Three Musical Poems

based on the poetry of Charlie Ritch

for solo piano

Bradley K. Harris

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The Importance of Symmetry

Standing across from you,
our eyes meet in perfect alignment.
Matching height, and no slanting angle,
pupil to pupil, iris to iris.
You see to my soul, I to yours.

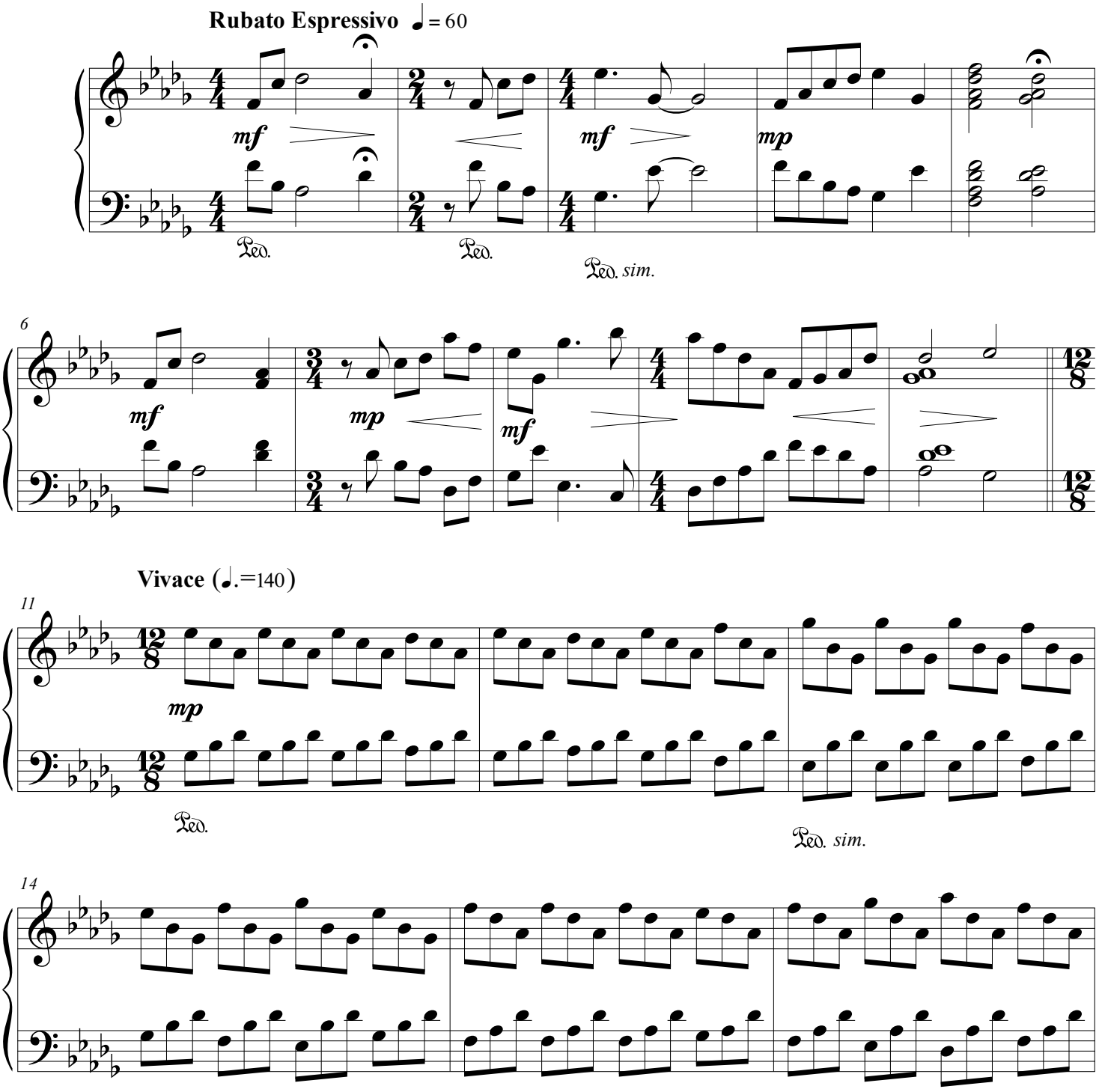
How is it we came to stand,
    with such perfect symmetry?

