3 Songs About Words

for soprano and piano

Jeremy Gill

3 Songs About Words

for soprano and piano
text by Lucy Miller Murray

Commission

commissioned by Martin L. and Lucy Miller Murray
to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Market Square Concerts

Premiere

16 May 2012 at the Rose Lehrman Arts Center, Harrisburg, PA
by Sarah Wolfson and Renate Rohlfing

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Instrumentation

soprano
piano

Duration

approximately 10 minutes

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3 Songs About Words

Words

Sit there, listen, listen to my voice
Sit there and be silent, love;
Ask me nothing, let me pound
My heart against your door;
Listen love, but do not open
Lest I should falter, fly in fear.

On Hearing a Very Famous Man Speak Profoundly

I sat complacent on that tin chair
And heard the ancient scholar say
That what is real we cannot know for certain
But only hope to feel at times its insufficient shade;
And all about me the learned heads would nod
In blind agreement of despair that knew itself
As innocent pattering upon paneled walls
That dulled its awful content and held mute the bleating heart.
Yet all this while I longed to press my lips upon your ear
And tell you of the drab, unconscious sparrow
That stared unblinking through the pane,
A gray bird on a gray bush, unconcerned, but there.

Please Take My Words

Please take my words
And turn them into song,
Do not leave them in a dusty drawer
For someone else to find
When all is done.

Please take my words
And turn them into song—
Give them your long crescendos,
Your subtle harmonies,
And your gentle ritards.

Please take my words
And turn them into song,
And if you do,
I shall be a child
Let loose among bells.

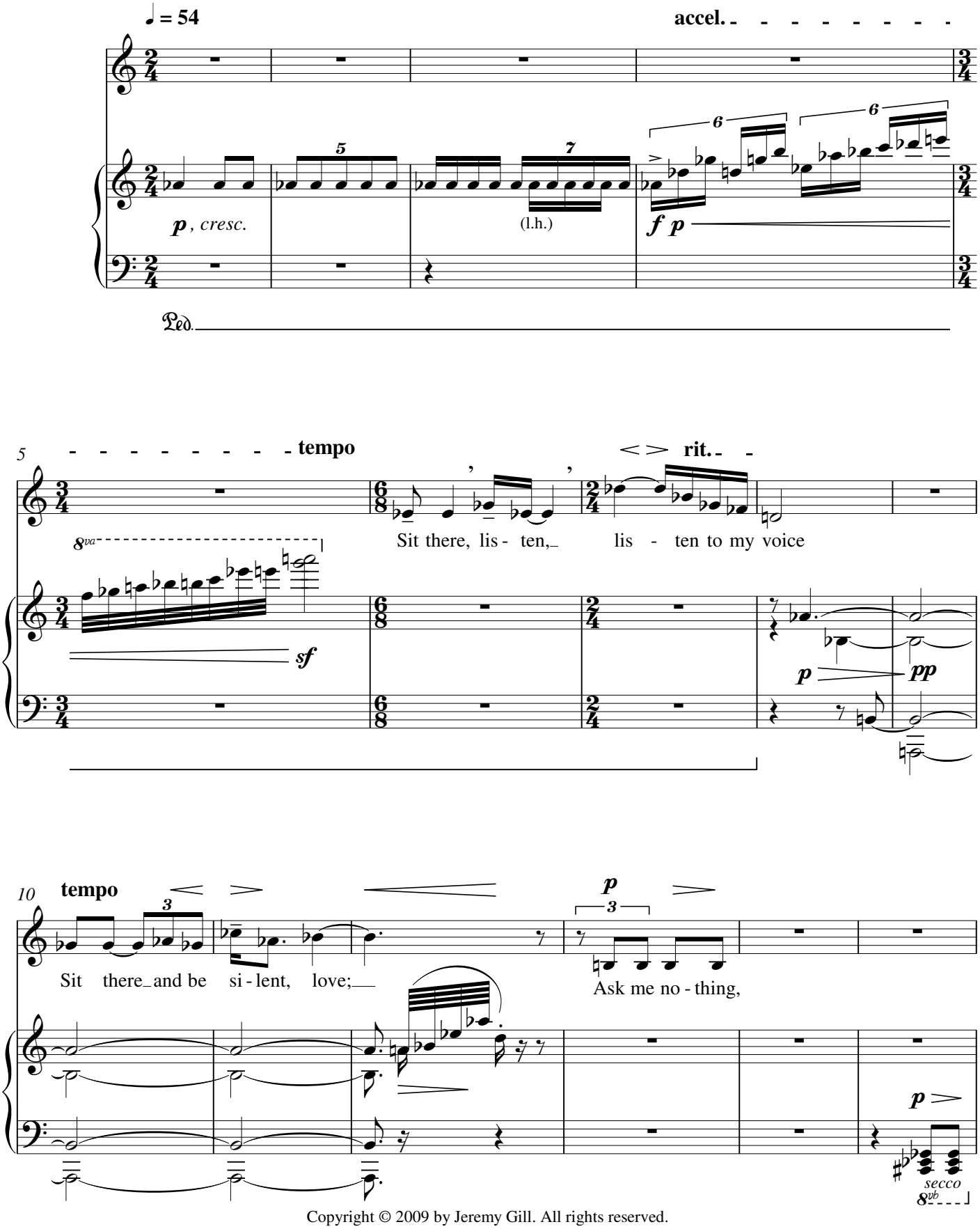
Poems by Lucy Miller Murray. Used by permission of the author.

