Grieg

MASTER SERIES FOR THE YOUNG

Compositions for Piano in their Original Versions
Selected and Edited by

Edwin Hughes

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Ed. 1118

G. Schirmer, Inc.
New York

EDVARD GRIEG

The ancestors of Edvard Grieg, on his father's side, were Scottish; his mother came of purely Scandinavian stock. He was born June 15, 1843, at Bergen, a small trading town in the nothernmost part of Norway, land of the midnight sun, fir-hung and snow-capped mountains, deep blue sea-fjords; land of ancient *sagas*, telling the deeds of mighty Norse gods and heroic forebears; land of songs so old that their origin is lost in the dim beginnings of its fabled story. From generation to generation these songs were transmitted, songs that accompanied the toil or pleasures of sturdy inhabitants who jealously guarded their seclusion and racial traditions.

Edvard Grieg fell heir not only to this treasure of aboriginal melody, but from his mother he directly inherited musical talents of an uncommon order. She was his first music-teacher. He learned to play the piano when he was six, and began to compose at the age of twelve. In his fifteenth year, he played his youthful creations for Ole Bull, the picturesque and far-famed violinist, who was visiting the Griegs, and earnestly advised the parents to let the boy become a musician. Edvard was sent to the Leipzig Conservatory and received there a thorough musical education. He studied piano, theory, counterpoint and composition, applying himself with such strenuous zeal that in 1860, as a result of overwork, he was seriously ill with lung trouble, and the effects of the malady left his health permanently impaired. After a sojourn in his native country, the invigorating air of which did much to improve his condition, he returned to Leipzig and continued his studies until he graduated in 1862.

So far, his music adhered more or less to the Mendelssohnian ideals which were preached as gospel truth at Leipzig. But after he went to Copenhagen, in 1863, where he met Gade, Hartman, and young Nordraak, the influence of these men—especially of the last named—awakened in him an appreciation for the beauties of Scandinavian folk-tunes; he realized their possibilities of artistic development, and he began to adopt the peculiar inflections and modulations of this national music, thereby giving his work its novel and distinguishing mark. He became the apostle of a nationalistic school engaged in systematic propaganda, and succeeded, by the force of his genius, in gaining universal recognition and admiration for the music of the North. His example has had many followers, and to-day Scandinavia possesses a musical literature as distinct as the works of her poets and novelists, and as typical as that of Russia, Spain or France.

In later years, Grieg characterized his purpose and achievement in these words: "Those who can appreciate this kind of music will be delighted at the extraordinary originality of these tunes, their blending of delicacy and grace with rough power and untamed wildness as regards the melody and, more particularly, the rhythm. These traditional tunes, handed down from an age when the Norwegian peasantry was isolated from the world in its solitary mountain valleys, all bear the stamp of an imagination equally daring and bizarre. My object in arranging this music for the pianoforte was to attempt to raise these folk-tunes to an artistic level by harmonizing them in a style suitable to their nature." However, it must not be understood that Grieg's work is chiefly or even largely based on existing material. By far the greater part of his themes are free and original inventions, which, though consciously cast in the moulds of "traditional tunes," are vivified by a personal element which is wholly Grieg's.

After a short stay in Rome, during the winter of 1865, Grieg went to live at Christiania, where he remained for eight years, busied with composing, teaching and conducting. He married his cousin Nina Hagerup in 1867, and his wife became known as the best interpreter of her husband's songs, being especially liked in England, which the Griegs visited several times. The composer received valuable encouragement from Franz Liszt, who treated him with signal kindness when they met, in 1868, at Rome.

In 1874 the Swedish crown awarded Grieg a yearly stipend for his life. His native Bergen now became his favorite abode. Not far from the town, amid the wonders of the fjords, he lived in surroundings that were congenial and inspiring. It was there that most of his masterworks were composed. His intimacy with the two eminent Scandinavian writers, Björnstjerne Björnson and Henrik Ibsen, influenced him in setting many poems by the first and in providing the latter's *Peer Gynt* with music that did much to carry Grieg's fame abroad. It was at Bergen, too, that Grieg died on September 4, 1907, succumbing at last to his old malady.

His figure was short, he always looked frail, and was slightly bent from asthma. Tschaikowsky, who greatly admired the Norwegian's music, painted him thus in his diary: "He had an unusual charm, and blue eyes, not very large, but irresistibly fascinating, recalling the glance of a charming and candid child."

Foremost in importance and scope among Grieg's compositions are his songs and his piano pieces, especially the latter; and here again the shorter and more "lyrical" ones contain the finest essence of his exquisite and personal style. With a simplicity and economy of means that are the secret of mastery, he develops a mood, tender and elegiac, or rollicking and droll, that is always unmistakably tinged with the colors of Norwegian folk-music. His violin sonatas, his piano concerto as well as his orchestral pieces, all bear the hall-mark of his individuality: refined craftsmanship, sensitive perception, and ardent love for his home-land.

C. E.

28939

MASTER SERIES FOR THE YOUNG

In presenting this unique series, issued especially to meet the need of the young pianist for material from the master composers for the instrument, a work is put before the public which, it is hoped, will fill a long-felt want.

Each volume contains a collection of the technically easiest compositions of the master represented, arranged progressively with regard to difficulty, and edited and fingered from a thoroughly modern standpoint. The numbers included were all penned especially for the instrument by their composers, so that the edition contains none of the tasteless arrangements from operas, symphonies, string quartets, and so forth, which have disfigured many publications of like nature in the past.

Naturally, the volumes do not all represent one particular "grade" of difficulty. Chopin and Grieg, for example, wrote no specific "children's pieces," as Schumann and Tschaikowsky did, and Mendelssohn's "Pieces for Children" require a technical development much more advanced than that demanded by the simpler compositions of Bach, Handel and Mozart. Each volume may be looked upon as an introduction to the study of the individual style and characteristic manner of the composer in question.

The use of excerpts from larger compositions has been necessary in a few instances, on account of the lack of sufficient appropriate material among the composer's works. In the case of some of the older compositions, undue prolixity has been avoided by a judicious paring of the numbers.

Attention is called to the completeness and accuracy of the modern pedal markings, the observance of which will result in the development of the student's taste and ear in the direction of correct pedalling. The use of the antiquated and inexact "Ped. ★" has been done away with entirely. Where pedal marks are absent, as in the case of the Bach and Handel numbers, which were written for instruments not equipped with the damper pedal, the use of the latter is to be avoided.

EDWIN HUGHES

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Master Series for the Young

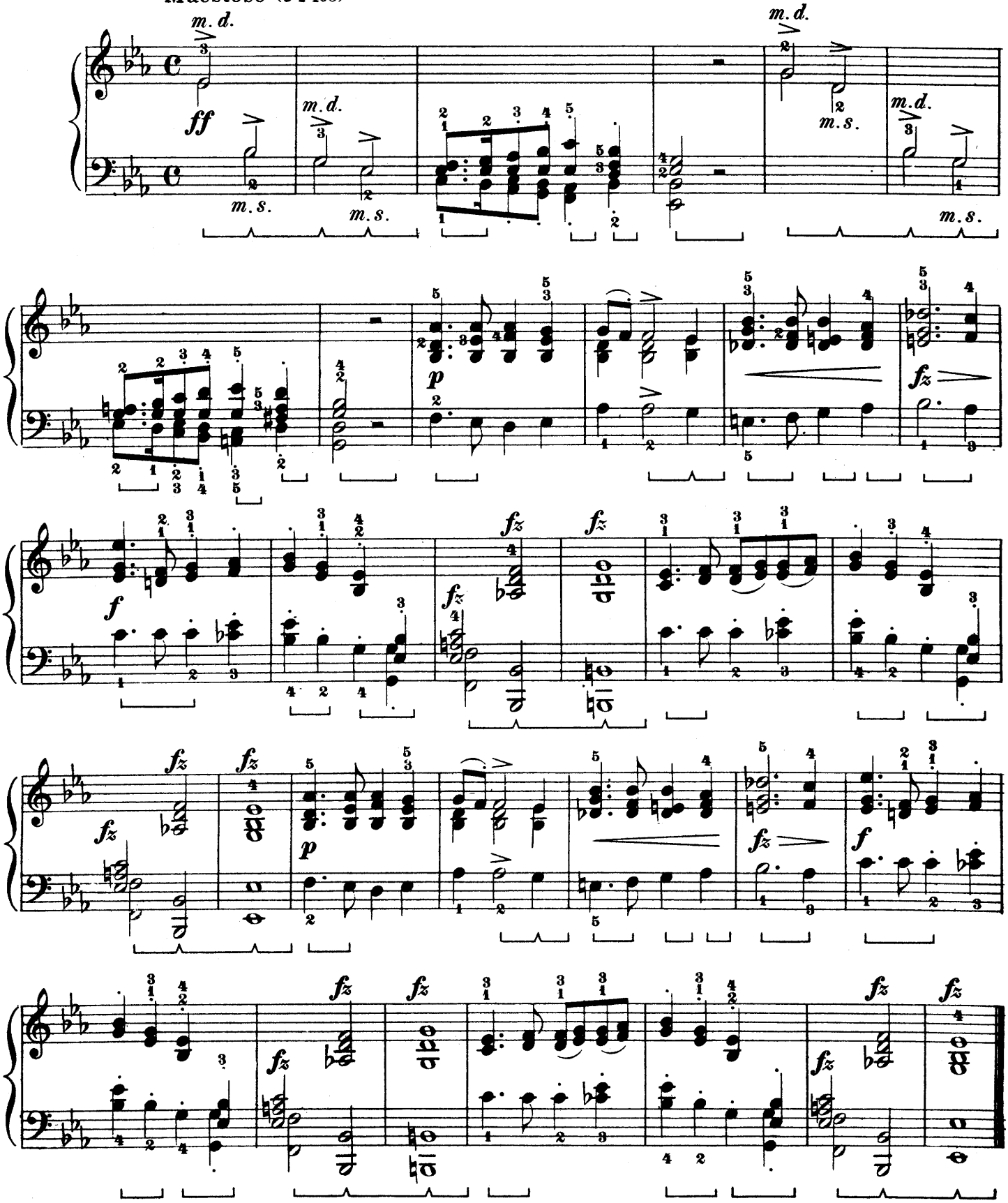
EDVARD GRIEG

Patriotic Song

Selected and edited by
Edwin Hughes

Edvard Grieg. Op. 12, No. 8

Maestoso (♩ = 108)