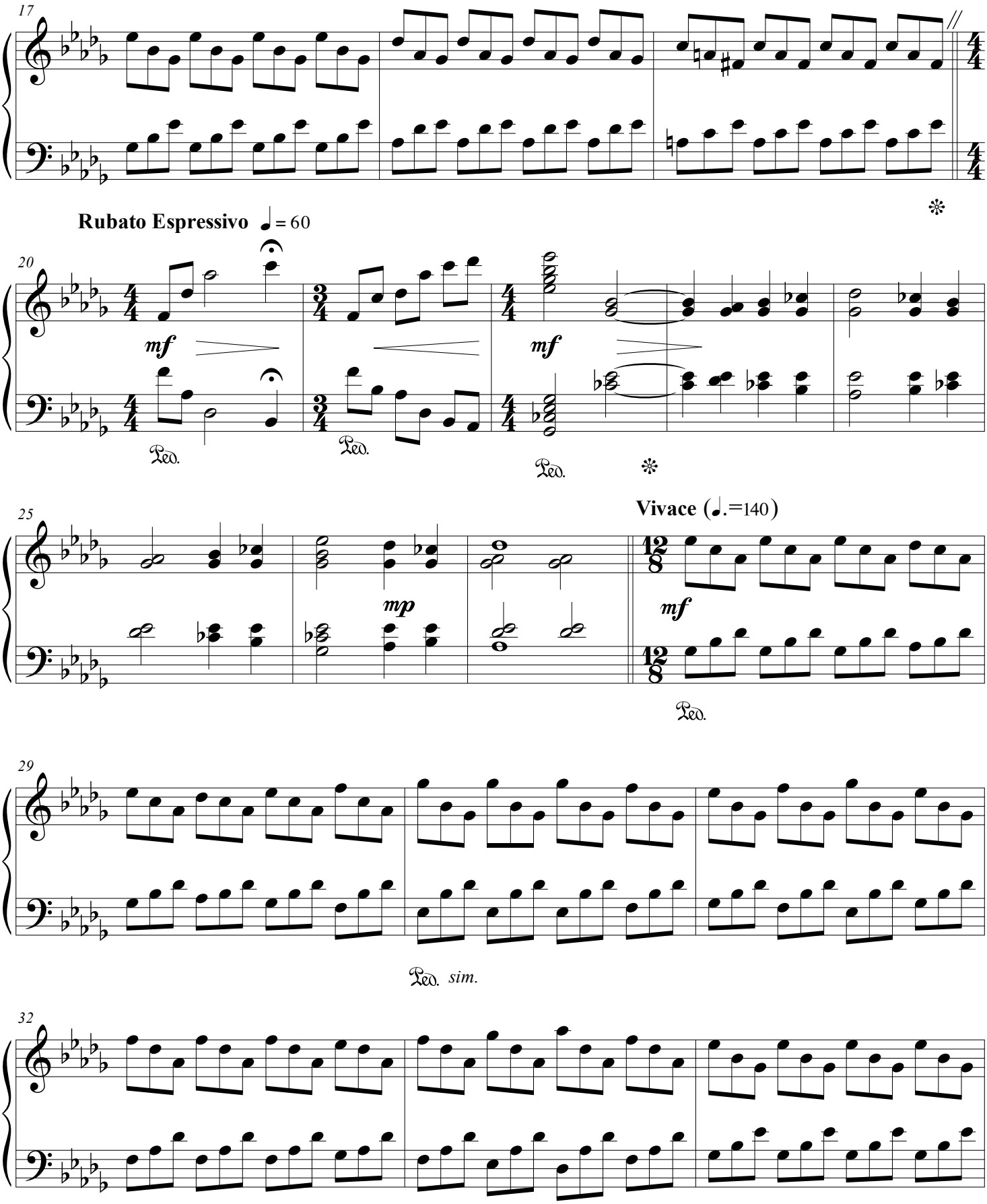
How is it the space between us
    contains a chasm so deep?

