Pagan Dance

Kris Peysen

Program Notes

At its heart, *Pagan Dance* is a rhythmic piece. Rapid changes in meters, most often clearly outlined by motoric rhythms, give the piece its energy and drive. Polymeter and polyrhythm characterize the piece as well, and those, alongside a harmonic progression that reappears throughout, help unify the piece. When this piece was performed by the Voices of Change, a reviewer described it as a "neoclassicism-meets-minimalism affair, cheerful chirpings and pulsing framing contrapuntal exchanges." I think that works well as a concise description of my piece.

The title *Pagan Dance* comes from me envisioning a primitive tribal ritual that occurs over the course of a full day and night. The rhythmic language of the piece goes along well with this narrative, as the driving eighth-note beat can be intrepreted as constant activity in the form of the dancers, while changes in the overall tone of the music can in turn coincide with different parts of the day as the ritual enters new stages. At the end of the piece calm is at last achieved, a musical exhalation that is representative of the fact that the ritual has finally come to a close.

Performance Notes

Instrumentation:

Flute
Oboe
Clarinet in B^b
Violin
Viola
Marimba (For 2 players)

*One marimba will be shared by 2 percussionists. Each will use four medium mallets. The first will always have the treble clef and the second will always have the bass clef.

Conductor's Notes:

This piece has a lot of additive meters. I have allowed the beaming to demonstrate how those measures are to be conducted. There are some instances where two or more simultaneous parts are beamed differently (for instance meas. 36-38). In those cases, I leave it to the conductor's discretion on how to conduct those sections.

Duration: 11 minutes

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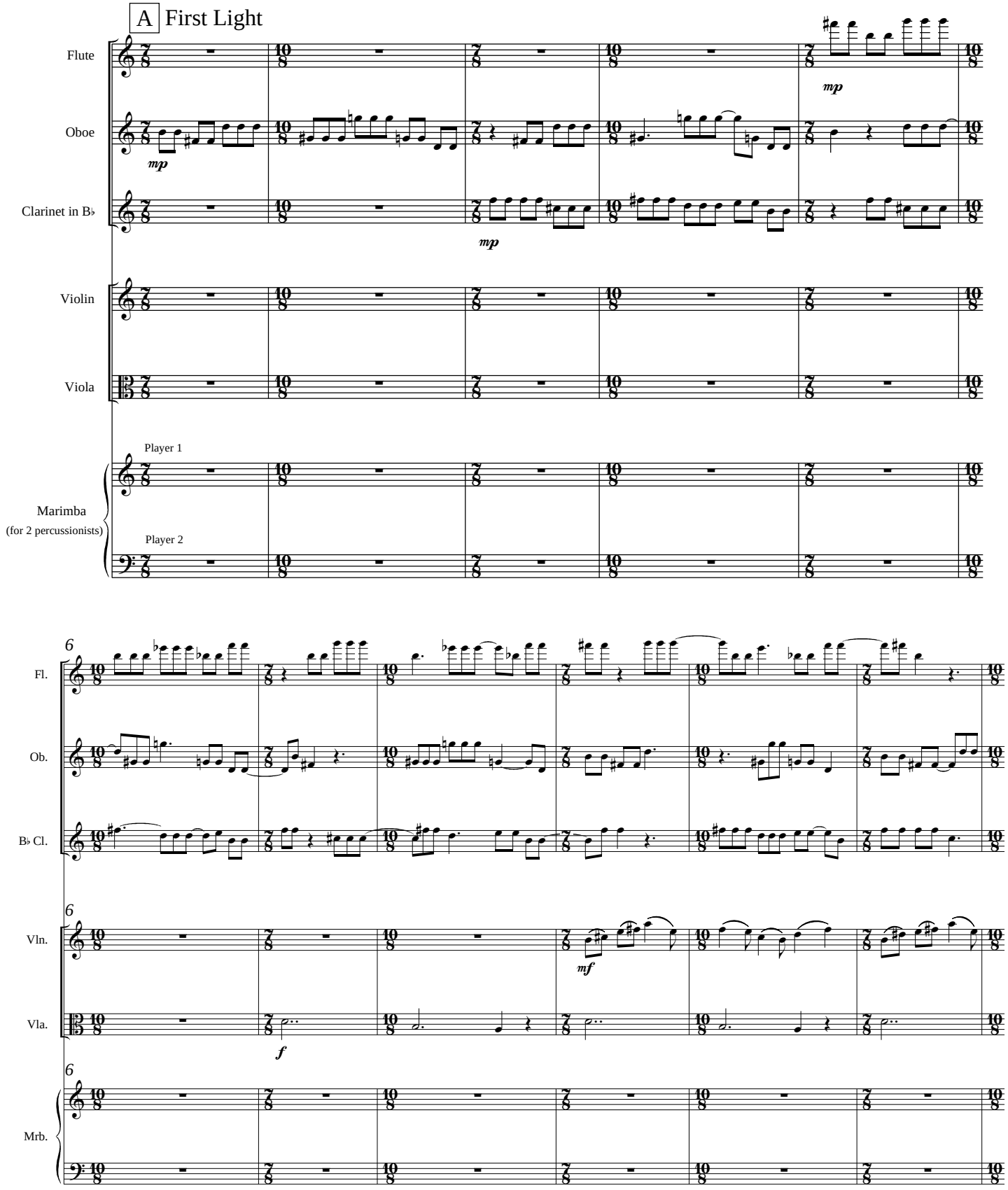
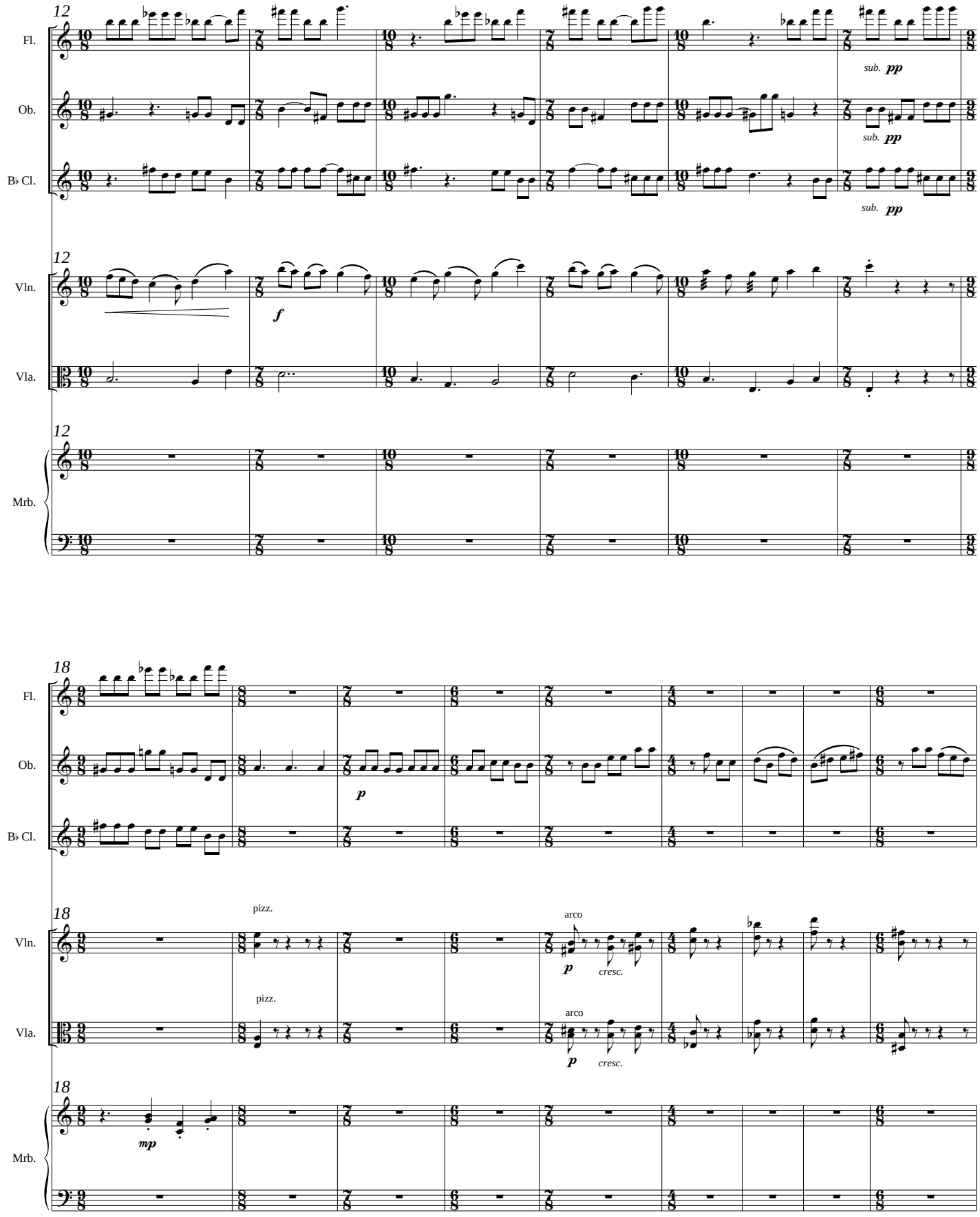
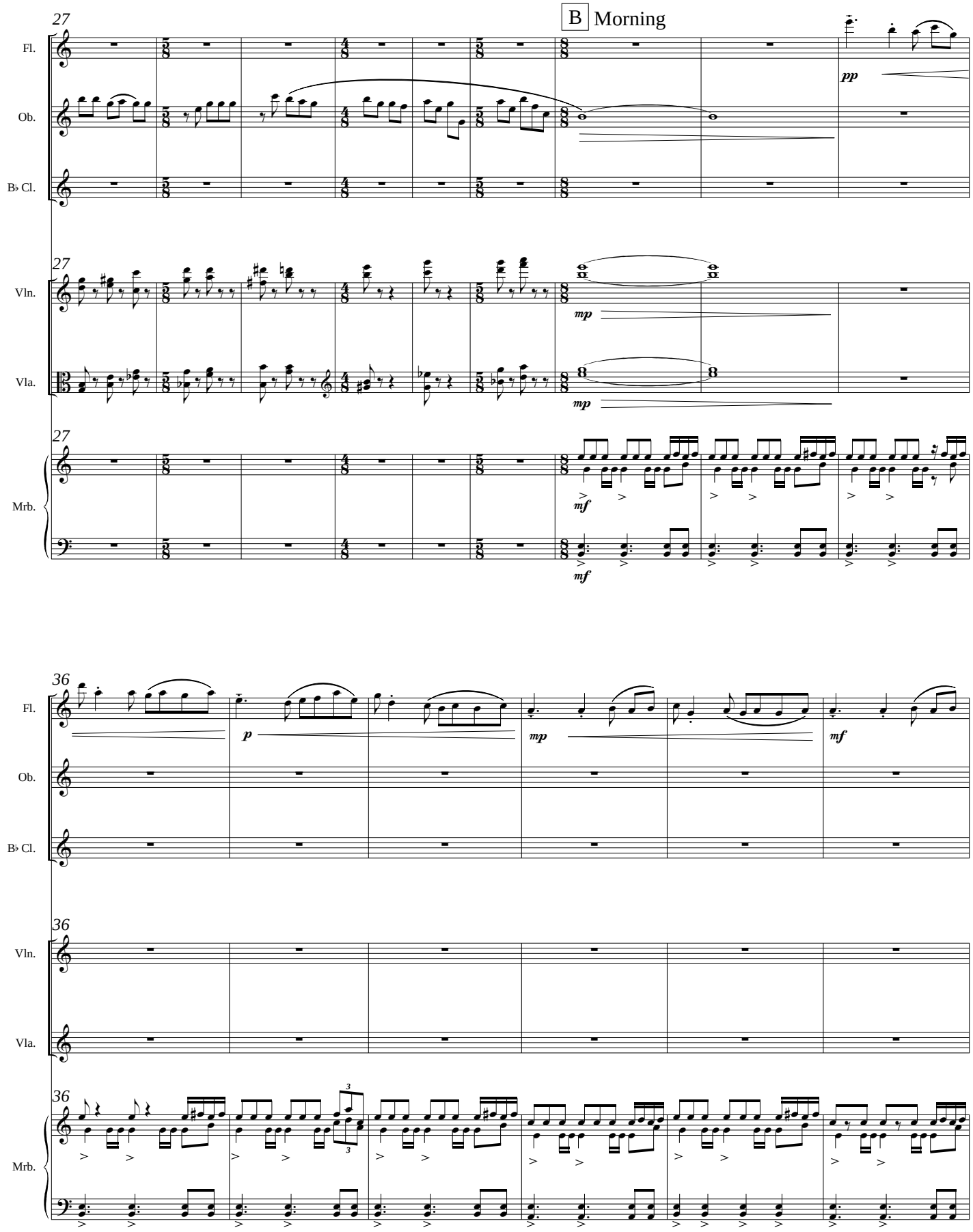
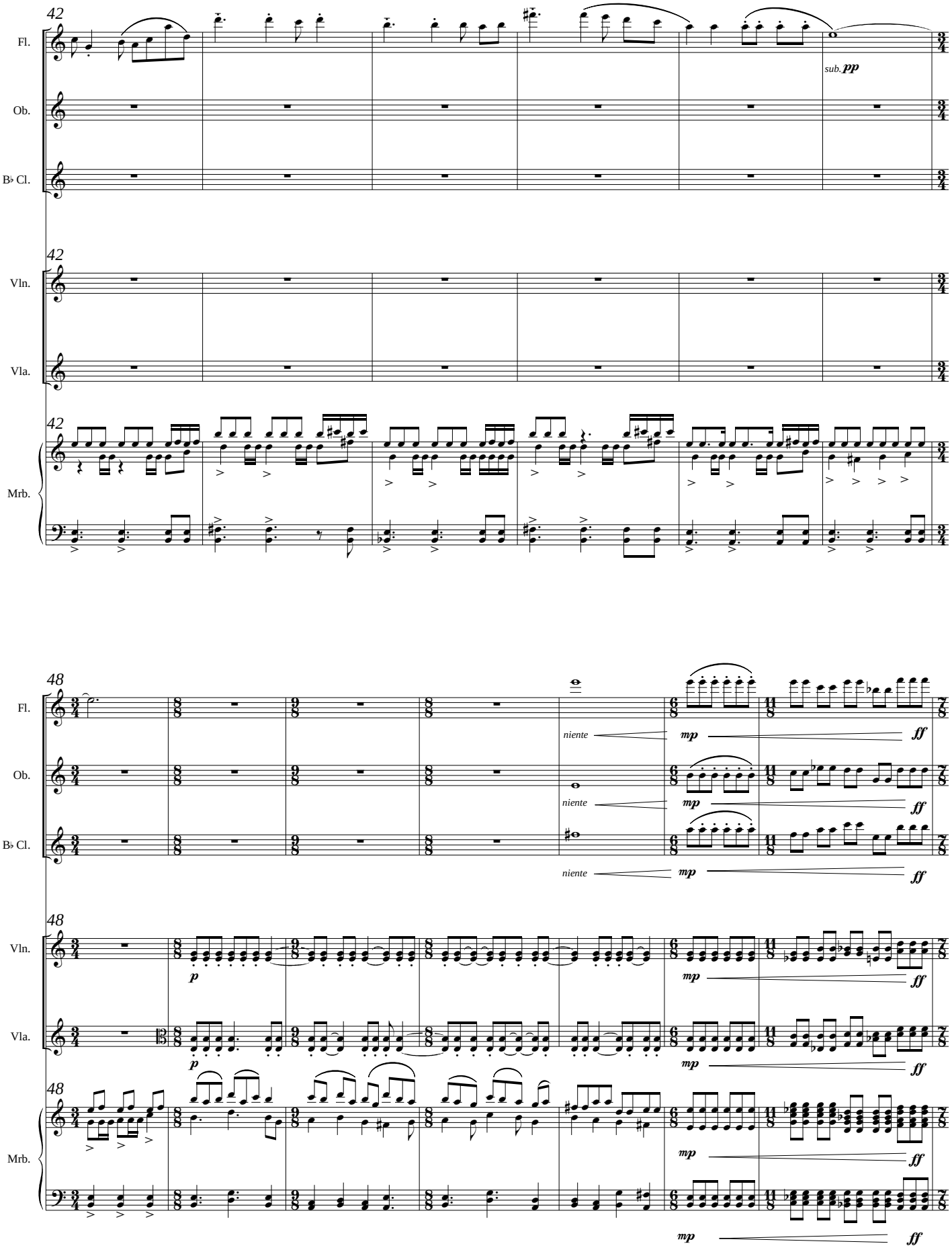
♩ = 112

