Deniz Aslan

Angelus Novus

for Soprano, Piano, Violin, Viola, and Double Bass

written for
Peyee Chen, Eliane Tokeshi, Reese Chen, Andrés Hernández, and Jeanne Hourez

2024

INSTRUMENTATION

Soprano

Piano

Violin
Viola
Double Bass

TEXT

The text is a fragmentation and re-construction of Walter Benjamin's famous paragraph on Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*:

A Klee painting named Angelus Novus shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History", Illuminations, trans. Harry Zohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1969: 249.

Duration: ca. 9'

PERFORMANCE NOTES

General

All trills and tremolos are to be played as fast as possible and non-measured.

Accidentals apply to the whole measure but occasionally some are indicated for convenience.

Always senza vibrato unless otherwise indicated.

Short fermata, needs to be taken as a very brief momentary pause, not more than a couple of seconds.

 Normal to long fermata, around 3-6 seconds of pause, depending on the passage. The exact duration is left to the performers.

Soprano

Explosive, sporadic, and unpredictable voice. Used with broken-apart words to emphasize the consonants. Sing as if you have a knot in your throat and only some parts of words come out. The only words used in the regarding part are “his”, “eyes”, “mouth”, and “face”.

Whisper. Sometimes used to sustain consonants, such as “sss”.

Piano

The player needs access to the closest part of the lower strings inside the piano to perform this piece. They also need a small plastic card, like a credit card.

Vertical gliss. on the string of the given note. Use the plastic card and a moderate speed to achieve a continuous sound. Play as long as indicated, scaling your speed to the length of the note, to make one single gliss.

Dampen the corresponding string with your hand to prevent resonance, therefore any pitch information. Very small resonance is okay.

PERFORMANCE NOTES (cont.)

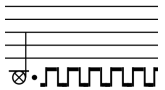
Strings

s.p.	Sul ponticello.
s.t.	Sul tasto.
p.n.	Posizione normale. Always and exclusively used to cancel s.p. or s.t..
ord.	Ordinario.
flaut.	Flautando.

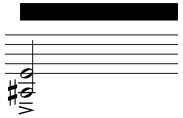
Dampen the string with your left hand to prevent any resonance.

Shorter ricochet. Around 3 bounces.

Longer ricochet. Around 5-6 bounces.



Scrape tone. Very slow bowing with high pressure. A non-continuous sound with very little resonance. If it is indicated with an "x" notehead, damp the string with your left hand so that no pitch is heard. If a normal notehead is used, let it resonate. Mostly used with open string. Always sul tasto unless otherwise indicated.



Scratch tone. Overpressure on the string with fast bowing. Pitch is still resonant but the sound is distorted.

Gradually go from one position to another.

Score

Angelus Novus

for Peyee Chen, Eliane Tokeshi, Reese Chen, Andrés Hernández, and Jeanne Hourez

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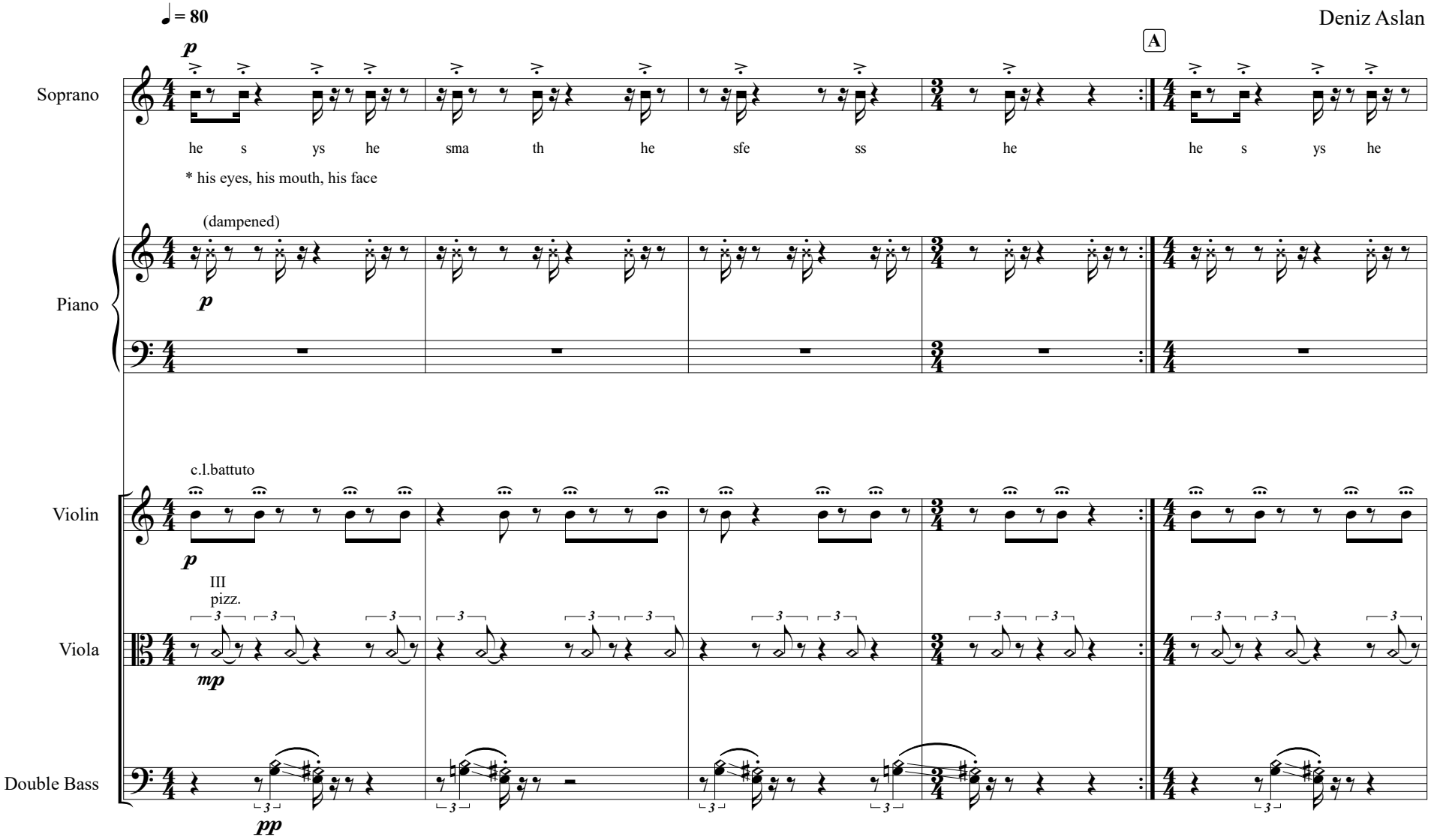
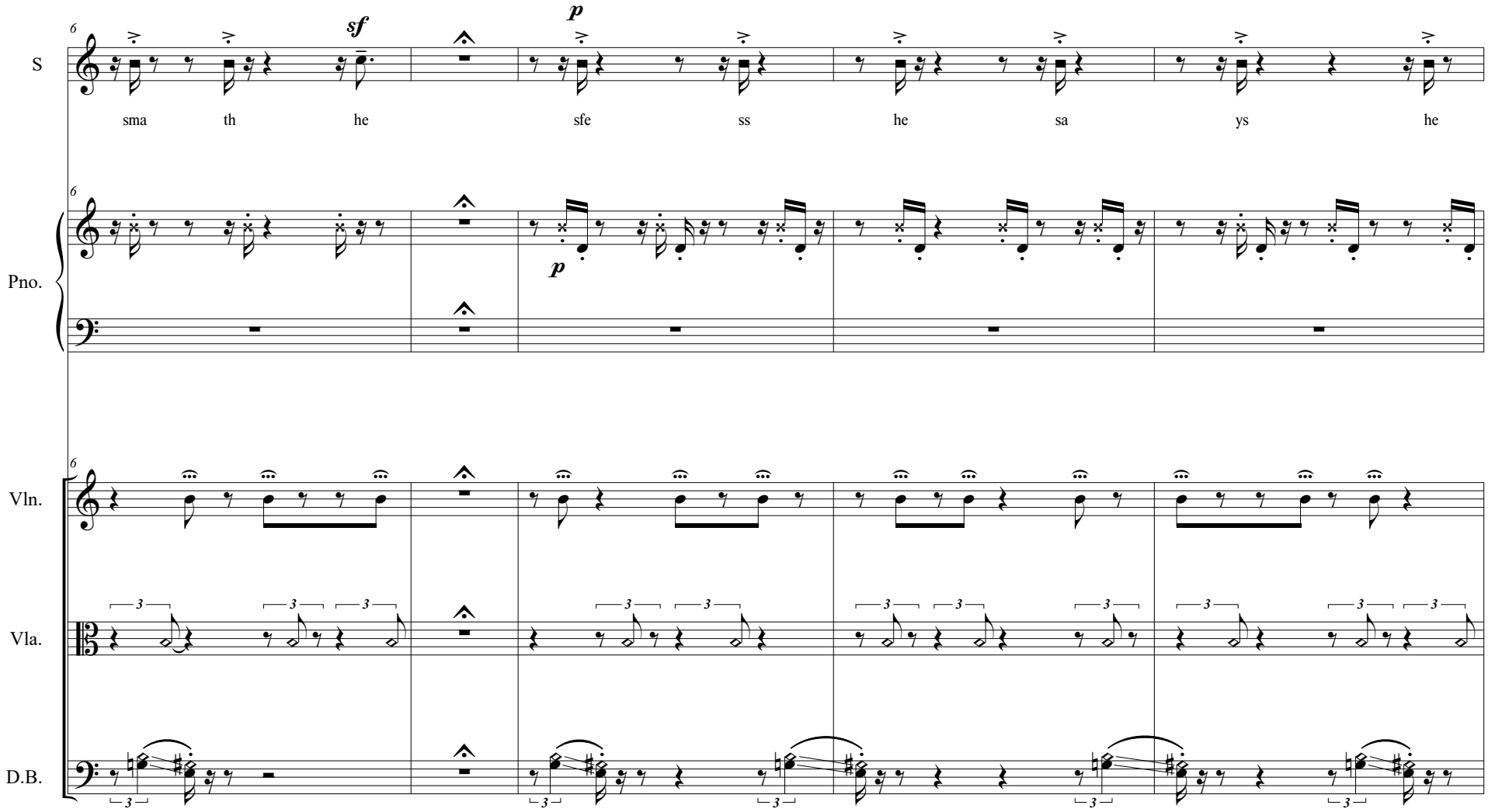
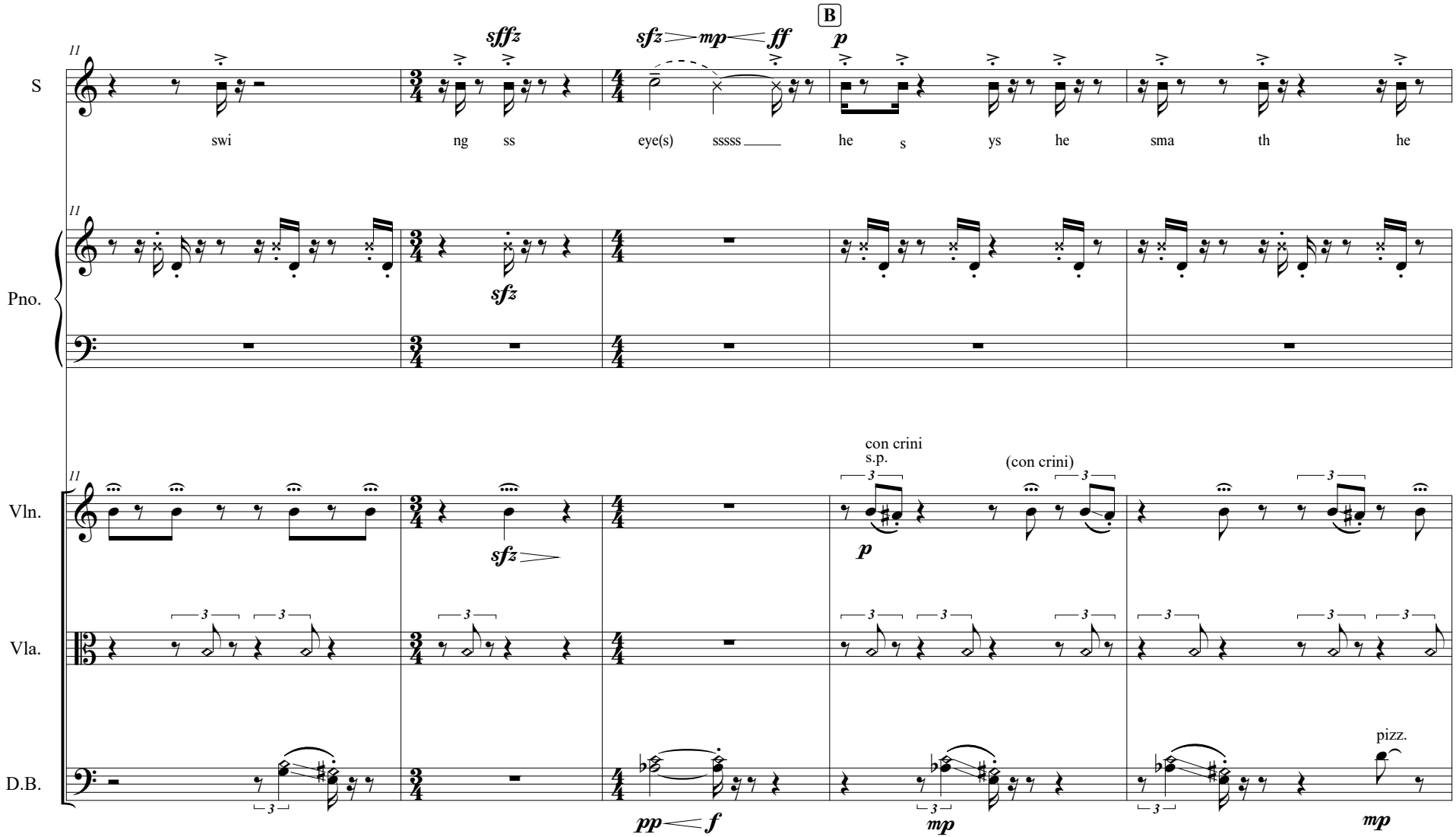
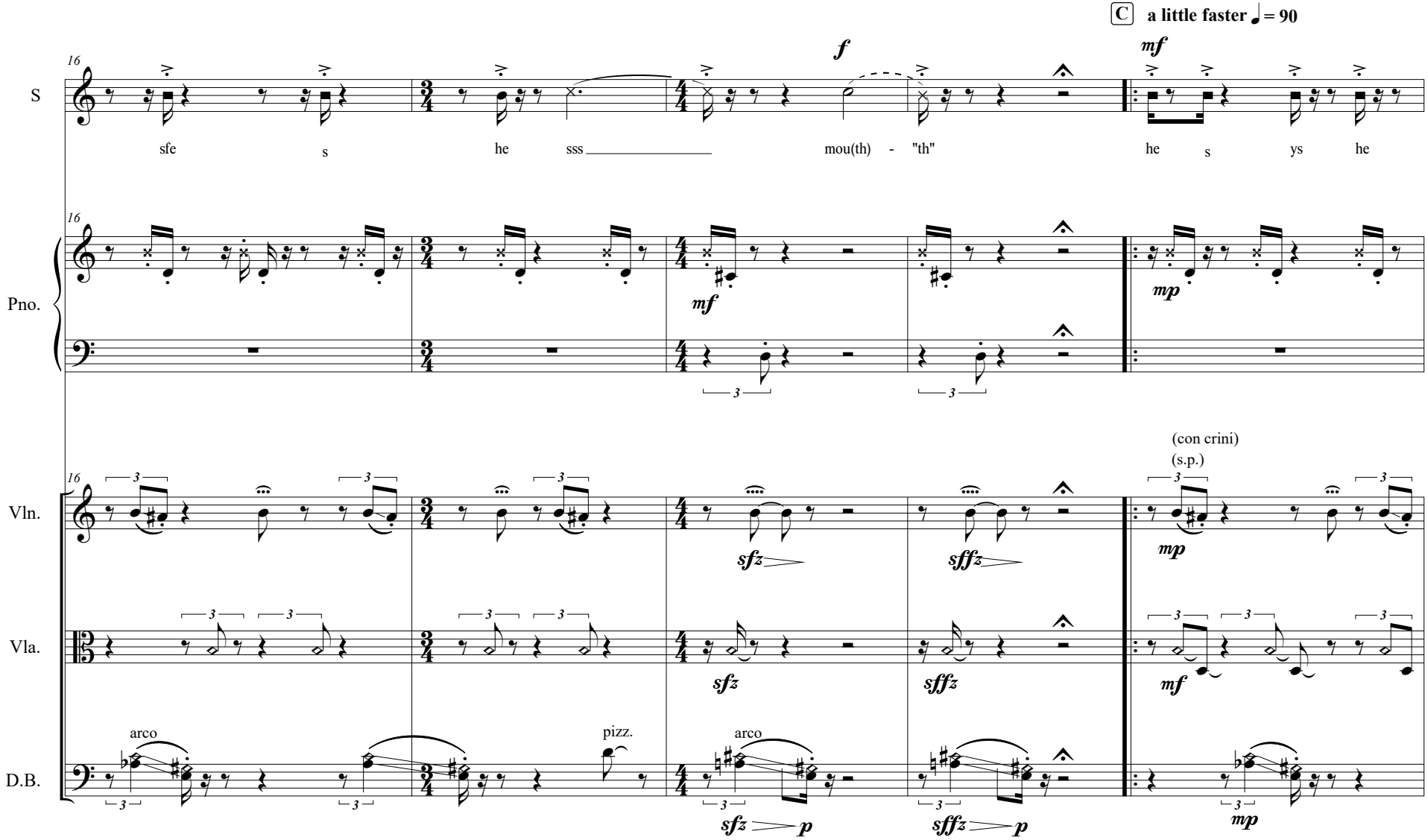
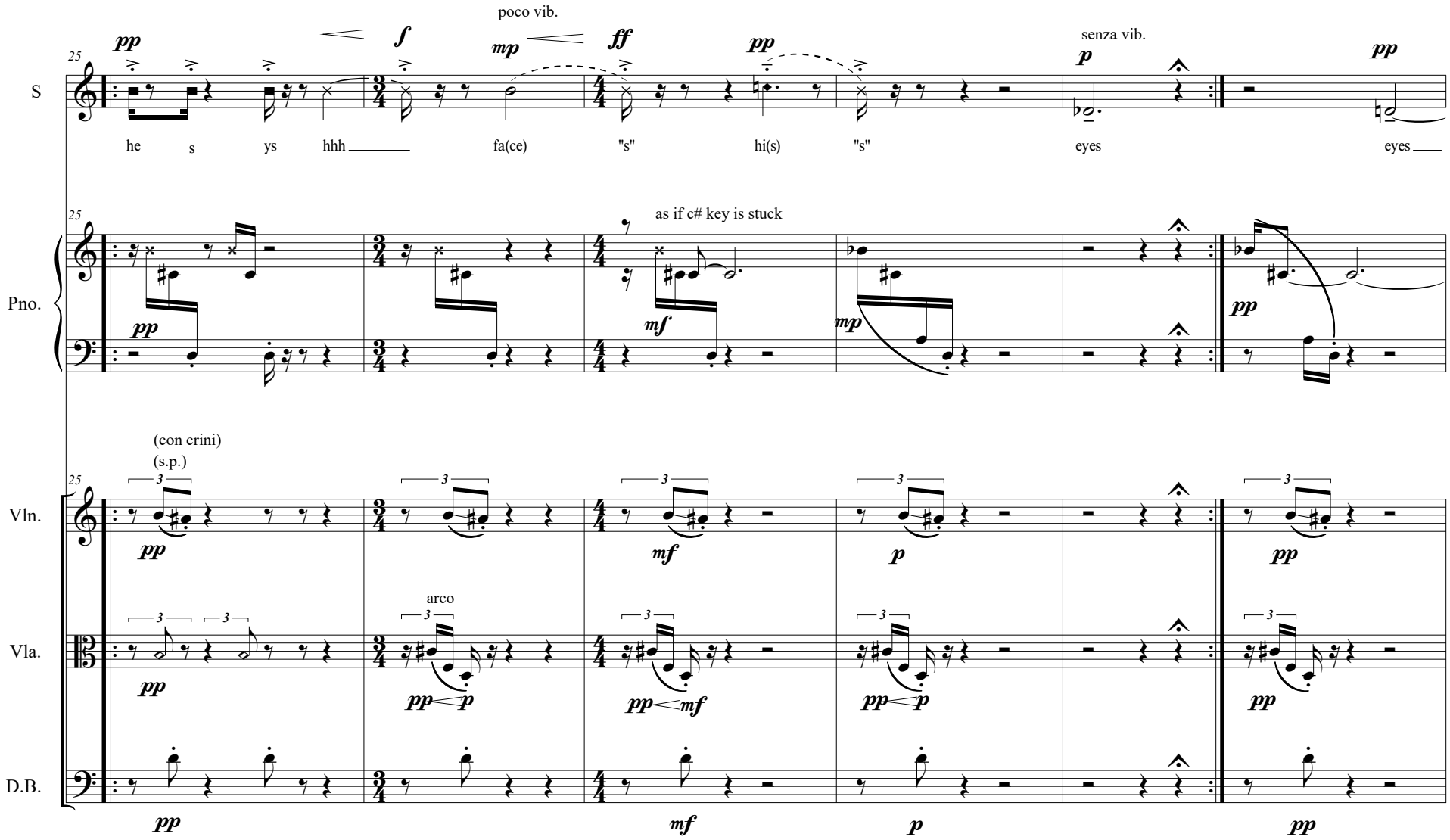