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Waltz

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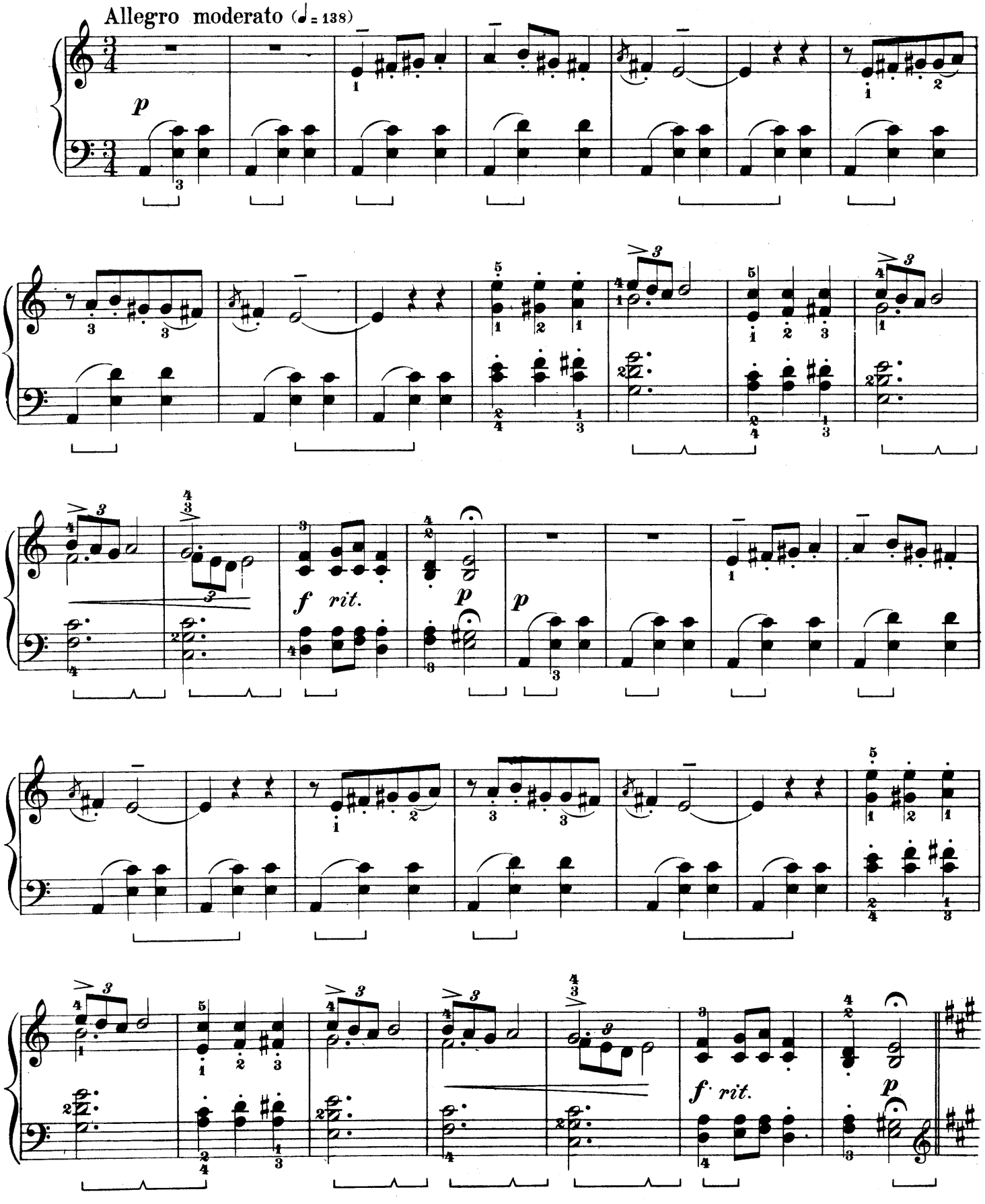
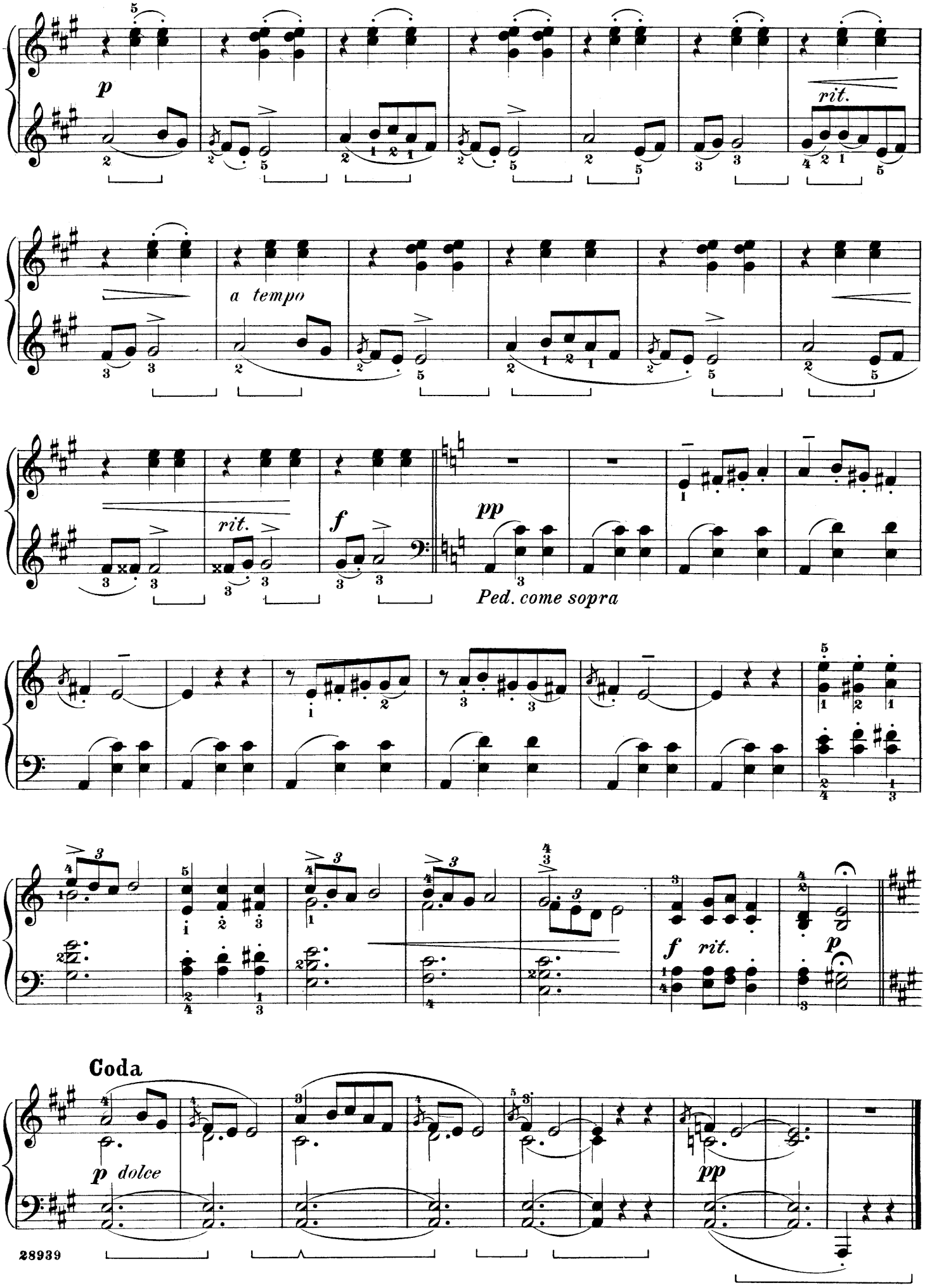
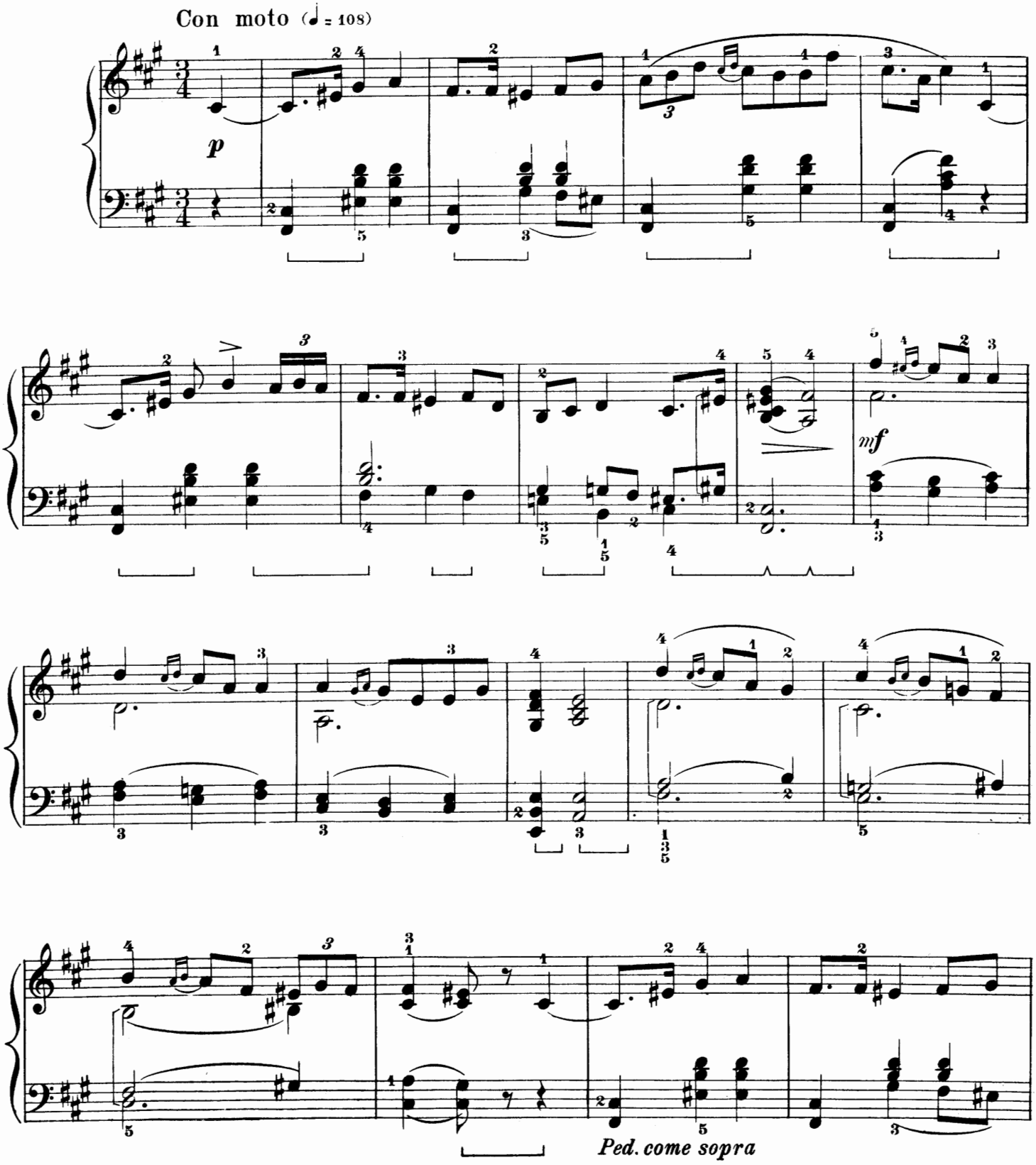
Op. 12, No. 2

