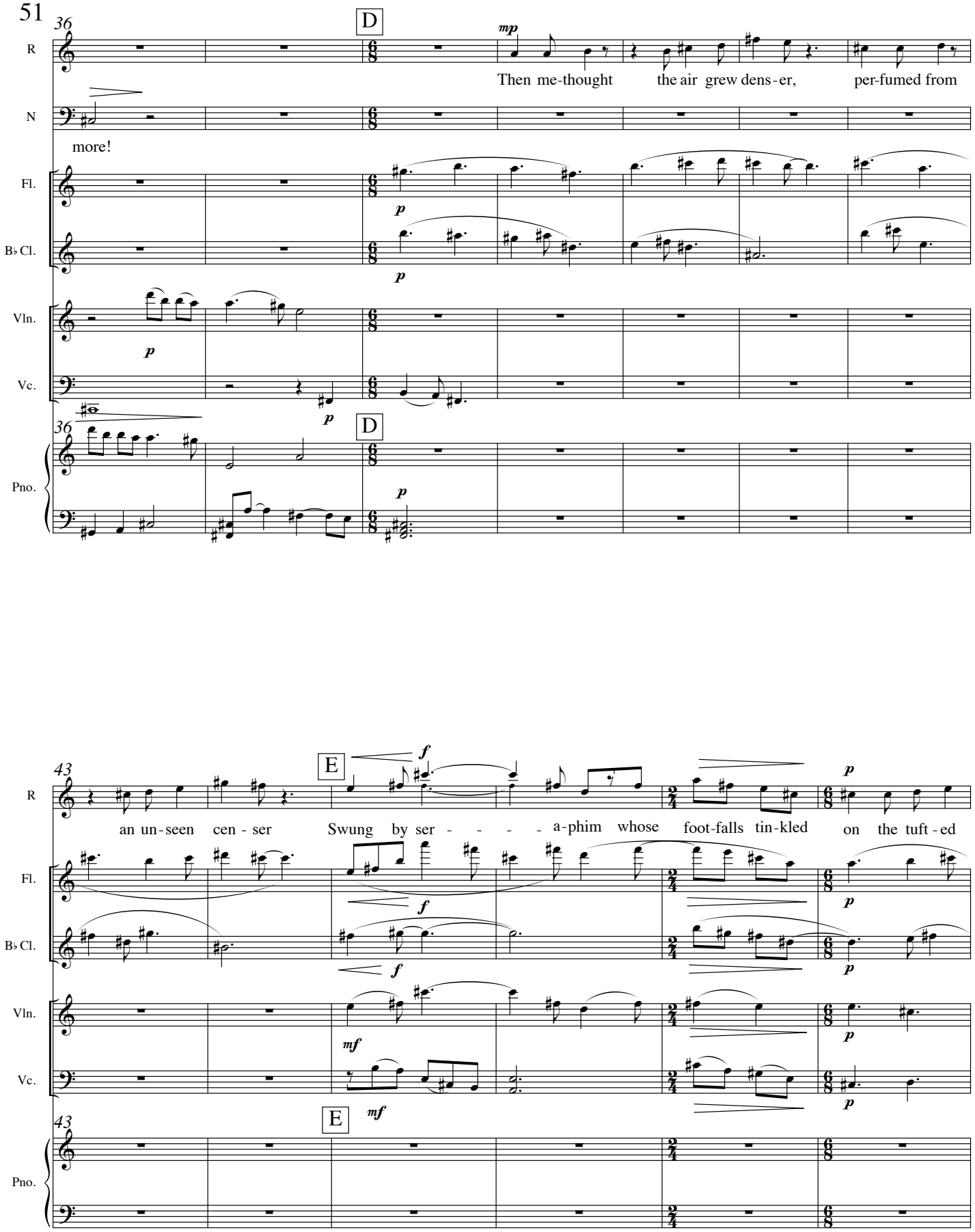
p

7. This I sat engaged in guessing




15
B
(= 80)
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
ord.
p
mp
mf
15
B
(= 80)
23
C
N
p
This and more I sat di-vin - ing, with my head at ease re -
ff
pp
p
ff
mp
f
p
mp
23
C
p


27
N
clin - ing On the cush - ion's vel - vet lin - ing that the lamp - light gloat - ed o'er, But whose
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
30
vel-vet vio-let lin - ing with the lamp-light gloat-ing o'er, She shall press, ah, nev - er -


36
D
mp
R
Then me-thought the air grew dens-er, per-fumed from
N
more!
Fl.
p
B♭ Cl.
p
Vln.
p
Vc.
p
36
D
Pno.
p
43
E
f
R
an un-seen cen-ser Swung by ser - - - - a-phim whose foot-falls tin-kled on the tuft-ed
p
Fl.
f
p
B♭ Cl.
f
p
Vln.
mf
p
Vc.
p
43
E
mf
Pno.

49

F

R

floor.

N

p f

"Wretch, thy God hath lent thee—

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

f

Vln.

Vc.

f f

Vib.

f mf

49

F

Pno.

f mf

53

ff

N

by these an - gels he hath sent thee

p

Res - pite— res - pite and ne - pen - the, from thy

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

pp

Vln.

Vc.

p

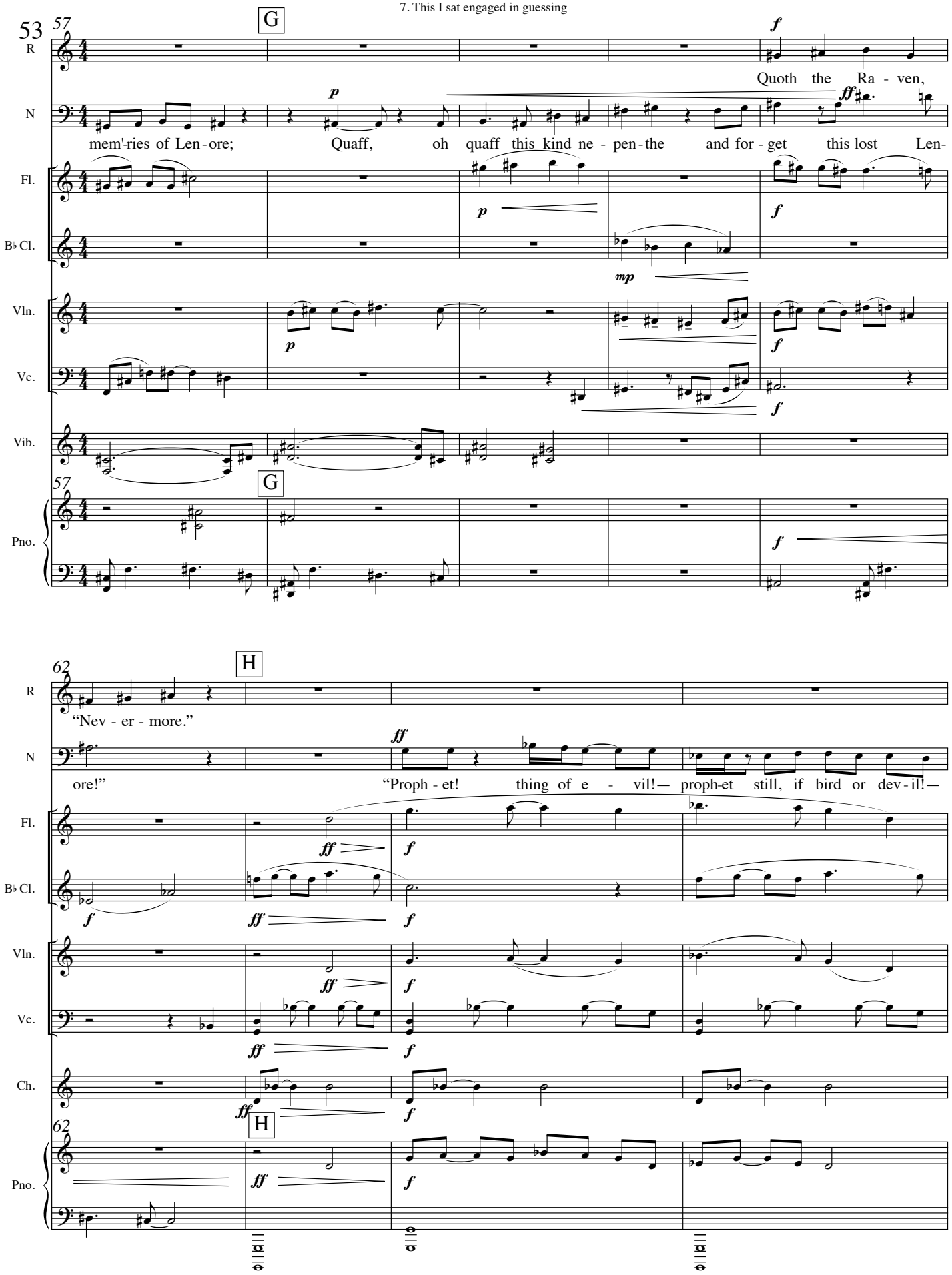
Vib.

