Edward II

An Opera in 2 Acts
(Six Tableaux)

for Narrator, 7 Singers,
and Medium Sized Orchestra

Piano Vocal Score

libretto by the composer
based on the play by

Christopher Marlowe

Music by

David Edgar Walther

DEW © Copyright 2010/18/20/25

The Cast:

(in order of appearance: Genders and Fachs may be modified)

Lightborn: Lyric Bass and Narrator: A very charming "gentle tradesman." This may require two performers of similar appearance and voice: one to stand on the podium in chains; and one to lurk in the shadows and eventually sing and be part of the action of the flashbacks. Lightborn must have incredible sweetness and seductive charm. His narrations should always be spoken in the dominant language of the culture; while all singing is best in Marlowe's English. Lightborn's narrations may be expanded, contracted or otherwise altered in any way to fit the language, character, tempi... of a given production. They may even be left out entirely. The narrations given here are for what seemed to me to be the correct musical tempi and the speed of my reading of the text in English.

Edward II: Dramatic Bass-baritone: King of England. Father of Edward III, estranged husband of Queen Isabella, lover of Gaveston. Referred to as "Edward The Second." Historically, Edward II was a tall and strong man, like his father. His death mask shows him to have had red blond curly hair and a thin hooked nose.

Queen Isabella: Dramatic Coloratura Soprano: The Queen of England, sister of The King of France, mother of Edward III, and estranged wife of King Edward II. She is said to have been a great beauty, and is depicted with long wavy dark brown or black hair.

Gaveston: High Dramatic Tenor: Born of French peasant stock; lover of Edward II.

Mortimer,Earl of Lancaster: Dramatic Tenor: The most powerful lord in The English Court.

Edward III: Lyric Baritone: The son of Edward II and Queen Isabella. His death mask showed him to have rugged features a full brown beard and curly brown hair. What is important in singing this role is a feeling of restraint, which develops into overwhelming strength. May also be sung either by a counter tenor (original) or mezzo-soprano ("Eleanor" or as pants role).

Executioner: Bass.

Executioners, on-stage musicians, Attendants, Guards, Soldiers and one or more Dancers

The Orchestra: 2 Flutes (II doubling Piccolo), Oboe, English Horn in F, Bb Clarinet (sometimes on stage) & Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Contrabassoon, 2 French Horns in F, 2 Trumpets in Bb (sometimes on stage) , Tenor Trombone, Tenor-bass Trombone, Tuba in F, 2 Percussionists (Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Triangle, Crash Cymbals, Gong, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Finger Cymbals, Sleigh Bells and Bongós), Timpani, Celeste, Piano, Harp, On-stage amplified classical Guitar and Strings (each string part divides; some Double Basses must have the low C extention). Every instrument is featured as a soloist at some point.

Notes from The Composer:

The Chamber Recording:

Edward II was recorded at John Weston's Futura Sound Studio in Roslindale, MA. by Mike Burke between July 11, 2009 and January 15, 2010 by the singers: Carol Millard, high soprano as Isabella; Michael Belle, high tenor, as Gaveston; Christopher Aaron Smith, tenor, as Mortimer; Brett Johnson, baritone, as Edward III; Drew Hubbard, bass-baritone, as Lightborn; Tom Dawkins, bass-baritone, as the executioner; and David Edgar Walther, bass-baritone, as Edward II. The instrumentalists were: flute & piccolo (Carol Millard); English horn, bassoon & contra bassoon (Tom Dawkins); clarinet & tenor saxophone (Christian Contreras); piano (Leah Kosch); Russell Southcott, guitar; solo 'cello (Sam Ou) and ensemble 'cello (Priscilla Chew). Mike Burke edited and mastered the CD.

Three quarters of Gaveston's Prayer (18), The first section of Murder (19), The repeat of Battle Music (27), The introduction to Wolf's Ear (30), The coda of Assasination (24) and The Coronation of Edward III (36) were not included. The repeat of Battle Music (27) is the only cut that makes sense, I regret the others. I strongly suggest that the head motive at the start, middle and end of each tableau not be cut, as this will alter the form.

The Sets:

Tabeau I: A Road: Lightborn is brought in, in chains, from stage left to up stage right, dark blue light. The center stage features a long road connecting two huts. The road continues up a large hill that starts up right continues up to down stage left. The castle is seen down stage right, in the distance. On either side, up stage, there are two little huts with thatched roofs, we can see inside and there is a door that leads to center stage. Each interior hut is illuminated by a fire in the fireplace during the appropriate scene. As the opera begins, Edward II is writing at a desk in the hut up stage left, accompanied by a clarinet player and guitarist. The two accompanying musicians exit through a door that leads to the center stage. They take Edward's letter across the stage, following the path, to the door to Isabella's hut, up stage right. She reads the letter and sends it, with the accompanying musicians, to Gaviston, center stage. The stage is now brightly lit yellow. Gaveston is joined by Edward, who exits his hut through the door in his hut. The rest of the action then takes place center stage.

Tableau II: The Throne Room: The lighting is rose tinted. The previous scene is completely covered by a marble half circle with large columns. In the center are two huge thrones: stage right is Isabella's; stage left is Edward's. There are three enormous arches: down center, behind the thrones, there is a large door that opens in two halves from the middle and remains closed for this Tableau. The arch to stage right is illuminated for scene ii, to show a fountain and a garden. The arch to stage left remains dark throughout the second tableau.

Tableau III: The Dark Forest: As in Tableau I, but the huts and castle are gone. There are pine trees everywhere. It is night, and down center stage right is a shadowed full moon. Underneath the highest point of the hill is a cave. Inside of the cave is a fire, illuminated only as Edward III meets with his father.

Tableau IV: The Battle Field: The scene is the same as the last, except that there is no moon; it is hazy daylight; the trees are gone; and the cave is replaced by a tent for Edward, up stage left. The set is now completely bare. The horizon is obscured by fog, the ground is red brown, and the sky pale yellow.

Tableau V: The Throne Room: As in Tableau II, the lighting is a cold pale blue. The fountain to stage right is illuminated for the second duet and fades as it concludes. Lightborn enters and exits through a gate of bars to the darkened stage left arch. This arch is illuminated to show Edward in prison. There is a bed, a chair and a dim fire in the fireplace. Throughout the prison scene, Mortimer remains slouched on the throne to stage right. The light gradually brightens. *(Note: a set of 3 timpani: A, E, B; may be hidden in the garden for #36.)*

Tableau V: The Mausoleum: The thrones are removed. The central doors are open. Behind are shelves lined with sarcafigi. The lighting is rose colored. Edward's body is on a hearse. In the other two arches are shelves lined with skulls; there are also skulls on the, now open, doors. Edward's body is center stage on a gurney.

Historical Notes:

1. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was Isabella's historic lover rather than Roger Moritmer. Gaveston, was beheaded rather than stabbed. Marlowe made these changes. Edward II's actual murderer is unknown, and there is one account (but ONLY ONE account); that details how Edward II escaped to the mainland after killing a guard.

2. Following Gaveston's murder, Edward may have had a another lover in Hugh le Dispenser, the first Earl of Winchester. It is less certain that they were lovers, but he was said to have been executed along side Edward. Marlowe included Hugh le Dispenser but did not imply any involvement, other than friendship, between him and Edward II. I left him out of the opera for the sake of simplicity.

3. Although Edward III did ultimately side with his father, he had earlier supported Isabella and The French in the battles that deposed Edward II.

4. Christopher Marlowe invented Lightborn as a minor character, and I have elevated him to narrator, and created his ironic nature as a "charming" villain..

5. Martha Blackman, early music specialist at Stanford University, helped me with the titles of the tableaux. They are a modern approach to dance and song forms that Edward II would have known.

6. When I was in London I was disappointed that, unlike his father and son, Edward II is not buried in Westminster Abbey. However, I was pleased to find that the reason for this is that Edward II's popularity has never died in England, and pilgrimages to the magnificent tomb built in his honor by his son, Edward III, at St Peter's Abbey in Gloucester are the source of great revenue to this day.

For More Information; Further information, parts, CDs, orchestral and piano vocal scores are available: ttp://davidedgarwalther.com or http://actingsingersproject.com

Index:

The Tableaux, Scenes and Numbers

ACT I:

Tableau I: Pastoral

Scene i: Edward's Cottage (small area up stage left: fire light)

1. Song: Love Letter (Ed) "Come live with mee, and be my love" 1.

Scene ii: Isabella's Cottage (small area up stage right: fire light)

2. Aria: Isabella's Tears (Is) : "From my embracements thus he breaks away" 5.

Scene iii: A Road (center stage: bright daylight)

3. Song: Love's Reply (Gav) "Sweet prince, I come," 10.
4. Duet: Reunion (Ed & Gav) "Embrace me, o my love, as I do thee." 16.
5. Instrumental & Dance: Arabesque 24.
6. Duet: Creation (Ed & Gav) "I here create thee Lord High Chamberlain" 28.
7. Duet: Heart (Ed & Gav) " My lord, these titles far exceed my worth." 32.
8. Duet: Love's Dart (Ed & Gav) "What makes my bed seem hard seeing it is soft?" 38.

Tableau II: Estampie

Scene i: The Throne Room (center stage: rose light)

9. Duet: Cat Fight (Is & Gav) "Whither goes my lord?" 46.
10. Aria: Love's Defense (Ed III) "Thou seest by nature he is mild and calm," 52.
11. Trio: Anger (Mort, Ed & Is): "Why should you love him whom th world hates so?" 58.
12. Aria & Duet: Wound (Gav. with Is. & Mort.) "*That villain* Mortimer" 66.
13. Instrumental: Cat Interlude 79.

Scene ii: The Garden (stage right arch: rose light)

14. Aria: Poison Cup (Is) "O miserable and distresséd queen!" 80.
15. Duet: Unto The Forest (Mort & Is) "Madam, whither walks your majesty so fast? 86.

Tableau III: Plaint

Scene i: The Dark Forest (center stage: night)

16. Instrumental: Dark Forest 94.
17. Aria: Jealousy (Mort) "That villain Gaveston is made an earl." 97.
18. Aria: Gaveston's Prayer (Gav) "Now, sweet Gd. of heaven" 103.
19. Aria: The Murder of Gavestion: (Mort) "Can kingly lions fawn on creeping ants?" 111.
20. Aria: Gaveston's Death (Gav) "O, must this day be period of my life, 129.

Scene ii: A Cave (small area stage left: fire light)

21. Aria: Mourning (Ed with Ed III) "My heart is as an anvil unto sorrow," 133.

Scene iii: The Dark Forest (center stage: night)

22. Instrumental: Dark Forest 138.

ACT II:

Tableau IV: Round Dance

Scene i: The Battle Field (center stage: hazy daylight)

23. Aria: Call to Arms: (Is) "Successful battle gives the Gd. of kings" 141.

Scene ii: Edward's Tent (small area up stage left: hazy daylight)

24. Aria: Atlas' Shoulder (Ed III with Ed II) "Commit not to my youth" 152.

Scene iii: The Battle Field (center stage: hazy daylight)

25. Aria: Sword (Is) "Look for rebellion," 157.
26. Aria: Earth (Ed II) "By earth, the common mother of us all," 170.
27. Duet: Battle Music (Mort. & Ed. II) "Tyrant, I scorn thy threats and menaces," 175.
28. Aria: Crown (Ed) "What the heavens appoint, I must obey!" 183.
29. Aria: Victory (Is) "Successful battle gives the Gd. of kings" 190.

Tableau V: Ductia

Scene i: The Throne Room (center stage: blue light)

30. Duet: Wolf's Ear(Is & Mort) "Fair Isabel, now we have our desire;" 199.
31. Duet: Second Love (Is & Mort) "Be thou persuaded that I love thee well;" 210.
32. Aria: Plot (Mort & Light) "The king must die," 215.

Scene ii: The Dungeon (small area up stage left: very low fire light)

33. Recit & Song: Fleeting Hence (Ed) " I see our souls are fleeting hence;" 219.
34. Aria: Assassination (Ed & Light) "Something still buzzeth in mine ear," 223.

Scene iii: The Throne Room (center stage: blue light becoming bright light)

35. Aria: Jove's Huge Tree (Mort) "Now is all sure" 234.
36. Instrumental: The Arrival of Edward III 239.

Tableau VI: Apotheosis

Scene i: The Mausoleum (center stage: rose light)

37. Aria: Isabella's Farewell (Is) "O! is he gone? is noble Edward gone?" 243.
38. Trio: Discovery (Ed III, Is, & Mort) "Weep not, sweet child!" 248.
39. Aria: Traveler (Mort) "Farewell, fair queen" 261.
40. Aria: Edward's Ghost (Ed III, with Executioner): "In me my loving father speaks," 264.

EDWARD II

Piano Vocal Score

Text after Christopher Marlowe

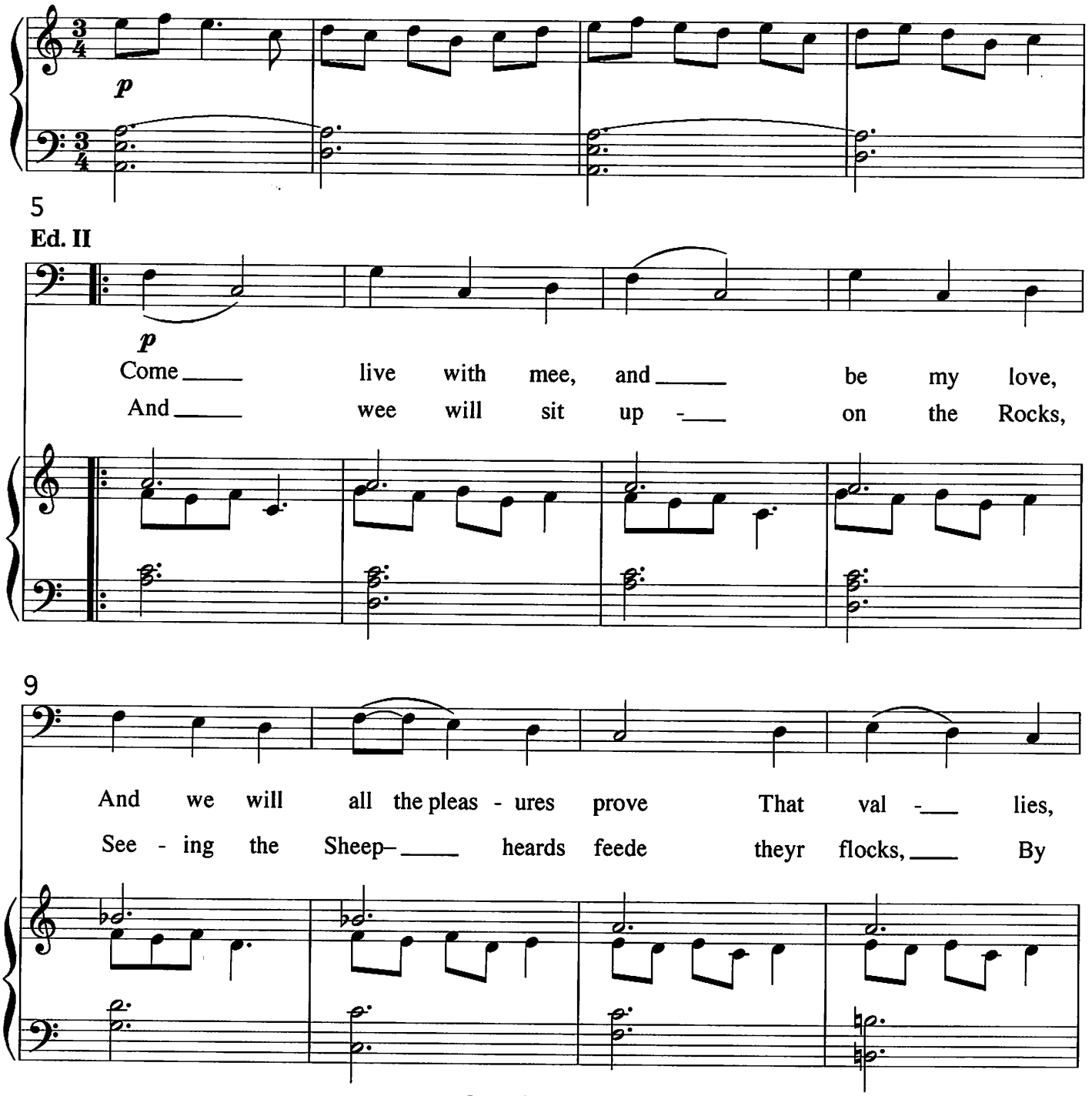
Music and libretto by David Edgar Walther

