Full score

A Step-By-Step Guide to Making Friends

for Piano Trio

by Aidan Gold

Written for the Juilliard 2025 Gena Raps Piano Chamber Music Prize

Duration: 10 min.

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Instrumentation

Violin (mutes required: practice mute)
Cello (mutes required: practice mute)
Piano (with sostenuto pedal)

Program Note

"Why do you have such an elaborate plan?"
"I don't know."
"It's just very...conceptual? Why don't you try just going with the flow, seeing where it takes you?"
"That just feels...like I'd always choose wrong."

Step one: we set the stage. Our characters are not so much part of the sound (themes, melodies) but act upon the sound – they are simply (played by?) the people you see in front of you. Three symmetrical [people] ({major} thirds).

Second, we get our characters to talk to one another. Maybe one interrupts the other. (Oh great, socialization.) Well clearly, we're at an impasse. Everyone has their own idea of what kind of music they should be playing. And they just keep interrupting each other! And now playing on top of each other all at once! Is this what they call "chamber music"? It's all falling apart.

Step...three? We stop, take some deep breaths. Take stock of our (symmetrical) situation. Why can't we get along? What are we missing? Why is one of us just...stuck in place?

Oh right! Teamwork! That was the answer all along. We've got to join in with them! Now that our friends have learned to work together, we proceed to the last step: happily ever after. Nothing could possibly go wrong as we approach the end of the piece. Let's celebrate by giving each of them a solo!

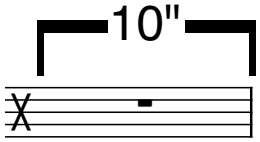
"What are you afraid of?"
"...that everyone else already knows who they are."

Performance Information

Independent bar numbers:

At certain points in the piece (rehearsals **D**, **P**, **W**, and **KK**), the performers split into different meters and/or tempi. Because of this, barlines do not line up in these sections. In these sections, secondary bar numbers are used in the following way:

All **numbered bars** are always aligned between all instruments. **Lettered bars** are not in sync between the instruments, and details as to their synchronization is given at those specific sections in the score. As an example, rehearsal **D** begins on bar *21*, and the piano slows down while the violin and cello maintain a steady tempo. Because of this, the barlines do not align, and each player uses their own "bar letters" instead (*21a*, *21b*, *21c*, *21d*). Then, at rehearsal **E**, when everyone lines up again, it is labelled as bar *22* for everyone.



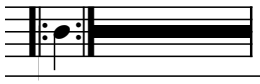
Notation

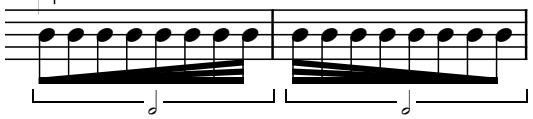
All Instruments

– open meter (approx. duration given above). Many open bars consist of a series of small figures, with no staff lines between them (like a cutaway score), meant to evoke the sound and pacing of a spoken conversation. These figures should be played (roughly) proportionally to their written position within the open bar, and should flow freely from one instrument to the next, potentially overlapping slightly. The exact pacing of these figures and sections is up to the ensemble.

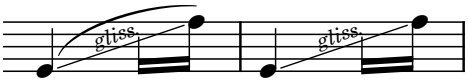
Tempo marks in bold ♩ = 120 apply to everyone.

Tempo marks in non-bold ♩ = 120 only apply to the instrument they are above. These are often used in the context of open bars or within sections with independent bar numbers (see pg. 2)

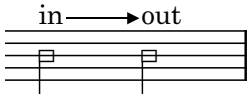

– repeat the figure throughout the duration of the solid line.


– accel./rit. freely for the given duration (doesn't have to be the exact number of notes written).

– (with a slash) play these notes extremely quickly, quasi grace notes.



– headless notes inside gliss. lines should only be re-articulated if there is no slur.



– breathe in and out. Exhale forcefully – the "out" portion should be audible.

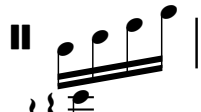
Strings

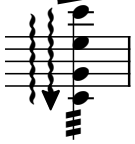
I, II, III, IV – string indicators (I = highest string; IV = lowest string); + = left hand pizz.
sp = sul pont.; st = sul tasto; msp = molto sul pont.; mst = molto sul tasto; clb = col legno battuto
(***f***) (***p***) – dynamics in parenthesis are used during the section with practice mutes (rehs. **K–O**). These reflect the played dynamics. Since the practice mutes significantly dampen the instrument, the resultant (sounding) dynamics will be much softer.

bow screw gliss – pluck the open string with the left hand. Place the bow screw against the string and slide it up and down to bend the pitch.

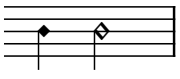
– fast ricochet (indeterminate number of bounces)

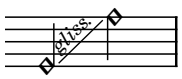
– play a very high indeterminate pitch


– when no staff lines are given, follow approx. contour (any pitches).


– repeatedly strum back and forth very quickly

– mute strings by lightly touching with fingers (scratchy, pitchless sound)

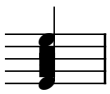

– harmonics always use open diamonds unless the duration would be ambiguous, in which case I use a closed diamond to specify a quarter note



– natural harmonic gliss. It should sound less like a continuous slide and more like an arpeggio of overtones.

Piano

– cluster with palm (approx. register)


– play outer notes with fingers and inner cluster with palm

– silently press keys in approx. register

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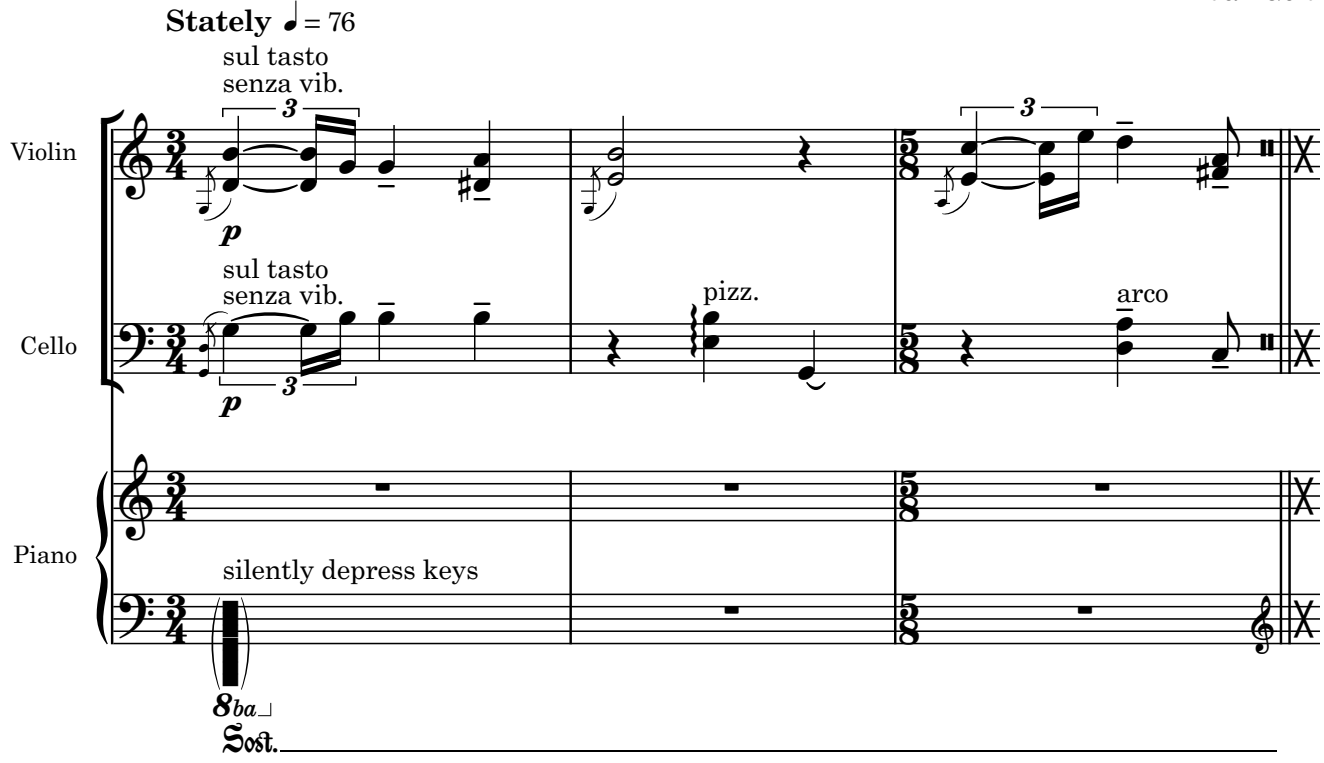

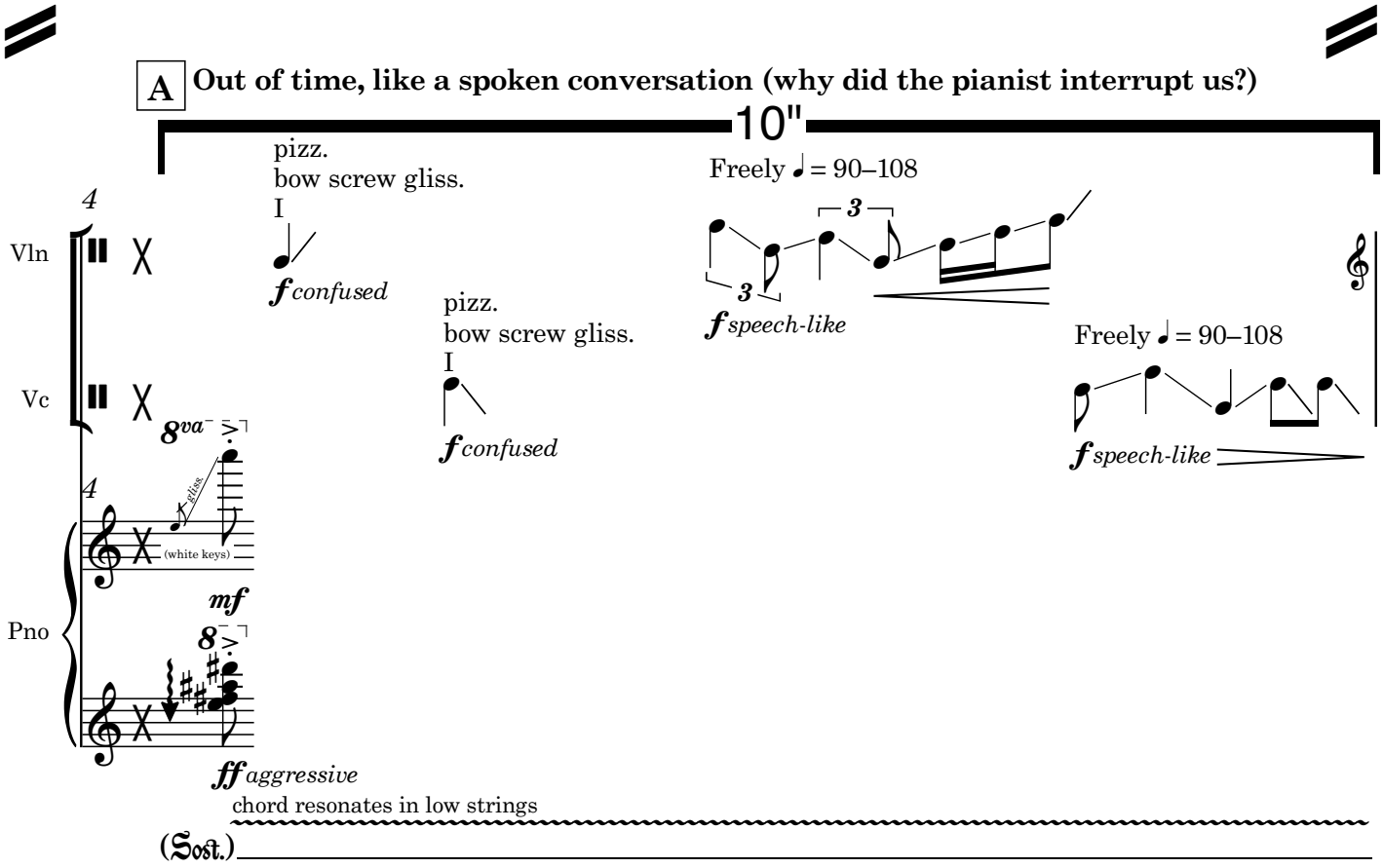

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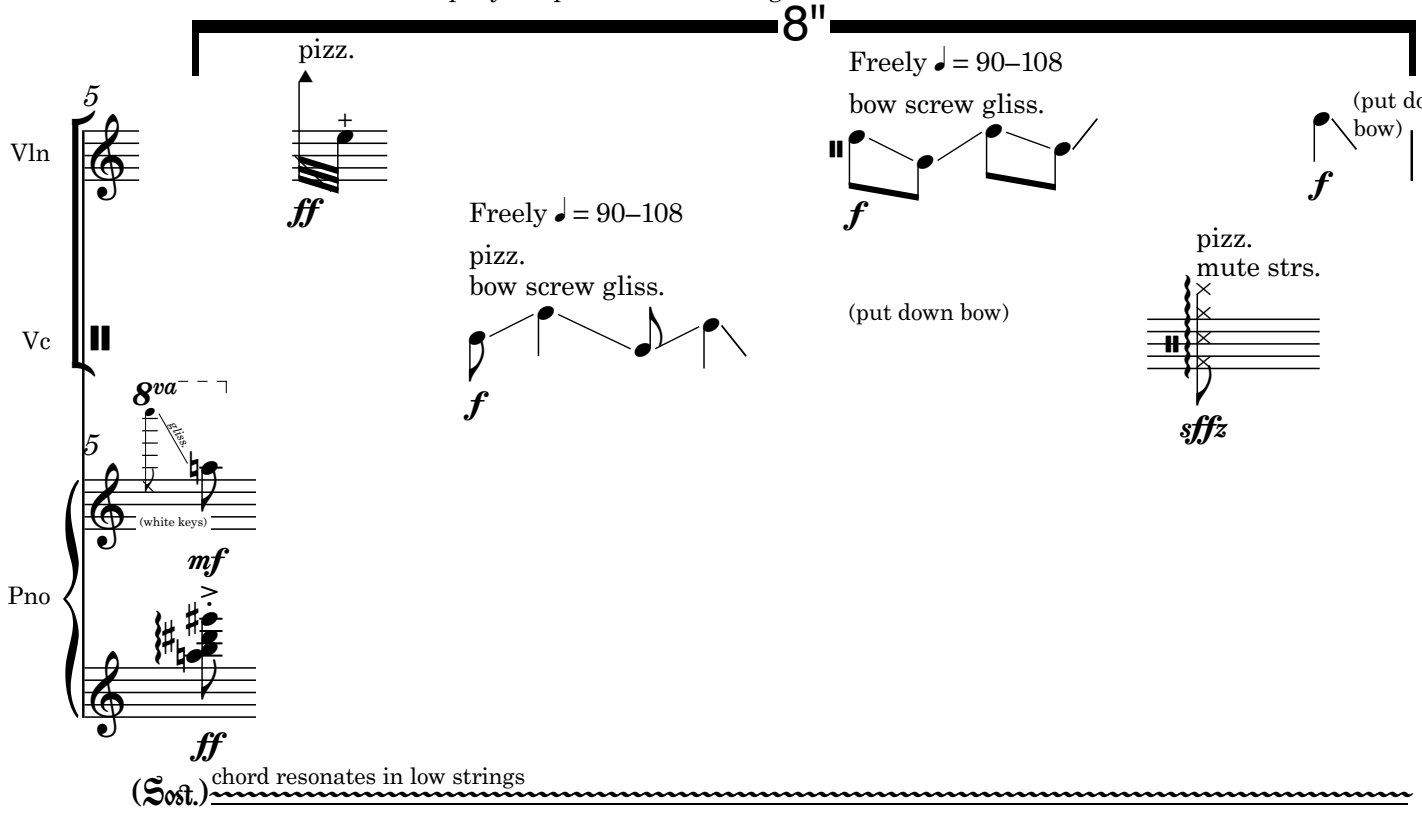
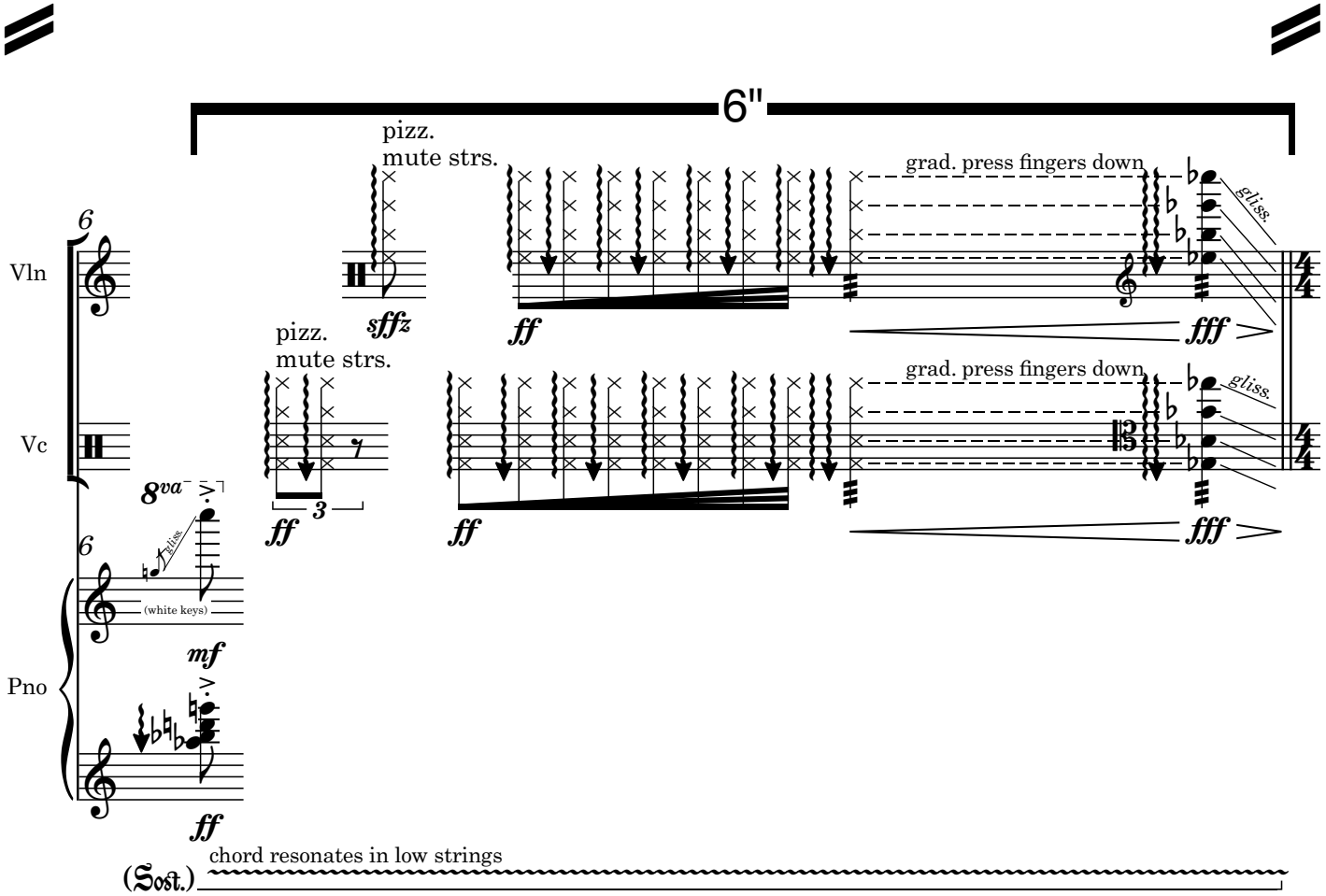
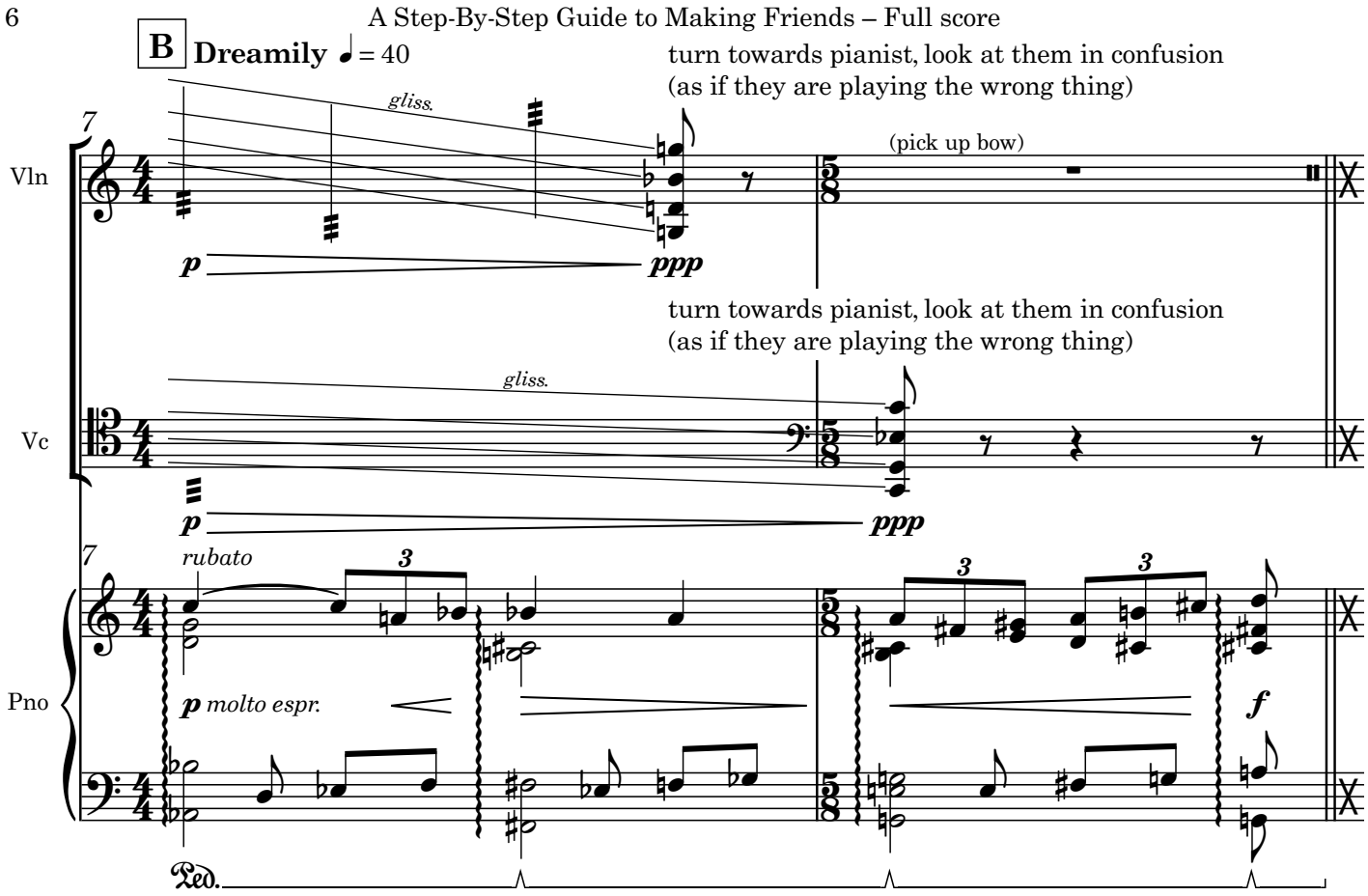
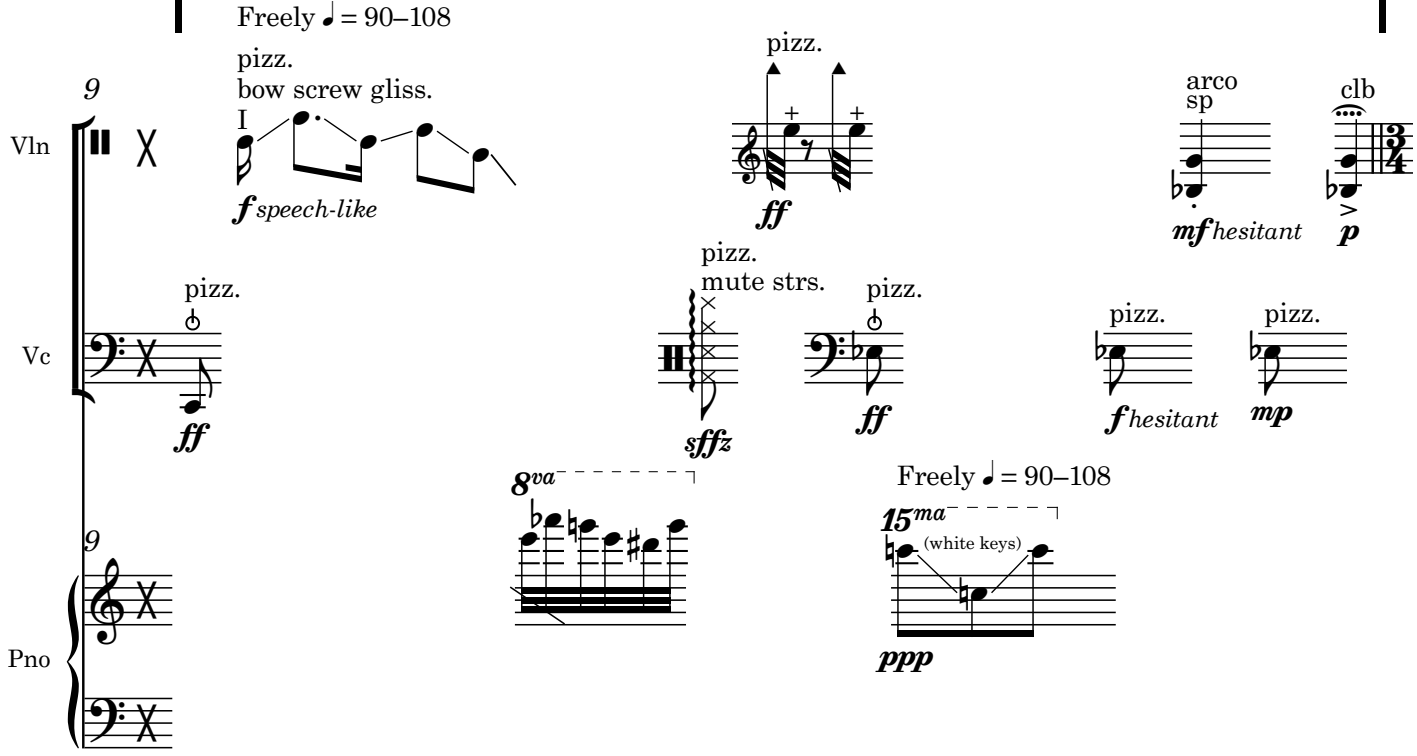

8"
Vln
Vc
Pno
pizz.
ff
Freely ♩ = 90–108
bow screw gliss.
f
(put down bow)
f
Freely ♩ = 90–108
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
f
(put down bow)
pizz.
mute strs.
sffz
8va
gliss.
(white keys)
mf
ff
(Sost.)
chord resonates in low strings

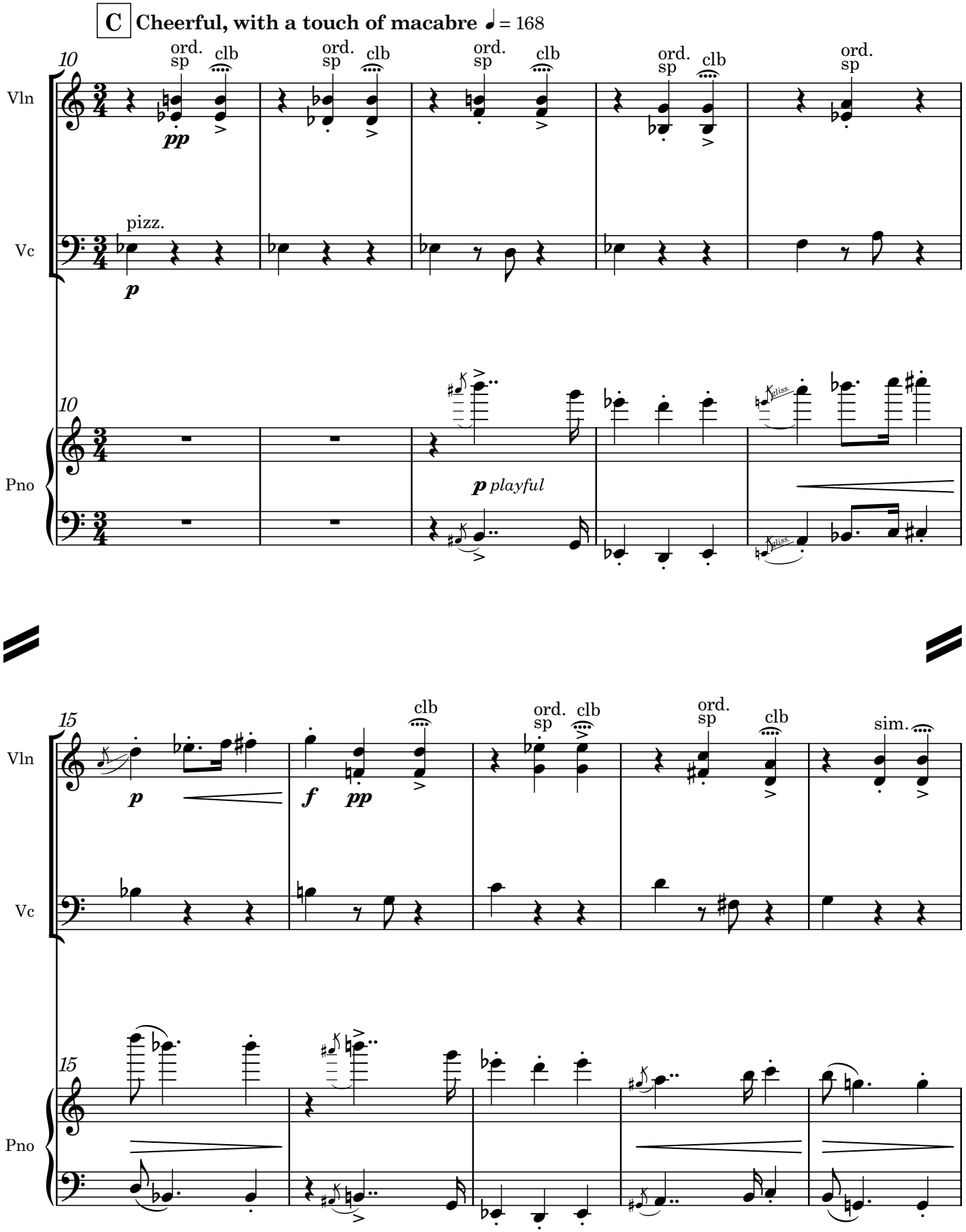

6"
Vln
Vc
Pno
pizz.
mute strs.
sffz
ff
grad. press fingers down
gliss.
fff
pizz.
mute strs.
ff
3
grad. press fingers down
gliss.
fff
8va
gliss.
(white keys)
mf
ff
(Sost.)
chord resonates in low strings

