Orchard Sunset

for violoncello and harp

RUSSELL NADEL

(2011)

Duration: c. 6′00″

Program Notes:

Orchard Sunset was commissioned and premiered by **apple orange pair**, a horn and harp duo in New Haven, CT, comprising Emily Boyer on horn and Colleen Potter Thorburn on harp. Emily was a good friend during three years spent together as students at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, MD, and a champion of new music among the students composers there; she participated in the premiere of my *Trio for Trumpet, Horn and Trombone* in 2002. After completing her undergraduate work at Peabody, she continued her graduate work at the prestigious Yale School of Music, where she met Colleen. Both Emily and Colleen were interested in and inspired by new music, and excited about exploring the repertoire composed for their unusual duo. Their premiere public concert as apple orange pair took place in New Haven in October 2010, and they have since given multiple concerts, each featuring a combination of music composed for horn and harp, music they arranged for their duo, or, in this case, music specifically composed for them.

I was delighted when Emily and Colleen requested this composition from me. I had never before composed for the harp in a chamber music context, and learning about its unique abilities and sonic abilities was inspiring, especially from such an outstanding musician (and editor) as Colleen turned out to be. And of course, having worked with Emily before, I was familiar with her superb musicianship. In *Orchard Sunset*, I experimented to some degree with writing for the horn in a lower range than chamber music typically features, allowing the harp to dance above and below the horn in a steady flow of arpeggios. I enjoyed the challenge of composing – especially for the harp, but also for the horn – using musical language and idiomatic figurations that would be both familiar (i.e., playable) and distinctive. I particularly enjoyed writing many chances for each instrument to bring out the flowing, *cantabile* melodic style that they perform so very well.

The word "Orchard" in the title comes equally from the fact that Emily grew up on a cherry farm in Michigan, and from the duo's unique name – "orchard" was an evocative word I chose because it has in common both apples and oranges. The "Sunset" came from repeated listening to the composition; after assigning the music the setting of an orchard, so to speak, the image of the sun setting very slowly, over the course of the entire work, came easily to mind.

Orchard Sunset was premiered by **apple orange pair** at Christ Presbyterian Church, in New Haven, CT, on May 28, 2011. I am grateful to AOP for their support, encouragement, editing assistance, patience, practice and enthusiasm, and for their friendship. This arrangement for violoncello and harp was a goal of mine from the time that I composed the work, and am pleased to have had Colleen's help in bringing it to life.

— Russell Nadel
July 2011

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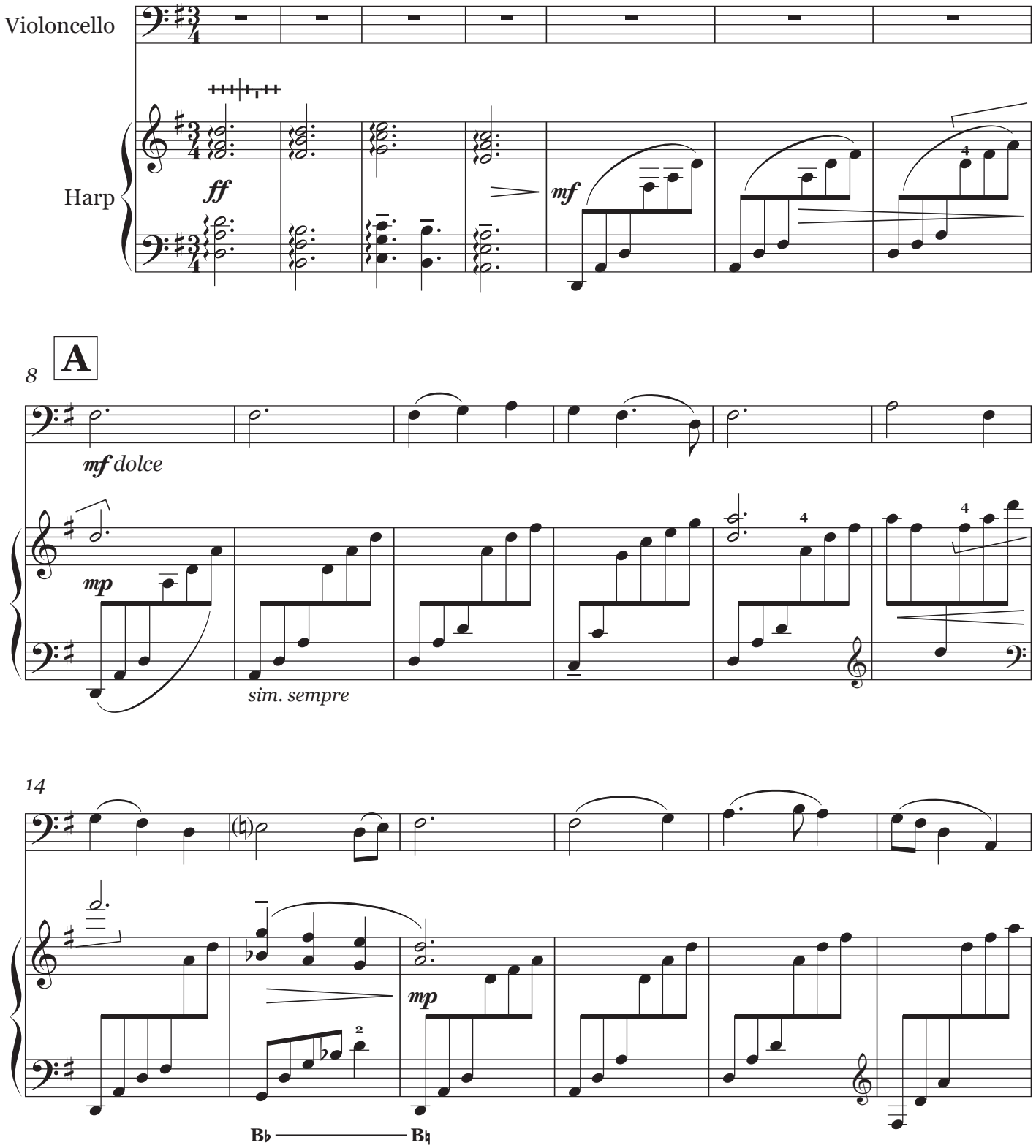
*Commissioned by, premiered by, and dedicated to **apple orange pair** (New Haven, CT):*
Emily Boyer, horn, and Colleen Potter Thorburn, harp

