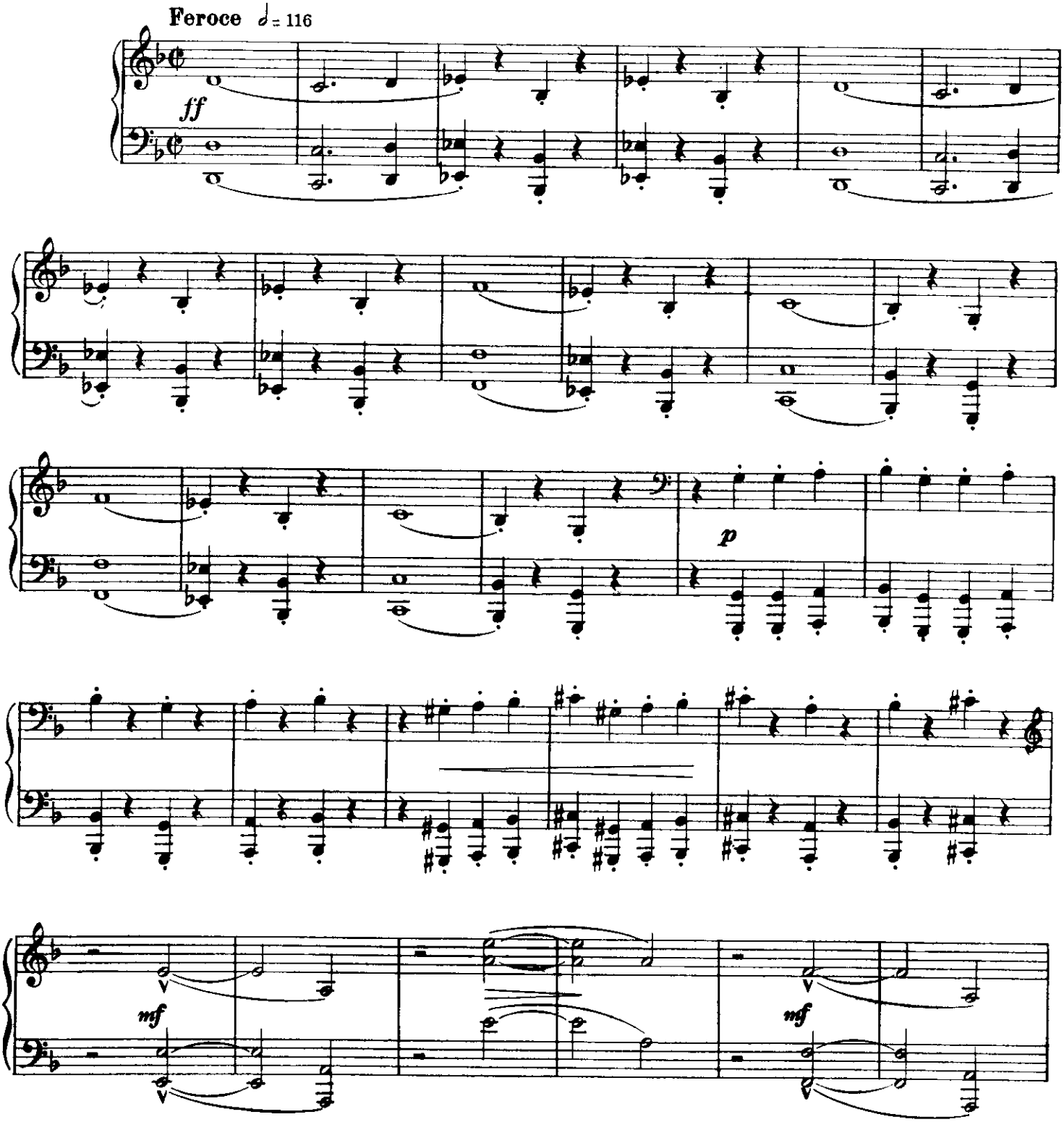
RITRATTI UNGHERESI

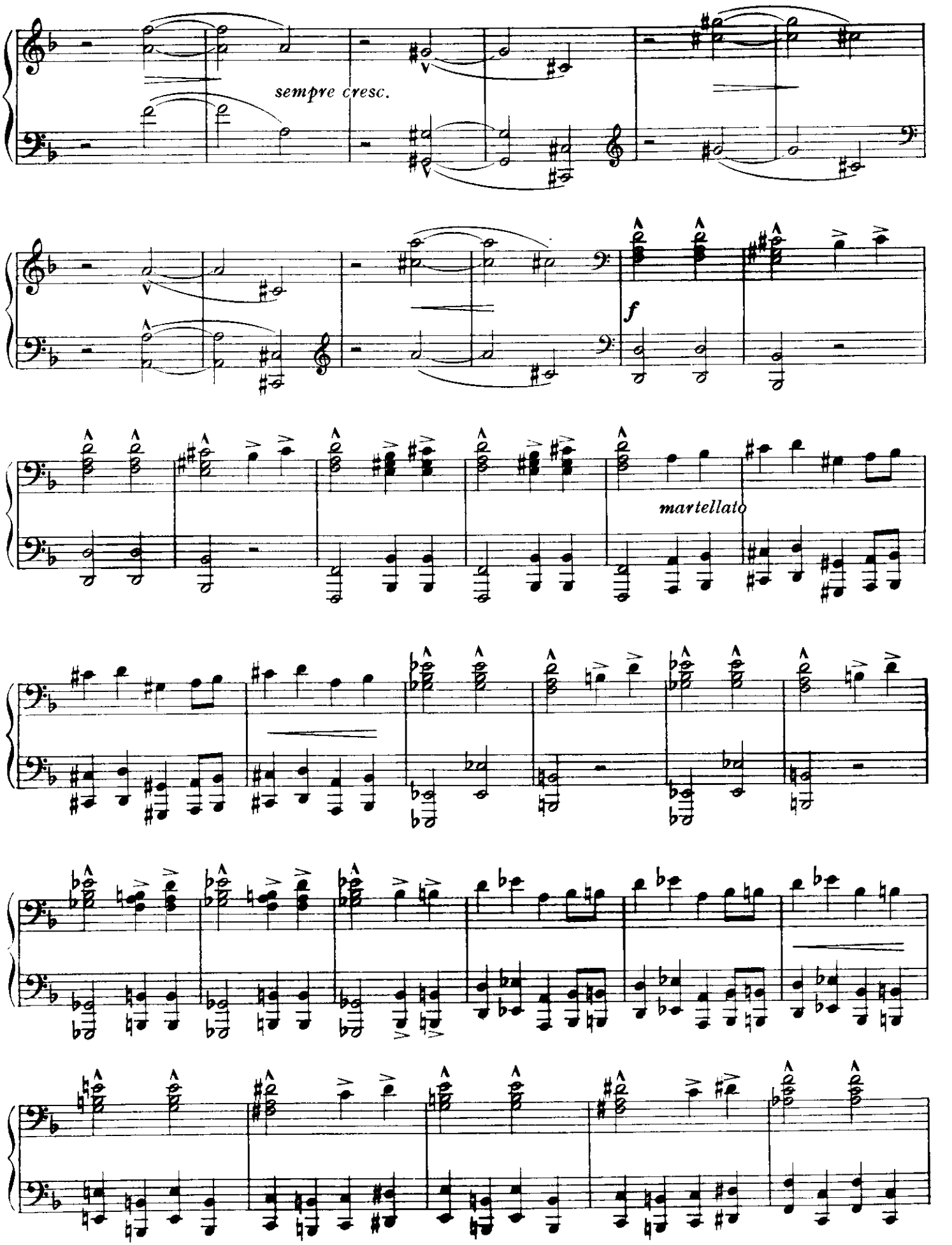
PER PIANOFORTE

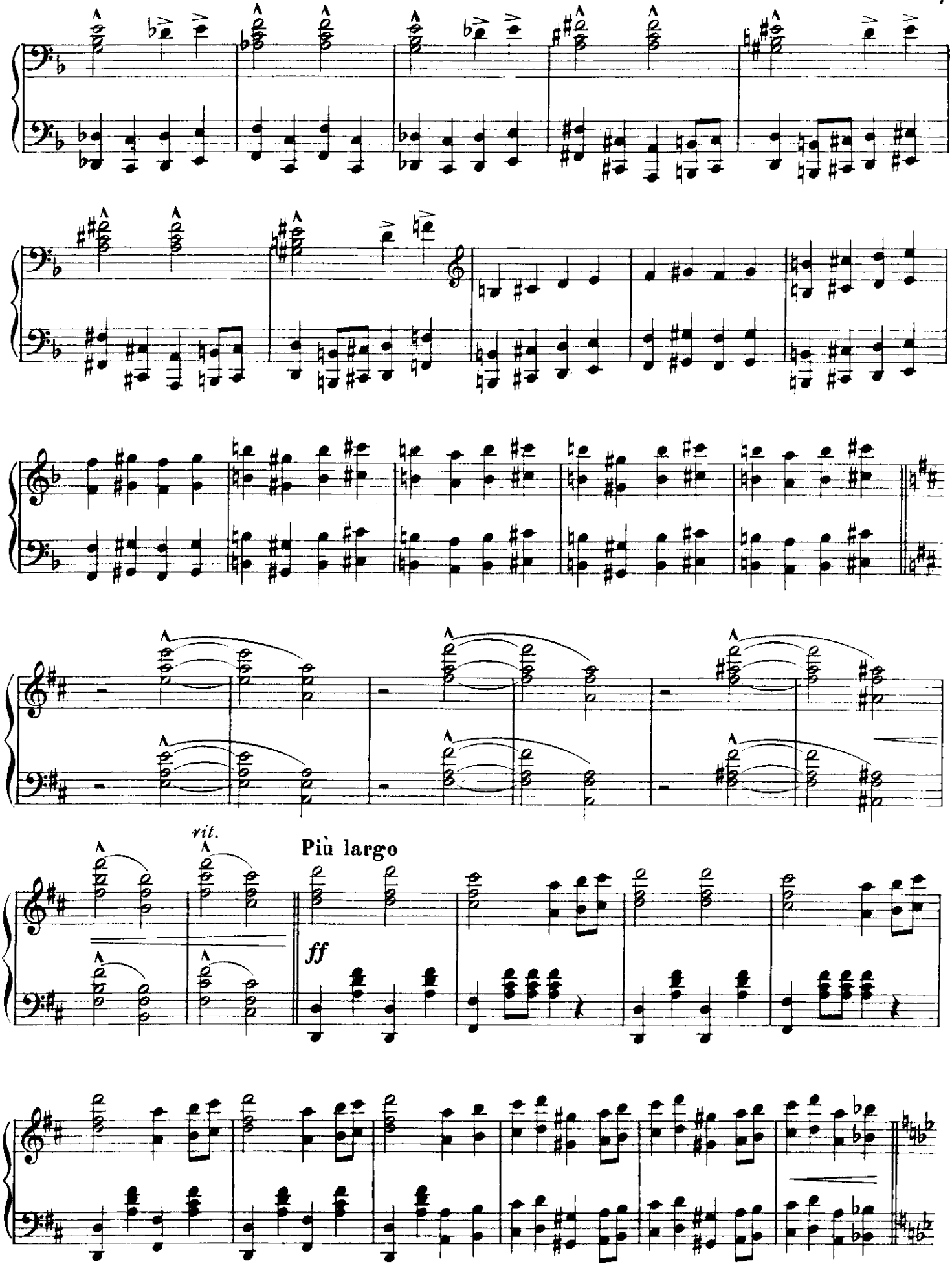
Revisione di VERESS SÁNDOR

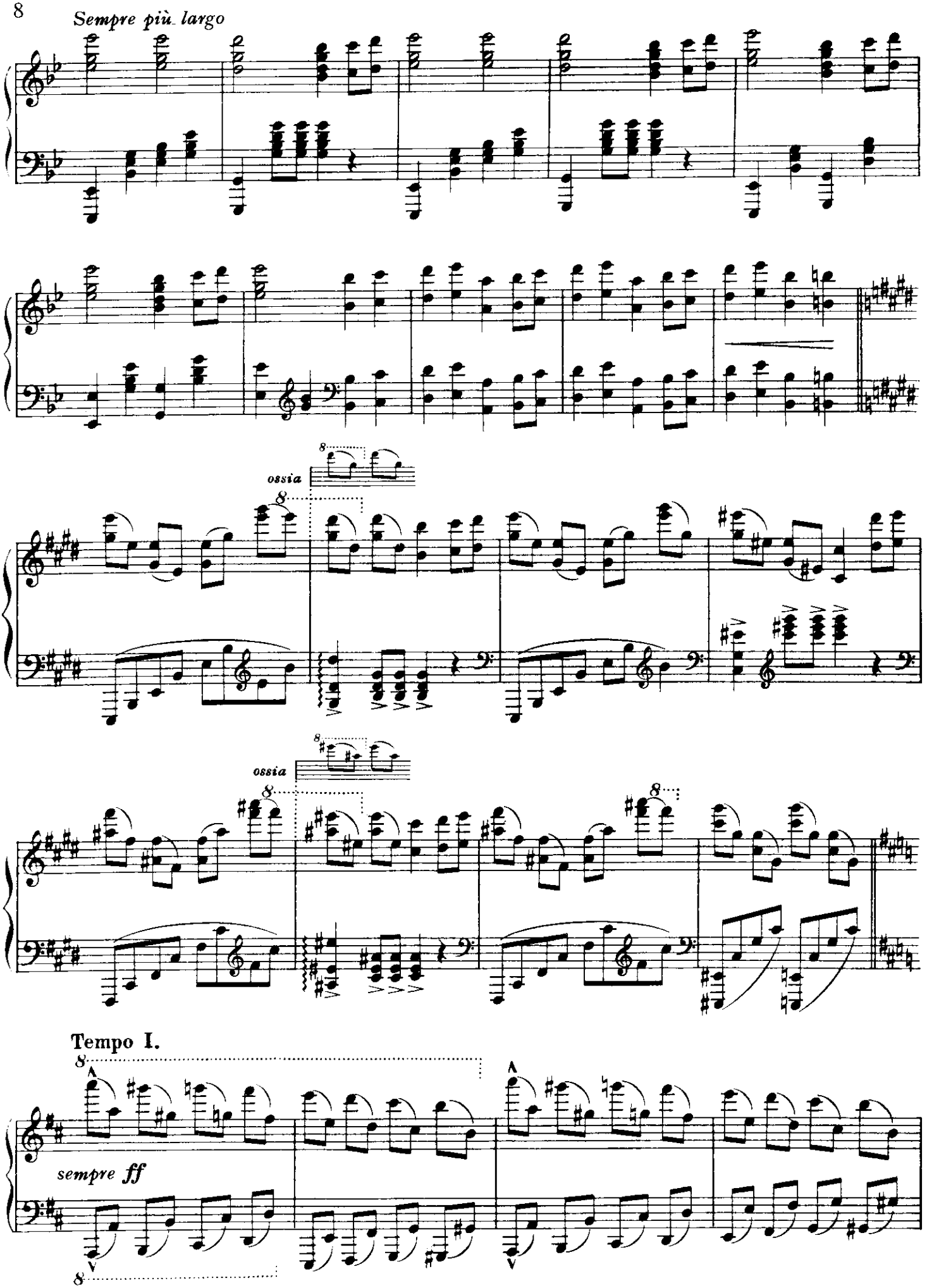
LISZT FERENC

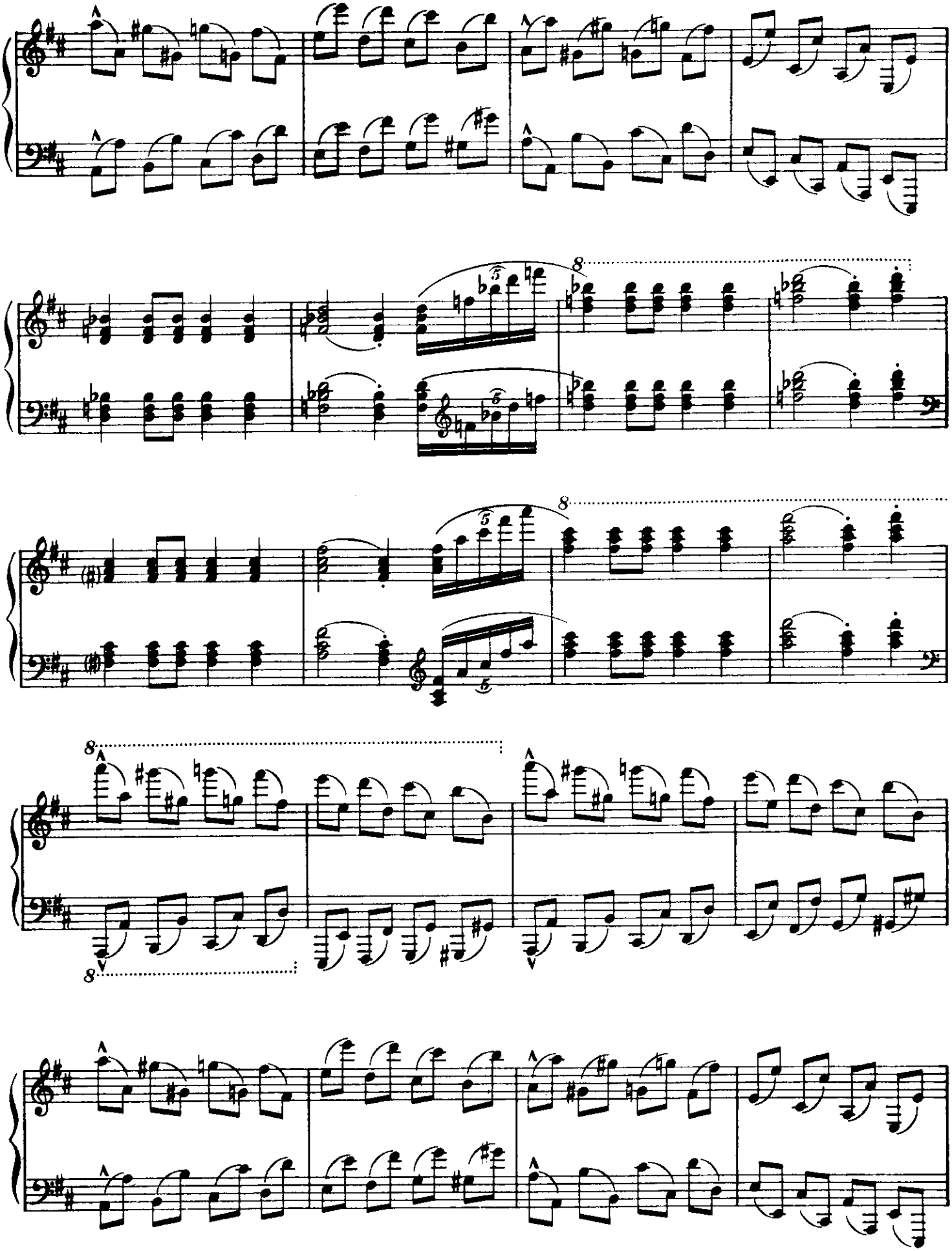
I.
SZÉCHENYI ISTVÁN

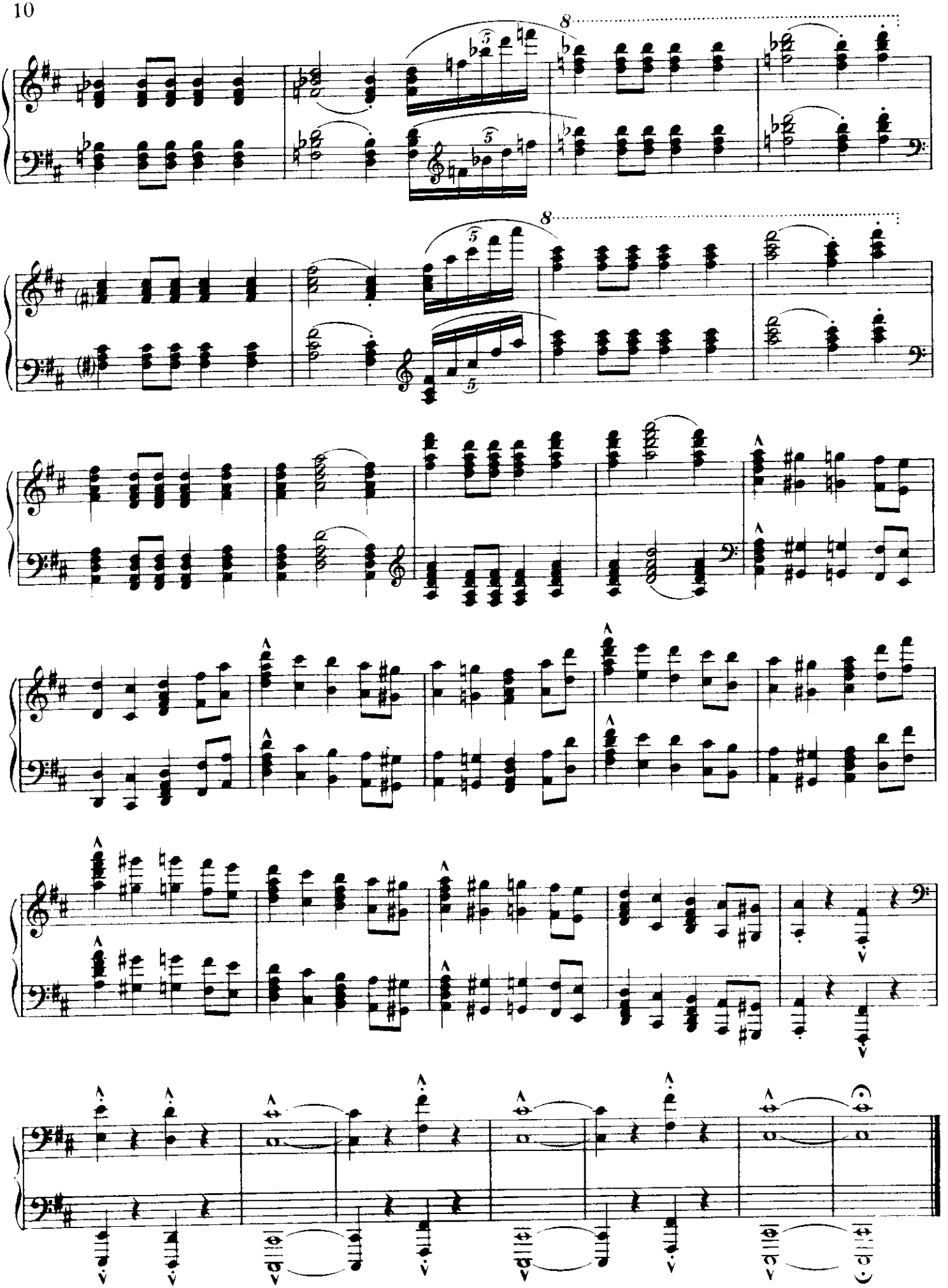



