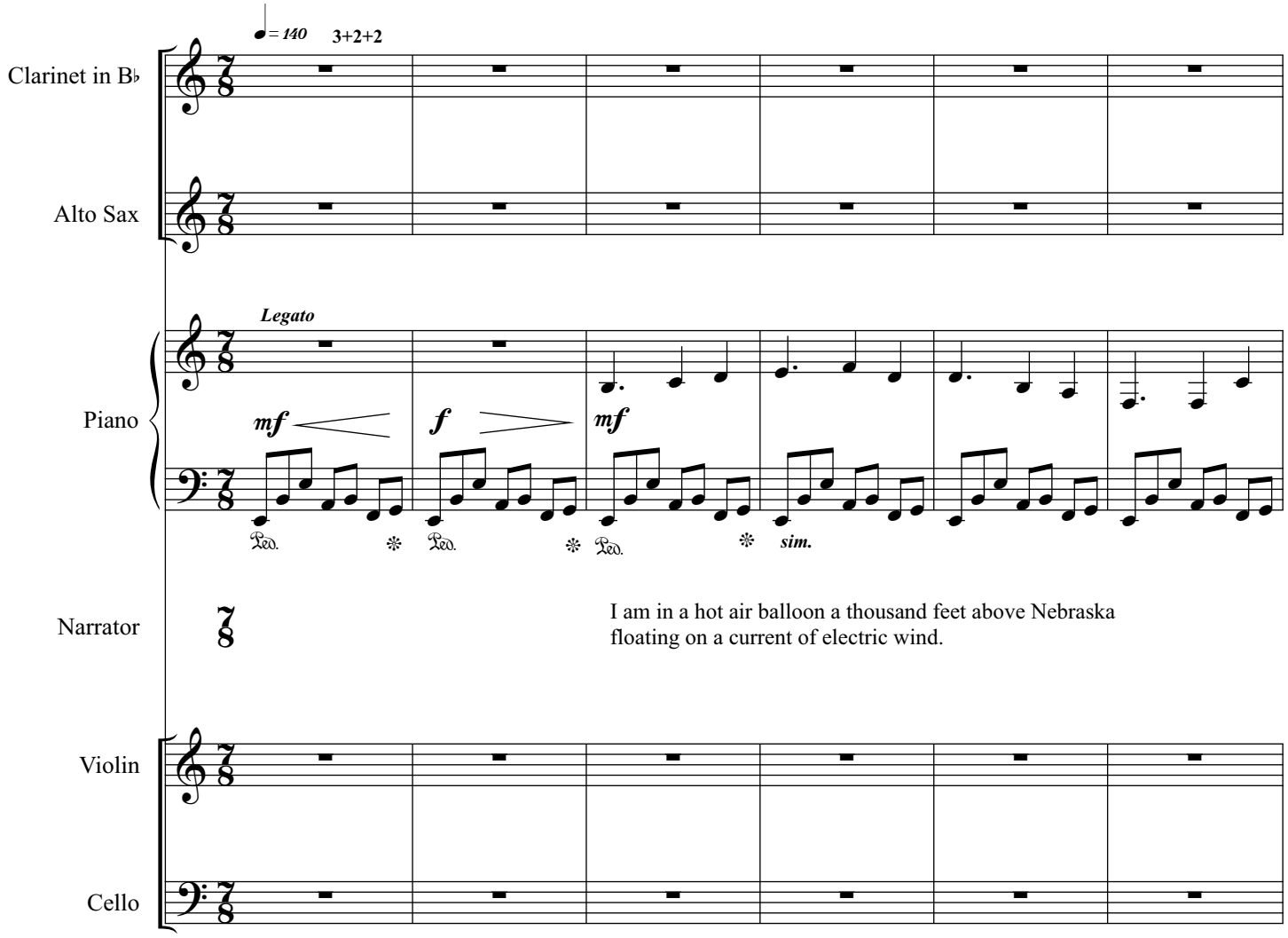
# Not the Right Balloon

duration: 6:08

C Score

## David Gunn

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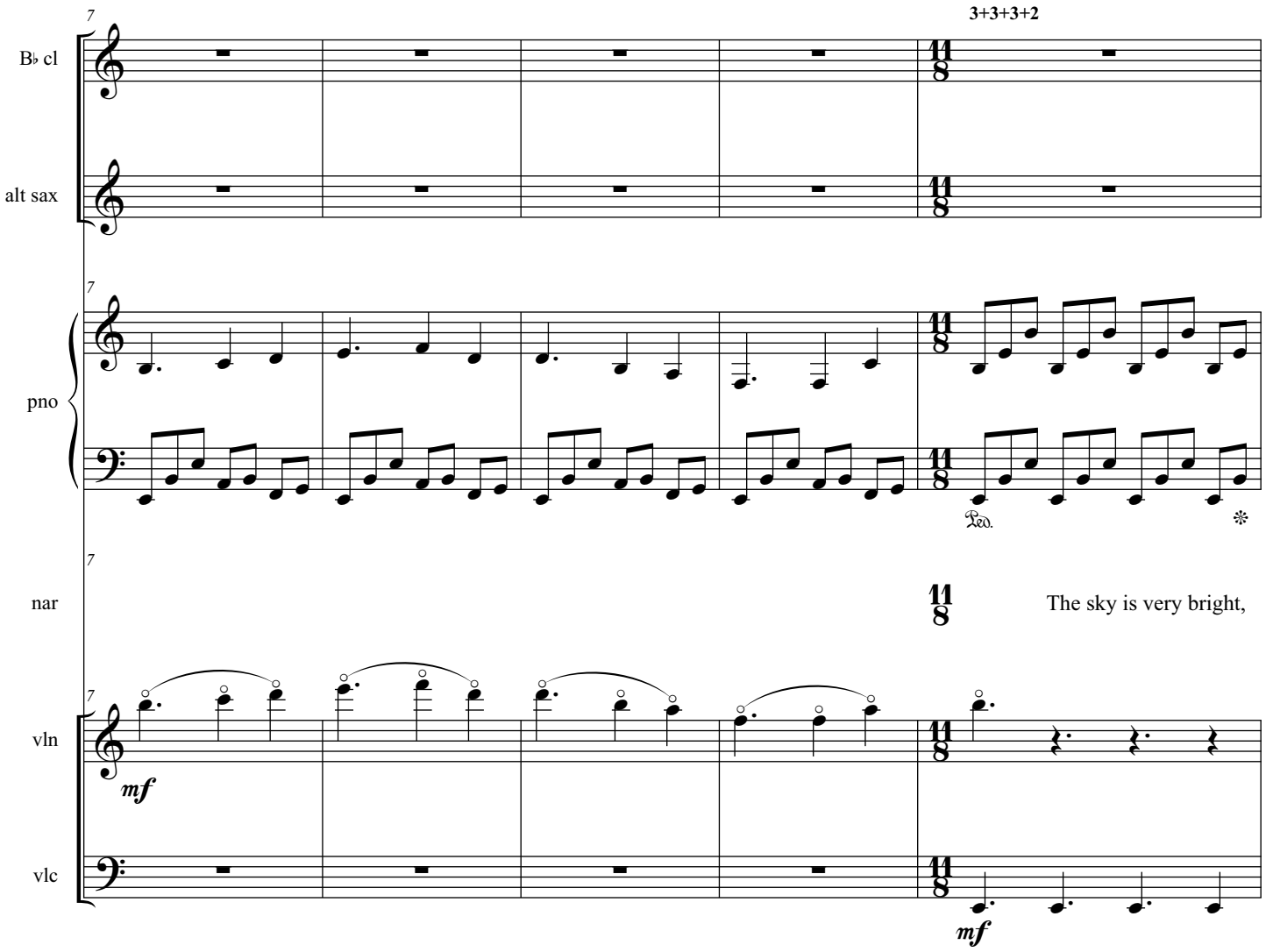
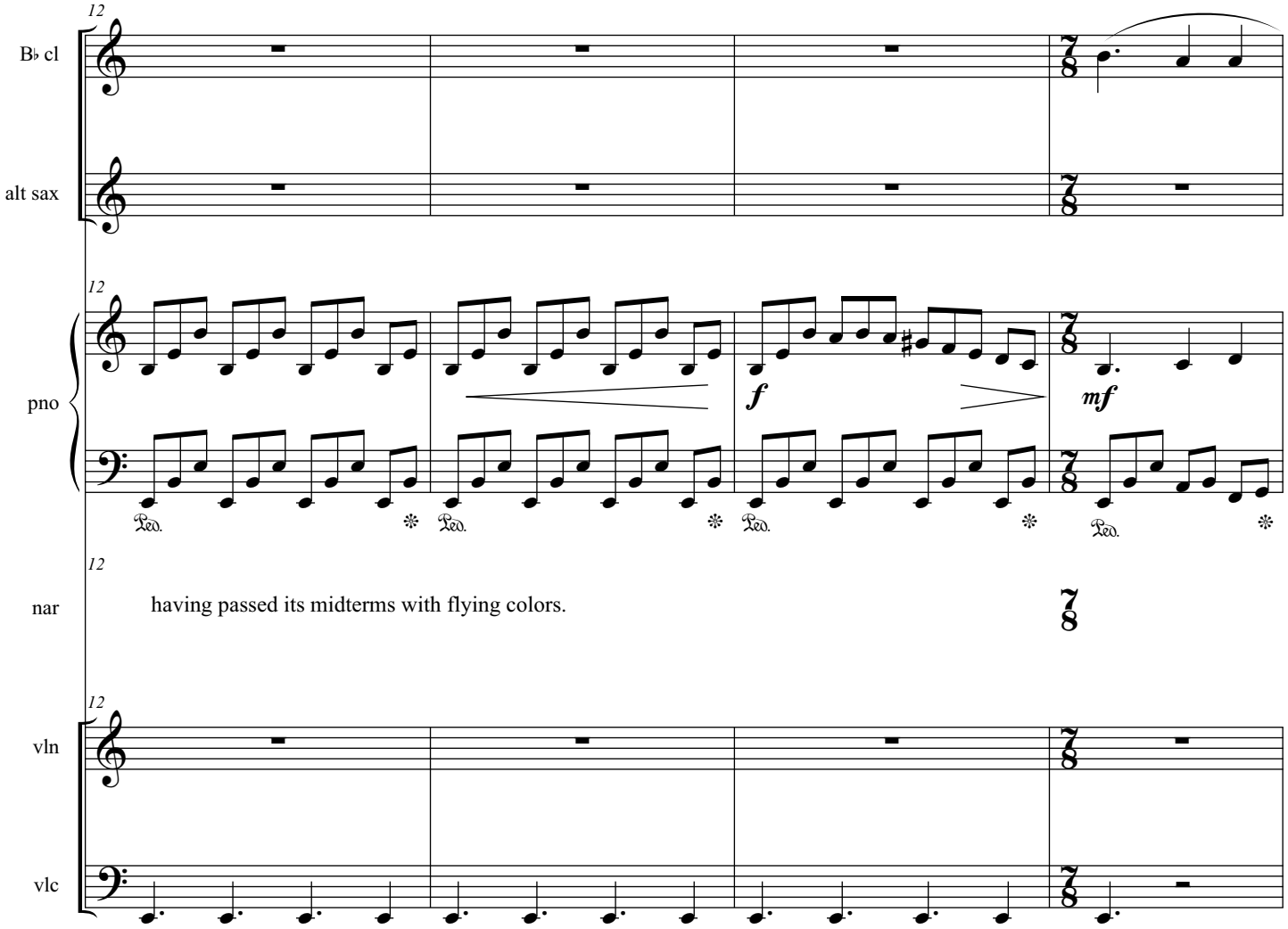
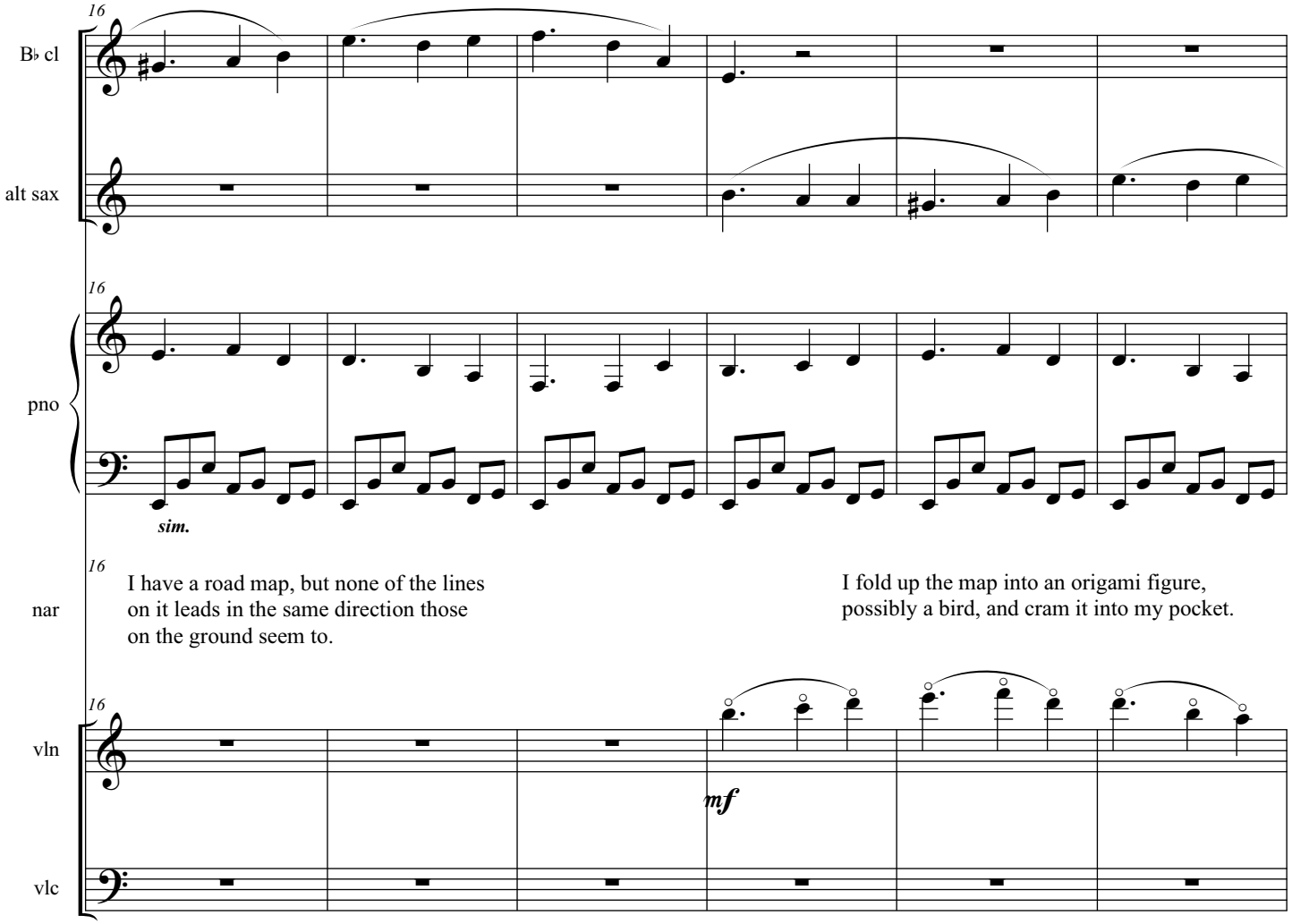
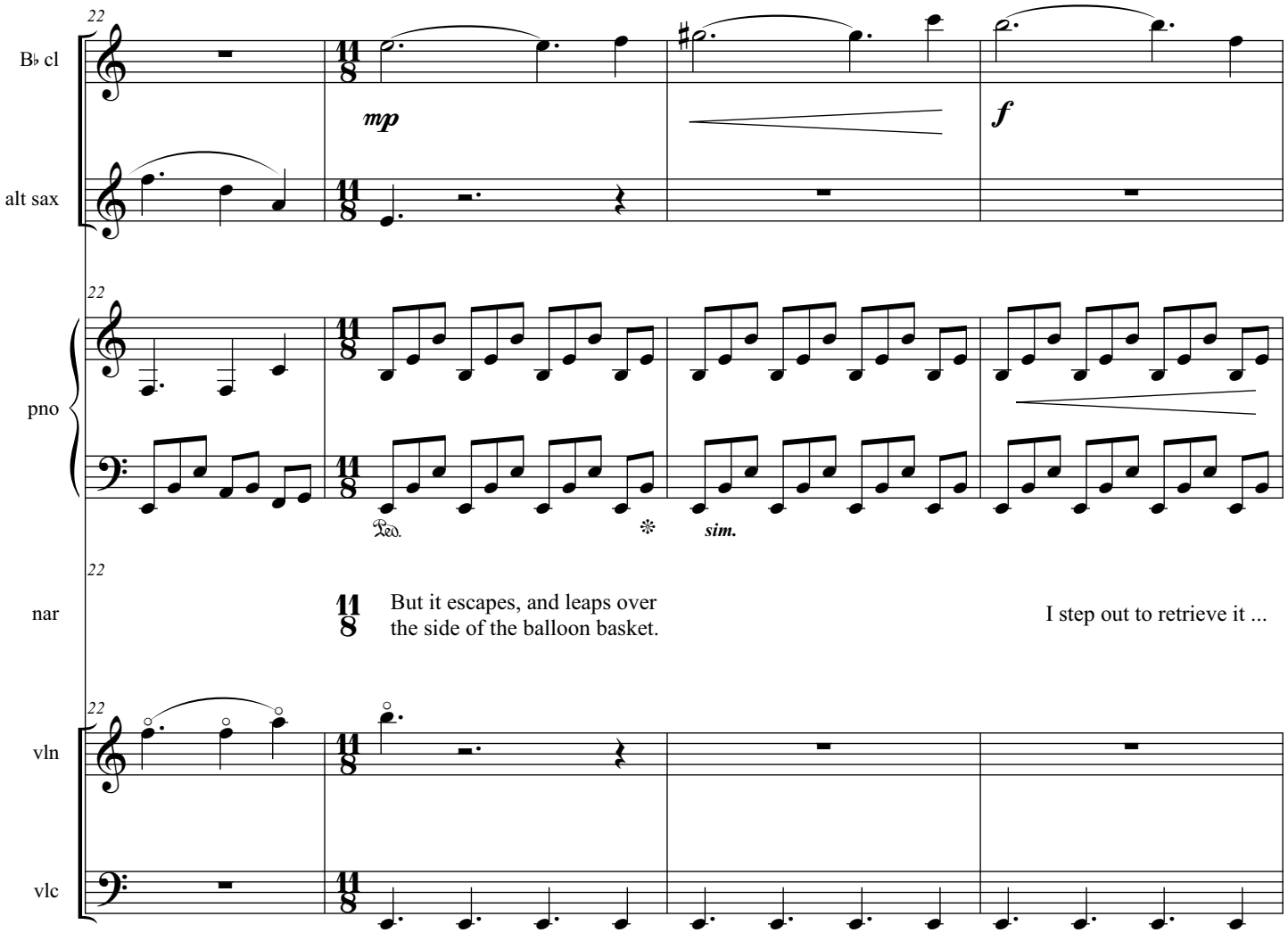
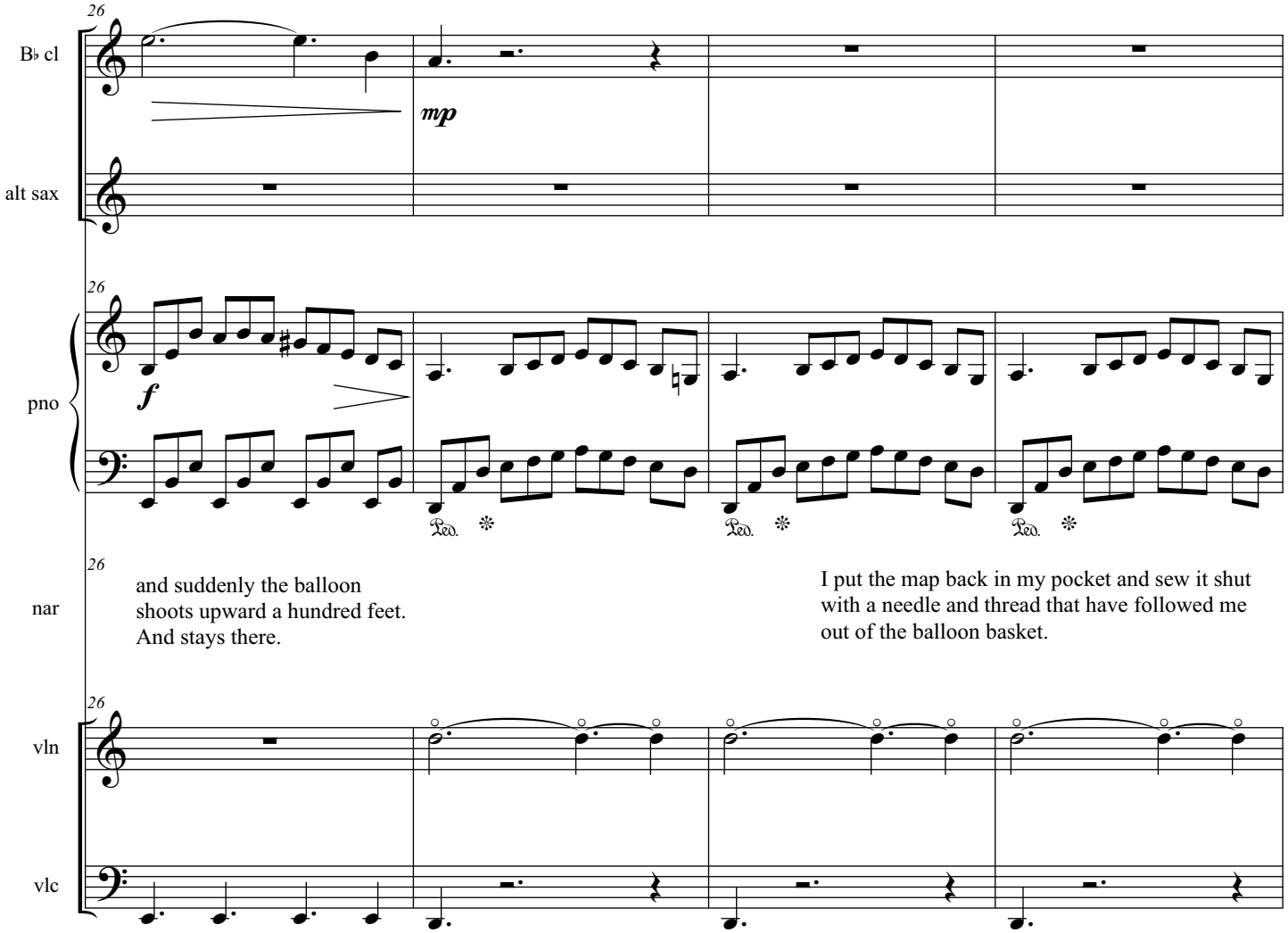
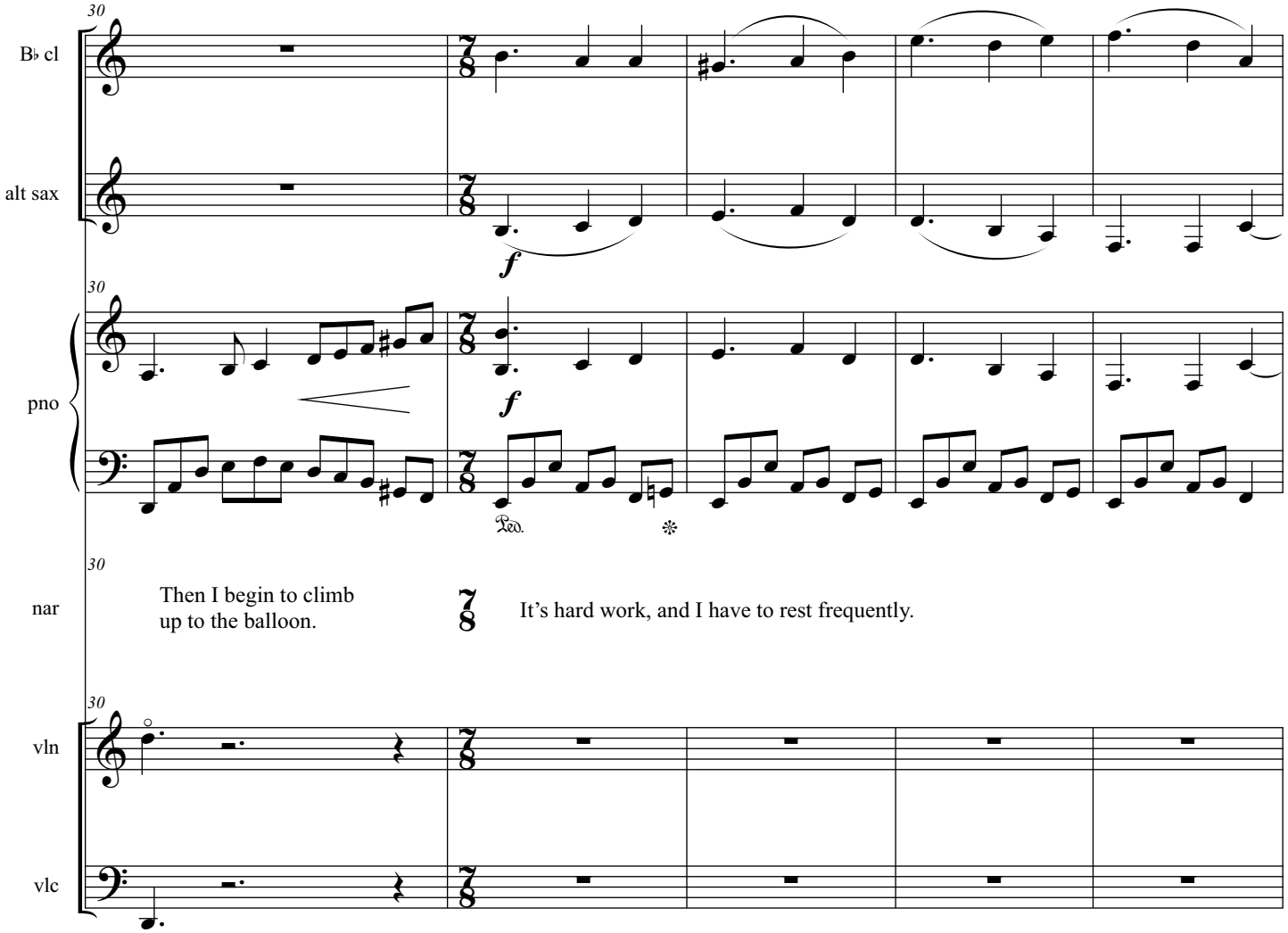

