A Short, Slow Life

version for soprano and 10 instruments

poem by Elizabeth Bishop
for Suzie LeBlanc and Symphony Nova Scotia

Emily Doolittle 2011/2013

A Short, Slow Life

for Suzie LeBlanc and Symphony Nova Scotia
duration: 8'30"

chamber ensemble version:

soprano
flute
oboe
clarinet in Bb
bassoon
horn in F
marimba
2 violins
viola
cello

We lived in a pocket of Time.
It was close, it was warm.
Along the dark seam of the river
the houses,the barns, the two churches, hid like white crumbs
in a fluff of gray willows and elms, till Time made one of his
gestures; his nails scratched the shingled roof. Roughly his hand
reached in,
and tumbled us out.

Elizabeth Bishop, mid-1950s

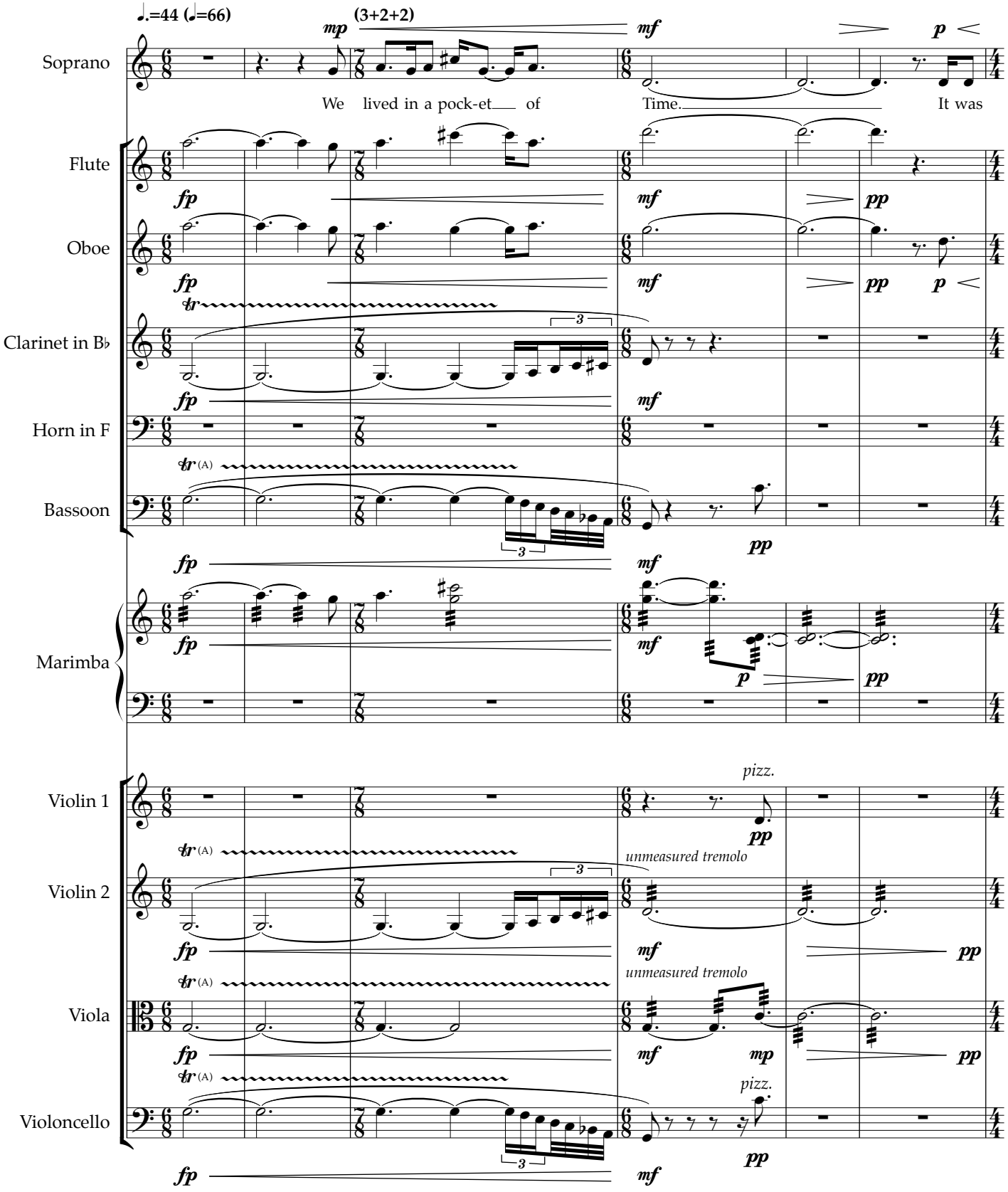
© Emily Doolittle, 2011/2013

A Short, Slow Life

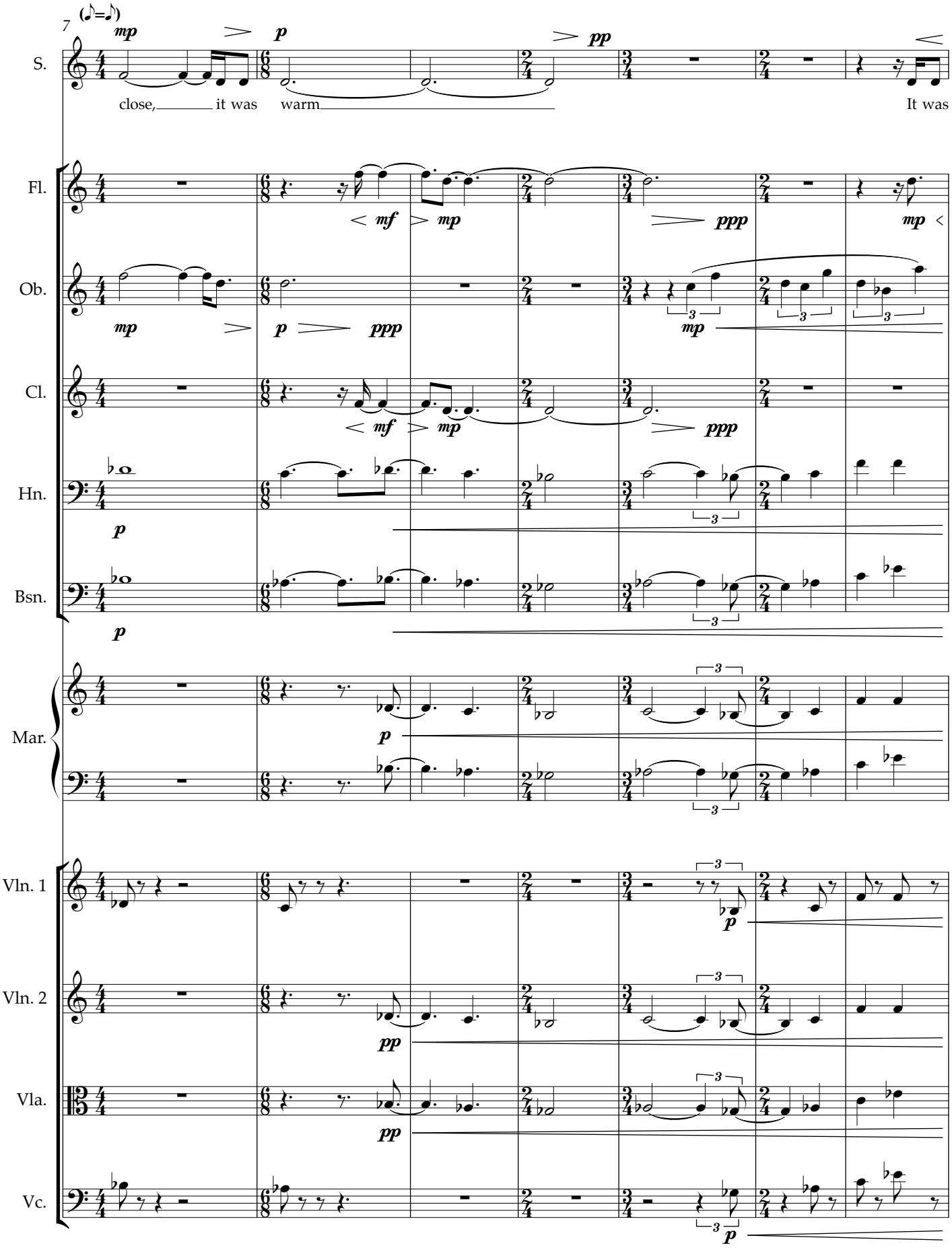
for Suzie LeBlanc and Symphony Nova Scotia

Elizabeth Bishop

Emily Doolittle



© Emily Doolittle, 2011 / 2012


7
(♪=♪)
S.
close, it was warm
It was
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
p
pp
mf
ppp

A ♩=88 (old ♪.= new ♩)

14

S. close, it was warm. A - long the dark seam of the riv - - -

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

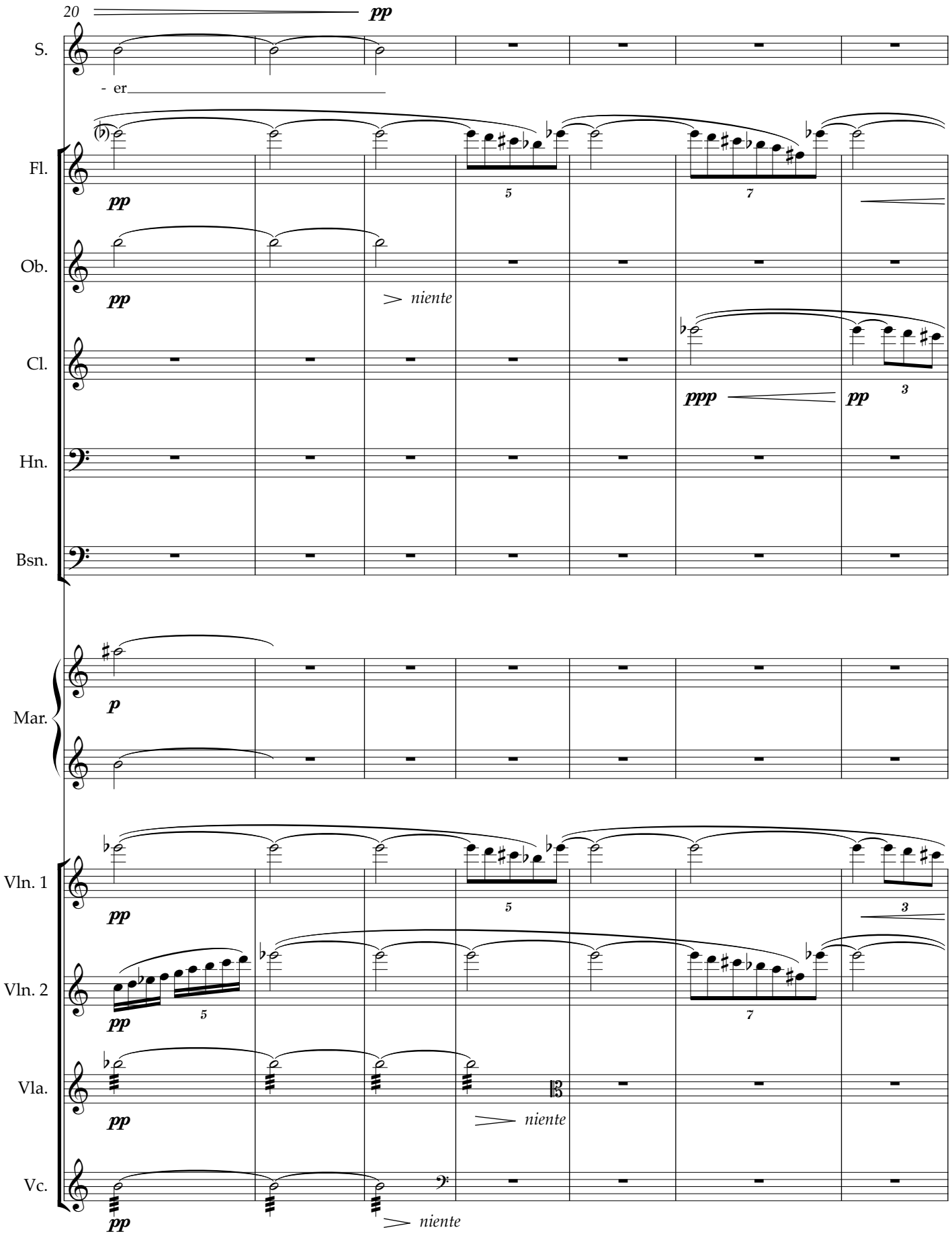
Mar.

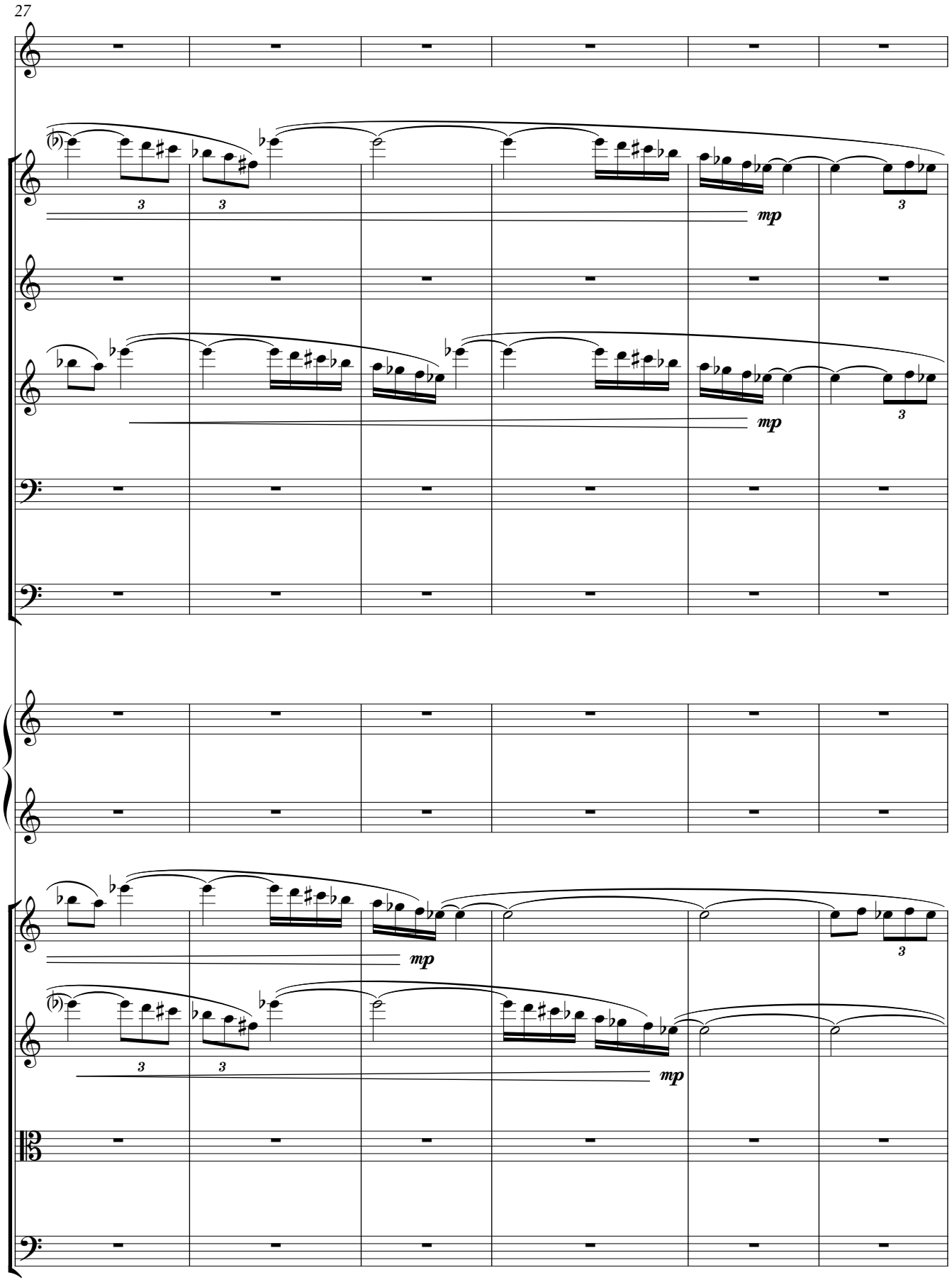
Vln. 1 arco

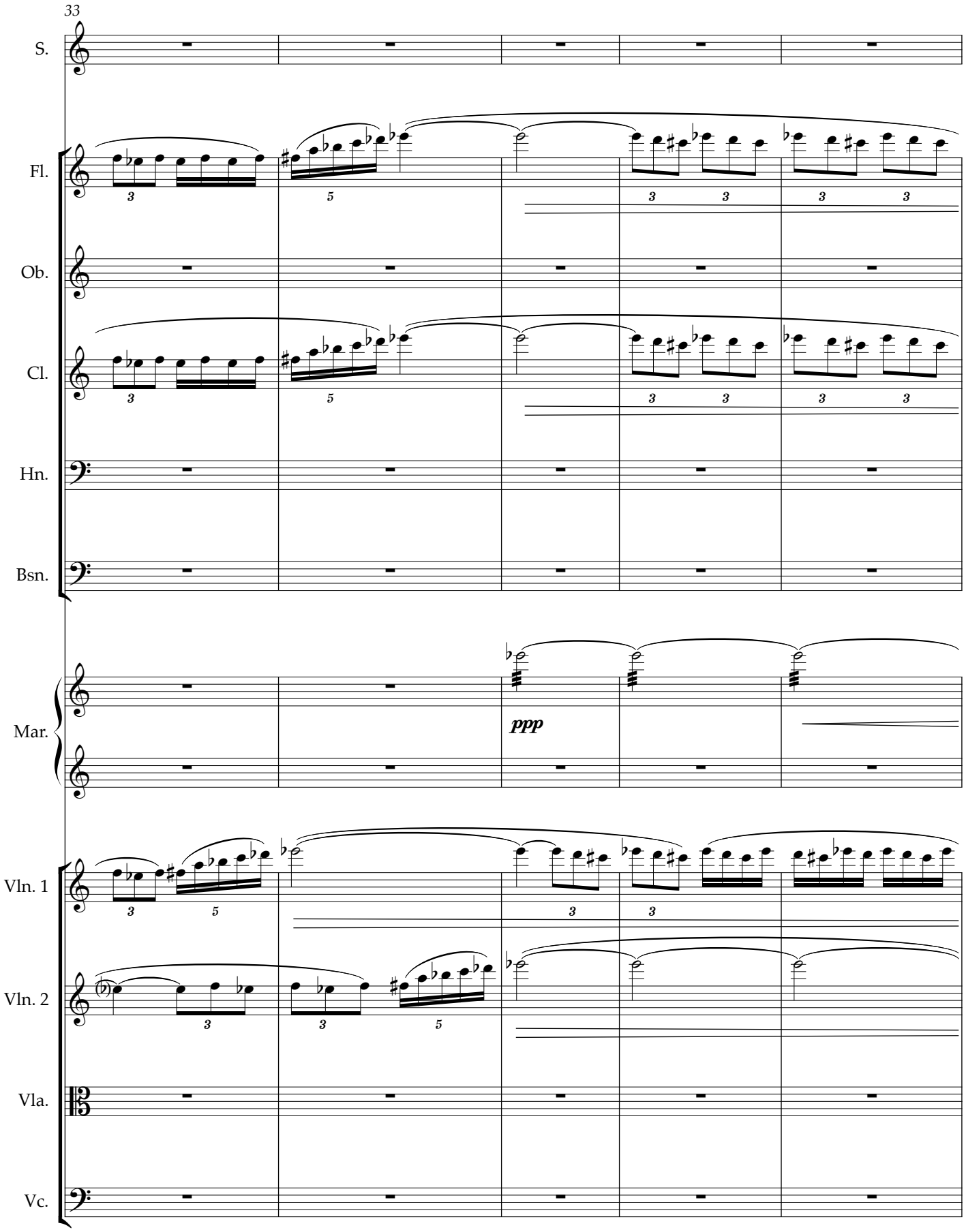
Vln. 2

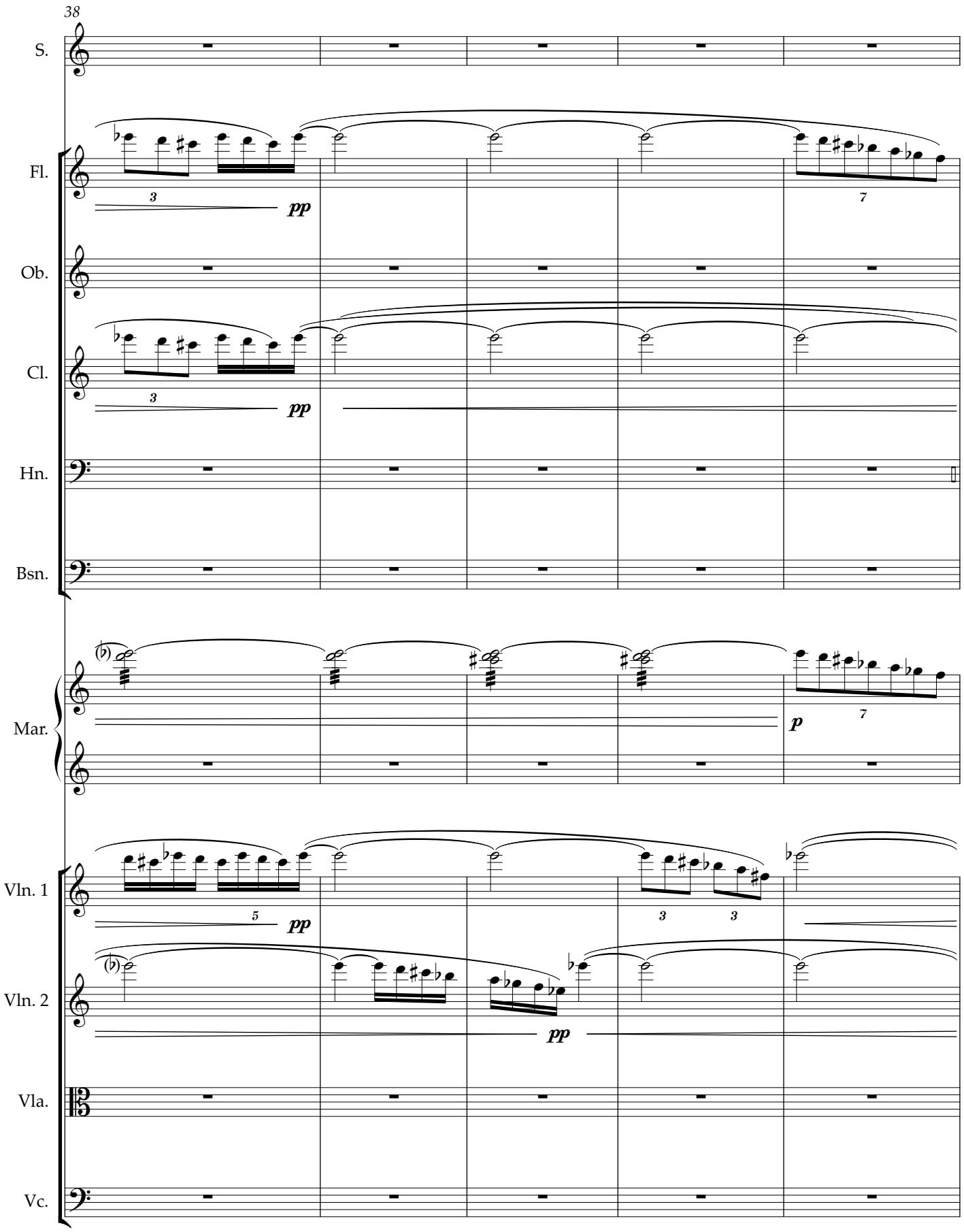
Vla.