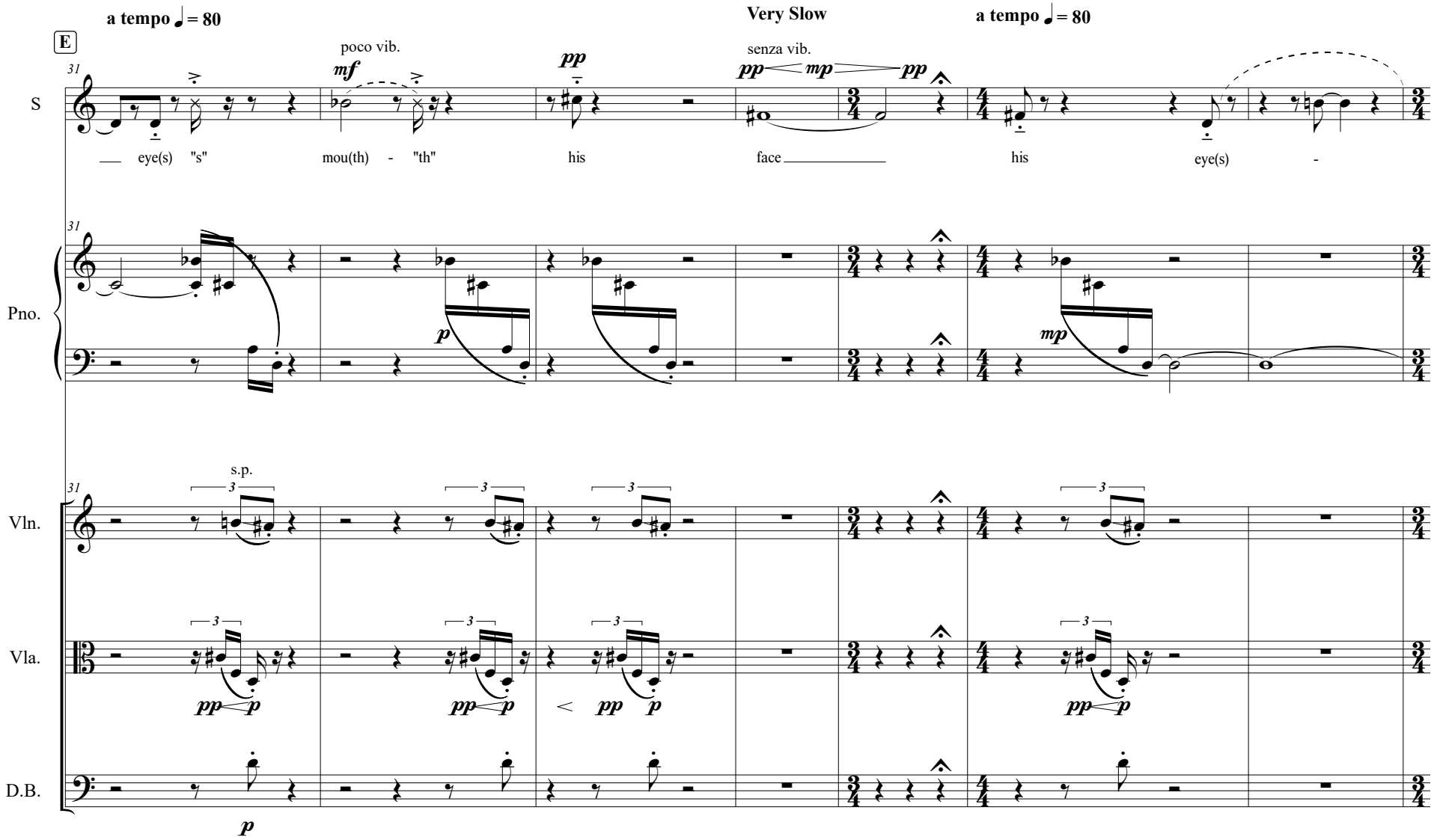

6
S
sf
p
sma th he sfe ss he sa ys he
Pno.
p
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
3

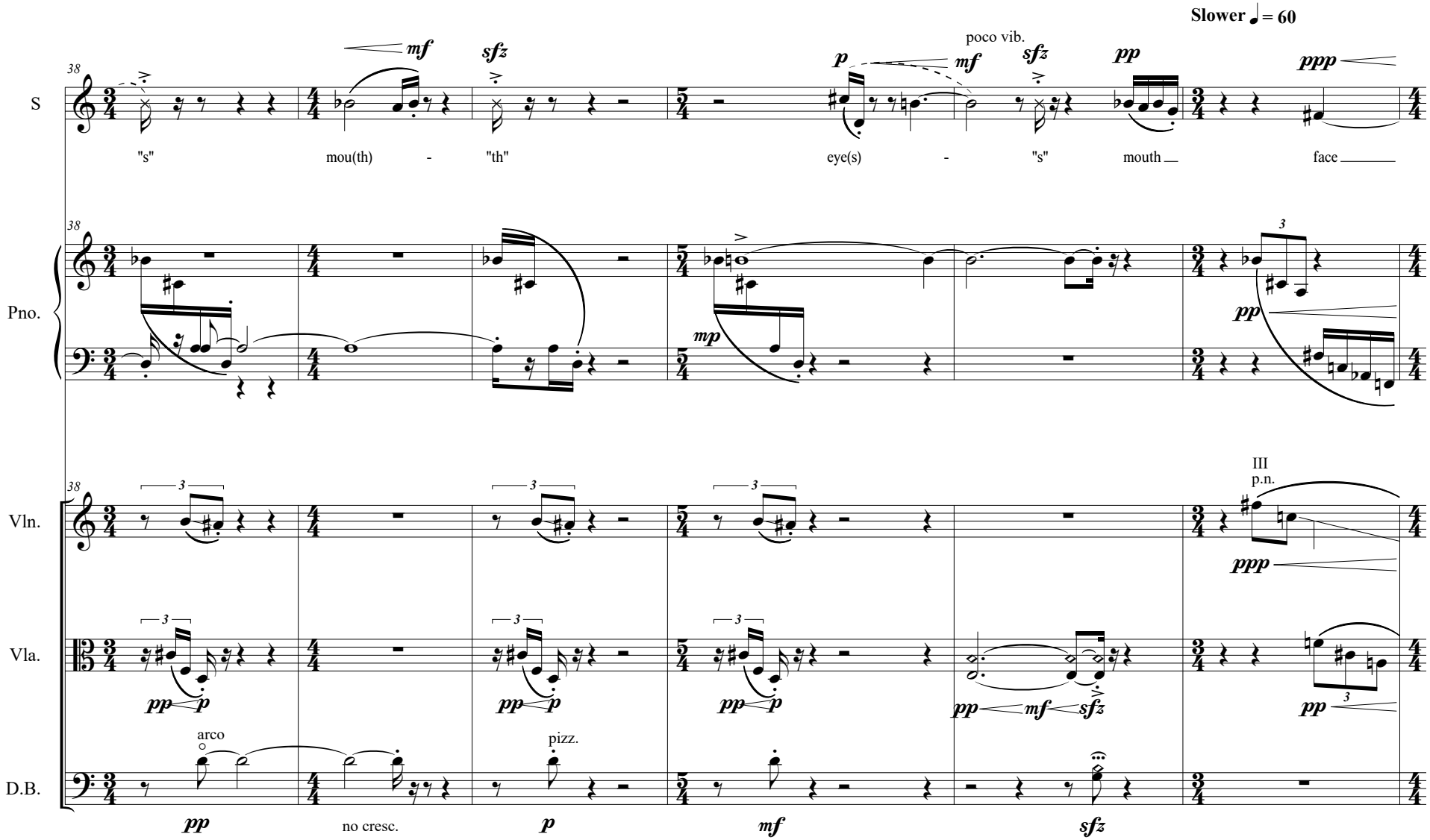

S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
swi ng ss eye(s) sssss he s ys he sma th he
sffz
sfz mp ff
B
p
sfz
con crini
s.p.
(con crini)
pp f
mp
pizz.
mp

