POSSESSIVE KNOTS

for soprano and bass voice with piano accompaniment

by Cort Lippe

1985

Based on texts by R.D. Laing

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Based on texts extracted by the composer from the book *Knots* by R.D. Laing
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Performance Notes

Accidentals hold throughout a measure unless otherwise indicated

Capitol letters - words written only in capitols - signify to the singers to scream the word at the given pitch. Sometimes the singers will be asked to scream and whisper at the same time. This should be a "stage" whisper.

= repeated note(s), stem without note-head beamed to a note

= glissando

= accelerate rhythmically

= retard rhythmically

= arpeggiate vertical structure in direction of arrow

= chromatic cluster

= trill, trill to note in parentheses

= grace note

= whispered

= sharp intake of breath

= sprechstimme

= inside piano on strings

= slap strings with open hand inside piano

I

They are playing a game. They are playing at not
playing a game. If I show them I see they are, I
shall break the rules and they will punish me.
I must play their game, of not seeing I see the game.

II

I am frightened
Don't be frightened
I am frightened to be frightened when you
tell me I ought not to feel frightened

frightened
frightened to be frightened
not frightened to be frightened

not frightened
frightened not to be frightened
not frightened to be not frightened

III

I'm upset you are upset
I'm not upset
I'm upset that you're not upset that I'm
upset you're upset
I'm upset that you're upset that I'm not
upset that you're upset that I'm upset,
when I'm not.

IV

You are a pain in the neck
To stop you giving me a pain in the neck
I protect my neck by tightening my neck muscles,
which gives me the pain in the neck
you are.

My head aches through trying to stop you
giving giving me a headache.

V

I am not entitled to what I have
therefore everything I have is stolen.
If I've got it,
and I am not entitled to it,
I must have stolen it,
because I am not entitled to it.

I am not entitled to it
because I have stolen it.

I have stolen it
therefore I am not entitled to it.

I am not entitled to it
therefore I must have stolen it.

Or, it has been given to me as a special favour
by someone who is entitled to it
so I am expected to be grateful for all I have
because what I have
has been given, not stolen.

VI

If it is mine
it is not me

If it is not mine
it is not me

If it is not me
it is not mine

If it is me
it is mine

But,
if it is mine
it is not me
and if it is not me
if it is not mine
it is not me

and if,
if mine
it is not me

then,
if it's not me
it's mine

If it's not me it's mine
If it's mine it's not me

If it's mine it's not me

If it's not me
It's not mine

if it's not mine
it's not me

if it's not me
it's mine

If, if it's mine
it is not me

if it is not me
it's not mine

then,
If it's mine, it's not mine

If, if it's mine, it's not mine

if it's not mine,
it is not me
and if it's not me
it's mine
if it's mine
it's not me,
if it's not me
it's not mine
if it's not me
it's mine

If it's mine
it's me

if, if it's mine
it's me
if
if it's me, it's mine
if it's mine it's not me
then if it's not me it's not mine
hence,
If it's not mine it's me
If it's not mine it's me
if
if it's me
it's mine
if it's mine it's not mine
if it's not mine it's not me
if it's not me
it's mine

Then,
If it's not mine it's mine
If it's not mine it's mine
if
if it's mine it's not mine
if it's not mine
it's not me
if it's not me it's mine
if it's mine it's me
if it's me it's not me
if it's not me it's mine
if it's mine
it's me
If it's me it's not mine
If it's not mine
it's not me
if it's not me
it's mine

VII

If it's mine it's not mine
if it's not mine it's mine
if it's mine is not me
if not me is not mine
if not mine
is me
if me is not mine
if not mine is not me
then, if not me, it is me
if not me, it is me
if it is me, it is not mine
if it is not mine it is not me
if it is not me, it is me
if it is me
it is not mine
if it is not mine
it is me
if it is me, it is mine
if it is mine
it is not me
therefore if it is not me
it is mine
if it is mine it is mine
if it is mine it is mine
if it is mine it is not mine
if it is not mine it is mine
if it is mine, it is mine
if it is mine, it is not mine
if it is not mine,
it is me
if it is me it is mine
if it is mine it is not me
if it is not me it is me
if it is me
it is not me
if it is not me
it is me
if it's me, if it's not me
if it's not me, if it's me
if it's me if it's me
if it's me if it's not me
if it's not me if it's not me
it's me if it's not me
if it's not me, it's me
if it's me it's not me
if it's not me it's me
if it's me,
if it's not me
if it's me
if it's not me
if it's me
if it's not me
if it's me
if it's not me, it's me
if it's not me it's not me
it's not me if it's me
if it's me it's me
it's me if it's not me
if it's not me, it's not me
if it's not me, it's me
it's me if it's me
if it's not me it's not me
it's not me if it's not me
if it's me, it's me
if it's me, it's me
I am it
if it is not me
if it is not me, I am it, if I am not it, I
am it, if I am it, I am not it

VIII

I want it
I get it
therefore I am good

I want it
I don't get it
therefore I am bad

I am bad
because I didn't get it

I am bad
because I wanted what I didn't get

I must take care
to get what I want
and want what I get
and not get what I don't want