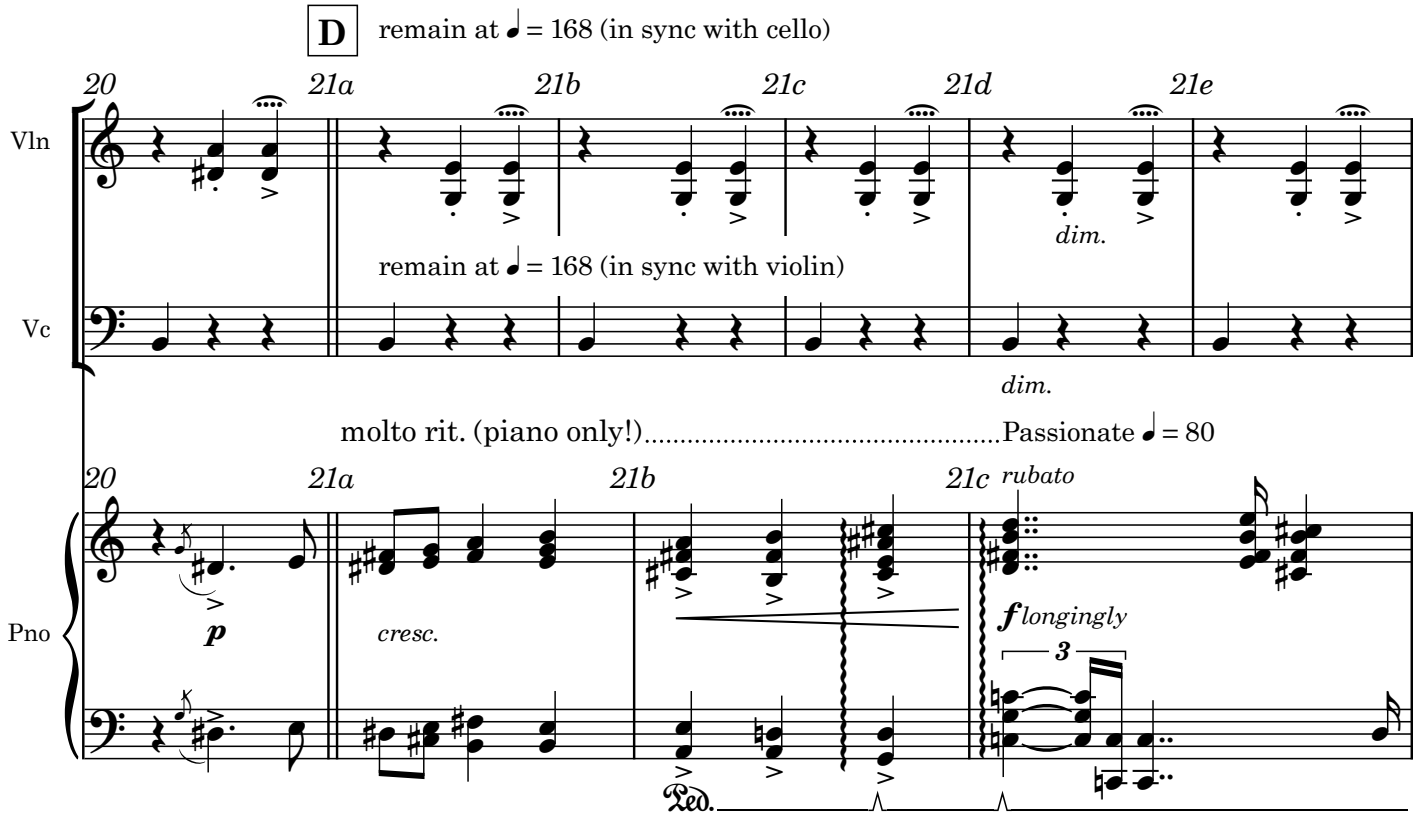


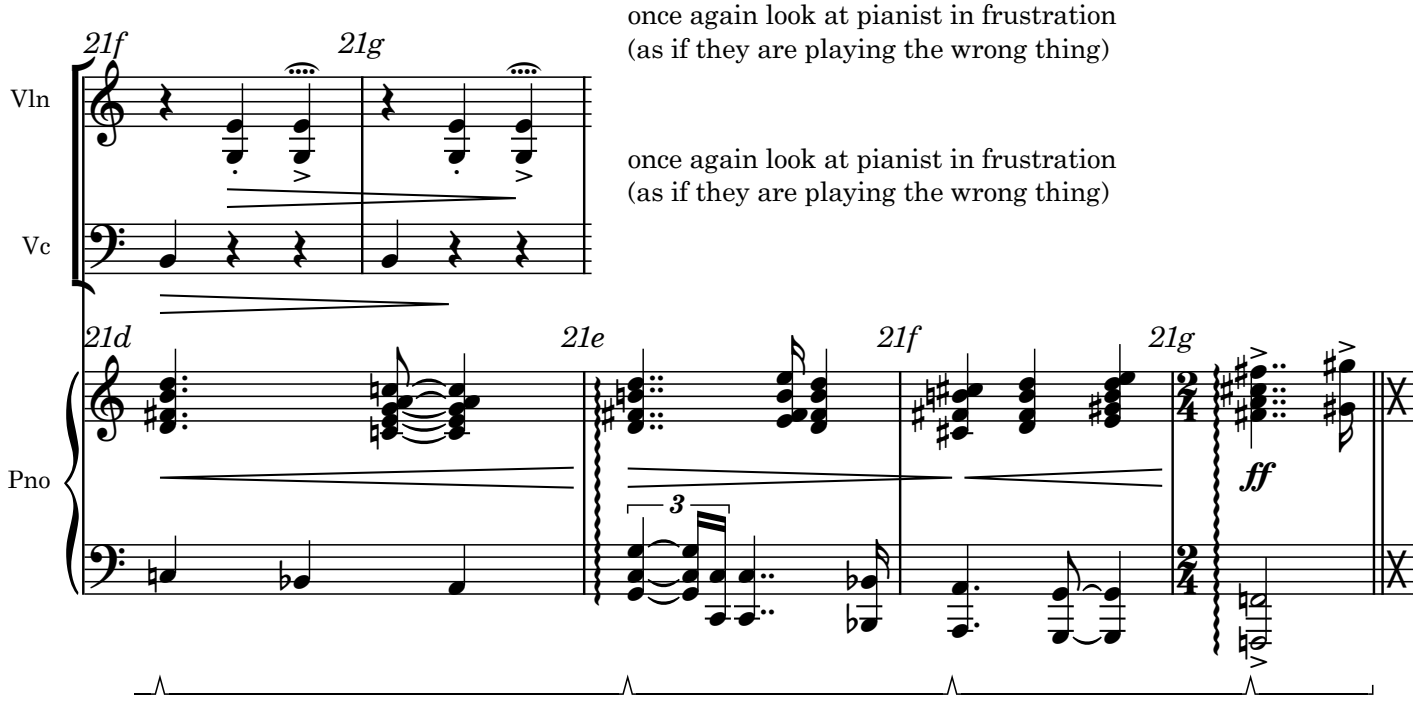
Discussion (what kind of music should we play?)

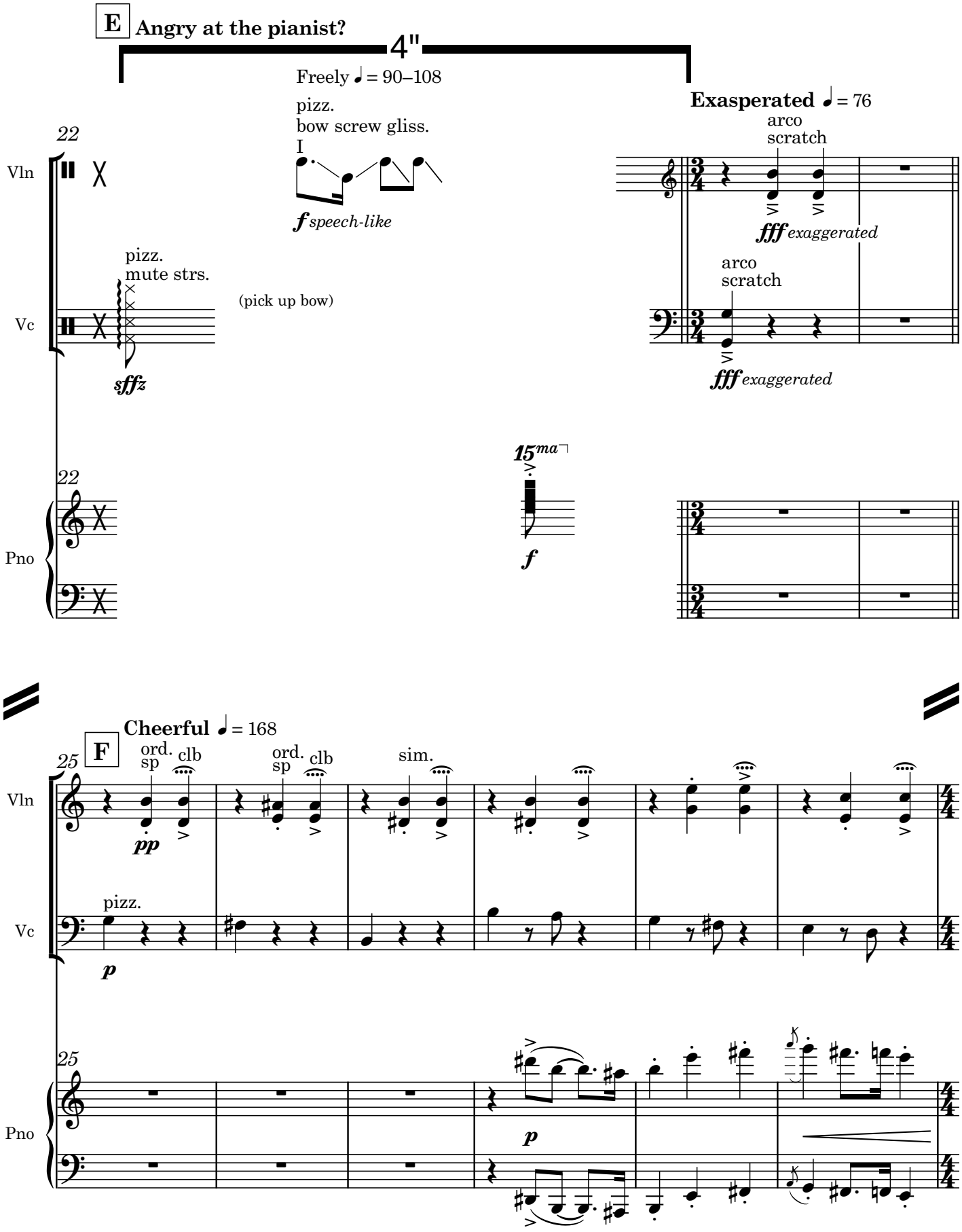
10"

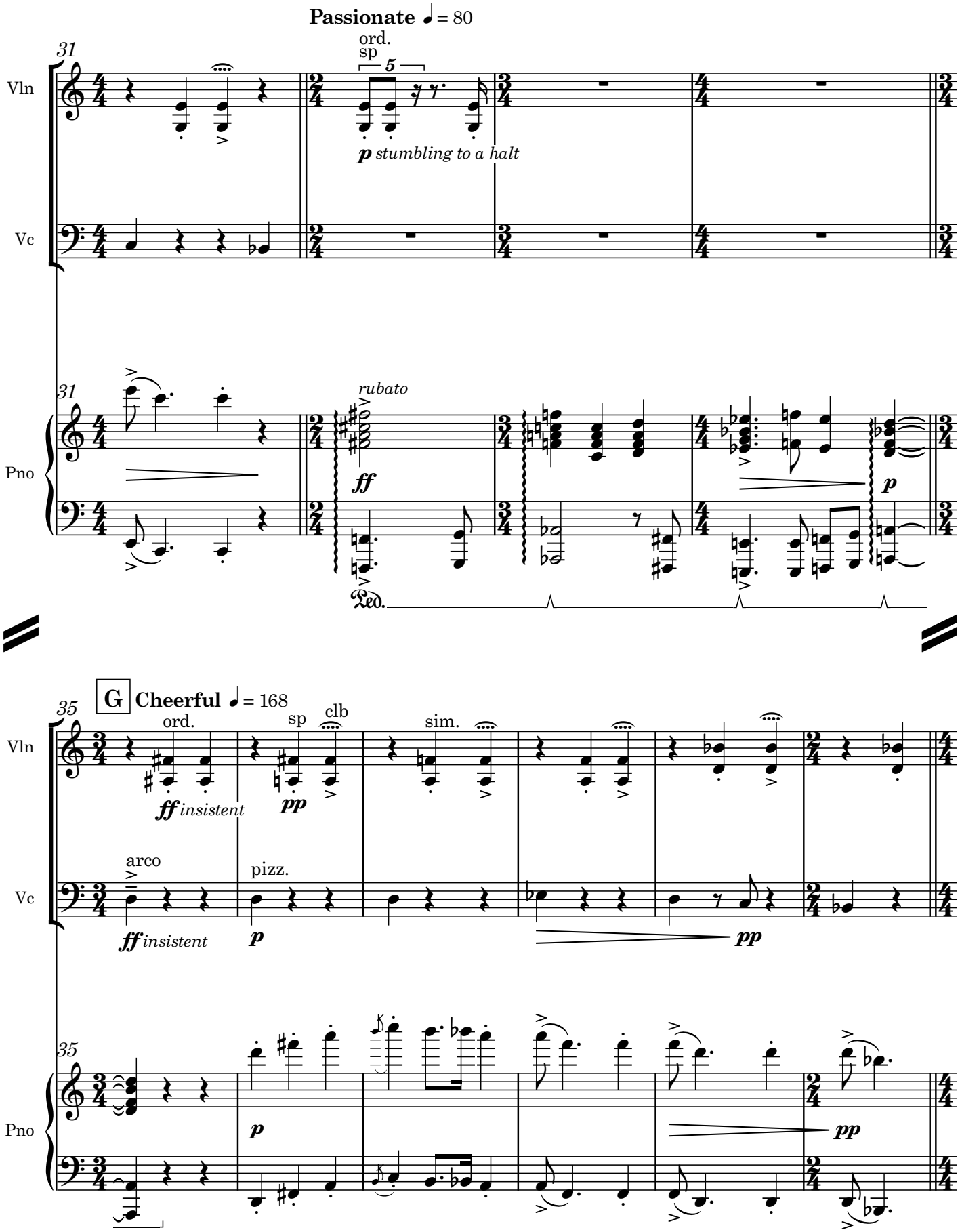


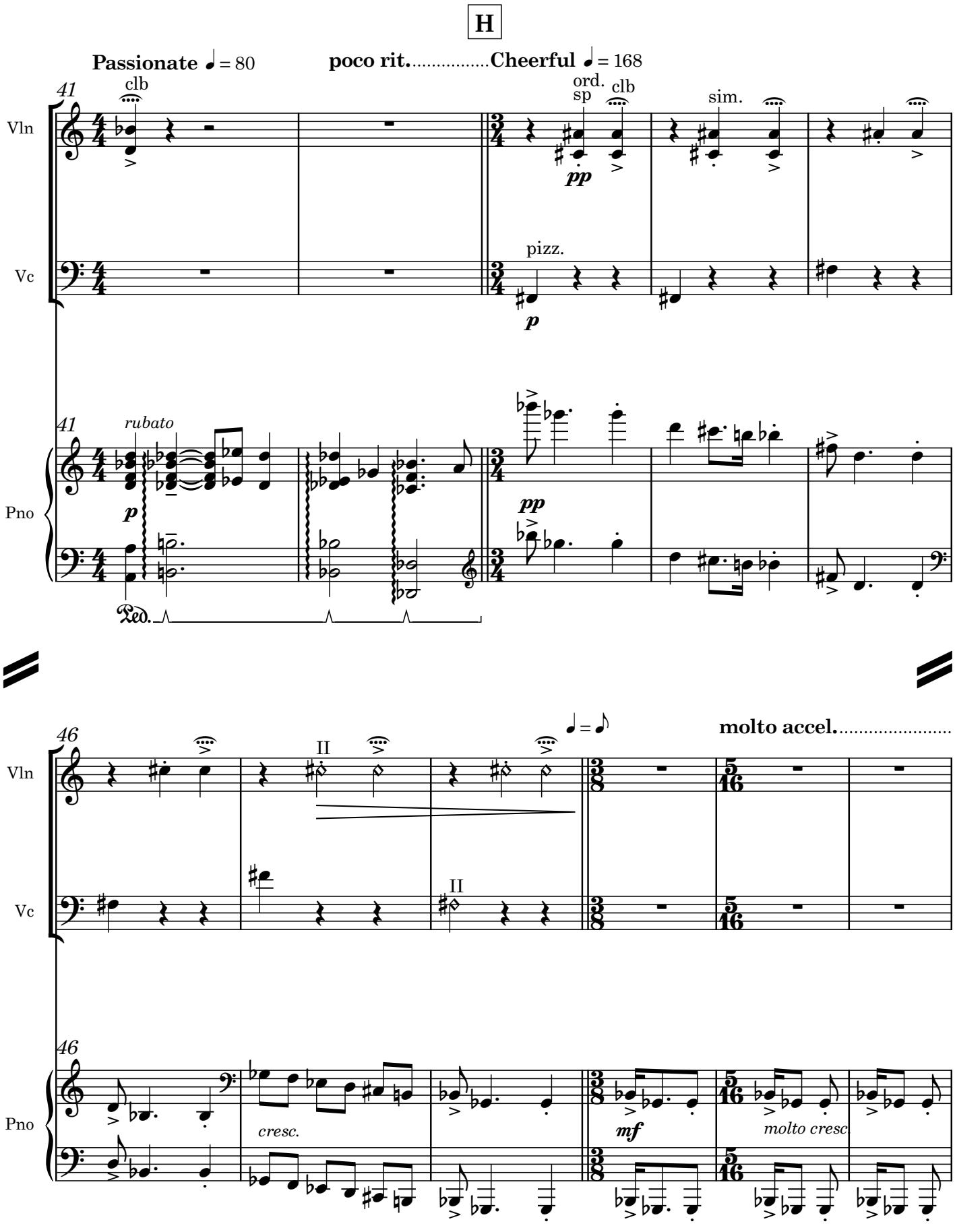

C
Cheerful, with a touch of macabre
= 168
10
Vln
Vc
Pno
ord.
sp
clb
pizz.
pp
p
p playful
15
f
sim.

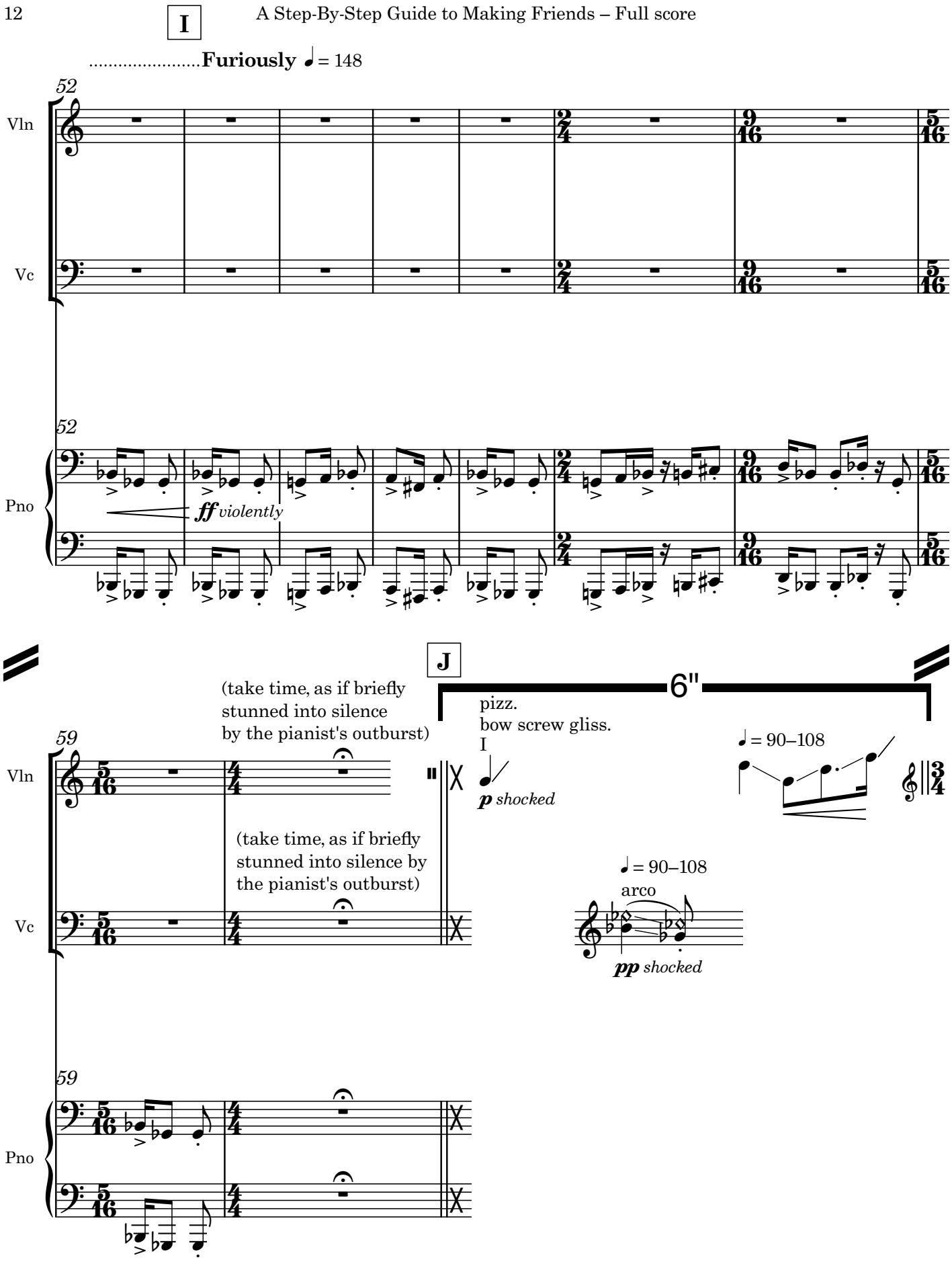

D
remain at ♩ = 168 (in sync with cello)
20
21a
21b
21c
21d
21e
Vln
Vc
dim.
remain at ♩ = 168 (in sync with violin)
dim.
molto rit. (piano only!)
Passionate ♩ = 80
20
21a
21b
21c
rubato
Pno
p
cresc.
f longingly
3
Ped.

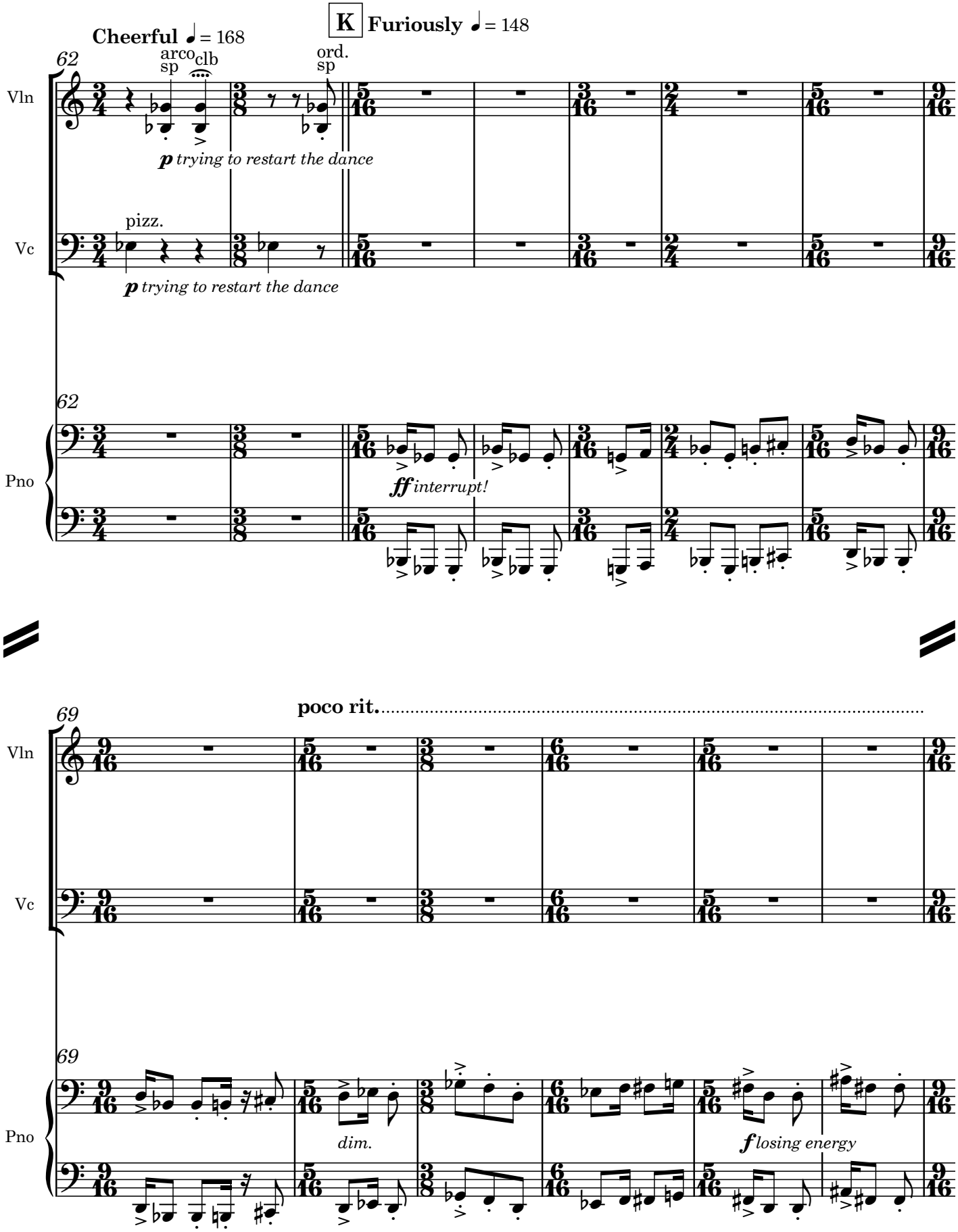

21f
21g
Vln
Vc
once again look at pianist in frustration
(as if they are playing the wrong thing)
once again look at pianist in frustration
(as if they are playing the wrong thing)
21d
21e
21f
21g
Pno
3
ff

