Oisín Suite

for

Solo Harp

by

Alyssa Reit

7 Stars Publishing

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Oísín Suíte

for Una , with love and gratitude

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To the Performer

The markings in this piece indicate as closely as possible how I hear it.
Please take these markings as suggestions only.
What makes this music come to life may be different for each person.

Harmonics written where played.

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Thanks

Acknowledgements

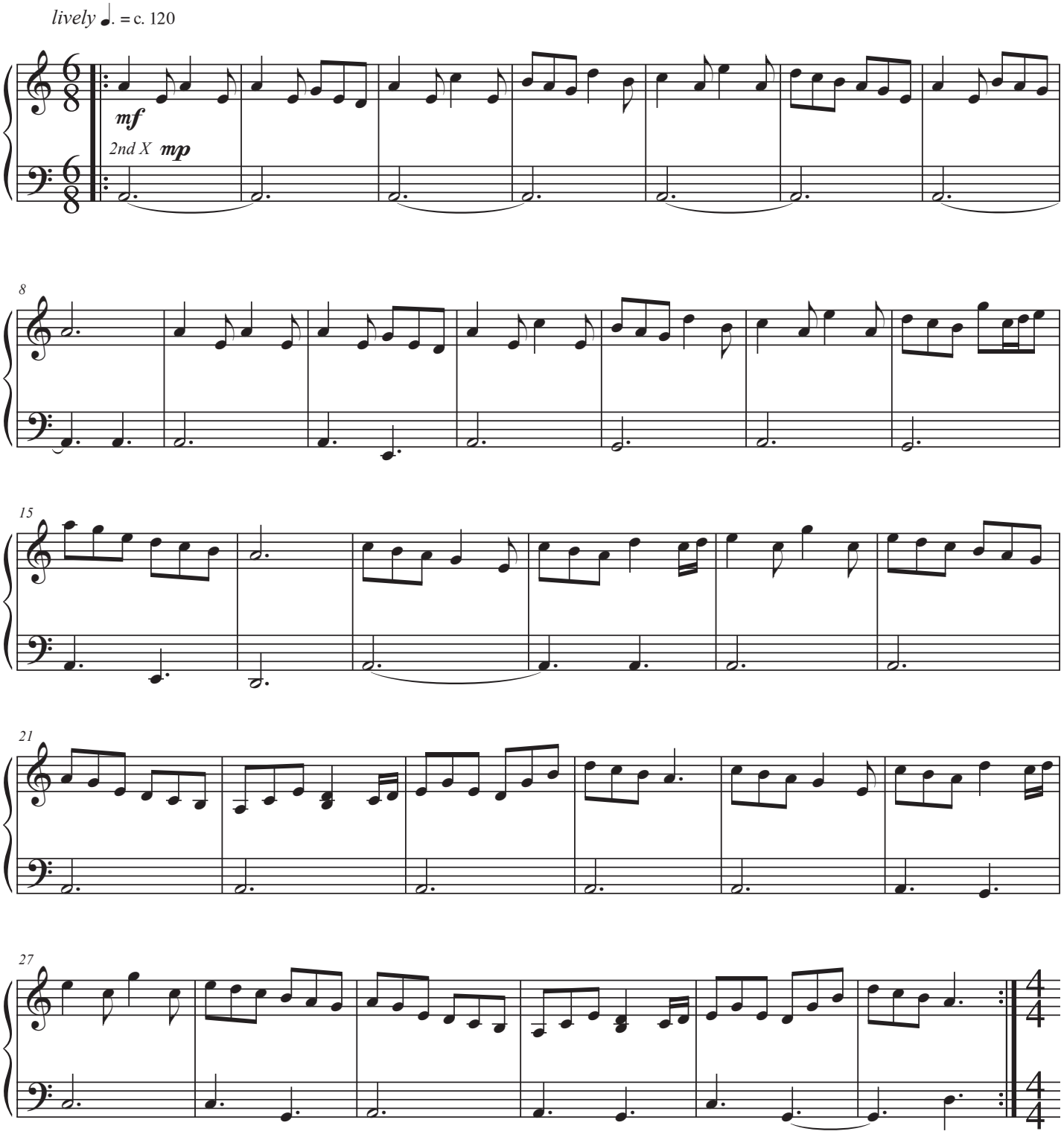
I wish to thank first and foremost my good friend Una, who introduced me to the story of Oisin. I am also grateful to all those who passed the tale on through the generations, keeping it alive.

To Pete--my deepest gratitude and thanks for all the love, help, and support so great that there isn't enough space to write it all down.

Oisín Suíte

1.The Fianna

Alyssa Reit



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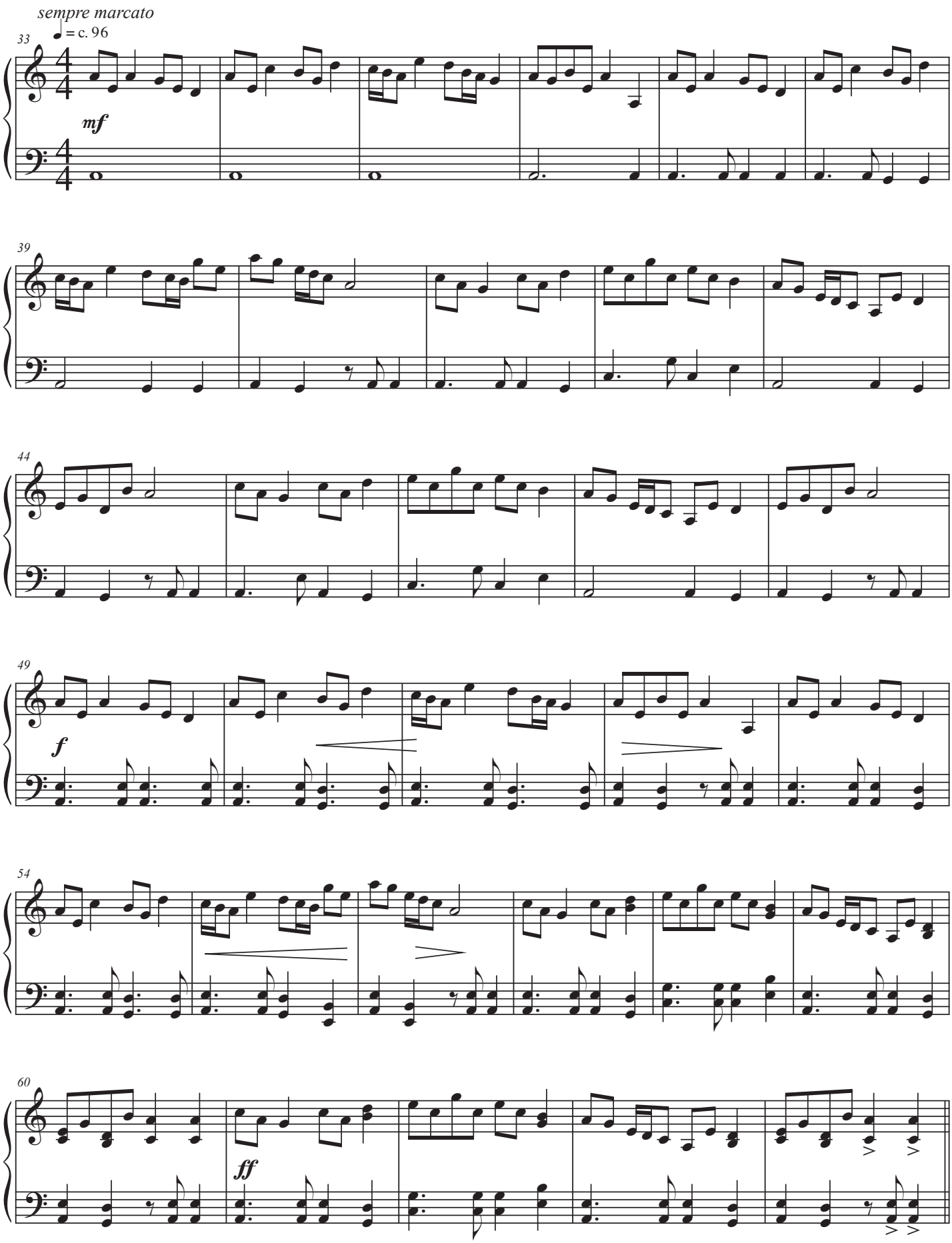
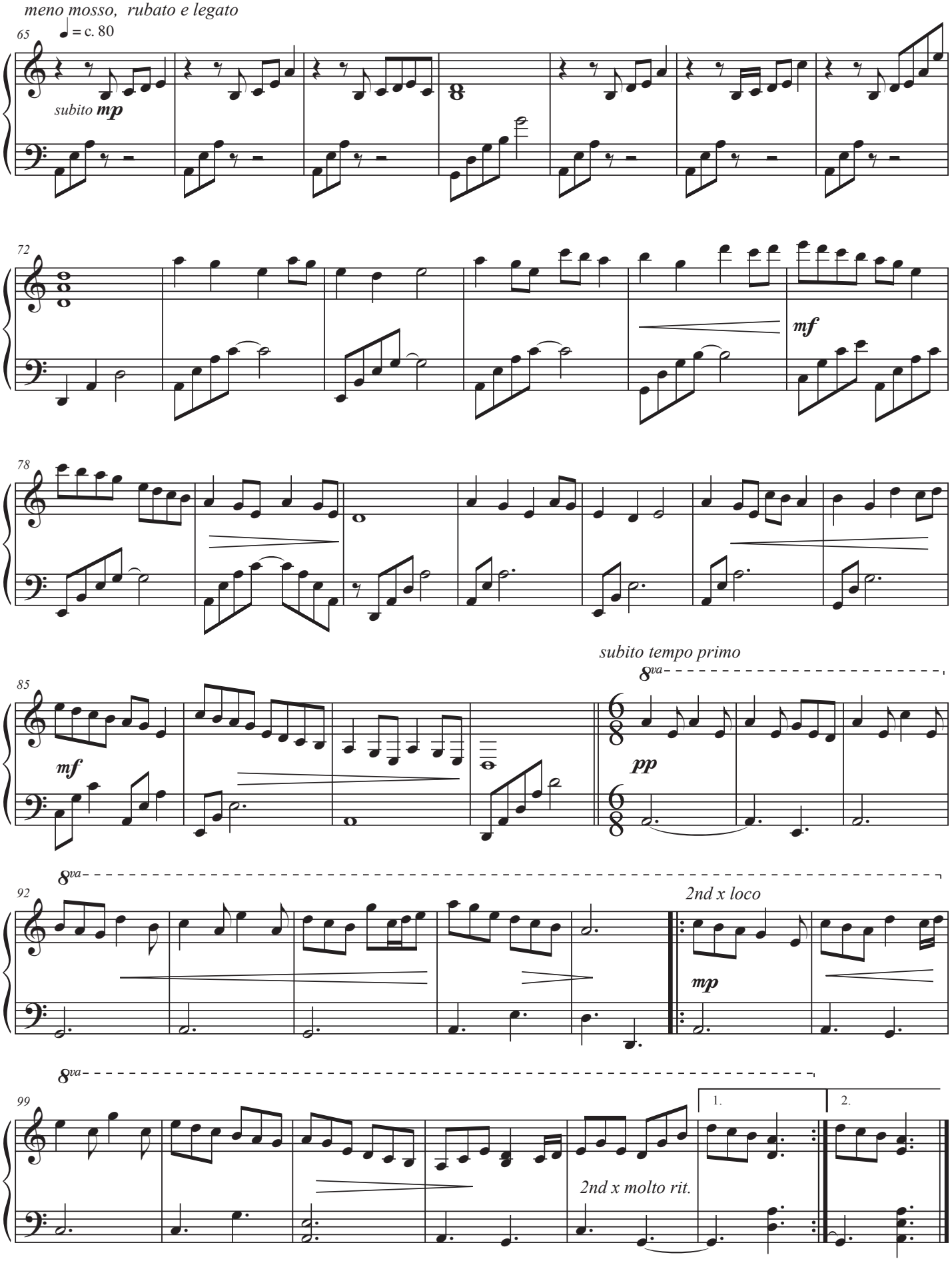
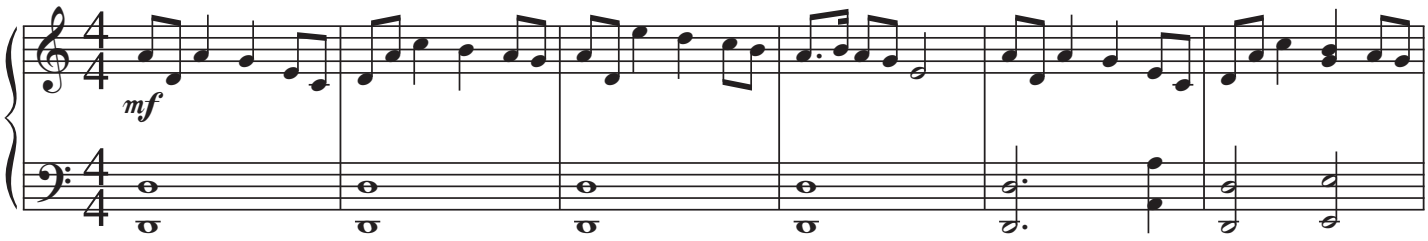

