Frank Proto

The House on Amity Street

A Tale For Kids of All Ages

for String Quintet and Storyteller

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Notes

Scored For:

- **2 Violins**
- **Viola**
- **Cello**
- **Double Bass**
- **Storyteller***

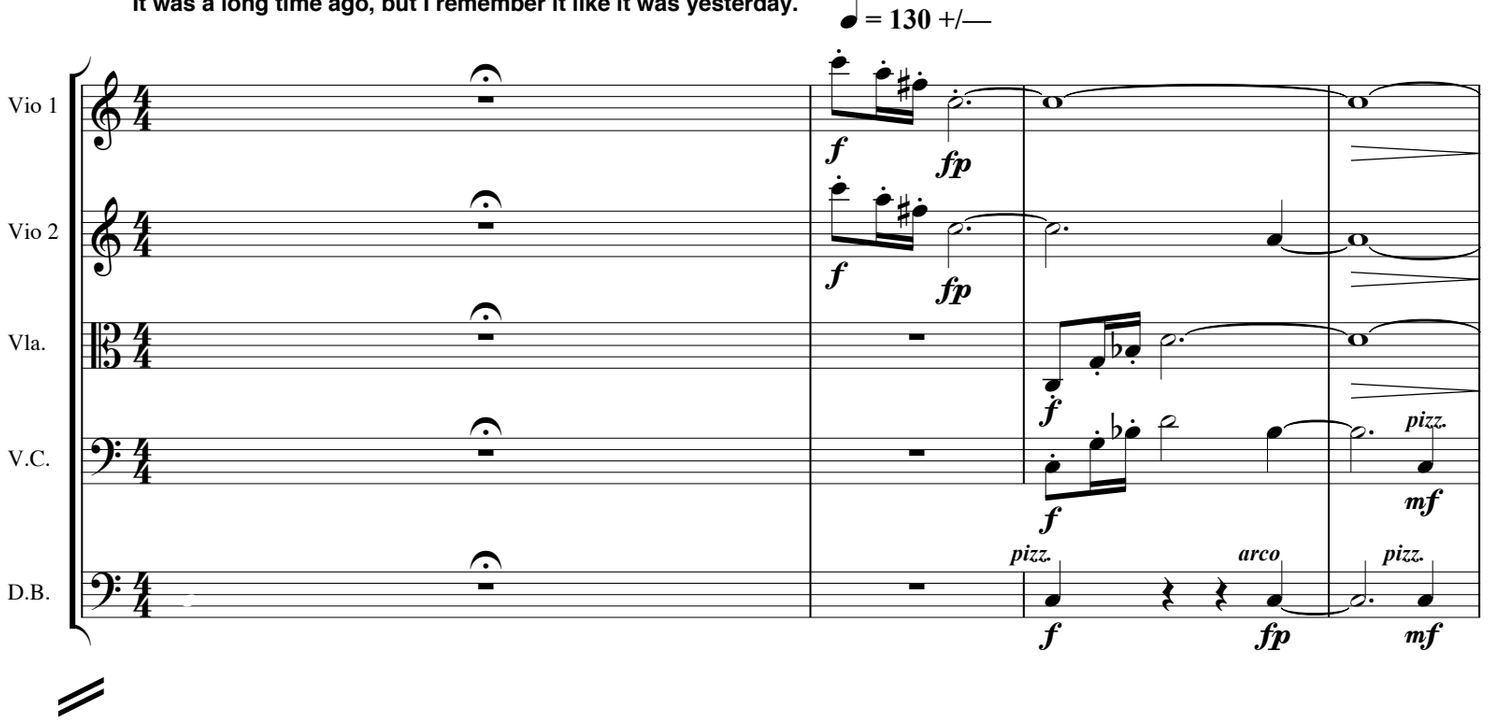
*** The storyteller may be Tony or Toni**

The House on Amity Street

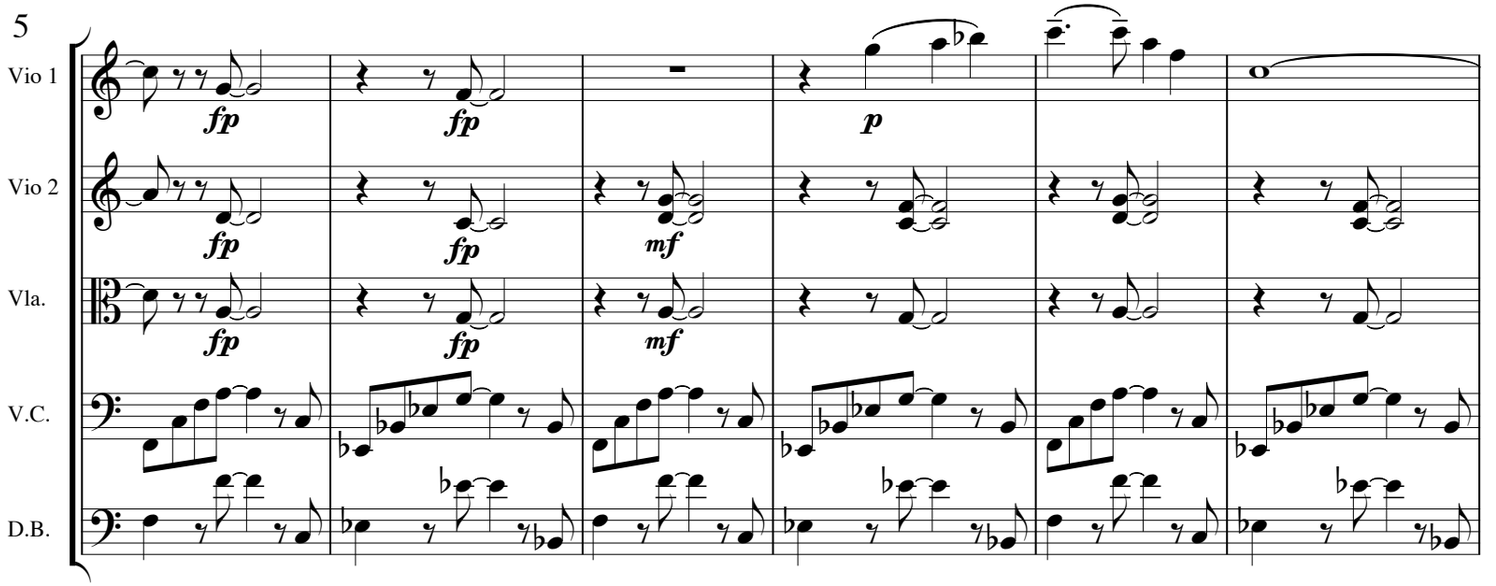
A Tale For Kids of All Ages

Music and Text
Frank Proto

I want to tell you about something that happened to me and my brother Willie when we were kids back home in Fudgeville Ohio. It was a long time ago, but I remember it like it was yesterday.



There wasn't much special about Fudgeville when we grew up there back in the 1980s -



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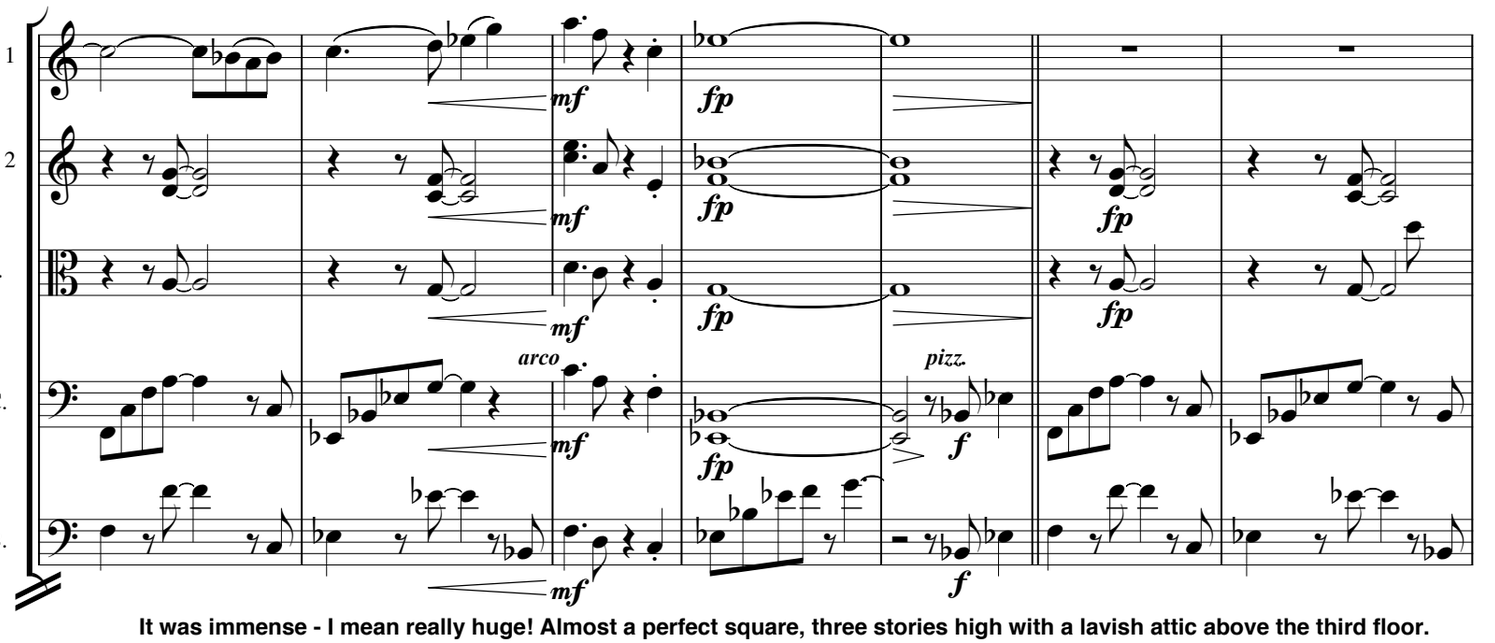
11

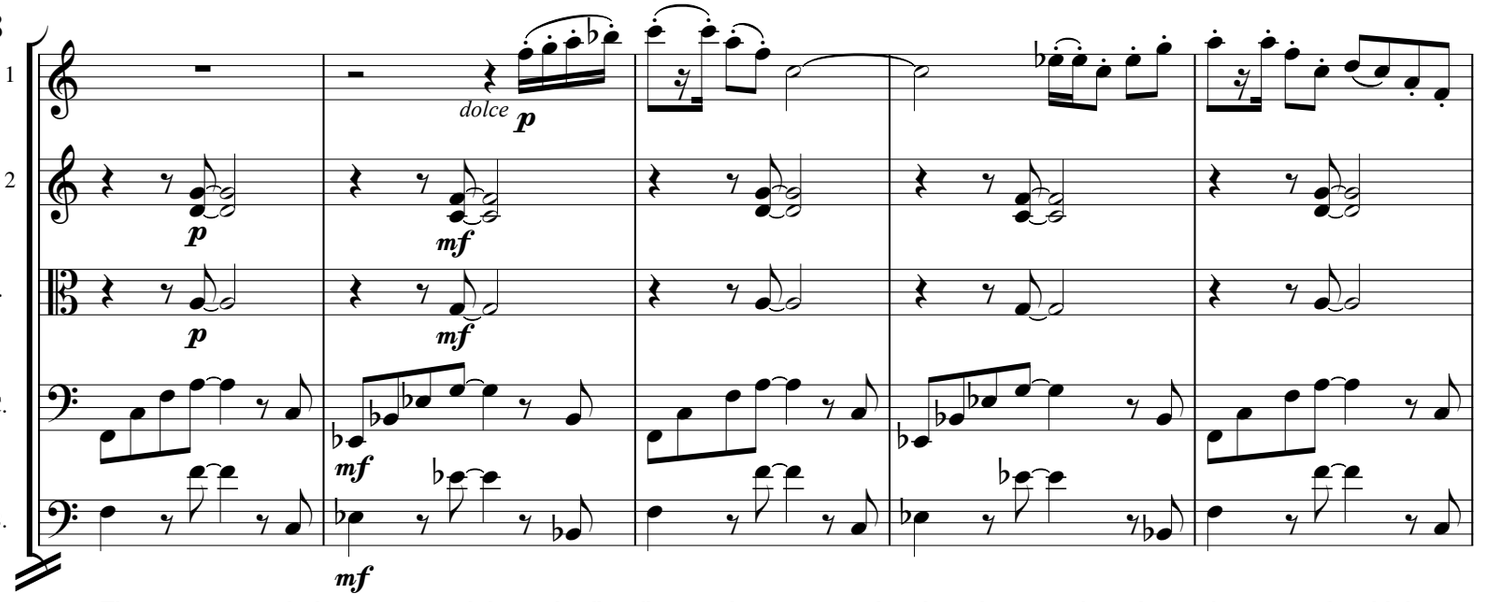
except for maybe that big old wooden frame house over on Amity Street.
That house had been there for as long as anyone could remember.

A



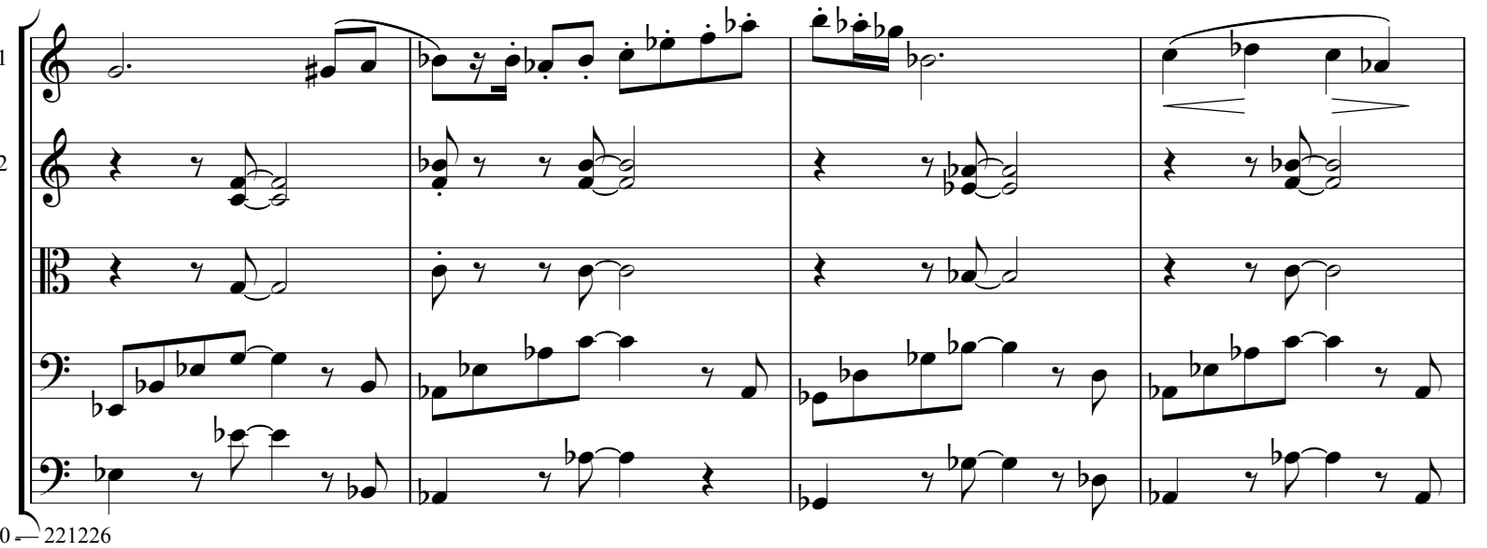
It was immense - I mean really huge! Almost a perfect square, three stories high with a lavish attic above the third floor.

18



There was a porch that ran around the entire first floor and a great wooden door that must have been almost ten–feet high.

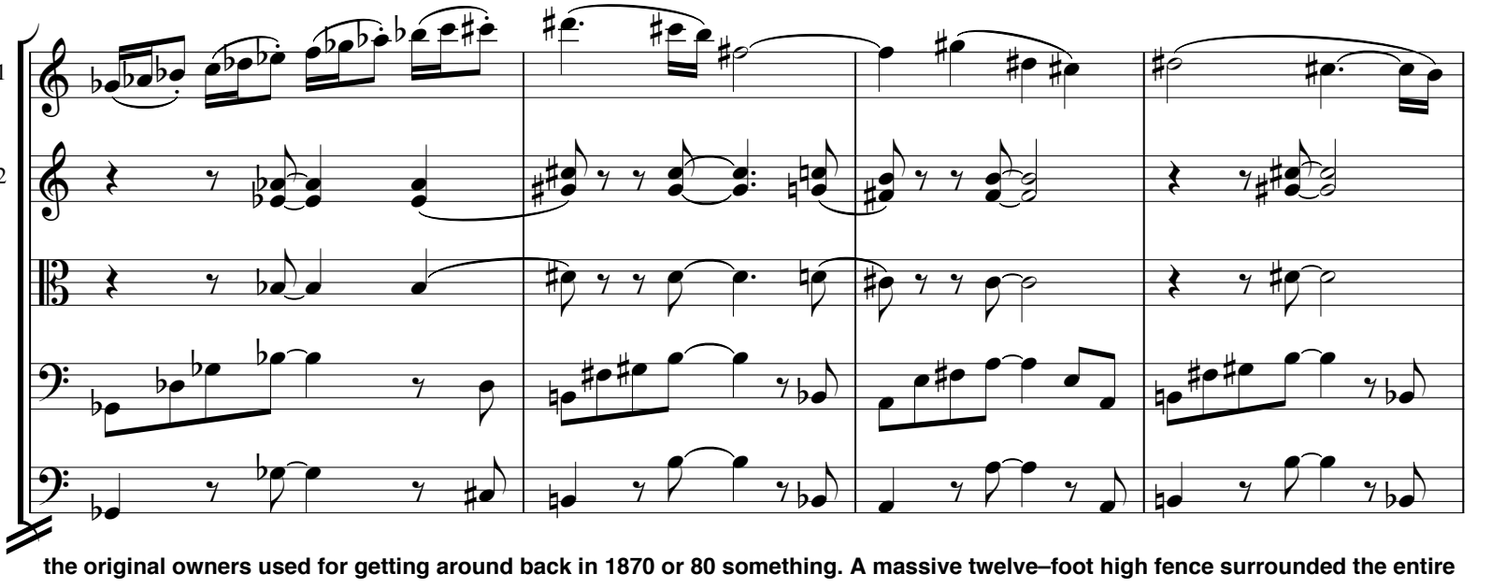
23



Three wide steps led down from the porch to a wide circular driveway that must have been used by those fancy horse-drawn carriages

27

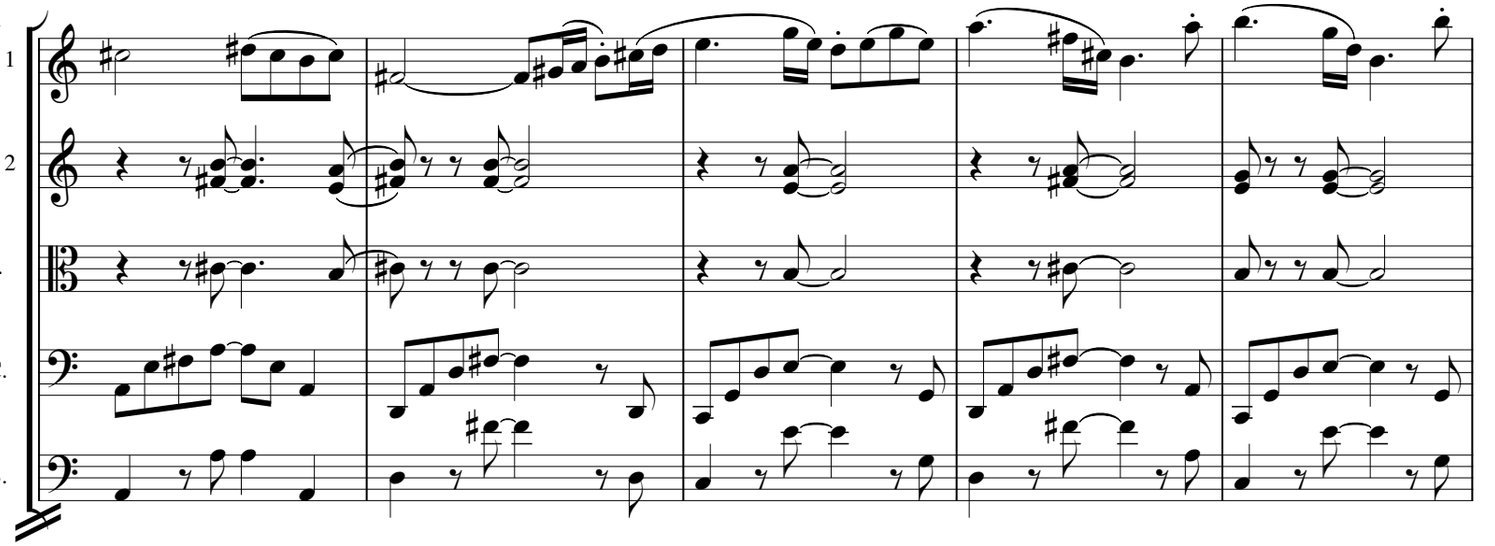
Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.



the original owners used for getting around back in 1870 or 80 something. A massive twelve–foot high fence surrounded the entire

31

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.



36

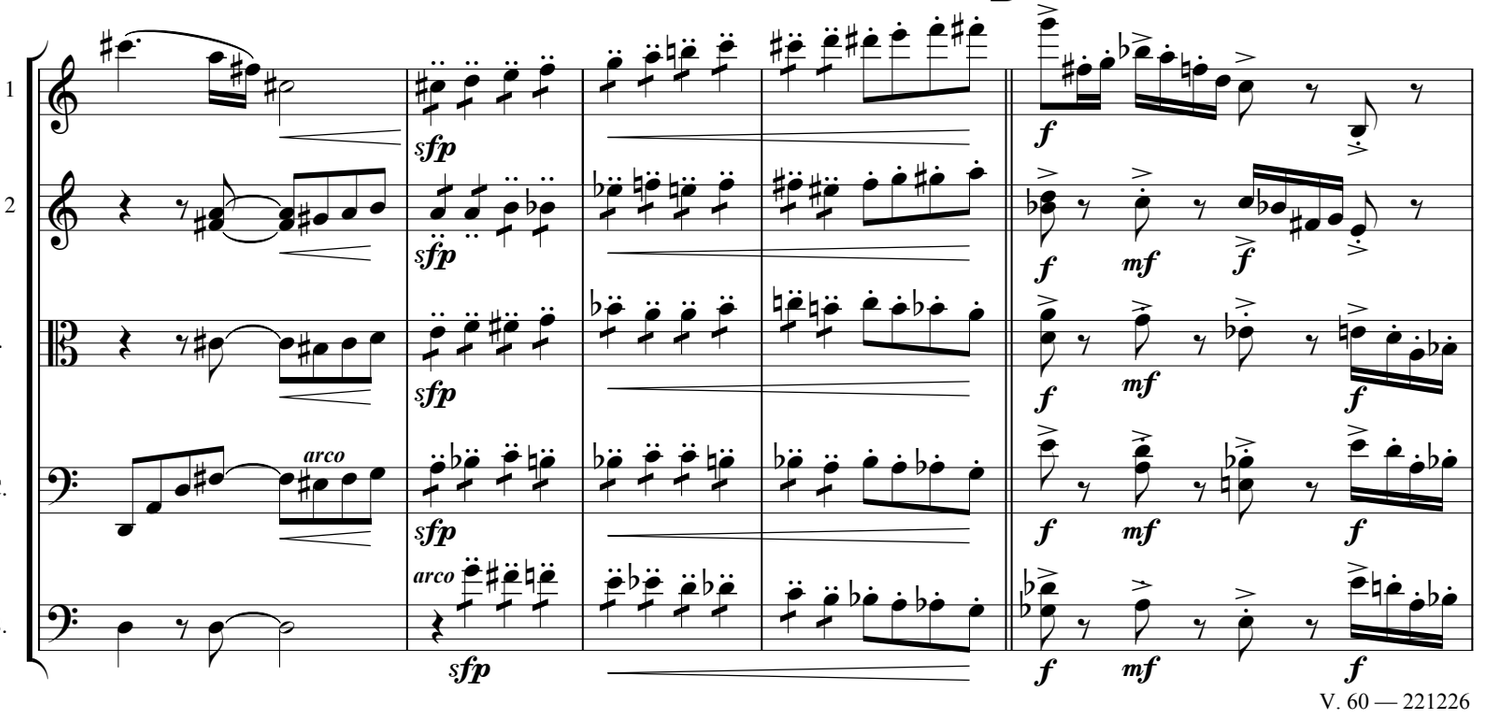
property.

B

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

arco

arco

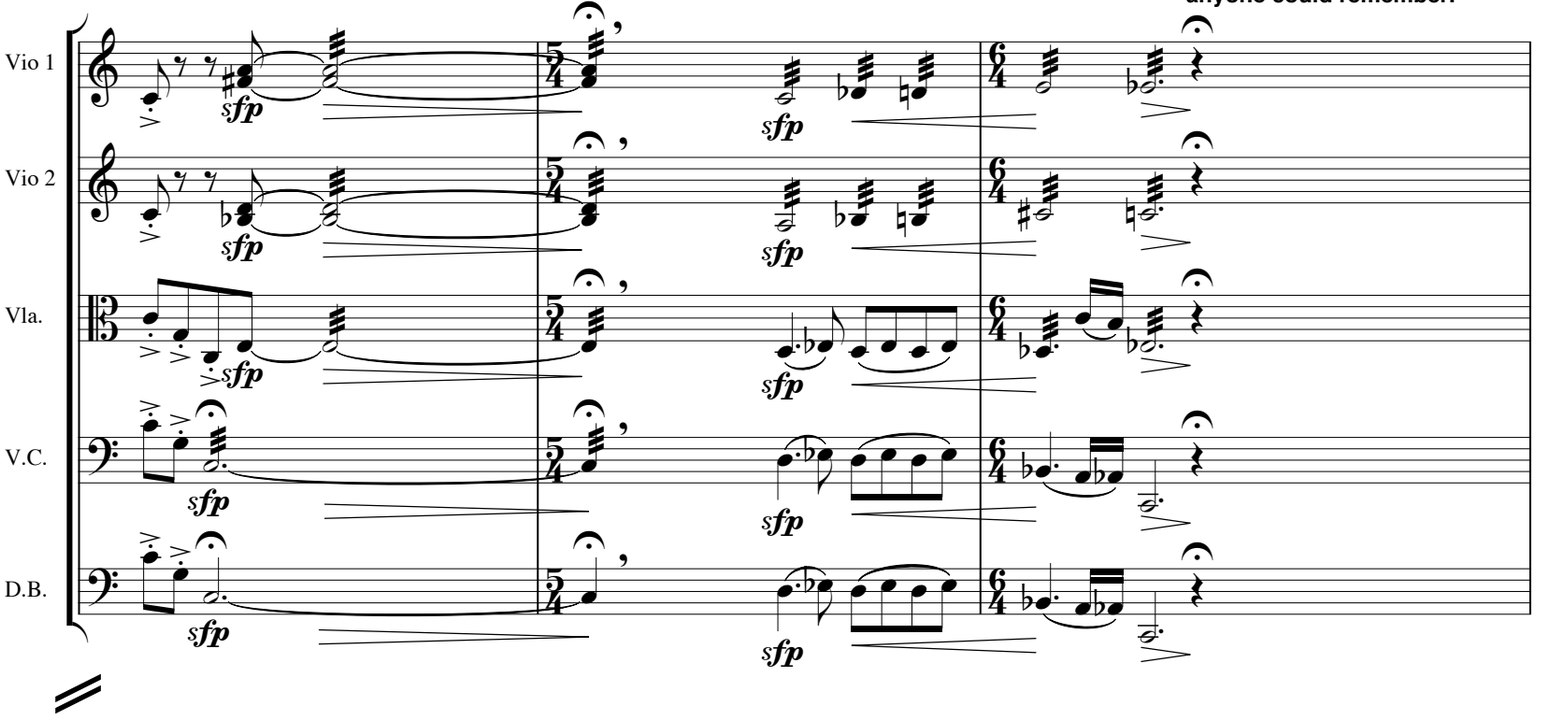


41

The owner of the house was Robert Prichard.
Not the friendliest soul in Fudgeville.

♩ = 69

Old man Prichard had also lived in that house for longer than anyone could remember.

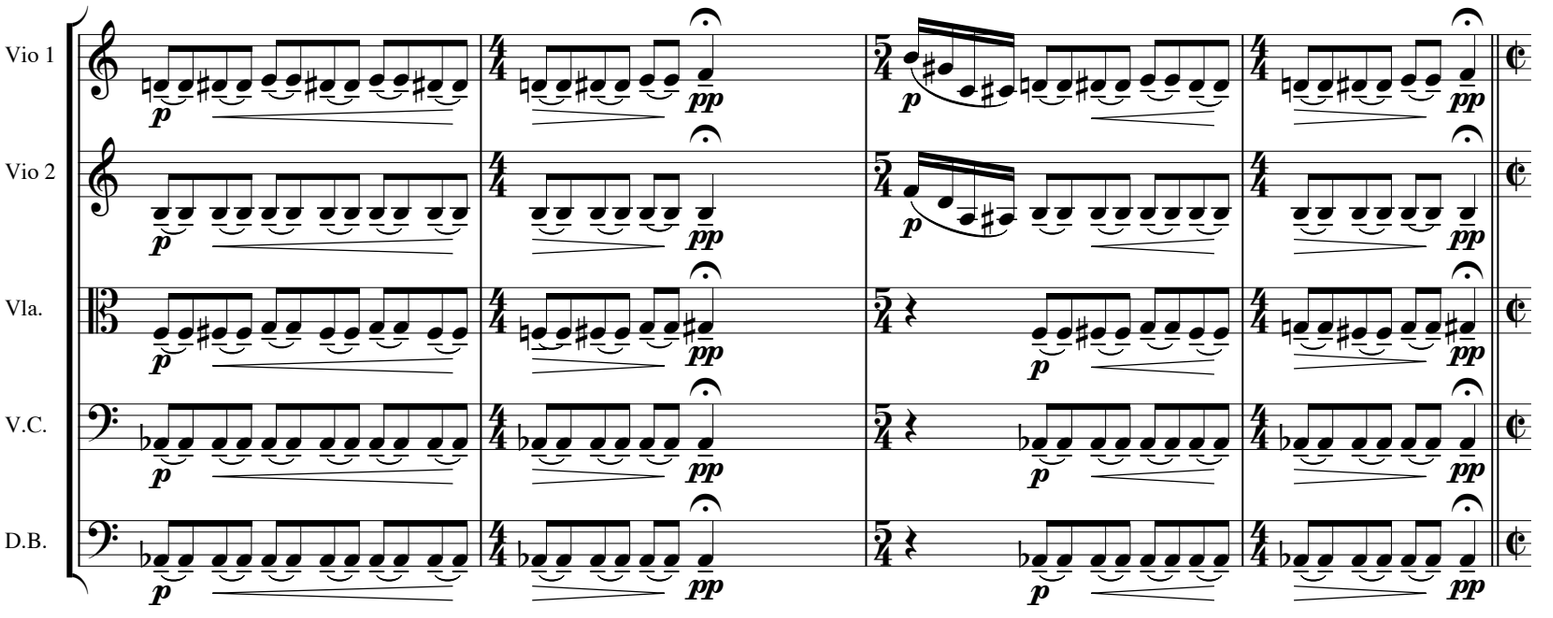


44

My father told me that his father told him that Mr. Prichard was living there even when he was a kid!

No one ever saw visitors entering or leaving the house, and if any of the neighborhood kids got too close they'd be chased away with a stern warning.

