Act Without Words I

A piano accompaniment to Samuel Beckett's work.

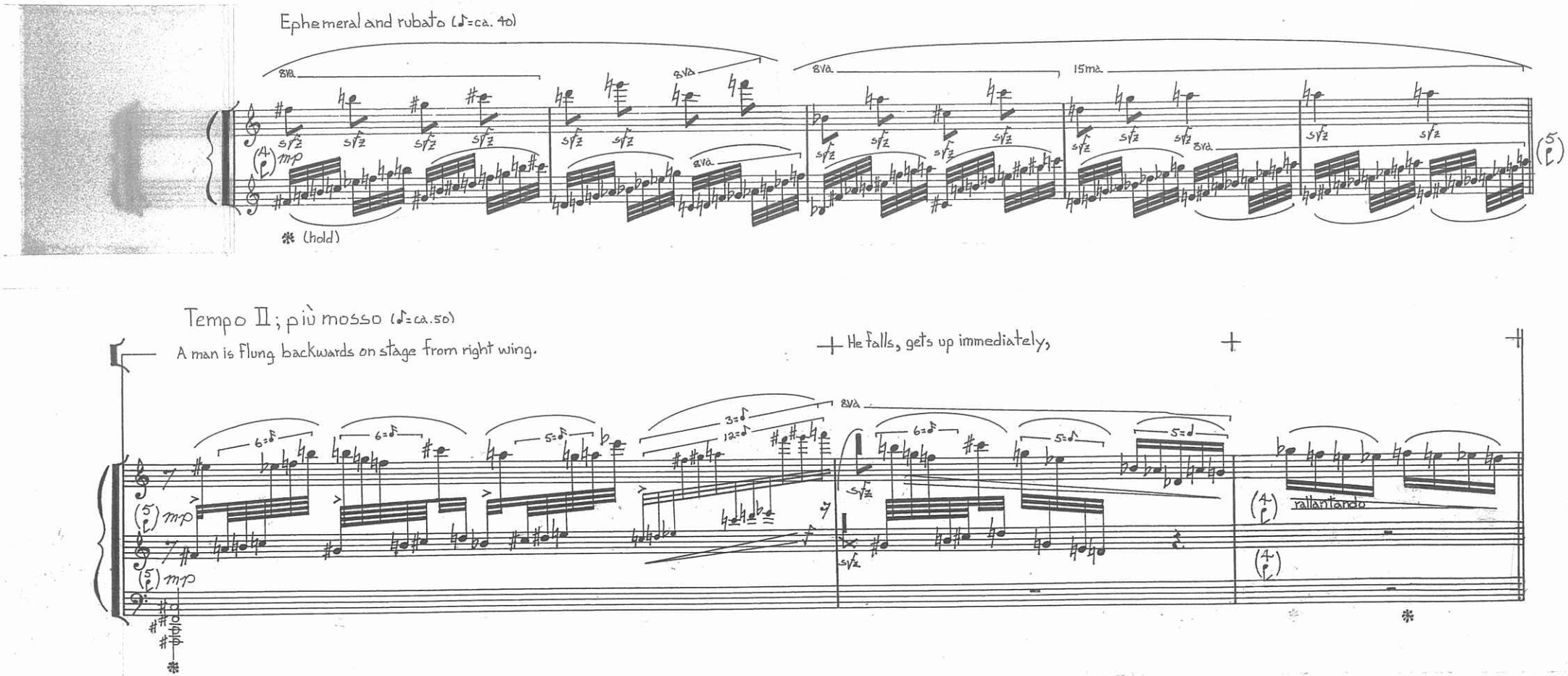
William Osborne

