Maurice RAVEL

the complete works for piano

Maurice Ravel

GASPARD de la NUIT

3 Poèmes pour Piano
d'après Aloysius BERTRAND

I ONDINE
II LE GIBET
III SCARBO

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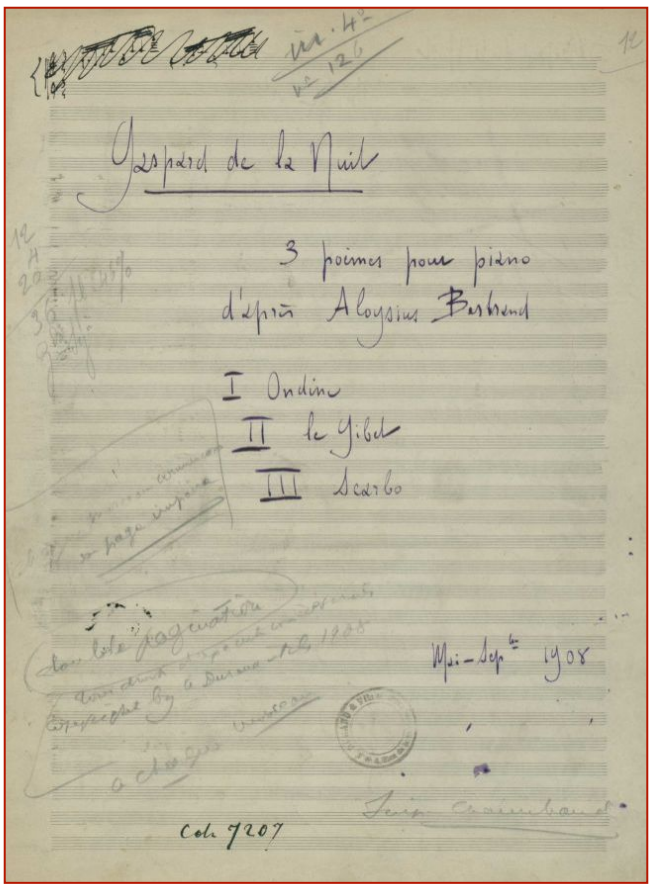
Maurice RAVEL 1875 - 1937

GASPARD de la NUIT

3 poèmes pour piano
d'après Aloysius BERTRAND

I ONDINE 1
II LE GIBET 17
III SCARBO 26

Published in 1909 *Gaspard de la Nuit* is considered to be the most beautiful, masterly and challenging of all Ravel's *œuvre* for piano. The poet Aloysius Bertrand* (1807— 1841), alchemist of irony and speech, whose only collection, *Gaspard de la Nuit* had just been reedited in 1908 by the *Mercure de France*, seduced Ravel, who immediately and dramatically changed his pianistic style: from the infantile Mother Goose (1908) to the fantastic, from extreme simplicity to extreme virtuosity, and to transpose as if for a wager the spell of prose poetry into the wizardry of the keyboard. Ravel confided that he wished to compose a work of transcendental virtuosity even more difficult than Balakirev's Islamey.



The poems themselves are expressed with strong creative imagination, and explore fantasies of medieval Europe — each prefaced by a short literary quotation.

The name "Gaspard" is derived from "Kaspur" or indeed "Casper", the biblical treasurer of the three wise men.

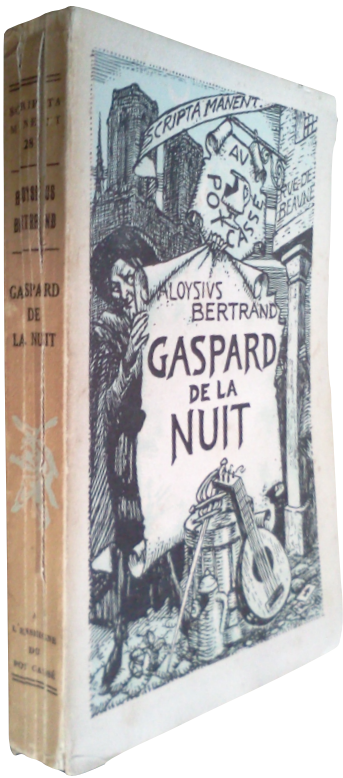
Of the work, Ravel himself said: "Gaspard has been a devil in coming, but that is only logical since it was he who is the author of the poems. My ambition is to say with notes what a poet expresses with words."

Alfred Cortot commented : "these three poems enrich the piano repertoire of our era by one of the most astonishing examples of instrumental resourcefulness that I have ever witnessed."

This is programme music *par excellence* and it is essential to assimilate the meaning of this fascinating literature. Although the three Bertrand poems chosen by Ravel are very diverse, they seem to make an almost perfect three movement sonata. My translations will no doubt help understanding their meaning, but anyone who wishes to know more of French language and culture would do well to make an effort to study them in the original language, even if some of the more arcane vocabulary is obscure.

***Louis Jacques Napoléon Bertrand** (pen name **Aloysius**) introduces his collection by attributing the poems to a mysterious old man who lends him a book in a Dijon park. When he goes in search of Mr Gaspard to return the volume, he asks — "Tell me where Mr Gaspard may be found?" "He is in hell, provided that he isn't somewhere else," comes the reply. "Ah! I am beginning to understand! What! *Gaspard de la Nuit* must be…?" the poet continues. "Ah! Yes... the devil!" his informant responds. "Thank you, *mon brave*!... If *Gaspard de la Nuit* is in hell, may he roast there. I shall publish his book."

Bertrand lived a few generations before Ravel but was a source of inspiration for Baudelaire and Mallarmé who in turn inspired Debussy and other 'impressionists'. Using imagery to create word pictures he was largely responsible for establishing the prose poem in French literature, leading subsequently to symbolism and eventually surrealism.



O N D I N E

à Harold BAUER

. . . . . Je croyais entendre
Une vague harmonie enchanter mon sommeil.
Et près de moi s'épandre un murmure pareil
Aux chants entrecoupés d'une voix triste et tendre.

. . . . . I thought I could hear
A vague harmony enrapture my slumber.
And close to me arose a whisper similar
To songs interrupted by a forlorn and tender voice.

Ch. Brugnot (Les deux Génies)
(The two Spirits)

— «Écoute ! — Écoute ! — C'est moi, c'est Ondine qui frôle de ces gouttes d'eau les losanges sonores de ta fenêtre illuminée par les mornes rayons de la lune ; et voici, en robe de moire, la dame châtelaine qui contemple à son balcon la belle nuit étoilée et le beau lac endormi.

«Chaque flot est un ondin qui nage dans le courant, chaque courant est un sentier qui serpente vers mon palais, et mon palais est bâti fluide, au fond du lac, dans le triangle du feu, de la terre et de l'air.

— «Écoute ! — Écoute ! — Mon père bat l'eau coassante d'une branche d'aulne verte, et mes sœurs caressent de leurs bras d'écume les fraîches îles d'herbes, de nénuphars et de glaïeuls, ou se moquent du saule caduc et barbu qui pêche à la ligne.»

*

Sa chanson murmurée, elle me supplia de recevoir son anneau à mon doigt, pour être l'époux d'une Ondine, et de visiter avec elle son palais, pour être le roi des lacs.

Et comme je lui répondais que j'aimais une mortelle, boudeuse et dépitée, elle pleura quelques larmes, poussa un éclat de rire, et s'évanouit, en giboulées qui ruisselèrent blanches le long de mes vitraux bleus.

— «Hark! — Hark! — It is I, Undine* caressing with these drops of water the sonorous lattices of your window lit by the pale rays of the moon; and here, from her balcony on a beautiful starlit night, in a gown of shimmering silk, '*la dame châtelaine*' contemplates the lovely sleeping lake.

«Each ripple is a water-nymph who swims in the current, each current of each stream winds towards my palace, and my palace is a watery realm deep in the lake, in the triangle of fire, earth and air.

— «Hark! — Hark! My father stirs the gurgling stream with a green alder branch, and with foamy arms my sisters embrace cool isles of reeds, water lilies and gladioli, teasing the aged and bearded willow, line fishing.»

*

Her song whispered, she beseeched me to slip her ring upon my finger and become the spouse of an Undine, and together return to her palace to become king of the lakes.

And when I told her that I loved a mortal, she pouted as if vexed, wept a few tears, then burst into laughter, evaporating into a shower of raindrops, streaming white down the length of my blue stained glass windows.

* a water nymph

Dedicated to the pianist Harold Bauer, the music of *Ondine* follows almost verse by verse the essence of this fluid and seductive prose poem. It narrates the tale of the temptress *Ondine*, hauntingly irresistible and dangerous, who lures young men to their deaths, with provocative changes of mood, finally pouting and mocking before disappearing in a shower of raindrops.

Although *lent* is indicated, and indeed the recitative has a slow tempo, most of the accompanying arpeggios, scales and glissandi require nimble fingers, although the overall effect must sound quite effortless and without virtuosity. Therein lies the challenge of this wondrous work of pianistic art.

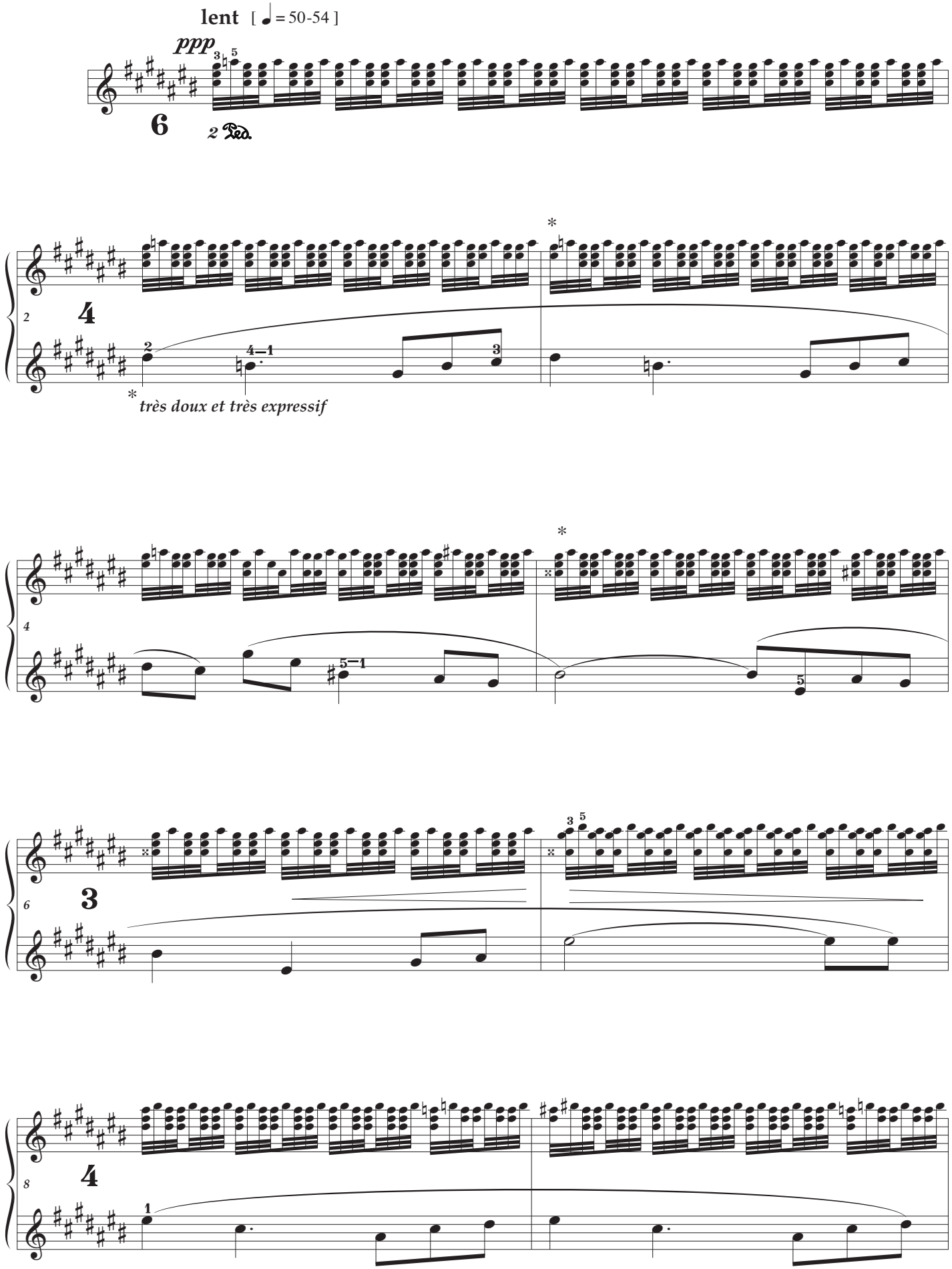
Ravel gives no metronome speeds and unlike the original edition, I have printed throughout noteheads of 80% for the element of water and 100% for the melody.

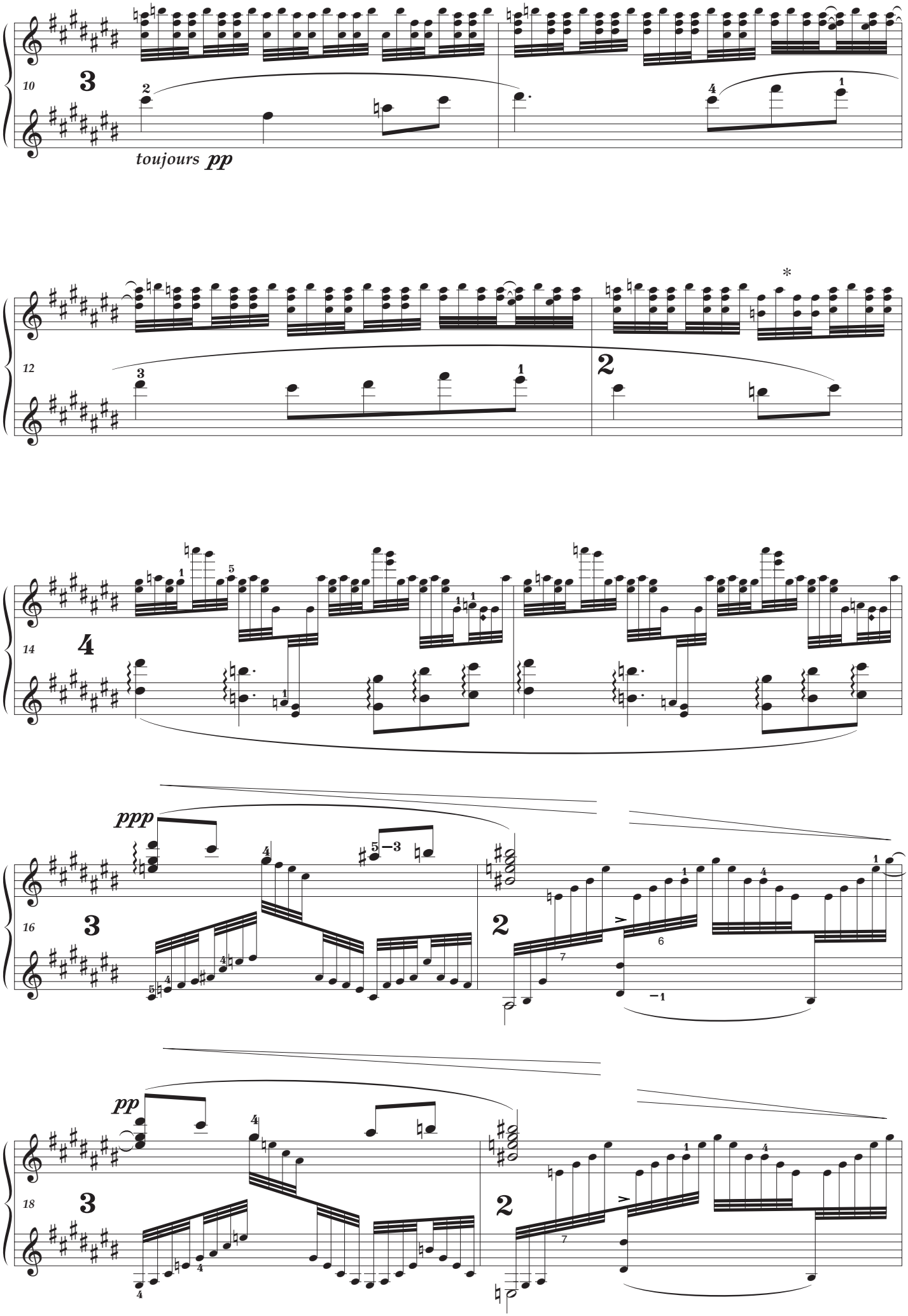
In addition to some suggested fingering, the appendix on page 60 contains comments, afterthoughts and a vocabulary. Redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive. Ravel uses the pedal sign sparingly, preferring extended ties or long bass notes, impossible to hold otherwise. It is possible to use the *sostenuto* pedal effectively from time to time, although this is entirely editorial.