7
3+3+3+2
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
Ped.
nar
The sky is very bright,
vln
mf
vlc
mf

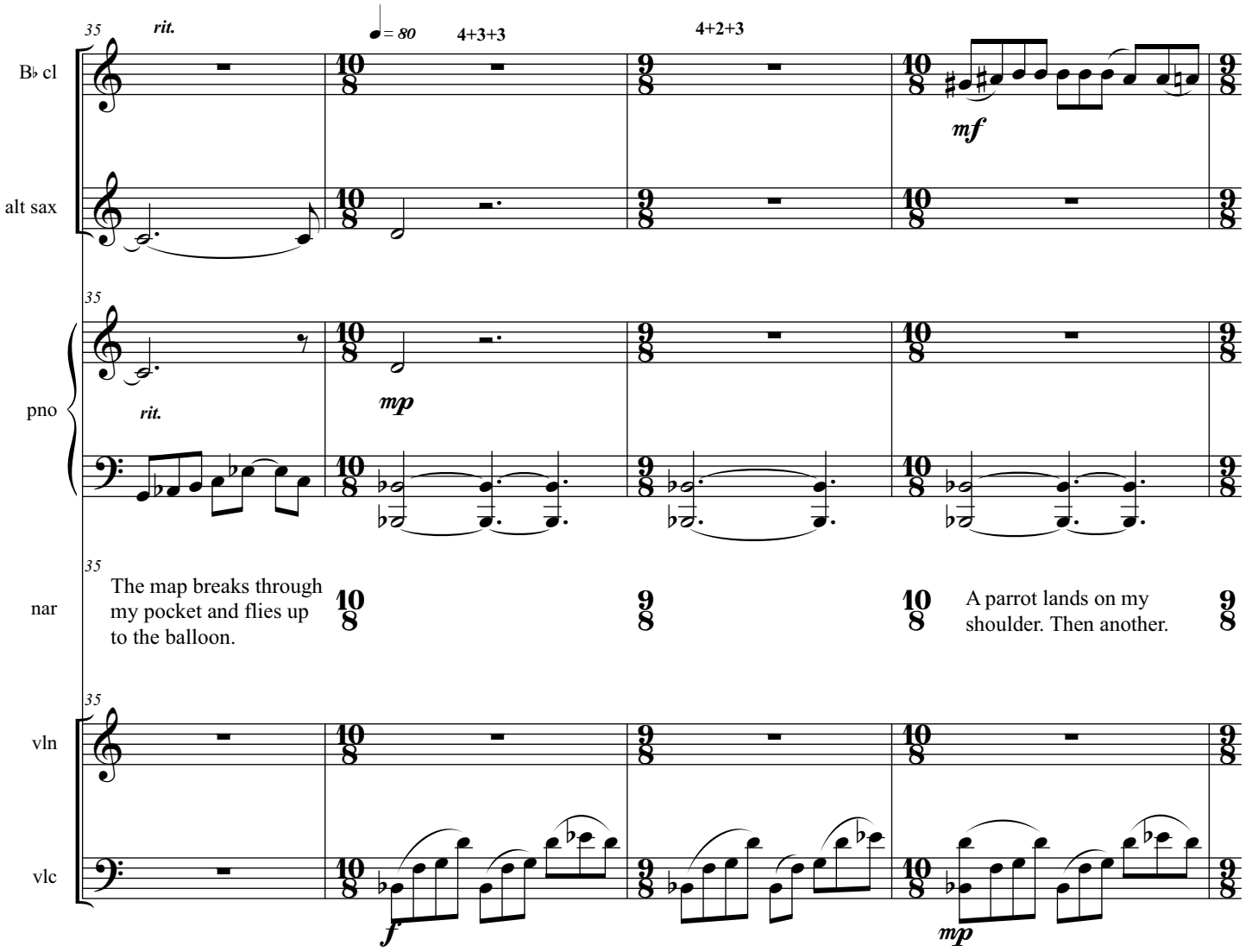

12
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
f
mf
Ped.
nar
having passed its midterms with flying colors.
vln
vlc

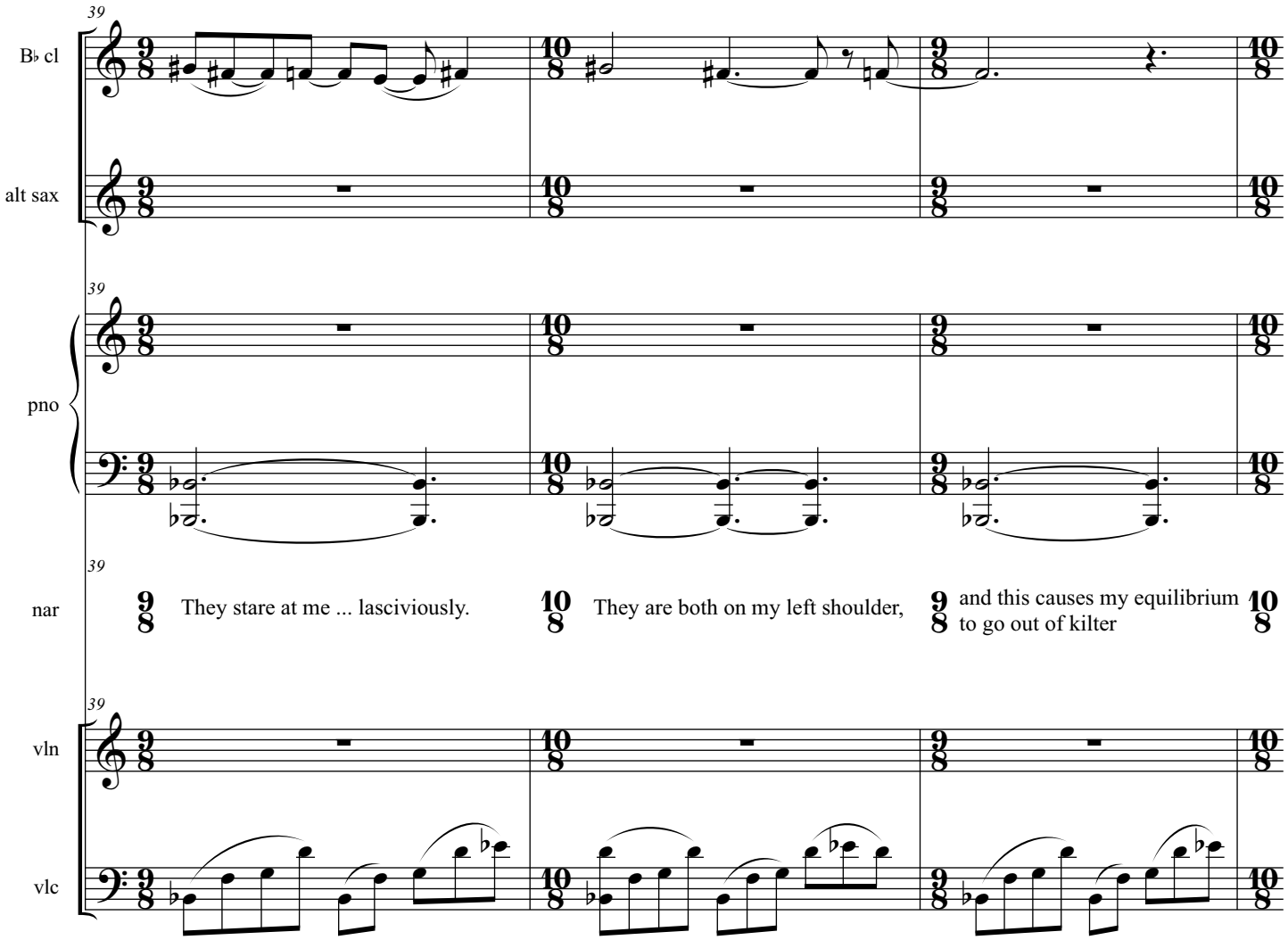

16
B♭ cl
alt sax
16
pno
sim.
16
nar
I have a road map, but none of the lines on it leads in the same direction those on the ground seem to.
I fold up the map into an origami figure, possibly a bird, and cram it into my pocket.
16
vln
mf
vlc

