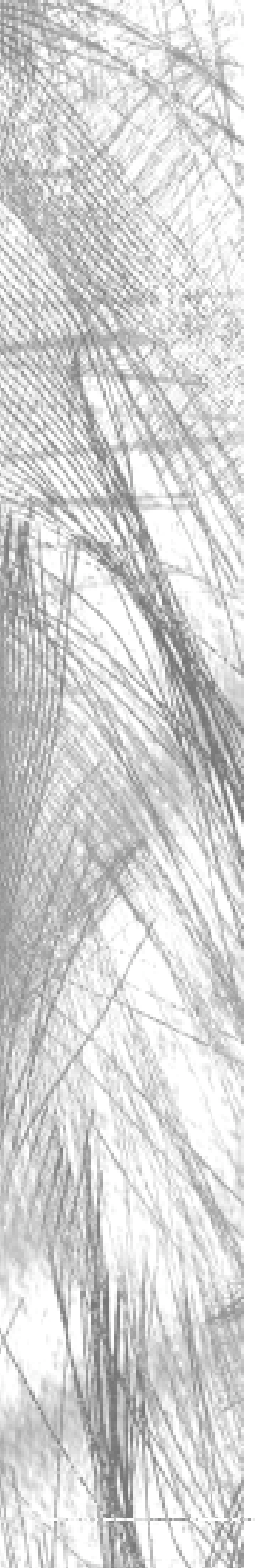

Allegories

For String Quartet

Nigel Morgan

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Allegories

For String Quartet

Nigel Morgan

An allegory is a form of extended metaphor in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. An allegory is a story with two meanings: literal and symbolic.

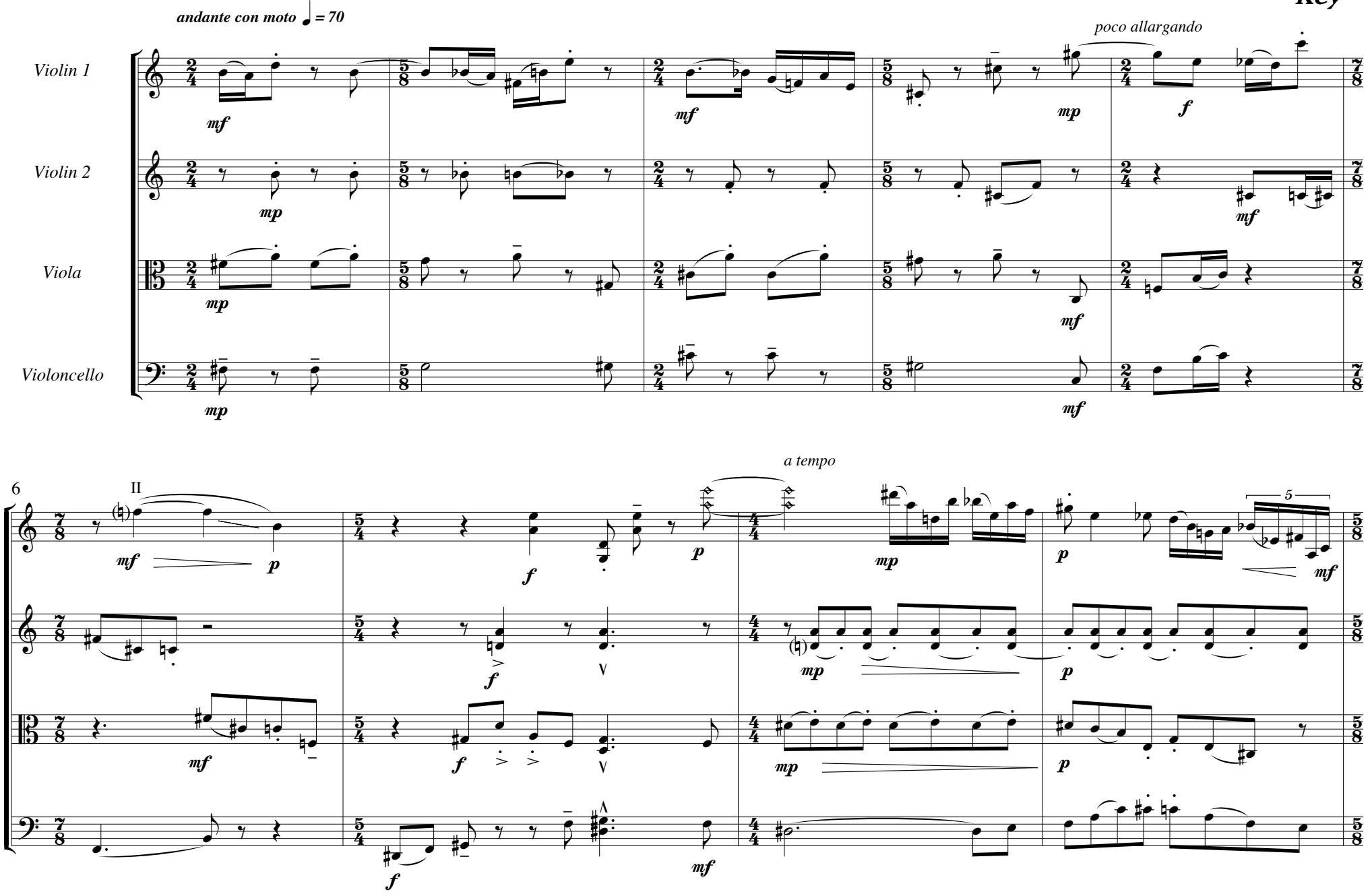
The five *Allegories* featured here come from the autobiography of a writer who believed that when young we see the world for what it really is, and then gradually become absorbed in pretence and make-believe, making reality elusive. This writer also maintained that many of our memories take on in later life the stuff on allegory, they get thoroughly transformed and veil our original childhood visions.

We've all played the association game when a word is given to us to which we are asked to respond immediately and without deliberation. These allegories are each triggered in this composition by single words, which collectively seem to conjure up whole stories, sets of circumstances or weird chain reactions of thought.

Key, *Memory*, *Adventure*, *Dream* and *Impatience* are presented as a sequence of short movements for string quartet that contain within them all kinds of emotional and musical references and devices. Some are these are really obvious, others may take time and experiment to uncover. The music might be approached as though it were the scenario for five short dramatic scenes to be mimed by a group of actors. Mime requires much exaggerated movement and a real sense of needing to communicate with the audience. Thus, the musical instructions found in the score, such as dynamics, articulation, and expressive indications are to be taken as starting points, no more.

The harmonic world that these pieces inhabit is deliberately unorthodox. The chain of tonalities through which the music moves has been devised to present a unique sound world where many of the normal conventions of harmonic practice simply don't apply. As an introduction to this approach performers are invited to explore the composer's work for solo piano called *The White Light of Wonder*. Phil Legard's web presentation of this piece and a downloadable study score can be found at http://www.nigel-morgan.co.uk. *Allegories* are the latest addition to Nigel Morgan's sequence of chamber works titled *Childhood and Memory* that take inspiration from the life and music of Robert Schumann.

Allegories is dedicated to Nick Meredith, his colleagues and students taking part in WGHS String Group Project 2008.



