Night Music

Jack Parton

2017

This music is a response to a particular production of Shakespere's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the first I'd ever seen in which Oberon and Titania and the rest of the fairy world are portrayed, I felt far more fittingly, as capricious, arrogant, belligerant creatures for whom the intrusion of these mortals into their woods was cause for aggression. This feels truer to an older sense: fairies in Shakespere's day were forest creatures to be taken seriously, capable of tremendous deviousness, often in the name of caprice, on those who come upon them. The woods are meant to be a frightening place where it might not be unheardof to find one's self magically transformed and as often as not for the far worse than for the better, and where the lovers flee to escape each other. It was refreshing to see Puck be genuinely astonished when Oberon asks him to annoint a mortal's eyes to assist a lady love, and even then still expects some entertaining mischeif and is understandably perplexed when Oberon scolds him for mangling the assignment. The woods are not meant to be romanticized, although that is the final outcome of the play; they are meant to present a "darkest hour" scenario, a terror and tribulation, from which the lovers emerge transformed and confirmed.

Hence NIGHT MUSIC is an impression of those denizens of the Athenian woods.

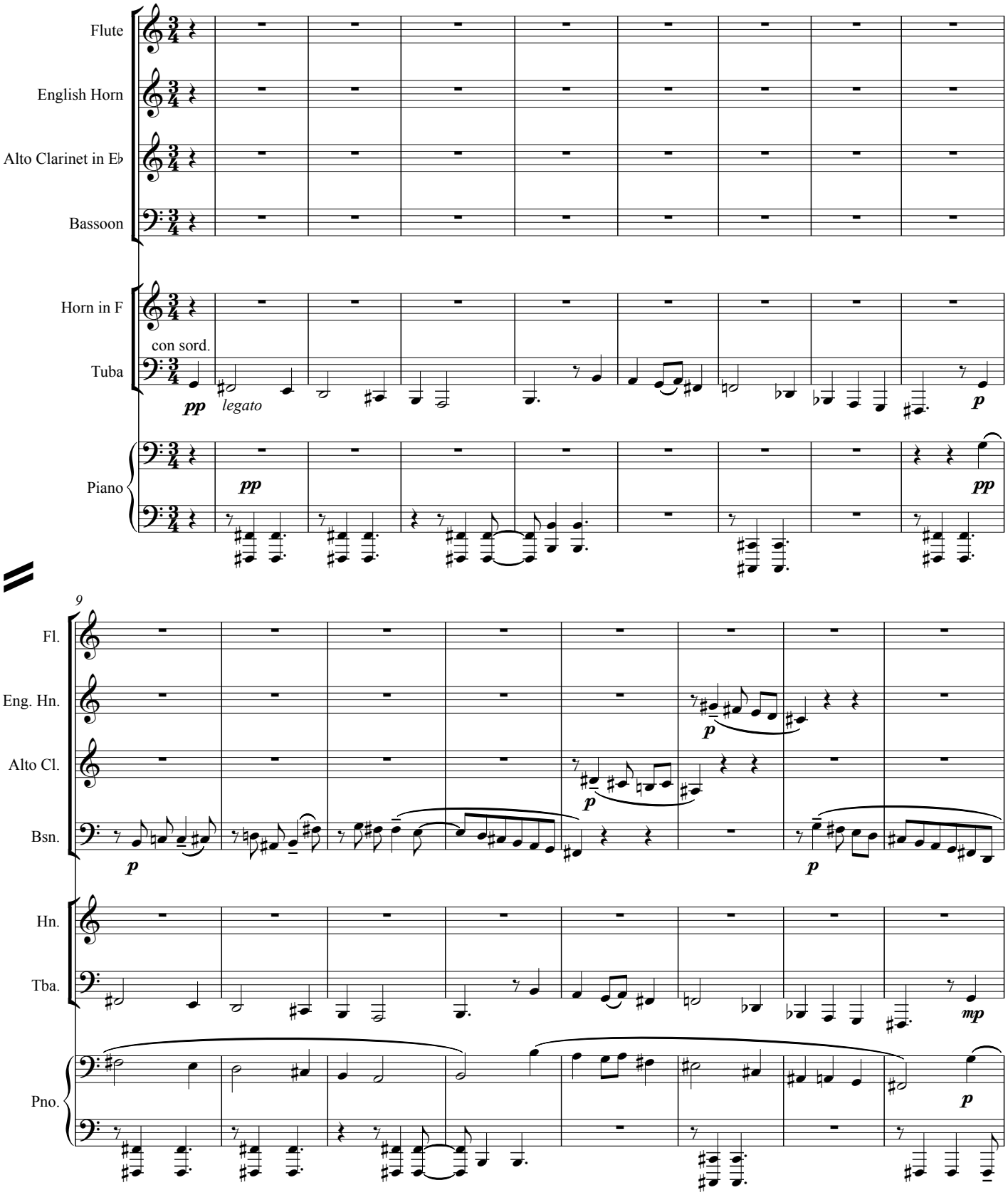
An initial version of this work was pushed to completion for entry into the 2011 Barlow Competition, which asked the composer to demonstrate skills writing for winds, and particularly for a woodwind quintet, as the grand prize was to be a commission for a new such quintet. I am far from the only composer to find that particular ensemble challenging to maneuver and to balance; however, as demonstrated by such works as Poulenc's Sextet and septets by Stanford and Parry, the addition of just one instrument can even out the sonic hiccups of the quintet. I experimented with this some years ago with a sextet I'd written in student days: being a tubist myself I added a tuba to a standard wind quintet with rather good success. My own theory is that the instruments with the most secure overtone series are in the middle of the ensemble, the horn and especially the oboe; part of the difficulty of maintaining a quintet's intonation is that upper instruments will tend to anchor to the bass to maintain intonation, and the bassoon is not the easiest of bass instruments to tune to. The tuba, having a somewhat richer selection of overtones, provides a much more solid bass for the ensemble. It is true it will require a tubist of some delicacy to play this, but one should bear in mind that the tuba is a remarkably agile instrument, and capable of great gentleness as well as some power; it also with the horn provides the "brass section" for the work. Piano was an easy and obvious foil for all the sustaining wind instruments, providing percussion, contrast, and sparkle. Using the English horn in lieu of an oboe darkens the tone a bit, but it's the use of the alto clarinet in E flat which I think may set this work aside (in perhaps a few senses, alas). Like the English horn the substitution loses the instrument very little range at the top; the alto clarinet easily has most of the same clarino range as the B flat with much the same tone quality, but has an additional fifth of chalumeau at the bottom of its range which has far more of that wonderful chocolaty sound of the bass clarinet. It's as agile an instrument as any of its brethern, and may well be the most unjustly neglected instrument in the family.

Duration: approx. 12 minutes.

Night Music

JACK PARTON
2017

I. Chaconne ♩ = ca. 66



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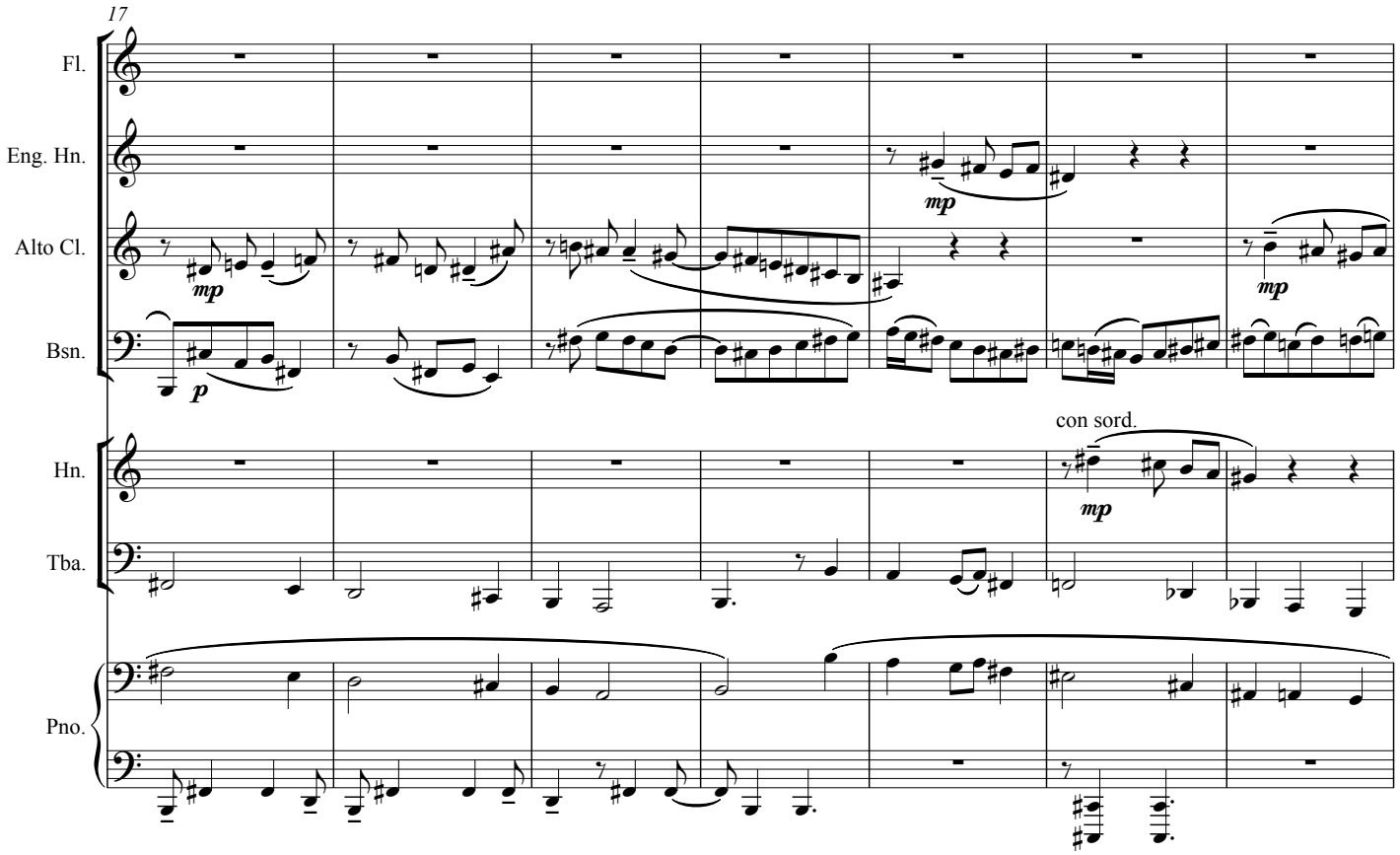
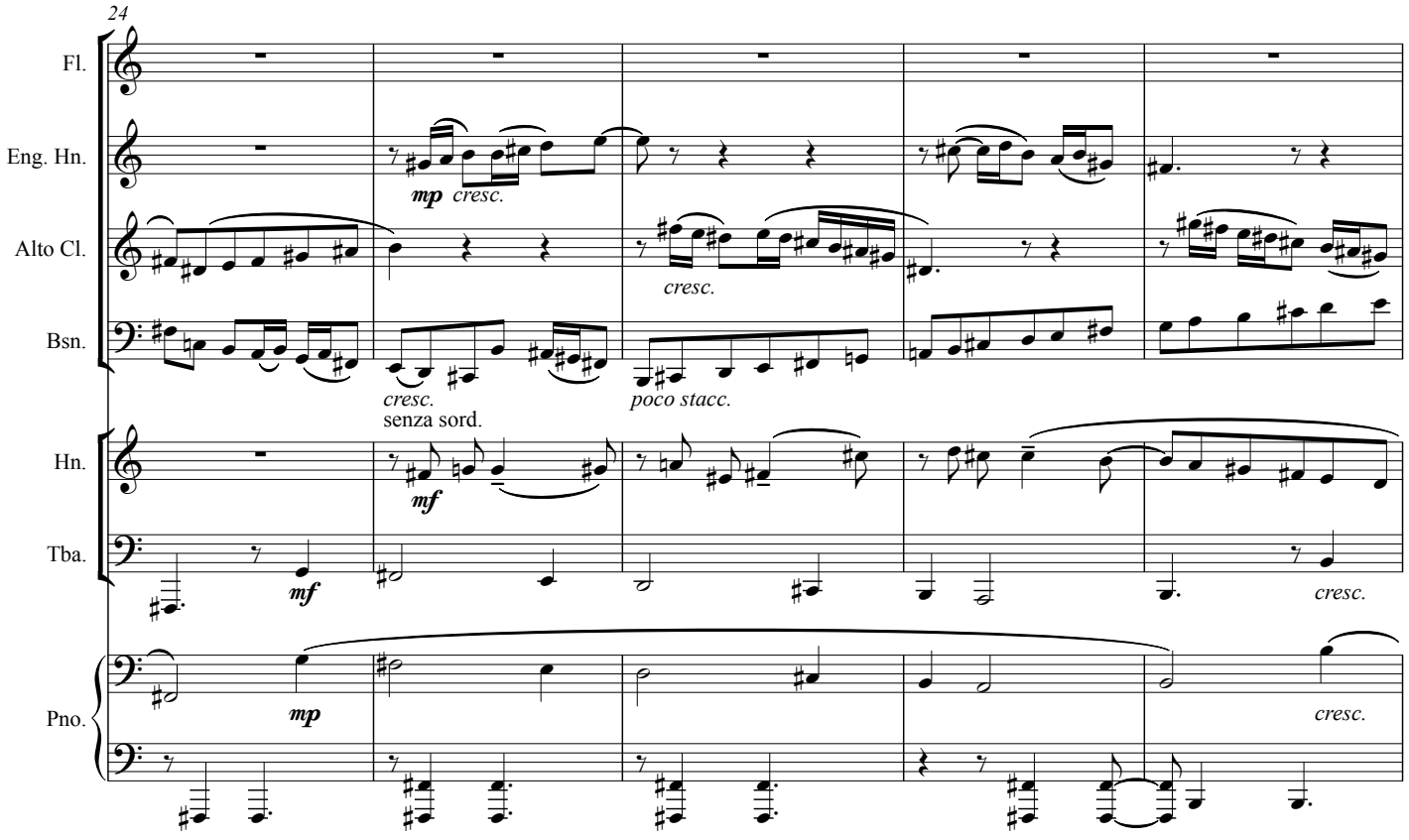
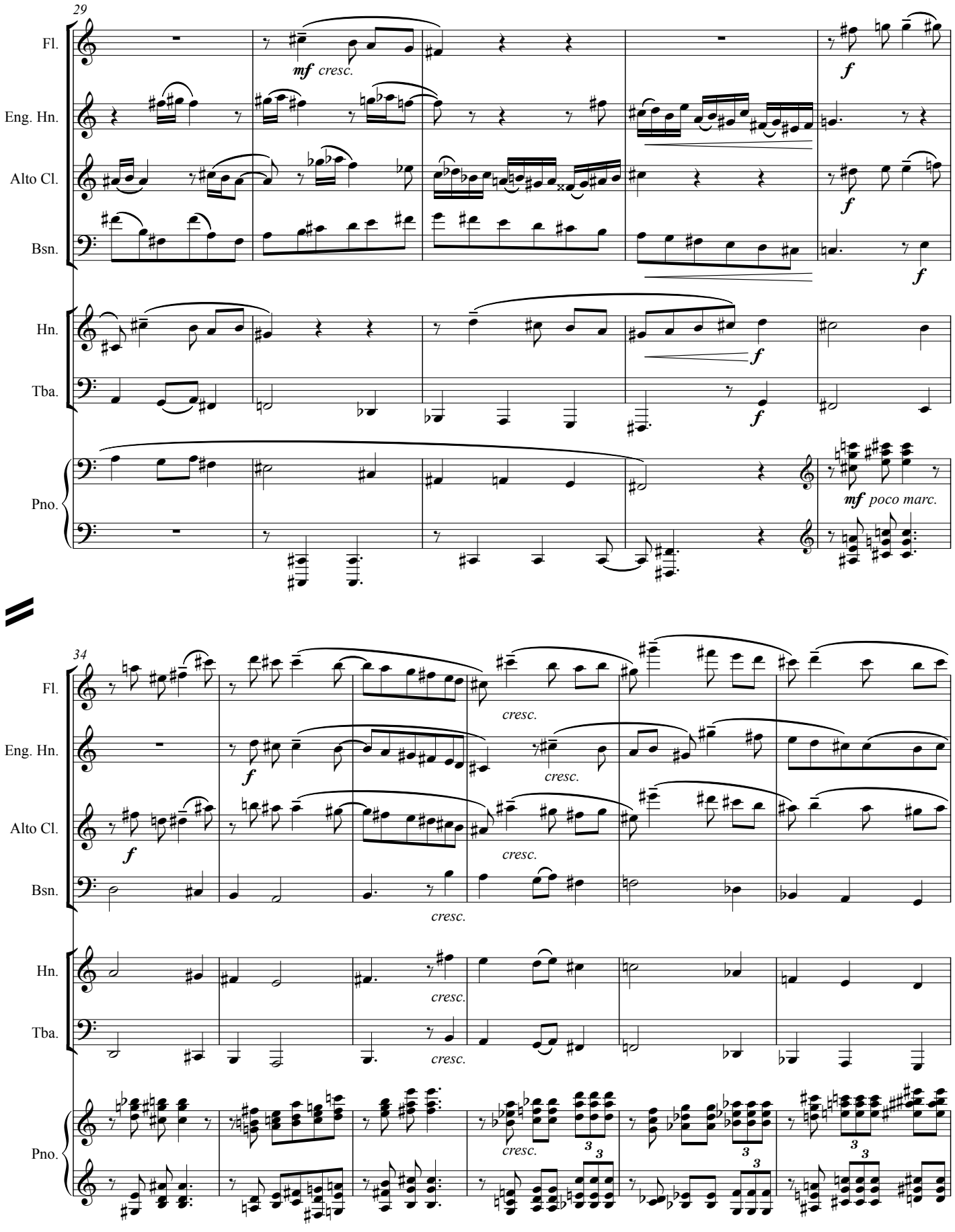
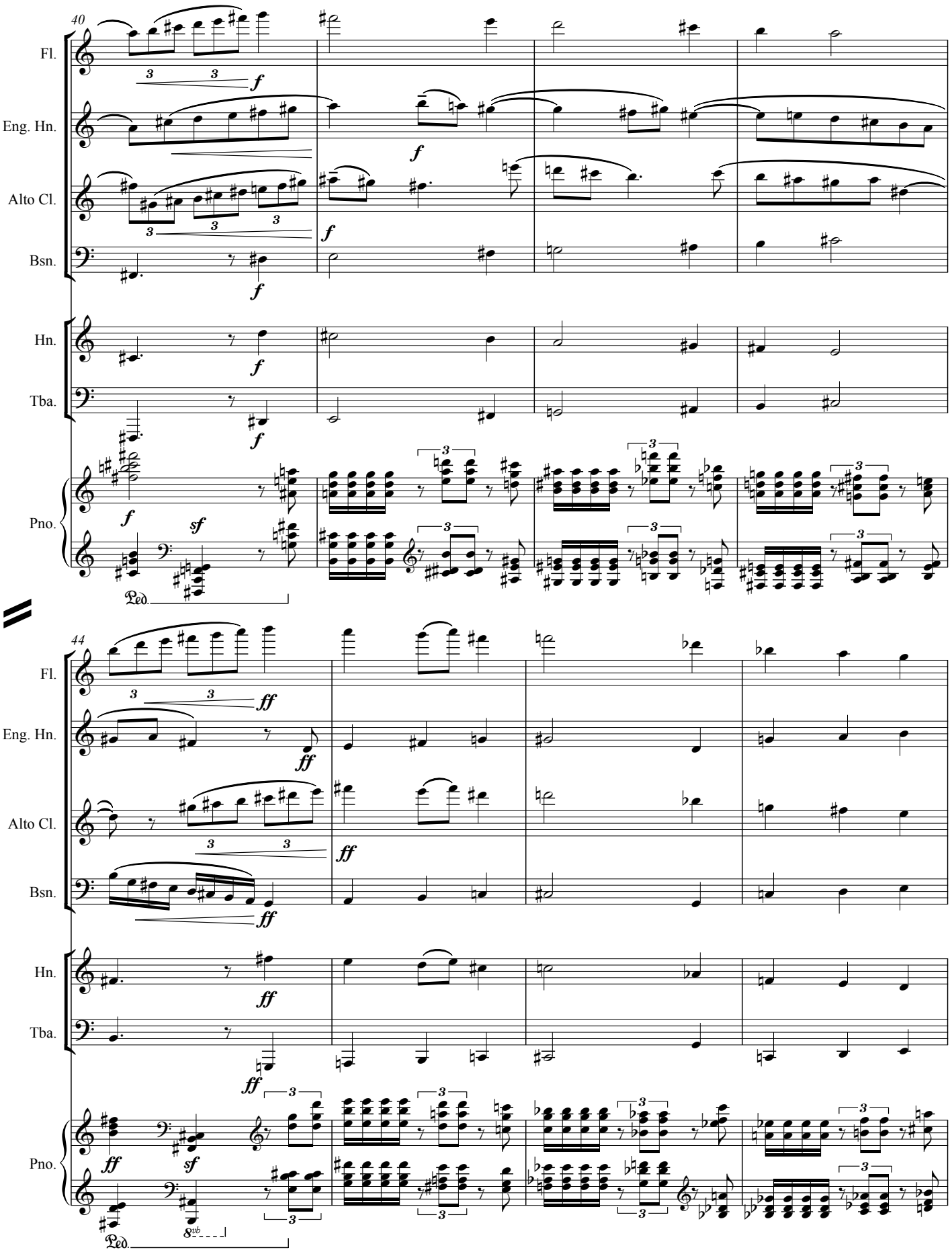
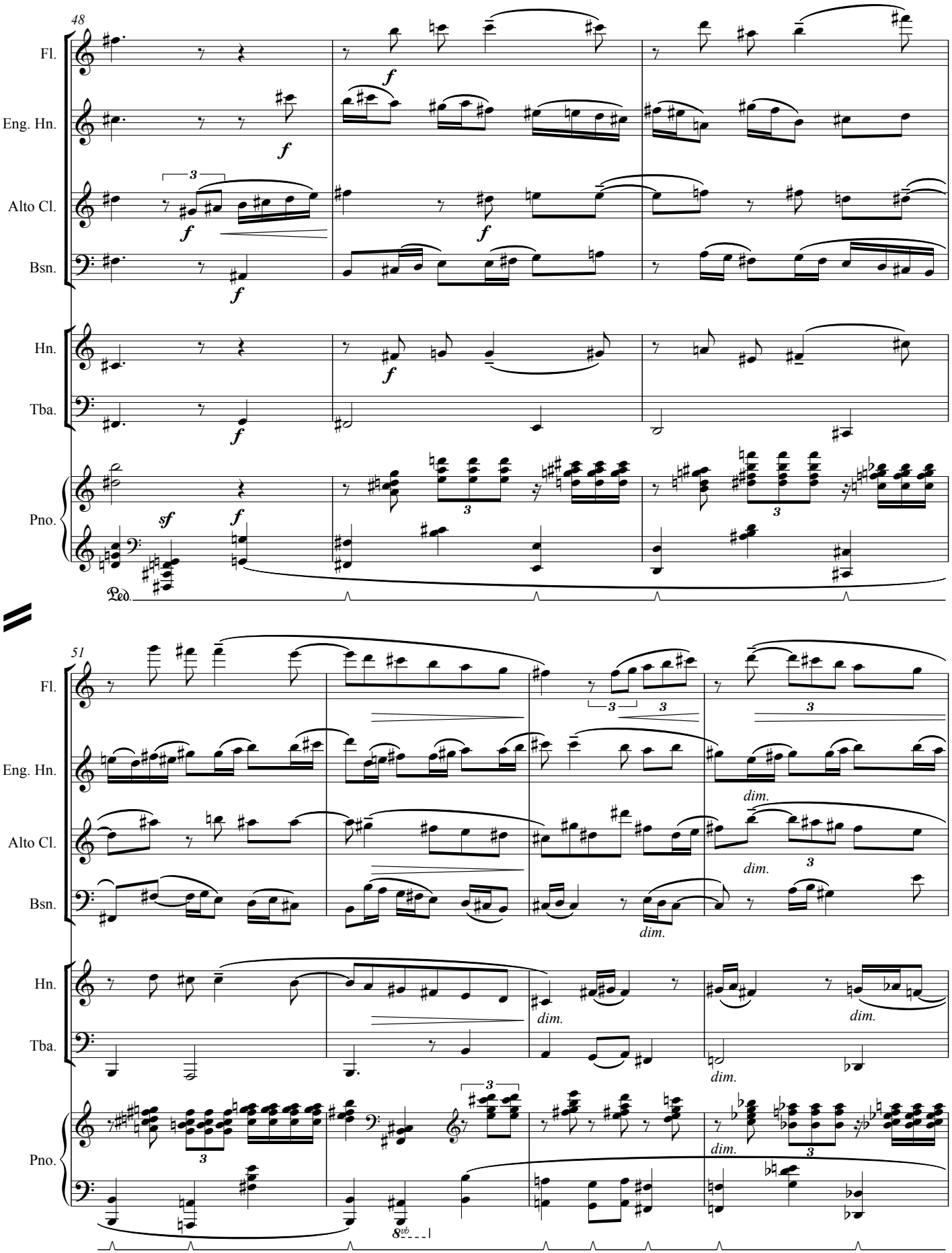
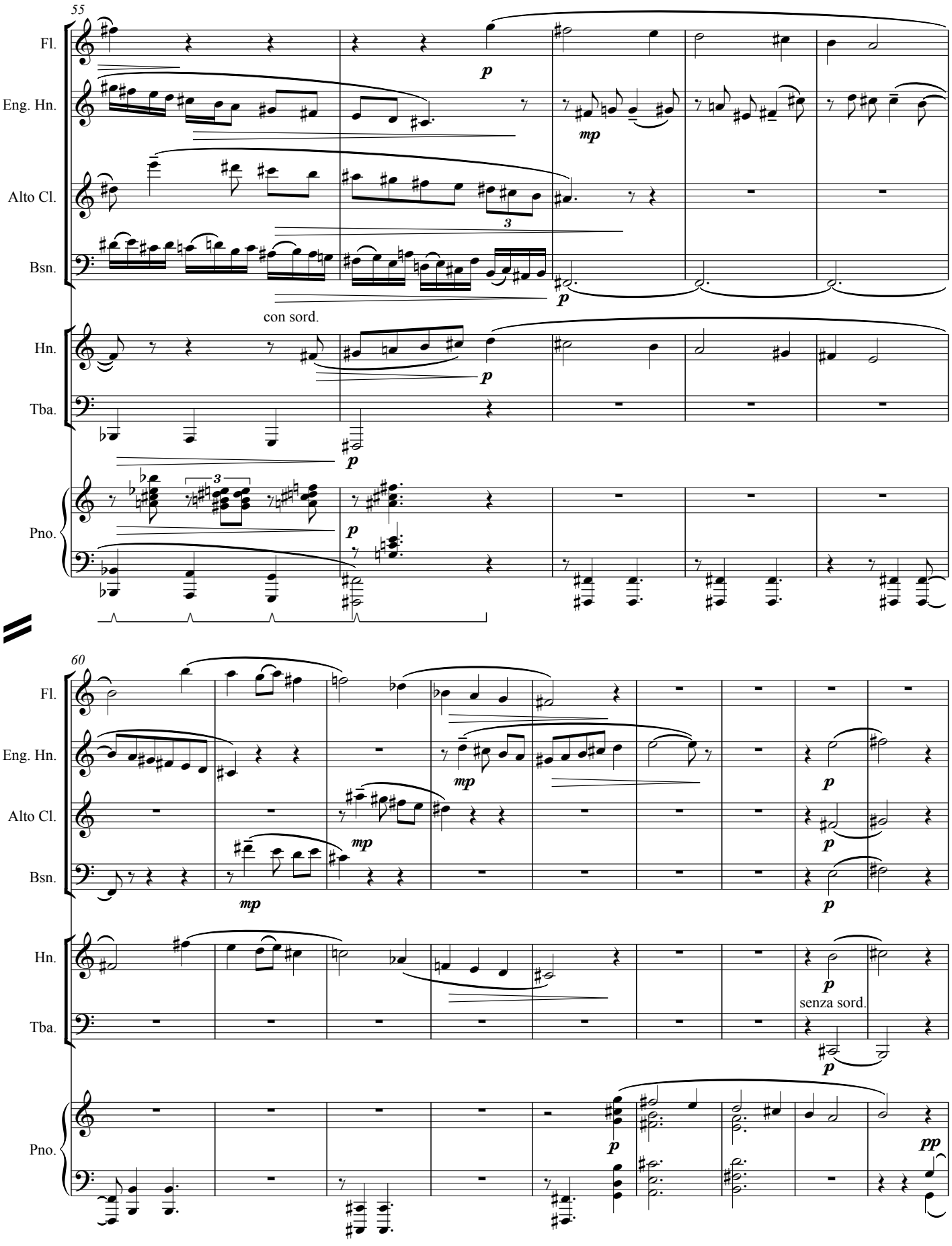