- R.D. Laing

-I-

♪ = ± 96

dryley, no vibrato

Jill

Jack

Piano

(ppp) We are play-ing a game

We are play-ing at not play-ing a game

(1) (ppp) We are play-ing a game

We are play-ing at not play-ing a game

ppp Legato

If I show that I - - - - see We are

I shall break they will PUN-ISH ME

(3) If I I - - - see We are

I shall break the rules and PUN-ISH ME

sfz

Ped

rit. un poco

(pp) I - - - must play our game

of not see-ing I see the game

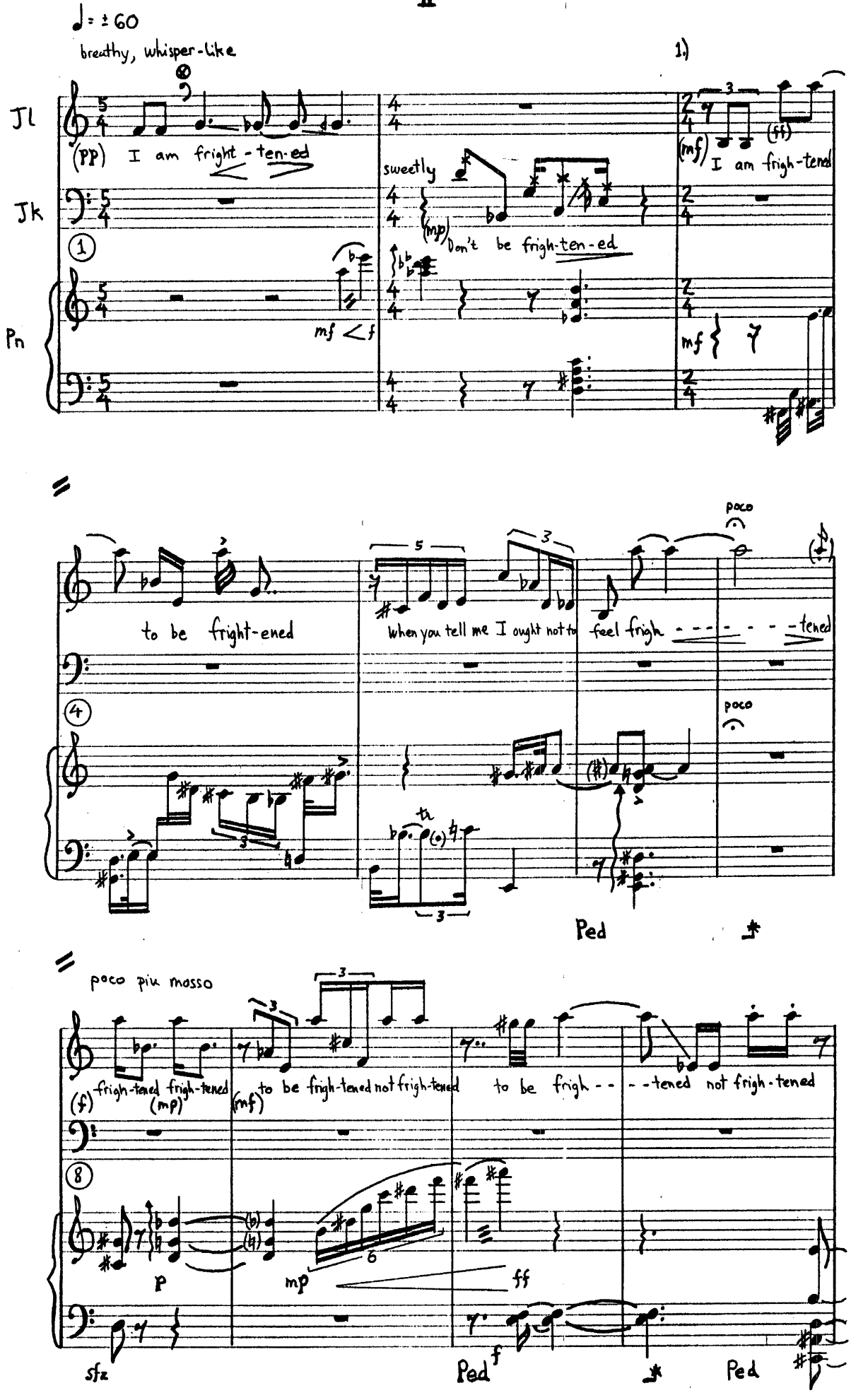
(5) (pp) I - - - must play our game

of not see-ing I see the game

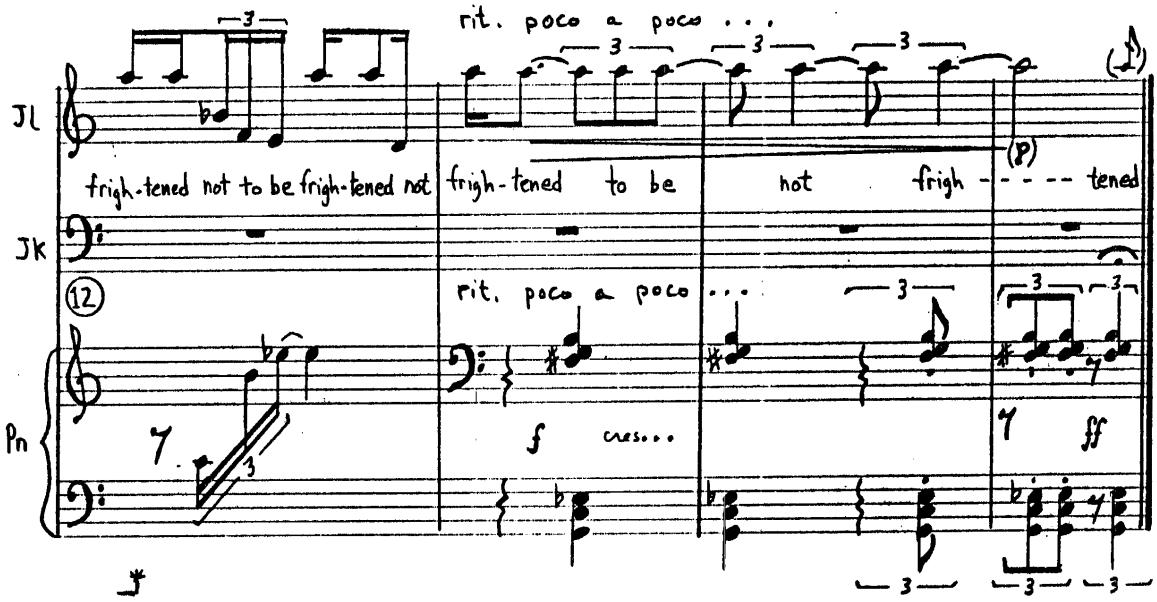
pp

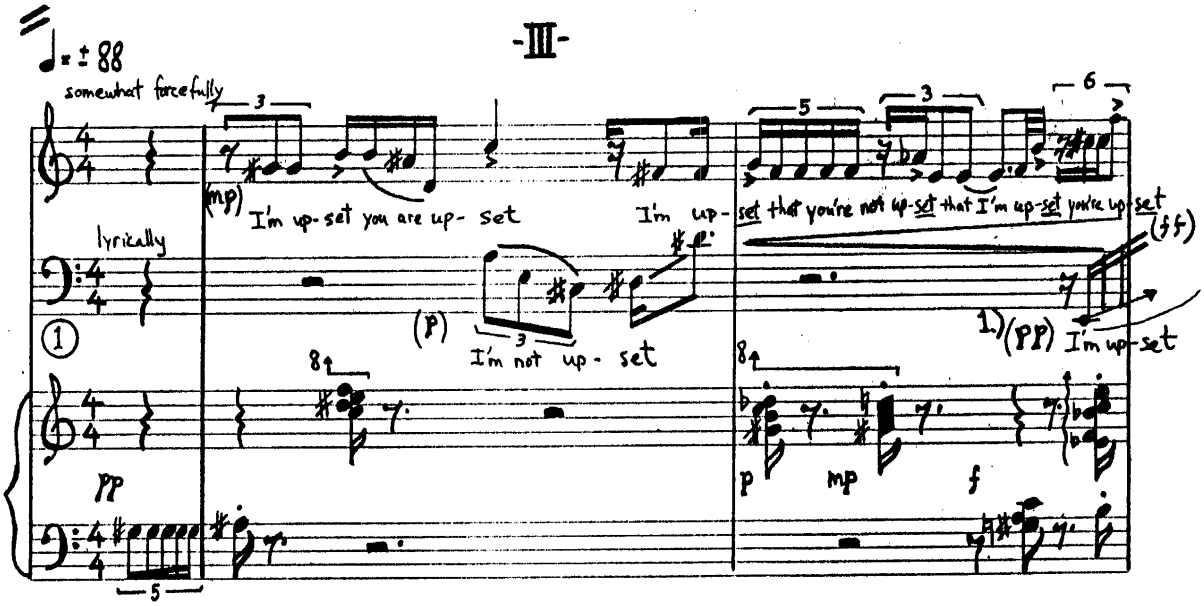
rit. un poco

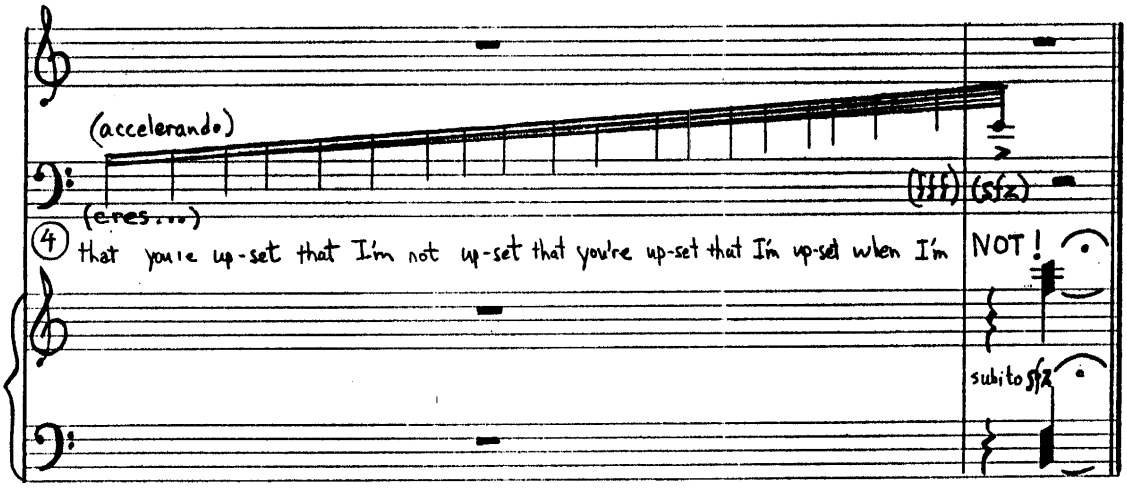
[very slight pause before II]



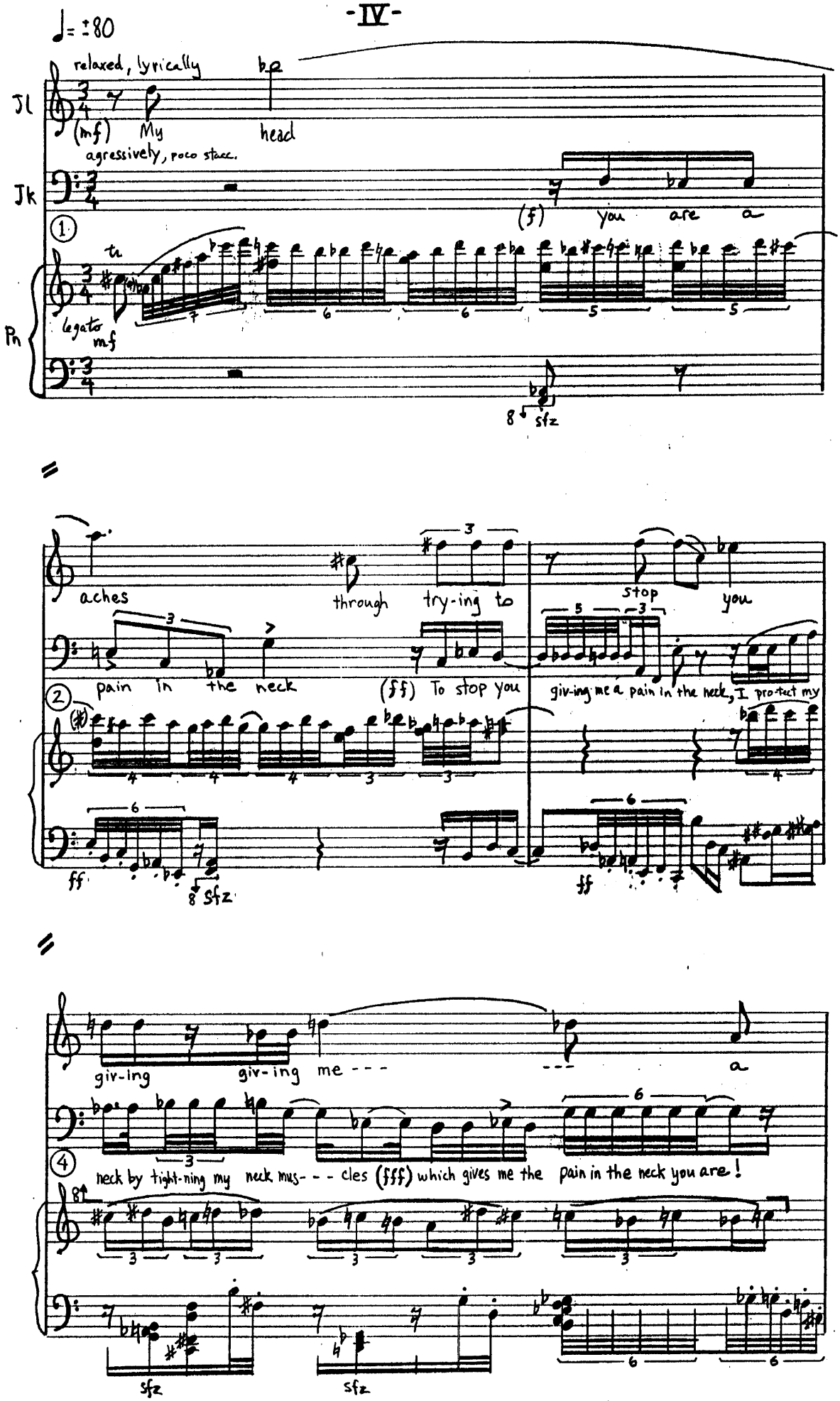
1.) note: the high "la" should be very clear timbrally and "ff" dynamically,

