EDITOR'S NOTE

In 1959-60 Irving Fine (1914-1962) orchestrated four short piano pieces he had written earlier and grouped them under the title *Diversions for Orchestra.** Although the original piano pieces were not intended as a set, we have followed Fine's example and offer them herewith as *Diversions for Piano,* using both the titles and order of the orchestral version.

"The Red Queen's Gavotte" and "Flamingo Polka" were written for a 1942 Boston production of Eva Le Gallienne's stage version of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland.* "The Red Queen's Gavotte," which was titled "Measuring Music" in the piano manuscript, accompanied the Red Queen's bouncy movements as she measured the ground in chapter 2 of Carroll's book. "Flamingo Polka" (originally "Flamingo Dance") was danced with flamingos being used as mock croquet mallets in the croquet game (in chapter 8).

"Little Toccata" was composed in 1958 for Fine's friend, the painter Ethel Cott, in exchange for one of her paintings. "Koko's Lullaby" (the piano version was titled "Arioso") was, in the words of Verna Fine, the composer's widow, "composed in 1959, expressly for Irving's beloved oversized, devoted, sensitive, sweet, white, Royal French poodle with apricot ears and a pedigree, named Koko."

Fine's manuscripts for the four piano pieces are in The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. This edition corrects a few phrasings and notes as confirmed by the orchestral version. Interpretive indications have not been added. The editor suggests referring to the orchestral version (published by Boosey & Hawkes) to see how the composer himself "interpreted" the pieces in his orchestration.

In March of 1963, Leonard Bernstein, a dear, close friend of the composer, wrote the following for the original edition (published posthumously by Mills Music, Inc.) of *Diversions for Orchestra:*

> It is all too easy to speak glibly of Irving Fine's *Diversions* as a "charming" piece, and let it go at that. But, in fact, true charm is one of the most difficult things to achieve musically; and Fine has achieved it by simply and honestly revealing the man in the music. In these four brief pieces we can behold a personality: tender without being coy, witty without being vulgar, appealing without being banal, and utterly sweet without ever being cloying. Such a man (and such a work) is rare enough to cause rejoicing.

—Bennett Lerner
Chiang Mai, Thailand
September, 1995

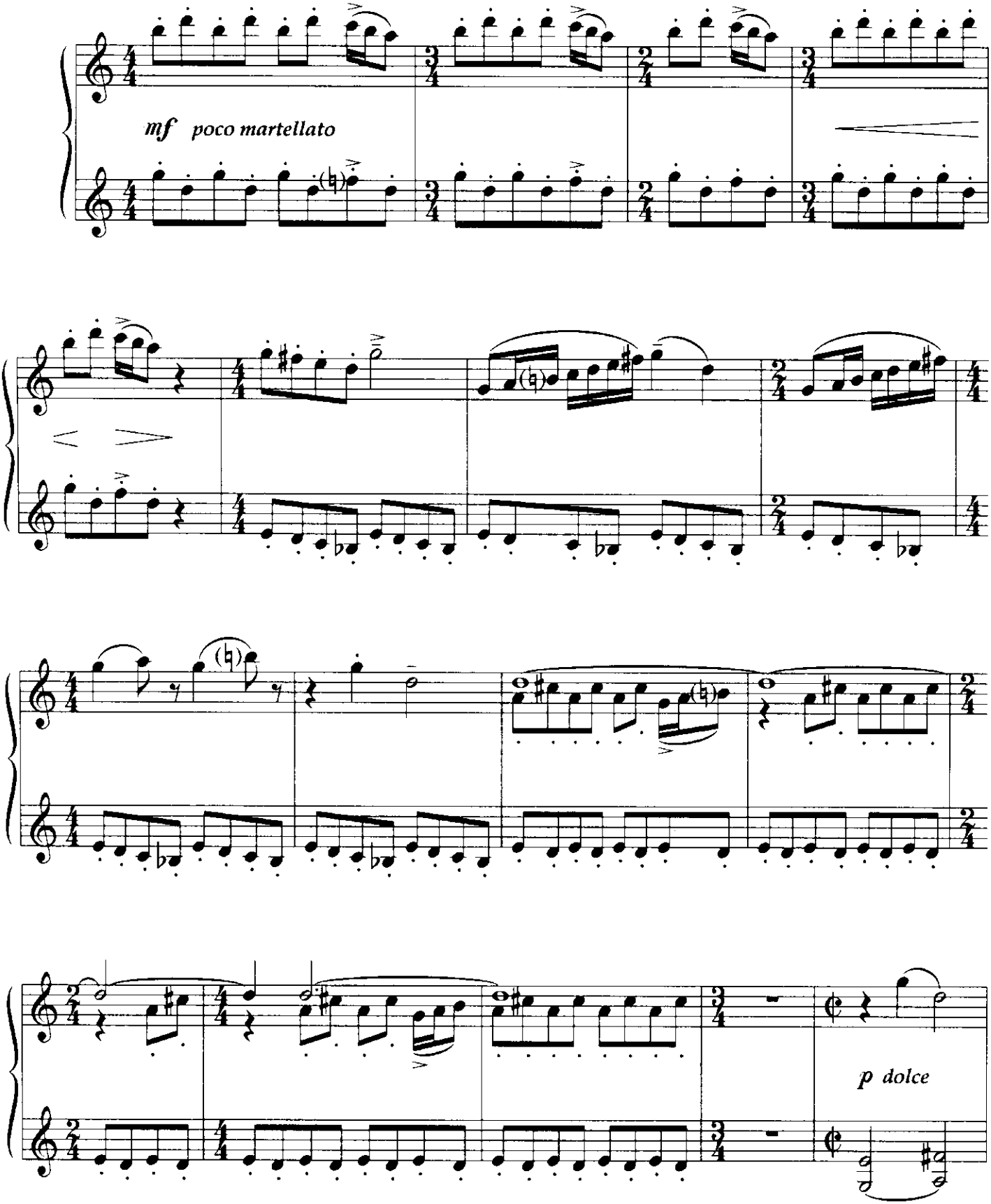
* The full score of *Diversions for Orchestra* is available for purchase (FIN 28). *Diversions* is included among five of Fine's orchestral works recorded on Delos DE 3139 by the Moscow Radio Symphony conducted by Joel Spiegelman.