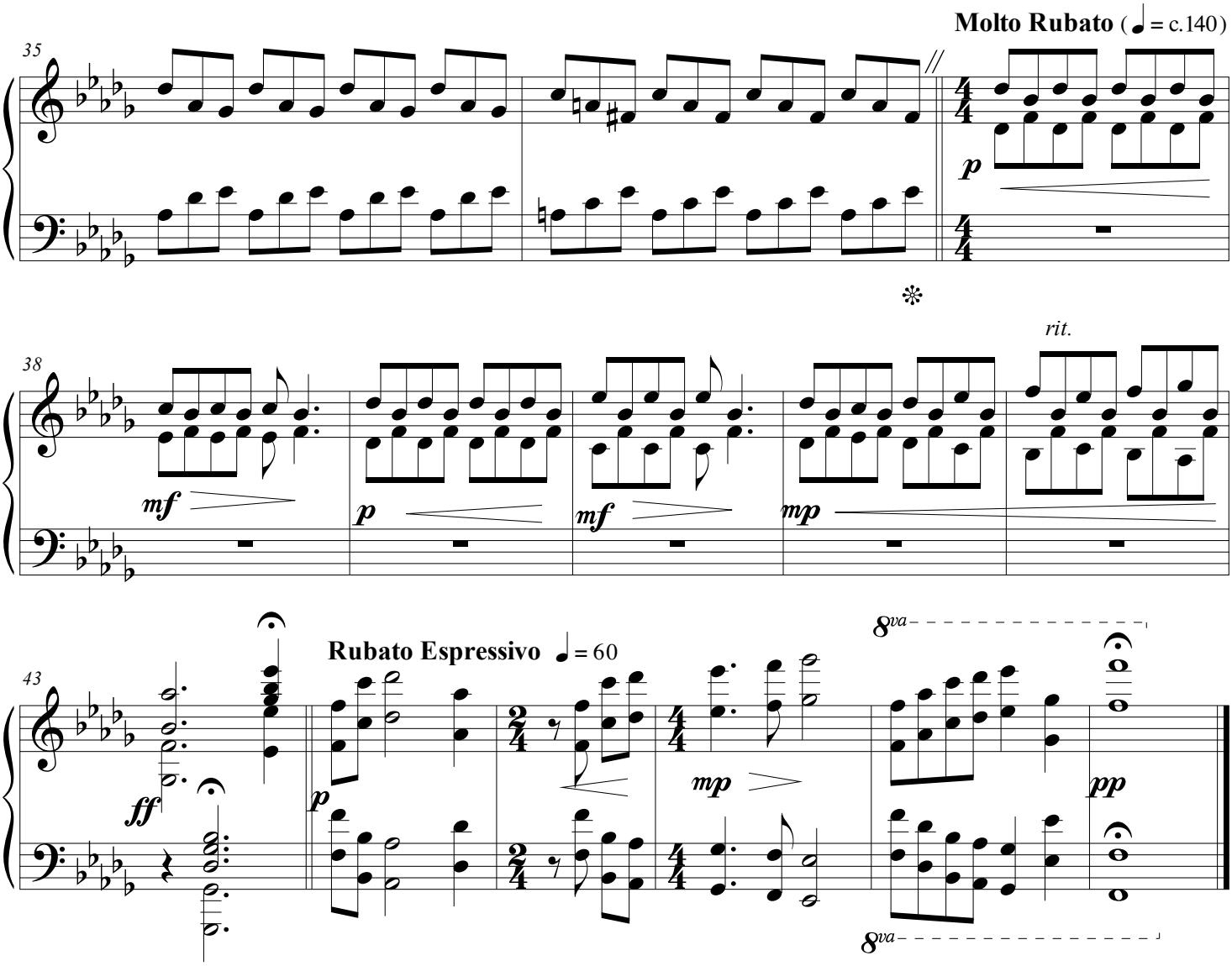
--Charlie Ritch

Three Musical Poems

I. The Importance of Symmetry




17
Rubato Espressivo ♩= 60
20
mf
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
25
Vivace (♩.=140)
mp
mf
Ped.
29
Ped. sim.
32