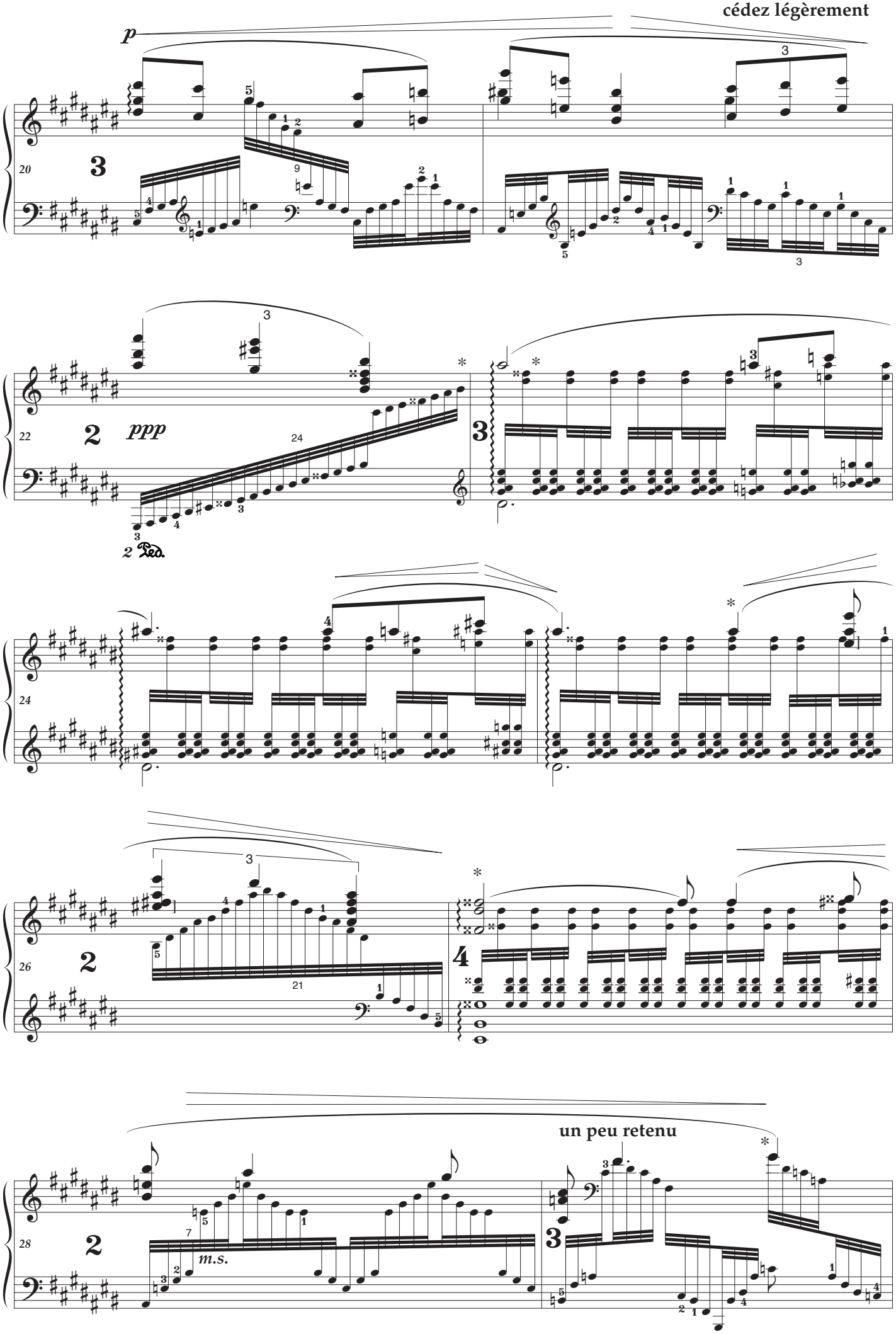
ARTHUR RACKHAM *UNDINE*

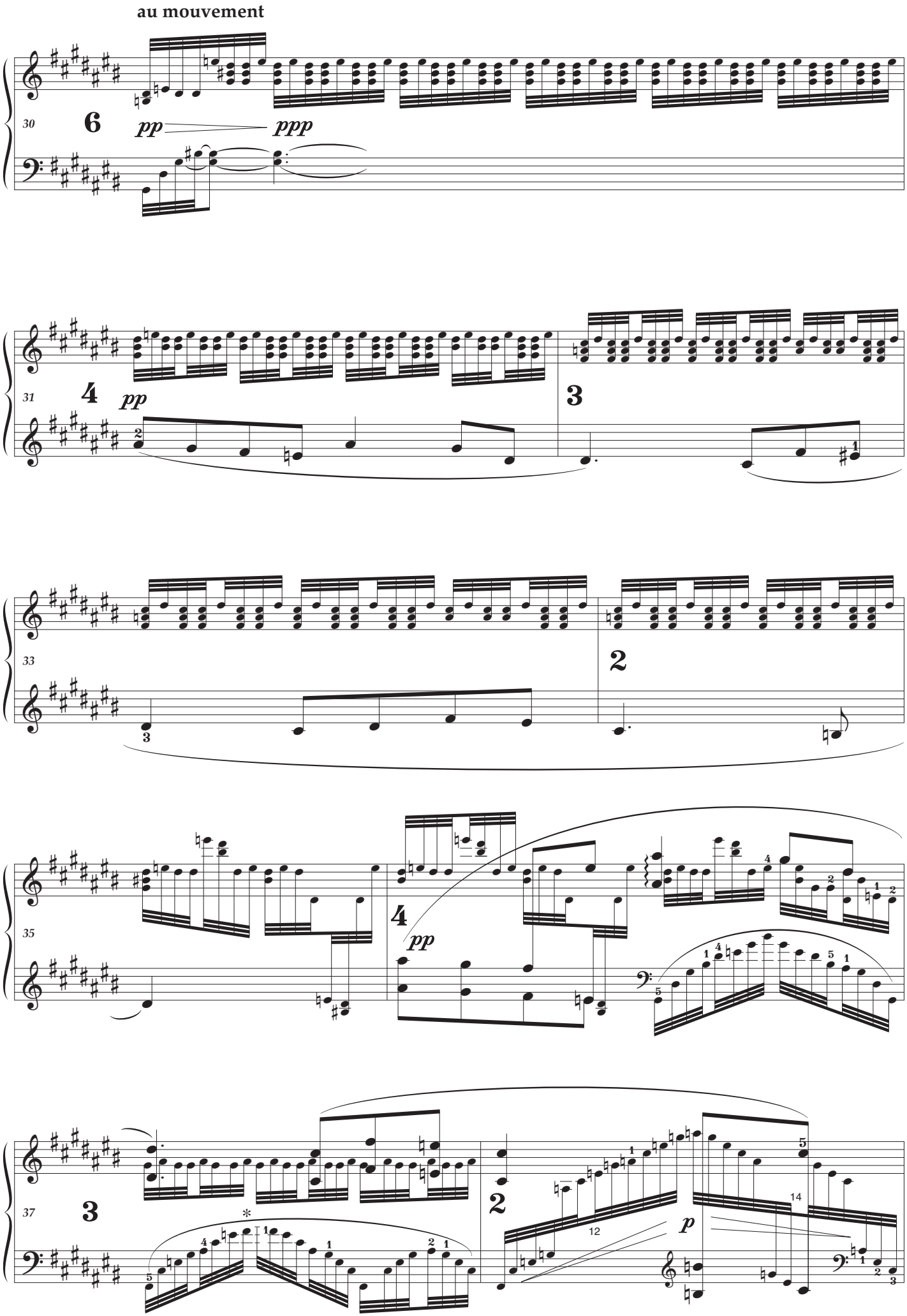
à HAROLD BAUER

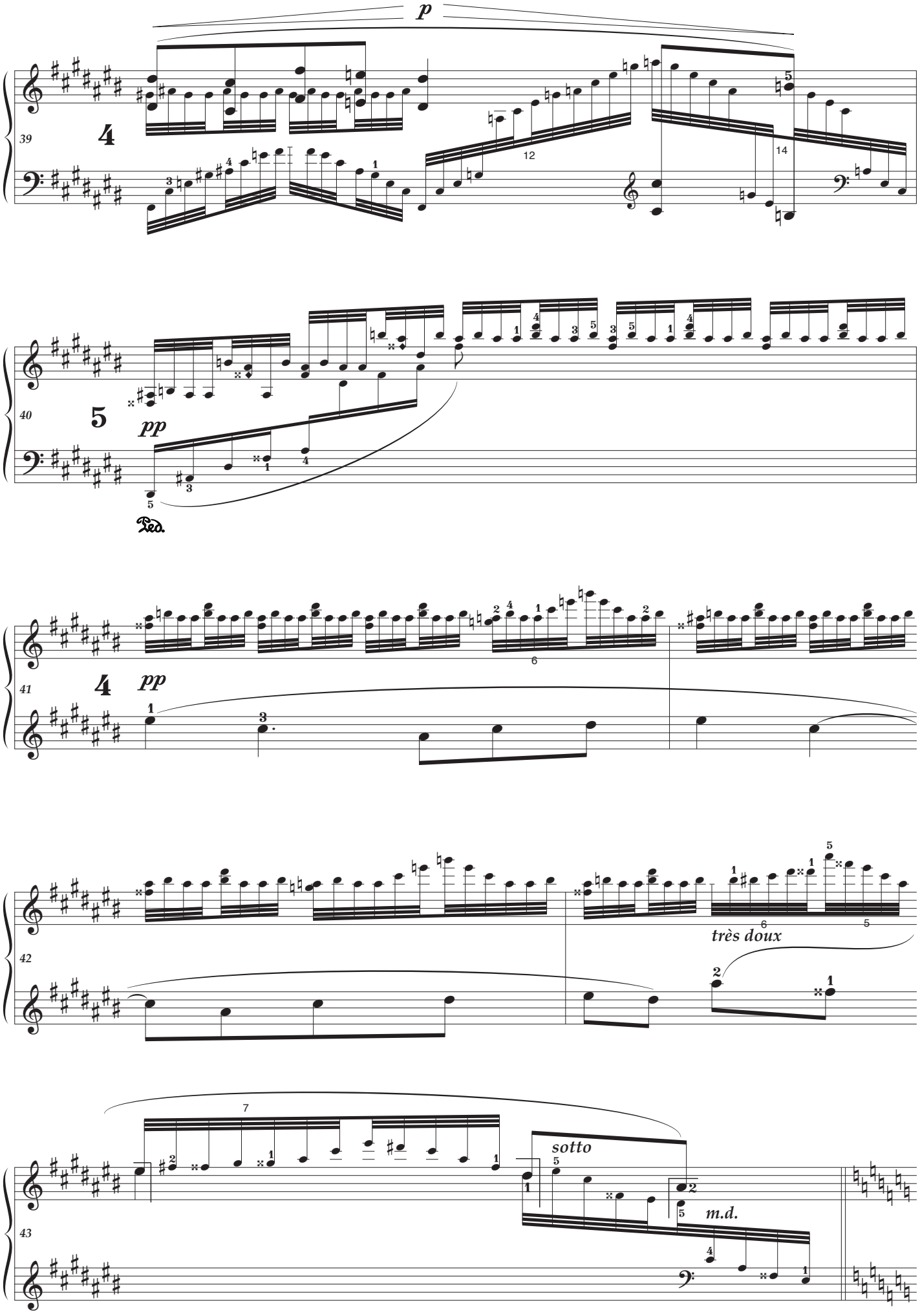
ONDINE

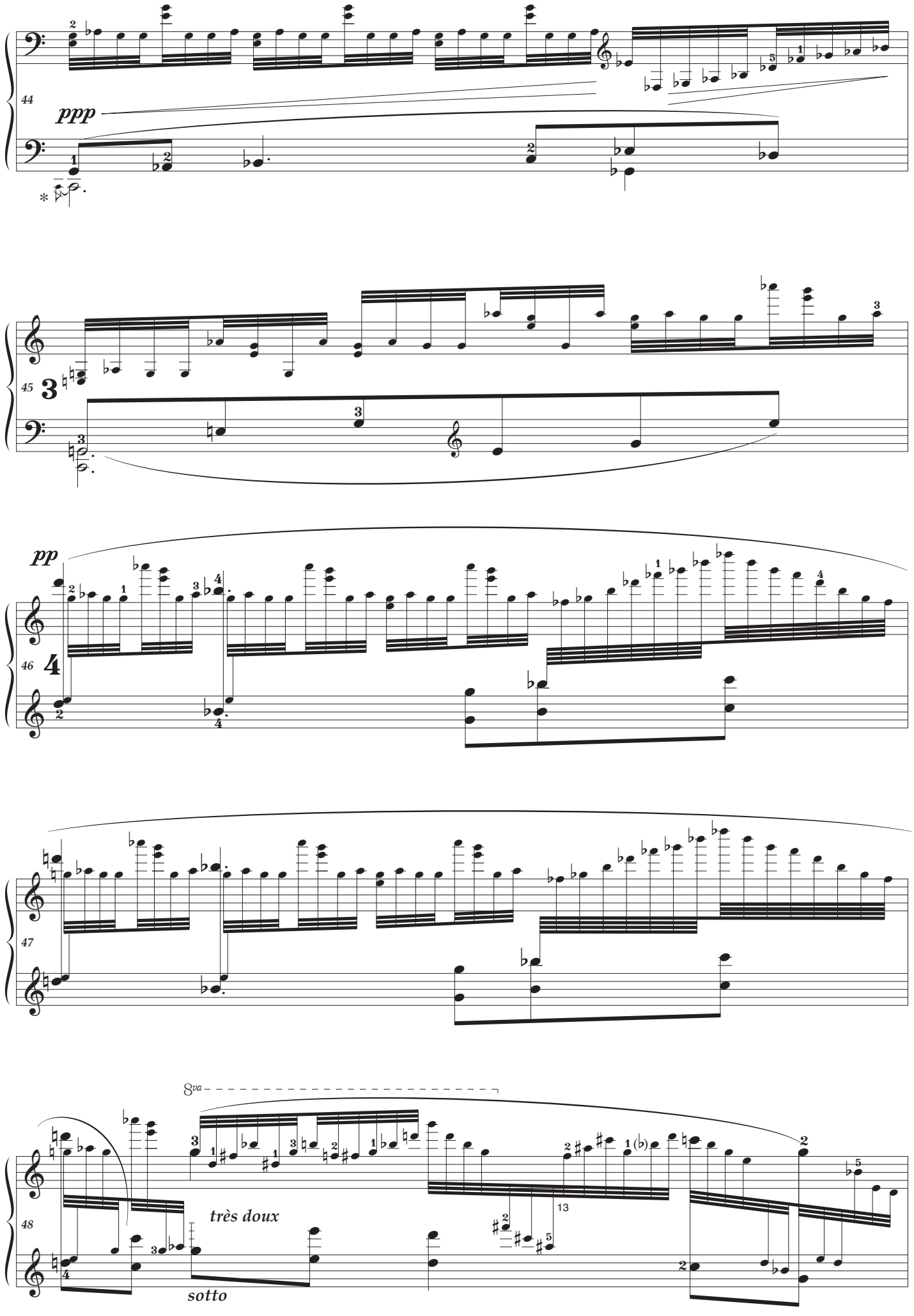


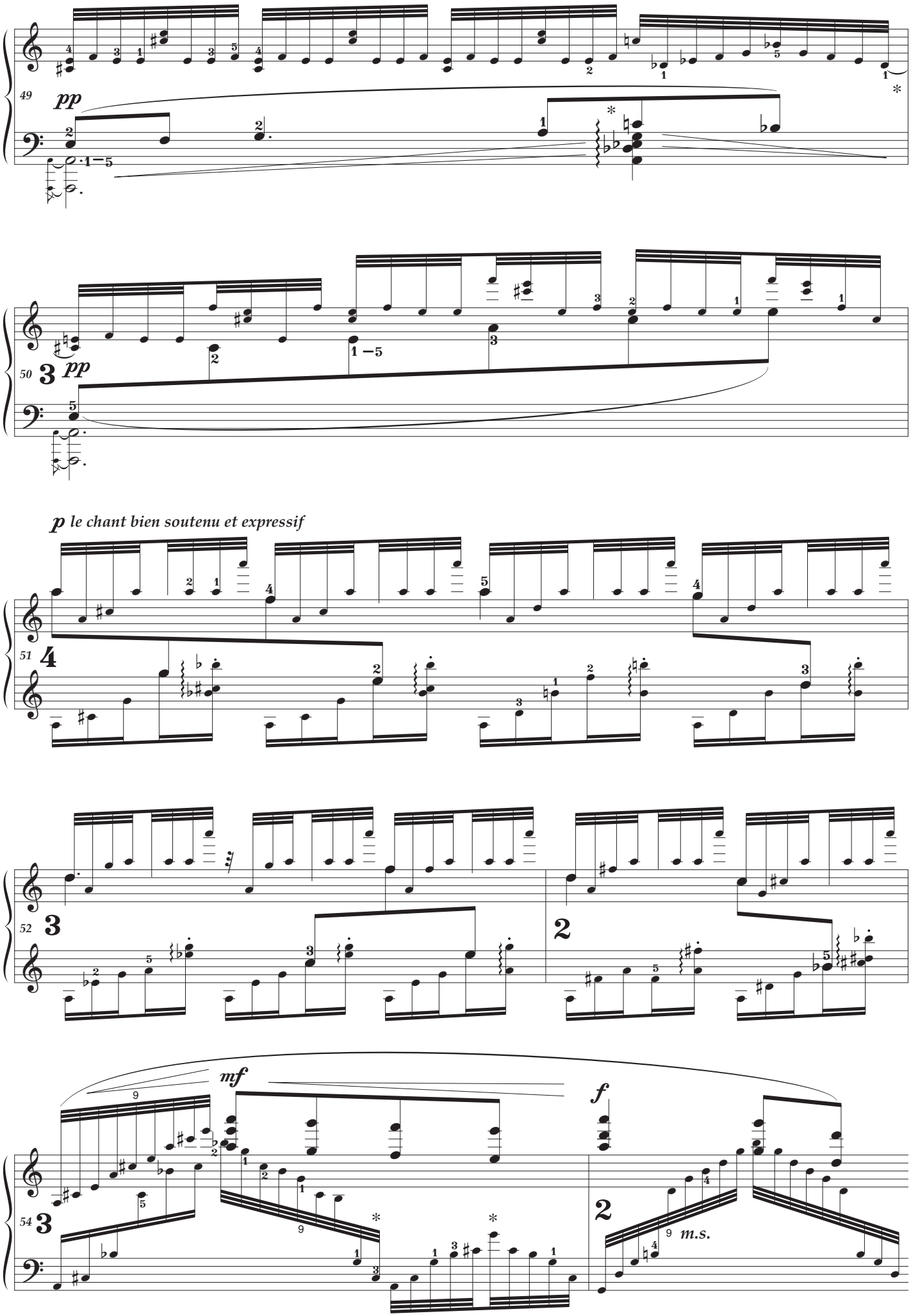

10
toujours pp
12
14
16
ppp
18
pp

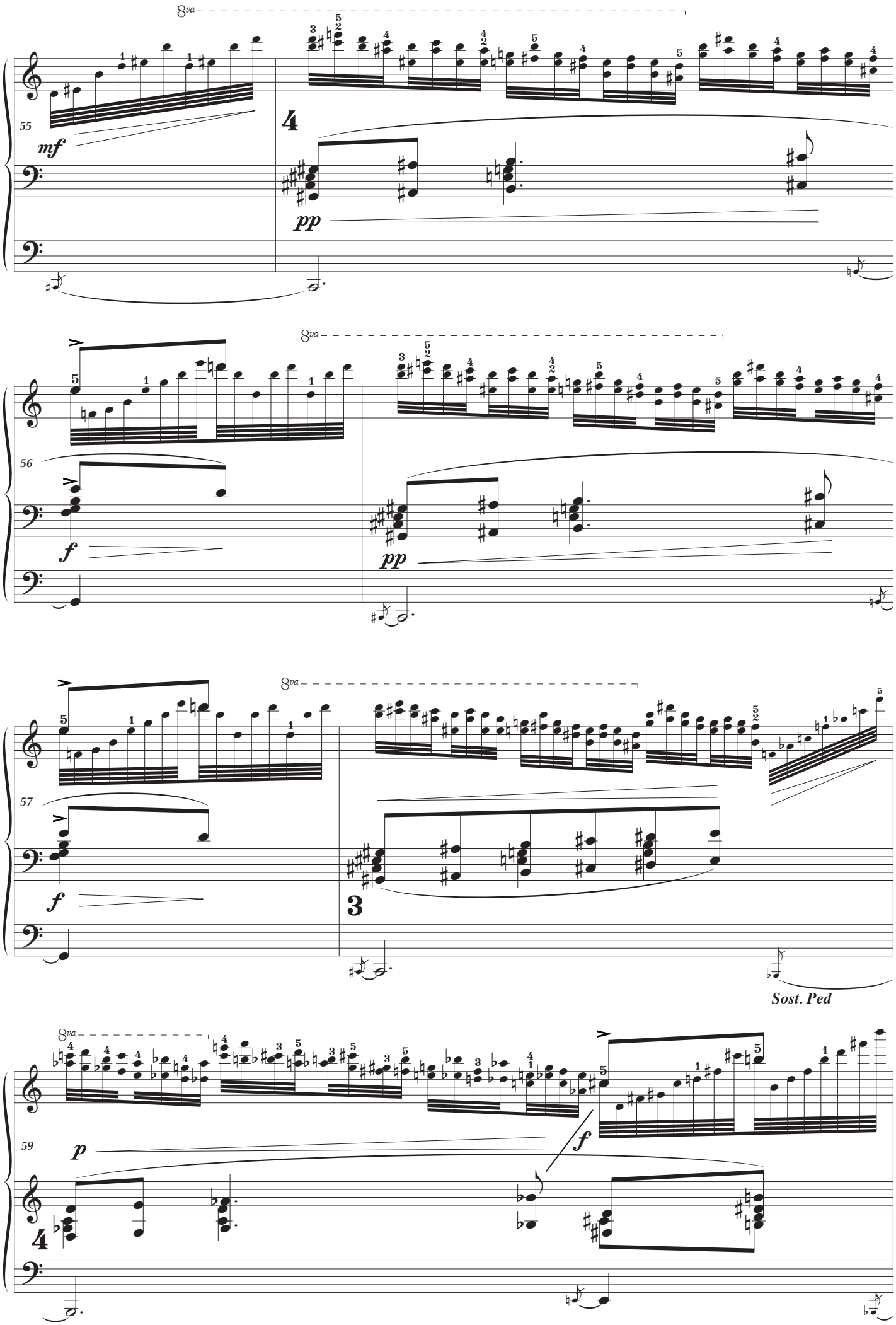

cédez légèrement
p
ppp
Ped.
un peu retenu
m.s.

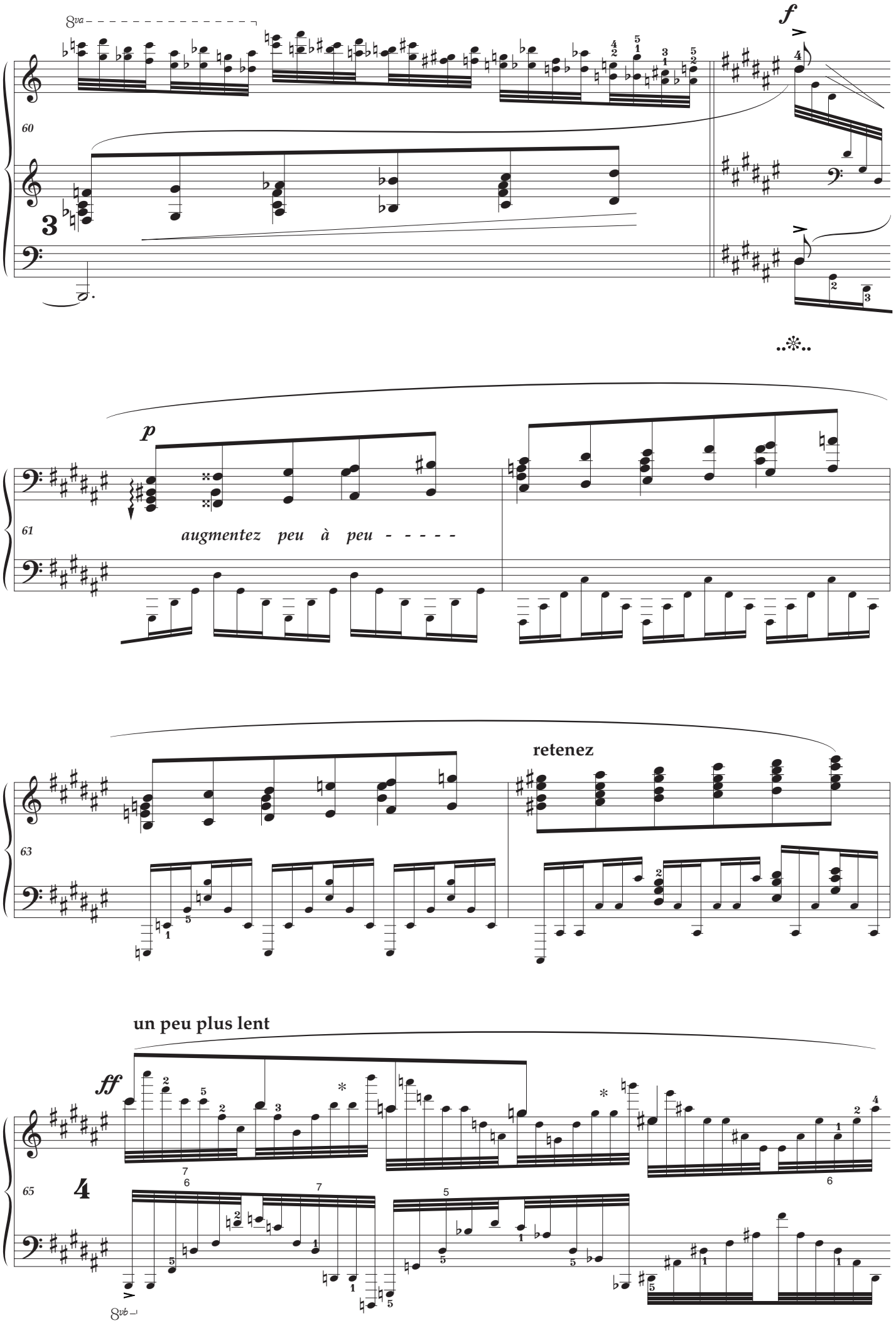

au mouvement
30
6
pp
ppp
31
4
pp
3
33
3
2
35
4
pp
37
3
*
2
12
p
14

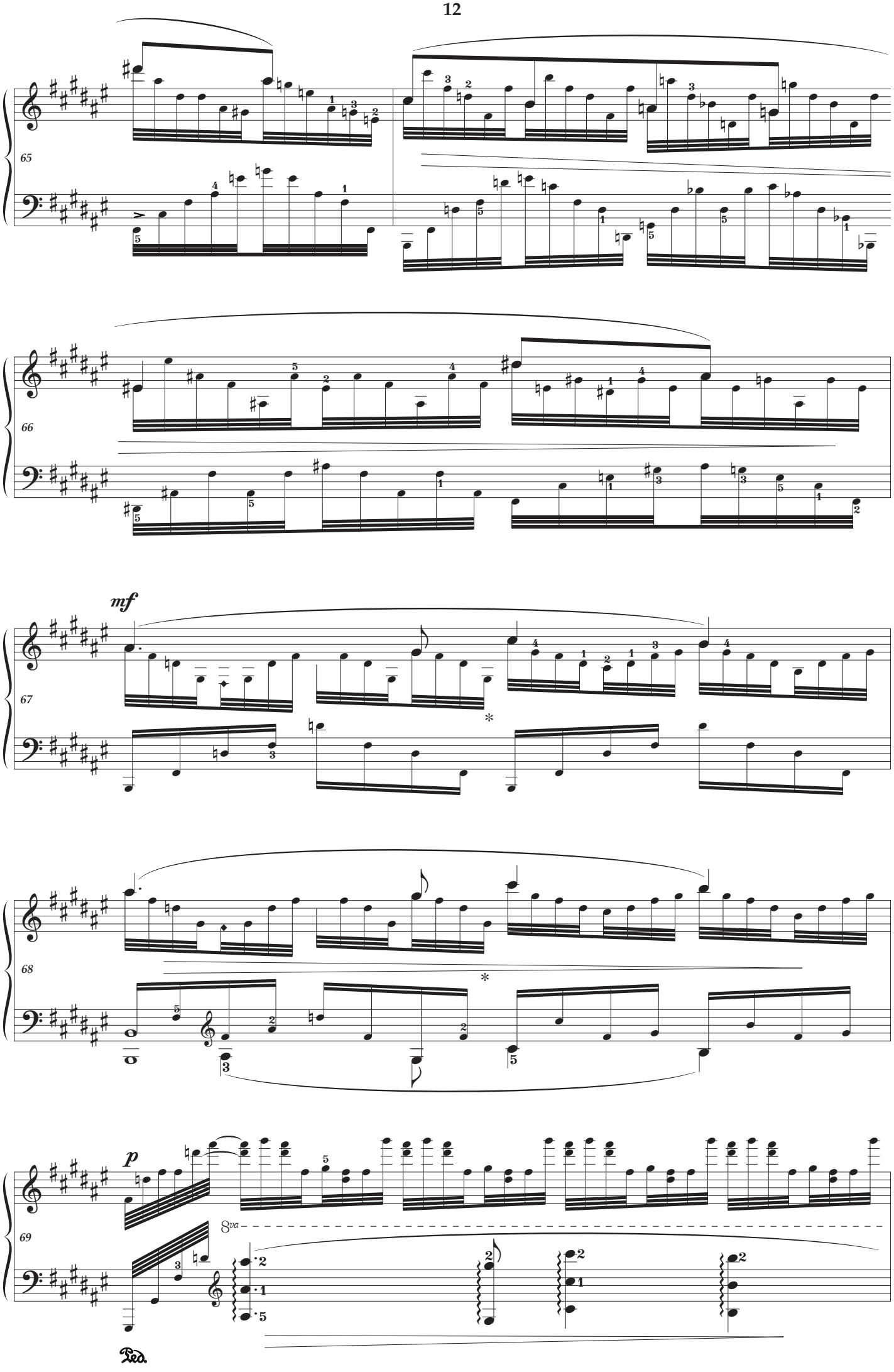

p
39
4
12
14
5
40
5
pp
Ped.
41
4
pp
6
42
très doux
6
5
43
7
sotto
m.d.

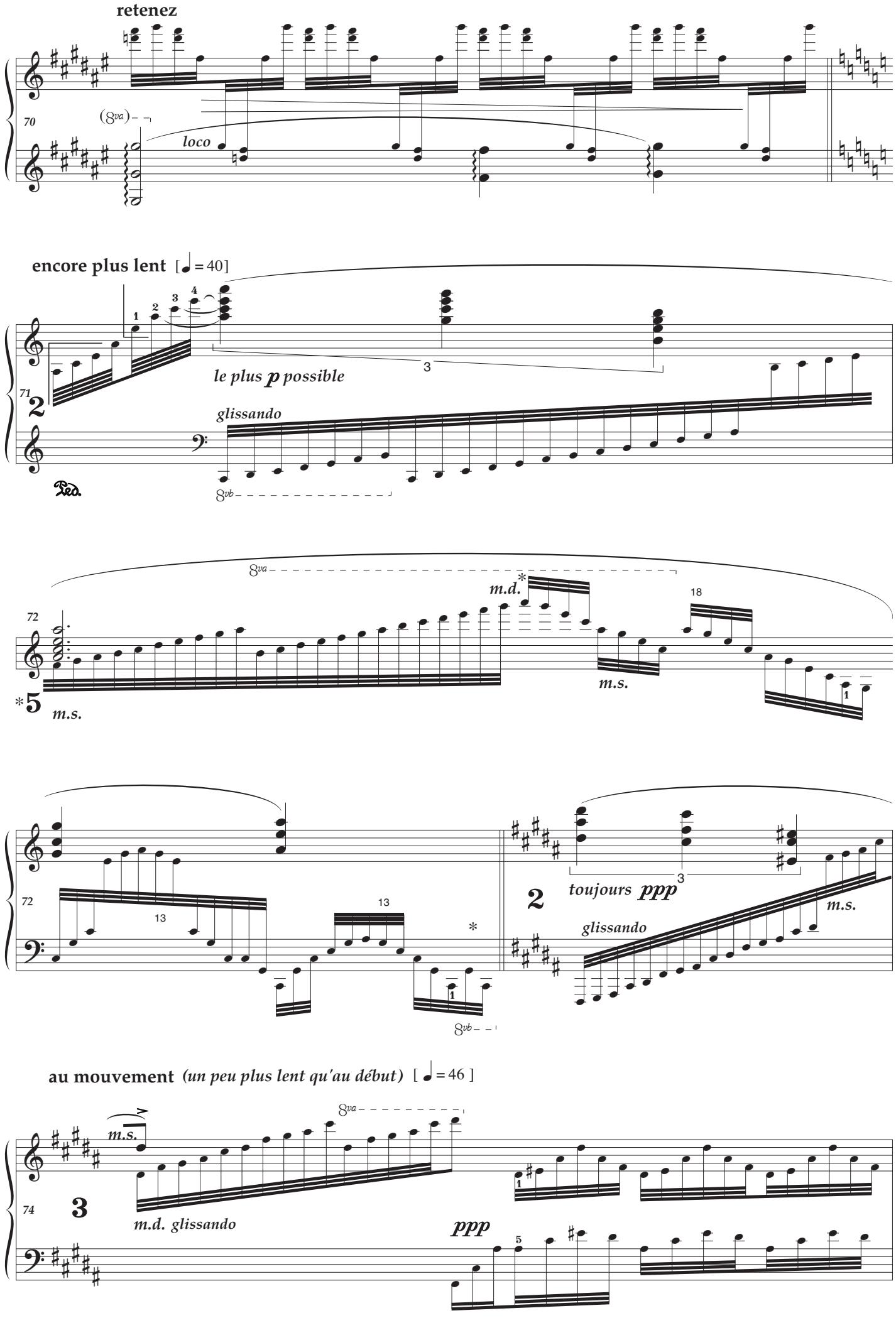

44
ppp
45
3
46
4
pp
47
48
8va
très doux
sotto

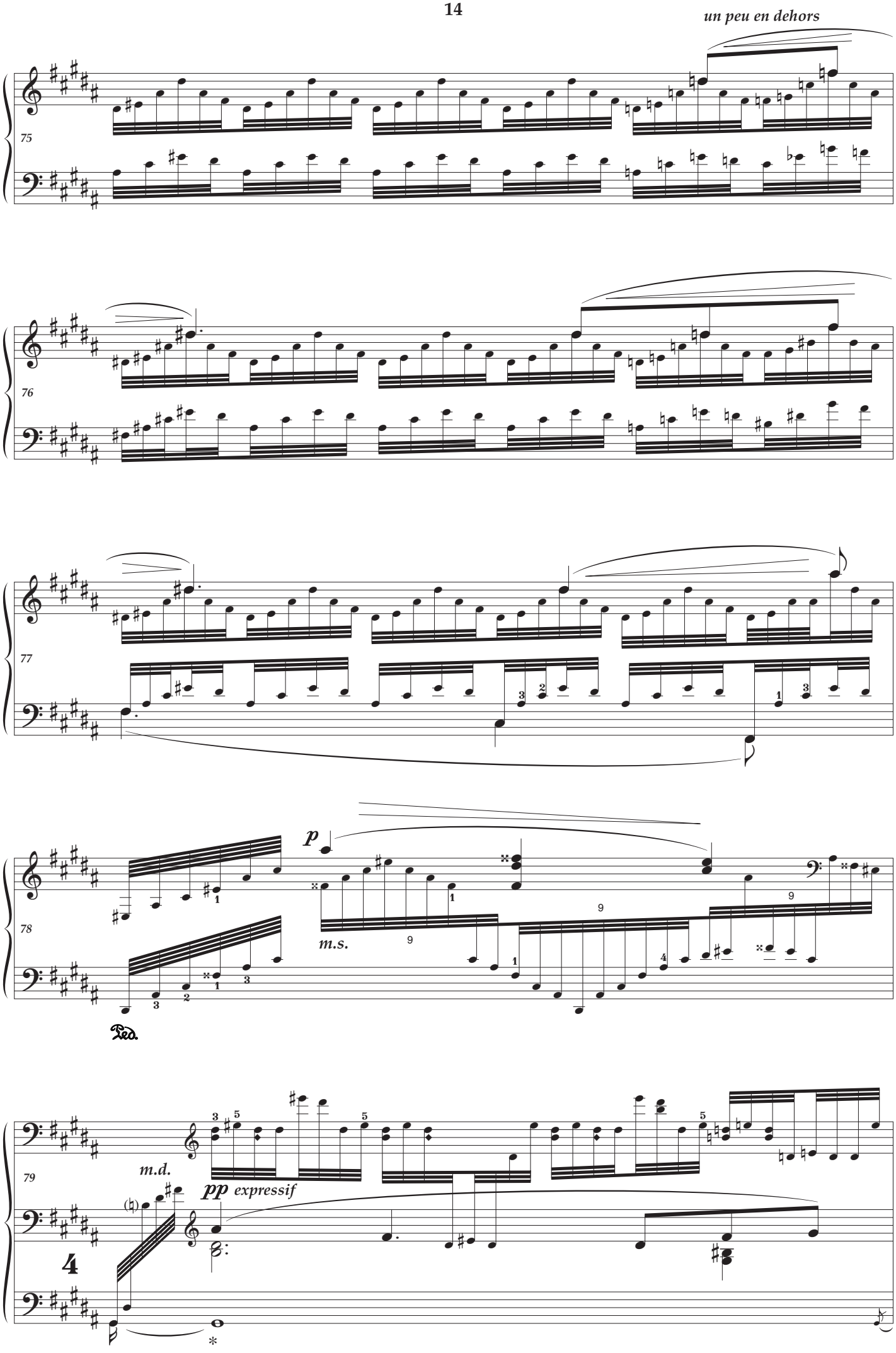

49
pp
50
3
pp
p le chant bien soutenu et expressif
51
4
52
3
2
54
3
mf
f
2
m.s.

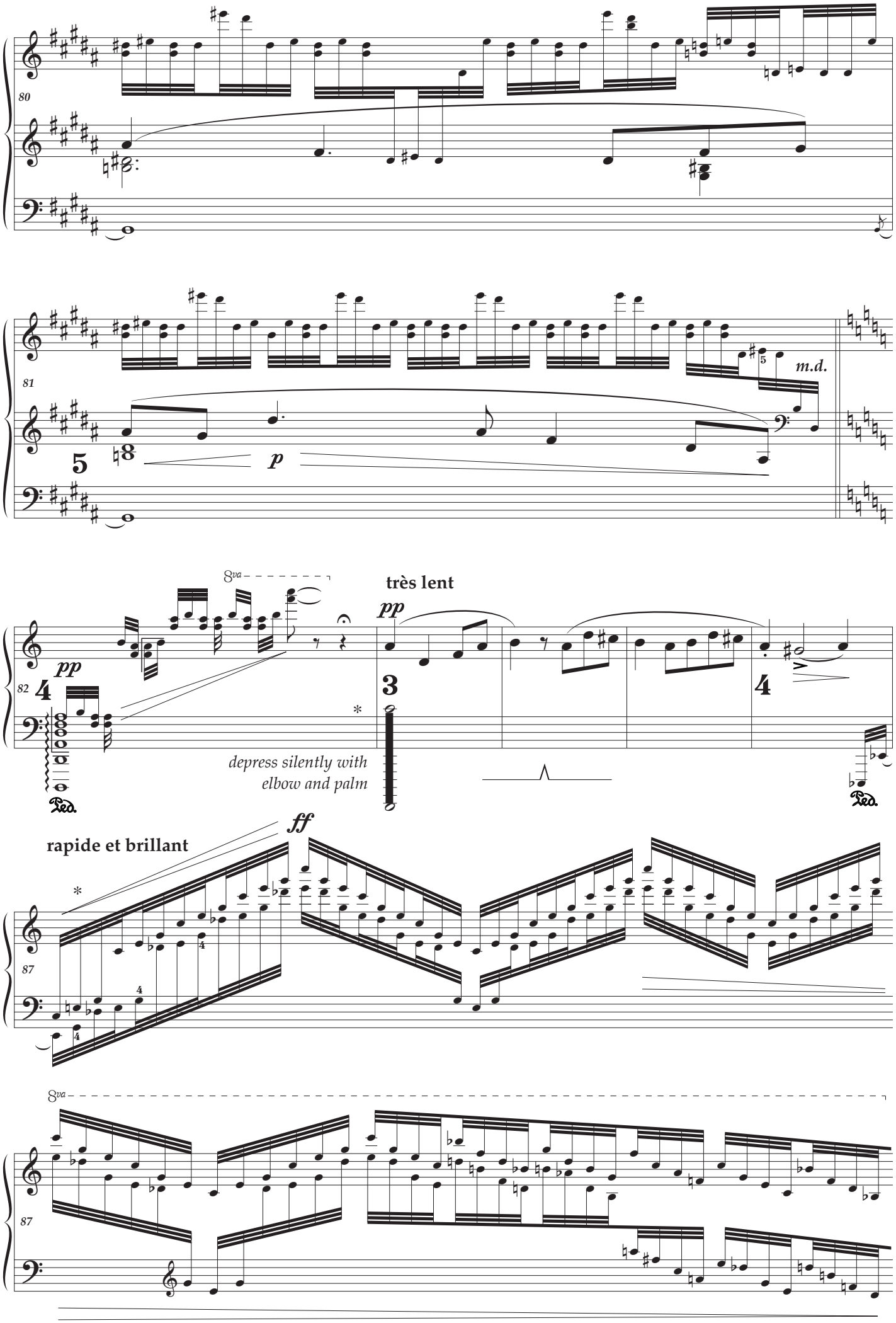

8va
55
mf
4
pp
8va
56
f
pp
8va
57
f
3
Sost. Ped
8va
59
p
4
f

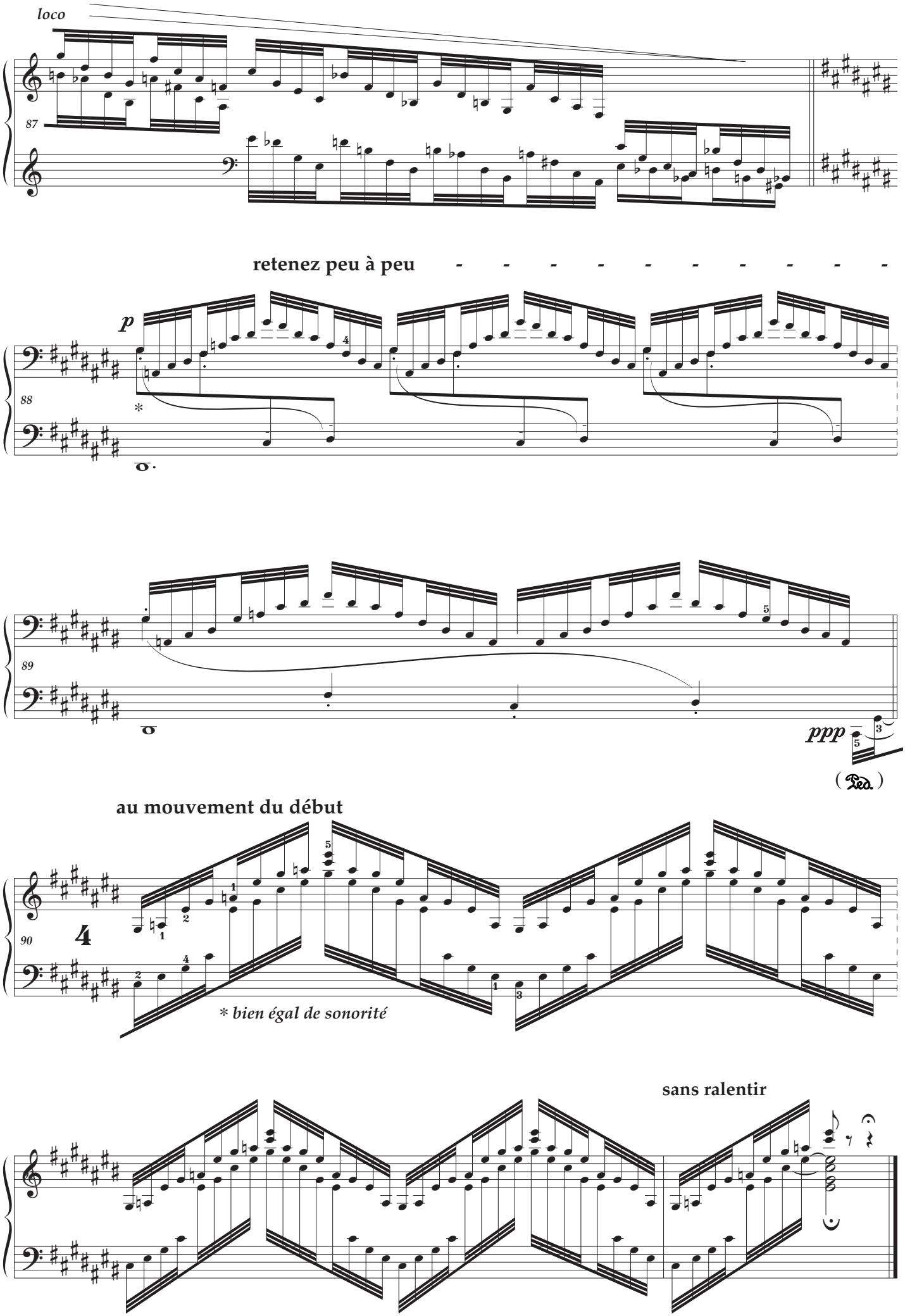

8va
f
60
3
p
61
augmentez peu à peu - - - - -
retenez
63
un peu plus lent
ff
65
4
8vb


65
66
mf
67
68
p
69
8va
Ped.


retenez
70
(8va)
loco
encore plus lent [♩ = 40]
71
2
le plus p possible
3
glissando
Ped.
8vb
72
*5
m.s.
8va
m.d.*
18
m.s.
1
72
13
13
*
1
8vb
2
toujours ppp
3
m.s.
glissando
au mouvement (un peu plus lent qu'au début) [♩ = 46]
74
3
m.s.
8va
m.d. glissando
ppp
5
1


un peu en dehors
75
76
77
78
p
m.s.
Ped.
79
m.d.
pp expressif
4


80
81
m.d.
5
p
8va
très lent
pp
82
4
3
4
depress silently with
elbow and palm
Ped.
ff
rapide et brillant
87
8va
87


loco
87
retenez peu à peu - - - - - - - - - - -
p
88
89
ppp
(Ped.)
au mouvement du début
90
4
* bien égal de sonorité
sans ralentir

L e G I B E T

à Jean MARNOLD

Que vois-je remuer autour de ce Gibet?
What do I see stirring around this Gallows?
Faust

Ah ! ce que j'entends, serait-ce la bise nocturne qui glapit, ou le pendu qui pousse un soupir sur la fourche patibulaire ?