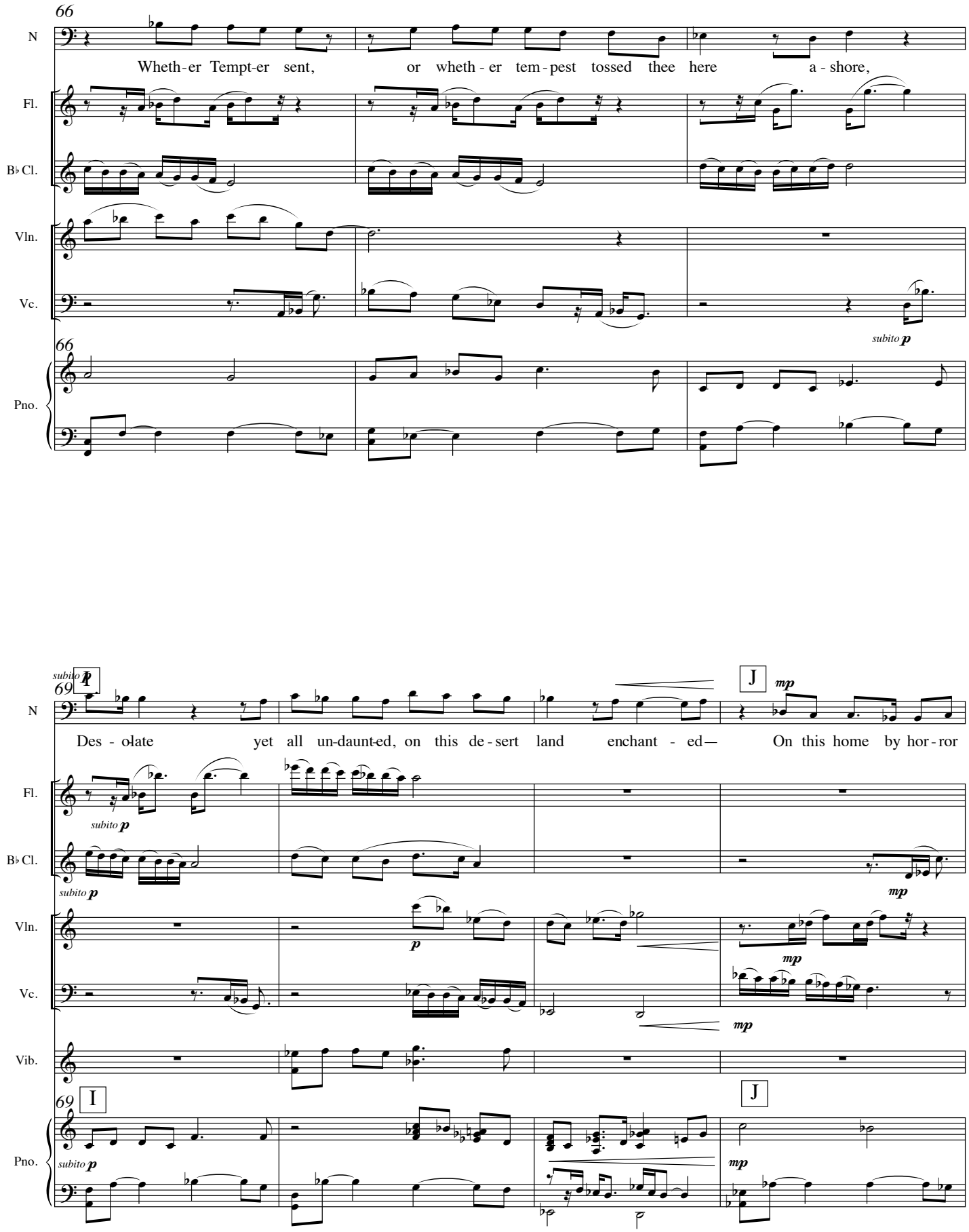
p

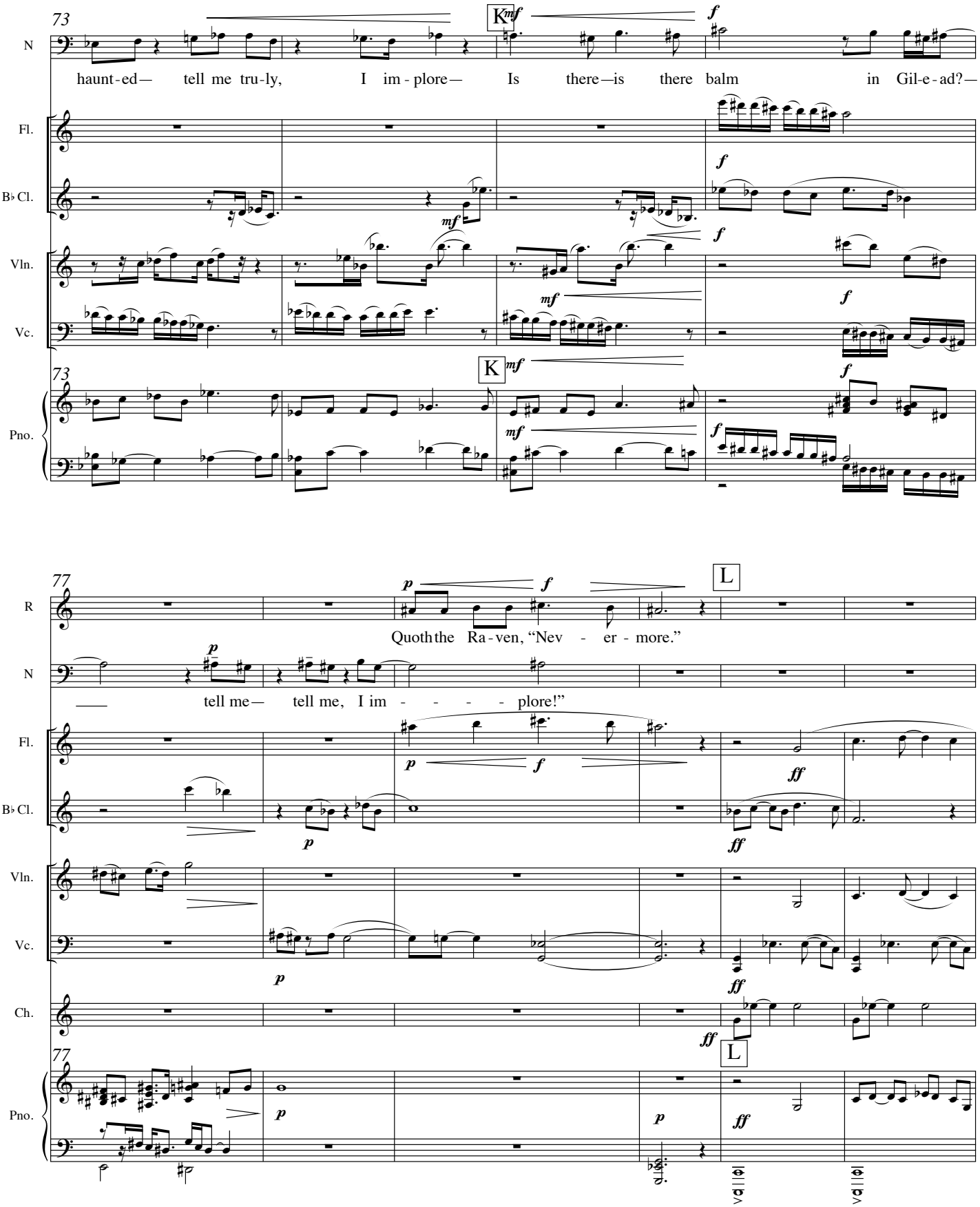
53

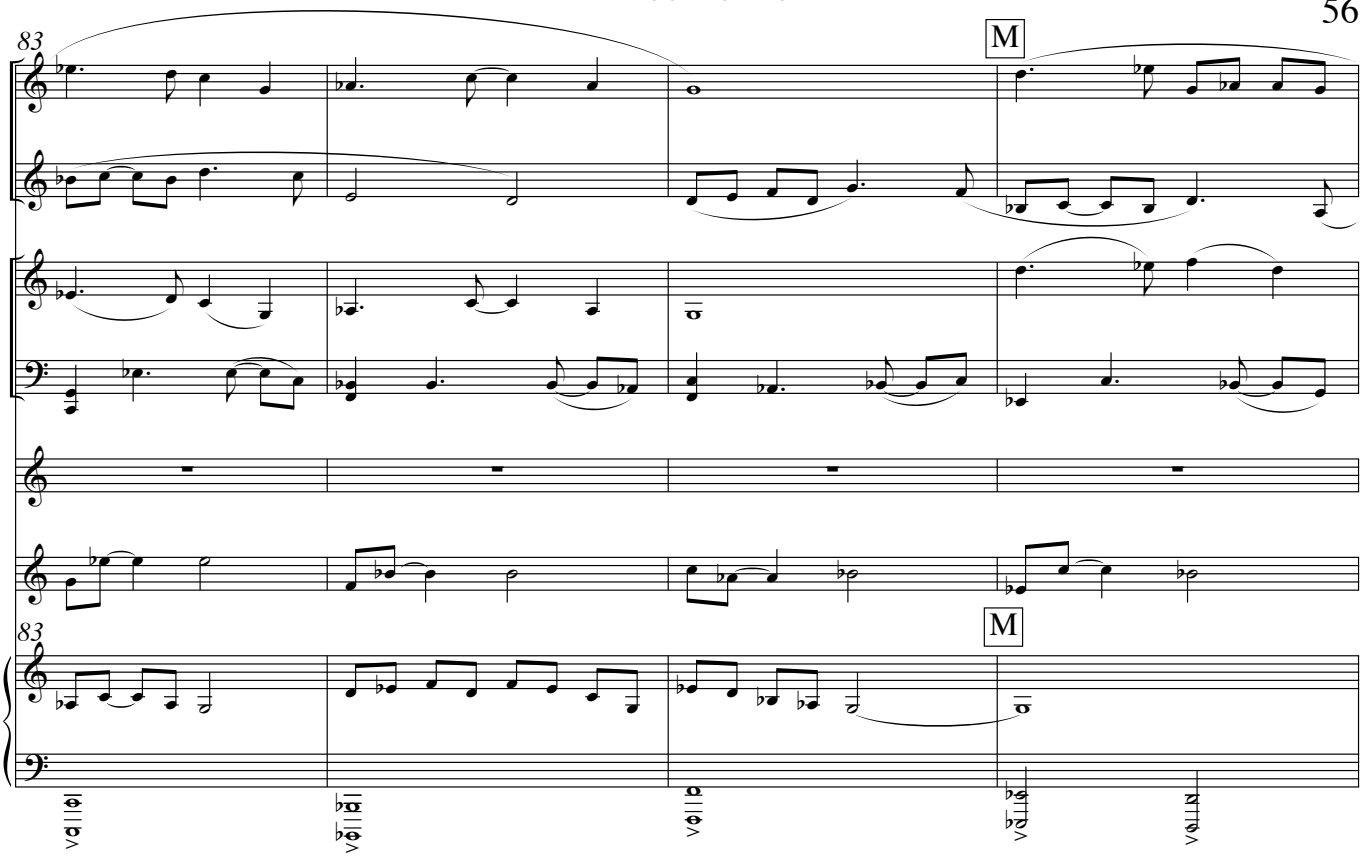
Pno.

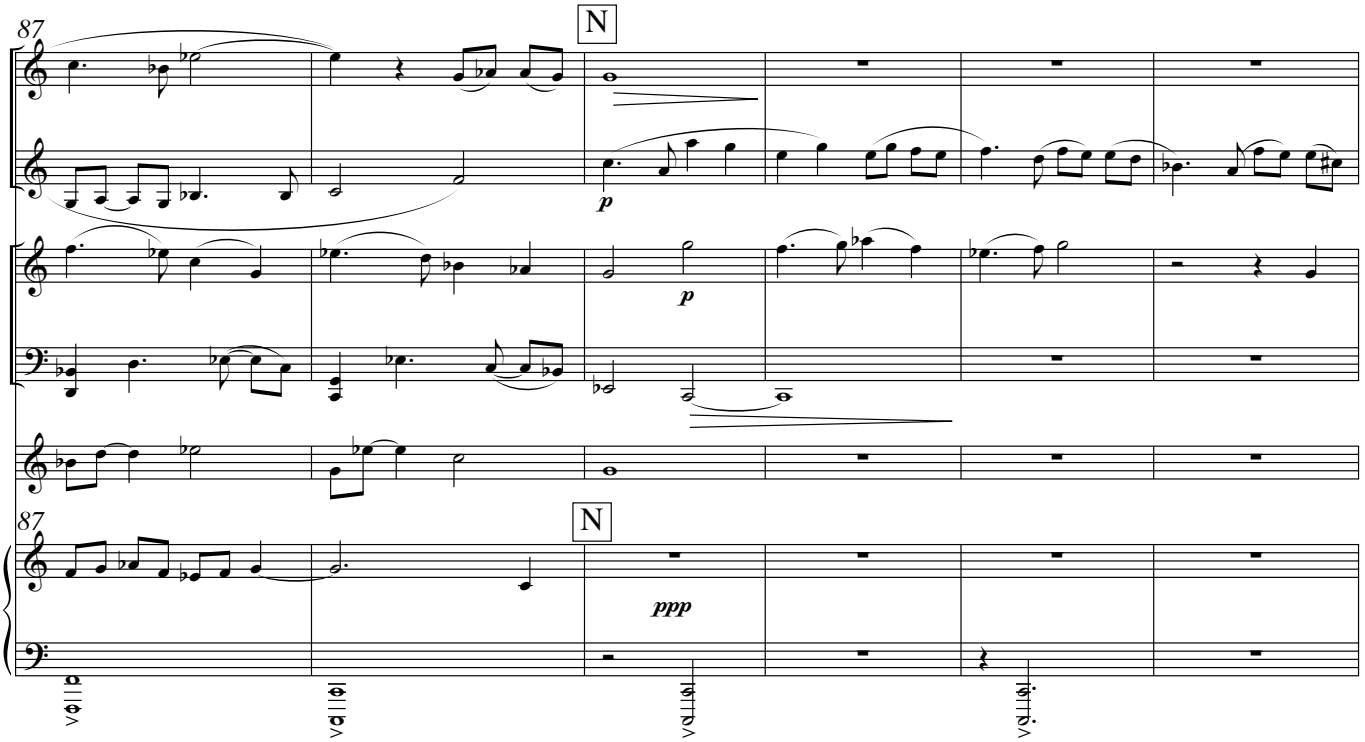
p


53
57
G
R
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Pno.
Quoth the Ra - ven,
mem'-ries of Len - ore; Quaff, oh quaff this kind ne - pen - the and for - get this lost Len-
62
H
"Nev - er - more."
ore!"
"Proph - et! thing of e - vil!— proph-et still, if bird or dev - il!—