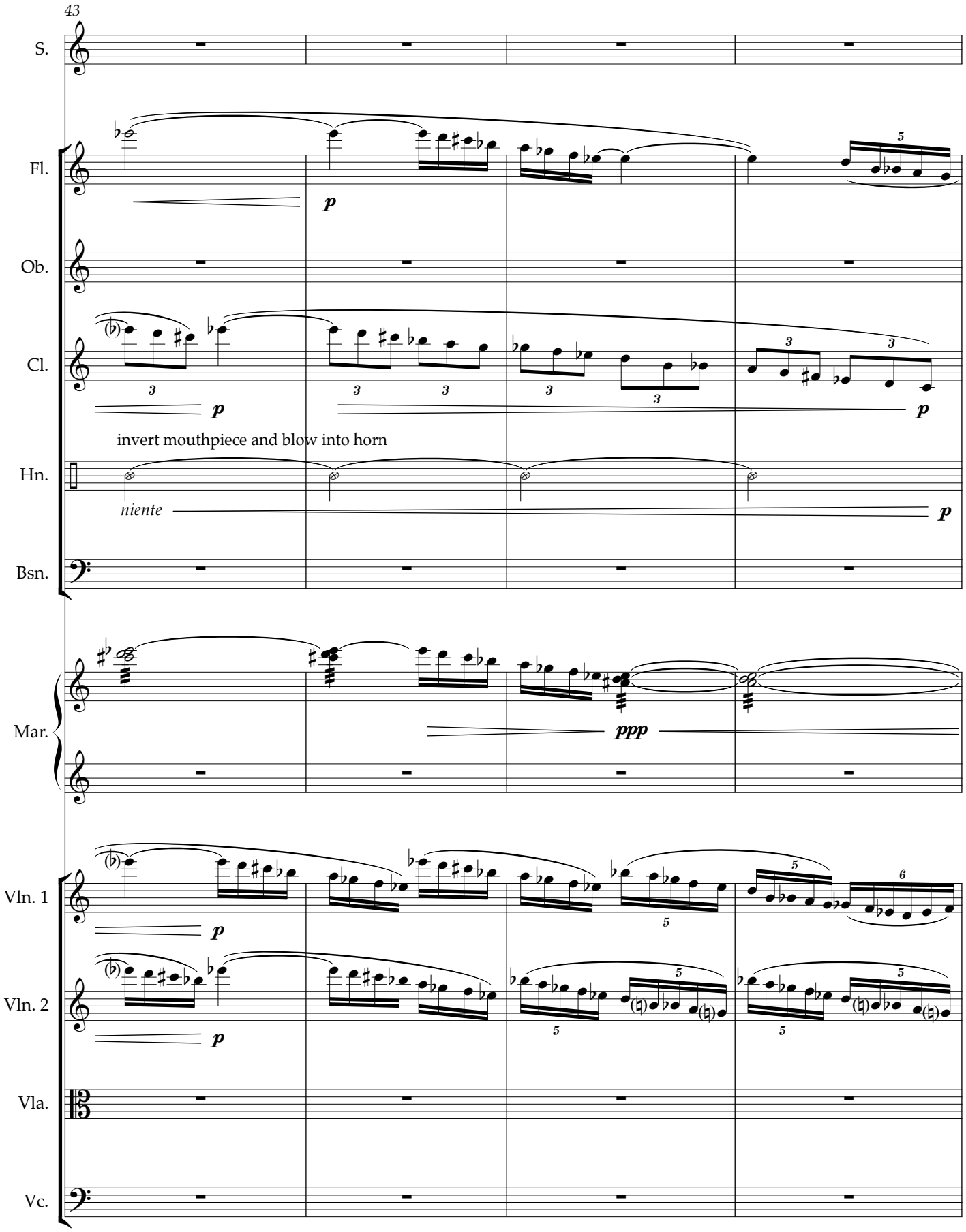
Vc. arco

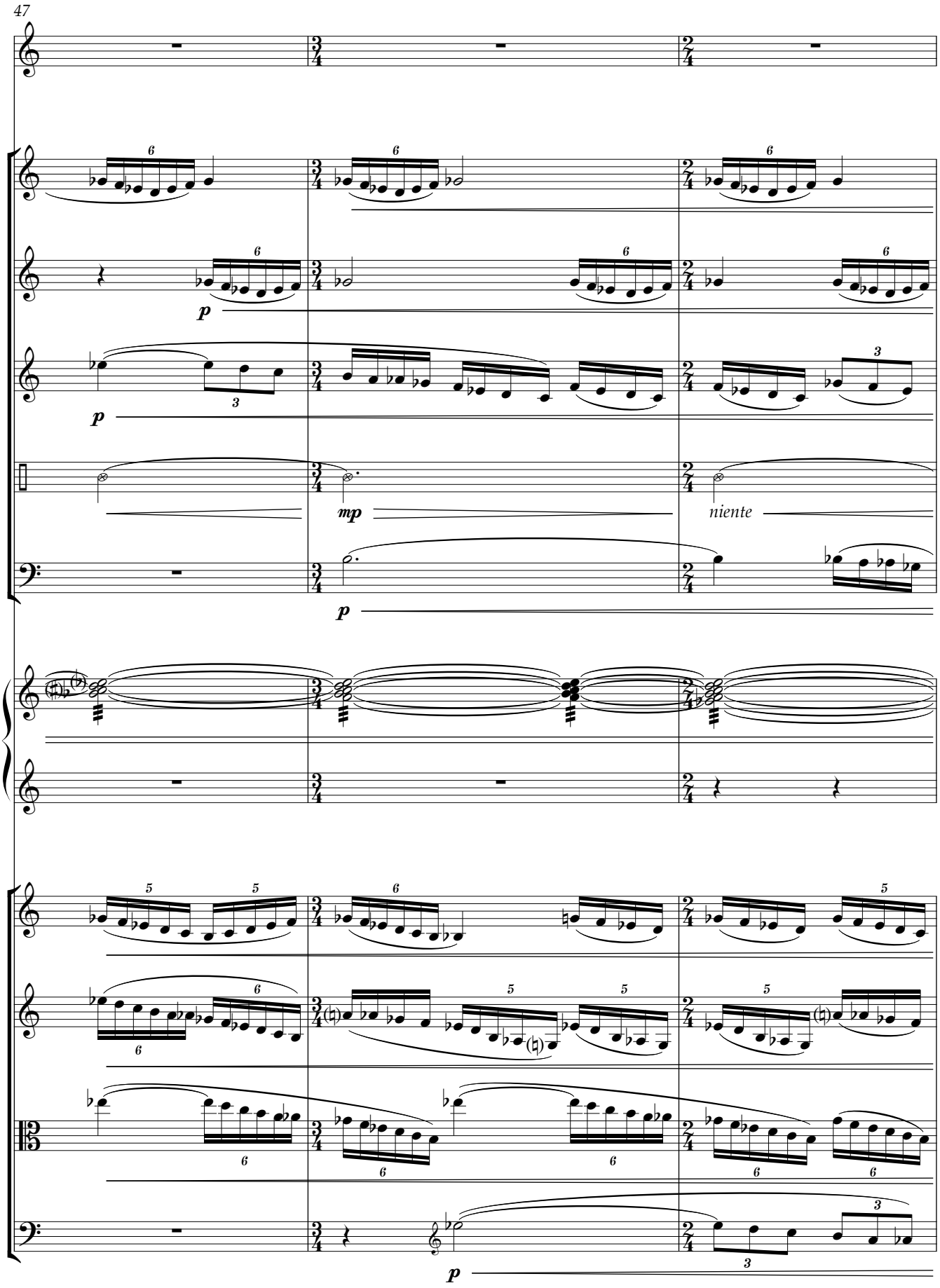

20
pp
S.
- er
Fl.
pp
5
7
Ob.
pp
niente
Cl.
ppp
pp
3
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
p
Vln. 1
pp
5
3
Vln. 2
pp
5
7
Vla.
pp
niente
Vc.
pp
niente

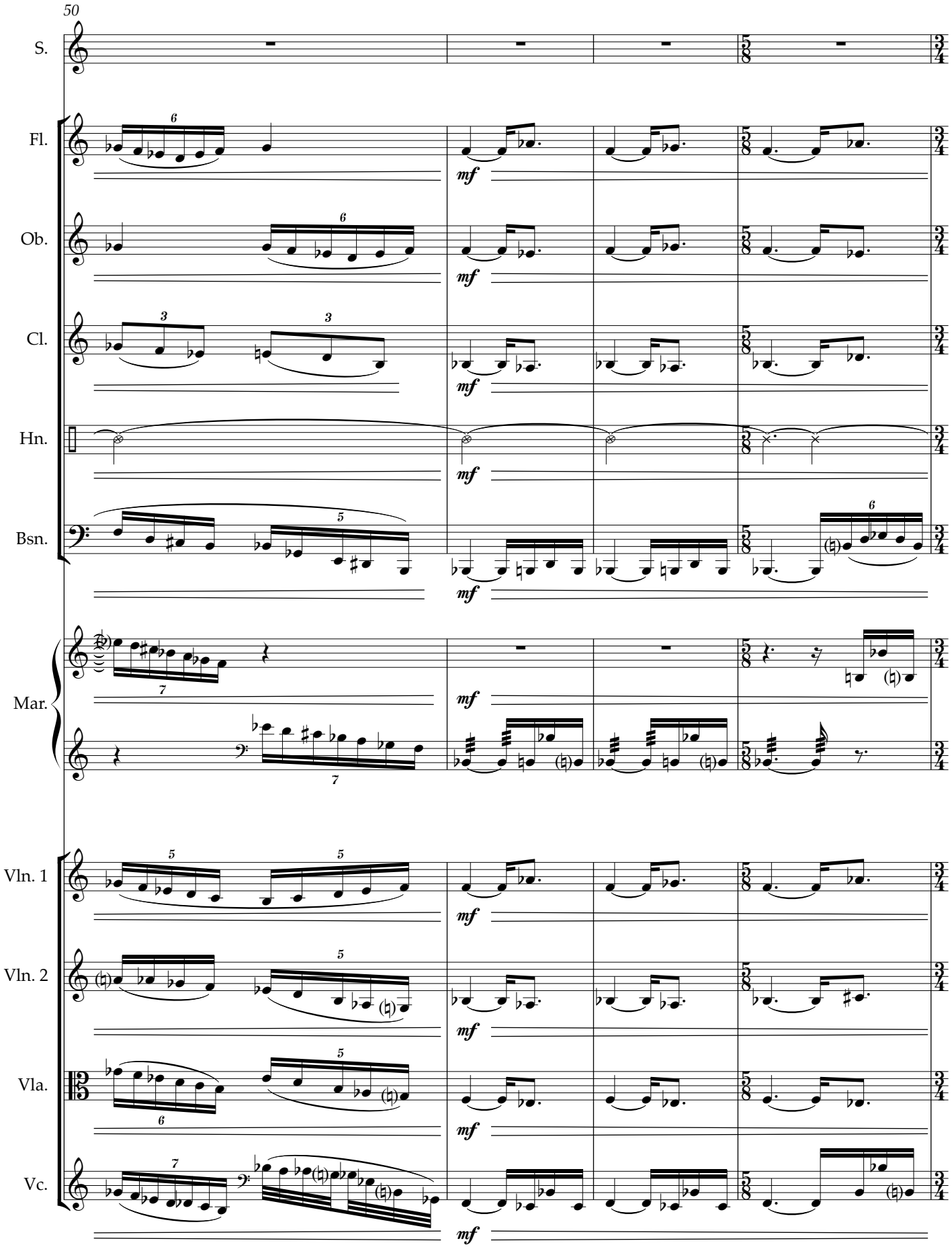

27
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
3


33
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
ppp
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.


38
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
pp
p


43
S.
Fl.
p
Ob.
Cl.
3
p
invert mouthpiece and blow into horn
Hn.
niente
p
Bsn.
Mar.
ppp
Vln. 1
p
Vln. 2
p
Vla.
Vc.


47
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
p
mp
niente


50
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mf

54

B **playful**
♩.=58 (approx. ♪=♪)

S.

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

Mar.

