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GUSTAV HOLST

The Planets

arranged for two pianos
by the composer

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This is Holst's own version of The Planets for two pianos, dating from the years 1914 to 1916. Unlike most keyboard versions of an orchestral work it was not an arrangement of the full score. It existed before the orchestral score had been written out, although details of the instrumentation had already been clear in Holst's mind from the moment when he began sketching the work. The reason that he needed a keyboard version on paper was that he suffered from neuritis in his right arm, and this often prevented him from playing over his sketches while he was composing.

He was able to ask two of his colleagues on the music staff of St. Paul's Girls' School, Vally Lasker and Nora Day, to play his two-piano version to him on Saturday mornings in his sound-proof music room at the school. These two friends were his chief amanuenses. When the time came for them to help him to write out the full score they were able to follow the details of instrumentation which they had written from his dictation in the margins of the keyboard manuscripts they had been playing from. (The manuscripts, autograph and partly autograph, are in the British Library Add. MS 57881; the Royal College of Music Parry Room Library MS 4556–61; and the Royal Academy of Music MS 303.)

The seven movements of this two-piano version were first published separately in 1949–51, and most have been out of print for some time. They are now reissued complete in one volume, providing a welcome opportunity for pianists to discover the music for themselves in performance.

Imogen Holst 1979

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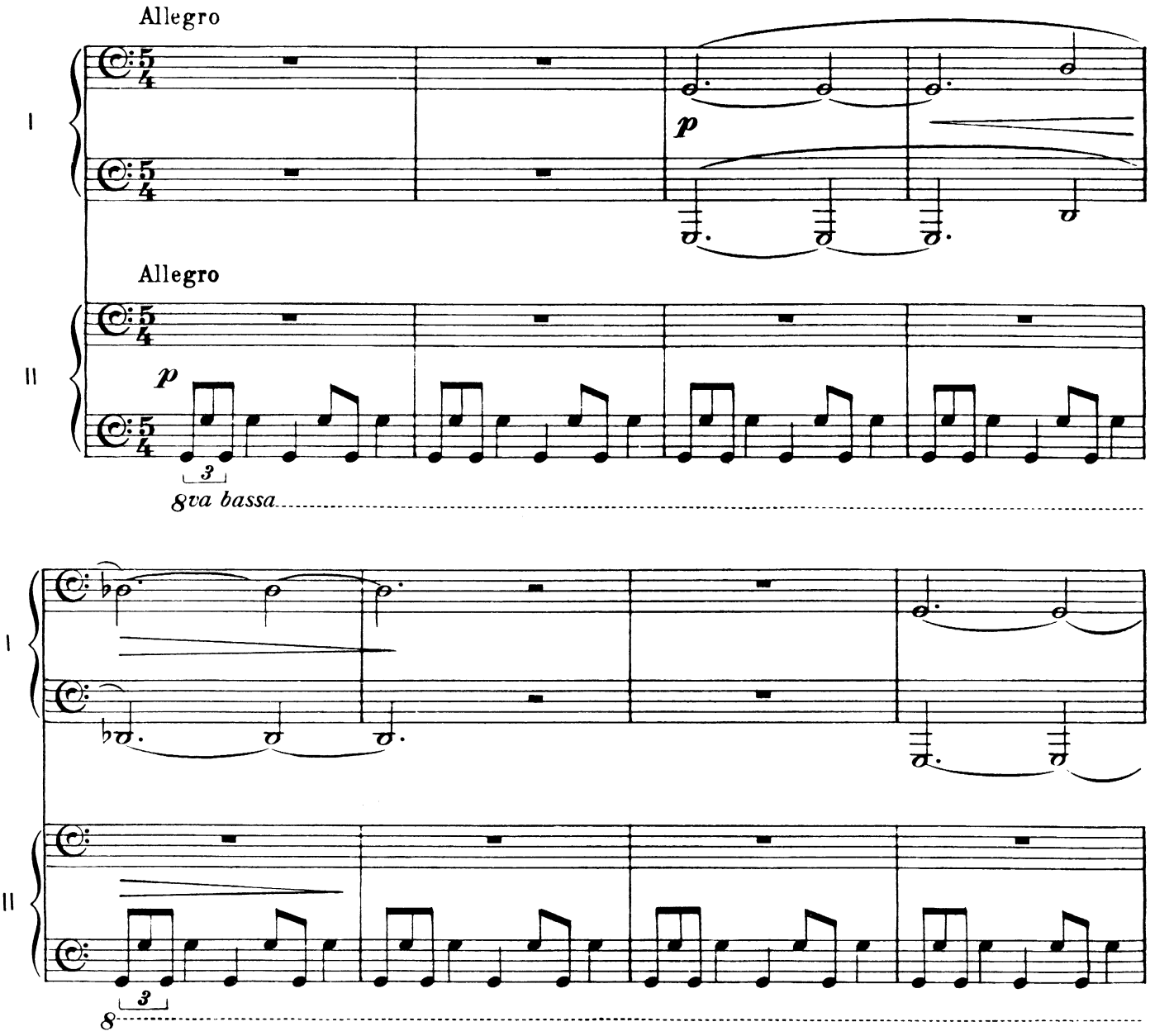
I. MARS

