John Pierce O'Reilly

Mus Mea

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For Three Voices and String Trio

On text by Stewart Lee

Duration: 7-8 minutes

Performance Notes

A conductor is recommended if not essential, and therefore 4 scores in addition to the string parts are required for performance.

The bass part performs the role of narrator, with the soprano and alto representing a quasi 'Greek choir', reacting to and echoing what is expressed by the narrator. Thus the work may be staged and performed dramatically, and this decision is left to the performers' discretion.

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The text is used with the express permission of Stewart Lee, *Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle* Series 4 Episode 4 'Death' (2016).

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to the composition lecturers at the University of Manchester, in addition to the invaluable suggestions of my close friend Hugh Morris.

The first performance of this piece was given in The Cosmo Rodewald Concert Hall on 8th May 2019 by the following performers:

Conductor - Hugh Morris
Soprano - Katie Emanuel
Alto - Bonnie Schwarz
Bass - Edmund Phillips
Violin - Jossy Hilder
Viola - Nadia Eskandari
ViolonCello - Patrick Shepherd

I think the first time that I learned about death was from the death of my pet mouse
which was given to me by my uncle when I was six.
I loved that mouse, I sort of imagined the mouse had some kind of relationship with me.
Every night, after school, I would tell my mouse about my day, my worries, and my concerns.
And he lies on the floor, scratching and eating and making smells, and then he turns his back on me,
and goes off and urinates in the corner.
One day I came home from school, and saw that the mouse was obviously dead.
There was blood in the mouse's mouth and his neck had got twisted as he tried to bite his way
through a bar of his cage.
I assumed he had been contended enough.
I mean, he had a wheel.
But it appears my mouse had been so depressed that he had killed himself while trying to escape.
Now I'm older, I wonder is that what gets us all in the end – a slow, creeping realisation
of the sheer pointlessness of existence.

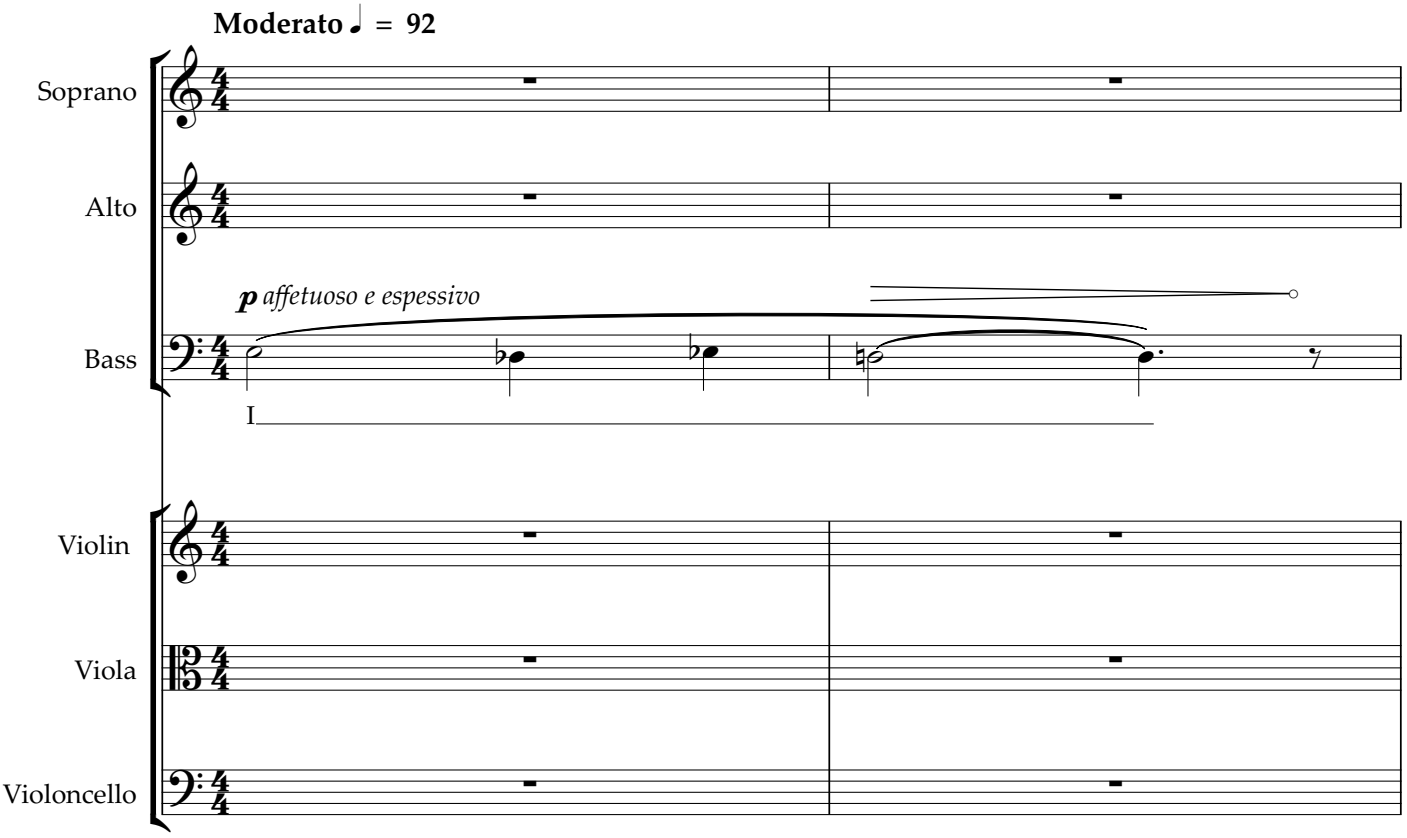
- Stewart Lee

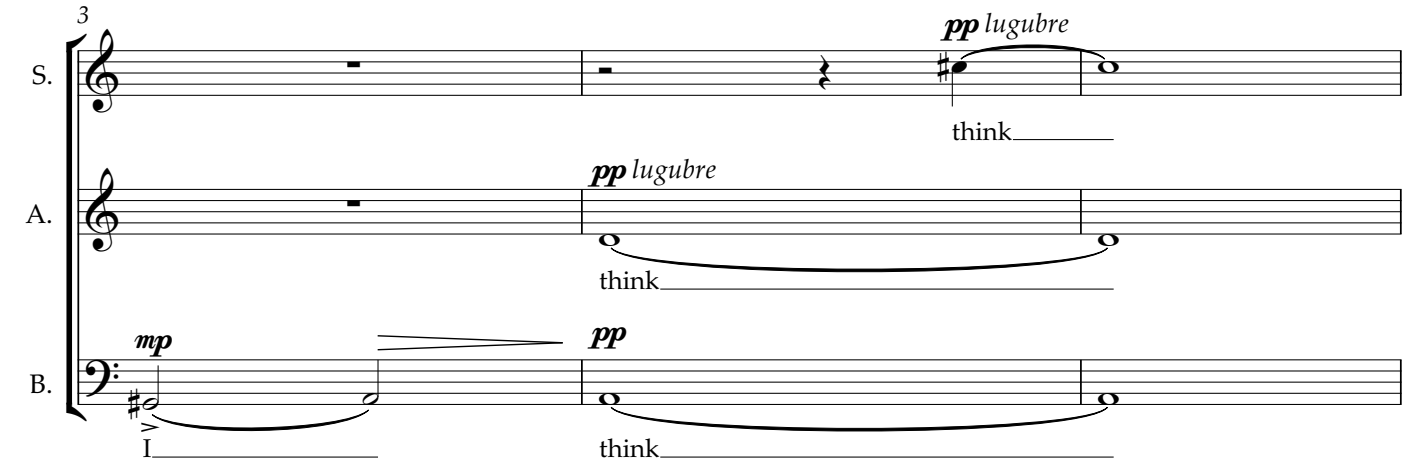
Taken from a transcript of *Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle* Series 4 Episode 4 'Death' (2016)

