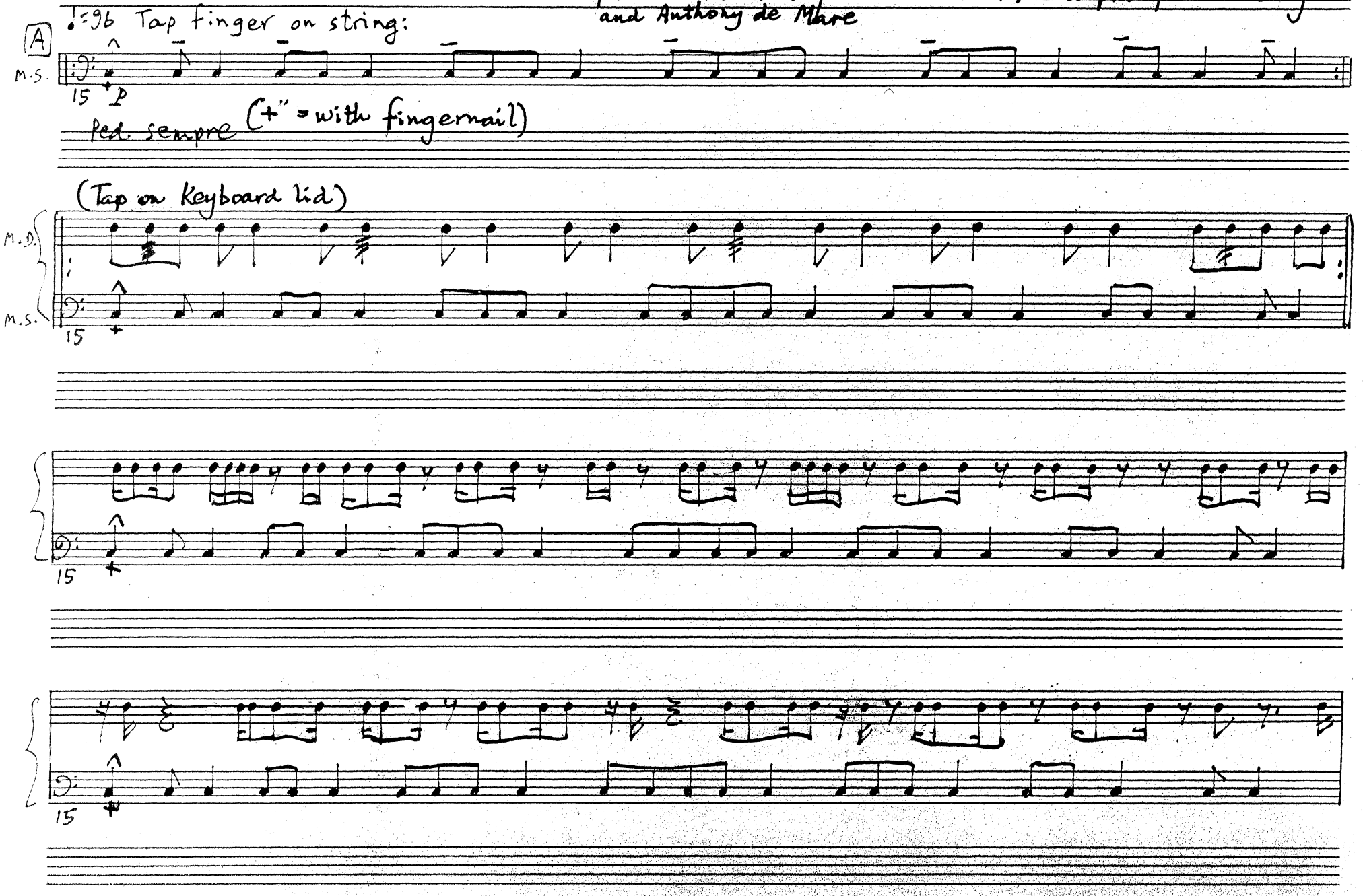
THE ROAD - P. 330

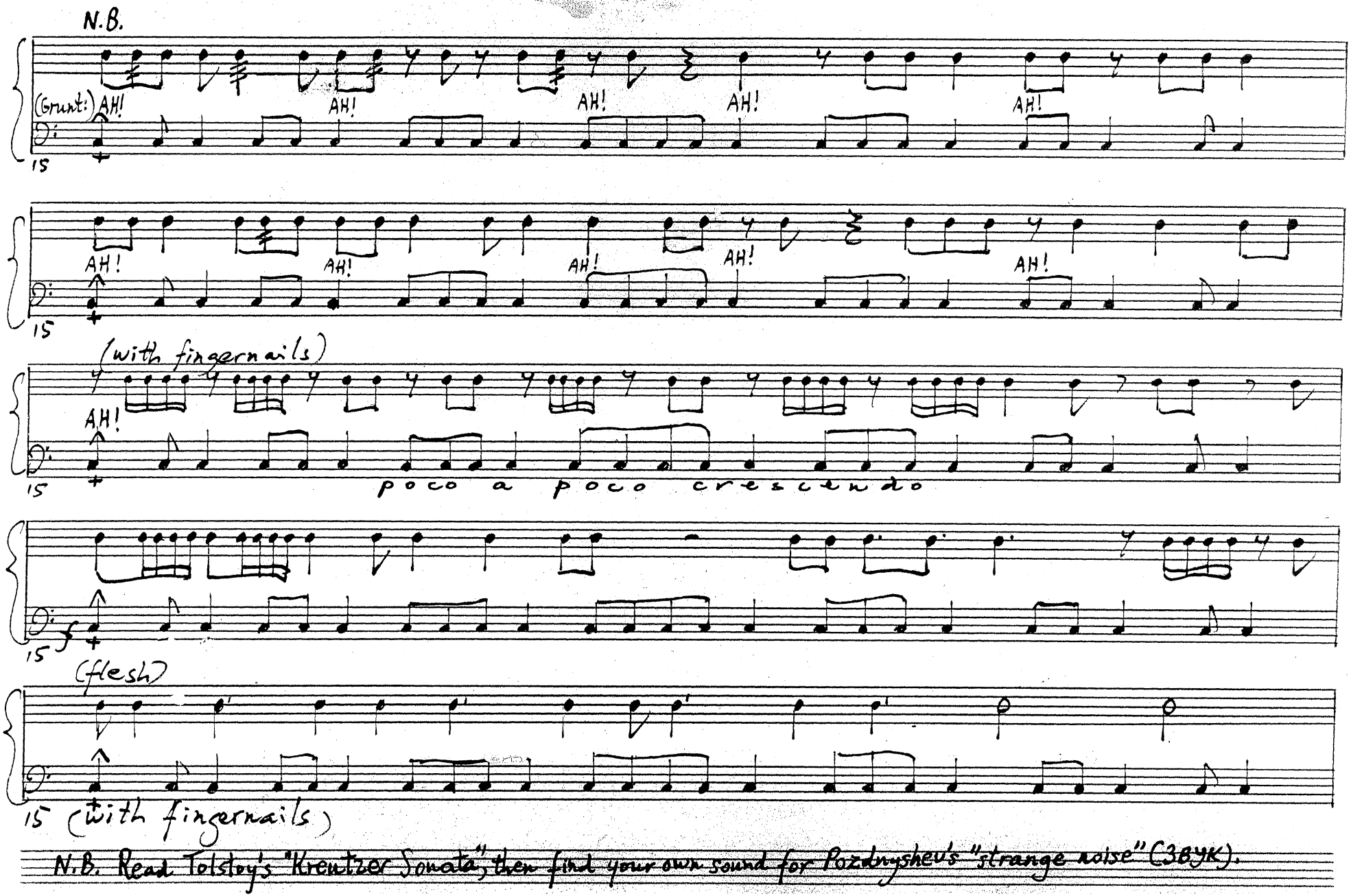
2. MARRIAGE (MILE 58)

