Sergei RACHMANINOV

ÉTUDES TABLEAUX

Opus 39 N° 5 E♭ minor

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Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Sergei RACHMANINOV

1873 - 1943

ÉTUDES-TABLEAUX

Opus 39 N° 5 E♭ minor

In 1915 following the death of his colleague Alexander Scriabin, Rachmaninov and Koussevitsky gave a series of concerts in memoriam for the benefit of Scriabin's family. Although their musical paths were poles apart, he must have looked back at their shared classes under Zverev some 30 years earlier with nostalgia. Rachmaninov was renowned for his generosity and at this time he made a serious study of Scriabin's œuvre. During a long and successful career, he did not hide his distaste for contemporary music and rarely performed Scriabin, recording just one piece, a performance which was generally censured.

Between 1914 and 1917, two volumes of Études-Tableaux were published, their title suggesting studies inspired by a picture, similar to those of Chopin and Liszt. However, Rachmaninov did not divulge the source, suggesting that each artist should be encouraged to "paint for himself". The nine Etudes-Tableaux of Op 39 are the last major works for piano composed before definitively leaving Russia.

Superficially this E♭ minor picture study might owe something to Scriabin's *Poème Tragique* written in 1903; they share some similarity in the heavy chordal triplets and the central section LH accompaniment. On a few occasions even the harmonies begin to resemble his old classmate's "modernist" style, such as the first two beats of **35**. By turns tempestuous and passionate, anguished and solemn, this glorious work features atypical harmonic dissonance. Poignant and soaring melodies guaranteed its popularity among pianists and audiences and it was performed and recorded by Horowitz several times throughout his career.

Given that the composer was born in 1873, an age of great artistic individuality, it is not surprising that he typically performed without wholly respecting the score. This edition reflects the editor's personal approach to the music, usually indicated with an asterisk*. In addition, some of the phrasing, dynamics and accentuation have been modified; a zealous student will need to consult other editions.

3, 8, 14 RH accompaniment modified
11 LH rhythmic modification (2nd beat)
21 some editions incorrectly give E♭
22 a somewhat awkward acciaccatura has been omitted
24-25 modifications to chording
25 C♭ octave dotted crotchet
32 D♮ throughout this bar
33 modification to the accompaniment
35 bass C replaced
38, 39 editorial bass ties
43-45 added bass octaves and modifications
45-48 time-signature modified
51-52 modifications to chording
53-56 time-signature radically modified
63 modification to the bass
69 the crotchets are editorial
81 A♭ throughout 3rd & 4th beats
85 RH editorial accents
86 editorial acciaccatura & 4th beat modification

Alexander Scriabin

Zverev class photo c. 1888

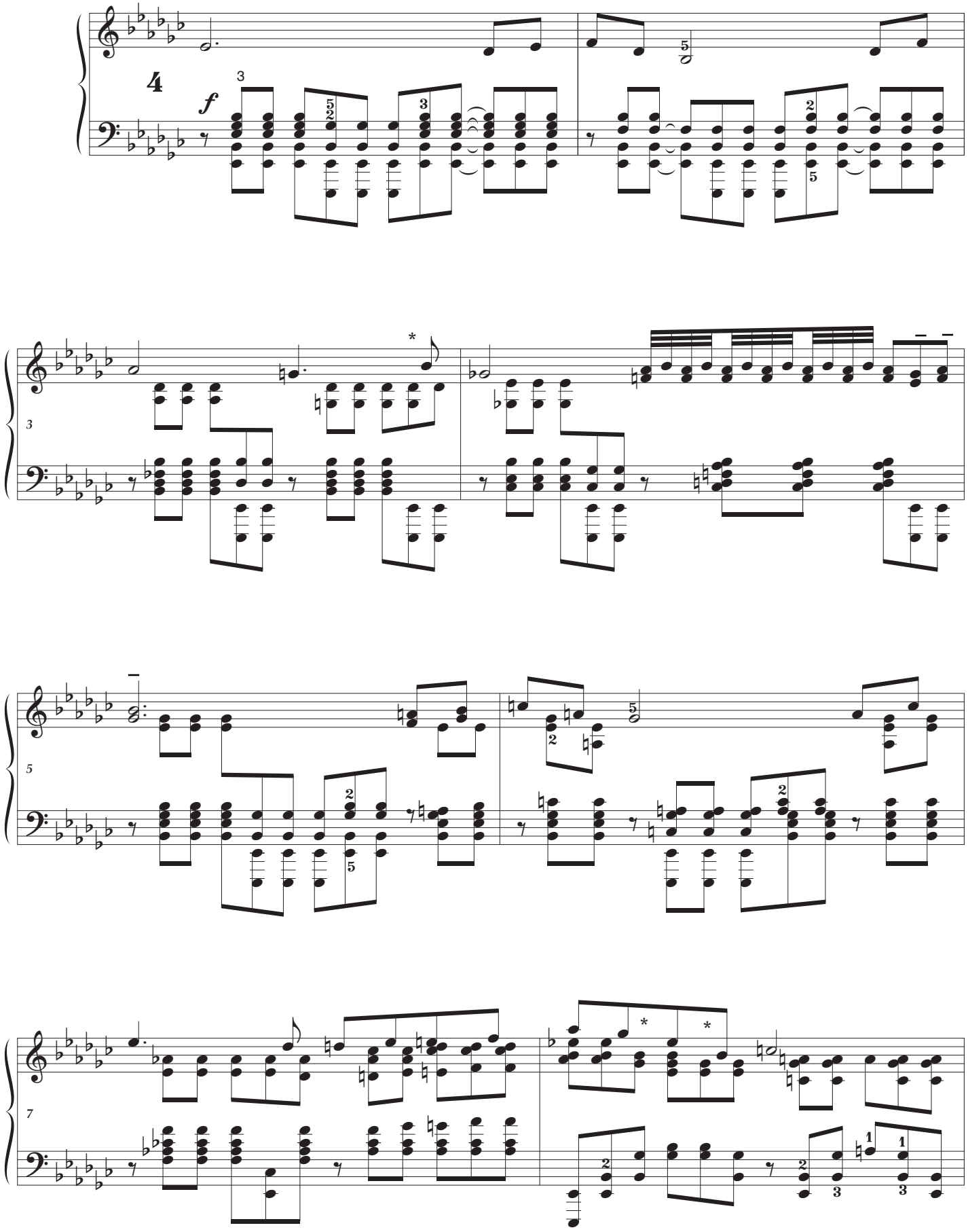
Samuelson - Scriabin - Maximov - Zverev - Rachmaninov - Chernyaev - Keneman - Pressman