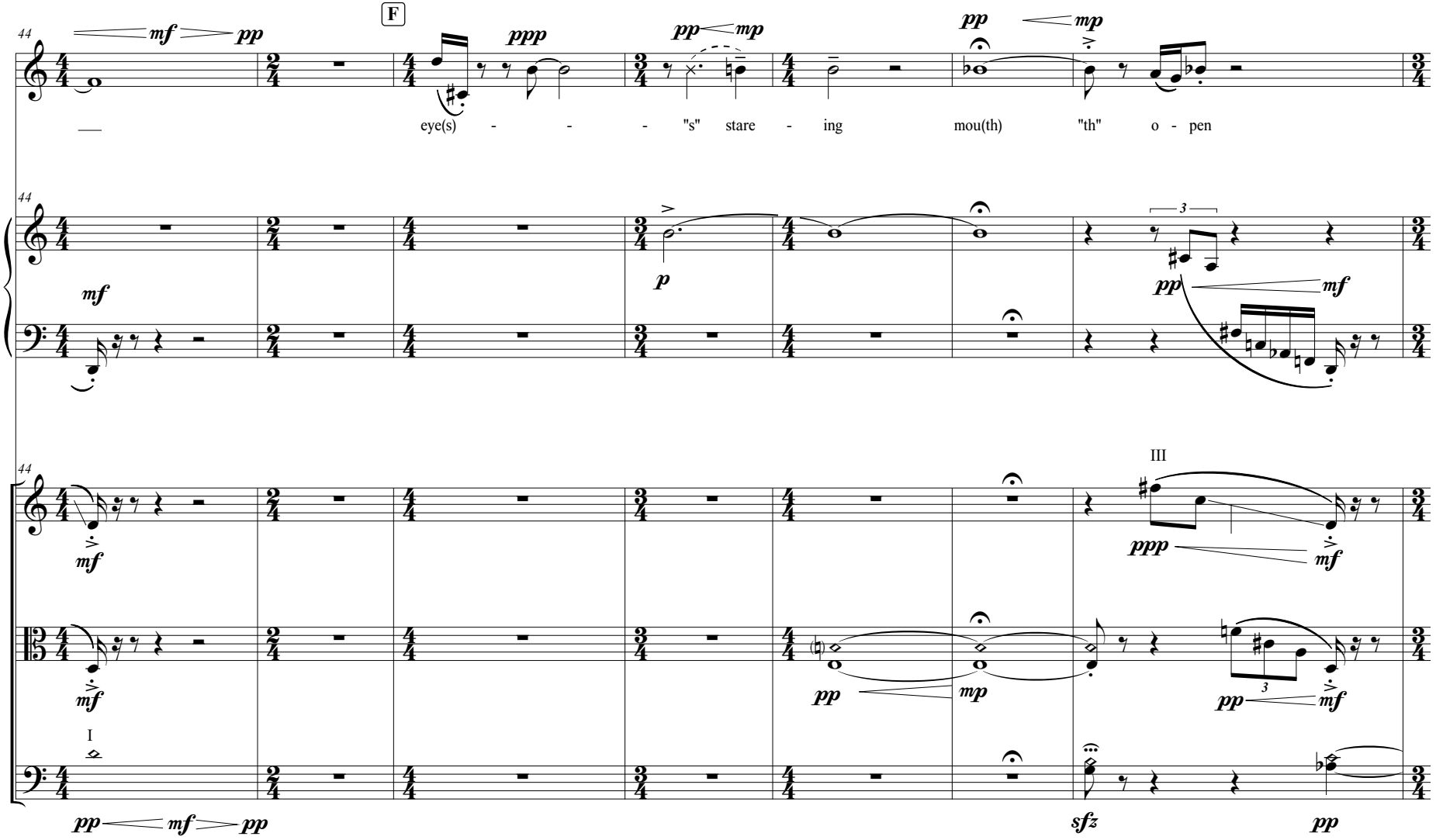

C a little faster ♩= 90
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
sfe s he sss mou(th) - "th" he s ys he
(con crini)
(s.p.)
arco
pizz.
arco

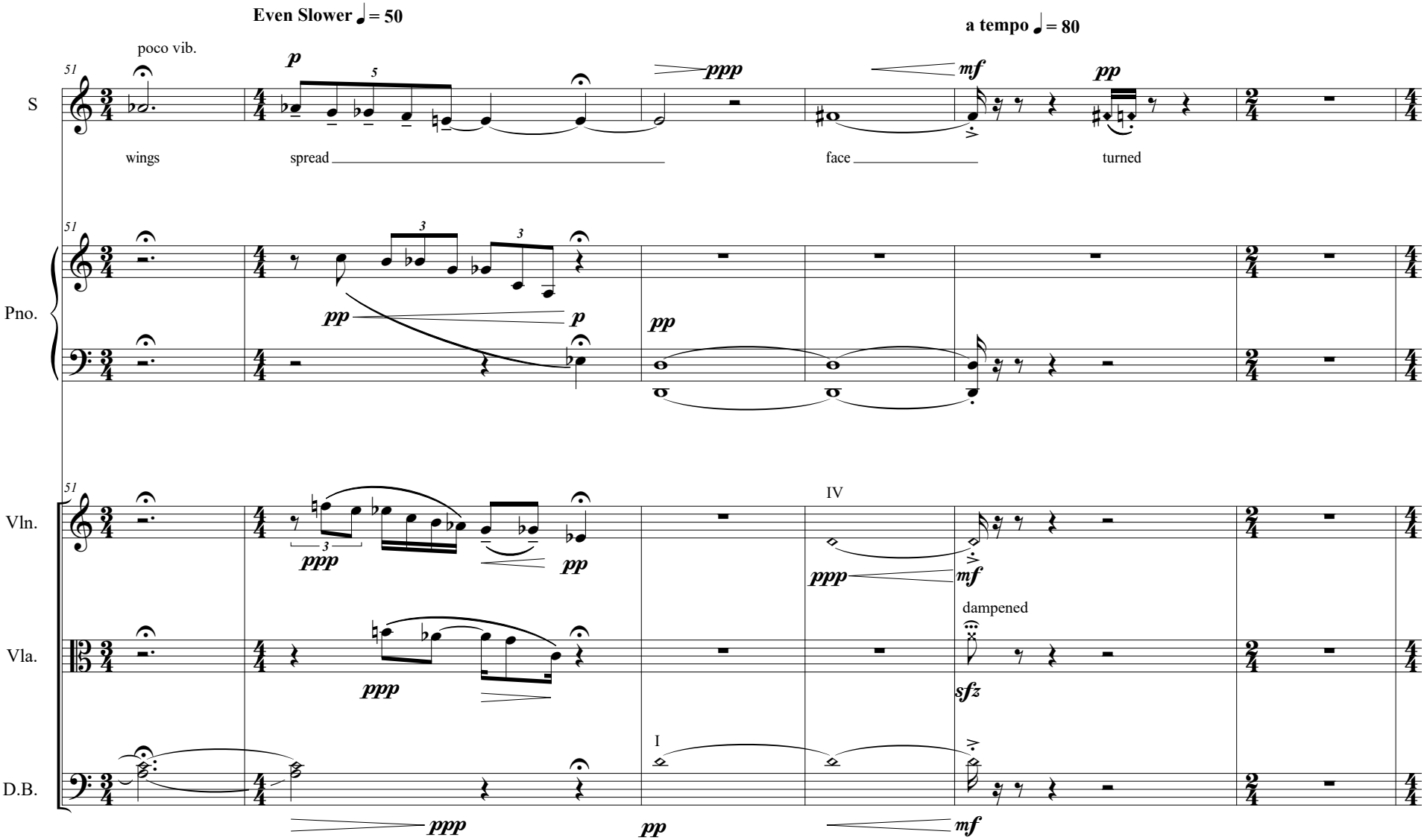
21
S
sma th he sfe ss ss ss ss
sfz
sfz
D
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
pizz.
arco
pizz.

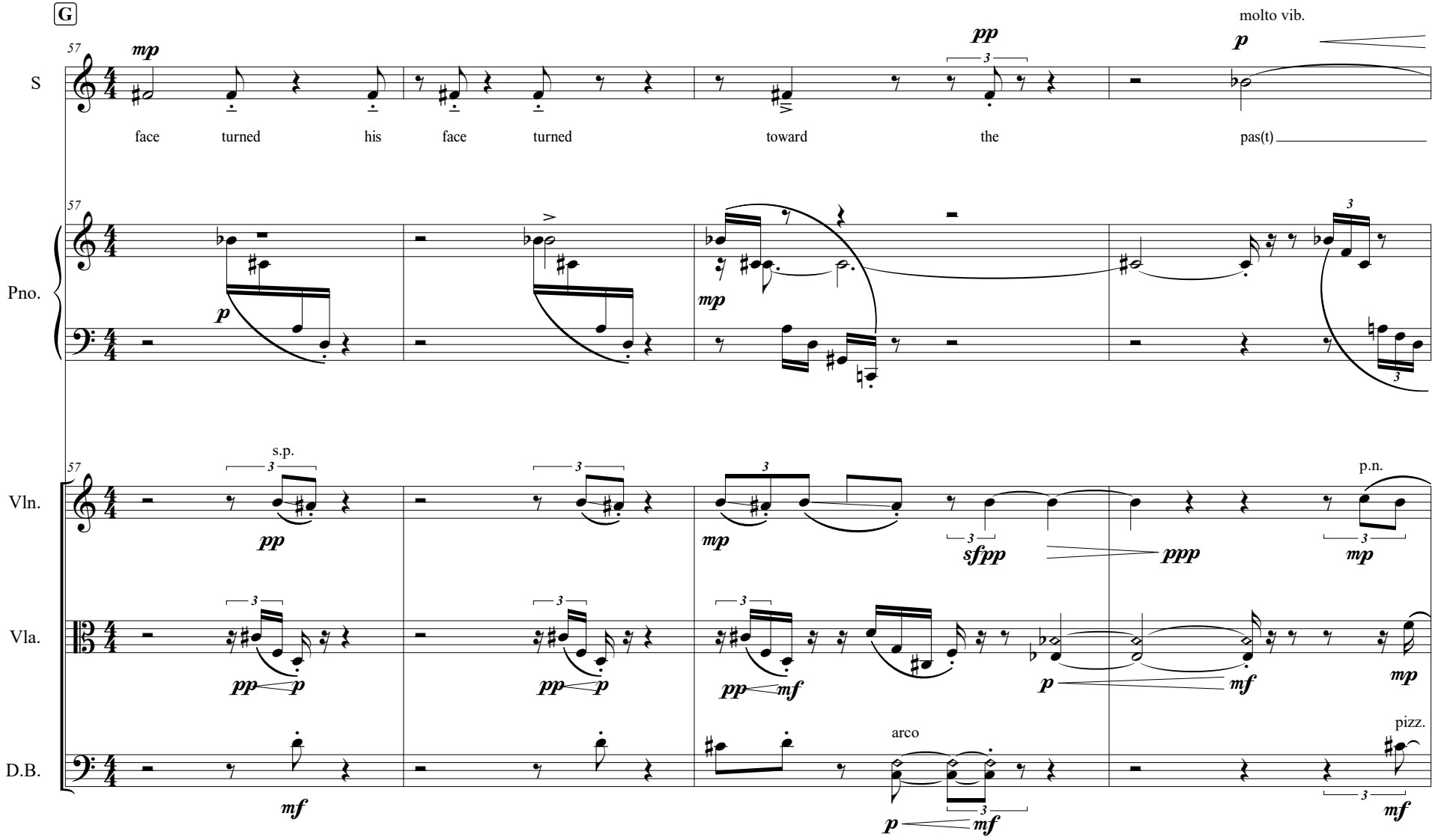

25
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
pp
f
mp
ff
pp
p
pp
poco vib.
senza vib.
he s ys hhh fa(ce) "s" hi(s) "s" eyes eyes
as if c# key is stuck
(con crini)
(s.p.)
arco
mf
mp