17
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
p
con sord.

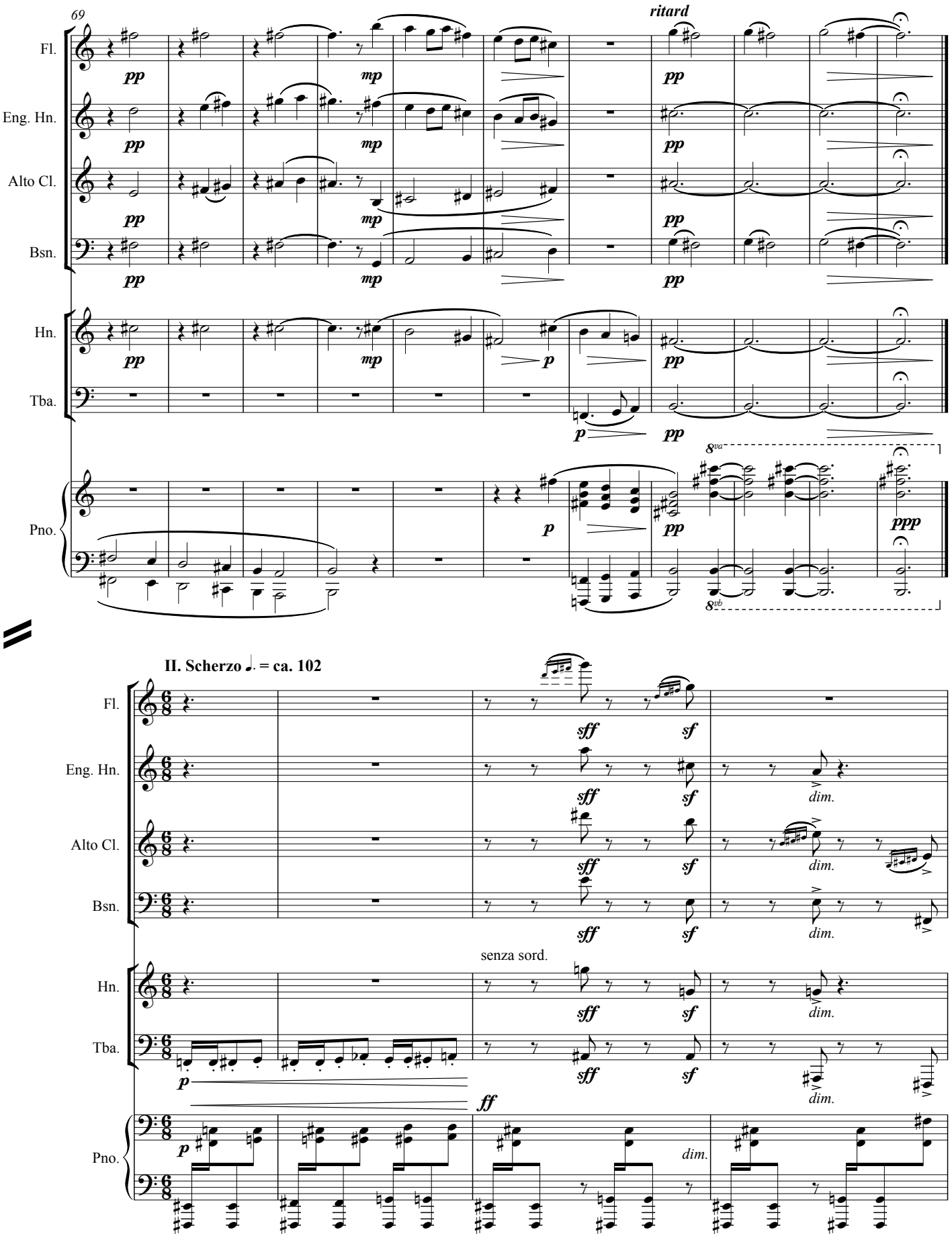

24
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
senza sord.
poco stacc.
mf
mp
cresc.
cresc.

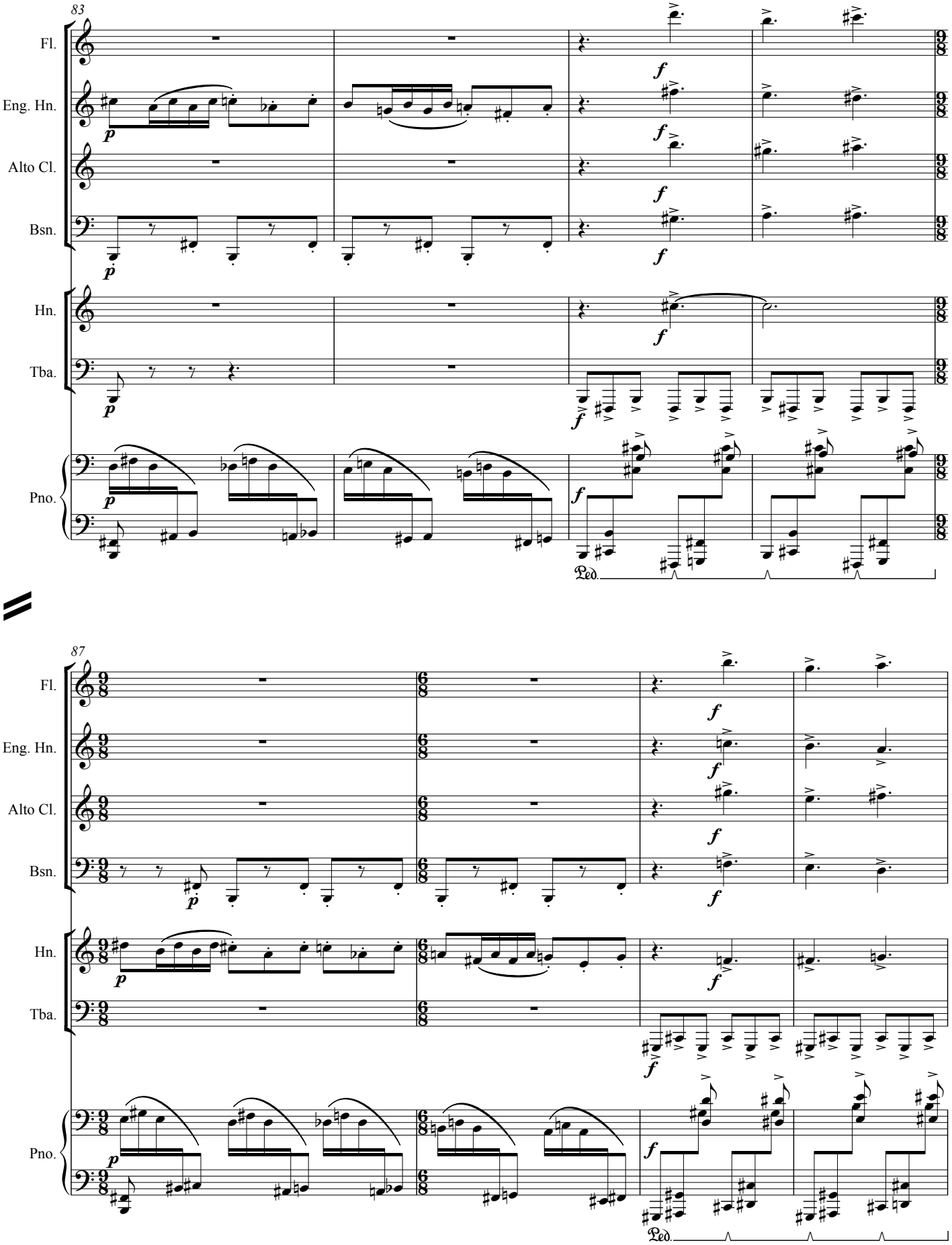

29
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mf cresc.
f
mf poco marc.
34
cresc.

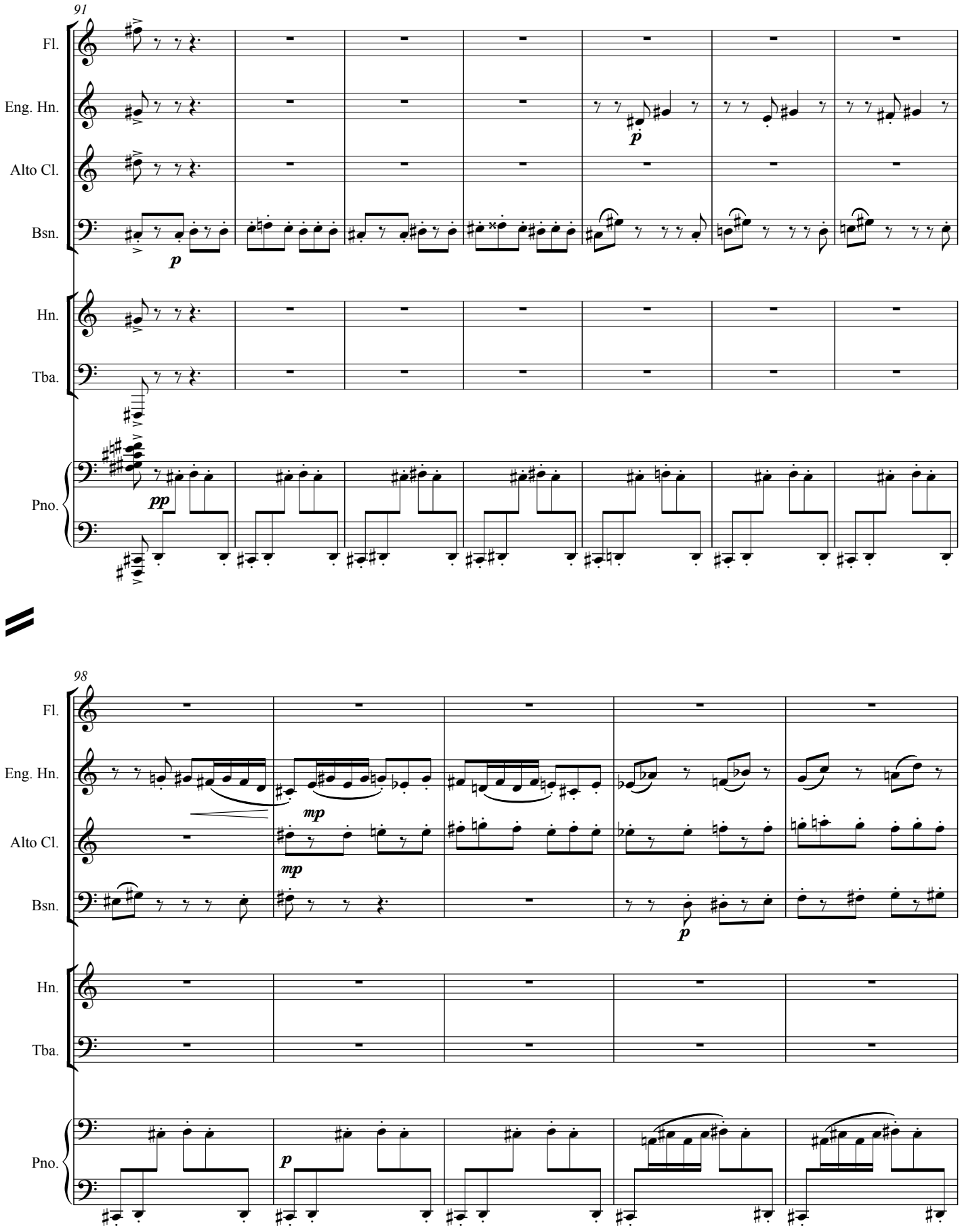

40
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
Ped.
44
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
Ped.
8vb

