HAMM

A theater piece for Violin and Piano
from Samuel Beckett's "Endgame"

William Osborne

Performance Notes

1. The work should be performed theatrically and from memory.
2. The rhythmically notated text should be accurately followed but with a natural and sometimes quasi-musical quality. Texts enclosed within a box should be spoken freely.
3. Stage directions are always enclosed in parentheses.
4. Every note is preceded by an accidental except for repeated notes and patterns.

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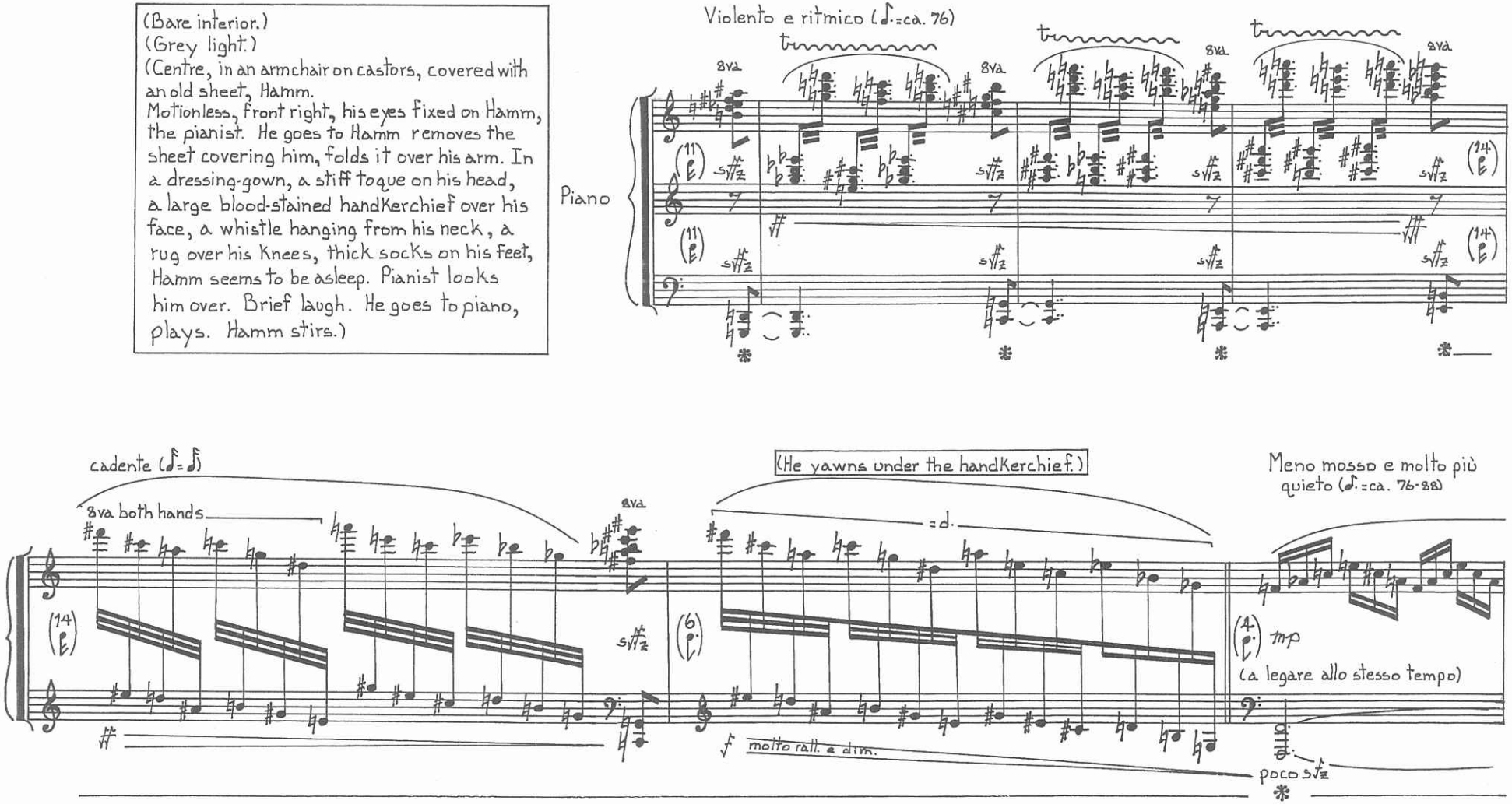
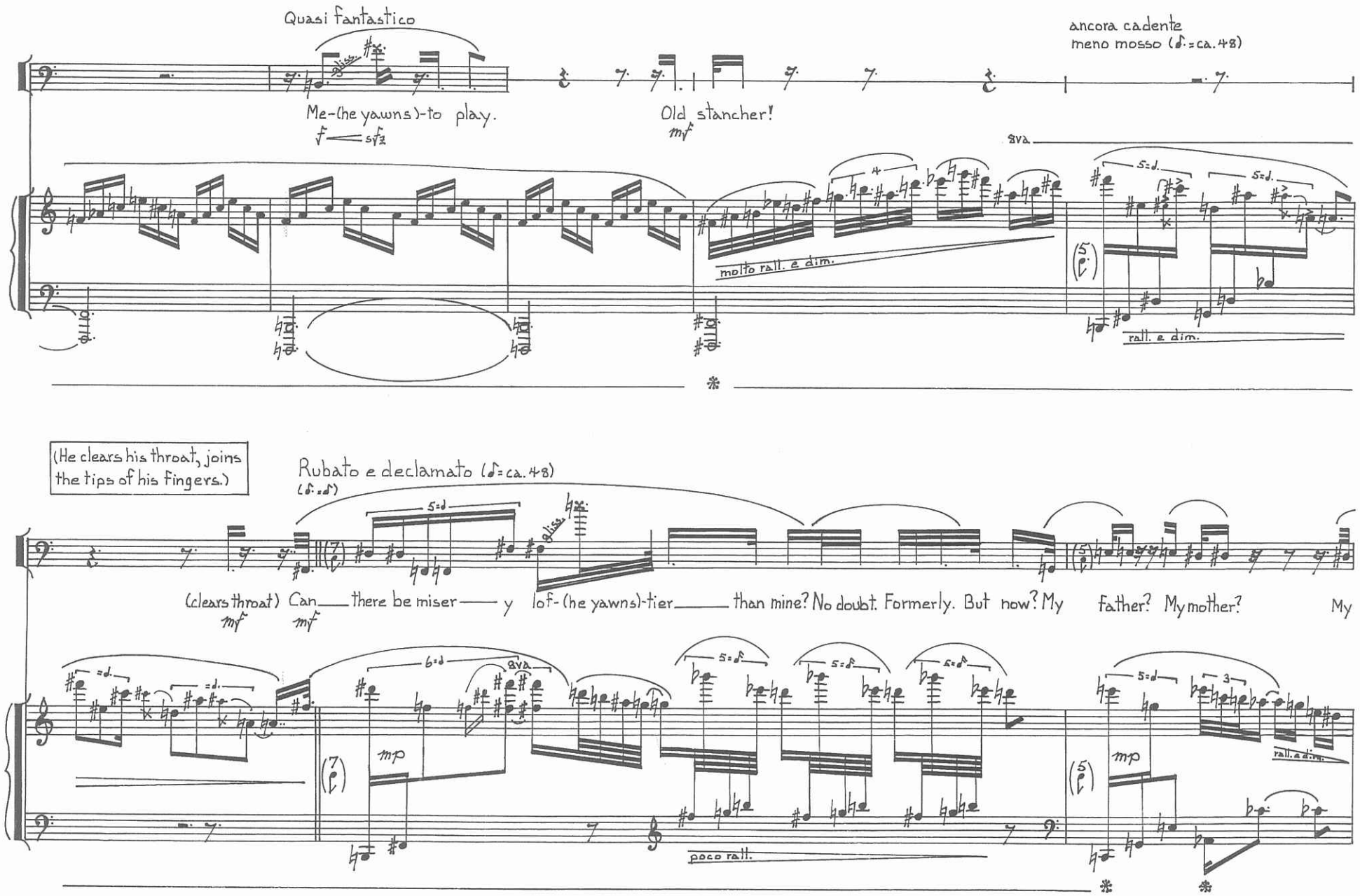
(Bare interior.)
(Grey light.)
(Centre, in an armchair on castors, covered with an old sheet, Hamm.
Motionless, front right, his eyes fixed on Hamm, the pianist. He goes to Hamm removes the sheet covering him, folds it over his arm. In a dressing-gown, a stiff toque on his head, a large blood-stained handkerchief over his face, a whistle hanging from his neck, a rug over his knees, thick socks on his feet, Hamm seems to be asleep. Pianist looks him over. Brief laugh. He goes to piano, plays. Hamm stirs.)

