Roger Briggs

Jitterbug

For Solo Piano
an etude on quintuplets



PROGRAM NOTE

Jitterbug was written for Milica Jelača Jovanović and premiered by her on May 30, 2015. The Jitterbug was a dance popular in the early 20th century United States and is often considered part of the "swing"movement.

The lyrics of a 1934 recording of "Call of the Jitterbug" by Cab Calloway establish a strong relationship between the dance and alcohol consumption:

If you'd like to be a jitter bug,
First thing you must do is get a jug,
Put whiskey, wine and gin within,
And shake it all up and then begin.
Grab a cup and start to toss,
You are drinking jitter sauce!
Don't you worry, you just mug,
And then you'll be a jitter bug!

I imagined a pianist who has the "jitters" or "heebie jeebies" and I used an abundance of ever-changing quintuplet rhythms to create the effect of "the shakes". The work is light-hearted and nervy, producing the effect of "not quite being in control"… but in truth, it takes an enormous amount of control to sound on the edge and be a "jitterbug".

Duration ca. 4.30 to 5.00, depending on the Jitters

Jitterbug
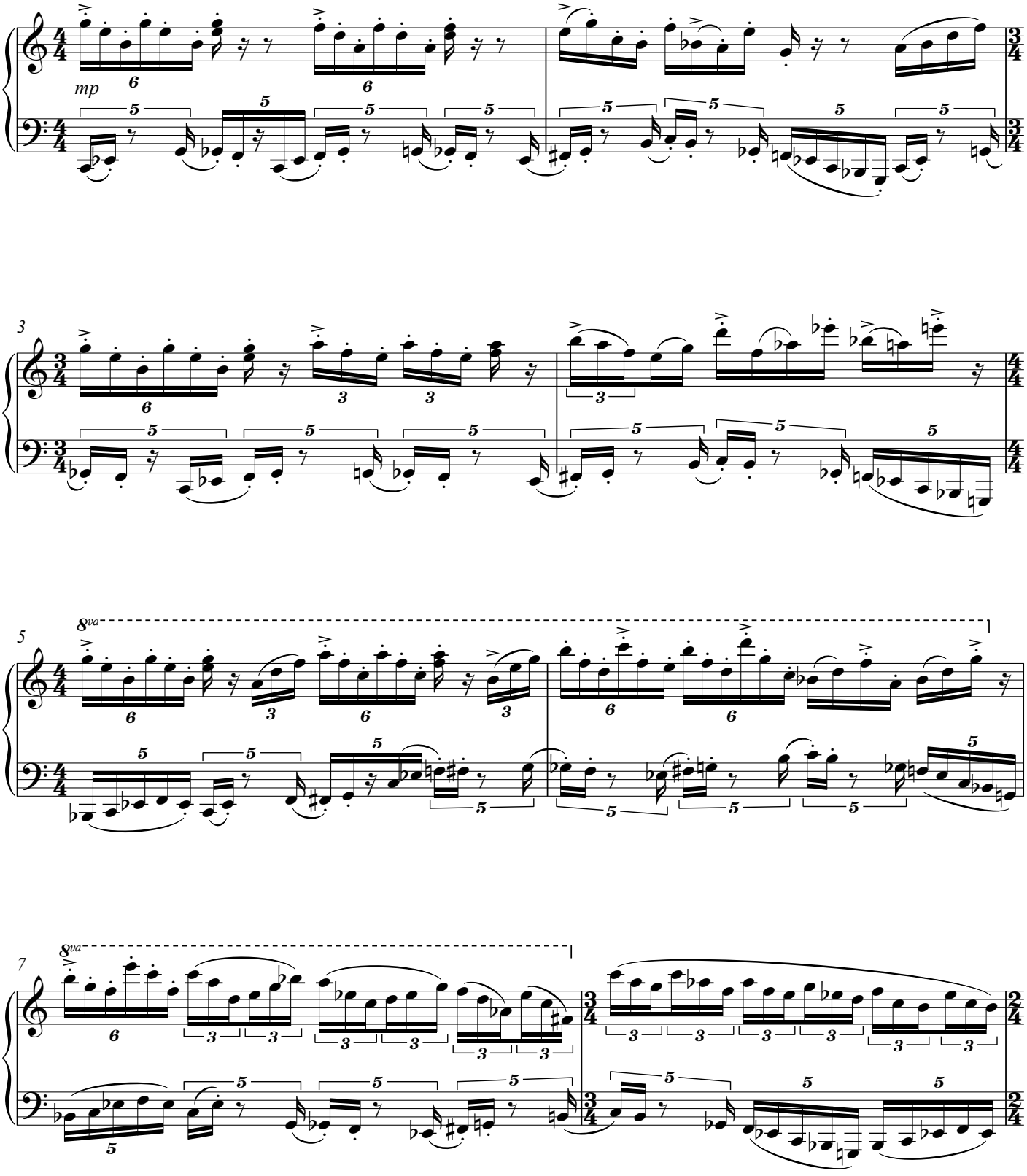
an Etude: quintuplets
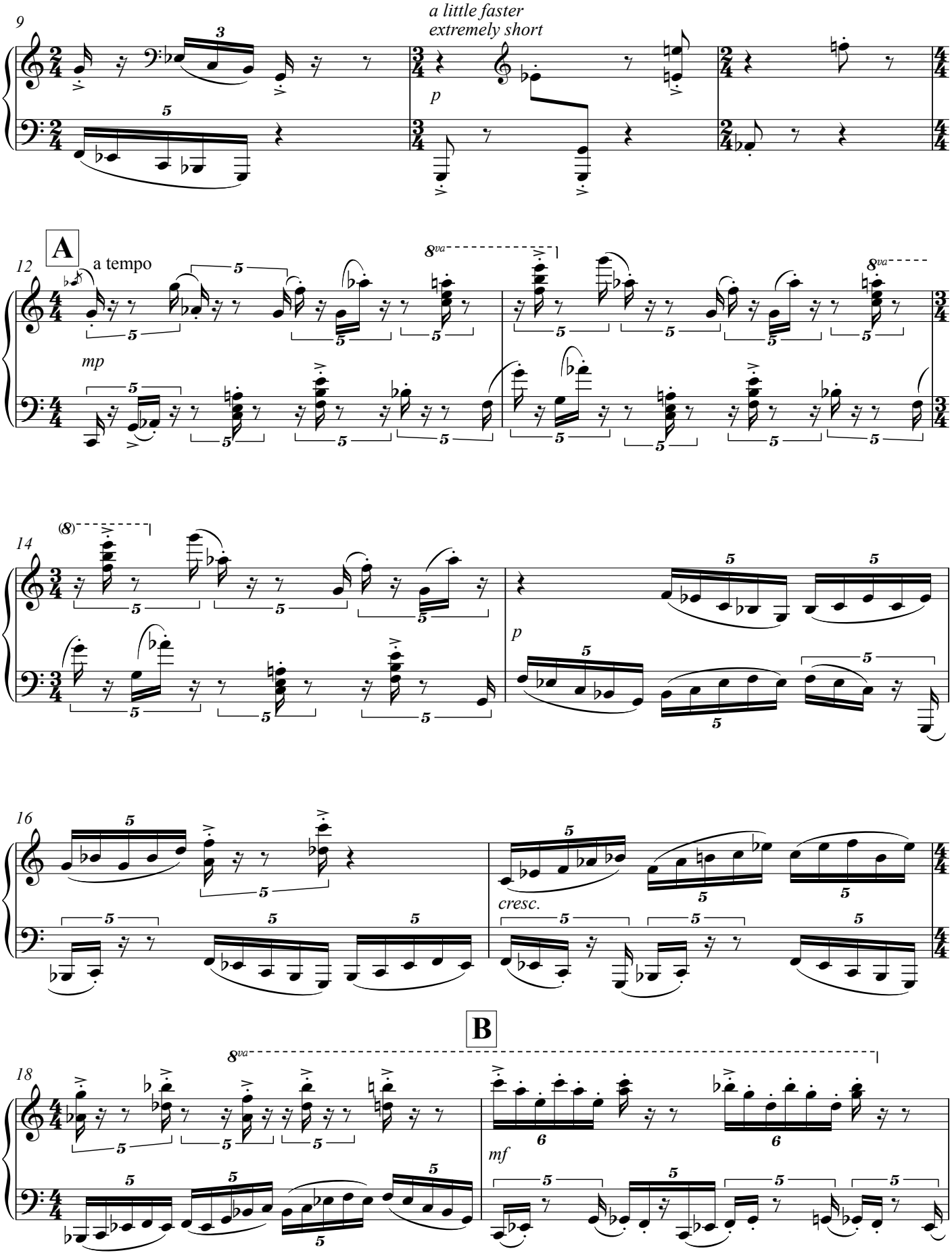
for Milica Jelača Jovanović
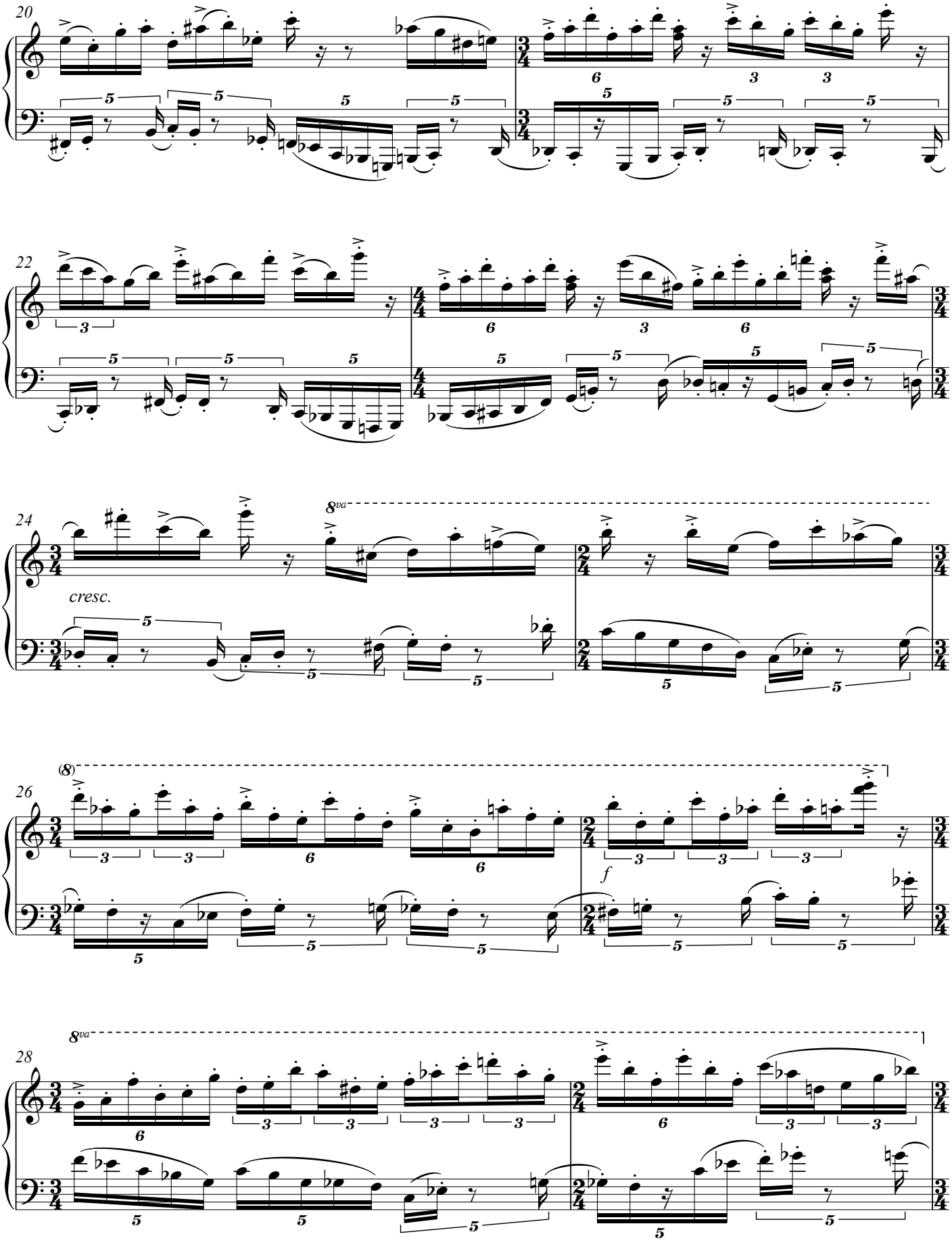
♩ = 110 or faster

