Maurice RAVEL

the complete works for piano

LA VALSE

Poème chorégraphique
pour Orchestre

a modified version of
the composer's
piano transcription

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Ray Alston : contact@pianopracticaleditions.com

Maurice RAVEL 1875 - 1937

La VALSE

Poème choréographique pour Orchestre

a modified version of the composer's piano transcription

An imperial court around 1855.

Waltzing couples are glimpsed through rifts of swirling storm clouds. Little by little the dancers disperse and an enormous ballroom is filled with a throng of whirling people.

*The stage gradually becomes brighter. Light from the chandeliers explodes at the first **ff**.*

Written between around 1920, conceived as a ballet and in tribute to the waltz, *La Valse* was first performed on 12 December in Paris. While the work may have been intended as a metaphor for the predicament of European civilisation in the aftermath of the Great War, the composer stated:

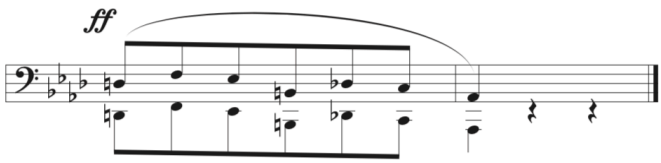
While some discover an attempt at parody, indeed caricature, others categorically see a tragic allusion in it – the end of the Second Empire, the situation in Vienna after the war, etc... This dance may seem tragic, like any other emotion... pushed to the extreme. But one should only see in it what the music expresses: an ascending progression of

Philippe Jacques Linder — Waltz at the Bal Mabille

sonority, to which the stage comes along to add light and movement.

In 1922 He also commented "*It doesn't have anything to do with the situation in Vienna, and it also doesn't have any hidden agenda. In the course of La Valse, I did not envision a dance of death or a struggle between life and death. The year of the choreographic setting, 1855, repudiates such an assumption.*"

The final bars remind me of Chopin's Waltz in A flat Op 42.



A musicologist described *La Valse* as *the most unexpected of Ravel's compositions, revealing to us heretofore unexpected depths of Romanticism, power, vigour, and rapture in this musician whose expression is usually limited to the manifestations of an essentially classical genius.*

La Valse was created in 1906 with Austria's waltzing capital as its first title: *Vienne* and later, *Wien*. Ravel described how he felt about its essence:

You know my intense attraction to these wonderful rhythms and that I value the joie de vivre expressed in the dance much more deeply than Franckist puritanism.

The production of the ballet caused a serious rift between the composer and Diaghilev, and although it is more often performed as a concert work, over the years many ballet companies have since taken up the challenge.

In 1911 another waltz-inspired ballet *Adélaïde* or "*le langage des fleurs*" was commissioned by the Russian ballerina Natasha Trouhanova, for which Ravel made an orchestral transcription of *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*. It was first performed in April 1912 at the *Théâtre du Châtelet* in Paris.

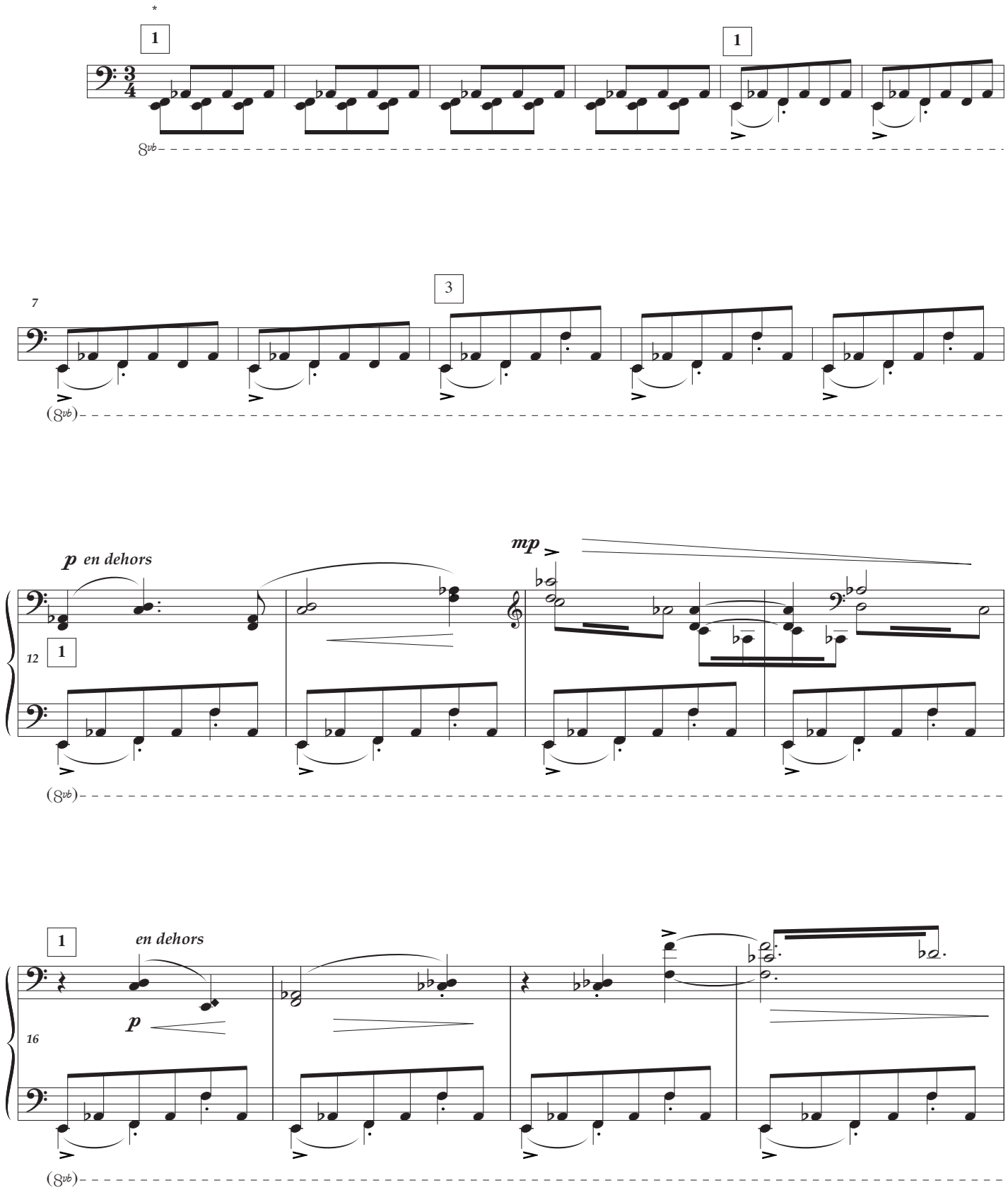
This revision is based upon Ravel's original published solo version which was presumably prepared for a rehearsal pianist, including optional, extra scoring. I have tried to combine these into a playable and integrated virtuoso recital piece, although, given the nature of orchestral works transcribed for piano, I am sure the reader will take the initiative and add, adjust or omit.

To help studying this great work, I have marked phrase lengths, corrected misprints and added some fingering and sostenuto pedal suggestions.

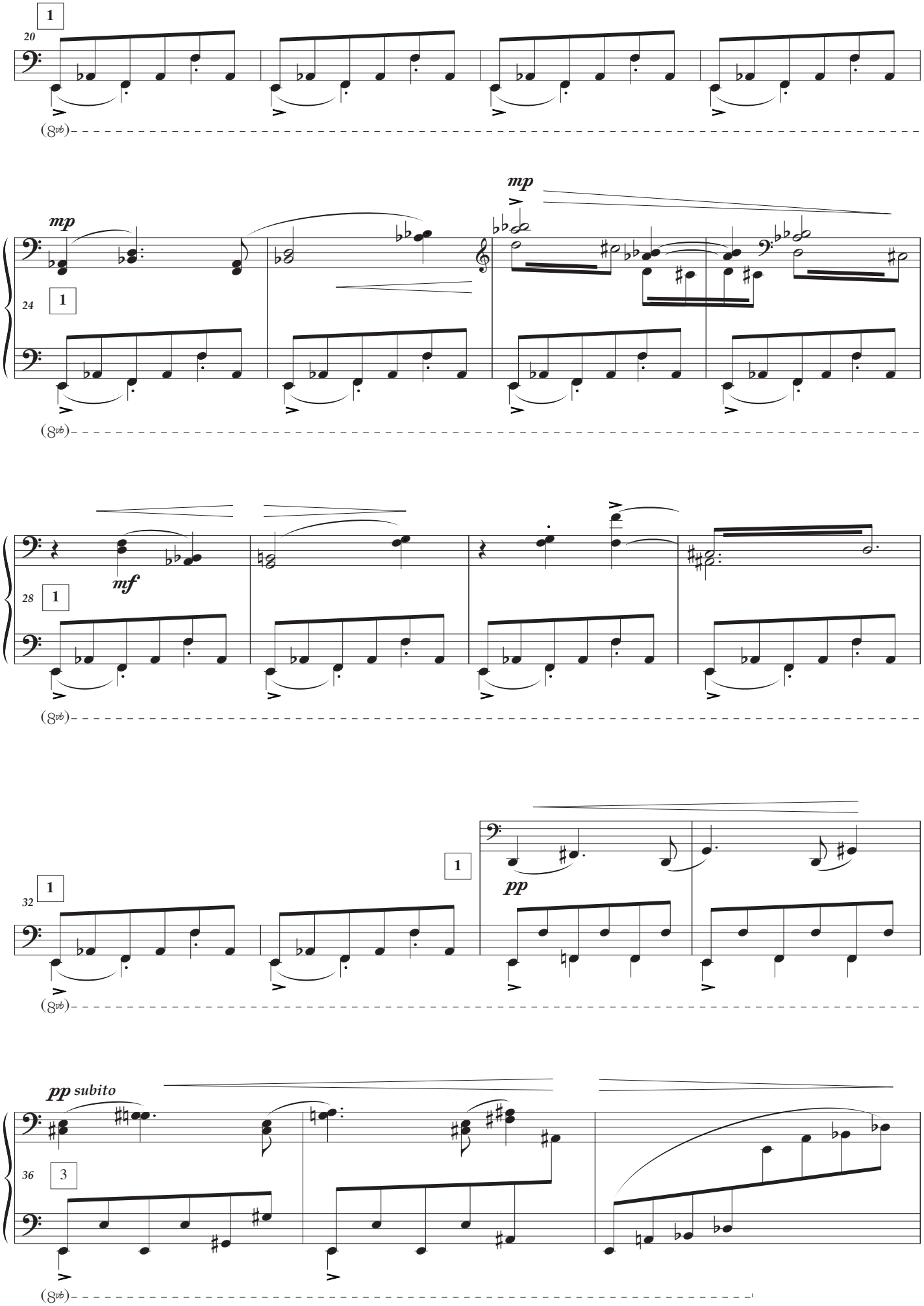
Pierre-Auguste Renoir

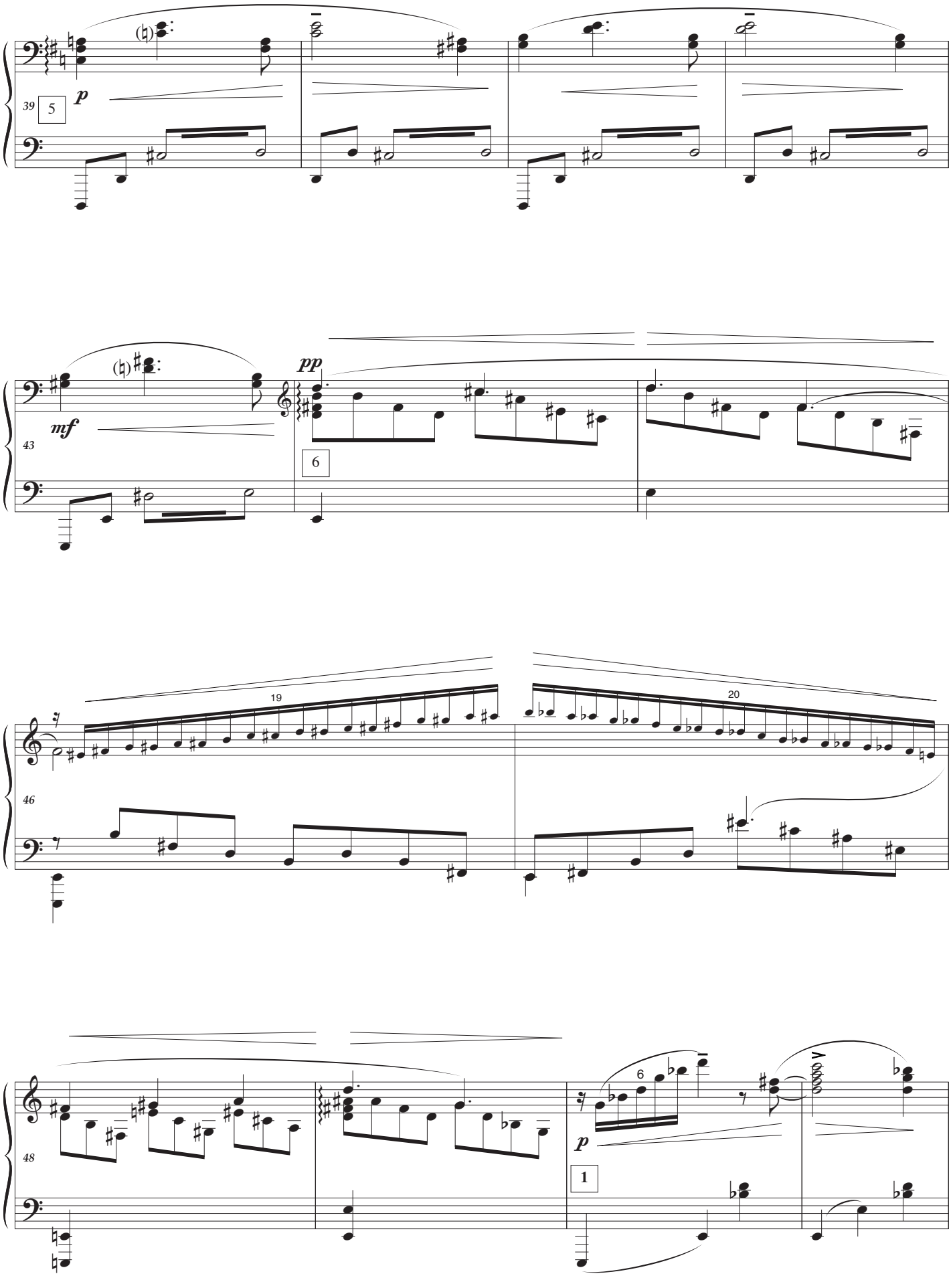
LA VALSE

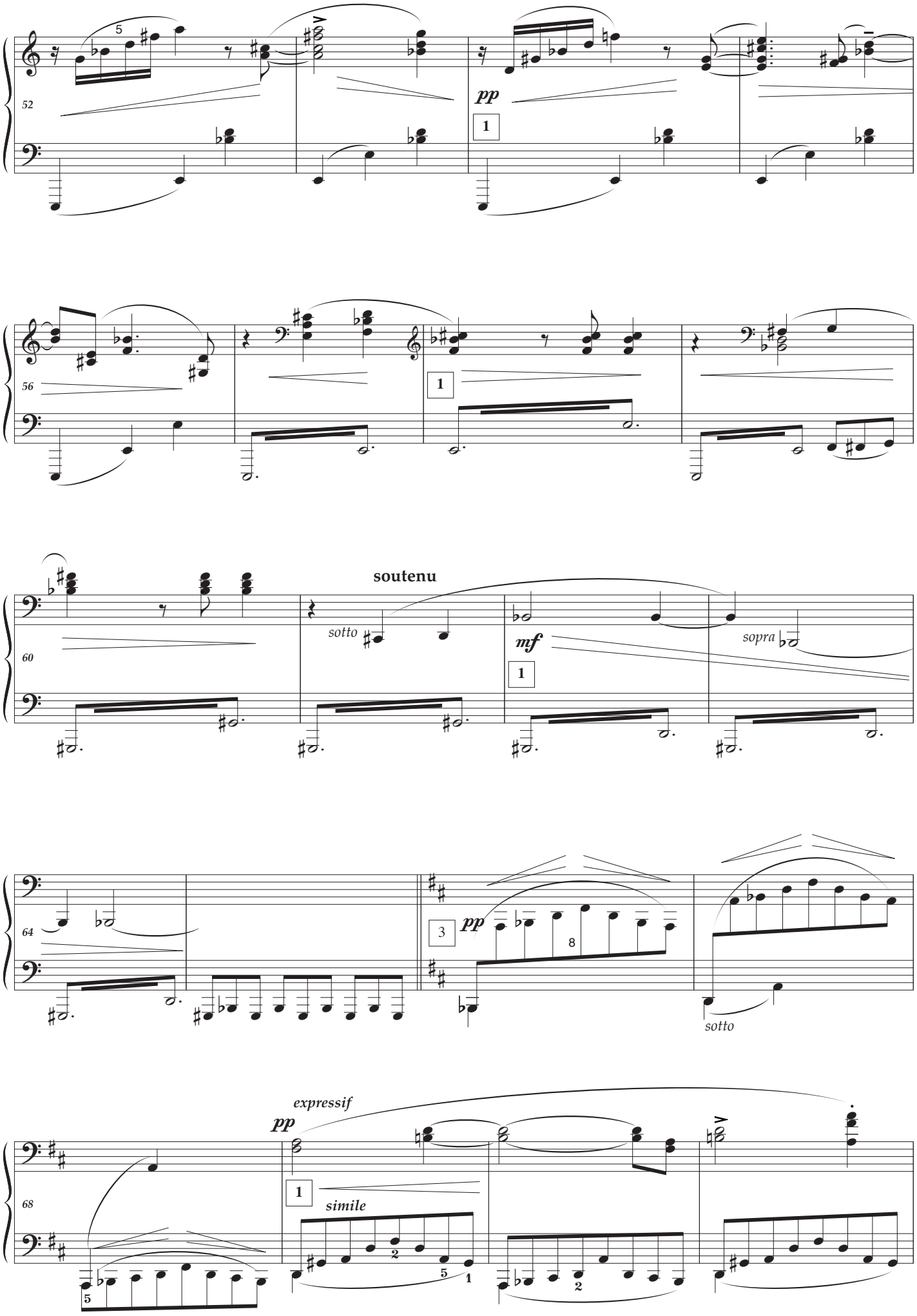
Mouvement de Valse Viennoise

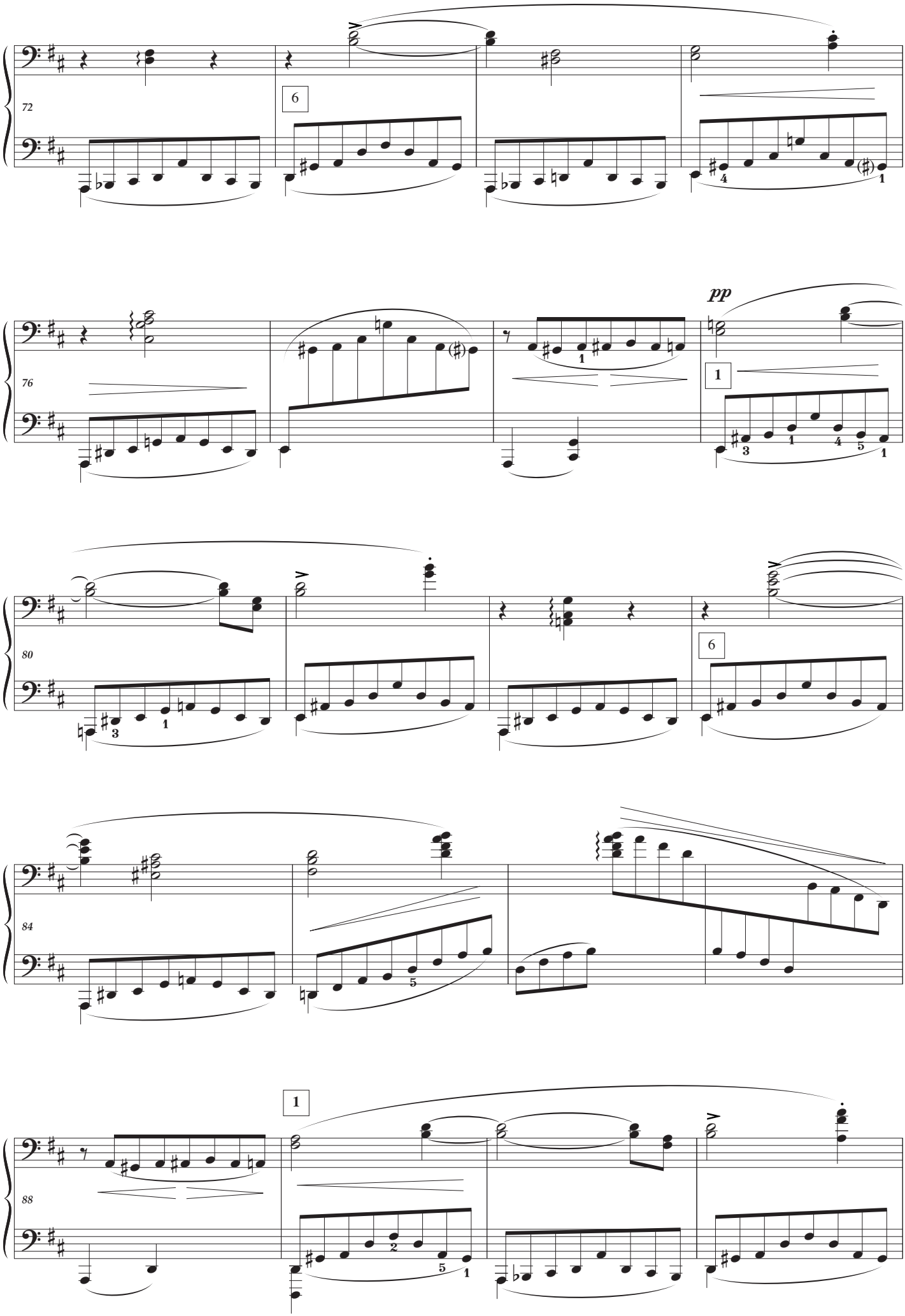


*** Indicating 4- (or 2-) bar phrases unless otherwise marked.**


20
1
(8vb)
mp
24
1
(8vb)
mf
28
1
(8vb)
32
1
1
pp
(8vb)
pp subito
36
3
(8vb)