♩ = 60



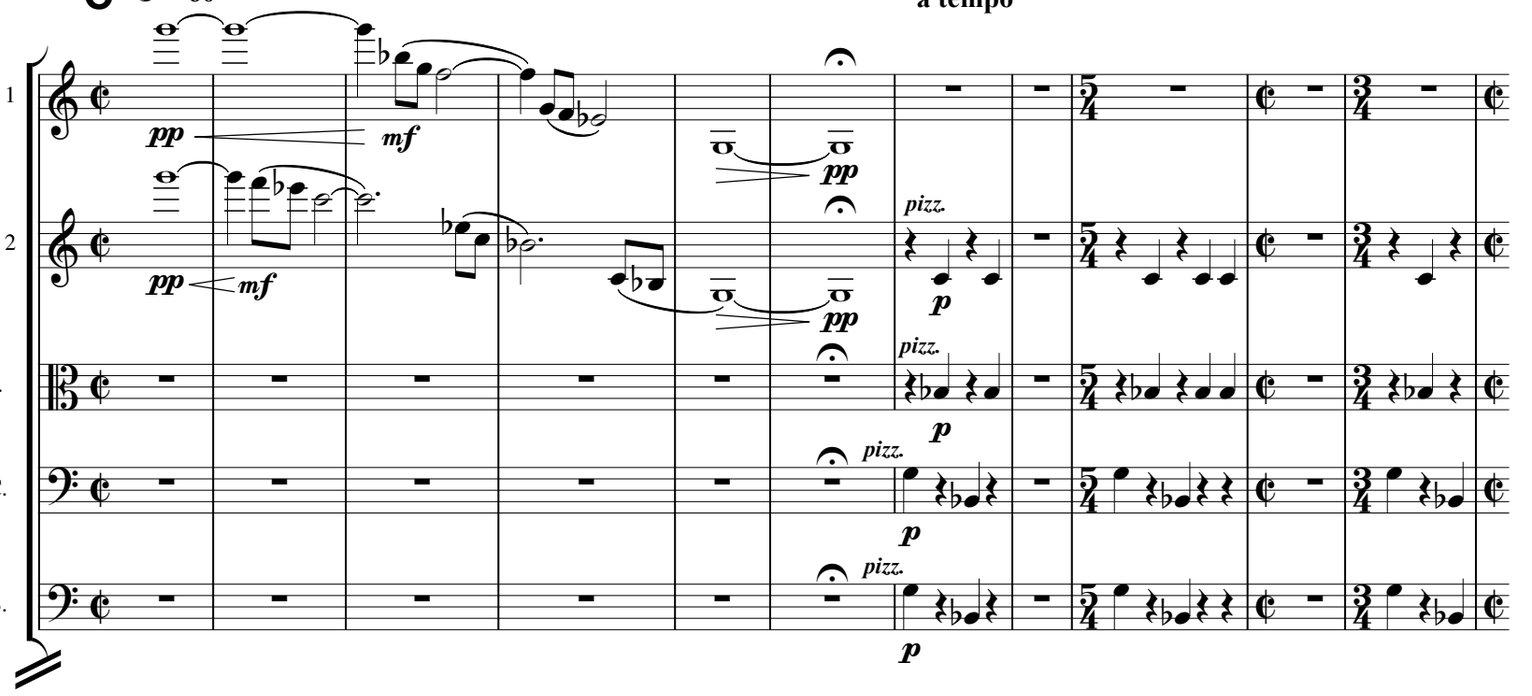
48

C ♩ = 60

It all started on a cold December afternoon.

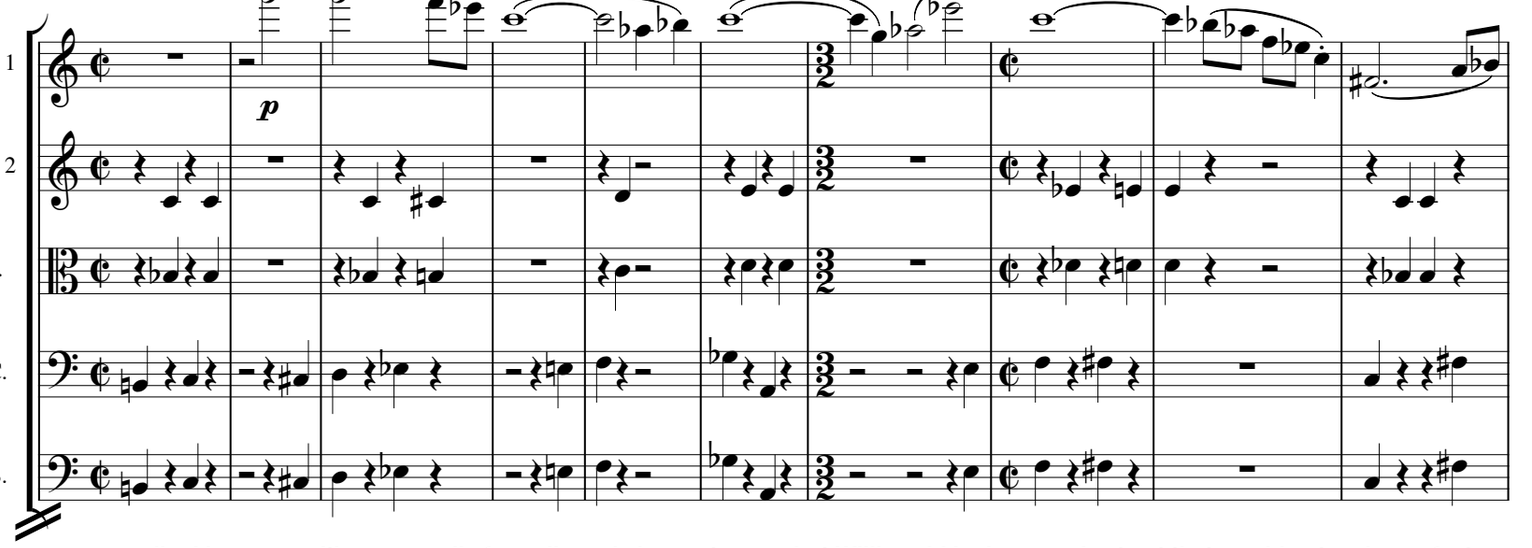
a tempo

Willie had been playing at Jimmy Nichols' house and



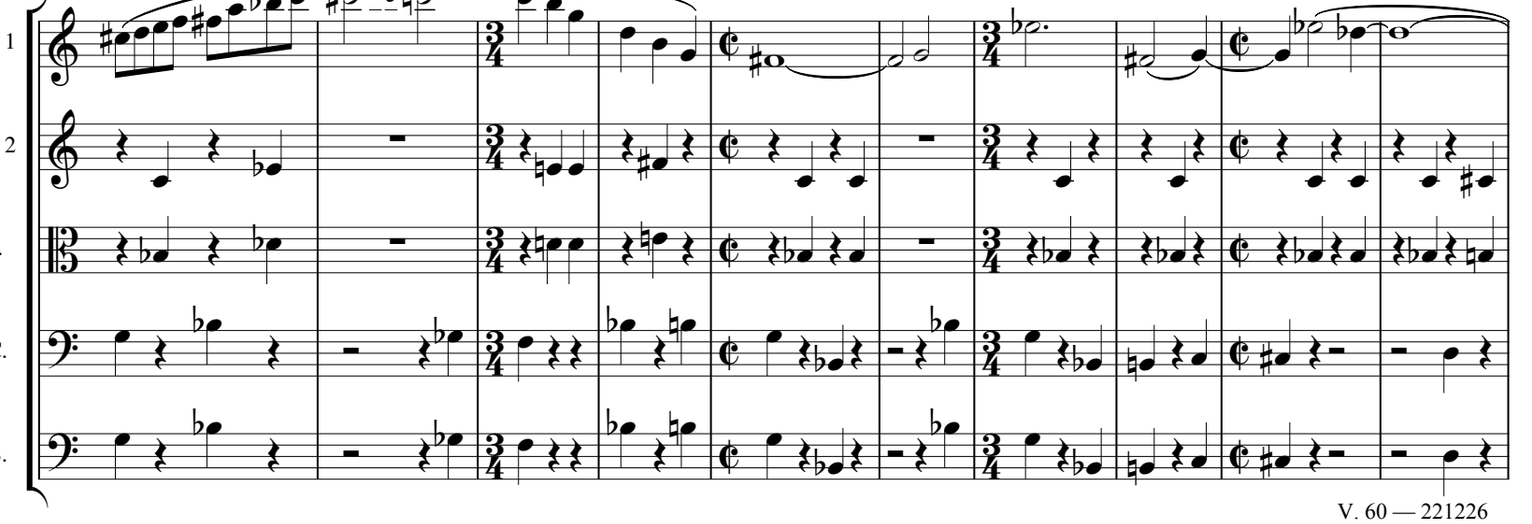
mom sent me over to get him. The sun had already disappeared, and Willie didn't have enough clothes on and was feeling the cold

59

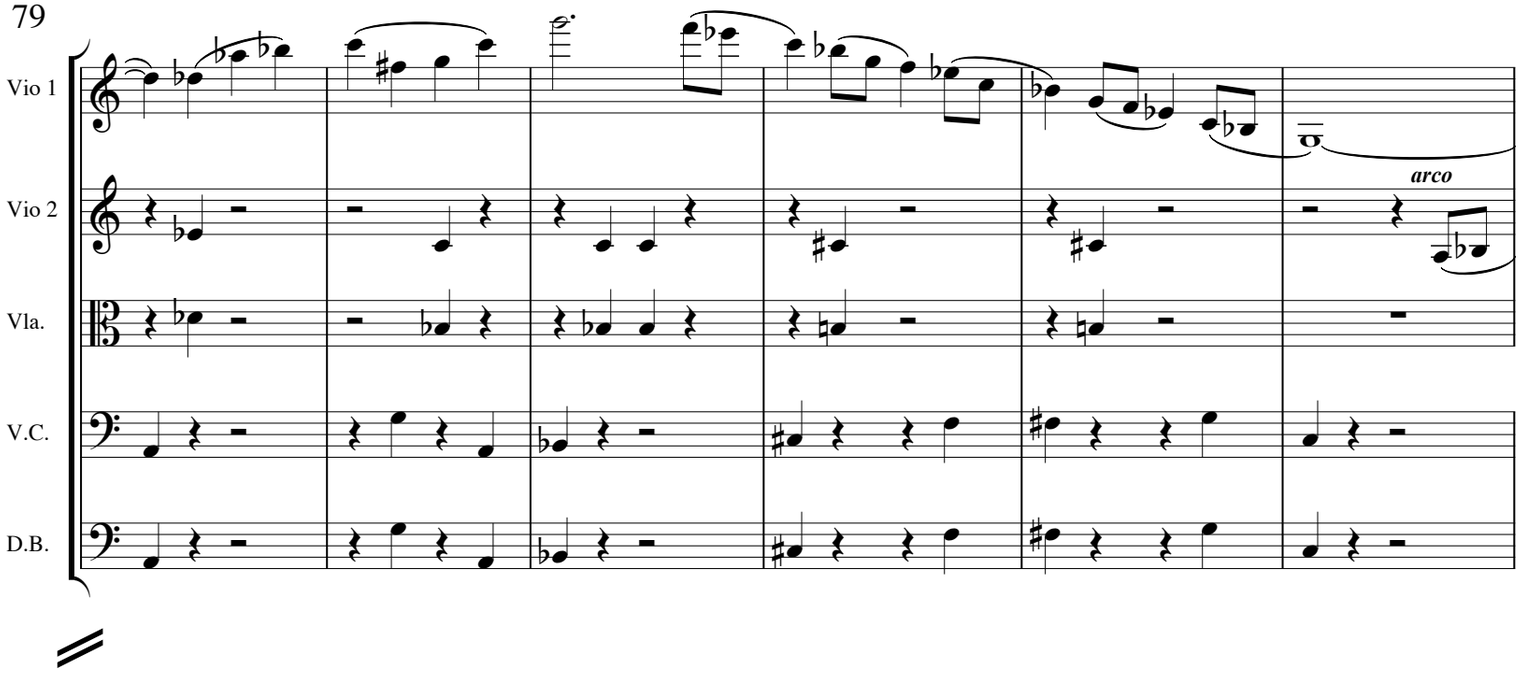


as we walked home. It's over a mile from Jimmy's house to ours but Willie said he knew a short cut that would get us home faster.

69



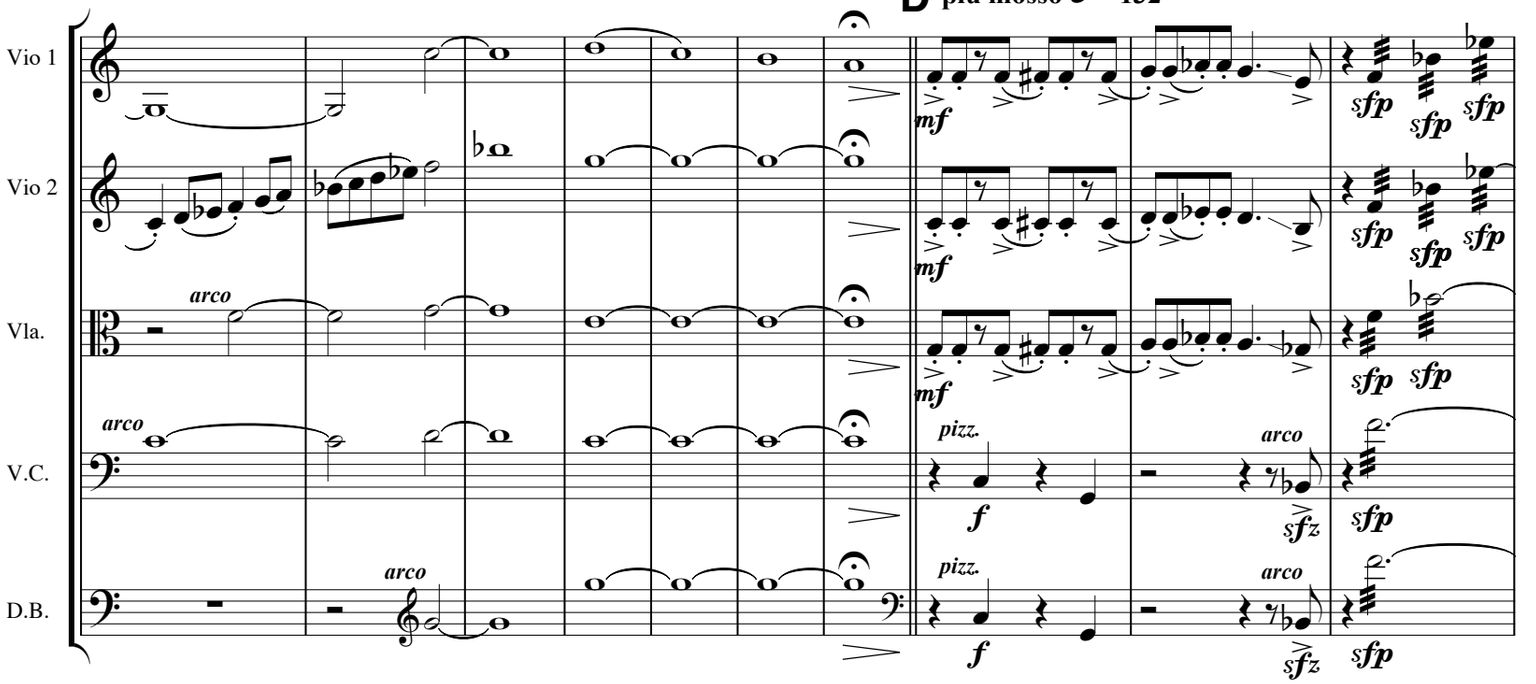
79 **"I know where there's a hole in the fence that goes around the big old house. We could be home in half the time." "Forget it Willie.**



85 **We're not taking any shortcuts. If old man Prichard sees us we'll be in for it!"**

"But Toni, I'm freezing and it's getting dark. He's probably inside keeping warm.

D piu mosso ♩ = 132

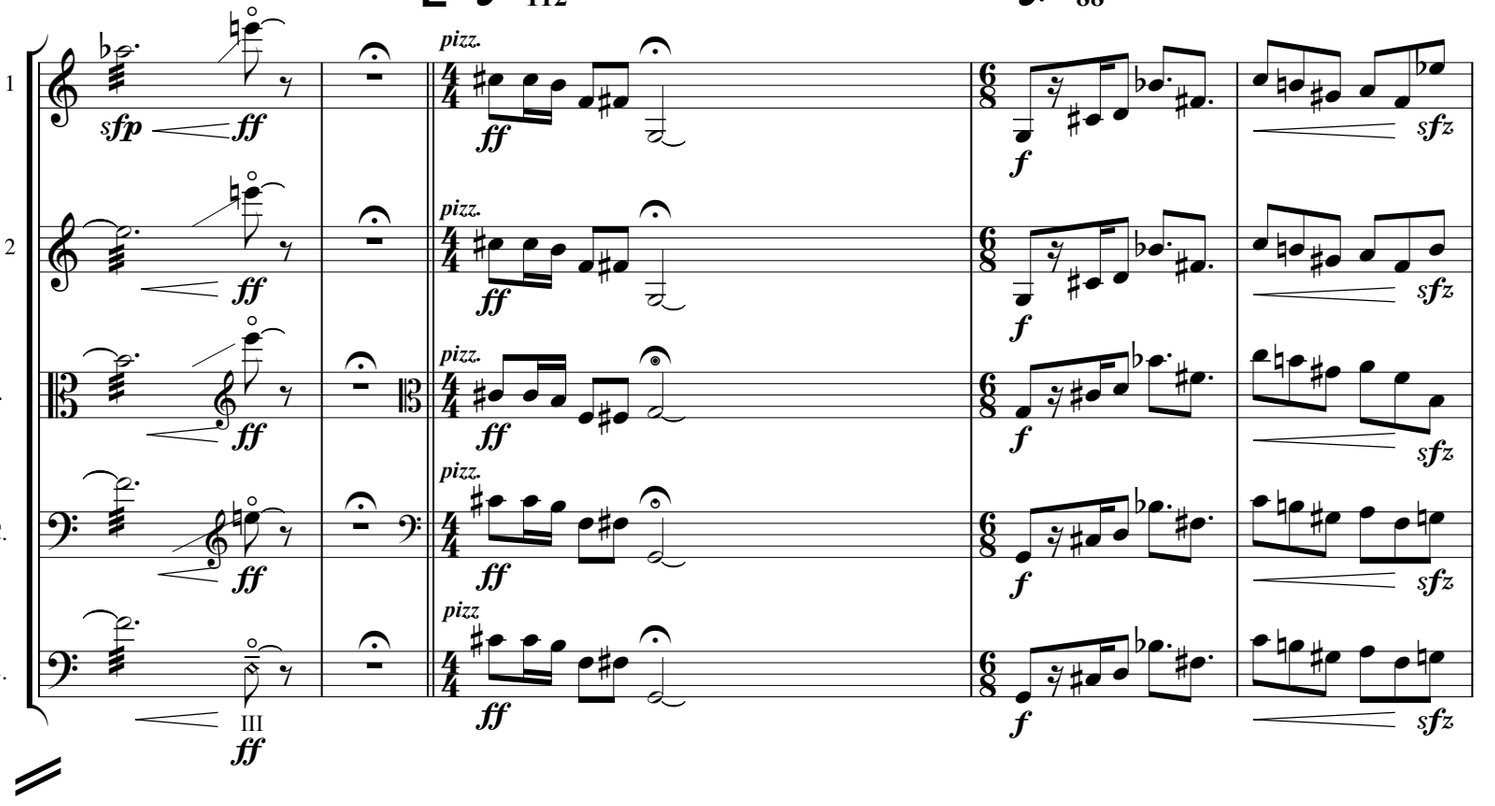


95

He'll never see us with those windows all boarded up!"

"Willie! When are you going to learn to wear the right clothes?" I began.

E ♩ = 112 ♩. = 88



100

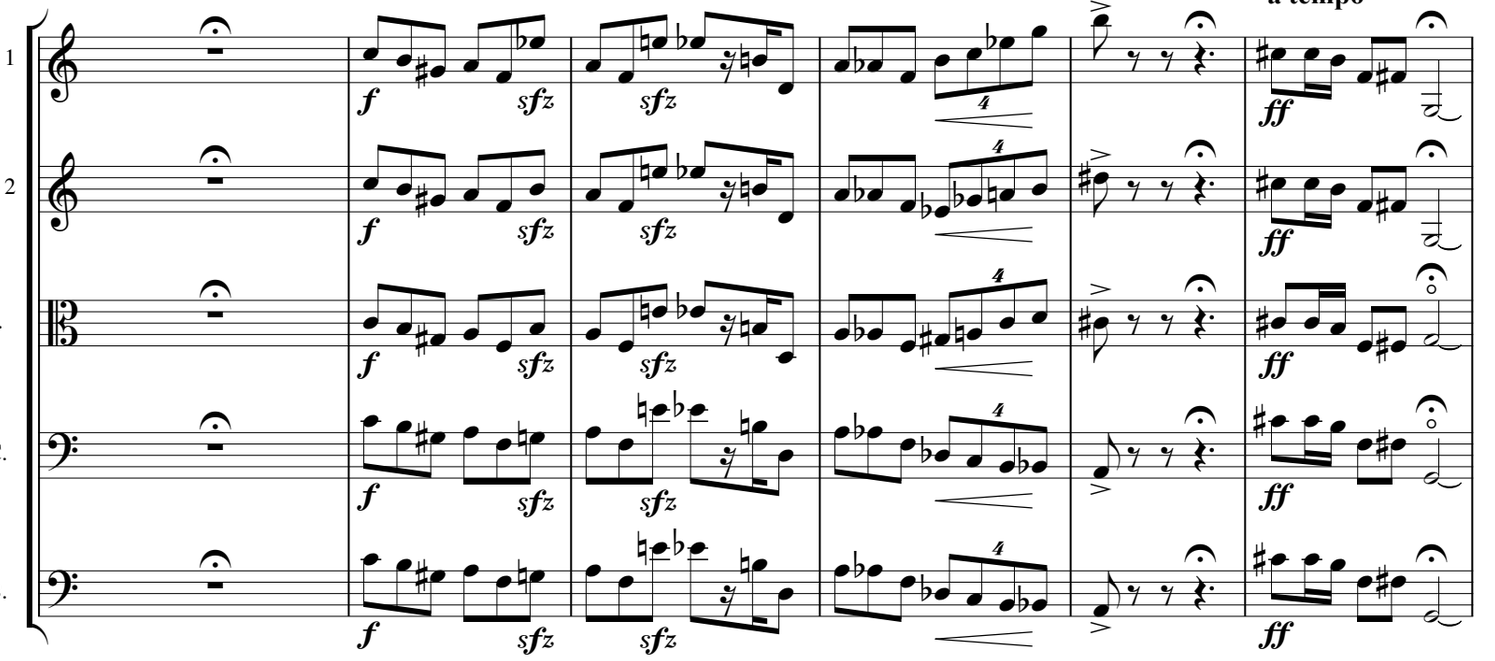
But before I could finish he darted between some bushes whispering loudly:

"There it is Toni! Come on, we'll be through and out the other end in less than 2 minutes!"

Willie No!!

a tempo

a tempo



106

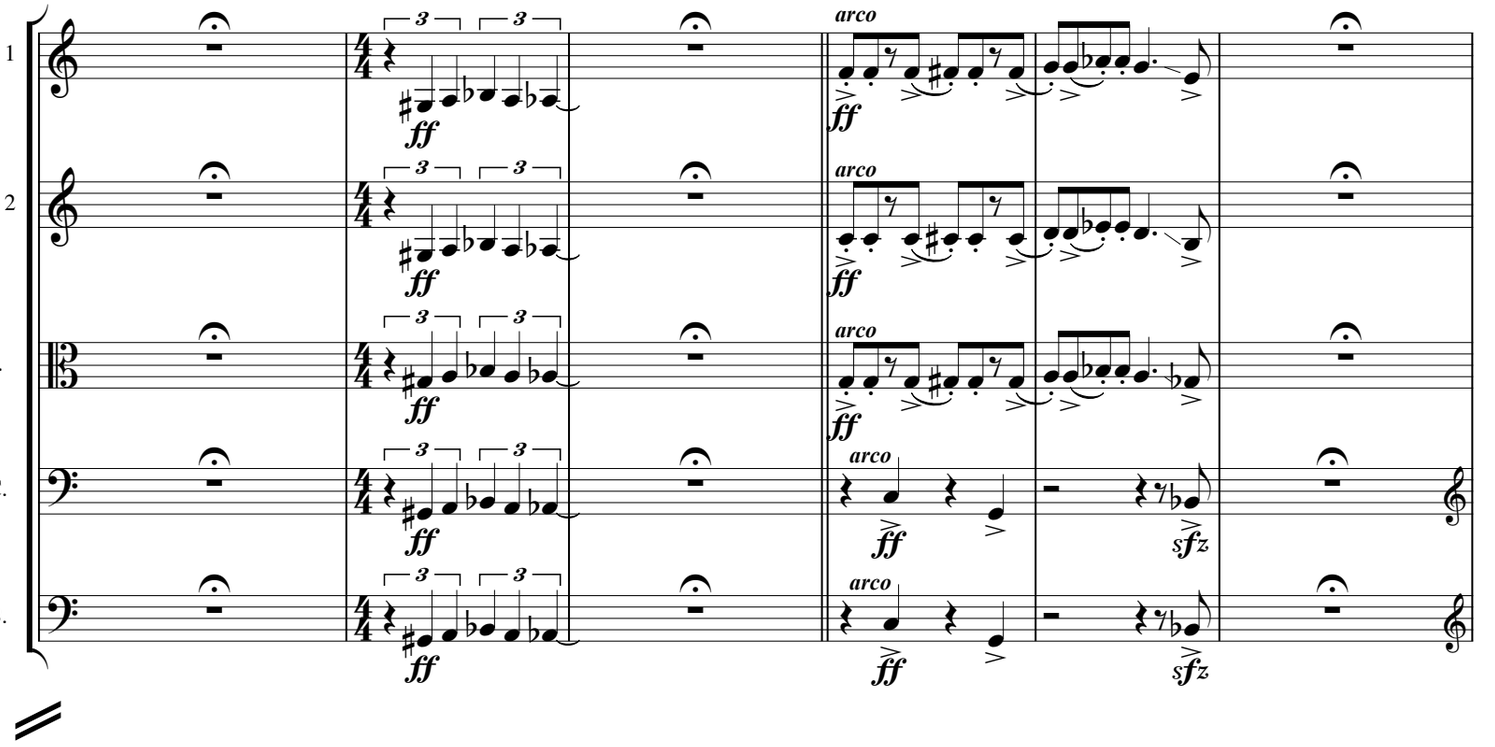
But he was through the fence
before I could take another breath.

a tempo

I ran after him, tearing through
the bushes and scooting through
the hole in the fence.

F ♩ = 132

He was waiting for me
just inside.



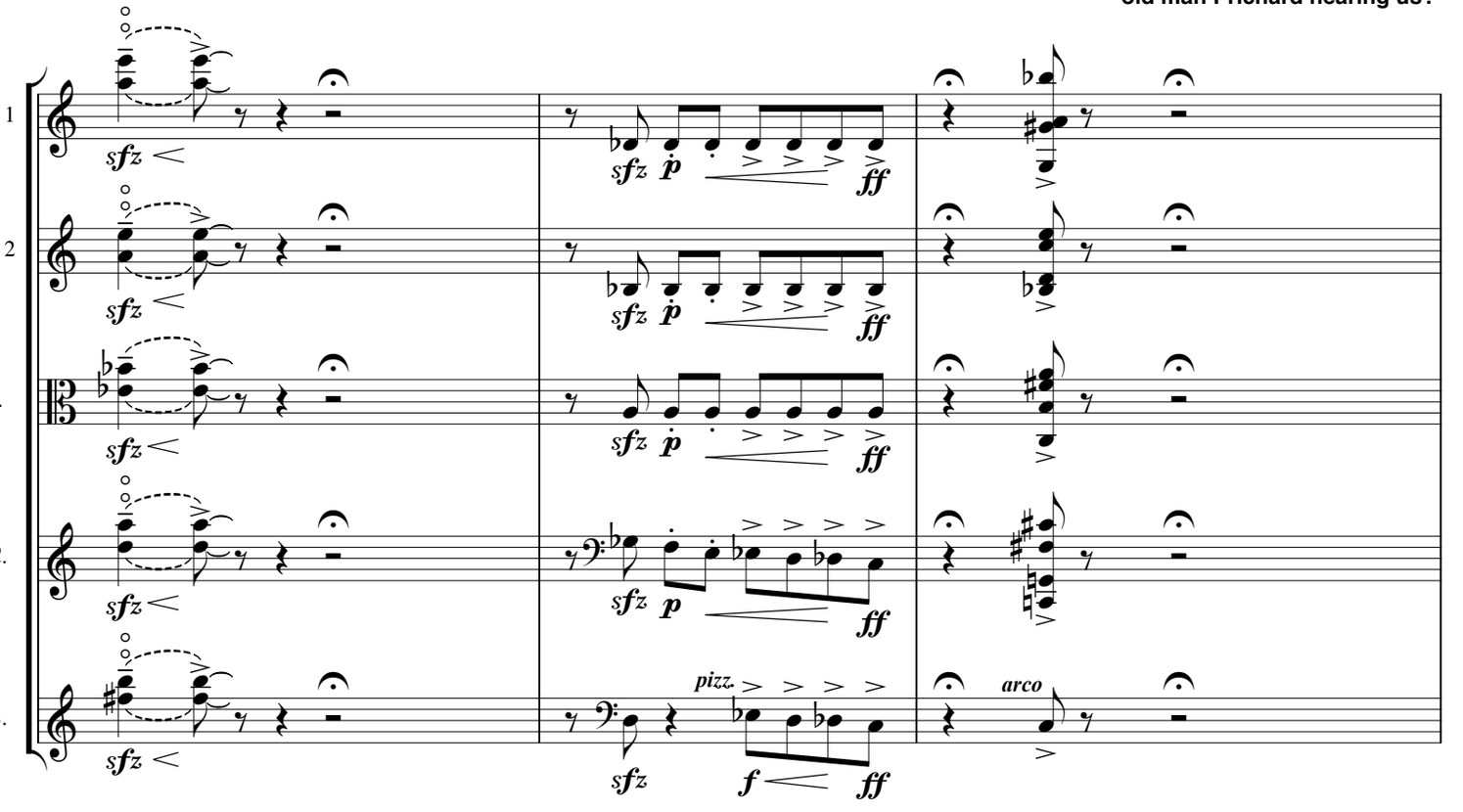
112

a tempo

"Follow me. All we have to
do is go around the house."

"Around
the house!?

"How are we going to get
around the house without
old man Prichard hearing us?"



115

a tempo

"Don't Worry about it. I've done this a million times.

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

ff

pizz. (strum)

pizz.

118

All you have to do is creep around the corner real slowly and make sure you don't bang into anything."

Before I could reply he was on his hands and knees crawling around the side of the building.