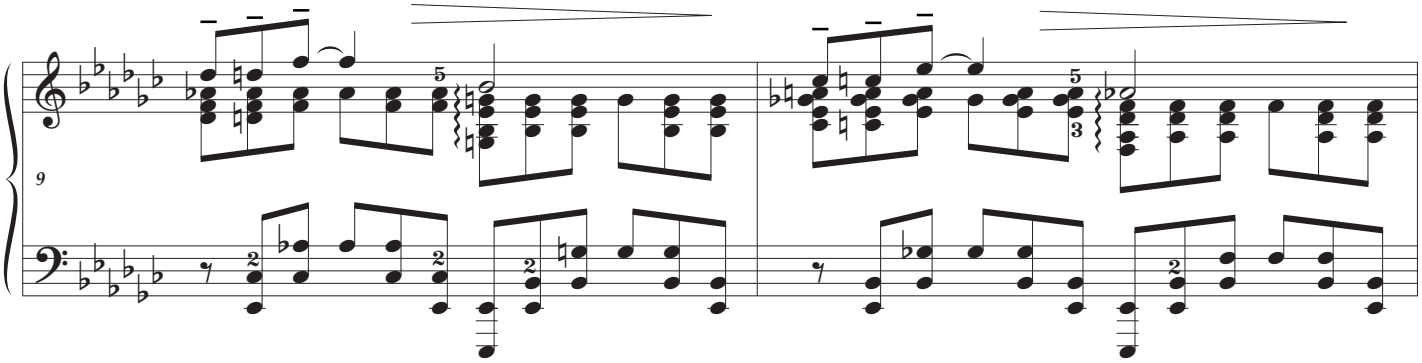
ETUDE TABLEAU

Op 39 Nº 5

appassionato

molto marcato

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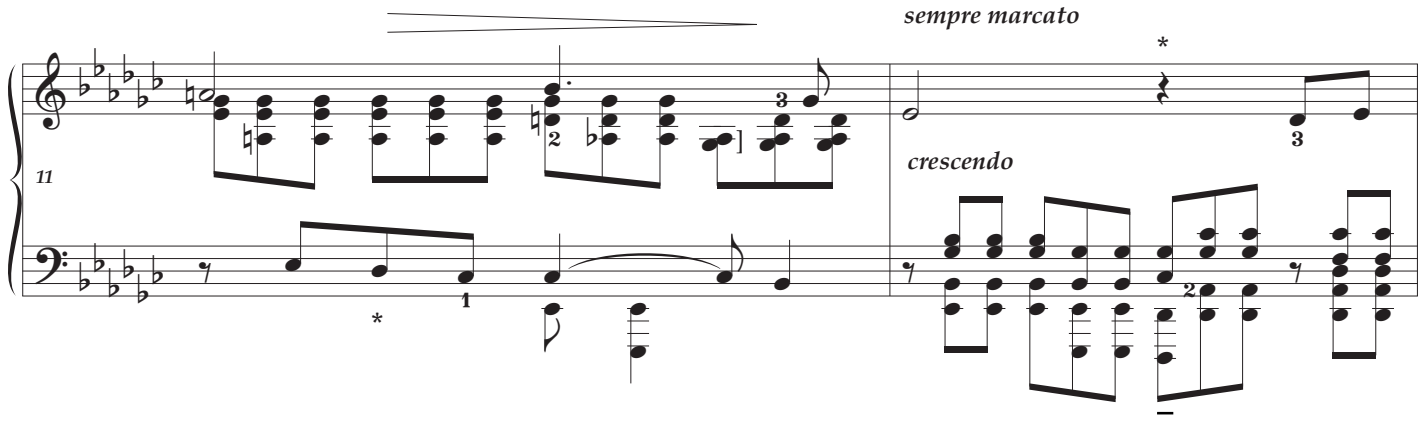
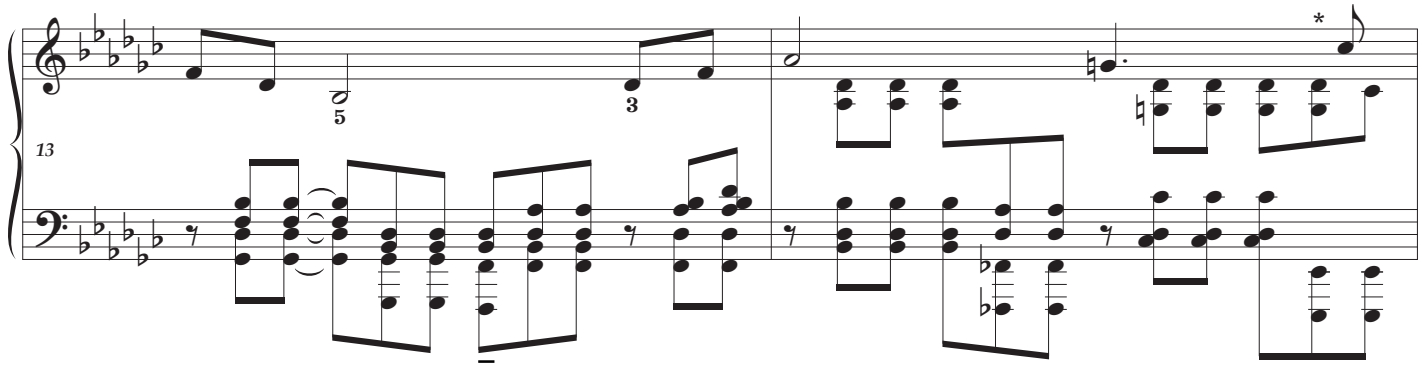