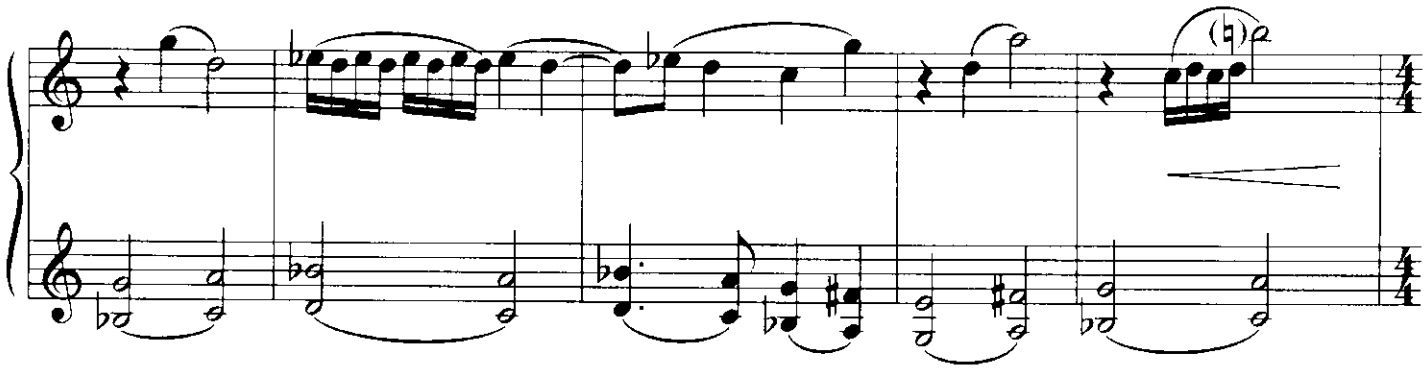
DIVERSIONS FOR PIANO

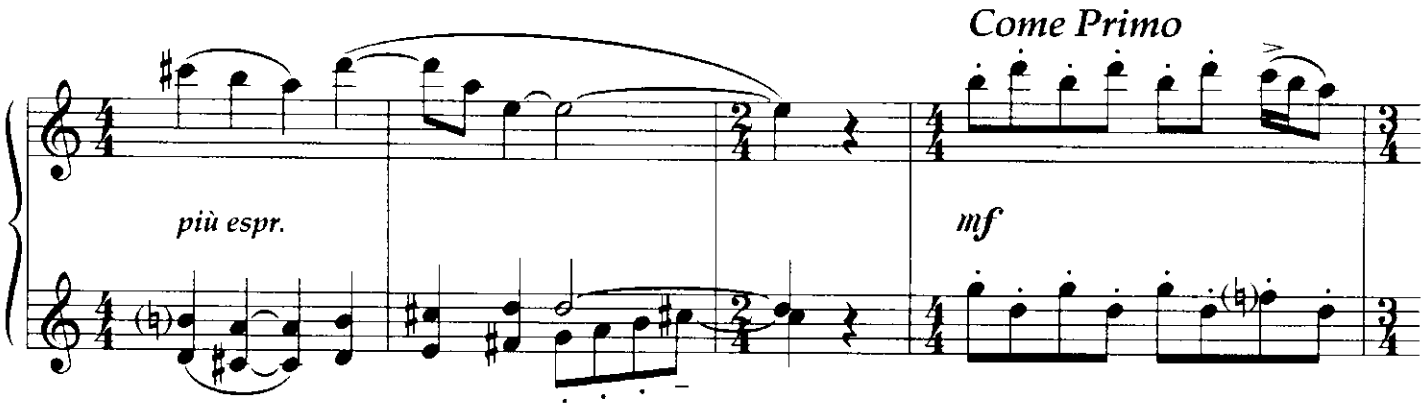
1. Little Toccata

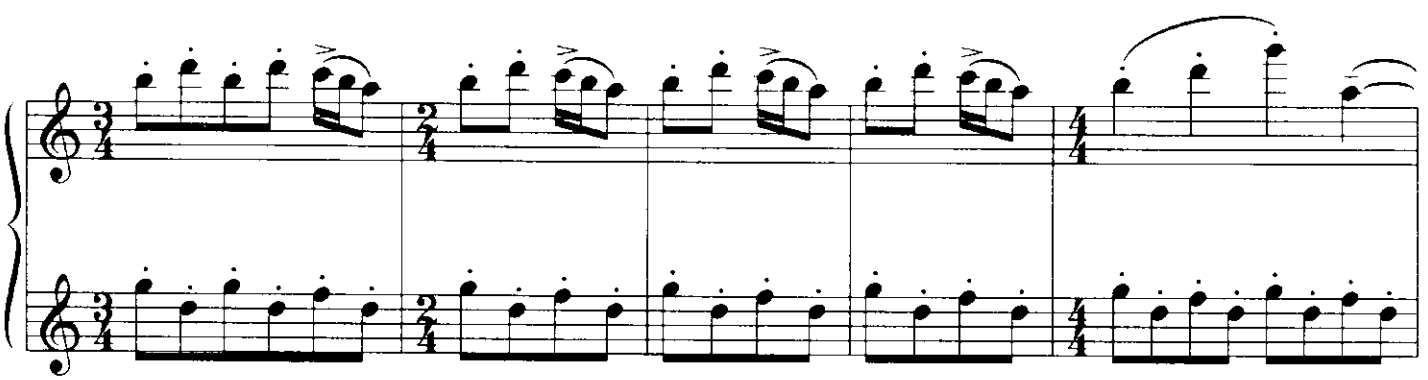
IRVING FINE

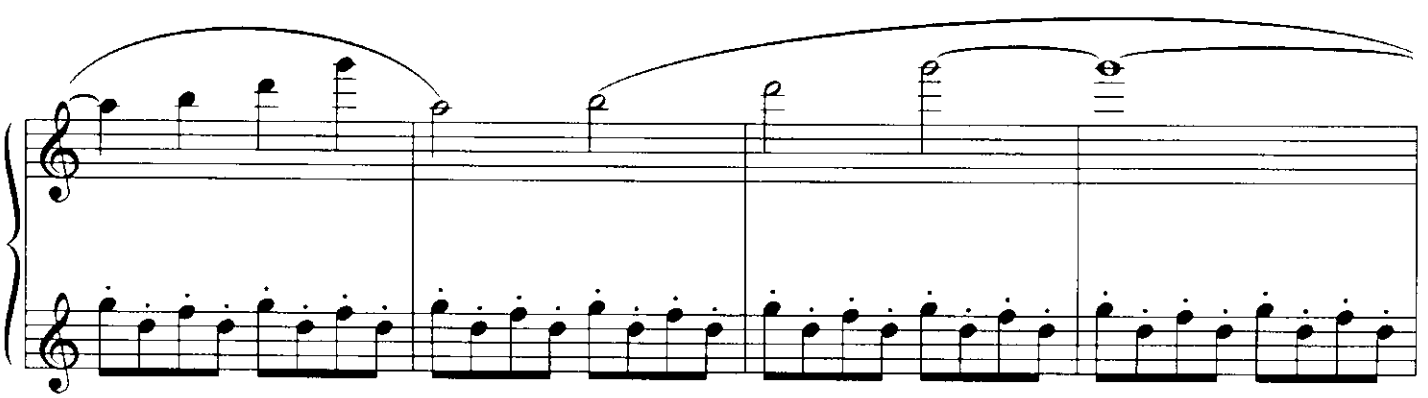
Vivace (♩= c. 176)