The Bringer of War



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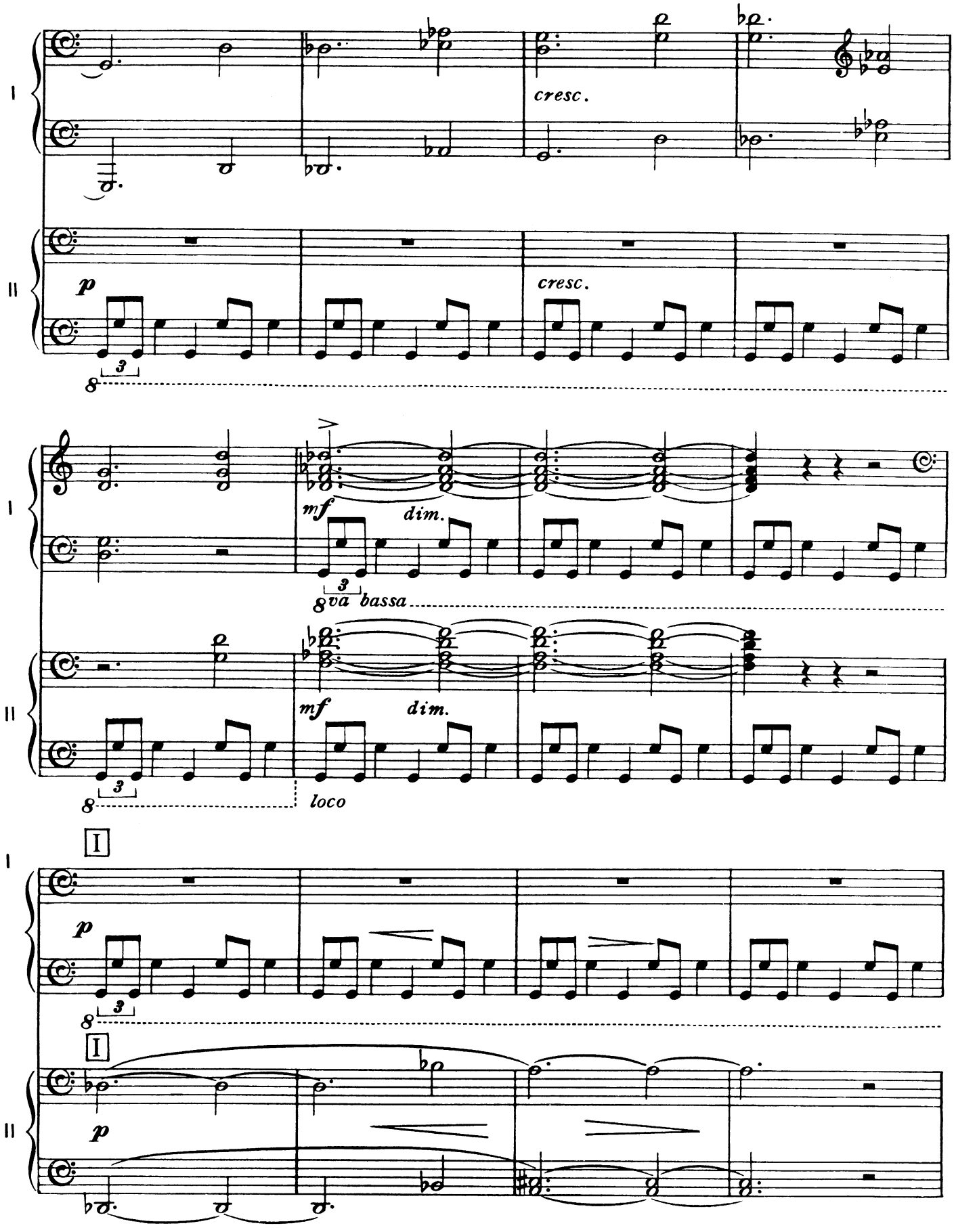