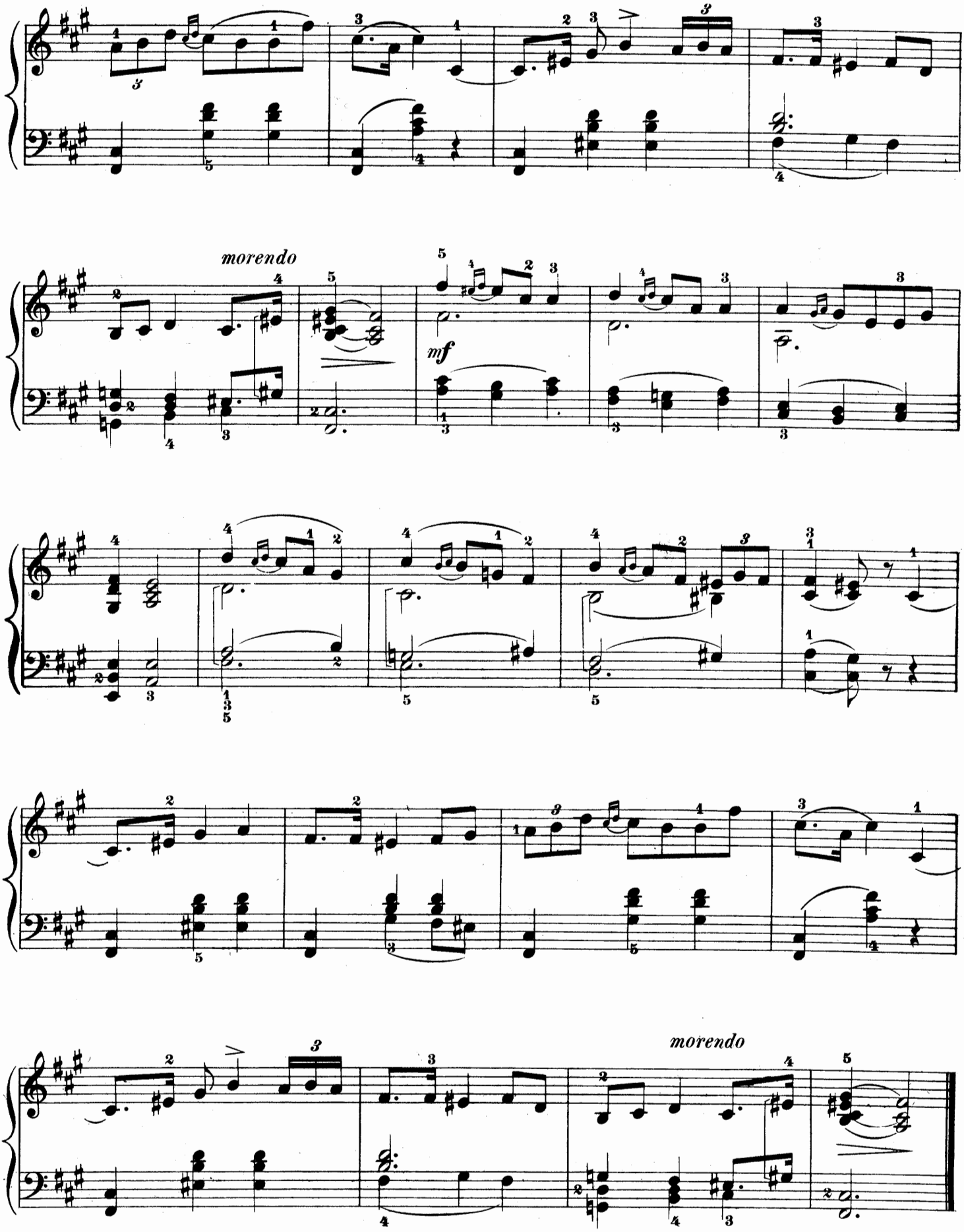



p
rit.
a tempo
rit.
f
pp
Ped. come sopra
f
rit.
p
Coda
p dolce
pp

Folk-Song

Op. 12, No. 5



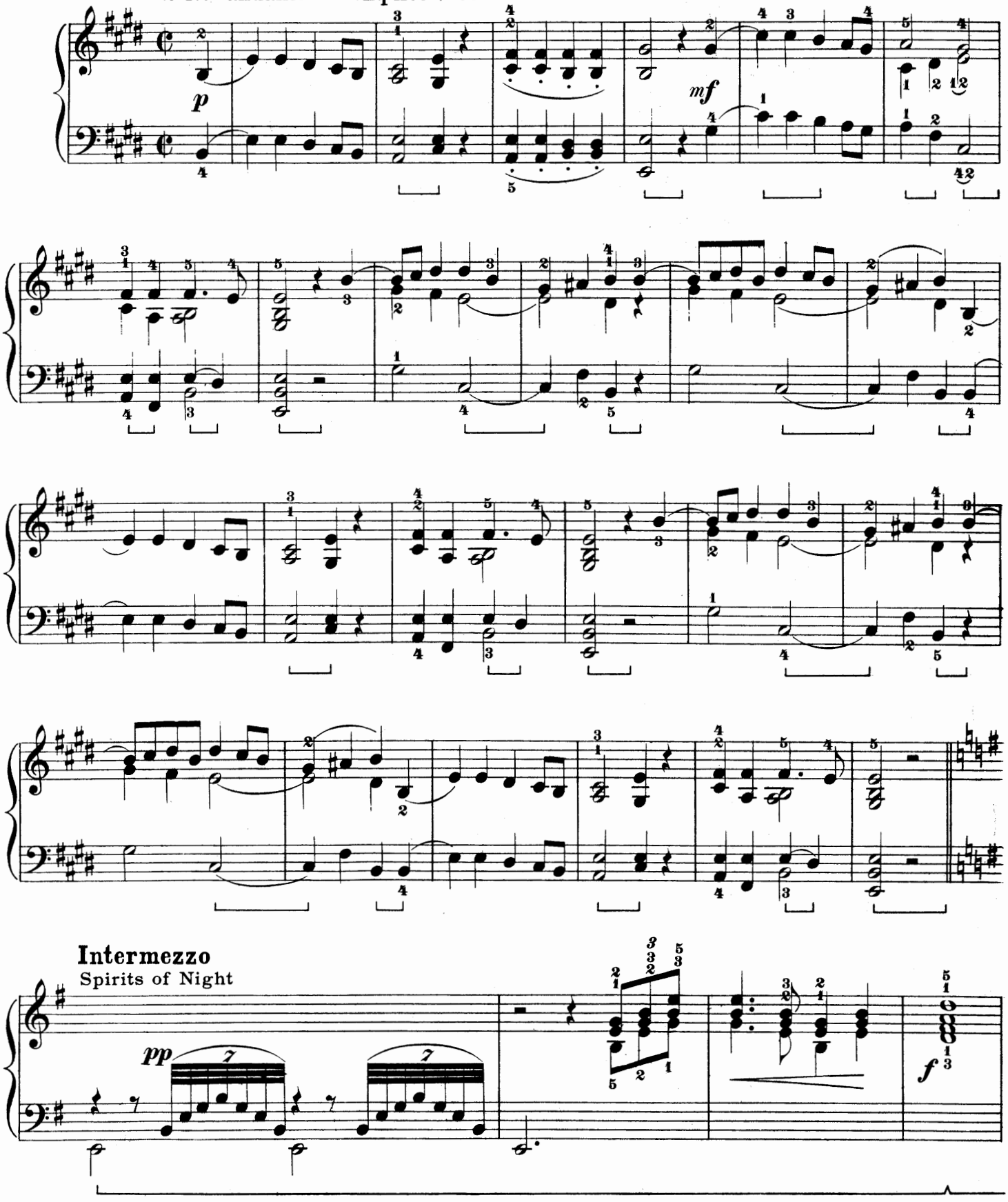

morendo
mf
morendo

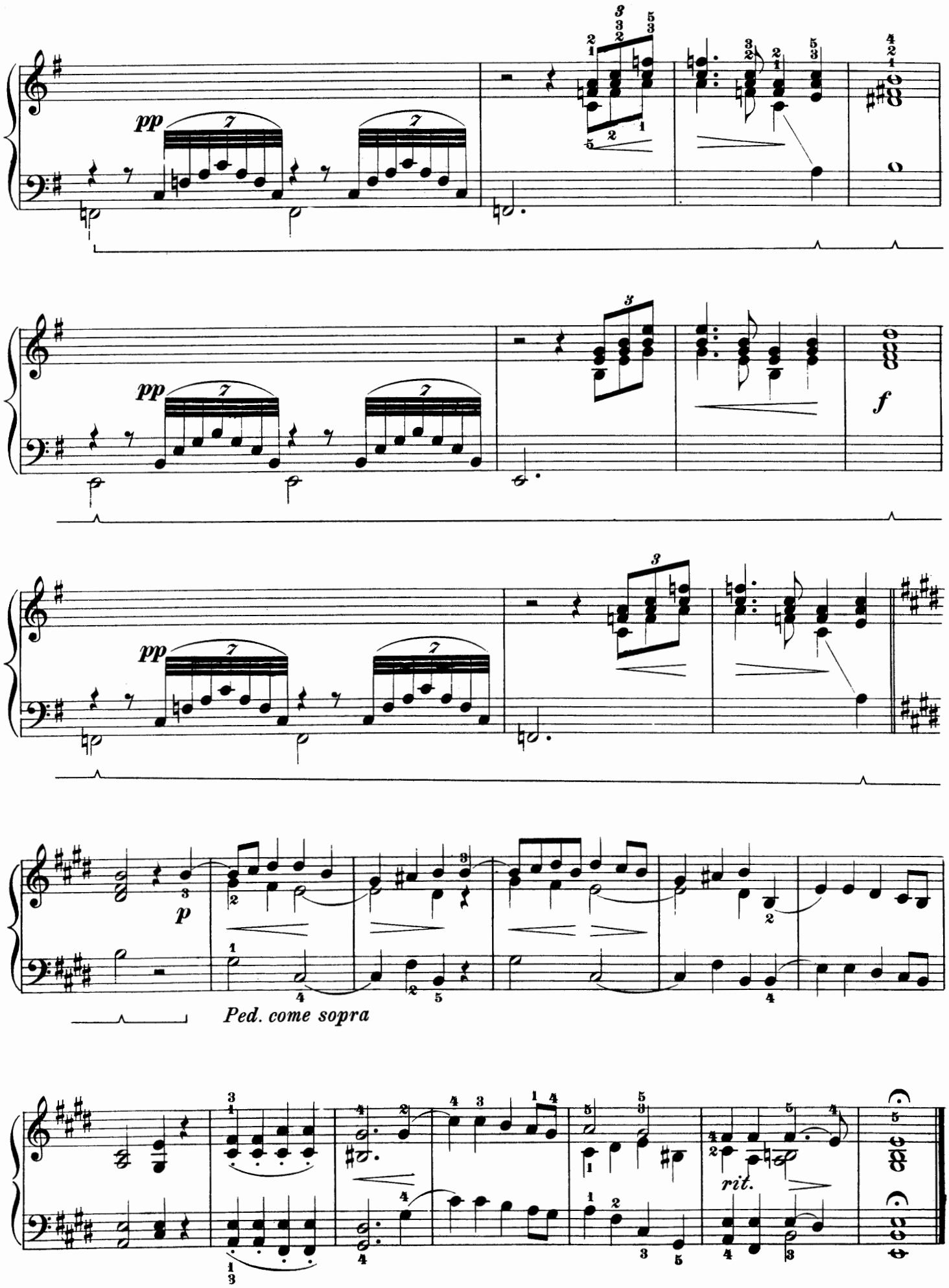
Watchman's Song

Inspired by a performance of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

Op. 12, No. 3

Molto andante e semplice (♩ = 100)

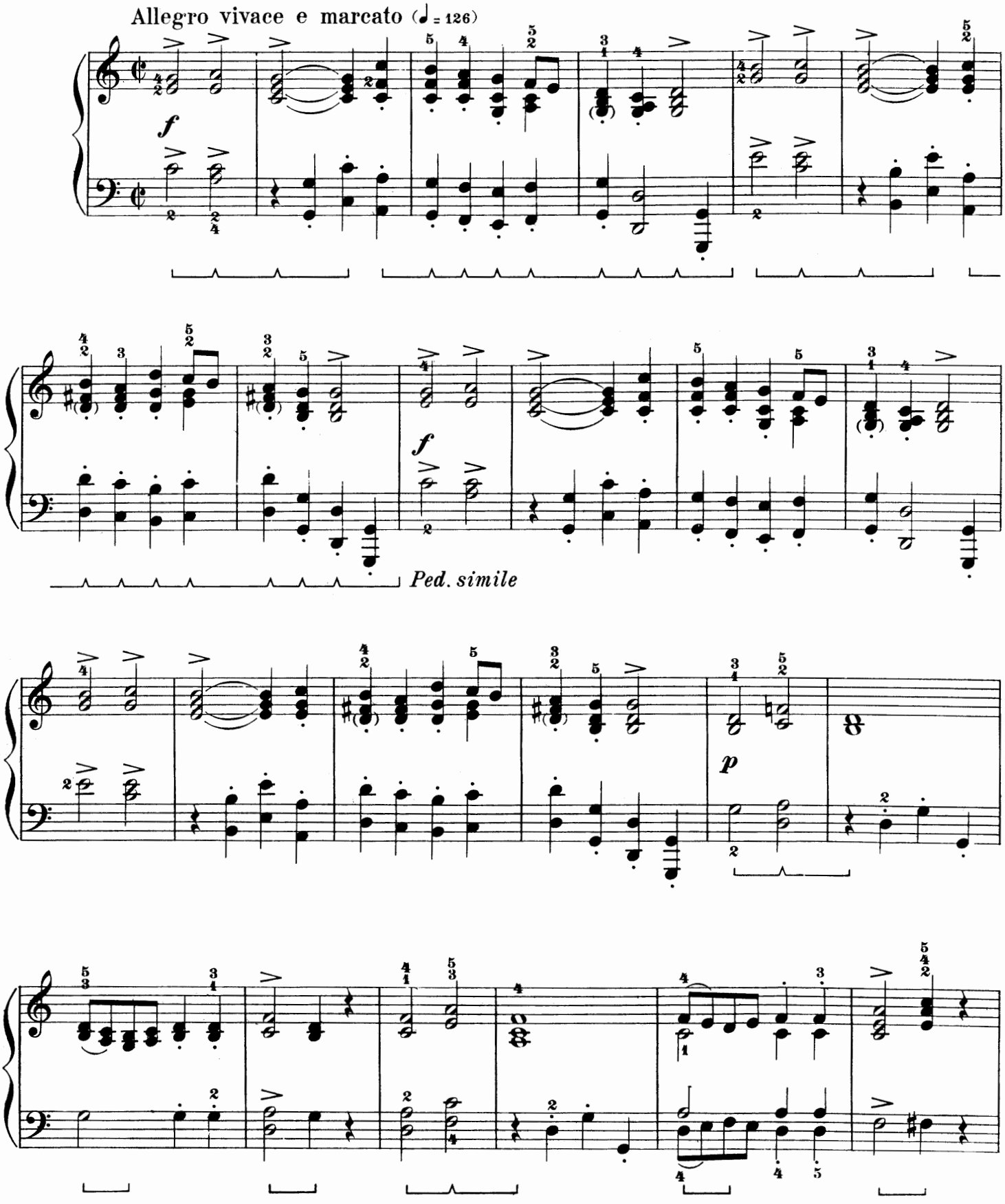



pp
pp
pp
f
p
Ped. come sopra
rit.

Sailor's Song

Edited and fingered by
Louis Oesterle

Op. 68, No. 1



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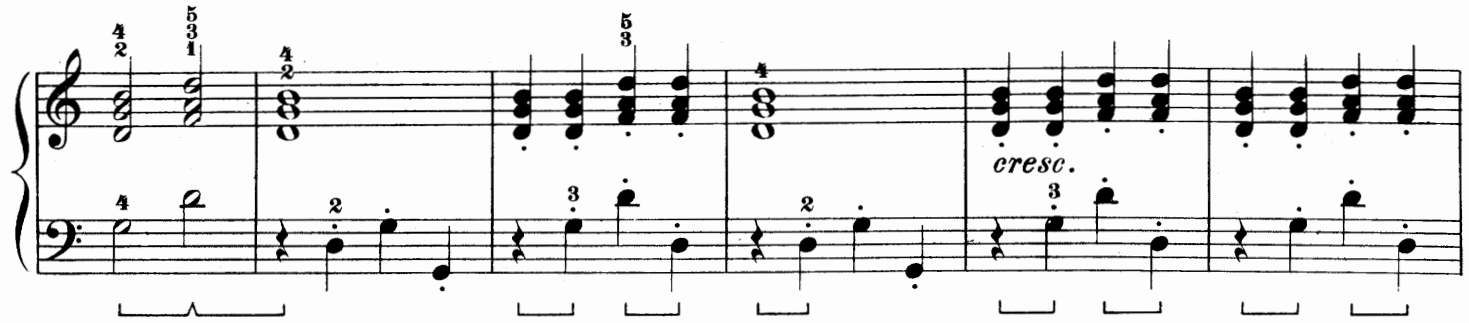
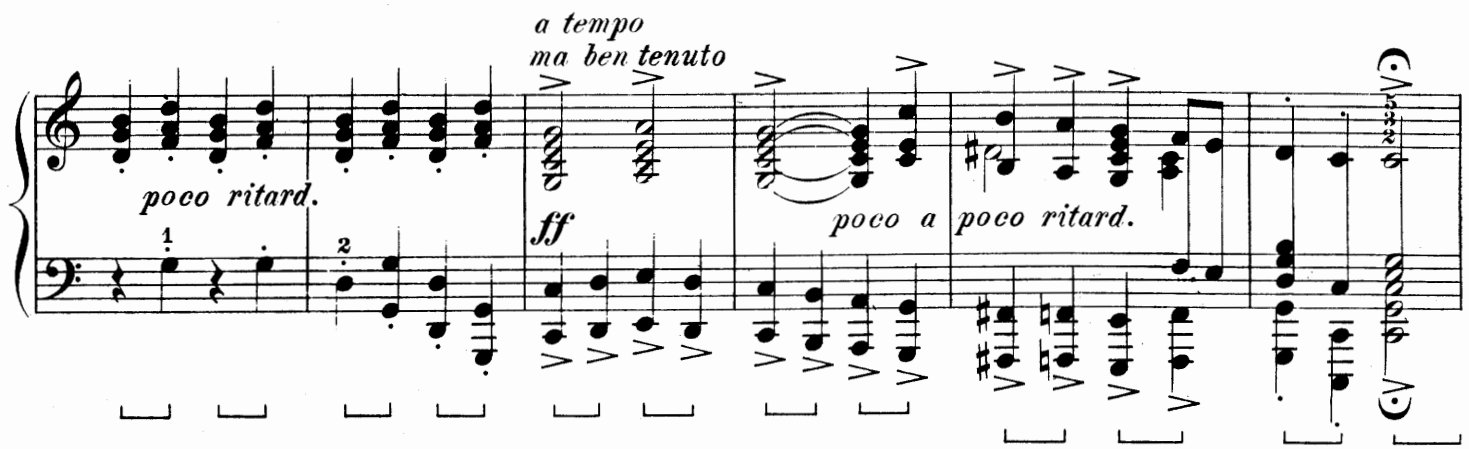
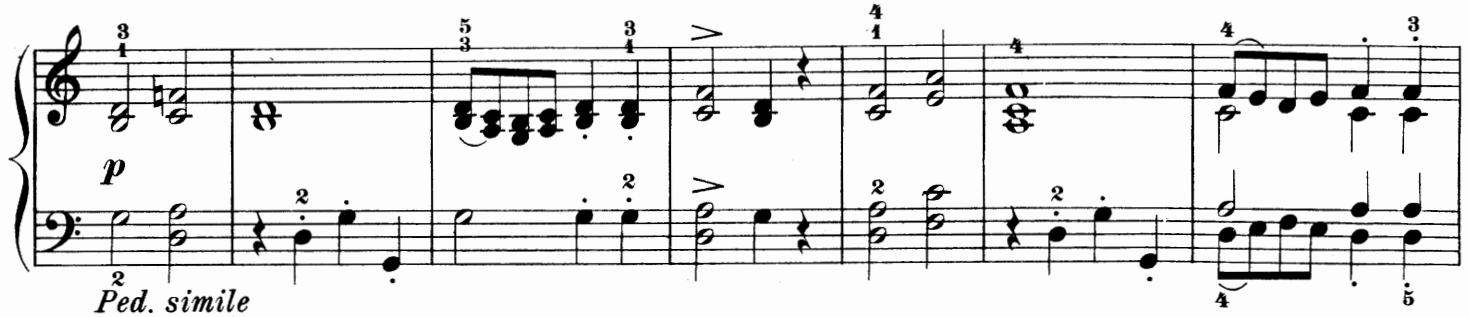
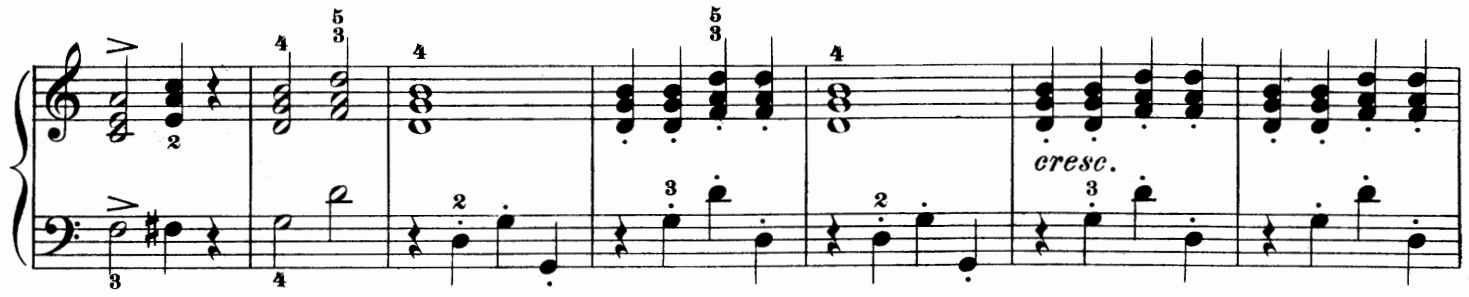
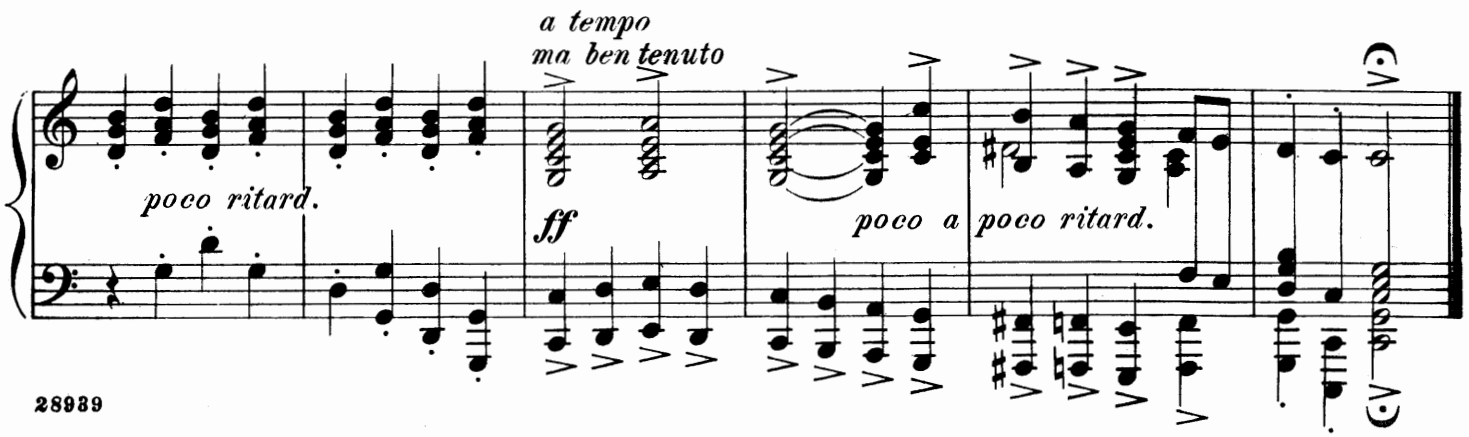

cresc.