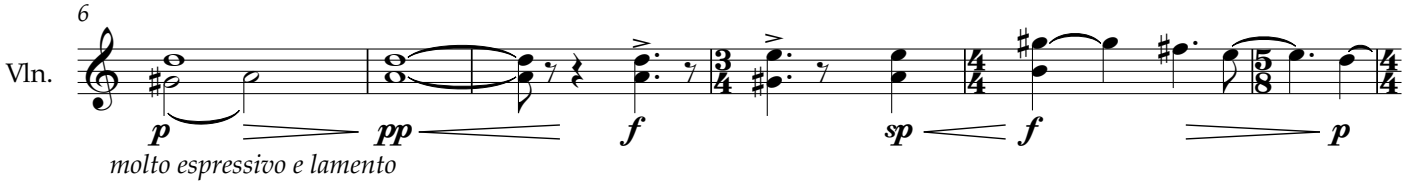
Mus Mea

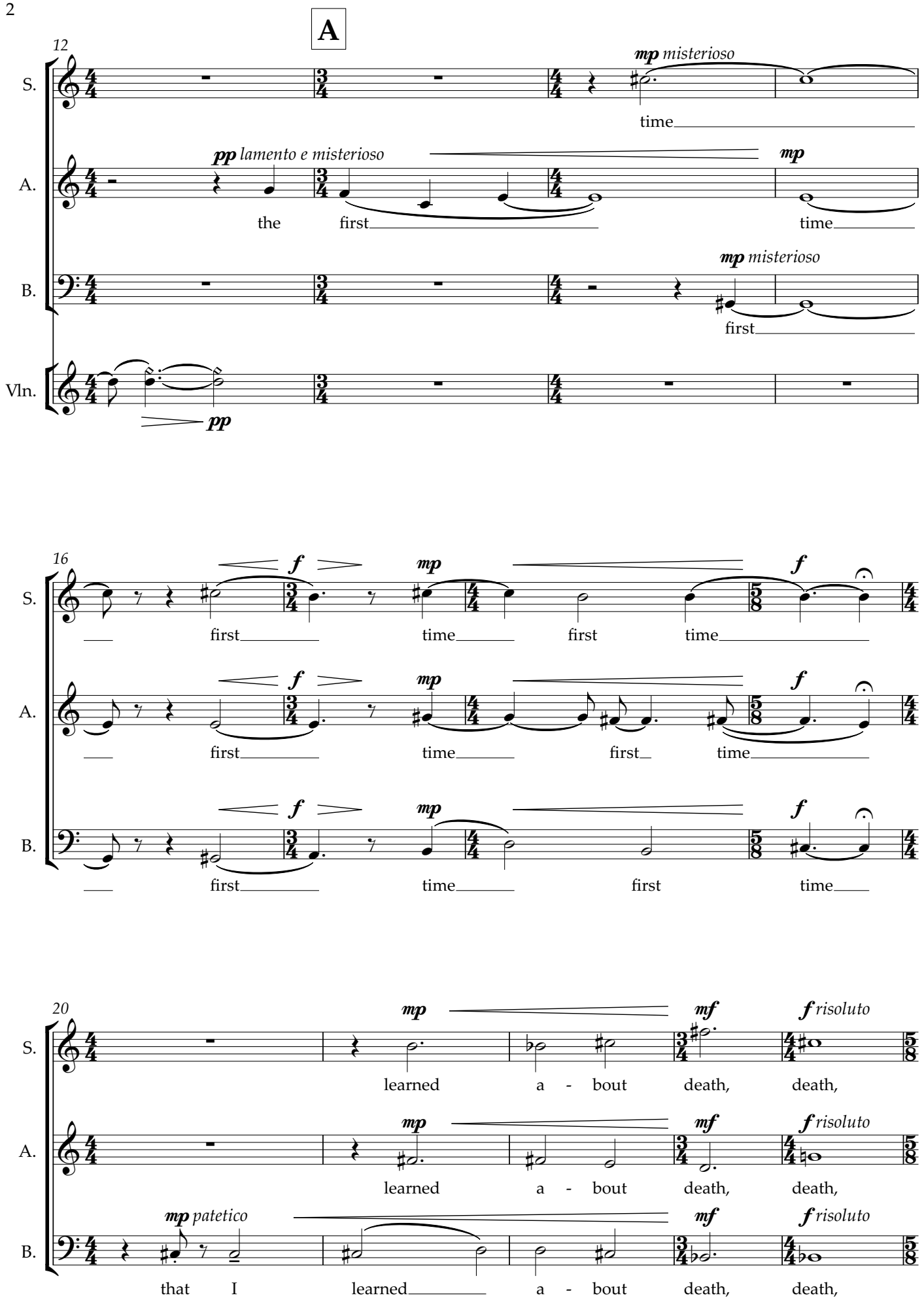
Stewart Lee (1968 -)