This work has been commissioned by Lucy Miller Murray for Concert Artists Guild and has been written for Sarah Wolfson

3 Songs about Words

Lucy Miller Murray — J. Gill (2009)

1. Words



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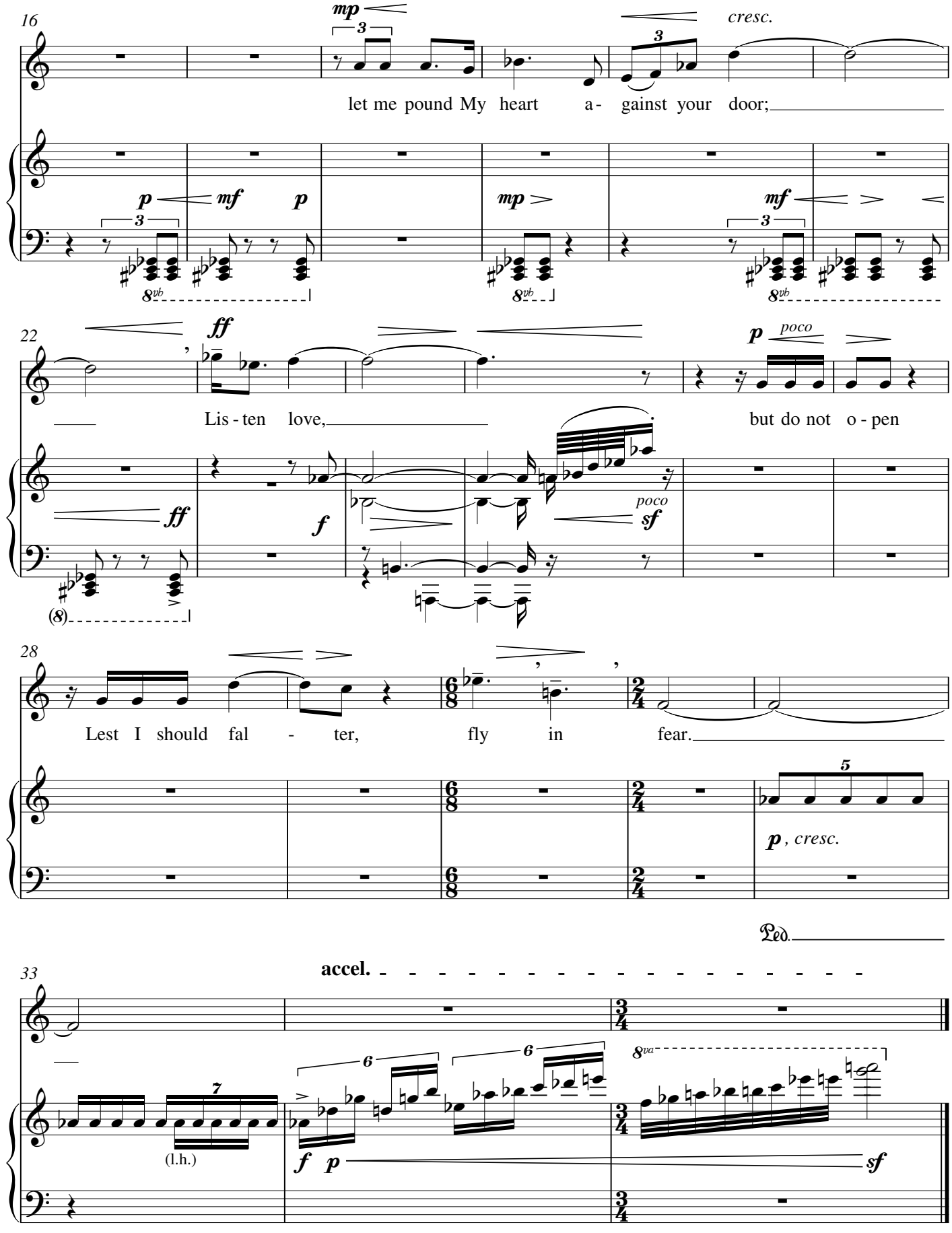