Ch.

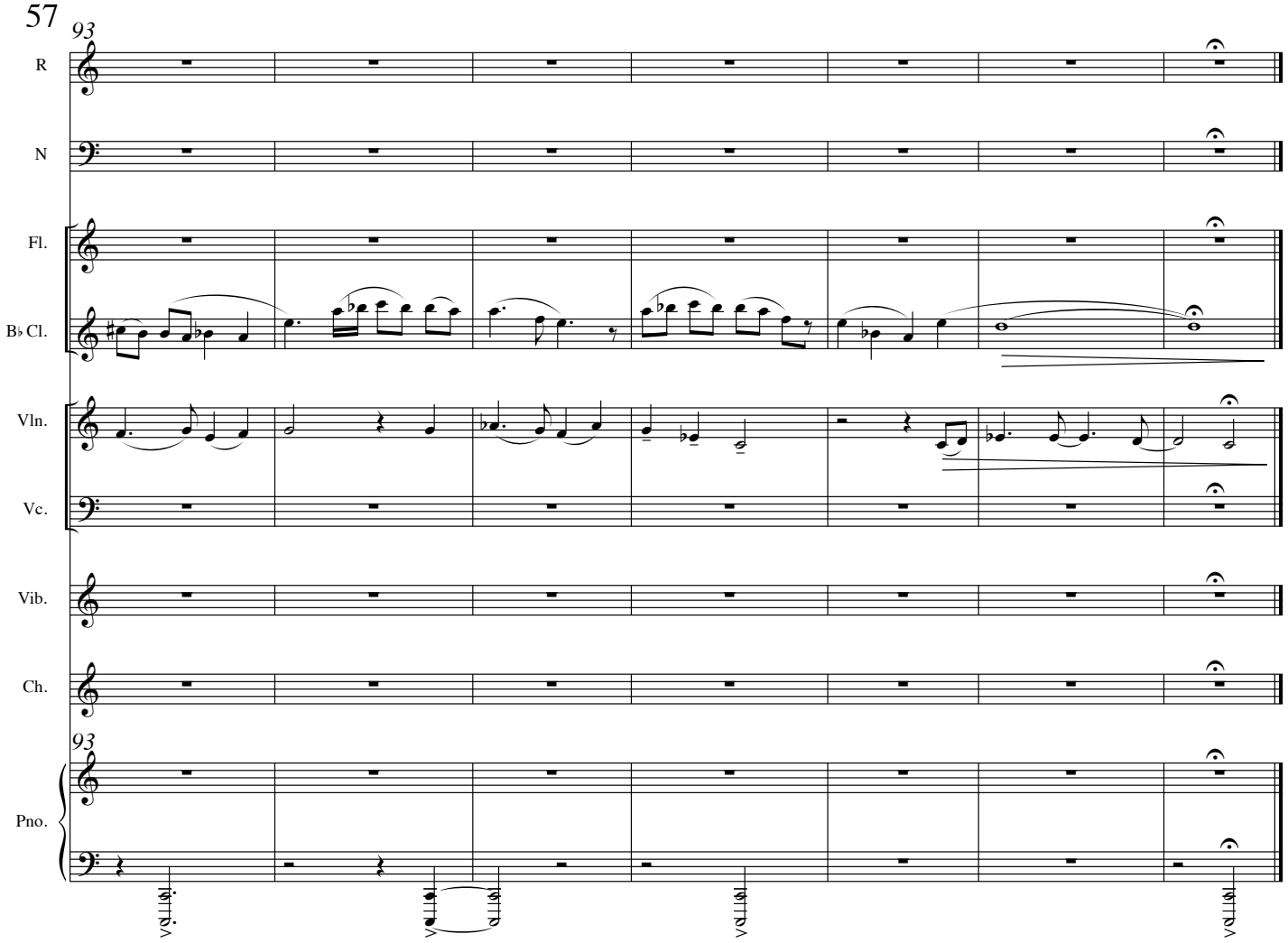

66
N
Wheth - er Tempt-er sent, or wheth - er tem - pest tossed thee here a - shore,
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
subito p
66
Pno.
subito p
69
I
N
Des - olate yet all un-daunt-ed, on this de - sert land enchant - ed— On this home by hor - ror
J
mp
Fl.
subito p
B♭ Cl.
subito p
mp
Vln.
p
mp
Vc.
mp
Vib.
69
I
J
Pno.
subito p
mp