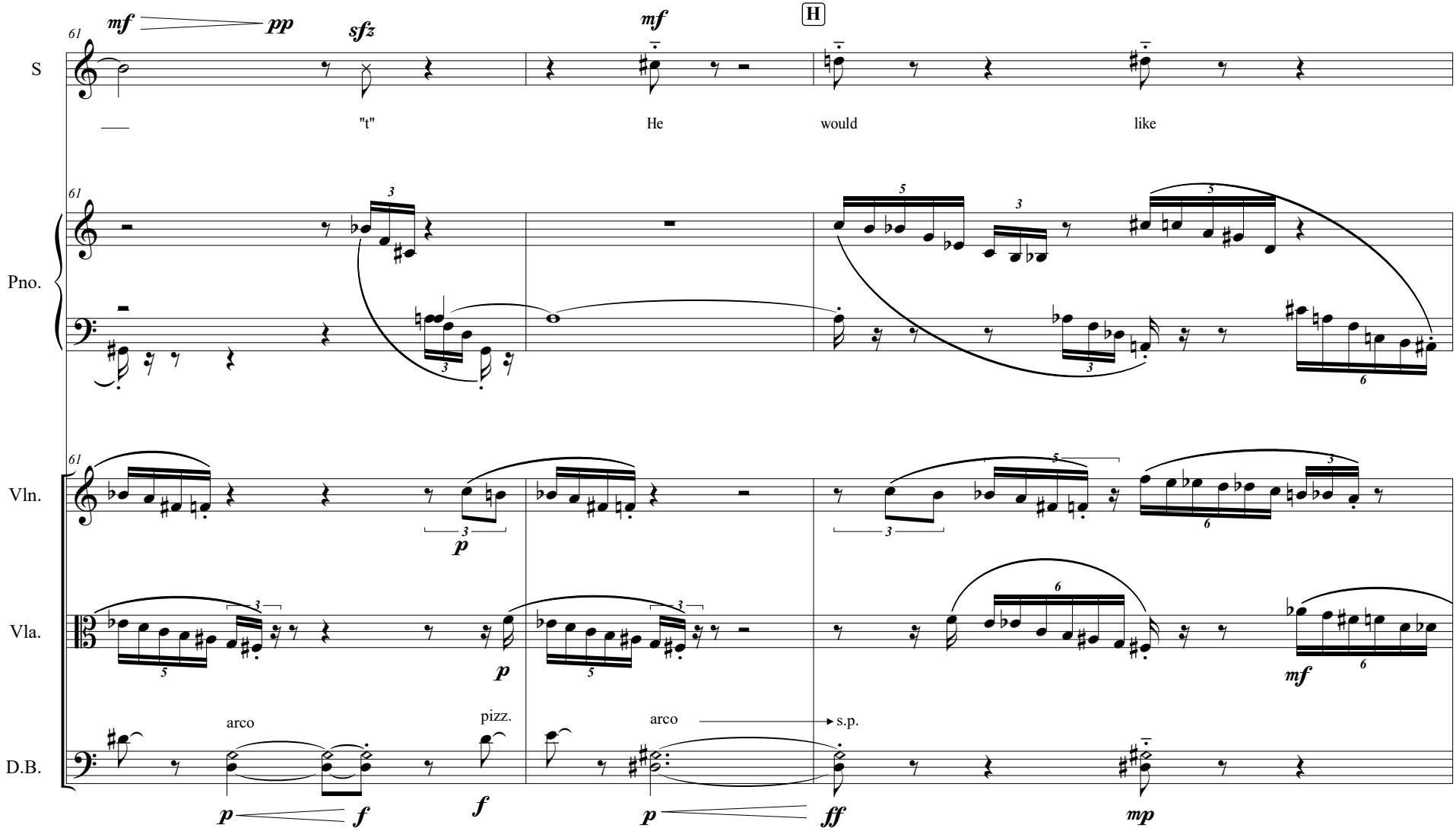

a tempo ♩= 80
Very Slow
a tempo ♩= 80
E
poco vib.
senza vib.
S
eye(s) "s"
mou(th) - "th"
his
face
his
eye(s) -
Pno.
s.p.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.

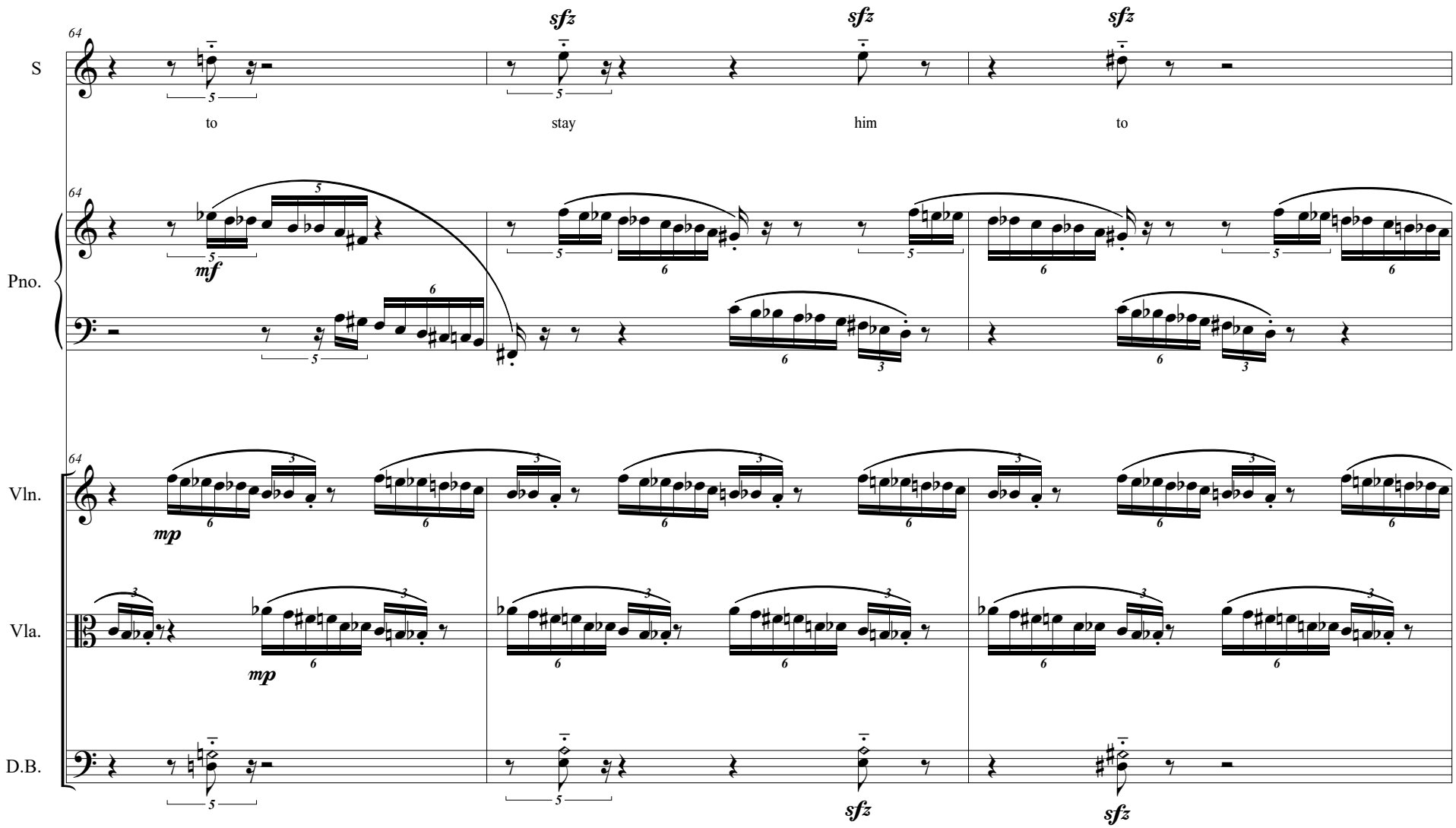

Slower ♩ = 60
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
38
"s"
mou(th)
-
"th"
eye(s)
-
"s"
mouth
face
poco vib.
III
p.n.
arco
pizz.
no cresc.

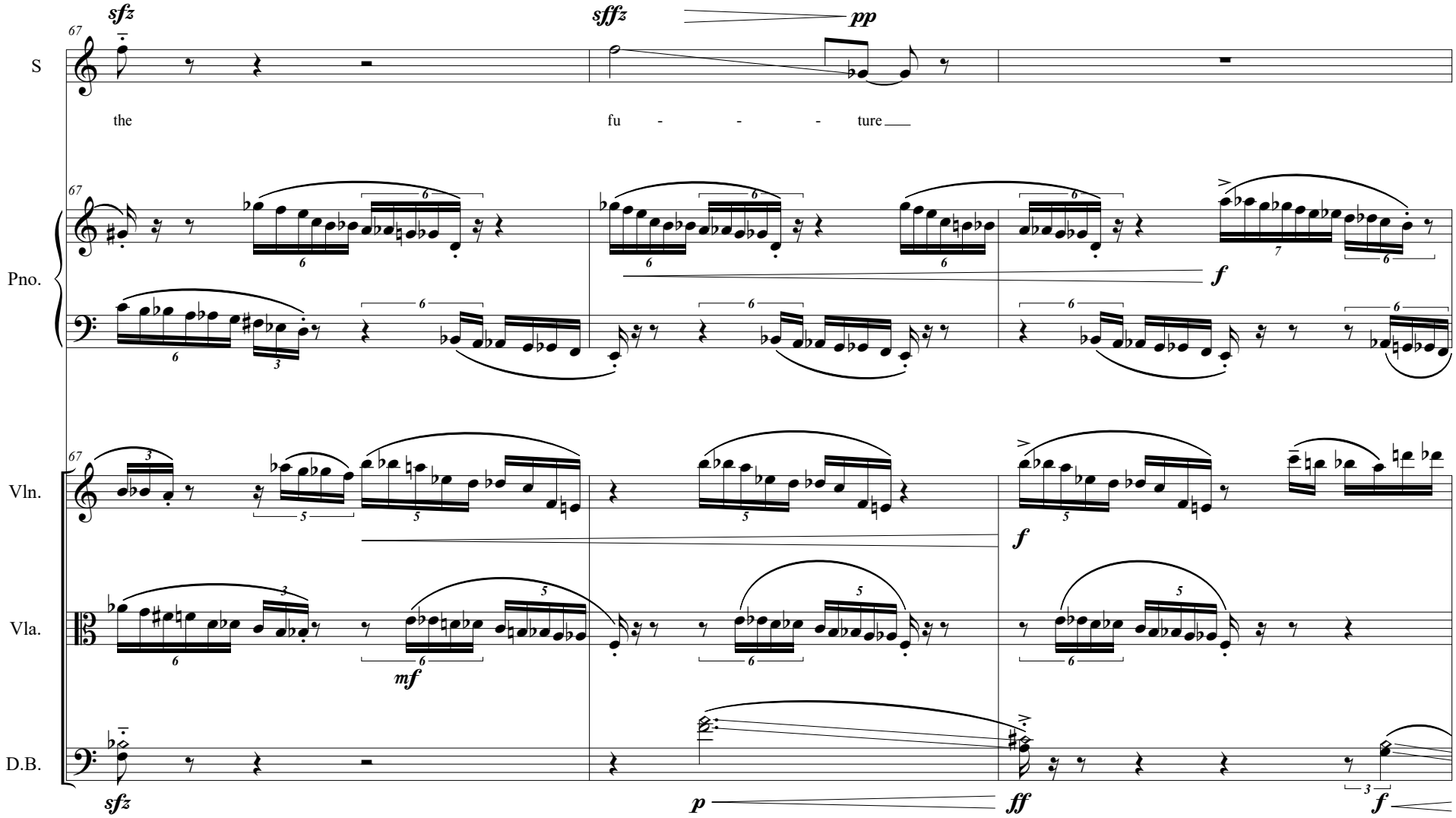

F
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
44
mf
pp
ppp
mp
eye(s) - - - "s" stare - ing mou(th) "th" o - pen
p
III
I
sfz

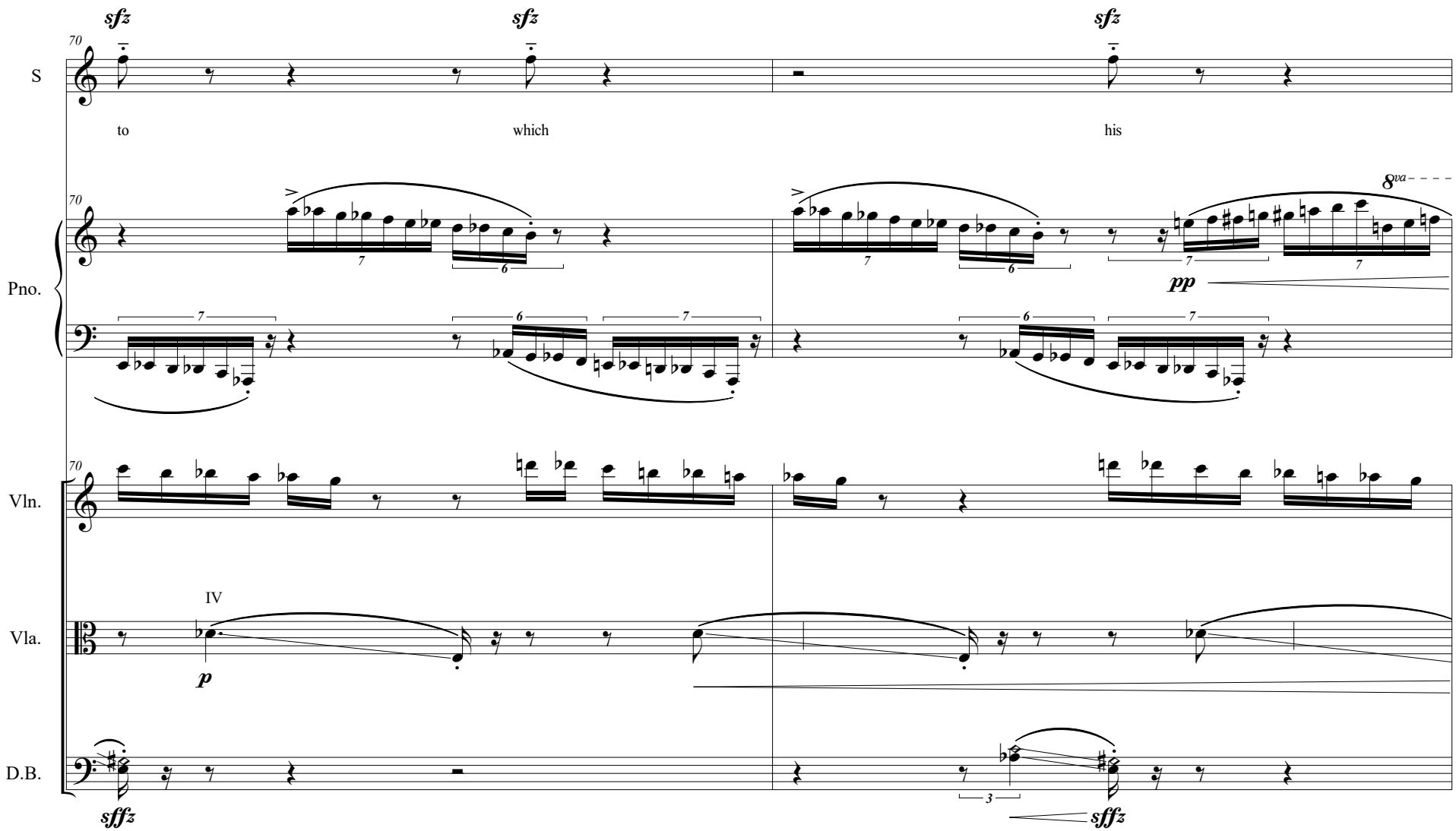

Even Slower ♩ = 50
a tempo ♩ = 80
poco vib.
S
wings
spread
face
turned
Pno.
Vln.
IV
Vla.
dampened
D.B.
I