39
5
p
43
mf
pp
6
46
19
20
48
6
p
1


52
pp
1
56
1
soutenu
60
sotto
mf
1
sopra
64
3
pp
8
sotto
expressif
pp
68
1
simile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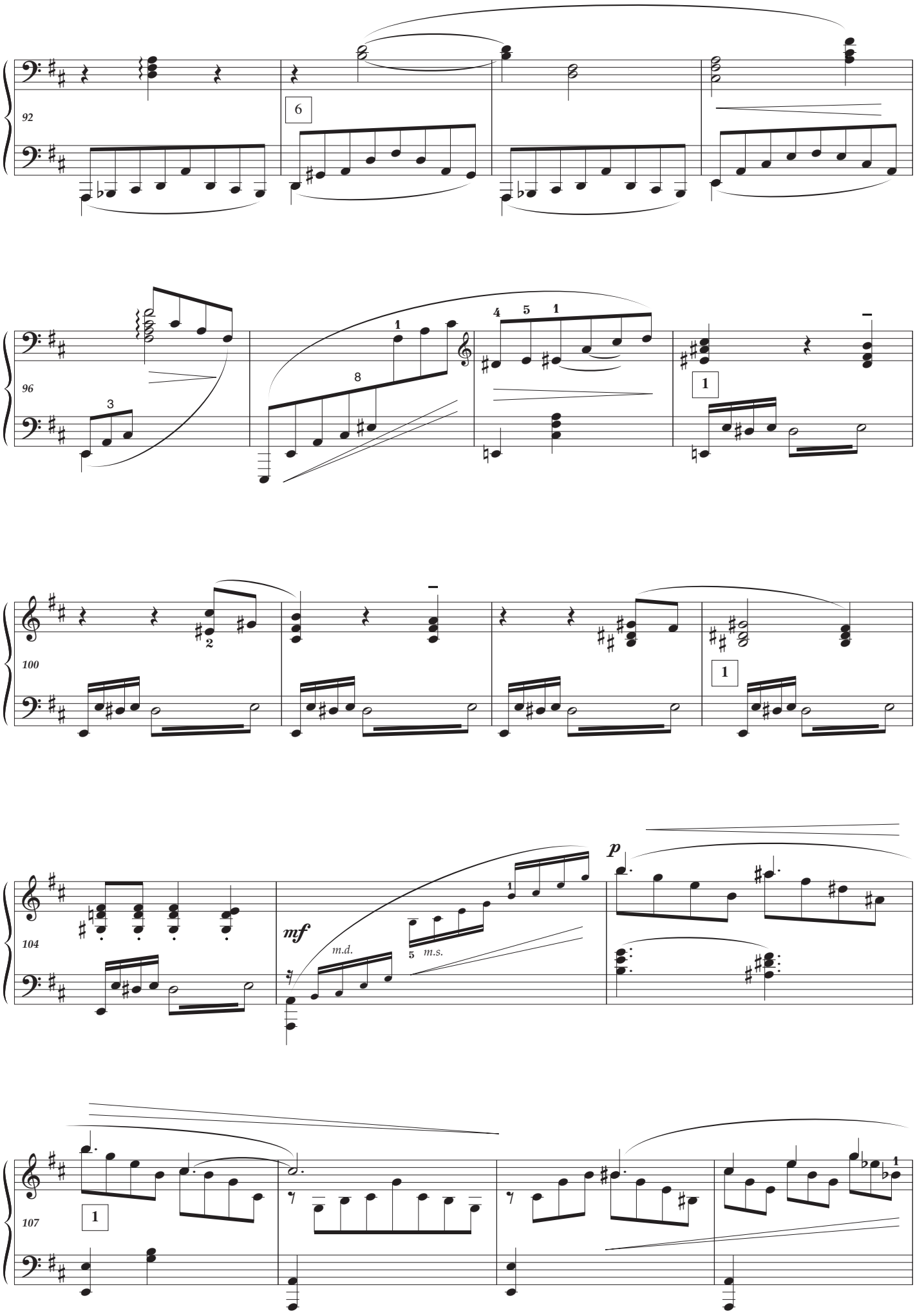
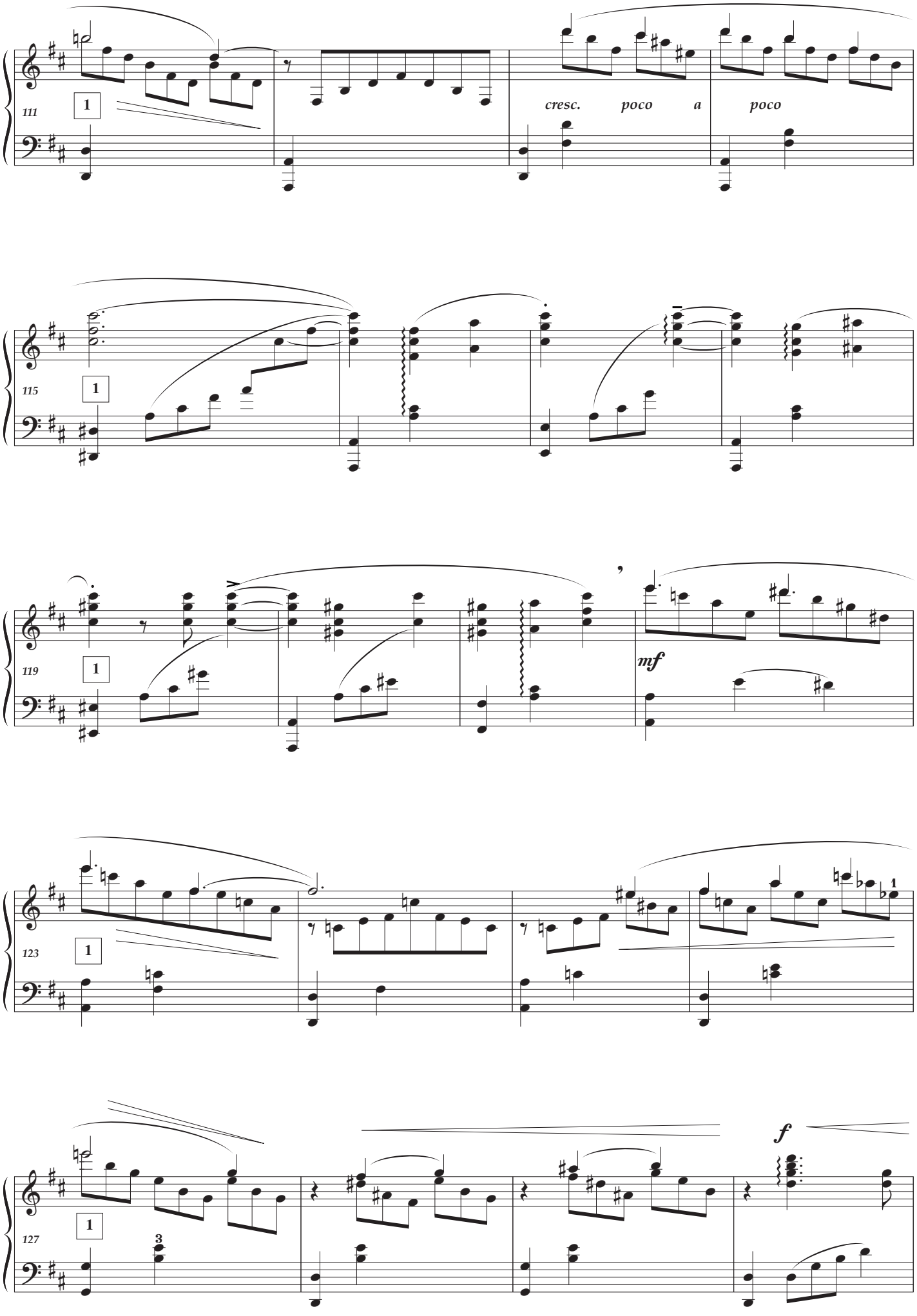
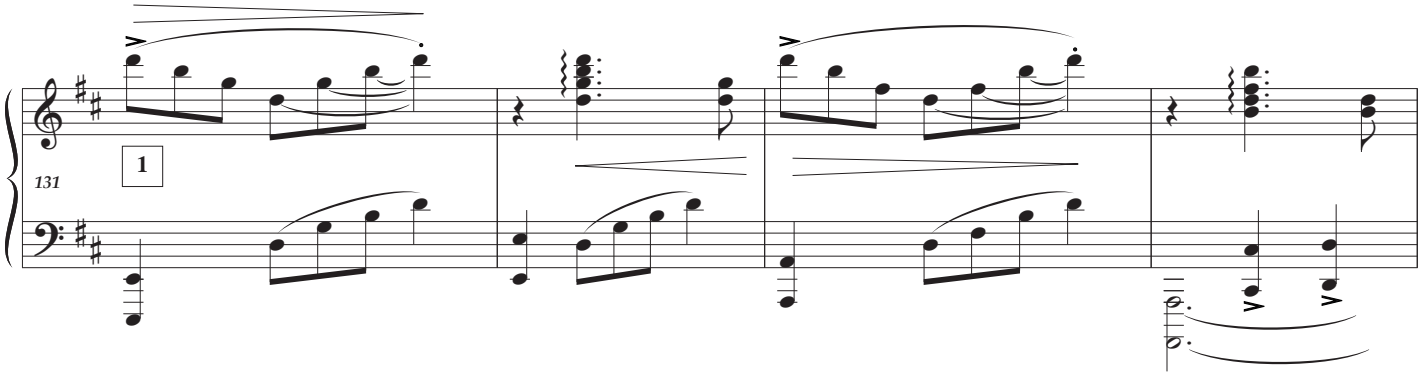
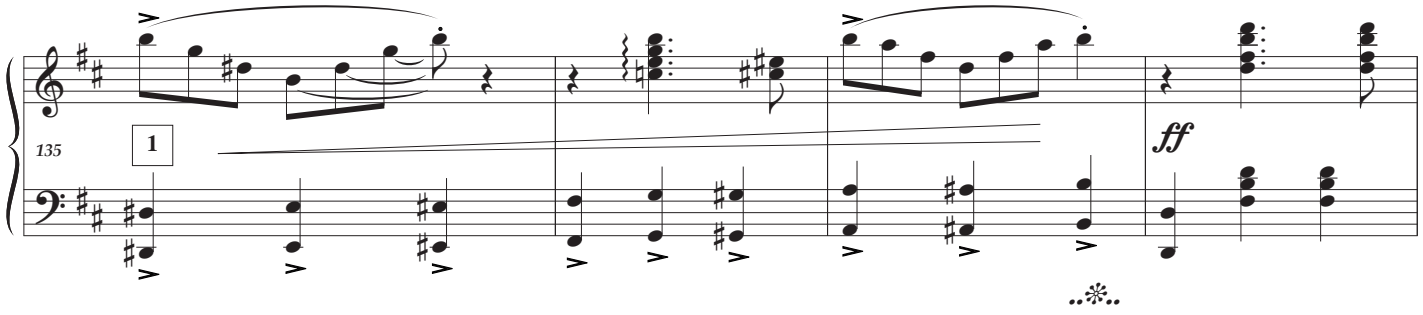
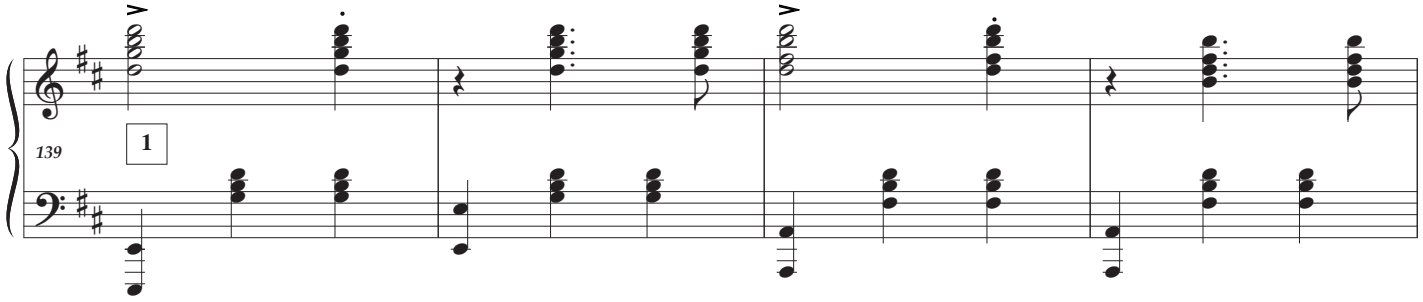
6
76
pp
1
80
6
84
5
88
1
2
5
1


92
6
96
100
104
mf
m.d.
m.s.
p
107


111
1
cresc. poco a poco
115
1
119
1
mf
123
1
1
127
1
3
f


131
1
Sost. Ped.


135
1
ff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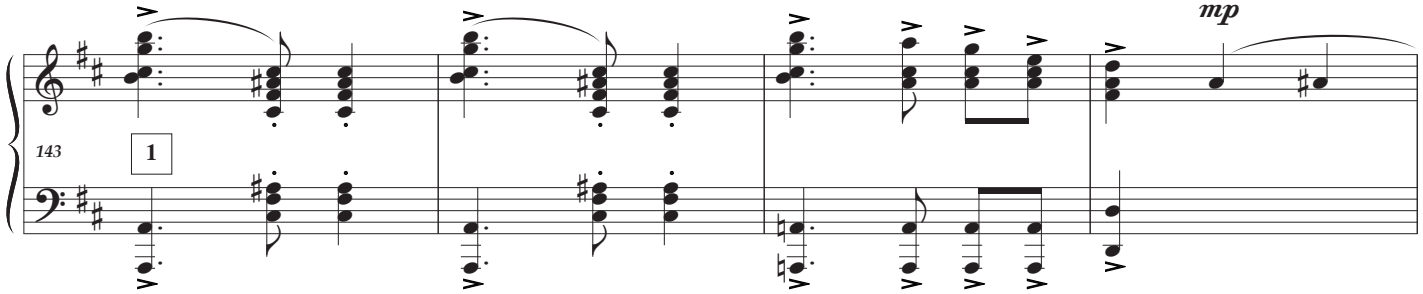
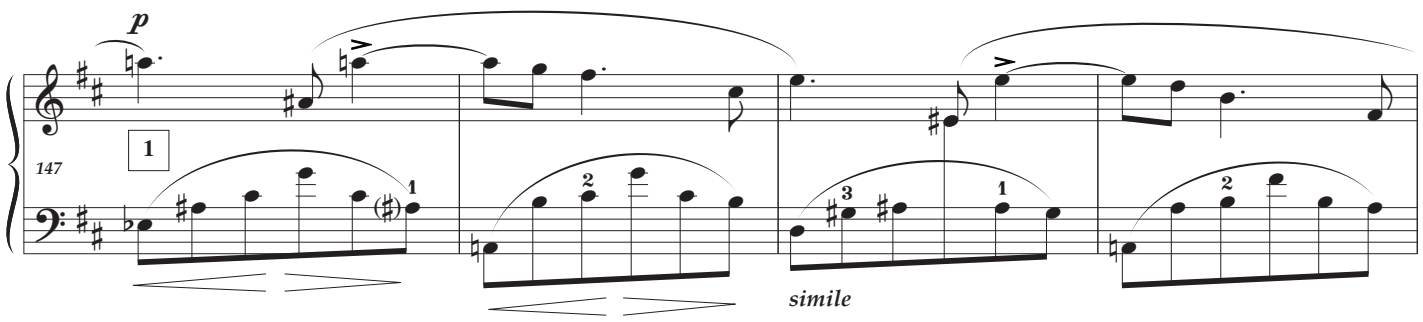
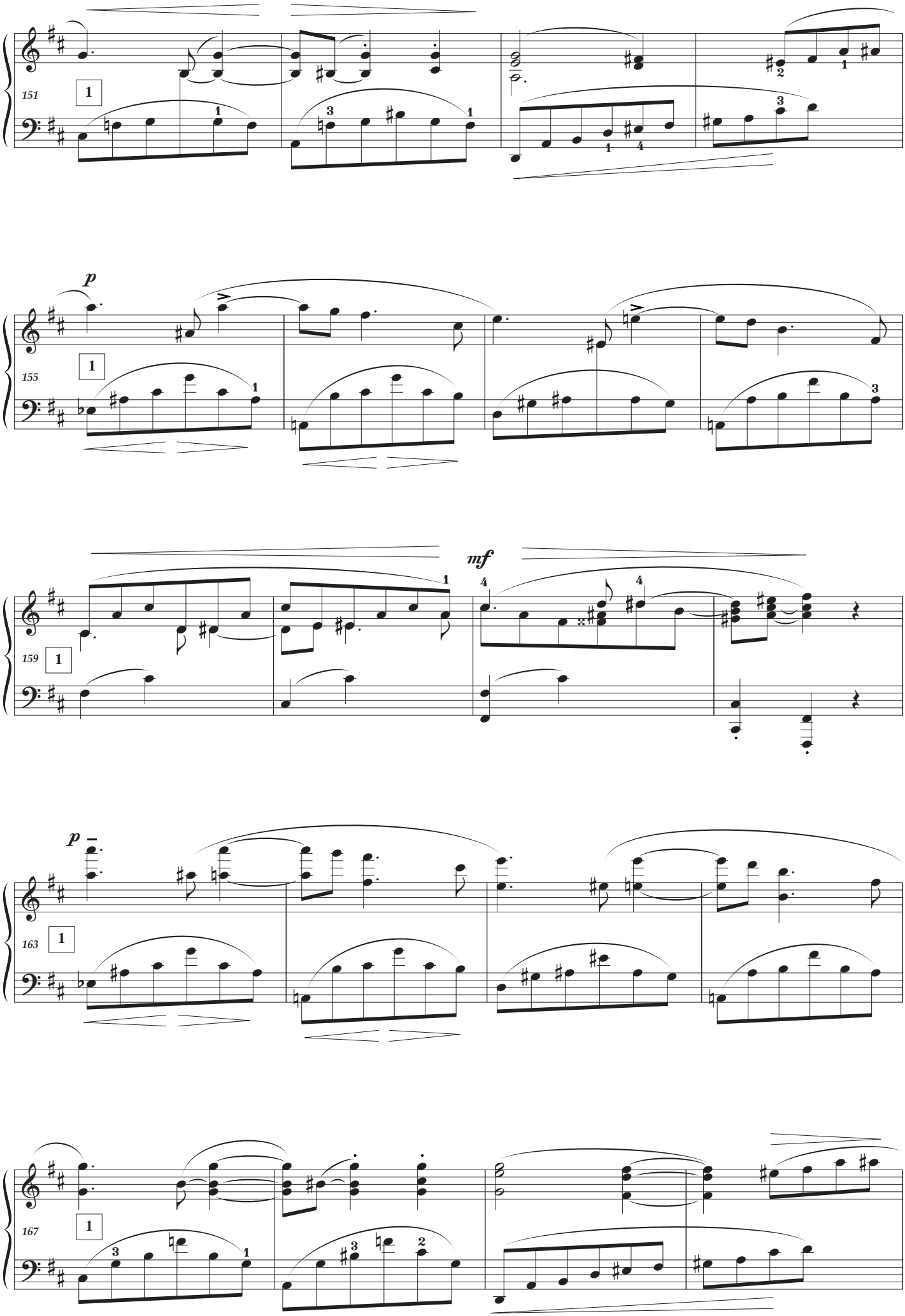
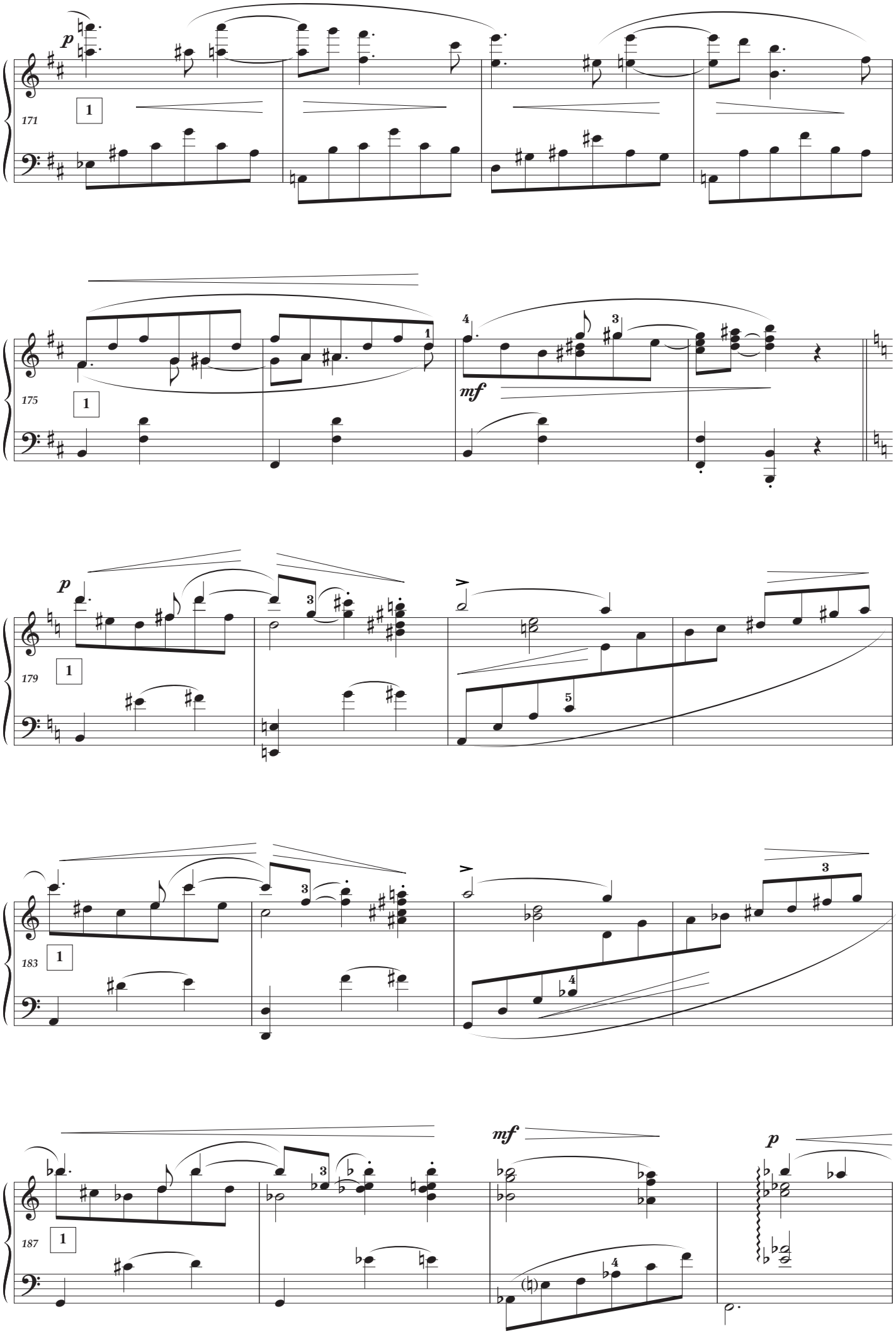
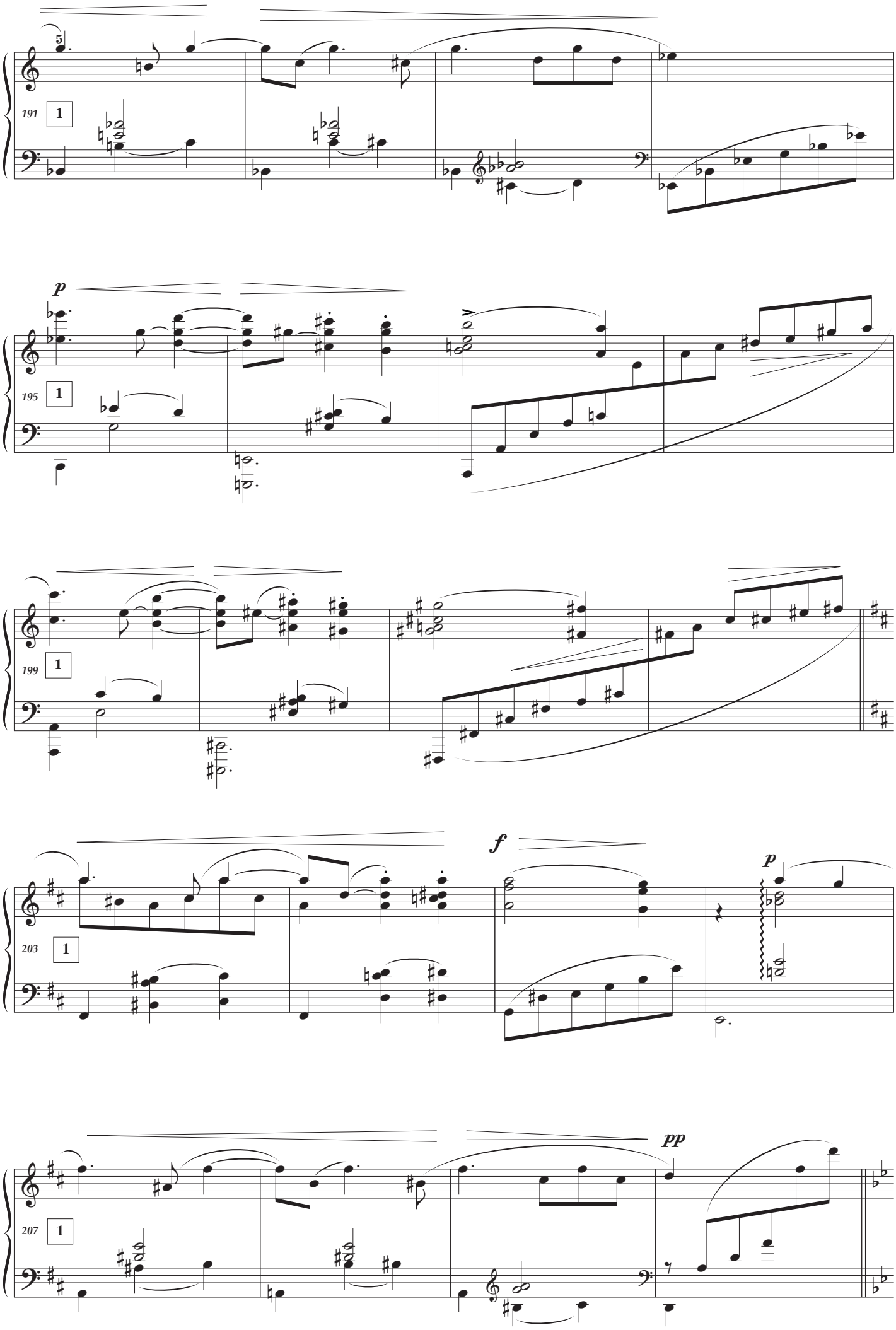
1