73
K
mf
f
N
haunt-ed— tell me tru-ly, I im-plore— Is there—is there balm in Gil-e-ad?—
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
77
L
p
R
Quoth the Ra-ven, "Nev - er - more."
tell me— tell me, I im - - - - - plore!"
ff
Ch.

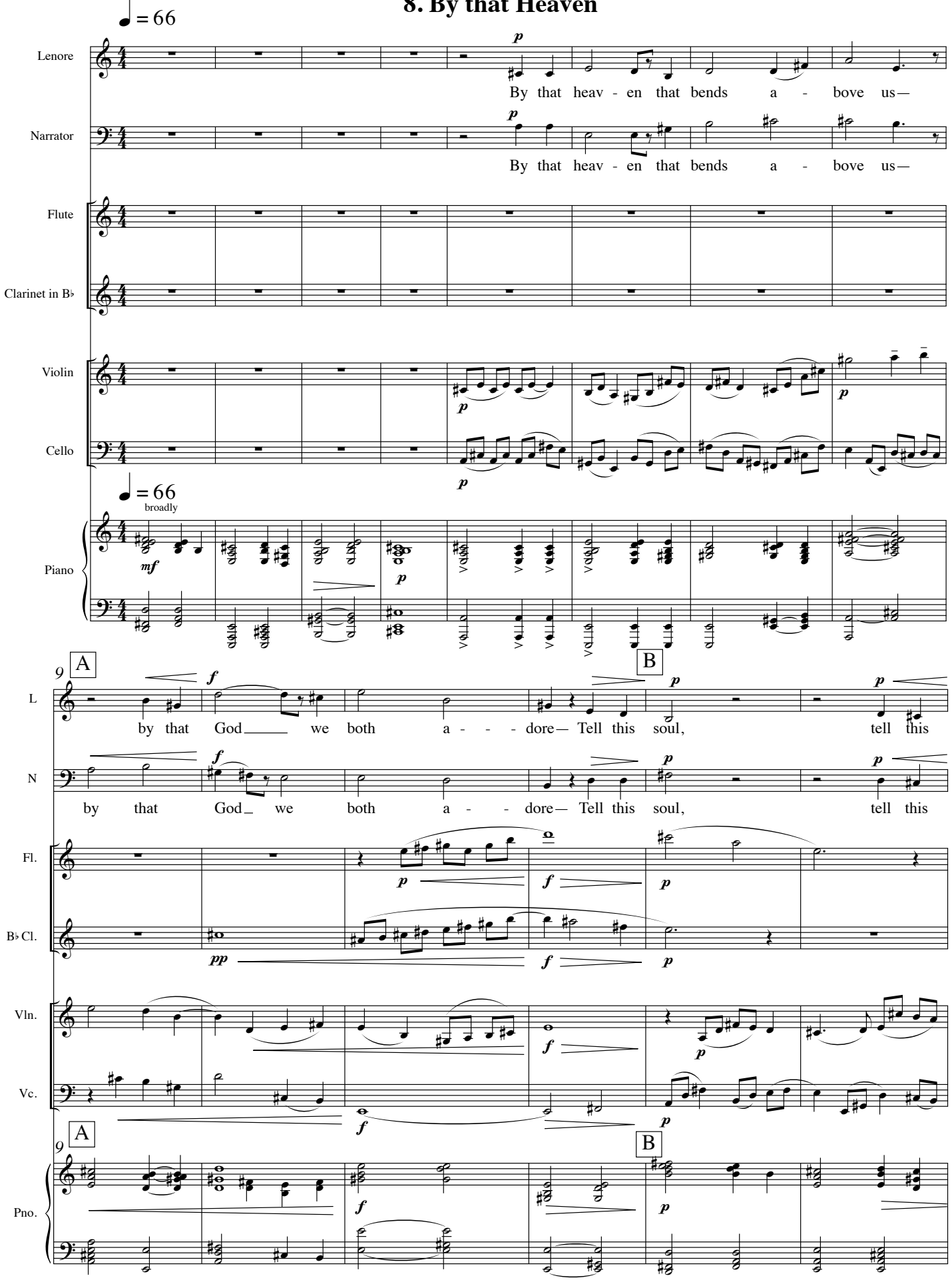

83
M
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Vib.
Ch.
Pno.

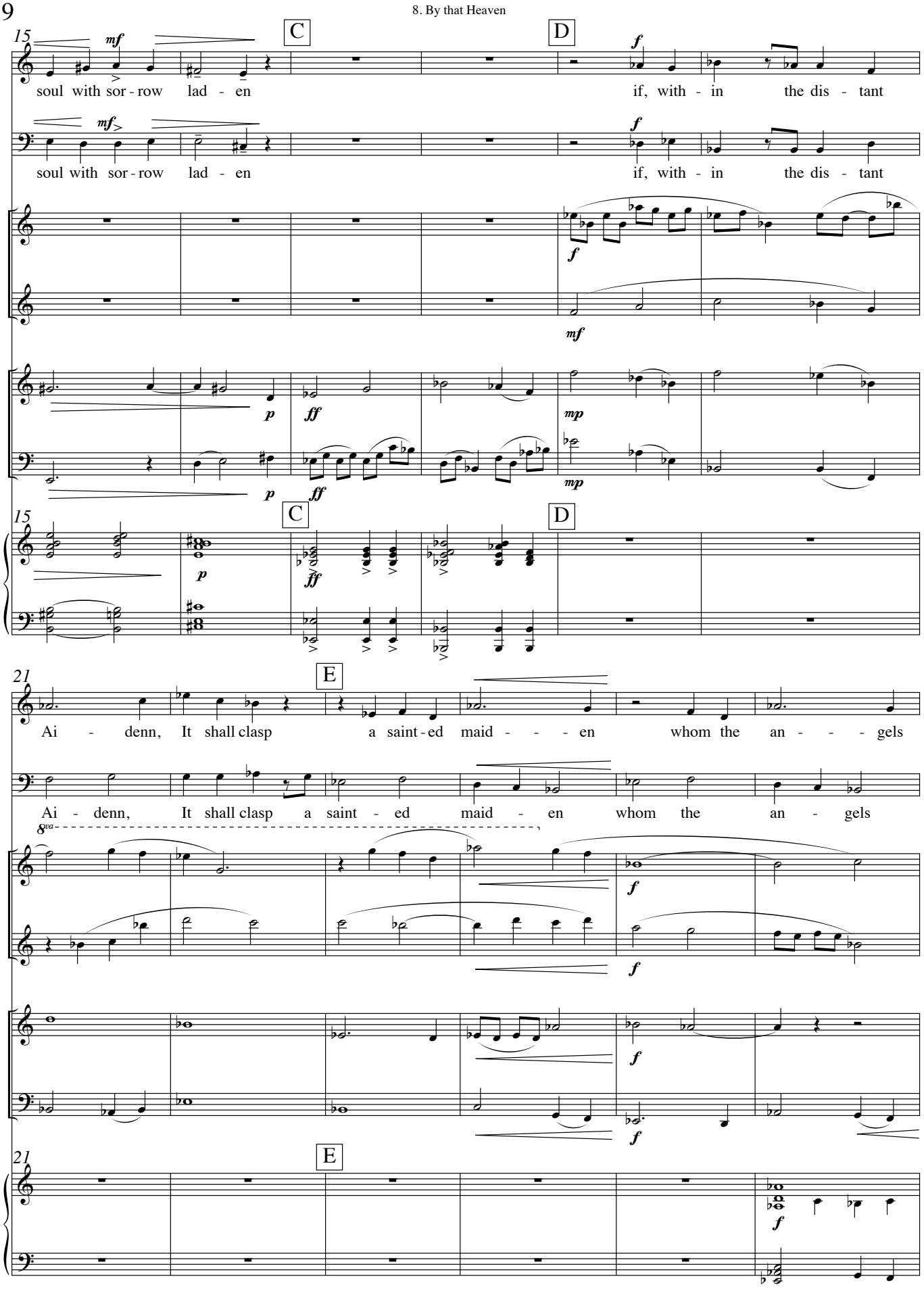

87
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Ch.
Pno.
p
p
ppp

57



8. By that Heaven




15
C
D
L
soul with sor - row lad - en
if, with - in the dis - tant
N
soul with sor - row lad - en
if, with - in the dis - tant
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
21
E
Ai - denn, It shall clasp a saint - ed maid - - - en whom the an - - - gels
Ai - denn, It shall clasp a saint - ed maid - en whom the an - gels
8va

27

F

L

name Len - ore— Clasp a rare and ra - diant maid - en whom the an - gels

N

name Len - ore— Clasp a rare and ra - diant maid - en whom the an - gels

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

33

G

H

L

name Len - ore.