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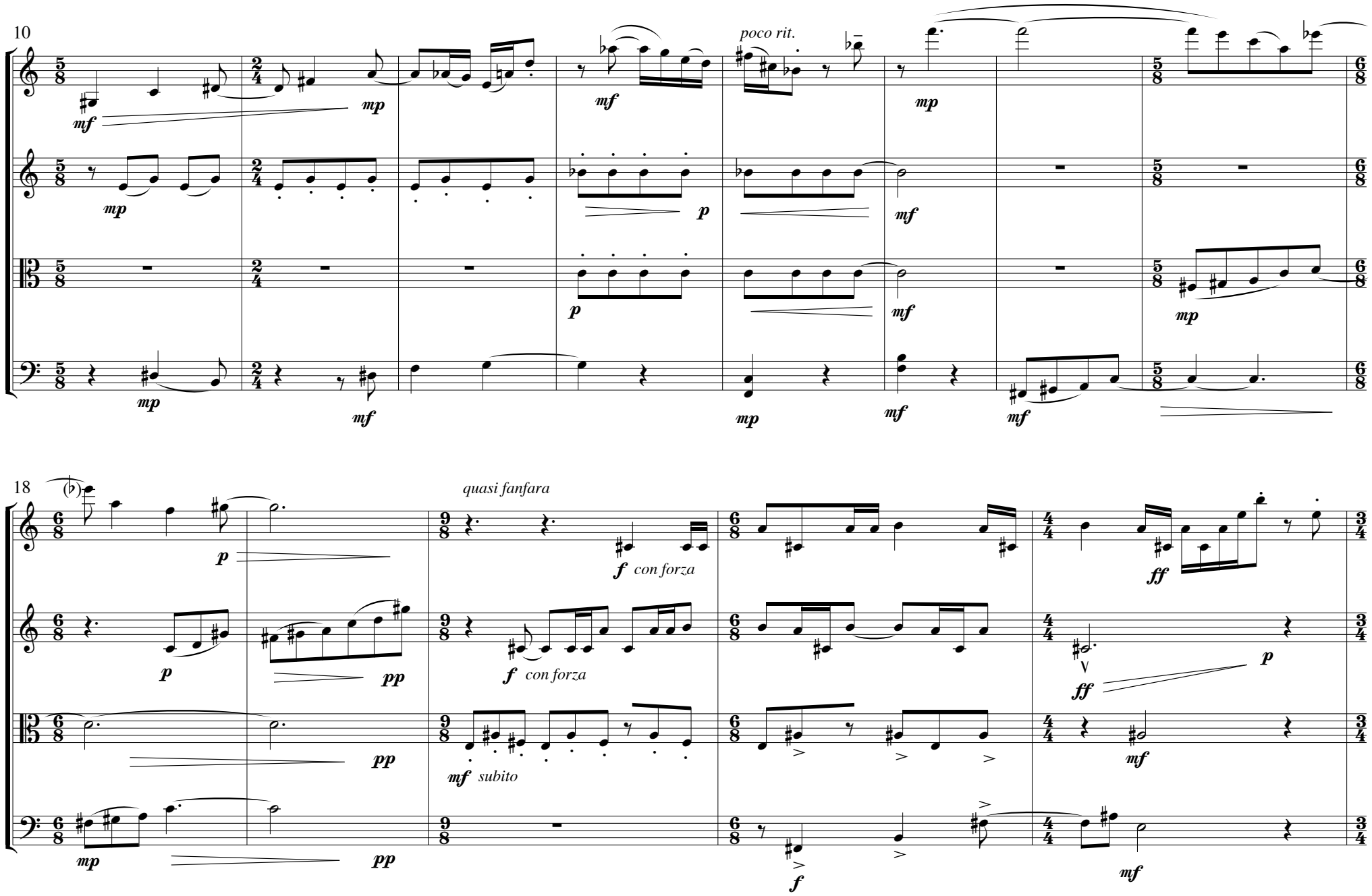
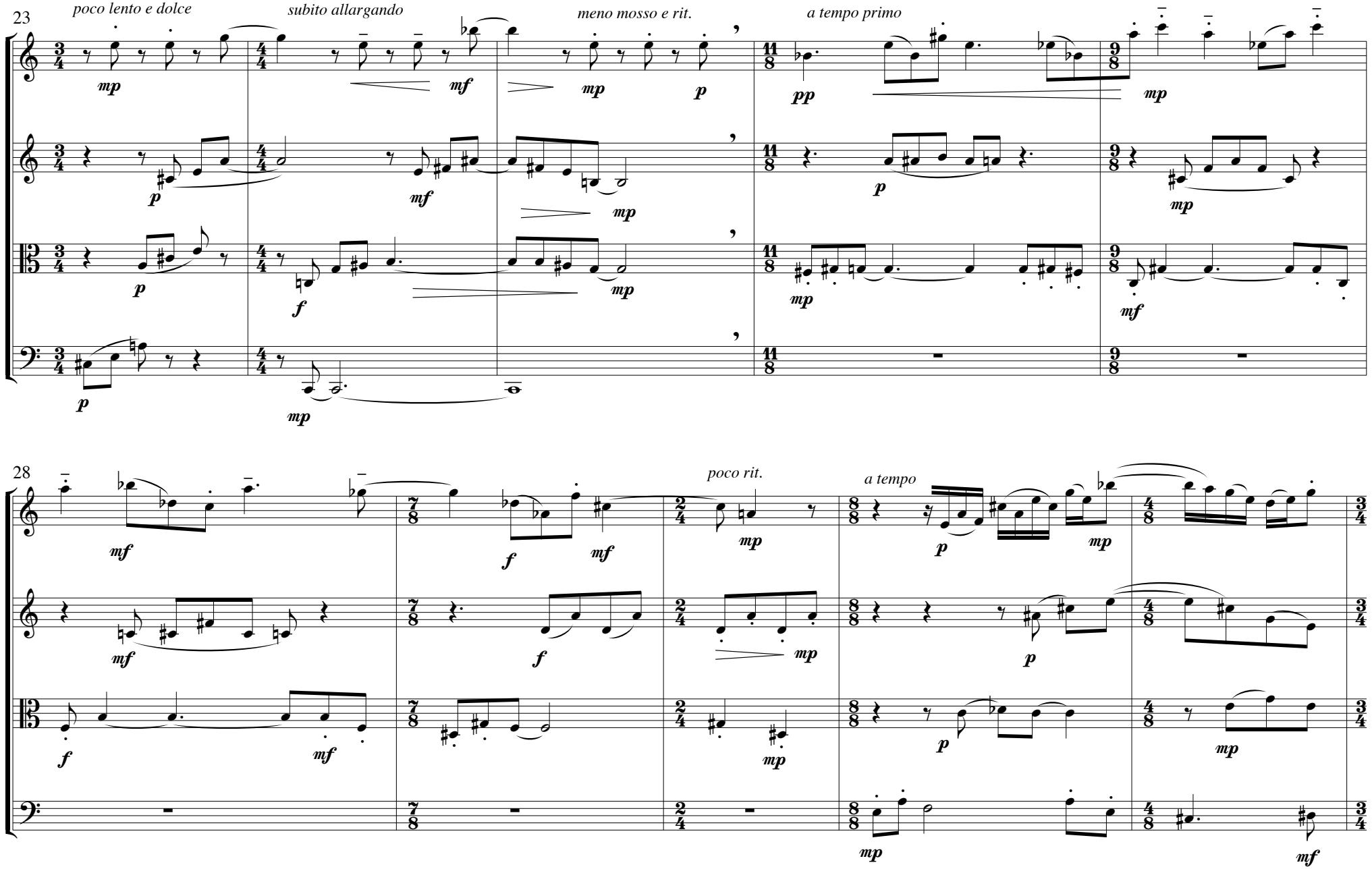
