Full Score

David Maslanka

…and I am a child before there are words…

Six songs for Flute and Piano

(2011)

David Maslanka Publications
Missoula, Montana

Still Morning, and lines from the poems *Worn Words*, *No*, *The Piano*, *Near Field*, *By Dark*, and *To Paula in Late Spring* are from *The Shadow of Sirius*, © 2009 by W.S. Merwin, and used by permission of the poet and Copper Canyon Press.

First published in 2011 by David Maslanka Publications.
2625 Strand Avenue, Missoula, Montana 59804 USA. • dvdmaspub@gmail.com
Engraved and Typeset by Matthew Maslanka • www.maslankamusicprep.com
Printed in the USA

All rights reserved.
© David Maslanka, 2011

Contents

1.	…and the unbroken sound of pure darkness…	(5′)	5
2.	…from her hands a scent of almonds rises…	(6′)	8
3.	the dead are not separate from the living	(5′)	13
4.	…where the rooms of the dark are already known…	(4′)	16
5.	…and I am a child before there are words…	(7′)	19
6.	Let me imagine that we will come again when we want to and it will be spring	(3′30″)	29

Total Duration: ca. 31′

Program Note

The poetry of W.S. Merwin has spoken to me very deeply. As of this writing (2011), Merwin is in his 80s, and his 2009 book *The Shadow of Sirius* is a powerful work. Major themes of the book are memory and the nature of time. In the poem *Worn Words* he writes:

> The late poems are the ones
> I turn to first now...
>
> ...it is the late poems
> that are made of words
> that have come the whole way
> they have been there

Simple words clearly spoken bear and convey the full weight of the poet's lifetime of experience. I am very attracted to this thought.

I have borrowed lines from six of Merwin's poems as titles for my "songs without words" for flute and piano. Without the context of the complete poems these lines can only offer a fleeting suggestion of a feeling, a mood, or a condition of being. The music offers its own wordless parallel of these impressions, each piece a dream of a dream.

The title of the whole piece, and of the fifth song, "*...and I am a child before there are words...*," comes from the poem *Still Morning*:

> It appears now that there is only one
> age and it knows
> nothing of age as the birds know
> nothing of the air they are flying through
> or of the day that bears them up
> through themselves
> and I am a child before there are words
> arms are holding me up in a shadow
> voices murmur in a shadow
> as I watch one patch of sunlight moving
> across the green carpet
> in a building
> gone long ago and all the voices
> silent and each word they said in that time
> silent now
> while I go on seeing that patch of sunlight

"*...and I am a child before there are words...*" was written for, and is dedicated to, two of my dearest musical friends, Kimberly McCoul Risinger and Allison Brewster Franzetti.

— David Maslanka

for Kim Risinger and Allison Franzetti

…and I am a child before there are words…*

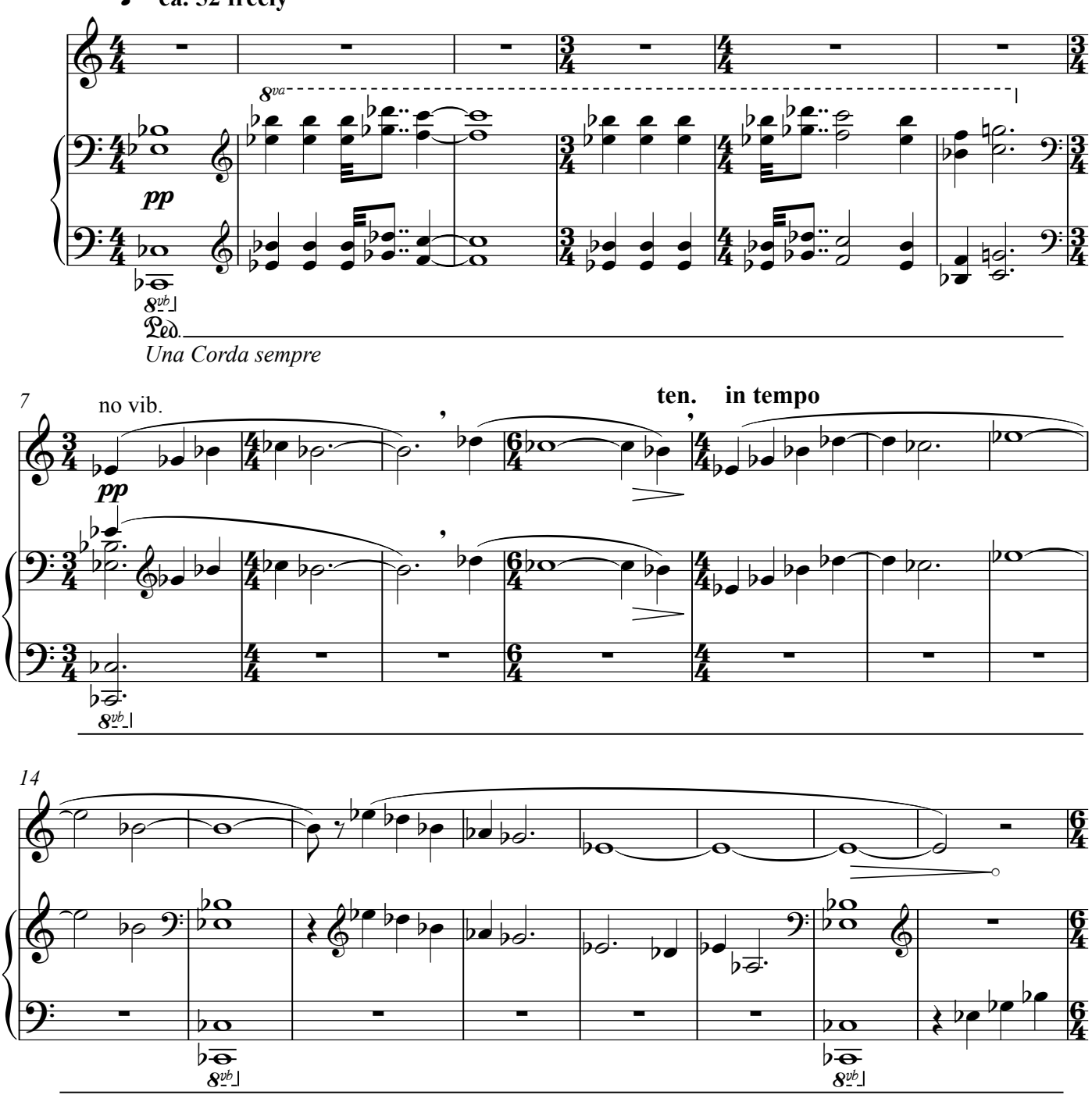
Six songs for Flute and Piano

(2011)

DAVID MASLANKA
(b. 1943)

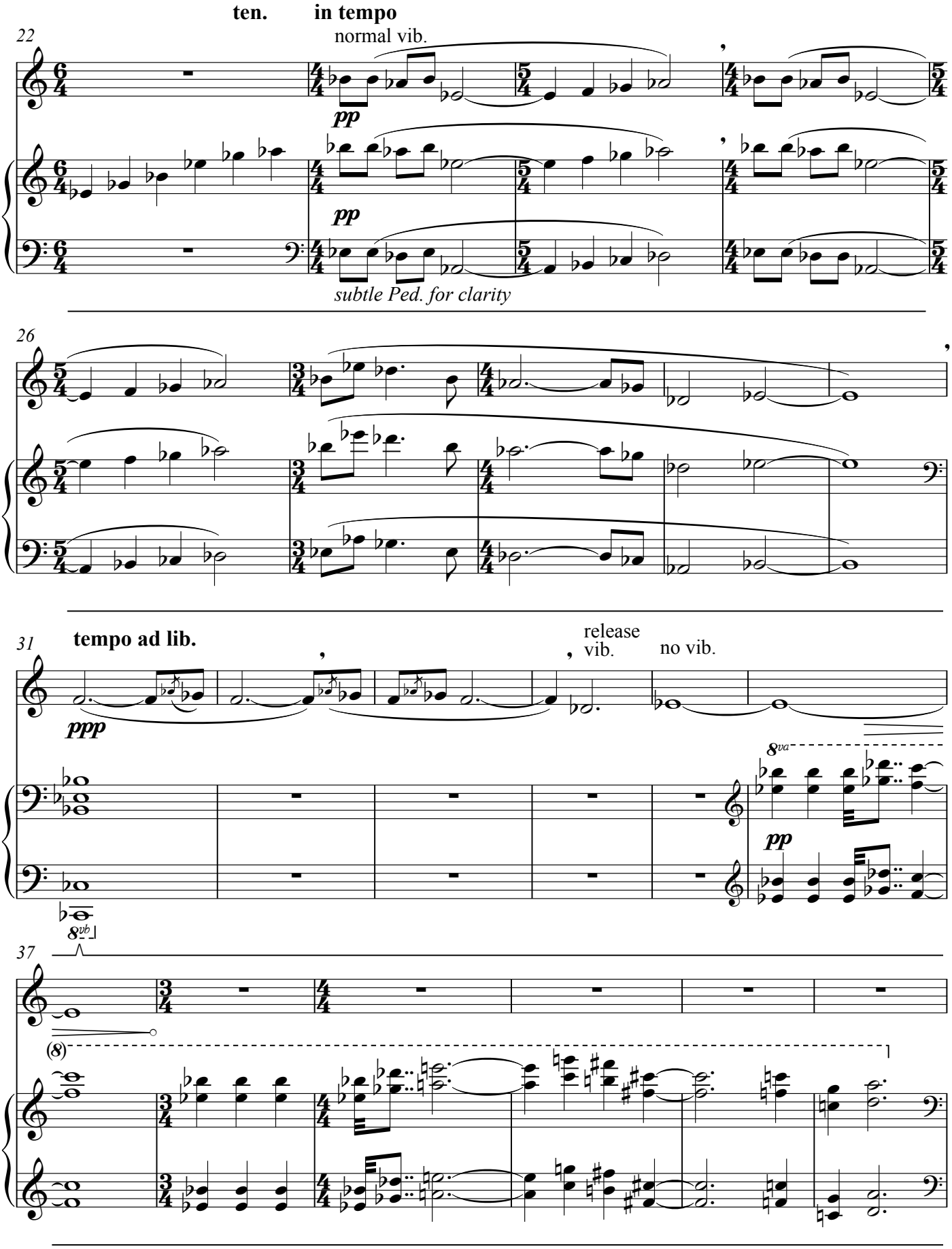
1. …and the unbroken sound of pure darkness…†