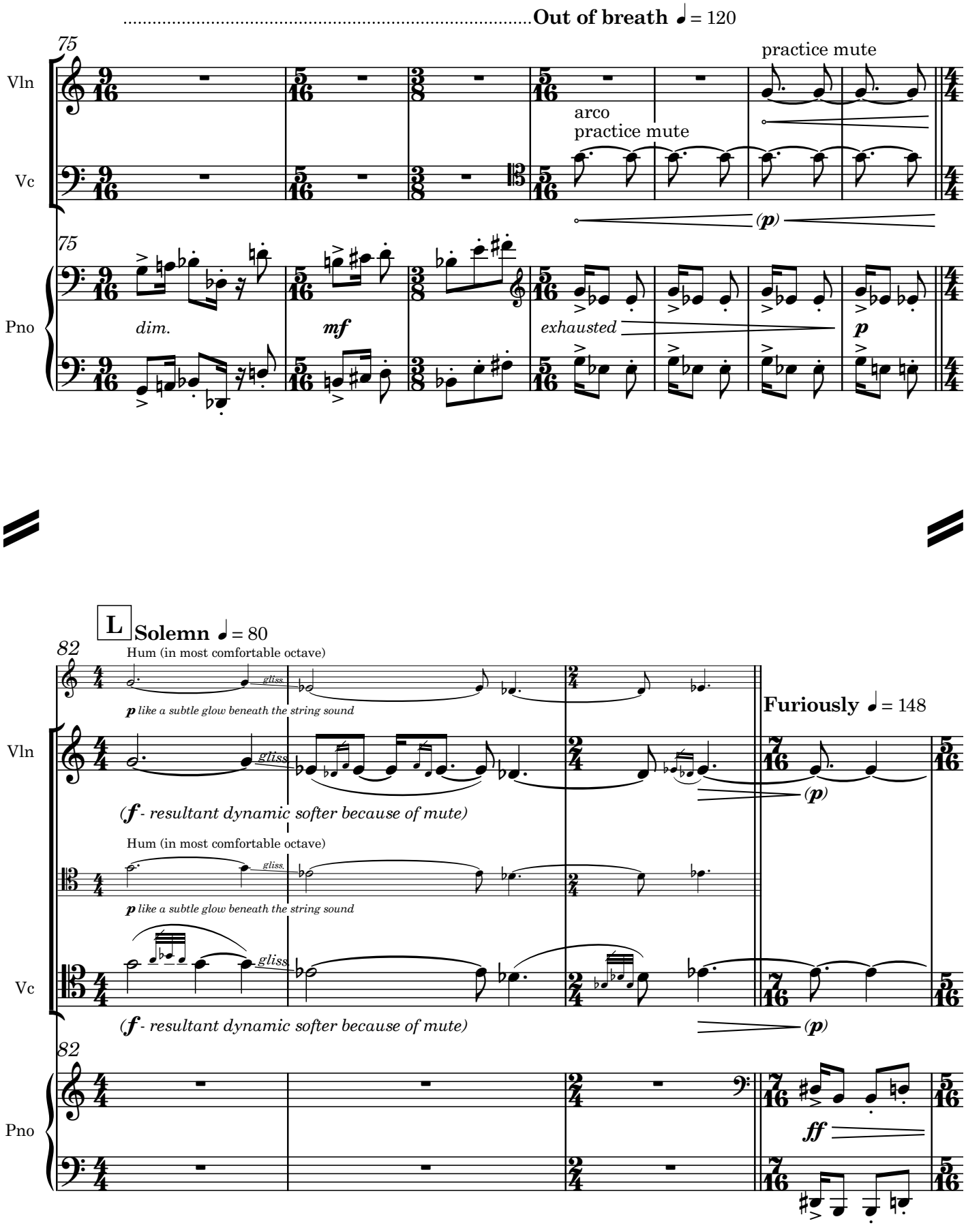

E
Angry at the pianist?
4"
Freely ♩ = 90–108
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
f speech-like
Exasperated ♩ = 76
arco
scratch
fff exaggerated
arco
scratch
fff exaggerated
22
Vln
Vc
Pno
pizz.
mute strs.
sffz
(pick up bow)
15ma
f
F
Cheerful ♩ = 168
25
ord.
sp
clb
sim.
pp
pizz.
p
p

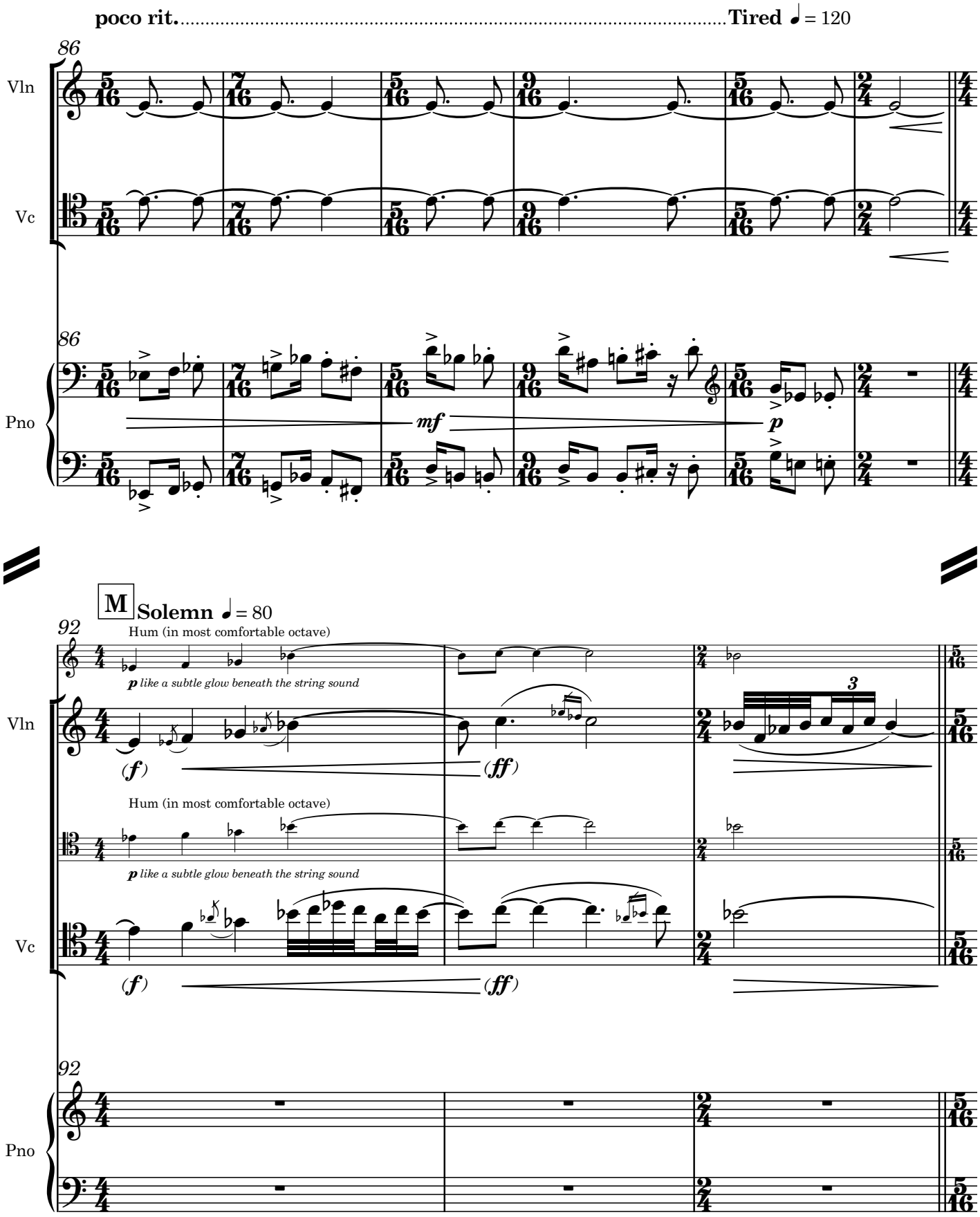

Passionate ♩ = 80
31
Vln
Vc
Pno
ord.
sp
5
p stumbling to a halt
rubato
ff
p
Ped.
G
Cheerful ♩ = 168
35
ord.
sp
clb
sim.
ff insistent
pp
arco
pizz.
ff insistent
p
pp
p
pp

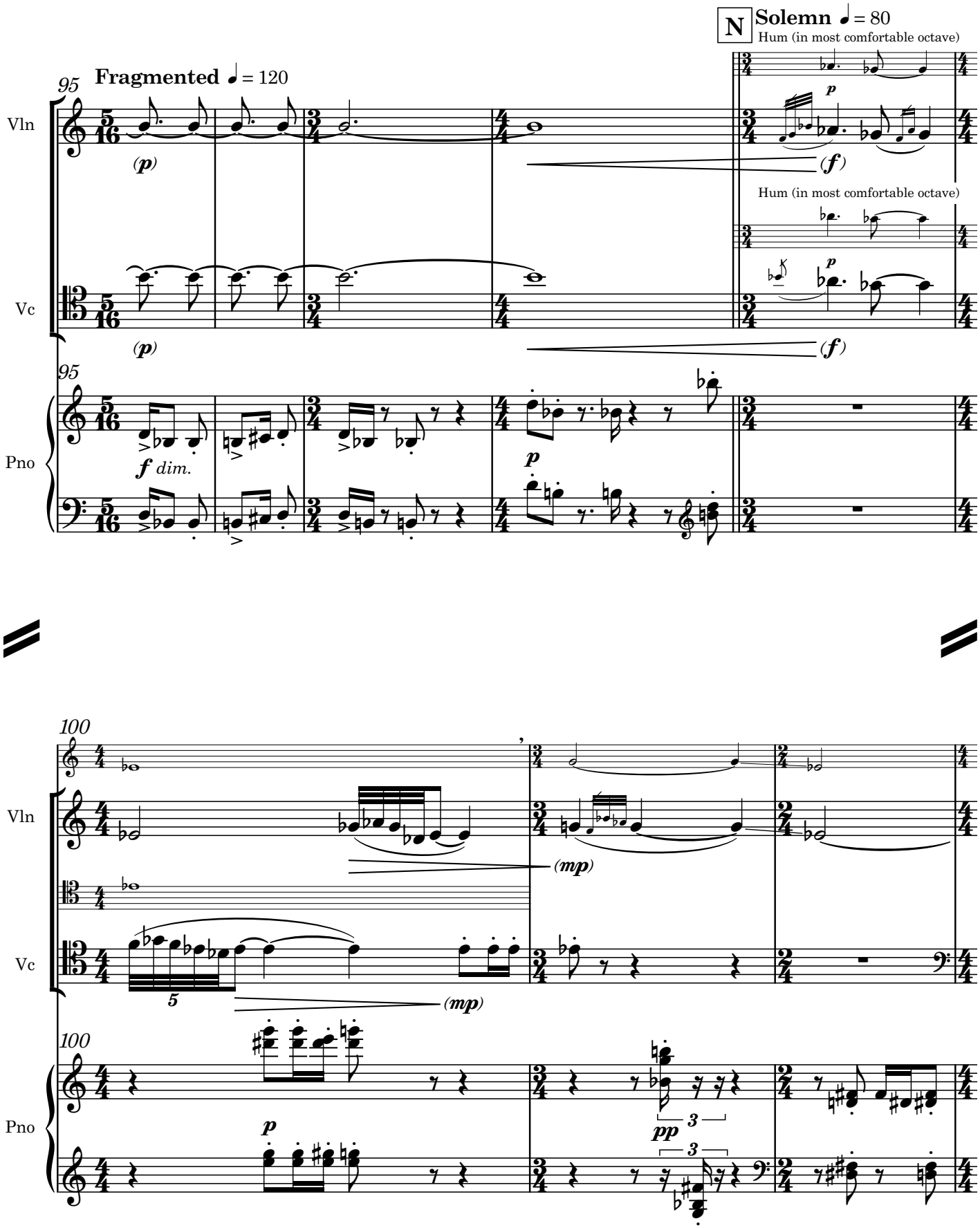

H
Passionate ♩ = 80
poco rit. Cheerful ♩ = 168
41
clb
ord.
sp
clb
sim.
pizz.
Vln
Vc
Pno
rubato
pp
p
Ped.
46
II
molto accel.
cresc.
mf
molto cresc

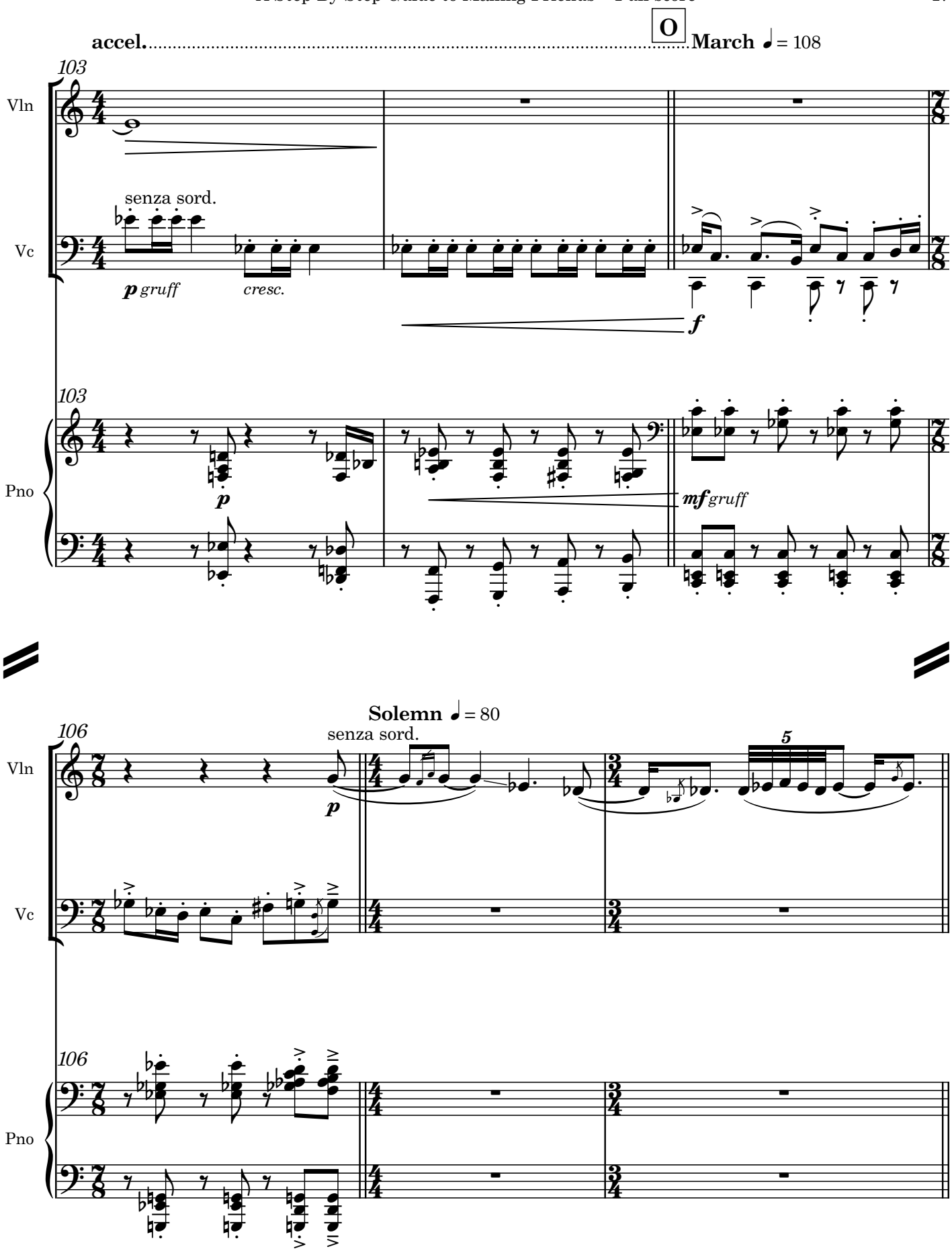

I
Furiously ♩ = 148
52
Vln
Vc
52
Pno
ff violently
J
6"
(take time, as if briefly stunned into silence by the pianist's outburst)
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
p shocked
♩ = 90–108
59
Vln
(take time, as if briefly stunned into silence by the pianist's outburst)
♩ = 90–108
arco
pp shocked
Vc
59
Pno

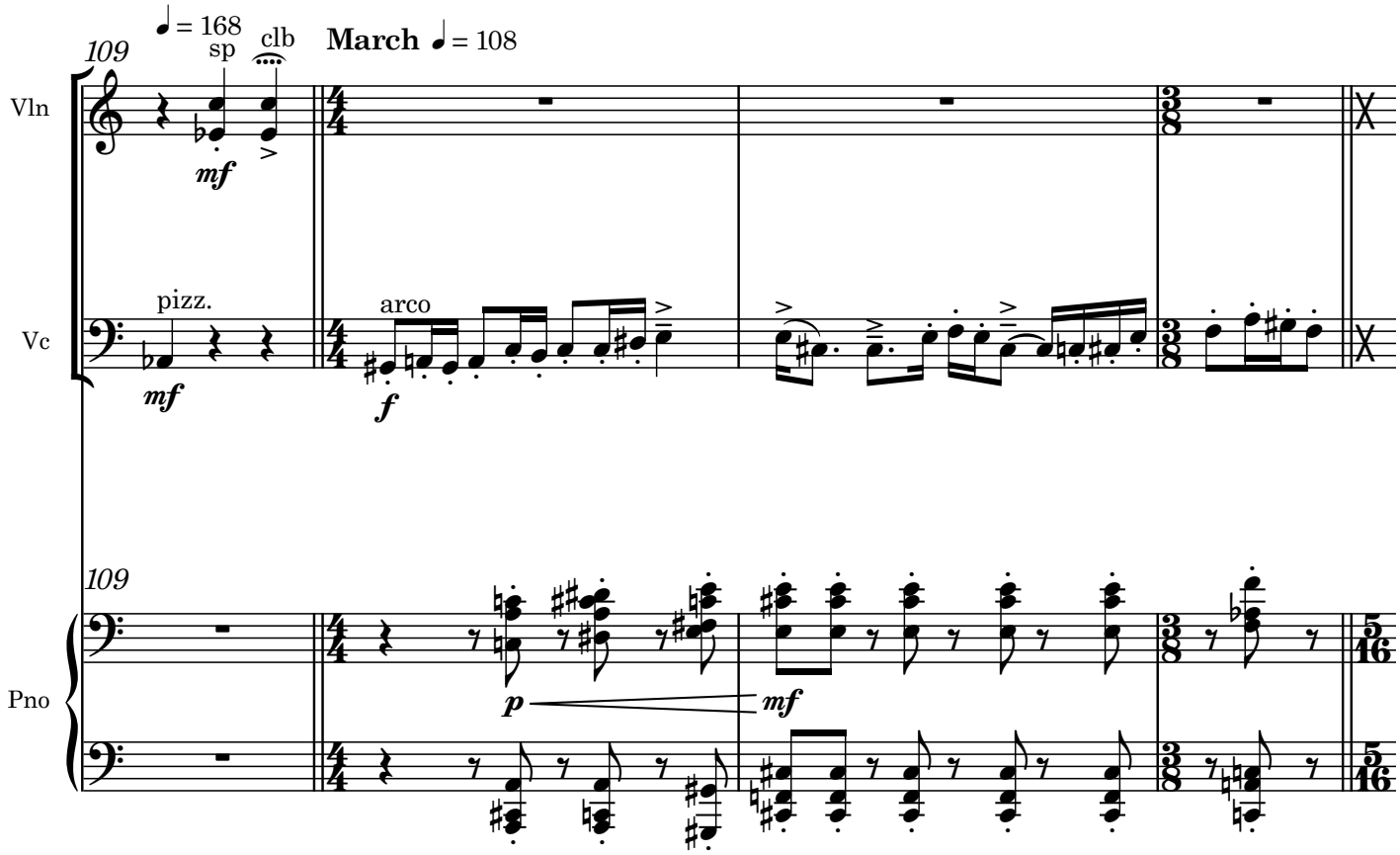

K
Furiously ♩= 148
Cheerful ♩= 168
62
arco
sp
clb
ord.
sp
Vln
p trying to restart the dance
pizz.
Vc
p trying to restart the dance
62
Pno
ff interrupt!
poco rit.
69
Vln
Vc
69
Pno
dim.
f losing energy

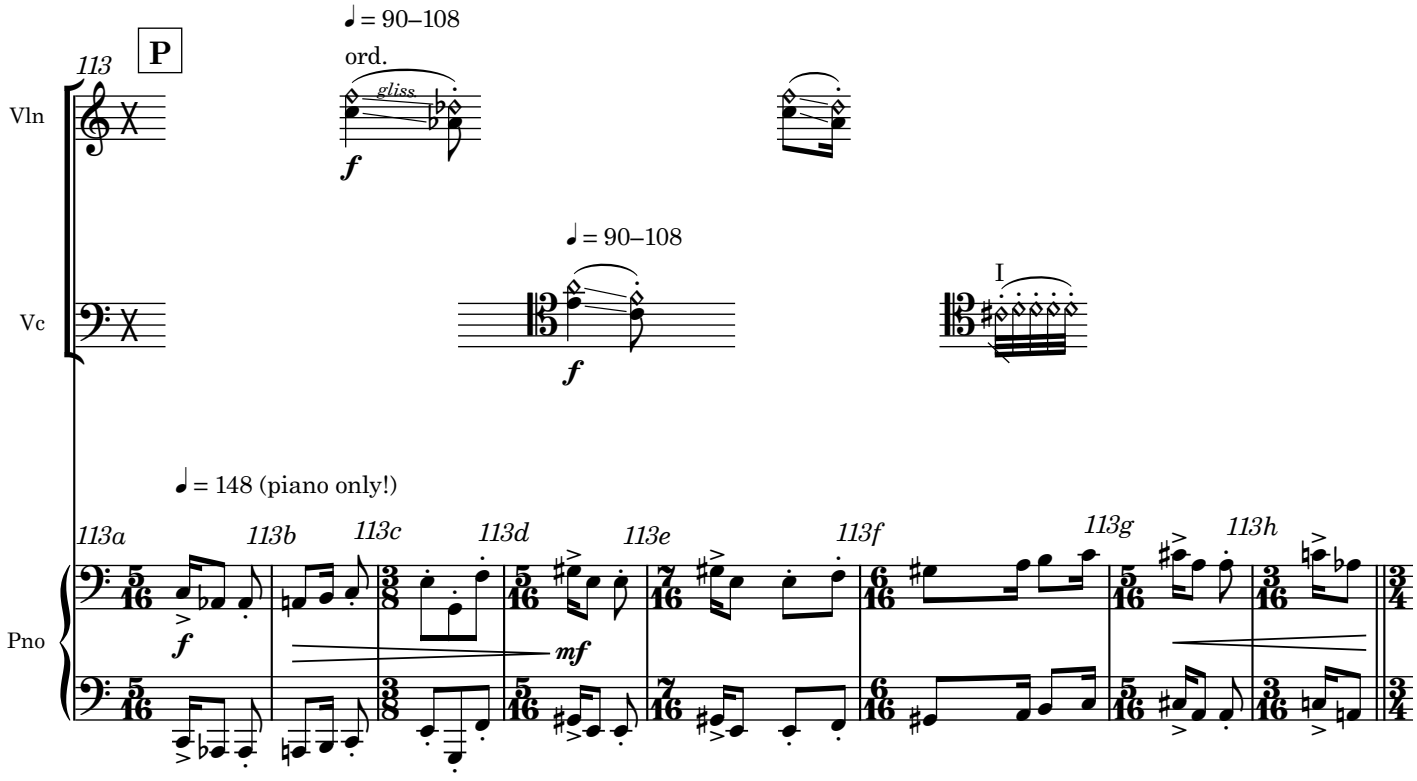

Out of breath ♩ = 120
75
Vln
Vc
Pno
practice mute
arco
practice mute
(p)
dim.
mf
exhausted
p
L
Solemn ♩ = 80
82
Hum (in most comfortable octave)
gliss.
p like a subtle glow beneath the string sound
Furiously ♩ = 148
(f - resultant dynamic softer because of mute)
(p)
ff

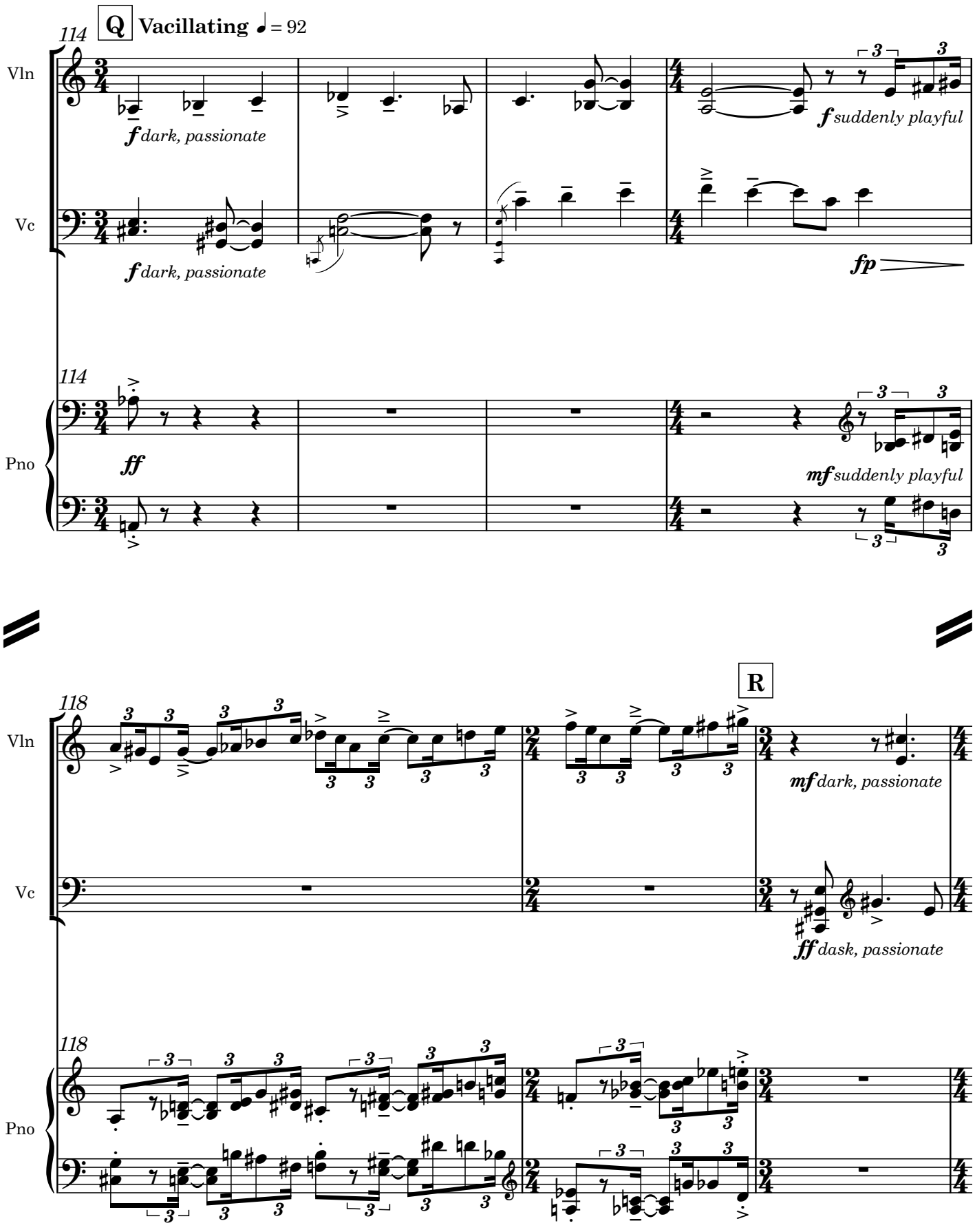

poco rit.
Tired ♩ = 120
86
Vln
Vc
Pno
mf
p
M
Solemn ♩ = 80
92
Hum (in most comfortable octave)
p like a subtle glow beneath the string sound
(f)
(ff)
3

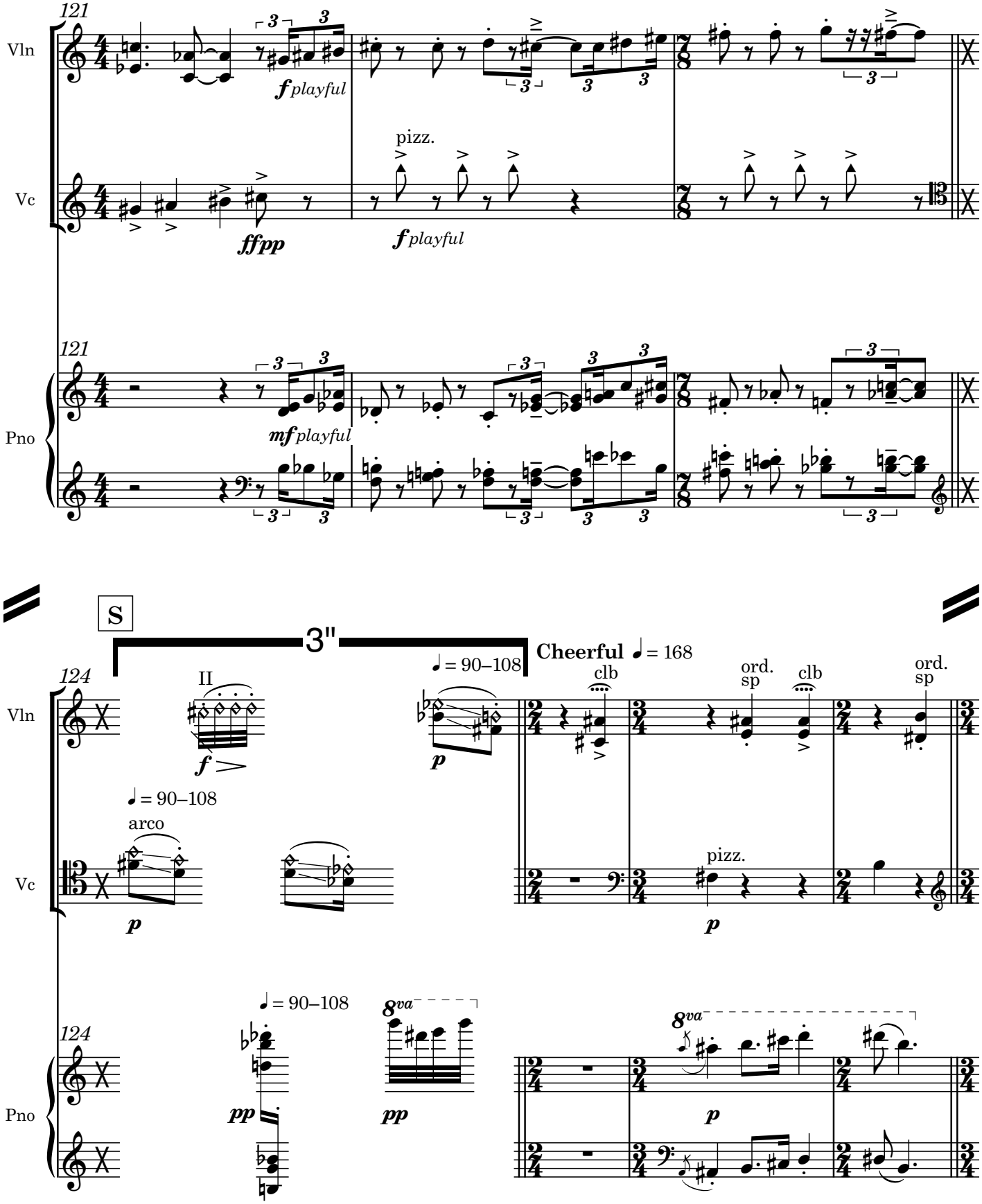

N
Solemn ♩ = 80
Hum (in most comfortable octave)
95
Fragmented ♩ = 120
Vln
Vc
Pno
(p)
(f)
f dim.
p
Hum (in most comfortable octave)
100
(mp)
5
pp
3