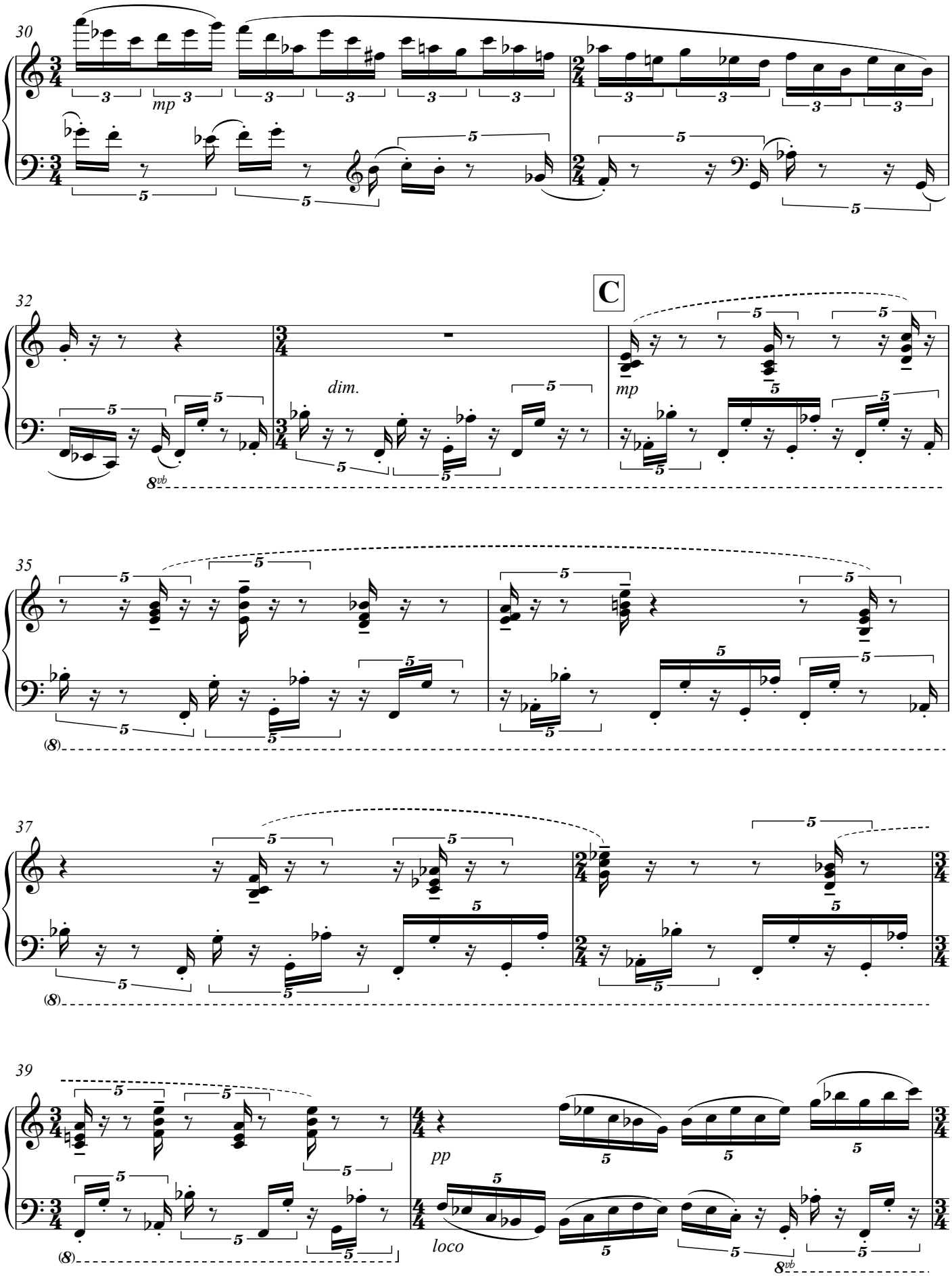
light, jittery, with a grin
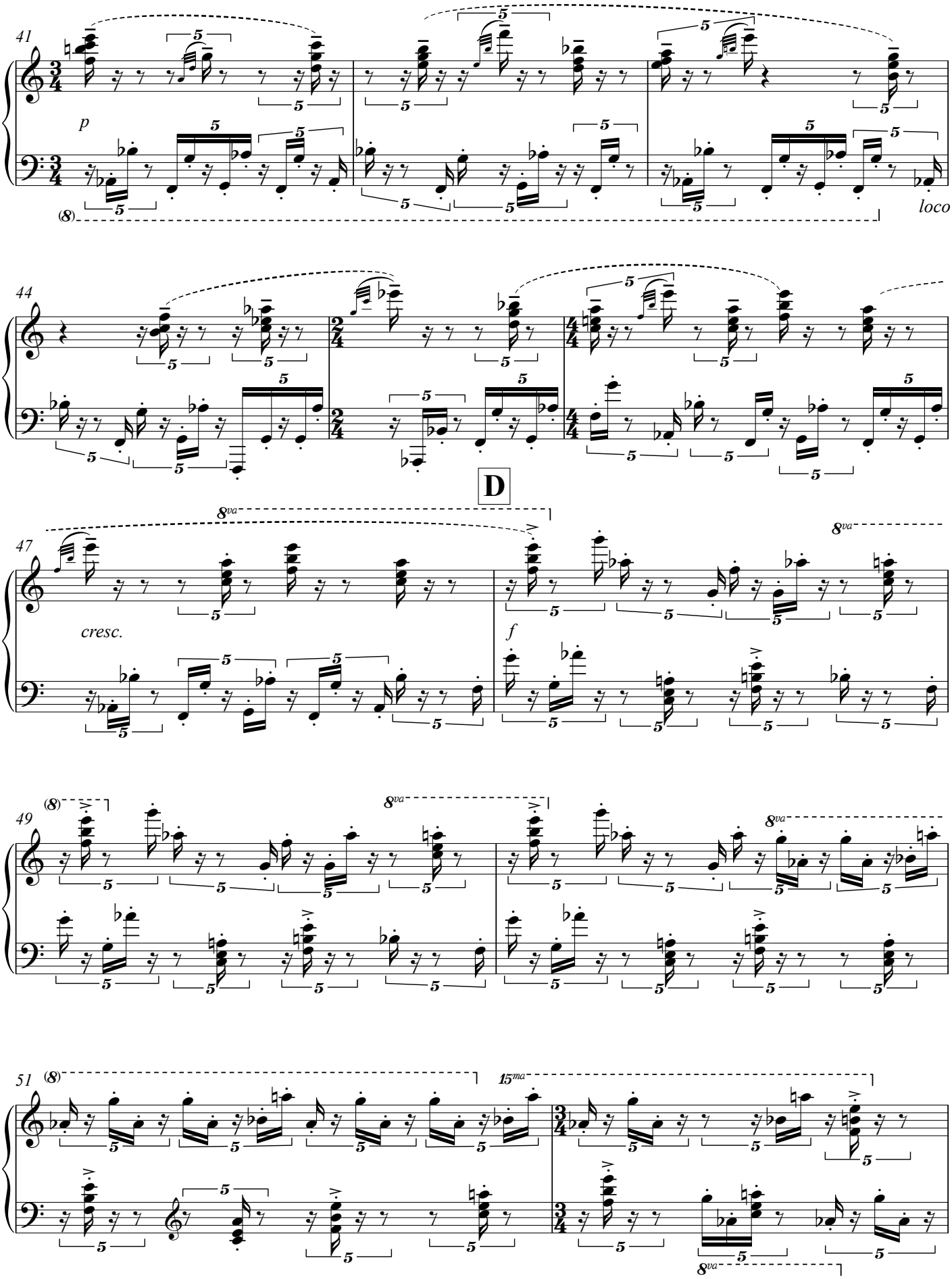