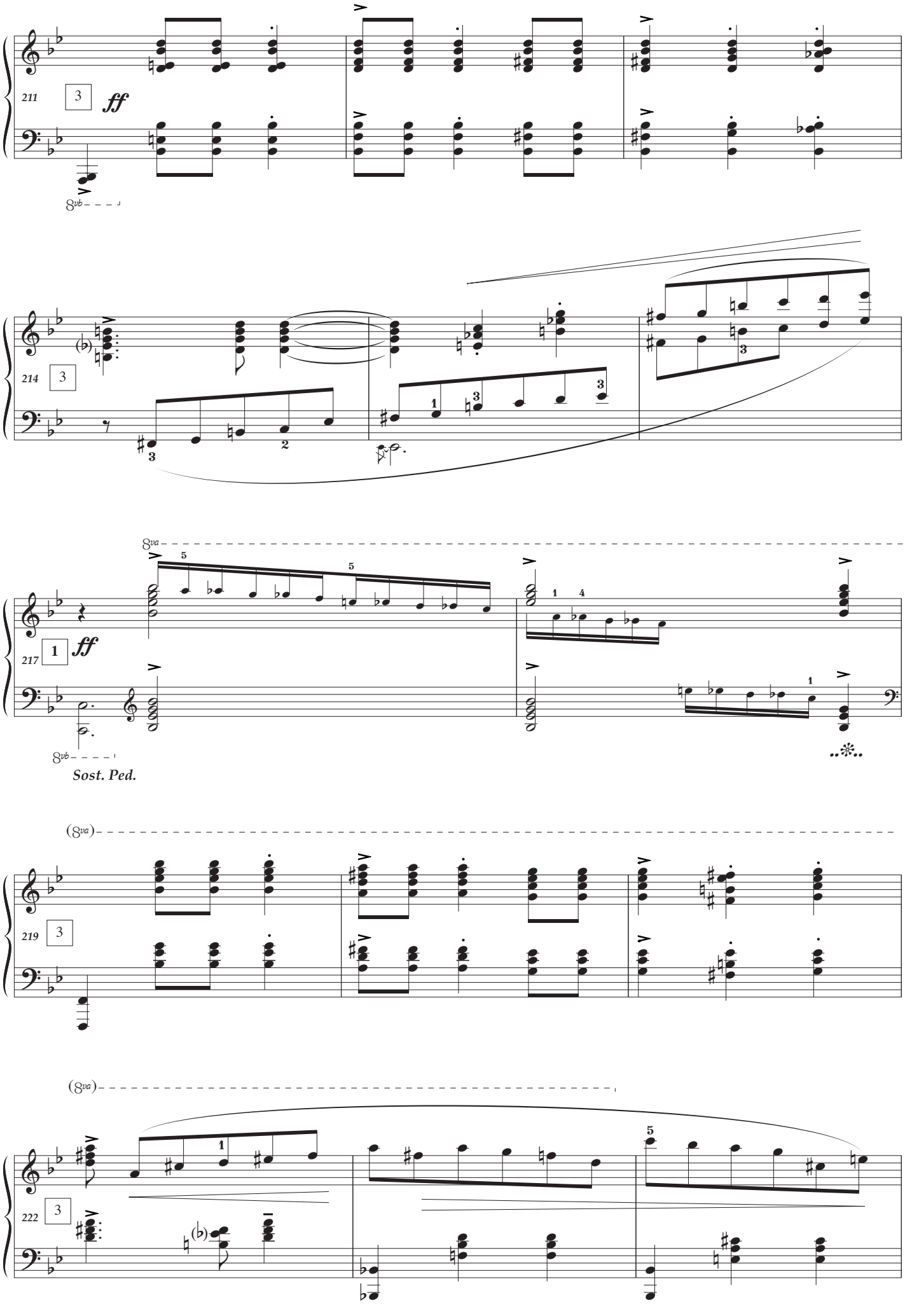

143
1
mp

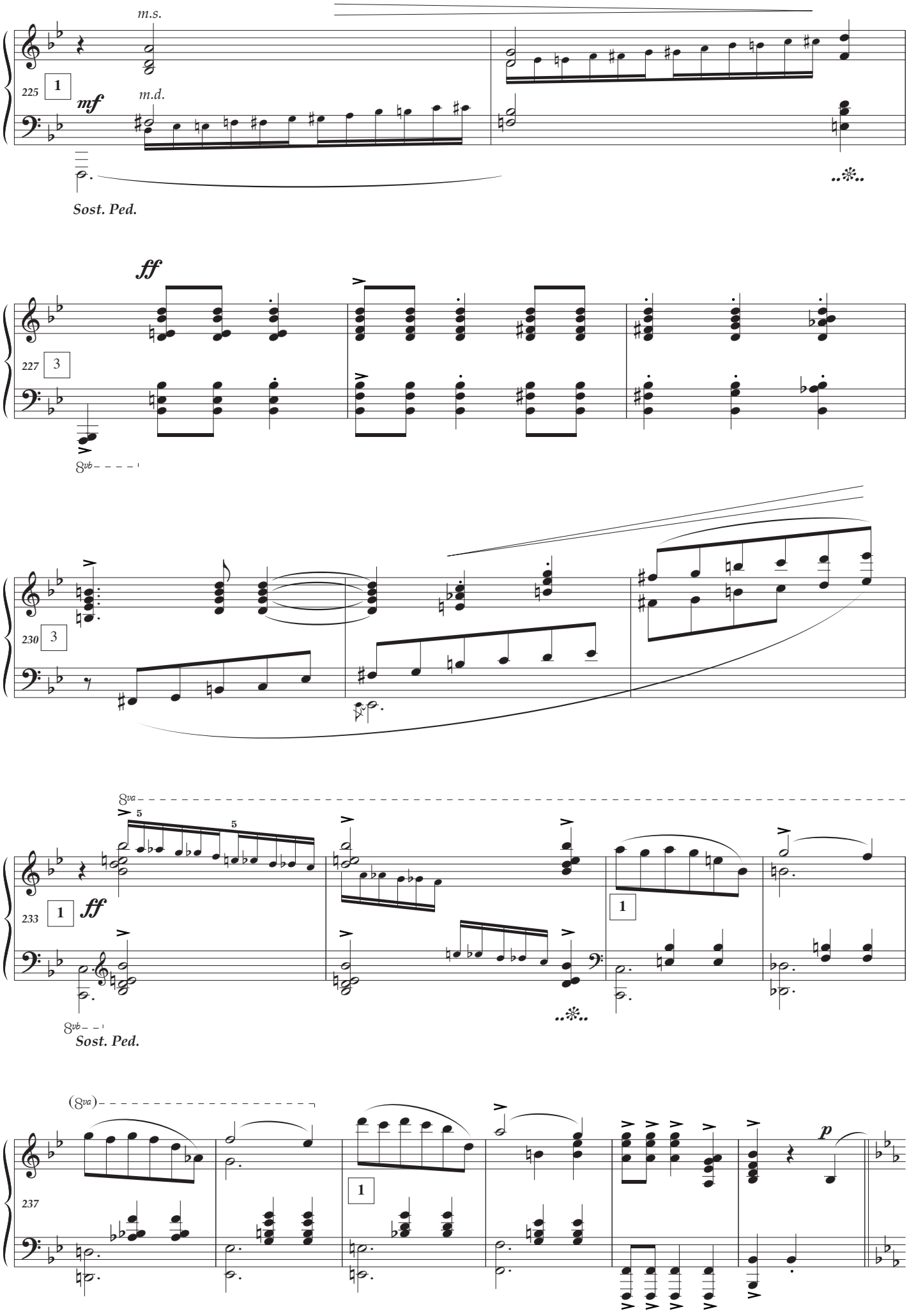

147
1
p
simile

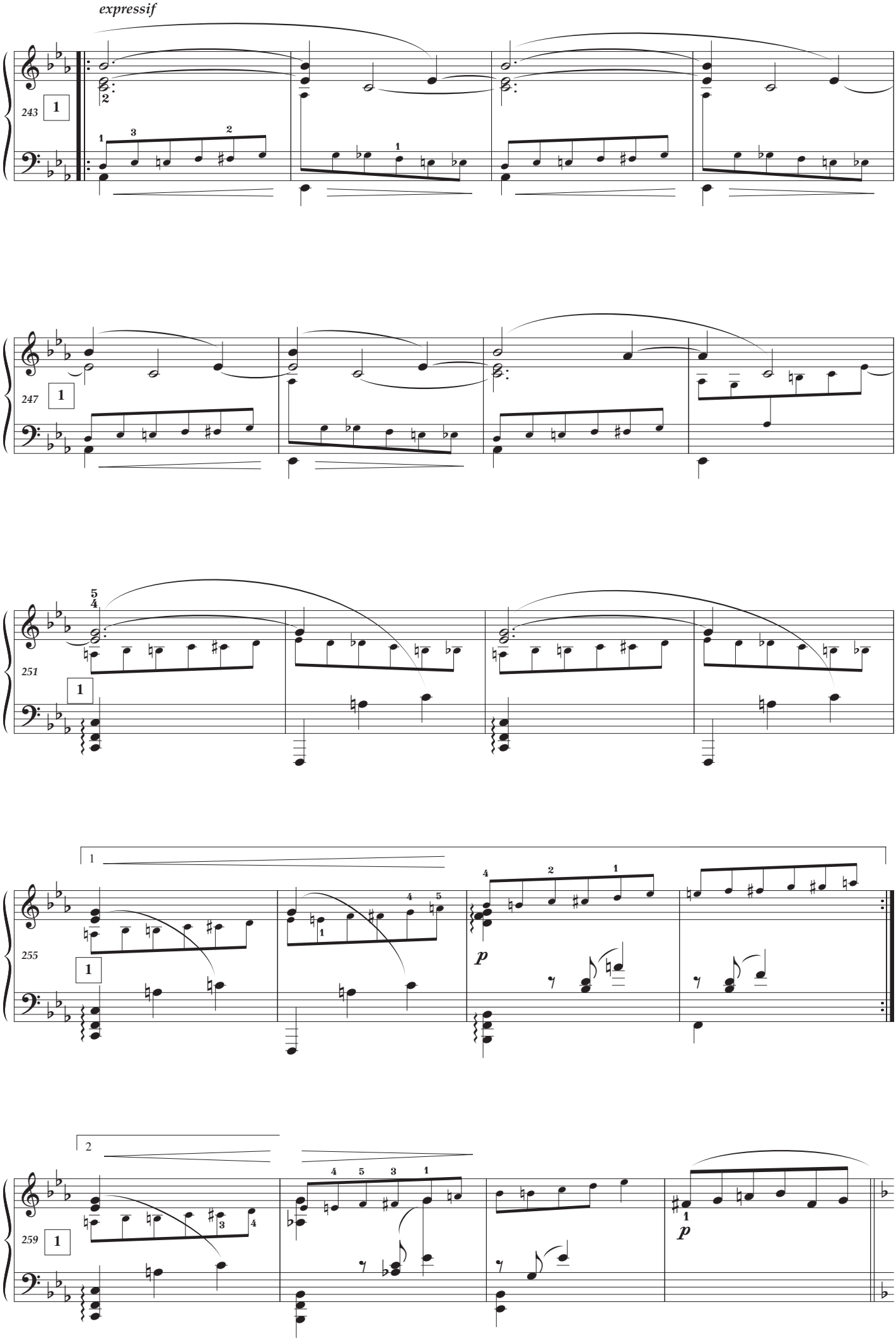

151
155
159
163
167
p
mf
p

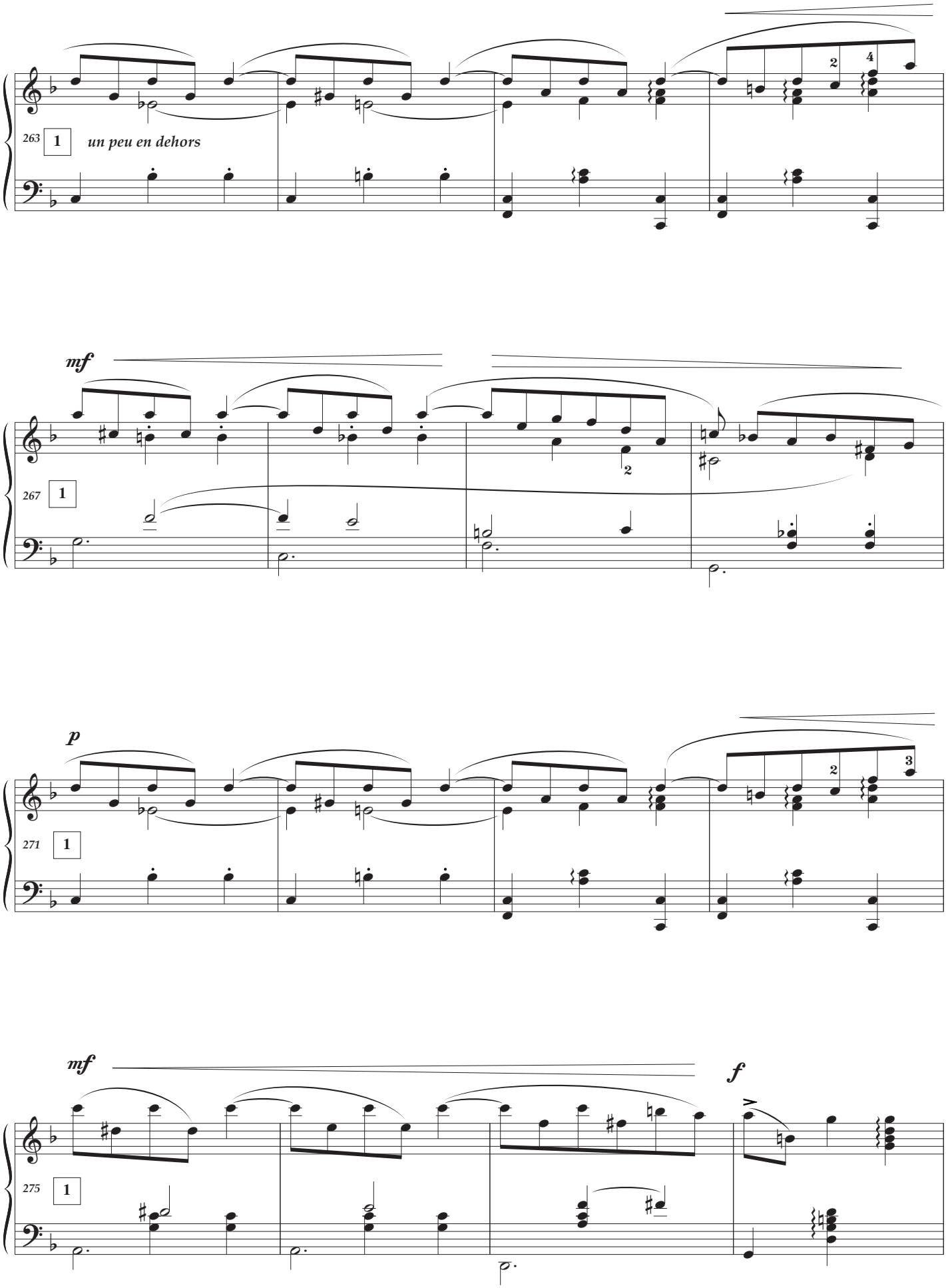

p
171
1
175
1
mf
179
1
183
1
187
1
mf
p

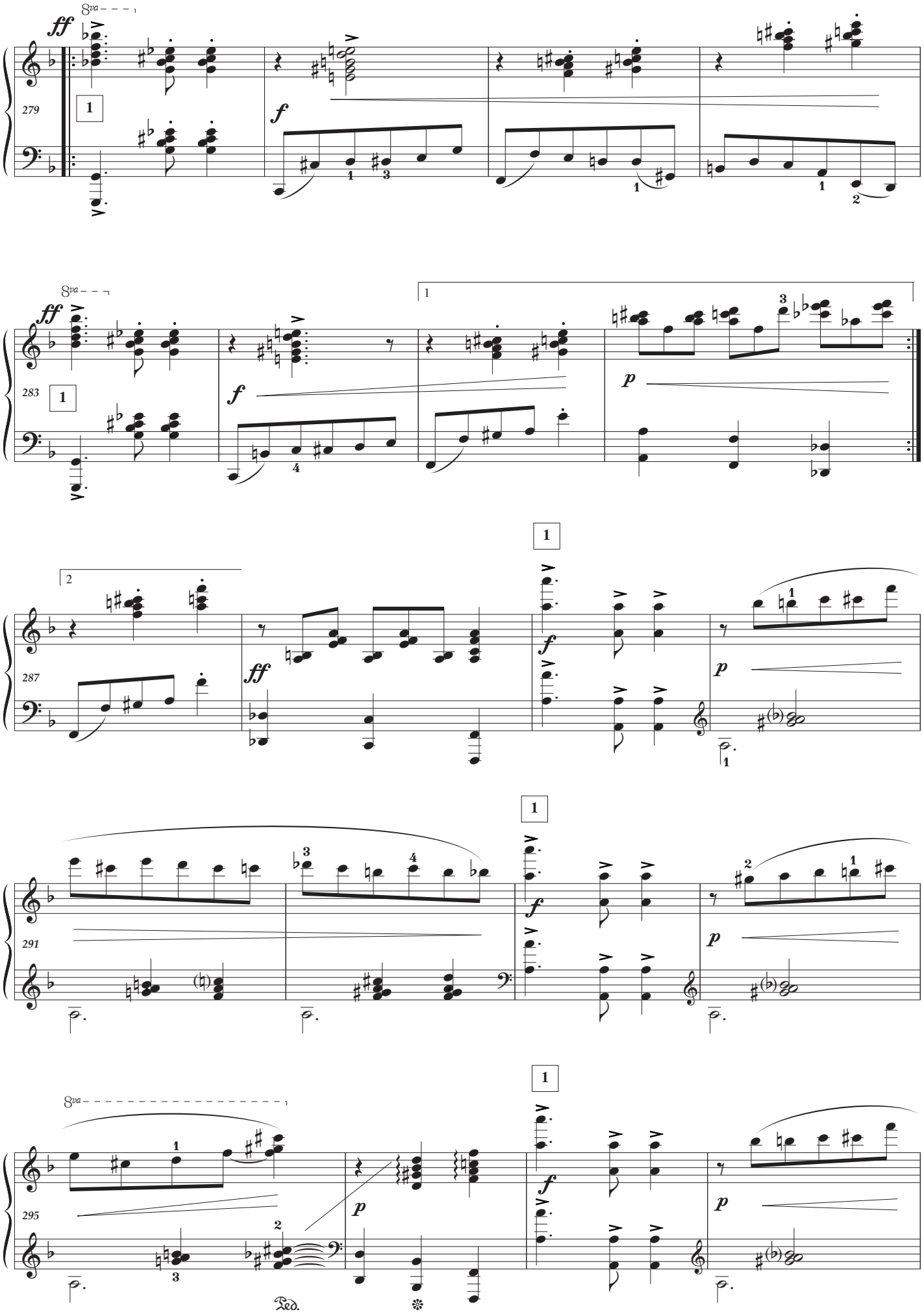

191
195
199
203
207
p
f
p
pp

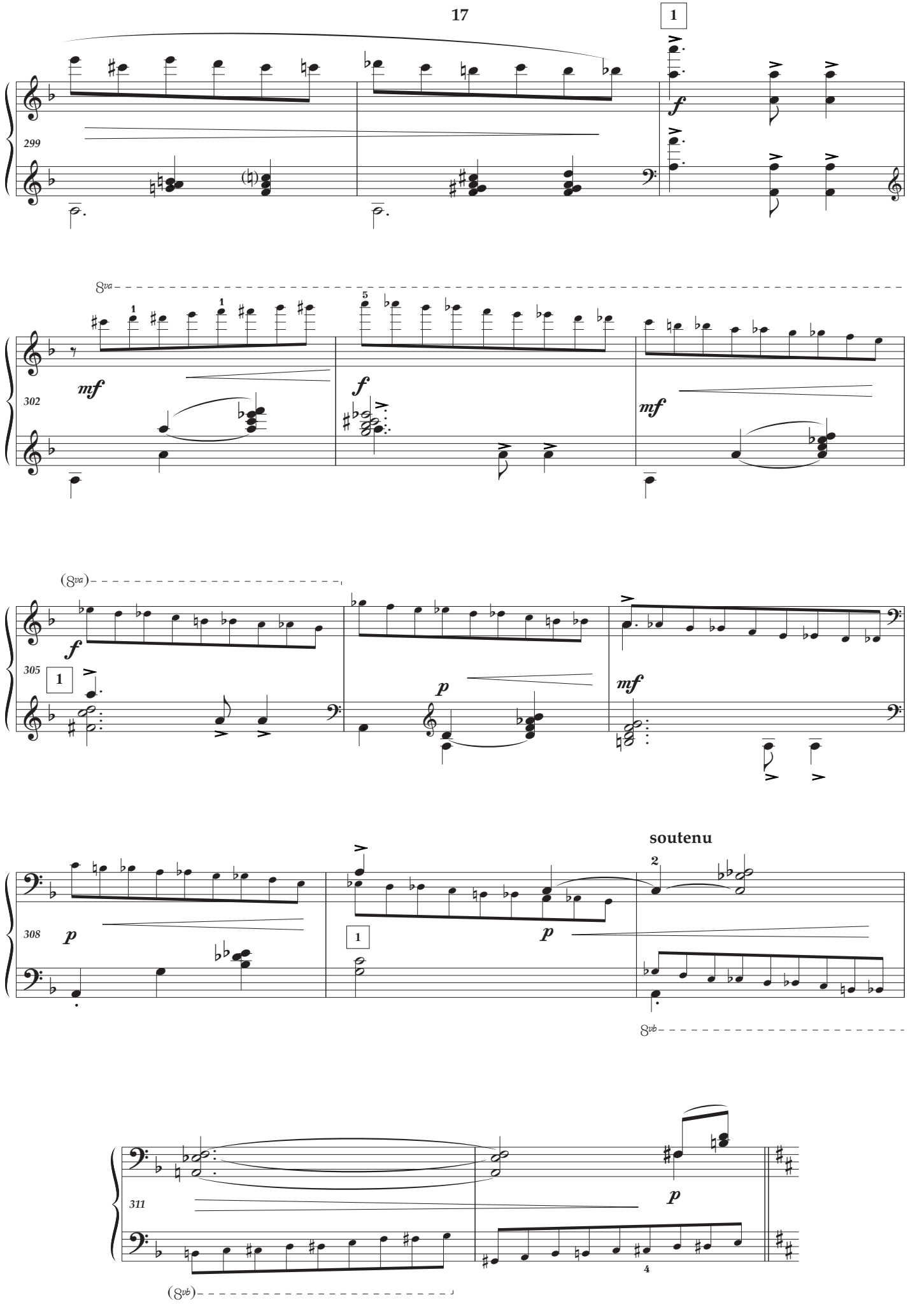

211
3
ff
8vb
214
3
217
1
ff
8va
8vb
Sost. Ped.
(8va)
219
3
(8va)
222
3

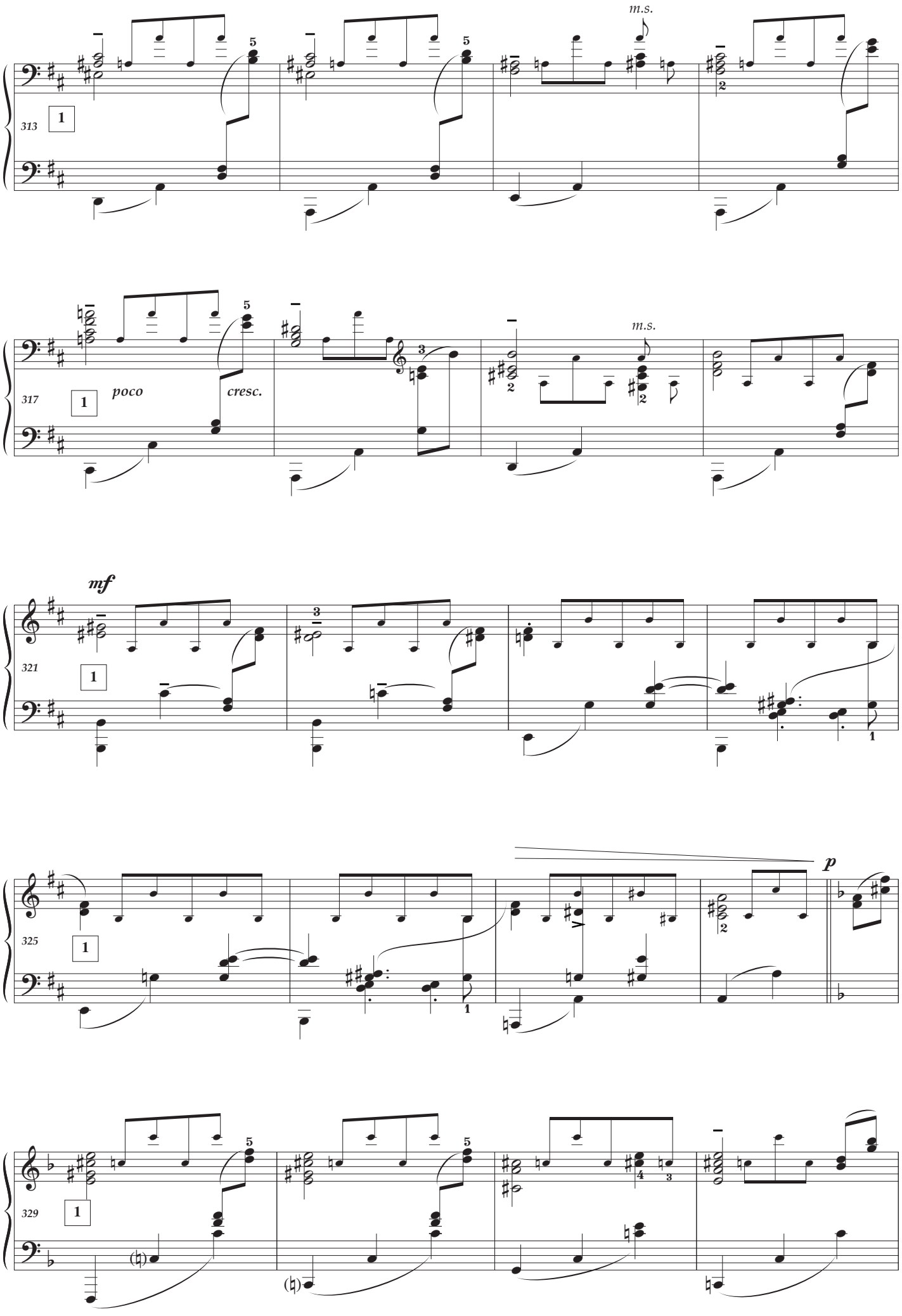

m.s.
225
1
mf
m.d.
Sost. Ped.
ff
227
3
8vb
230
3
8va
5
5
233
1
ff
8vb
Sost. Ped.
(8va)
237
1
p

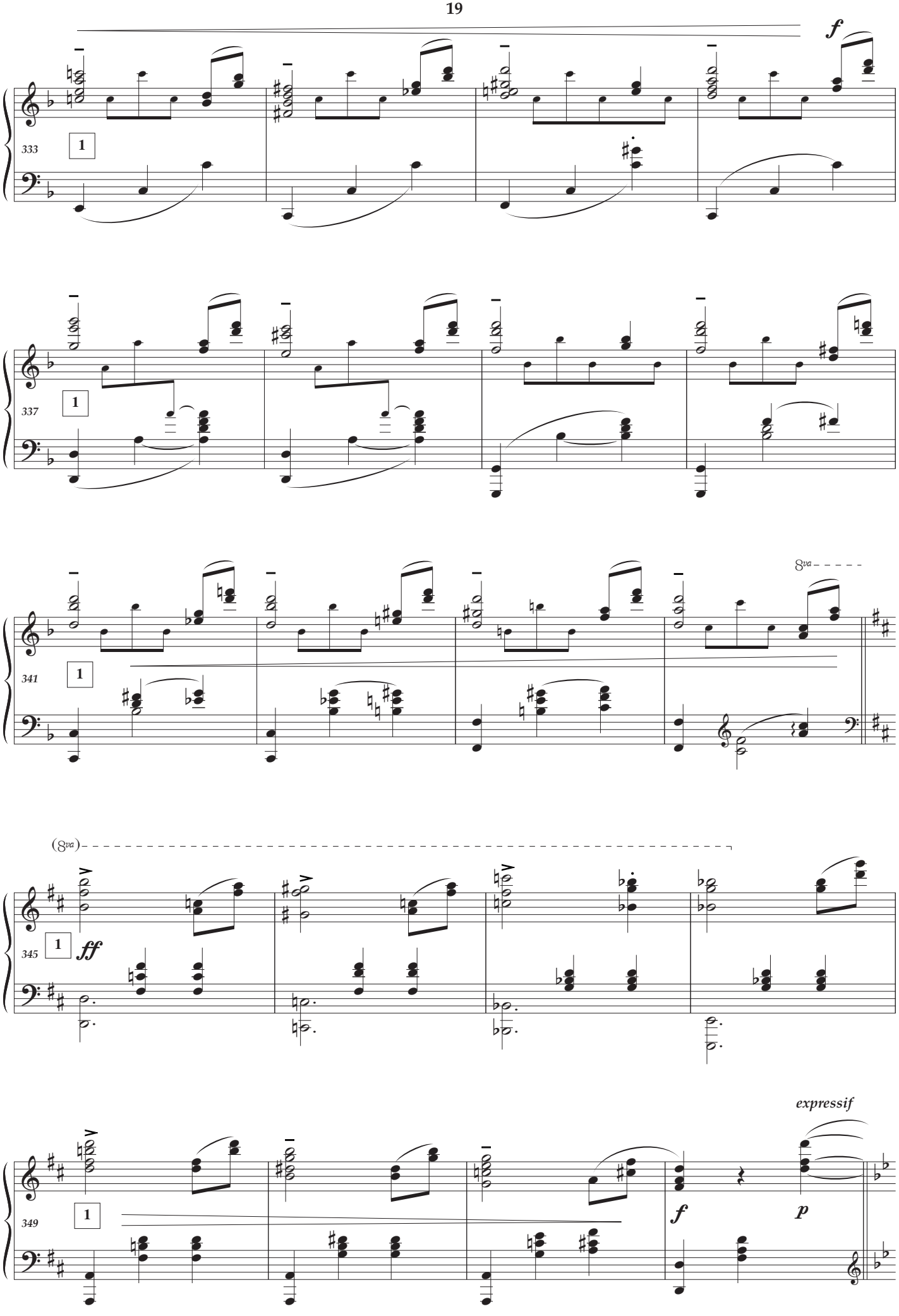

expressif
243
247
251