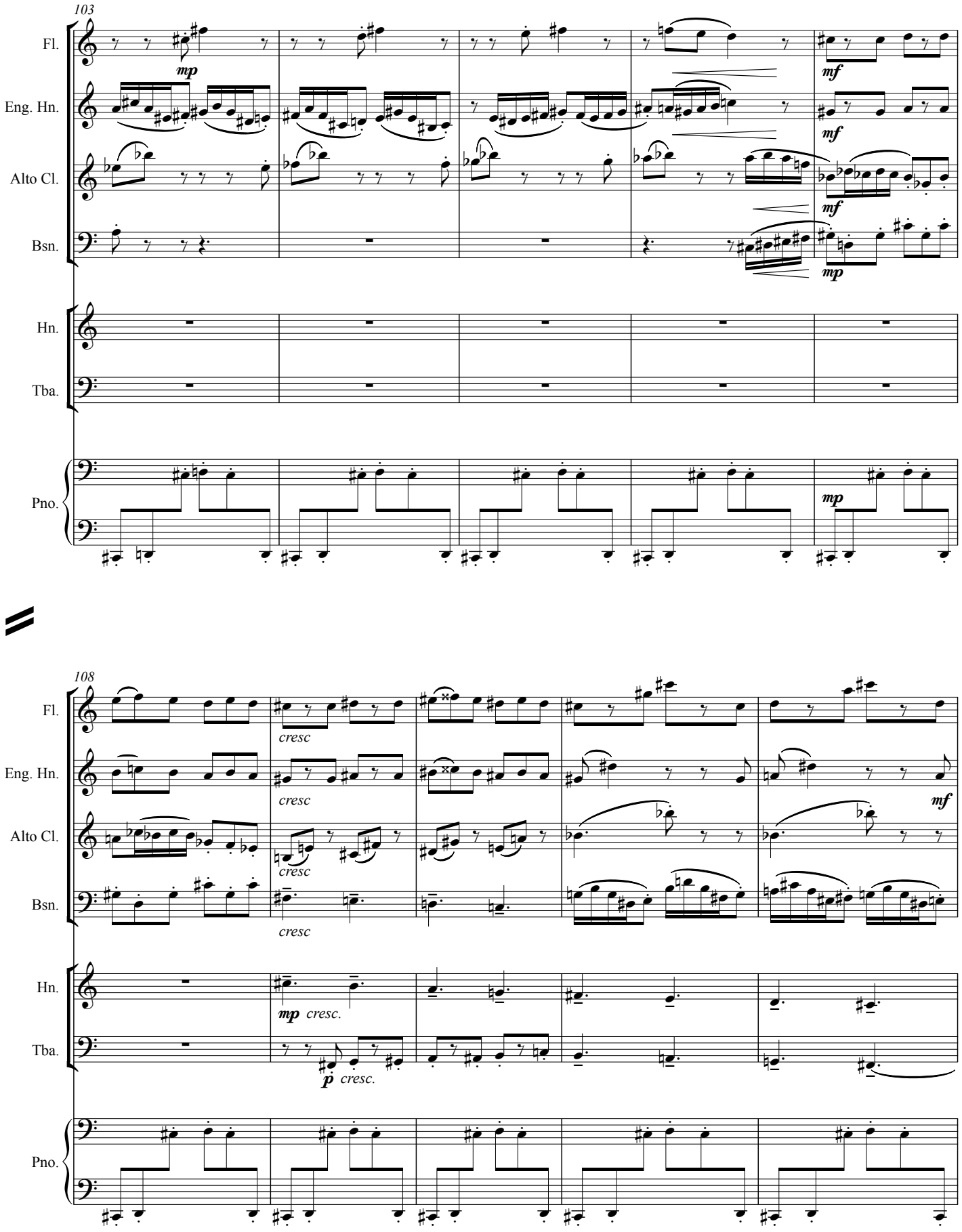

48
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
Ped.
51
dim.
8vb

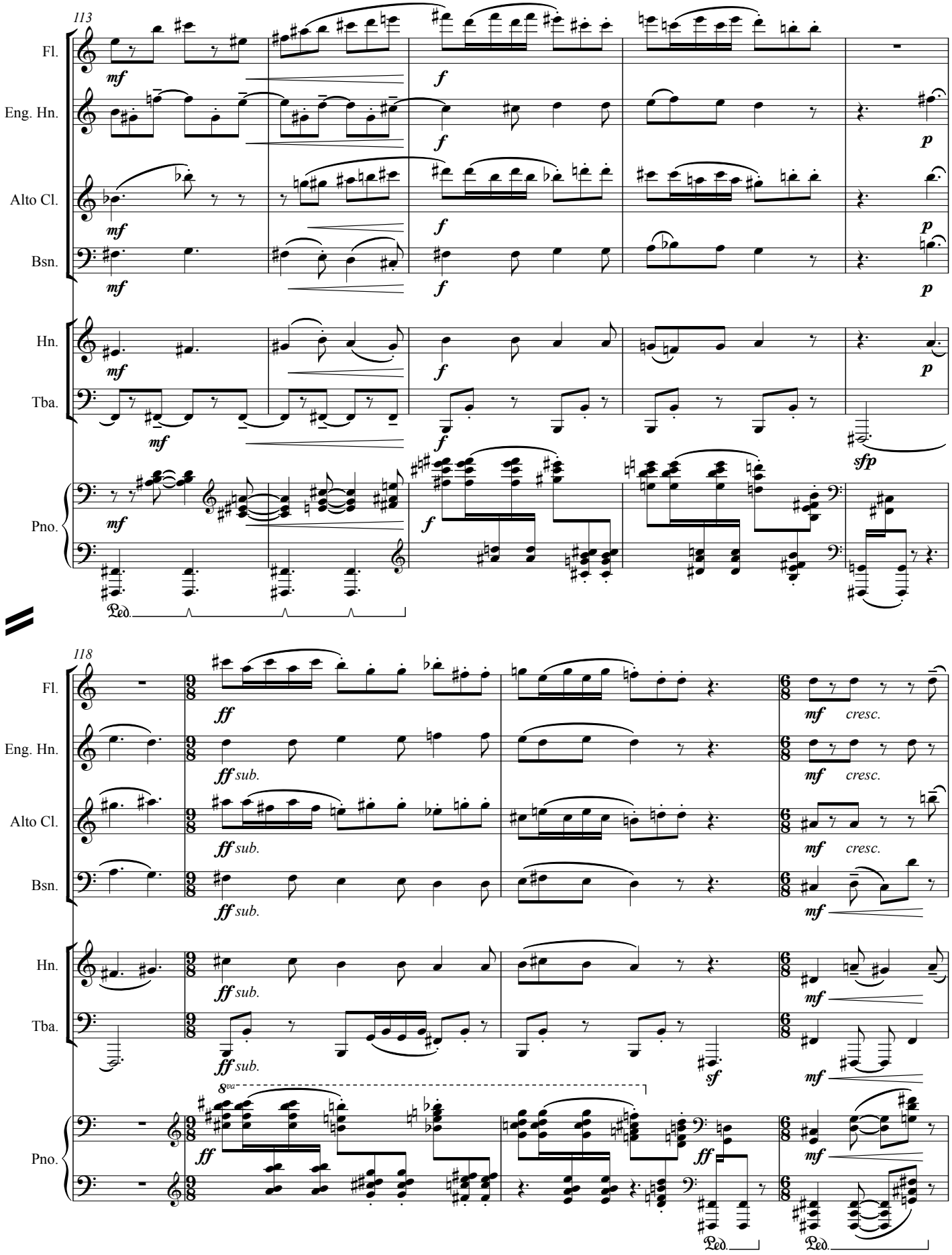

55
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
con sord.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
60
senza sord.

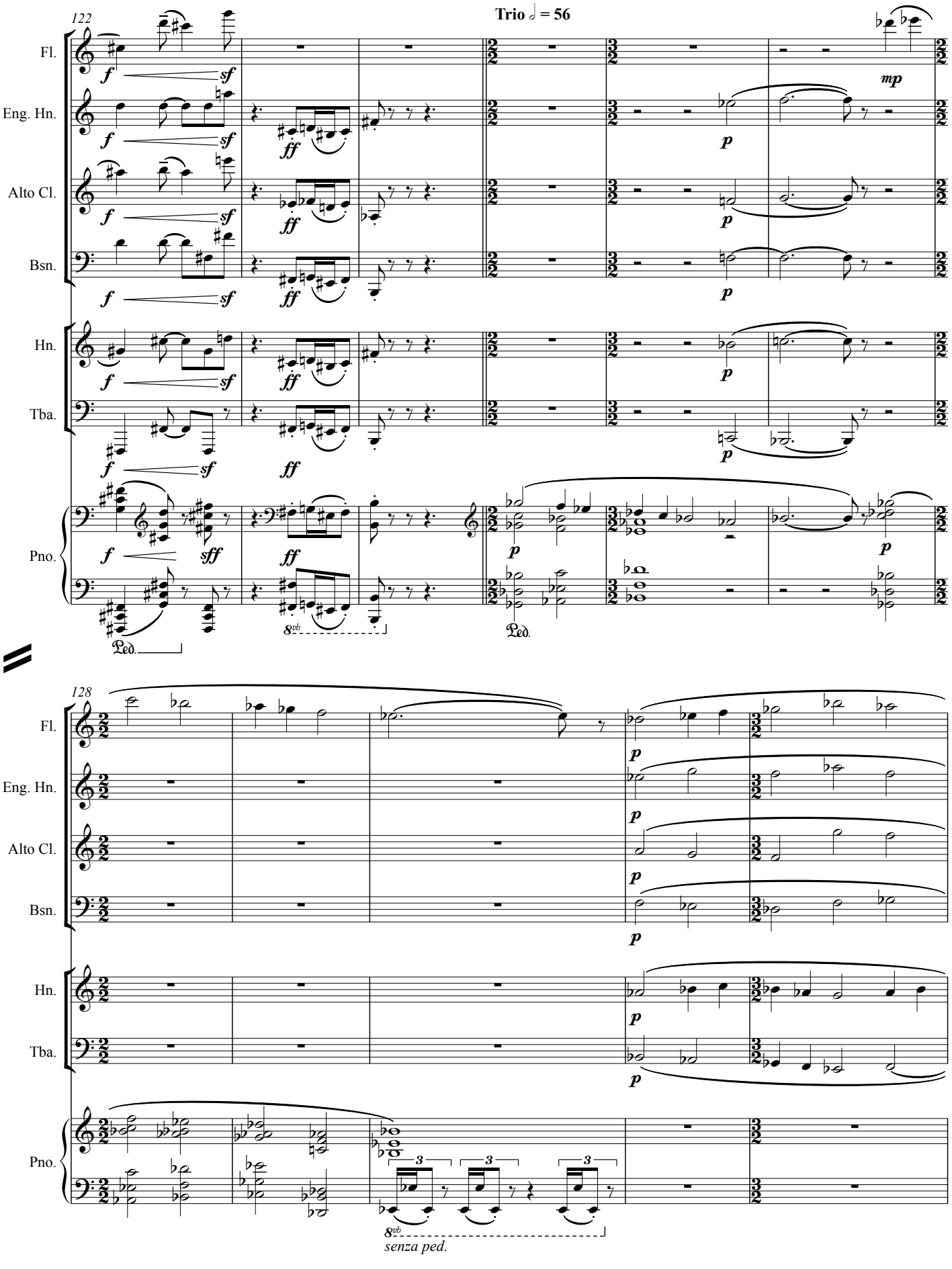

69
ritard
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
pp
mp
p
ppp
8va
8vb
II. Scherzo ♩. = ca. 102
sff
sf
dim.
senza sord.
ff

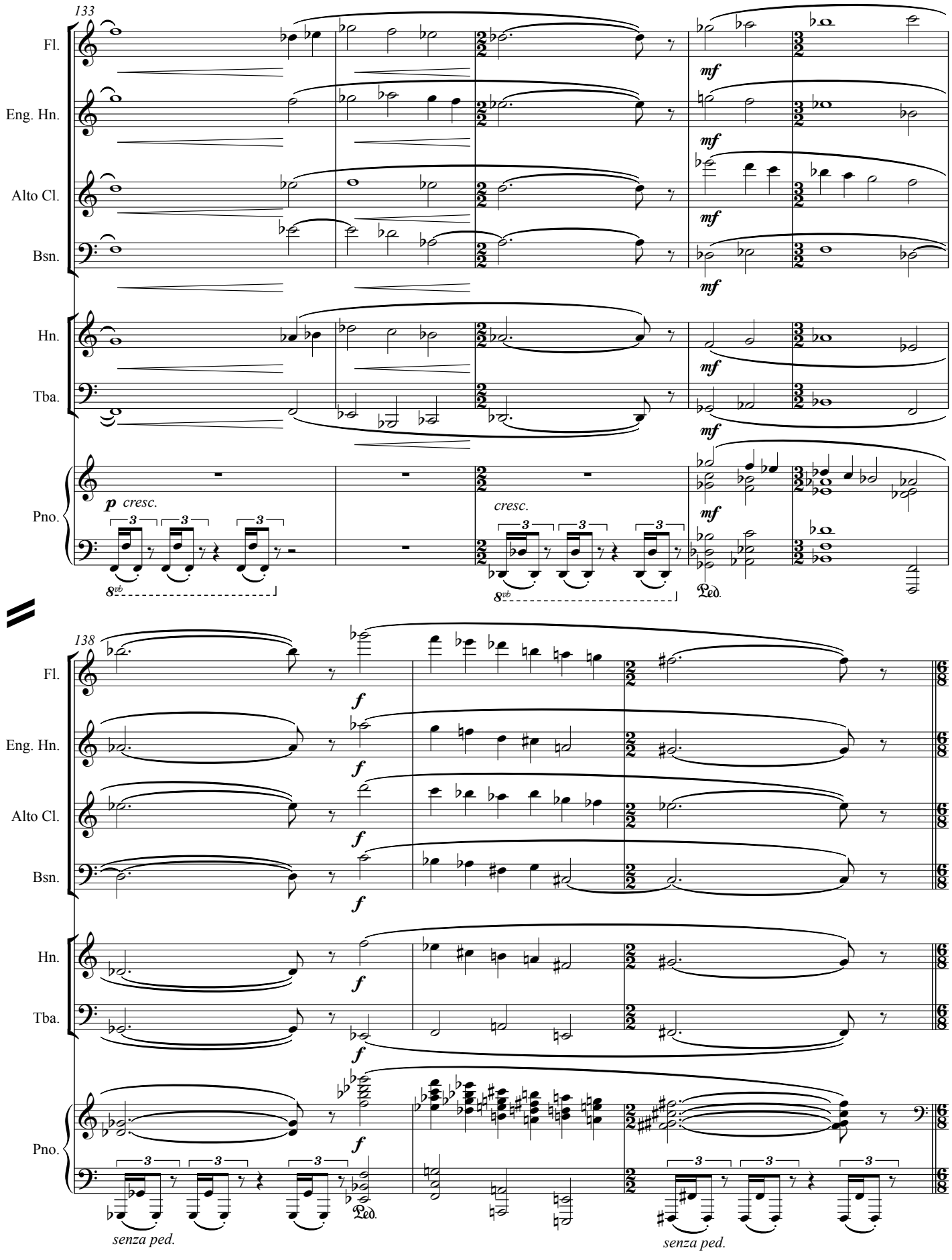

83
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
87
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.

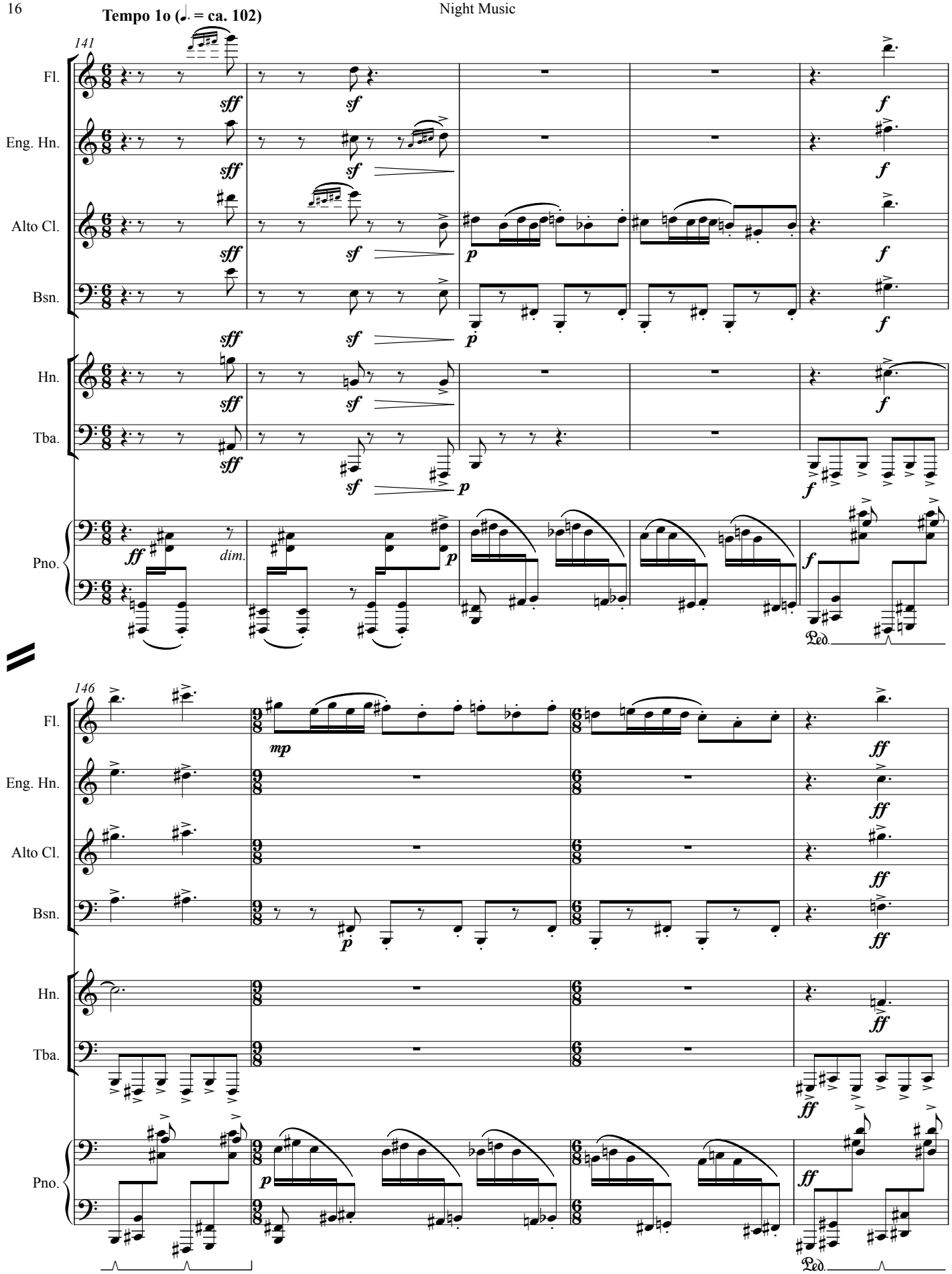

91
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
p
pp
98
mp
mp
p

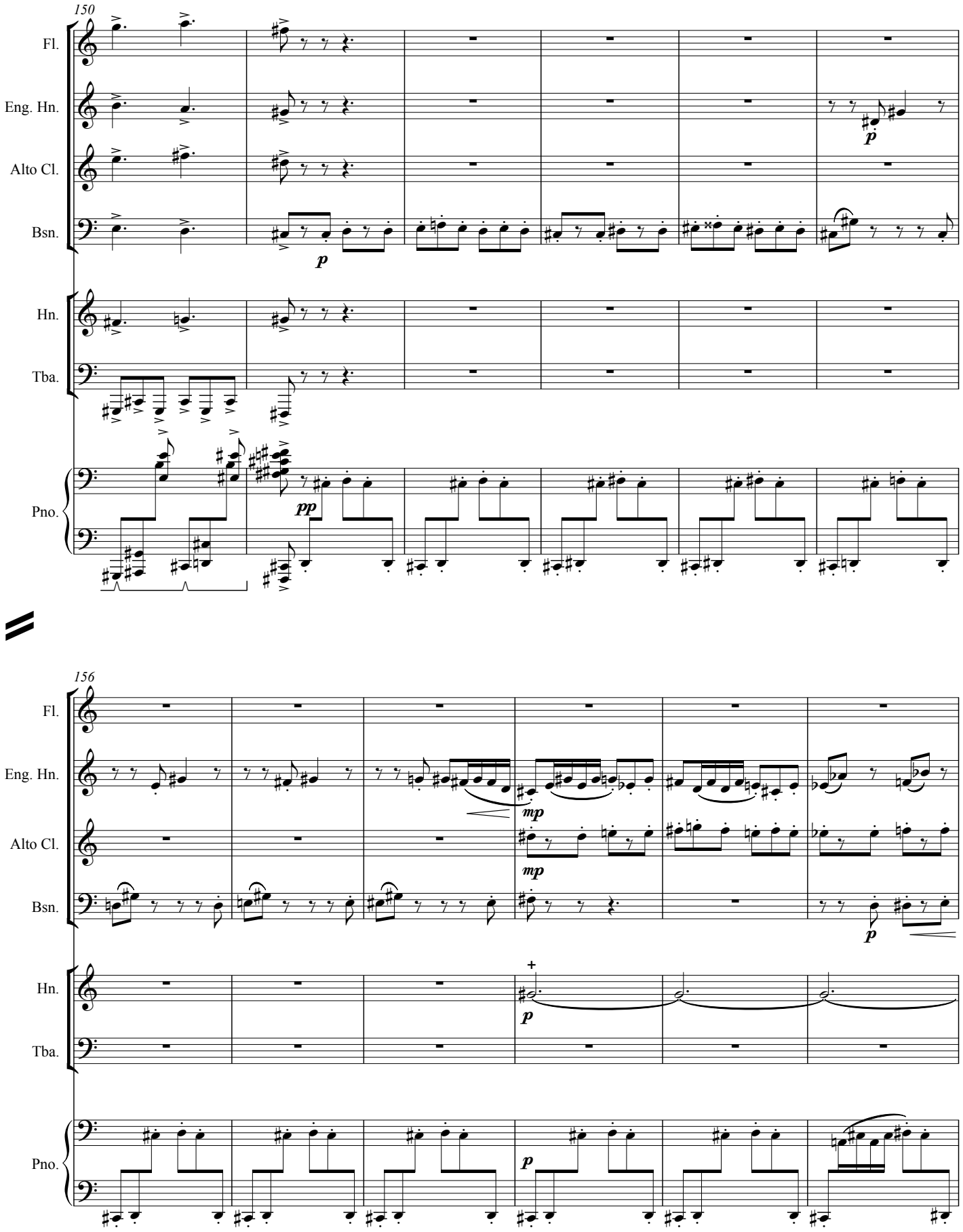

103
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
mf
mf
mf
mp
mp
108
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
cresc
cresc
cresc
cresc
mf
mp cresc.
p cresc.