Roger Briggs
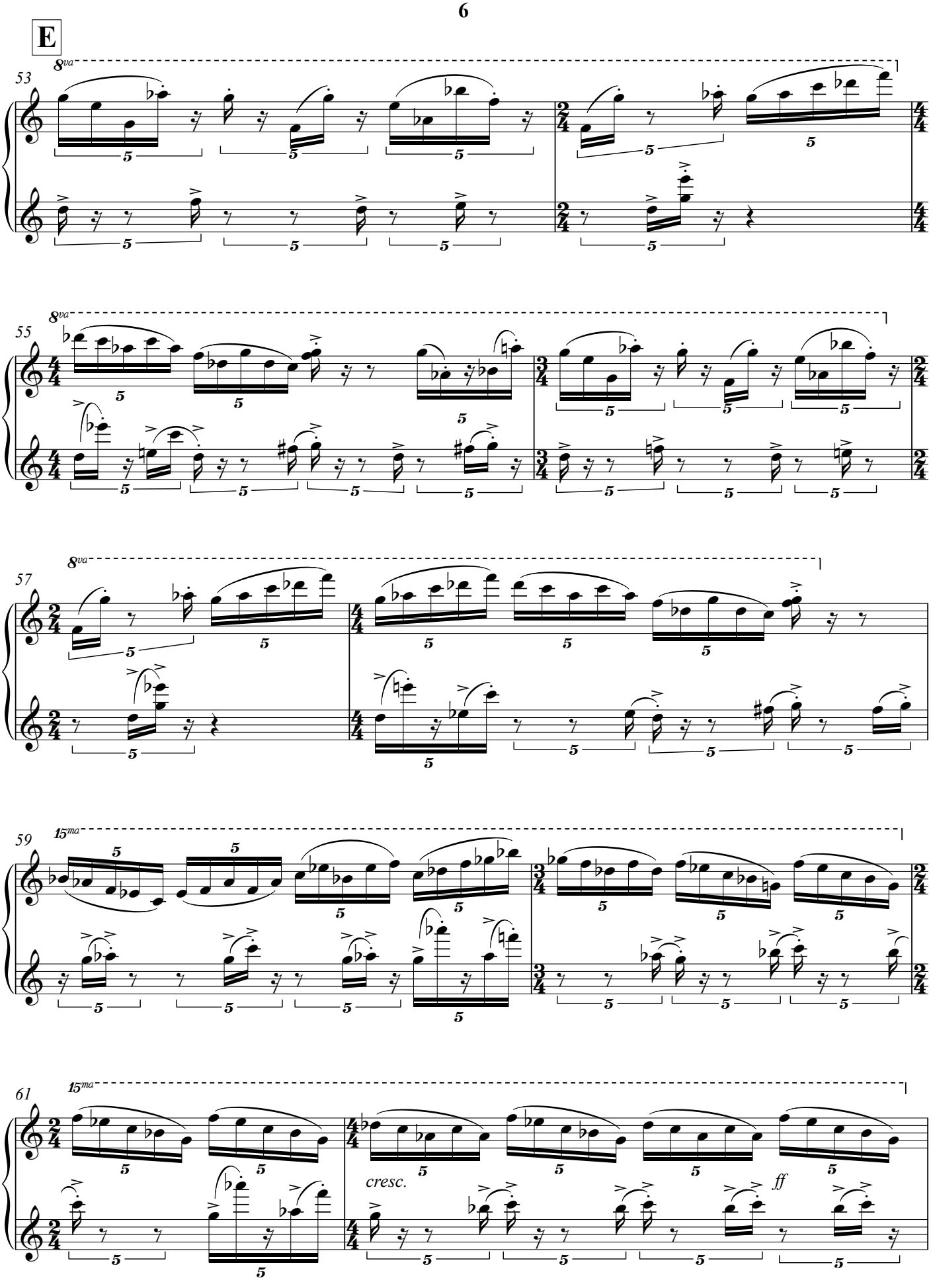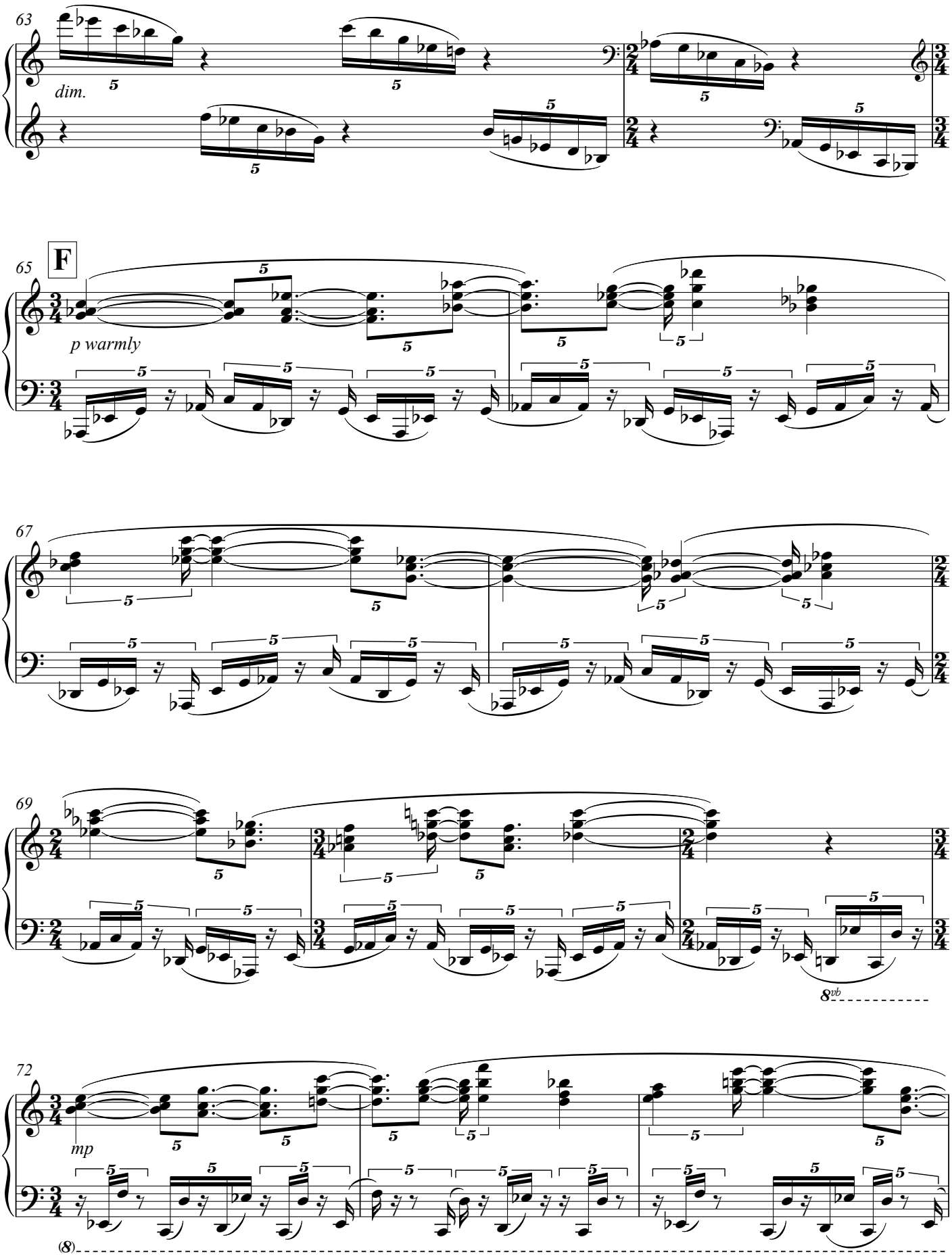