255
259
p
p

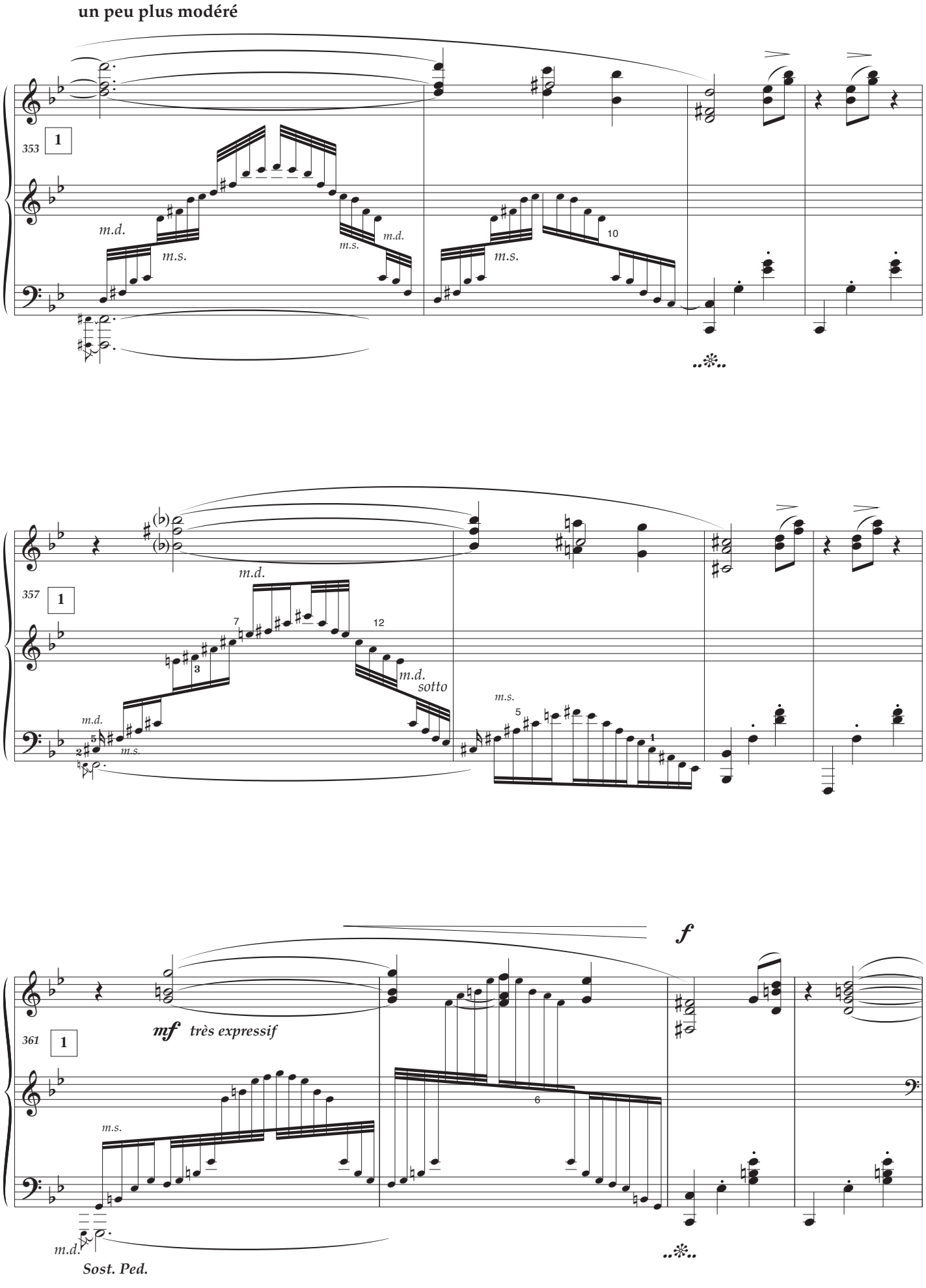

263
1
un peu en dehors
mf
267
1
p
271
1
mf
f
275
1

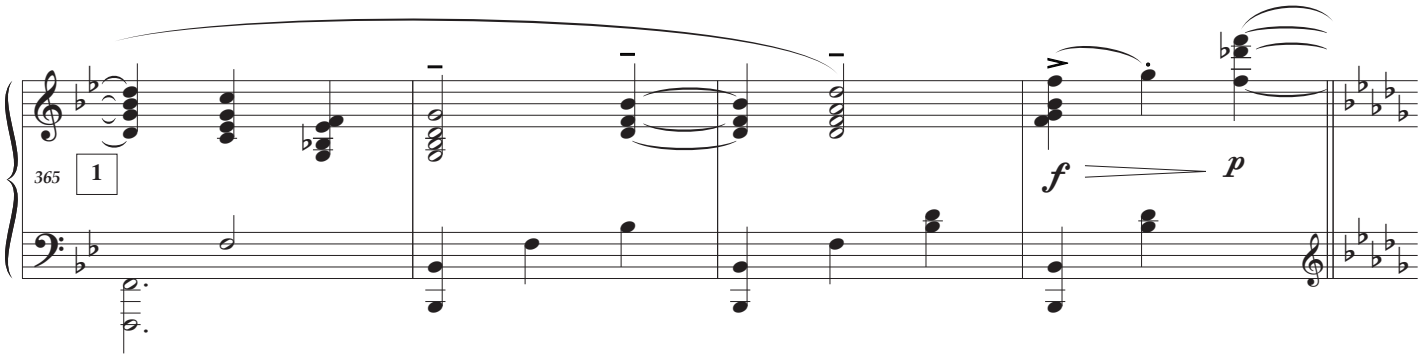

8va
ff
279
1
f
283
1
f
p
287
2
ff
1
f
p
291
1
f
p
295
8va
p
1
f
p
Ped.

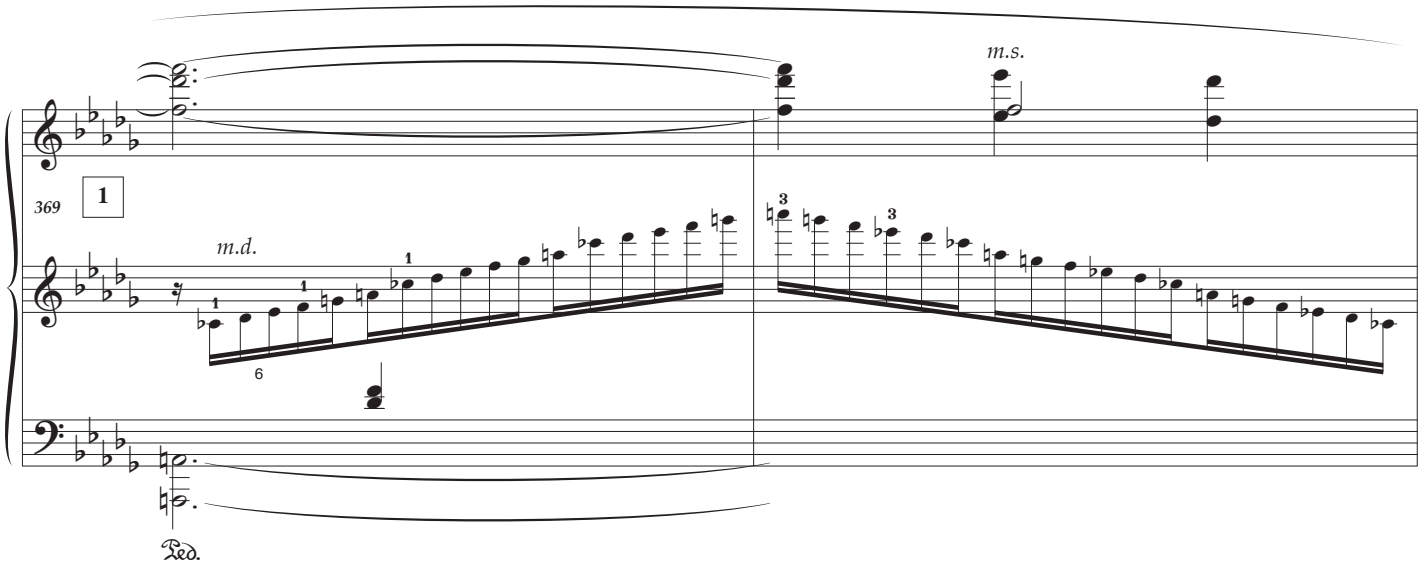

1
299
f
8va
302
mf
f
mf
(8va)
305
1
f
p
mf
308
p
1
p
soutenu
2
8vb
311
p
4
(8vb)

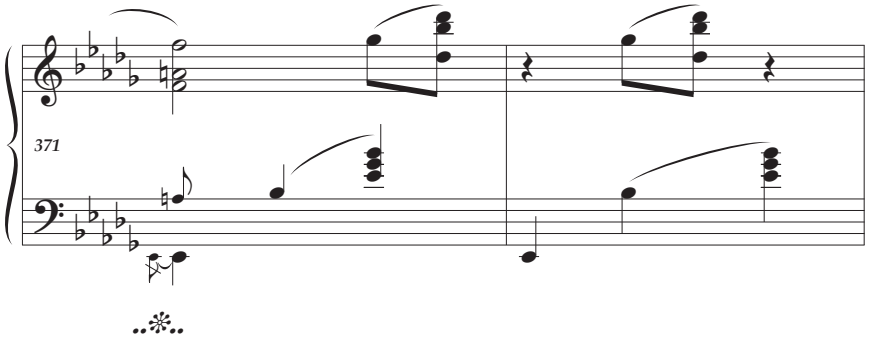

m.s.
313
1
317
poco
cresc.
m.s.
mf
321
325
p
329


f
333
1
337
1
8va
341
1
(8va)
345
1
ff
expressif
349
1
f
p


un peu plus modéré
353
1
m.d.
m.s.
m.d.
m.s.
m.s.
10
357
1
m.d.
7
12
3
m.d.
sotto
m.d.
5
2
m.s.
m.s.
5
1
361
1
mf très expressif
m.s.
6
f
m.d.
Sost. Ped.