Serait-ce quelque grillon qui chante tapi dans la mousse et le lierre stérile dont par pitié se chausse le bois?

Serait-ce quelque mouche en chasse sonnant du cor autour de ces oreilles sourdes à la fanfare des hallali ?

Serait-ce quelque escarbot qui cueille en son vol inégal un cheveu sanglant à son crâne chauve ?

Ou bien serait-ce quelque araignée qui brode une demi-aune de mousseline pour cravate à ce col étranglé ?

C'est la cloche qui tinte aux murs d'une ville sous l'horizon, et la carcasse d'un pendu que rougit le soleil couchant.

Aha! What's this I hear, could it be the nocturnal wail of an icy blast of winter, or the hanged man heaving a sigh on the patibulary fork*?

Could it be some singing cricket cowering in the moss and barren ivy, which mercifully clothe the wood?

Could it be some fly in pursuit sounding a horn to these ears deaf to the fanfare of the halloo?

Could it be some scarab in erratic flight plucking a gory hair from his bald skull?

Or could it rather be some spider embroidering an ell of muslin as a cravat for this strangled neck?

It is the bell that tolls from the walls of a city beneath the horizon, and the corpse of a hanged man that glows red by the setting sun.

ALOYSIUS BERTRAND

* Gibbets, sometimes named *justices* because they represented the authority of the law, were generally composed of pillars of stone, joined at their summit by wooden traverses, to which the bodies of criminals were tied by ropes or chains. The local squire's rank dictated the number of pillars and they were always visibly sited at busy crossroads.

With Bertrand's compellingly plaintive composition of gloom, a gruesome and ominous portrayal of a lurid sunset illuminating the corpse of a hanged man on a gallows; it is the last verse of the poem which is the true inspiration of this macabre masterpiece. Ravel was also undoubtedly influenced by the American poet Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849). The fatal bell is represented by a B♭ death knell, and have no fear of appearing lifeless, as it is the essence of this atmospheric masterpiece. As difficult as it may seem, resist any temptation to become over-expressive; in fact, as Perlemuter stated — monotony is an integral part of the poetry and the music.

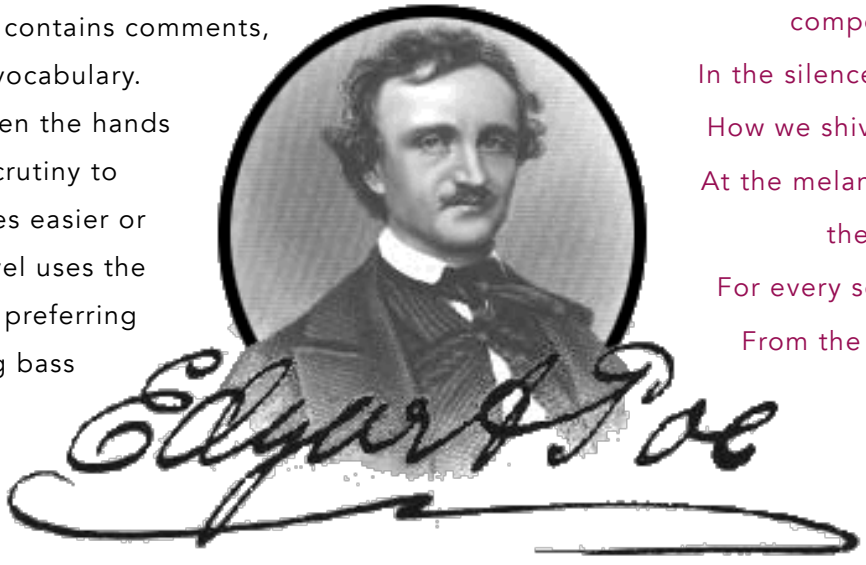
Aloysius Bertrand

Polyphonic skills will provide the demanding pianistic technique and sensitivity necessary to simultaneously project the melodic line, accented and non-accented bells and accompaniment.

Performing Le Gibet requires a zen-like tranquillity and hallucinatory attitude at the piano, where you cannot even react to a gory scarab plucking at your bald skull. The final tolling bell sends shivers down the spine.

In addition to some suggested fingering, the appendix (page 61) contains comments, afterthoughts and a vocabulary. Redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive. Ravel uses the pedal sign sparingly, preferring extended ties or long bass notes, impossible to hold otherwise. It is possible to use the sostenuto pedal effectively although this is entirely editorial, as is the metronome speed.

The dedicatee, the critic *Jean Marnold*, was a personal friend of the composer.



The Bells — Edgar Allan Poe

— a short extract from part 4

Hear the tolling of the bells —
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.

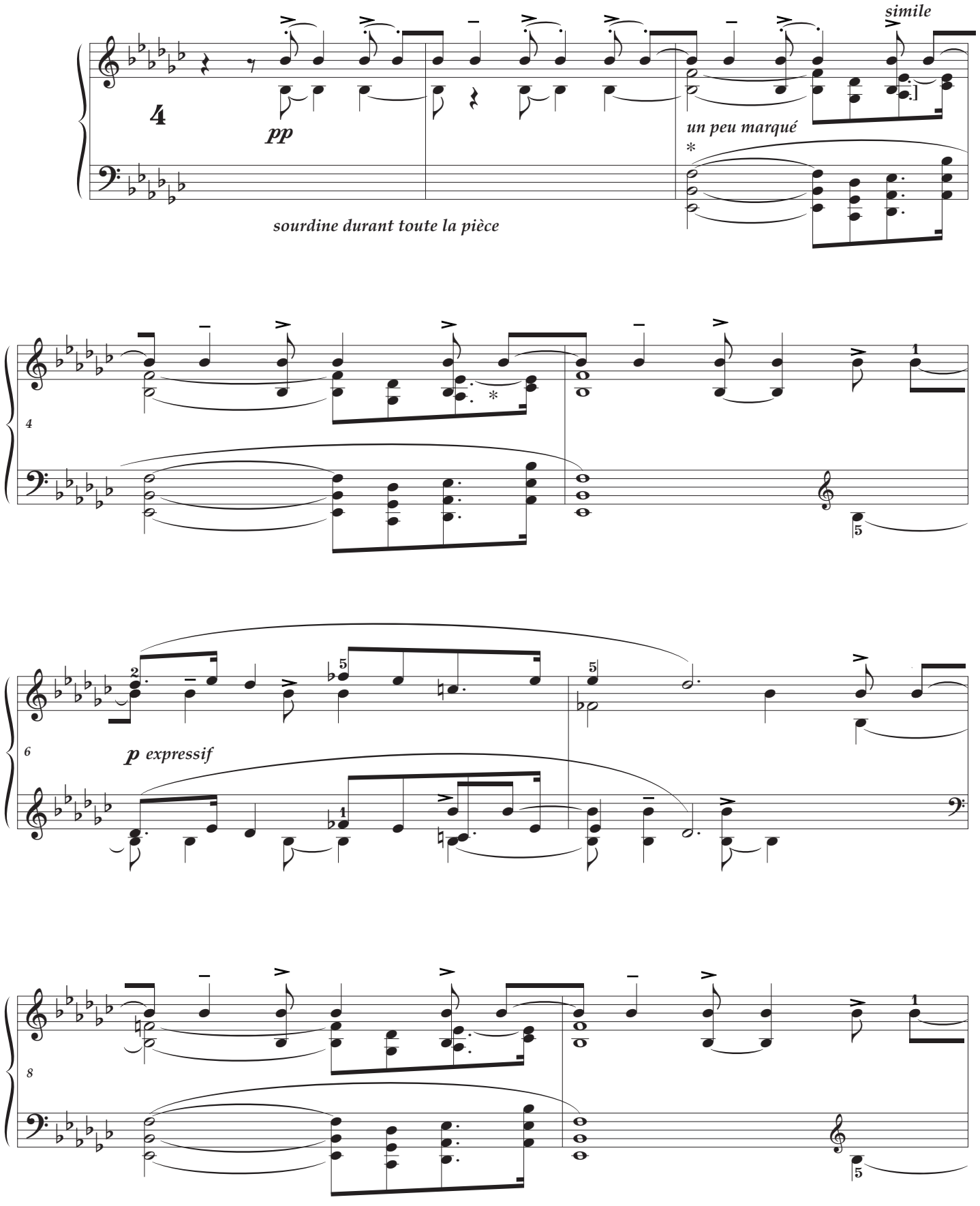
Gaspard de la Nuit

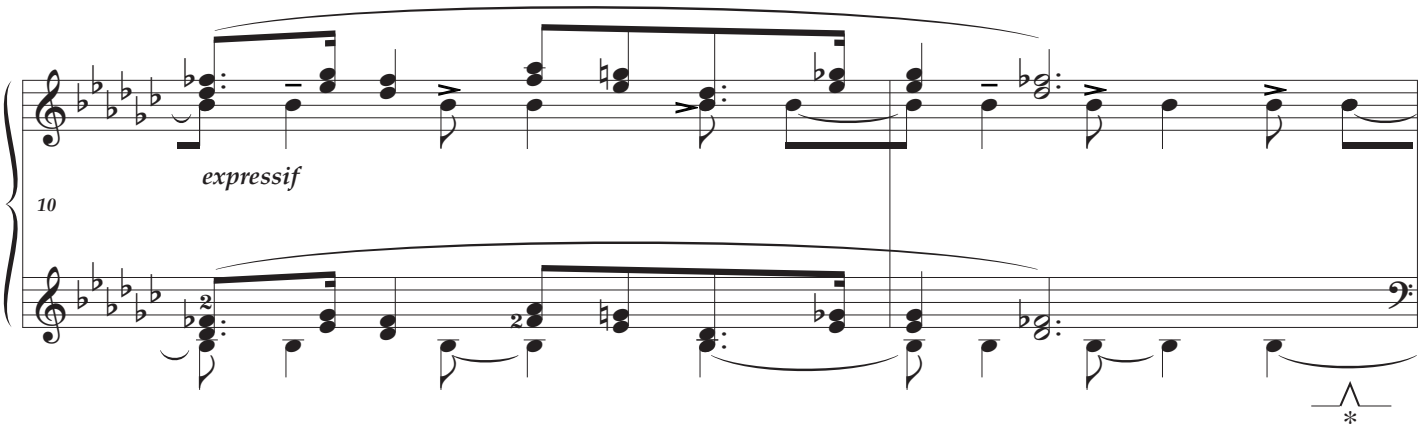
à JEAN MARNOLD

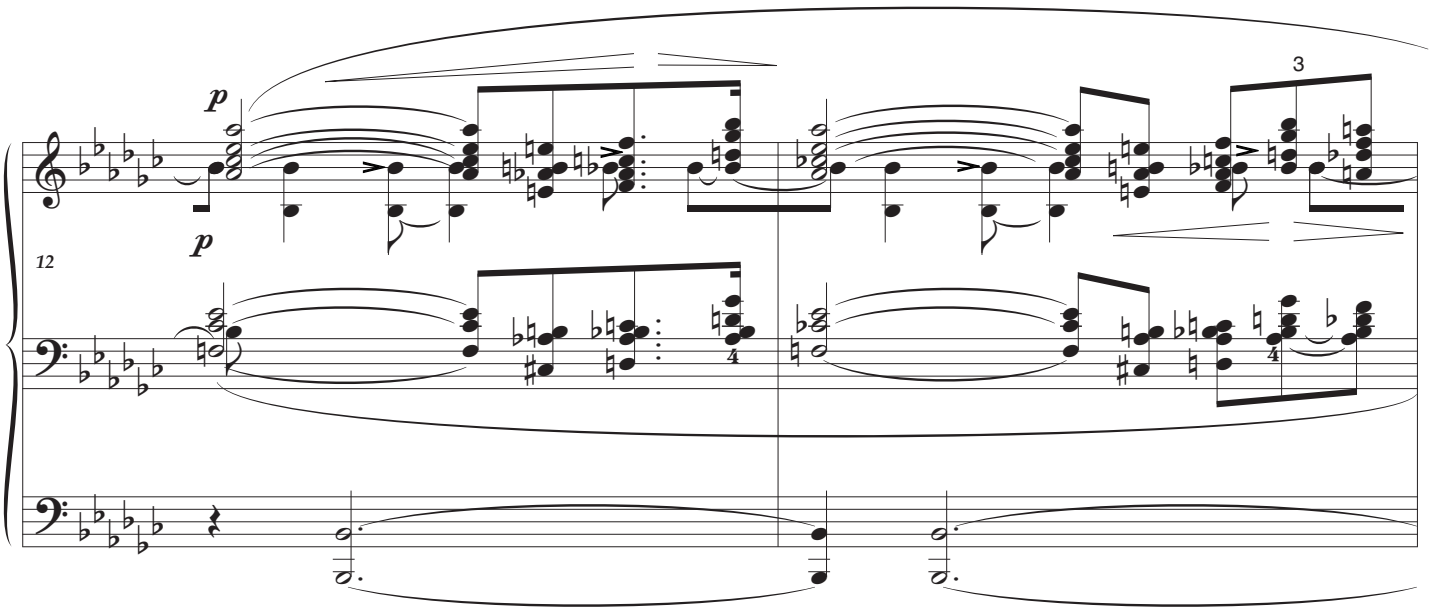
LE GIBET

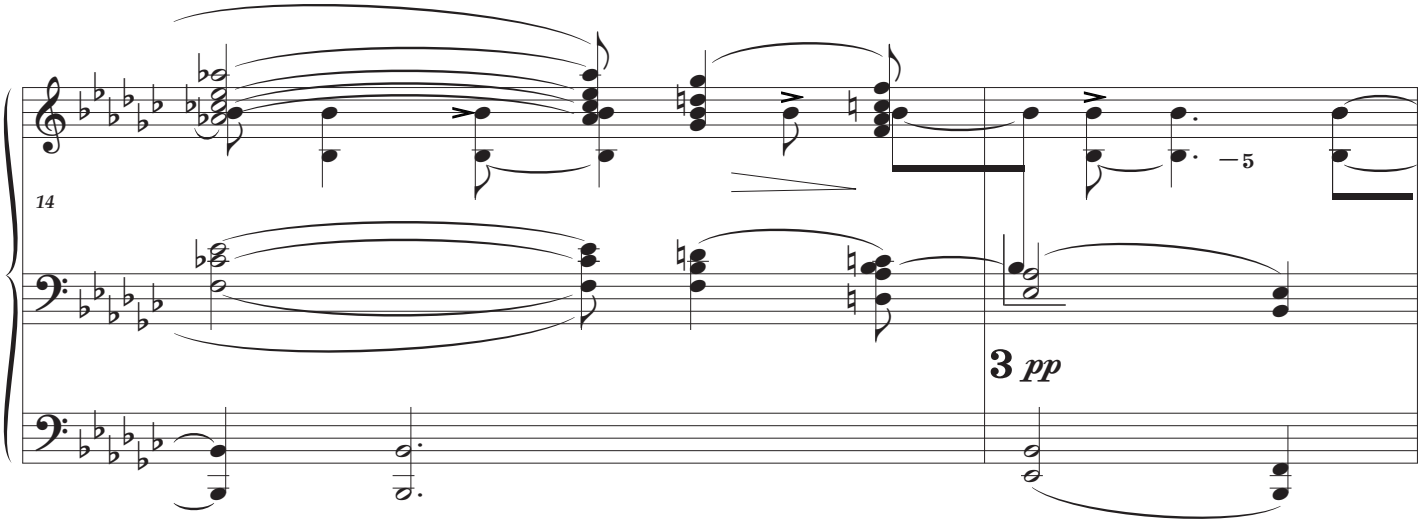
très lent [♩ = 40]