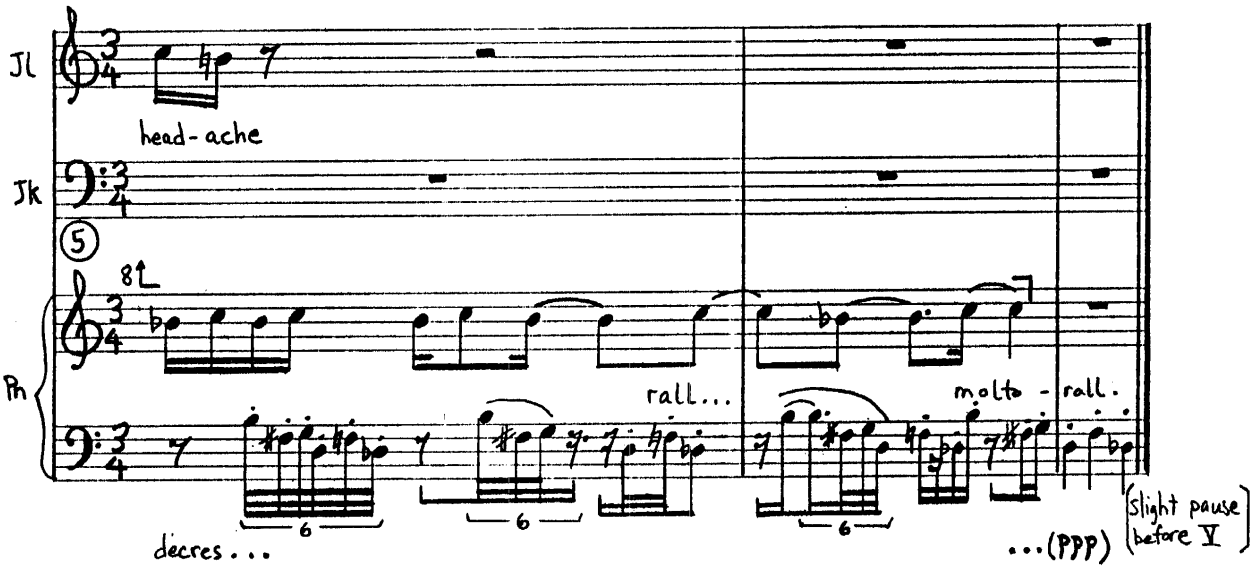

rit. poco a poco . . .
Jl
fright-tened not to be fright-tened not
Jk
fright-tened to be
not
fright - - - - - tened
rit. poco a poco . . .
Pn
cres. . .
ff


-III-
♩= ± 88
somewhat forcefully
lyrically
I'm up-set you are up- set
I'm up-
I'm not up- set
set that you're not up-set that I'm up-set you're up-set
1.)
I'm up-set
pp
p
mp
f

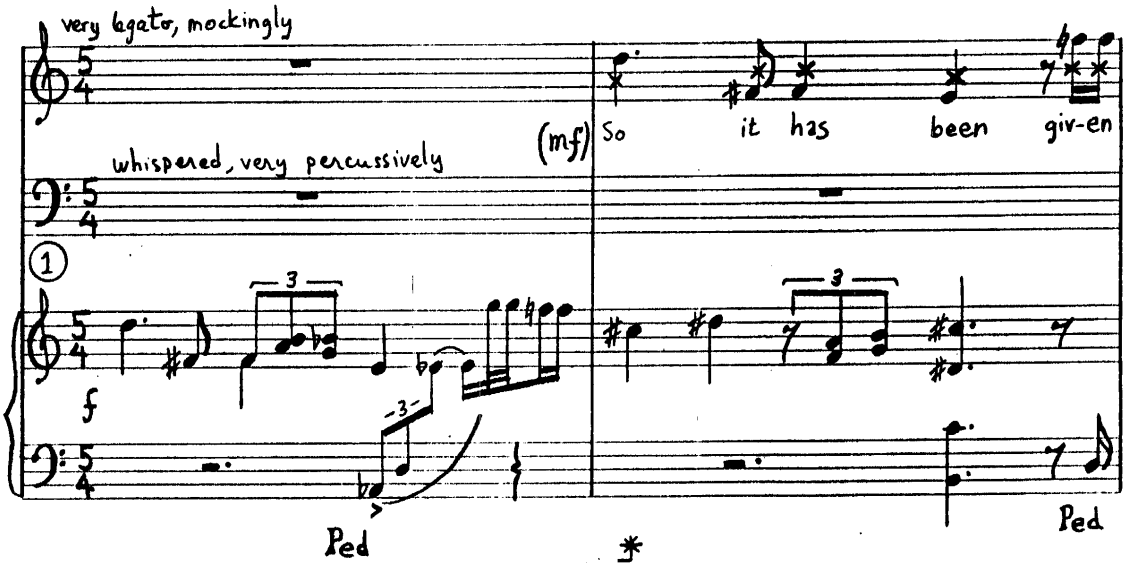

(accelerando)
(cres. . .)
that you're up-set that I'm not up-set that you're up-set that I'm up-set when I'm
NOT!
subito sfz