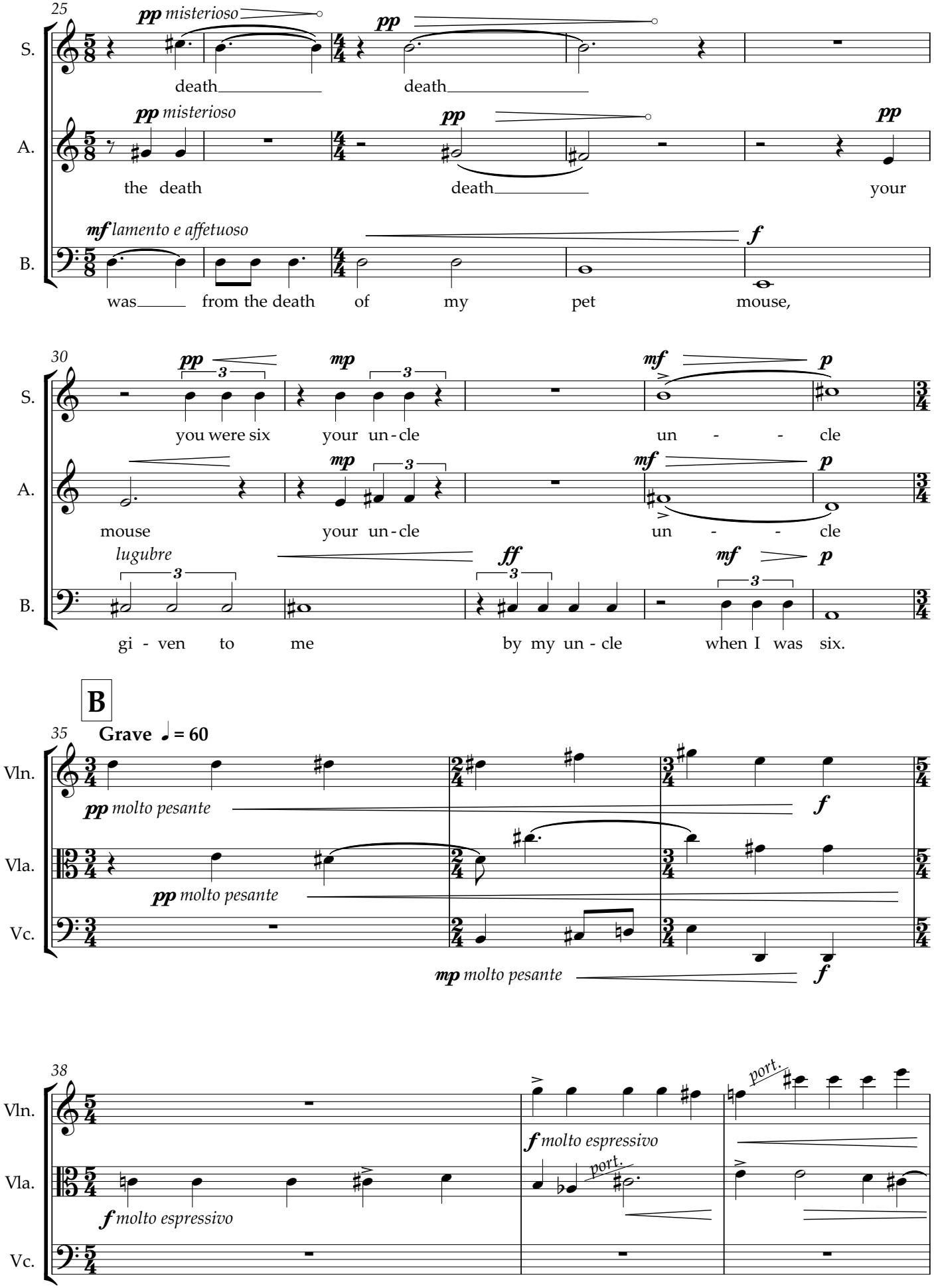
John Pierce O'Reilly



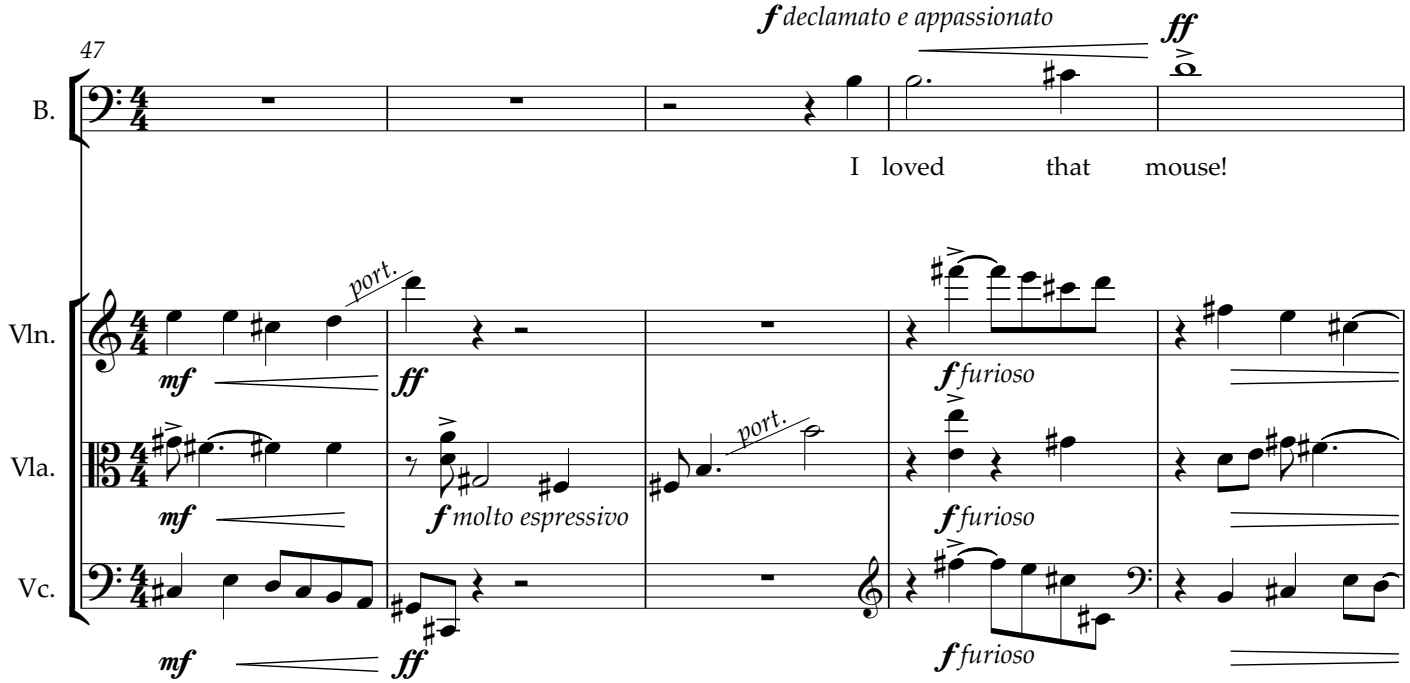





A
12
S.
A.
B.
Vln.
mp misterioso
time
pp lamento e misterioso
the
first
mp
time
mp misterioso
first
pp
16
f
mp
f
first
time
first
time
first
time
first
time
first
time
first
time
20
mp
mf
f risoluto
learned
a - bout
death,
death,
mp patetico
that
I
learned
a - bout
death,
death,


25
pp misterioso
pp
S.
death
death
pp misterioso
pp
pp
A.
the death
death
your
mf lamento e affetuoso
f
B.
was
from the death
of
my
pet
mouse,
30
pp
mp
mf
p
S.
you were six
your un-cle
un - - cle
mp
mf
p
A.
mouse
your un-cle
un - - cle
lugubre
ff
mf
p
B.
gi - ven
to
me
by my un-cle
when I was six.
B
35
Grave ♩ = 60
Vln.
pp molto pesante
f
Vla.
pp molto pesante
Vc.
mp molto pesante
f
38
Vln.
f molto espressivo
port.
Vla.
f molto espressivo
port.
Vc.

41
S.
mp lugubre e misterioso
mouse
A.
mp lugubre e misterioso
mouse
B.
mp lugubre e misterioso
my
mouse
Vln.
ff
pp
p
Vla.
mf
pp
p
Vc.
f molto pesante
pp
p


47
B.
f declamato e appassionato
ff
I loved that mouse!
Vln.
mf
port.
ff
f furioso
Vla.
mf
f molto espressivo
port.
f furioso
Vc.
mf
ff
f furioso

C

52

f lugubre e lamentabile

B. I___ sort__ of__ i - ma - gined the mouse_ had some kind of re -

Vln. *p*

Vla. *p*

Vc. *p*

p dolce

p dolce

56

B. -la - tion - ship with me

Vln. *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Vc. *pp misterioso* *p*