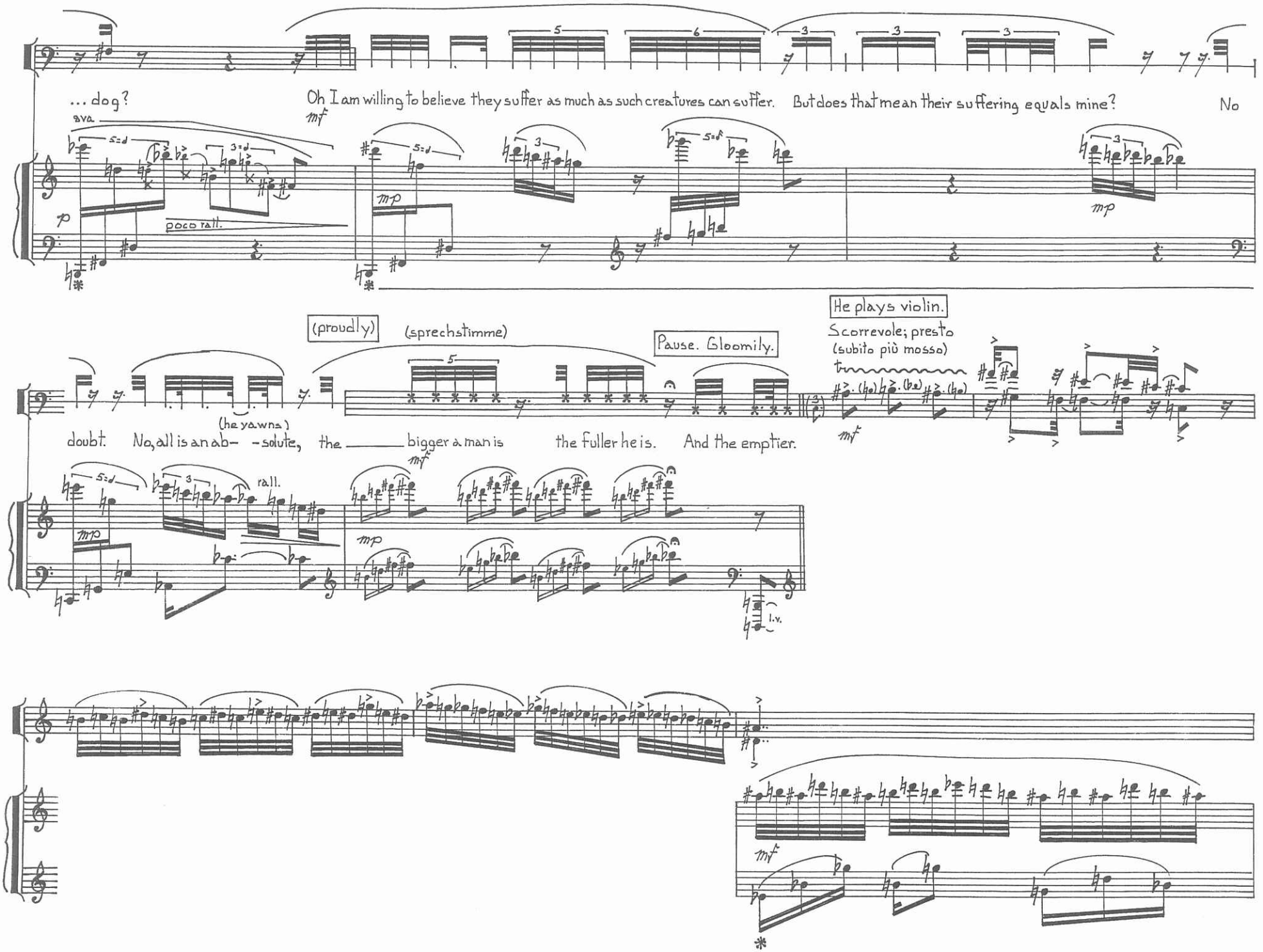


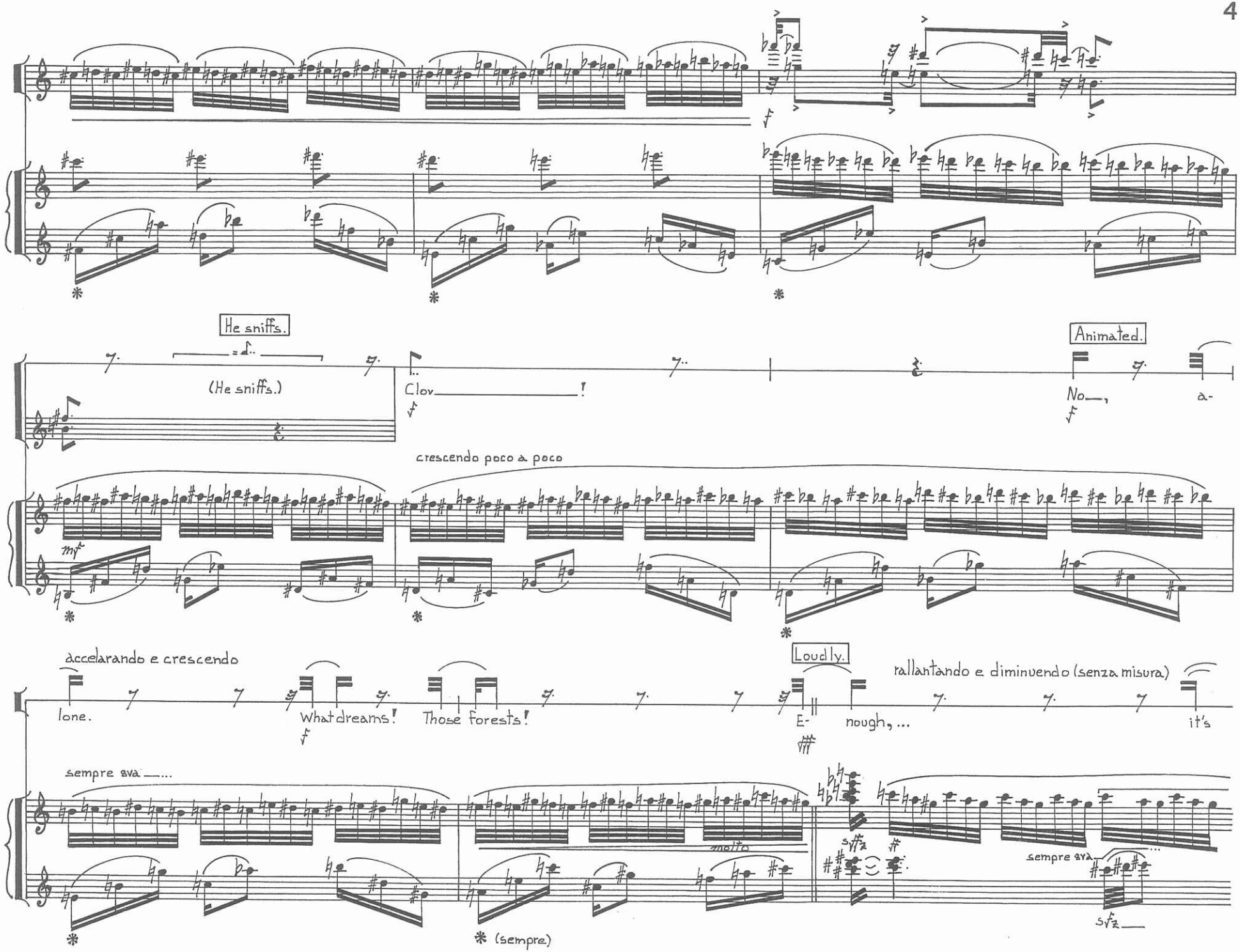
(He removes the handkerchief from his face. Very red face. Black glasses.)

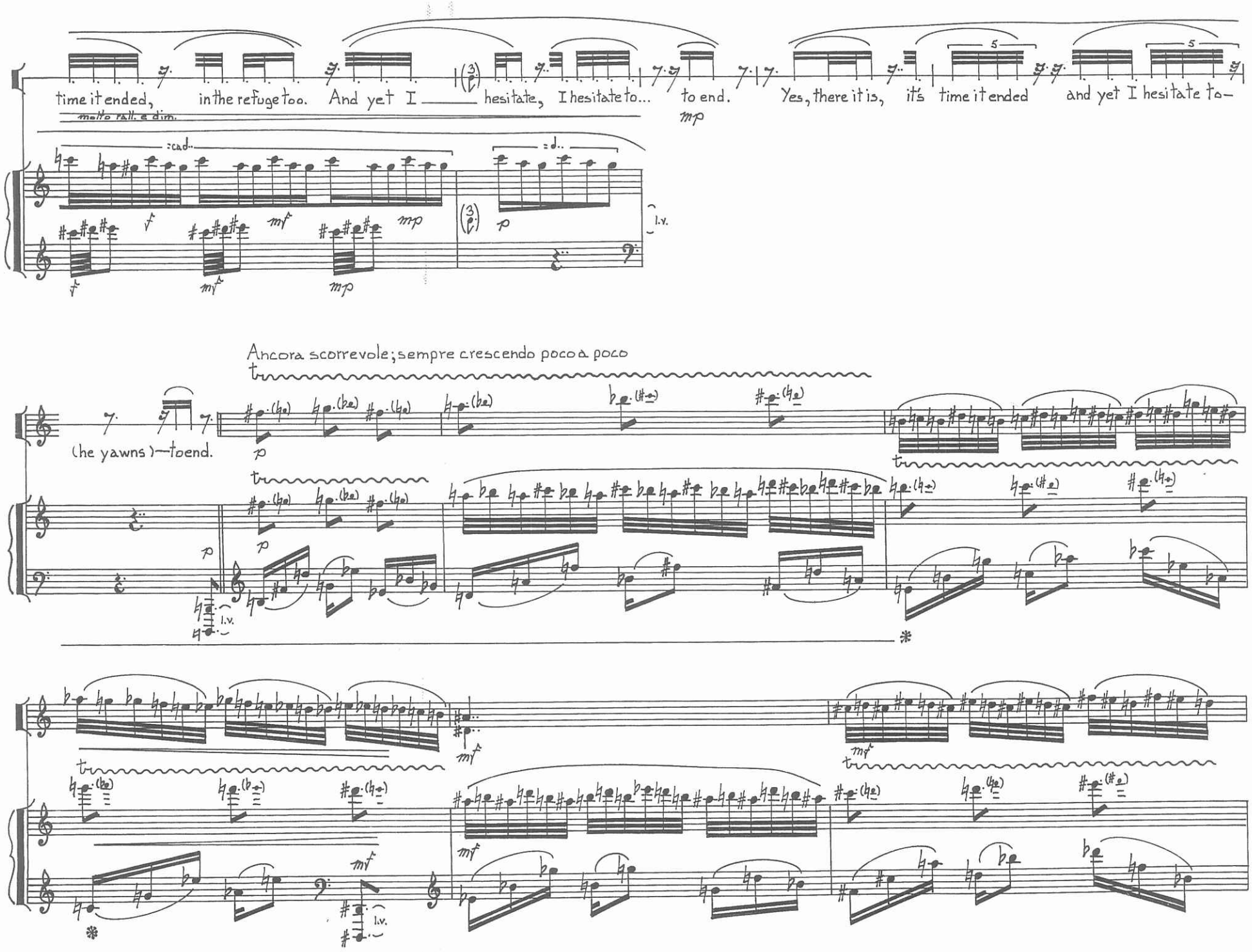
(He holds the handkerchief spread out before him.)

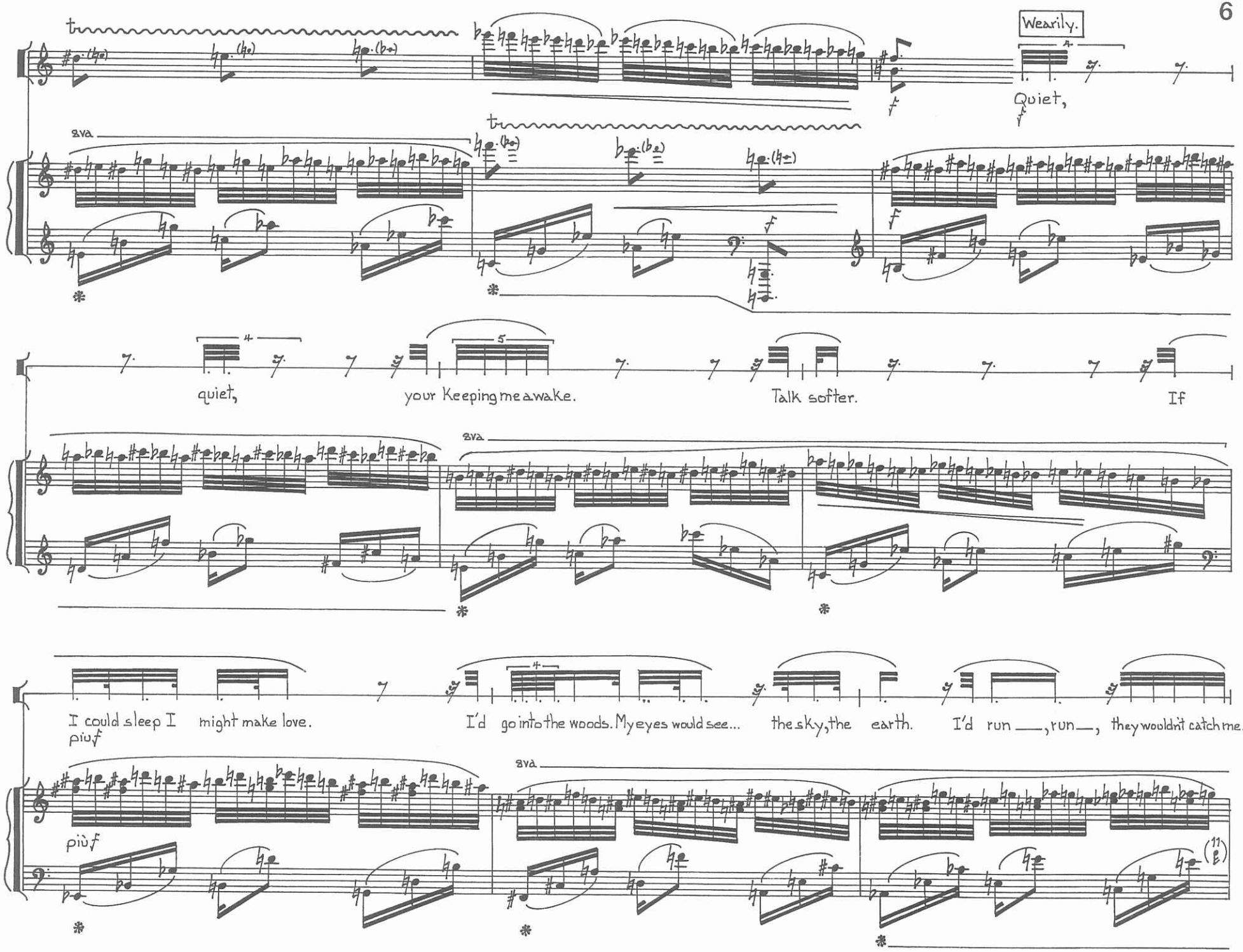
(He takes off his glasses, wipes his eyes, his face, the glasses, puts them on again, folds the handkerchief and puts it neatly in the breast-pocket of his dressing-gown.)