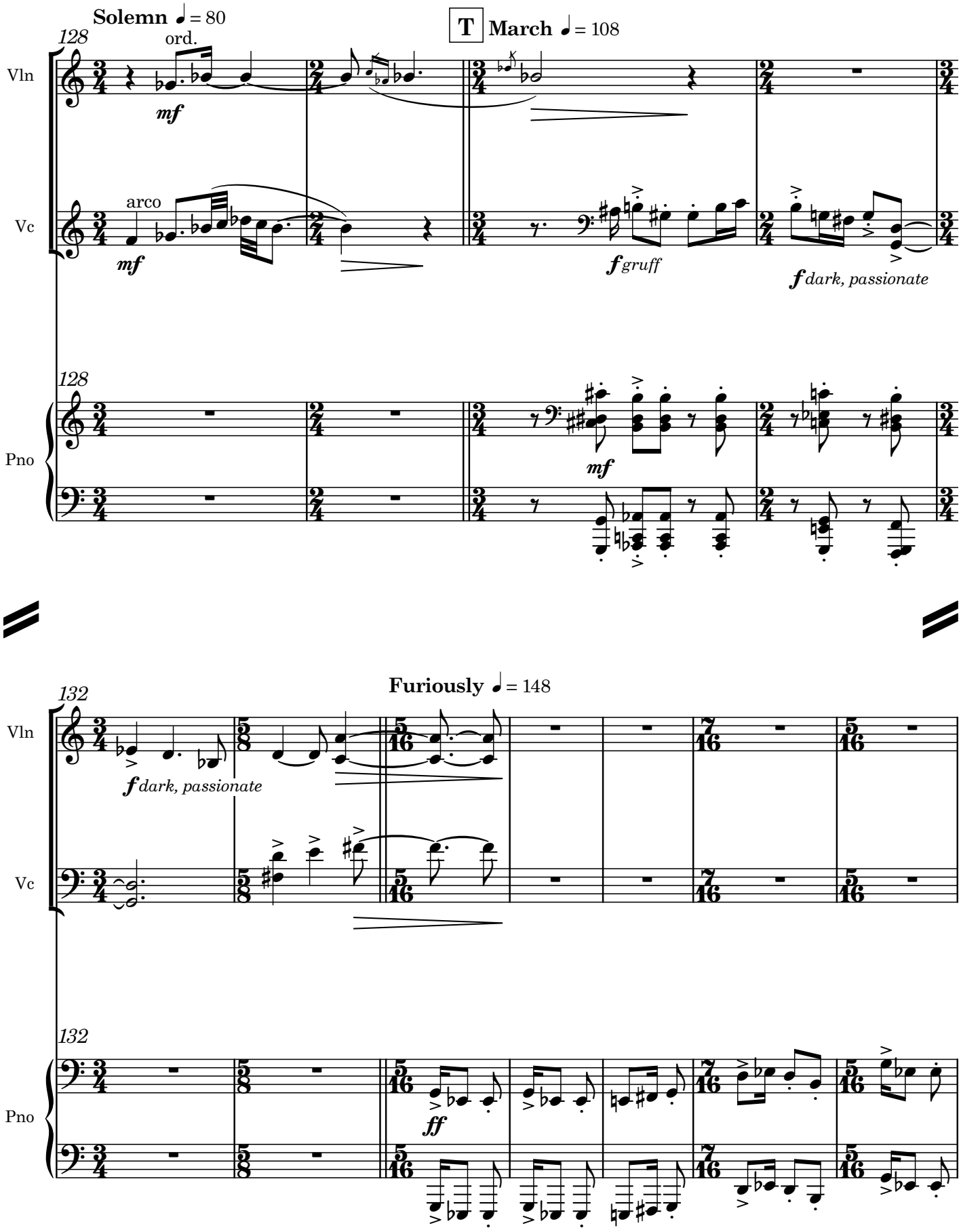

accel.
O
March ♩ = 108
103
Vln
Vc
senza sord.
p gruff
cresc.
f
103
Pno
p
mf gruff
Solemn ♩ = 80
106
senza sord.
p
5
106

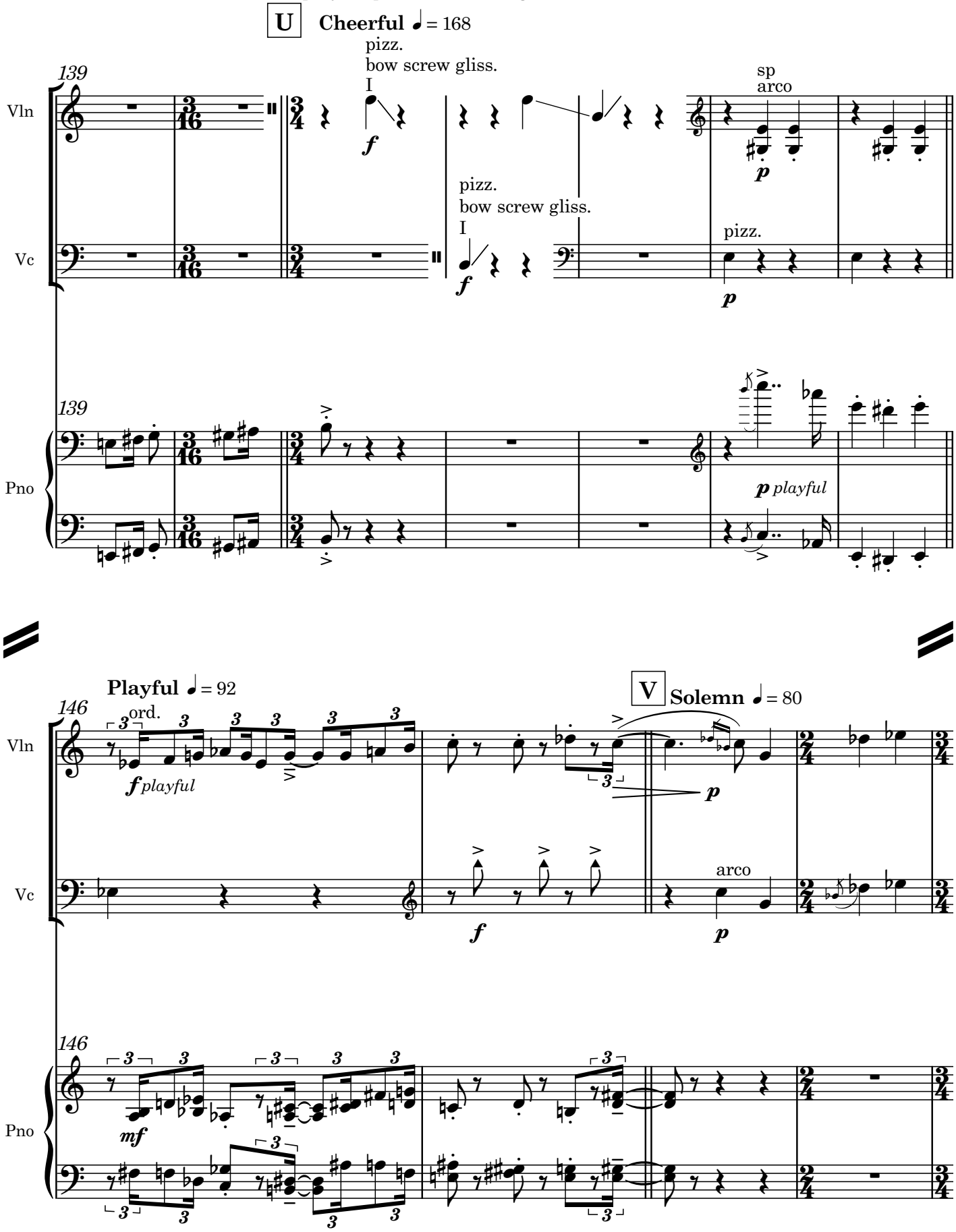

109
♩ = 168
sp
clb
March ♩ = 108
Vln
mf
pizz.
Vc
mf
arco
f
109
Pno
p
mf

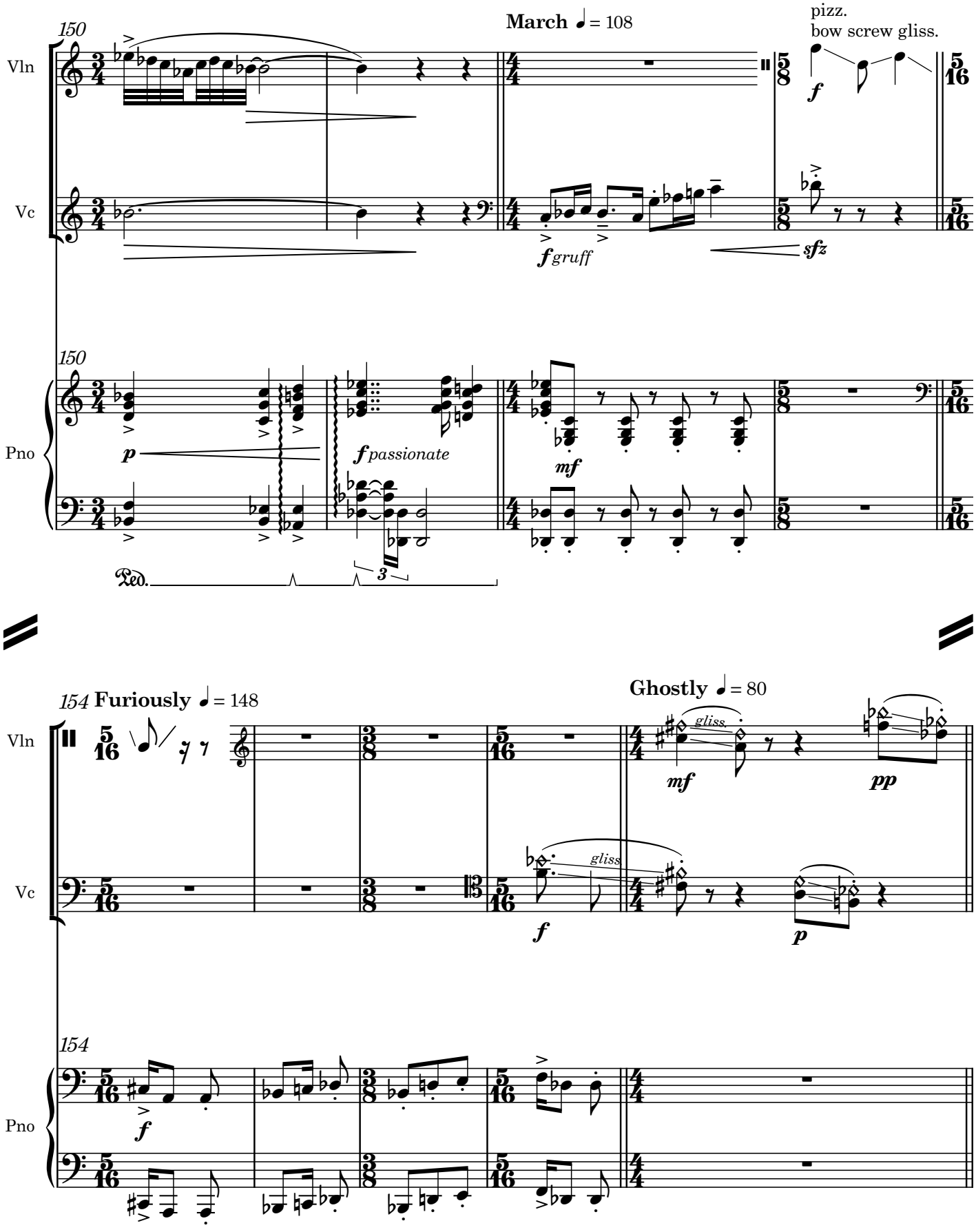

113
P
♩ = 90–108
ord.
gliss
Vln
f
♩ = 90–108
Vc
f
I
♩ = 148 (piano only!)
113a
113b
113c
113d
113e
113f
113g
113h
Pno
f
mf

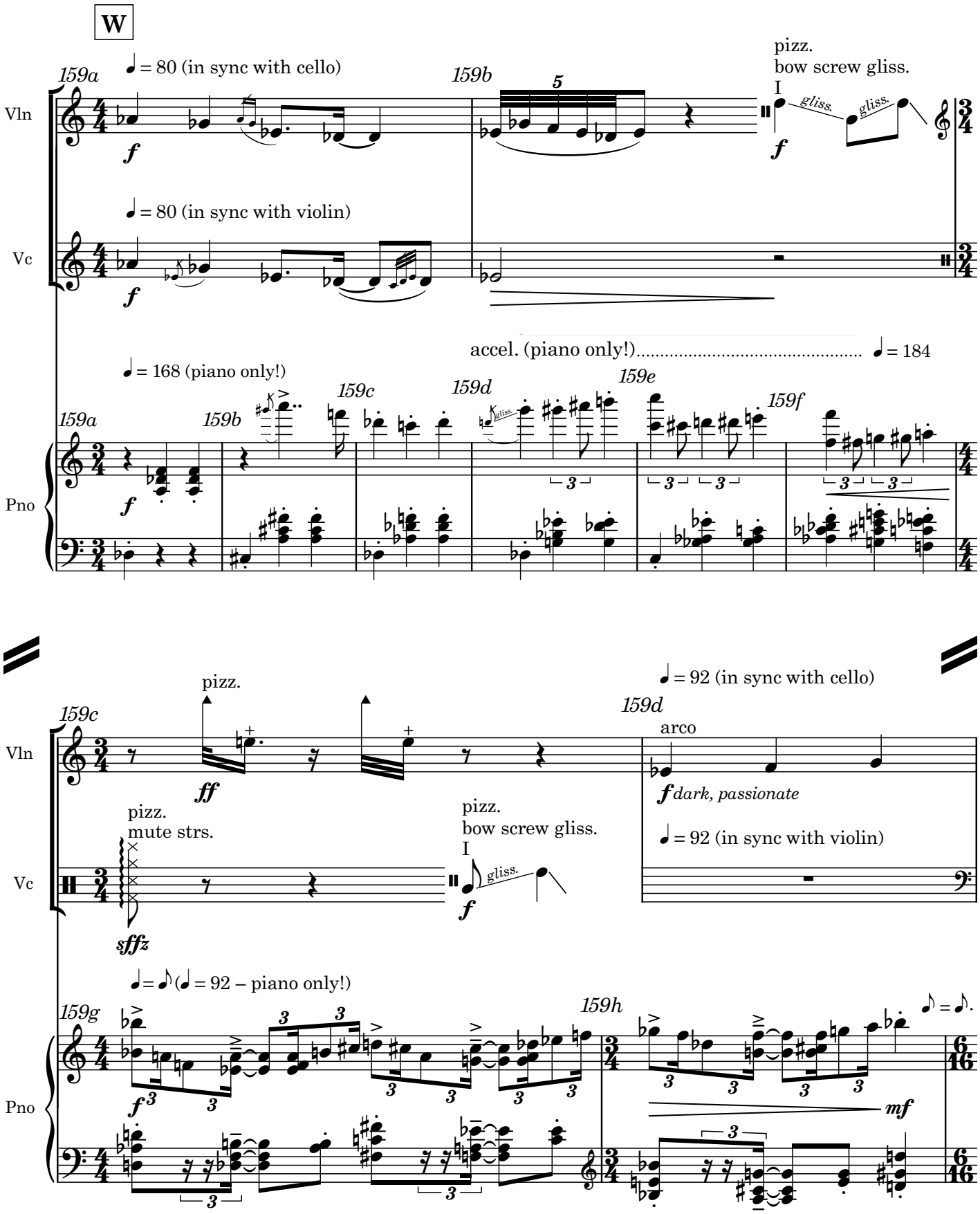

114
Q
Vacillating ♩ = 92
Vln
Vc
Pno
f dark, passionate
f suddenly playful
fp
ff
mf suddenly playful
118
R
mf dark, passionate
ff dask, passionate

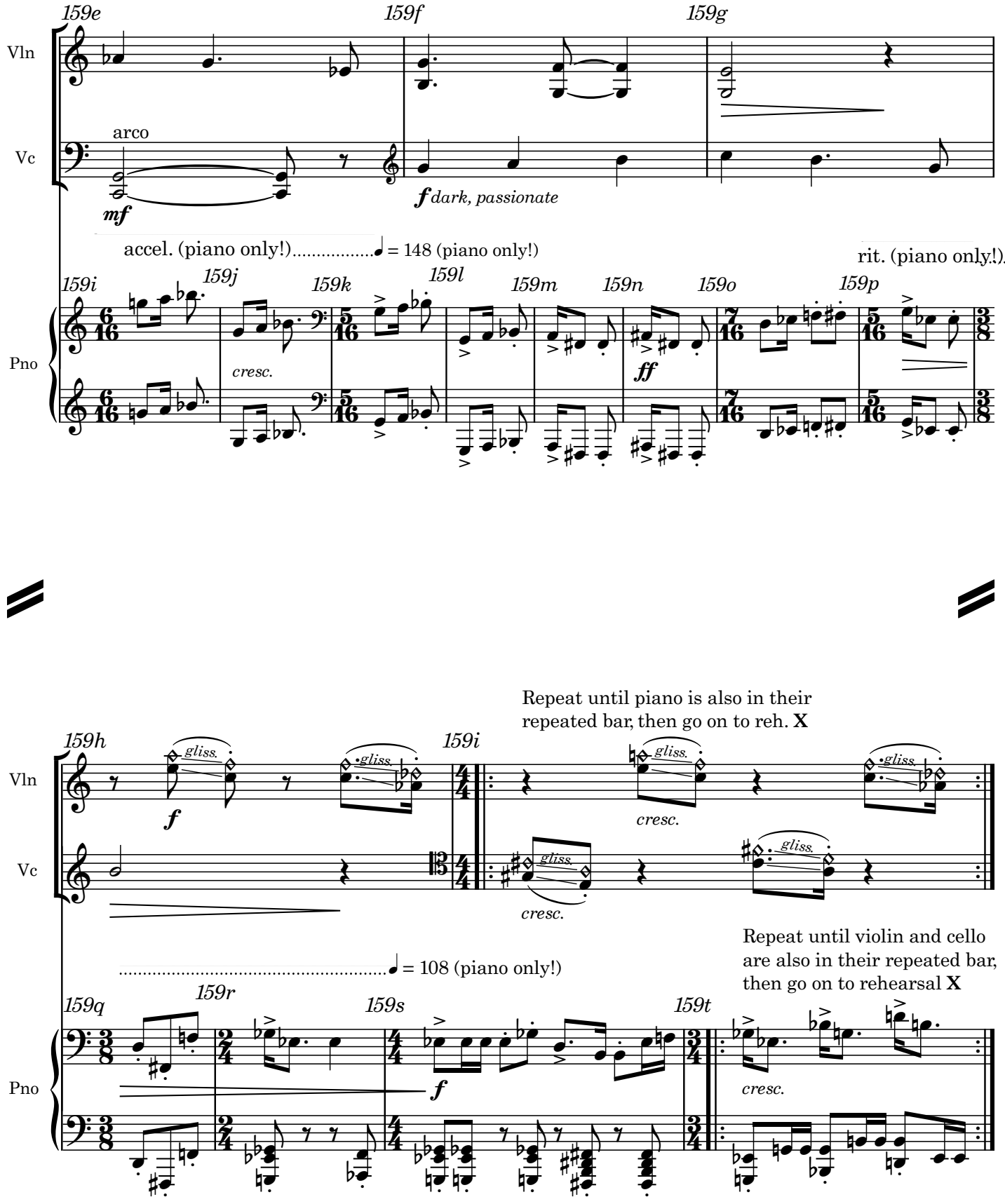

121
Vln
Vc
Pno
ffpp
f playful
pizz.
mf playful
S
3"
124
II
arco
= 90–108
Cheerful = 168
clb
ord. sp
pizz.
8va
p
pp


Solemn ♩ = 80
T March ♩ = 108
128
ord.
mf
arco
mf
f gruff
f dark, passionate
Vln
Vc
Pno
Furiously ♩ = 148
132
f dark, passionate
ff


U
Cheerful ♩ = 168
139
Vln
Vc
Pno
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
sp
arco
pizz.
playful
Playful ♩ = 92
146
ord.
playful
V
Solemn ♩ = 80
arco

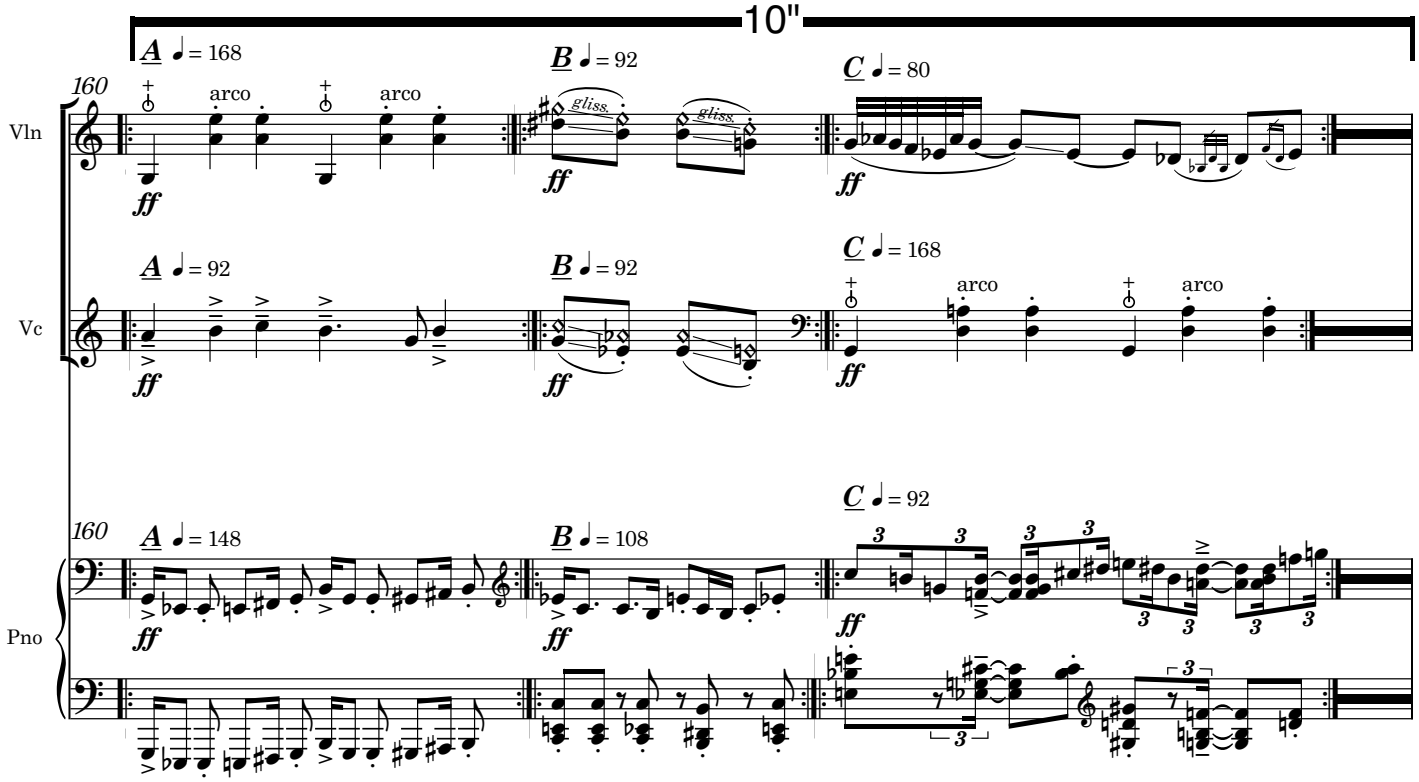

150
March ♩ = 108
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
Vln
Vc
Pno
f
gruff
sfz
p
passionate
mf
Ped.
3
154 Furiously ♩ = 148
Ghostly ♩ = 80
gliss
pp


W
159a
♩ = 80 (in sync with cello)
159b
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
gliss.
gliss.
Vln
♩ = 80 (in sync with violin)
Vc
accel. (piano only!)..... ♩ = 184
♩ = 168 (piano only!)
159a
159b
159c
159d
159e
159f
Pno
159c
pizz.
ff
♩ = 92 (in sync with cello)
159d
arco
f dark, passionate
Vln
pizz.
mute strs.
sffz
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
gliss.
♩ = 92 (in sync with violin)
Vc
♩ = ♪ (♩ = 92 – piano only!)
159g
159h
♪ = ♪.
f
mf
Pno

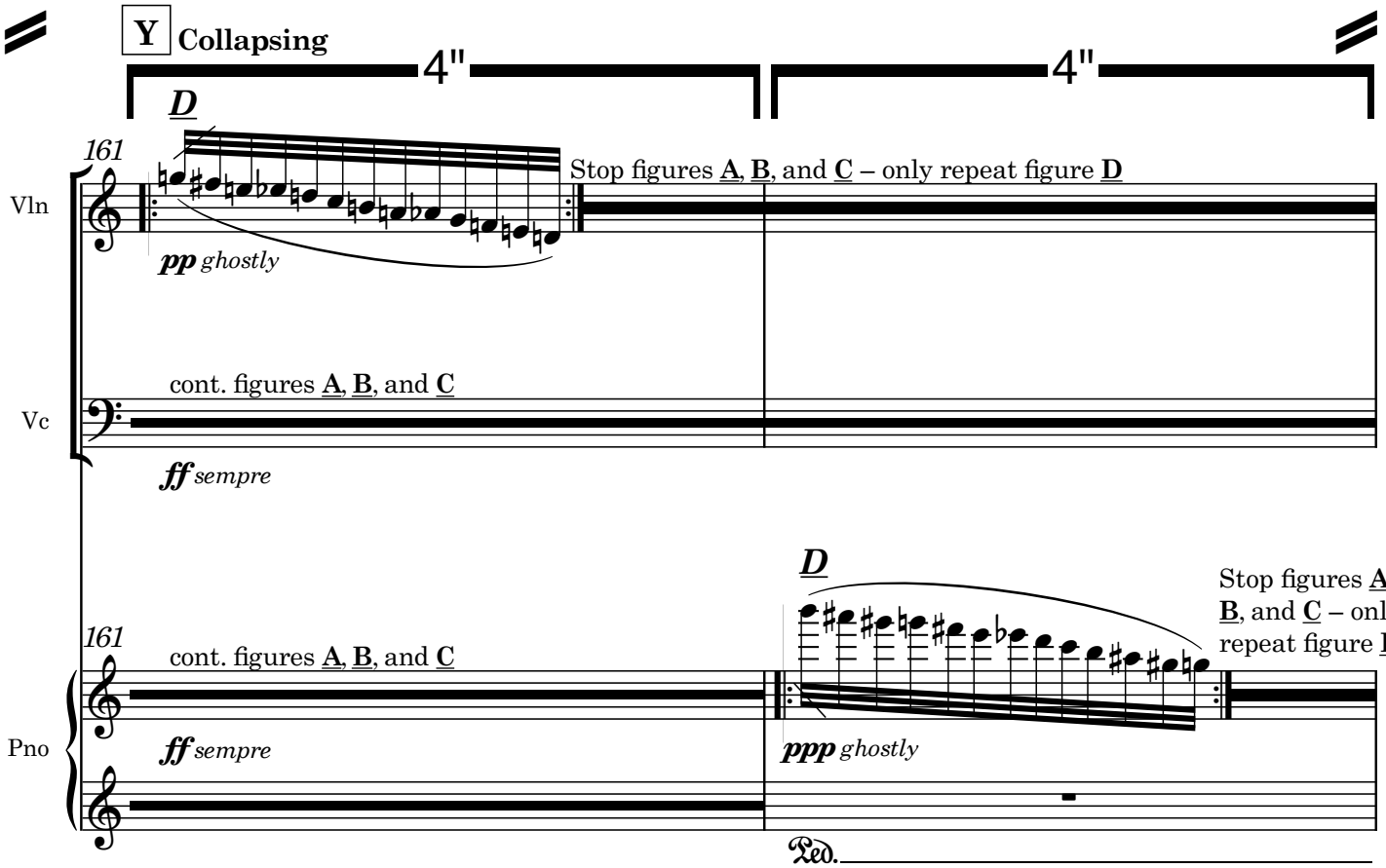

159e
159f
159g
Vln
Vc
arco
mf
f dark, passionate
accel. (piano only!)
= 148 (piano only!)
rit. (piano only!).
159i
159j
159k
159l
159m
159n
159o
159p
Pno
cresc.
ff
Repeat until piano is also in their repeated bar, then go on to reh. X
159h
159i
gliss.
f
cresc.
= 108 (piano only!)
Repeat until violin and cello are also in their repeated bar, then go on to rehearsal X
159q
159r
159s
159t