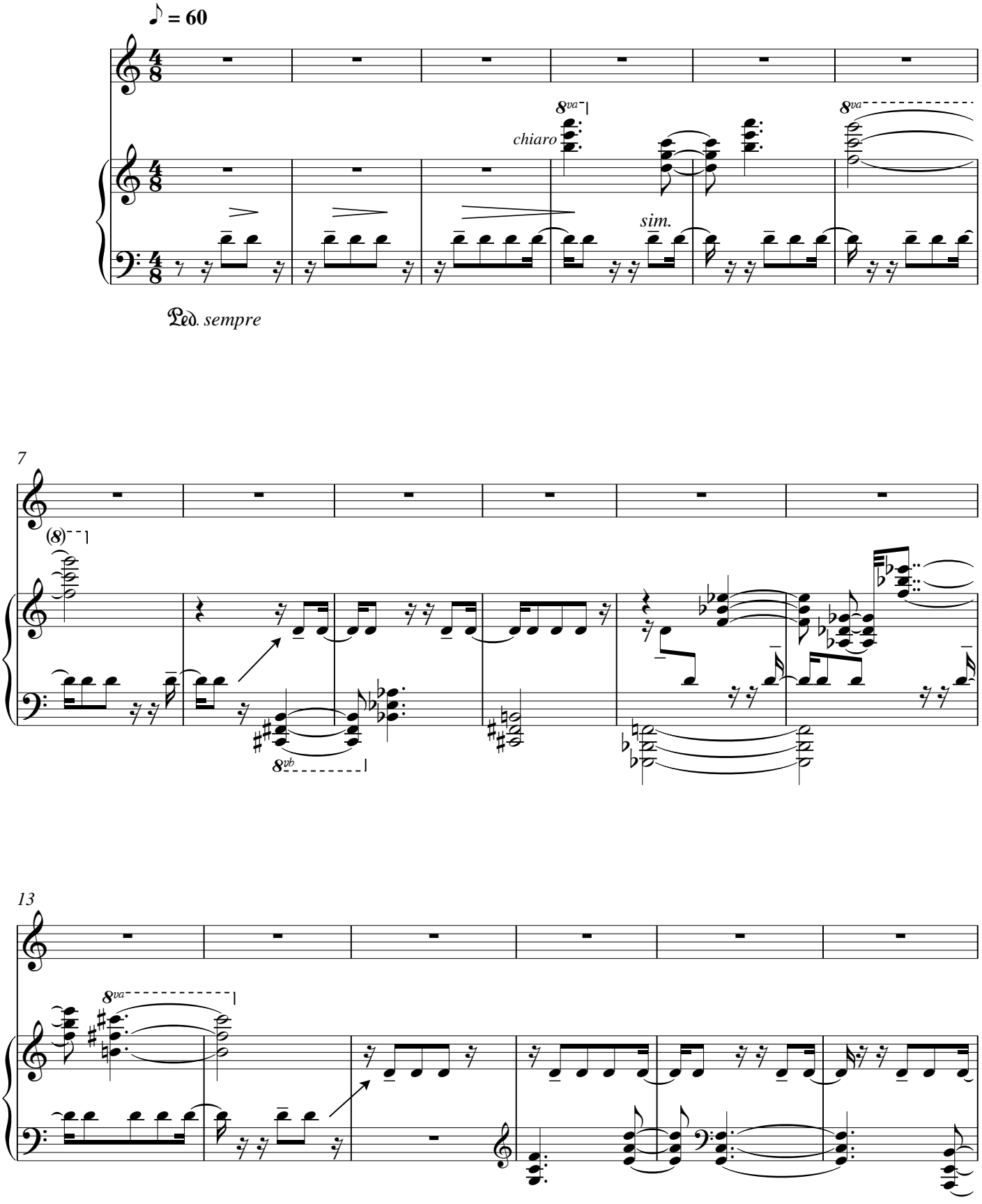
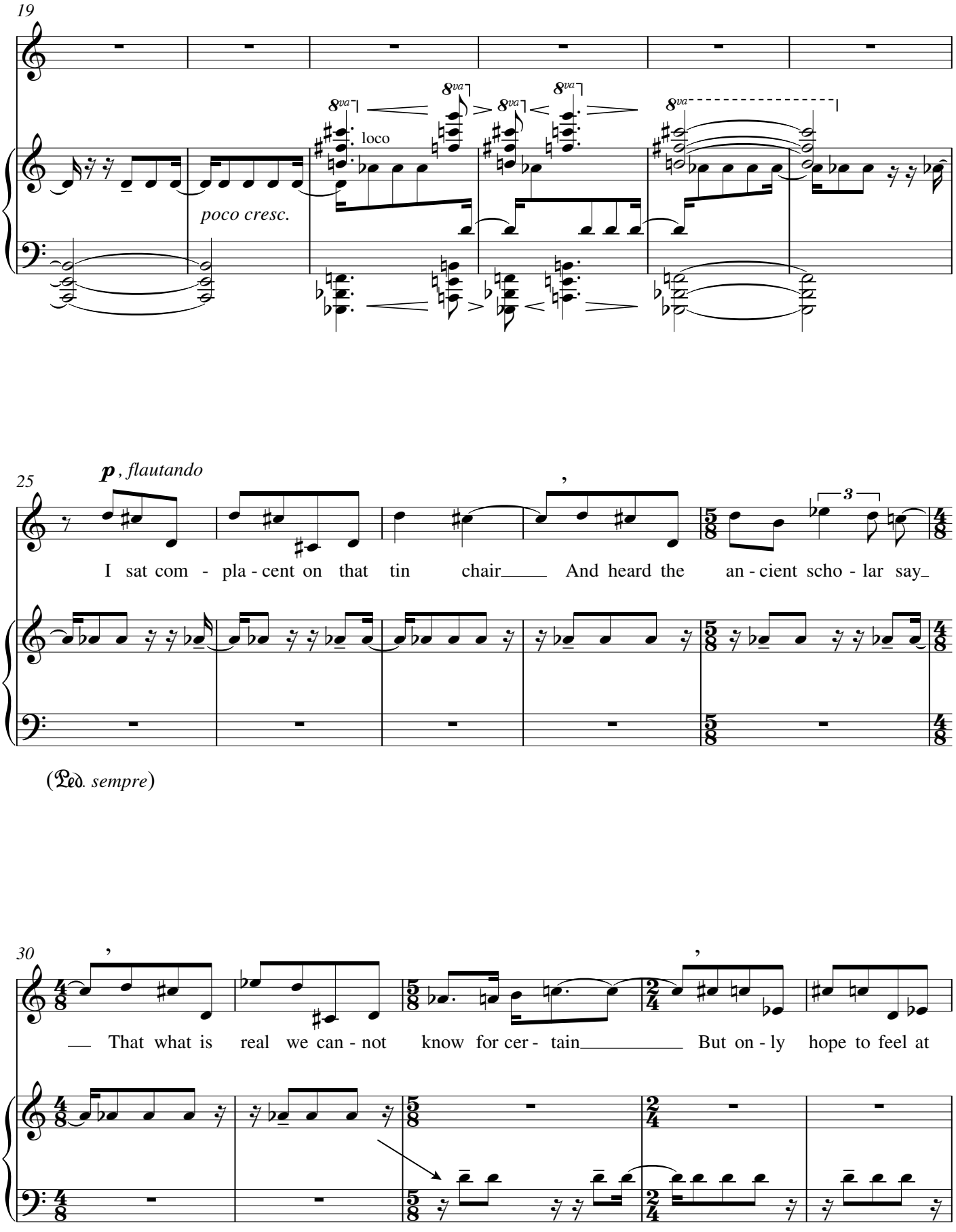
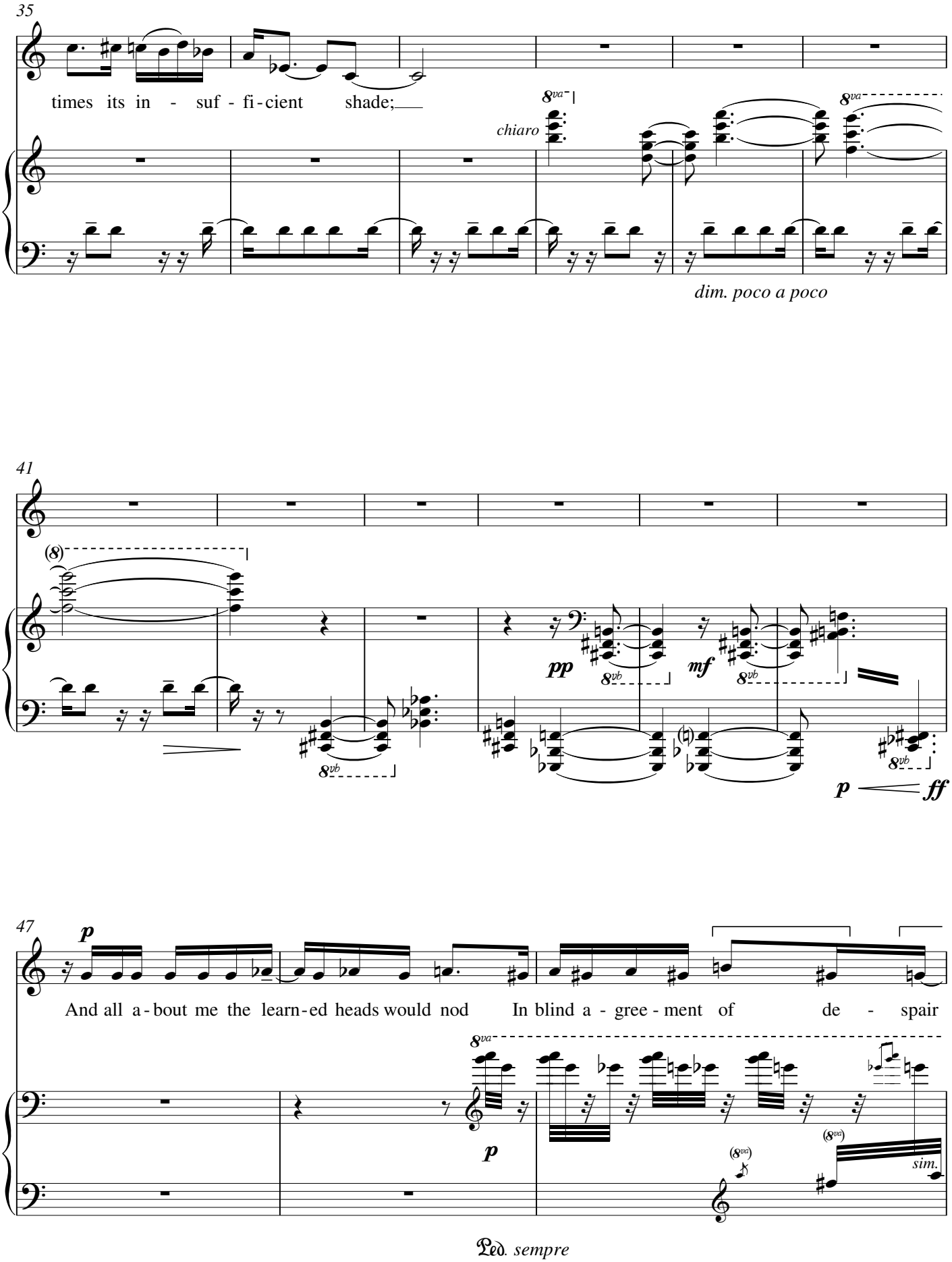
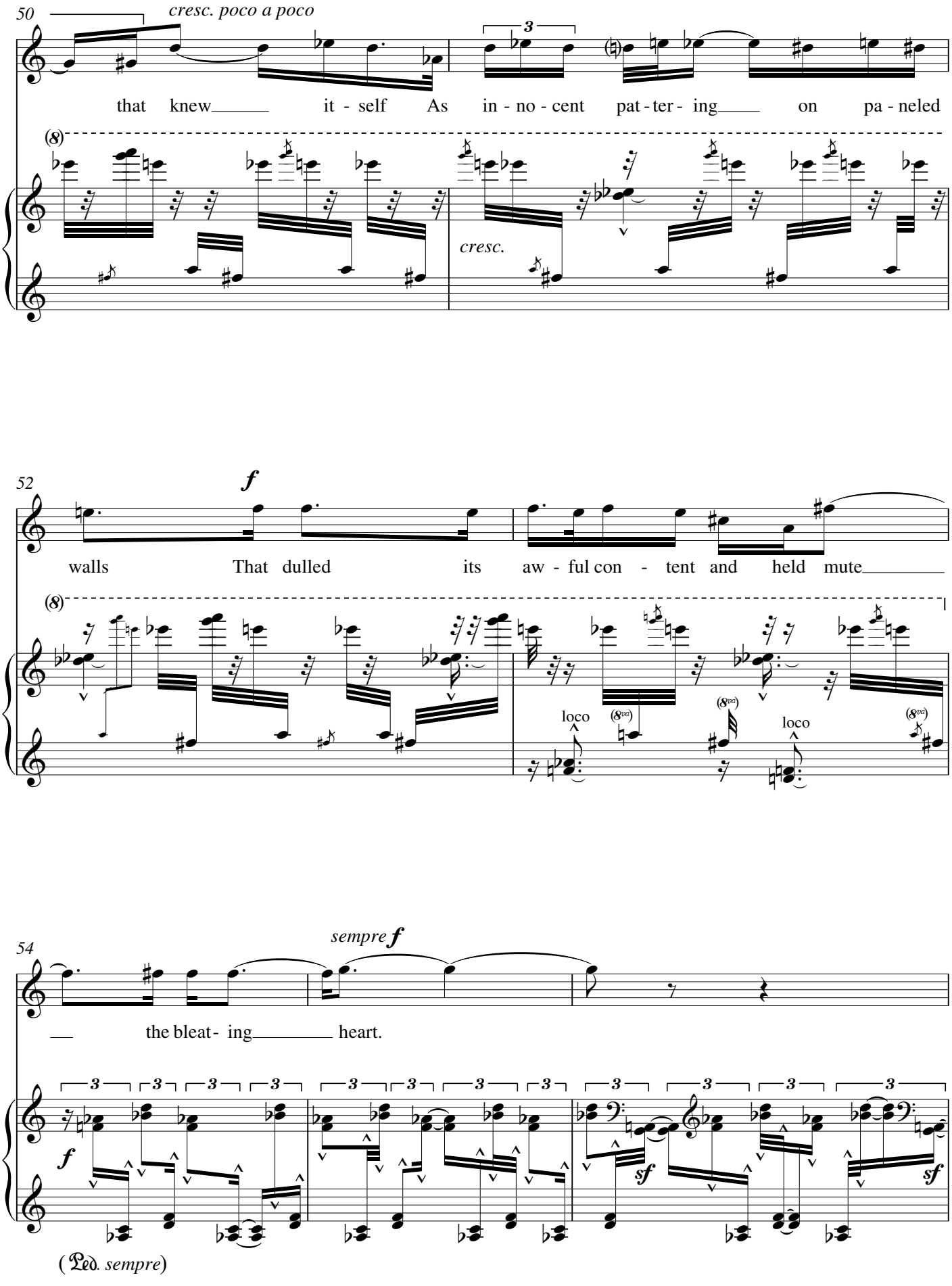