Act I: Tableau I: Pastoral

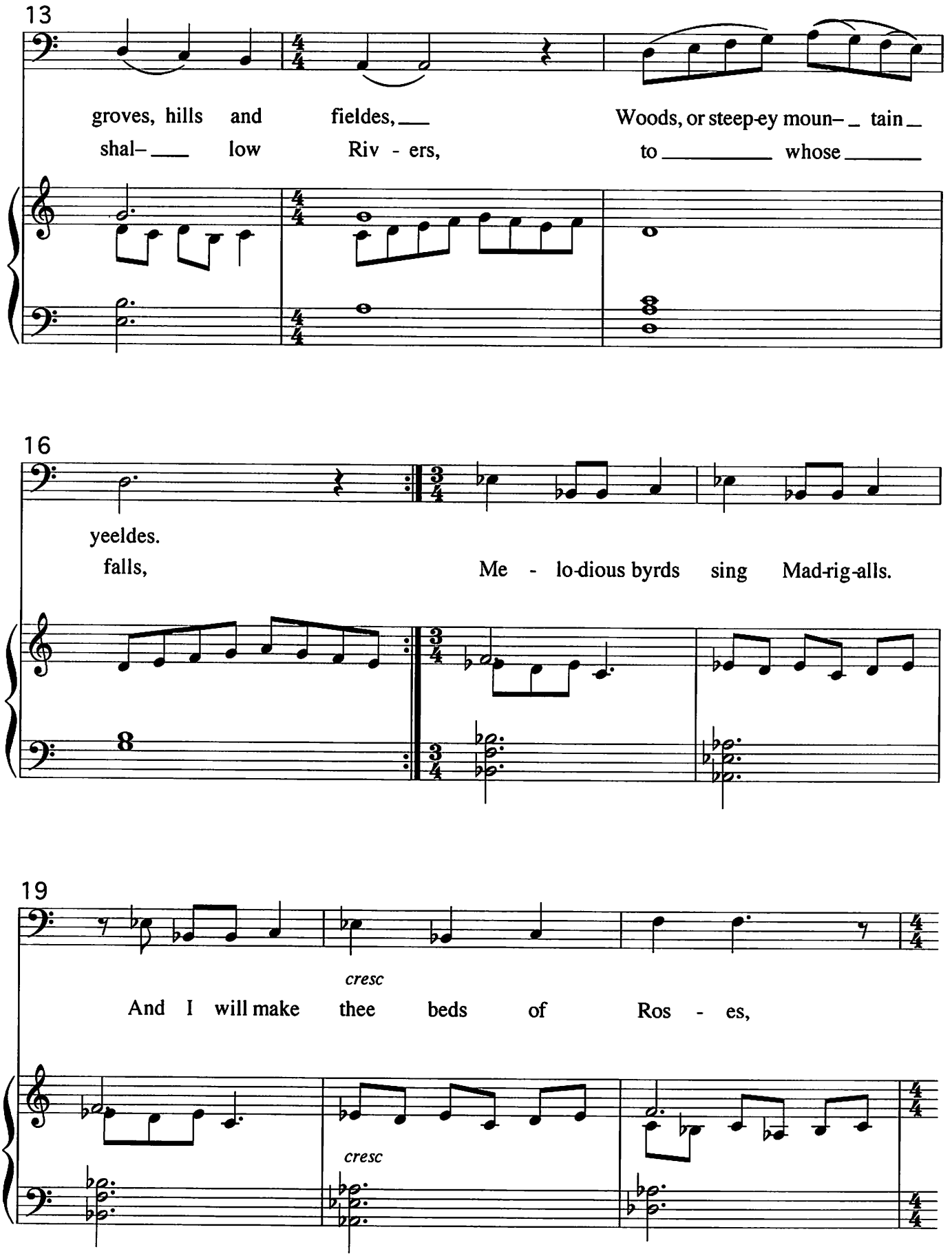
scene i: Edward's Cottage

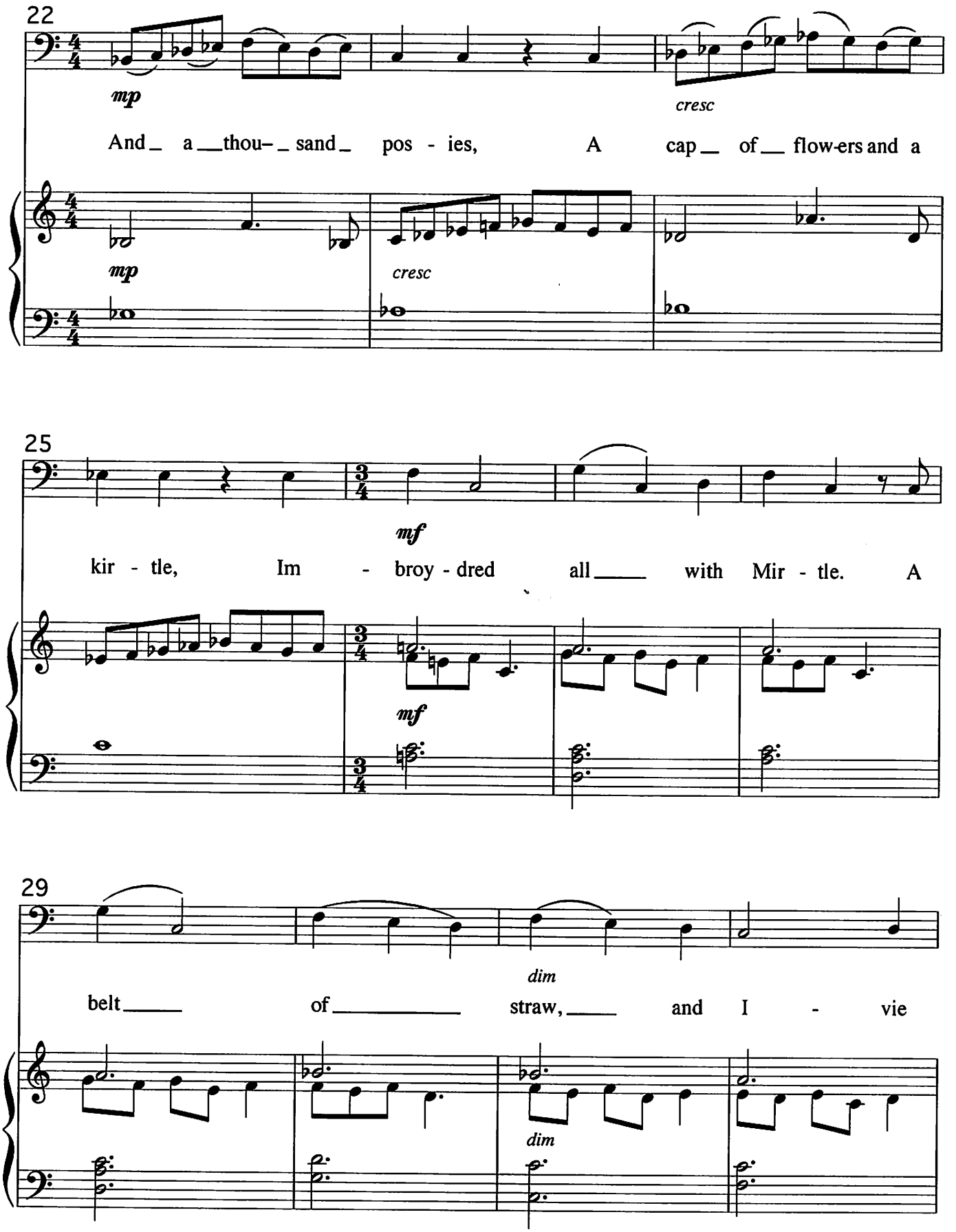
1. Love Letter: Edward II

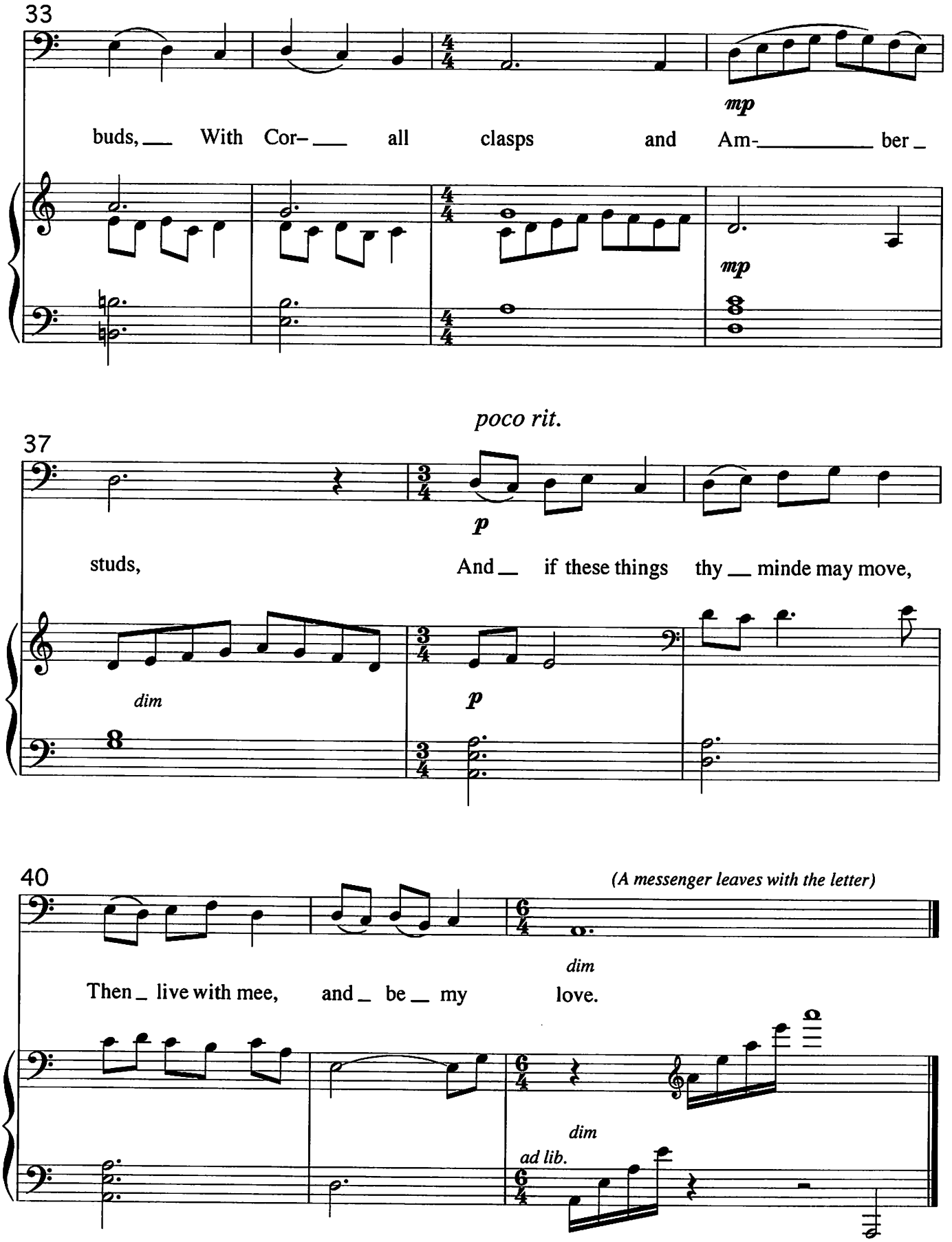
♩= c. 50 *(Edward writes to Gaveston)*



Copyright © DEW 2010

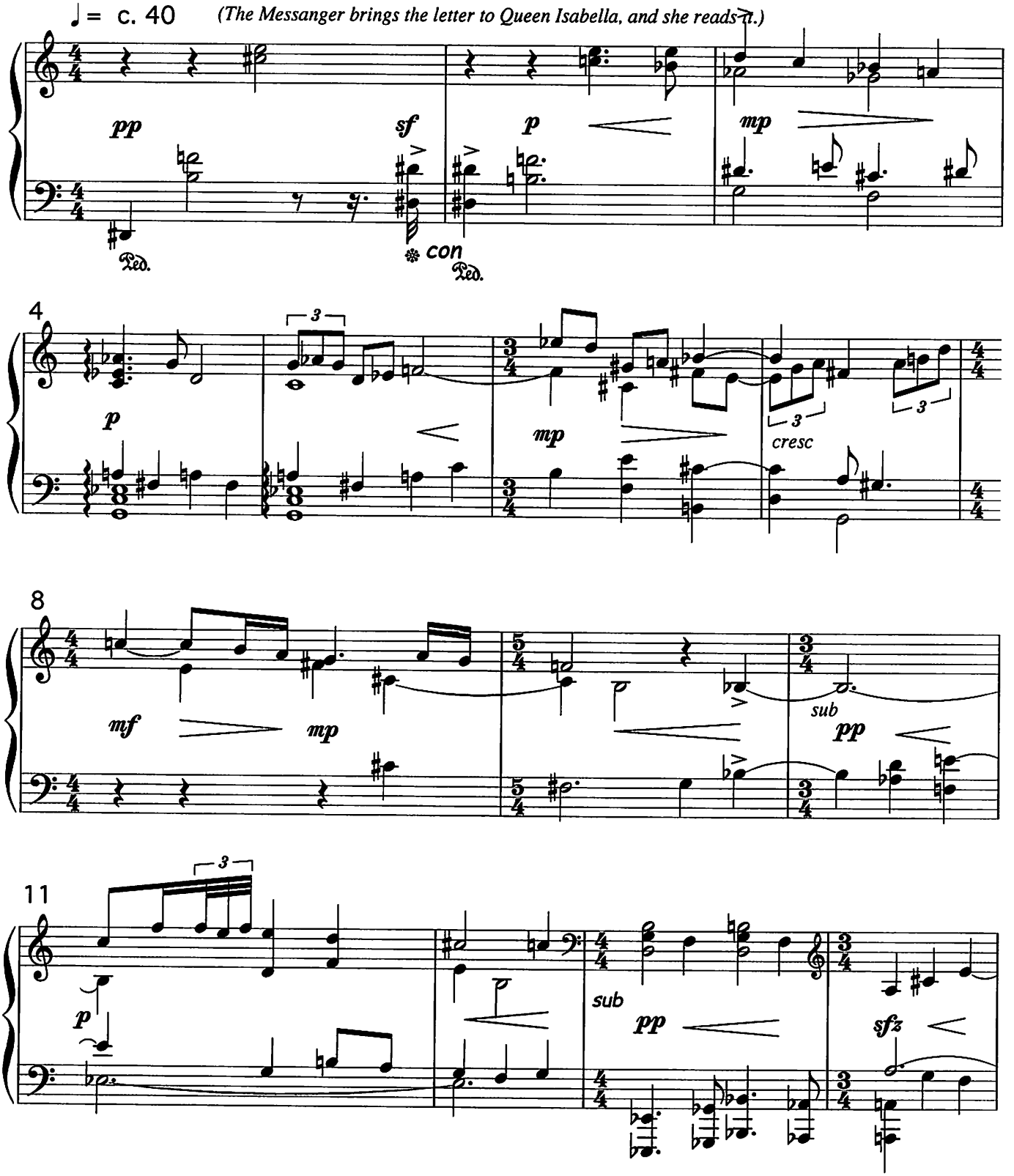

13
groves, hills and fieldes, Woods, or steep-ey moun- tain
shal- low Riv - ers, to whose
16
yeeldes.
falls, Me - lo-dious byrds sing Mad-rig-alls.
19
cresc
And I will make thee beds of Ros - es,
cresc

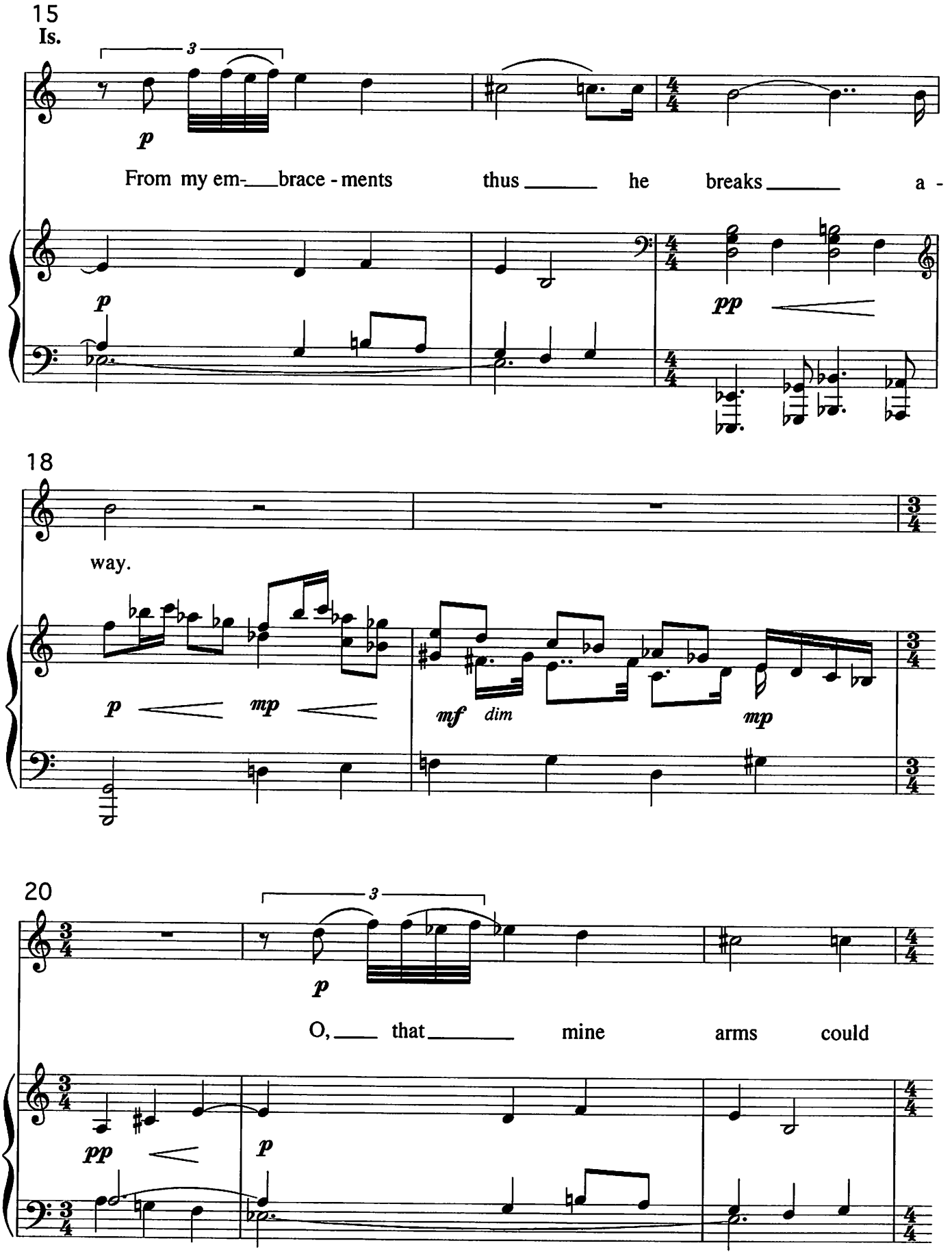

22
mp
cresc
And a thou- sand pos - ies, A cap of flow-ers and a
mp
cresc
25
mf
kir - tle, Im - broy - dred all with Mir - tle. A
mf
29
dim
belt of straw, and I - vie
dim

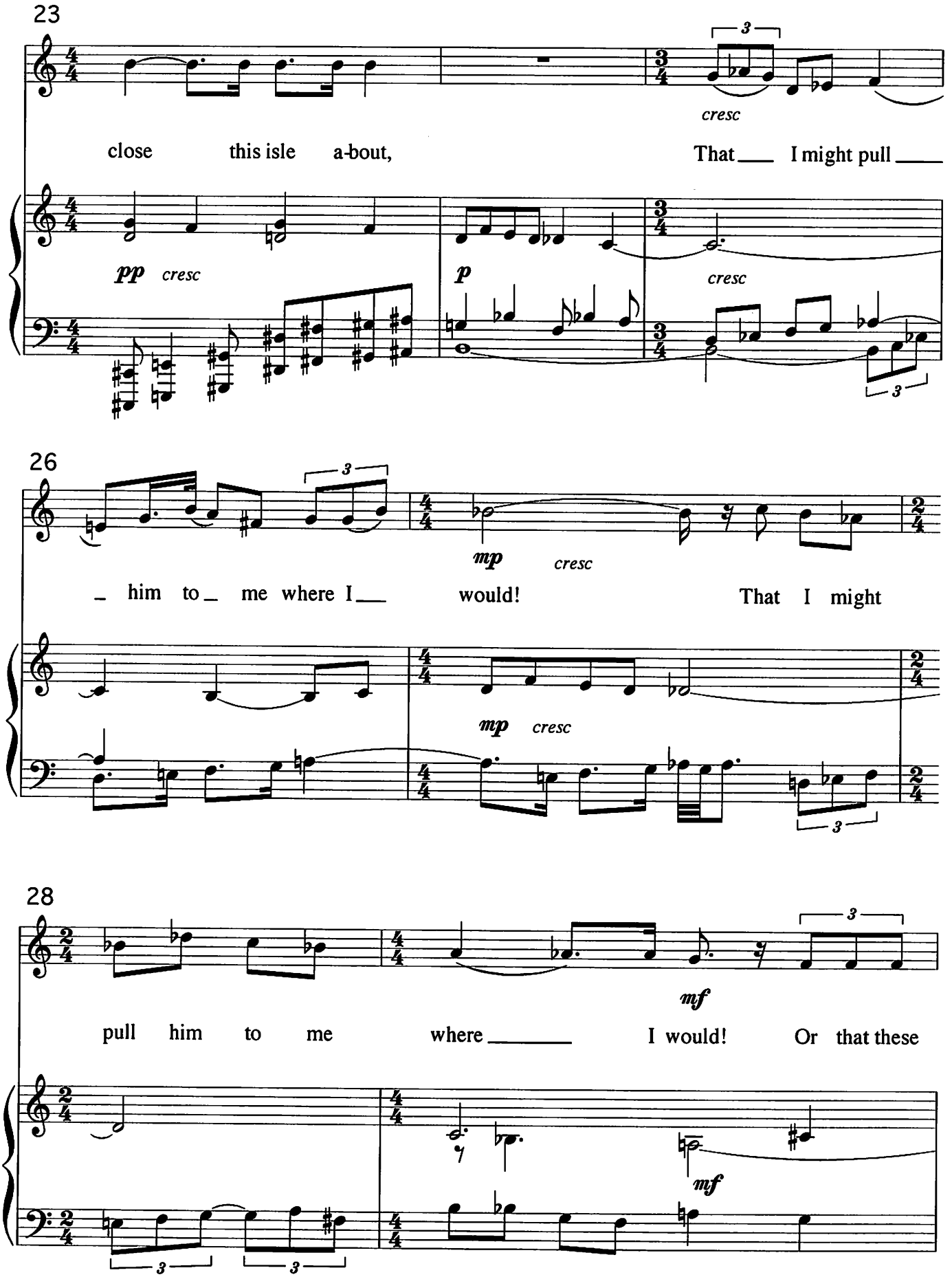

33
mp
buds, With Cor- all clasps and Am- ber
mp
poco rit.
37
p
studs, And if these things thy minde may move,
dim
p
40
(A messenger leaves with the letter)
dim
Then live with mee, and be my love.
dim
ad lib.

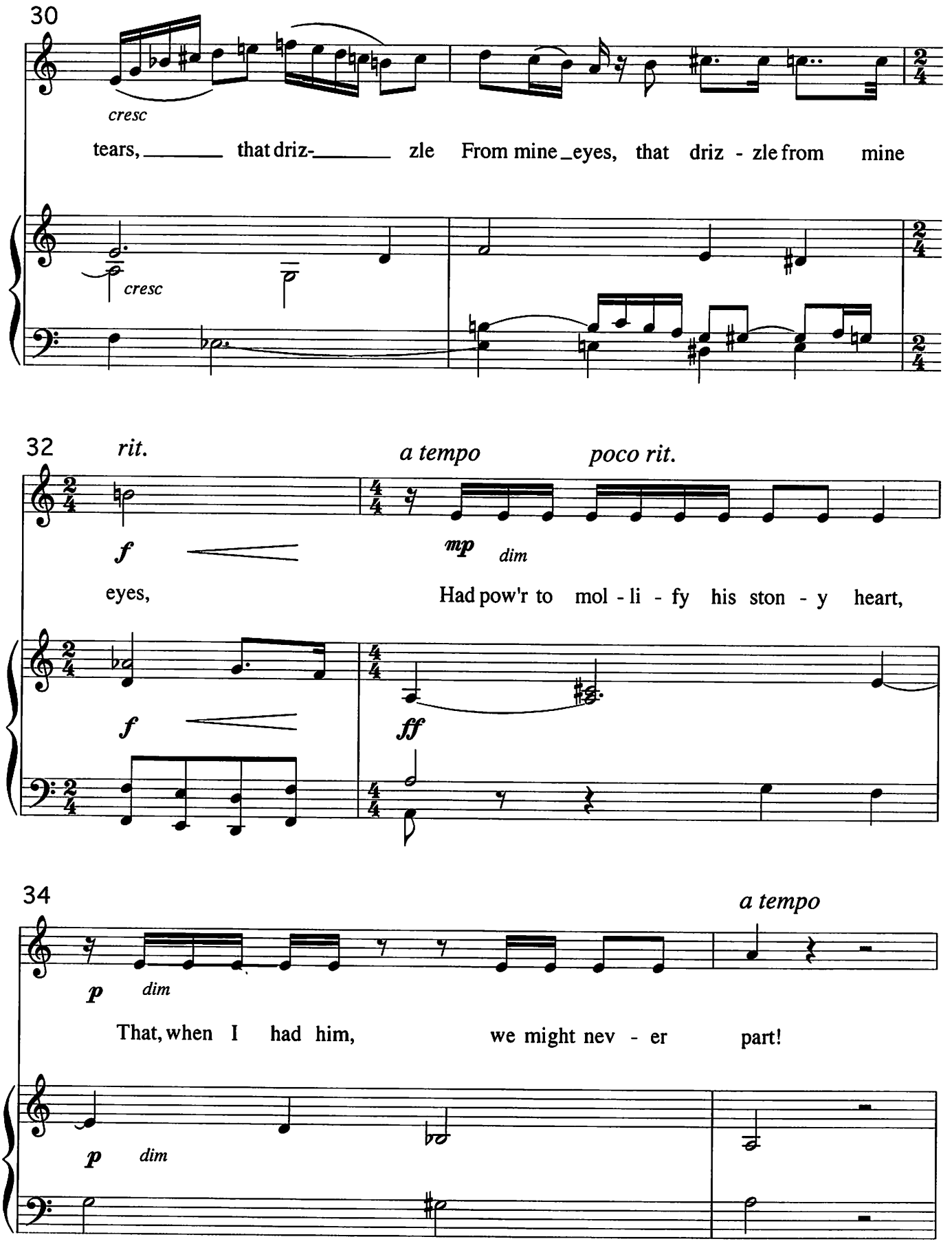
scene ii: Isabella's Cottage

2. Isabella's Tears: Isabella



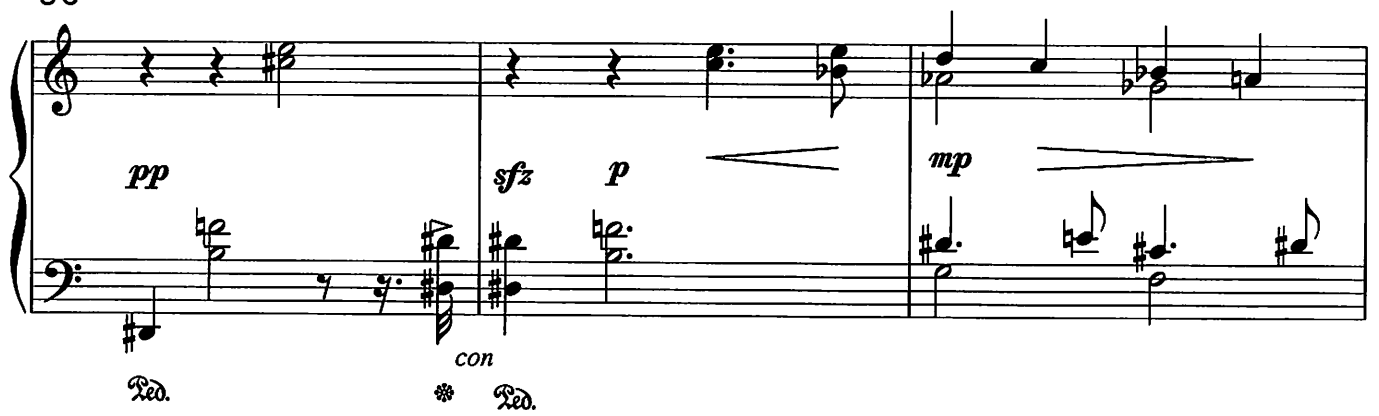

15
Is.
3
p
From my em-___brace - ments thus ____ he breaks ____ a -
p
pp
18
way.
p
mp
mf
dim
mp
20
3
p
O, ___ that ____ mine arms could
pp
p


23
cresc
close this isle a-bout, That I might pull
pp cresc
p
cresc
26
him to me where I would! That I might
mp cresc
mp cresc
28
pull him to me where I would! Or that these
mf
mf

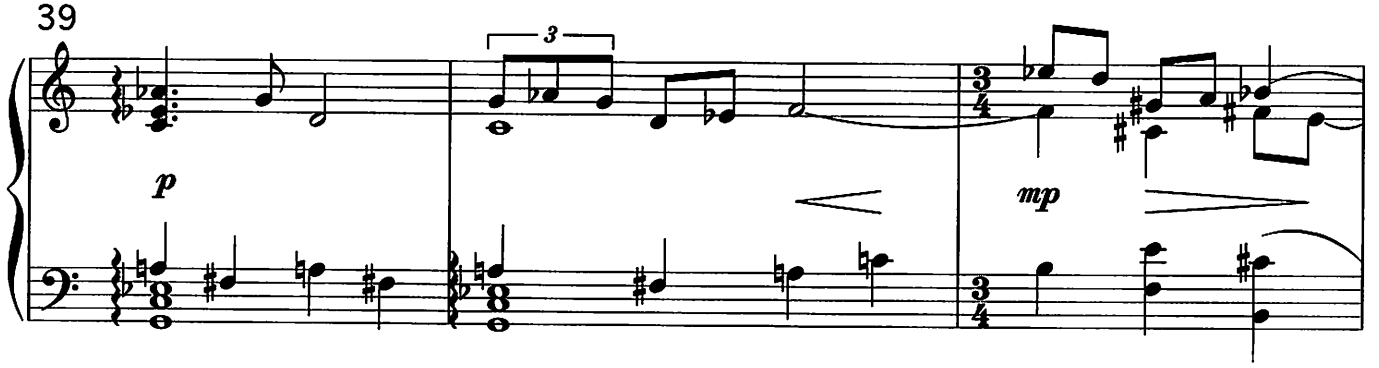

30
cresc
tears, that driz- zle From mine eyes, that driz - zle from mine
cresc
32
rit.
a tempo
poco rit.
f
mp
dim
eyes,
Had pow'r to mol - li - fy his ston - y heart,
f
ff
34
a tempo
p
dim
That, when I had him, we might nev - er part!
p
dim

36

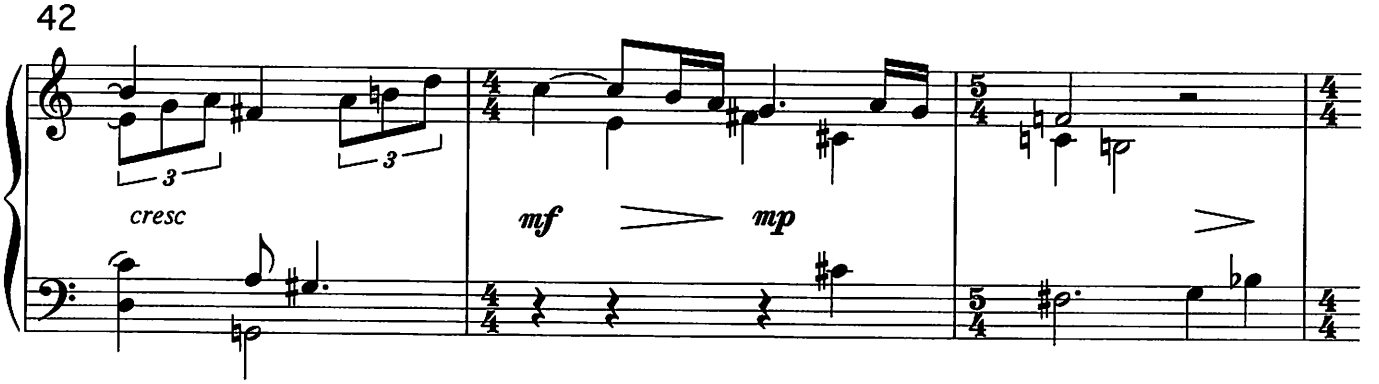
(Isabella gives the letter to The Messenger who take it to Gaveston.)