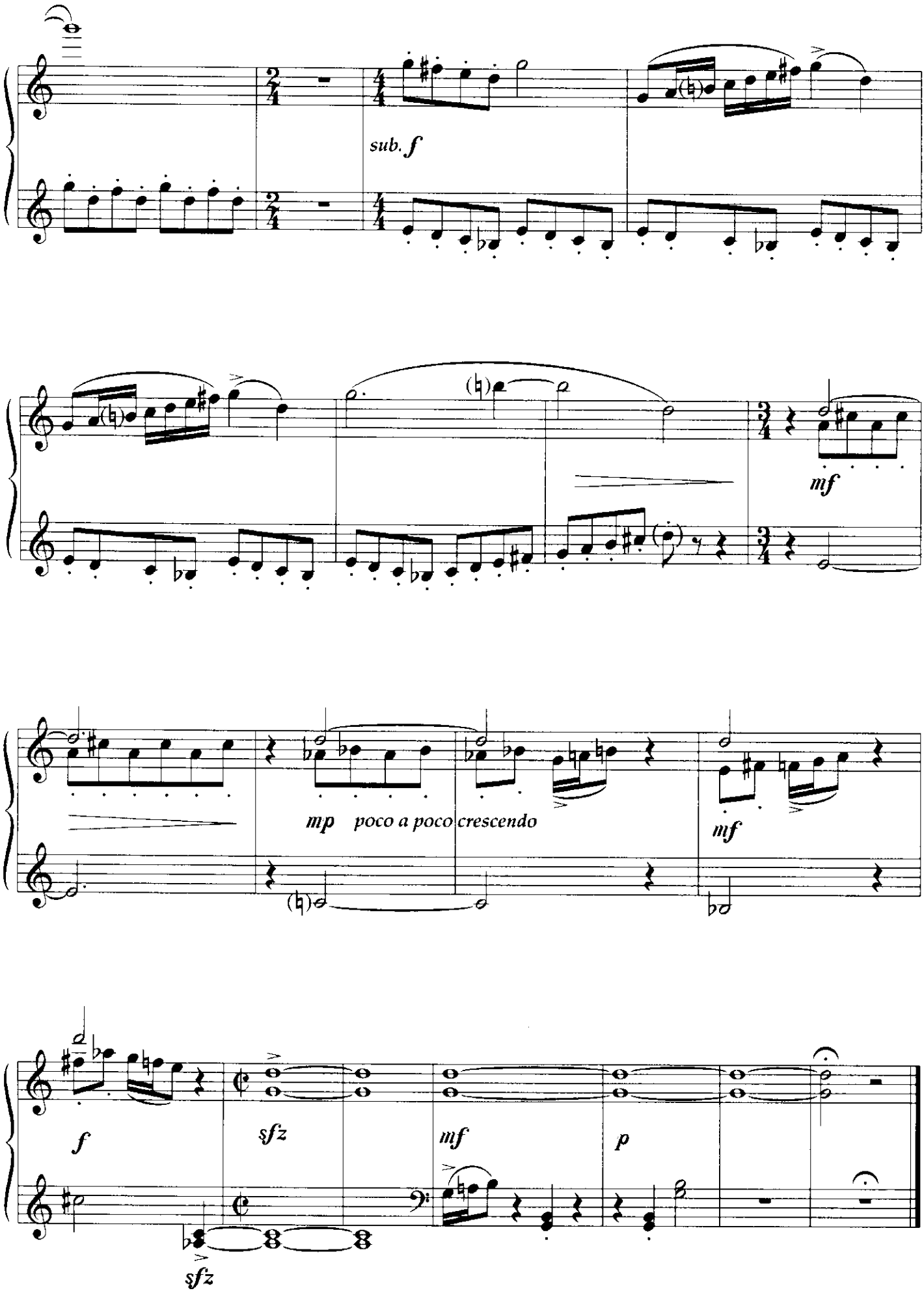




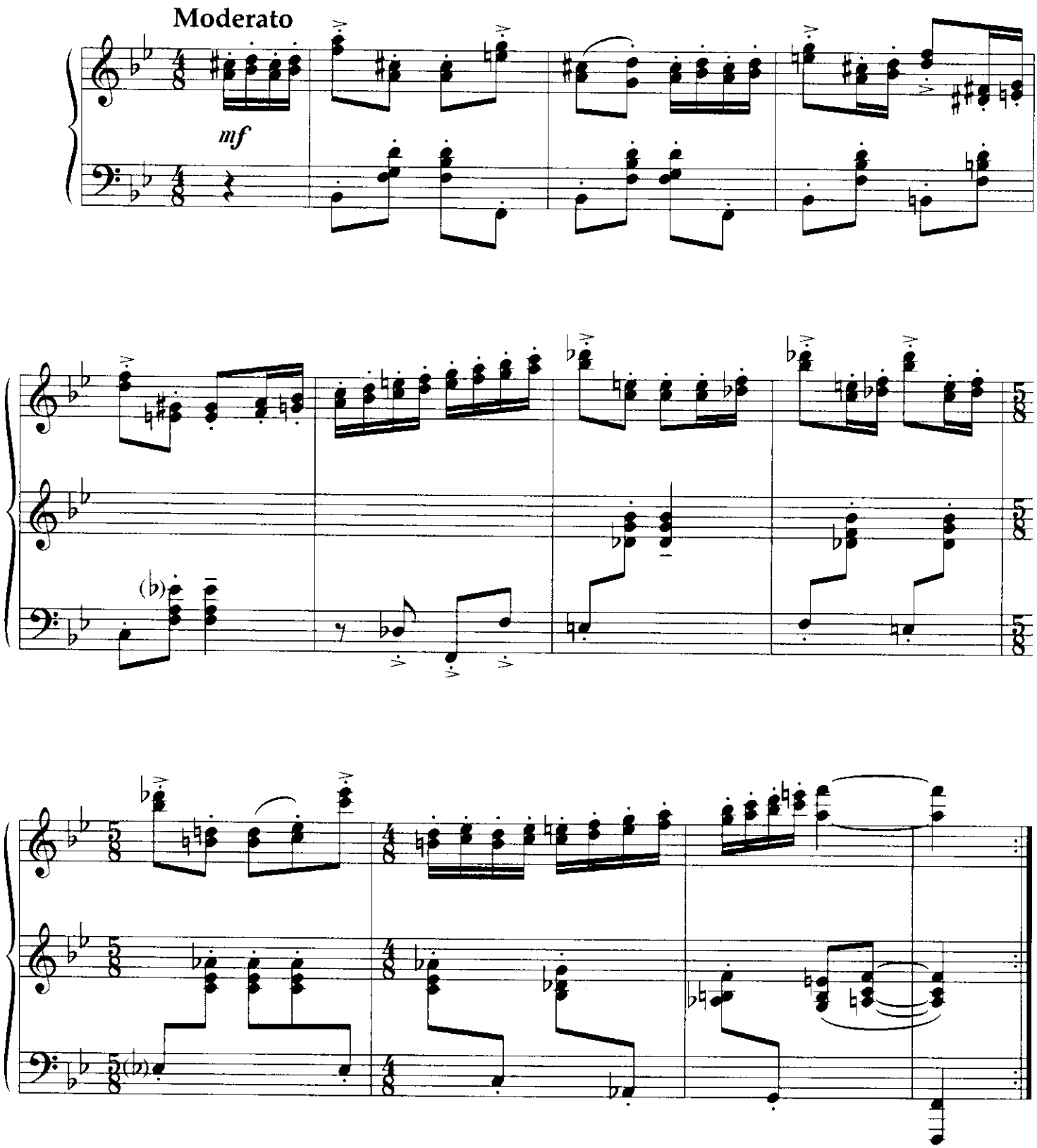