N

name Len - ore.

Fl.

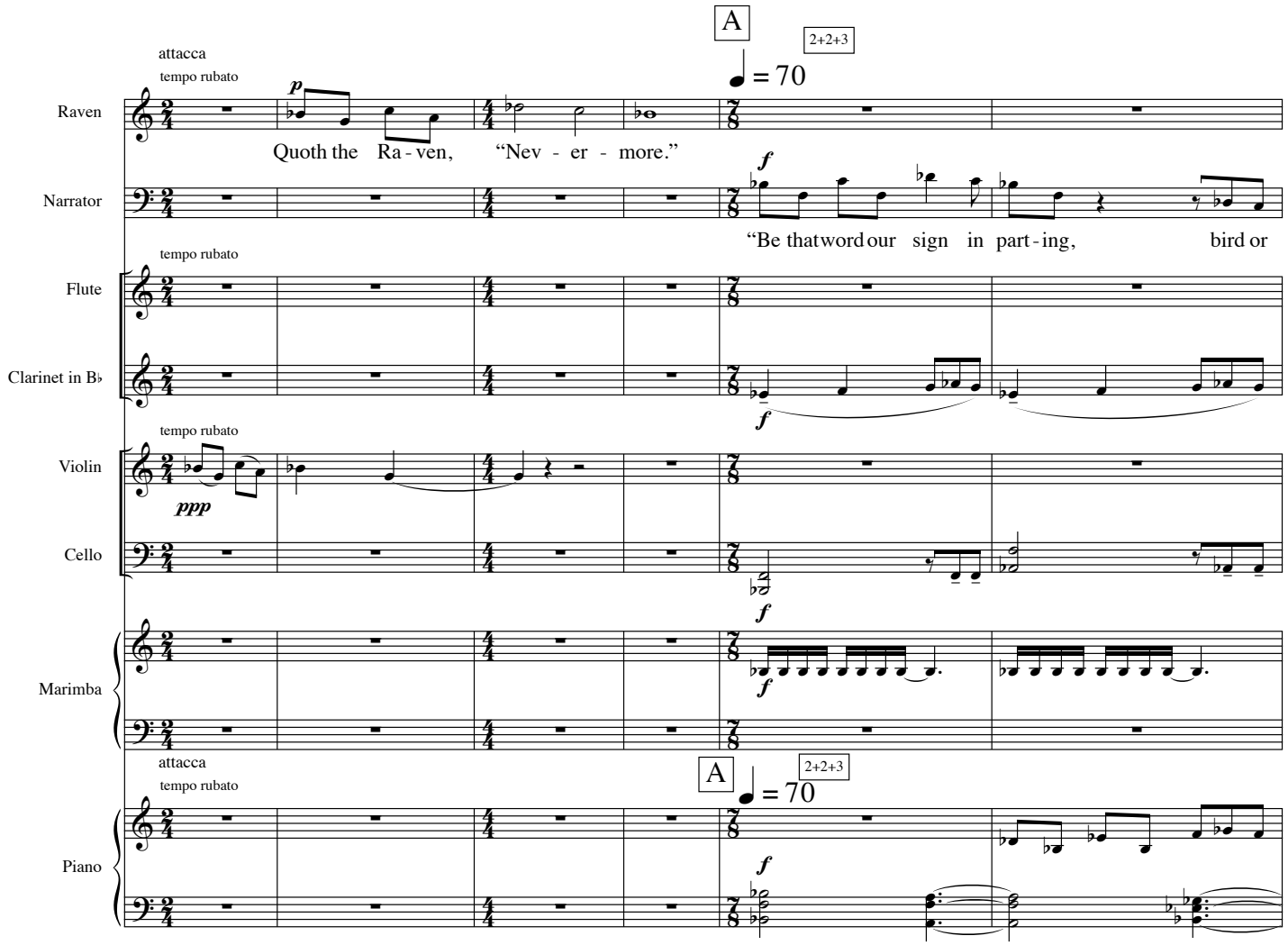
B♭ Cl.

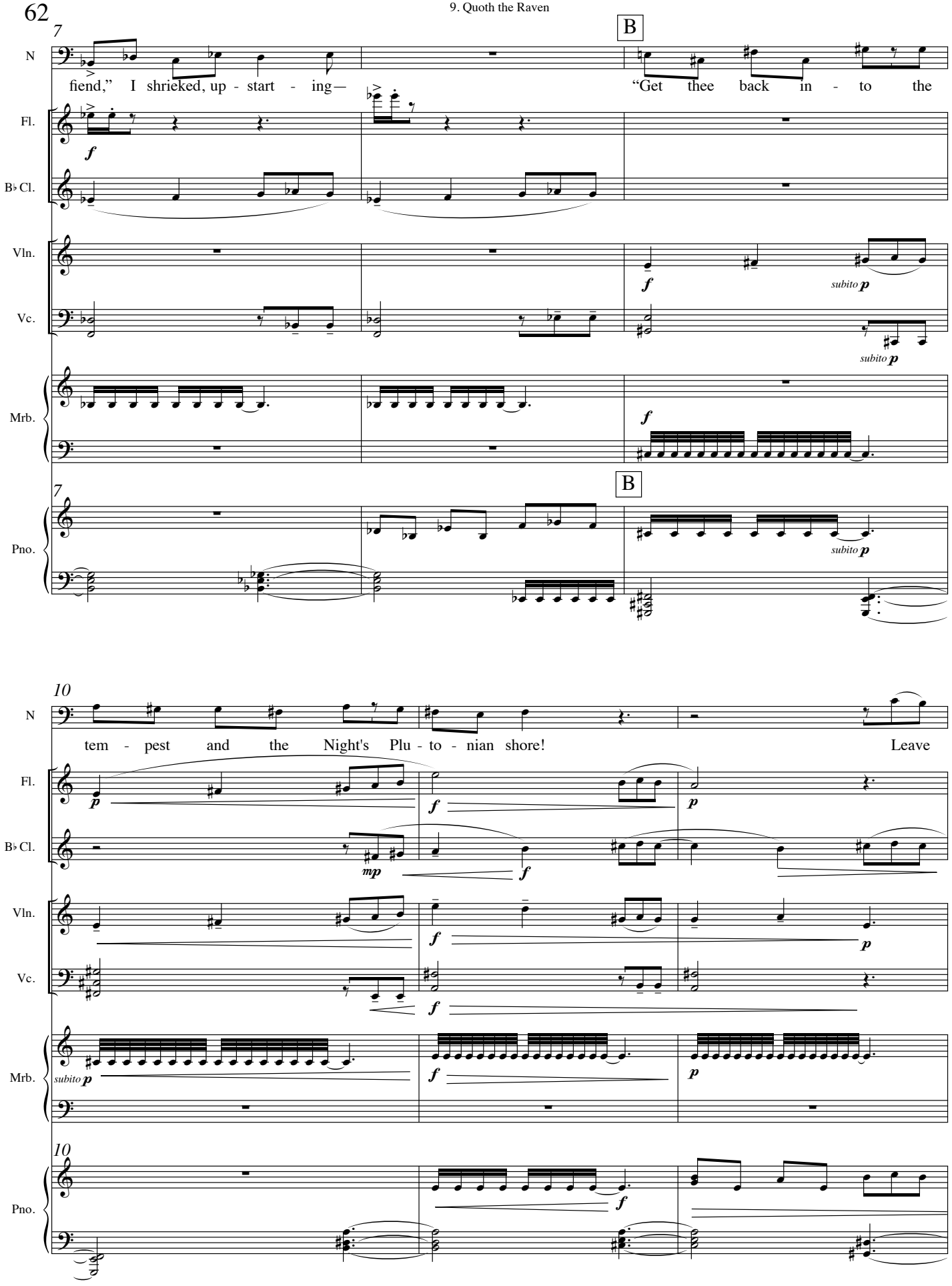
Vln.