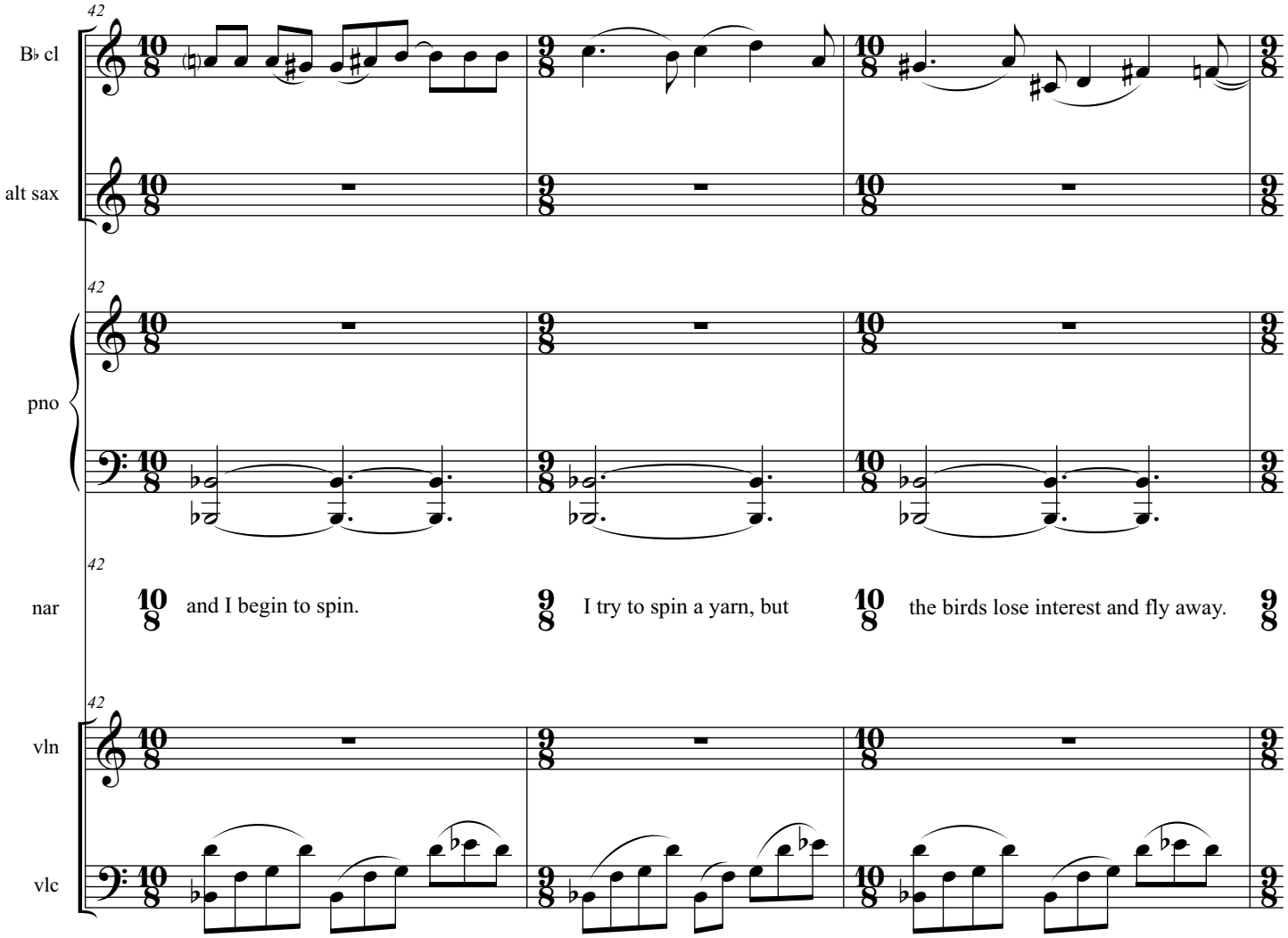

22
B♭ cl
mp
f
alt sax
22
pno
Ped.
sim.
22
nar
But it escapes, and leaps over
the side of the balloon basket.
I step out to retrieve it ...
22
vln
vlc

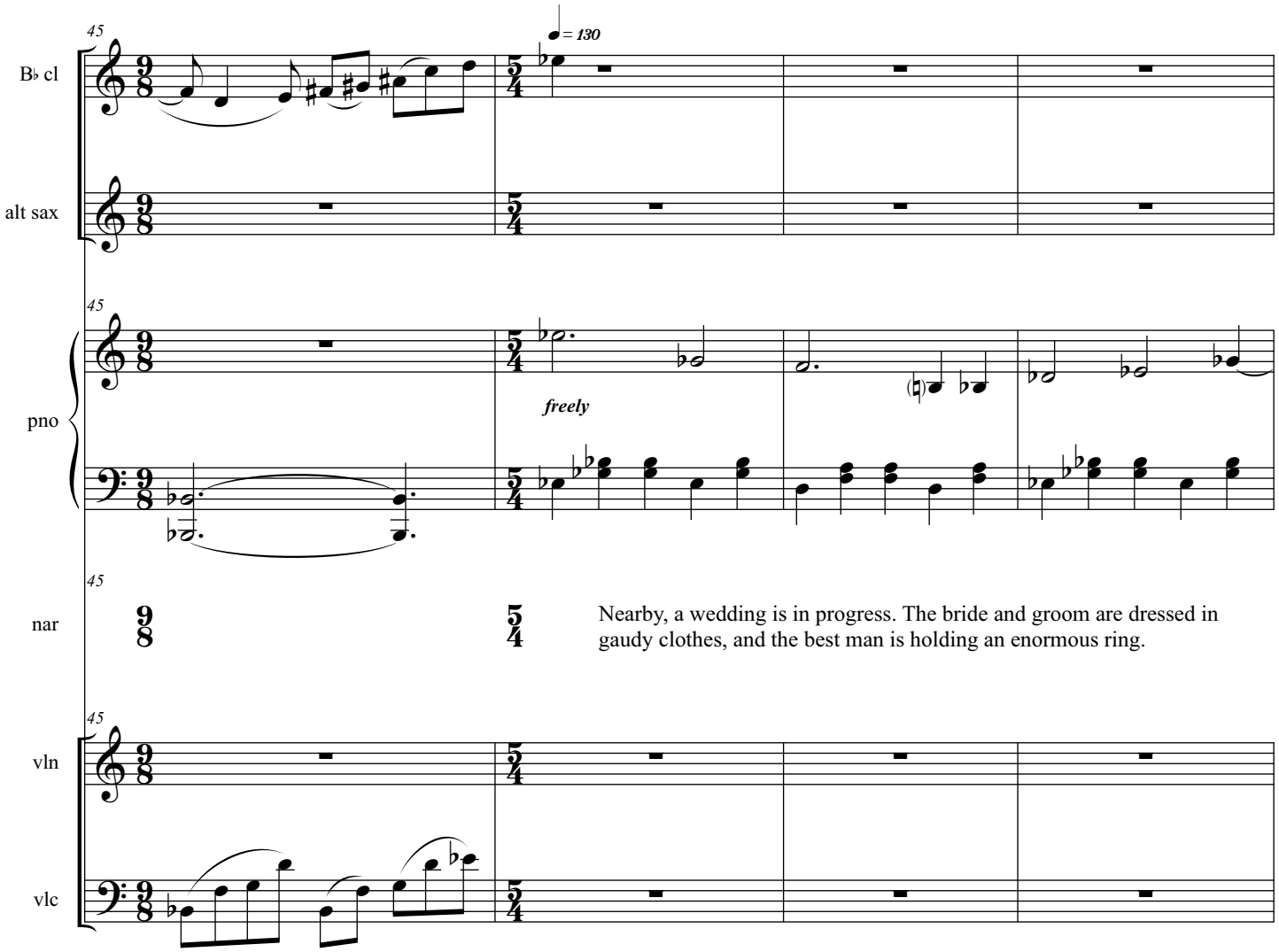

26
B♭ cl
mp
alt sax
26
pno
f
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
26
nar
and suddenly the balloon
shoots upward a hundred feet.
And stays there.
I put the map back in my pocket and sew it shut
with a needle and thread that have followed me
out of the balloon basket.
26
vln
vlc

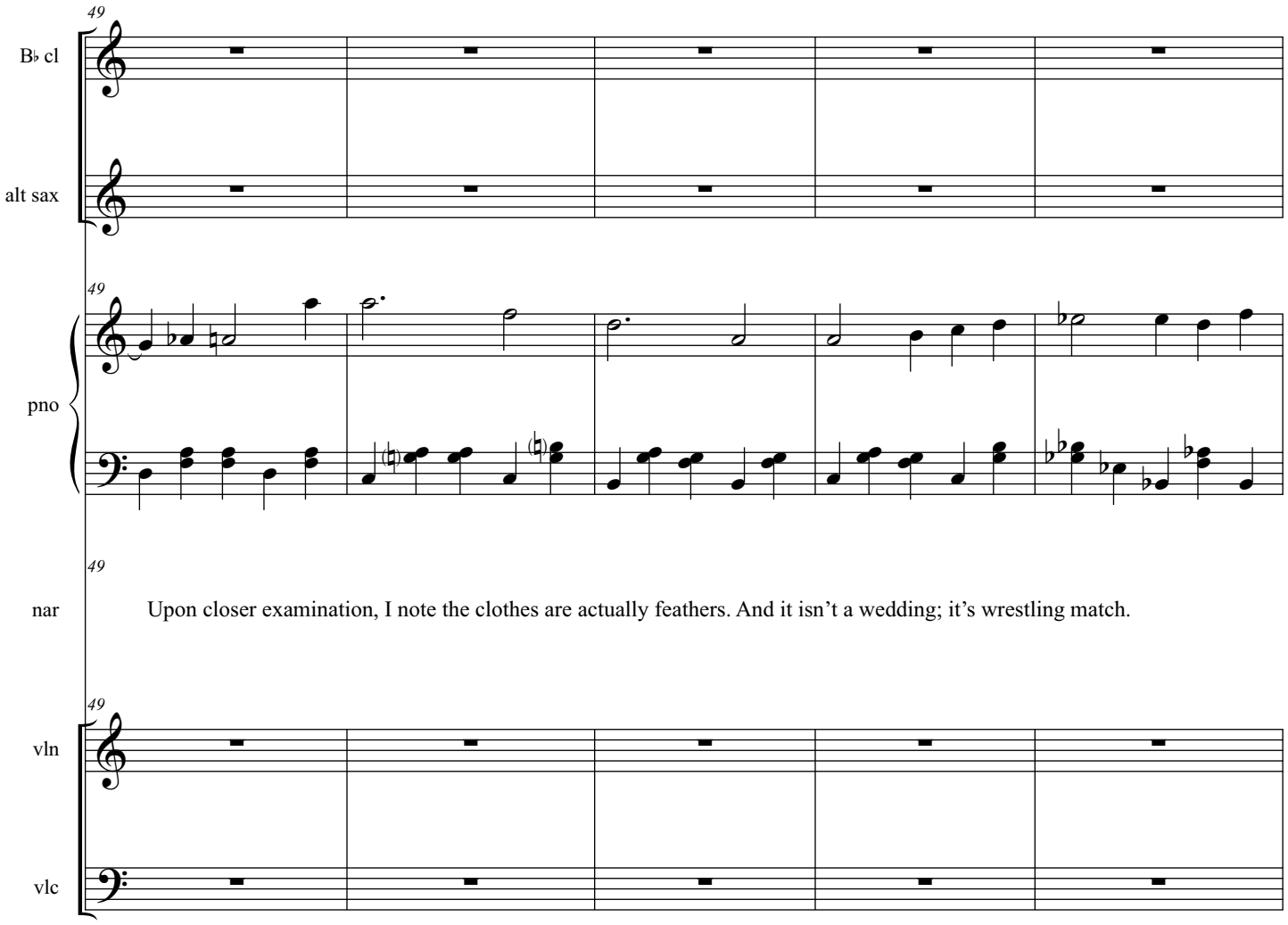

30
B♭ cl
alt sax
f
pno
Ped.
nar
Then I begin to climb
up to the balloon.
It's hard work, and I have to rest frequently.
vln
vlc

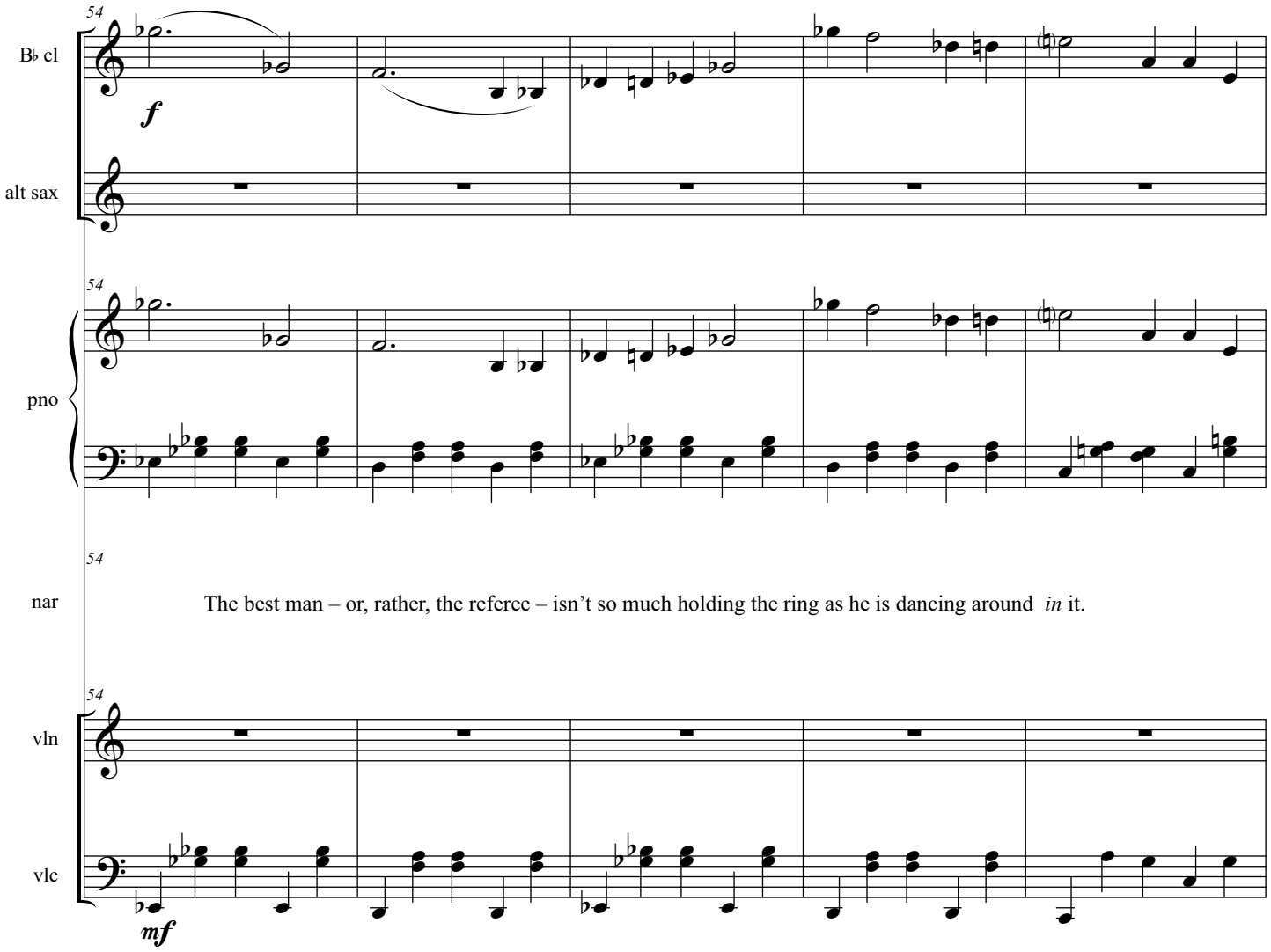

35
rit.
♩= 80
4+3+3
4+2+3
B♭ cl
mf
alt sax
pno
mp
rit.
nar
The map breaks through my pocket and flies up to the balloon.
A parrot lands on my shoulder. Then another.
vln
vlc
f
mp