Come Primo
più espr.
mf

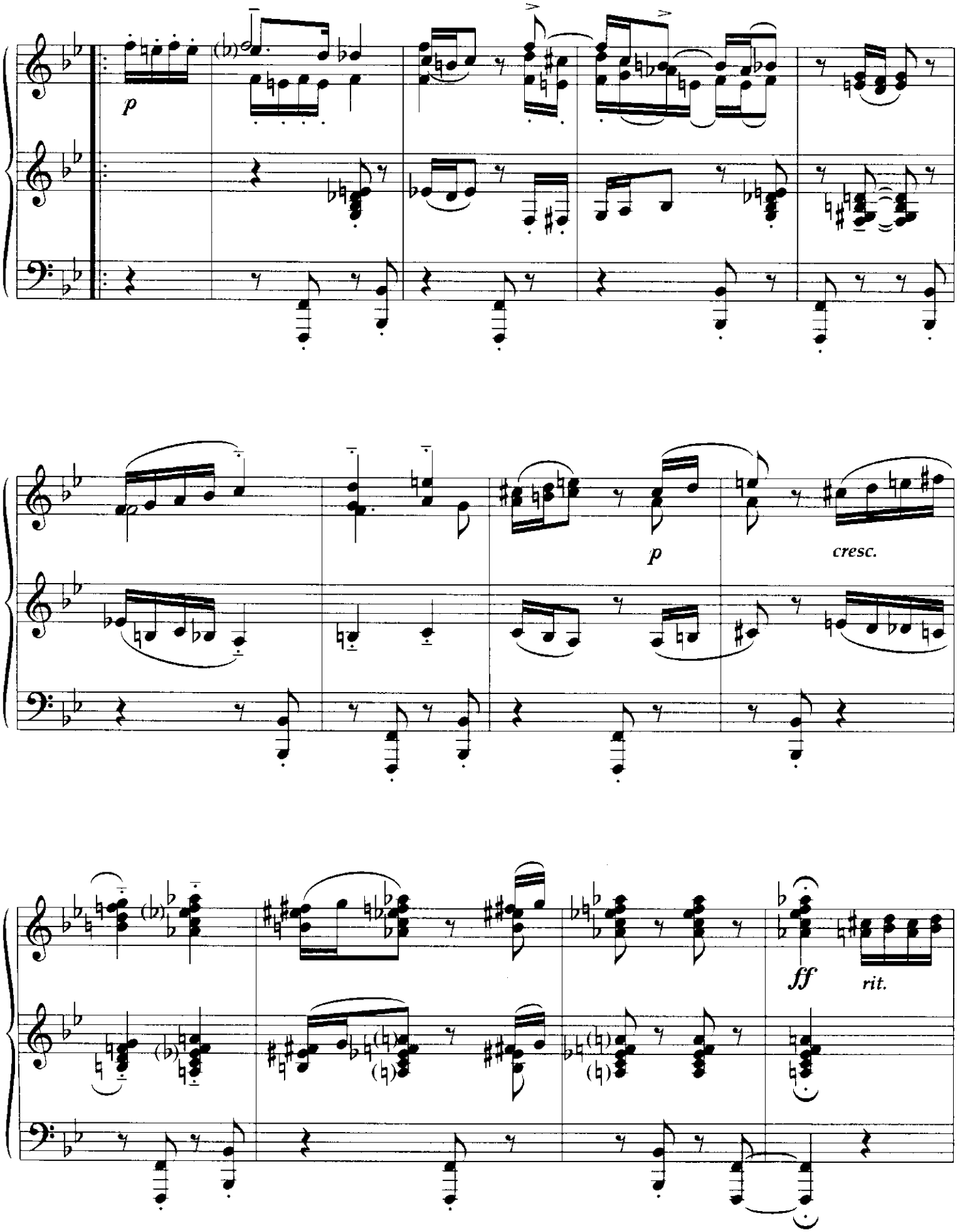