sempre marcato
♩ = c. 96
33
mf
39
44
49
f
54
60
ff


meno mosso, rubato e legato
♩ = c. 80
65
subito mp
72
mf
78
85
mf
subito tempo primo
8va
pp
92
8va
2nd x loco
mp
99
8va
1.
2.
2nd x molto rit.

2. The Meeting

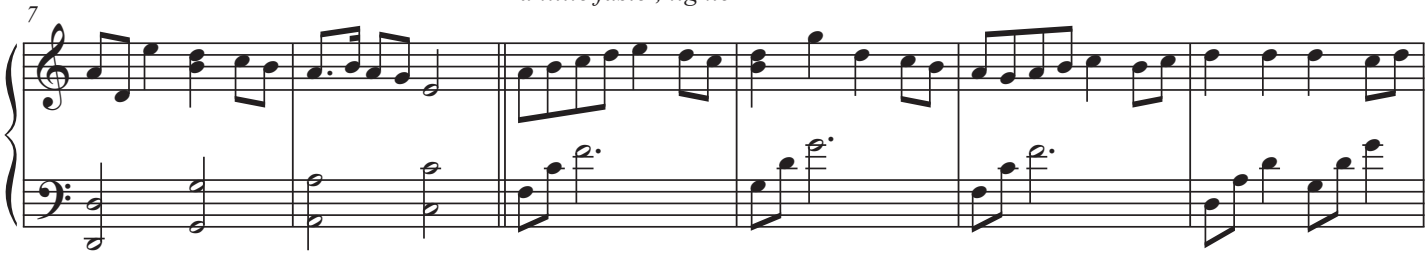
The Fianna after battle

somber ♩ = c. 72



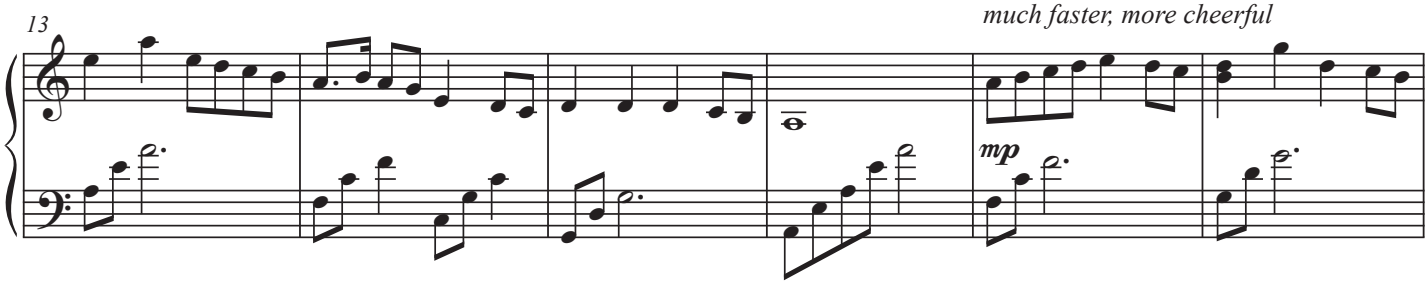
Into the woods to lift their spirits
a little faster, lighter