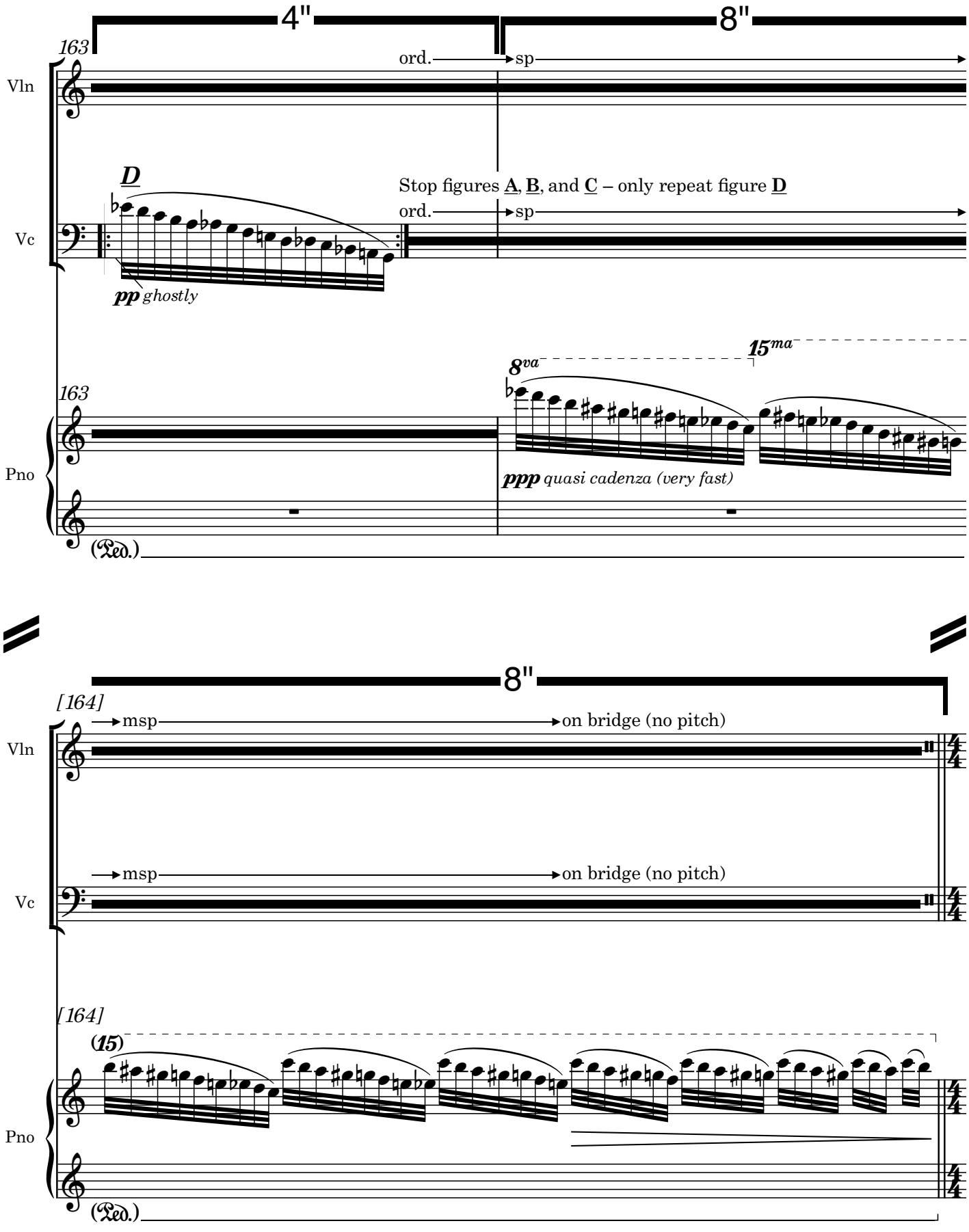
X **What happens if we mash everything together?**

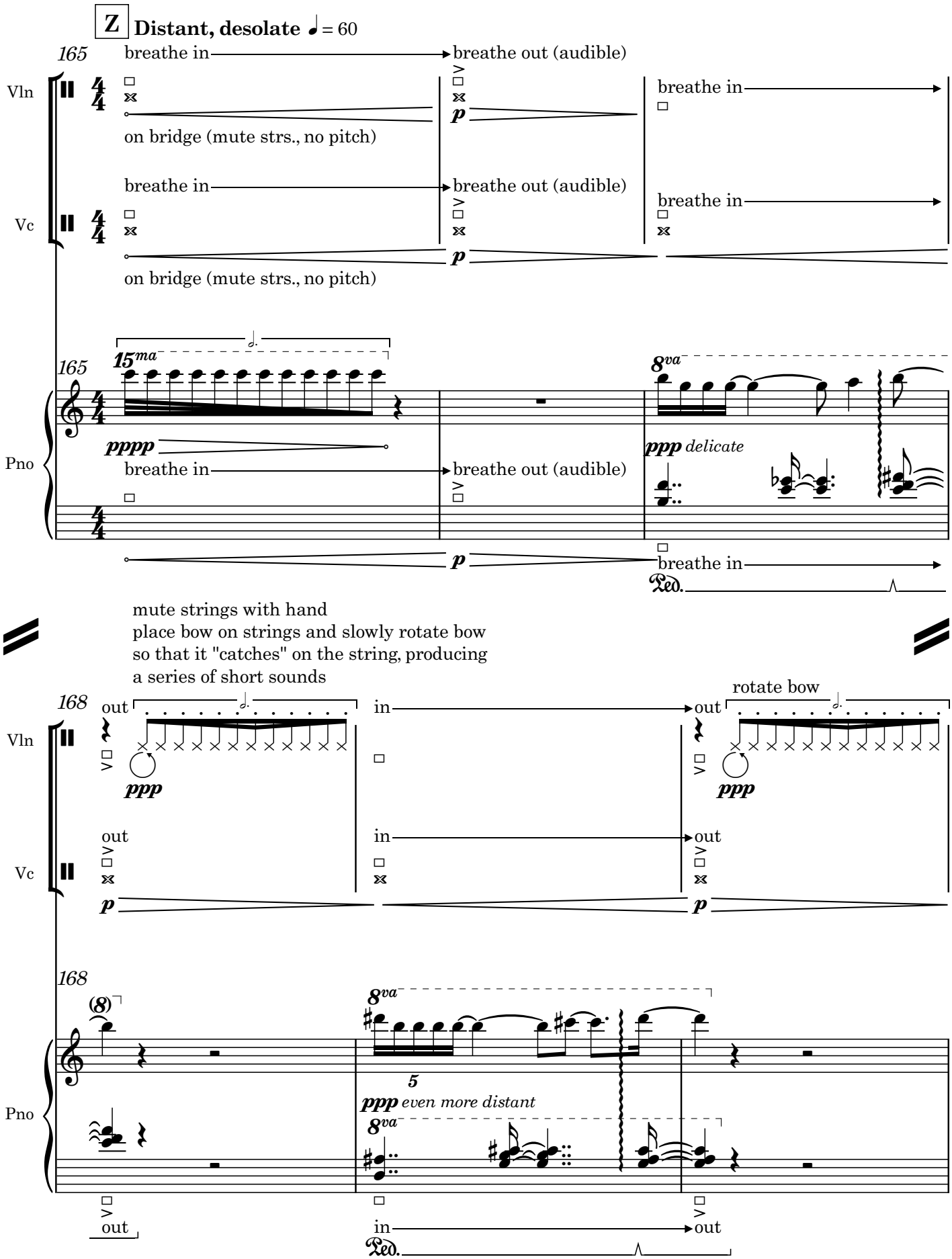
Repeat & freely alternate between figures ***A***, ***B***, and ***C*** (completely uncoordinated)

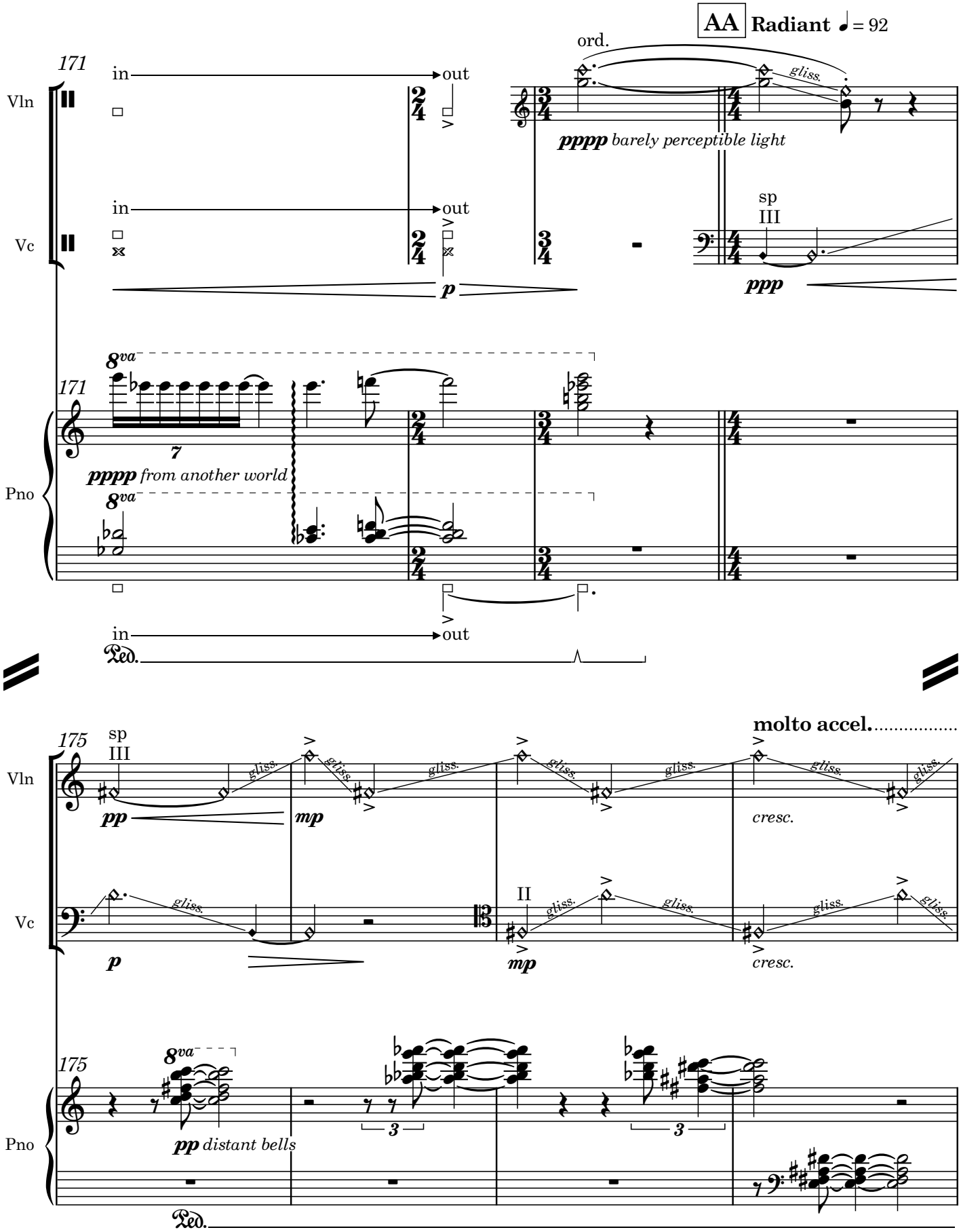


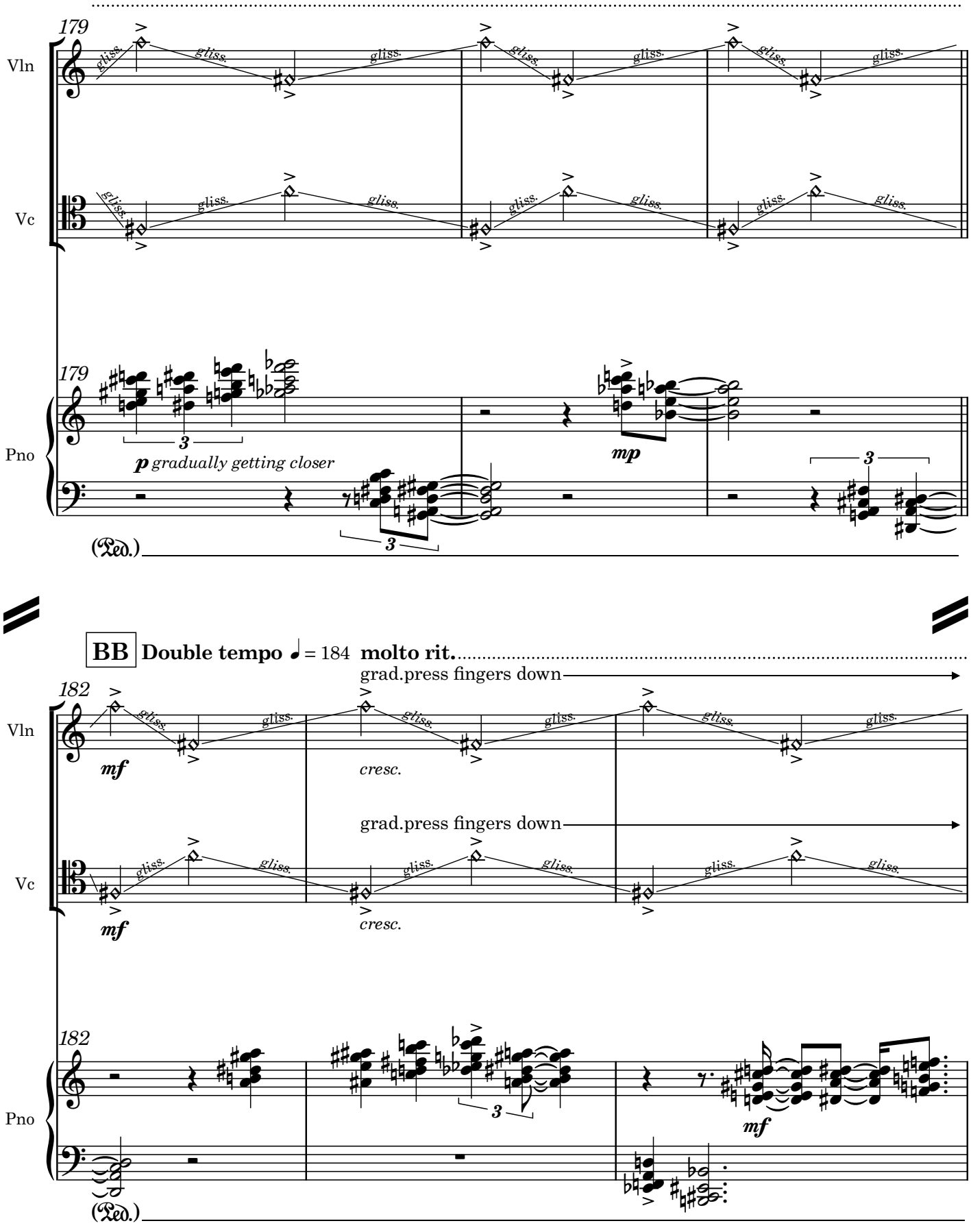
Y **Collapsing**

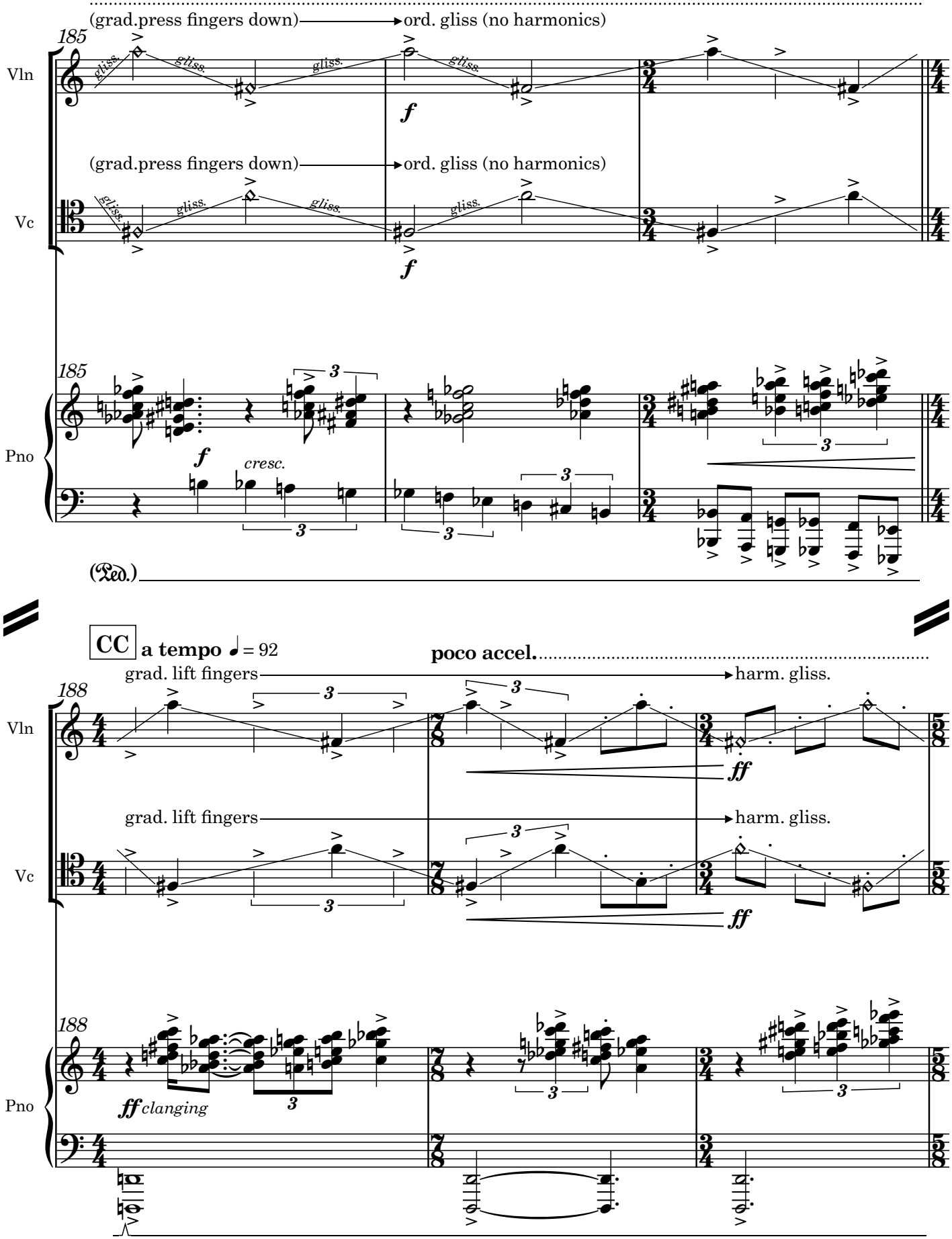


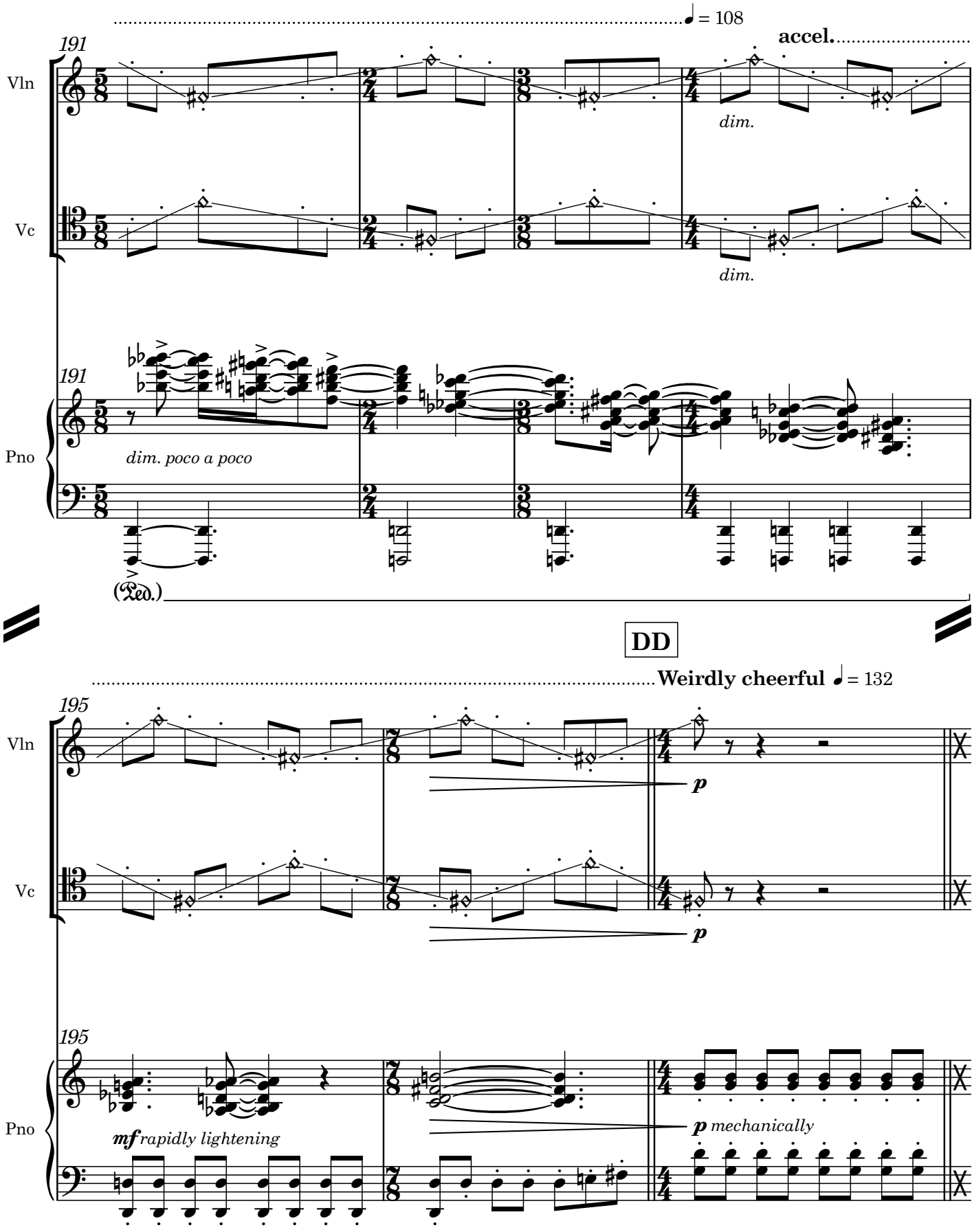

4"
8"
163
Vln
ord.
sp
D
Stop figures A, B, and C – only repeat figure D
Vc
ord.
sp
pp ghostly
15ma
8va
163
Pno
ppp quasi cadenza (very fast)
(Ped.)
8"
[164]
msp
on bridge (no pitch)
Vln
msp
on bridge (no pitch)
Vc
[164]
(15)
Pno
(Ped.)


Z
Distant, desolate ♩ = 60
165
Vln
Vc
Pno
breathe in
breathe out (audible)
on bridge (mute strs., no pitch)
15ma
8va
pppp
ppp delicate
Ped.
mute strings with hand
place bow on strings and slowly rotate bow
so that it "catches" on the string, producing
a series of short sounds
168
out
in
rotate bow
ppp
p
(8)
5
ppp even more distant


AA Radiant ♩ = 92
171
Vln
Vc
Pno
in
out
ord.
gliss.
pppp barely perceptible light
sp
III
ppp
p
8va
pppp from another world
Ped.
molto accel.
175
pp
mp
cresc.
II
distant bells
3


179
Vln
Vc
Pno
gliss.
p gradually getting closer
mp
(Ped.)
BB Double tempo ♩ = 184 molto rit.
grad.press fingers down
182
mf
cresc.
(Ped.)


(grad.press fingers down)
ord. gliss (no harmonics)
185
Vln
Vc
Pno
gliss.
f
cresc.
(Ped.)
CC
a tempo ♩ = 92
poco accel.
grad. lift fingers
harm. gliss.
188
ff
ff clanging


♩ = 108
accel.
191
Vln
Vc
Pno
dim.
dim.
dim. poco a poco
(Ped.)
DD
Weirdly cheerful ♩ = 132
195
p
mf rapidly lightening
p mechanically

Oh no, it looks like the pianist is frozen in time

10"

198

Vln

throughout this bar, act increasingly concerned that the pianist is "stuck". Look around, look in your music, look at the pianist, etc.

Vc

throughout this bar, act increasingly concerned that the pianist is "stuck". Look around, look in your music, look at the pianist, etc.

Repeat at ♩ = 132

198

Pno

move your body as little as possible, as if you are frozen in time

p *sempre*

Discussing what to do about the frozen pianist

6"

199

Vln

pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I

ff

Freely ♩ = 90–108

gliss. gliss. 3 gliss.

ff *speech-like*

gliss.

Vc

pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I

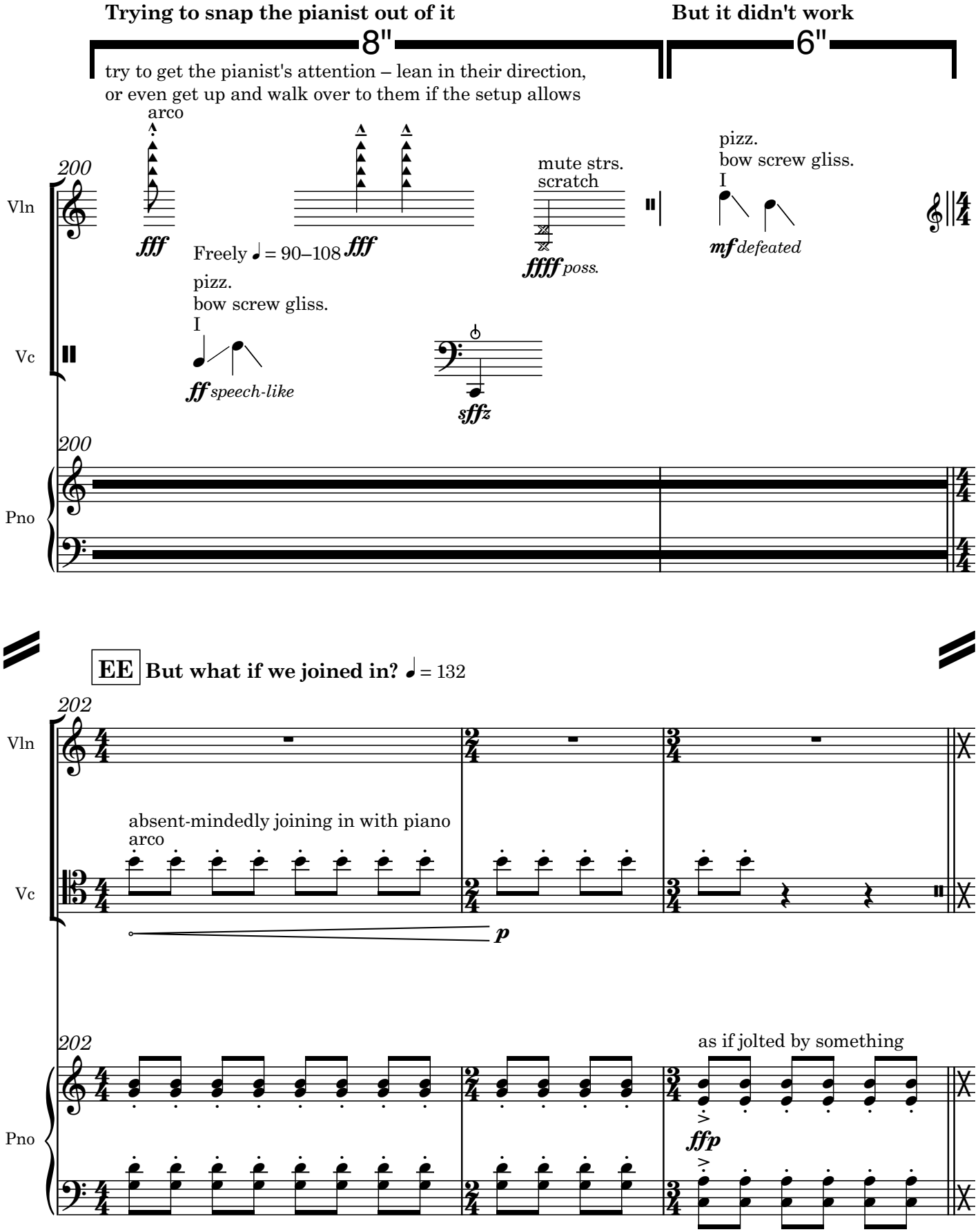
ff

pizz.
mute strs.

sffz

199

Pno


Trying to snap the pianist out of it
8"
But it didn't work
6"
try to get the pianist's attention – lean in their direction,
or even get up and walk over to them if the setup allows
200
Vln
arco
fff
Freely ♩ = 90–108
fff
mute strs.
scratch
ffff poss.
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
mf defeated
Vc
pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
ff speech-like
sffz
200
Pno
EE
But what if we joined in? ♩ = 132
202
Vln
absent-mindedly joining in with piano
arco
Vc
p
202
Pno
as if jolted by something
ffp

Woah, the pianist changed chords! We did it!

5"

Freely ♩ = 90–108

arco

point excitedly at the pianist
(you got them to change chords!!)