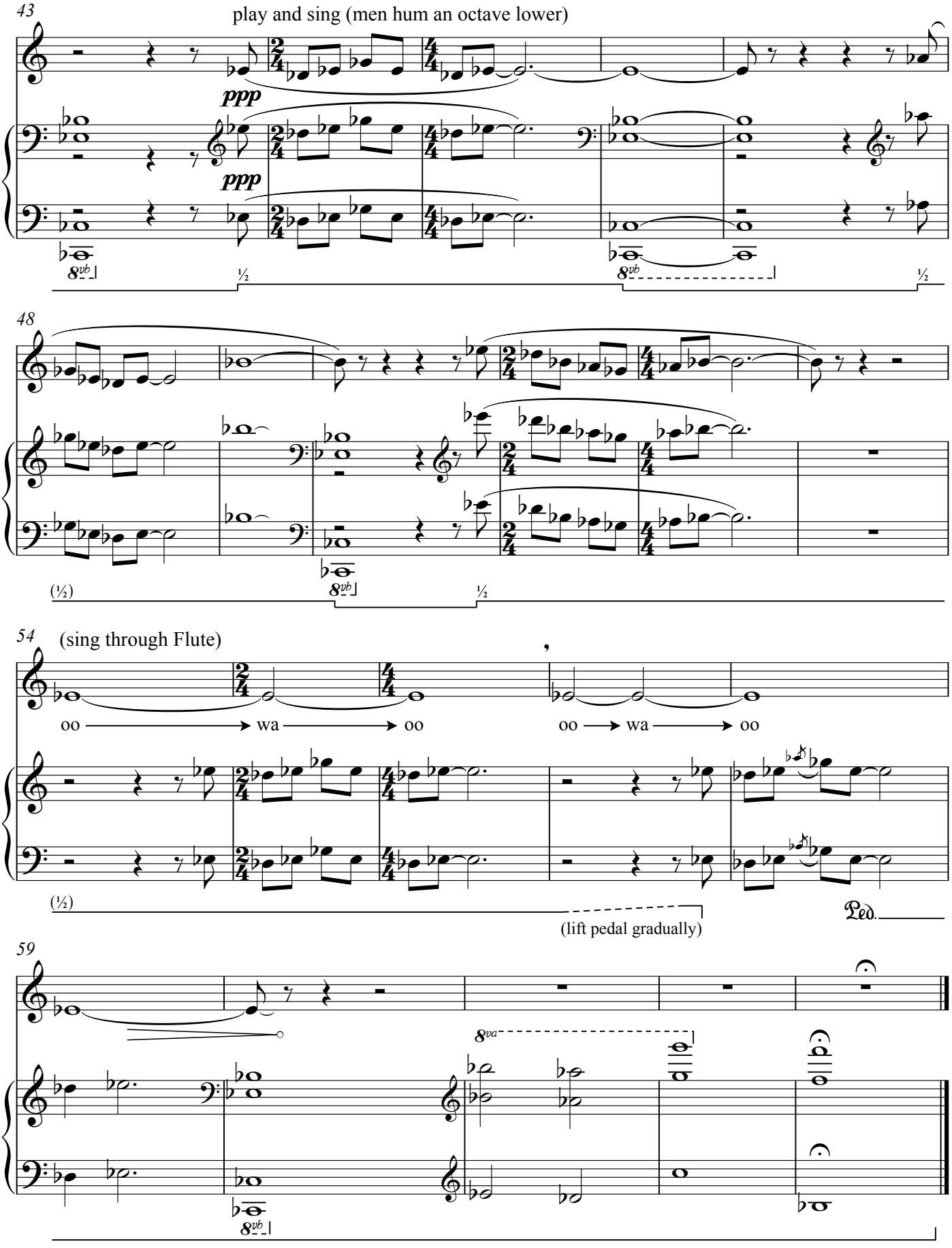
♩ = ca. 52 freely



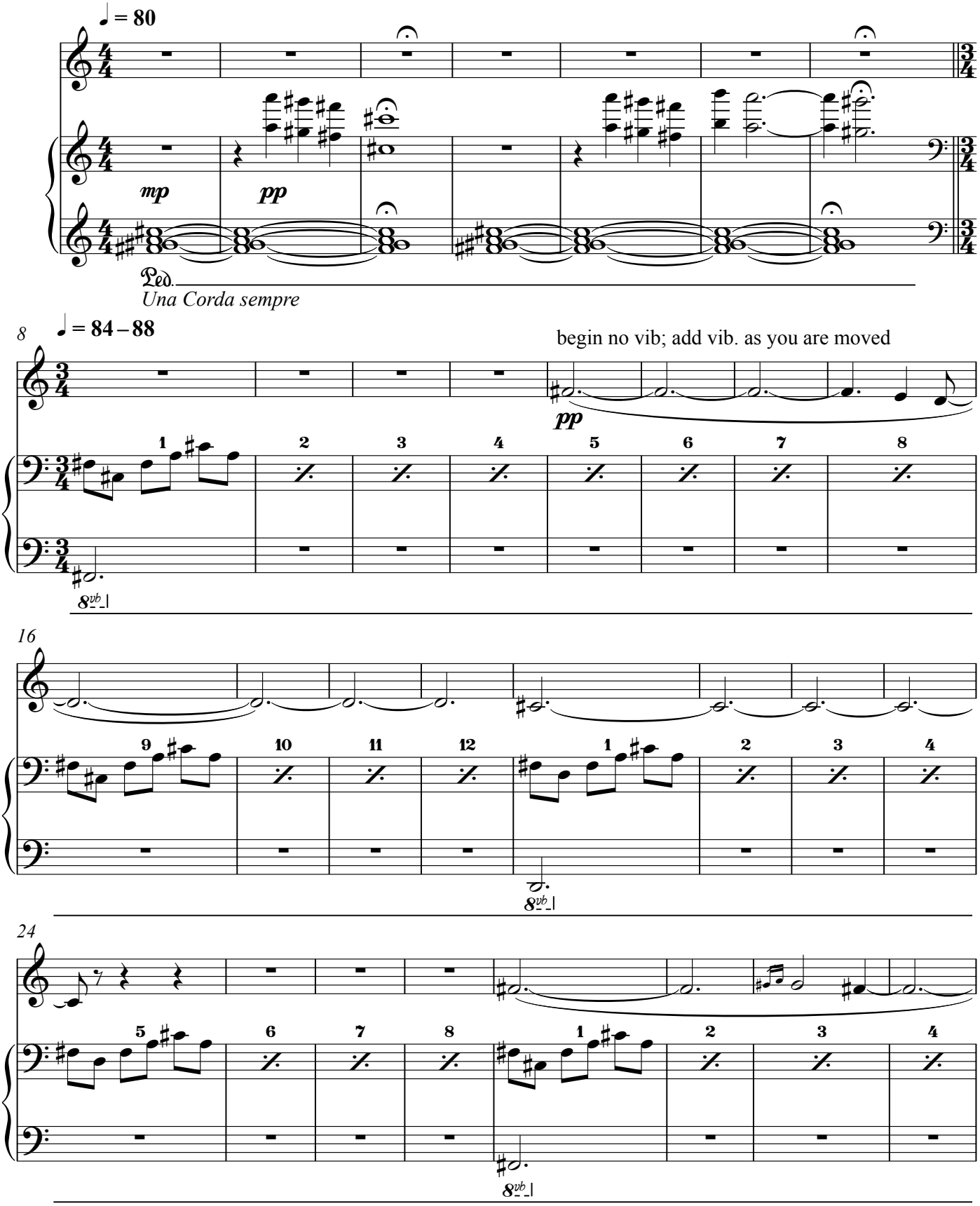
* from *Still Morning* by W.S. Merwin
† from *No* by W.S. Merwin

© 2011 David Maslanka

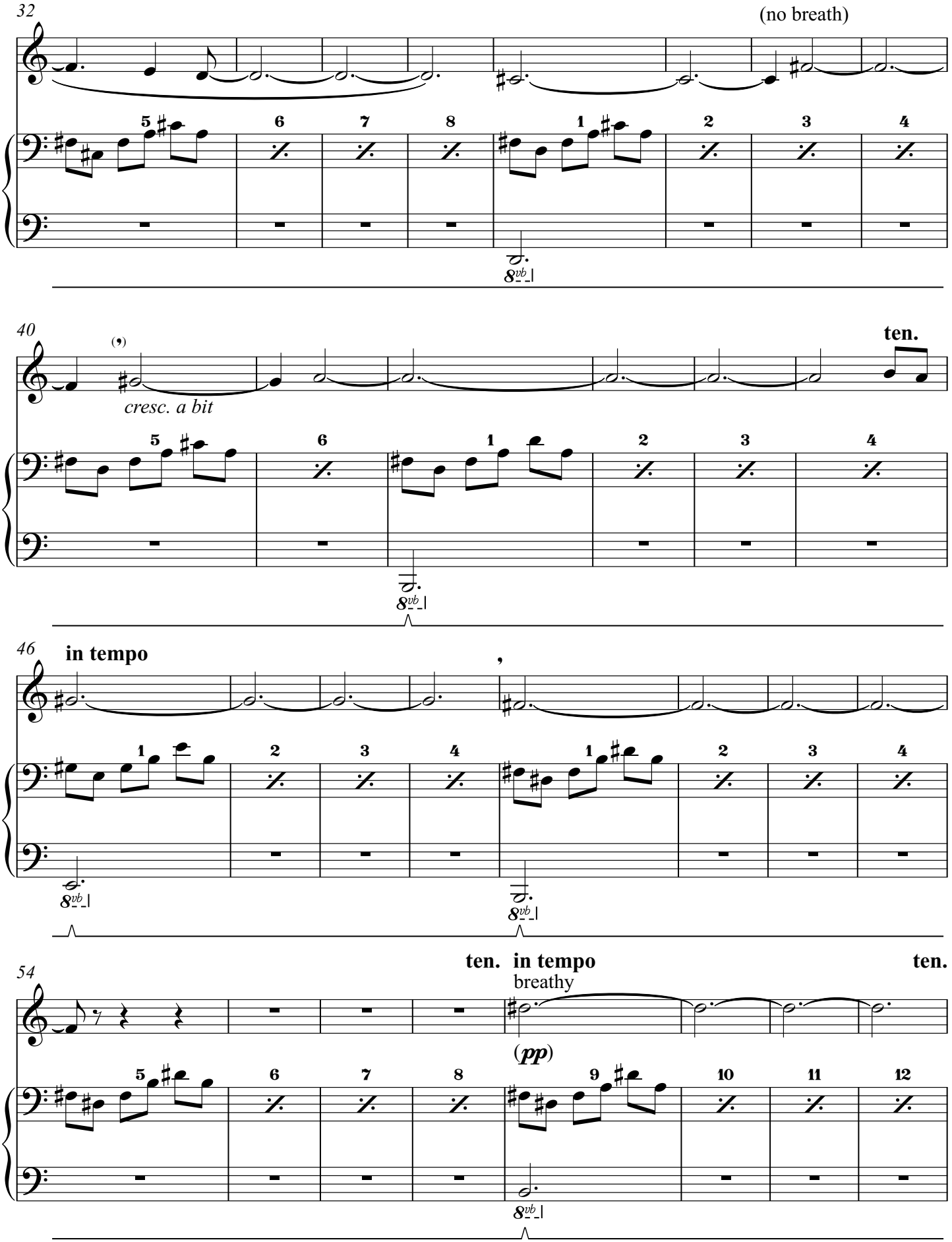

ten.
in tempo
22
normal vib.
pp
pp
subtle Ped. for clarity
26
31
tempo ad lib.
ppp
release vib.
no vib.
8va
pp
8vb
37
(8)

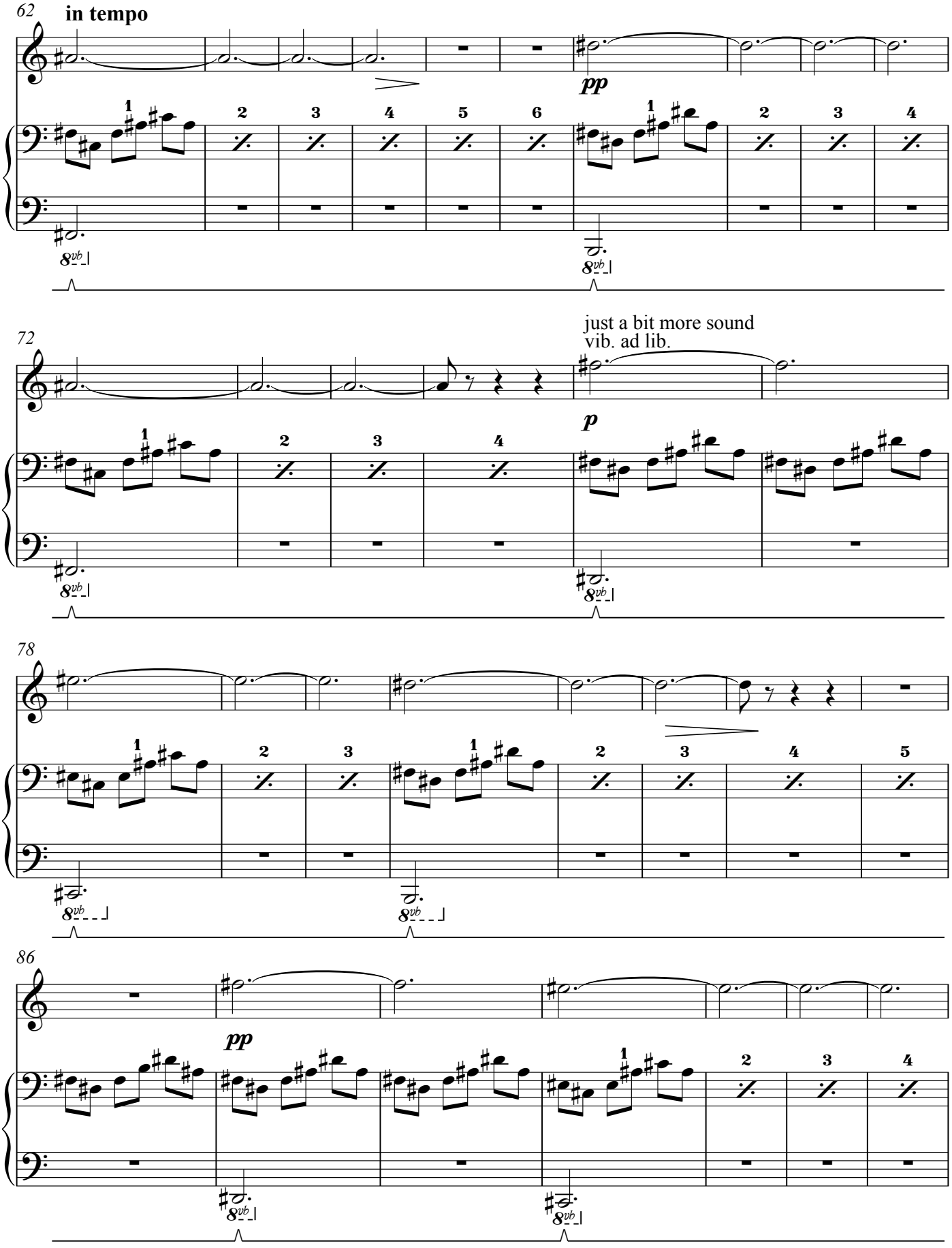

43
play and sing (men hum an octave lower)
ppp
ppp
8vb
½
8vb
½
48
(½)
8vb
½
54
(sing through Flute)
oo → wa → oo
oo → wa → oo
(½)
(lift pedal gradually)
Ped.
59
8va
8vb