Molto Rubato (♩ = c.140)
35
p
38
mf
p
mf
mp
rit.
43
Rubato Espressivo ♩ = 60
ff
p
mp
8va
pp
8va

Recognition

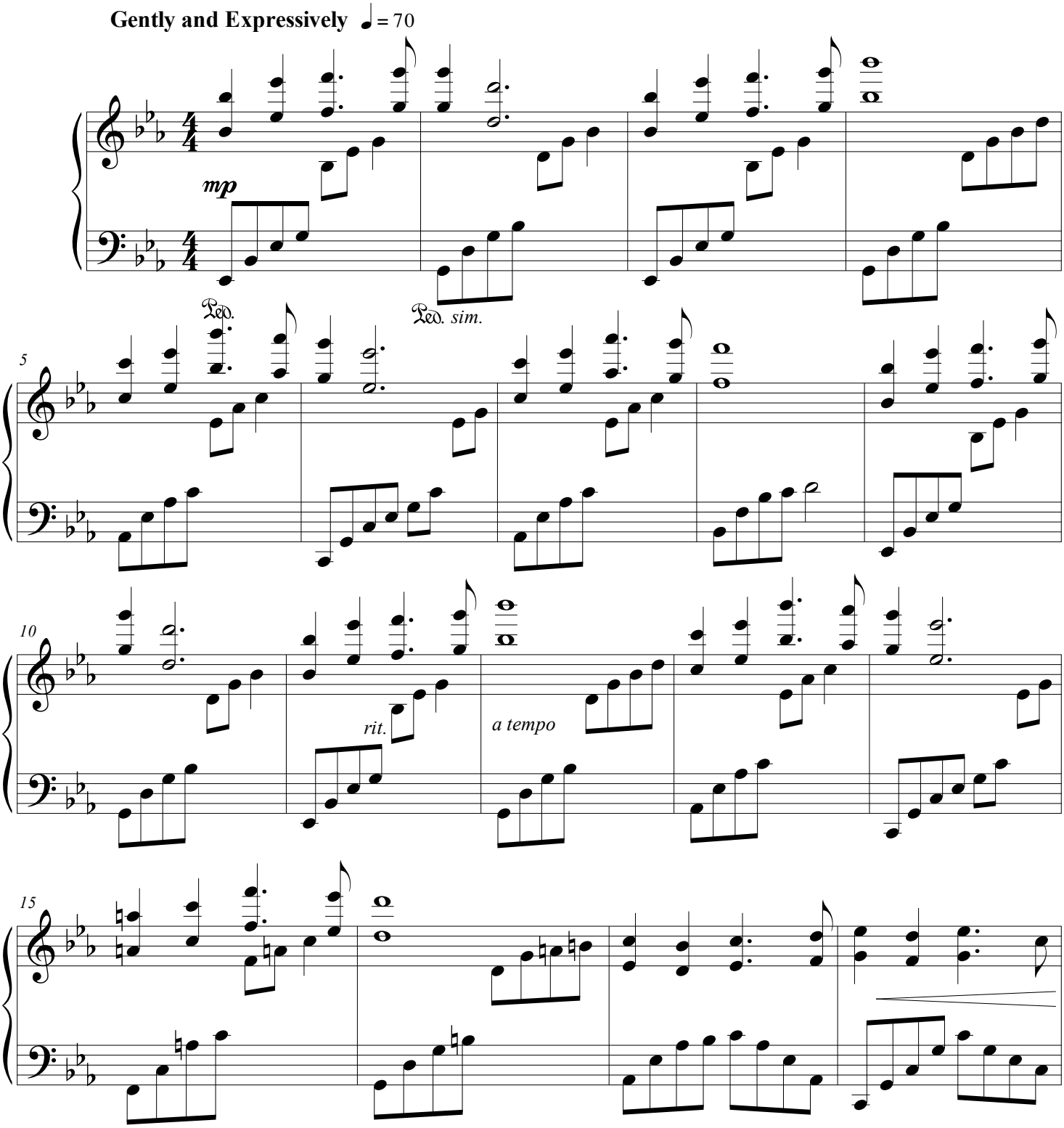
I took you outside to calm your crying.
You smiled when we emerged
into the moon's pale light.
She shined on us gently,