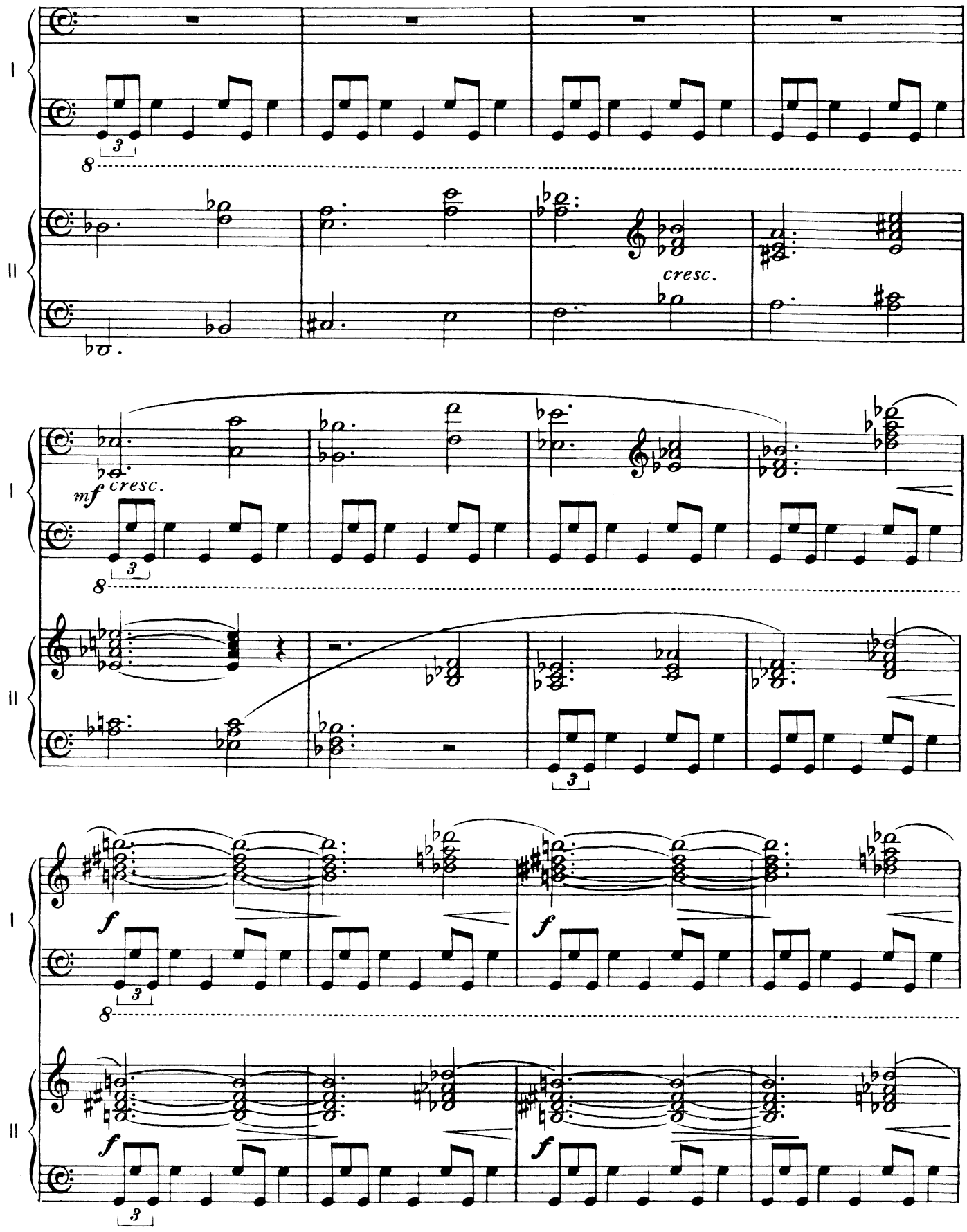
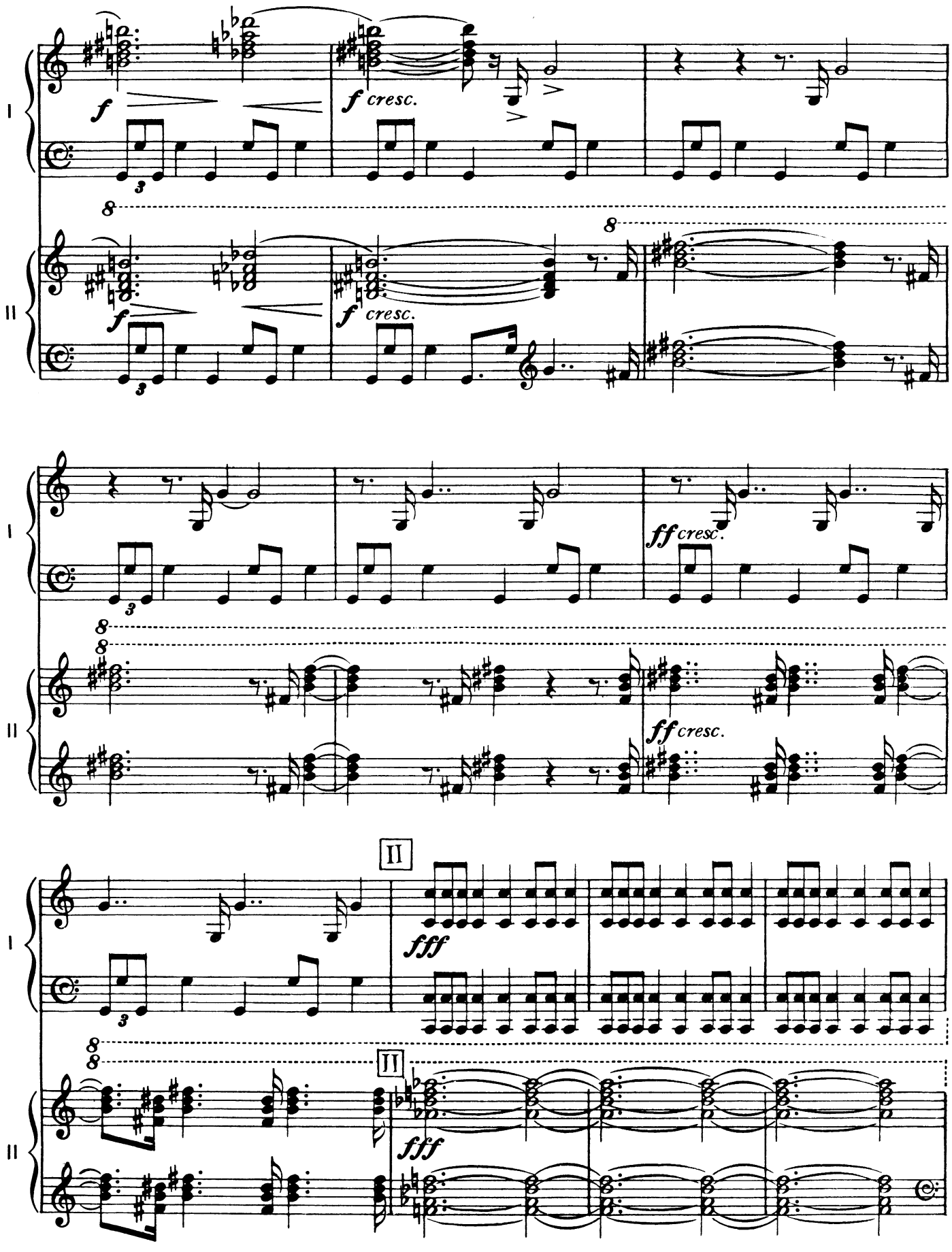
