John M. Tarrh

Trio Suite

For Two Flutes and Violoncello

Full Score

Meriam Hill Music
www.tarrh.com
(ASCAP)

Instrumentation

Flute 1
Flute 2
Violoncello

Performance Notes

Performance time: 10:30. Movements: 1) 3:20; 2) 2:25; 3) 2:55; 4) 1:50

Program Listing

Trio Suite (2009) John M. Tarrh (b. 1947)

I. Love Song
II. Argument
III. Memory
IV. Game

Program Notes

Trio Suite (2009) for two flutes and violoncello was written for the Trio Con Brio (Laura Wilkins, flute, Wendy Vignaux, flute, and Susanne Friedrich, violoncello). I wanted to create a musical work reminiscent of the baroque suites and classical trios that comprise the bulk of their current repertoire, while taking advantage of the broader palette of colors available today by using more contemporary tonal methods. For contrast, each movement employs a different approach to tonality and a different meter (number of beats per measure), while unity of the entire work is achieved through a variety of means. The movements are given descriptive subtitles to suggest each movement's particular mood or character.

The first movement, subtitled *Love Song*, is an adaptation of my song *Past Spring I Met You* (2009) that was commissioned by Anita Gram for the tenth anniversary of her union with Holly Humphreys. The text for the song consists of three brief love poems, two of which were written by Anita while the author of the third poem is unknown. (See www.tarrh.com/mus.html for the text of these poems.) The harmonic scheme for this movement was inspired by Beethoven's sixteenth piano sonata, which was innovative in his time: both works emphasize tonal relationships that are a third removed from their home keys.

The second movement, *Argument*, is much more dissonant and aggressive than the first, suggesting the harmonic language and pathos of Shostakovich. After a confrontational opening, the violoncello's melody becomes the subject of a small set of variations.

The third movement, *Memory*, is a slow fugue modeled after one of my favorites, Bach's c minor fugue from Book I of the Well-Tempered Clavier. The harmony of my fugue is very different, however, as I have used an atonal compositional approach. The opening fugue subject, which appears throughout the movement in a variety of voices, consists of a 12-tone row (a specific sequence of pitches in which no pitch is repeated until the remaining 11 have been used) along with an inversion of that row. The accompanying voices provide a sense of tonality for the atonal, wistful melody of the fugue subject.

The fourth movement, *Game*, is a playful, energetic romp in 5/8 time. The central section of this three-part movement consists of thematic materials from the first three movements, transformed into an entirely new character.