58

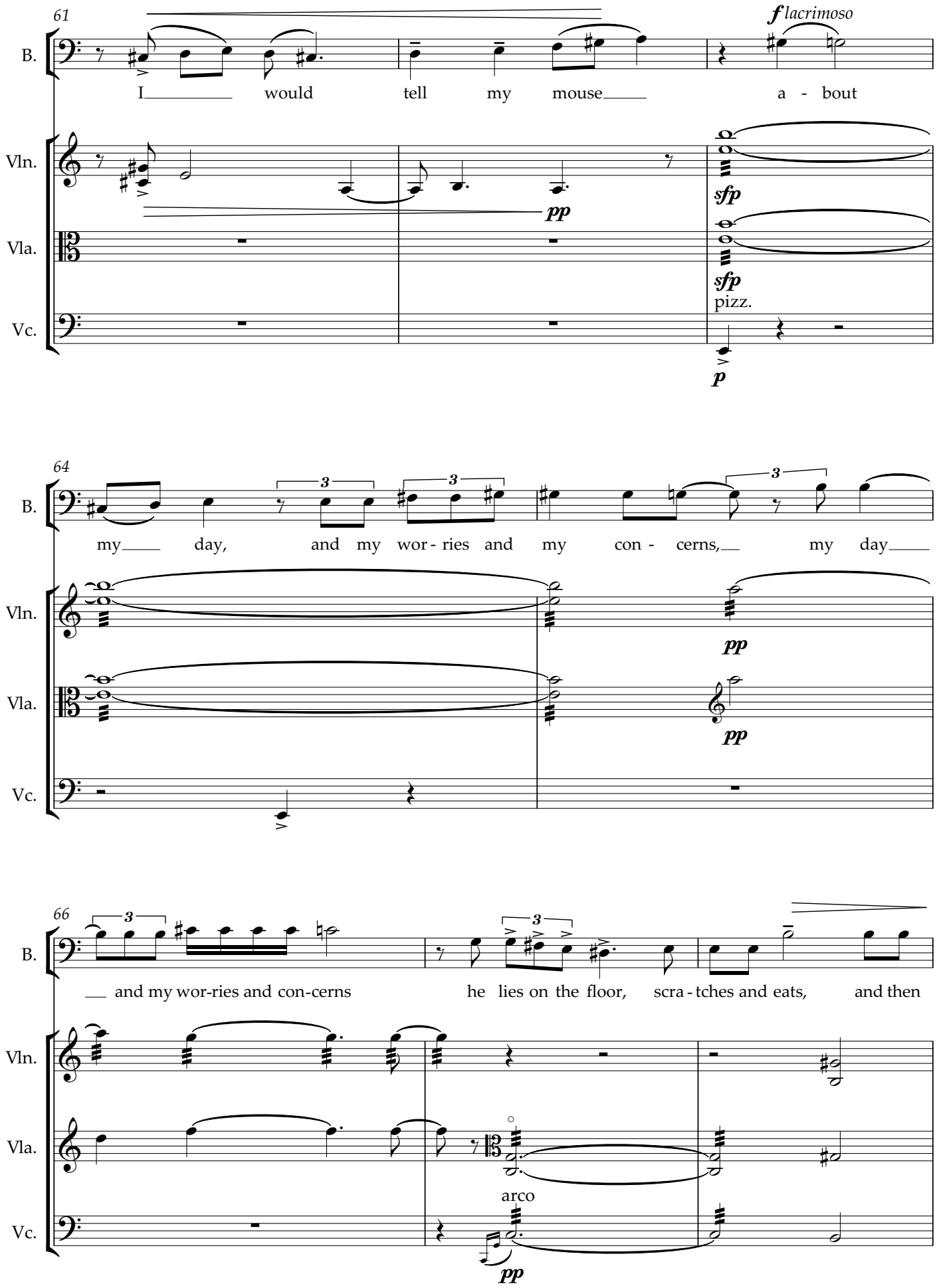
mf affettuoso

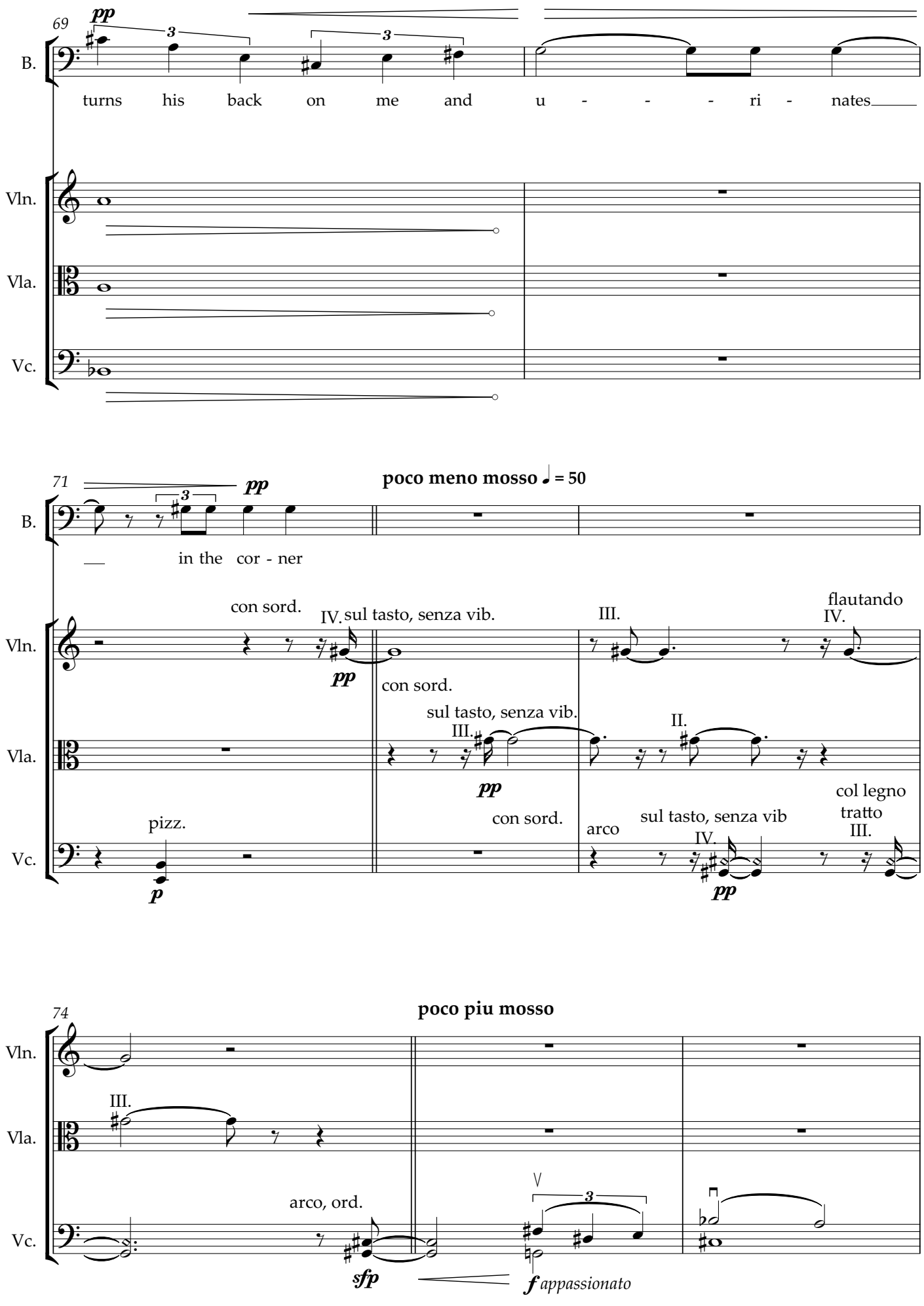
B. ev - ery night_ af - ter___ school

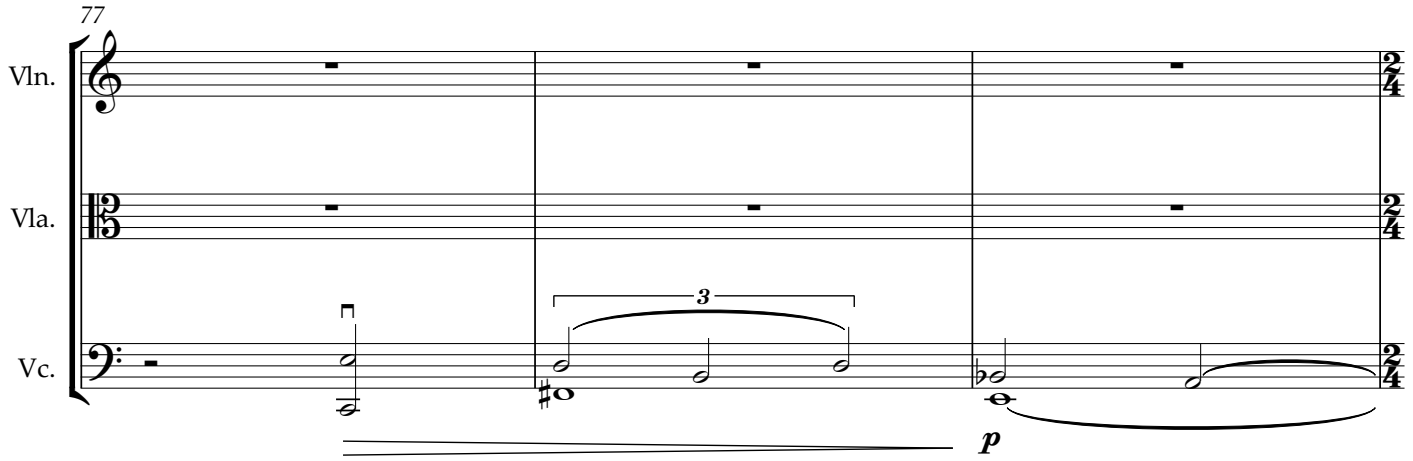
Vln. *mf* *ff* *mp intimo*

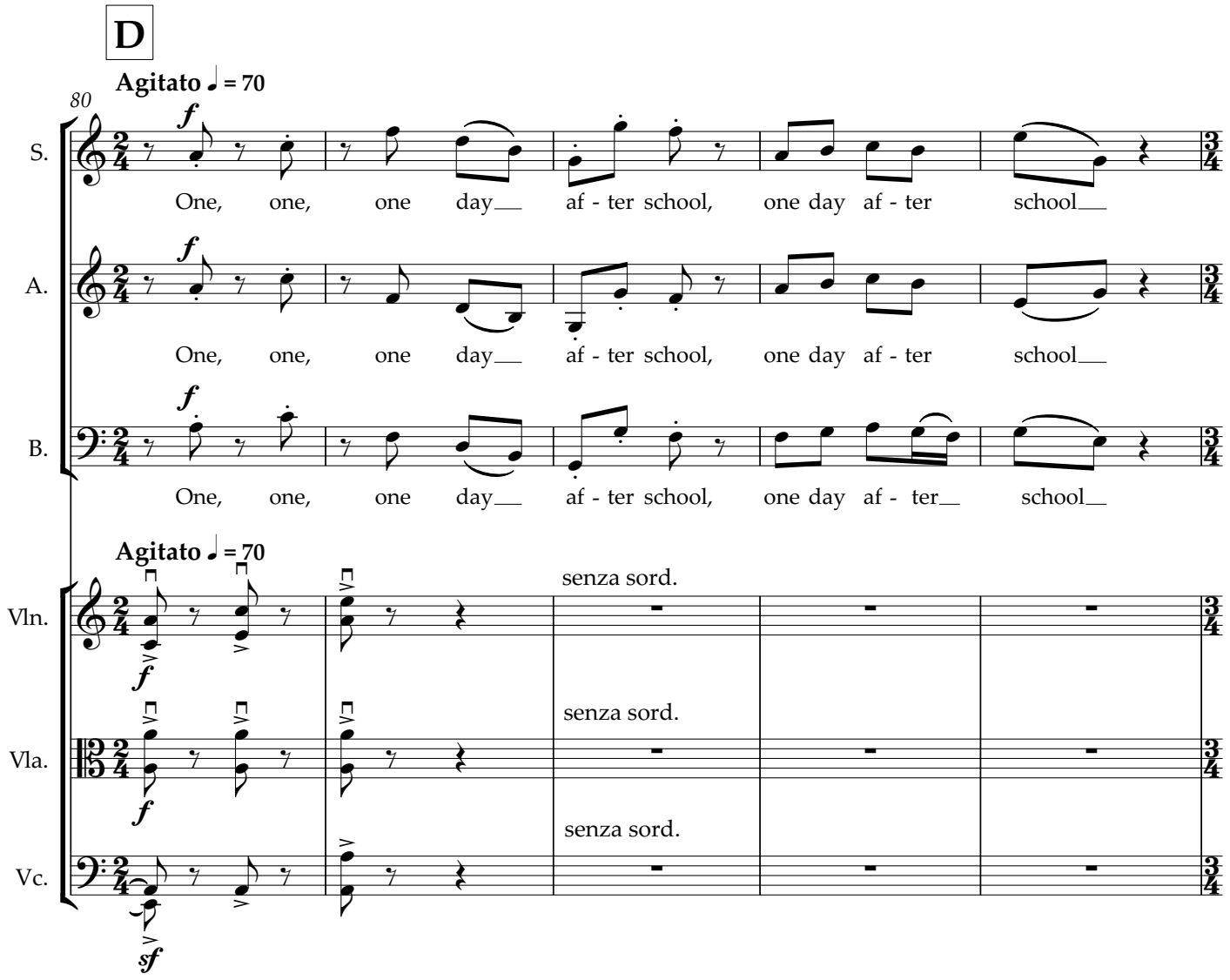
Vla. *mf* *ff*

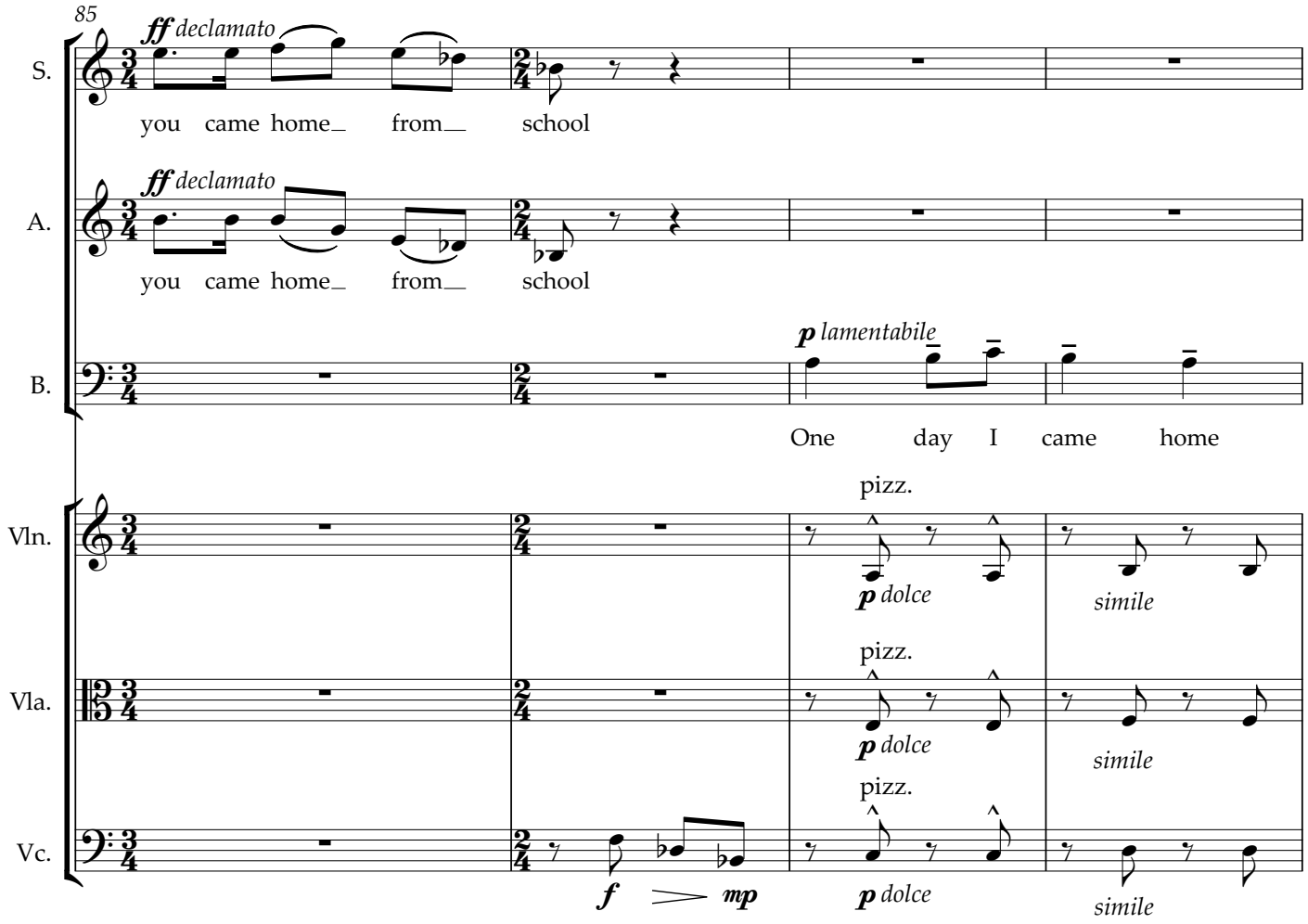
Vc. *mf* *ff* pizz. *p*