for Tomoko Mukaiyama and Anthony de Mare

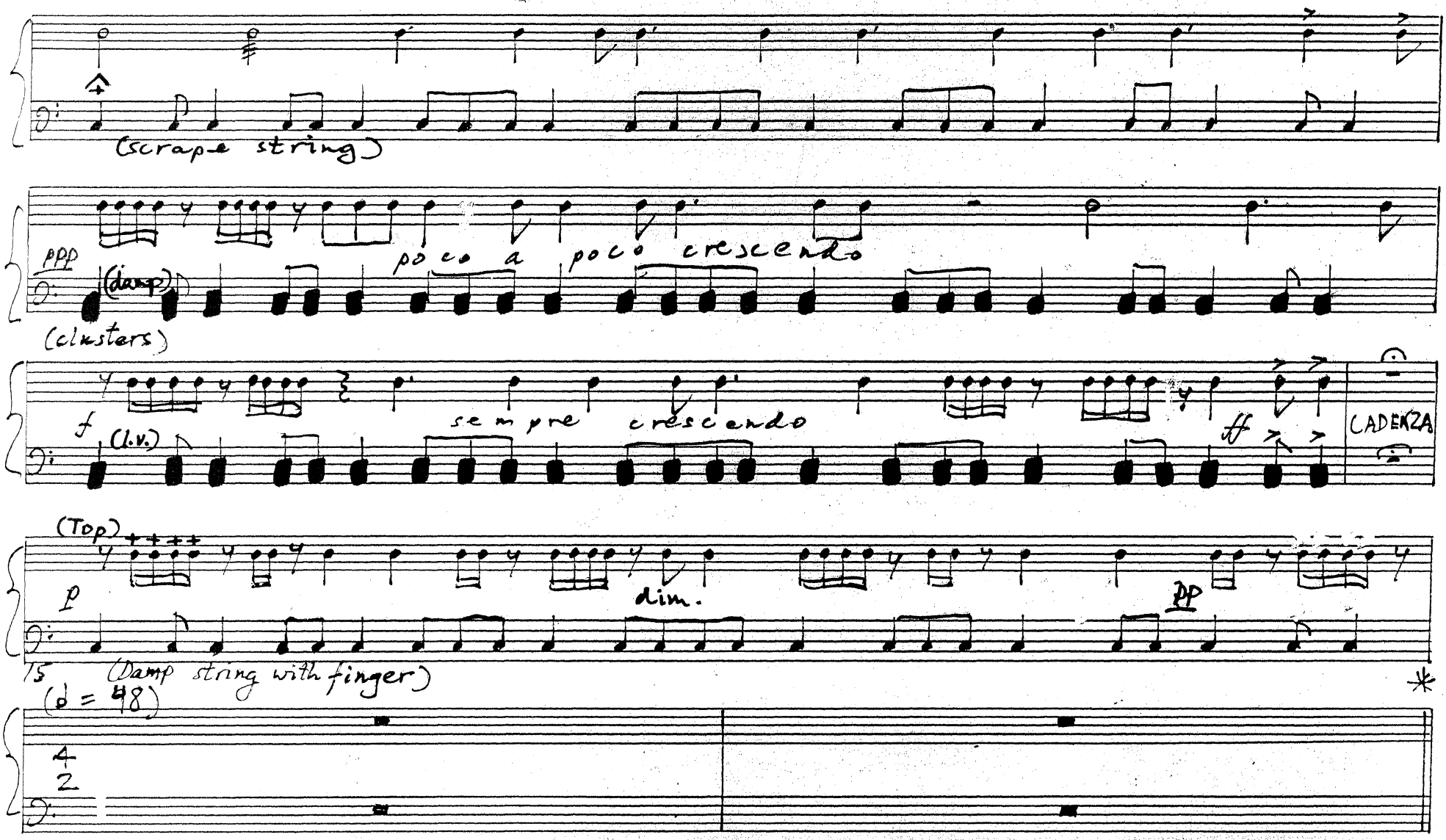
Frederic Rzewski

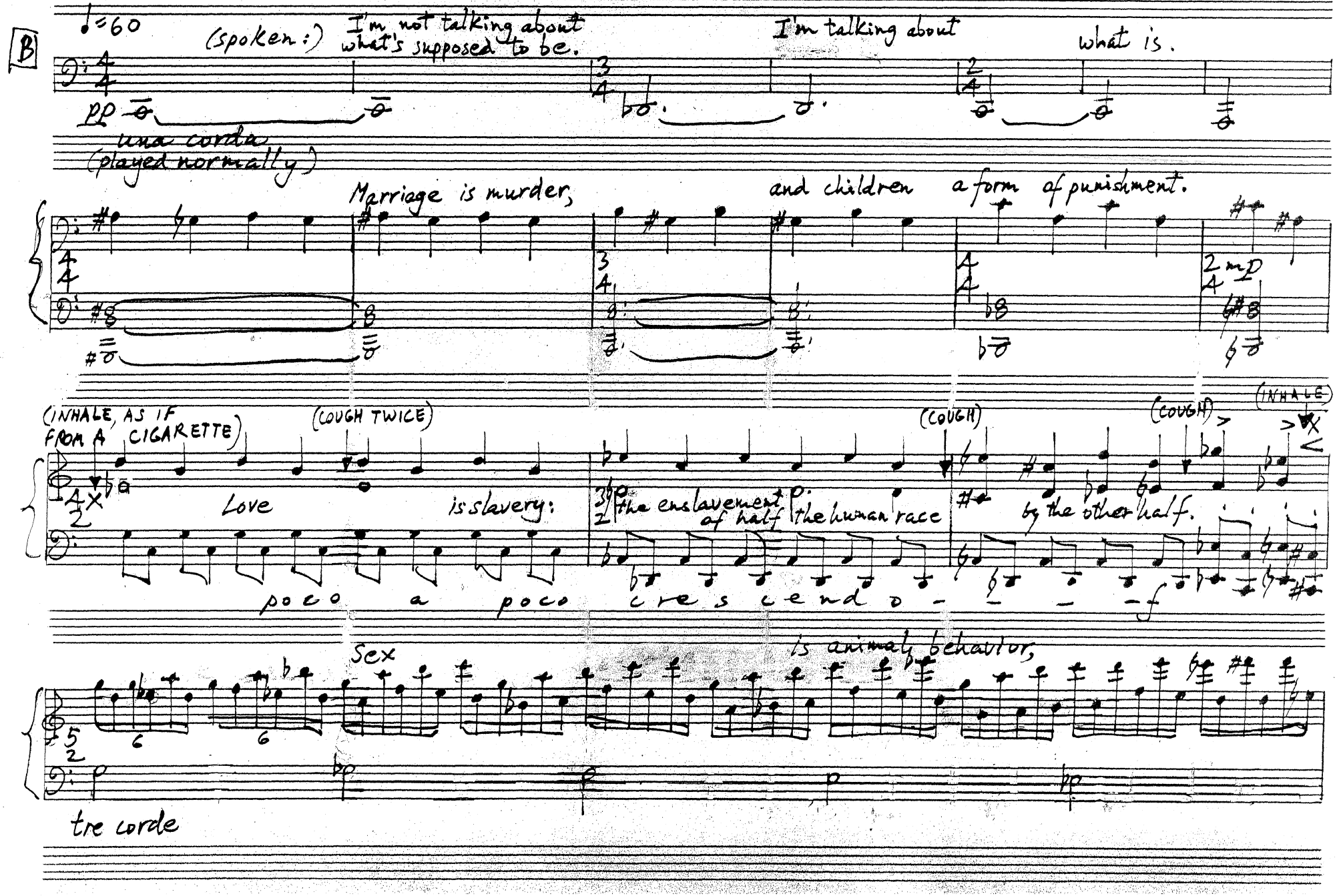
Text adapted from Tolstoy

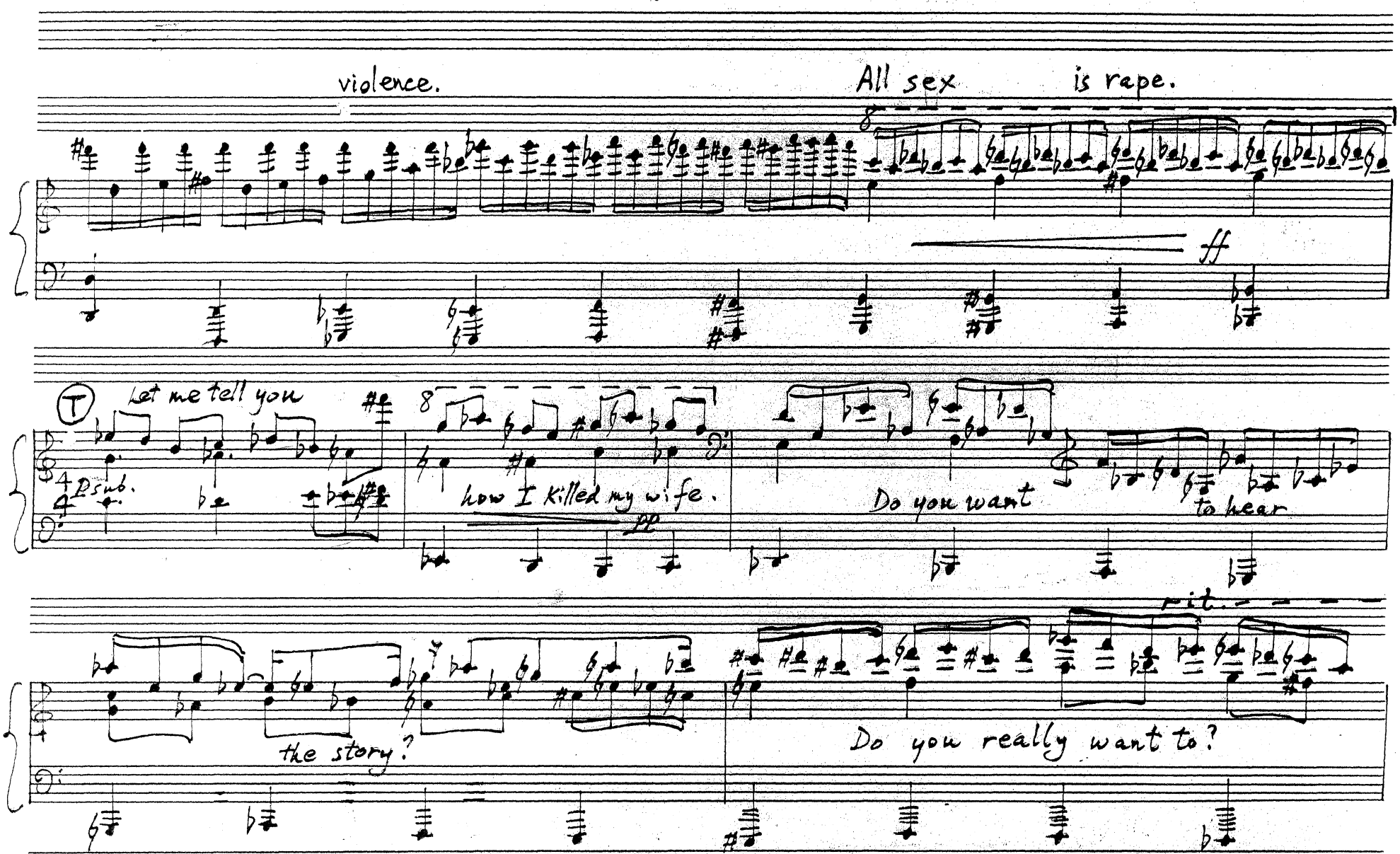


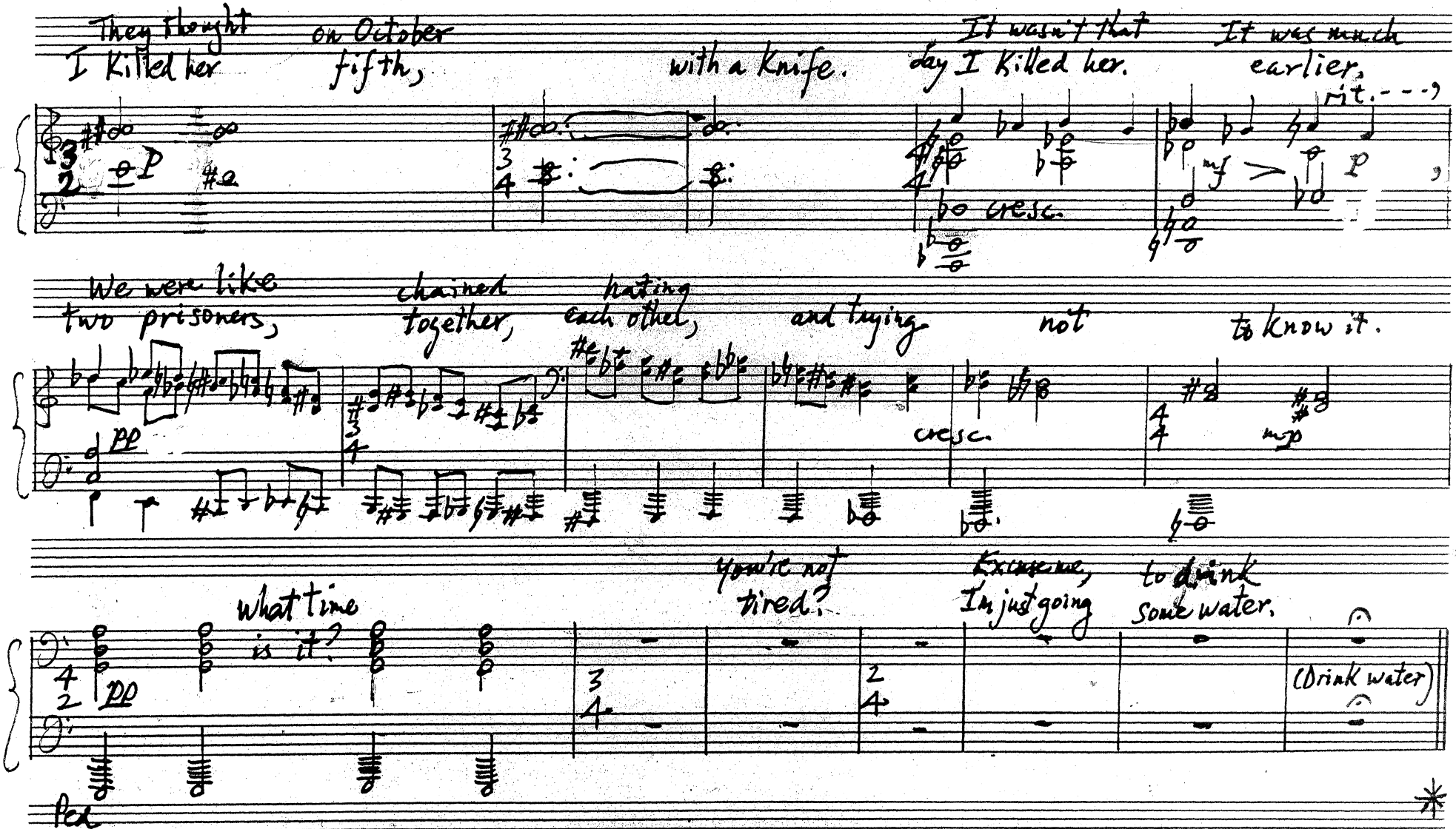


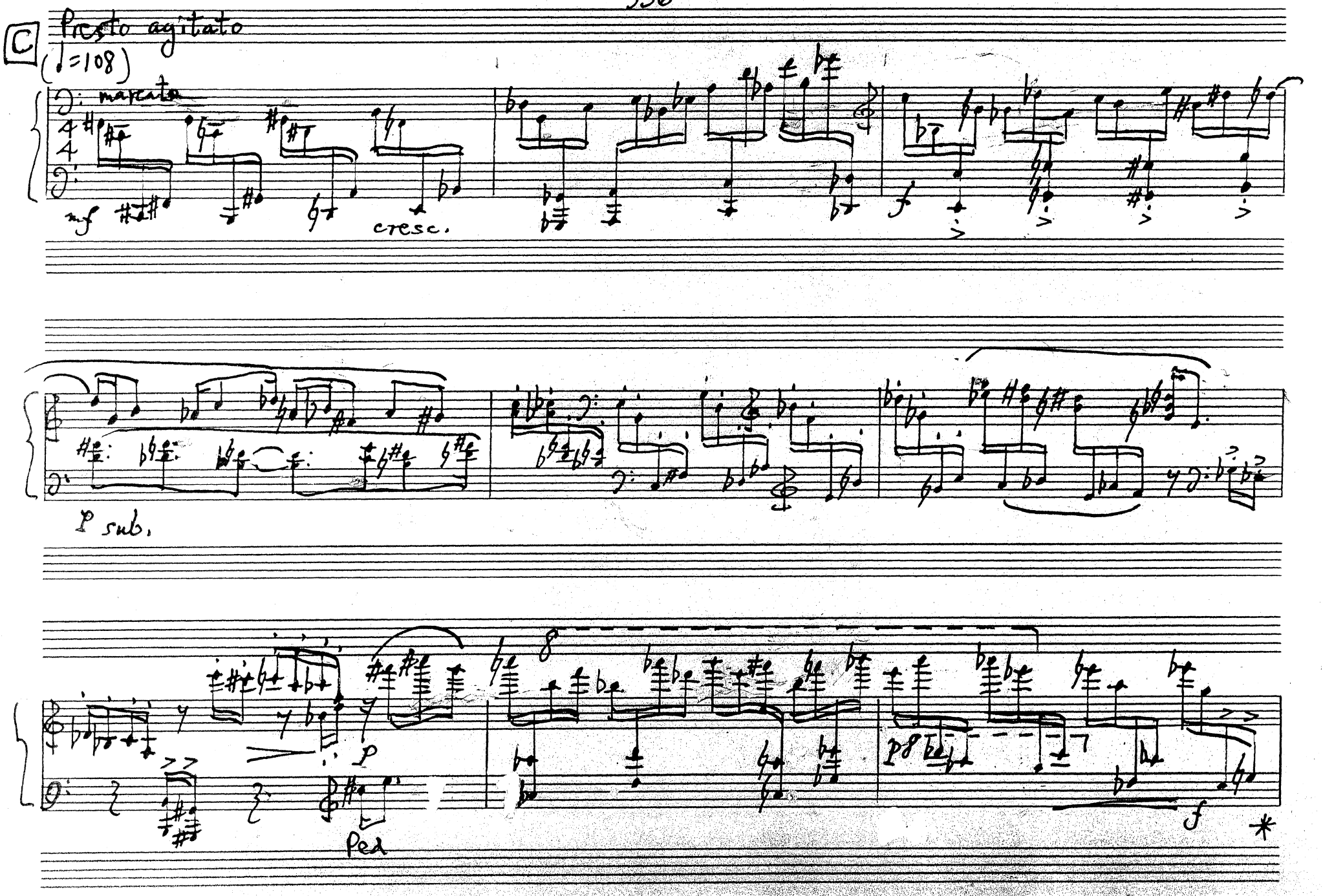
N.B. Read Tolstoy's "Kreutzer Sonata", then find your own sound for Pozdnyshev's "strange noise" (звук).

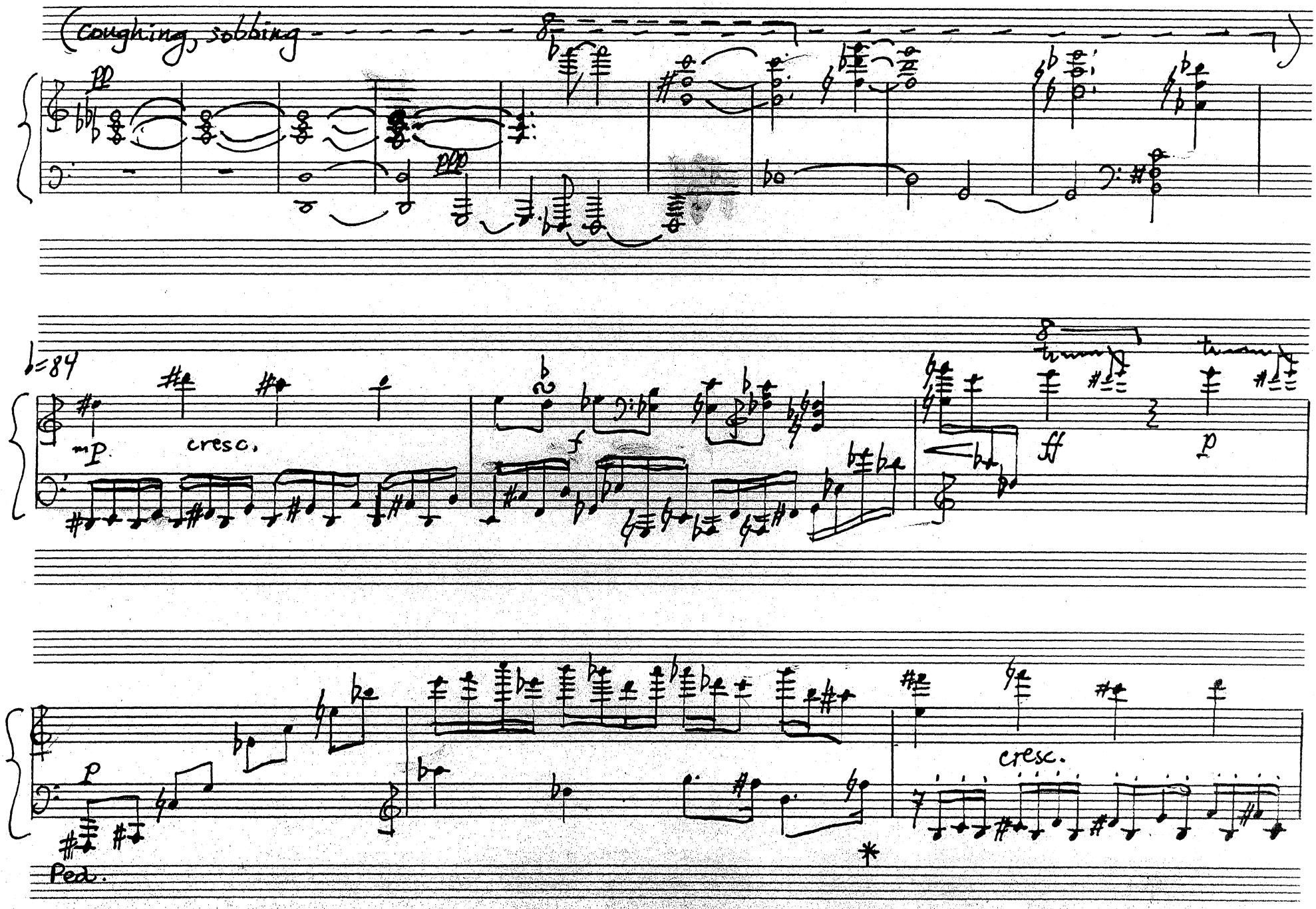

(scrape string)
ppp
(damp)
poco a poco crescendo
(clusters)
f
(l.v.)
sempre crescendo
ff
CADENZA
(Top)
p
dim.
pp
15
(Damp string with finger)
(♩ = 48)
4
2