39

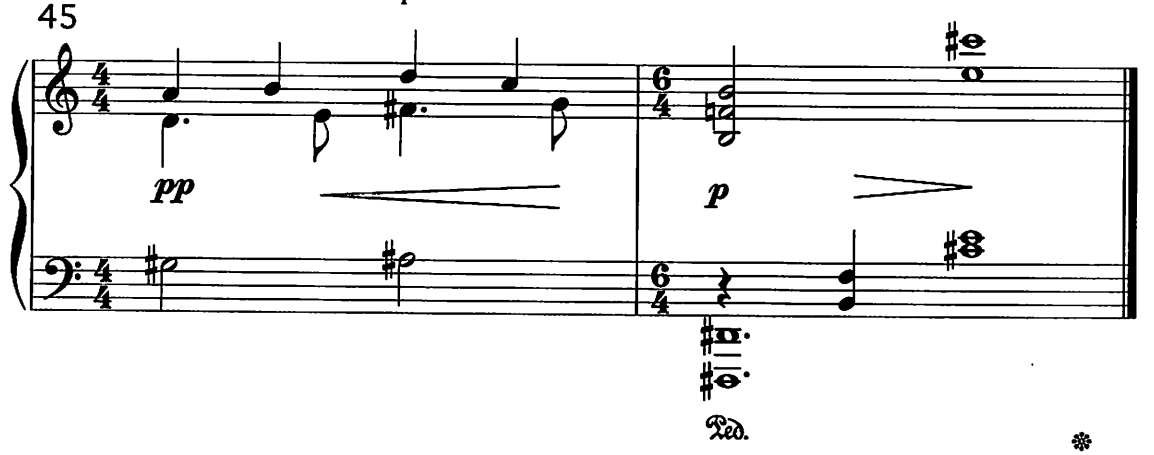


42



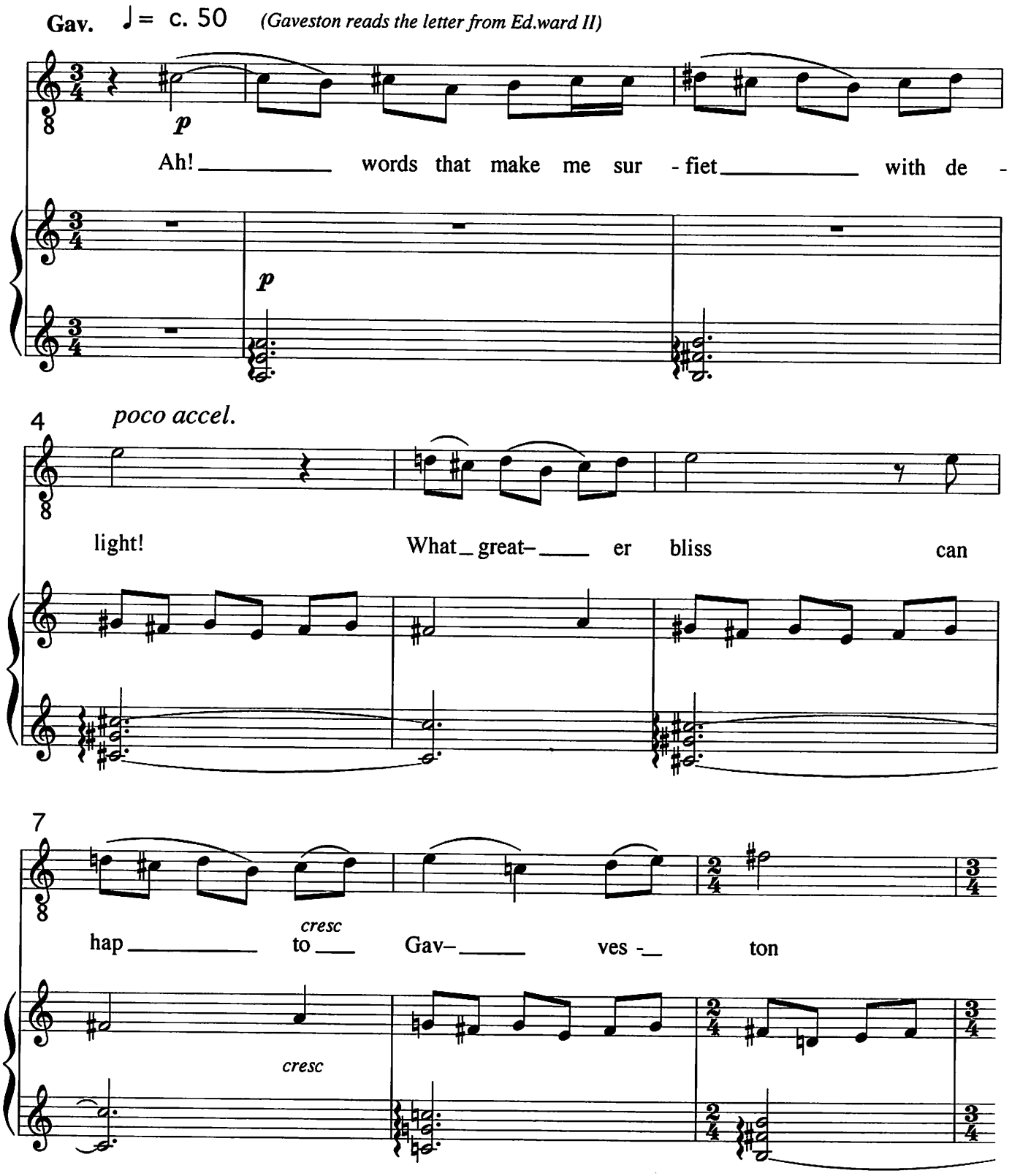
poco rit.

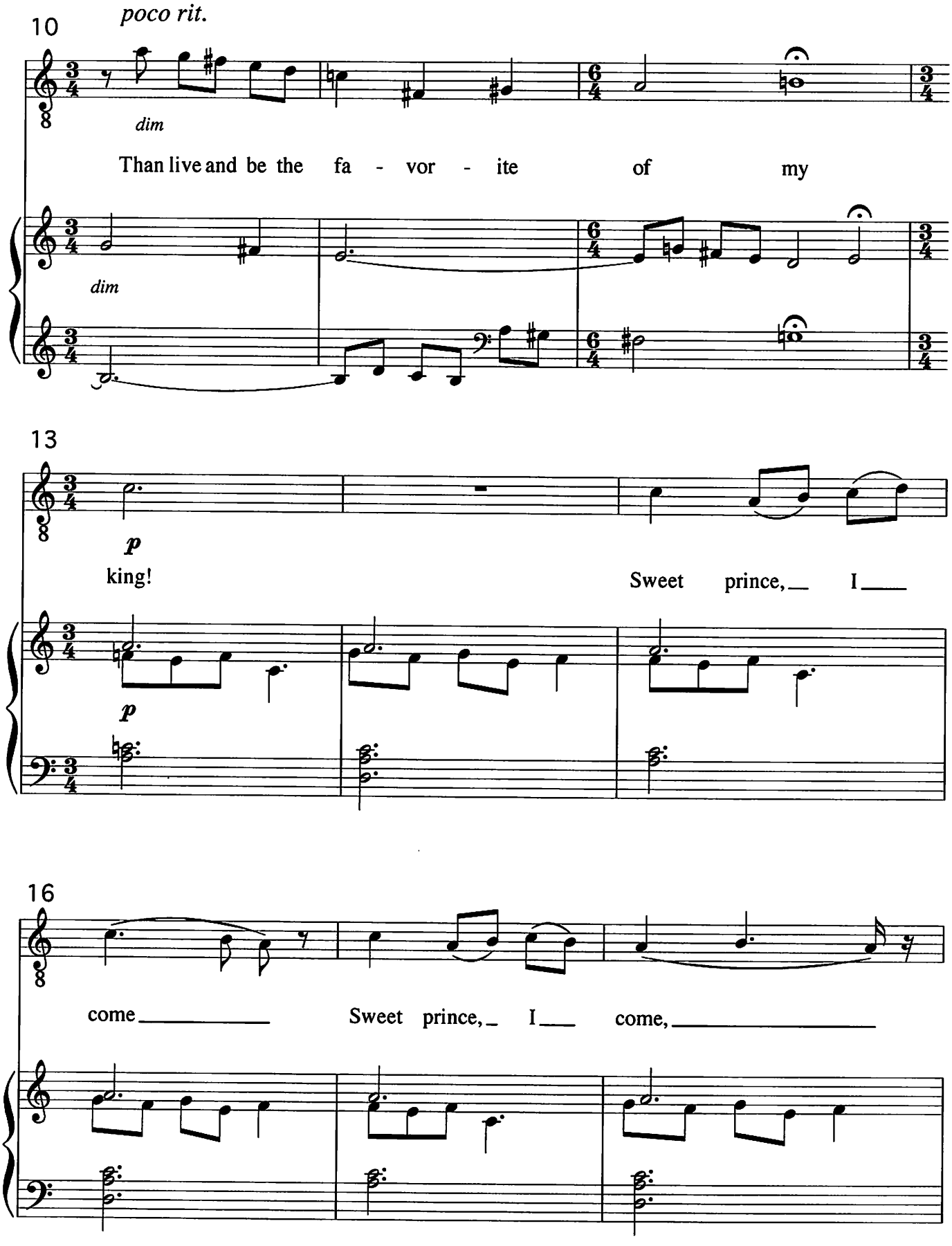
45

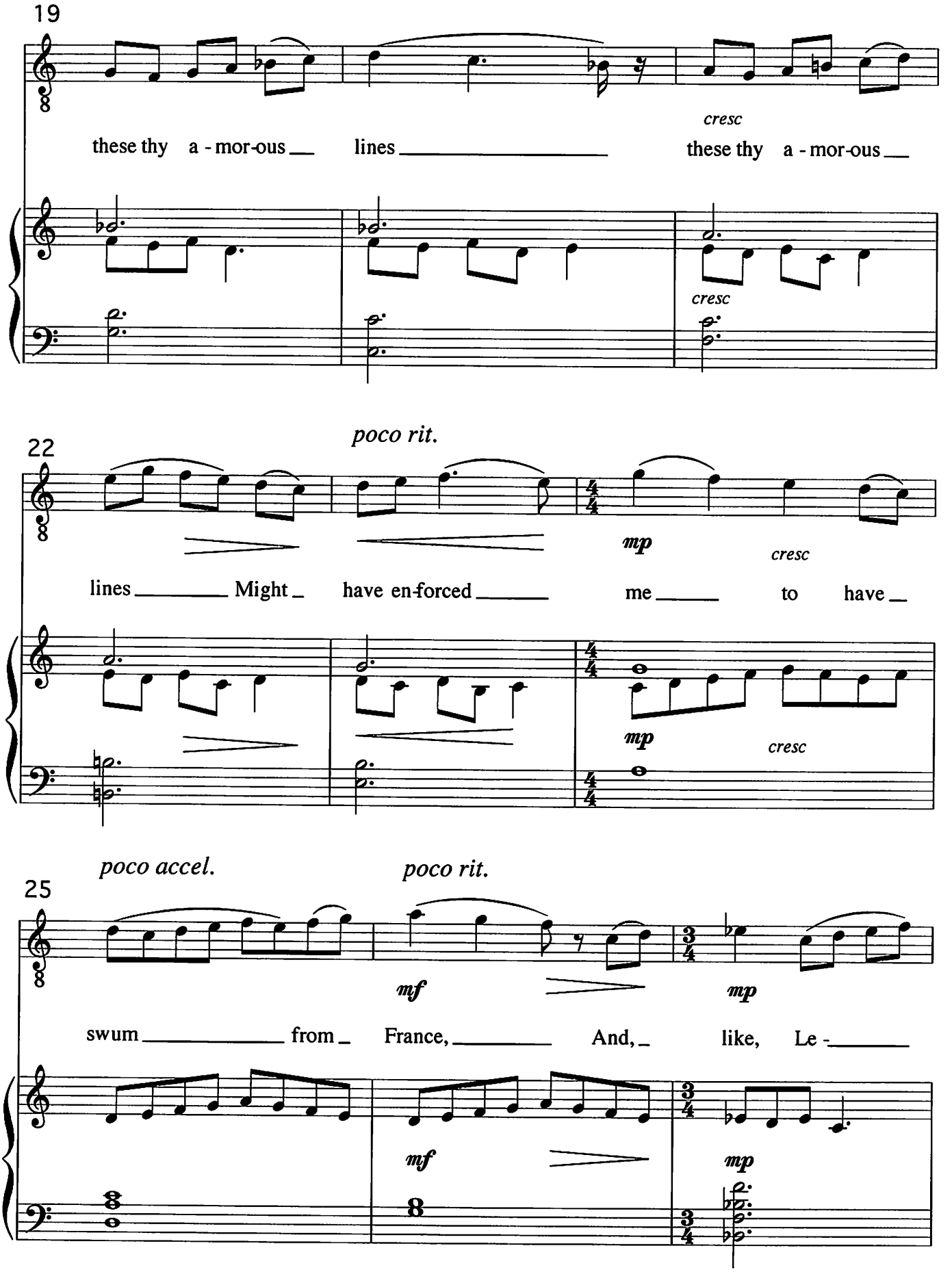


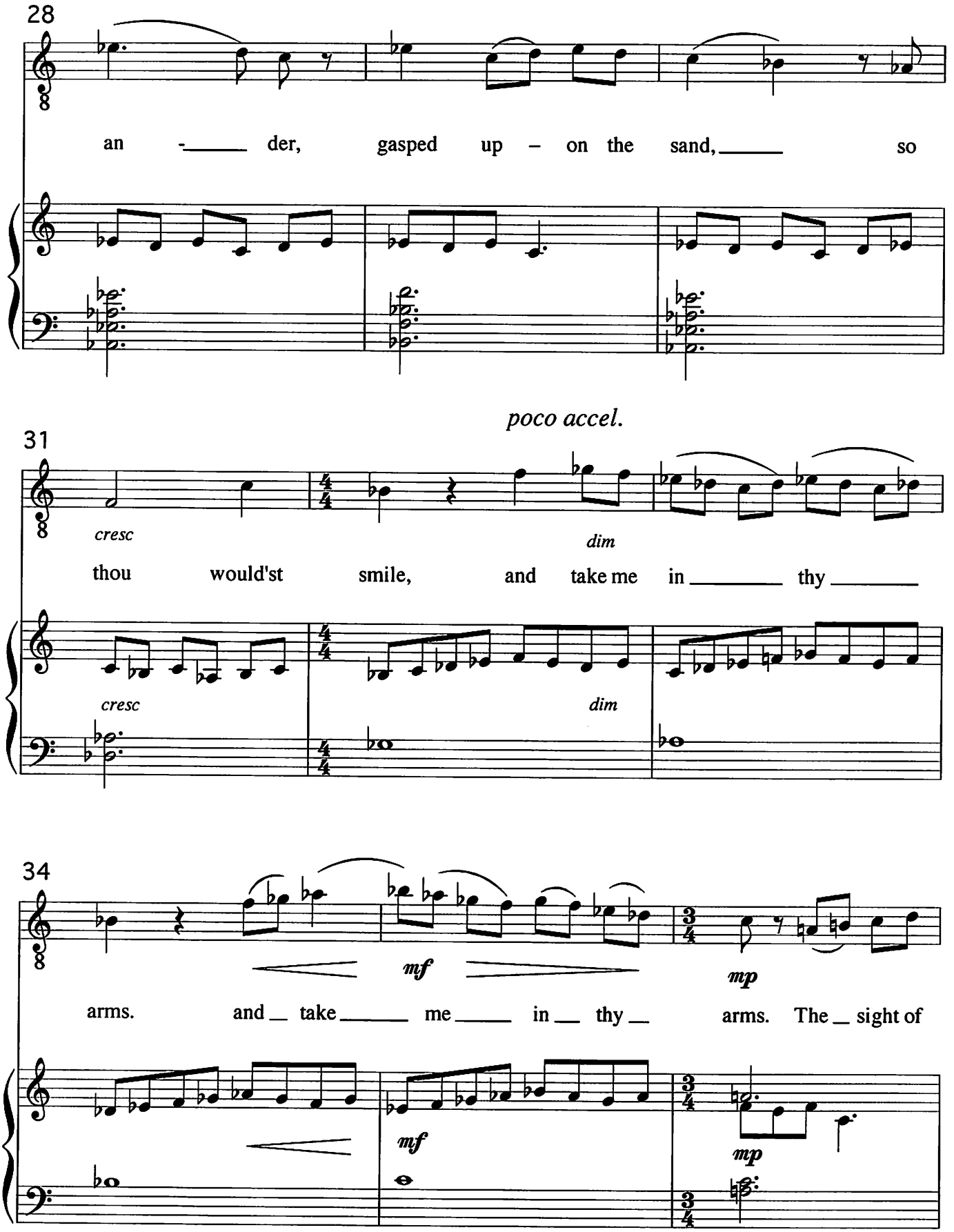
scene iii: A Road to The Castle

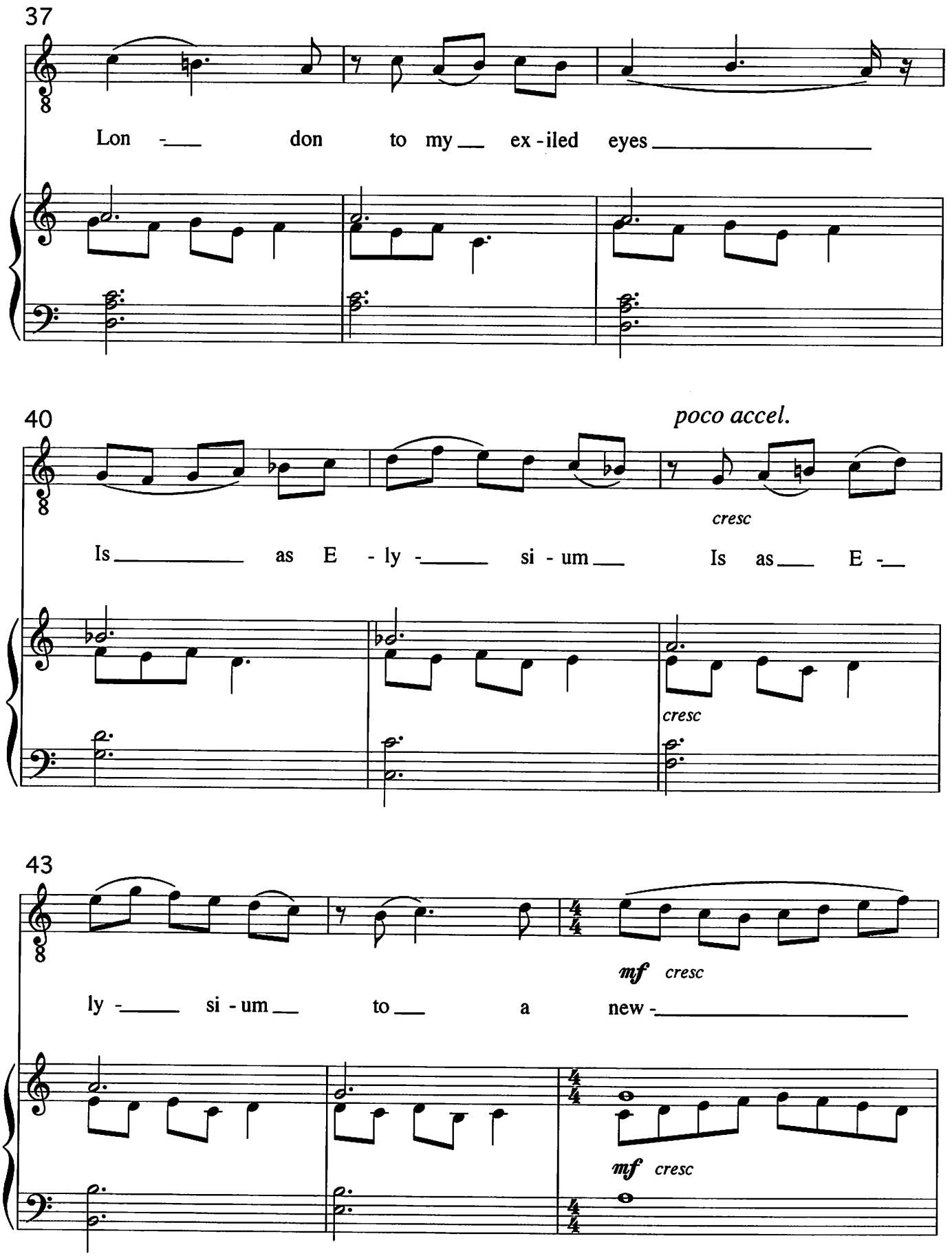
3. Love's Reply: Gaveston

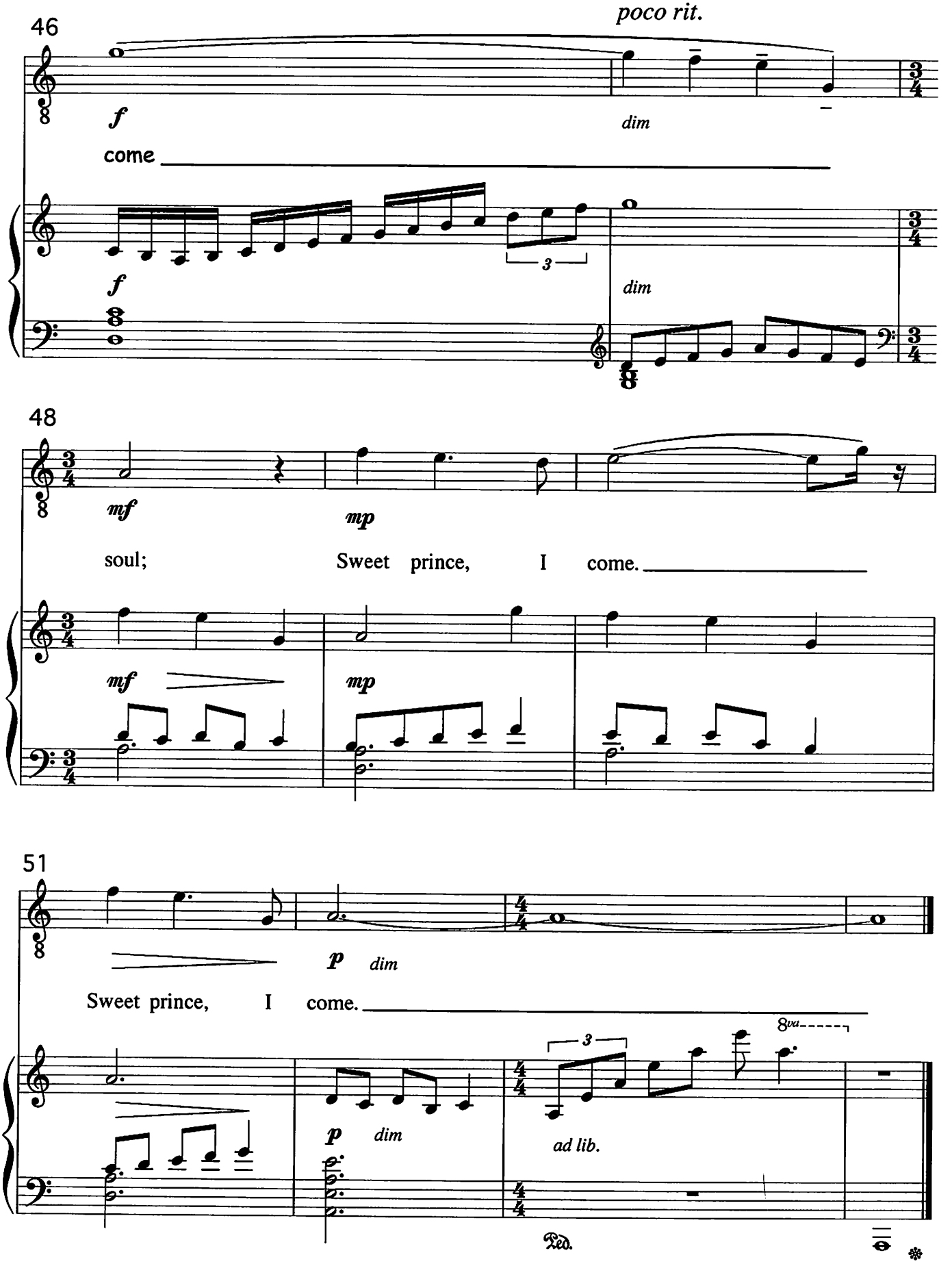



10
poco rit.
dim
Than live and be the fa - vor - ite of my
dim
13
p
king!
Sweet prince, I
p
16
come
Sweet prince, I come,

