Children's Album for piano, op. 52

This work dates from the spring of 1984. The twelve pieces which comprise it are not graded, and range in difficulty from the simple and undemanding "Lullaby" (no. 10) to the difficult and highly evocative "The Fox Hunt" (no. 4). Although I did ordinate the numbers to form an effective set, selections from the opus are also programmed occasionally.

1. "Walt's Waltz" serves as an early study in *rubato*.
2. "Serenade" is a characteristic piece. The serenader cannot ascertain, as the music unfolds, what kind of music his beloved really likes, and so subjects his four-note motive to a set of miniature variations. Near the end of some of these variations, we can almost hear him thinking "Well, that isn't working. Let's try this" as the music anticipates the rhythm and dynamics of the variation just about to follow. (I was not conscious of this effect when composing the music; in fact, it had to be pointed out to me.) At all events, something eventually works, for at the end we hear the serenader and his beloved singing in canon.
3. "Invention" serves to prepare the student for Sebastian Bach's miniatures of this name, inasmuch as the melody passes between the hands. The master wrote a complete set in two parts, and then another in three. My number is predominantly for two voices, but there is a short passage for three voices toward the middle.
4. In "The Fox Hunt" we find the composer for a change taking the fox's point of view. The hurtling music unexpectedly grinds to a halt as the pack loses track of the quarry. In the quieter, middle section, we seem to hear the fox frolicking, exuberant in having regained its freedom. But as this exuberance becomes excessive, the dogs spot the quarry, and the chase resumes. In the end, the hopelessly outnumbered creature is nabbed, an unhappy but alas! realistic dénouement.
5. The high register in "Romance" is promptly balanced by the low one in the piece which follows.
6. This "Jig" was scaled down from an improvised "Rumpus Dance" to accompany a production for children of *Where the Wild Things Are* by students at Sarah Lawrence College. The inspiring director of the proceedings was Shirley Kaplan.
7. On Easter day my friend the song writer Walter Paul (of "Walt's Waltz" fame) visited his family in New Jersey. His five-year-old nephew Brendan Ferris was eager to play for his musical uncle the first melody he had worked out on the piano. When Walt told me this story I asked him what the melody was and he sang it for me. With Brendan's permission I incorporated the repeated ten notes (the episode beginning in bar 10, in the middle voice) into my "Fughetta." A surprising level of tension builds up over this two-page piece.
8. I wrote "Tropicana" in dismay after hearing from someone in the ad business that the orange juice company was going to get rid of the little girl ("Tropic-Ana") who had graced its carton for as long as the company had existed. (They displayed very little loyalty in their search for a new image.) It turned out,

of course, that they kept her, but stuck among oversized oranges and leaves at a fraction of her original size. Demoted, but at least not fired. [If I may be allowed to interpolate here an update to the foregoing entry: the process of attrition I describe continued, and by the middle 90's the little girl with the grass skirt for whom I wrote this tender number had quite disappeared!]

9. "Tendus" are exercises done at the ballet *barre,* and this would be typical music to accompany them during class.

10. "Lullaby" was written for my toddler nephew, Patrick Cupo. [Again, reviewing these lines in the last year of the century, I cannot resist the insertion of an ironic update. This lullaby features both hands throughout in the treble clef, but Patrick grew up to be quite a dazzling double bass player!]

11. "Pastorale" is undoubtedly my personal favorite among the twelve numbers in the set.

12. The final "Galop" is cast in rondo form, with an exuberant, thematic coda.

The dedication over the first page of music reads: "to all my piano students, young and less young."

Victor Frost
28 IX 84
New York City

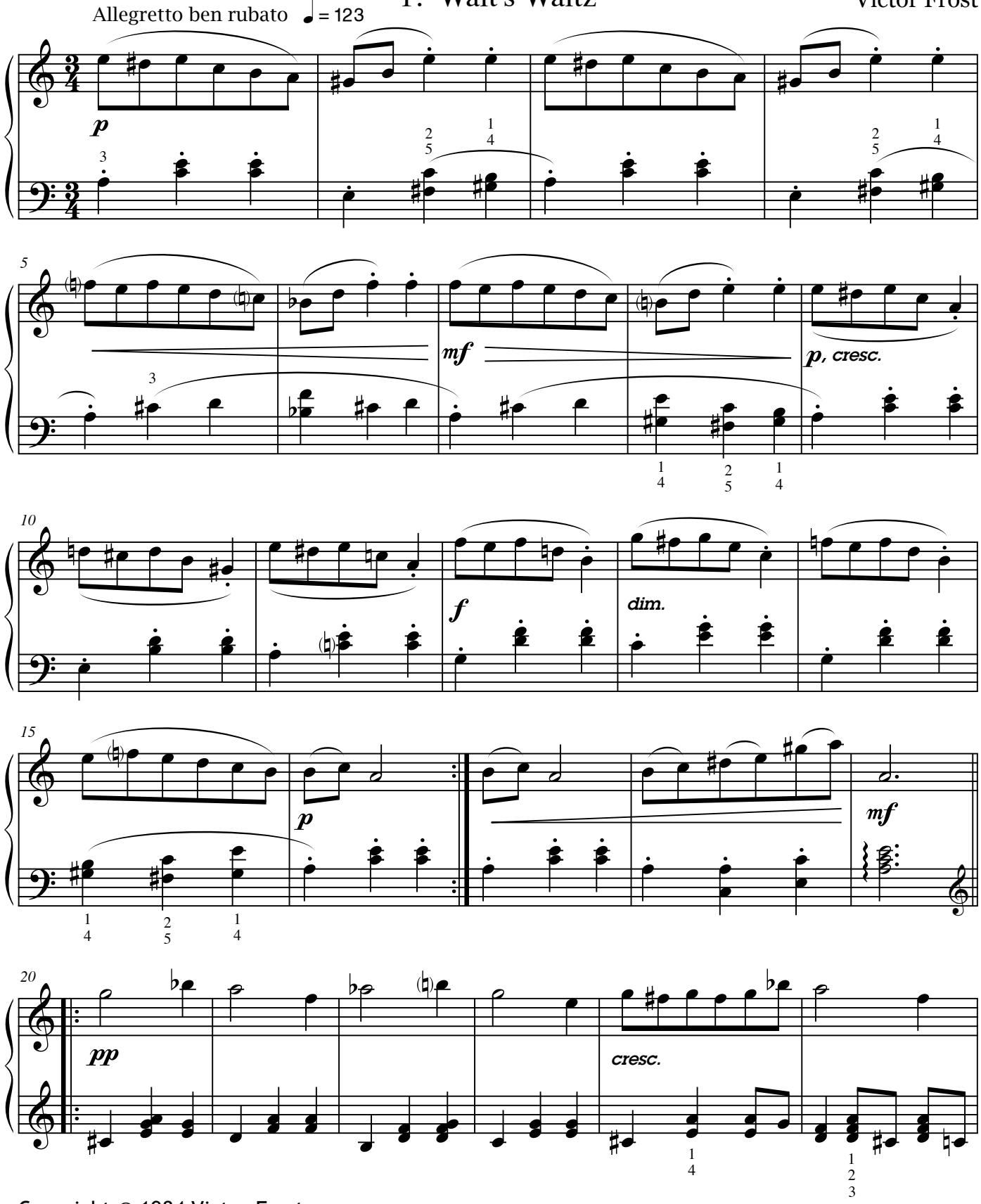
to all my piano students, young and less young