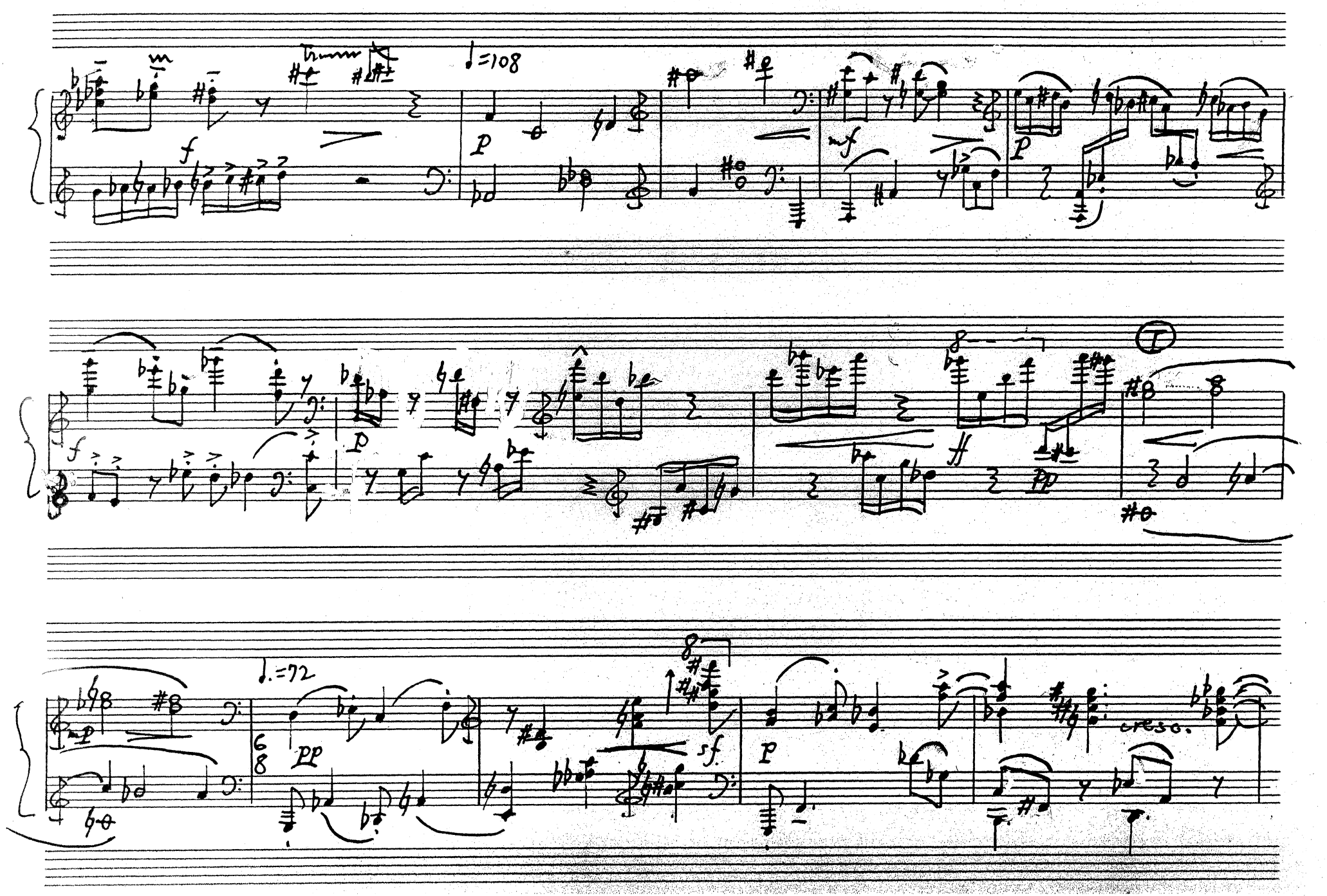

B
♩=60
(spoken:) I'm not talking about what's supposed to be.
I'm talking about what is.
pp
una corda
(played normally)
Marriage is murder,
and children a form of punishment.
mp
(INHALE, AS IF FROM A CIGARETTE)
(COUGH TWICE)
(COUGH)
(COUGH)
(INHALE)
Love is slavery:
the enslavement of half the human race by the other half.
poco a poco cresc end o - - - f
Sex is animal behavior,
tre corde

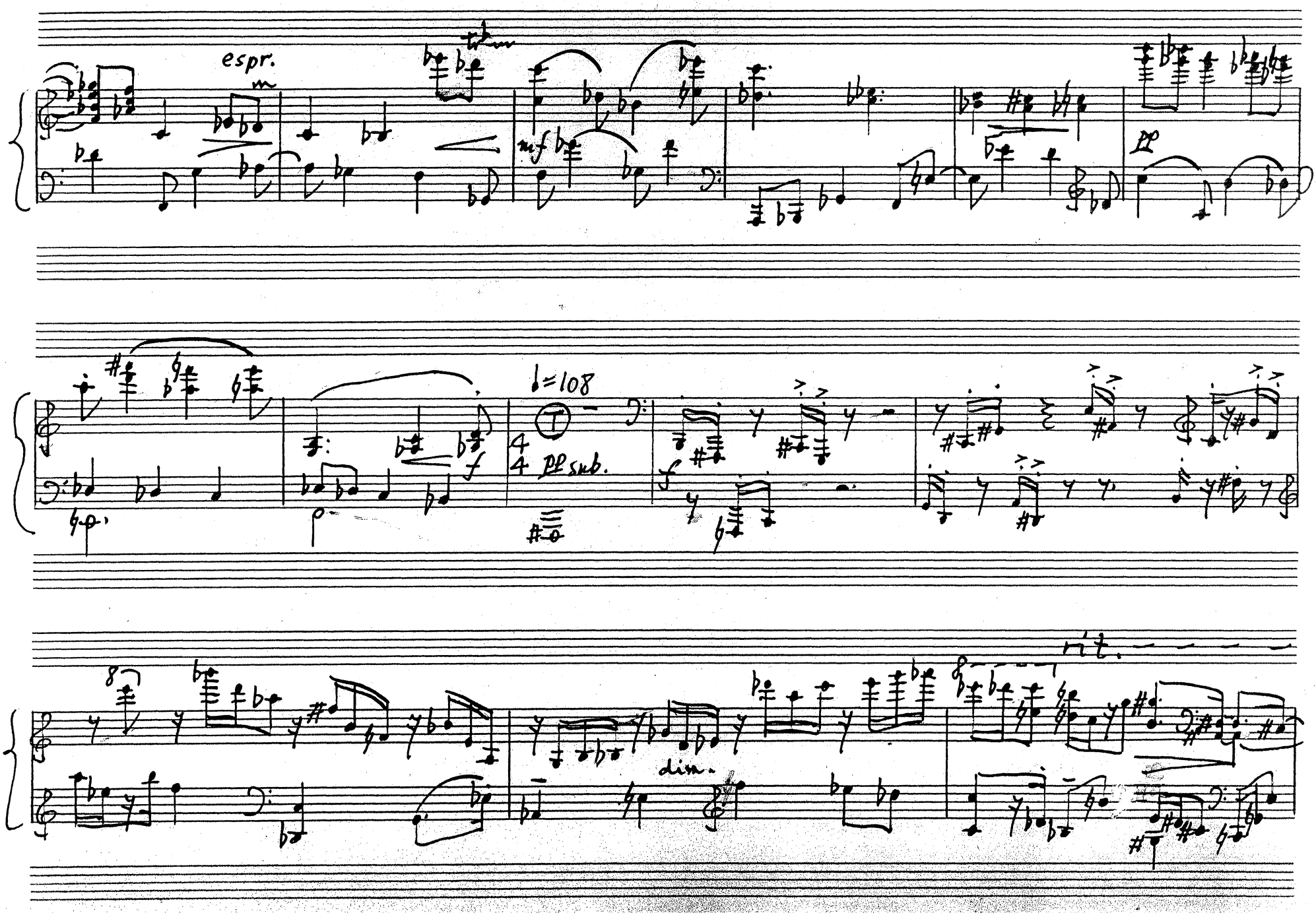

violence.
All sex is rape.
ff
(T)
Let me tell you
D sub.
how I killed my wife.
pp
Do you want
to hear
rit.
the story?
Do you really want to?

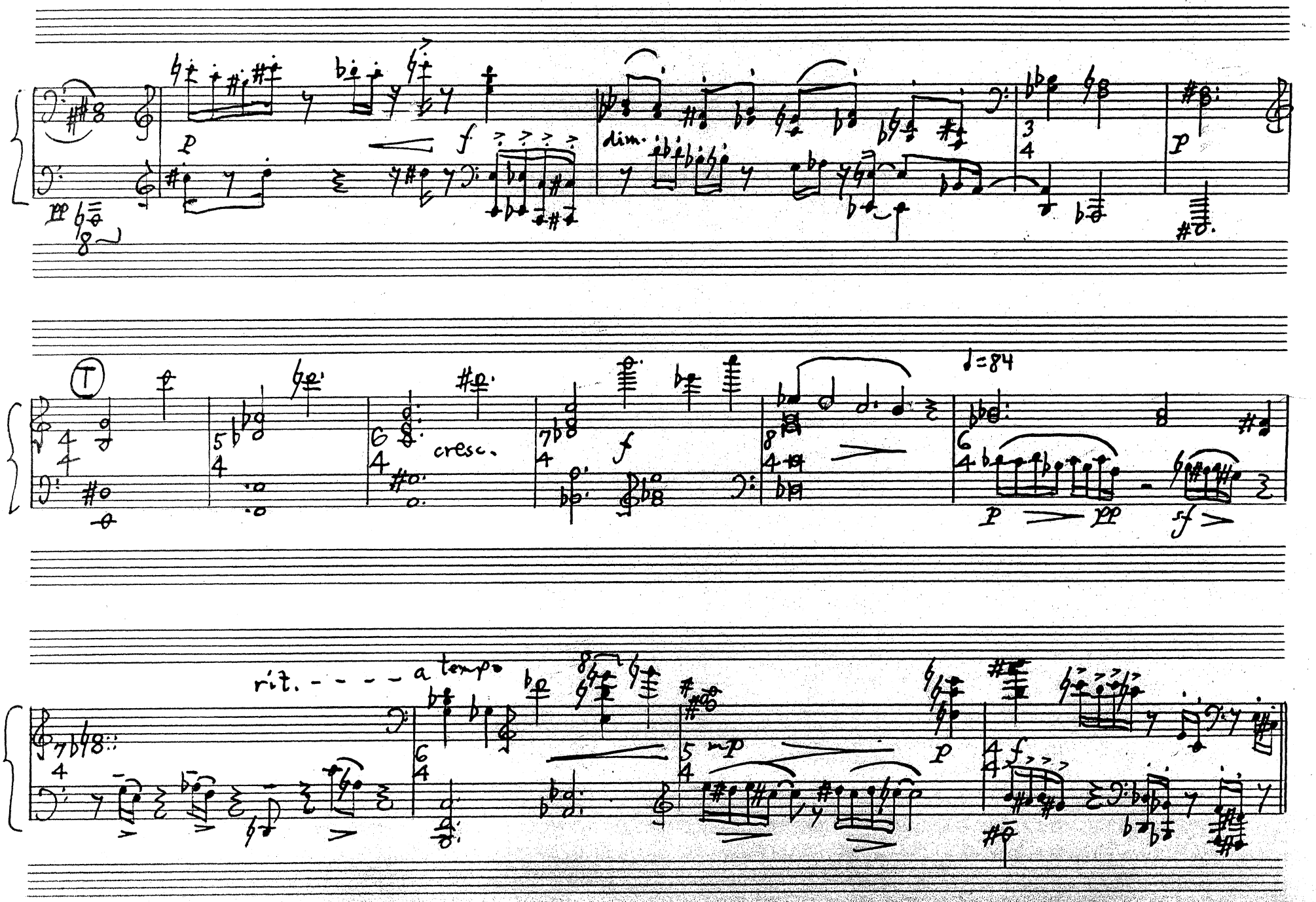

They thought I killed her on October fifth, with a knife.
It wasn't that day I killed her.
It was much earlier,
mit. - - -
cresc.
We were like two prisoners, chained together, hating each other, and trying not to know it.
cresc.
What time is it?
You're not tired?
Excuse me, I'm just going to drink some water.
(Drink water)