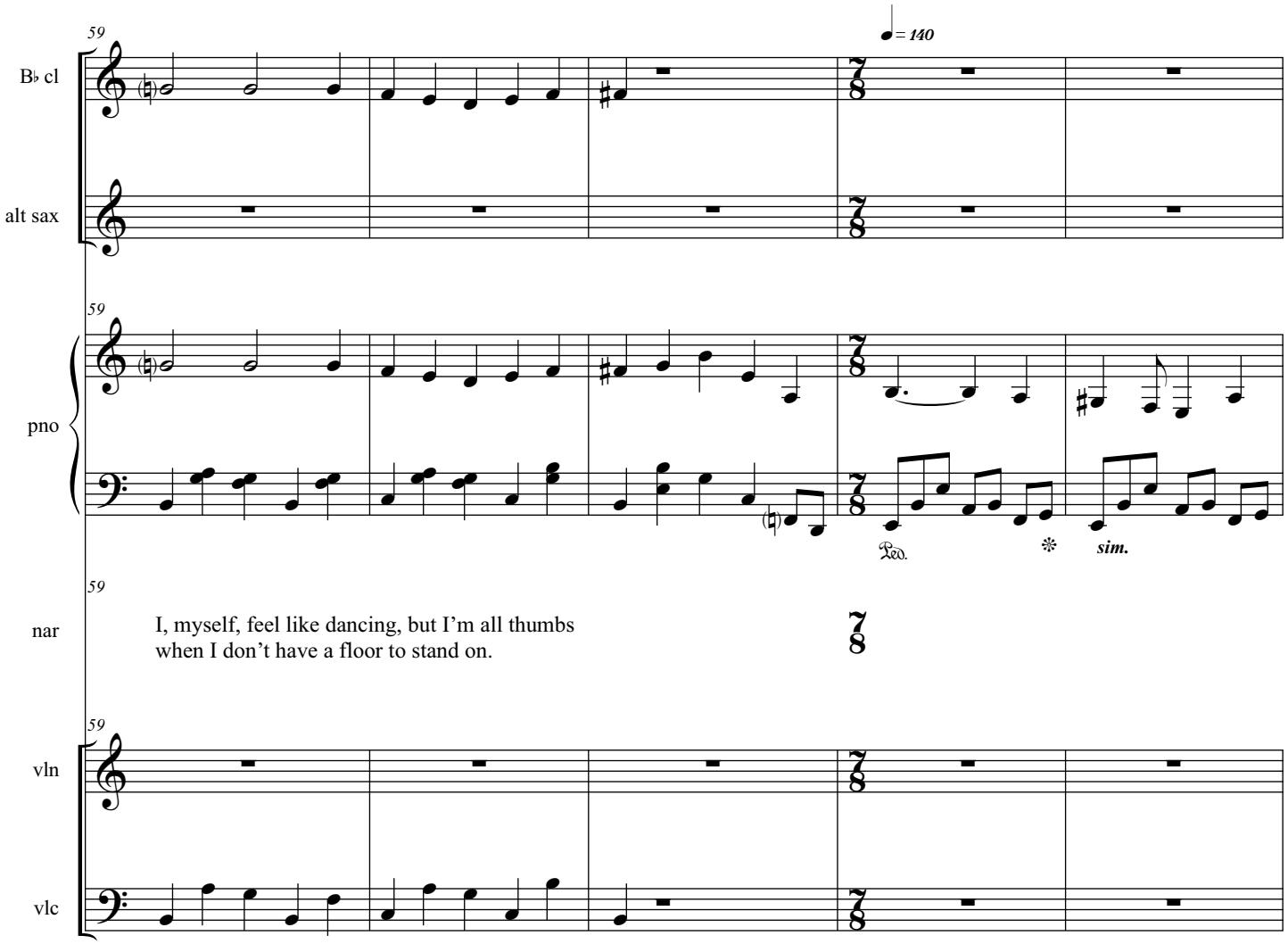

39
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
They stare at me ... lasciviously.
They are both on my left shoulder,
and this causes my equilibrium
to go out of kilter
vln
vlc

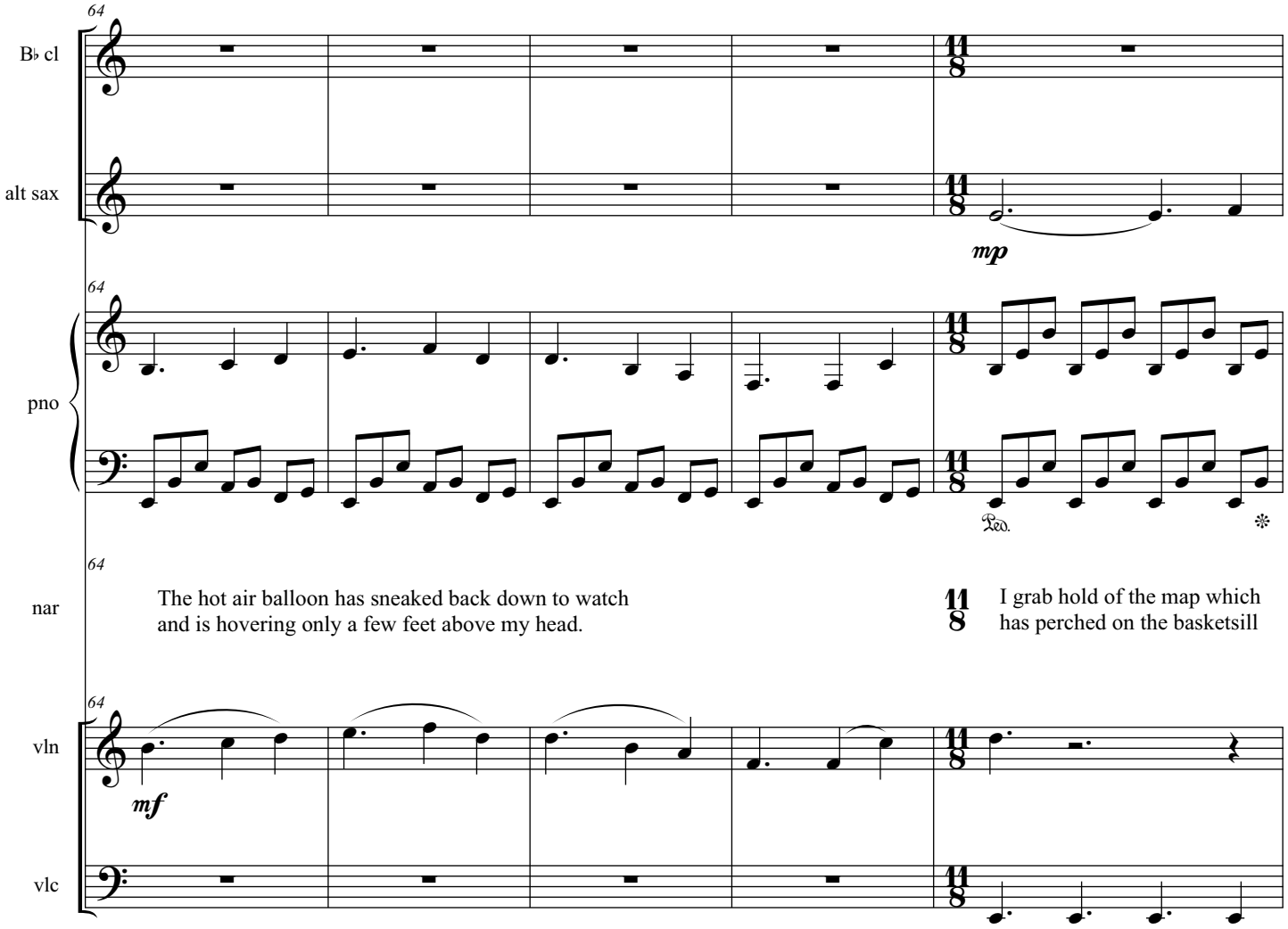

42
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
and I begin to spin.
I try to spin a yarn, but
the birds lose interest and fly away.
vln
vlc

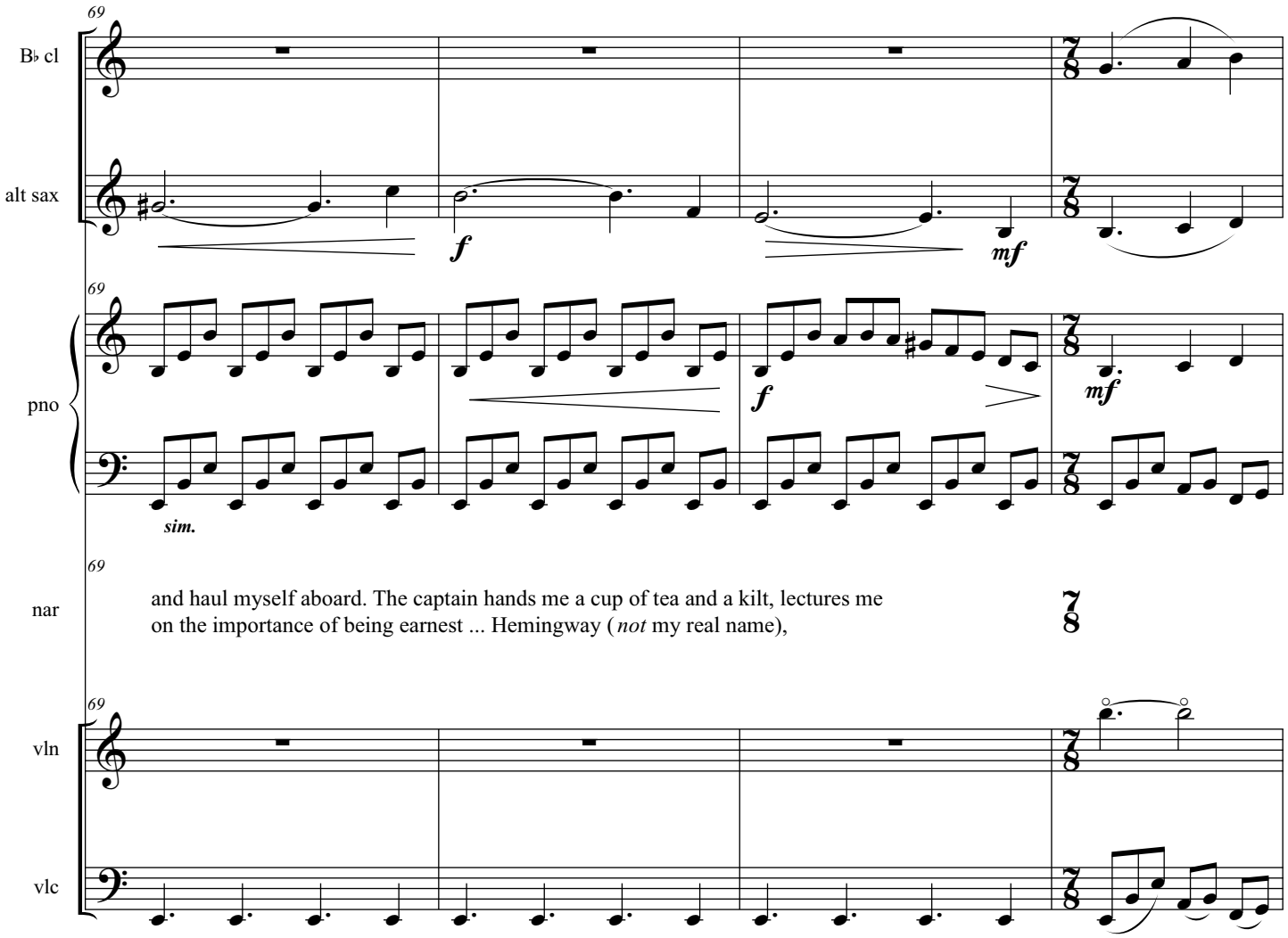

45
B♭ cl
alt sax
♩ = 130
pno
freely
nar
Nearby, a wedding is in progress. The bride and groom are dressed in gaudy clothes, and the best man is holding an enormous ring.
vln
vlc

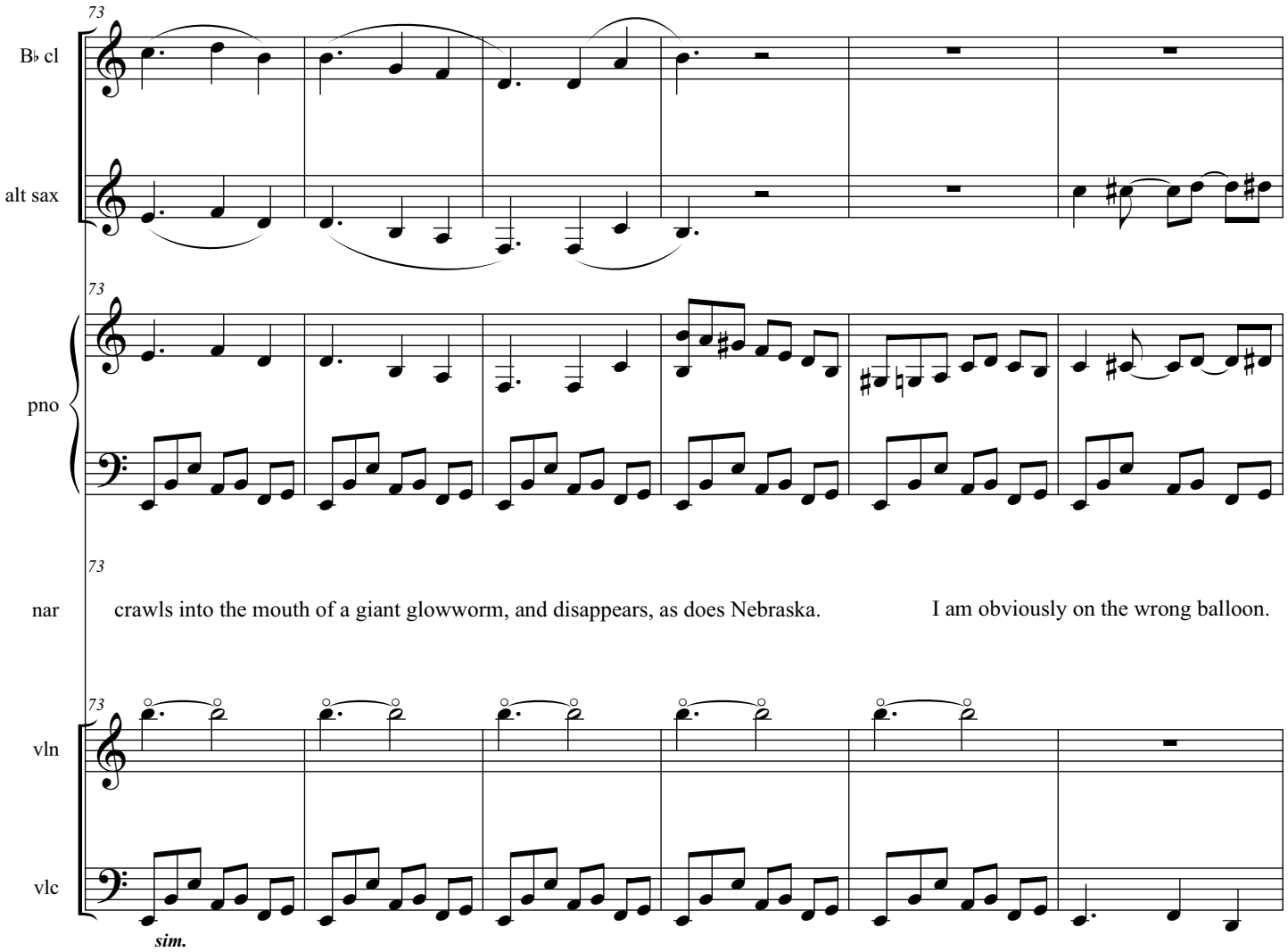

49
B♭ cl
alt sax
49
pno
49
nar
Upon closer examination, I note the clothes are actually feathers. And it isn't a wedding; it's wrestling match.
49
vln
vlc

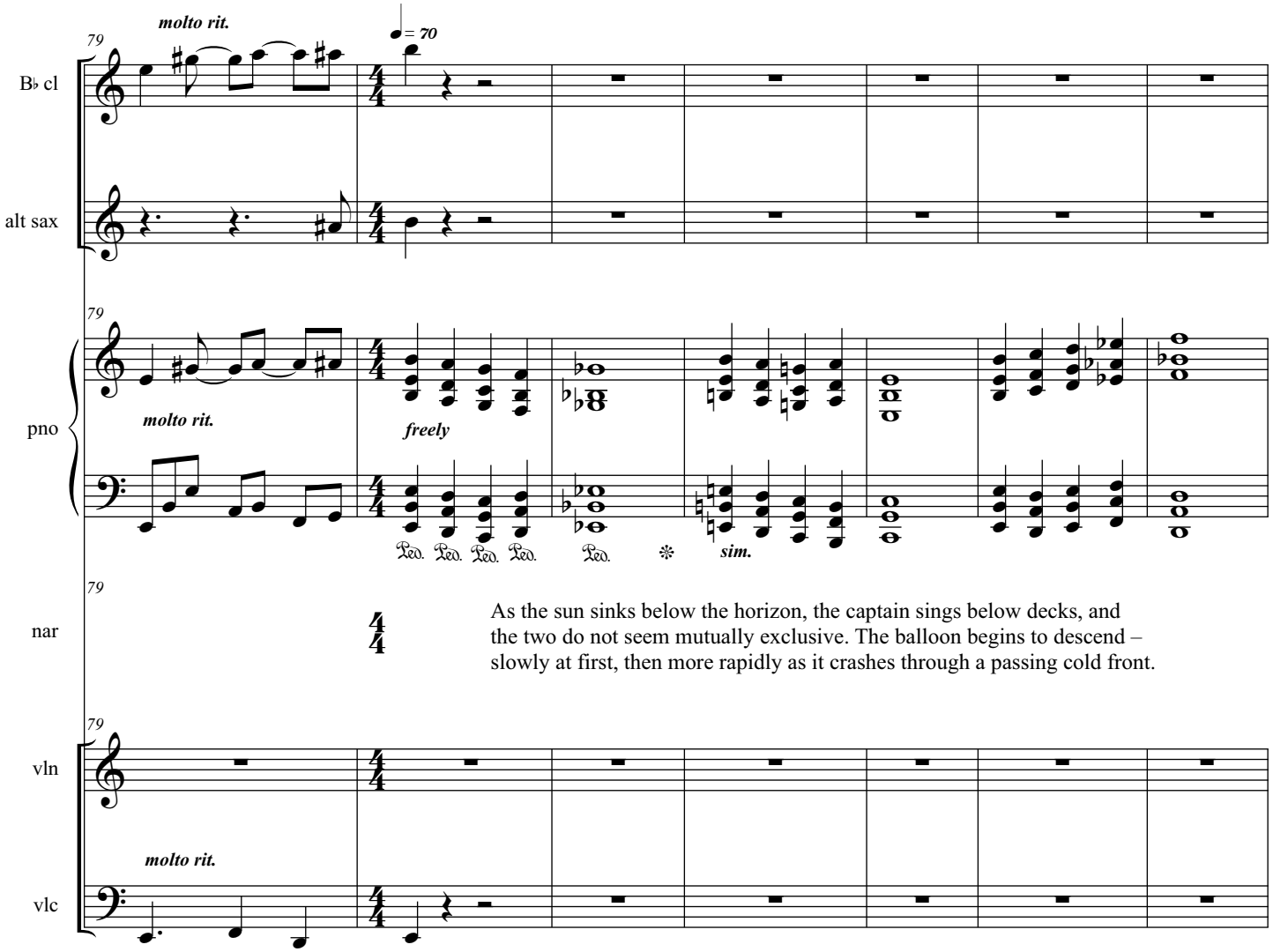

54
B♭ cl
f
alt sax
54
pno
54
nar
The best man – or, rather, the referee – isn't so much holding the ring as he is dancing around *in* it.
54
vln
vlc
mf