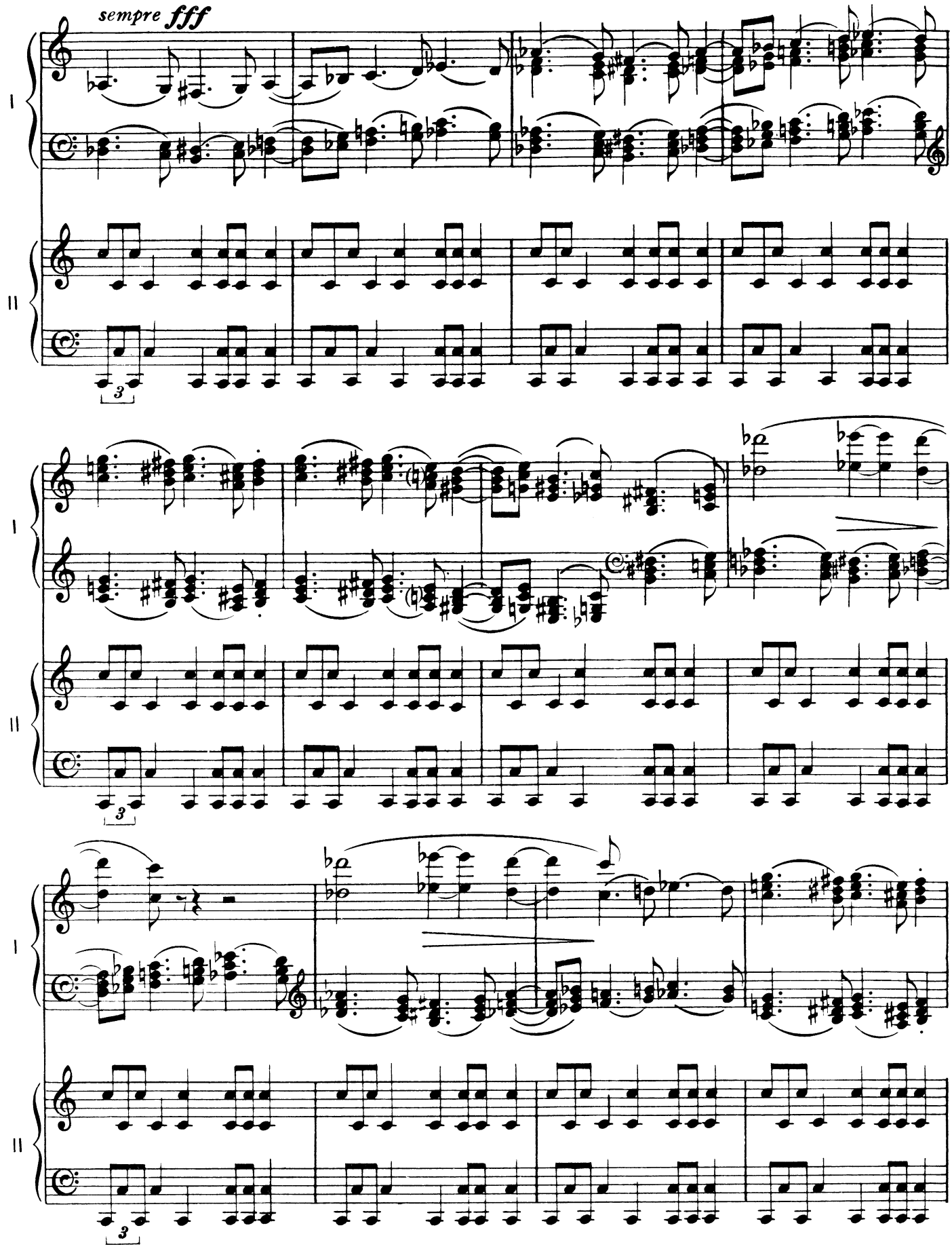
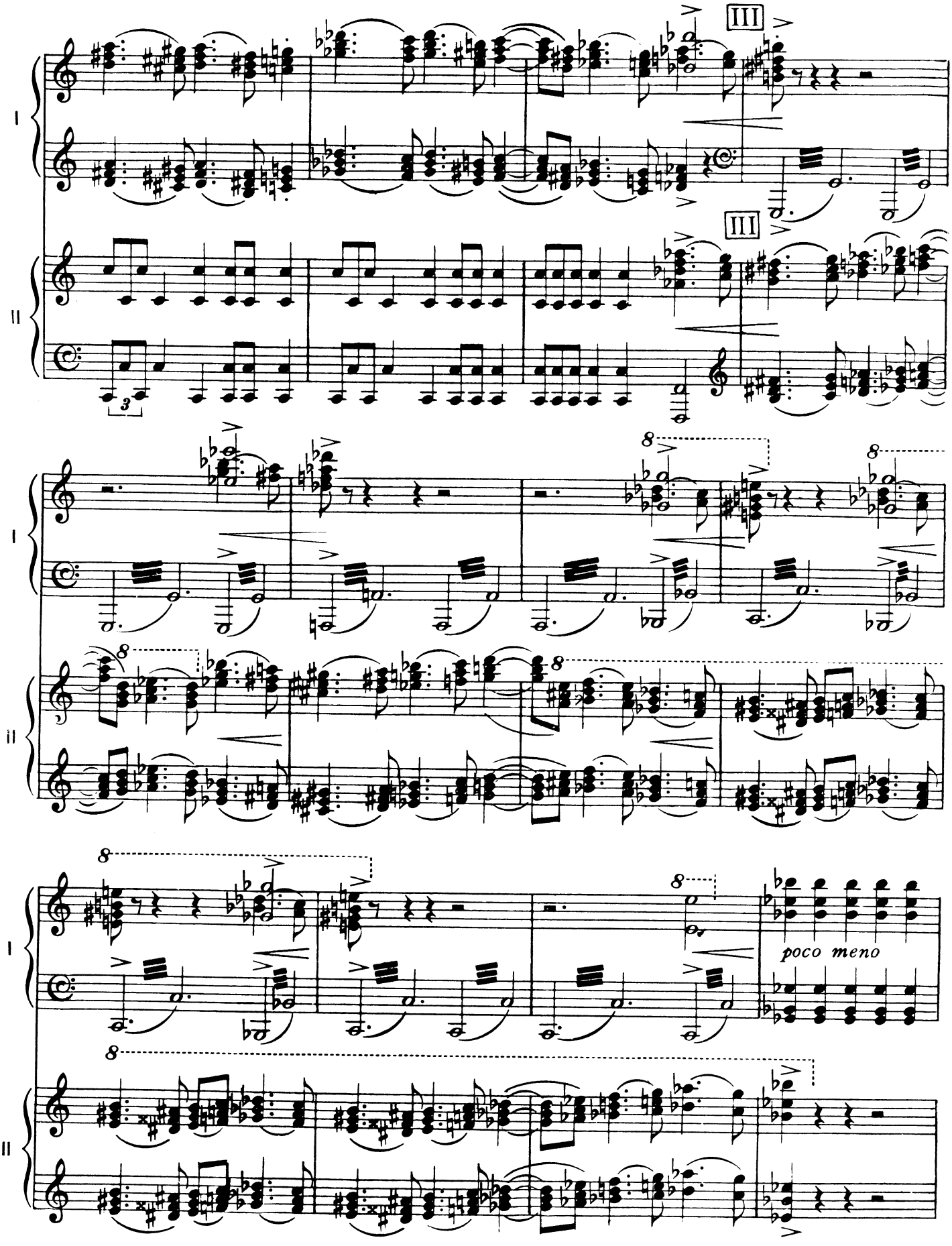
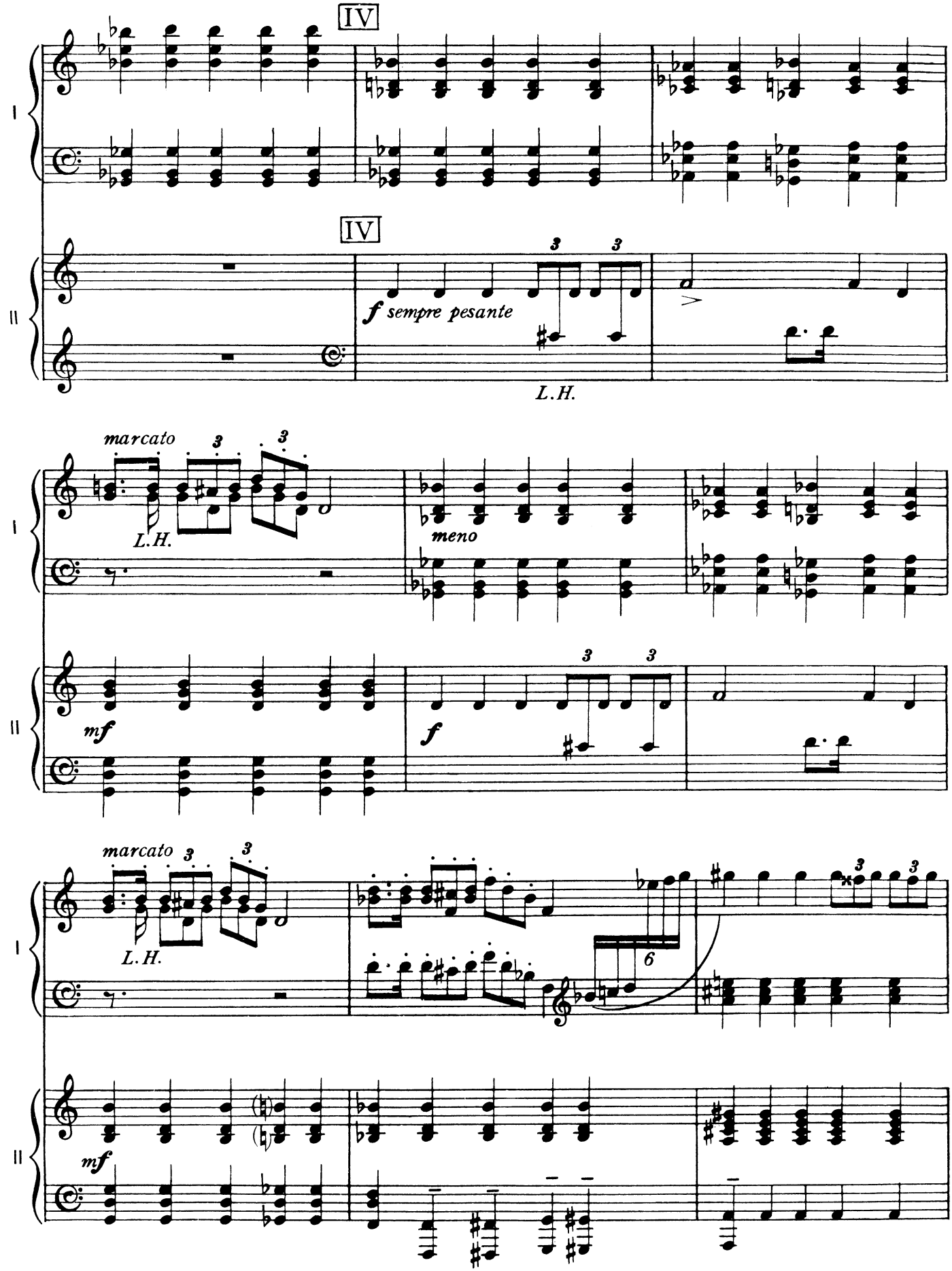