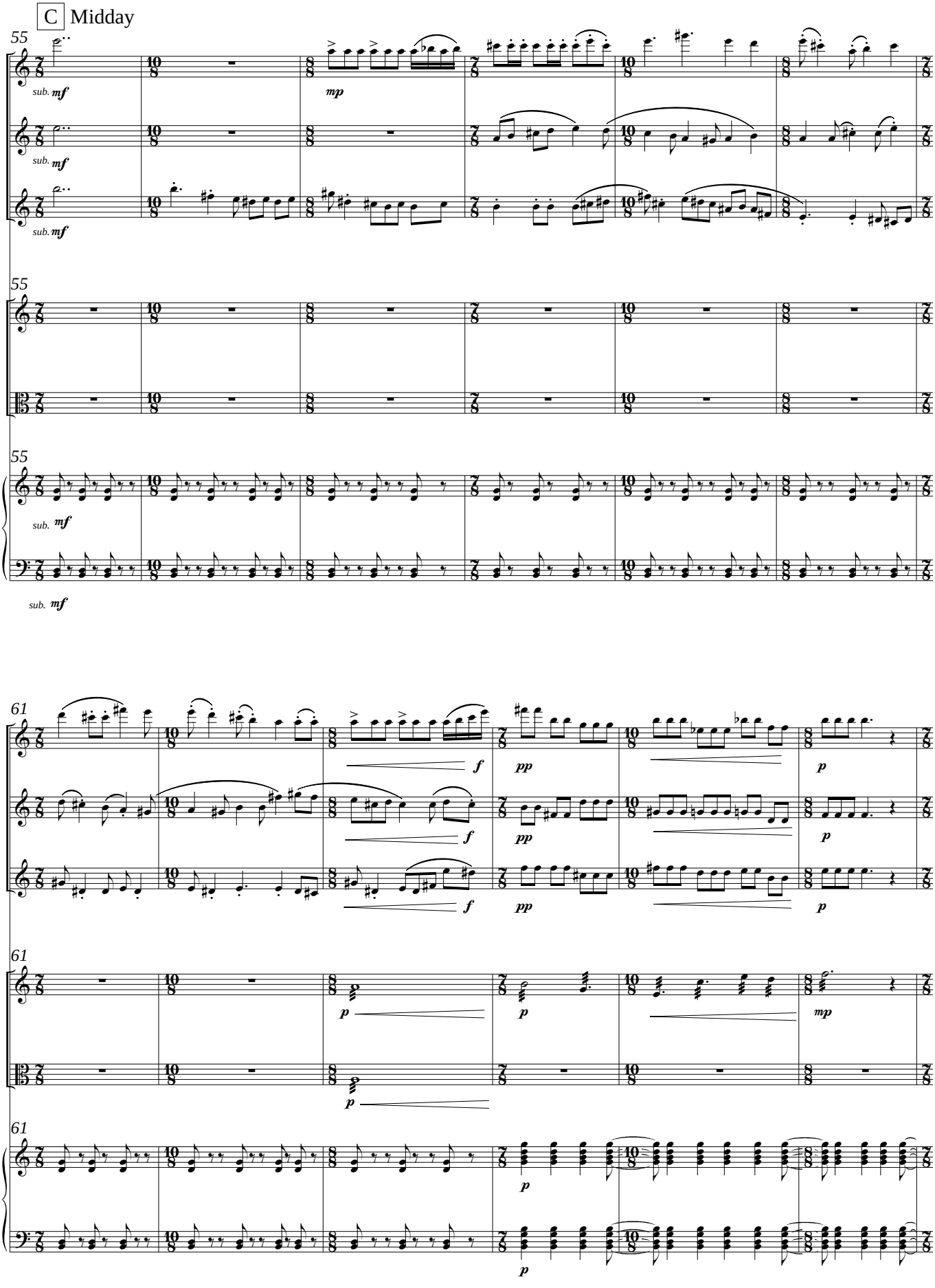
A First Light

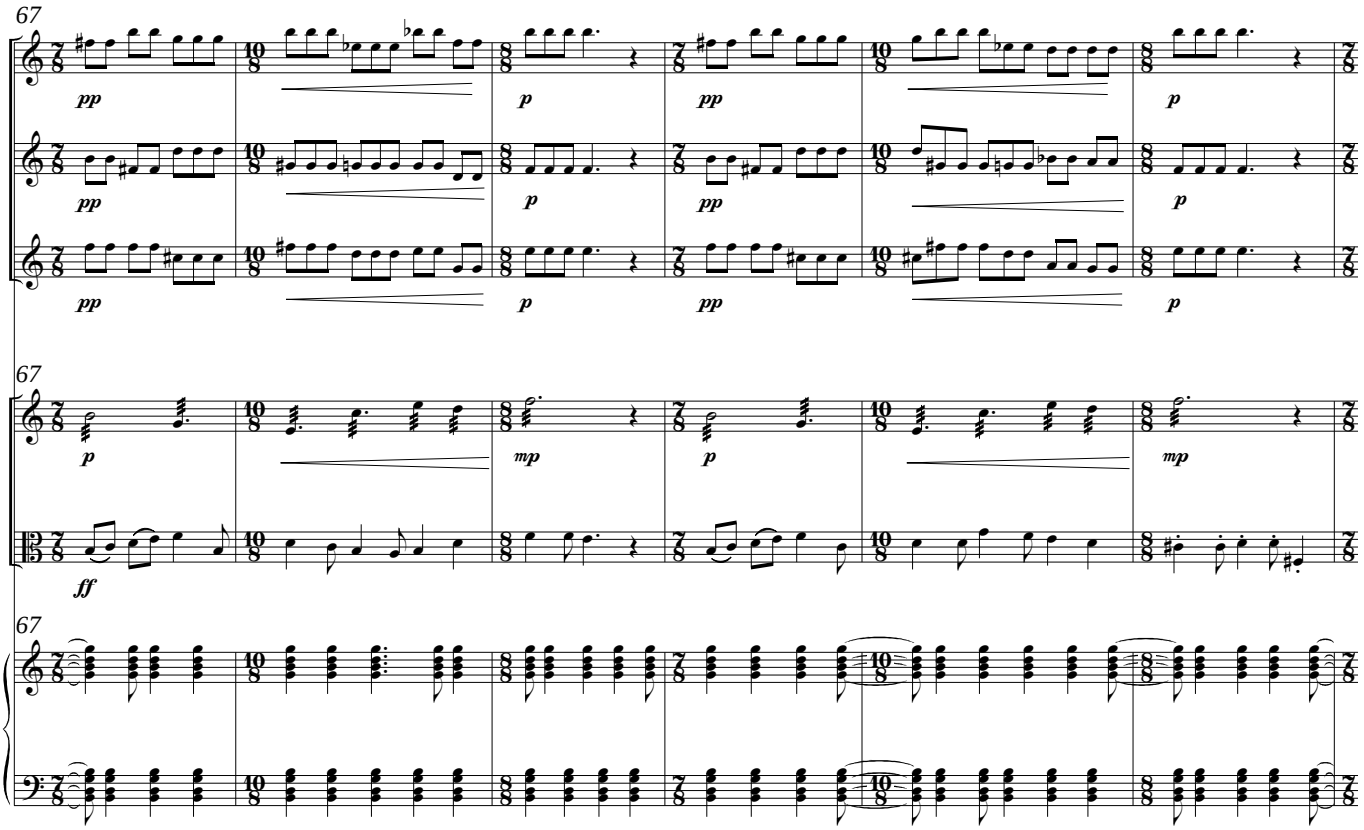


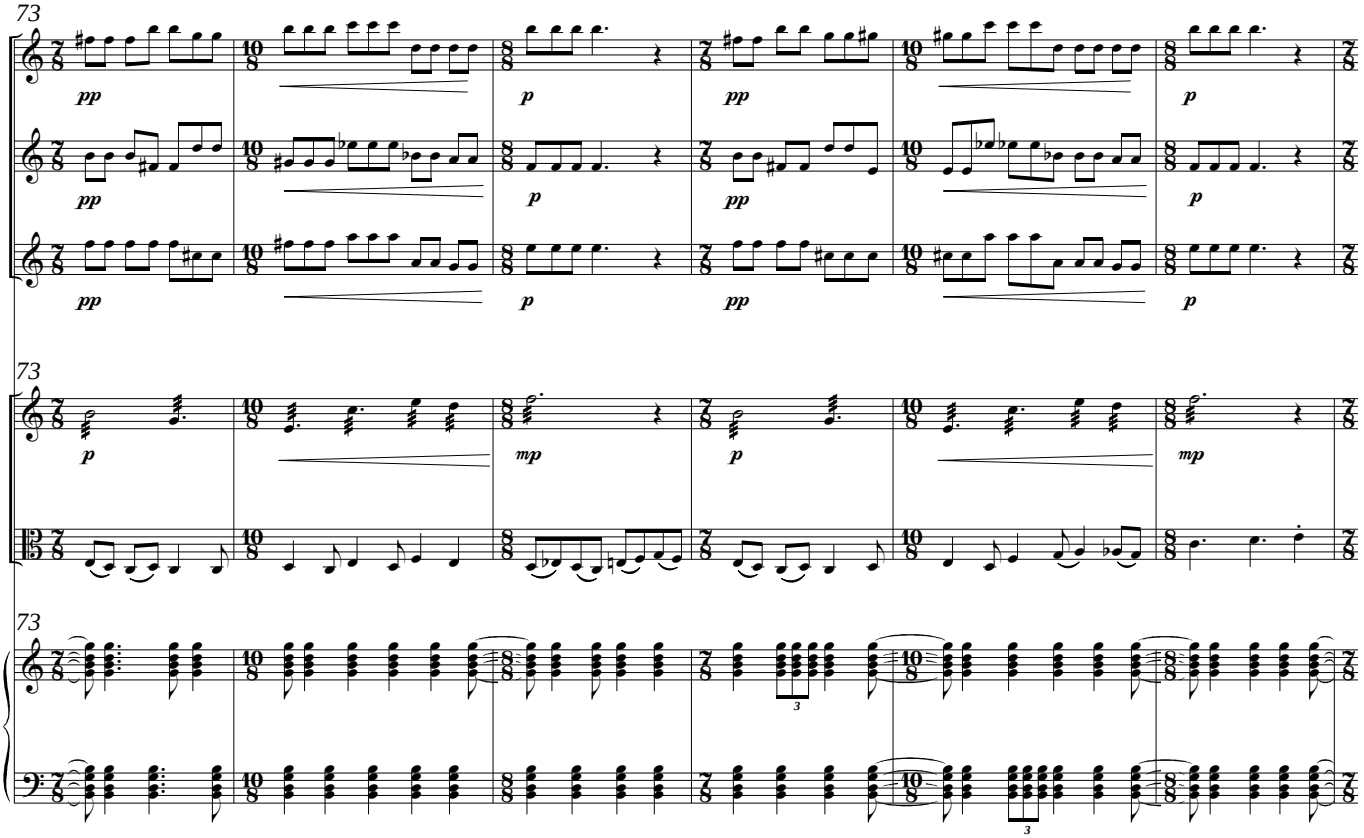

12
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
sub. pp
sub. pp
sub. pp
12
Vln.
Vla.
f
12
Mrb.
18
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
p
18
pizz.
arco
Vln.
p
cresc.
pizz.
arco
Vla.
p
cresc.
18
Mrb.
mp