♩ = 60

sfp

p

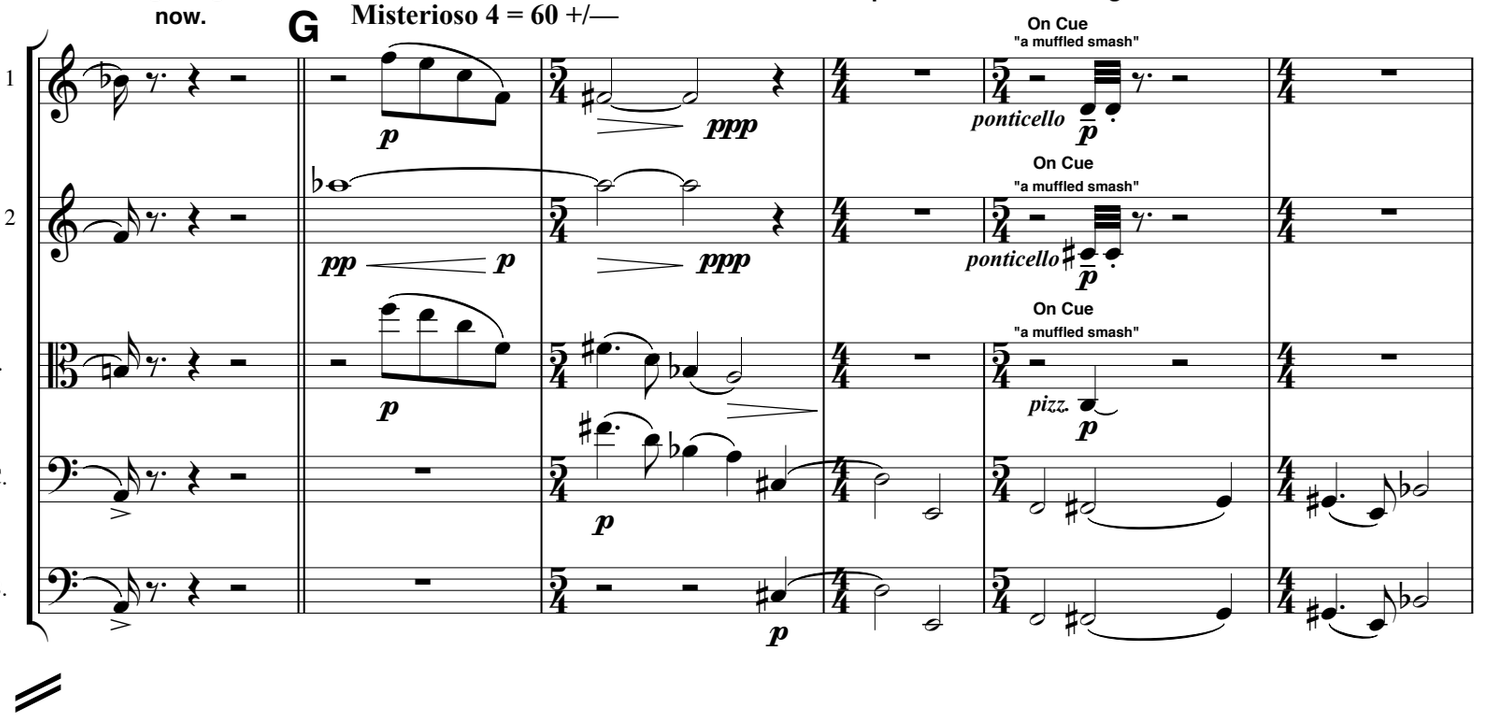
sfz

arco

121

It was really getting dark now.

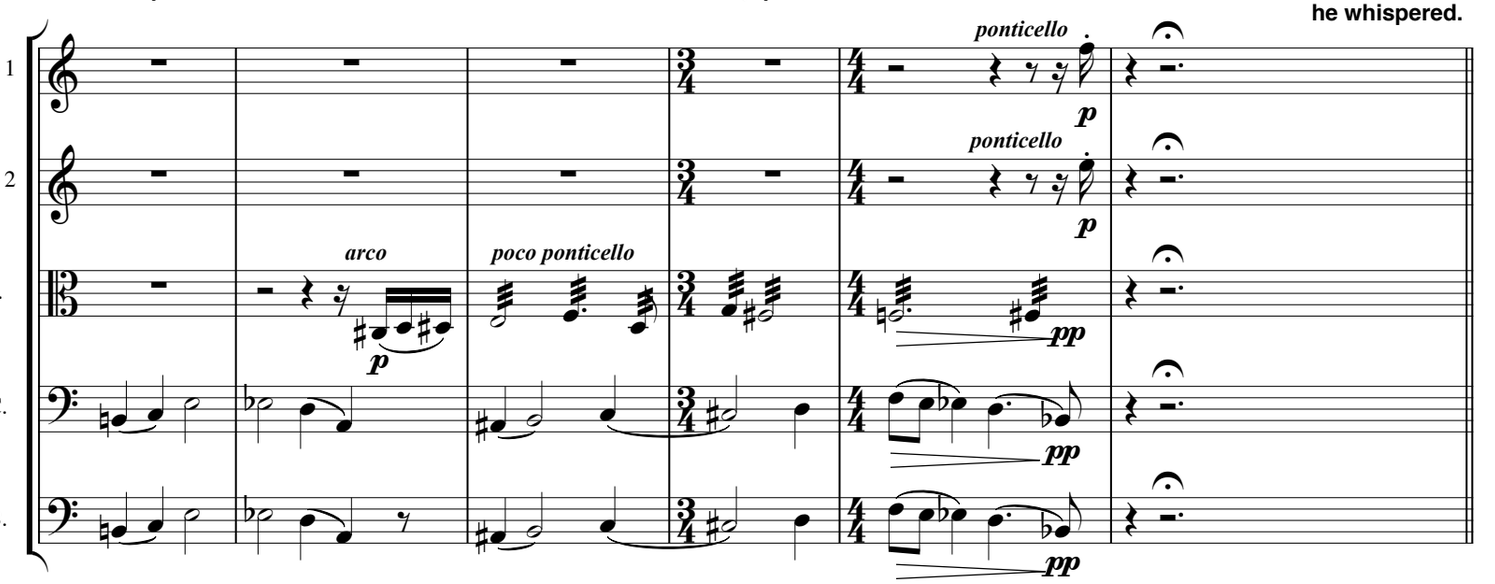
We were so far from the entrance that the street lights were no help at all. He turned and whispered, “Shh, follow me.” I felt my foot catch on something. A muffled smash interrupted the stillness as I grabbed the side of a trash can.



127

We froze with our eyes opened so wide that if we dared to move they'd pop right out of their sockets. “I knew we shouldn't have done this." "Don't worry Toni, just keep following me,” he replied. We advanced about six feet when I heard a short, quiet click.

I grabbed at Willie and tapped him on the leg. “What's wrong? he whispered.

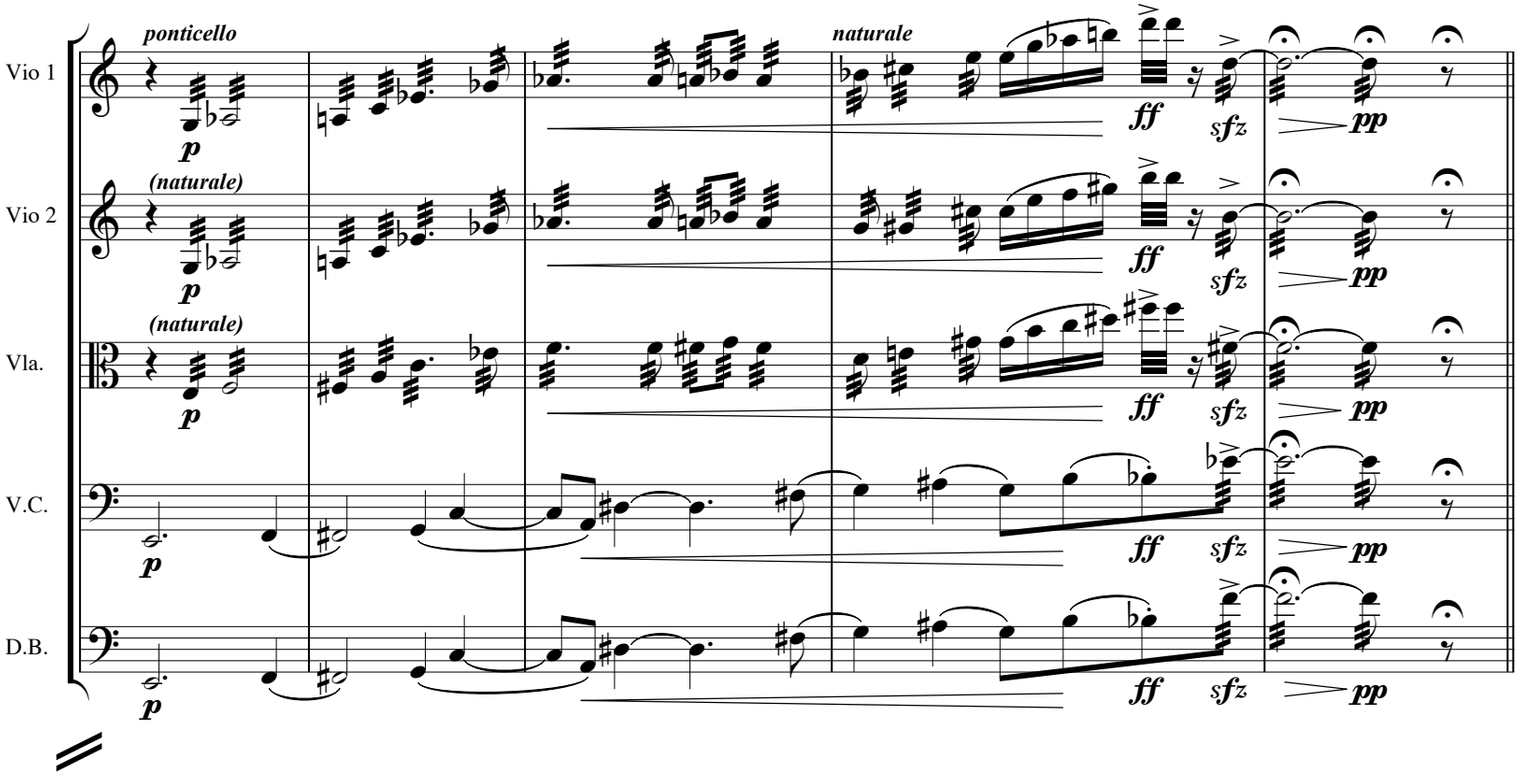


133

H ♩ = 56

I replied with some wild hand signals to stop and shut up. I could see a look of distress beginning to come over his face.

Silence in the night.

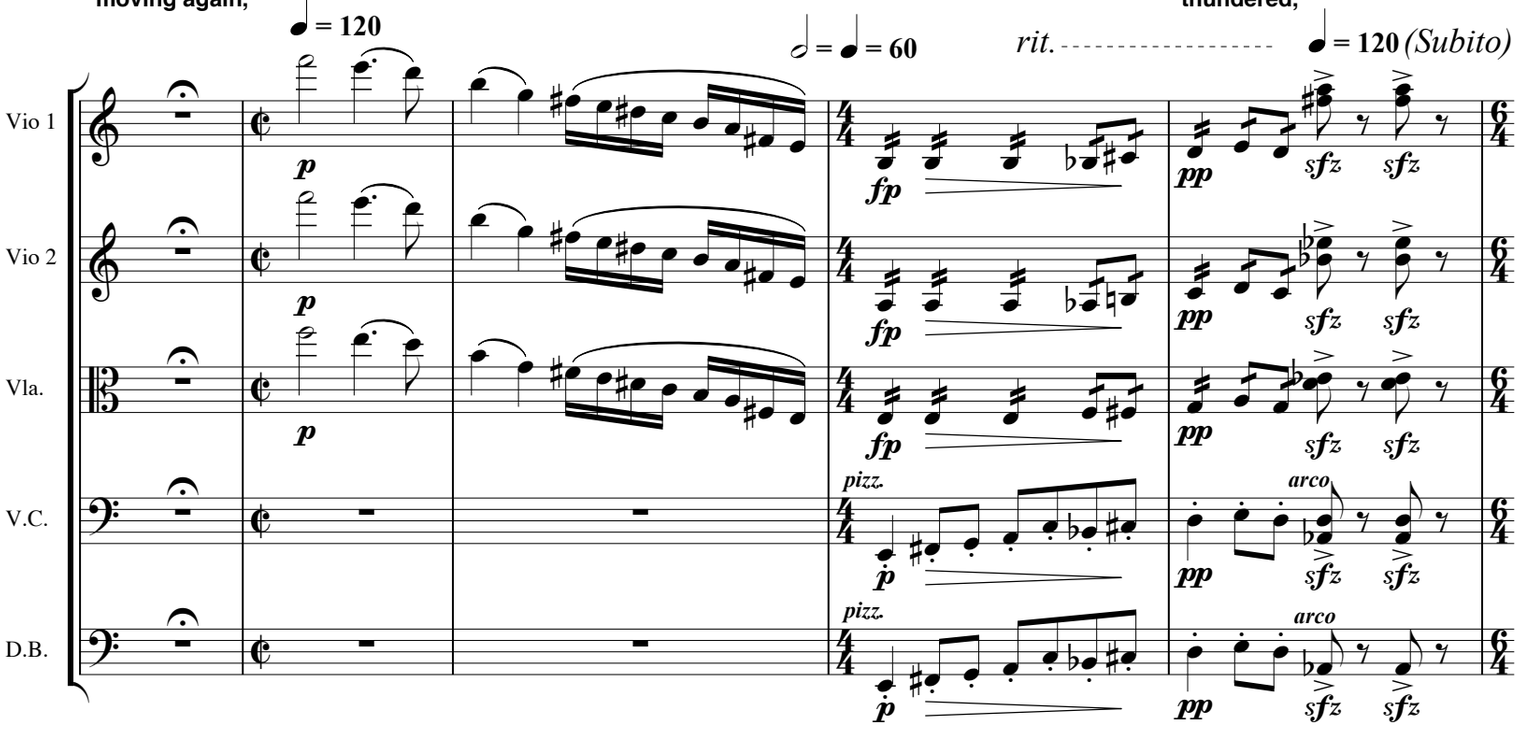


138

We were about to start moving again,

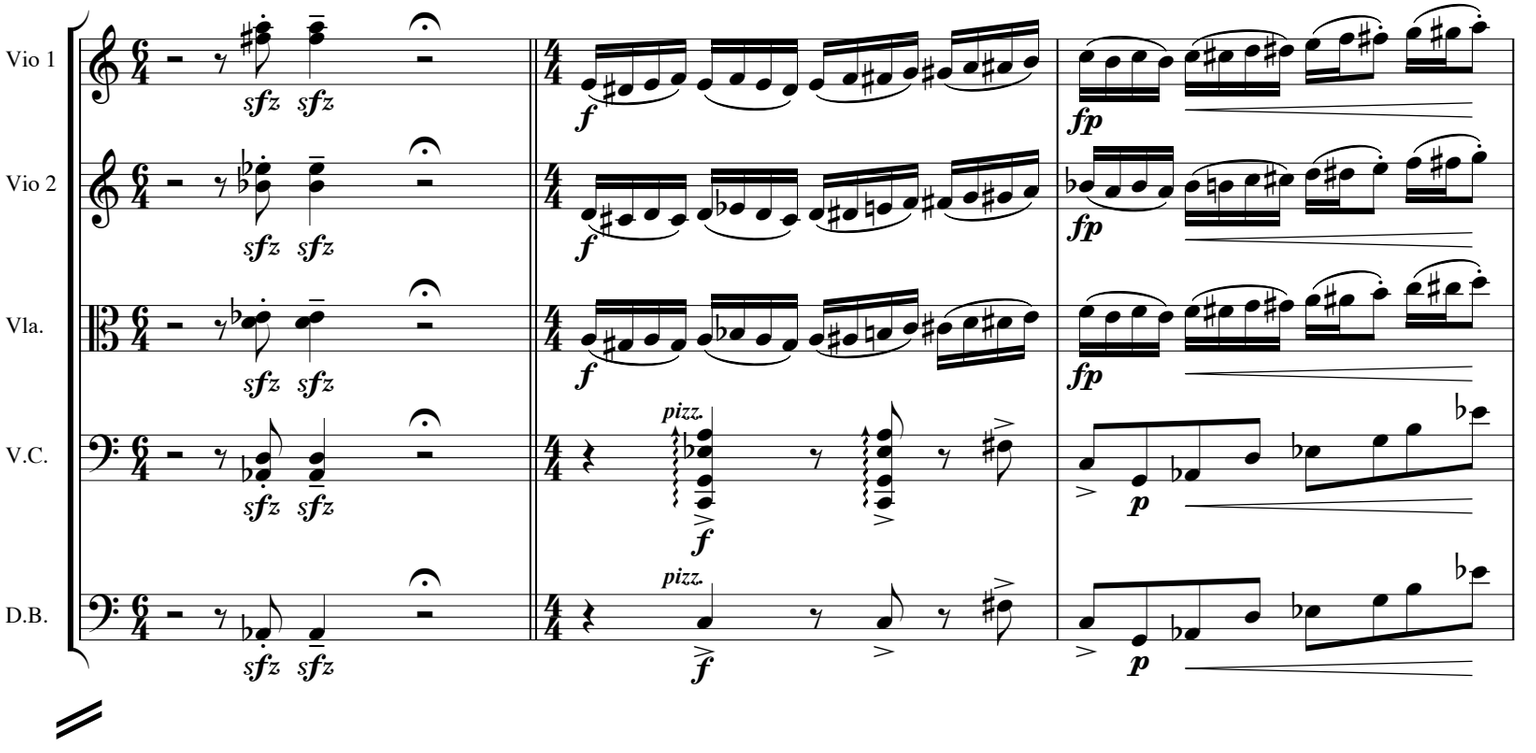
when there was another noise. The sound of a door slowly opening.

A deep voice thundered,



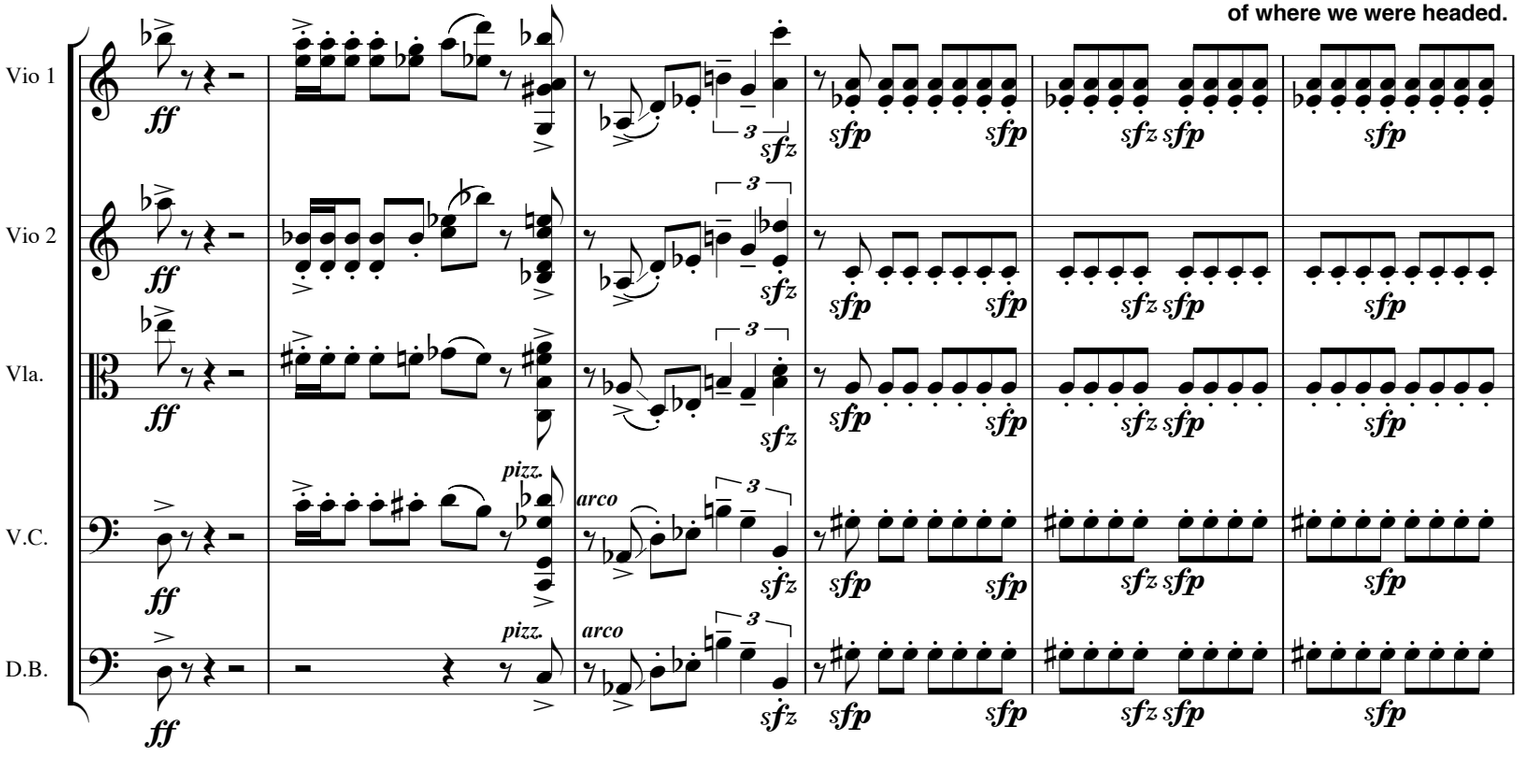
143 "Who's there!"? "Run!" screamed Willie.

Molto agitato ♩ = 132



146 I bolted after him.

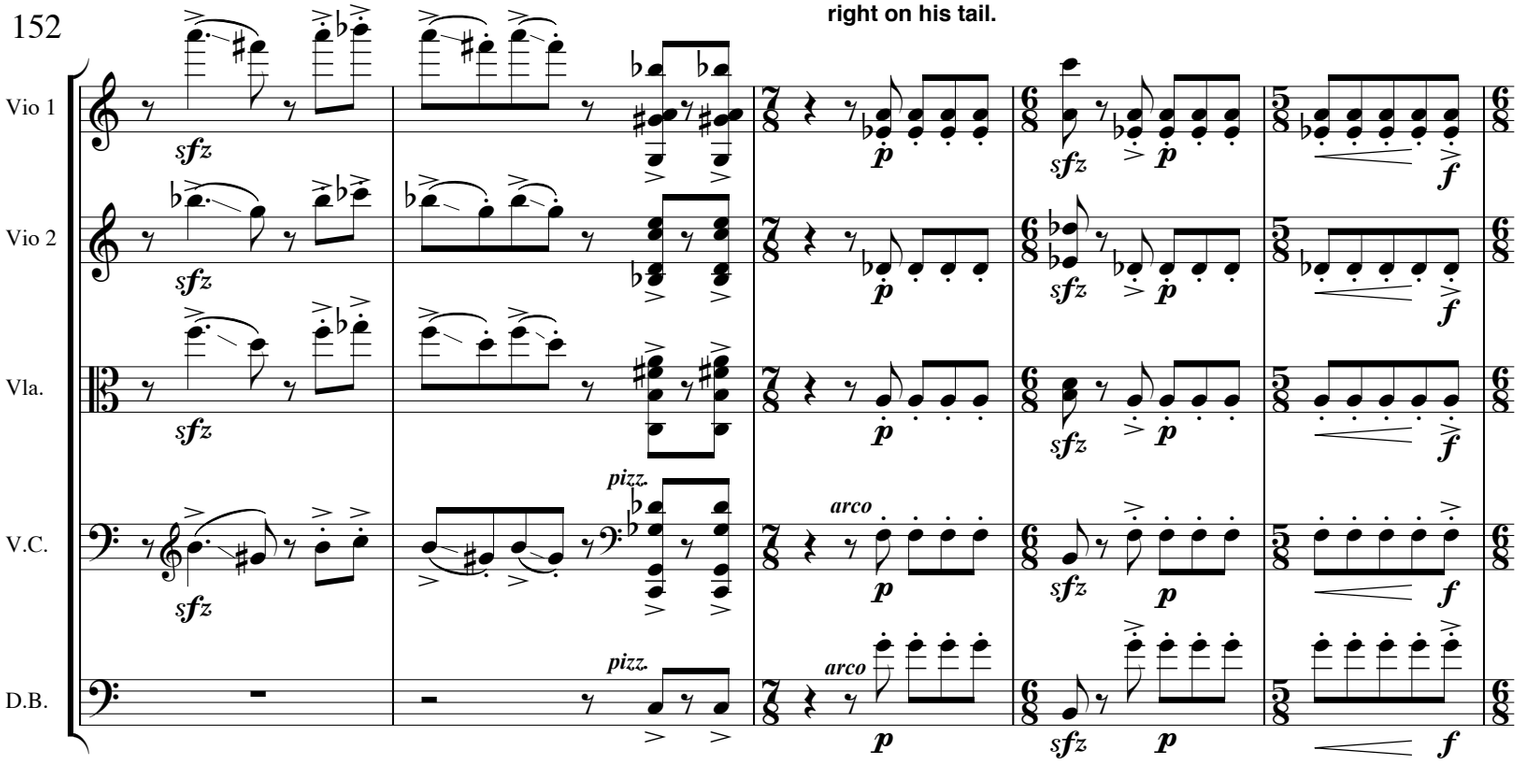
Not being able to see more than a couple of feet in front of us I had no idea of where we were headed.



152

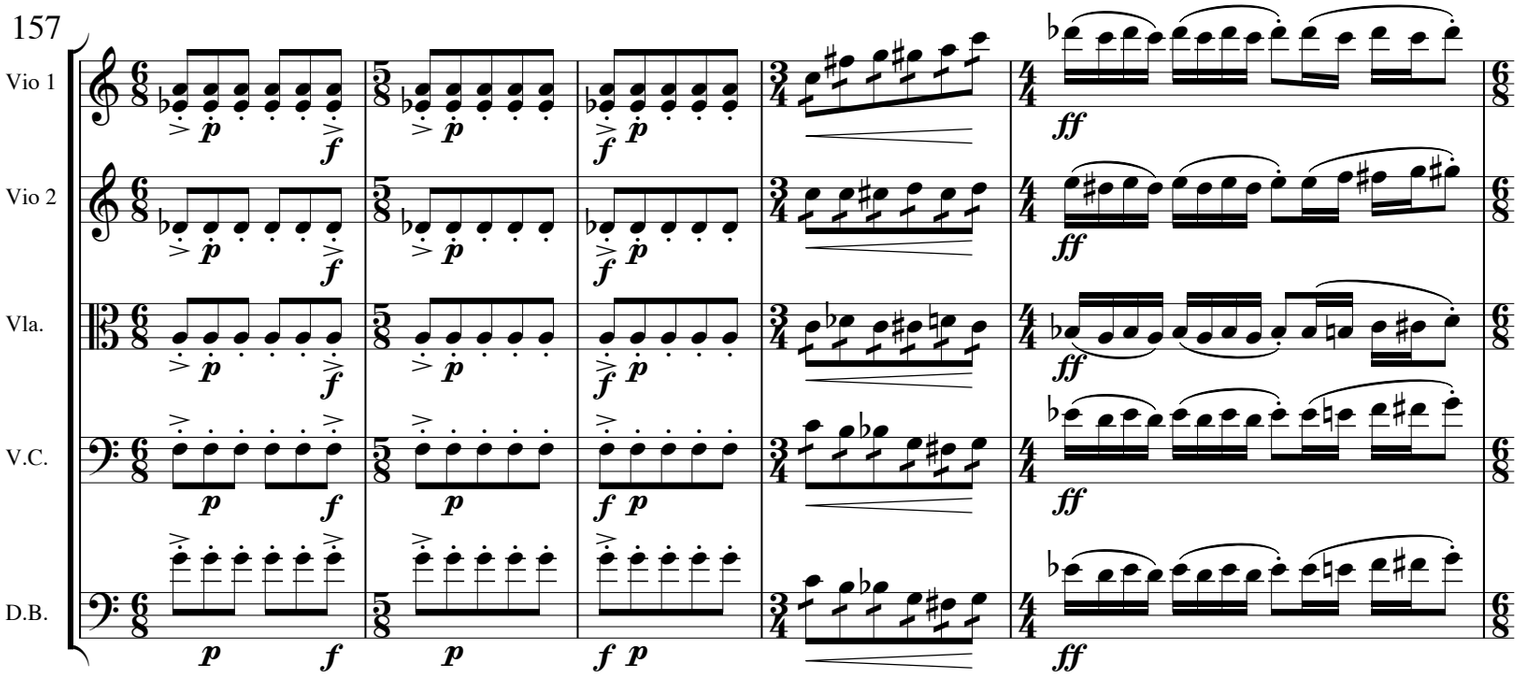
I just stayed right on his tail.

But after circling the house twice,



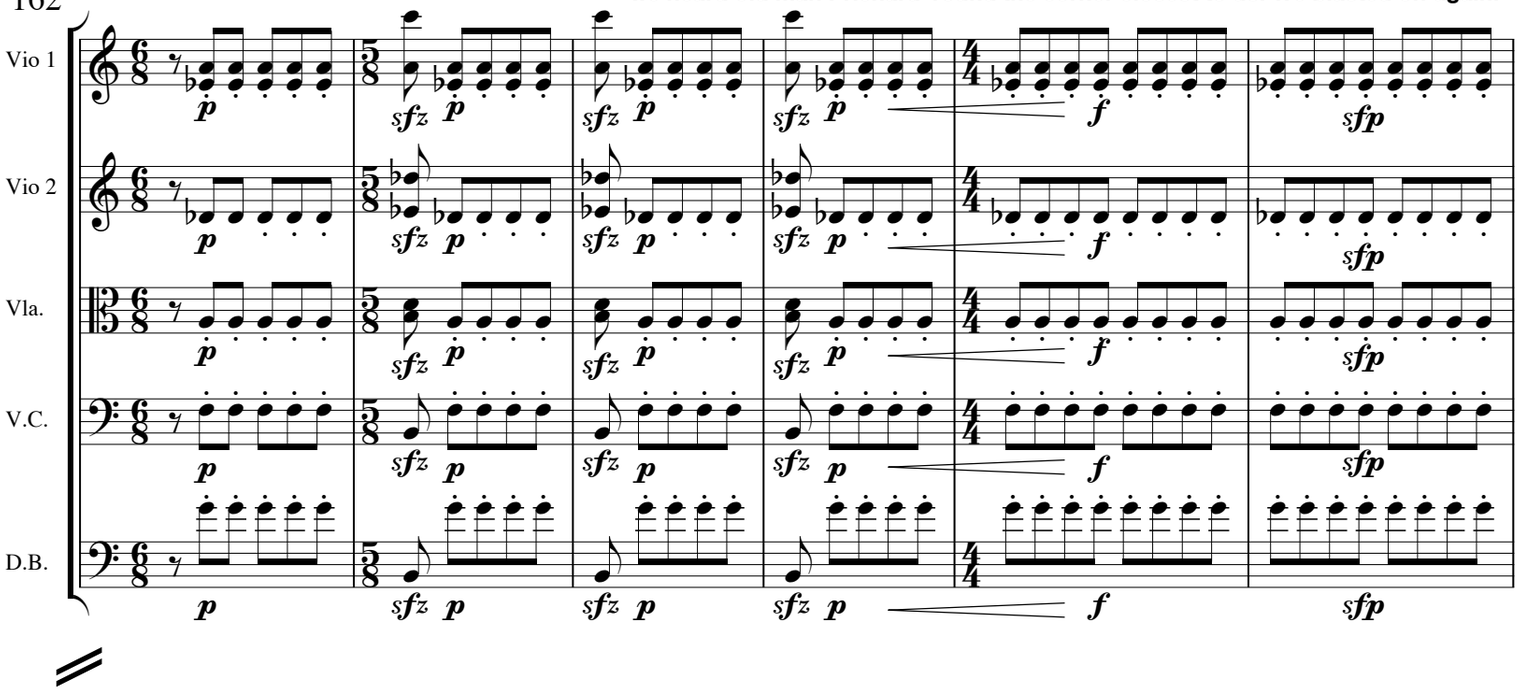
157

I realized he didn't know what he was doing.



Reining him in I squealed, “Willie! There's got to be another way out of here!” But before he could answer we heard old man Prichard 'round the corner closest to us. We blasted off again.