poco ritard.
a tempo
ma ben tenuto
ff
poco a poco ritard.


p
Ped. simile

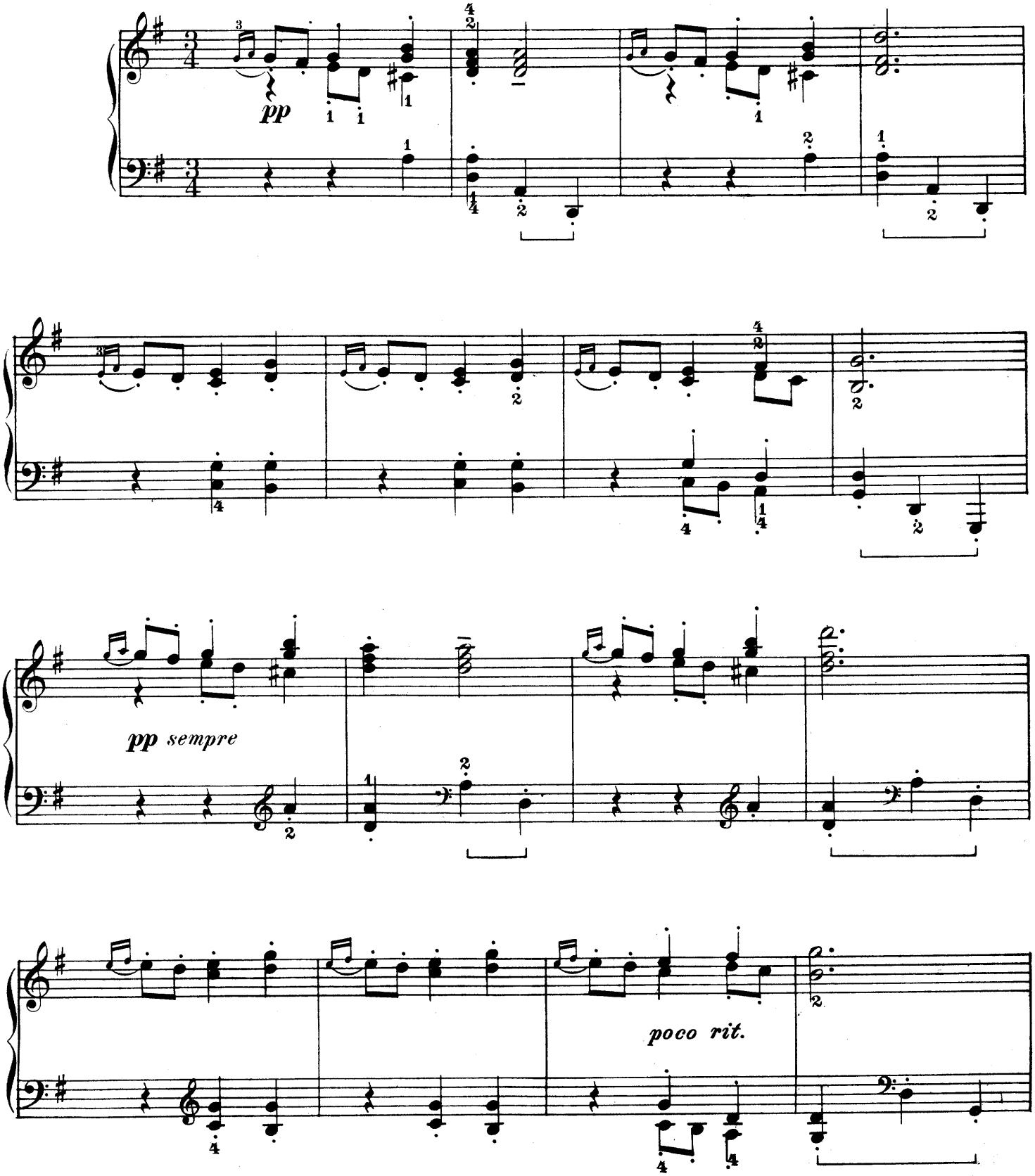

cresc.

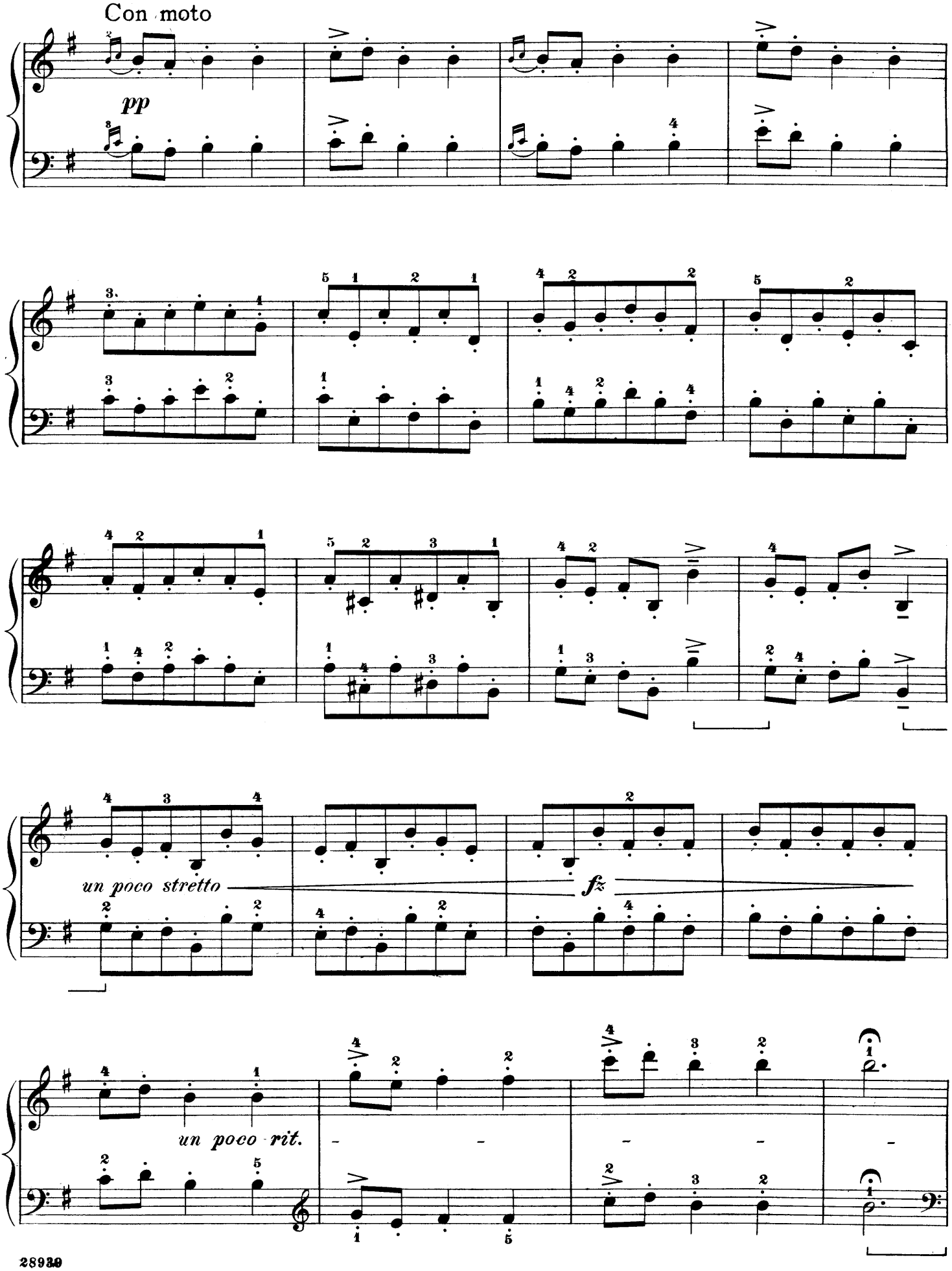

poco ritard.
a tempo
ma ben tenuto
ff
poco a poco ritard.

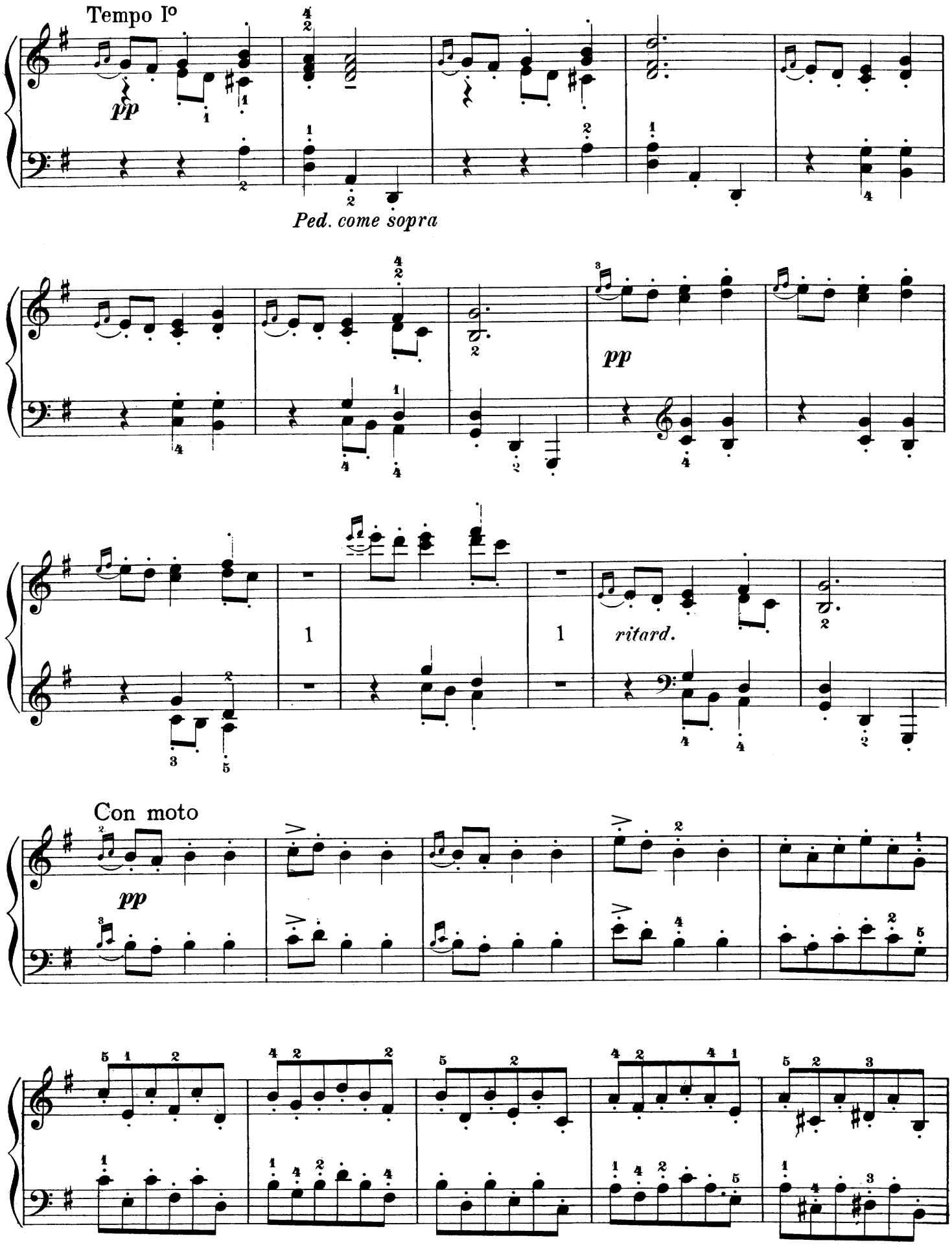
Grandmother's Minuet

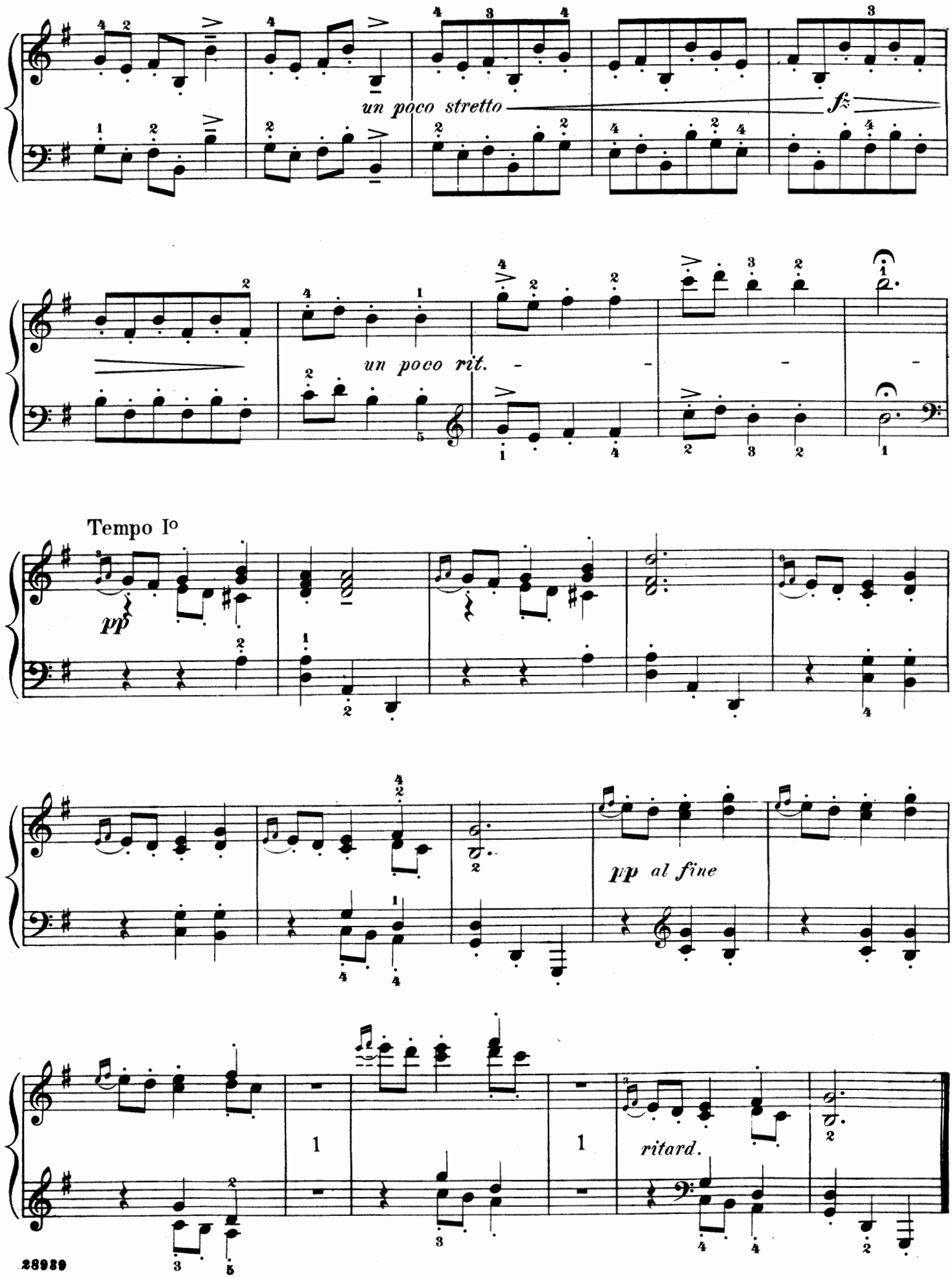
Allegretto grazioso e leggierissimo (♩ = 132)