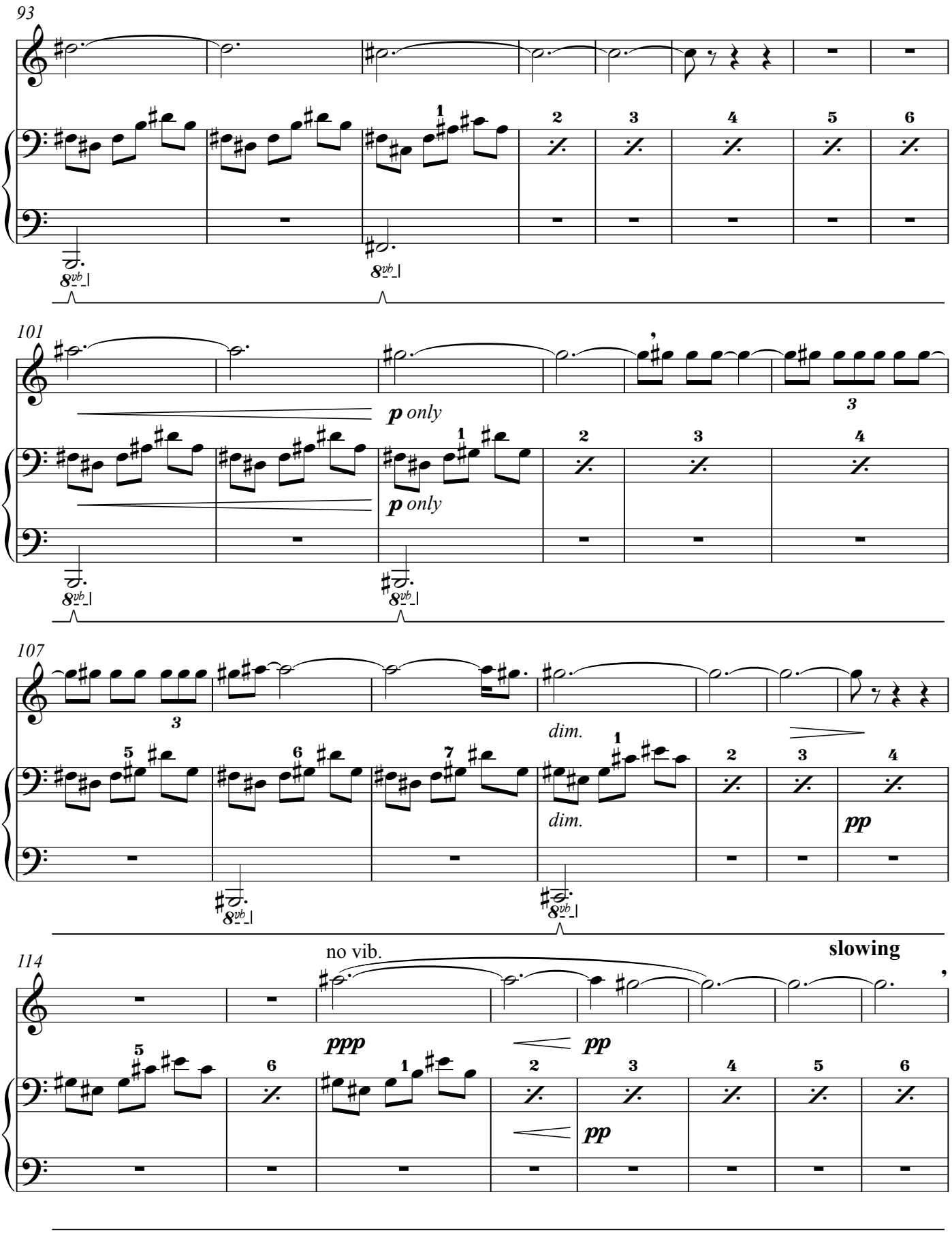
2. …from her hands a scent of almonds rises…*

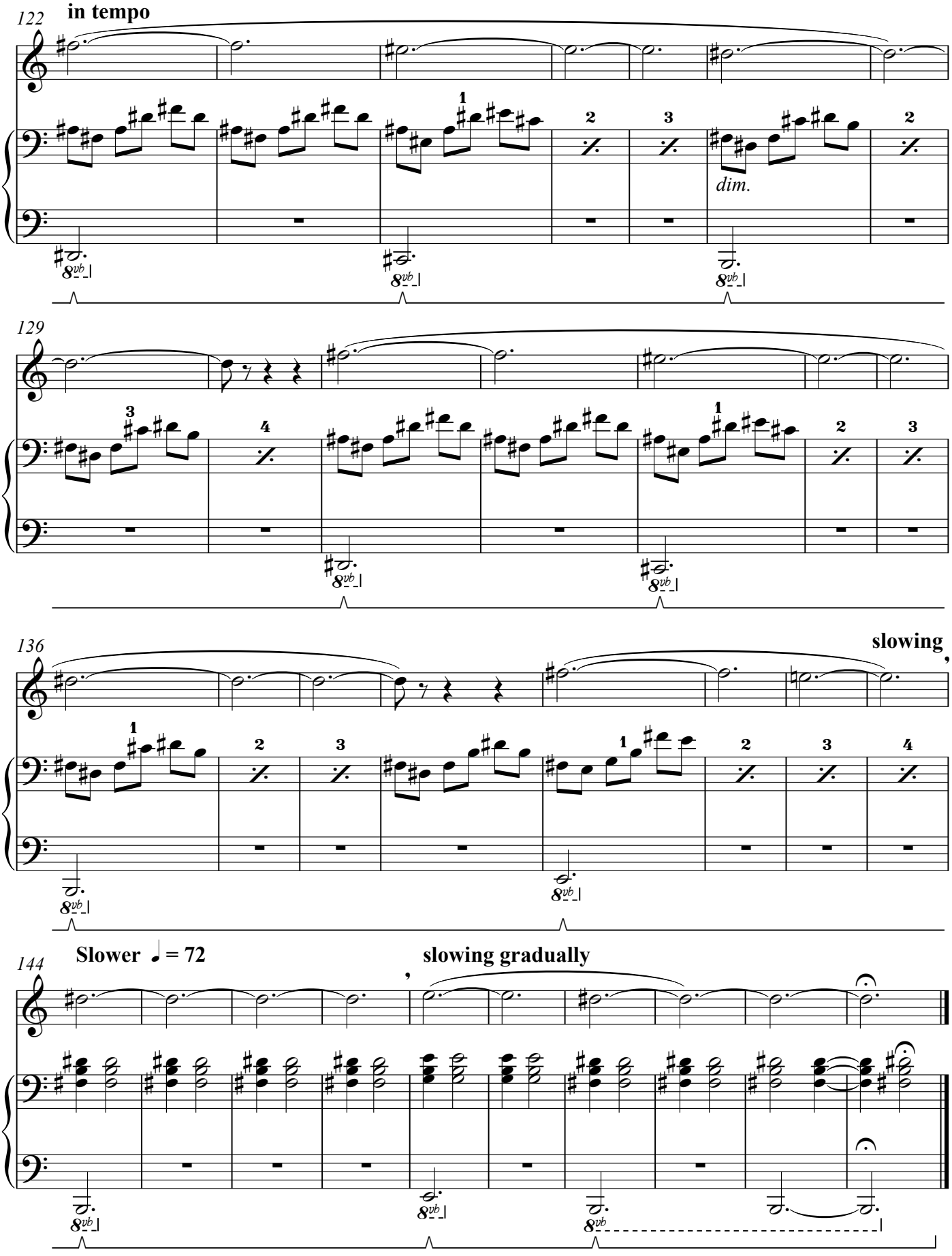


* from *The Piano* by W.S. Merwin

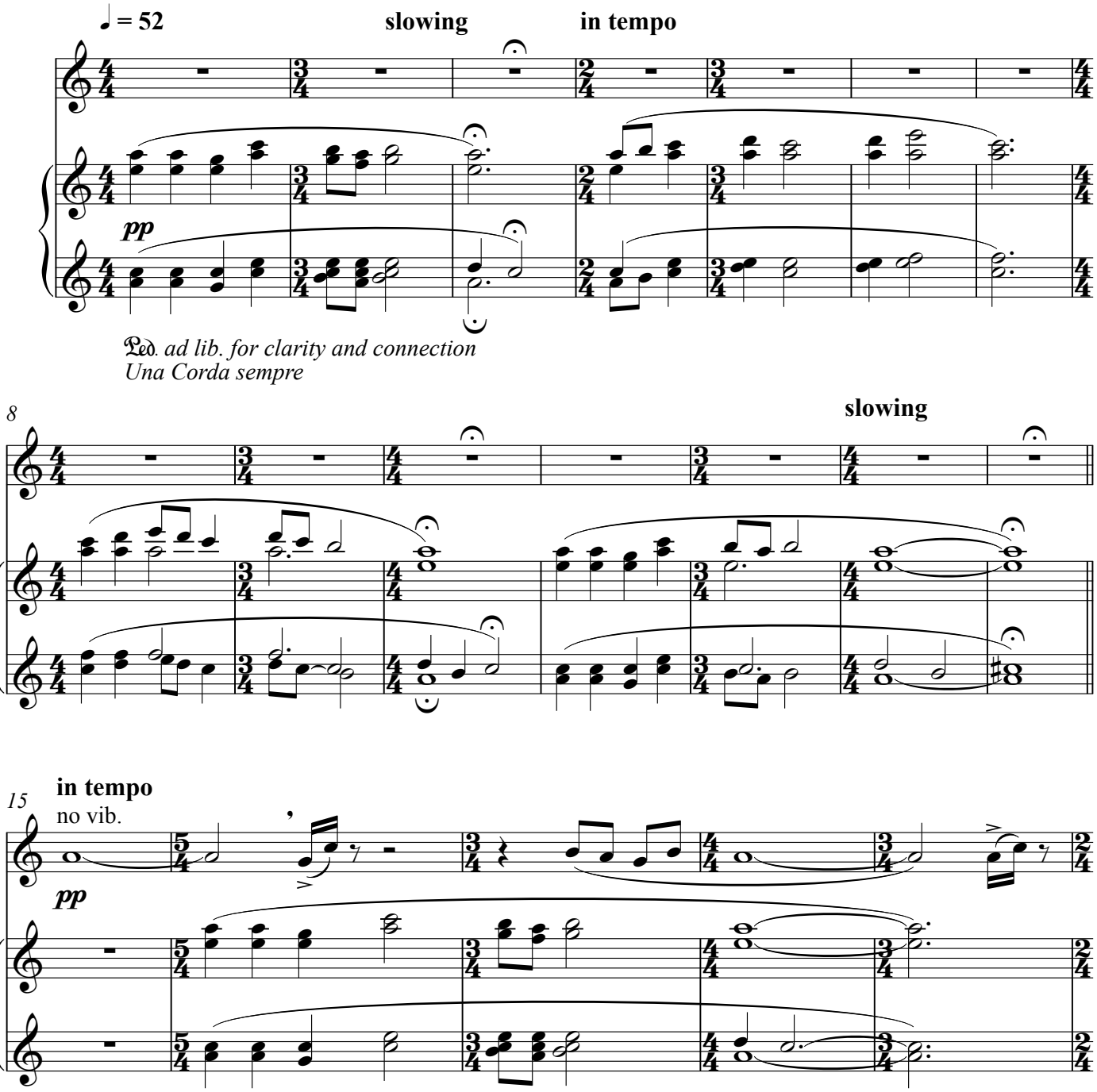

32
(no breath)
8vb
40
(𝄐)
cresc. a bit
ten.
8vb
46
in tempo
8vb
8vb
54
ten.
in tempo
ten.
breathy
(pp)
8vb