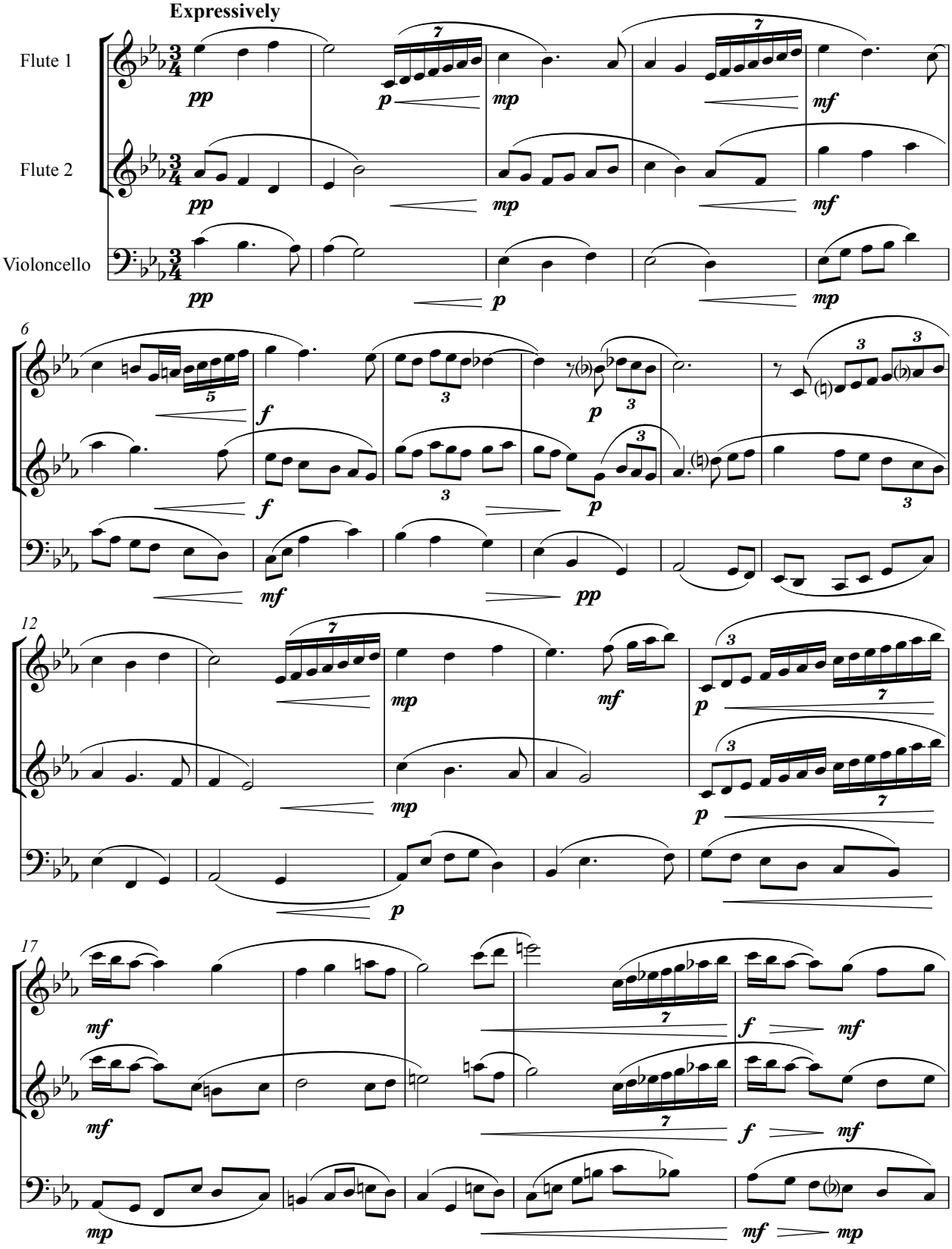
John M. Tarrh

Rev. 11/05/09

Trio Suite
I. Love Song

John M. Tarrh

Andante, ♩ = 72
Expressively



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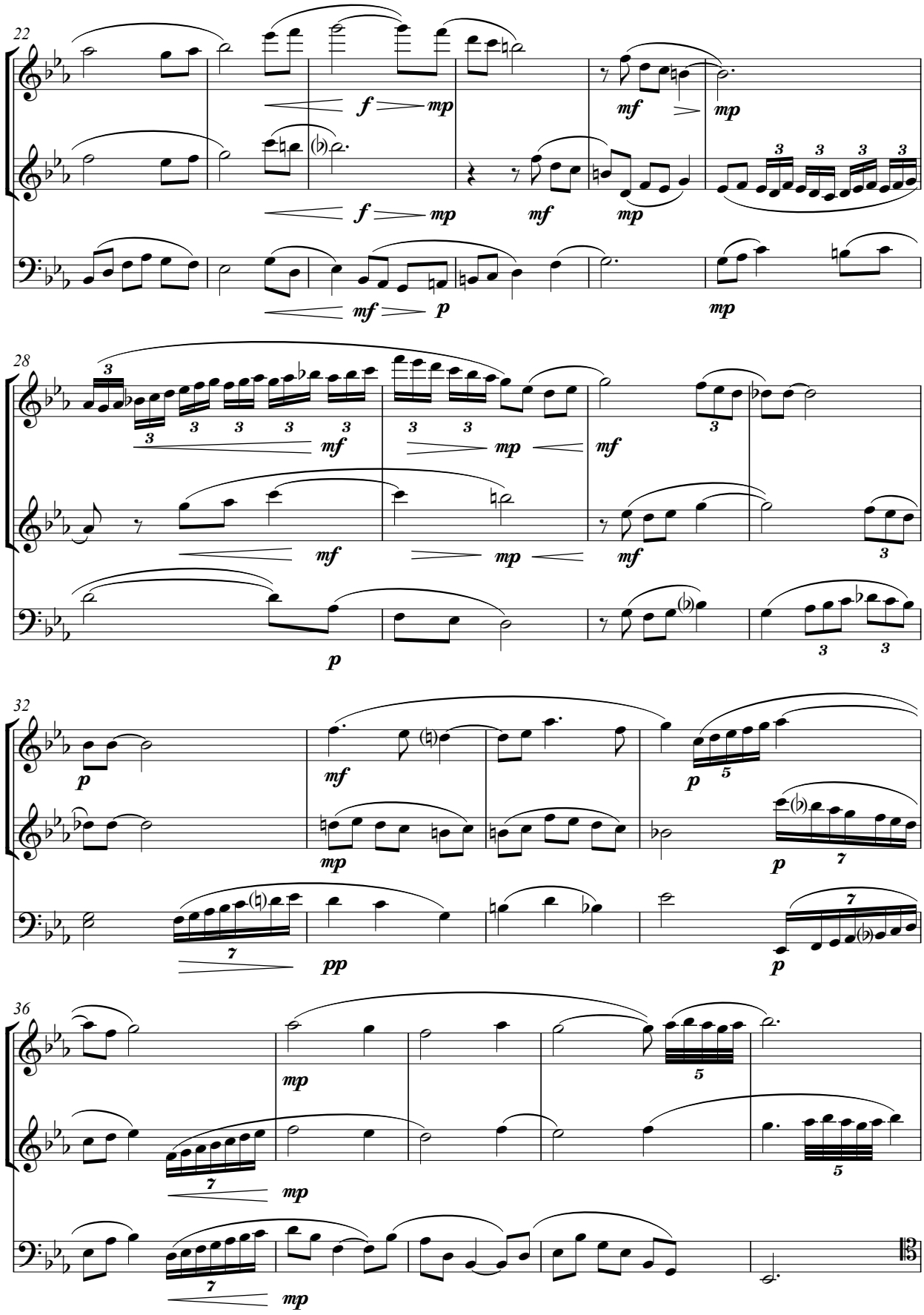
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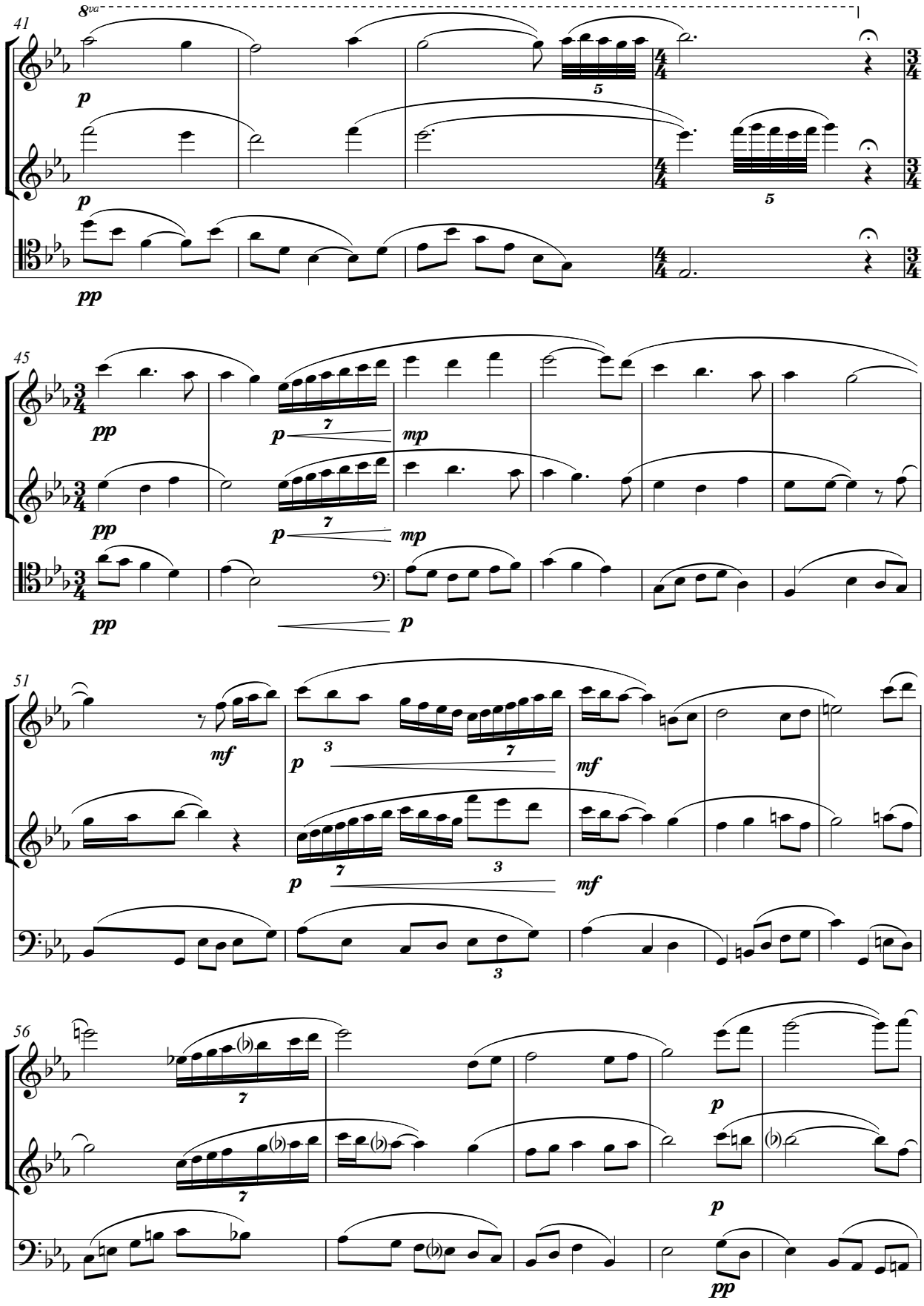
28
32
36