ORCHARD SUNSET

RUSSELL NADEL
Harp markings by Colleen Potter Thorburn

Con moto, sempre legato (♩. = 48)



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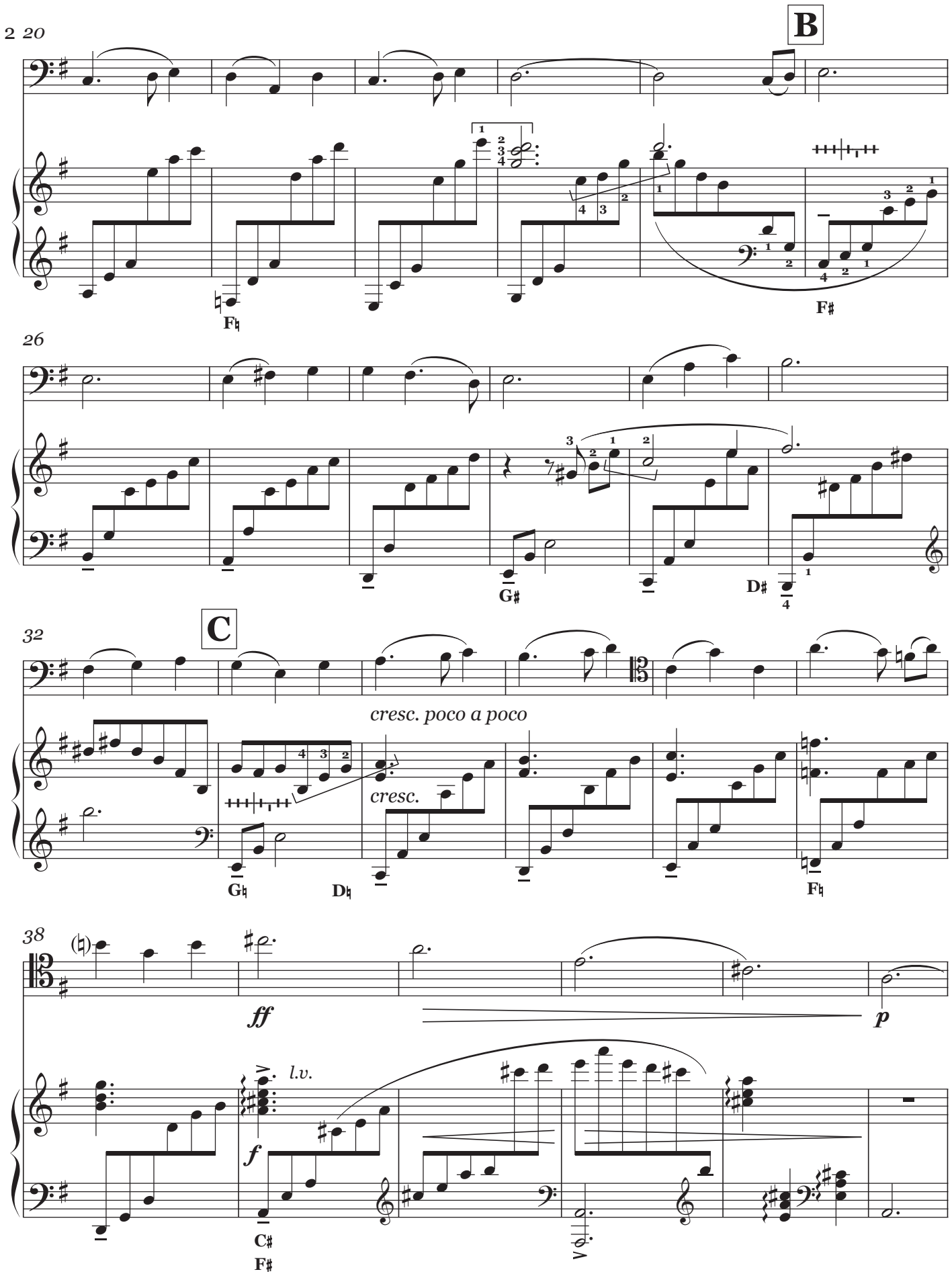