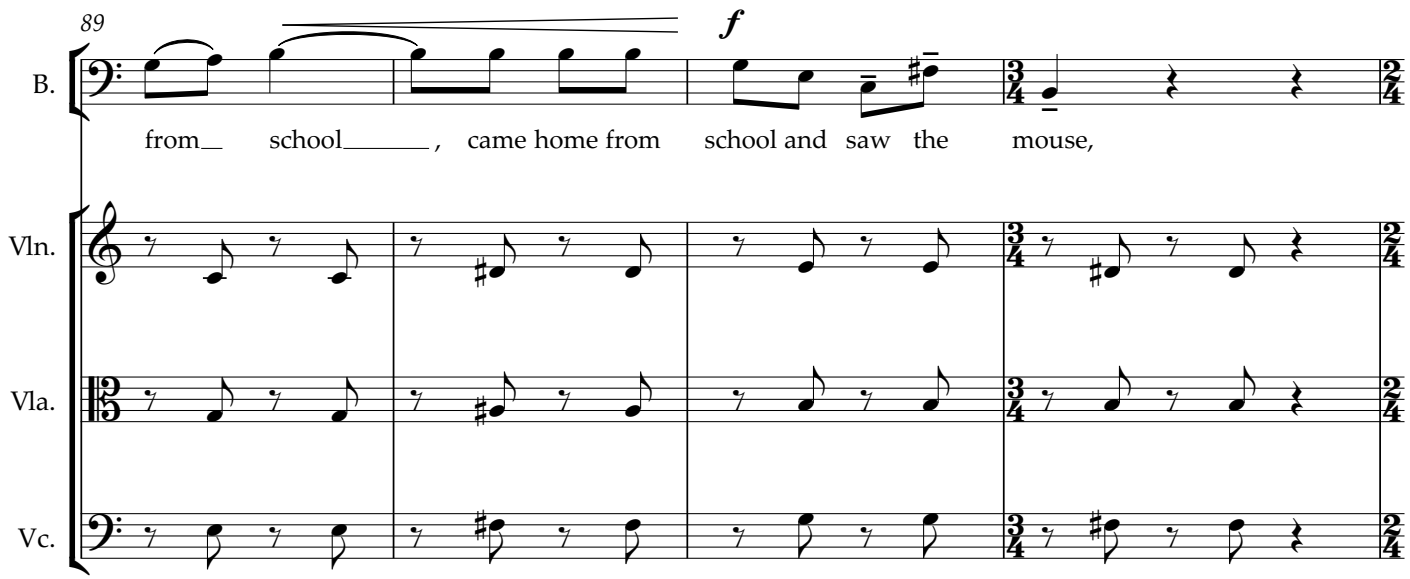

61
B.
I would tell my mouse a - bout
f lacrimoso
Vln.
pp
sfp
Vla.
sfp
pizz.
Vc.
p
64
B.
my day, and my wor - ries and my con - cerns, my day
3
Vln.
pp
Vla.
pp
Vc.
66
B.
and my wor-ries and con-cerns he lies on the floor, scra - tches and eats, and then
3
Vln.
Vla.
arco
Vc.
pp