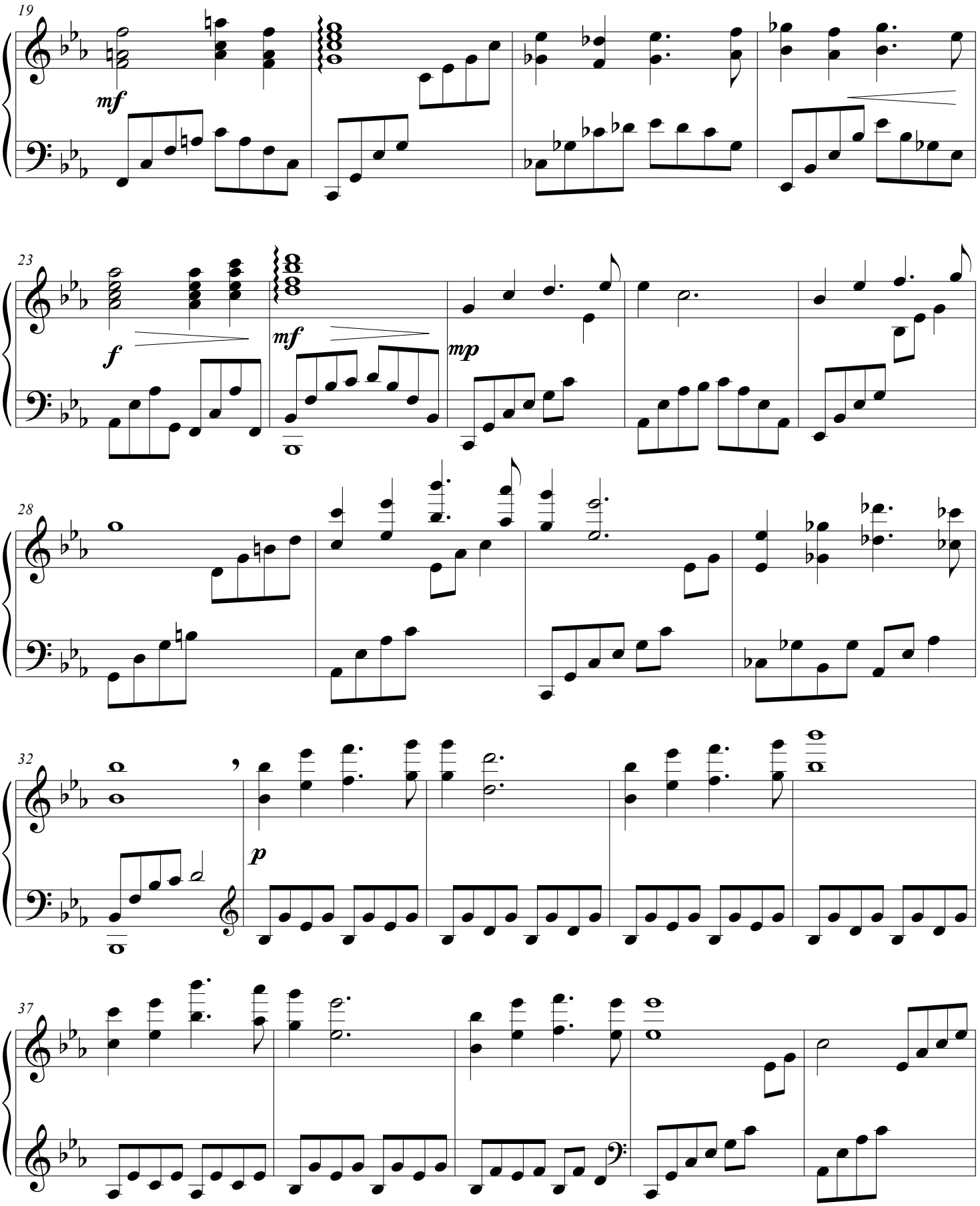
and the way you looked at her
I thought you two had met.
Was she the one you thought you saw
in every incandescent, every candle flame