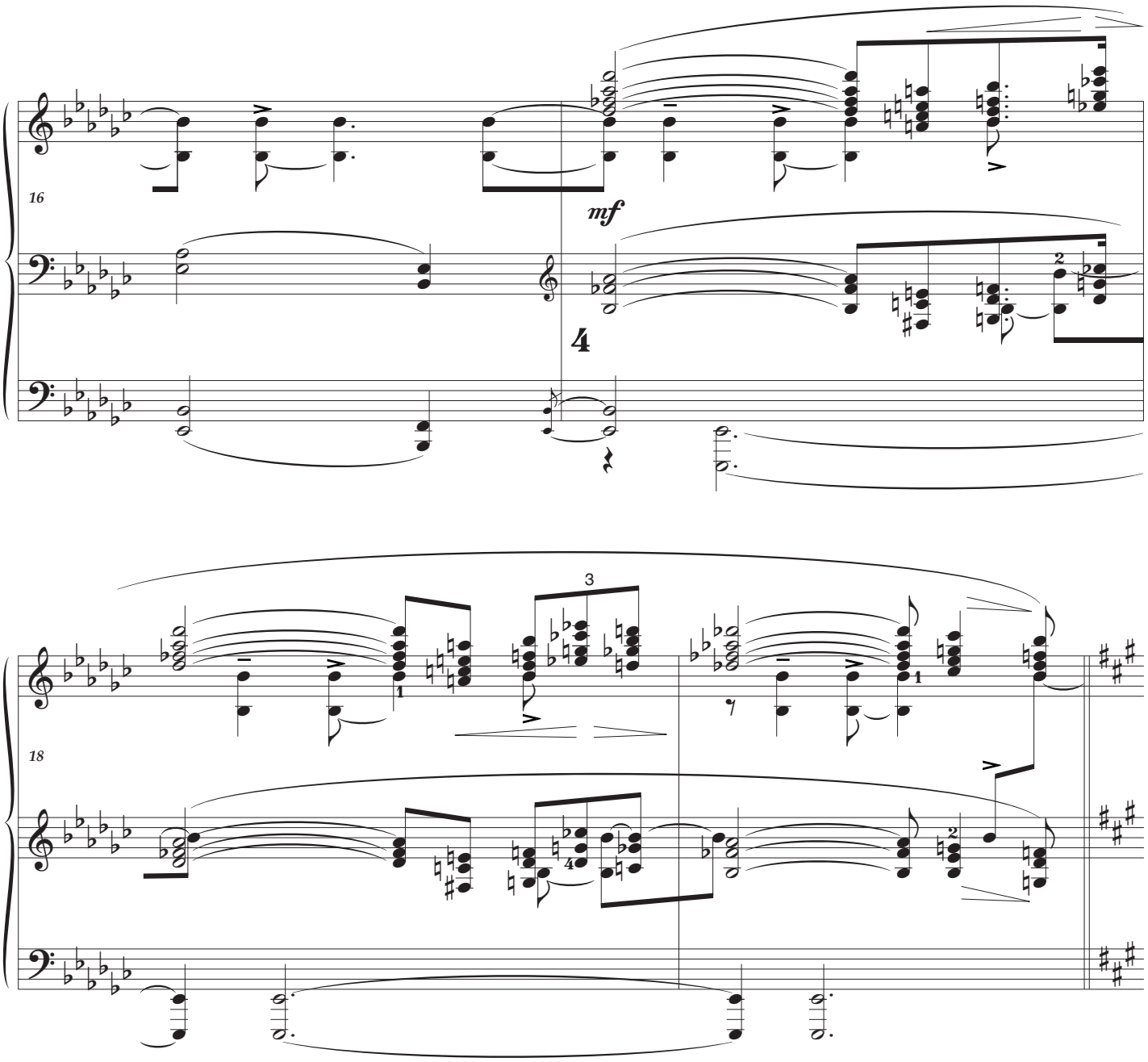
sans presser ni ralentir jusqu'à la fin



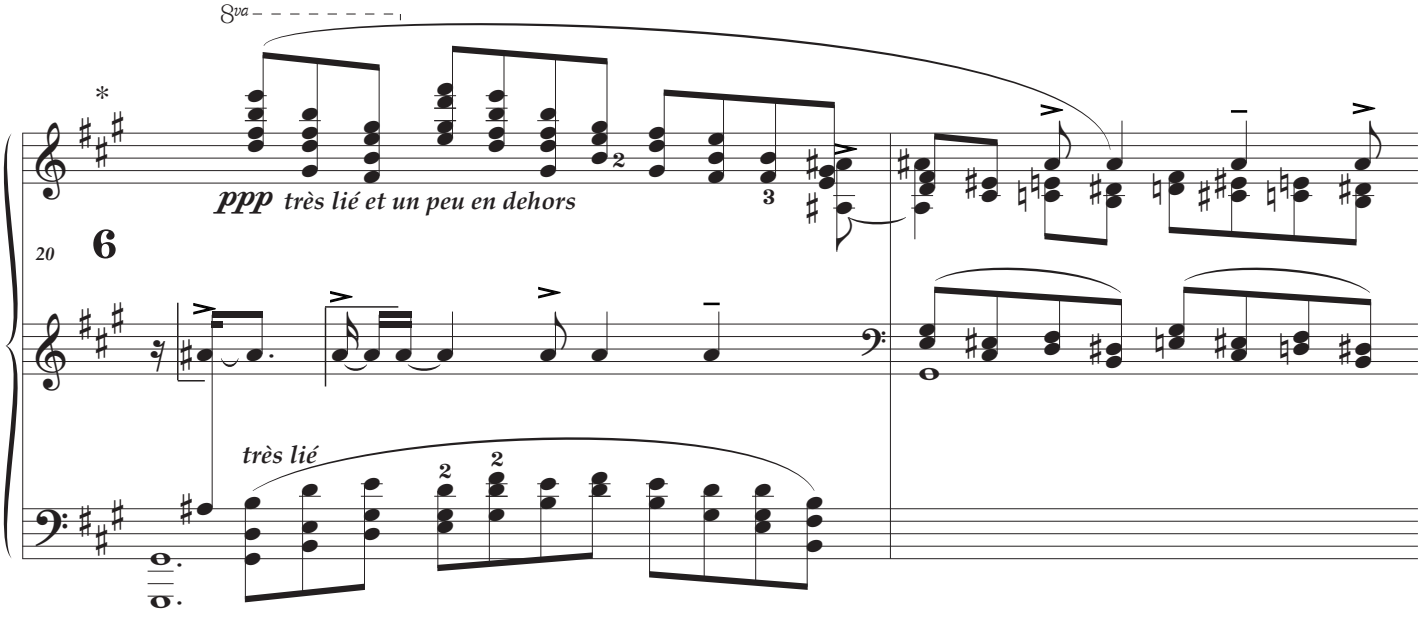

expressif
10

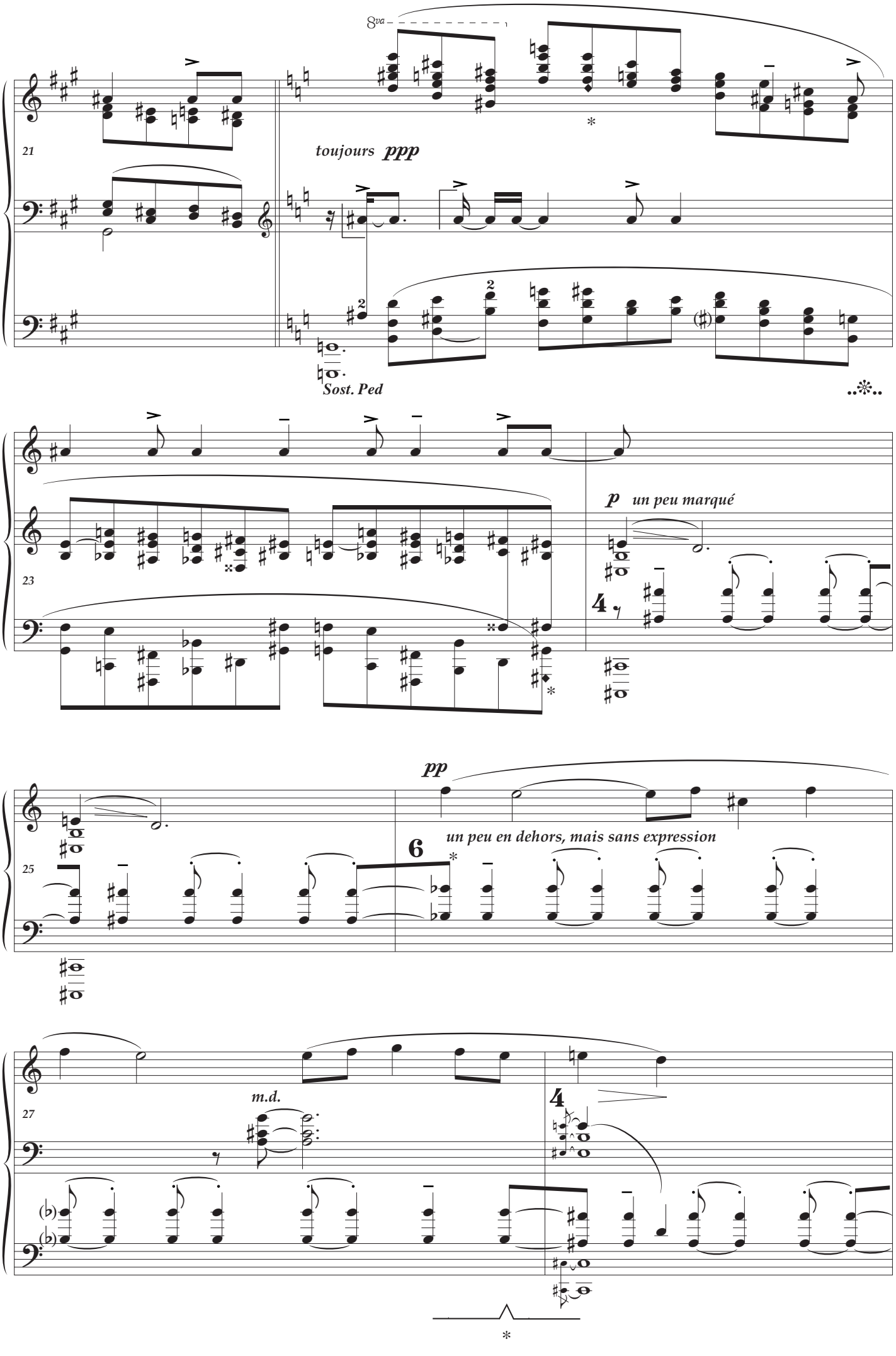

p
p
12
3

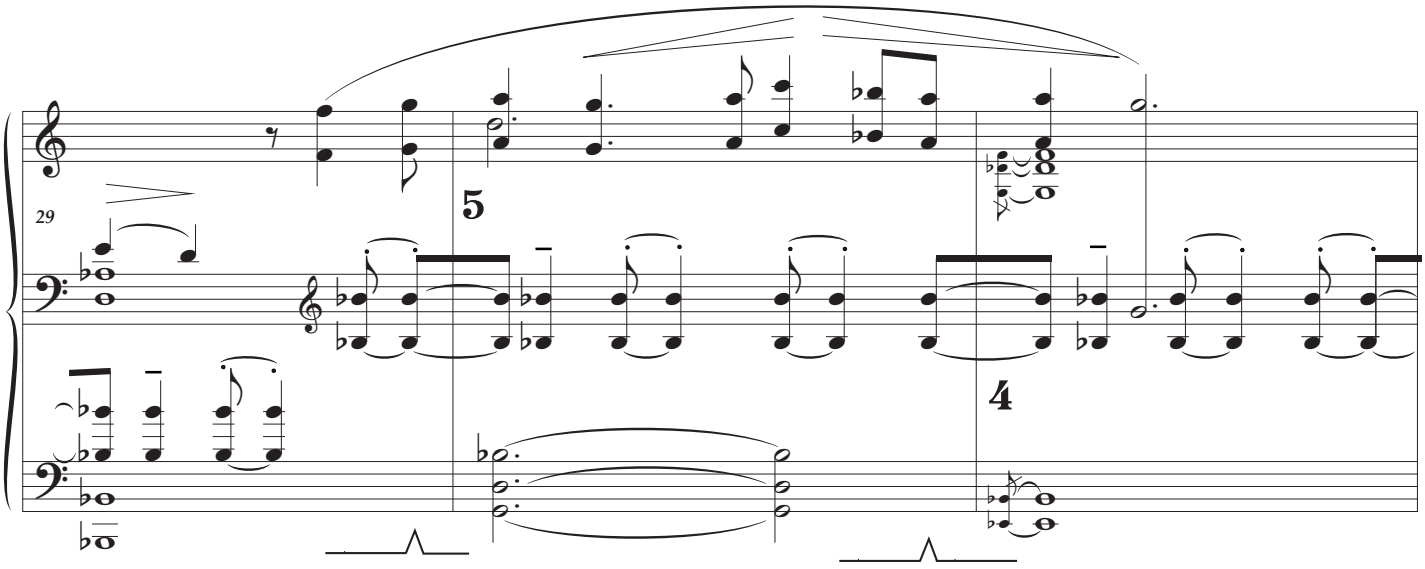

14
3 pp

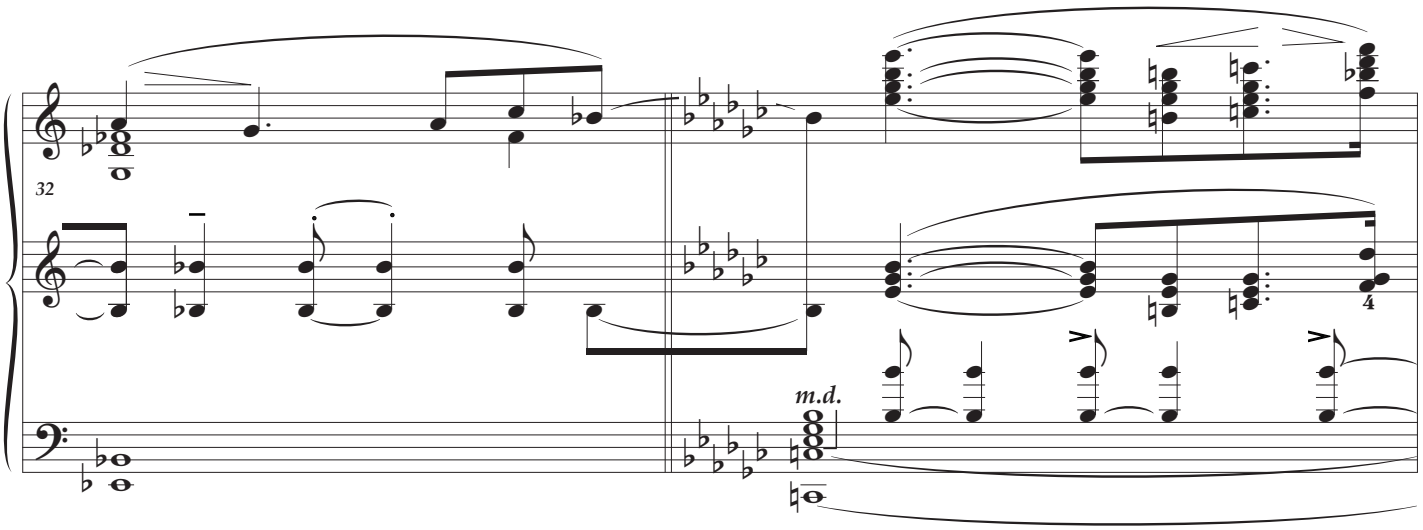

16
mf
4

18

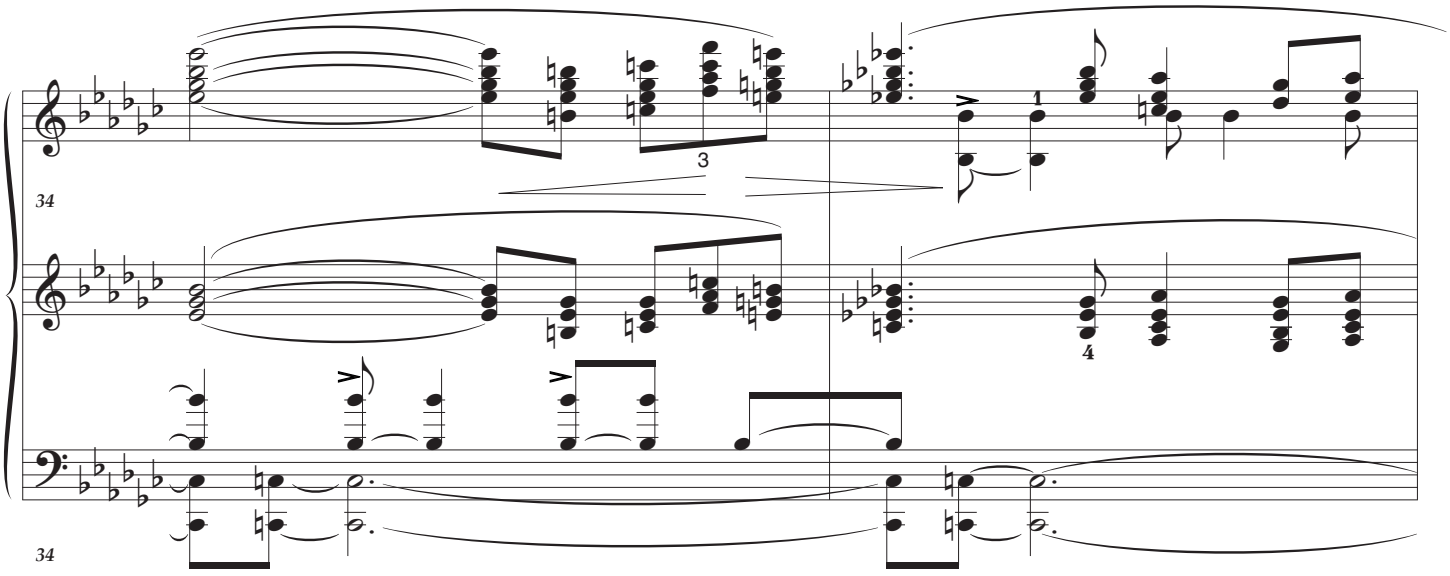

8va
ppp très lié et un peu en dehors
20
6
très lié
Sost. Ped

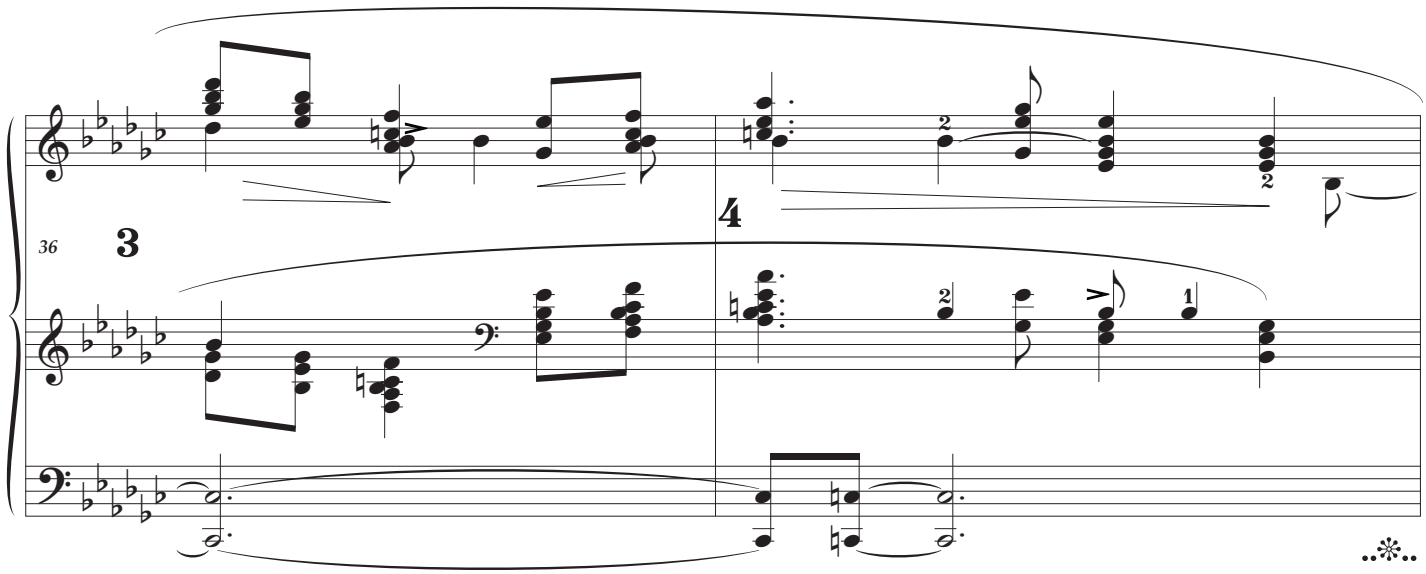

8va
21
toujours ppp
Sost. Ped
23
p un peu marqué
25
pp
un peu en dehors, mais sans expression
27
m.d.

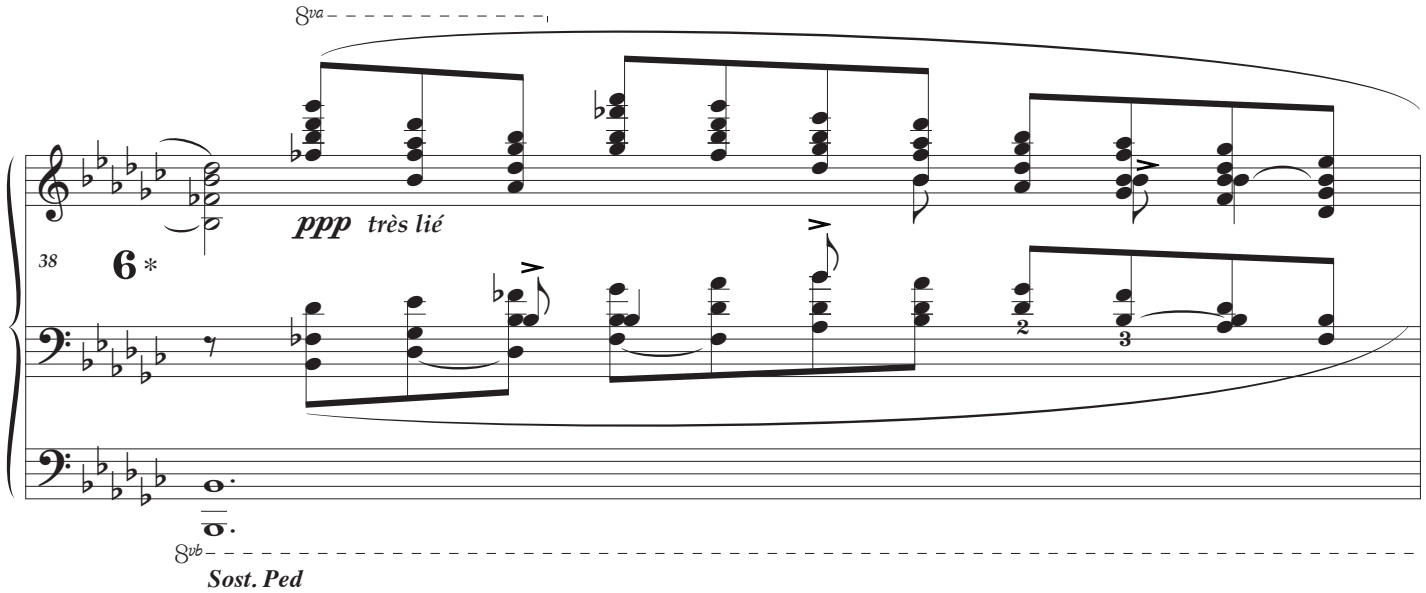


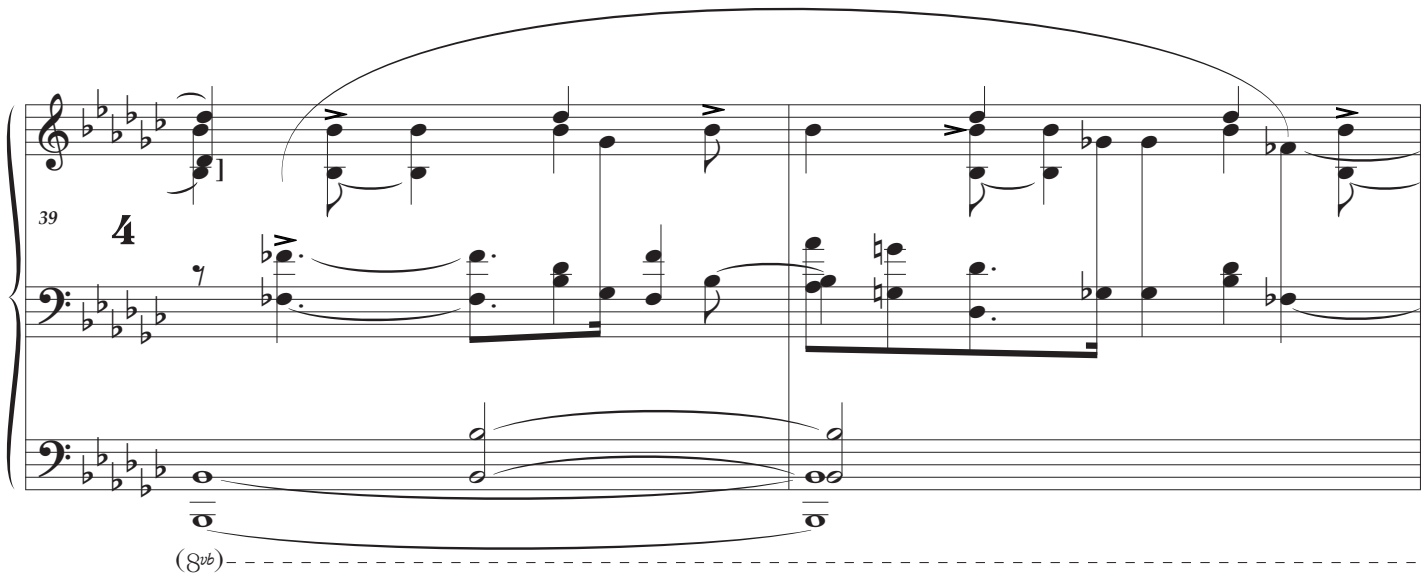


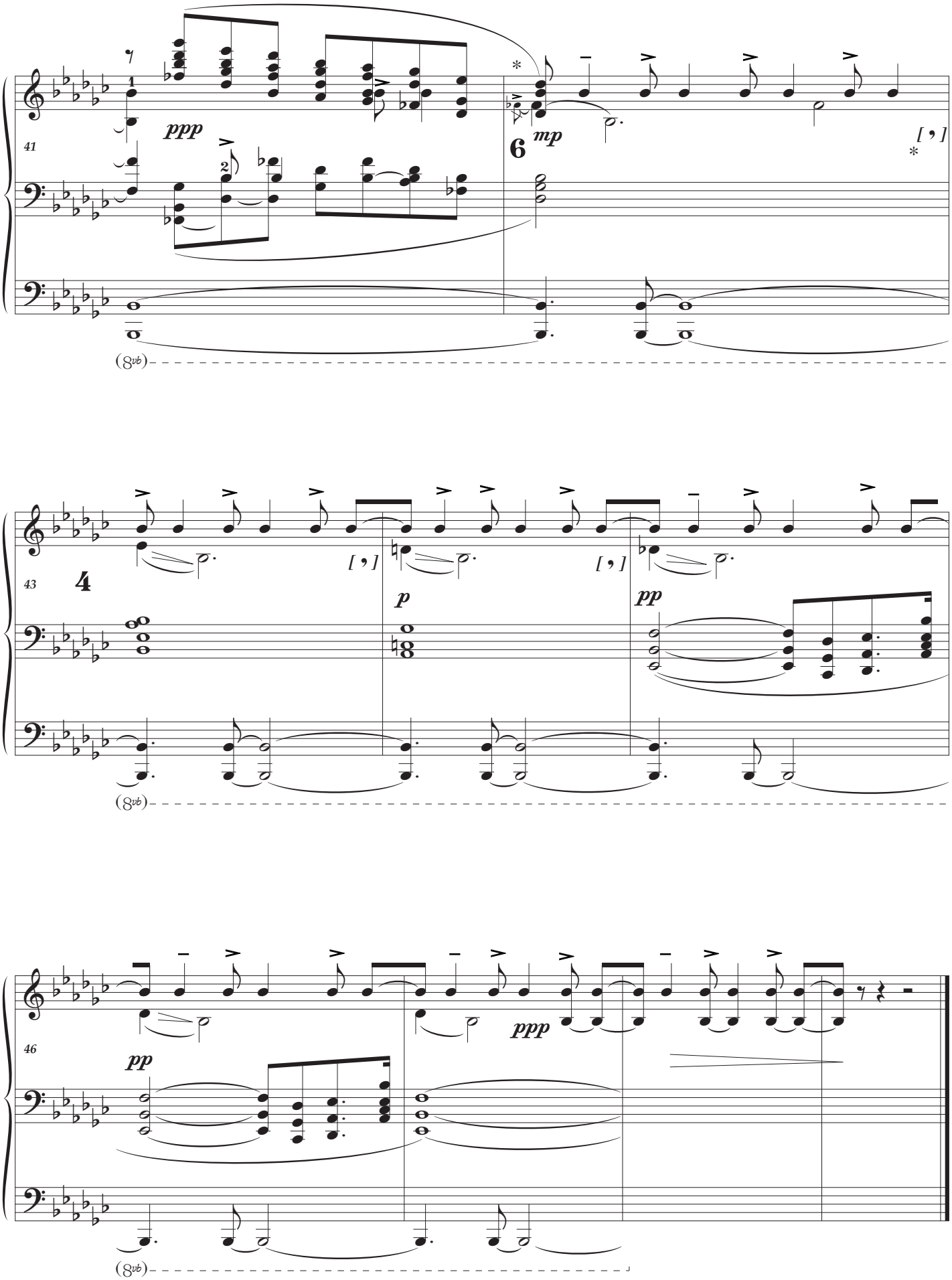
Sost. Ped




36
3
4


8va
ppp très lié
38
6 *
8vb
Sost. Ped


39
4
(8vb)


41
ppp
6
mp
43
4
p
pp
46
pp
ppp
(8vb)

S C A R B O

à Rudolph GANZ

Il regarda sous le lit, dans la cheminée, dans le bahut; - personne. Il ne put comprendre par où il s'était introduit, par où il s'était évadé.

He looked under the bed, in the chimney, in the chest; - nobody. He could not understand where he had entered, nor how he had fled.

E.T.A. Hoffman - *contes nocturnes*
nocturnal tales

Oh! que de fois je l'ai entendu et vu, Scarbo, lorsqu'à minuit la lune brille dans le ciel comme un écu d'argent sur une bannière d'azur semée d'abeilles d'or !

Que de fois j'ai entendu bourdonner son rire dans l'ombre de mon alcôve, et grincer son ongle sur la soie des courtines de mon lit !

Que de fois je l'ai vu descendre du plancher, pirouetter sur un pied et rouler par la chambre comme le fuseau tombé de la quenouille d'une sorcière !

Le croyais-je alors évanoui? le nain grandissait entre la lune et moi comme le clocher d'une cathédrale gothique, un grelot d'or en branle à son bonnet pointu !

Mais bientôt son corps bleuissait, diaphane comme la cire d'une bougie, son visage blémissait comme la cire d'un lumignon, - et soudain il s'éteignait.

Oh! Scarbo, how often have I heard and seen him, when the midnight moon shimmers in the sky like a silver shield on an azure banner studded with golden bees!

How often have I heard his chuckle droning in the shadow of my alcove, and the scratching of his fingernail on the silk of my bed curtains.

How often have I seen him swoop from the ceiling, pirouette on one foot and whirl around the room like the spindle fallen from a witch's loom!

Believing he'd finally flown, the dwarf would grow between the moon and myself like the belfry of a gothic cathedral, a golden bell quivering on his pointed hat!

But soon his body would turn blue, translucent as the wax of a candle, his face blanching like the wax of a tea light, - and then suddenly he'd vanish.

ALOYSIUS BERTRAND

A truly dark, heavy, tense and agonising creation of brilliance and malice, this final movement evokes Scarbo*, a hideous goblin, a devilish and sadistic dwarf, who takes pleasure in persecuting his victim. The creature of one's nightmares, who scratches at the bed-curtains, cackles in the shadows, rolls on the floor, and grows huge and menacing before vanishing like the snuffed flame of a candle. Dedicated to the pianist and conductor Rudolph Ganz, much of the poem's character has been absorbed in the music and its torment is even more telling after the deliberately static movement which precedes it.

Scarbo incarnates the mischief, the tangle of the mind and literally overwhelms the listener in a destructive manner, danger lurking at any moment. Nevertheless the music is lyrical and refined, accentuating a dark beauty, the elf of the damned. Ravel was inspired by this idea of a hallucinatory dream.

Illustration from an early edition

"I set out to compose a caricature of Romanticism, but have perhaps allowed myself to be carried away by it" — thus confided Ravel to Vlado Perlemuter.

Pianists fear Scarbo: the rhythmic virtuosity is a real test; anxiety is caused by so many notes, a fast tempo and diabolic dissonances.

Bertrand was obsessed with this diabolical villain, having written four poems about him. If you have not had enough poetry about this unpleasant and vexatious character, there is another verse by Bertrand on page 63 which might have been the source of inspiration for the prose poem on the previous page.

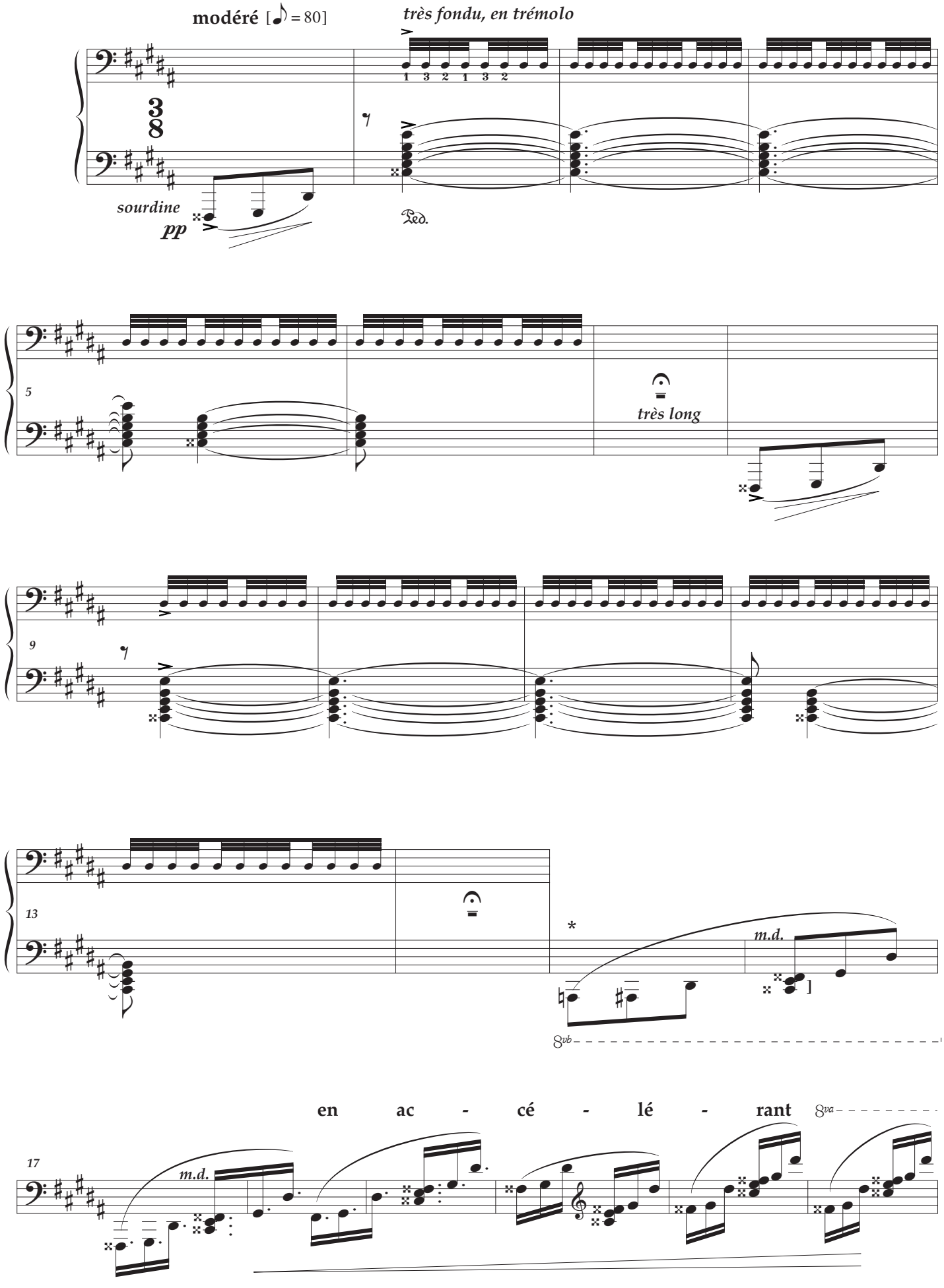
I wonder whether Scarbo himself influenced Ravel in the writing of the music! For example, there are missing *a tempi*, eccentric choices of clef, time signatures and layout. Perhaps Scarbo has deliberately and devilishly introduced inconsistencies and mistakes to test the mind and mettle of the performer (and editor) — a fascinating thought. Ravel was a most meticulous writer, and his mistakes are few and far between. However, in this particular piece there are more than usual. Perhaps his customary sang-froid deserted him during the understandable turbulence and fury of the music.

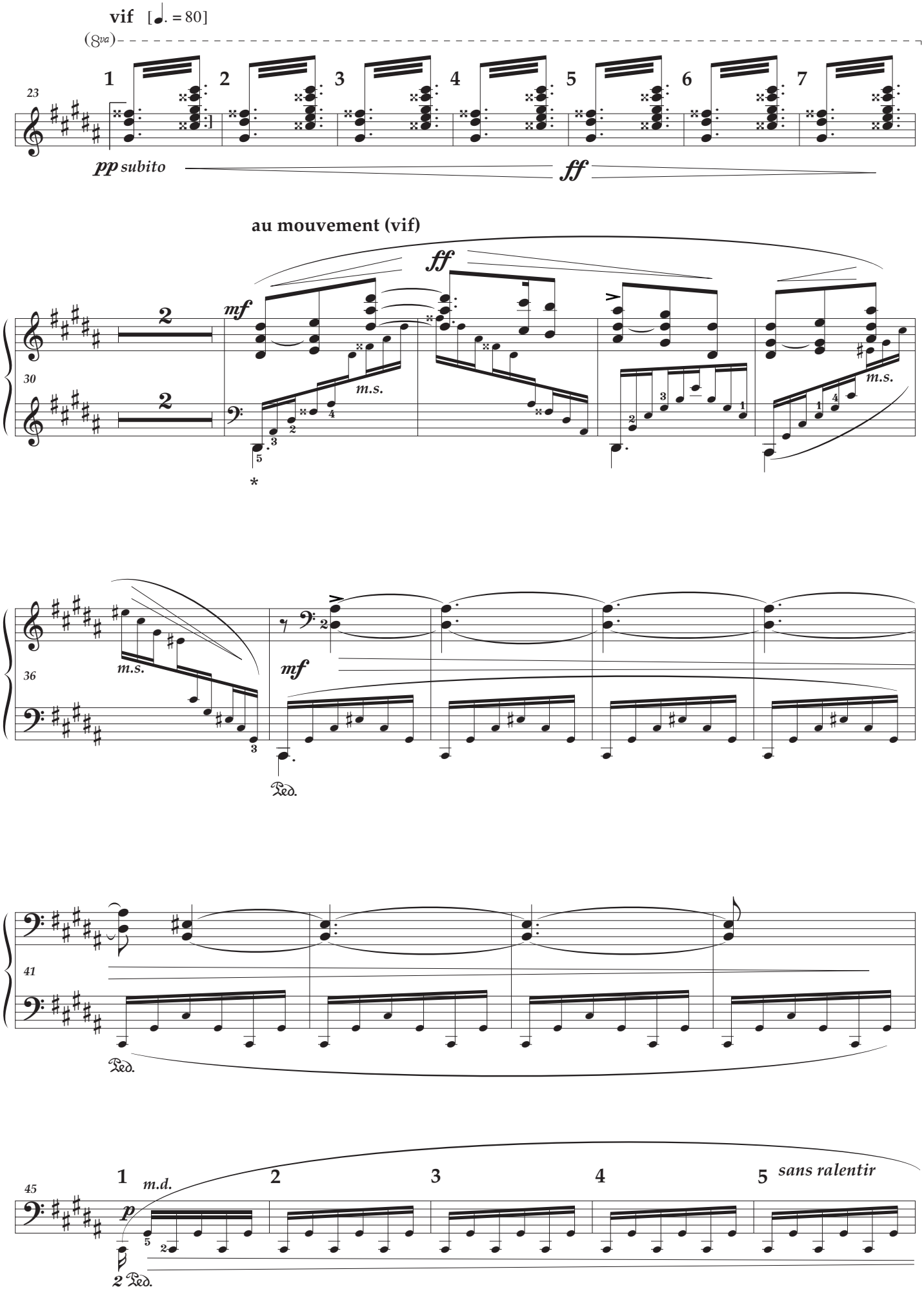
All the suggested metronome marks are editorial and, as in Ondine, smaller note-heads have been used to differentiate between accompanying figures and melodic lines. Bars which are repeated more than four times have been numbered. There is an appendix on page 60.

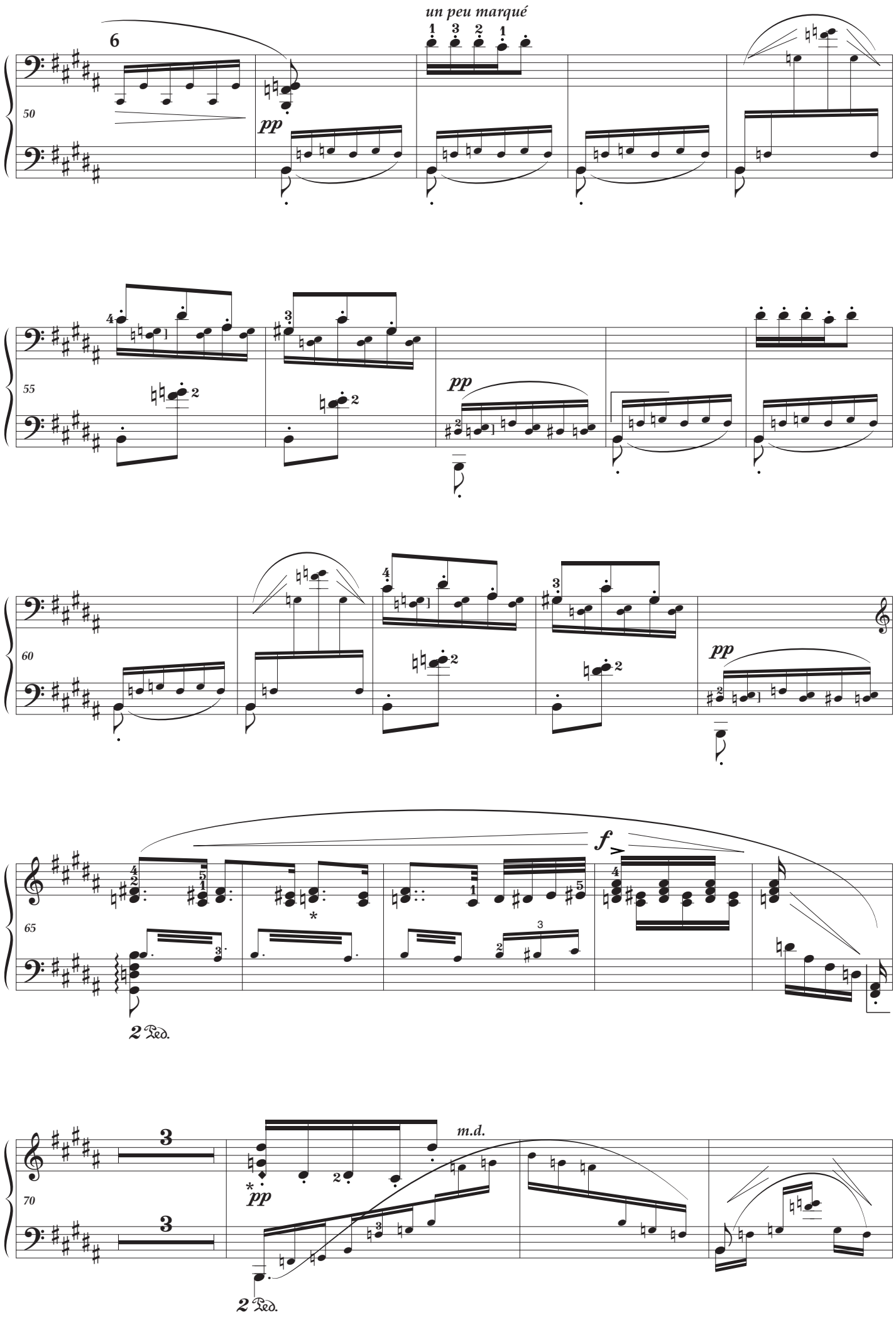
* The *kobold* is a sprite in Germanic mythology. Usually invisible, he can materialise in the form of an animal, fire, a candle, or an ugly, hunched being, about the size of a small child.