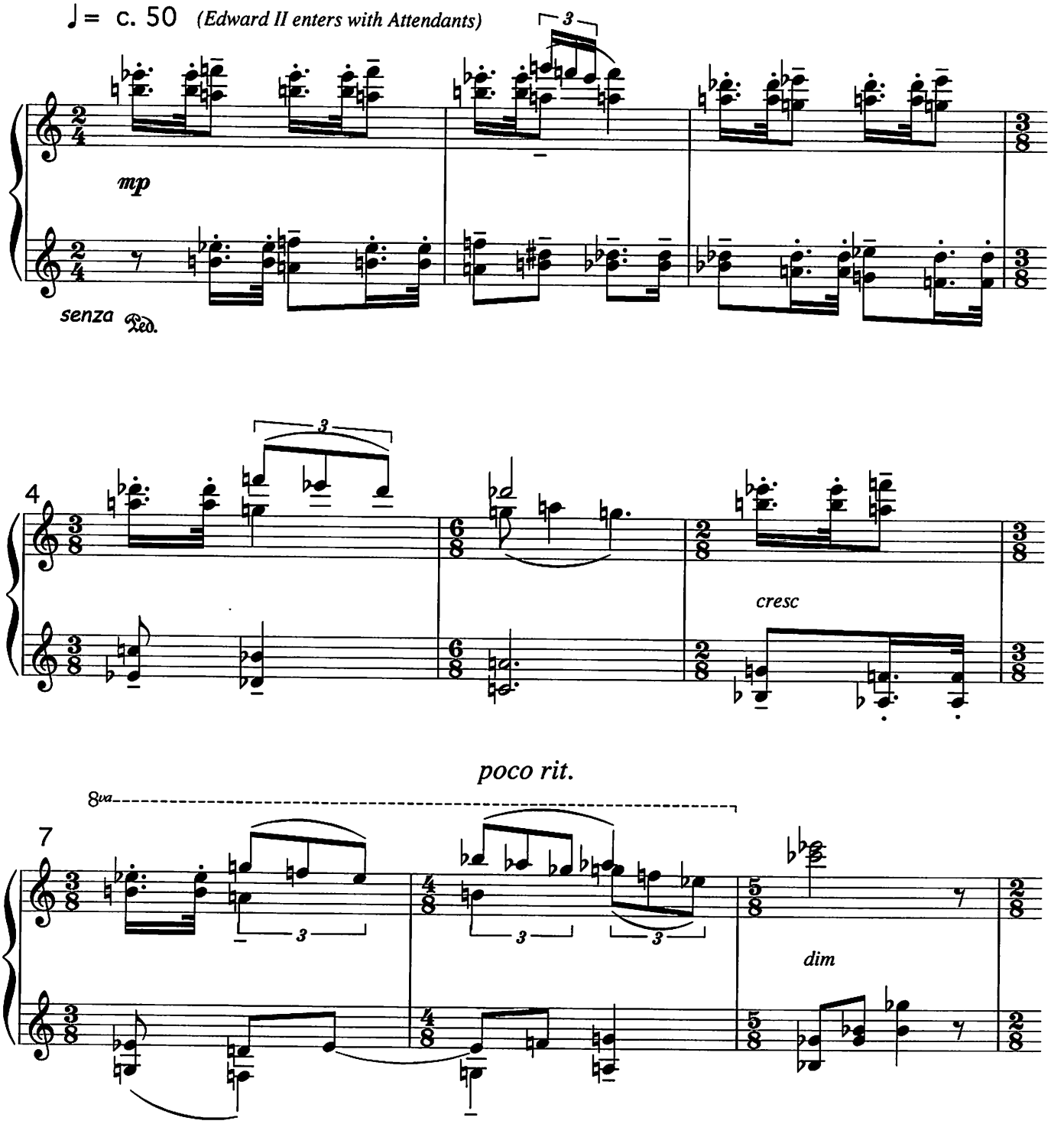

19
these thy a - mor-ous lines these thy a - mor-ous
cresc
cresc
22
poco rit.
lines Might have en-forced me to have
mp
cresc
mp
cresc
25
poco accel.
poco rit.
swum from France, And, like, Le -
mf
mp
mf
mp

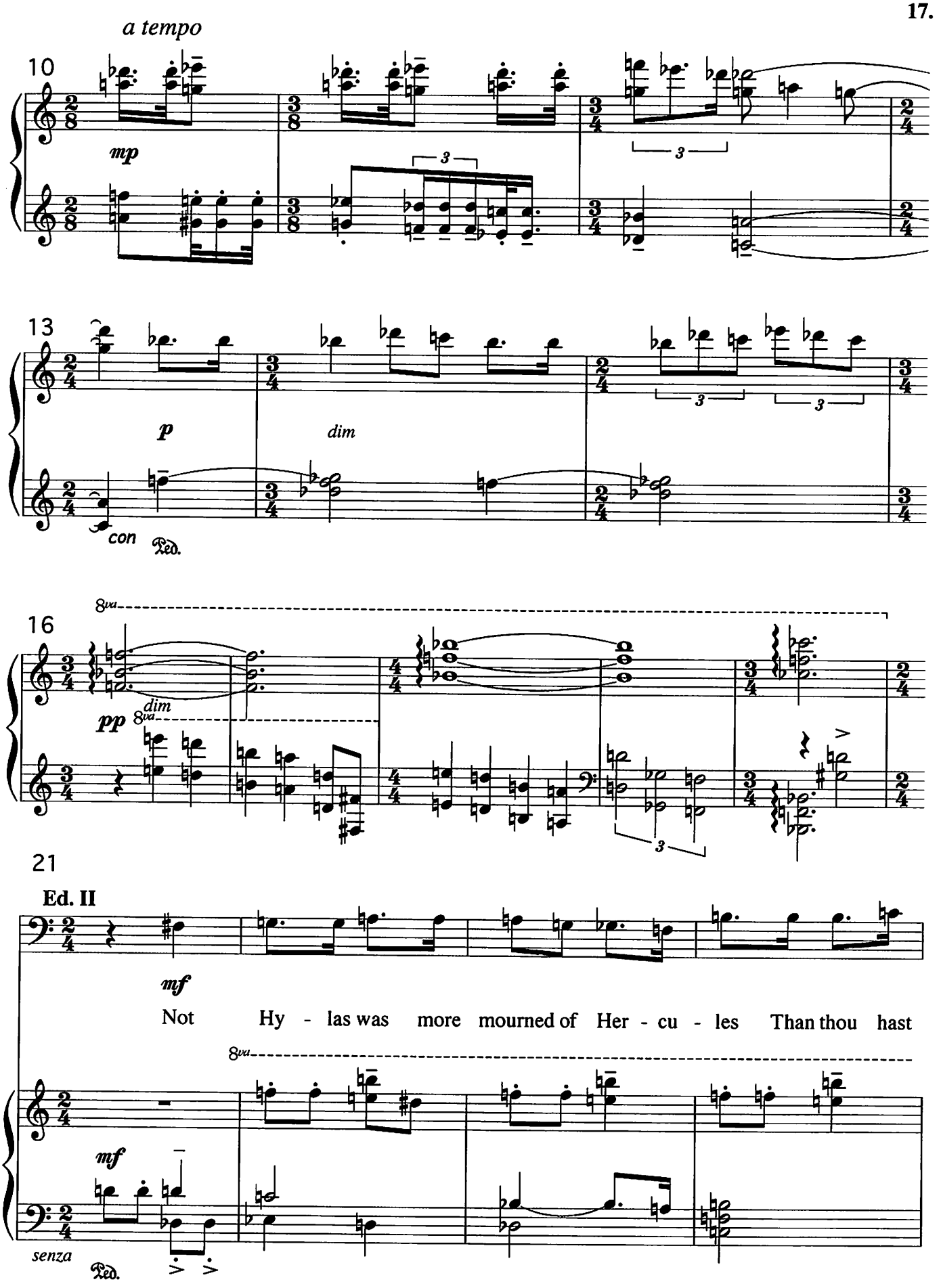

28
an - der, gasped up - on the sand, so
poco accel.
31
cresc
dim
thou would'st smile, and take me in thy
cresc
dim
34
mf
mp
arms. and take me in thy arms. The sight of
mf
mp

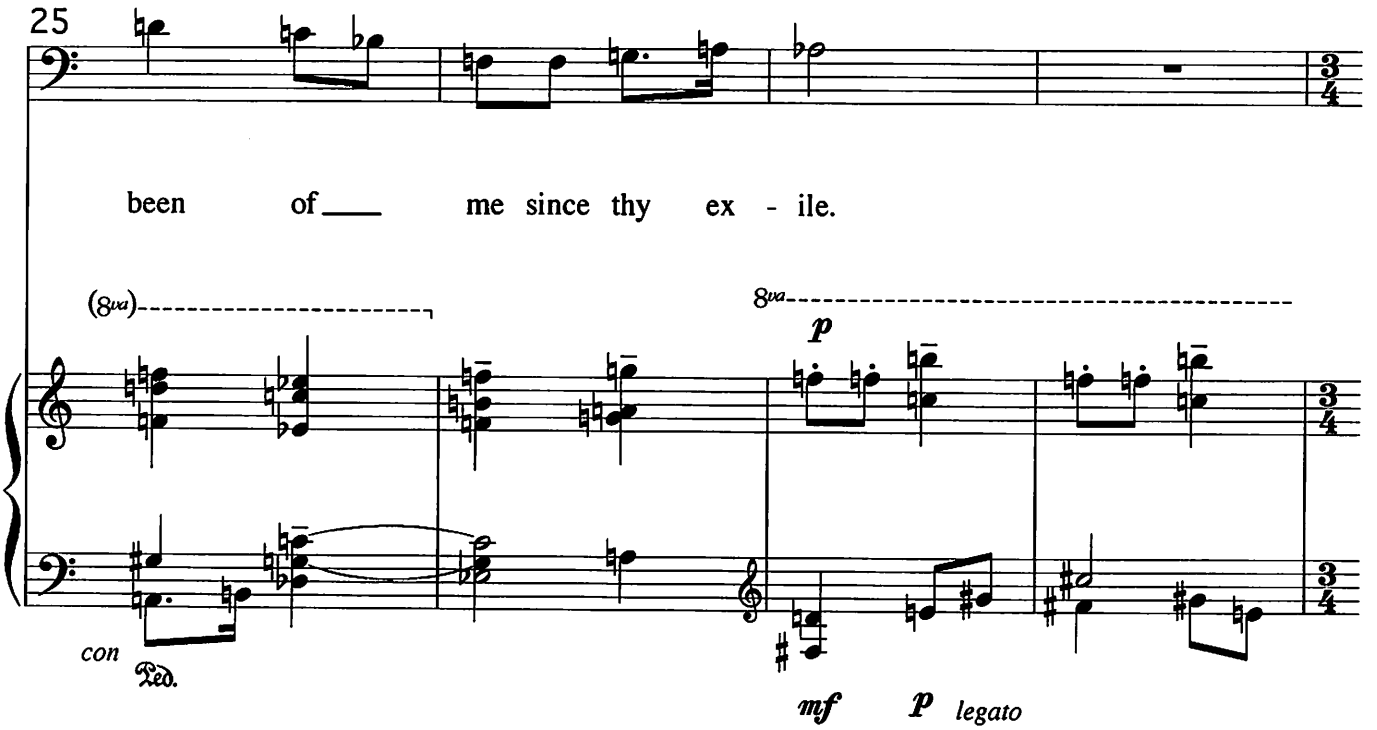

37
Lon - don to my ex - iled eyes
40
poco accel.
cresc
Is as E - ly - si - um Is as E -
cresc
43
mf cresc
ly - si - um to a new -
mf cresc

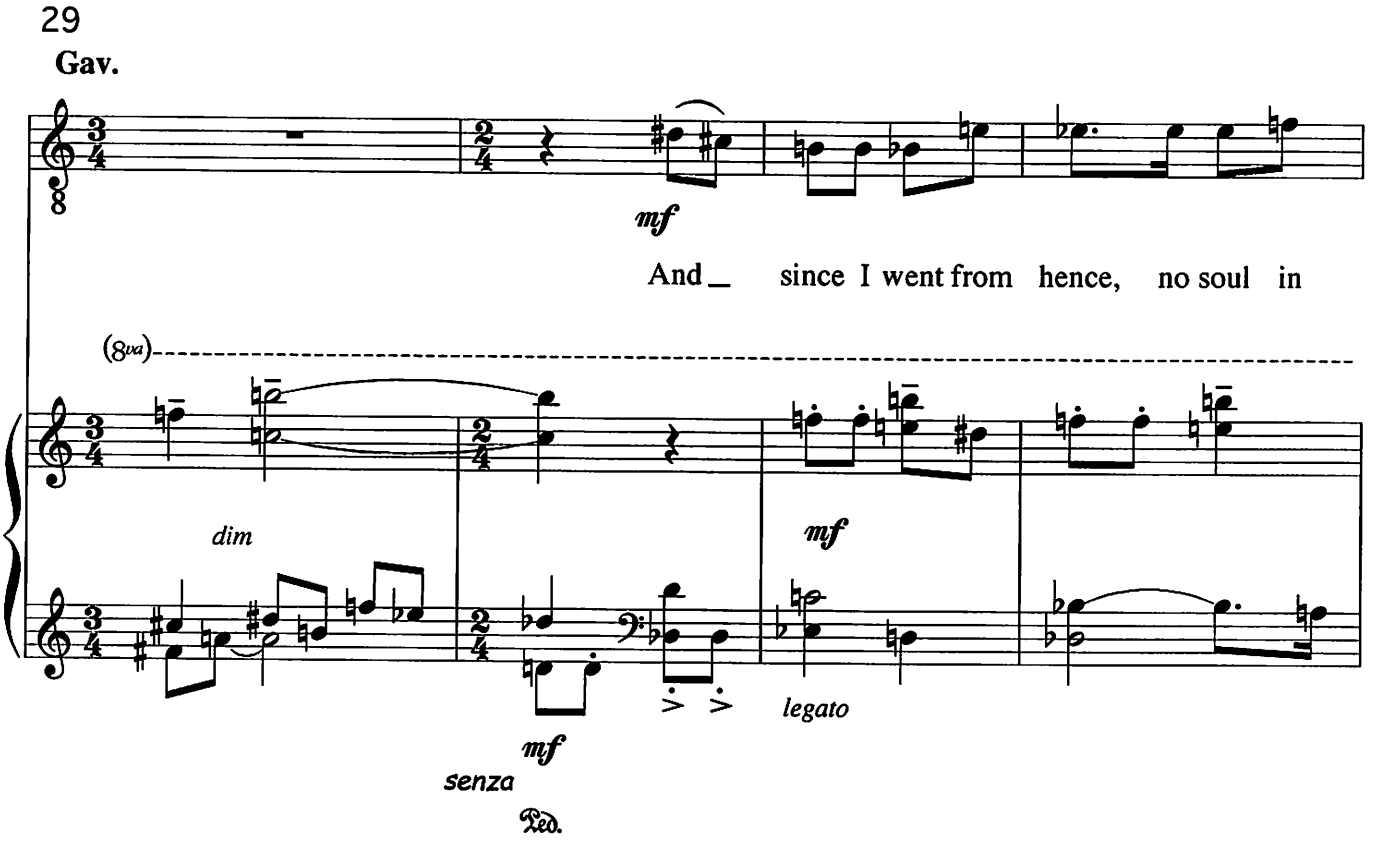

46
poco rit.
f
dim
come
3
f
dim
48
mf
mp
soul;
Sweet prince, I come.
mf
mp
51
p dim
Sweet prince, I come.
8va
3
p dim
ad lib.
Ped.

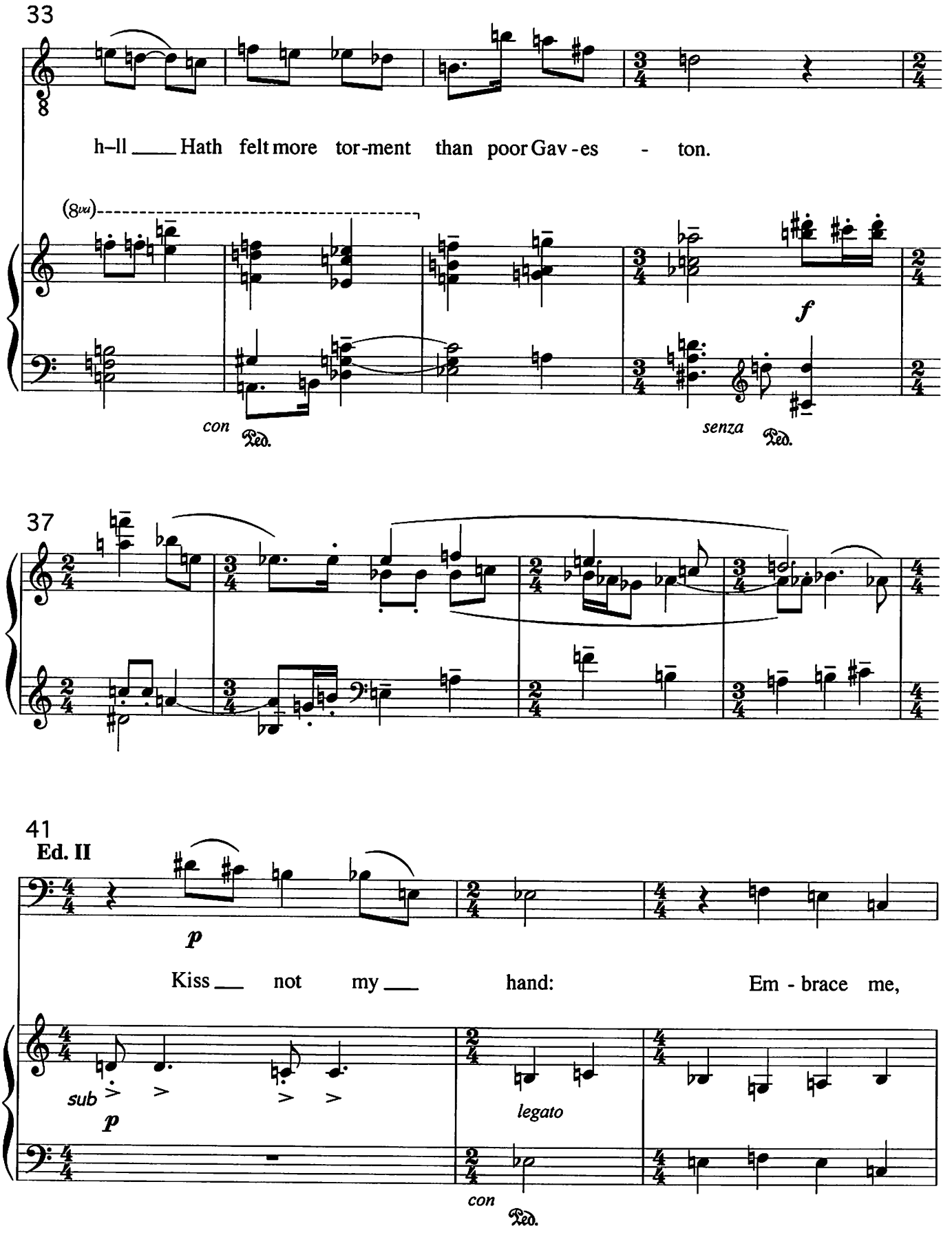
4. Reunion: Gaveston and Edward II

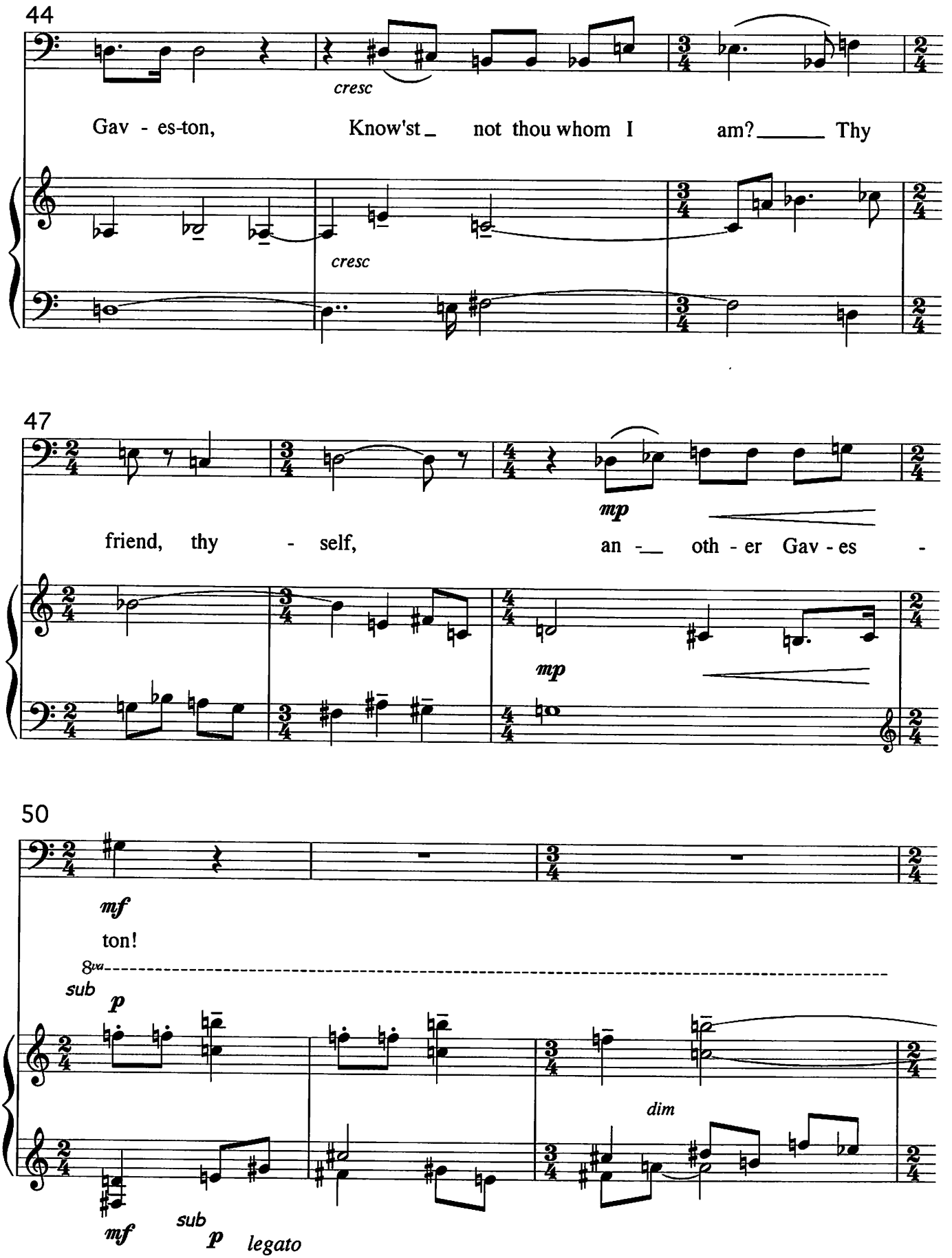



a tempo
10
mp
3
3
13
p
dim
con
Ped.
8va
16
dim
pp
8va
21
Ed. II
mf
Not Hy - las was more mourned of Her - cu - les Than thou hast
8va
mf
senza
Ped.


25
been of___ me since thy ex - ile.
(8va)
8va
p
con
Ped.
mf
p
legato


29
Gav.
mf
And_ since I went from hence, no soul in
(8va)
dim
mf
legato
mf
senza
Ped.


33
h–ll ___ Hath felt more tor-ment than poor Gav-es - ton.
(8va)
f
con Ped.
senza Ped.
37
41
Ed. II
p
Kiss ___ not my ___ hand: Em-brace me,
sub p
legato
con Ped.