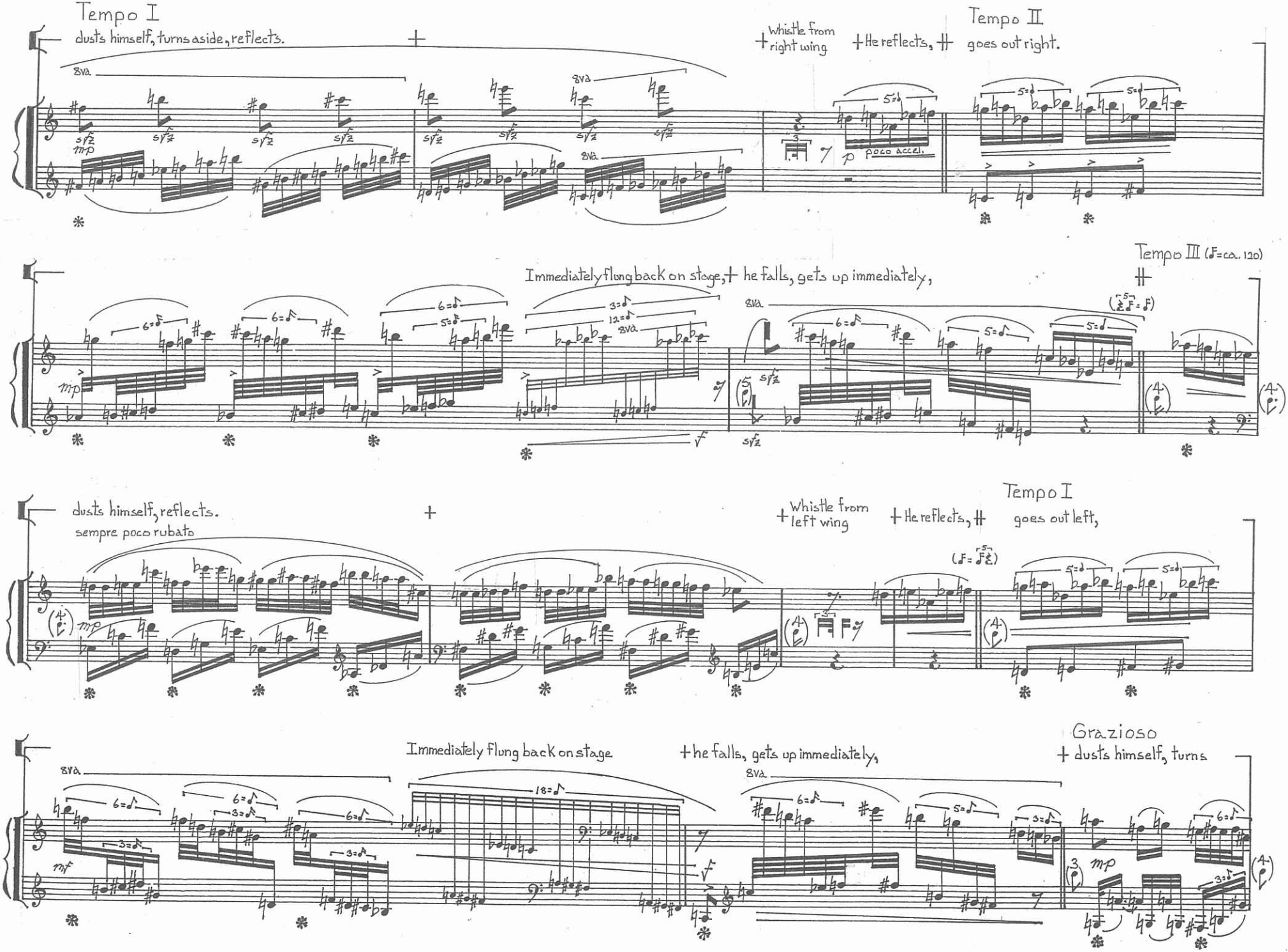
Act Without Words I

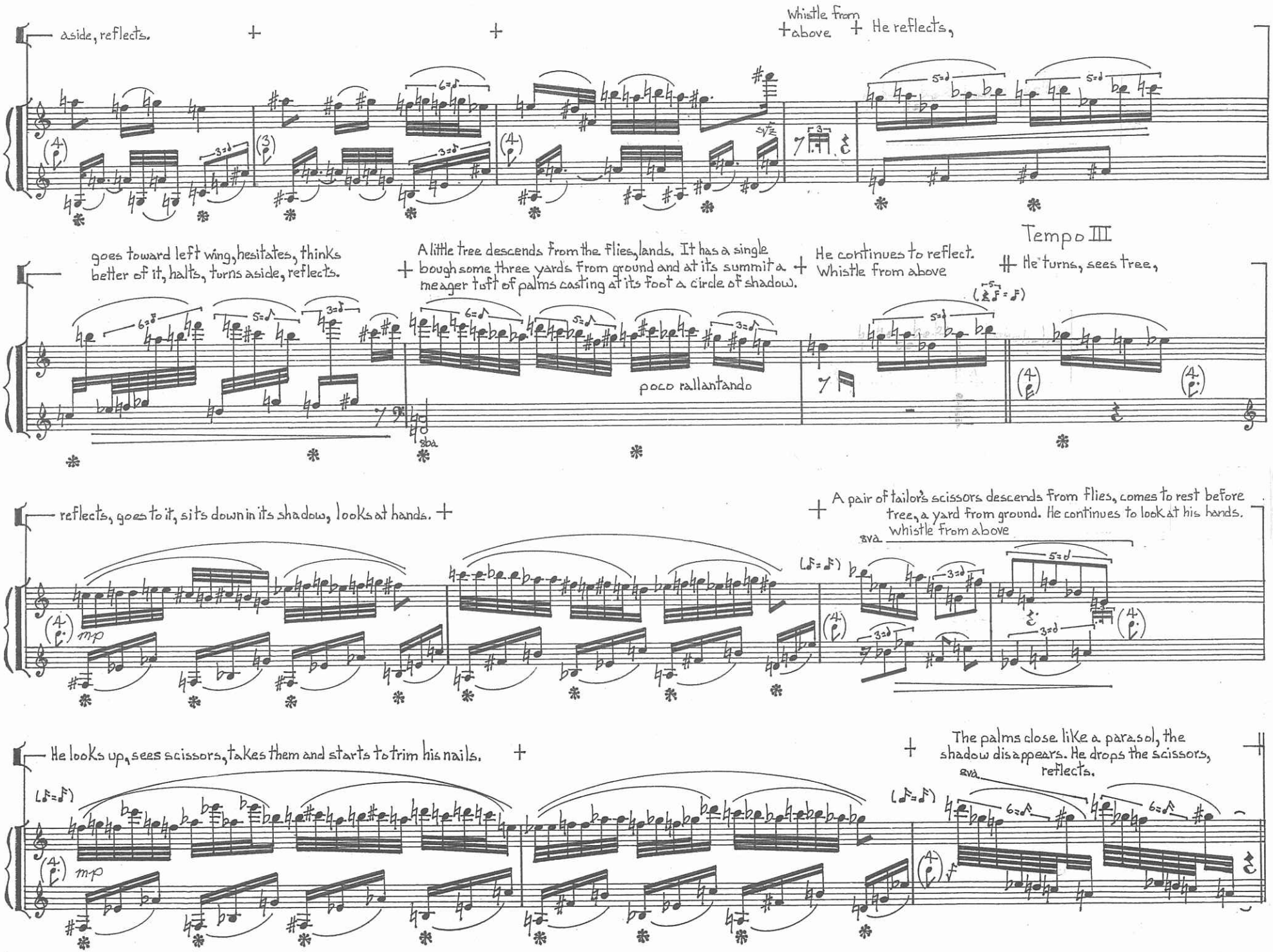
A piano accompaniment to Samuel Beckett's work.