I
II
cresc.
p
cresc.
mf
dim.
va bassa
mf
dim.
loco
I
p
I
p

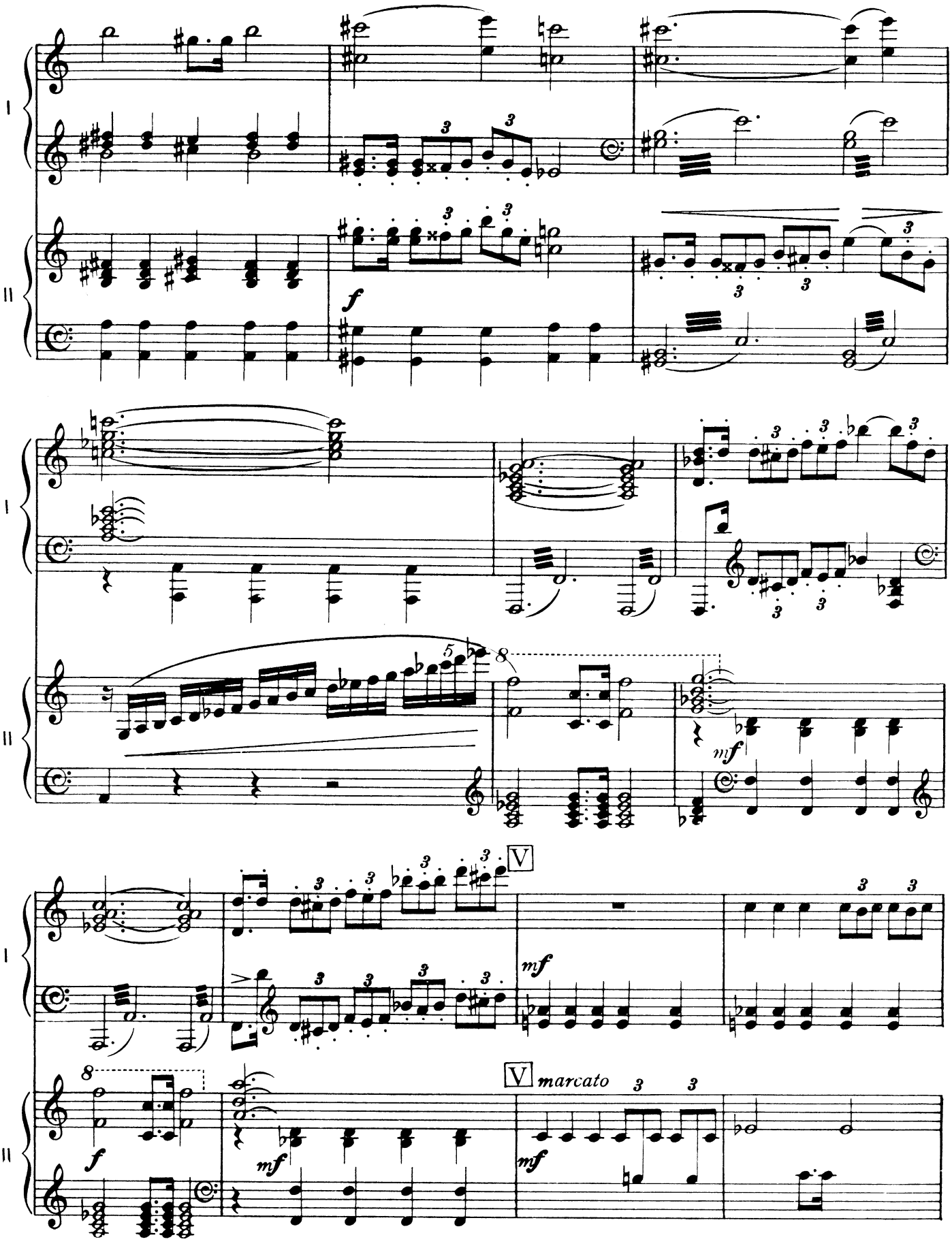

I
II
cresc.
mf cresc.
f
f
f
f

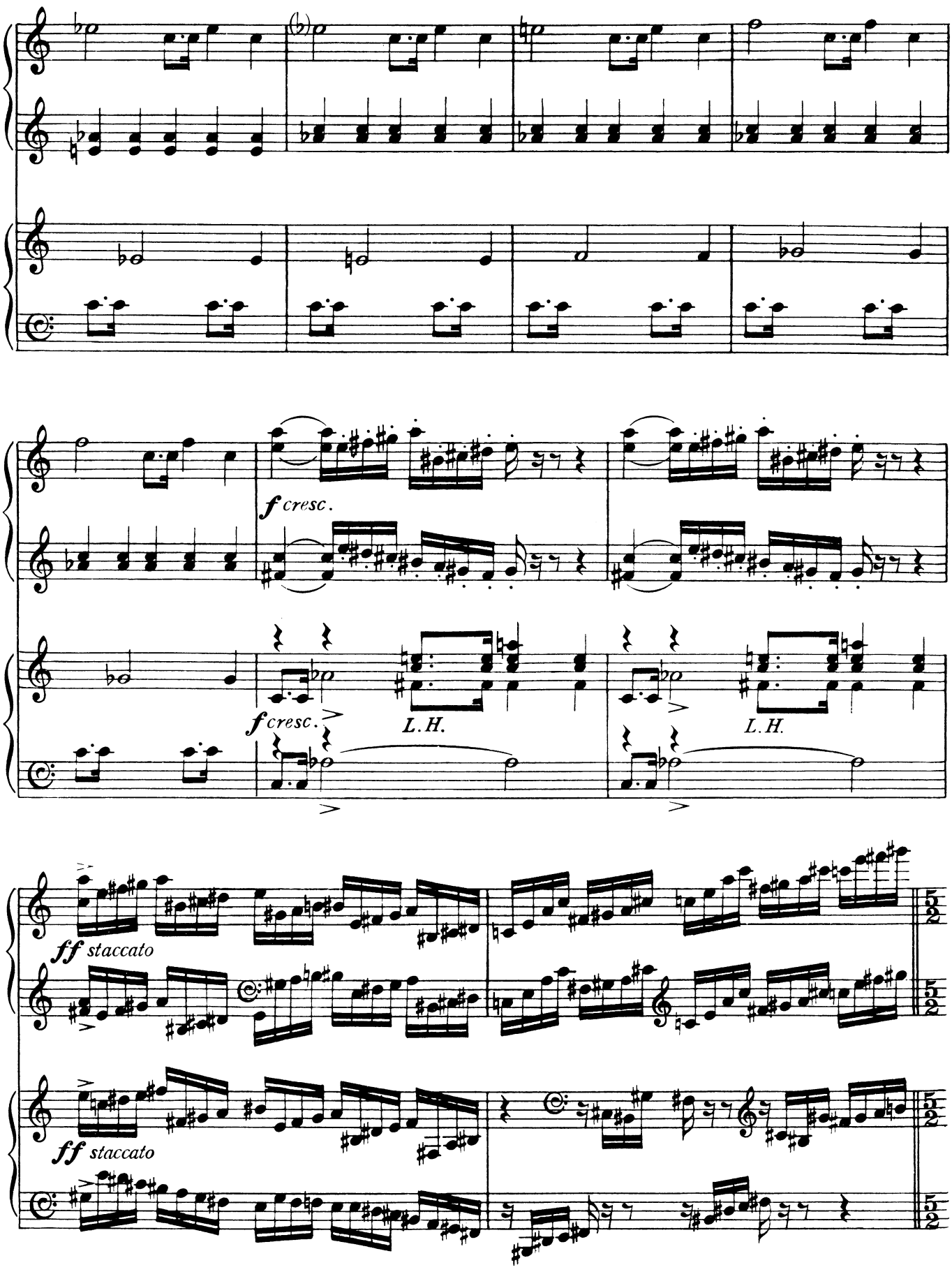

I
II
f
f cresc.
8
ff cresc.
II
fff

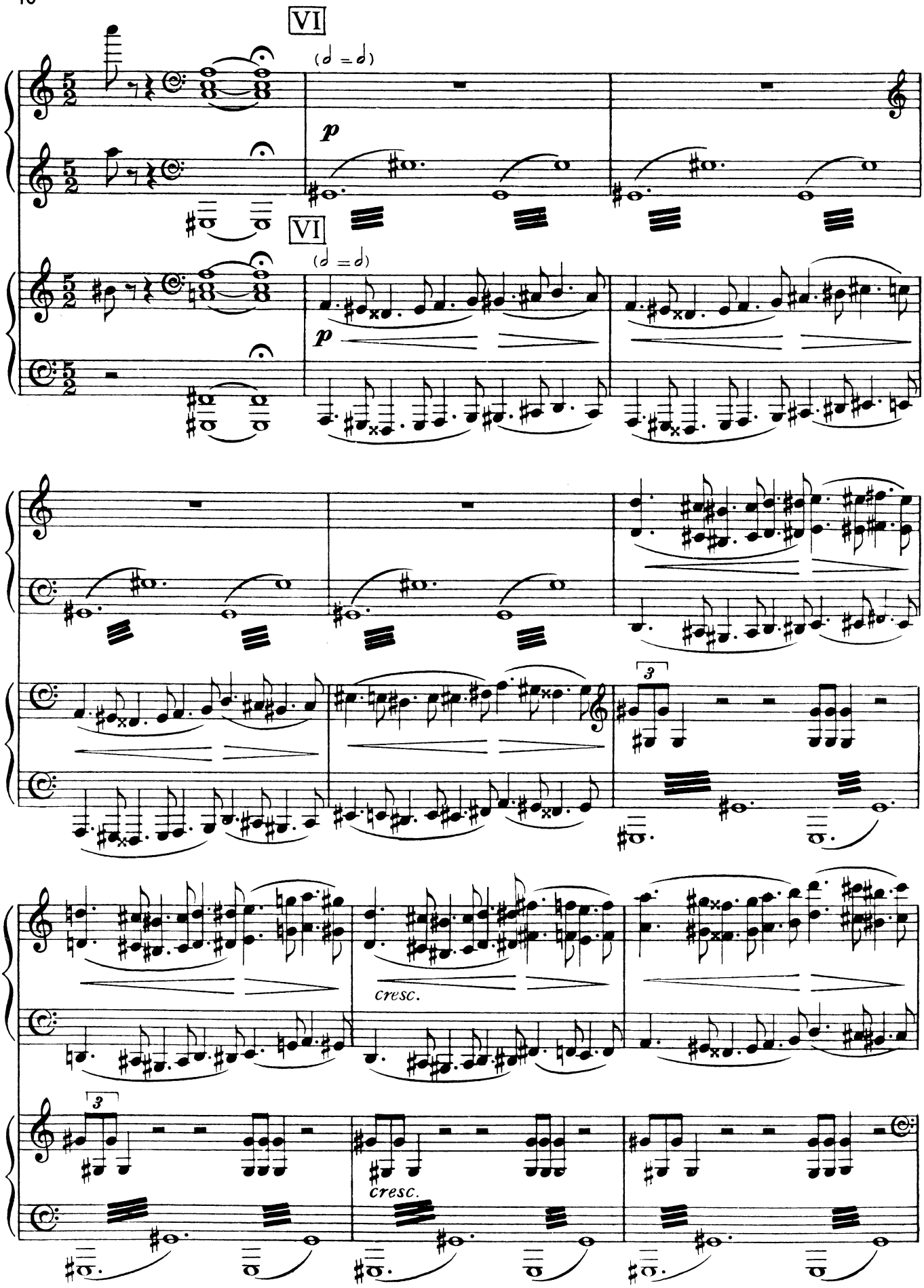

