To my Aunt Vera Fonaroff

12ME
487 c 6

Keyboard Karikatures

Foreword

The search for a title for this group of sketches revealed a gap in English nomenclature. There seems to be no word midway between 'portrait' and 'caricature,' although the composer recognizes that a 'caricature' may range from delicately accentuated interpretations to burlesque exaggerations. It is evident at first glance that these piano pieces are not of the latter order of grotesques; but the composer does not wish them to be read as 'portraits' since that would connote a too ambitious assumption of the manner of the subjects.

We are rather to imagine a pianist improvising after a contemplation of these masters in an expression of his reactions to them, utilizing their manner only to pay homage to their greatness. Each composition is quite simply a *jeu d'esprit* in which a sense of humor combines with a respectful appreciation. The result is a not too broad exaggeration of Rachmaninoff's lowering moods, of Godowsky's zealous contrapuntal pencil, and of Bachaus' superb disdain of technical difficulties. If in addition they prove to be compositions interesting and amusing in themselves, the composer, like his colleagues of pen and pencil, will be grateful that his choice fell on happy subjects.

These pieces deserve a word of praise for their pianistic qualities. Of late years the word *pianistic* has not been well received in the best musical circles because it has been used to describe such compositions as lend themselves amiably to a superficial keyboard facility with a corresponding sacrifice of musical content. It should be employed, as it is in this case, to describe compositions which are so well conceived in terms of the piano that the instrument yields its maximum of sonority, brilliancy, and color, without exacting an athletic contortionism beyond the comforts of a legitimate technique.

New York, October 1st, 1925 — Henry Bellamann

J.F.&B. 5594 Sp.

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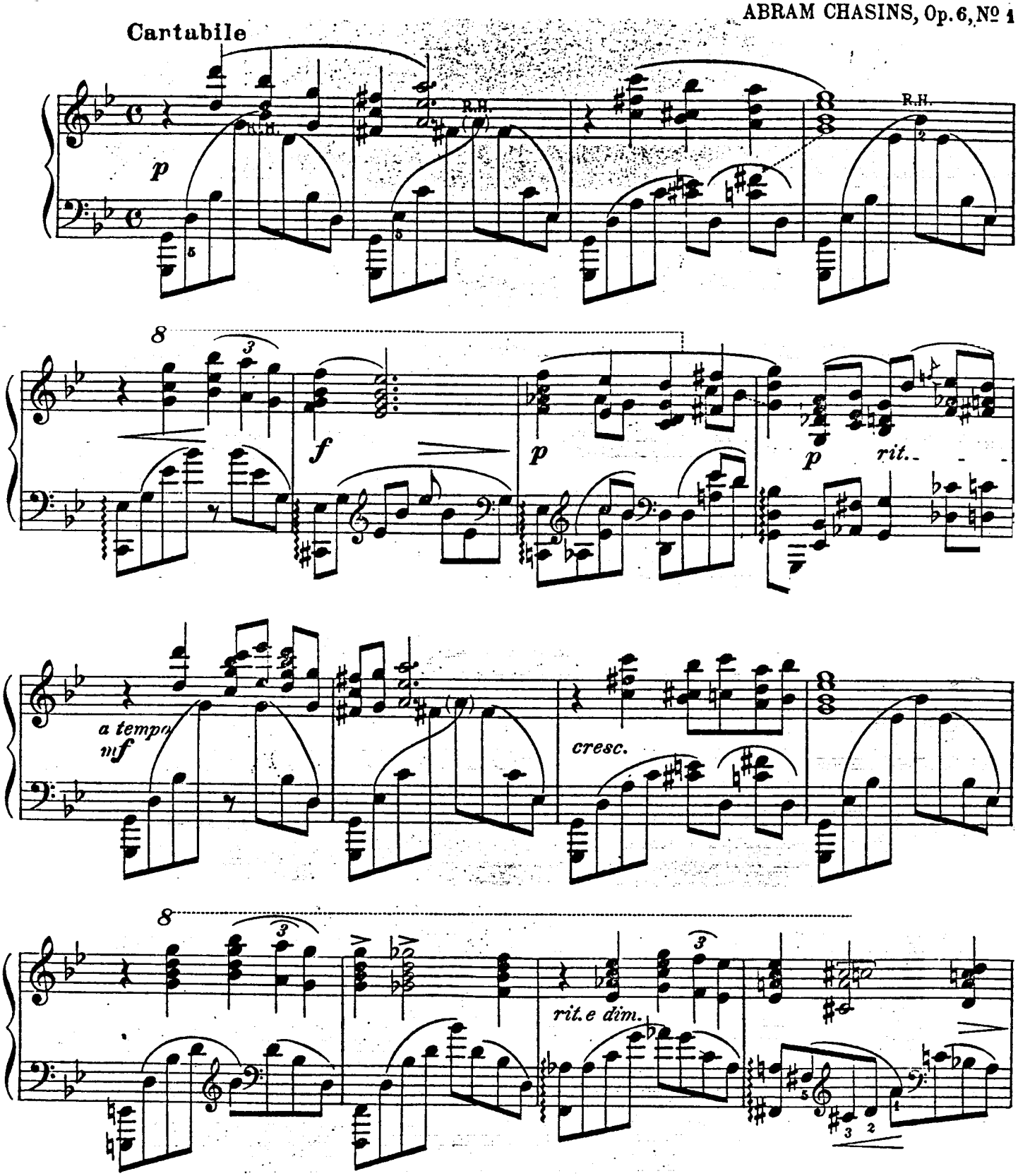
"RACHMANINOFF"