7

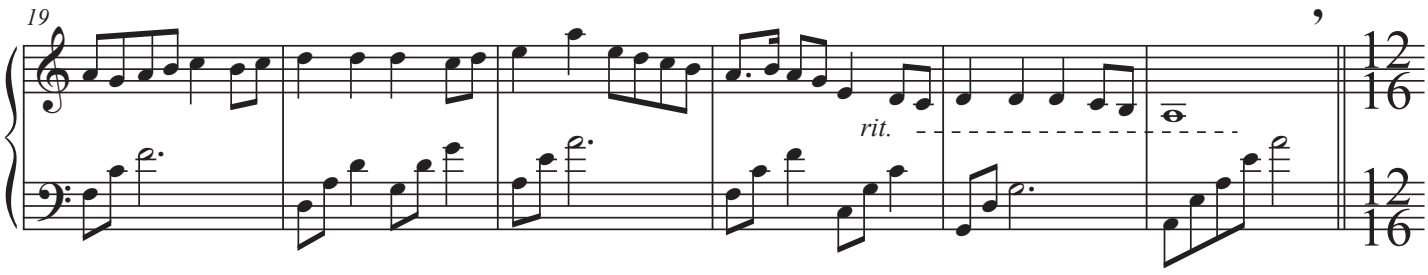


13

much faster, more cheerful



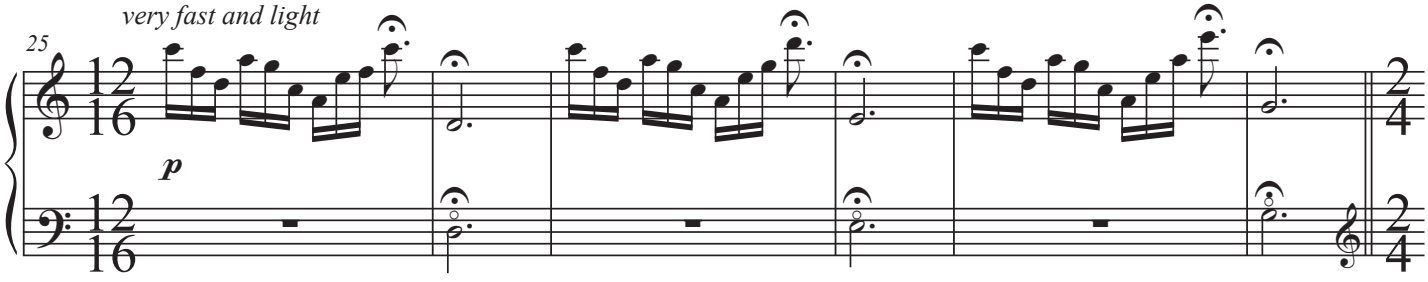
19



They see the Maiden Niamh

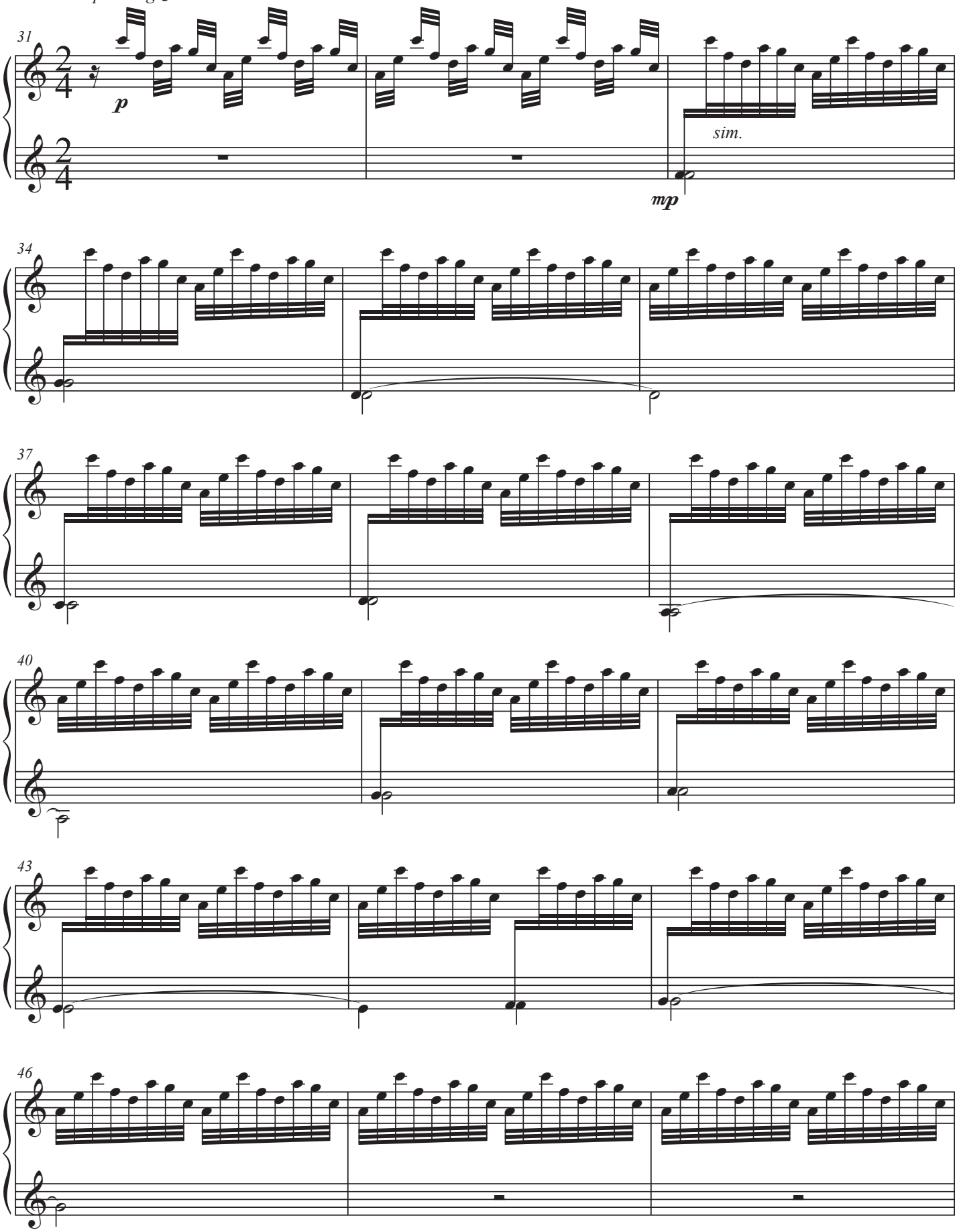
very fast and light

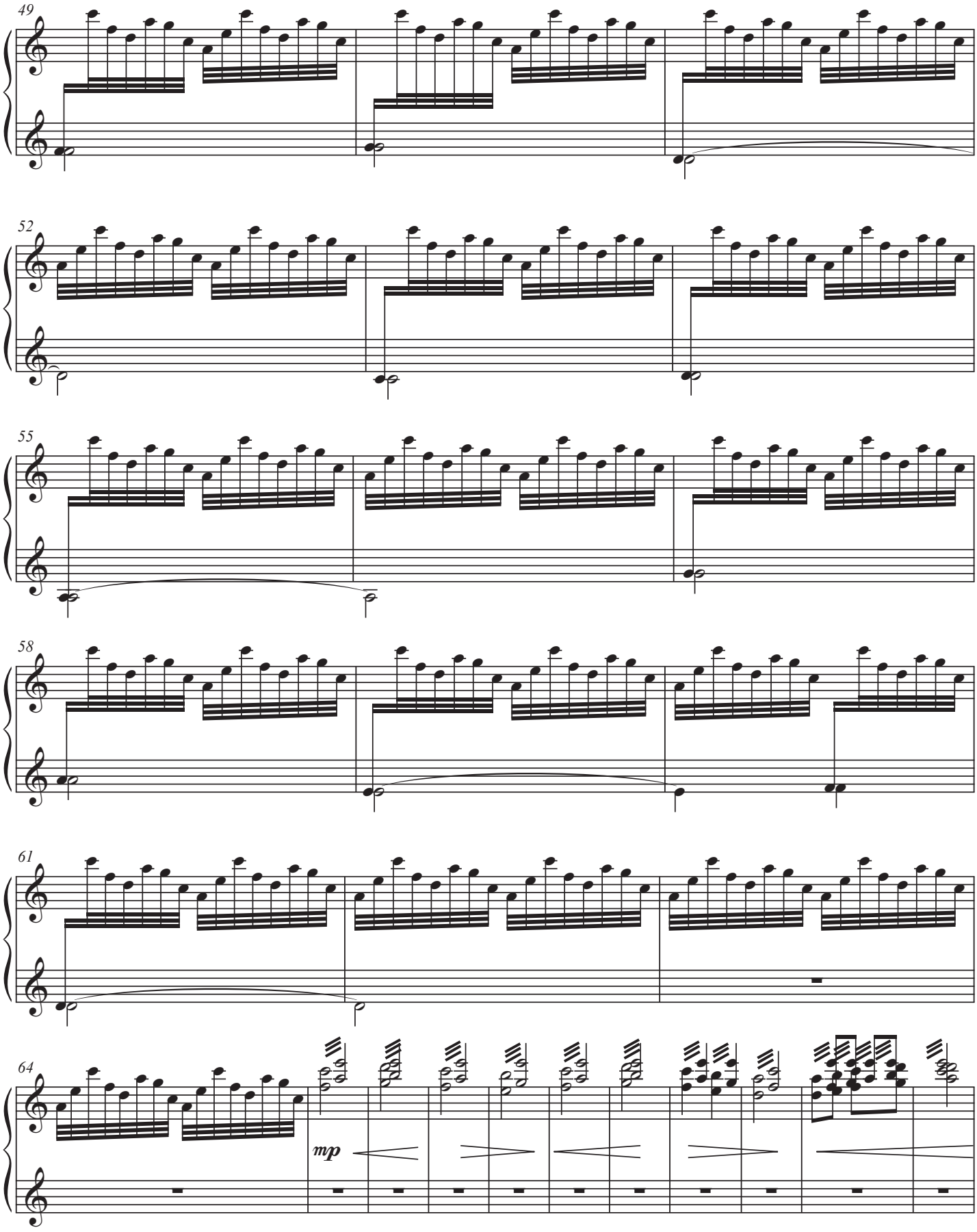
25

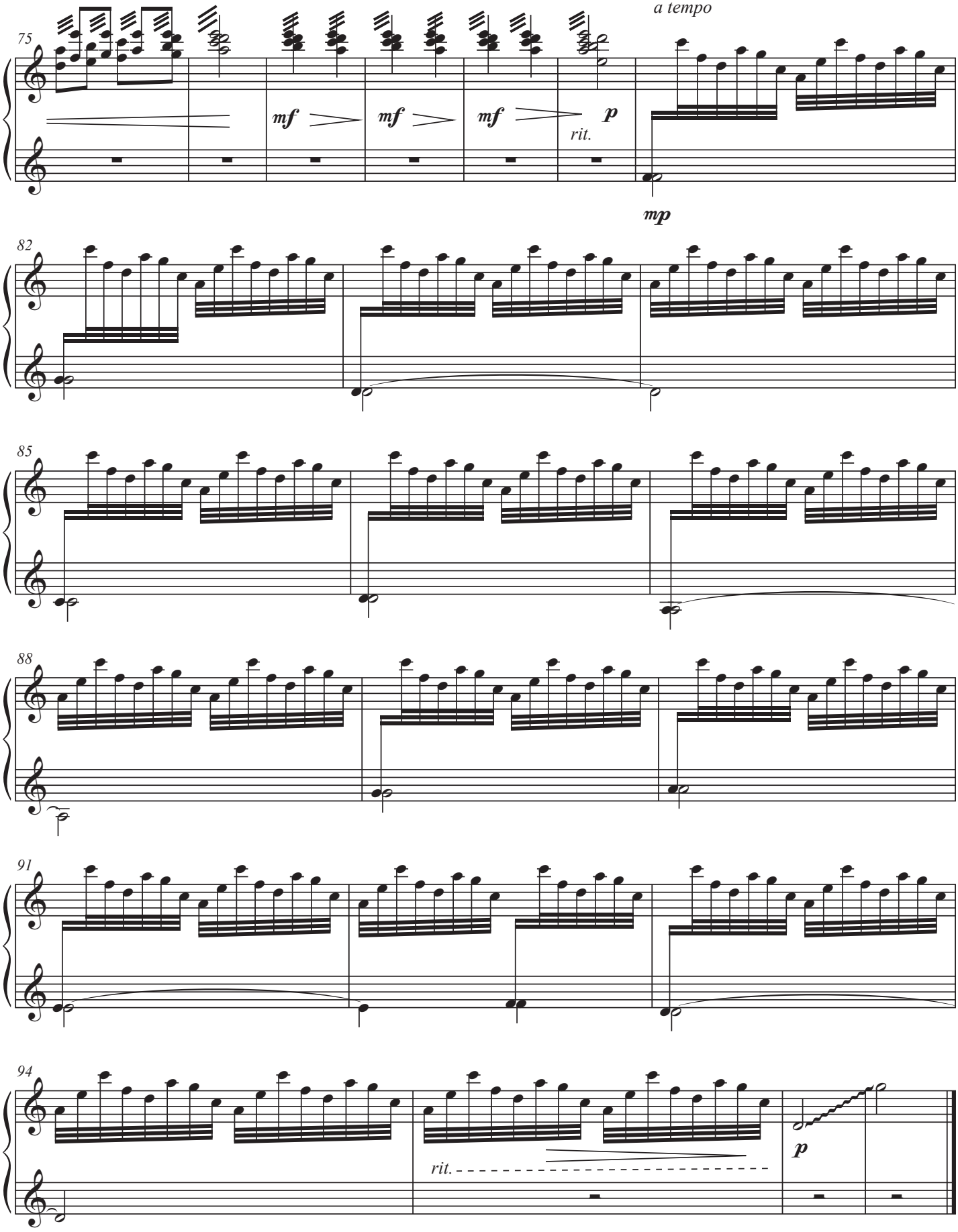


She tells them of the magical land