62
in tempo
pp
72
just a bit more sound
vib. ad lib.
p
78
86
pp

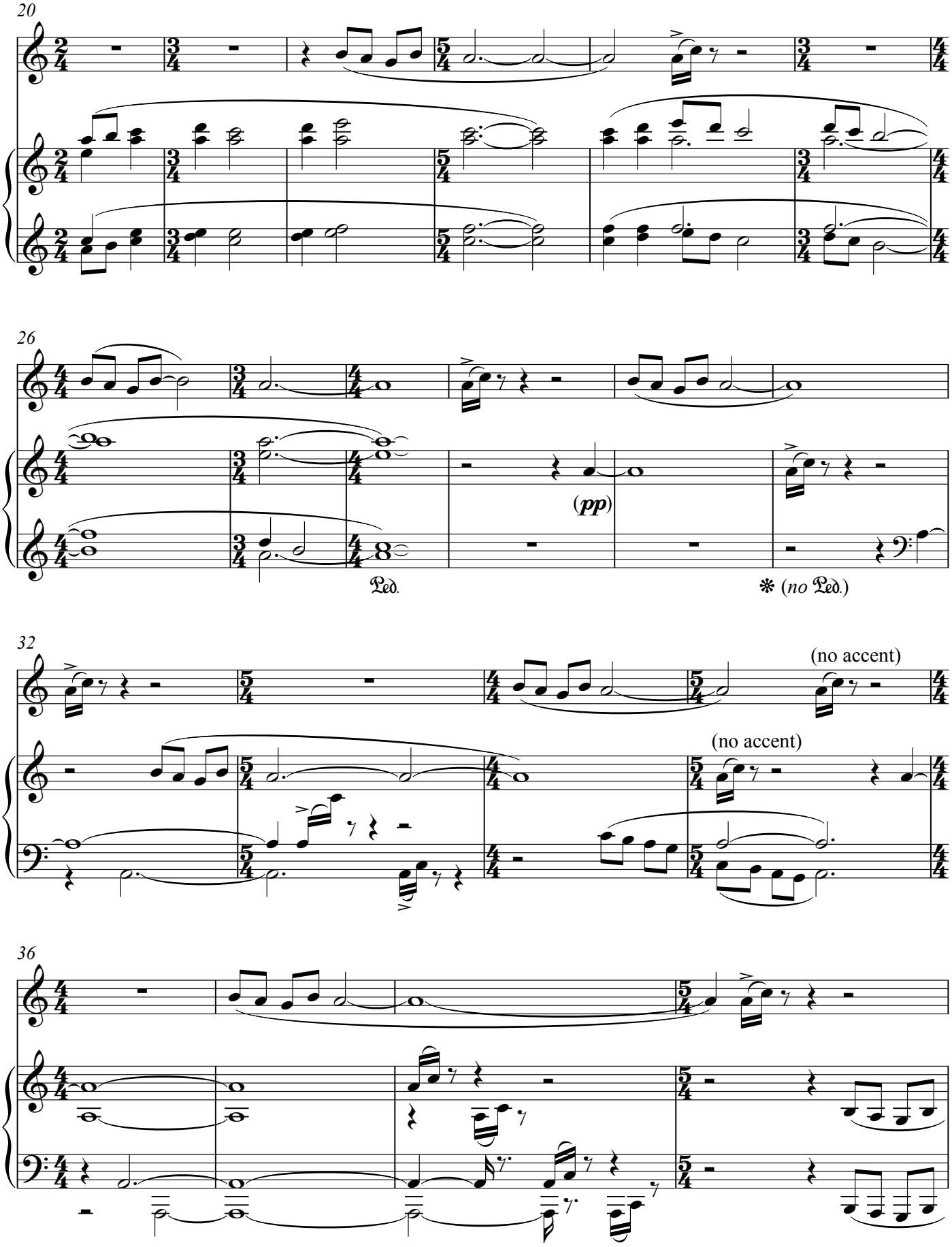

93
8vb
101
p only
p only
8vb
107
3
dim.
dim.
pp
8vb
114
no vib.
slowing
ppp
pp
pp

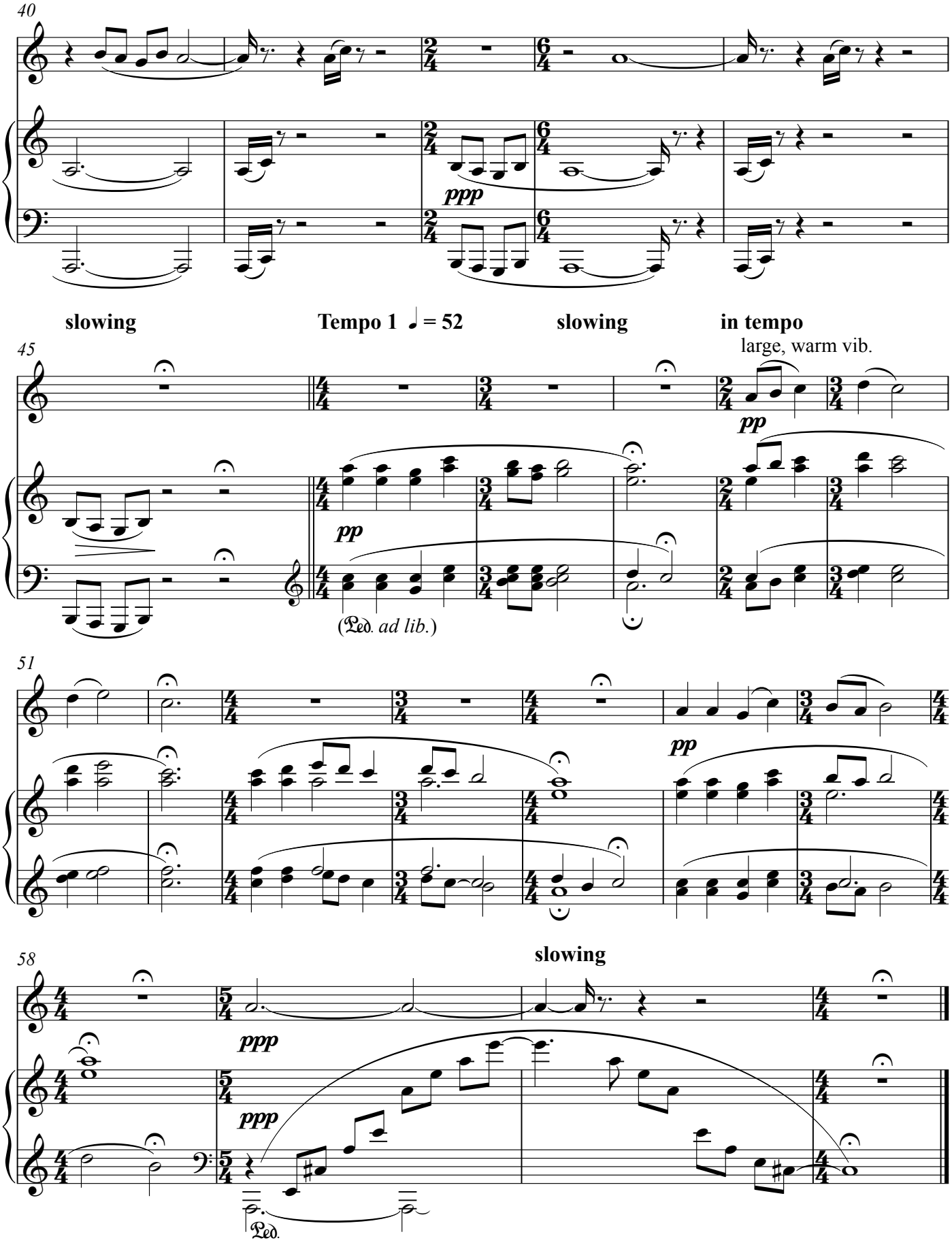

122
in tempo
dim.
129
136
slowing
144
Slower ♩ = 72
slowing gradually

3. the dead are not separate from the living*



* from *Near Field* by W.S. Merwin


20
26
(pp)
Ped.
* (no Ped.)
32
(no accent)
(no accent)
36


40
ppp
slowing
Tempo 1 ♩ = 52
slowing
in tempo
45
large, warm vib.
pp
pp
(Ped. ad lib.)
51
pp
58
slowing
ppp
ppp
Ped.

4. …where the rooms of the dark are already known…*

♩ = **60** – no slower

pp

Ped.
Una Corda sempre

p

very gentle Ped. ad lib.
to clear sounds

thin, breathy
no vib.
finger A, roll down

6

sfpp

11 add vib.

sim.
no vib.

add vib.

no vib.

sfpp

16 add vib.

no vib.

