John Carbon

Six Spanish Lessons

for piano

JC COLLECTIONS
The Music of American Composer **John Carbon**

Six Spanish Lessons was composed originally for harpsichord in the summer of 1988 during a period when I was enjoying beginning Spanish lessons along with my friend and colleague harpsichordist Bruce Gustafson. The lessons were given to us by another colleague and friend, Ana Börger-Reese, and took place in her garden. The piece was subsequently premiered by Mr. Gustafson at Franklin and Marshall College that fall. The piano version was created in 1990. The titles need a bit of explanation, even for those who have more than a passing knowledge of the language. After a "Prólogo," which sets the mood with a reference to a well-known folk tune, the suite begins with the depiction of the manic "La perra Marysol," the very small hyperactive dog of our teacher, who was always present at these gatherings. In the following piece, "La siesta de Domenico Scarlatti," the famous harpsichordist/composer is depicted during his sojourn in Spain with hand-crossings (one of his trademarks) perhaps in the middle of a dream (indicated in the score by the words “el sueño”). Because Ana used to always take a siesta before, during and after our lessons, this piece is necessary. Next we have "Siempre elegante," (always elegant), a reference to the extravagant meals Ana served in her garden. The absurdist piece, "Y de niño?" (and as a child?) refers to the terrifying drills in the imperfect tense we performed as students. The teacher is depicted in the faster parts of the piece and the students more slowly. The suite concludes with "El trabajo del gato" (the cat’s work), which refers to Blanche, Bruce’s cat, yet another resident of the garden who was always occupied with afternoon chores.

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The Music of American Composer **John Carbon**

Born in Chicago in 1951, John Carbon studied composition at Rice University and at the University of California at Santa Barbara, where his teachers were Thea Musgrave, Paul Cooper, and Peter Racine Fricker. He is now Professor of Music at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Carbon's music--which has been gaining prominence in the past few years due to an increasing number of high-profile performances and recordings--includes three operas, *Marie Laveau*, *Benjamin*, and *Out of this World,* along with many choral, orchestral, vocal, and chamber works. Carbon has a special flair for the virtuosity and drama needed for concertos, and has completed works in this genre for clarinet, violin, piano, and most recently double bass.

Mr. Carbon's work has been performed in New York at Merkin Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall and Avery Fisher and Alice Tully Halls at Lincoln Center, Boston's Symphony Hall, and Prague's Smetana Hall. Premieres of Carbon works have been presented by the New York Chamber Symphony, the Czech Radio Orchestra, and the Alaria Chamber Ensemble of New York. His *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra* (premiered under Gerard Schwarz at Avery Fisher Hall in November of 1997) was hailed by New York Times critic Allen Kozinn for "its demandingly agile clarinet line that wove its way through a variegated orchestral fabric .... rich in coloristic effects of the sort that create a sense of depth rather than artificial glitter." Recordings of Carbon's music include his *Violin Concerto*, released on Three American Concertos (MMC 2059), performed by Violinist Peter Zazofsky with Gerhardt Zimmermann conducting the Warsaw National Philharmonic Orchestra. Fanfare critic Robert Maxham praised the concerto for the "...finale's dazzling kinetic virtuosity," and in American Record Guide Bill Faucett commented on the concerto's "....many moments of genuine beauty..." Also becoming well known is the *Clarinet Concerto*, in a spectacular and highly-acclaimed performance with soloist Richard Stoltzman on MMC 2031 with the Warsaw Philharmonic, and *Notturno for Trumpet, Harp, and Strings*, performed by Gerard Schwarz (with Jeff Silberschlag on trumpet) and the Seattle Symphony on Delos. (New Yorkers had a chance to hear Notturno live when it was performed by George Manahan leading the New York Chamber Symphony in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in April, 1999). Other recordings include two orchestral works--*Hommage à Trois,* played by the Slovak Radio Symphony under Szymon Kawalla on Vienna Modern Masters 3011, and *Inner Voices* on MMC 2003 with the Warsaw Philharmonic under Robert Black--and a chamber work for flute and guitar, *Paseos,* on CGS 1024223.

Performances have included several premieres by Ensemble Giverny, with members of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, at the Portland Art Museum, as part of the release of a widely broadcast compact disc recording released by Moonbridge Recordings, *Waterlilies; Musical Visions of Monet,* in conjunction with the opening of the museum's exhibit centering on the late paintings of Monet. The much-acclaimed chamber music group Alaria, with guest clarinetist Doris Hall-Gulati, performed *Dreamspiral* by Mr. Carbon in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 1999 as part of their chamber music series. Premieres have included those by the Philadelphia Trio in Weiss Center for the Performing Arts at Bucknell University of *Do Not Go Gentle* and a new chamber music setting of arias from the composer's opera *Benjamin* in Merkin Concert Hall, New York City. Most recently, performances have included those by the Philadelphia-based Network for New Music, Trio Fedele, cellist Stephen Balderston, pianist Edith Orloff, and an appointment as American composer in residence at the 2nd Annual Santa Barbara Chamber Music Festival in June, 2004.

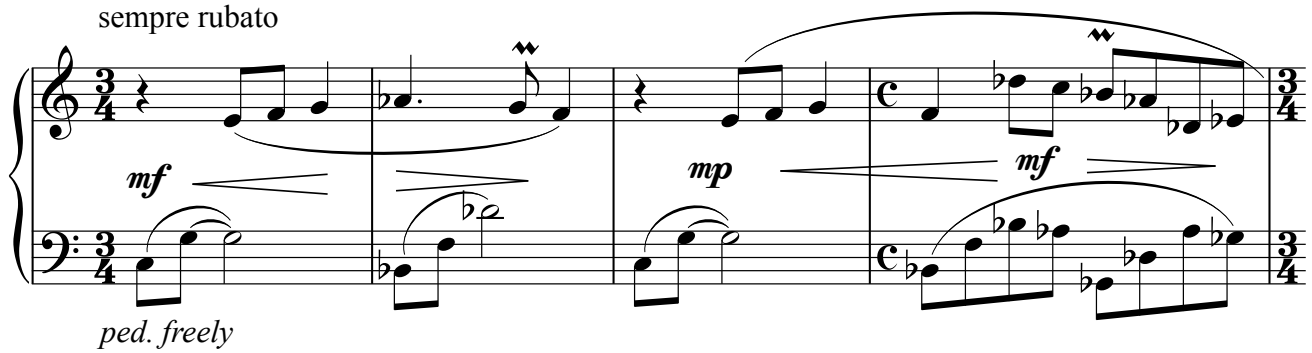
In July, 2002, MMC Recordings released *John Carbon*, a recording of the composer's *Piano Concerto, Rasgos*, *Rhapsody for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra* and *Ghost Town Sketches,* with conductors Vladmír Valék, Maron Alsop, Gerard Schwarz and David Stock conducting the Czech Radio Orchestra, Concordia Orchestra of New York City, the New York Chamber Symphony, and the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, with soloists pianist William Koseluk, violinist Claire Chan, clarinetist Doris Hall-Gulati, and members of the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble. In 2005-2006 recording releases included *Rasgos,* for violin, harp and winds, performed by Claire Chan with Concordia Orchestra, conducted by Maron Alsop and the premiere recording of *Endangered Species,* a new doublebass concerto commissioned by bassist Richard Fredrickson for an MMC release. This work was recorded by the Slovak Radio Orchestra in Bratislava, Slovakia, in November, 2002. Performances in 2006 included a fully-staged production of *Benjamin*, the composer's comic opera with libretto by Sarah White at Franklin & Marshall College as part of the National 300th Celebration. A live-performance version of this performance was released by Zimbel Recordings in late 2007.

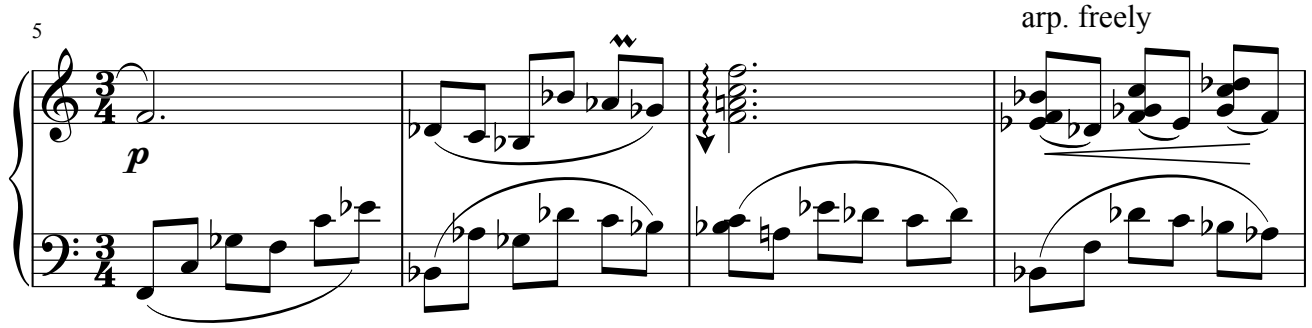
Six Spanish Lessons

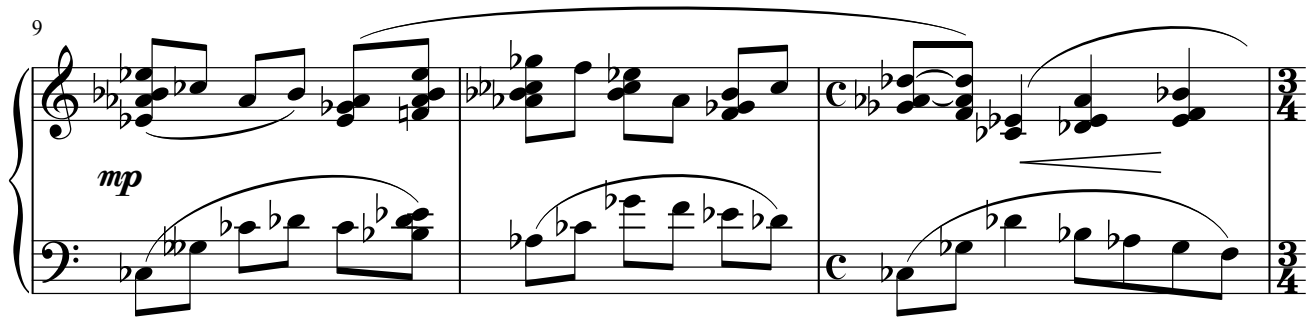
1. Prólogo

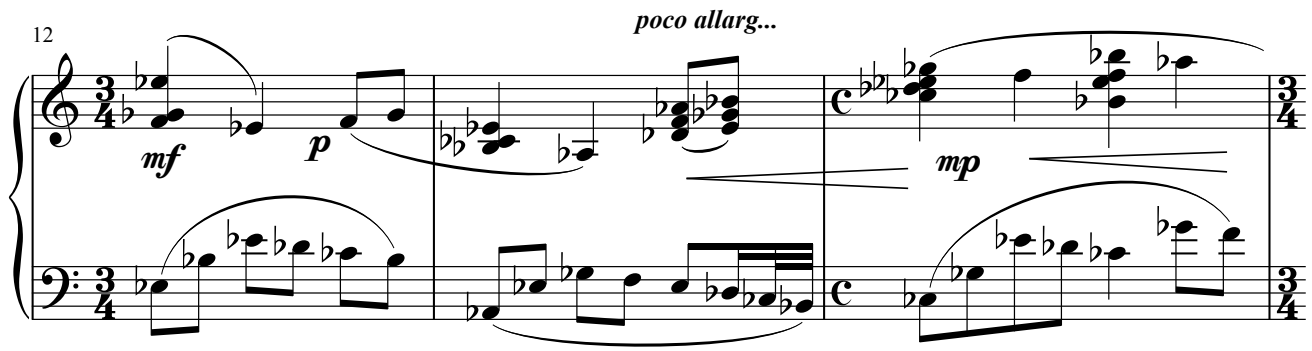
John Carbon (1990)