sempre cresc.
f
martellato

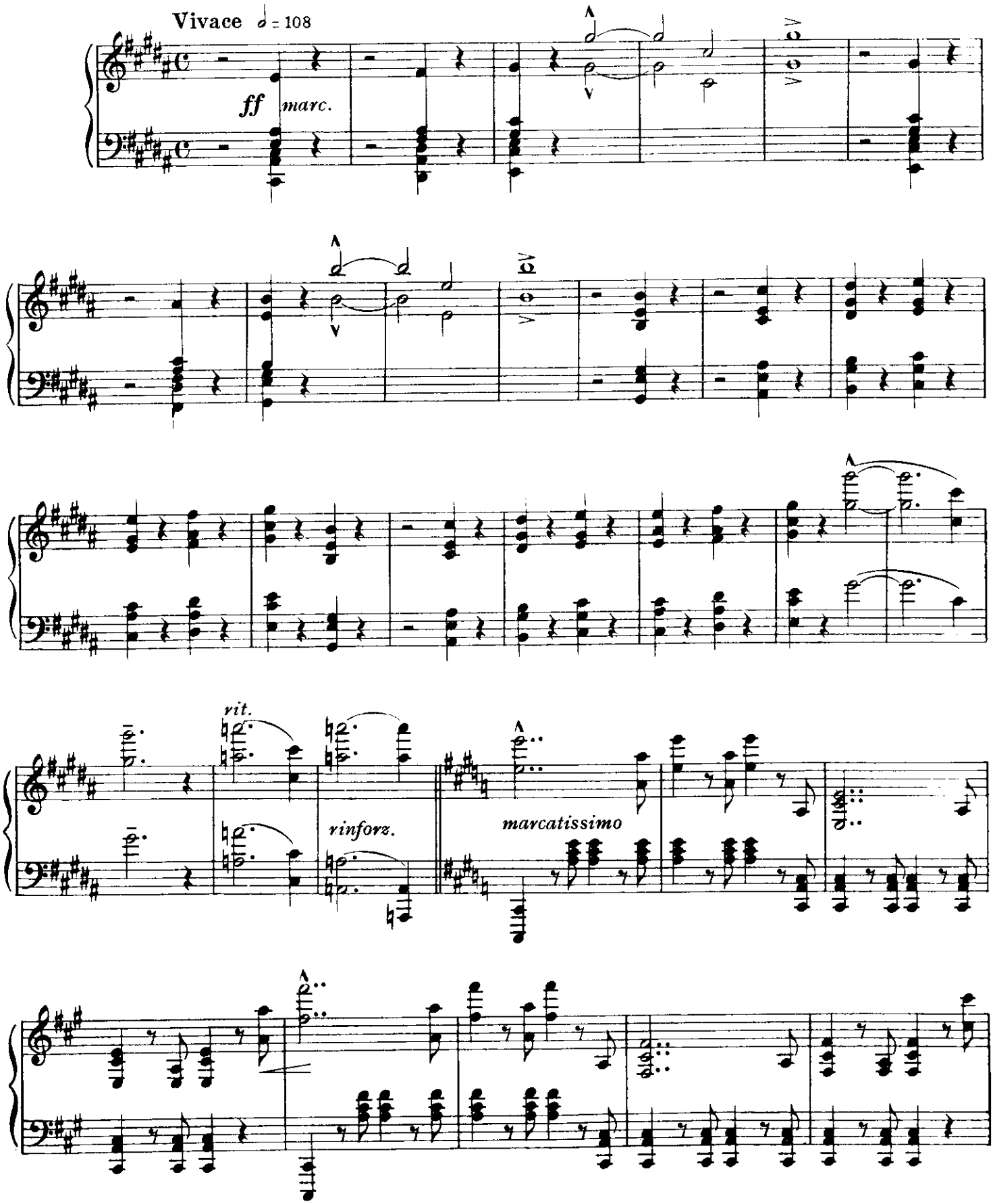

rit.
Più largo
ff

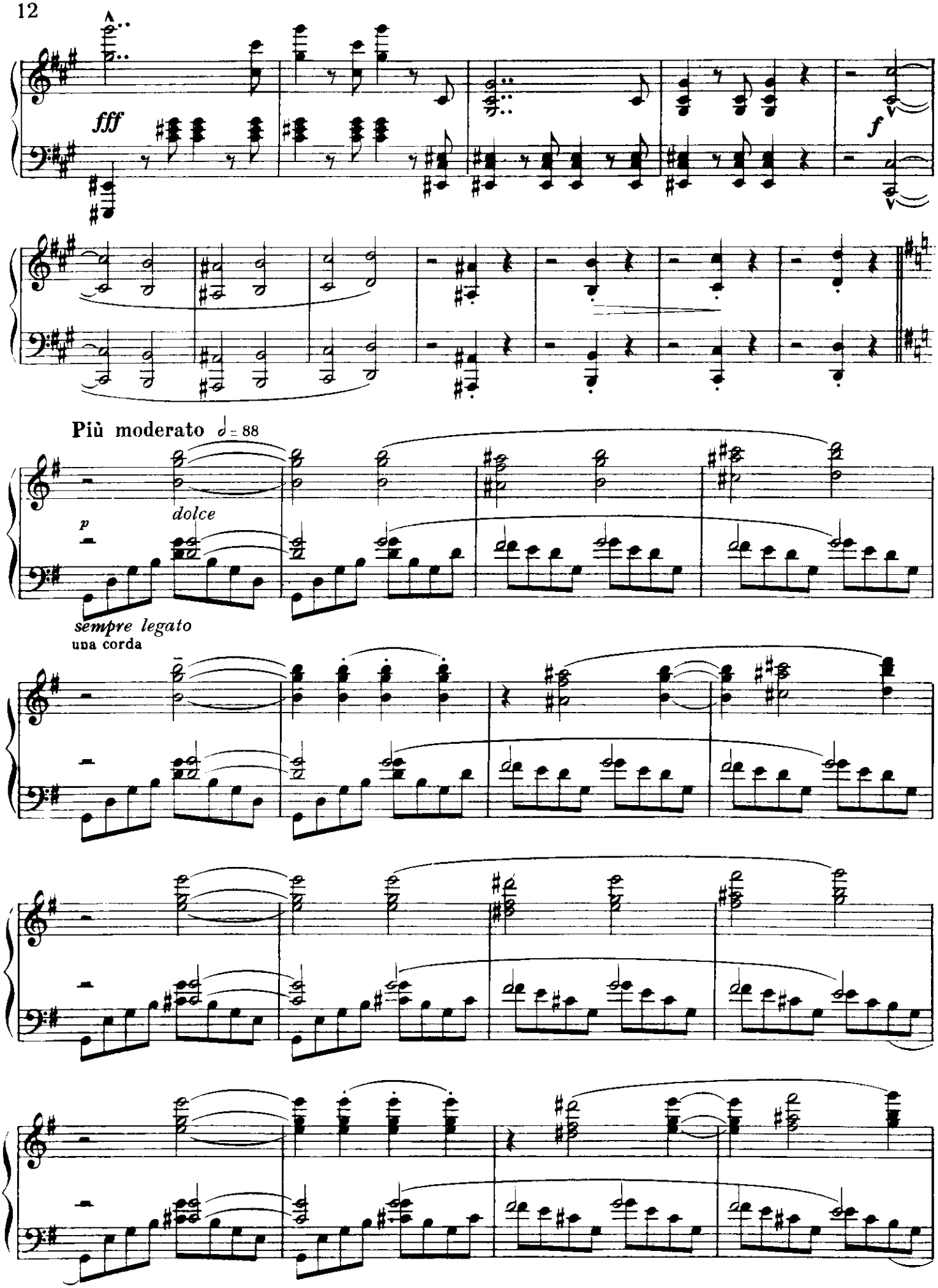

Sempre più largo
ossia
ossia
Tempo I.
sempre ff

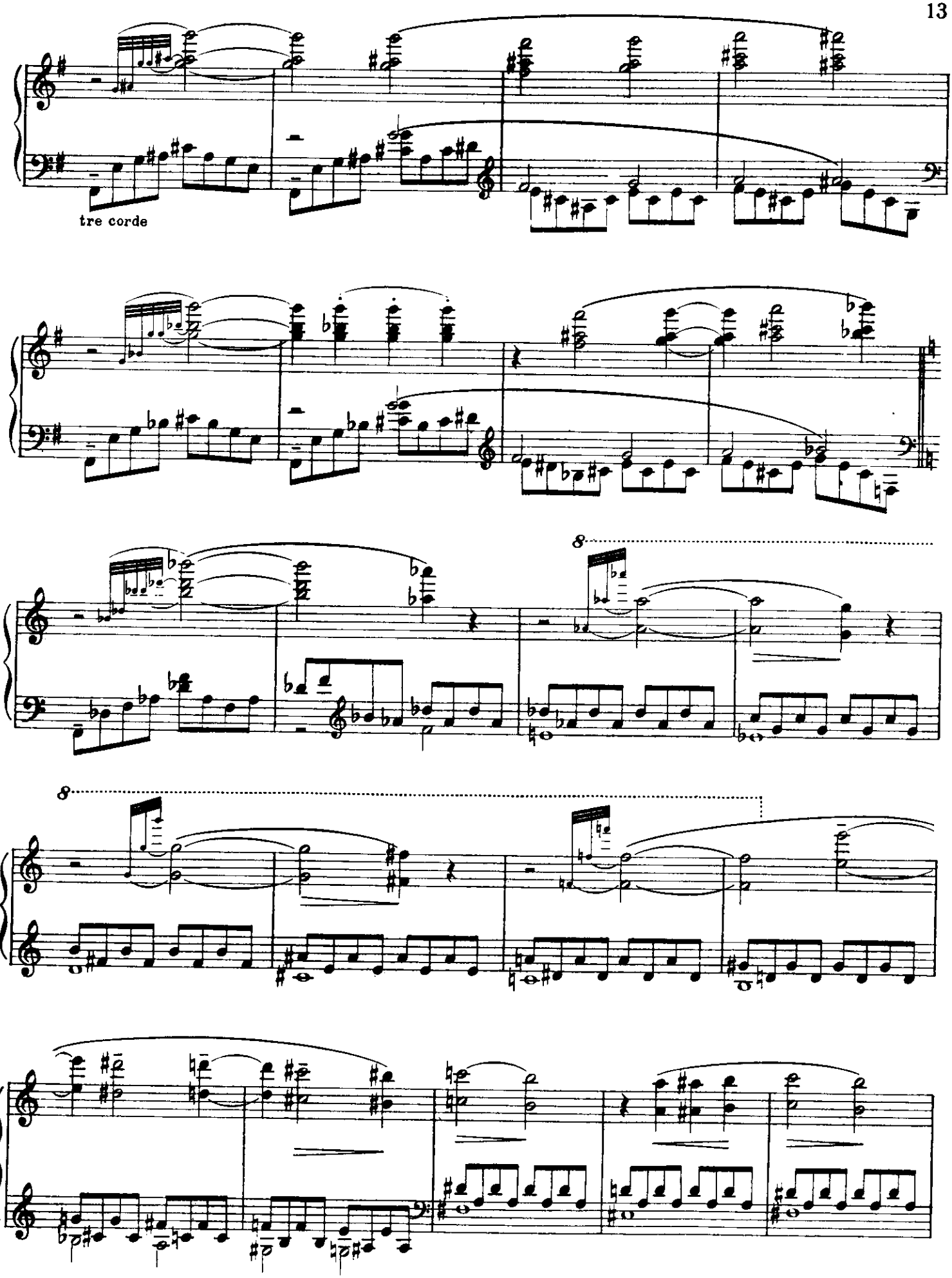


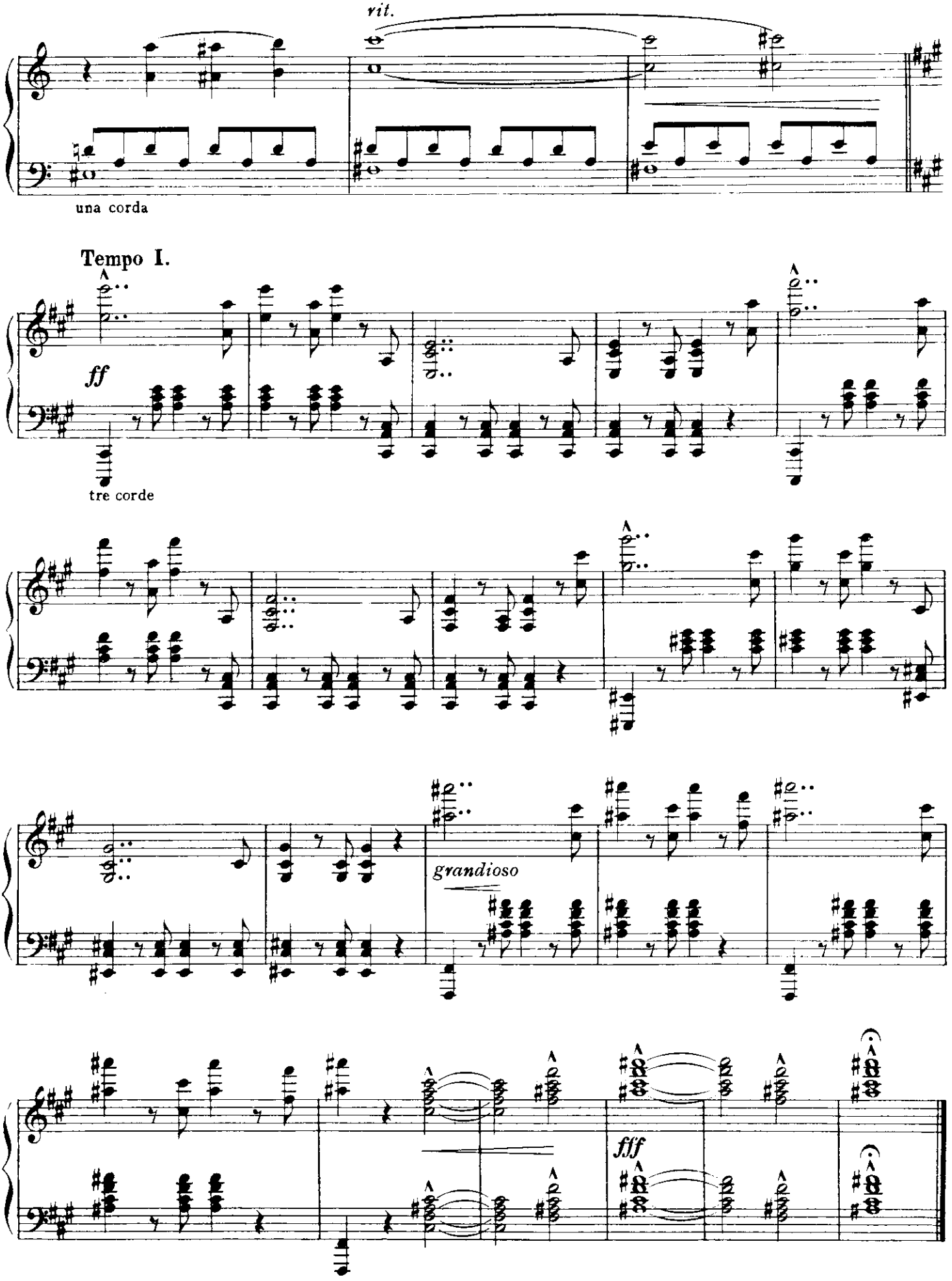


II.
EÖTVÖS JÓZSEF

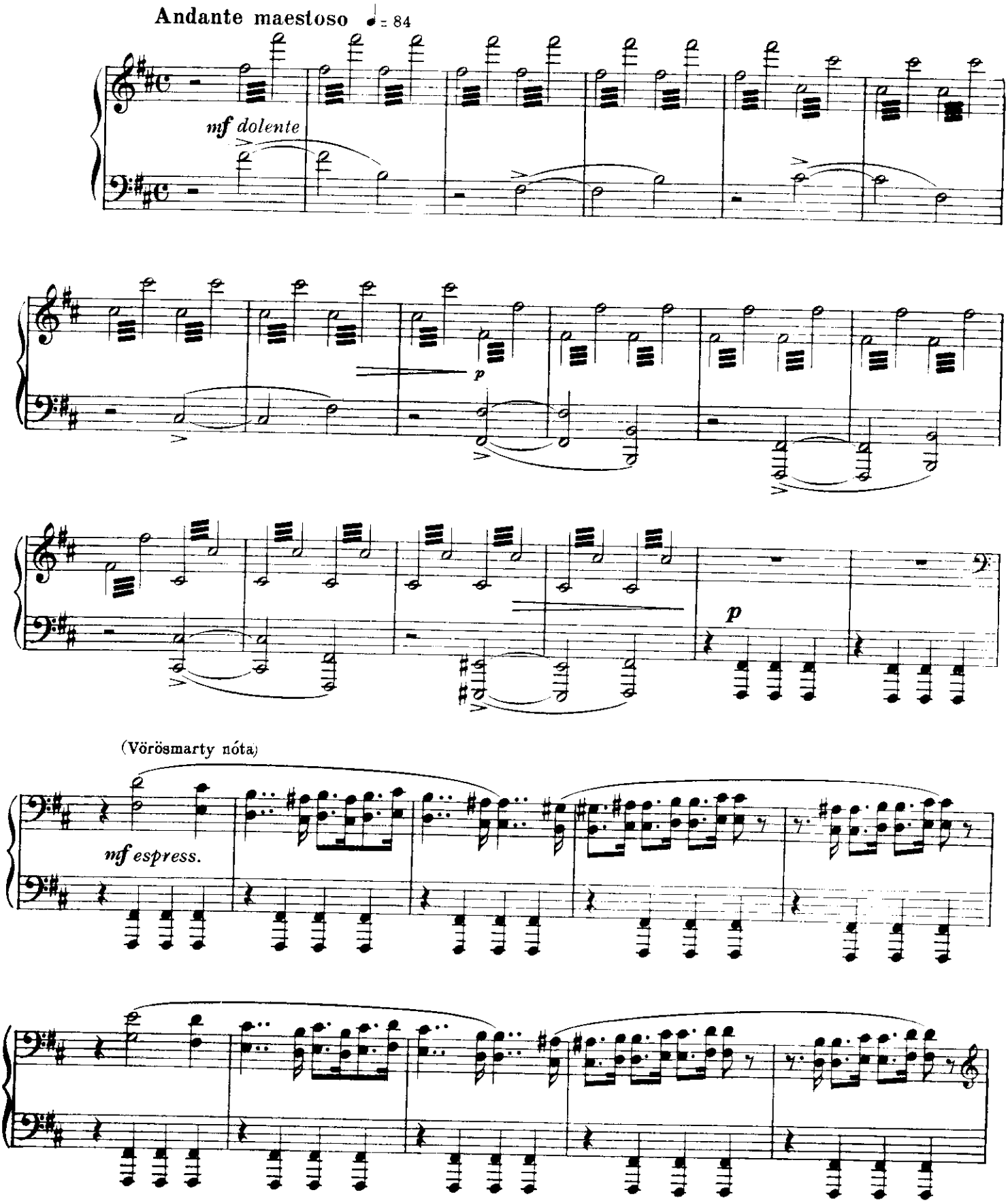