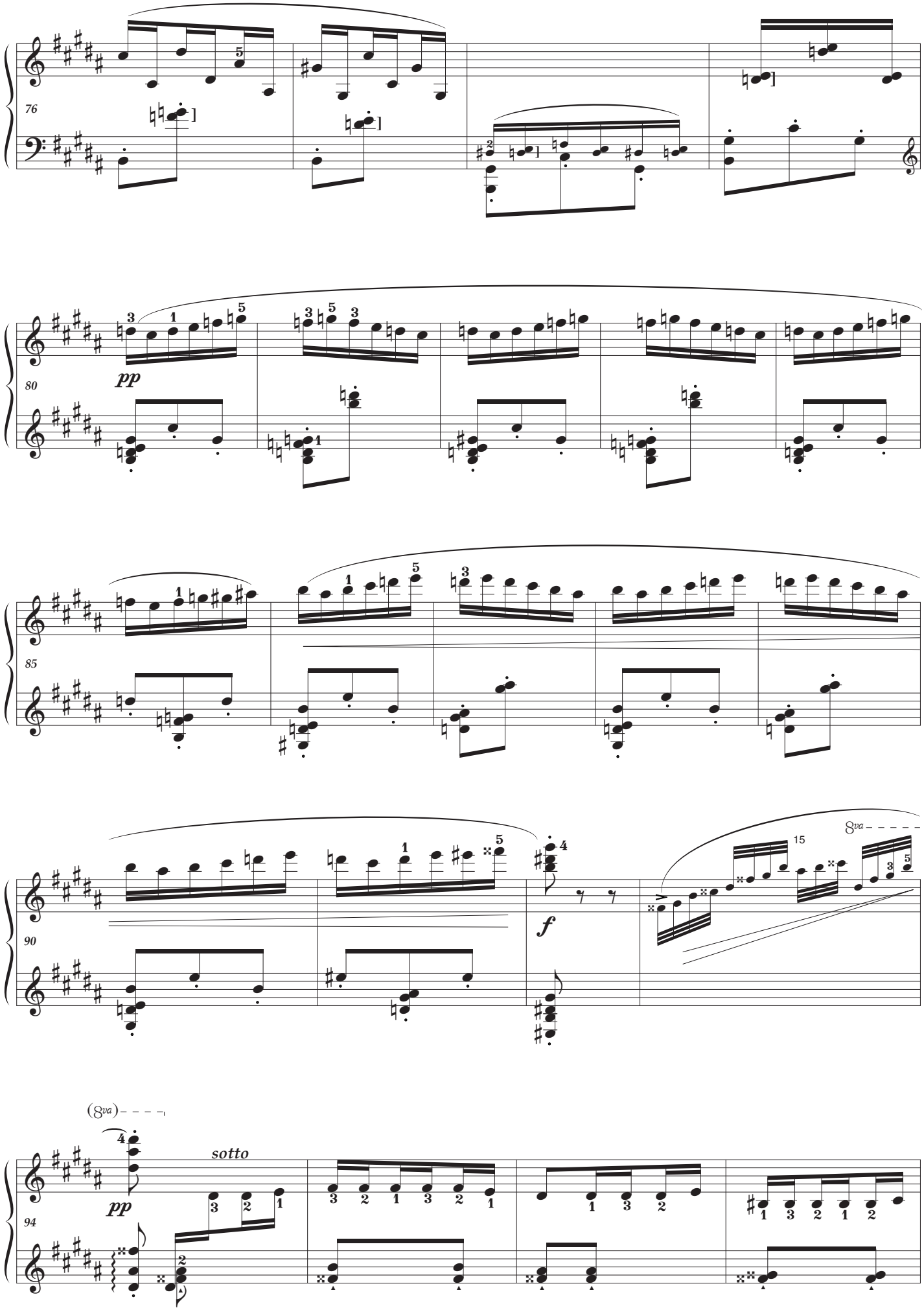
à RUDOLPH GANZ

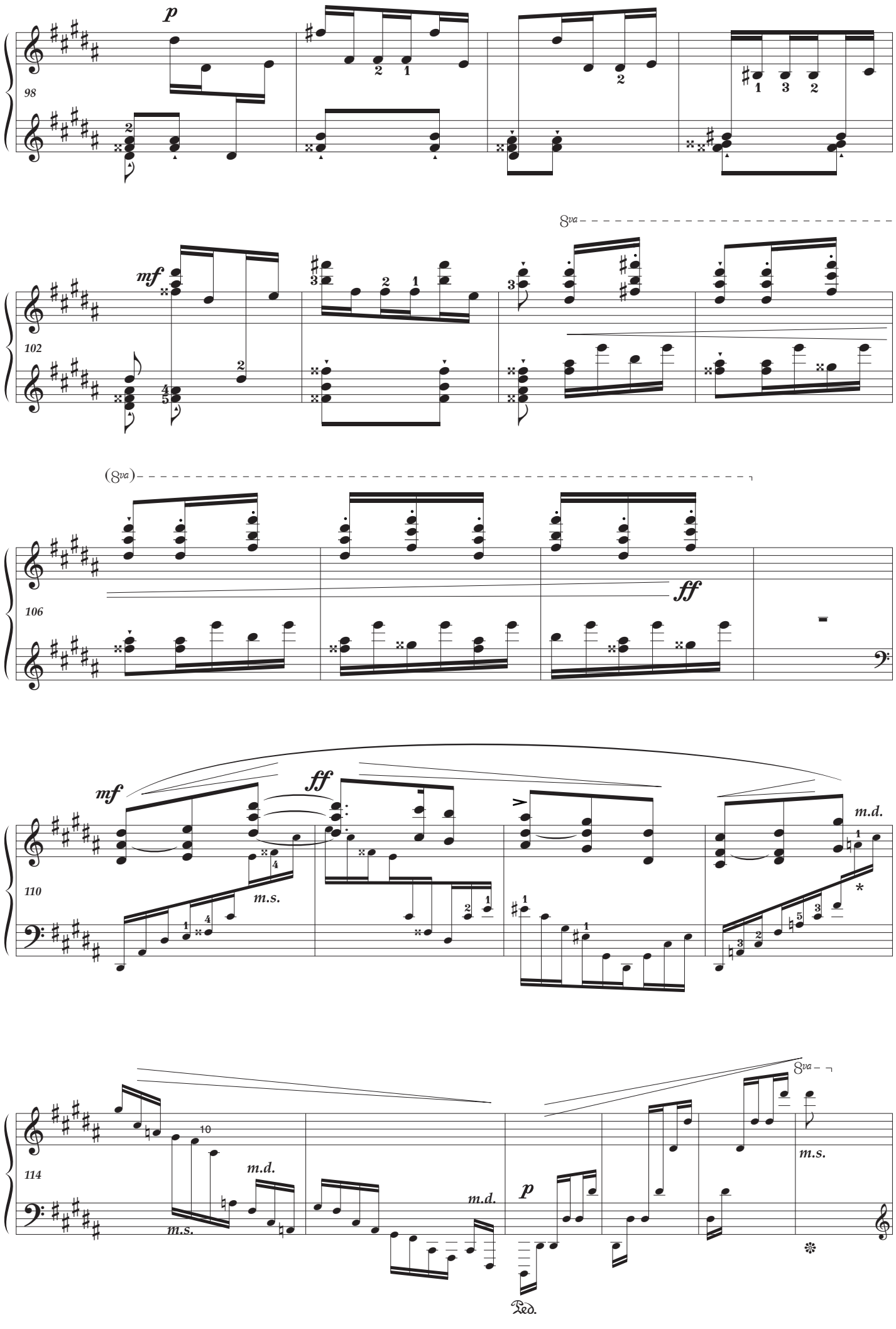
SCARBO

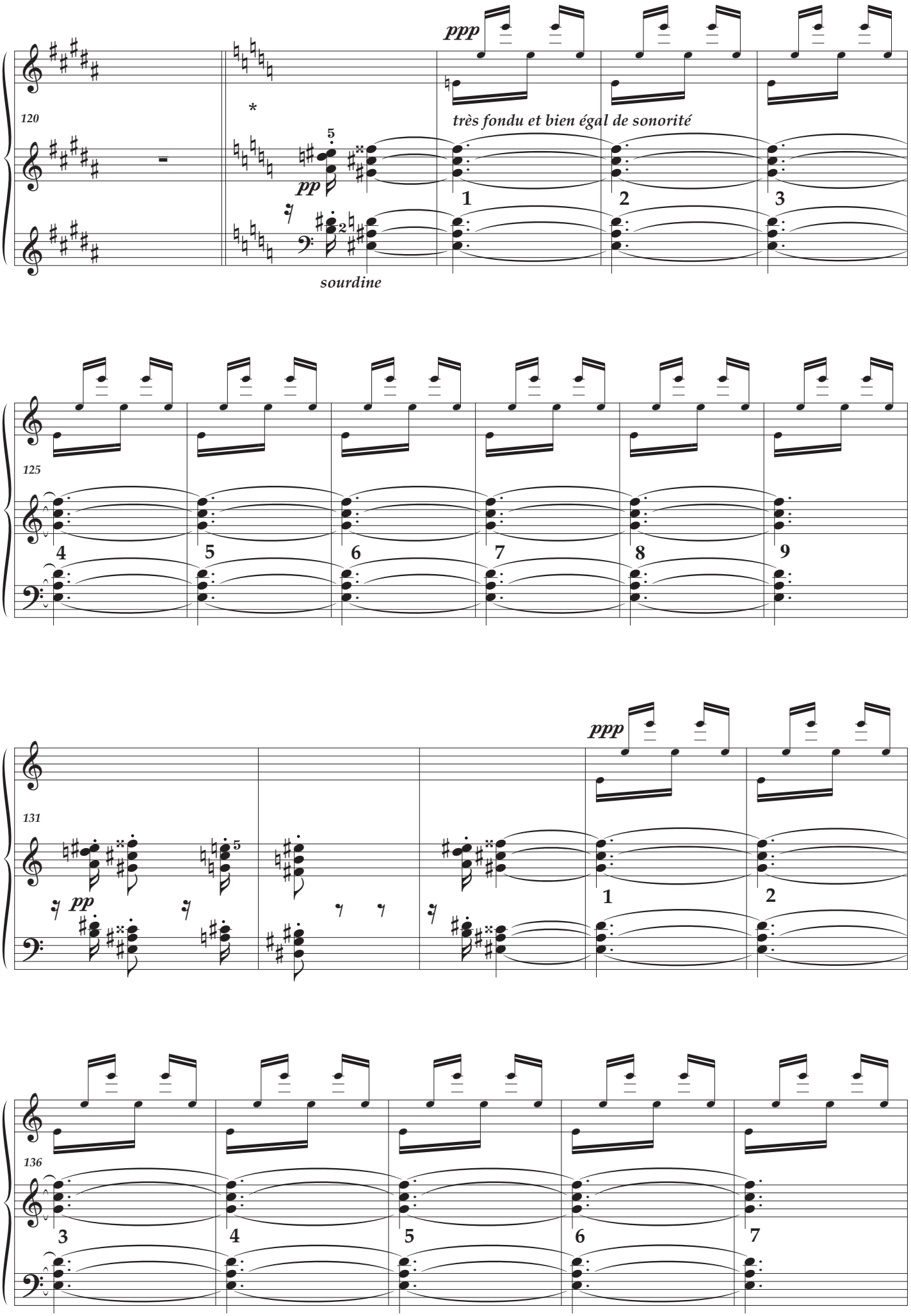


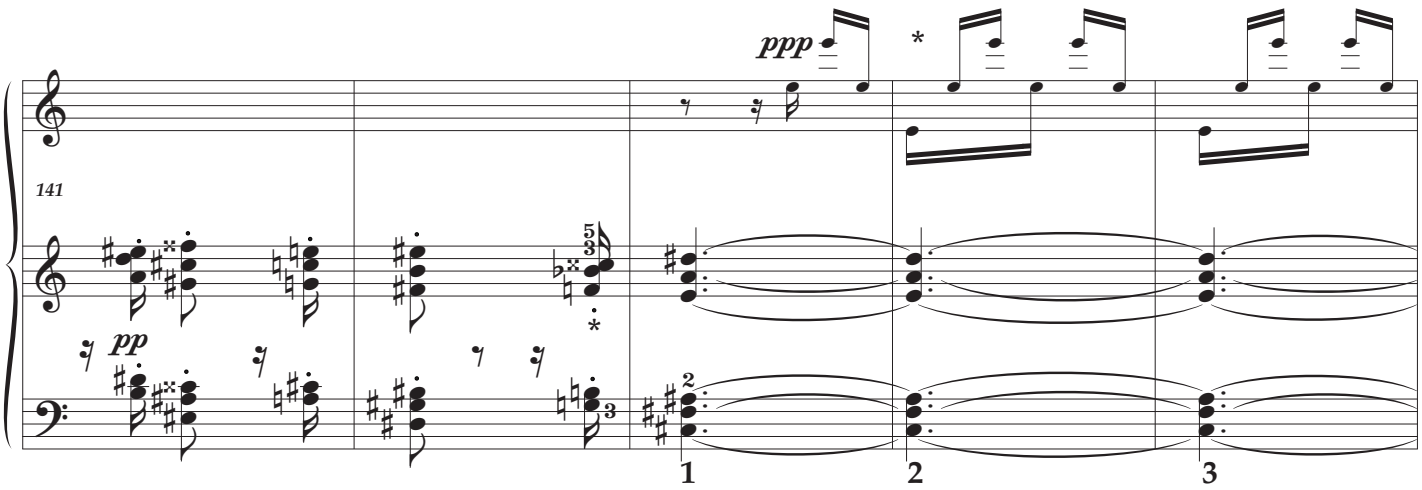

vif [♩. = 80]
(8va)
23
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
pp subito
ff
au mouvement (vif)
30
mf
ff
m.s.
m.s.
m.s.
*
36
m.s.
mf
Ped.
41
Ped.
45
1 2 3 4 5
m.d.
p
sans ralentir
2 Ped.

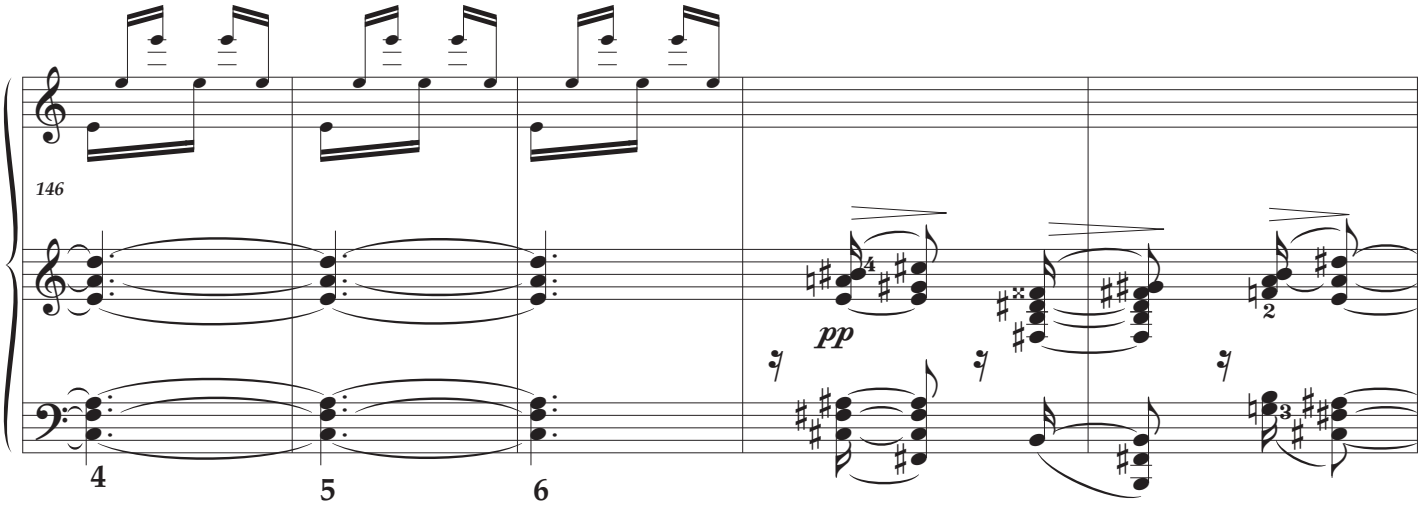

un peu marqué
pp
pp
pp
f
2 Ped.
m.d.
pp
2 Ped.

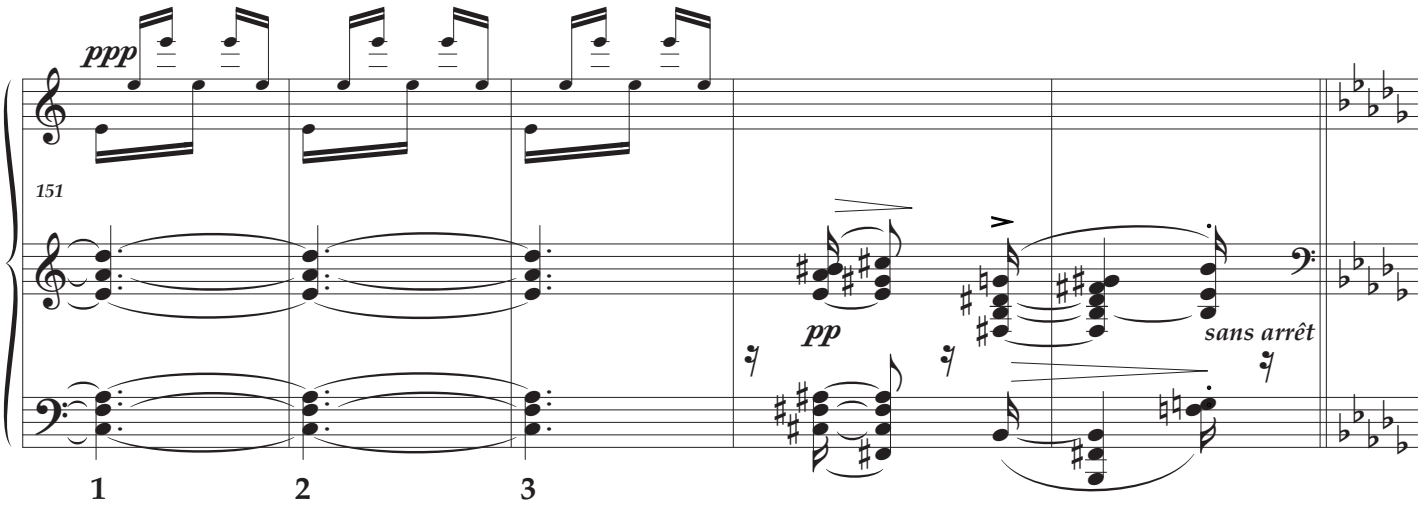

76
80
pp
85
90
f
8va
15
(8va)
94
pp
sotto

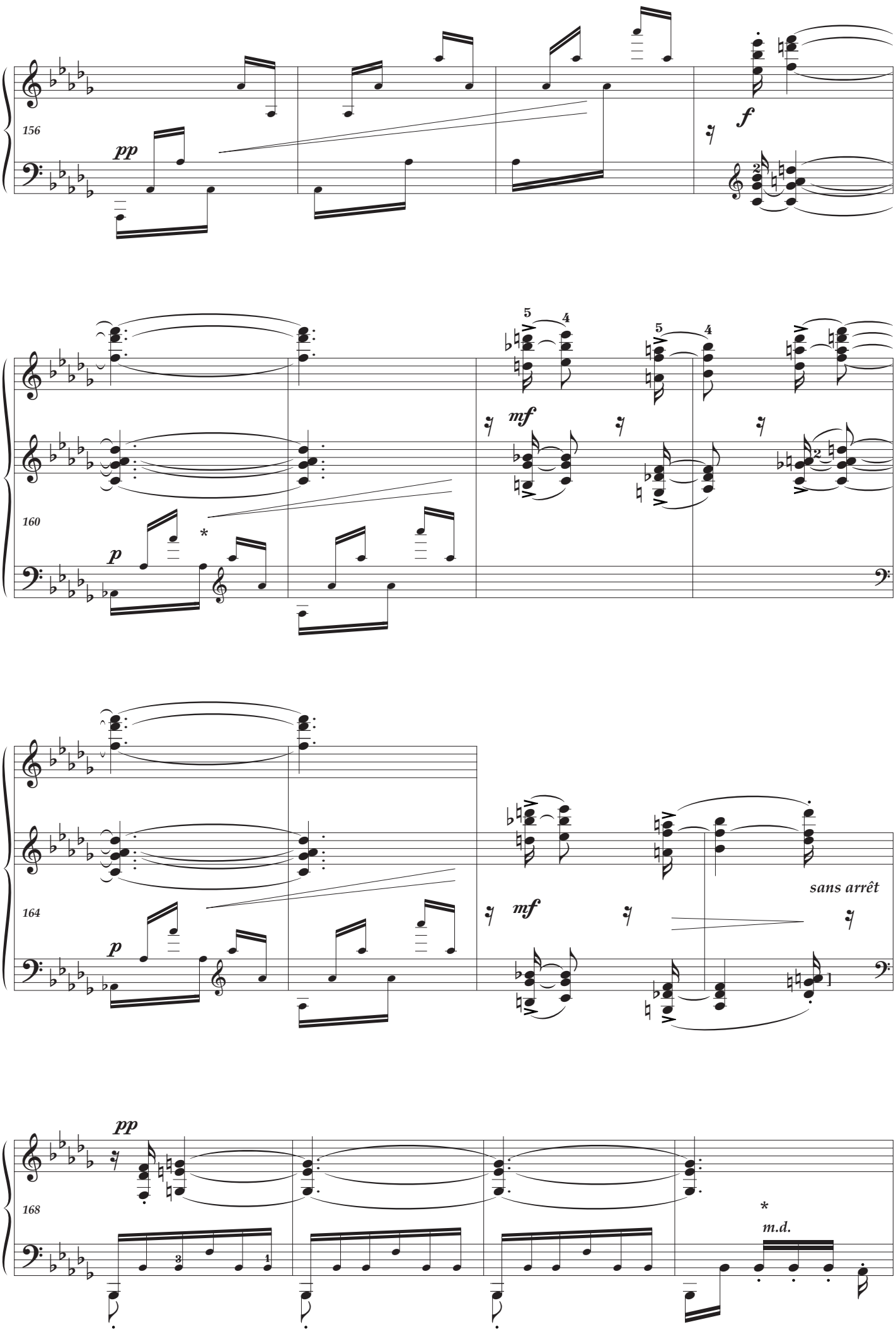

p
98
mf
8va
102
(8va)
ff
106
mf
ff
m.s.
m.d.
110
m.s.
m.d.
m.d.
p
8va
m.s.
114
Ped.