41
8va
p
p
pp
45
pp
p
mp
pp
p
mp
pp
p
51
mf
p
mf
p
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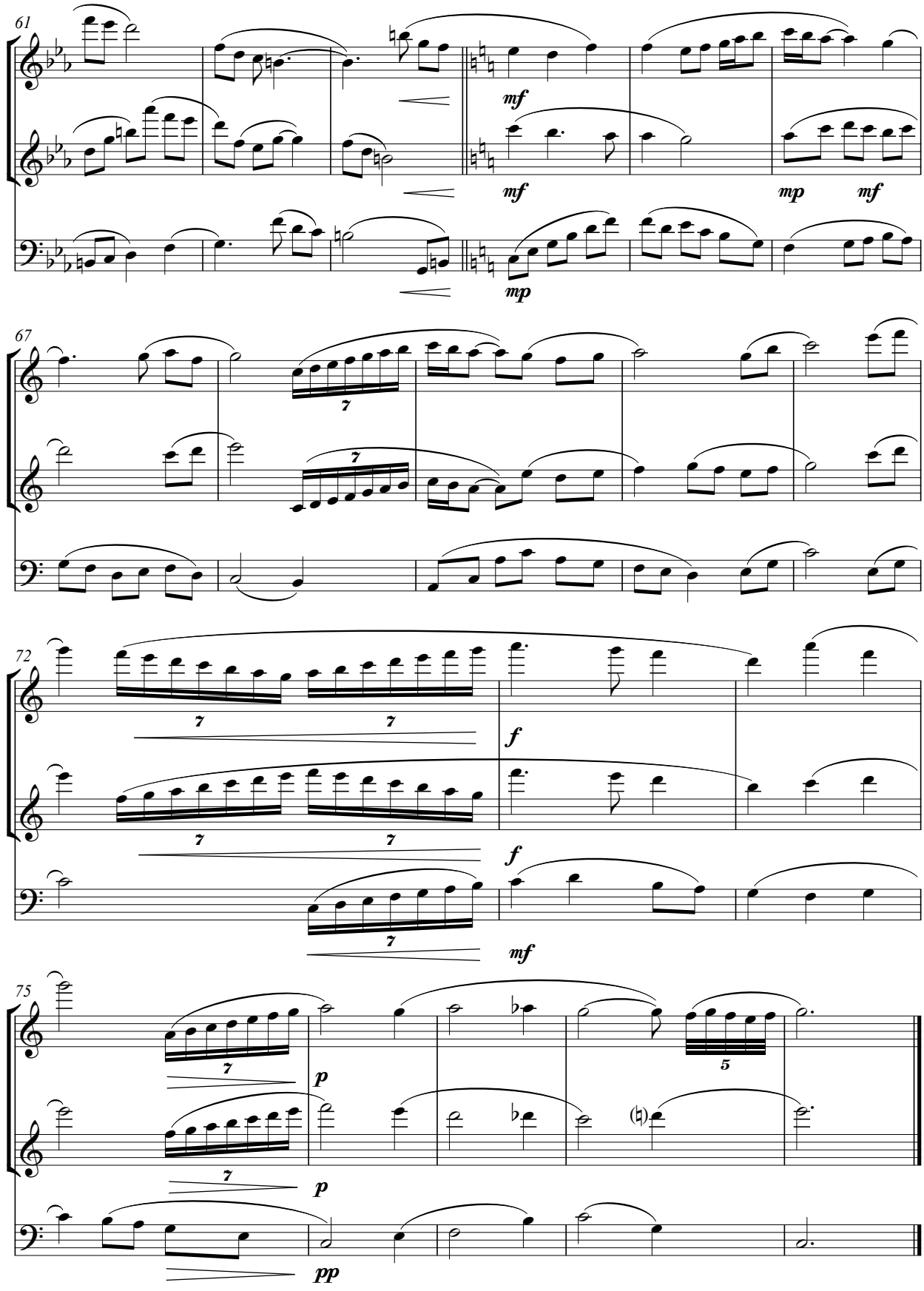
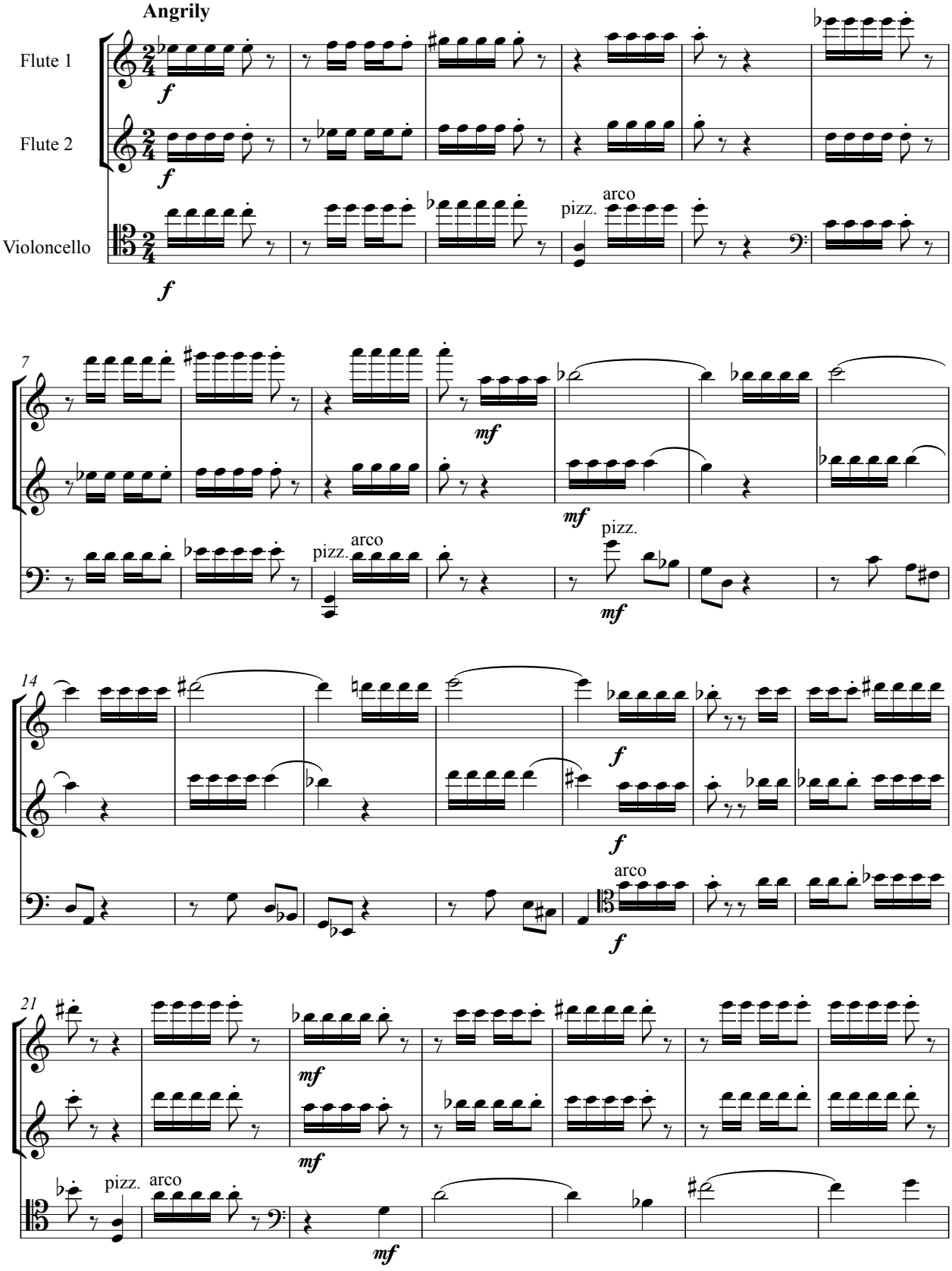
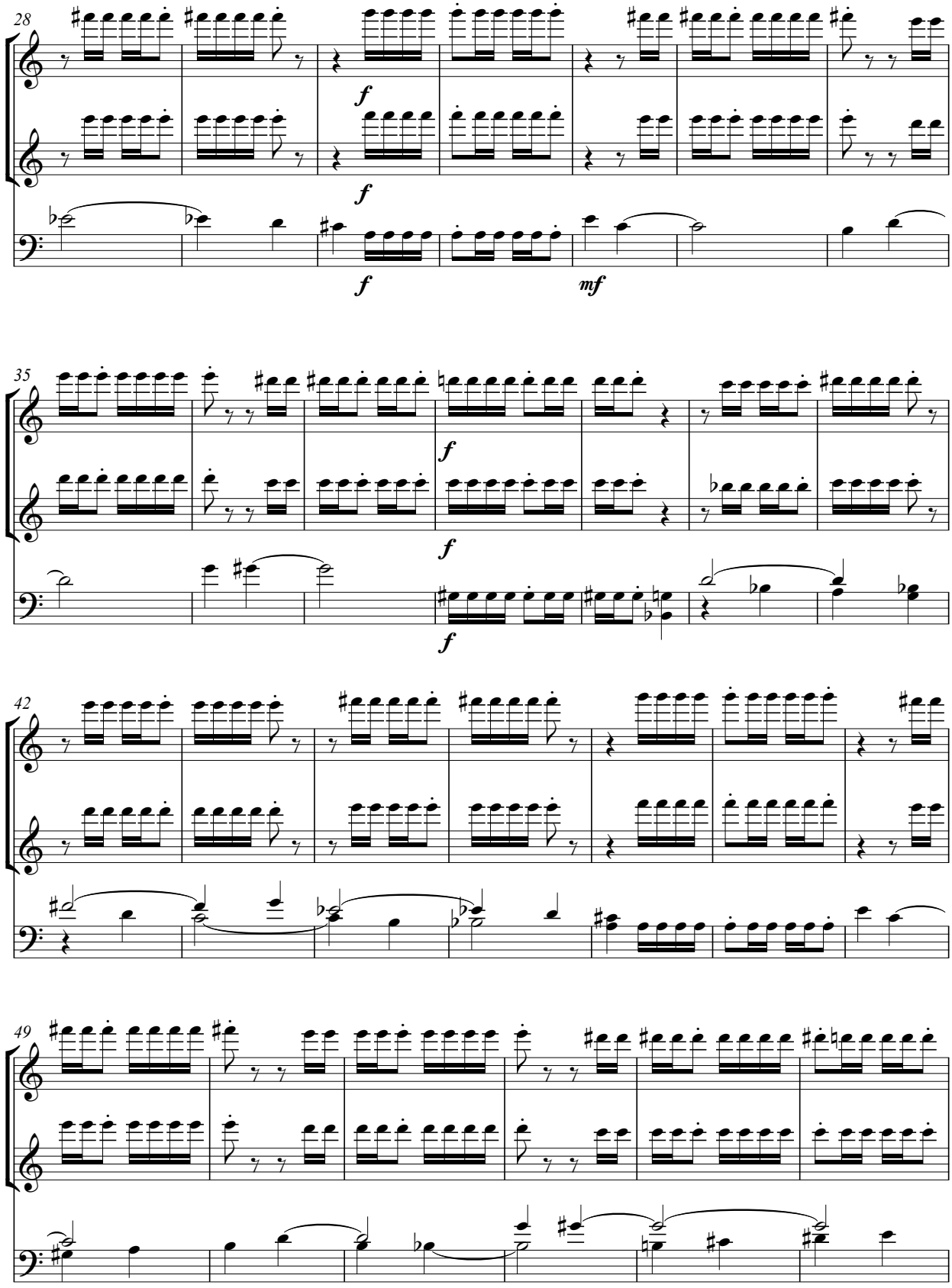
56
p
p
pp