Children's Album

for piano, op. 52

1. Walt's Waltz

Victor Frost



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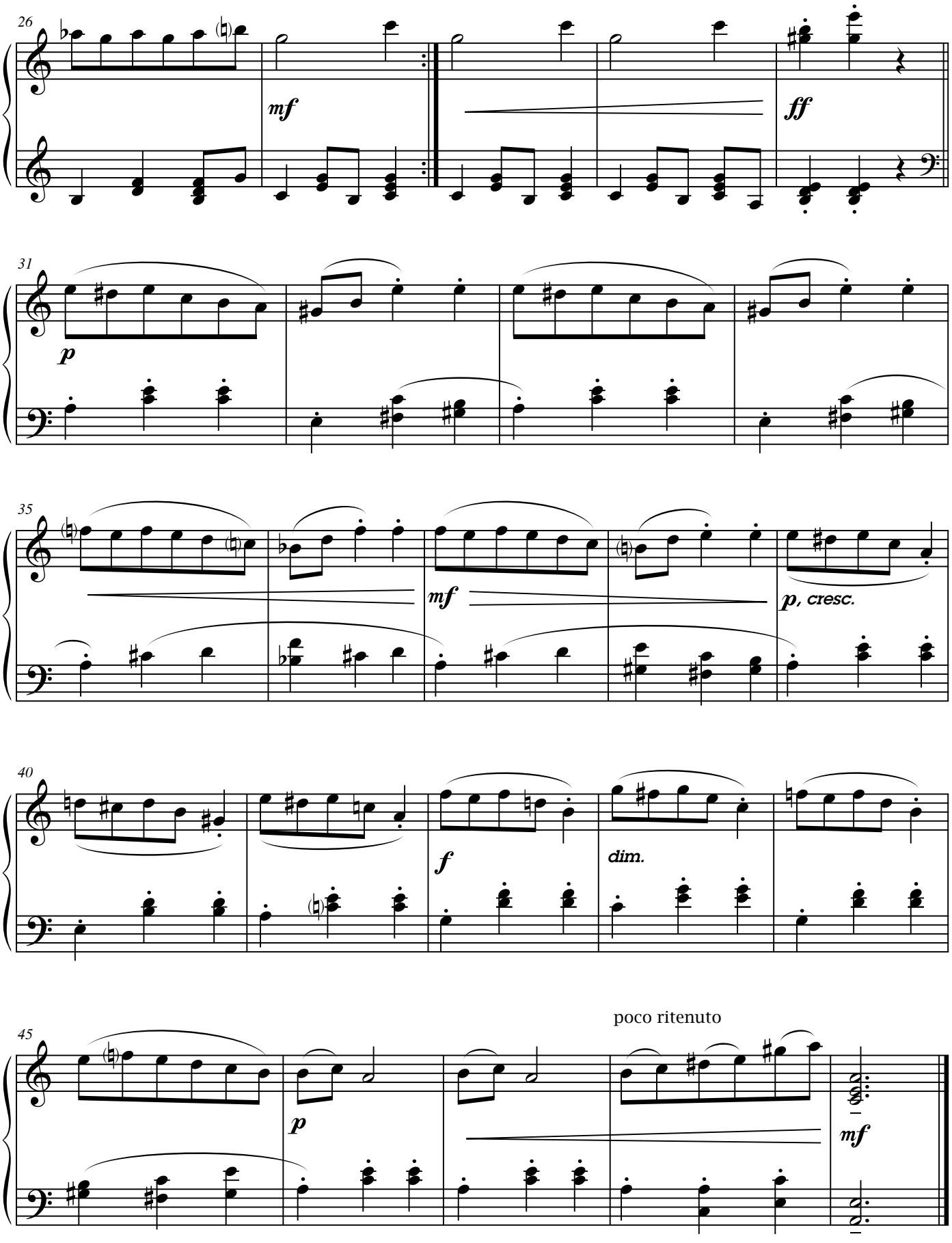
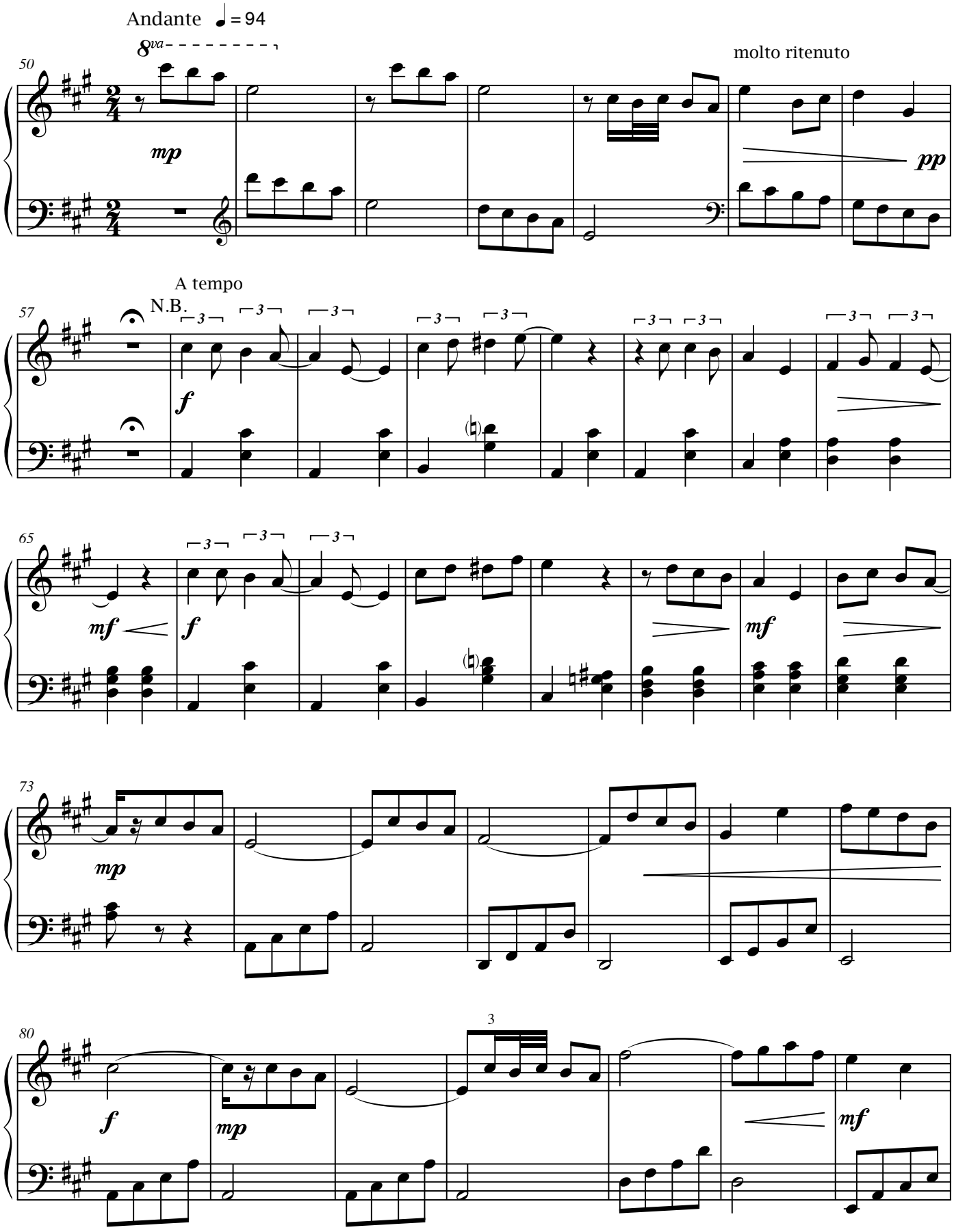
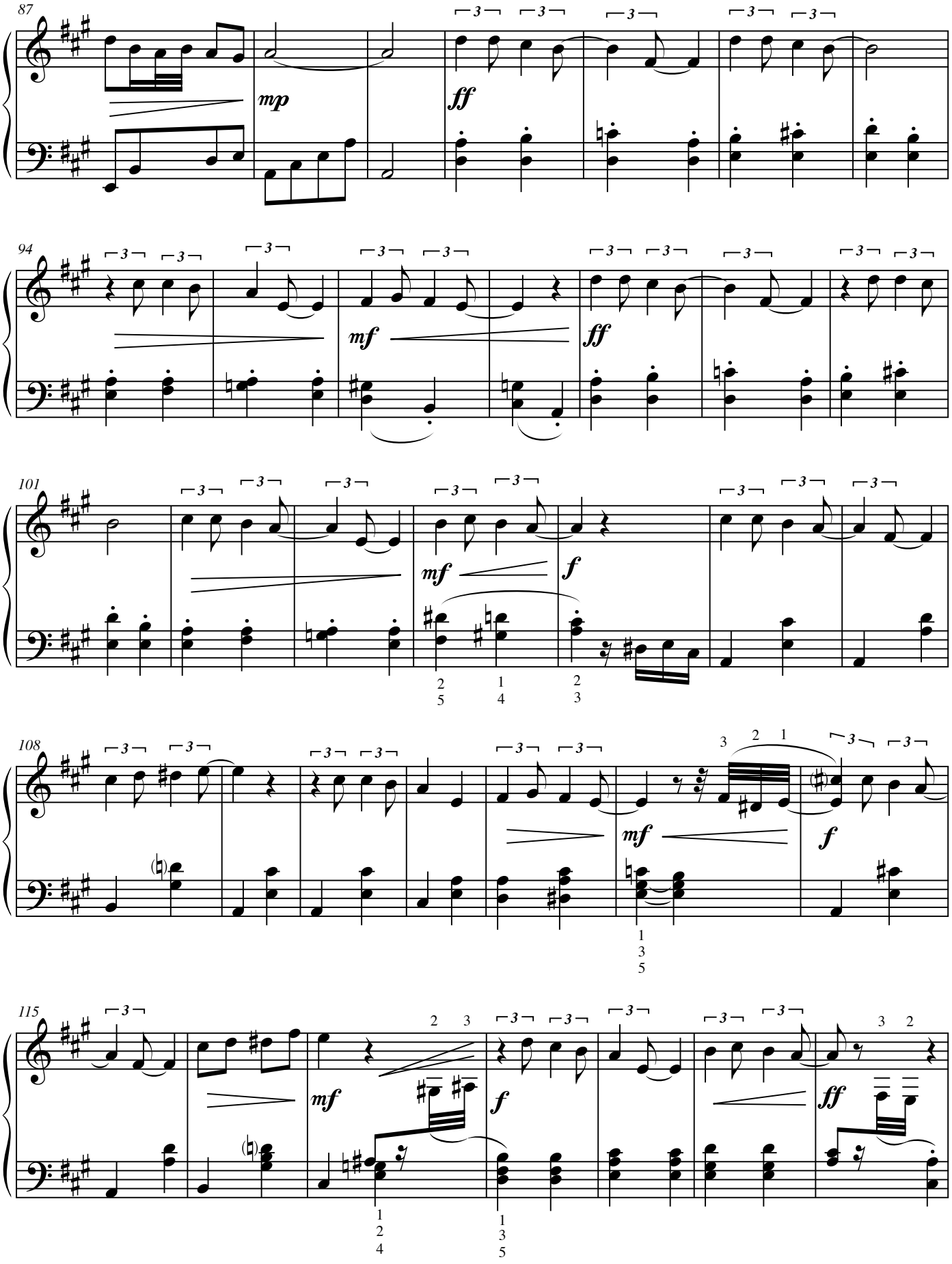
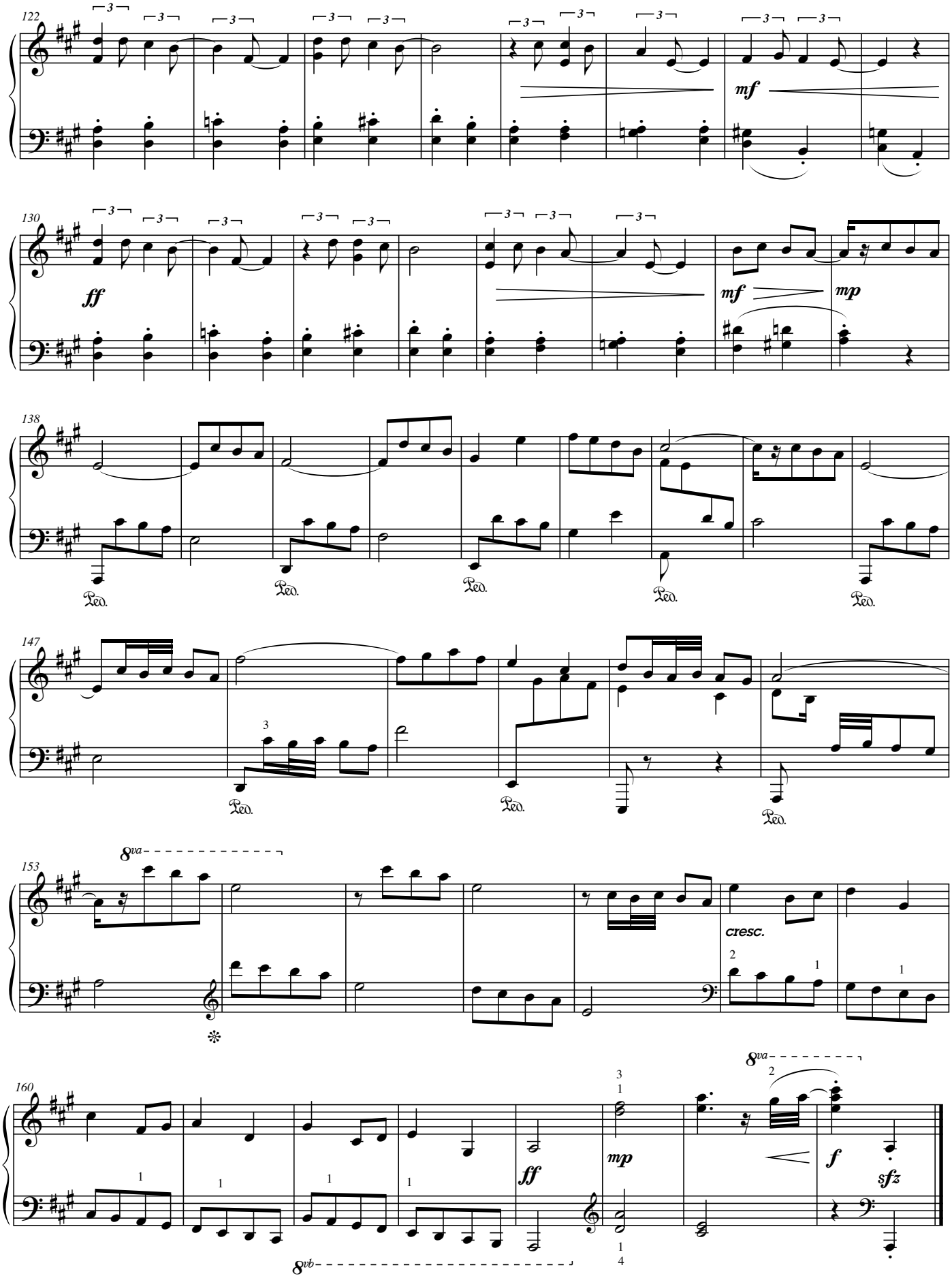

26
mf
ff
31
p
35
mf
p, cresc.
40
f
dim.
45
poco ritenuto
p
mf

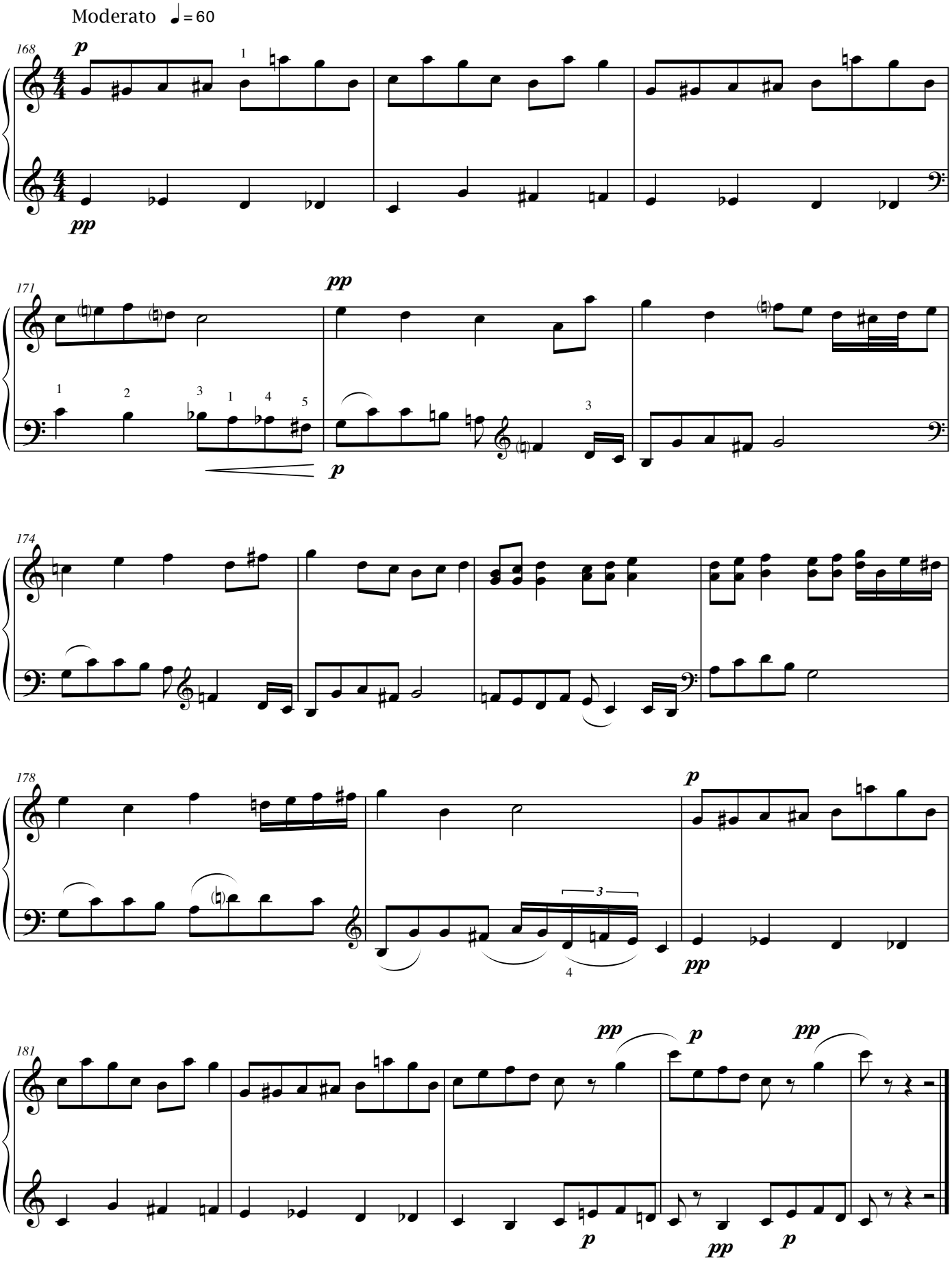
2. Serenade



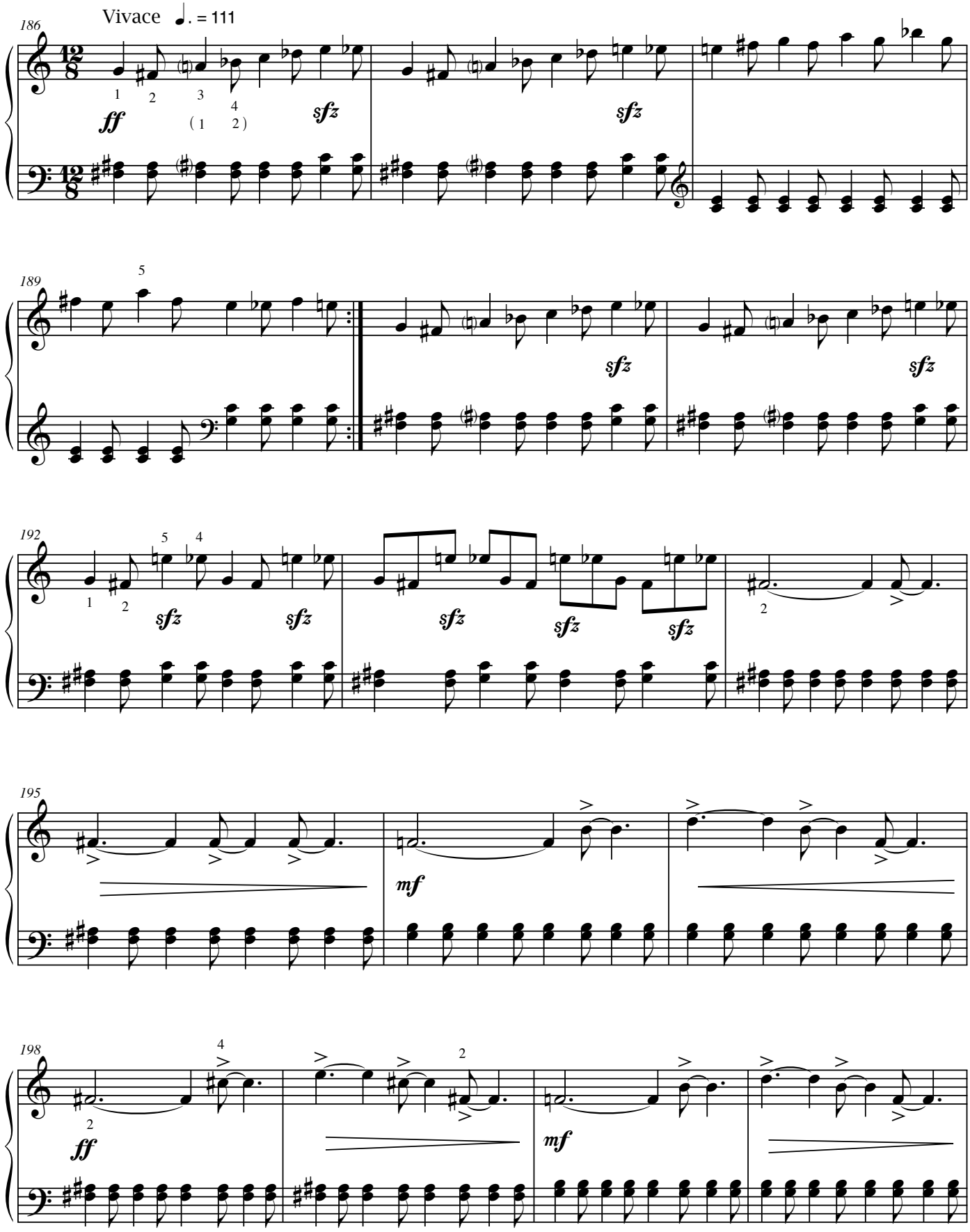
N.B. A "swing" rhythm (in the crack between triplet and dotted) may be used when a triplet is marked in this number. *All* other rhythms should be performed exactly as written.