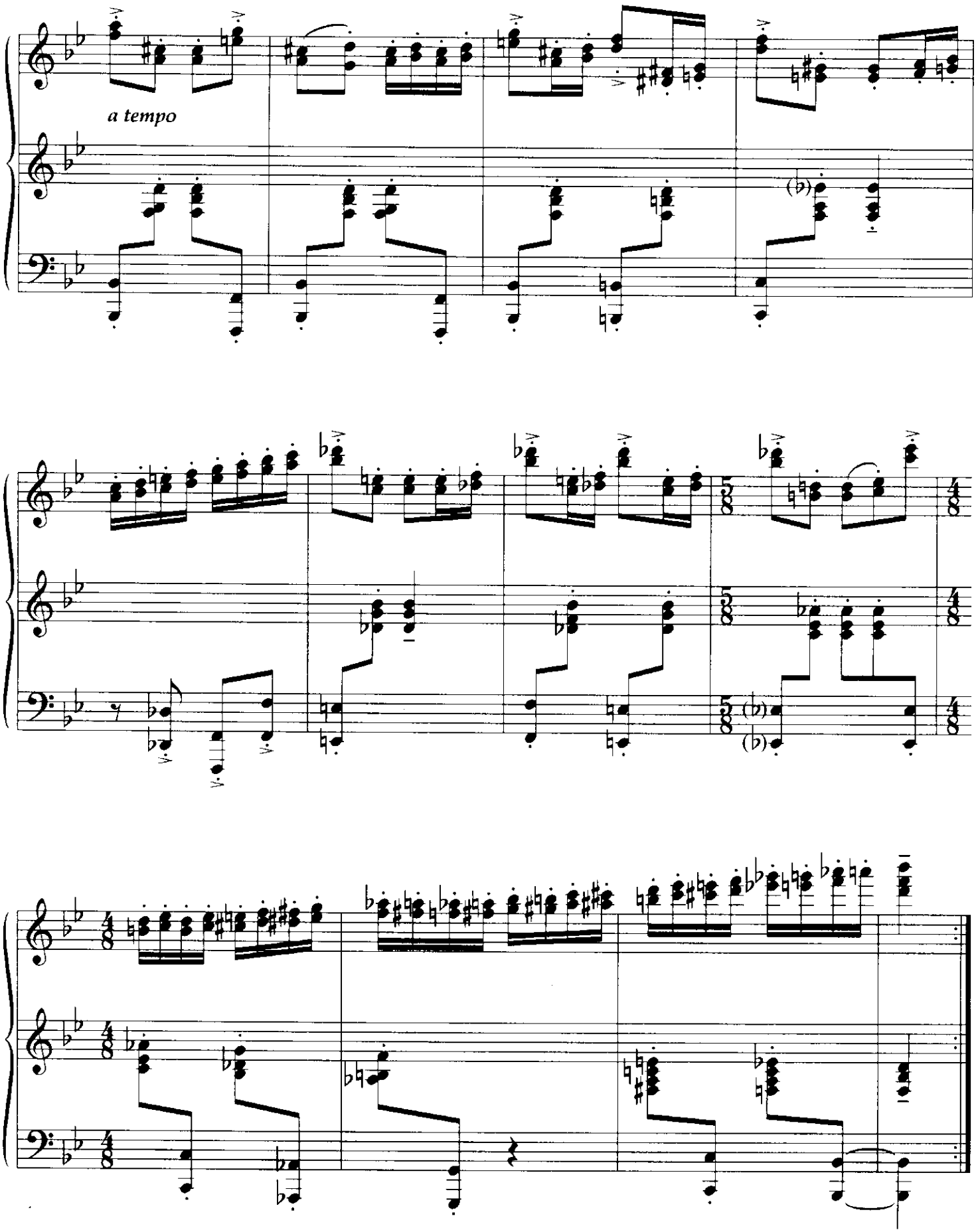



sub. f
mf
mp poco a poco crescendo
mf
f
sfz
mf
p
sfz