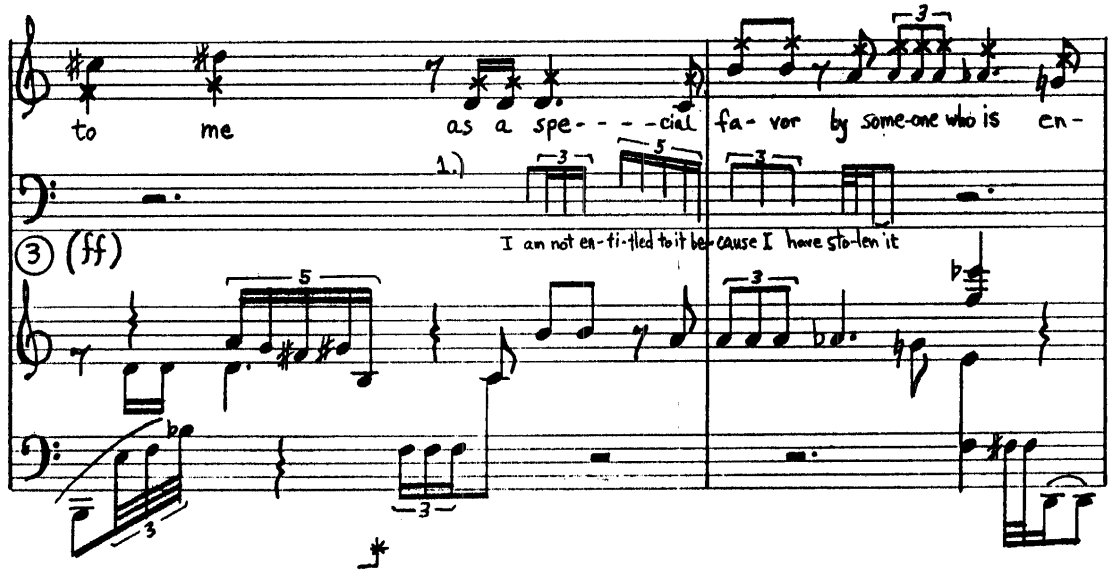
-IV-

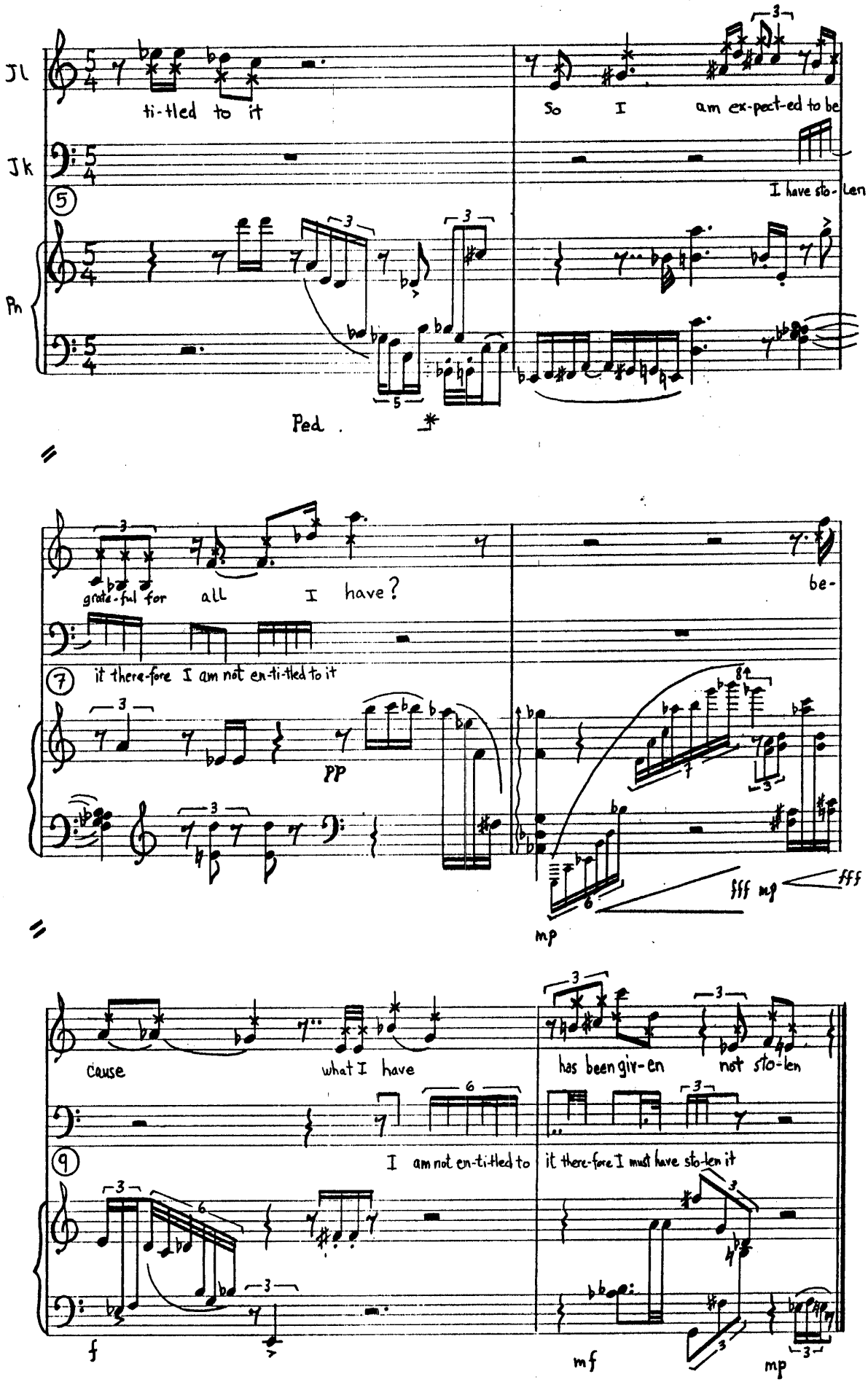

♩= ±80
relaxed, lyrically
(mf) My head
agressively, poco stacc.
Jl
Jk
Pn
(f) you are a
legato
mf
8 sfz
aches
through
try-ing to
stop
you
pain in the neck
(ff) To stop you
giv-ing me a pain in the neck, I pro-tect my
ff
8 sfz
giv-ing
giv-ing me - - -
a
neck by tight-ning my neck mus- - - cles (fff) which gives me the pain in the neck you are!
sfz
sfz


Jl
Jk
Ph
head-ache
rall...
molto - rall.
decres...
...(PPP)
slight pause before V

-V-

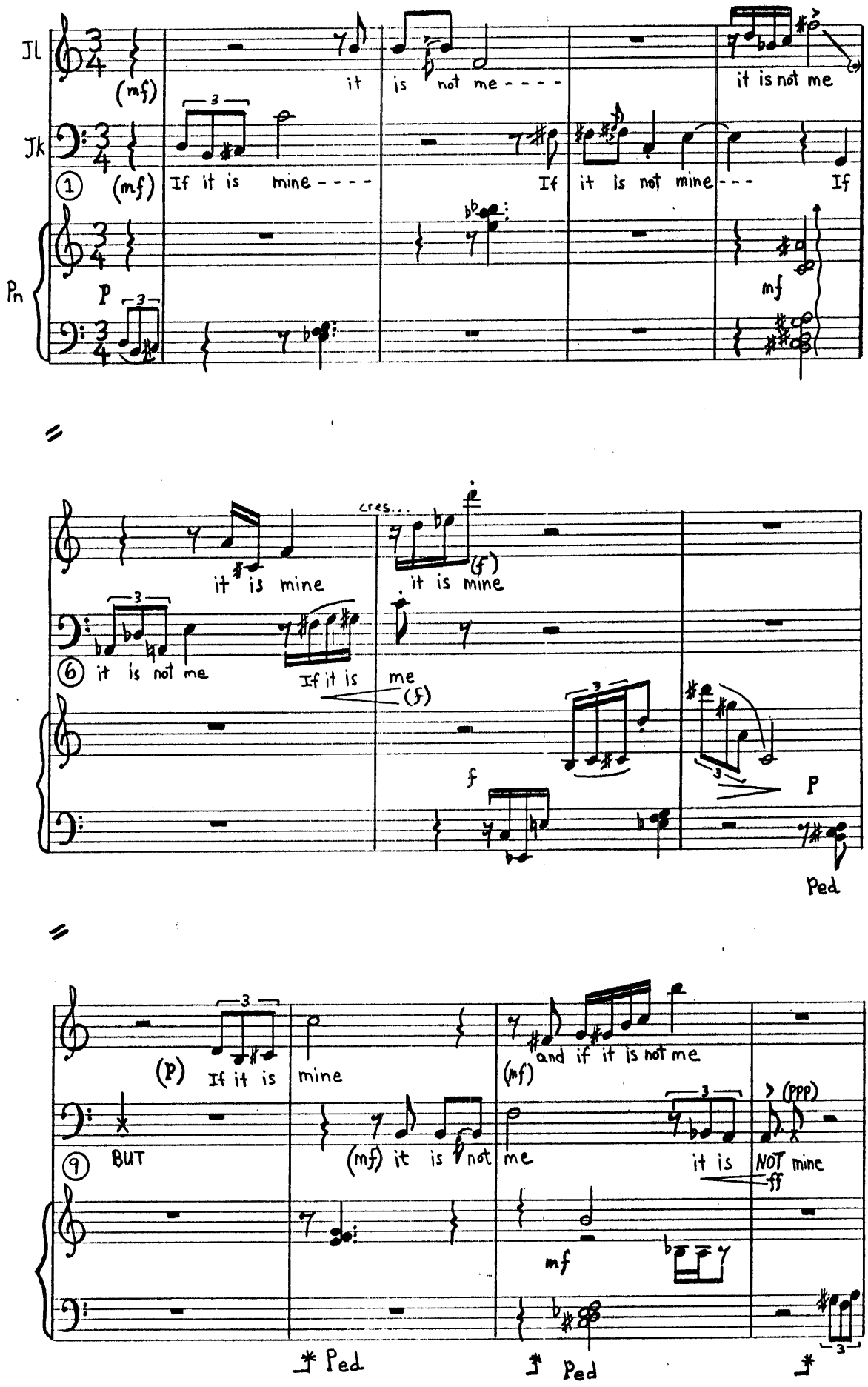

very legato, mockingly
whispered, very percussively
(mf)
So it has been giv-en
f
Ped
Ped

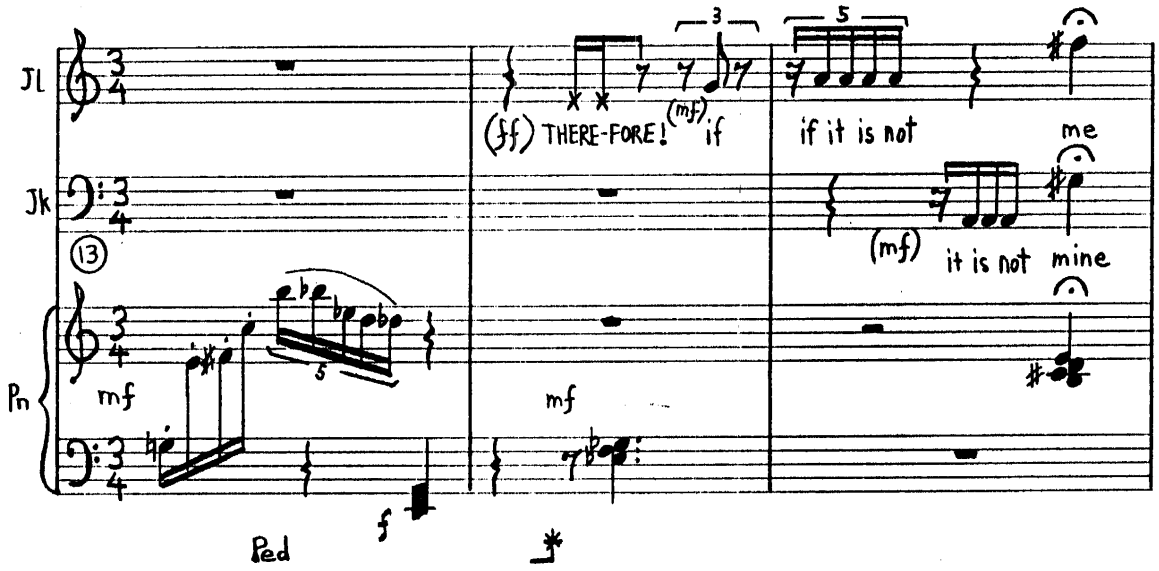

to me as a spe- - - -cial fa- vor by some-one who is en-
1.)
I am not en-ti-tled to it be-cause I have sto-len it
(ff)