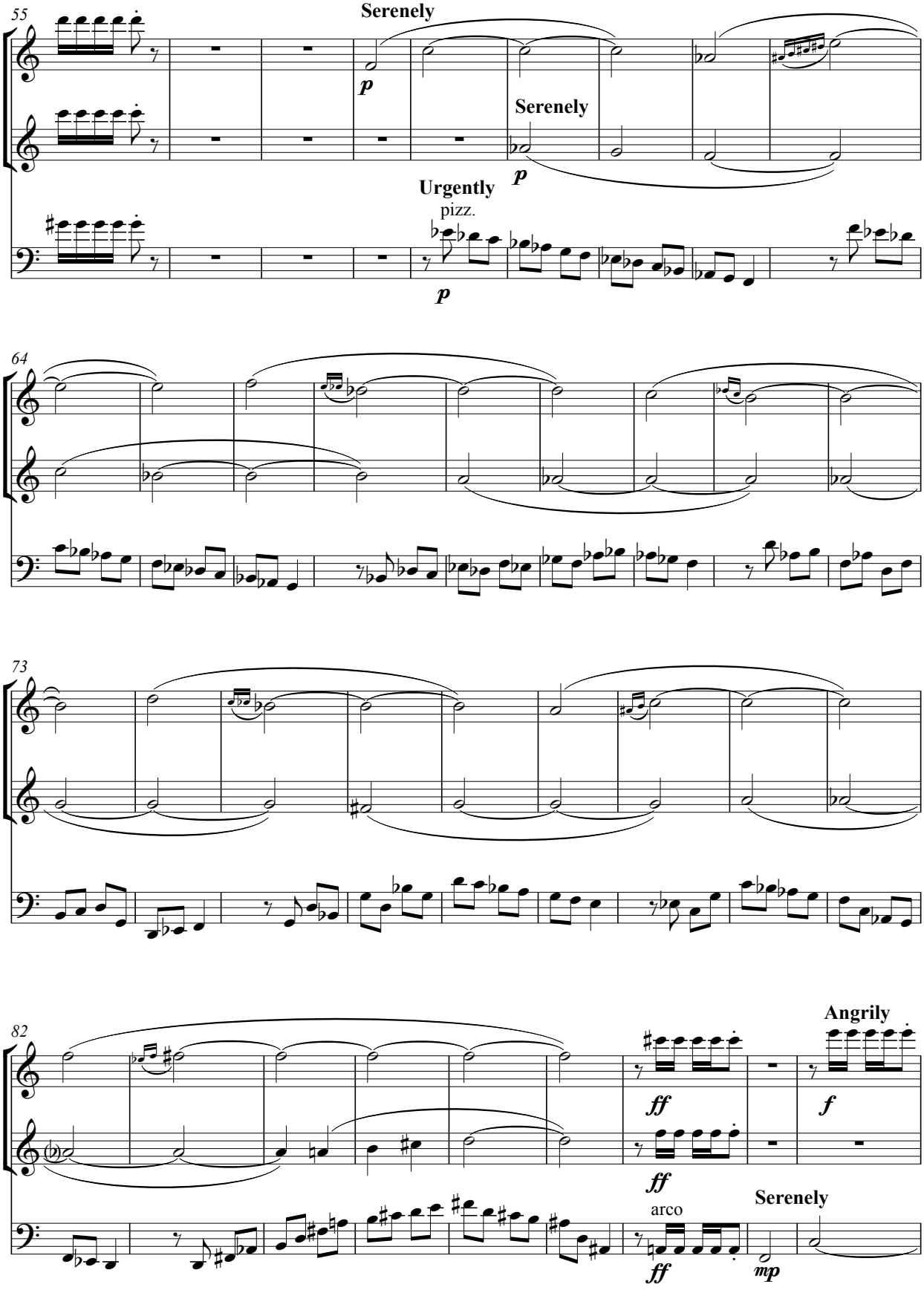

61
mf
mf
mp
mf
mp
67
7
7
72
7
7
f
7
7
f
7
mf
75
7
p
5
7
p
pp

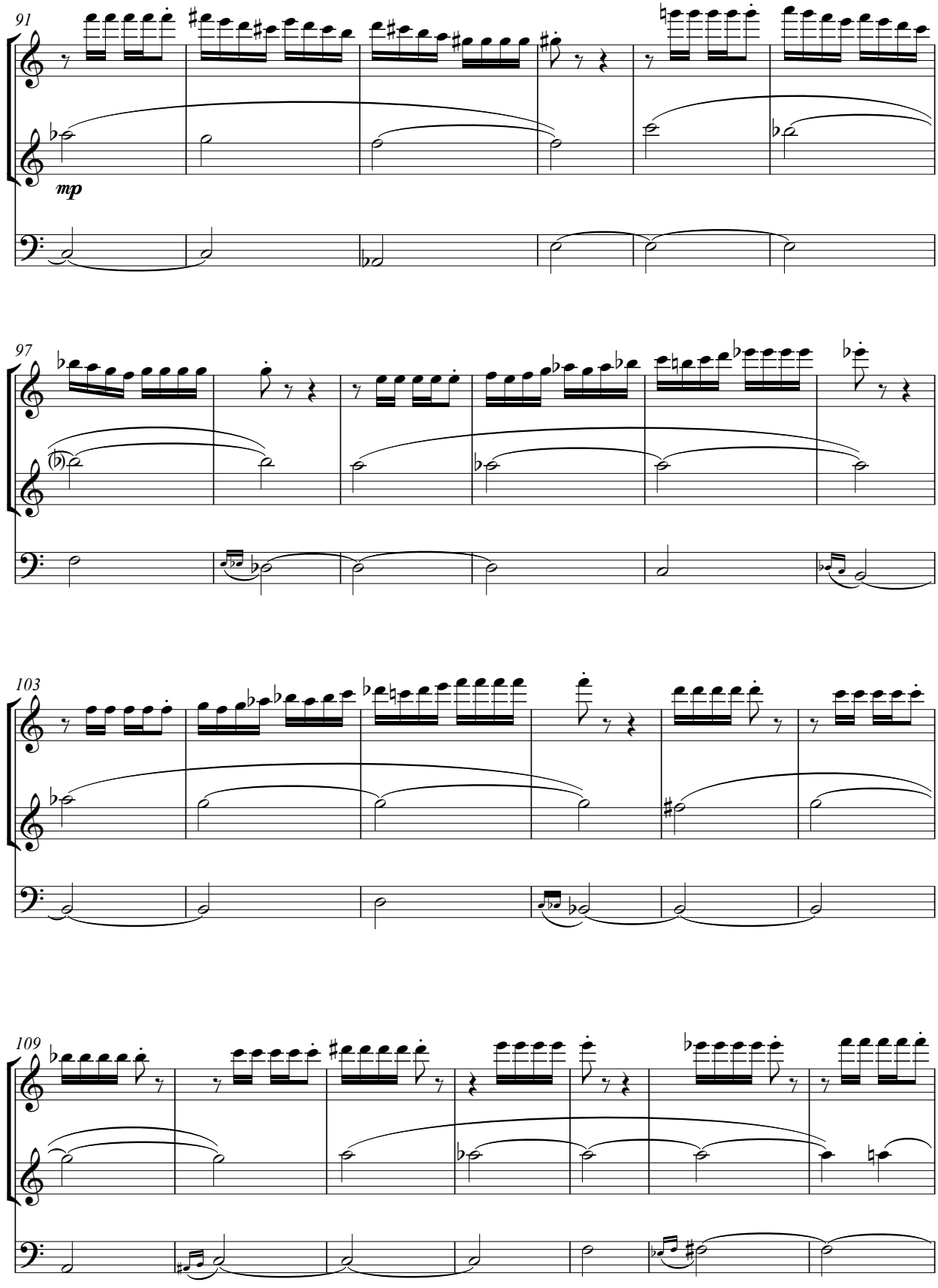
II. Argument

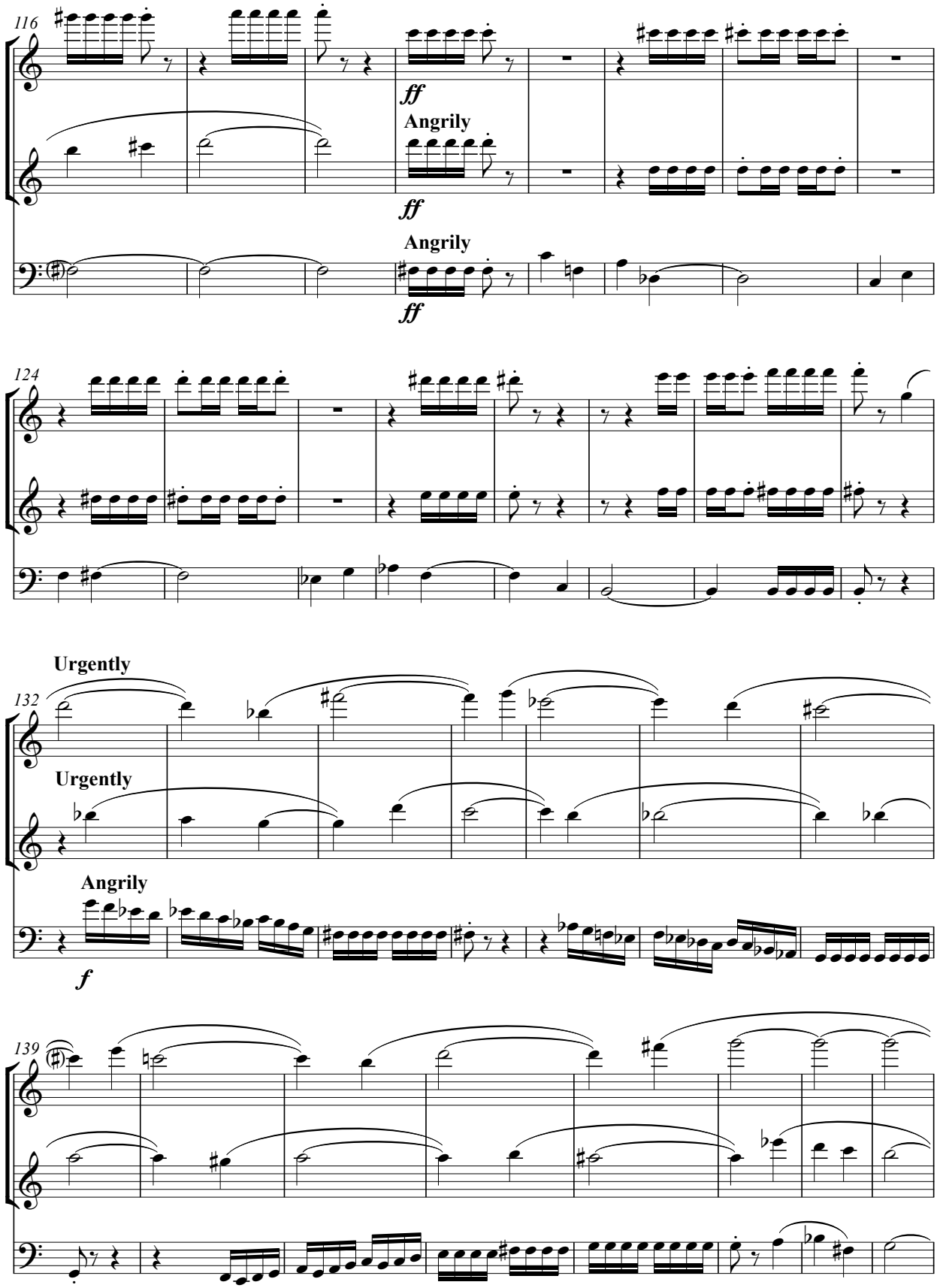
Allegro, ♩ = 144
Angrily

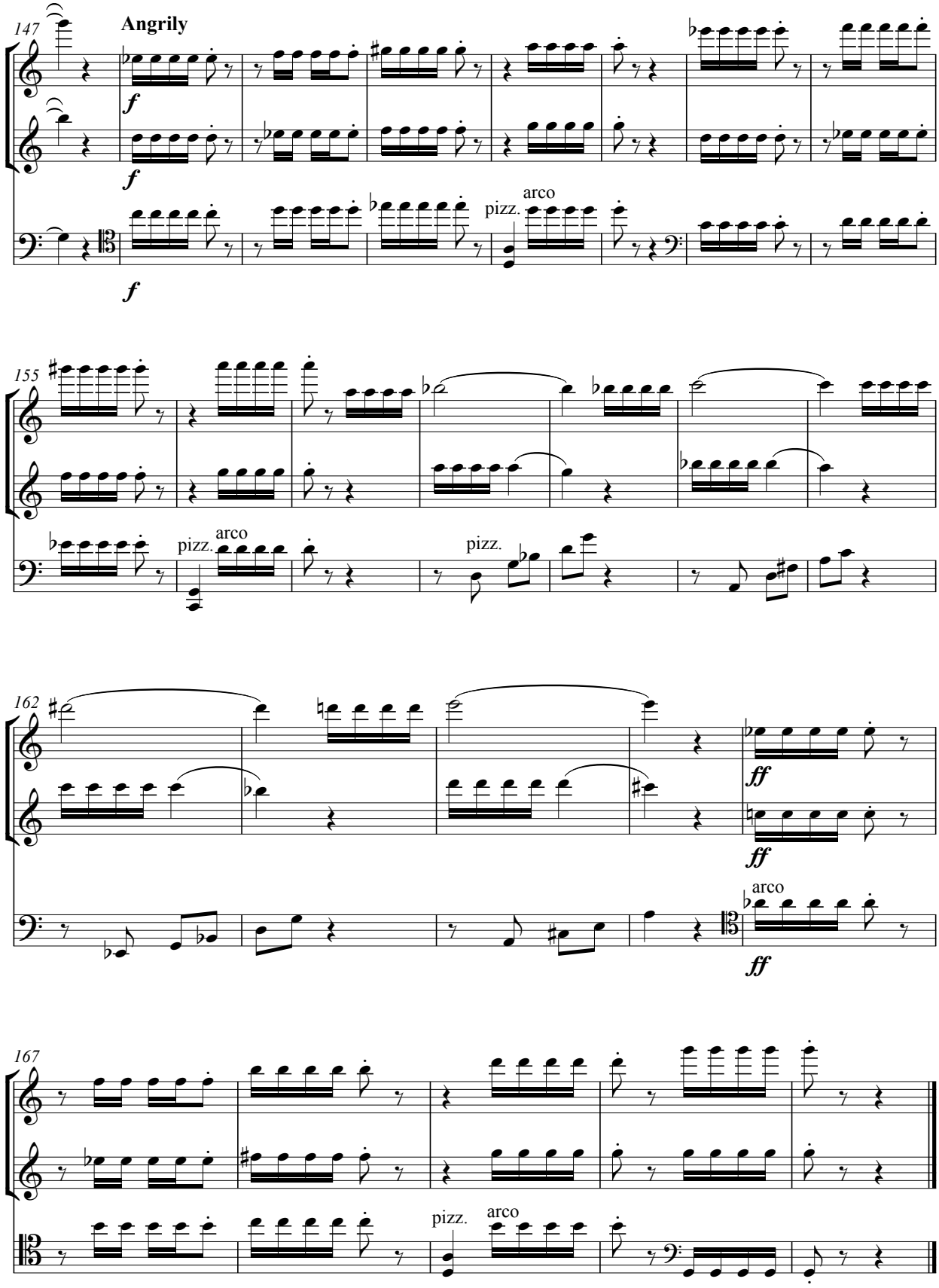



28
f
f
f
mf
35
f
f