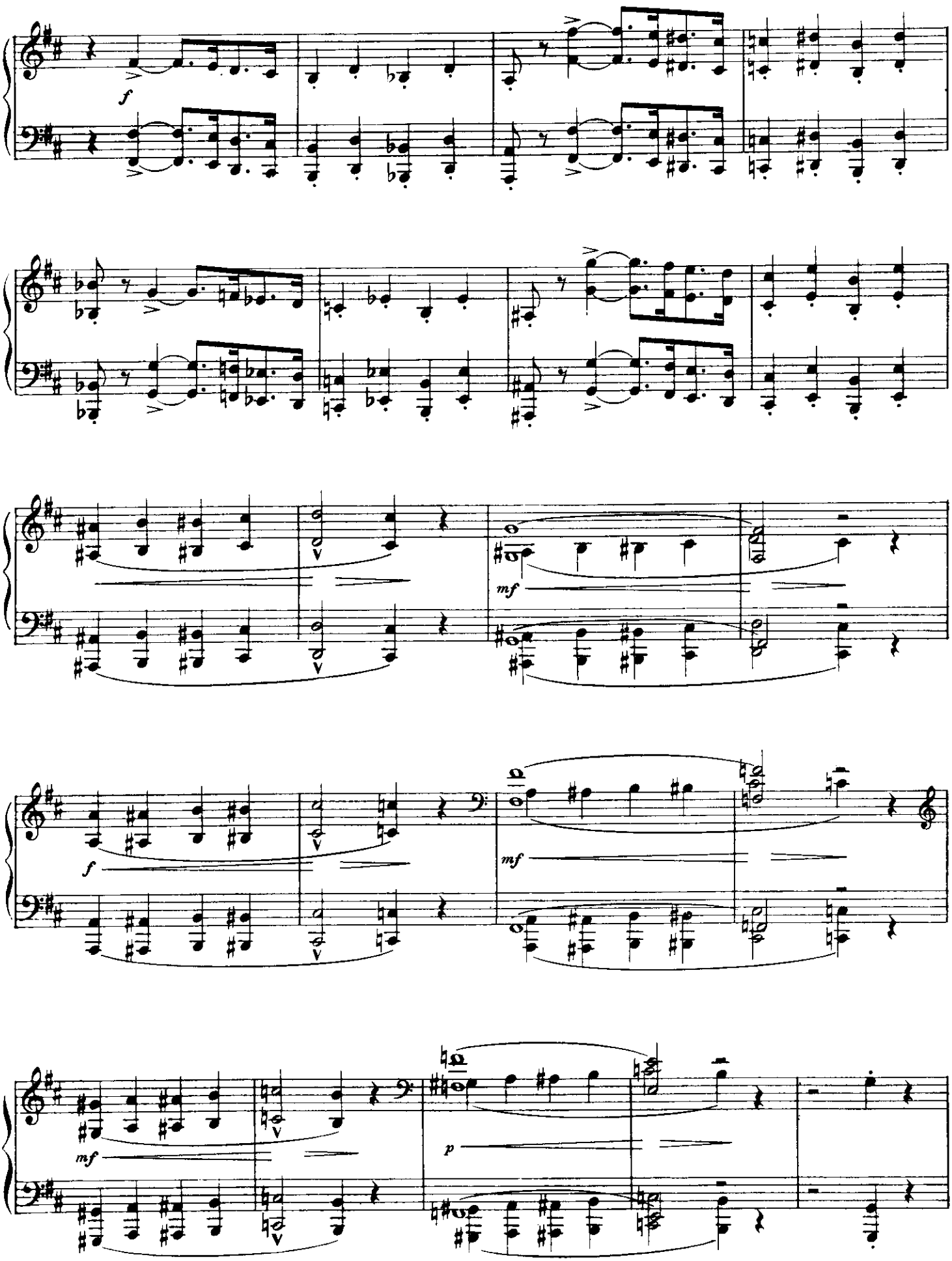

fff
f
Più moderato ♩= 88
dolce
p
sempre legato
una corda

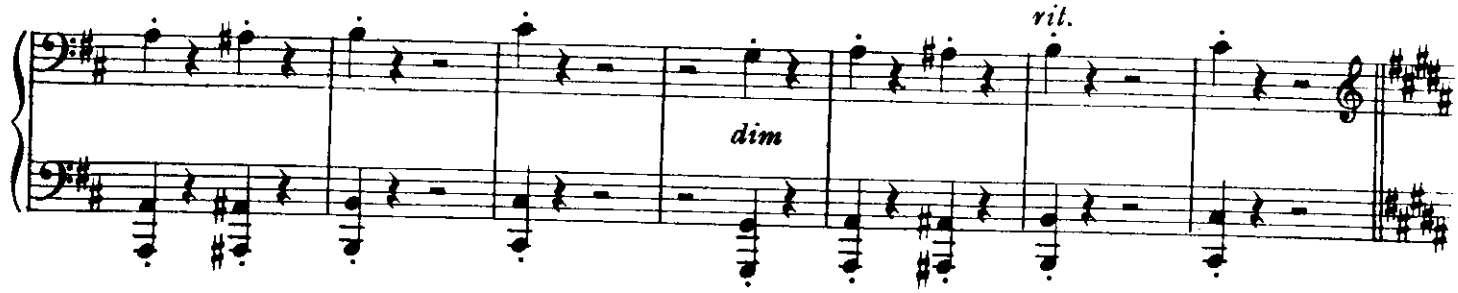

tre corde
8
8

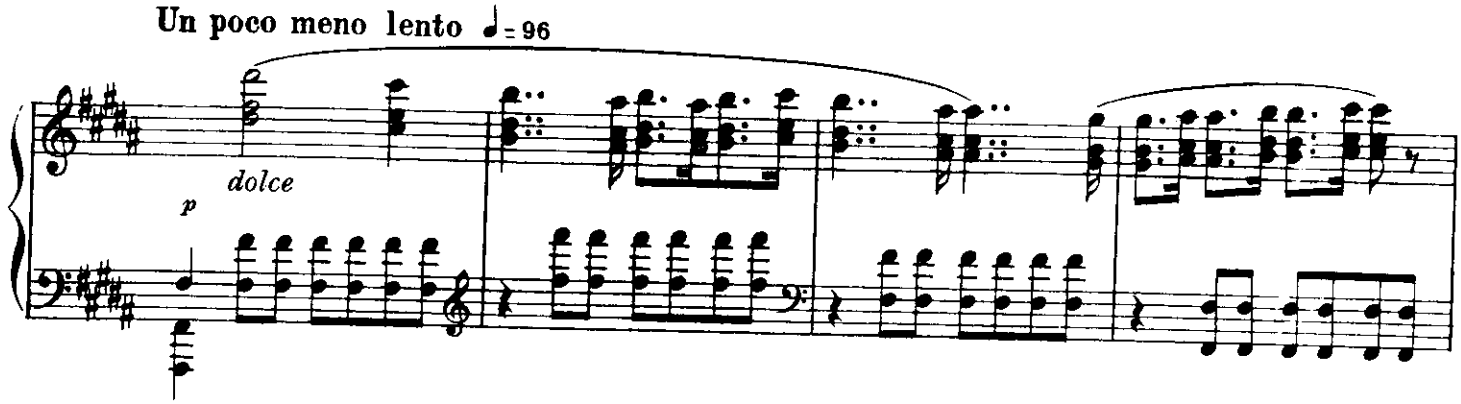

rit.
una corda
Tempo I.
ff
tre corde
grandioso
fff

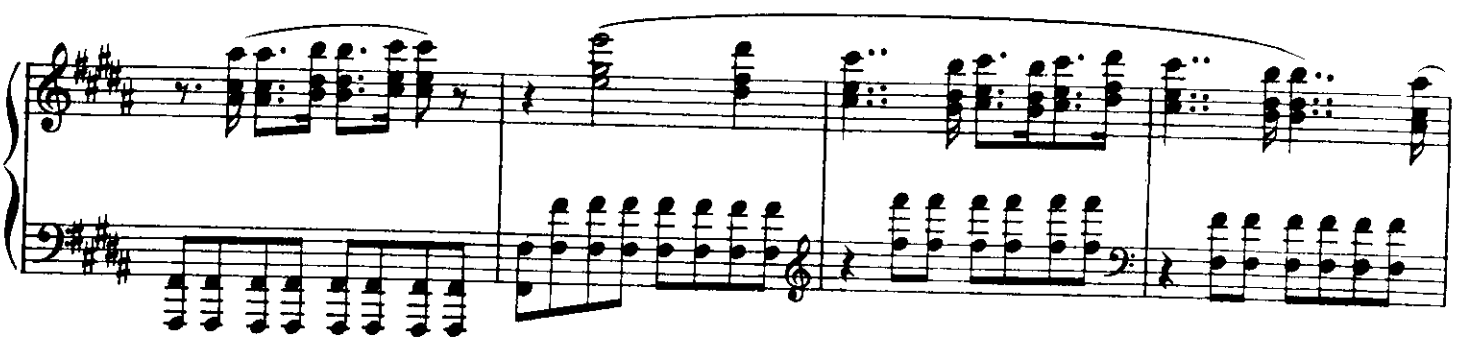
III.
VÖRÖSMARTY MIHÁLY