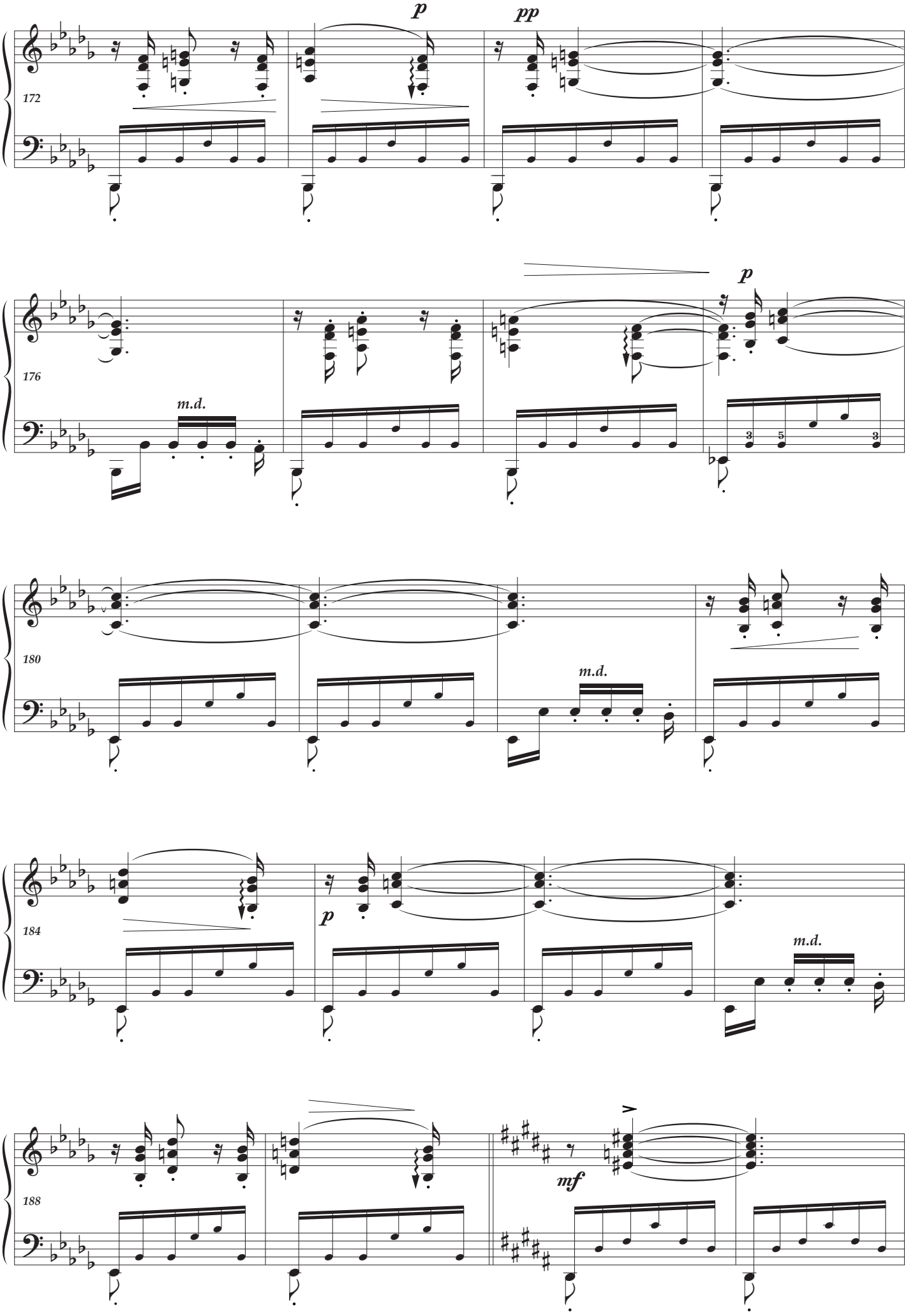

ppp
120
très fondu et bien égal de sonorité
pp
sourdine
125
131
ppp
pp
136

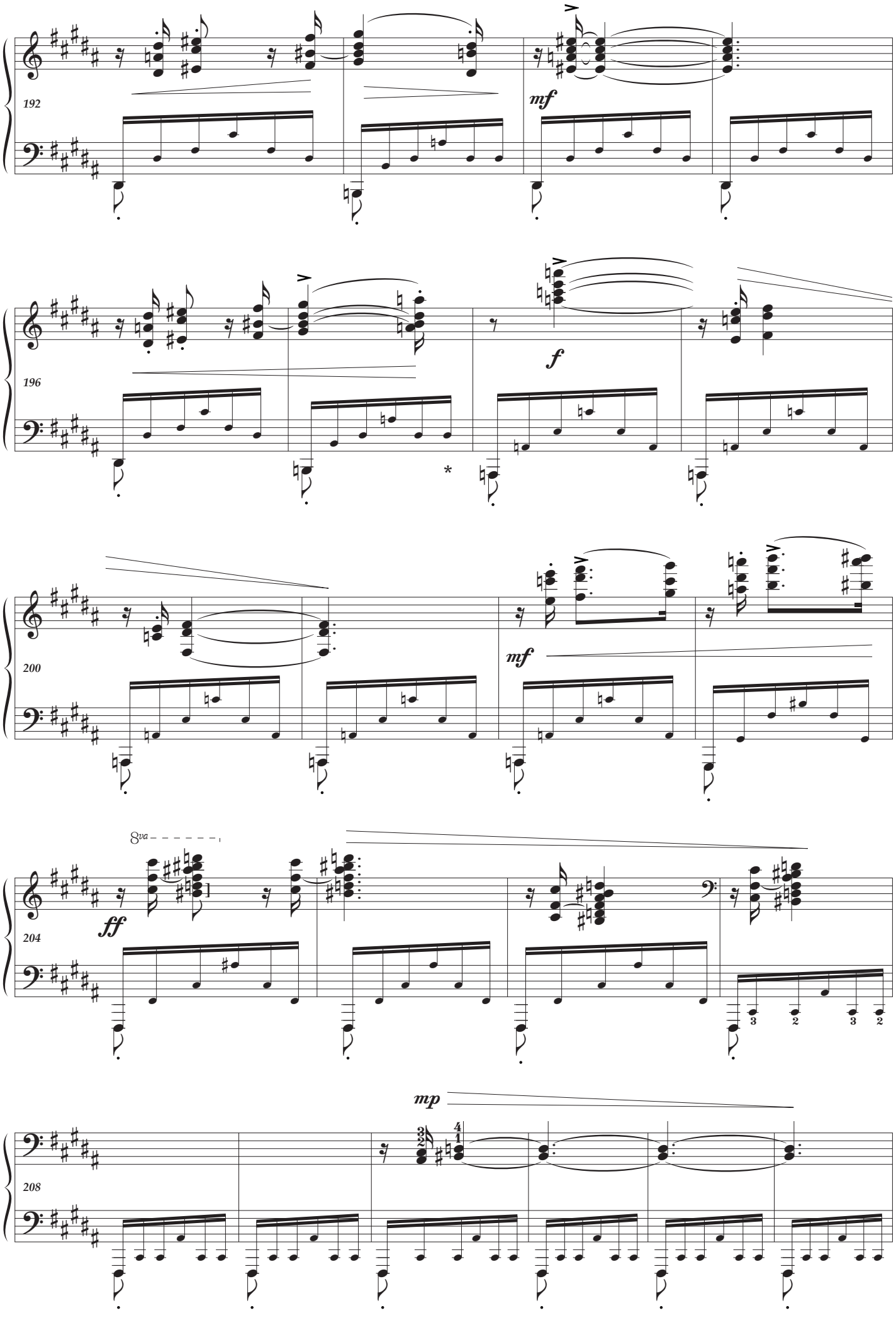

ppp
141
pp
1
2
3

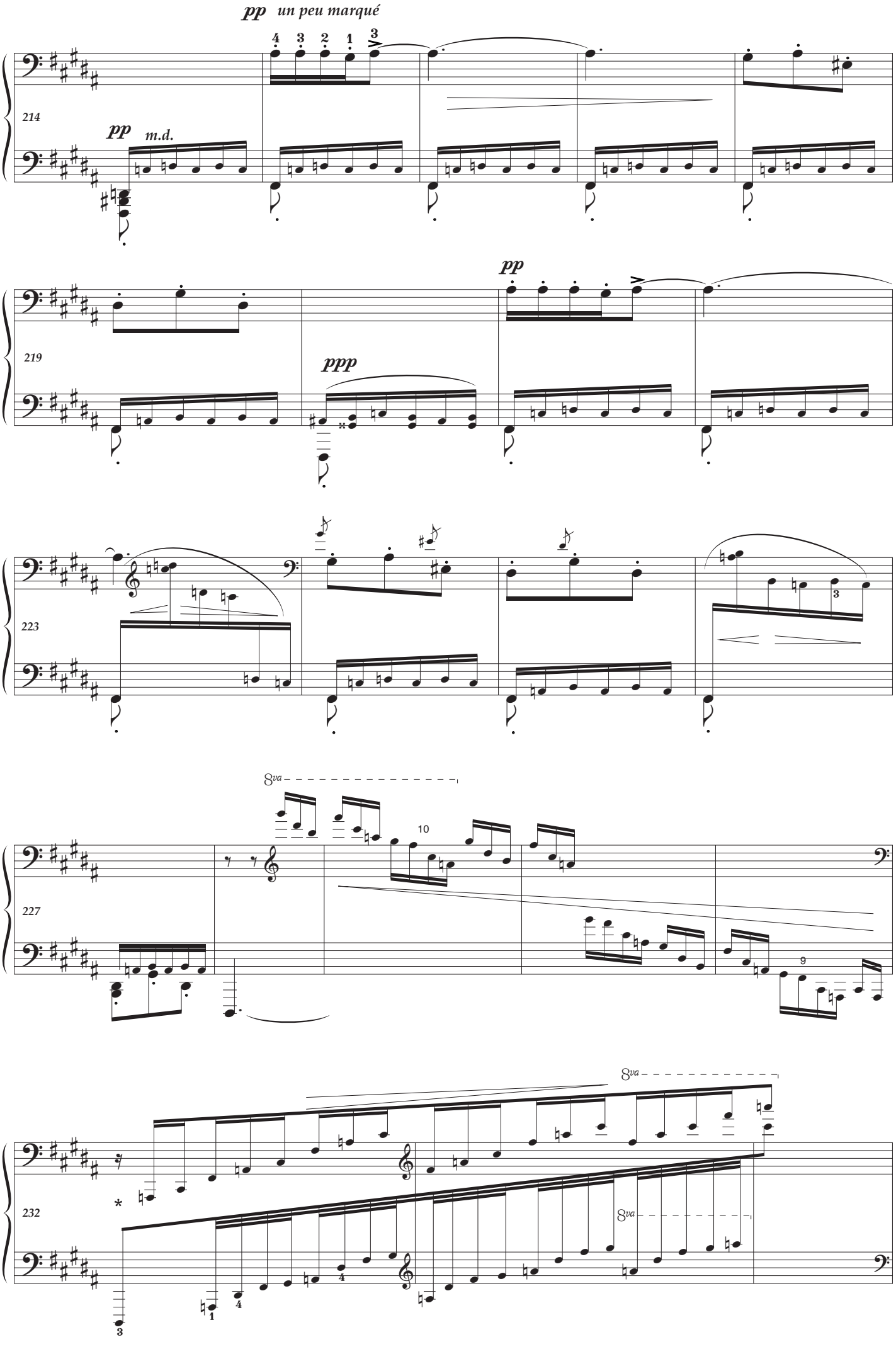

146
pp
4
5
6

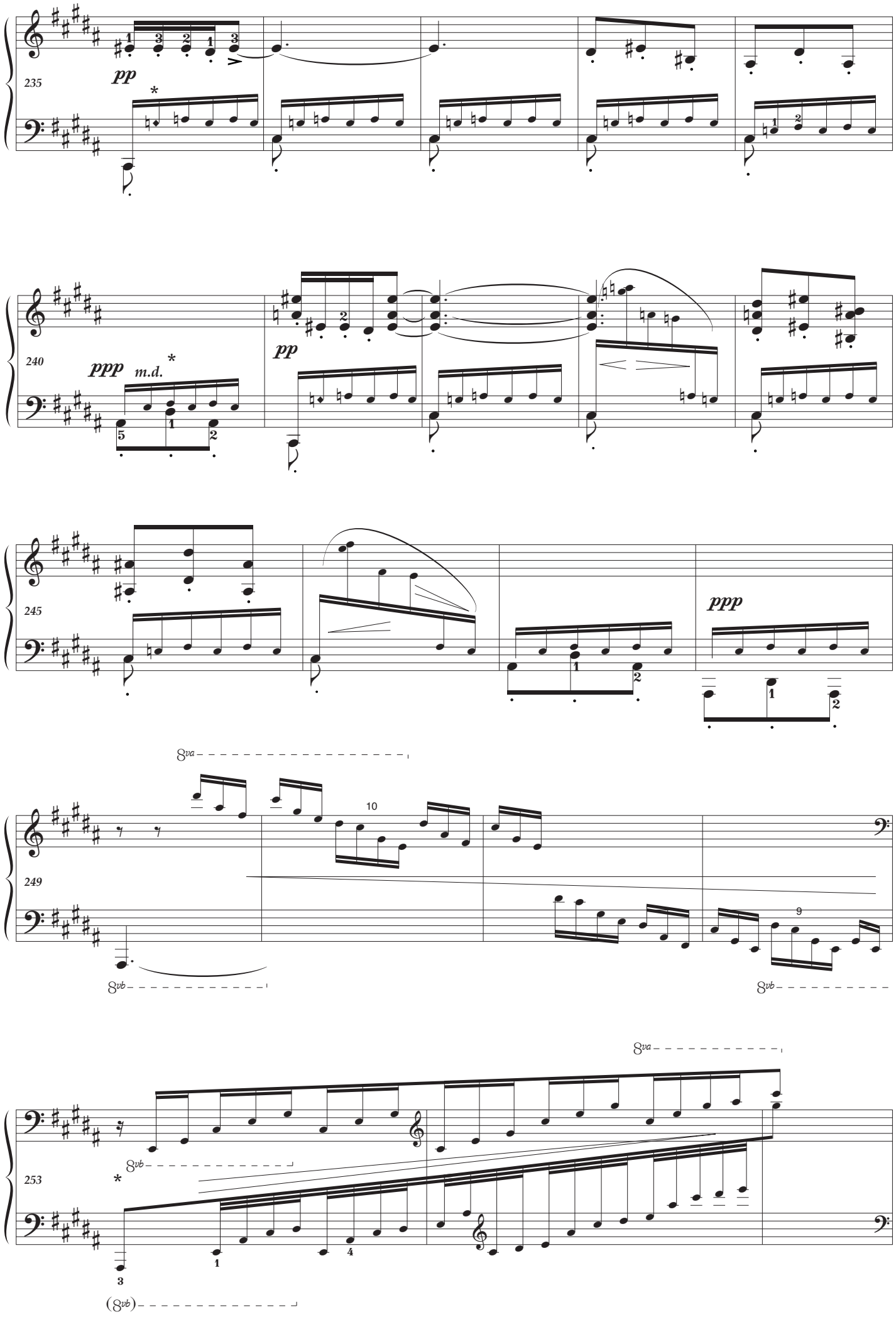

ppp
151
pp
sans arrêt
1
2
3

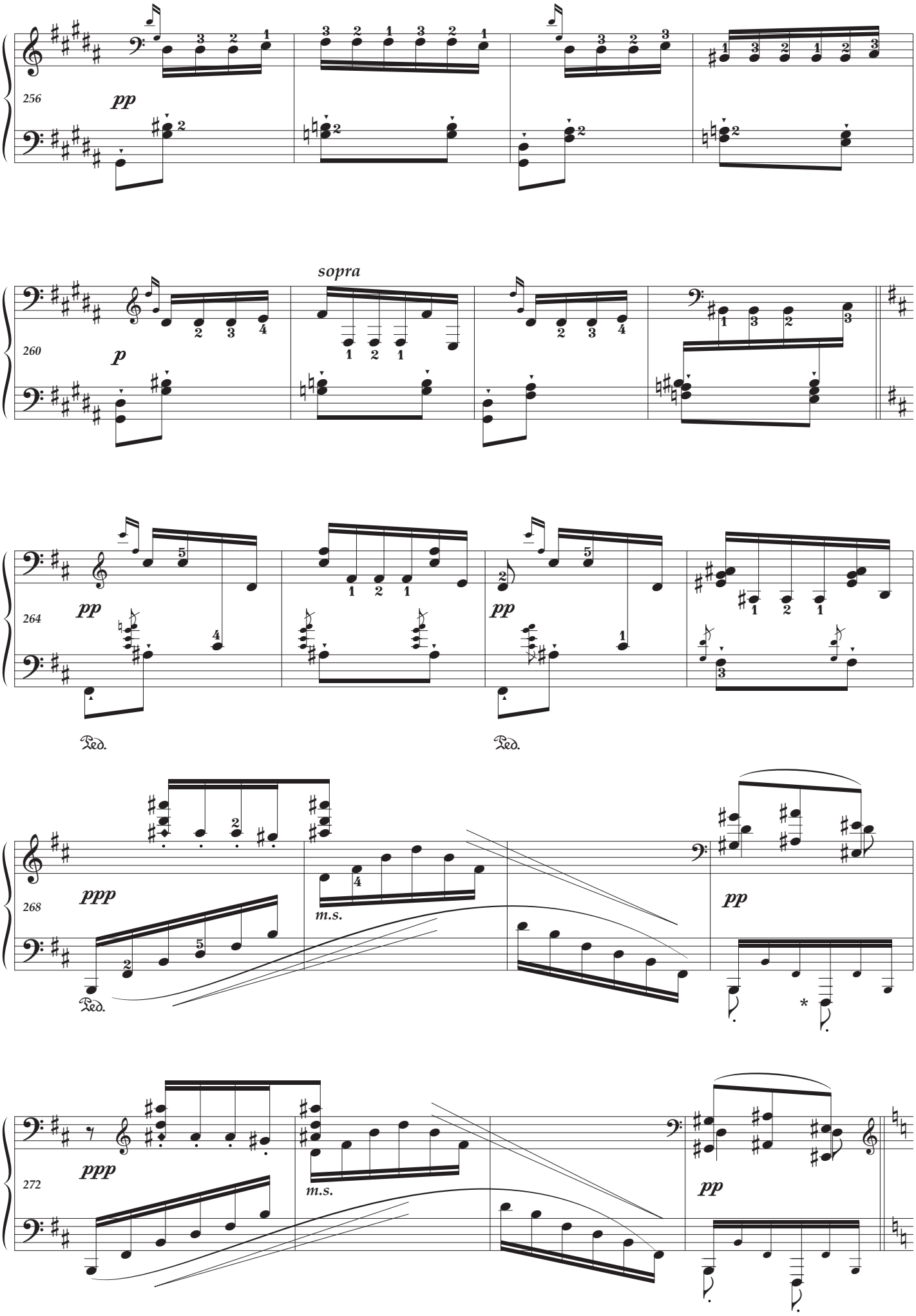

156
pp
f
160
mf
p
*
164
mf
p
sans arrêt
168
pp
*
m.d.

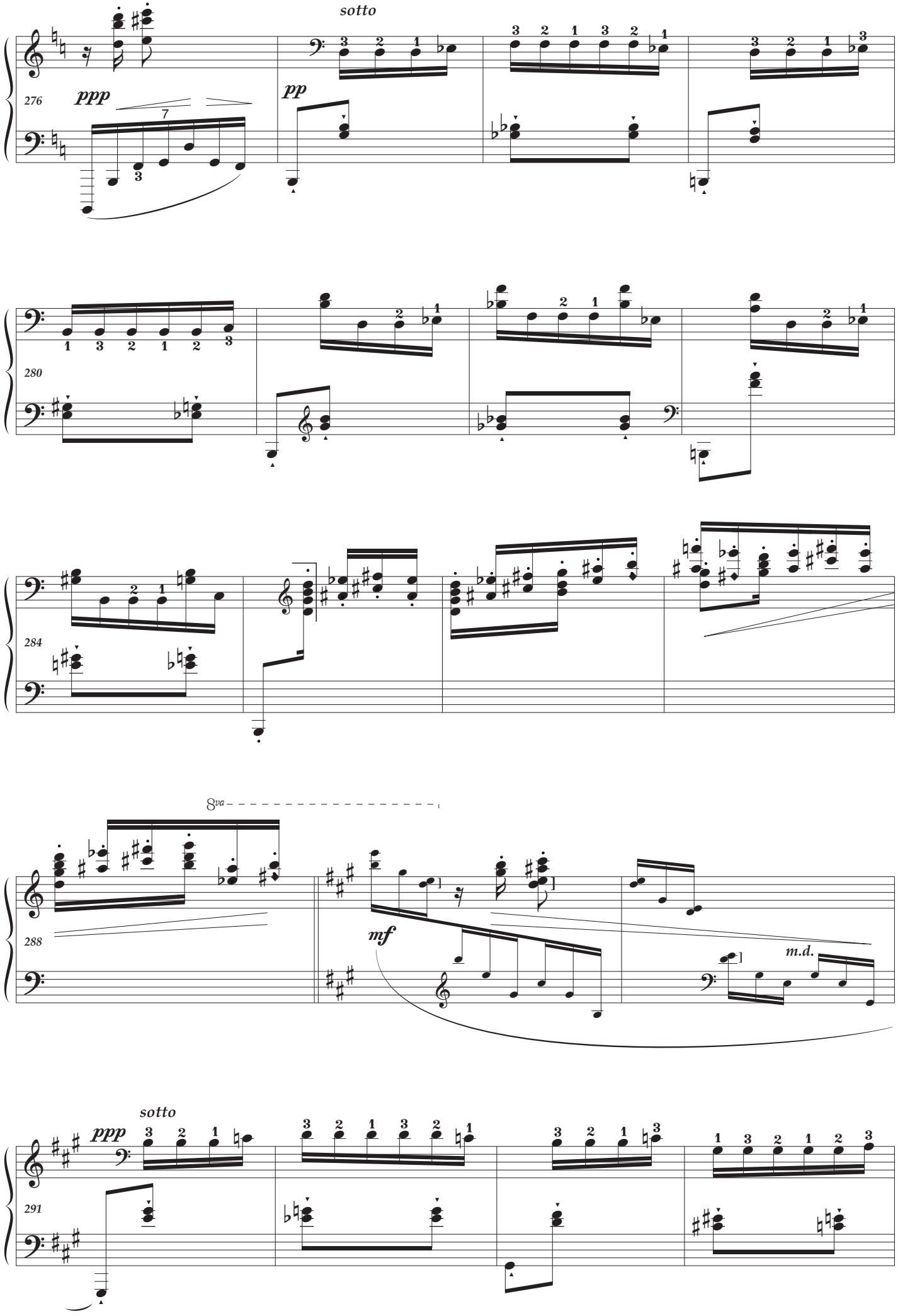

p
pp
172
p
176
m.d.
3
5
3
180
m.d.
184
p
m.d.
188
mf

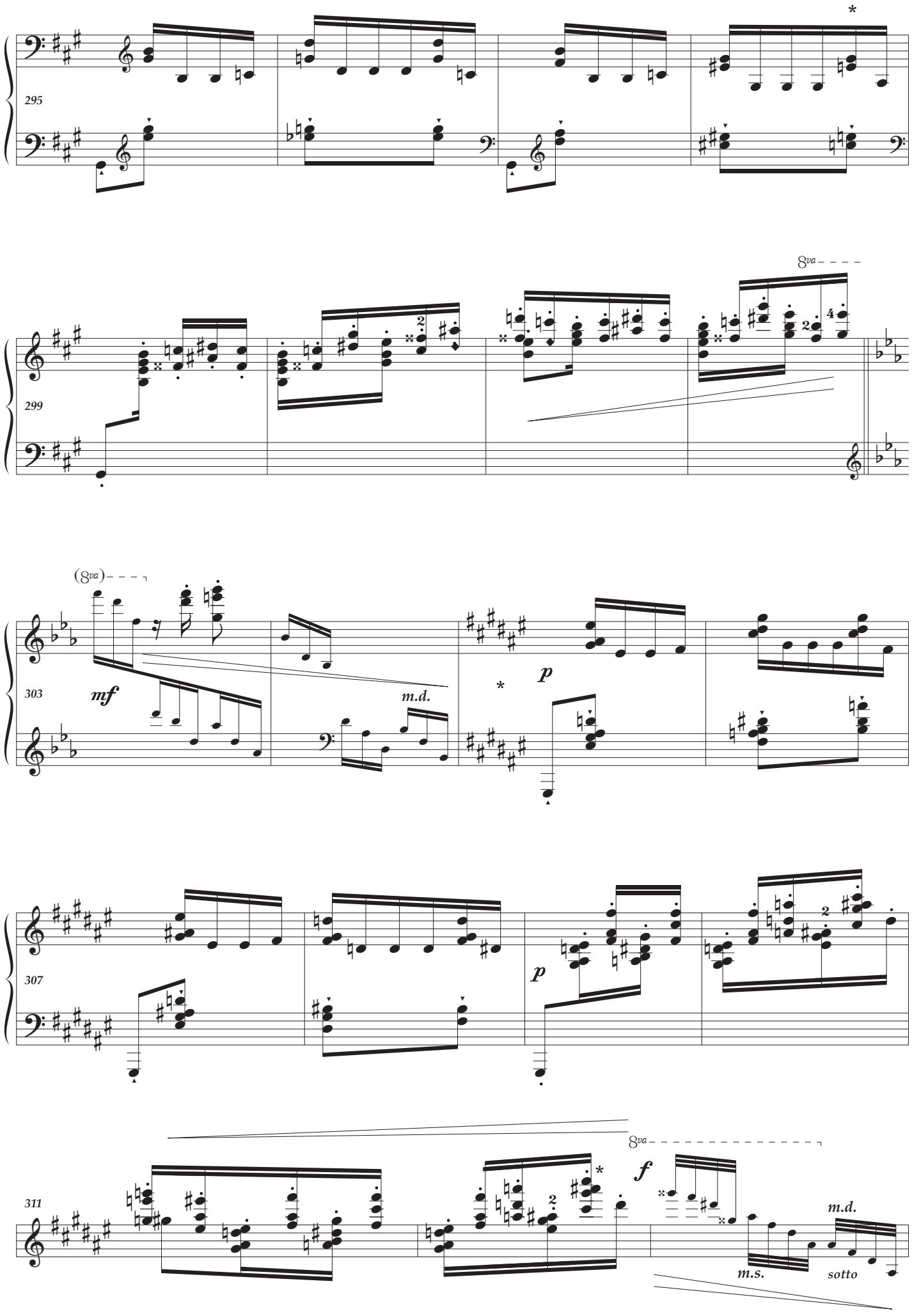

192
mf
196
f
*
200
mf
204
8va
ff
3
2
3
2
208
mp

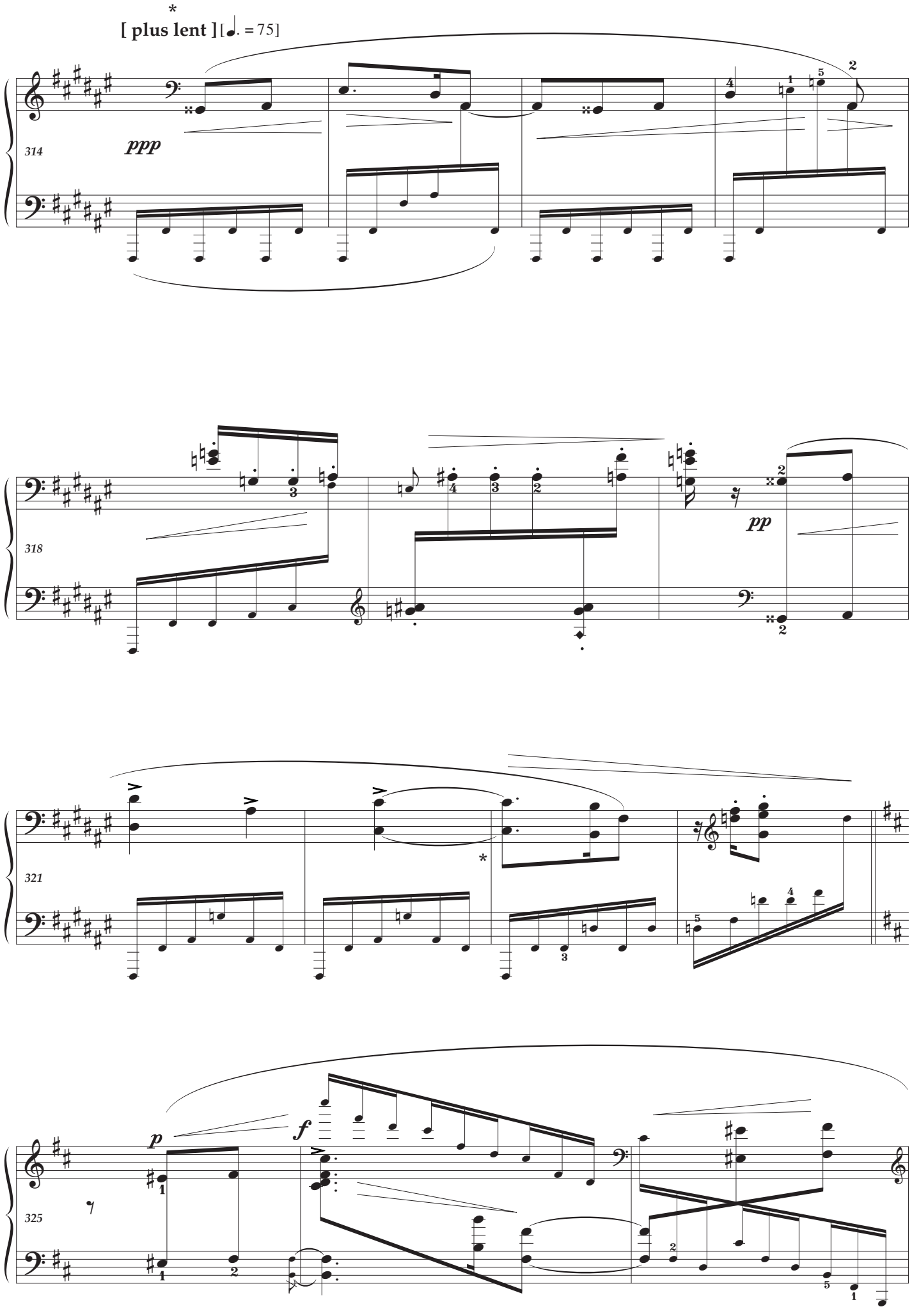

pp un peu marqué
214
pp m.d.
219
ppp
pp
223
227
8va
10
9
232
8va
8va

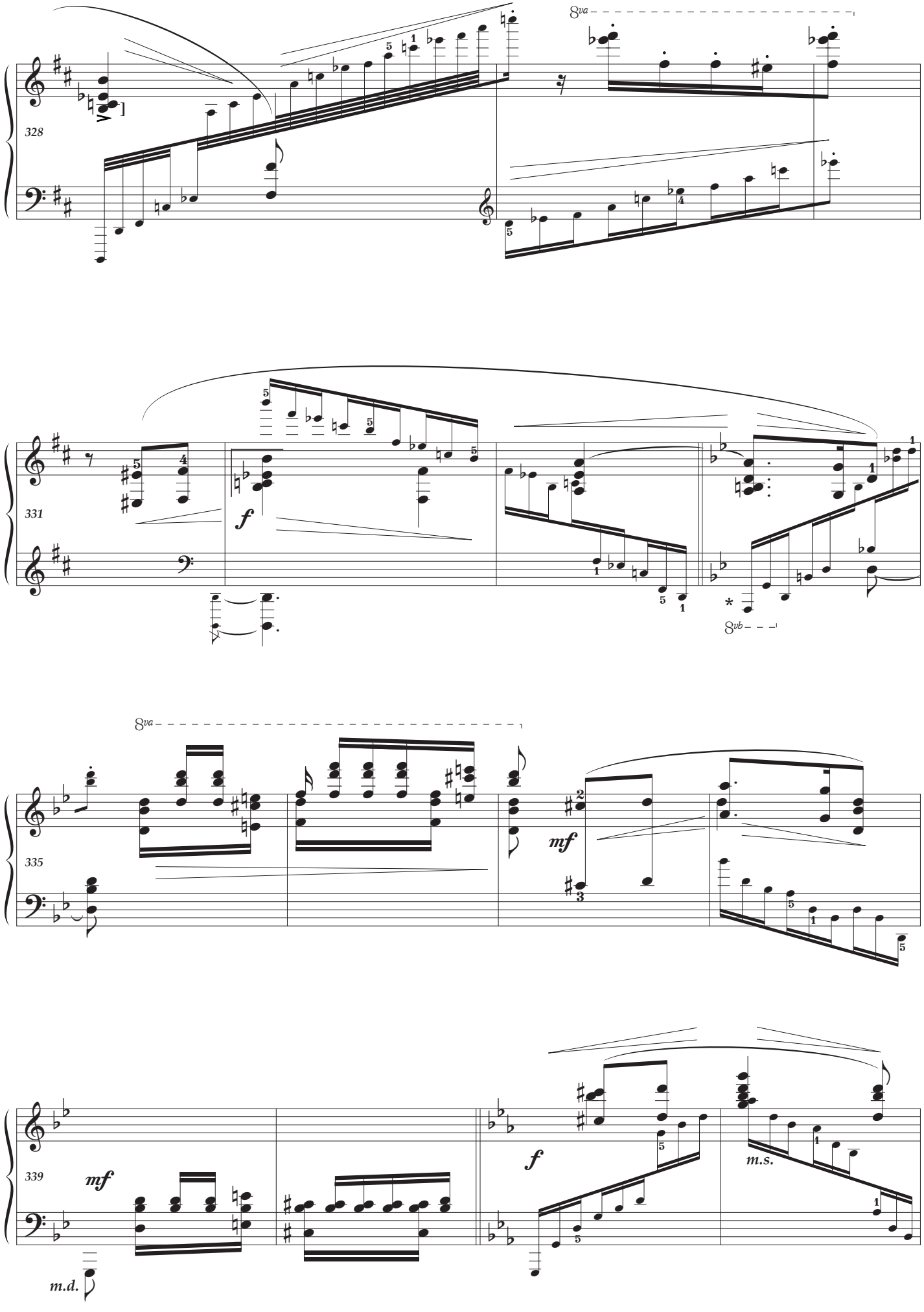

235
pp
240
ppp
m.d.
pp
245
ppp
249
8va
8vb
10
9
253
8va
8vb
(8vb)