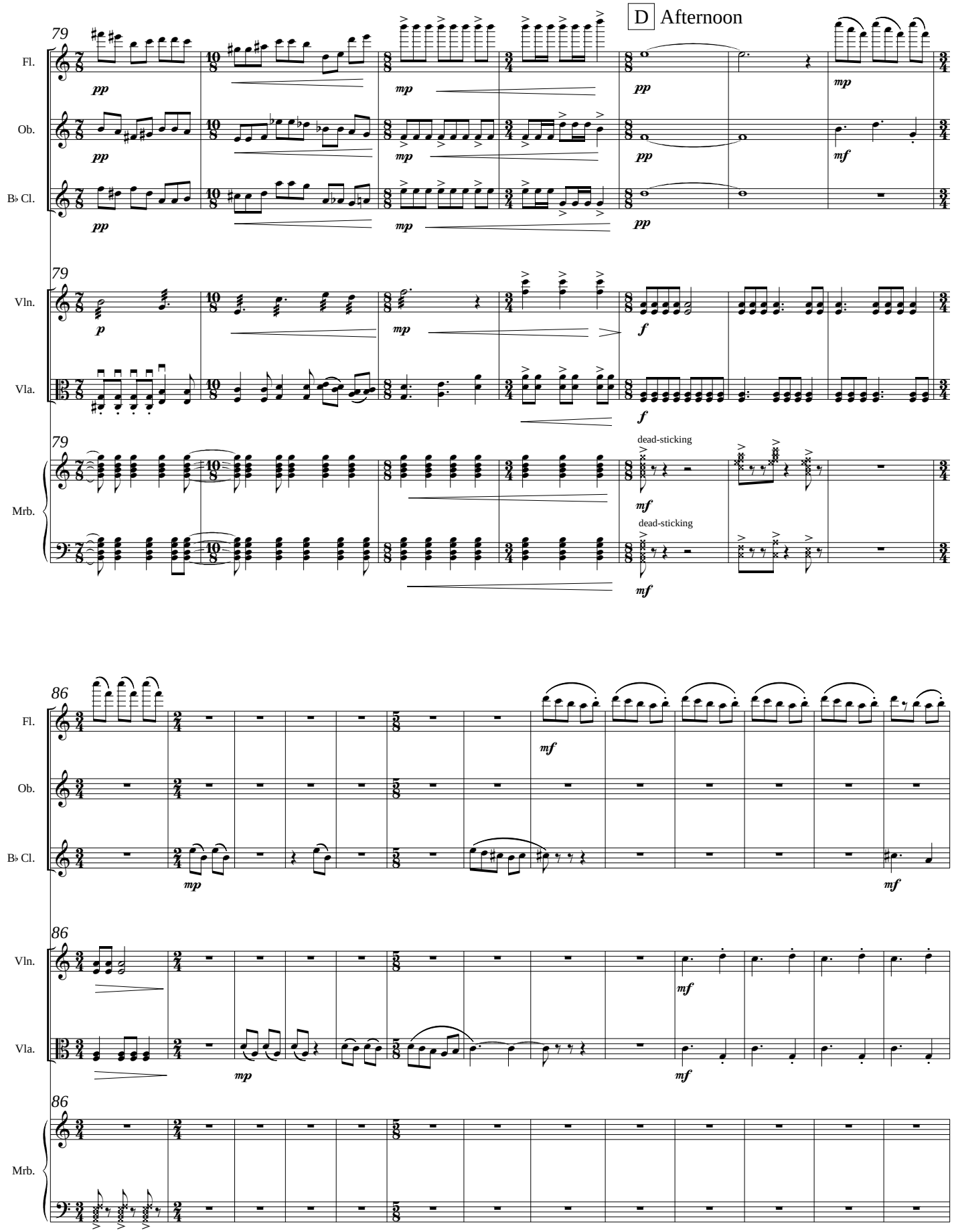

B Morning
27
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
pp
mp
mf
36
p
mp
mf
3

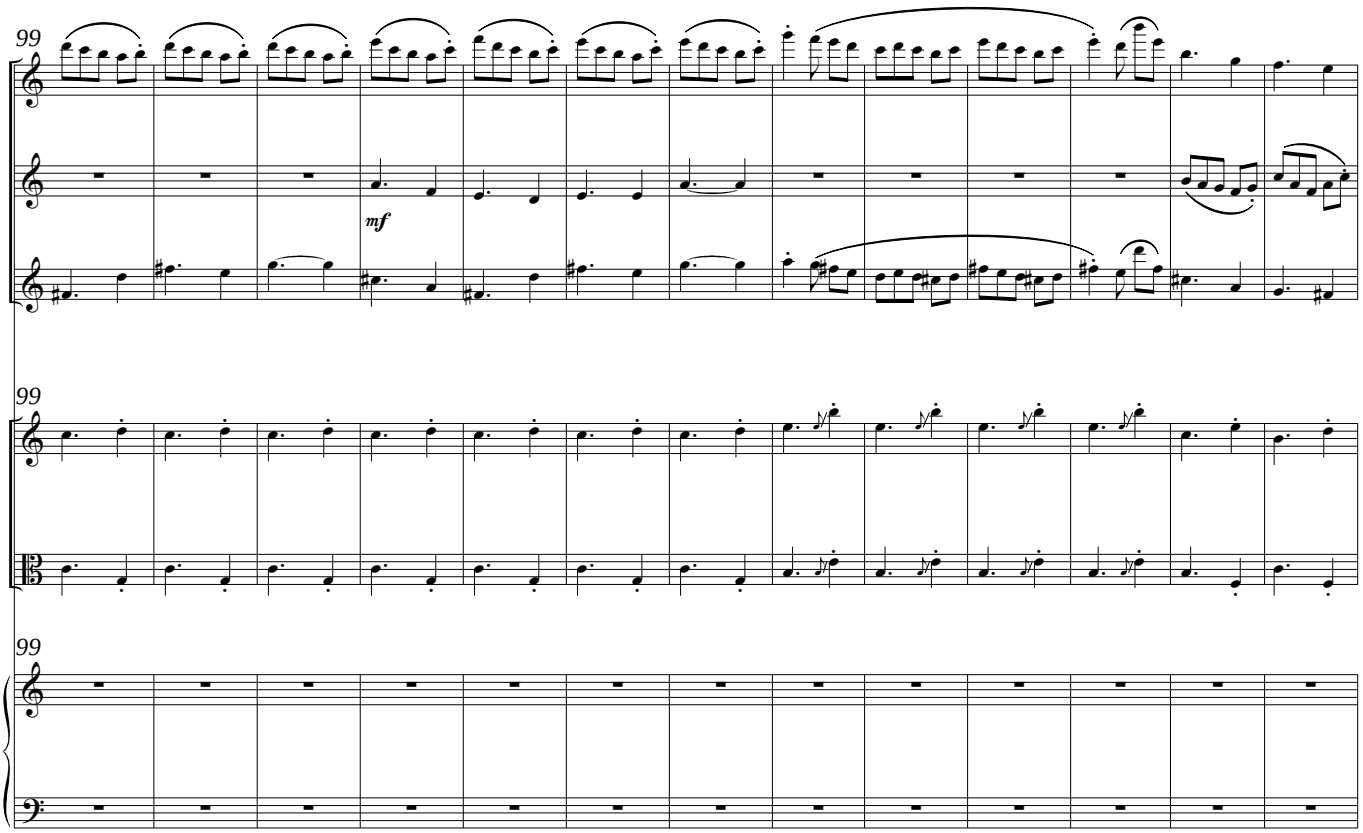

42
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
sub. pp
48
niente
mp
ff
p

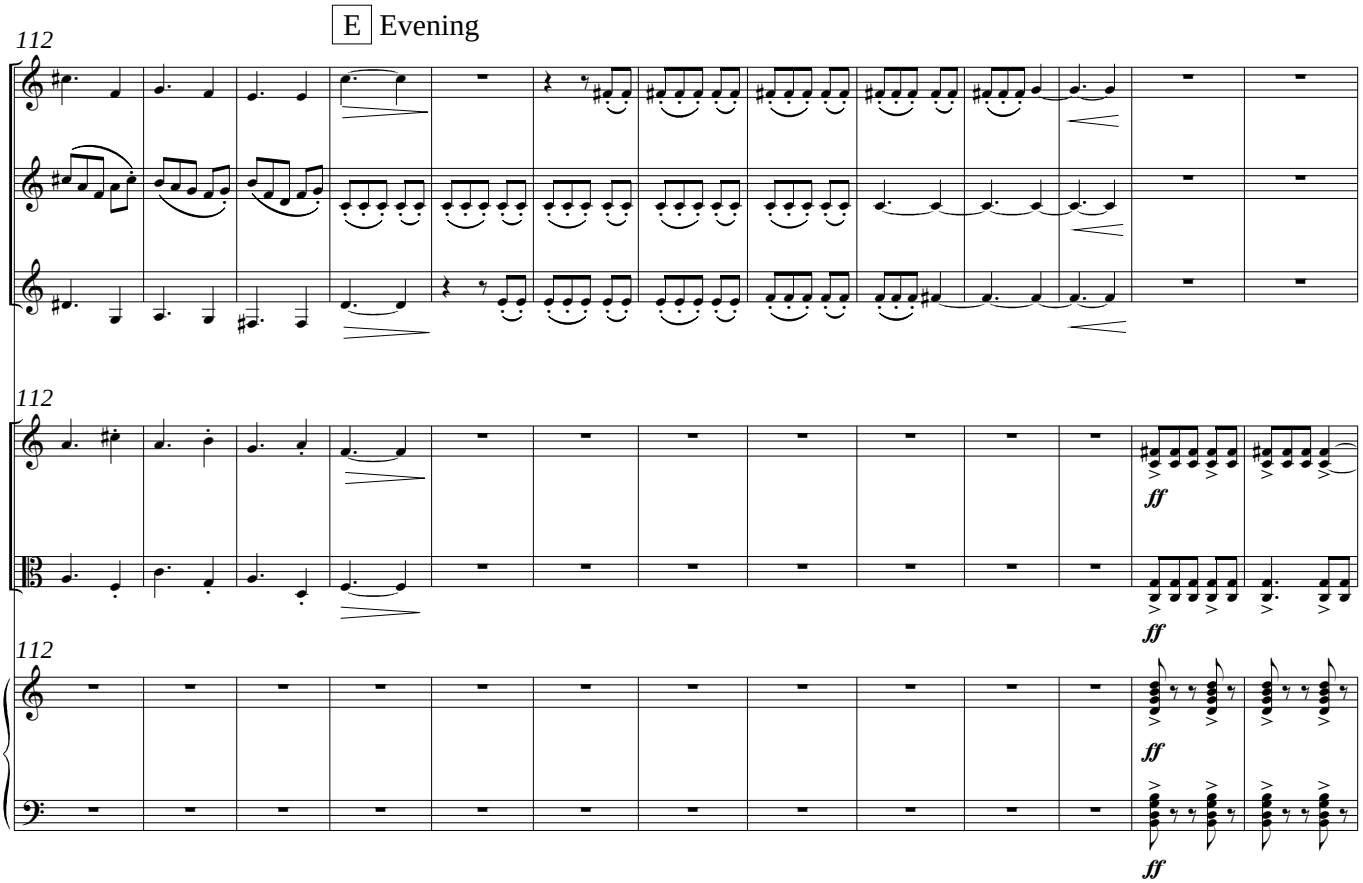

C Midday
55
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
sub. mf
mp
61
f
pp
p
mp