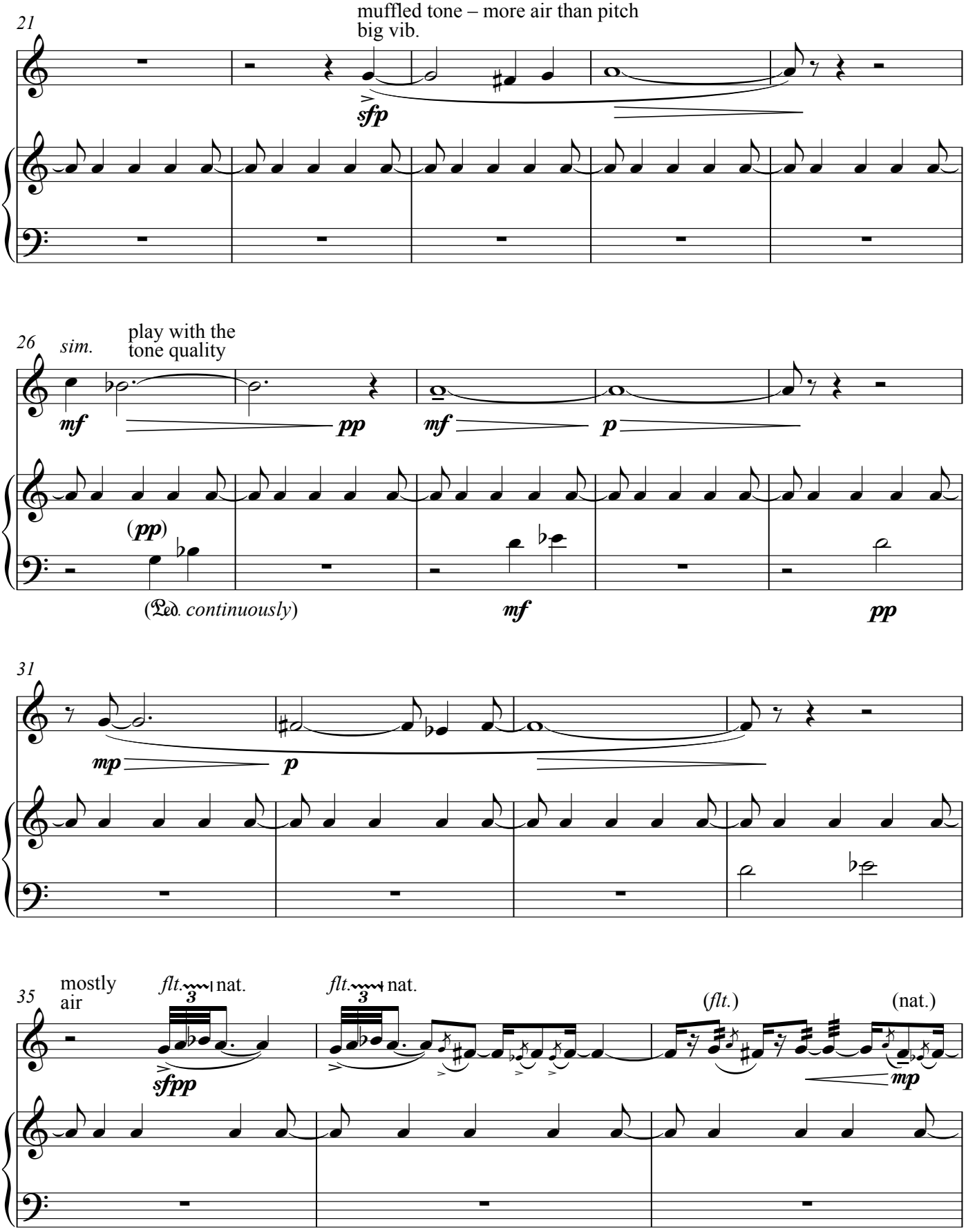
add vib. with fade

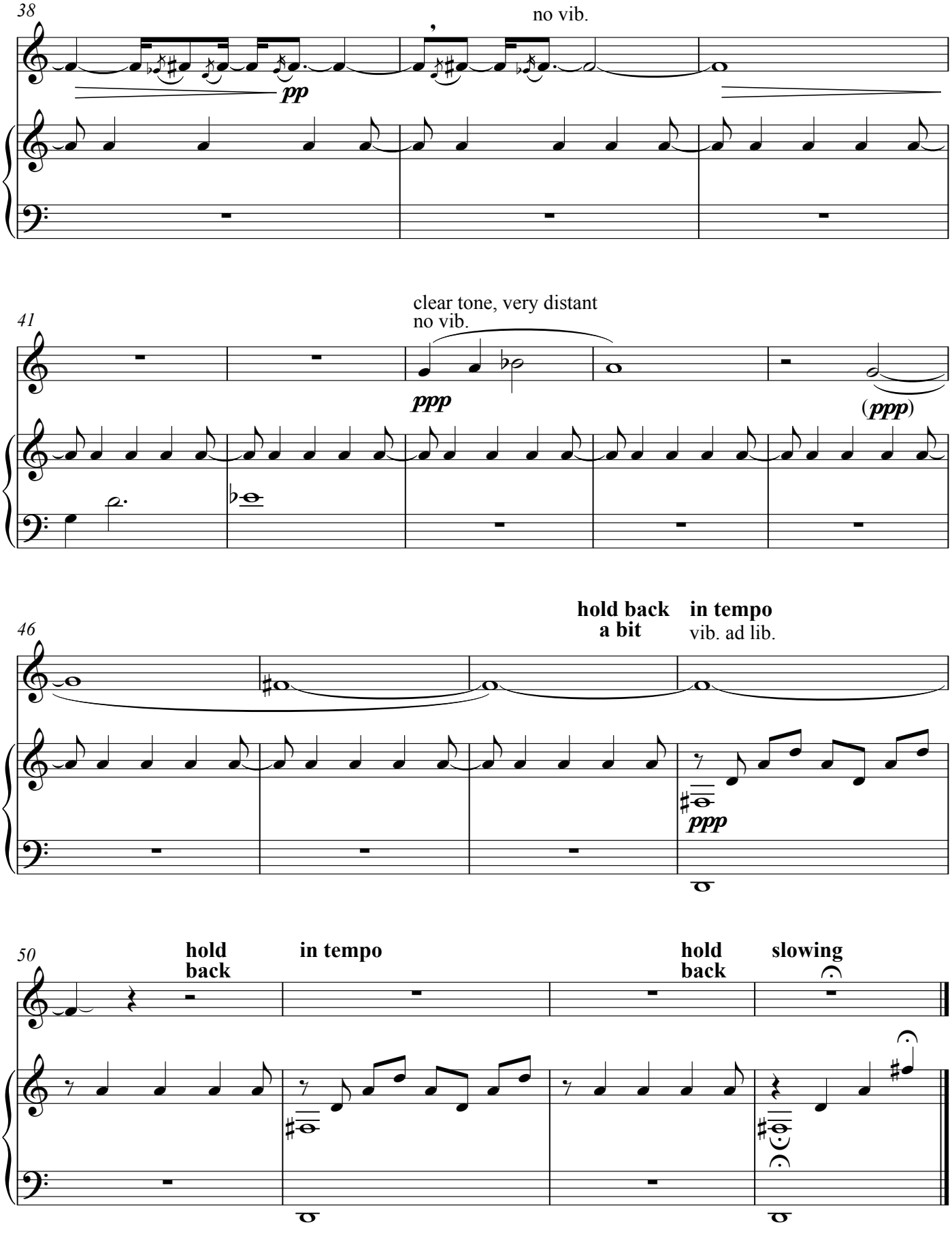
p

p

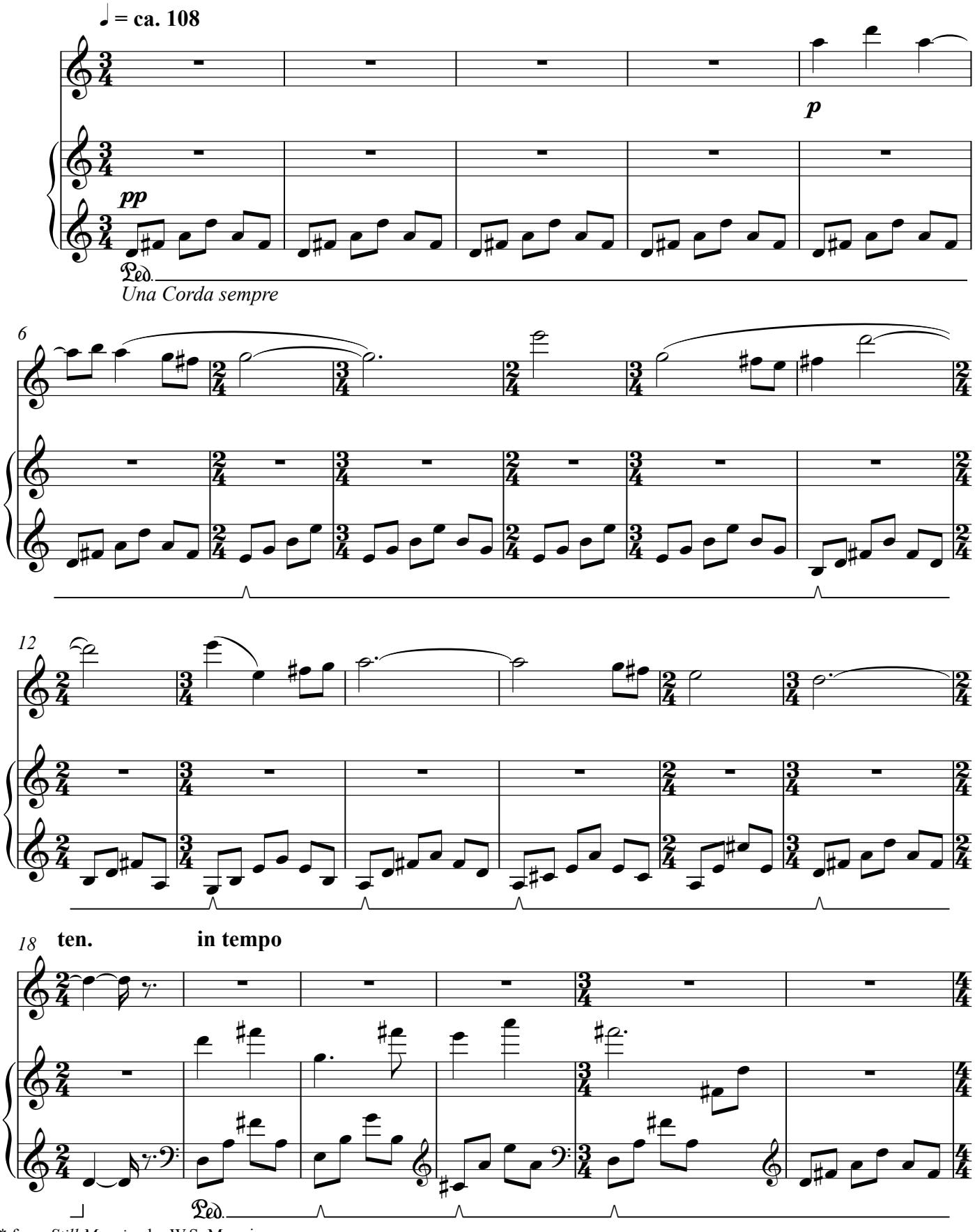
pp

* from *By Dark* by W.S. Merwin

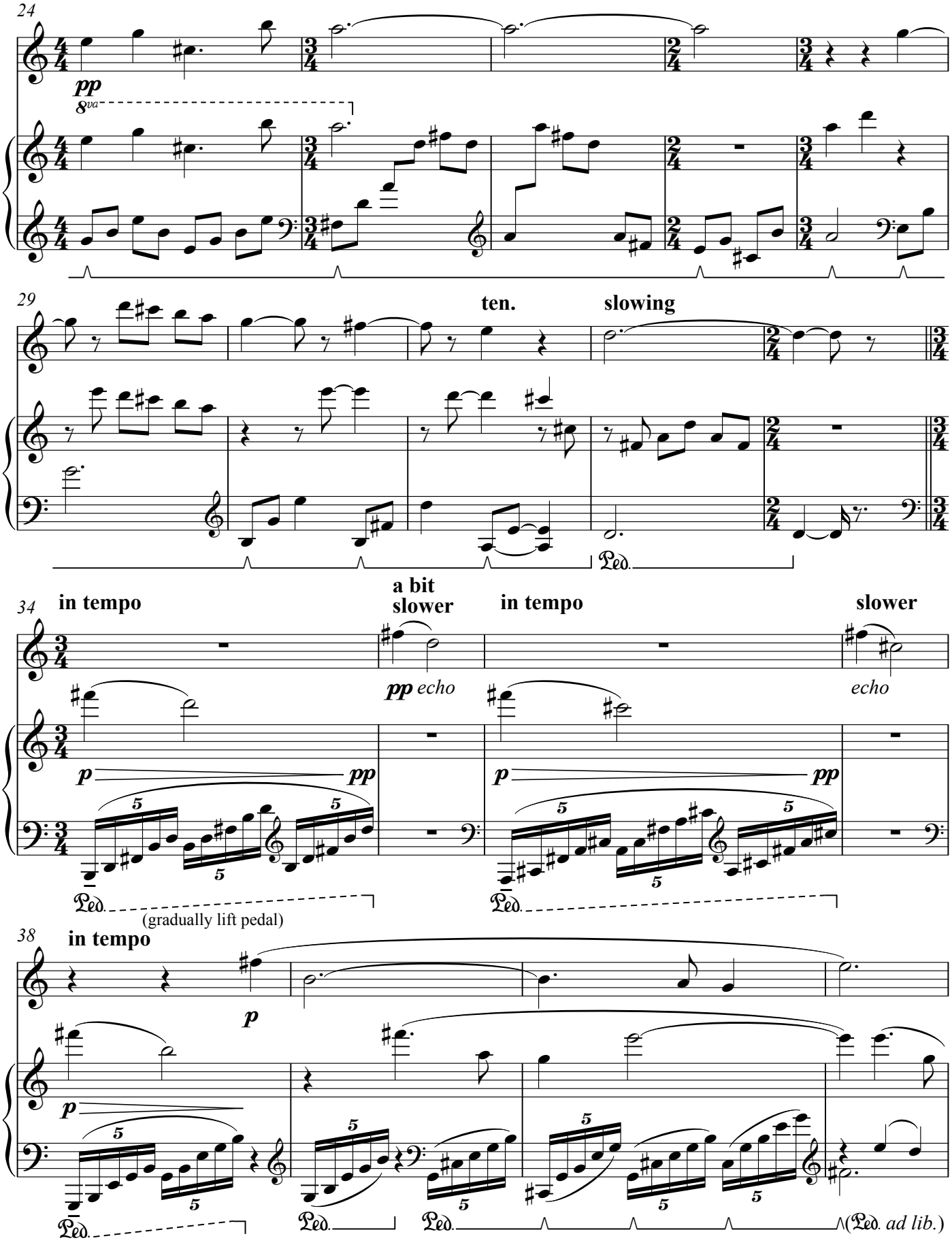

21
muffled tone – more air than pitch
big vib.
sfp
26
sim.
play with the
tone quality
mf
pp
mf
p
(pp)
(Ped. continuously)
mf
pp
31
mp
p
35
mostly
air
flt. nat.
sfpp
flt. nat.
(flt.)
(nat.)
mp

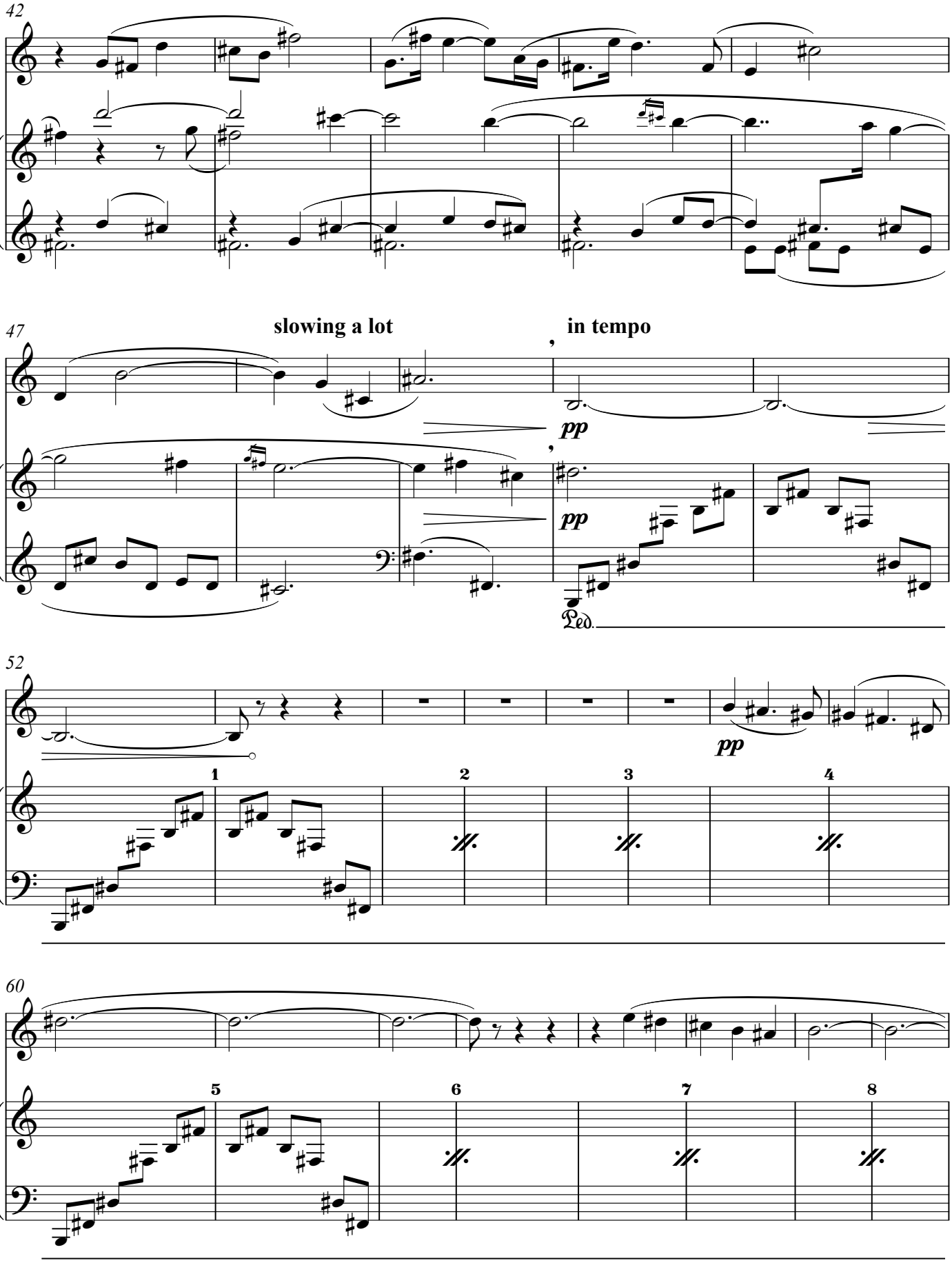

38
no vib.
pp
41
clear tone, very distant
no vib.
ppp
(ppp)
46
hold back
a bit
in tempo
vib. ad lib.
ppp
50
hold
back
in tempo
hold
back
slowing