44
cresc
Gav - es-ton, Know'st not thou whom I am? Thy
cresc
47
mp
friend, thy - self, an - oth - er Gav - es -
mp
50
mf
ton!
8va
sub
p
dim
mf
sub
p
legato

53

Gav.

mf

And_ since I went from hence, no soul in h–ll_____ Hath

Ed. II

mf

Not Hy - las was more mourned of Her - cu - les Than thou hast

(8va)

mf

legato

senza *mf*

Ped.

57

felt more tor-ment than poor Gav-es - ton.

been of___ me since thy ex - ile.

(8va)

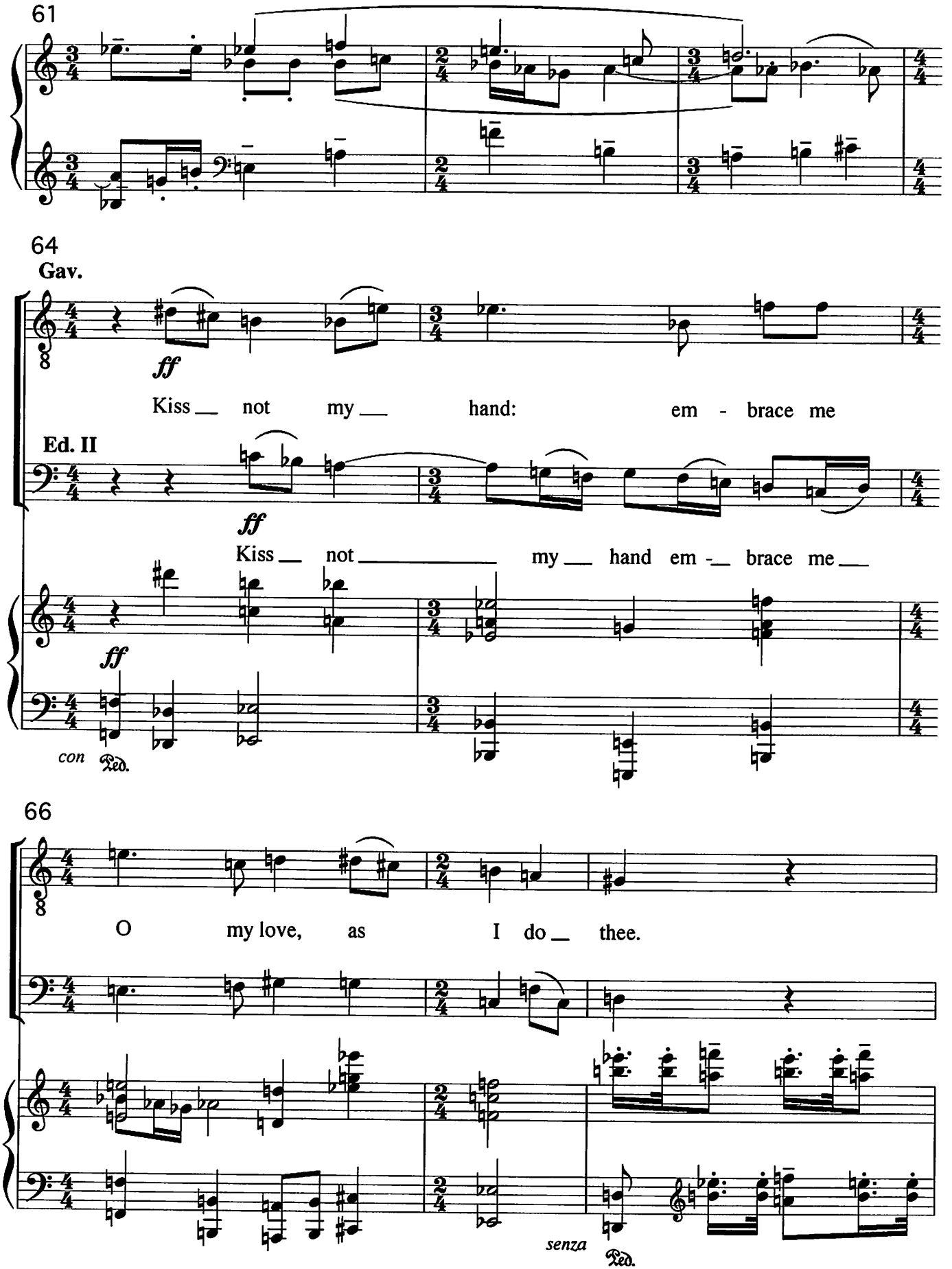
f

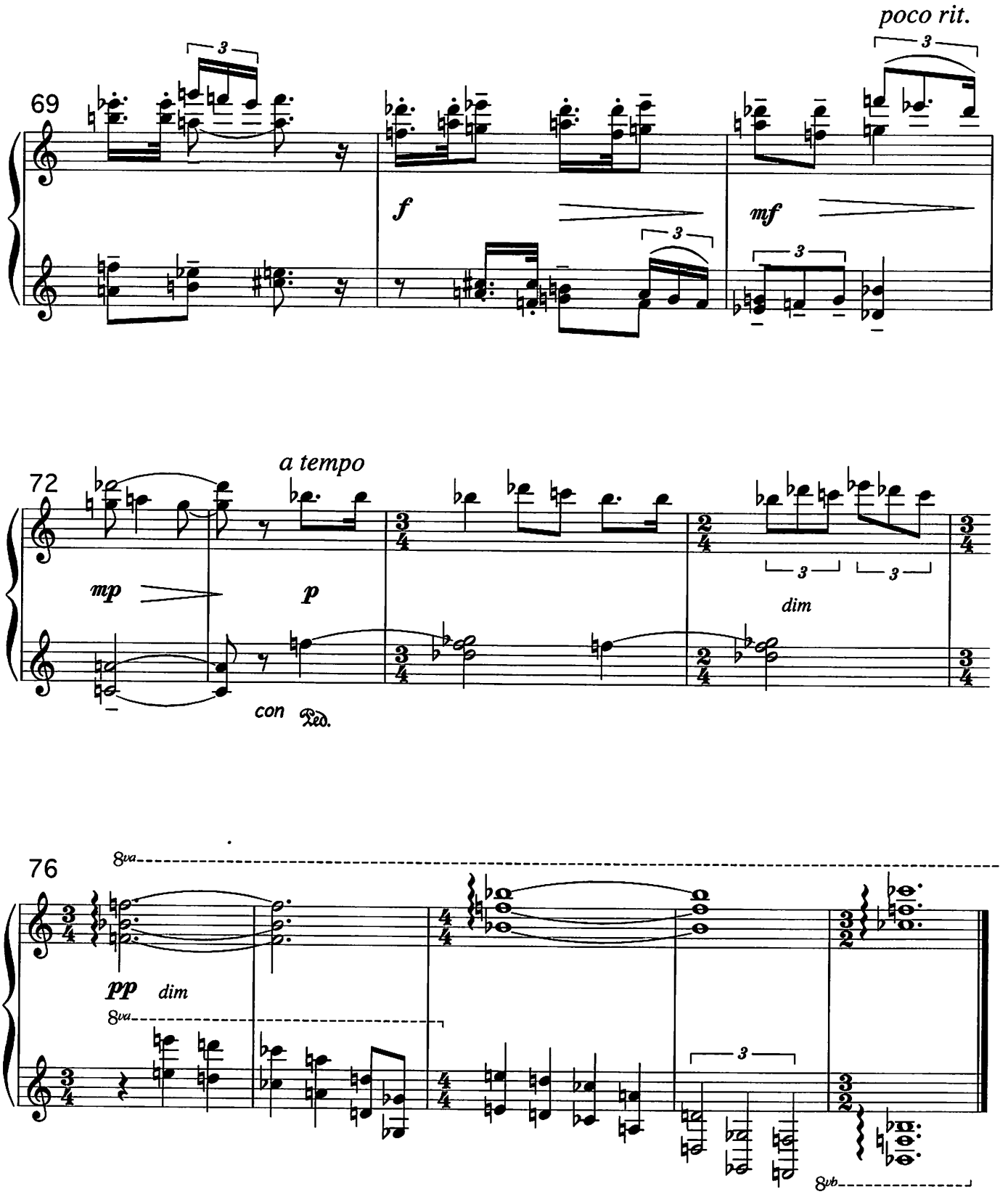
con

Ped.

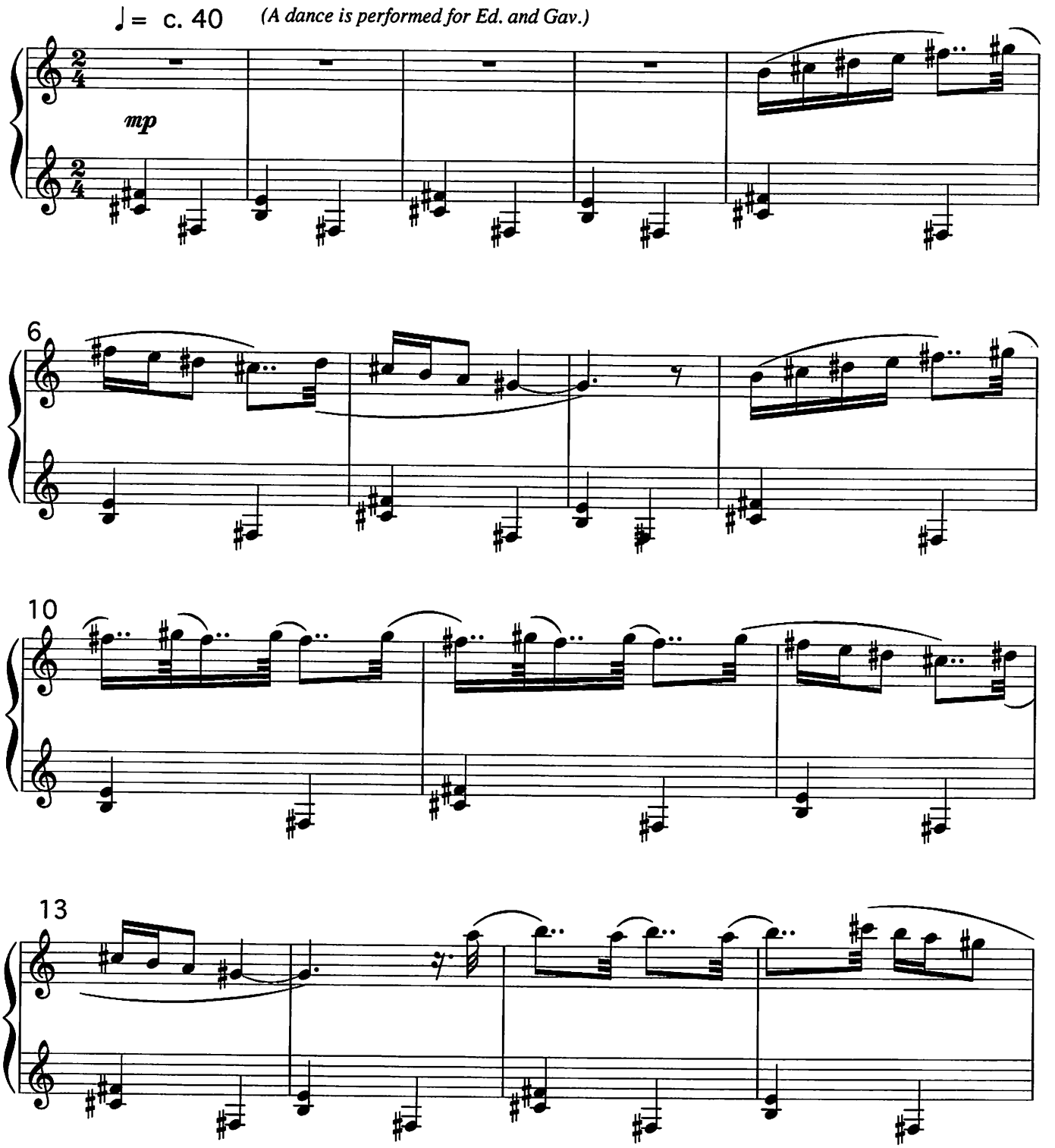
senza

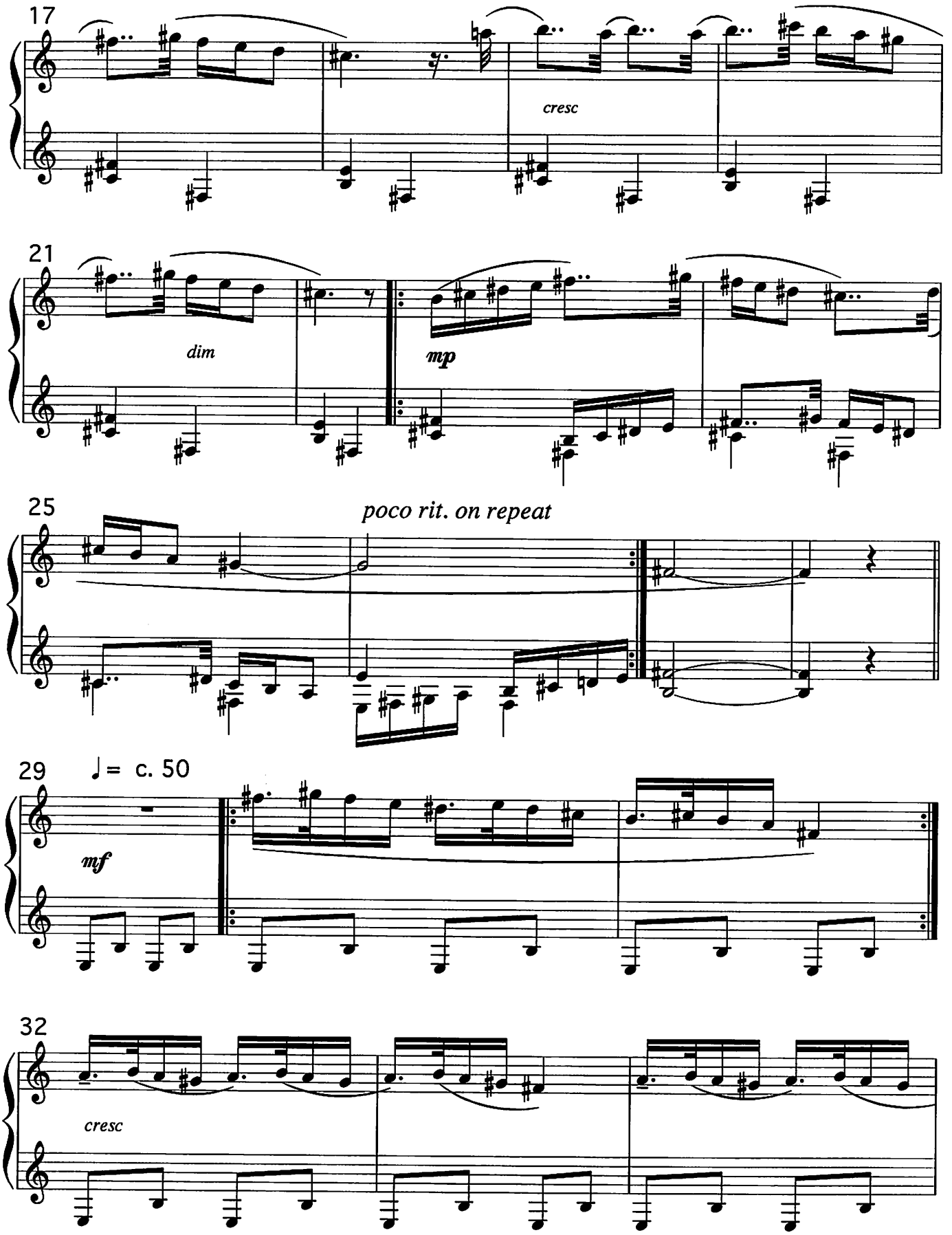
Ped.

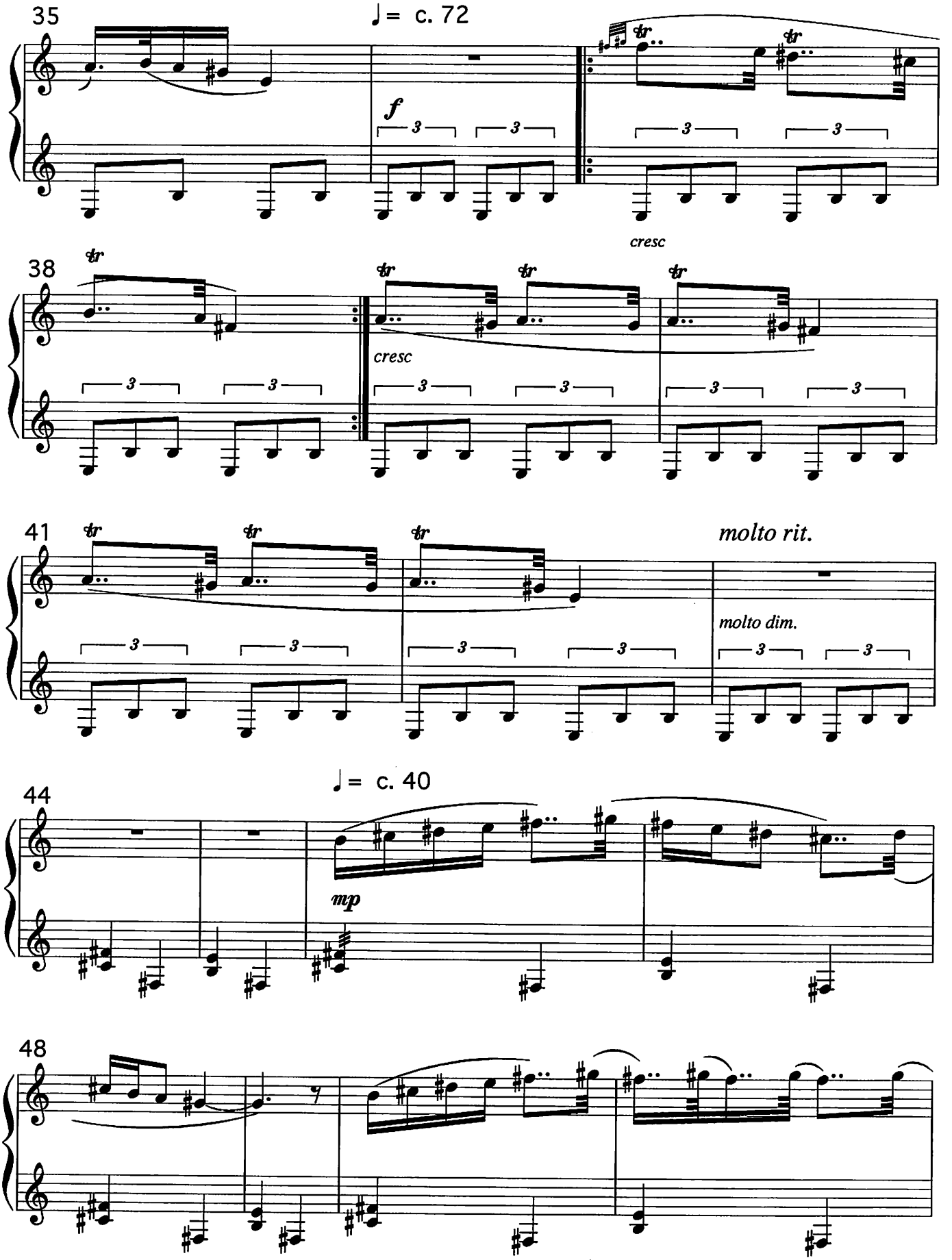

61
64
Gav.
ff
Kiss not my hand: em - brace me
Ed. II
ff
Kiss not my hand em - brace me
ff
con Ped.
66
O my love, as I do thee.
senza
Ped.