sempre marcato
crescendo
11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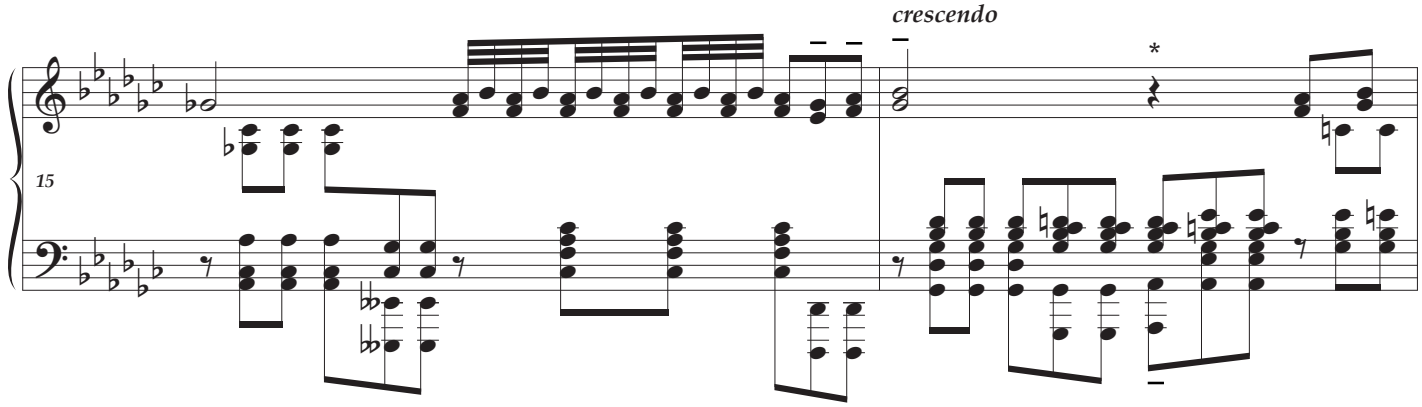
crescendo
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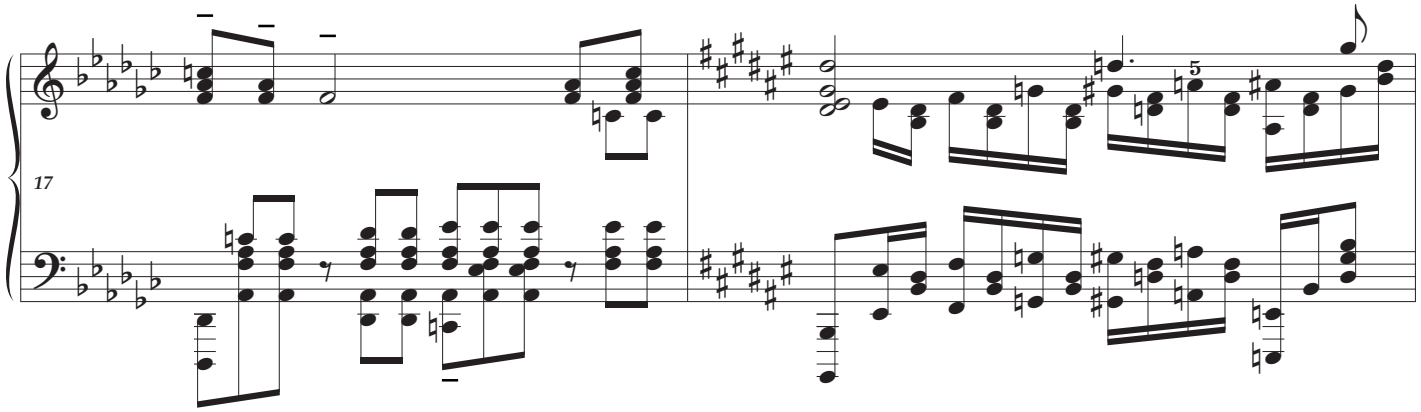
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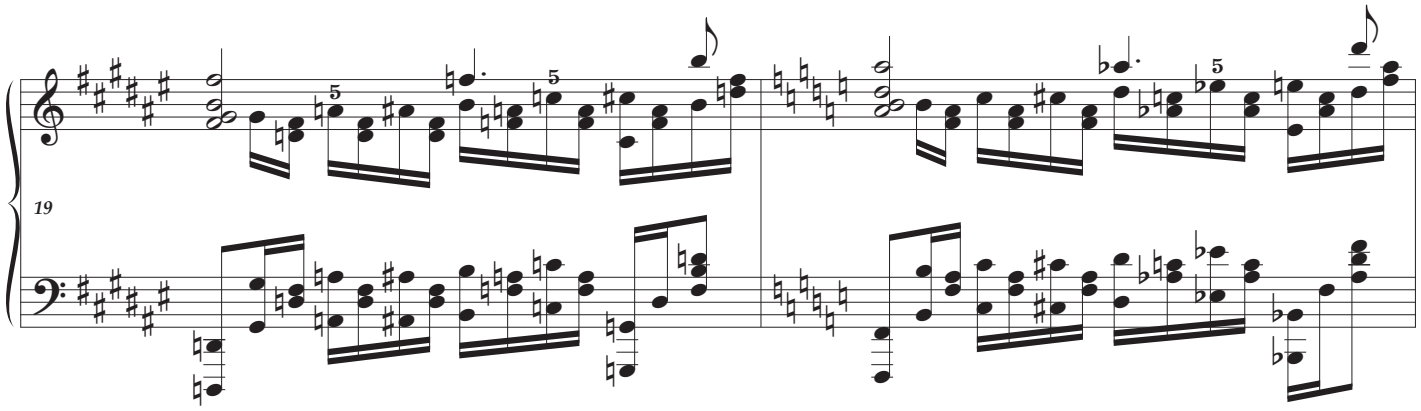
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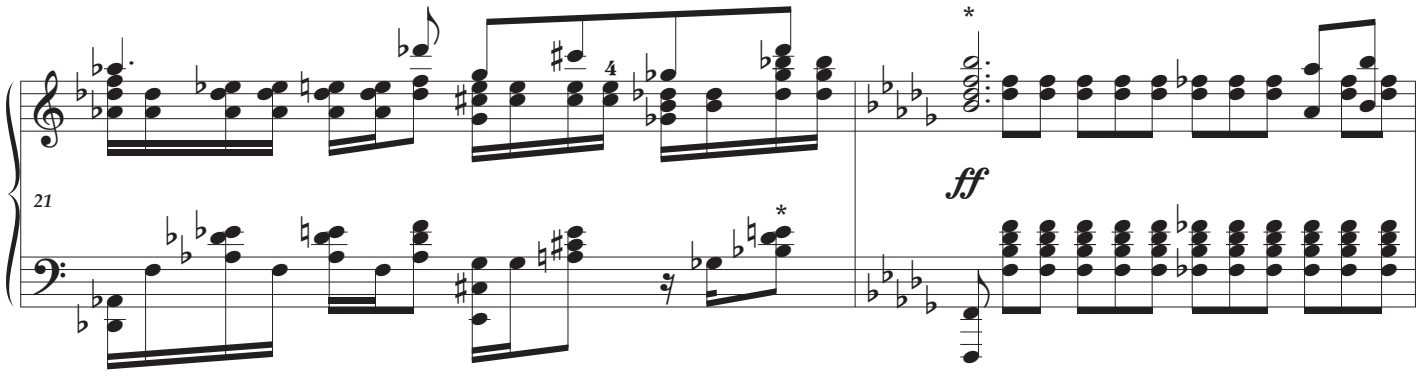
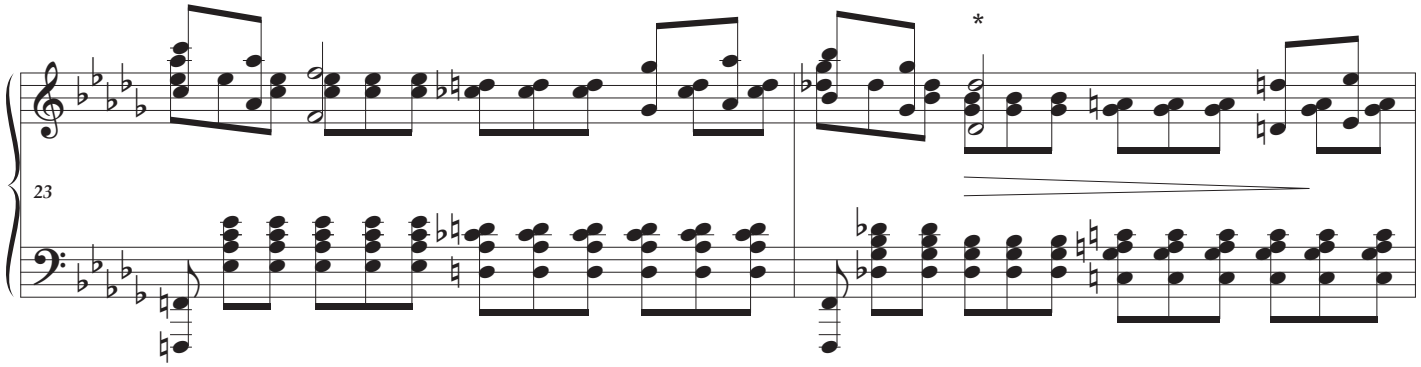