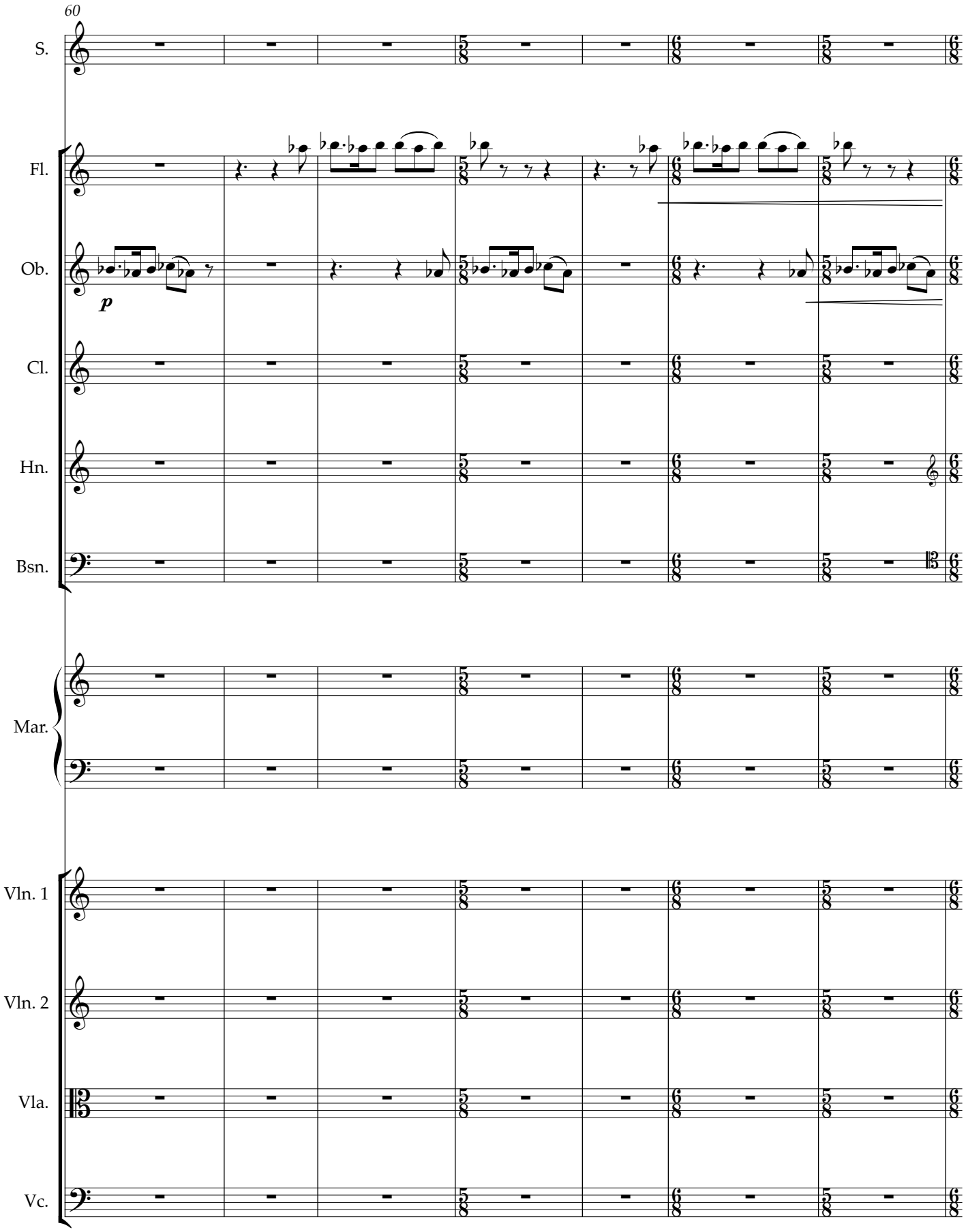
Vln. 1

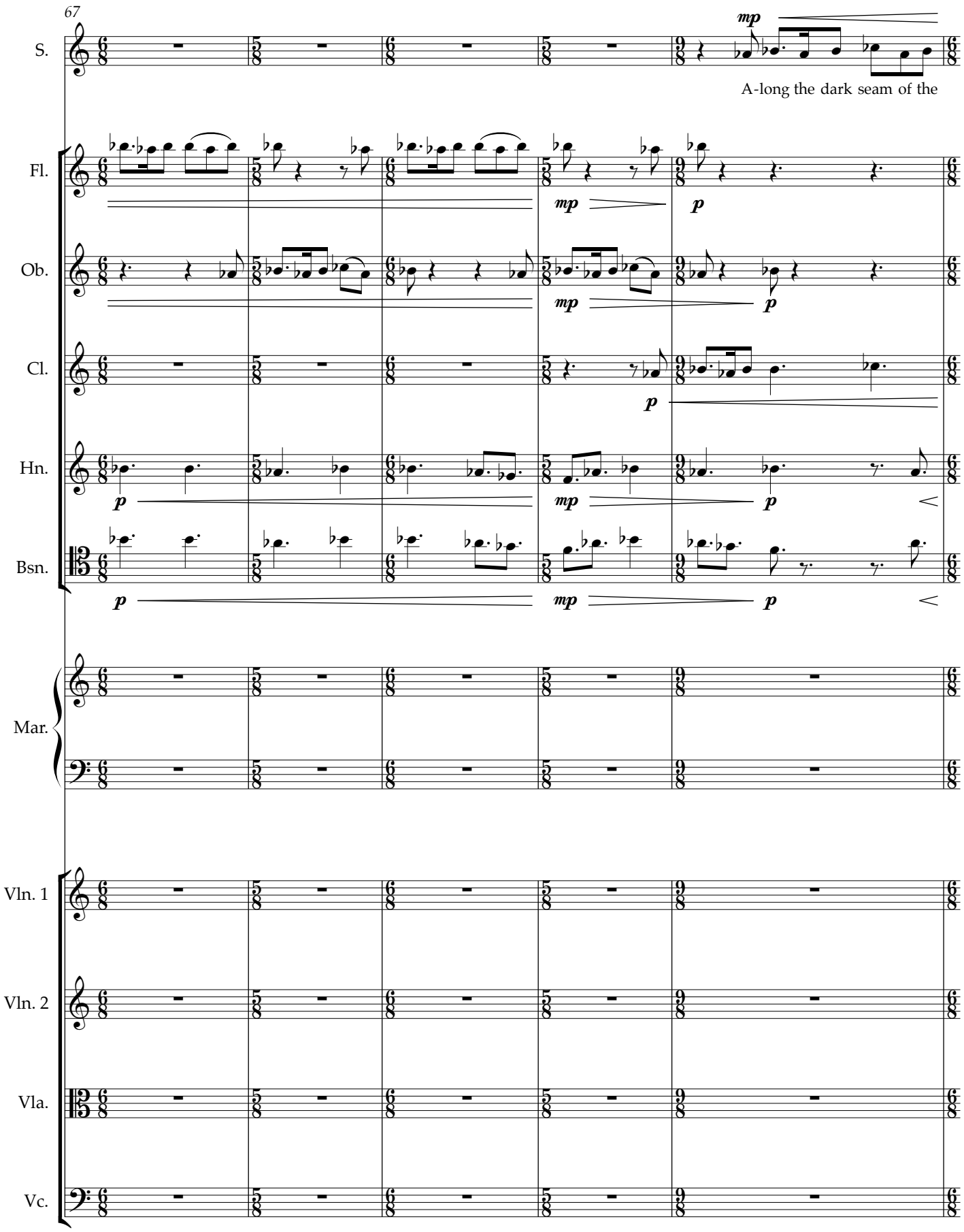
Vln. 2

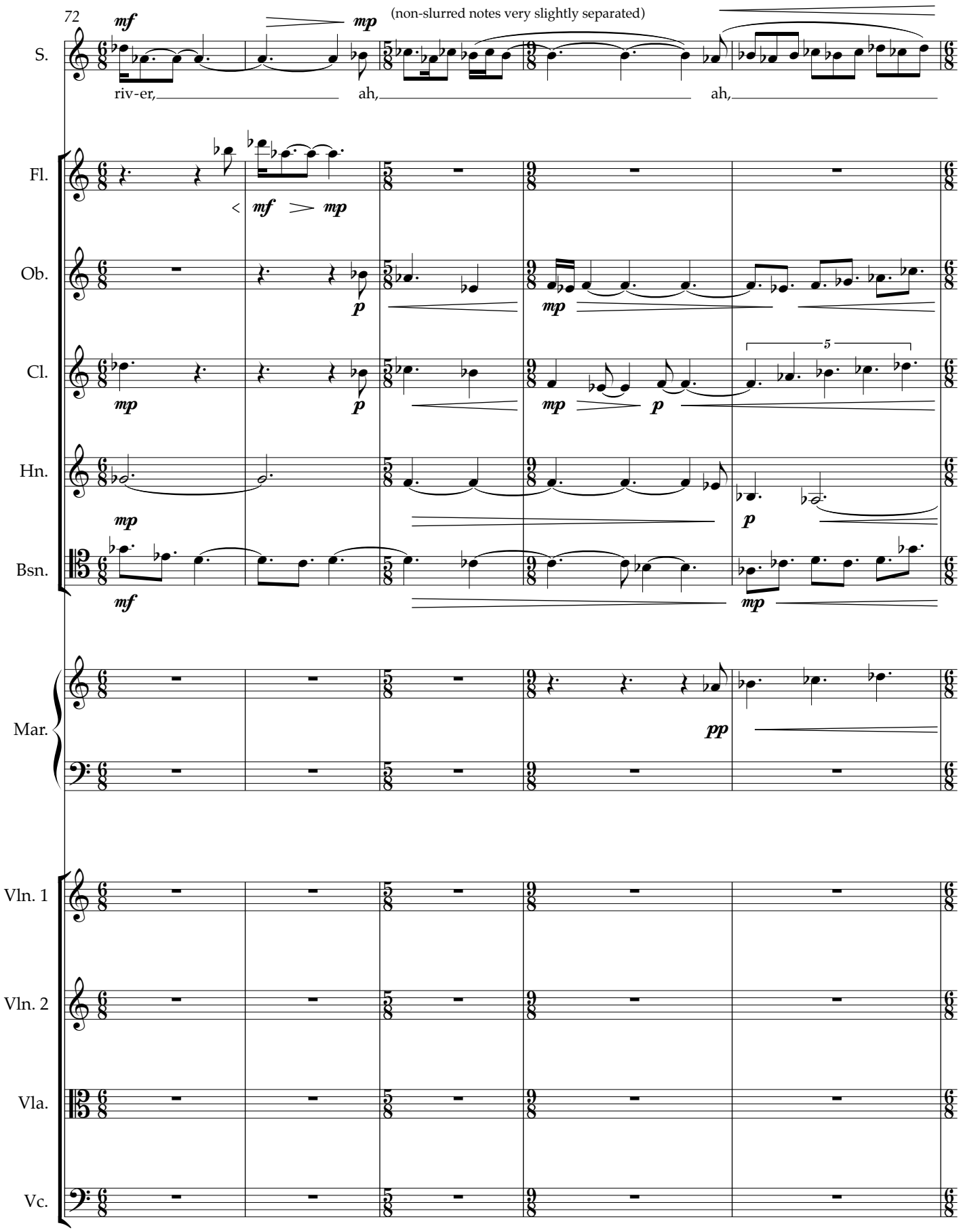
Vla.

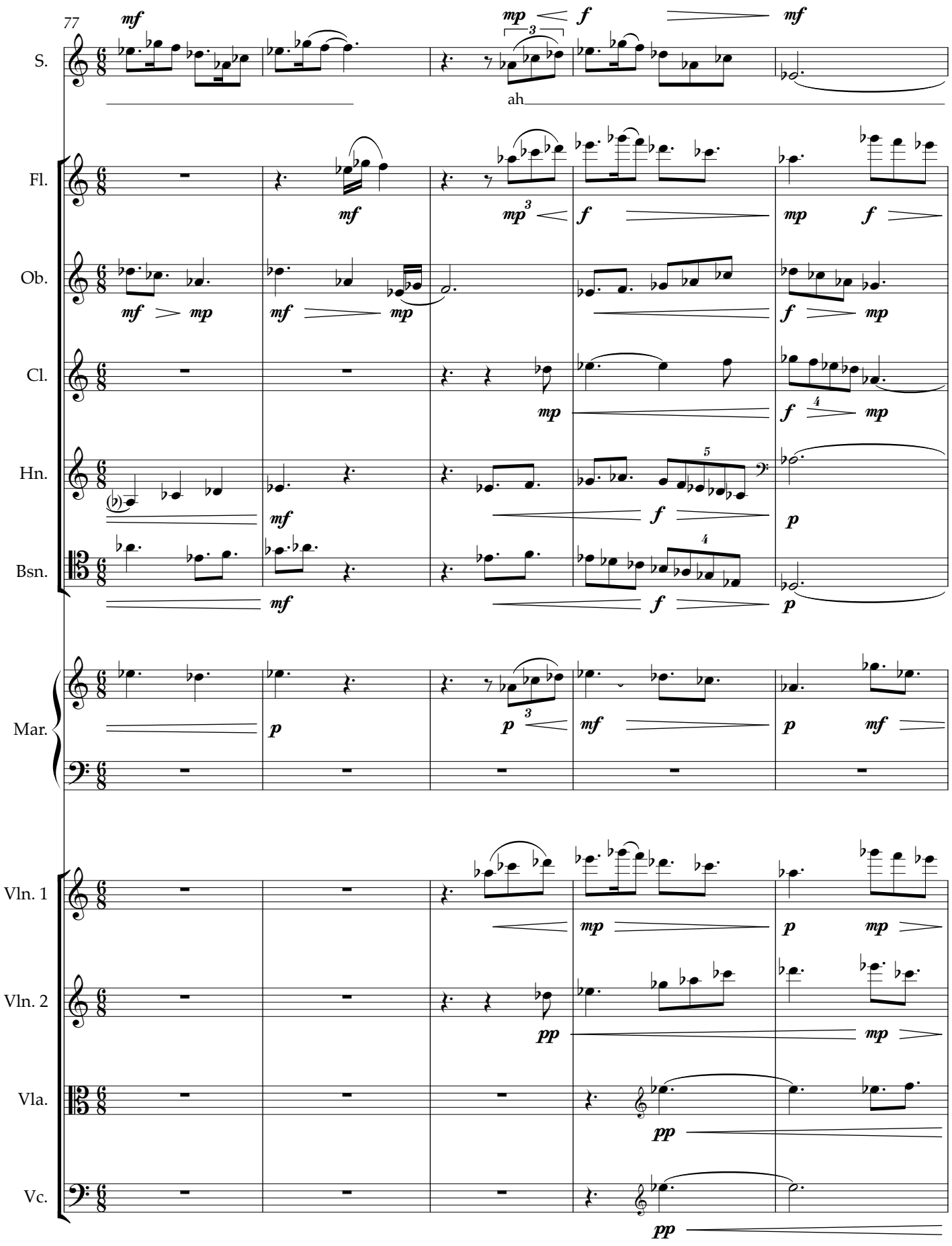
Vc.

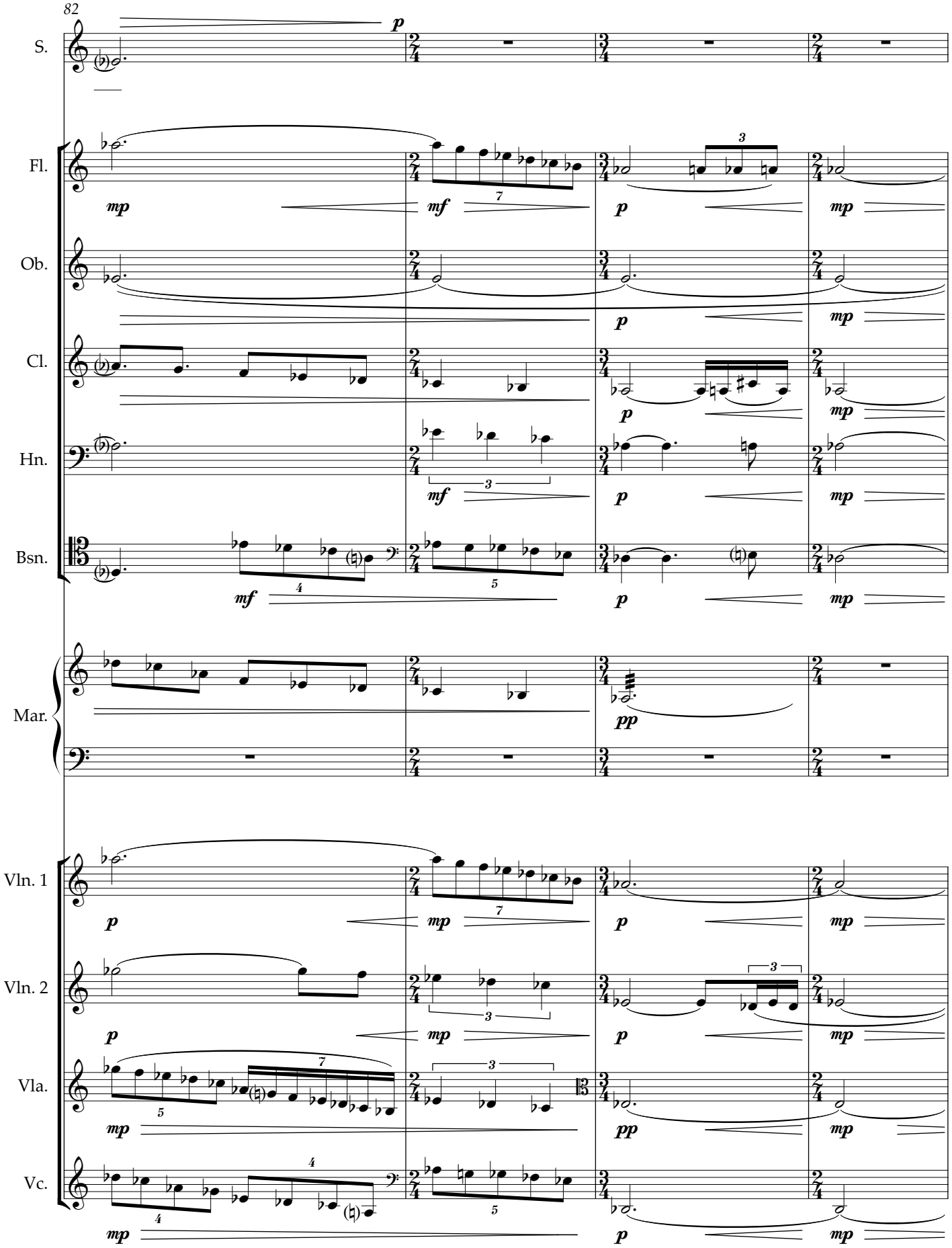
niente

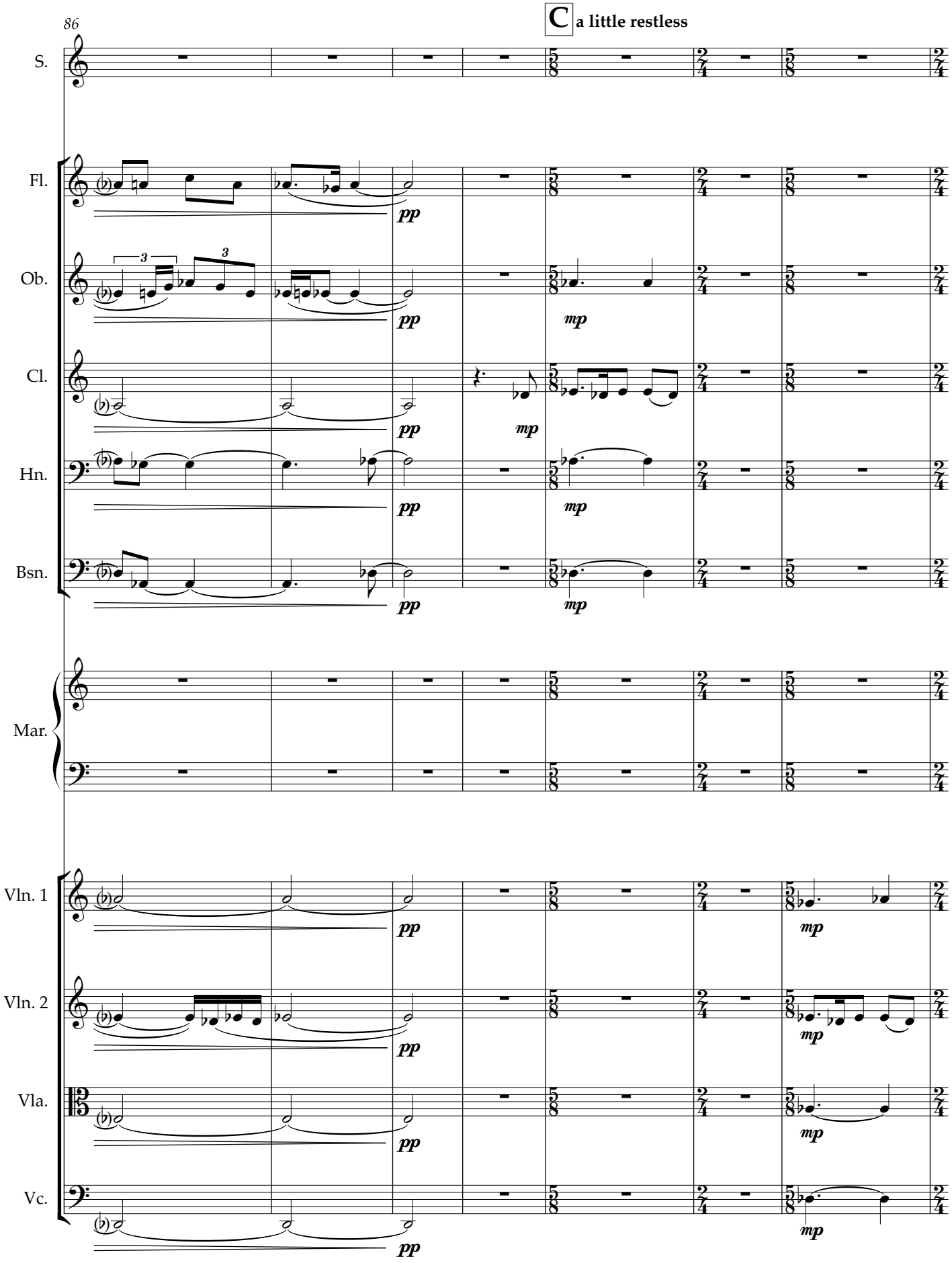

60
S.
Fl.
Ob.
p
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

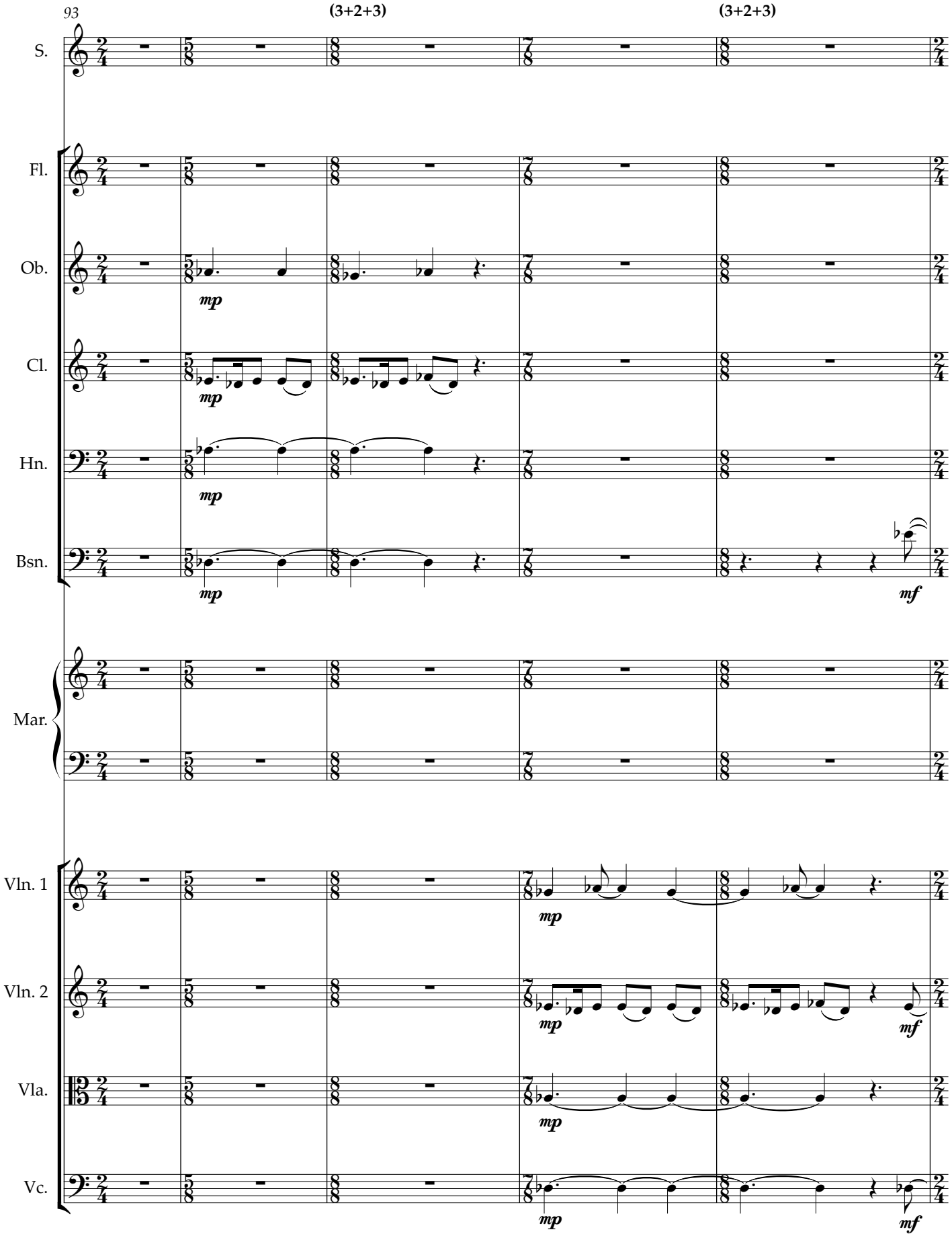

67
S.
mp
A-long the dark seam of the
Fl.
mp
p
Ob.
mp
p
Cl.
p
Hn.
p
mp
p
Bsn.
p
mp
p
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

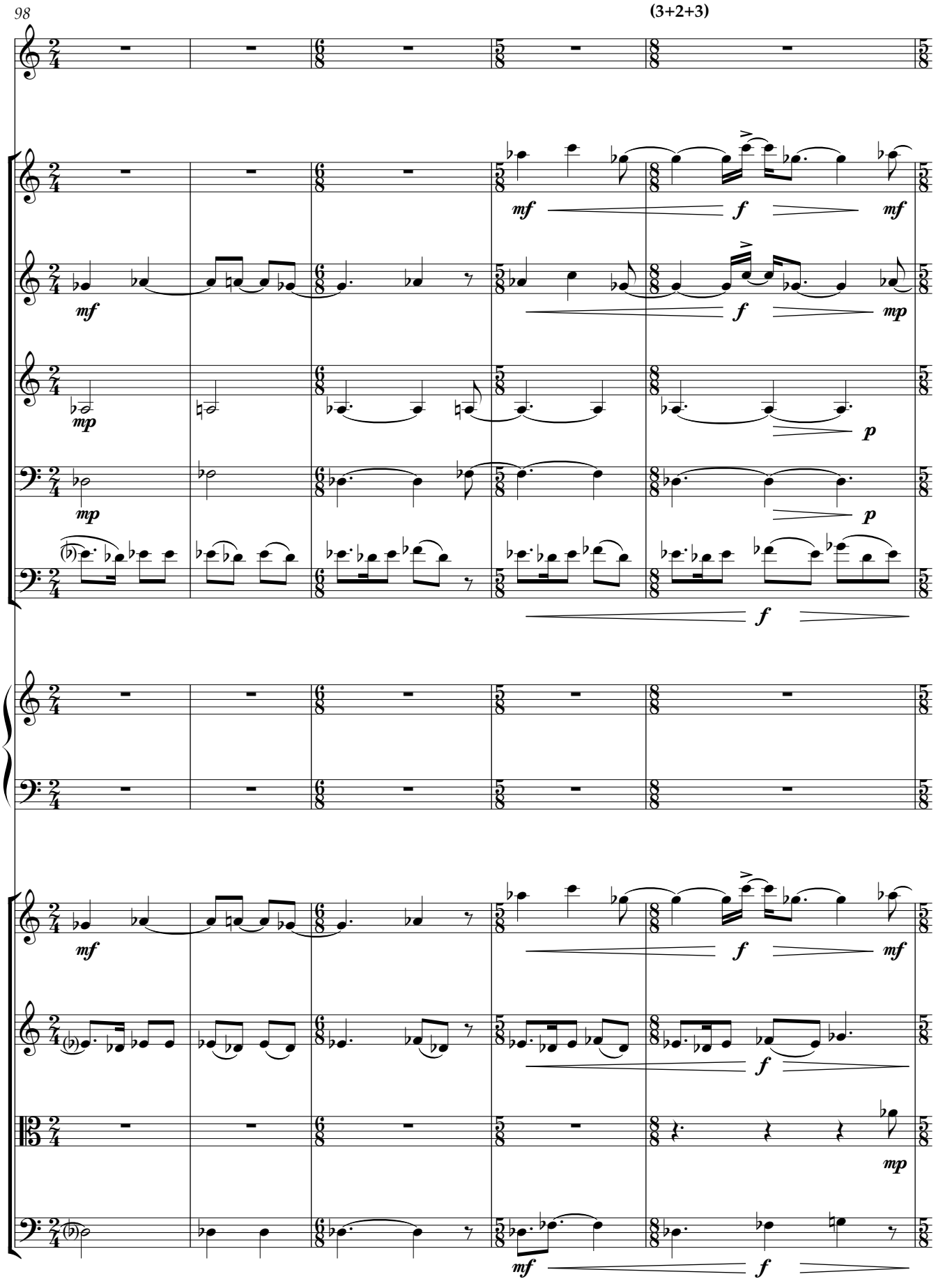

72
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
(non-slurred notes very slightly separated)
riv-er,
ah,
ah,
mf
mp
p
pp
5