9
a little faster
extremely short
p
A
12
a tempo
8va
mp
14
(8)
p
16
cresc.
B
18
8va
mf
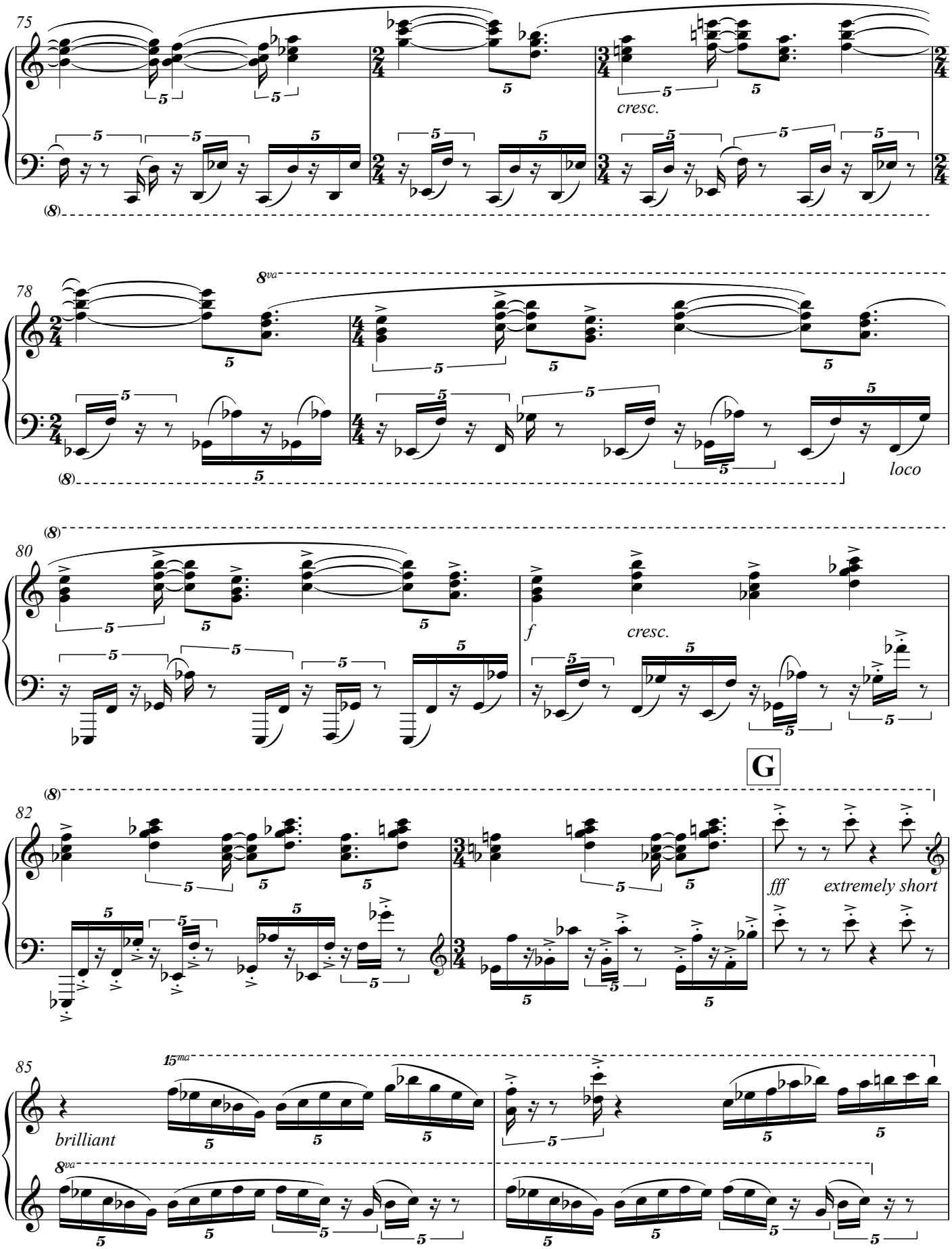