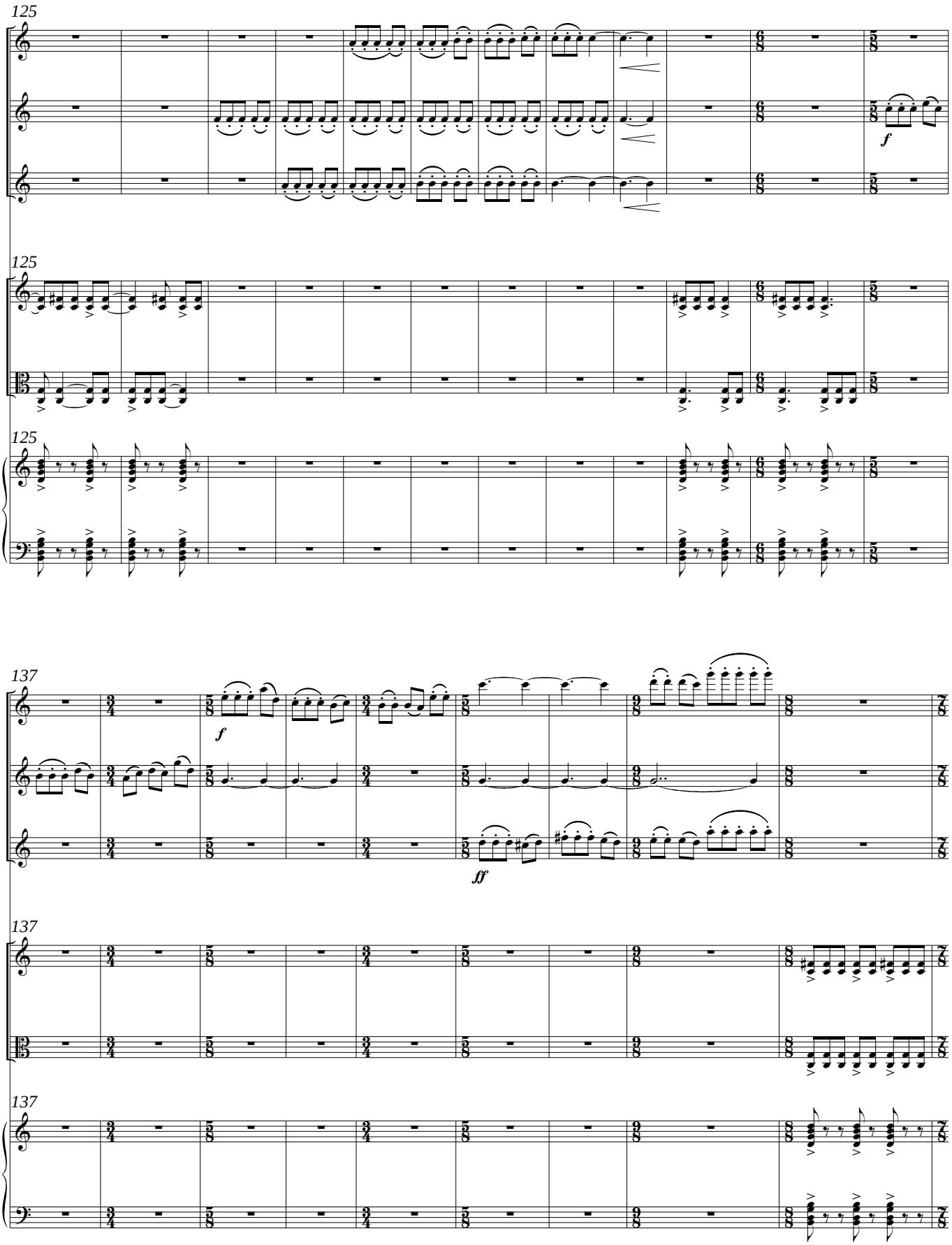

67
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.

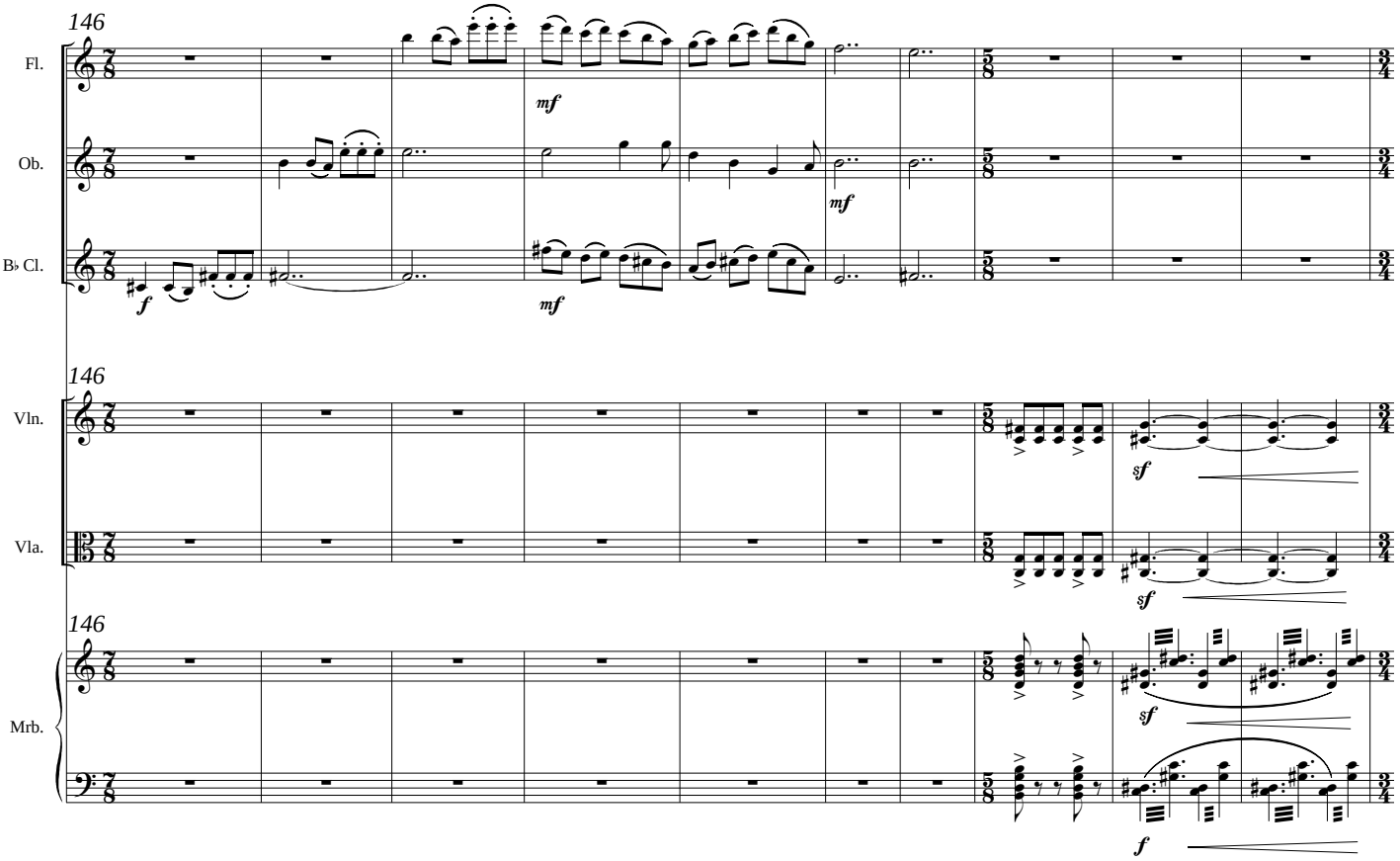

73
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.

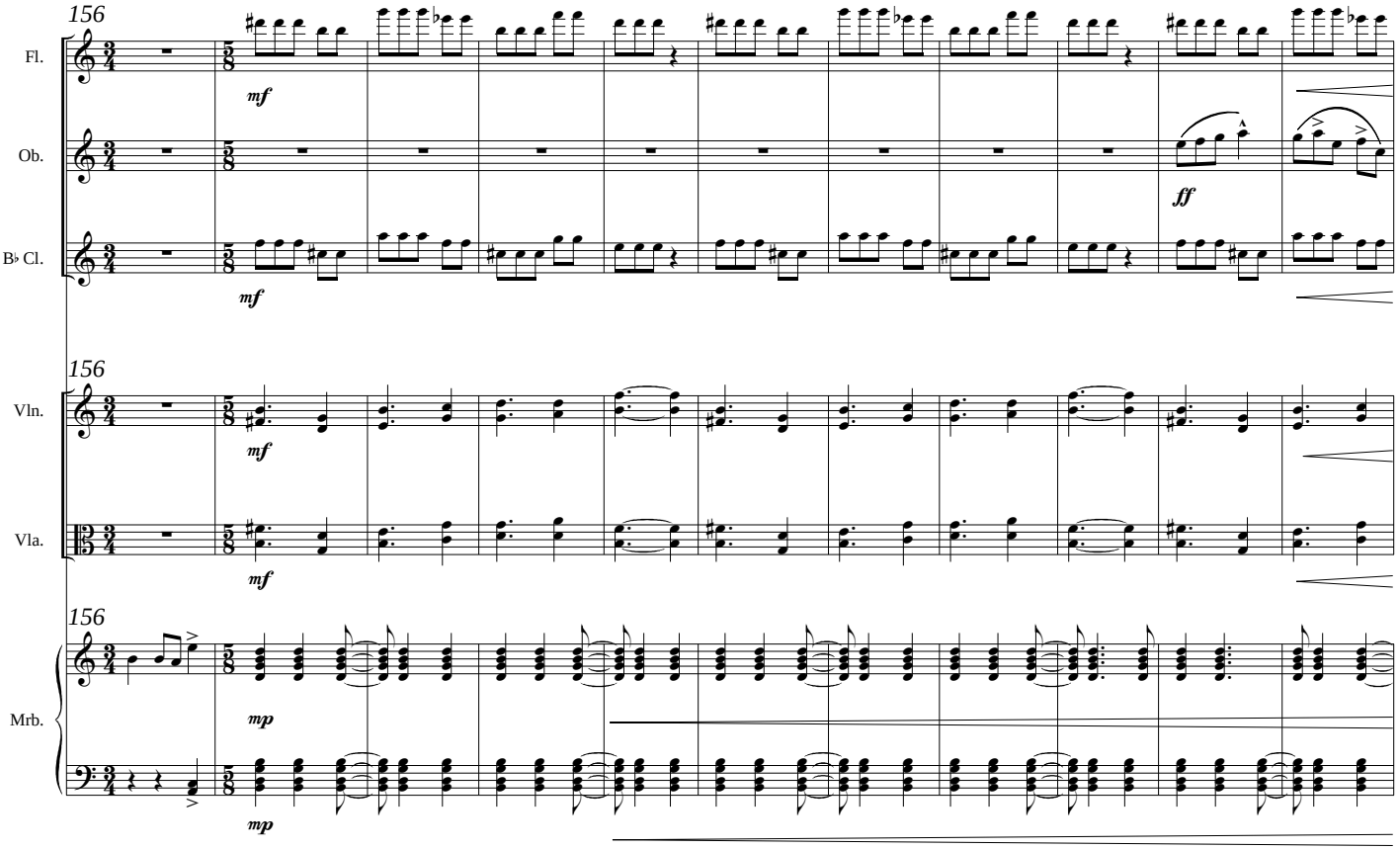

D Afternoon
79
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
dead-sticking
dead-sticking
86