16
mp
cresc.
let me pound My heart a- gainst your door;
p mf p
mp
mf
8vb
22
ff
poco
Lis - ten love,
but do not o - pen
ff
f
poco
sf
(8)
28
Lest I should fal - ter, fly in fear.
p, cresc.
Ped.
33
accel.
(l.h.)
f p
sf
8va

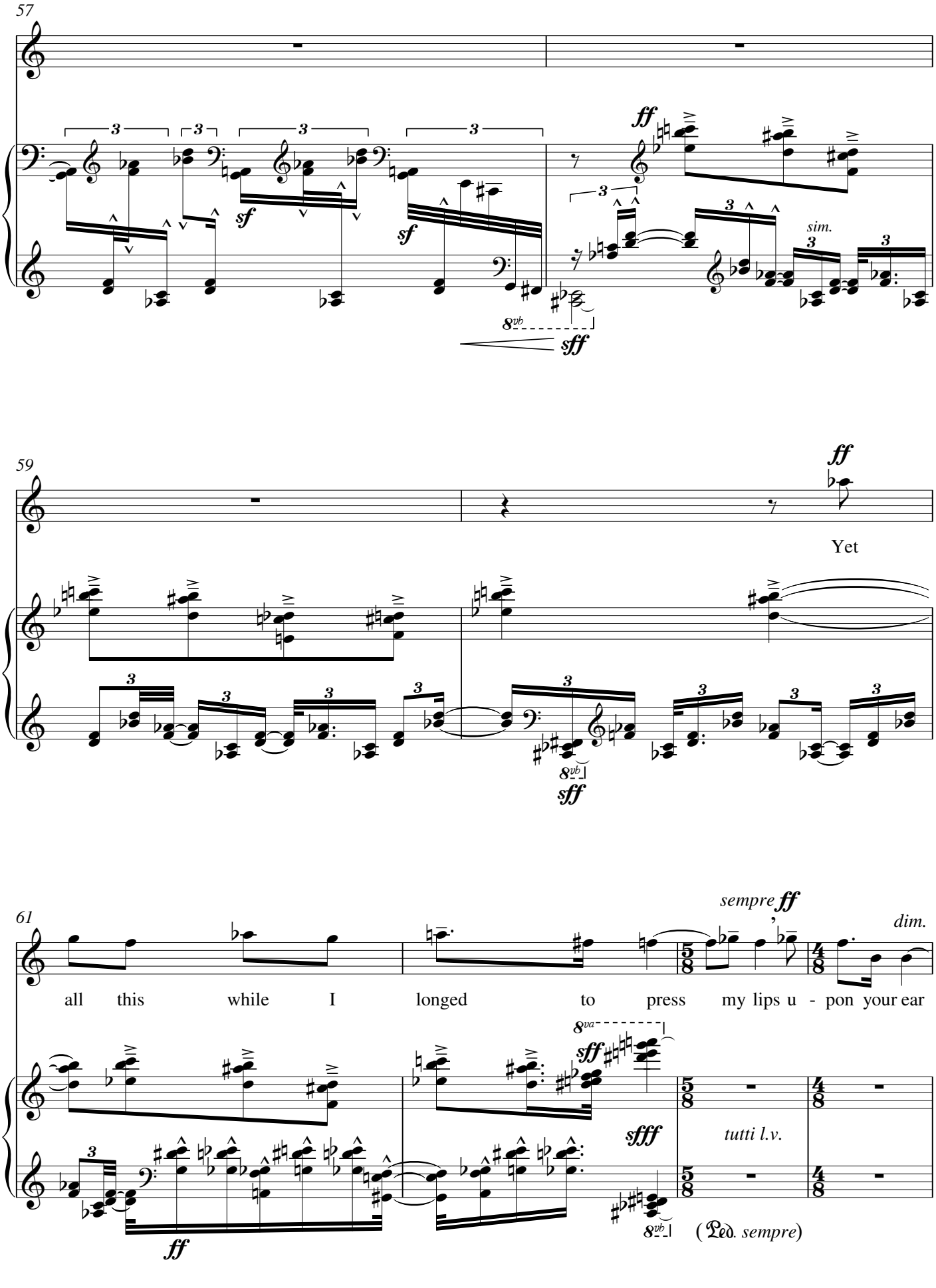
2. On Hearing a Very Famous Man Speak Profoundly

