THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

Text by FRANZ KAFKA

I

Music by VIVIAN FINE

Lento (♩=42)

Voice

Flute

p

I can still re-mem-ber quite

p dolce

well us stand-ing as small chil-dren, scarce-ly sure on our feet, in our

teach-er's gar-den, and be-ing or-dered to build a sort of wall

poco f

out of peb-bles;

p f

and then the teach-er,

f

girding

8va

up his robe, ran full tilt a-gainst the wall, of

course knocking it down, and scold- ed us so ter- rib- ly for the

dim.

shod- di- ness meno f of our work dolce that we ran weep- ing

8va

in all di- rec- tions to our par- ents.

p

A tri- vi- al in- ci- dent, but sig- ni- fi- cant

poco marc.

of the spi- rit of the time.

p f

dim. p poco rit.

Moderato (♩= 63)

A

p

But in-

pp con sord.

stead how vain-ly does he wear out his strength;

B

still he is on- ly mak- ing his way through the cham- bers of the

p

(?)

C

3

in- ner-most pal- ace; nev- er will he get to the

3

poco.....

end of them; and if he suc- ceed- ed in that noth- ing would be gained;

poco cresc. al

D

he must fight his way down the next stair; and if he suc- ceed- ed- in

that noth- ing would be gained; the courts would still have to be

E

crossed;

marc.

fz

fz

F

p

and af- ter the

pp

pp

courts the sec- ond out- er pal- ace; and once more stairs and courts; and

espr.

once more an- oth- er pal- ace; and so on for thou-sands of years; and

cresc.

G

if at last he should burst thru the out- er-most gate- but nev- er, nev- er

poco f

p

p

H

f

can that hap- pen the im- pe- ri- al cap- i- tal would lie be-

f

f

ff

fore him, the cen - tre of the world, crammed to burst-ing with its own ref - use.

ff

ff

3

3

I

marc.

3

J meno mosso

K p senza espr.

3

No - bod- y

pp without nuance

could fight his way through here

e-ven with a mes- sage from a

dead man.

L

espr.

But you sit at your

dolce

win- dow when eve- ning falls and dream it to your- self.

p possible

espr.

poco xit.

(spoken:)

They do not know what emperor is reigning, and there exist doubts regarding even the name of the dynasty. In school a great deal is taught about the dynasties with the dates of succession, but the universal uncertainty in the matter is so great that even the best scholars are drawn into it.

attacca:

Adagio, with massive power (♪=63)

Long- dead

em- per -ors are set on the throne, and one that on-ly

lives in song

recently had a proclamation of his read out by the priest before the altar.

10

Battles that are old history are new to us and

8va

sostenuto

sostenuto

8va

sostenuto

8va

one's nieghbor rushes in with a jubilant face to tell the news.