♩=72
Andante
sempre rubato









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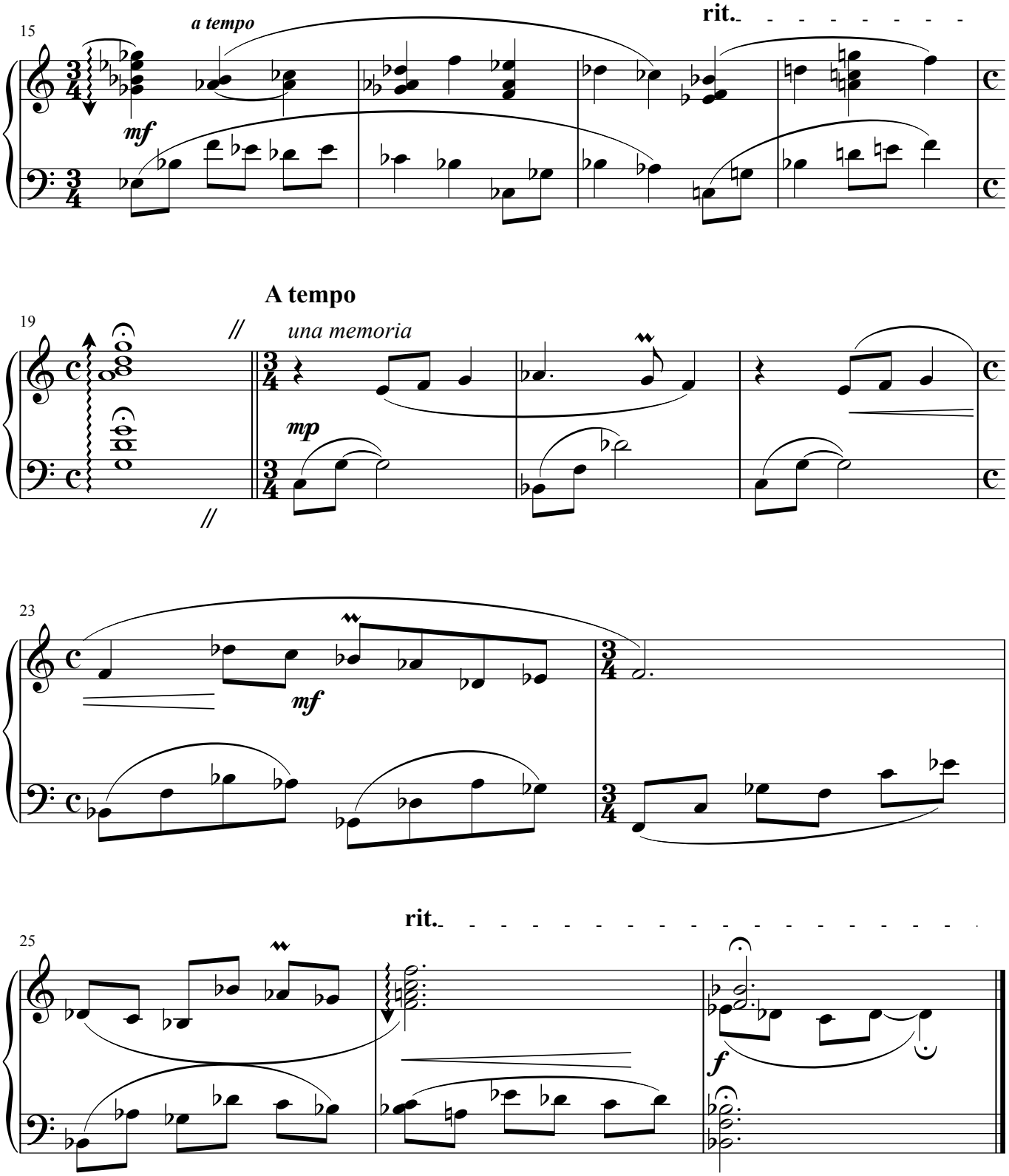
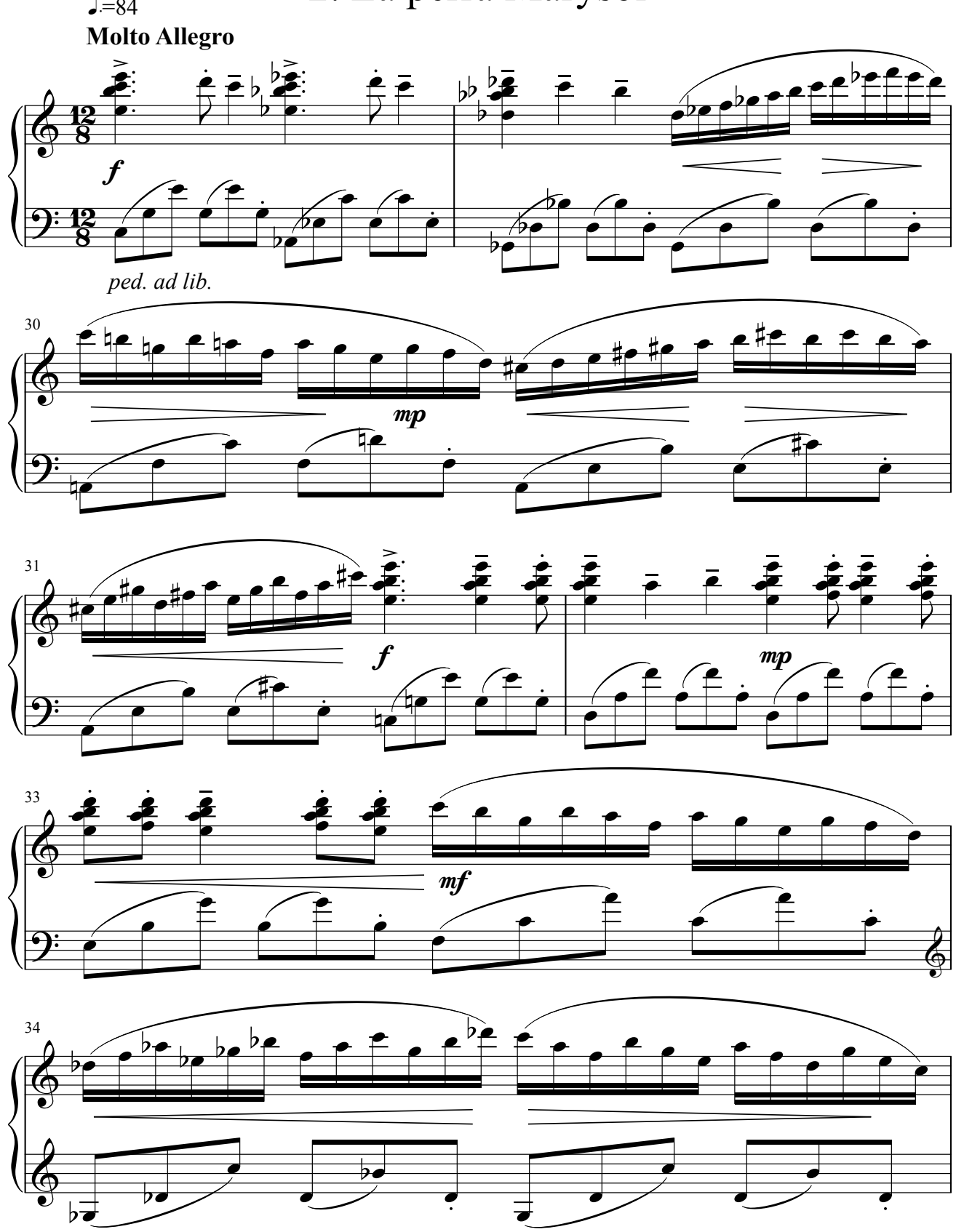
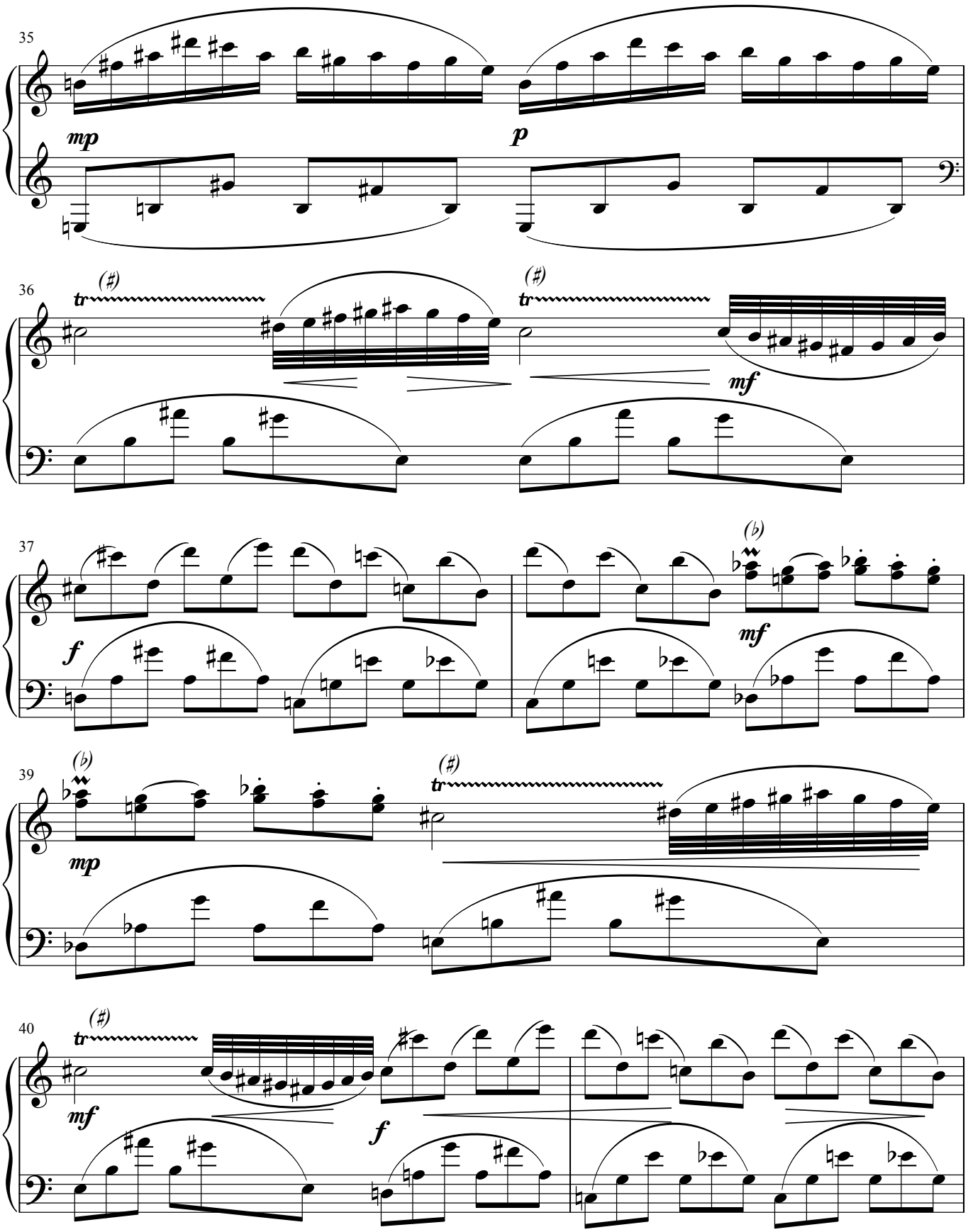
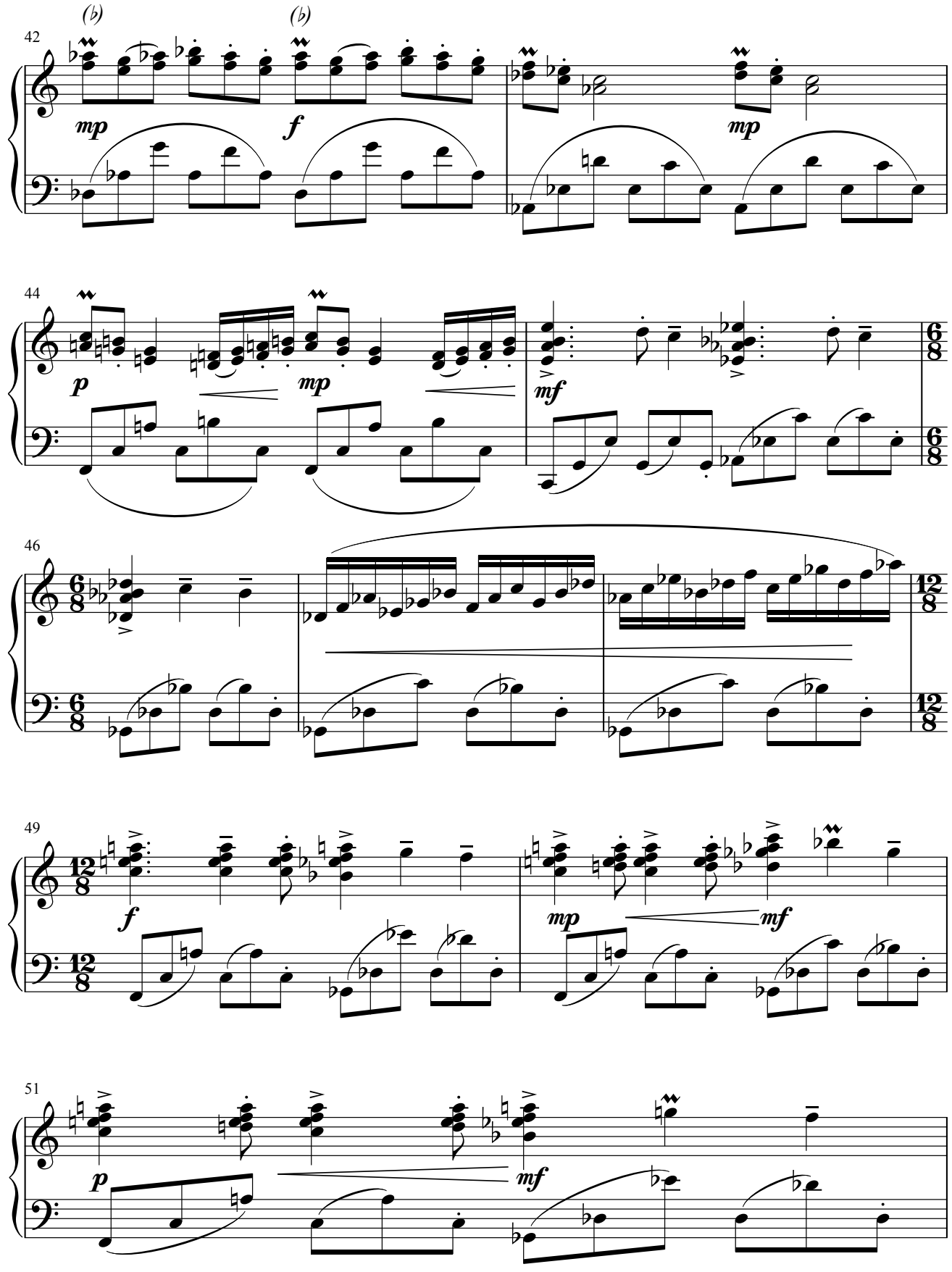
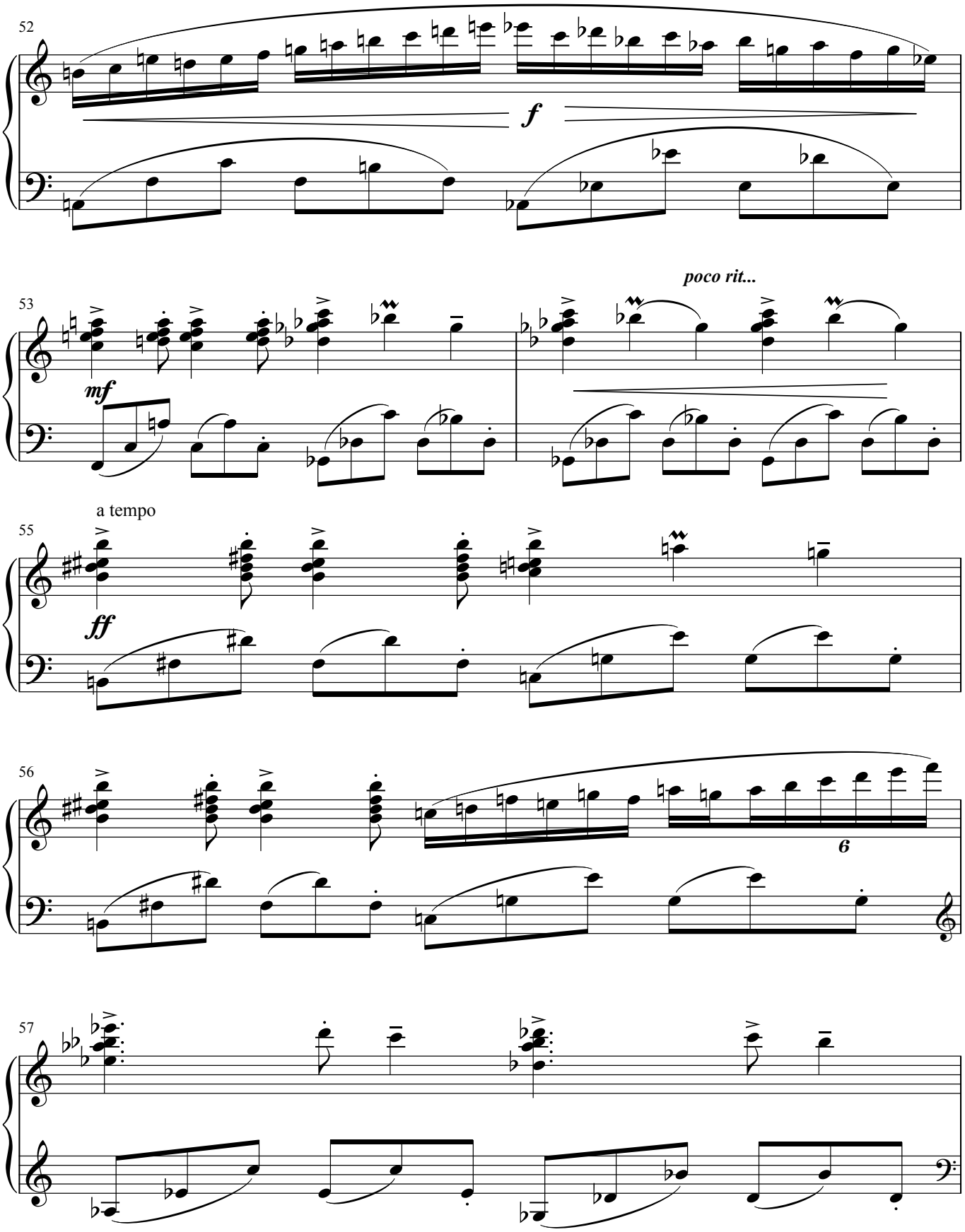