sparkling ♩ = c. 108

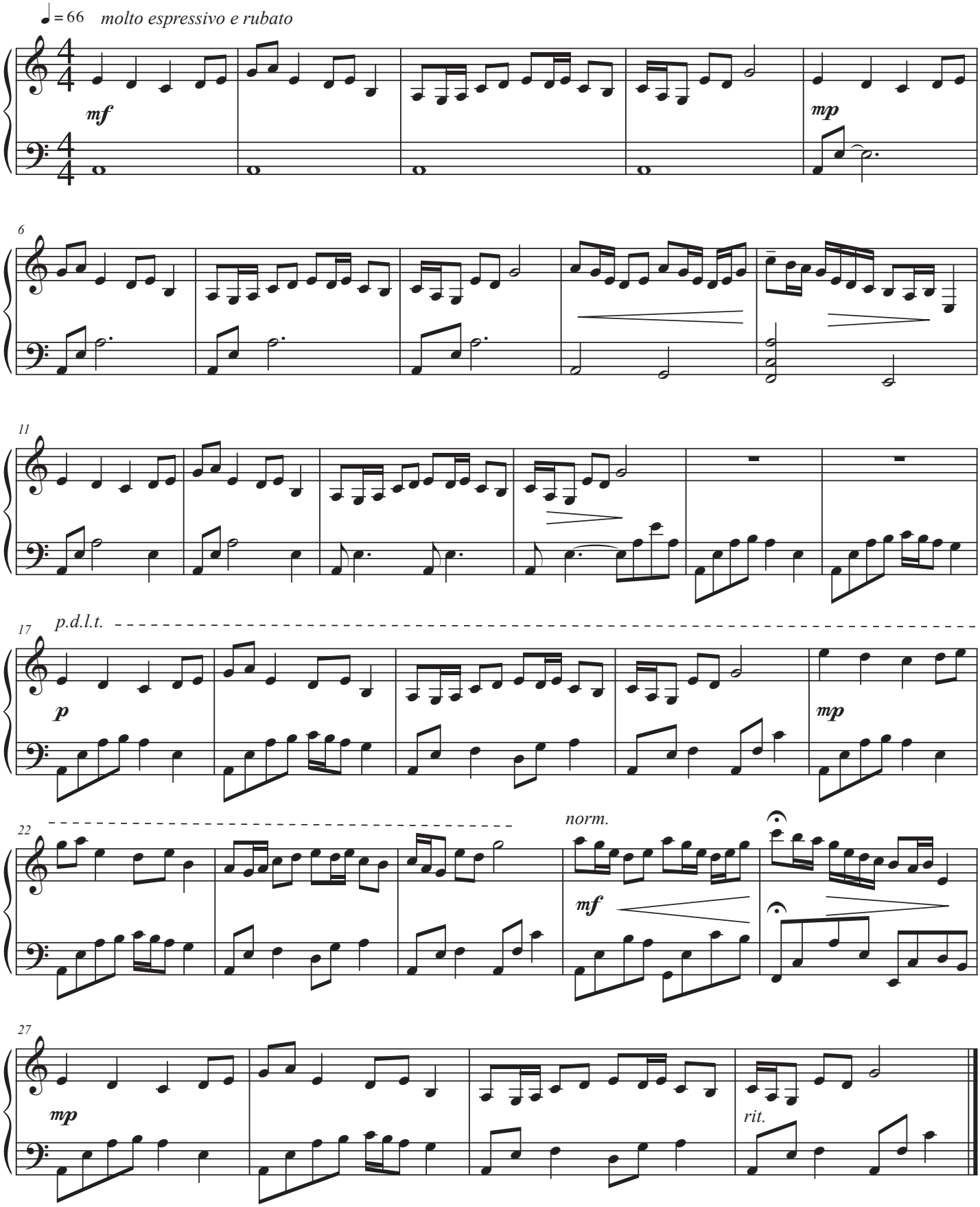



49
52
55
58
61
64
mp


a tempo
75
mf
mf
mf
p
rit.
mp
82
85
88
91
94
rit.
p

3. Oisin's Farewell

Oisin leaves with Niamh; his father sorrows to see him go



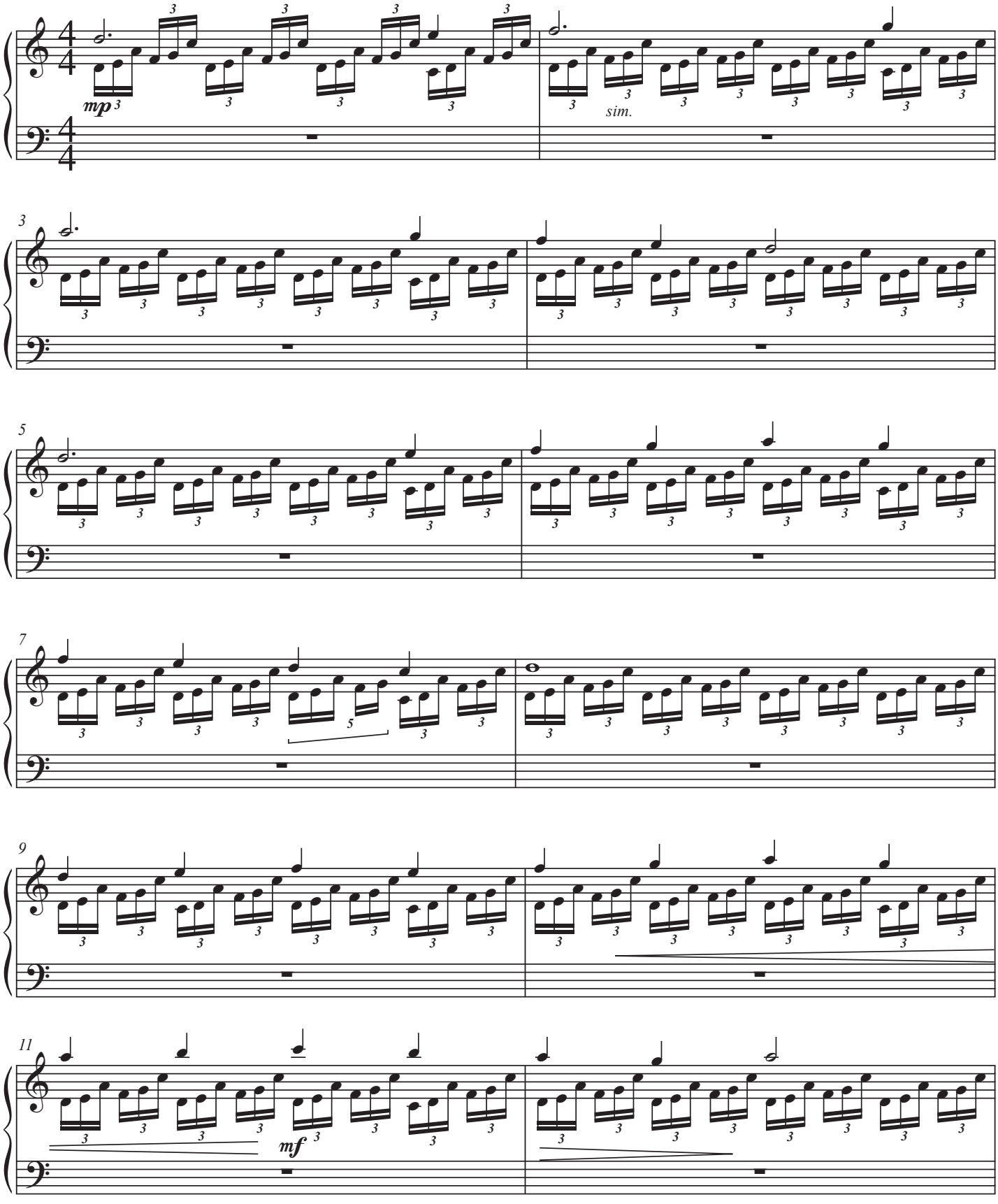
About the Story of Oisin in Tir na n-'Og