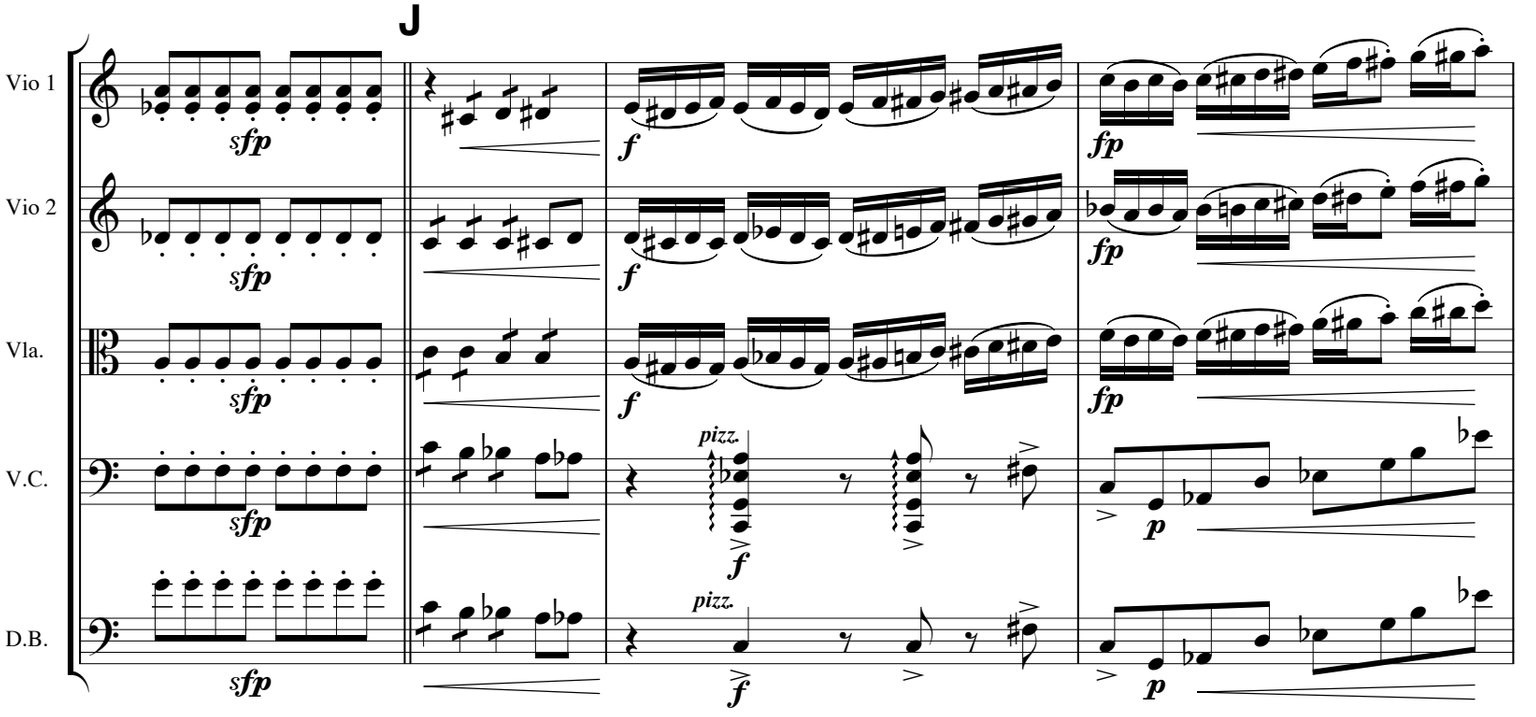
162



168

But this time we tripped on something that sent us both flying into a bunch of trash cans, causing a tremendous crash.

J



172

Meno mosso

Slow, tight glissandi ad lib

We lay stunned for a couple of seconds but recovered quickly as we heard the old man approaching.

K ♩ = 60

rit.

By some stroke of luck we had landed right in front of a little cubbyhole in the side of the house.

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

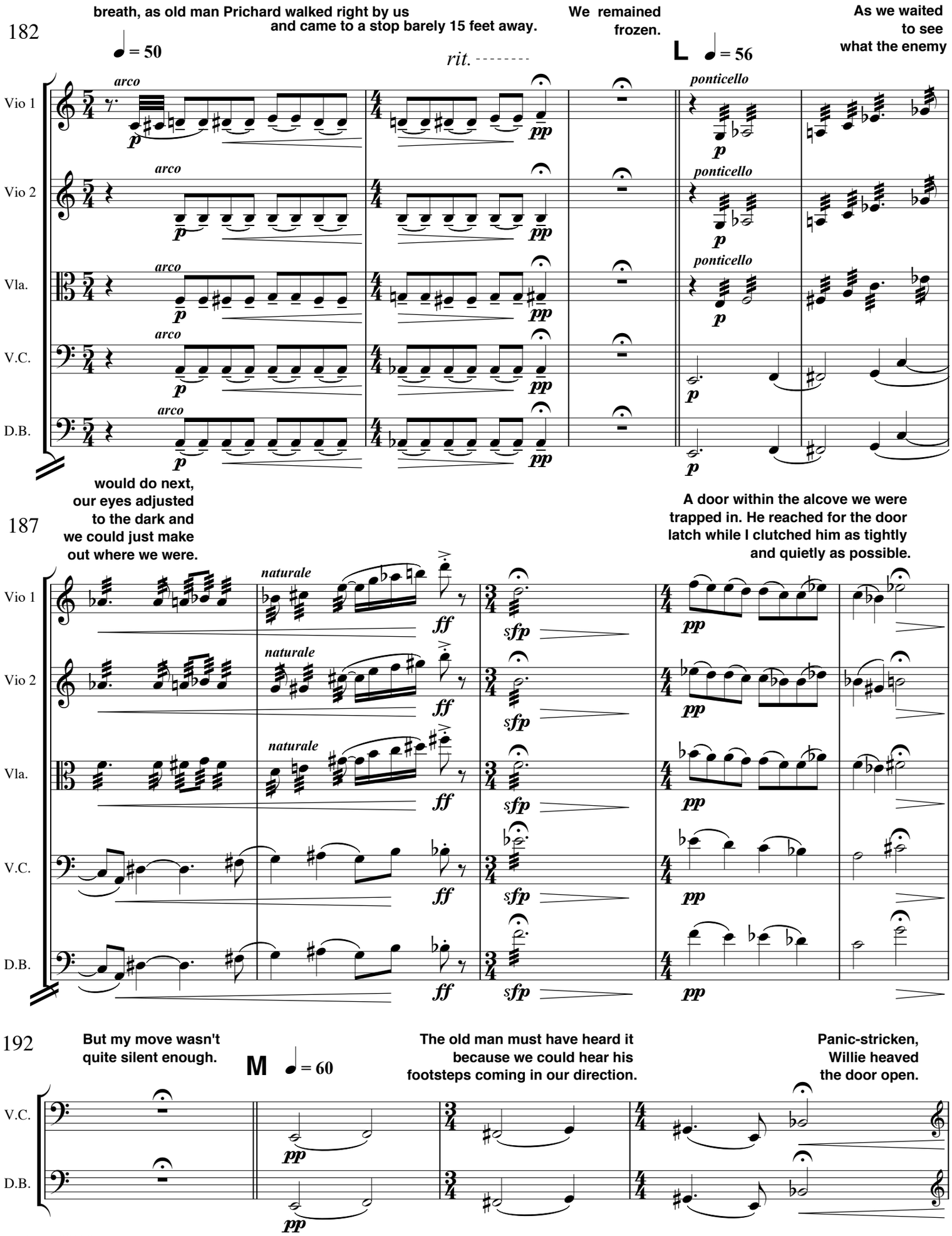
V.C.

D.B.

177

♩. = 88

We stood, totally petrified, not daring to even


182
breath, as old man Prichard walked right by us
and came to a stop barely 15 feet away.
We remained
frozen.
As we waited
to see
what the enemy
♩ = 50
rit.
L ♩ = 56
Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
arco
ponticello
p
pp
187
would do next,
our eyes adjusted
to the dark and
we could just make
out where we were.
A door within the alcove we were
trapped in. He reached for the door
latch while I clutched him as tightly
and quietly as possible.
naturale
ff
sfp
192
But my move wasn't
quite silent enough.
M ♩ = 60
The old man must have heard it
because we could hear his
footsteps coming in our direction.
Panic-stricken,
Willie heaved
the door open.

196

♩ = 120 (Listeso tempo)

As he yanked me inside old man Prichard shrieked, "No! Don't go in there!"

a tempo — Wild

We flew through the door and slammed it shut.

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

Wild gliss ad lib

ad lib

pizz.

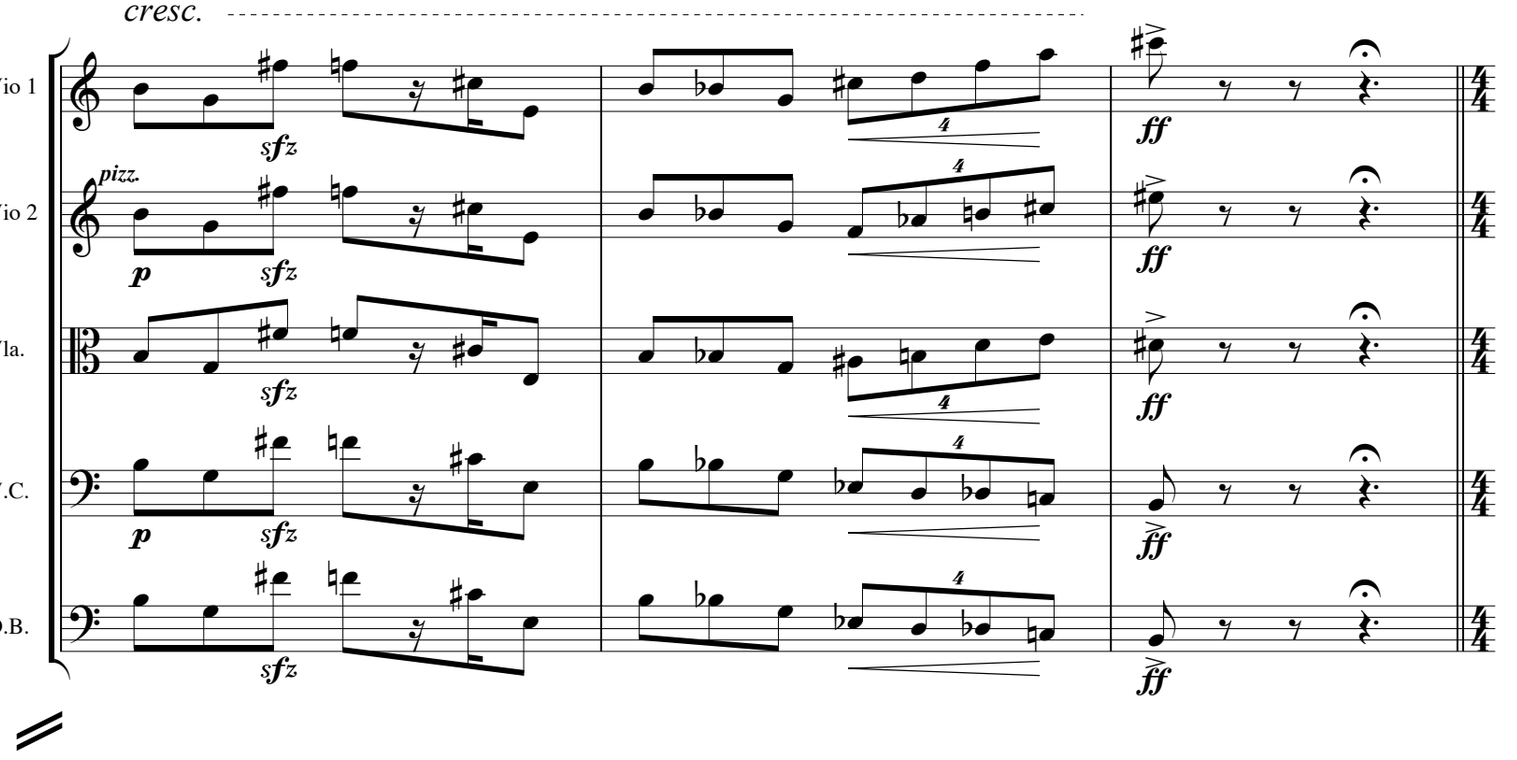
200

We found ourselves at the top of a flight of stairs and knowing that the old man would be coming through the door any second, we tore down the steps, crashed

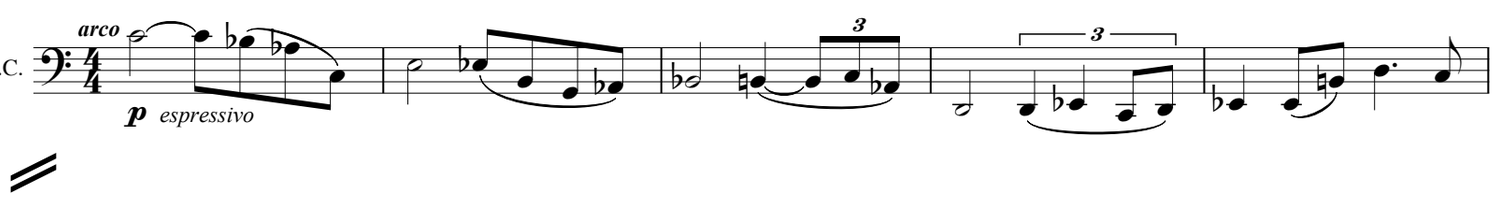
♩. = 88

arco

207 **through another door at the bottom landing and paused to catch our breath.**

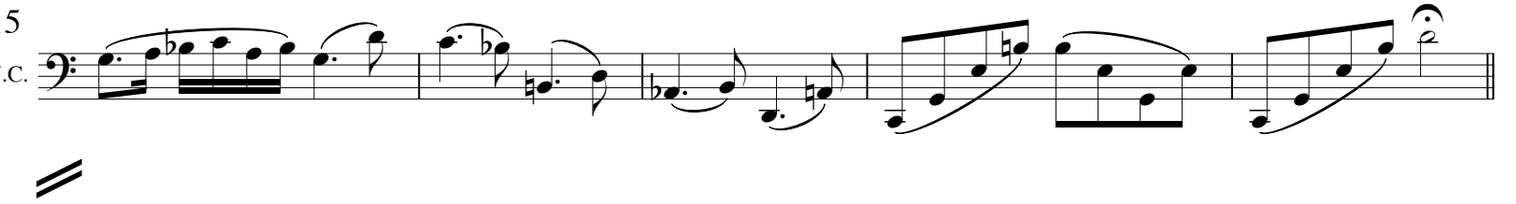


210 **Blackness again. Silence again. Fear quickly overwhelmed me. "We've got to get out of here Willie." For once he didn't argue. He peeped back, "OK, Toni."**



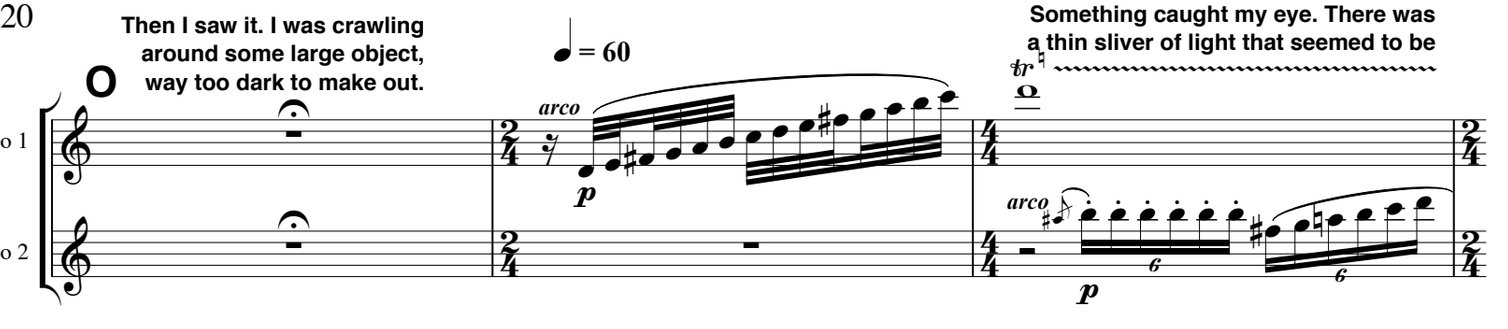
We waited. And waited. Why hasn't he come for us? Surely he knows we're somewhere in his basement. Our wait seemed endless.

215



220 **Then I saw it. I was crawling around some large object, way too dark to make out.**

Something caught my eye. There was a thin sliver of light that seemed to be



223

floating high up in the air. "Willie come here, look at this!"

"What is it?" he asked.
"Dunno, but it's so high.
Maybe it's on the ceiling.
Let's see if we can get closer."

Vio 1

Vio 2

227

P ♩ = 84

We started to inch our way toward the light.

We didn't crawl very far before running into a wide, wooden object, which seemed to have another similar object attached directly above but slightly behind it.

a tempo

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

231

We felt around and discovered still another, then another!

"Stairs!" cried Willie.

We had

poco a poco accel.

♩ = 112

Vio 1

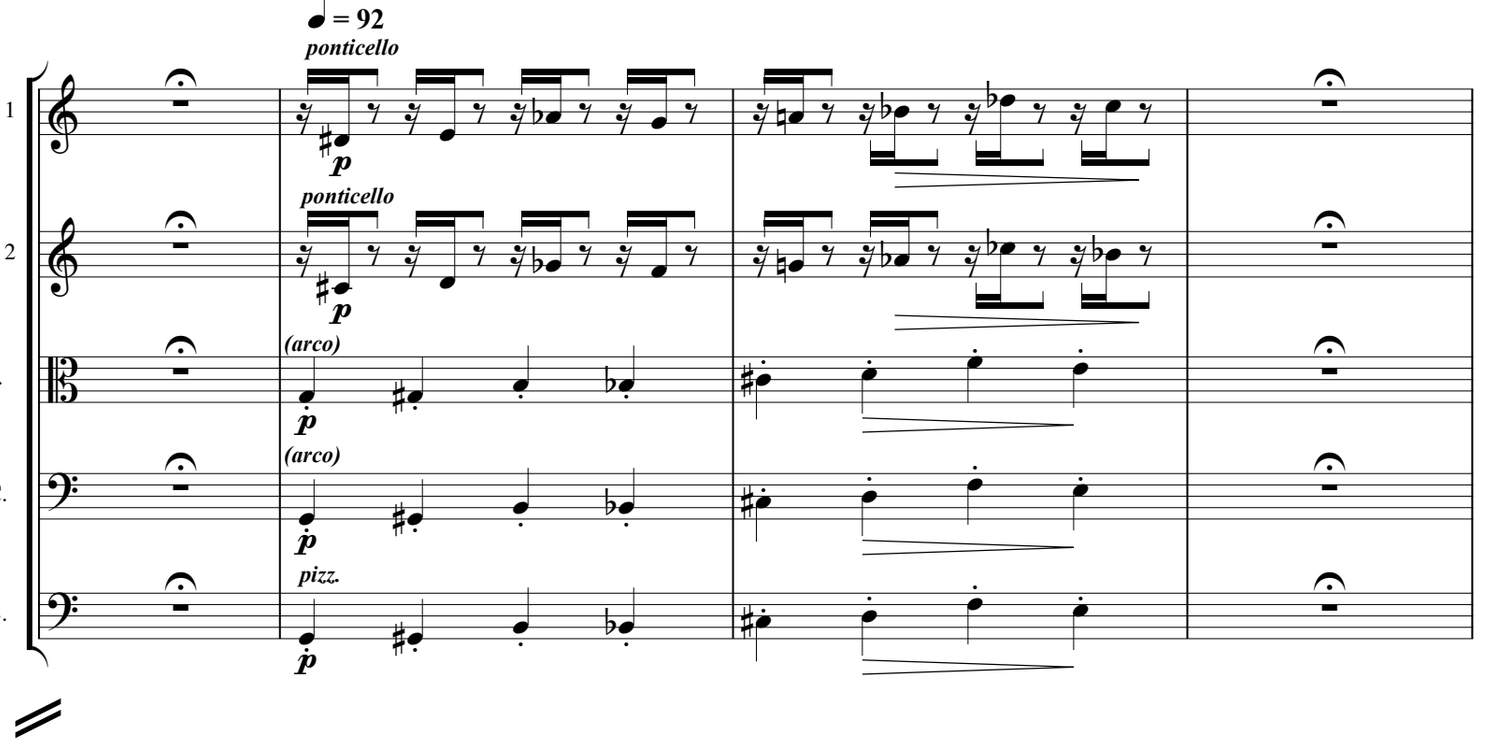
Vio 2

Vla.

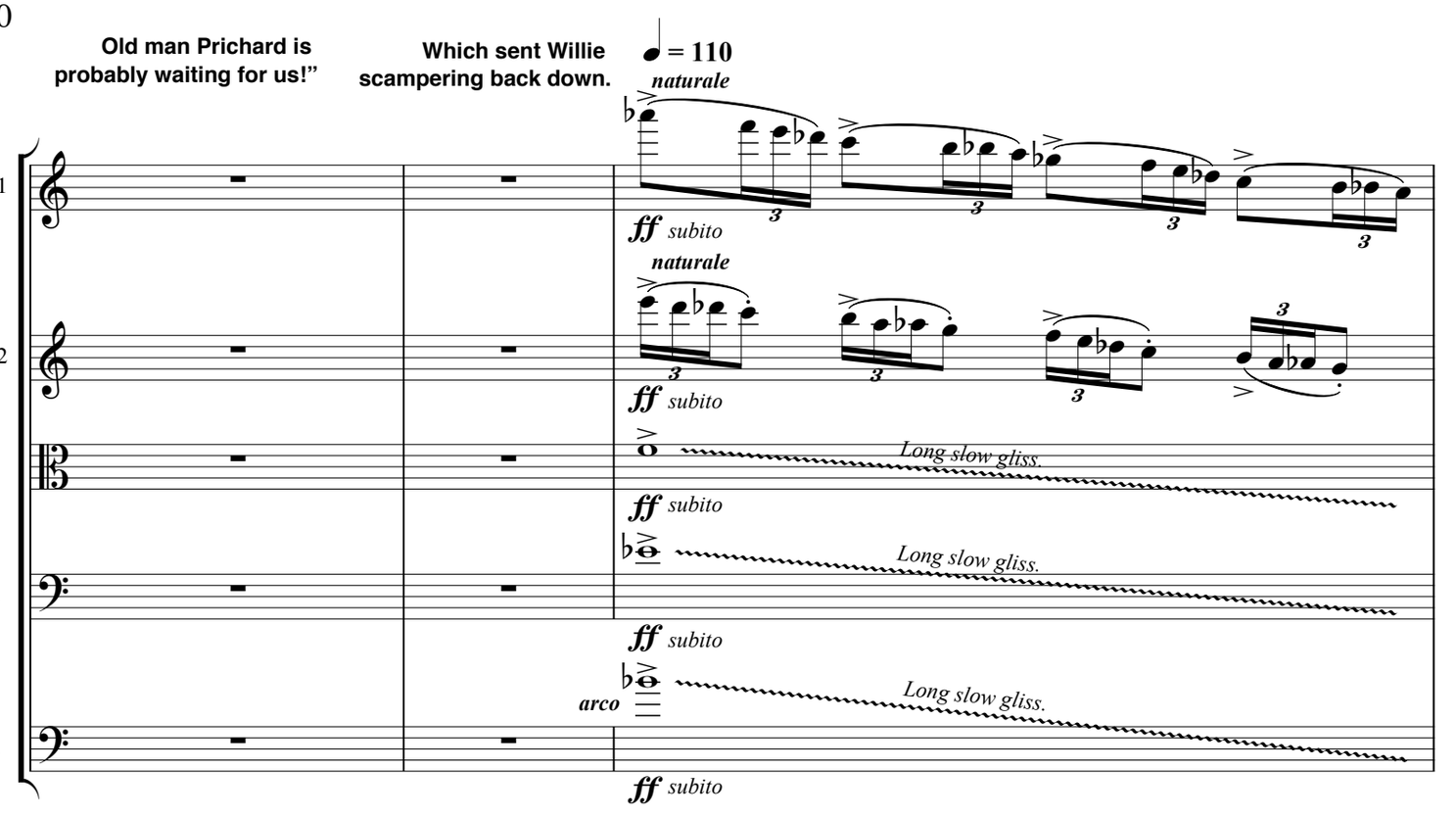
V.C.

D.B.

236 **found the staircase!** **Willie was already halfway up when I screeched in a loud whisper, "No! The light's on up there!**



240 **Old man Prichard is probably waiting for us!"** **Which sent Willie scampering back down.**

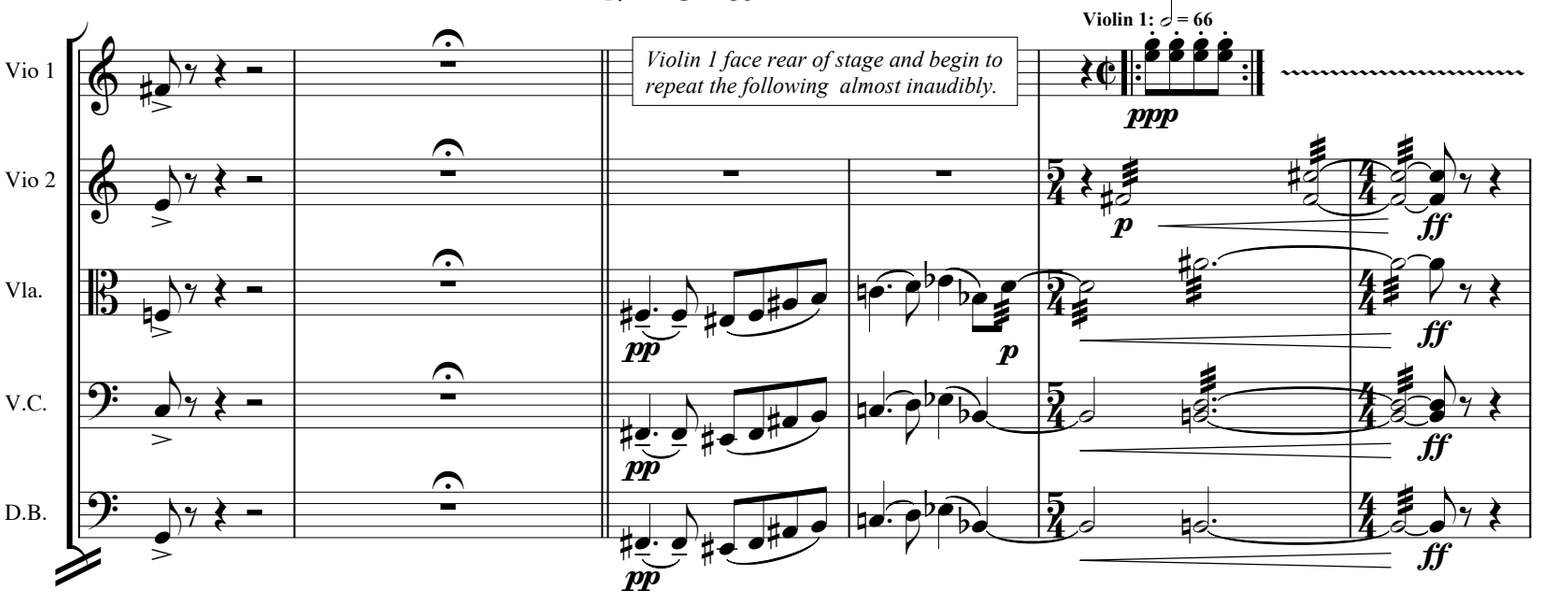


243

"Let's sneak up there and just listen a little, If we don't hear anything, we could open the door and make a run for it."
(Willie) "OK, Toni!"

We held each other's hands and began our climb to the top of the stairs, moving as quietly as possible. We got about halfway up when we both stopped.

Q ♩ = 60



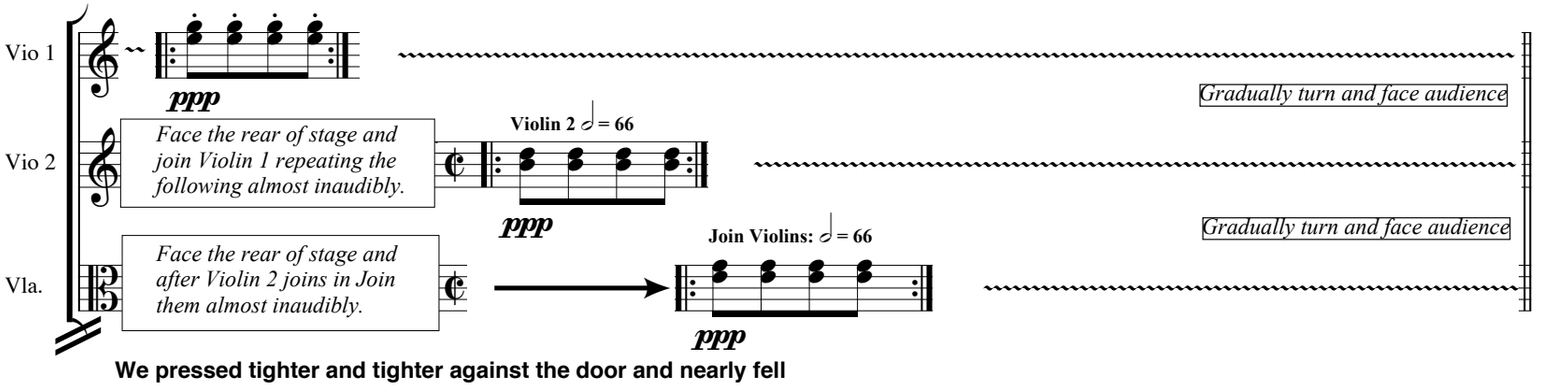
249

"Do you hear that?"
"Yeah, it sounds like . . . like . . ."
"Music!" I said.

As we continued up the steps the music grew louder and louder. We reached the top and tried to find a keyhole or something to peek in.

But there was none. We placed our heads against the door and listened. Wow! It was really loud now.

crescendo poco a poco

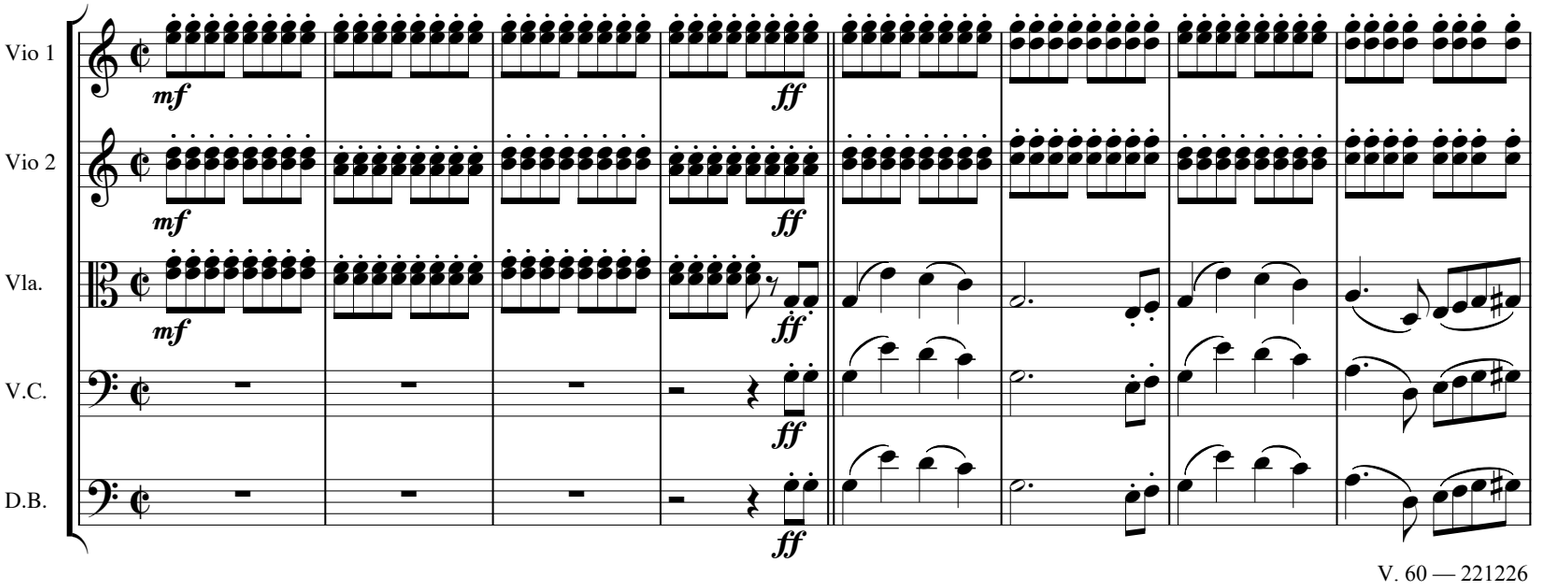


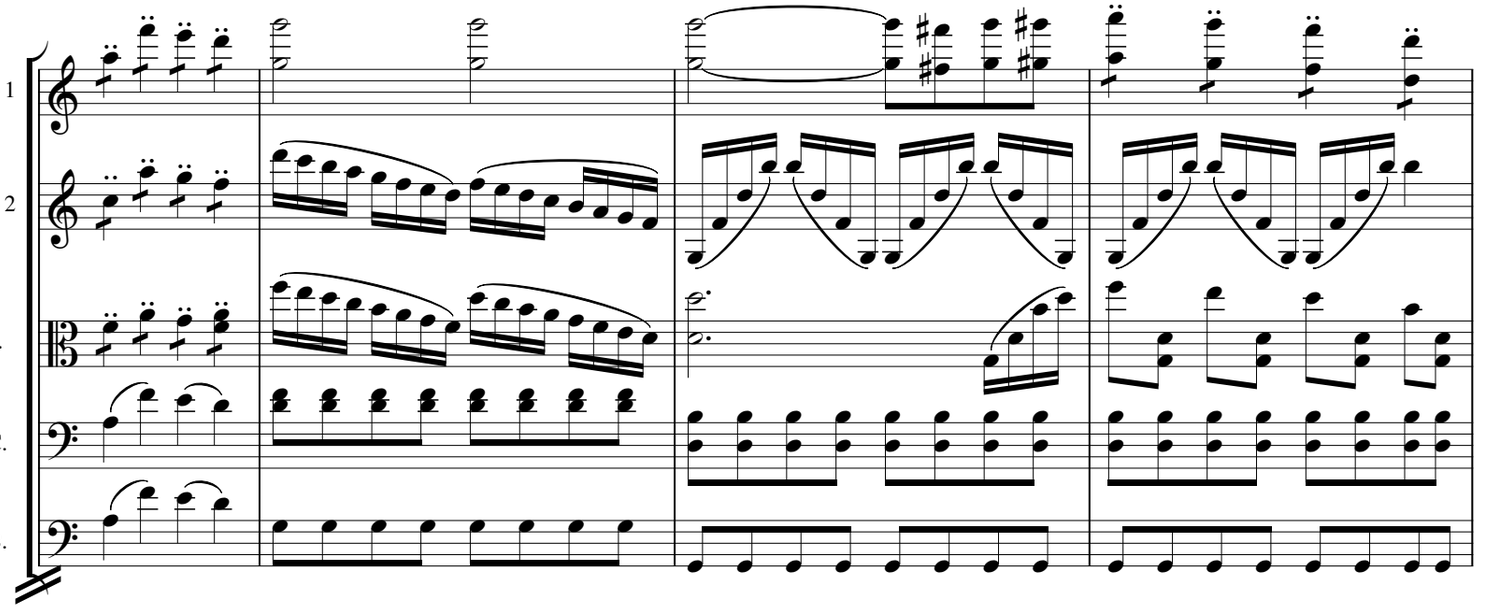
We pressed tighter and tighter against the door and nearly fell down as the door slid open!