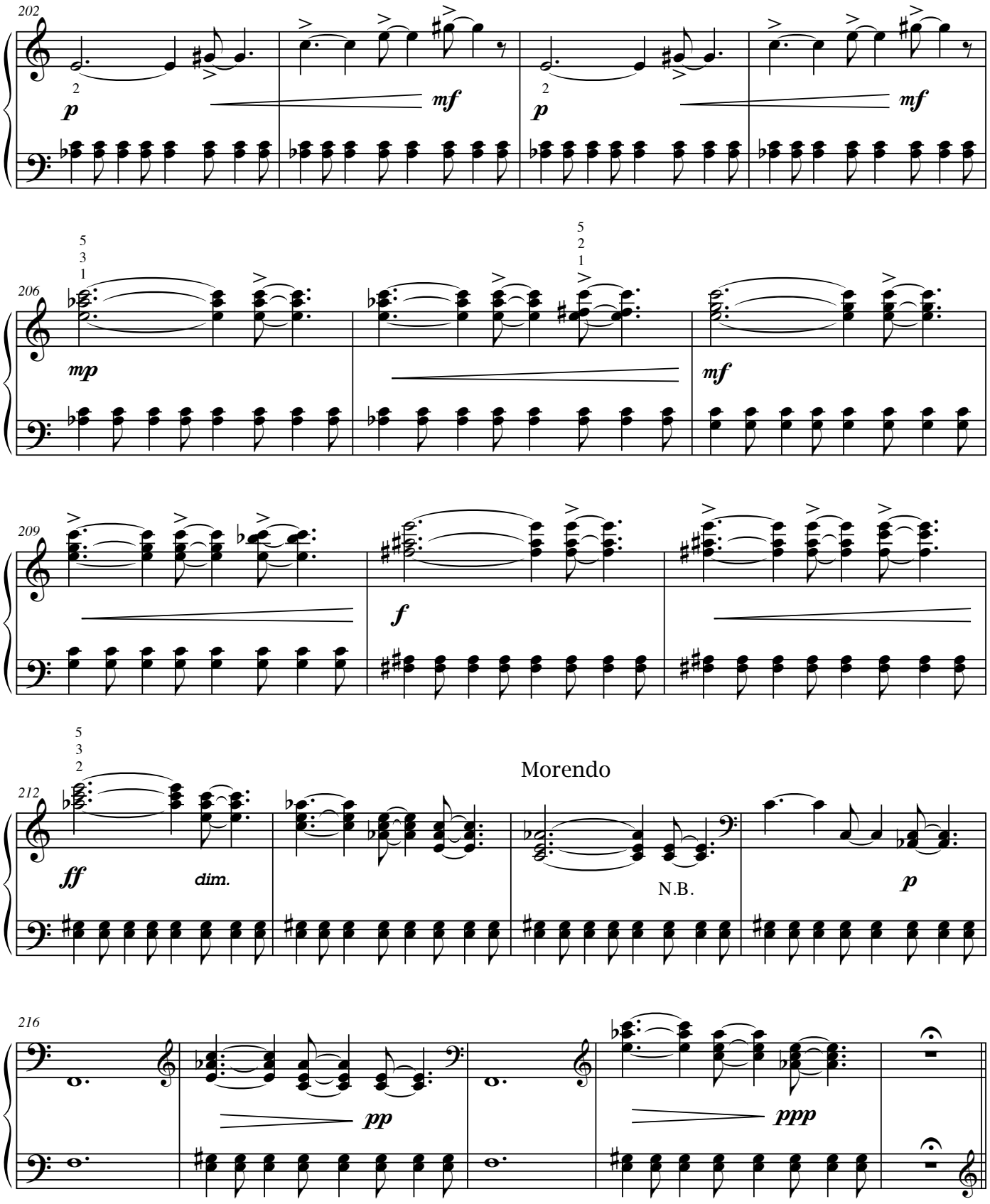

87
mp
ff
94
mf
ff
101
mf
f
2 5
1 4
2 3
108
mf
f
1 3 5
115
mf
f
ff
1 2 4
1 3 5


122
mf
130
ff
mf
mp
138
Ped.
147
Ped.
153
8va
cresc.
160
8va
8vb
mp
ff
f
sfz


Moderato ♩= 60
168
171
174
178
181

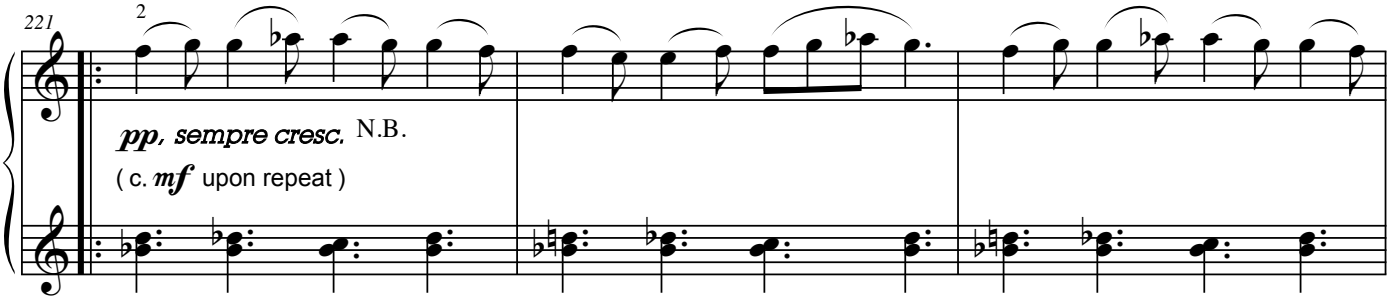
4. The Fox Hunt



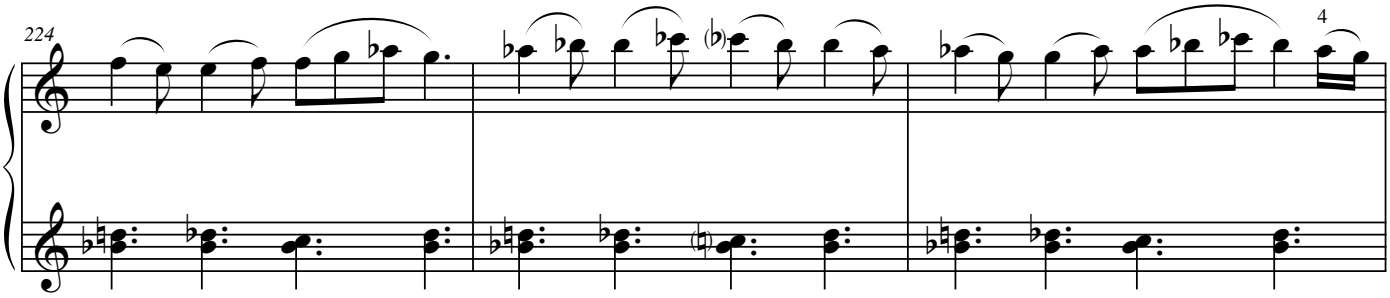


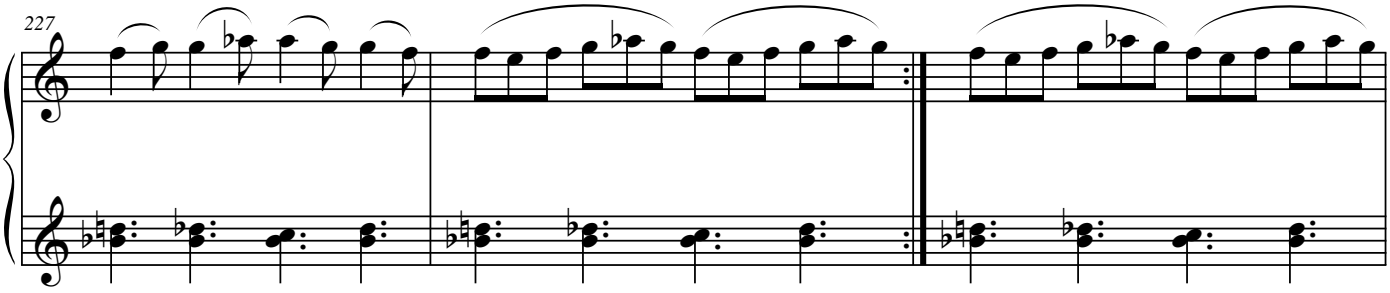
N.B. Three-factor augmented chords continue to obtain here and in mm.215 and 217. (As part of the music's getting "lost," the l.h. *ostinato* is allowed to take precedence.) The music should simply be played as written, with no attempt made to "bring out" the missing factors, for that would spoil the dramatic effect here. Nevertheless, be aware that in the r.h., the notes of mm.215 and 217 are respectively two octaves and one octave lower than m.219.)

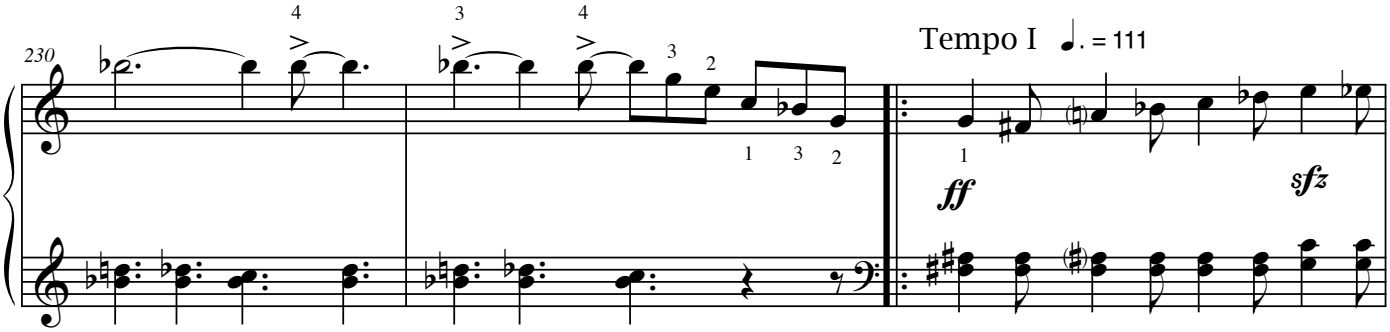
Lento, sempre accelerando ♩. = 55 to begin (♩. = c. 83 upon repeat)

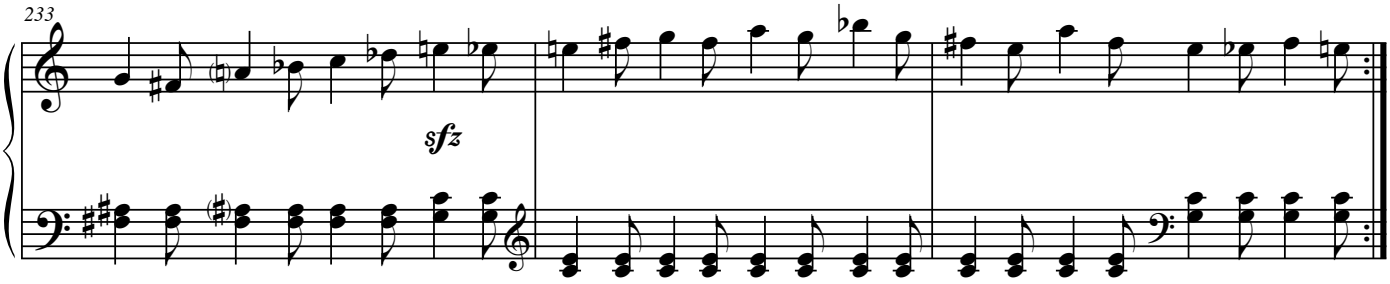


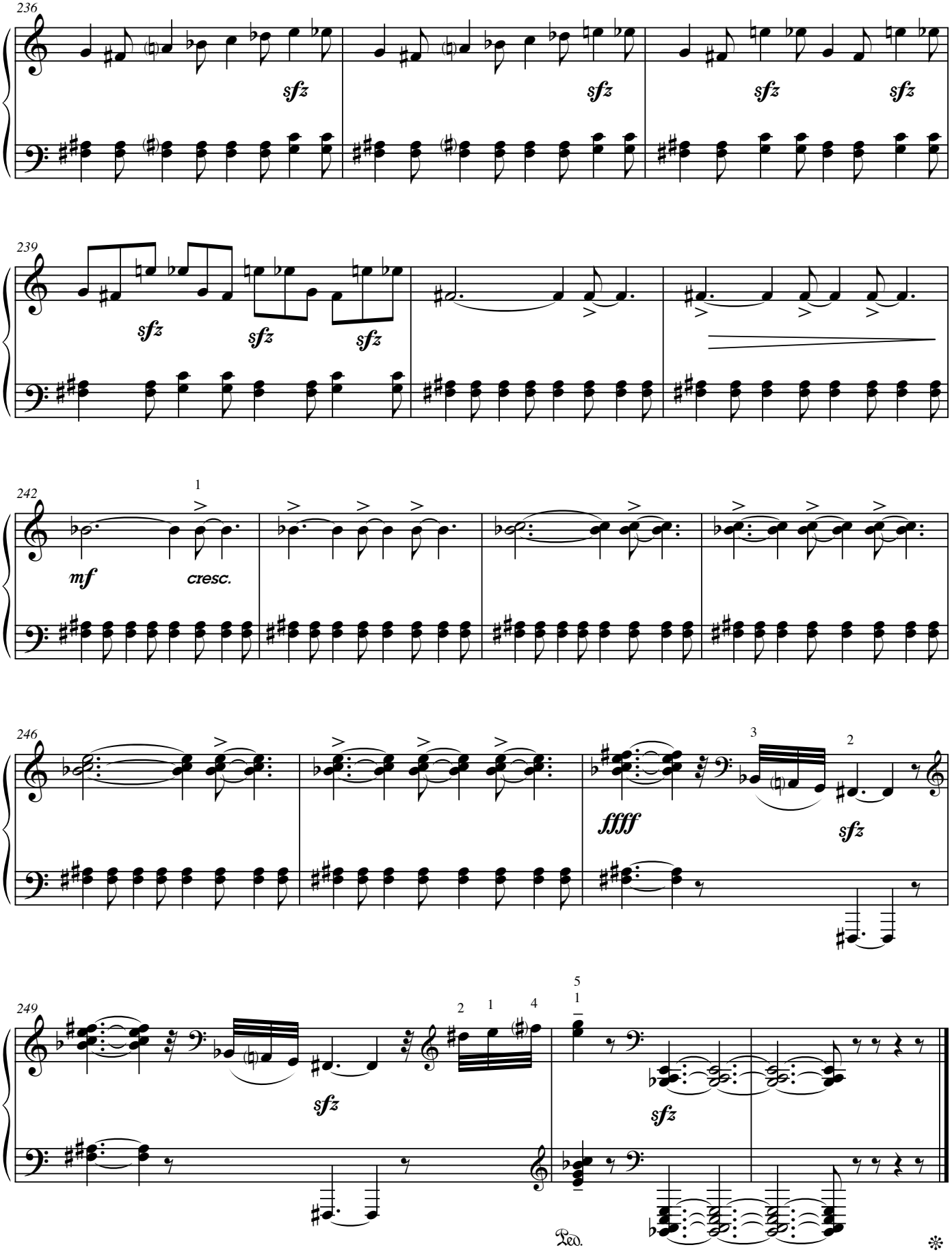
N.B. Upon repeat, the music continues to get faster and louder.