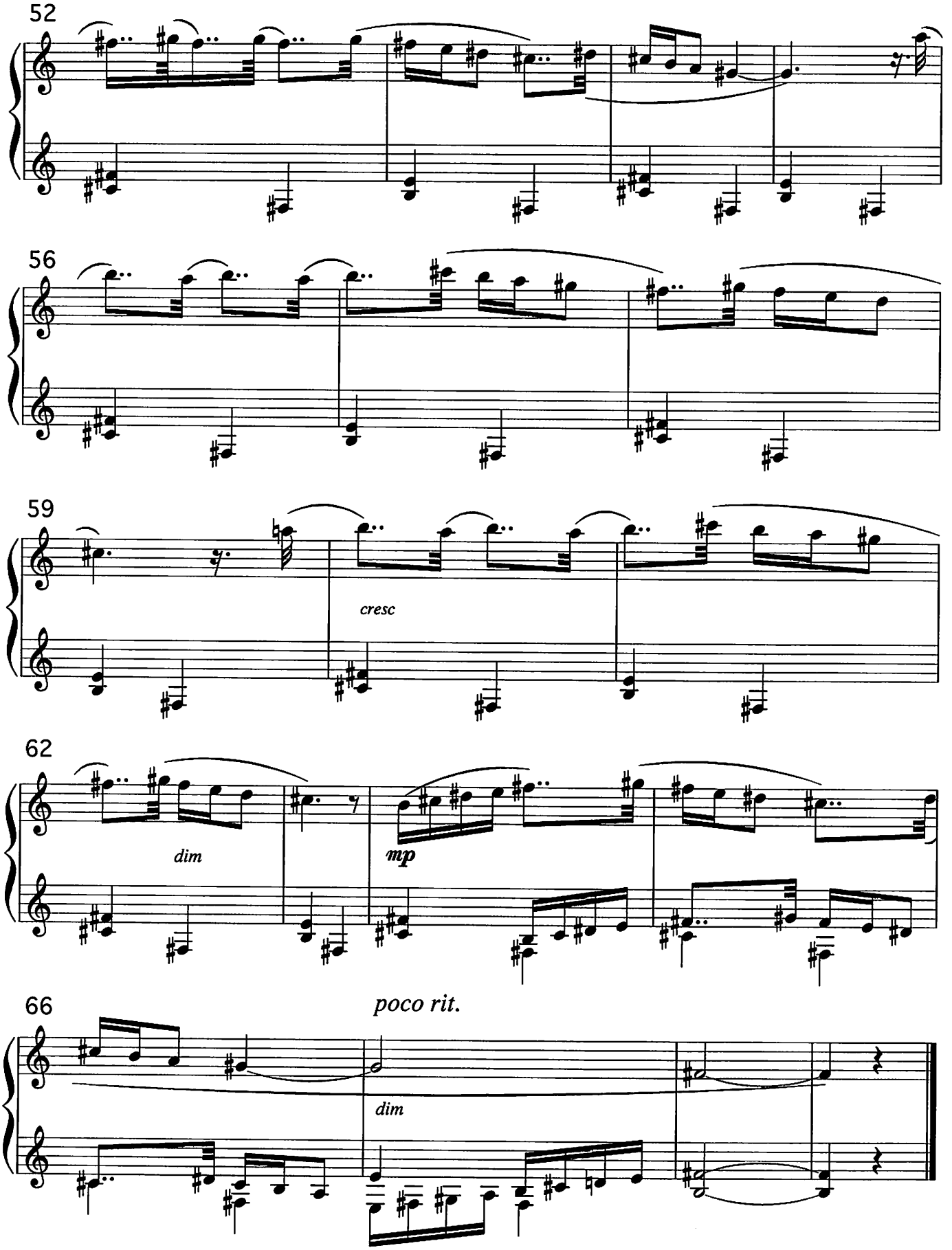

poco rit.
69
f
mf
72
a tempo
mp
p
dim
con Ped.
76
8va
pp
dim
8va
8vb

5. Arabesque (Dance)

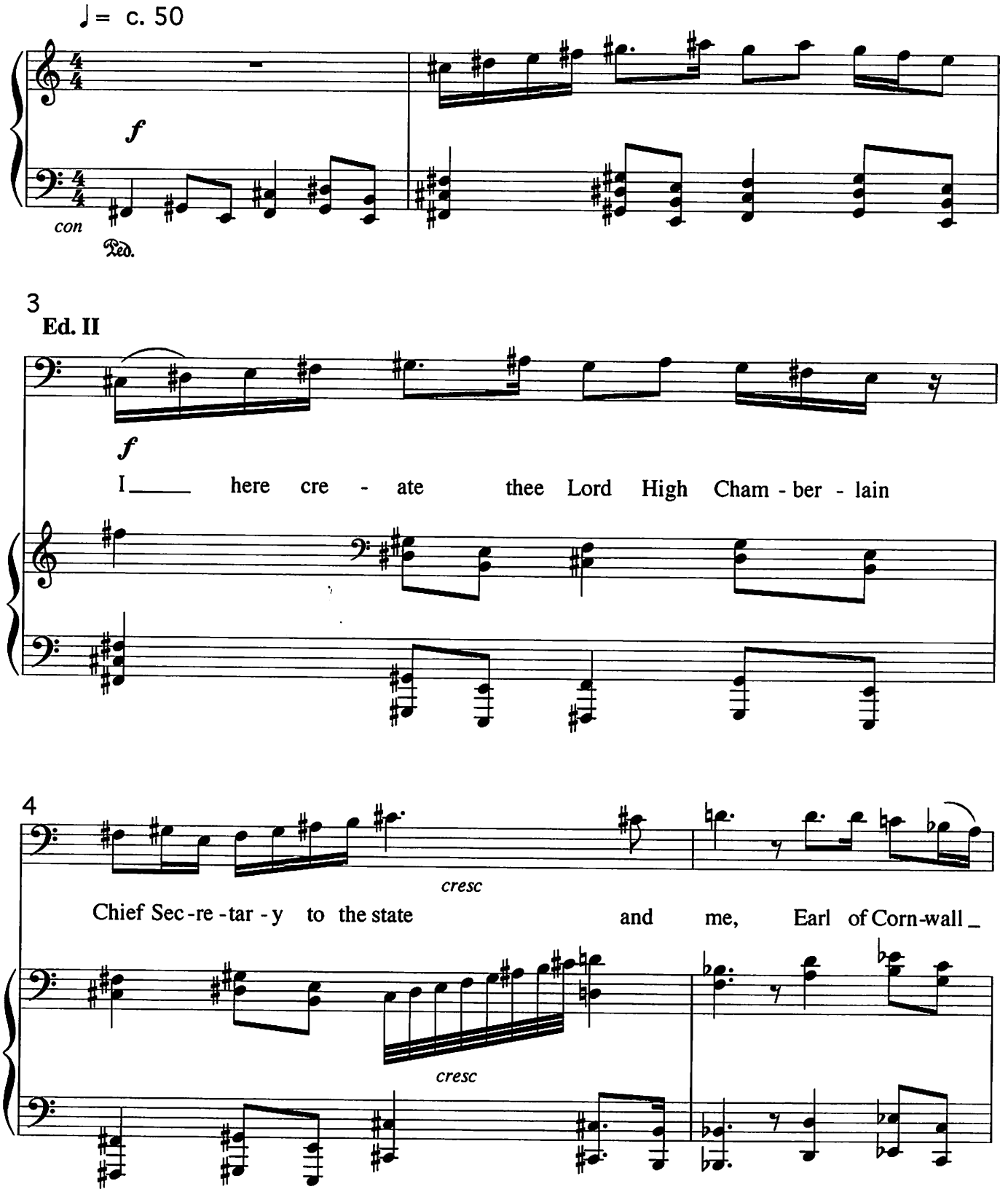


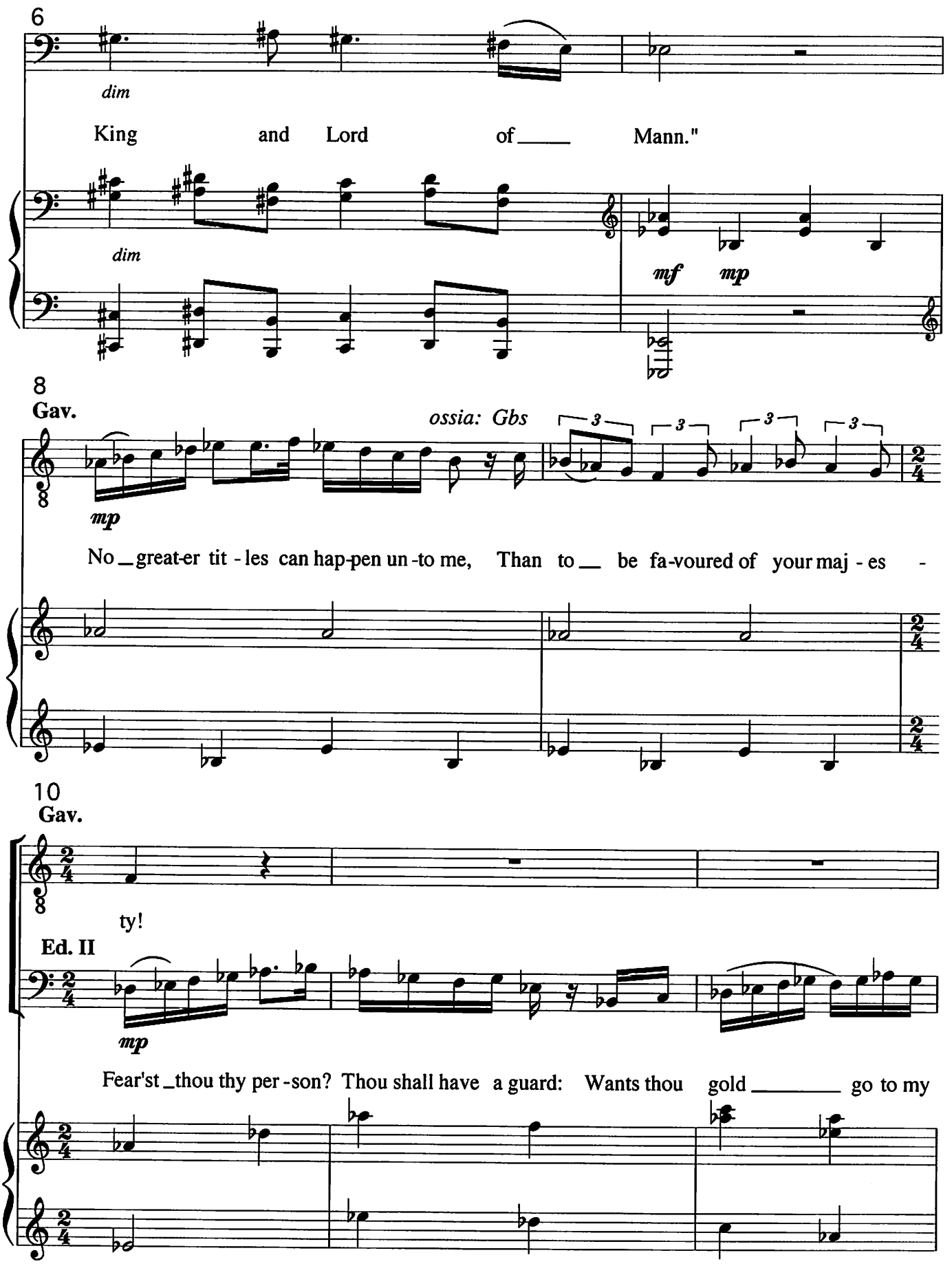

17
cresc
21
dim
mp
25
poco rit. on repeat
29
♩= c. 50
mf
32
cresc

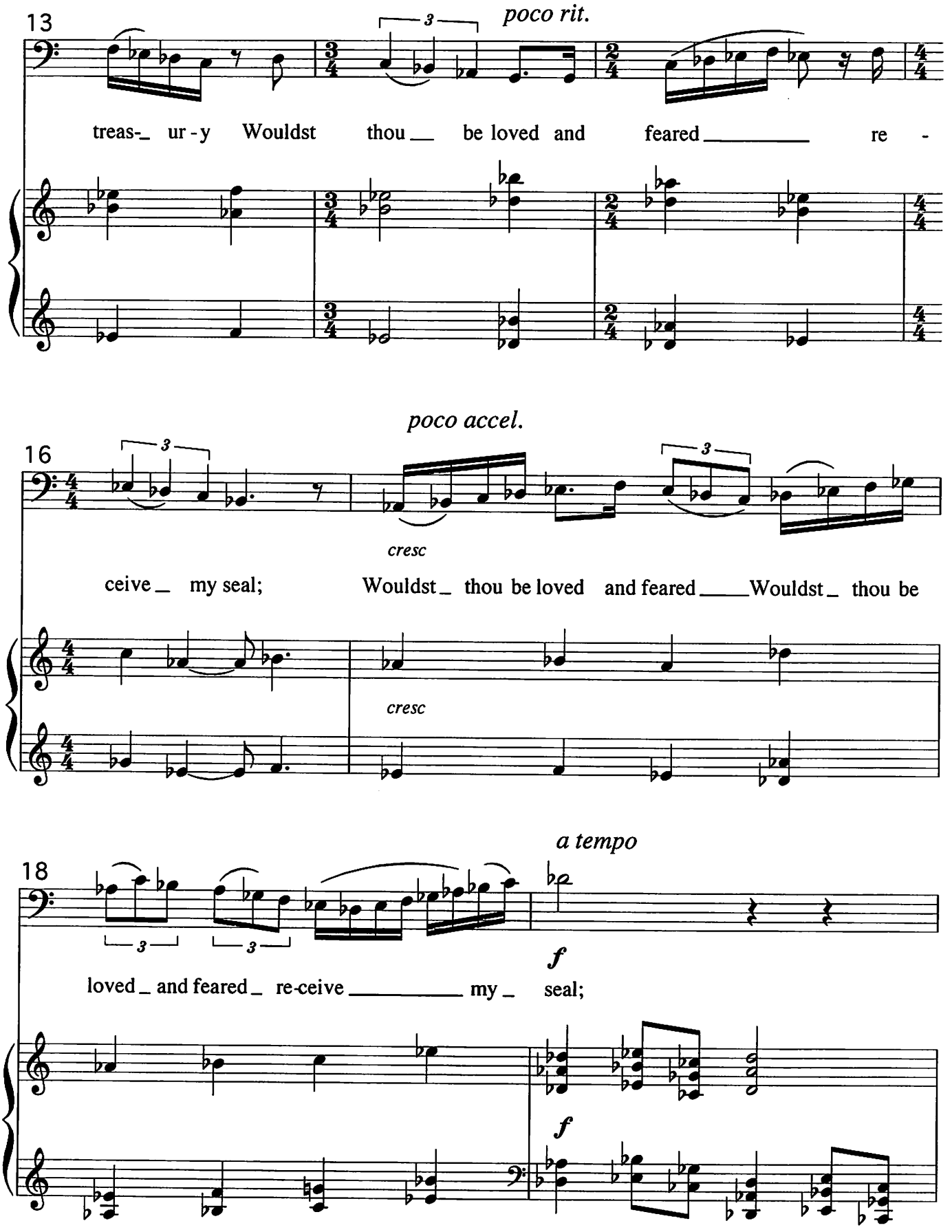

35
♩= c. 72
f
cresc
38
cresc
41
molto rit.
molto dim.
44
♩= c. 40
mp
48

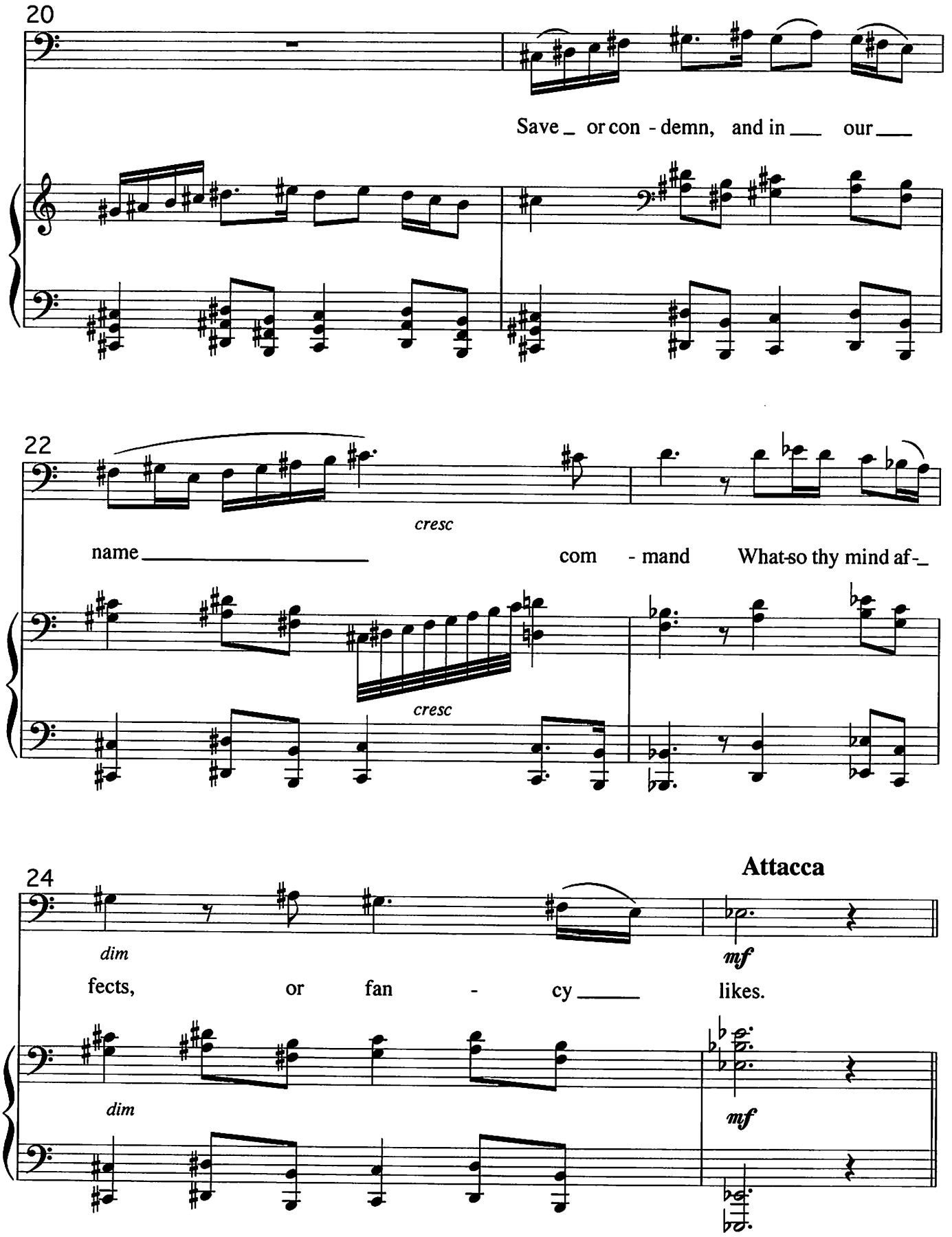

52
56
59
cresc
62
dim
mp
66
poco rit.
dim

6. Creation: Gaveston and Edward II

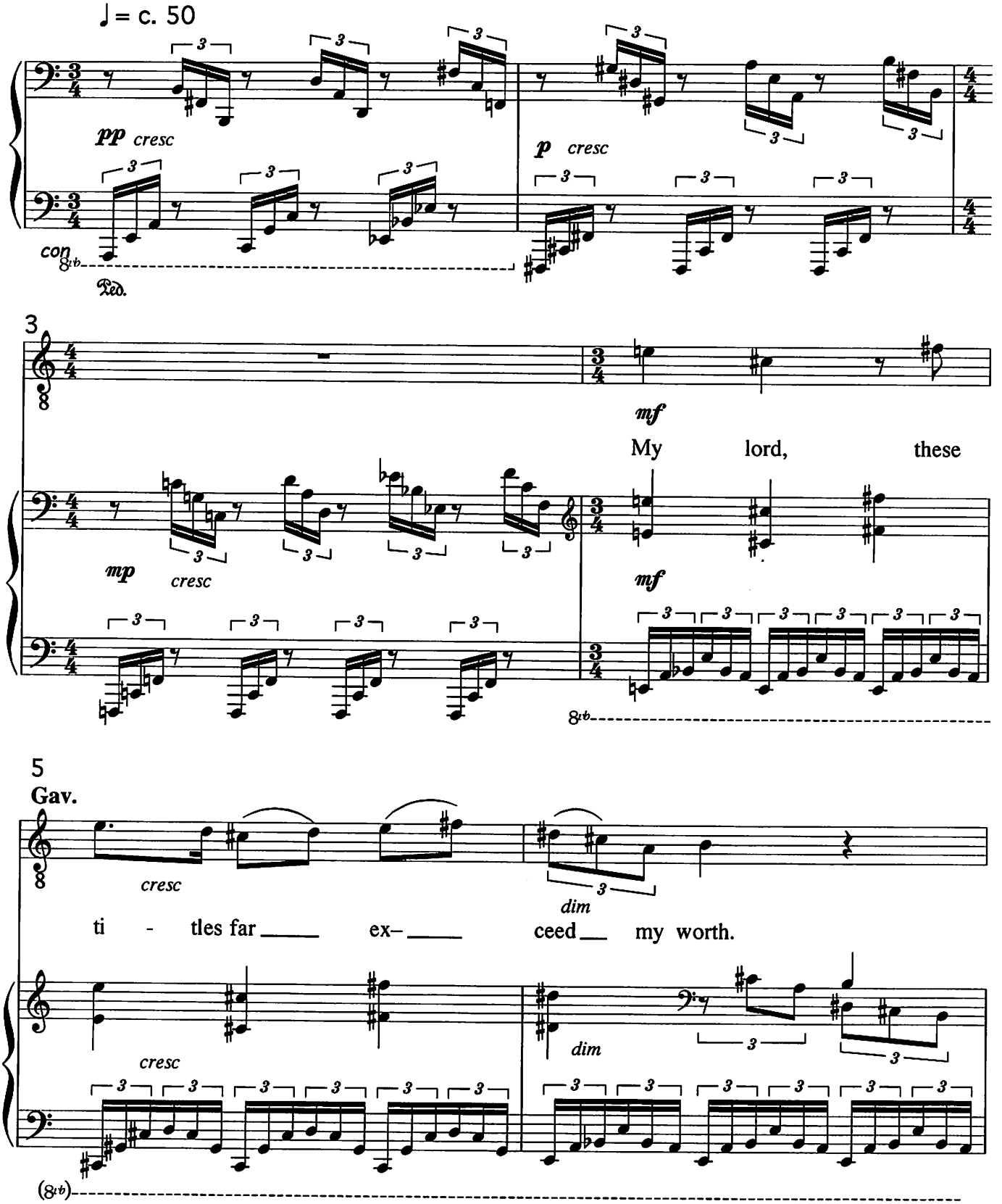


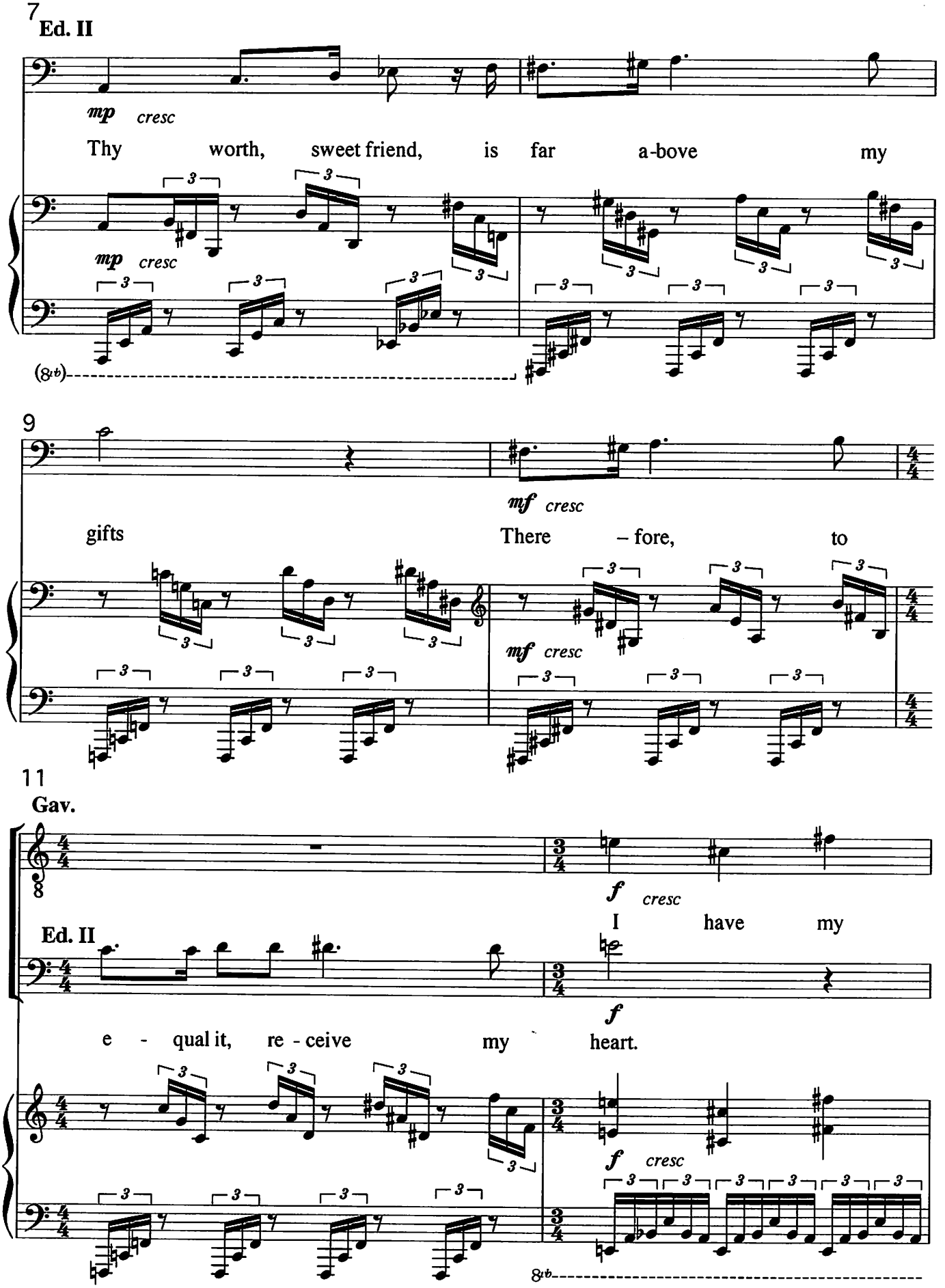

6
dim
King and Lord of Mann."
dim
mf mp
8
Gav.
ossia: Gbs
mp
No great-er tit - les can hap-pen un - to me, Than to be fa-voured of your maj - es -
10
Gav.
ty!
Ed. II
mp
Fear'st thou thy per - son? Thou shall have a guard: Wants thou gold go to my

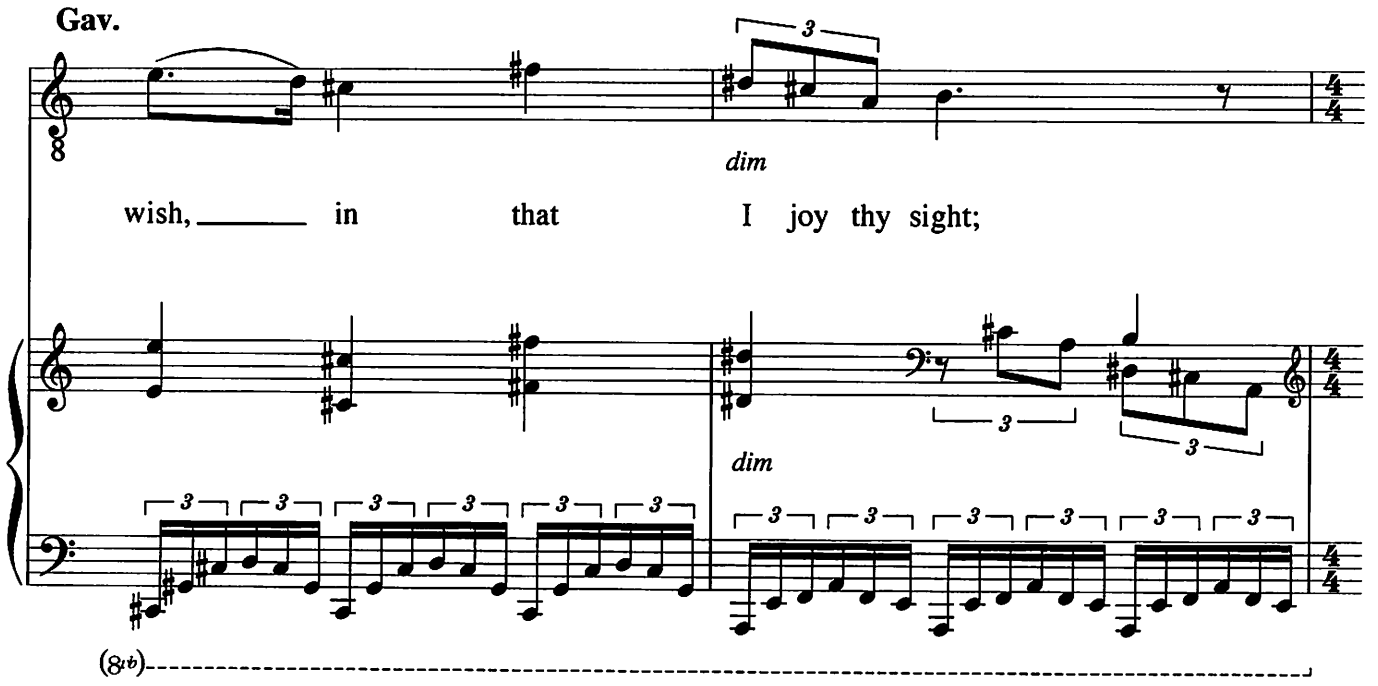

13
poco rit.
treas- ur - y Wouldst thou be loved and feared re -
poco accel.
16
cresc
ceive my seal; Wouldst thou be loved and feared Wouldst thou be
cresc
a tempo
18
f
loved and feared re-ceive my seal;
f