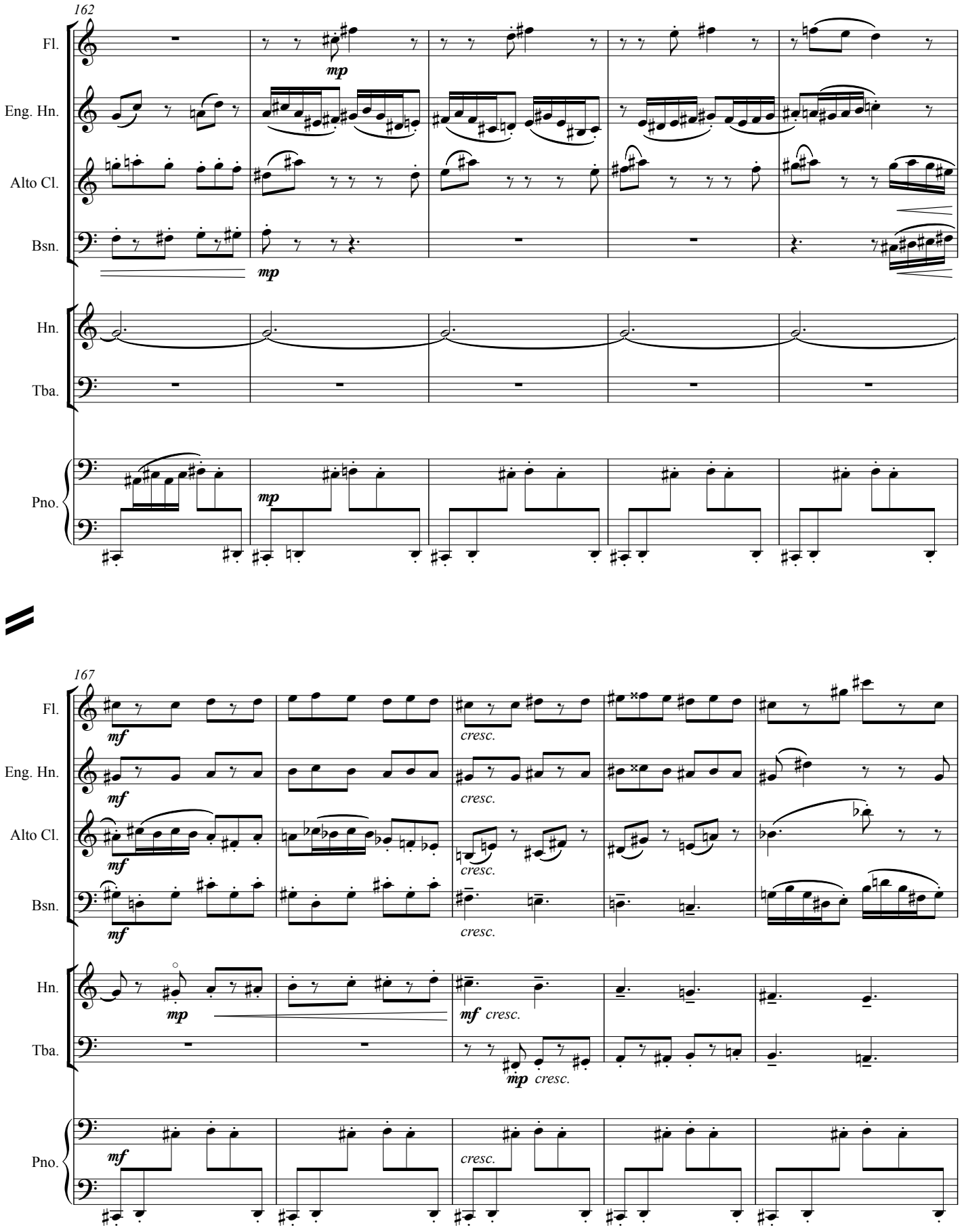

113
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mf
f
p
sfp
Ped.
118
ff
ff sub.
mf cresc.
sf
8va

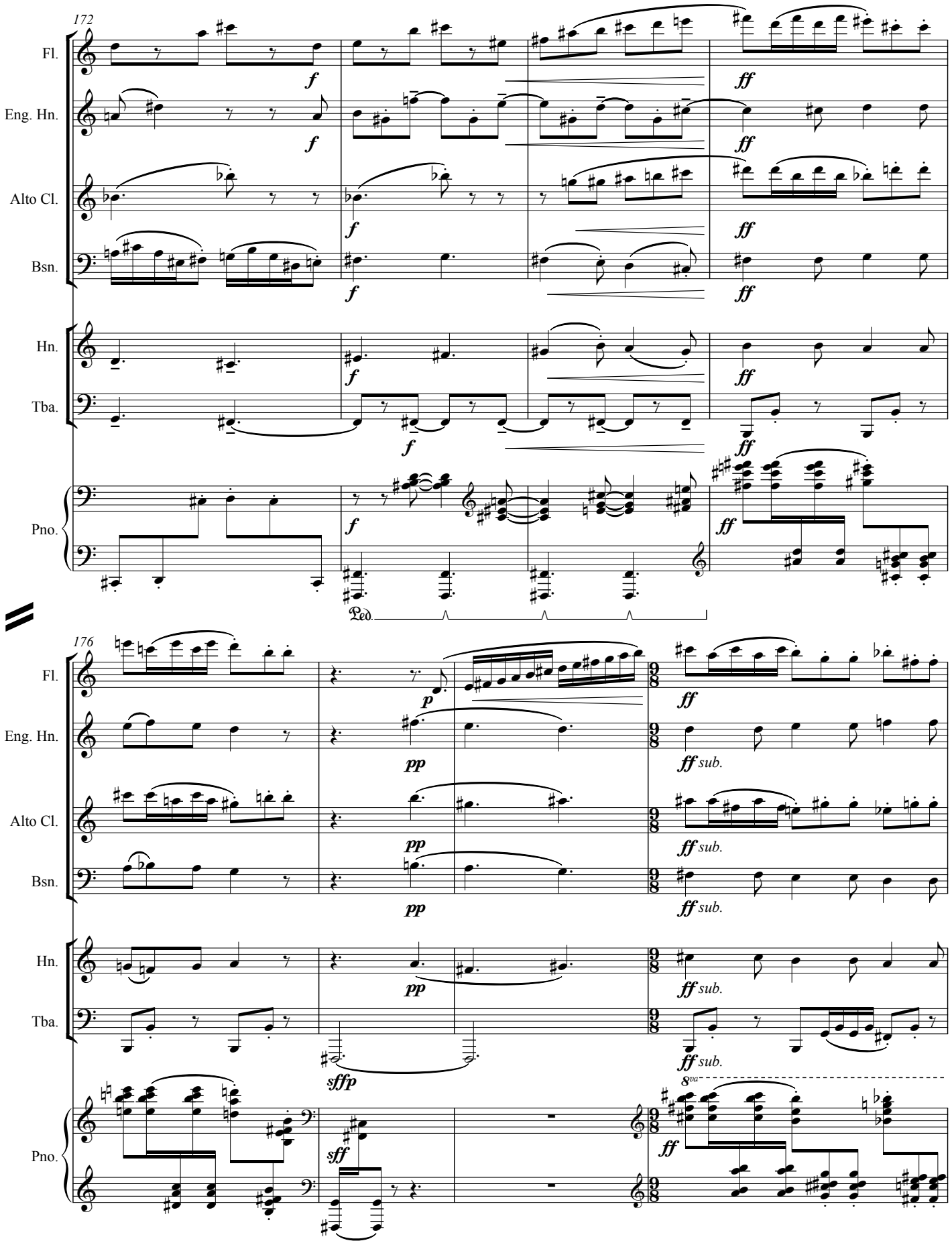

Trio ♩ = 56
122
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
128
senza ped.

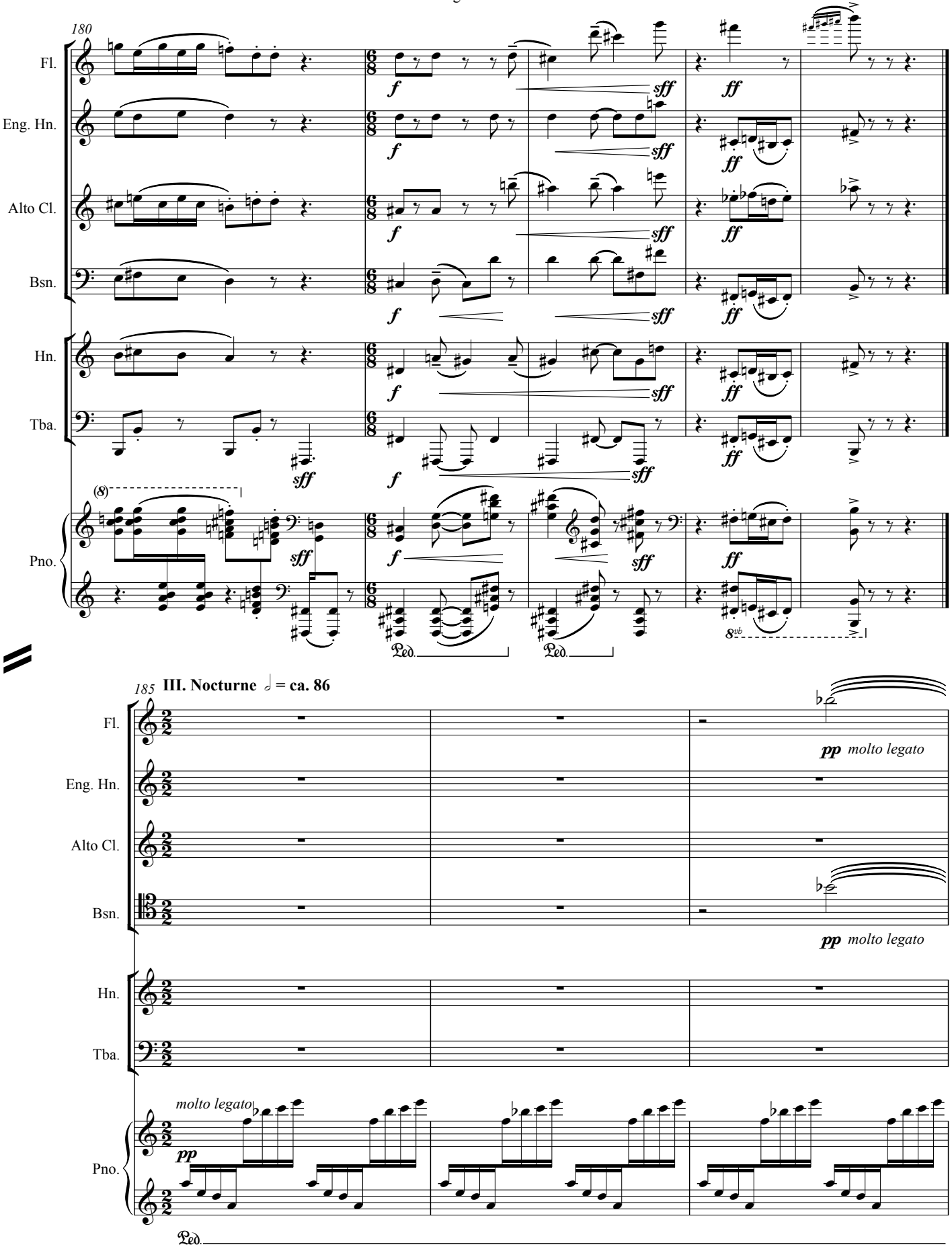

133
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mf
p cresc.
cresc.
8vb
Ped.
138
f
senza ped.

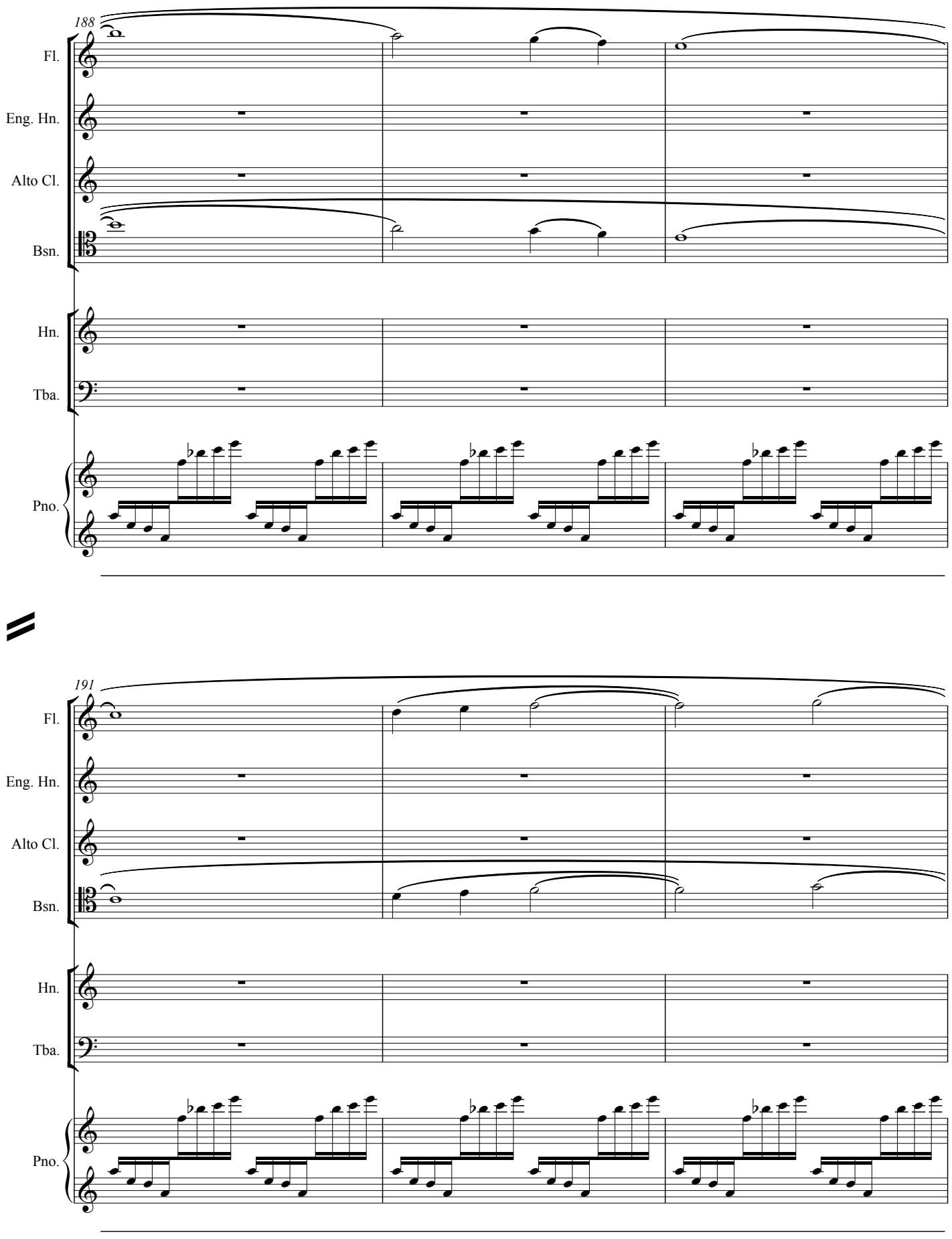

Tempo 1o (♩. = ca. 102)
141
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
sff
sf
p
f
ff
dim.
Ped.
146
mp

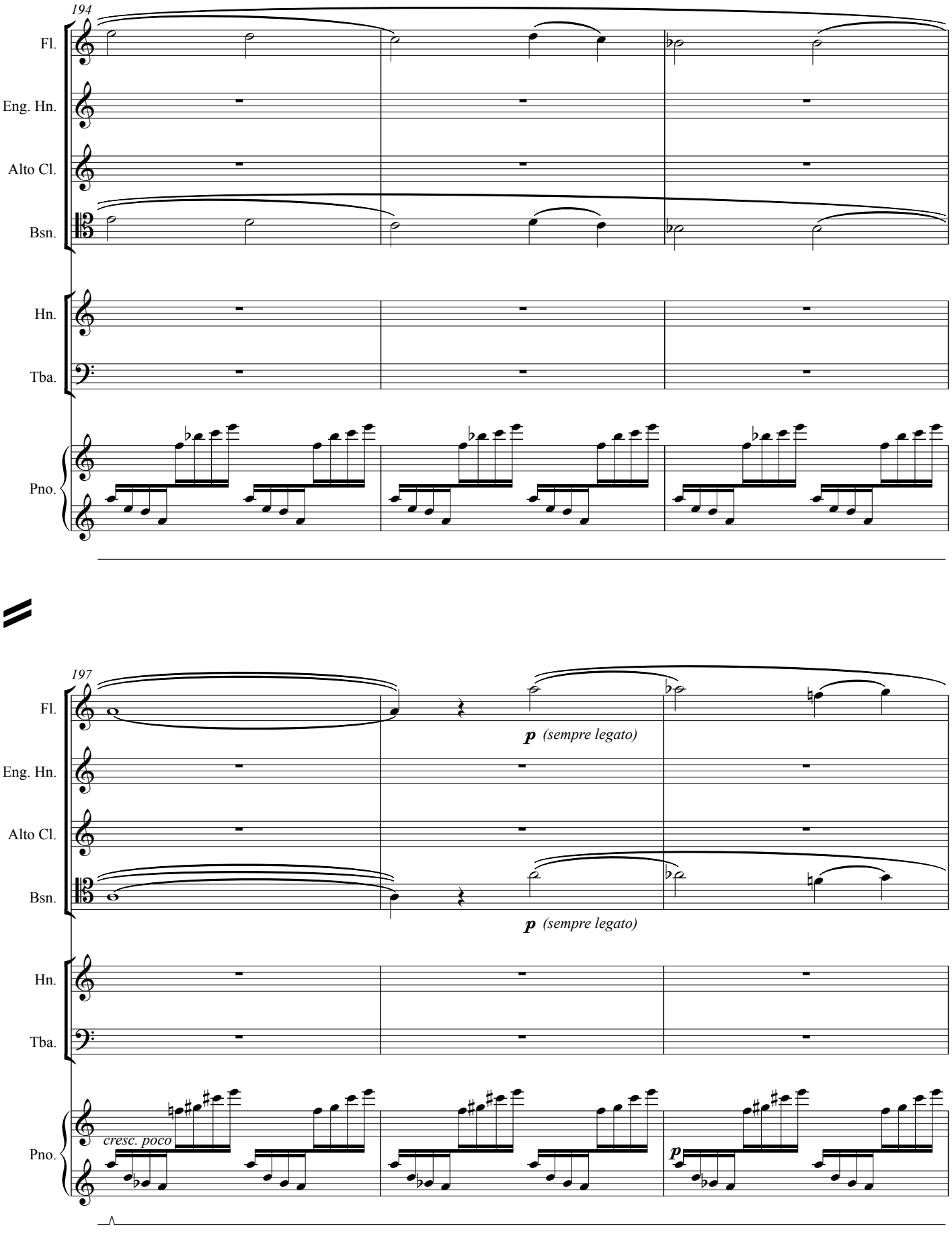

150
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
p
pp
156
mp
mp
p
+
p
p

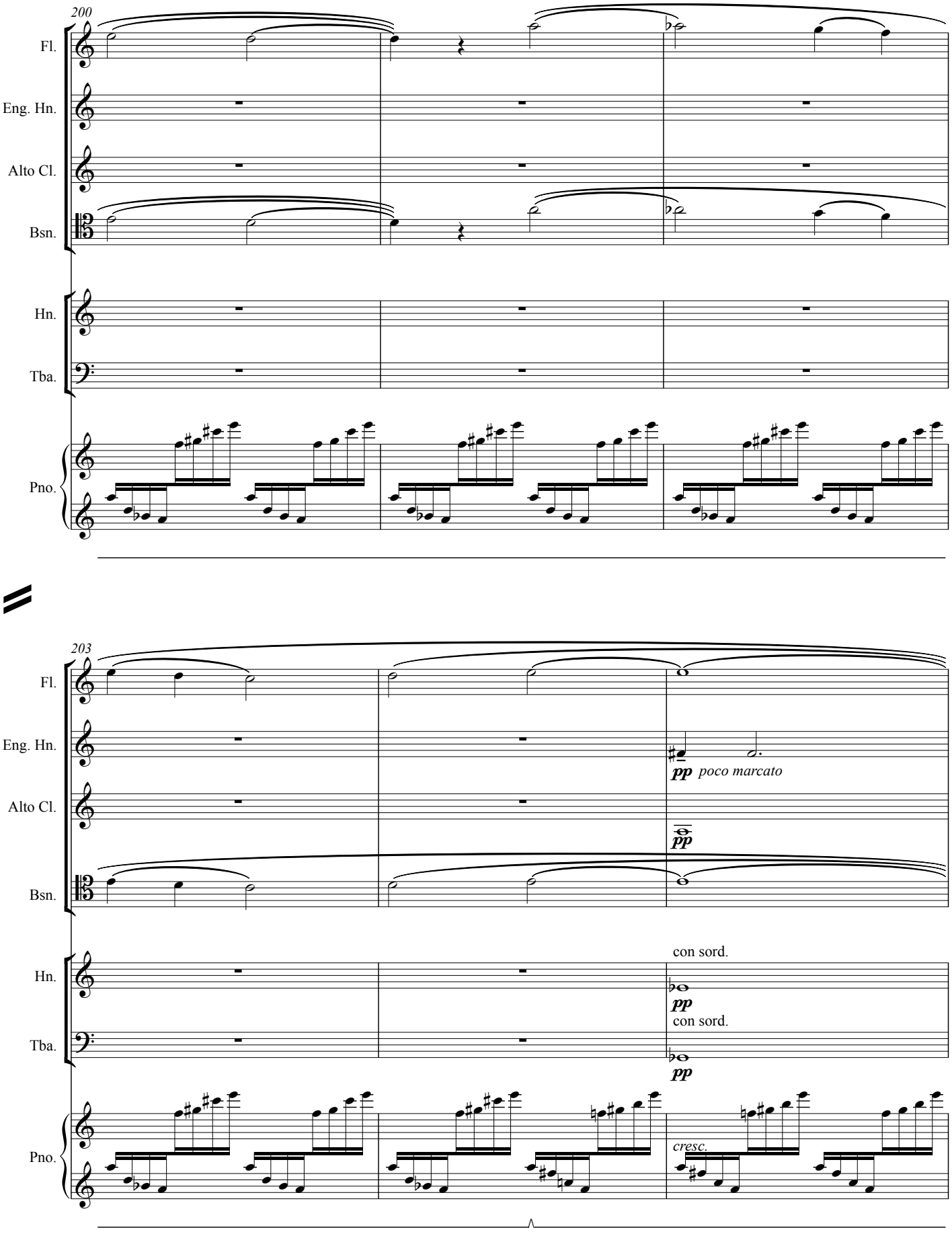

162
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
mp
mp
167
mf
mf
mf
mf
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
mp
mf cresc.
mp cresc.
mf
cresc.