wives of em-per-ors, pam-pered

meno f

8va

8va

mf

mf

15

and o-ver-ween-ing se-duced from nob-le cus-tom by wi-ly court-iers,

8va

loco

p

swell-ing with am-bi-tion,

ve-he-ment in their greed,

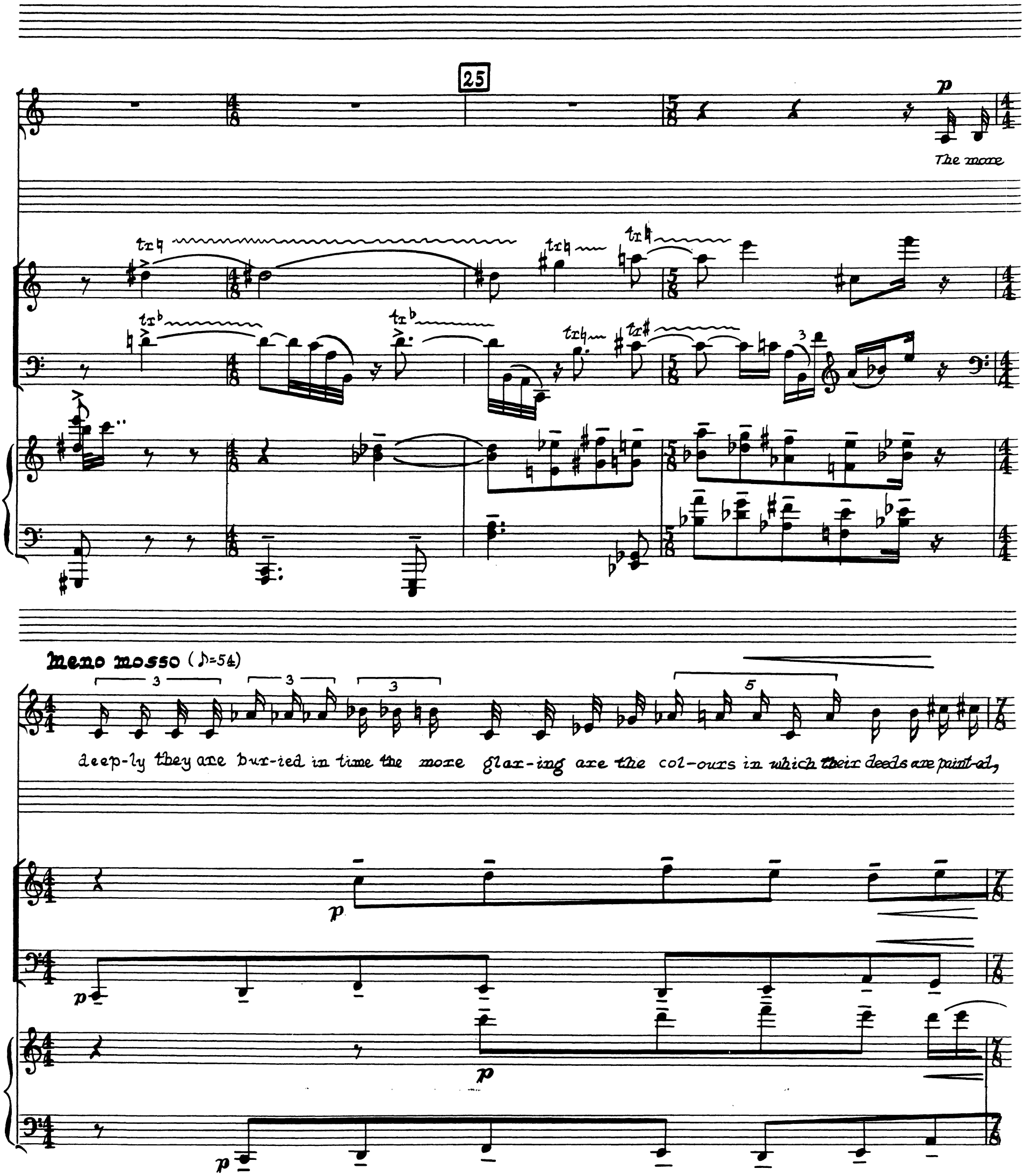
un-con-trol-lab-le in their lust,

prac-tise their a-bom-i-na-tions

e-ver a-

new.

motto f


25
p
The more
Meno mosso (♪=54)
deep-ly they are bur-ied in time the more glar-ing are the col-ours in which their deeds are paint-ed,

f

and with a loud cry of woe our vil-lage e-ven-tu-al-ly hears how an

mf

poco f

8va

poco f

mp

Em-press drank her hus-band's blood in long draughts thou-sands of years a-go.

8va

(loco)

f

30

8va

Poco f

mf

8va

8va

f

f

8va

Quasi recitativo; semplice (circa ♩=54)