365
1
f
p


369
1
m.s.
m.d.
Ped.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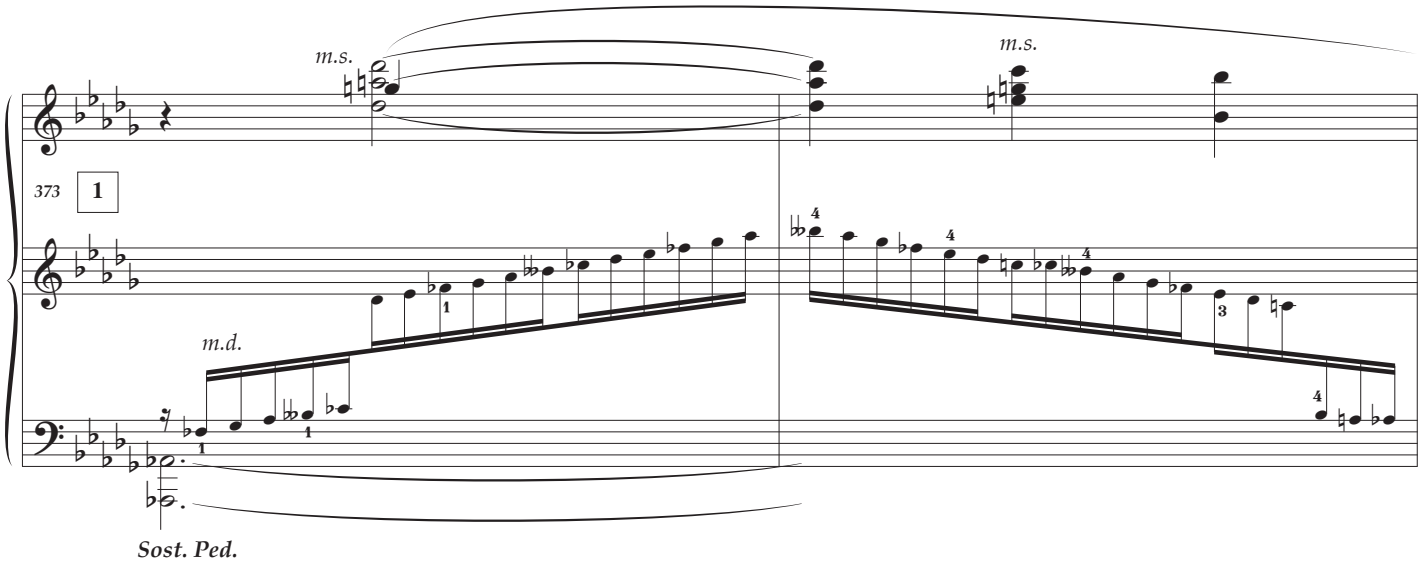
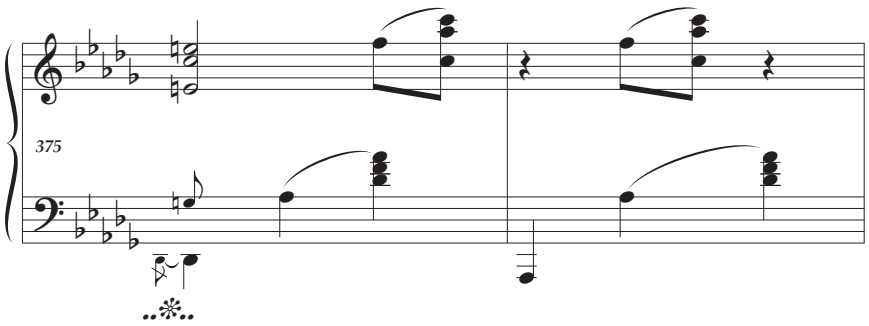

373
1
m.s.
m.s.
m.d.
Sost. Ped.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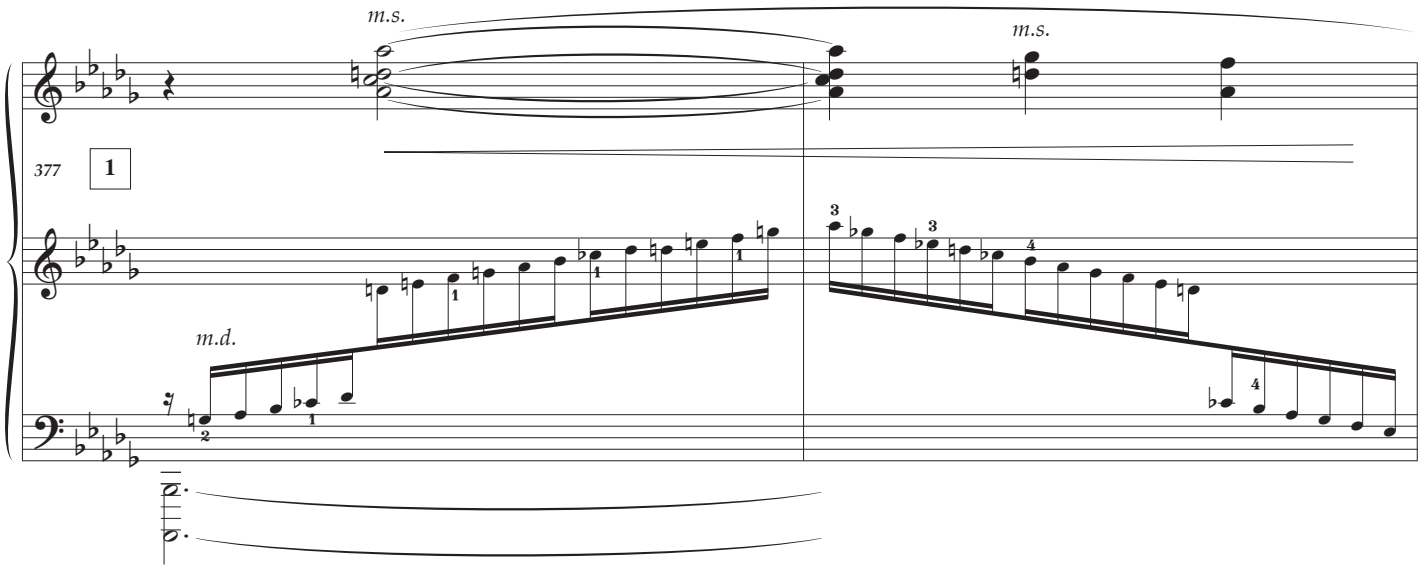
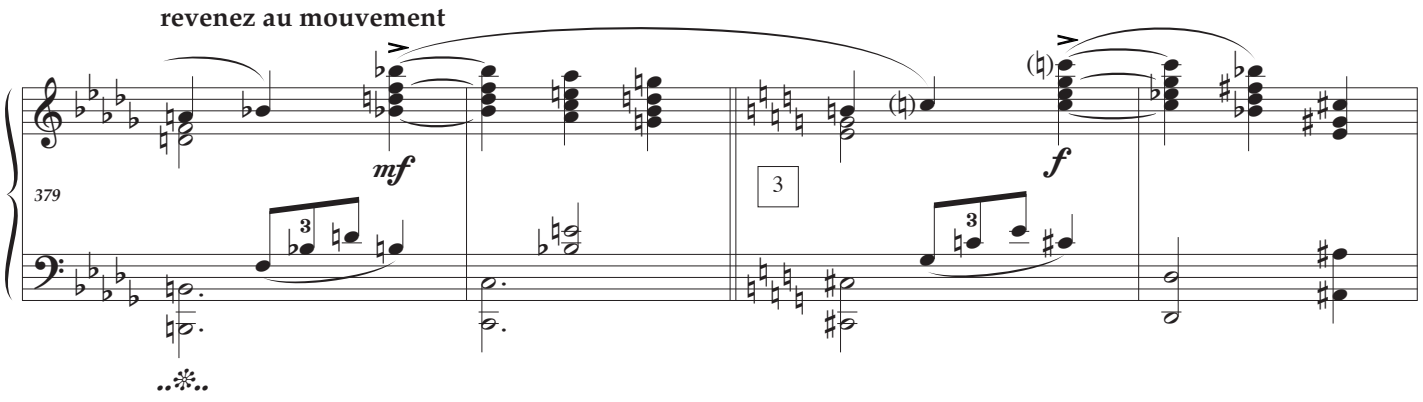
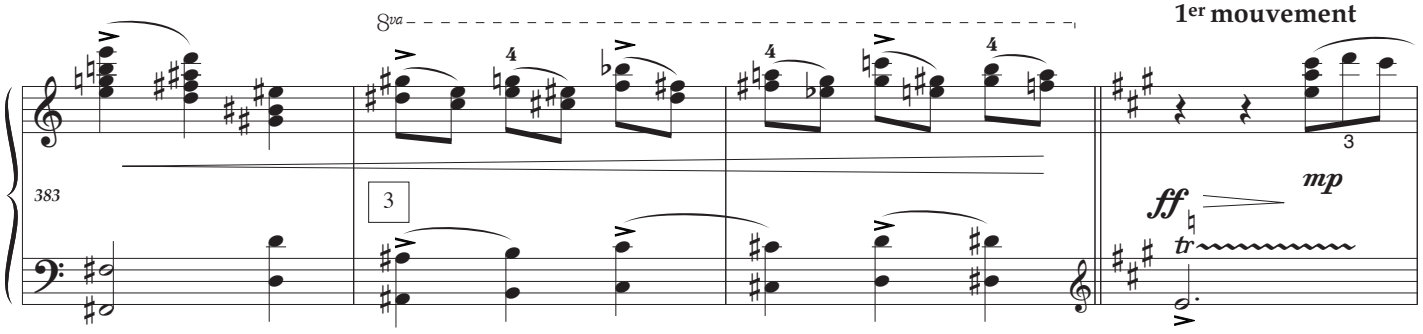
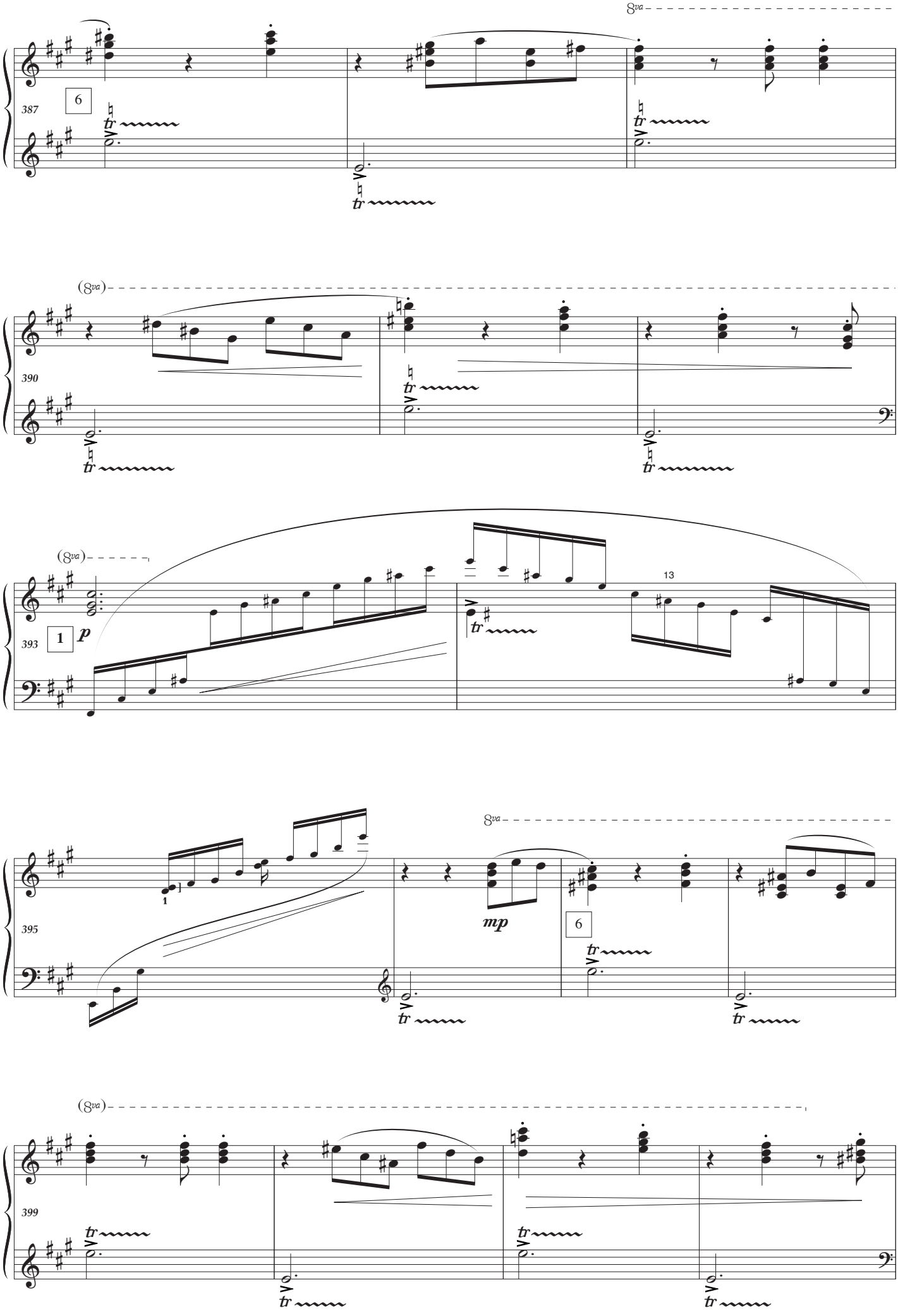
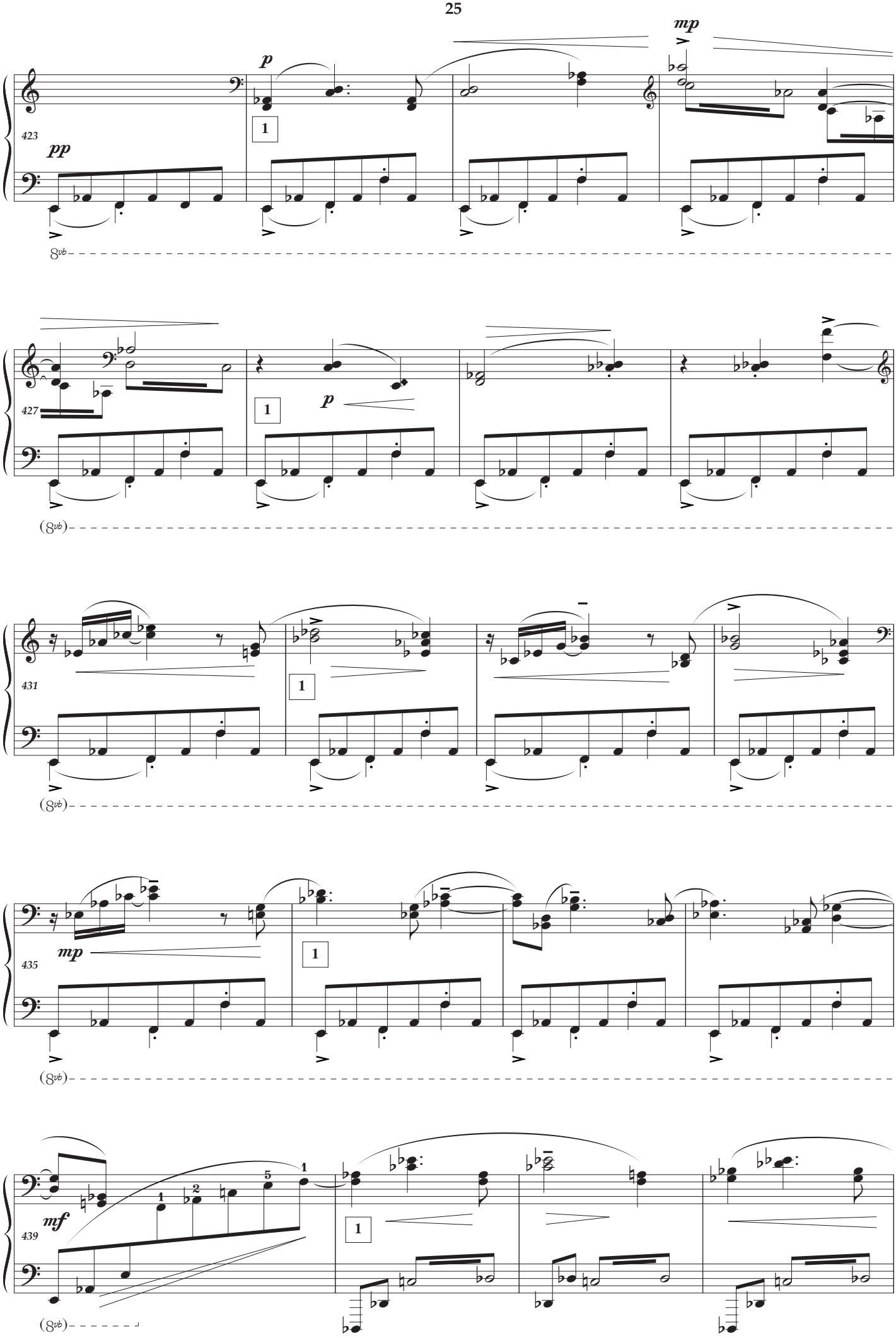

m.s.
m.s.
377
1
m.d.
Sost. Ped.