20
22
24
8va
cresc.
26
(8)
f
28
8va
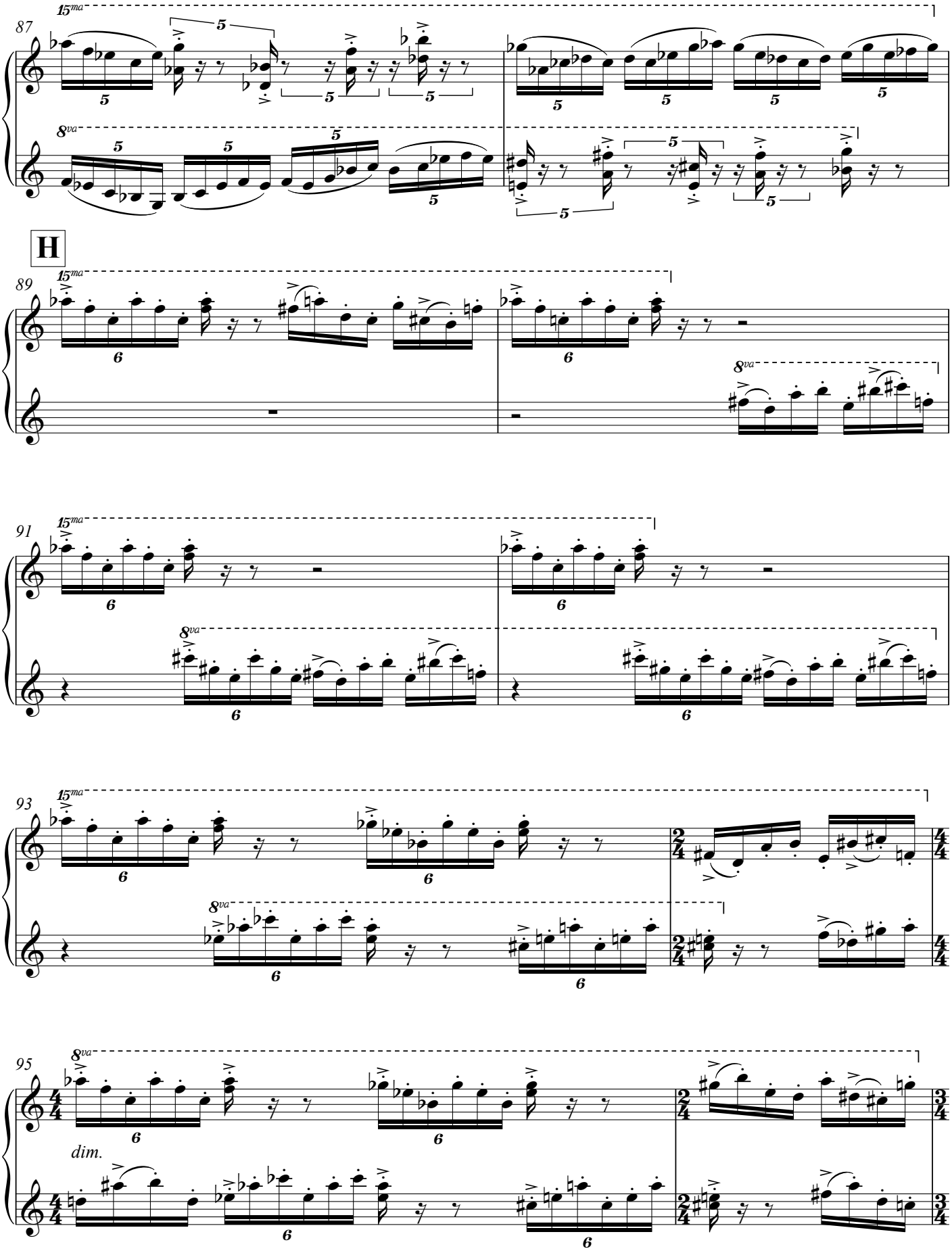

30
mp
32
C
dim.
mp
8vb
35
(8)
37
(8)
39
pp
loco
8vb
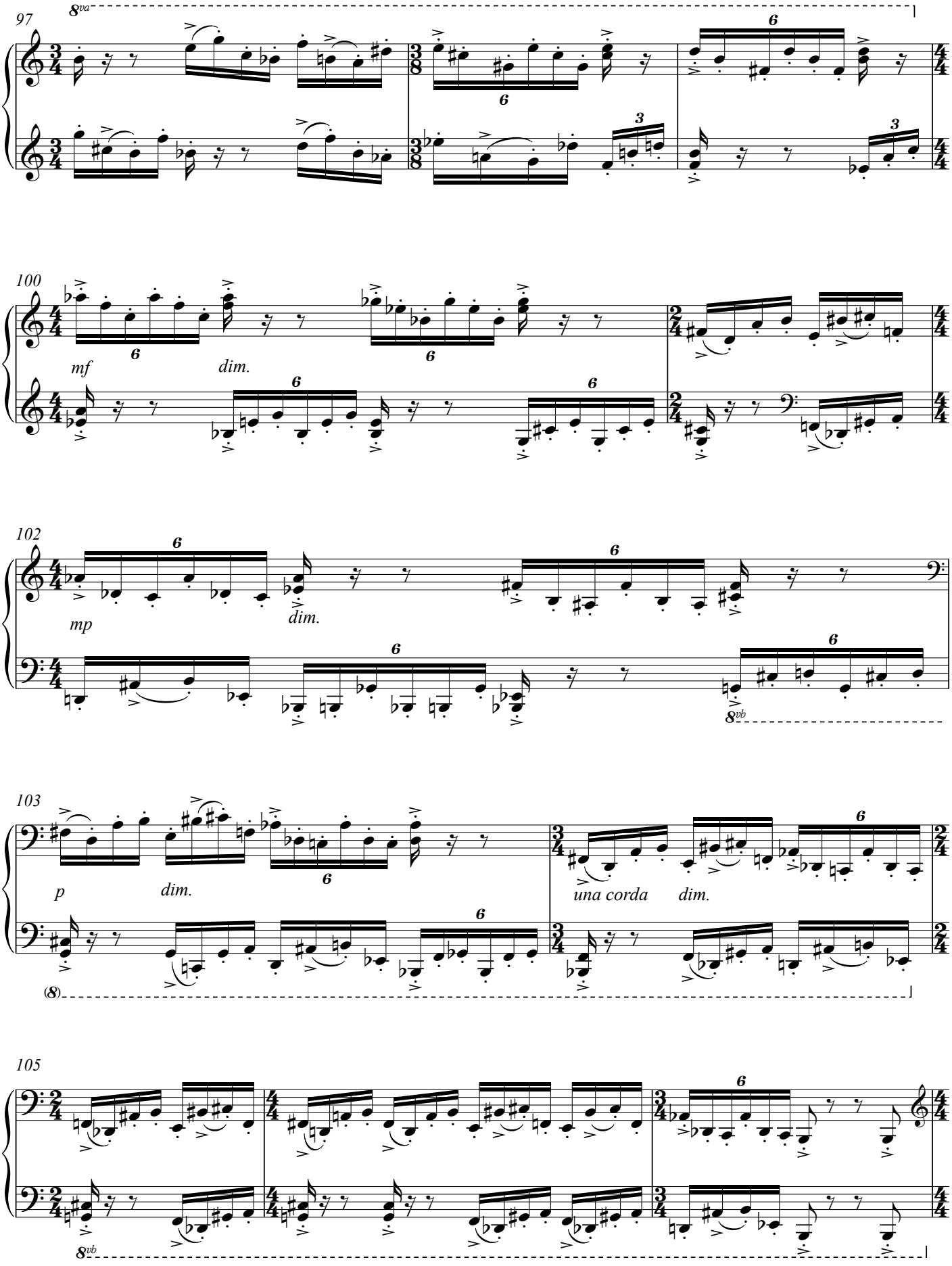