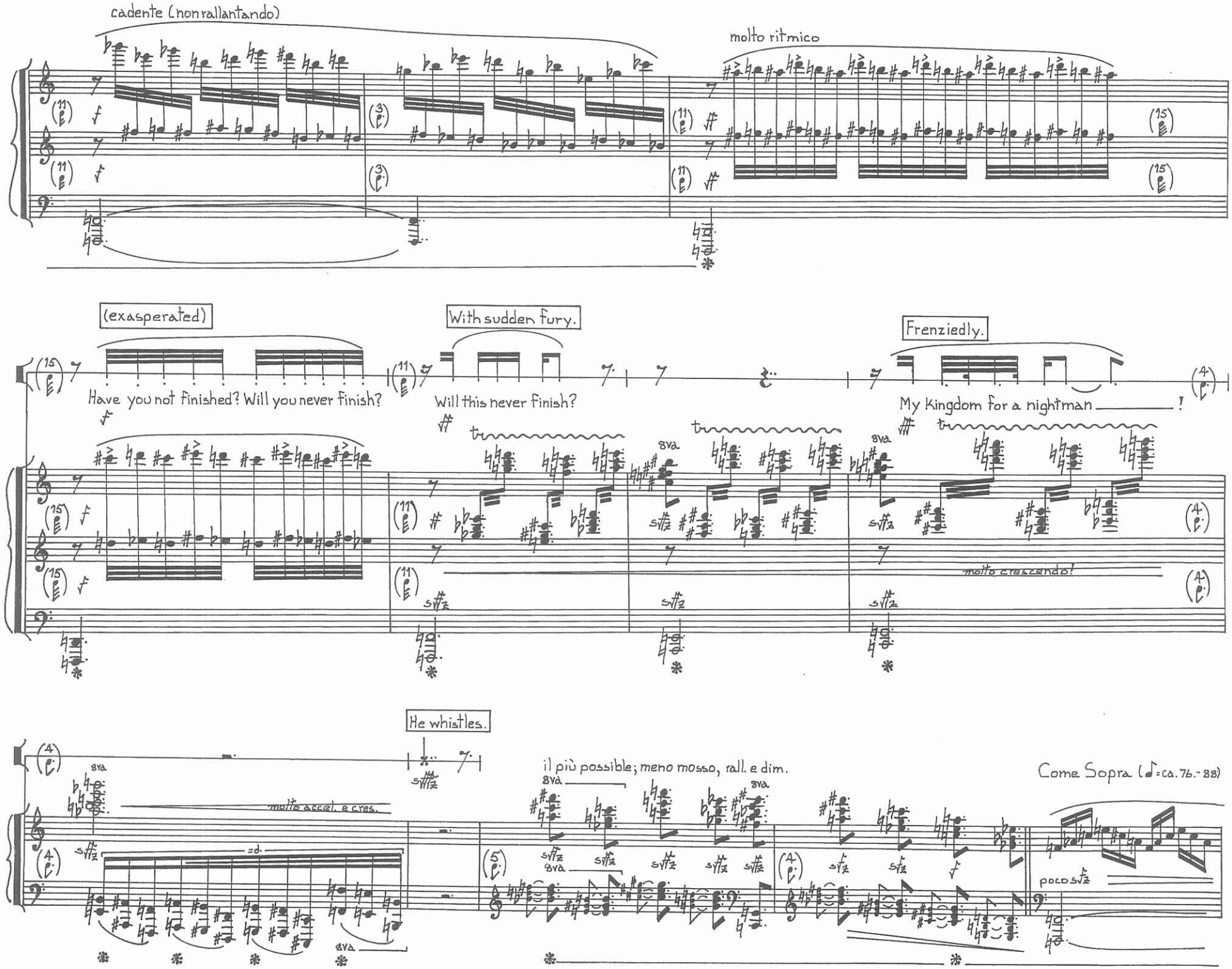


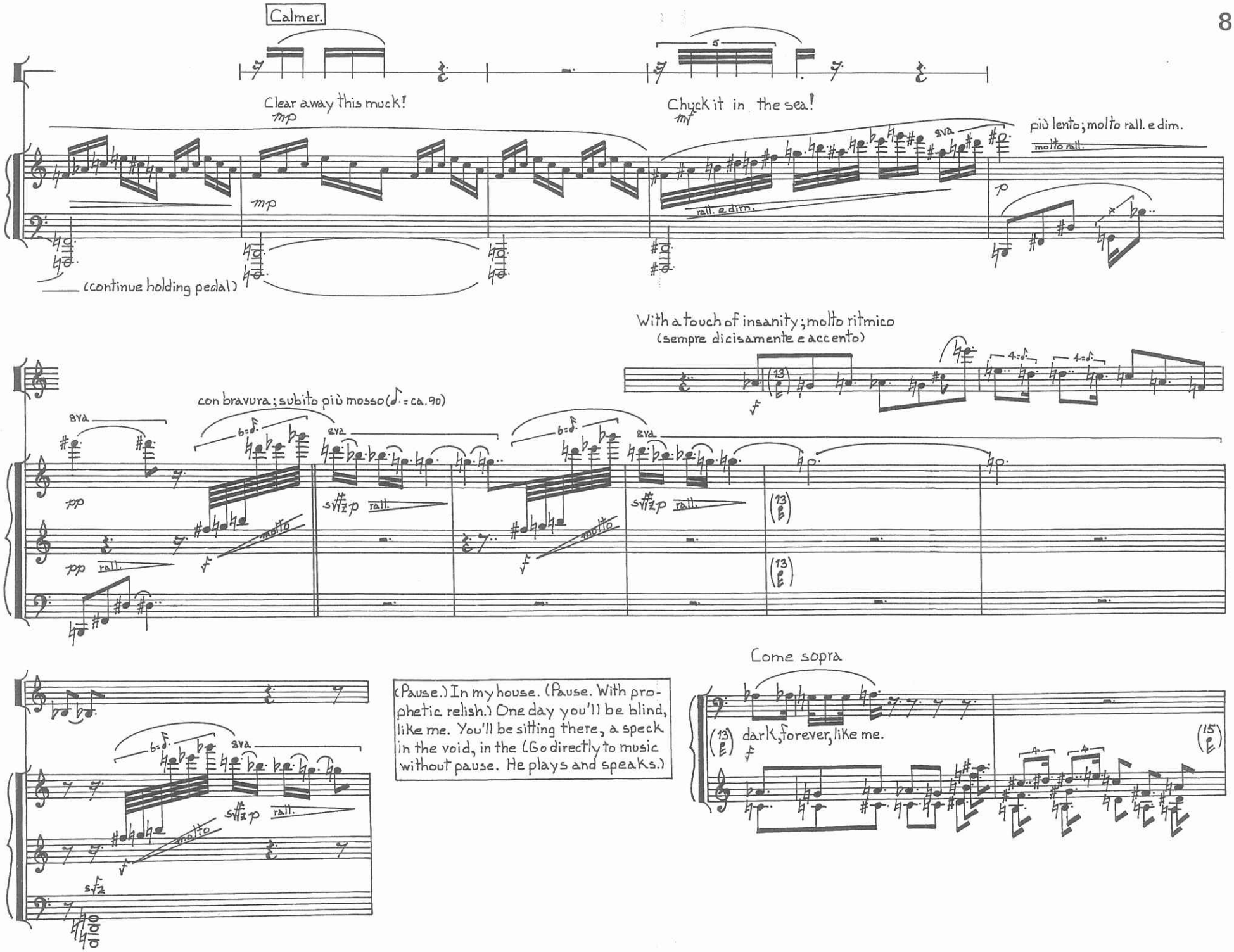

... dog?
Oh I am willing to believe they suffer as much as such creatures can suffer. But does that mean their suffering equals mine?
No
ava.
poco rall.
(proudly)
(sprechstimme)
Pause. Gloomily.
He plays violin.
Scorrevole; presto
(subito più mosso)
(he yawns)
doubt. No, all is an ab- -solute, the bigger a man is the fuller he is. And the emptier.
rall.
l.v.