sempre fff
I
II
3
I
II
3
I
II
3

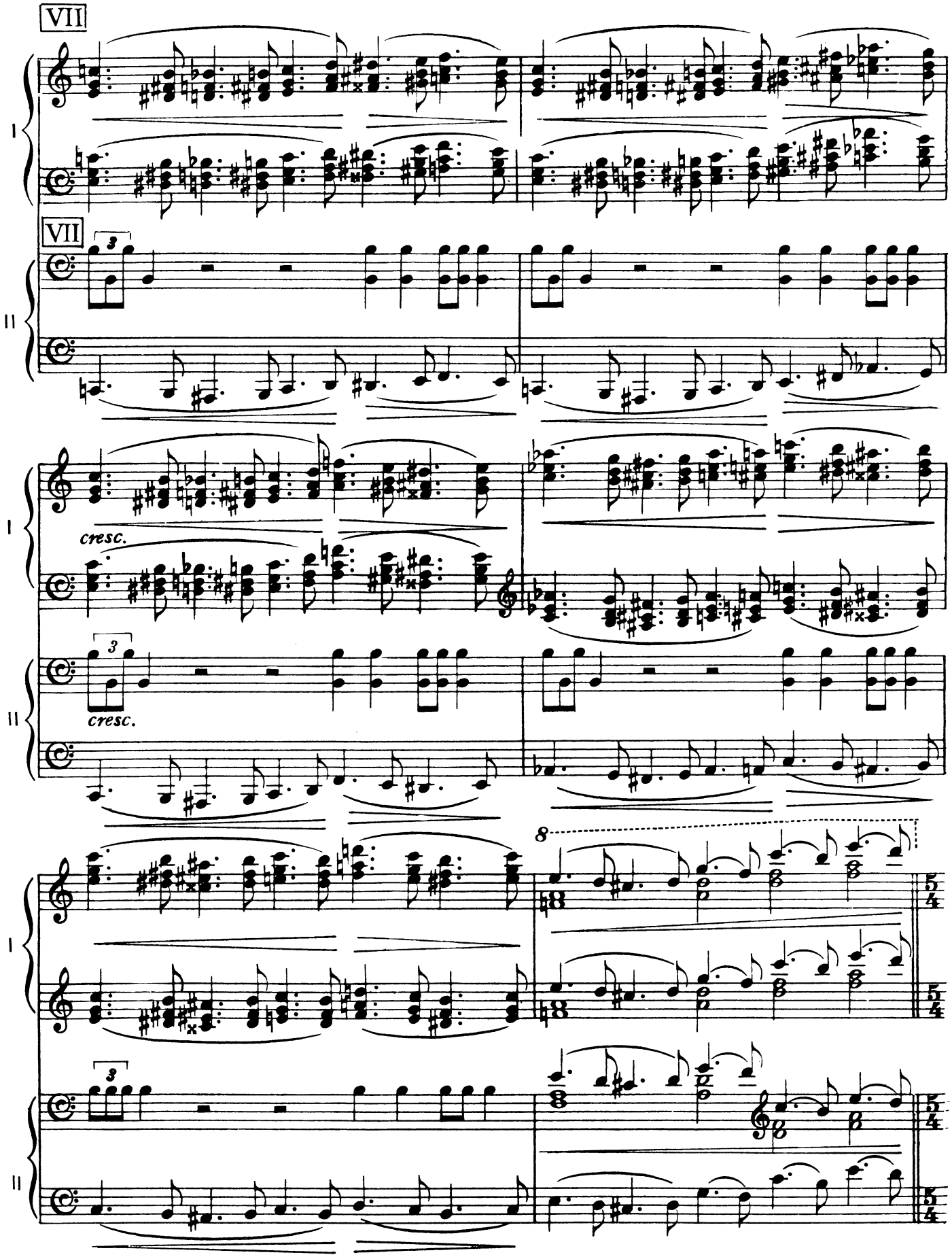

III
III
poco meno

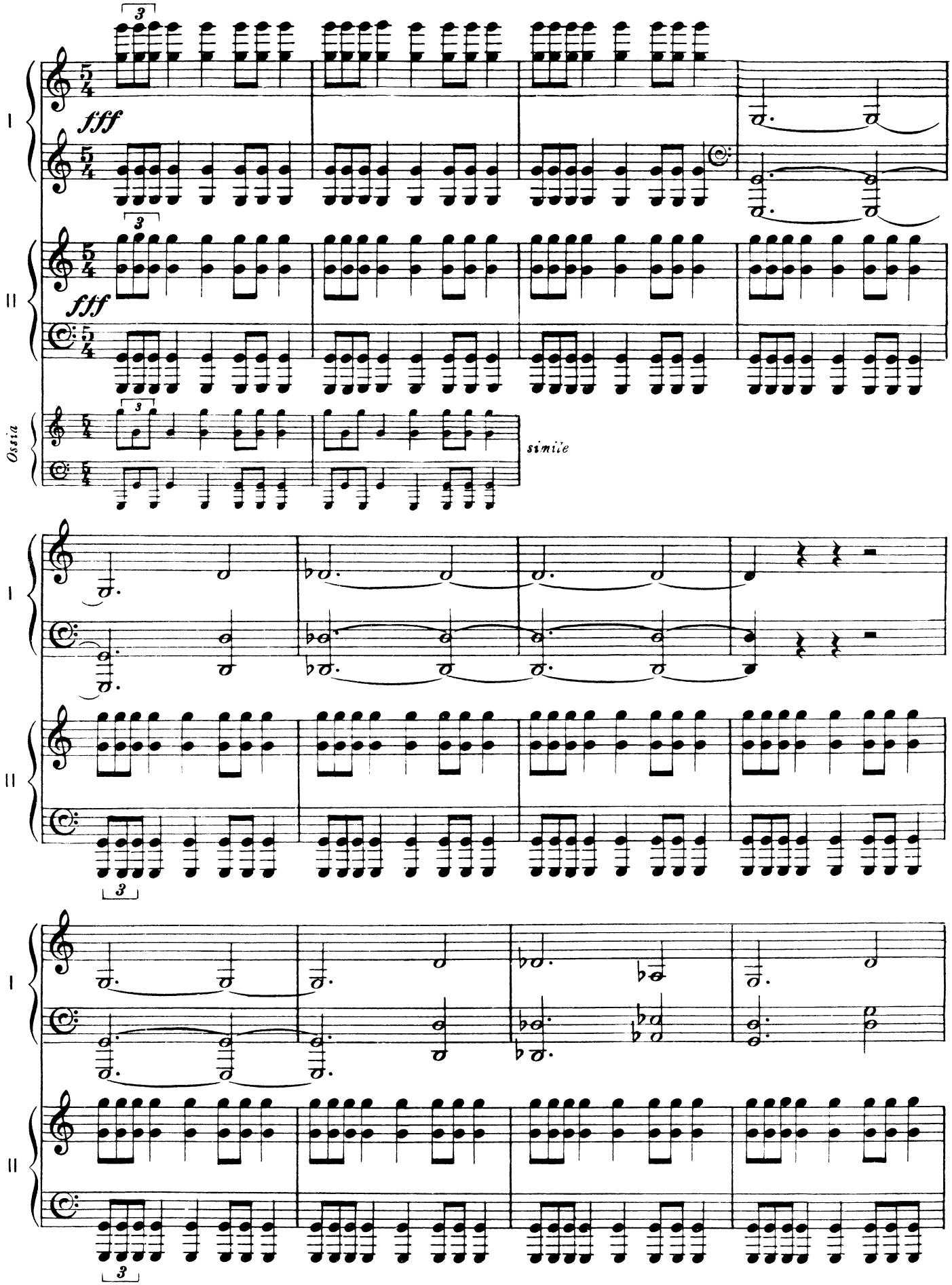

IV
IV
f sempre pesante
L.H.
marcato
L.H.
meno
mf
f
marcato
L.H.
mf

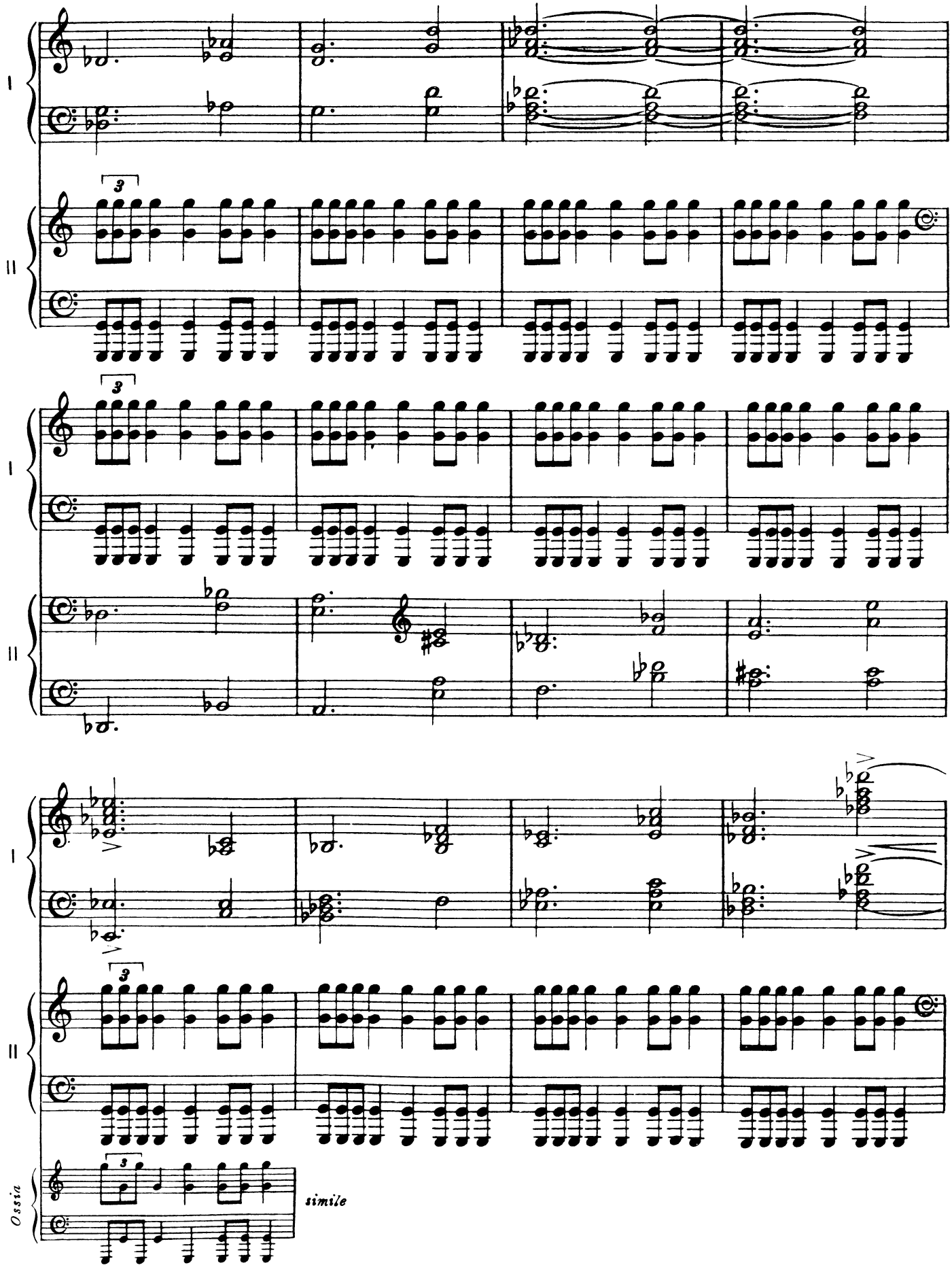