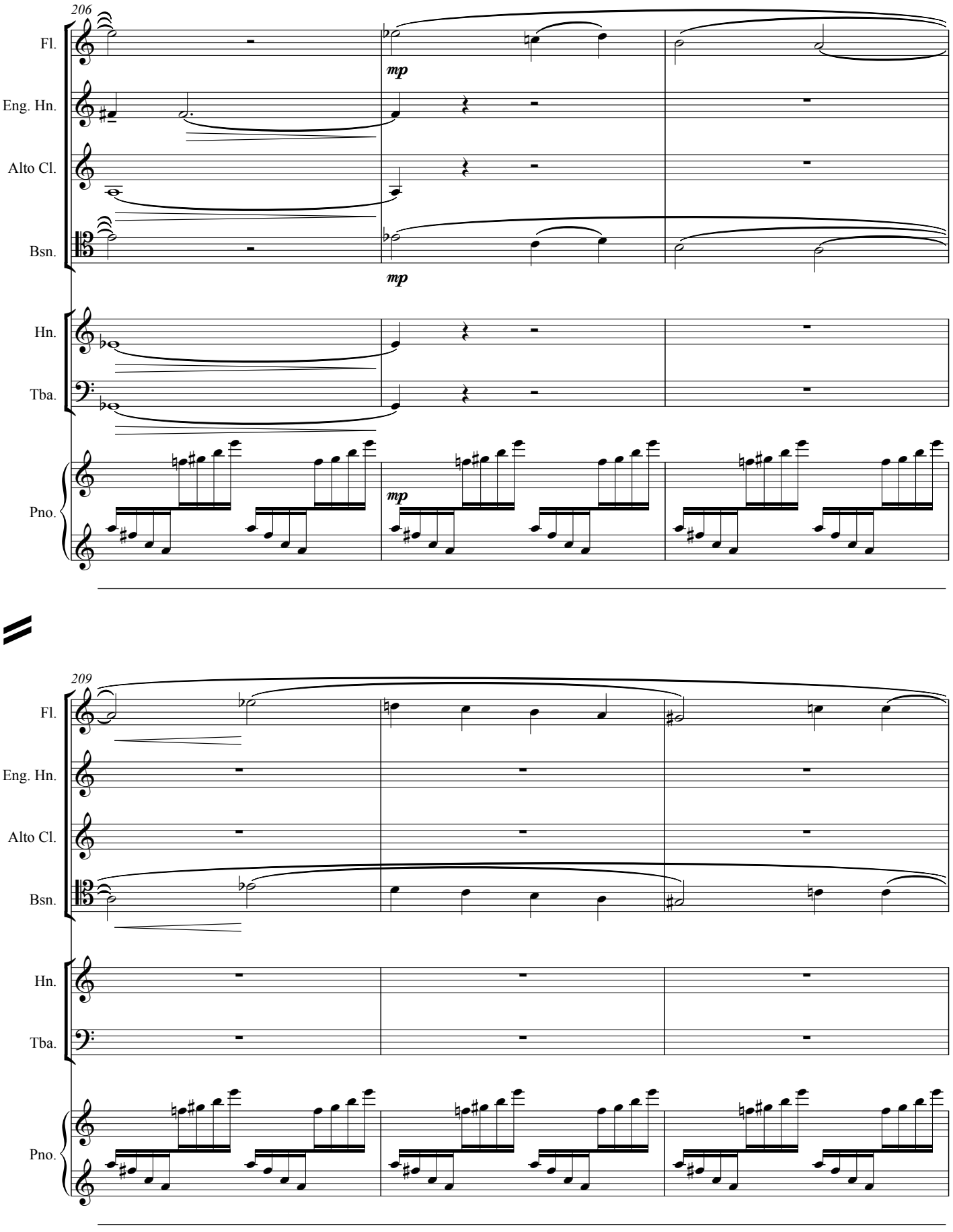

172
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
f
ff
Ped.
176
p
pp
ff sub.
sffp
sff
8va

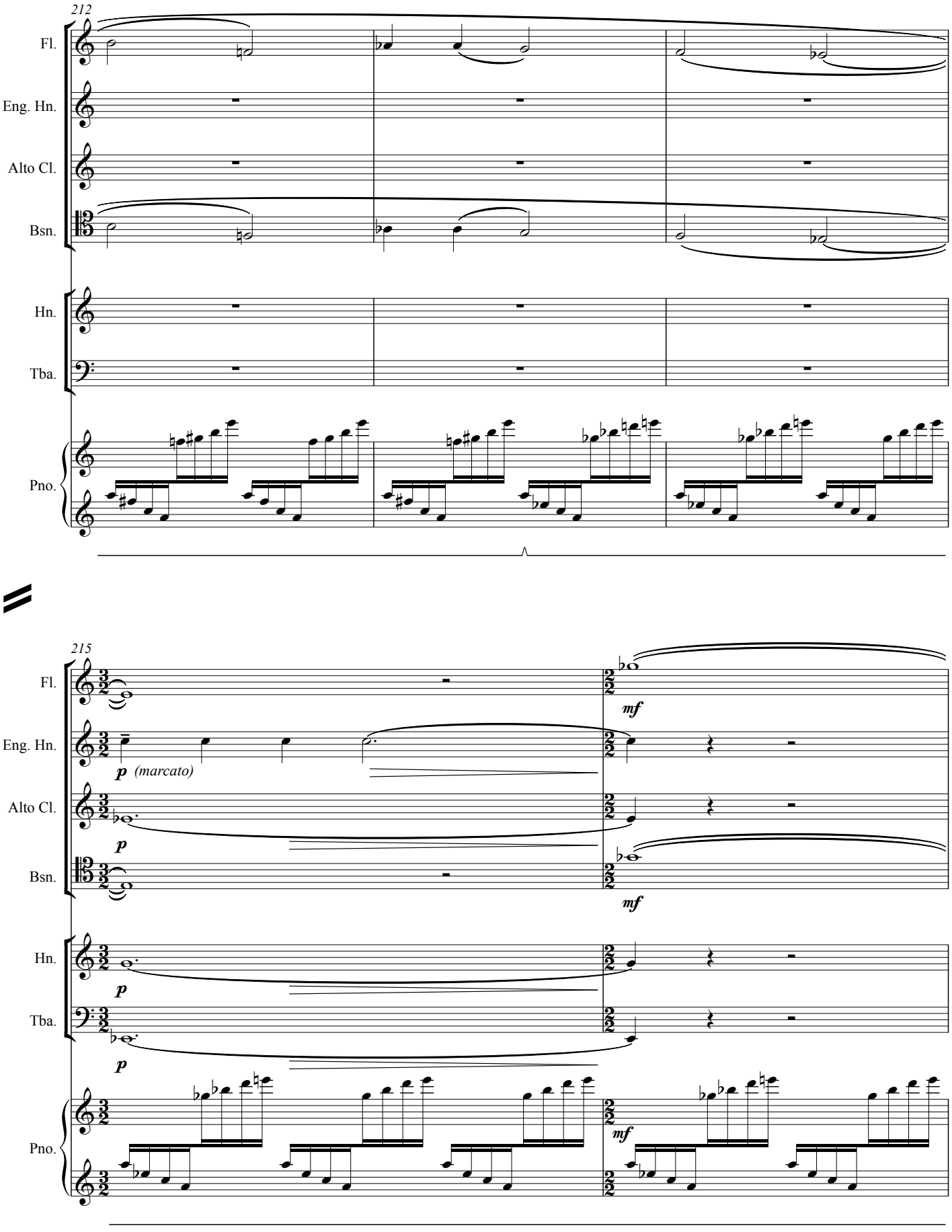

180
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
f
sff
ff
(8)
8vb
Ped.
185 III. Nocturne ♩ = ca. 86
pp molto legato
molto legato

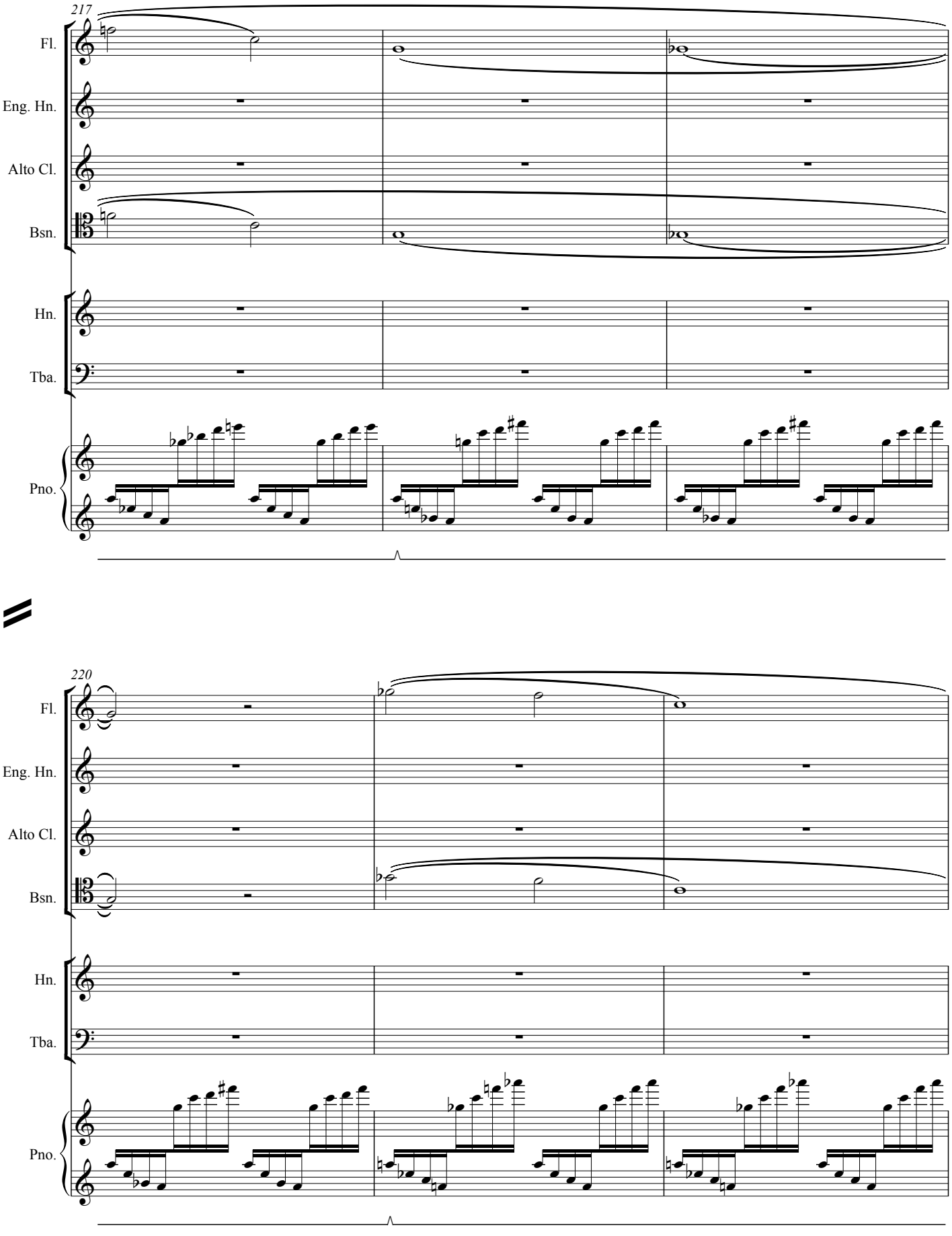

188
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
191
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.

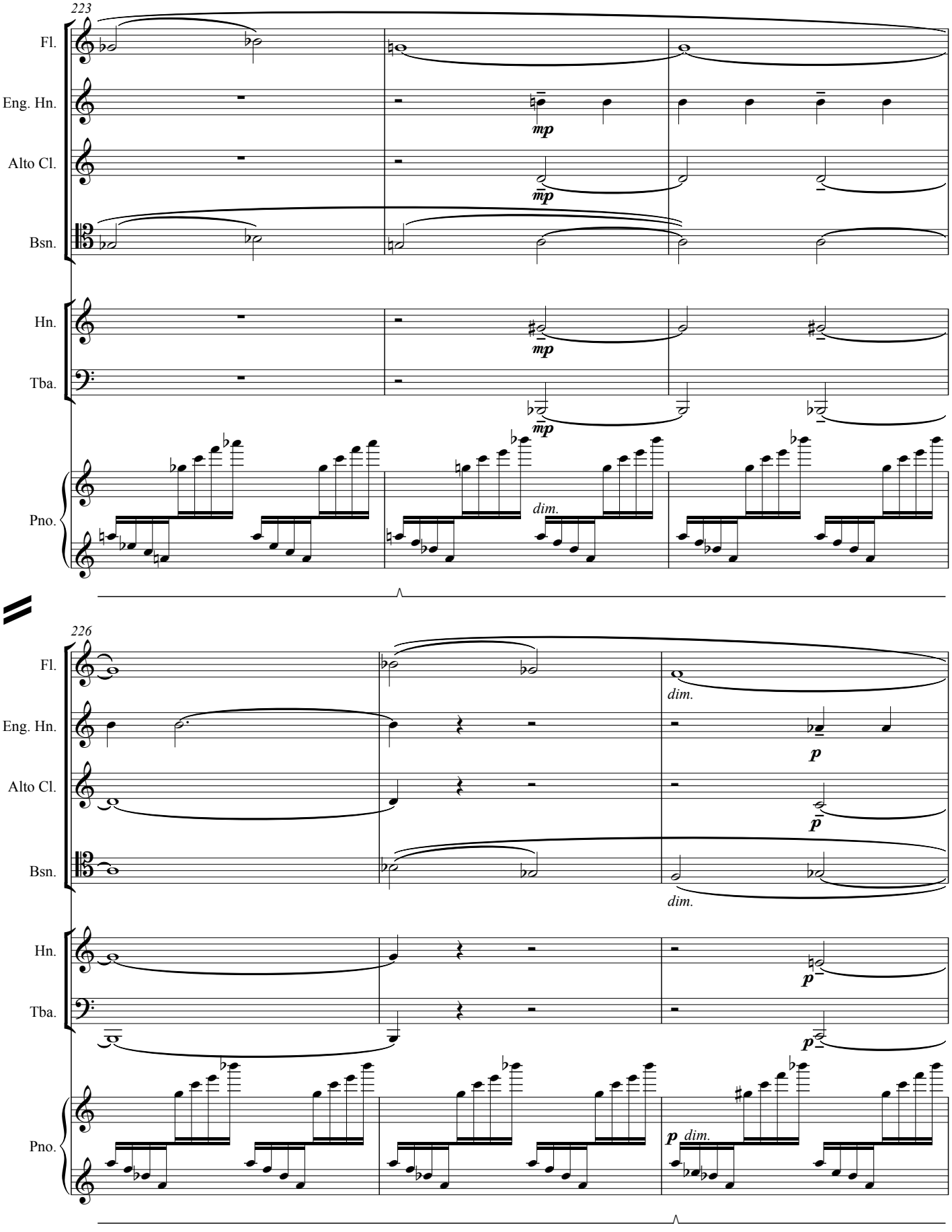

194
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
197
Fl.
p (sempre legato)
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
p (sempre legato)
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
cresc. poco
p

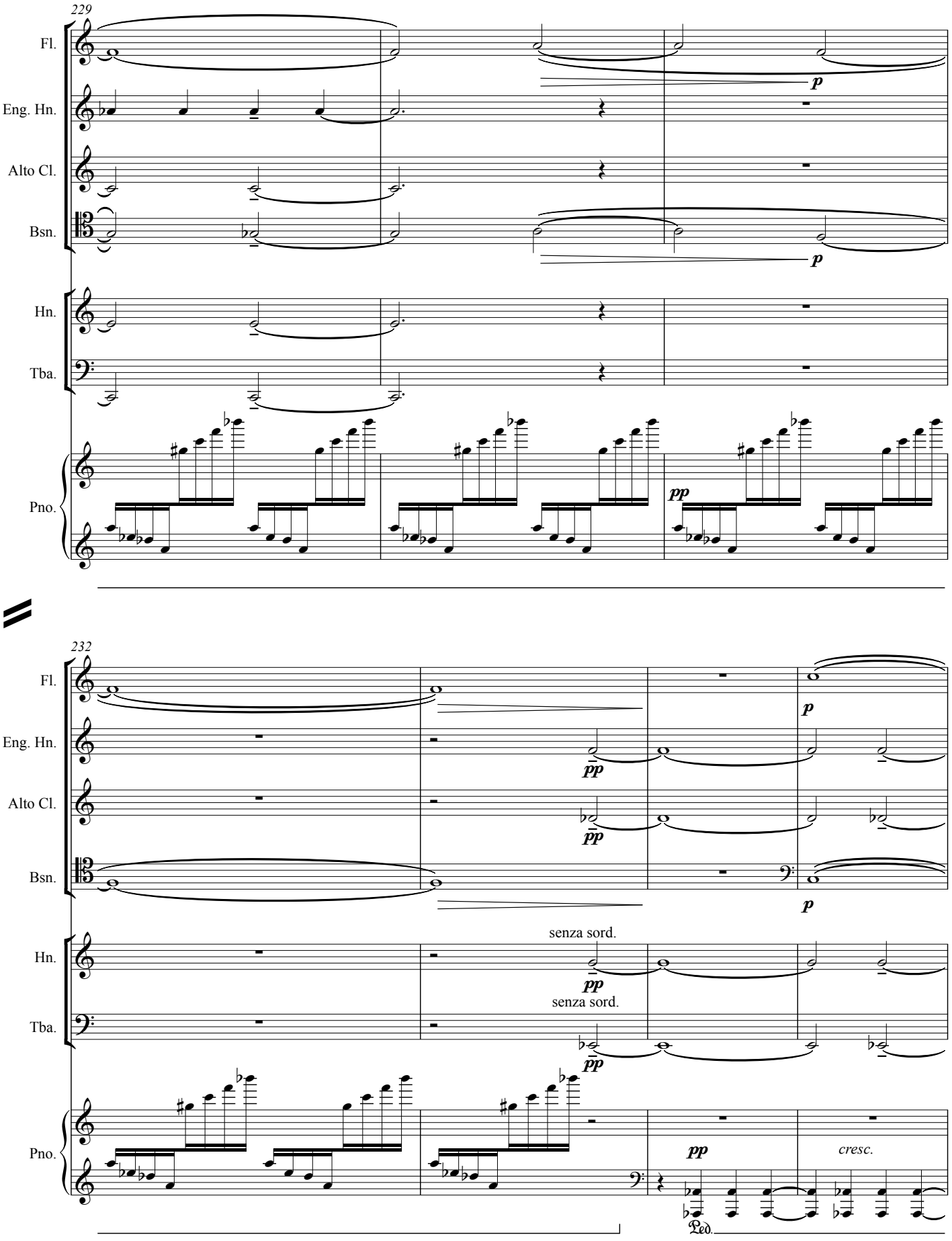

200
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
203
pp poco marcato
pp
con sord.
pp
con sord.
pp
cresc.