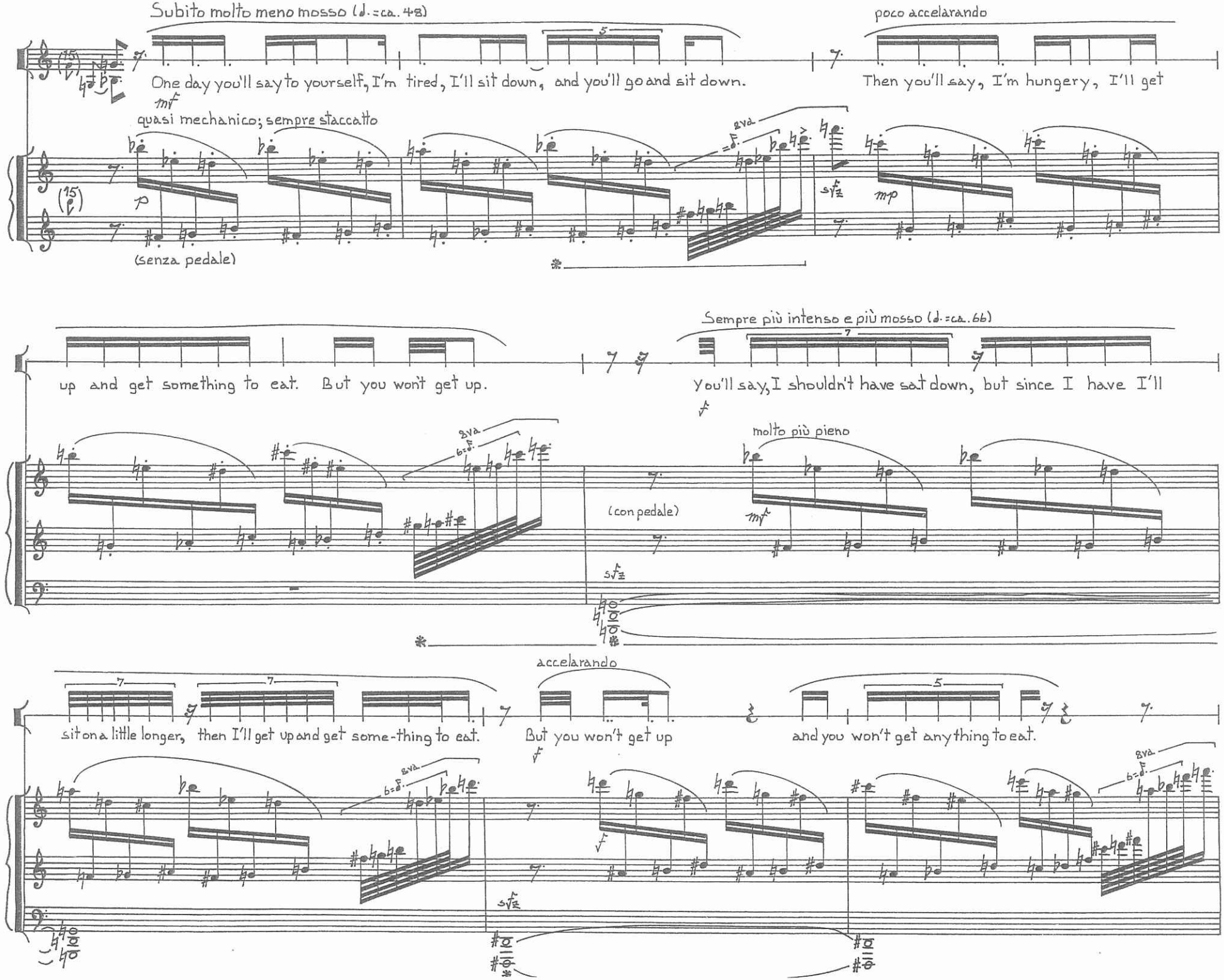

He sniffs.
(He sniffs.)
Clov
!
Animated.
No—,
a-
crescendo poco a poco
mf
accelarando e crescendo
lone.
What dreams!
Those forests!
Loudly.
E-
nough, ...
rallantando e diminuendo (senza misura)
it's
sempre ava ....
molto
sempre ava
sfz
sfz
* (sempre)


time it ended, in the refuge too. And yet I ____ hesitate, I hesitate to... to end.
molto rall. e dim.
mp
Yes, there it is, it's time it ended and yet I hesitate to—
cad.
l.v.
Ancora scorrevole; sempre crescendo poco a poco
(he yawns)—to end.
l.v.
l.v.


Wearily.
Quiet,
quiet,
your Keeping me awake.
Talk softer.
If
I could sleep I might make love.
I'd go into the woods. My eyes would see...
the sky, the earth.
I'd run ___, run___, they wouldn't catch me.
più f
più f
8va


cadente (non rallantando)
molto ritmico
(exasperated)
Have you not finished? Will you never finish?
With sudden fury.
Will this never Finish?
Frenziedly.
My kingdom for a nightman _____ !
molto crescendo!
He whistles.
molto accel. e cres.
il più possibile; meno mosso, rall. e dim.
Come Sopra (♩.=ca. 76.-88)
poco s


Calmer.
Clear away this muck!
Chuck it in the sea!
più lento; molto rall. e dim.
molto rall.
rall. e dim.
(continue holding pedal)
With a touch of insanity; molto ritmico
(sempre dicisamente e accento)
con bravura; subito più mosso (♩. = ca. 90)
rall.
molto
(Pause.) In my house. (Pause. With prophetic relish.) One day you'll be blind, like me. You'll be sitting there, a speck in the void, in the (Go directly to music without pause. He plays and speaks.)
Come sopra
dark, forever, like me.


Subito molto meno mosso (♩.=ca. 48)
poco accelarando
One day you'll say to yourself, I'm tired, I'll sit down, and you'll go and sit down.
Then you'll say, I'm hungery, I'll get
mf
quasi mechanico; sempre staccatto
8va
p
mp
(senza pedale)
Sempre più intenso e più mosso (♩.=ca. 66)
up and get something to eat. But you won't get up.
You'll say, I shouldn't have sat down, but since I have I'll
molto più pieno
(con pedale)
accelarando
sit on a little longer, then I'll get up and get some-thing to eat.
But you won't get up
and you won't get anything to eat.

He sings and plays.

ancora più intensità e mosso (♩.=ca.96)

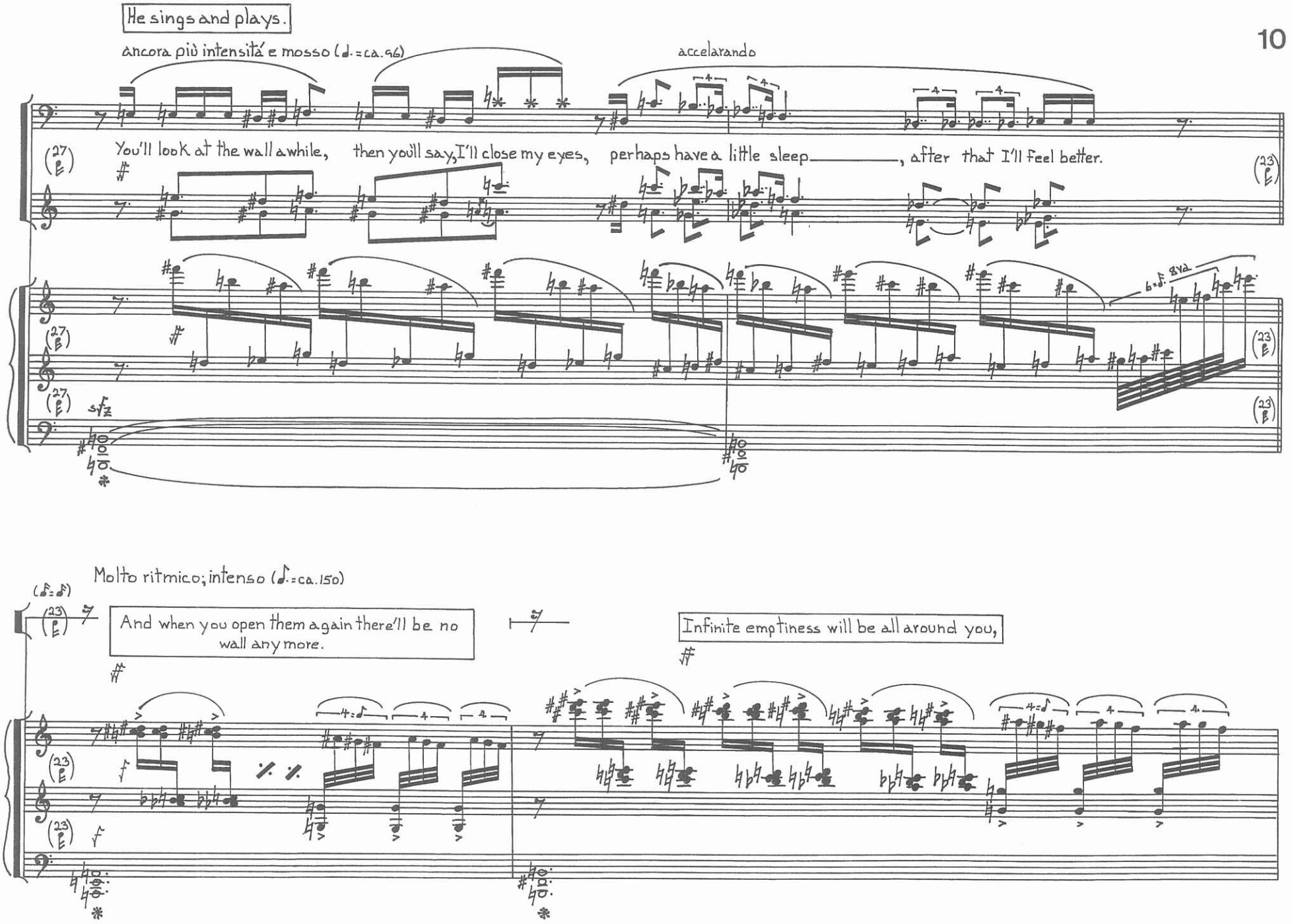
accelarando

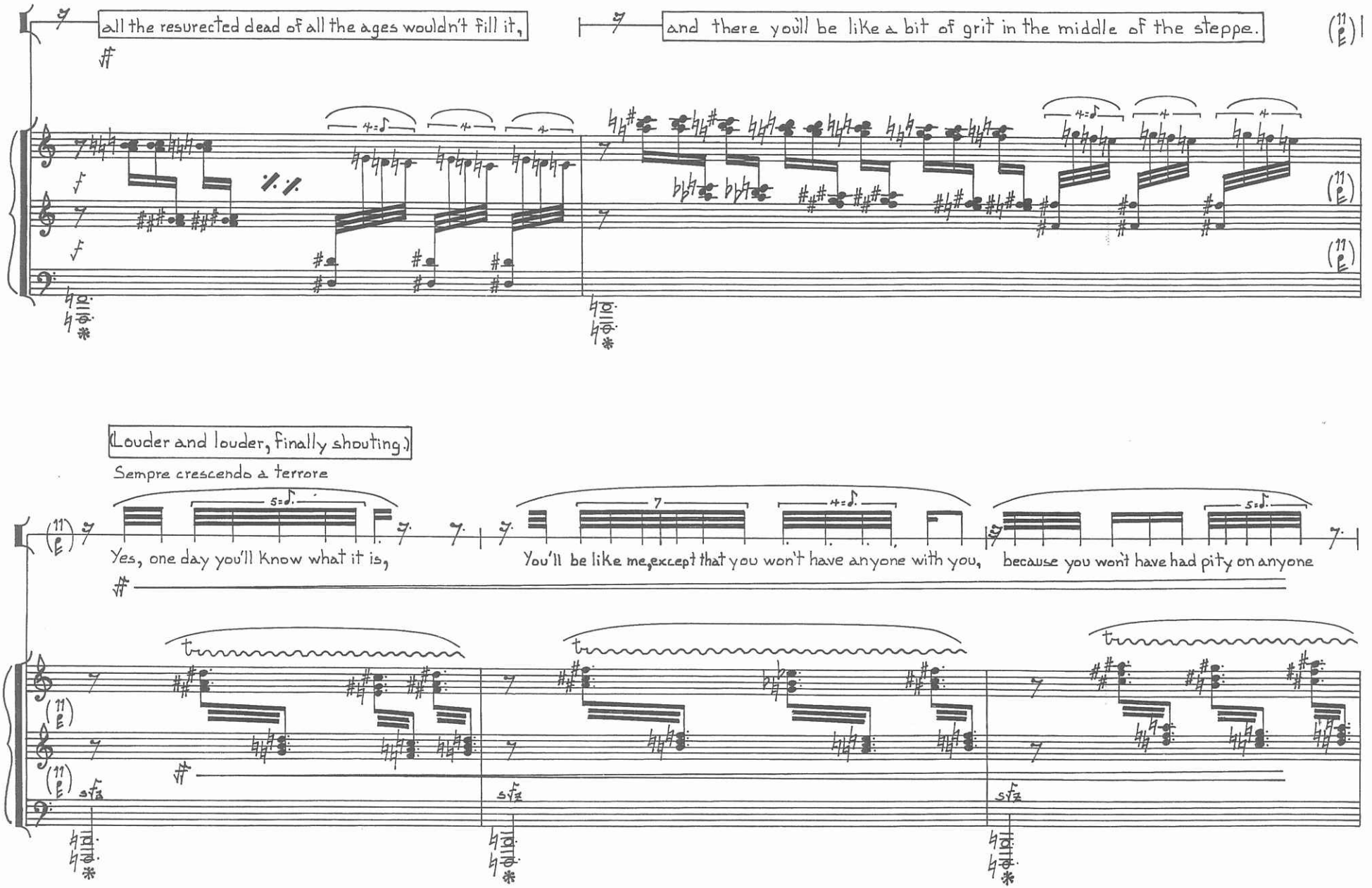
You'll look at the wall a while, then you'll say, I'll close my eyes, perhaps have a little sleep———, after that I'll feel better.

