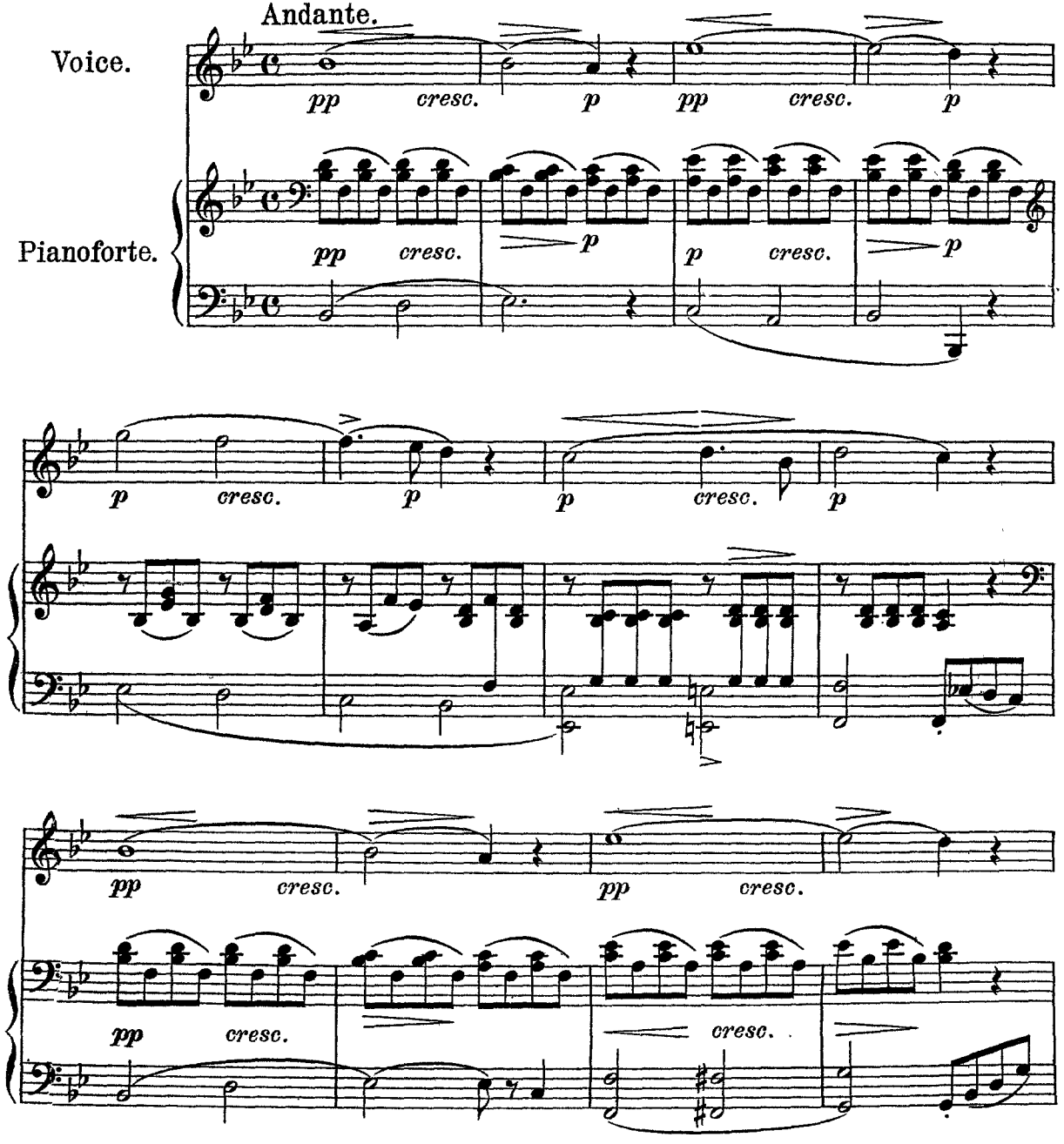
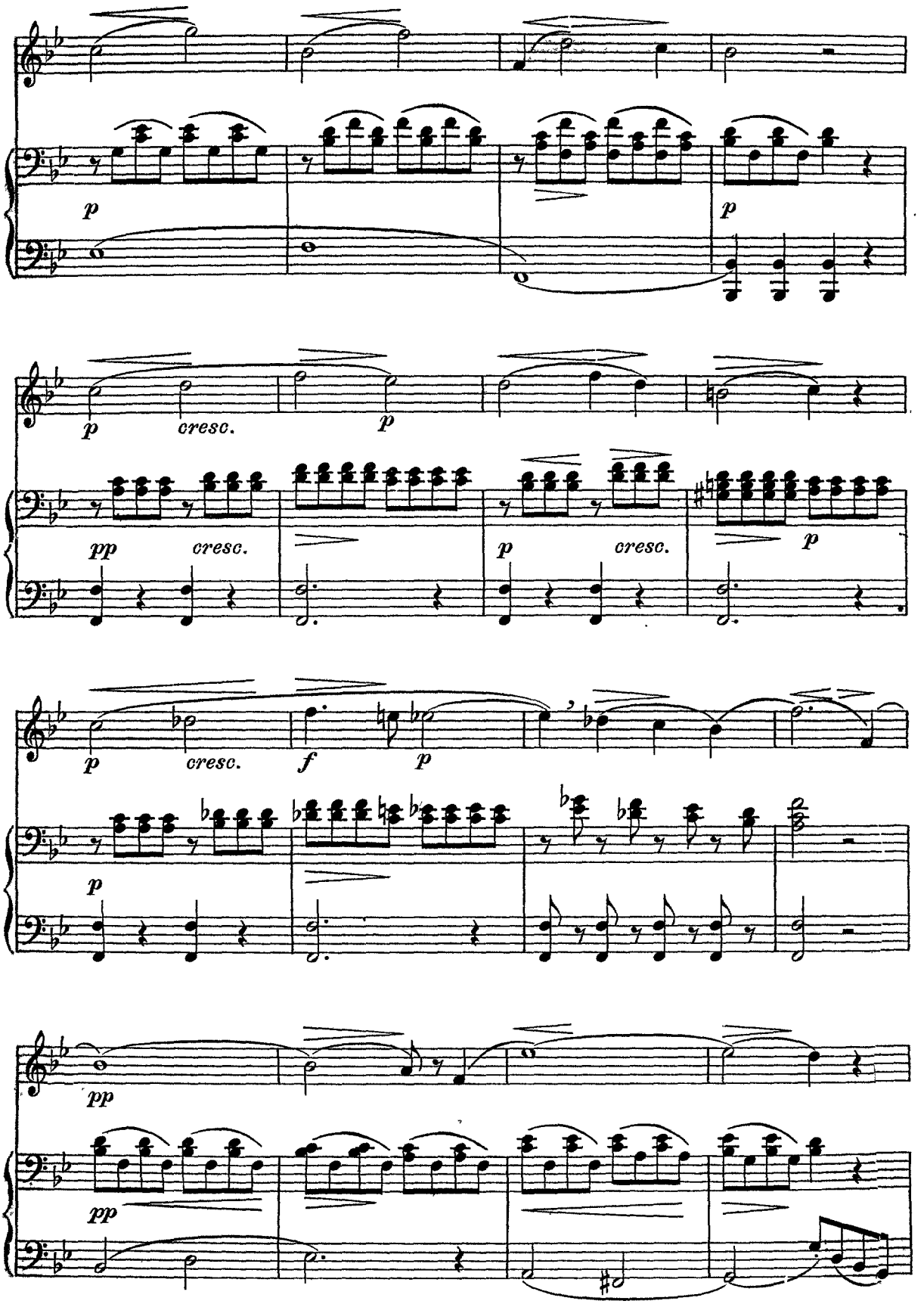