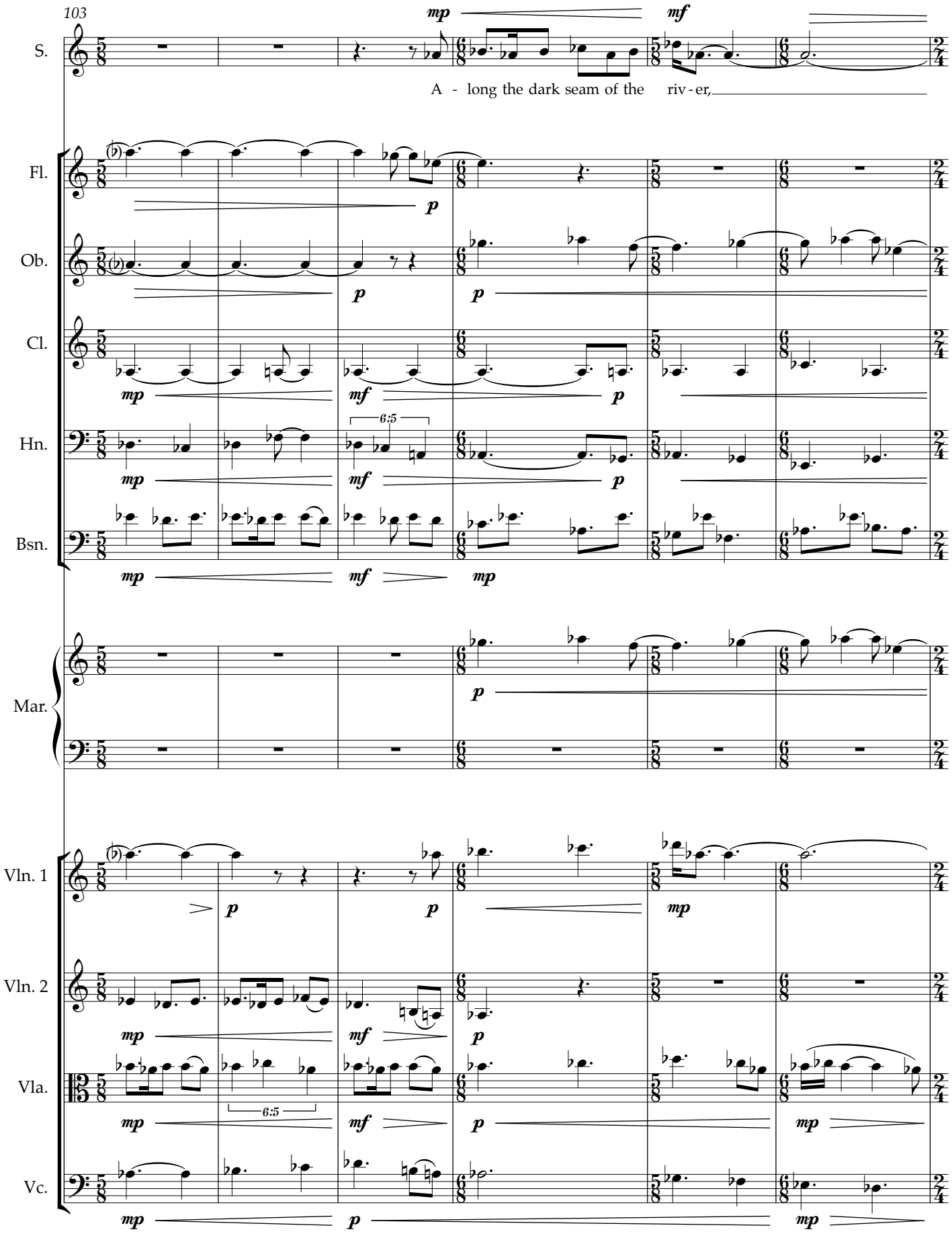

77
S.
ah
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

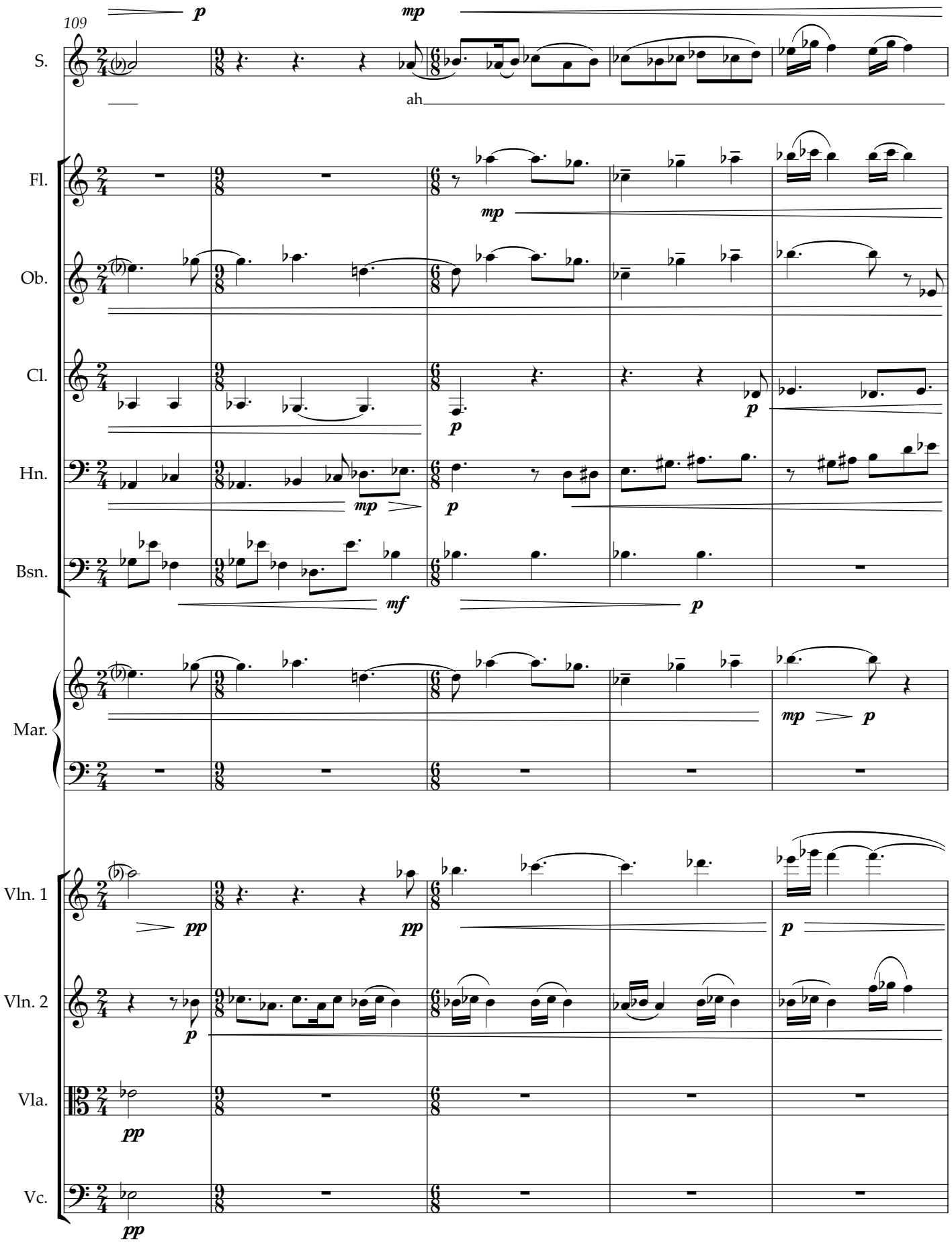

82
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

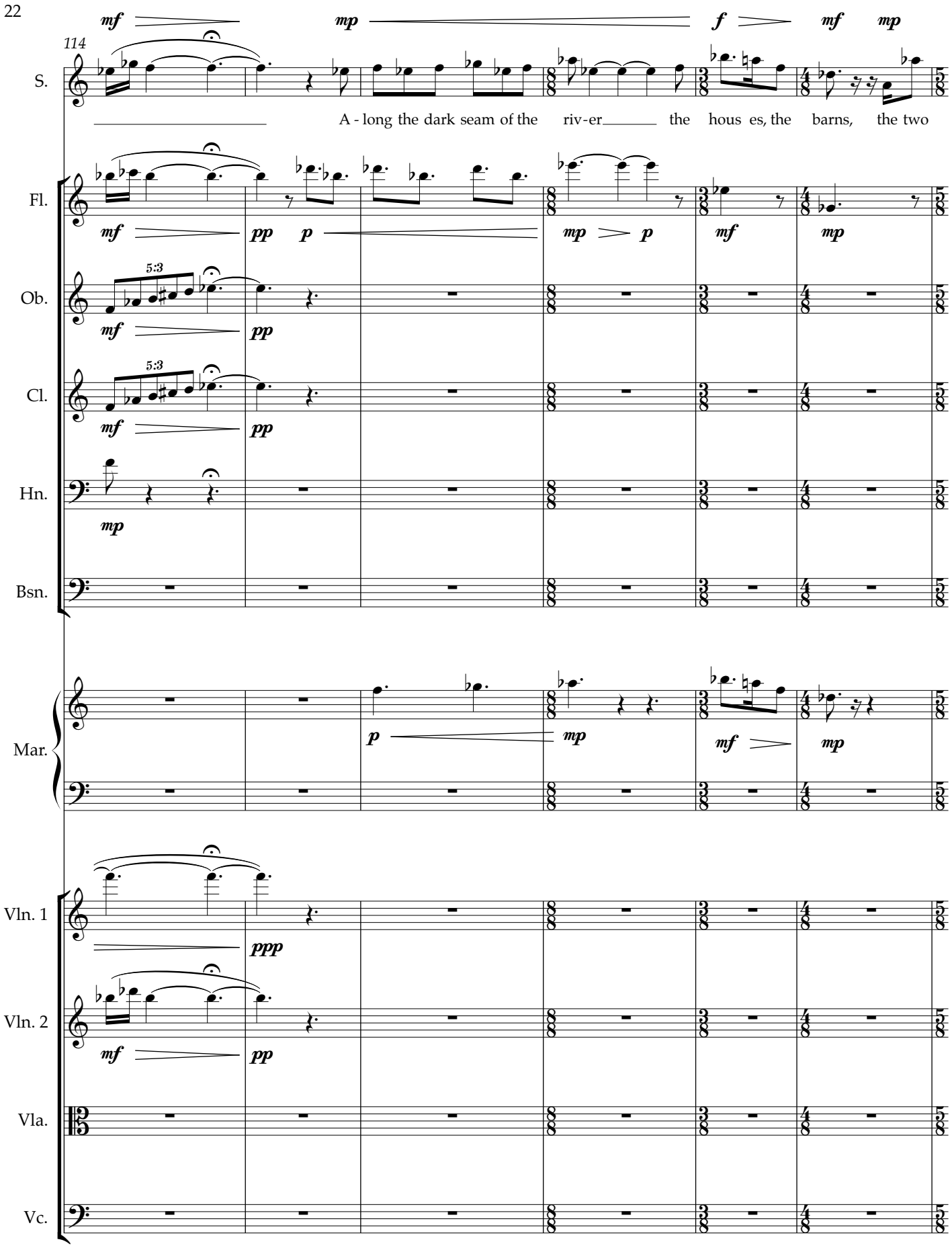

86
C a little restless
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
pp
mp

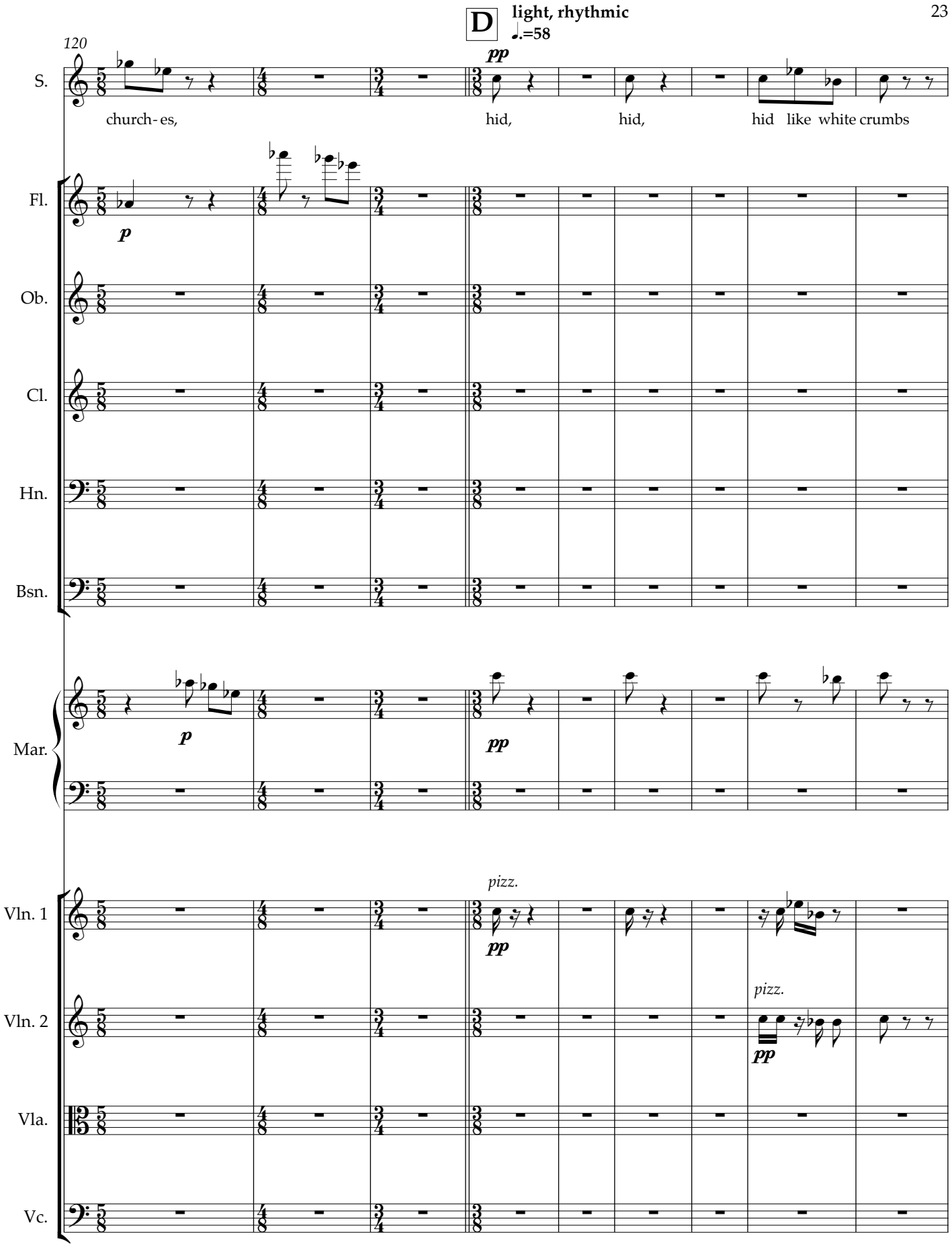

93
(3+2+3)
(3+2+3)
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
mf

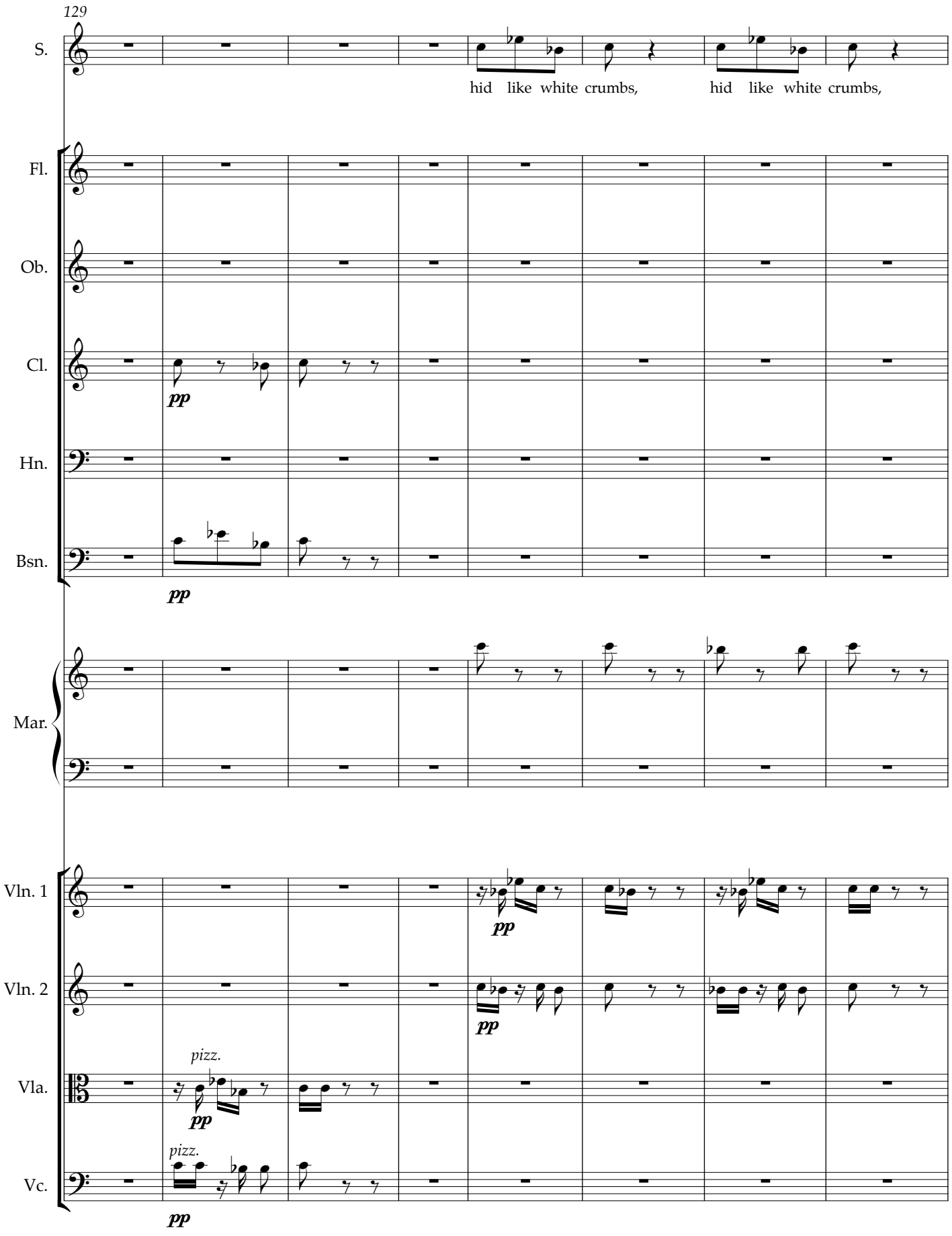

98
(3+2+3)
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mf
f
mf
mf
f
mp
mp
p
mp
p
f
mf
f
mp
mf
f