253

Tutti 𝅗𝅥 = 66
sempre crescendo

PART 2



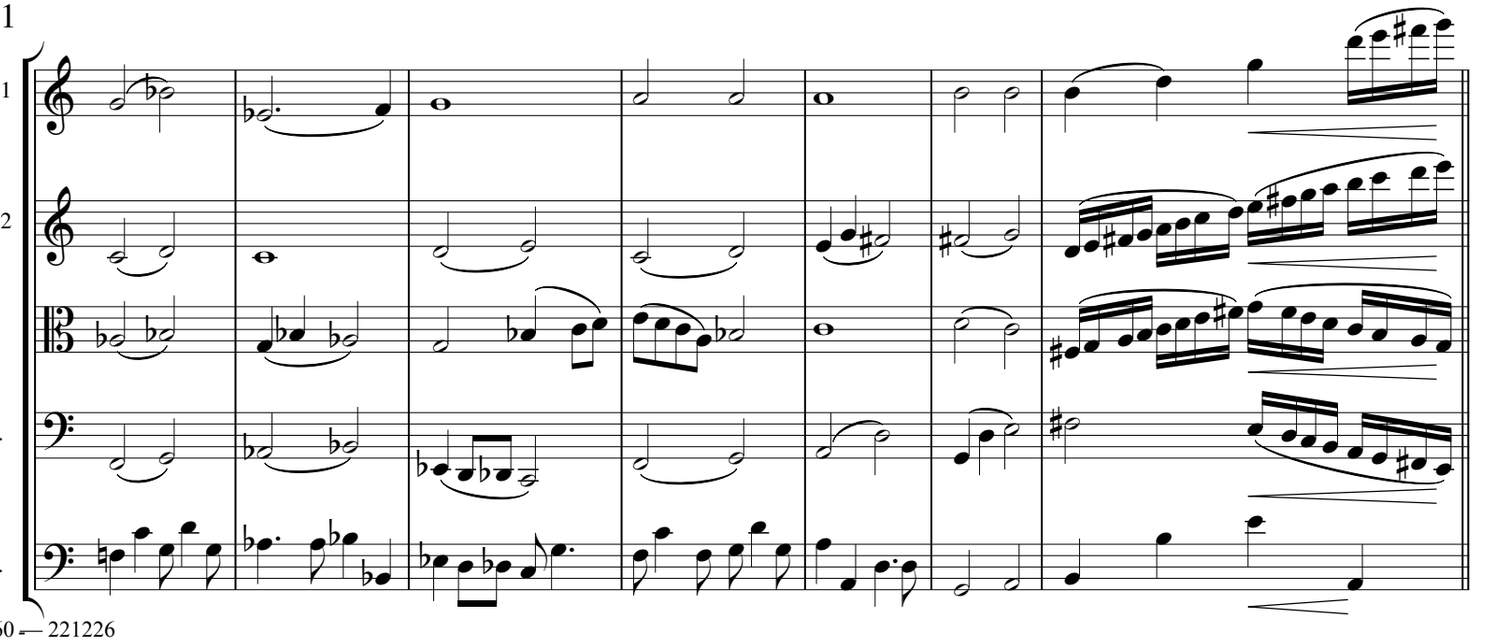


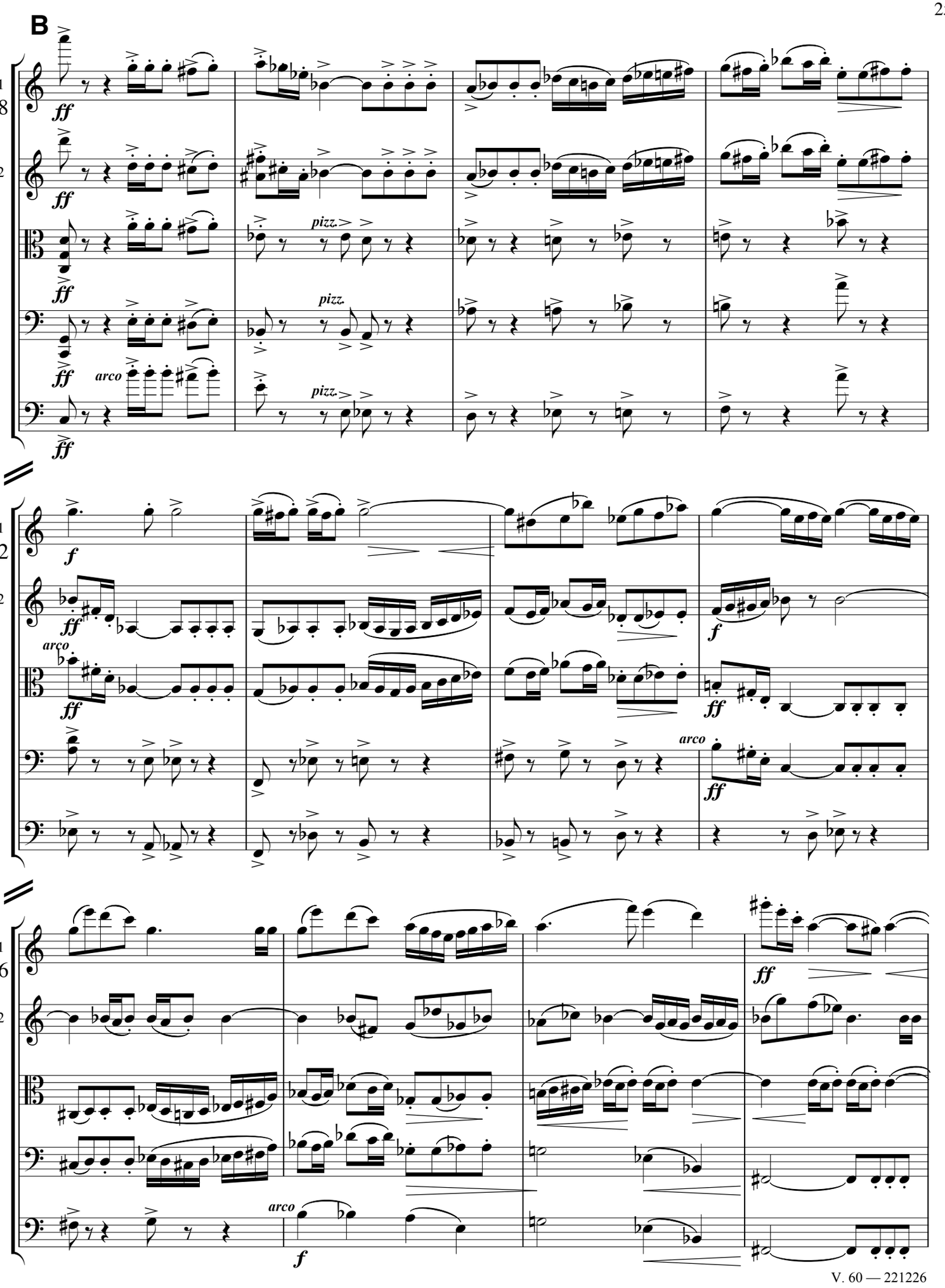
265

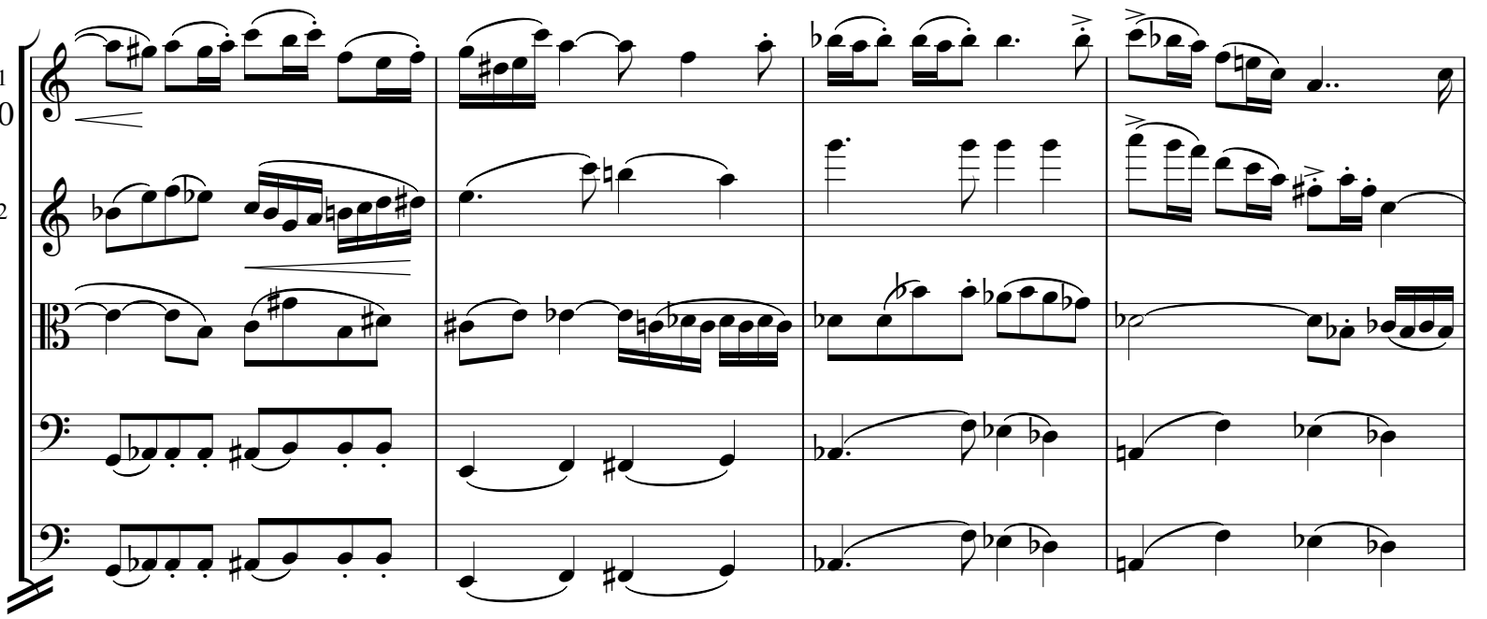
An orchestra is playing, people are laughing and dancing everywhere. It's a great holiday feast. Look!

The dancers are getting faster and wilder!

271

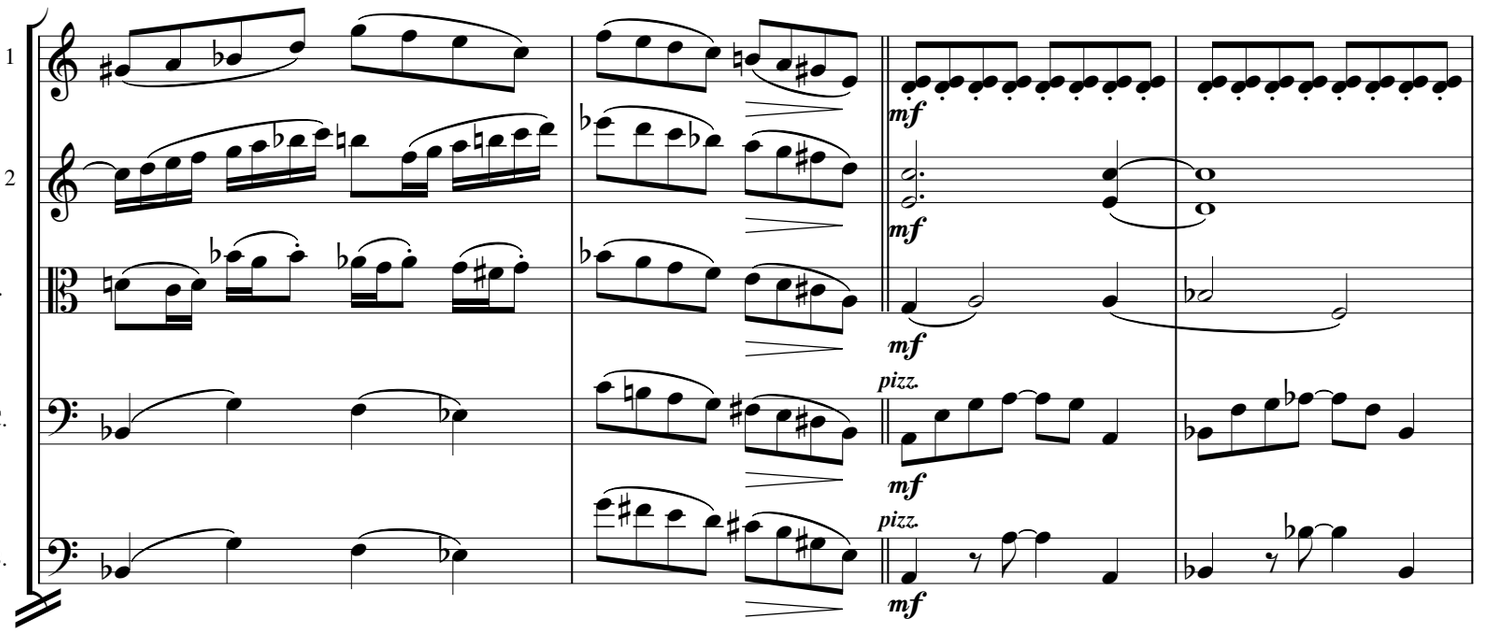



B
Vio 1
278
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
ff
arco
pizz.
282
f
286



294

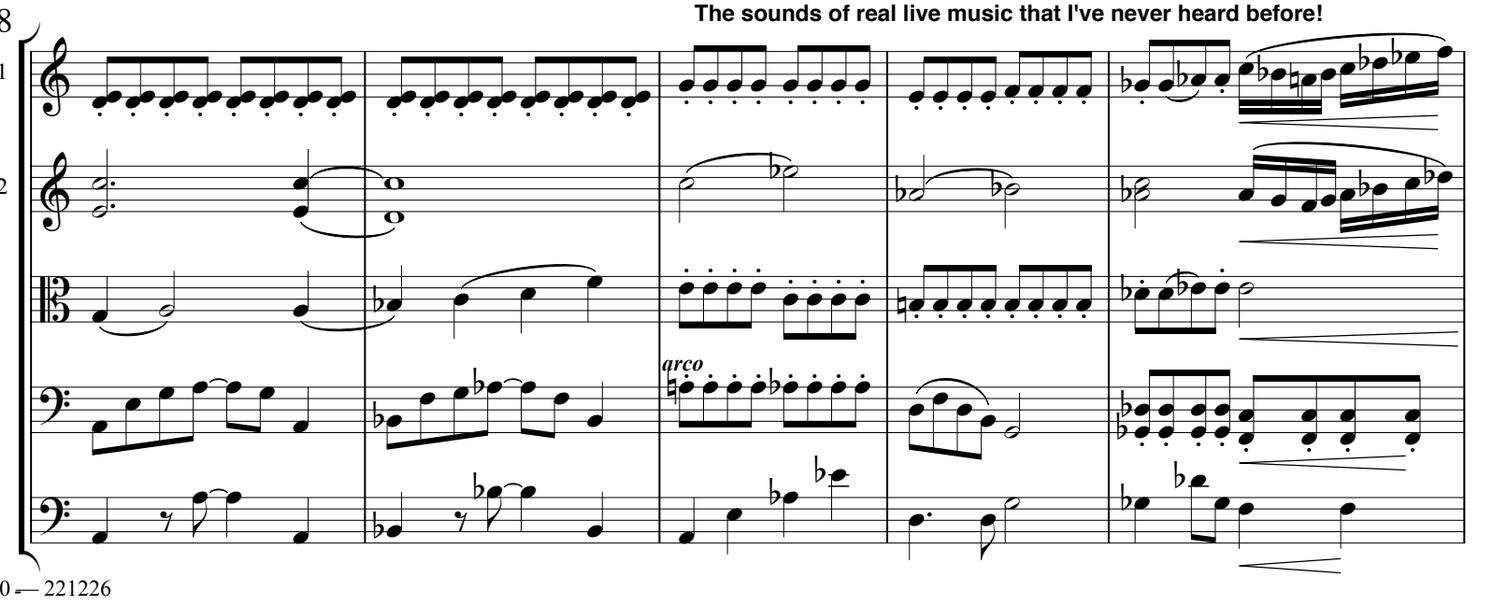
C **Everywhere I turn I see things that are so different.**

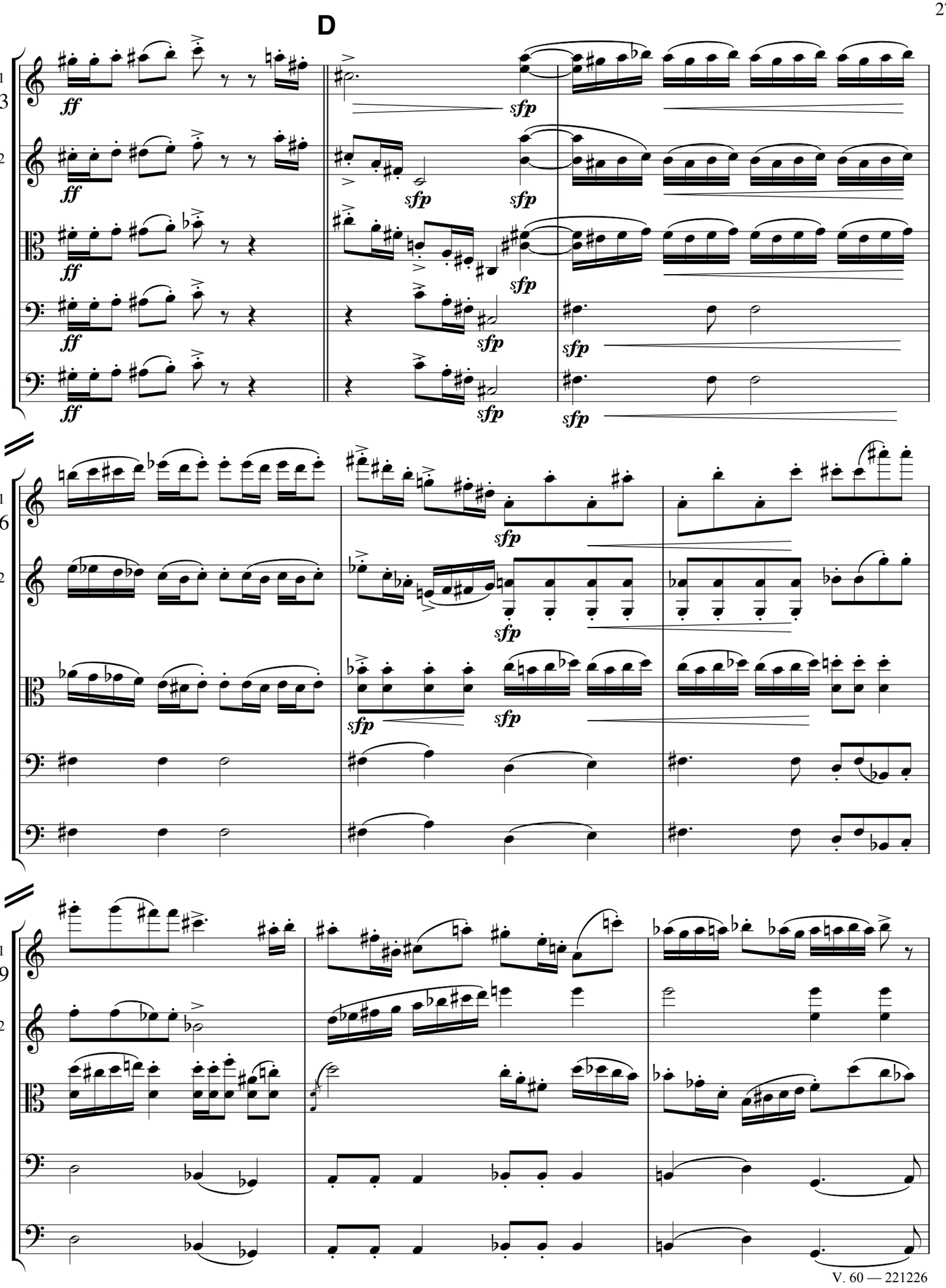


Men with beards and great mustaches – and women dressed in the most elaborate gowns.

The sounds of real live music that I've never heard before!

298




D
Vio 1
303
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
ff
sfp
Vio 1
306
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
sfp
Vio 1
309
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

312

Right next to us a window looks out

E

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

to the front of the house. I can't believe what I'm seeing! The entrance way is lighted with gas lamps, and there's a long line of elegant horse-drawn carriages all along the driveway down to the street.

316

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

Where is Amity Street? It should be right outside the gate, but the road there is much too narrow and the surface is dirt.

What is happening?

321

Vio 1

Vio 2

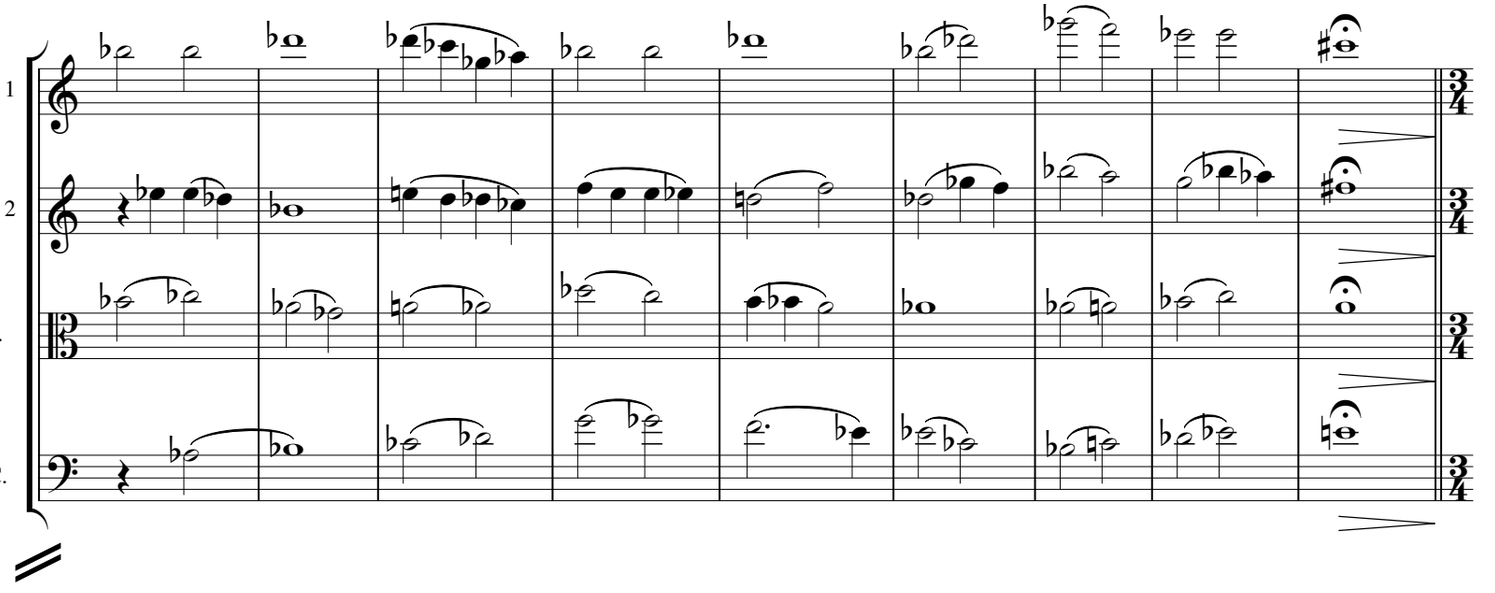
Vla.

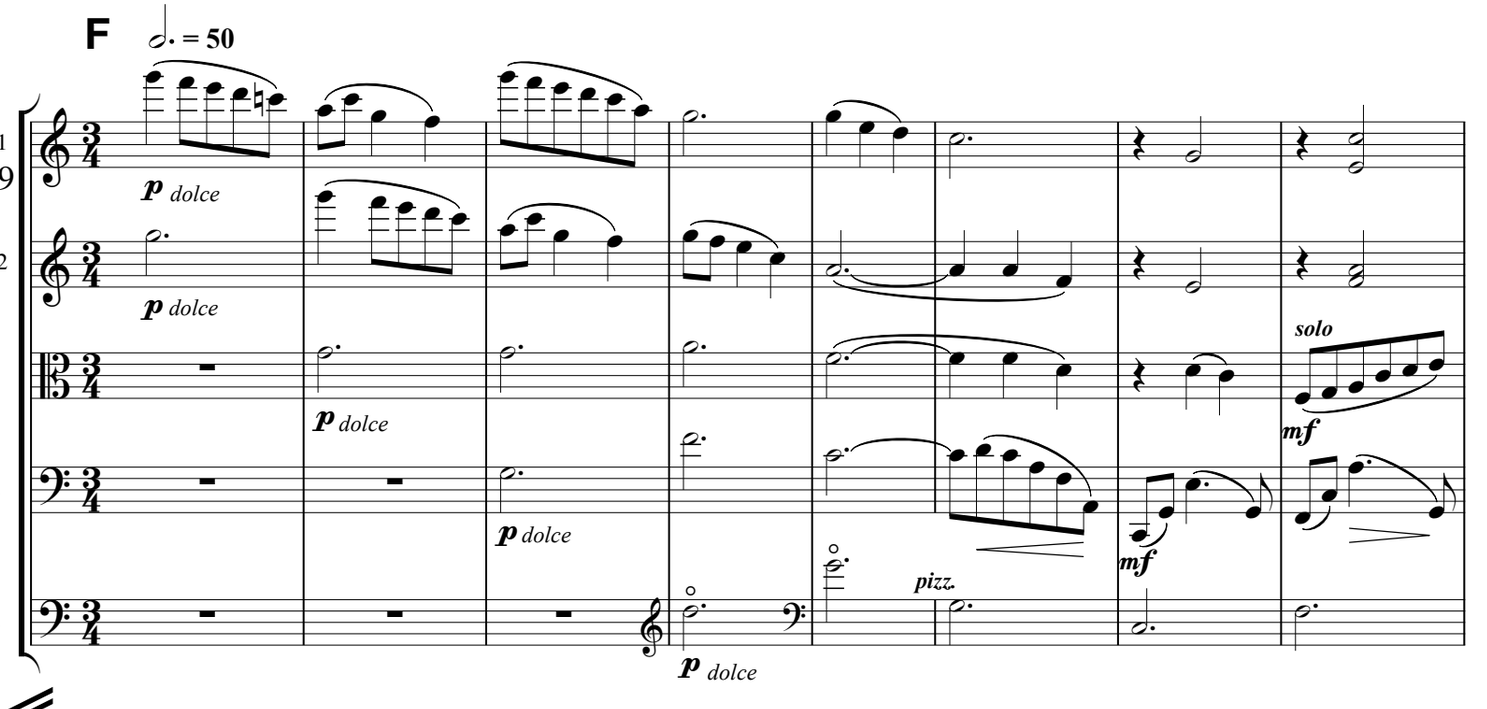
V.C.

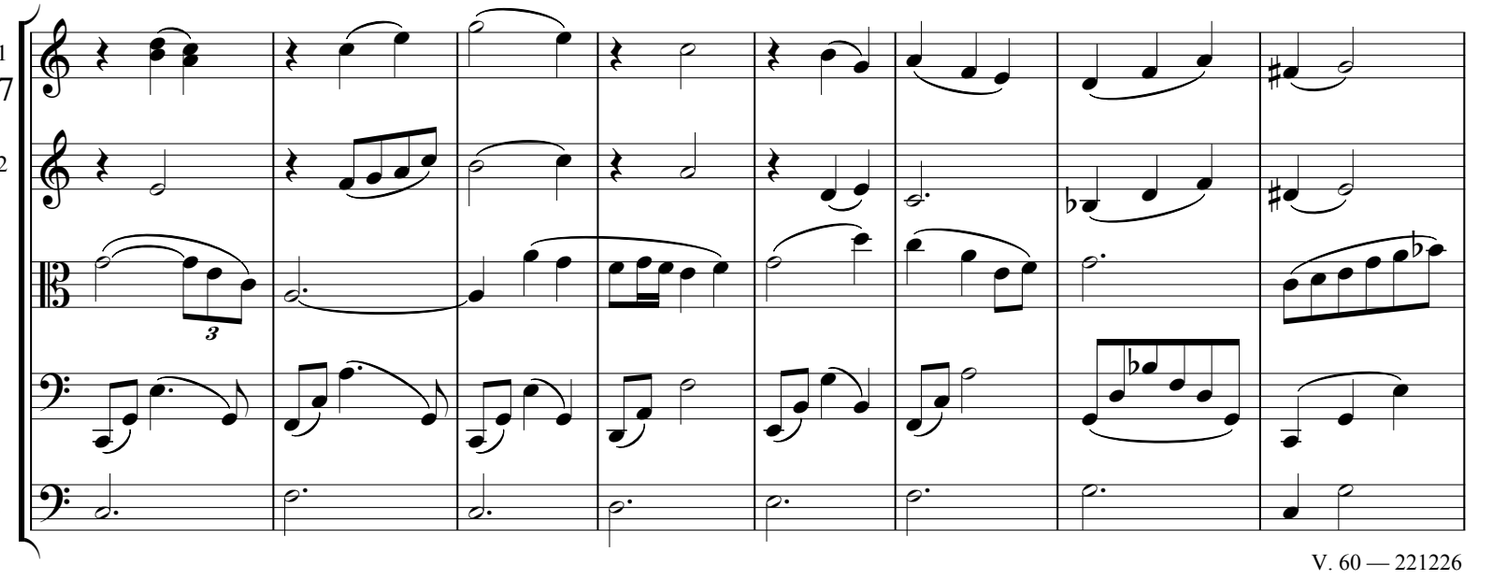
D.B.