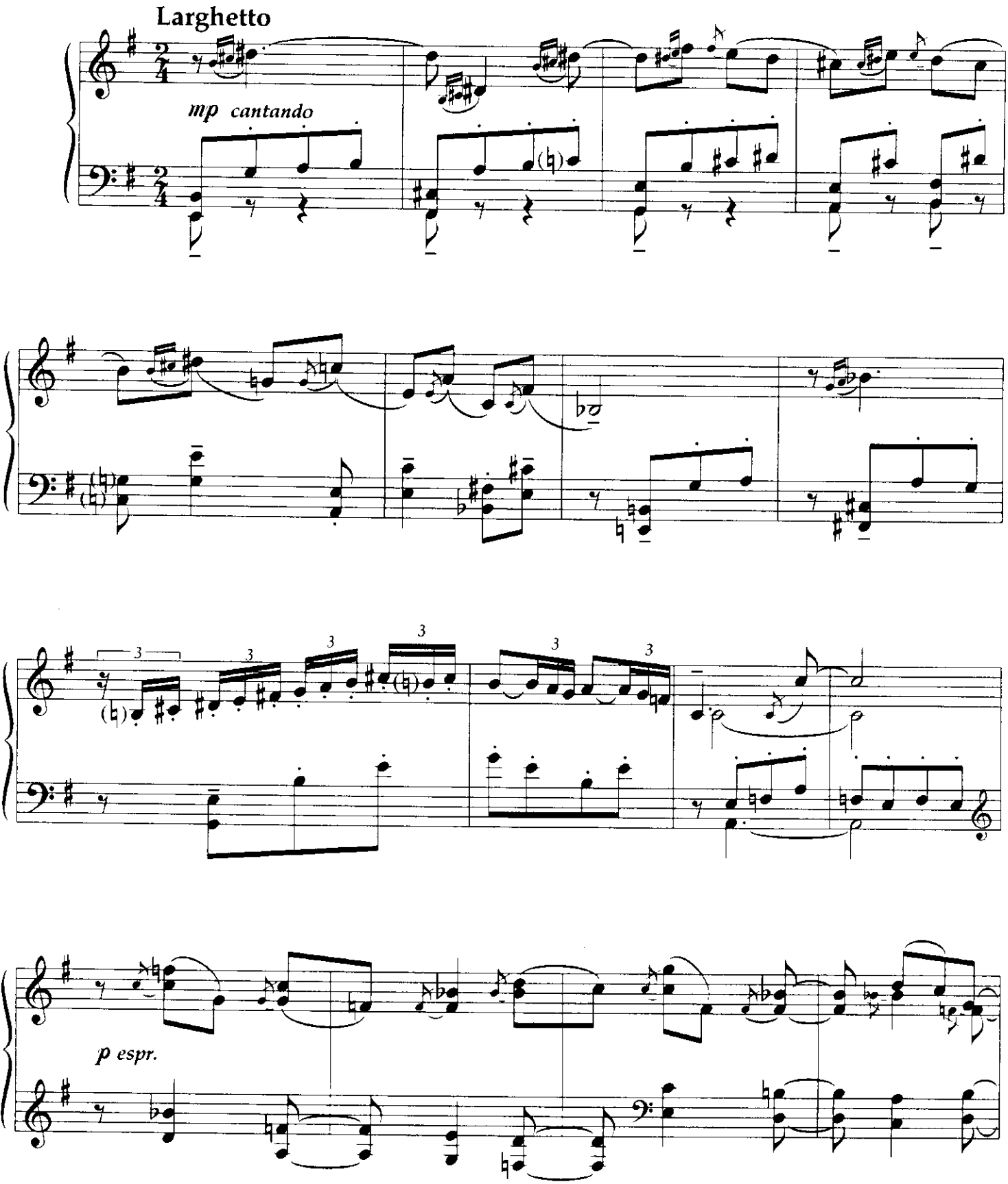
2. Flamingo Polka

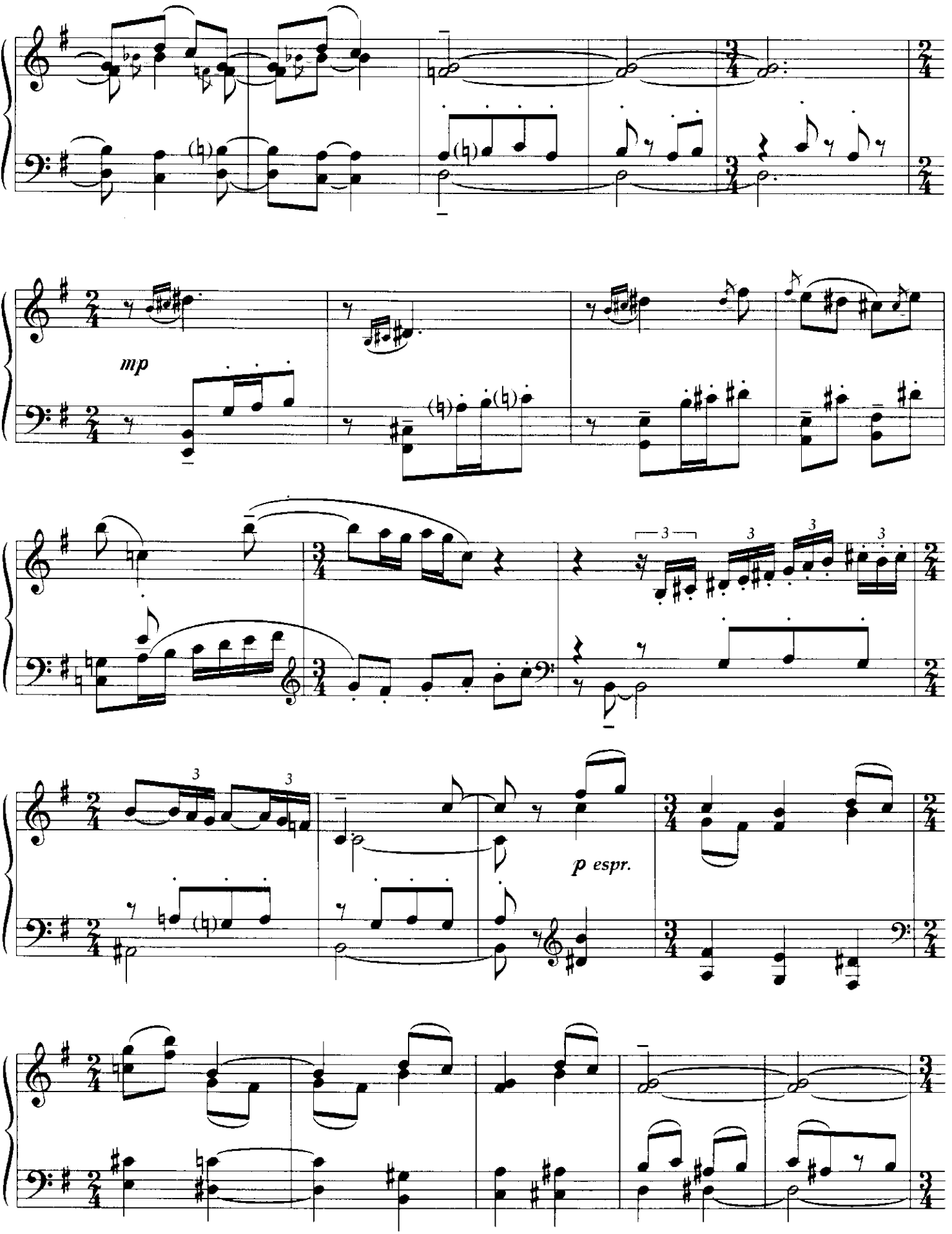