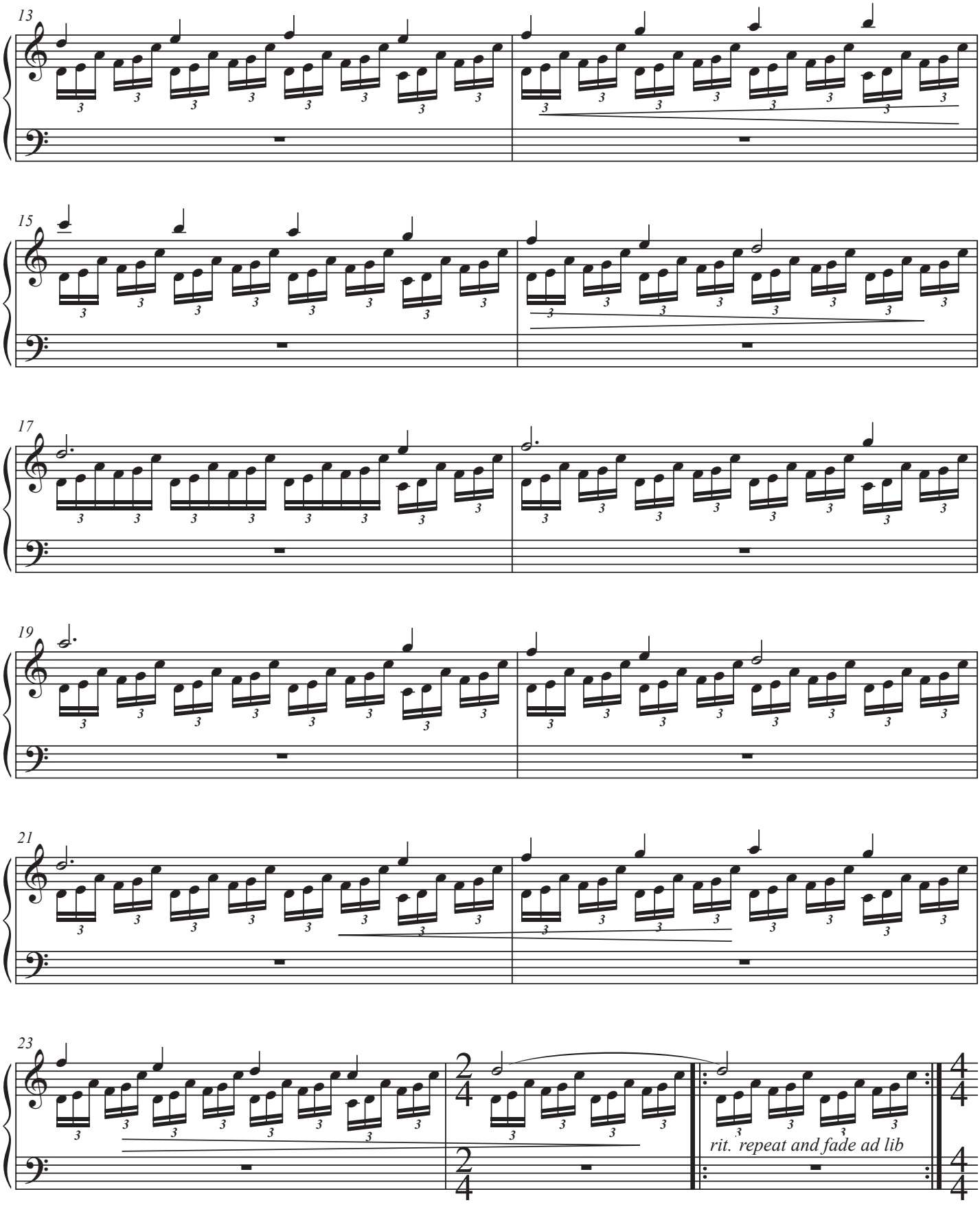
This music was written as a setting for the story Oisin in Tir na n-'Og, which comes from what is known as the Fenian cycle of the myths and legends of ancient Ireland. In this tale we hear of the great harper Oisin, son of Finn Mac Cumhaill, member of the Fianna-- a band of warriors serving the High King. After a terrible battle in which his own son was killed, Oisin meets the princess Niamh. She comes from the land called Tir na n-'Og--the "land of the ever young," a place where no one grows old or dies, and all is bliss. With the promise of her love, he leaves his friends and family to follow her to her kingdom. Although he is at first happy with his new life and beautiful wife, he grows increasingly discontent, and even stops playing his harp. Thinking that perhaps the solution is to take on a heroic task, and so to fulfill his warrior's desire for service, he challenges the giant Fovor, who has been keeping captive the Princess of the Land of Life. In the heat of battle, the memory of his father and friends gives him the force to prevail against his relentless foe. Exhilarated with his conquest, he begs Niamh to let him return to his native home once more, to tell everyone about the joys of Tir na n-'Og, and of his fight with the giant. Niamh tries to dissuade him, without success. Sorrowing, she loans him her magical steed, which knows the way to back, warning him to never dismount. When he arrives, all looks strange, and he is unable to find anyone familiar. In helping some peasants as they struggle to move a boulder, his saddle breaks and he is thrown from the horse. In that instant, the horse vanishes, and he turns into a withered old man. He discovers that at least three hundred years have passed in what felt like a short time in Tir na n-'Og. The peasants, frightened by the magic they have witnessed, bring Oisin to Saint Patrick to see what to do with him. St. Patrick not only welcomes the aged harper, but encourages Oisin to tell him all about his life, and to share his stories. Seeing the value in the tales, the good saint has his scribes write everything down, to preserve and honor the tradition of the Fianna. So even though suffering the personal tragedy of his loss, Oisin becomes a bridge connecting the old with the new, so that the memory of the ancient heros, and the great deeds that they did, will never be forgotten.