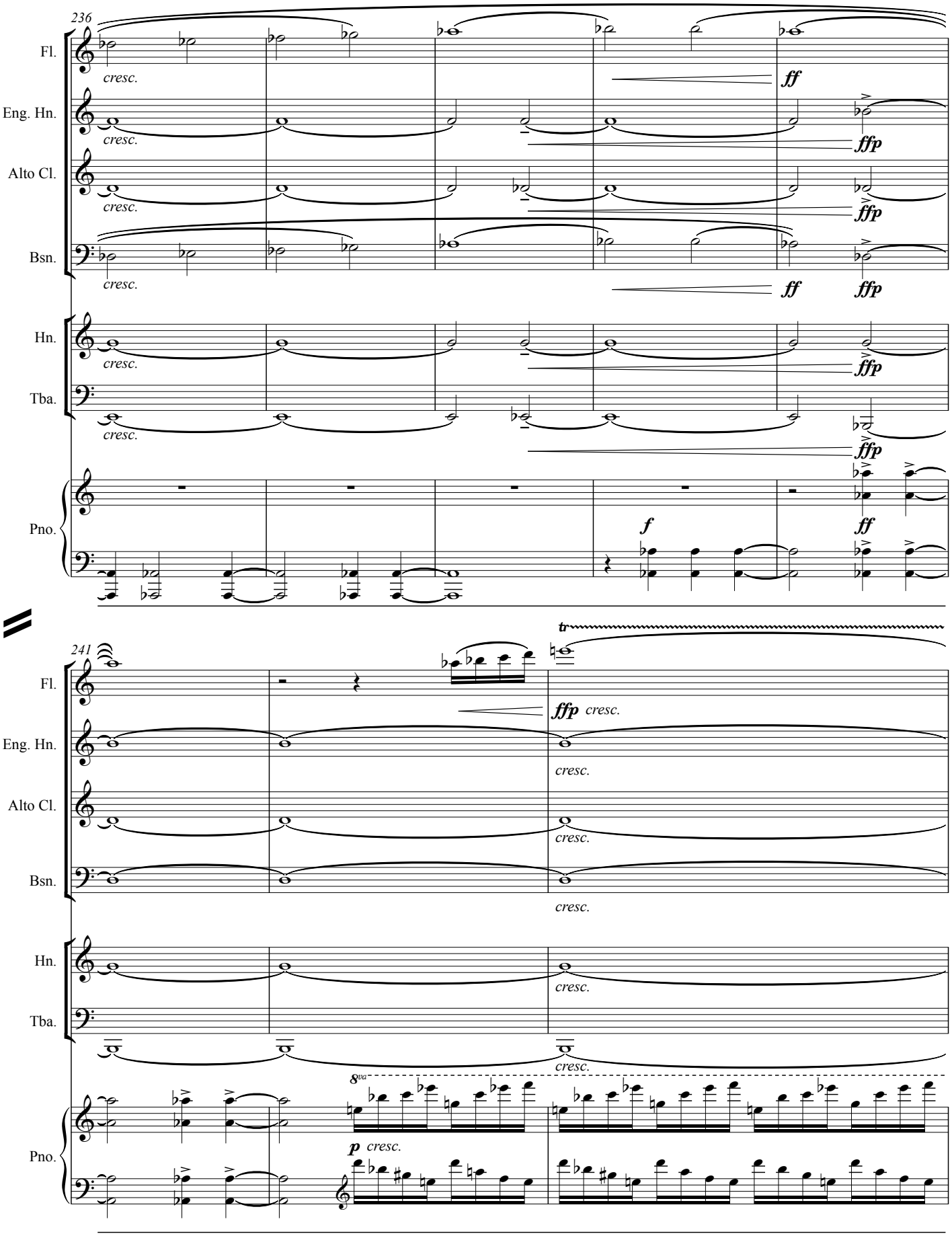

206
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
mp
mp
209
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.

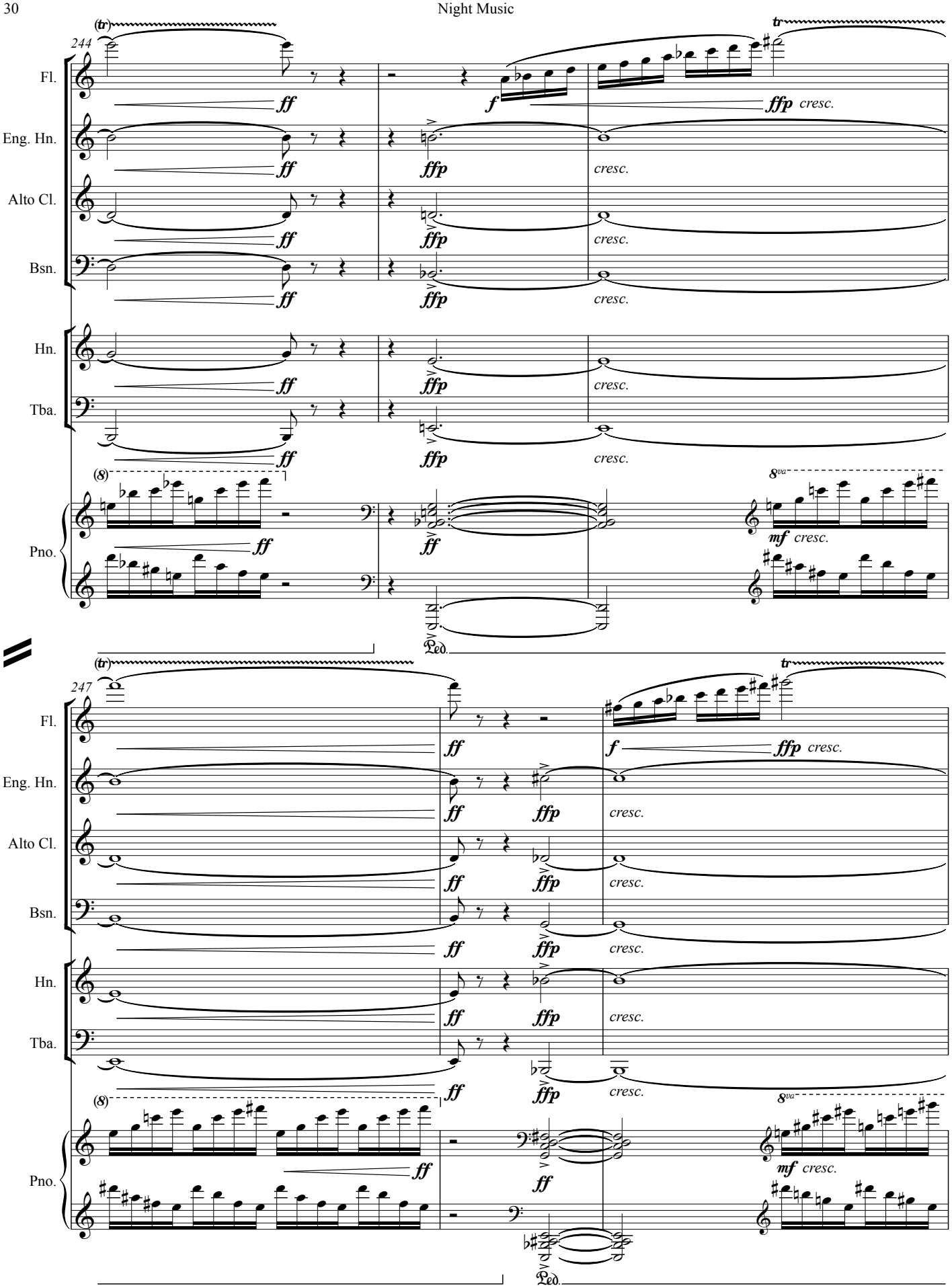

212
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
215
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
p
(marcato)
mf

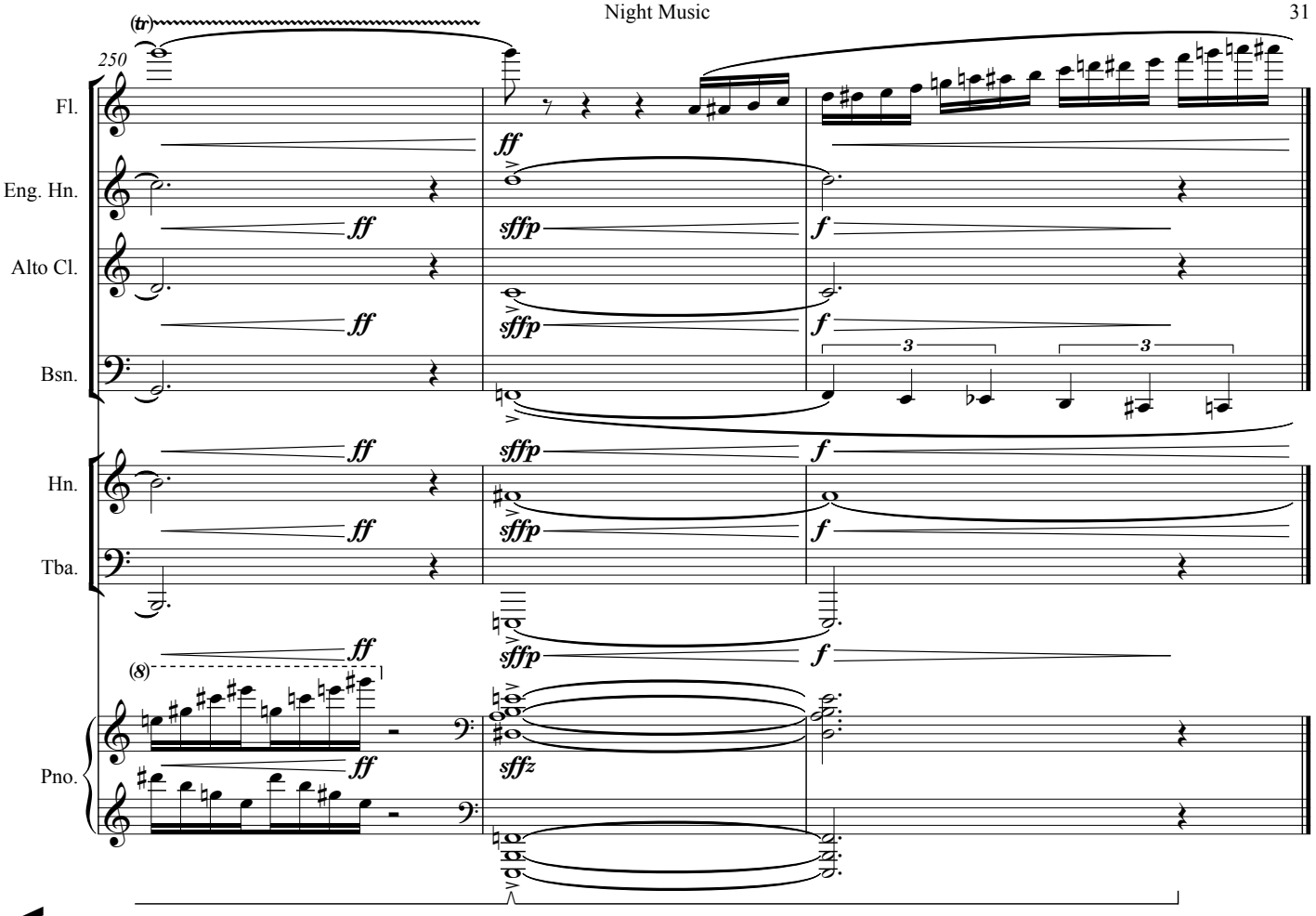

217
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
220
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.


223
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
dim.
226
p
dim.

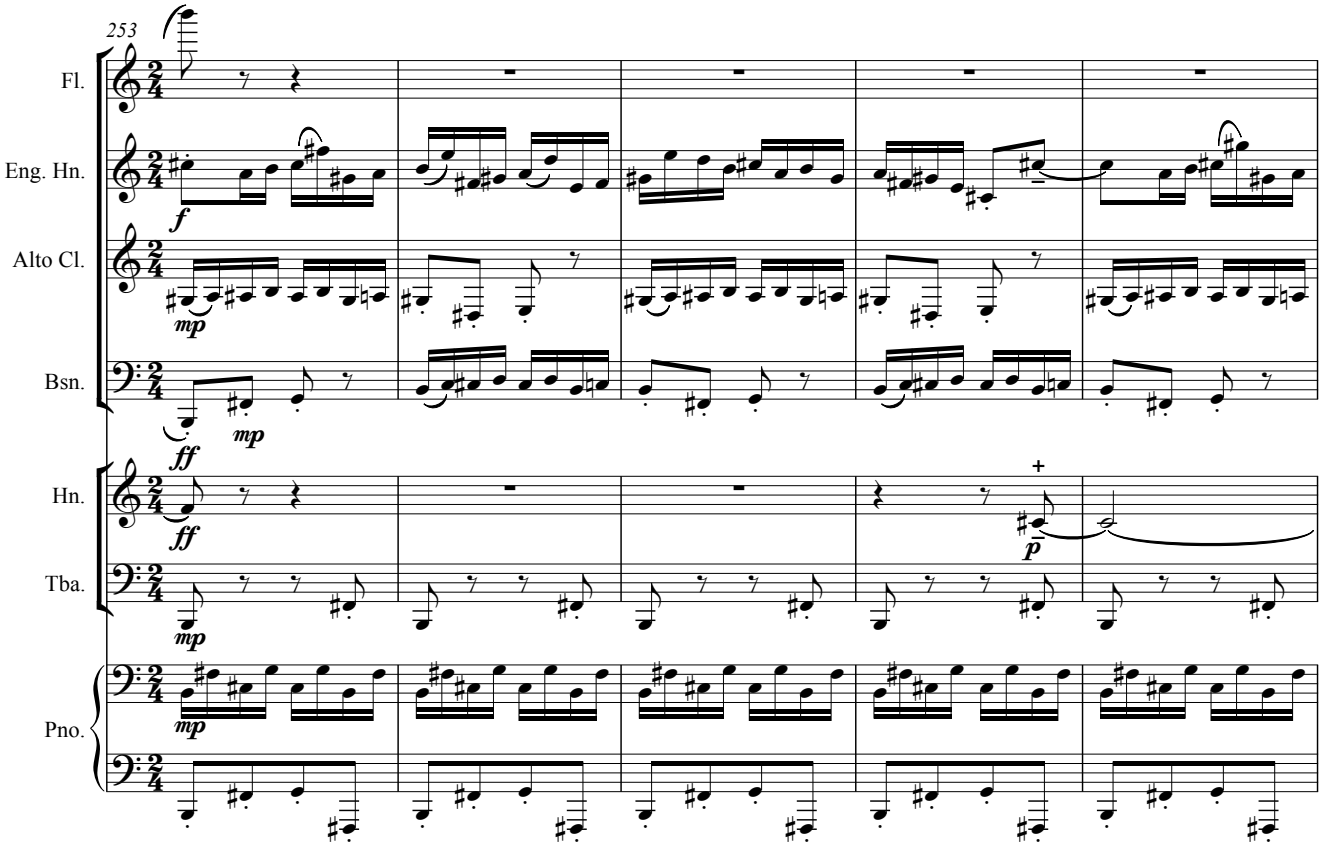

229
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
p
pp
232
senza sord.
cresc.
Ped.

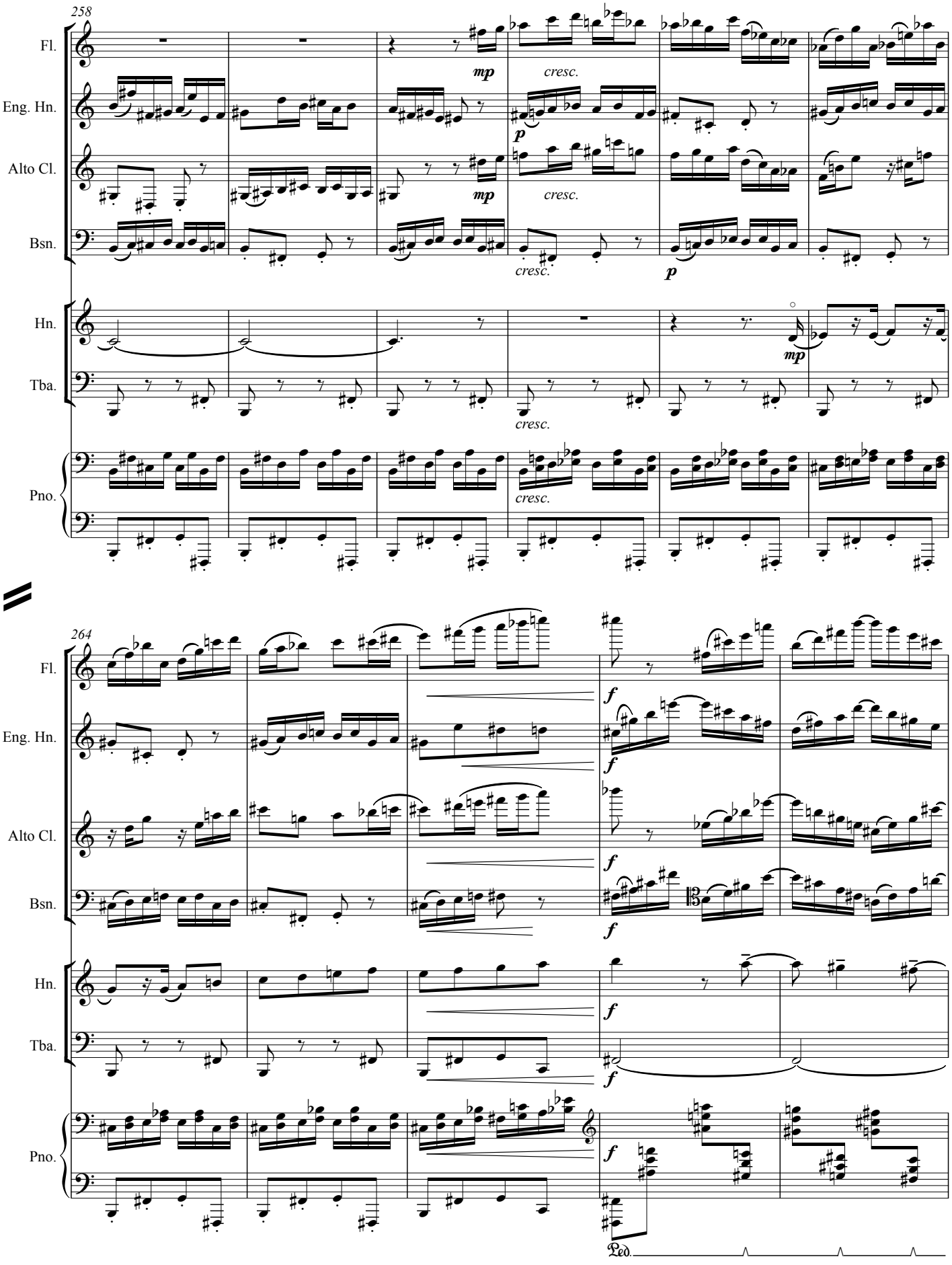

236
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
cresc.
ff
ffp
f
241
tr
ffp cresc.
8va
p cresc.

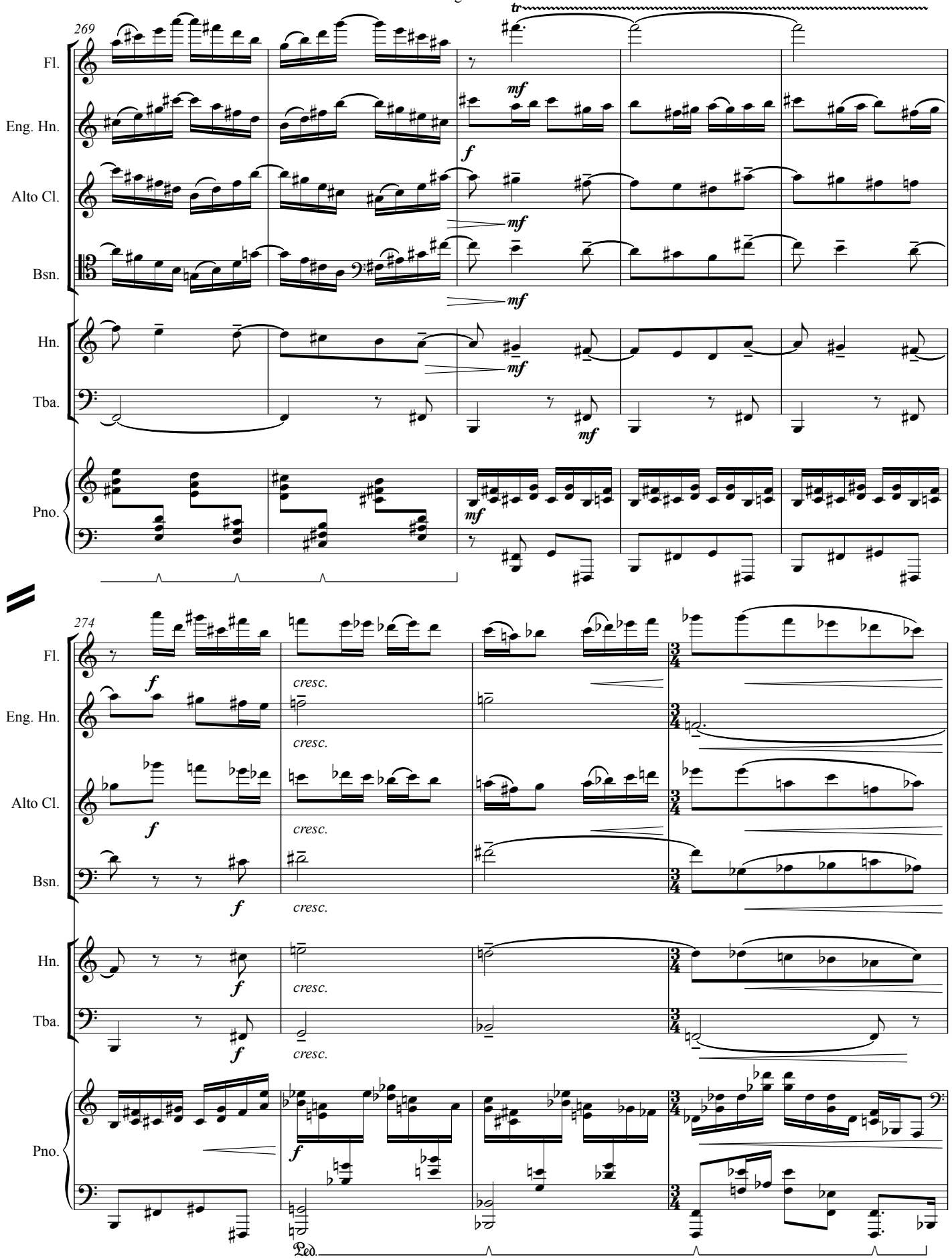

244
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
(tr)
tr
(8)
8va
ff
f
ffp
mf
cresc.
Ped.
247