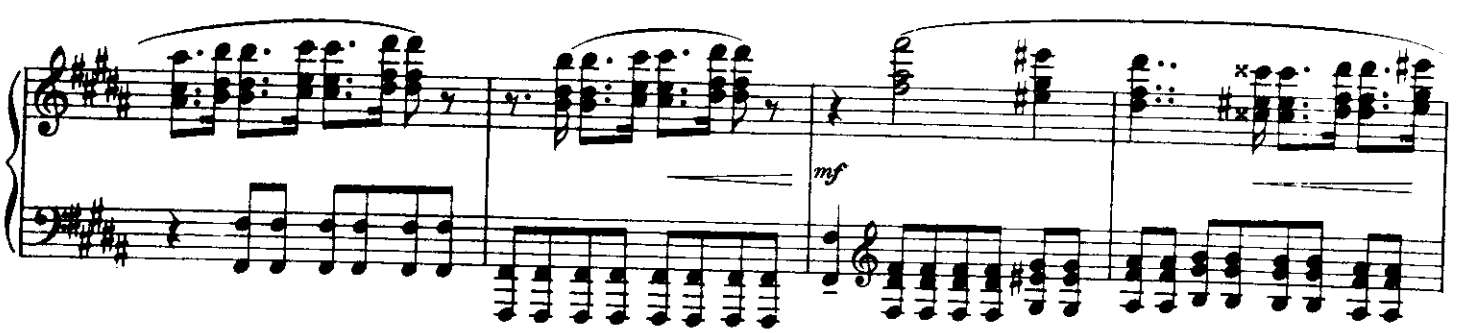


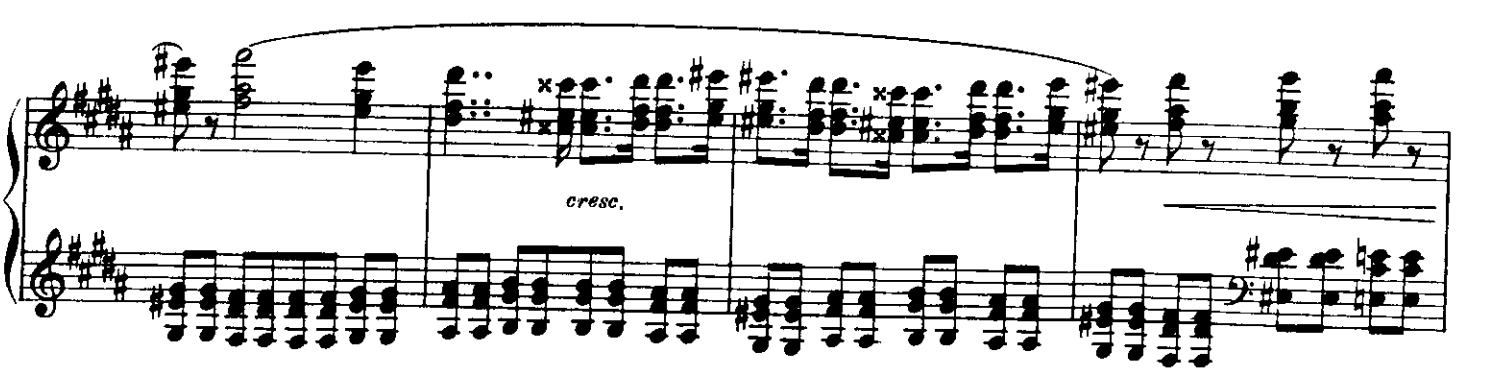

f
mf
f
mf
mf
p

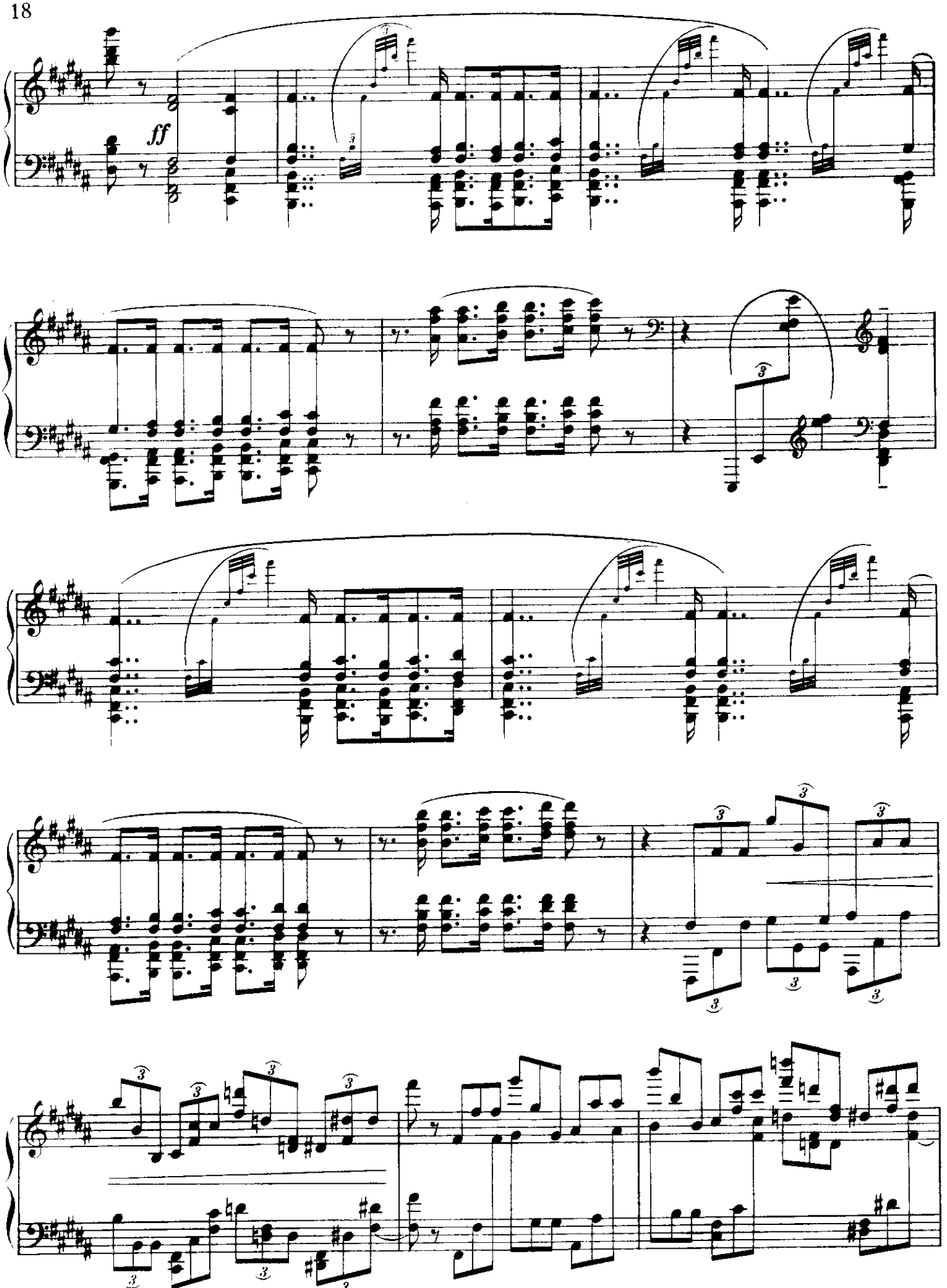

ril.
dim

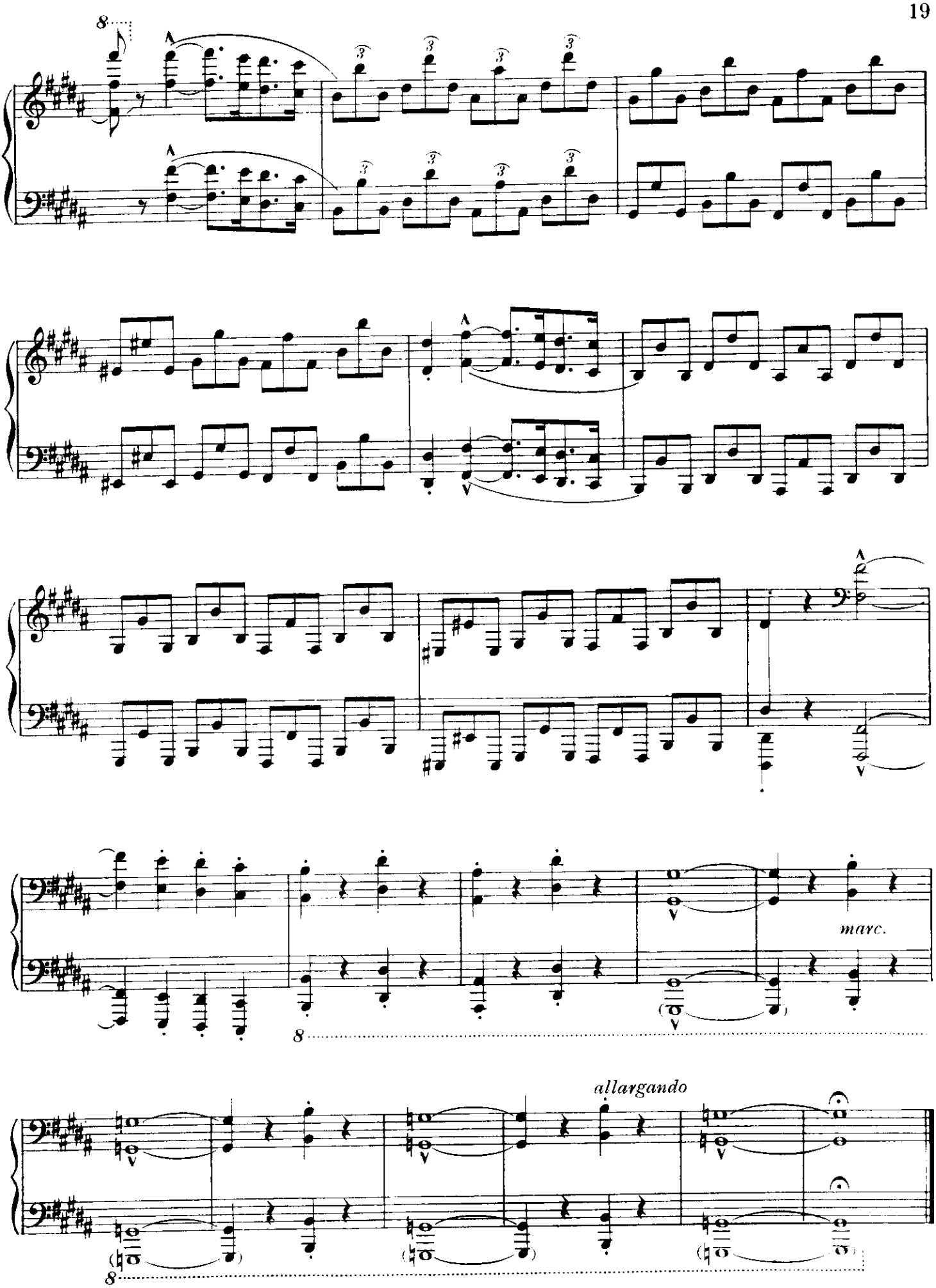

Un poco meno lento ♩= 96
dolce
p



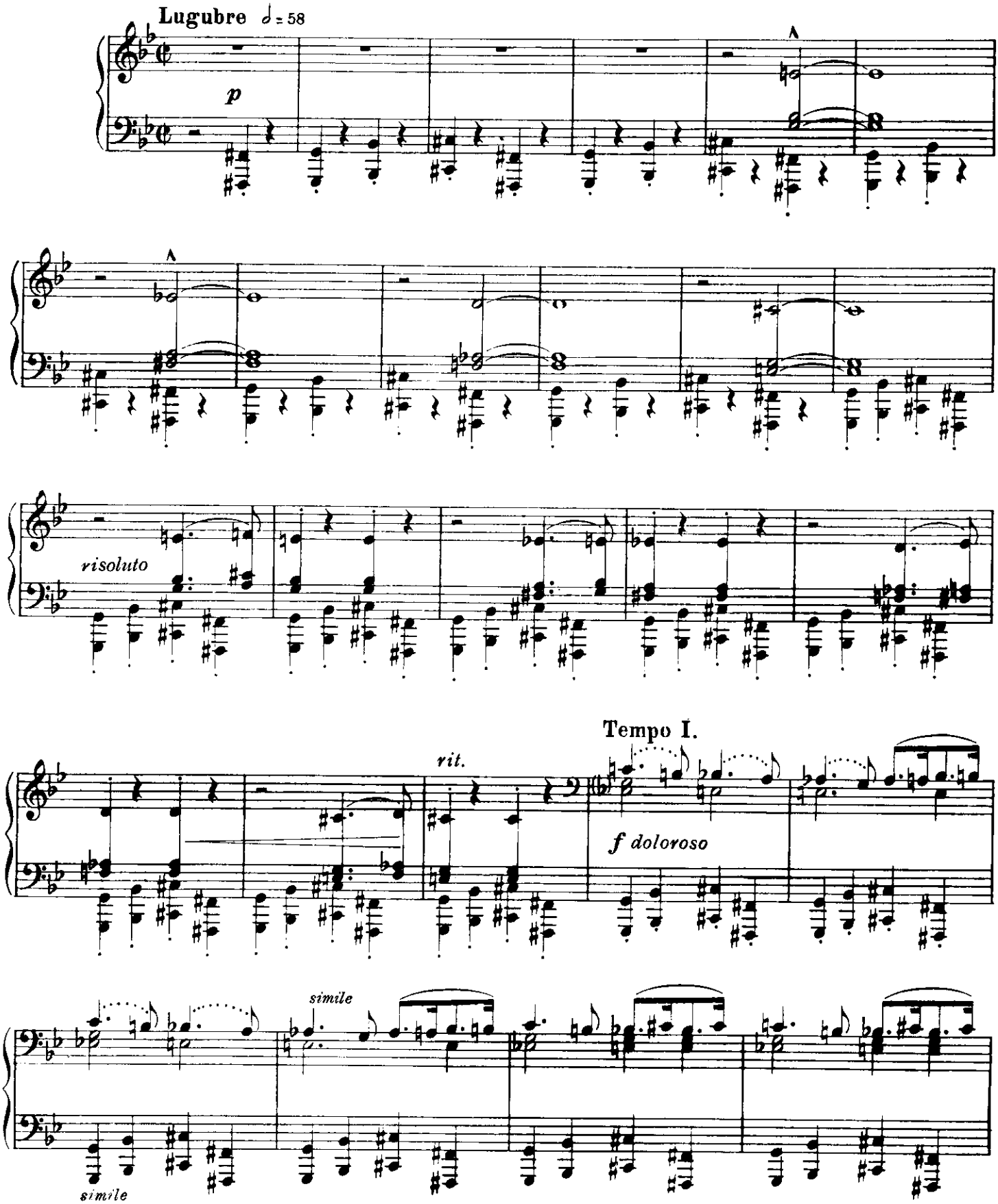

mf

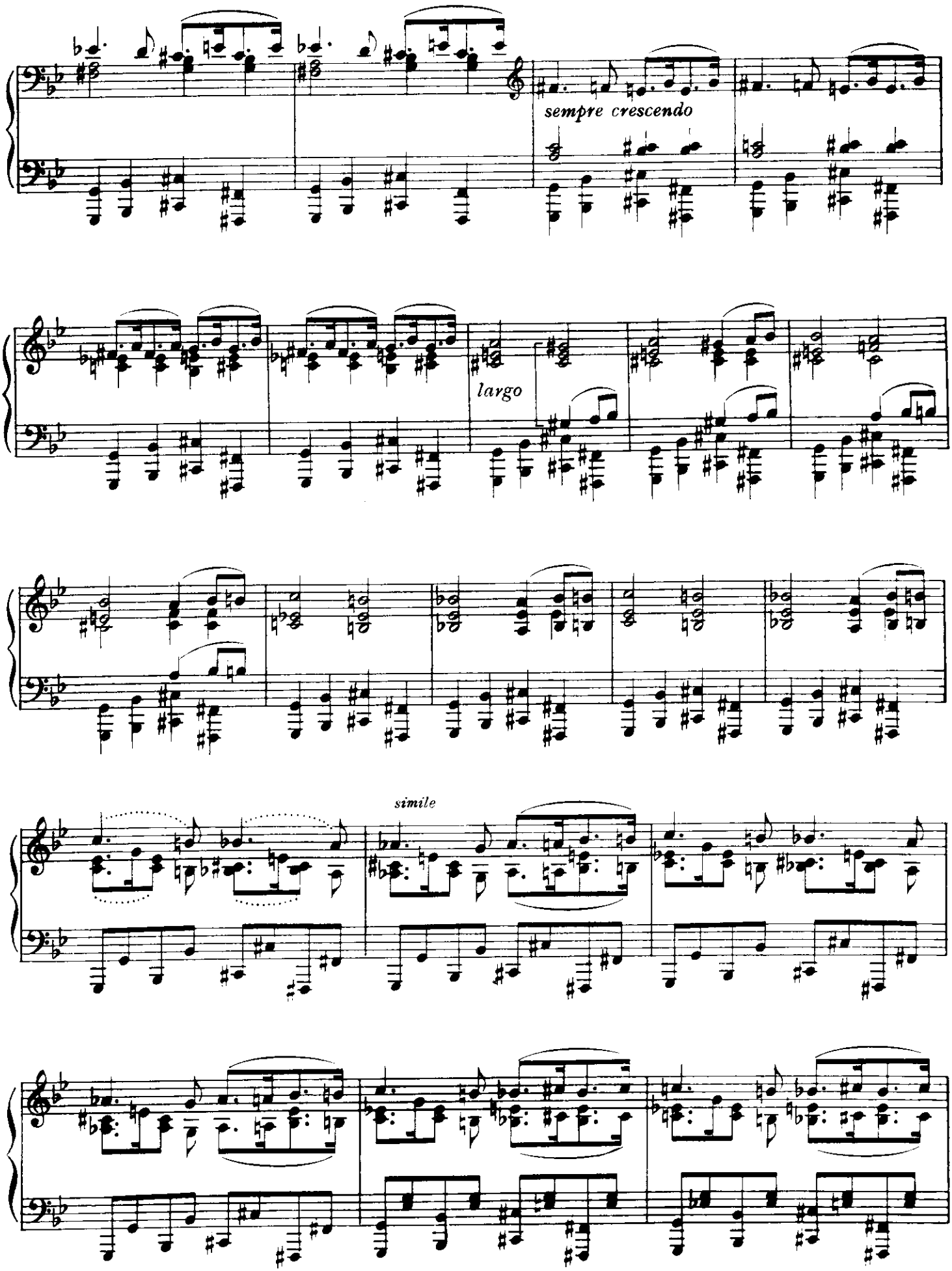

cresc.