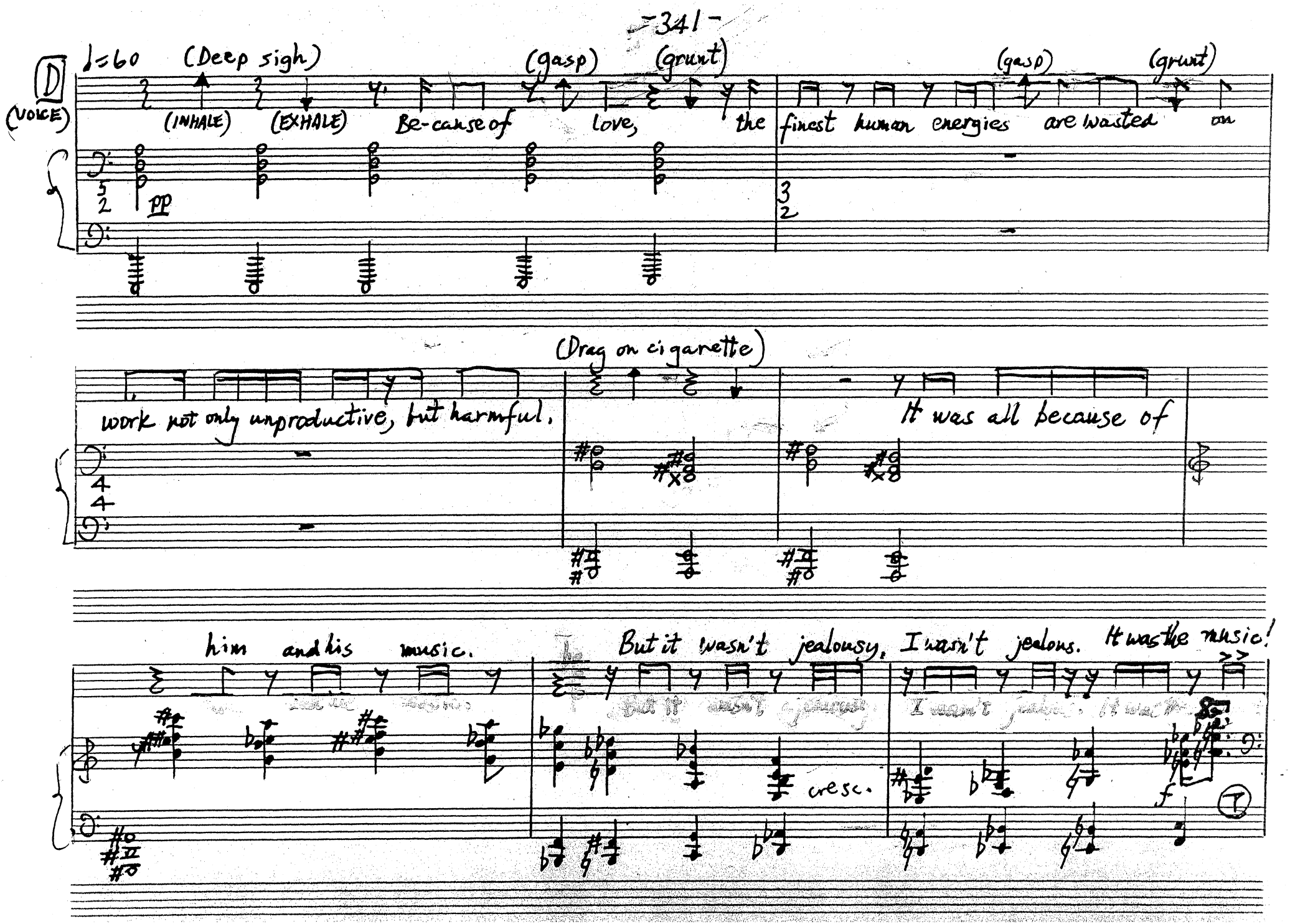

C
Presto agitato
(♩=108)
marcato
mf
cresc.
f
p sub.
p
Ped
p
f
*

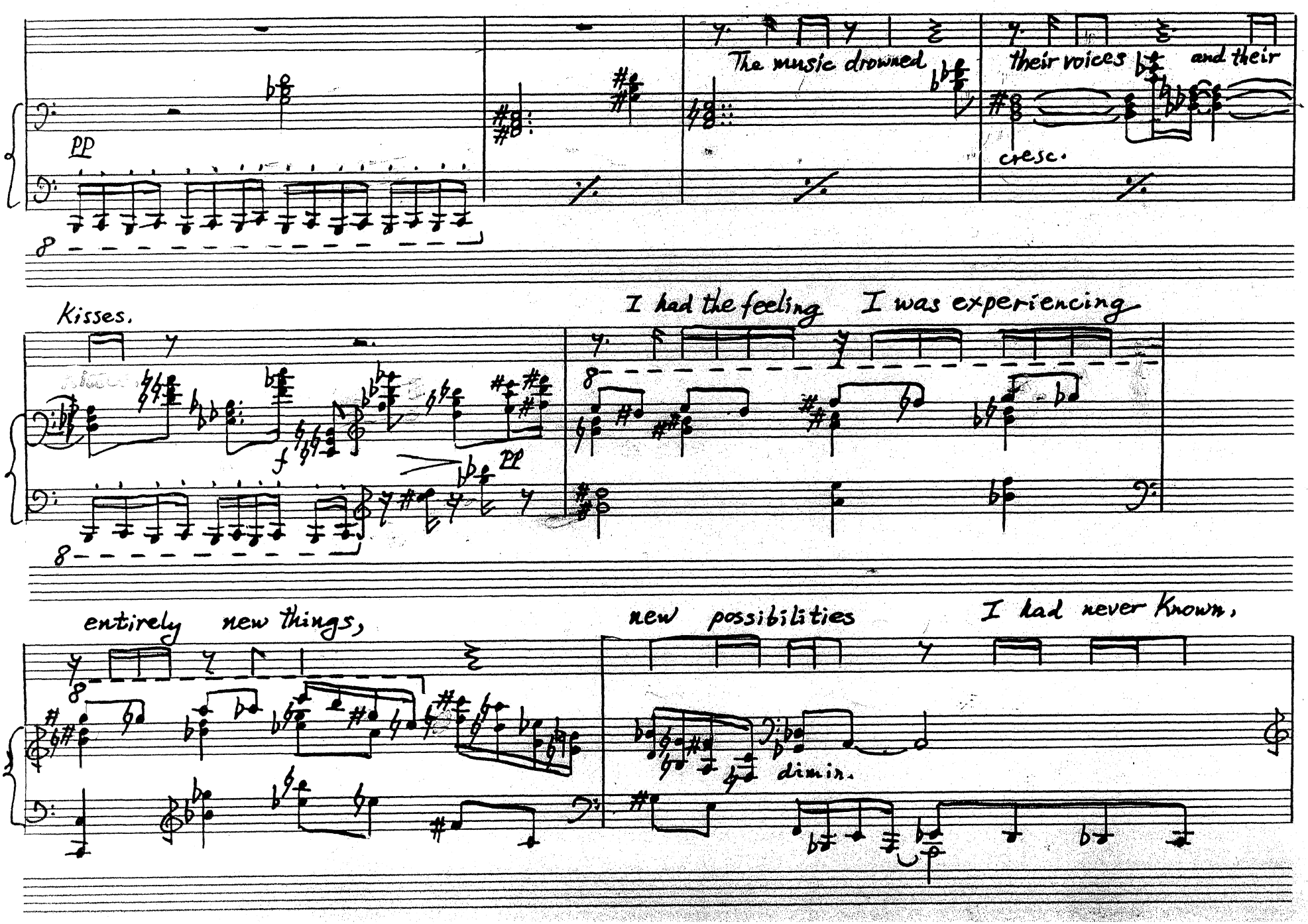

(coughing, sobbing
pp
ppp
♩=84
mp
cresc.
f
ff
p
p
cresc.
Ped.
*

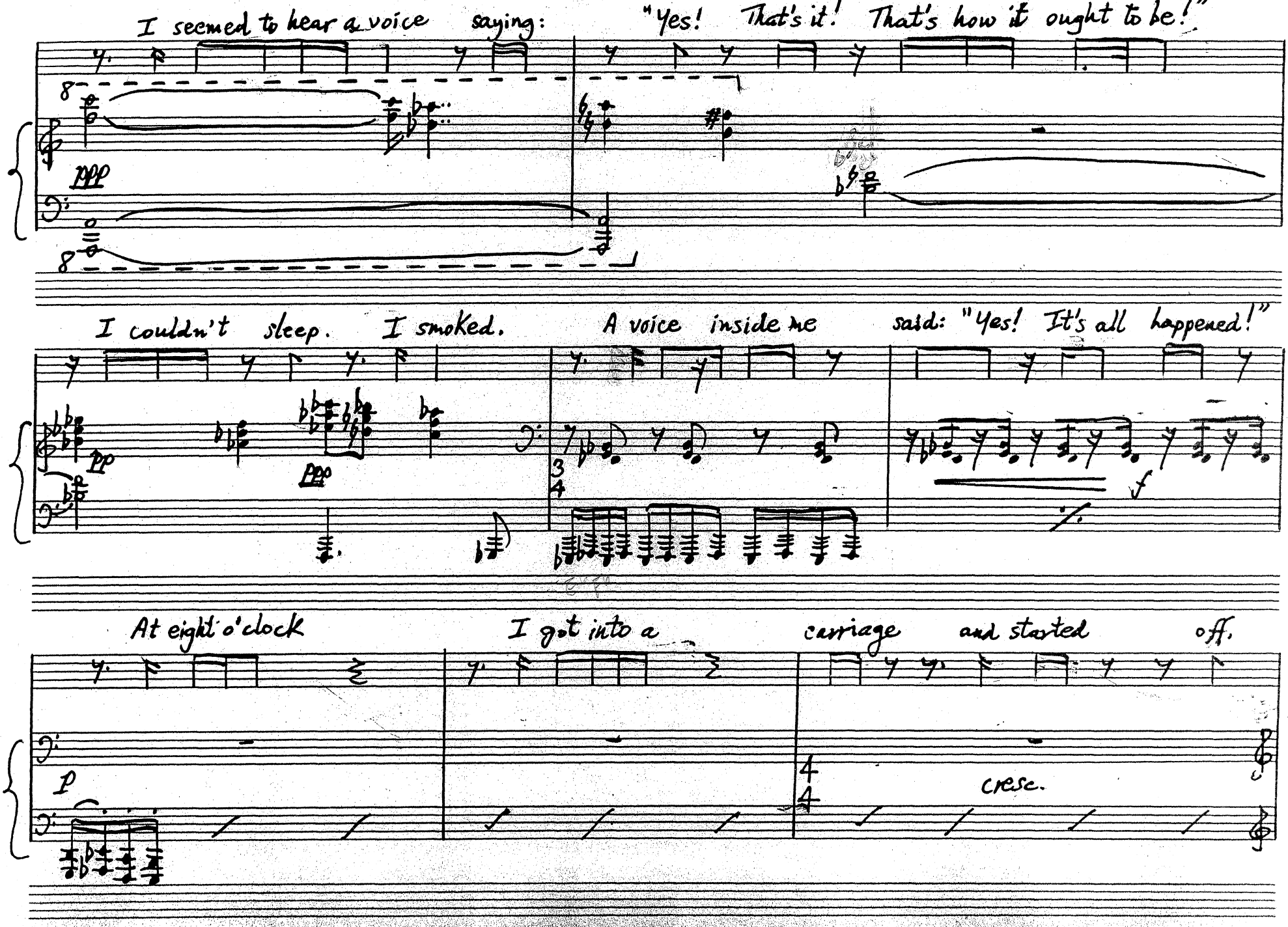

♩=108
f
p
mf
p
f
p
ff
pp
I
♩.=72
pp
sf
p
cresc.

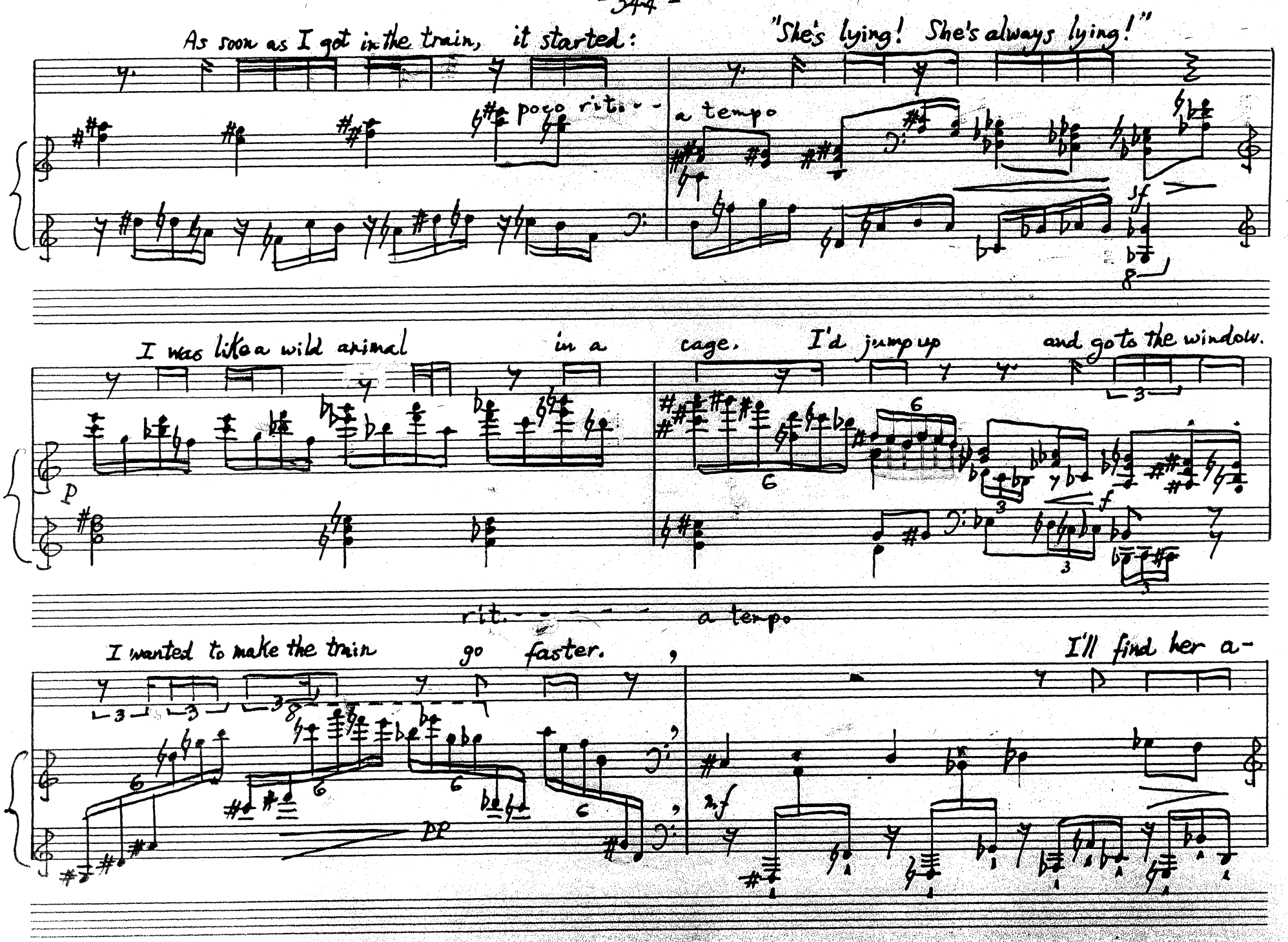

espr.
mf
pp
♩=108
4/4 pp sub.
f
dim.
rit.