41
p
(8)
loco
44
D
47
8va
cresc.
f
49
(8)
8va
51
(8)
15ma
8va
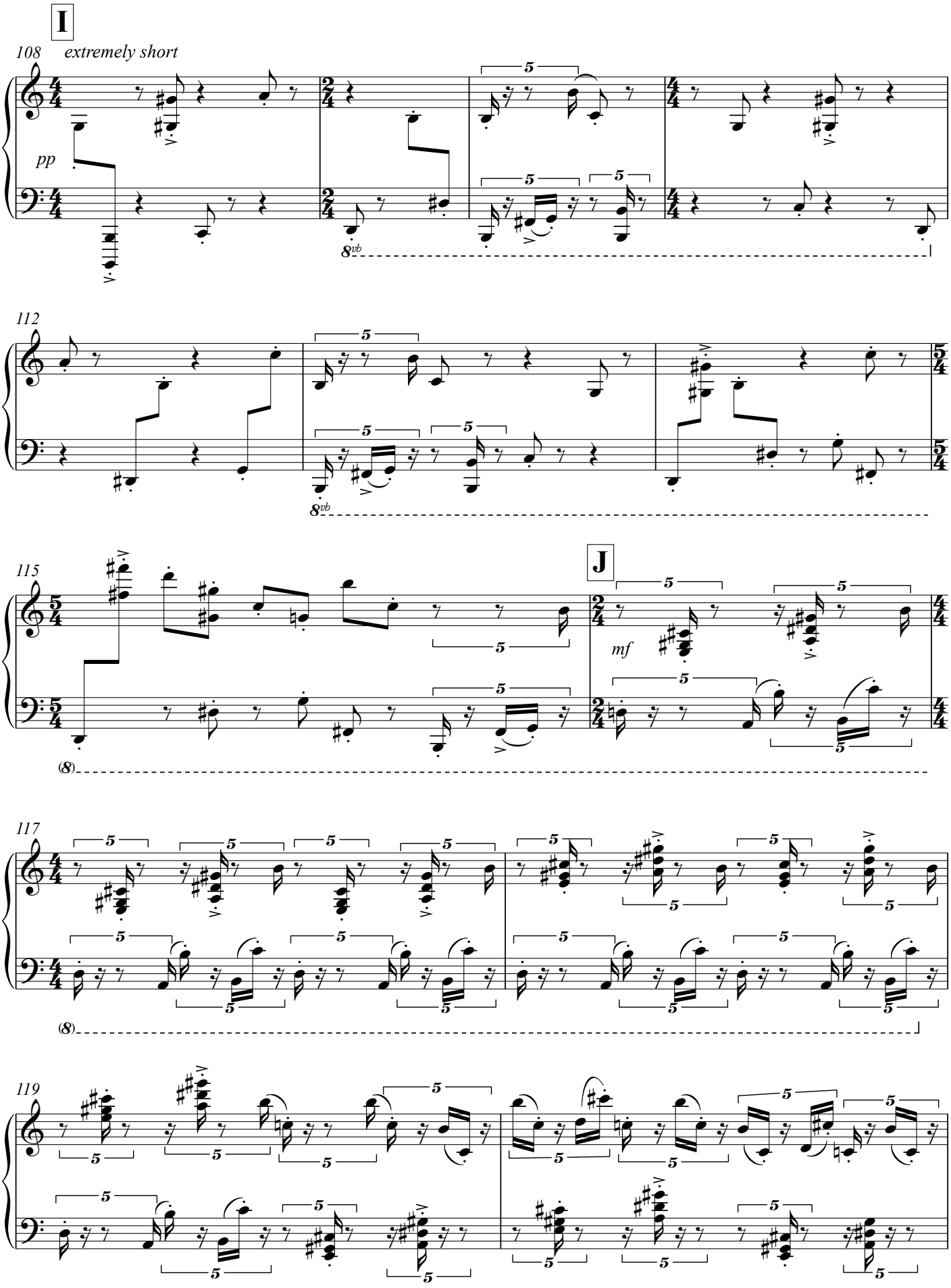

E
53
8va
55
8va
57
8va
59
15ma
61
15ma
cresc.
ff


63
dim.
65
F
p warmly
67
69
8vb
72
mp
(8)
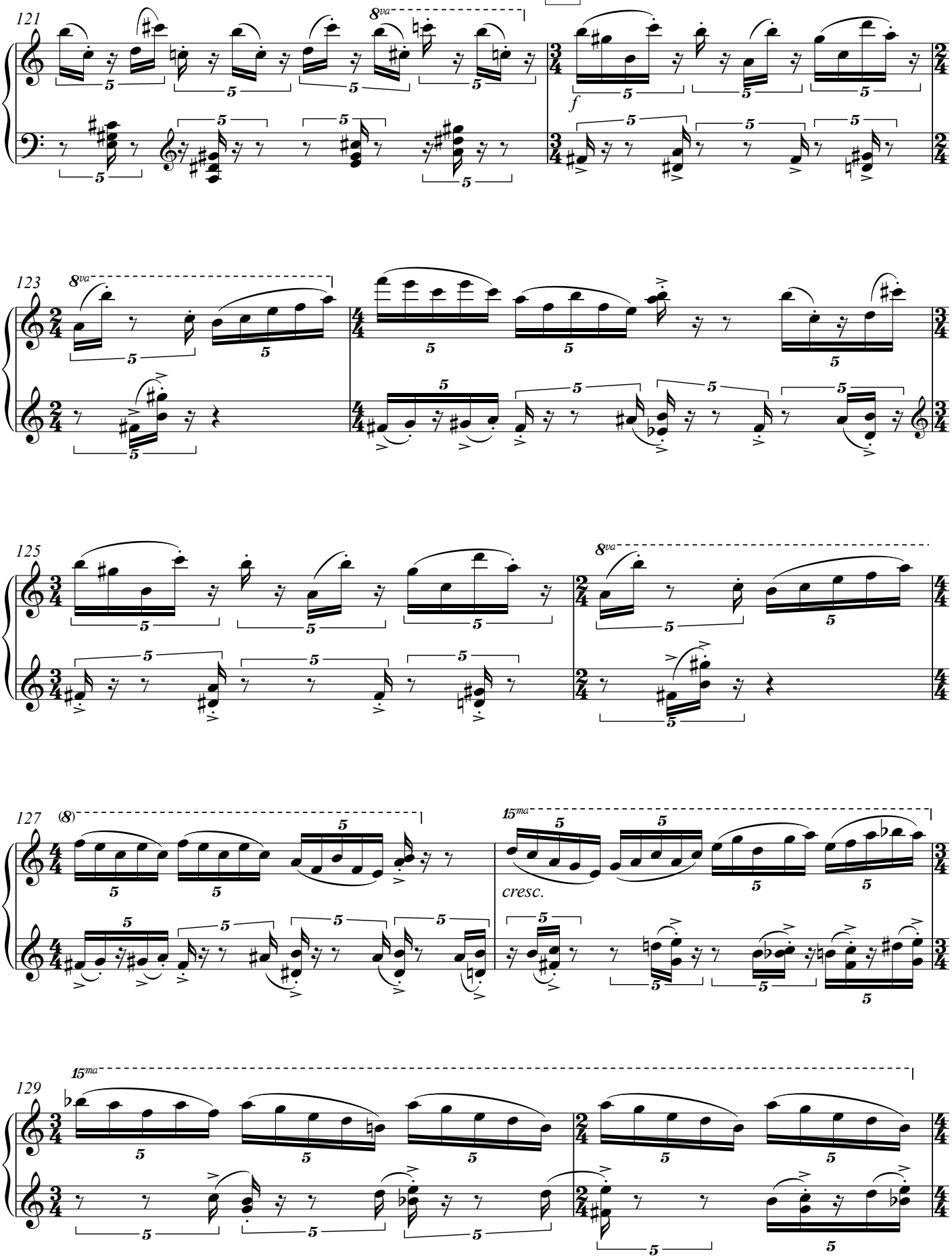