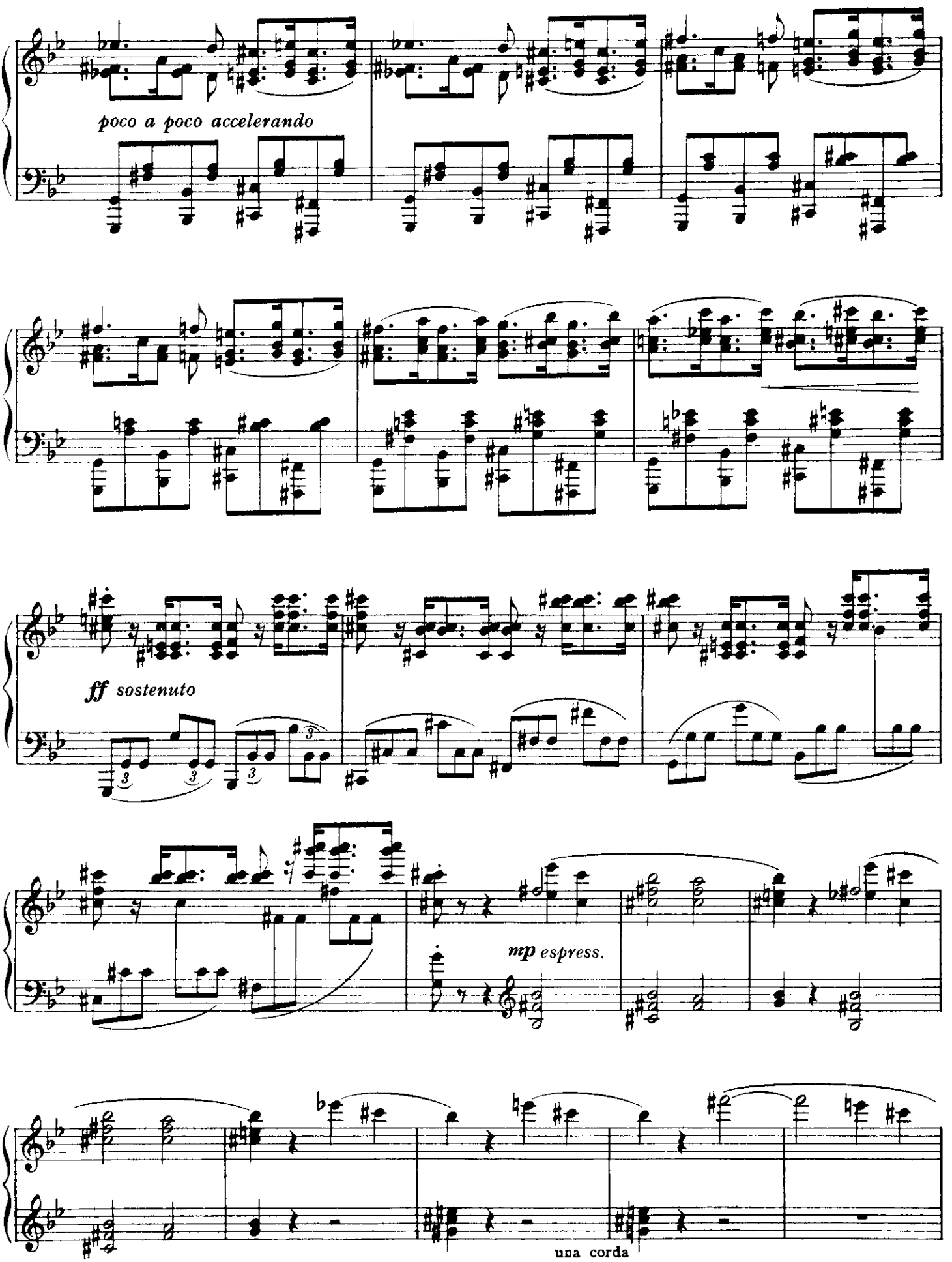

ff

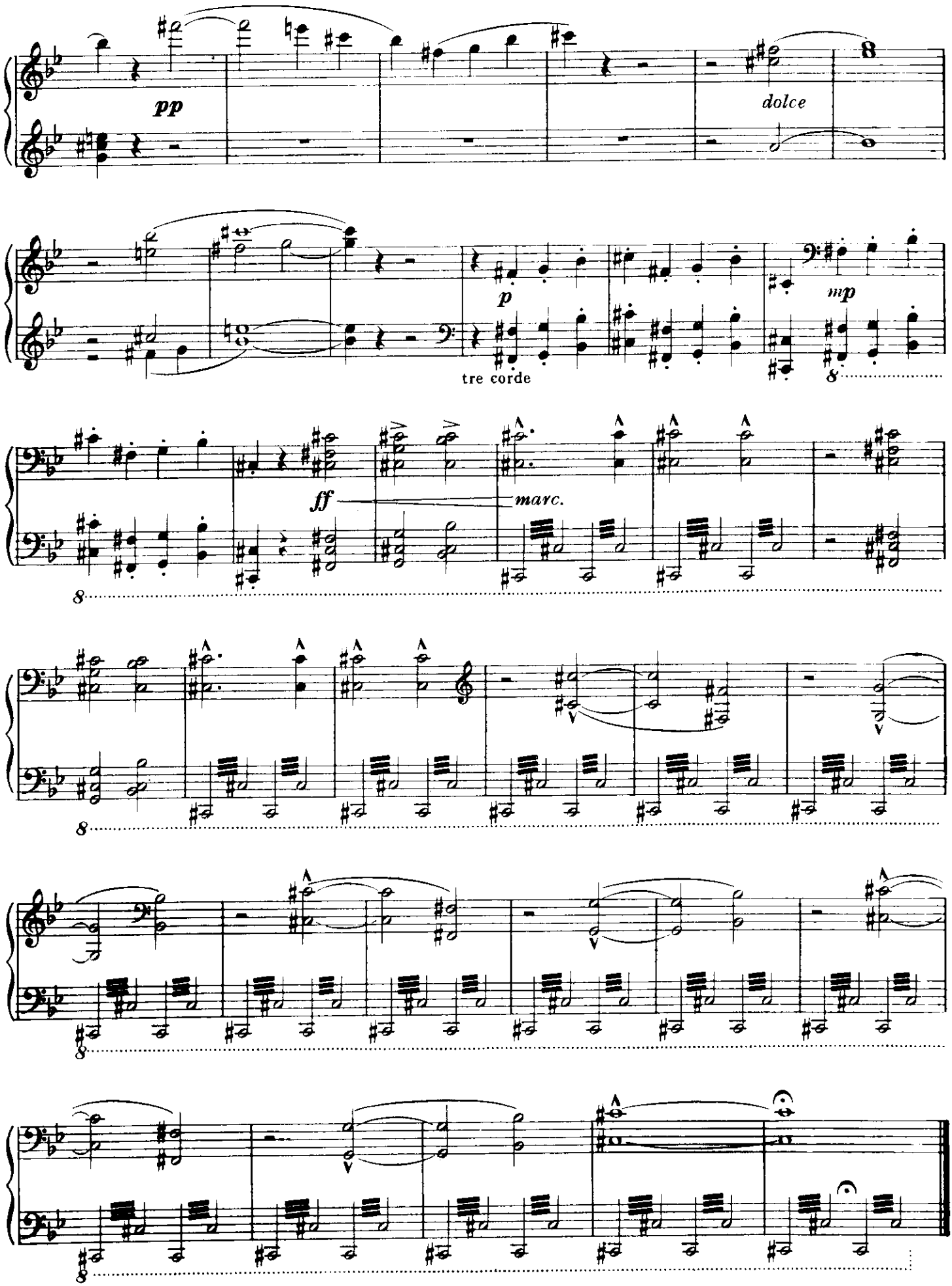

8
marc.
allargando

IV.
TELEKI LÁSZLÓ

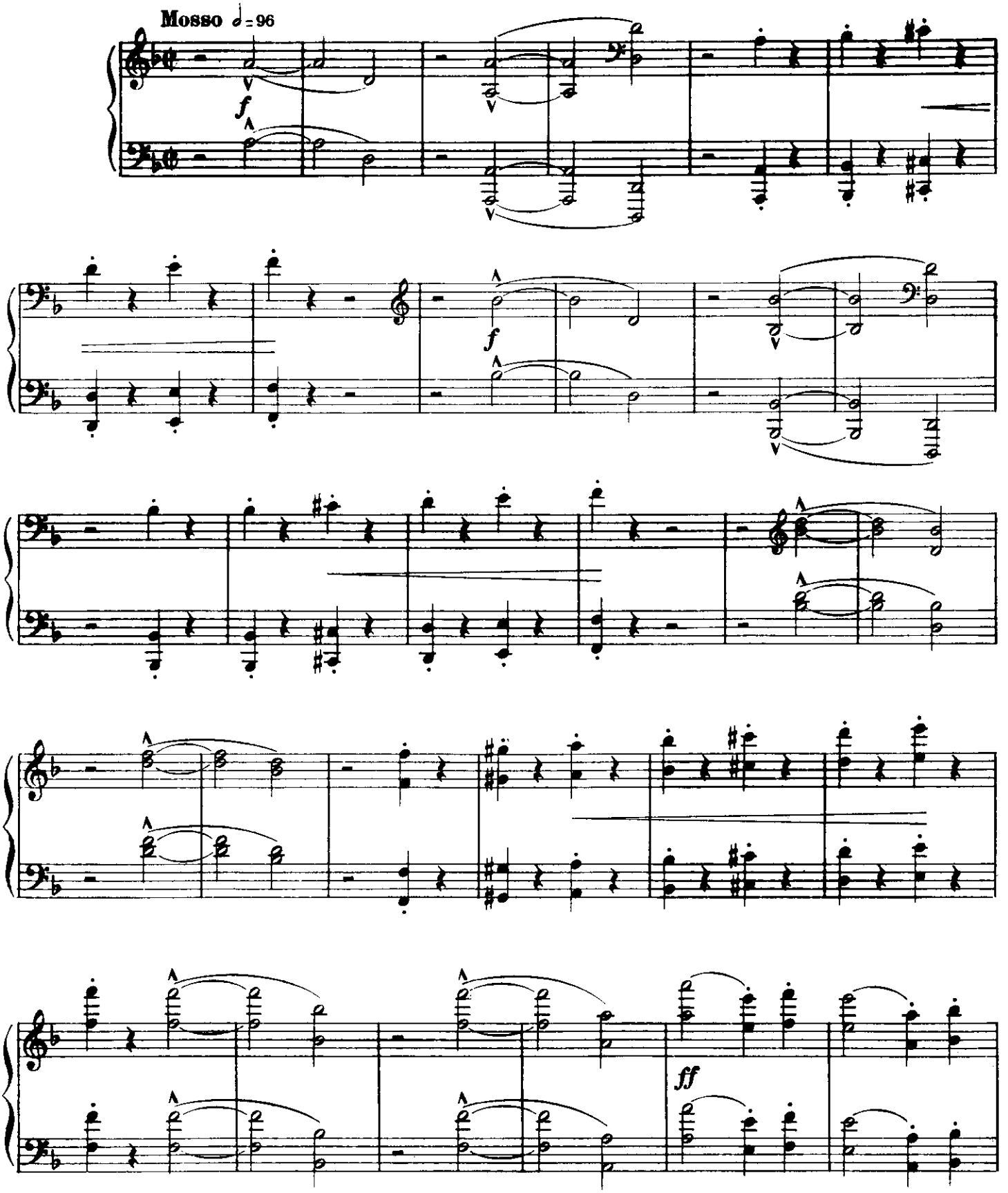


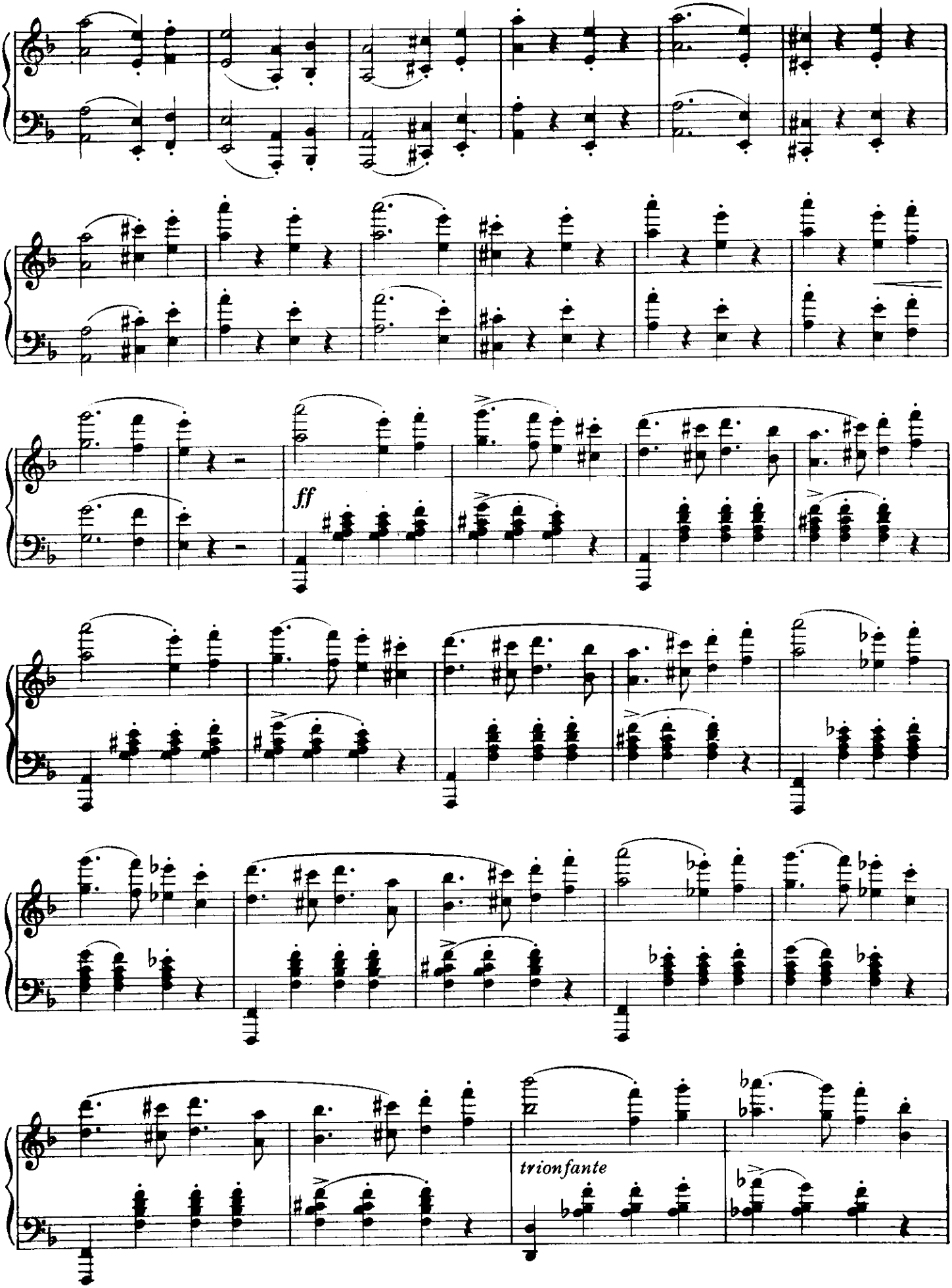

sempre crescendo
largo
simile

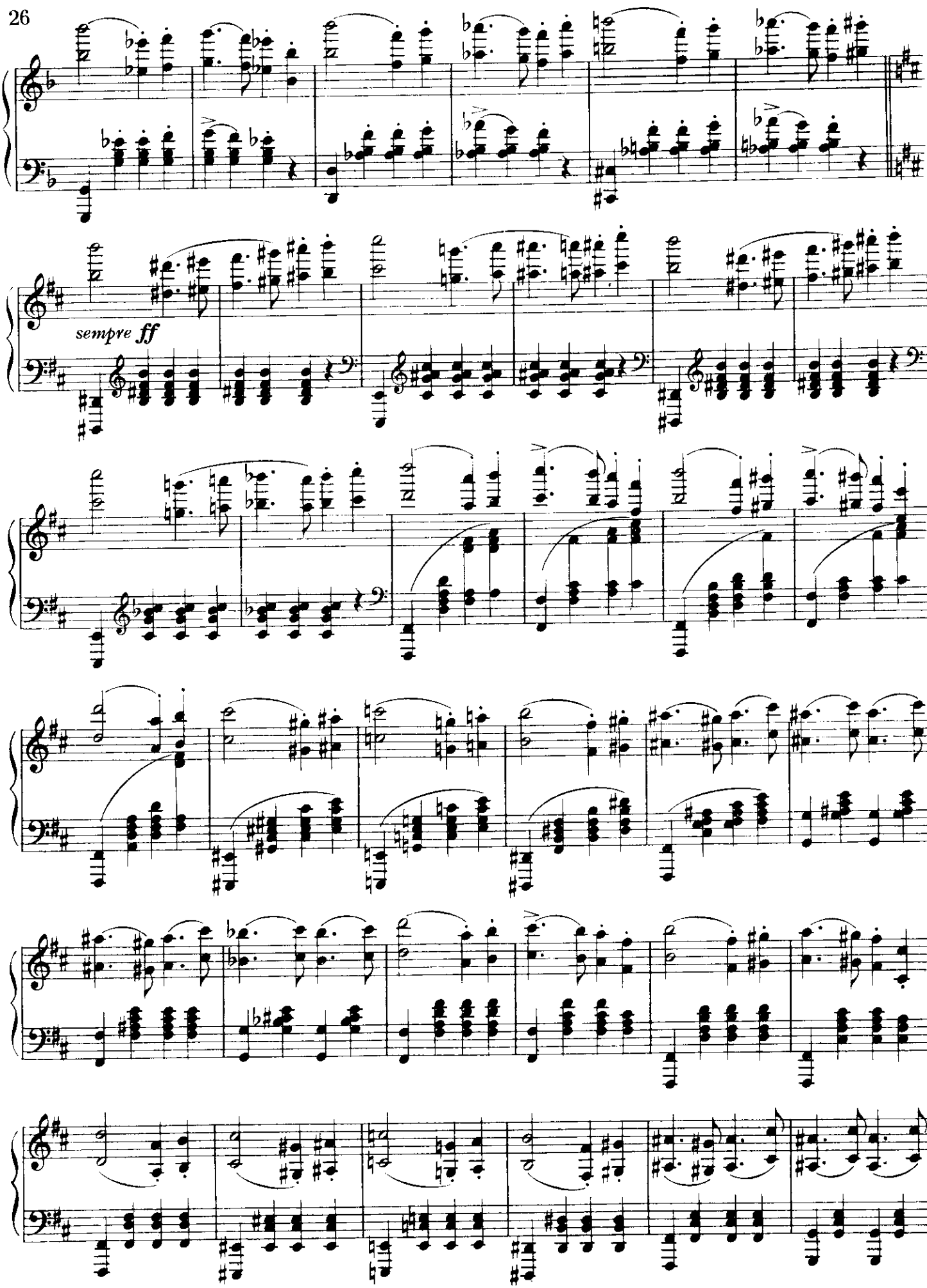