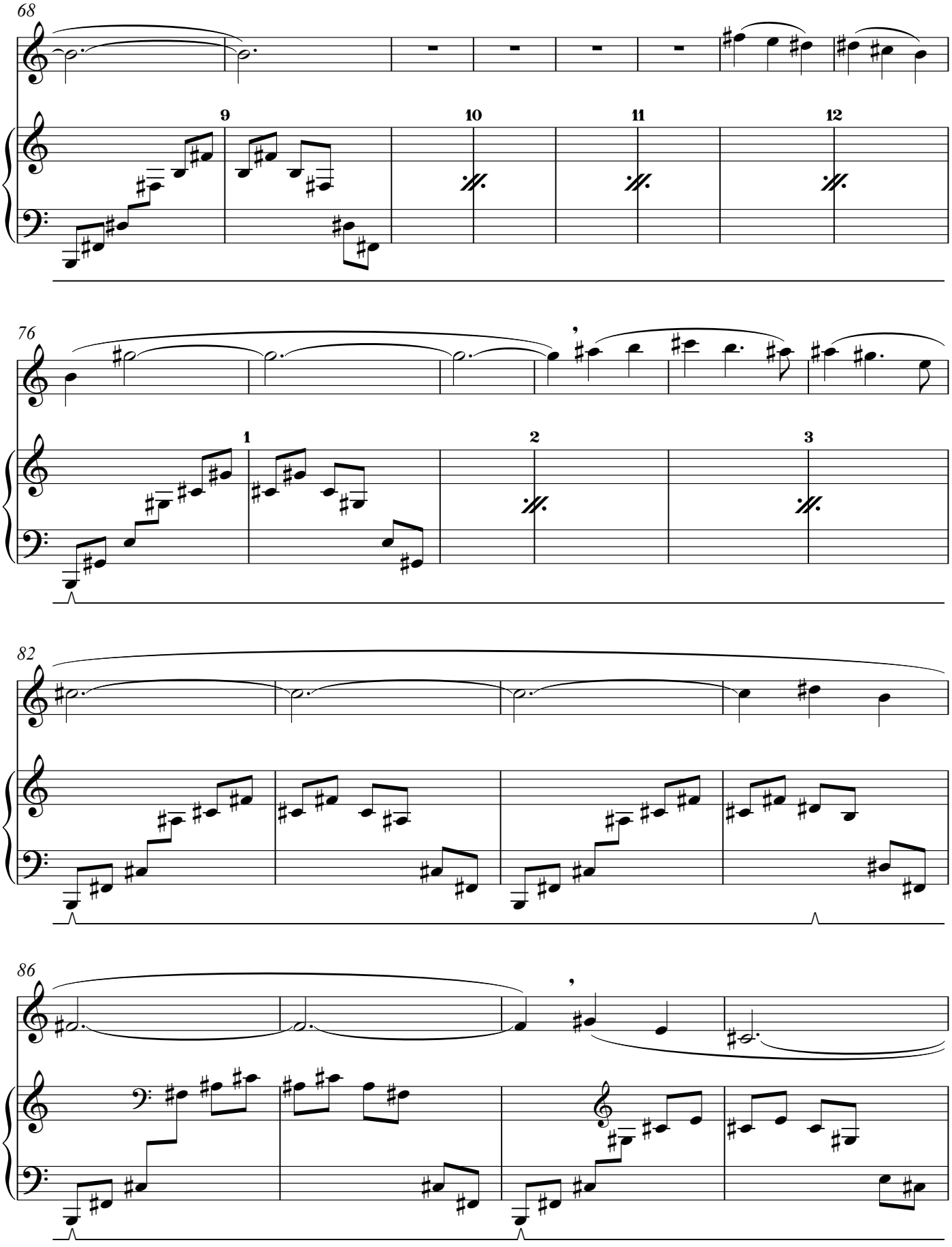
5. …and I am a child before there are words…*