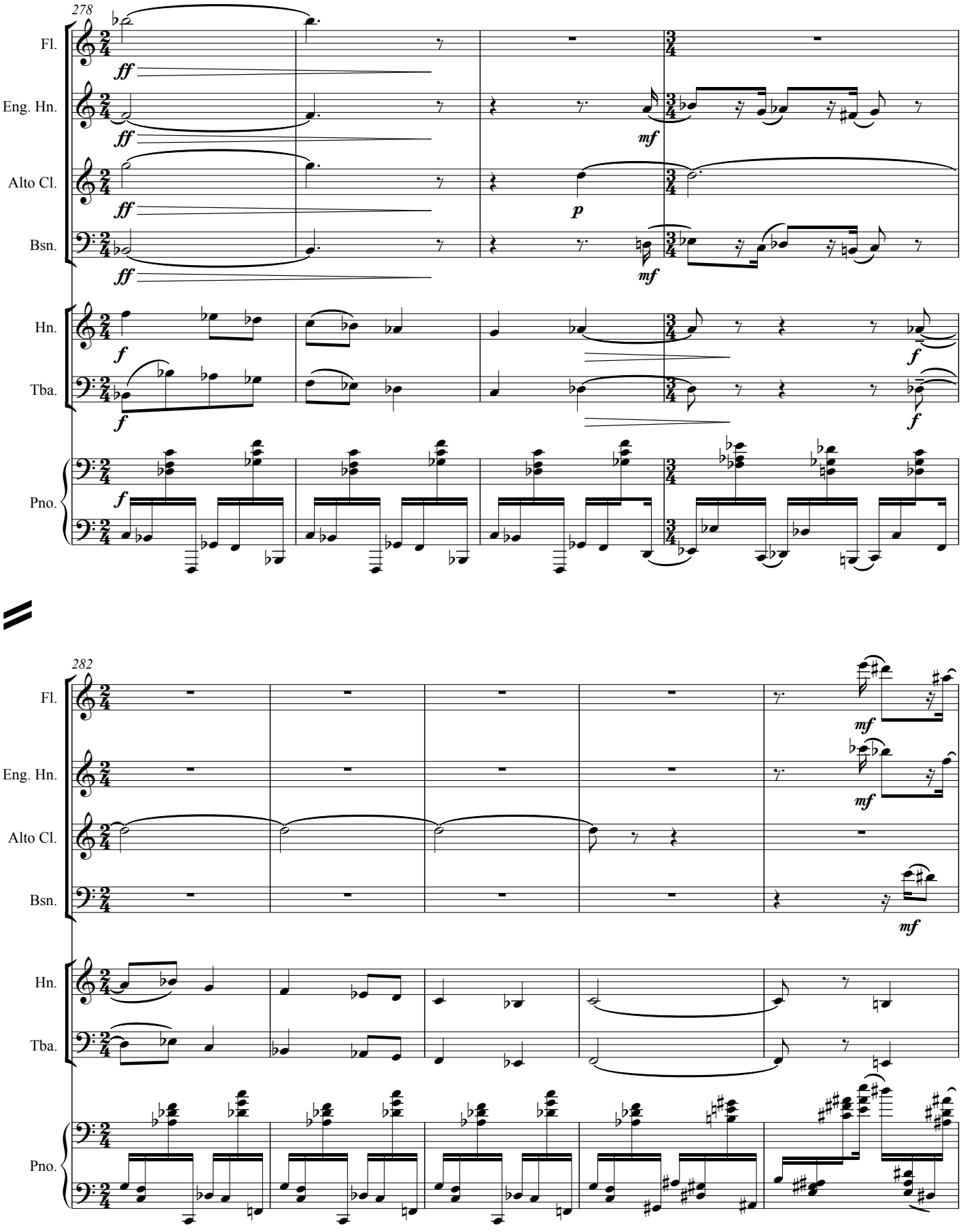


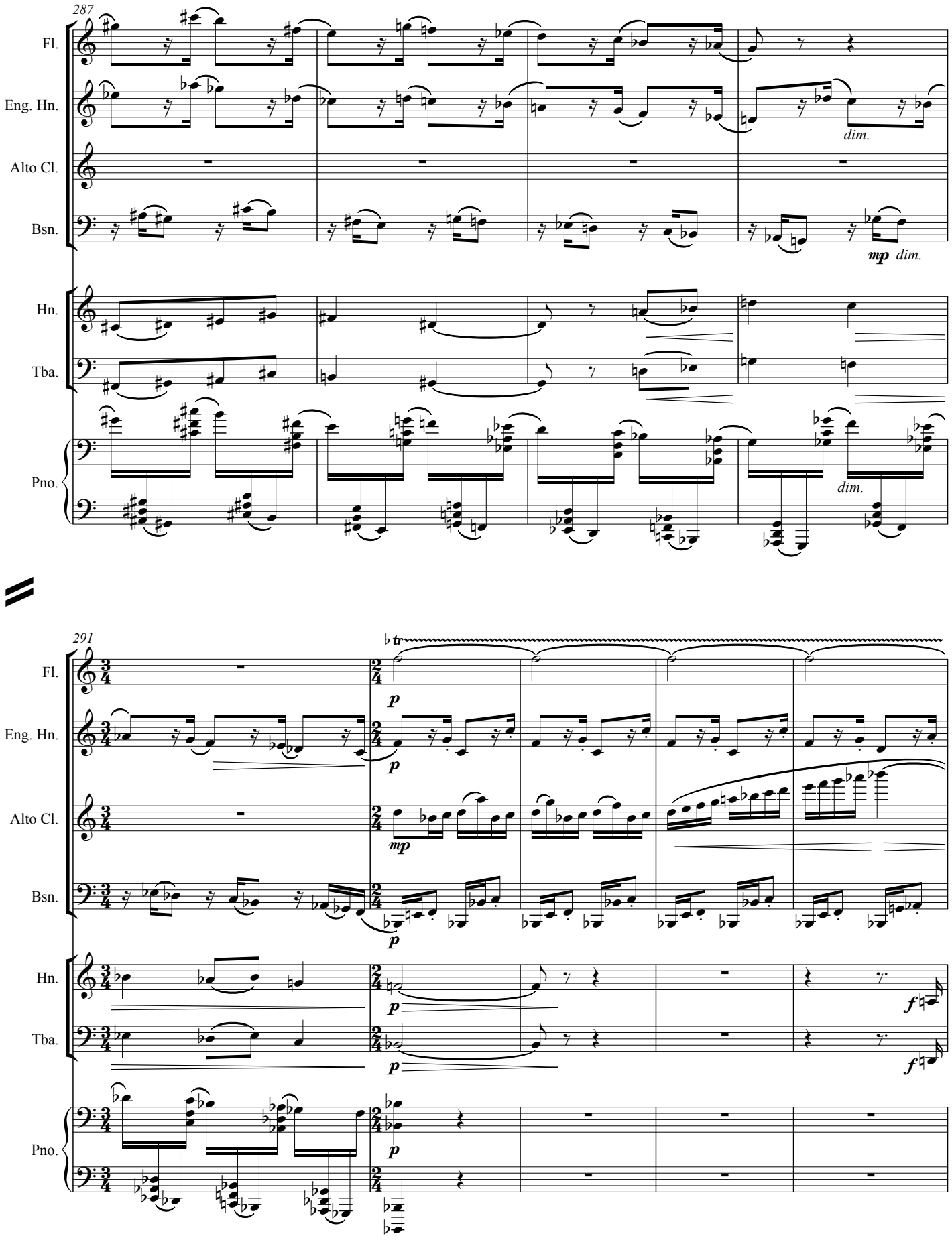
IV. Cortege ♩ = 88




258
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mp
cresc.
p
264
f
Ped.


269
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
tr
mf
f
274
cresc.
3/4
Ped.


278
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
ff
mf
p
f
282
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
mf


287
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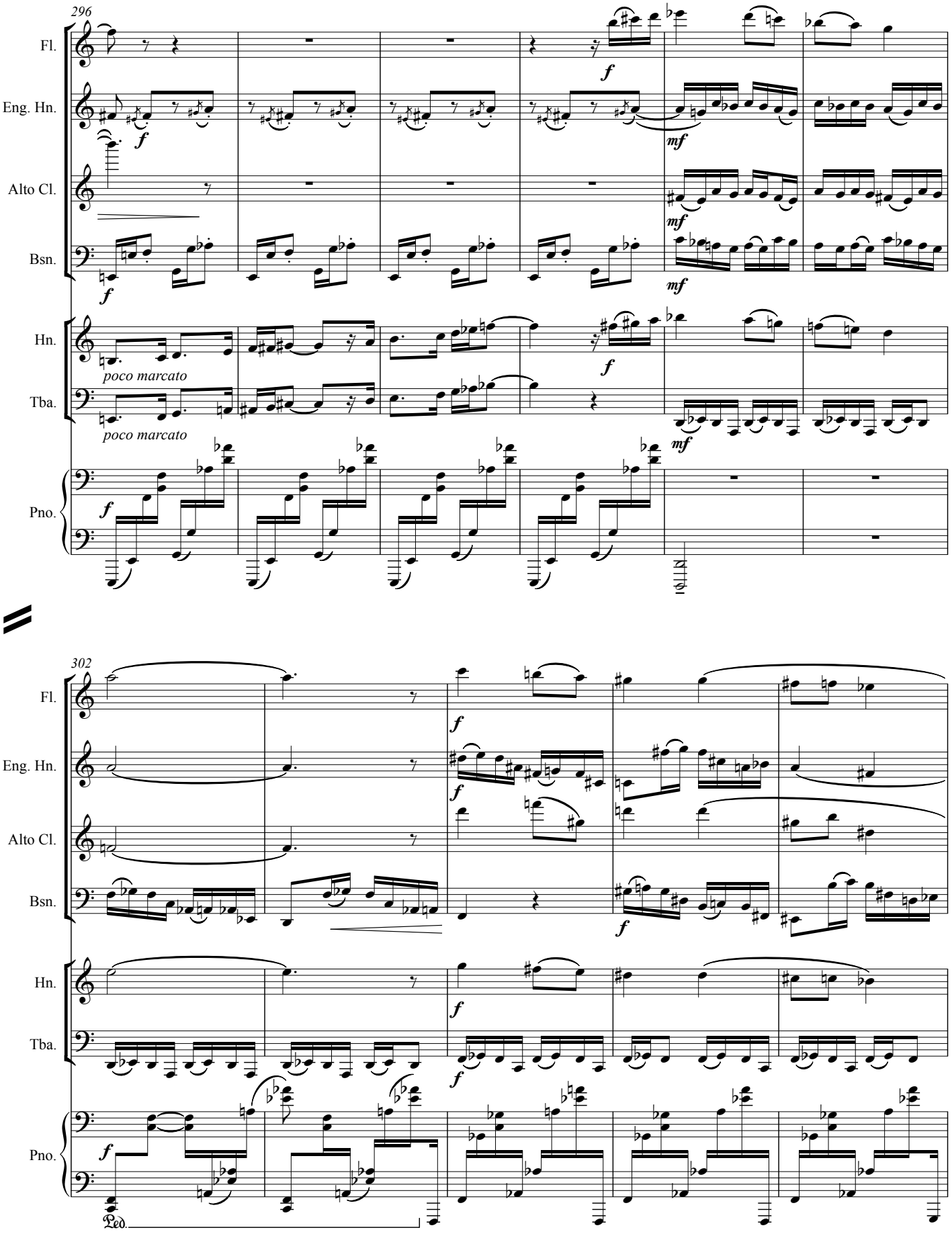
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
dim.
mp dim.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
dim.
291
tr
p
p
mp
p
p
f
f
p


296
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Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
poco marcato
poco marcato
302
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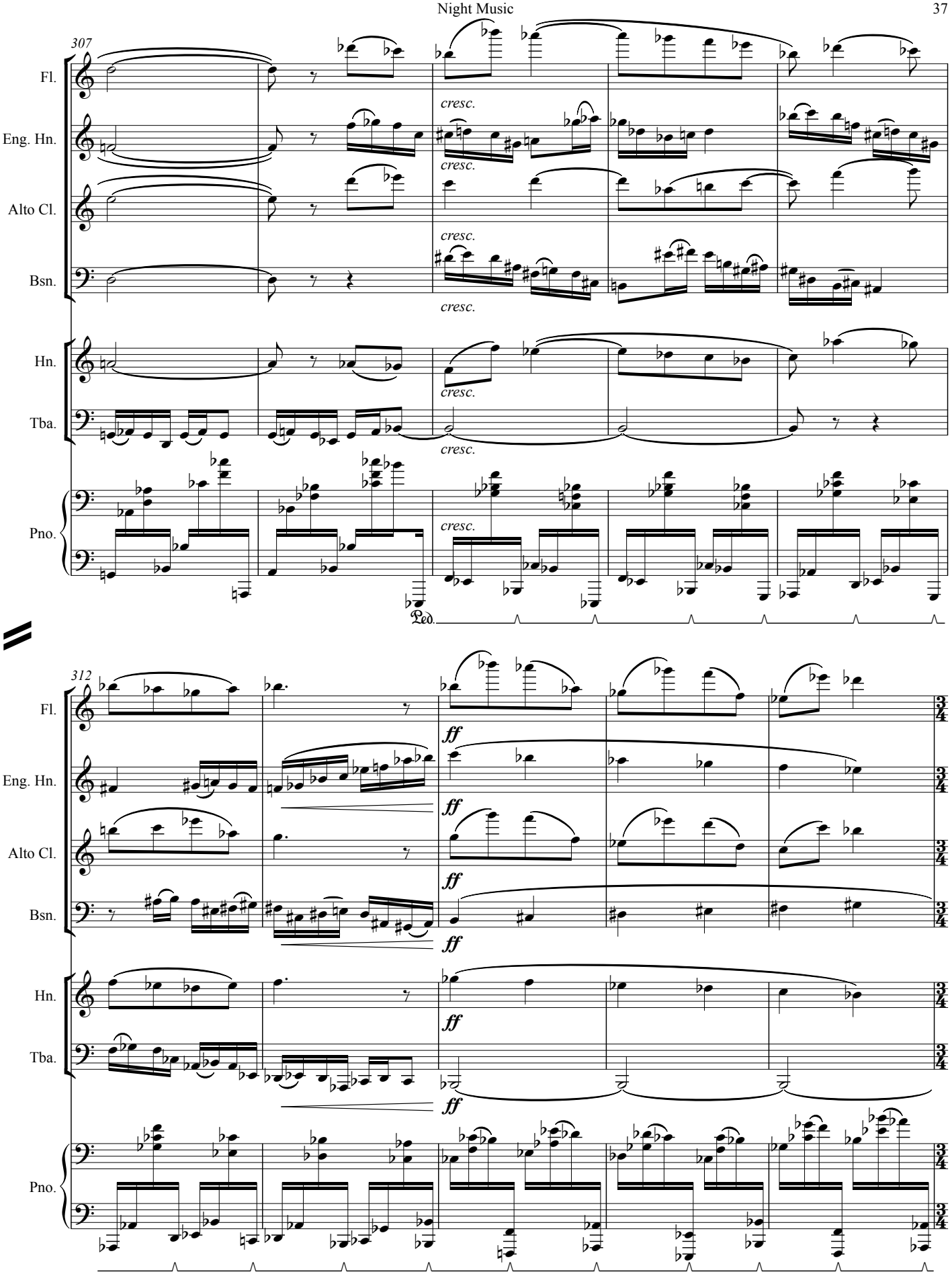
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
Ped.


307
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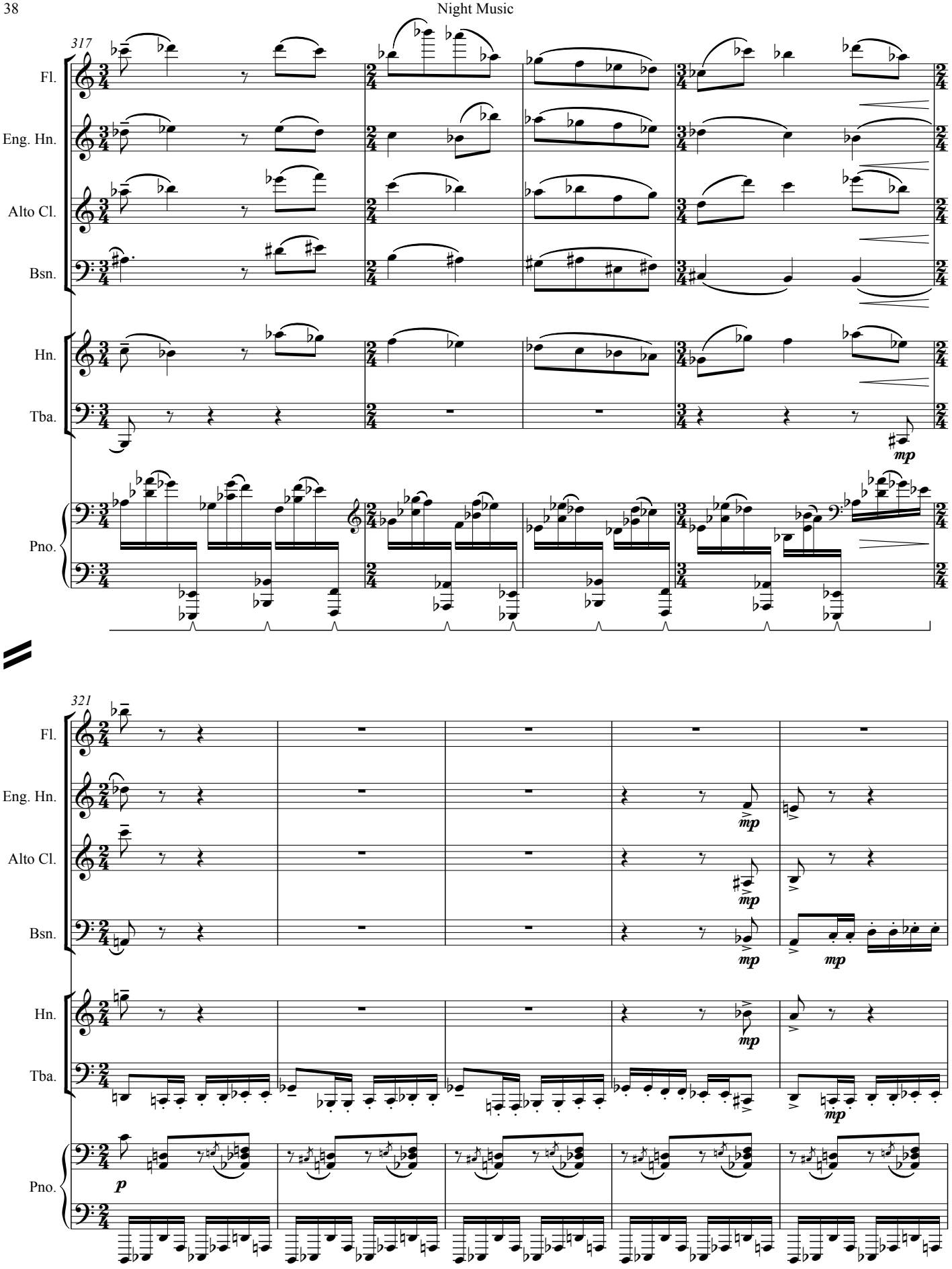
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
cresc.
Ped.
312
ff