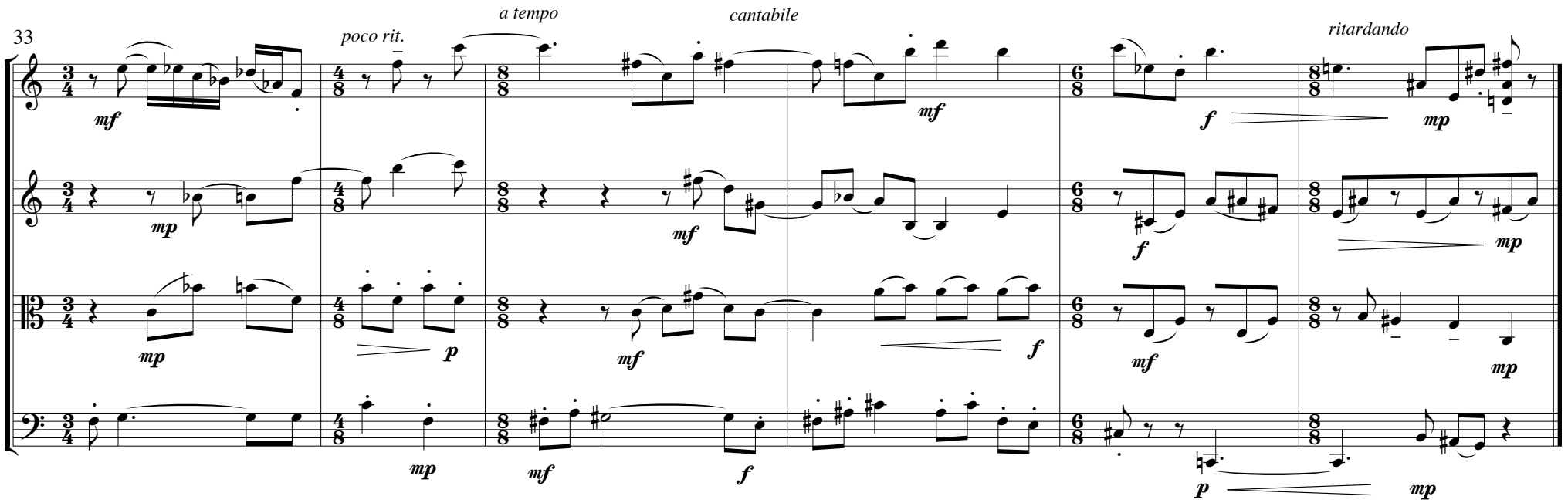
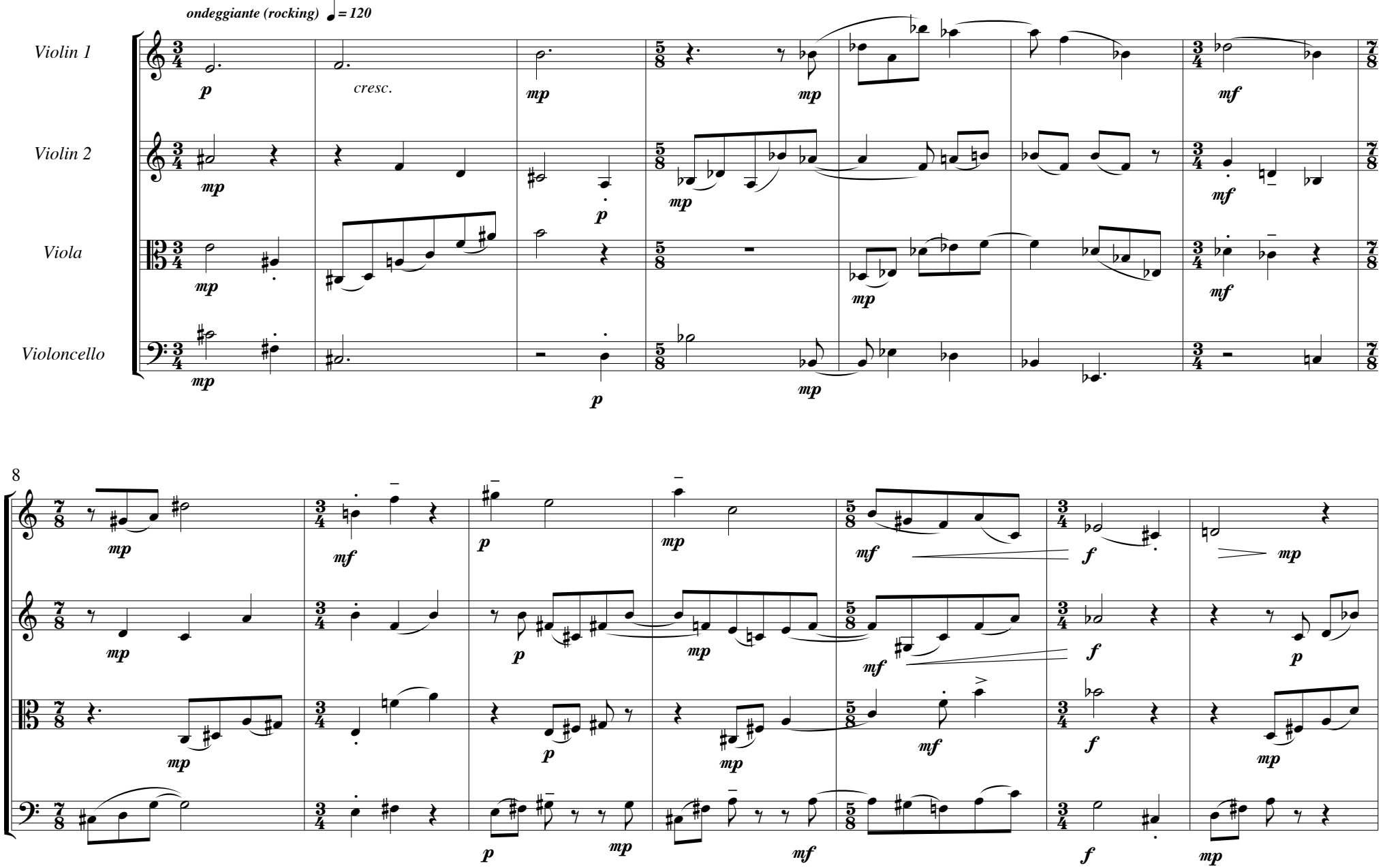
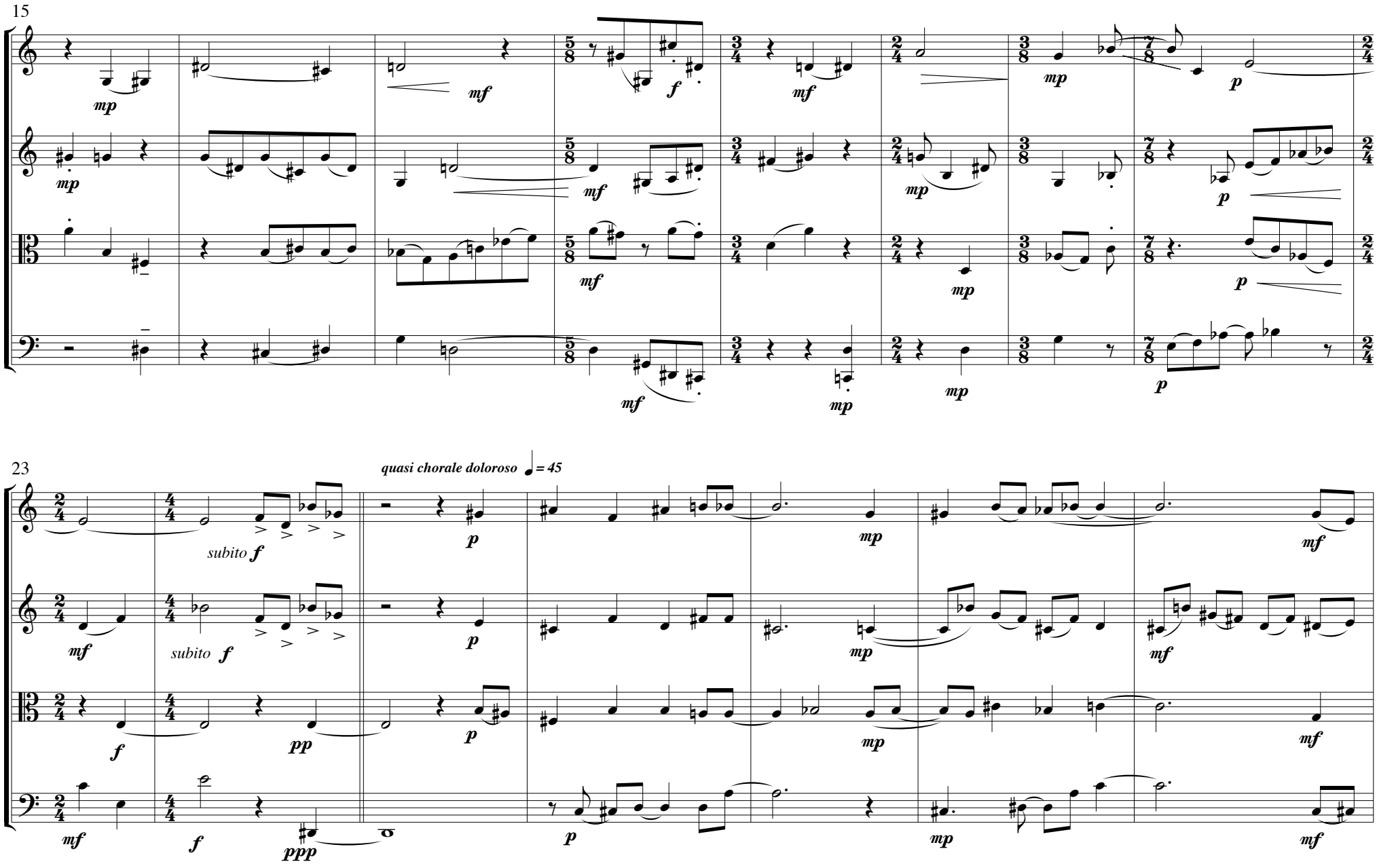