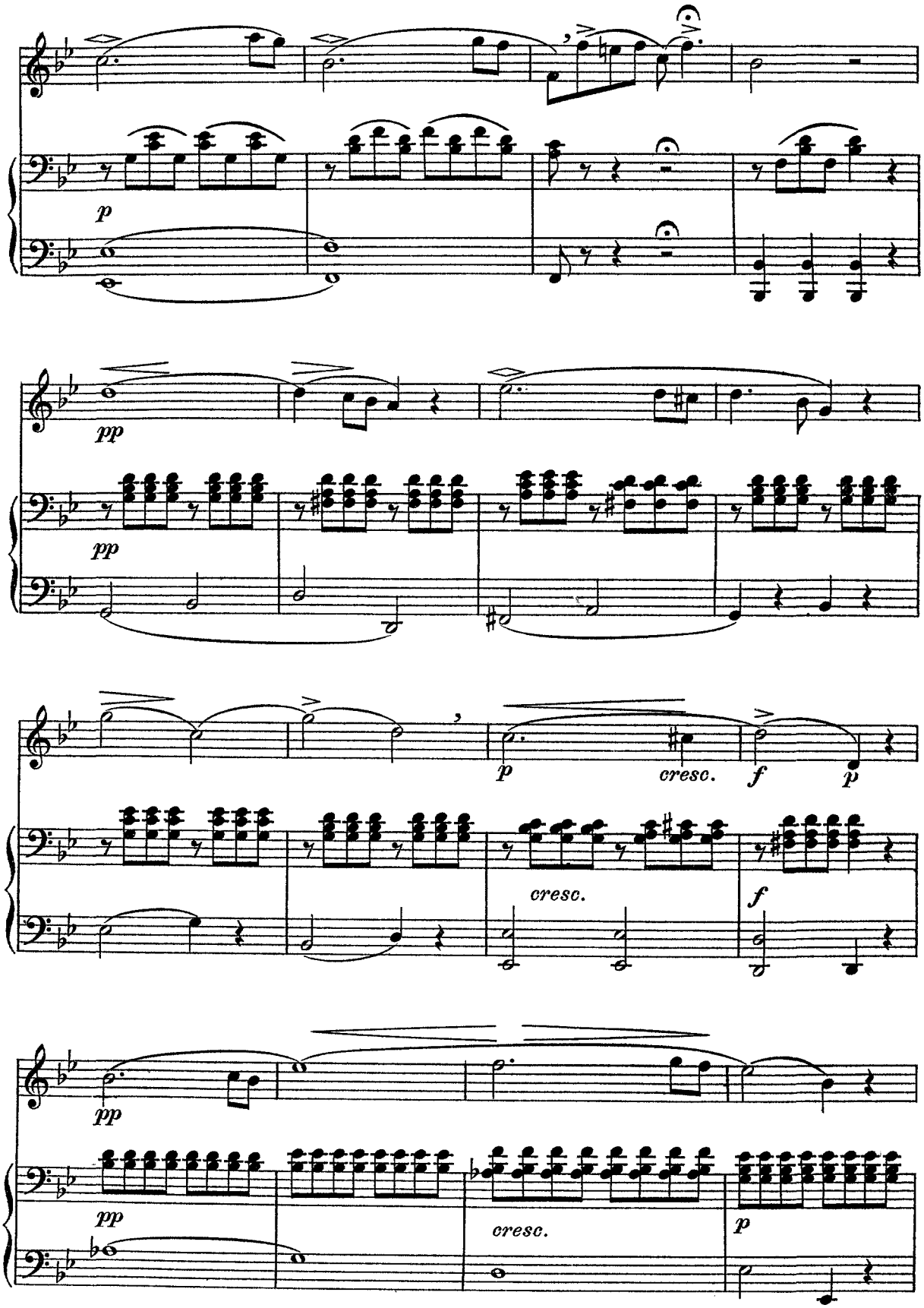
Rubini