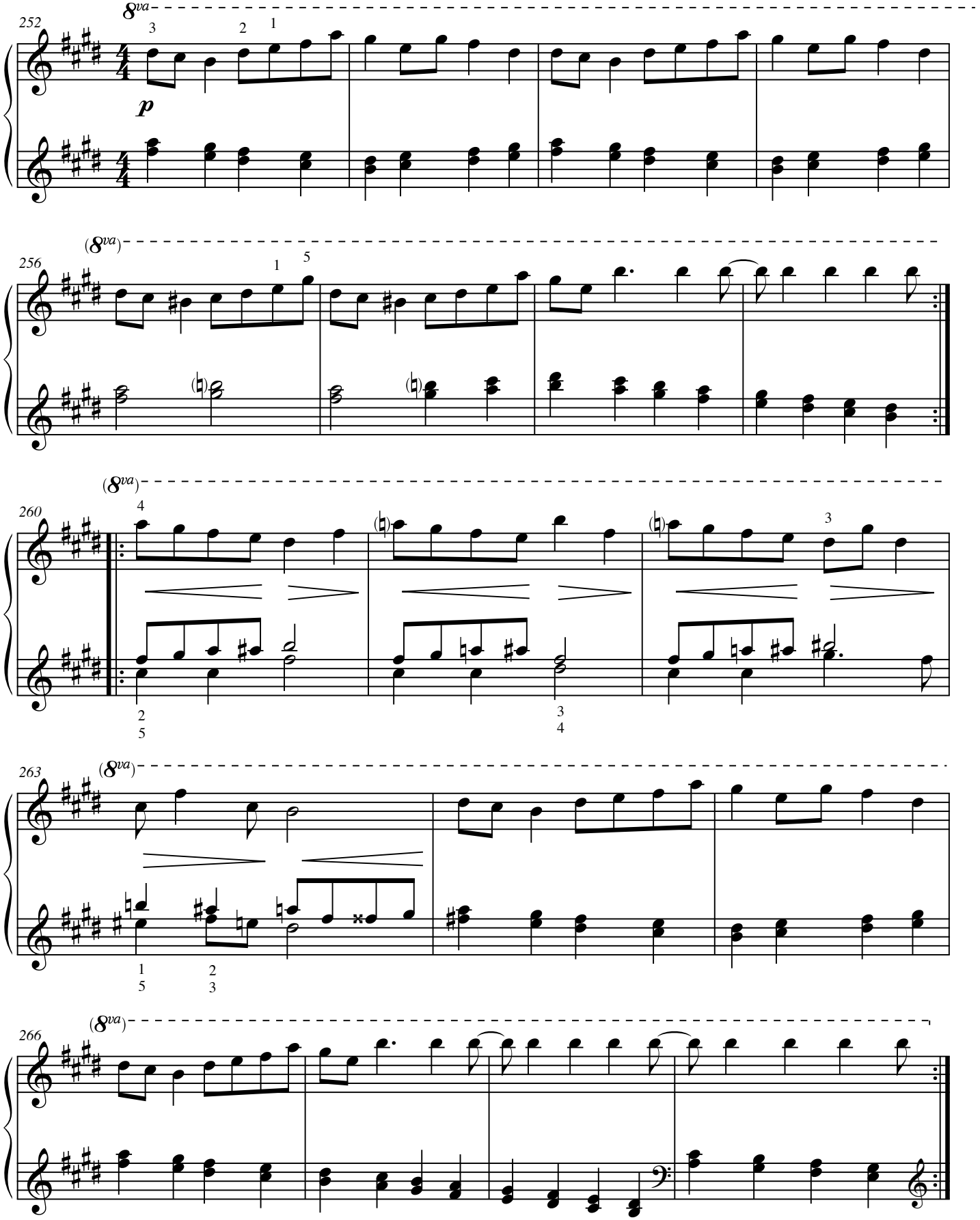


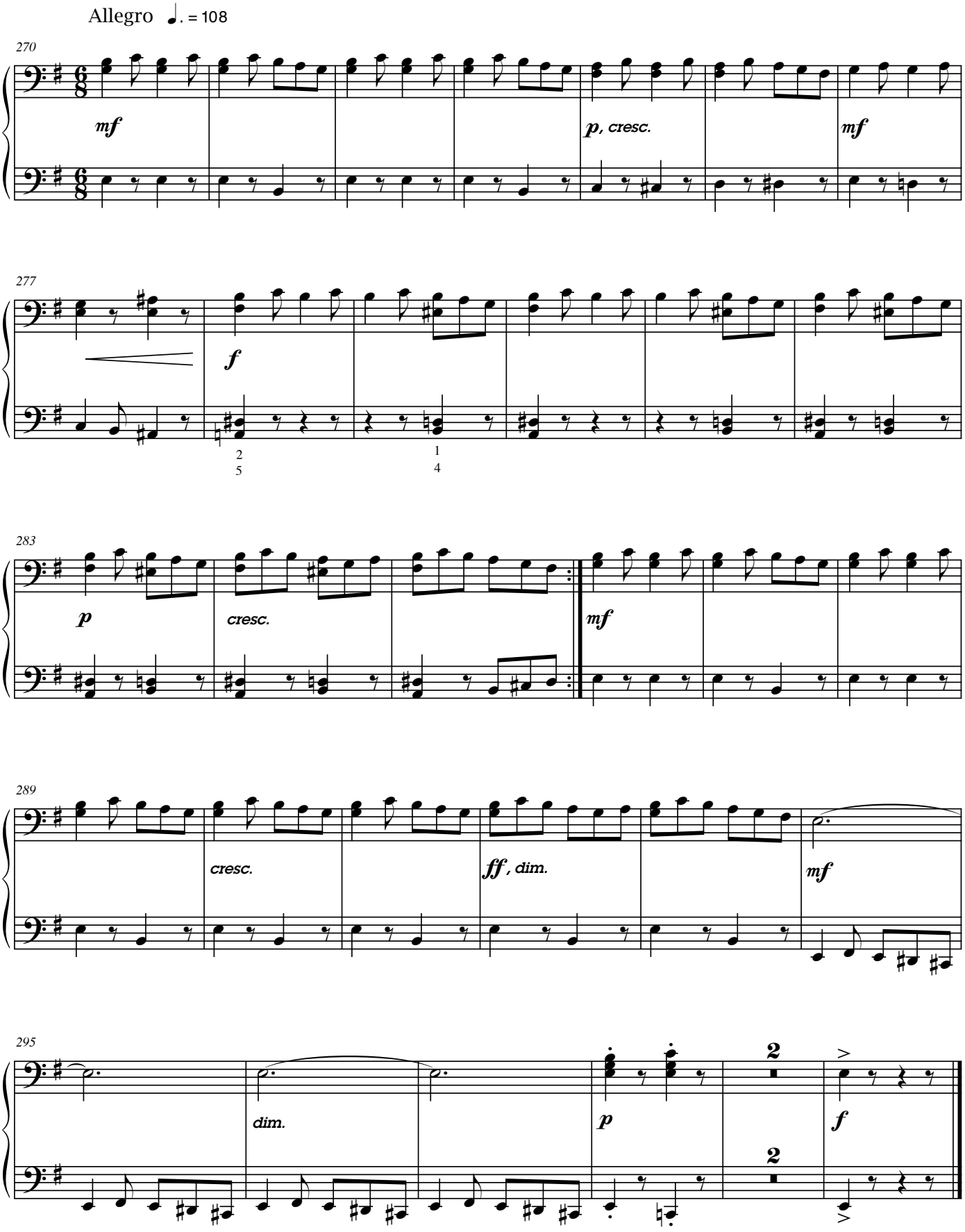


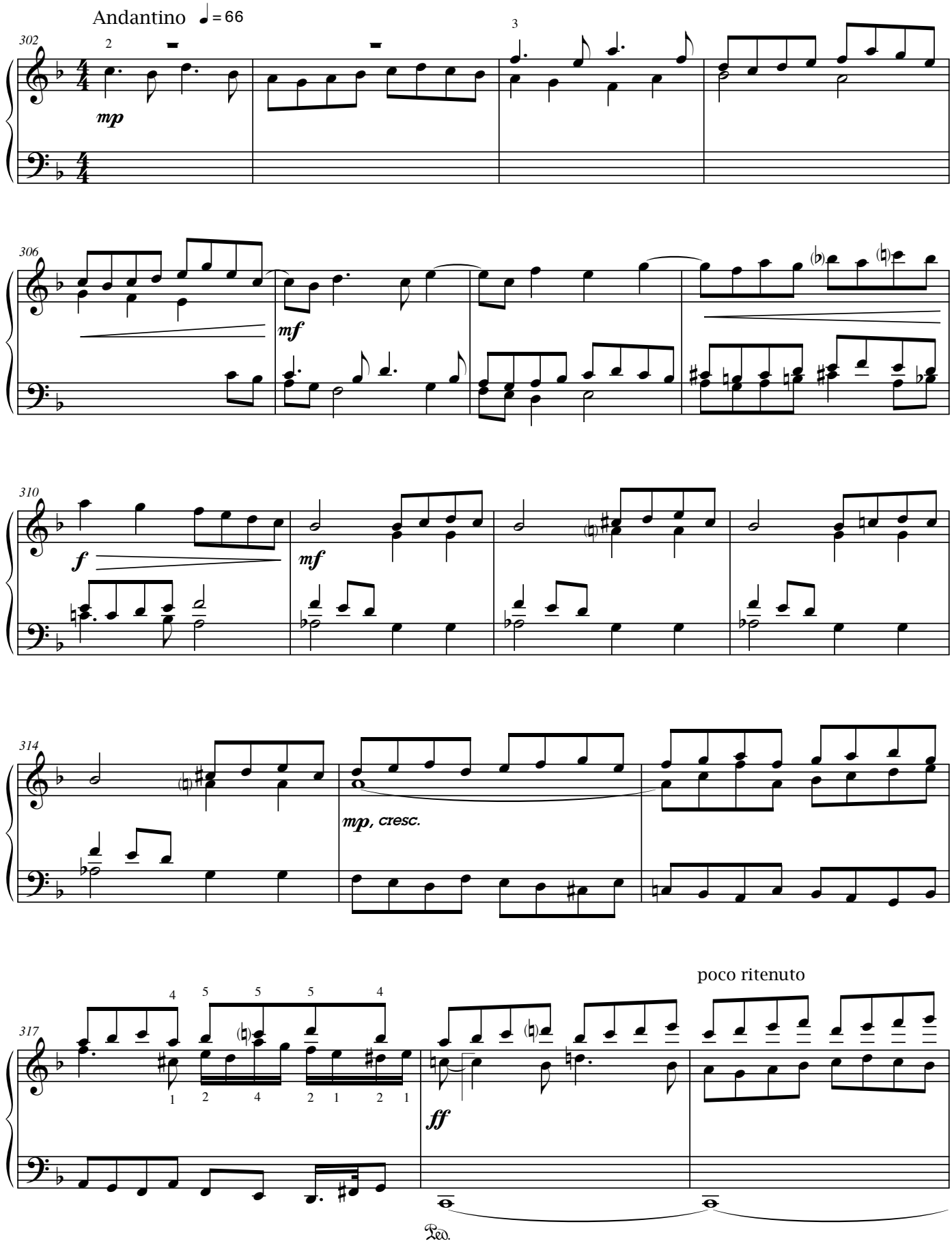

236
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
239
sfz
sfz
sfz
242
1
mf
cresc.
246
ffff
sfz
3
2
249
sfz
2
1
4
5
1
sfz
Ped.