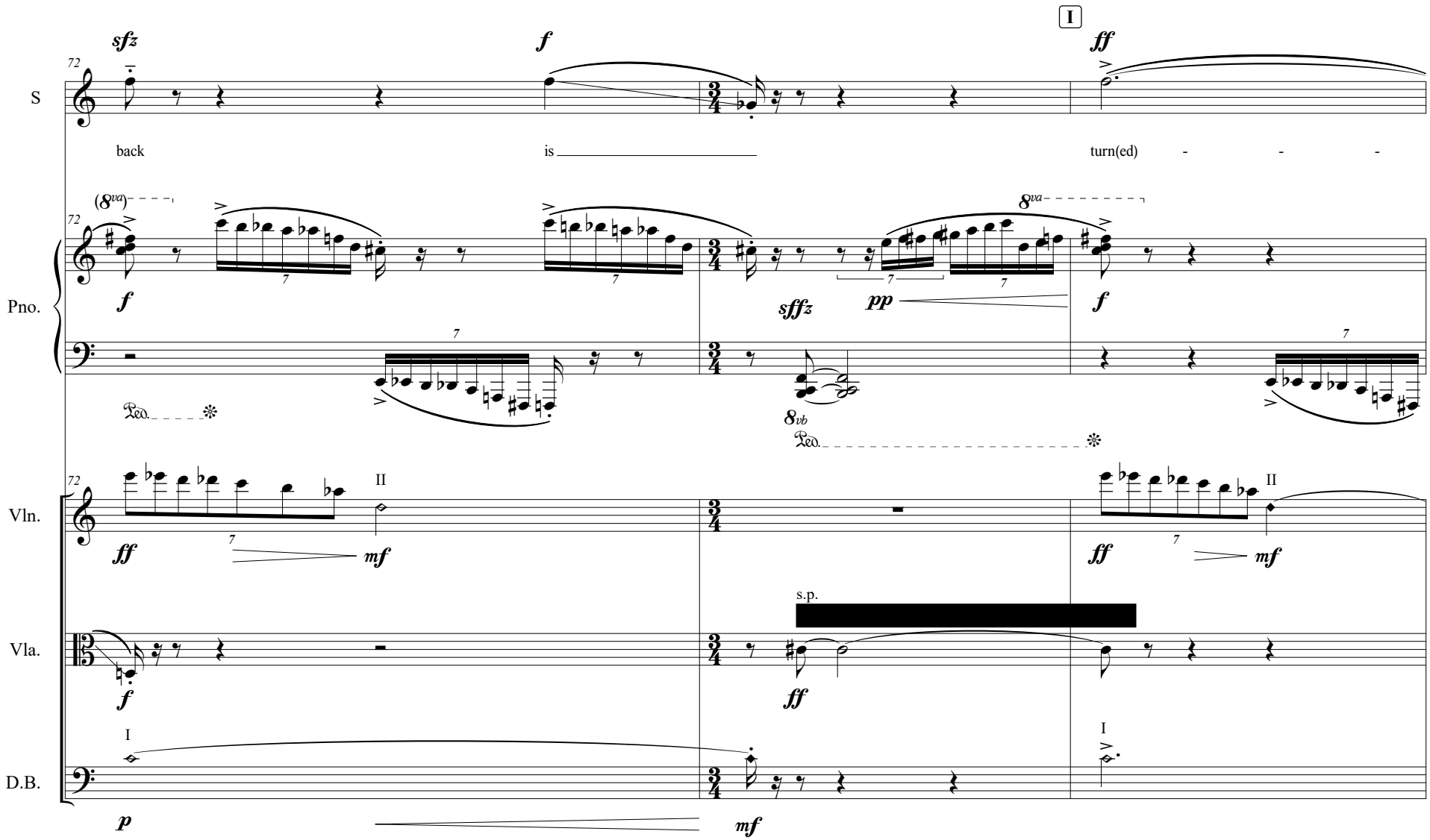

G
57
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
face turned his face turned toward the pas(t)
molto vib.
s.p.
p.n.
arco
pizz.

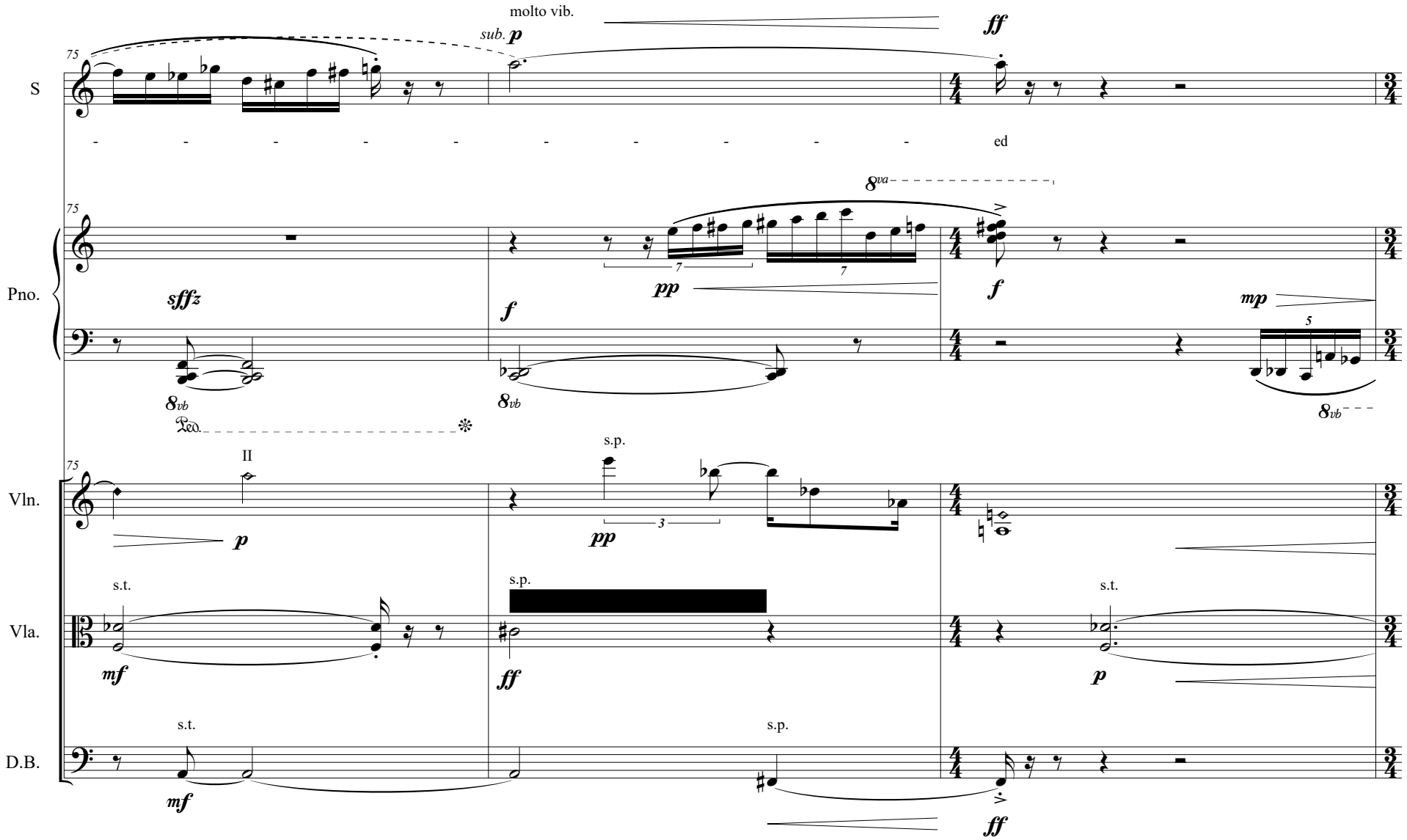

61
mf
pp
sfz
mf
H
S
"t"
He
would
like
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
arco
pizz.
arco
s.p.
p
f
ff
mp

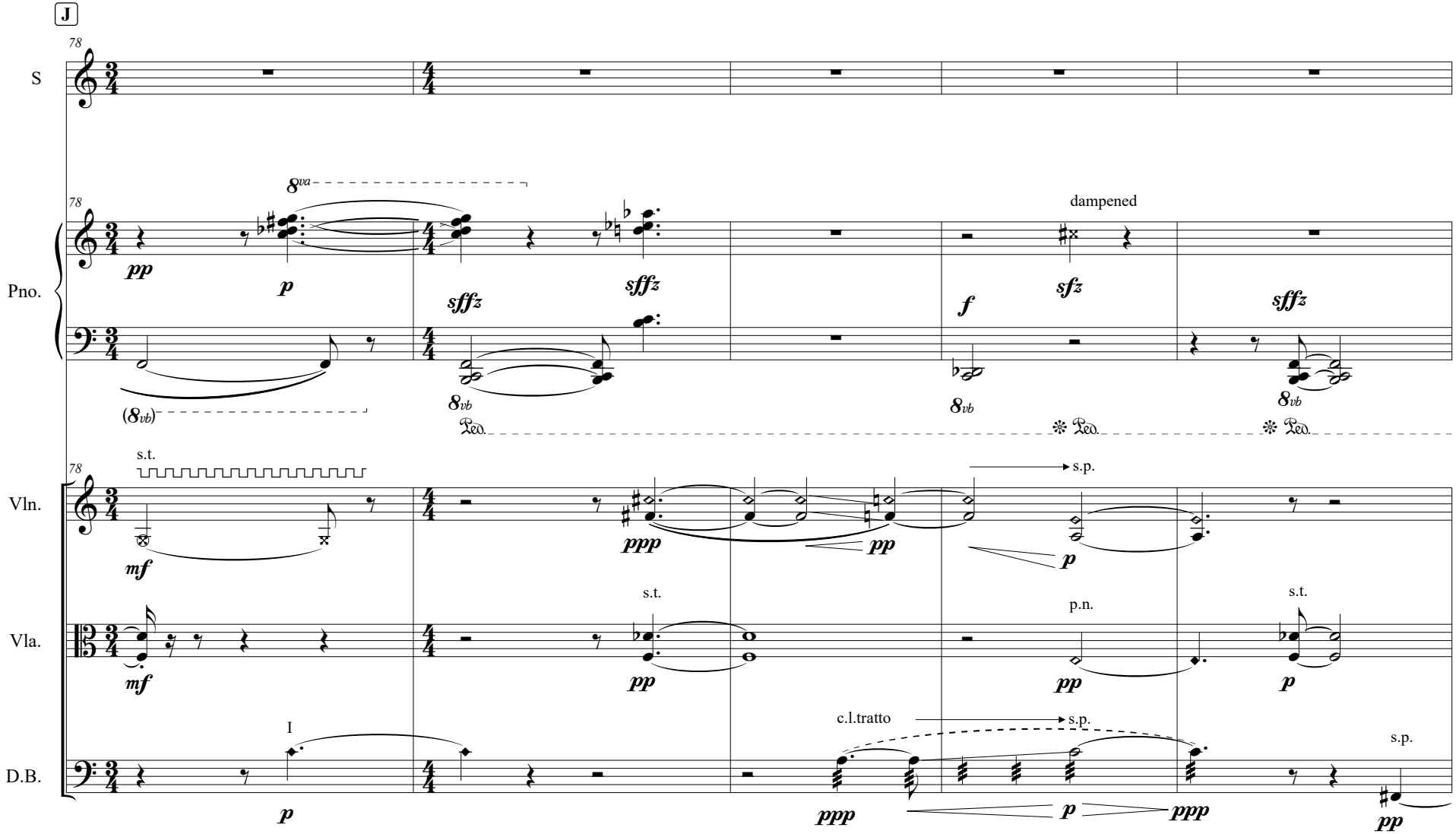

S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
64
sfz
sfz
sfz
to
stay
him
to
mf
mp
mp
sfz
sfz