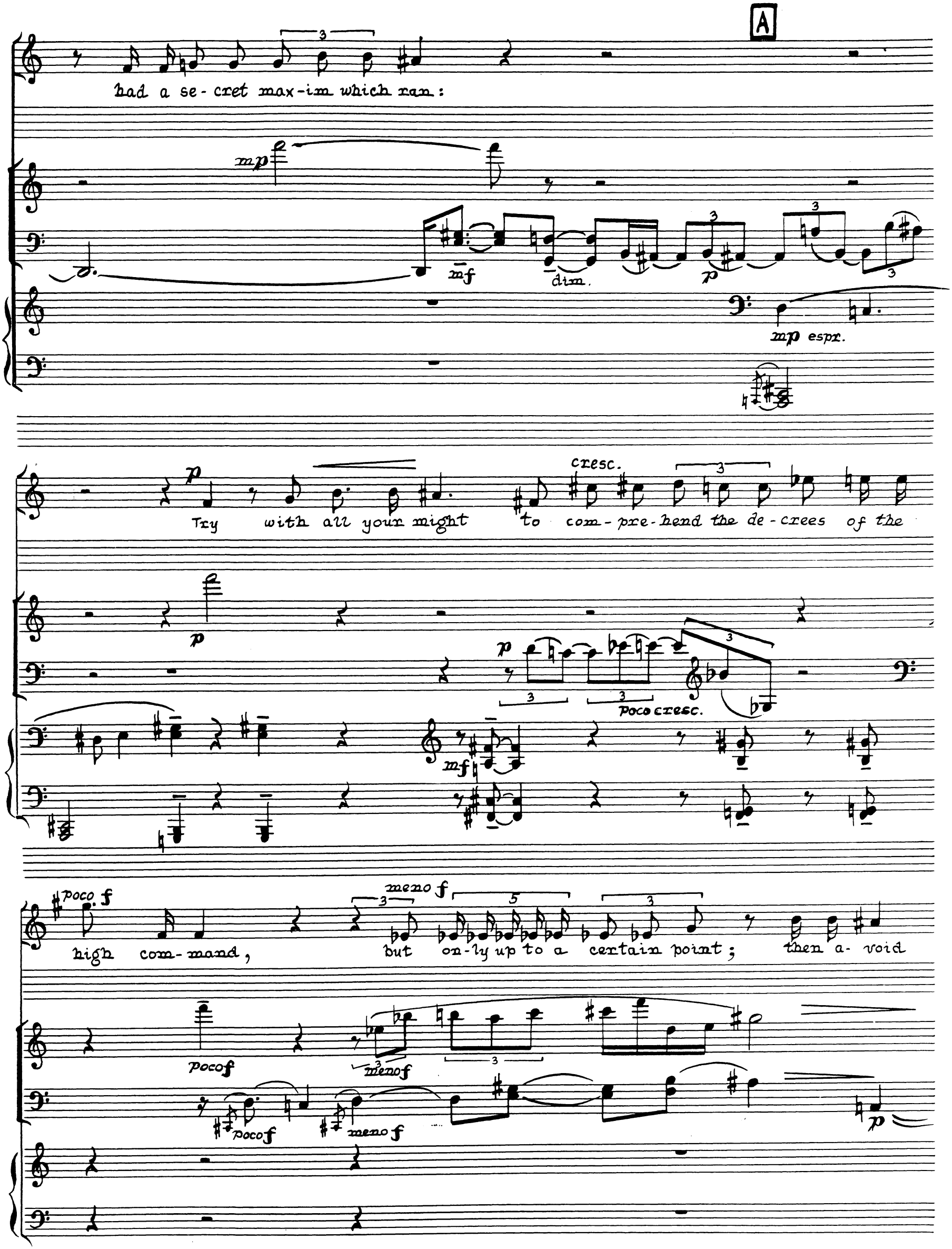
p

8va - - - - One can per-haps safe-ly dis- cuss it now.

p

p ma espr.

in those days man- y peo-ple, and among them the best,


A
had a se-cret max-im which ran:
mp
mf
dim.
p
mp espr.
p
Try with all your might to com-pre-hend the de-crees of the
cresc.
p
p
poco cresc.
mf
poco f
high com-mand,
meno f
but on-ly up to a certain point; then a-void
poco f
meno f
poco f
meno f
p

B

dim.

fur-ther me-di-ta-tion

p

a-void fur-ther me-di-ta-tion:

poco più mosso

con-si-der

8va

p

ra-ther the ri-ver in spring.