15
a tempo
rit.
mf
A tempo
19
una memoria
mp
23
mf
rit.
25
f

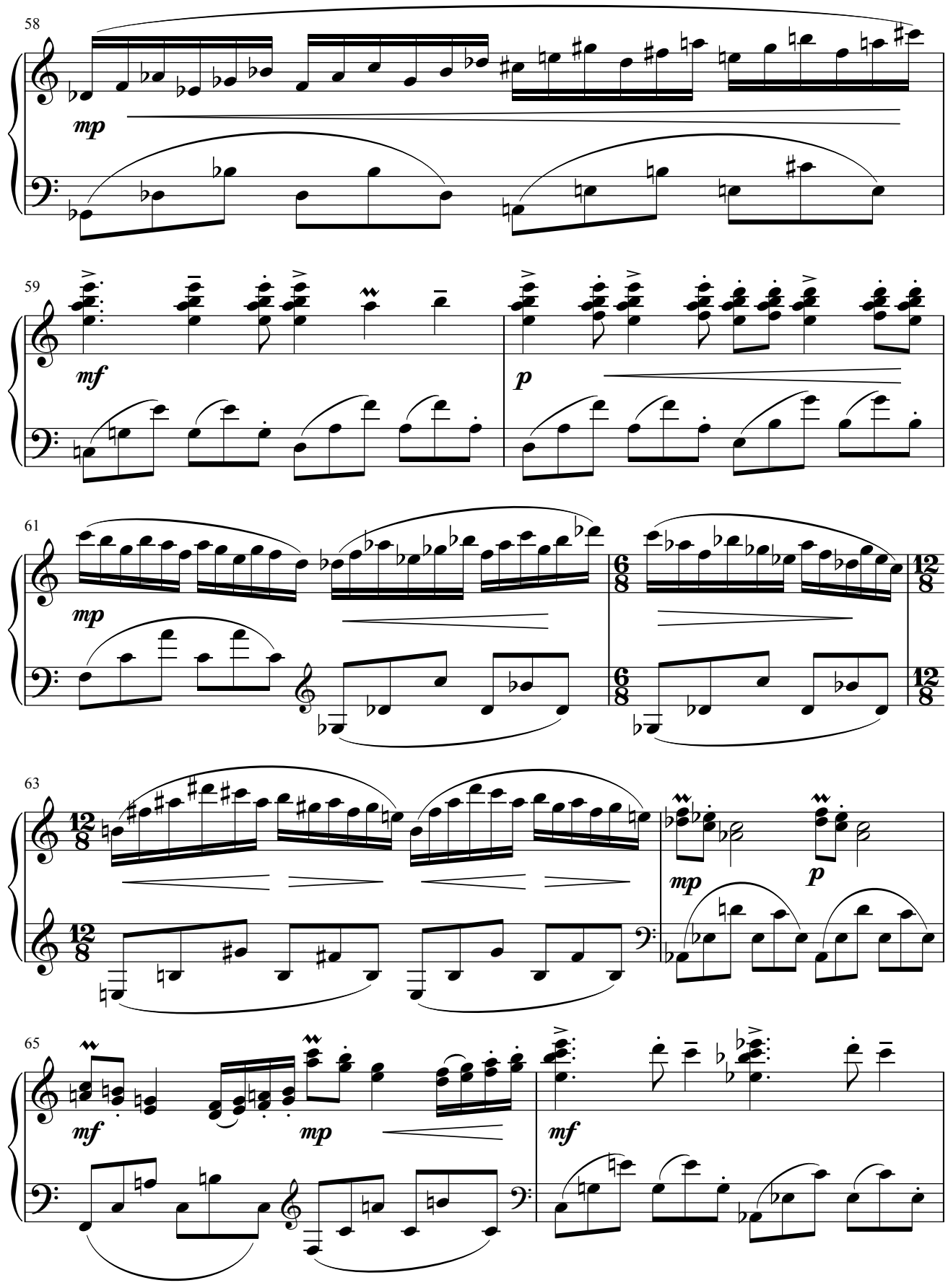
2. La perra Marysol

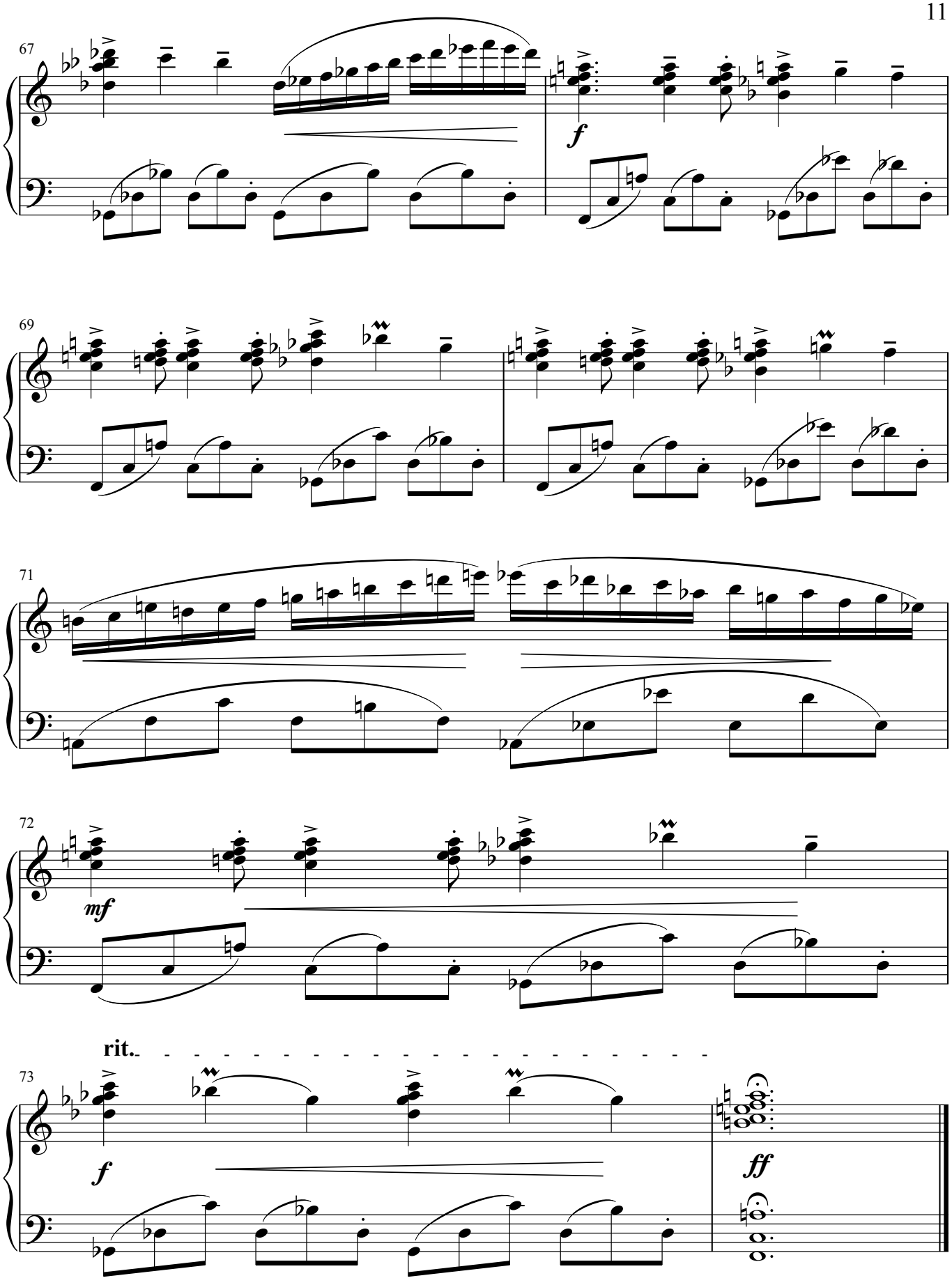



35
mp
p
36
tr
(♯)
mf
37
f
(♭)
mf
39
mp
40
mf
f


42
(♭)
(♭)
mp
f
mp
44
p
mp
mf
46
49
f
mp
mf
51
p
mf

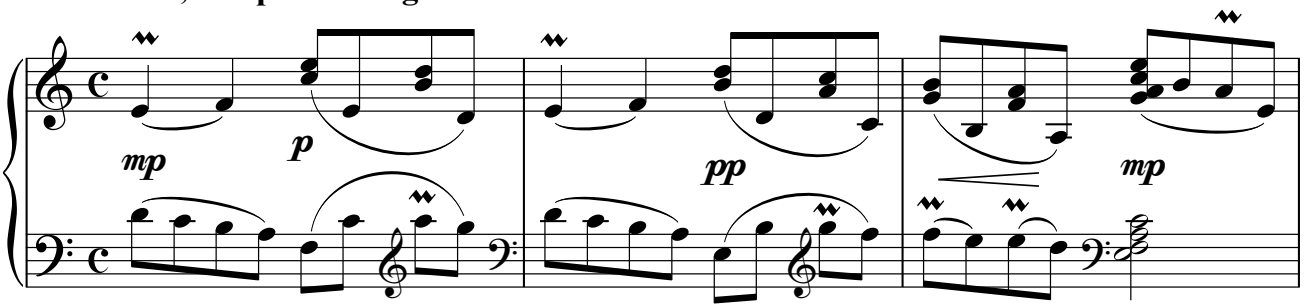

52
f
53
mf
poco rit...
a tempo
55
ff
56
6
57


58
mp
59
mf
p
61
mp
6/8
12/8
63
12/8
mp
p
65
mf
mp
mf


67
f
69
71
72
mf
rit.
73
f
ff

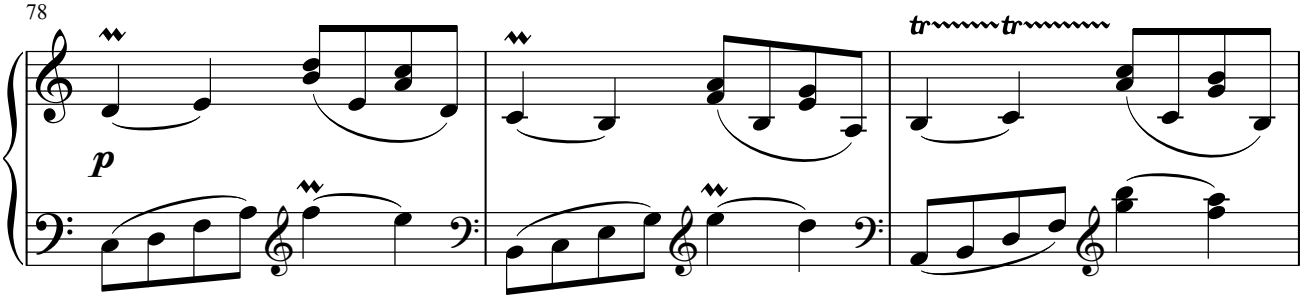
3. La siesta de Domenico Scarlatti

♩=46
Lento; sempre ben legato



molto ped.

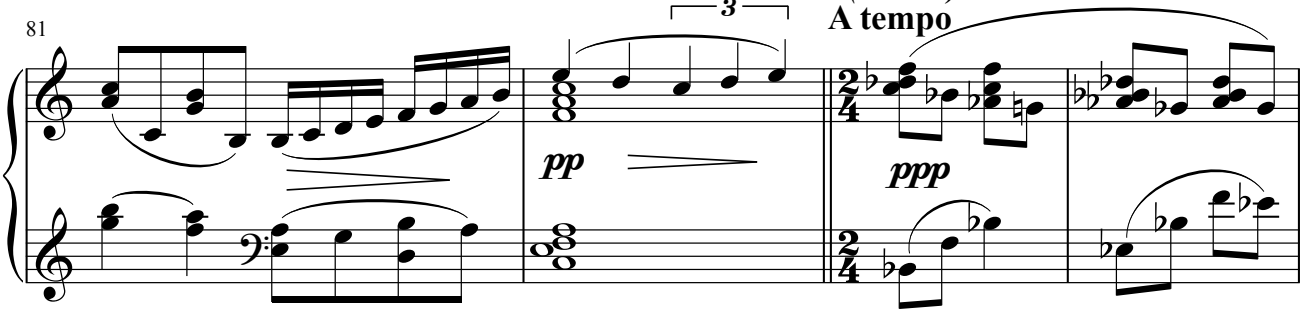
78



molto rit.