4. The Land of the Ever Young

They arrive at Tir na n-'Og

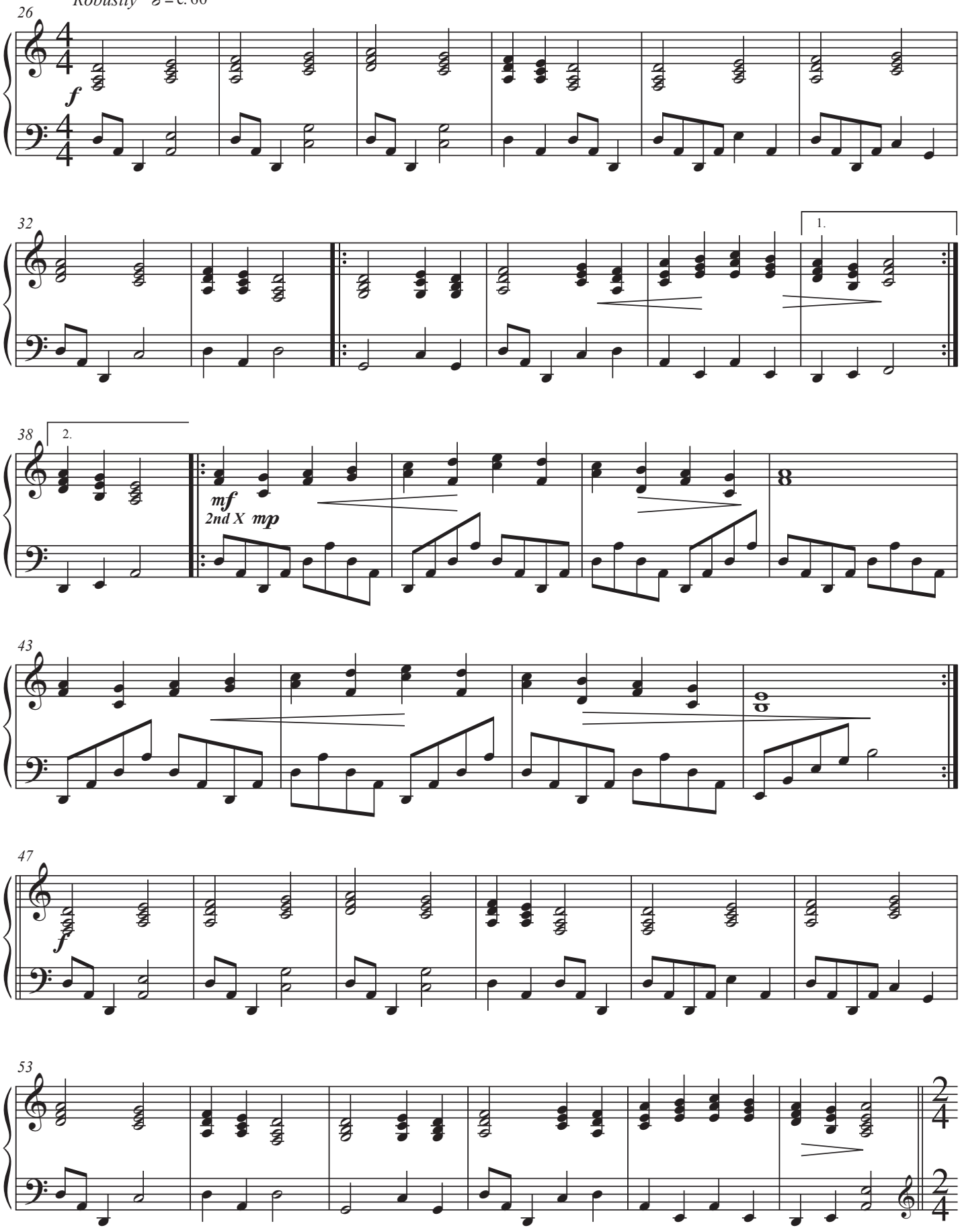
magical ♩ = c. 108



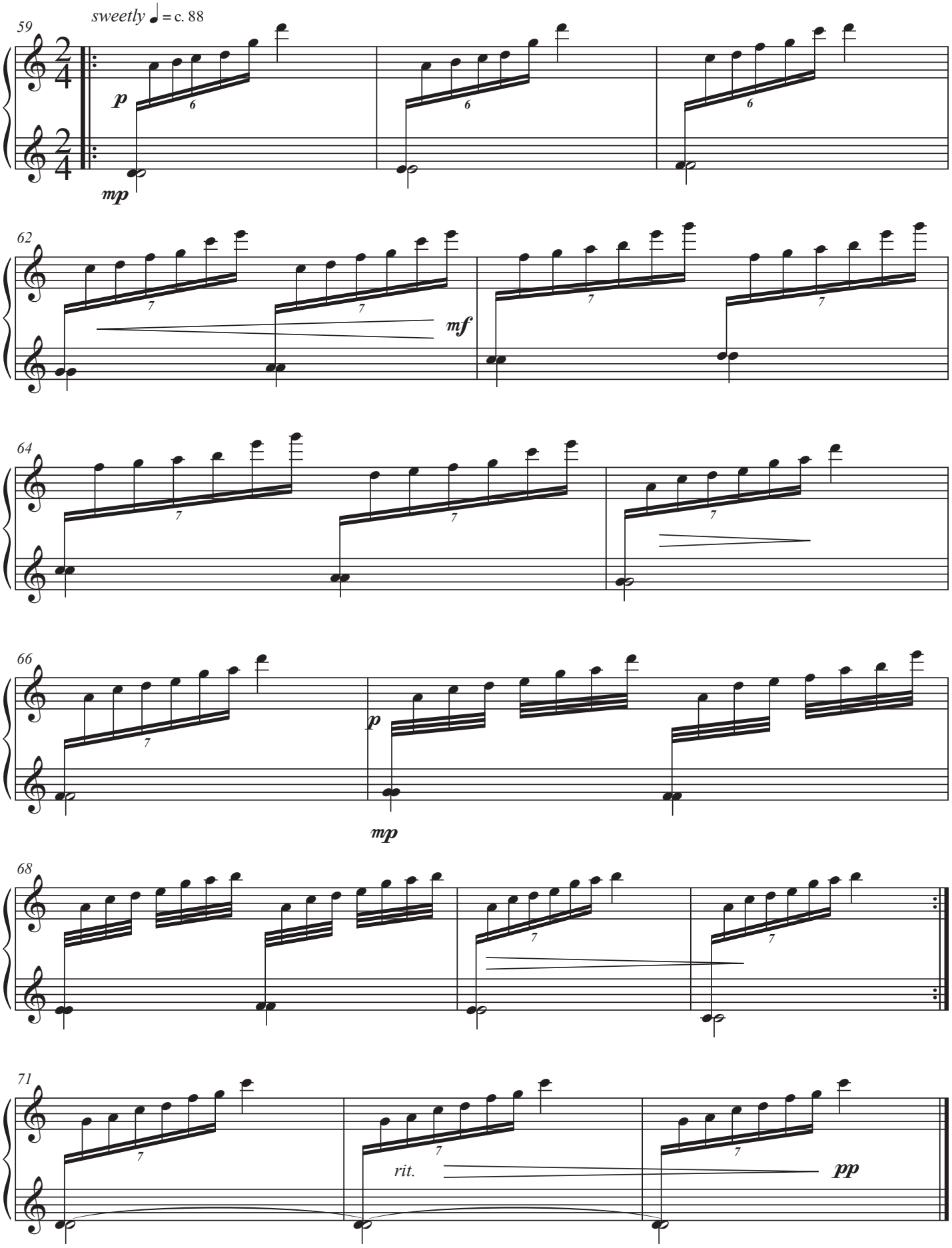

13
15
17
19
21
23
rit. repeat and fade ad lib

The King welcomes Oisin

Robustly ♩ = c. 60



The beauty of Tir na n-'Og



5. Fovor

Oisin challenges the giant Fovor

boldly ♩ = c. 72

f

5

9

The battle begins

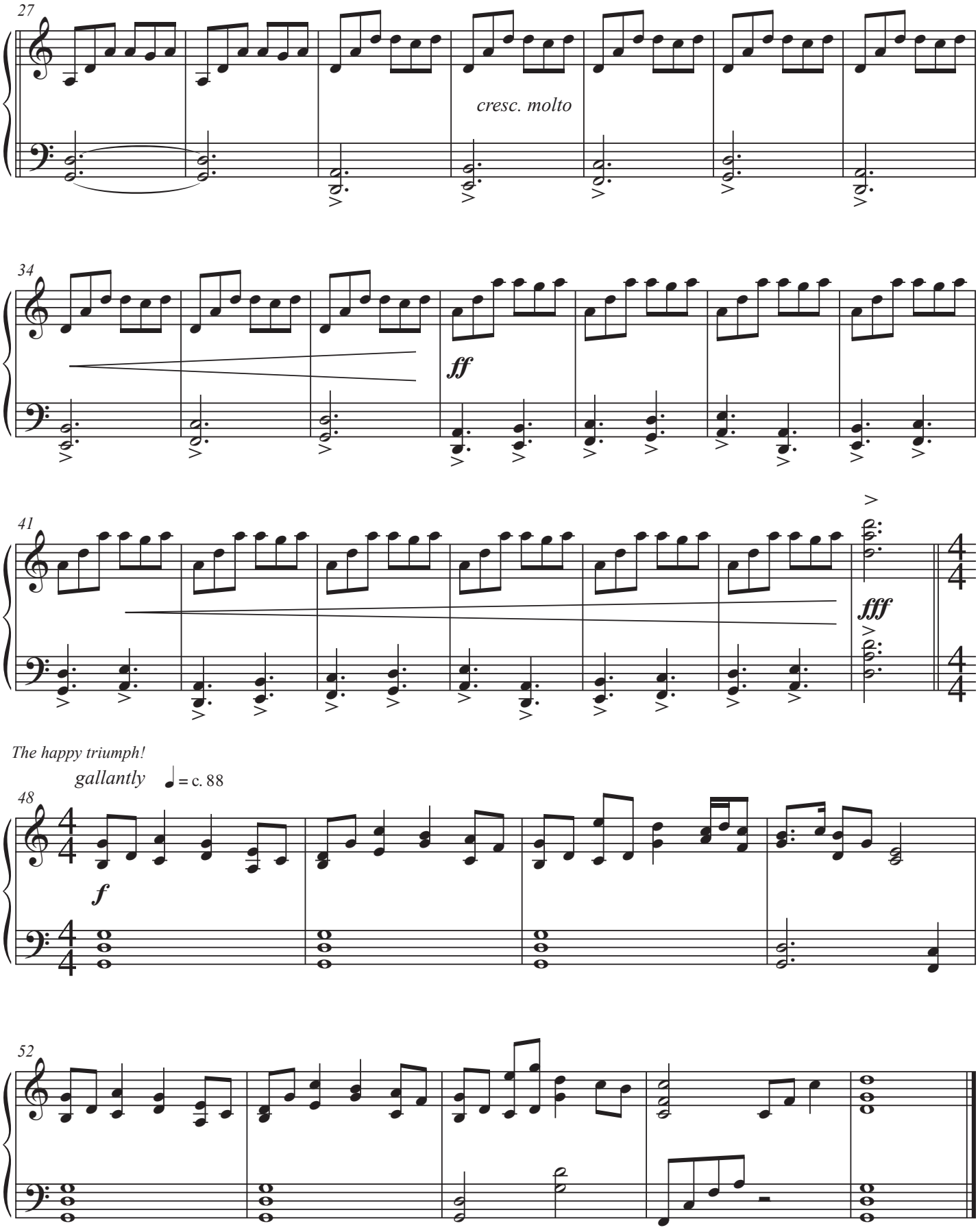
with urgency ♩ = 𝅗𝅥.