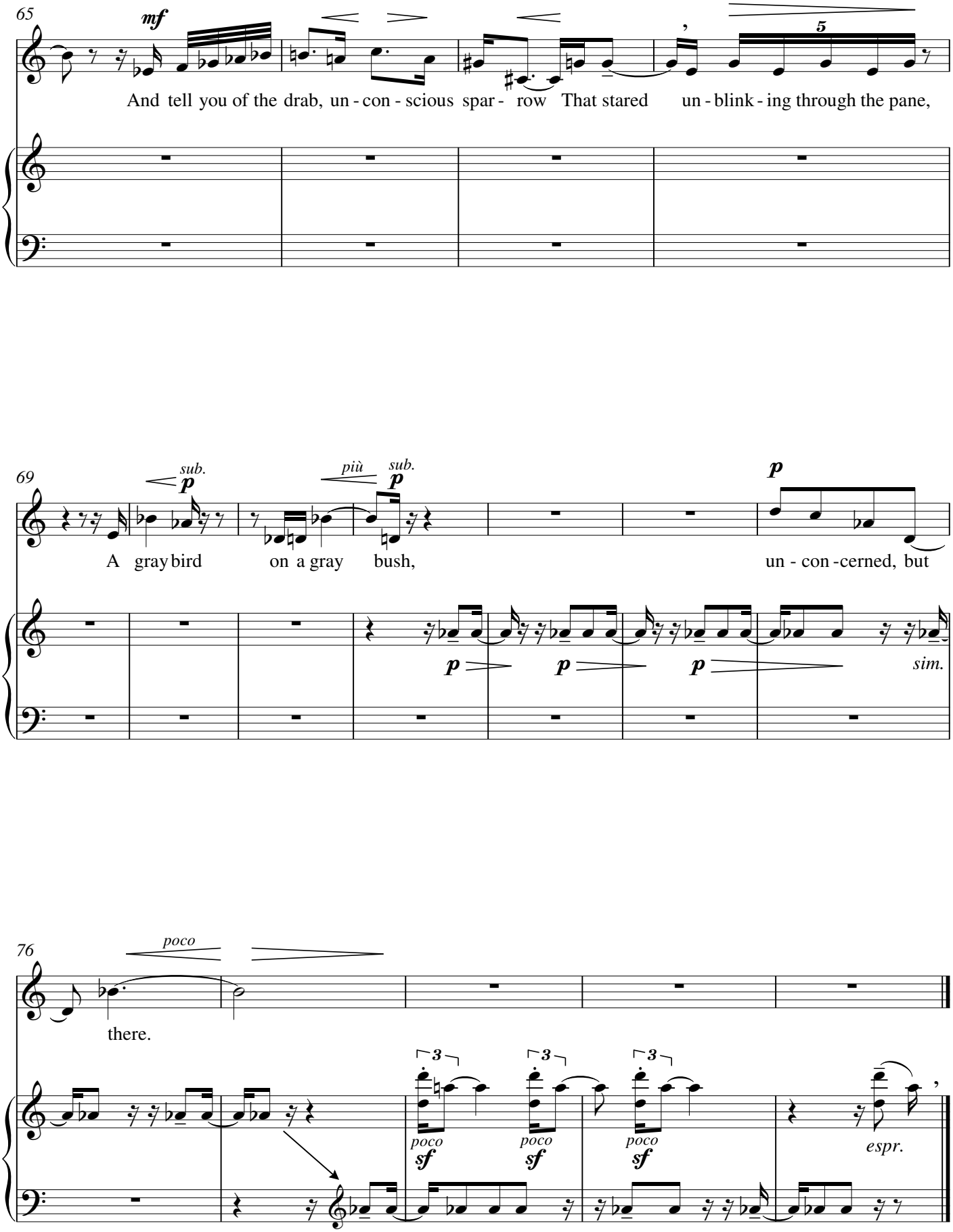



19
8va
loco
poco cresc.
25
p, flautando
I sat com - pla - cent on that tin chair And heard the an - cient scho - lar say
(Ped. sempre)
30
That what is real we can - not know for cer - tain But on - ly hope to feel at

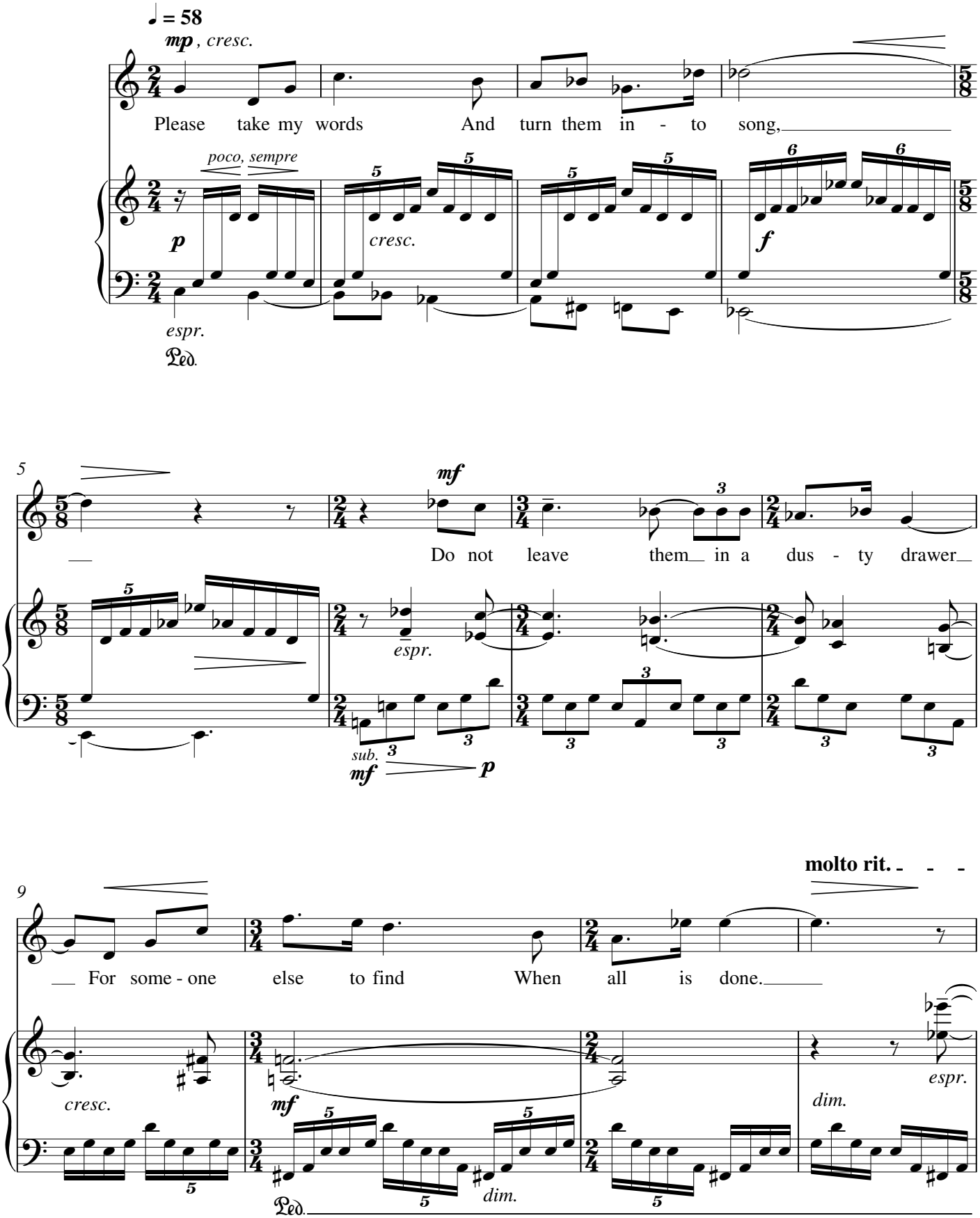

35
times its in - suf - fi - cient shade;
chiaro
dim. poco a poco
41
pp
mf
p
ff
47
p
And all a - bout me the learn - ed heads would nod In blind a - gree - ment of de - spair
p
sim.
Ped. sempre