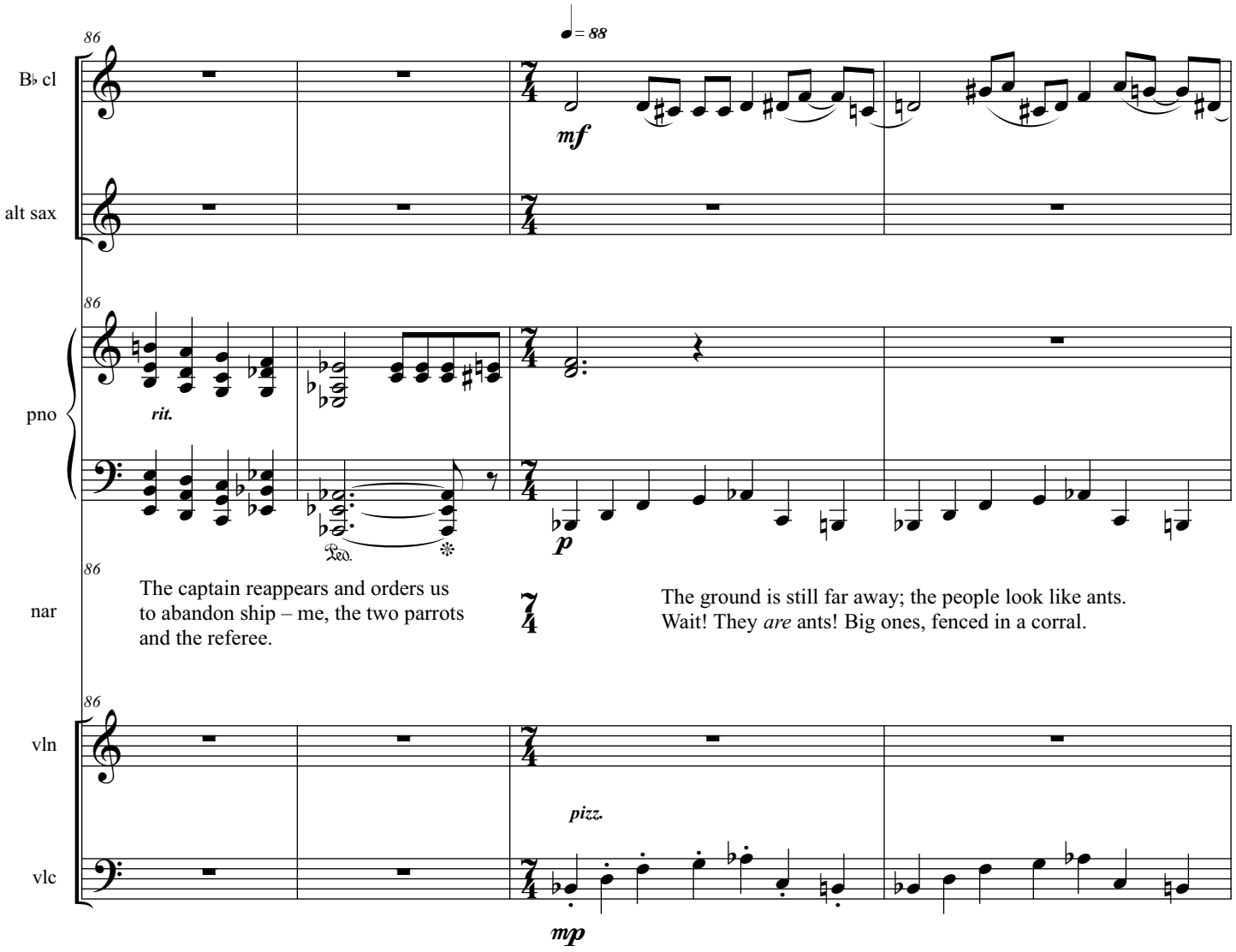

59
♩ = 140
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
Ped.
sim.
nar
I, myself, feel like dancing, but I'm all thumbs
when I don't have a floor to stand on.
vln
vlc

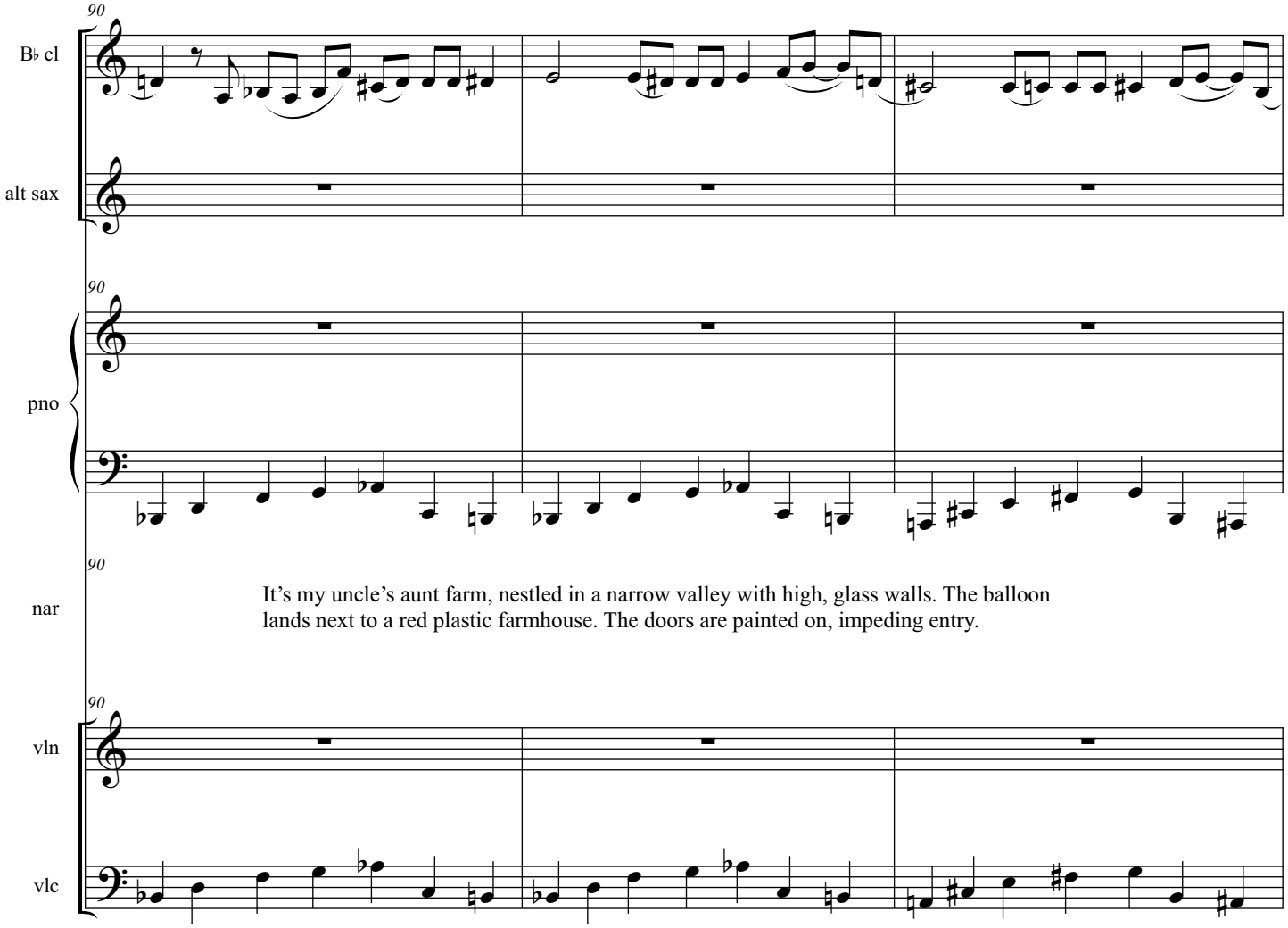

64
B♭ cl
alt sax
mp
pno
Ped.
nar
The hot air balloon has sneaked back down to watch
and is hovering only a few feet above my head.
I grab hold of the map which
has perched on the basketsill
vln
mf
vlc

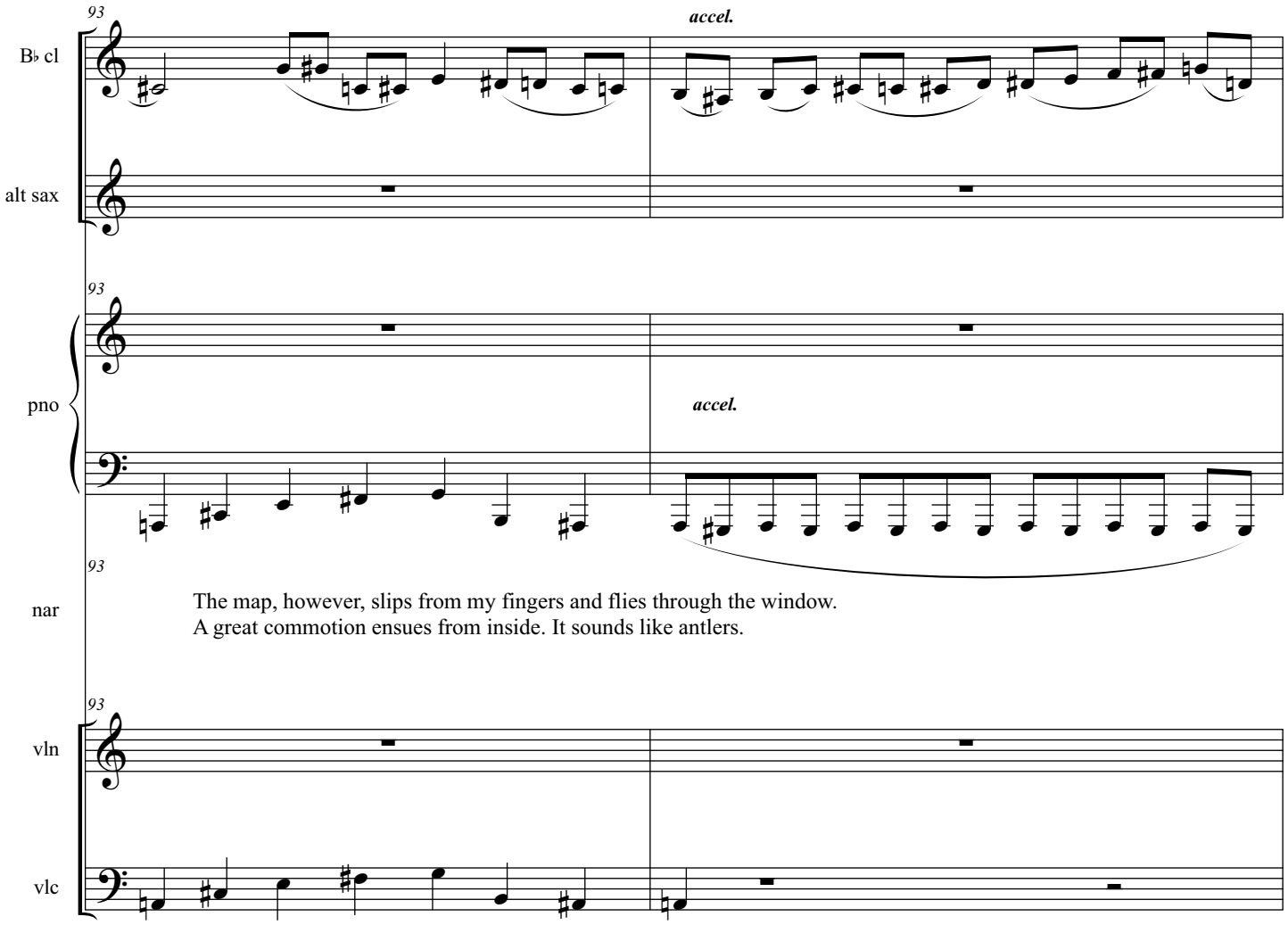

69
B♭ cl
alt sax
f
mf
pno
sim.
nar
and haul myself aboard. The captain hands me a cup of tea and a kilt, lectures me
on the importance of being earnest ... Hemingway (*not* my real name),
vln
vlc

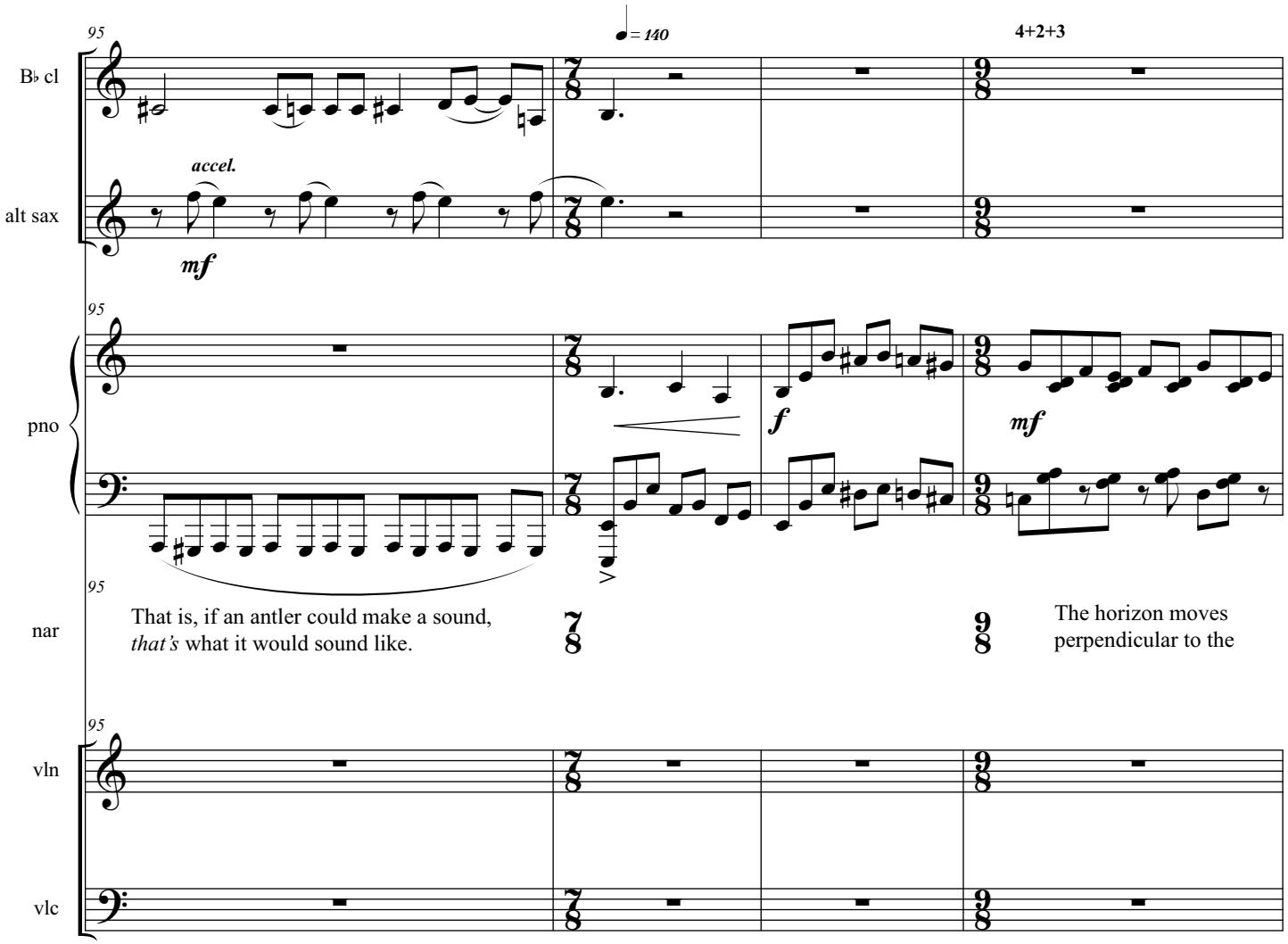

73
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
crawls into the mouth of a giant glowworm, and disappears, as does Nebraska.
I am obviously on the wrong balloon.
vln
vlc
sim.