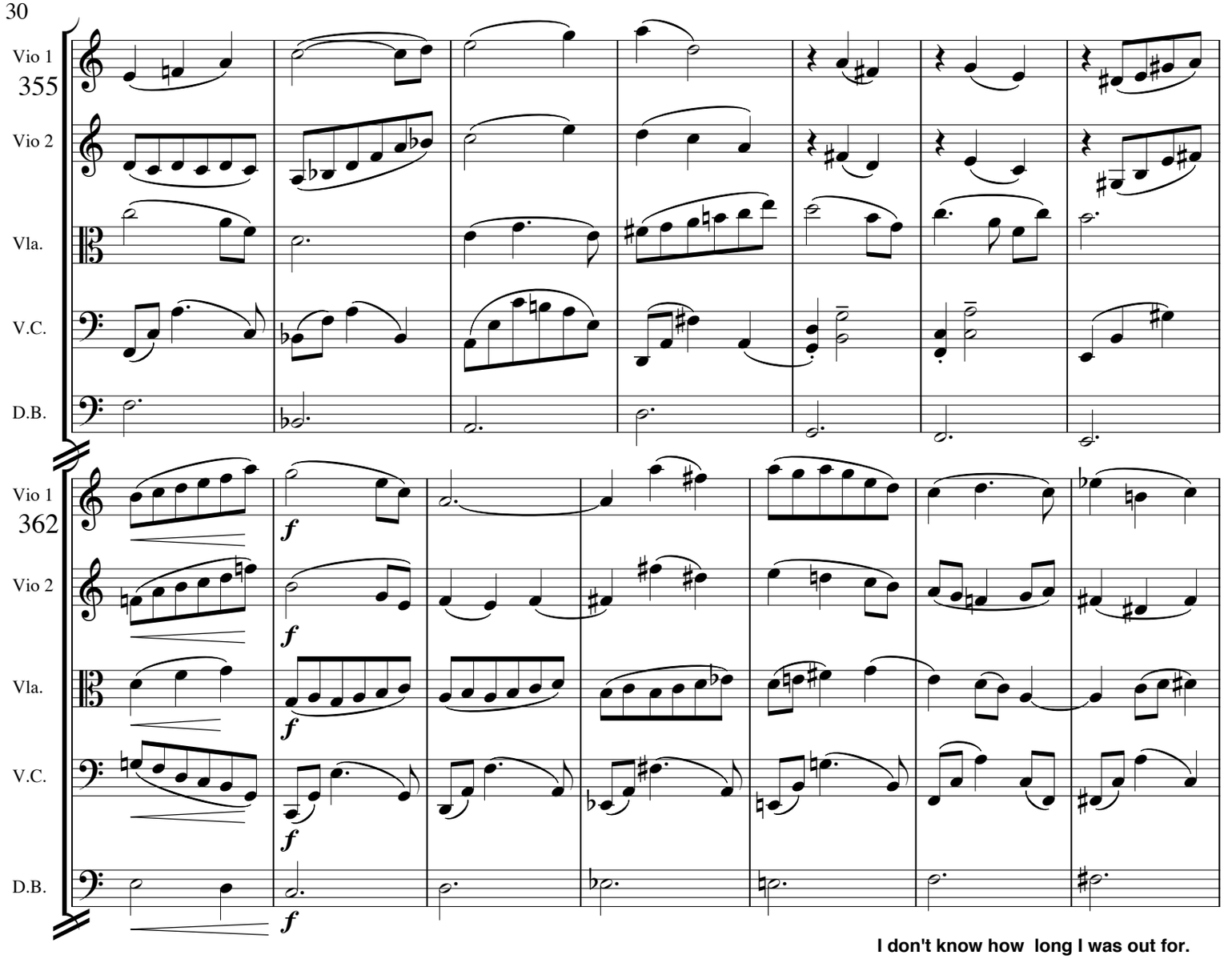
330

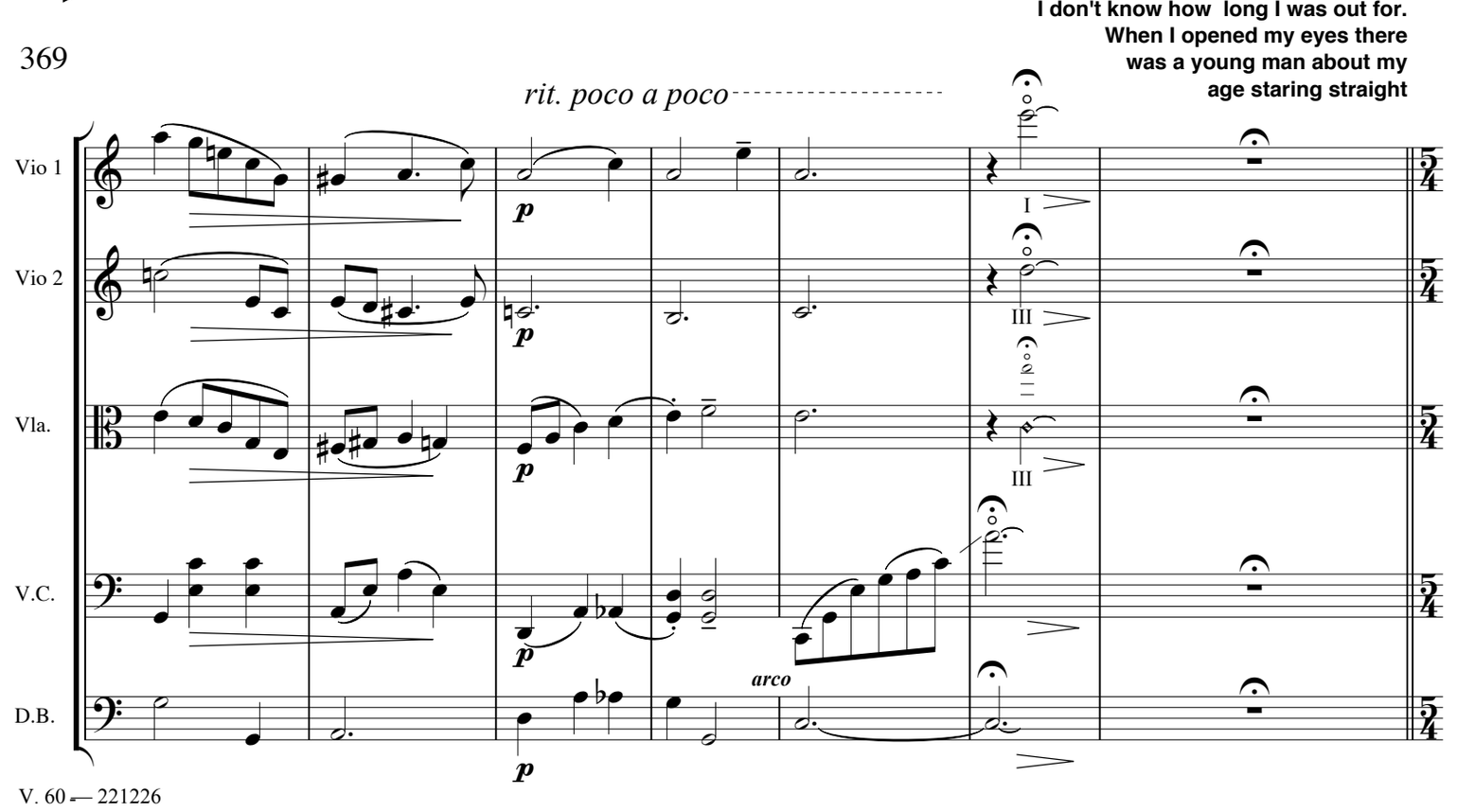
I'm getting so tired. All this running around is really getting to me. I see Willie is already asleep next to me on the floor. I should stay awake. Old man Prichard is sure to come by any minute but. . . I'm so . . . so . . . sleepy. I'll just close my eyes for a minute.








Vio 1
355
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
Vio 1
362
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
f


I don't know how long I was out for.
When I opened my eyes there
was a young man about my
age staring straight
369
rit. poco a poco
Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
p
I
III
III
arco
5/4

376

at me.

♩ = 144

He had a smile on his face and looked friendly. In fact he looked kind of familiar.
I looked down at Willie who was still asleep, but was beginning to stir.

♩ = 84

The big room was quiet now,

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

p fp pizz. arco

382

but the candles still illuminated it. "Hi," I said, "Wh. . .what's going on? Who're you?" He smiled and answered,

"I'm Bobby."

G ♩ = 69 *poco rubato*

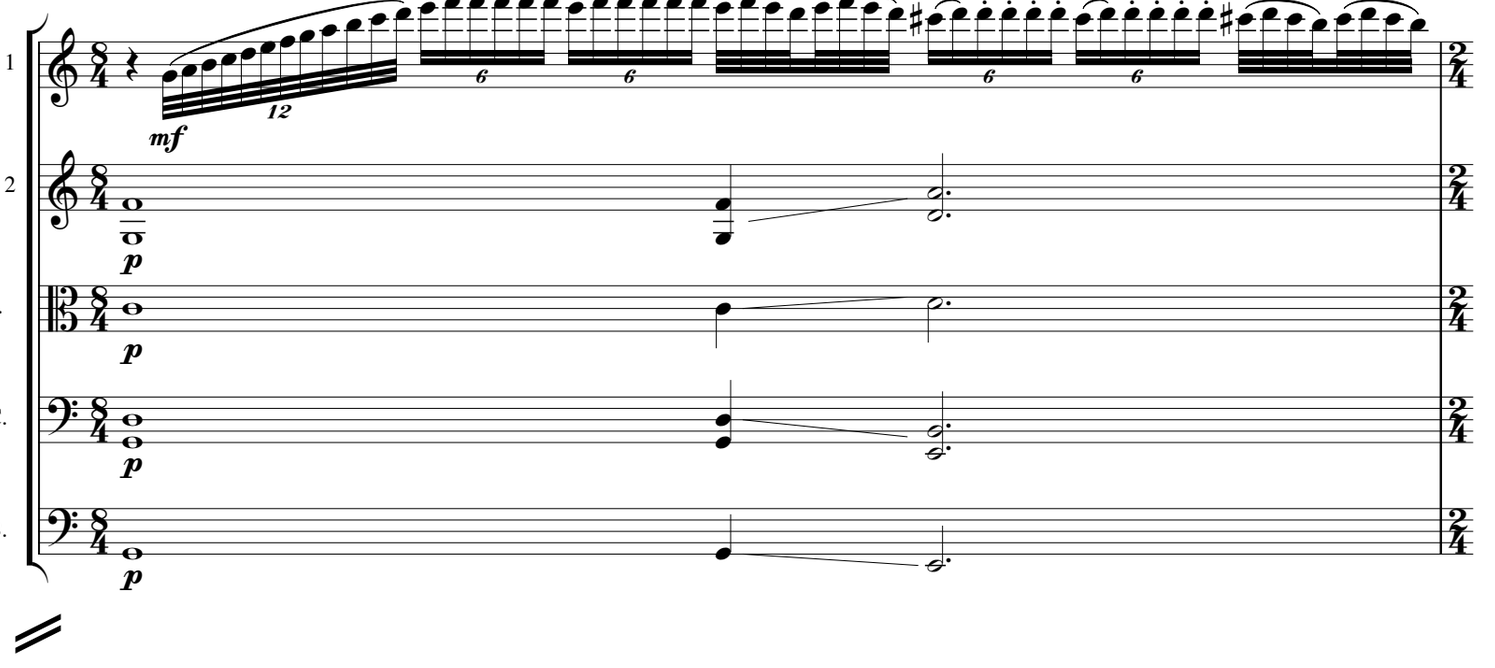
I spotted a small photograph of an impressive-looking man with a full beard wearing a military coat. Everyone seemed to have beards around here.

mf

387

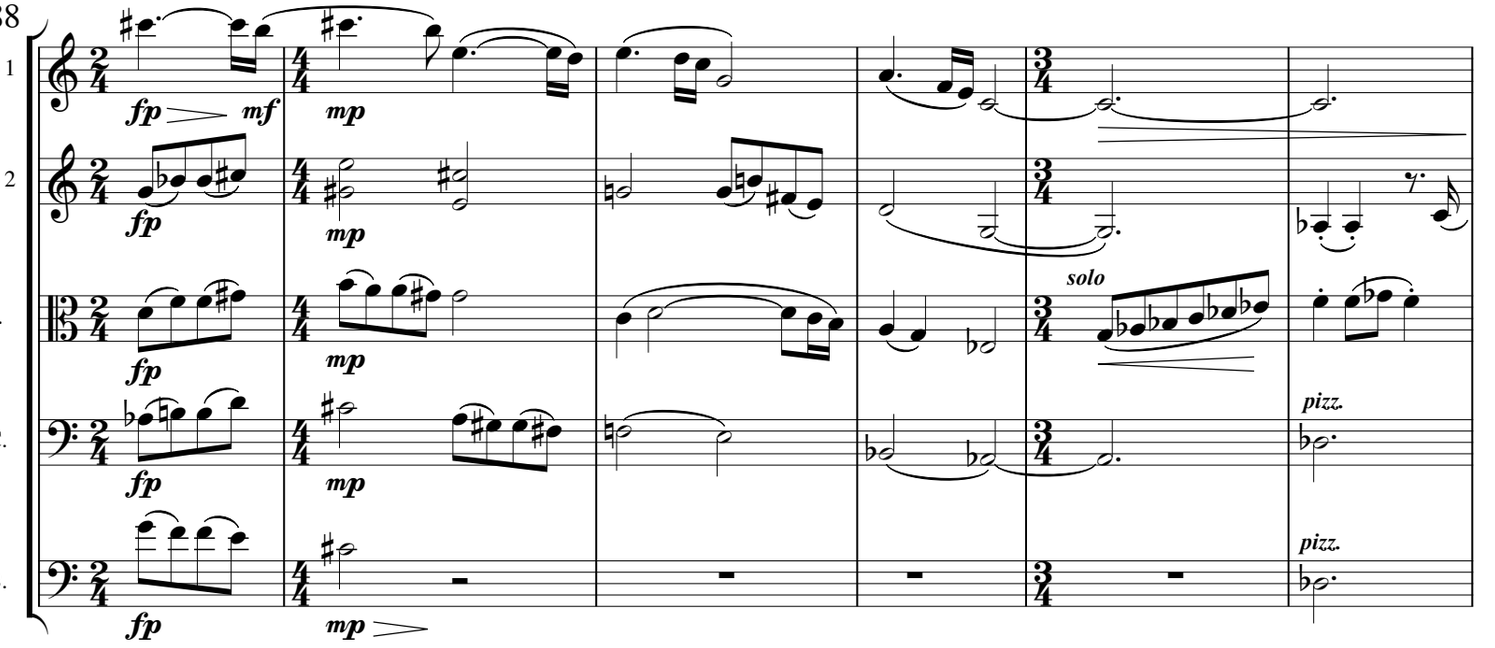
Cadenza *ad lib*

It was autographed, but I couldn't make out the signature.



"Who's that?" I asked Bobby. "Why that's President Grant," he smiled.

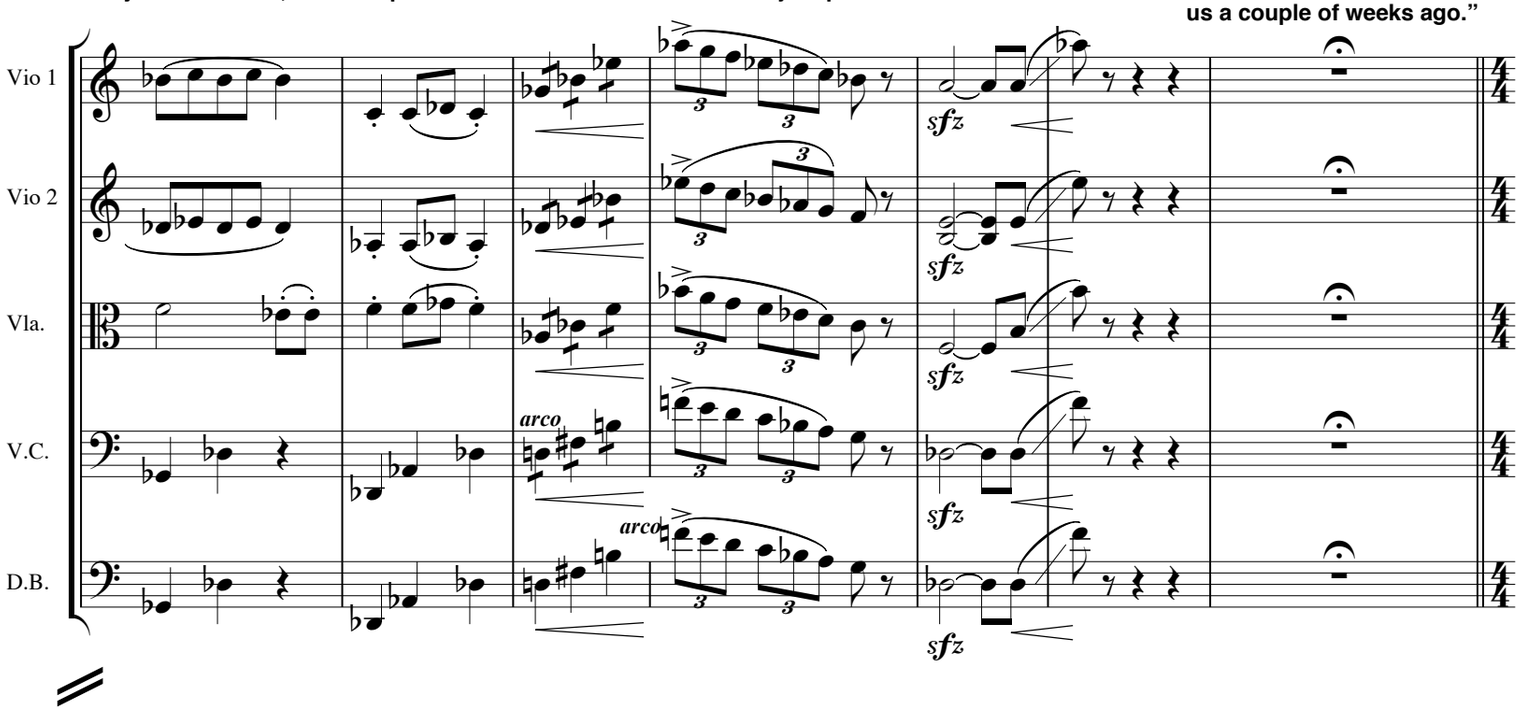
388



394

"Ulysses S. Grant, our 18th president? Wow! It looks like it was just printed."

Bobby's smile grew brighter as he replied,"Yes, It's an original, Mr. Brady gave it to us a couple of weeks ago."

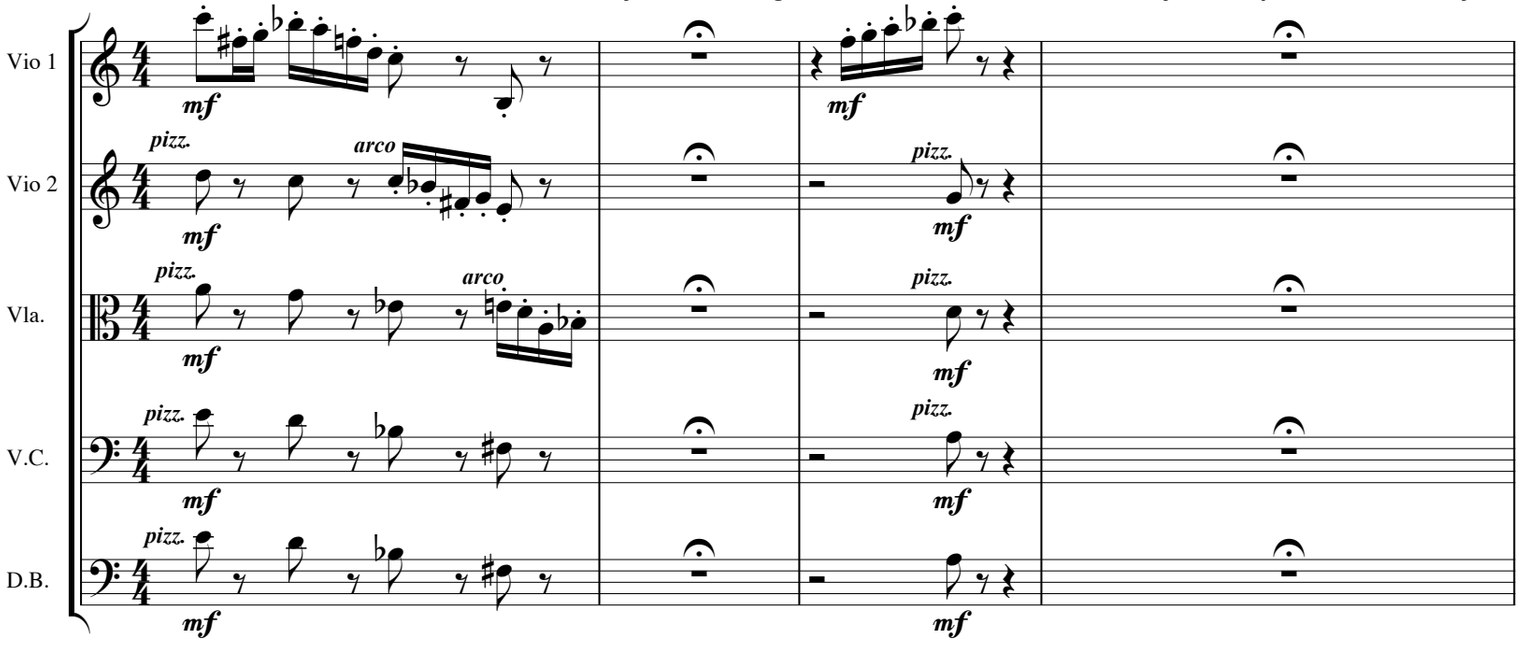


401

H ♩= 132

I laughed at his joke, "You pick it up on E-Bay or something?

Boy an original Matthew Brady print must be worth a fortune, and this one looks almost new!"Bobby looked puzzled, "What-Bay?

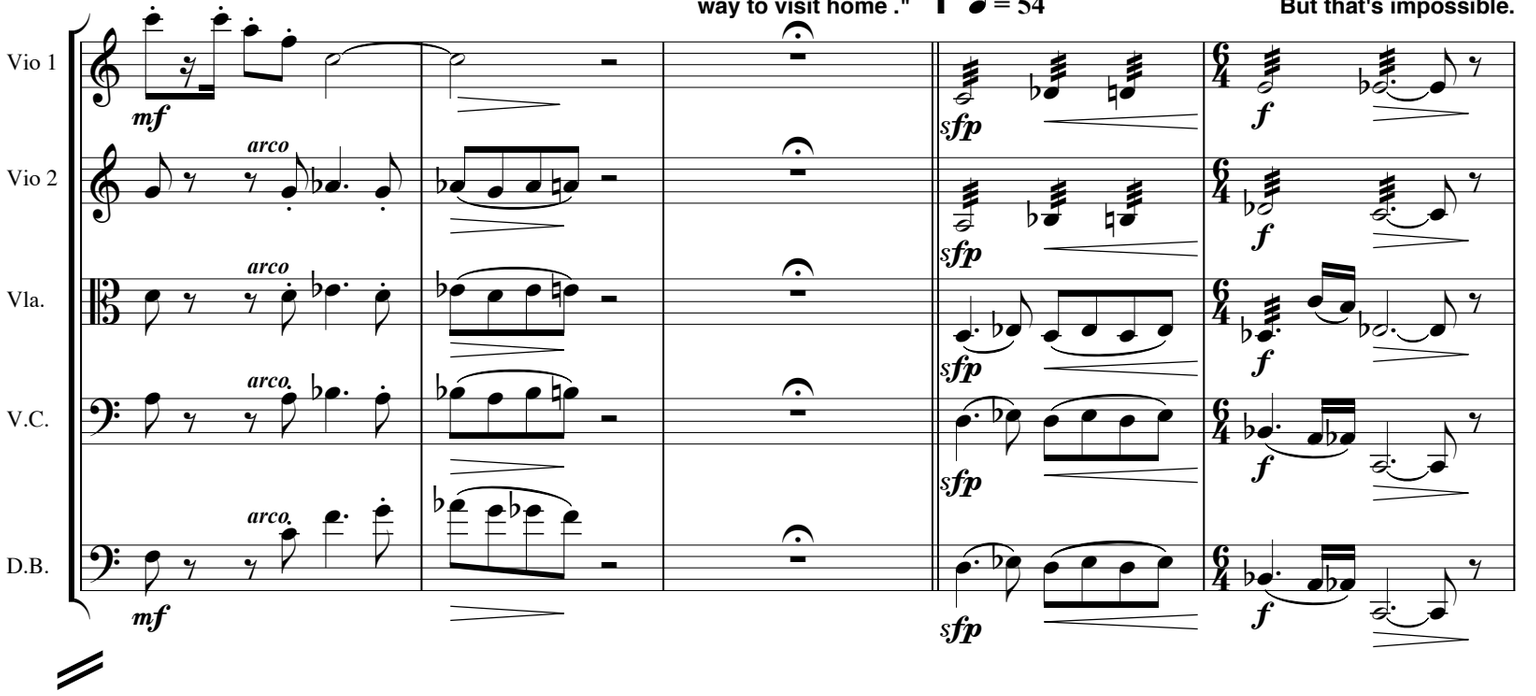


405

Of course it's almost new.
Mr. Brady took it just a few
months ago when President
Grant stopped here on his
way to visit home ."

♩ = 54

He was serious, not joking at all.
But that's impossible.

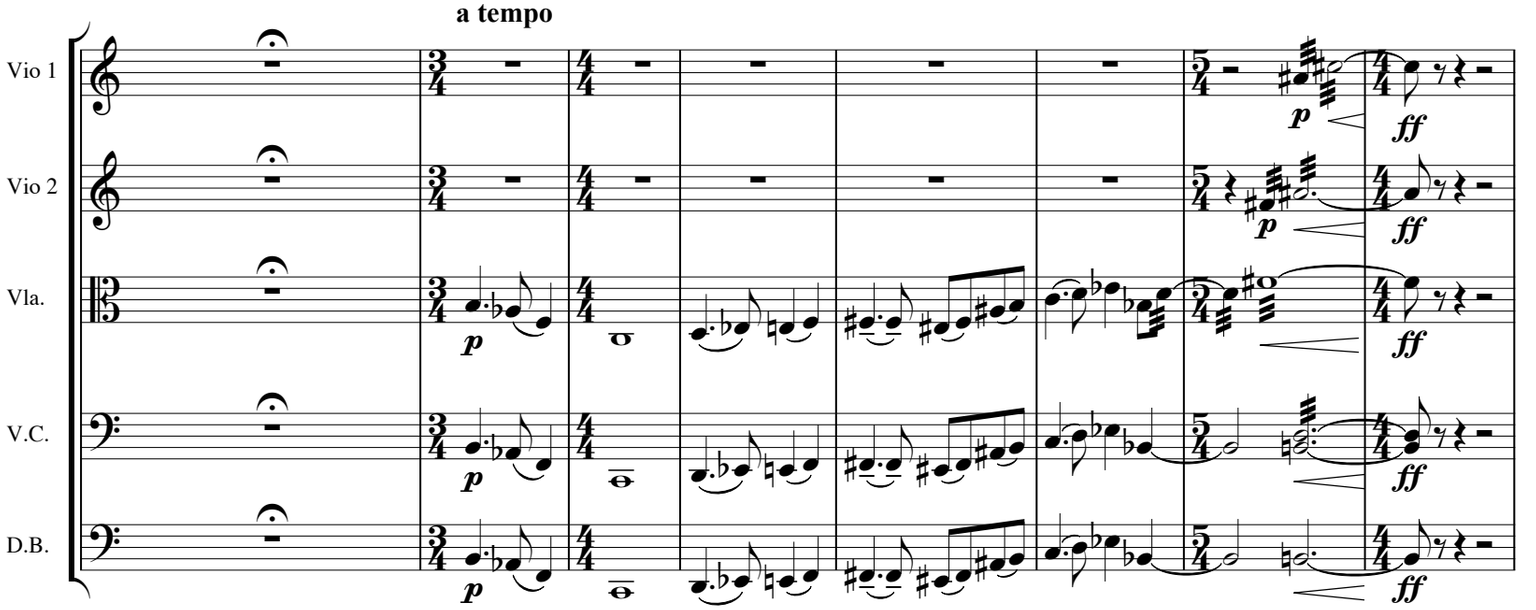


410

Grant became President in
1869 and this is . . ."
But before I could finish
Bobby interrupted, "1872."

Things were starting to make a weird sort of sense. The photograph, the horse–
drawn carriages, Amity Street, where it's always tough to park, is a dirt road.
Not a hint of electricity - everything lit with candles. . . I stared at Bobby,
"This is the year 1872?
You mean we've traveled back over a hundered years!?"