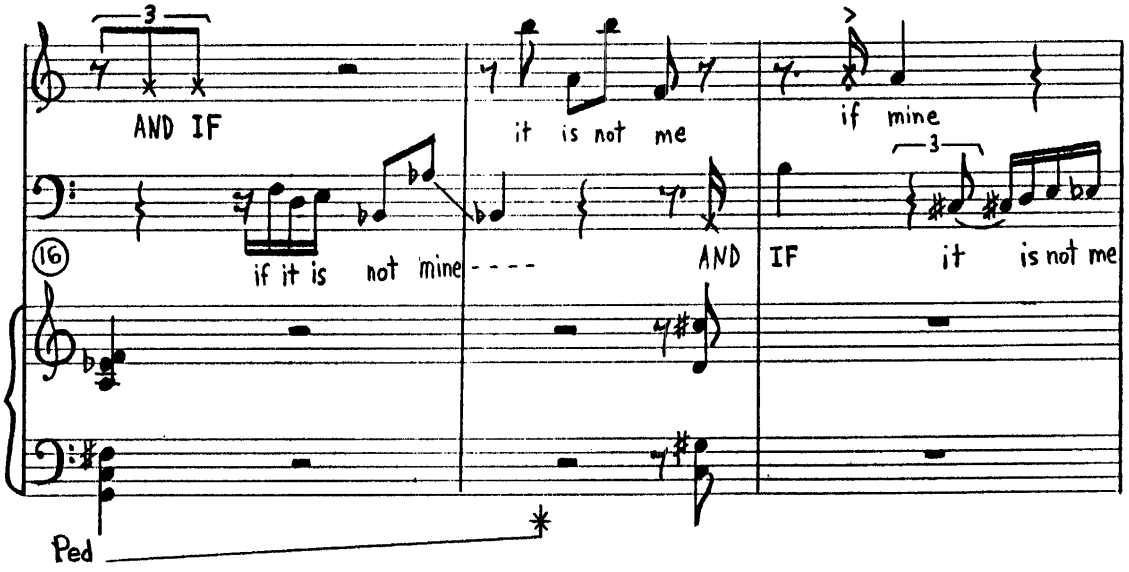

Jl
Jk
Pn
ti-tled to it
So I am ex-pect-ed to be
I have sto-len
Ped.
grate-ful for all I have?
be-
it there-fore I am not en-ti-tled to it
PP
mp
fff mp fff
cause what I have
has been giv-en not sto-len
I am not en-ti-tled to
it there-fore I must have sto-len it
f
mf
mp