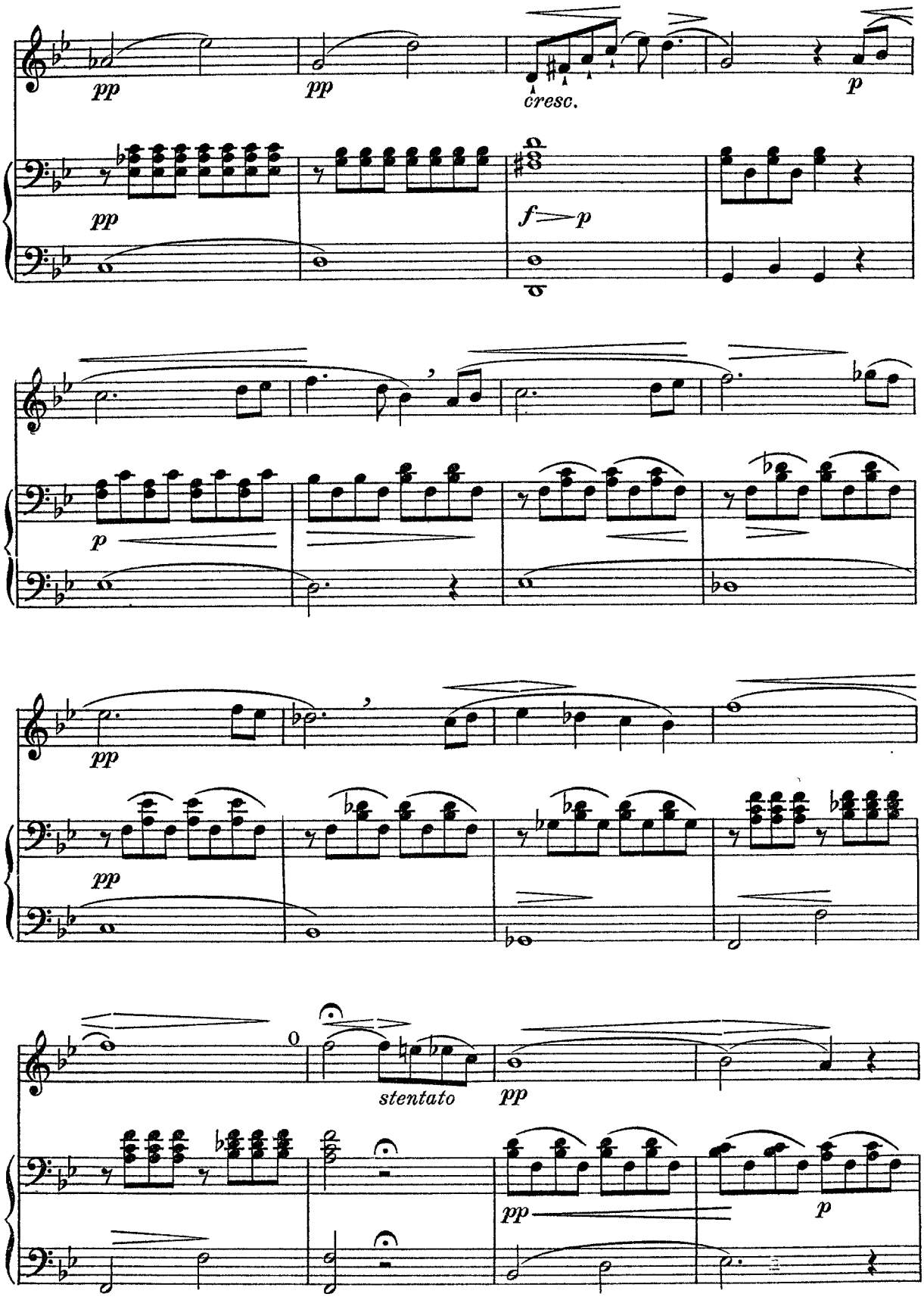
12 Lessons in Modern Singing

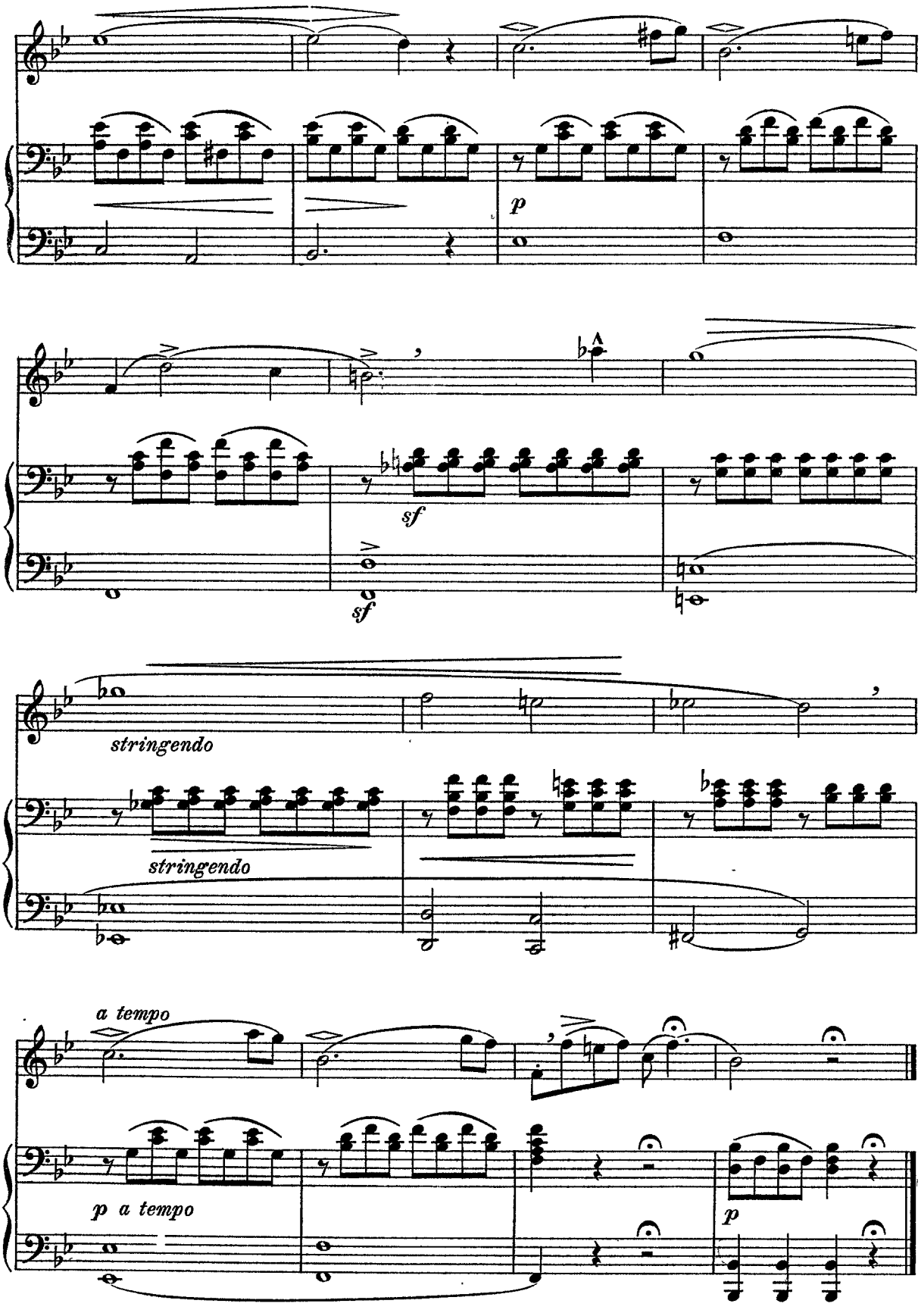
for Tenor or Soprano




p
p
p
cresc.
p
pp