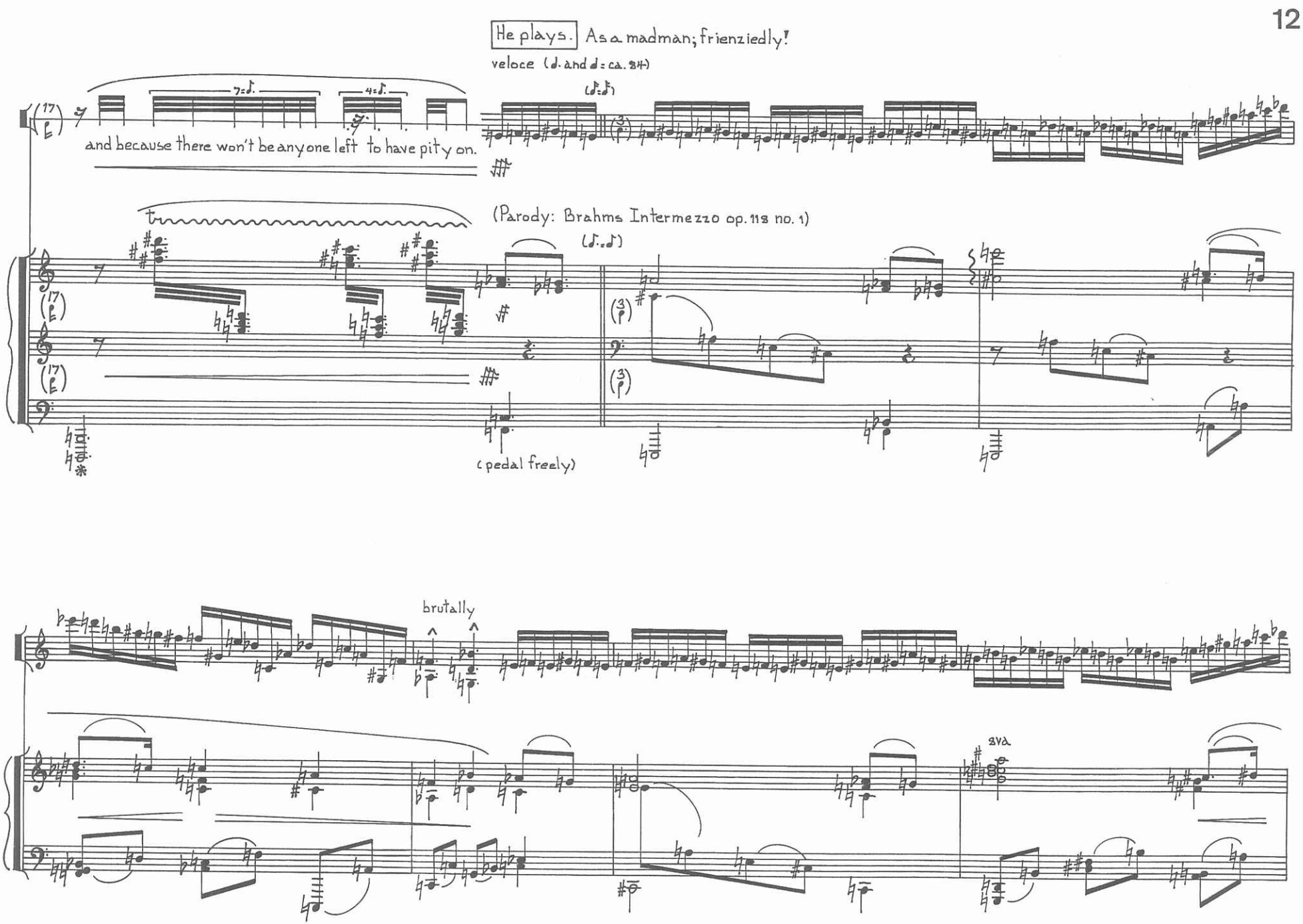
Molto ritmico; intenso (♪.=ca.150)

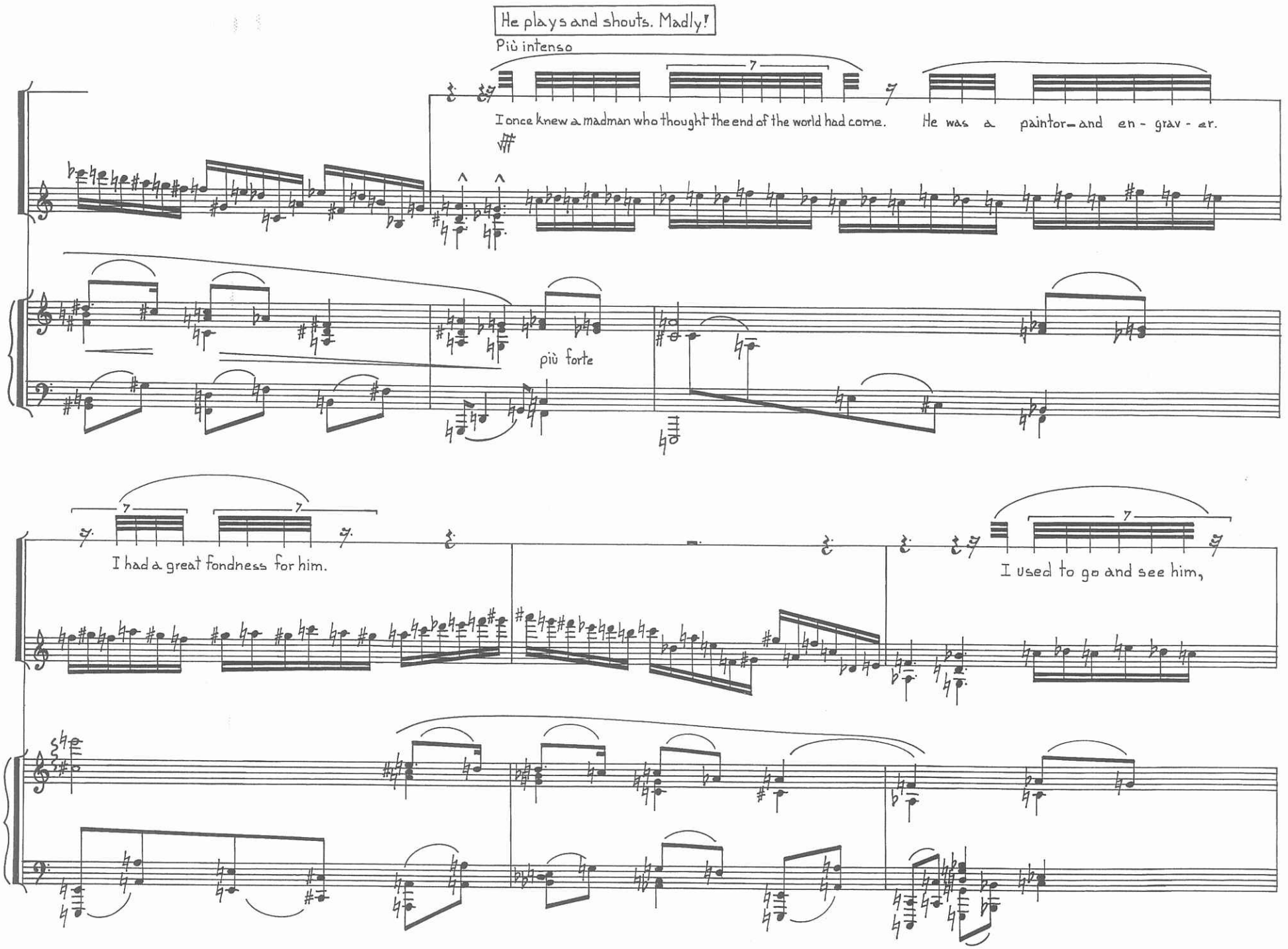
And when you open them again there'll be no wall any more.

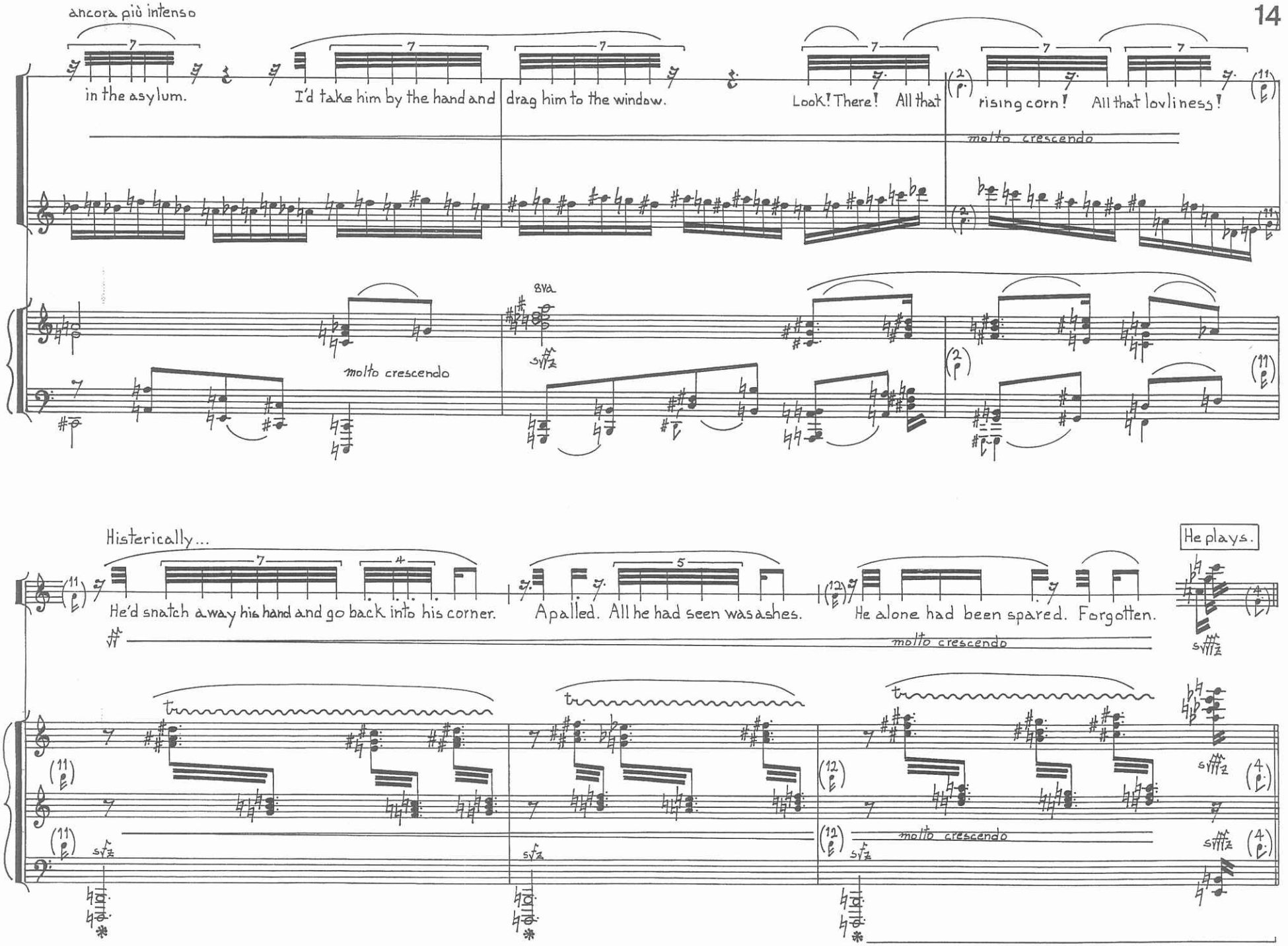
Infinite emptiness will be all around you,