Employing our new strategy ♩ = 132

205

Vln

Vc

Pno

ff ecstatic

gliss.

f *ff triumphant*

Freely ♩ = 90–108

pizz.
bow screw gliss.

ff giddy

arco

gliss.

f *ff triumphant*

205

Repeat at ♩ = 132, as if frozen again

207

Vln

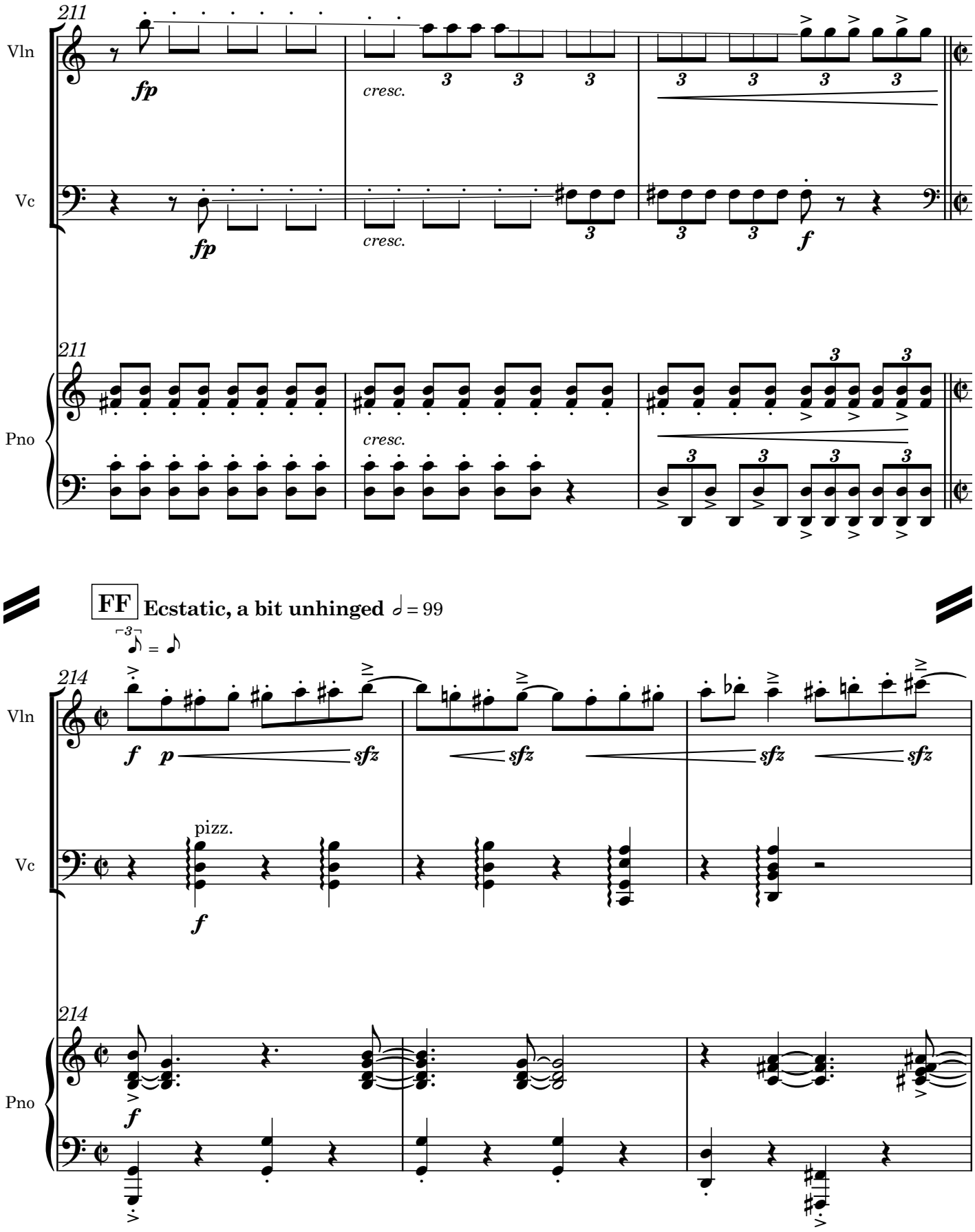
Vc

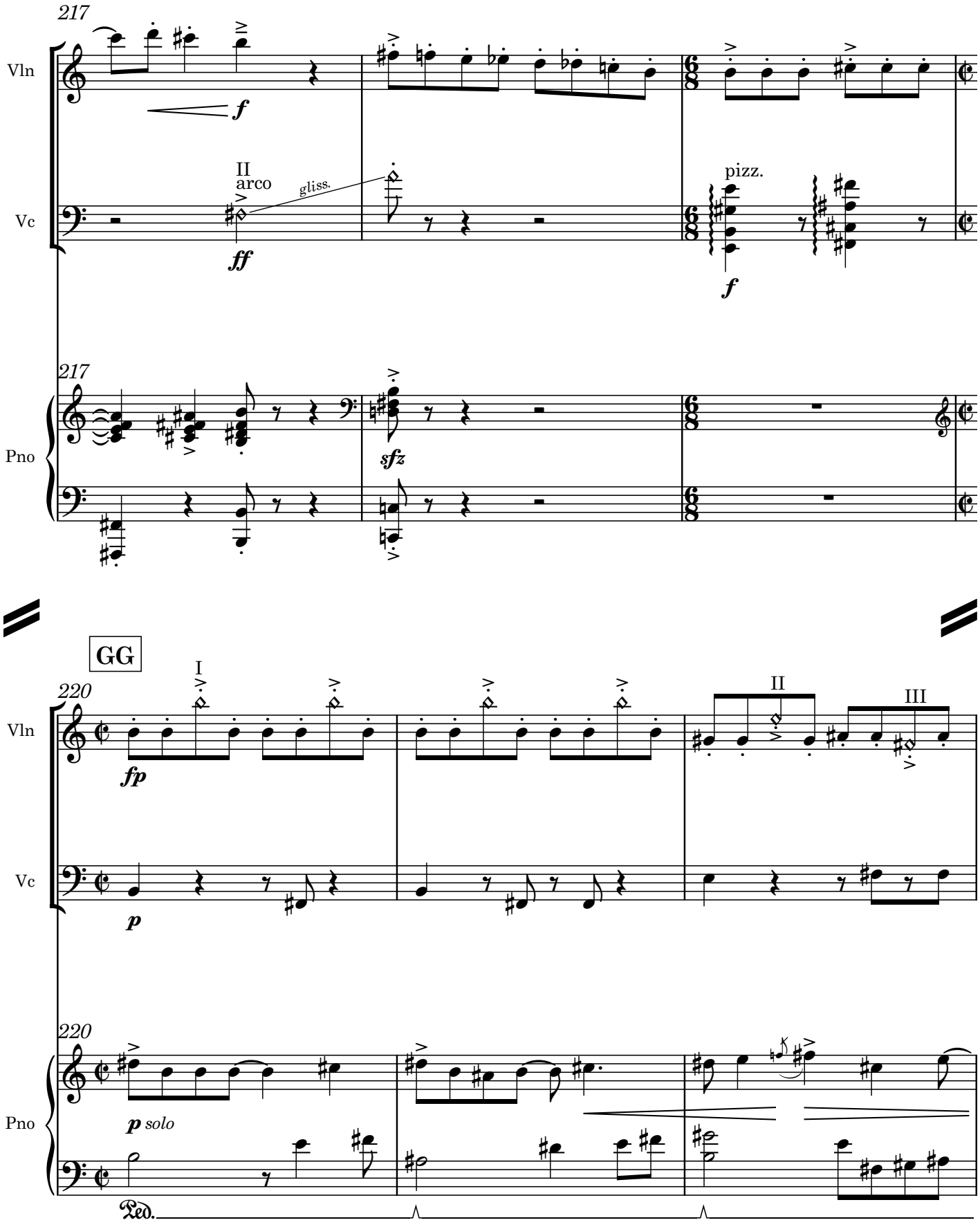
Pno

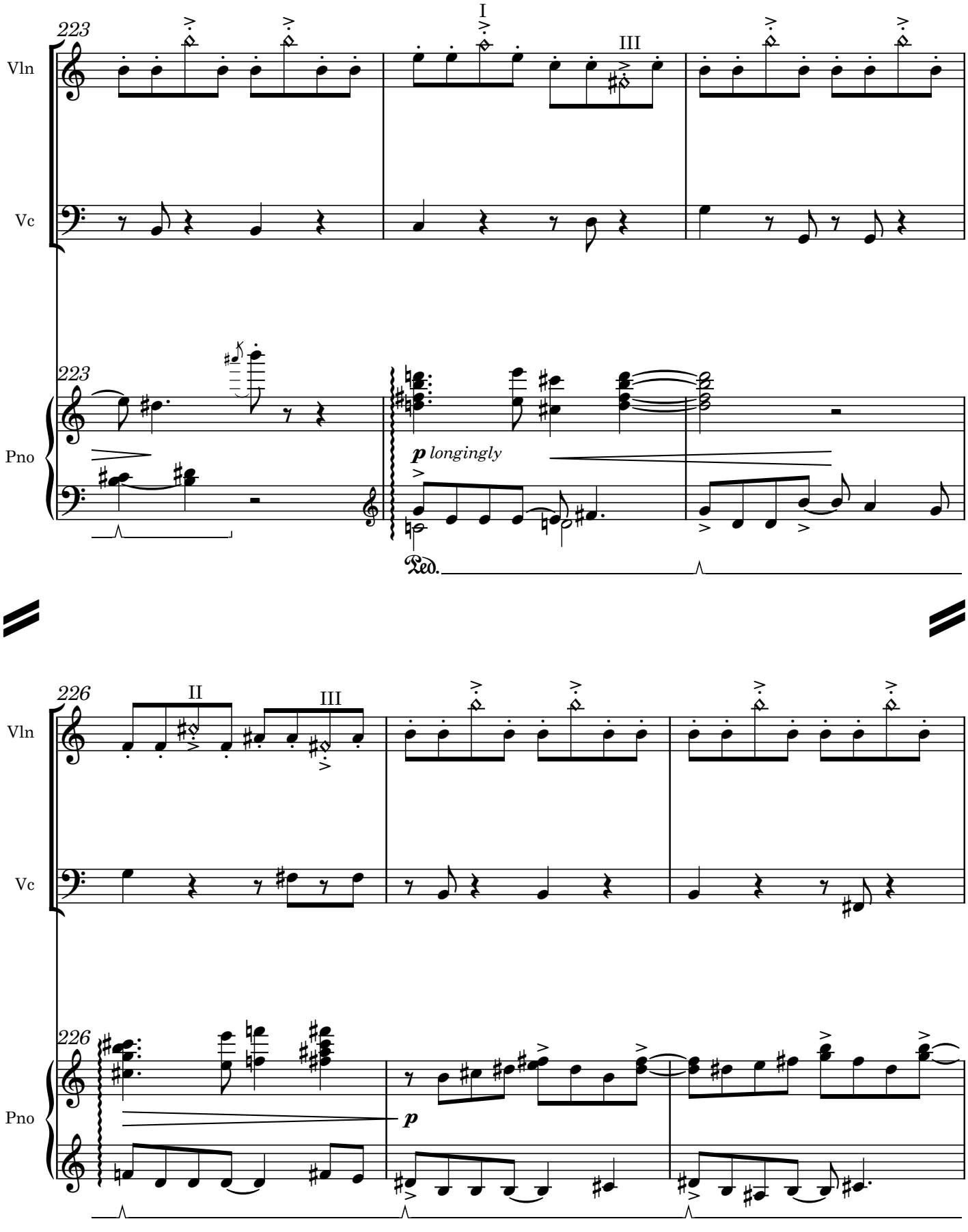
p *f*

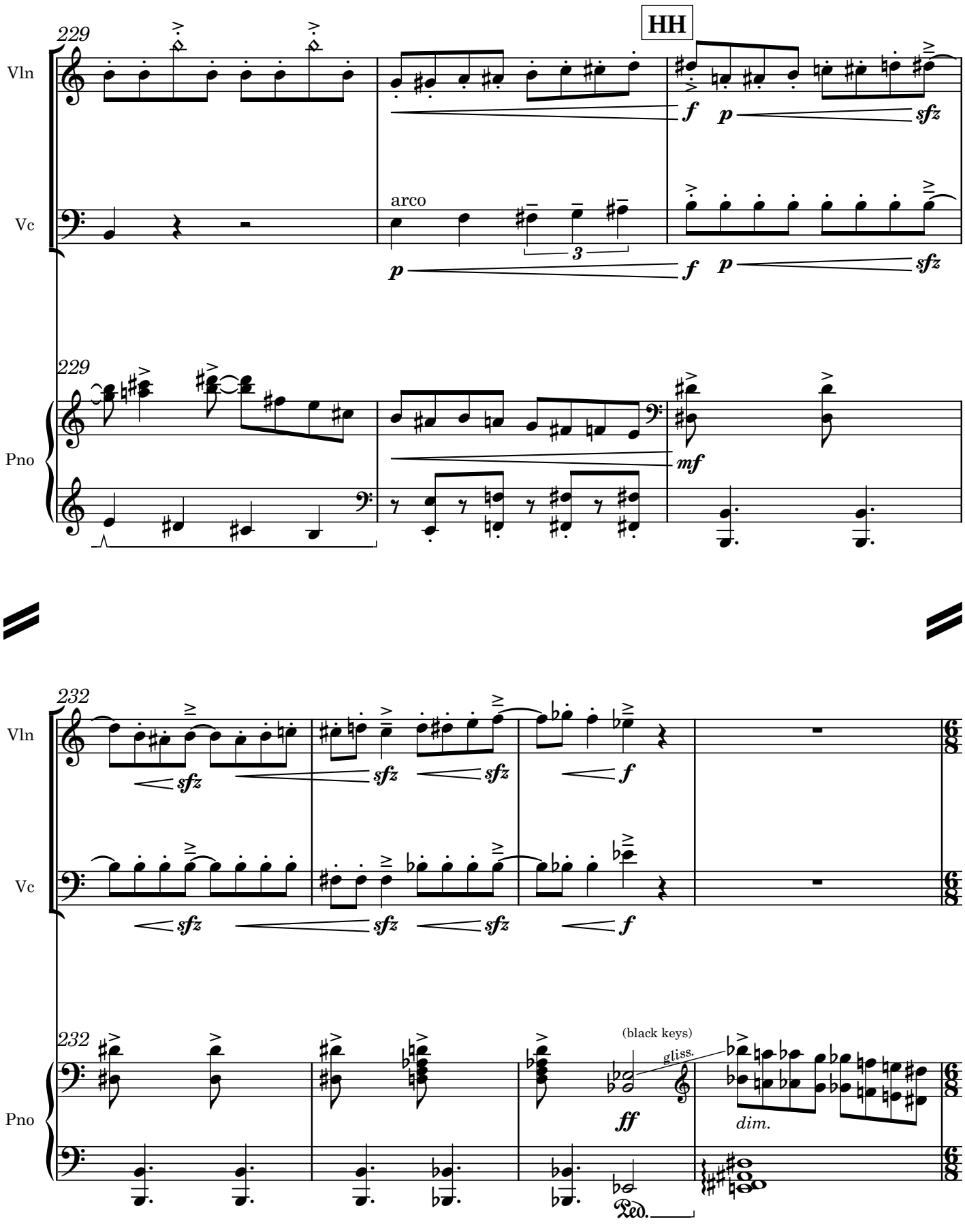
ff

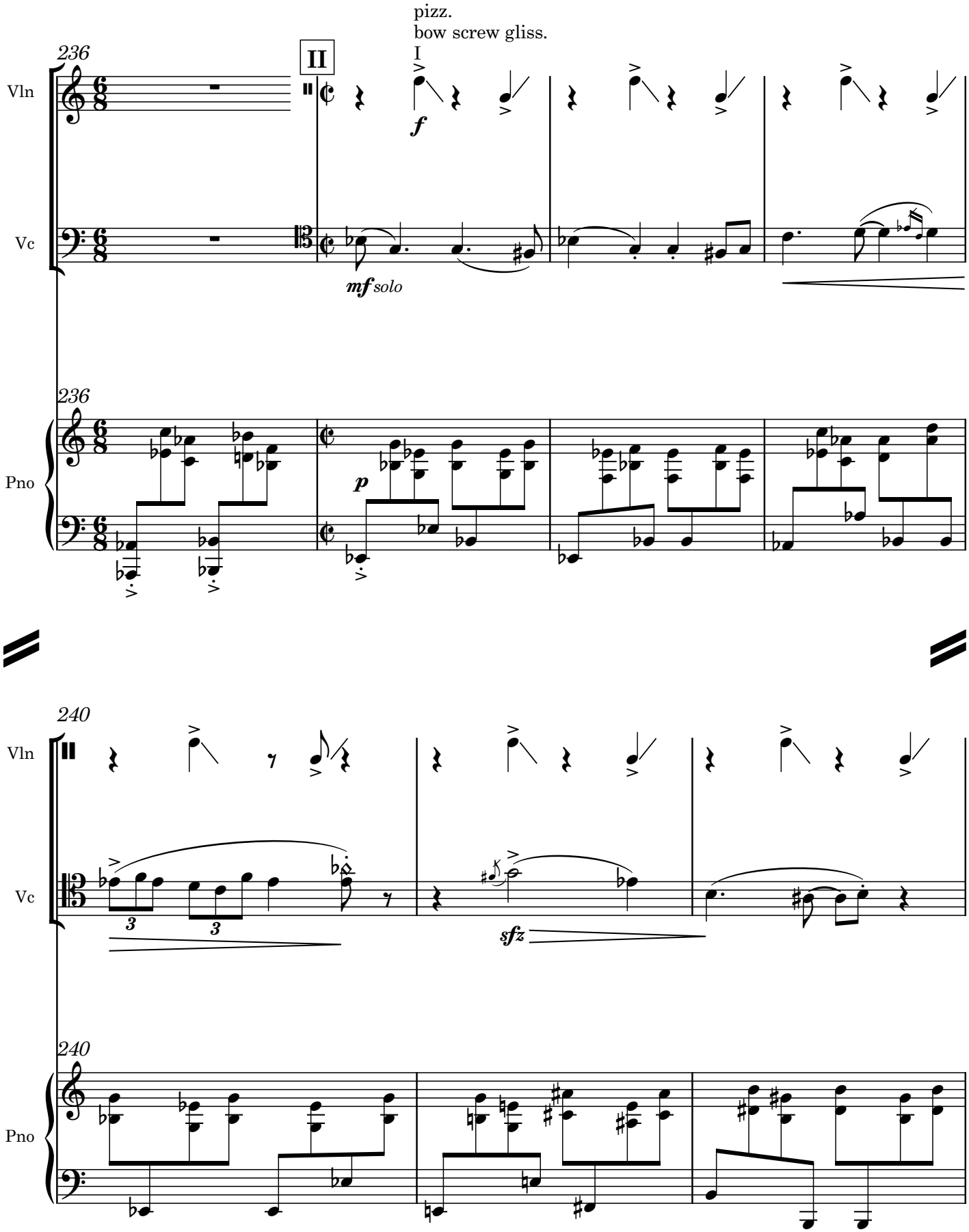
207

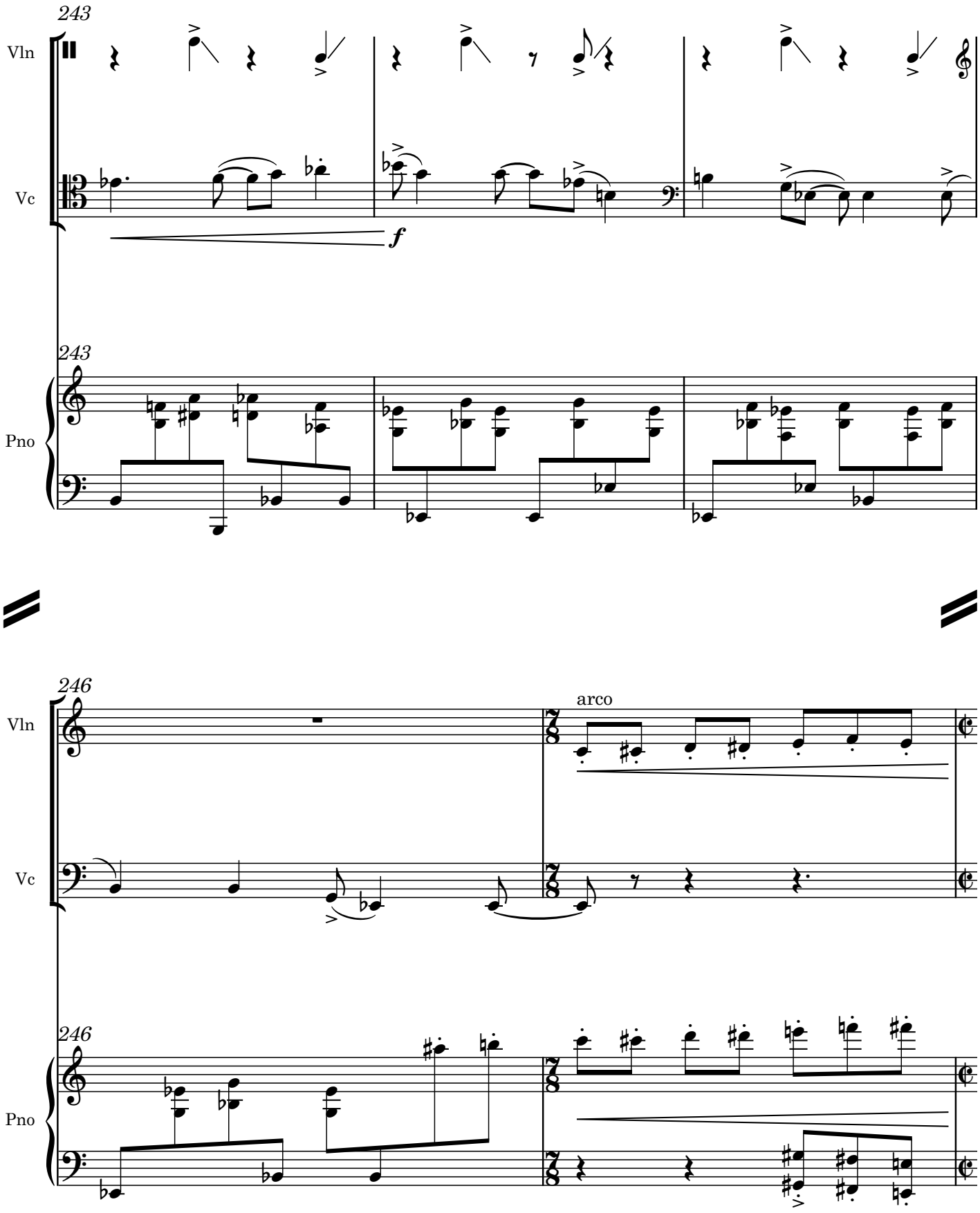

211
Vln
Vc
Pno
fp
cresc.
f
FF
Ecstatic, a bit unhinged
= 99
214
pizz.
sfz

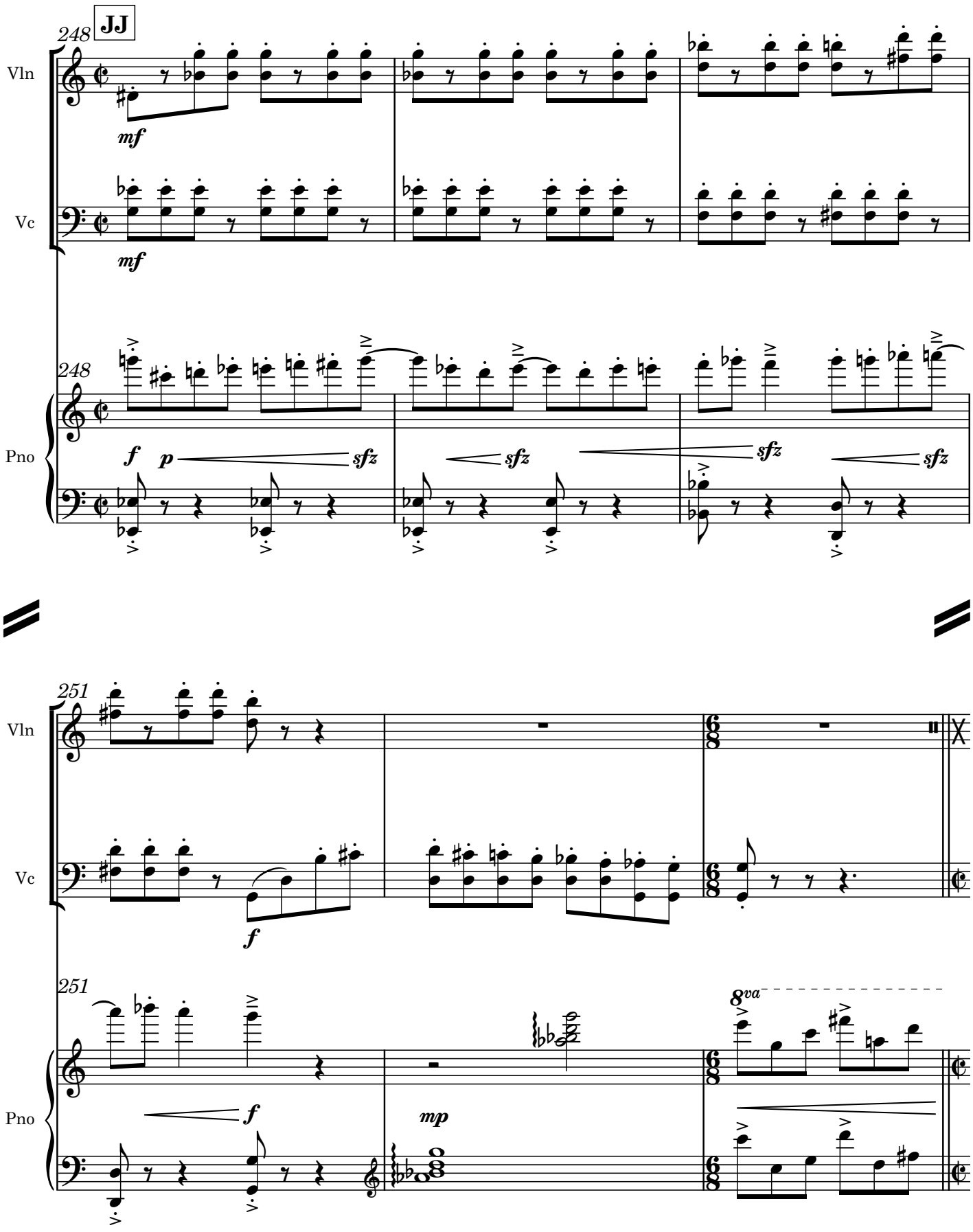

217
Vln
Vc
Pno
f
II
arco
gliss.
ff
pizz.
f
sfz
GG
220
I
II
III
fp
p
p solo
Ped.


223
Vln
Vc
Pno
I
III
p longingly
Ped.
226
II
III
p

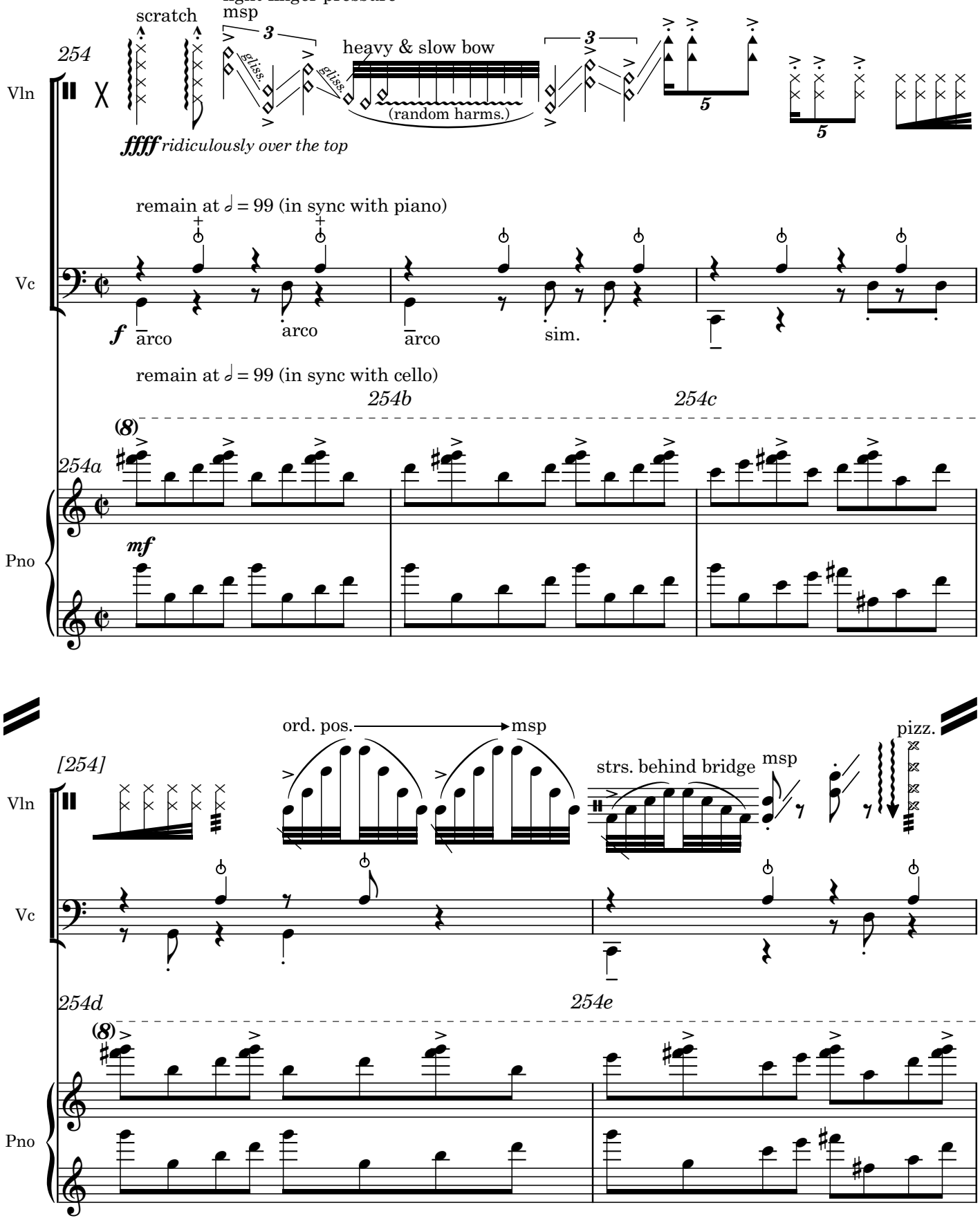

229
HH
Vln
Vc
arco
Pno
232
(black keys)
gliss.
dim.

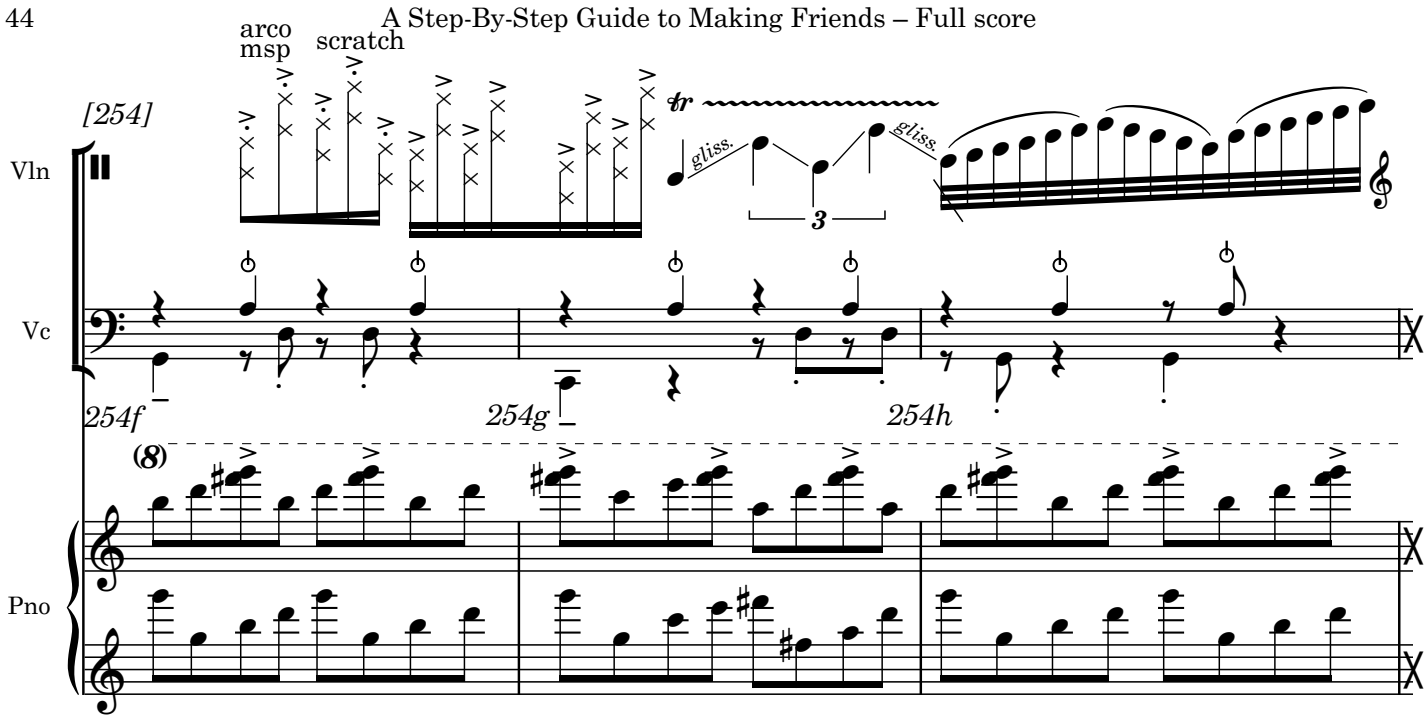

pizz.
bow screw gliss.
I
II
236
Vln
Vc
Pno
f
mf solo
p
240
sfz
3
3

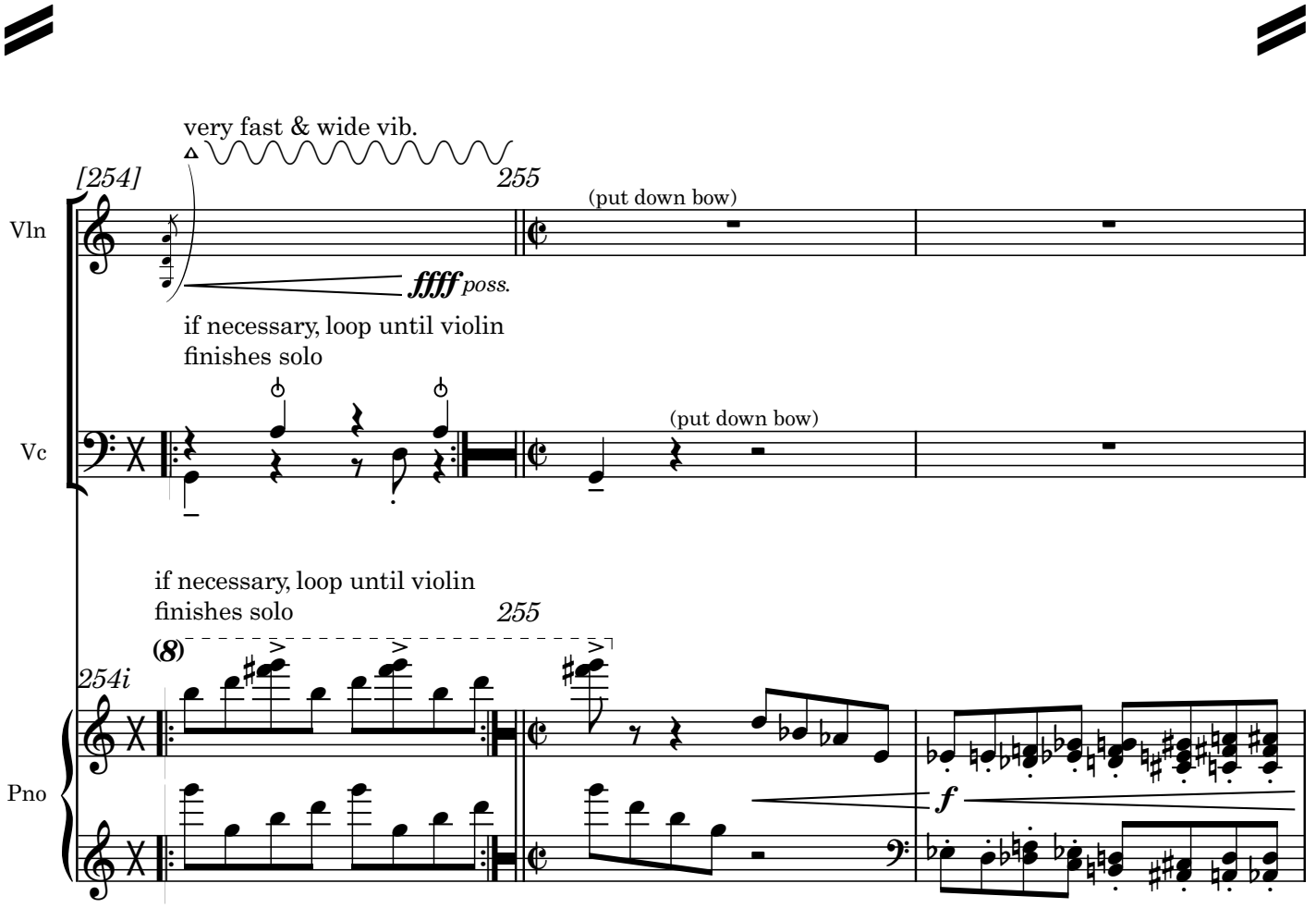