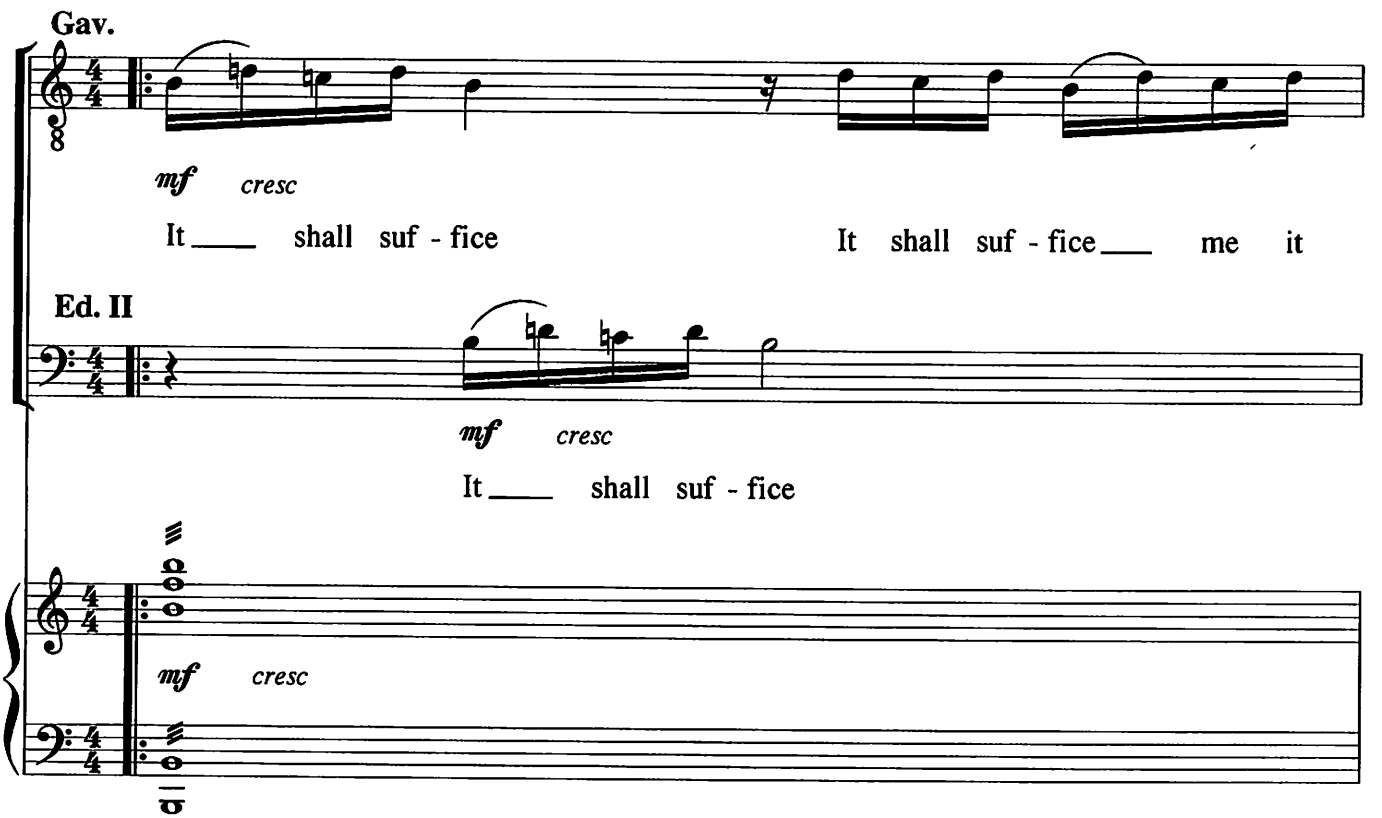

20
Save _ or con - demn, and in ___ our ___
22
cresc
name _____ com - mand What-so thy mind af-_
cresc
24
Attacca
dim
mf
fects, or fan - cy _____ likes.
dim
mf

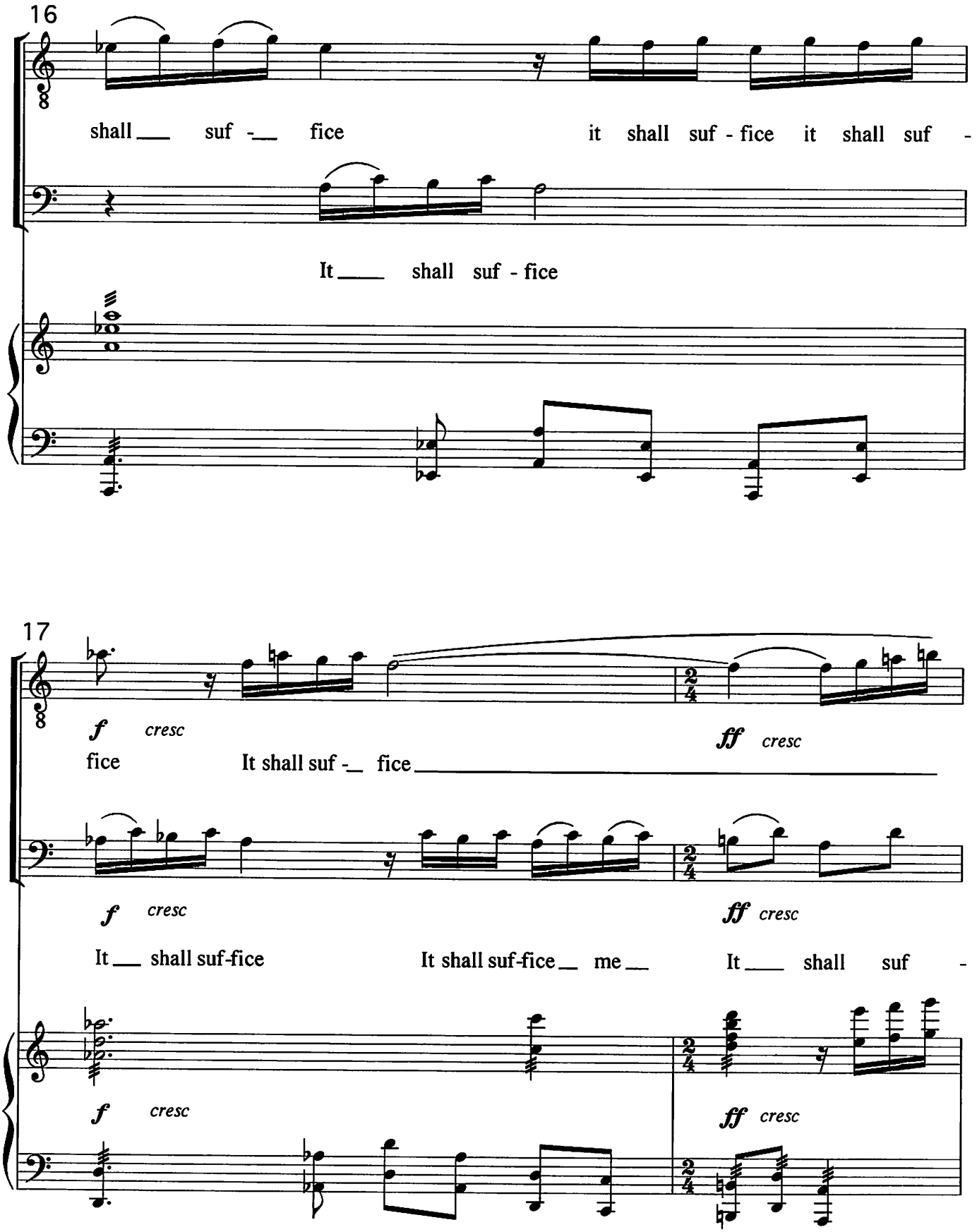
7. Heart: Gaveston and Edward II

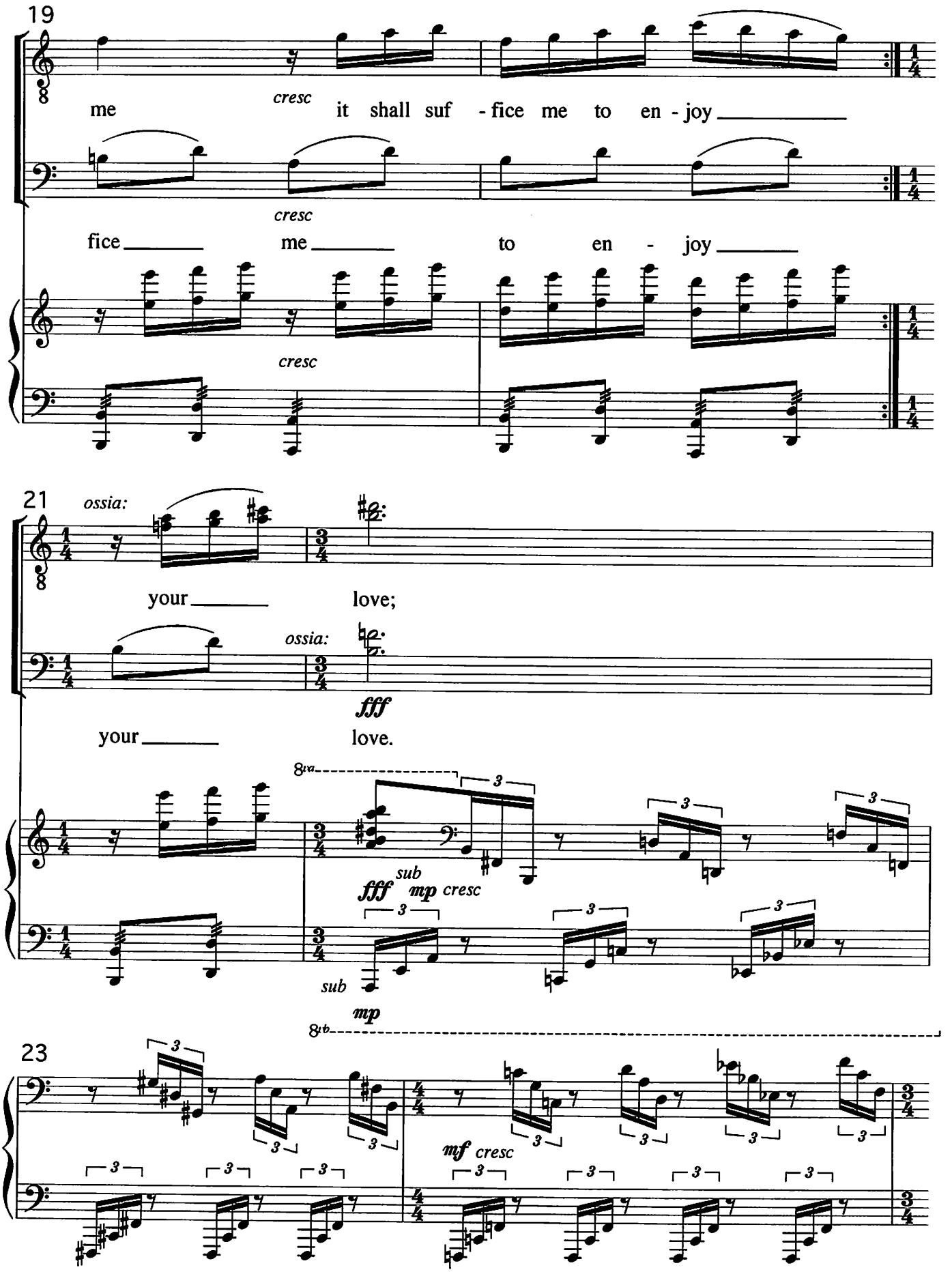


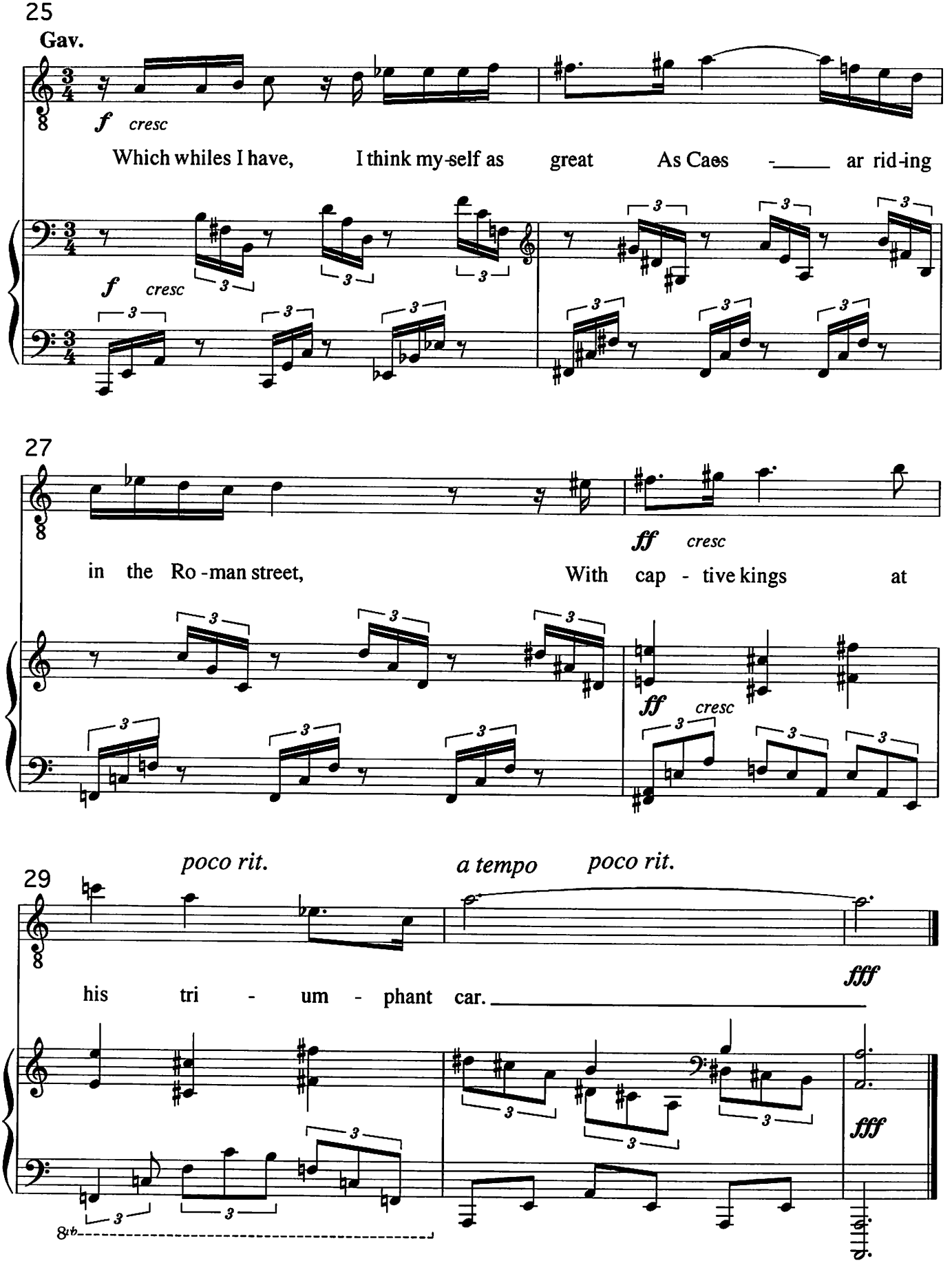

7
Ed. II
mp cresc
Thy worth, sweet friend, is far a-bove my
mp cresc
(8vb)
9
mf cresc
gifts There – fore, to
mf cresc
11
Gav.
8
f cresc
I have my
Ed. II
f
e - qual it, re - ceive my heart.
f cresc
8vb


13
Gav.
dim
wish, ____ in that I joy thy sight;
dim
(8vb)

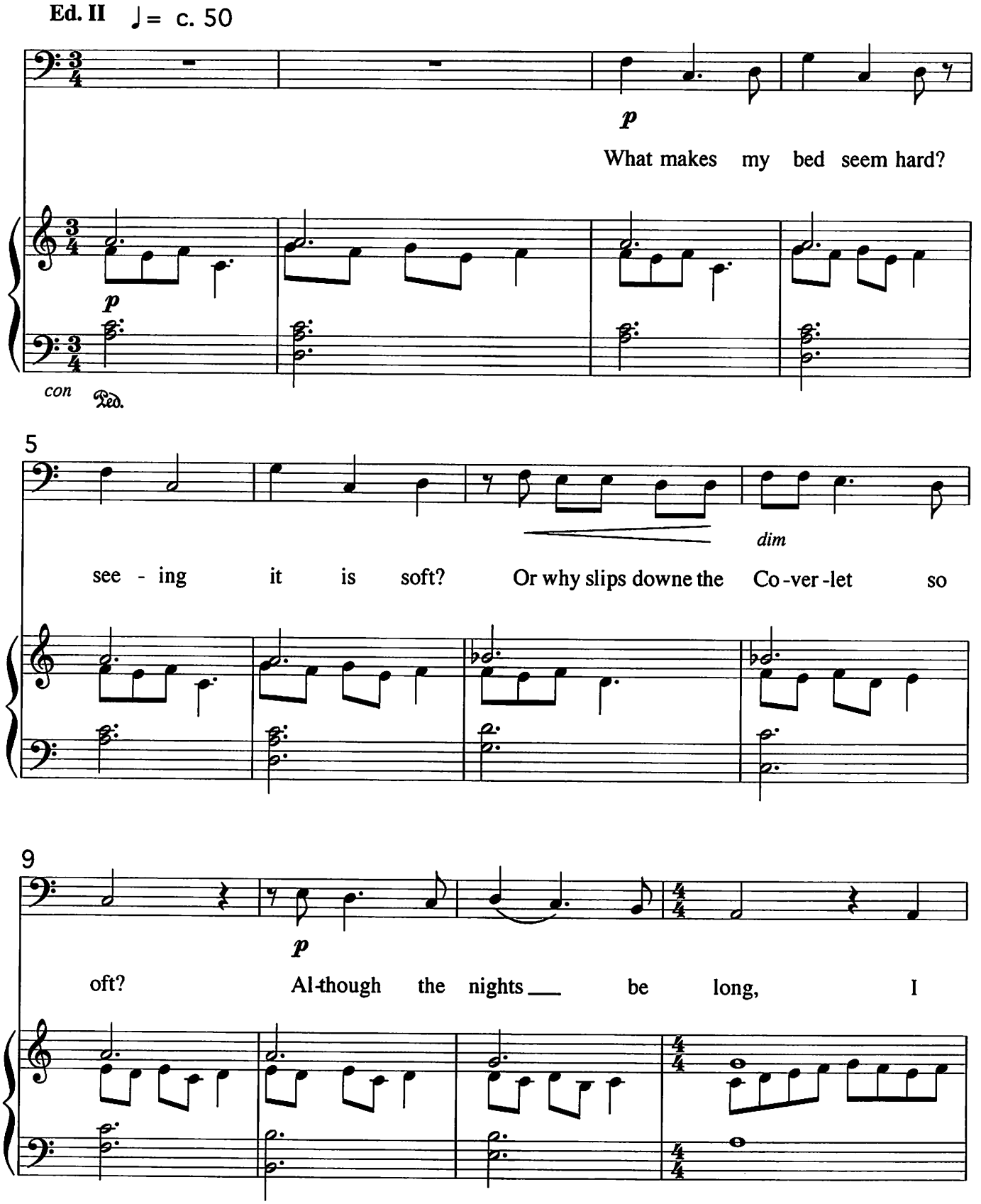

15
Gav.
mf cresc
It ____ shall suf - fice It shall suf - fice ____ me it
Ed. II
mf cresc
It ____ shall suf - fice
mf cresc


16
shall ___ suf - ___ fice
it shall suf - fice it shall suf -
It ___ shall suf - fice
17
f cresc
fice
It shall suf - ___ fice ___
ff cresc
f cresc
It ___ shall suf-fice
It shall suf-fice ___ me ___
ff cresc
It ___ shall suf -
f cresc
ff cresc


19
me
cresc
it shall suf - fice me to en - joy
fice
cresc
me
to en - joy
cresc
21
ossia:
your
love;
ossia:
fff
your
love.
8va
fff
sub
mp cresc
sub
mp
8vb
23
mf cresc


25
Gav.
f cresc
Which whiles I have, I think my-self as great As Caes - ar rid-ing
27
ff cresc
in the Ro-man street, With cap - tive kings at
poco rit.
a tempo
poco rit.
29
fff
his tri - um - phant car.
fff

8. Love's Dart: Gaveston & Edward II



13

Gav.