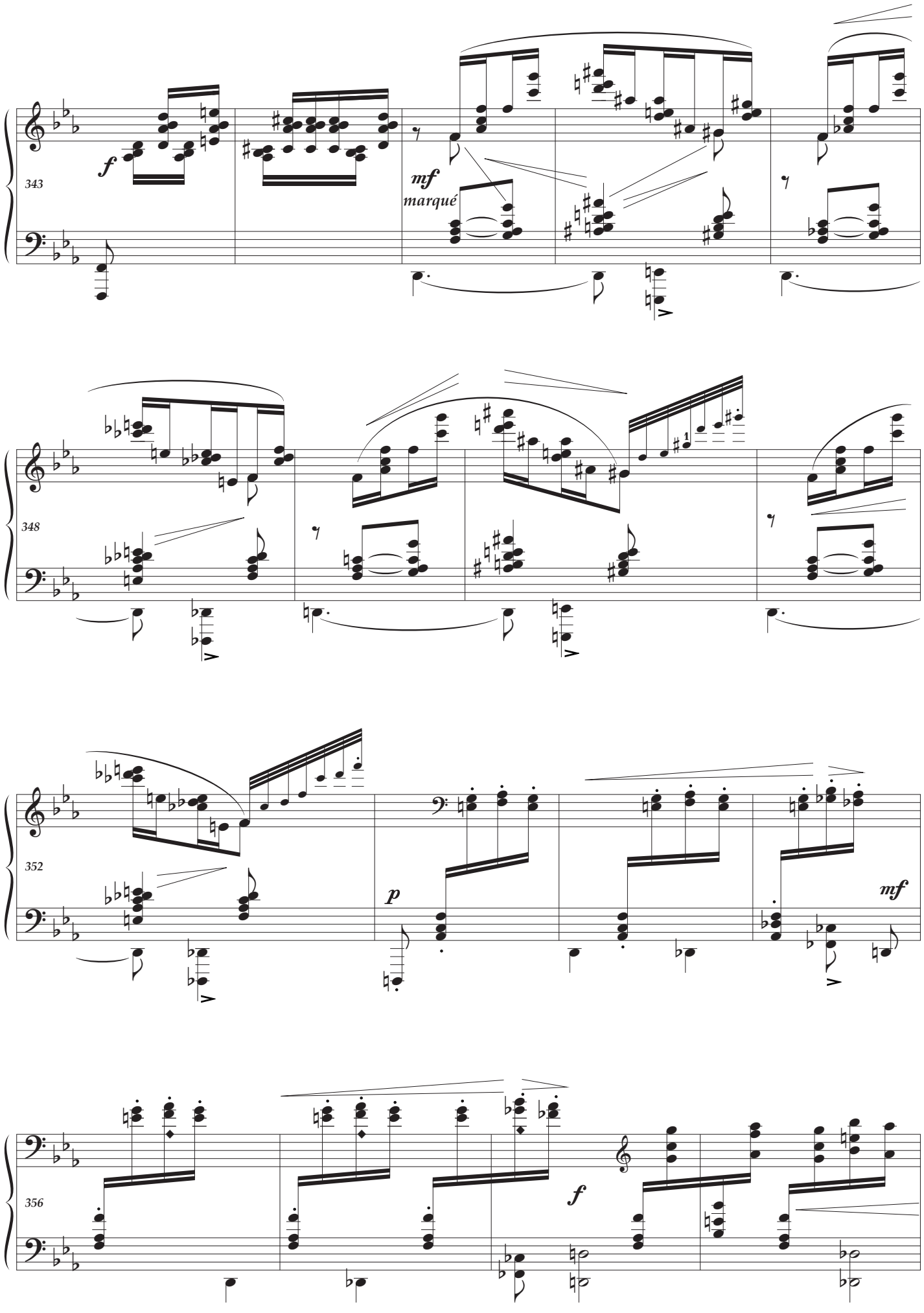

256
pp
sopra
260
p
264
pp
pp
Ped.
Ped.
268
ppp
m.s.
pp
Ped.
272
ppp
m.s.
pp

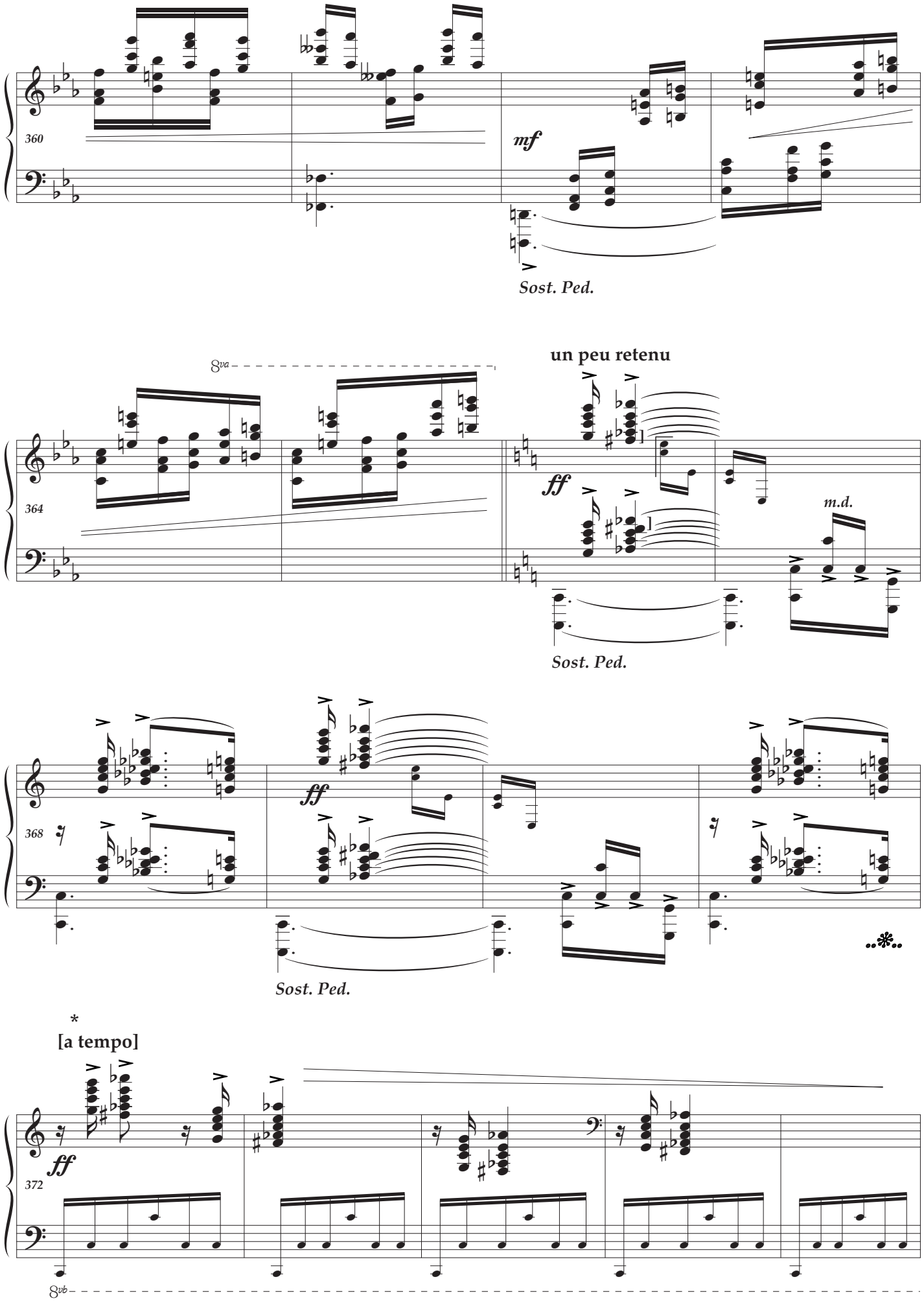

sotto
276
ppp
pp
280
284
8va
288
mf
m.d.
sotto
ppp
291

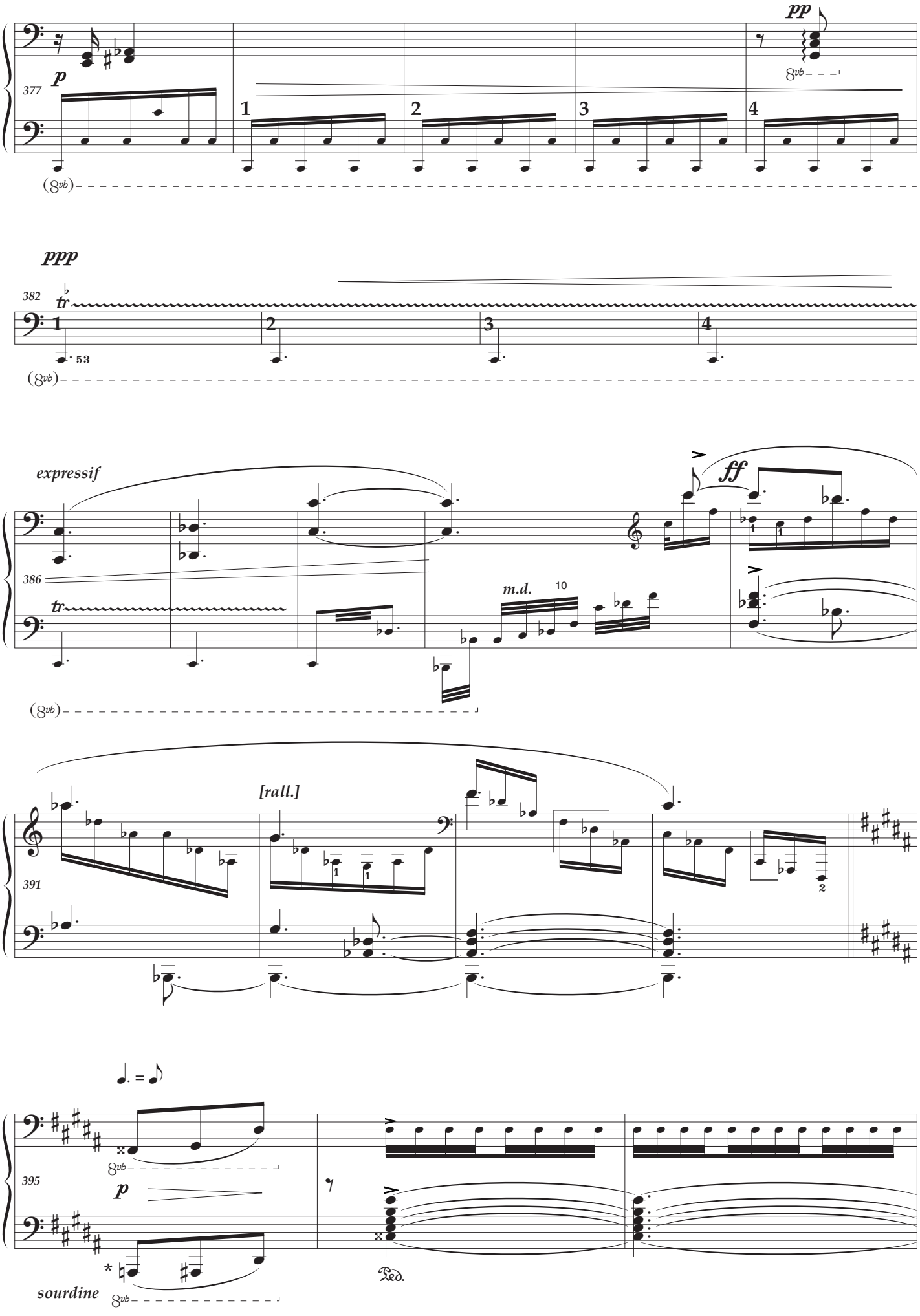

295
299
8va
303
(8va)
mf
m.d.
p
307
p
311
8va
f
m.d.
m.s.
sotto

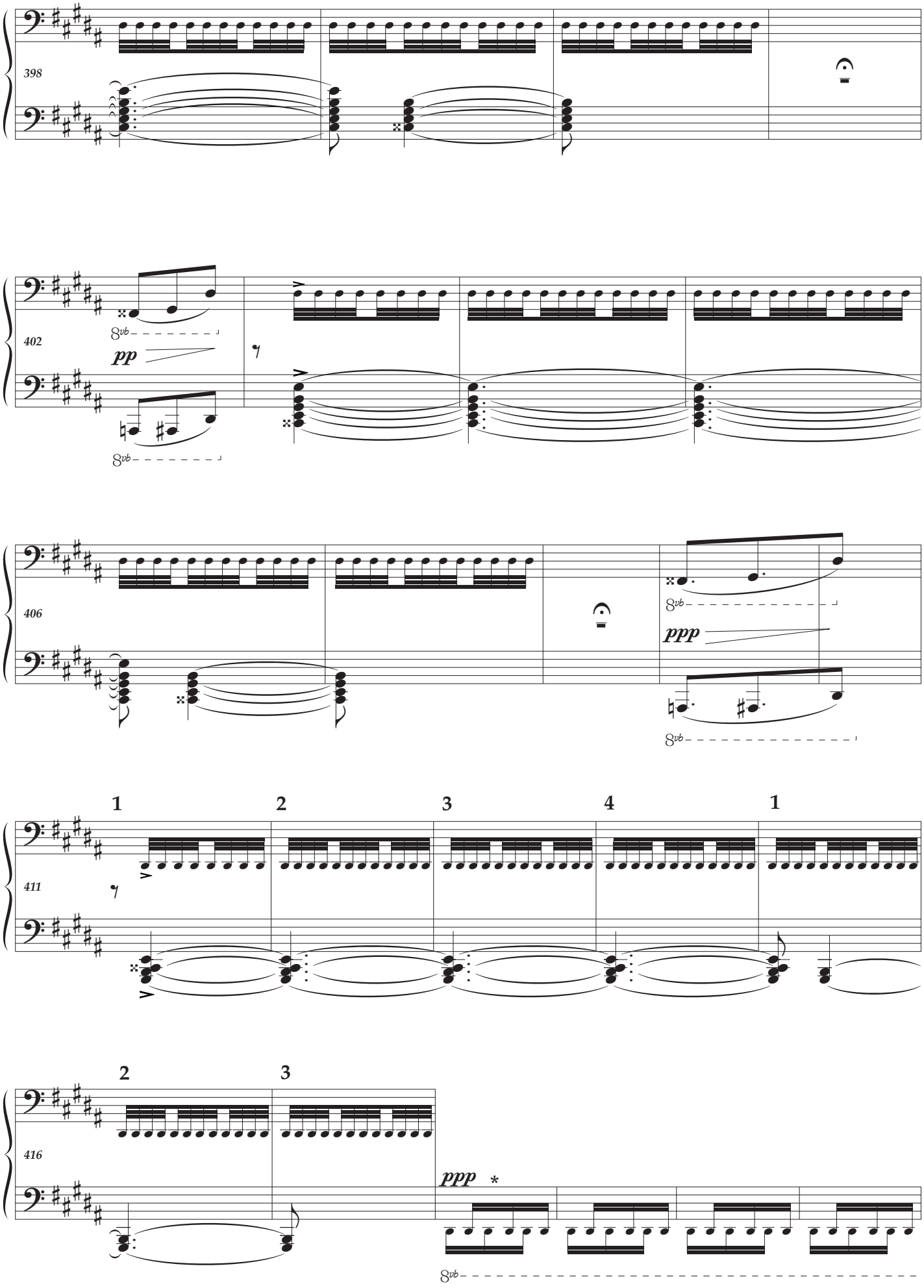

[plus lent] [♩. = 75]
ppp
314
pp
318
321
p
f
325

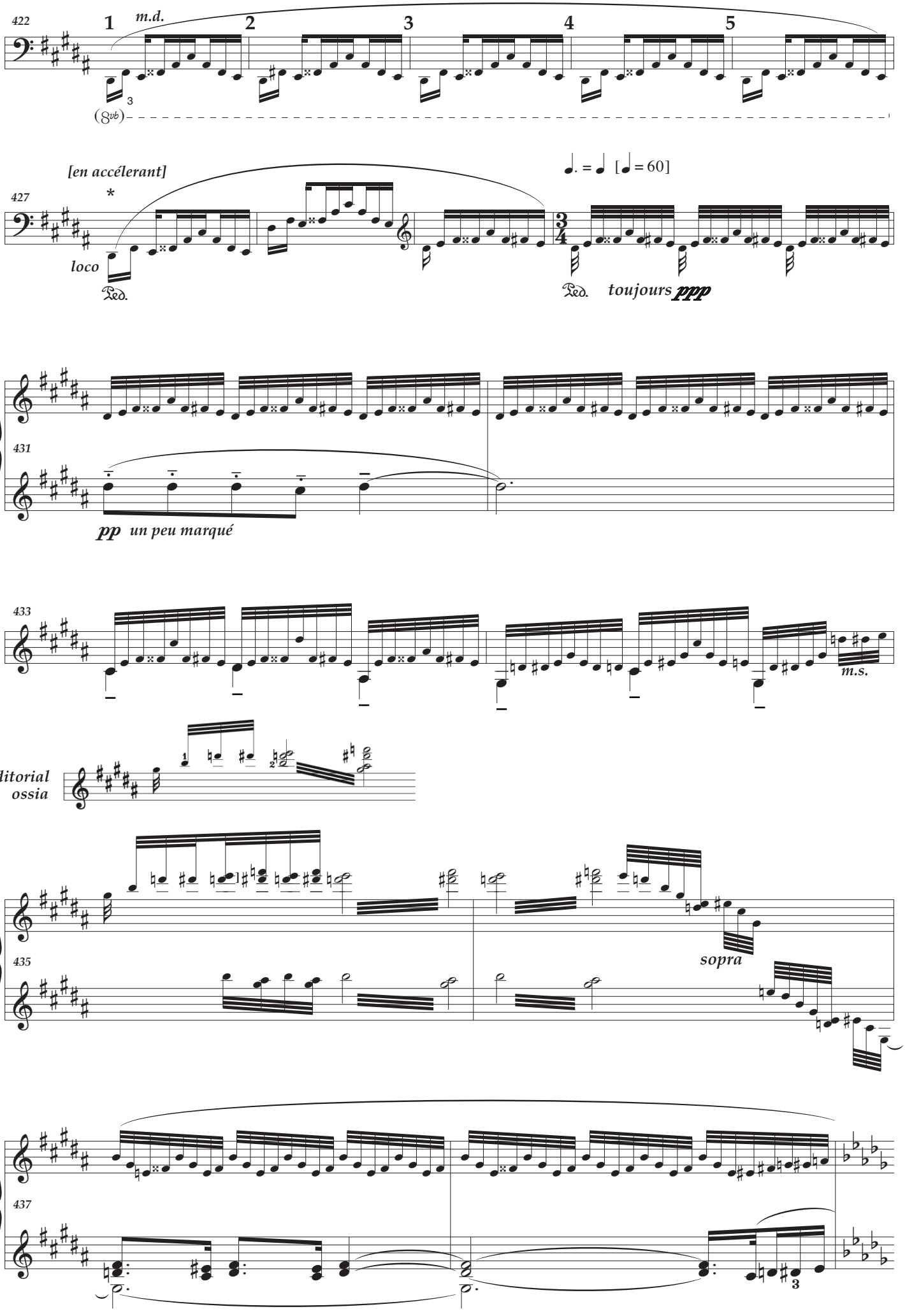

328
8va
331
f
8vb
335
8va
mf
339
mf
m.d.
f
m.s.

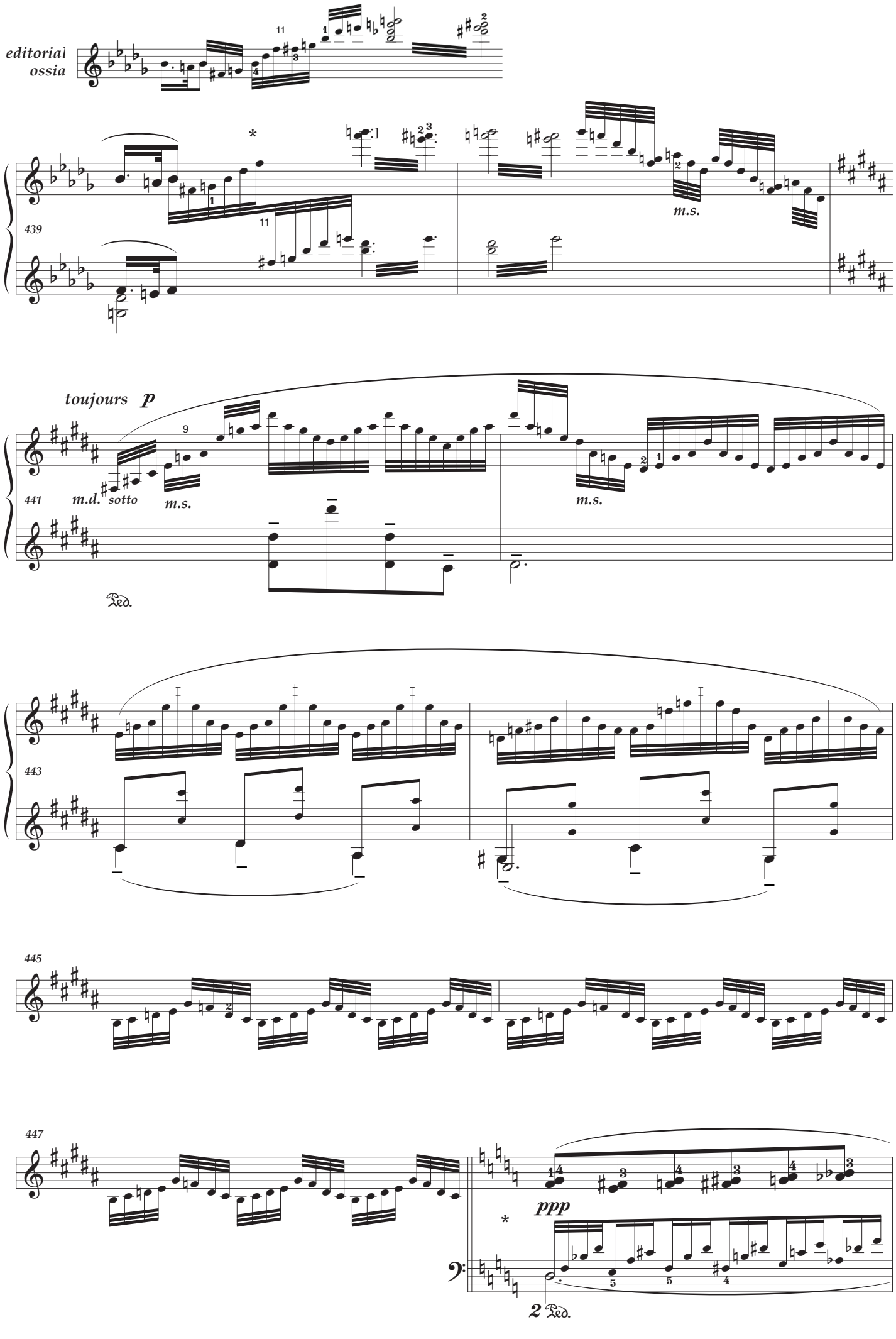

343
f
mf
marqué
348
352
p
mf
356
f

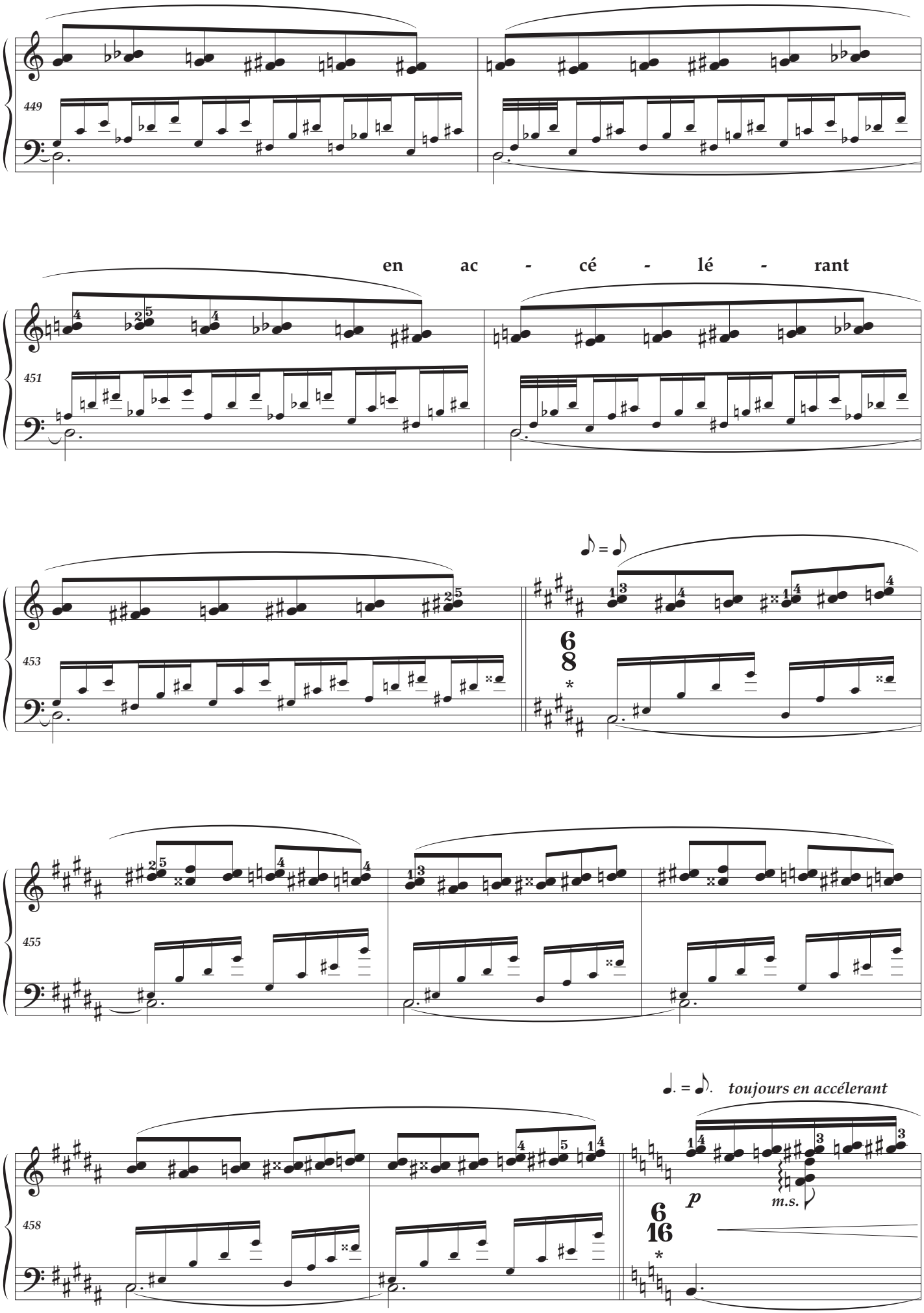

360
mf
Sost. Ped.
8va
un peu retenu
364
ff
m.d.
Sost. Ped.
368
ff
Sost. Ped.
*
[a tempo]
372
ff
8vb


pp
p
377
1
2
3
4
(8vb)
ppp
382
tr
1
2
3
4
53
(8vb)
expressif
ff
386
tr
m.d.
10
(8vb)
[rall.]
391
2
♩. = ♪
395
8vb
p
*
sourdine
Ped.

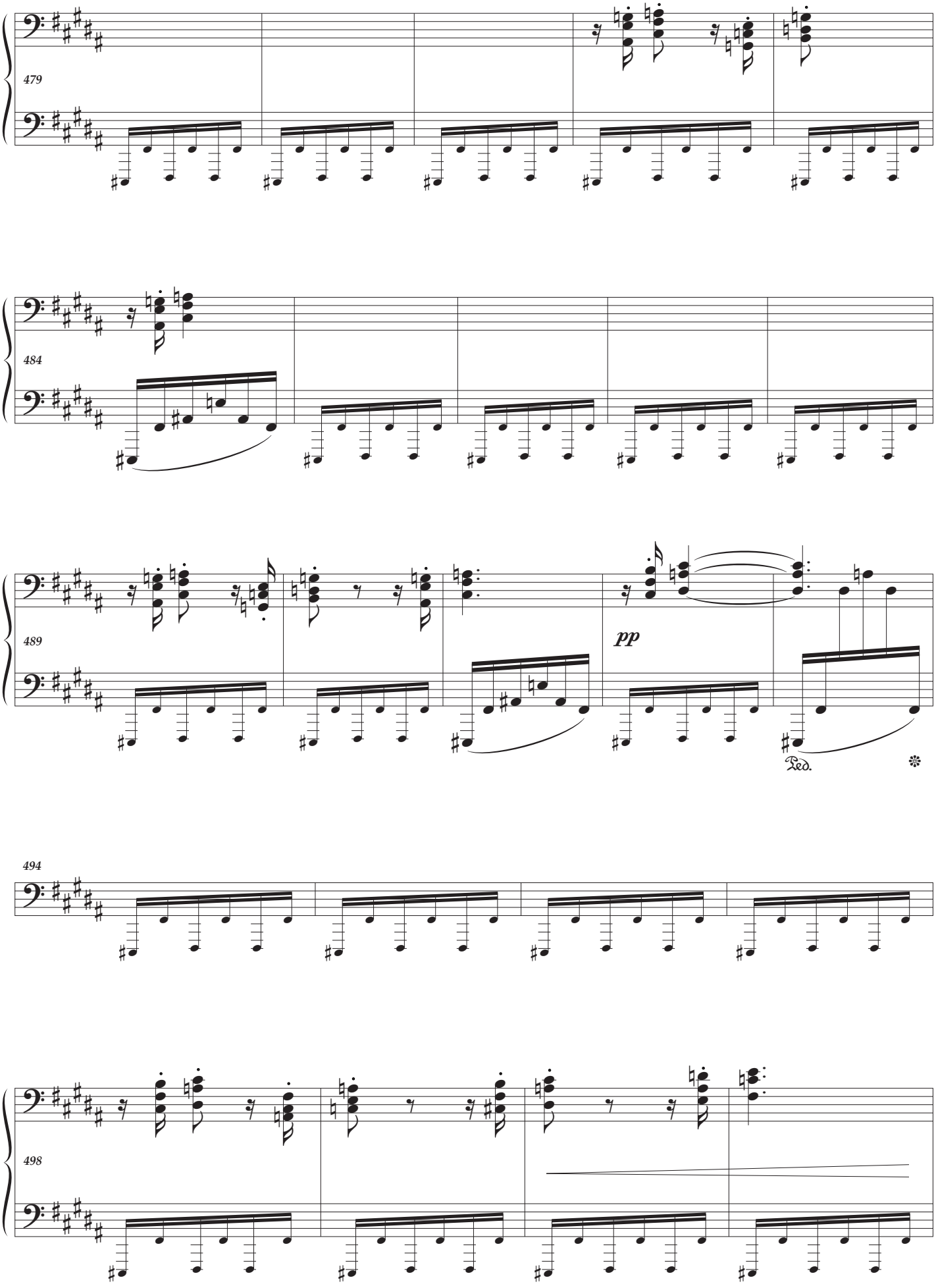

398
402
pp
406
ppp
411
1
2
3
4
1
416
2
3
ppp
*

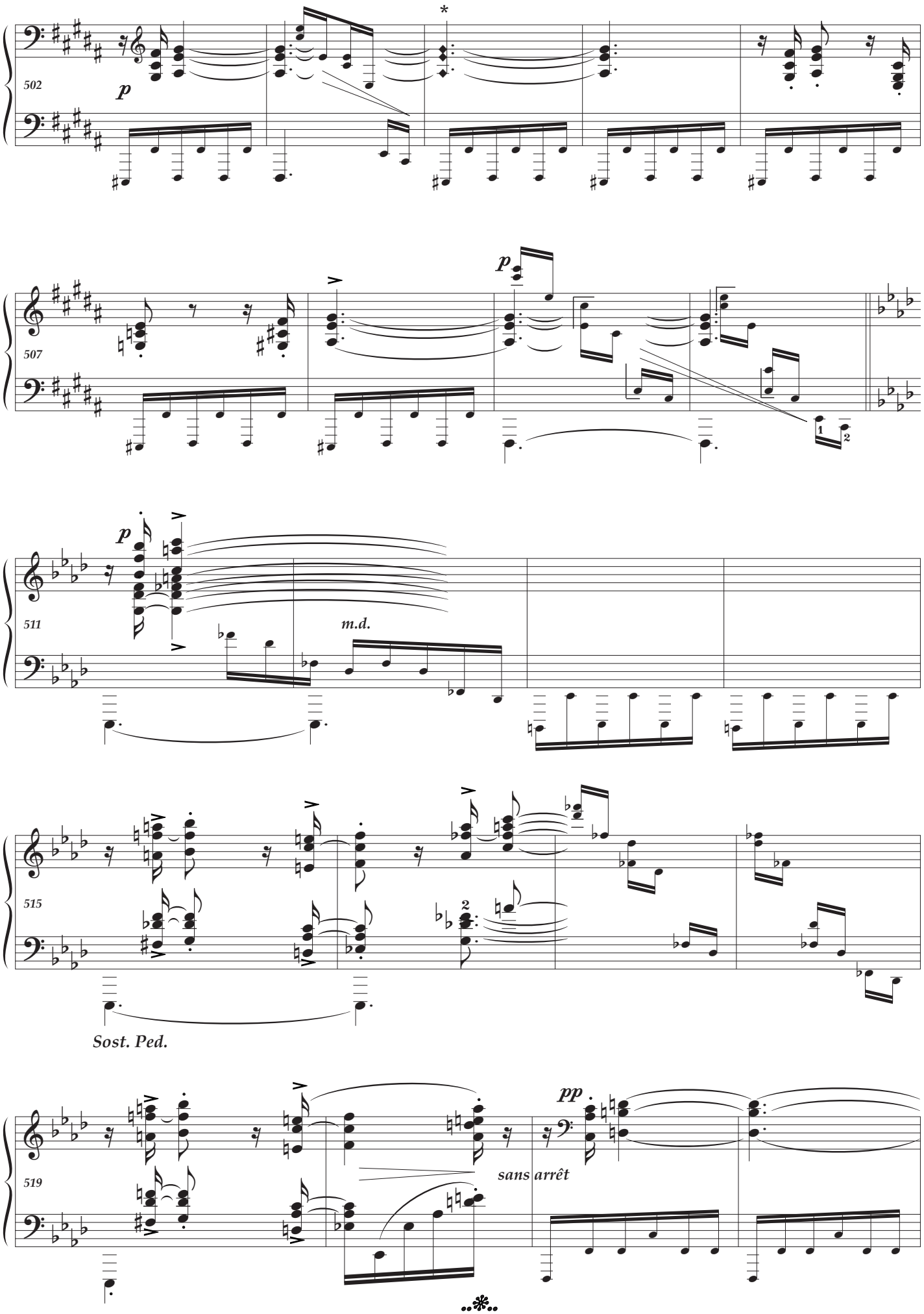

422
1
m.d.
2
3
4
5
(8vb)
[en accélerant]
427
*
loco
Ped.
♩. = ♩ [♩ = 60]
Ped.
toujours ppp
431
pp un peu marqué
433
m.s.
editorial
ossia
435
sopra
437
3