f
42
49


55
Serenely
p
Serenely
p
Urgently
pizz.
p
64
73
82
Angrily
ff
f
ff
Serenely
arco
ff
mp

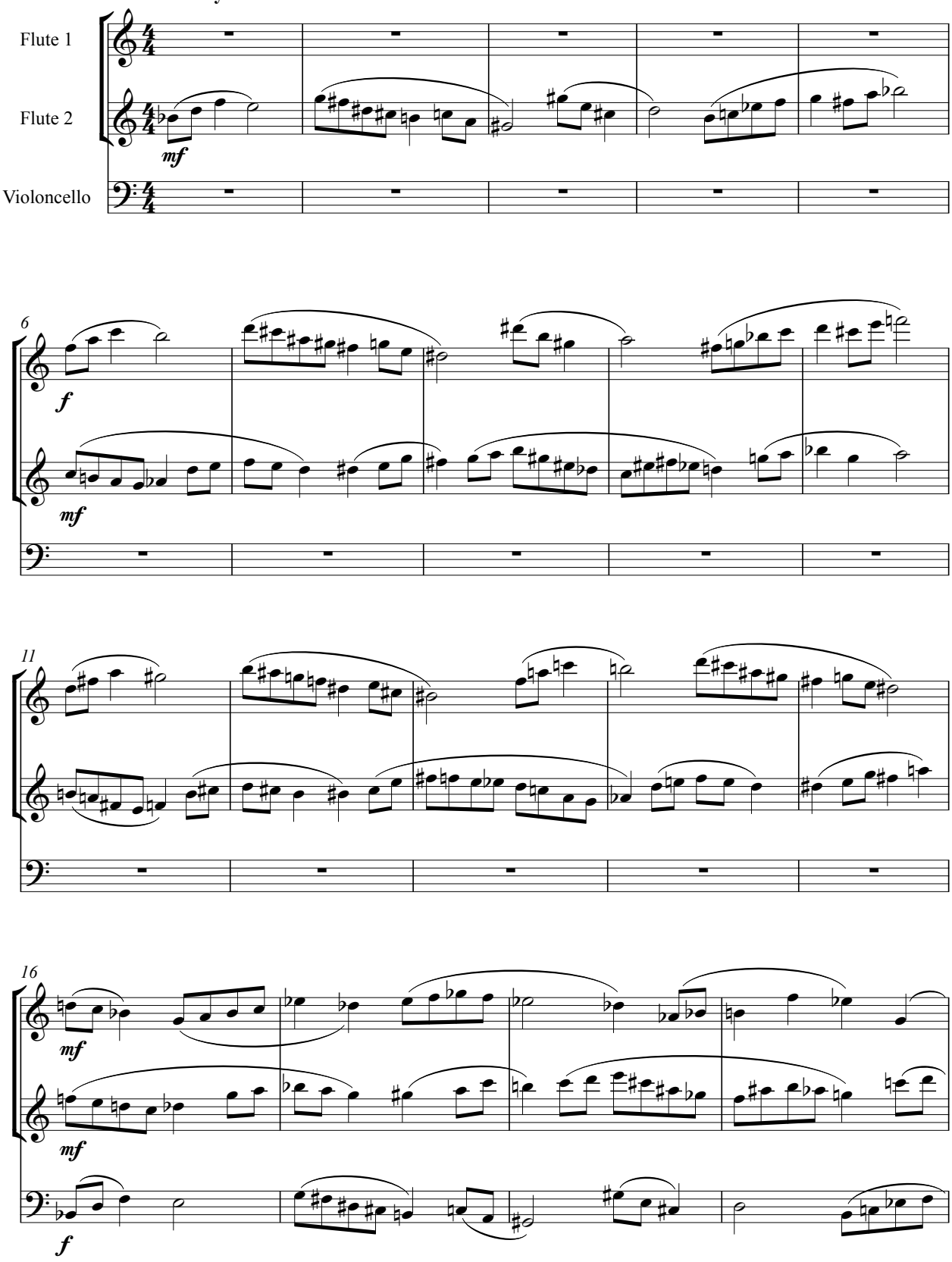

91
mp
97
103
109

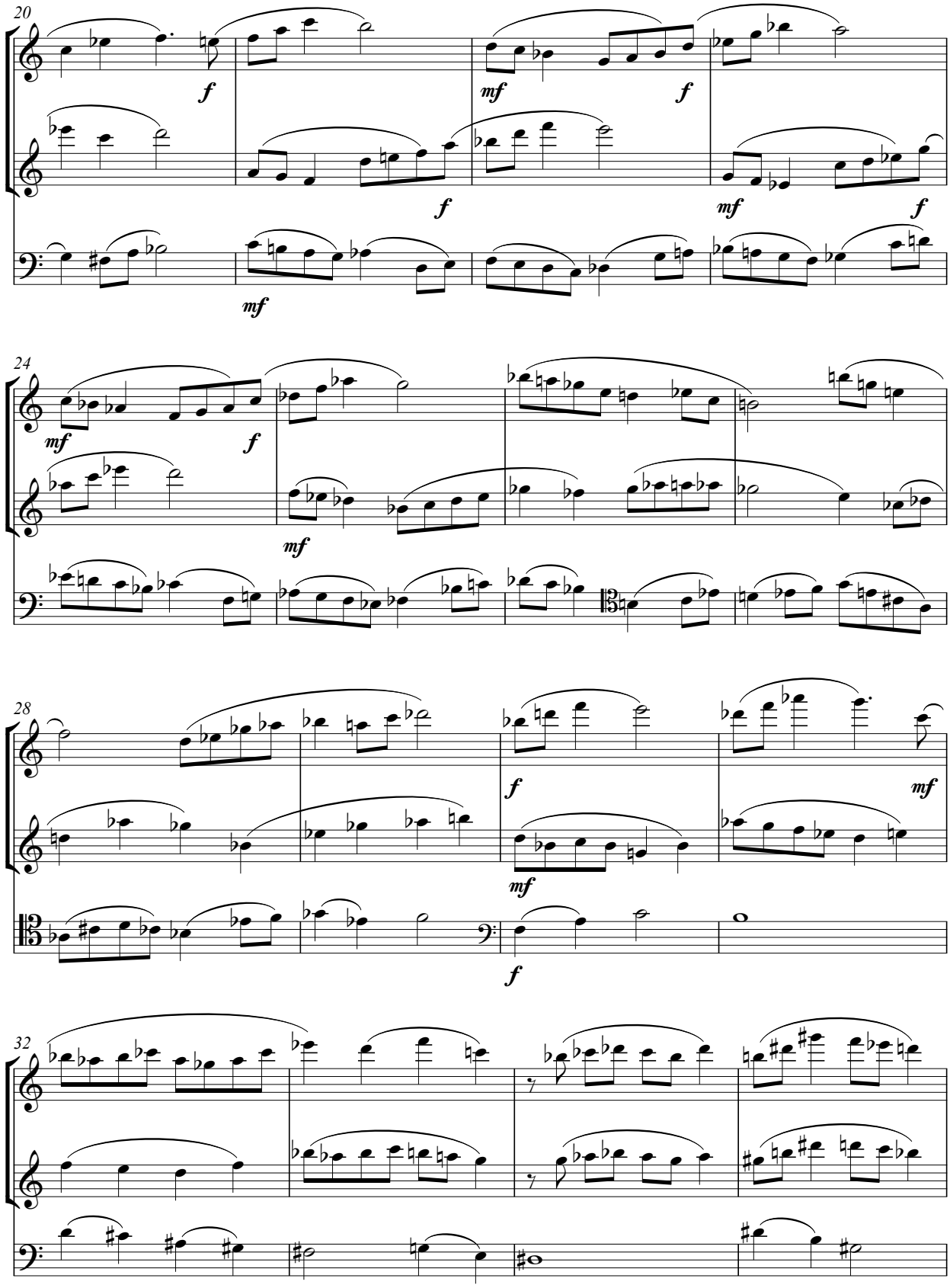

116
ff
Angrily
ff
Angrily
ff
124
Urgently
132
Urgently
Angrily
f
139


147
Angrily
f
f
f