Op. 68, No. 2



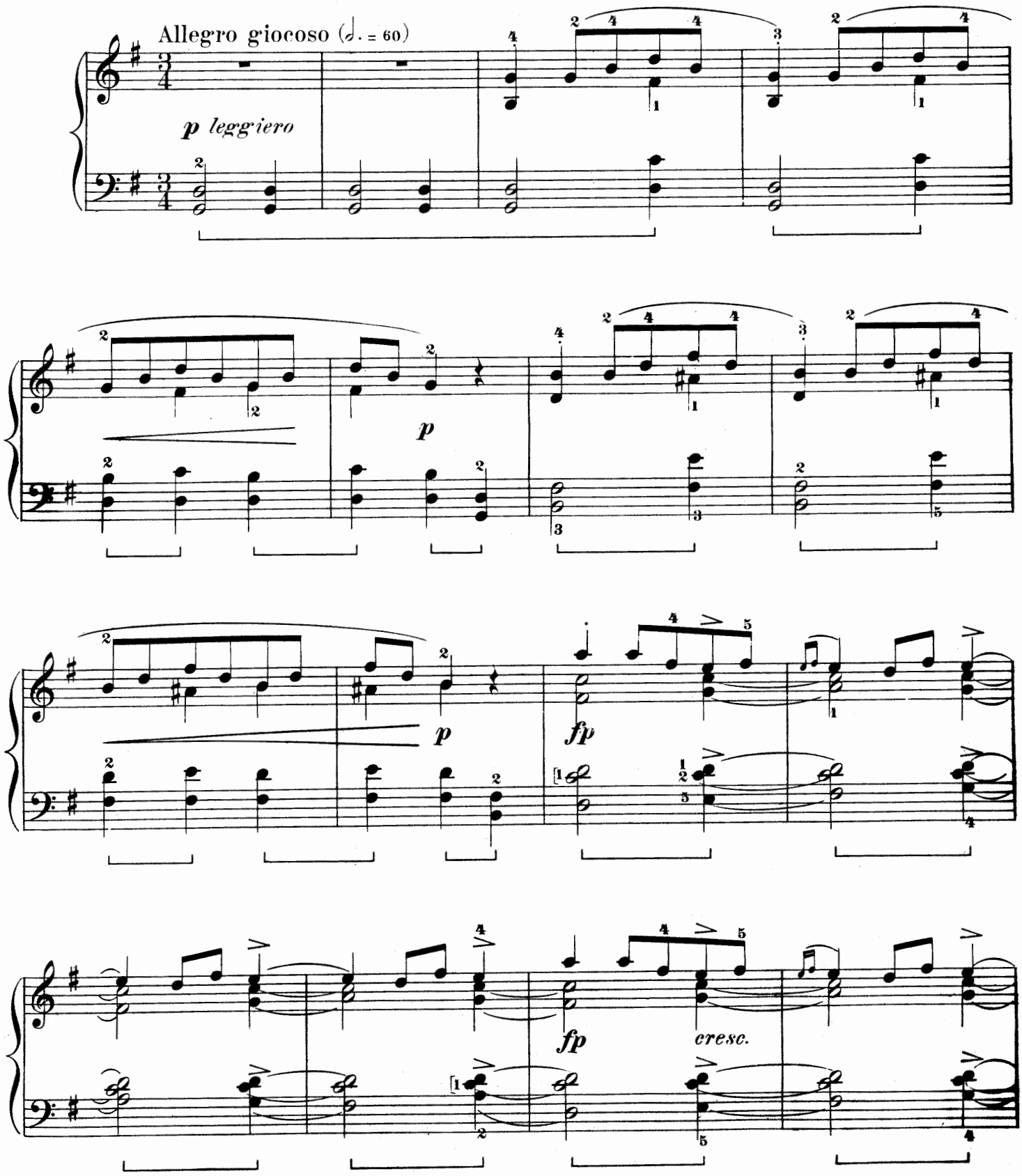

Con moto
pp
un poco stretto
fz
un poco rit.

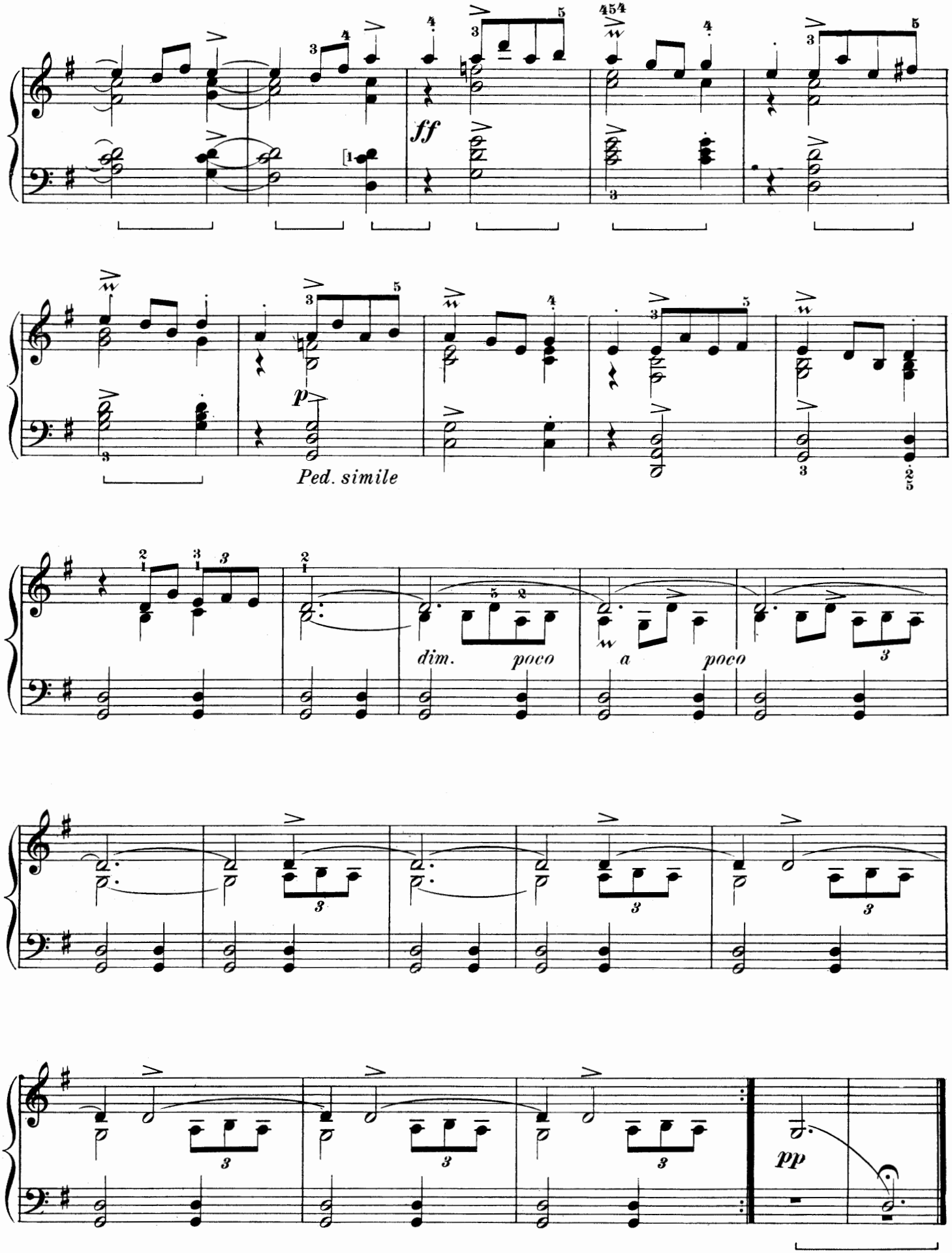

Tempo Io
pp
Ped. come sopra
pp
1
1
ritard.
Con moto
pp


un poco stretto
fz
un poco rit.
Tempo Io
pp
pp al fine
ritard.