21
ff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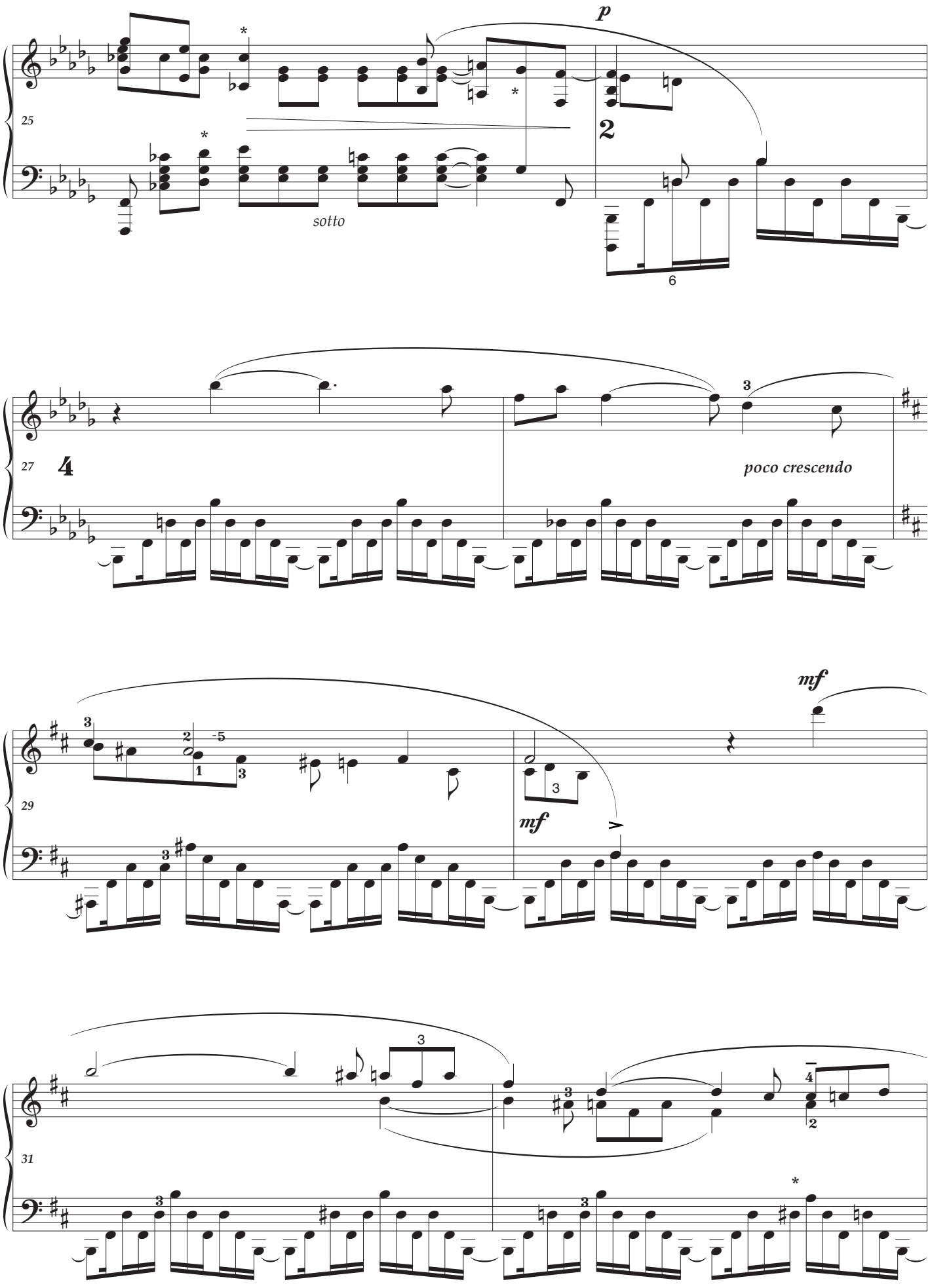
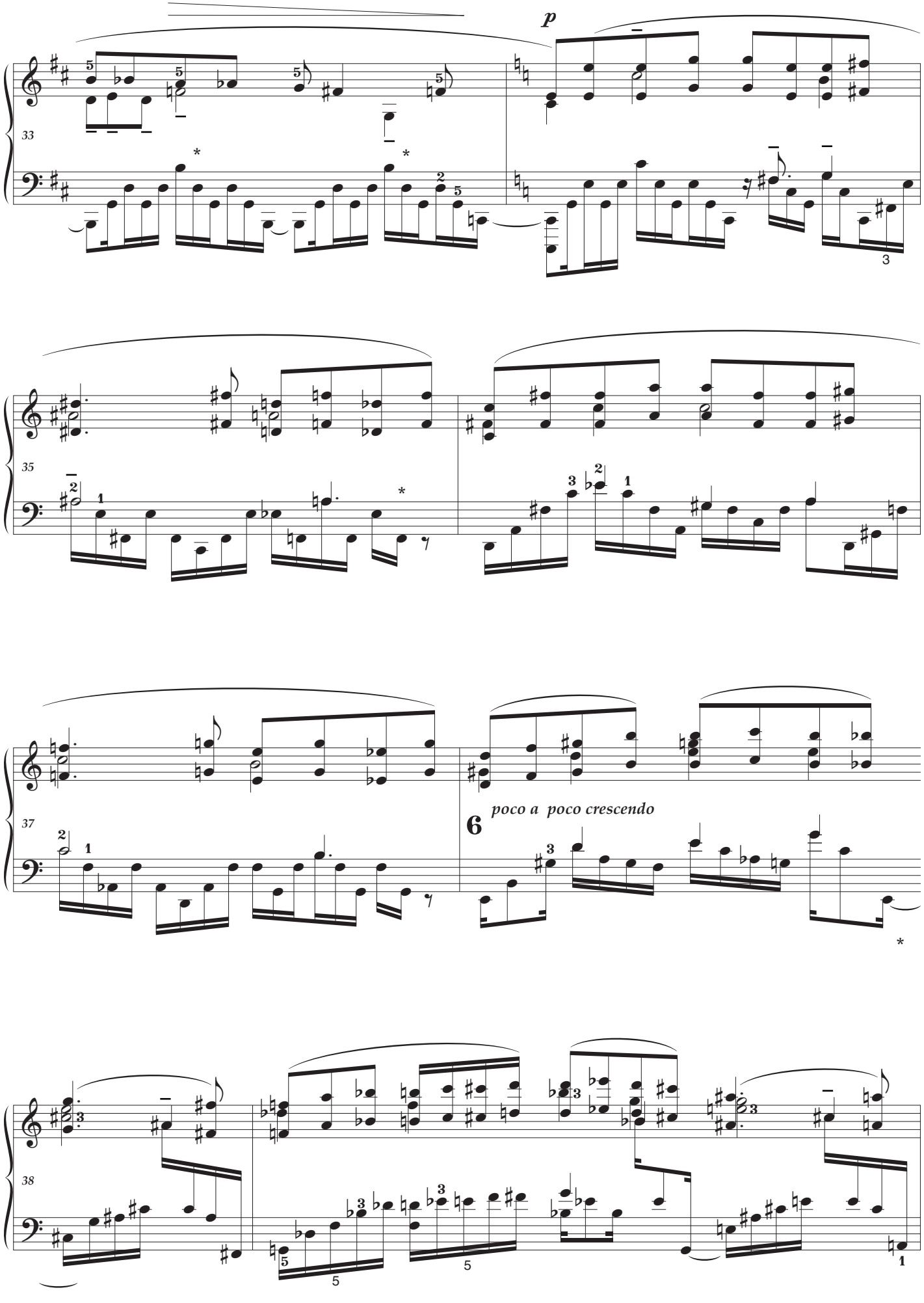