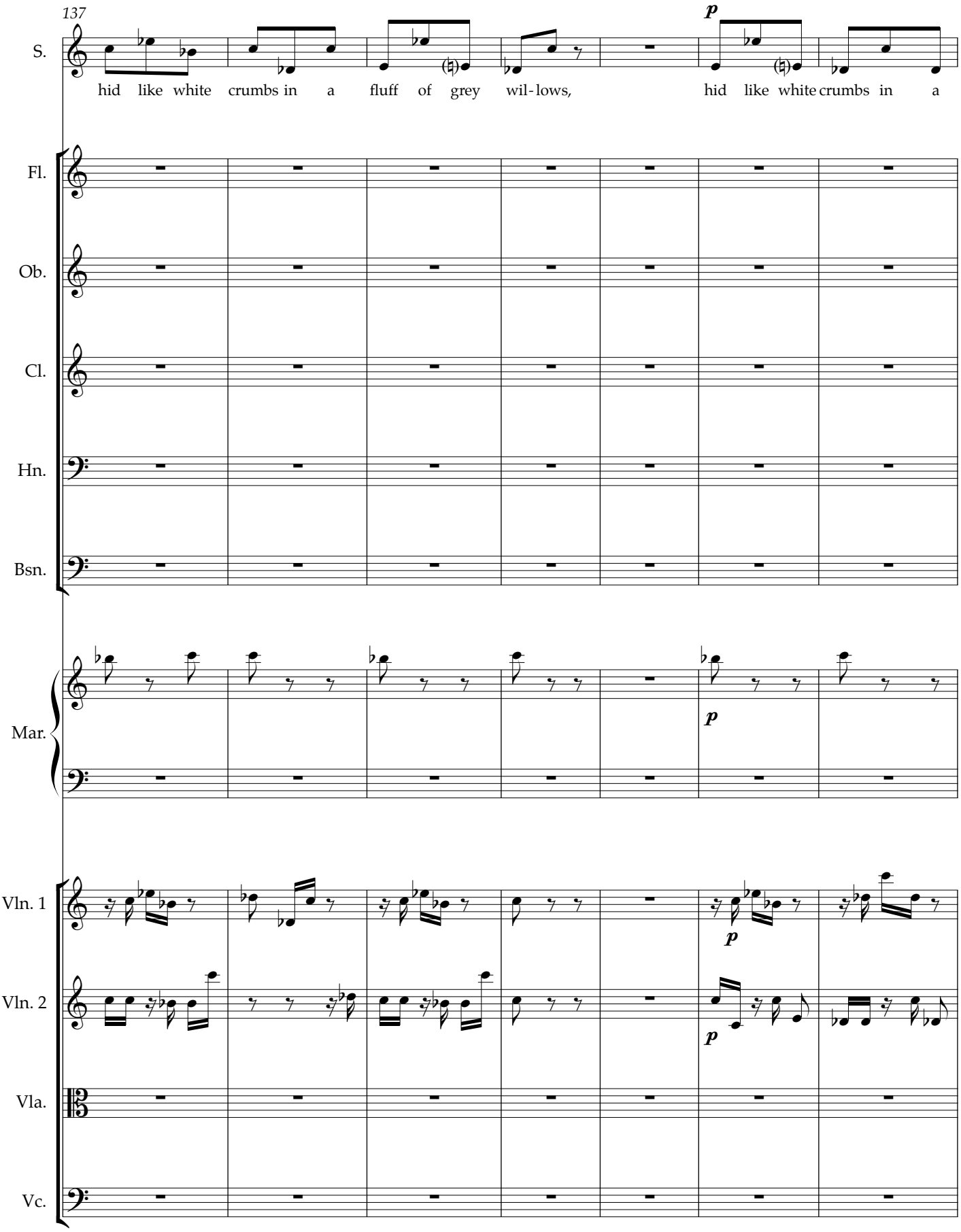

103
S.
A - long the dark seam of the riv - er,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
6:5
6:5

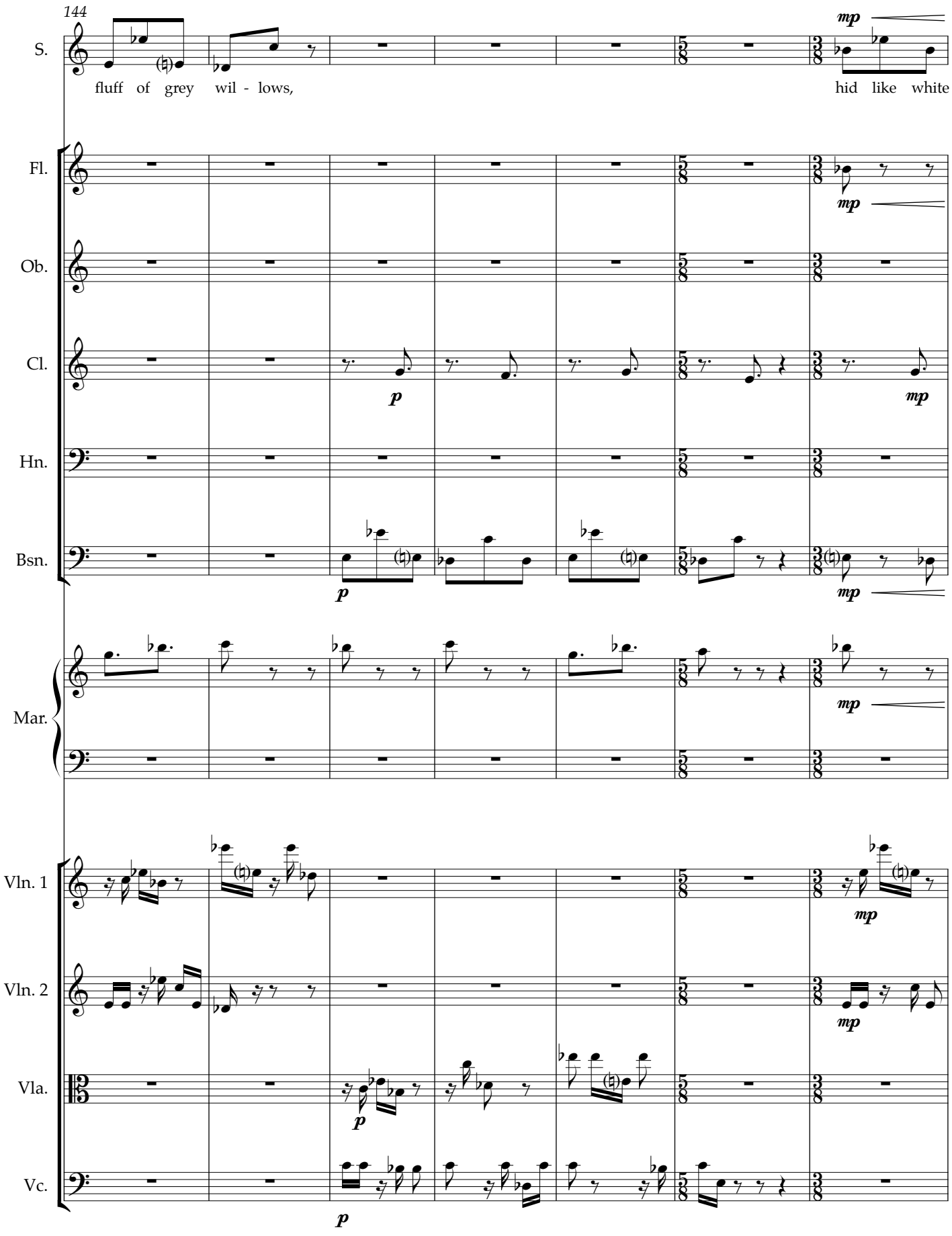

109
S.
ah
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
p
mp
mf
pp

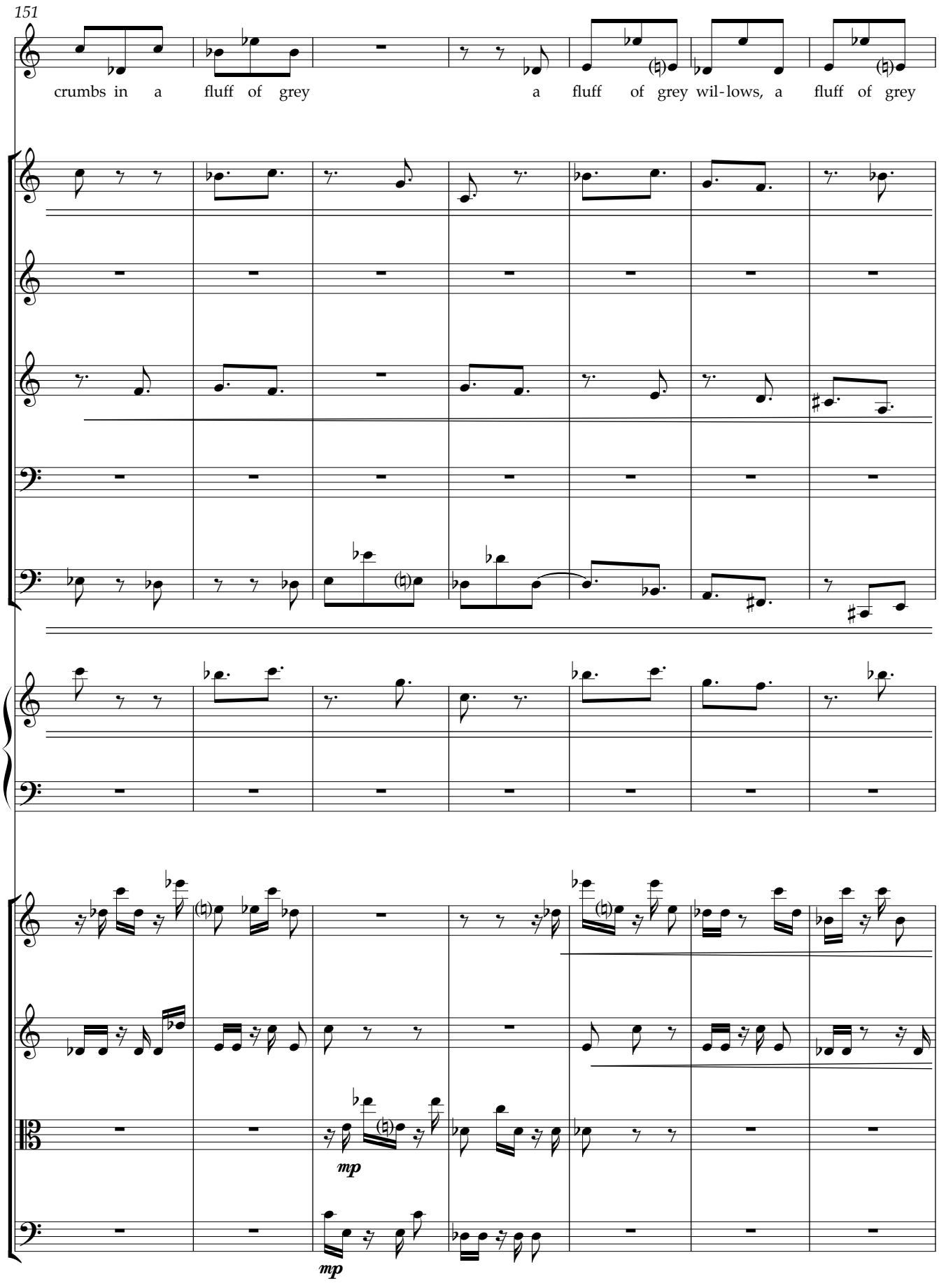

114
S.
A - long the dark seam of the riv-er the hous es, the barns, the two
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
5:3
5:3

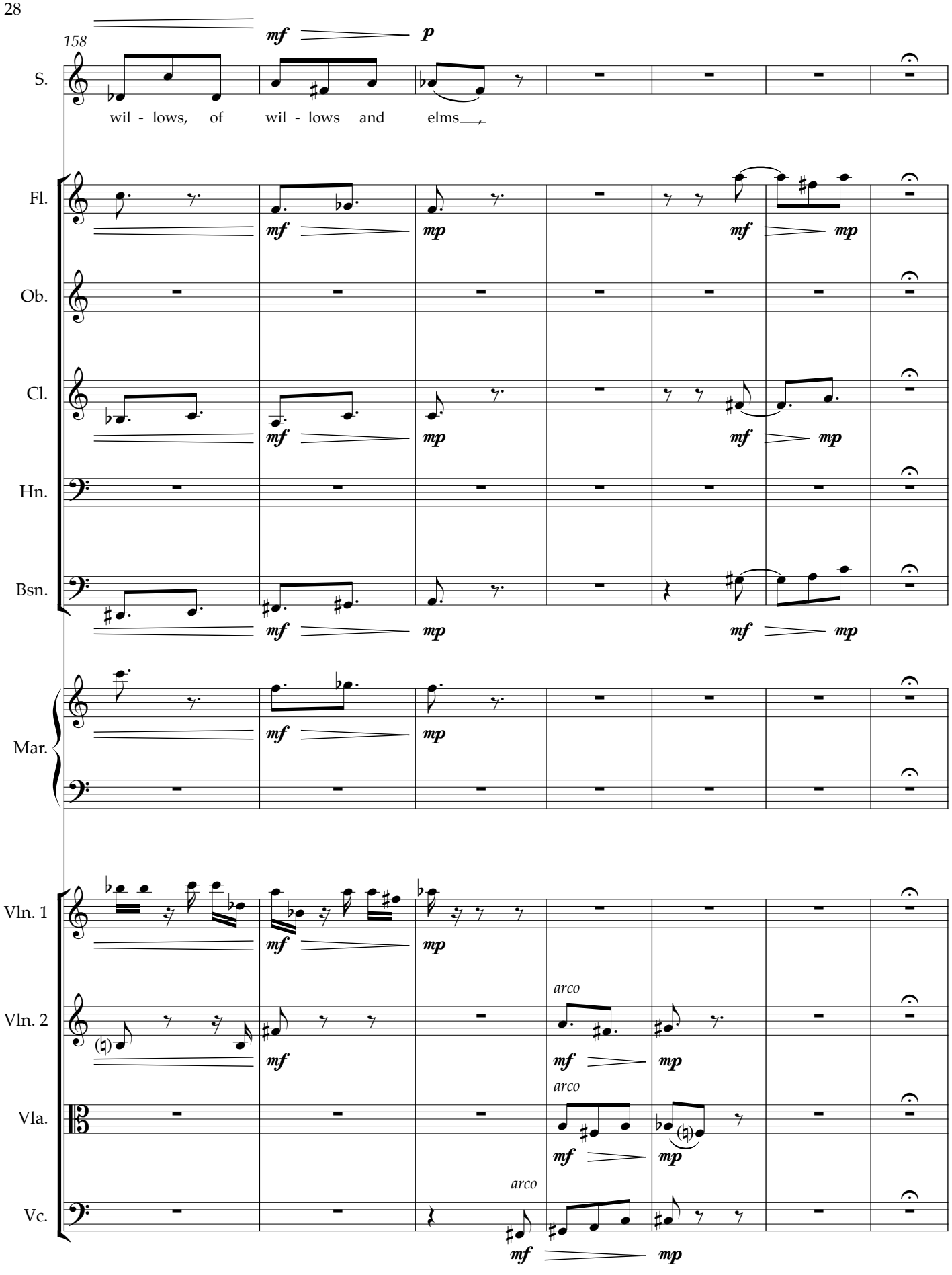

D
light, rhythmic
♩.=58
120
S.
church- es,
hid,
hid,
hid like white crumbs
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
pizz.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
pizz.
Vla.
Vc.


129
S.
hid like white crumbs,
hid like white crumbs,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
pp
Hn.
Bsn.
pp
Mar.
Vln. 1
pp
Vln. 2
pp
pizz.
Vla.
pp
pizz.
Vc.
pp


137
S.
hid like white crumbs in a fluff of grey wil- lows, hid like white crumbs in a
p
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
p
Vln. 1
p
Vln. 2
p
Vla.
Vc.


144
S.
fluff of grey wil - lows,
hid like white
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
p


151
S.
crumbs in a fluff of grey a fluff of grey wil-lows, a fluff of grey
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
mp


158
S.
wil - lows, of wil - lows and elms
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
arco
arco
arco
mf
p
mp

E

165

S. *pp*

hid, hid, hid, hid, hid, hid, hid like white crumbs,

Fl. *pp*

Ob. *pp*

Cl. *p* *pp*

Hn.

Bsn. *pp*

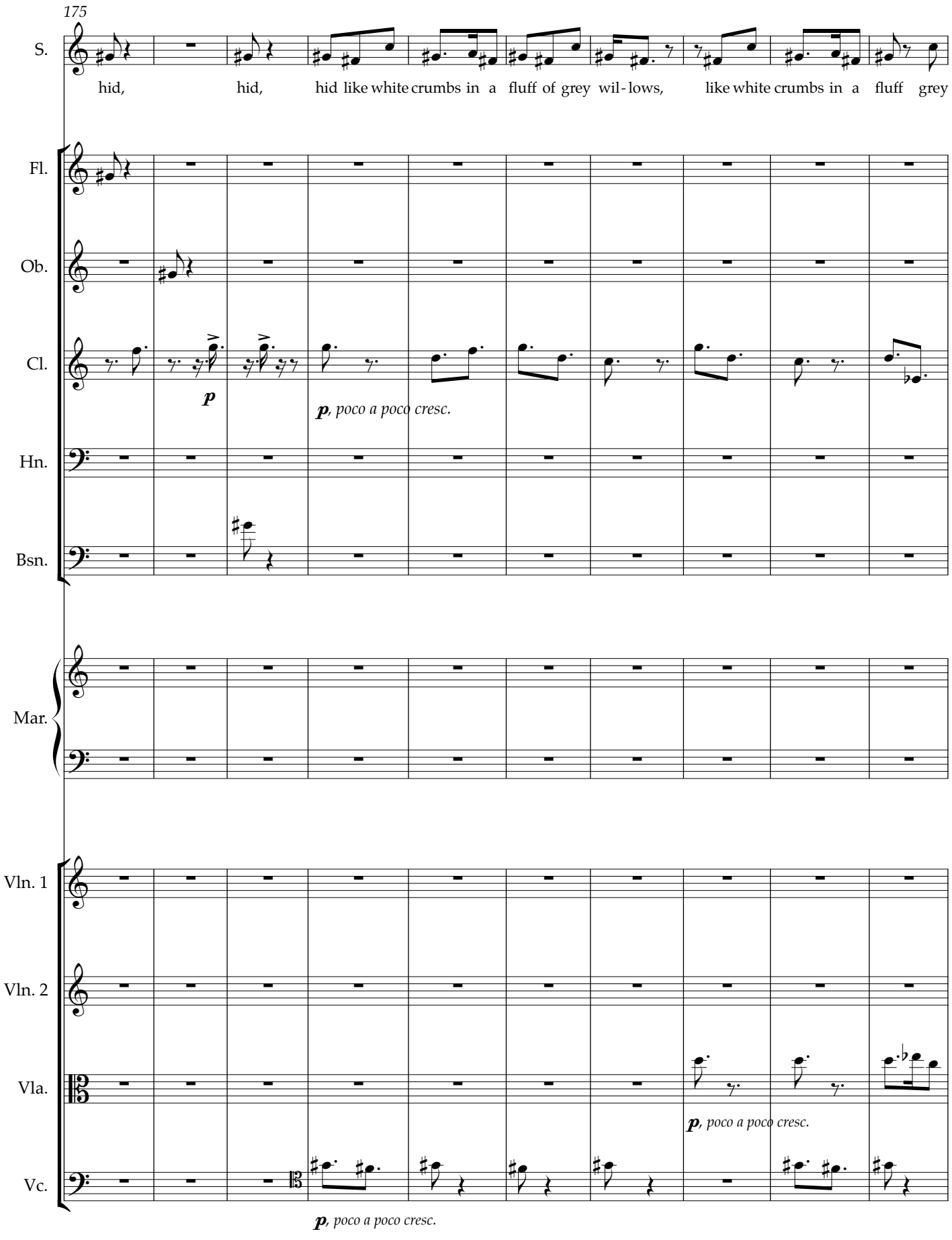
Mar.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.


175
S.
hid, hid, hid like white crumbs in a fluff of grey wil- lows, like white crumbs in a fluff grey
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
p
p, poco a poco cresc.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
p, poco a poco cresc.
Vc.
p, poco a poco cresc.

185

F

mf

S. wil - lows, hid white crumbs in a fluff grey a

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Hn.

Bsn.

Mar.