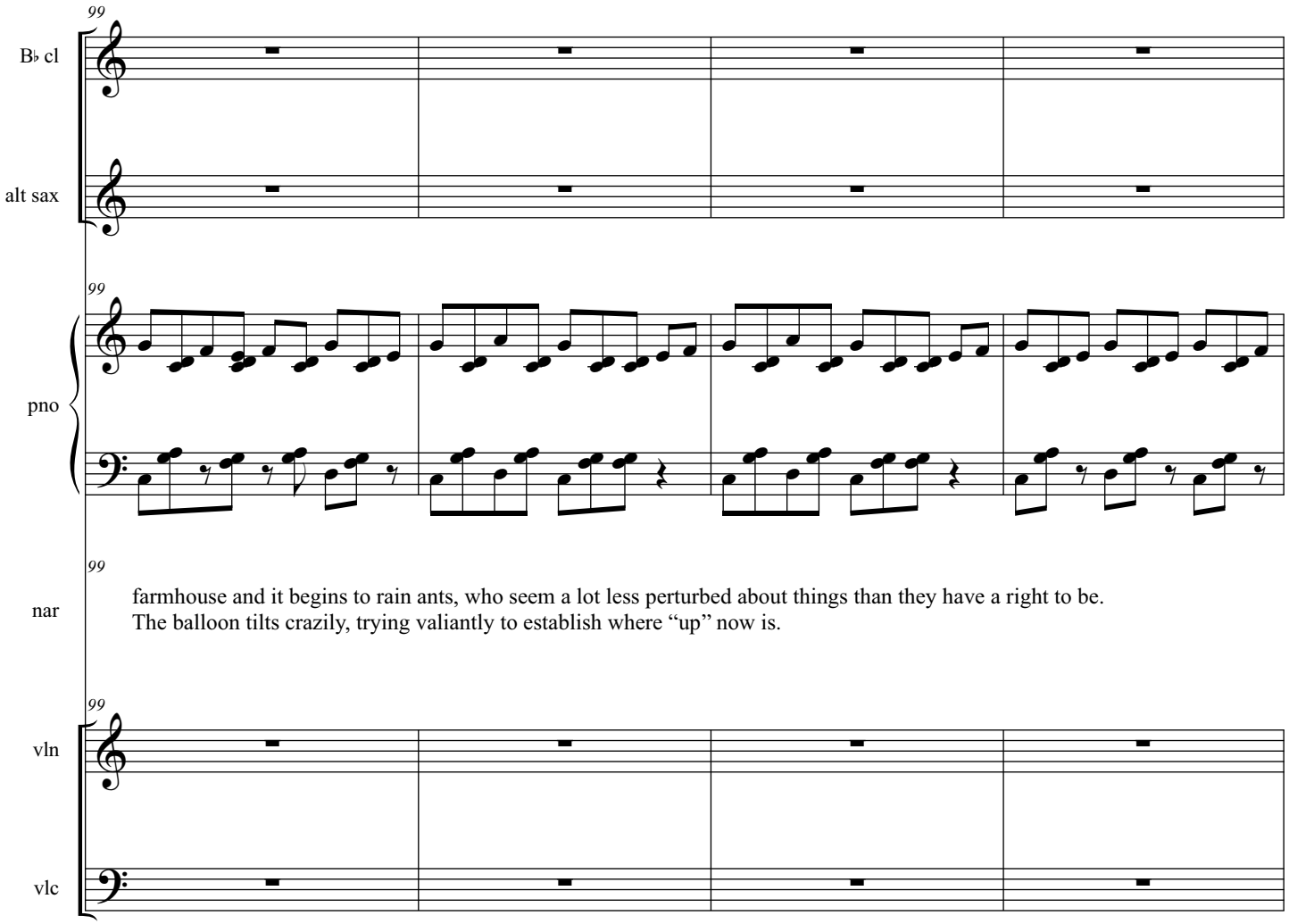

79
molto rit.
♩ = 70
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
molto rit.
freely
Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. ✻
sim.
nar
As the sun sinks below the horizon, the captain sings below decks, and the two do not seem mutually exclusive. The balloon begins to descend – slowly at first, then more rapidly as it crashes through a passing cold front.
vln
molto rit.
vlc

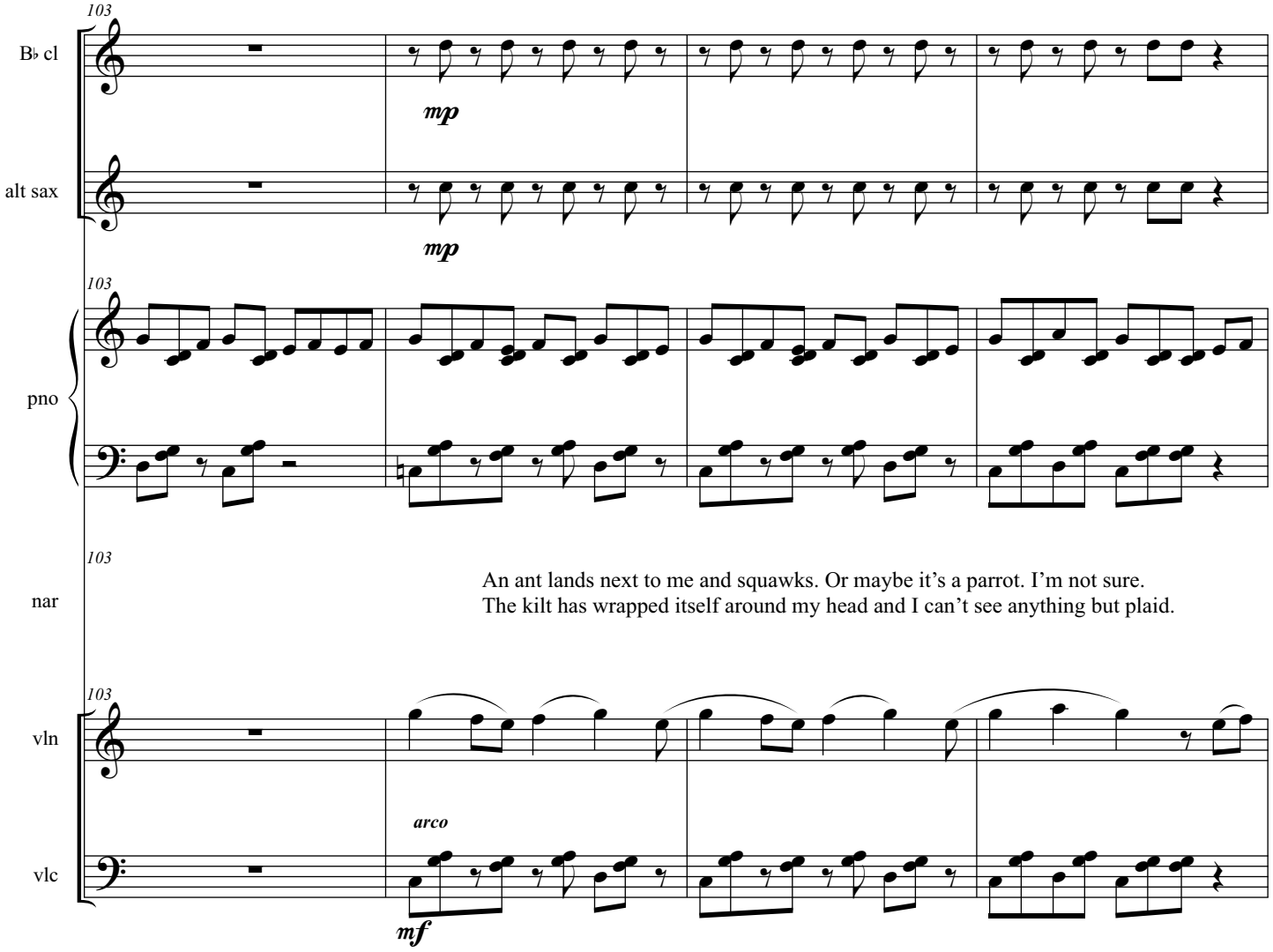

86
♩ = 88
B♭ cl
mf
alt sax
86
pno
rit.
p
Ped.
86
nar
The captain reappears and orders us
to abandon ship – me, the two parrots
and the referee.
The ground is still far away; the people look like ants.
Wait! They *are* ants! Big ones, fenced in a corral.
86
vln
pizz.
vlc
mp

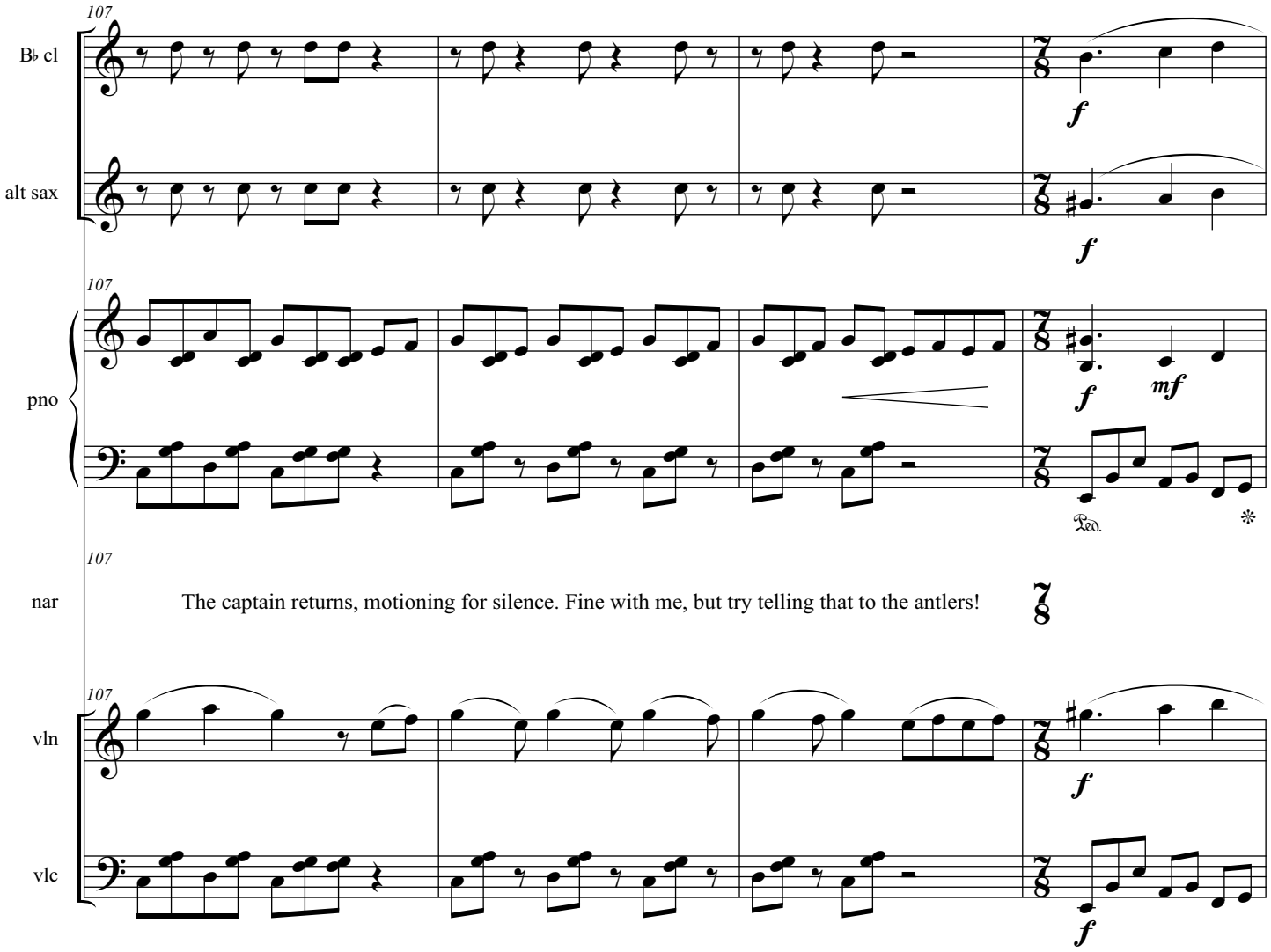

90
B♭ cl
alt sax
90
pno
90
nar
It's my uncle's aunt farm, nestled in a narrow valley with high, glass walls. The balloon lands next to a red plastic farmhouse. The doors are painted on, impeding entry.
90
vln
vlc

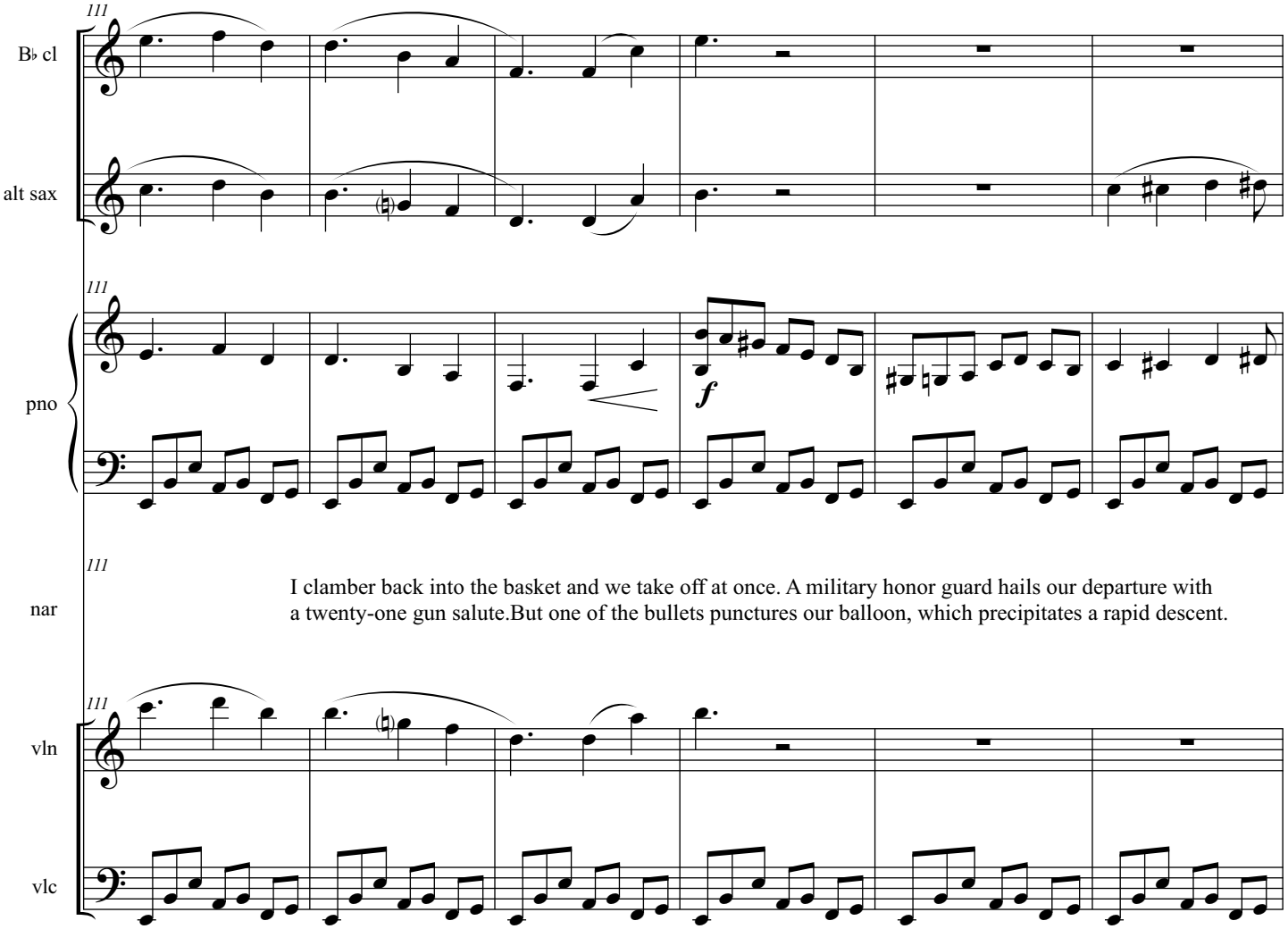

93
accel.
B♭ cl
alt sax
93
pno
accel.
93
nar
The map, however, slips from my fingers and flies through the window.
A great commotion ensues from inside. It sounds like antlers.
93
vln
vlc