poco a poco accelerando
ff sostenuto
mp espress.
una corda

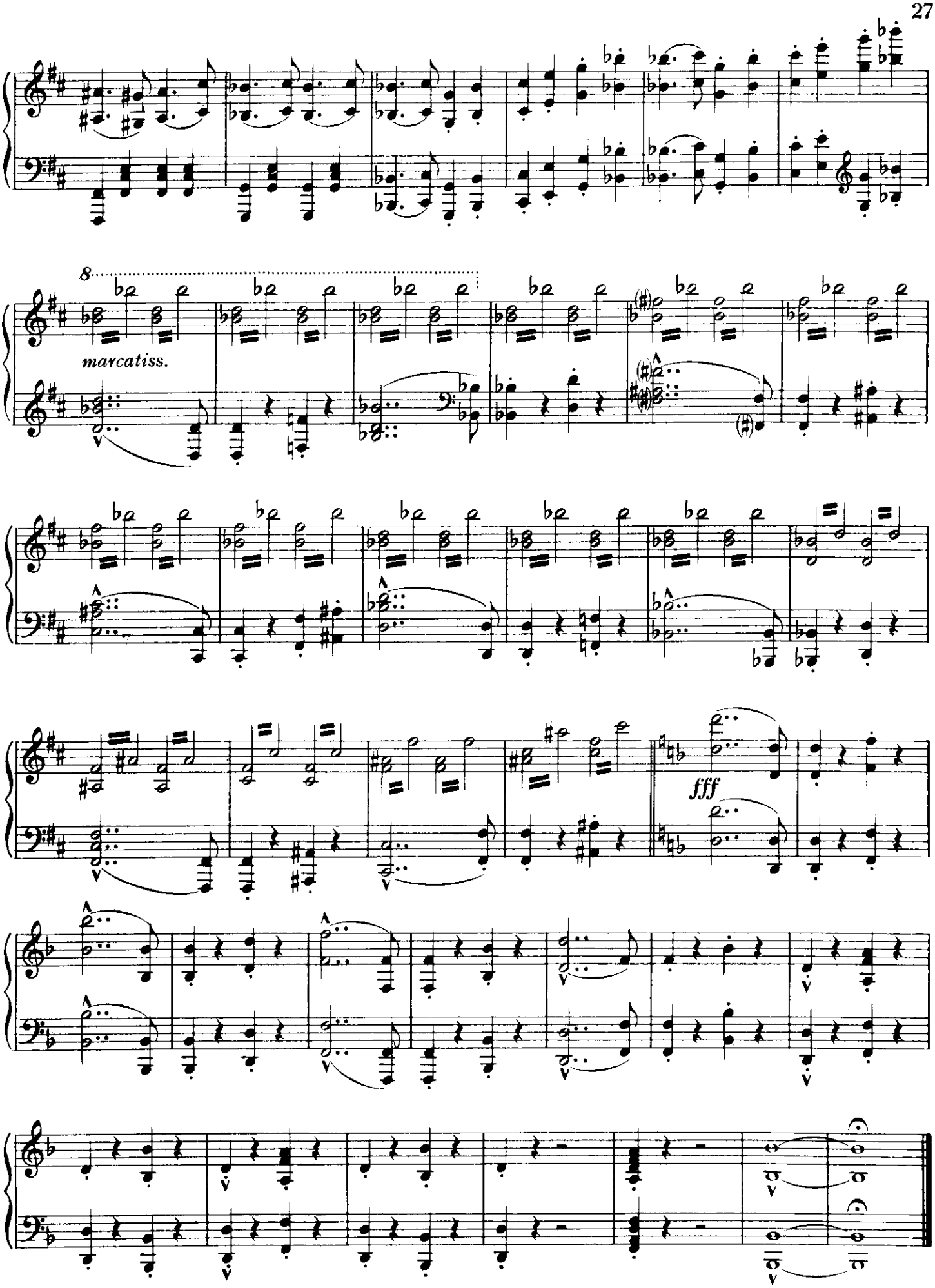

pp
dolce
8
p
tre corde
mp
8
ff
marc.
8
8
8
8

V.
DEÁK FERENC

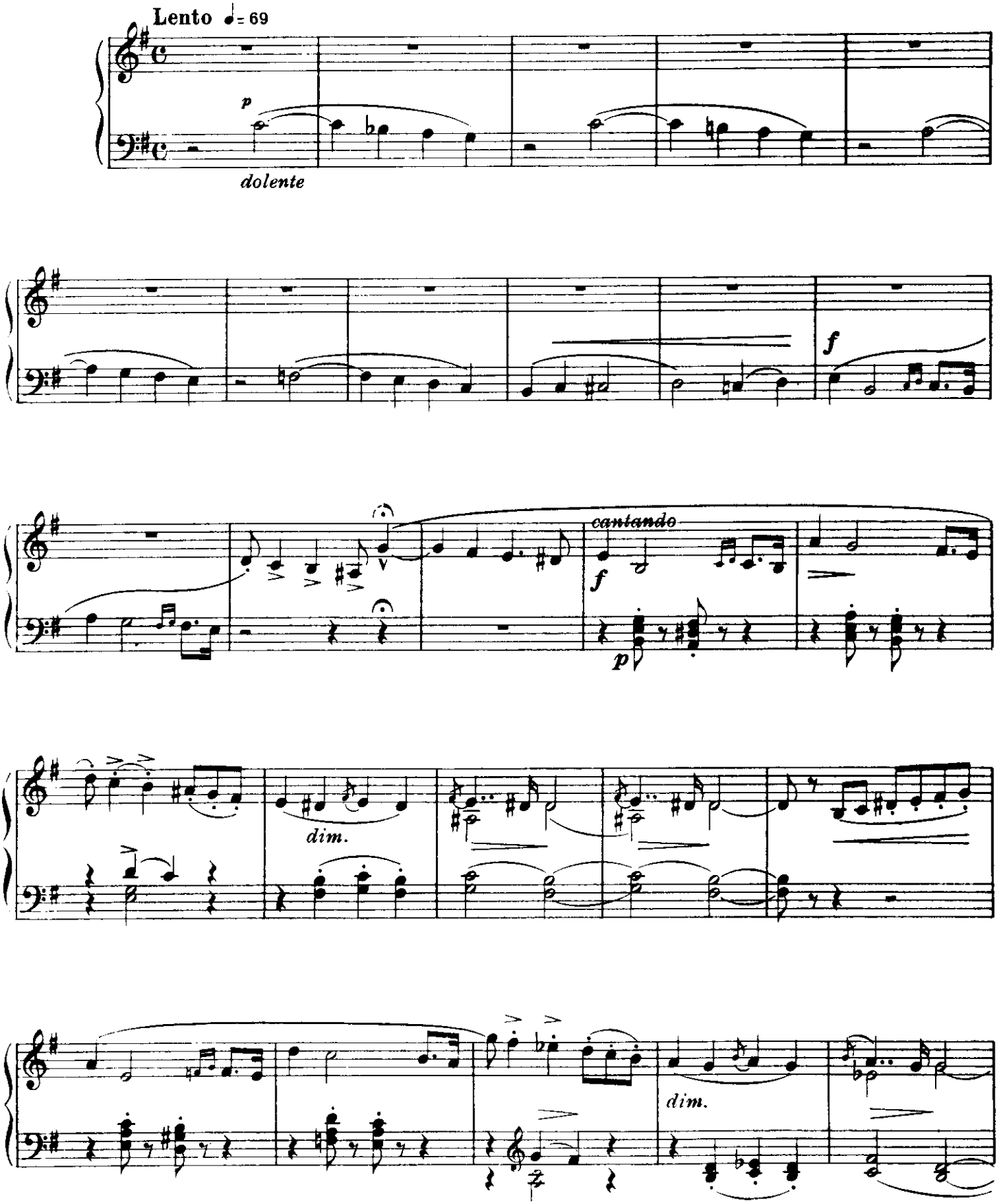


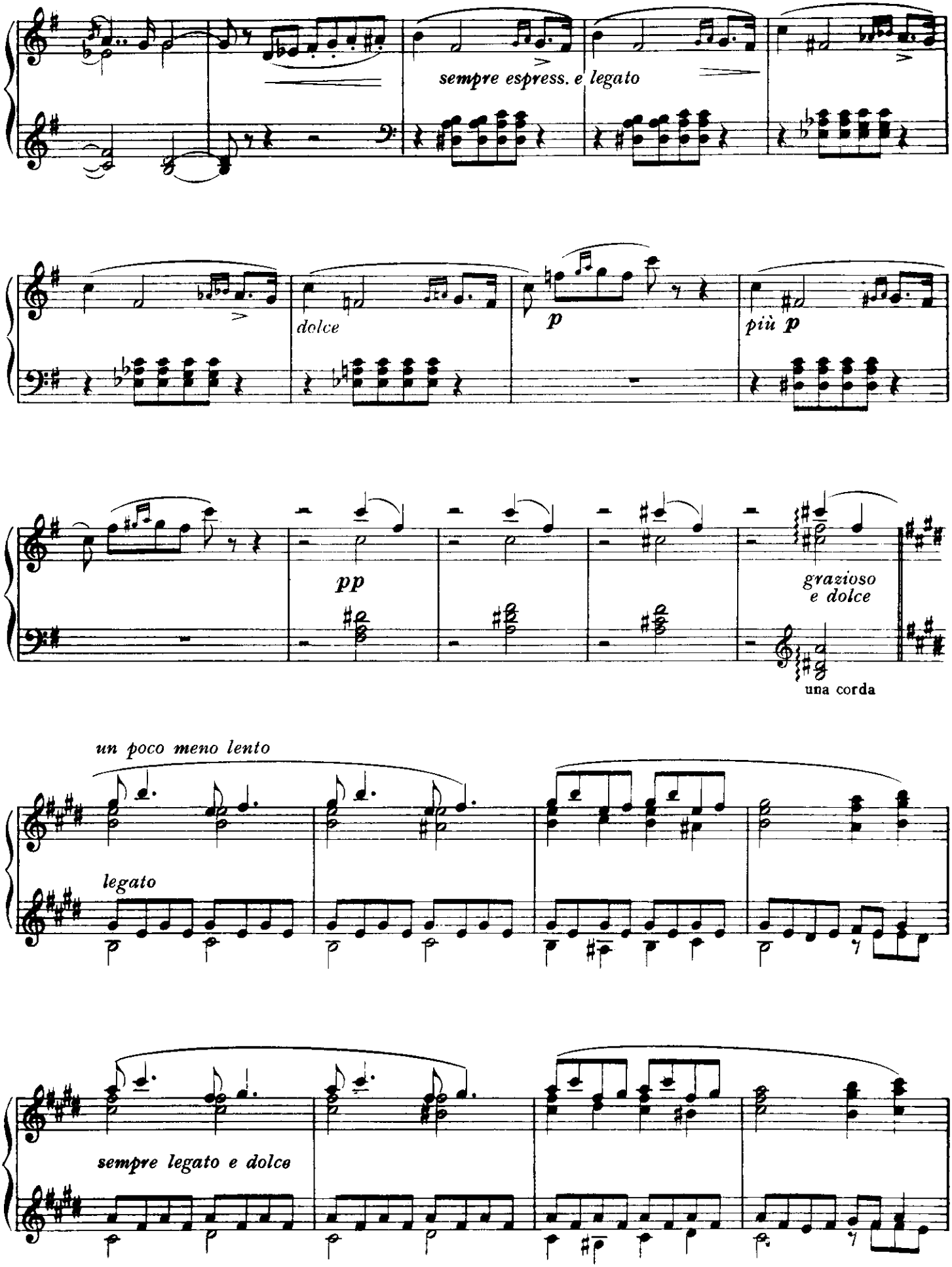

ff
trionfante

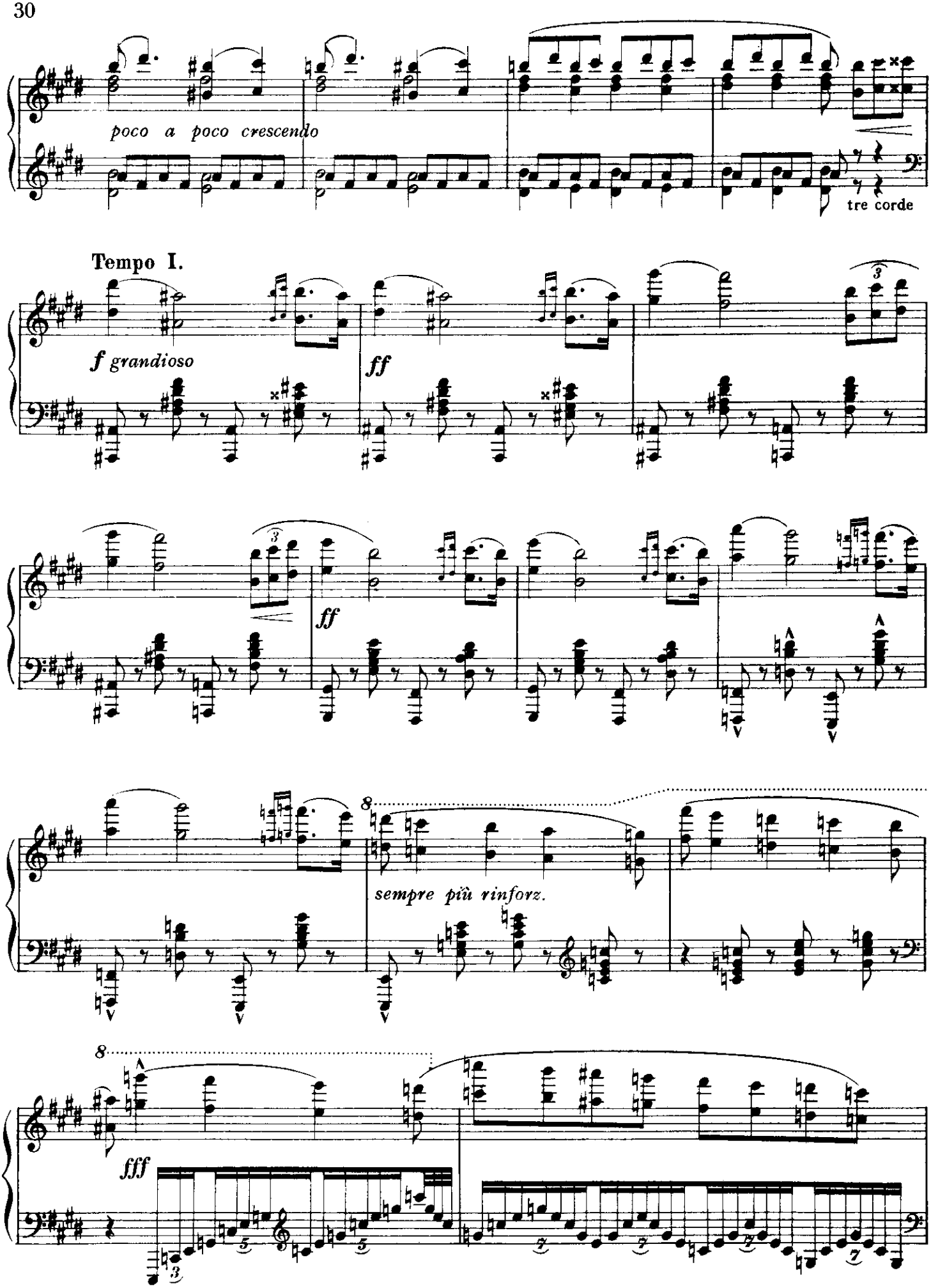