cresc.
p
cresc.
p
p
cresc.
f
p
p
pp
pp


p
pp
pp
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
pp
pp
cresc.
p


pp
pp
cresc.
p
pp
f
p
p
pp
pp
0
stentato
pp
pp
p

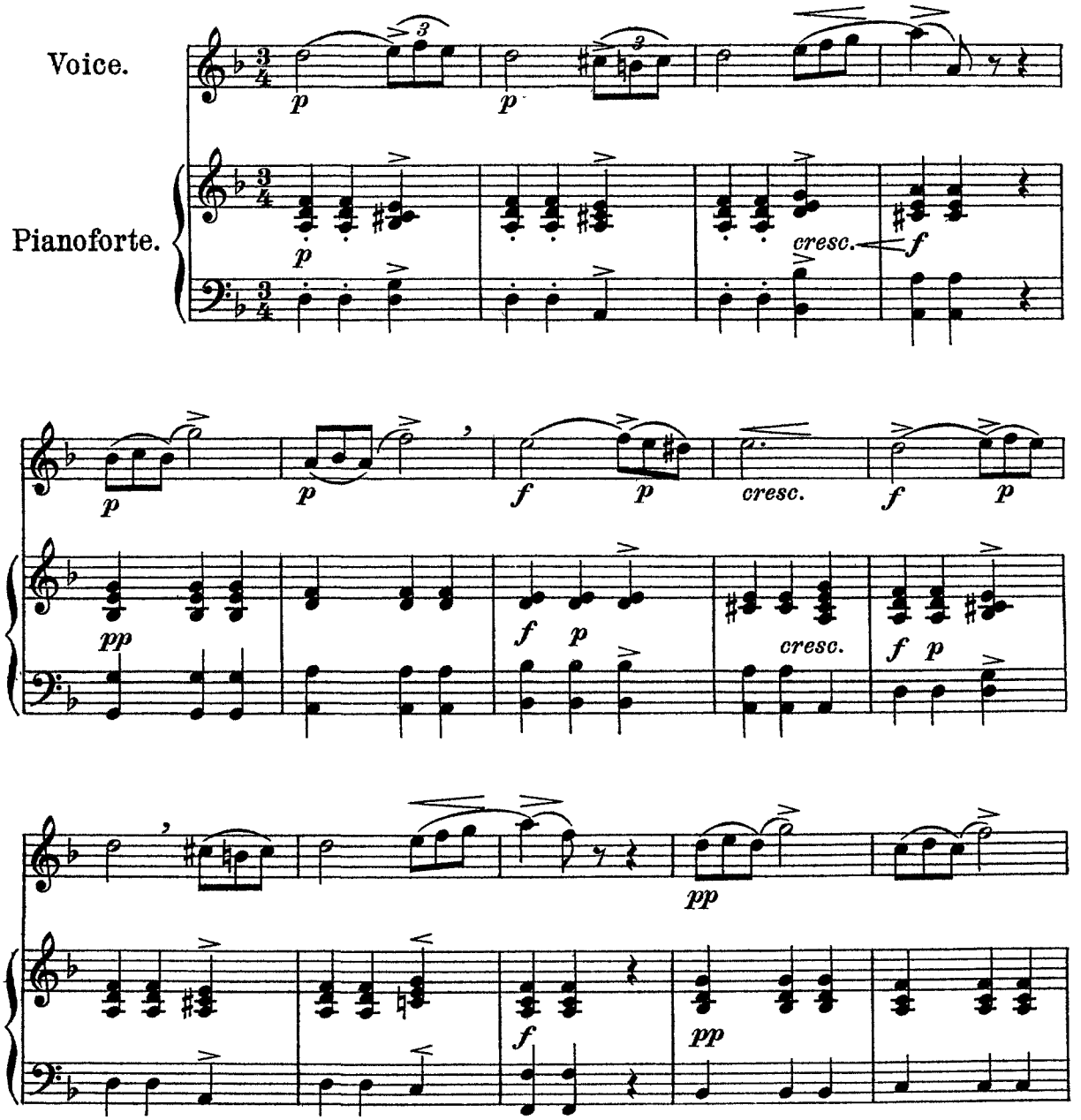

p
sf
sf
stringendo
stringendo
a tempo
p a tempo
p

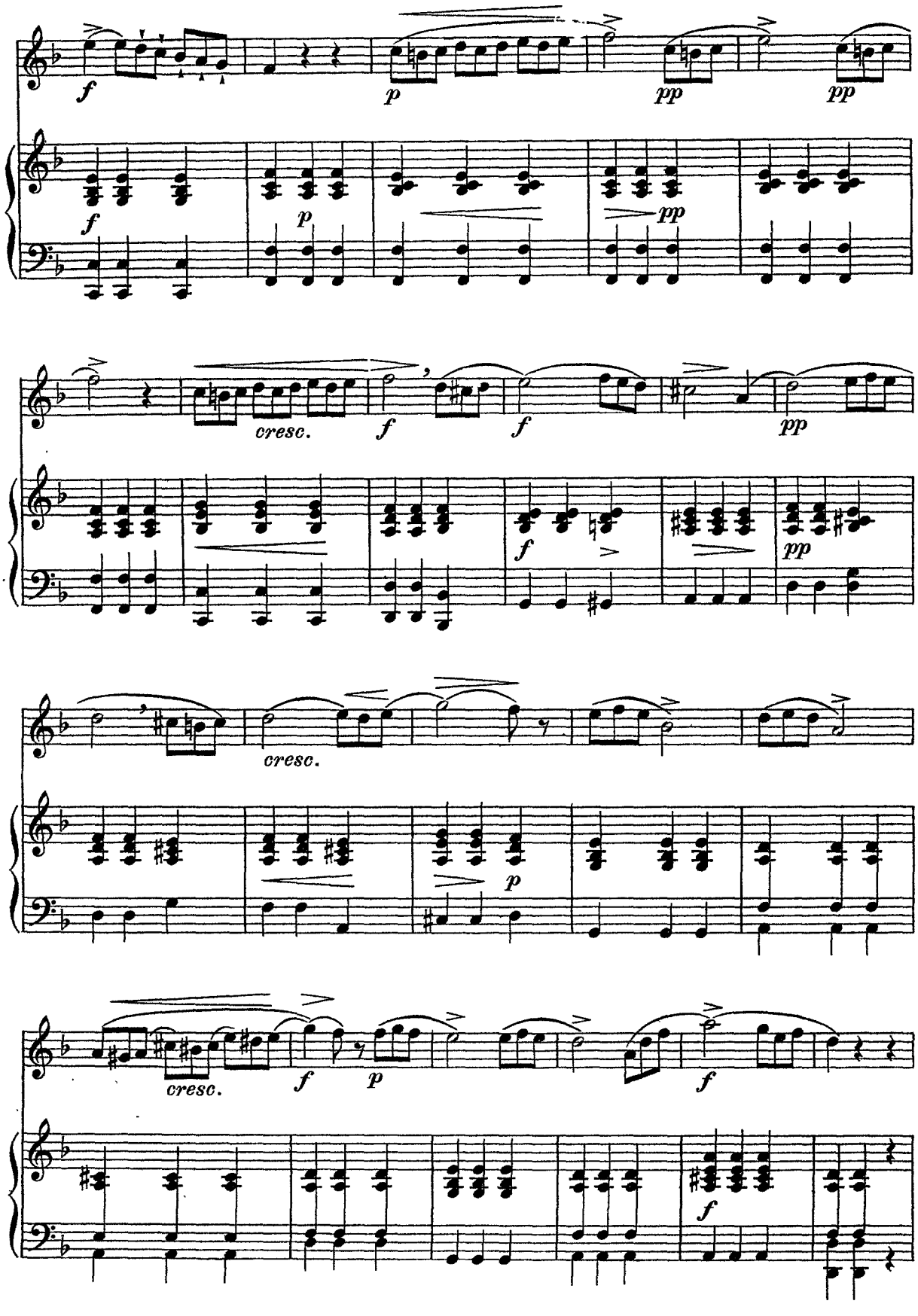