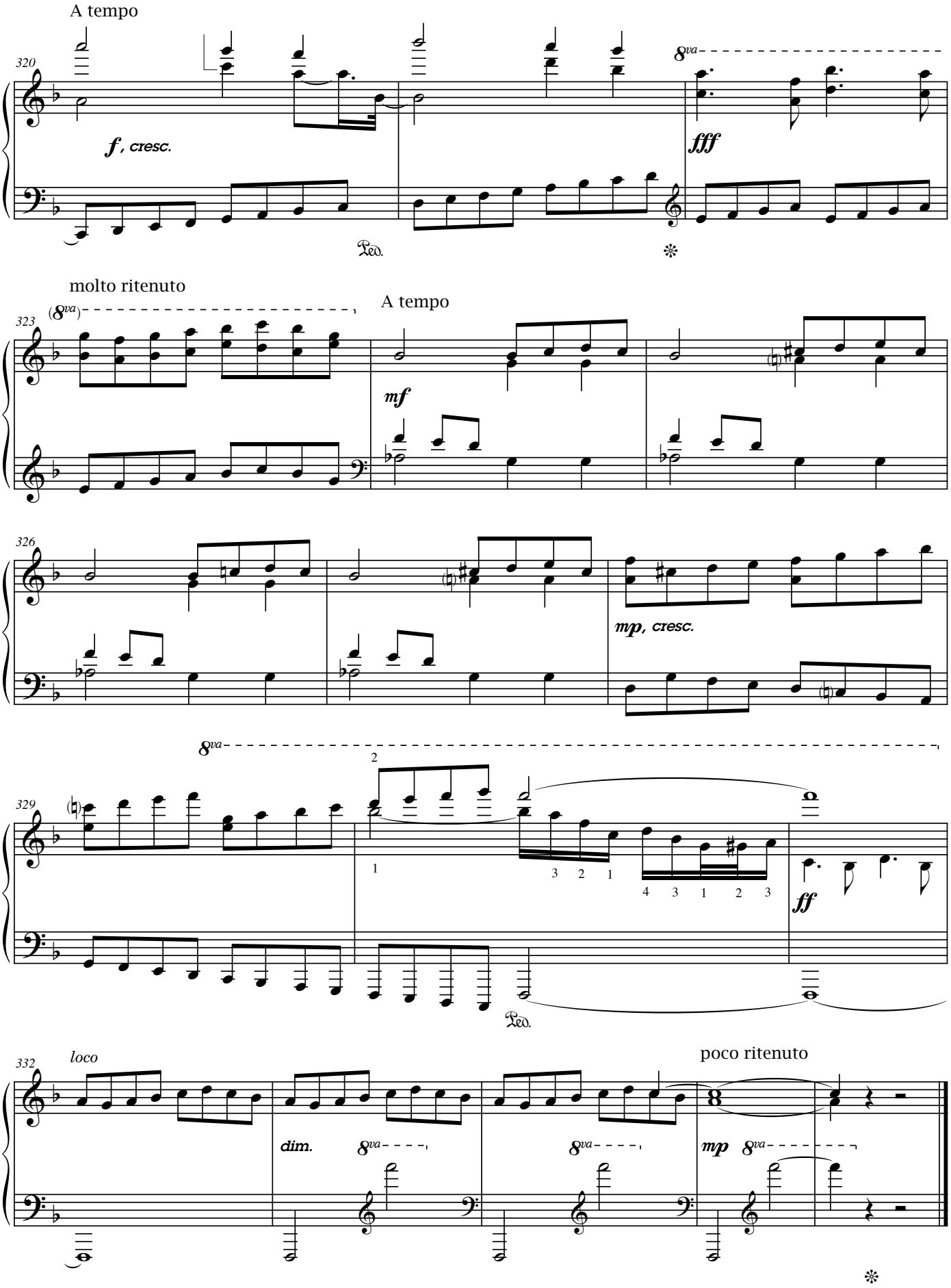
5. Romance

Adagietto ♩ = 58
leggerissimo

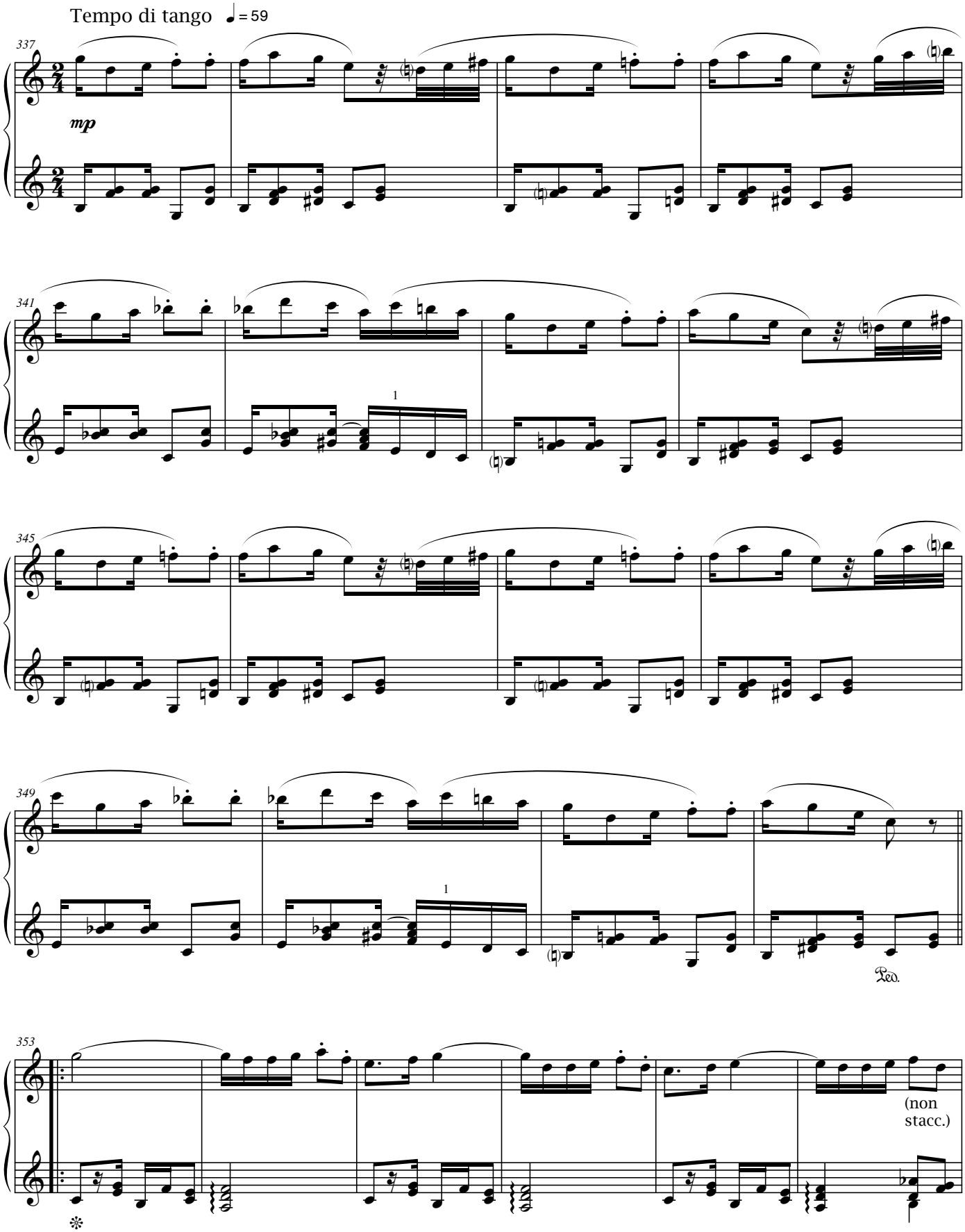


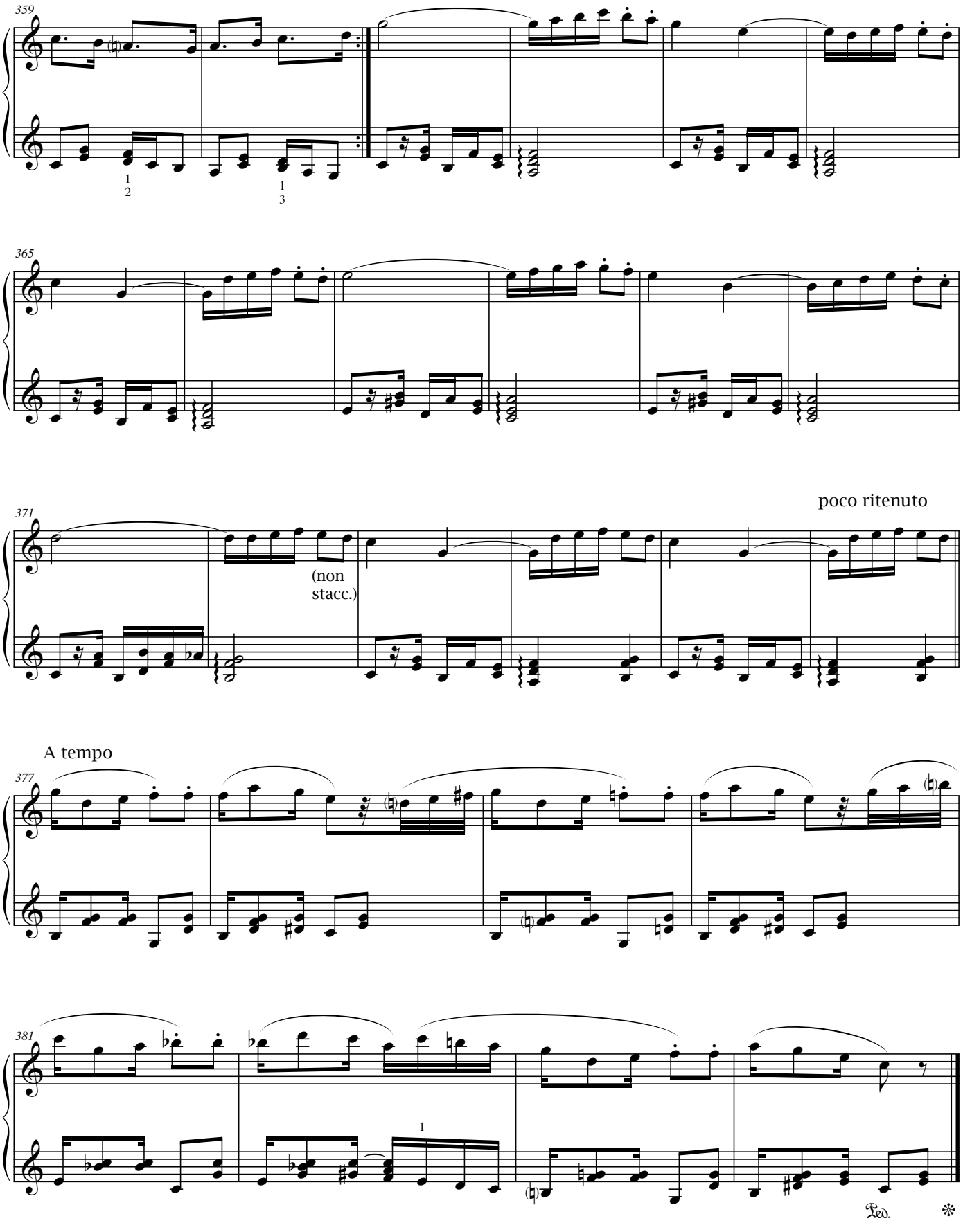

Allegro ♩. = 108
270
mf
p, cresc.
mf
277
f
2
5
1
4
283
p
cresc.
mf
289
cresc.
ff, dim.
mf
295
dim.
p
2
2
f

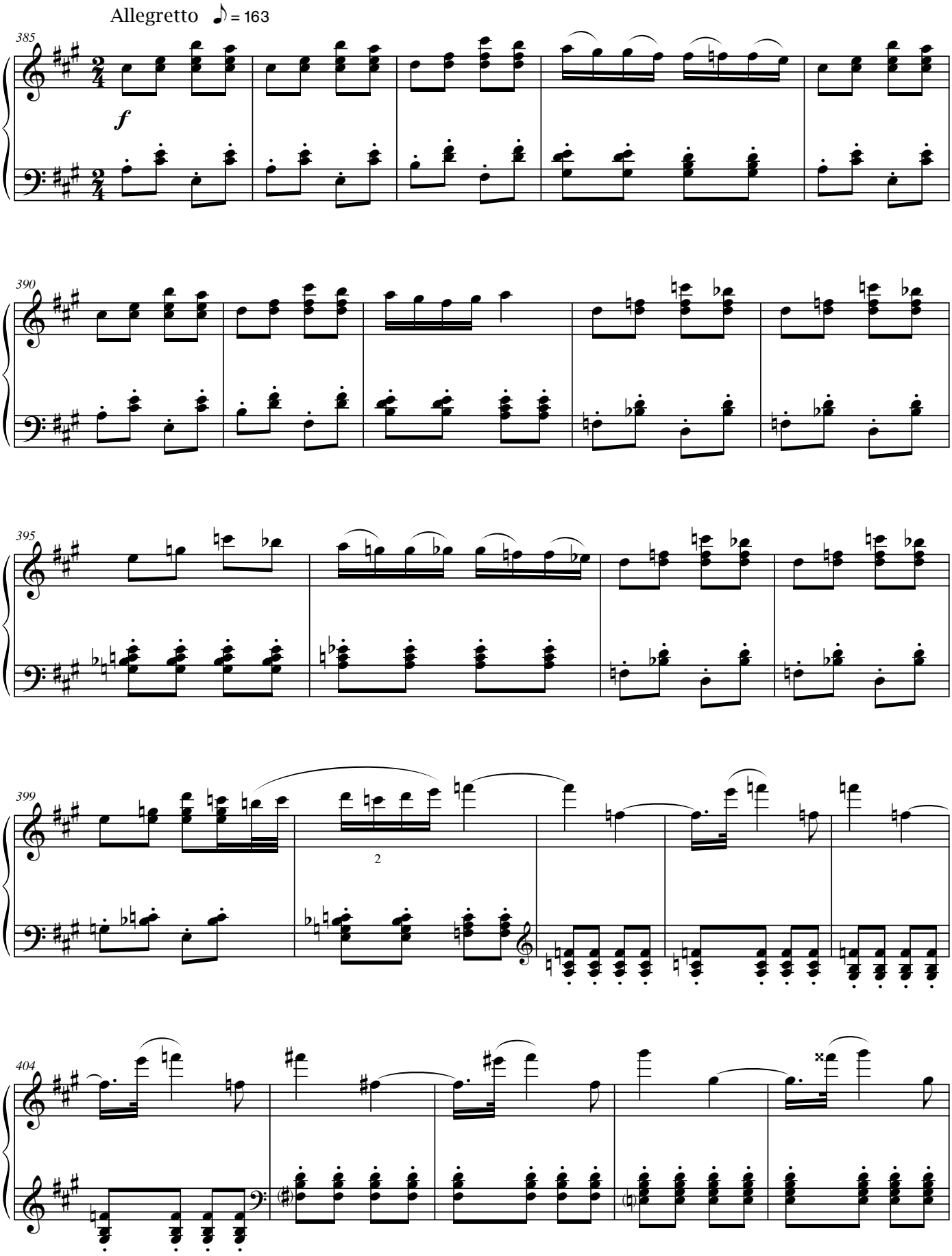

Andantino ♩= 66
302
mp
306
mf
310
f
mf
314
mp, cresc.
317
ff
poco ritenuto
Ped.