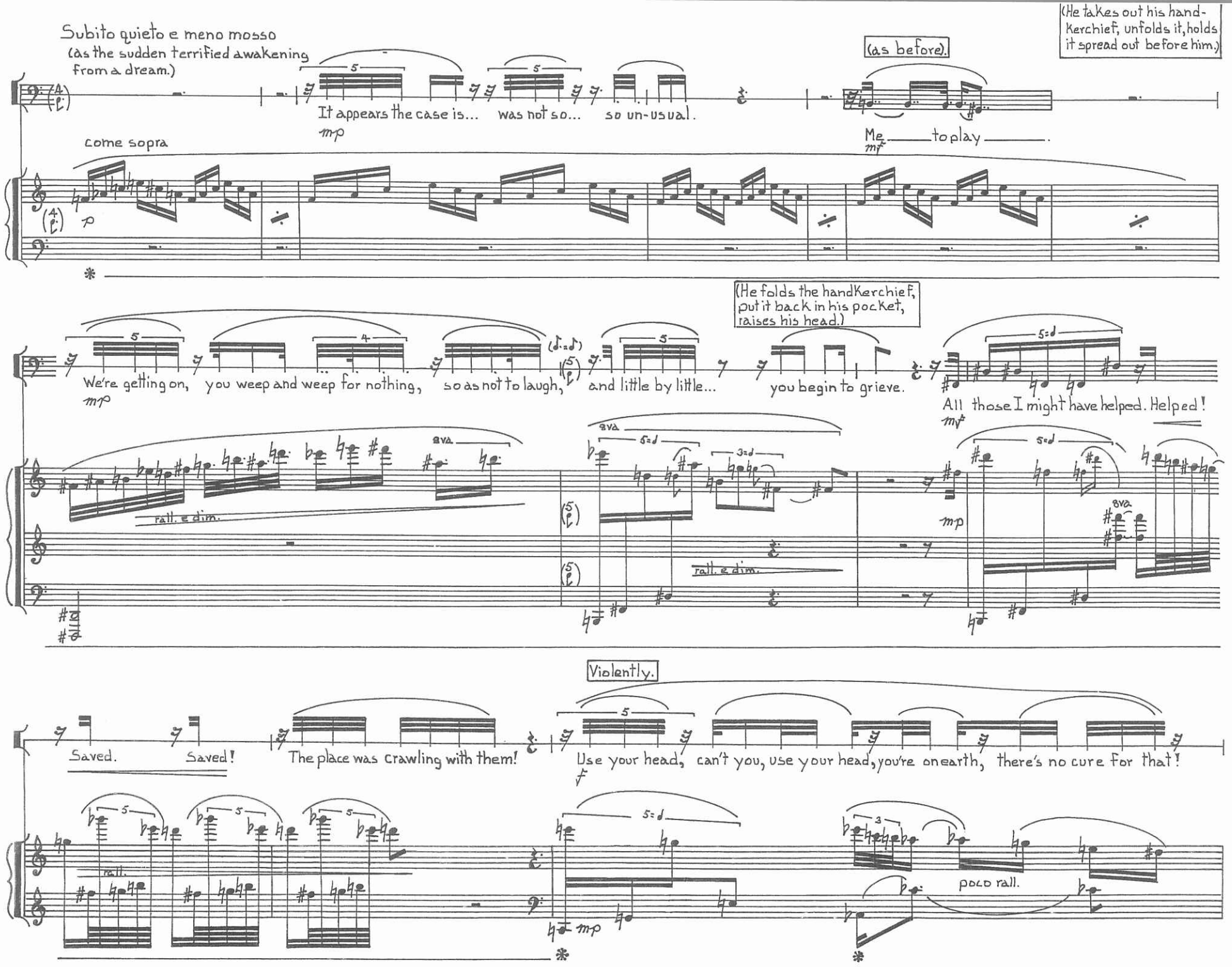



all the resurected dead of all the ages wouldn't fill it,
and there you'll be like a bit of grit in the middle of the steppe.
(Louder and louder, finally shouting.)
Sempre crescendo a terrore
Yes, one day you'll know what it is,
You'll be like me, except that you won't have anyone with you,
because you won't have had pity on anyone


He plays. As a madman; frienziedly!
veloce (♩. and ♩ = ca. 84)
and because there won't be anyone left to have pity on.
(Parody: Brahms Intermezzo op. 118 no. 1)
(pedal freely)
brutally
8va


He plays and shouts. Madly!
Più intenso
I once knew a madman who thought the end of the world had come. He was a paintor – and en - grav - er.
più forte
I had a great fondness for him.
I used to go and see him,


ancora più intenso
in the asylum.
I'd take him by the hand and
drag him to the window.
Look! There! All that
rising corn! All that lovliness!
molto crescendo
molto crescendo
8va
Histerically...
He'd snatch away his hand and go back into his corner.
Apalled. All he had seen was ashes.
He alone had been spared. Forgotten.
He plays.
molto crescendo
molto crescendo


Subito quieto e meno mosso
(as the sudden terrified awakening from a dream.)
(as before).
(He takes out his handkerchief, unfolds it, holds it spread out before him.)
It appears the case is... was not so... so un-usual.
mp
Me to play.
mf
come sopra
p
(He folds the handkerchief, put it back in his pocket, raises his head.)
We're getting on, you weep and weep for nothing, so as not to laugh, and little by little... you begin to grieve.
mp
All those I might have helped. Helped!
mf
8va
rall. e dim.
mp
Violently.
Saved. Saved! The place was crawling with them!
Use your head, can't you, use your head, you're on earth, there's no cure for that!
f
rall.
mp
poco rall.

Calmer.

Get out of here and love one another!

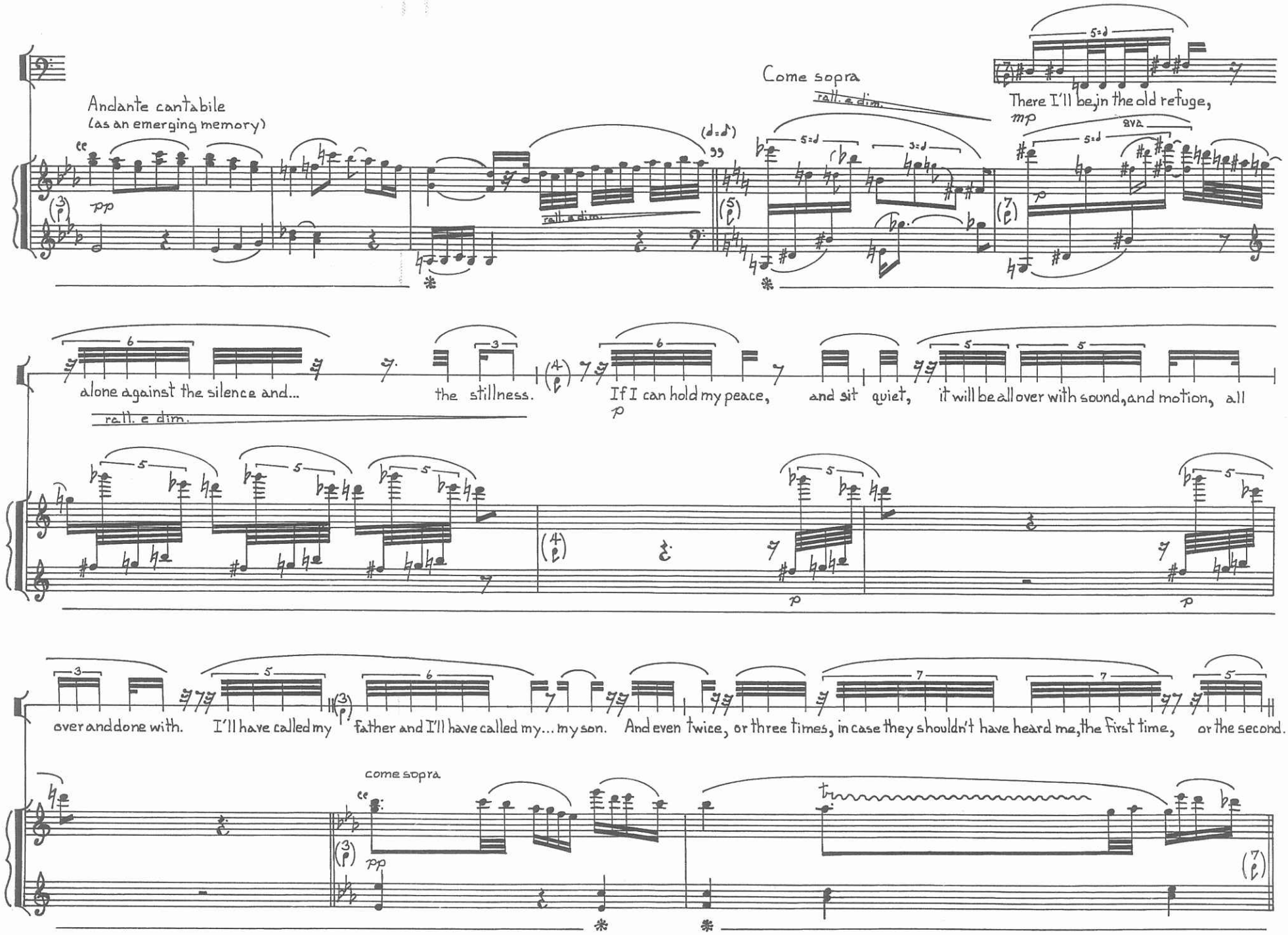
Lick your neighbor as yourself! (Pause. Calmer.) When it wasn't bread they wanted it was crumpets. (Pause. Violently.) Out of my sight and back to your petting parties! (Pause.)