p

My sides _ are _ sore _____

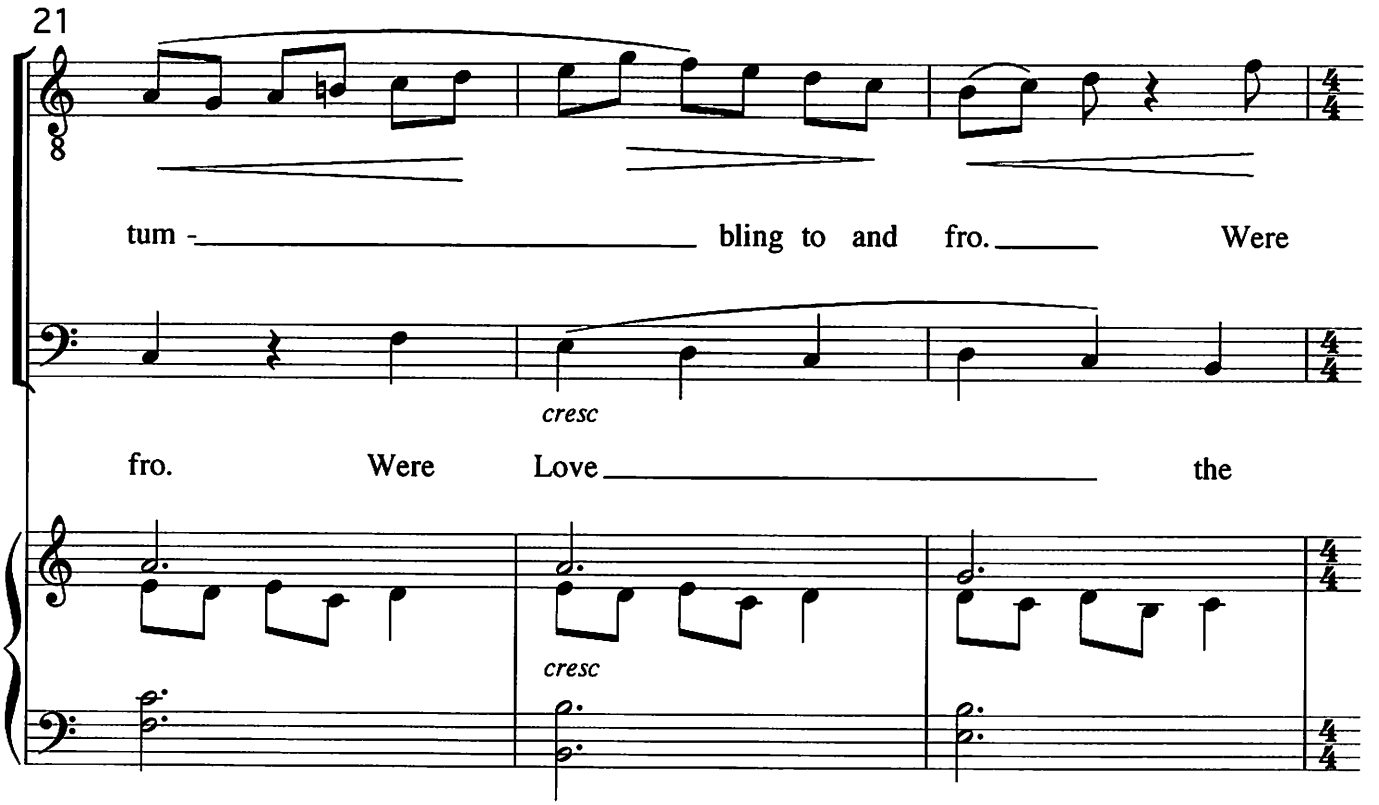
Ed. II

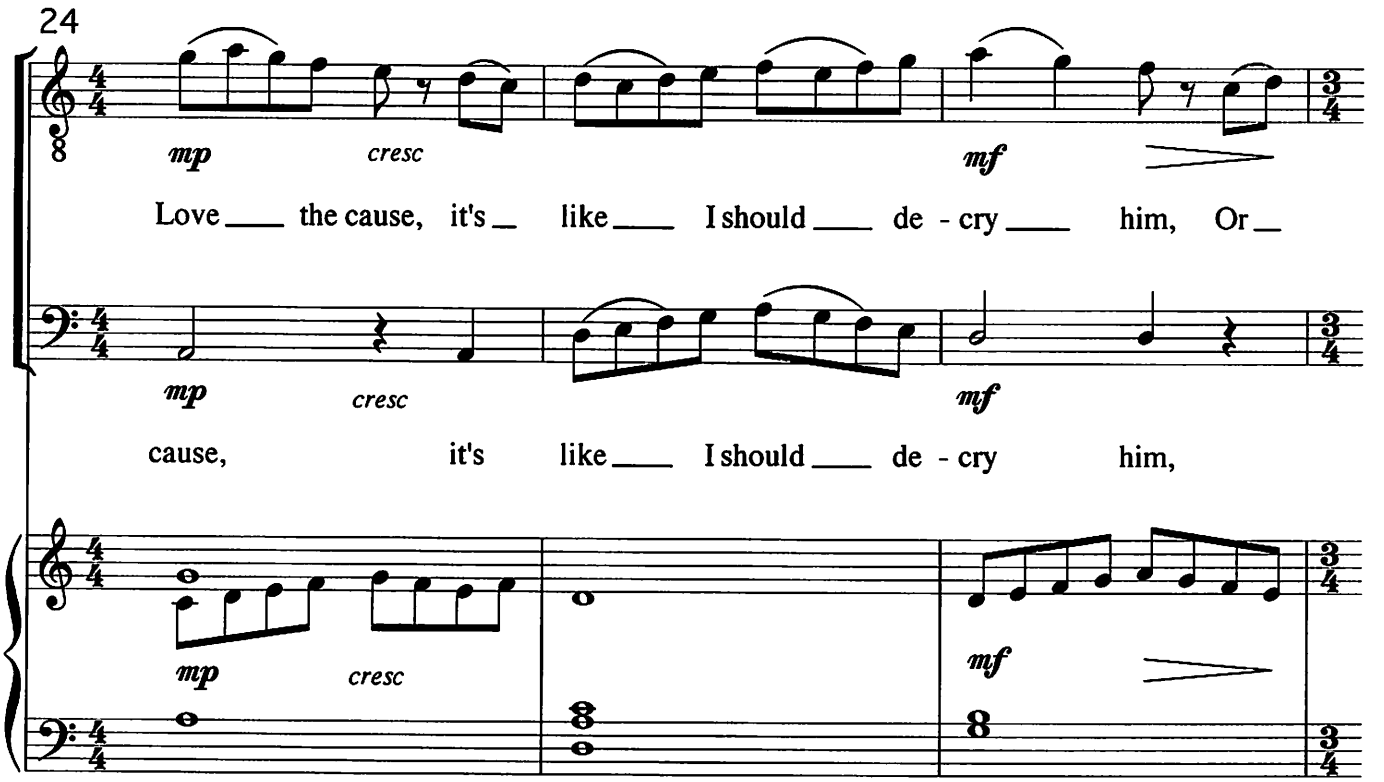
sleepe _____ not _ tho, My ____ sides are sore

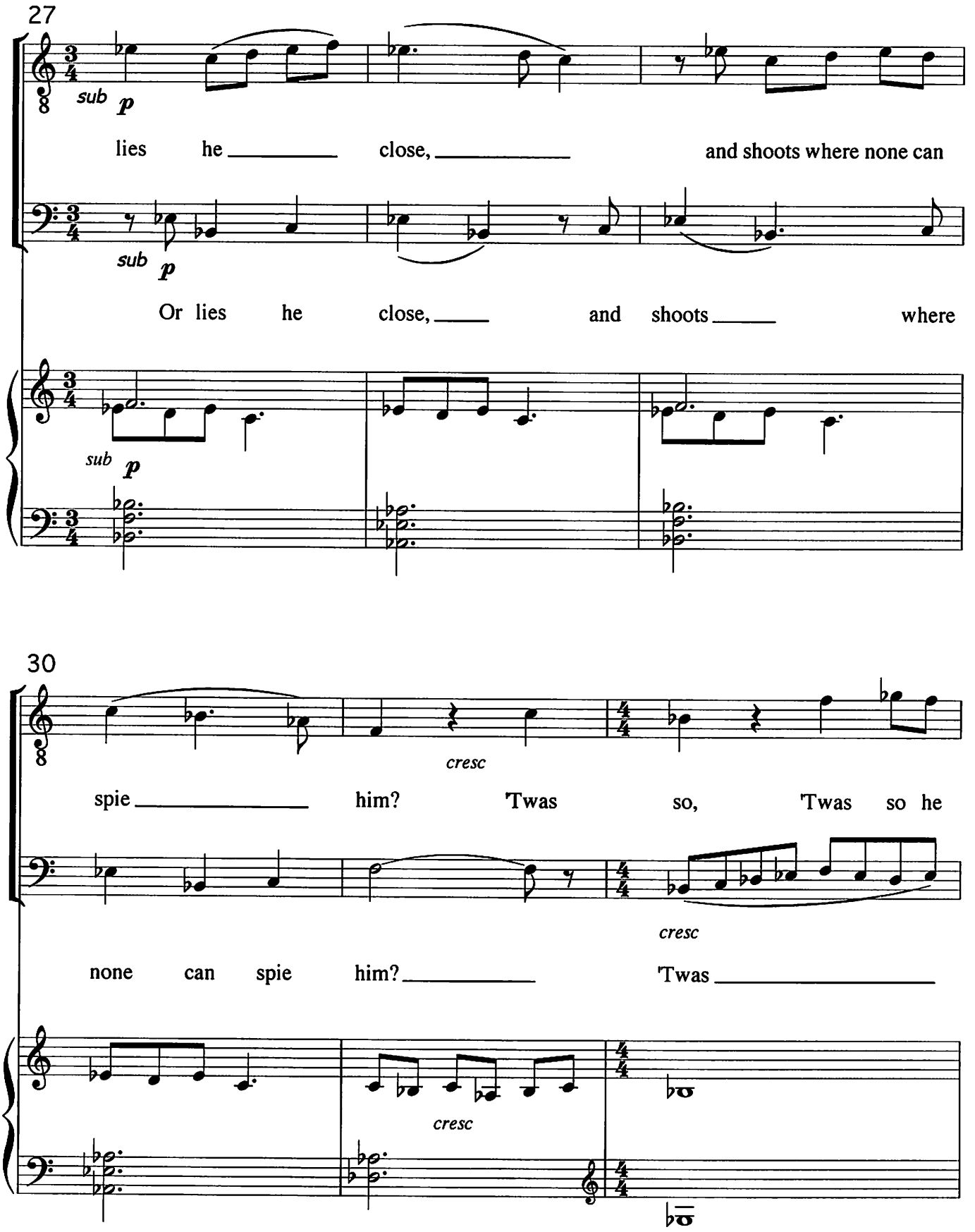
17

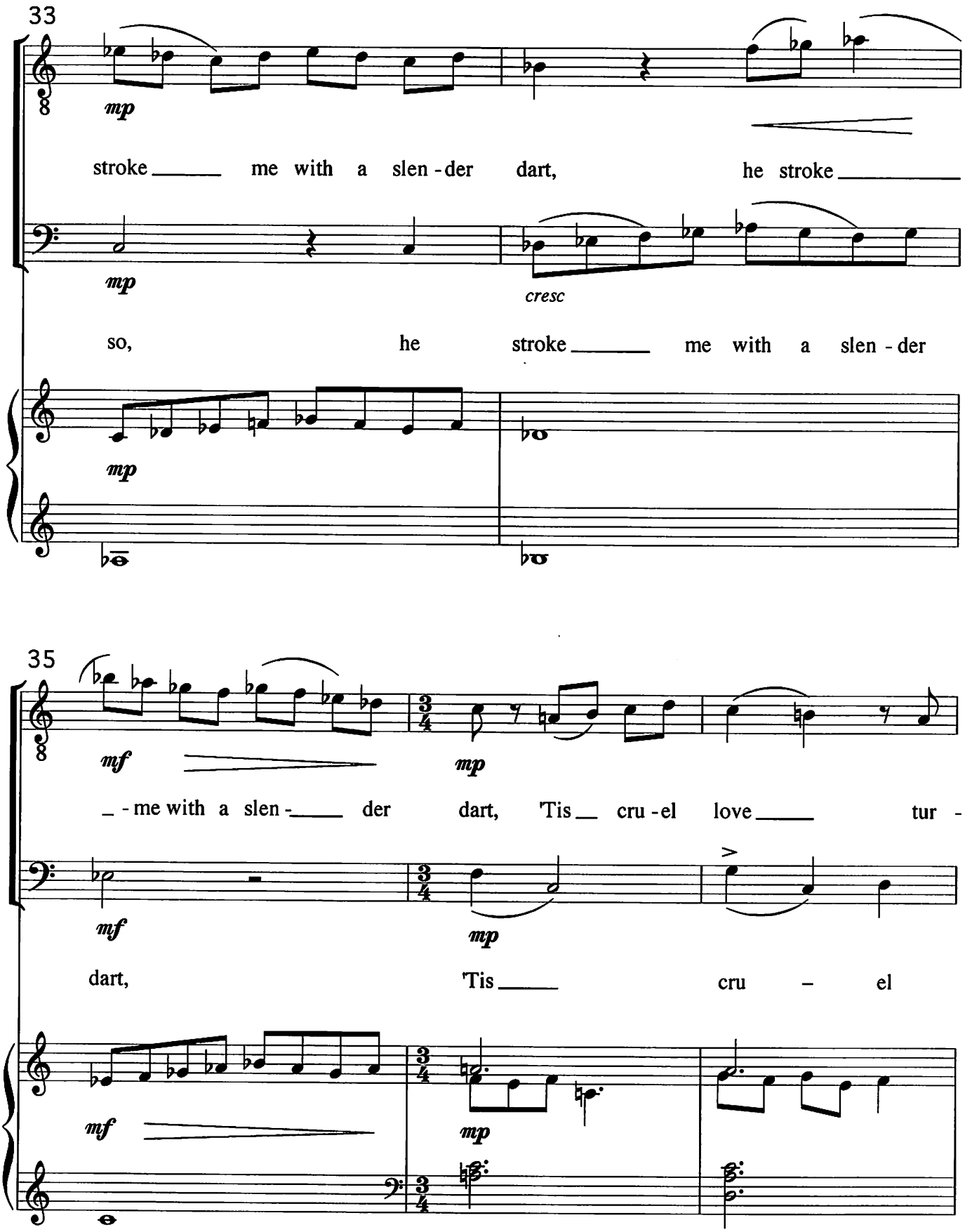
My sides _ are _ sore ___ with tum-_____ bling

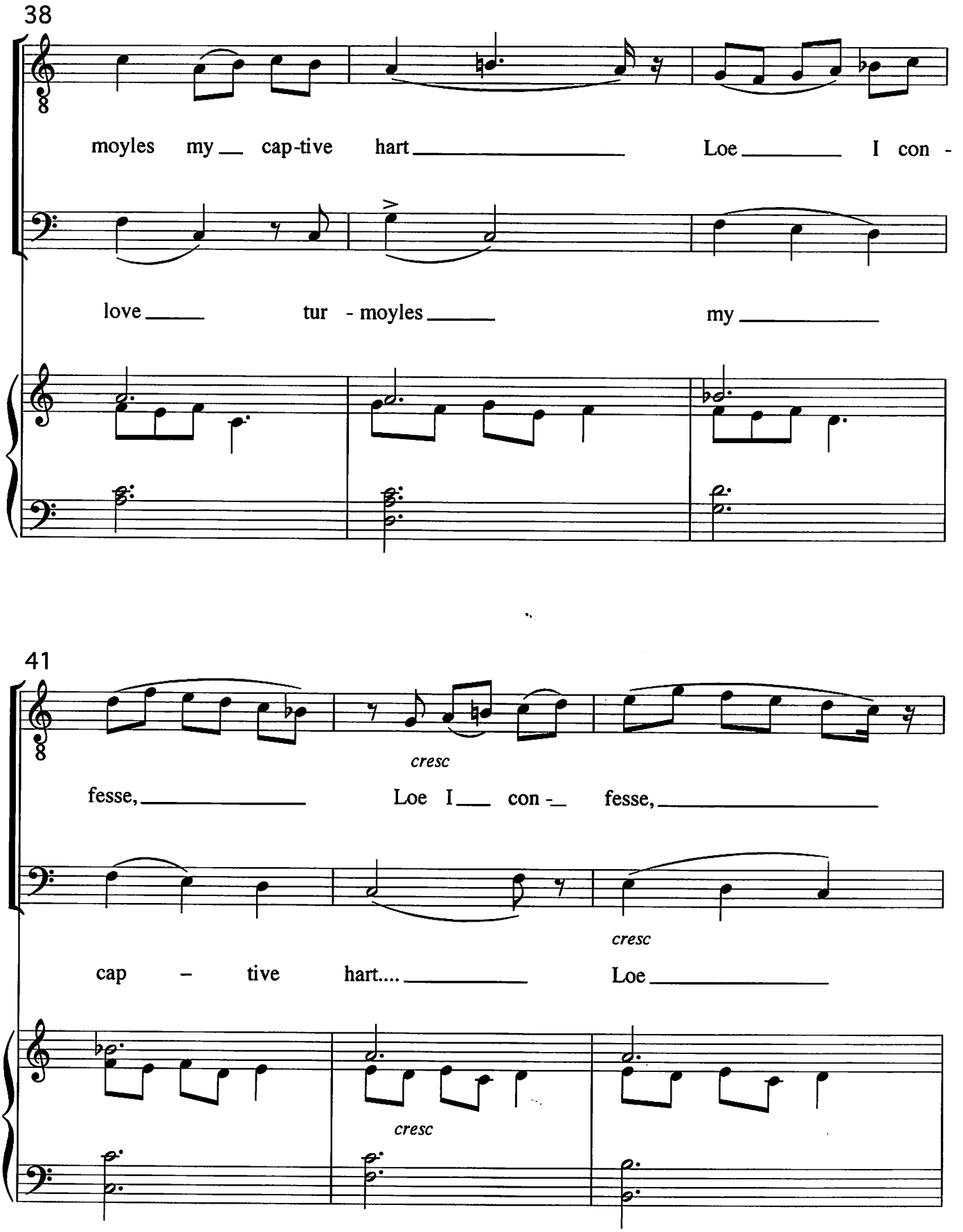
My ____ sides are sore with tum - bling to _____ and

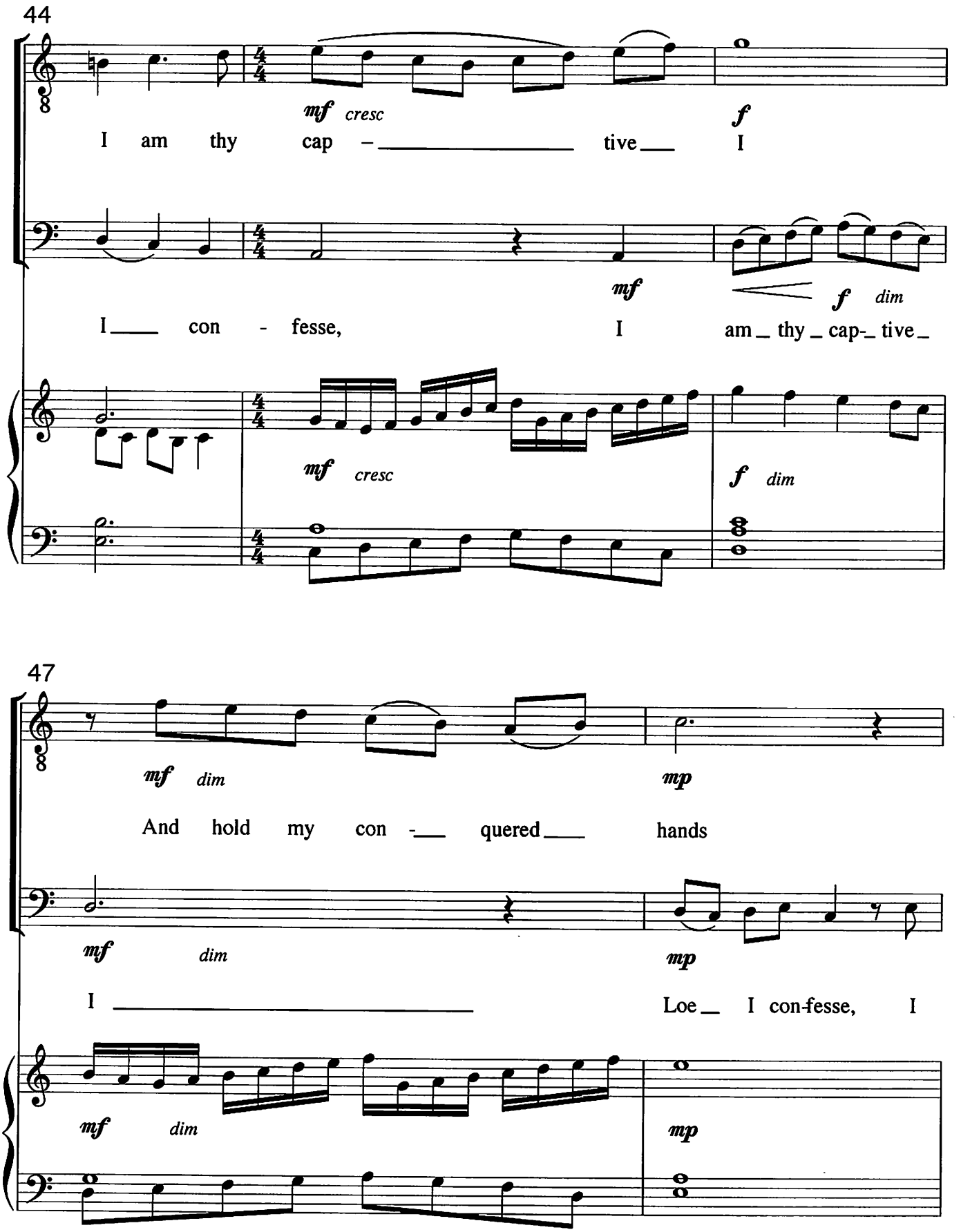

21
tum - bling to and fro. Were
cresc
fro. Were Love the
cresc

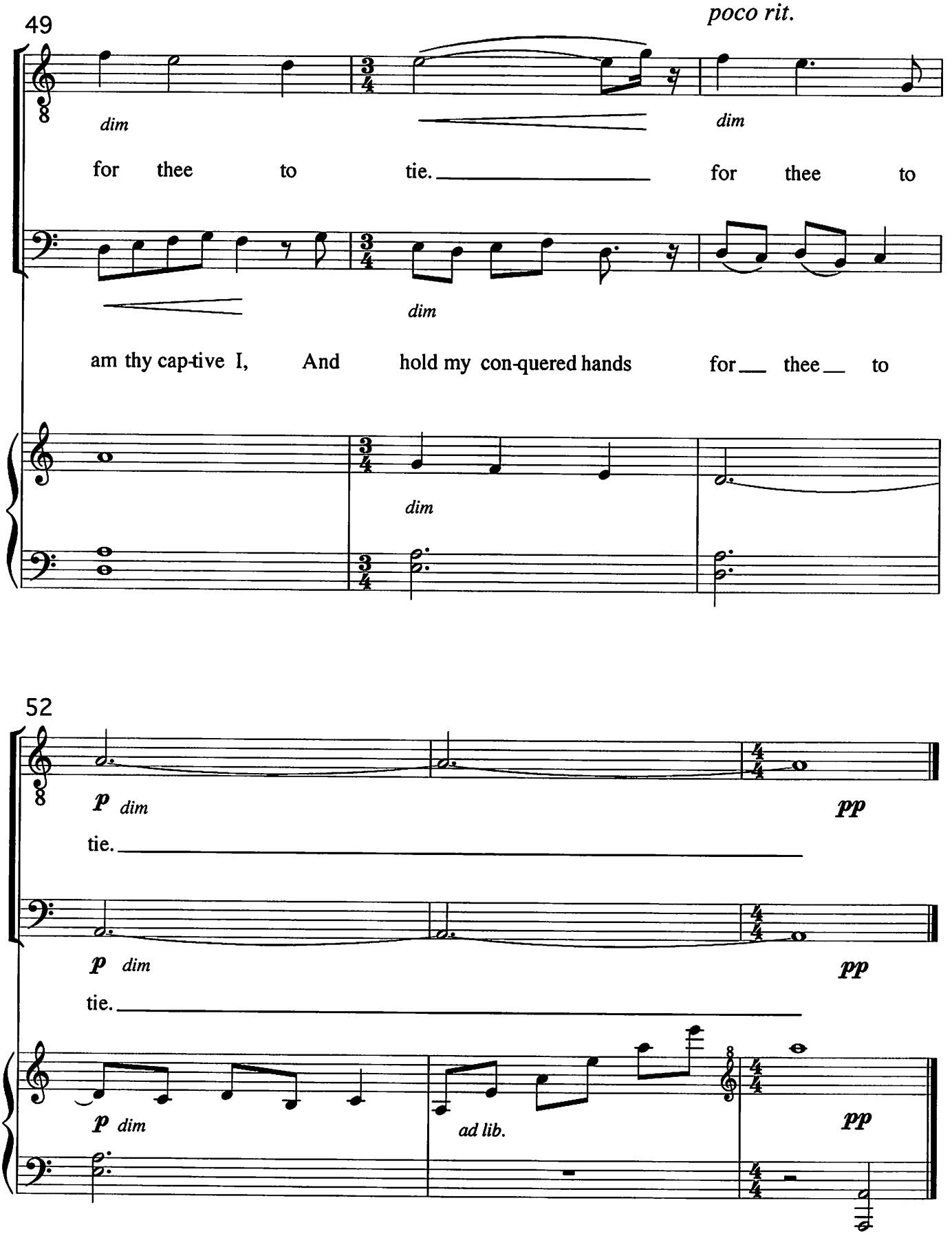

24
mp cresc mf
Love the cause, it's like I should de - cry him, Or
mp cresc mf
cause, it's like I should de - cry him,
mp cresc mf


27
sub p
lies he close, and shoots where none can
sub p
Or lies he close, and shoots where
sub p
30
cresc
spie him? 'Twas so, 'Twas so he
cresc
none can spie him? 'Twas
cresc


33
mp
stroke me with a slen - der dart, he stroke
mp
cresc
so, he stroke me with a slen - der
mp
35
mf
mp
- me with a slen - der dart, 'Tis cru - el love tur -
mf
mp
dart, 'Tis cru - el
mf
mp


38
moyles my cap-tive hart Loe I con -
love tur - moyles my
41
cresc
fesse, Loe I con - fesse,
cresc
cap - tive hart.... Loe
cresc


44
mf cresc
f
I am thy cap – tive I
mf
f dim
I con - fesse, I am thy cap- tive
mf cresc
f dim
47
mf dim
mp
And hold my con - quered hands
mf dim
mp
I
Loe I con-fesse, I
mf dim
mp


49
poco rit.
dim
dim
for thee to tie. for thee to
dim
am thy cap-tive I, And hold my con-quered hands for thee to
dim
52
p dim
pp
tie.
p dim
pp
tie.
p dim
ad lib.
pp