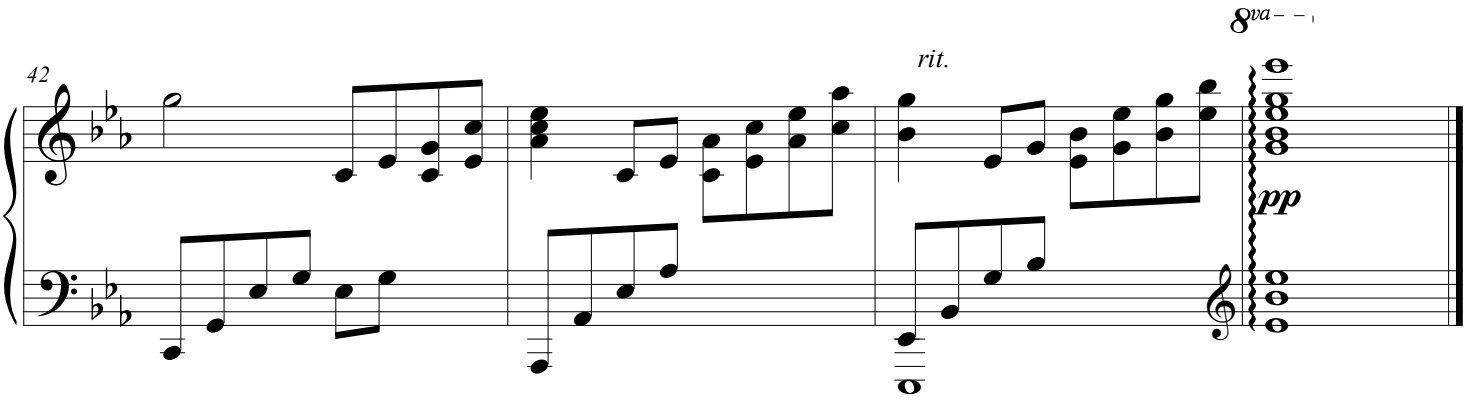
that's grabbed your gaze and calmed you
these three months of life?
Does she bring to mind another face
you have seen somewhere before?