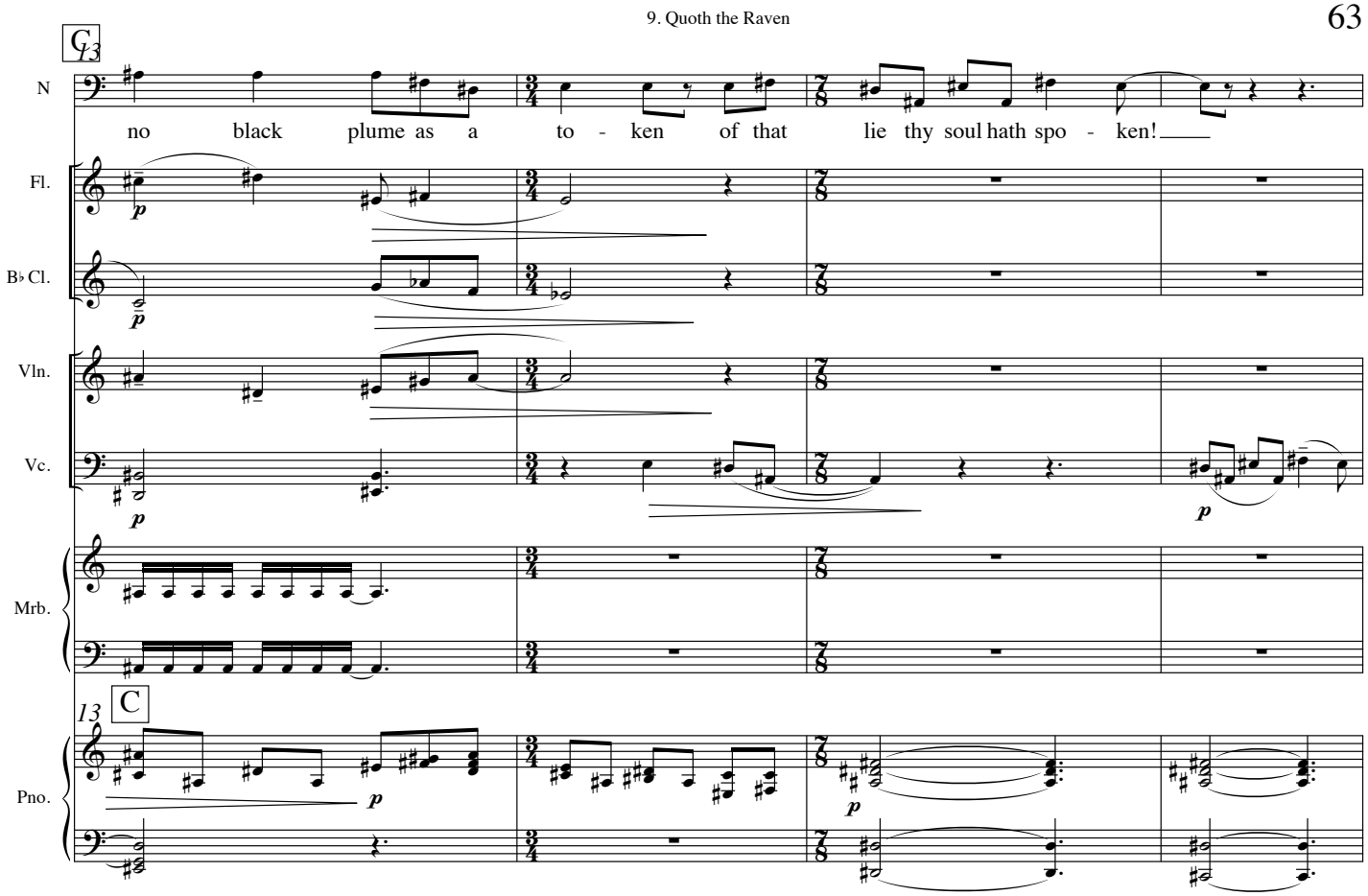
Vc.

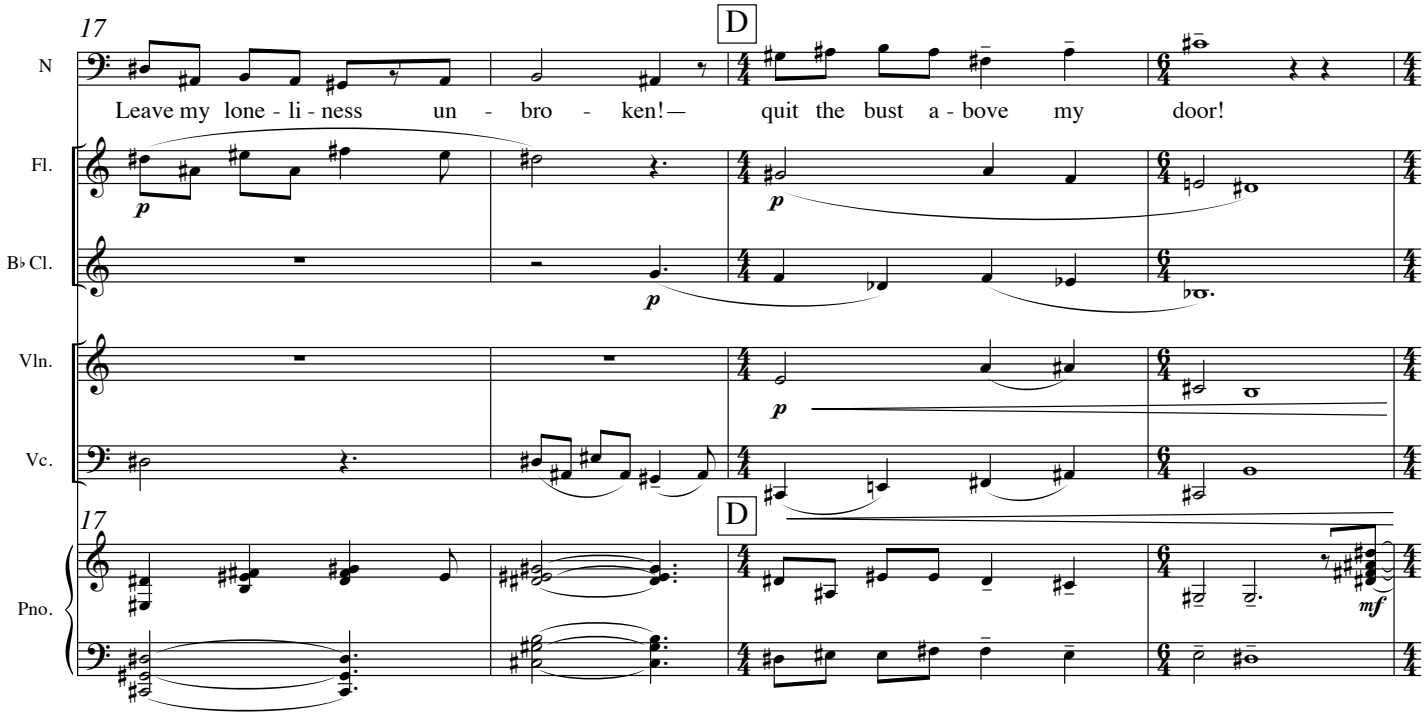
Pno.