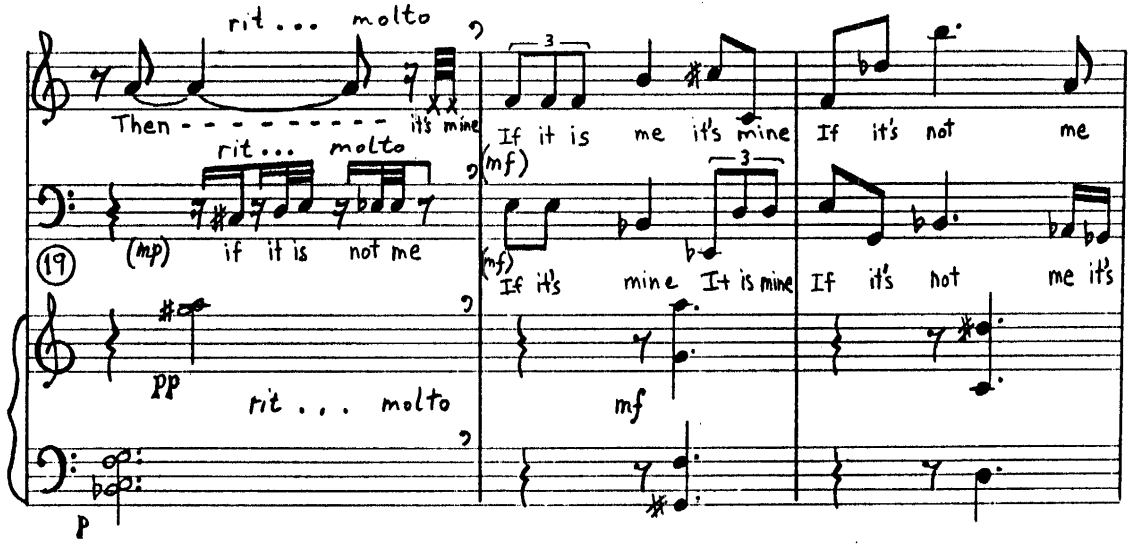
-VI-

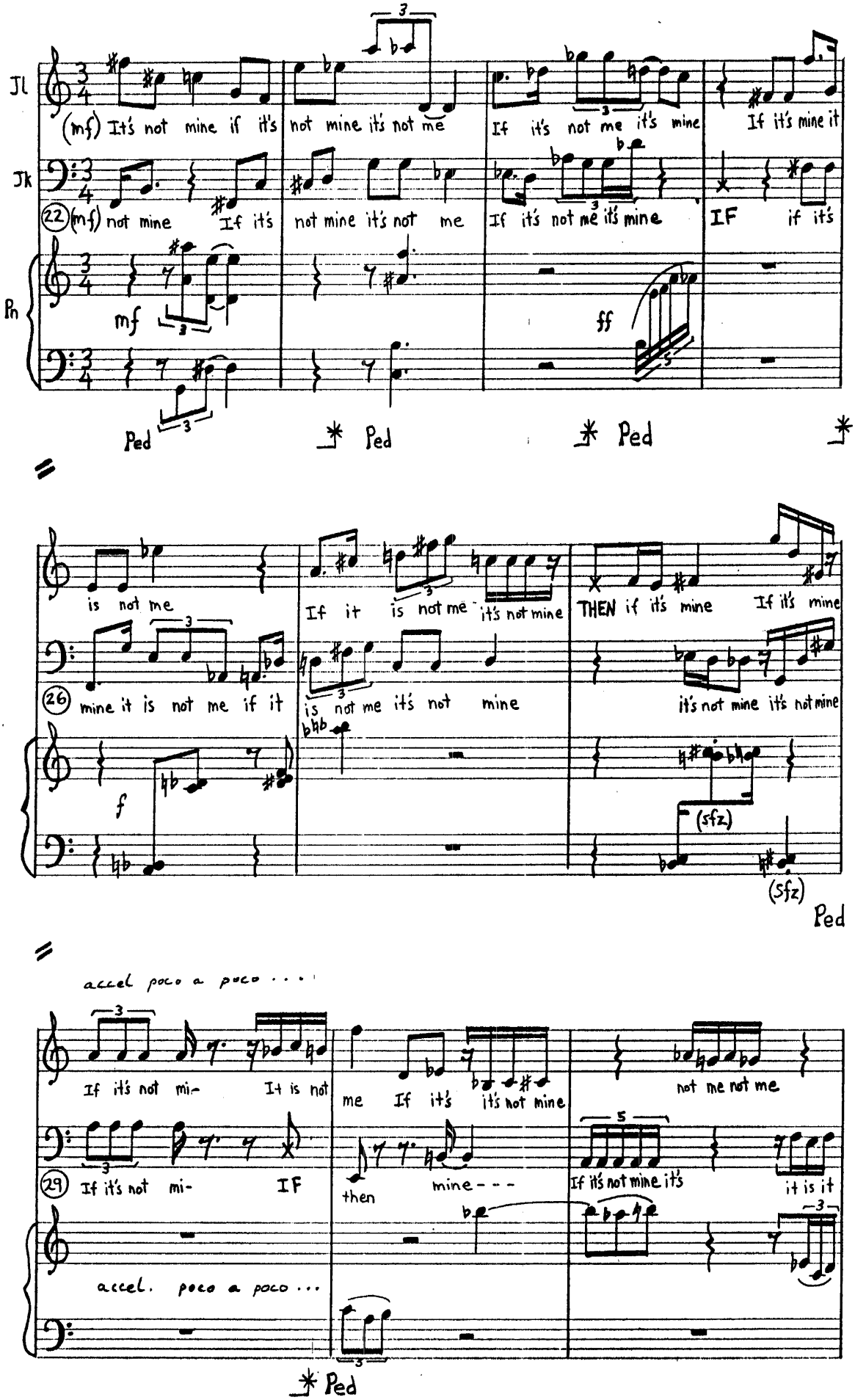
♩= ± 72

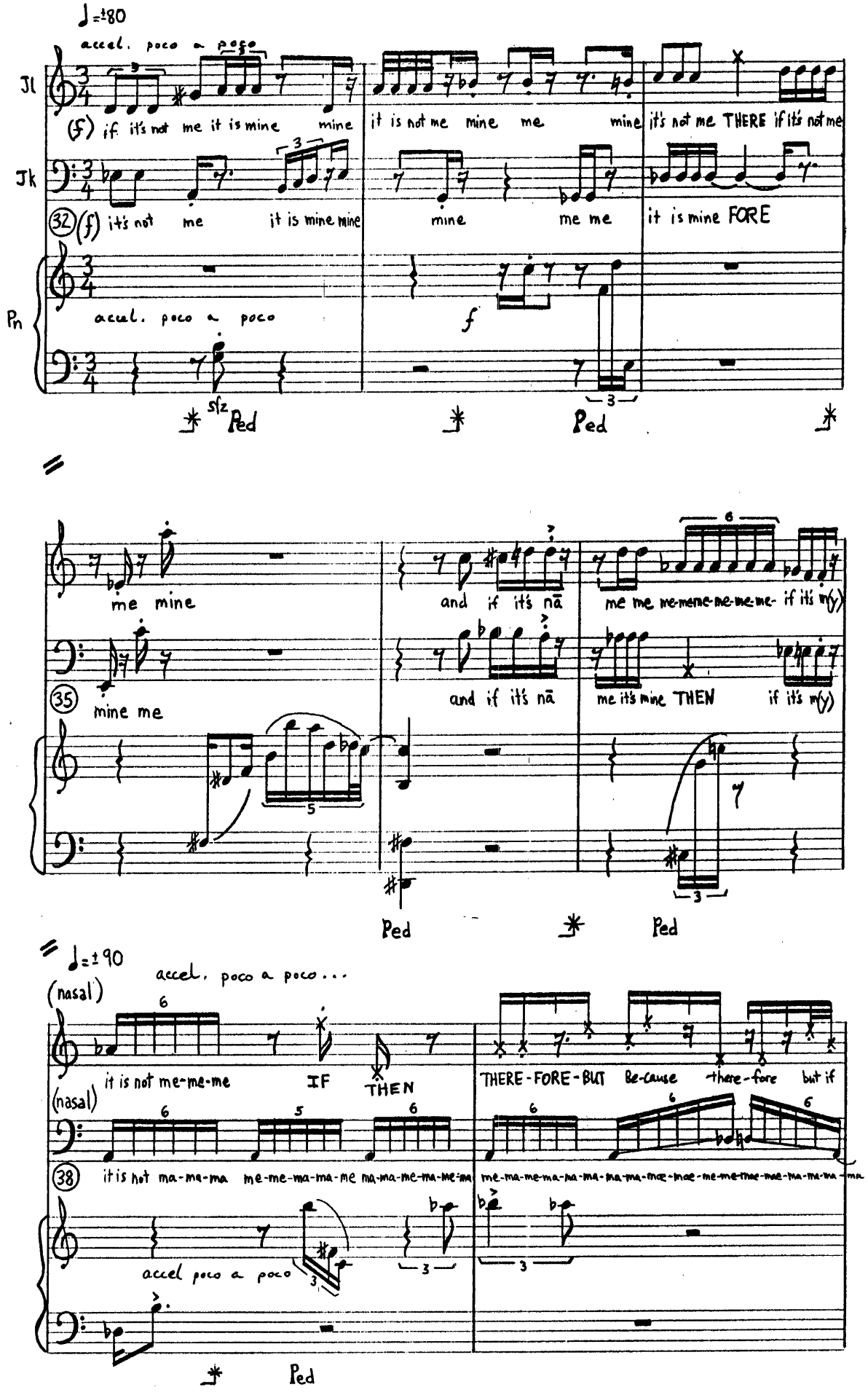

Jl
Jk
Pn
(mf)
it is not me - - - -
it is not me
If it is mine - - - -
If it is not mine - - -
If
P
mf
cres...
it is mine
(f)
it is mine
it is not me
If it is me
(f)
f
P
Ped
(p)
If it is
mine
BUT
(mf) it is not
and if it is not me
(mf)
me
it is
(ppp)
NOT mine
ff
mf
Ped
Ped

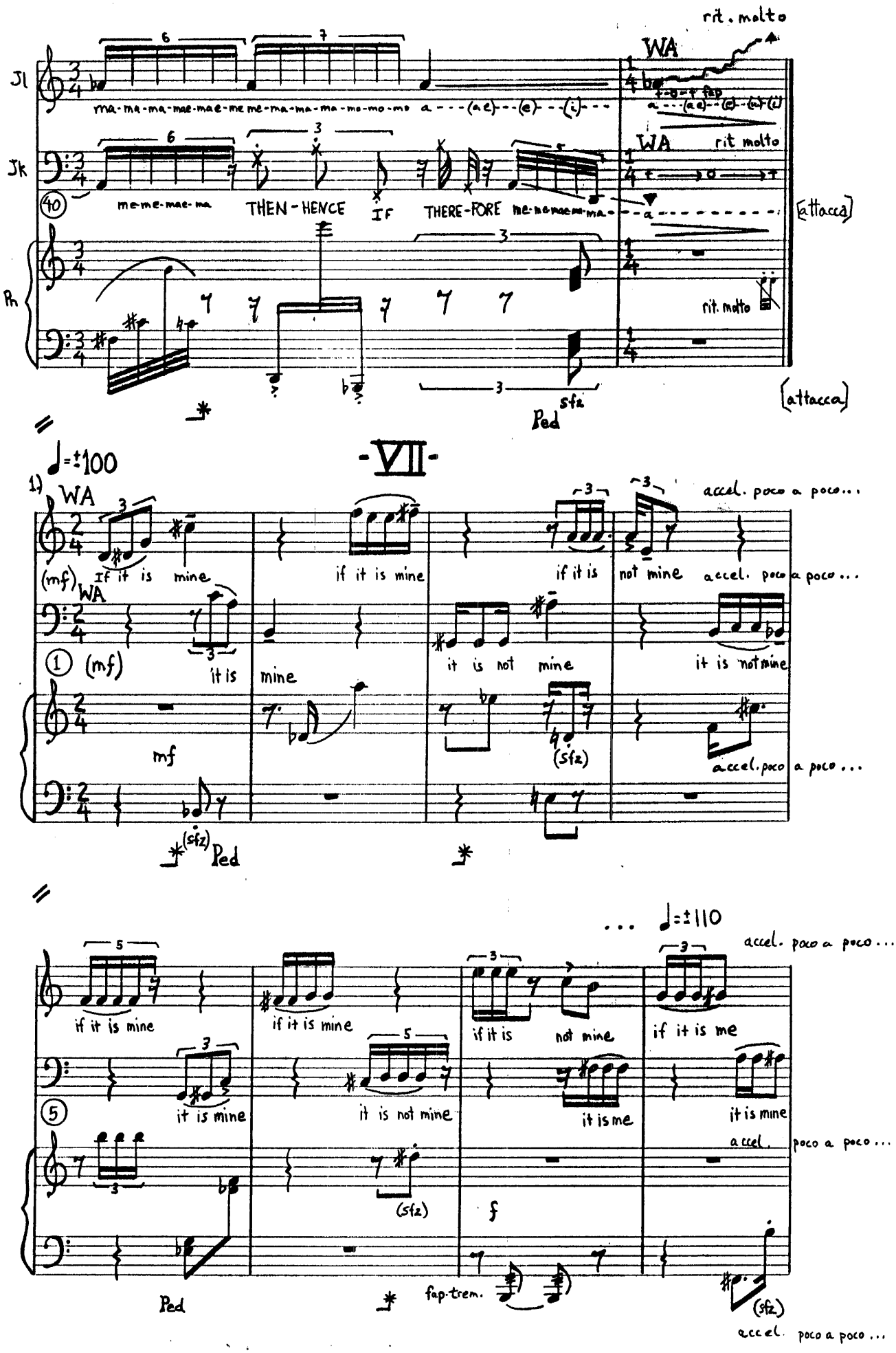

Jl
Jk
Pn
13
mf
Ped
f
(ff) THERE-FORE!
(mf) if
if it is not
me
(mf) it is not mine
mf