--Charlie Ritch

II. Recognition




19
mf
23
f
mf
mp
28
32
p
37


42
rit.
8va
pp

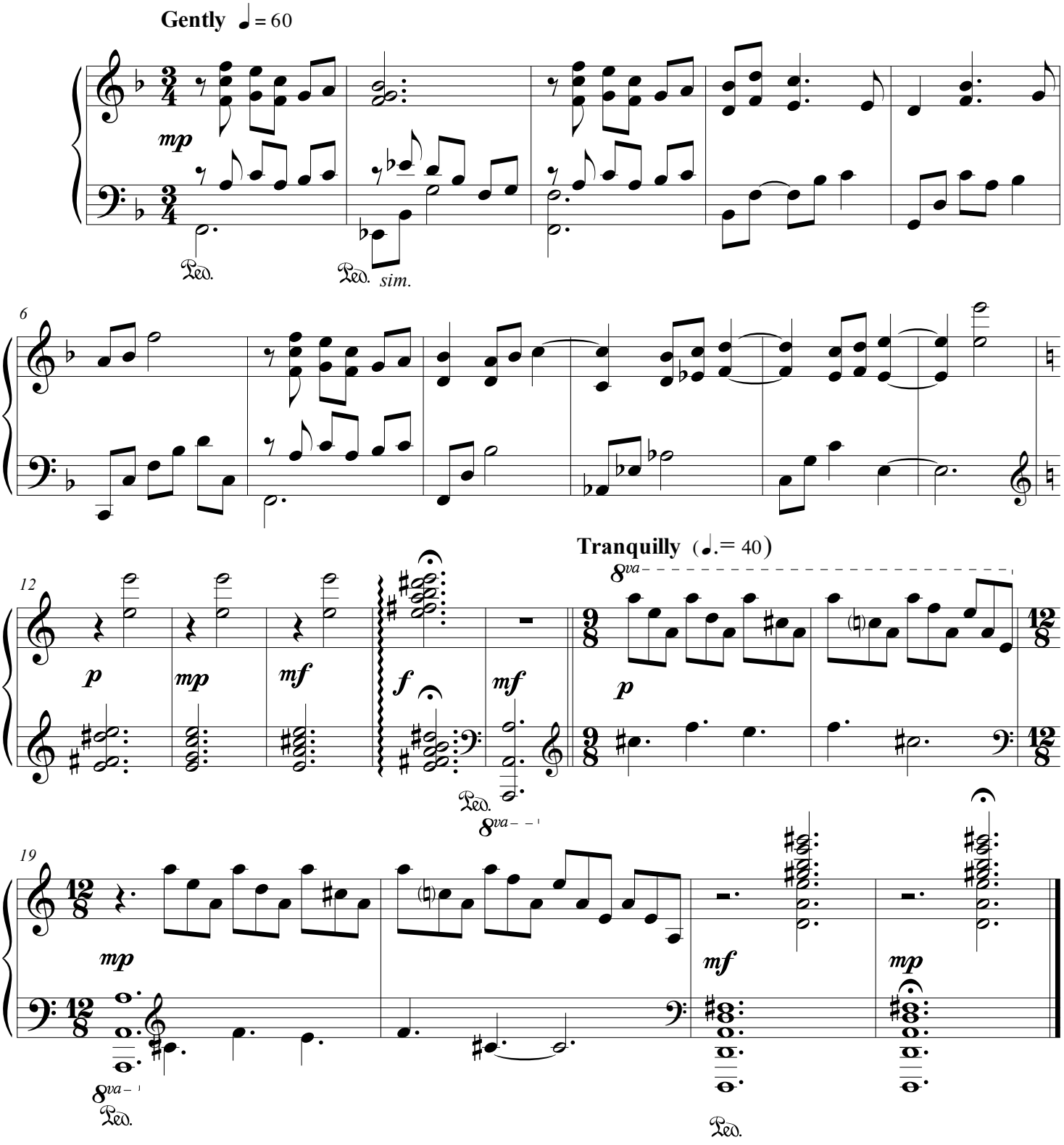
Leaving One Kind of Life

You won't believe it:
tonight - no, today -
I pulled back the sheets on our bed -
they need washing,
you know,
they always do -

and there where the impress of our resting bodies
should be, there was
a portal door,
the kind you see
on spaceships,
with a wheel to unlock the pressure seal.

I turned that wheel,
and the cracking of a gasket
breaking from the frame
and the hiss of air
were the last sounds
I heard.
And there was outer space and all the heavenly bodies

before me, silent
and full of peace.
And overcome by
insanity or joy -
I don't know which -
I stepped into that
unknown world.

--Charlie Ritch

III. Leaving One Kind of Life