NOT RENEWABLE

ABRAM CHASINS, Op. 6, No. 1



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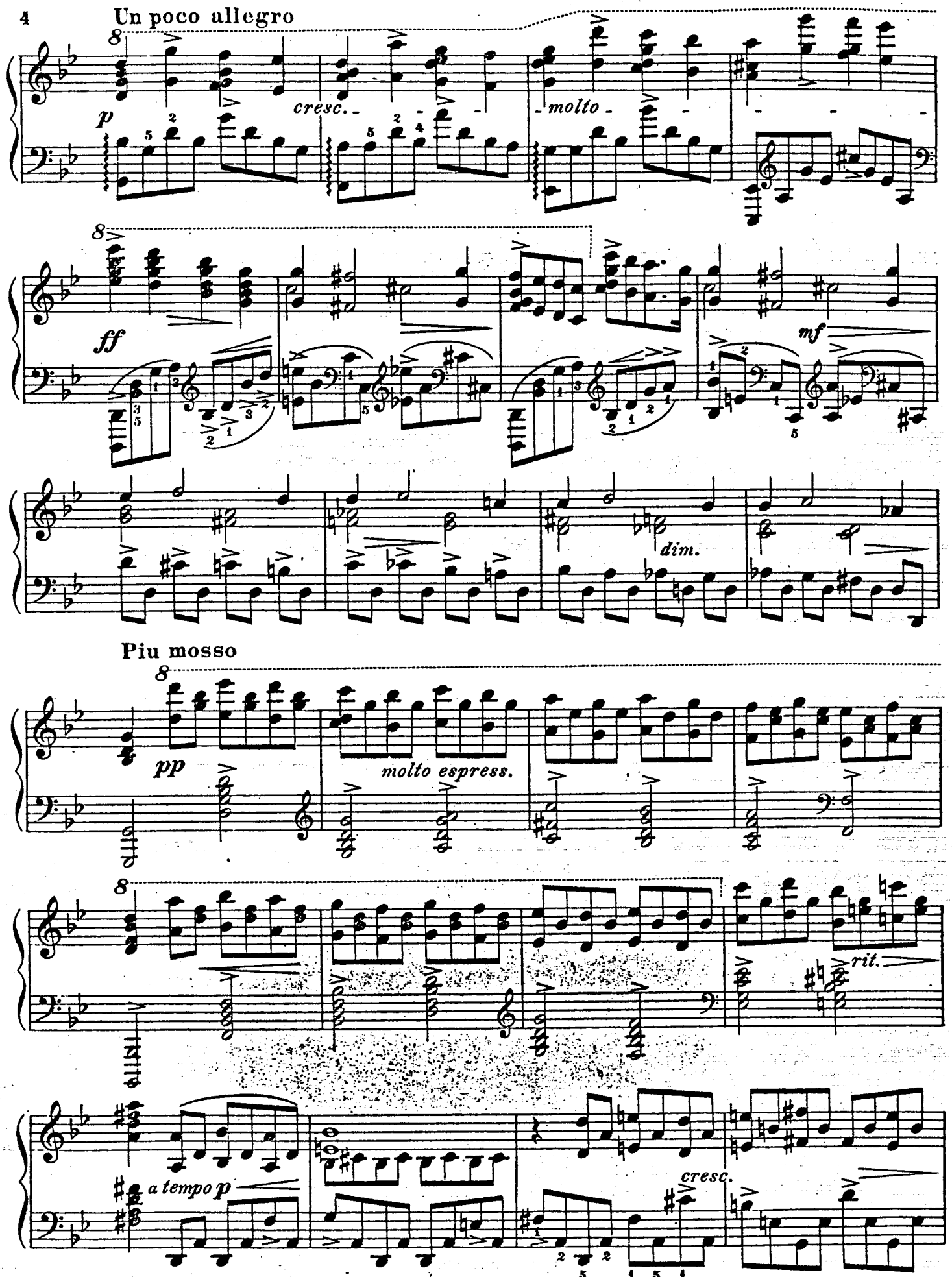
Un poco allegro