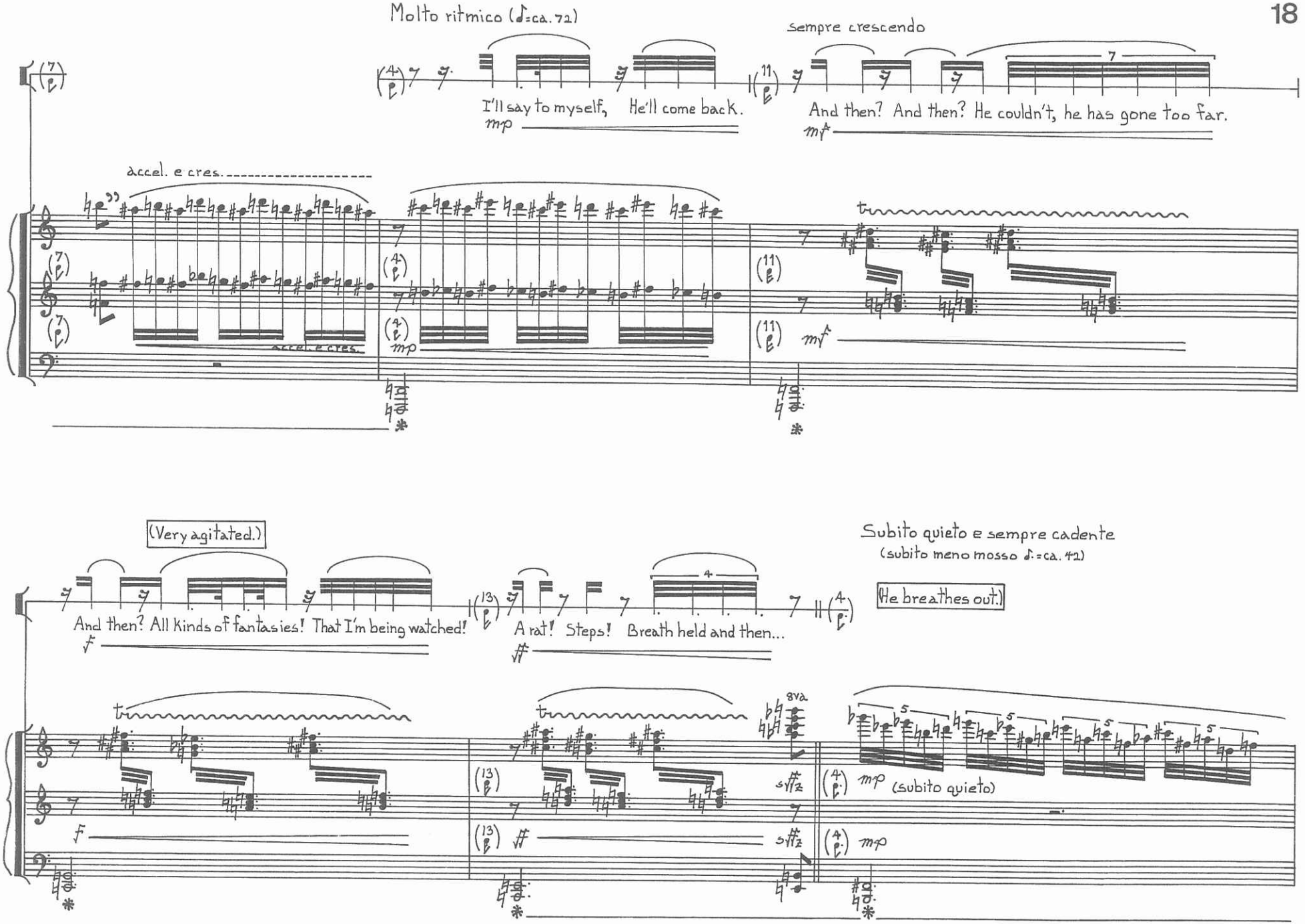
The end is in the beginning and yet you go on. Per-

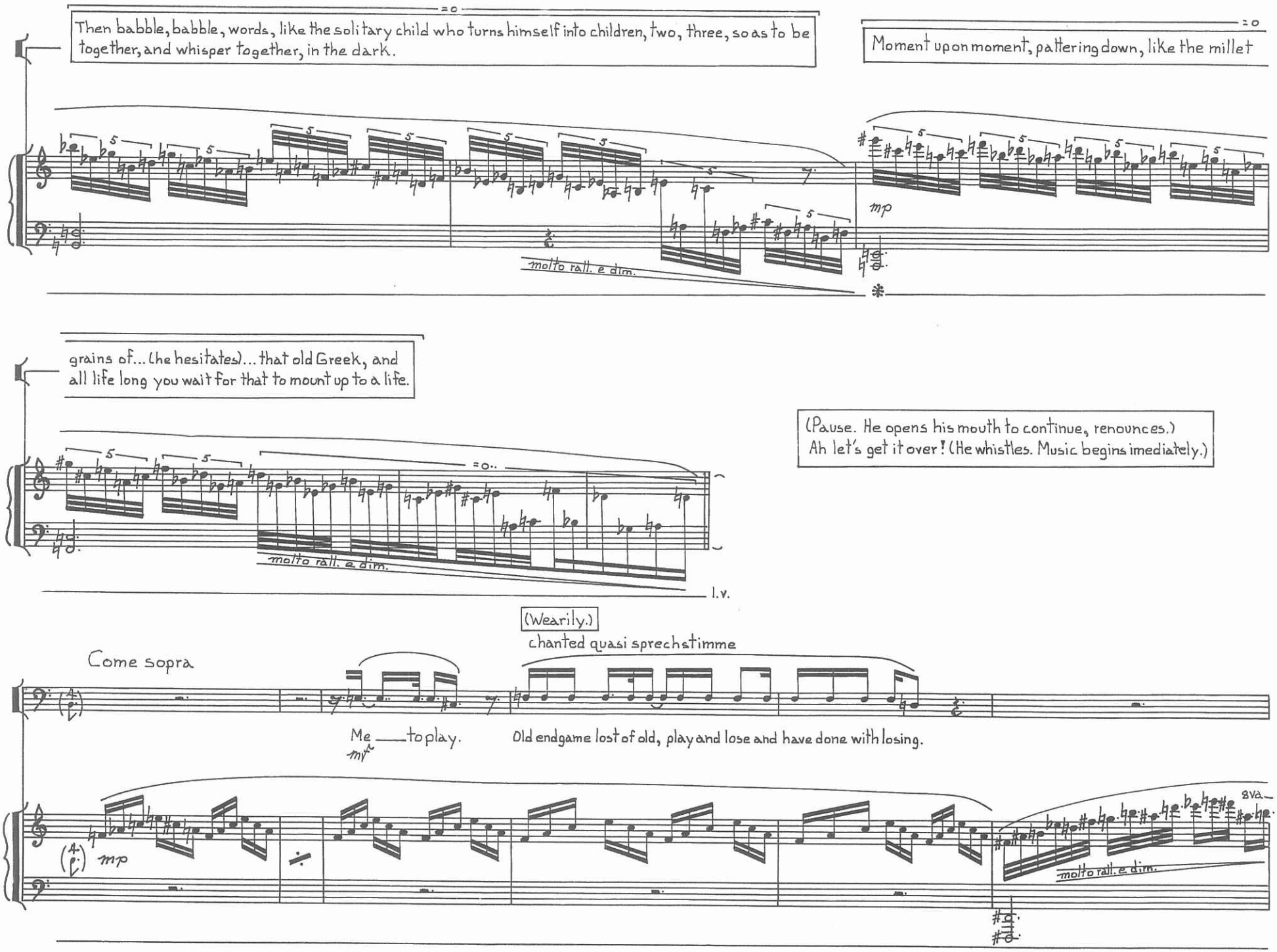
(He pushes himself painfully off his seat, falls back again.)

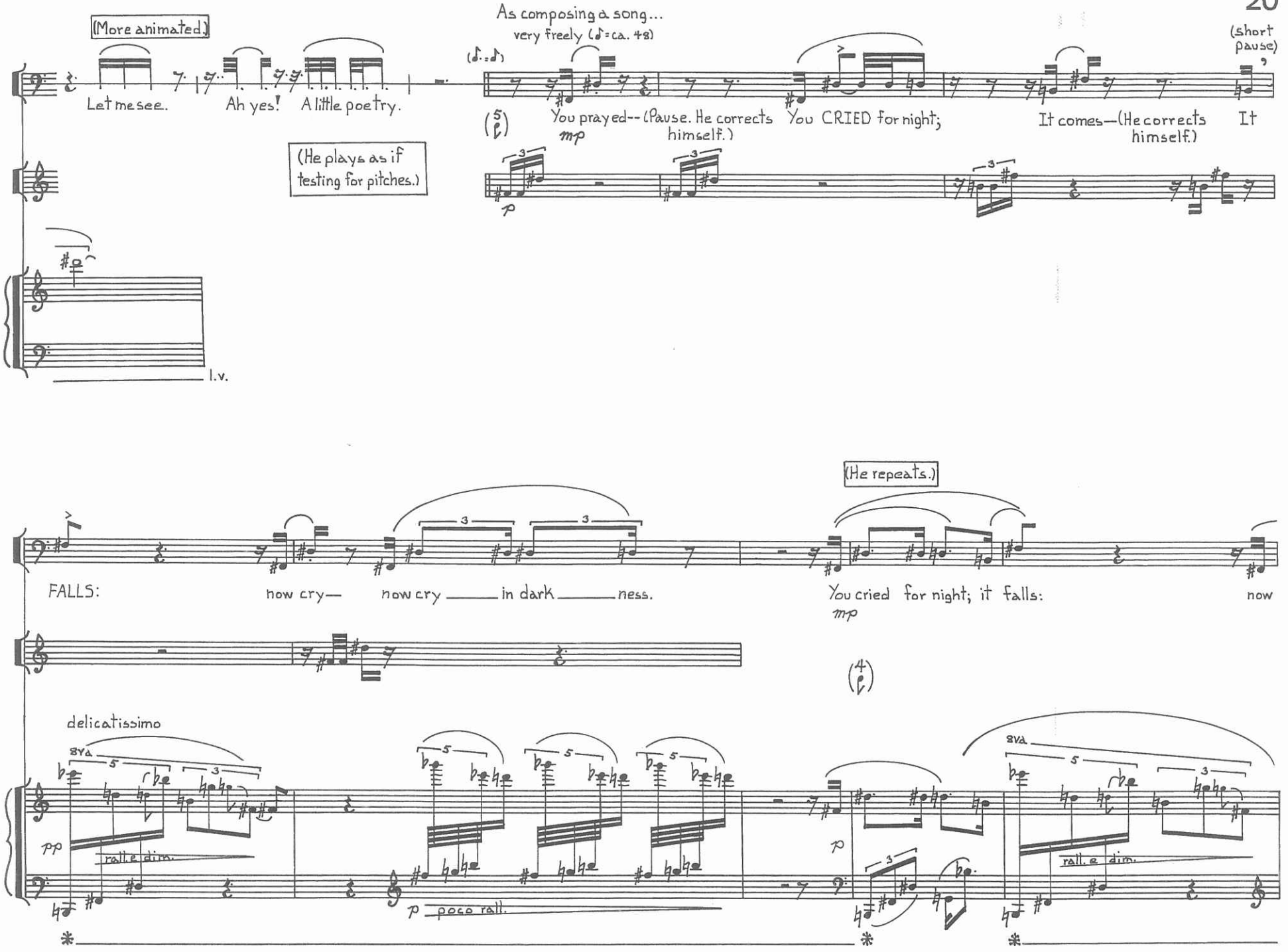
haps I could go on with my story, end it and begin another. Per-haps I could throw myself out on the floor. Dig my nails into the cracks and drag myself foward with my fingers.