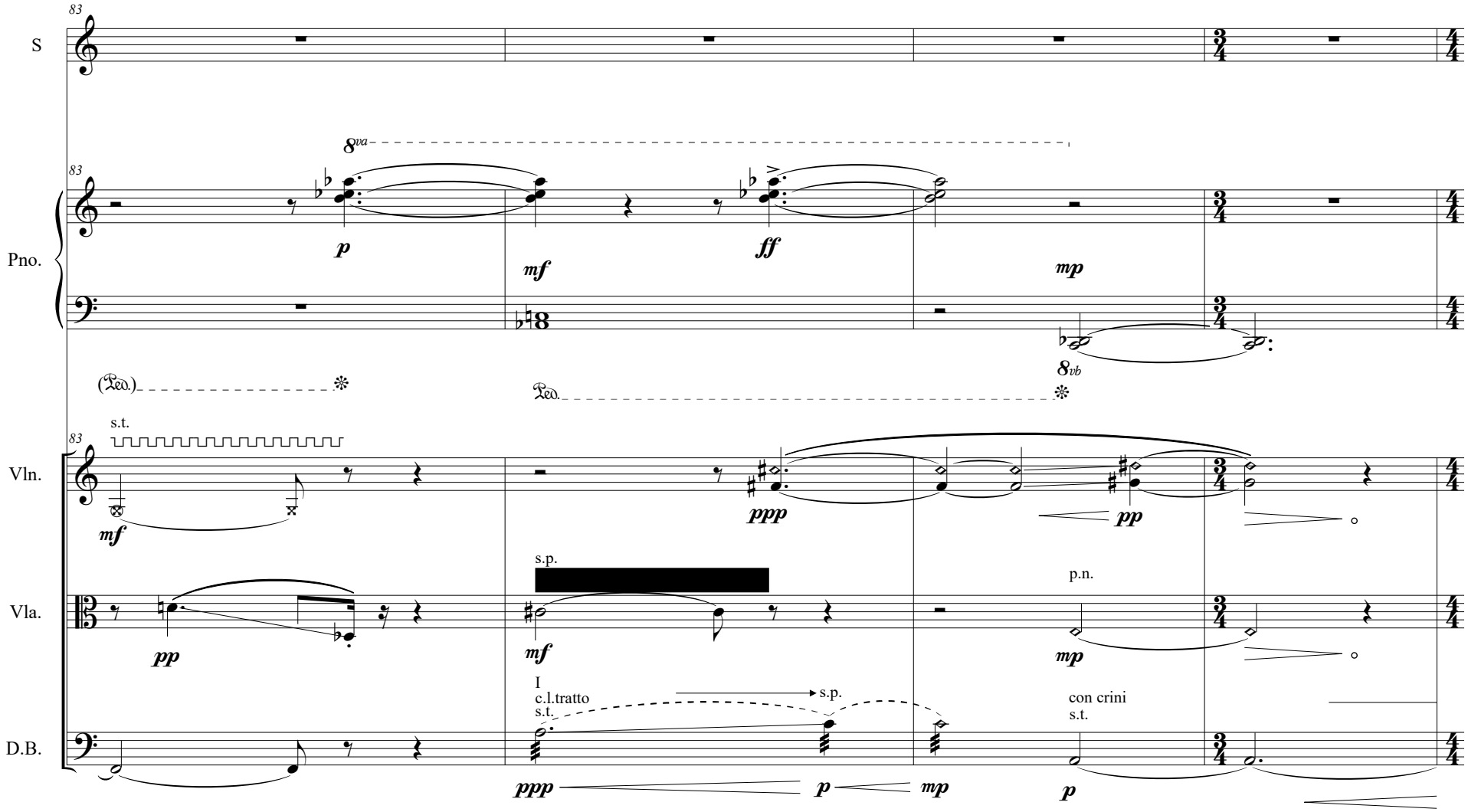

67
S
sfz
the
sffz
pp
fu - - - ture
Pno.
f
Vln.
f
Vla.
mf
D.B.
sfz
p
ff
f

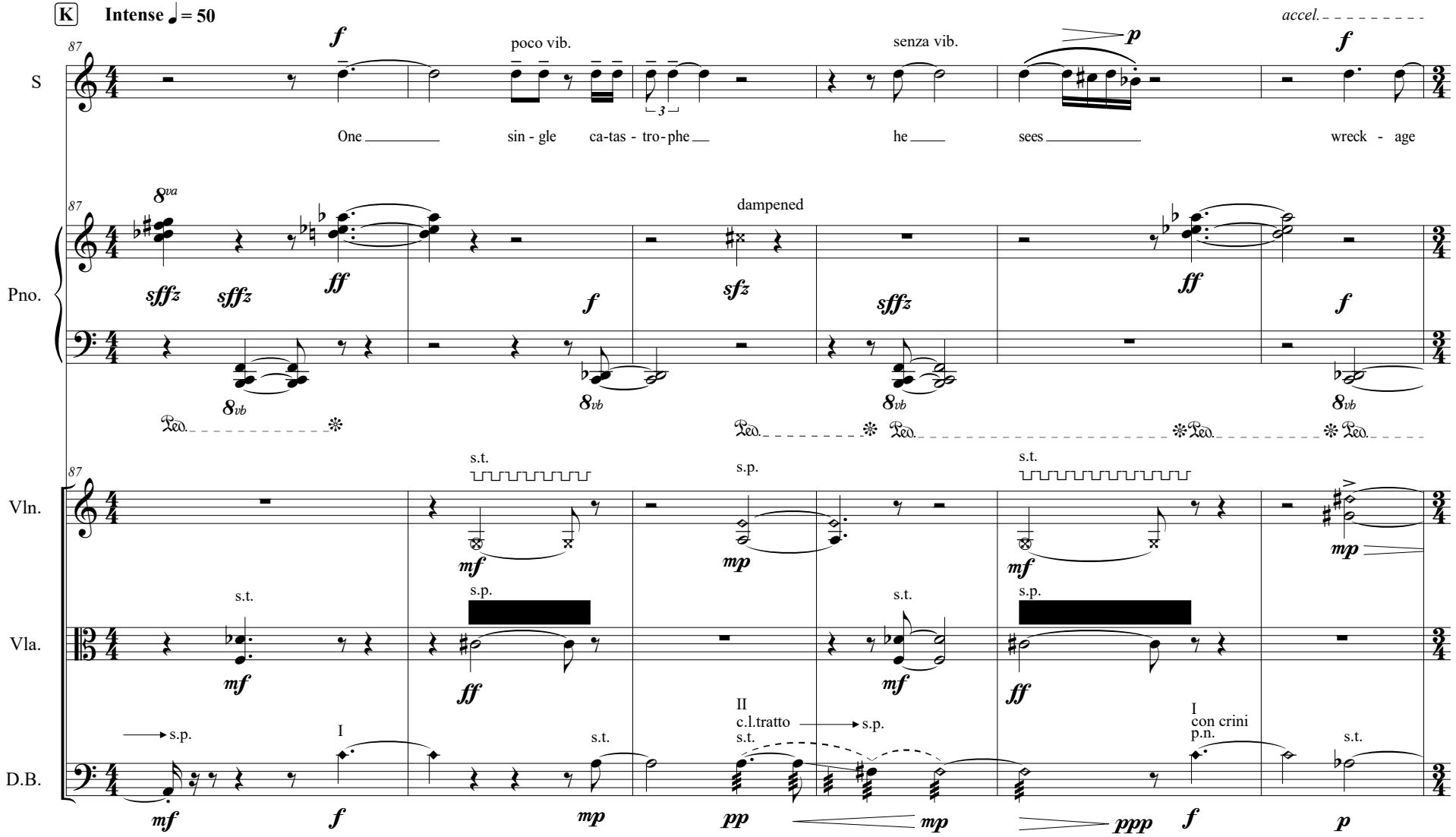

sfz
sfz
sfz
70
S
to
which
his
Pno.
8va
pp
Vln.
IV
Vla.
p
D.B.
sfffz
sfffz

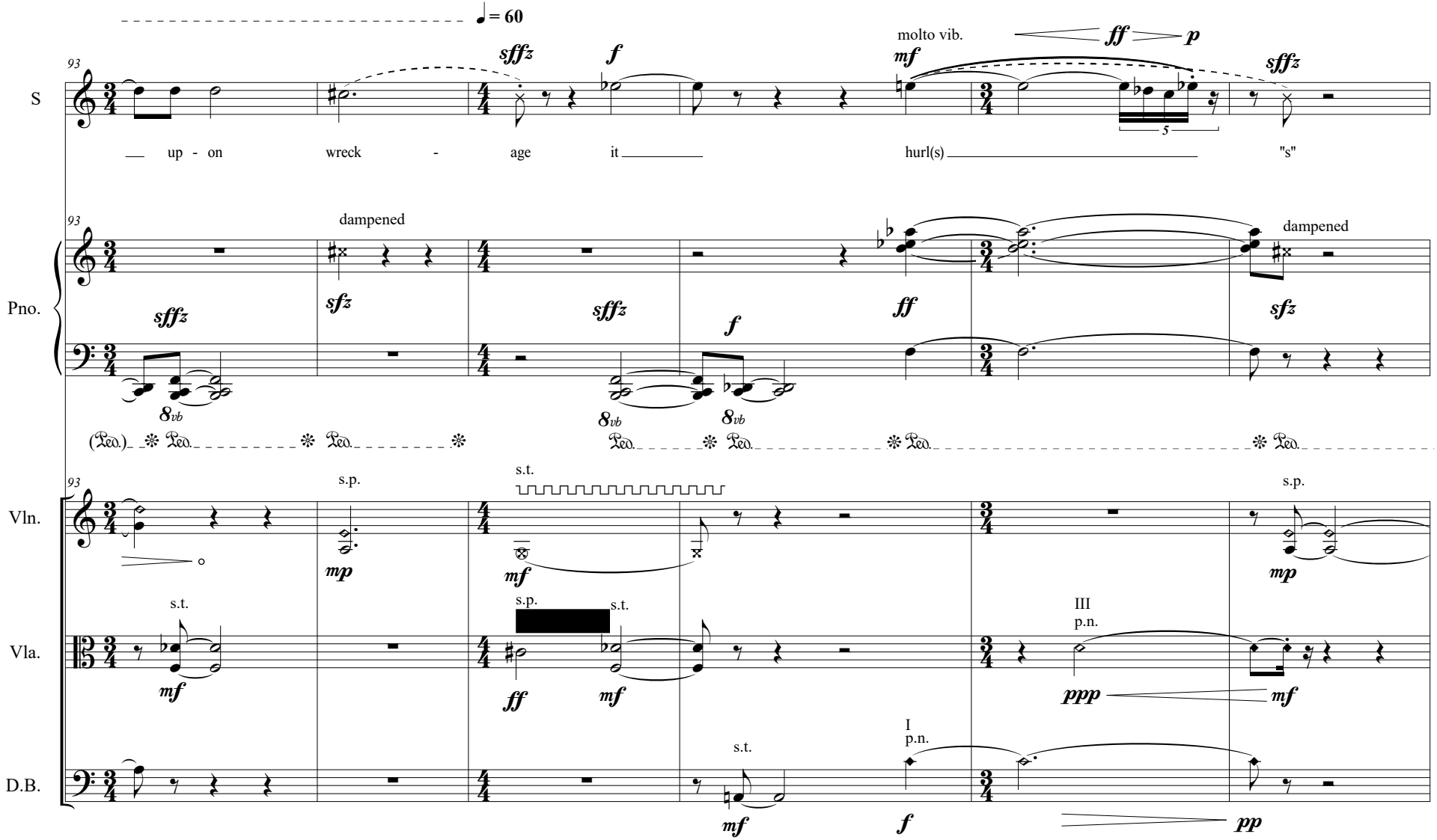

S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
sfz
f
ff
back
is
turn(ed) - - -
I
(8va)
8va
sffz
pp
8vb
Ped.
II
mf
s.p.
p

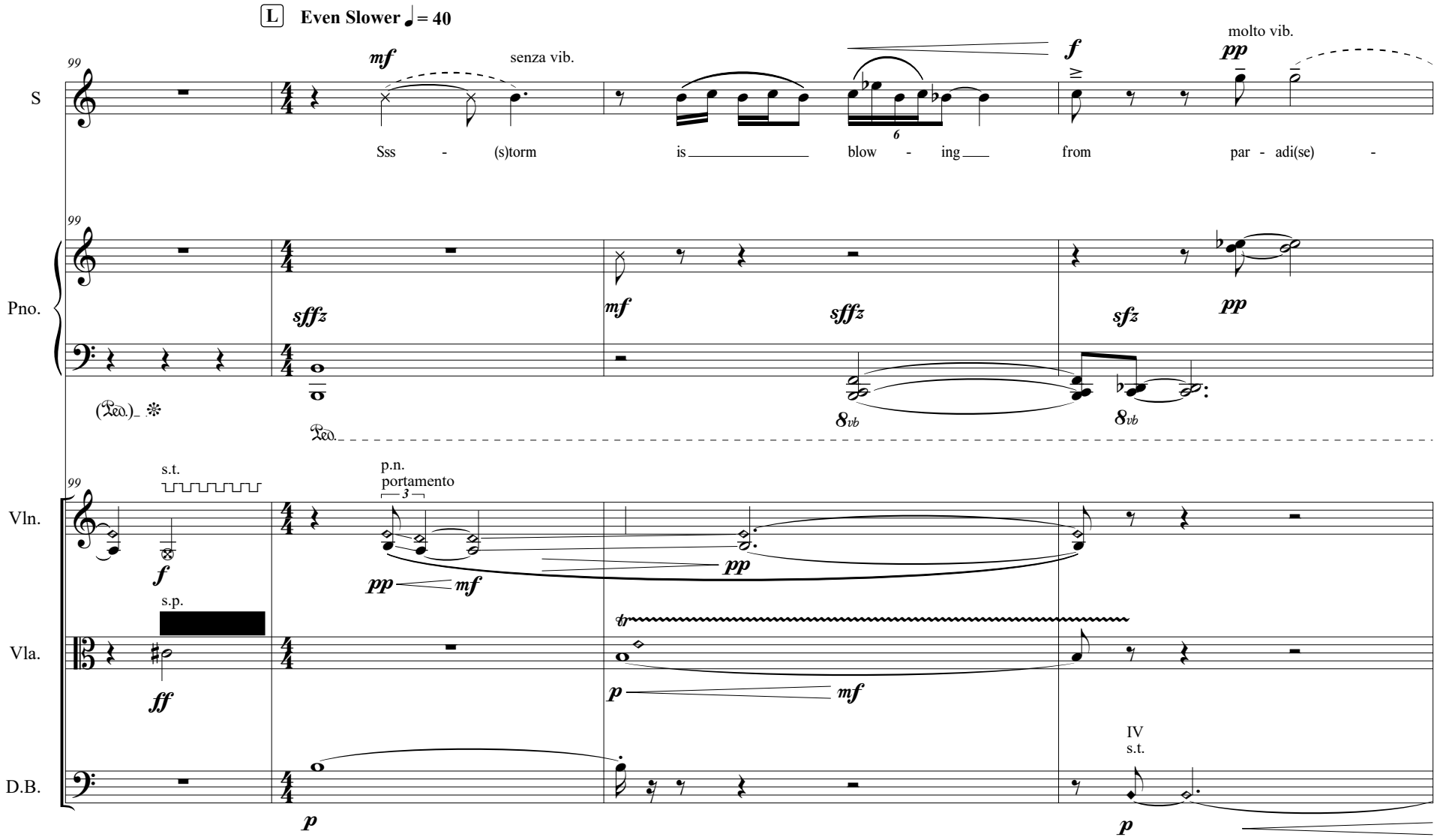

molto vib.
sub. p
ff
S
ed
8va
Pno.
sffz
f
pp
f
mp
8vb
8vb
8vb
Ped.
II
s.p.
Vln.
p
pp
s.t.
s.p.
s.t.
Vla.
mf
ff
p
s.t.
s.p.
D.B.
mf
ff