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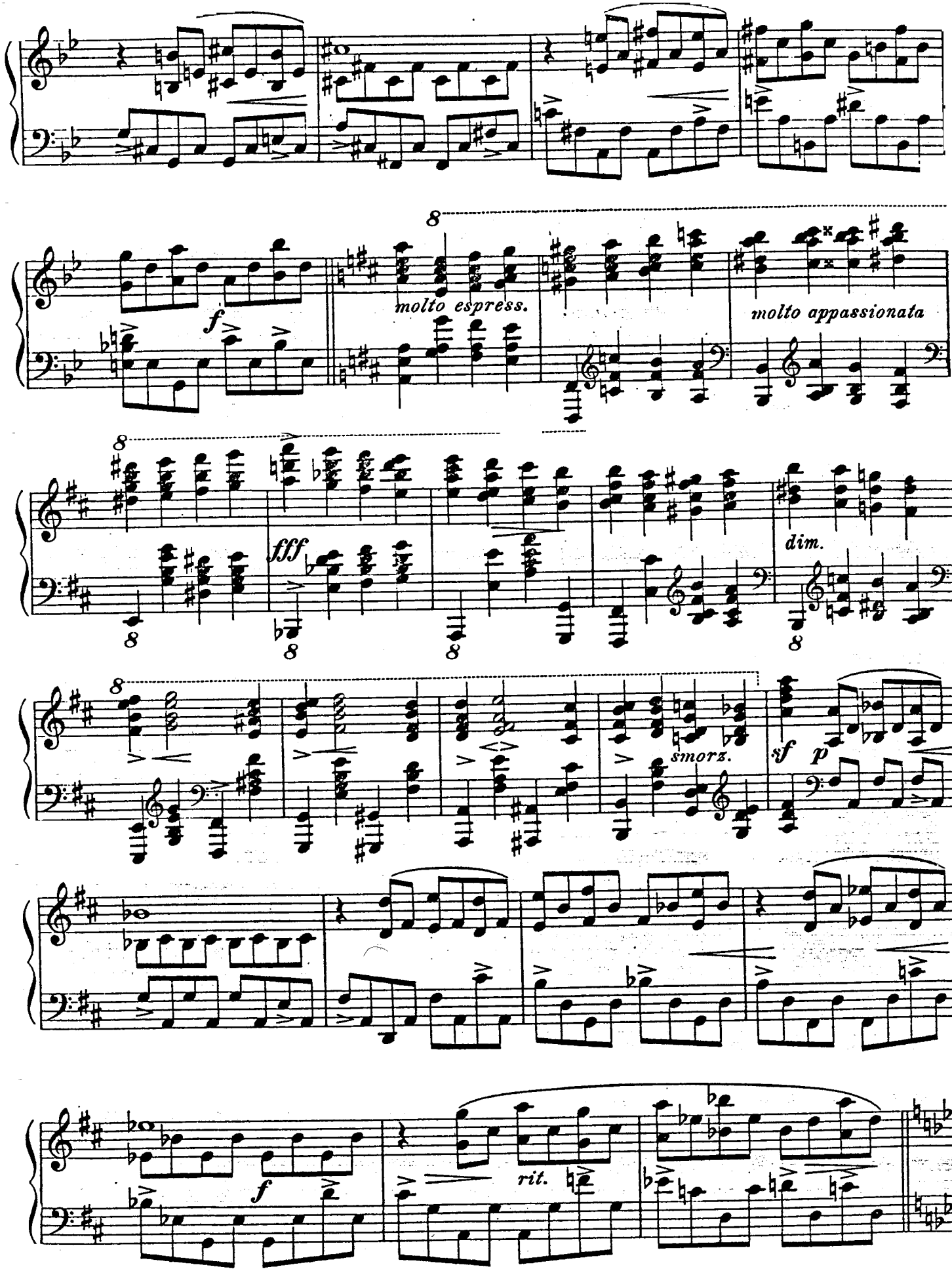
cresc.
molto
ff
mf
dim.
Piu mosso
pp
molto espress.
rit.
a tempo p
cresc.