Skip-Dance

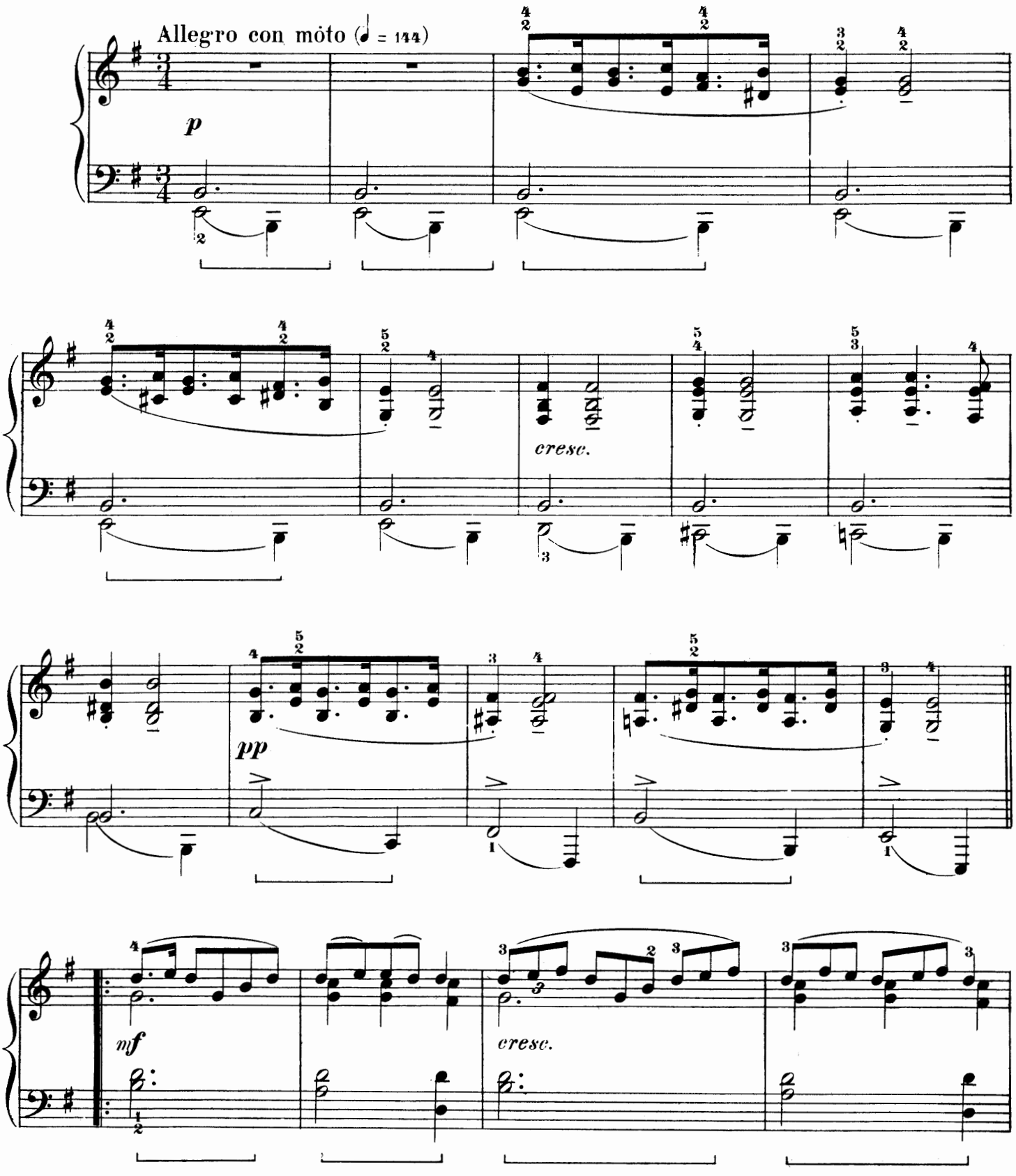
Op. 38, No. 5

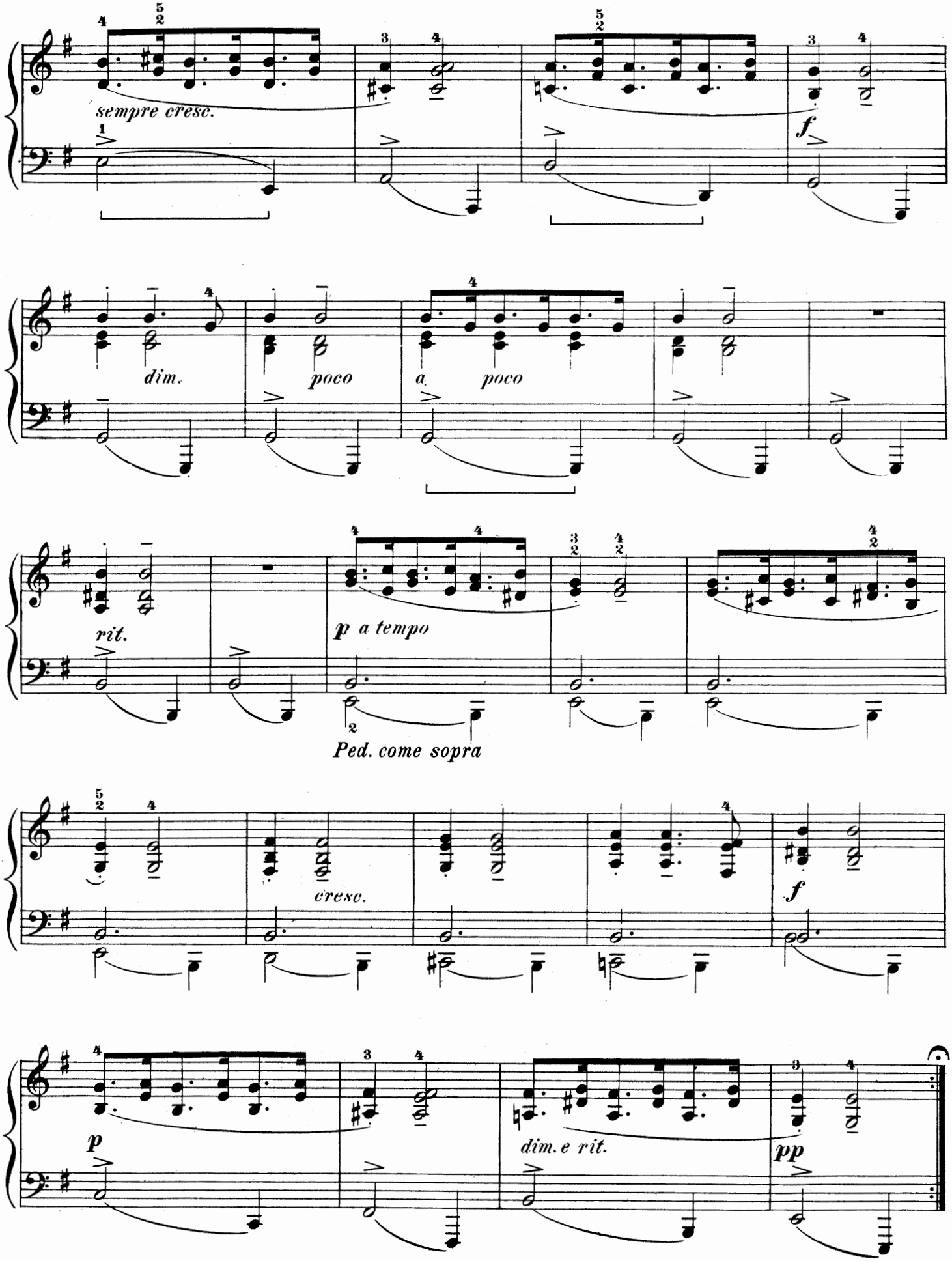



ff
p
Ped. simile
dim. poco a poco
pp

Folk-Song

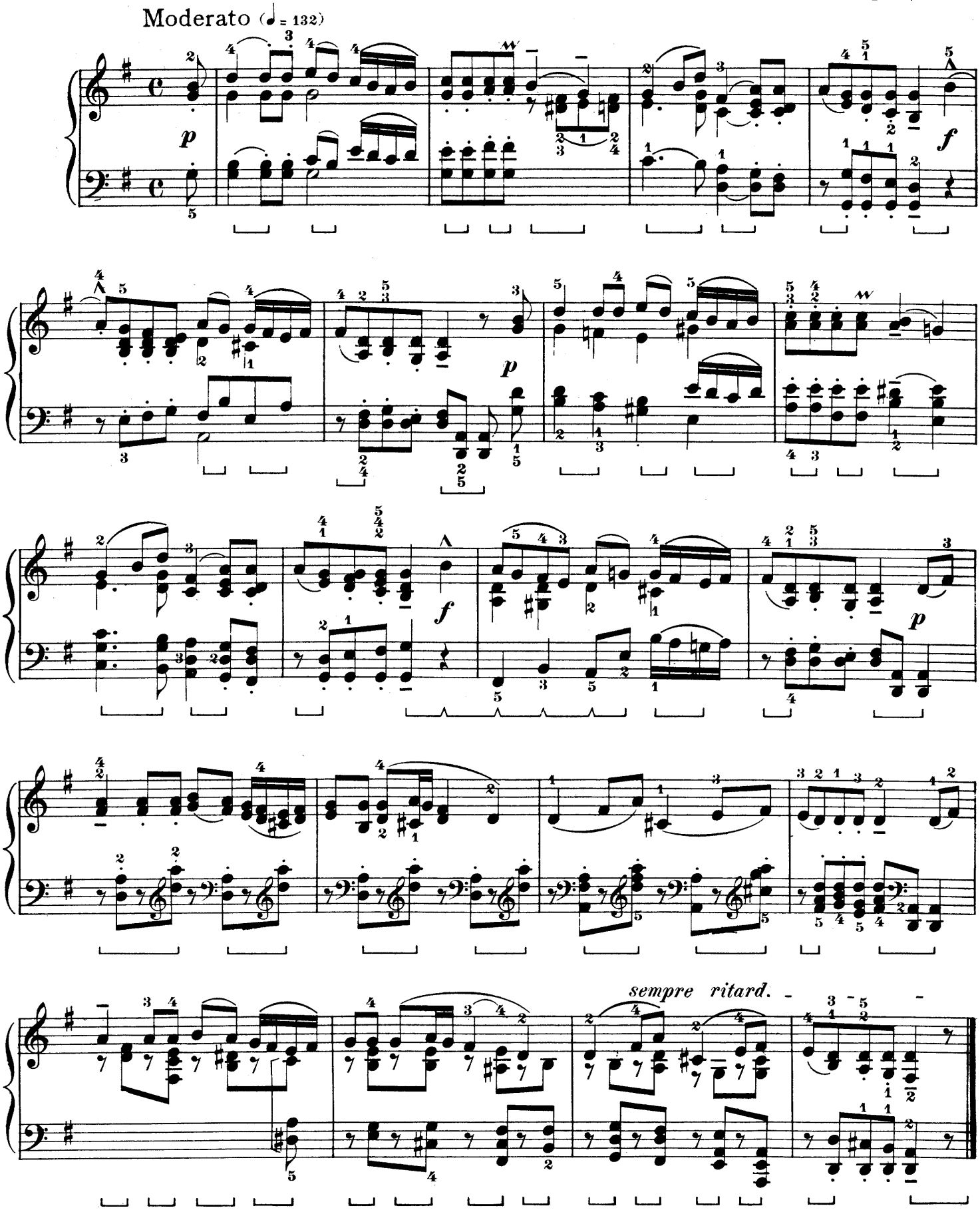
Op. 38, No. 2




sempre cresc.
f
dim.
poco
a poco
rit.
p a tempo
Ped. come sopra
cresc.
f
p
dim. e rit.
pp