99
Fl.
Ob.
mf
B♭ Cl.
99
Vln.
Vla.
99
Mrb.


E Evening
112
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
112
Vln.
ff
Vla.
ff
112
Mrb.
ff
ff


125
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
f
137
ff


146
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
mf
f
sf


156
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
mf
ff
mp

F Nightfall

167

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

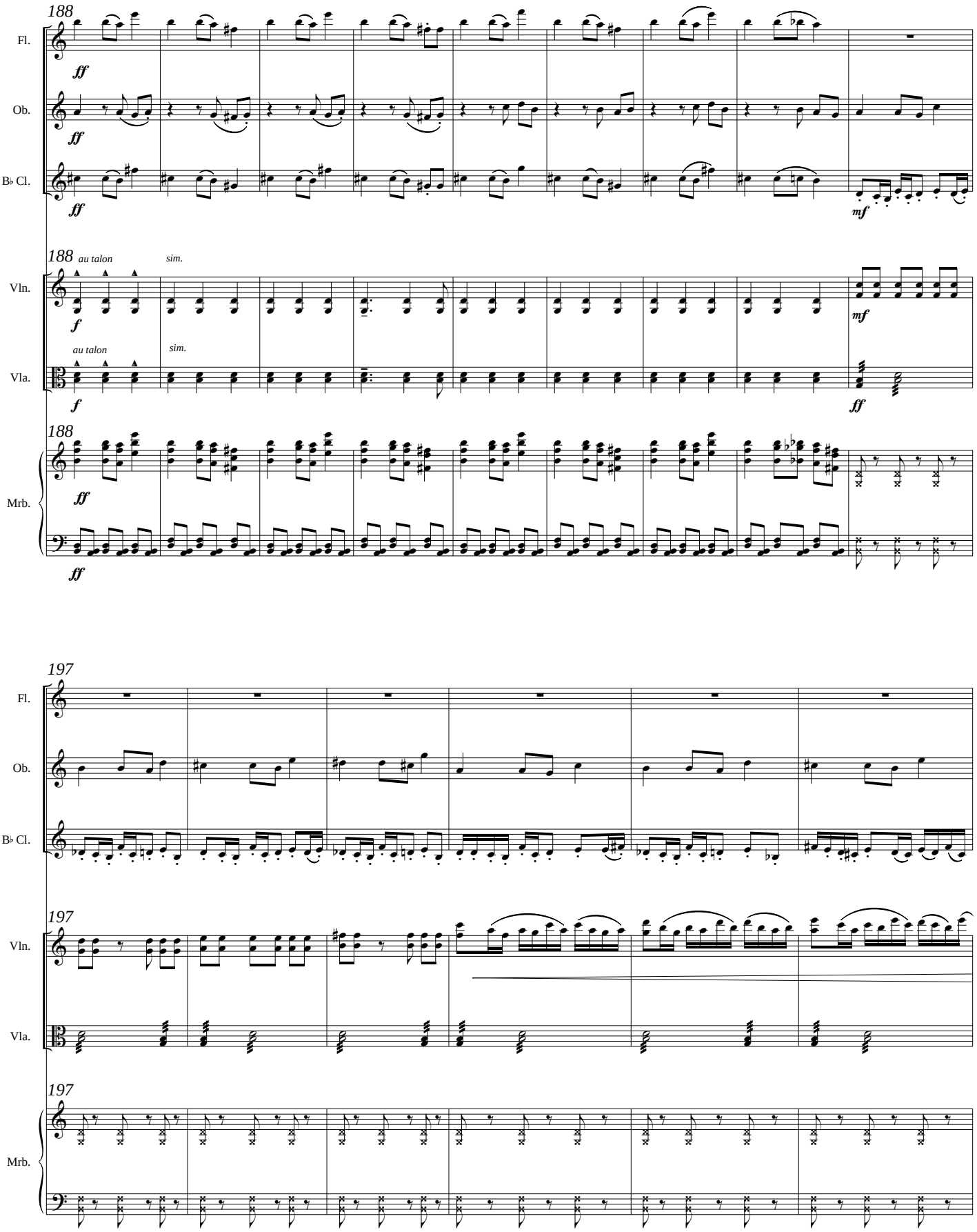
Vln.

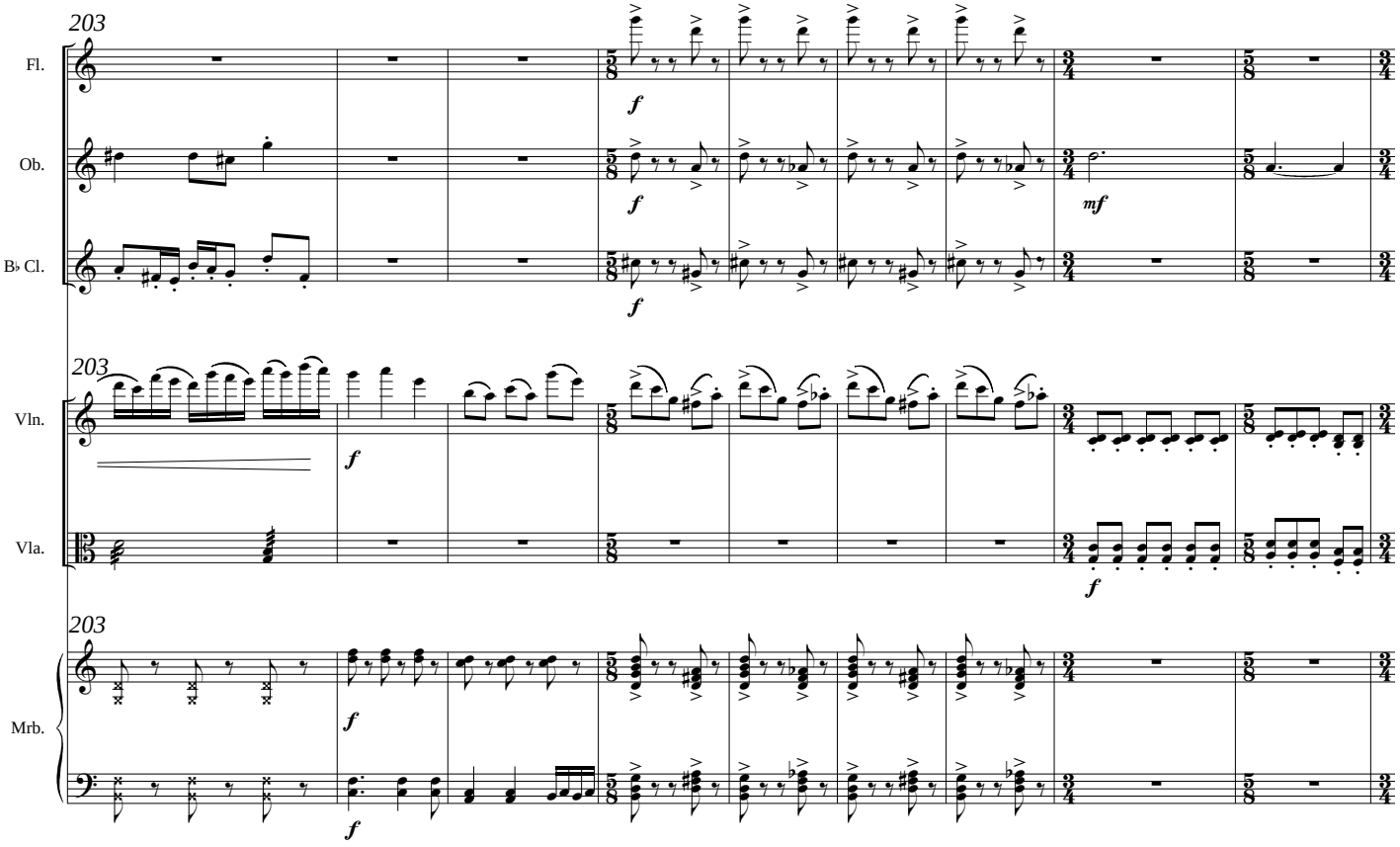
Vla.

Mrb.