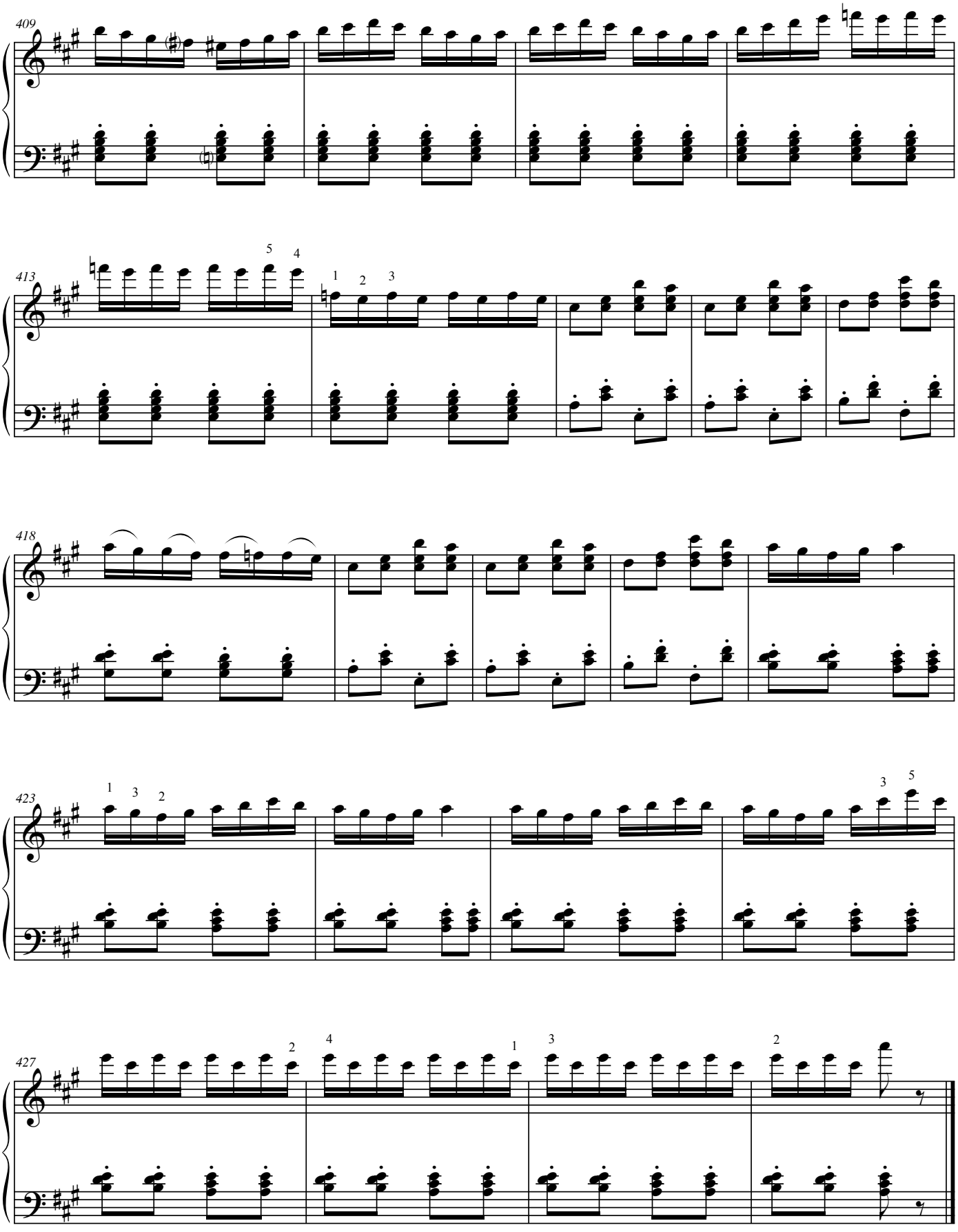

A tempo
320
8va
f, cresc.
fff
Ped.
molto ritenuto
A tempo
323
(8va)
mf
326
mp, cresc.
8va
329
2
1
3 2 1
4 3 1 2 3
ff
Ped.
332
loco
dim.
8va
8va
poco ritenuto
mp
8va

8. Tropicana

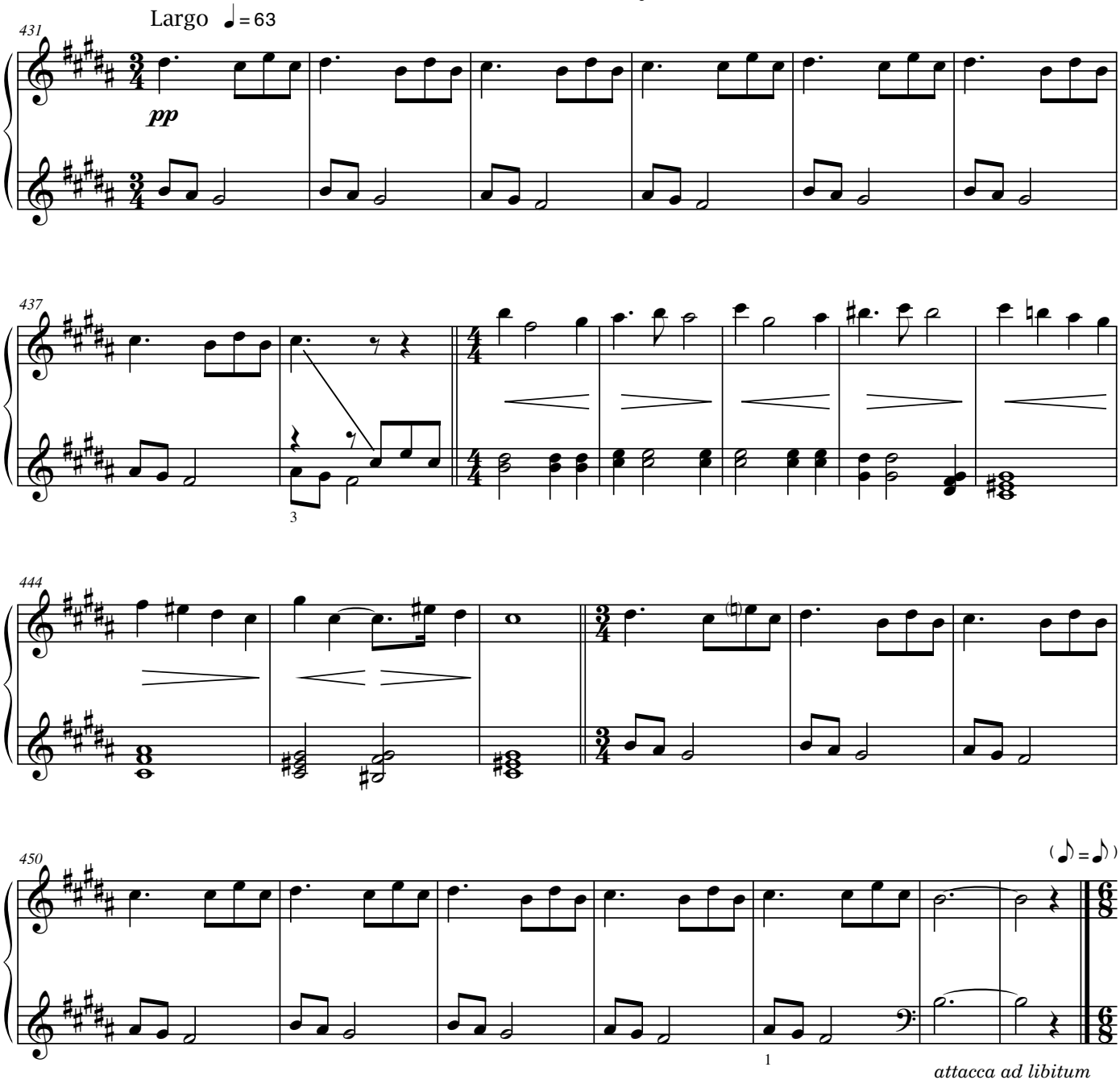



359
365
371
poco ritenuto
(non
stacc.)
A tempo
377
381
Ped.