75
cresc.
78
8va
loco
80
f
cresc.
G
82
fff
extremely short
85
15ma
brilliant
8va
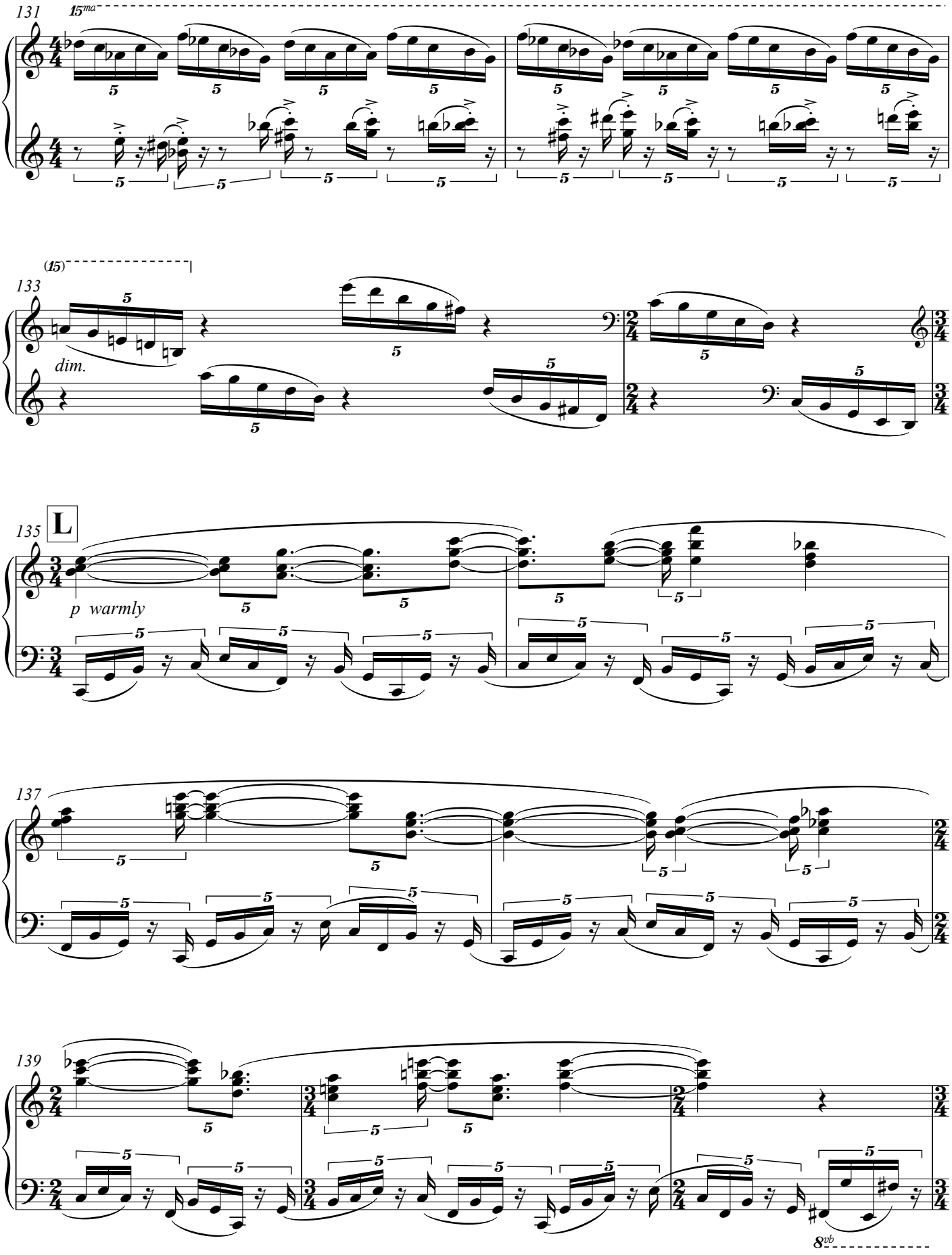