20
B
F♮
F♯
26
G♯
D♯
32
C
cresc. poco a poco
cresc.
G♮
D♮
F♮
38
ff
p
l.v.
f
C♯
F♯

D

44 **poco rit.** - - - - - - **A tempo**

mp *mp* *mp*

C♮ B♭

51

mf

C♯

E

57

f

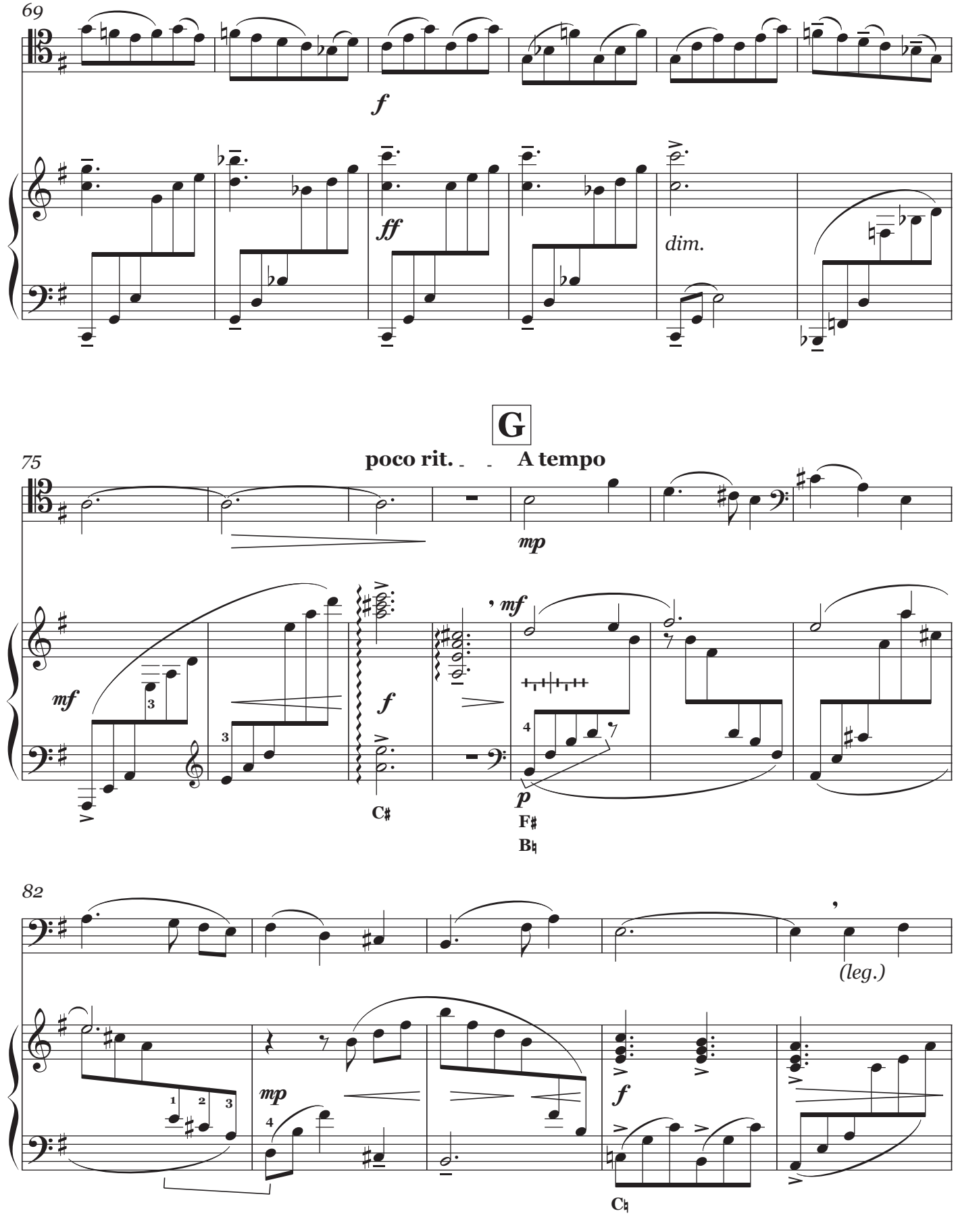
F♮ B♭ C♮ *sim.*

F

63

cresc. poco a poco

cresc.


69
f
ff
dim.
G
75
poco rit.
A tempo
mp
mf
f
C♯
mf
p
F♯
B♮
82
(leg.)
mp
f
C♮