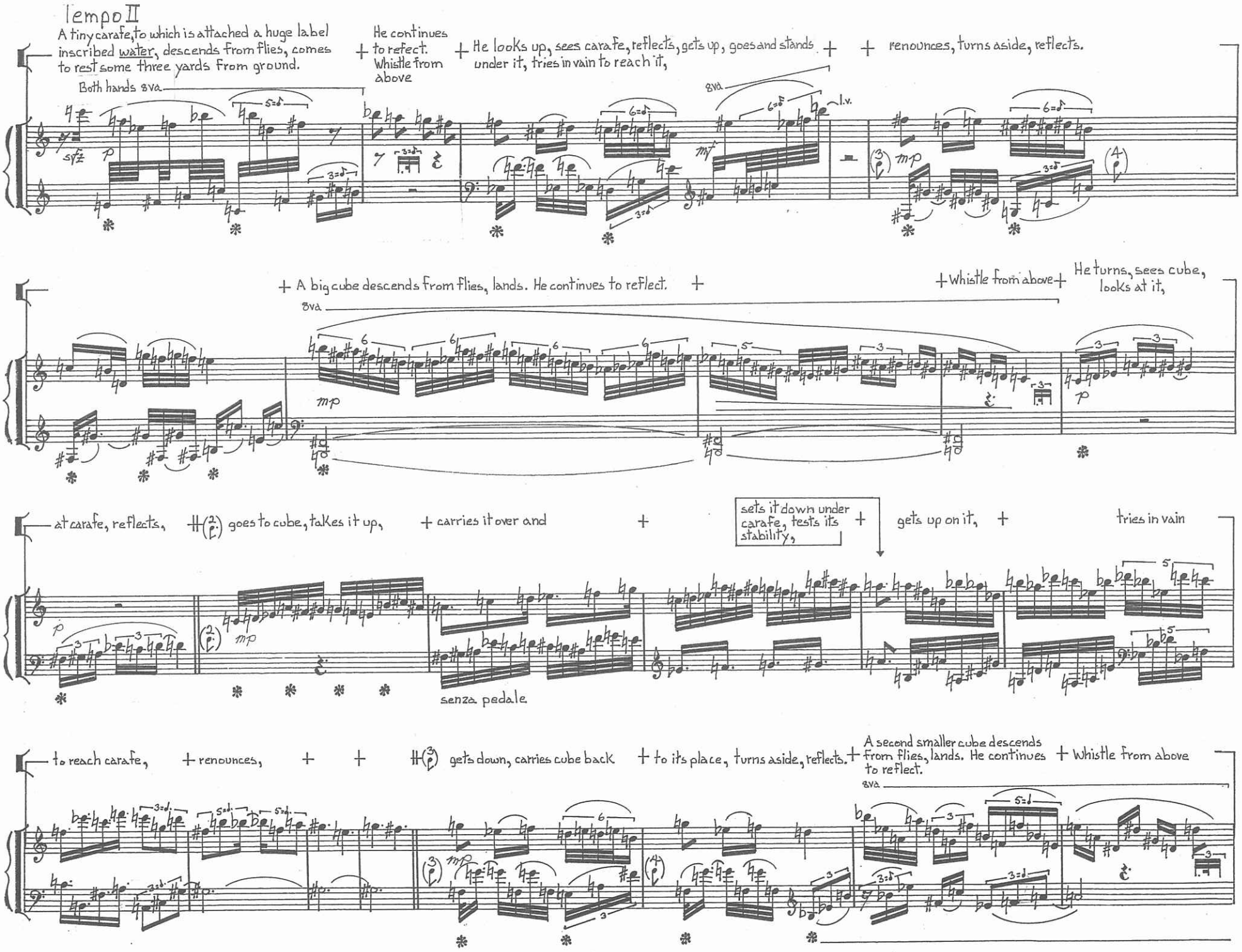
William Osborne

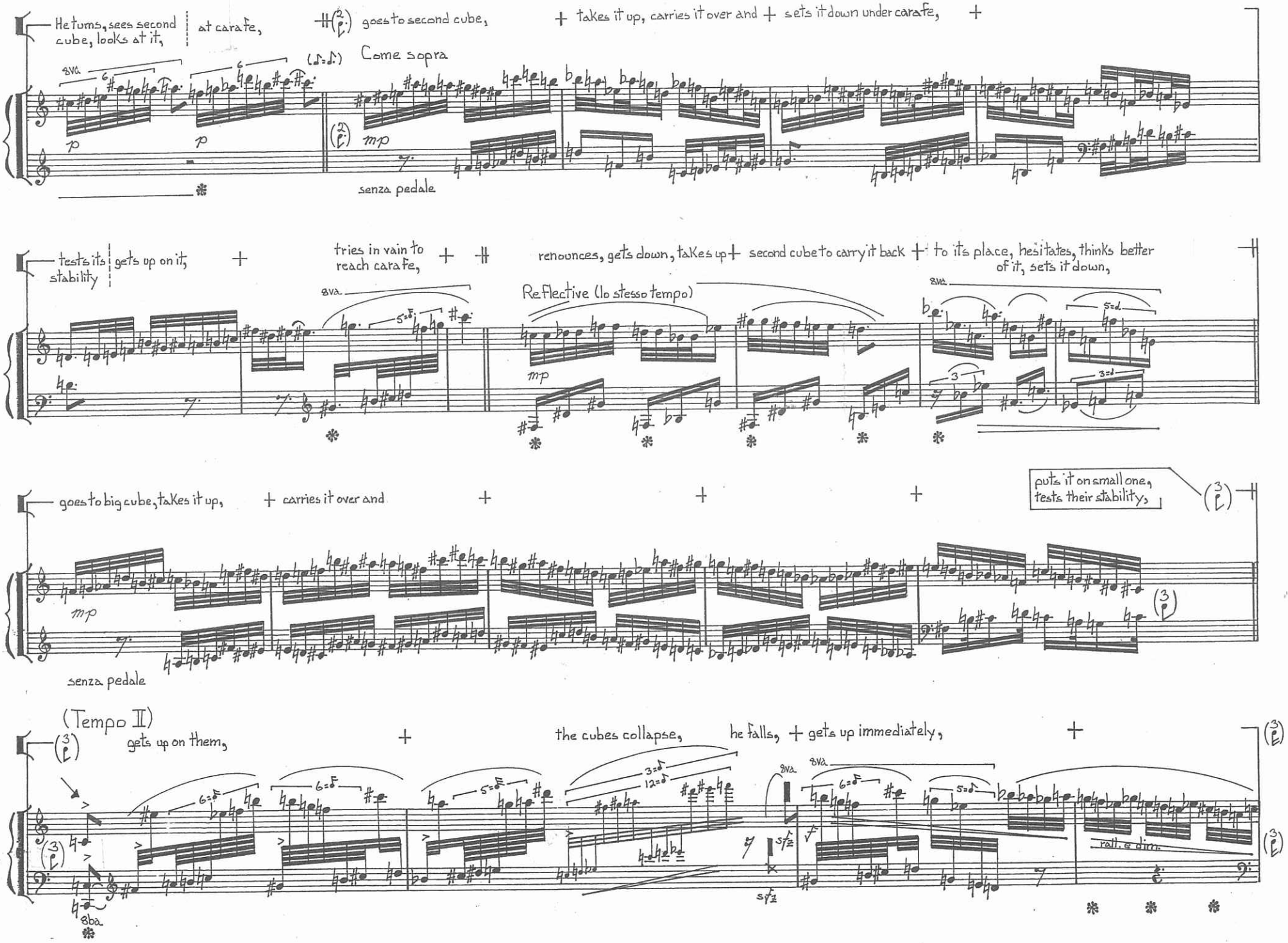
Scene: Desert. Dazzling light.