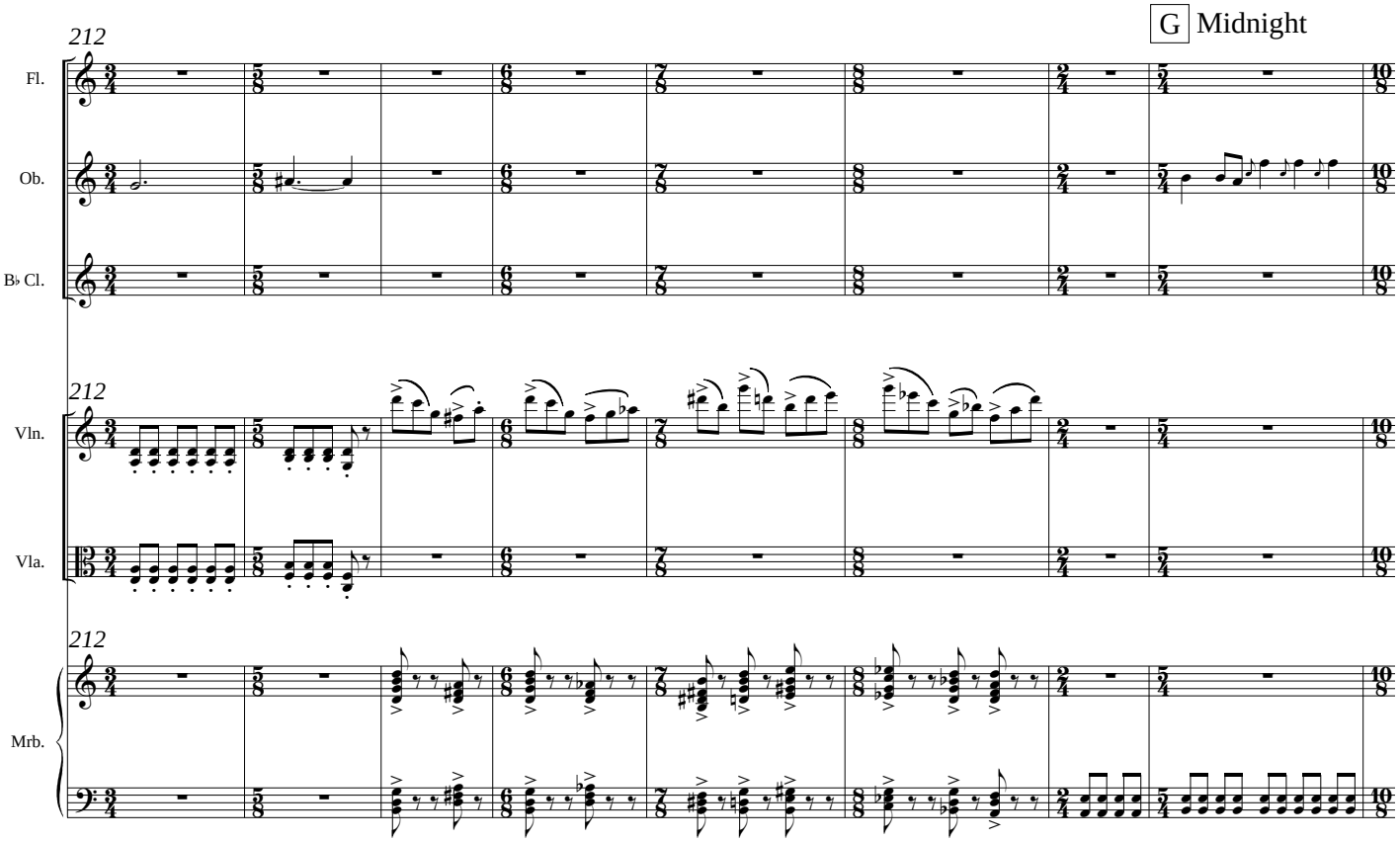
177

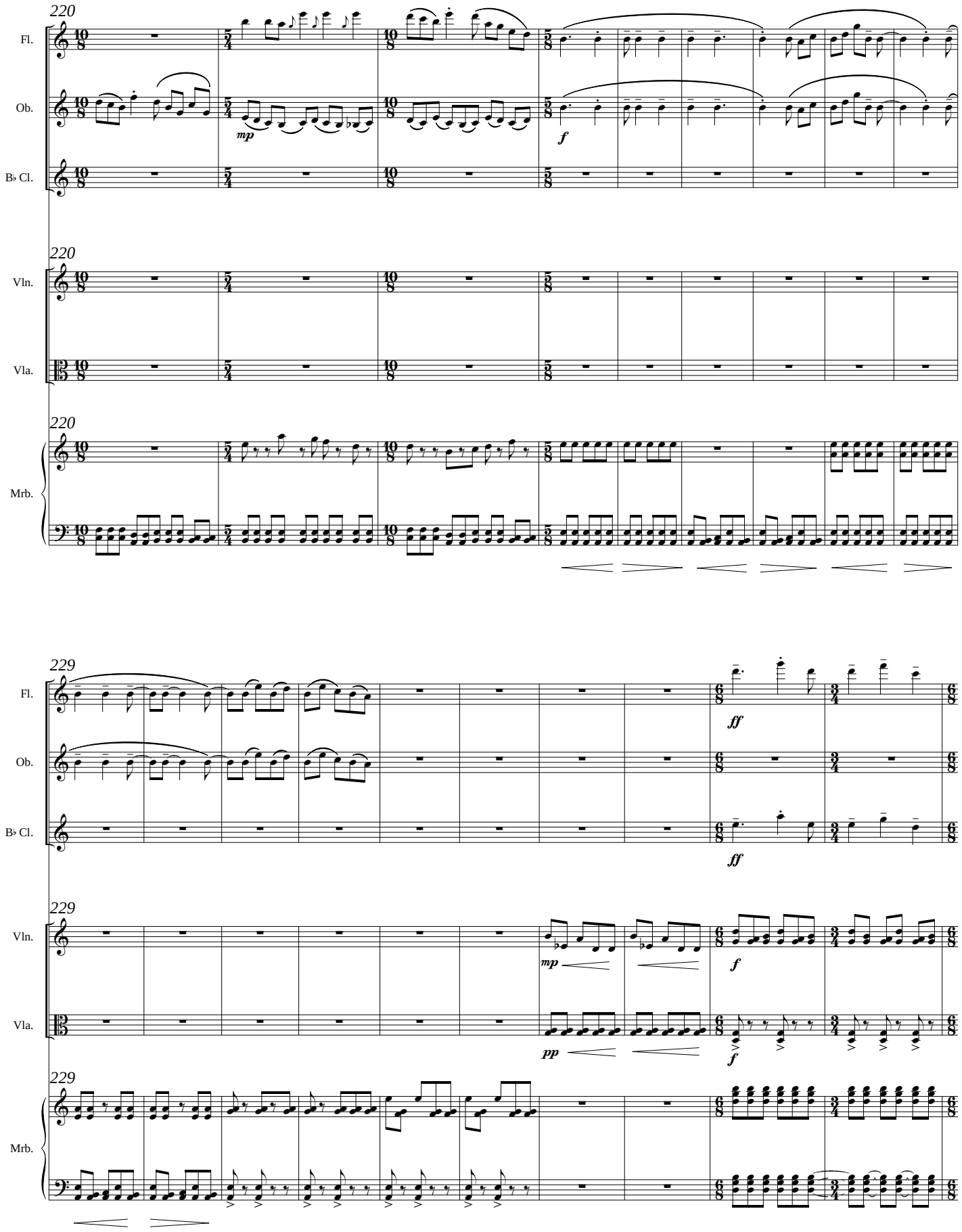
177 sim.