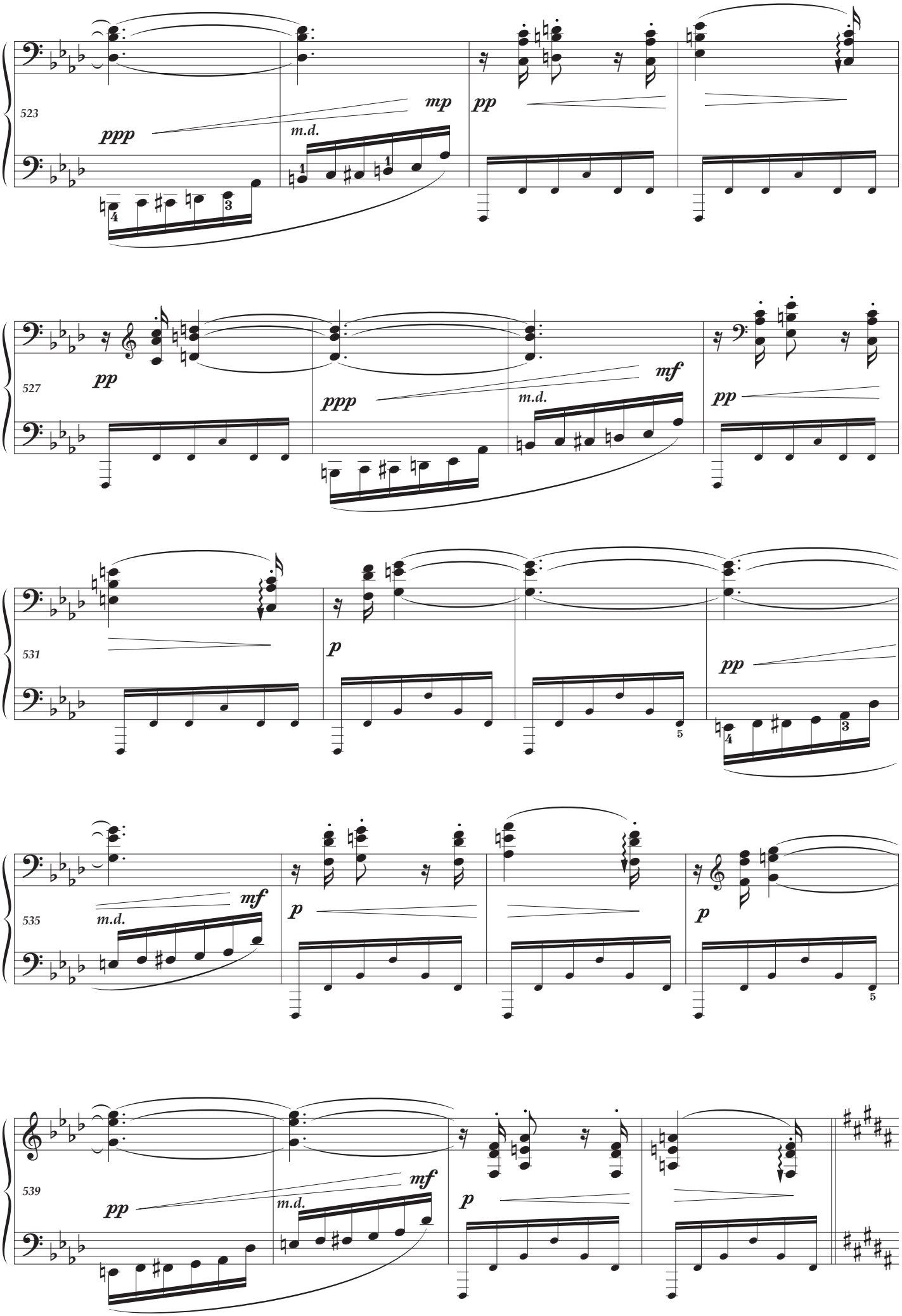

editorial
ossia
439
m.s.
toujours p
441
m.d. sotto
m.s.
m.s.
Ped.
443
445
447
ppp
2 Ped.

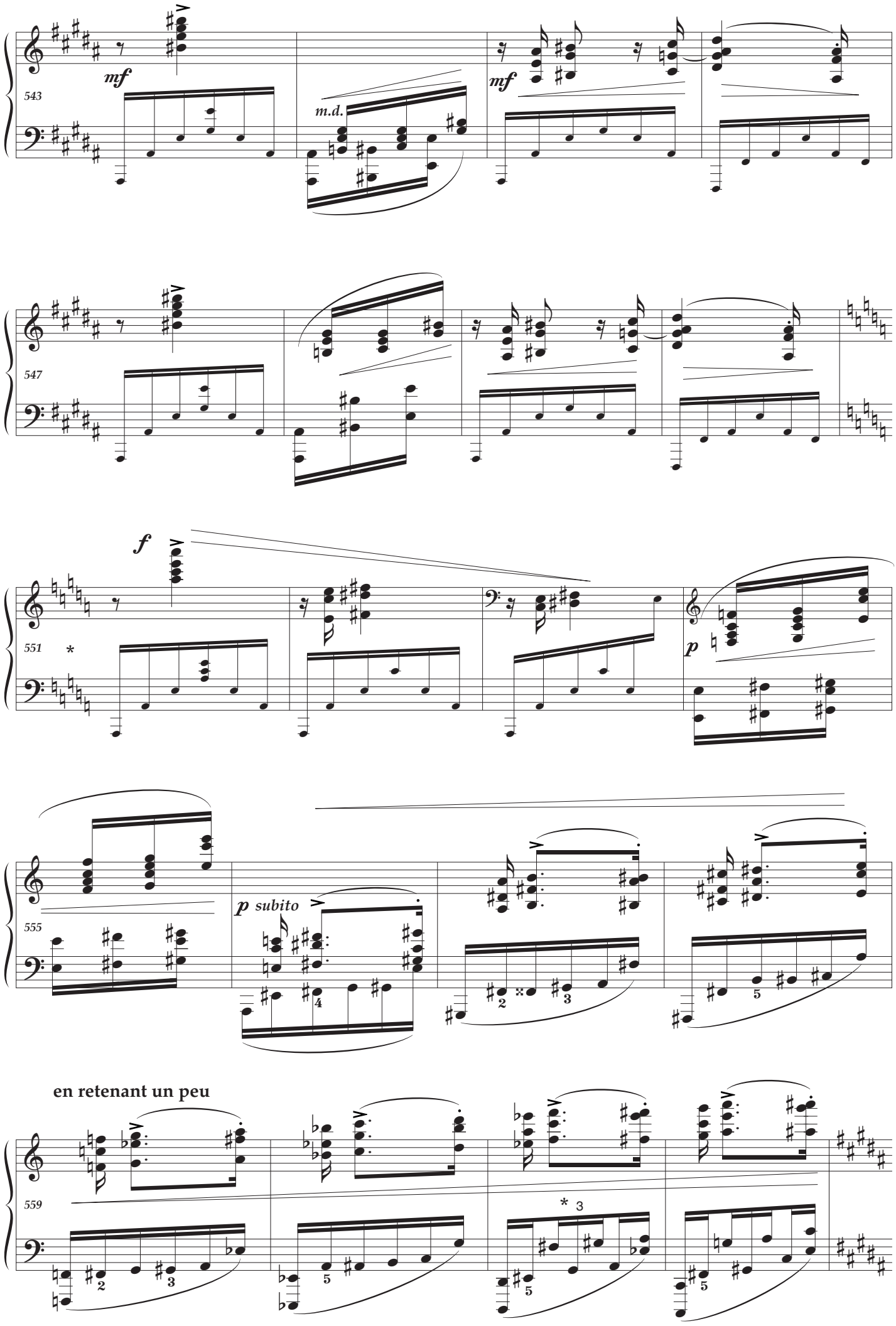

449
en ac - cé - lé - rant
451
453
455
458
toujours en accélerant
m.s.

461
1er mouvement (vif) [♩. = 80]
464
467
f
8va
471
(8va)
f
475
ppp
Ped.


479
484
489
pp
Ped.
494
498

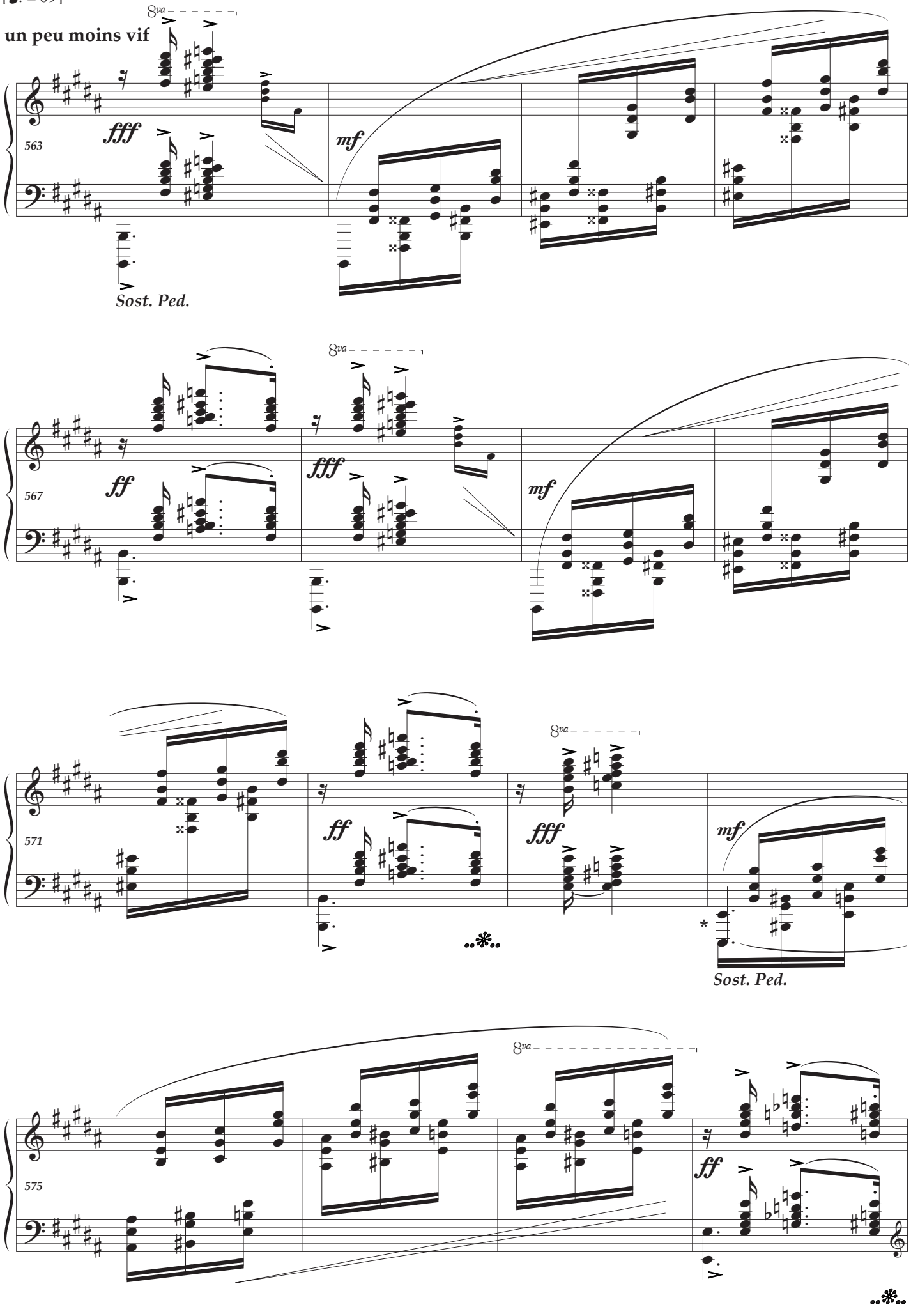

502
p
*
507
p
1
2
511
p
m.d.
515
2
Sost. Ped.
519
pp
sans arrêt

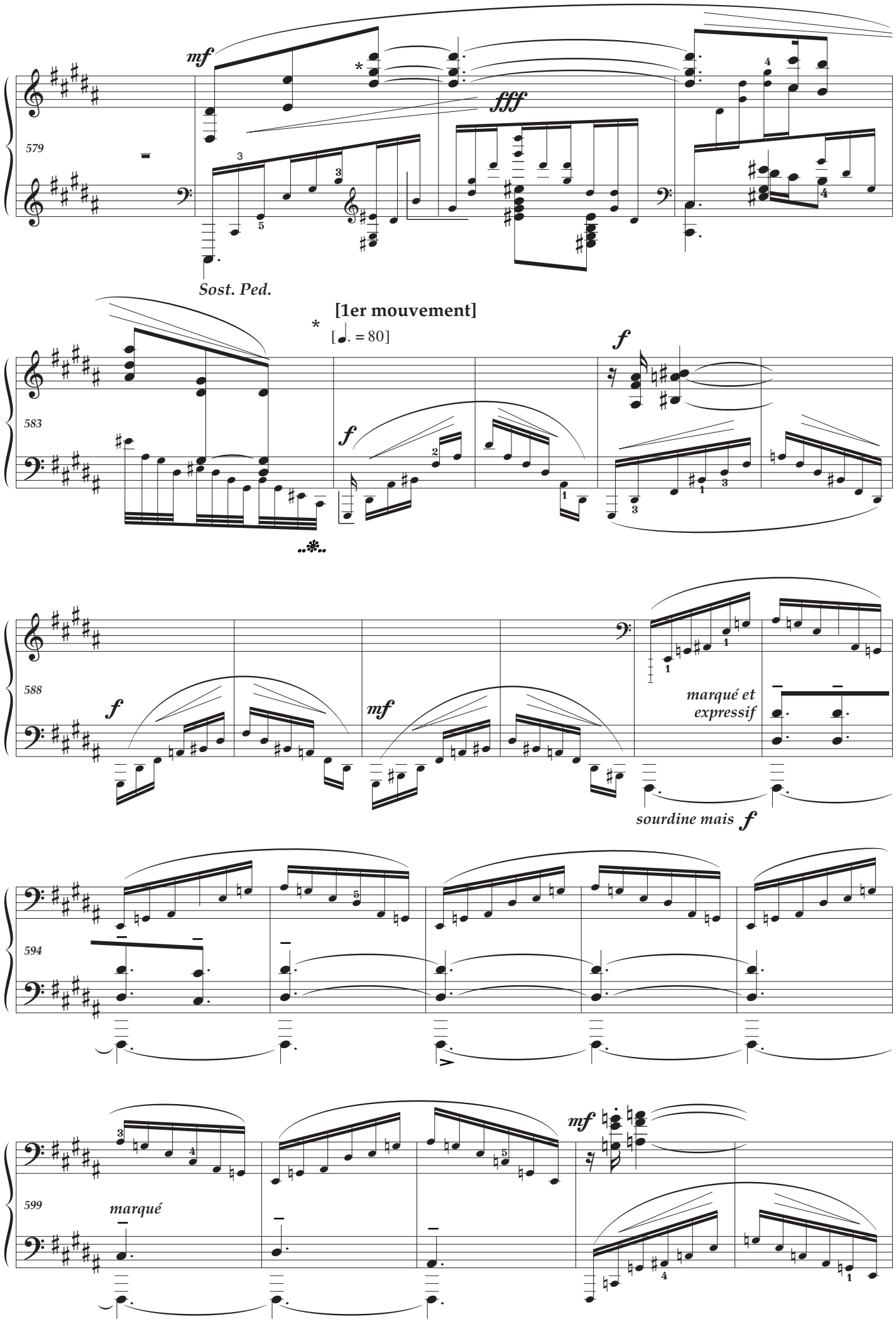

523
ppp
mp
m.d.
pp
527
pp
ppp
mf
m.d.
pp
531
p
pp
535
m.d.
mf
p
p
539
pp
m.d.
mf
p

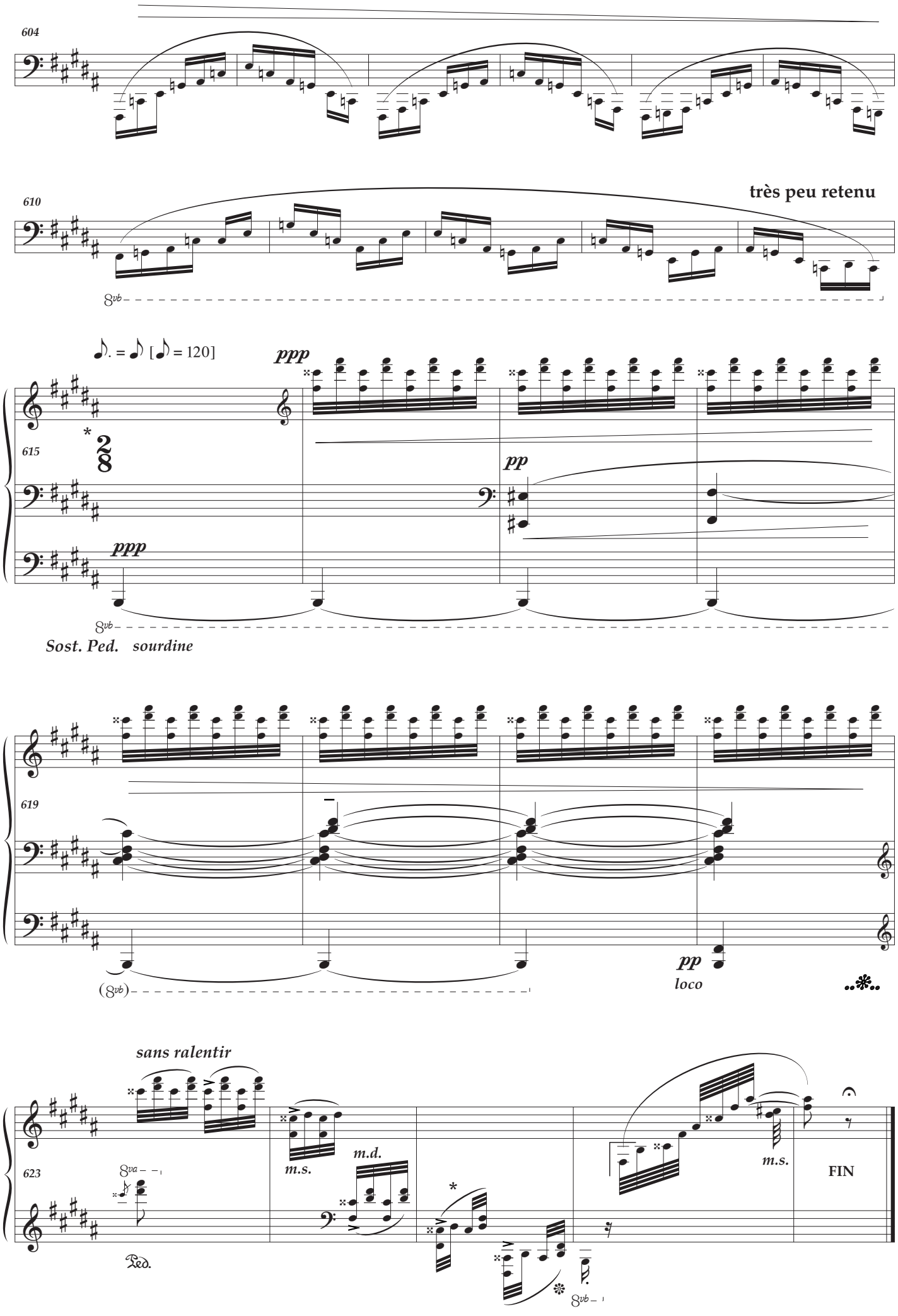

mf
543
m.d.
mf
547
f
551
*
p
555
p subito
en retenant un peu
559
* 3

[♩. = 69]

un peu moins vif




mf
fff
579
Sost. Ped.
[1er mouvement]
[♩. = 80]
f
583
f
588
mf
marqué et
expressif
sourdine mais f
594
599
marqué
mf


604
610
très peu retenu
8vb
♪. = ♪ [♪ = 120]
ppp
615
pp
ppp
8vb
Sost. Ped. sourdine
619
(8vb)
pp
loco
sans ralentir
623
8va
m.s.
m.d.
m.s.
FIN
Ped.
8vb

appendix

comments, afterthoughts & vocabulary

ONDINE (page 1) duration: 7'25

- Has Ondine so bewitched the composer that a some bars have curiously inaccurate time values?
- Édition Durand : there are no metronome speeds
- Ravel used the pedal sign very sparingly, preferring elongated ties and extended notes, impossible to hold otherwise.
- When chords and arpeggiated chords are combined I find this useful: LH arpeggiated — connect the **top** note with RH chord; RH arpeggiated — connect the **lower** note with LH.
- Notes with a diamond head can be omitted — a strictly editorial suggestion for 'challenging' passages.
- **88-89** The melodic line is originally in semiquavers and quavers but, given the note values of the accompaniment, I believe it makes more sense as presented here.
- **2-9** LH melody — try sustaining lower notes (particularly with 5th finger) to create a special 'pedalled' effect; pedal changes will thus be less noticeable.
- **3-13** RH notes which impede LH finger legato have been omitted (as in **2** beat 4)
- **5-7**, **23-27** according to Casadesus, Perlemuter and Badura-Skoda, the accompaniment should remain as hitherto
- **22** LH accompaniment modification
- **25** RH 2nd beat thumb melody octave omitted
- **27** RH 1st beat a crotchet in Durand… probably an error
- **27** the first RH minim tied to a quaver reads as a crotchet in the original edition
- **29** the final G♯ of the melody is a quaver in the original edition
- **37** an F♯ has been substituted for the original G♯ to avoid repeated notes between the hands (as in **39**)
- **44, 49 & 50** editorial acciaccaturas (played on the beat) to help voicing the bass melody opening
- **49** editorial arpeggiated chord (for a particularly sensual sound) and modification of the accompaniment
- **54** editorial modification of LH 1st beat — I suspect that middle E is a ledger line error, here replaced by G
- **65** repeated notes have been added in conformity
- **67-68** editorial modification of accompaniment
- **73-74** an excellent way to perform a white or black key *pp* glissando is to use four fingernails — see website description for further details https://pianopracticaleditions.com/2020/01/22/glissando/
- **72** Modification of the time signature to allow an extra beat for the *melismata*. The octave higher sign is missing in the original edition. At the point where the glissando meets the descending arpeggio a repeated A has been omitted. According to Robert Casadesus last two bass notes should be played an octave lower.
- **79** the bass G♯ tie has been omitted in the original edition — clearly an error
- **82** Ravel's pedal instruction at this point is unclear and the following phrase (83-86 - where "Ondine wept a little") sounds 'dry' without it. I suggest holding a silent cluster with the left forearm and palm which clears out dissonance and enables normal pedalling.
- **87** editorial beaming
- **88-89** The melody is originally in semiquavers and quavers but, given the note values of the accompaniment, I believe it makes more sense as presented here.
- **90-92** according to Perlemuter *non-legato* within the pedal

très doux et très expressif	*very gentle and very expressive*
toujours	*always*
cédez légèrement	*slight ritardando*
un peu retenu	*held back a little*
au mouvement	*a tempo*
le chant bien soutenu et expressif	*sustained and expressive melody*
augmentez peu à peu	*gradually louder*
retenez	*slowing down*
un peu plus lent	*slightly slower*
encore plus lent	*even more slowly*
le plus ***p*** possible	*as soft as possible*
un peu plus lent qu'au début	*a little slower than the opening*
un peu en dehors	*a little in relief*
retenez peu à peu	*gradually holding back*
au mouvement du début	*at the opening tempo*
bien égal de sonorité	*very even tone*
sans ralentir	*without slowing down*

LE GIBET (page 17) duration: 6'

- *Édition Durand* : there are no metronome speeds
- Ravel used the pedal sign very sparingly, preferring elongated ties and extended notes, impossible to hold otherwise.
- *Le Gibet* demands a very large hand span… if you are unable to play a chord, rather than arpeggiating, it is better to compromise, removing certain notes, or try an alternative hand arrangement.
- **3-5** LH thumb to be marked (*un peu marqué)*
- **4** E♭ tie missing in Durand (see **3**)
- **11** & **27-30** editorial pedal suggestions
- **20-21** presented in A major
- **22** unless you are blessed with a huge hand, best to leave out the diamond-headed note
- **20-23** presented as 6 crotchet beats instead of 4
- **23** the final 'bell' quaver can be played if the bass G♯ is omitted
- **26-32** note the unaccentuated bells to underline *sans expression*
- **38-42** modified metre and bar lines
- **42** the accented acciaccatura should almost certainly be tied
- **42/43/44** editorial hiatus to allow a brief pedal change for harmonic clarity

sans presser ni ralentir jusqu'à la fin	maintain the same tempo throughout
sourdine durant toute la pièce	use the soft pedal throughout
un peu marqué	a little marked
très lié et un peu en dehors	very smooth and a little in relief
toujours ***ppp***	always ***ppp***
mais sans expression	but without expression

SCARBO (page 28) duration: 11'

- Édition Durand : there are no metronome speeds indicated
- It is suggested that diamond-headed notes may be omitted
- Ravel used the pedal sign very sparingly, preferring elongated ties and extended notes, impossible to hold otherwise. It is possible to use the sostenuto pedal effectively although this is entirely editorial.
- **15** beats 1 & 2 — with a Bösendorfer F𝄪 and G♯ are possible here
- **32-37** editorial bass voice
- **66** the D♮ is missing in Durand — clearly a misprint
- **73** the thumb D♯ is most awkward and can be omitted without spoiling the effect (see **241**)
- **113** 3rd quaver beat modified
- **121-155** presented without key-signature
- **142** RH final semiquaver — B♭ to complete the chromatic alto (Durand B♮)
- **144-148** according to Perlemuter the treble accompaniment should conform (as presented here)
- **160/1** & **164/5** RH accompaniment conforming to **157** and **158**; I suspect the Durand edition to be in error.
- **171/176/182/187** the demonic motif has been adapted for two hands
- **197** I suggest substituting B
- **232 & 253** editorial beaming modified for consistency
- **235/241** LH diamond-headed semiquaver may be omitted
- **240/247** rearranged between the hands
- **271** LH adapted from **275**
- **298** RH 3rd quaver beat : the G♯ replaces a suspected G♮ error to be consistent with **284**
- **305** modified key-signature
- **312** copied from **310**
- **314** the editorial *plus lent* seems to be musically justified
- **322** I suspect the RH C♯ thumb should be tied
- **334** a Bösendorfer could play bass G
- **372** *a tempo* missing in Durand… an undoubted oversight
- **395/402/409** as **15**
- **418** the repeated notes can be played with LH alone
- **427-430** a slight accelerando is suggested here; the ambiguous ♩=♪ has been replaced by an editorial metronome speed
- **439** editorial re-beaming
- **448-453 551-562** presented without key signature
- **454** the 6/8 time signature is editorial but a reasonable interpretation
- **460** another perhaps more meaningful time signature, easier to realise
- **476** LH 1st beat B♯ removed for clarity in the bass
- **503** RH accompaniment slightly modified
- **504** to replay silently
- **561-562** editorial division
- **574** editorial added octave
- **580-582** G♯ has been added to the climactic RH 3rd quaver, and the RH has been slightly modified to strengthen this awkward technical and musical moment
- **584** *a tempo* probably omitted in error
- **615** The change of time signature takes place at **616** (Durand), but this interpretation makes the 4-bar phrase easier to perceive.
- **625** editorial modification of text

vif	lively
très fondu	very muted
sans ralentir	without slowing down
un peu marqué	a little marked
bien égal de sonorité	even tone
sans arrêt	without stopping
un peu retenu	held back a little
toujours	always
en retenant un peu	slowing a little
un peu moins vif	a little less lively

LE FOU

Aloysius Bertrand

LE FOU

Un carolus ou bien encor,
Si l'aimez mieux, un agneau d'or *.

MANUSCRIT DE LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE DU ROI

La lune peignait ses cheveux avec un démêloir d'ébène qui argentait d'une pluie de vers luisants les collines, les prés et les bois.

Scarbo, gnome dont les trésors foisonnent, vannait sur mon toit, au cri de la girouette, ducats et florins qui sautaient en cadence, les pièces fausses jonchant la rue.

Comme ricana le fou qui vague, chaque nuit, par la cité déserte, un oeil à la lune et l'autre - crevé !

"Foin de la lune ! grommela-t-il, ramassant les jetons du diable, j'achèterai le pilori pour m'y chauffer au soleil ! "

Mais c'était toujours la lune, la lune qui se couchait. - Et Scarbo monnoyait sourdement dans ma cave ducats et florins à coups de balancier.

Tandis que, les deux cornes en avant, un limaçon qu'avait égaré la nuit, cherchait sa route sur mes vitraux * lumineux.

THE LUNATIC

A sovereign or even,
If you better prefer, a golden angel *.

MANUSCRIPT FROM THE KING'S LIBRARY

The moon was grooming her hair with an ebony comb, silvery glowworms showering the hills, the fields and the woods.

Scarbo, a gnome whose treasures are abundant, was jeering on my roof, to the screech of the weathervane, ducats and florins leaping in rhythm, the fake coins scattered across the street.

How the lunatic sneered in the deserted city, wandering each night, one eye on the moon and the other - punctured!

"A plague on the moon! he grumbled, collecting the devil's chips, I'll buy the pillory to warm myself in the sun!"

But it was always the moon, the receding moon. - And in my cellar Scarbo was furtively minting ducats and florins to the striking of money scales.

Meanwhile, with two horns foremost, disoriented by nightfall, a snail was seeking its path on my luminous stained-glass windows.

* note the similarity to the final verse of *Ondine*
* *carolus* and *agnel d'or (golden lamb)* are medieval French coins — the English *sovereign* and earlier *gold angel (15th century)* have been translated with some poetic licence with their relative values inverted

RAVEL

GASPARD DE LA NUIT

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