317
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Bsn.
Hn.
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321
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mp
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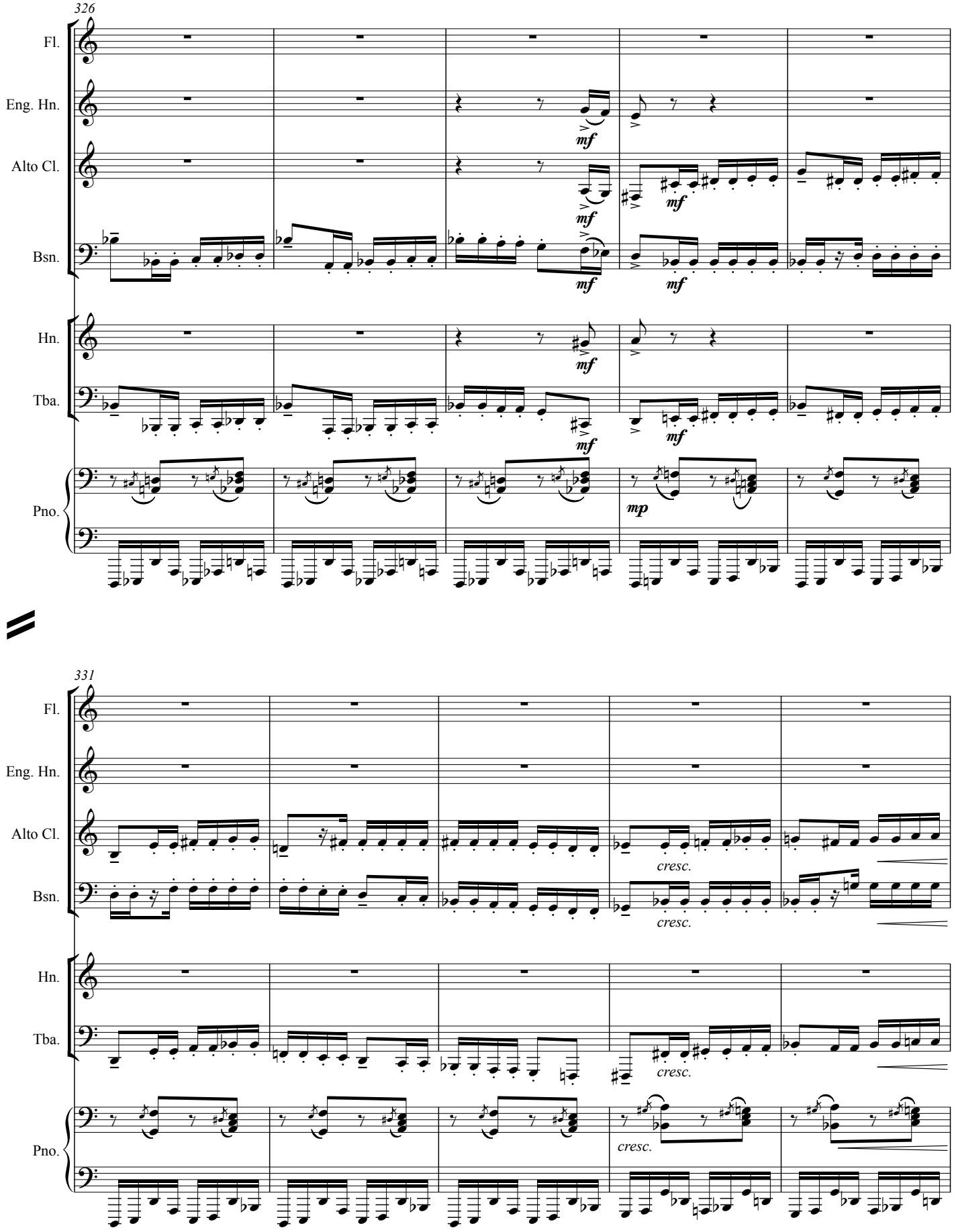
326
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Alto Cl.
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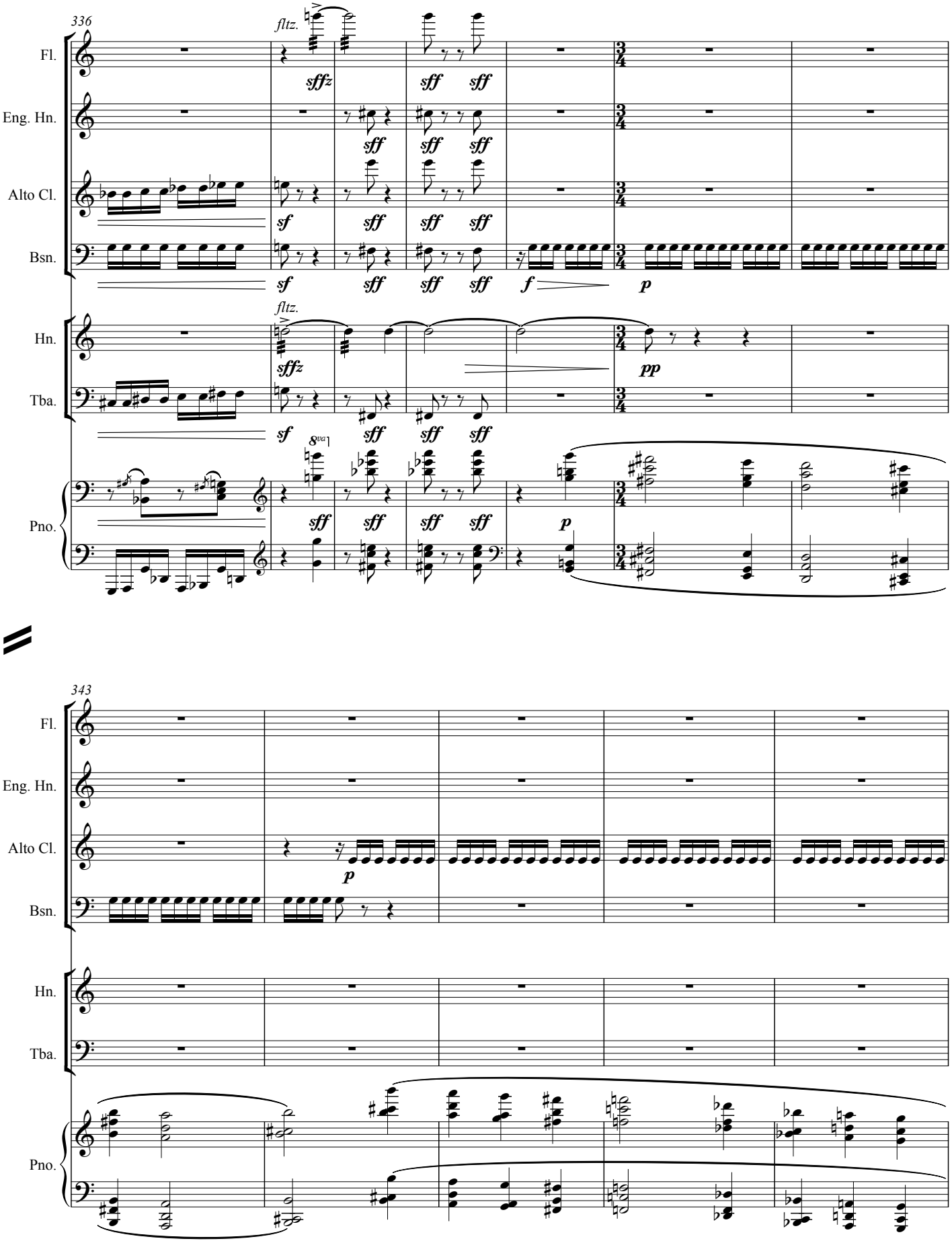
Tba.
Pno.
mf
mp
331
cresc.


336
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Fl.
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Pno.
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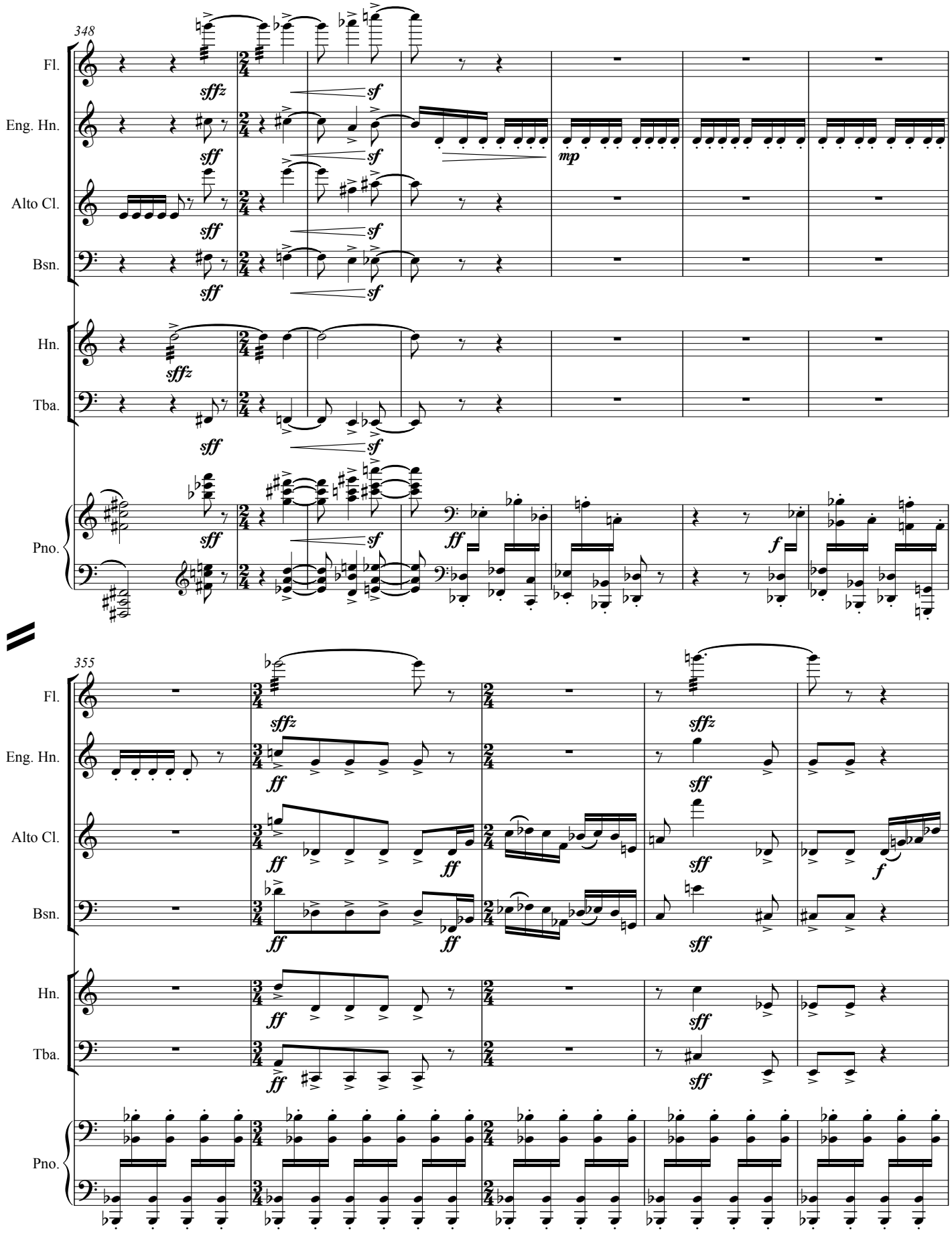
f
p
pp
8va
343


348
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Eng. Hn.
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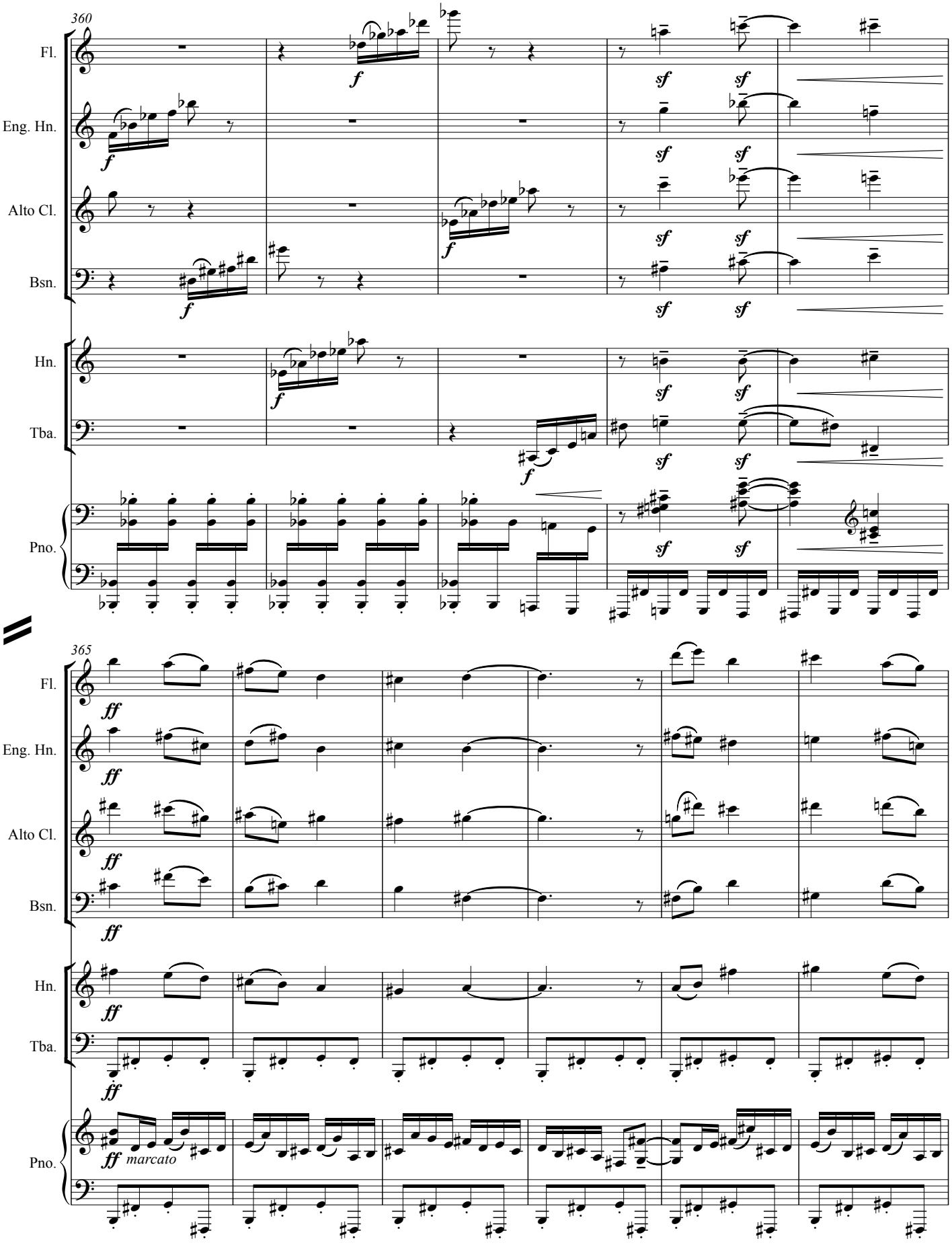
Pno.
sffz
sff
sf
mp
ff
f
355
3/4
2/4


360
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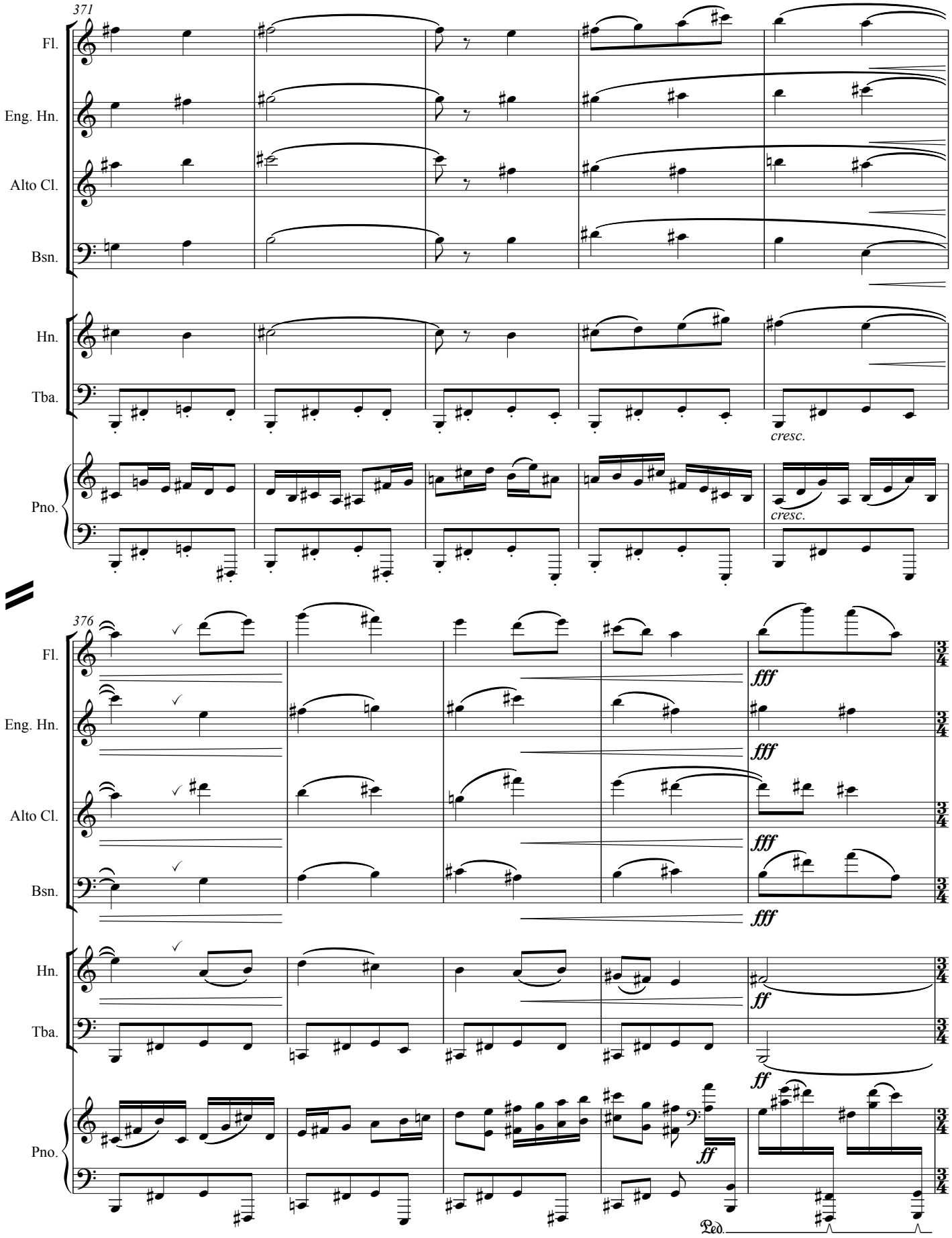
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
365
marcato


371
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
cresc.
cresc.
376
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Bsn.
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fff
fff
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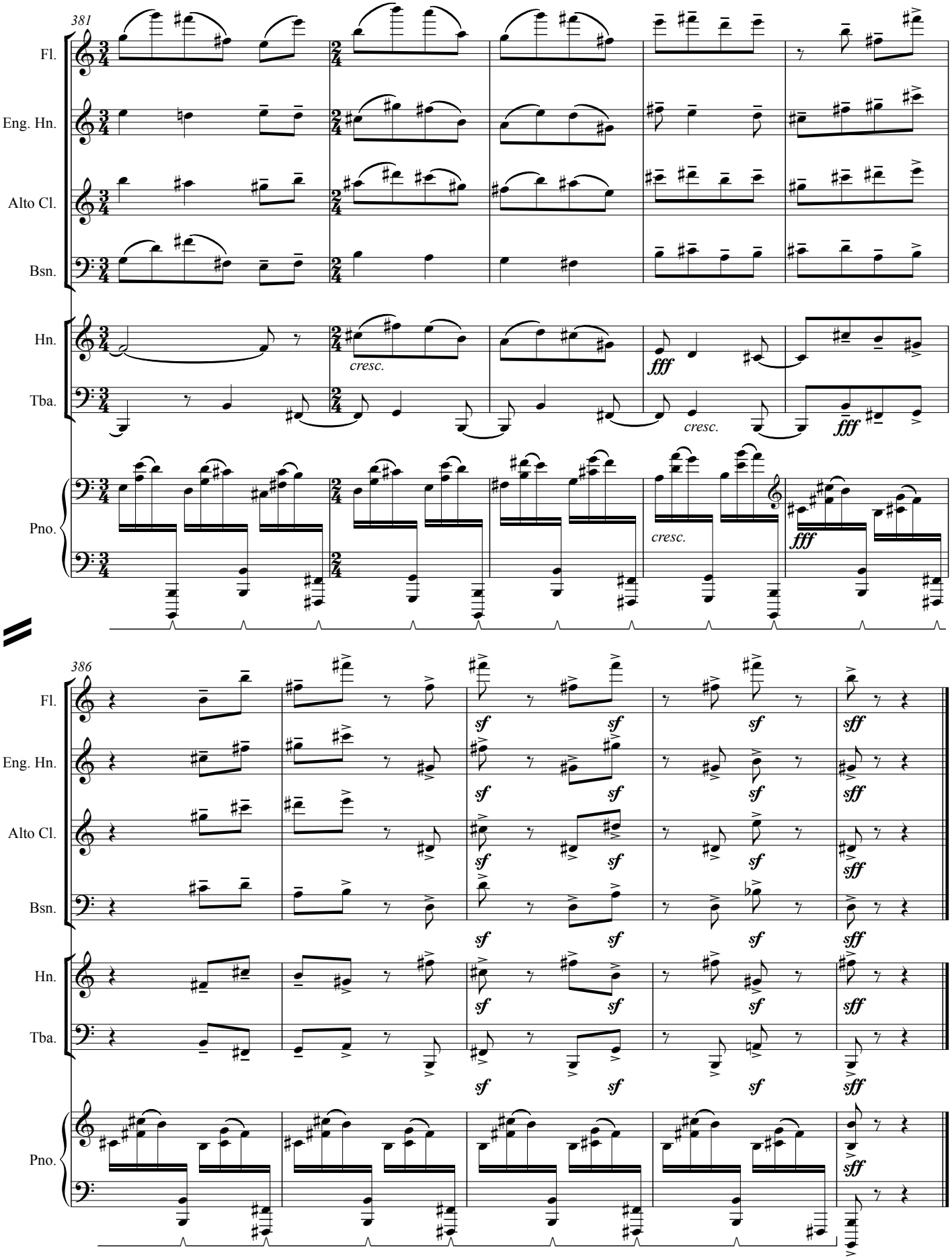
ff
ff
ff
Ped.


381
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
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Pno.
cresc.
fff
cresc.
fff
cresc.
fff
386
Fl.
Eng. Hn.
Alto Cl.
Bsn.
Hn.
Tba.
Pno.
sf
sff