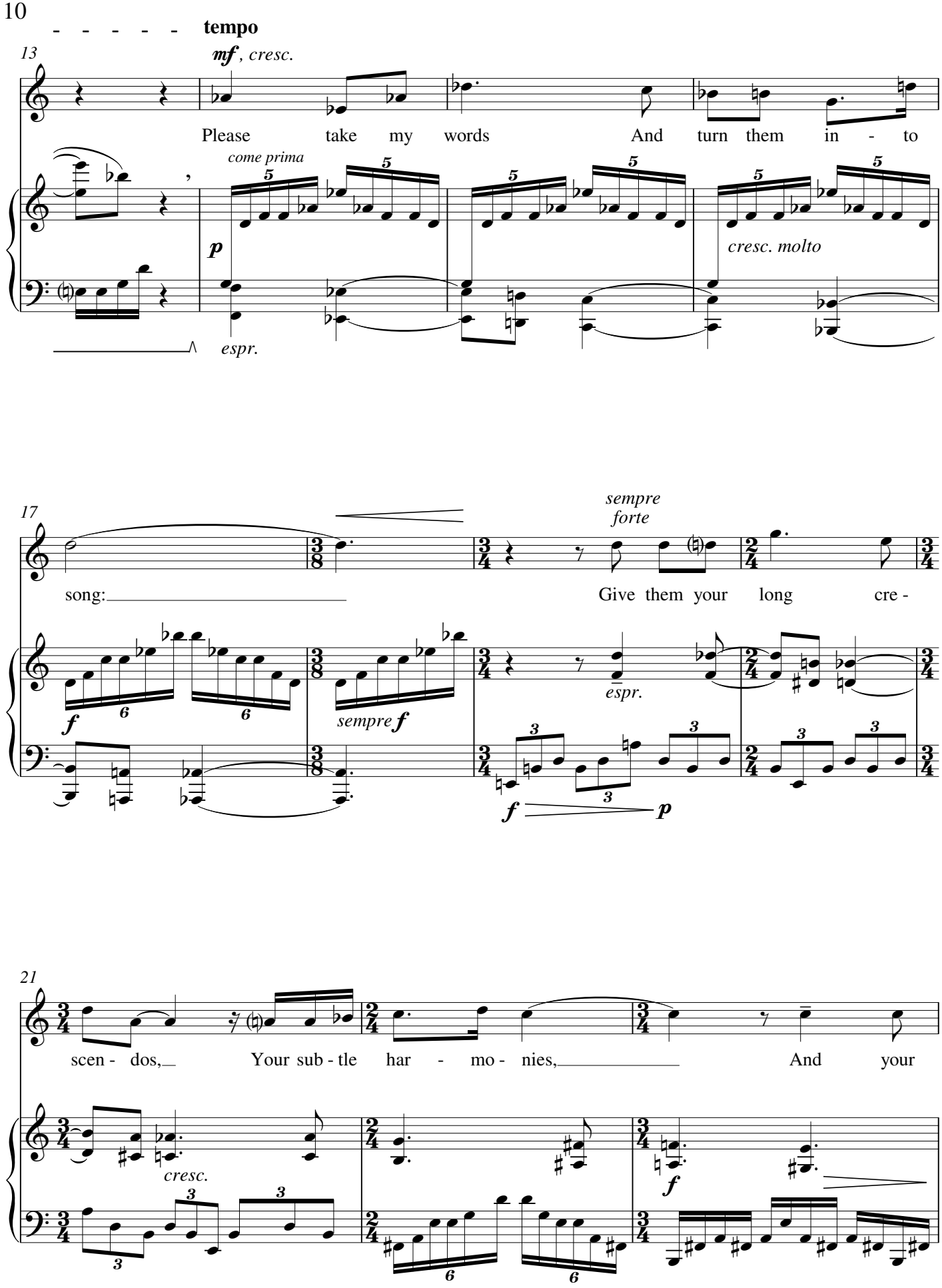

50
cresc. poco a poco
that knew it - self As in - no - cent pat - ter - ing on pa - neled
cresc.
52
f
walls That dulled its aw - ful con - tent and held mute
loco
loco
54
sempre f
the bleat - ing heart.
f
sf
sf
(Ped. sempre)