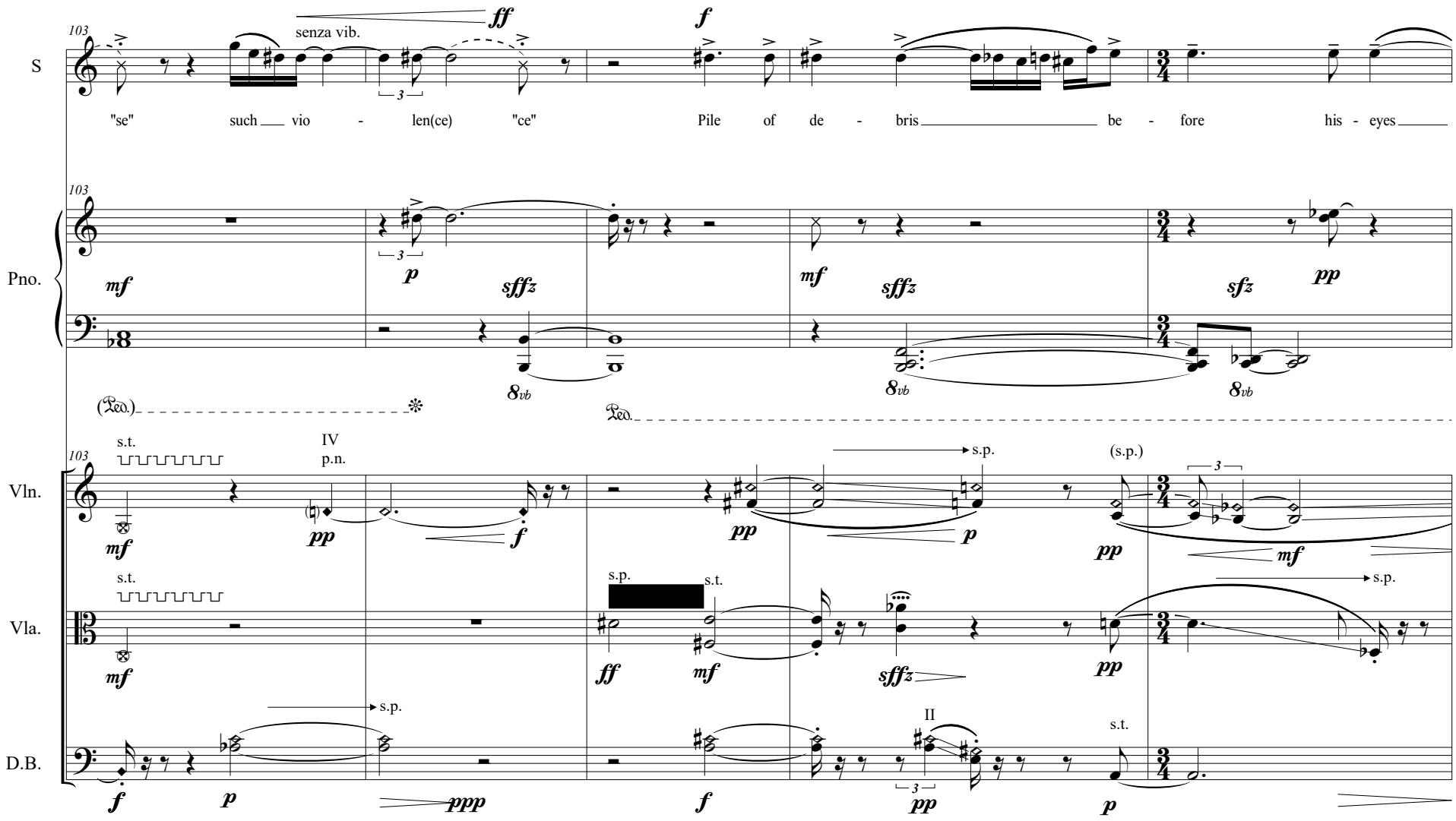

J
78
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
8va
(8vb)
8vb
pp
p
sffz
f
sfz
dampened
Ped.
s.t.
mf
ppp
s.p.
p.n.
I
c.l.tratto

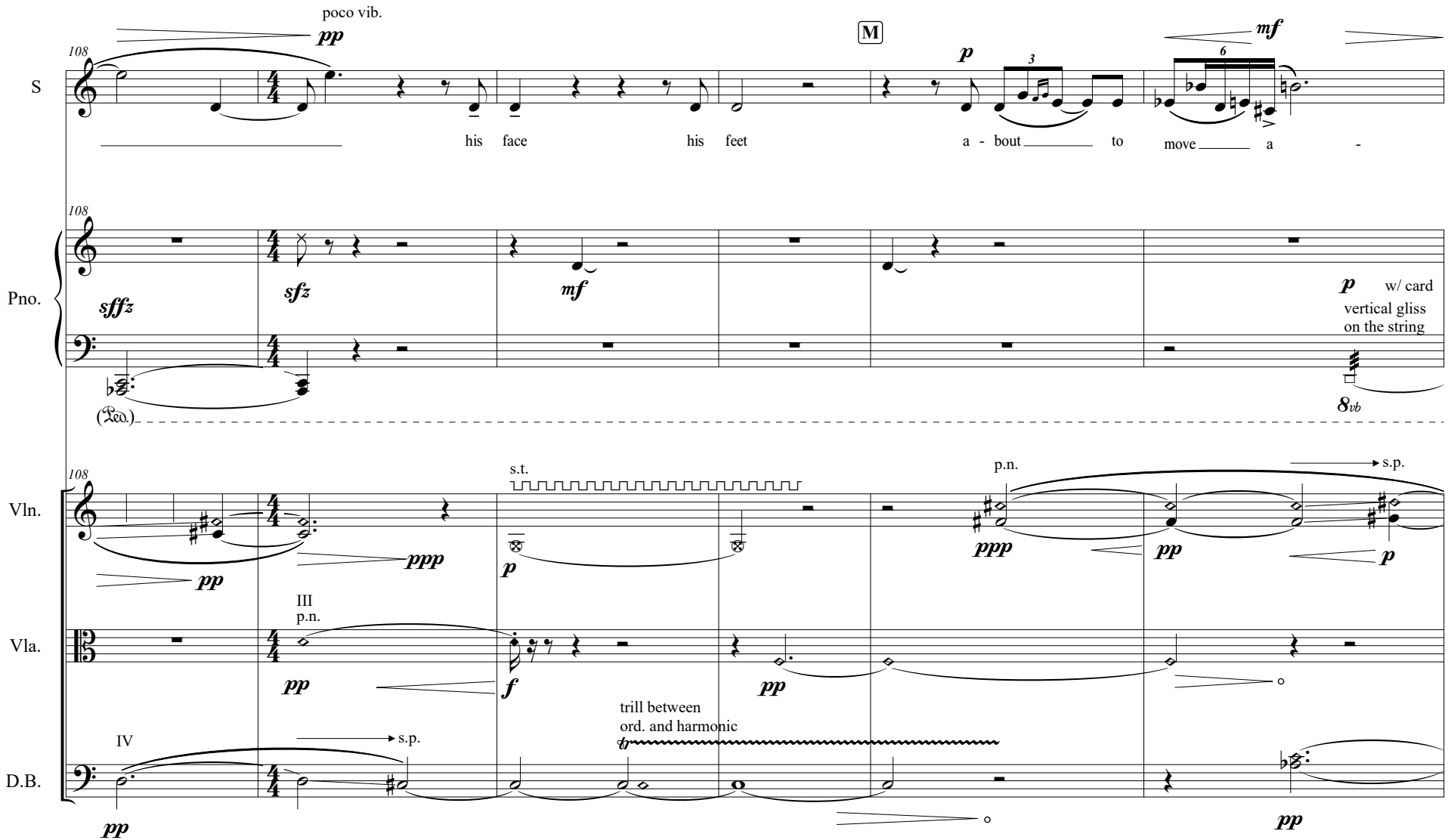

S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
83
8va
p
mf
ff
mp
8vb
(Ped.)
Ped.
s.t.
ppp
pp
s.p.
p.n.
I
c.l.tratto
con crini
mf
mp
p

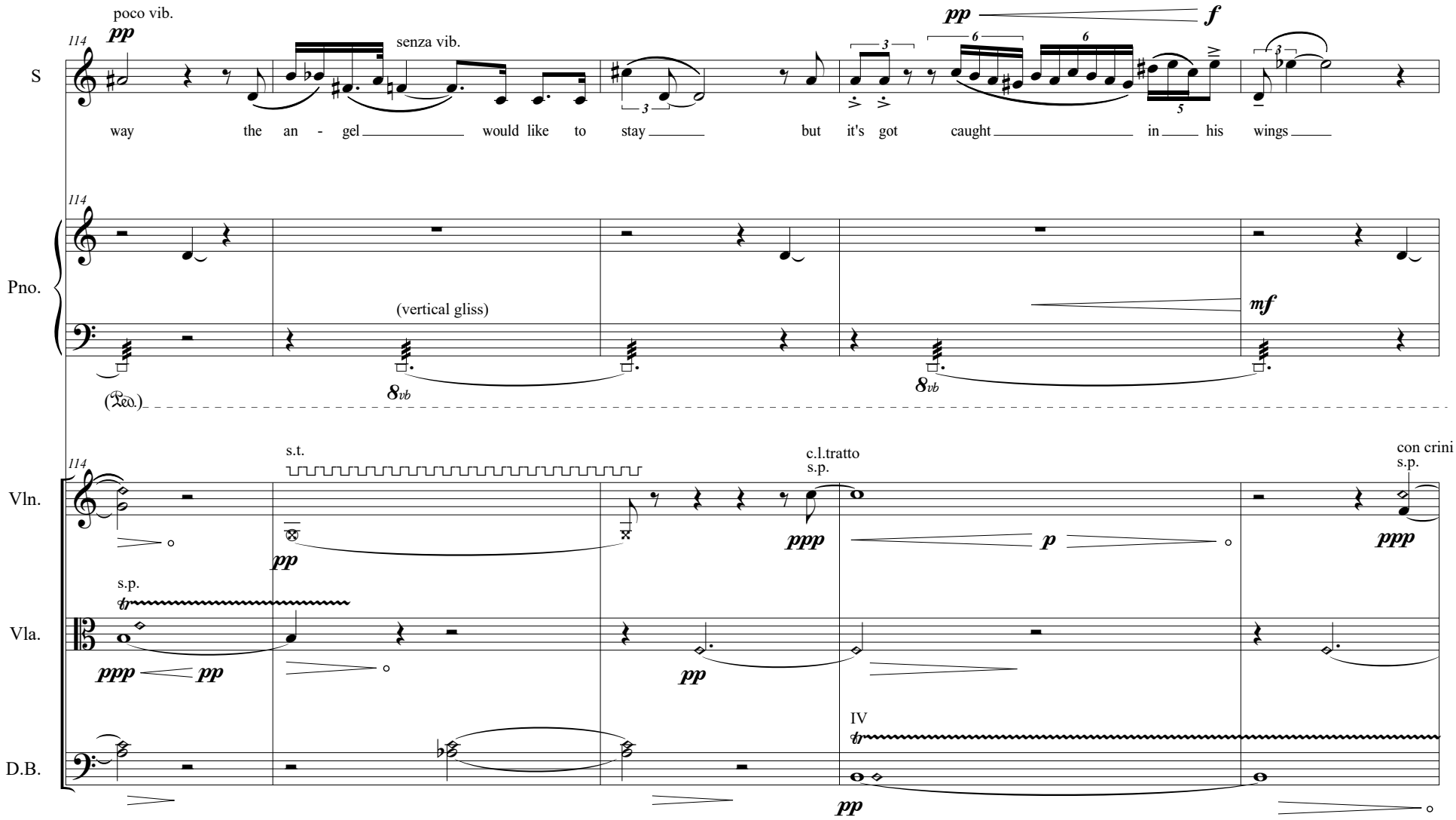

K
Intense ♩= 50
87
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
f
poco vib.
senza vib.
p
accel.
f
One sin - gle ca-tas - tro-phe he sees wreck - age
8va
sffz
sffz
ff
f
dampened
sfz
sffz
ff
f
8vb
Ped.
s.t.
s.p.
mf
mp
mf
mp
s.t.
s.p.
mf
ff
s.t.
mf
s.p.
ff
s.p.
I
s.t.
II
c.l.tratto
s.p.
s.t.
I
con crini
p.n.
s.t.
mf
f
mp
pp
mp
ppp
f
p