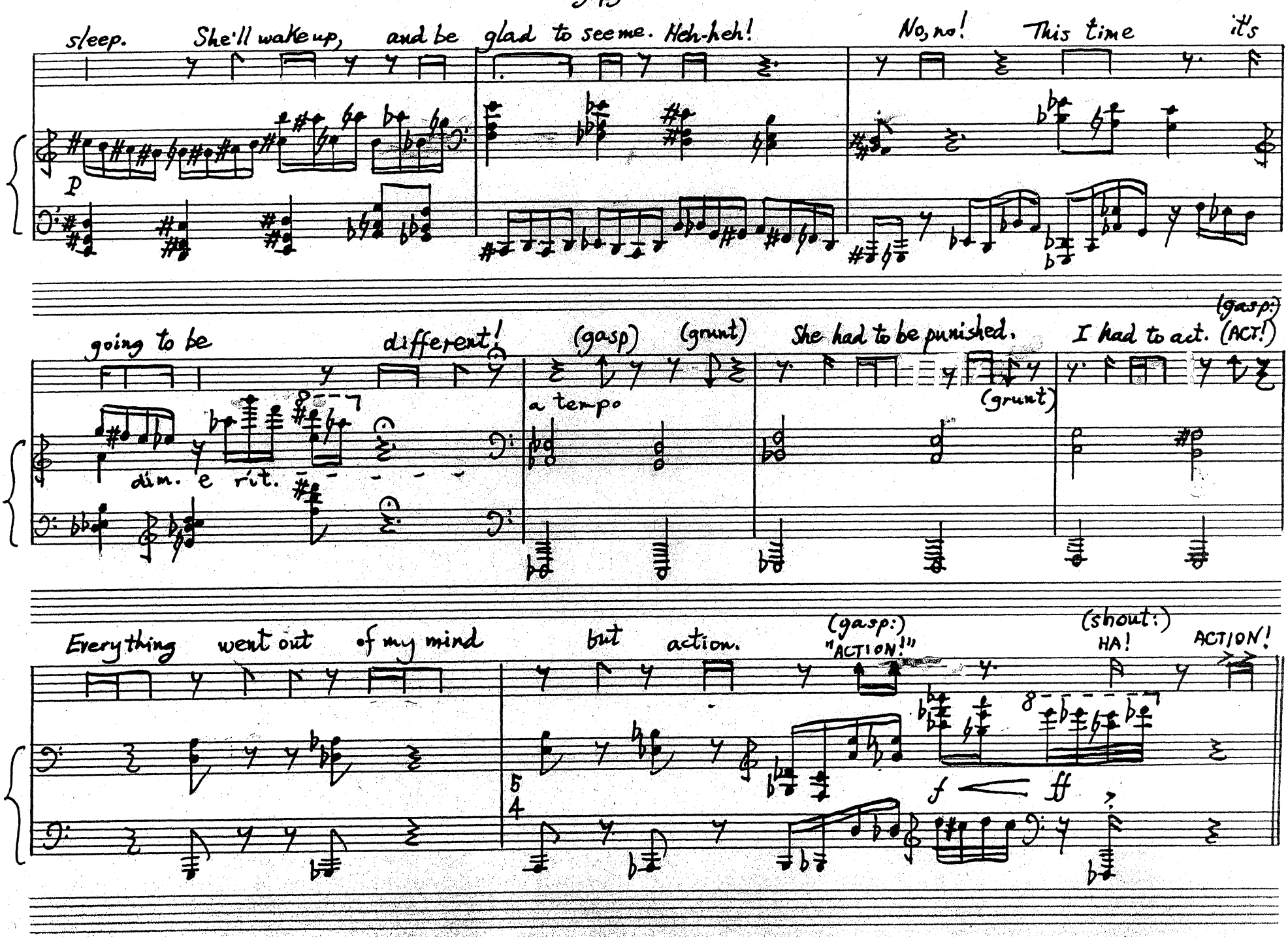

p
f
dim.
p
T
cresc.
f
♩=84
p
pp
sf
rit. - - - - a tempo
mp
p
f

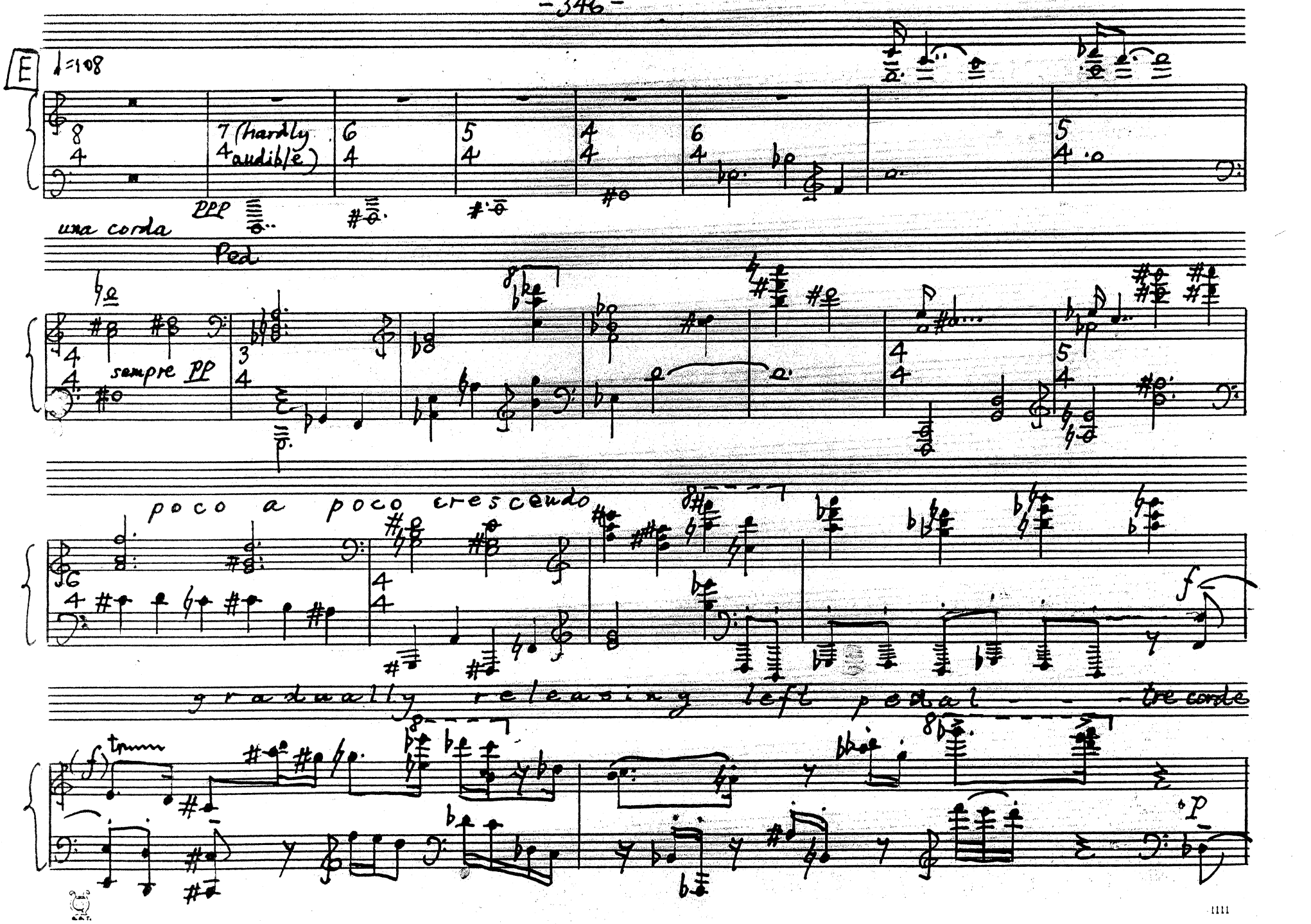

D
(VOICE)
♩=60
(Deep sigh)
(gasp)
(grunt)
(gasp)
(grunt)
(INHALE)
(EXHALE)
Be-cause of
love,
the
finest human energies
are wasted
on
pp
(Drag on cigarette)
work not only unproductive, but harmful.
It was all because of
him and his music.
But it wasn't jealousy. I wasn't jealous. It was the music!
cresc.
f

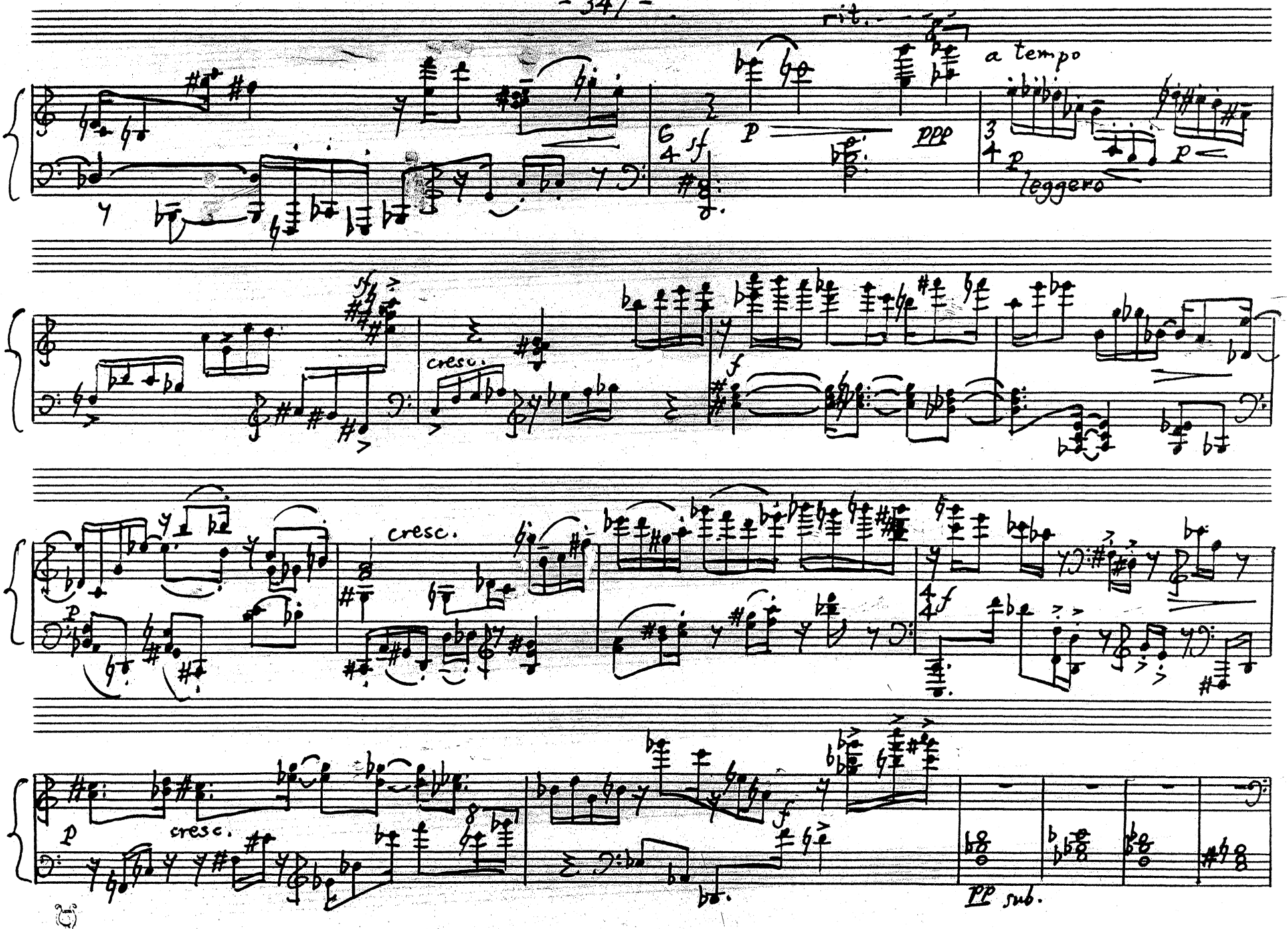

pp
The music drowned
their voices
and their
cresc.
Kisses.
I had the feeling
I was experiencing
f
pp
entirely new things,
new possibilities
I had never known,
dimin.

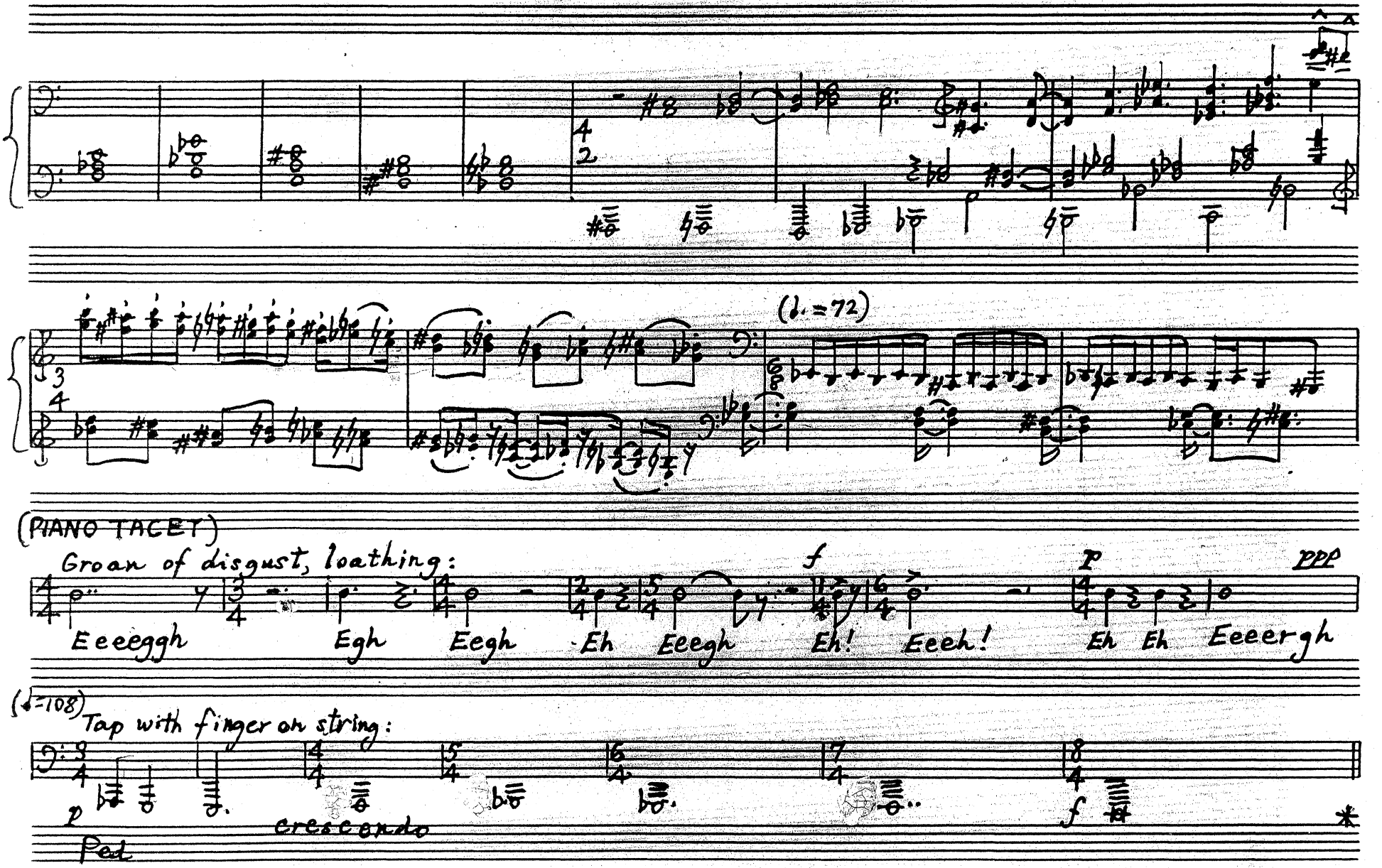

I seemed to hear a voice saying:
"Yes! That's it! That's how it ought to be!"
ppp
I couldn't sleep. I smoked.
A voice inside me
said: "Yes! It's all happened!"
pp
ppp
f
At eight o'clock
I got into a
carriage
and started
off.
p
cresc.

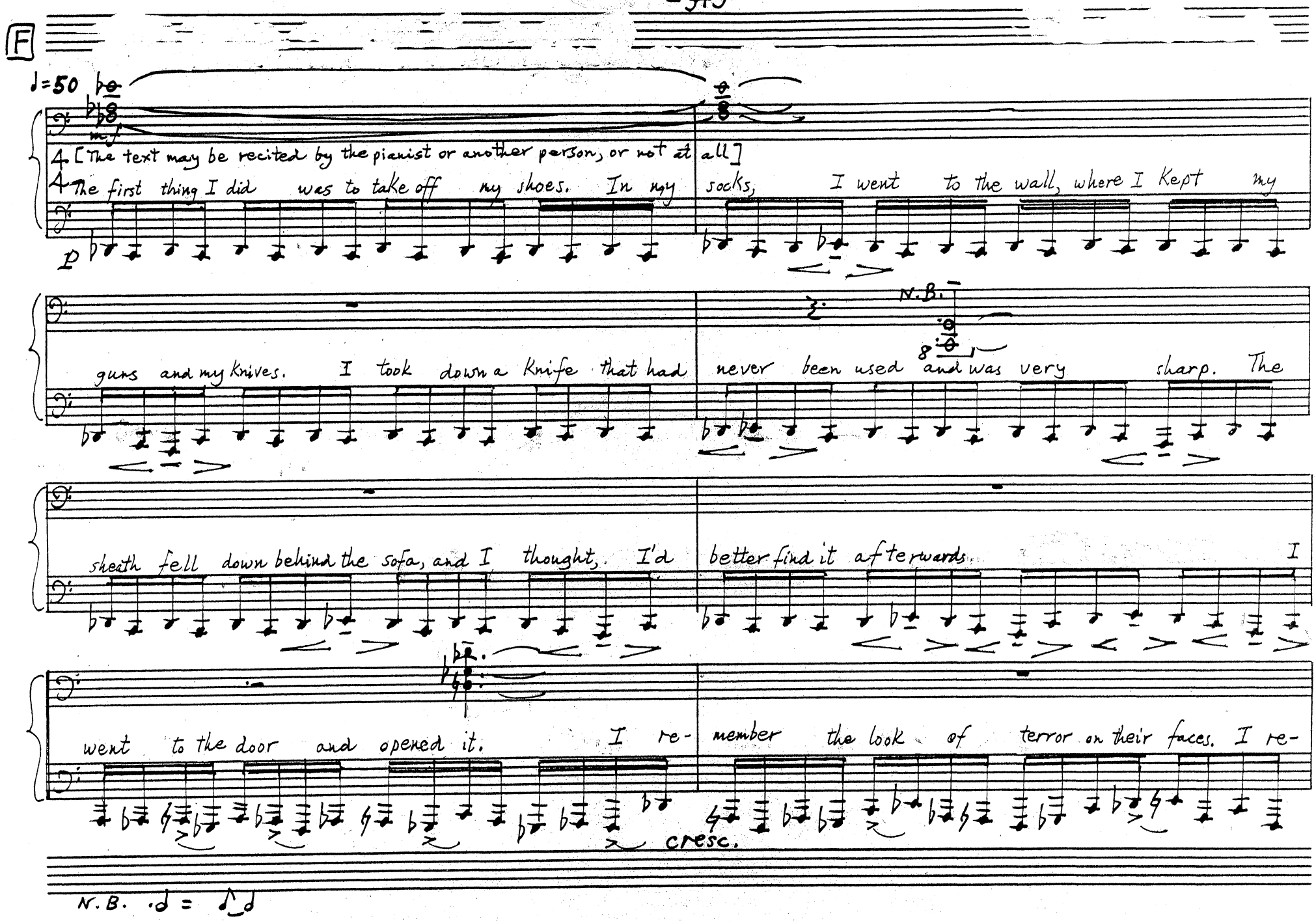

As soon as I got in the train, it started:
"She's lying! She's always lying!"
poco rit.
a tempo
sf
I was like a wild animal in a cage. I'd jump up and go to the window.
p
f
rit.
a tempo
I wanted to make the train go faster.
I'll find her a-
pp
mf