87
15ma
8va
H
89
91
93
95
dim.
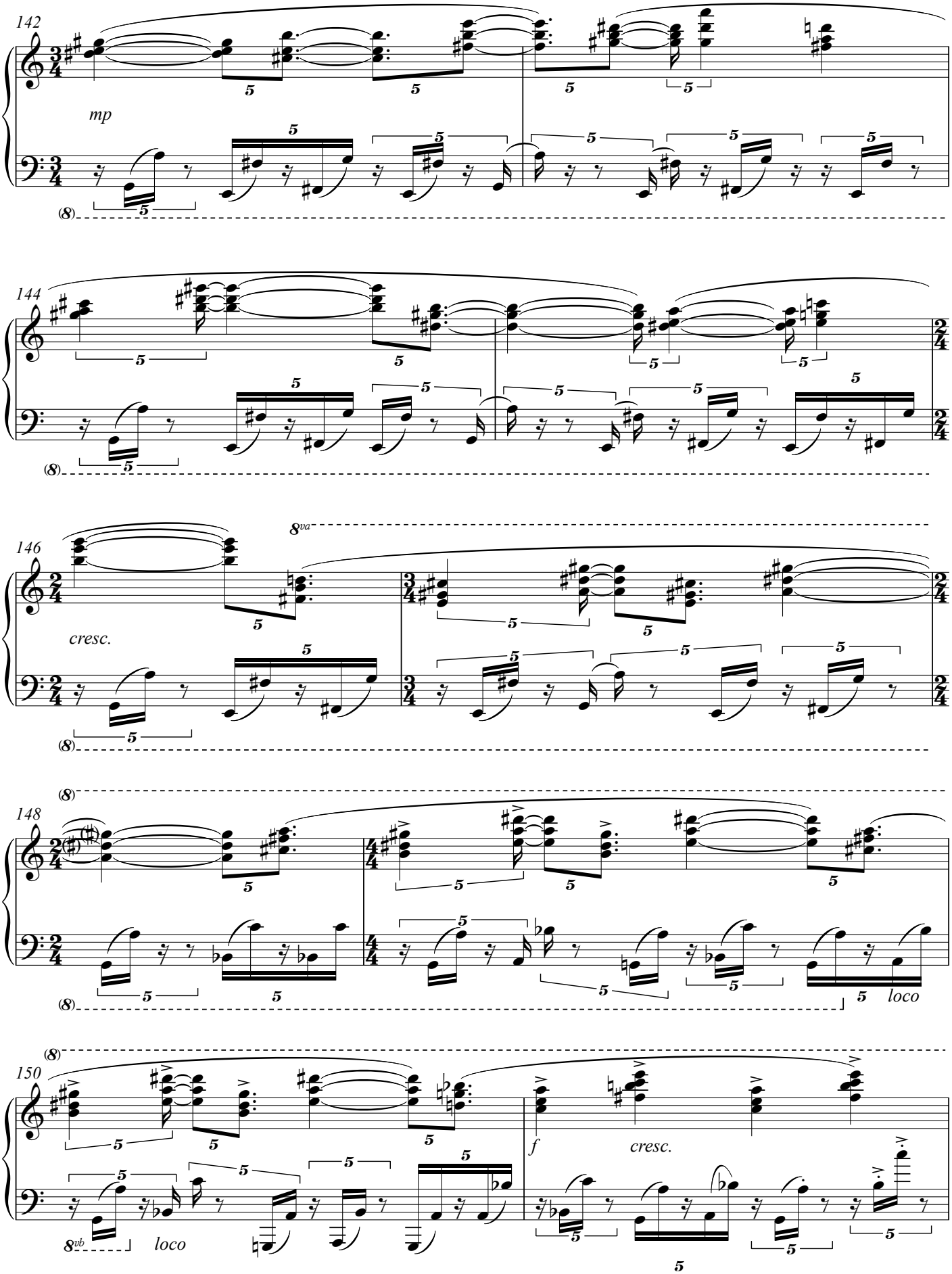

97
8va
100
mf
dim.
102
mp
dim.
8vb
103
p
dim.
una corda
dim.
(8)
105
8vb
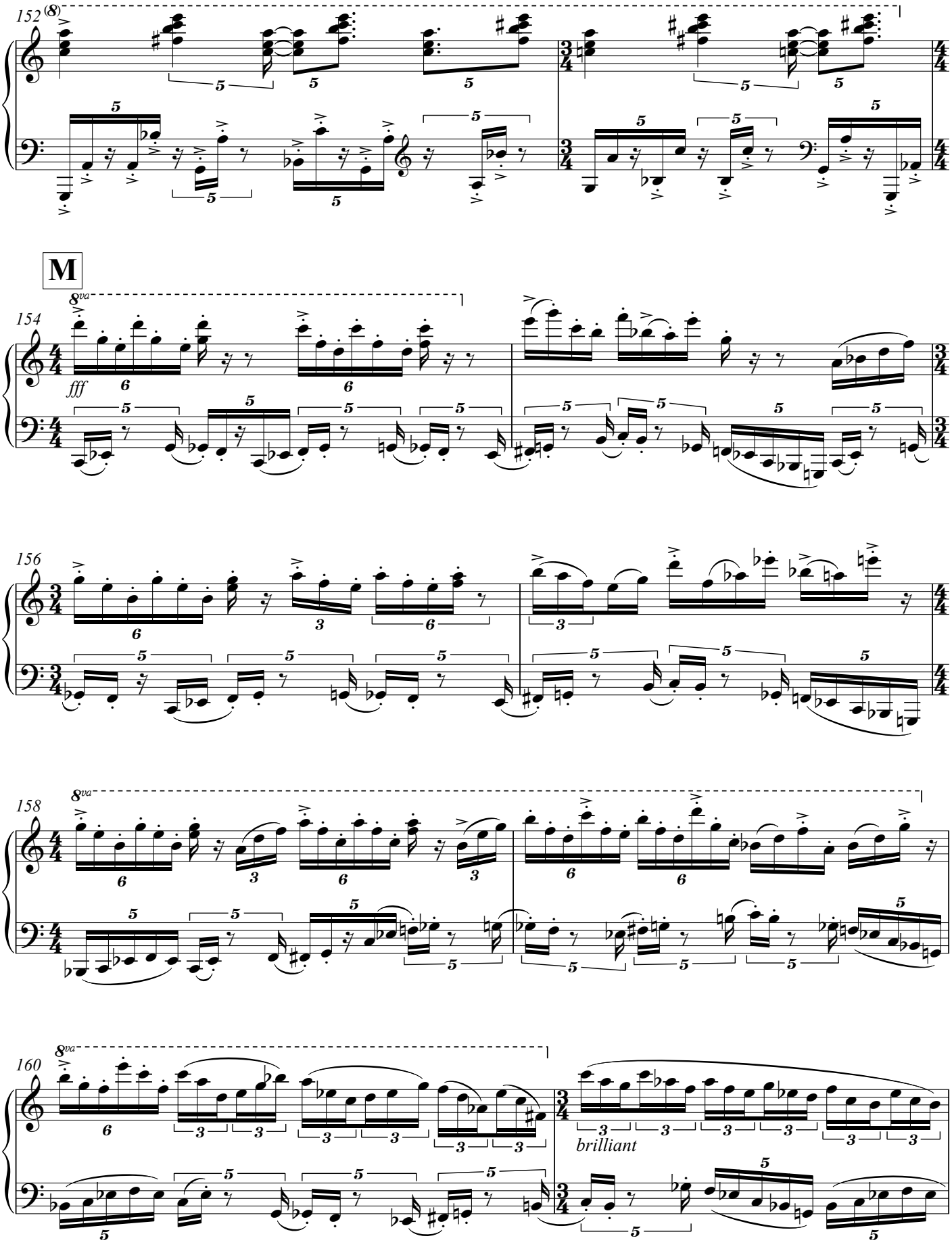

I
108
extremely short
pp
8vb
112
8vb
115
J
mf
(8)
117
(8)
119
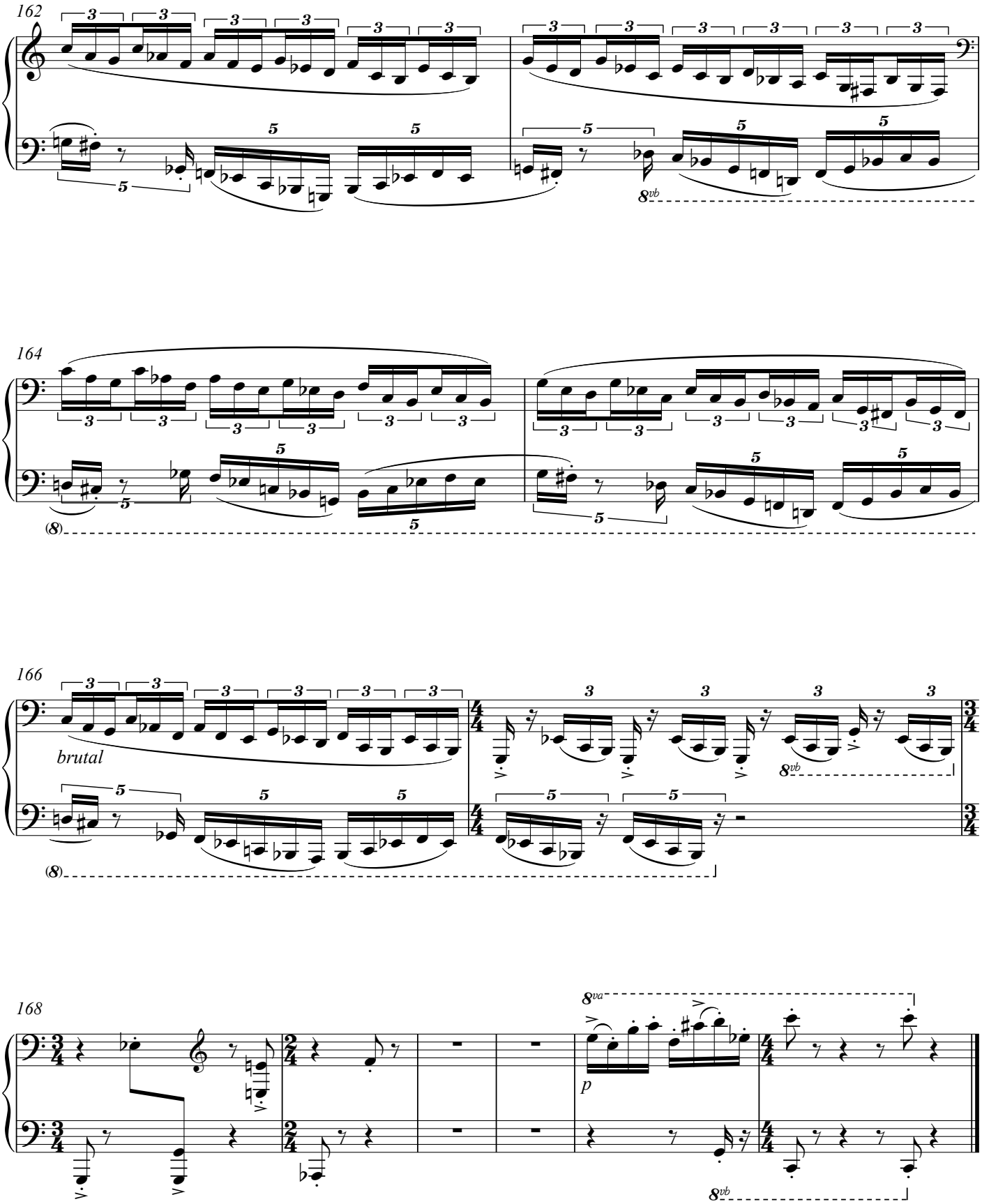
K




131
15ma
(15)
133
dim.
135
L
p warmly
137
139
8vb


142
mp
144
146
8va
cresc.
148
loco
150
8vb
loco
f
cresc.


152
(8)
M
8va
154
fff
156
158
8va
160
8va
brilliant


162
164
166
brutal
168
p