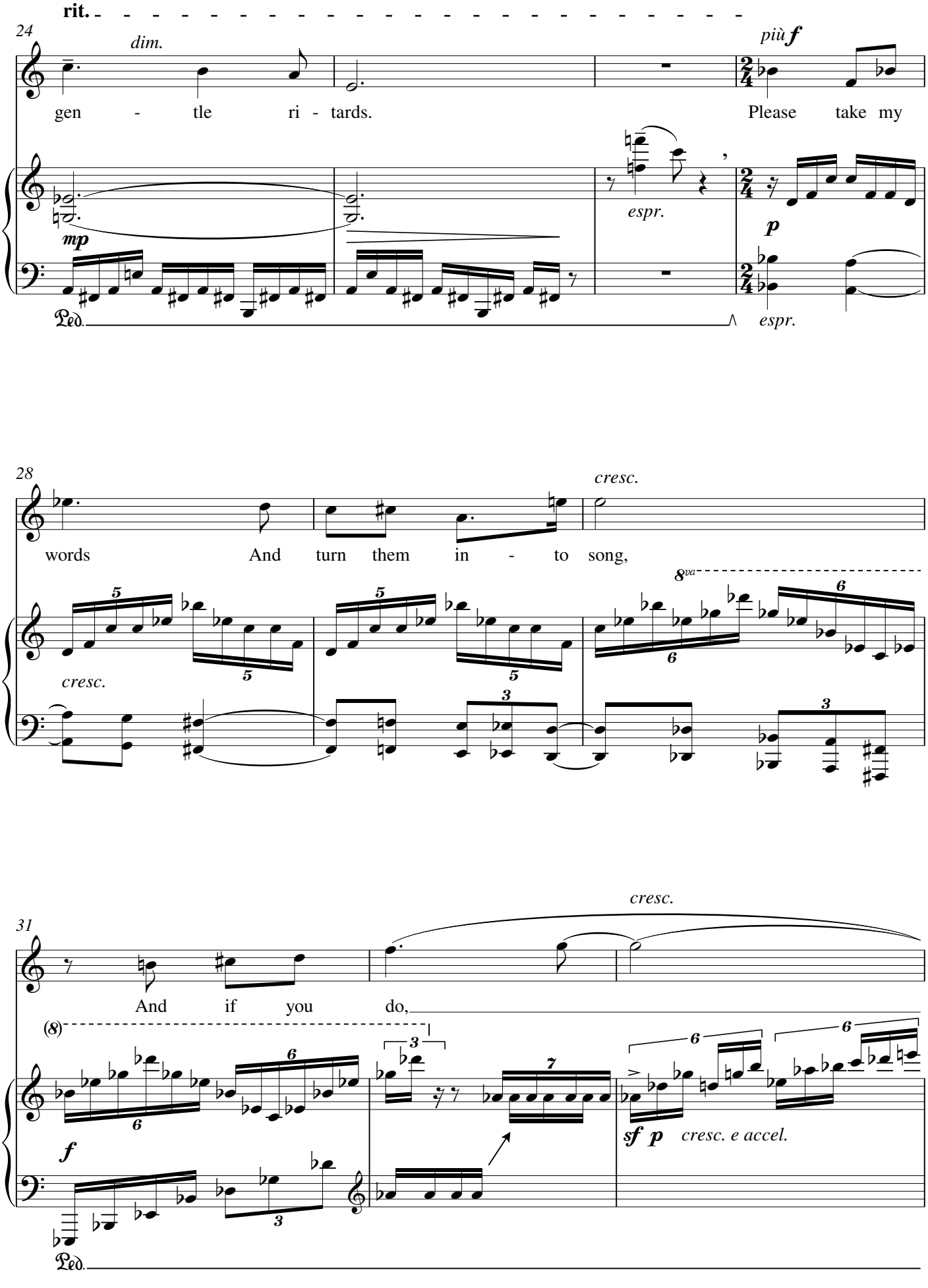

57
ff
sf
sf
sim.
8vb
sff
59
ff
Yet
8vb
sff
61
sempre ff
dim.
all this while I longed to press my lips u - pon your ear
8va
sff
sfff
tutti l.v.
ff
8vb
(Ped. sempre)

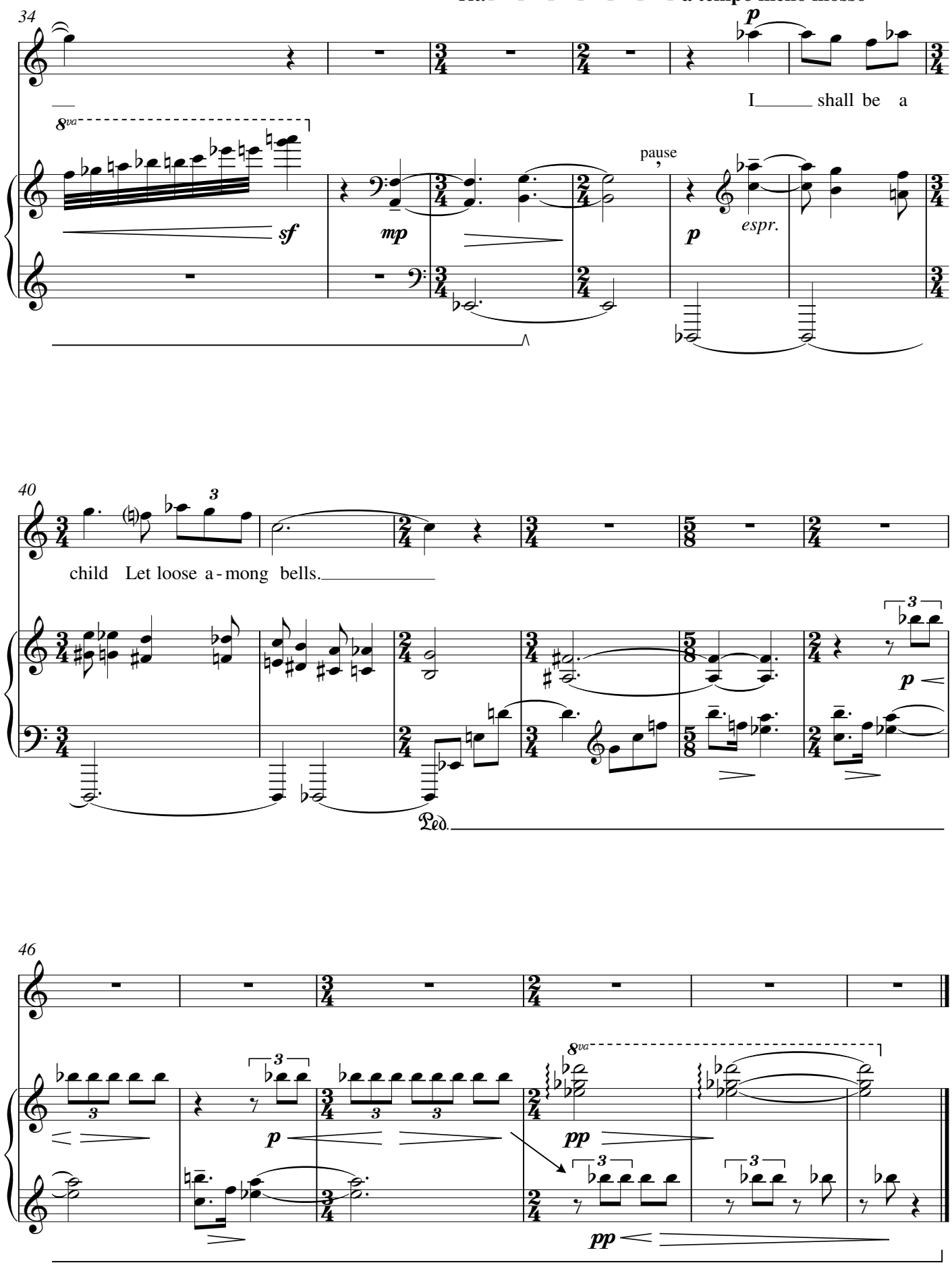

65
mf
And tell you of the drab, un - con - scious spar - row That stared un - blink - ing through the pane,
69
sub.
più
sub.
p
A gray bird on a gray bush, un - con - cerned, but
sim.
76
poco
there.
3
poco
sf
espr.

3. Please Take My Words




tempo
13
mf, cresc.
Please take my words And turn them in - to
come prima
p
cresc. molto
espr.
17
sempre forte
song:
Give them your long cre -
f
sempre f
espr.
f
p
21
scen - dos, Your sub - tle har - mo - nies, And your
cresc.
f


rit.
24
dim.
più f
gen - tle ri - tards.
Please take my
mp
espr.
p
Ped.
espr.
28
cresc.
words
And turn them in - to song,
8va
cresc.
31
cresc.
And if you do,
(8)
f
sf p
cresc. e accel.
Ped.


rit. - - - - - - - a tempo meno mosso
34
8va
sf
mp
pause
p
espr.
I shall be a
40
child Let loose a - mong bells.
3
Ped.
46
8va
pp