It ri-ses un-til it grows might-i-er and

nour-ish-es more rich-ly the soil on the long stretch of its banxs,

8va

loco

p

8va

loco

still main- tain-ing its own course un- til it reach- es the sea,

8va

(loco)

where it is all the more wel- come be-cause it is a worth-i-er al-ly

f

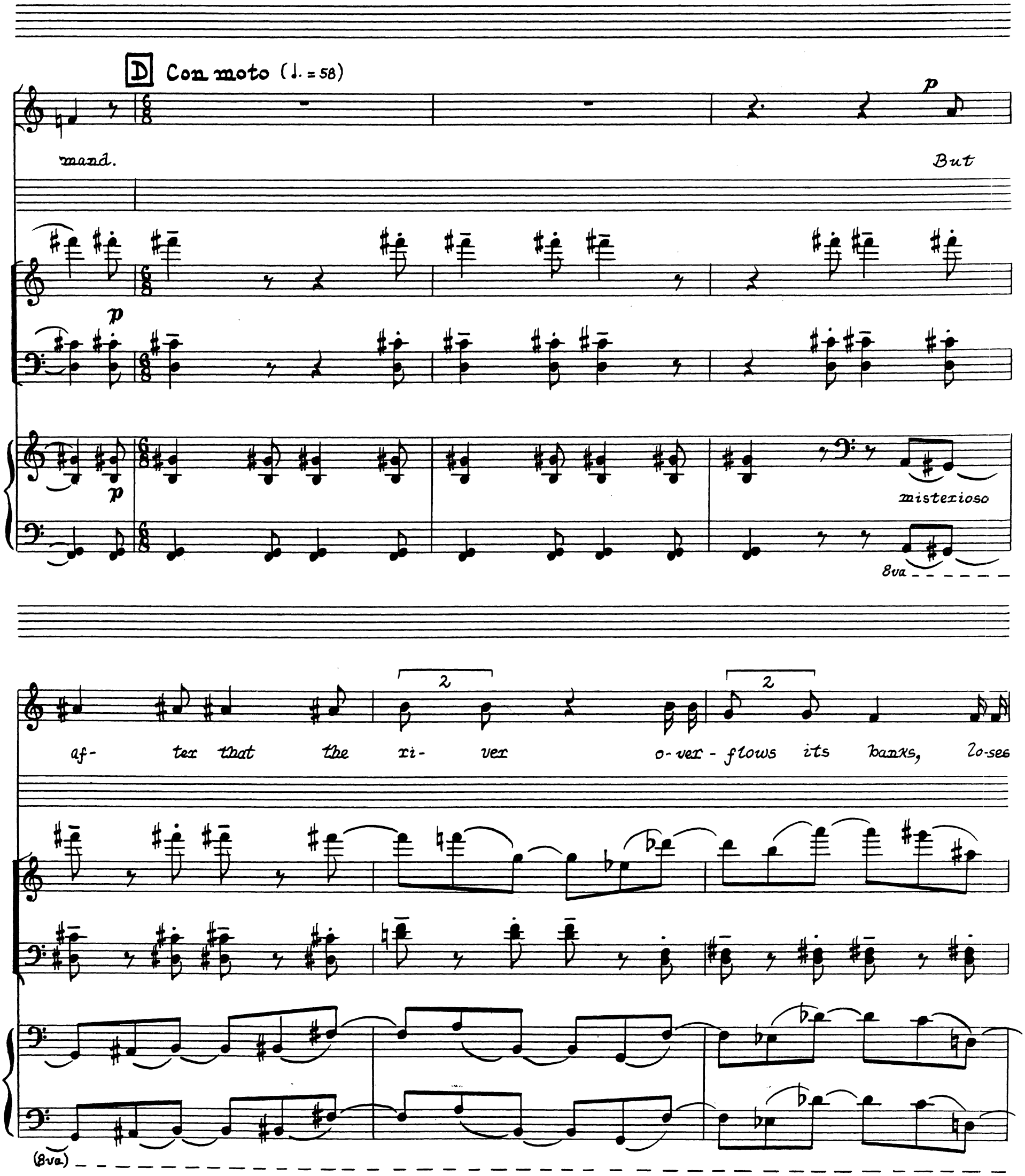
f

f

C meno mosso

f

Thus far may you urge your med-i-ta-tions on the de- crees of the high com-


D Con moto (♩. = 58)
mand.
But
p
p
p
mistexioso
8va
af- ter that the ri- ver o-ver-flows its banks, lo-ses
2
2
(8va)

out- line and shape slows down the speed of its cur- rent,

8va

tries to ignore its destiny by forming
little seas in the interior of the land,

f

E

dam-a-ges the fields, and yet can-not main- tain- it - self for

p

p

p supito

m.d.

cresc.

long in its new ex-panse, but must run back be-tween its banks a- gain,

cresc.

cresc.