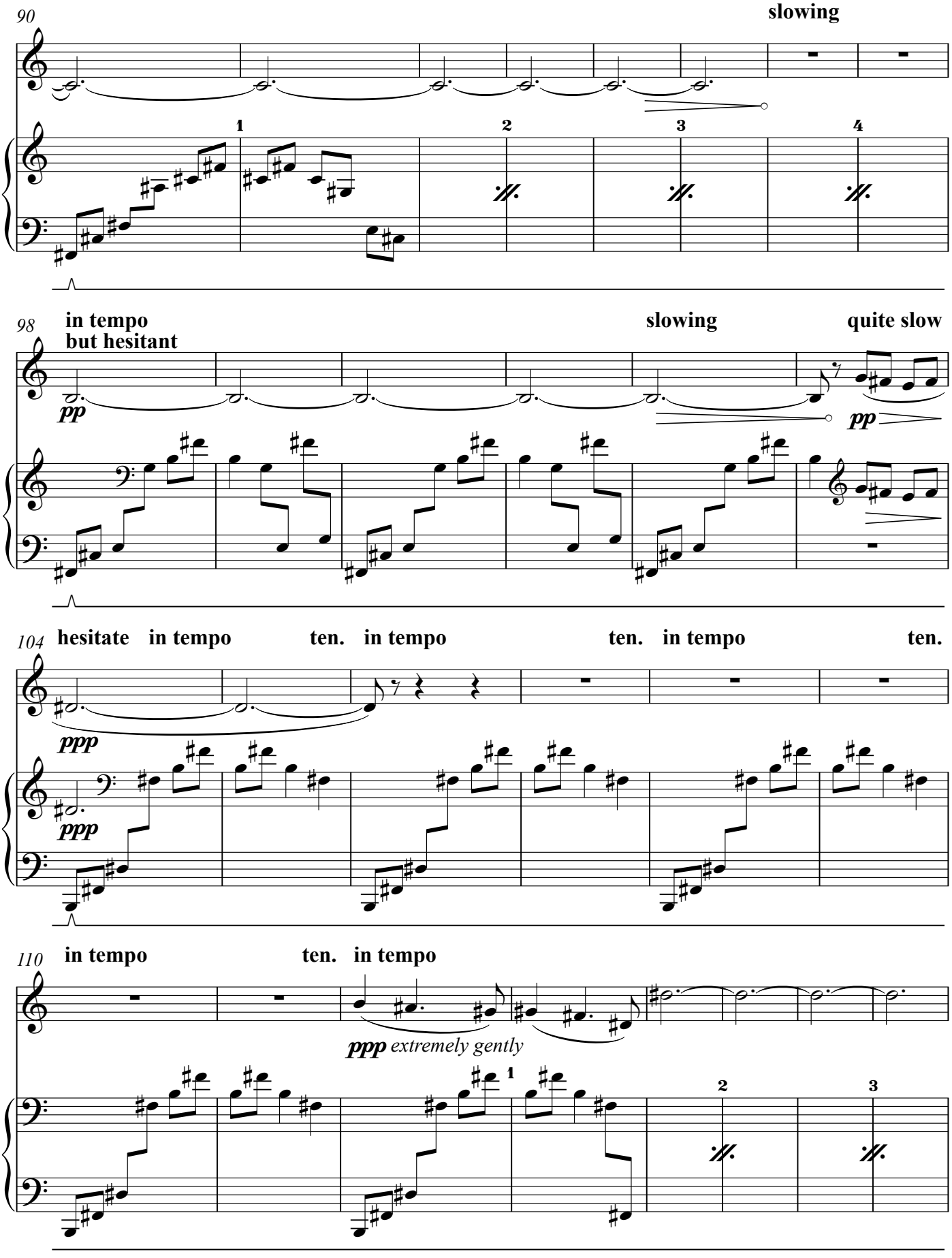


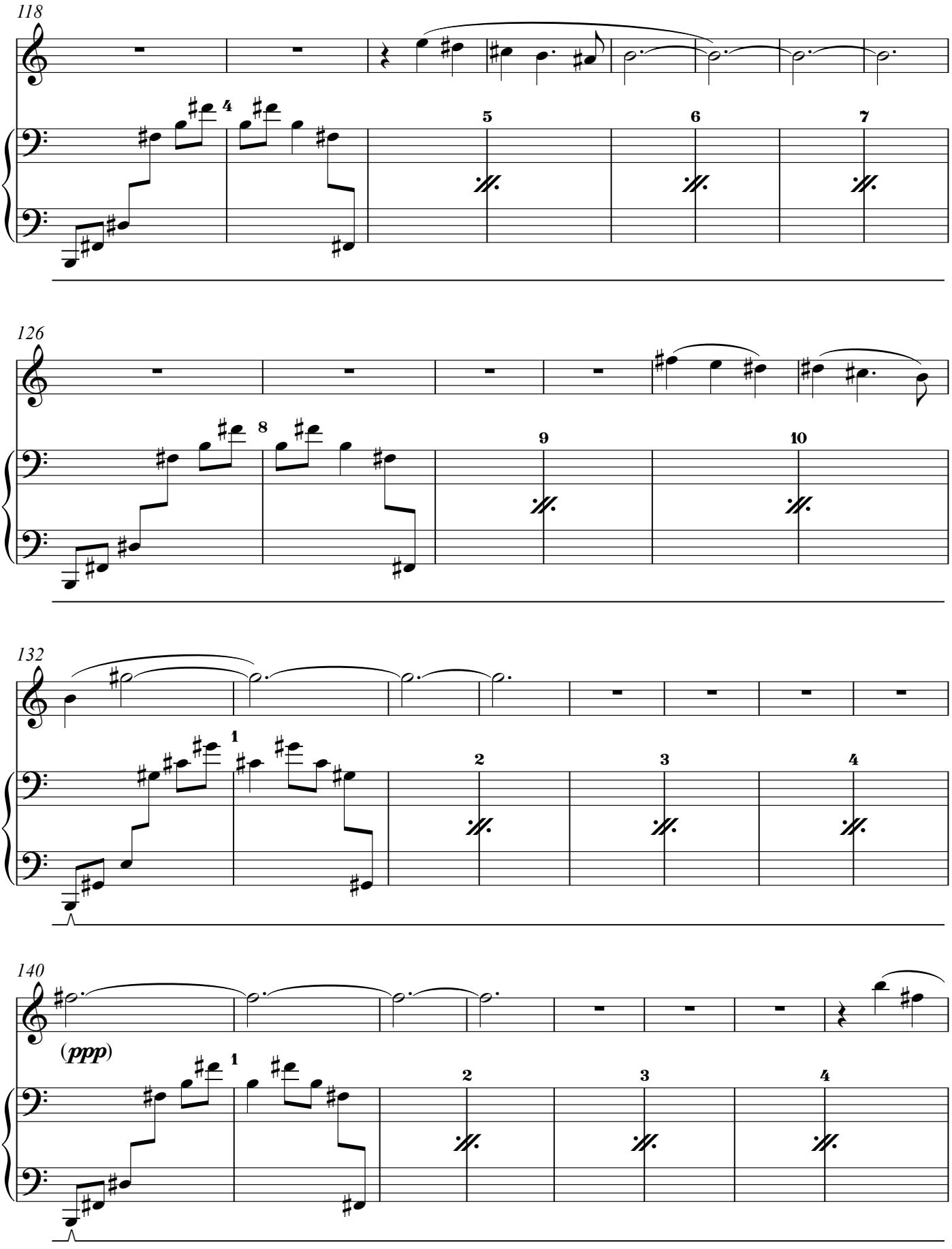
* from *Still Morning* by W.S. Merwin

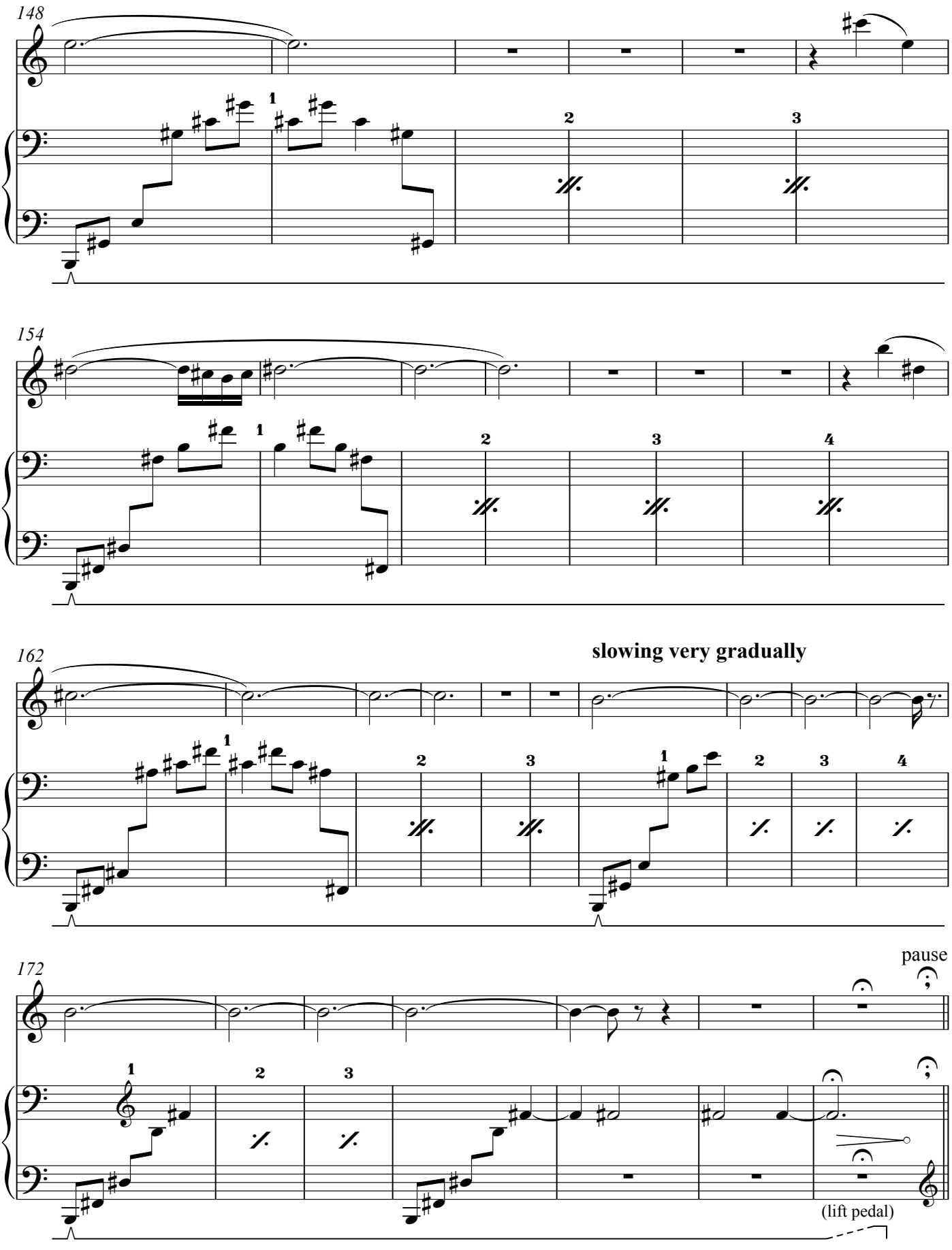

24
pp
8va
29
ten.
slowing
Ped.
34
in tempo
a bit slower
in tempo
slower
pp echo
echo
p
pp
Ped.
(gradually lift pedal)
38
in tempo
p
Ped.
(Ped. ad lib.)

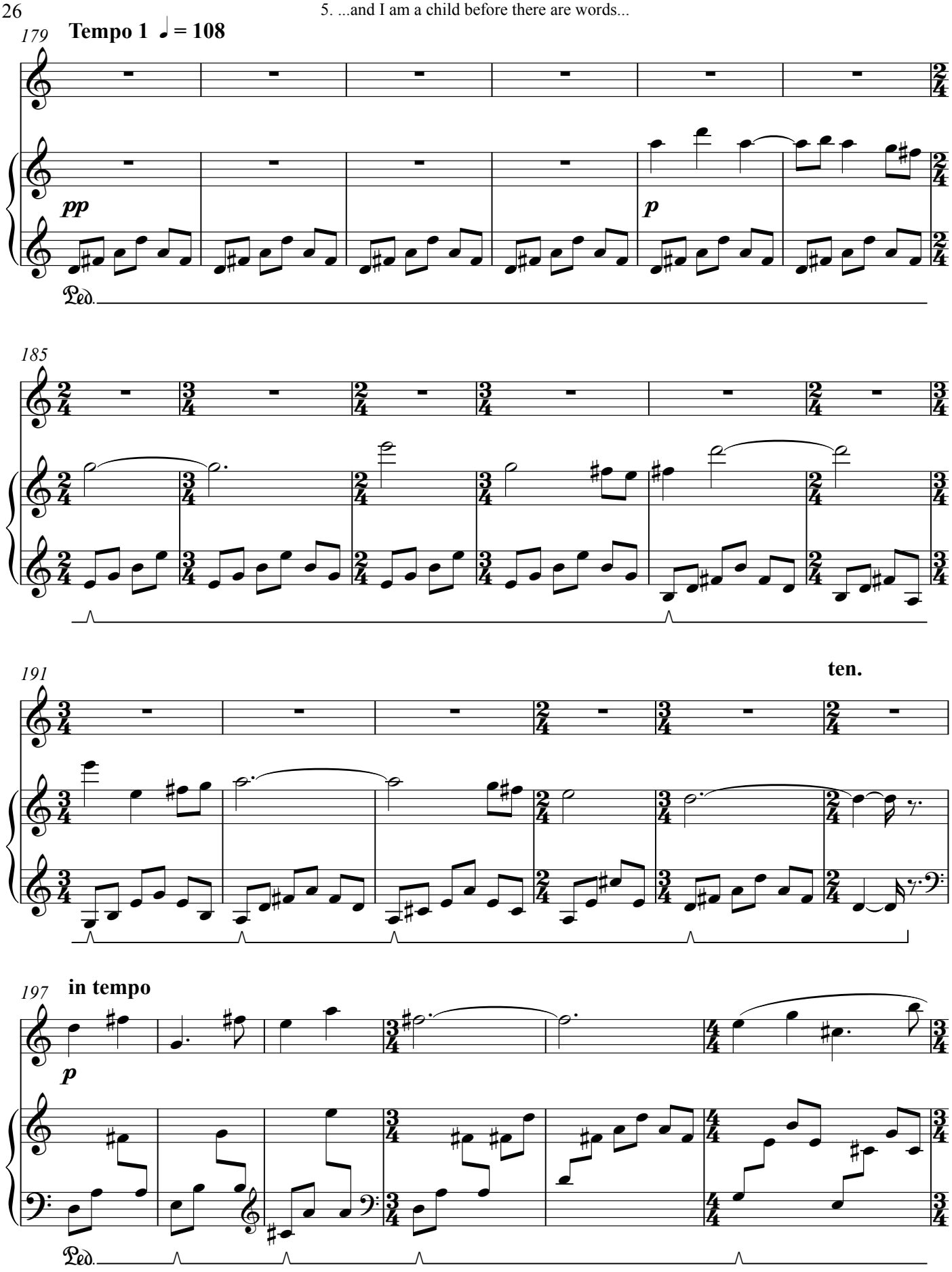

42
47
slowing a lot
in tempo
pp
pp
Ped.
52
pp
1
2
3
4
60
5
6
7
8

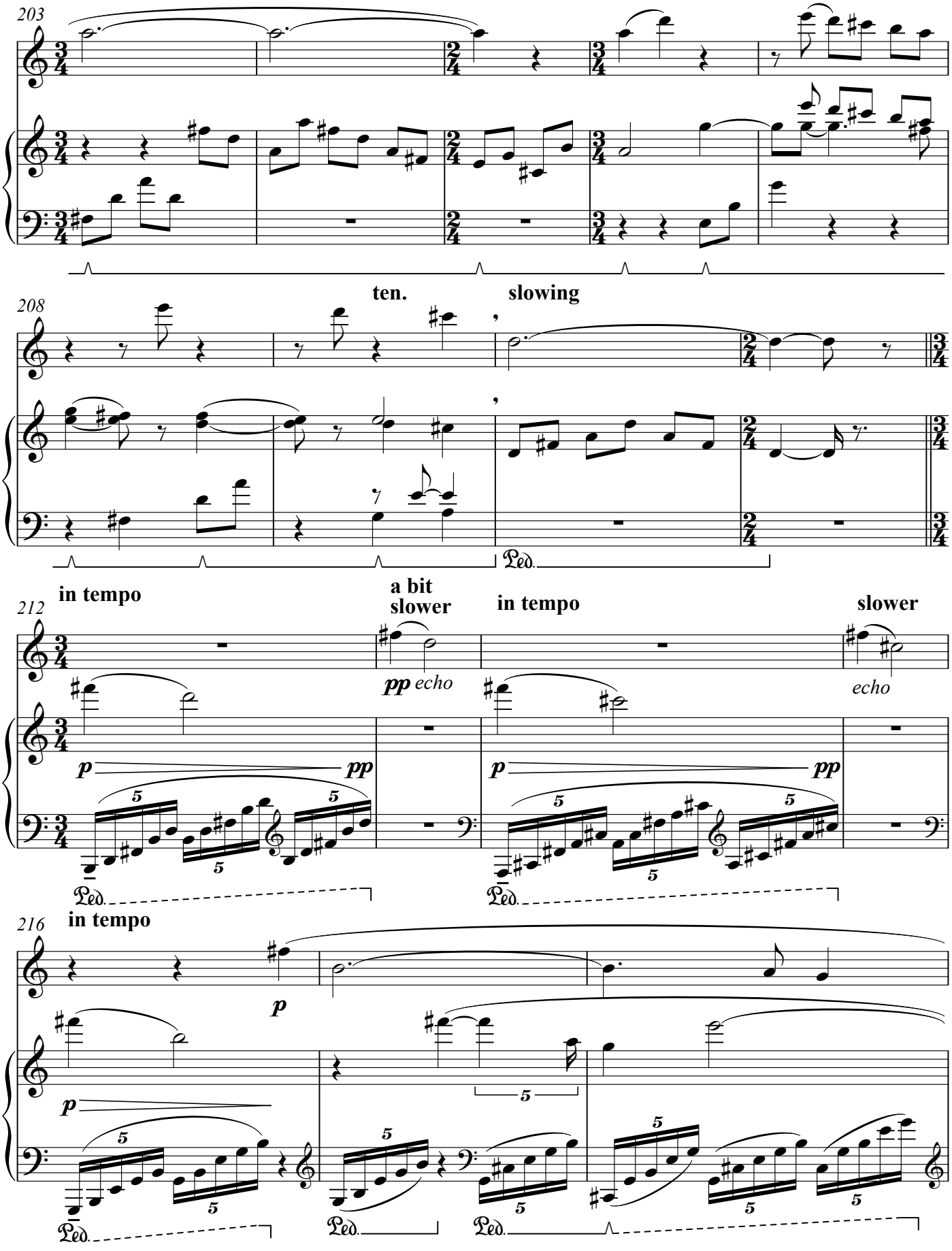

68
9
10
11
12
76
1
2
3
82
86

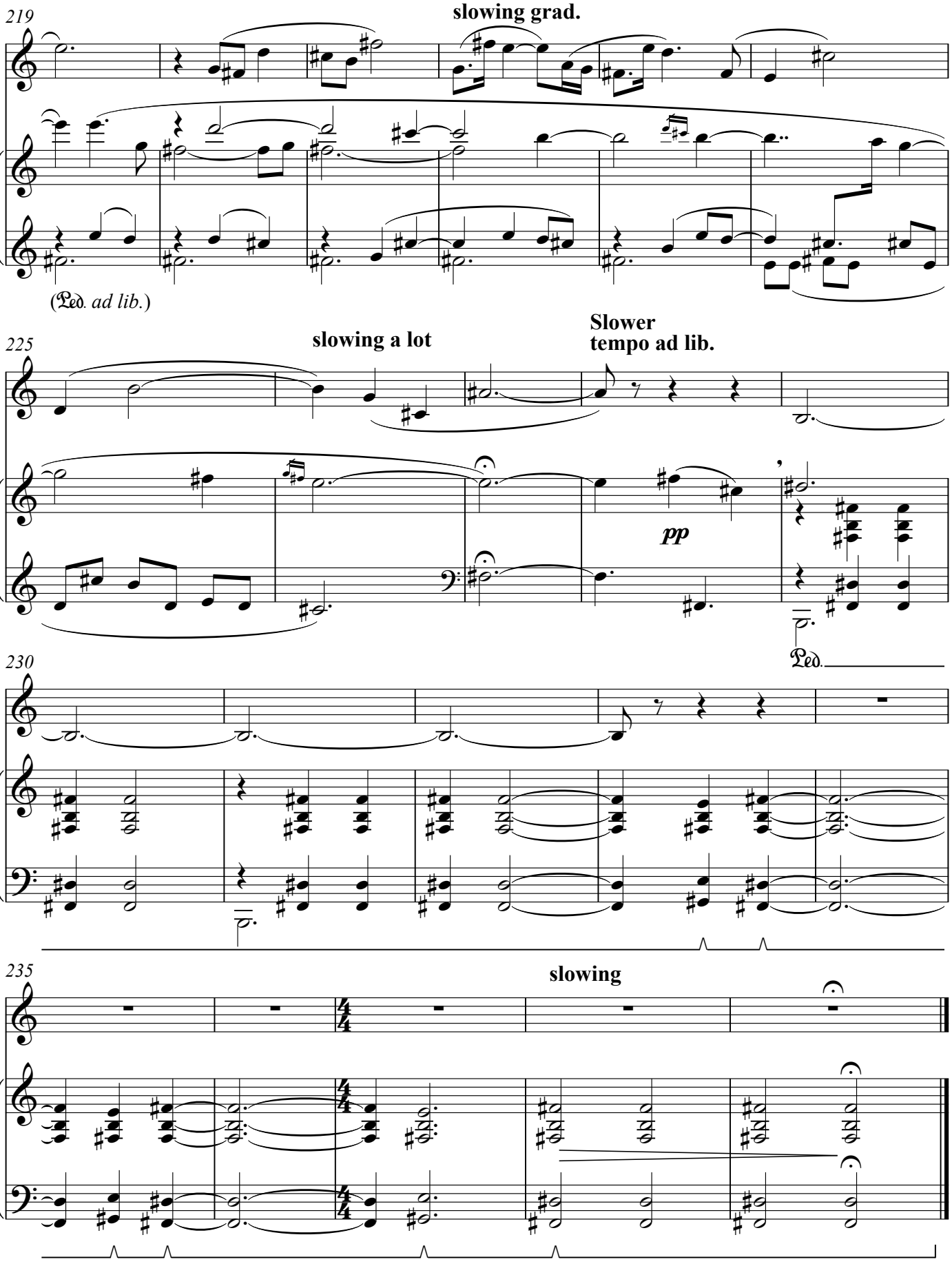

90
slowing
1
2
3
4
98
in tempo
but hesitant
slowing
quite slow
pp
pp
104
hesitate
in tempo
ten.
in tempo
ten.
in tempo
ten.
ppp
ppp
110
in tempo
ten.
in tempo
ppp extremely gently
1
2
3