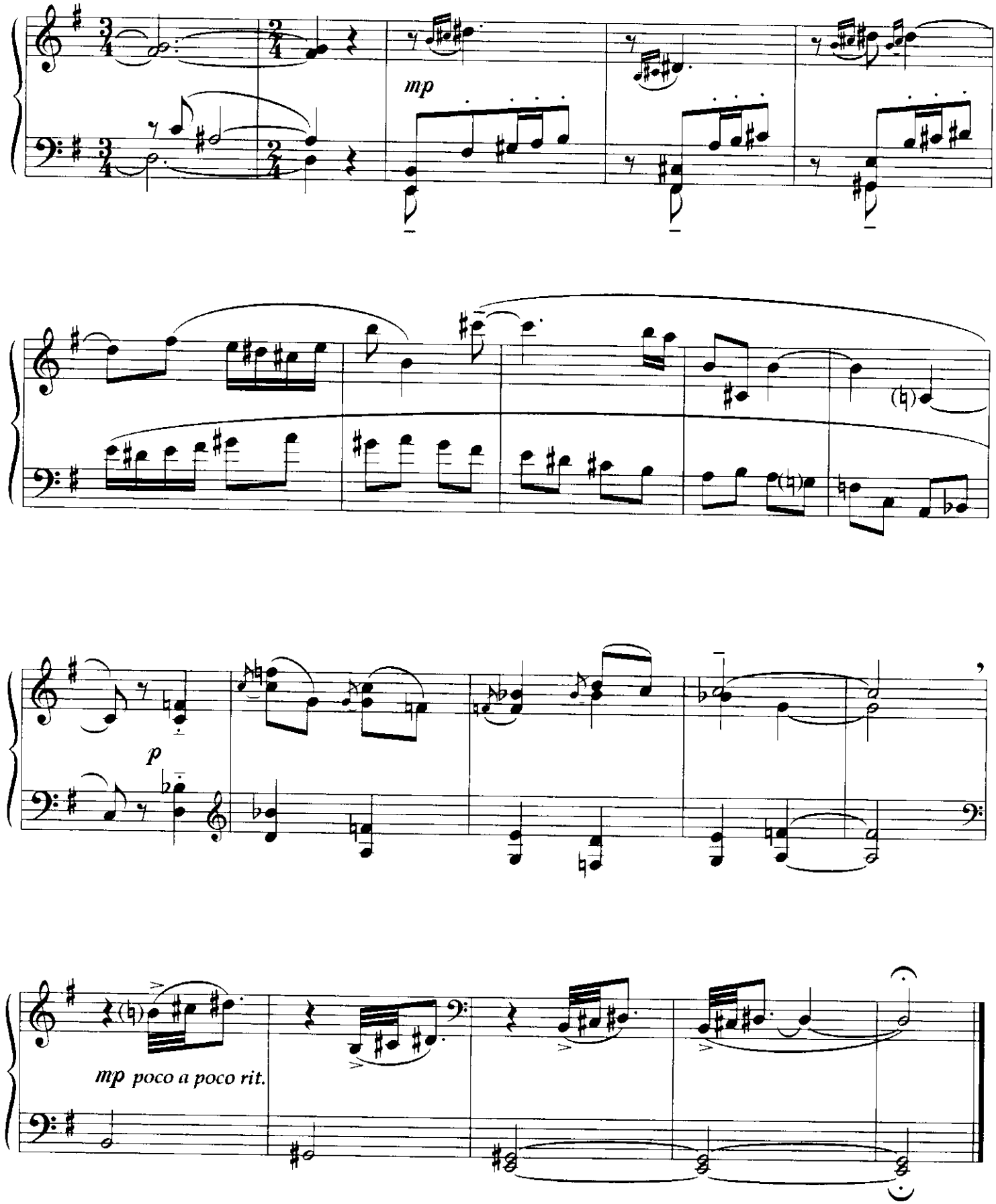

p
p
cresc.
ff
rit.