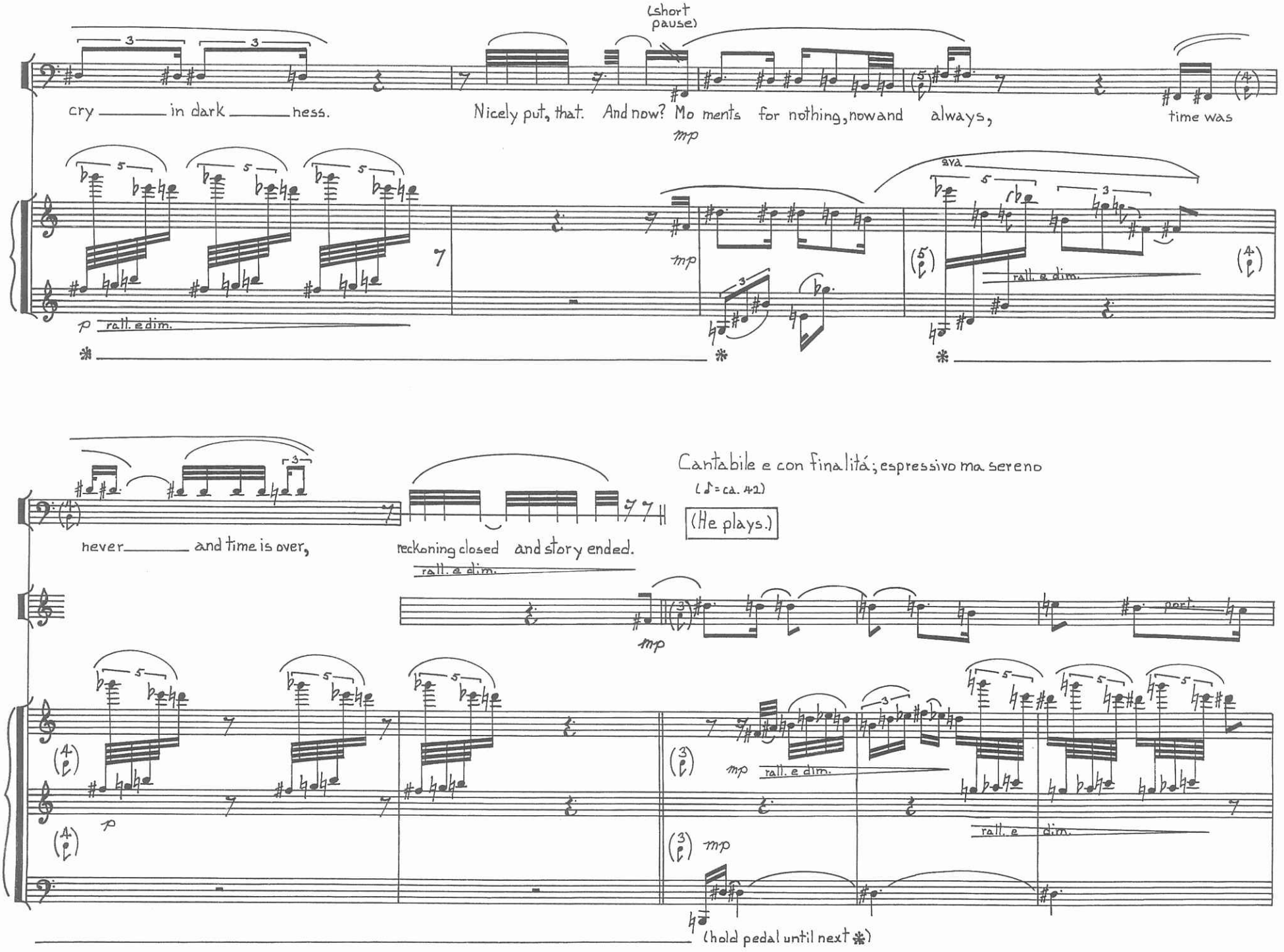
It will be the end and there I'll be—, wondering what can have brought it on and what can have... (he hesitates) ... why it was so long in coming.


Andante cantabile
(as an emerging memory)
pp
rall. e dim.
Come sopra
There I'll begin the old refuge,
mp
alone against the silence and...
the stillness.
If I can hold my peace,
p
and sit quiet,
it will be all over with sound, and motion, all
over and done with.
I'll have called my
father and I'll have called my... my son.
And even twice, or three times, in case they shouldn't have heard me, the first time,
or the second.
come sopra
pp

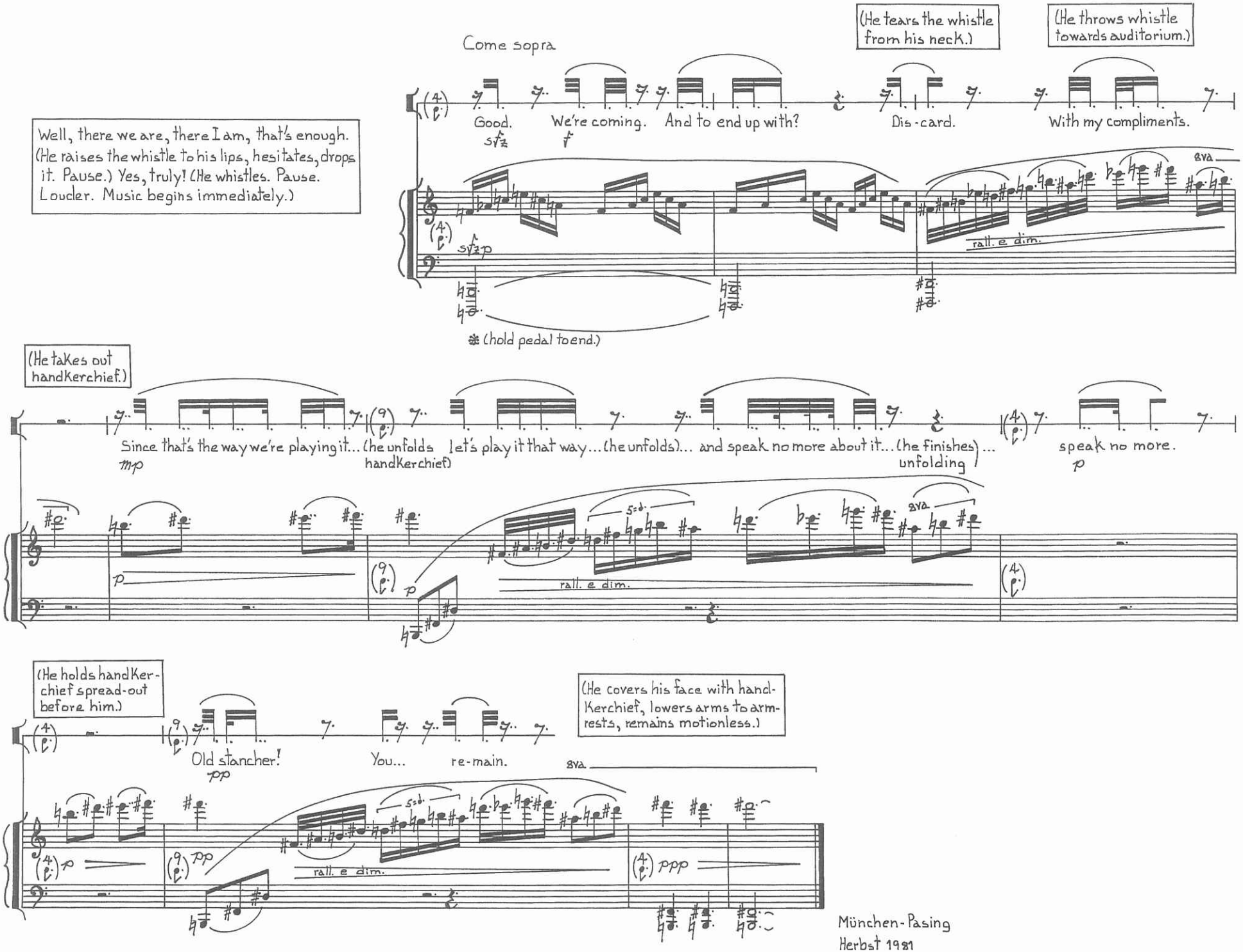

Molto ritmico (♪=ca. 72)
Sempre crescendo
I'll say to myself, He'll come back.
mp
And then? And then? He couldn't, he has gone too far.
mf
accel. e cres.
accel. e cres.
mp
mf
(Very agitated.)
Subito quieto e sempre cadente
(subito meno mosso ♪.=ca. 42)
(He breathes out.)
And then? All kinds of fantasies! That I'm being watched!
f
A rat! Steps! Breath held and then...
8va.
mp (subito quieto)
mp


Then babble, babble, words, like the solitary child who turns himself into children, two, three, so as to be together, and whisper together, in the dark.
Moment upon moment, pattering down, like the millet
mp
molto rall. e dim.
grains of... (he hesitates)... that old Greek, and all life long you wait for that to mount up to a life.
(Pause. He opens his mouth to continue, renounces.) Ah let's get it over! (He whistles. Music begins imediately.)
molto rall. e dim.
l.v.
(Wearily.)
chanted quasi sprechstimme
Come sopra
Me ___ to play.
mp
Old endgame lost of old, play and lose and have done with losing.
8va
molto rall. e dim.


(More animated.)
Let me see.
Ah yes!
A little poetry.
(He plays as if testing for pitches.)
l.v.
As composing a song...
very freely (♪ = ca. 48)
You prayed--
(Pause. He corrects himself.)
You CRIED for night;
It comes—(He corrects himself.)
It
(short pause)
mp
p
(He repeats.)
FALLS:
now cry—
now cry ___ in dark ___ ness.
You cried for night; it falls:
now
mp
delicatissimo
8va
pp
rall. e dim.
p poco rall.
p
8va
rall. e dim.


(short pause)
cry ___ in dark ___ ness.
Nicely put, that. And now? Mo ments for nothing, nowand always,
time was
mp
8va
p rall. e dim.
rall. e dim.
never ___ and time is over,
reckoning closed and story ended.
rall. e dim.
Cantabile e con finalitá; espressivo ma sereno
(♪ = ca. 42)
(He plays.)
port.
mp
p
mp rall. e dim.
rall. e dim.
mp
(hold pedal until next ✻)

port.
rall. e dim.
8va
a niente
più lento
molto lento (♩=ca.27)


Come sopra
(He tears the whistle from his neck.)
(He throws whistle towards auditorium.)
Well, there we are, there I am, that's enough. (He raises the whistle to his lips, hesitates, drops it. Pause.) Yes, truly! (He whistles. Pause. Louder. Music begins immediately.)
Good.
We're coming.
And to end up with?
Dis-card.
With my compliments.
8va
rall. e dim.
* (hold pedal to end.)
(He takes out handkerchief.)
Since that's the way we're playing it... (he unfolds handkerchief)
let's play it that way... (he unfolds)... and speak no more about it... (he finishes unfolding)...
speak no more.
5:4
(He holds handkerchief spread-out before him.)
(He covers his face with handkerchief, lowers arms to armrests, remains motionless.)
Old stancher!
You...
re-main.
ppp
München-Pasing
Herbst 1981