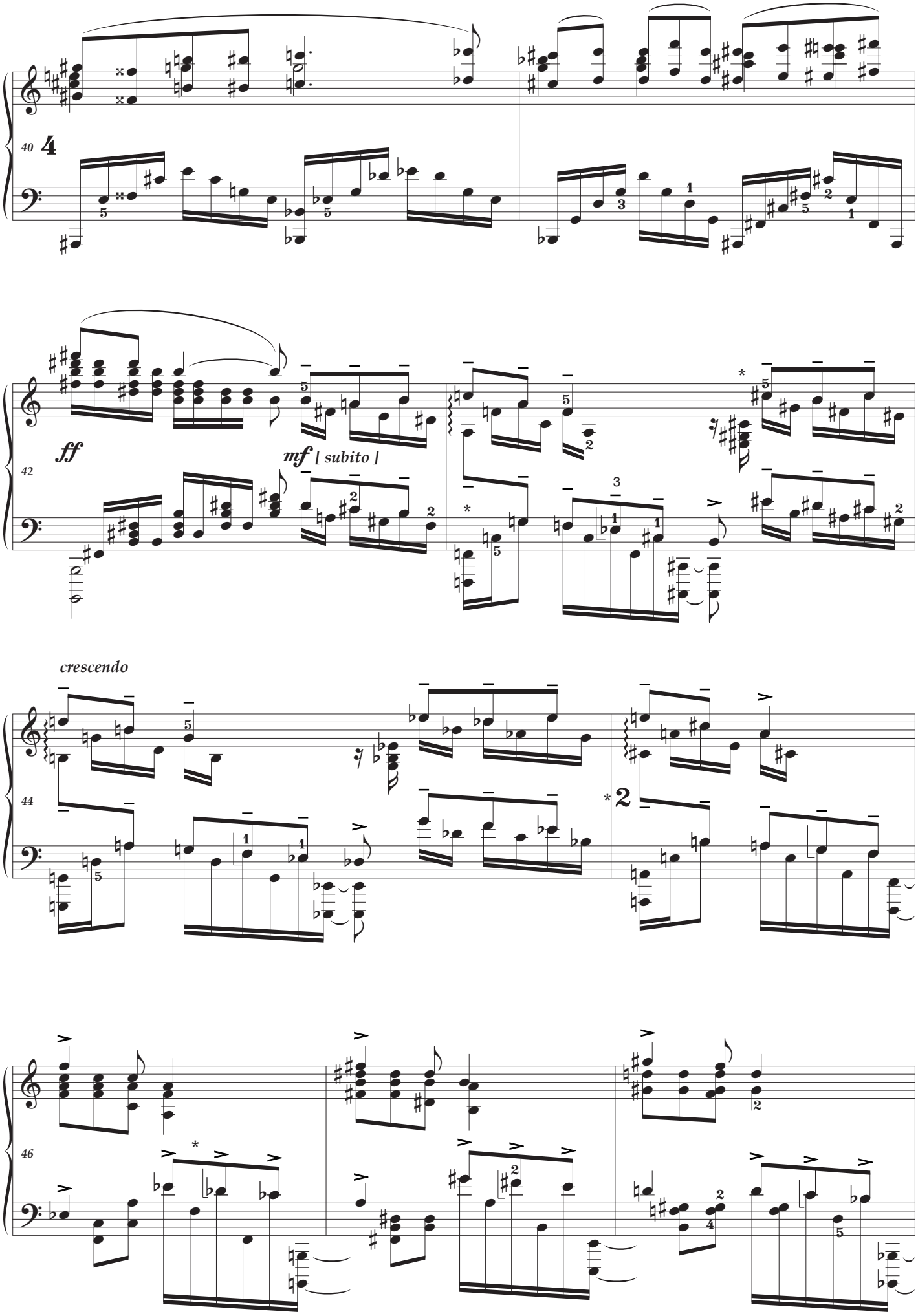
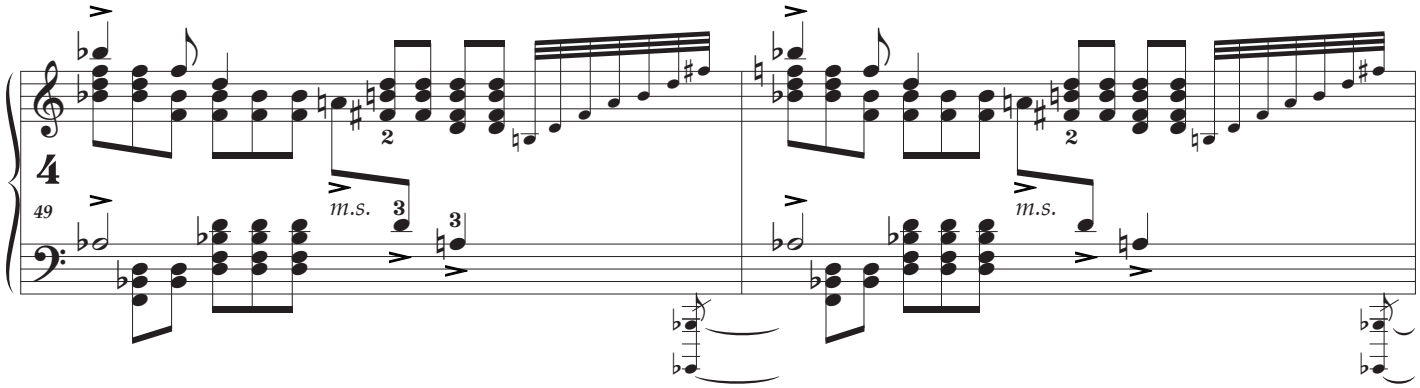
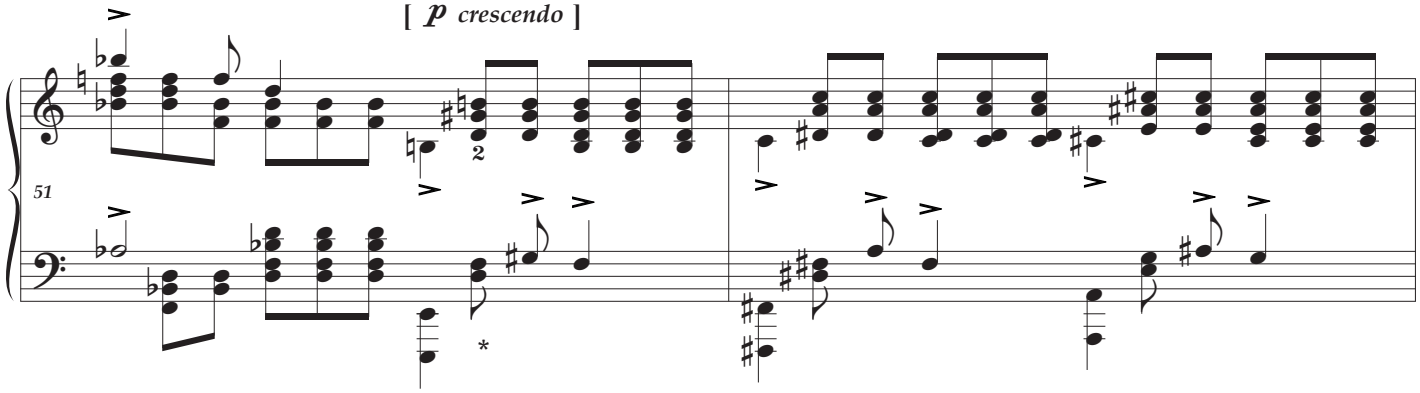
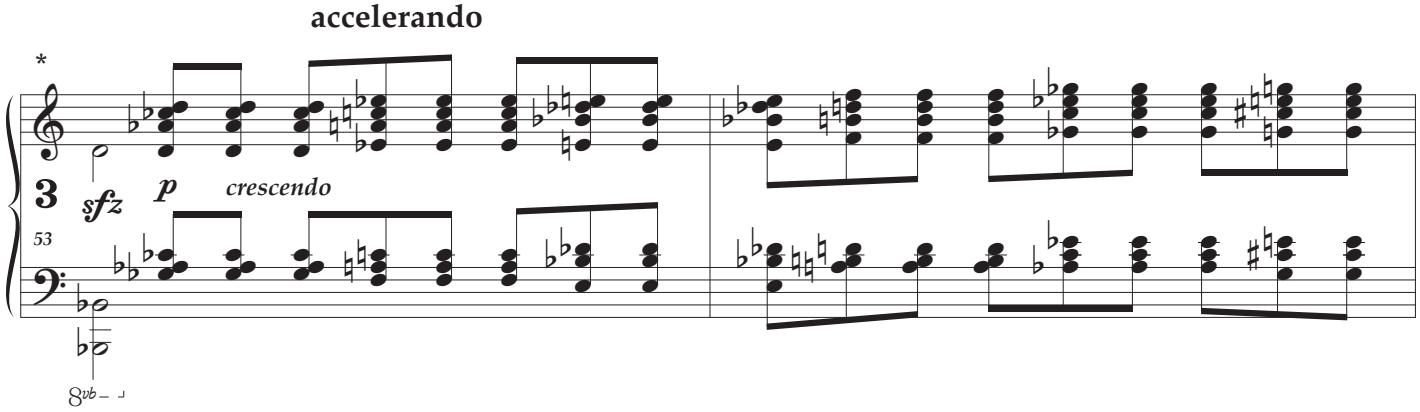