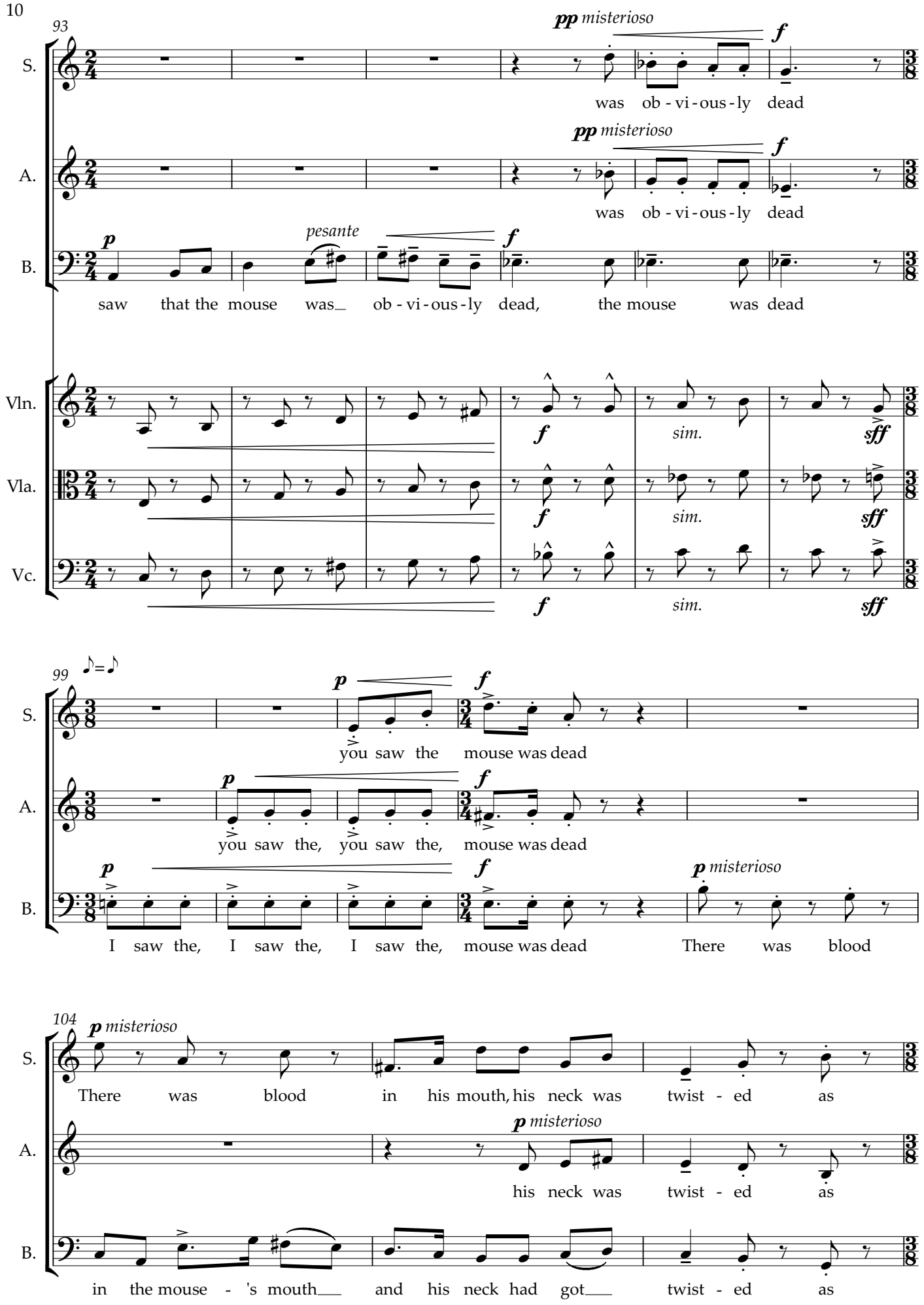

69
pp
B.
turns his back on me and u - - - ri - nates
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
71
pp
poco meno mosso ♩ = 50
B.
in the cor - ner
con sord.
IV.
sul tasto, senza vib.
pp
III.
flautando
IV.
Vln.
con sord.
sul tasto, senza vib.
III.
pp
II.
Vla.
pizz.
p
con sord.
arco
sul tasto, senza vib
IV.
pp
col legno
tratto
III.
Vc.
74
poco piu mosso
Vln.
III.
Vla.
arco, ord.
sfp
V
3
f appassionato
Vc.

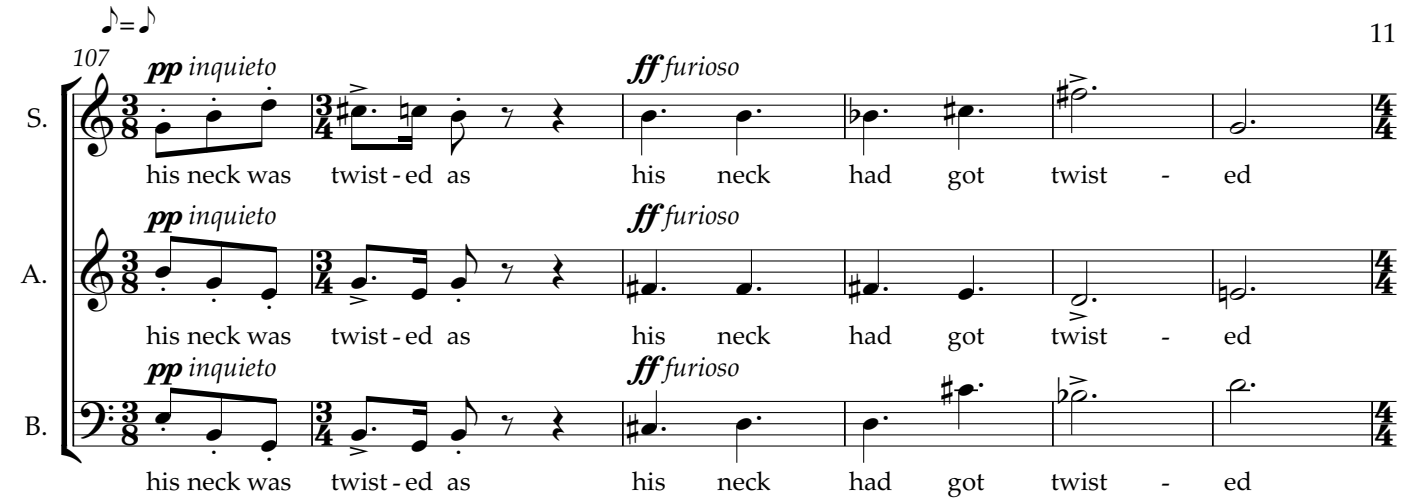

77
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
3
p

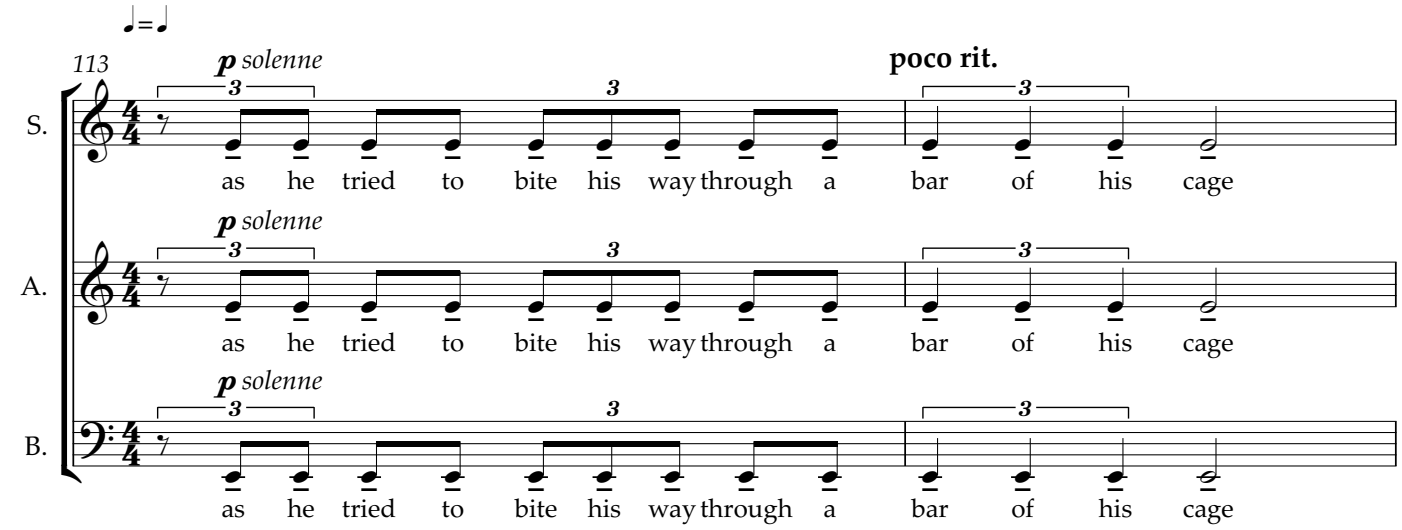

D
Agitato ♩ = 70
80
S.
A.
B.
f
One, one, one day af - ter school, one day af - ter school
One, one, one day af - ter school, one day af - ter school
One, one, one day af - ter school, one day af - ter school
Agitato ♩ = 70
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
senza sord.
senza sord.
senza sord.
sf