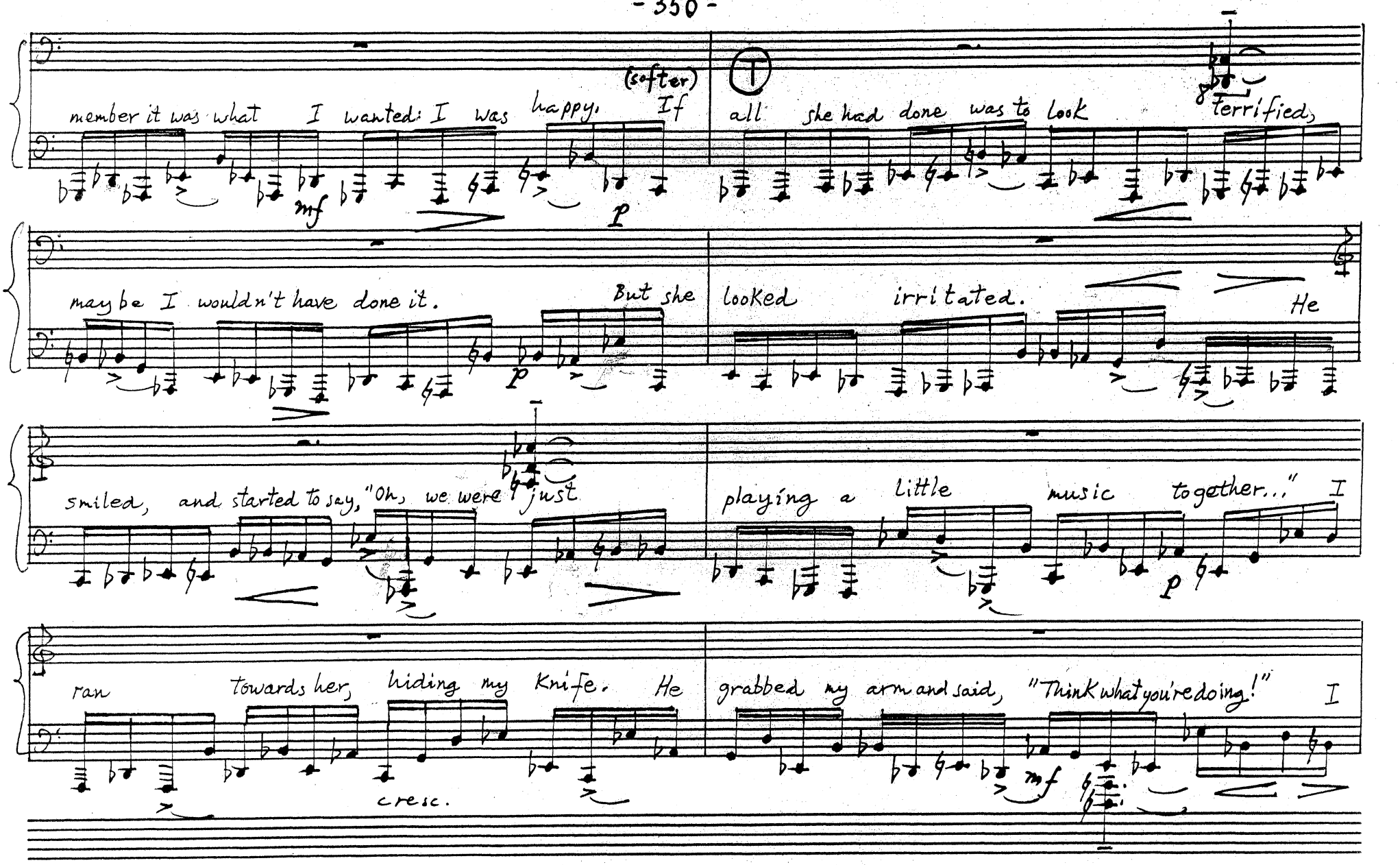

sleep.
She'll wake up,
and be
glad to see me. Heh-heh!
No, no!
This time
it's
p
going to be
different!
(gasp)
(grunt)
She had to be punished.
I had to act.
(gasp:)
(ACT!)
dim. e rit.
a tempo
(grunt)
Everything
went out
of my mind
but
action.
(gasp:)
"ACTION!"
(shout:)
HA!
ACTION!
f
ff

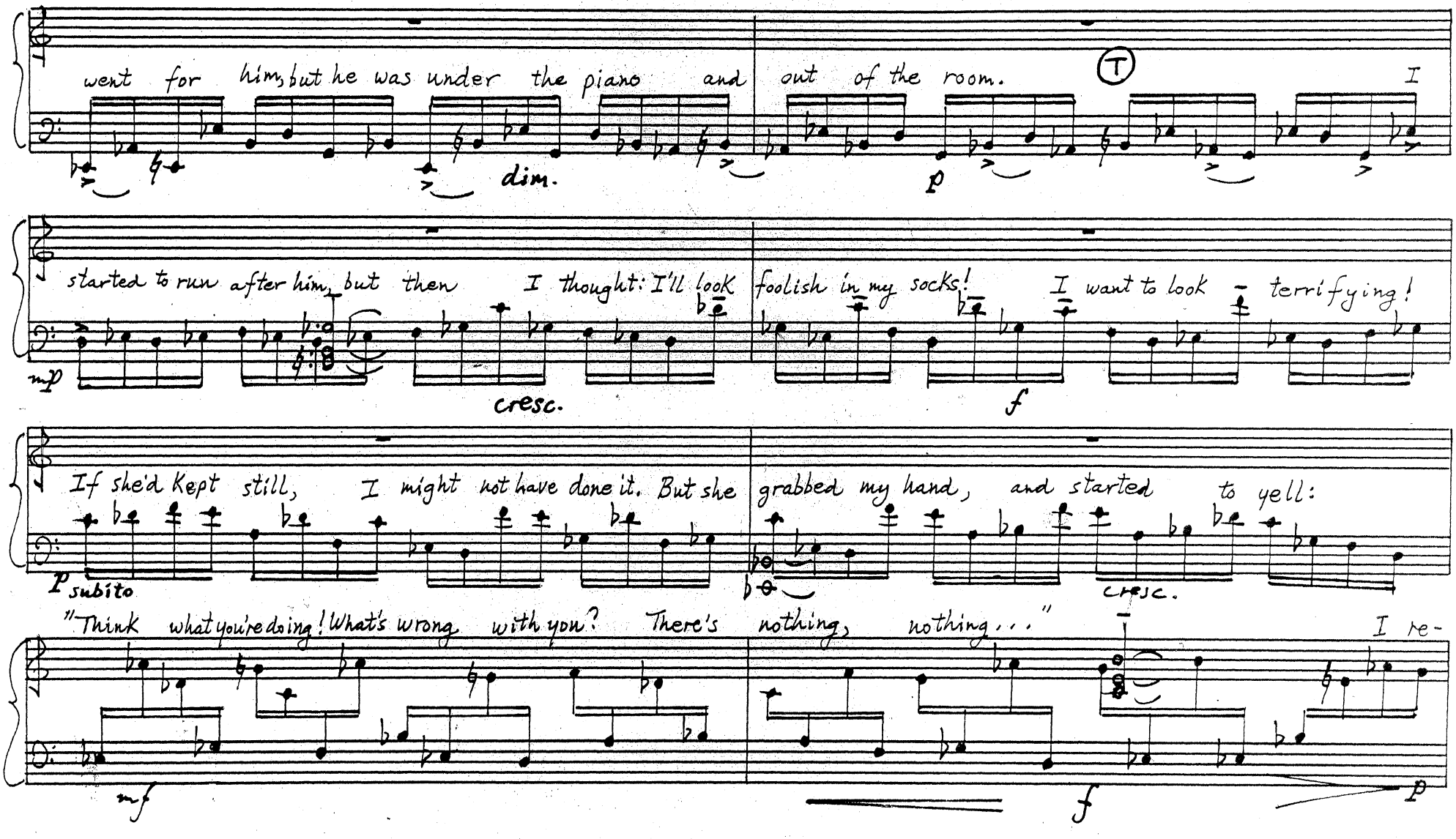

E
♩=108
7 (hardly audible)
ppp
una corda
Ped
sempre pp
poco a poco crescendo
f
gradually releasing left pedal
tre corde
p

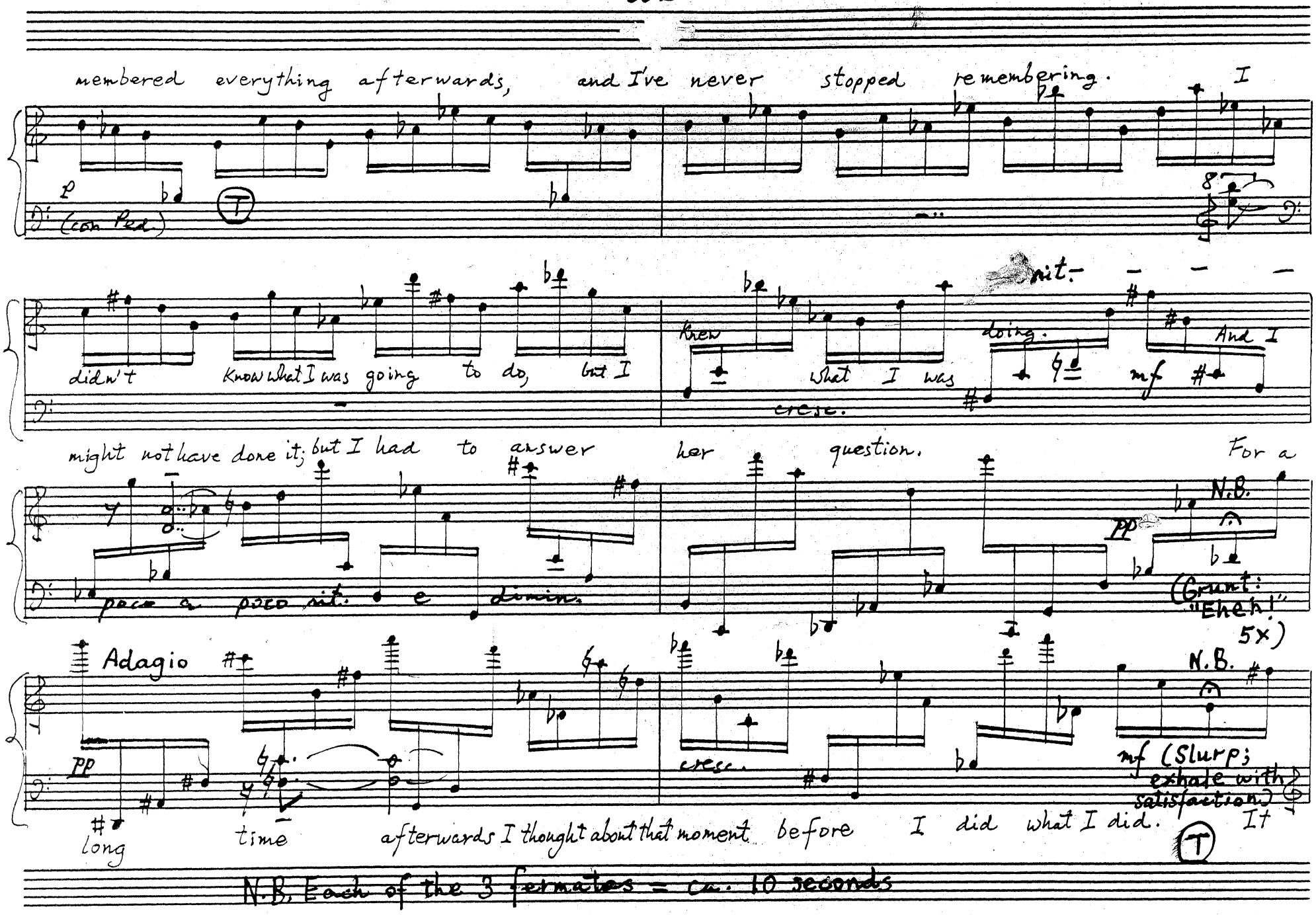

a tempo
leggero
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
pp sub.

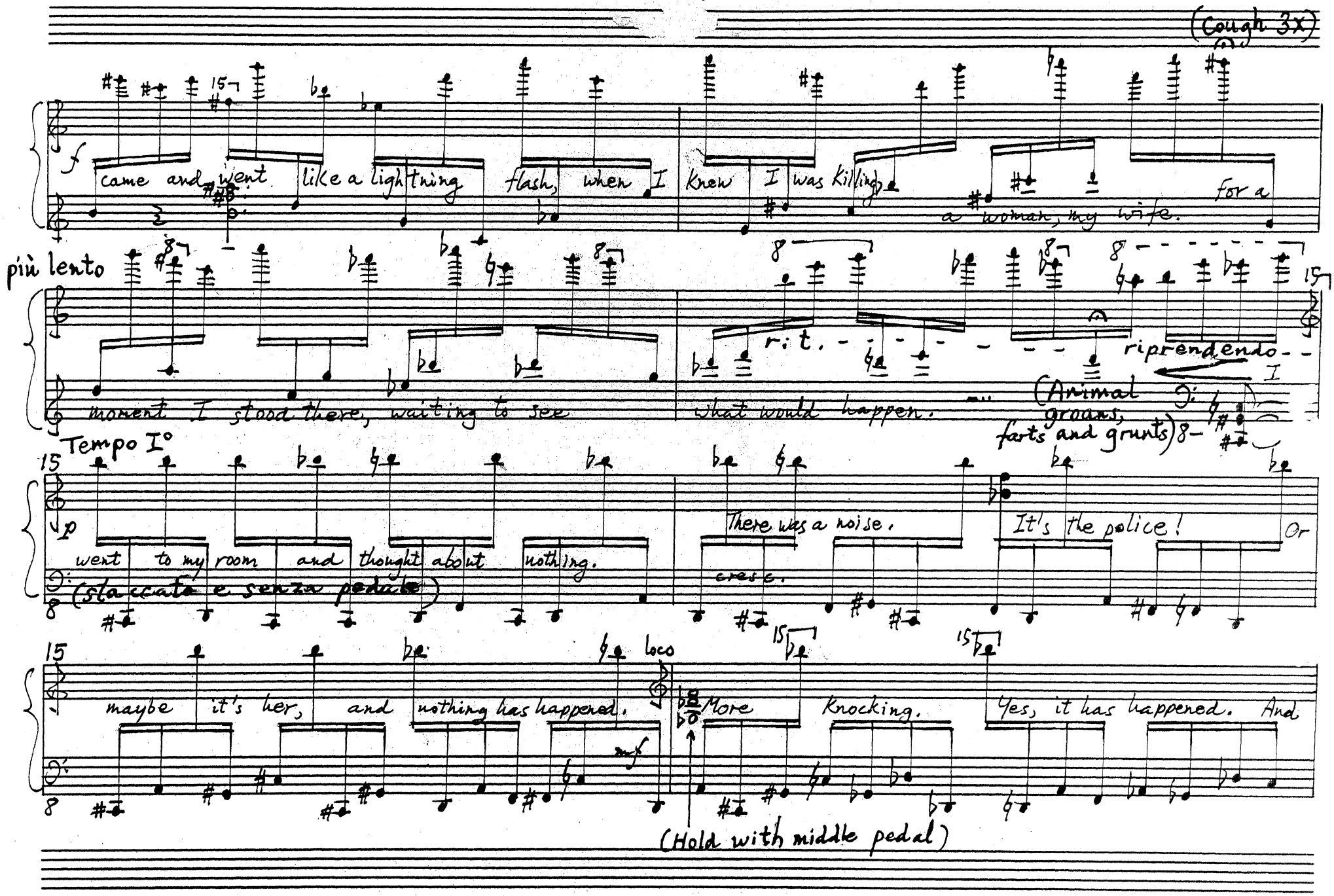

(♩.=72)
(PIANO TACET)
Groan of disgust, loathing:
Eeeeggh
Egh
Eegh
Eh
Eeegh
Eh!
Eeeh!
Eh
Eh
Eeeergh
(♩=108)
Tap with finger on string:
Ped