118
4
5
6
7
126
8
9
10
132
1
2
3
4
140
(ppp)
1
2
3
4

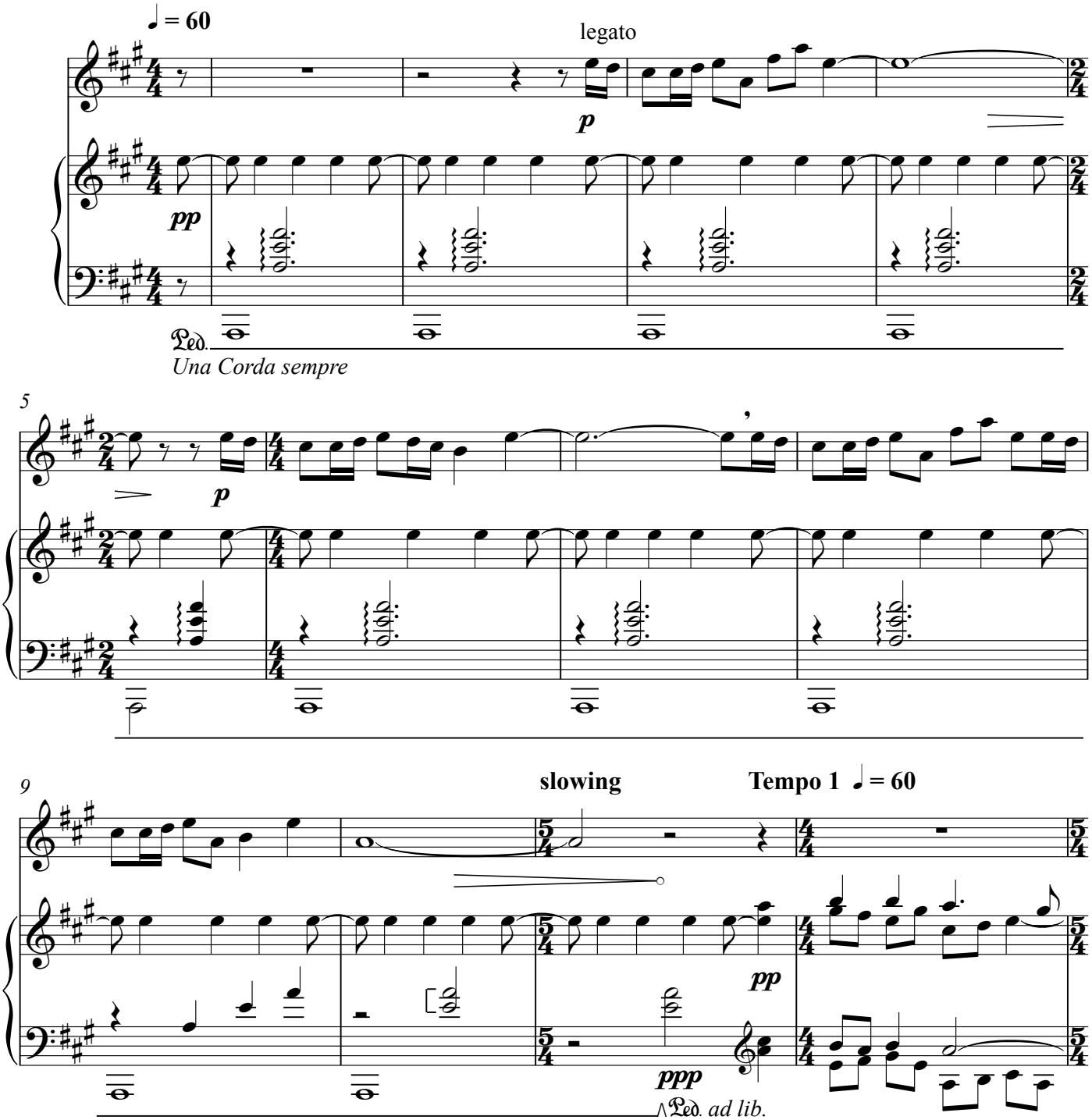

148
154
162
slowing very gradually
172
pause
(lift pedal)


179
Tempo 1 ♩ = 108
pp
p
Ped.
185
191
ten.
197
in tempo
p
Ped.

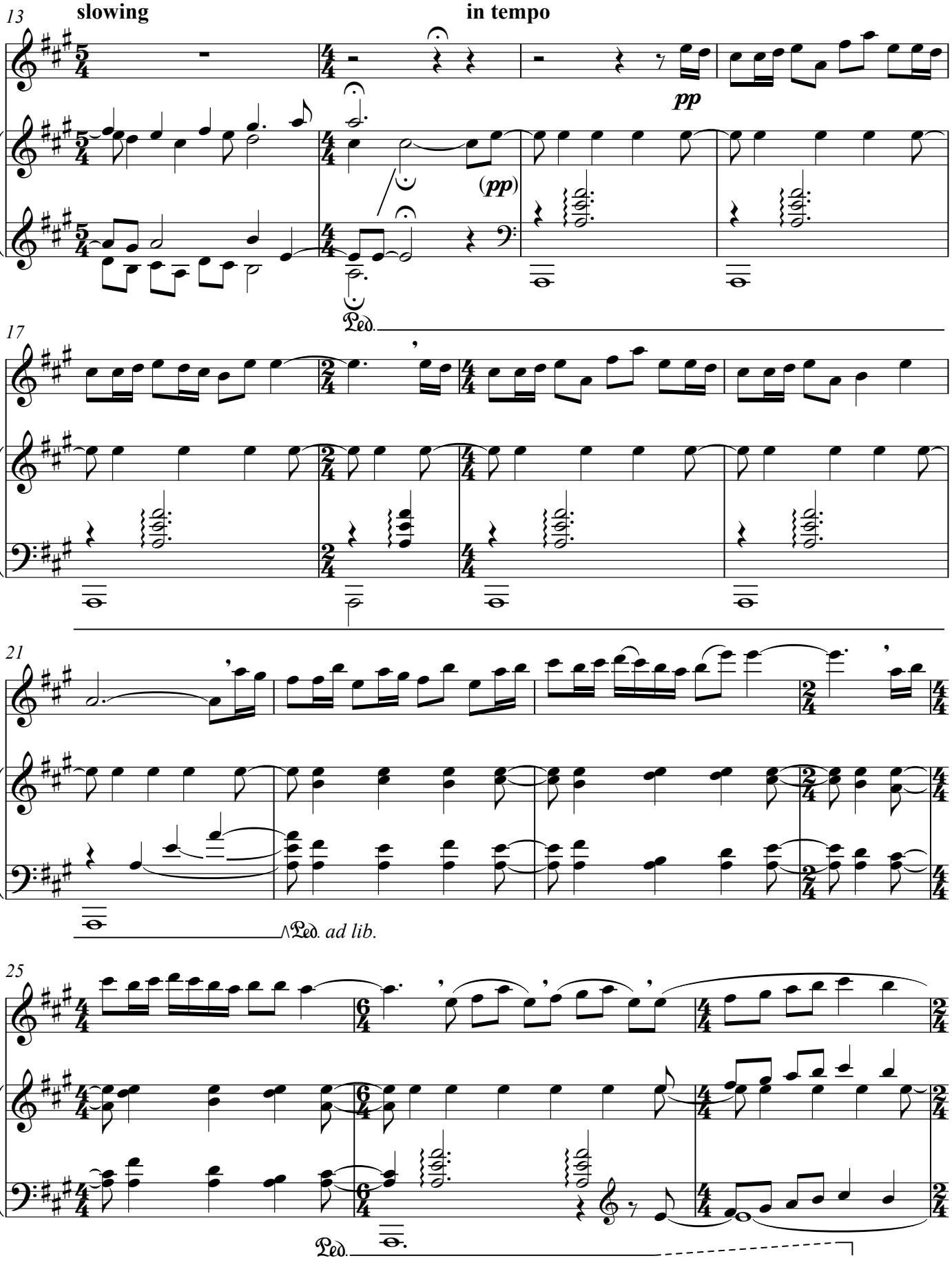

203
ten.
slowing
208
Ped.
in tempo
a bit slower
in tempo
slower
212
pp echo
echo
p
pp
Ped.
in tempo
216
p
Ped.

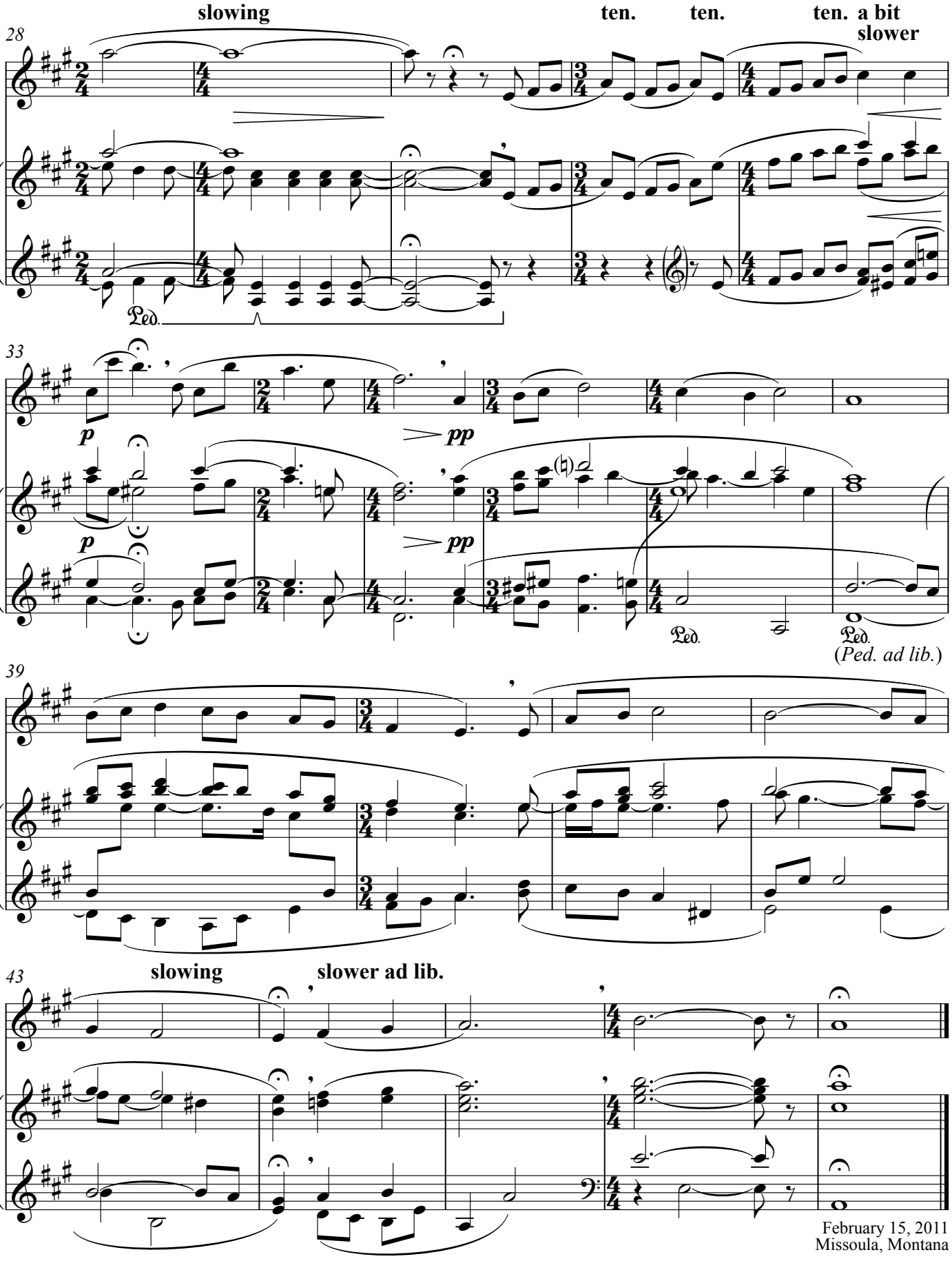

219
slowing grad.
(Ped. ad lib.)
225
slowing a lot
Slower
tempo ad lib.
pp
Ped.
230
235
slowing

6. Let me imagine that we will come again when we want to and it will be spring*



* from *To Paula in Late Spring* by W.S. Merwin


13
slowing
in tempo
pp
(pp)
Ped.
17
21
Ped. ad lib.
25
Ped.



February 15, 2011
Missoula, Montana