SECOND LESSON

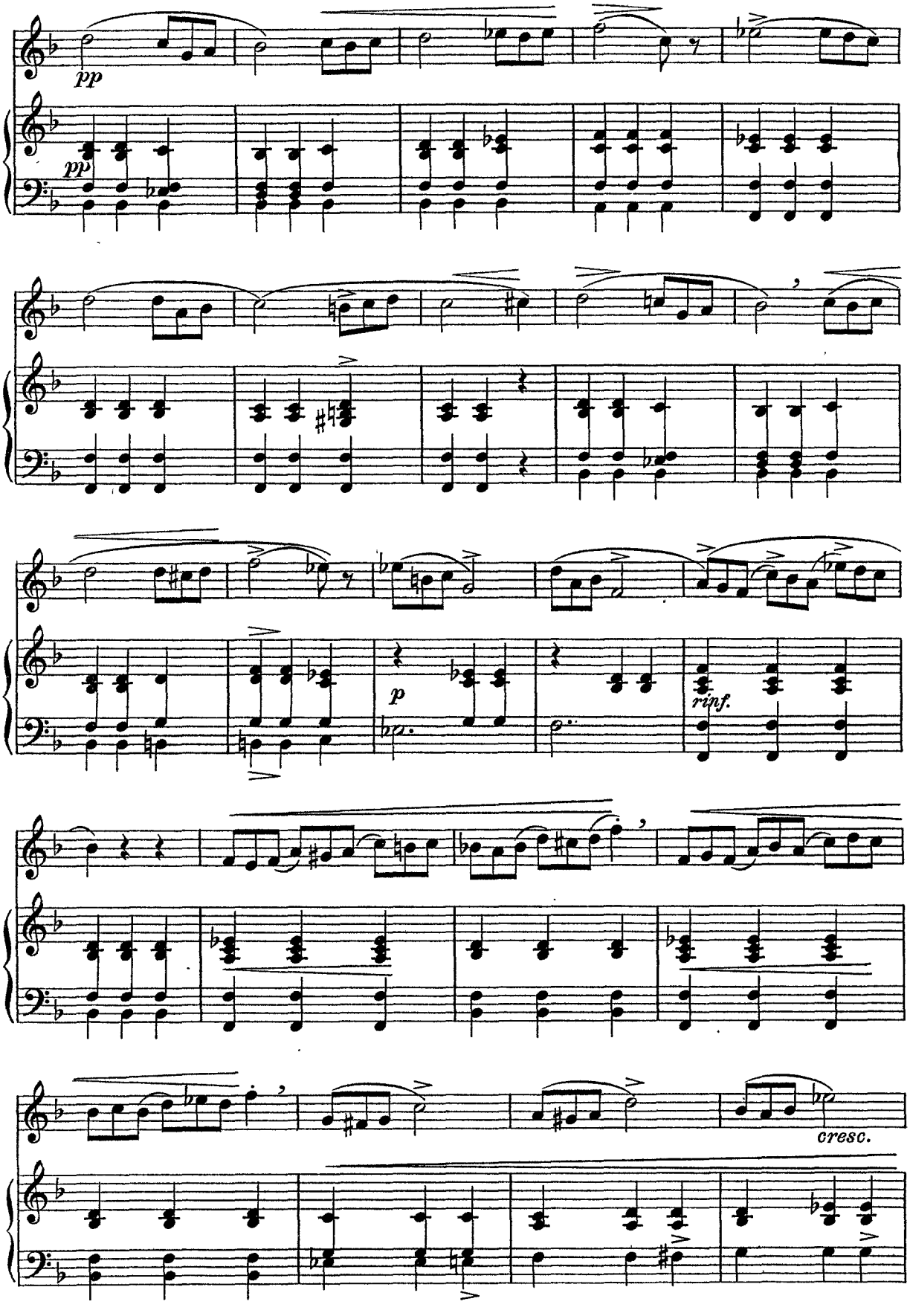
Triplets

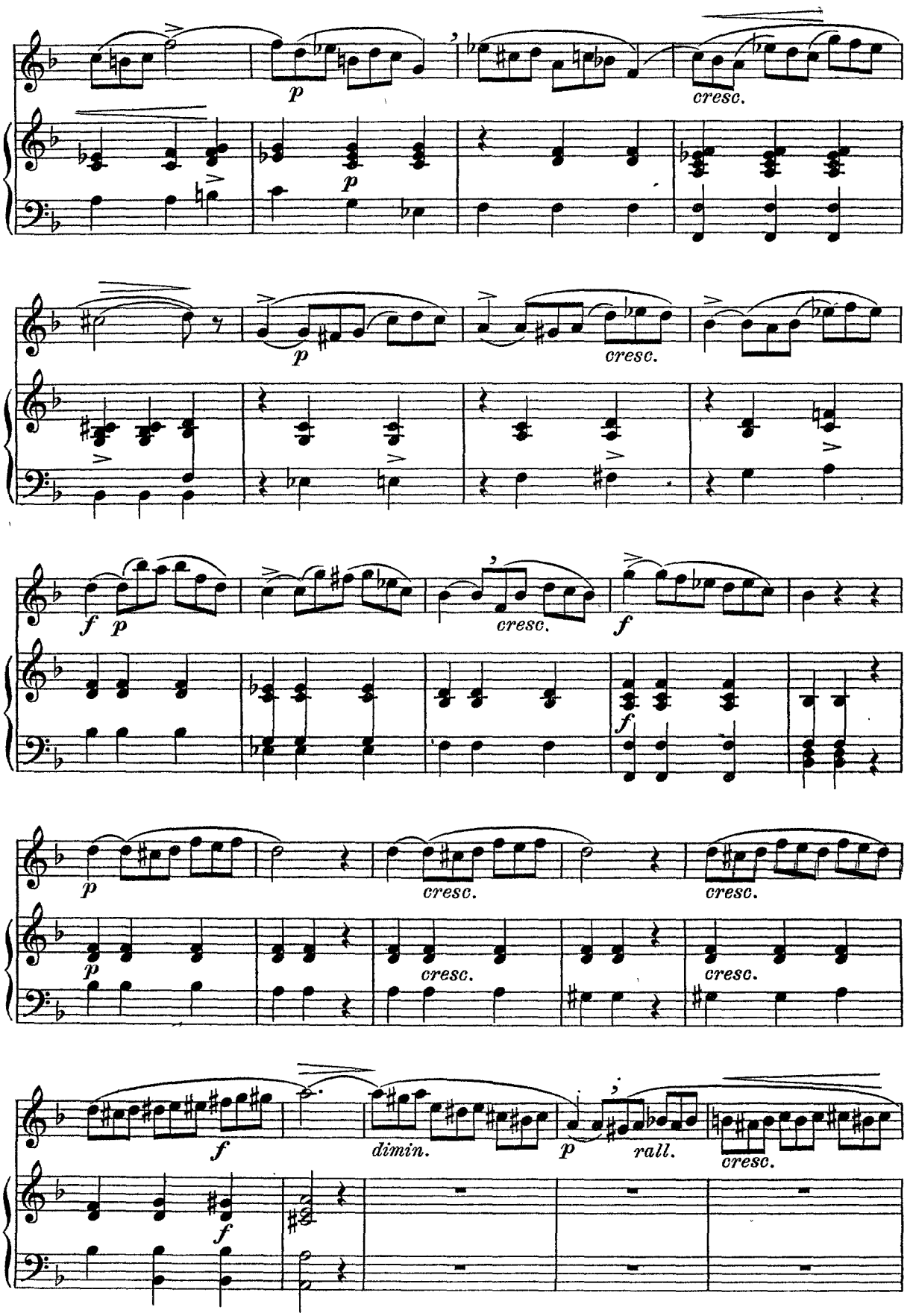
Brilliant Execution

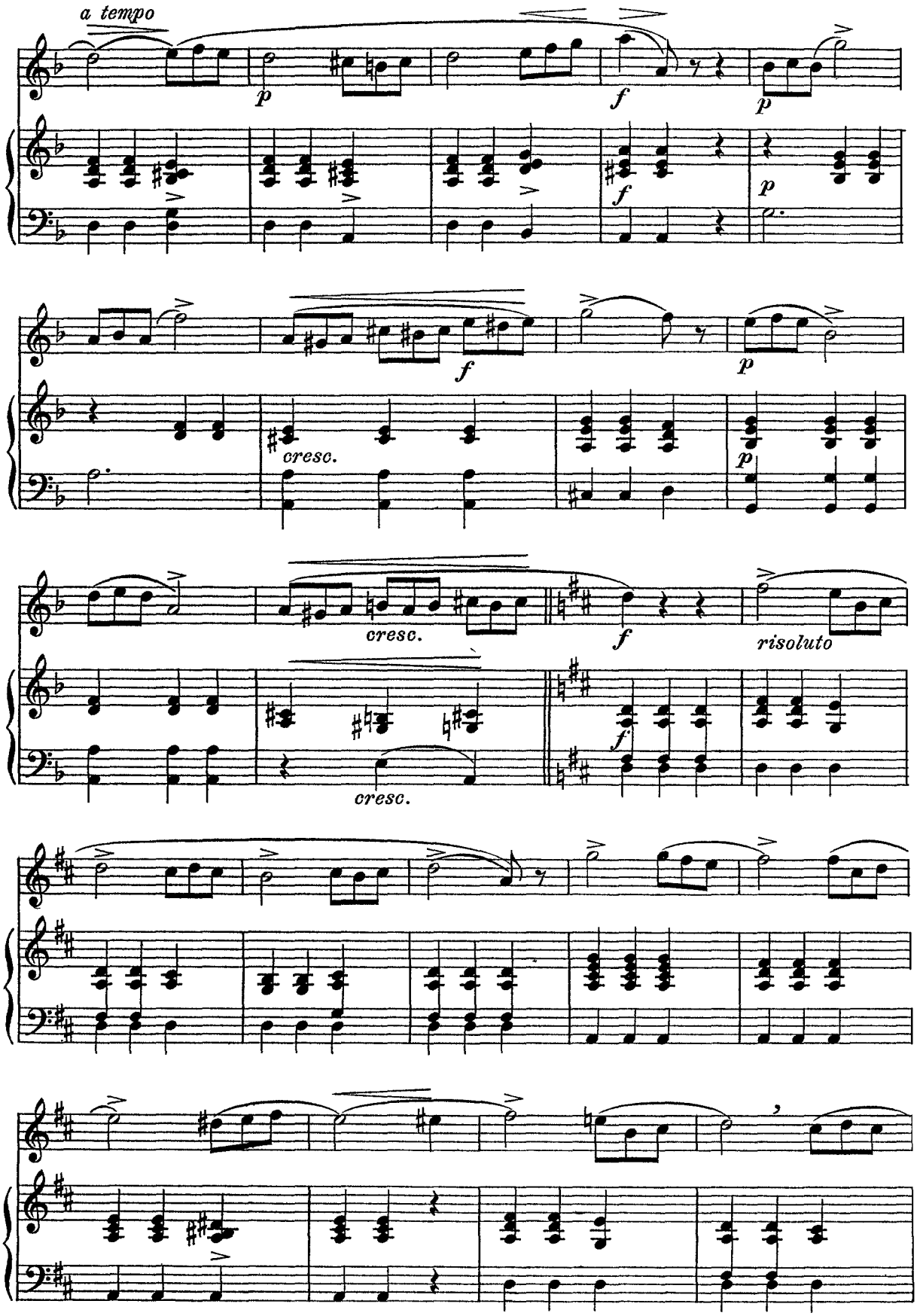
In this lesson the singer must be careful to accent the first note of the triplet a little more then the other two, both in *forte* and in *piano*.