(loco)

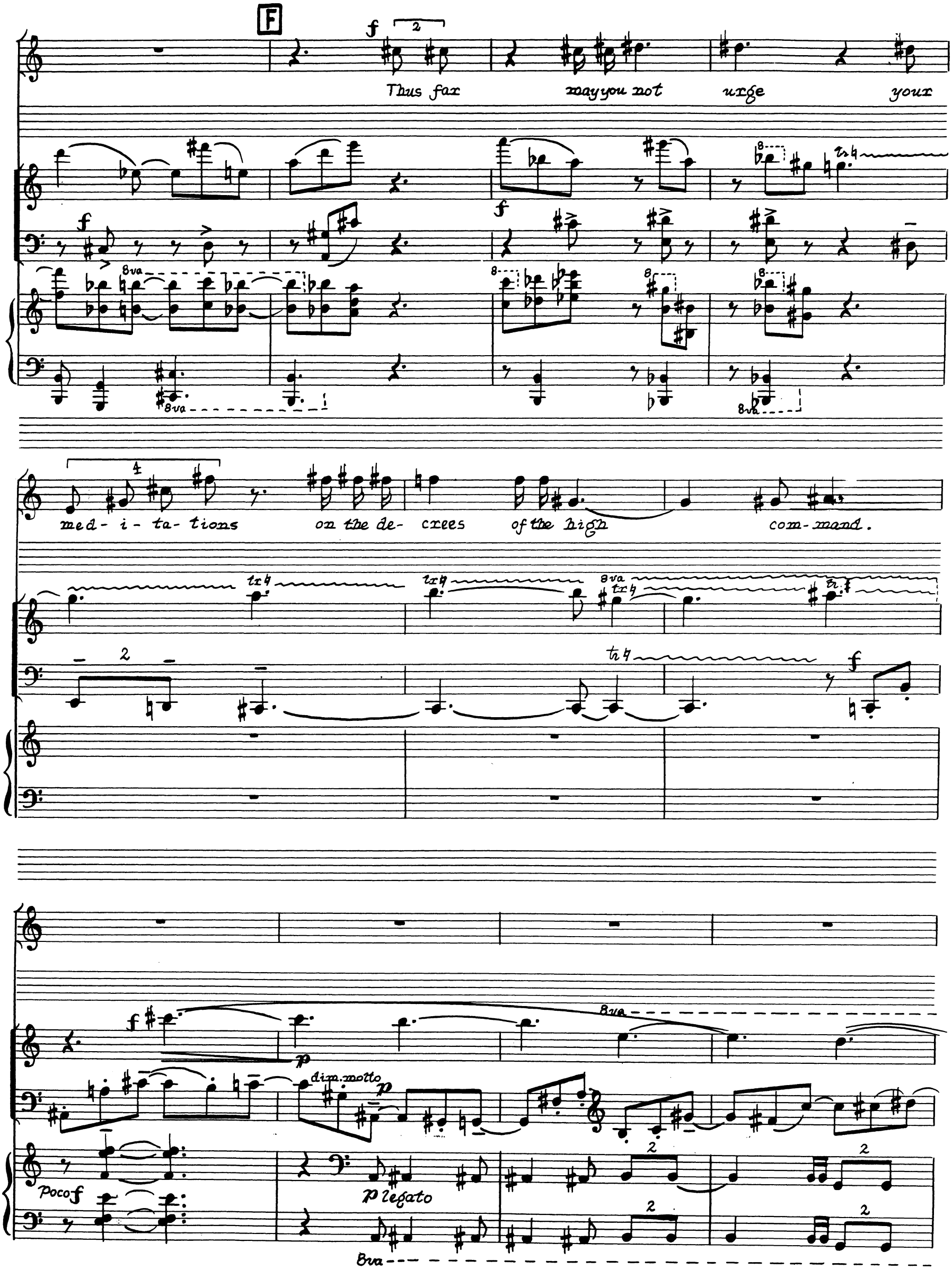
8va

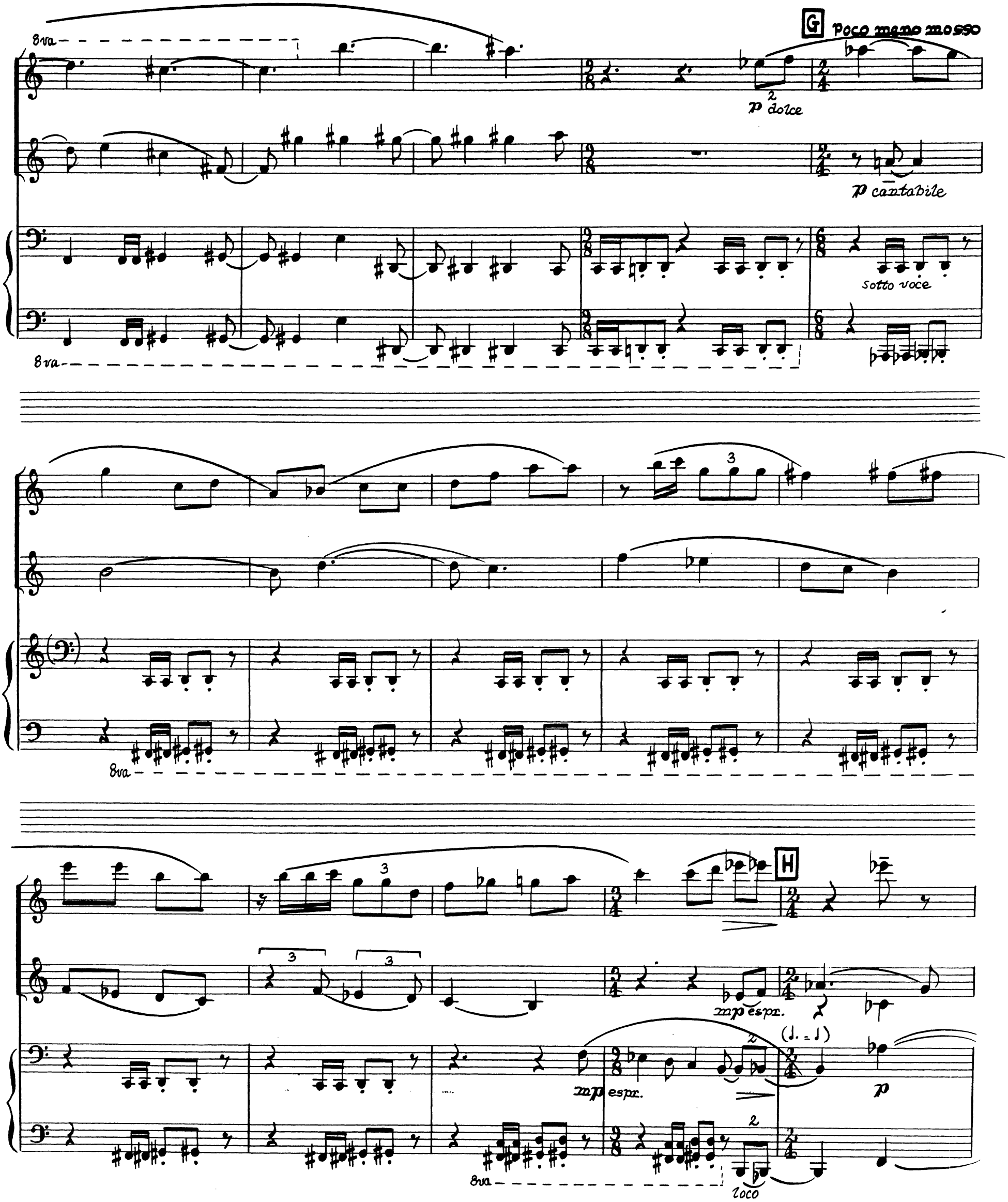
must e- ven dry up wretch-ed-ly in the hot sea-son which pre- sent- ly fol- lows.

8va

f

cresc.