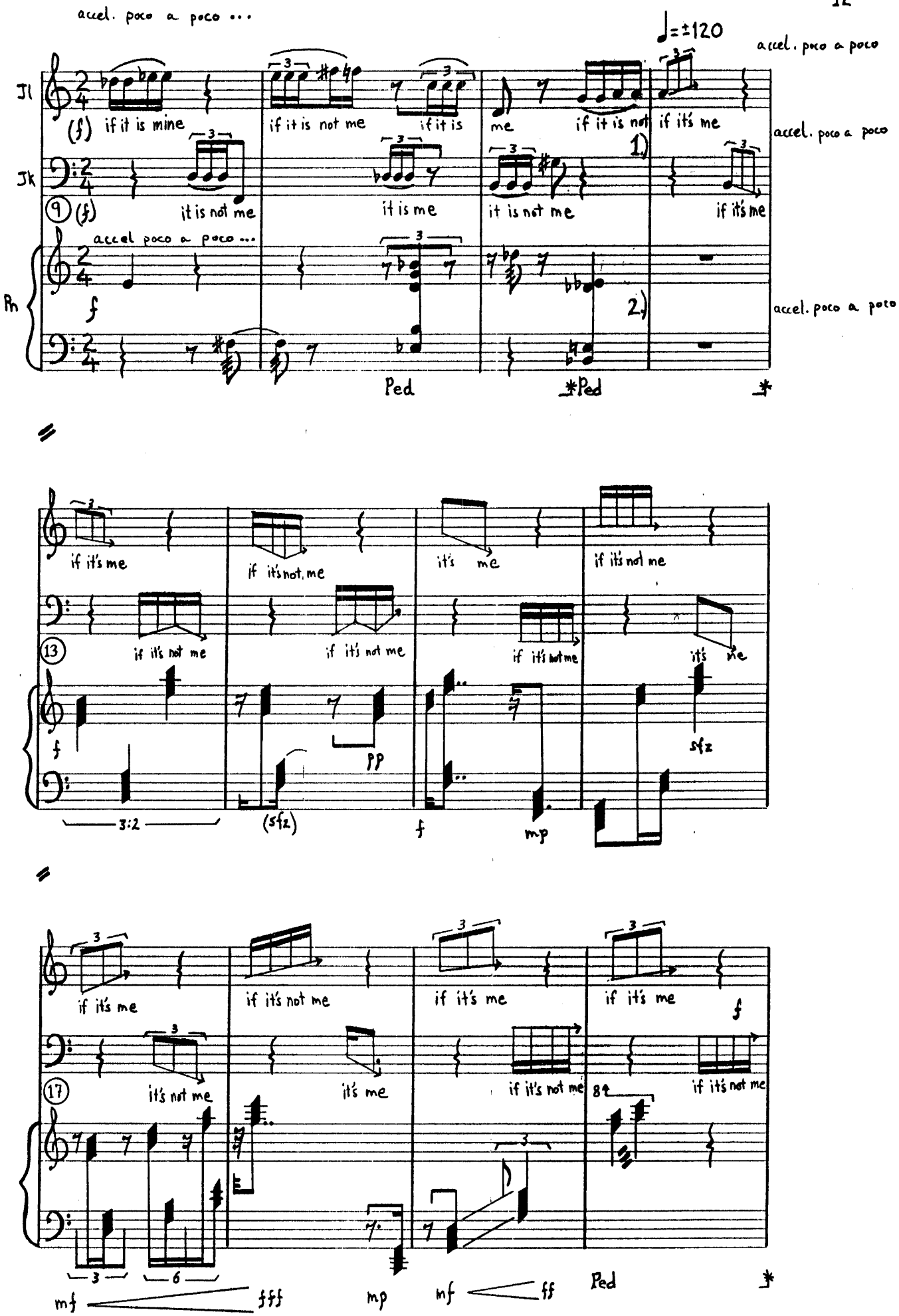

AND IF
if it is not mine
it is not me
if mine
16
AND
IF
it
is not me
Ped


rit... molto
Then - - - - - - - - - - it's mine
If it is me it's mine
If it's not me
rit... molto
(mp) if it is not me
19
(mf)
If it's mine It is mine
If it's not me it's
pp
rit... molto
mf
p

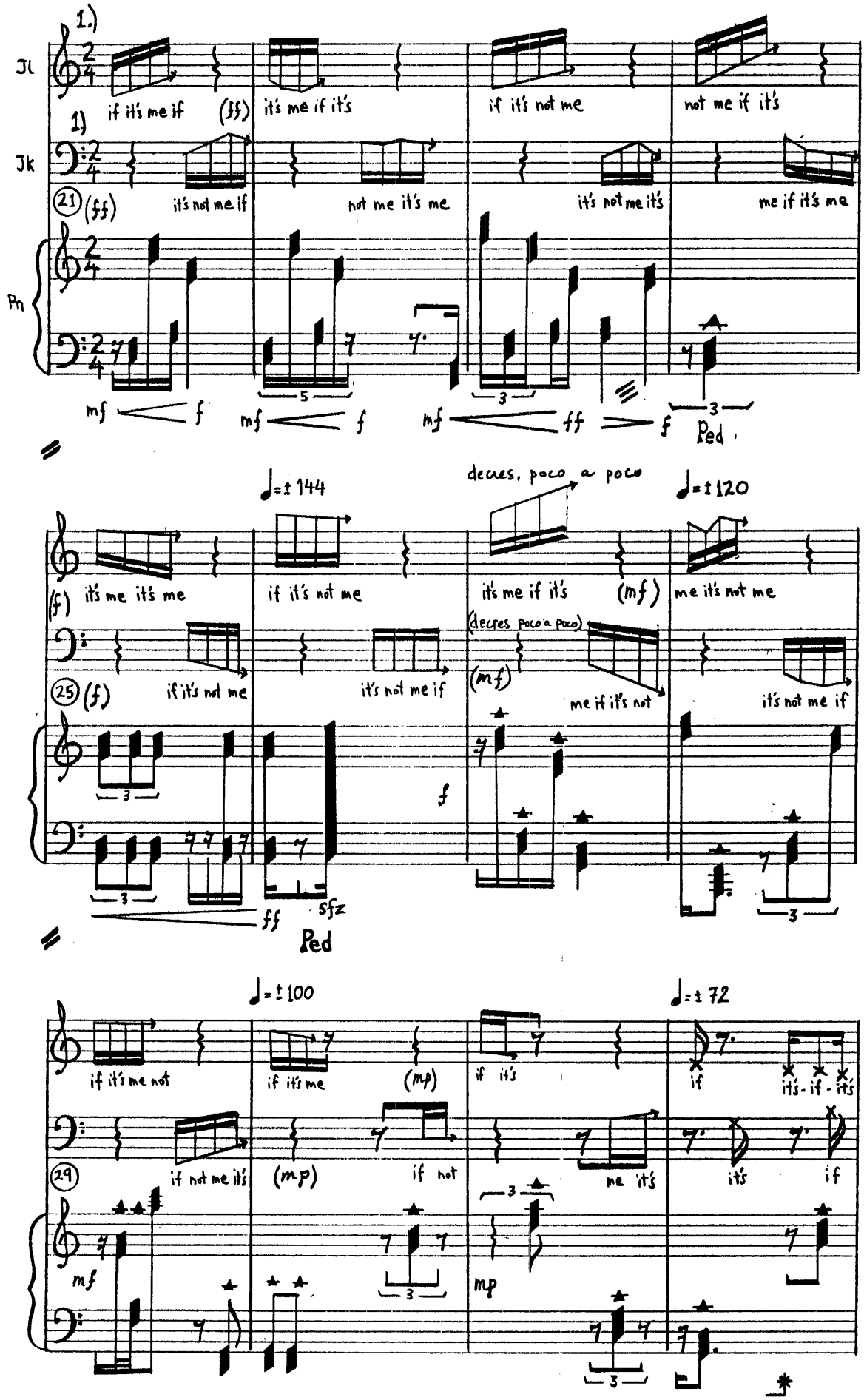

Jl
(mf) It's not mine if it's not mine it's not me
If it's not me it's mine
If it's mine it
Jk
22 (mf) not mine If it's not mine it's not me
If it's not me it's mine
IF if it's
Pn
mf
ff
Ped
Ped
Ped
is not me
If it is not me it's not mine
THEN if it's mine If it's mine
26 mine it is not me if it
is not me it's not mine
it's not mine it's not mine
f
(sfz)
(sfz)
Ped
accel poco a poco . . .
If it's not mi- It is not
me If it's it's not mine
not me not me
29 If it's not mi- IF
then mine - - -
If it's not mine it's
it is it
accel. poco a poco . . .
Ped


♩=±80
accel. poco a poco
Jl
Jk
Pn
(f) if it's not me it is mine mine
it is not me mine me mine
it's not me THERE if it's not me
32 (f) it's not me it is mine mine
mine me me
it is mine FORE
accel. poco a poco
f
sfz Ped
Ped
me mine
and if it's nā
me me me-mene-me-me-me- if it's m(y)
35 mine me
and if it's nā
me it's mine THEN
if it's m(y)
Ped
Ped
♩=±90
accel. poco a poco...
(nasal)
it is not me-me-me
IF
THEN
THERE-FORE-BUT
Be-cause
there-fore
but if
(nasal)
38 it is not ma-me-ma
me-me-ma-ma-me
ma-ma-me-ma-me-ma
me-ma-me-ma-ma-ma-ma-mae-mae-me-me-mae-mae-ma-ma-ma-ma
accel poco a poco
Ped

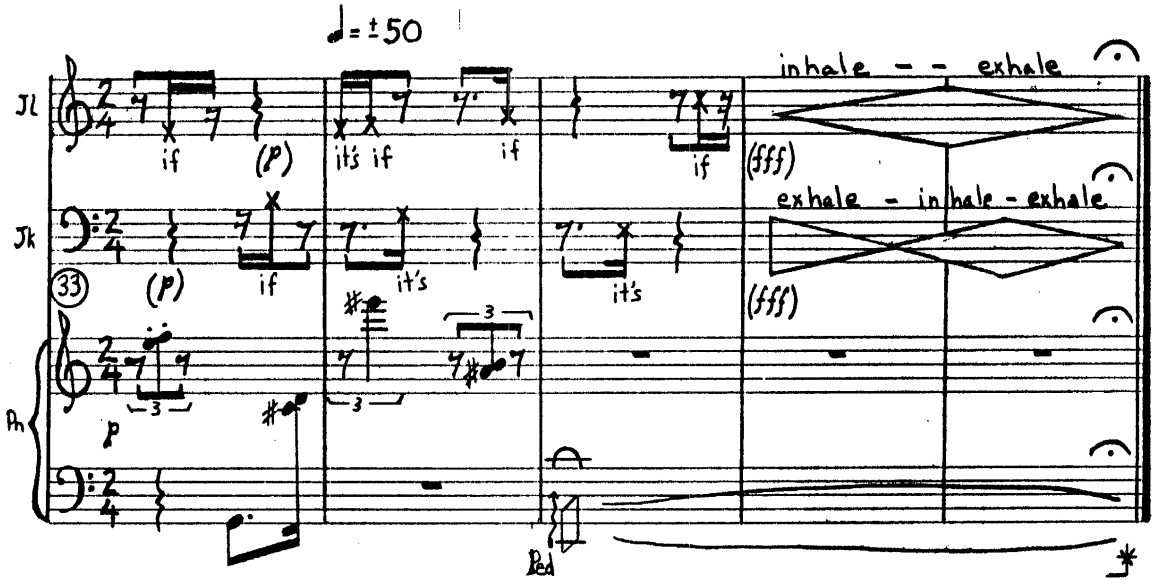

rit. molto
WA
Jl
ma-ma-ma-mae-mae-me me-ma-ma-ma-mo-mo-mo a---(ae)--(e)--(i)---
fap
Jk
me-me-mae-ma THEN-HENCE IF THERE-FORE me-me-mae-ma-ma---a
rit molto
[attacca]
Ph
rit. molto
sfz
Ped
[attacca]
♩=±100
-VII-
1)
WA
accel. poco a poco...
(mf) If it is mine if it is mine if it is not mine accel. poco a poco...
WA
(mf) it is mine it is not mine it is not mine
mf
(sfz)
accel. poco a poco...
(sfz) Ped
... ♩=±110
accel. poco a poco...
if it is mine if it is mine if it is not mine if it is me
it is mine it is not mine it is me it is mine
accel. poco a poco...
(sfz)
f
Ped
fap. trem.
(sfz)
accel. poco a poco...