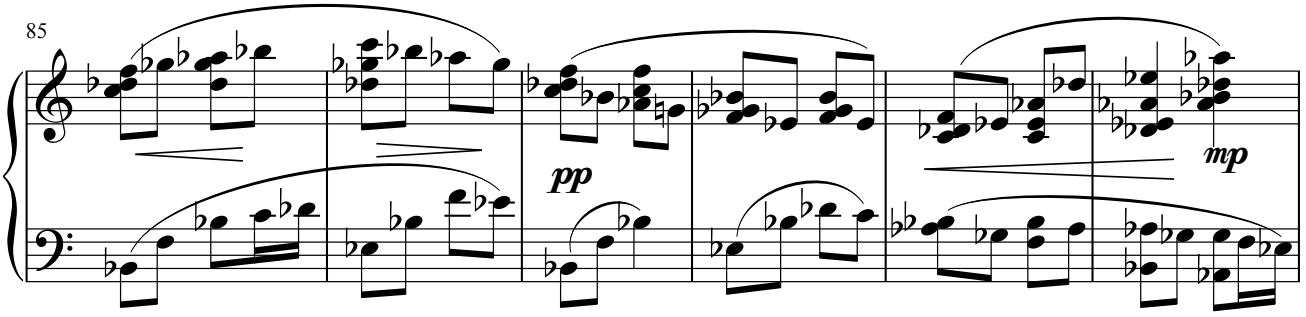
(el sueño)
A tempo

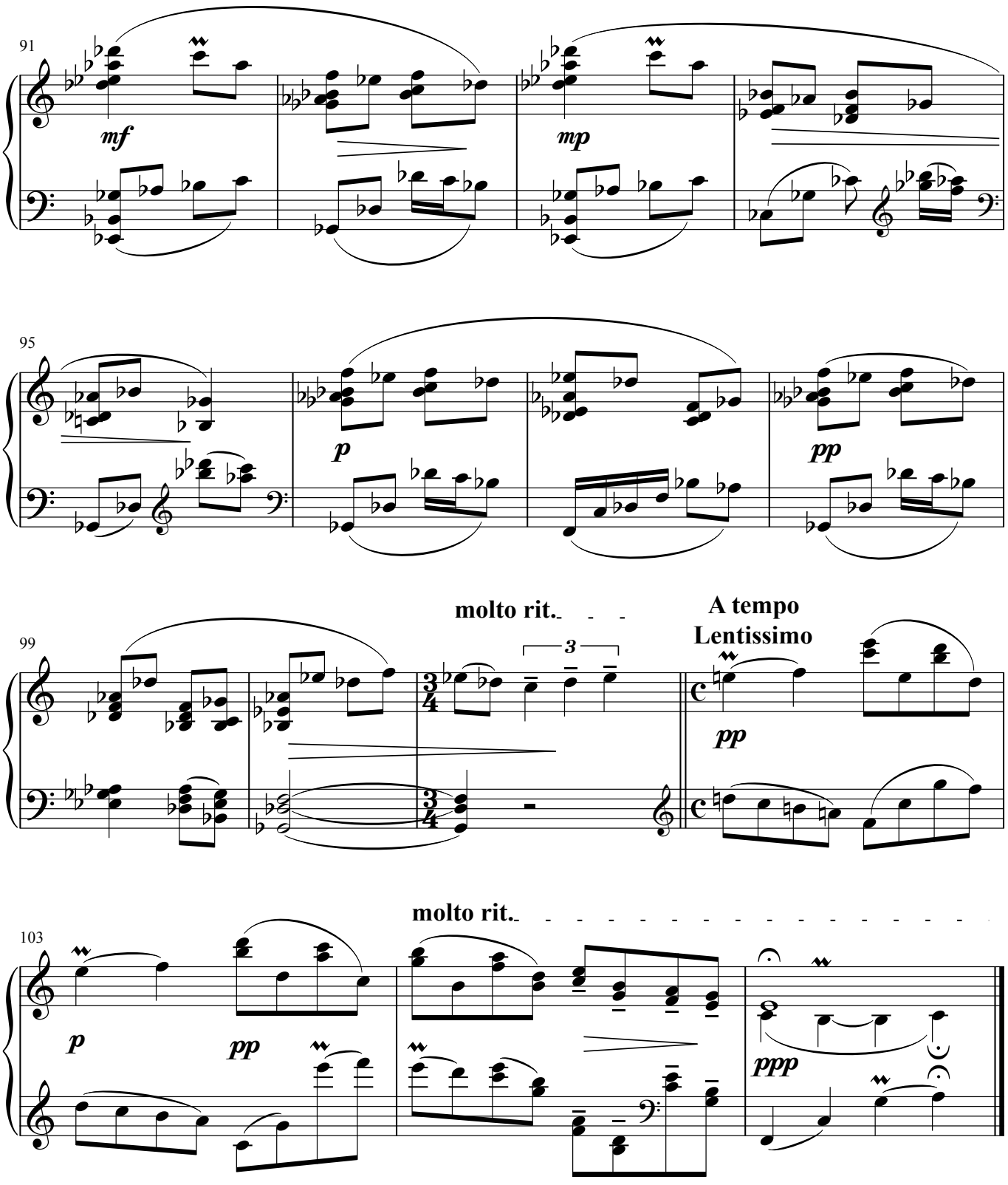
81



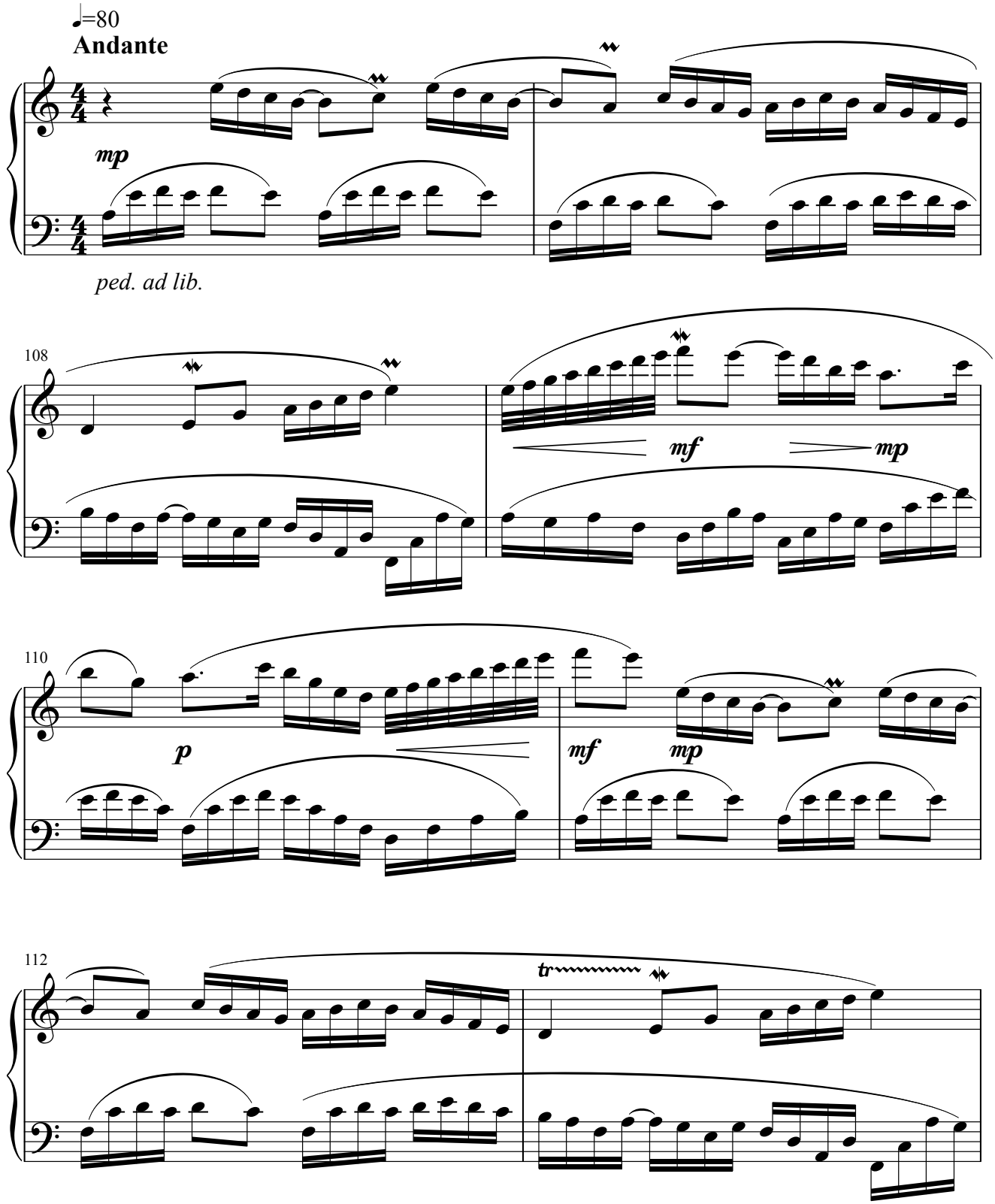
una corda; molto ped.