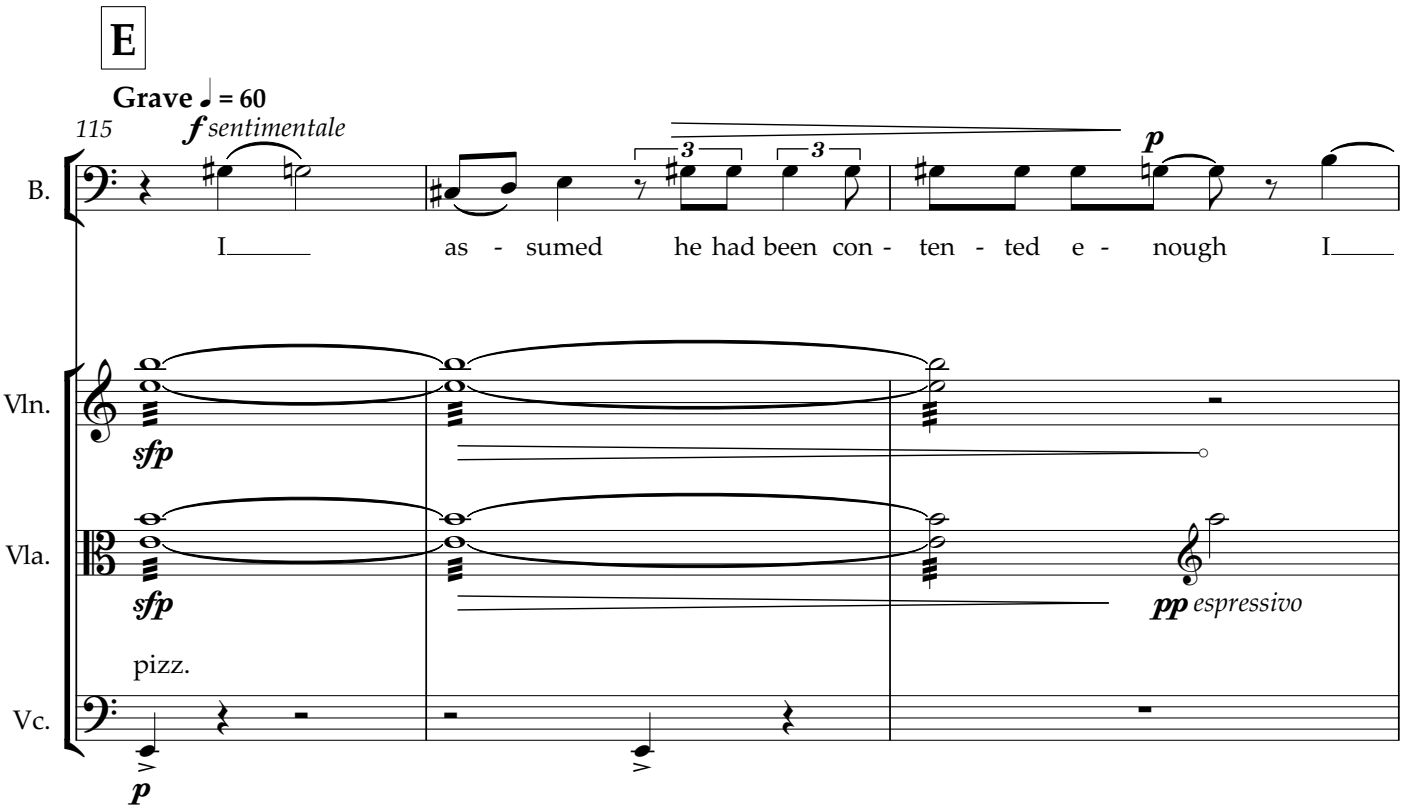

85
S.
ff declamato
you came home_ from__ school
A.
ff declamato
you came home_ from__ school
B.
p lamentabile
One day I came home
Vln.
pizz.
p dolce
simile
Vla.
pizz.
p dolce
simile
Vc.
pizz.
f
mp
p dolce
simile

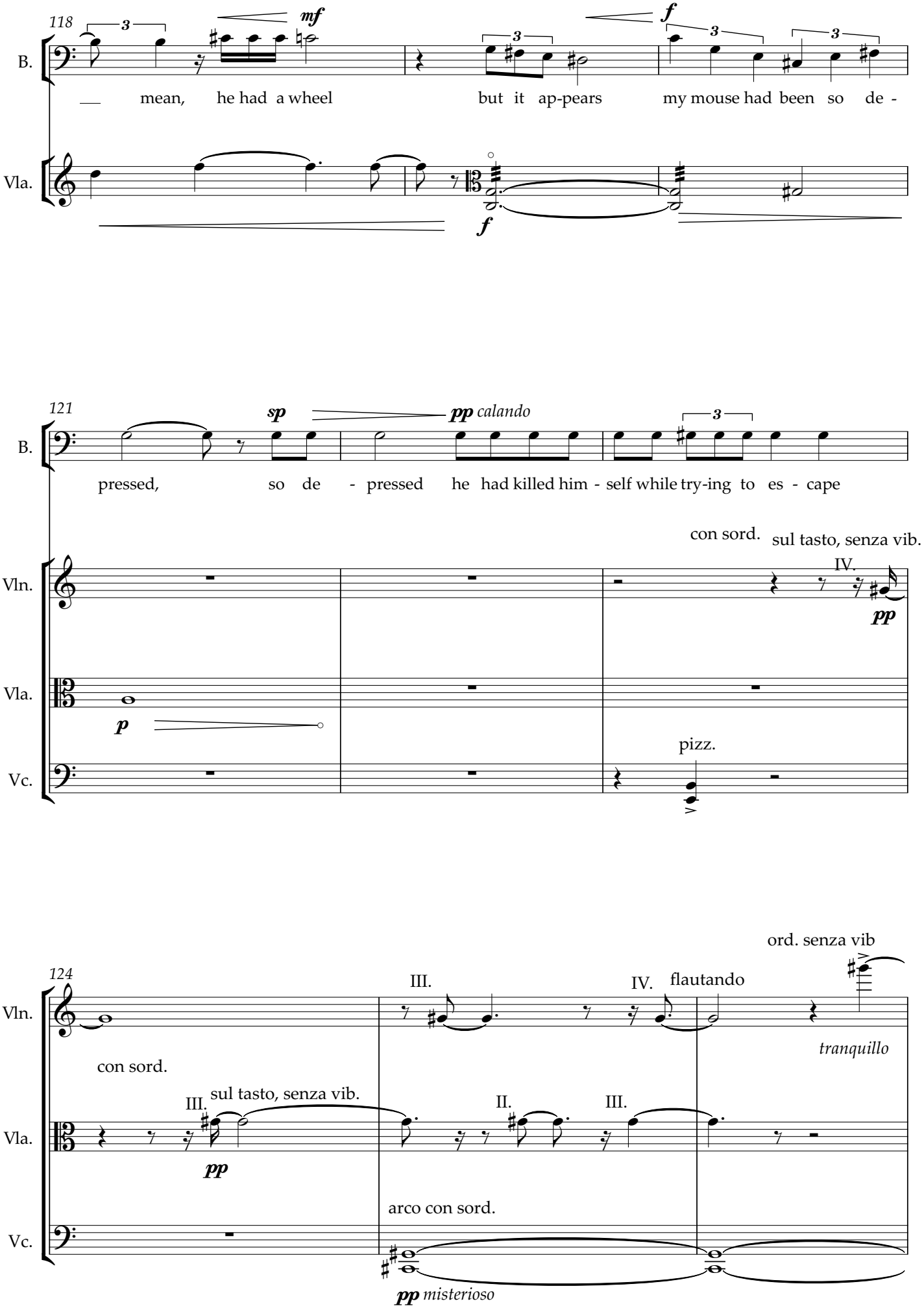

89
B.
f
from__ school_____, came home from school and saw the mouse,
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.