pizz.
arco
155
pizz.
arco
pizz.
162
ff
ff
arco
ff
167
pizz.
arco

III. Memory

Andante, ♩ = 72
Wistfully

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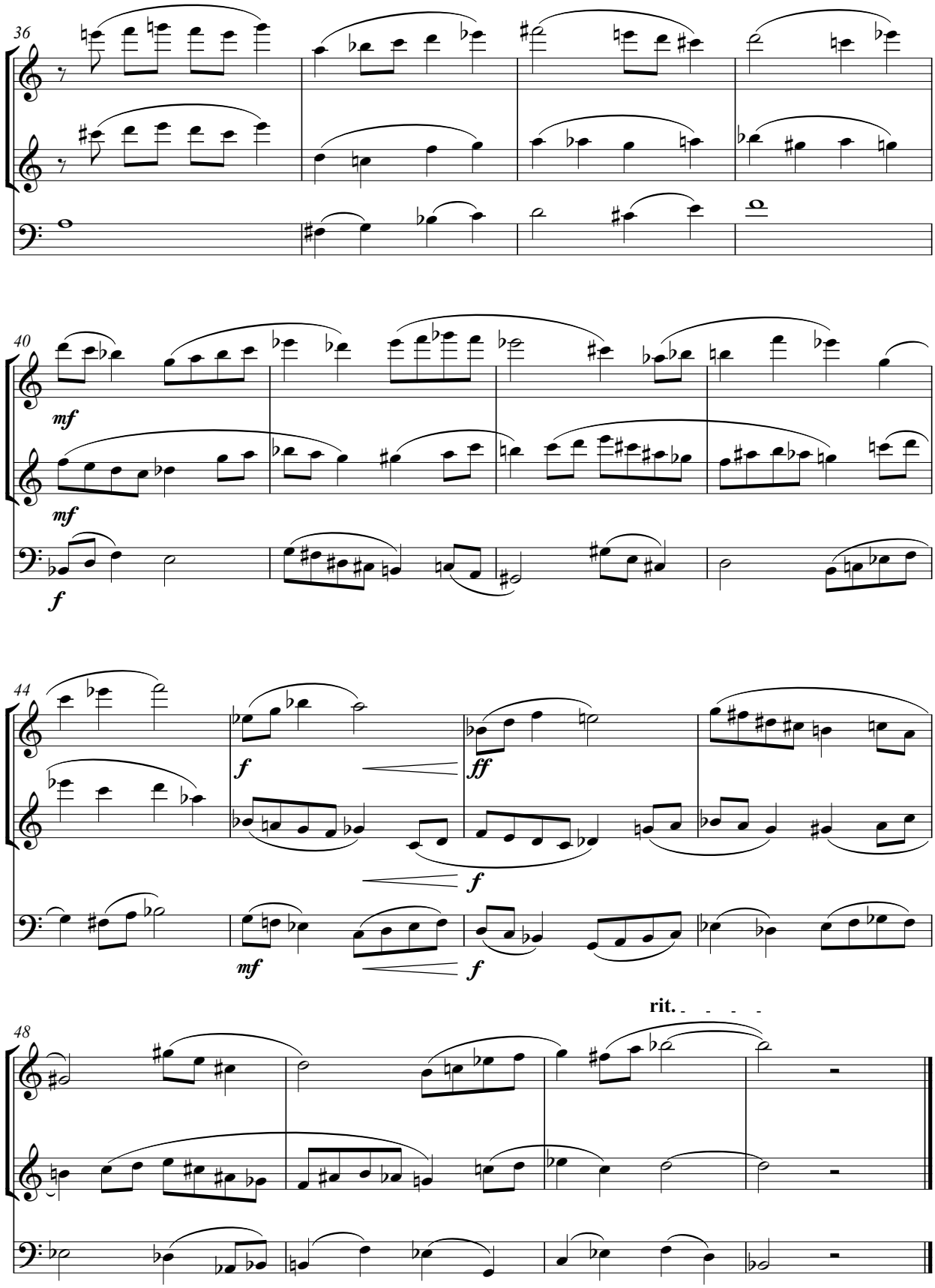
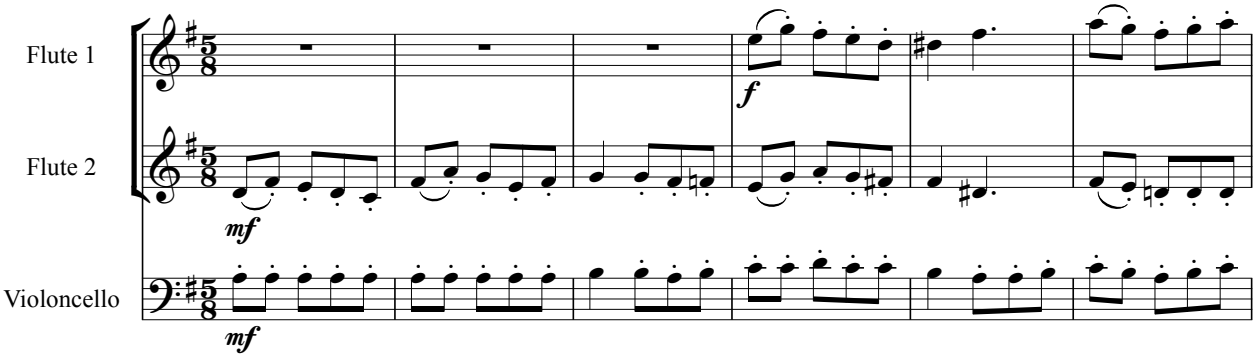
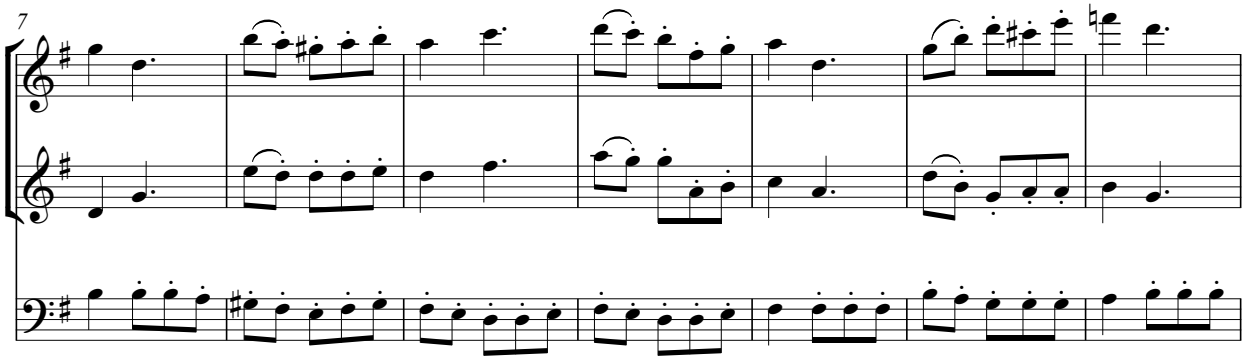
24
28
32