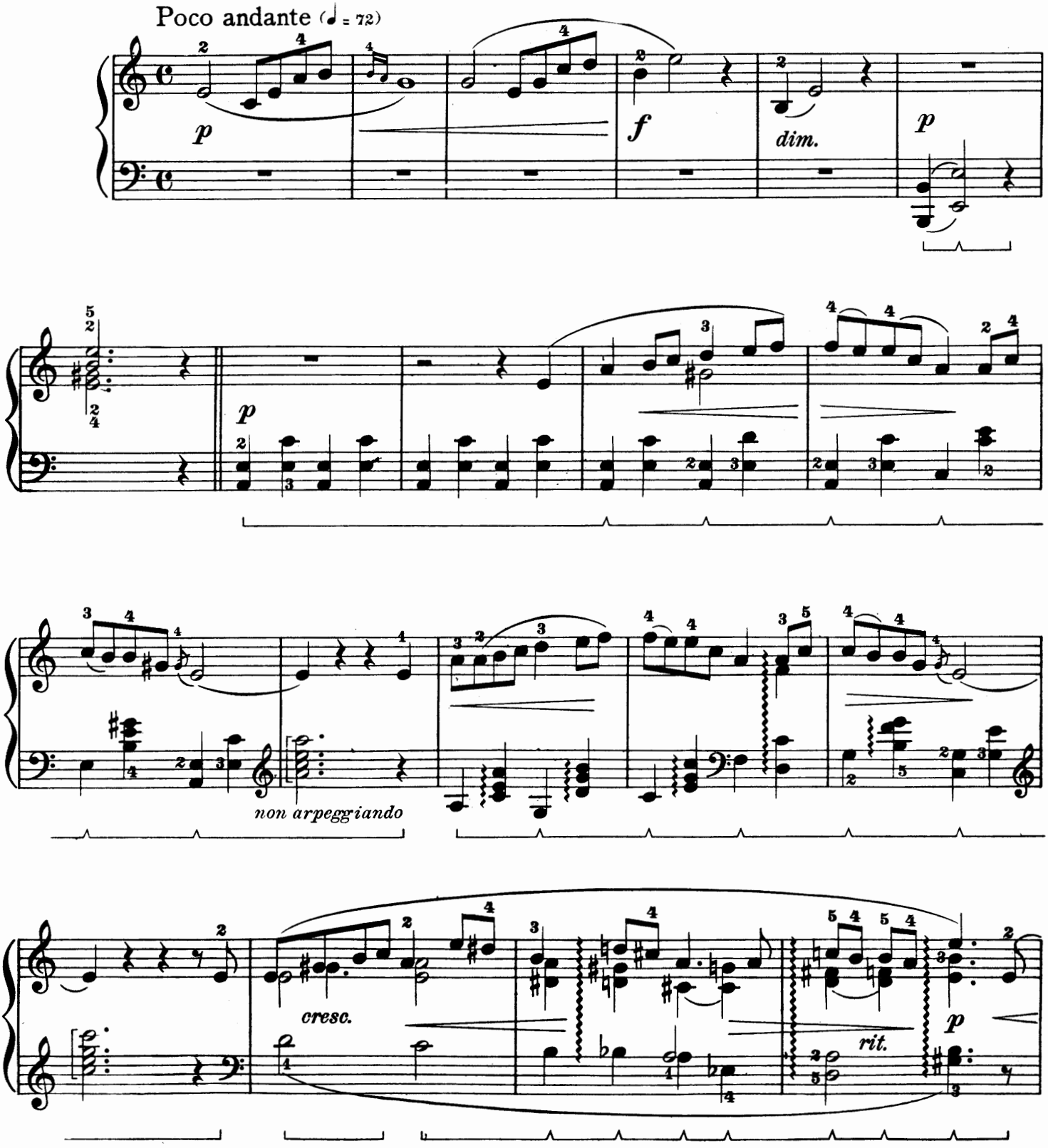
Traveler's Song

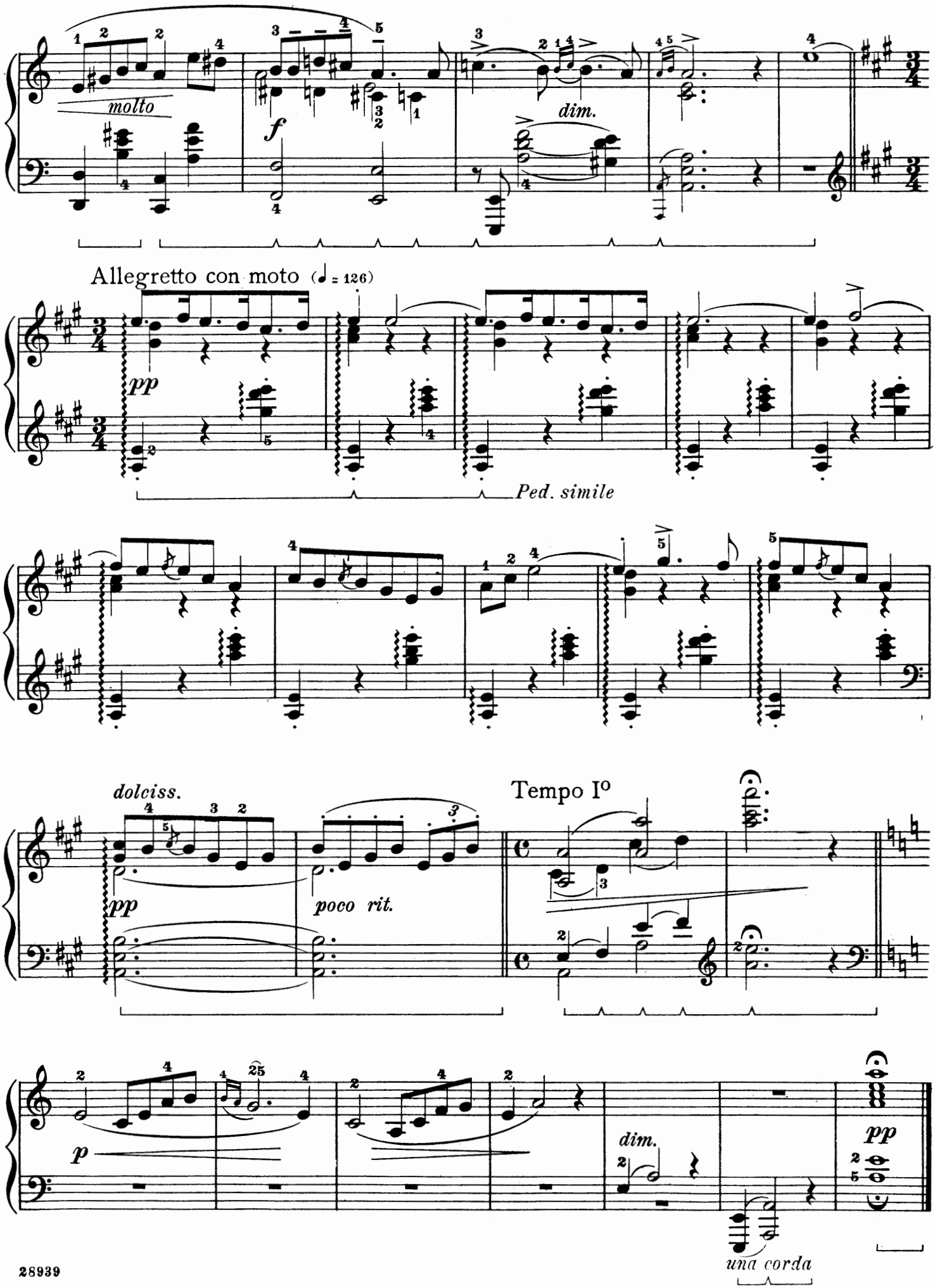
Op. 17, No. 13



Solvejg's Song

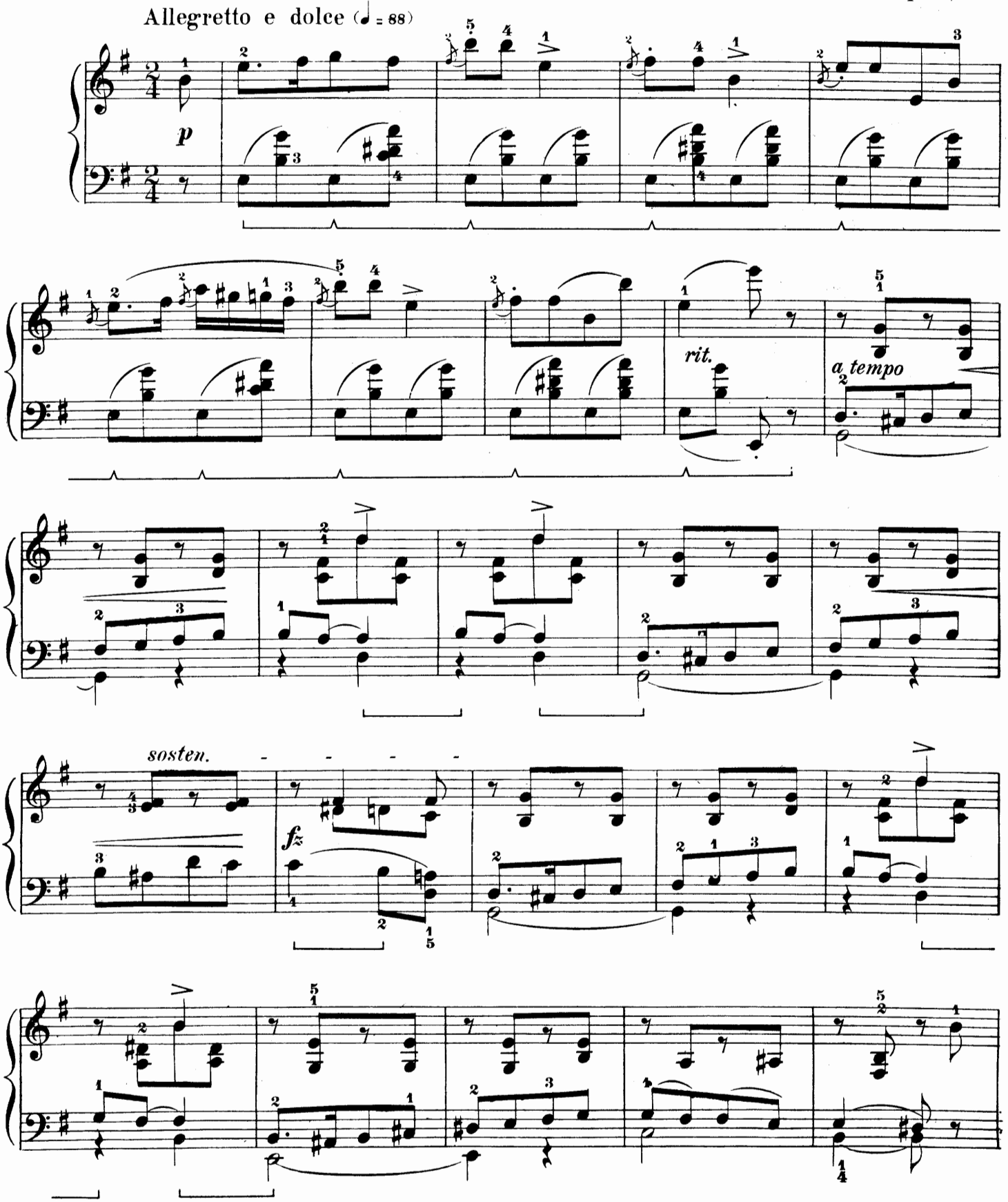
Op. 52, No. 4

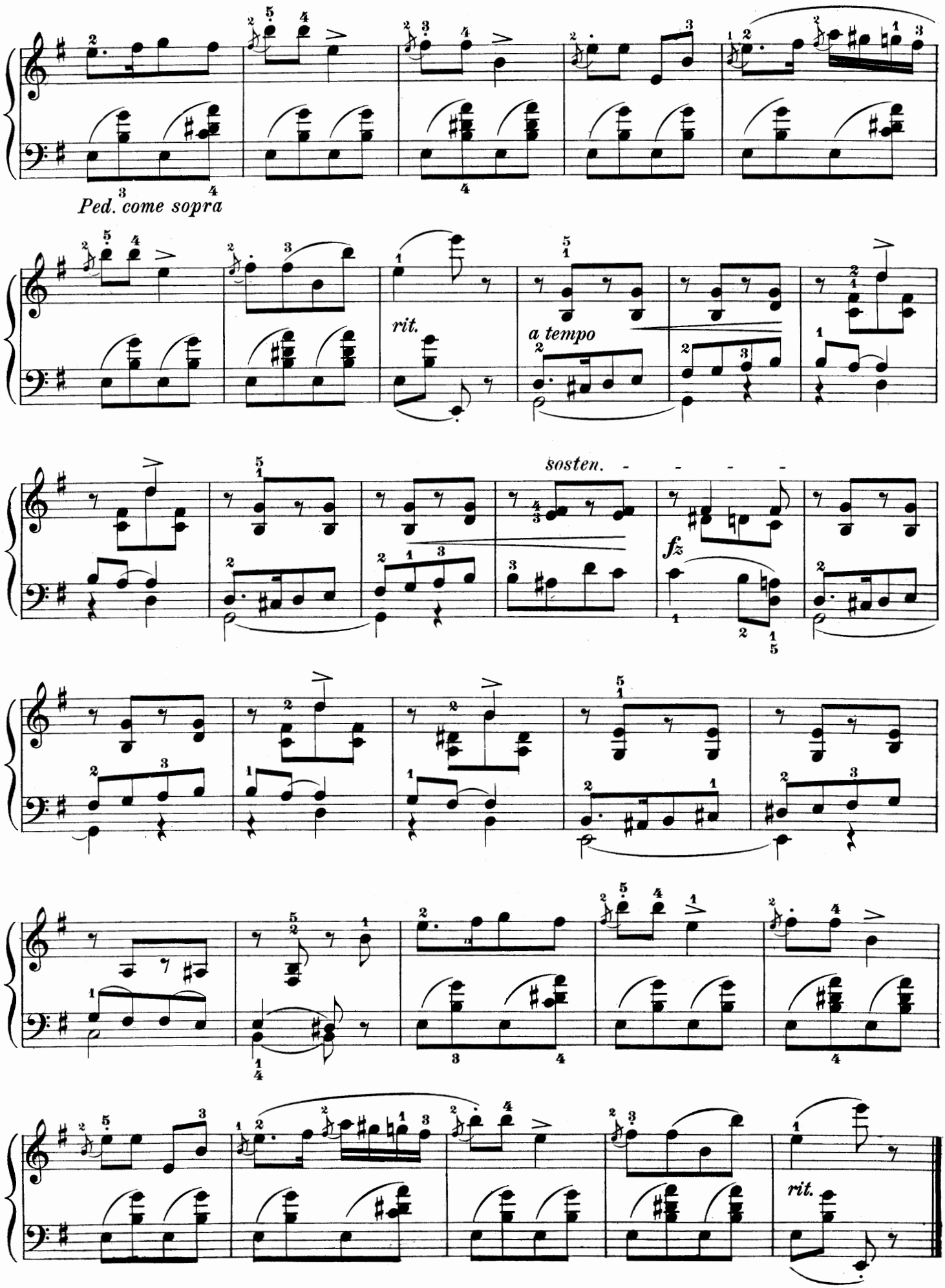



molto
f
dim.
Allegretto con moto (♩ = 126)
pp
Ped. simile
dolciss.
pp
poco rit.
Tempo Iº
p
dim.
una corda
pp

Albumleaf

Op. 12, No. 7

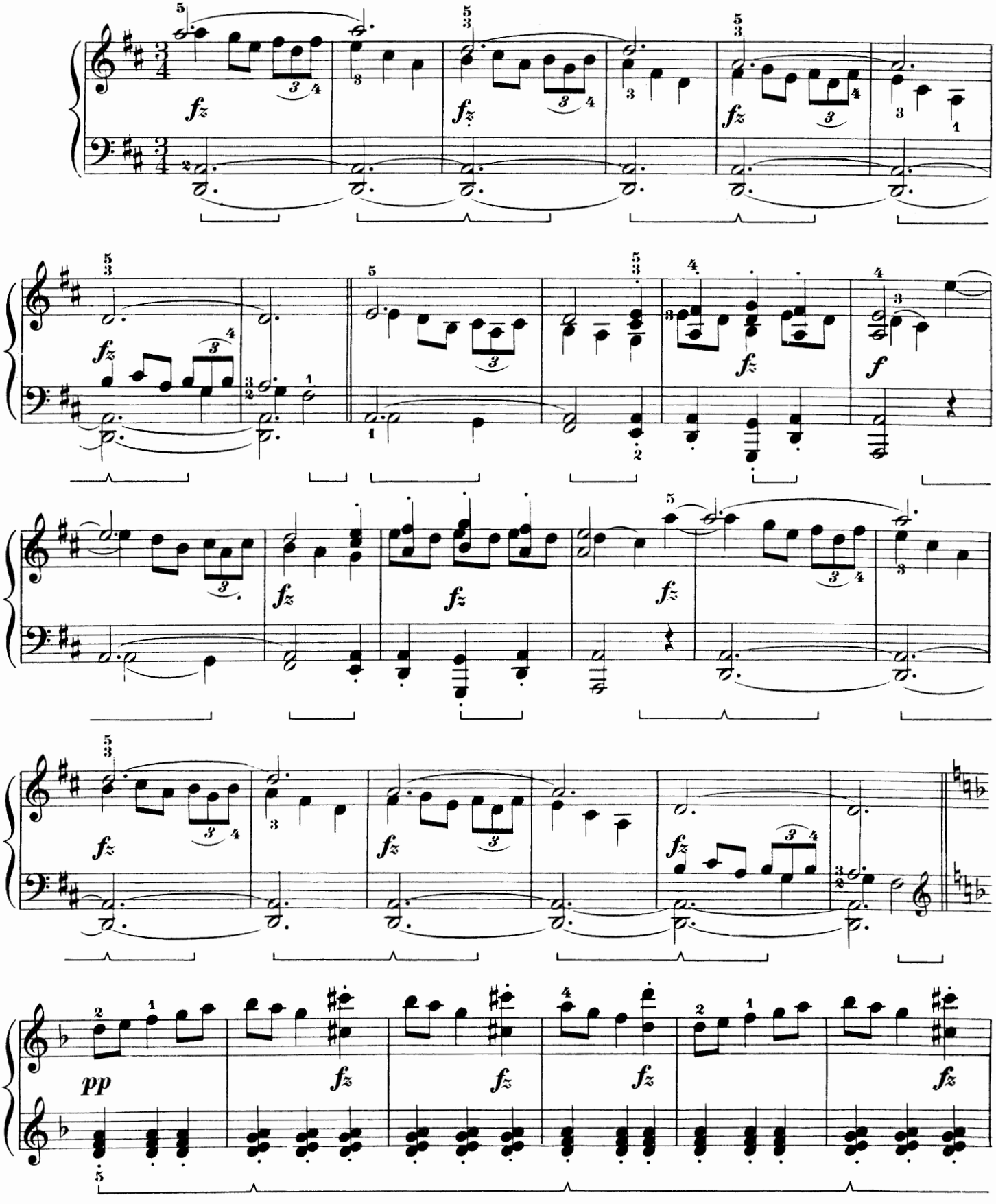


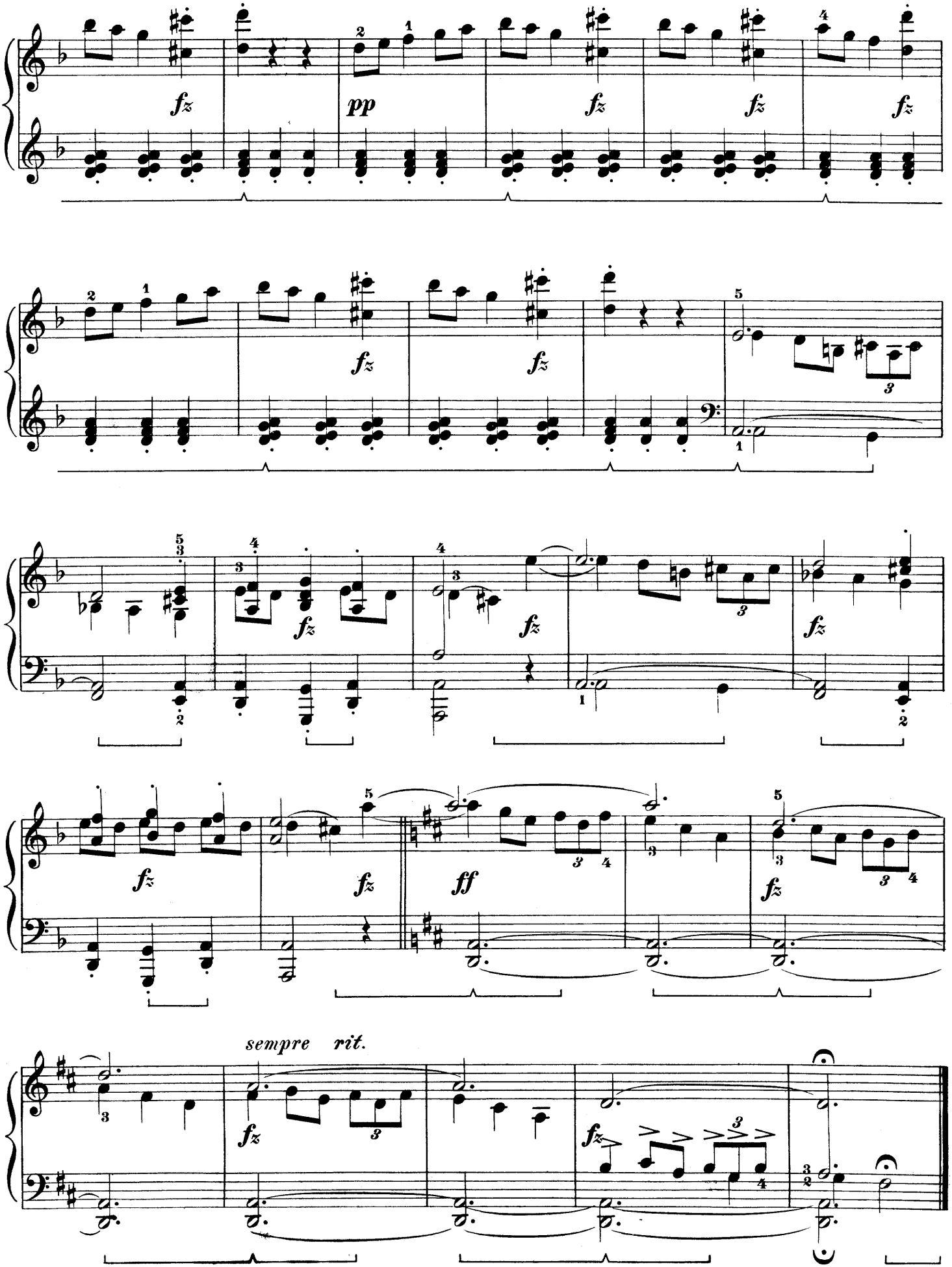

Ped. come sopra
rit.
a tempo
sosten.
fz
rit.