sempre ff

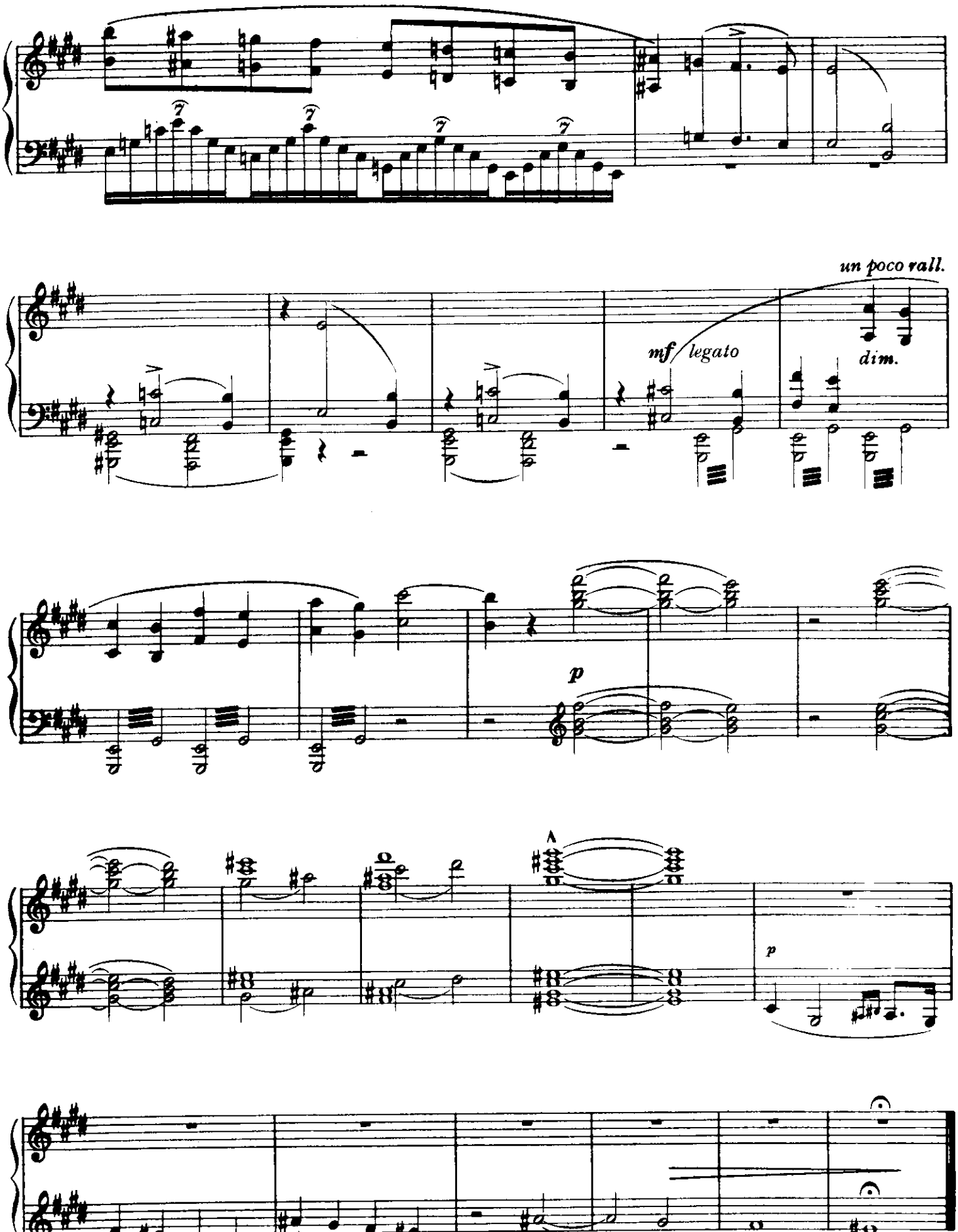

8
marcatiss.
fff

VI.
PETÖFI SÁNDOR

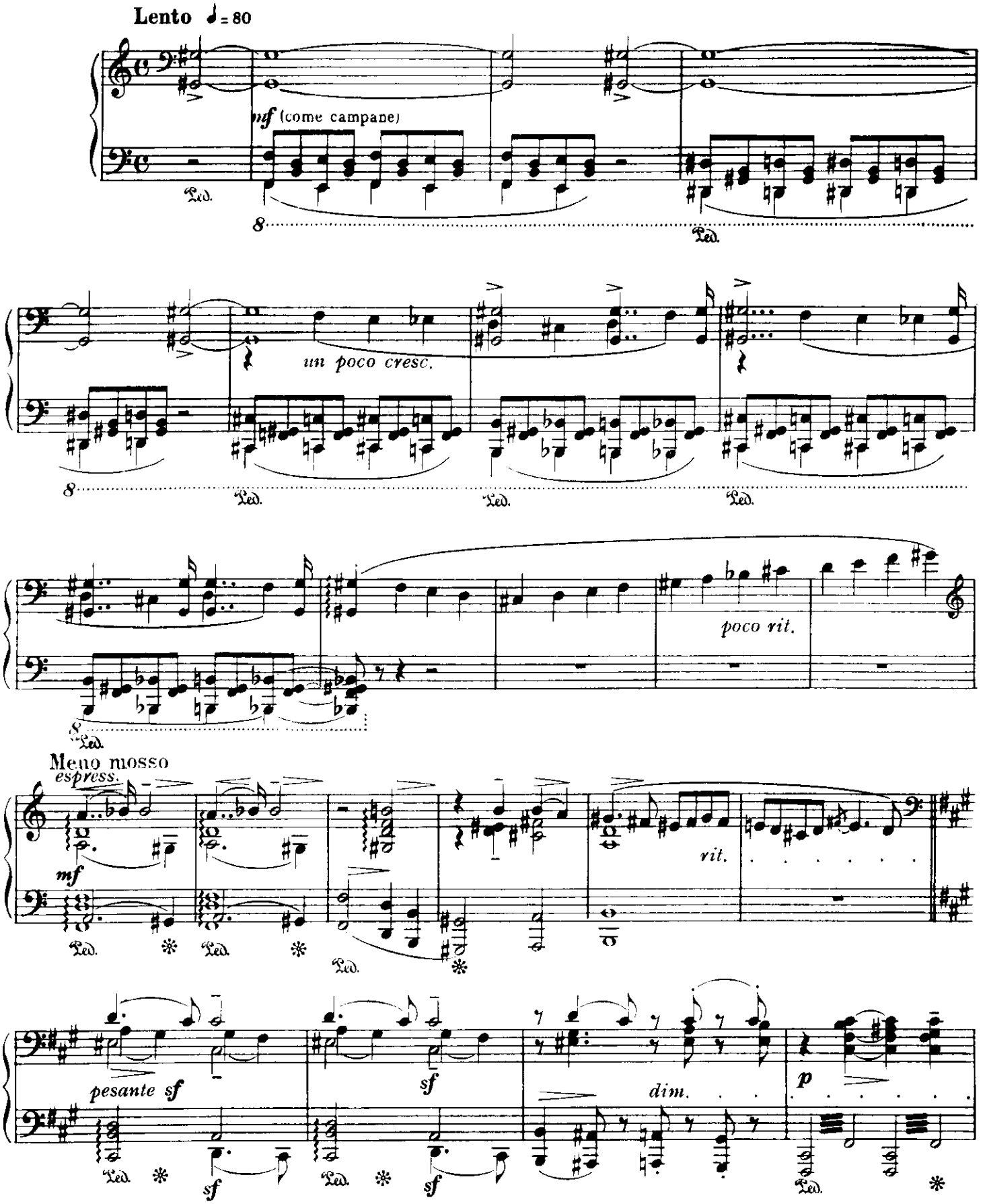


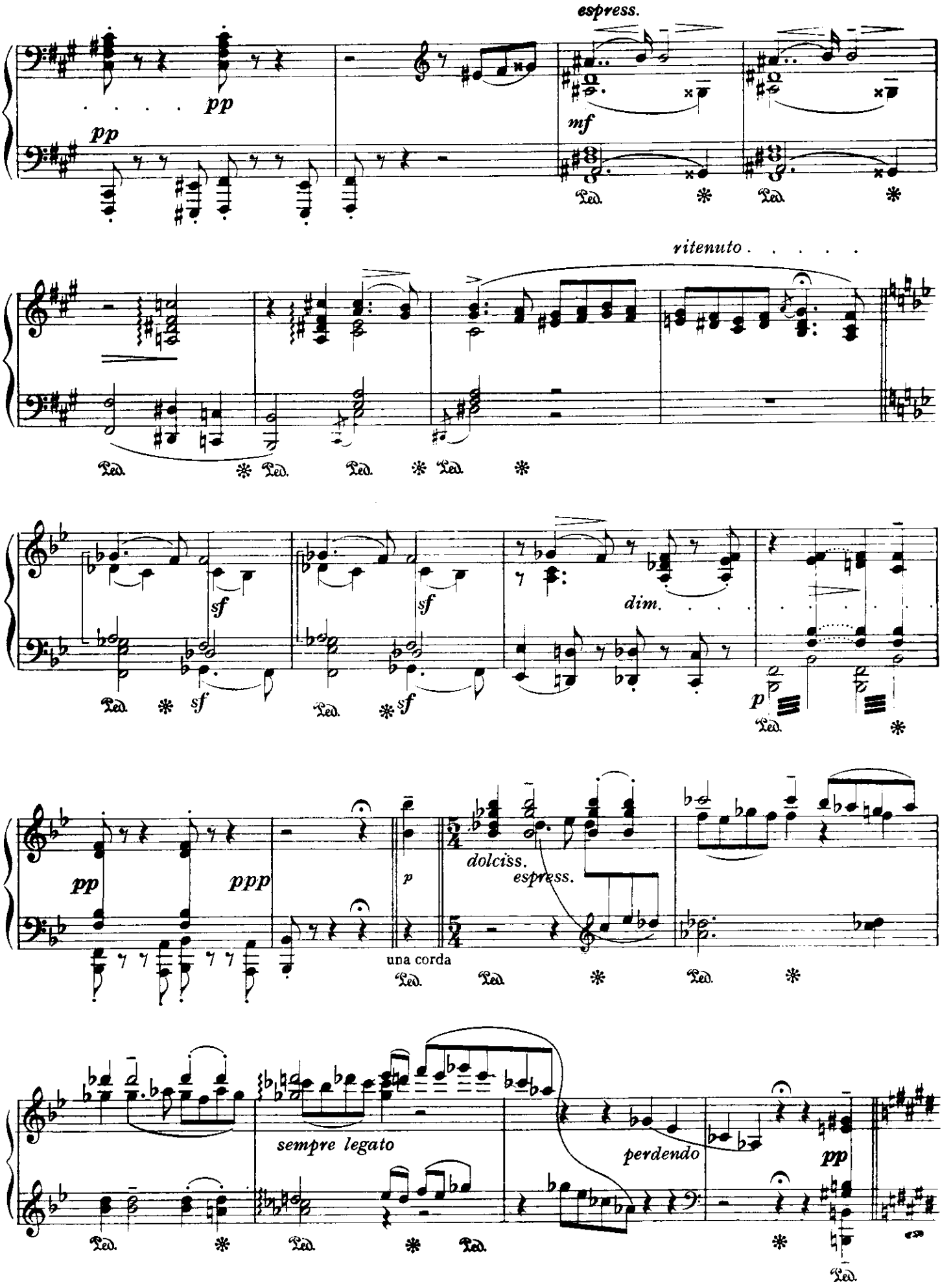

sempre espress. e legato
dolce
p
più p
pp
grazioso
e dolce
una corda
un poco meno lento
legato
sempre legato e dolce