f
molto espress.
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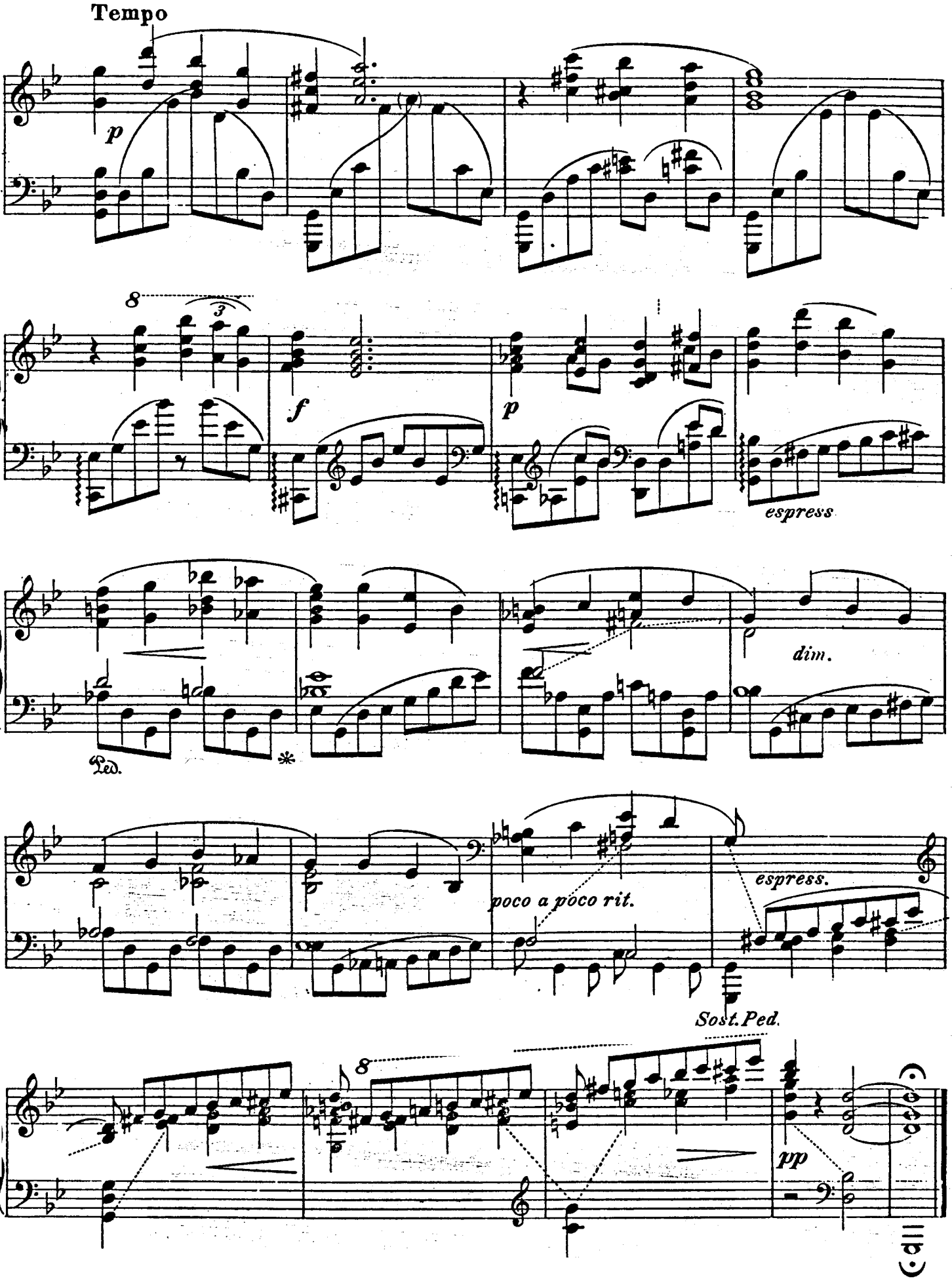
Tempo
p
8
3
f
p
espress
dim.
Ped.
*
poco a poco rit.
espress.
Sost. Ped.
8
pp