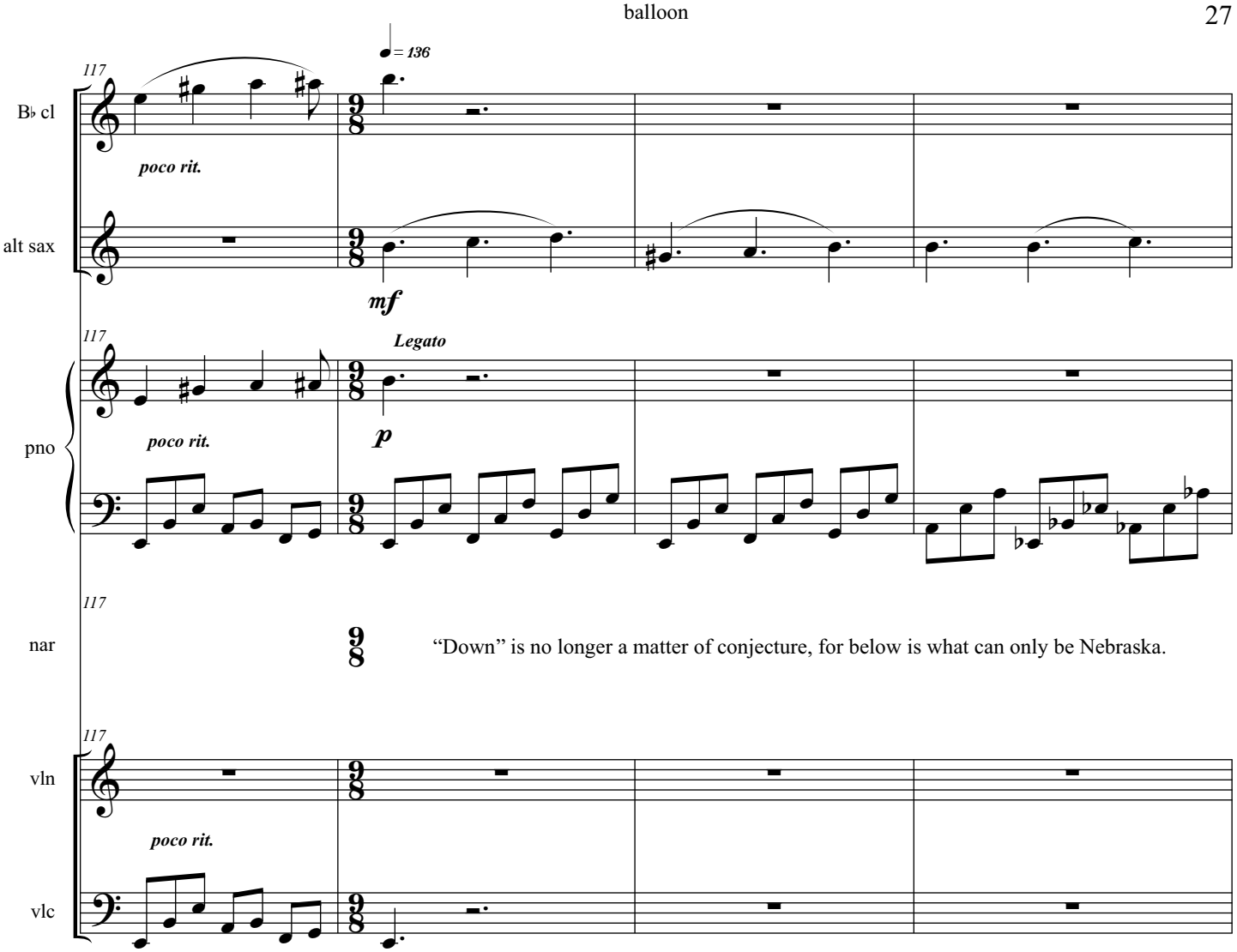

95
♩ = 140
4+2+3
B♭ cl
alt sax
accel.
mf
pno
f
mf
nar
That is, if an antler could make a sound,
*that's* what it would sound like.
The horizon moves
perpendicular to the
vln
vlc

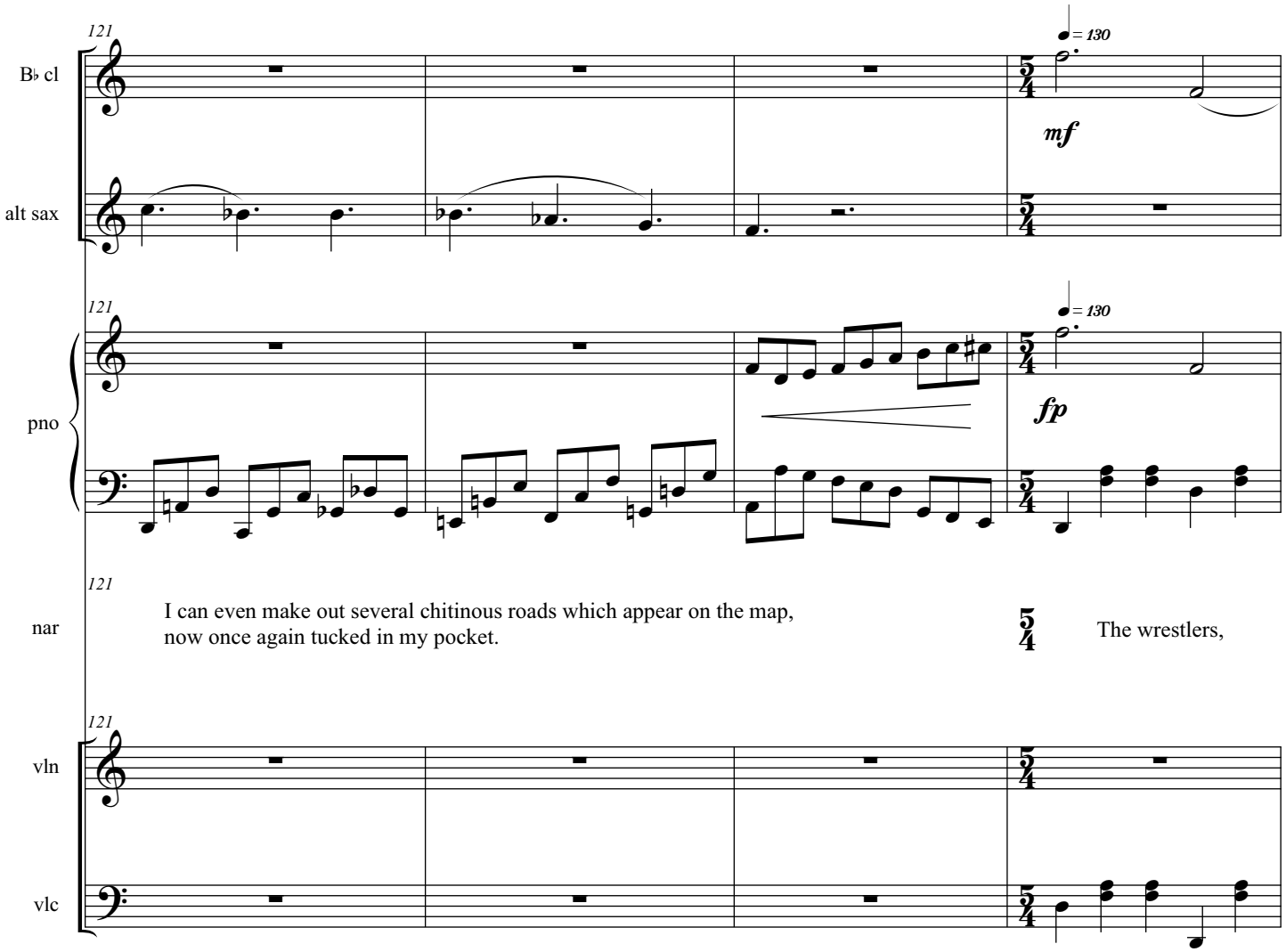

99
B♭ cl
alt sax
99
pno
99
nar
farmhouse and it begins to rain ants, who seem a lot less perturbed about things than they have a right to be.
The balloon tilts crazily, trying valiantly to establish where “up” now is.
99
vln
vlc

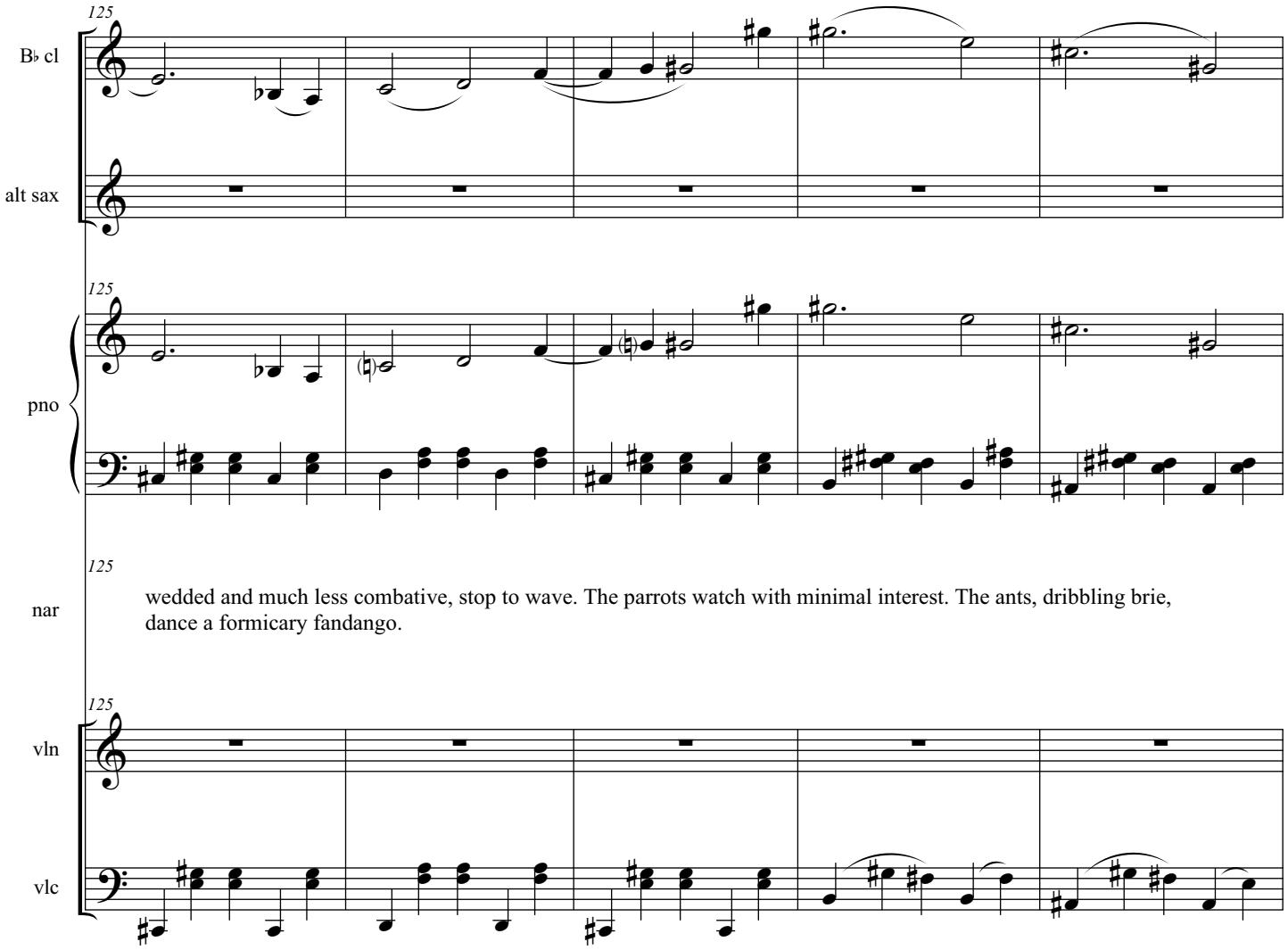

103
B♭ cl
mp
alt sax
mp
103
pno
103
nar
An ant lands next to me and squawks. Or maybe it's a parrot. I'm not sure.
The kilt has wrapped itself around my head and I can't see anything but plaid.
103
vln
arco
vlc
mf


107
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
vln
vlc
f
mf
Ped.
The captain returns, motioning for silence. Fine with me, but try telling that to the antlers!

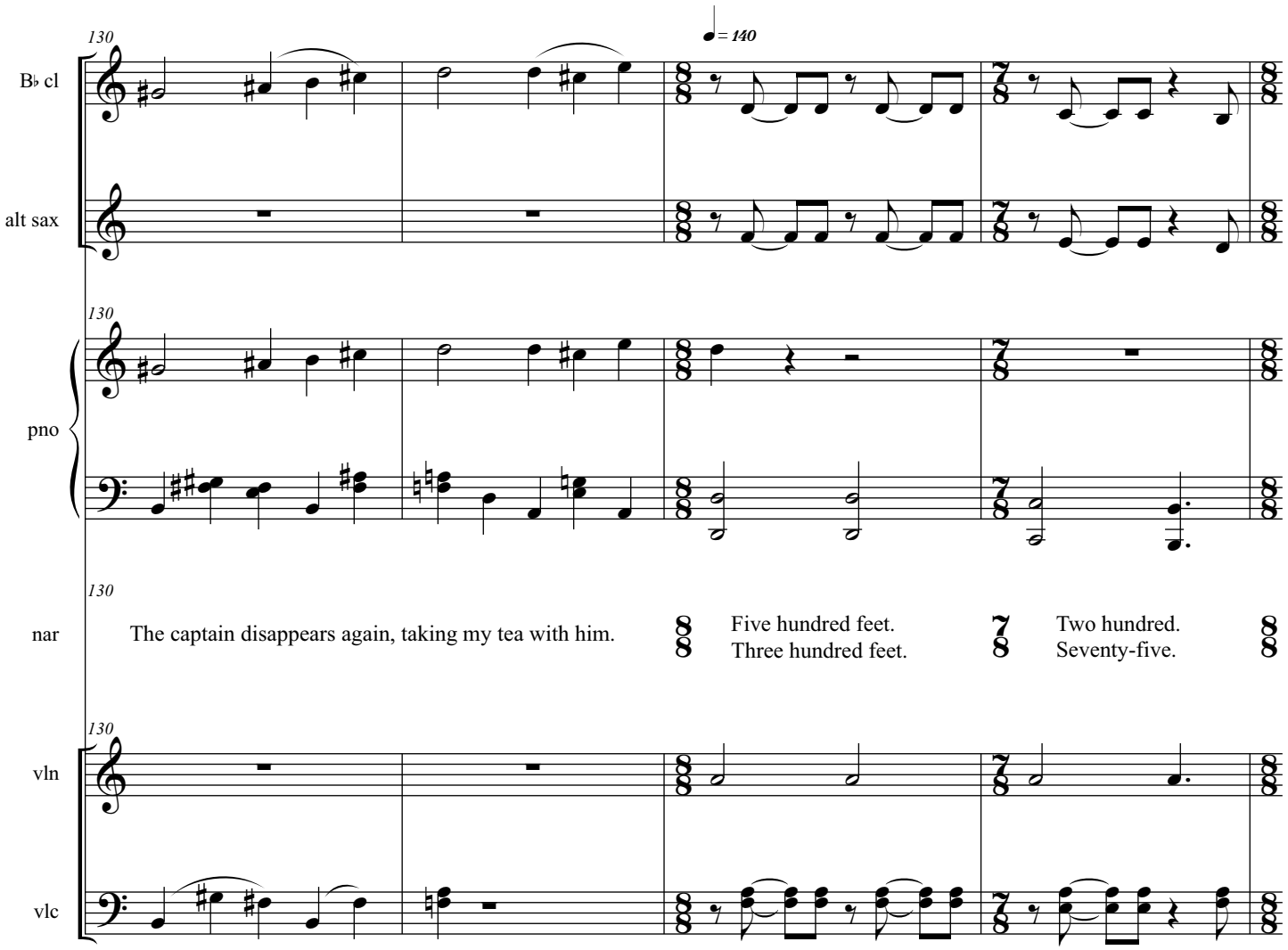

111
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
f
nar
I clamber back into the basket and we take off at once. A military honor guard hails our departure with a twenty-one gun salute.But one of the bullets punctures our balloon, which precipitates a rapid descent.
vln
vlc

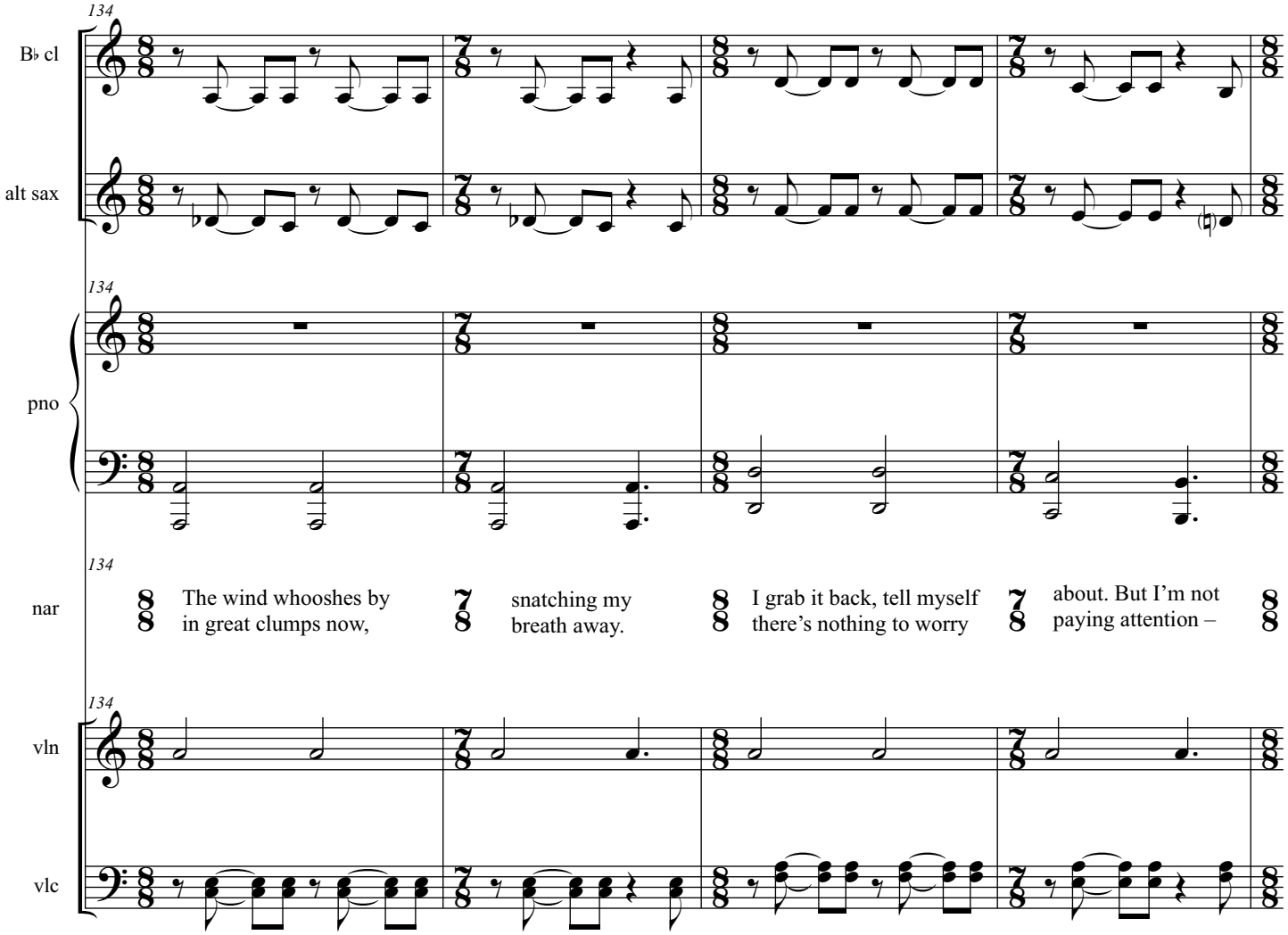

117
♩= 136
B♭ cl
poco rit.
alt sax
mf
Legato
pno
p
nar
"Down" is no longer a matter of conjecture, for below is what can only be Nebraska.
vln
vlc