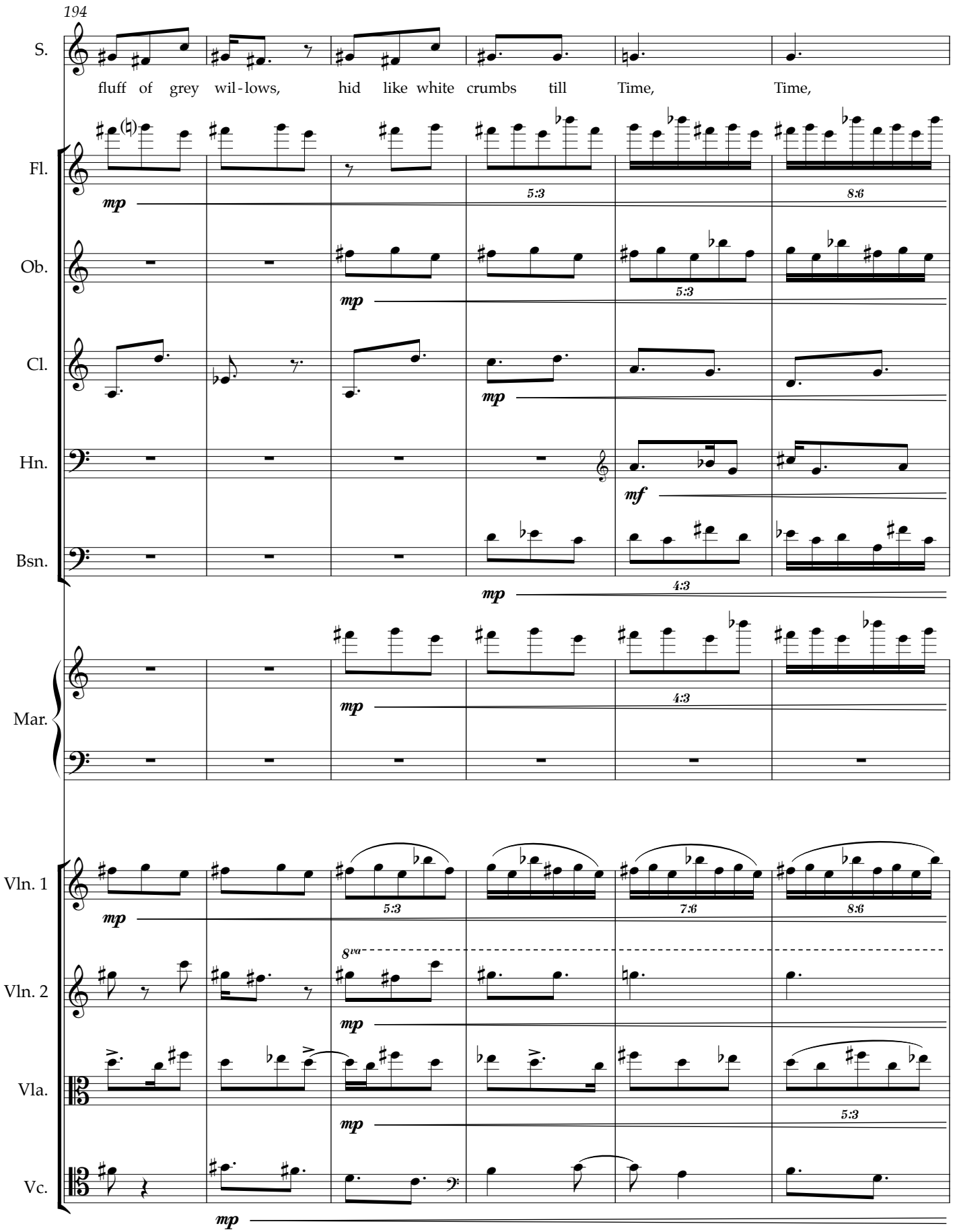
arco

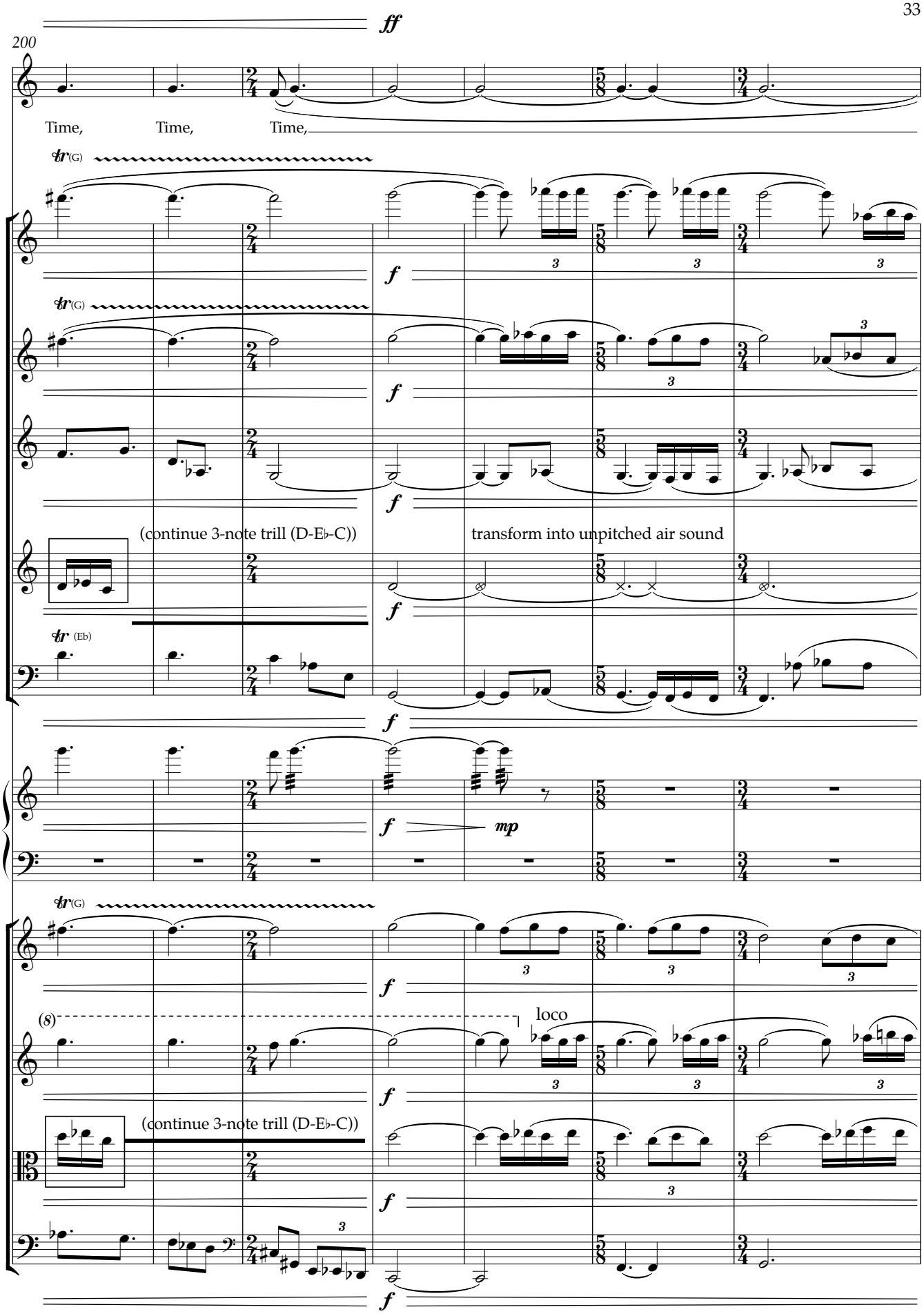
Vln. 1 ***p**, poco a poco cresc.* 4:3

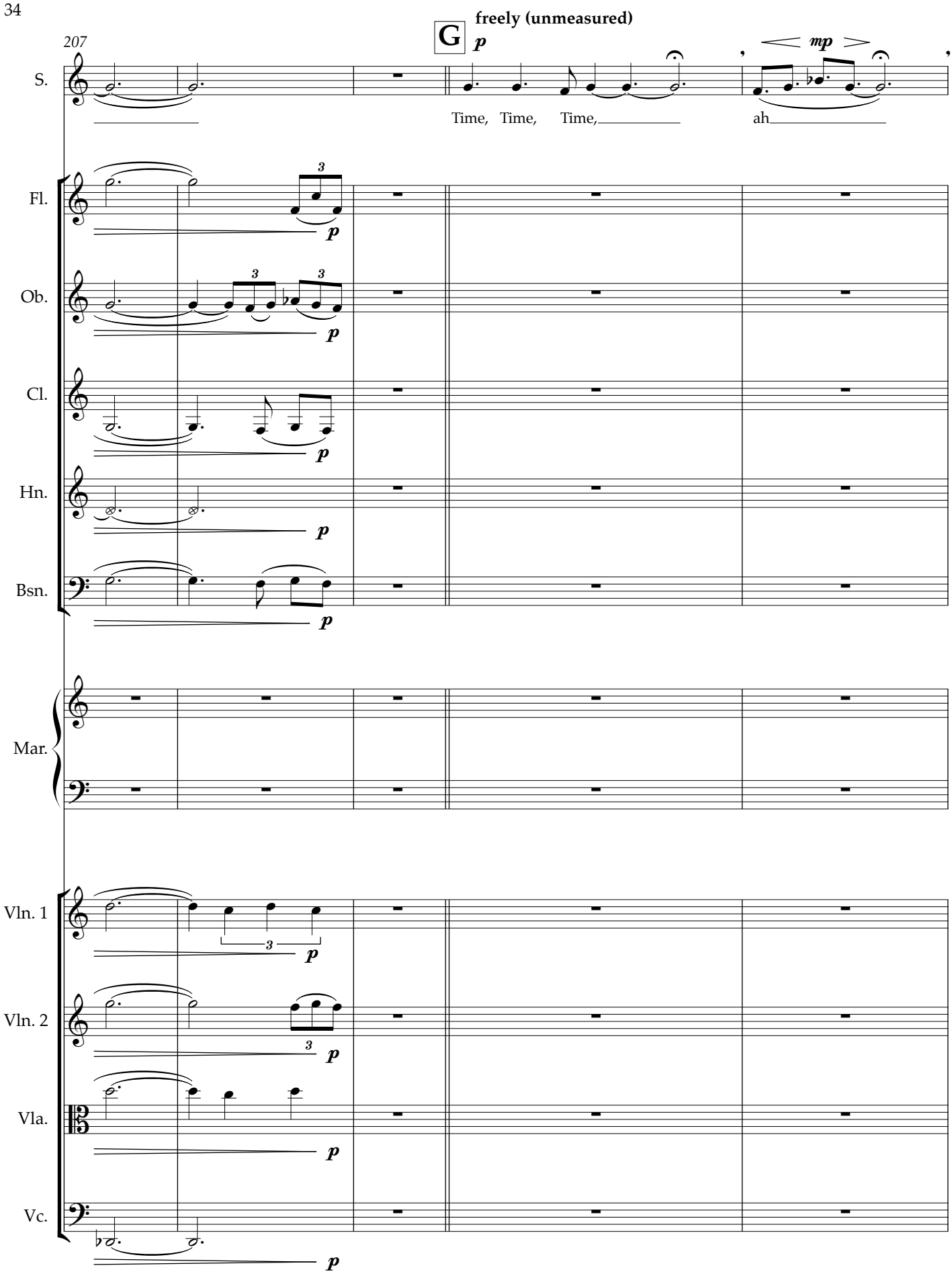
Vln. 2 ***p**, poco a poco cresc.*

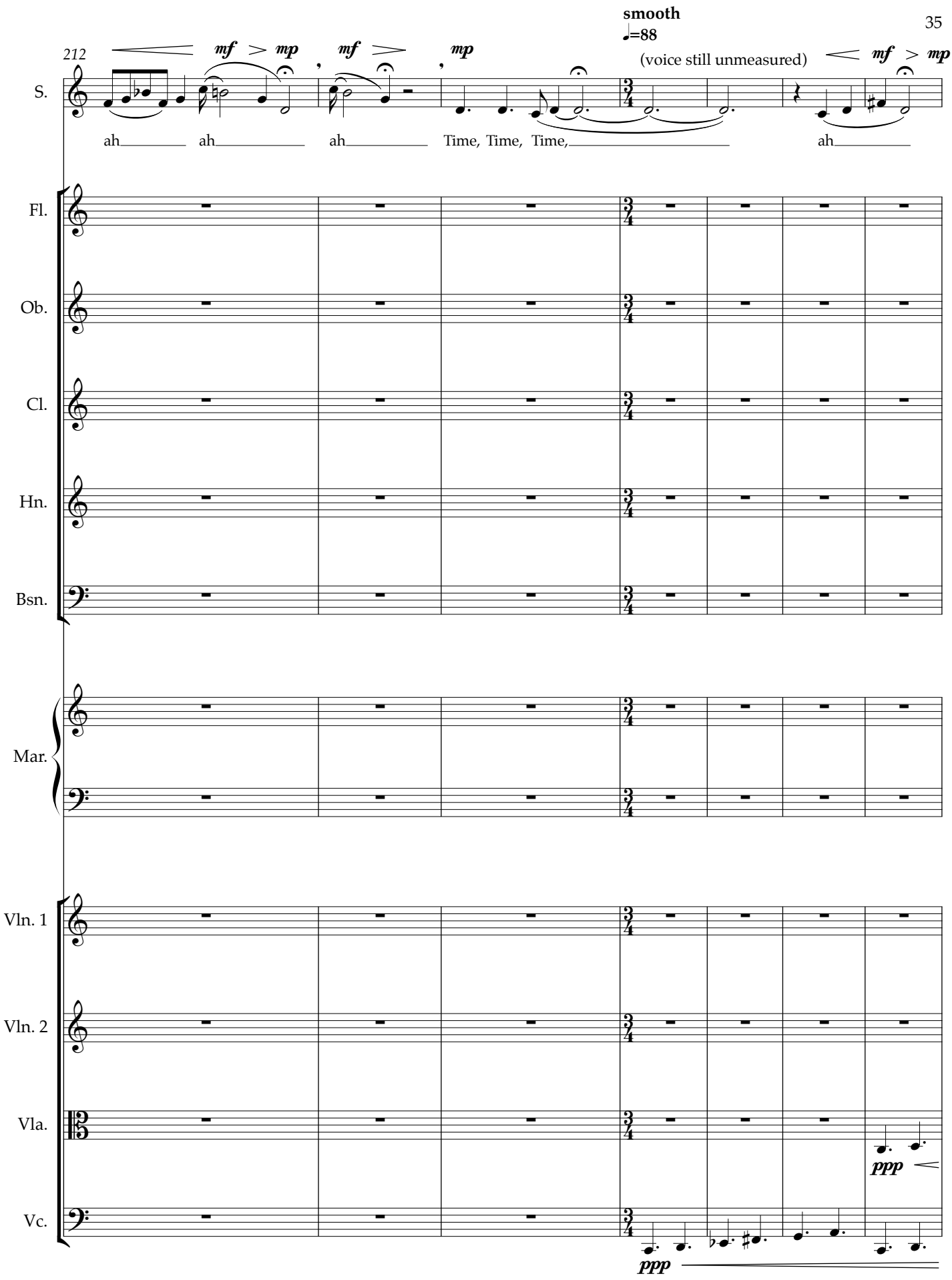
Vla.

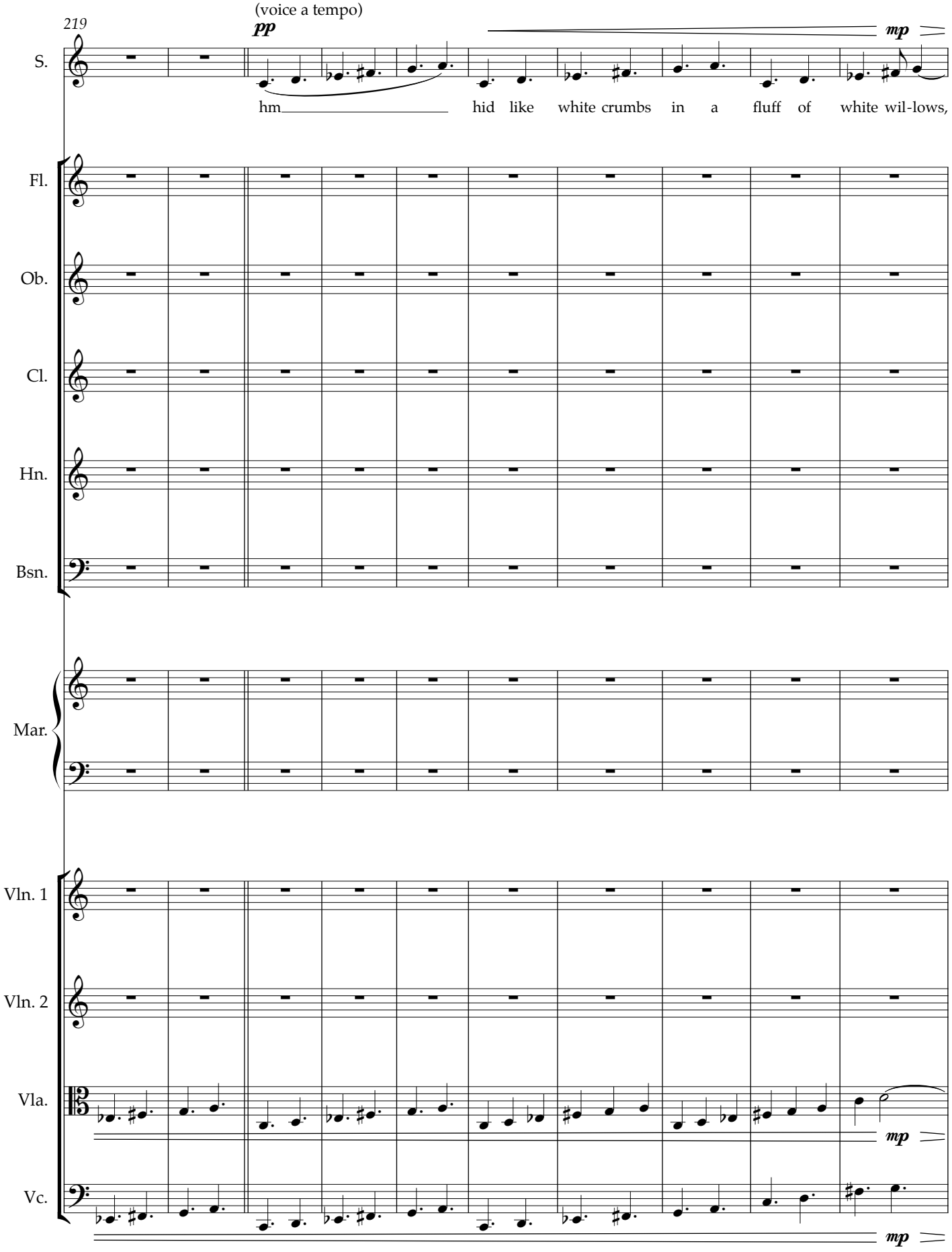
Vc.

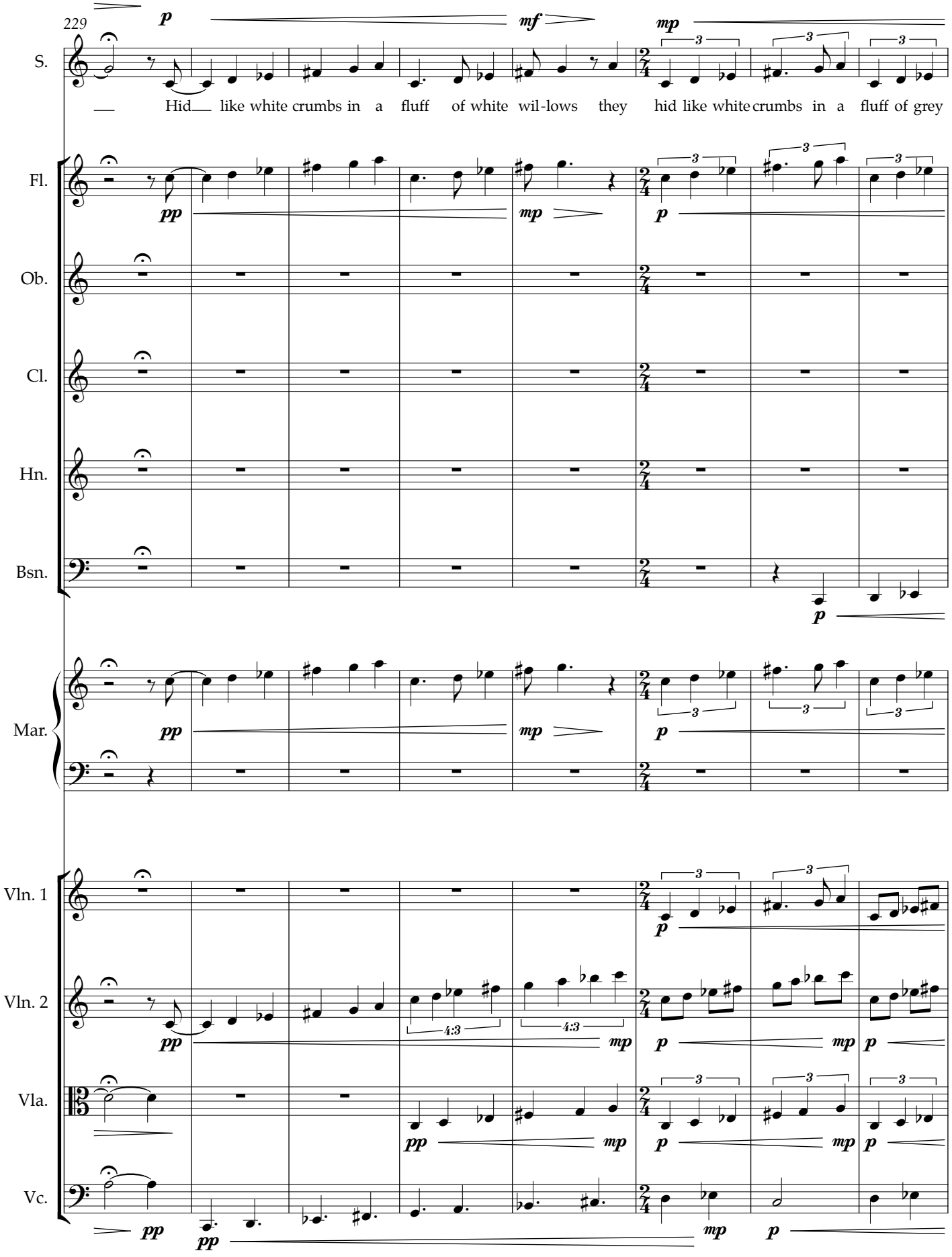

194
S.
fluff of grey wil-lows, hid like white crumbs till Time, Time,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
mf
5:3
8:6
4:3
7:6
8va