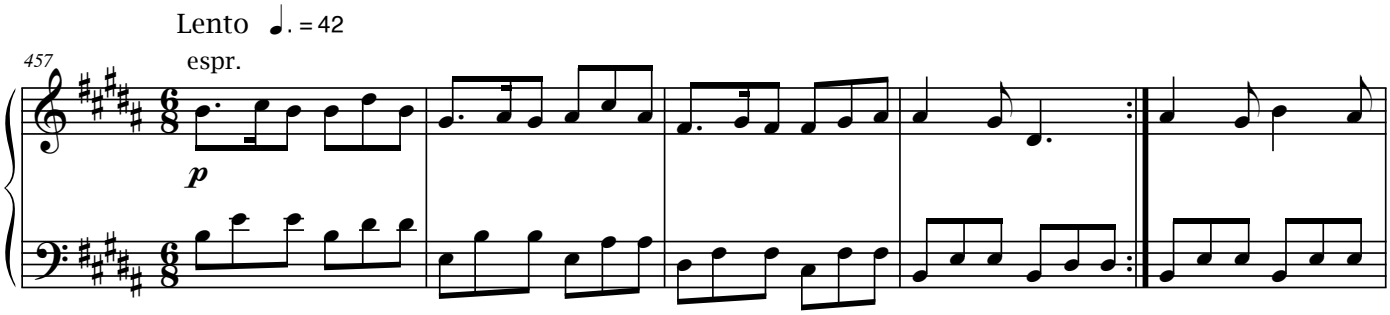

Allegretto ♪ = 163
385
f
390
395
399
2
404

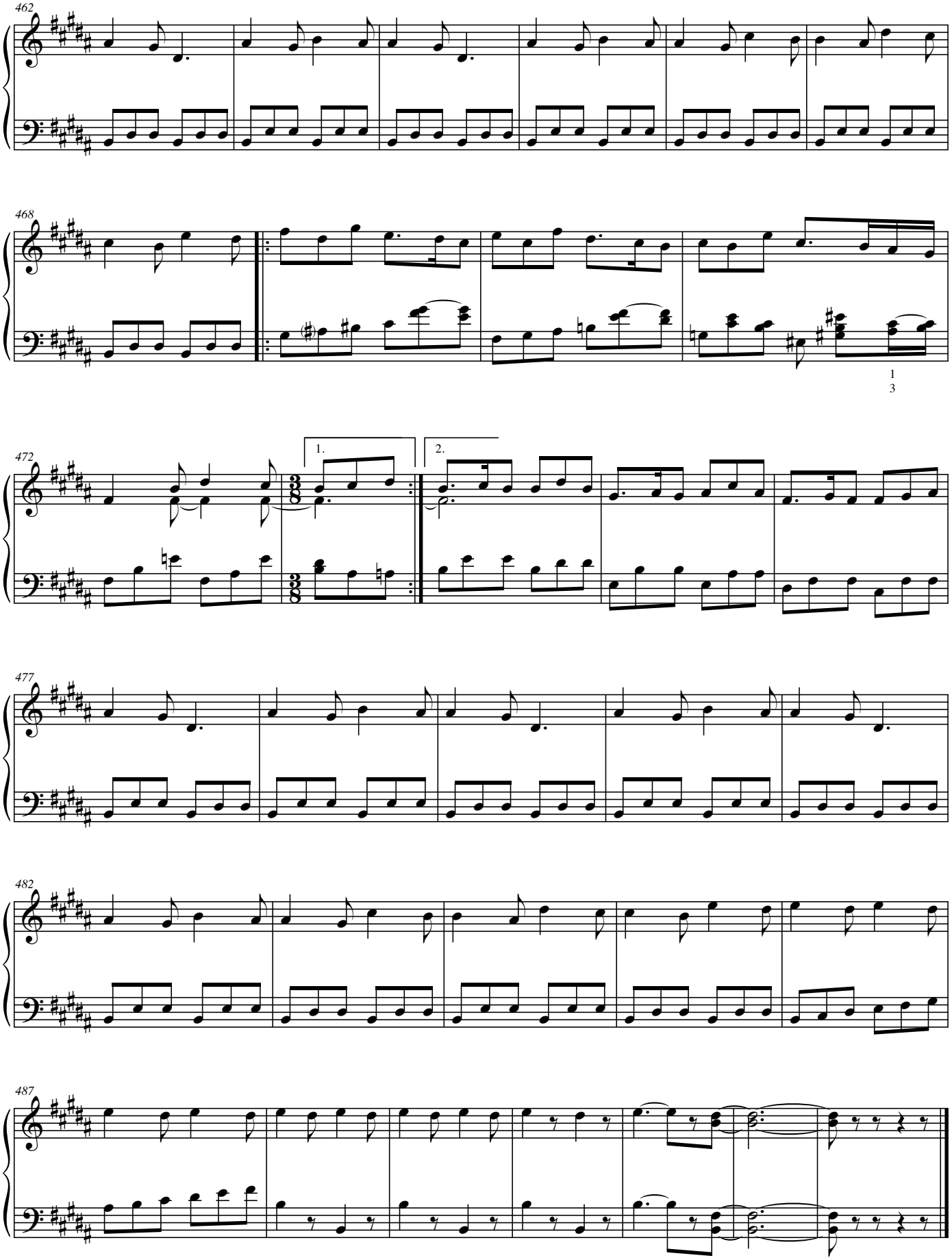

409
413
418
423
427

10. Lullaby



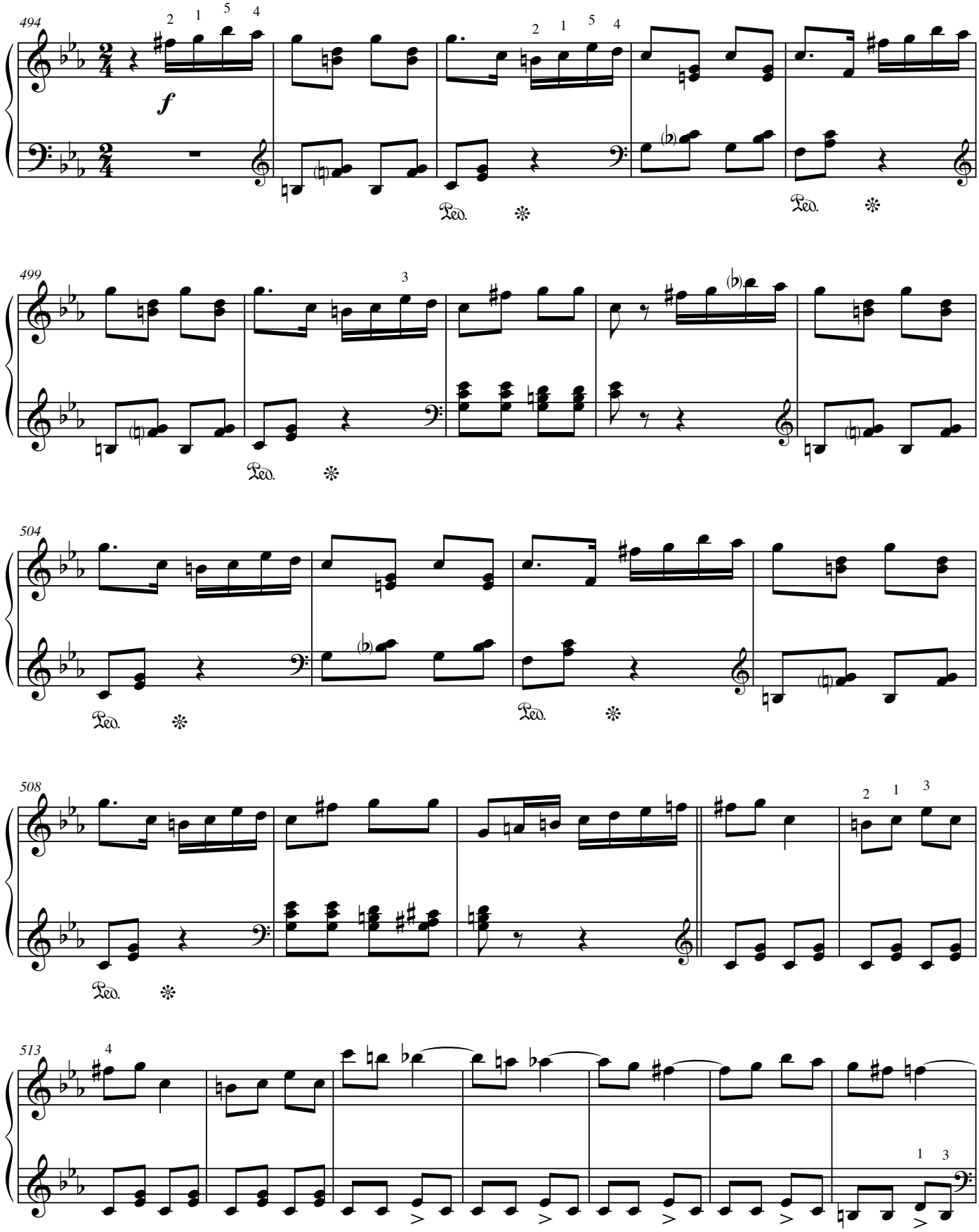
11. Pastorale

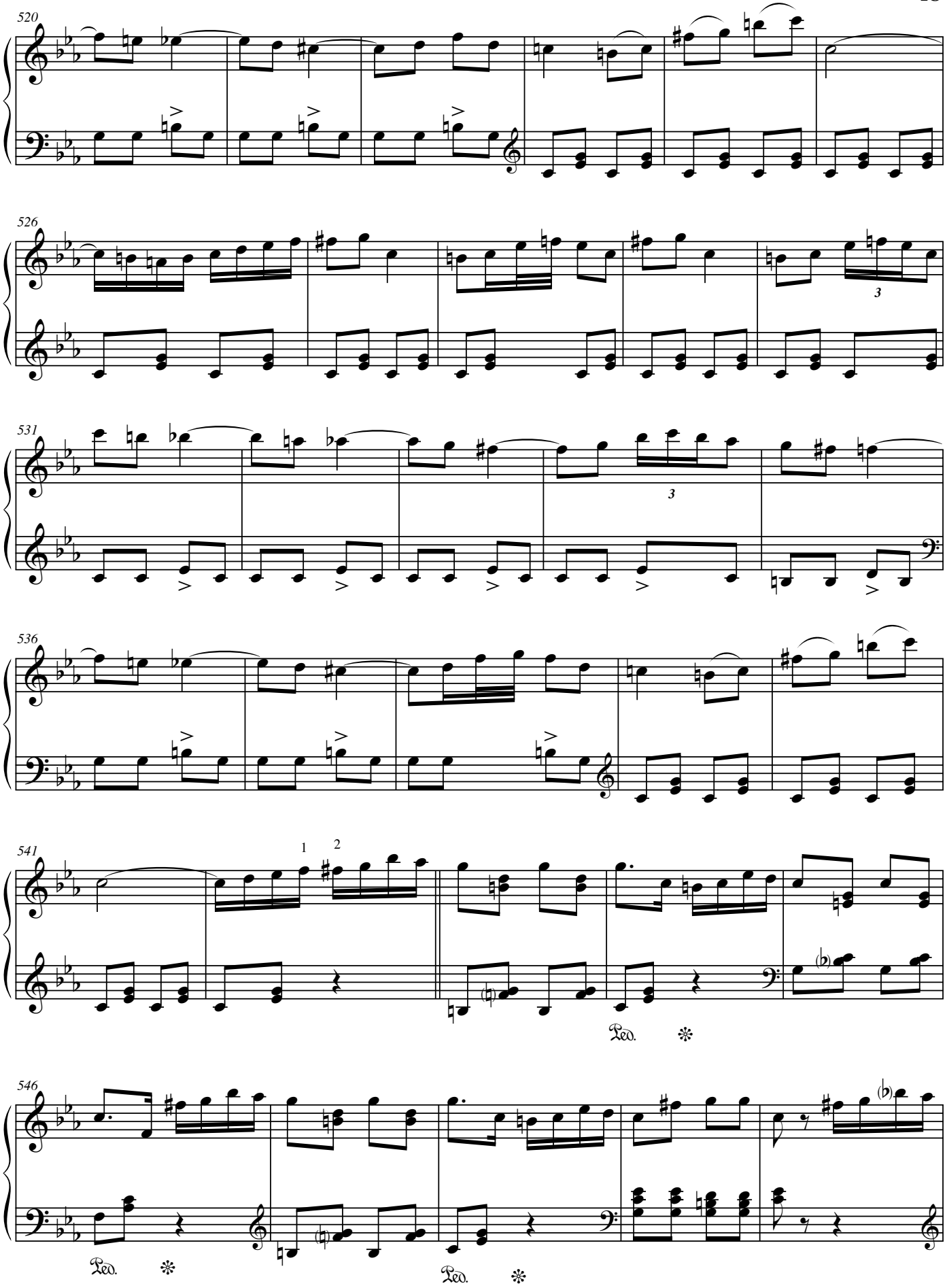


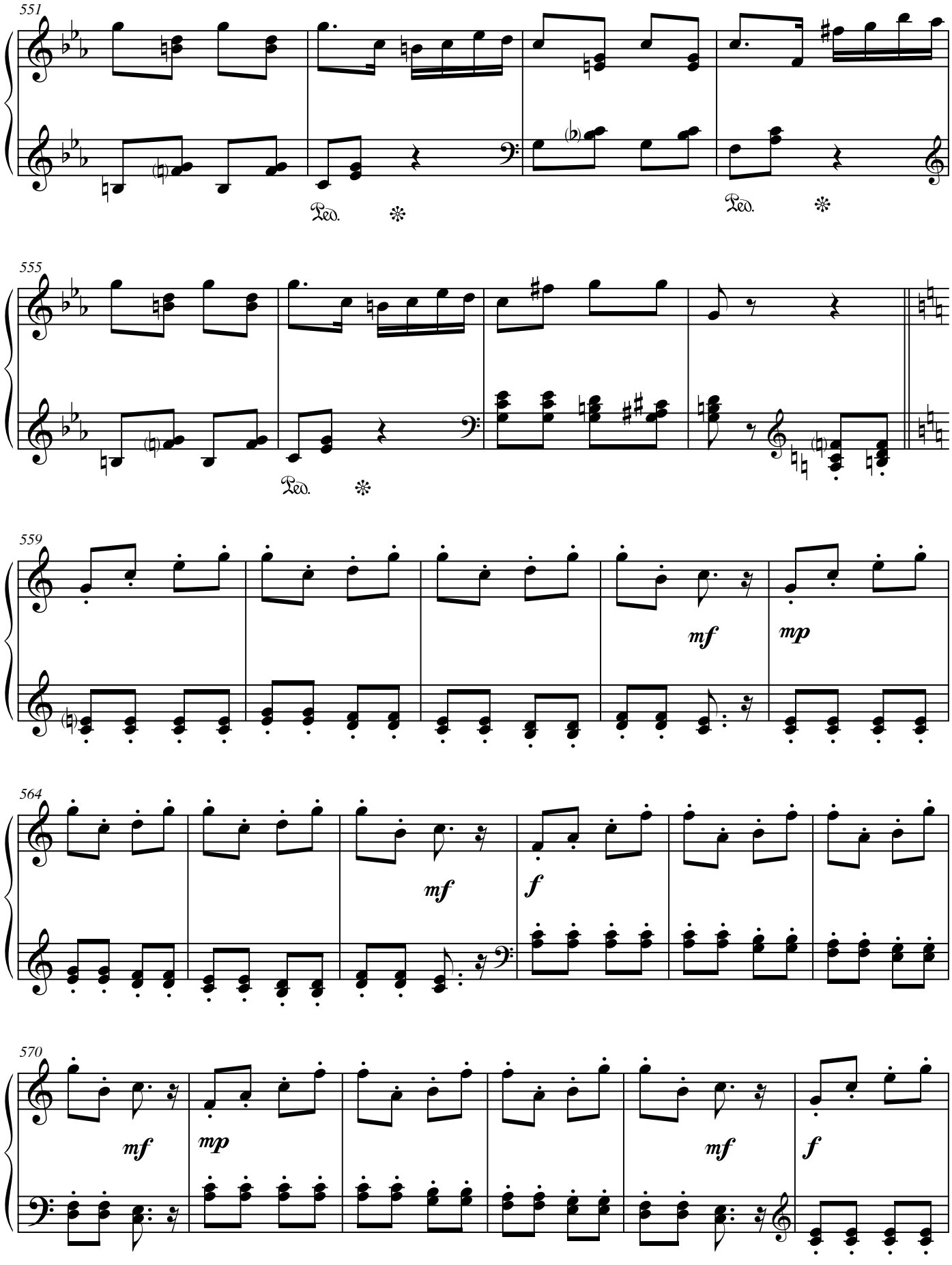

462
468
1
3
472
1.
2.
477
482
487

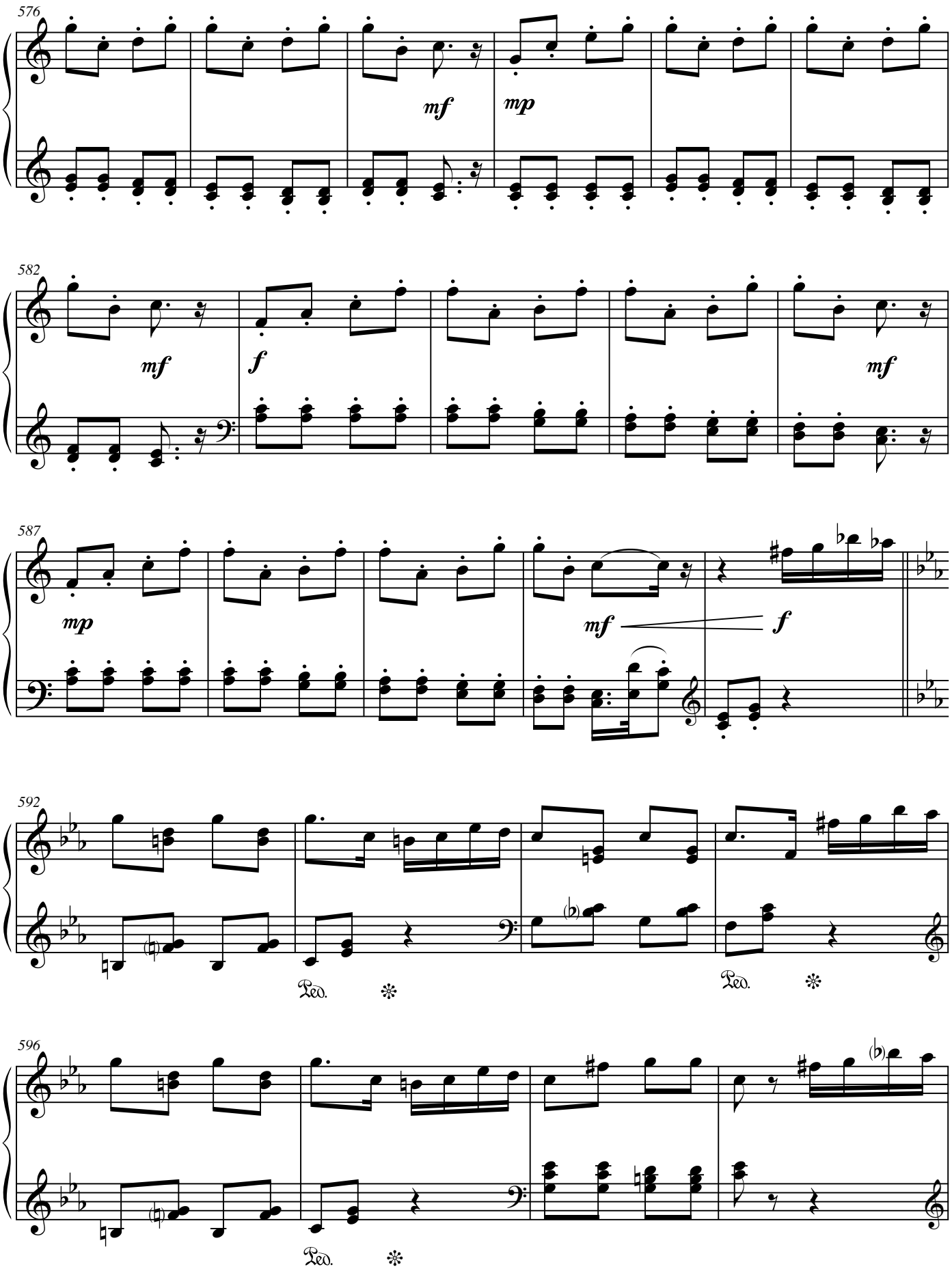
12. Galop

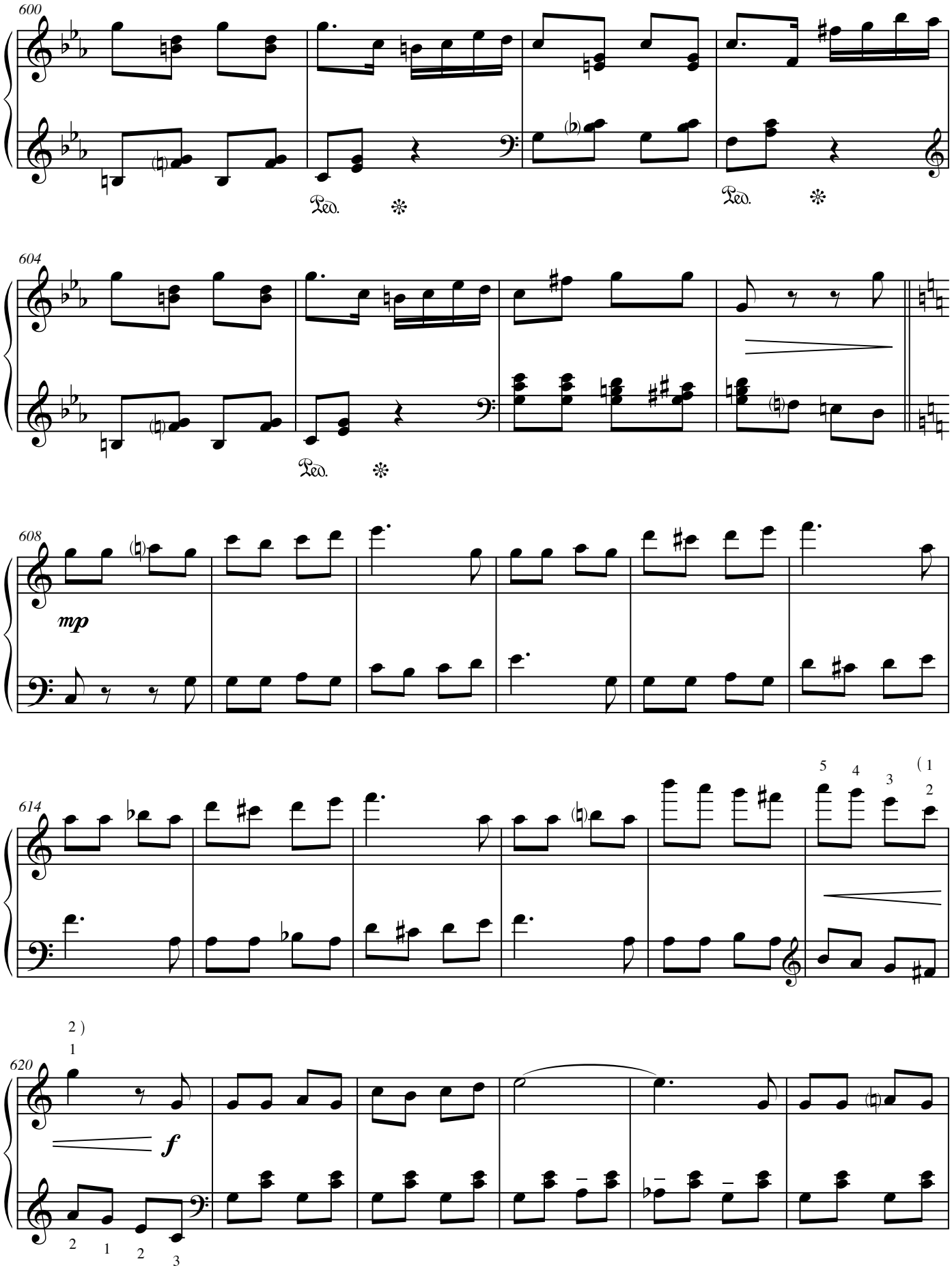
Allegro ma non troppo ♩ = 100

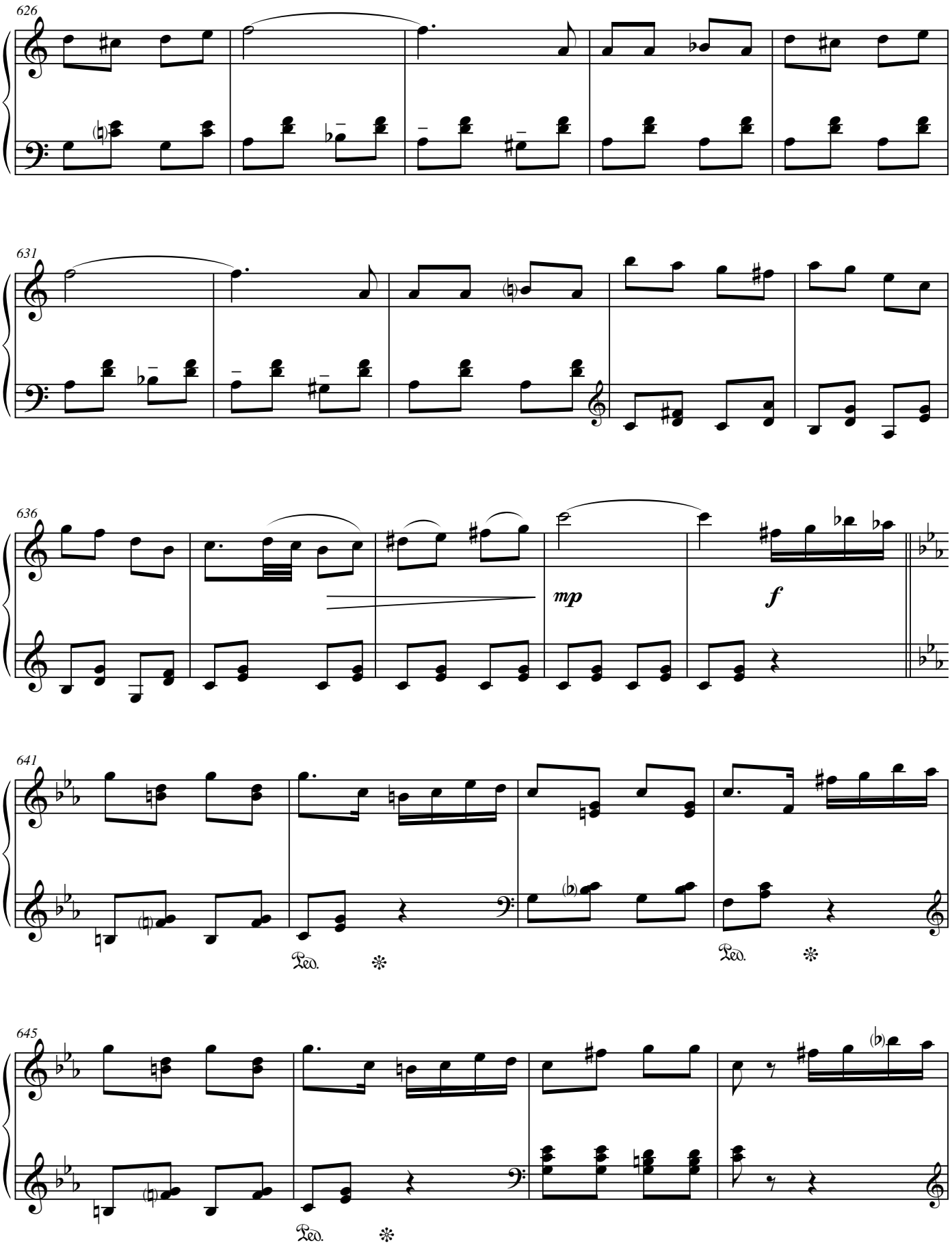