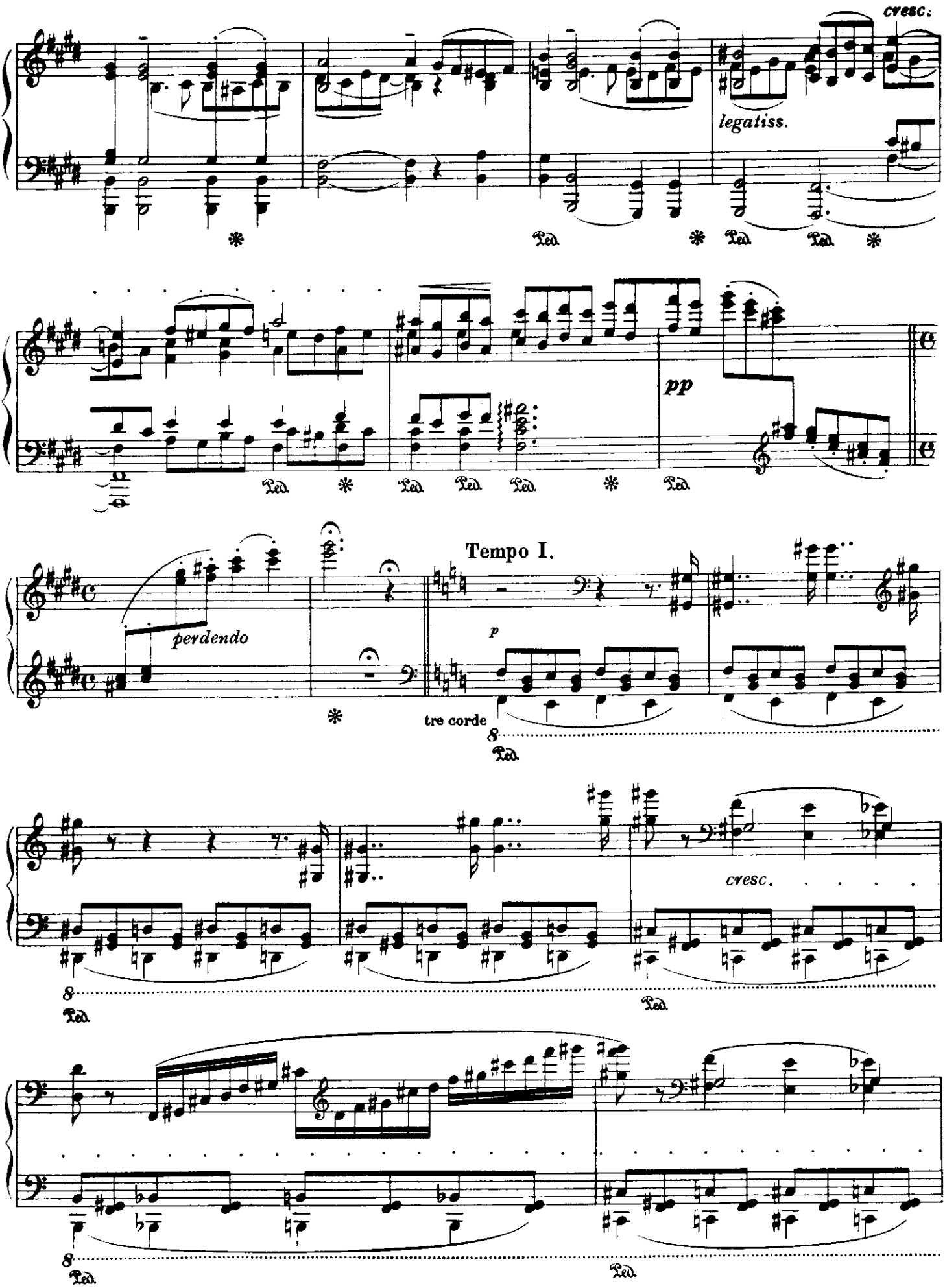

poco a poco crescendo
tre corde
Tempo I.
f grandioso
ff
ff
sempre più rinforz.
fff

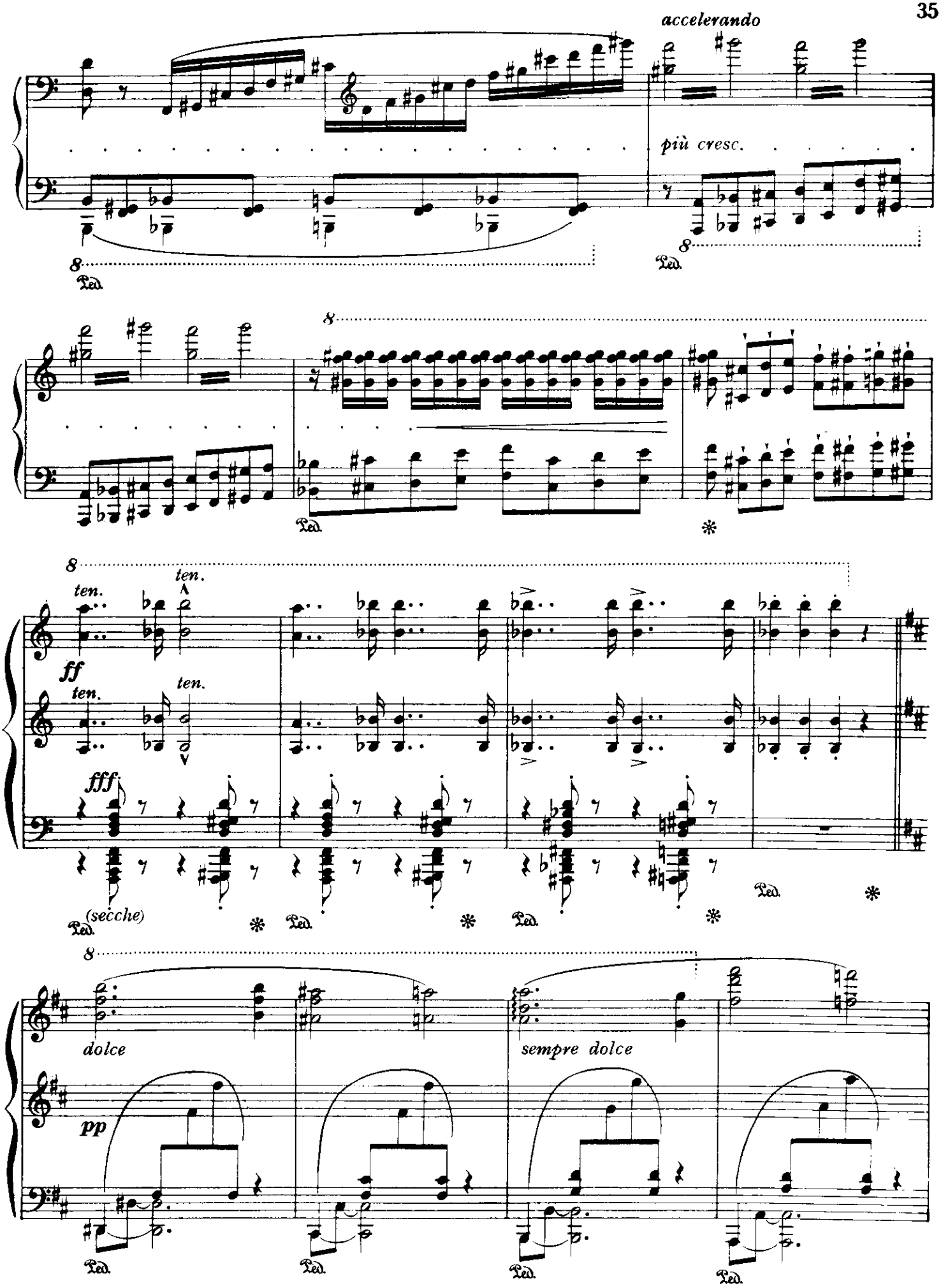

un poco rall.
mf legato
dim.
p
p

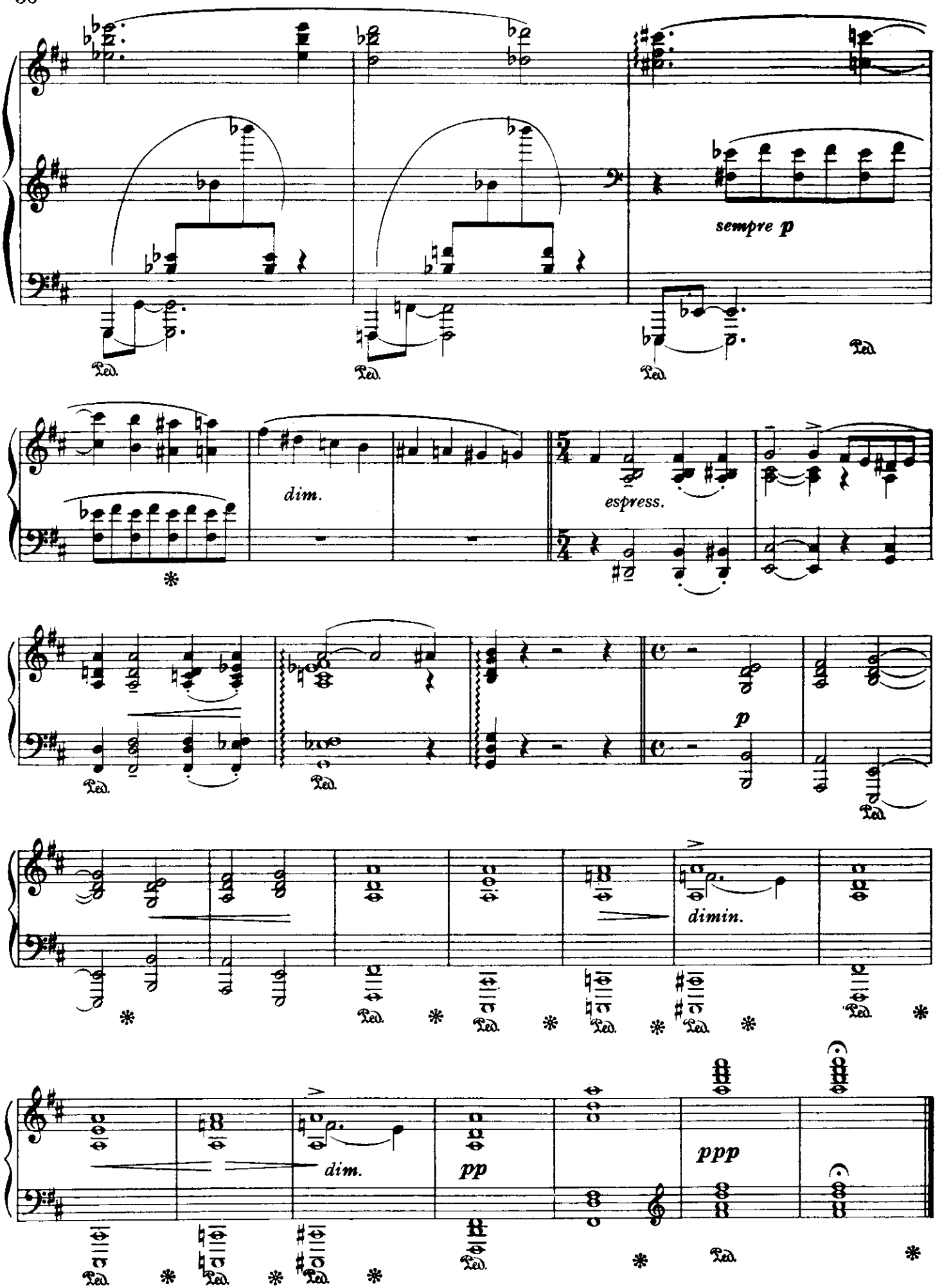
VII.
MOSONYI MIHÁLY




espress.
pp
pp
mf
Ped.
ritenuto
sf
sf
dim.
p
pp
ppp
p
una corda
dolciss.
espress.
sempre legato
perdendo
pp


cresc.
legatiss.
Ped.
pp
Tempo I.
perdendo
p
tre corde
cresc.


accelerando
più cresc.
8
Ped.
ten.
ff
fff
(secche)
dolce
pp
sempre dolce


sempre p
Ped.
dim.
espress.
p
dimin.
dim.
pp
ppp

This publication presents one of Liszt's late — or perhaps, as a cyclic unity, his last — work. Various sources — among them two of Liszt's letters — mention that Liszt, in his later years, worked on a series of piano-pieces which he intended to publish under the title: « Hungarian Historical Portraits ». By writing these pieces Liszt intended to erect, in the romantic manner of his time, a sort of musical memorial for a number of famous 19th *century Hungarian musicians, poets and statesmen already deceased. However, not all the pieces are of Liszt's late compositions and consequently they also represent different layers of his style. Two of the portraits were published in Liszt's life time. The last piece of the series which Liszt wrote in* 1870, *in commemoration of his great friend the Hungarian composer Mihály Mosonyi, was published in the same yĕar by the publishing firm Táborszky in Pest. Similarly the portrait of Petőfi, written in* 1874, *was also edited by the same firm in* 1877. *Finally the portrait of László Teleki was printed by Breitkopf & Härtel as the second number of the «Trauer Vorspiel und Trauer Marsch» (Funeral Prelude and Funeral March) in* 1887, *one year after Liszt's death. This piece was composed in* 1885, *but then Liszt changed its title and inserted it in the cycle as a portrait of Teleki. In order to fit these pieces into the general conception of the Portraits, Liszt had more or less recast them by making the most alterations in the Petőfi, while in the funeral music of Mosonyi he made only a few changes.*

The nature of these alterations, the corresponding motivic features, the way of writing and finally the identity in expression and declamation which link the pieces together (with the exception of the Mosonyi, though this too, being funeral music remains in direct contact with the portraits of the « mortuary » — as Liszt called this series) are all evidence of a grand programm-musical poem Liszt visualized in his phantasy.

The programme of this series of musical portraits clearly manifests itself in the main character of each piece. Most strongly in those pictures in which the musically « portraied » person determines the profil of the composition as an inner attitude while in others the programme is limited to externalities only. According to Lina Raman, Liszt himself had saide that he had drawn these pieces « after life ».

The programmatic characterization can be felt most emphatically in the portraits of Széchenyi, Eötvös, Deák and Teleki, while the pieces devoted to the poets Vörösmarty and Petőfi are linked to their models merely by more superficial means. Like for instance the quoting of the so-called « Vörösmarty song ». The dynamic impetus which determined the life of both statesmen Széchenyi and Deák, is the essential disposition in Liszt's musical conception. But while these driving forces disintegrated in the tragic discordance of Széchenyi's insanity, in Deák we witness the type of statesman who arrived at his aim successfully. See Liszt's remark in the music: « Trionfante »! On the other hand the contemplative manifoldness of the poet-writer-politician Eötvös may be reflected in the twofold musical form. And finally the very fact that Liszt's choice for the portrait of Teleki, whose life, owing to tragic political circumtances ended in suicide, fell on the darkest piece of the whole series, is clear evidence that Liszt consciously intended to portray in musical terms the main lines of the profiles of his subjects.

Both the musical analysis as well as literary sources indicate that the focus of the series is to be found in the triptych: Széchenyi - Eötvös - Deák. All three pieces are based on a common motivic feature originally derivating from the Funeral March - Teleki. Liszt has split the unity of this triptych probably only by seeking a better sequence among the pieces of the whole cycle, and we know from his letters that he has changed the succession a few times before finally fixing the numbers within the cycle. A certain sketchiness in writing of these pieces and, apart from the middle part of the Eötvös, their not primarily pianistic texture, furthermore Liszt's own indications of orchestral effects as well as a remark in one of his letters concerning his intention of orchestrating these pieces later, are all proofs that Liszt originally wanted to write — at least these pieces — for orchestra.

It has not been our intention to publish the original version of the Portraits but rather to set forth an edition which might be suitable for concert performances. Therefore, from the point of view of instrumental technique, we considered it necessary to make some modification of the pieces. Naturally these transcriptions do not alter the original musical text which remains unchanged. They concern — reduced to a minimum — only such parts where a more elaborate instrumental shaping has been obviously indicated. Those Portraits which Liszt originally considered as orchestral pieces Széchényi, Deák and further certain parts in others (Vörösmarty) where also similar tendencies can be felt, were subject to most of this sort of pianistic brush up. Otherwise the original text has been enriched with figurative elements only where conviction, that these pianistic ornamentations are made in the spirit of Liszt who was famous for his improvising ability, seemed to have justified them.

Dynamics and phrasing are added to those of Liszt's very sparingly and they are printed in small type.

The Hungarian Historical Portraits represent Liszt's last, large cyclical work. Their music-historical importance may be seen in the fact that at a time when Liszt, mainly in the last years of his life, expressed his new, revolutionary musical ideas (leading directly to impressionism and to the new Bartókian Hungarian style of the beginning of the 20th century) mostly in smaller character-pieces, he built in this work once more a big cyclical form.

Berne, June 1956. SÁNDOR VERESS