Norwegian Melody

Presto marcato (𝅗𝅥. = 60)

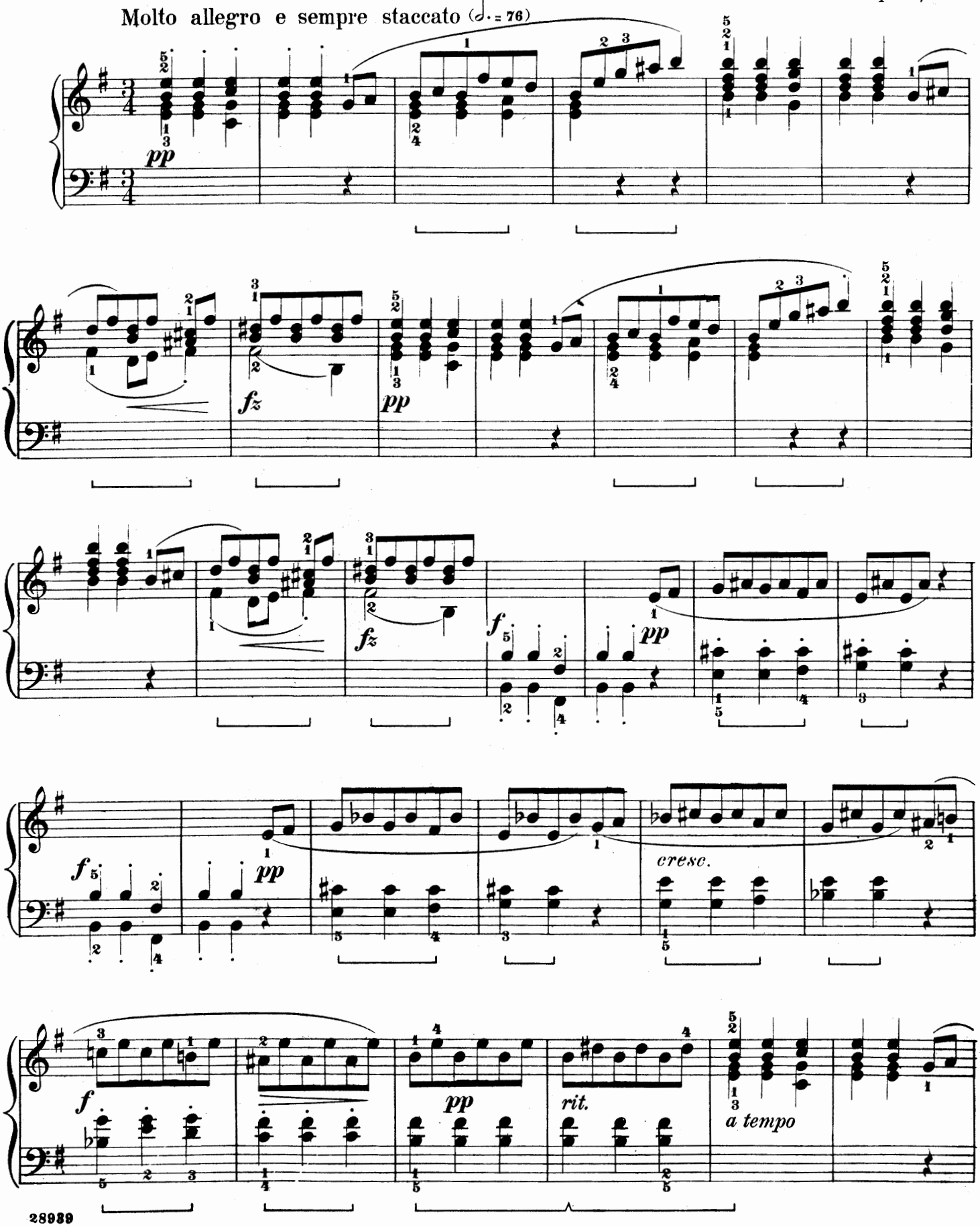
Op. 12, No. 6

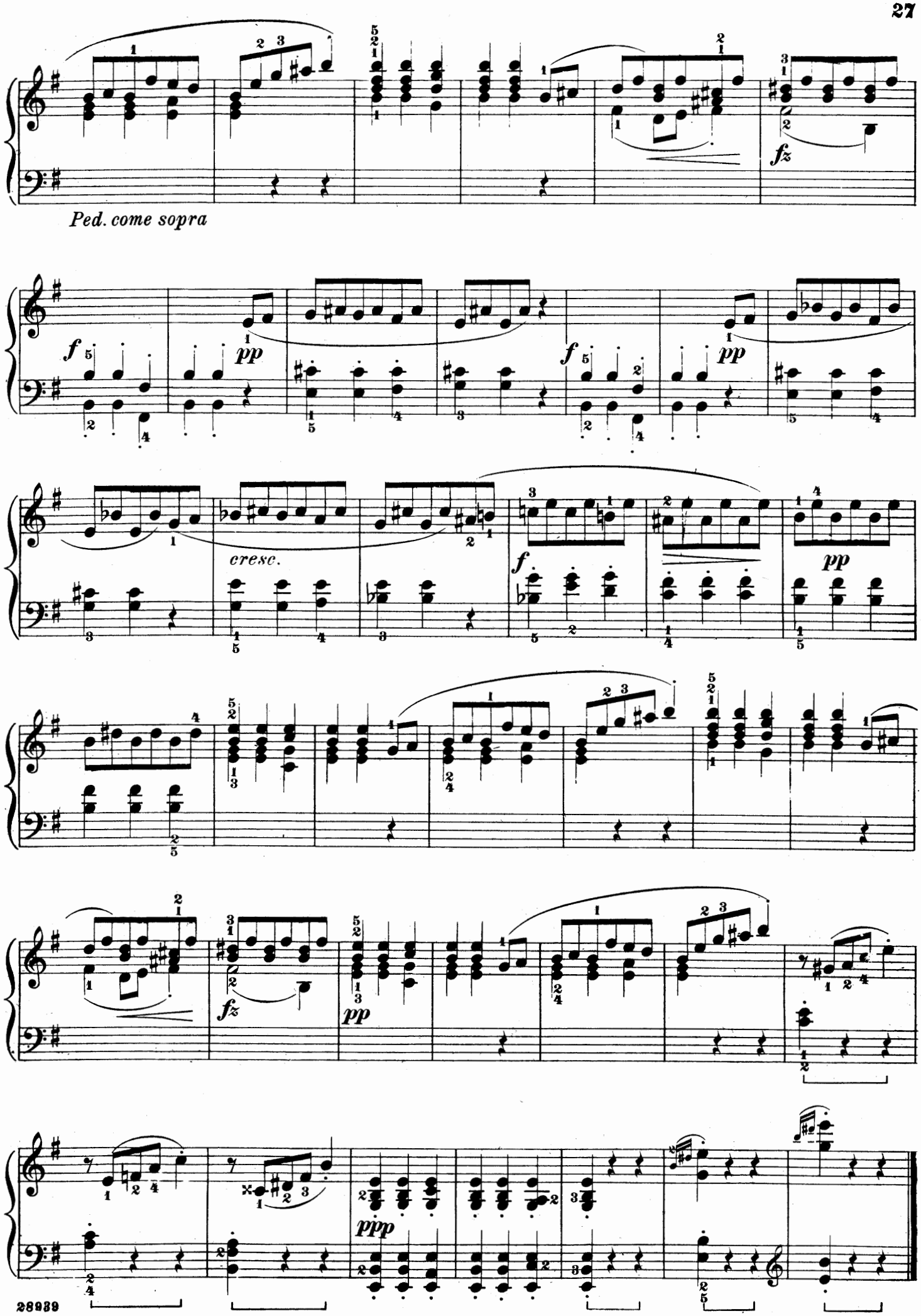



fz
pp
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
fz
ff
fz
sempre rit.
fz
fz

Elfin Dance

Op. 12, No. 4

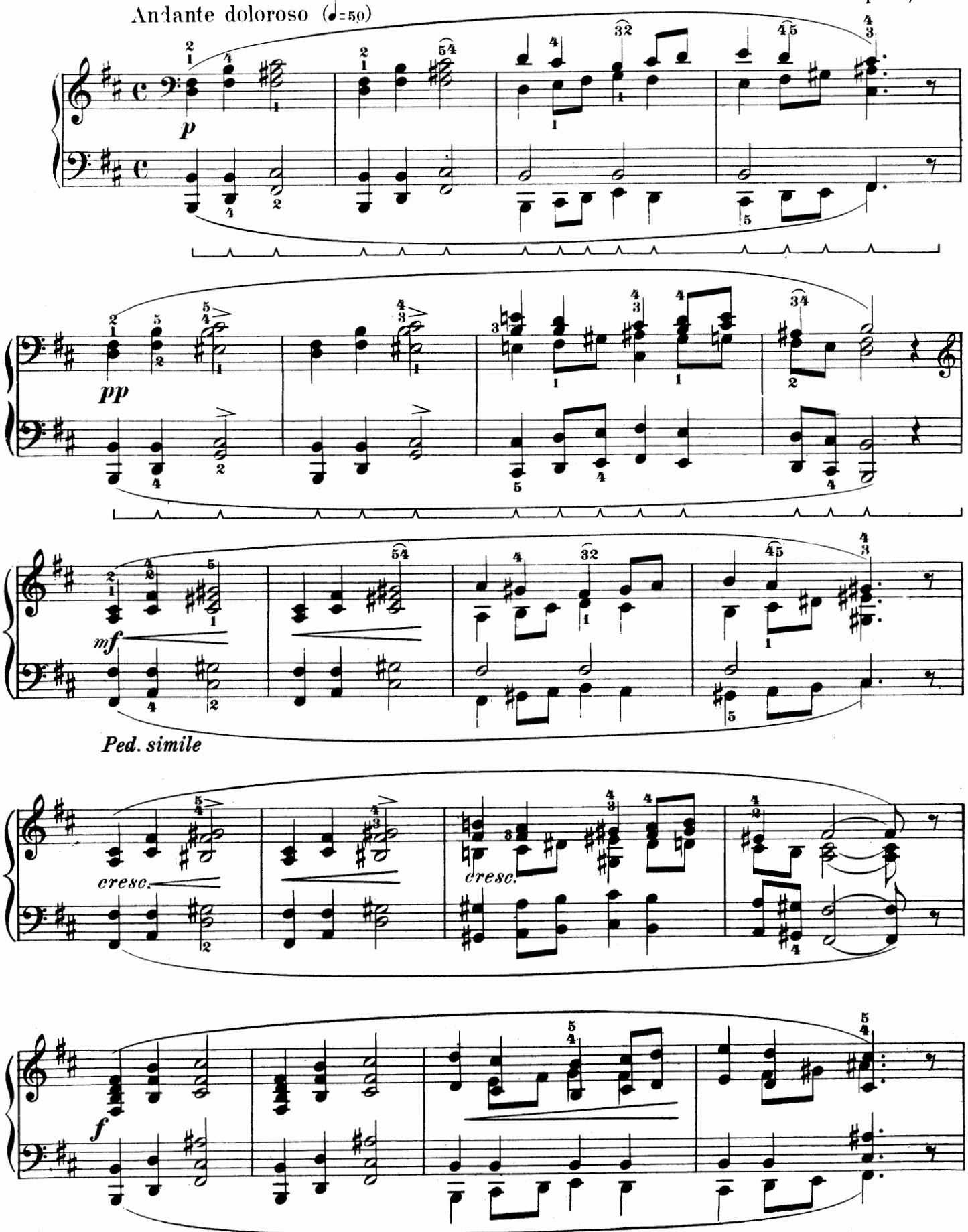



Ped. come sopra
fz
f
pp
f
pp
cresc.
f
pp
fz
pp
ppp

Ase's Death

Edited and fingered by
Louis Oesterle

Op. 46, No. 2



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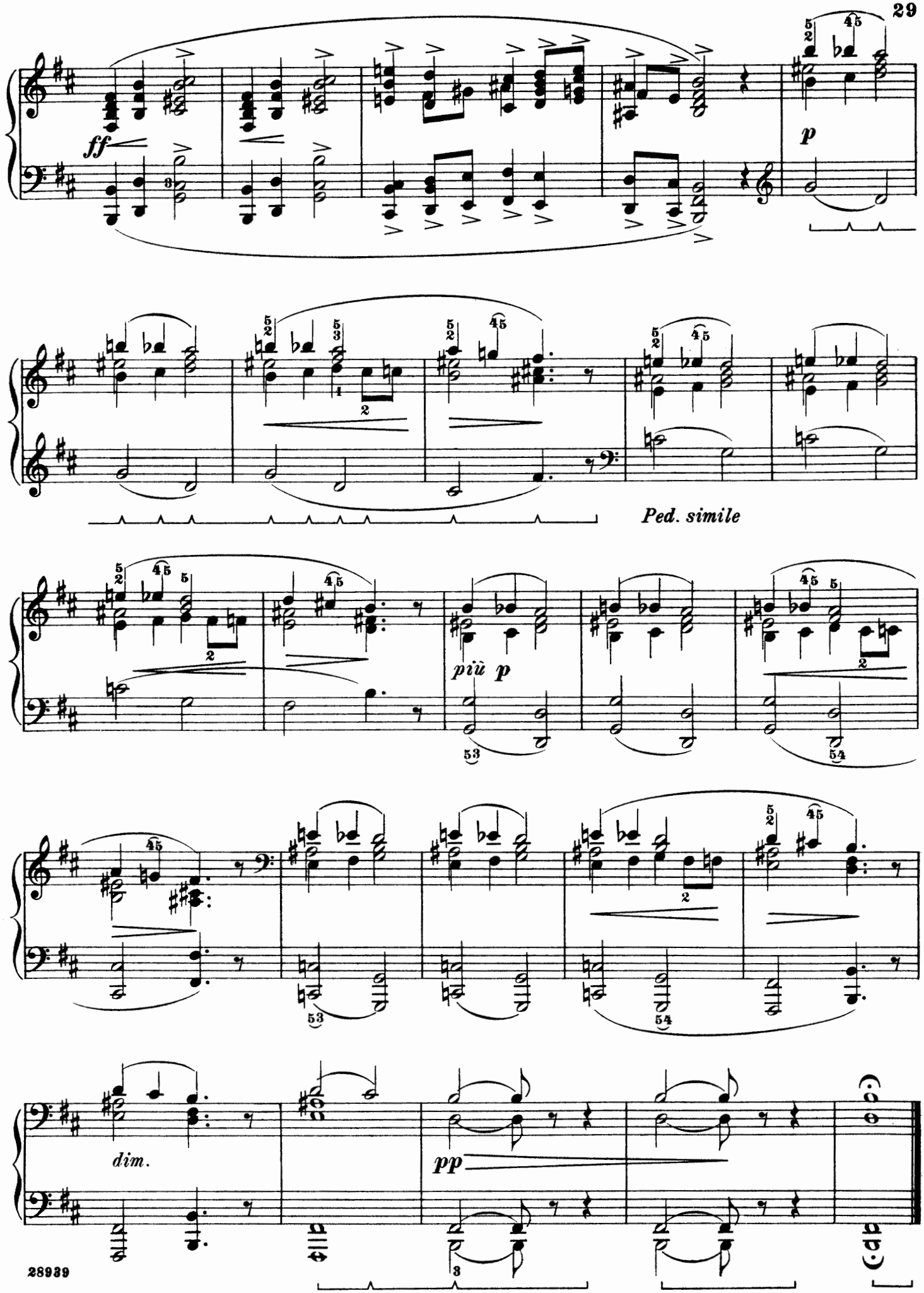

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