10
poco rit.
18
quasi fanfara
con forza
subito

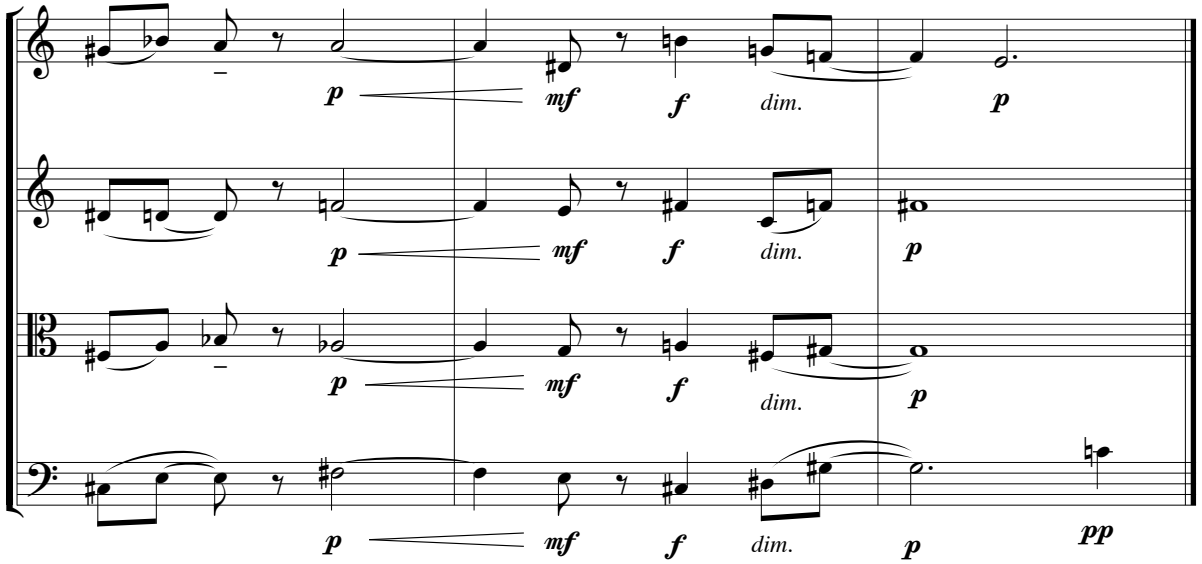

23
poco lento e dolce
subito allargando
meno mosso e rit.
a tempo primo
28
poco rit.
a tempo