243
Vln
Vc
f
243
Pno
246
arco
Vln
Vc
246
Pno

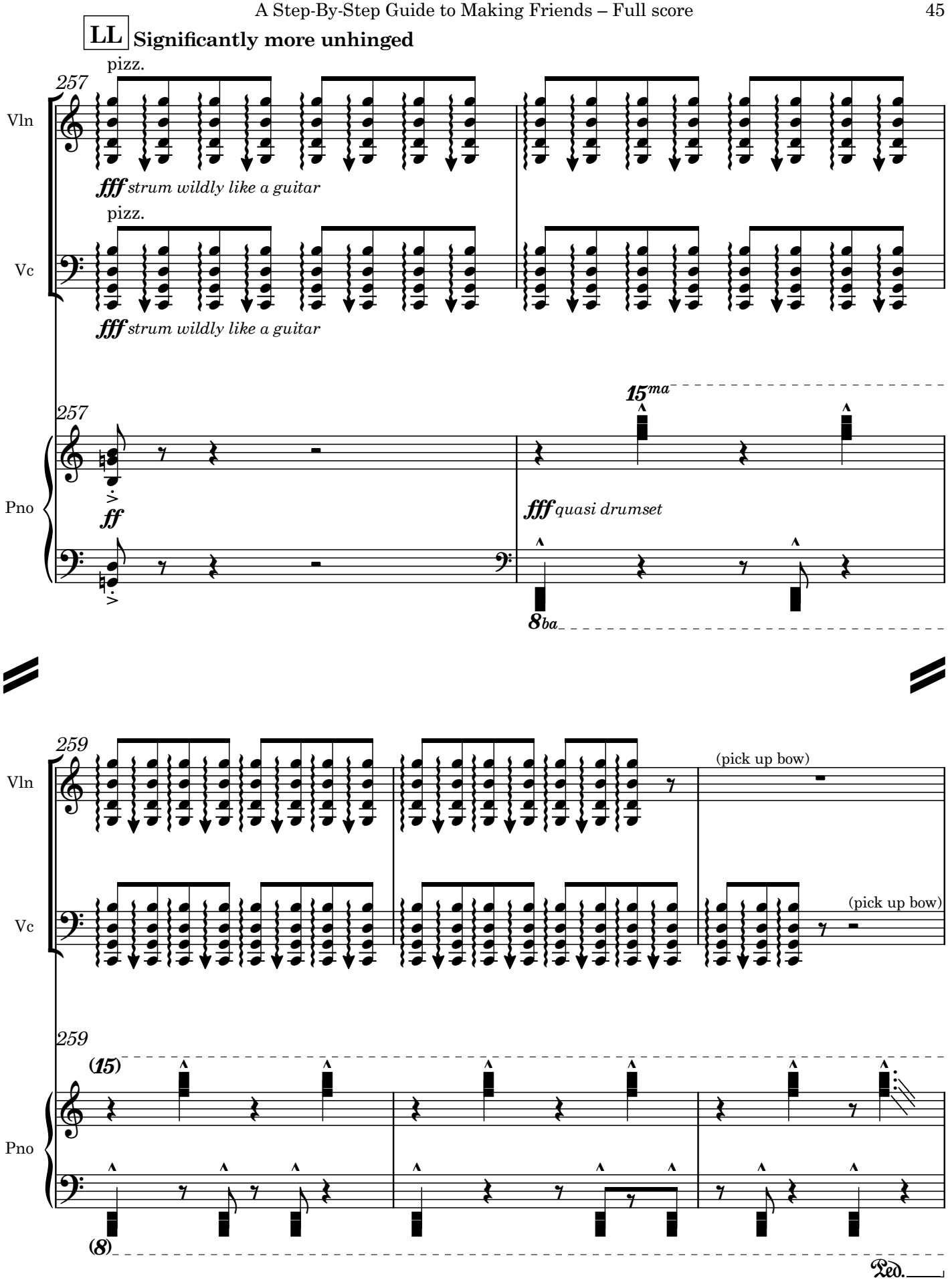

JJ
248
Vln
Vc
Pno
mf
f
p
sfz
251
8va
mp

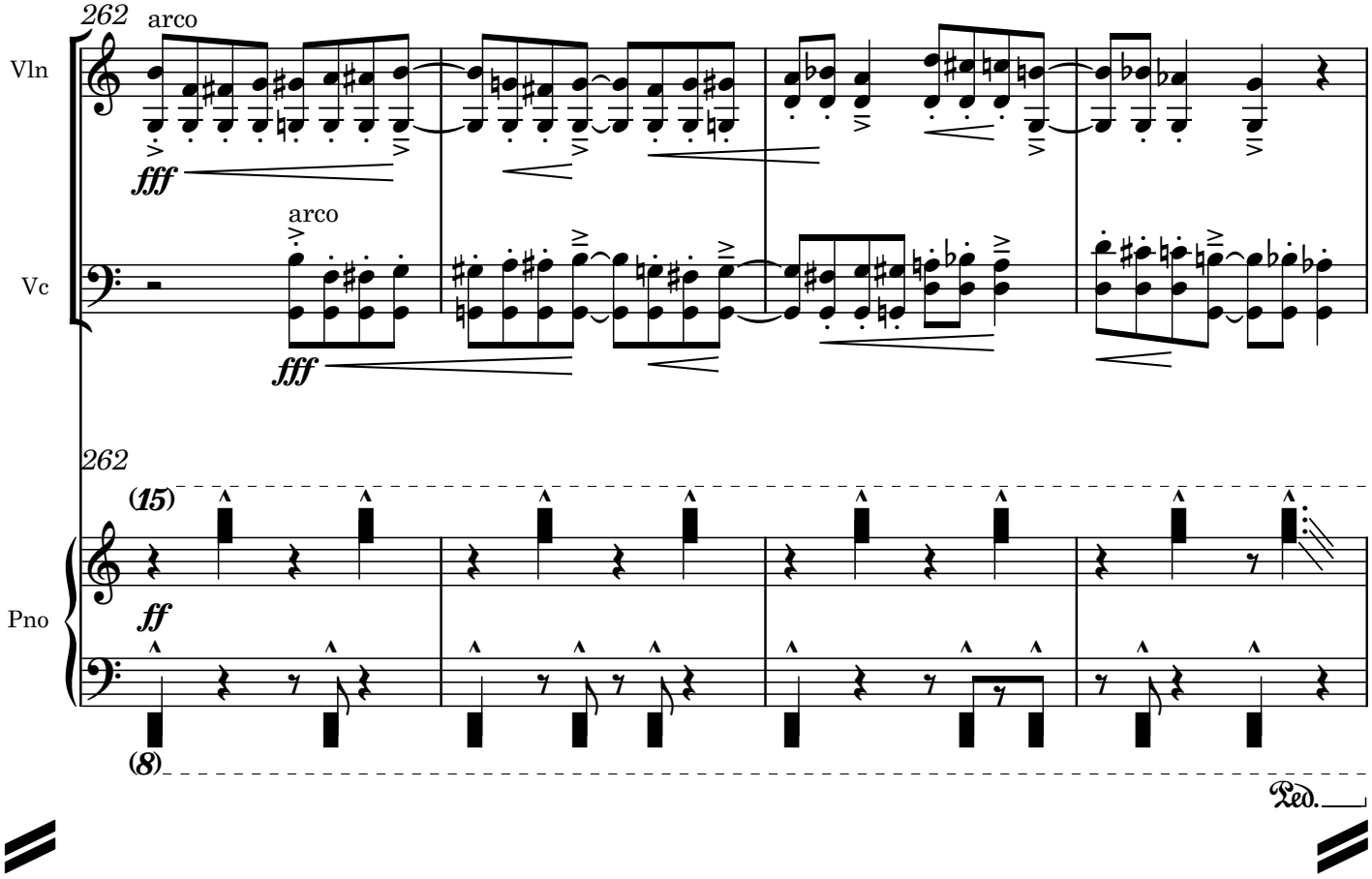
KK crazy out of time solo (should last about 10–12 sec.) All pitch is relative – follow contour. Feel free to embellish, using the notation as a basic guide.

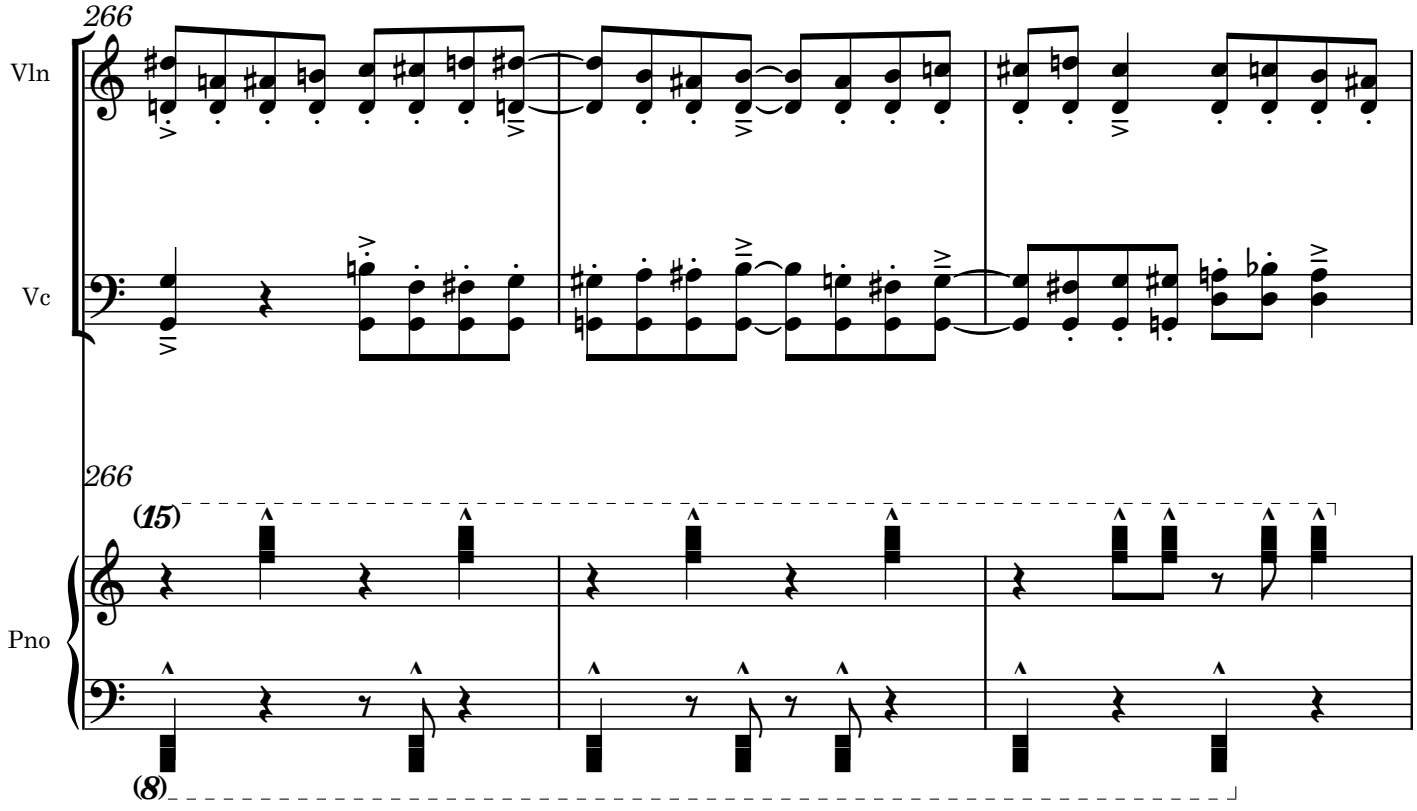


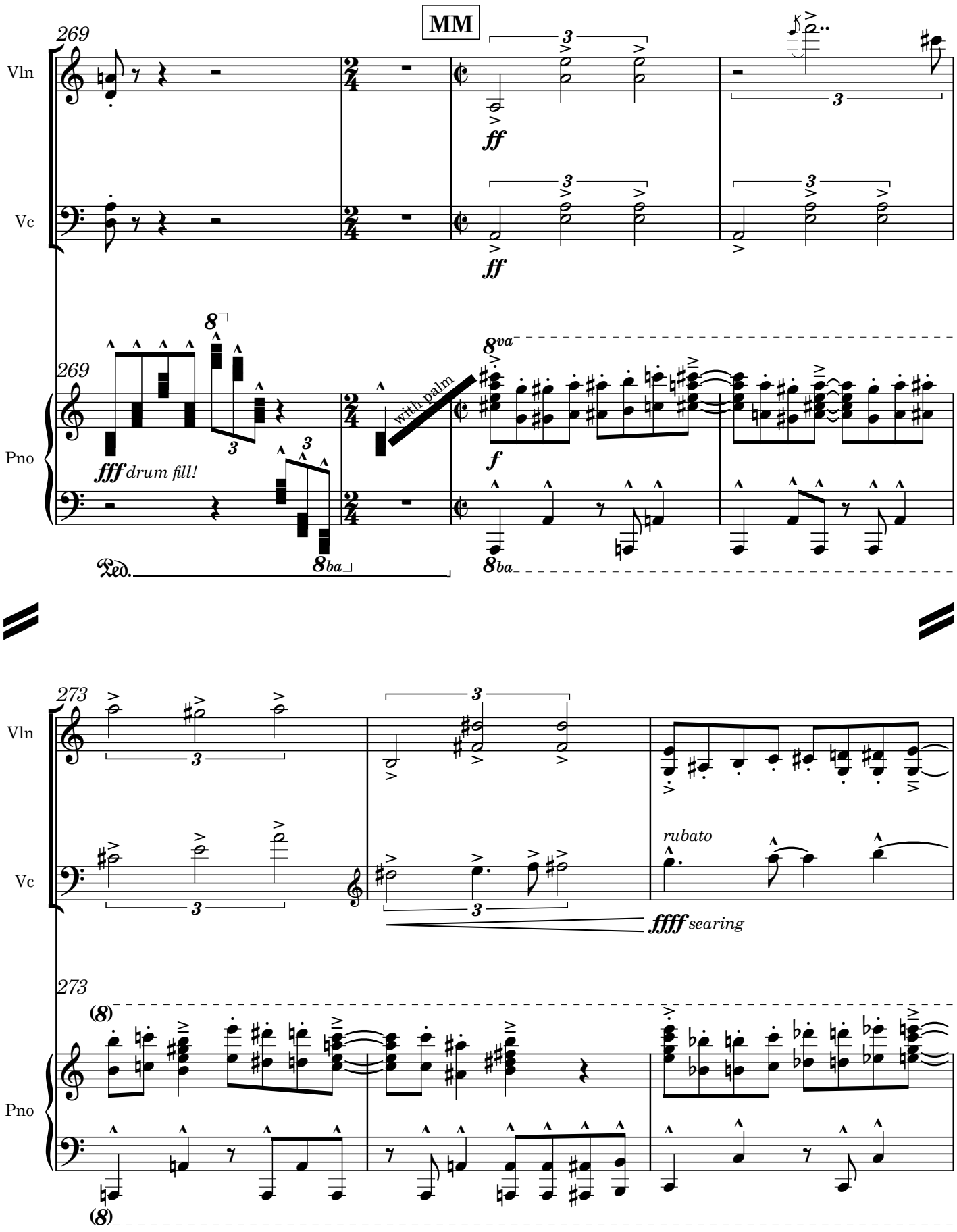

arco
msp
scratch
[254]
Vln
Vc
Pno
tr
gliss.
gliss.
3
254f
254g
254h
(8)

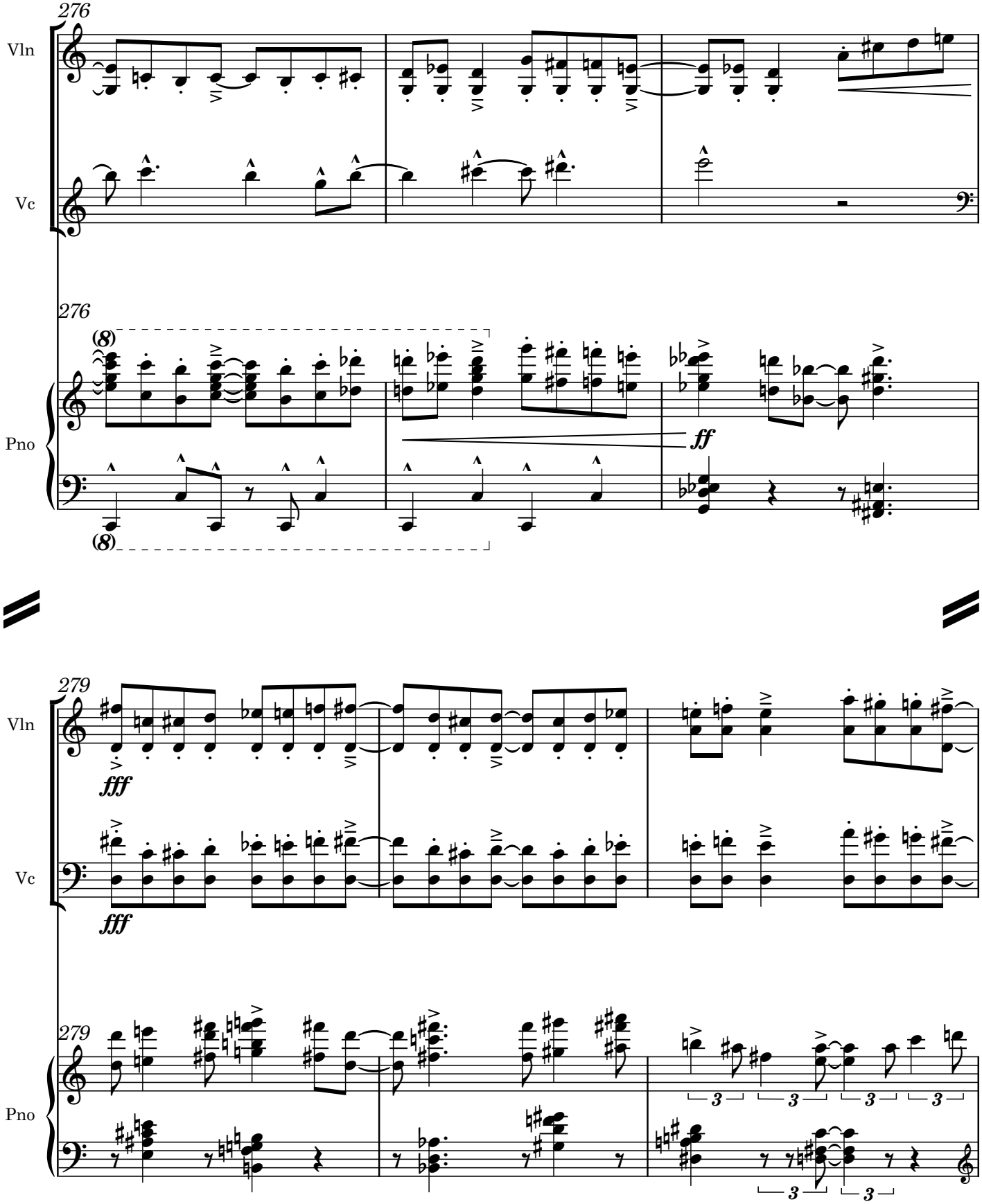

very fast & wide vib.
[254]
255
Vln
(put down bow)
ffff poss.
if necessary, loop until violin finishes solo
Vc
(put down bow)
if necessary, loop until violin finishes solo
255
(8)
254i
Pno
f

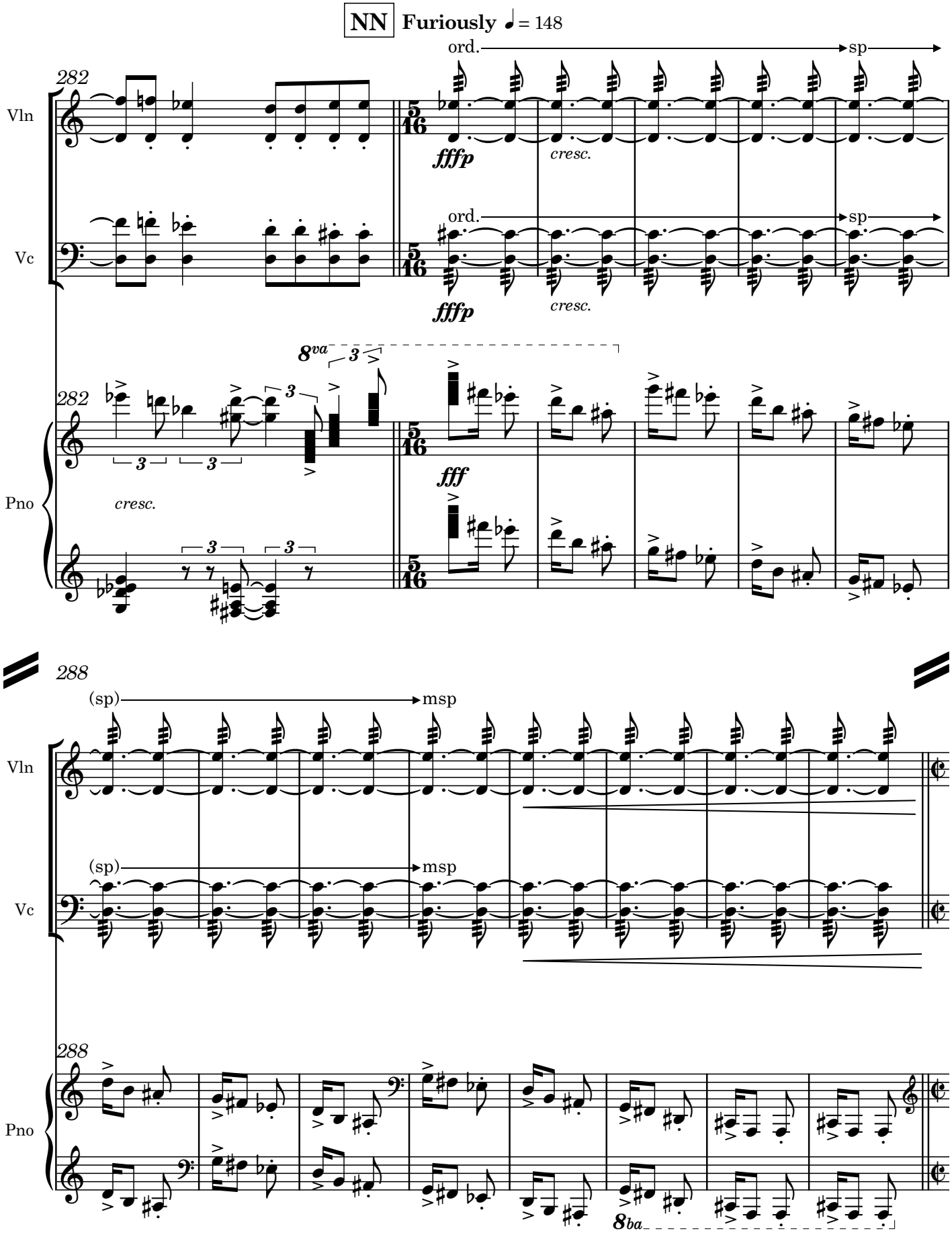

LL
Significantly more unhinged
pizz.
257
Vln
fff strum wildly like a guitar
pizz.
Vc
fff strum wildly like a guitar
15ma
257
Pno
ff
fff quasi drumset
8ba
259
Vln
(pick up bow)
Vc
(pick up bow)
259
(15)
Pno
(8)
Ped.