a tempo

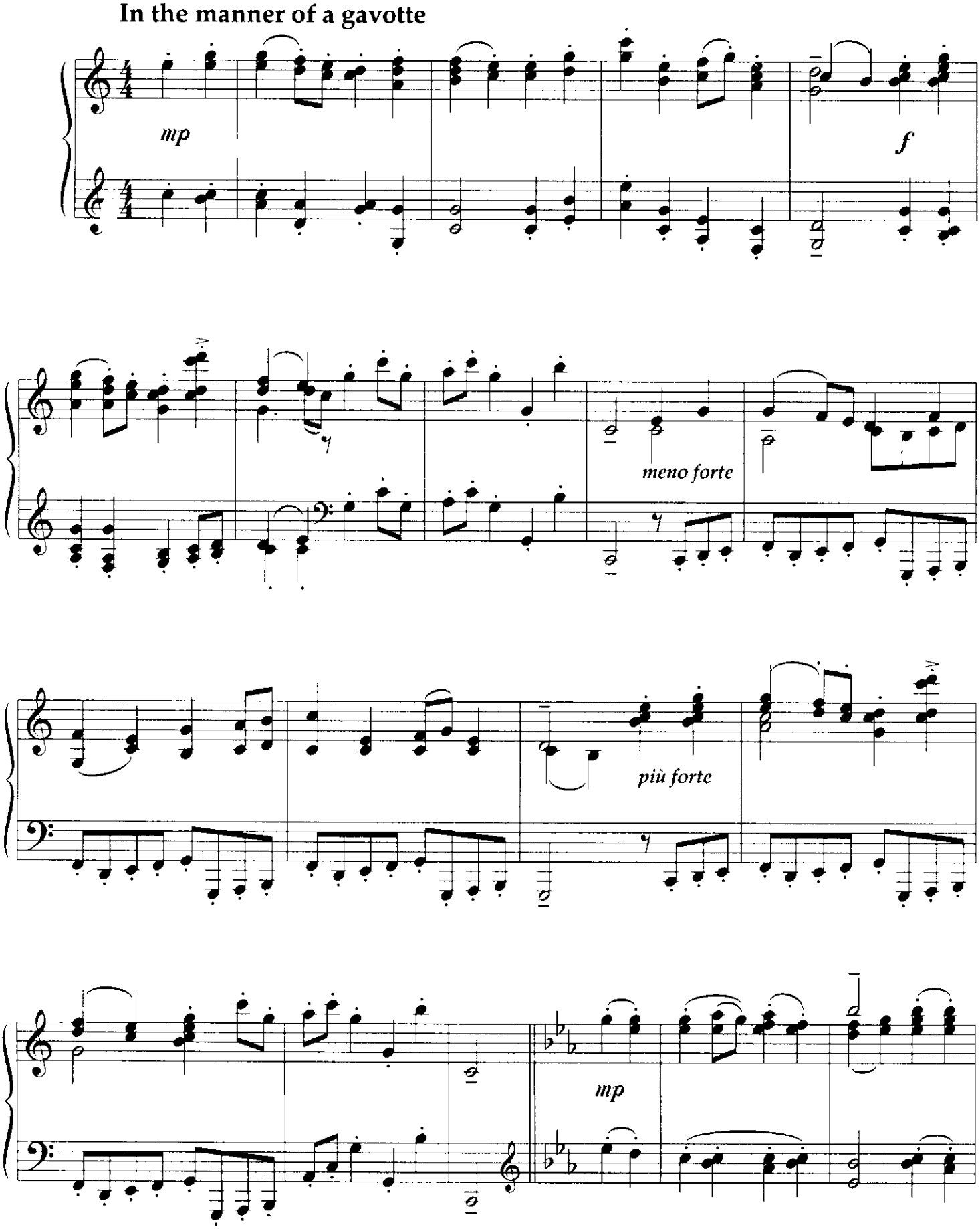
3. Koko's Lullaby

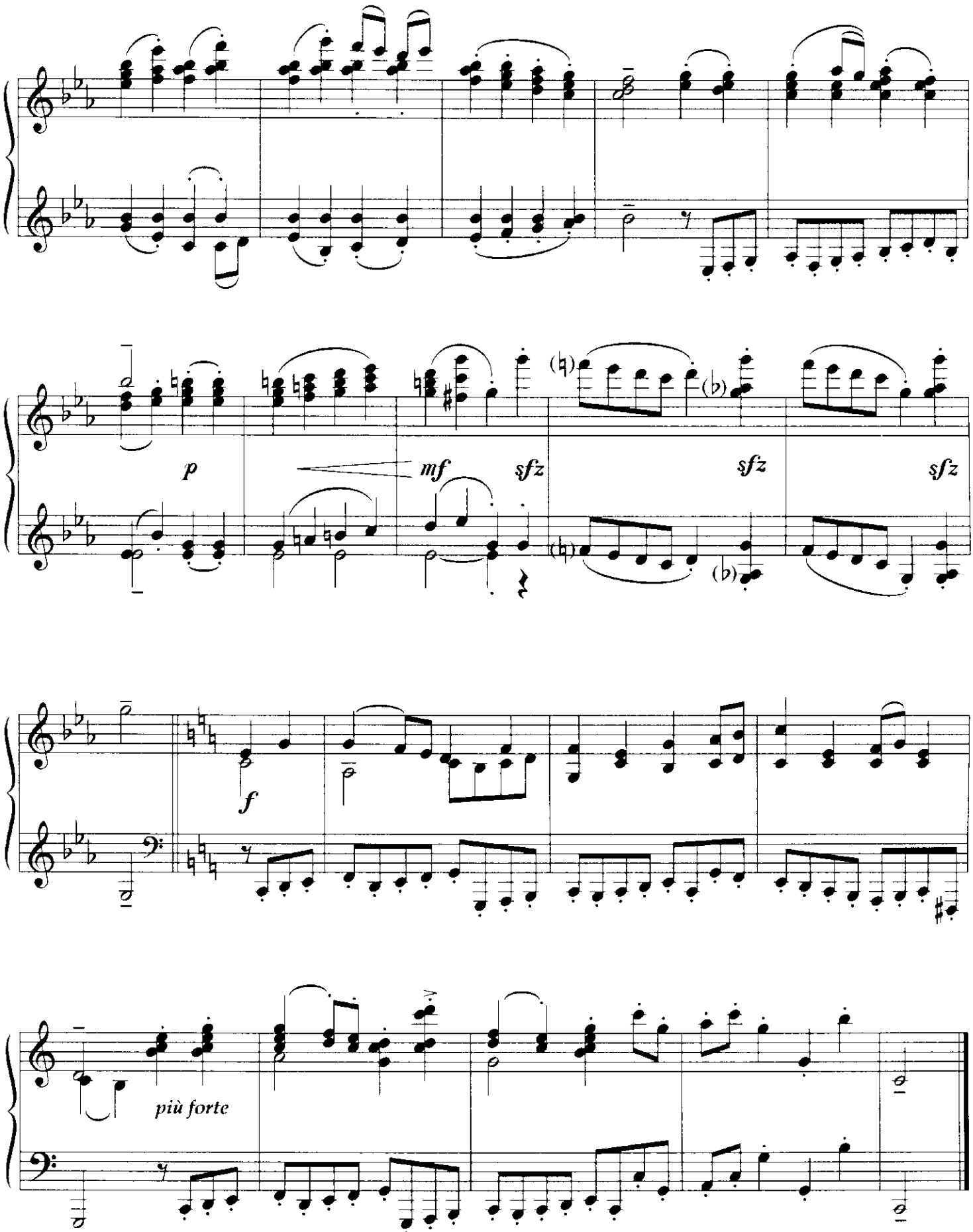



mp
p espr.


mp
p
mp poco a poco rit.

4. The Red Queen's Gavotte




p
mf
sfz
sfz
sfz
f
più forte