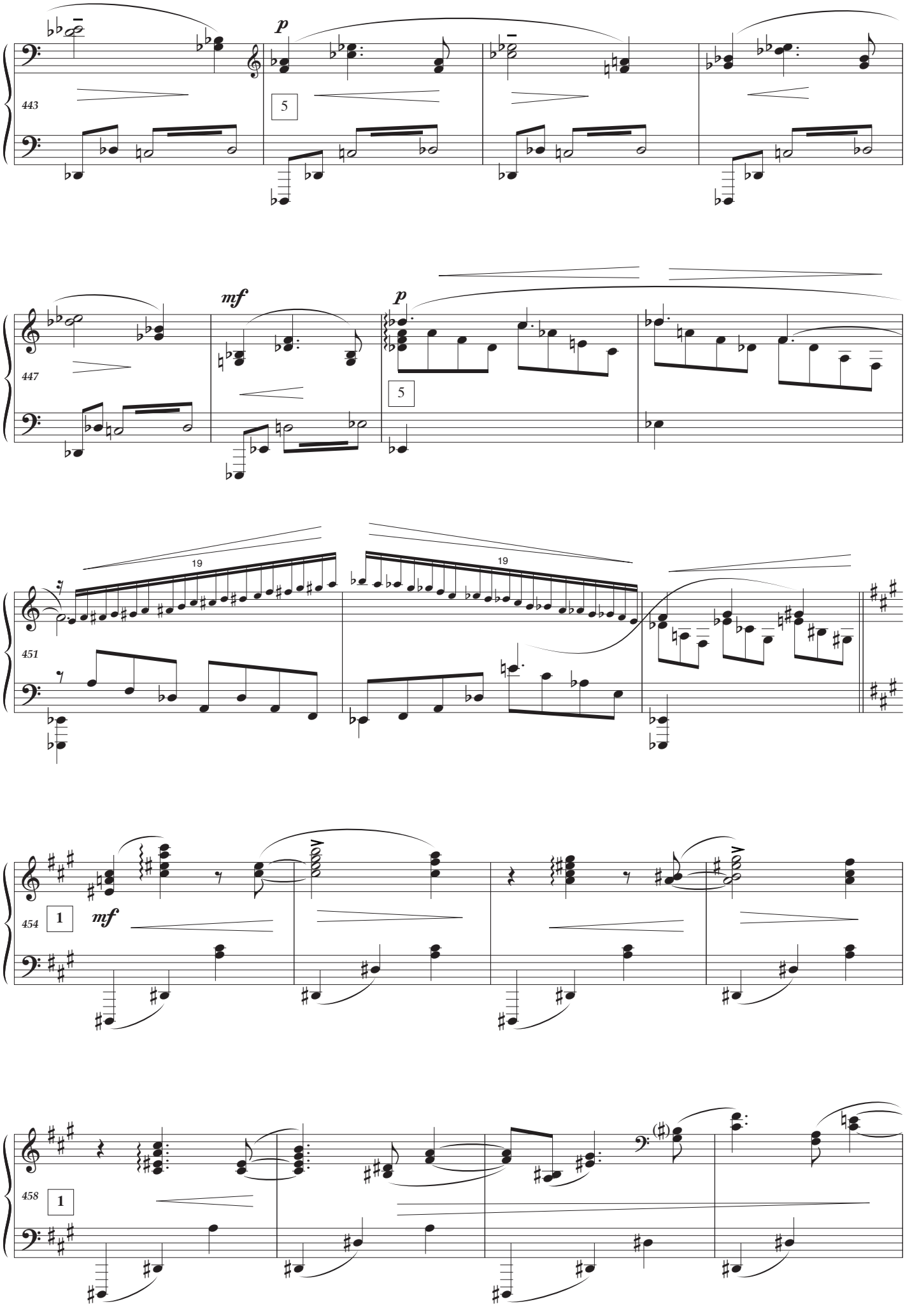

revenez au mouvement
379
mf
f
3

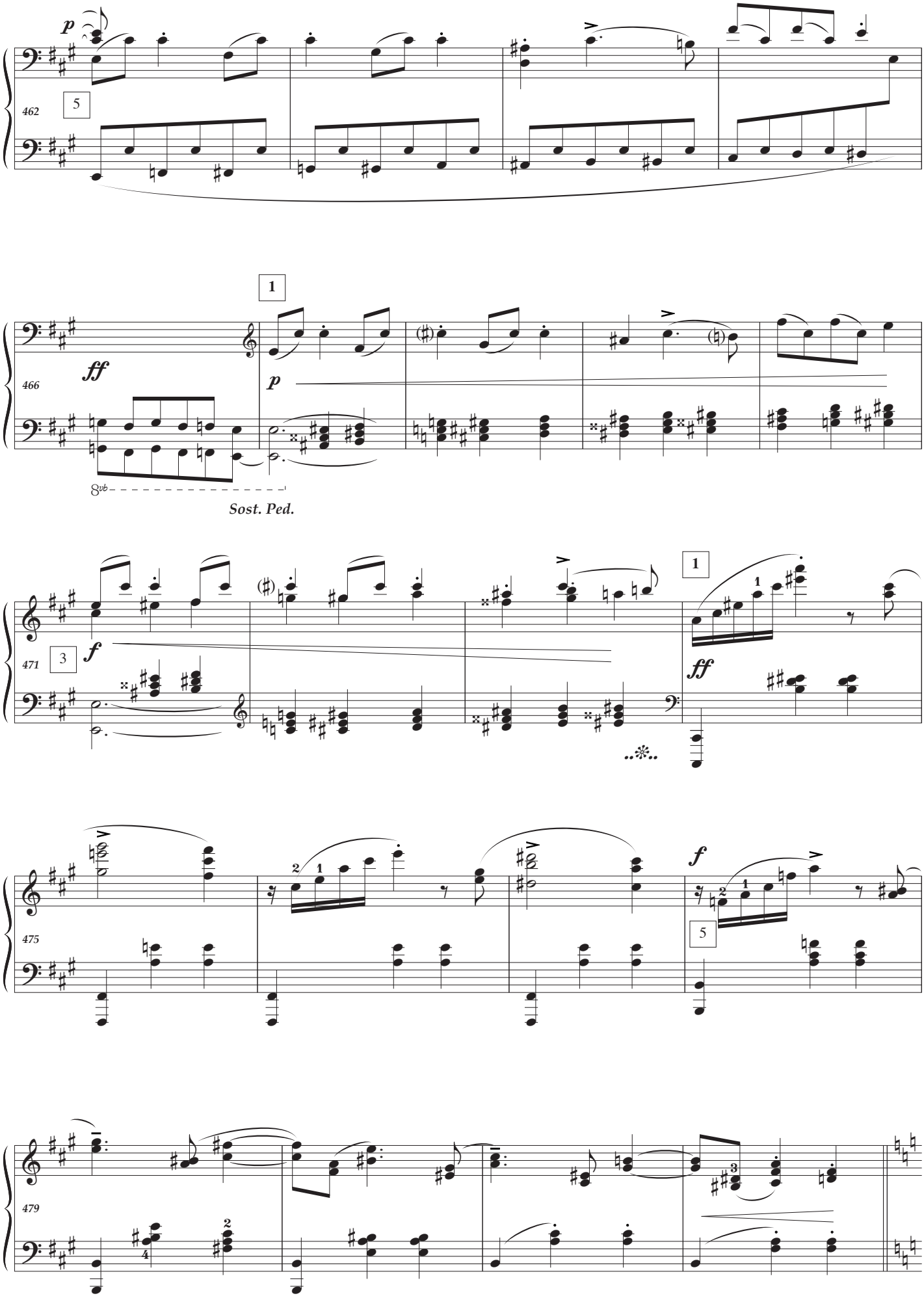

8va
1er mouvement
383
3
ff
mp
tr

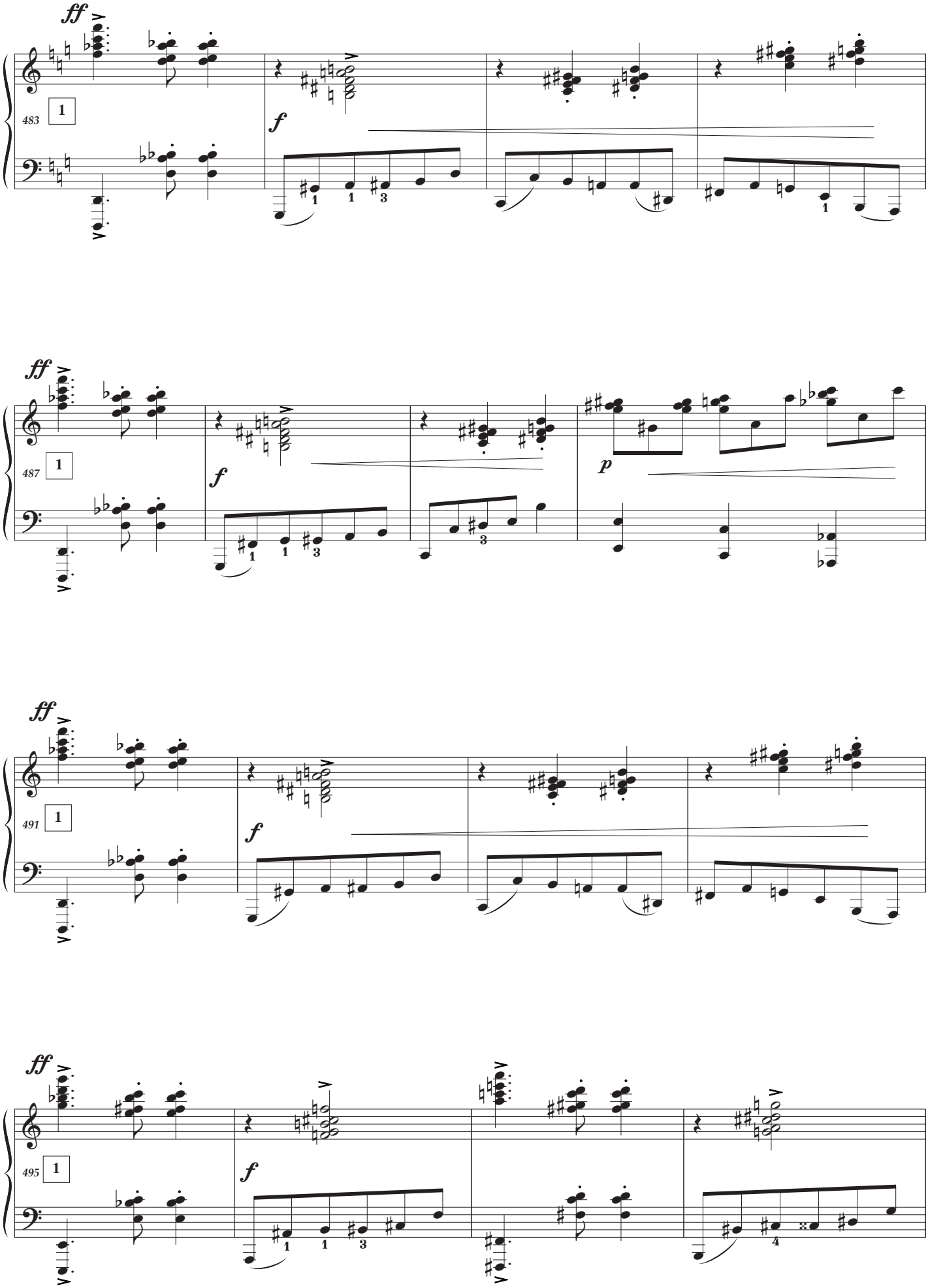

8va
387
6
tr
(8va)
390
tr
(8va)
393
1
p
13
tr
8va
395
1
mp
6
tr
(8va)
399
tr

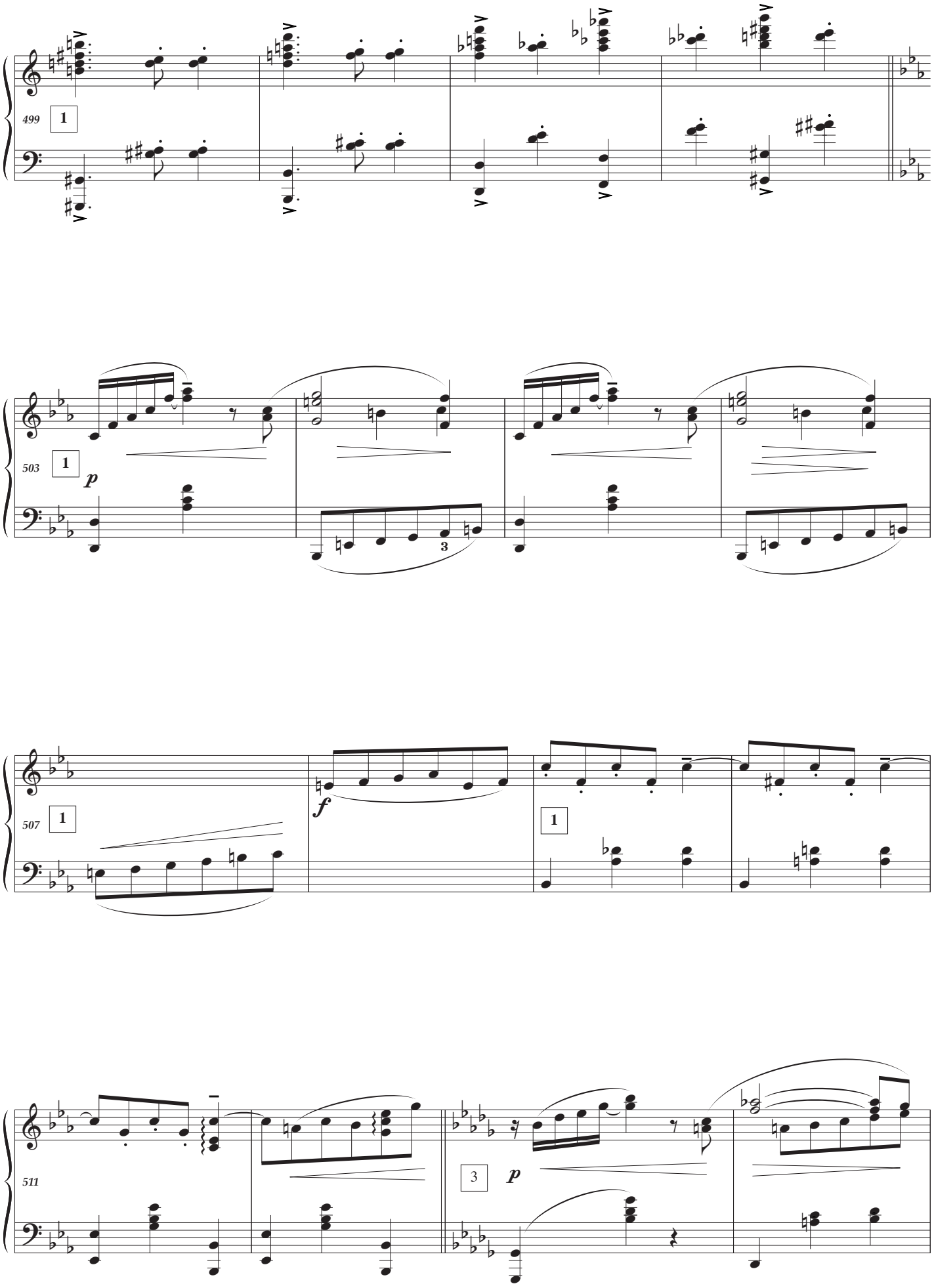
403
1
13
15
8va
mf
406
1
tr
8va
411
1
tr
8va
415
1
sempre cresc.
8va
419
1
ff
m.s.
m.d.
m.d.
tr


423
pp
p
mp
8vb
427
p
(8vb)
431
(8vb)
435
mp
(8vb)
439
mf
(8vb)