I
II
f
mf
V
marcato

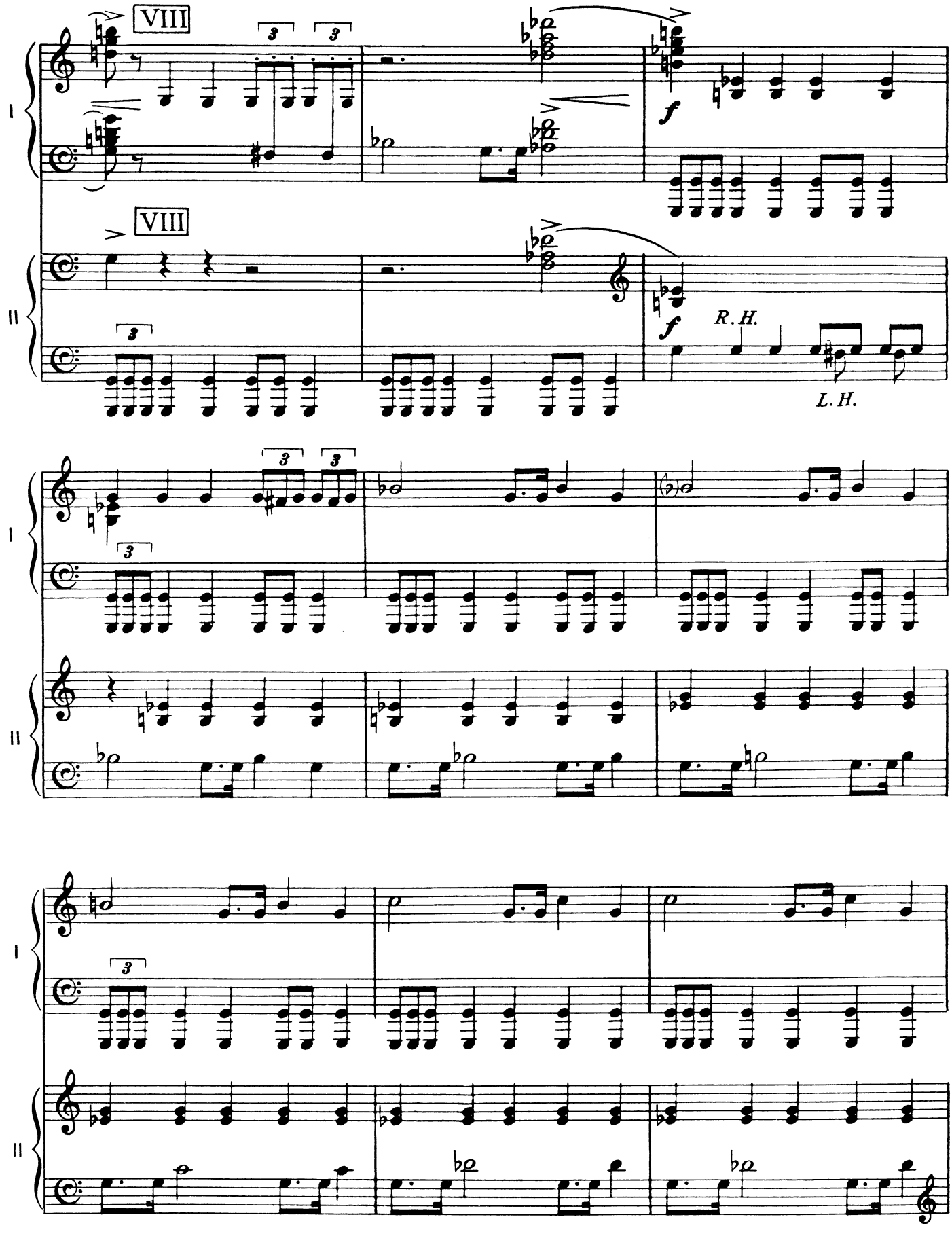

f cresc.
f cresc.
L.H.
L.H.
ff staccato
ff staccato

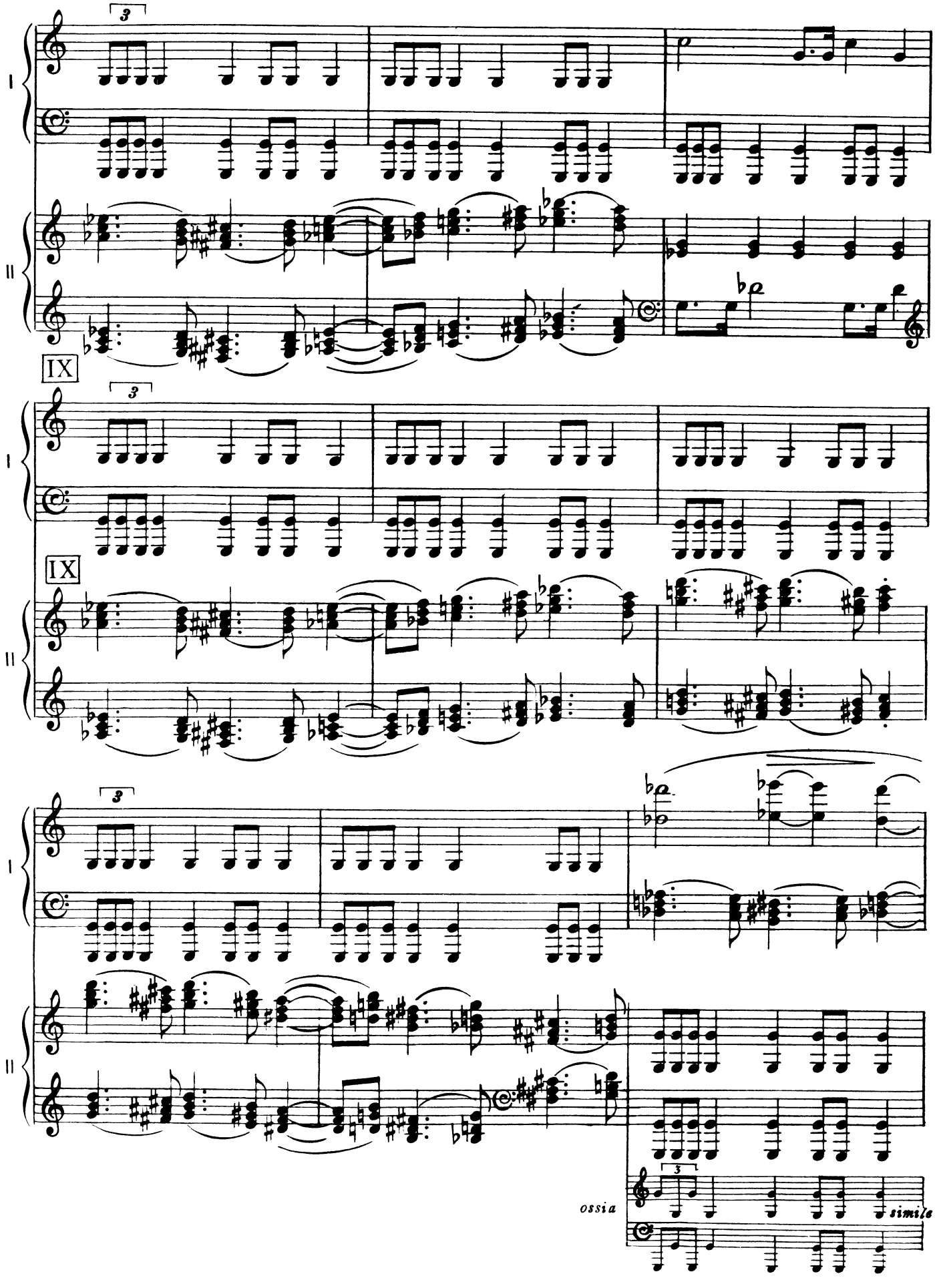

VI
(𝅗𝅥 = 𝅗𝅥)
p
I
II
VI
(𝅗𝅥 = 𝅗𝅥)
p
I
II
3
I
cresc.
II
3
cresc.