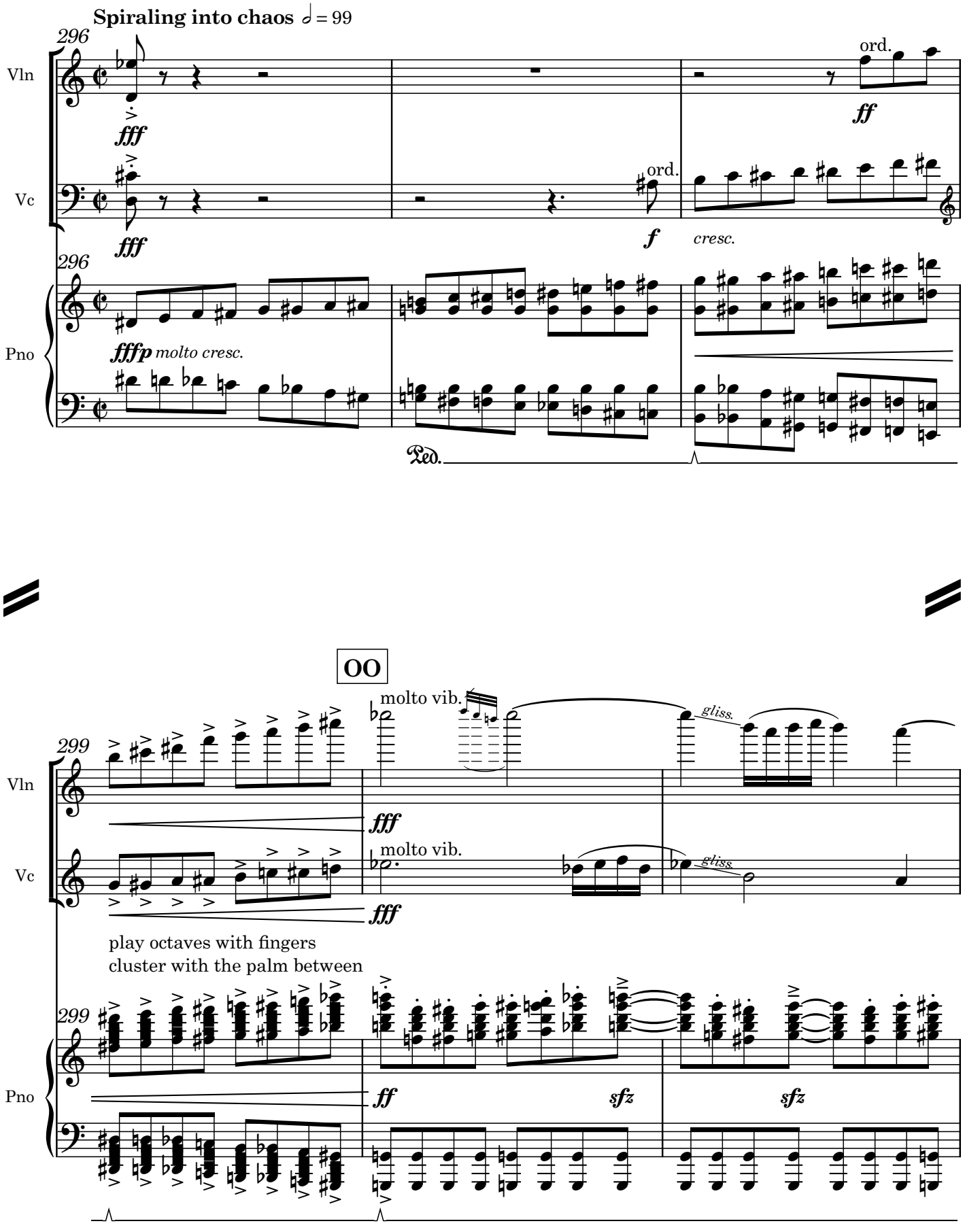

262
arco
Vln
fff
arco
Vc
fff
262
(15)
Pno
ff
(8)
Ped.

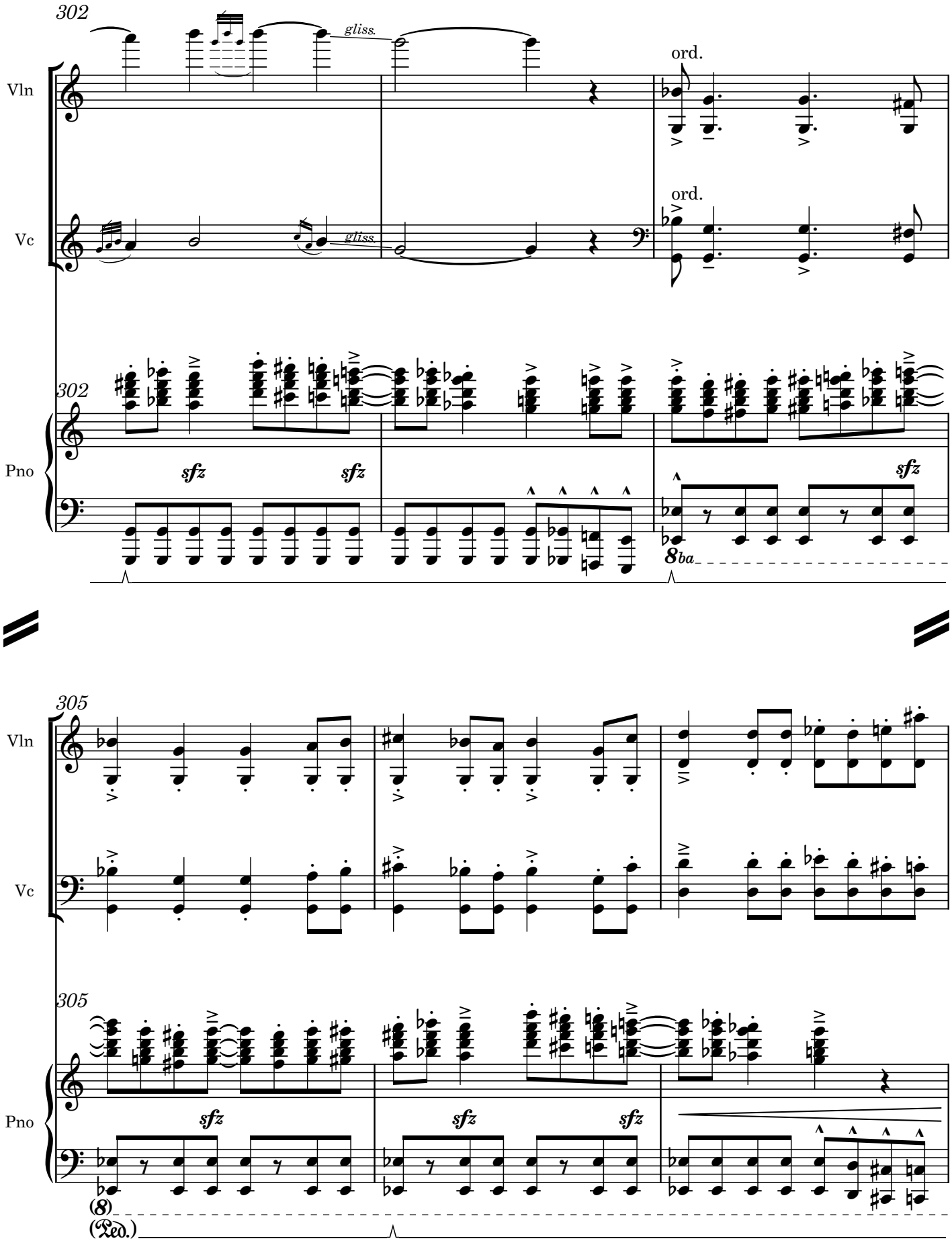

266
Vln
Vc
266
(15)
Pno
(8)

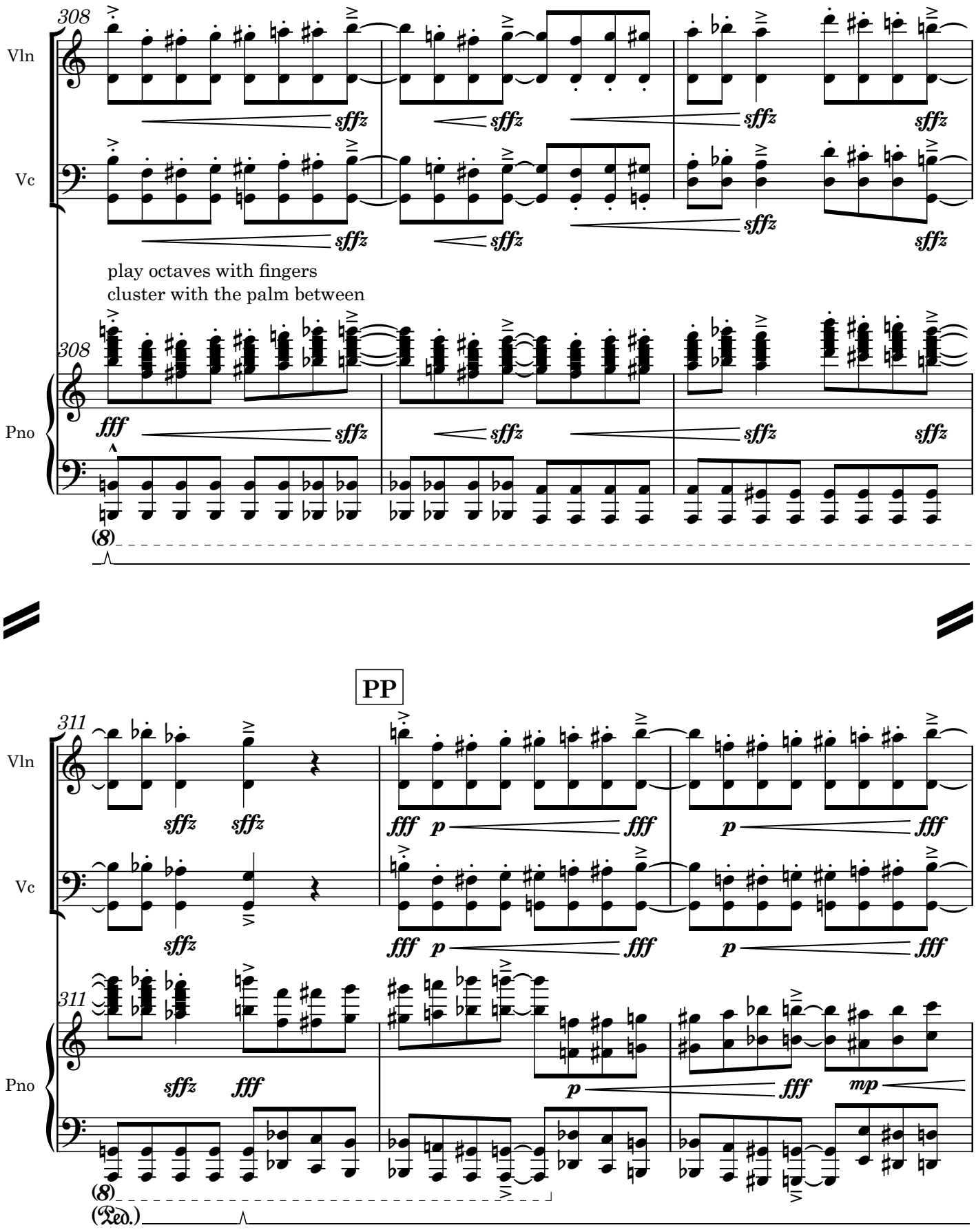

MM
269
Vln
Vc
Pno
ff
fff drum fill!
with palm
8va
8ba
f
Ped.
273
rubato
ffff searing
(8)

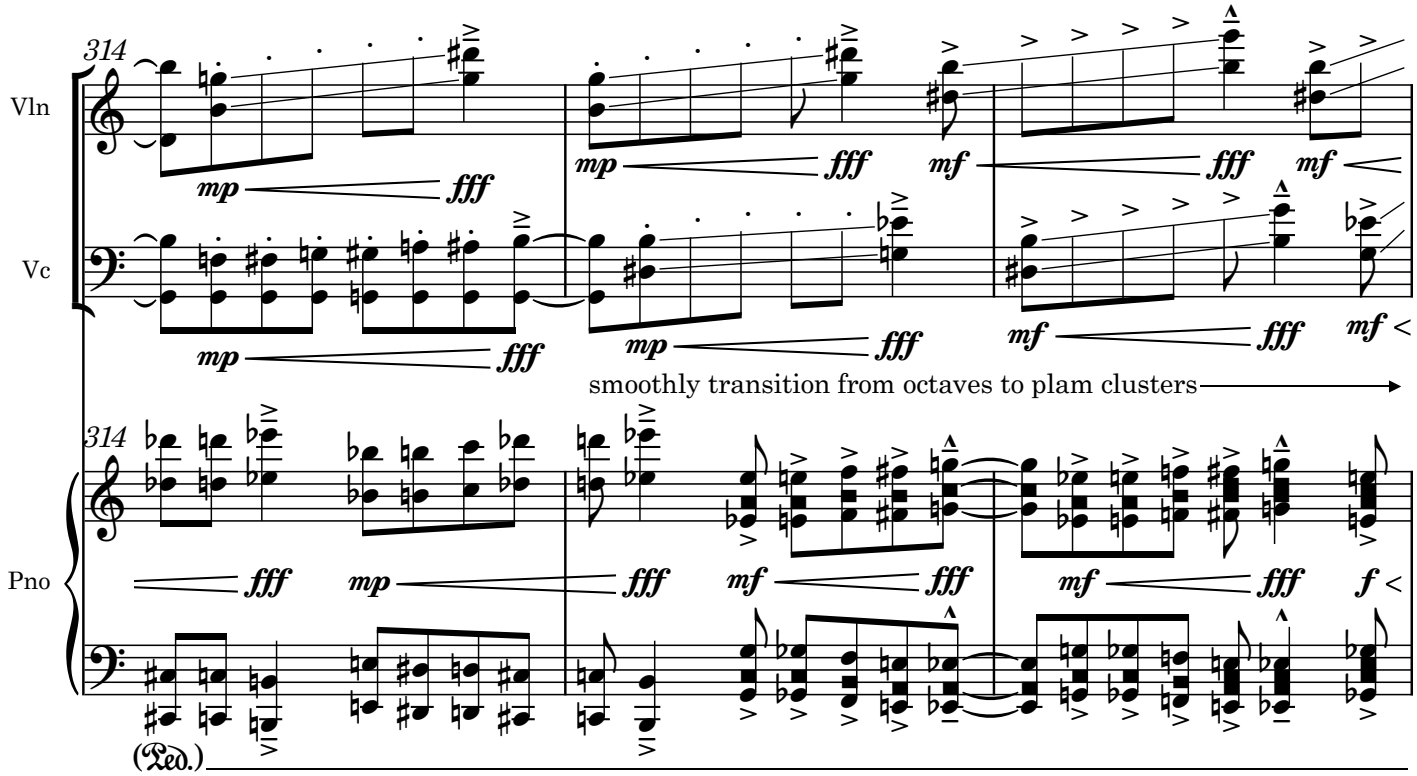

276
Vln
Vc
276
(8)
Pno
ff
(8)
279
Vln
fff
Vc
fff
279
Pno
3
3
3
3
3
3

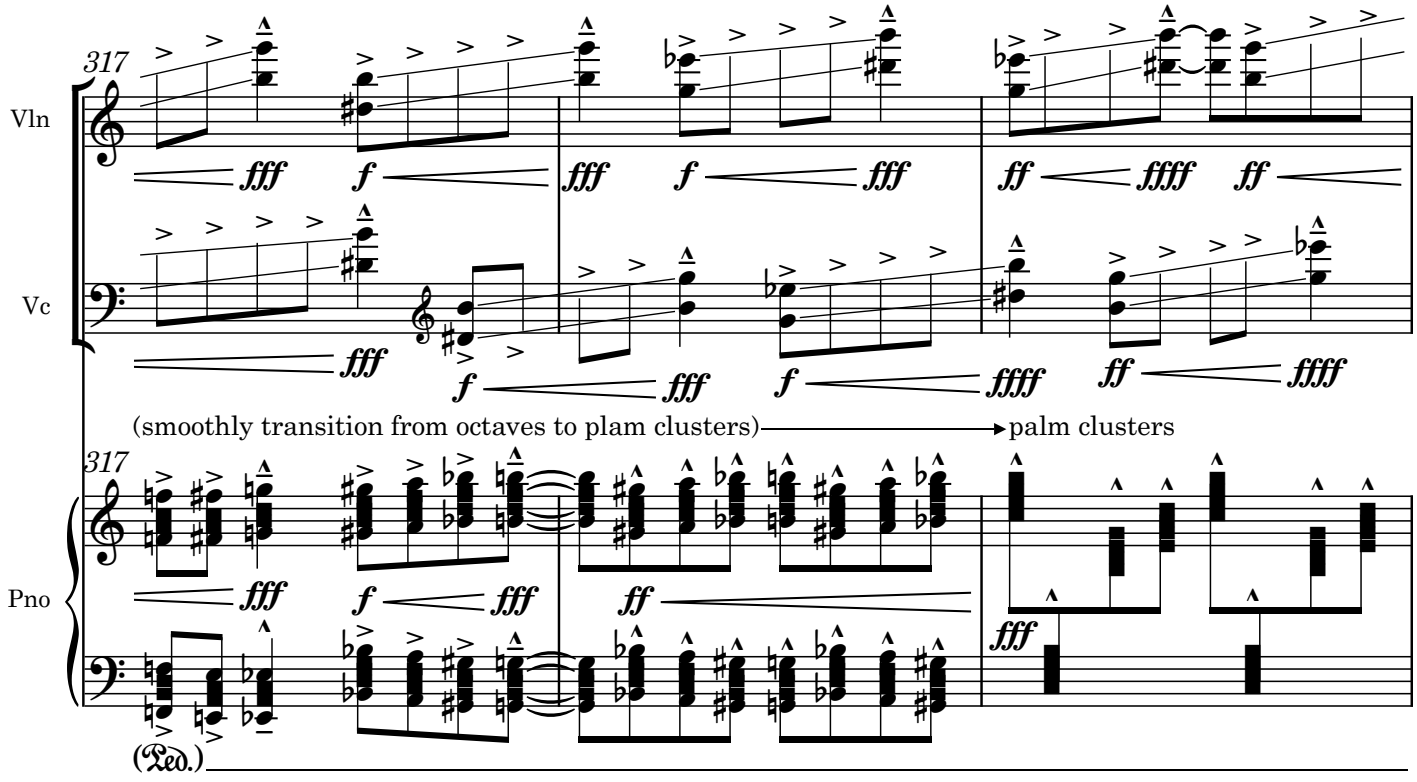

NN
Furiously
= 148
282
Vln
Vc
Pno
ord.
sp
fffp
cresc.
8va
fff
288
(sp)
msp
8ba

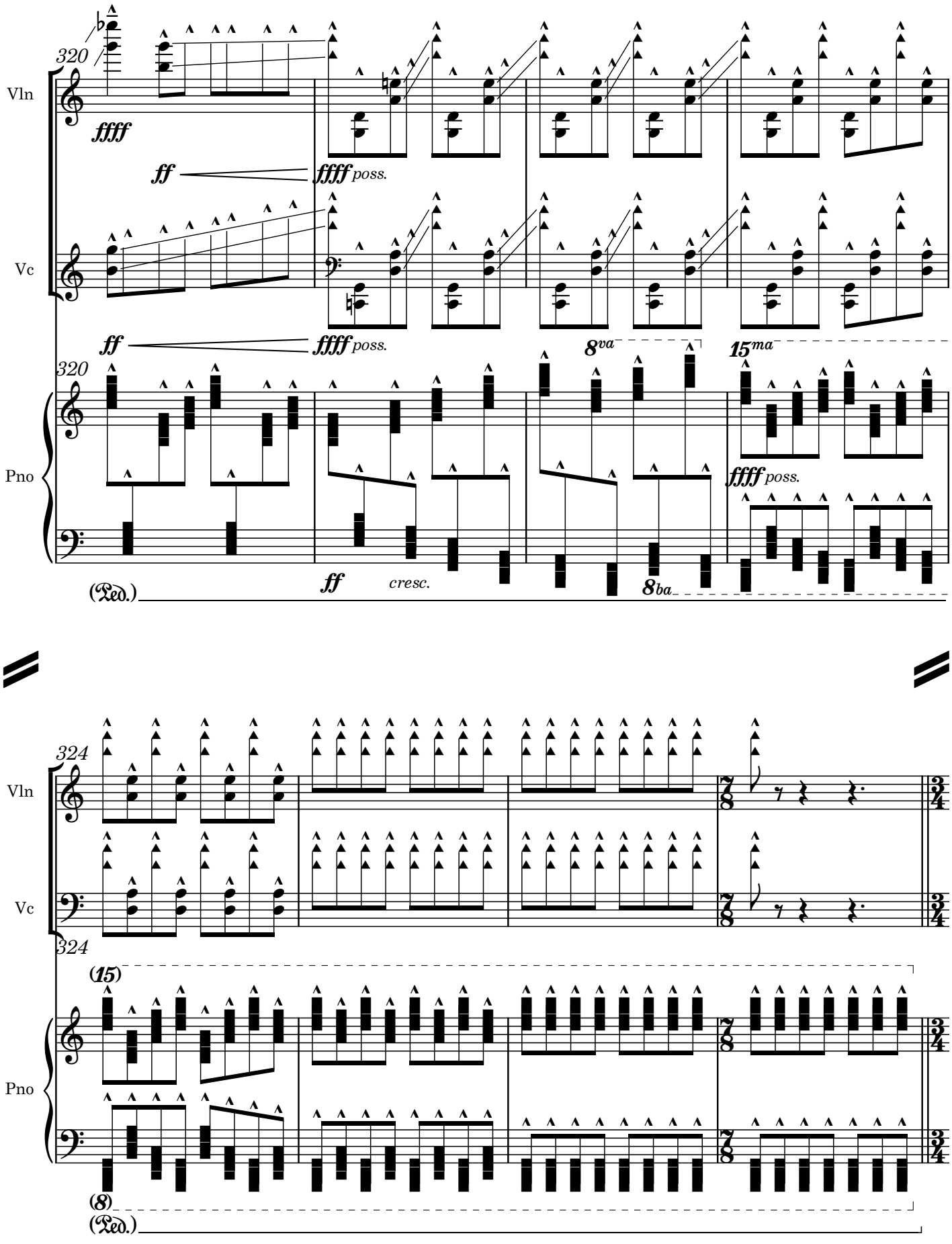

Spiraling into chaos ♩ = 99
296
Vln
Vc
Pno
fff
ord.
ff
f
cresc.
fffp molto cresc.
Ped.
OO
299
molto vib.
gliss.
play octaves with fingers
cluster with the palm between
sfz

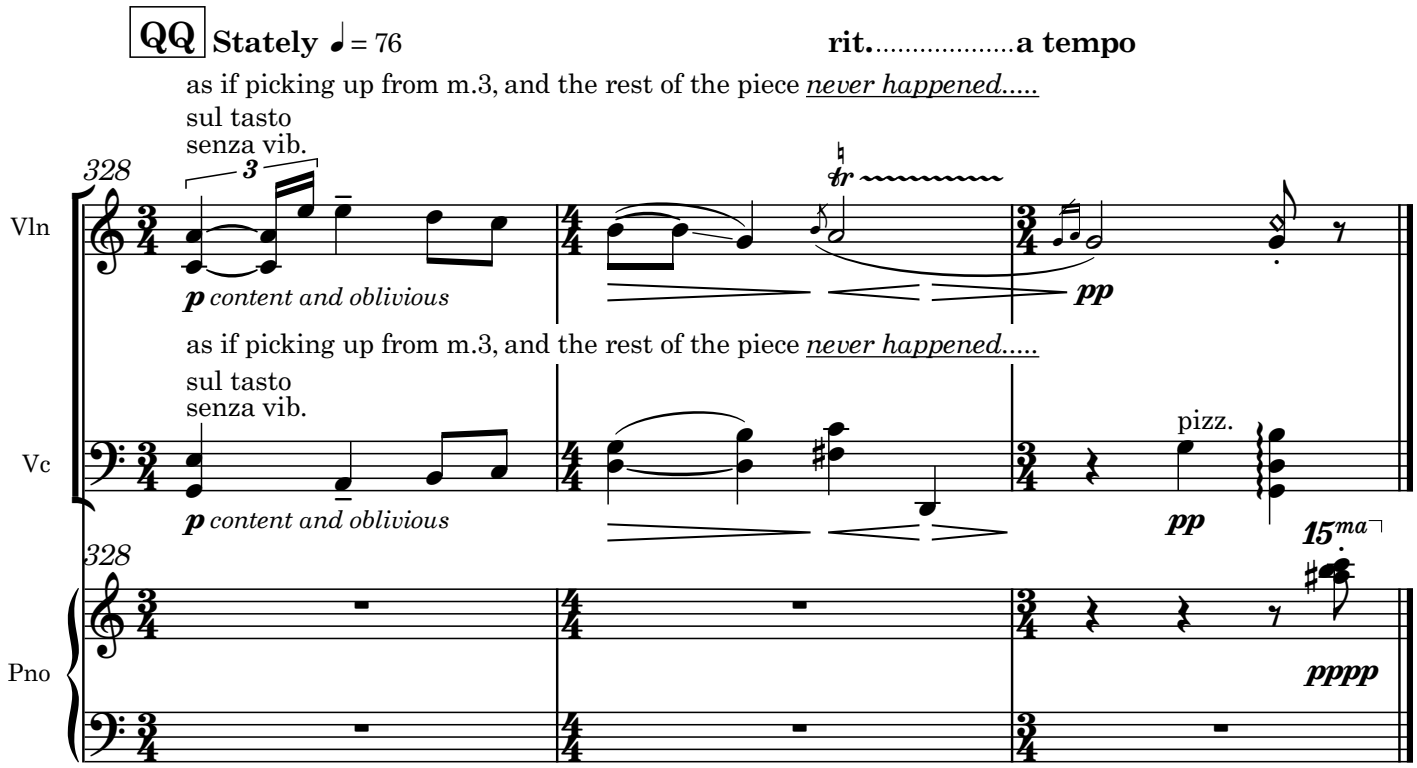

302
Vln
Vc
Pno
gliss.
gliss.
ord.
ord.
sfz
sfz
sfz
8ba
305
Vln
Vc
Pno
sfz
sfz
sfz
(8)
(Ped.)


308
Vln
Vc
sffz
play octaves with fingers
cluster with the palm between
308
Pno
fff
sffz
(8)
PP
311
Vln
sffz
fff
p
Vc
311
Pno
mp
(8)
(Ped.)


314
Vln
Vc
Pno
mp fff
mf fff
smoothly transition from octaves to plam clusters
(Ped.)


317
Vln
Vc
Pno
fff f ff ffff
(smoothly transition from octaves to plam clusters)
palm clusters
(Ped.)


320
Vln
ffff
ff
ffff poss.
Vc
ff
ffff poss.
320
Pno
8va
15ma
ffff poss.
ff
cresc.
8ba
(Ped.)
324
Vln
Vc
324
(15)
Pno
(8)
(Ped.)


QQ
Stately ♩ = 76
rit.....a tempo
as if picking up from m.3, and the rest of the piece never happened.....
sul tasto
senza vib.
328
Vln
p content and oblivious
tr
pp
as if picking up from m.3, and the rest of the piece never happened.....
sul tasto
senza vib.
Vc
p content and oblivious
pizz.
pp
328
15ma
Pno
pppp