p
sotto
poco crescendo
mf
mf

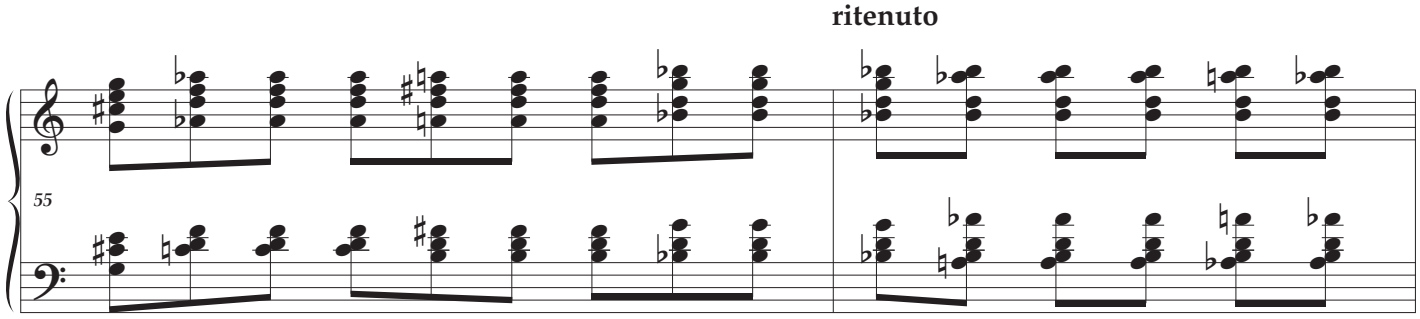

p
33
35
37
6
poco a poco crescendo
38

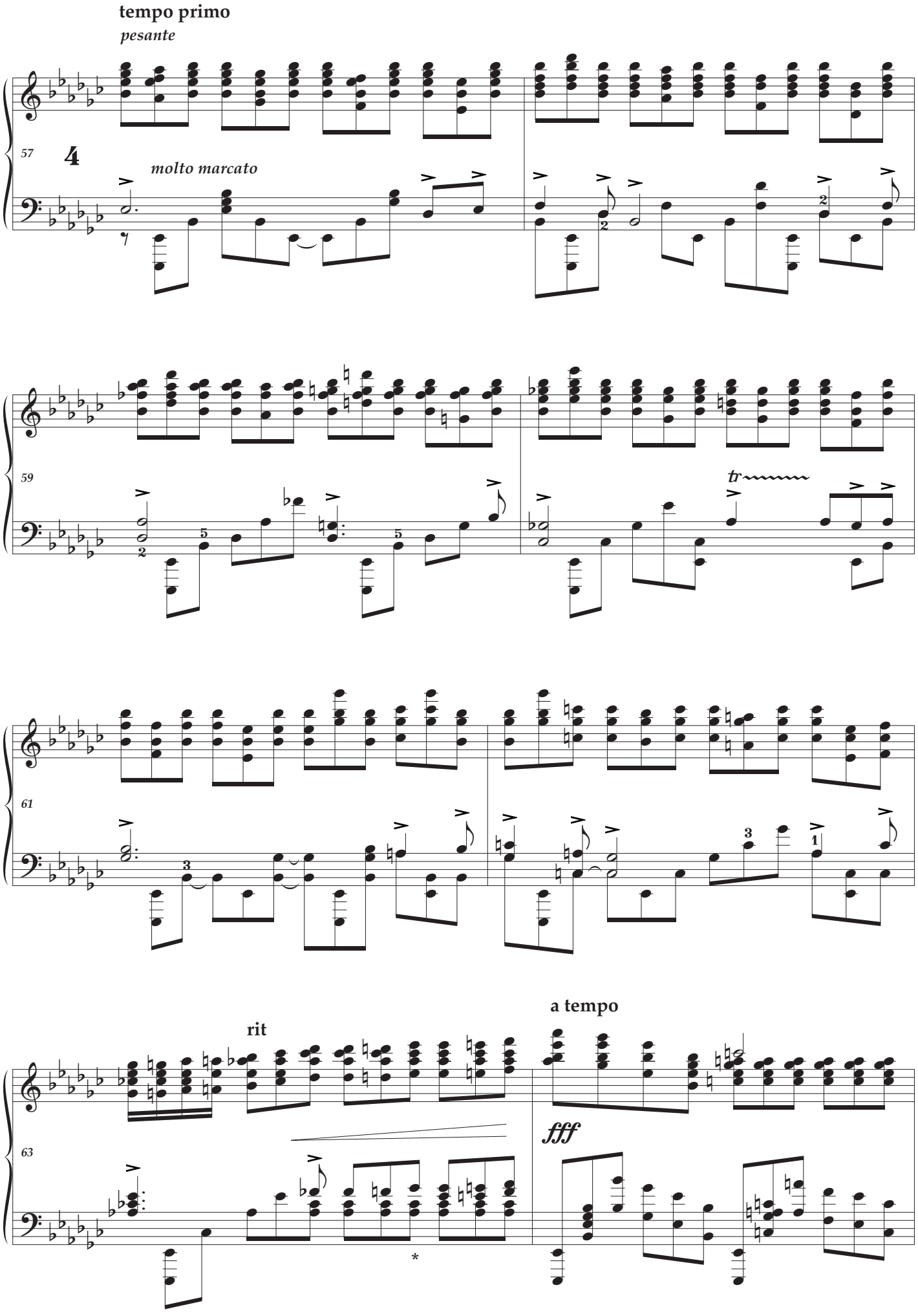

40
4
42
ff
mf [subito]
crescendo
44
2
46

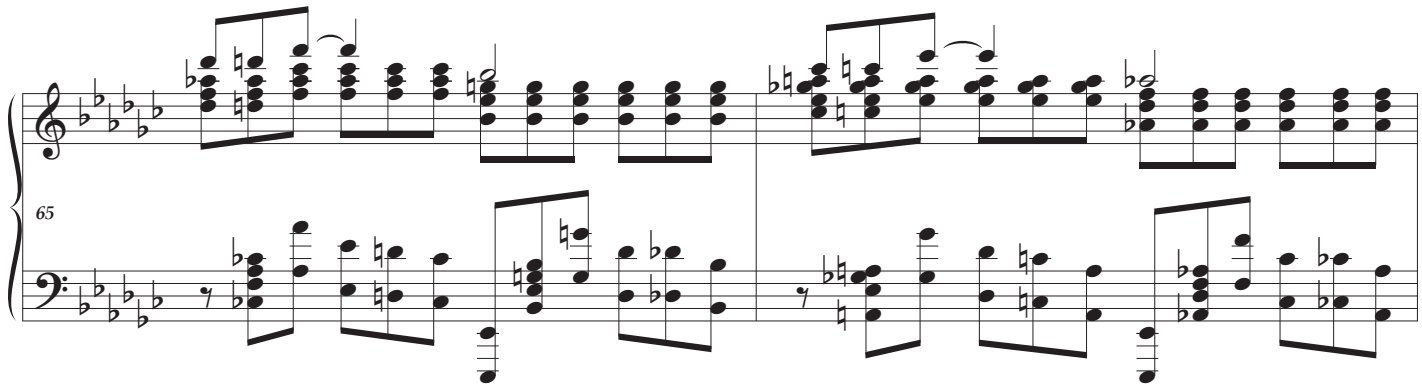

4
49
m.s.
m.s.