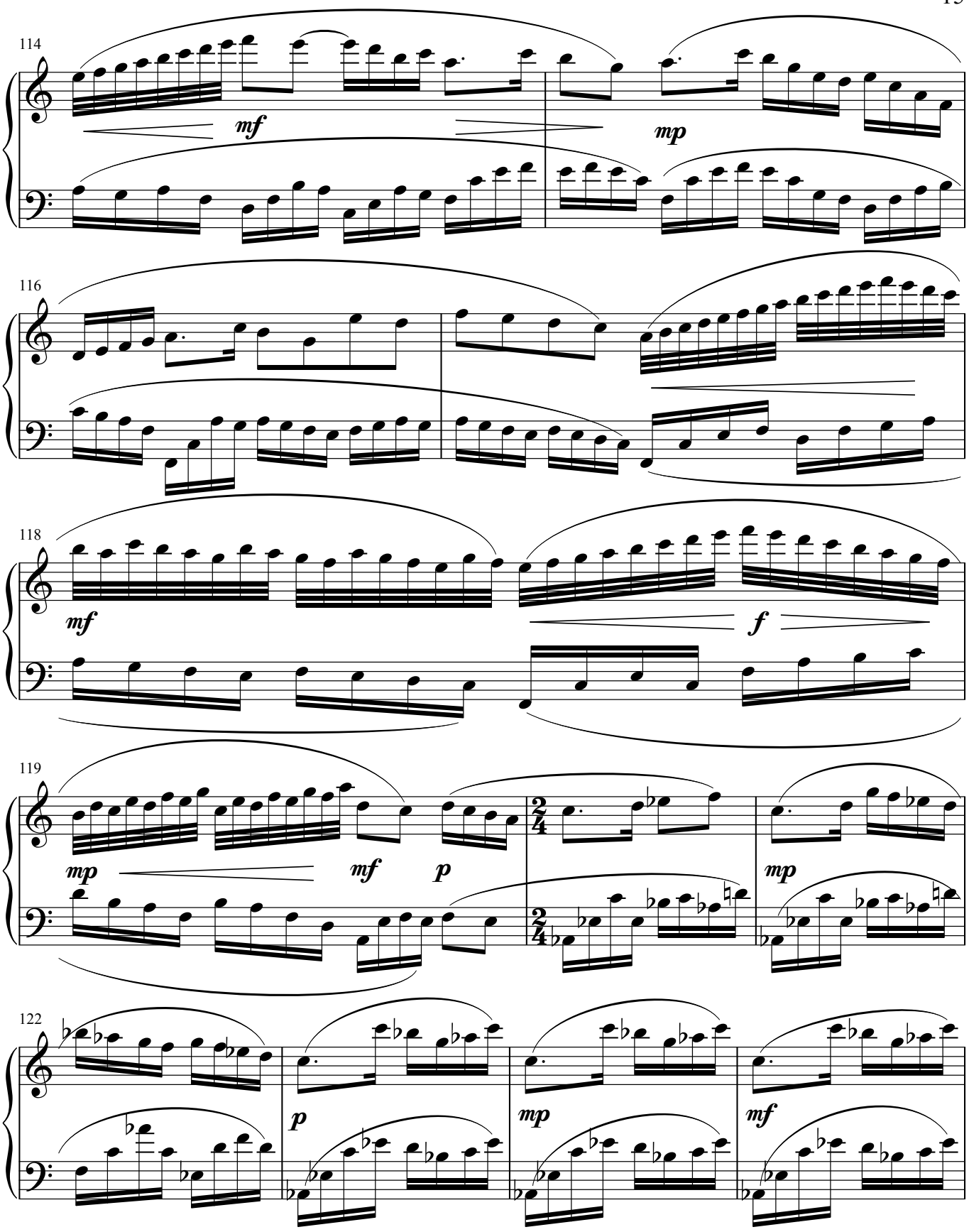
85

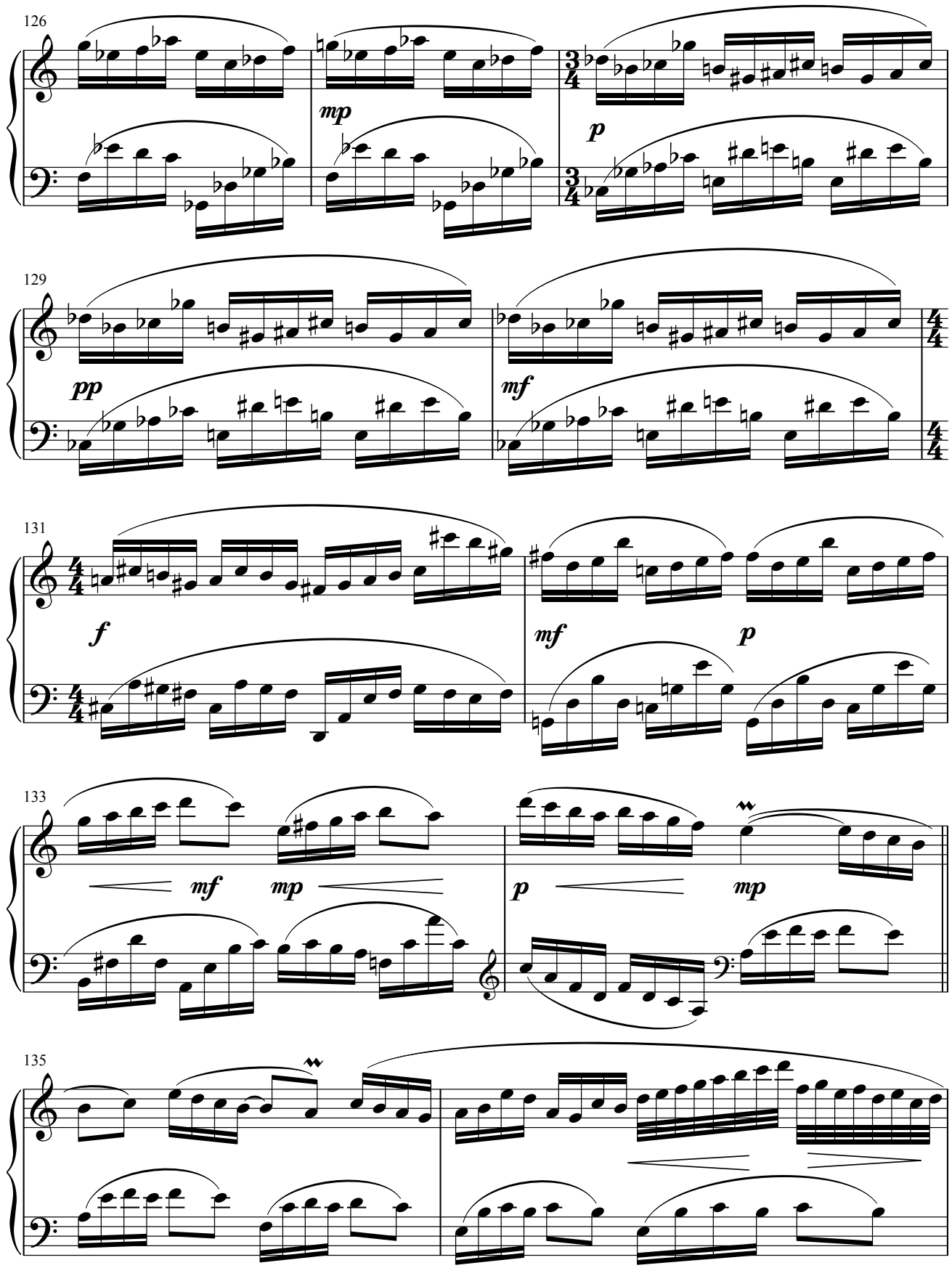


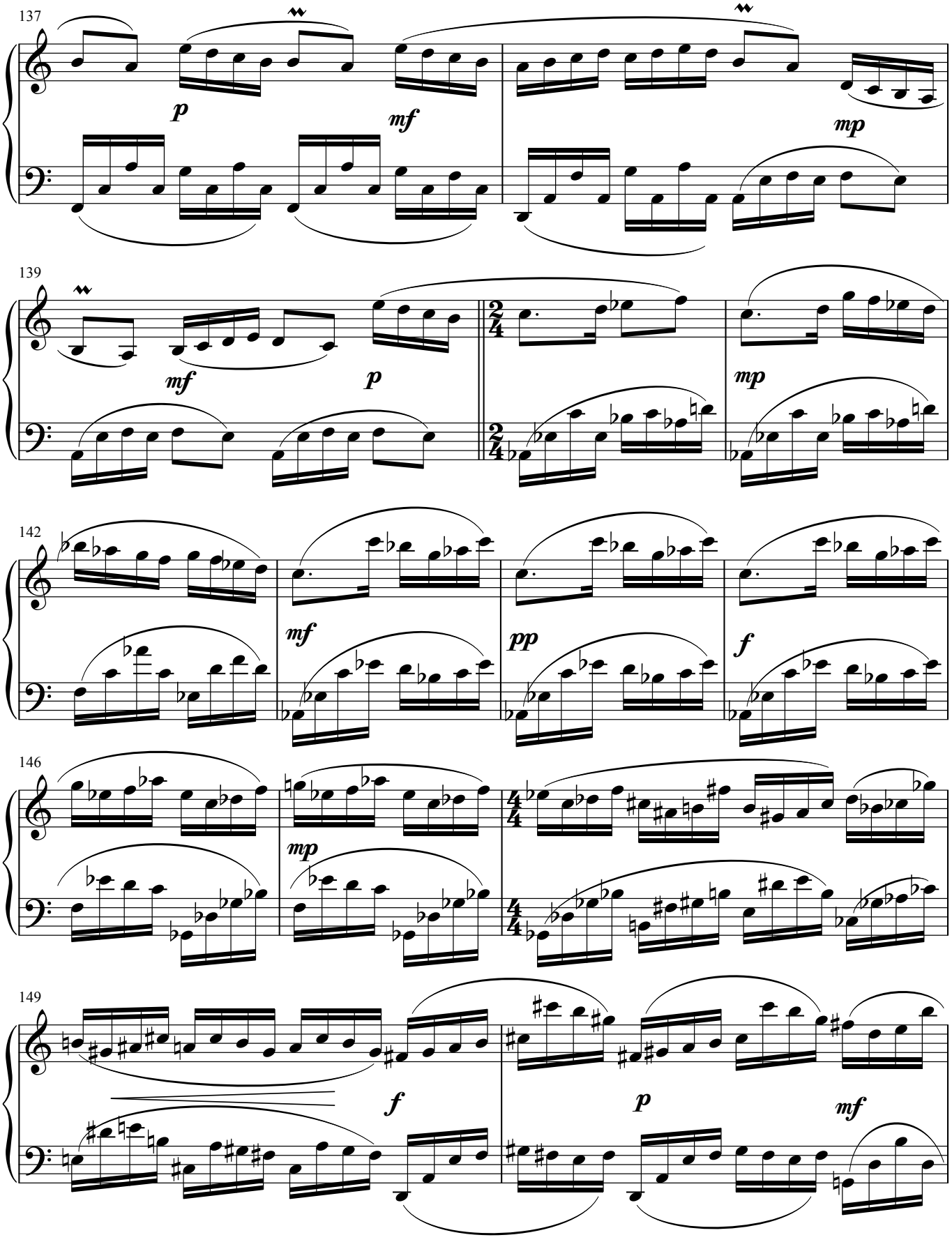

91
mf
mp
95
p
pp
molto rit.
3
A tempo
Lentissimo
pp
99
molto rit.
103
p
pp
ppp

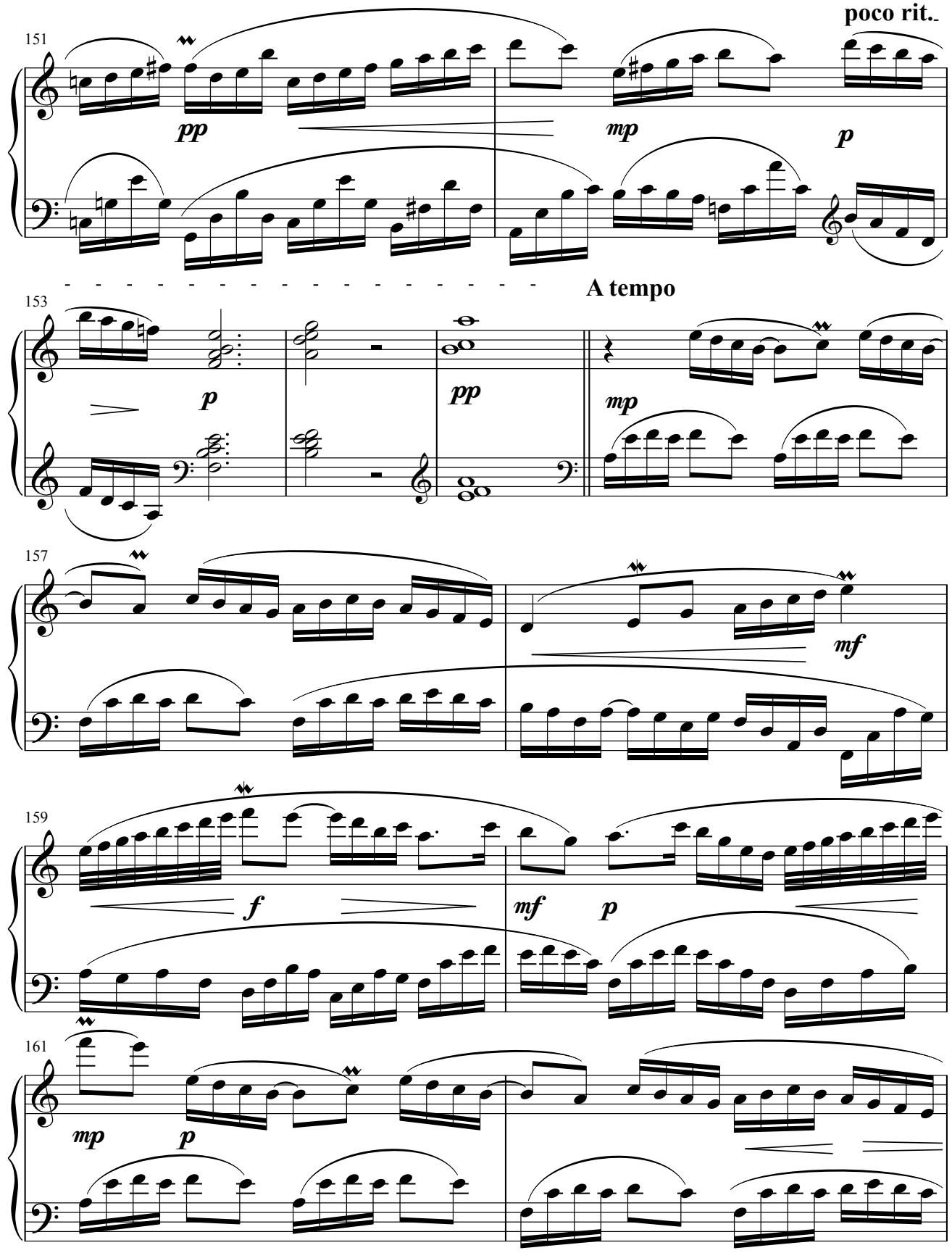
4. Siempre elegante