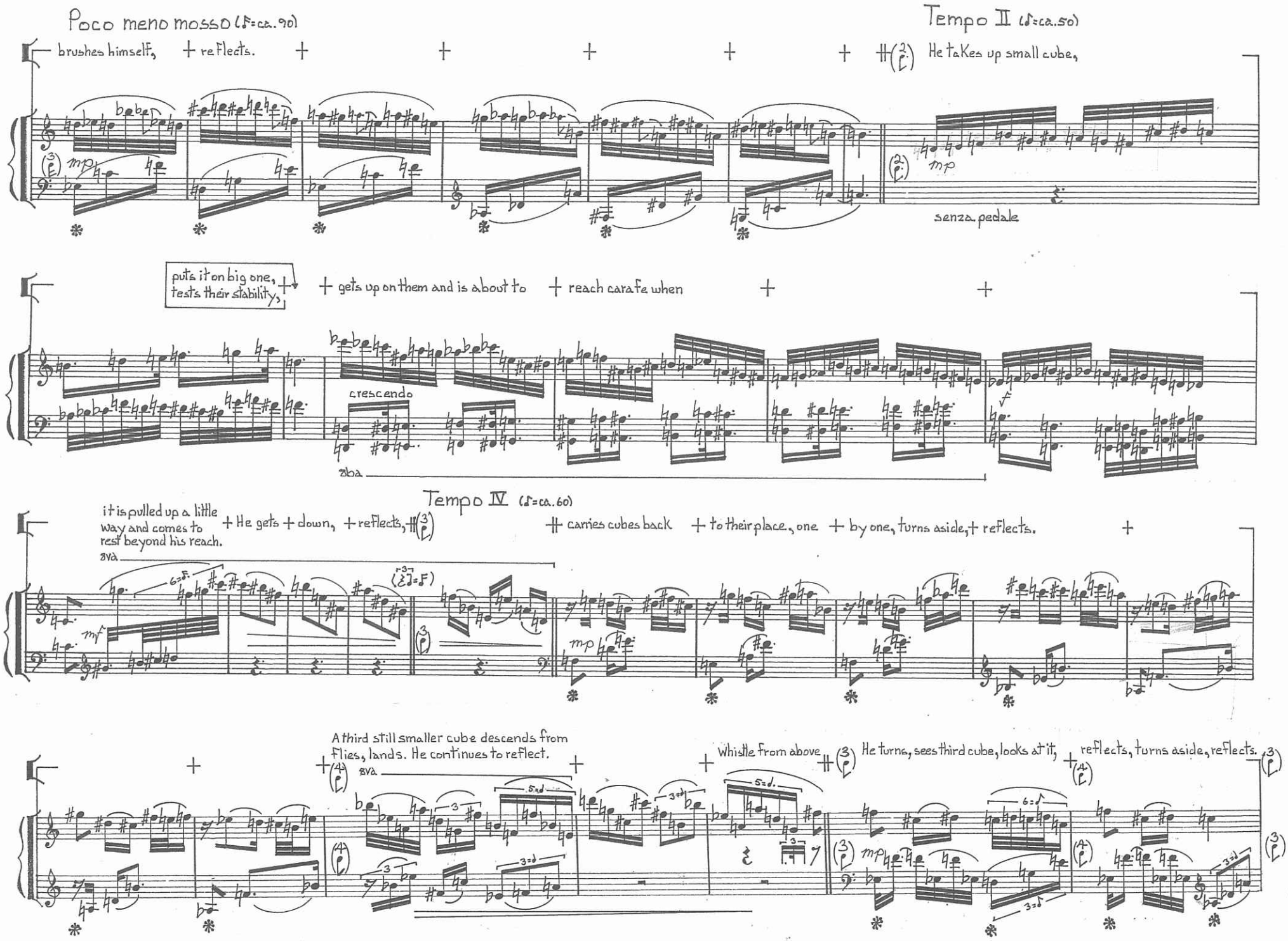


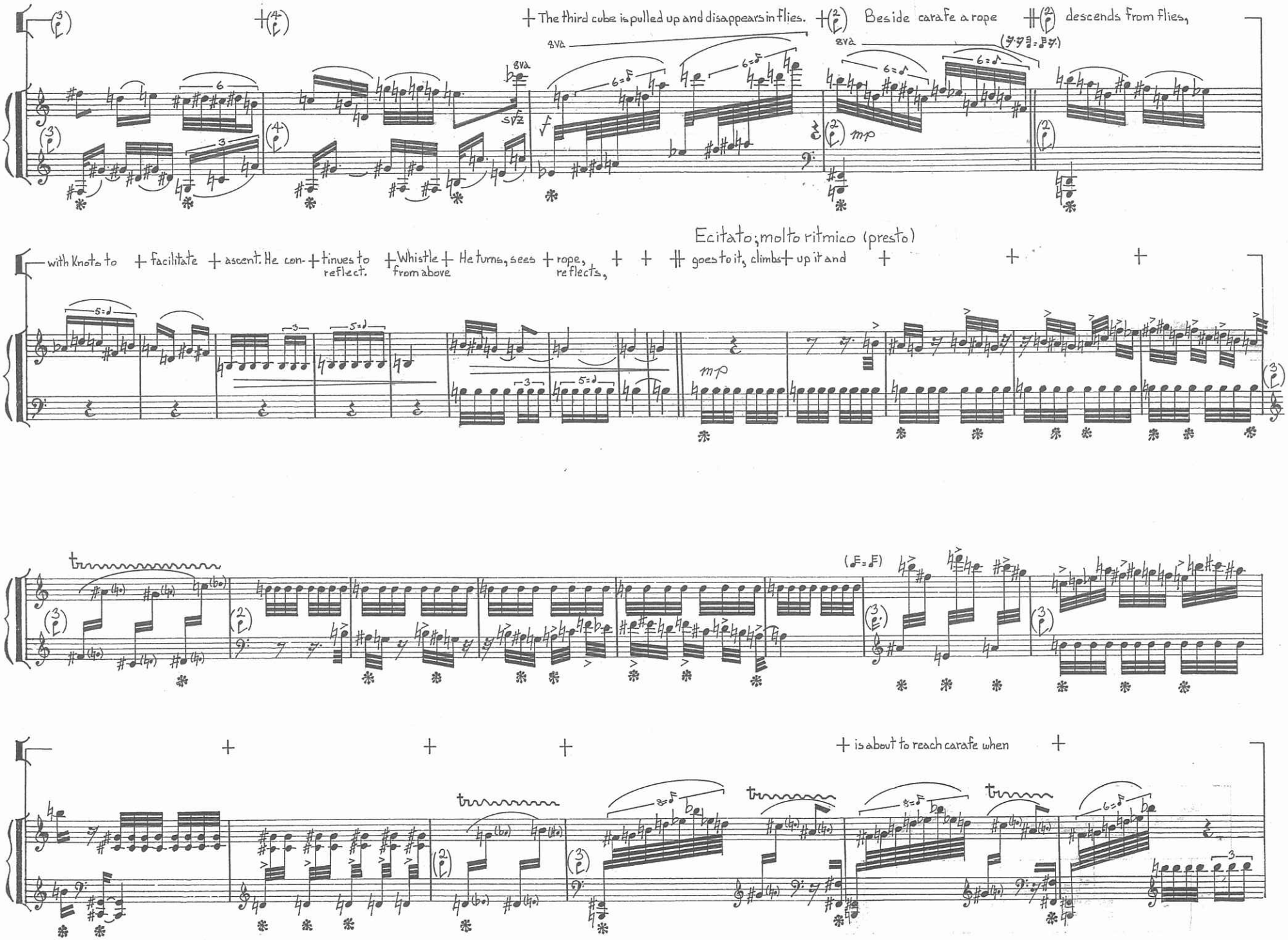

Tempo I
dusts himself, turns aside, reflects.
Whistle from right wing
He reflects,
Tempo II
goes out right.
poco accel.
Immediately flung back on stage,
he falls, gets up immediately,
Tempo III (♩=ca. 120)
dusts himself, reflects.
sempre poco rubato
Whistle from left wing
He reflects,
Tempo I
goes out left,
Immediately flung back on stage
he falls, gets up immediately,
Grazioso
dusts himself, turns