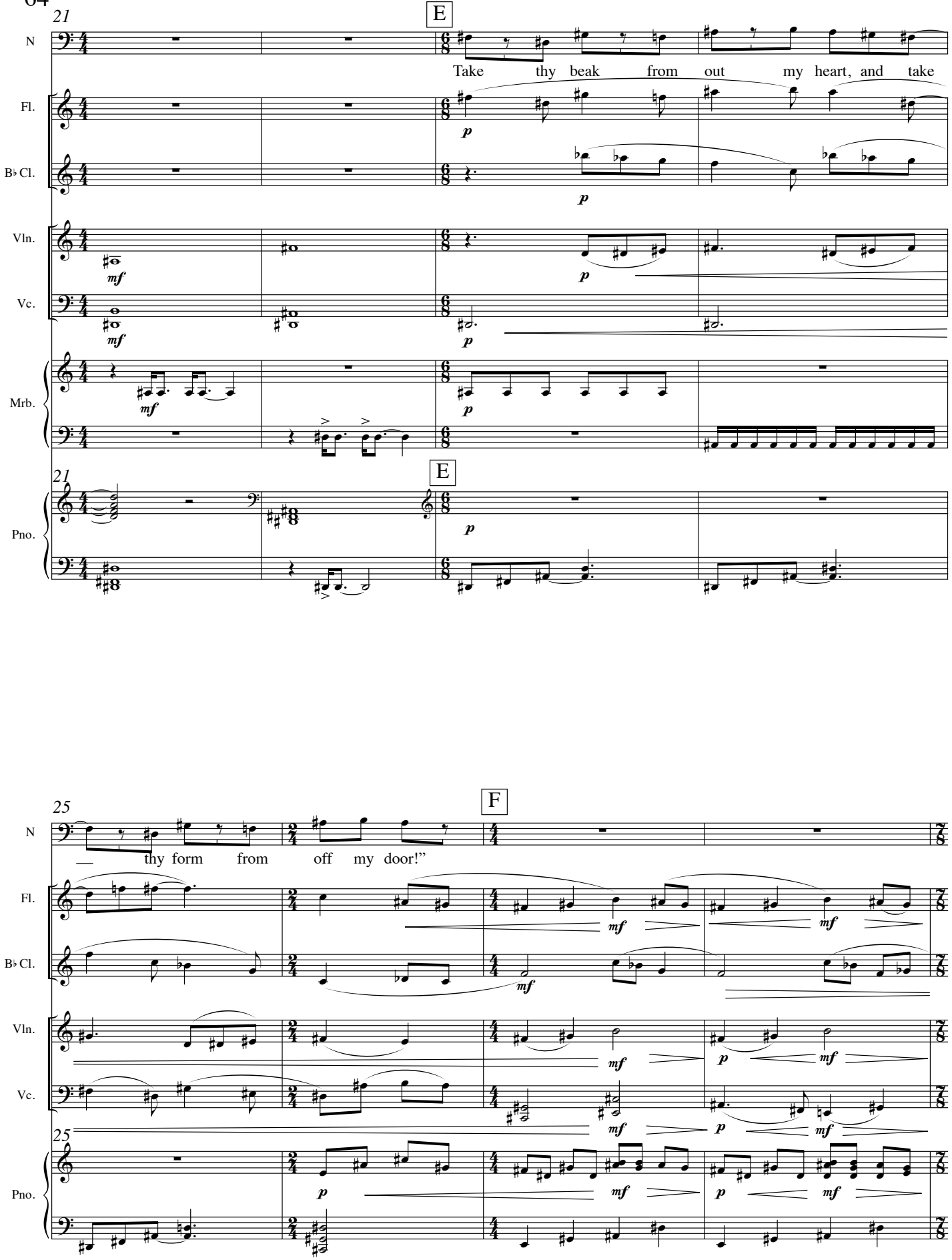
9. Quoth the Raven




7
B
N
fiend," I shrieked, up - start - ing—
"Get thee back in - to the
Fl.
Bb Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
subito p
10
tem - pest and the Night's Plu - to - nian shore!
Leave


C
13
N
no black plume as a to - ken of that lie thy soul hath spo - ken!
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
13
C
Pno.
p


17
D
N
Leave my lone - li - ness un - bro - ken! — quit the bust a - bove my door!
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
17
D
Pno.
p
mf


21
E
N
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
21
E
Pno.
25
F
N
— thy form from off my door!"
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
25
Pno.

29

G

R

Quoth the Ra - ven, "Nev-er - more."

And the Ra - ven, nev - er

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

Vc.

Mrb.

29

G

Pno.

H

34

R

flit-ting, still is sit-ting, still is sit - ting On the pal - lid bust of Pal - las

Fl.

B♭ Cl.

Vln.

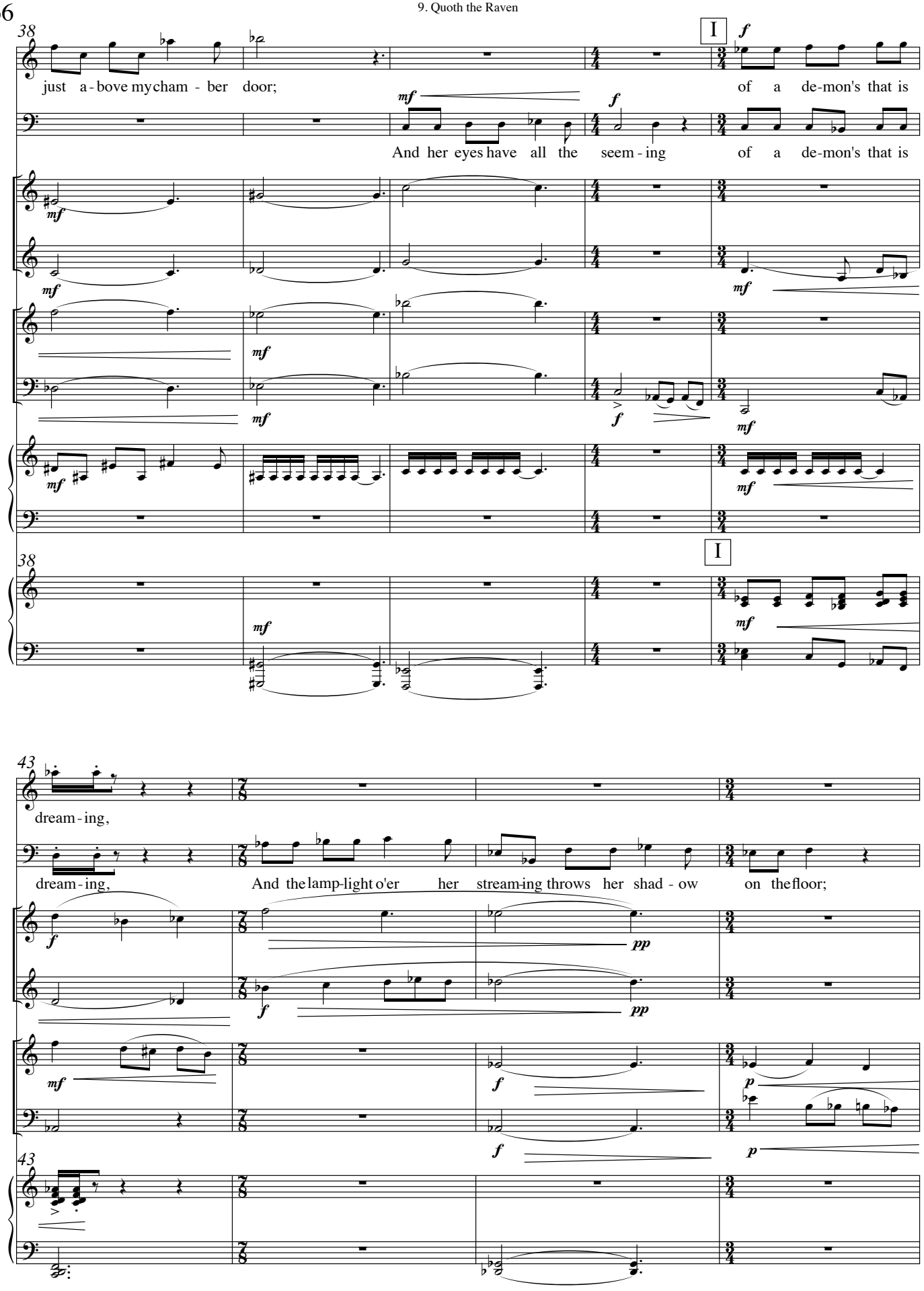
Vc.

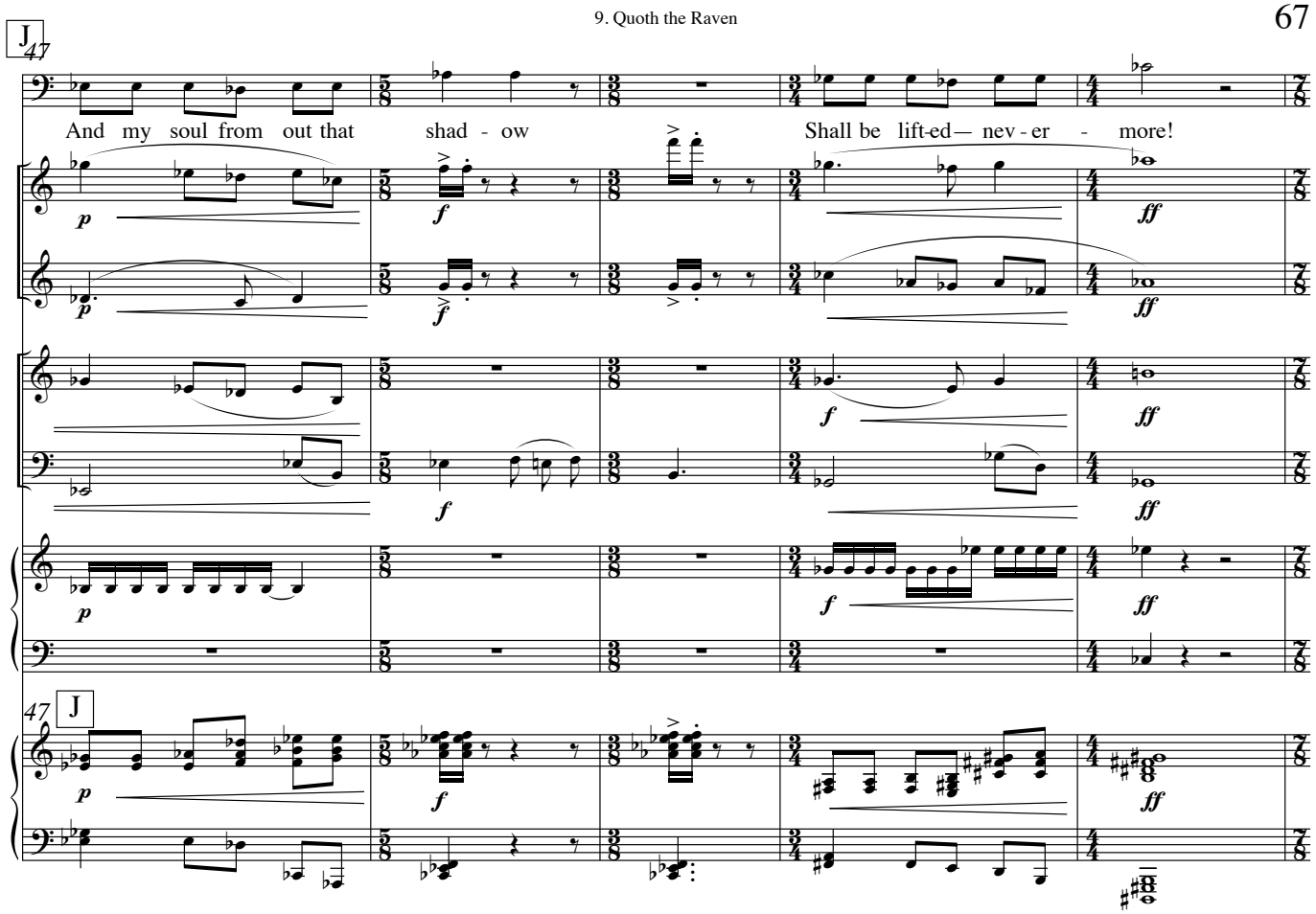
Mrb.