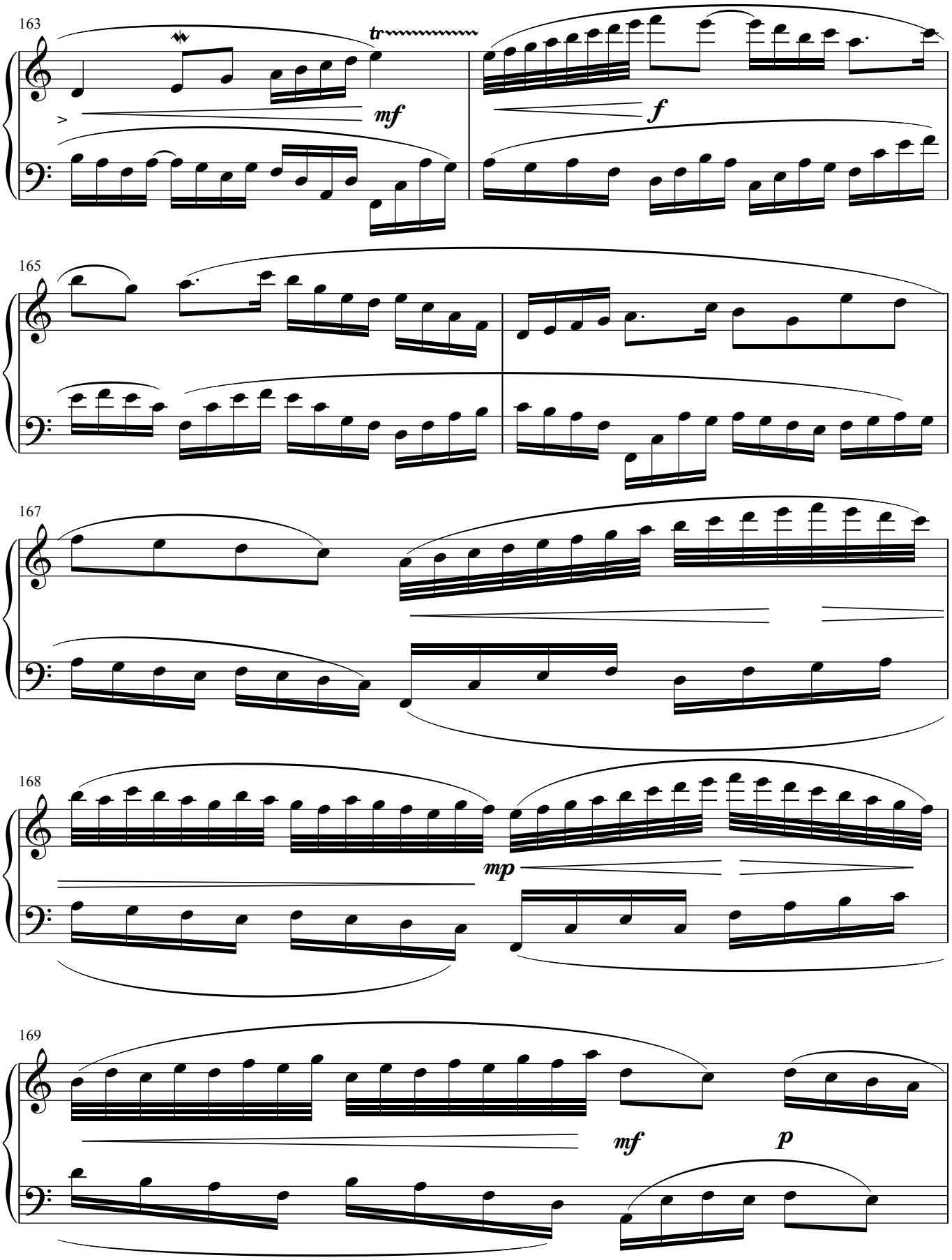


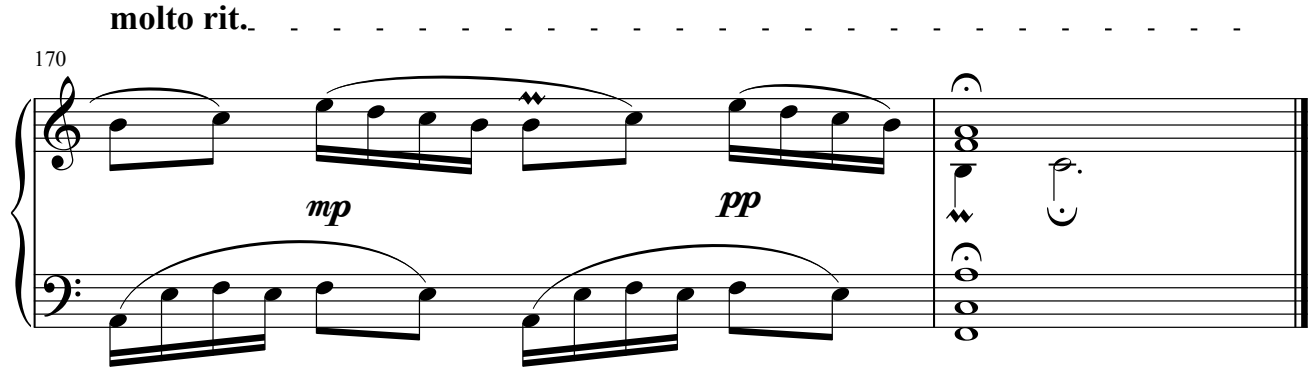

114
mf
mp
116
118
mf
f
119
mp
mf
p
mp
122
p
mp
mf


126
mp
p
129
pp
mf
131
f
mf
p
133
mf
mp
p
mp
135

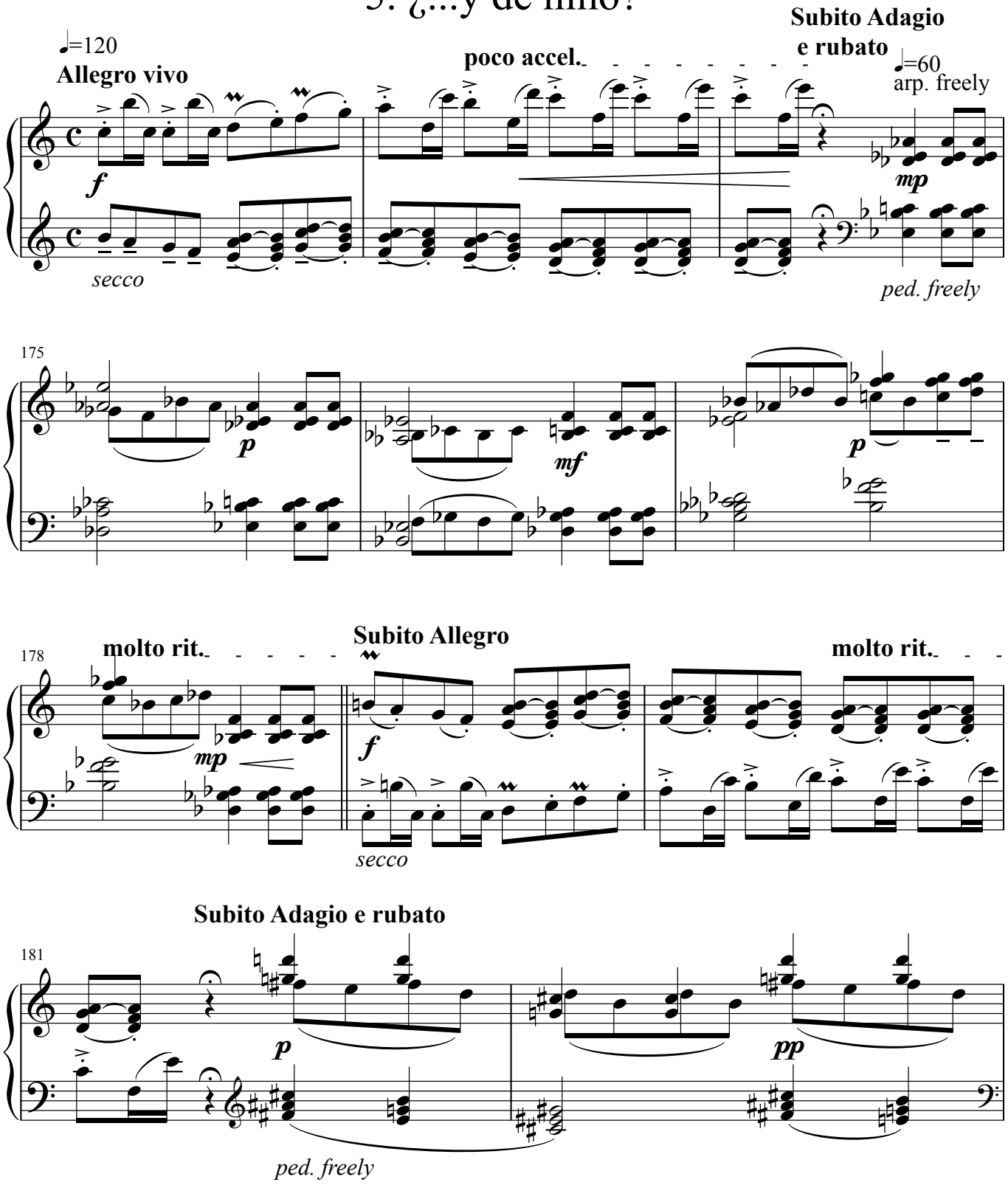

137
p
mf
mp
139
mf
p
mp