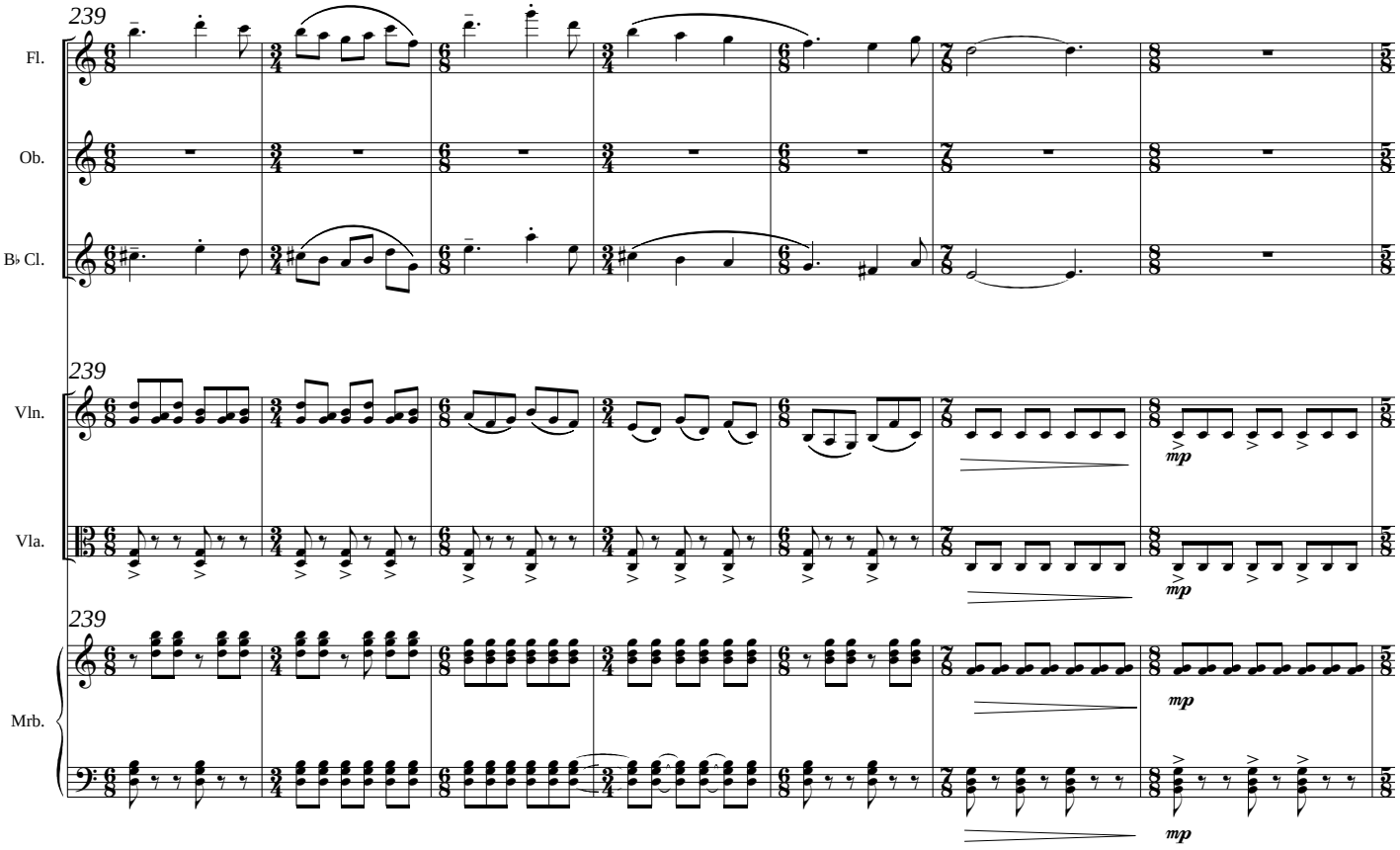

188
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
au talon
sim.
197



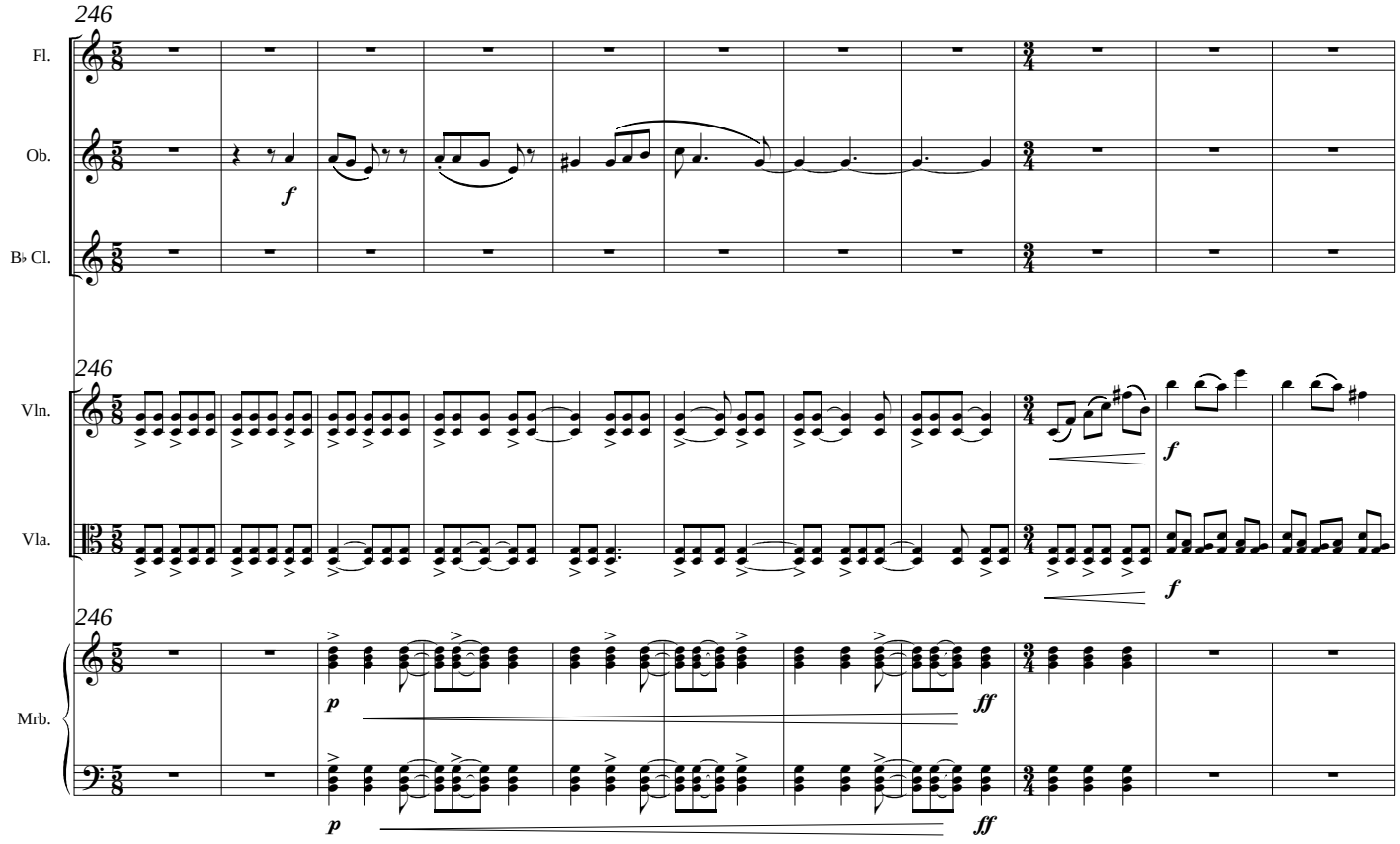
G Midnight

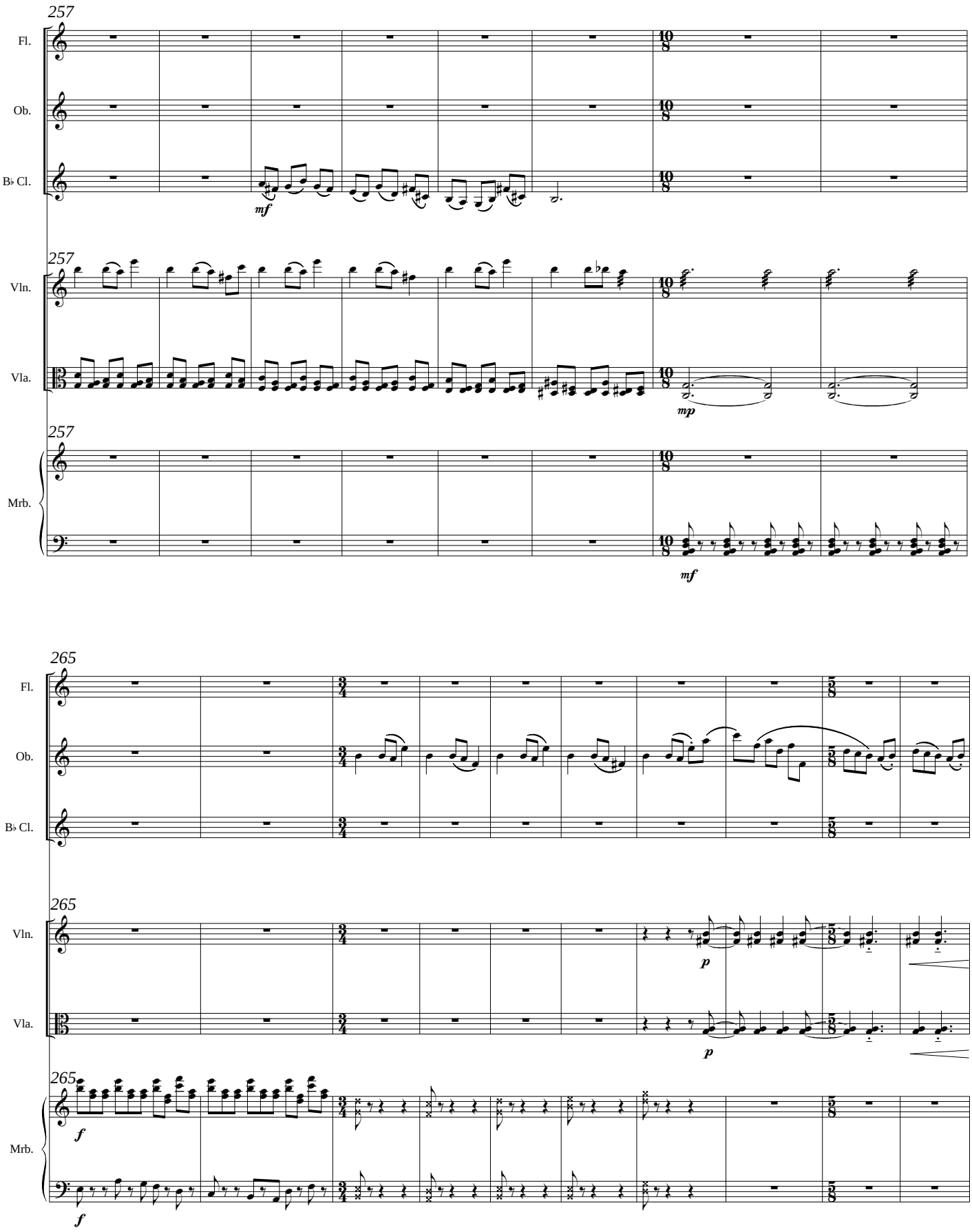


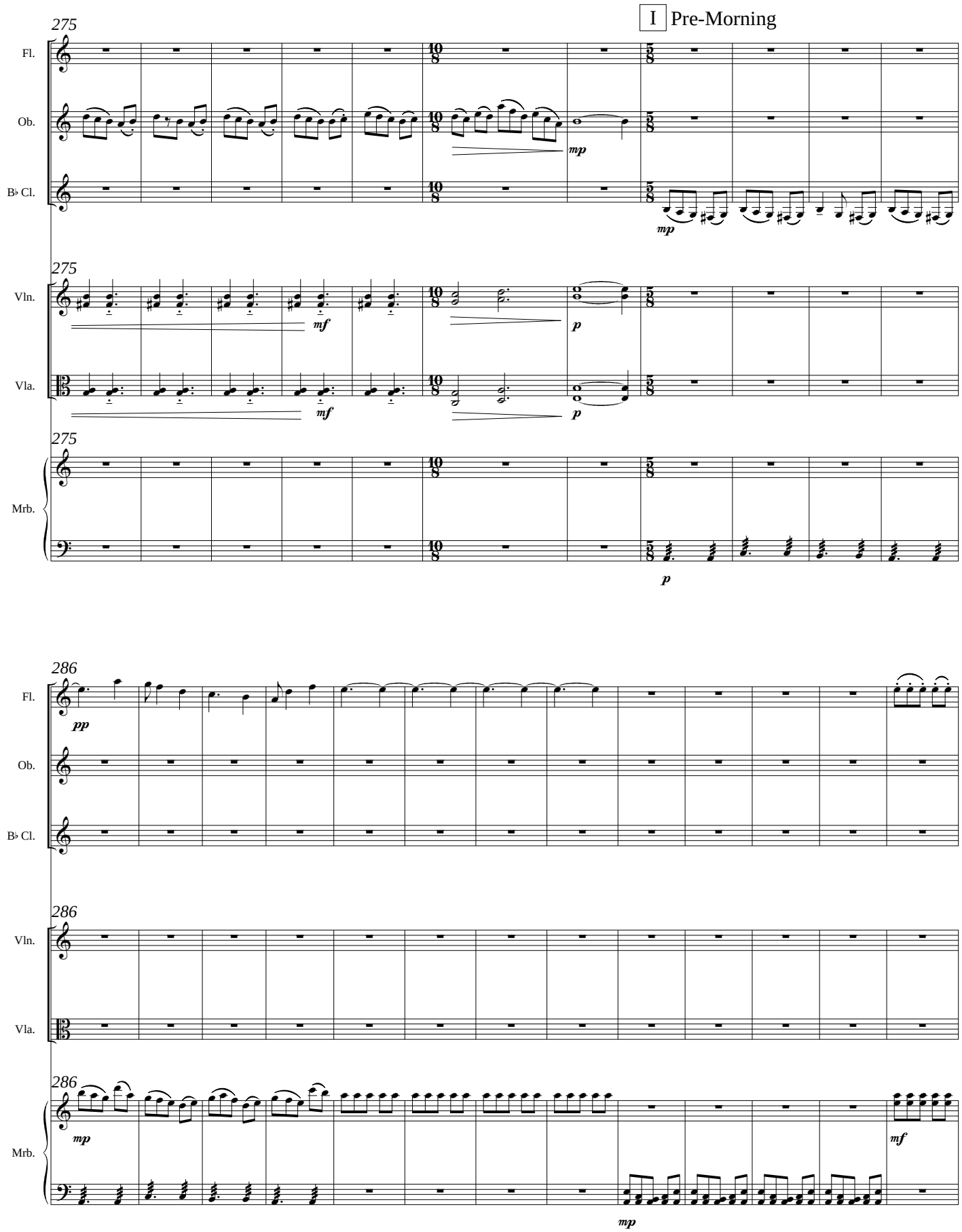

220
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
mp
f
220
Vln.
Vla.
220
Mrb.
229
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
ff
ff
229
Vln.
Vla.
mp
f
pp
f
229
Mrb.

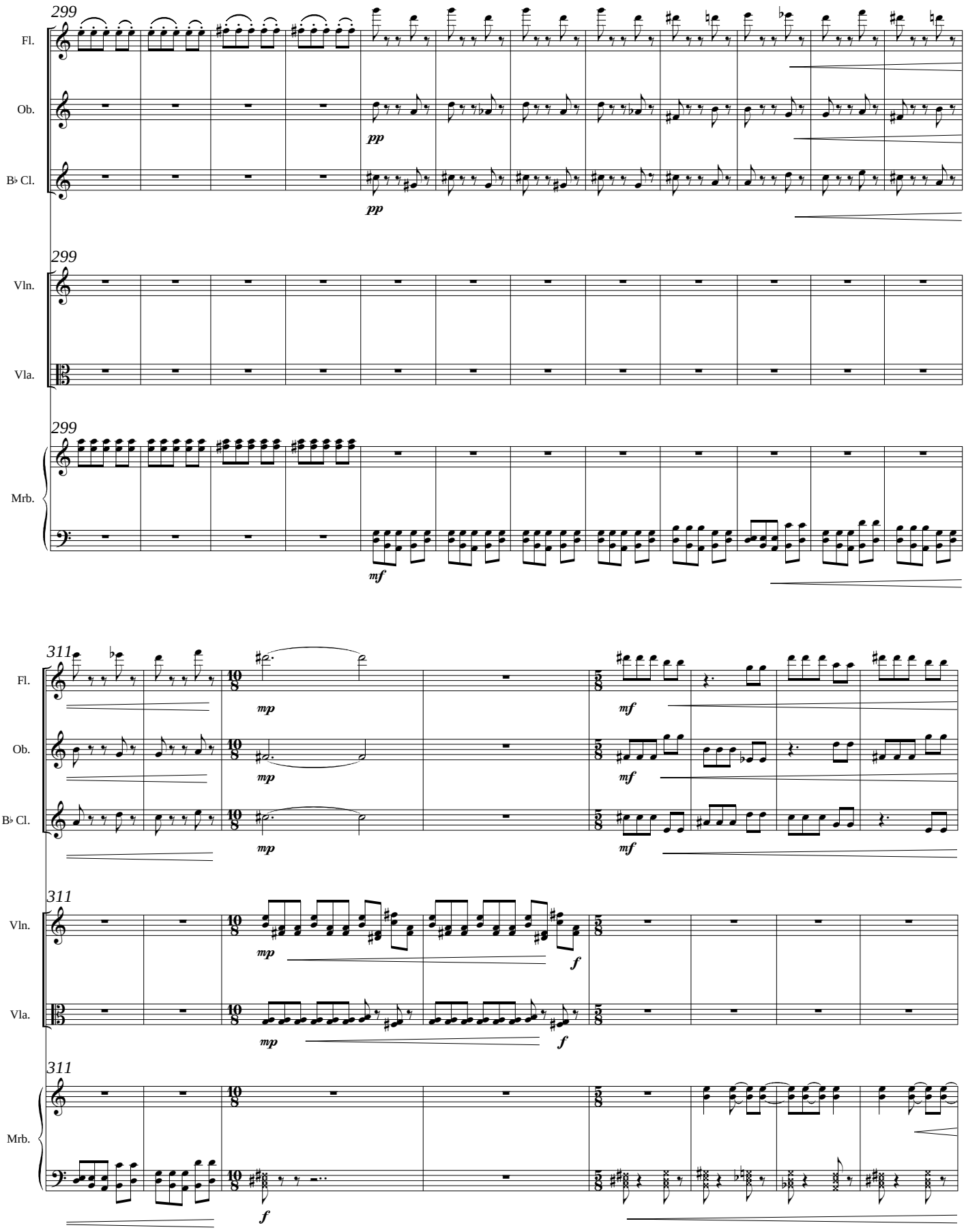

239
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
239
Vln.
Vla.
239
Mrb.
mp
mp
mp