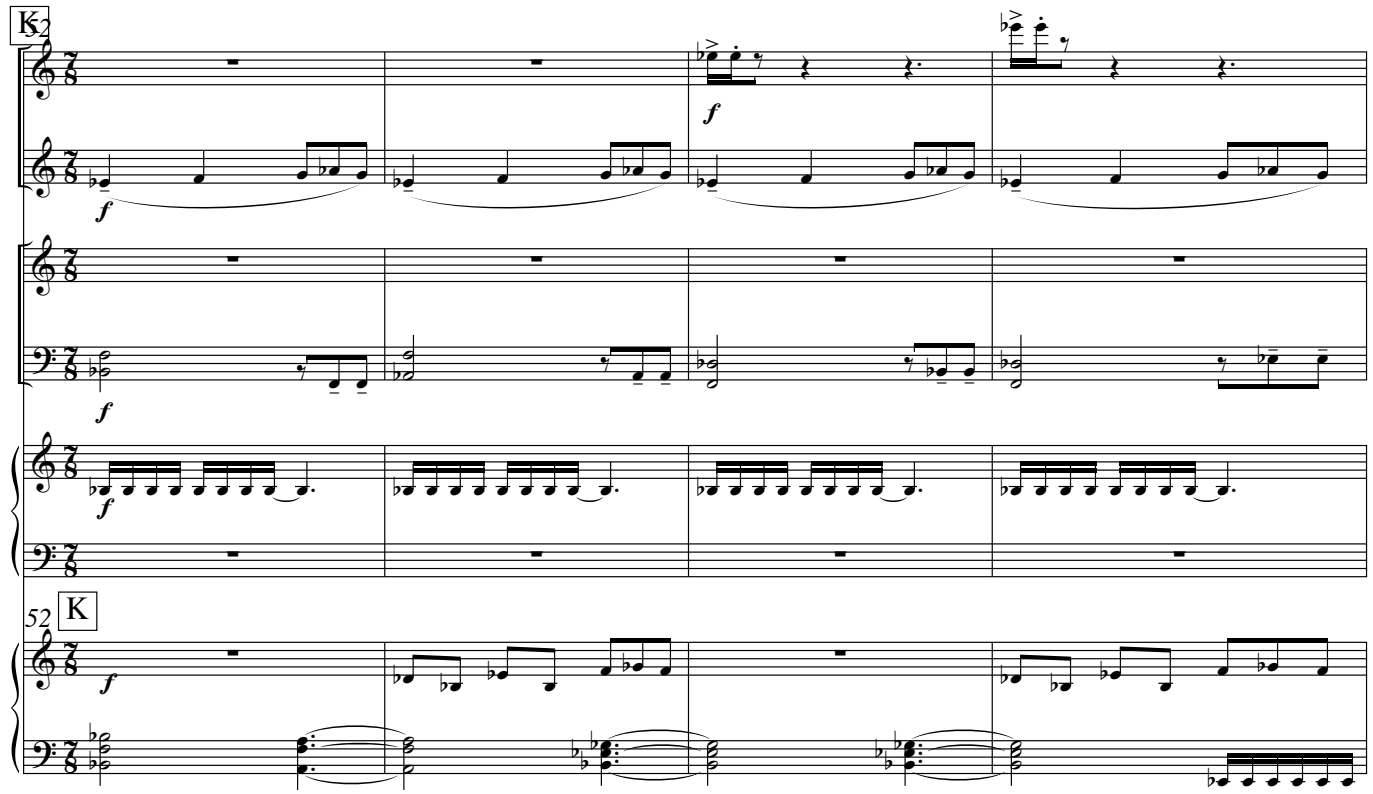
34

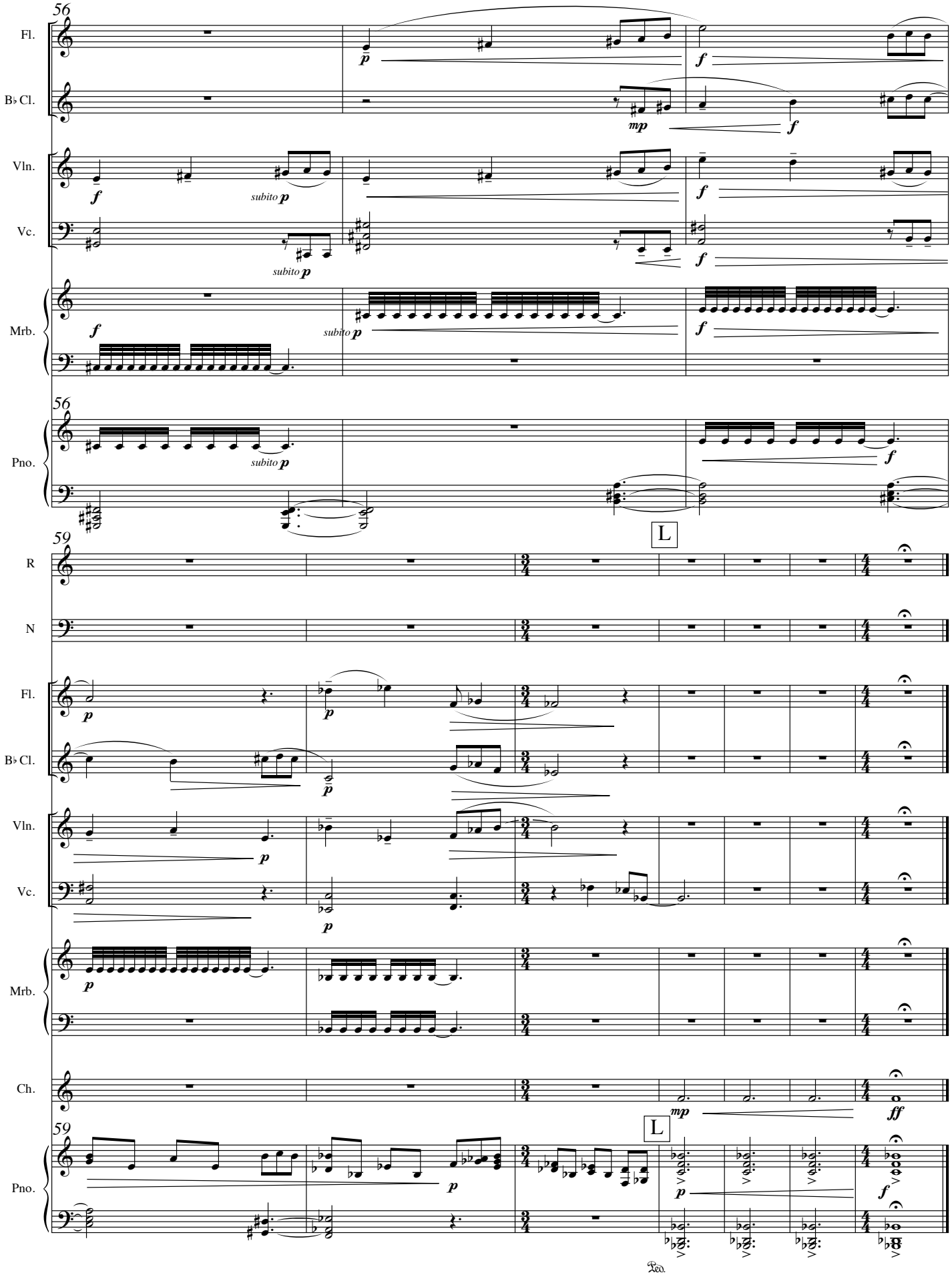
H

Pno.


38
I
R
just a - bove my cham - ber door;
of a de-mon's that is
N
And her eyes have all the seem - ing
of a de-mon's that is
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
43
dream - ing,
dream - ing,
And the lamp-light o'er her stream-ing throws her shad - ow
on the floor;


J
47
N
And my soul from out that shad - ow Shall be lift-ed— nev - er - more!
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.


K
52
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.


56
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Mrb.
Pno.
subito p
59
R
N
L
Ch.
mp
ff
Ped.