142
mf
pp
f
146
mp
149
f
p
mf

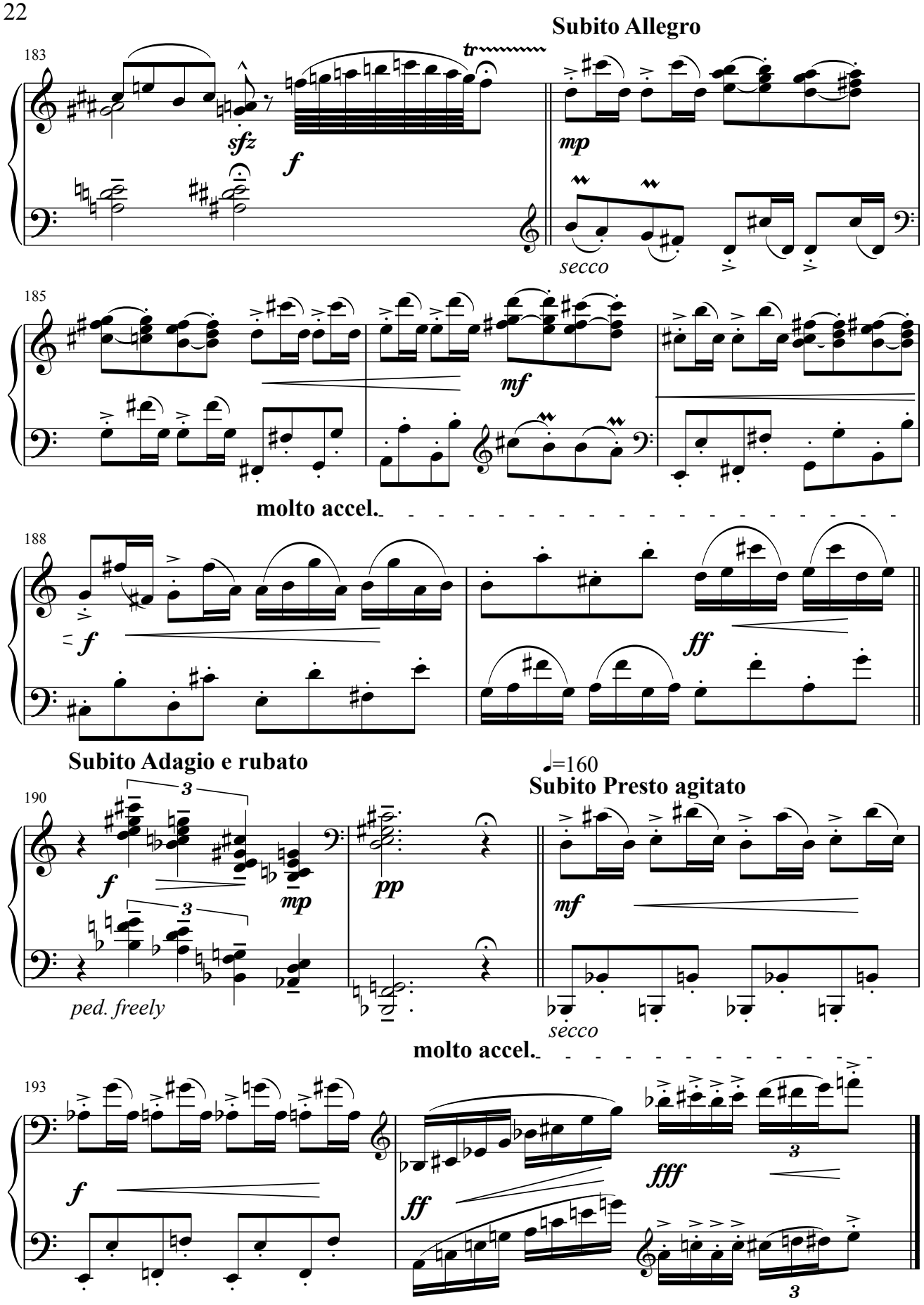

poco rit.
151
pp
mp
p
A tempo
153
p
pp
mp
157
mf
159
f
mf
p
161
mp
p


163
tr
mf
f
165
167
168
mp
169
mf
p


molto rit.
170
mp
pp

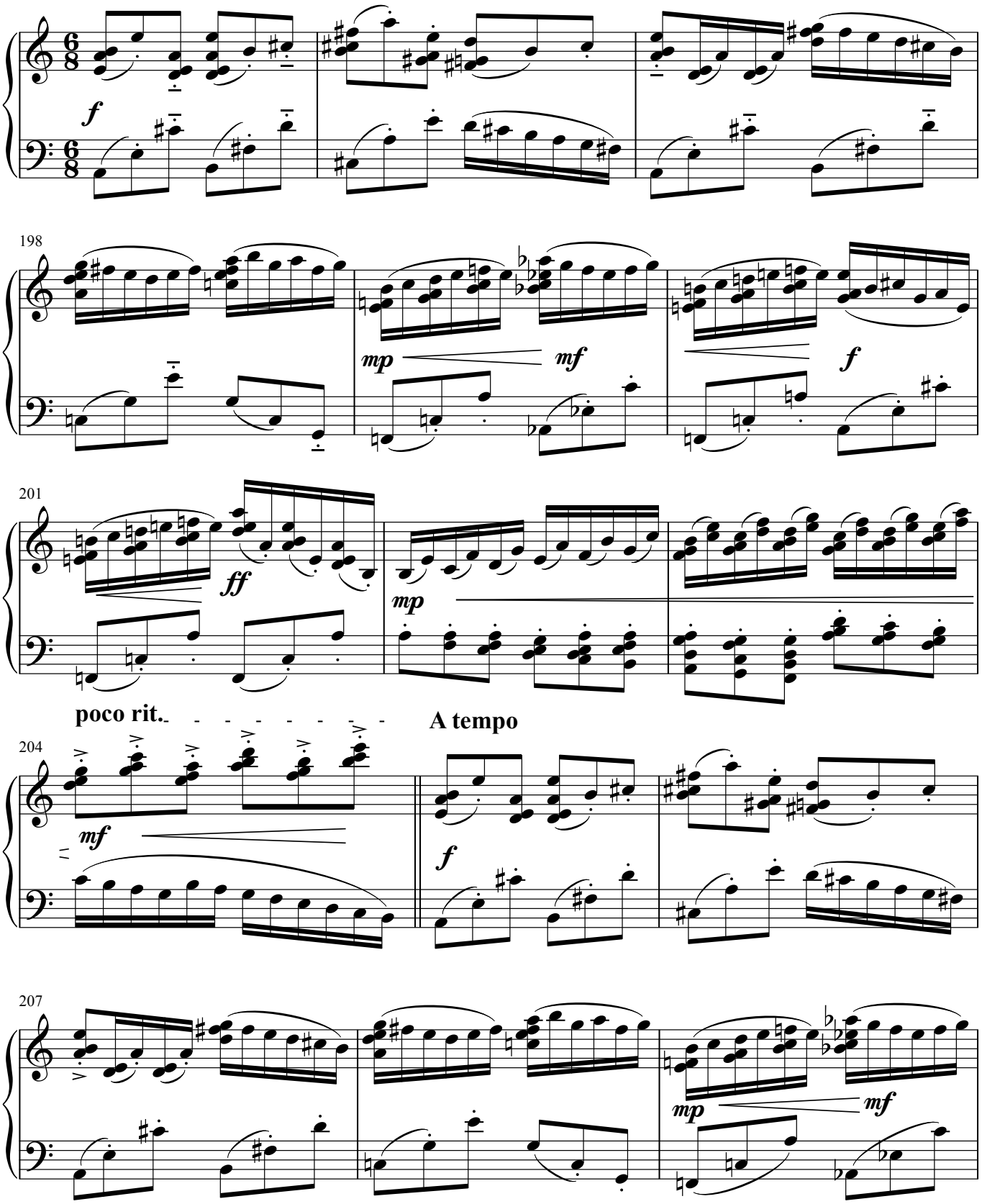
5. ¿...y de niño?