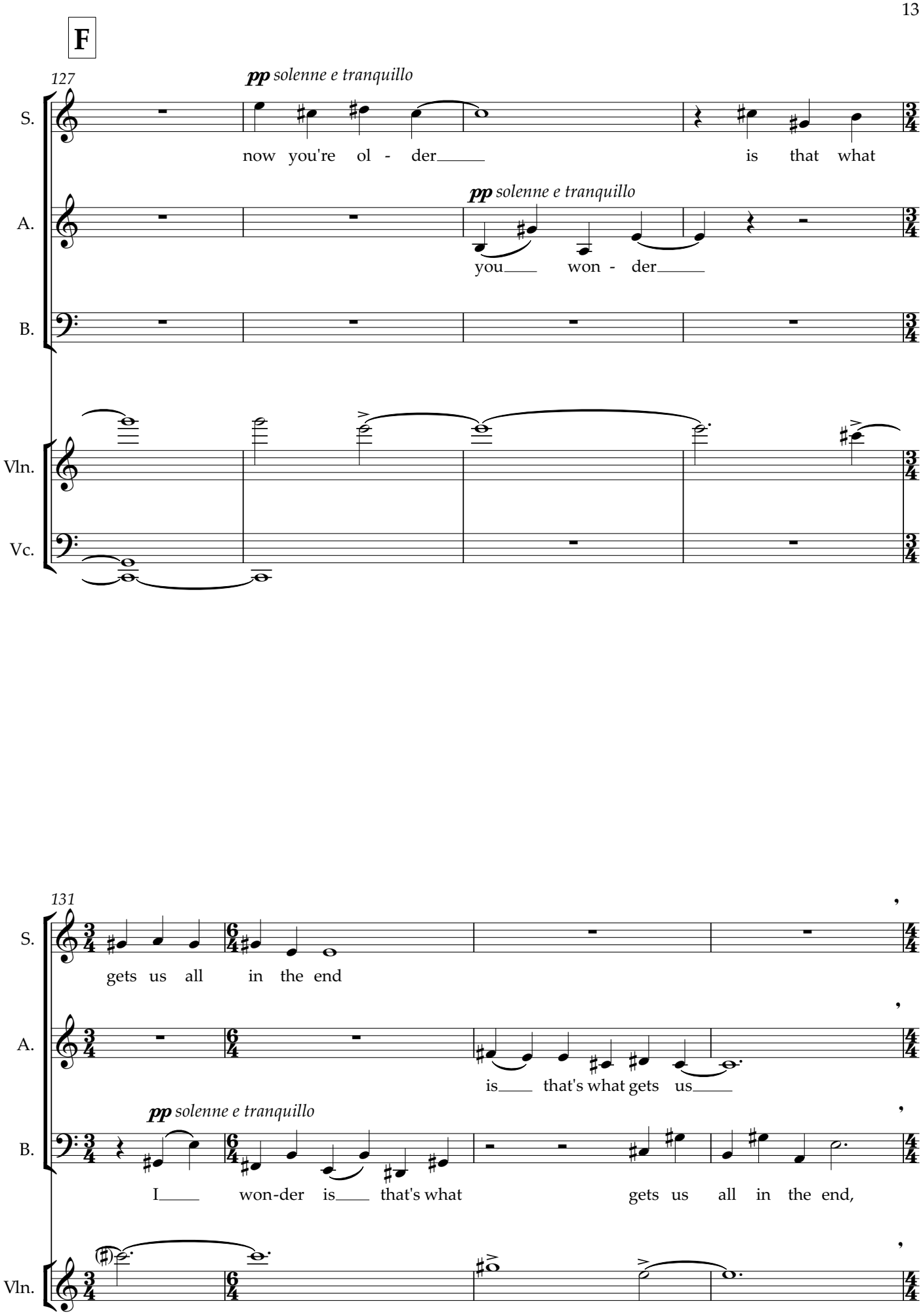

93
S.
A.
B.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
pp misterioso
f
was ob - vi - ous - ly dead
p
pesante
saw that the mouse was_ ob - vi - ous - ly dead, the mouse was dead
sim.
sff
99
♪=♪
you saw the mouse was dead
you saw the, you saw the, mouse was dead
I saw the, I saw the, I saw the, mouse was dead There was blood
104
There was blood in his mouth, his neck was twist - ed as
his neck was twist - ed as
in the mouse - 's mouth___ and his neck had got___ twist - ed as

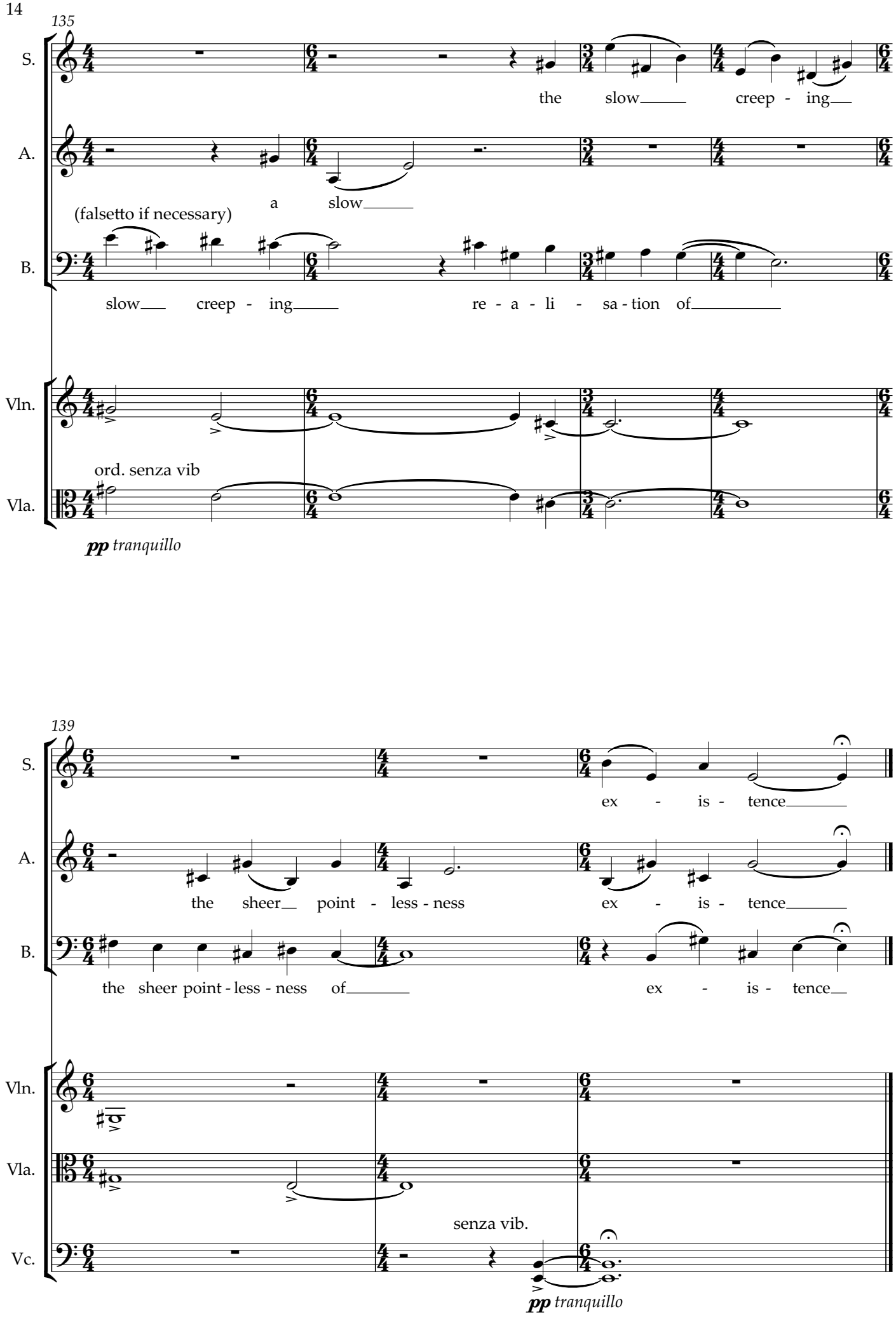

107
pp inquieto
ff furioso
S.
A.
B.
his neck was twist - ed as his neck had got twist - ed


113
p solenne
poco rit.
S.
A.
B.
as he tried to bite his way through a bar of his cage


E
Grave ♩ = 60
115
f sentimentale
p
B.
I as - sumed he had been con - ten - ted e - nough I
Vln.
sfp
Vla.
sfp
pp espressivo
pizz.
Vc.
p


118
B.
Vla.
mf
f
3
mean, he had a wheel
but it ap-pears
my mouse had been so de -
121
sp
pp calando
pressed, so de - pressed he had killed him - self while try-ing to es - cape
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
con sord.
sul tasto, senza vib.
IV.
pp
p
pizz.
124
ord. senza vib
III.
IV.
flautando
tranquillo
con sord.
sul tasto, senza vib.
II.
arco con sord.
pp misterioso


F
127
pp solenne e tranquillo
S.
now you're ol - der
is that what
pp solenne e tranquillo
A.
you
won - der
B.
Vln.
Vc.
131
S.
gets us all in the end
A.
is
that's what gets us
pp solenne e tranquillo
B.
I
won-der is
that's what
gets us all in the end,
Vln.


135
S.
the slow creep - ing
A.
a slow
(falsetto if necessary)
B.
slow creep - ing re - a - li - sa - tion of
Vln.
ord. senza vib
Vla.
pp tranquillo
139
S.
ex - is - tence
A.
the sheer point - less - ness ex - is - tence
B.
the sheer point - less - ness of ex - is - tence
Vln.
Vla.
senza vib.
Vc.
pp tranquillo