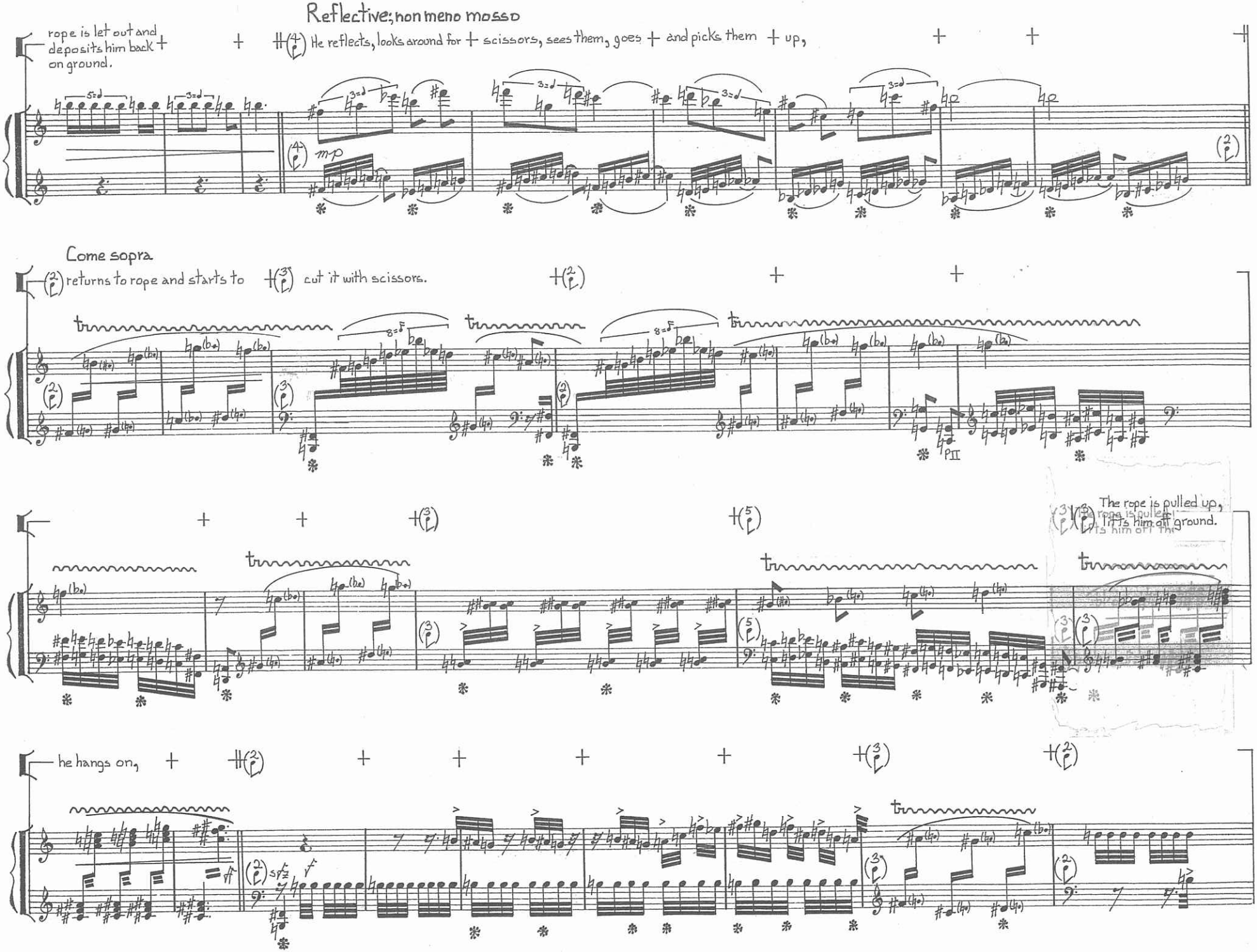

aside, reflects.
Whistle from above
He reflects,
Tempo III
goes toward left wing, hesitates, thinks better of it, halts, turns aside, reflects.
A little tree descends from the flies, lands. It has a single bough some three yards from ground and at its summit a meager tuft of palms casting at its foot a circle of shadow.
He continues to reflect. Whistle from above
He turns, sees tree,
poco rallantando
reflects, goes to it, sits down in its shadow, looks at hands.
A pair of tailor's scissors descends from flies, comes to rest before tree, a yard from ground. He continues to look at his hands.
Whistle from above
He looks up, sees scissors, takes them and starts to trim his nails.
The palms close like a parasol, the shadow disappears. He drops the scissors, reflects.