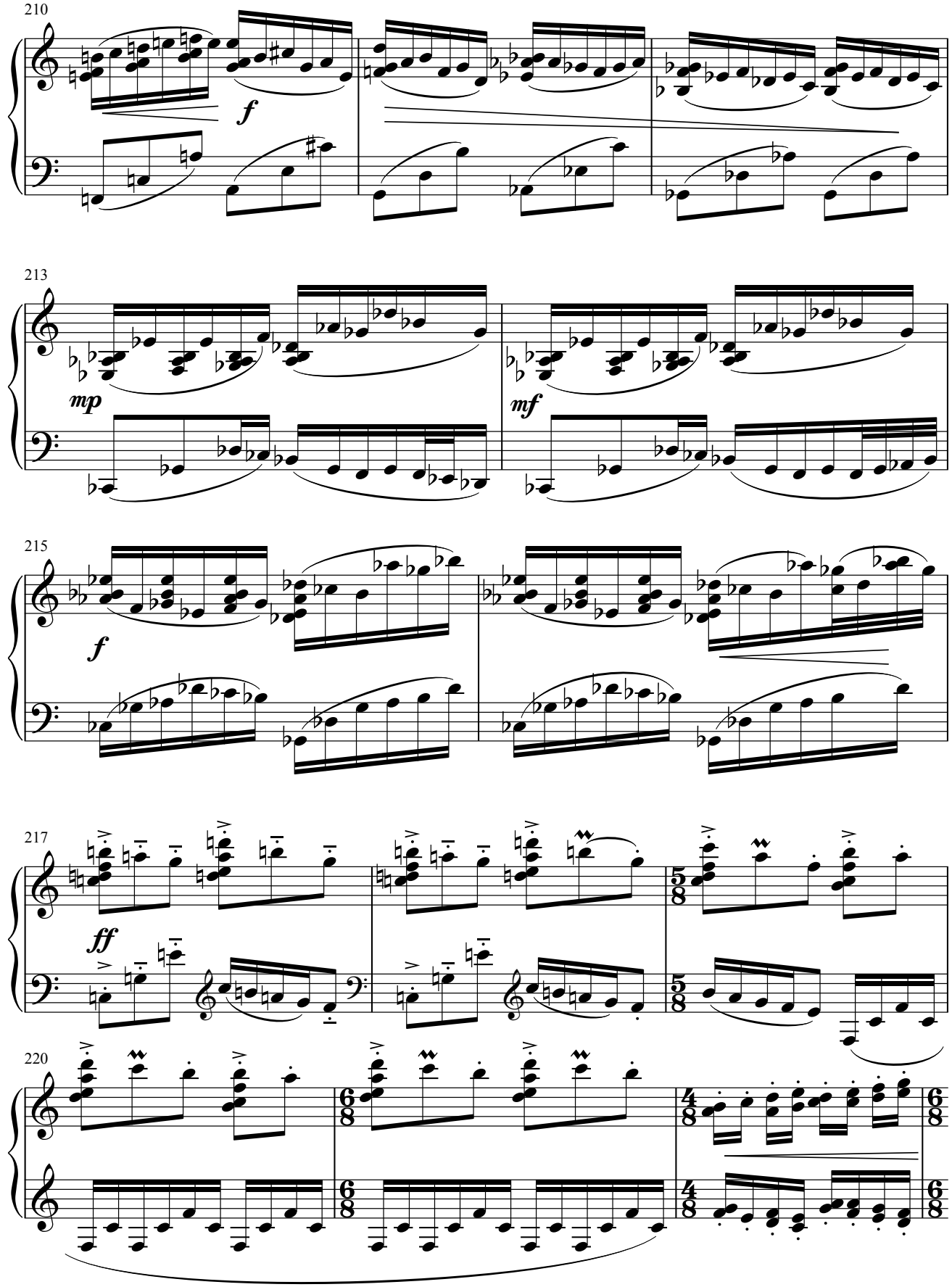

♩=120
Allegro vivo
poco accel.
Subito Adagio
e rubato
♩=60
arp. freely
f
mp
secco
ped. freely
175
p
mf
p
178
molto rit.
Subito Allegro
molto rit.
mp
f
secco
Subito Adagio e rubato
181
p
pp
ped. freely

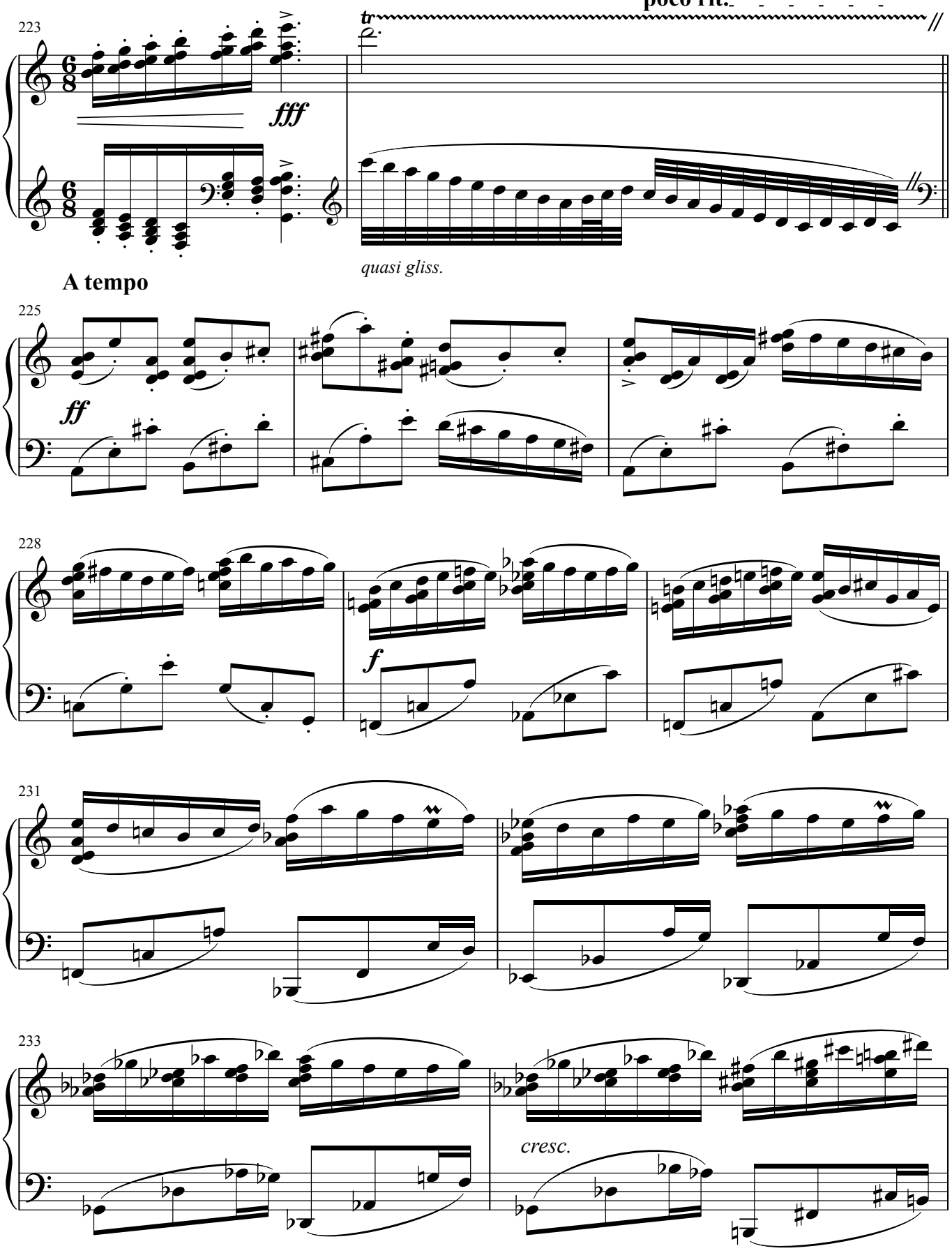

Subito Allegro
183
tr
sfz
f
mp
secco
185
mf
molto accel.
188
f
ff
Subito Adagio e rubato
♩=160
Subito Presto agitato
190
3
f
mp
pp
mf
ped. freely
secco
molto accel.
193
f
ff
fff
3

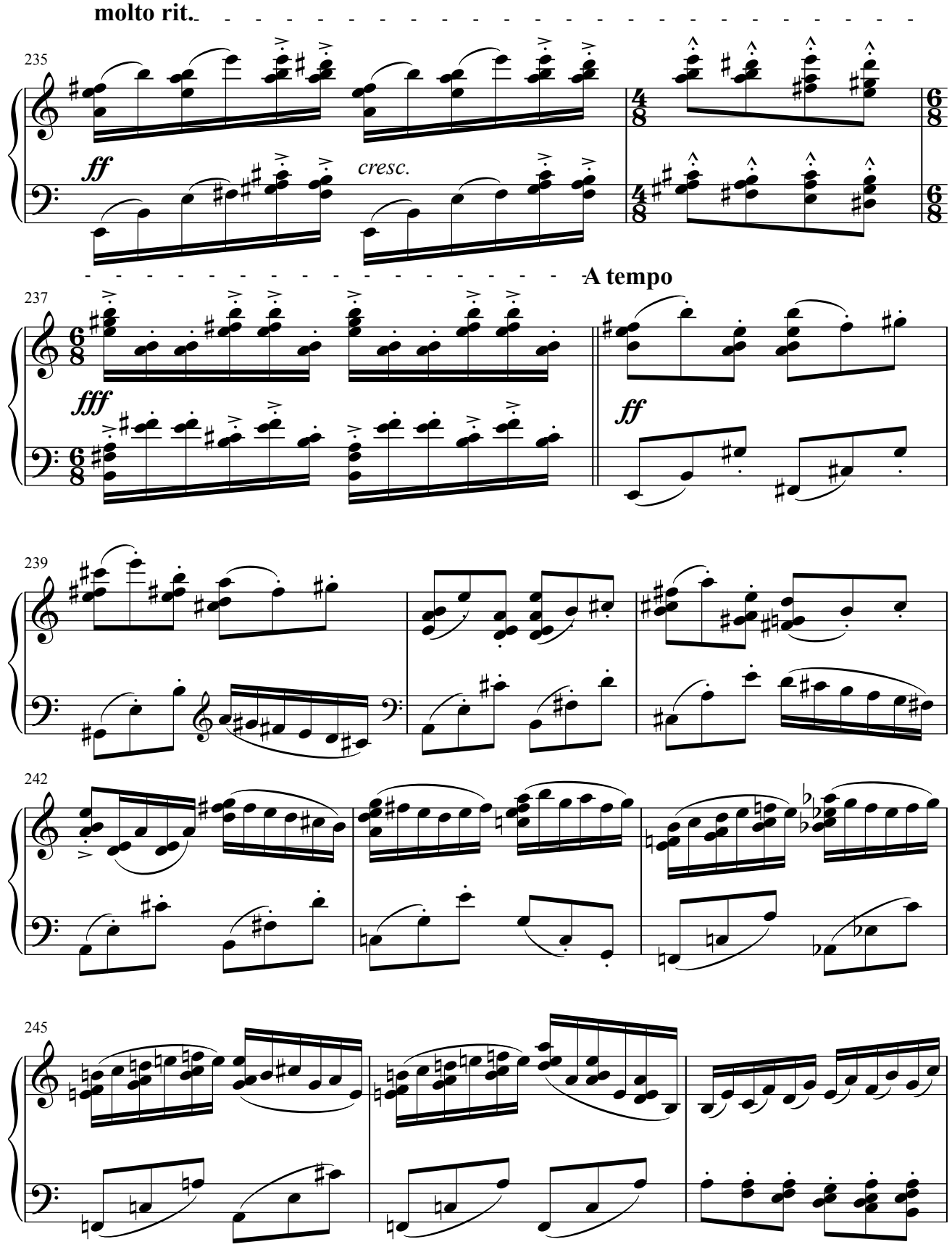
6. El trabajo del gato

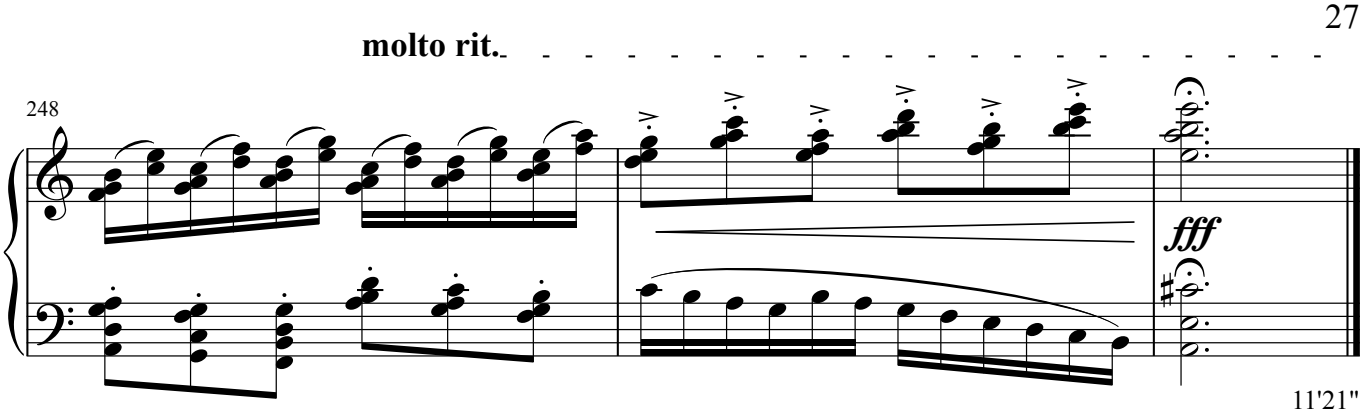
Allegro pomposo




210
f
213
mp
mf
215
f
217
ff
220


poco rit.
223
tr
fff
quasi gliss.
A tempo
225
ff
228
f
231
233
cresc.


molto rit.
235
ff
cresc.
A tempo
237
fff
ff
239
242
245


molto rit.
248
fff
11'21"