F
Thus far may you not urge your
med- i- ta- tions on the de- crees of the high com- mand.
dim. molto
poco f
p legato


G
poco meno mosso
8va
p dolce
p cantabile
sotto voce
8va
8va
H
mp espr.
mp espr.
p
8va
loco

I

con-

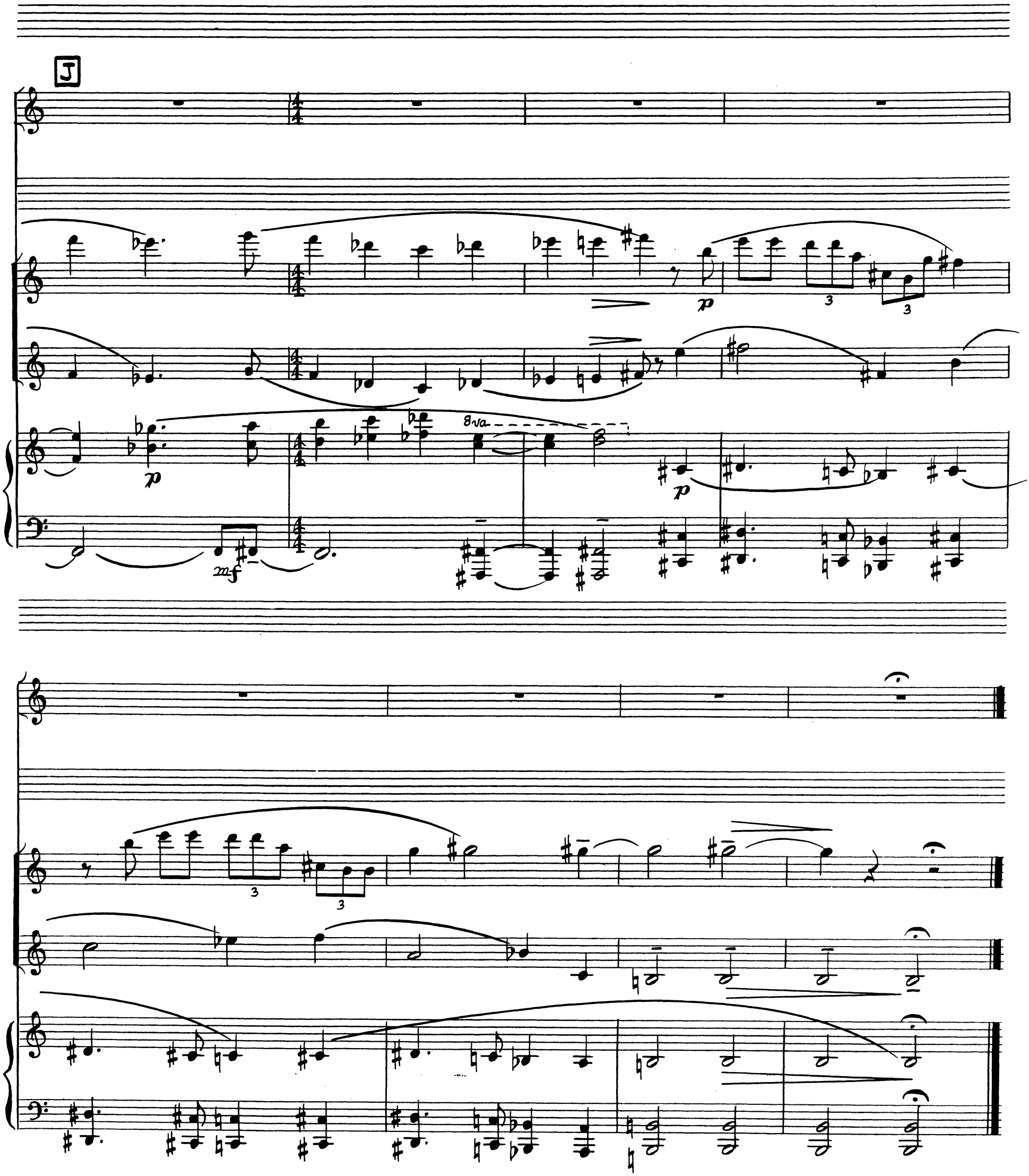
si - der rath-er the ri-ver in spring

con- si - der rath-er the ri-ver in spring.

mf

p

mf



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