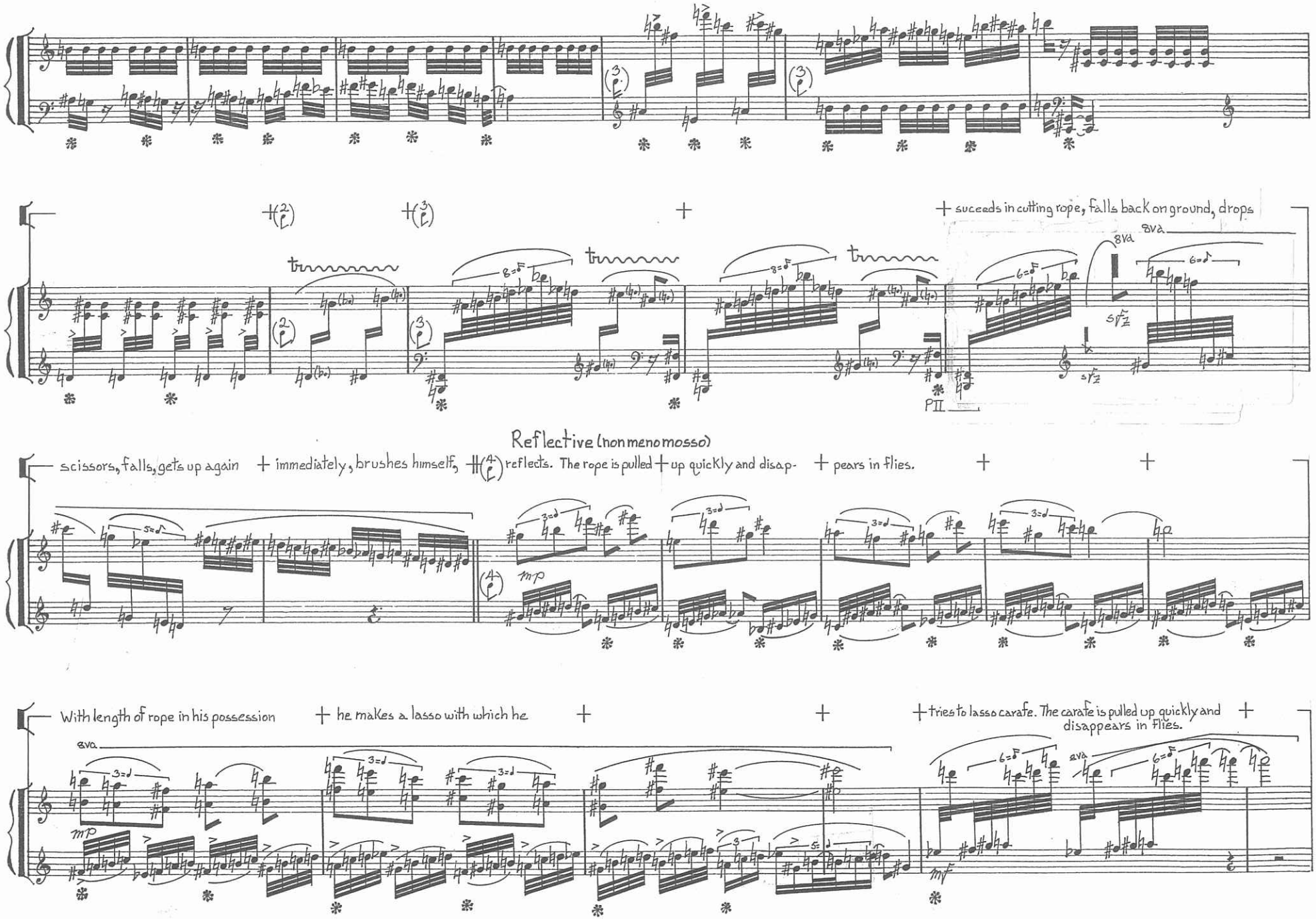

Tempo II
A tiny carafe, to which is attached a huge label inscribed water, descends from flies, comes to rest some three yards from ground.
He continues to reflect. Whistle from above
He looks up, sees carafe, reflects, gets up, goes and stands under it, tries in vain to reach it,
renounces, turns aside, reflects.
Both hands 8va
8va
l.v.
A big cube descends from flies, lands. He continues to reflect.
Whistle from above
He turns, sees cube, looks at it,
at carafe, reflects,
goes to cube, takes it up,
carries it over and
sets it down under carafe, tests its stability,
gets up on it,
tries in vain
senza pedale
to reach carafe,
renounces,
gets down, carries cube back
to its place, turns aside, reflects.