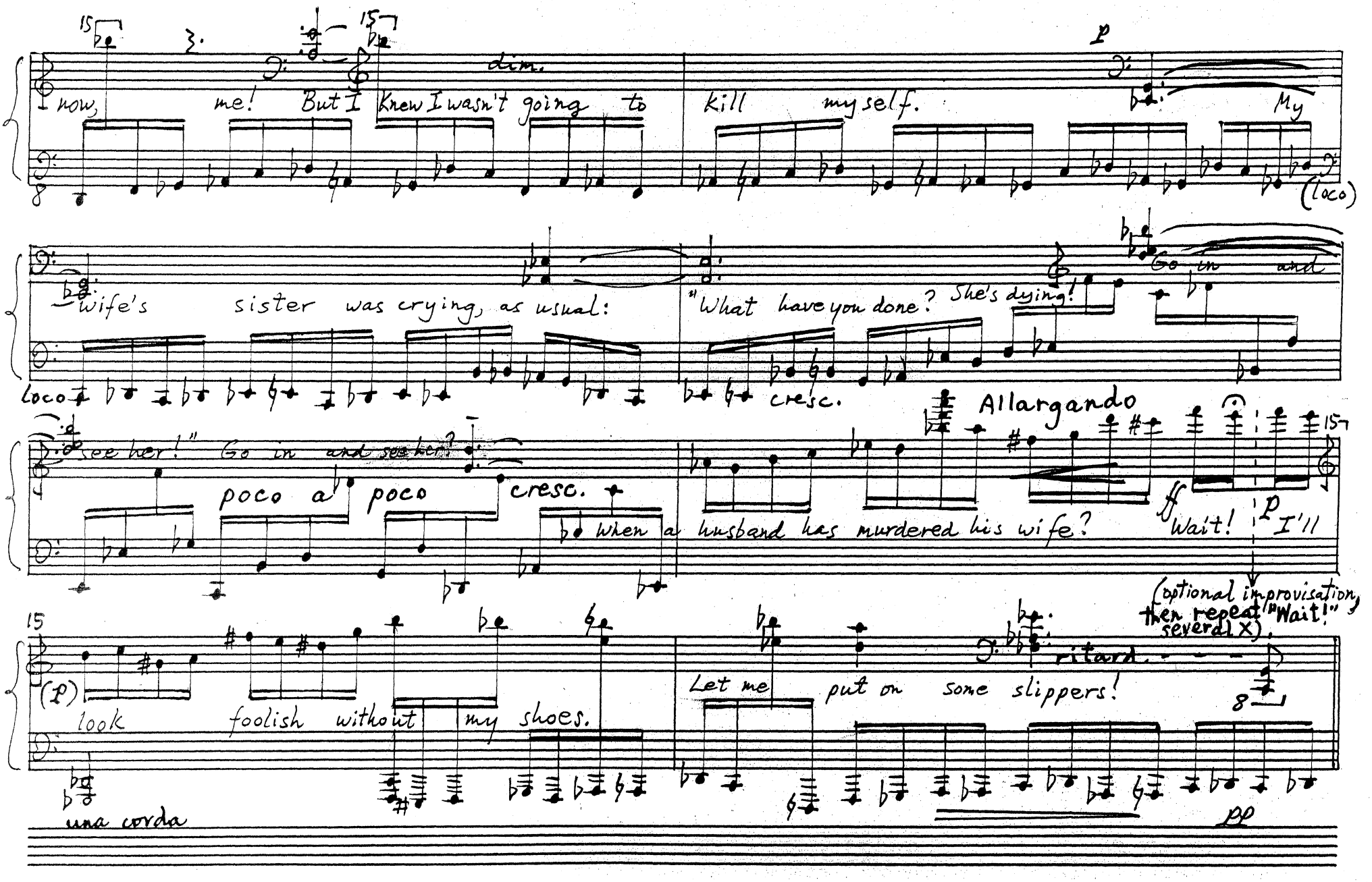

F
♩=50
mf
4. [The text may be recited by the pianist or another person, or not at all]
4 The first thing I did was to take off my shoes. In my socks, I went to the wall, where I kept my
p
guns and my knives. I took down a knife that had never been used and was very sharp. The
N.B.
sheath fell down behind the sofa, and I thought, I'd better find it afterwards. I
went to the door and opened it. I re- member the look of terror on their faces. I re-
cresc.
N.B. ♩ = ♪♩

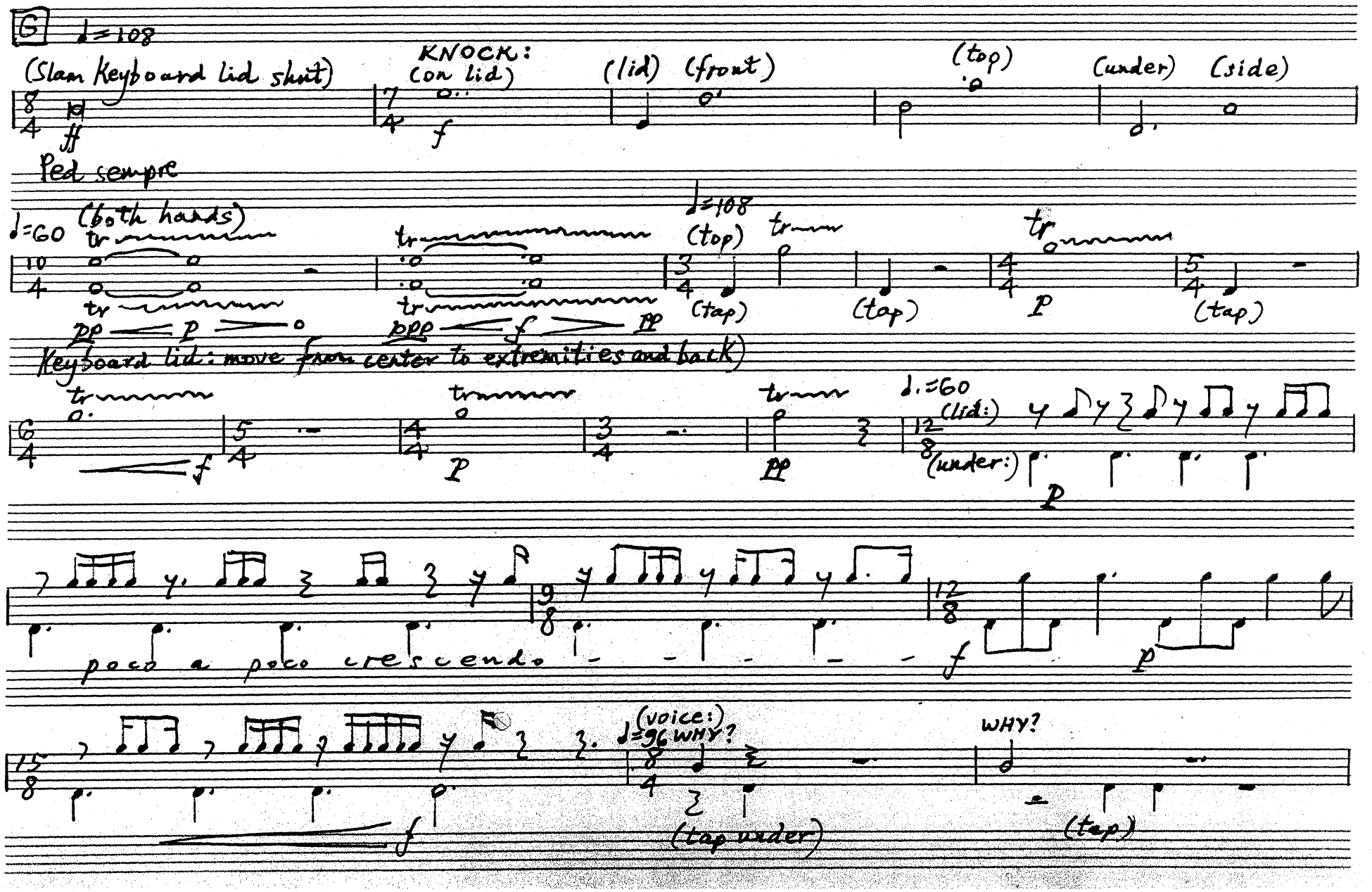

member it was what I wanted: I was happy. If
(softer)
mf
p
all she had done was to look
8
terrified,
maybe I wouldn't have done it.
But she
p
looked irritated.
He
smiled, and started to say, "Oh, we were just
playing a little music together..." I
p
ran towards her, hiding my knife. He
cresc.
grabbed my arm and said, "Think what you're doing!" I
mf

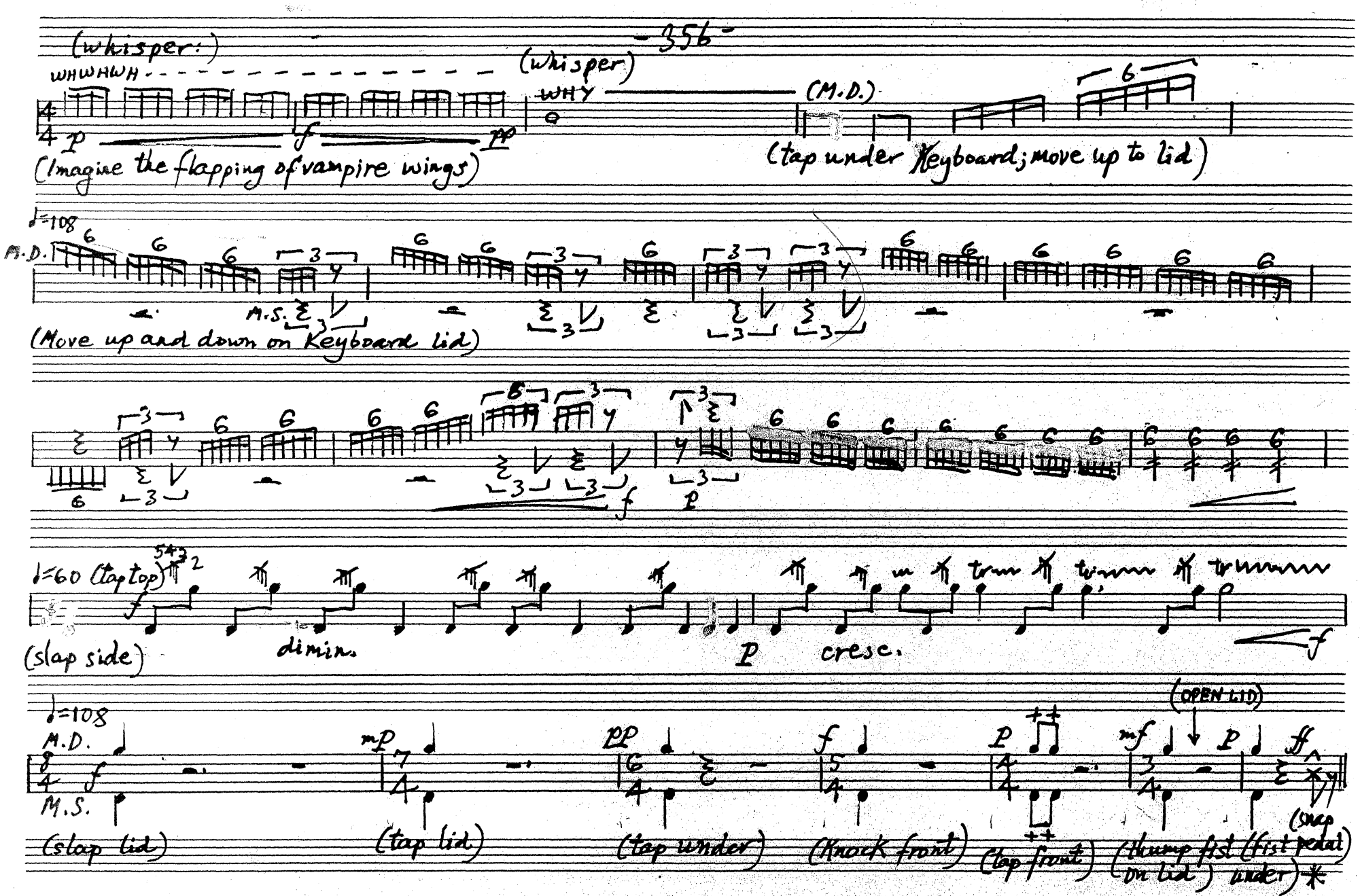

went for him, but he was under the piano and out of the room.
T
I
dim.
p
started to run after him, but then I thought: I'll look foolish in my socks!
I want to look - terrifying!
mp
cresc.
f
If she'd kept still, I might not have done it. But she grabbed my hand, and started to yell:
p subito
cresc.
"Think what you're doing! What's wrong with you? There's nothing, nothing..."
I re-
mf
f
p


membered everything afterwards, and I've never stopped remembering. I
p (con Ped.)
T
didn't Know what I was going to do, but I
Knew what I was doing. And I
rit.
cresc.
mf
might not have done it; but I had to answer her question. For a
poco a poco rit. e dimin.
pp
N.B.
(Grunt: "Ehen!" 5x)
Adagio
pp
cresc.
mf (Slurp; exhale with satisfaction)
long time afterwards I thought about that moment before I did what I did. It
T
N.B. Each of the 3 fermatas = ca. 10 seconds


(Cough 3x)
f
came and went like a lightning flash, when I knew I was killing a woman, my wife. for a
più lento
moment I stood there, waiting to see
r.i.t.
riprendendo
I
what would happen.
(Animal groans, farts and grunts)
Tempo I°
p
went to my room and thought about nothing.
(staccato e senza pedale)
There was a noise.
cresc.
It's the police!
Or
maybe it's her, and nothing has happened.
mf
loco
More
Knocking.
Yes, it has happened. And
(Hold with middle pedal)


15
dim.
p
I now, me! But I knew I wasn't going to kill myself. My
(loco)
wife's sister was crying, as usual:
"What have you done? She's dying!
Go in and
loco
cresc.
see her!" Go in and see her?
poco a poco cresc.
when a husband has murdered his wife?
Allargando
ff
Wait!
p
I'll
(optional improvisation, then repeat "Wait!" several X).
15
(p)
look foolish without my shoes.
Let me put on some slippers!
ritard.
8
una corda
pp


G
♩=108
(Slam Keyboard lid shut)
ff
KNOCK:
(on lid)
f
(lid)
(front)
(top)
(under)
(side)
Ped sempre
♩=60
(both hands)
tr
pp
p
♩=108
(top)
(tap)
(tap)
p
(tap)
ppp
f
pp
(Keyboard lid: move from center to extremities and back)
f
p
pp
♩.=60
(lid:)
(under:)
p
poco a poco crescendo
f
p
(voice:)
♩=96 WHY?
(tap under)
WHY?
(tap)


(whisper:)
WHWHWH
(whisper)
WHY
(M.D.)
(Imagine the flapping of vampire wings)
(tap under Keyboard; move up to lid)
♩=108
M.D.
M.S.
(Move up and down on Keyboard lid)
♩=60 (tap top)
(slap side)
dimin.
cresc.
♩=108
M.D.
M.S.
(slap lid)
(tap lid)
(tap under)
(Knock front)
(tap front)
(OPEN LID)
(thump fist on lid)
(fist under)
(snap pedal)

H ♩= 80

VOICE:

Shall I forgive her? She's dying, and so can be for-given.