[p crescendo]
51


accelerando
*
3
sfz
p
crescendo
53
8vb


ritenuto
55


tempo primo
pesante
57
4
molto marcato
59
tr
61
rit
a tempo
63
fff
*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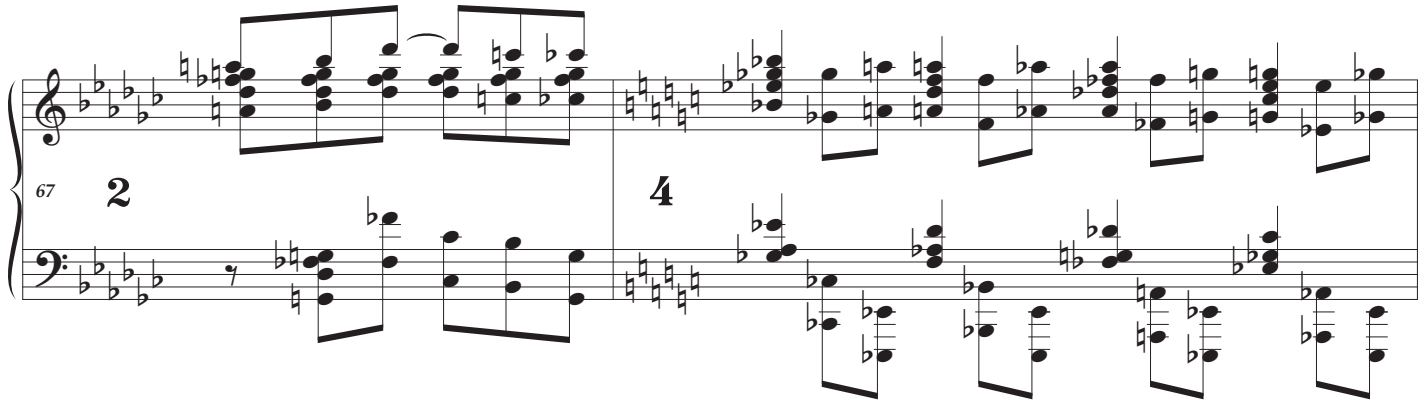
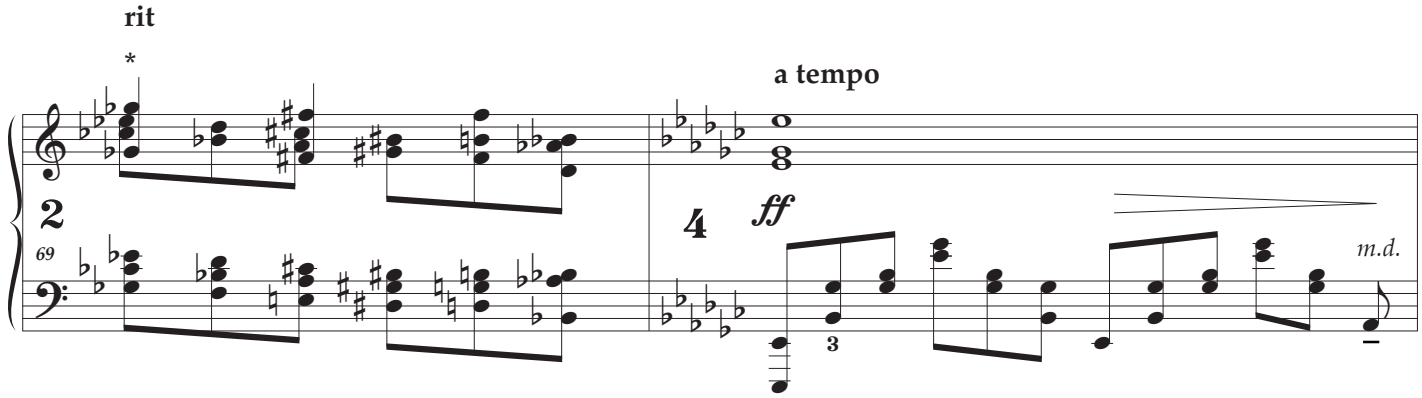