A second smaller cube descends from flies, lands. He continues to reflect.
Whistle from above

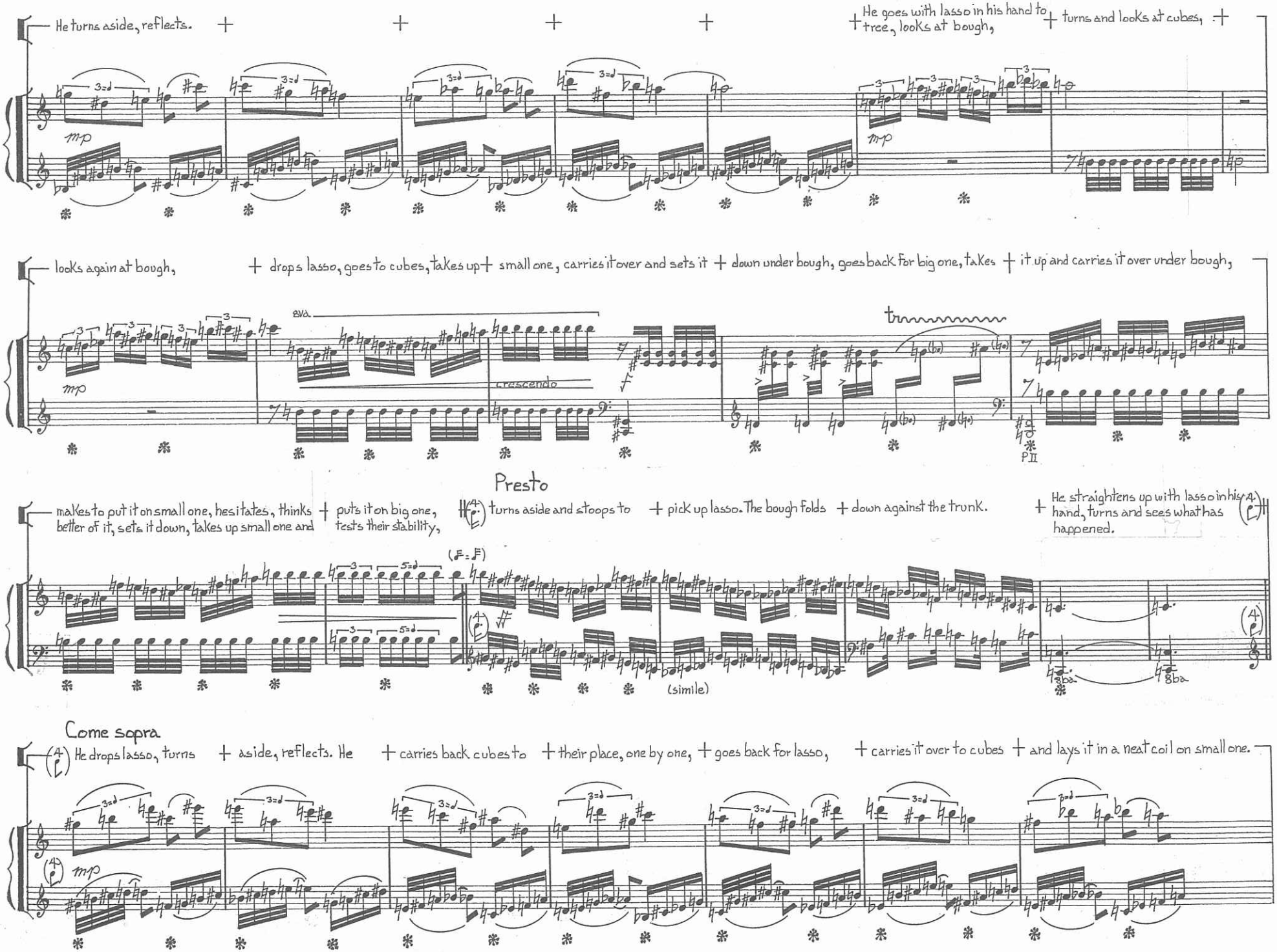

He turns, sees second cube, looks at it, | at carafe, | goes to second cube, | takes it up, carries it over and | sets it down under carafe,
Come sopra
8va
p
mp
senza pedale
tests its stability | gets up on it, | tries in vain to reach carafe, | renounces, gets down, takes up | second cube to carry it back | to its place, hesitates, thinks better of it, sets it down,
Reflective (lo stesso tempo)
8va
mp
goes to big cube, takes it up, | carries it over and | puts it on small one, tests their stability,
mp
senza pedale
(Tempo II)
gets up on them, | the cubes collapse, | he falls, | gets up immediately,
8va
8va
8ba
rall. e dim.