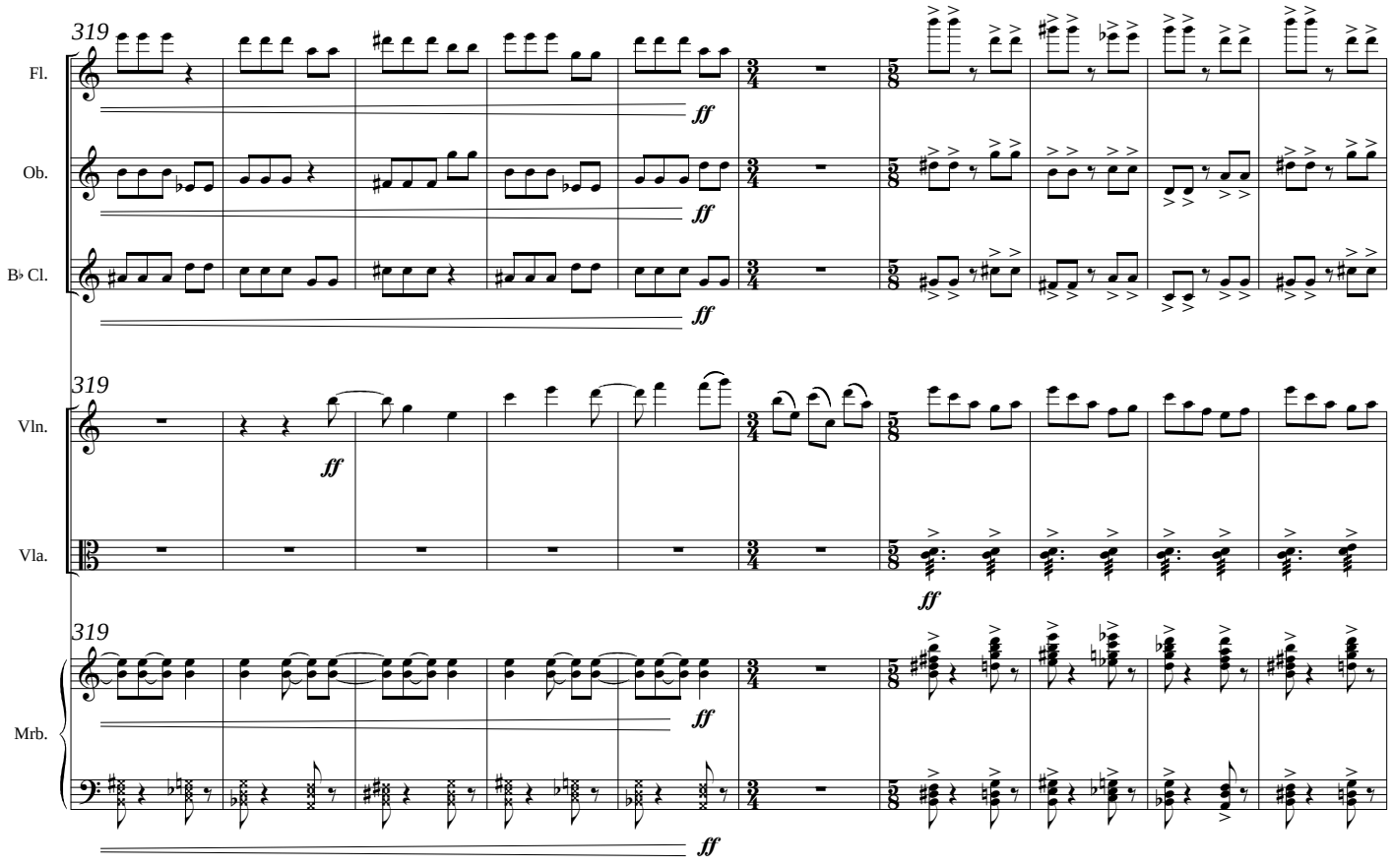
H Late Night

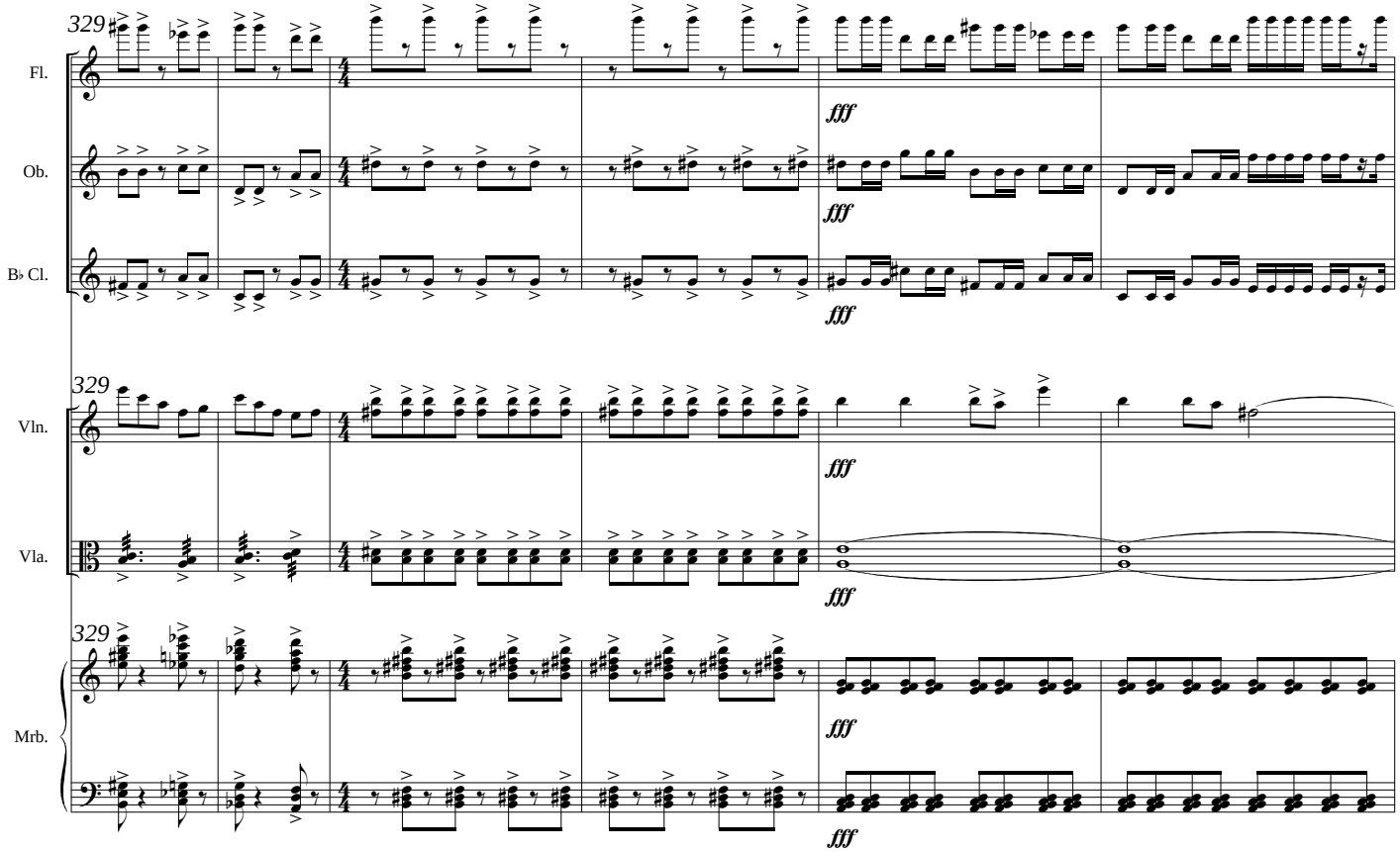

246
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
246
Vln.
Vla.
246
Mrb.
f
f
f
p
ff
p
ff

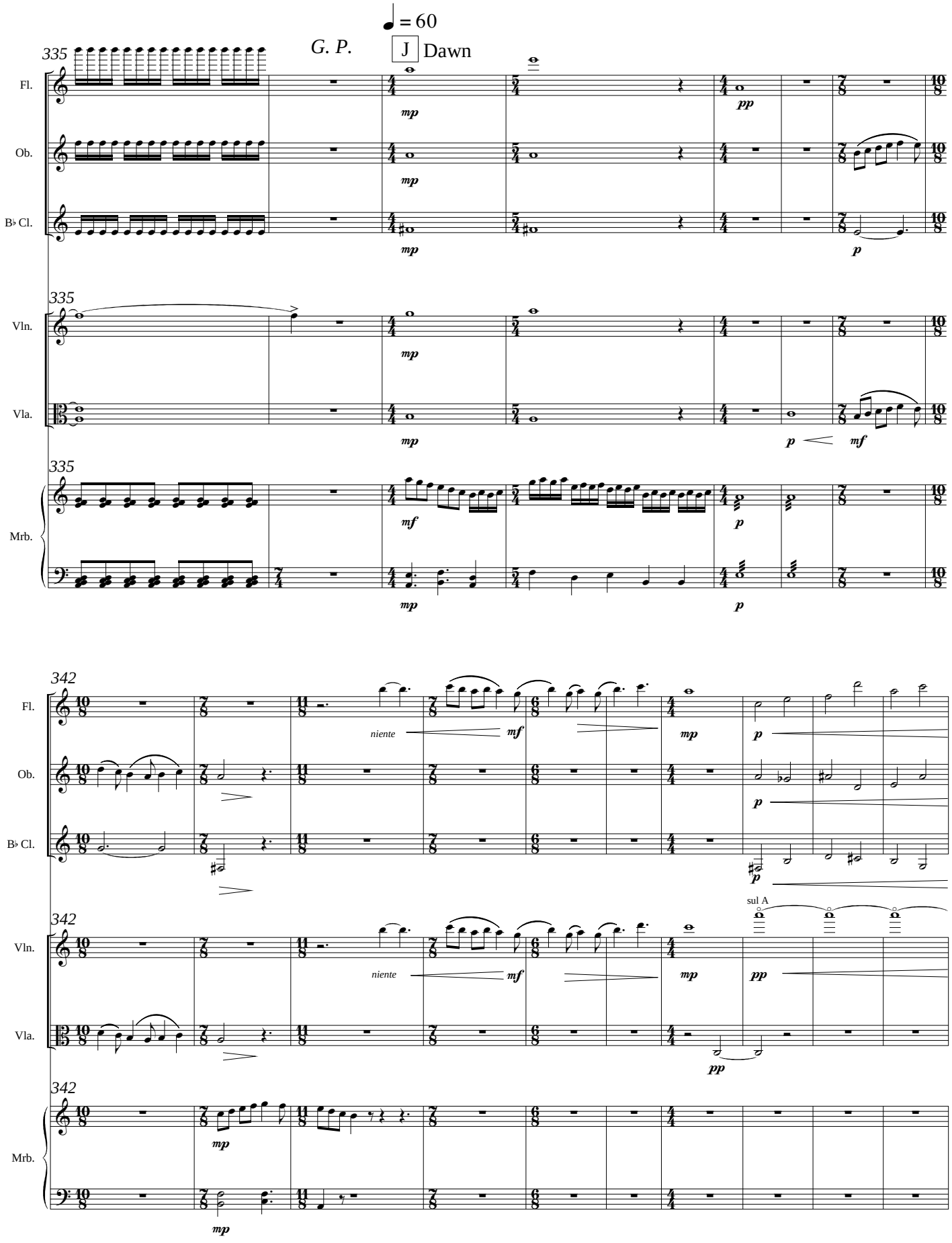

257
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
mf
257
Vln.
Vla.
mp
257
Mrb.
mf
265
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
265
Vln.
Vla.
p
p
265
Mrb.
f
f

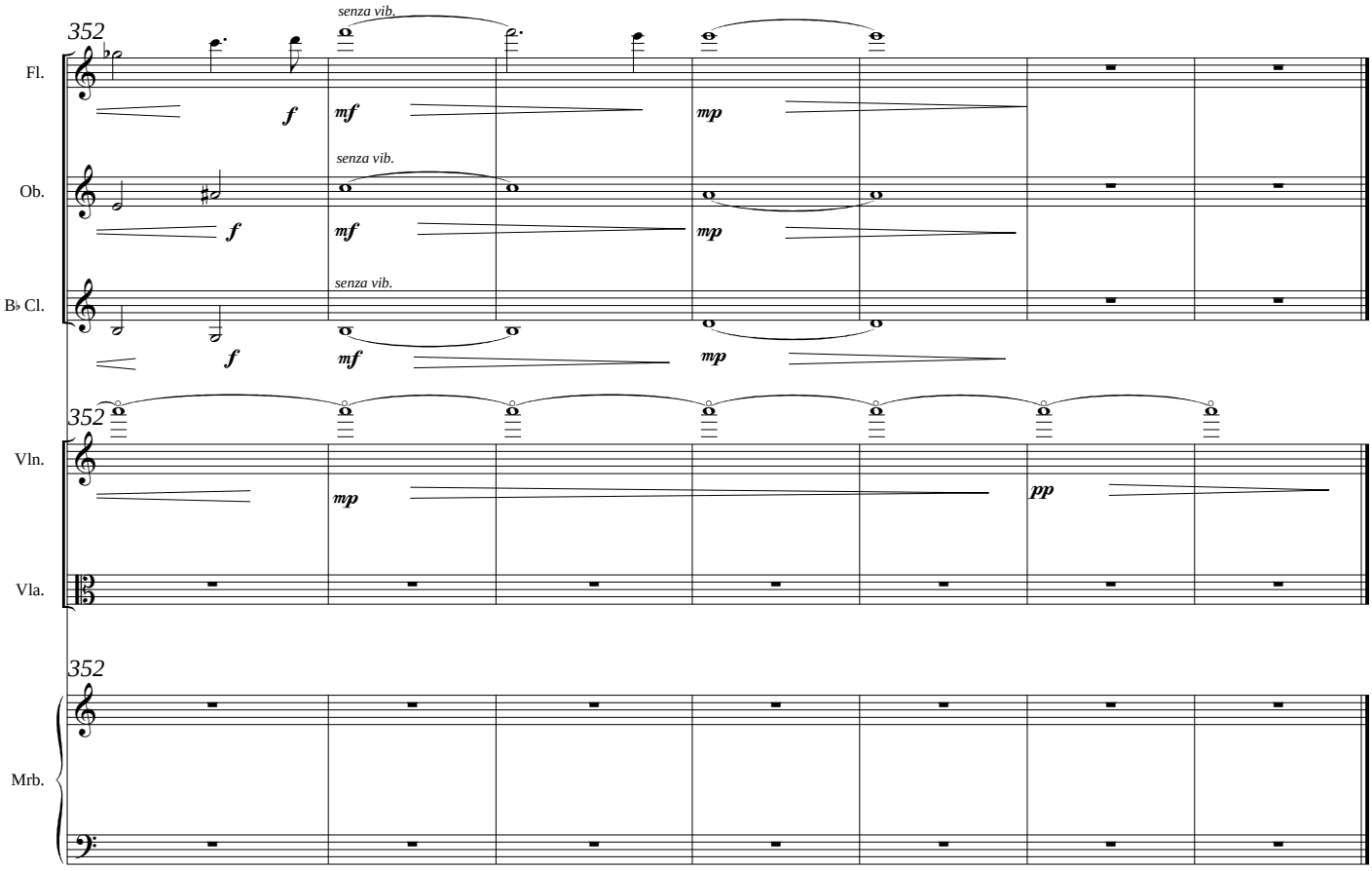

I Pre-Morning
275
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
mp
mf
p
286
pp
mp
mf


299
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
pp
pp
299
Vln.
Vla.
299
Mrb.
mf
311
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
mp
mp
mp
mf
mf
mf
311
Vln.
Vla.
mp
mp
f
f
311
Mrb.
f


319
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
ff


329
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
fff


♩ = 60
G. P.
J Dawn
335
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
mp
pp
p
mf
342
niente
sul A


352
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Mrb.
senza vib.
f
mf
mp
pp