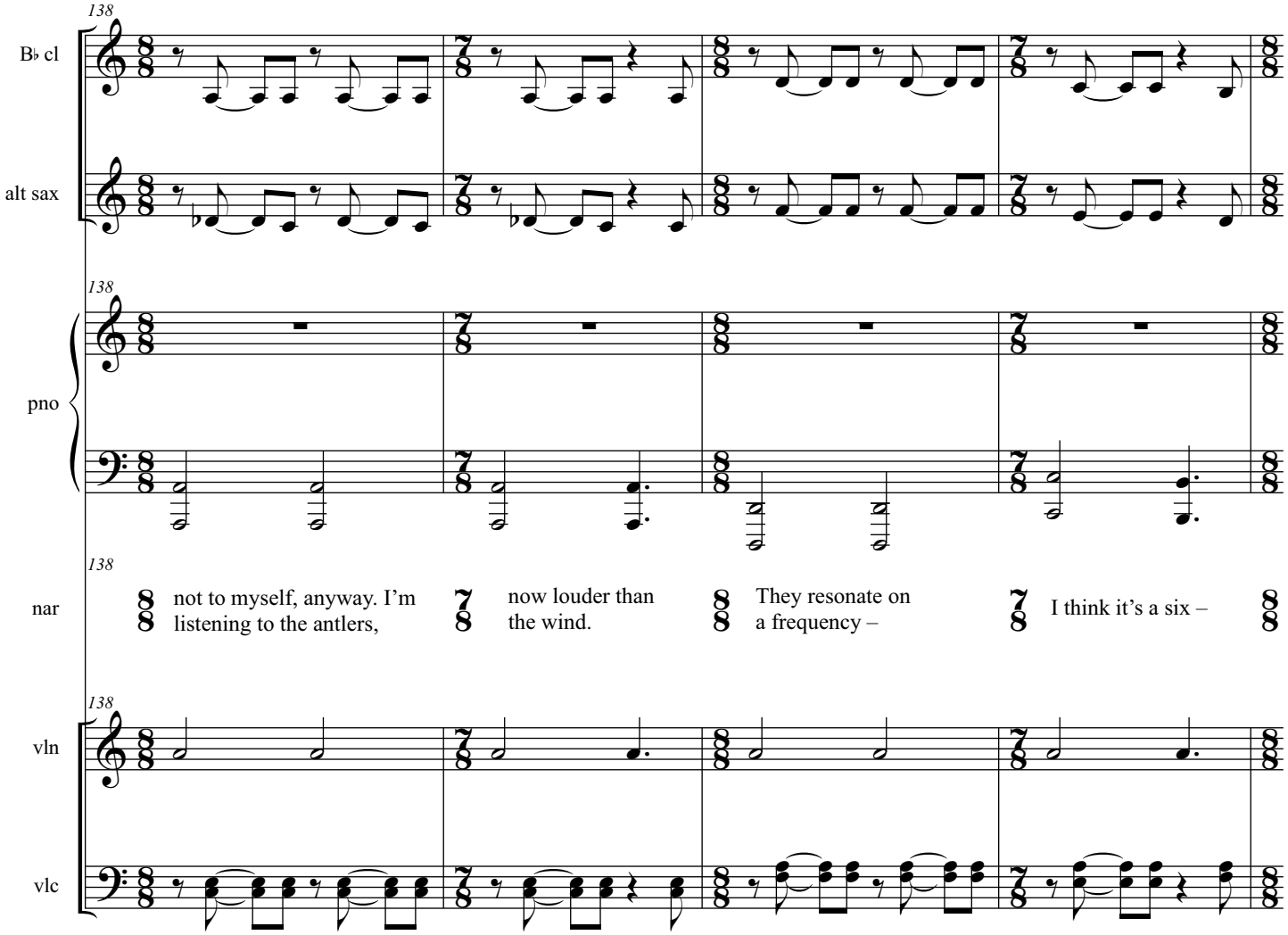

121
B♭ cl
alt sax
= 130
mf
pno
fp
nar
I can even make out several chitinous roads which appear on the map,
now once again tucked in my pocket.
The wrestlers,
vln
vlc

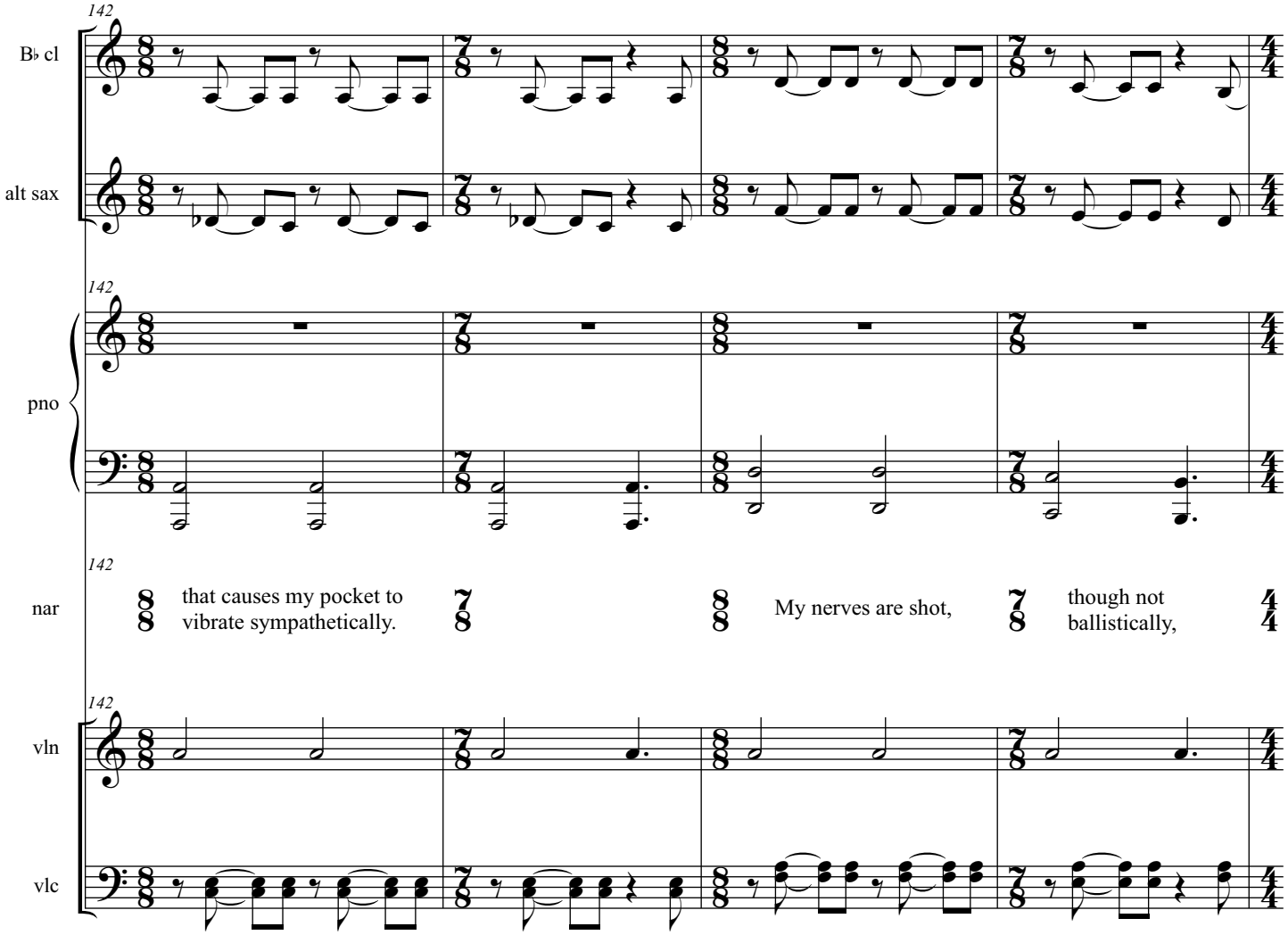

125
B♭ cl
alt sax
125
pno
125
nar
wedded and much less combative, stop to wave. The parrots watch with minimal interest. The ants, dribbling brie, dance a formicary fandango.
125
vln
vlc

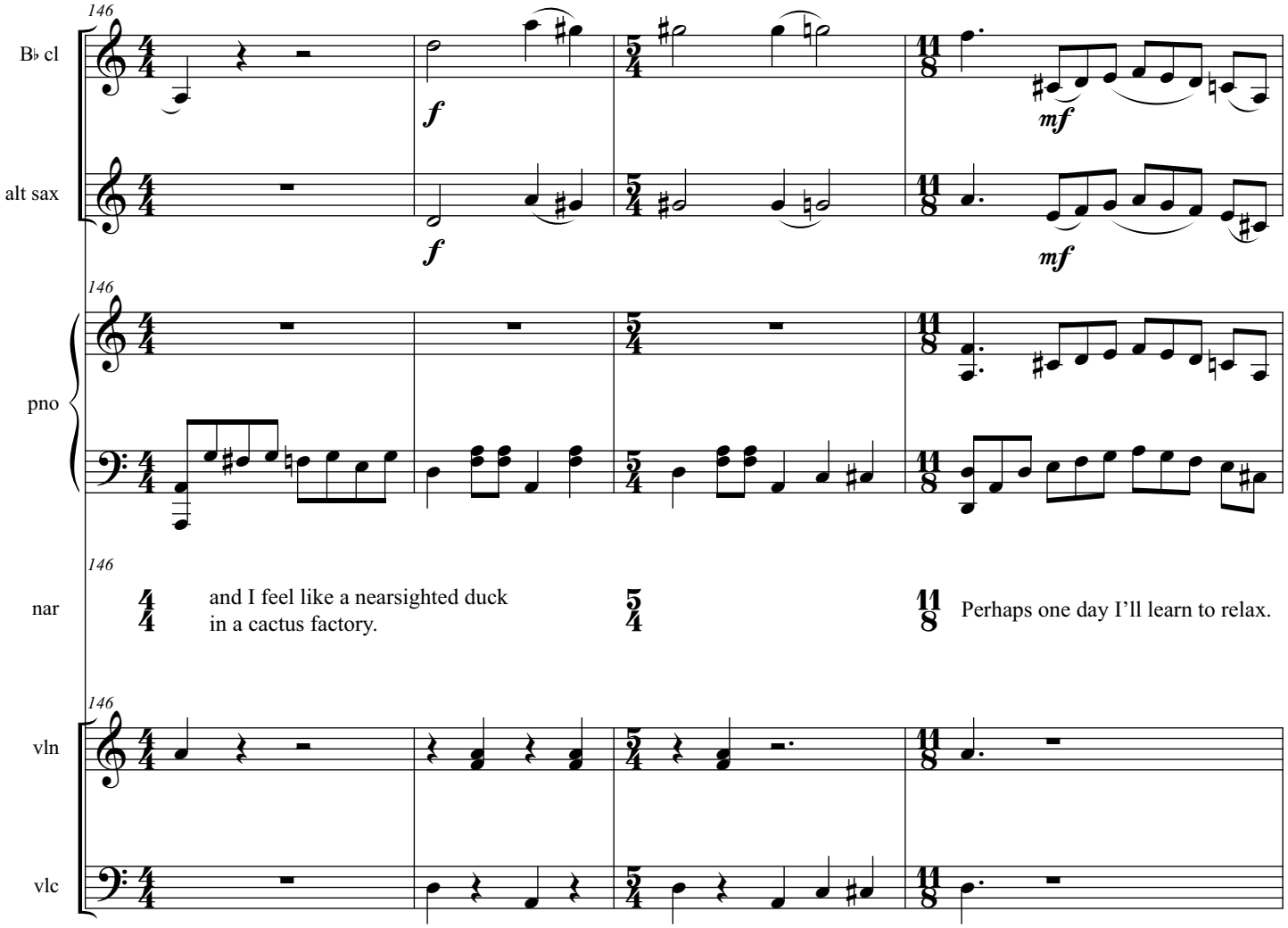
balloon

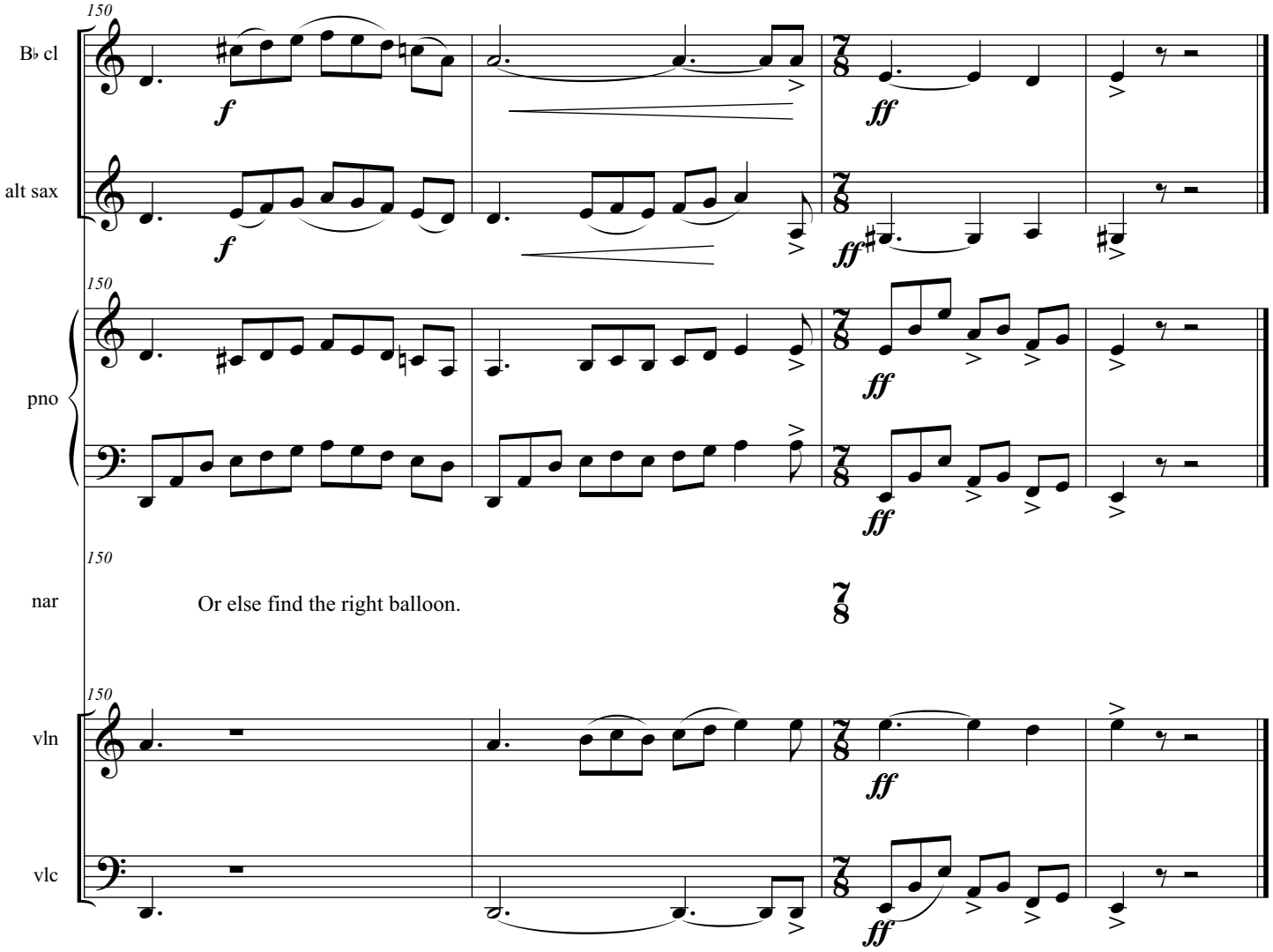

130
♩ = 140
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
The captain disappears again, taking my tea with him.
Five hundred feet.
Three hundred feet.
Two hundred.
Seventy-five.
vln
vlc


134
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
The wind whooshes by
in great clumps now,
snatching my
breath away.
I grab it back, tell myself
there's nothing to worry
about. But I'm not
paying attention –
vln
vlc


138
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
not to myself, anyway. I'm listening to the antlers,
now louder than the wind.
They resonate on a frequency –
I think it's a six –
vln
vlc


142
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
that causes my pocket to
vibrate sympathetically.
My nerves are shot,
though not
ballistically,
vln
vlc


146
B♭ cl
alt sax
f
mf
pno
nar
and I feel like a nearsighted duck
in a cactus factory.
Perhaps one day I'll learn to relax.
vln
vlc


150
B♭ cl
alt sax
pno
nar
Or else find the right balloon.
vln
vlc
f
ff