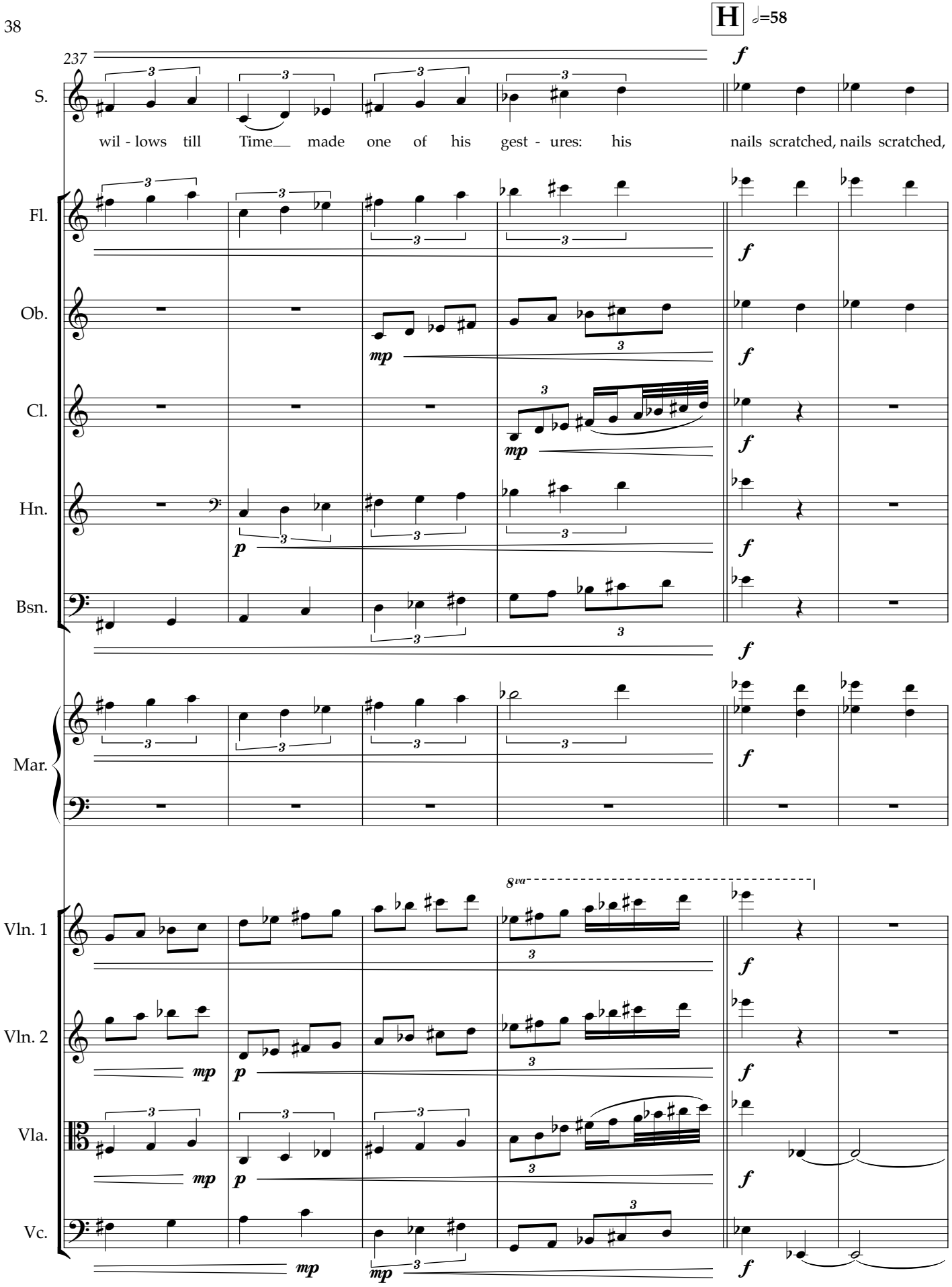

ff
200
S.
Time,
Time,
Time,
tr(G)
Fl.
f
3
Ob.
Cl.
(continue 3-note trill (D-E♭-C))
transform into unpitched air sound
Hn.
Bsn.
tr (Eb)
Mar.
mp
Vln. 1
(8)
loco
Vln. 2
(continue 3-note trill (D-E♭-C))
Vla.
Vc.

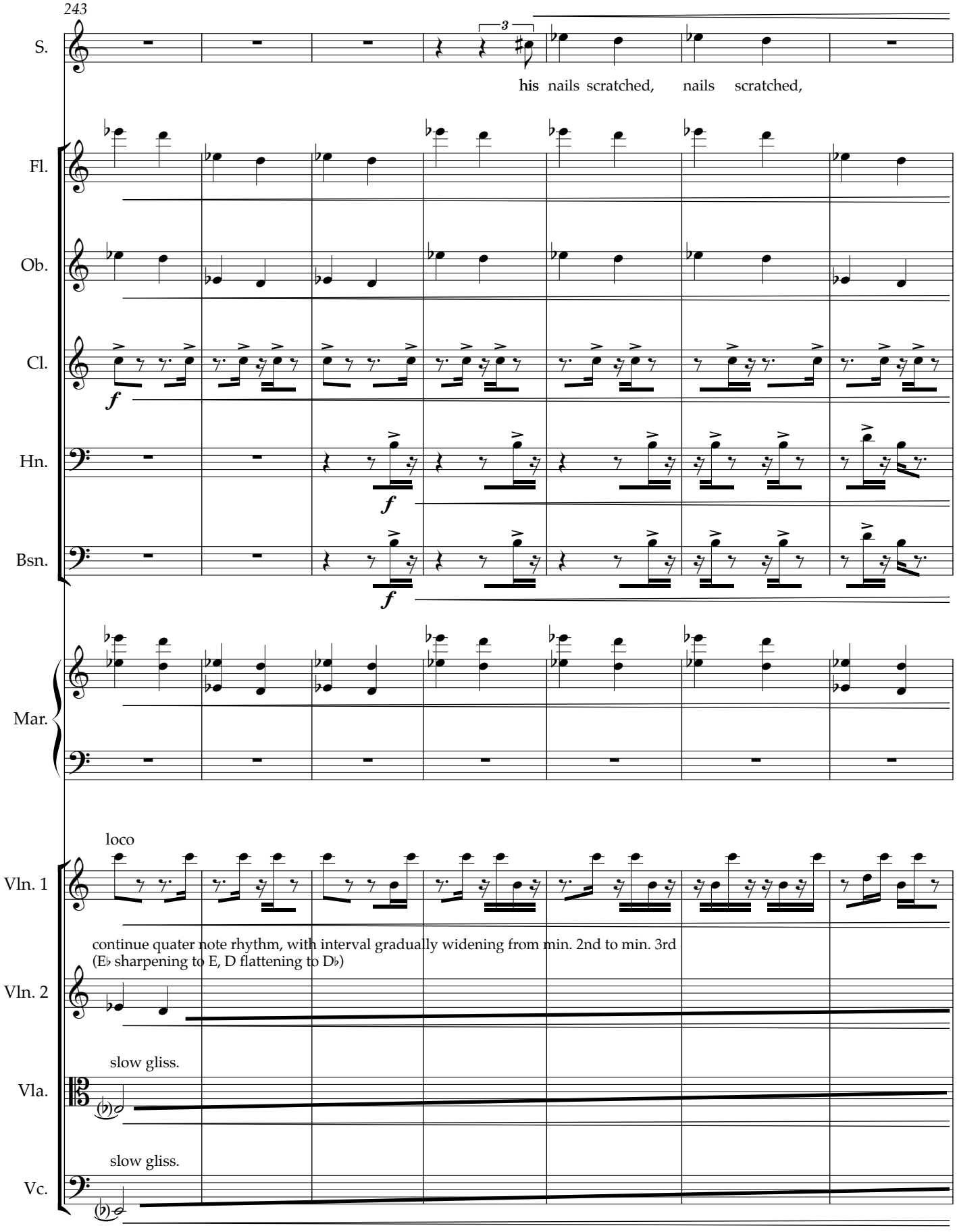

207
G
freely (unmeasured)
p
mp
S.
Time, Time, Time,
ah
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

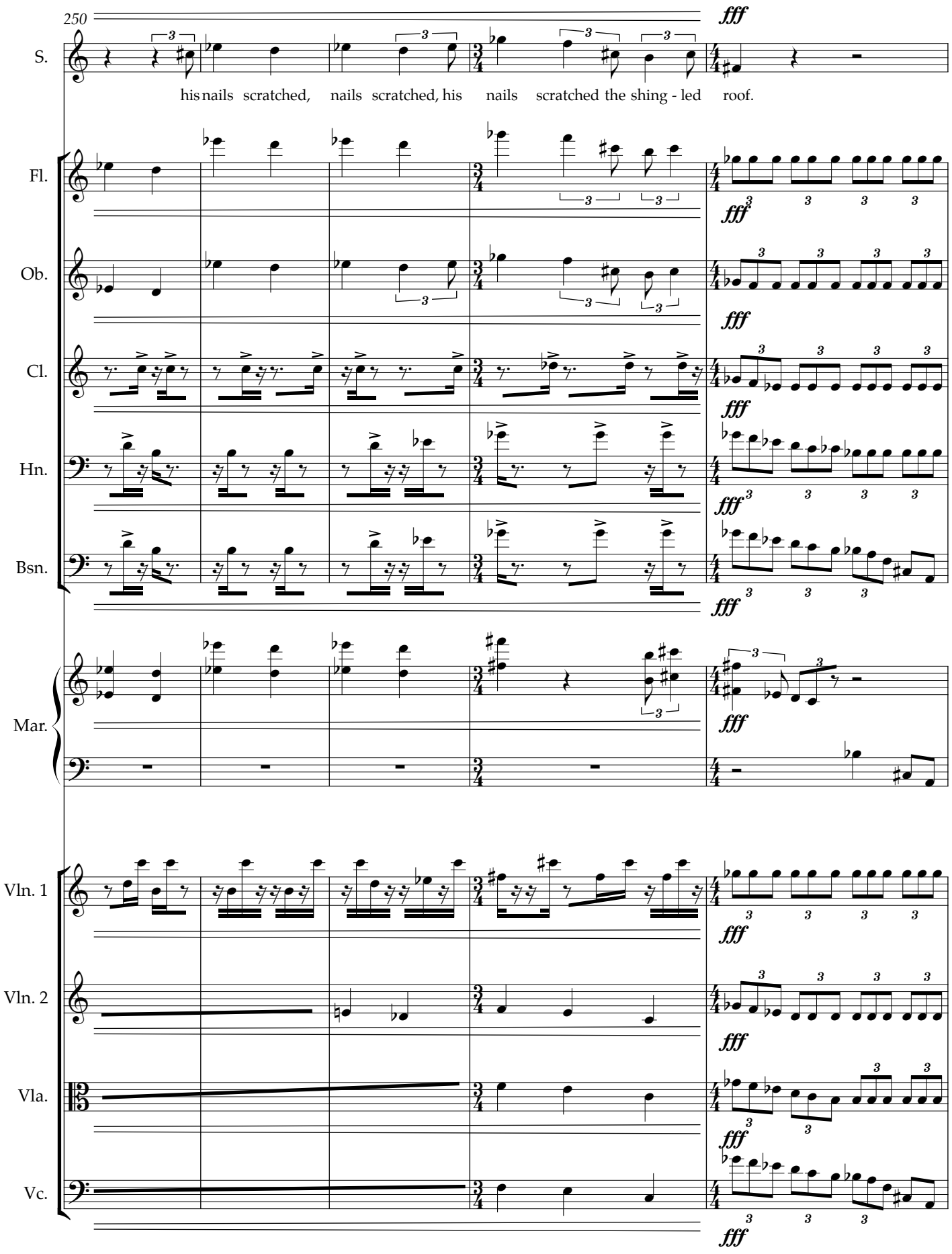

212
mf > mp
mf >
mp
smooth
♩=88
(voice still unmeasured)
mf > mp
S.
ah ah ah Time, Time, Time, ah
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
ppp
ppp

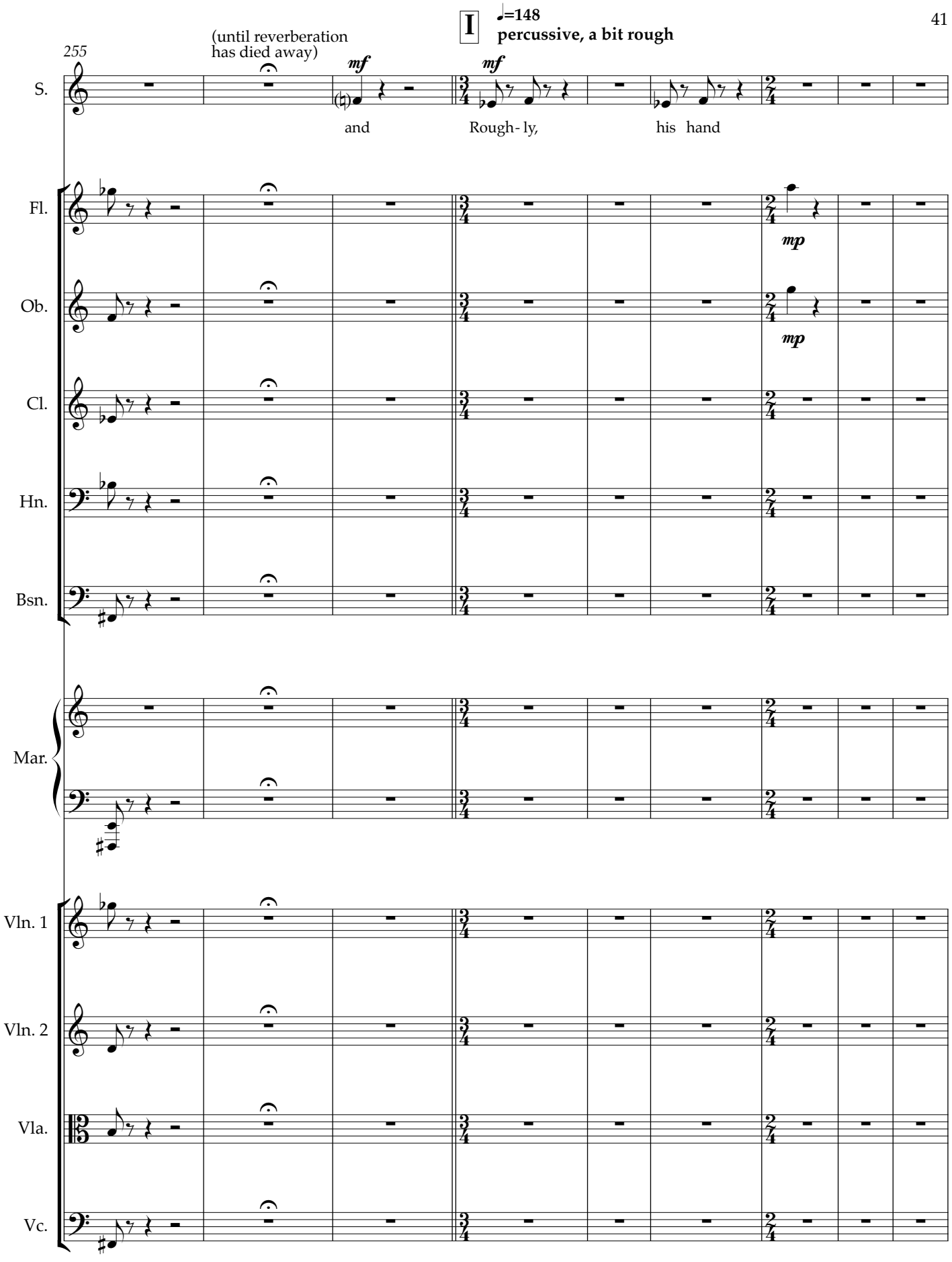

219
(voice a tempo)
pp
mp
S.
hm
hid like white crumbs in a fluff of white wil-lows,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mp
mp

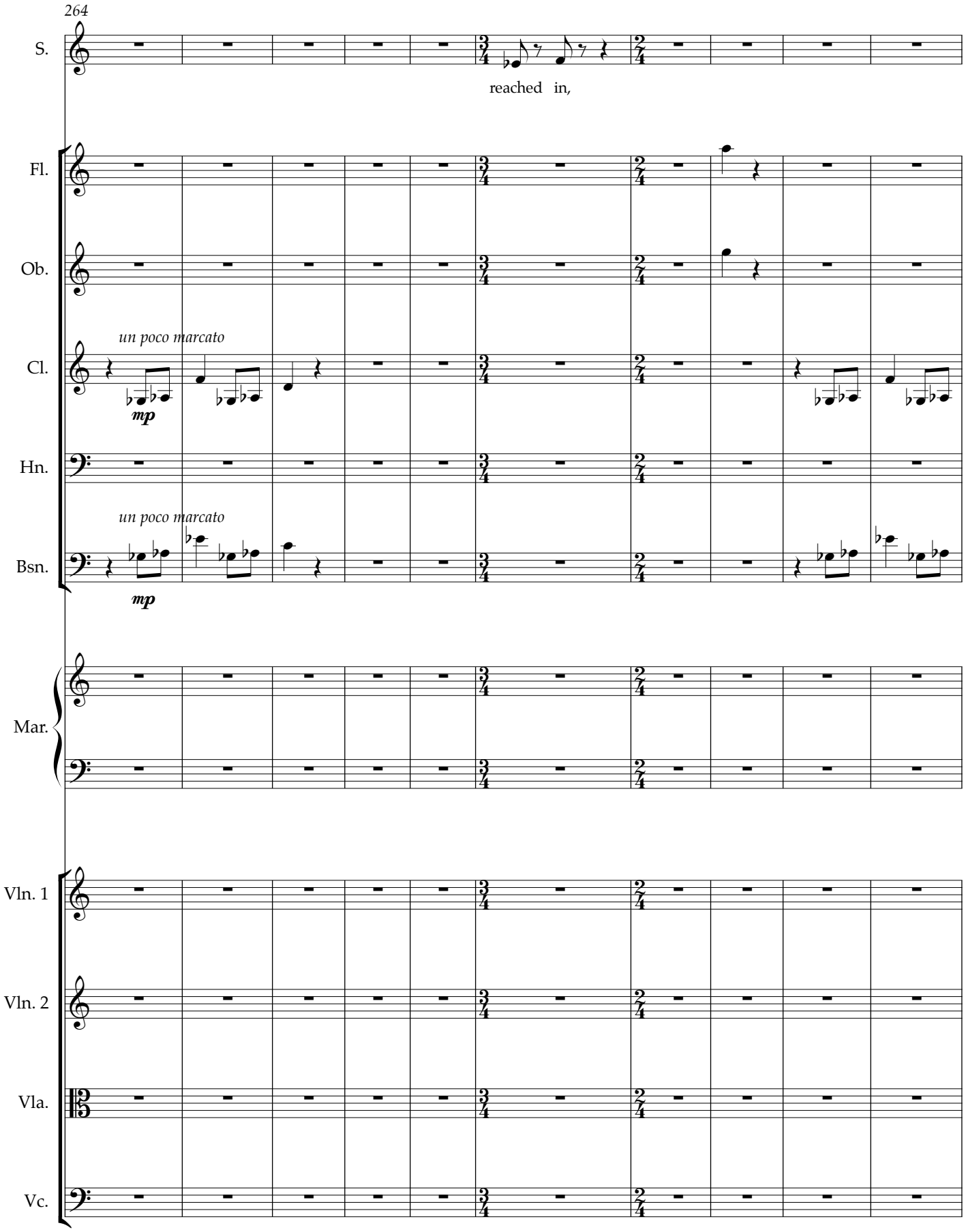

229
S.
Hid like white crumbs in a fluff of white wil-lows they hid like white crumbs in a fluff of grey
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
pp
mp
mf
p
4:3

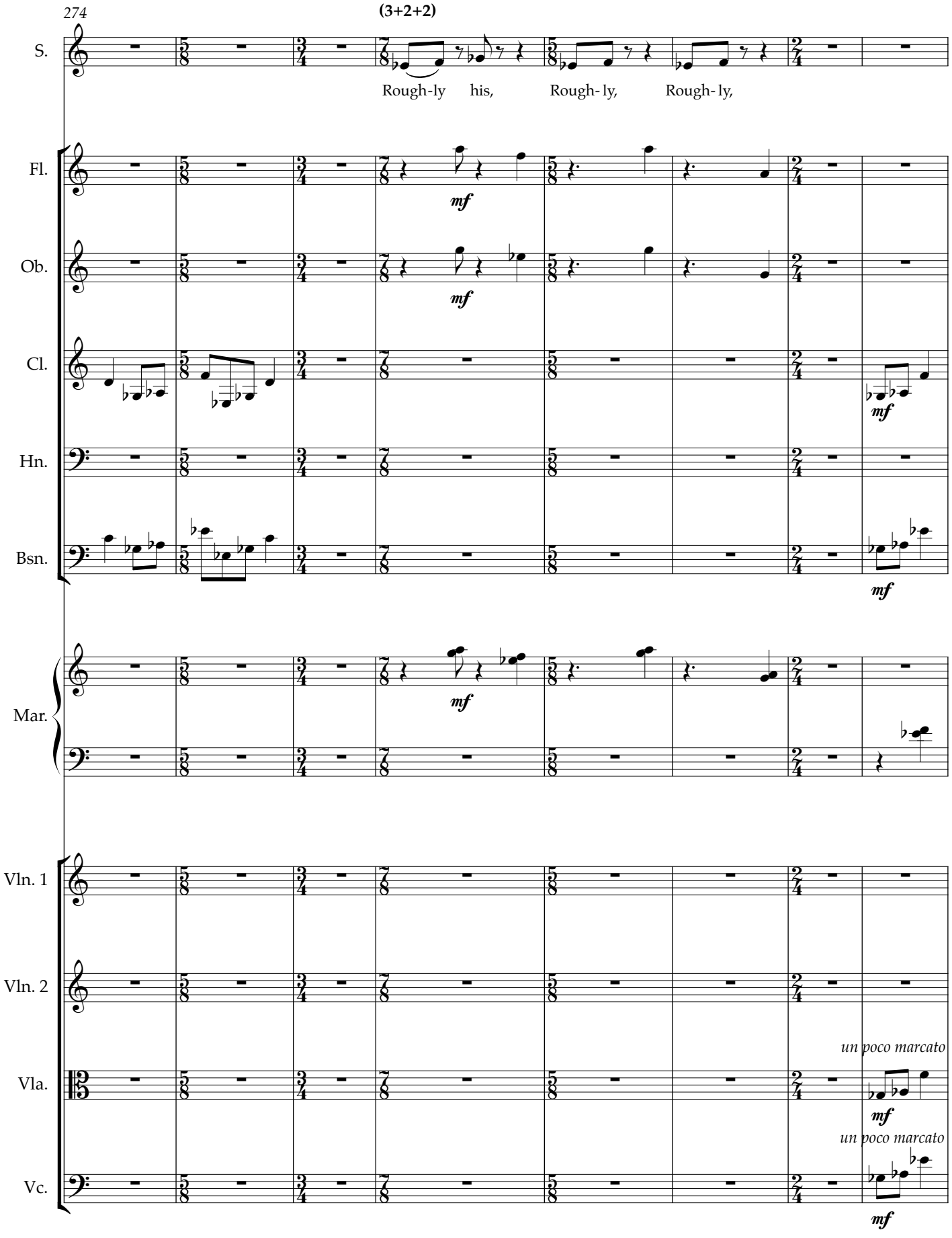

H
♩=58
237
S.
wil - lows till Time made one of his gest - ures: his nails scratched, nails scratched,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
8va
f
mp
p