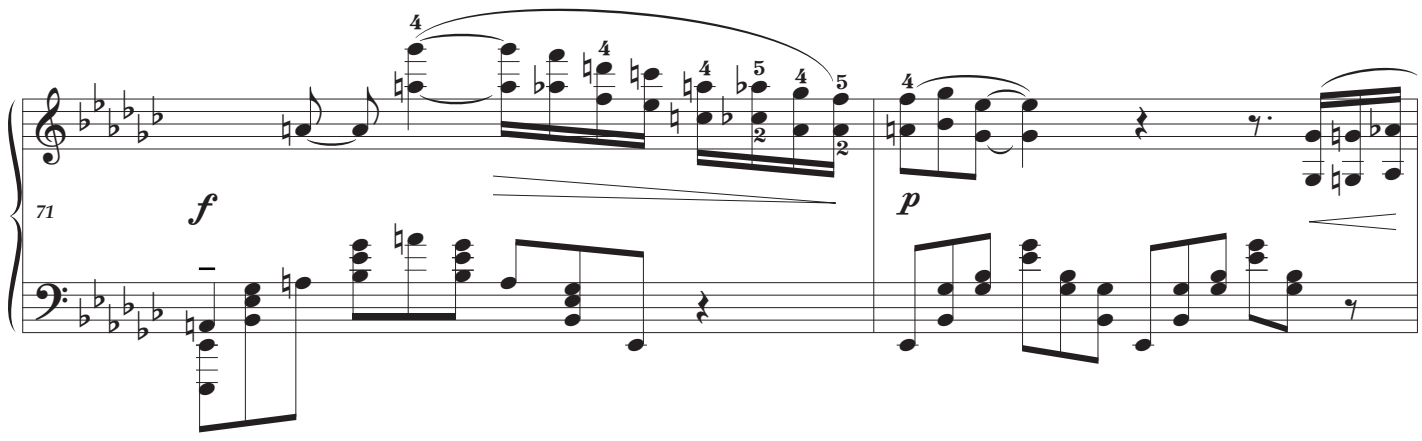
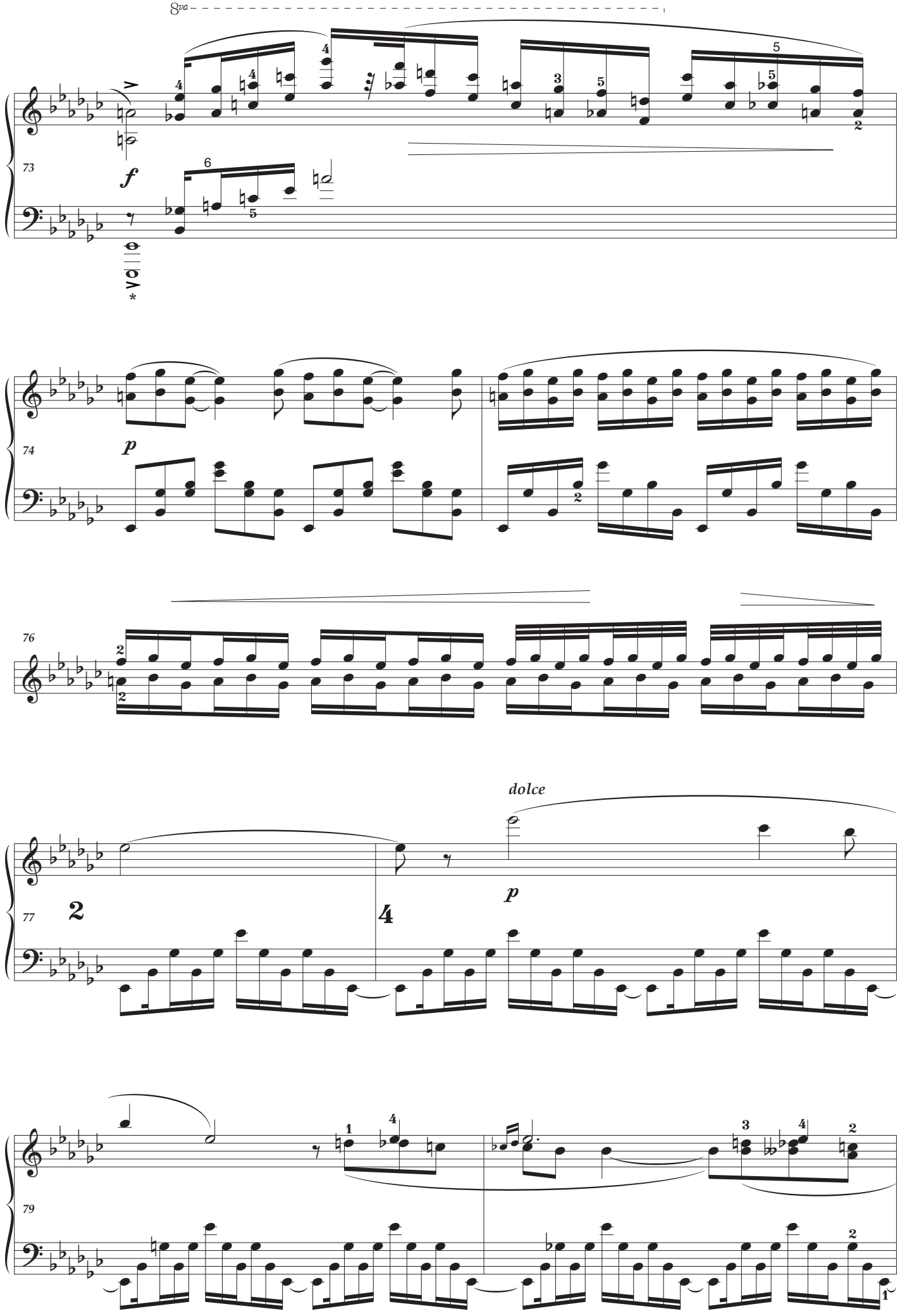
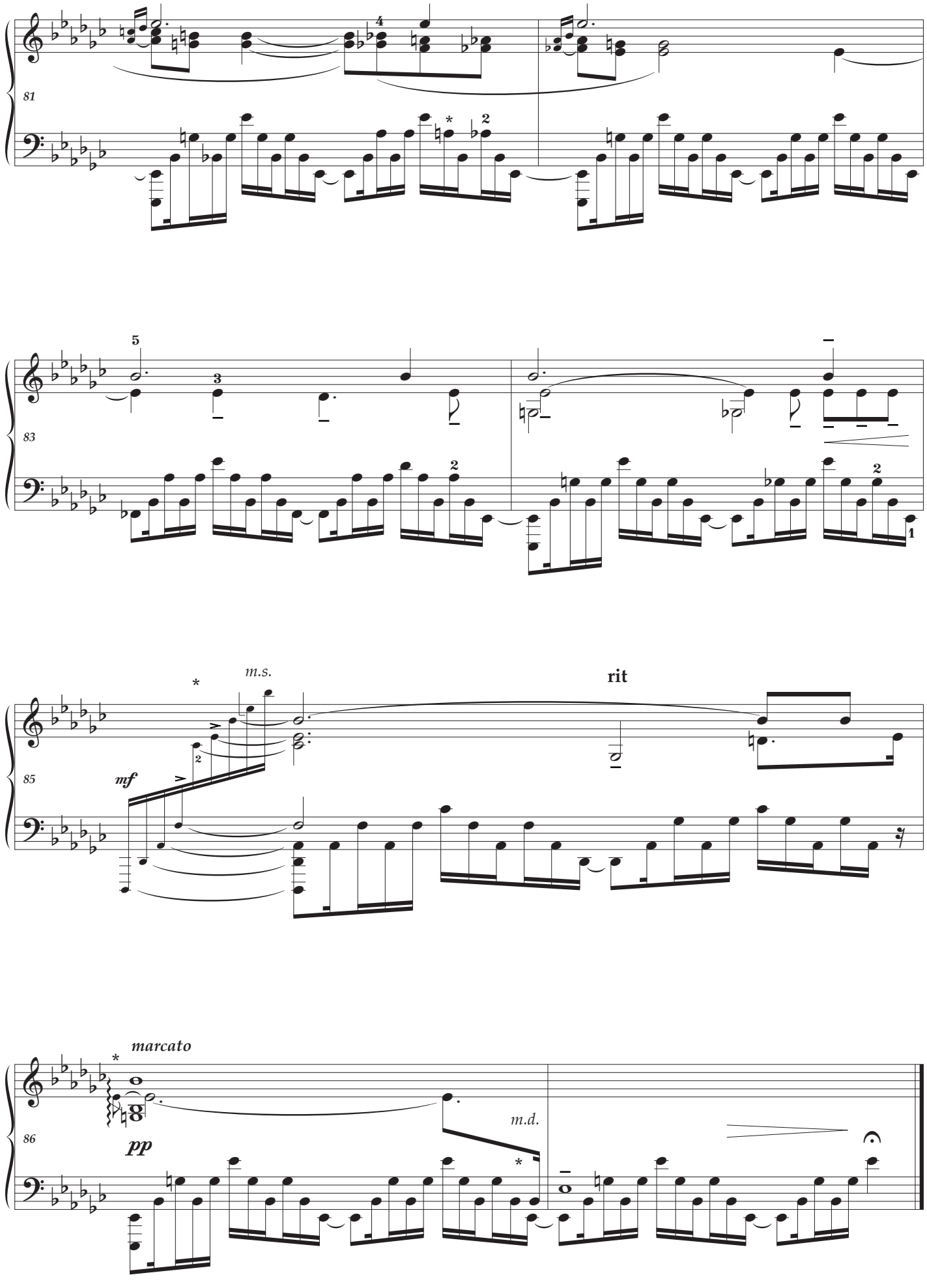

67
2
4


rit
*
a tempo
2
69
4
ff
m.d.


71
f
p


8va
73
f
74
p
76
77
2
4
dolce
p
79


81
83
85
m.s.
mf
rit
marcato
pp
m.d.
86

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