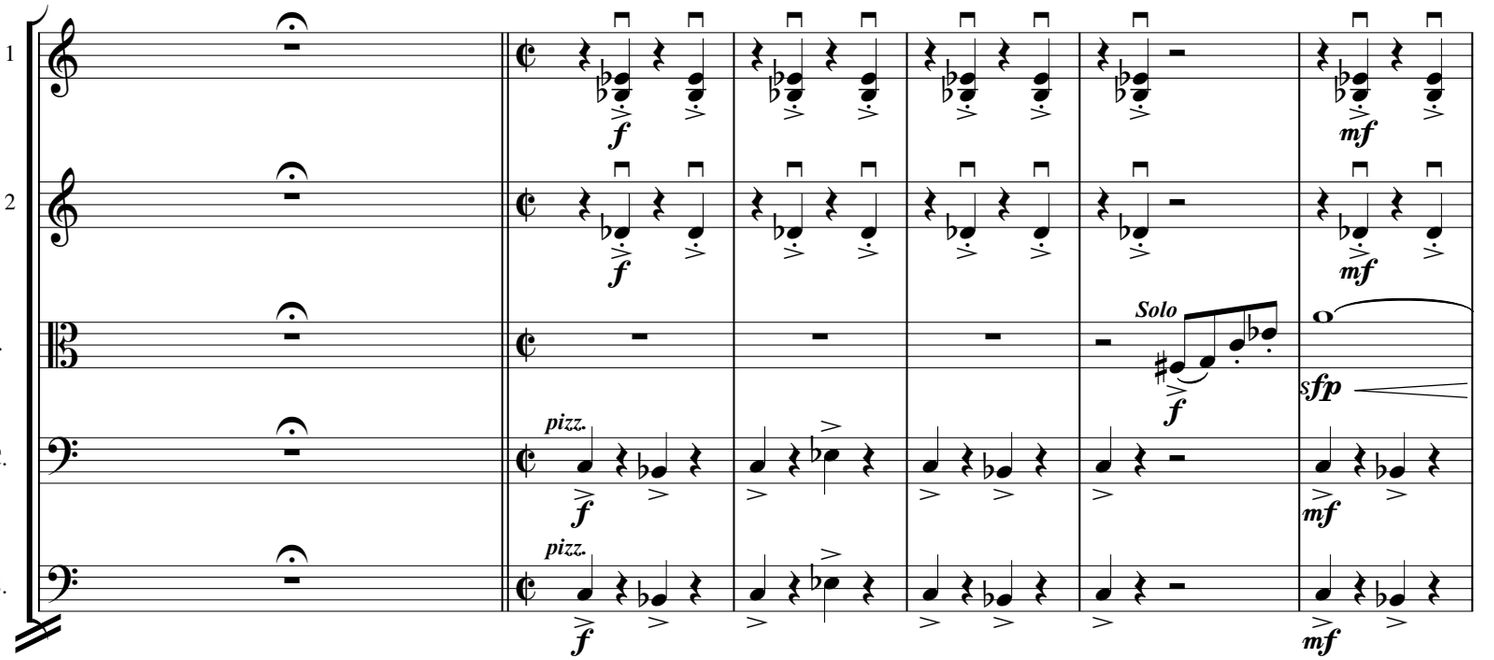
a tempo



418

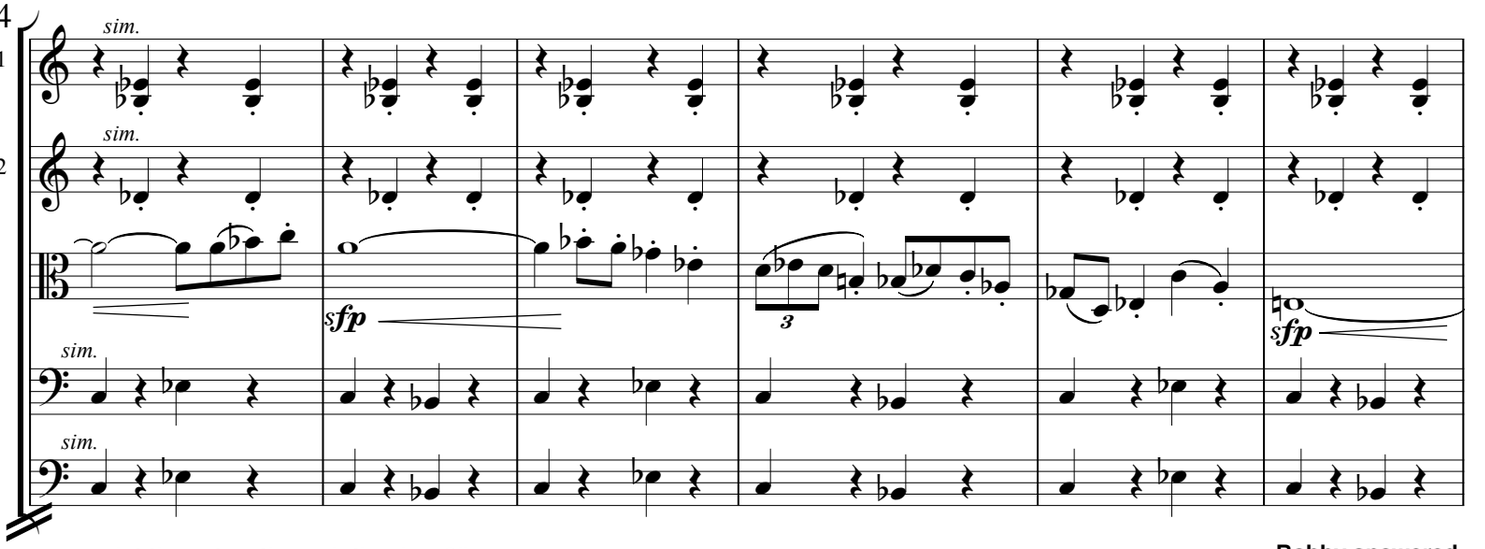
Bobby nodded slowly, as Willie, now awake and having caught the last part of our conversation squealed, "What's going on Toni? let's go home!"

♩ = 112



A frowning, extremely large, rather nasty-looking woman appeared and growled, "Bobby Prichard, did you

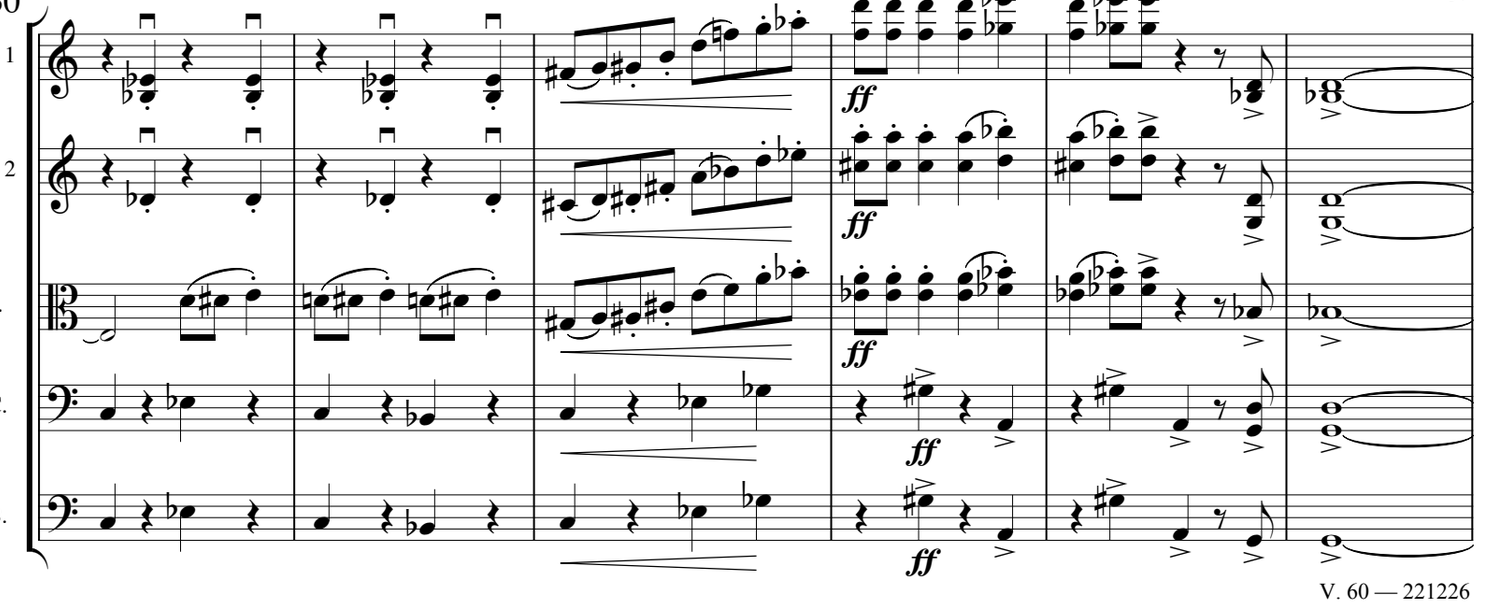
424



let these two through the door?"

Bobby answered fearfully,

430



436

"I'm sorry Aunt May, I tried to stop them but they stepped through before I could do anything!"

Willie, now even more terrified insisted "Toni, I wanna' go home!"

Aunt May scolded Bobby, "You know they'll have to stay now. We can't let them return!"

K ♩ = 63

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

441

I watched Bobby sadly nod as Willie, who was now beside himself wined, "Toni, let's go!"

As Aunt May and Bobby turned away to confer among themselves, I grabbed Willie and whispered through clenched teeth,

♩ = 100

pizz.

445

"We've got to get downstairs and find our way out the same way we came in.

a tempo

On my signal no matter what I do, run for the basement. Got it?" He nodded .

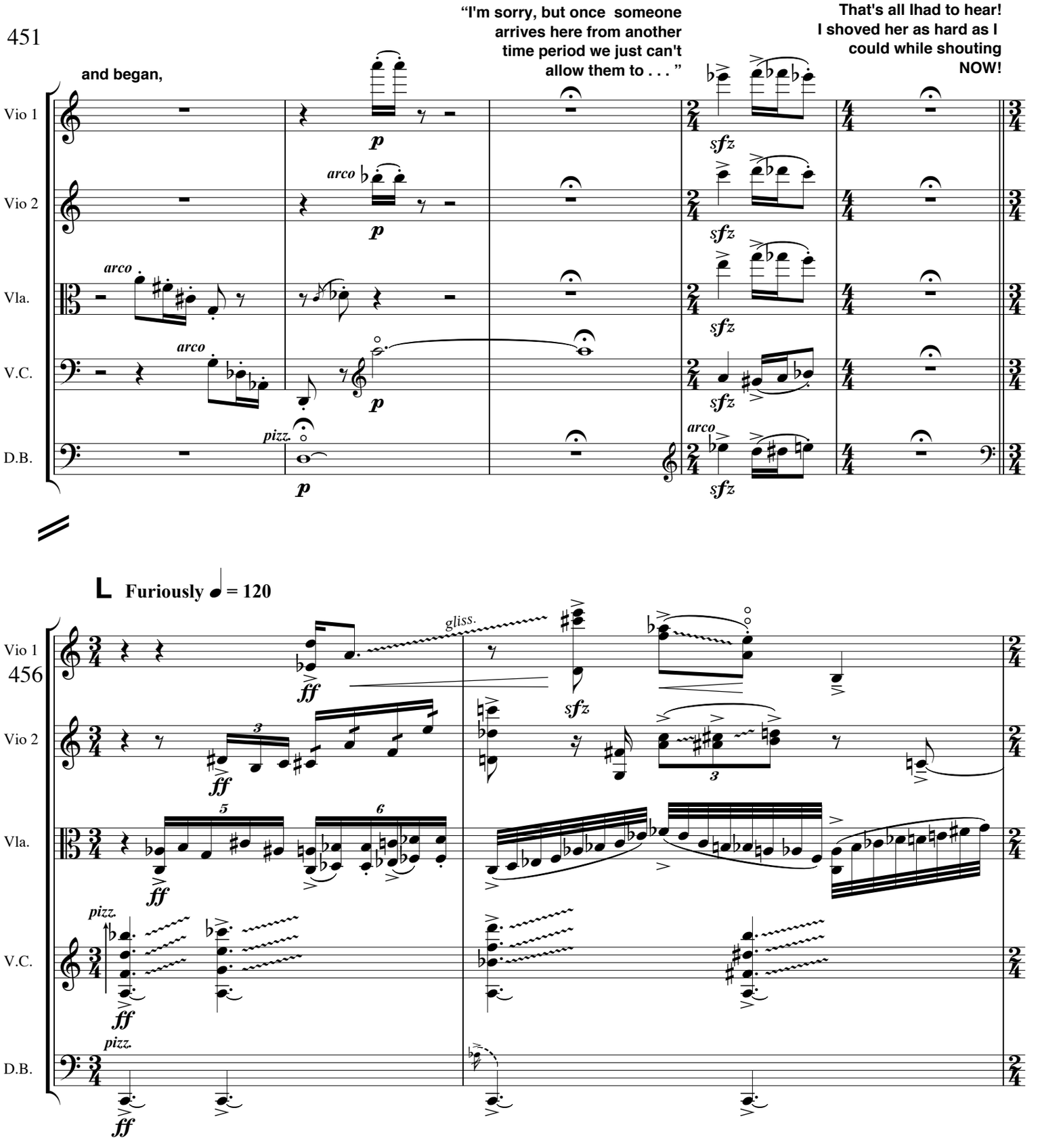
pizz.

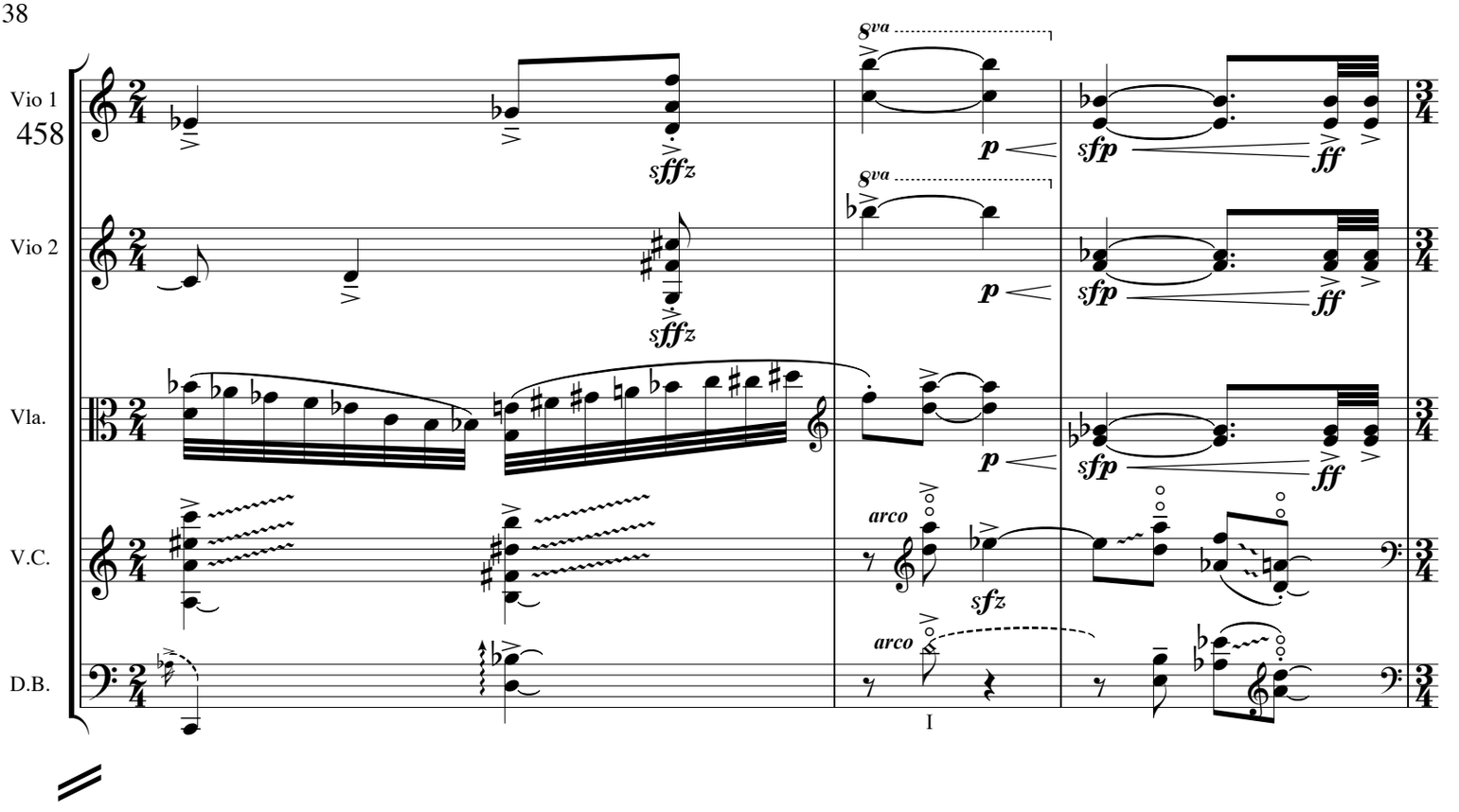
a tempo

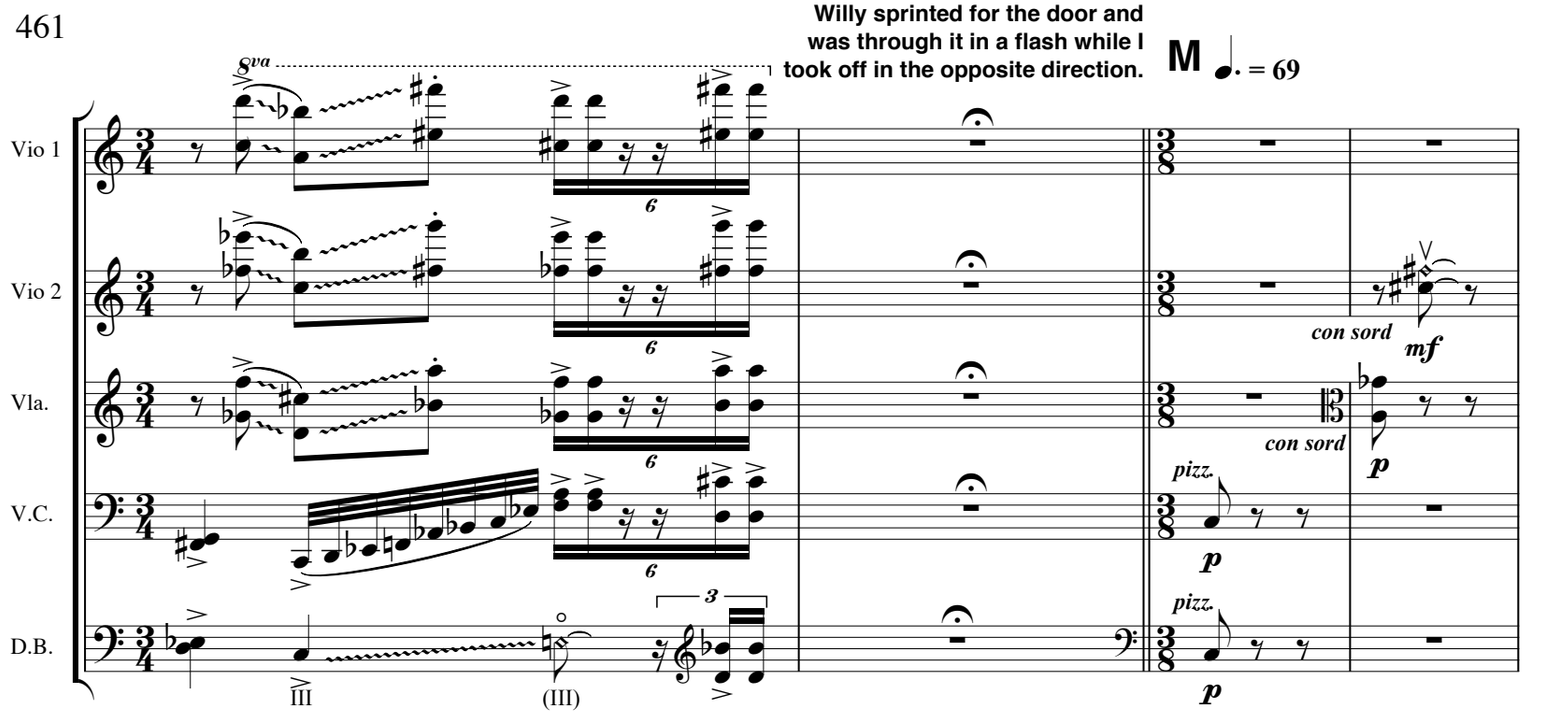
As Aunt May came closer

a tempo

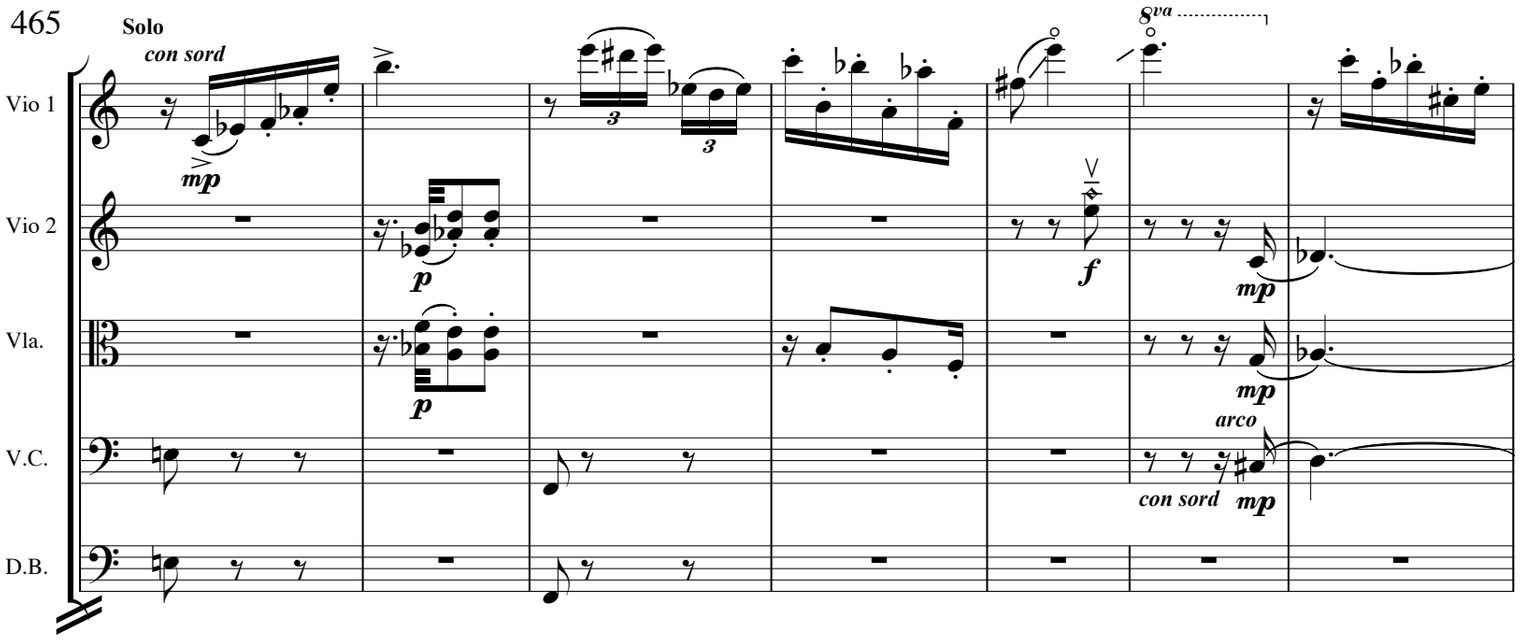
arco


451
and began,
"I'm sorry, but once someone arrives here from another time period we just can't allow them to . . . "
That's all Ihad to hear! I shoved her as hard as I could while shouting NOW!
Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
arco
pizz.
p
sfz
L Furiously ♩ = 120
456
gliss.
ff

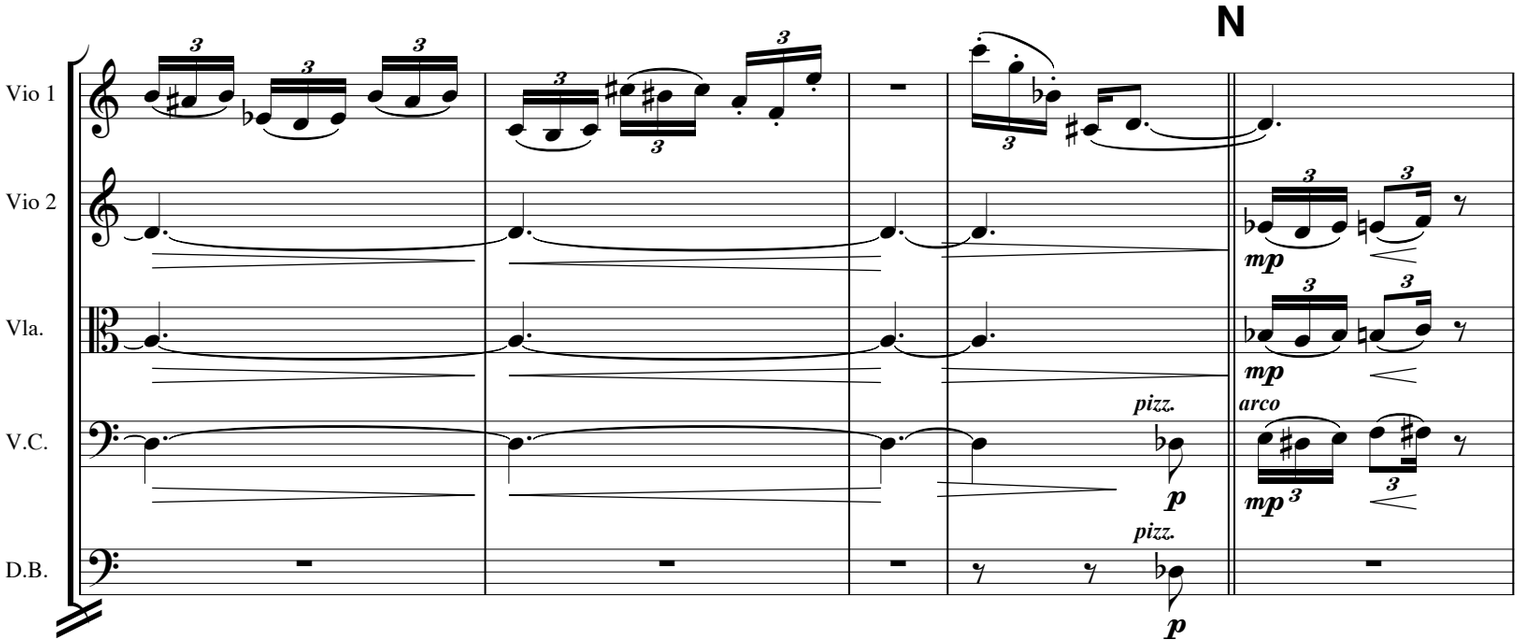

Vio 1
458
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
8va
sfffz
p
sfp
ff
arco
sfz
I


461
Willy sprinted for the door and was through it in a flash while I took off in the opposite direction.
M
= 69
Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.
8va
6
3
III
(III)
con sord
mf
p
pizz.

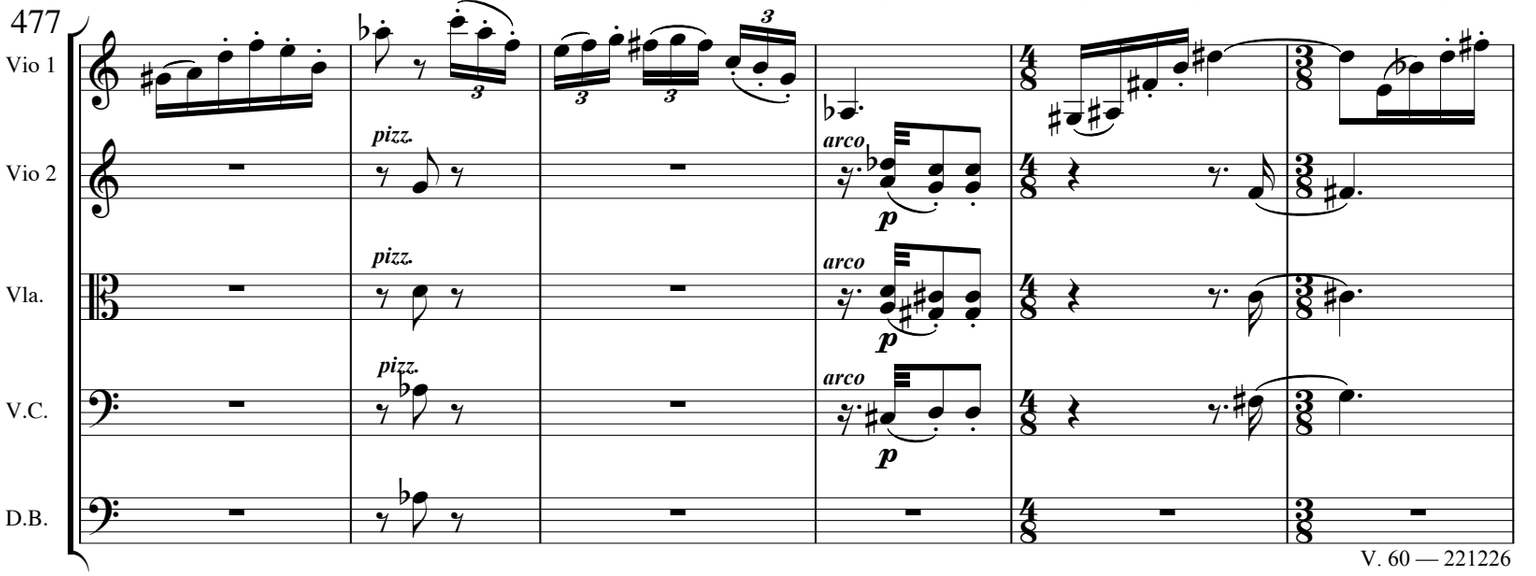
While Bobby helped Aunt May to her feet, I took a few extra seconds to grab a couple of candles



472 **before heading for the basement.**

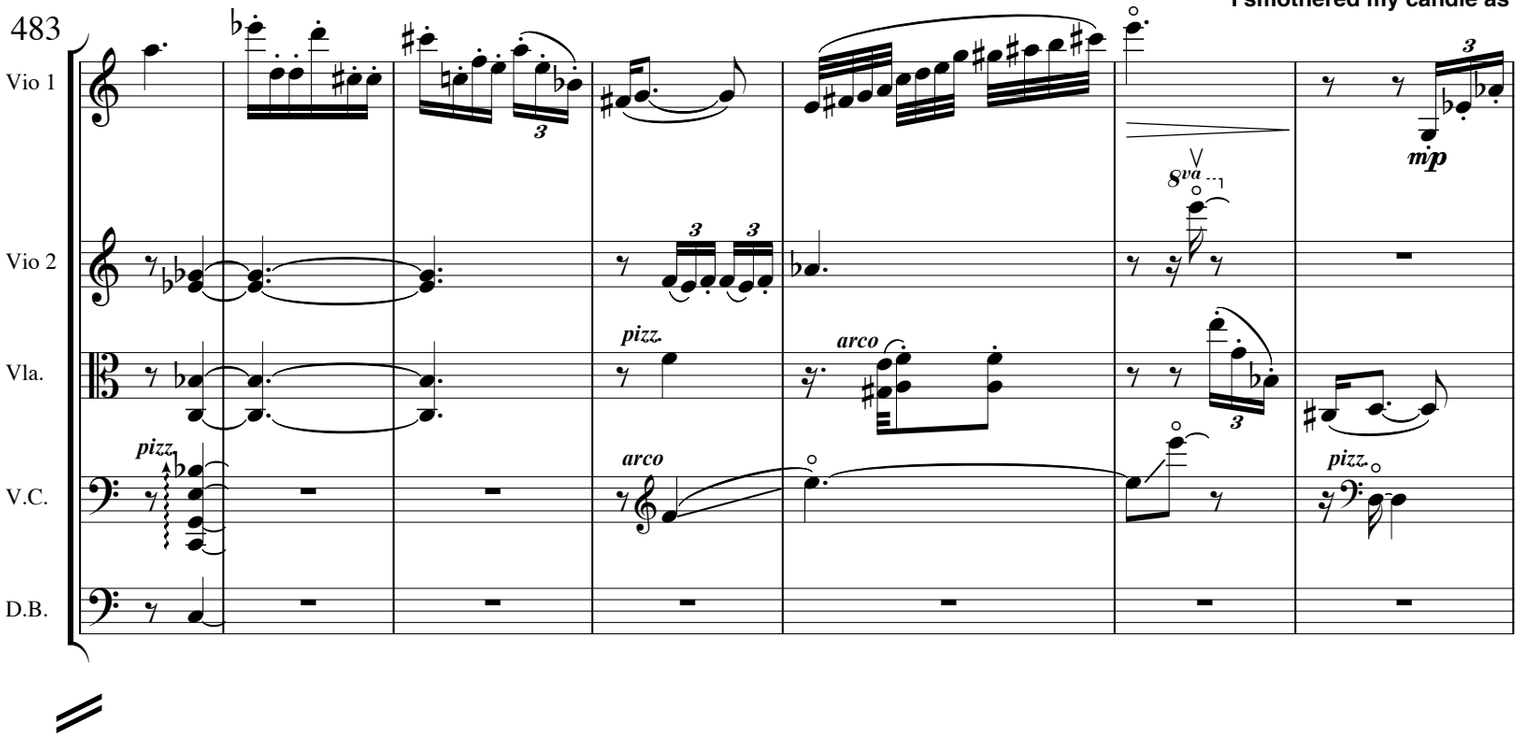


The upstairs door flew open. Bobby whizzed down the steps.



But Aunt May, who couldn't move very fast, had to take one at a time.