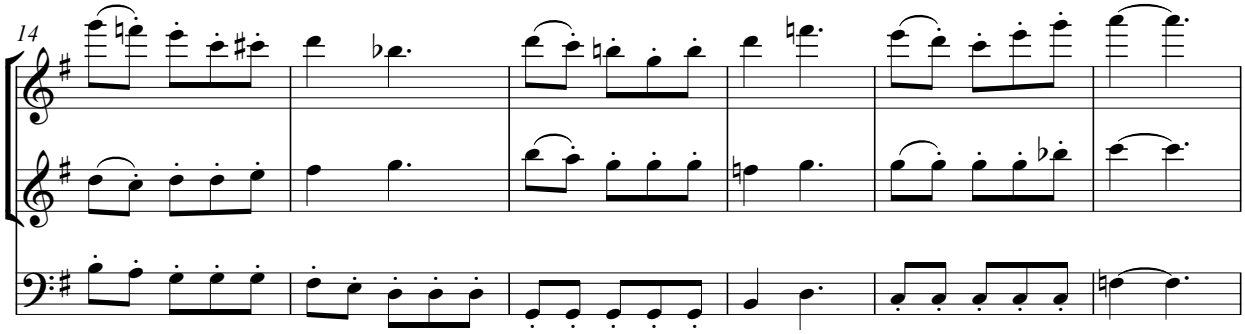

36
40
mf
mf
f
44
f
ff
f
mf
f
48
rit.