443
p
5
447
mf
p
5
451
19
19
454
1
mf
458
1


462
5
466
1
ff
p
8vb
Sost. Ped.
471
3
f
1
ff
475
f
5
479


ff
483
1
f
ff
487
1
f
p
ff
491
1
f
ff
495
1
f


499
1
503
1
p
3
507
1
f
1
511
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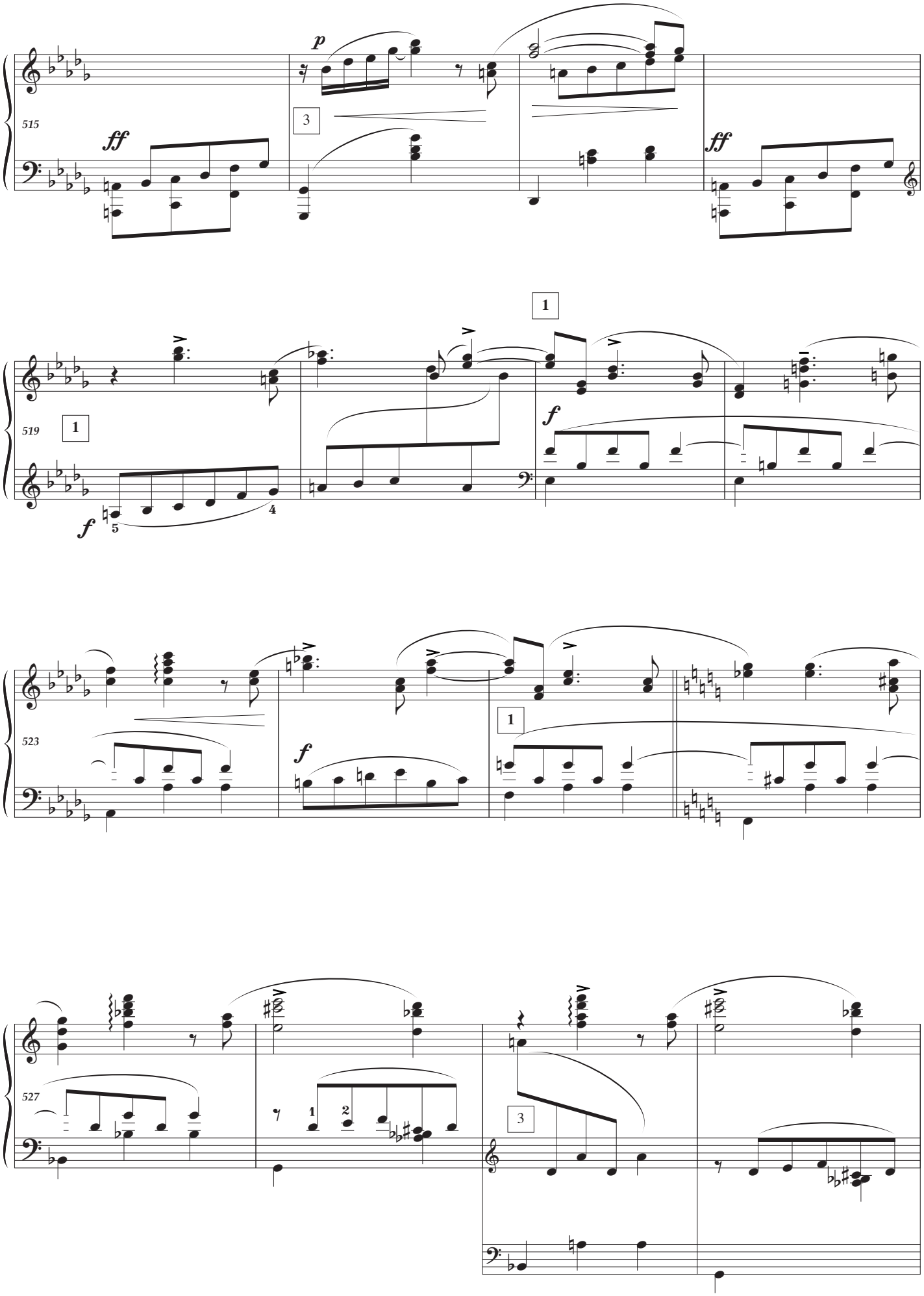
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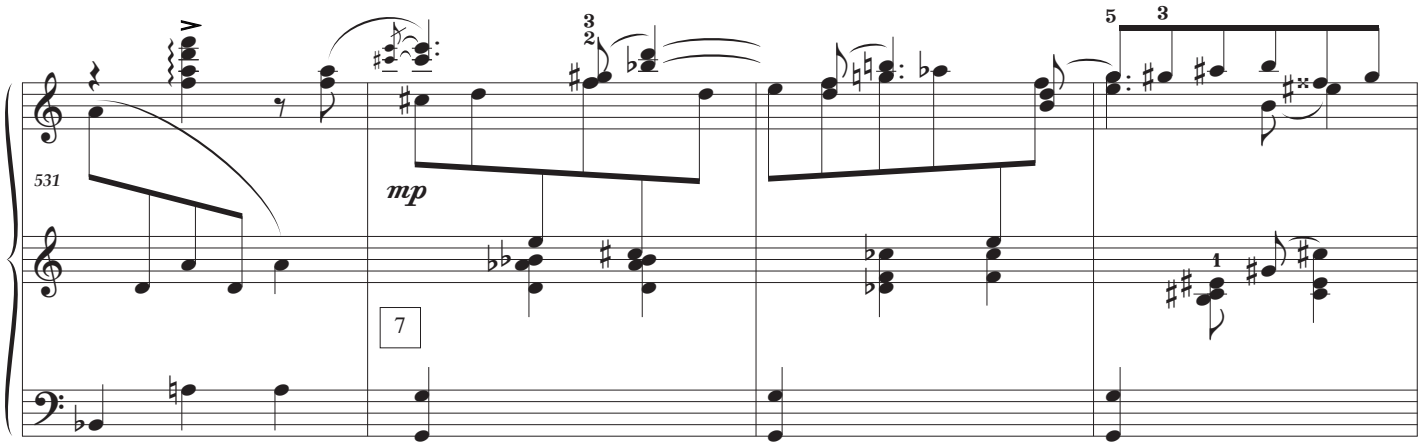
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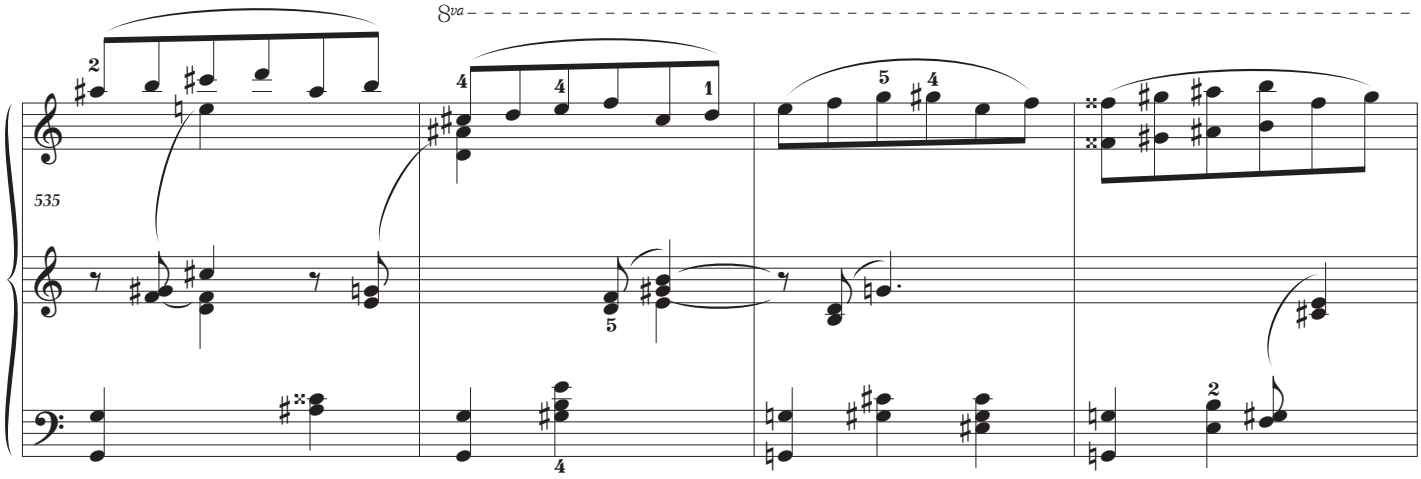
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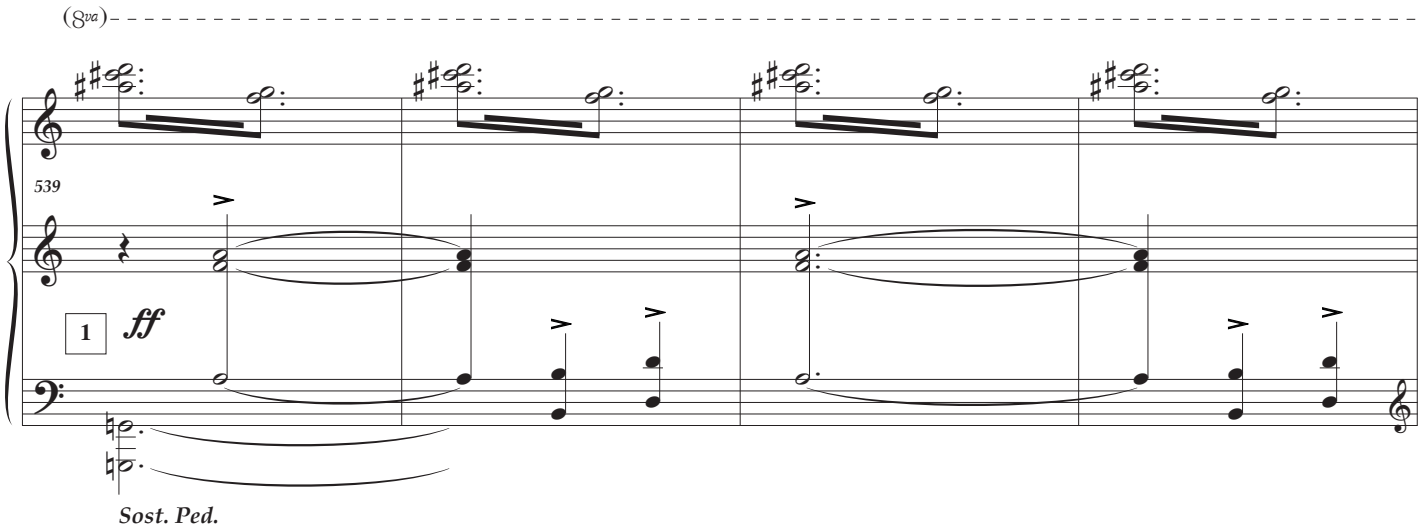
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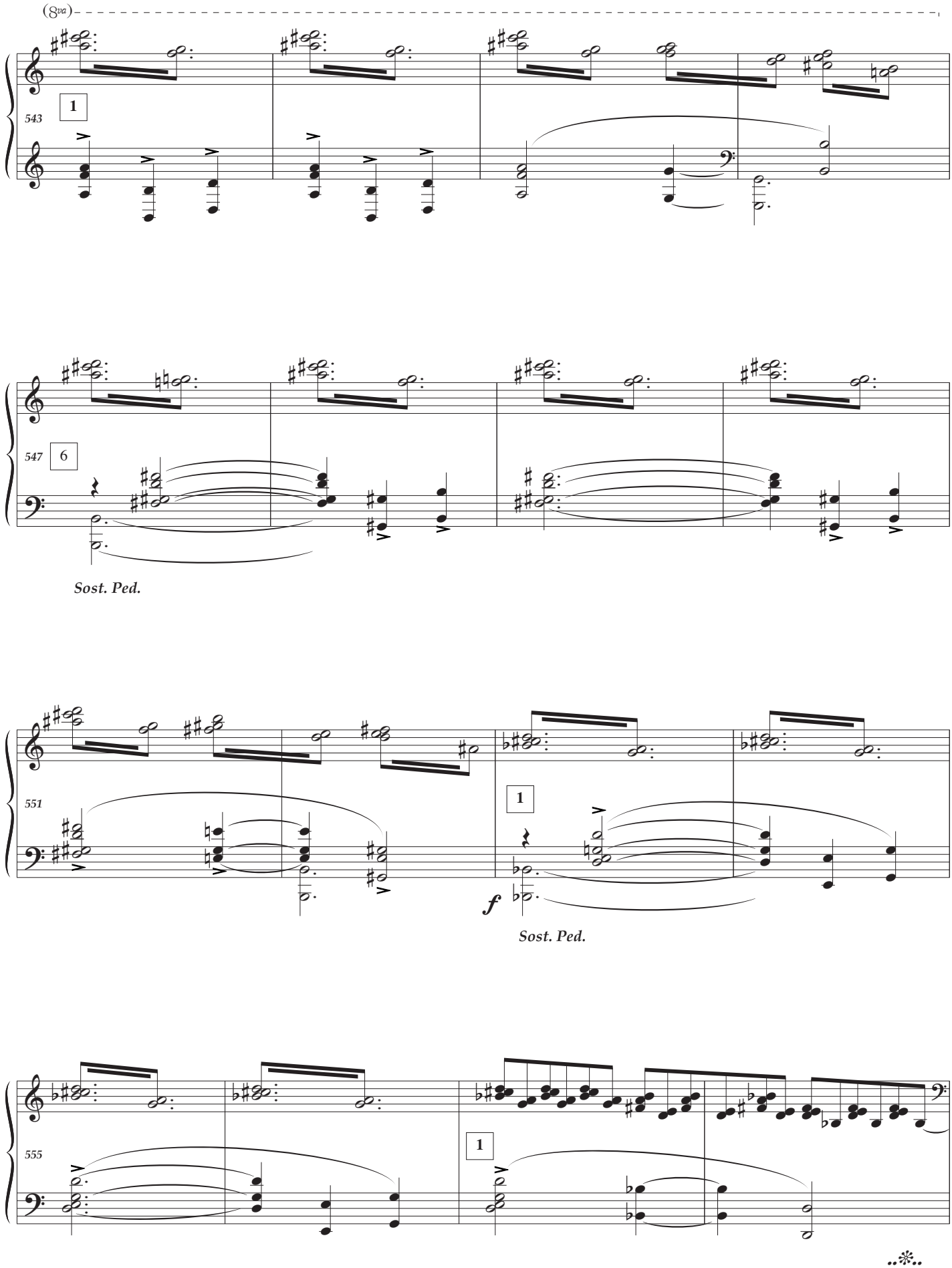
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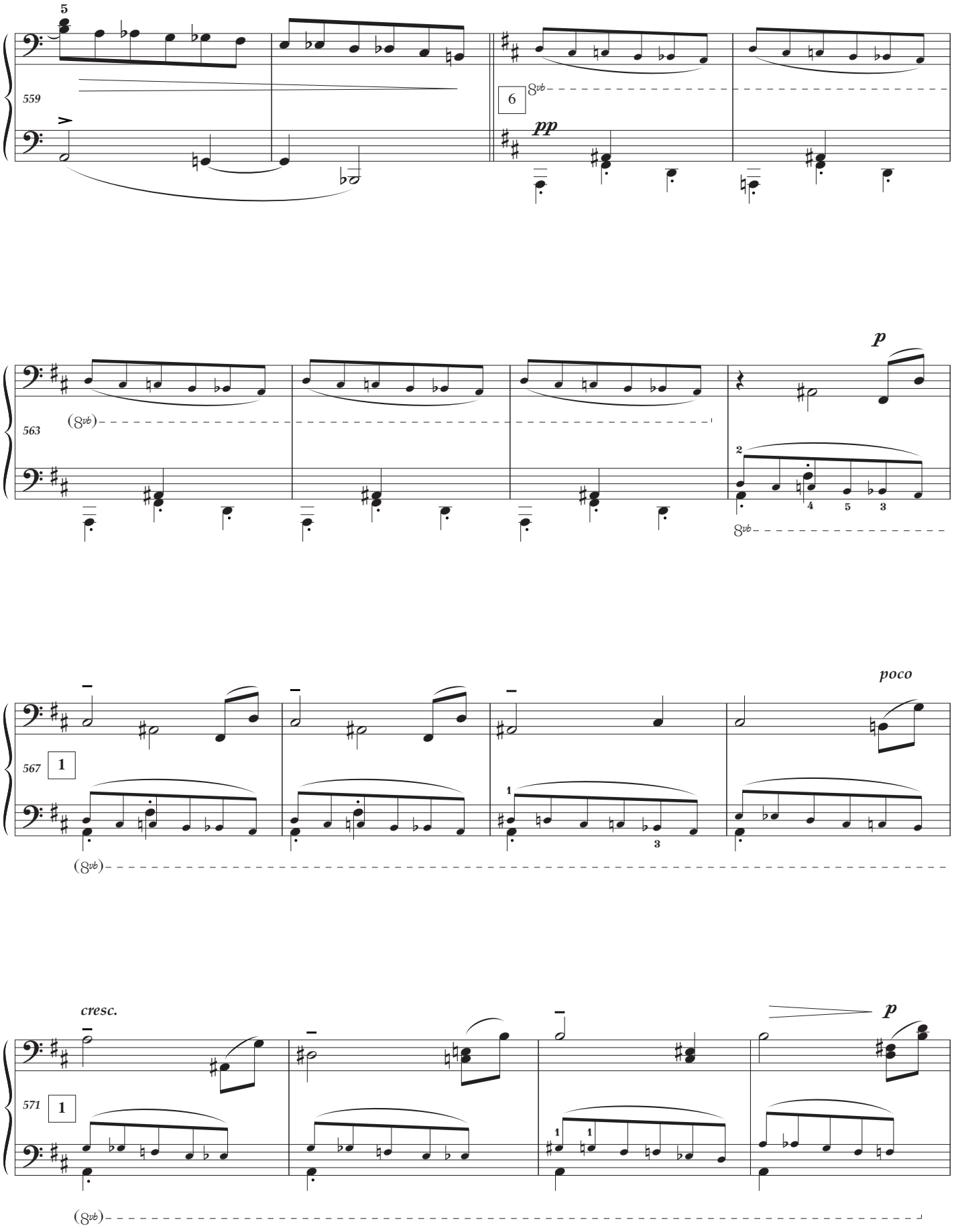
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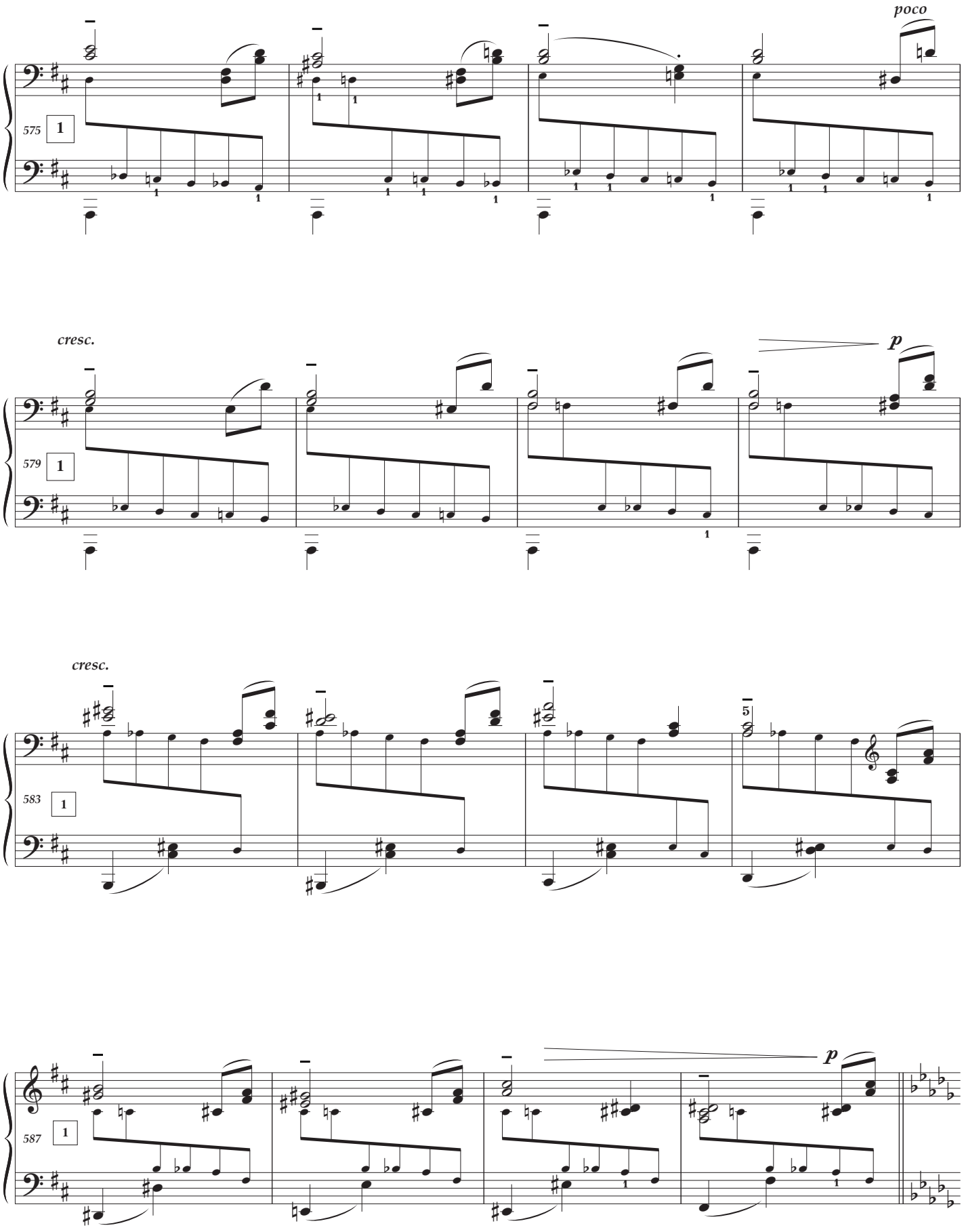
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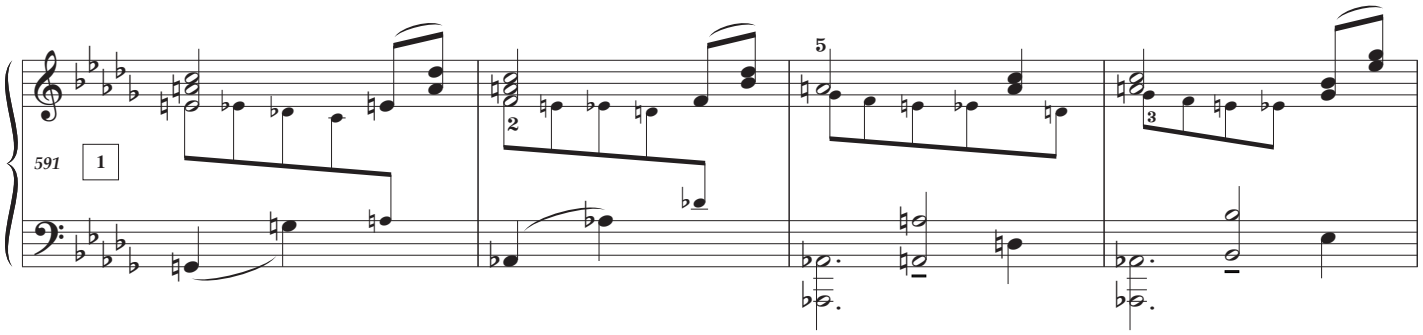
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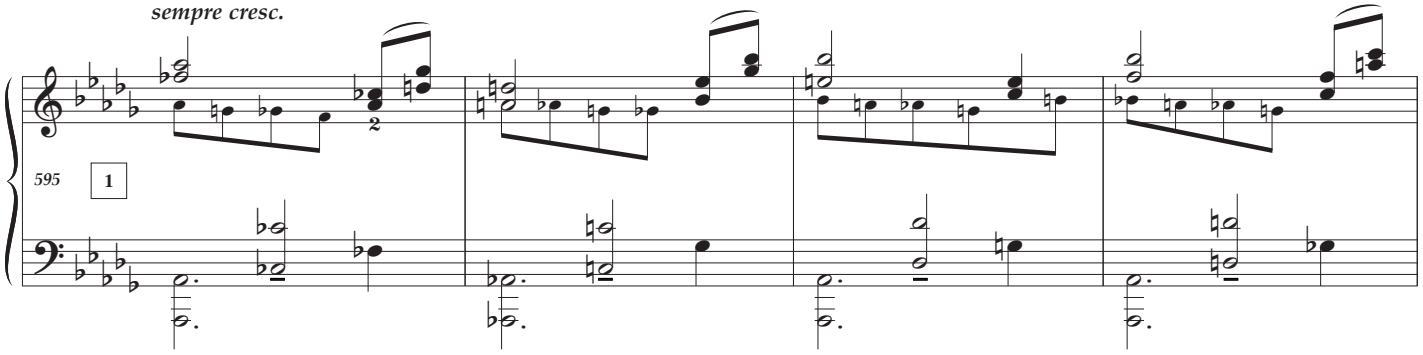
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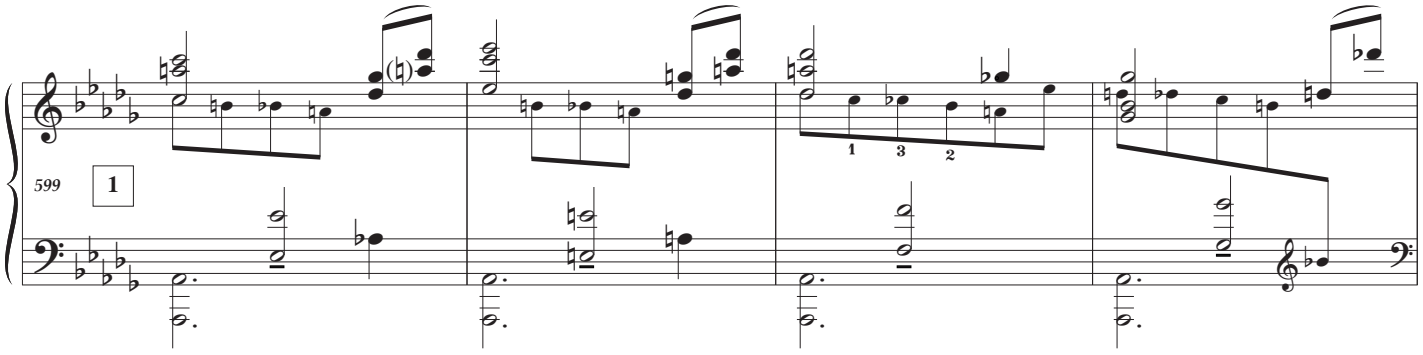
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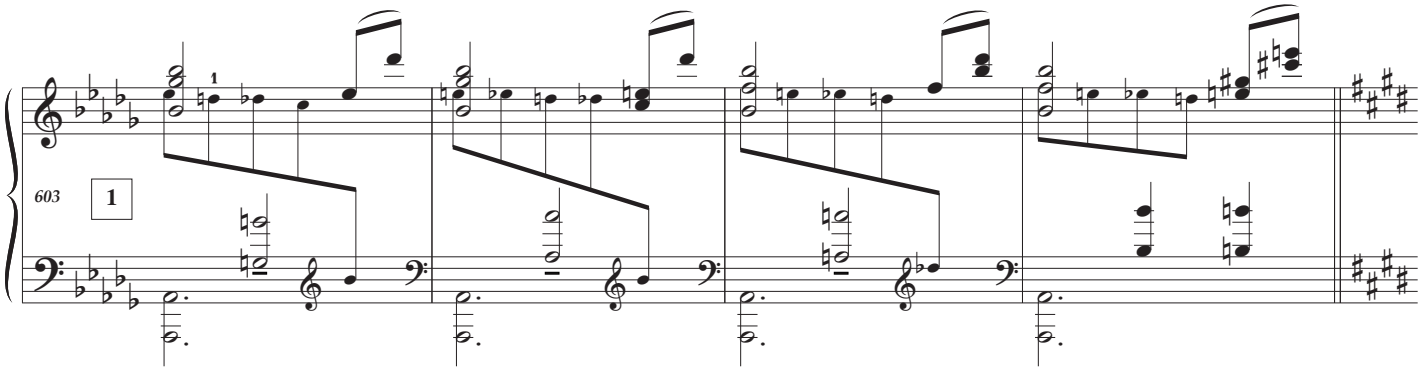
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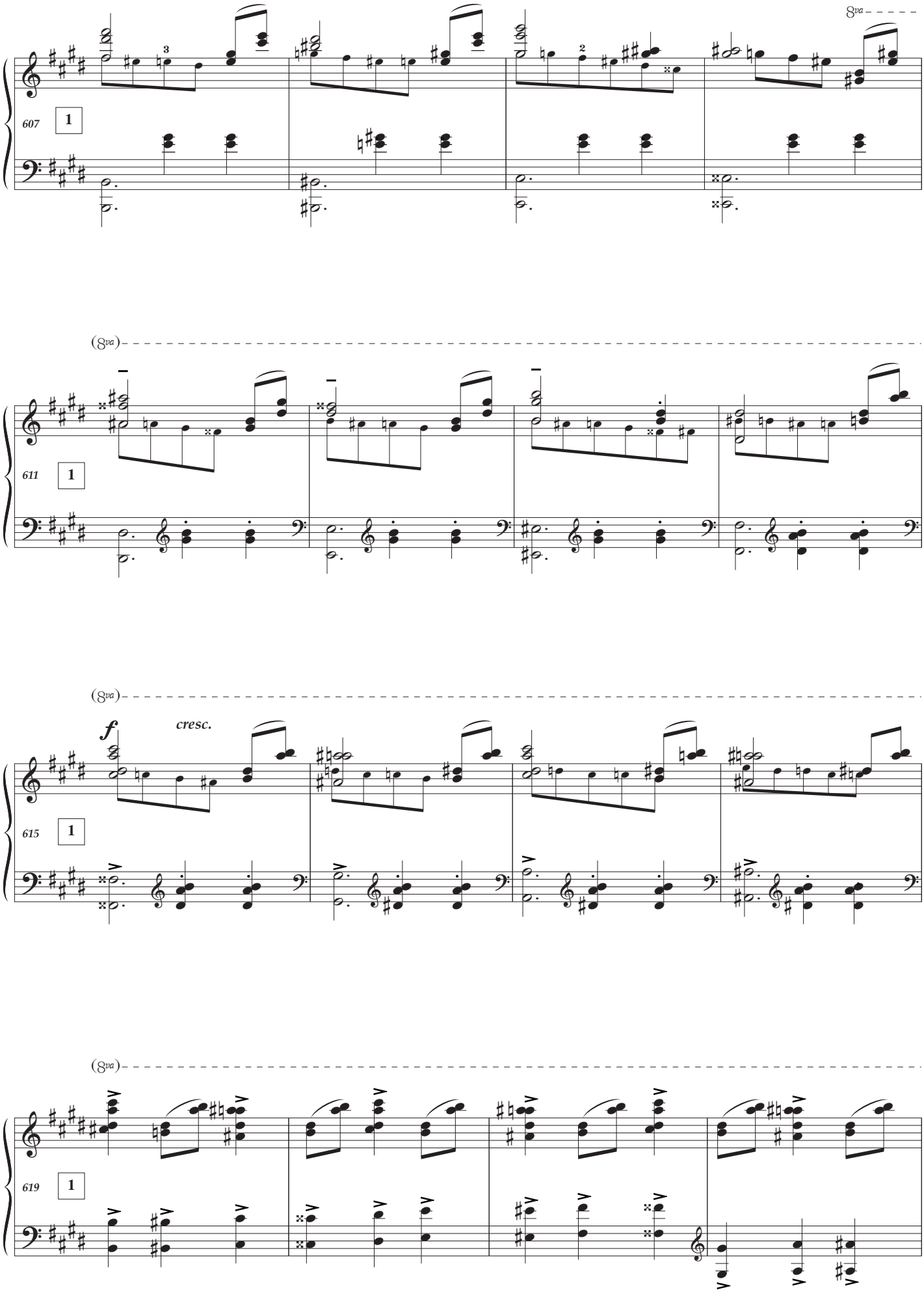