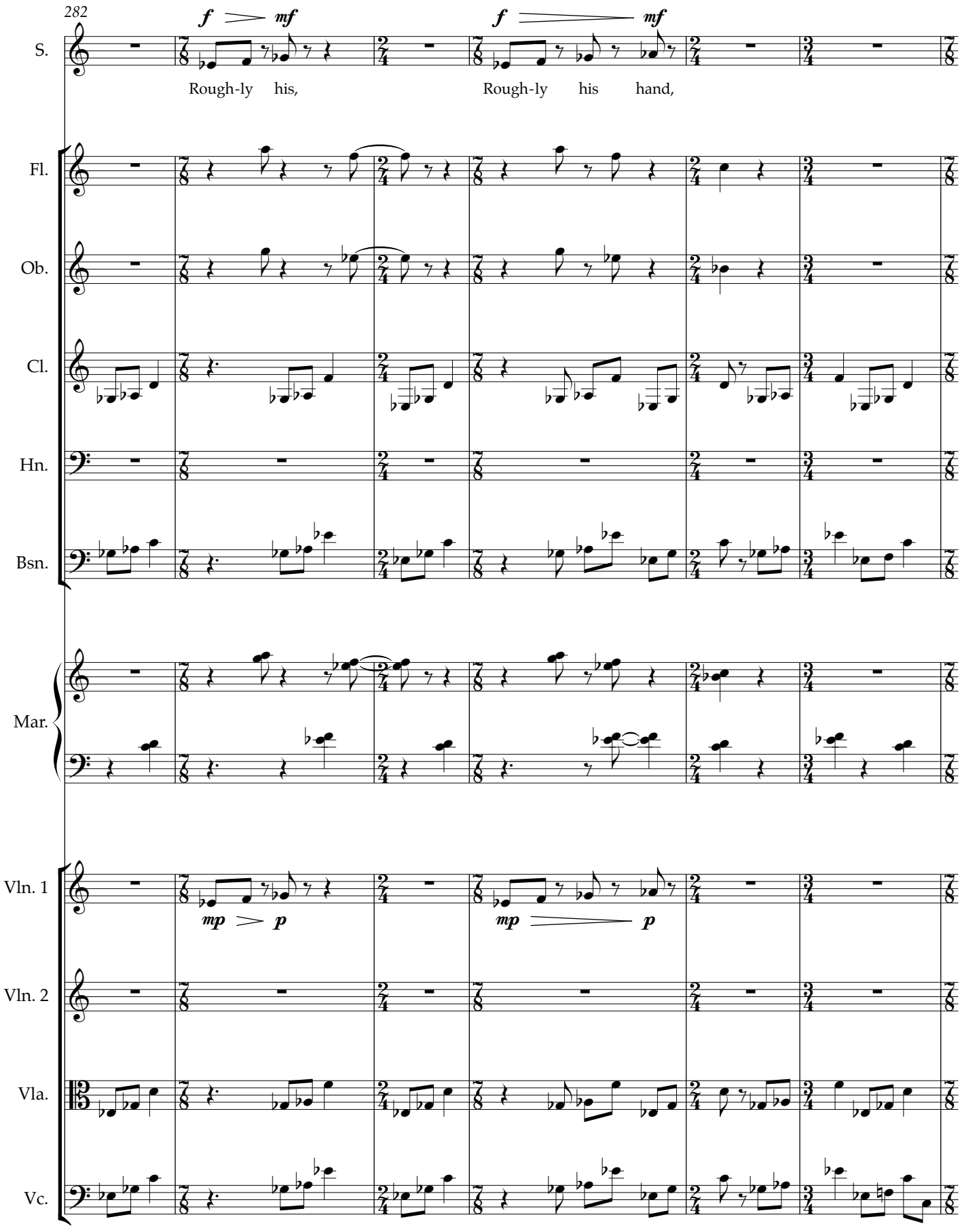

243
S.
his nails scratched, nails scratched,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
f
Hn.
f
Bsn.
f
Mar.
loco
Vln. 1
continue quater note rhythm, with interval gradually widening from min. 2nd to min. 3rd
(E♭ sharpening to E, D flattening to D♭)
Vln. 2
slow gliss.
Vla.
slow gliss.
Vc.

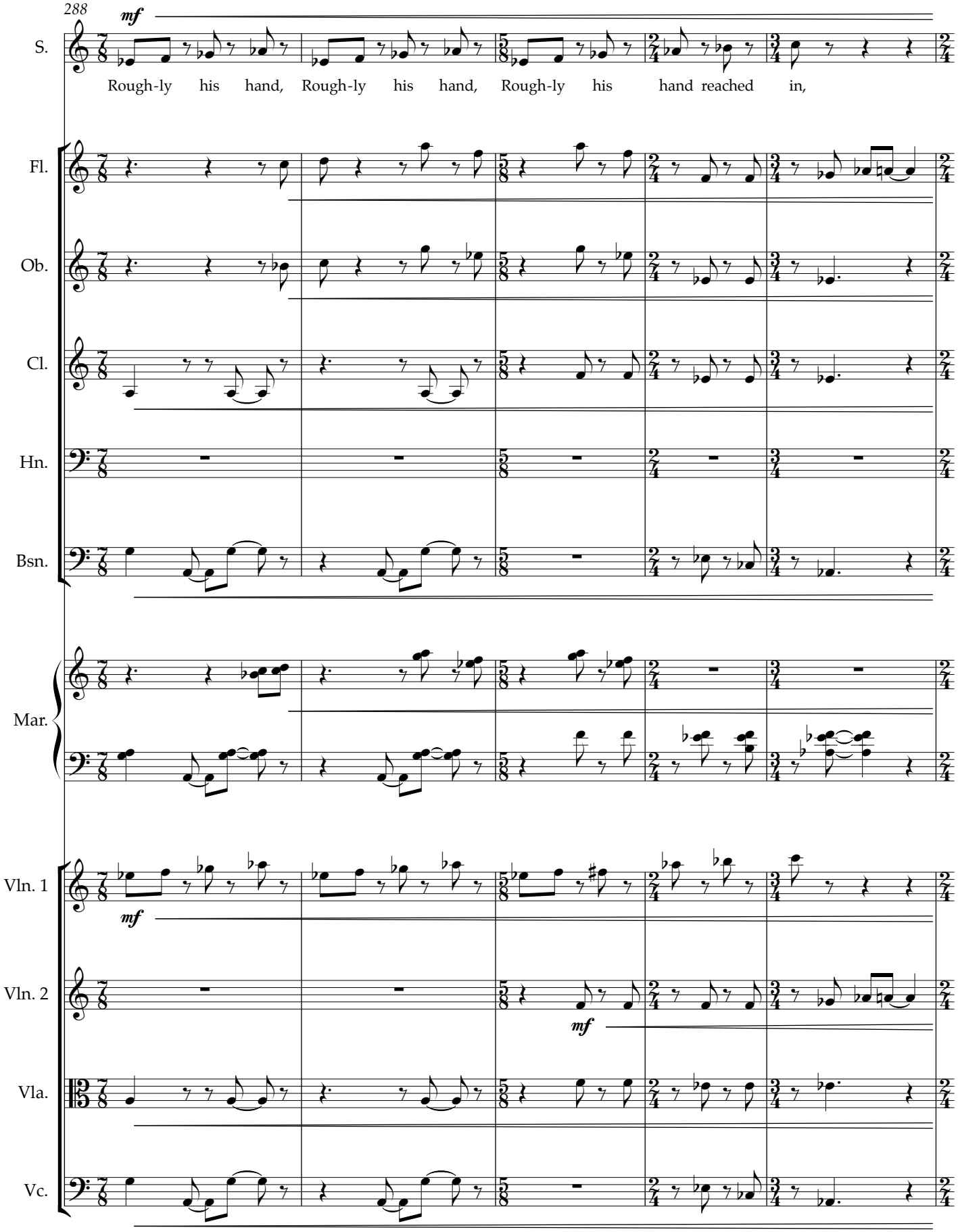

250
fff
S.
his nails scratched, nails scratched, his nails scratched the shing - led roof.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

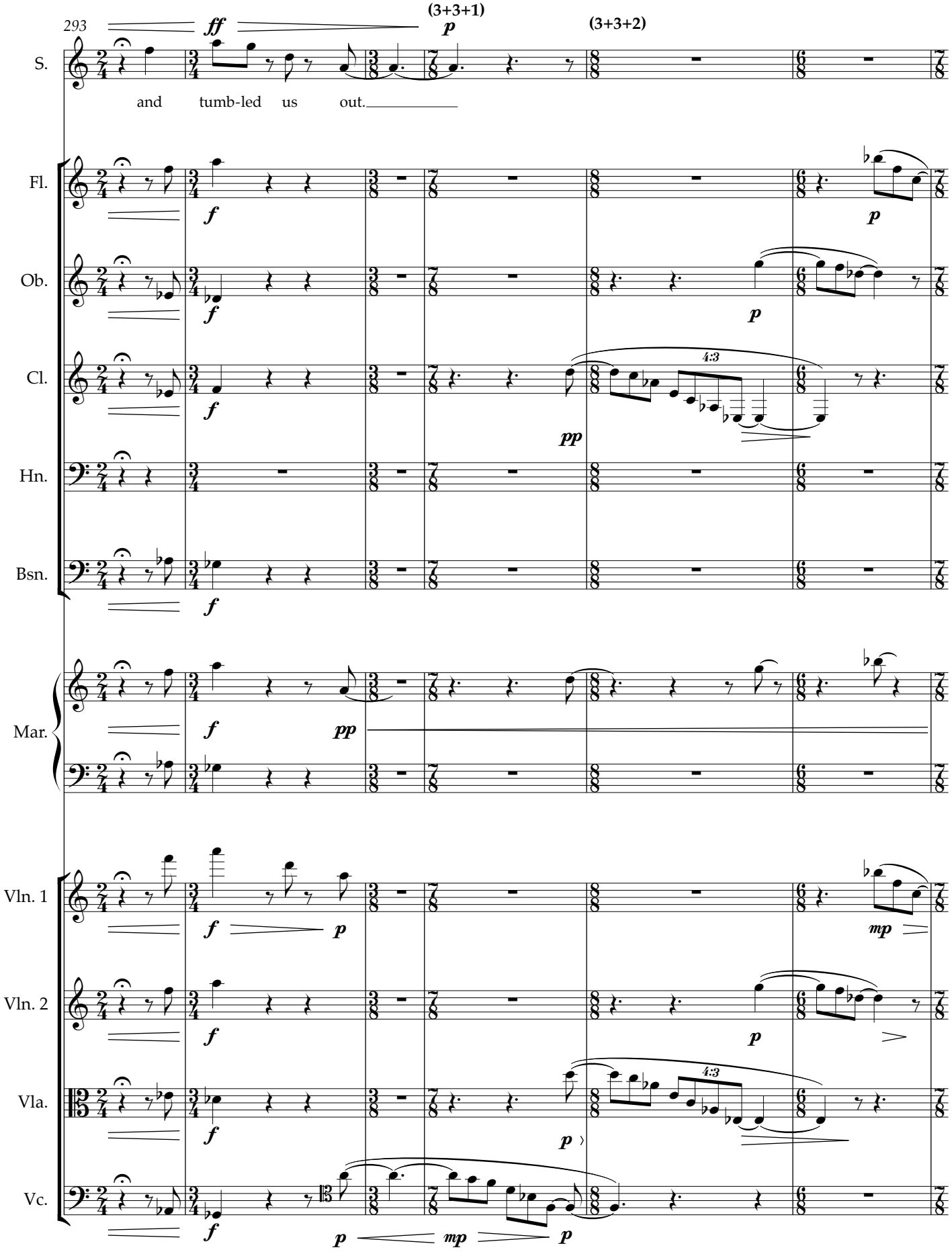

I
♩=148
percussive, a bit rough
255
(until reverberation has died away)
mf
mf
S.
and
Rough- ly,
his hand
Fl.
mp
Ob.
mp
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

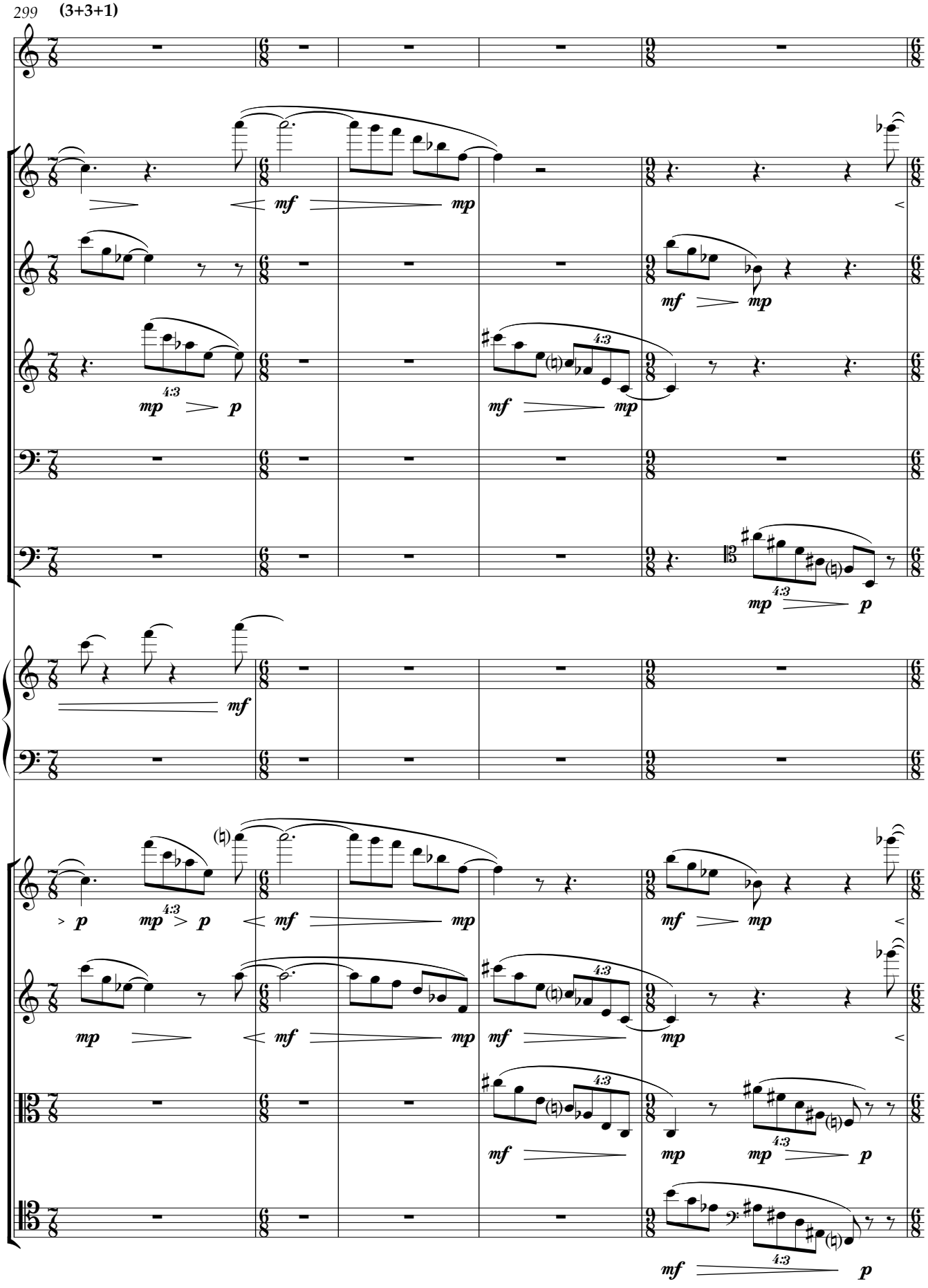

264
S.
reached in,
Fl.
Ob.
un poco marcato
Cl.
mp
Hn.
un poco marcato
Bsn.
mp
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

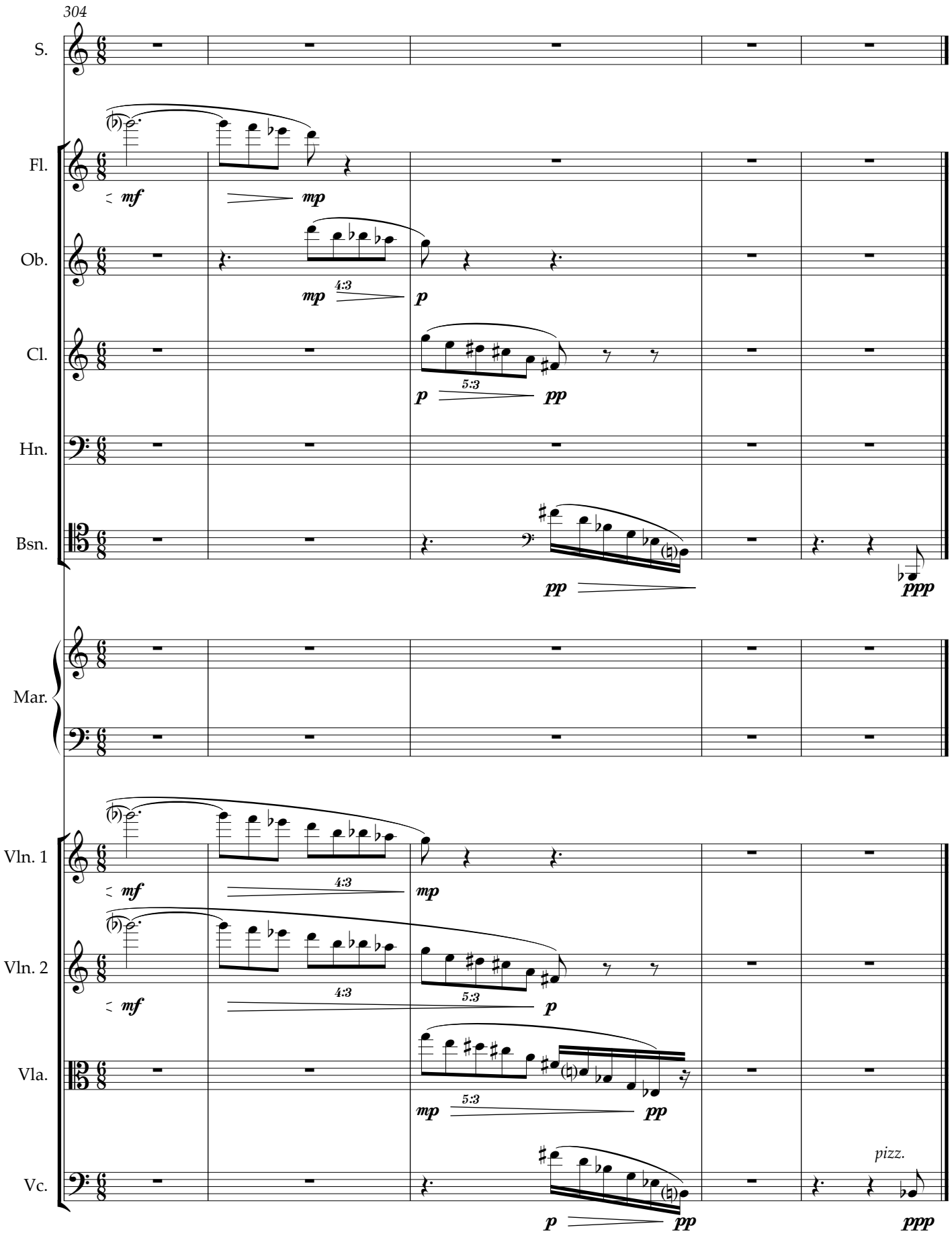

274
(3+2+2)
S.
Rough-ly his, Rough-ly, Rough-ly,
Fl.
mf
Ob.
mf
Cl.
mf
Hn.
Bsn.
mf
Mar.
mf
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
un poco marcato
Vla.
mf
un poco marcato
Vc.
mf


282
f mf
f mf
S.
Rough-ly his,
Rough-ly his hand,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
mp p
mp p
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.


288
mf
S.
Rough-ly his hand, Rough-ly his hand, Rough-ly his hand reached in,
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
mf
Vln. 2
mf
Vla.
Vc.


293
S.
and tumb-led us out.
(3+3+1)
(3+3+2)
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
4:3
4:3


299
(3+3+1)
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mf
mp
p
4:3


304
S.
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Hn.
Bsn.
Mar.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
mf
mp
4:3
p
5:3
pp
ppp
pizz.