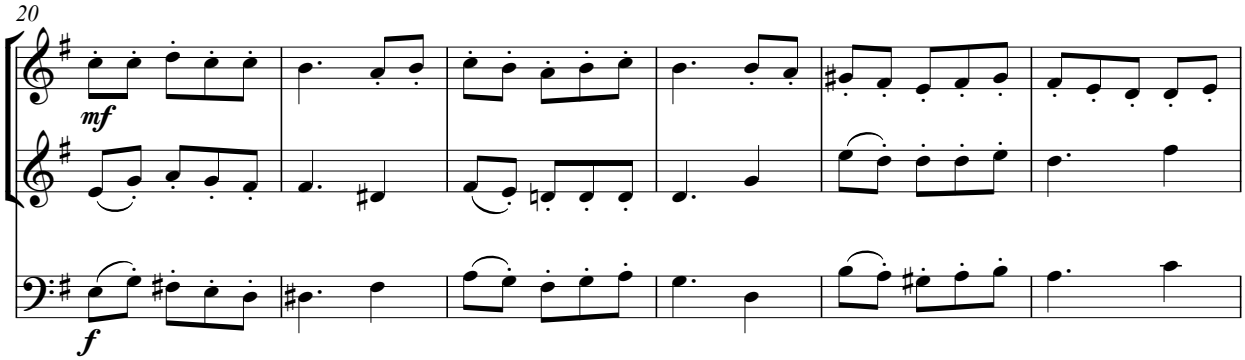
IV. Game

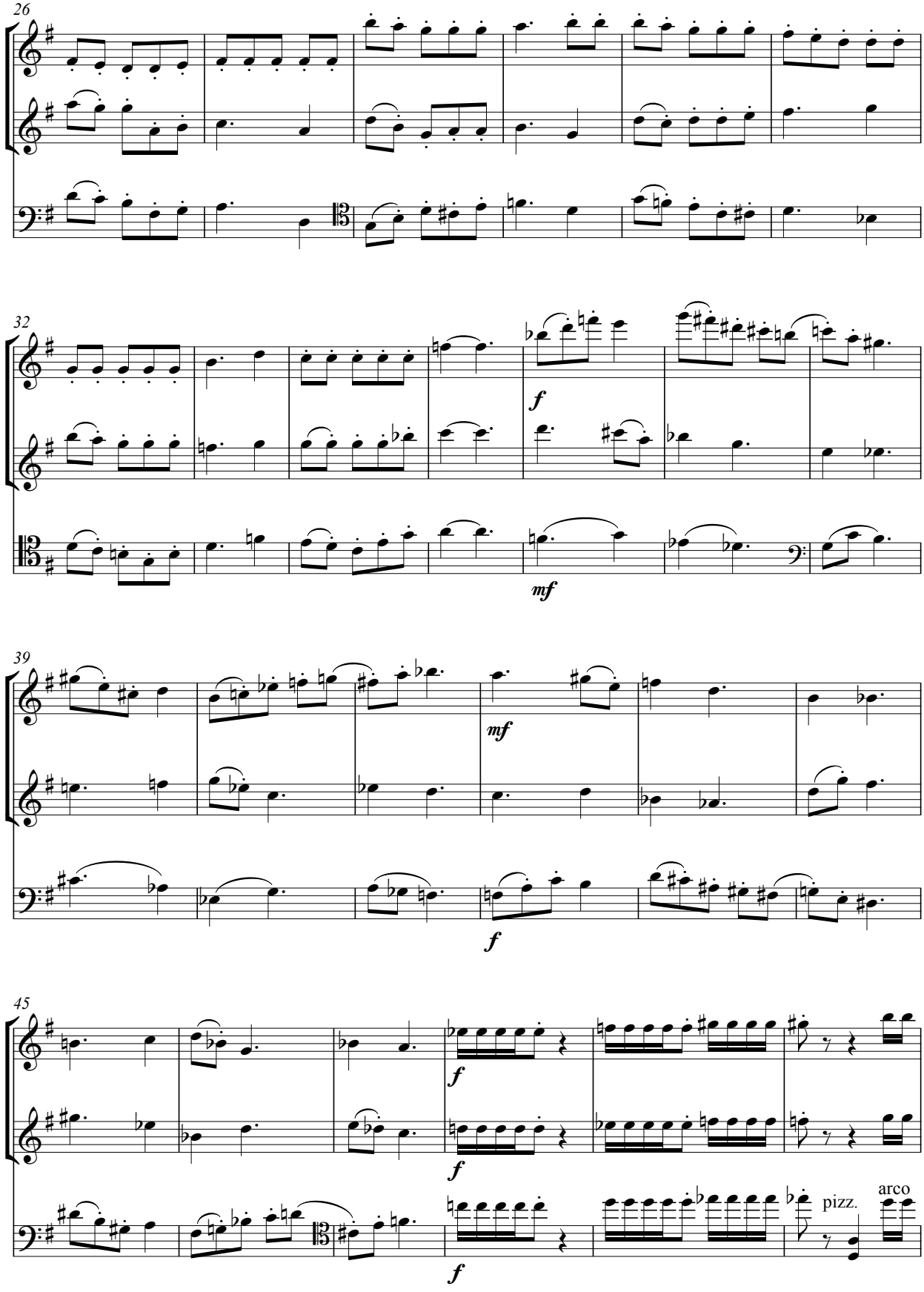
Allegro, ♩ = 144
Playfully

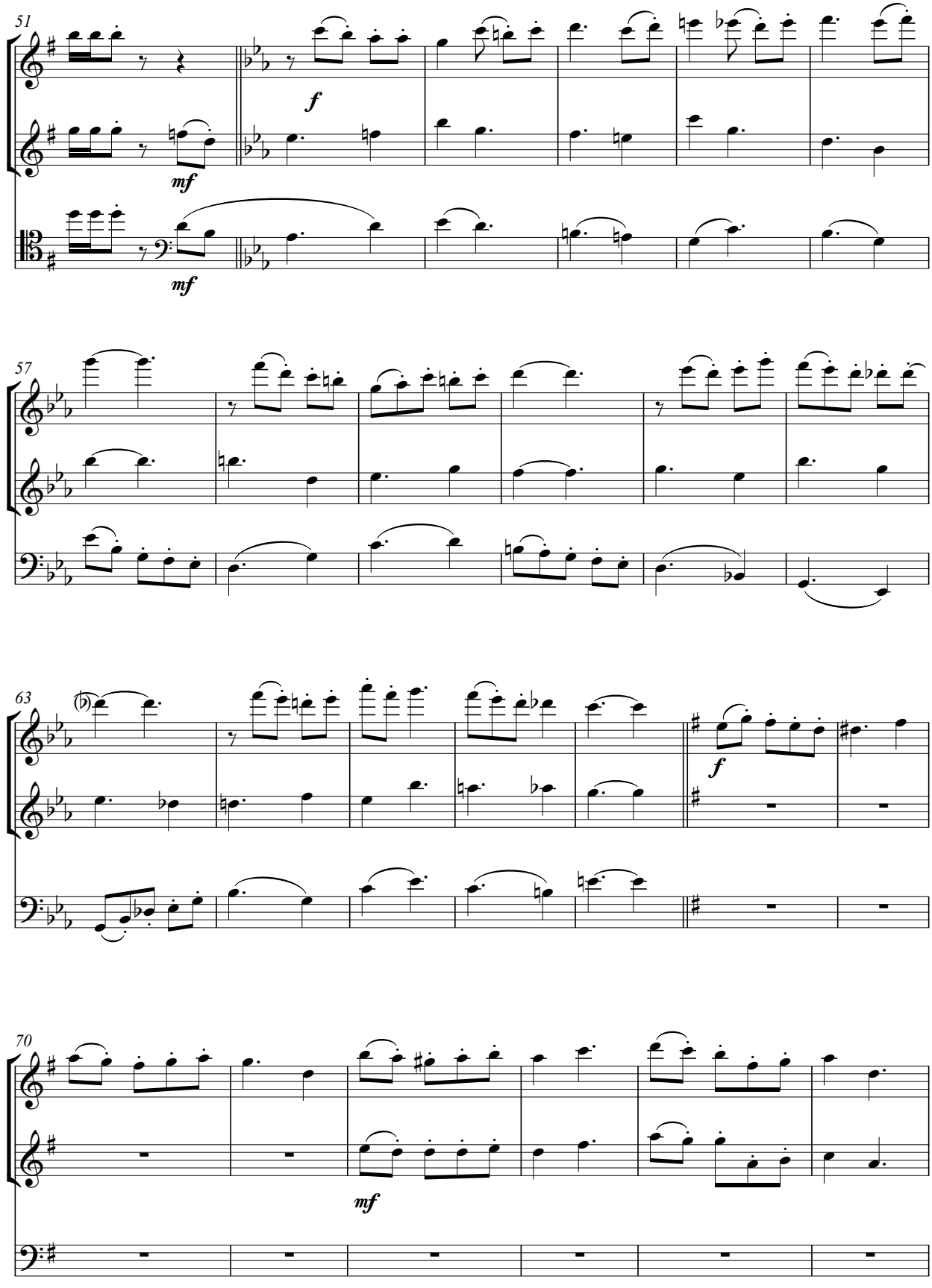


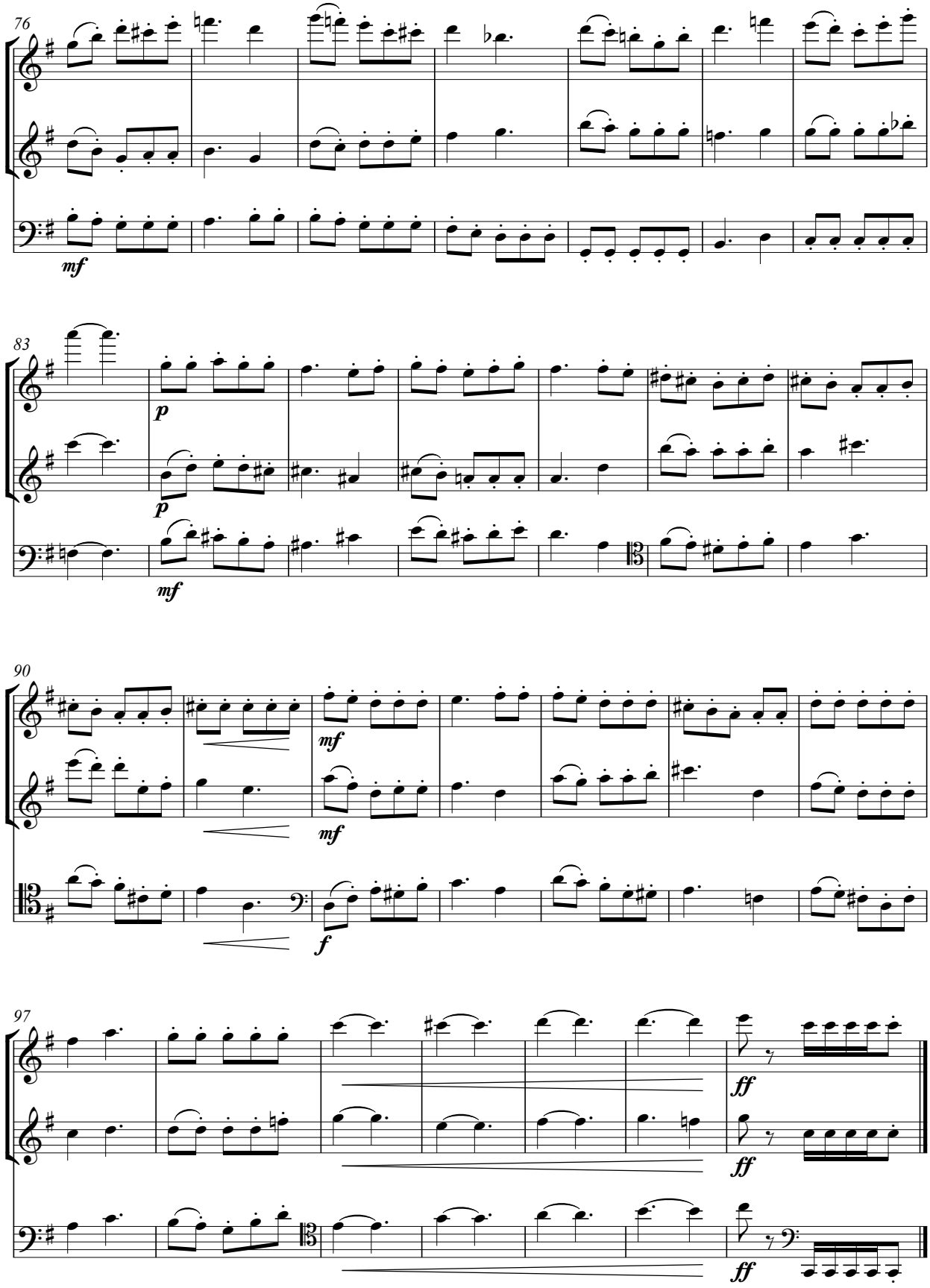







26
32
f
mf
39
mf
f
45
f
f
pizz.
arco
f


51
f
mf
mf
57
63
f
70
mf


76
mf
83
p
p
mf
90
mf
mf
f
97
ff
ff
ff