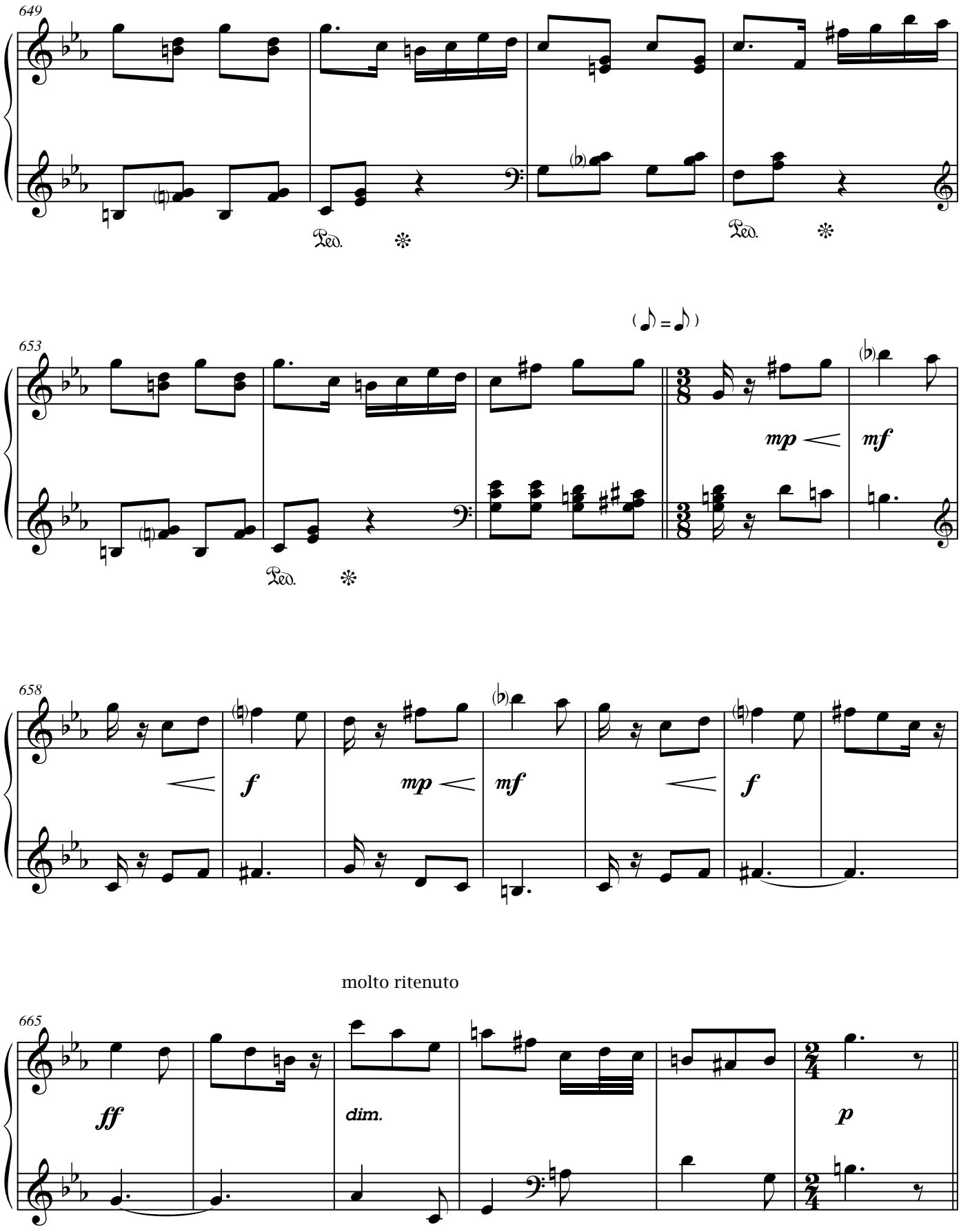

520
526
3
531
3
536
541
1
2
Ped.
546
Ped.
Ped.

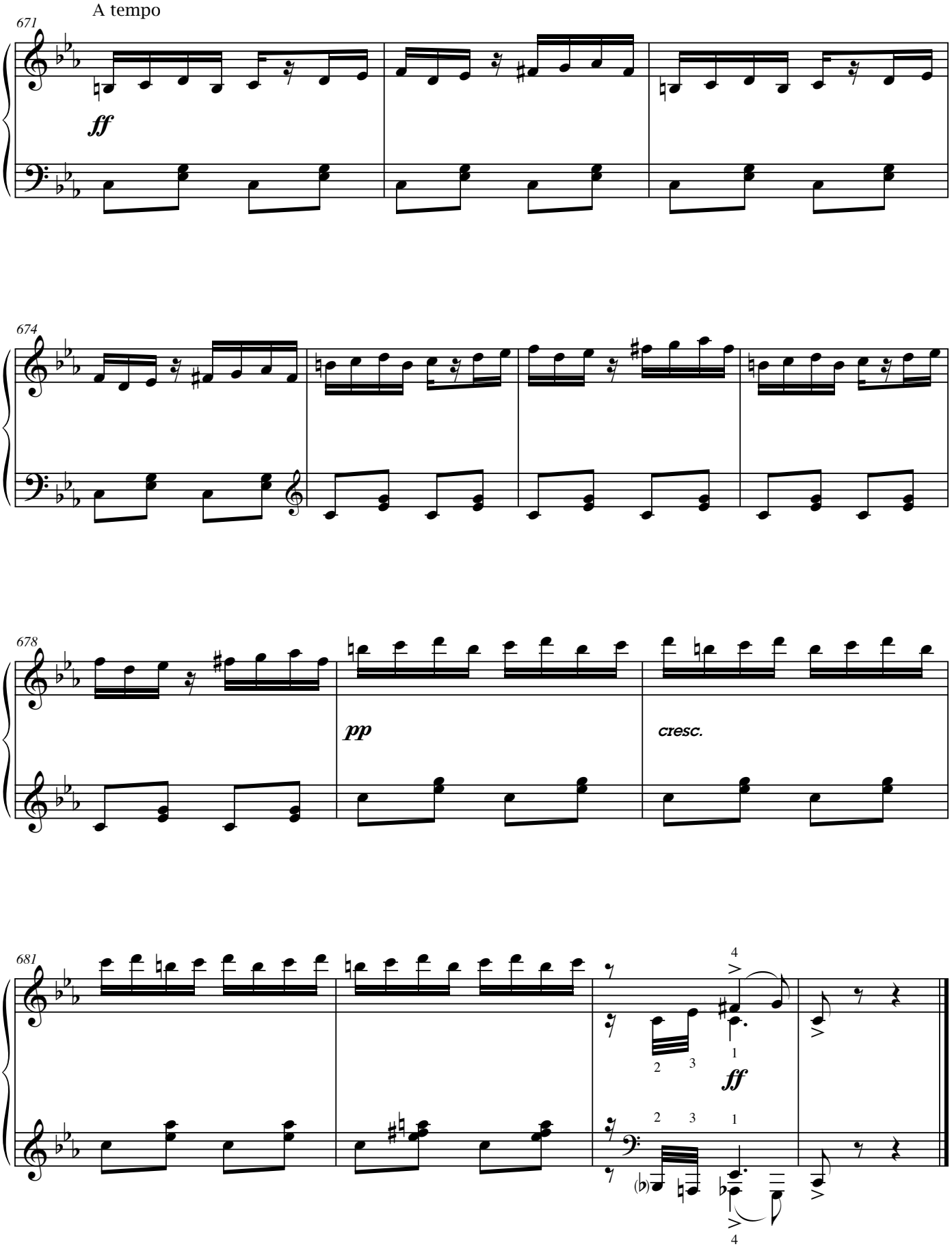

551
Ped.
Ped.
555
Ped.
559
mf
mp
564
mf
f
570
mf
mp
mf
f


576
mf
mp
582
mf
f
mf
587
mp
mf
f
592
Ped.
Ped.
596
Ped.


600
Ped.
Ped.
604
Ped.
608
mp
614
5
4
3
(1
2
620
2)
1
f
2
1
2
3


626
631
636
mp
f
641
Ped.
Ped.
645
Ped.


649
Ped.
Ped.
653
(♪ = ♪)
mp
mf
Ped.
658
f
mp
mf
f
molto ritenuto
665
ff
dim.
p


A tempo
671
ff
674
678
pp
cresc.
681
ff