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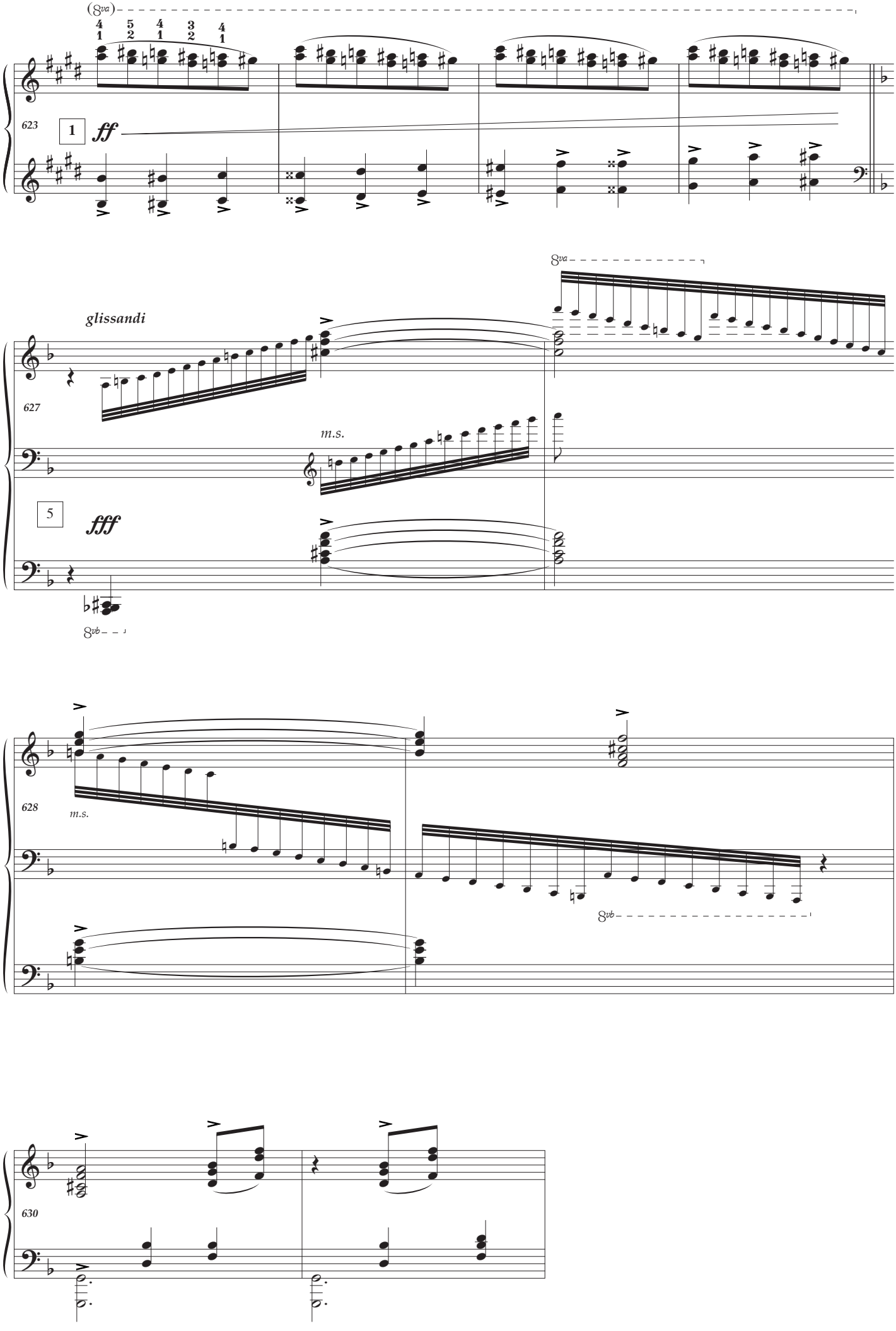
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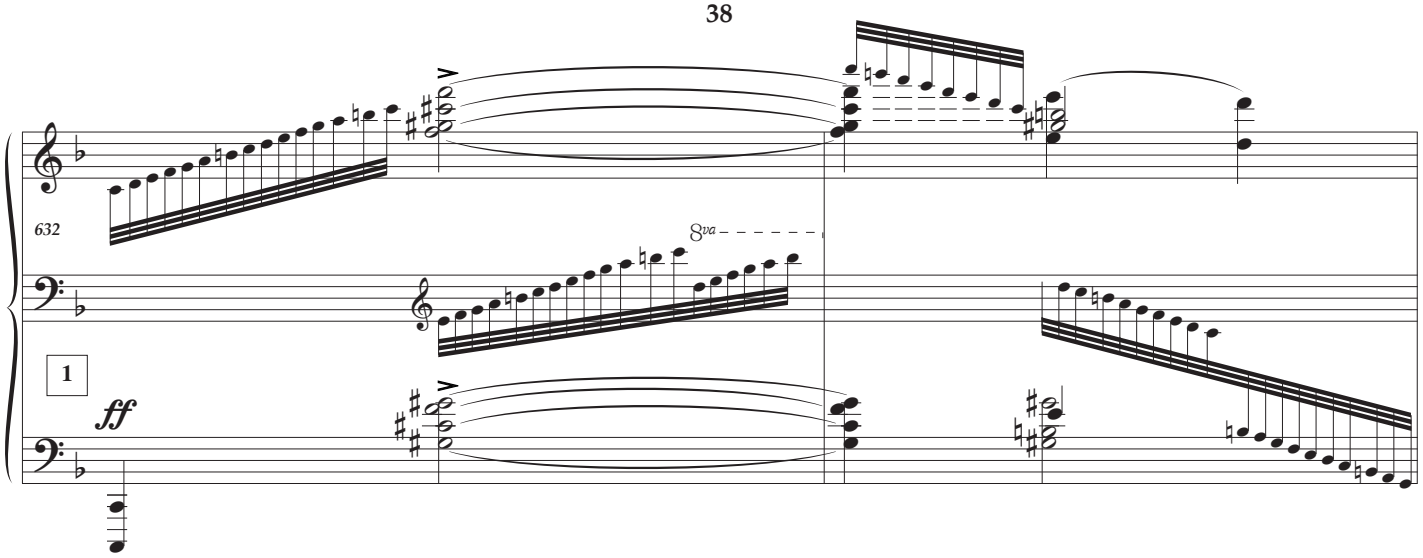
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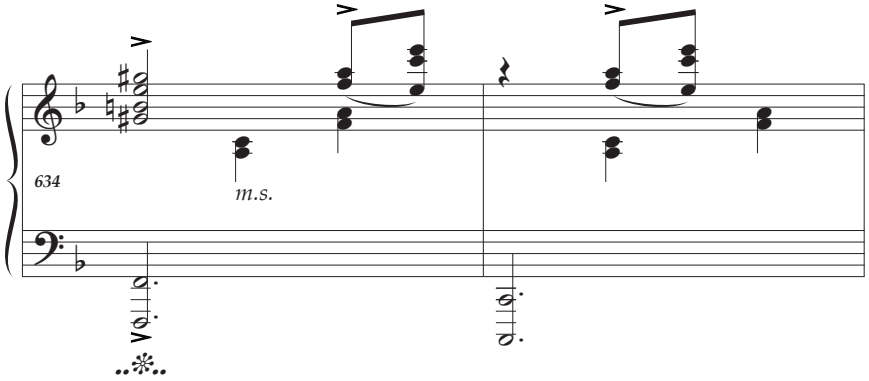
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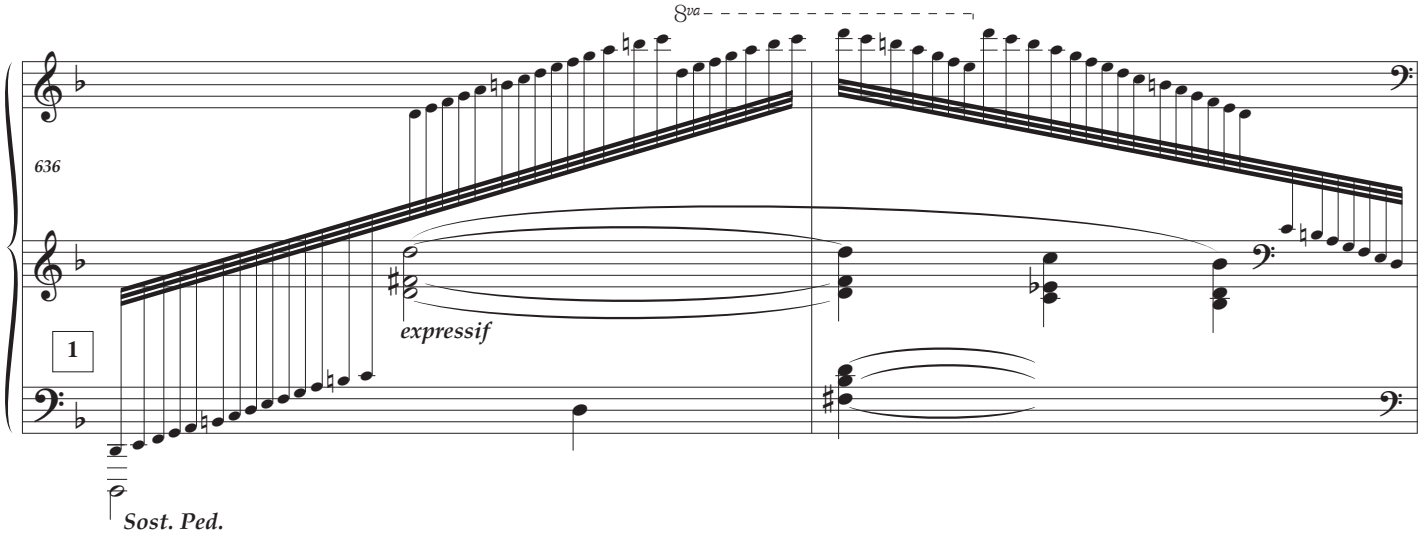
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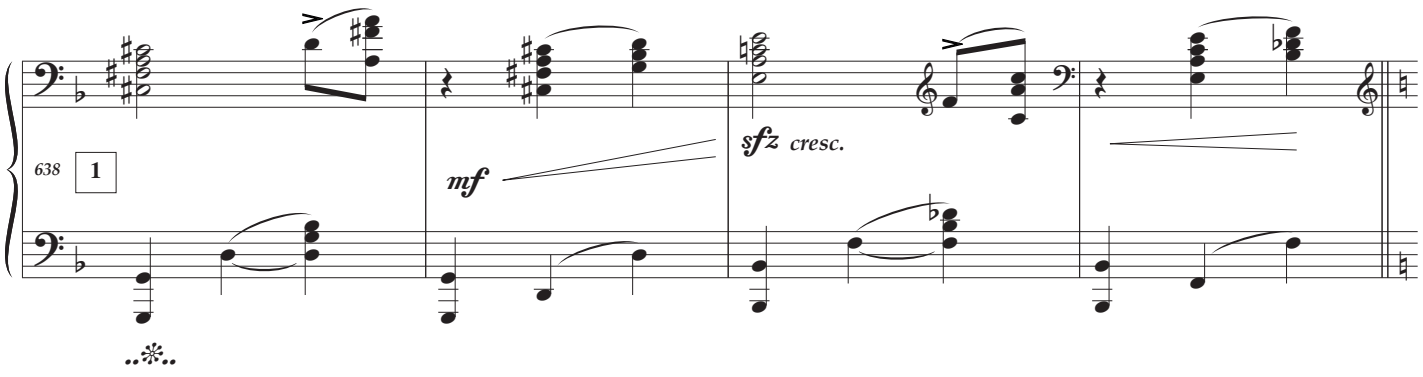
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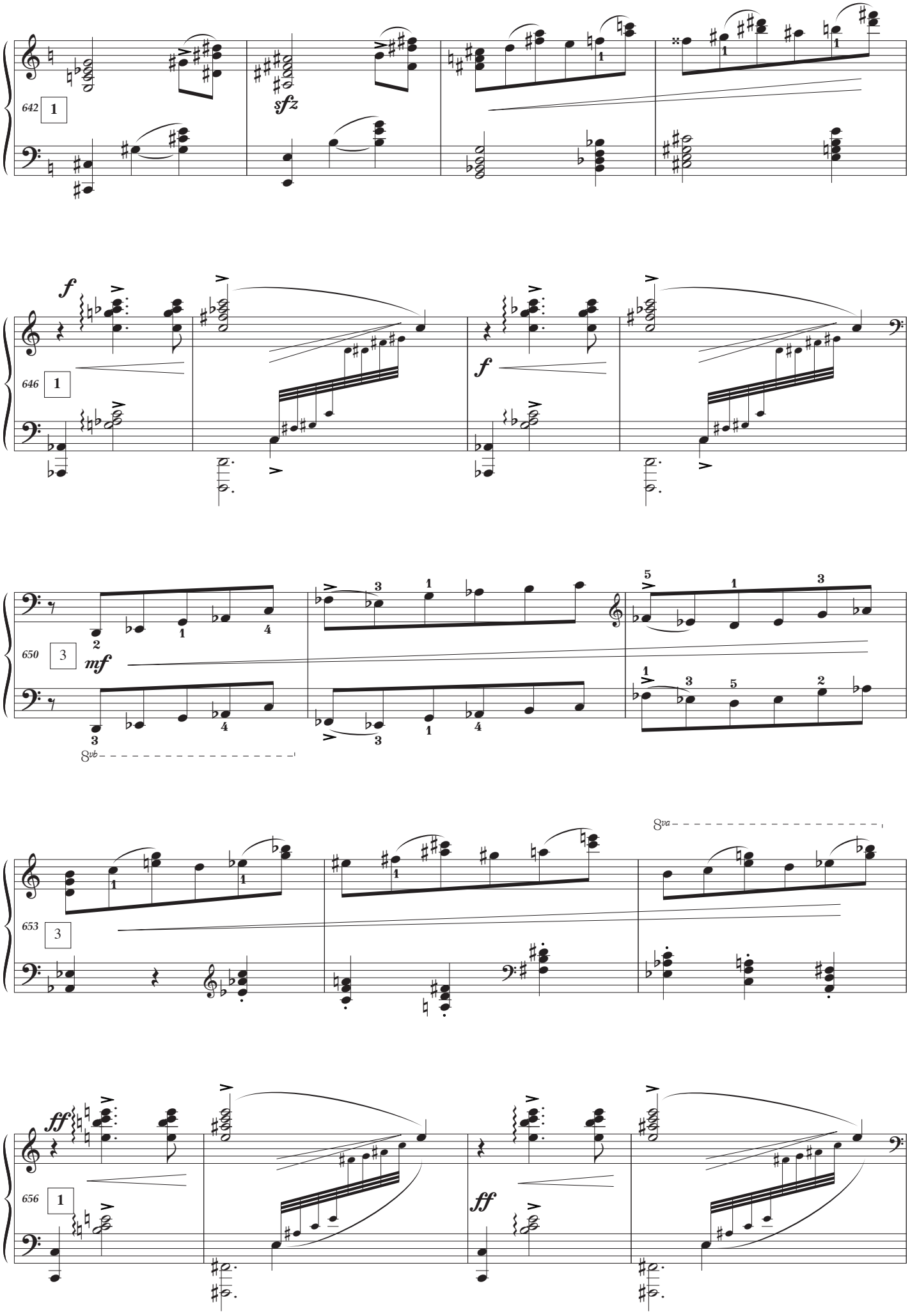
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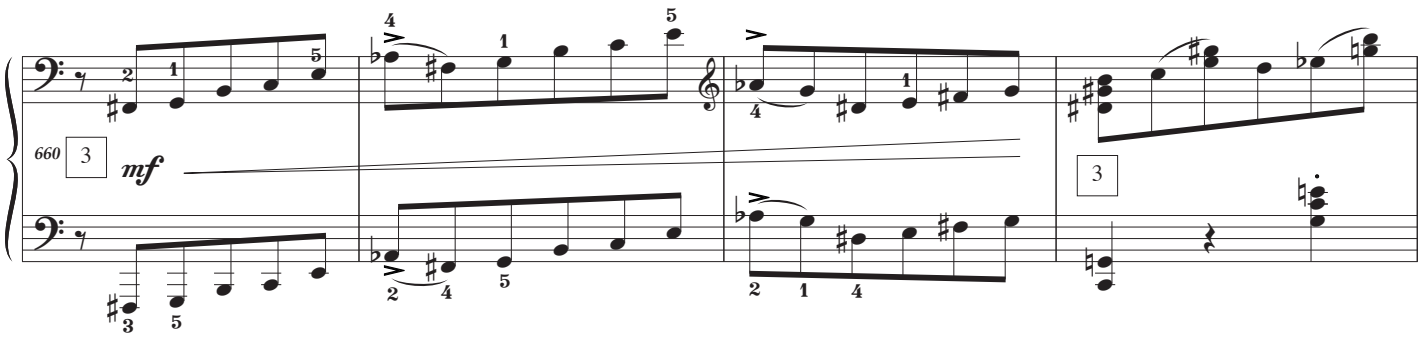
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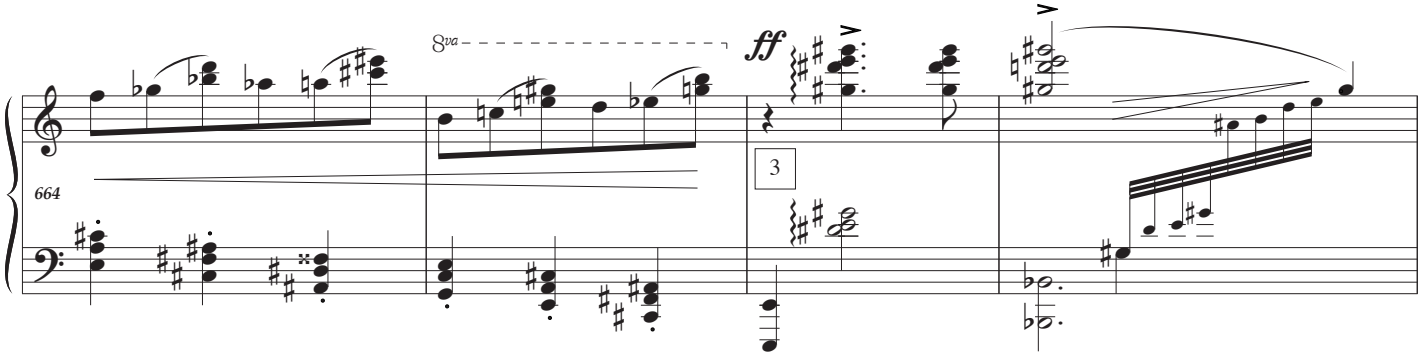
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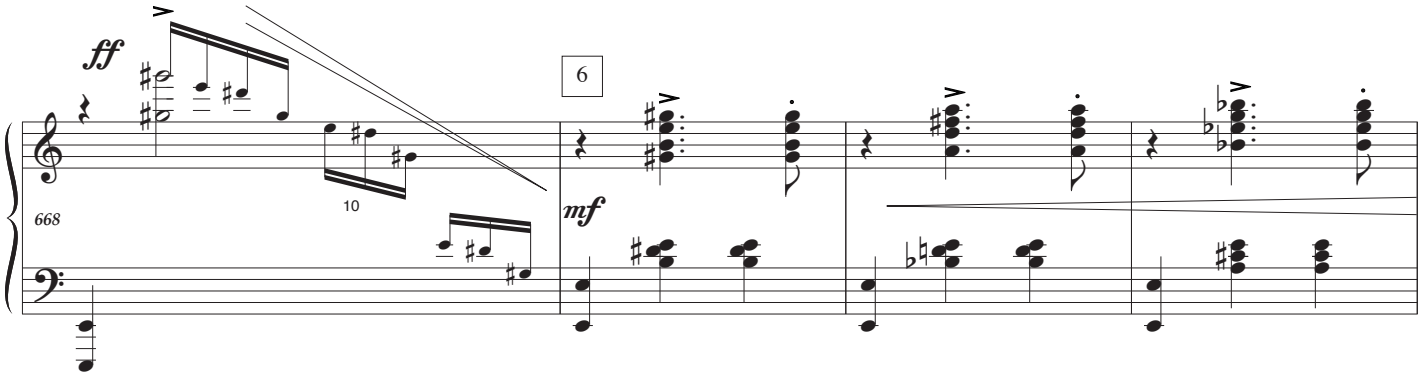
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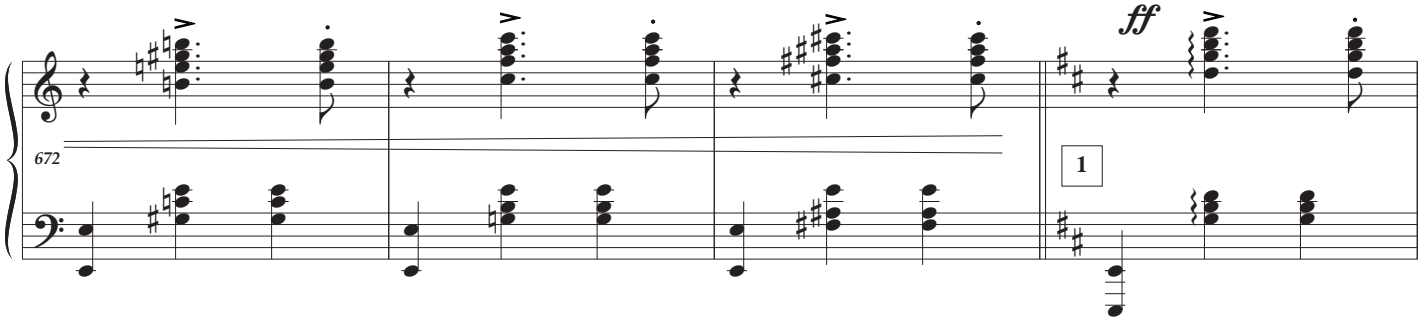
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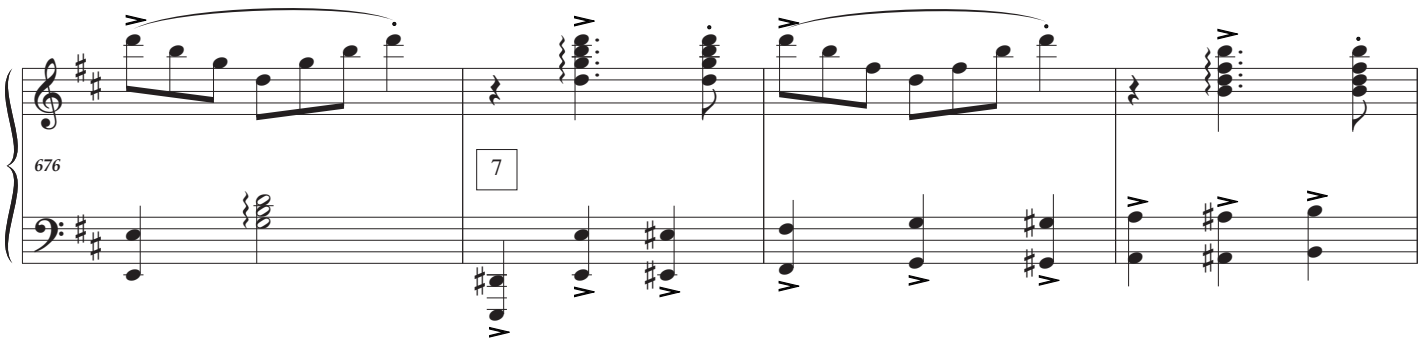
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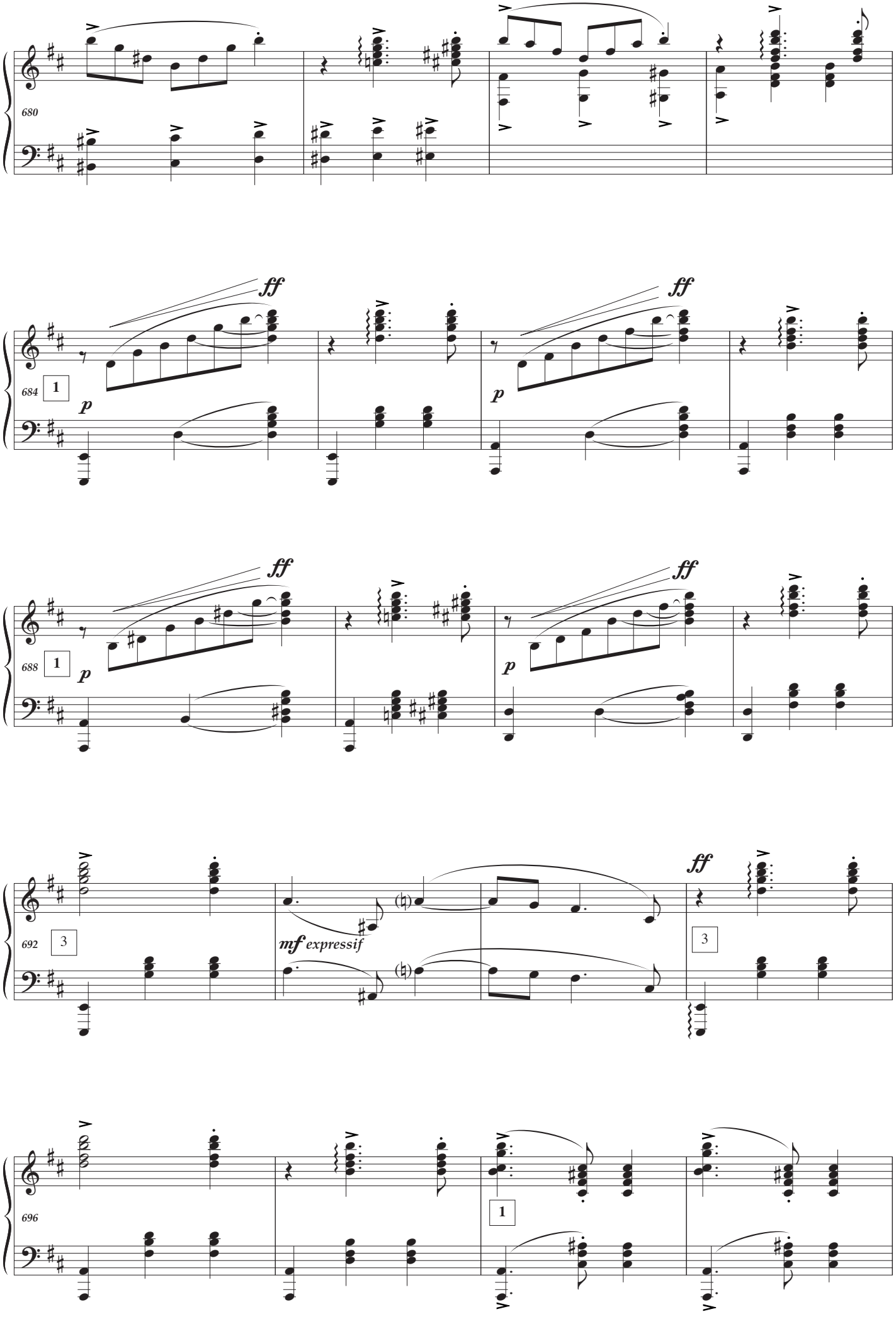
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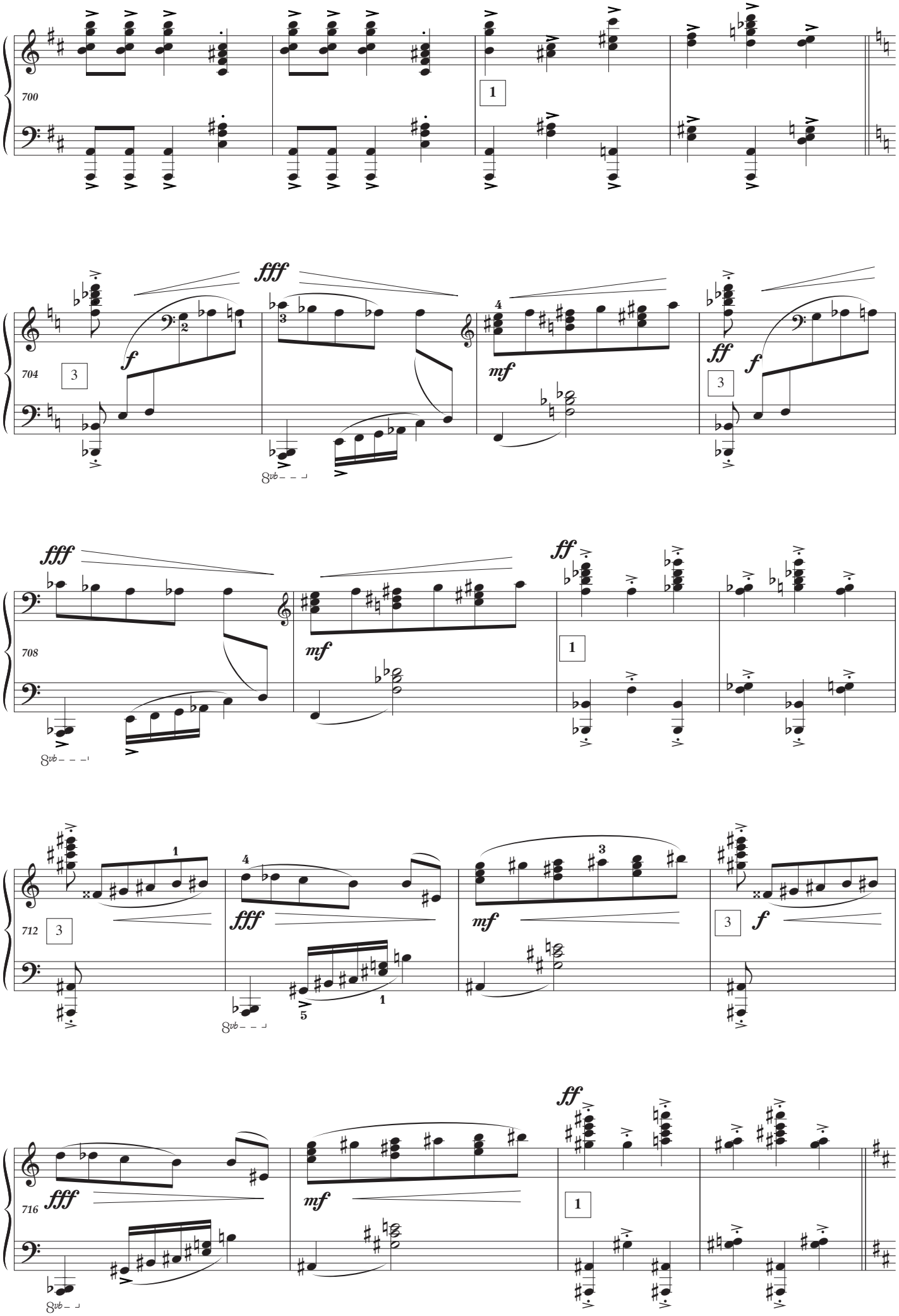
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