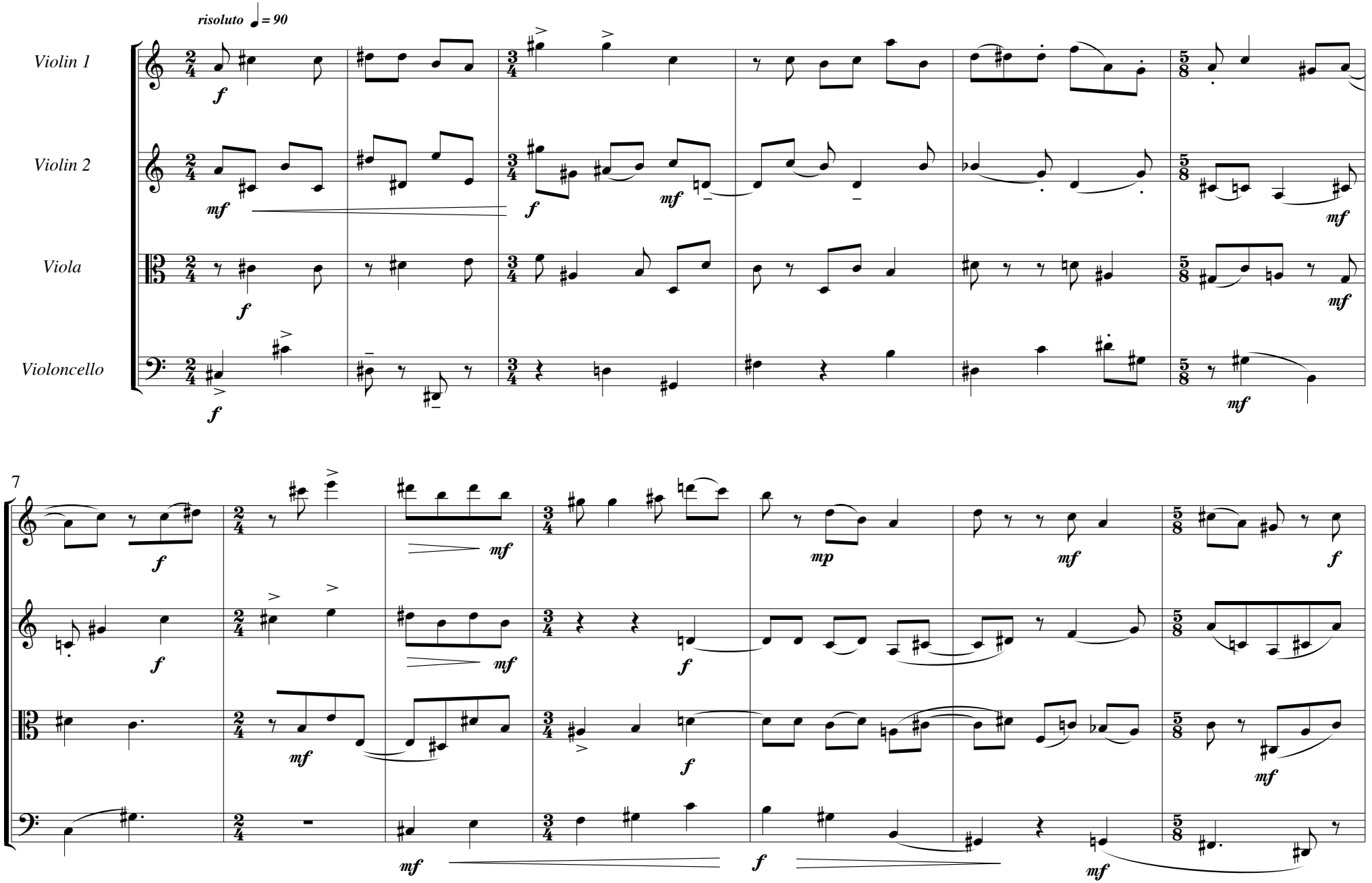

33
poco rit.
a tempo
cantabile
ritardando

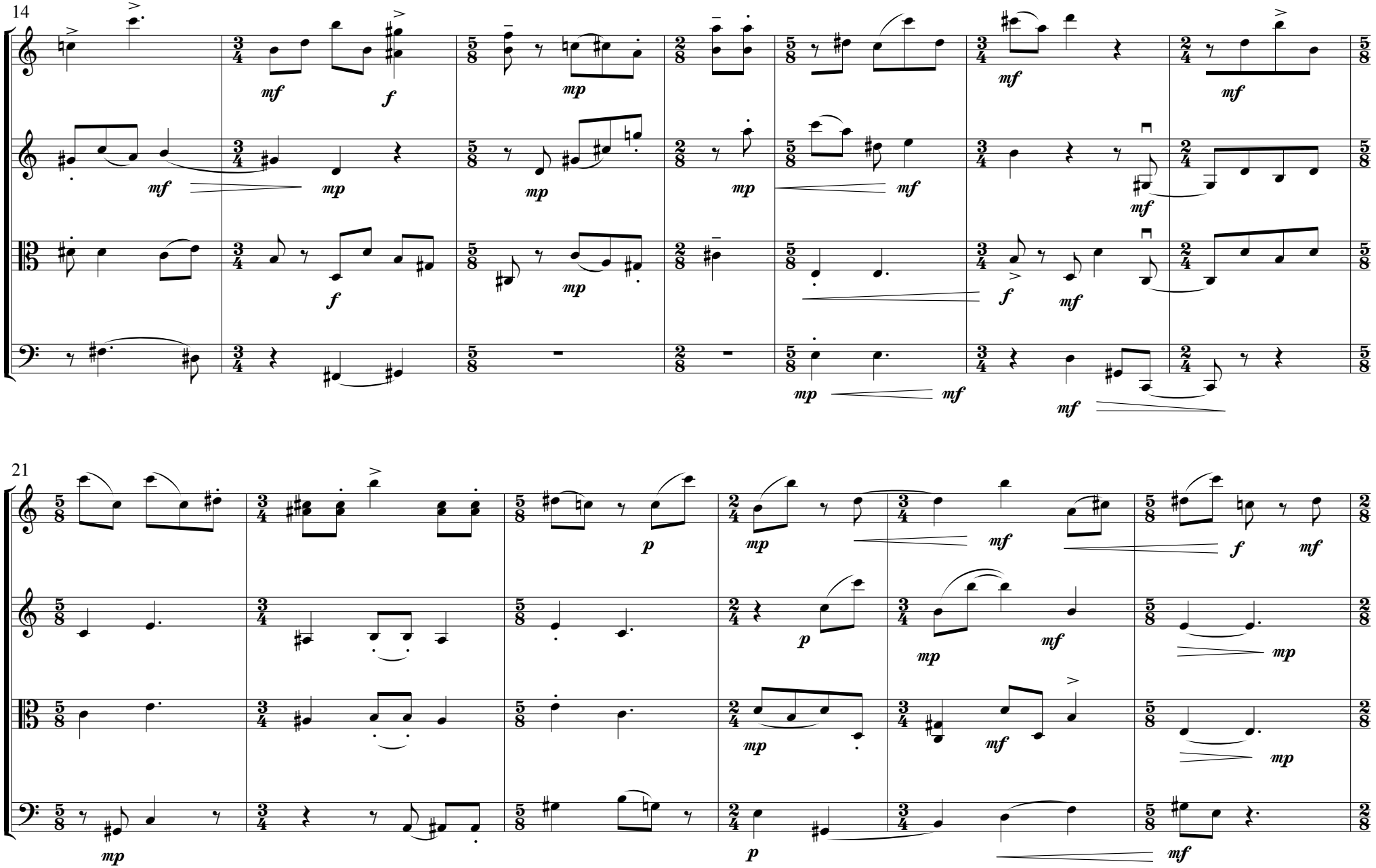

ondeggiante (rocking) ♩ = 120
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Violoncello
cresc.
8