Poco meno mosso (♩=ca.90)
brushes himself,
reflects.
Tempo II (♩=ca.50)
He takes up small cube,
mp
senza pedale
puts it on big one, tests their stability,
gets up on them and is about to
reach carafe when
crescendo
8va
Tempo IV (♩=ca.60)
it is pulled up a little way and comes to rest beyond his reach.
He gets down,
reflects,
carries cubes back
to their place, one
by one, turns aside,
reflects.
8va
mf
mp
A third still smaller cube descends from flies, lands. He continues to reflect.
8va
Whistle from above
He turns, sees third cube, looks at it,
reflects, turns aside, reflects.
mp


The third cube is pulled up and disappears in flies.
Beside carafe a rope
descends from flies,
8va
mp
Ecitato; molto ritmico (presto)
with Knots to
facilitate
ascent. He con-
tinues to
reflect.
Whistle
from above
He turns, sees
rope,
reflects,
goes to it, climbs up it and
mp
is about to reach carafe when


Reflective; non meno mosso
rope is let out and deposits him back on ground.
He reflects, looks around for scissors, sees them, goes and picks them up,
mp
Come sopra
returns to rope and starts to
cut it with scissors.
The rope is pulled up, lifts him off ground.
he hangs on,


+ succeeds in cutting rope, falls back on ground, drops
8va
Reflective (non meno mosso)
scissors, falls, gets up again + immediately, brushes himself, + reflects. The rope is pulled + up quickly and disap- + pears in flies.
With length of rope in his possession + he makes a lasso with which he + tries to lasso carafe. The carafe is pulled up quickly and disappears in flies.


He turns aside, reflects.
He goes with lasso in his hand to tree, looks at bough,
turns and looks at cubes,
looks again at bough,
drops lasso, goes to cubes, takes up small one, carries it over and sets it down under bough, goes back for big one, takes it up and carries it over under bough,
8va
crescendo
tr
Presto
makes to put it on small one, hesitates, thinks better of it, sets it down, takes up small one and puts it on big one, tests their stability,
turns aside and stoops to pick up lasso. The bough folds down against the trunk.
He straightens up with lasso in his hand, turns and sees what has happened.
(simile)
Come sopra
He drops lasso, turns aside, reflects. He carries back cubes to their place, one by one, goes back for lasso, carries it over to cubes and lays it in a neat coil on small one.

Tempo II

He turns aside, reflects. + + Whistle from right wing + # He reflects, goes out right. Immediately flung back on stage

mp crescendo

Whistle from left wing He does not move. Chorale; tranquil

he falls, gets up immediately, brushes himself, turns + aside, reflects. + # He looks at his + hands, looks around + for scissors, + sees them, goes and + picks them up, starts to trim his nails,

8va sfz mp (Chords broken from bottom.) (simile)

stops, reflects, + (9) runs his finger along blade of scissors, goes and lays them on small cube, + turns aside, opens his collar, frees his neck + and fingers it. The small

mp 8ba

cube is pulled up and disappears in flies, carrying + away rope and scissors. He turns to take scissors, sees what has happened. + He turns aside, + reflects. +

8va accelerando e crescendo p

Cantabile

He goes and sits down on big cube. + ‡ The cube is pulled from under him. He falls. The big cube is pulled up and disappears in + flies. ‡ He remains lying on his side, + his face toward auditorium, staring before him.

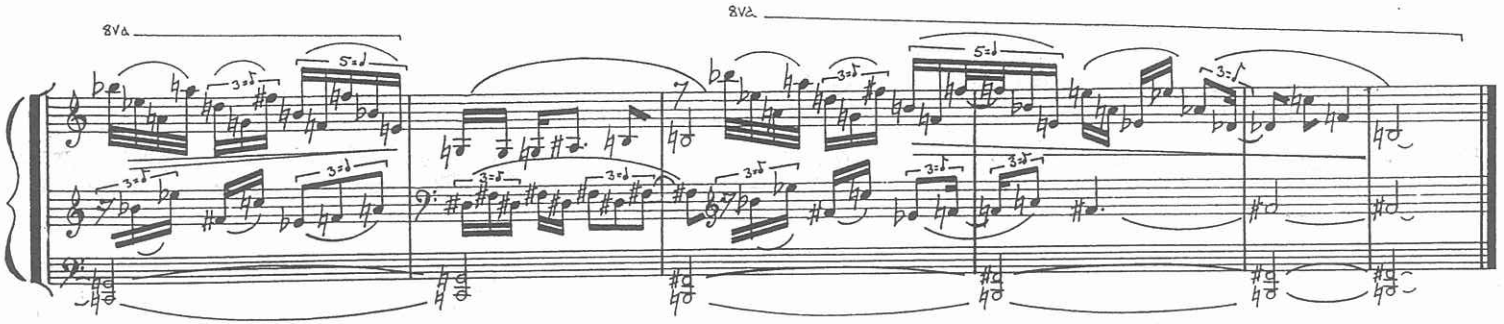
(★ See appendix for optional instrumental theatre insert.)

The carafe descends from flies and comes to rest a few feet from his body. + He does not move. Whistle from + above He does not move. The carafe + descends further, + dangles and plays about + his face. He does not + move. The carafe

is pulled up and disappears + in flies. + The bough returns + to horizontal, the palms + open, the shadow returns. Whistle from above + He does not move. + +

+ The tree is pulled up + and disappears in the flies. + He looks at his hands. + +

morendo poco a poco



Frühling 1986
Kleinhöhenrain

Appendix: optional insert for instrumental theatre. (Trombone)

Cantabile

+ A trombone descends from flies+ + # He takes trombone and + plays.

mp

8va

The trombone is pulled from his hands and disappears in flies.

(Return directly to ★ page 12.)