13

mp

20

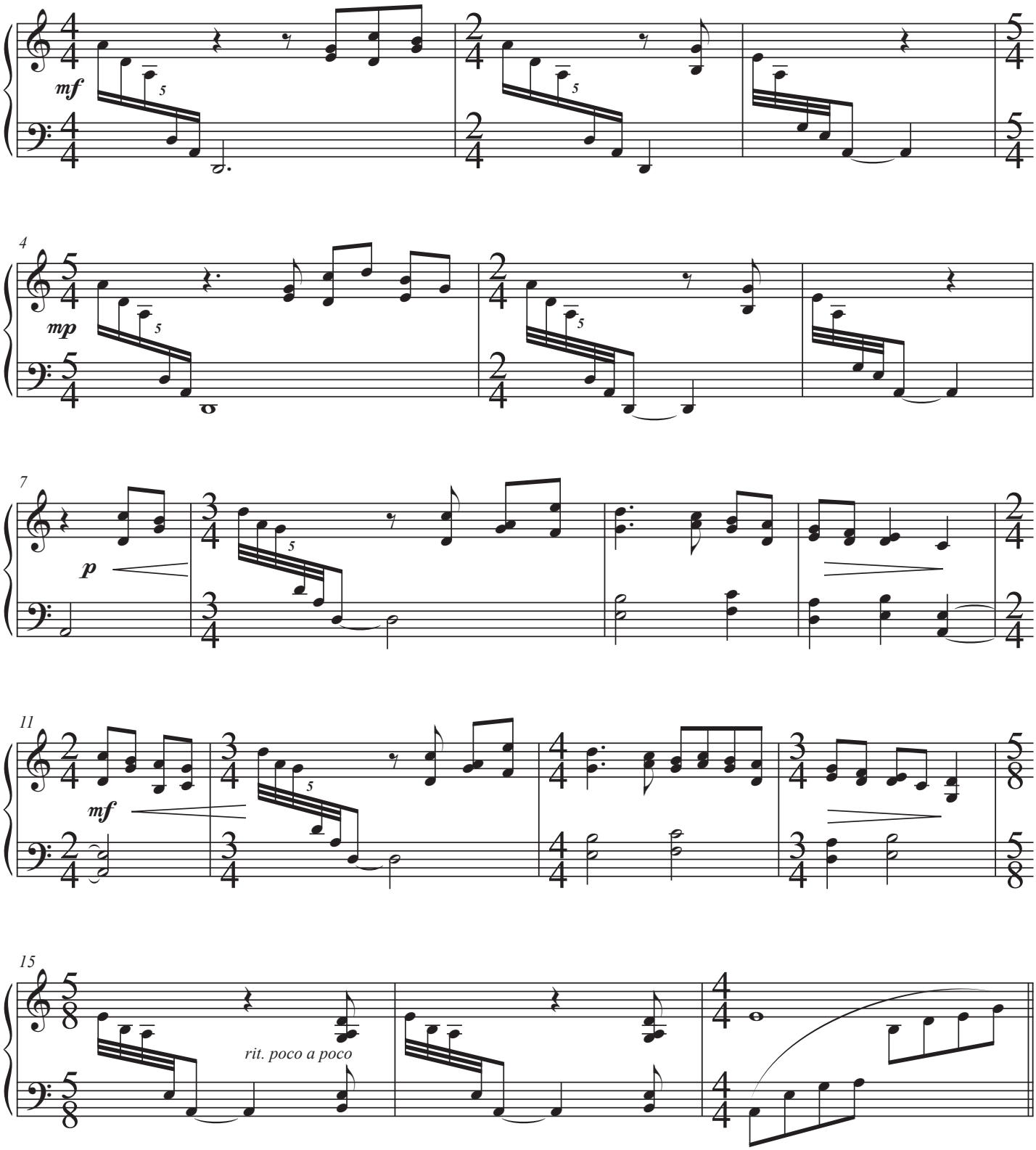
cresc. poco a poco

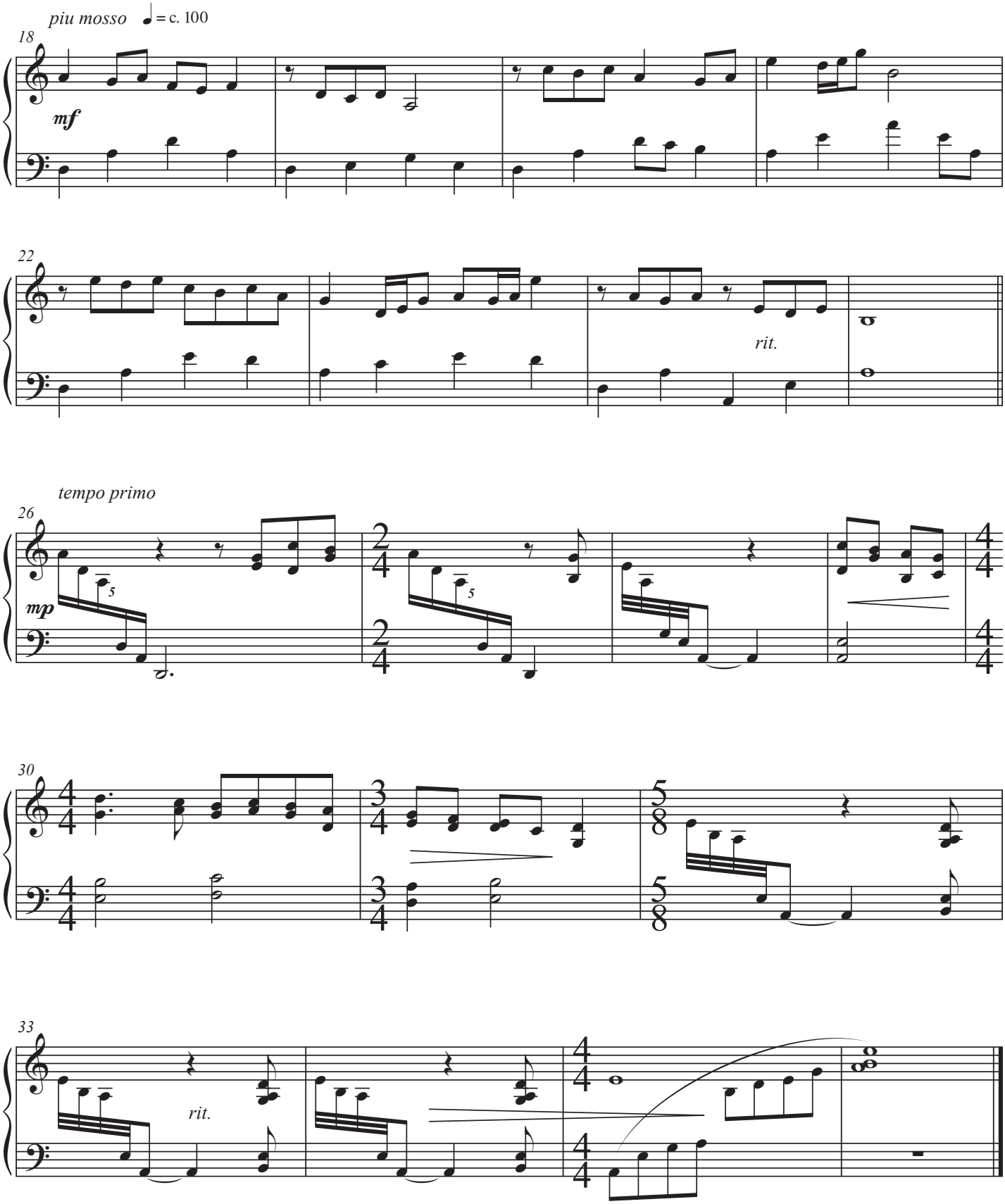

27
cresc. molto
34
ff
41
fff
The happy triumph!
gallantly
= c. 88
48
f
52

6. Niamh's Sorrow

Niamh aches over Oisin's desrie to return to Eirann

molto rubato e espressivo ♩ = c. 60

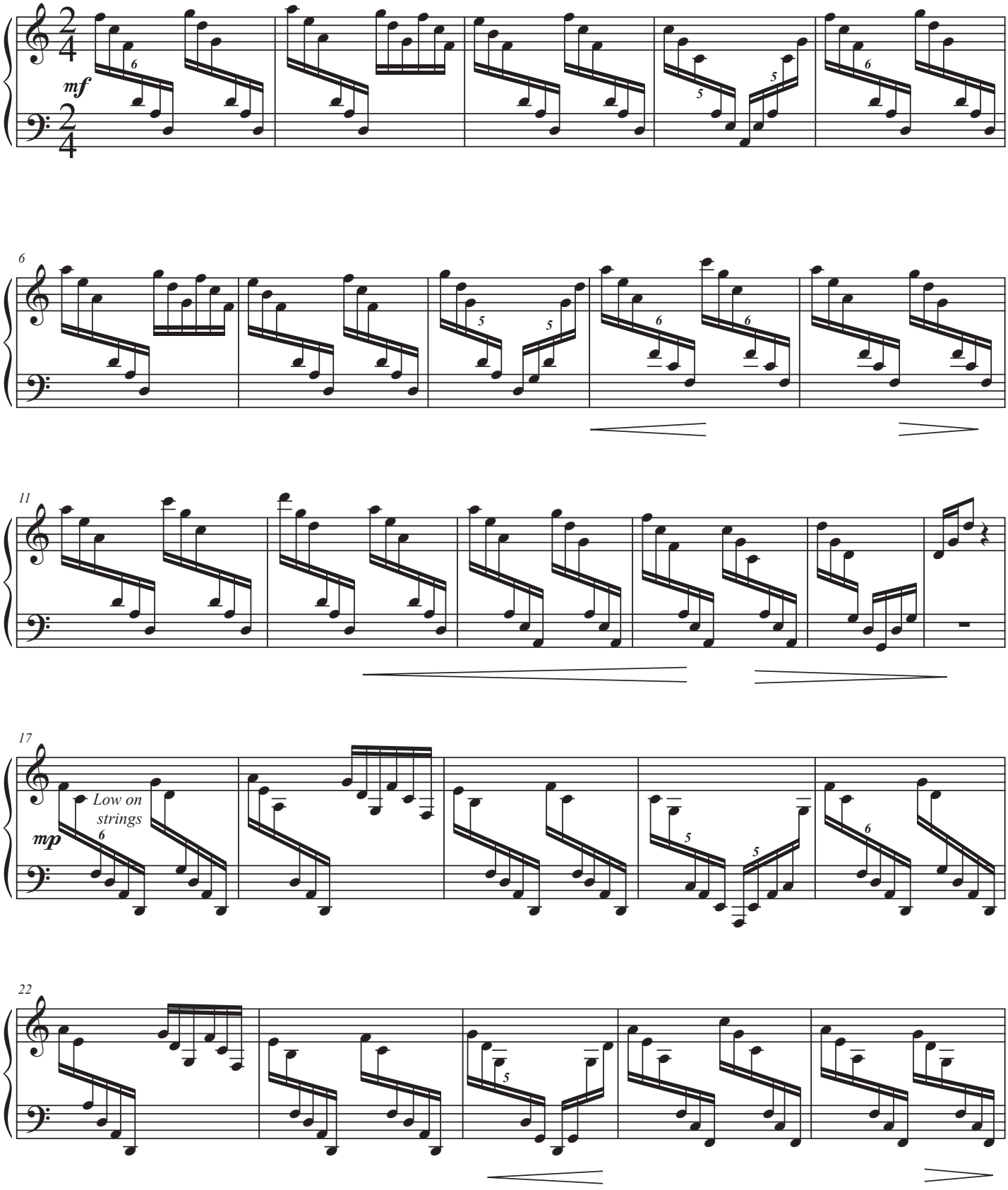


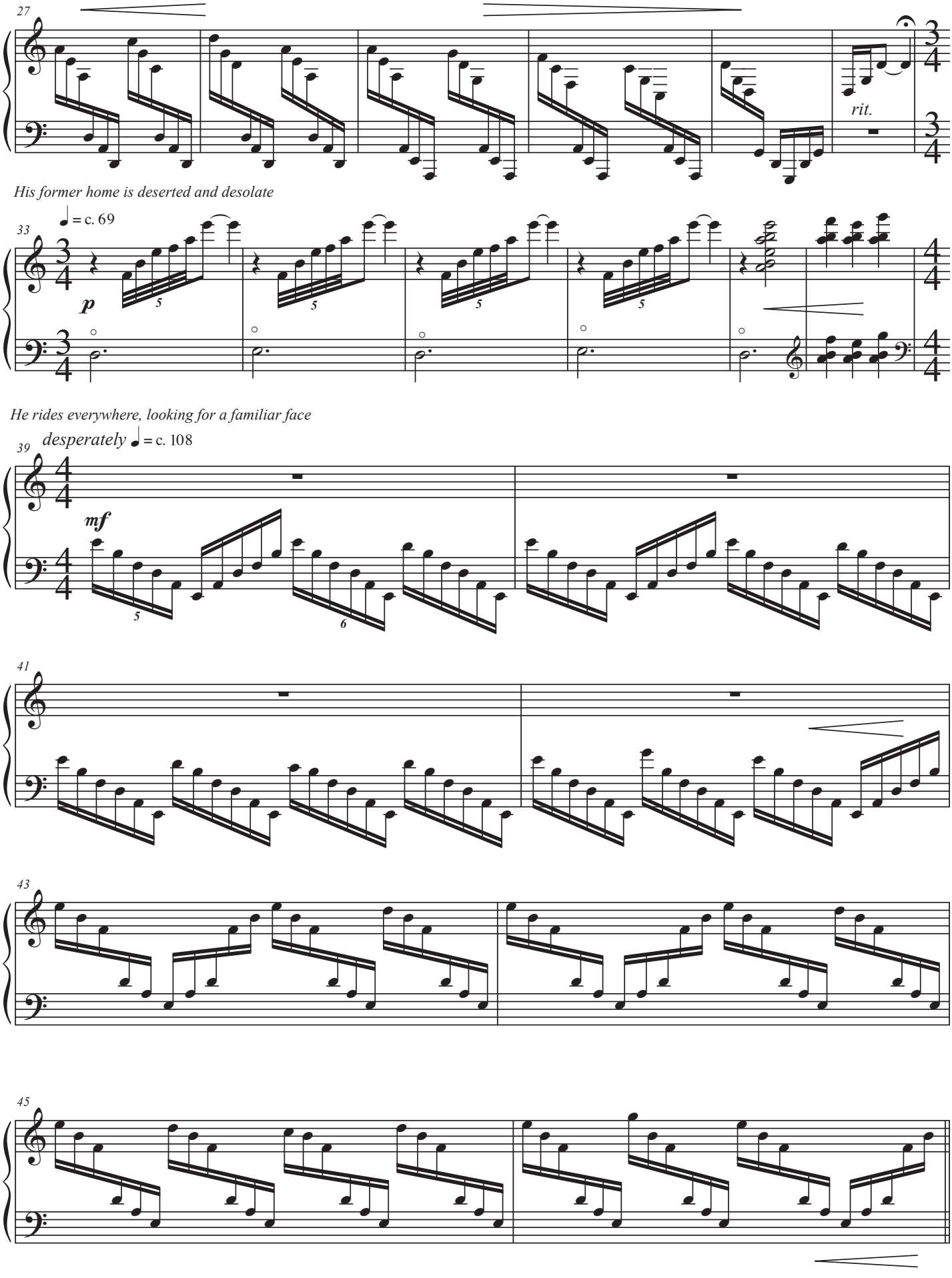

piu mosso ♩ = c. 100
18
mf
22
rit.
tempo primo
26
mp
30
33
rit.

7. Return to Eireann

Oisin rides back across the waves

♩ = c. 100




27
rit.
His former home is deserted and desolate
33
♩ = c. 69
p