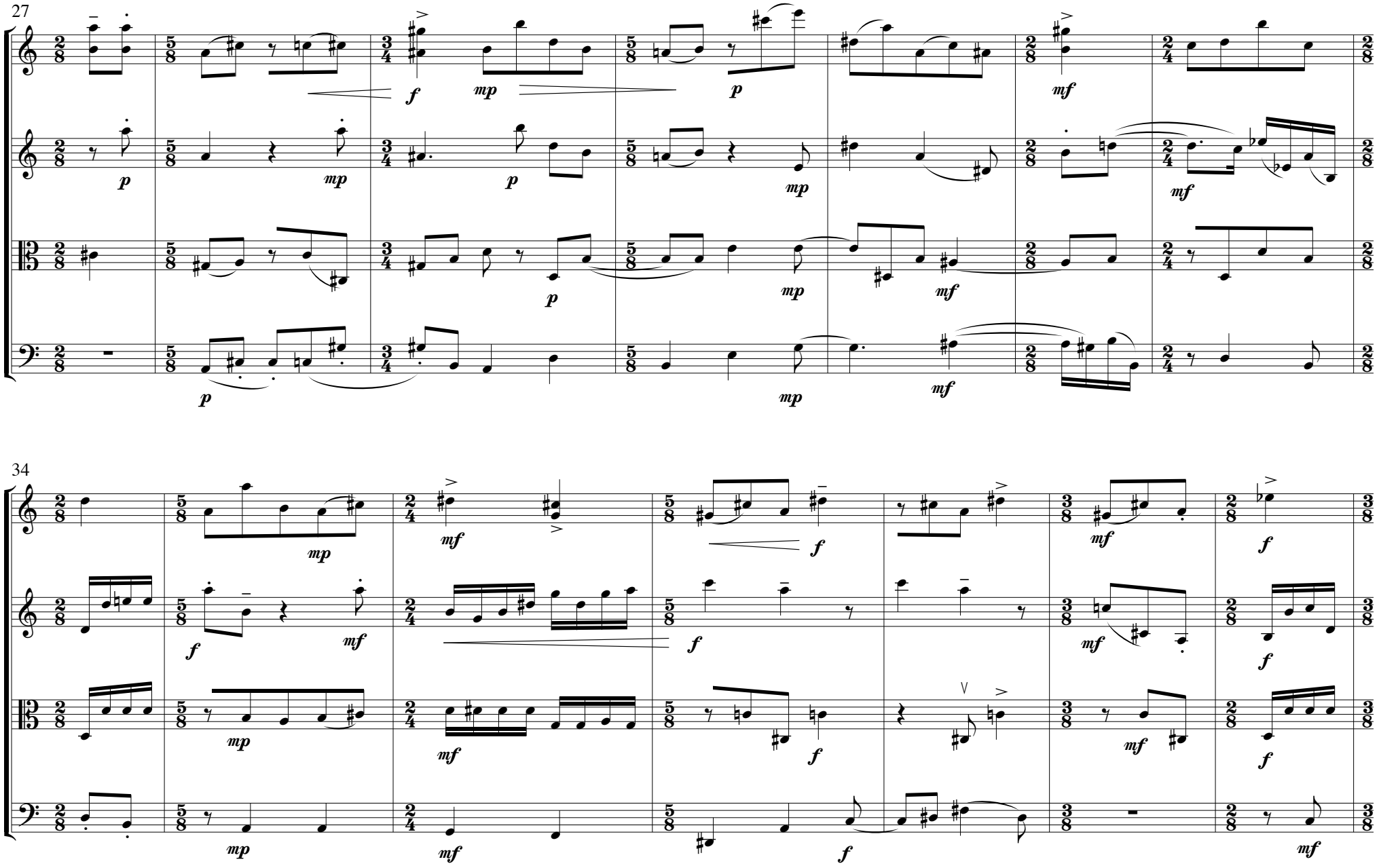

15
23
quasi chorale doloroso ♩ = 45
subito f
subito f

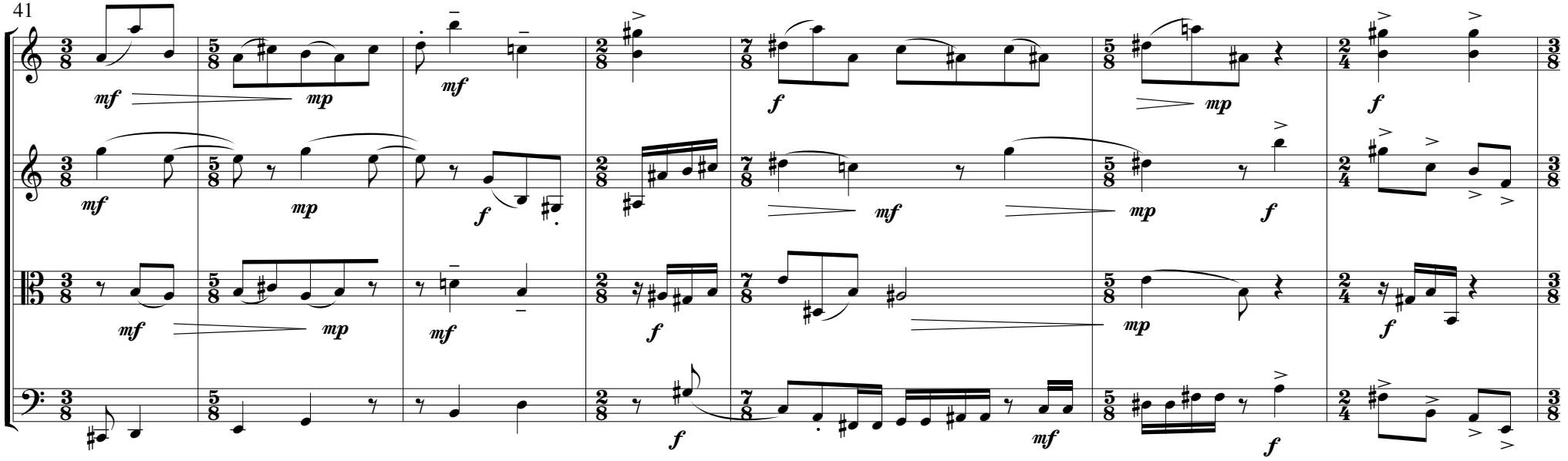
30

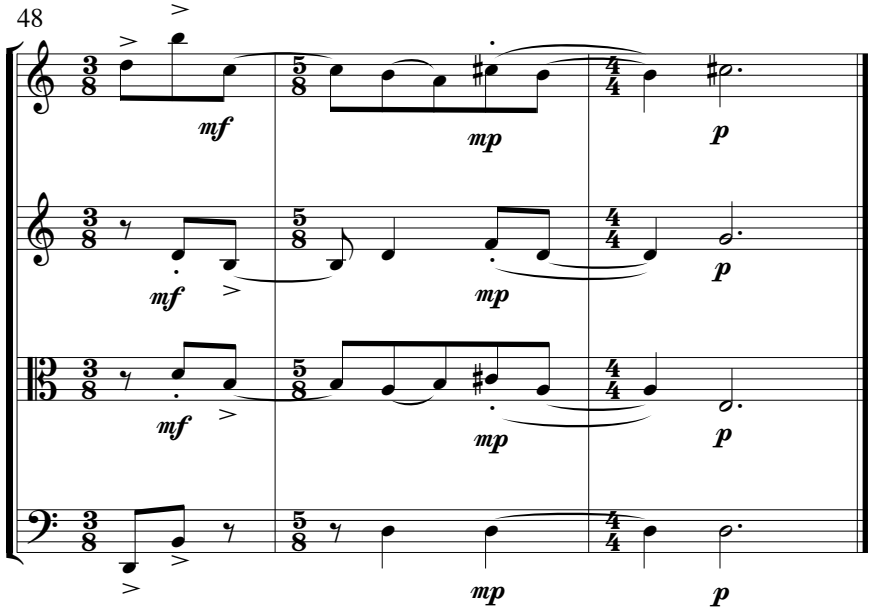


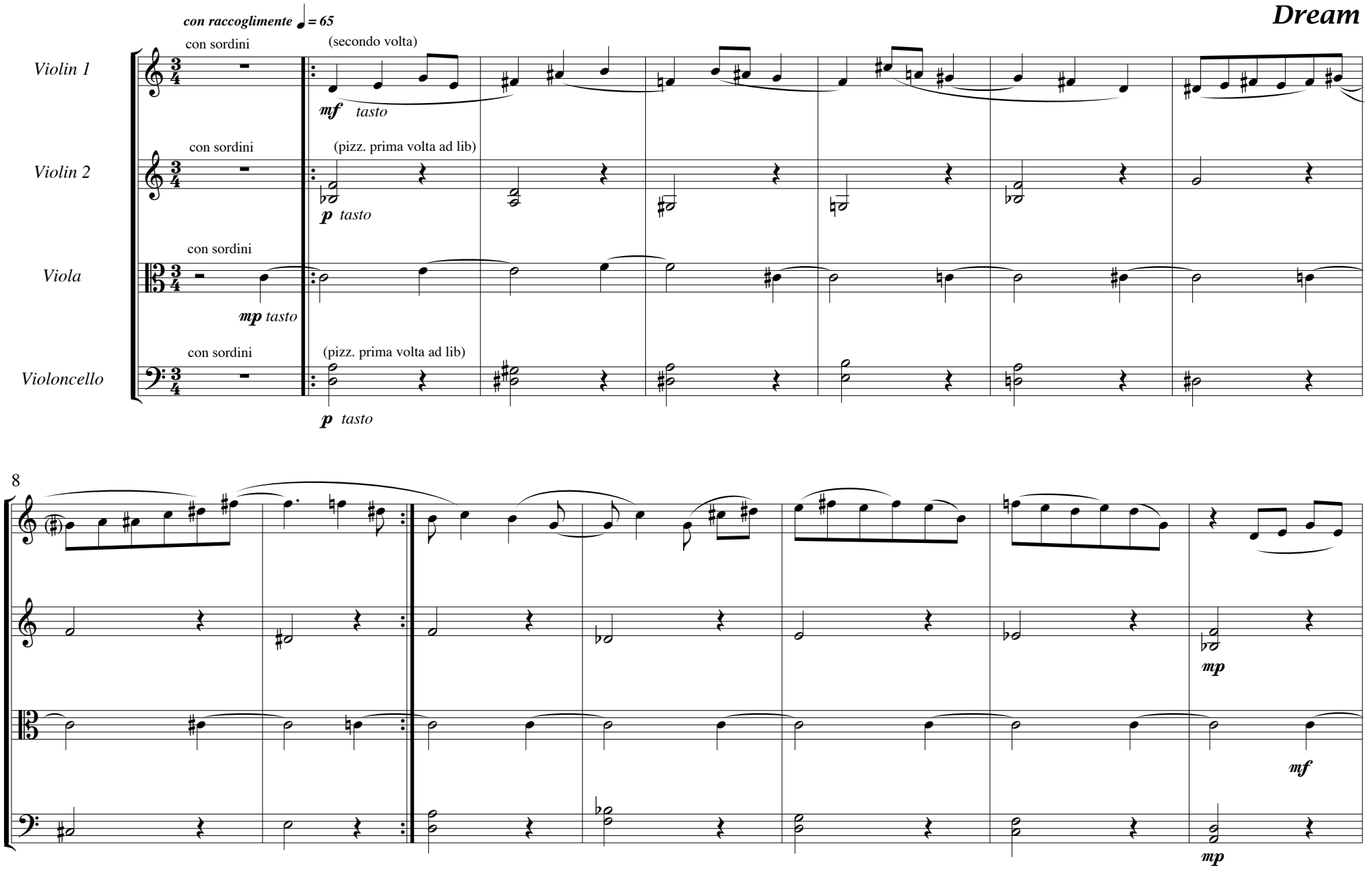

risoluto ♩ = 90
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Violoncello
7