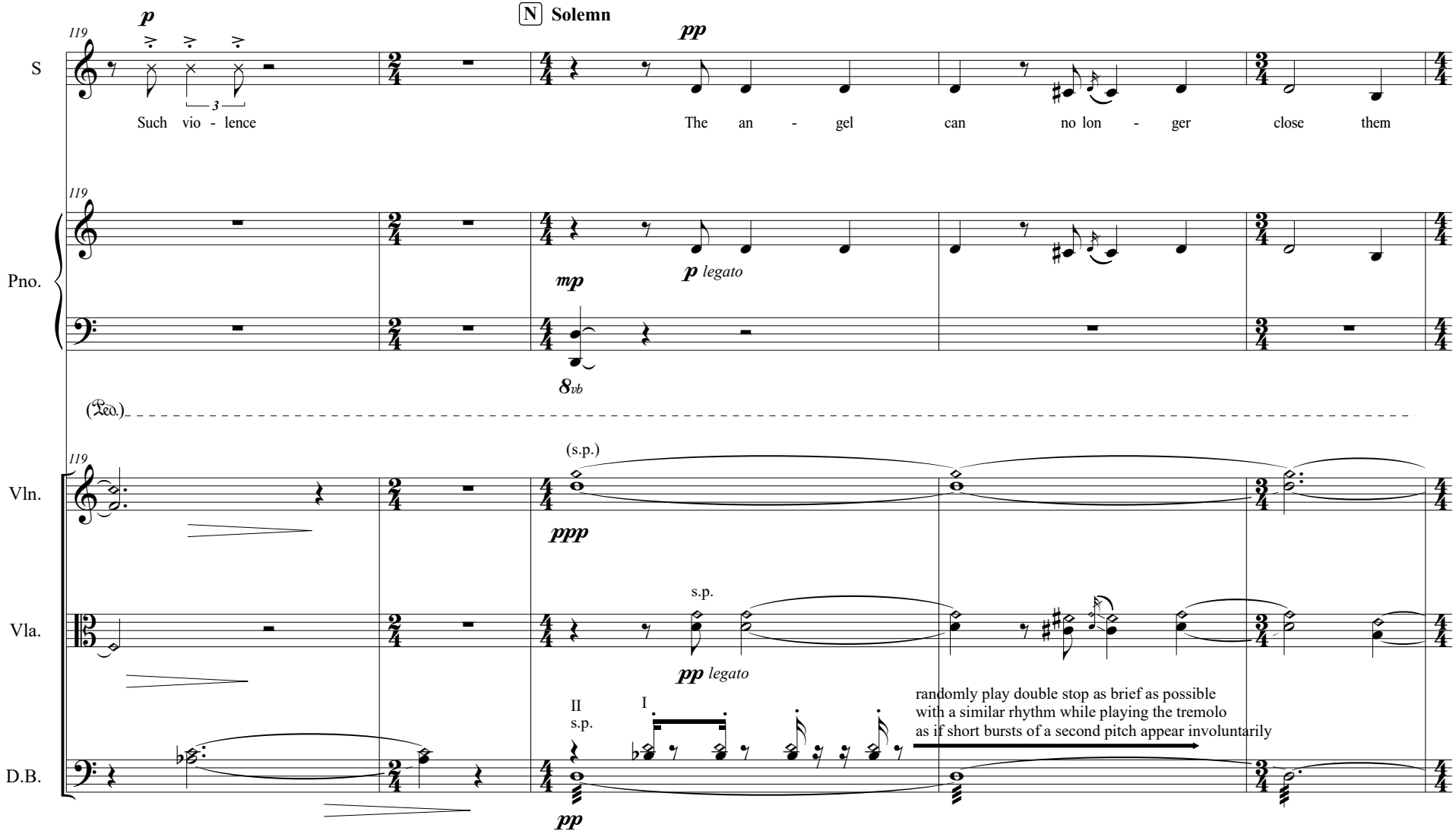

♩= 60
S
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
93
sfffz
f
molto vib.
mf
ff
p
sfffz
up - on
wreck - age
it
hurl(s)
"s"
dampened
sfz
sfffz
ff
dampened
sfz
8vb
(Ped.)
s.p.
s.t.
mp
mf
s.p.
s.t.
ff
mf
III
p.n.
ppp
mf
s.t.
I
p.n.
mf
f
pp

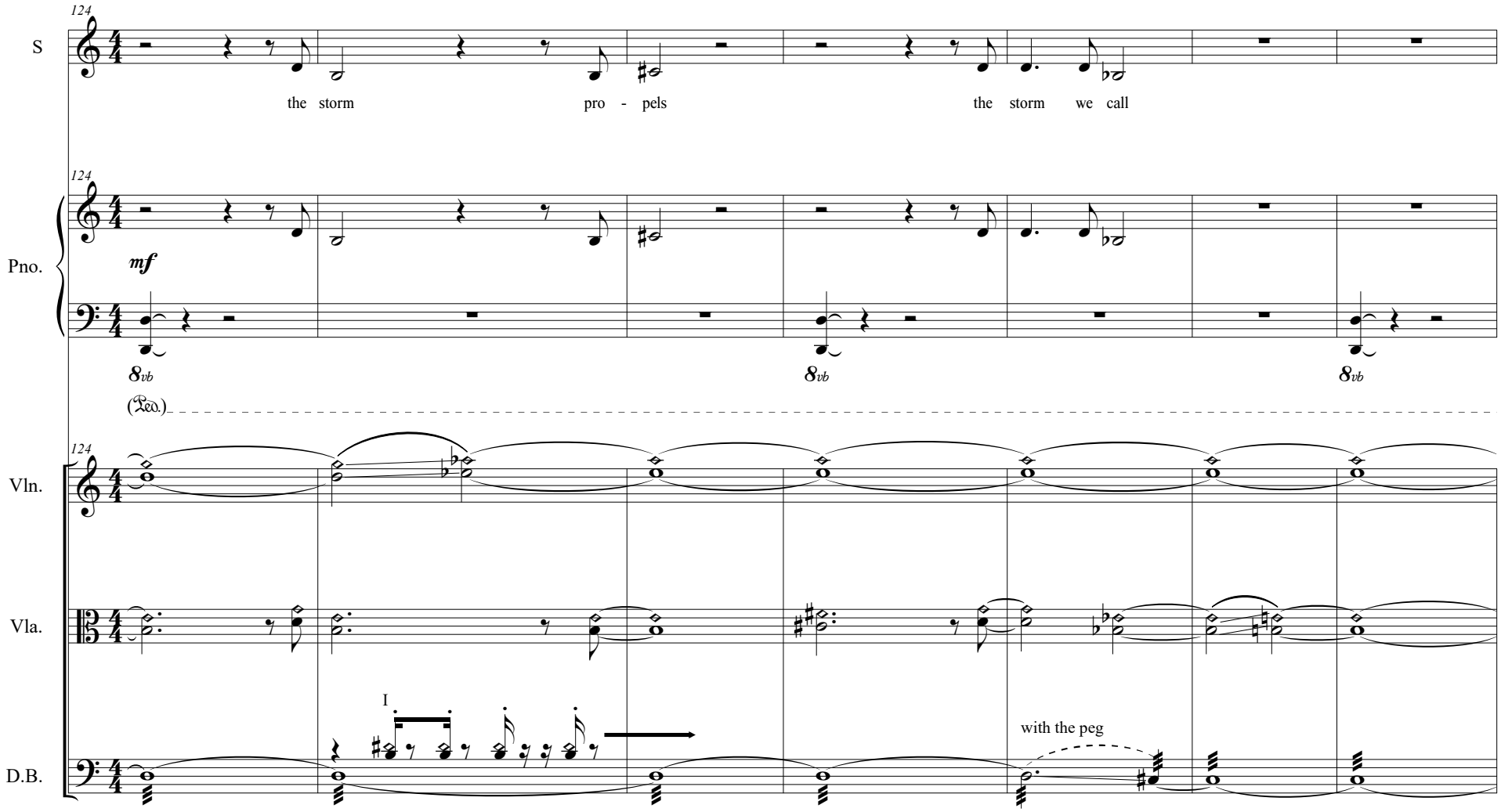

L
Even Slower ♩= 40
99
S
mf
senza vib.
f
molto vib.
pp
Sss - (s)torm is blow - ing from par - adi(se) -
Pno.
sffz
mf
sffz
sfz
pp
8vb
8vb
(Ped.)
Ped.
Vln.
s.t.
p.n.
portamento
3
f
pp
mf
pp
s.p.
Vla.
ff
tr
p
mf
D.B.
p
IV
s.t.
p

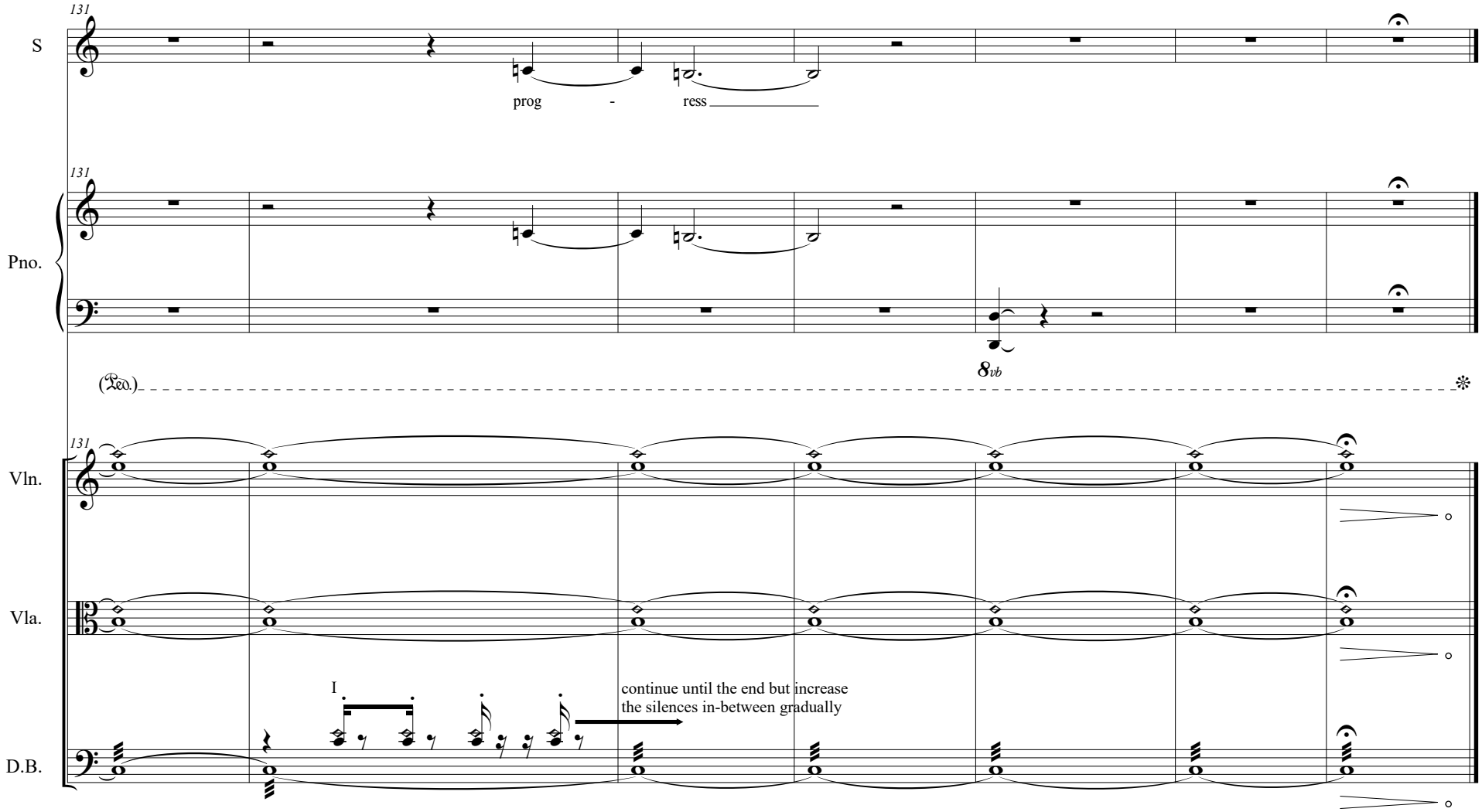

103
S
senza vib.
ff
f
"se" such vio - len(ce) "ce" Pile of de - bris be - fore his - eyes
Pno.
mf
p
sffz
sfz
pp
8vb
(Ped.)
Ped.
Vln.
s.t.
IV
p.n.
s.p.
(s.p.)
Vla.
s.p.
s.t.
ff
D.B.
II
ppp


poco vib.
pp
108
S
his face
his feet
M
p
3
mf
6
a - bout
to
move
a -
Pno.
sffz
sfz
mf
p
w/ card
vertical gliss
on the string
(Ped.)
8vb
Vln.
s.t.
ppp
pp
p
p.n.
s.p.
III
p.n.
Vla.
f
trill between
ord. and harmonic
IV
D.B.


poco vib.
pp
senza vib.
pp
f
S
way the an - gel would like to stay but it's got caught in his wings
Pno.
(vertical gliss)
8vb
8vb
mf
(Ped.)
Vln.
s.t.
pp
c.l.tratto
s.p.
ppp
p
con crini
s.p.
ppp
Vla.
s.p.
ppp
pp
pp
D.B.
IV
pp


N Solemn
S
Such vio - lence
The an - gel can no lon - ger close them
Pno.
Vln.
Vla.
D.B.
(s.p.)
s.p.
II
s.p.
I
randomly play double stop as brief as possible
with a similar rhythm while playing the tremolo
as if short bursts of a second pitch appear involuntarily


124
S
the storm pro - pels the storm we call
124
Pno.
mf
8vb
8vb
8vb
(Ped.)
124
Vln.
Vla.
I
with the peg
D.B.


131
S
prog - ress
131
Pno.
8vb
(Ped.)
131
Vln.
Vla.
I
continue until the end but increase
the silences in-between gradually
D.B.