p mf f mp p pp

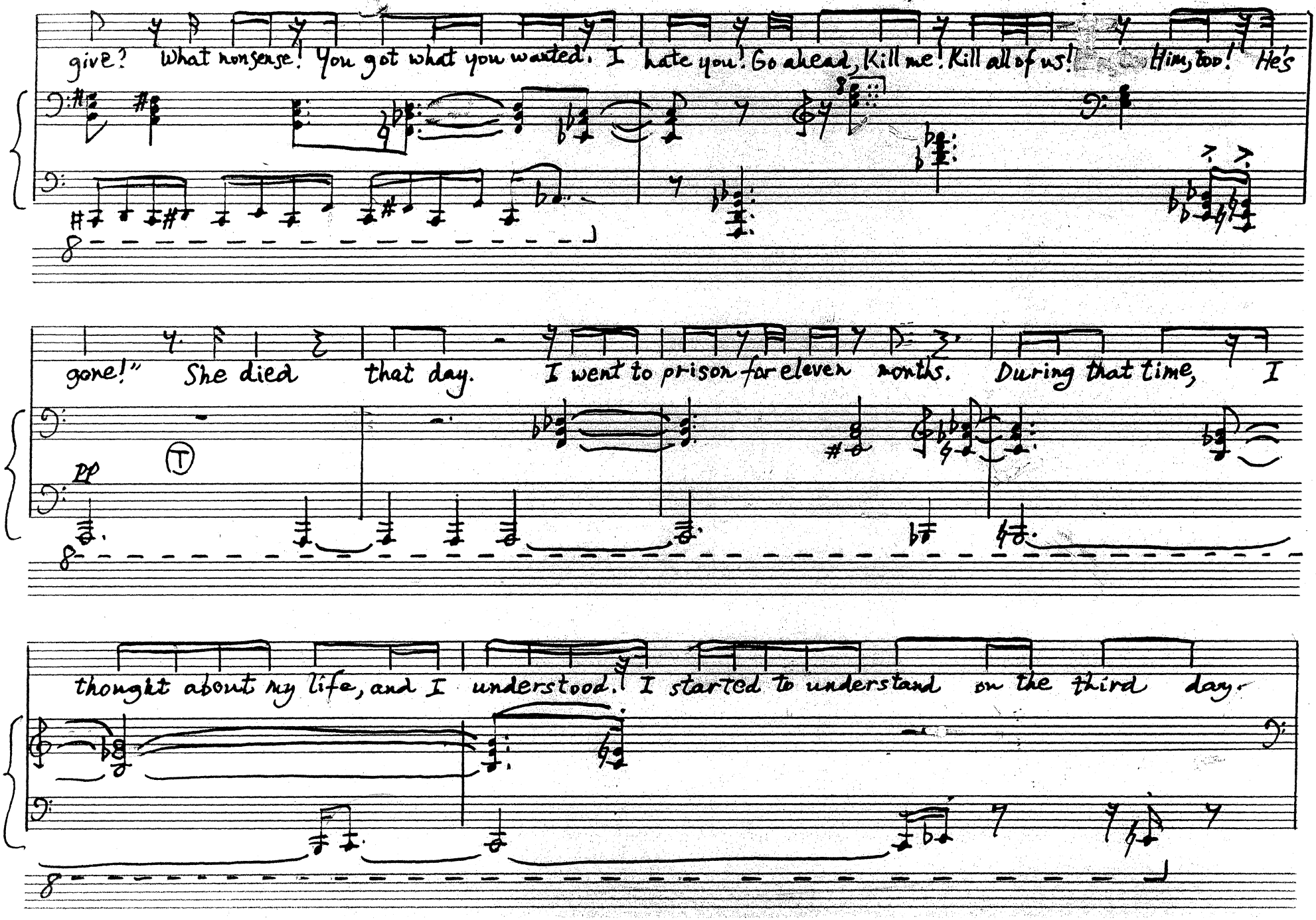
She looked at me. "You got what you wanted. You killed me!

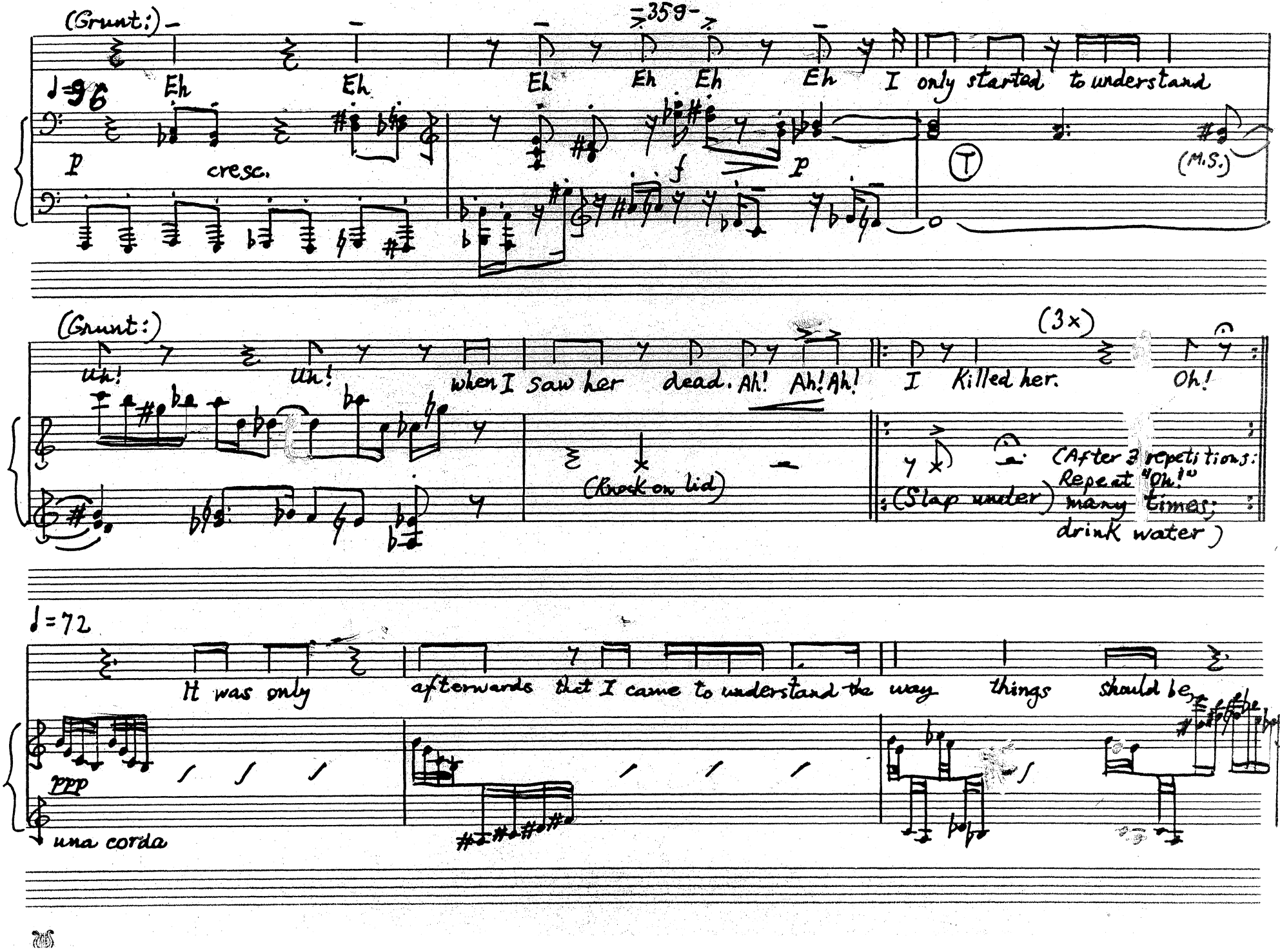
T p pp

una corda

Why did all this happen? Why?" "For-give me!" I said. "For-

p


give? What nonsense! You got what you wanted. I hate you! Go ahead, kill me! Kill all of us! Him, too! He's
gone!" She died that day. I went to prison for eleven months. During that time, I
pp
T
thought about my life, and I understood. I started to understand on the third day.


(Grunt:)
♩=96
Eh
Eh
Eh
Eh
Eh
Eh
I only started to understand
p
cresc.
f
p
T
(M.S.)
(Grunt:)
Uh!
Uh!
when I saw her dead. Ah! Ah! Ah!
(3x)
I Killed her.
Oh!
(Rock on lid)
(Slap under)
(After 3 repetitions: Repeat "Oh!" many times; drink water)
♩=72
It was only
afterwards that I came to understand the way things should be
ppp
una corda

allargando - - -

and thus perceived the horror of things as they are.

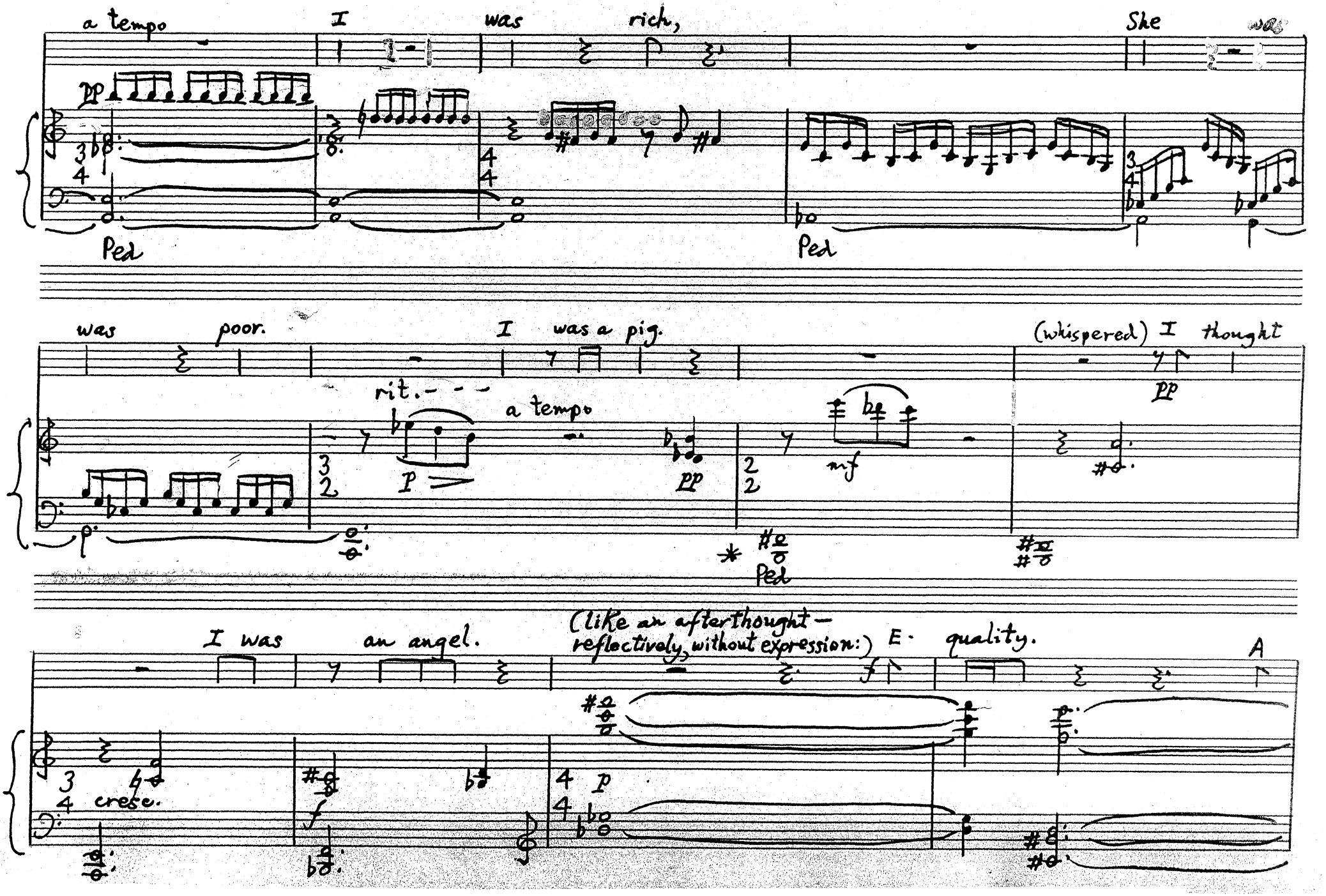
♩ = 96 Look at the factories! Most of them make useless junk. Millions of humans

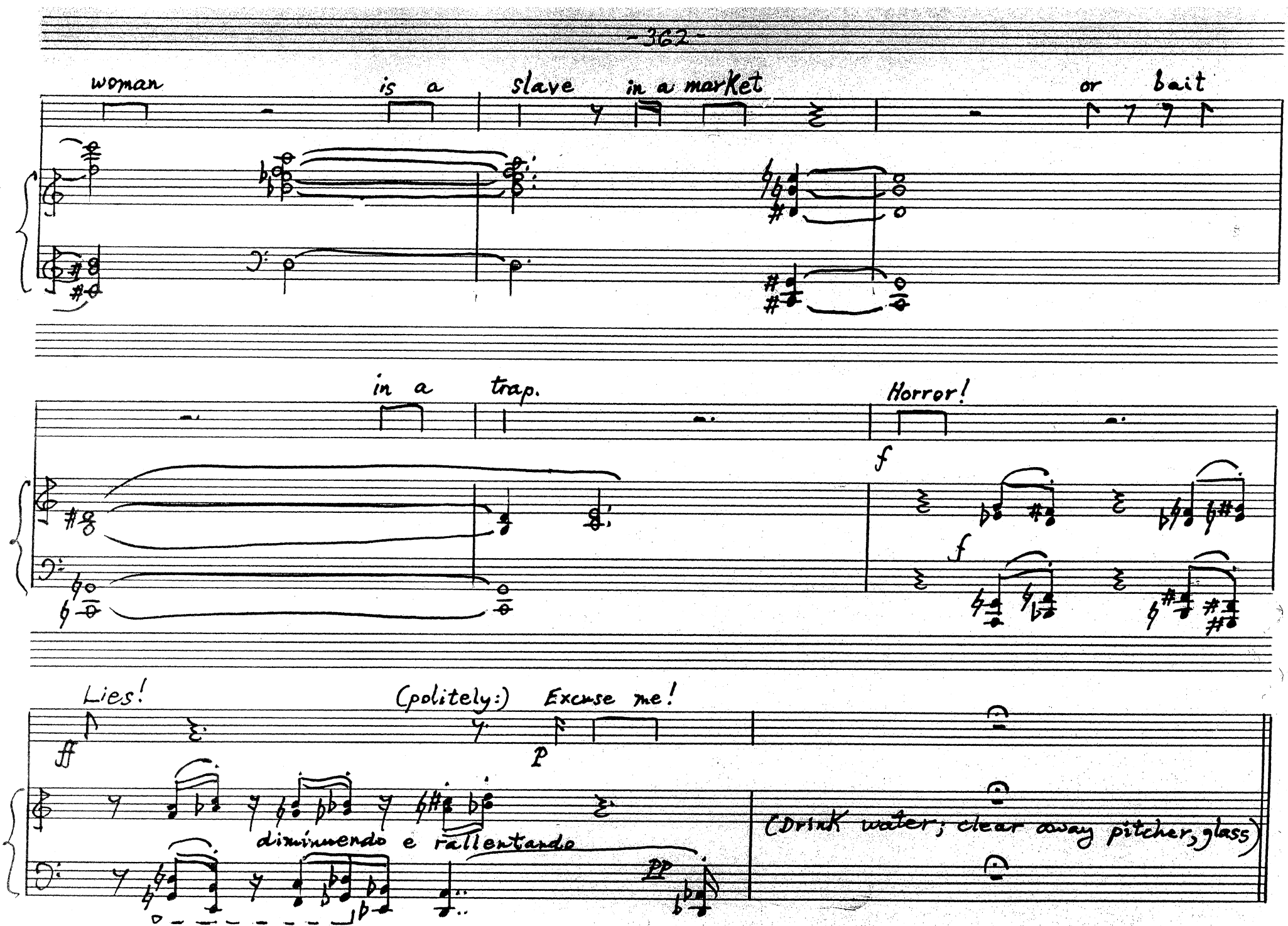
pp

generations of slaves, laboring like convicts, punishing themselves for love!

(Repeat "love" many times, accelerating)

rallentando - - - -


a tempo
I
was
rich,
She
was
Ped
Ped
was
poor.
I was a pig.
(whispered) I thought
rit.
a tempo
pp
mf
pp
Ped
I was
an angel.
(Like an afterthought—
reflectively, without expression:)
E·
quality.
A
cresc.
f
p


woman is a slave in a market or bait
in a trap.
Horror!
f
f
Lies!
ff
(politely:) Excuse me!
p
diminuendo e rallentando
pp
(Drink water; clear away pitcher, glass)