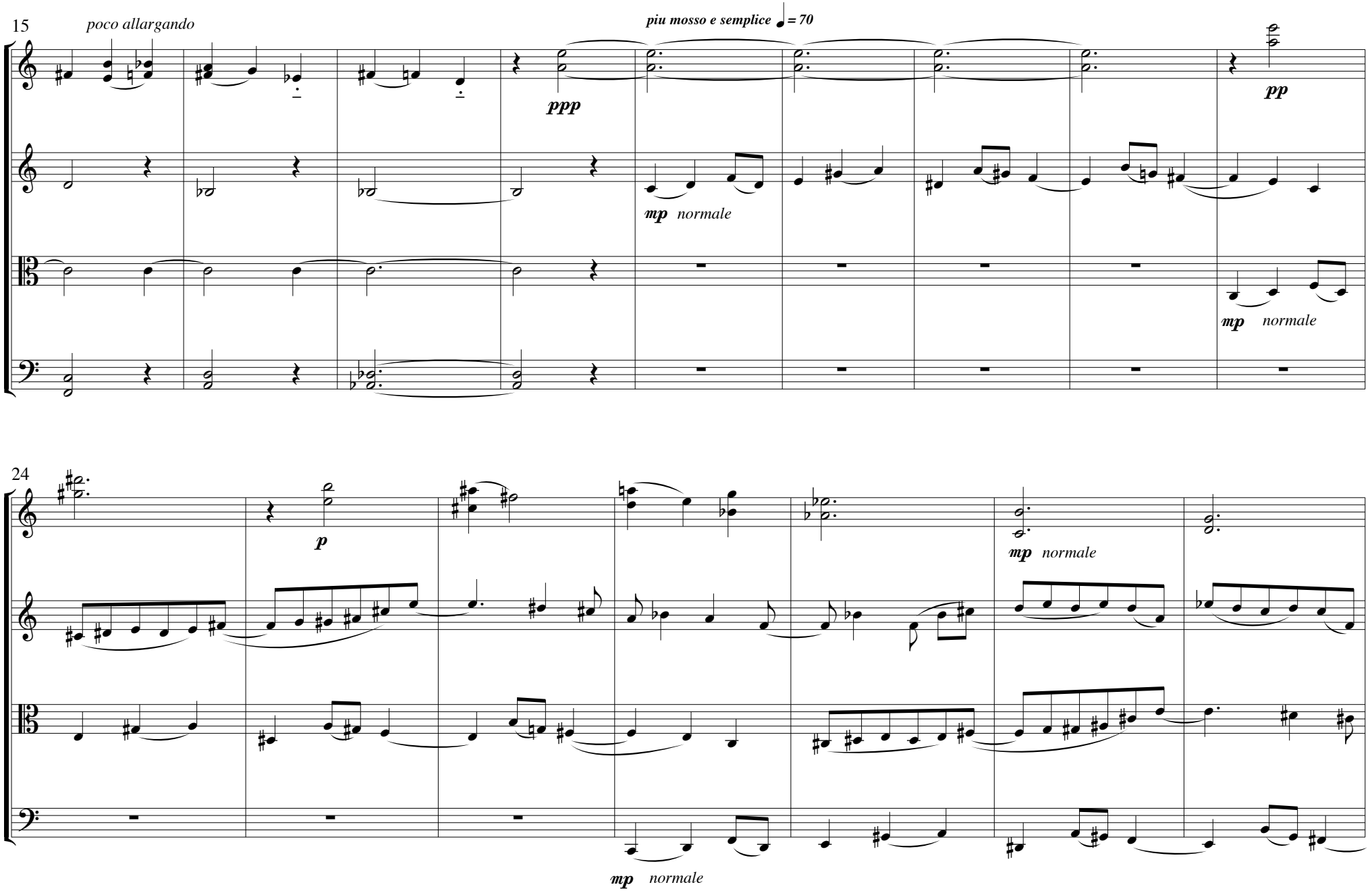

14
21

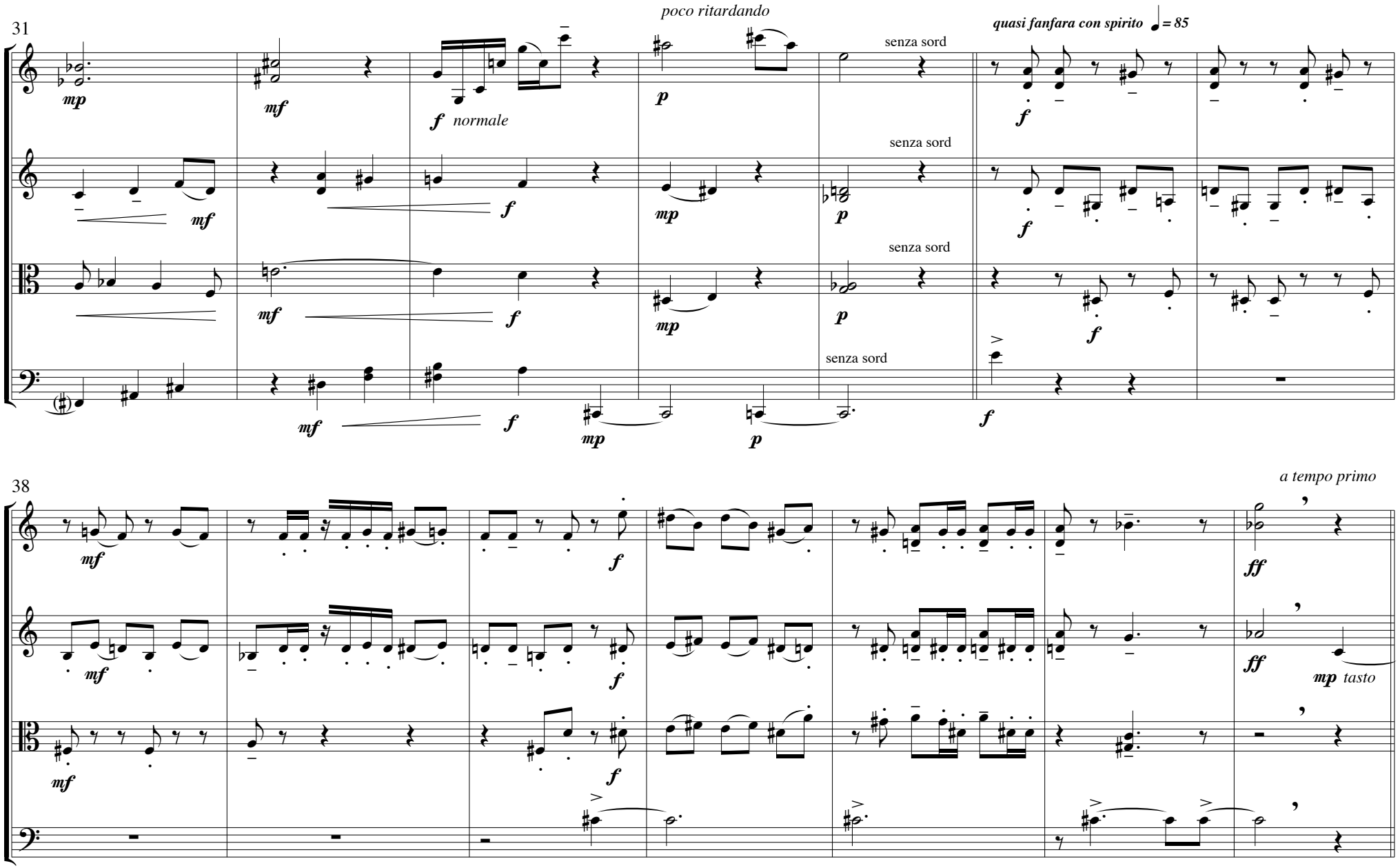

27
34

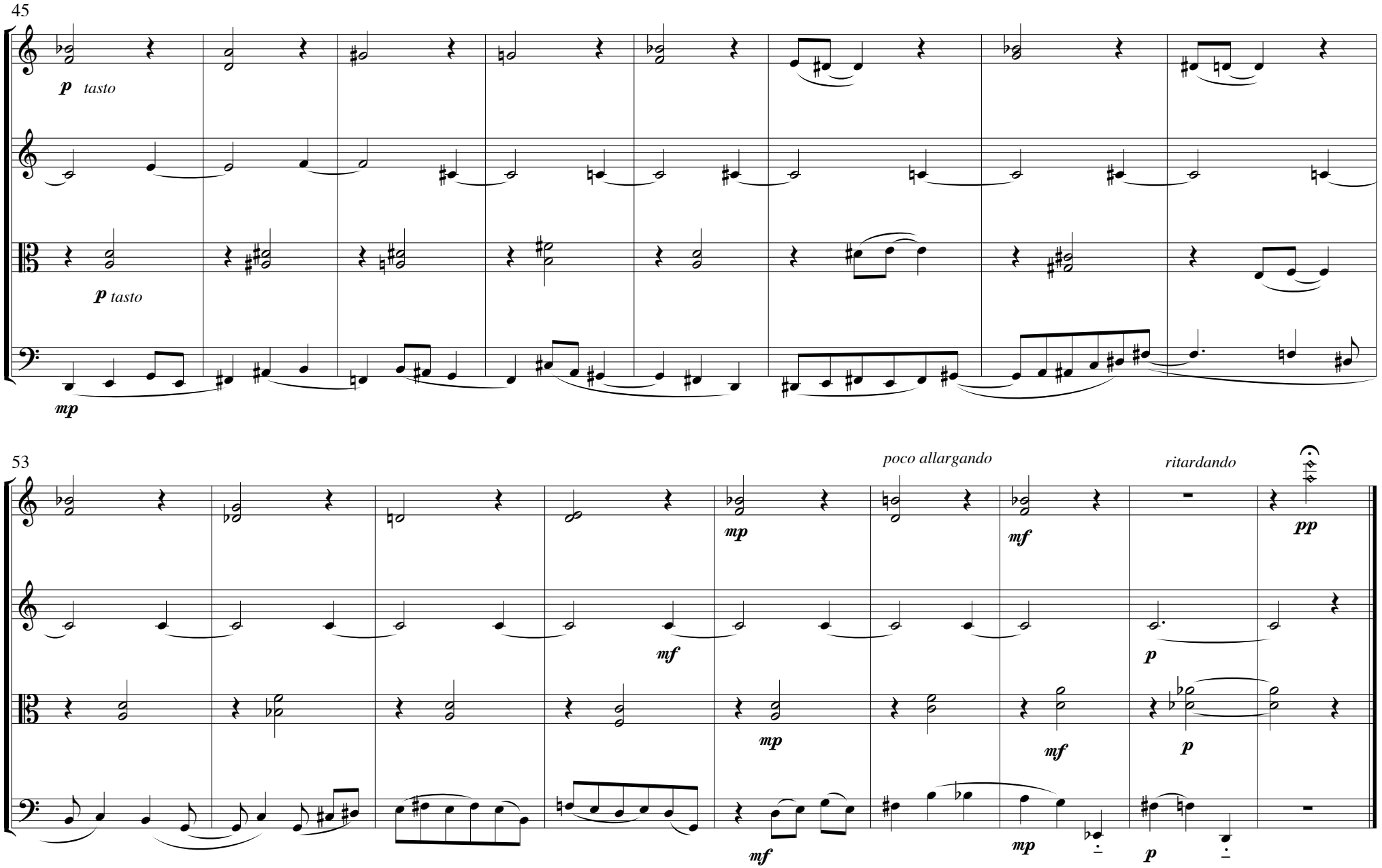

41

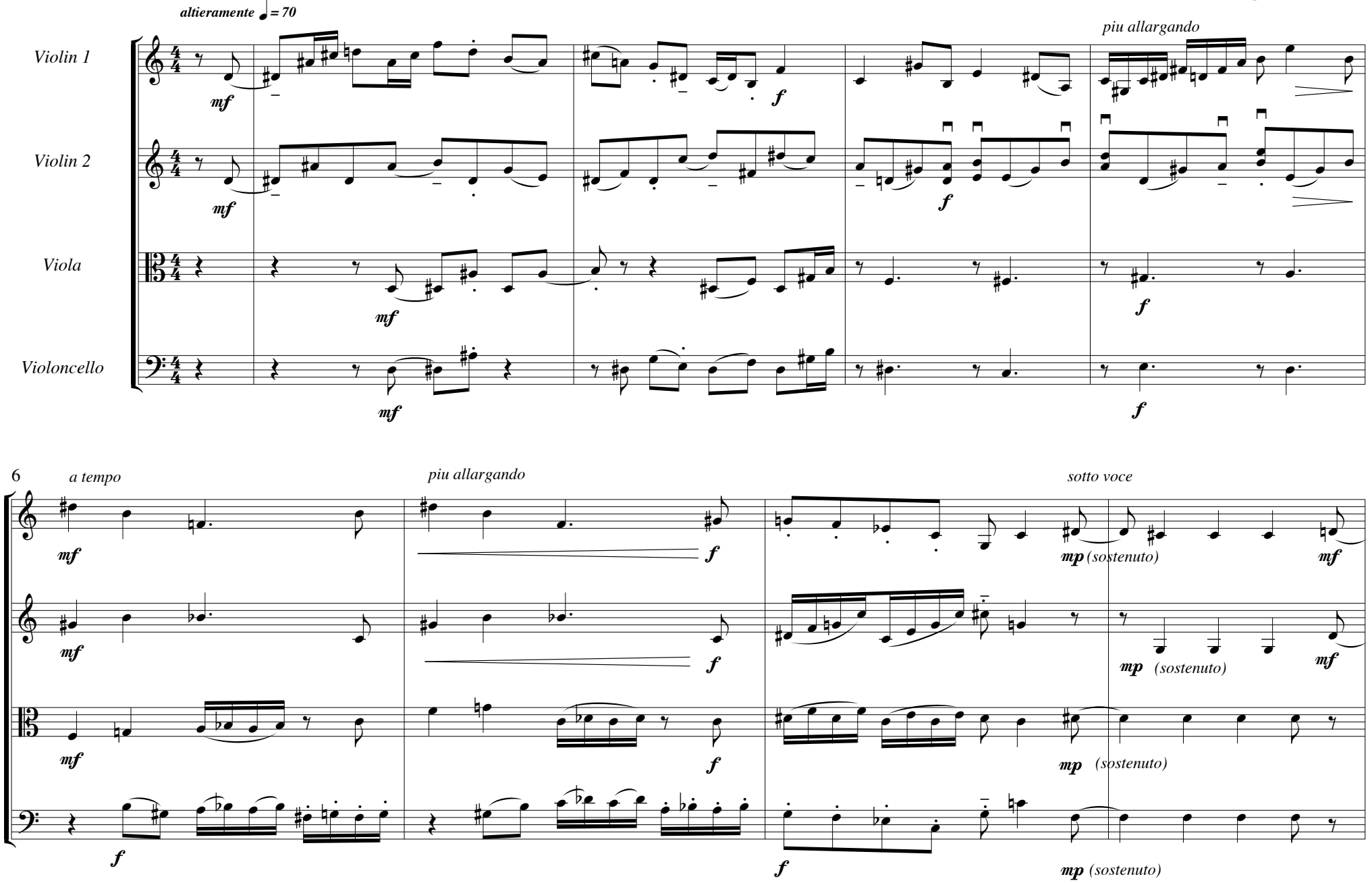

48

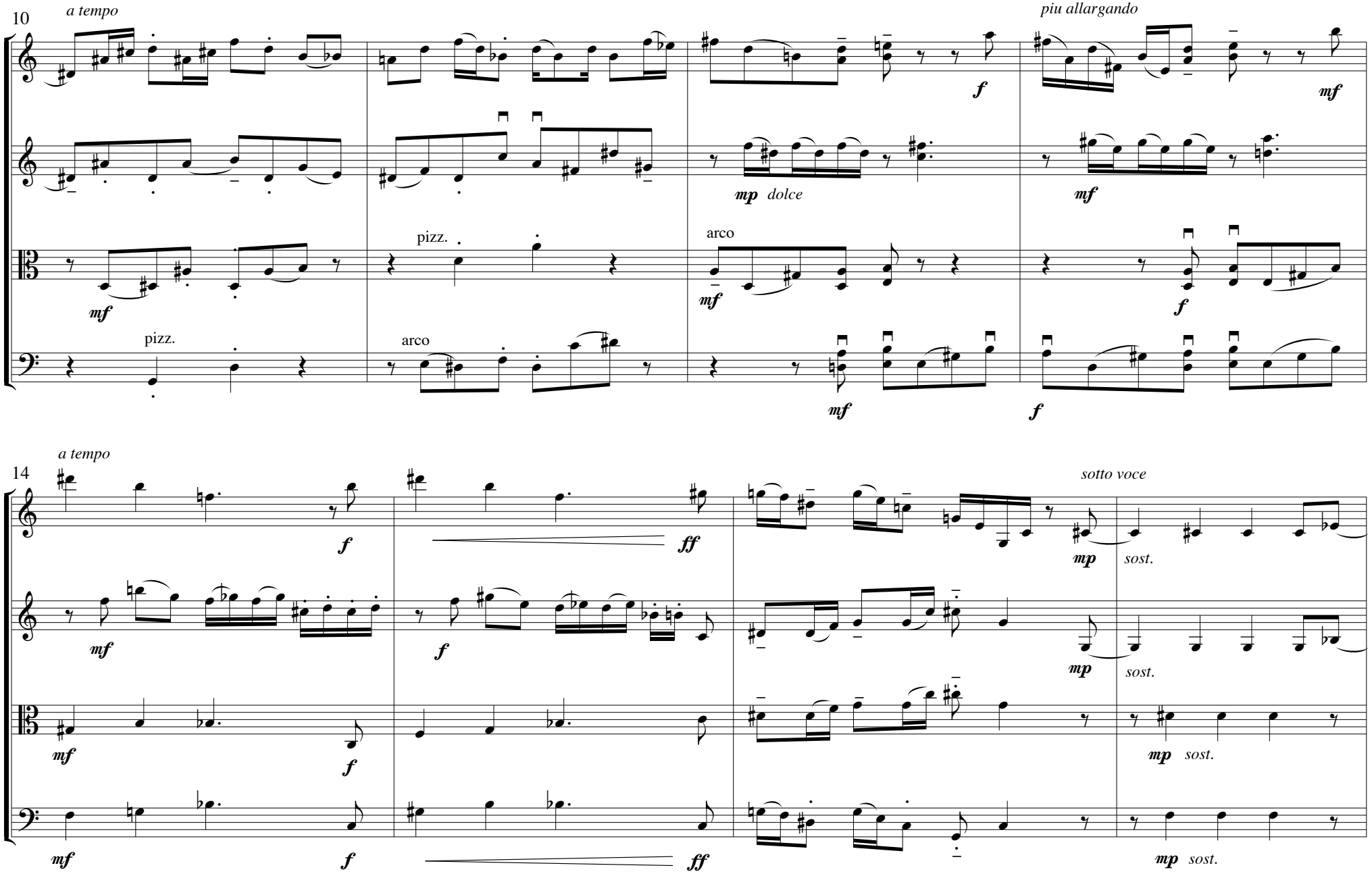

con raccoglimente ♩= 65
Violin 1
con sordini
(secondo volta)
mf tasto
Violin 2
con sordini
(pizz. prima volta ad lib)
p tasto
Viola
con sordini
mp tasto
Violoncello
con sordini
(pizz. prima volta ad lib)
p tasto
8
mp
mf
mp

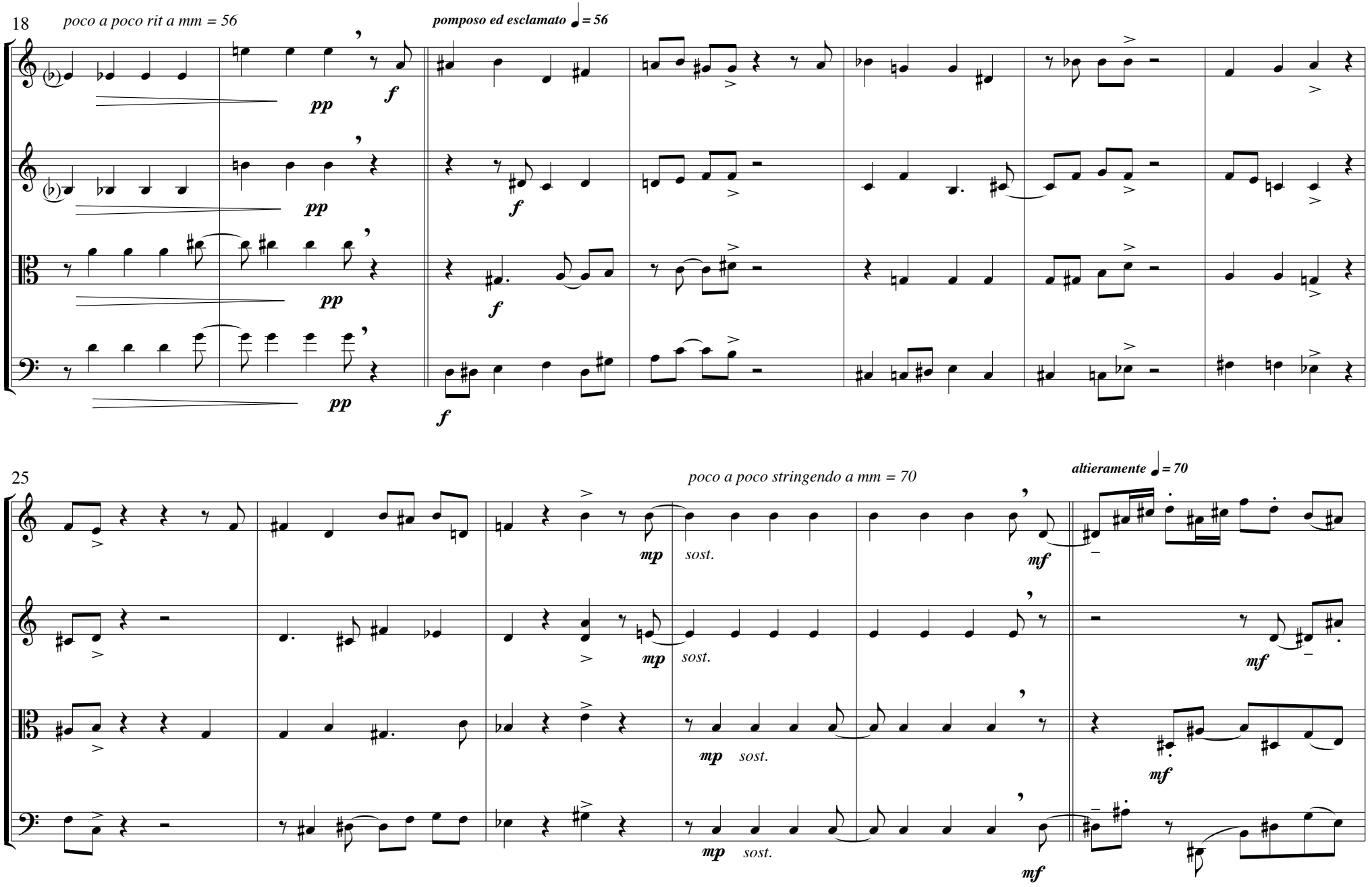

15
poco allargando
piu mosso e semplice ♩= 70
ppp
pp
mp normale
mp normale
24
p
mp normale
mp normale

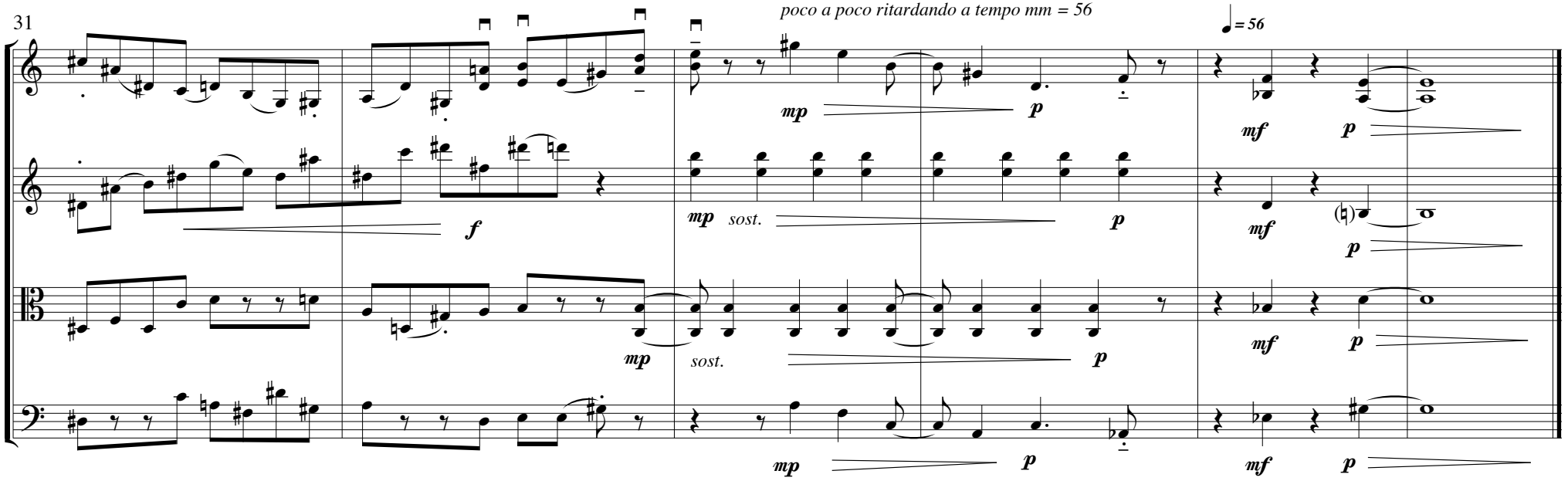

31
poco ritardando
quasi fanfara con spirito ♩ = 85
senza sord
senza sord
senza sord
senza sord
normale
38
a tempo primo
tasto


45
p tasto
p tasto
mp
53
poco allargando
ritardando
mp
mf
mf
pp
mf
mp
mf
p
mp
mf
p
p


altieramente ♩ = 70
piu allargando
Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Violoncello
mf
f
6
a tempo
piu allargando
sotto voce
mp (sostenuto)


10
a tempo
piu allargando
mp dolce
mf
pizz.
arco
14
a tempo
sotto voce
sost.


18
poco a poco rit a mm = 56
pomposo ed esclamato ♩ = 56
pp
f
25
poco a poco stringendo a mm = 70
altieramente ♩ = 70
mp
sost.
mf


31
poco a poco ritardando a tempo mm = 56
♩= 56
mp
p
mf
p
f
mp
sost.
p
mf
p
mp
sost.
p
mf
p
mp
p
mf
p