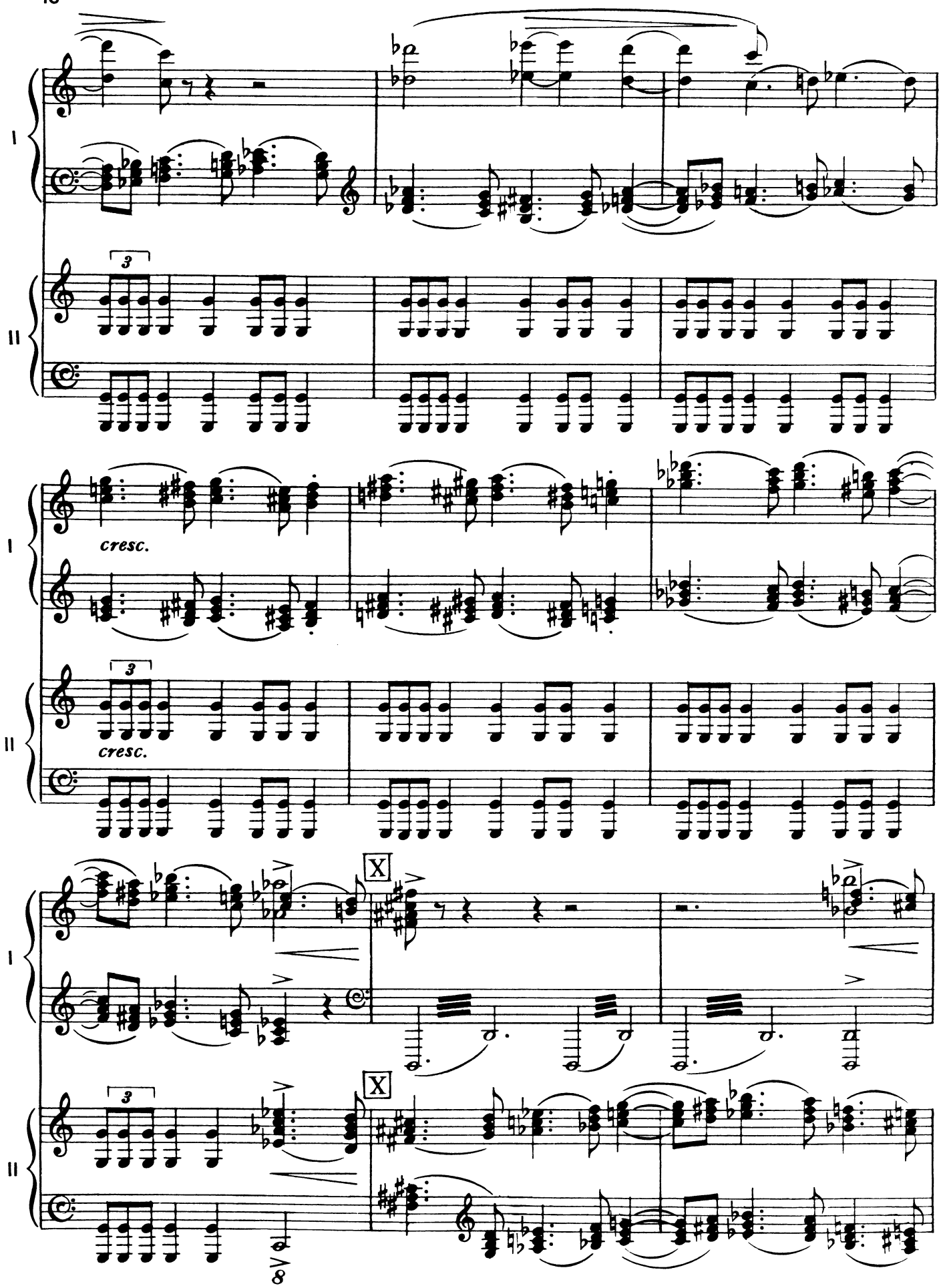

VII
I
VII
II
3
cresc.
I
3
cresc.
II
8
I
II

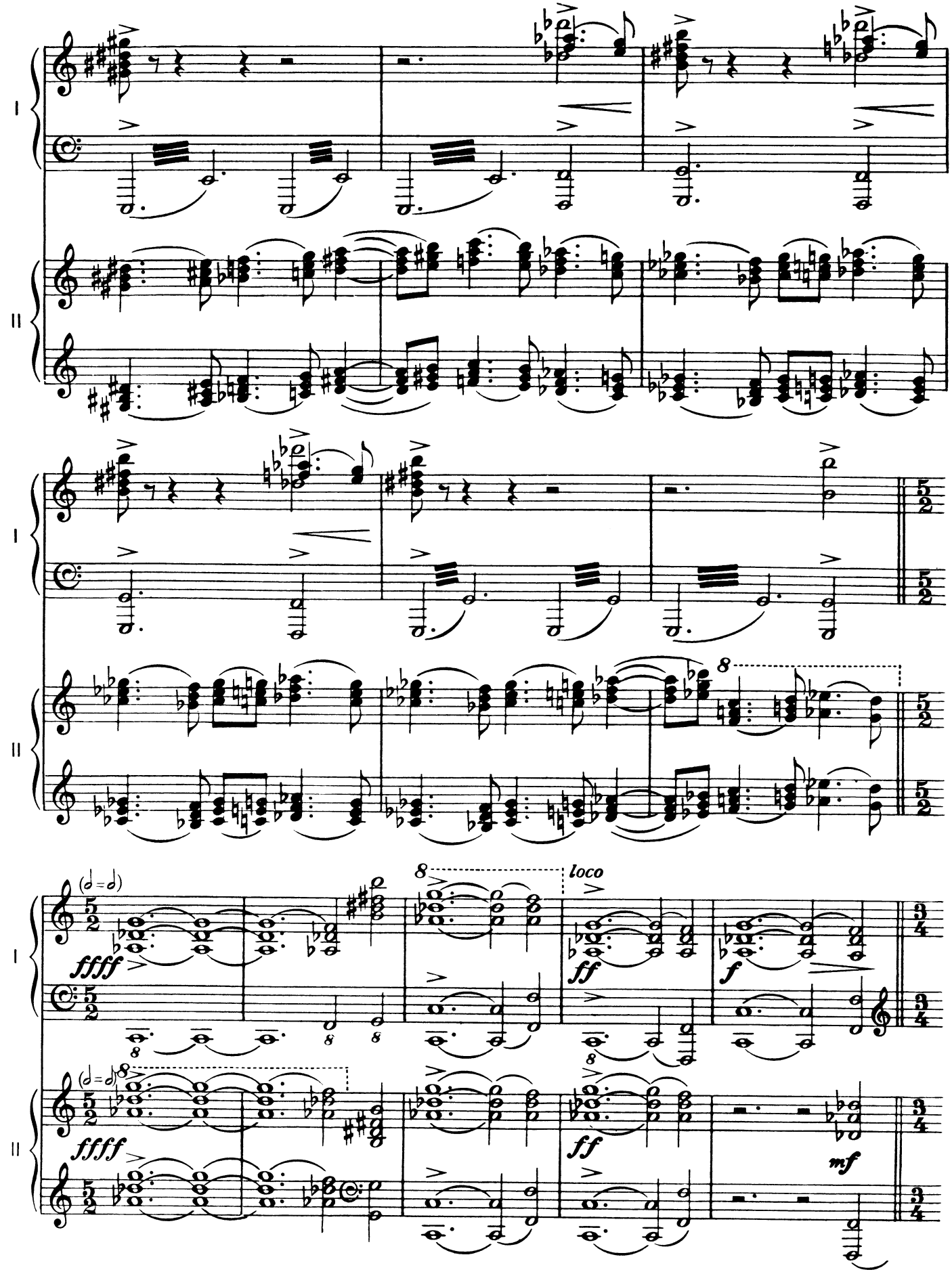

I
II
fff
fff
Ossia
simile

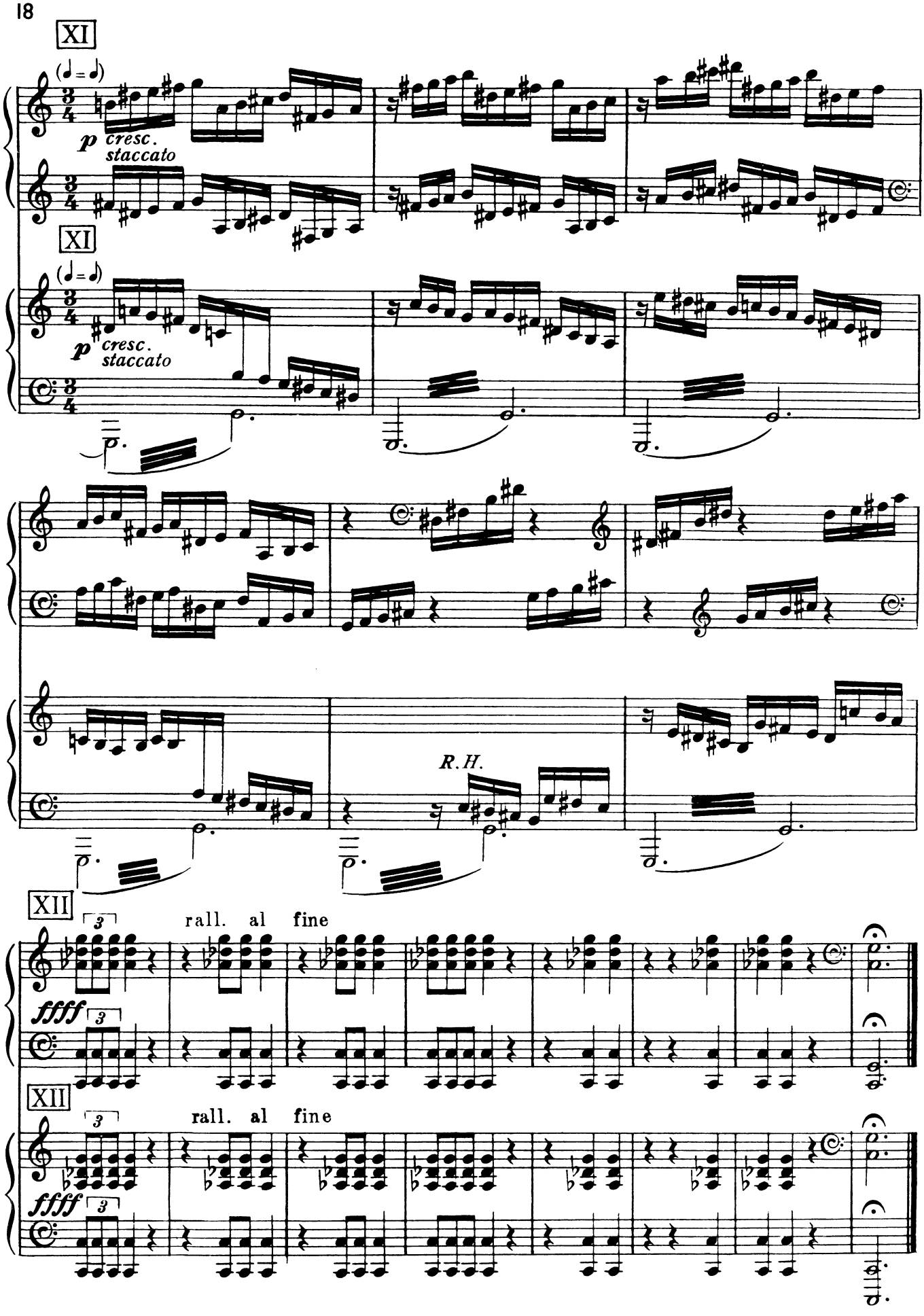

I
II
3
I
II
3
I
II
3
Ossia
simile


VIII
VIII
f
f
R. H.
L. H.
I
II


I
II
IX
IX
3
ossia
simile


I
II
3
cresc.
cresc.
X
X
8


I
II
8
loco
ffff
ff
f
mf


XI
p cresc. staccato
XI
p cresc. staccato
R.H.
XII
rall. al fine
ffff
XII
rall. al fine
ffff