He rides everywhere, looking for a familiar face
39
desperately ♩ = c. 108
mf
41
43
45

Oisin has fallen from his horse

47

f

54

He changes into an old man

a tempo

rit.

mp

sim.

62

70

mf

78

meno mosso

sadly

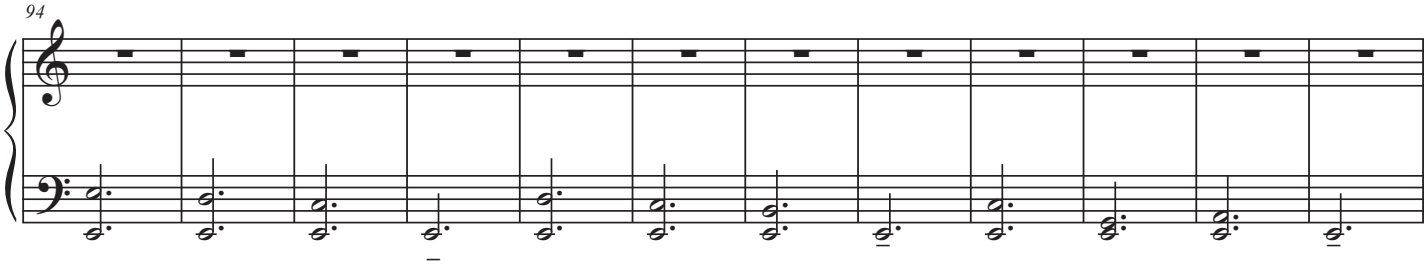
poco rit.

mp

86

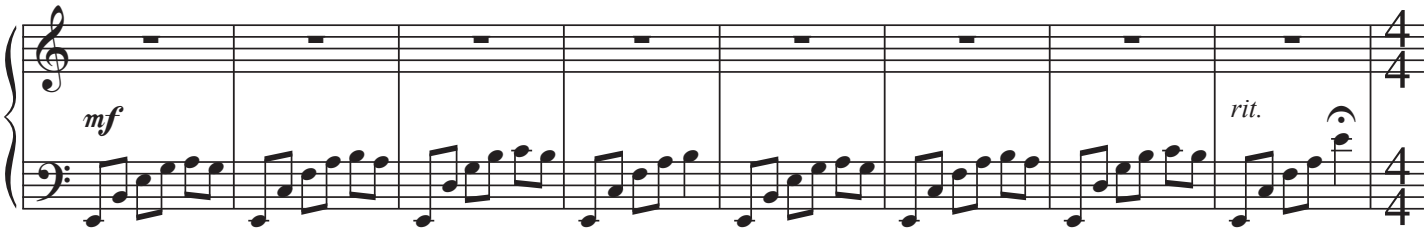
Oisin discovers that 300 years have passed

94

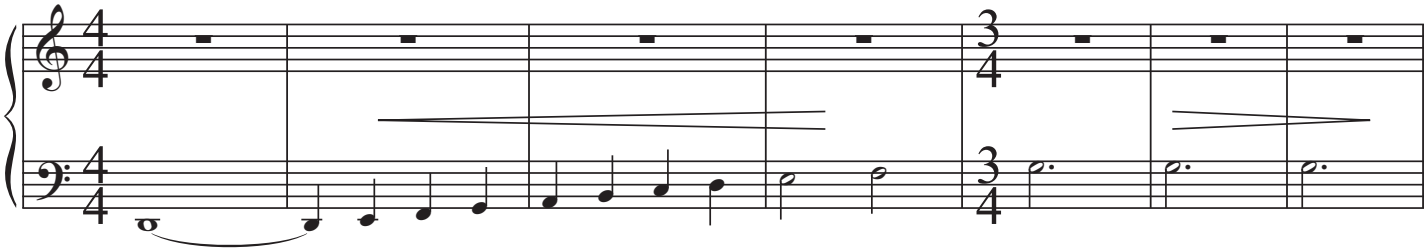


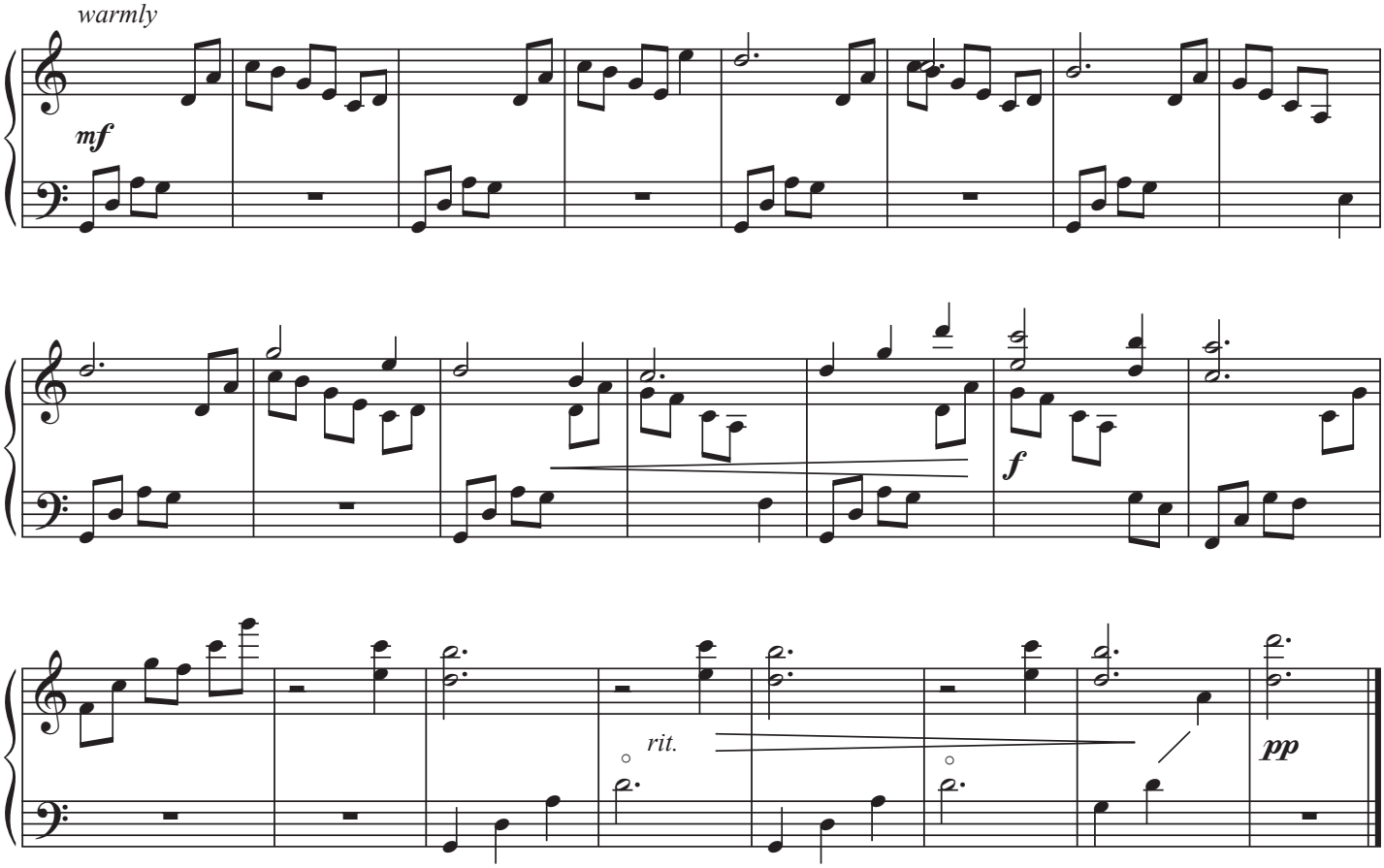
The frightened men deliberate about what to do with Oisin

piu mosso



They decide to take him to St. Patrick



Oisin meets St. Patrick

warmly