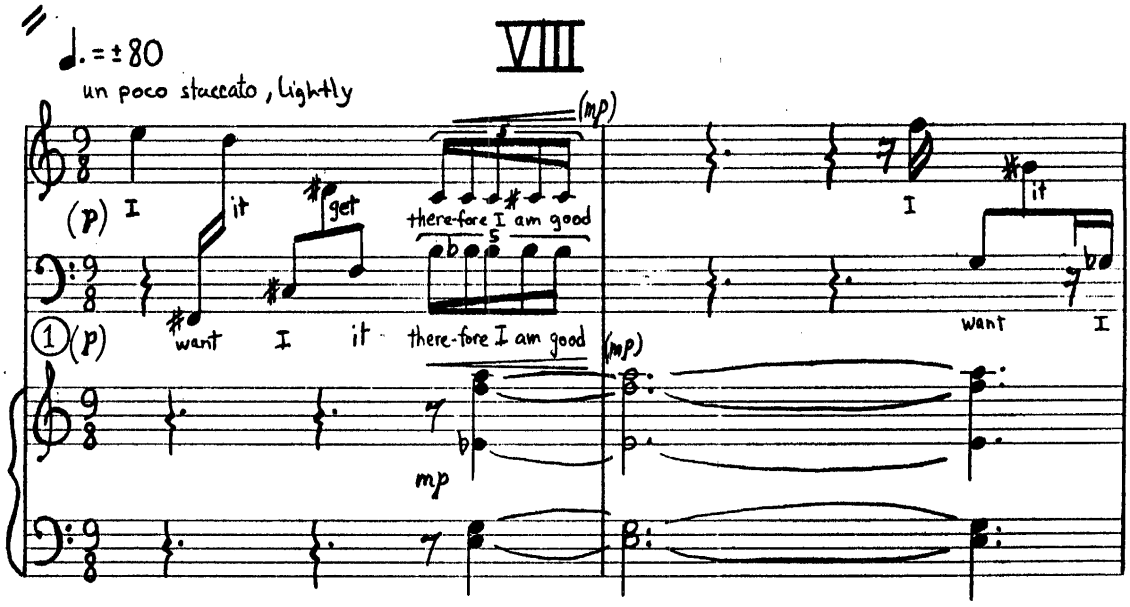


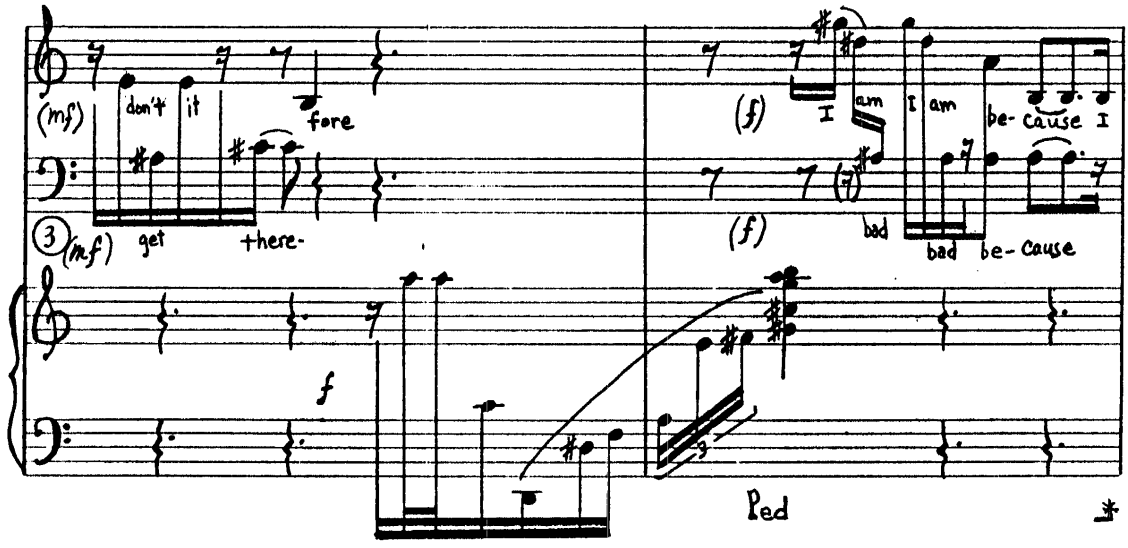
The pitch contour arrows designate general pitch change across the given rhythms. A completely

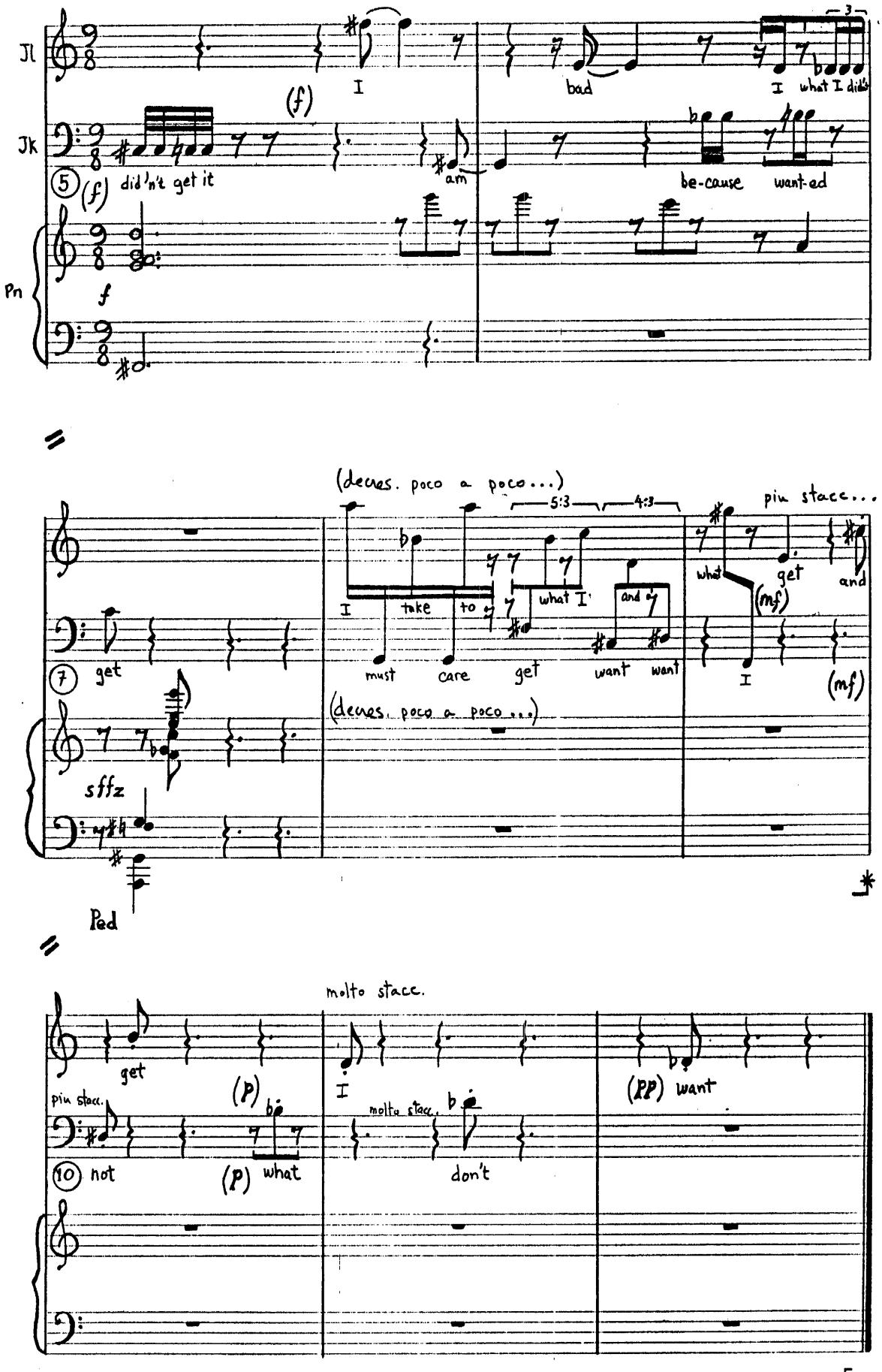


1) From measure (21) to the end of VII, begin enunciating and articulating the words less and less


♩= ±50
Jl
Jk
Ph
inhale - - exhale
exhale - inhale - exhale
if
(p)
it's if
it's
(fff)
Ped


VIII
♩. = ±80
un poco staccato, lightly
(p)
I
it
get
there-fore I am good
want
(mp)
mp


(mf)
don't
it
fore
get
there-
(f)
I
am
bad
be-cause
Ped



[1984-85
Paris-Tampa]