I smothered my candle as

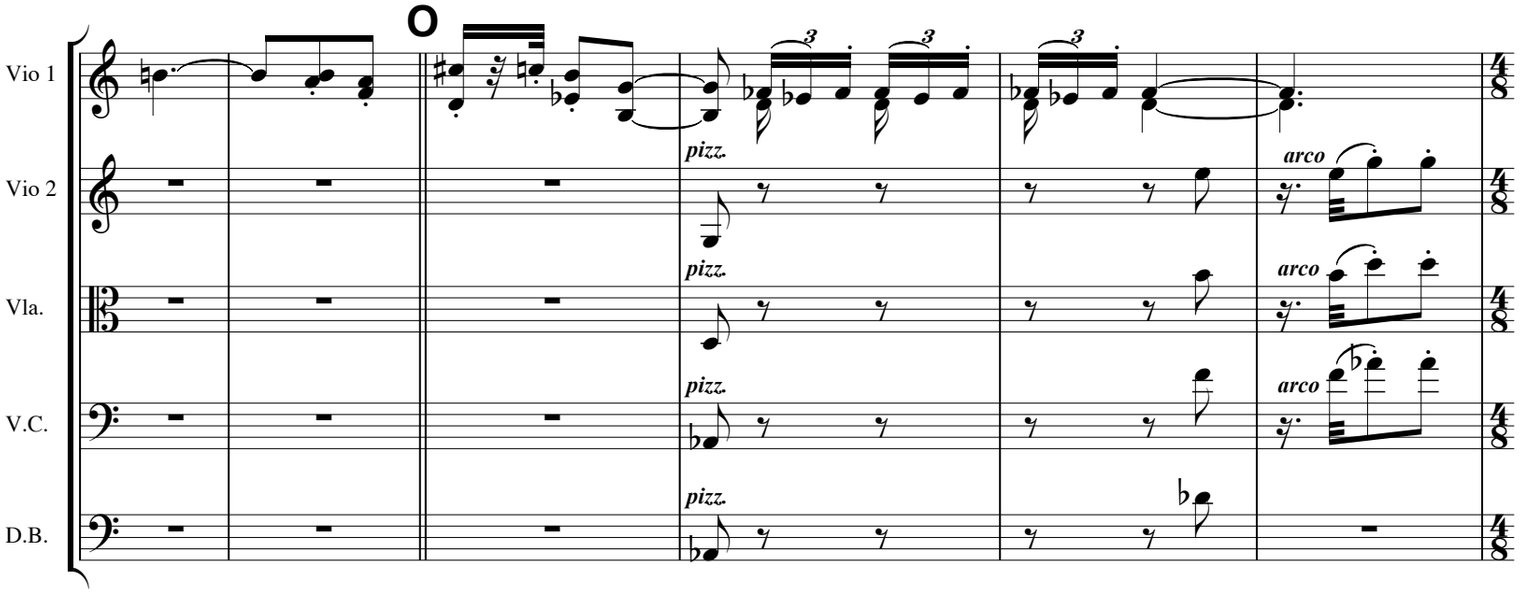


490

well as I could,

but Bobby saw immediately and was on me in no time.

He clutched me and extinguished the

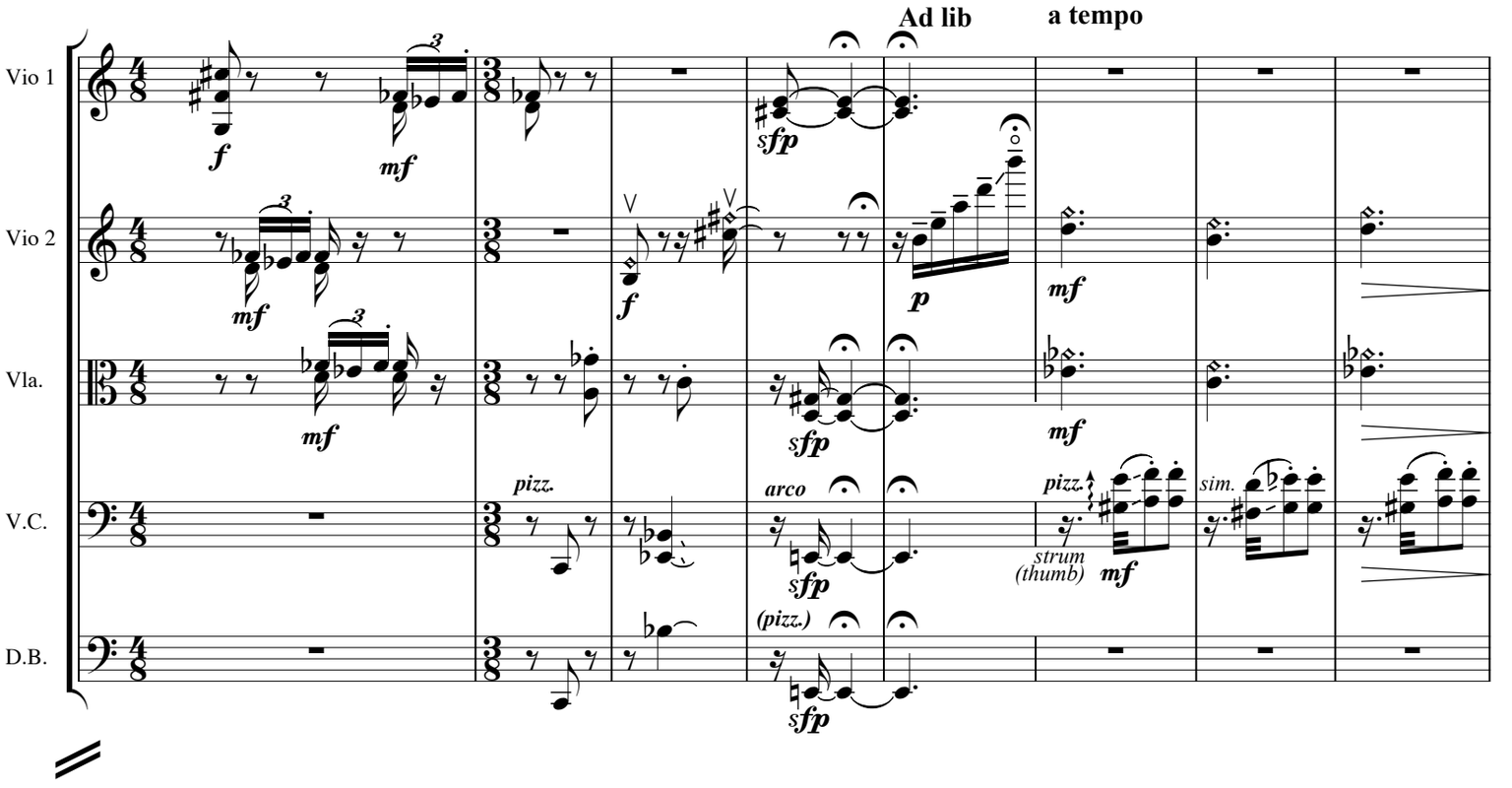


496

candle all in one brisk move.

He dragged me a few feet to another door, shoved me through,

Ad lib **a tempo**

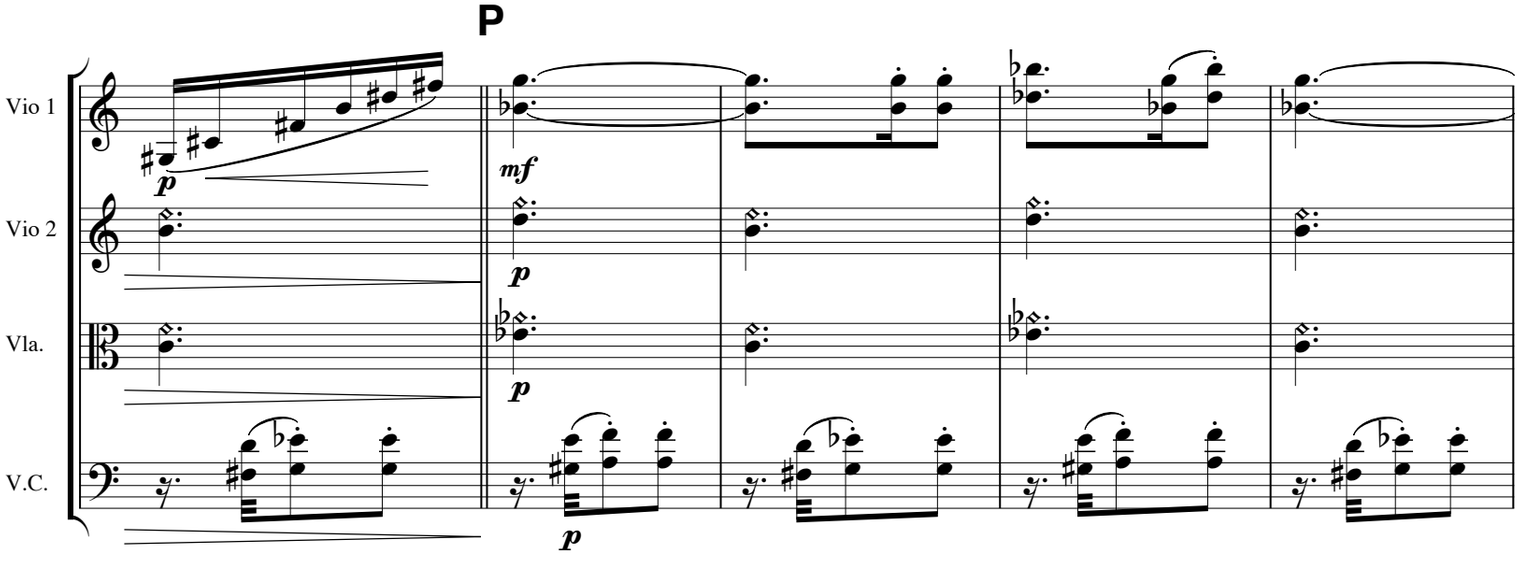


504

and said: "Wait here!"

After he took off I regained my senses and looked around.

P

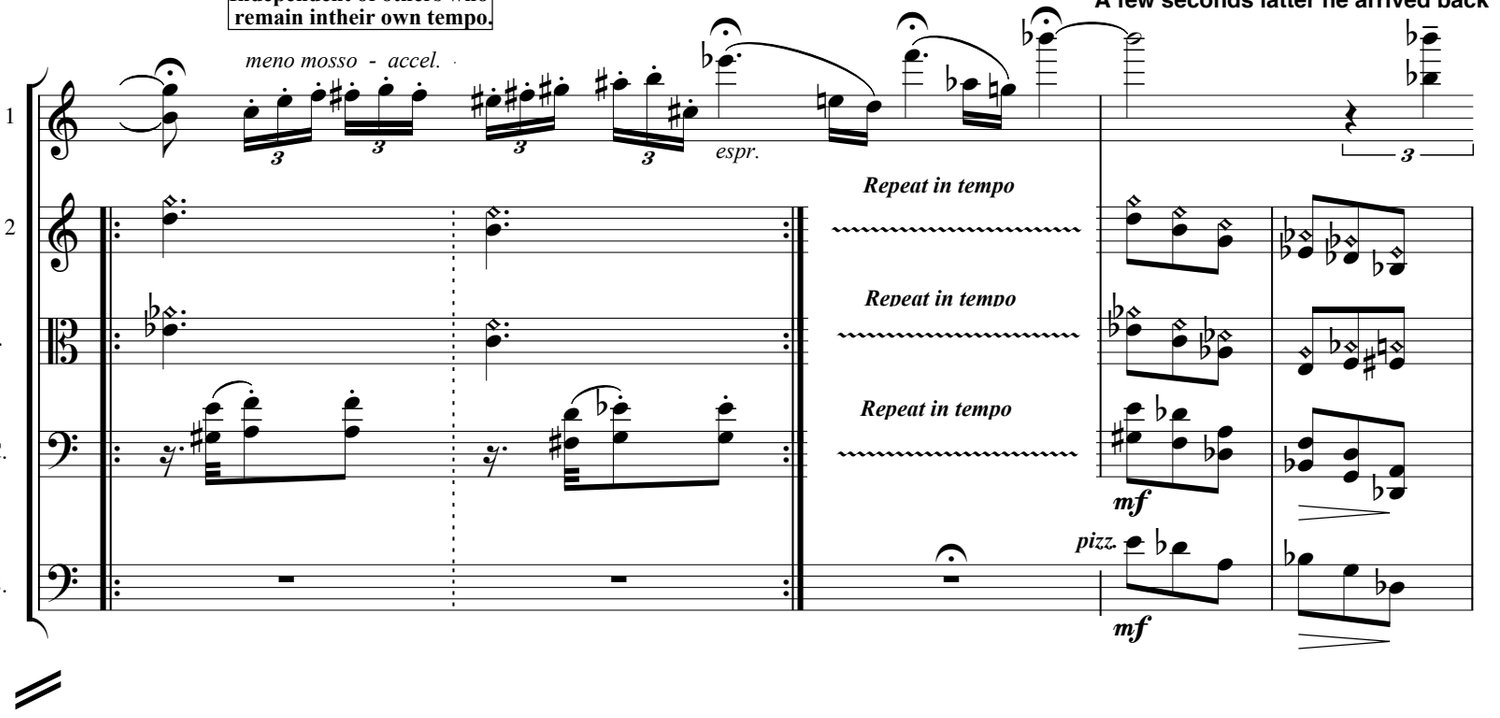


I was at the foot of the stairs that led to the outside door!

509

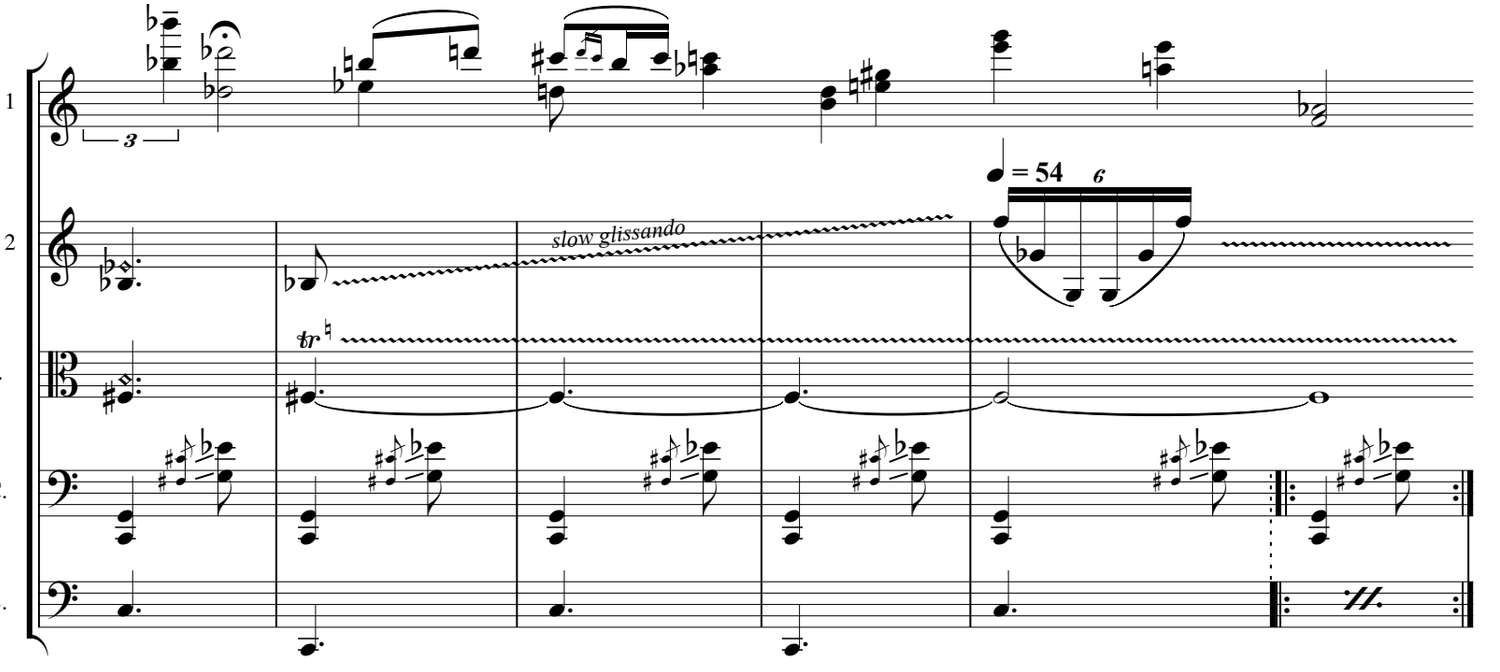
First Violin Cadenza.
Independent of others who
remain intheir own tempo.

A few seconds latter he arrived back



carrying Willie, who was flailing and kicking wildly as Bobby, with his hand cupping Willie's mouth, tossed him through the door "Quickly! Up the steps!" he whispered

513

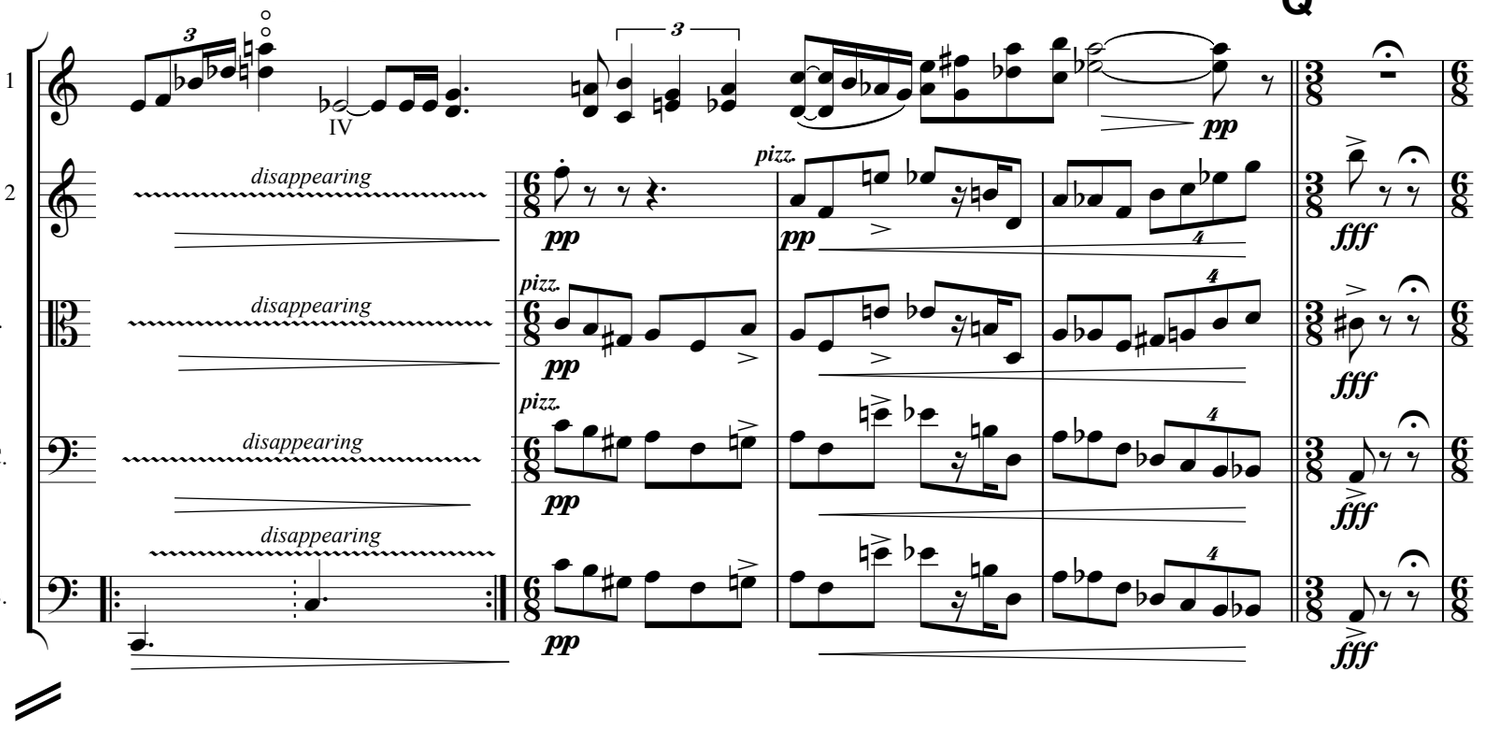


517

as we heard Aunt May closing in on us.

He slammed the door. We flew toward our last hurtle, reached the door, turned the handle and pulled.

Q



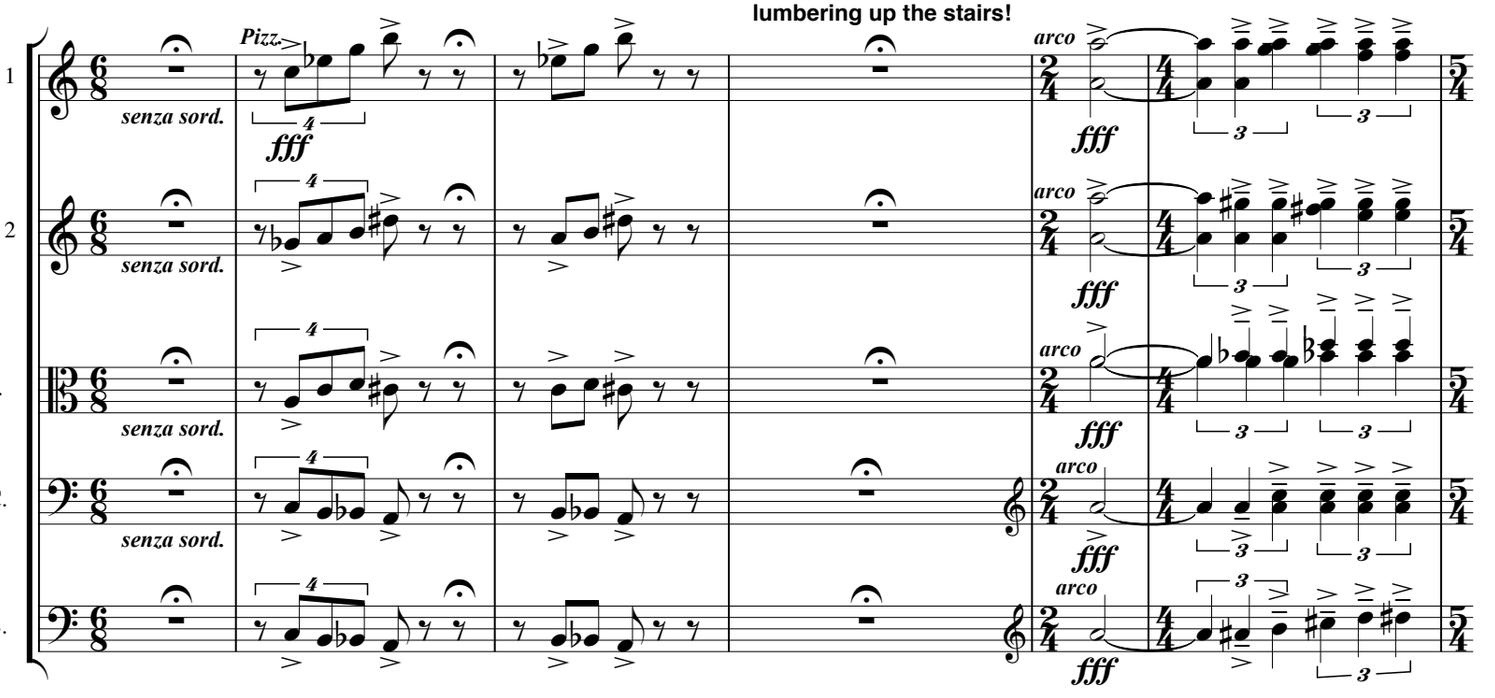
521

It was stuck! We pulled a-gain!

with all our might

Nothing. But worse, the downstairs door was now open and Aunt May was lumbering up the stairs!

♩ = 84

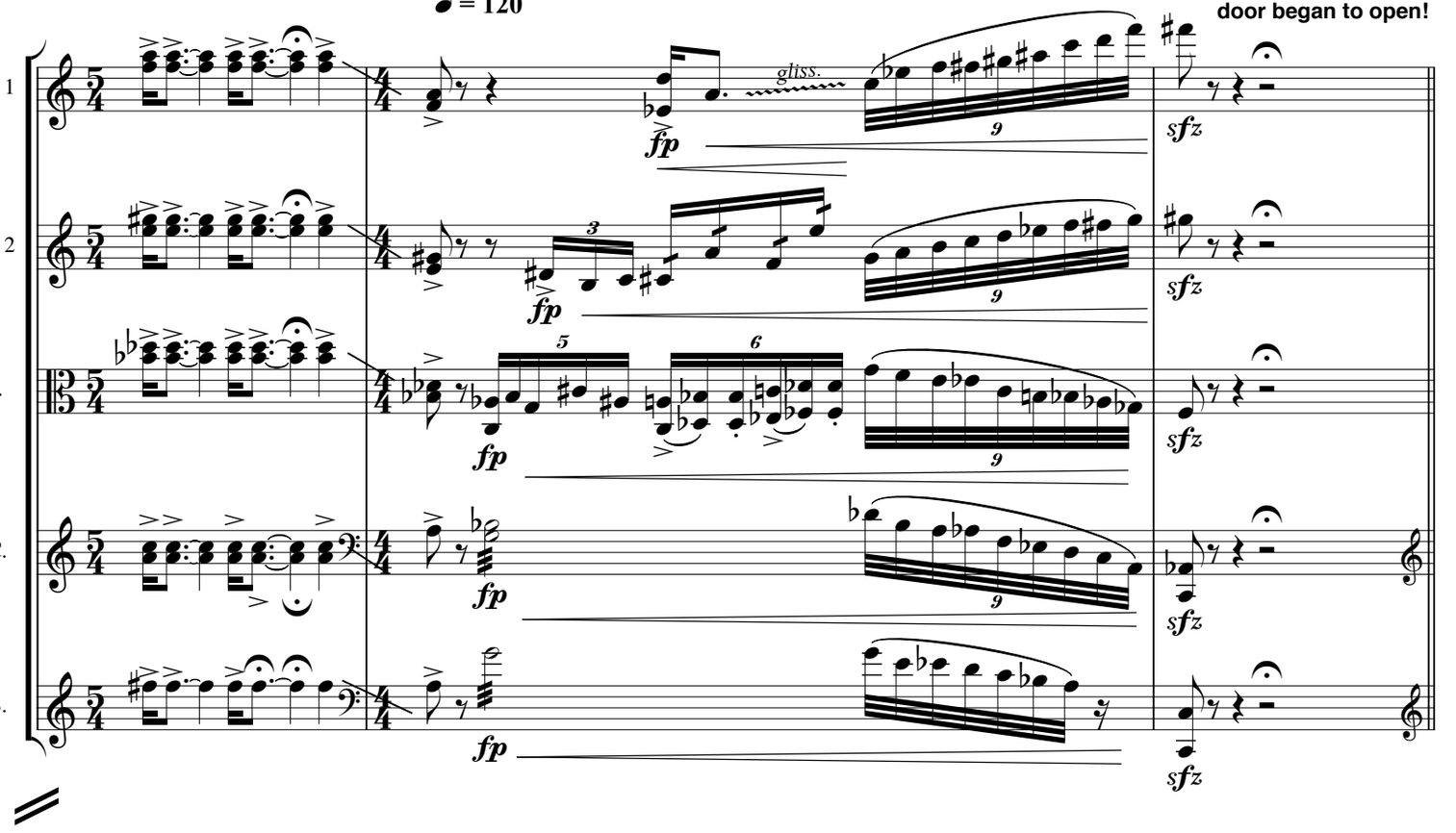


527

♩ = 120

We were about to be caught!

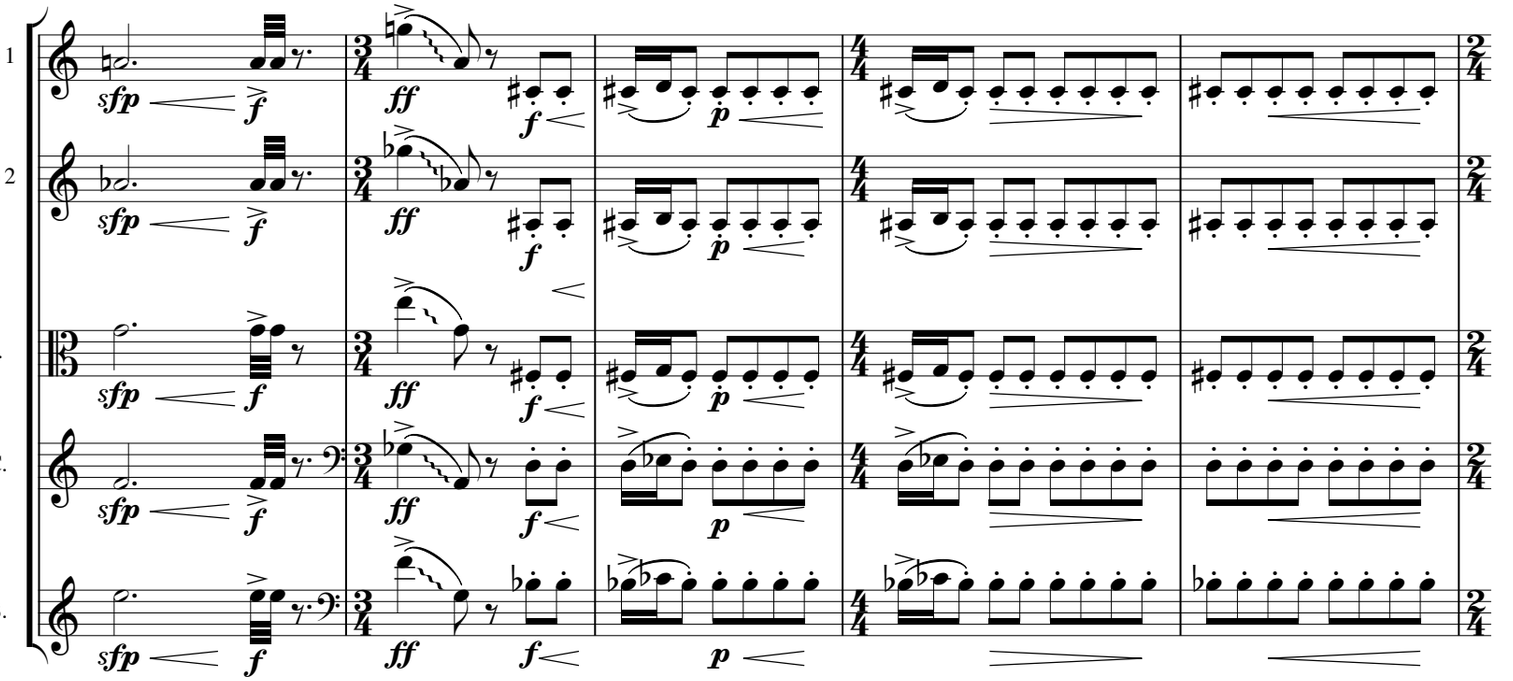
Suddenly the outside door began to open!



530

R

It seemed impossible, but never mind, Aunt May was just now reaching the top step as we were pulled through the opening



535

by two strong hands!

Subito ♩ = 56

3 - 4 Seconds
wild, tight, slow glissandos ad lib

The cold December air
greeted us. We were
out, and back in our own time.

S poco rubato ♩ = 60

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

Solo

539

Willie stood motionless,
staring, unable to speak.

I startedto reassure him that everything
was OK when I turned and found myself
staring straight into the eyes of old man Prichard!

Those eyes. They looked
so familiar.

D.B.

543

They were kind eyes.
Where had I seen them before?

"Mr. Pr. . .Prichard
we're sorry . . ." I began.

But he put his hand on my
shoulder and smiled, "You two
have had quite a little trip haven'tyou."

Of course.

D.B.

548

These were the hands that pulled us through the door.

But there was something else about him.

"Mr. Prich . . . Bobby? Are you . . ."

But before I could finish he smiled again, "Well, you know my little secret now don't you."

T

Adagio ♩ = 60 rubato

rit. ----

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

D.B.

553

a tempo

molto espress.

I stood there for a second with my mouth wide open. Then he said gently, " Now you kids geton home before it gets

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

557

too late." Then he wandered around to the other side of the house.

It turned out that after that day

Vio 1

Vio 2

Vla.

V.C.

no one ever saw the old man around again. Willie is convinced that Mr. Prichard - or Bobby still lives somewhere inside the house and probably sees Matthew Brady and maybe even

560

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

p

mf

President Grant from time to time.

As for me; well I bought the house a few years ago and even though I don't live in it,

563

U

rit. --------

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

I'm just going to make sure that it remains exactly as it is for a long time to come. And who knows, maybe when I get really old I'll let myself in through that little door on the side that leads down to the basement and . . .

566

Rall.

Vio 1
Vio 2
Vla.
V.C.
D.B.

p

mf

pp

III