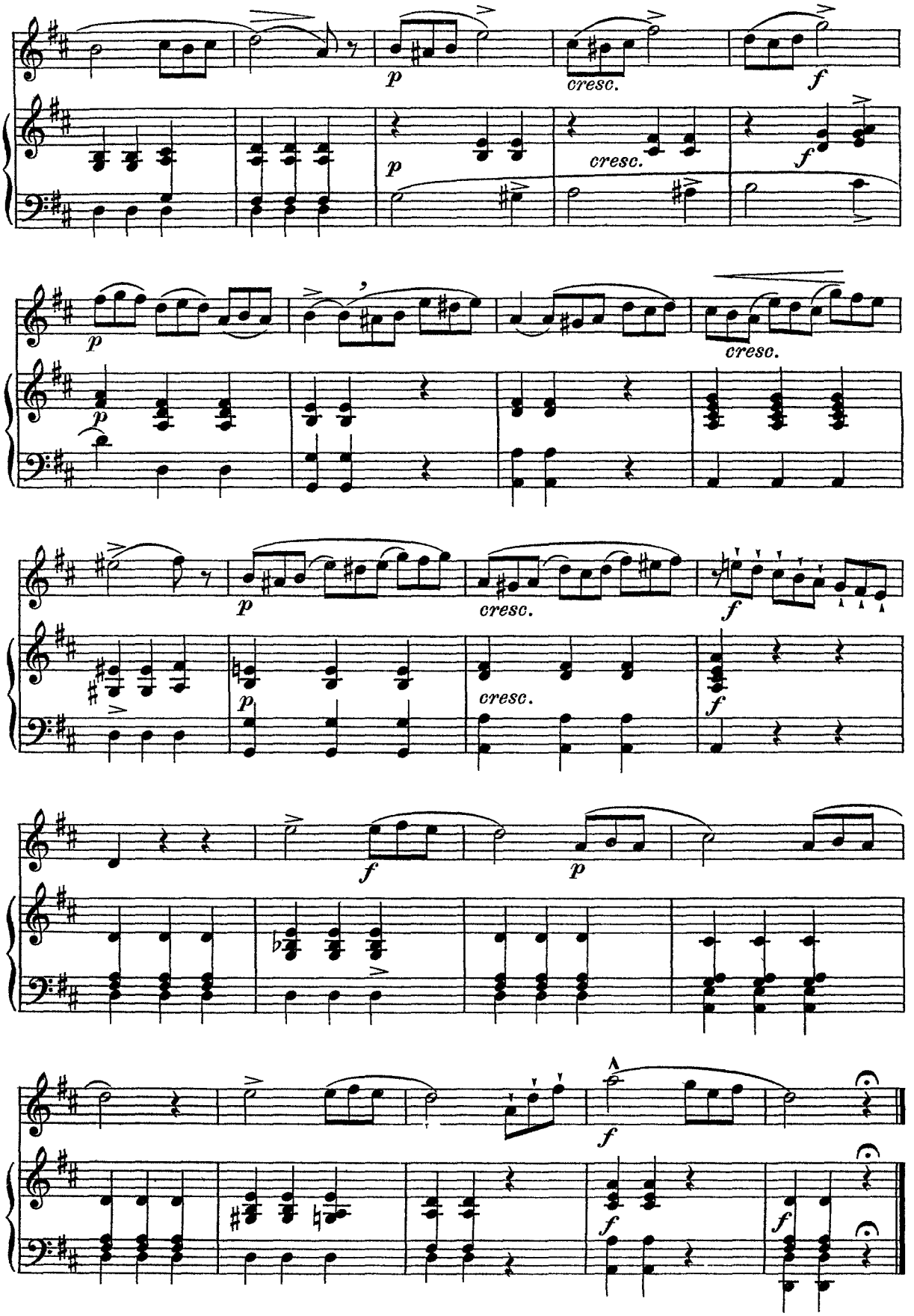



f
p
pp
pp
f
p
pp
cresc.
f
f
pp
f
pp
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
f
f


pp
pp
p
rinf.
cresc.


p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
f
p
cresc.
cresc.
p
cresc.
cresc.
f
dimin.
p
rall.
cresc.
f


a tempo
p
f
p
f
p
f
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
risoluto
cresc.
f

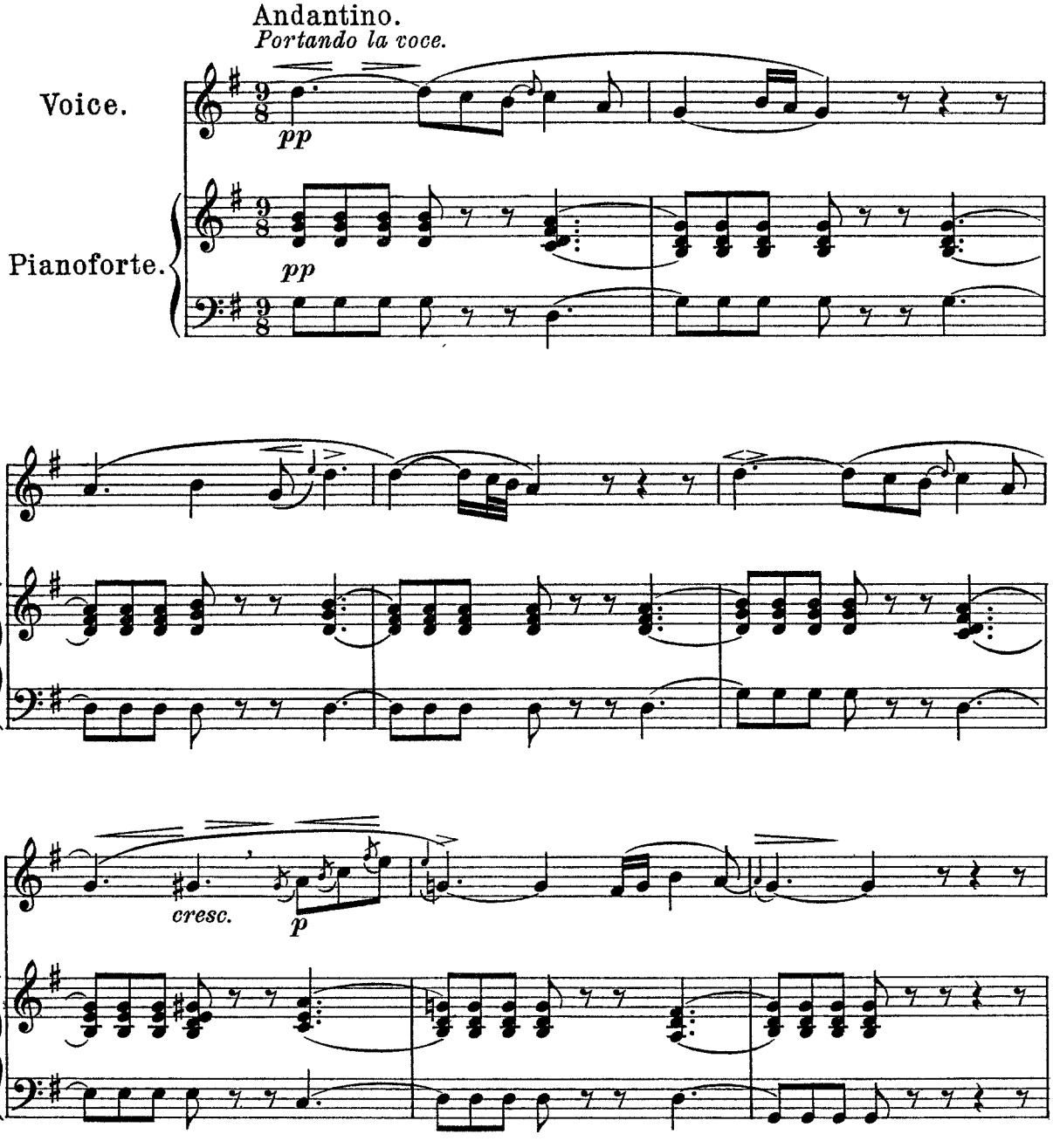

p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
f
p
f
f
f

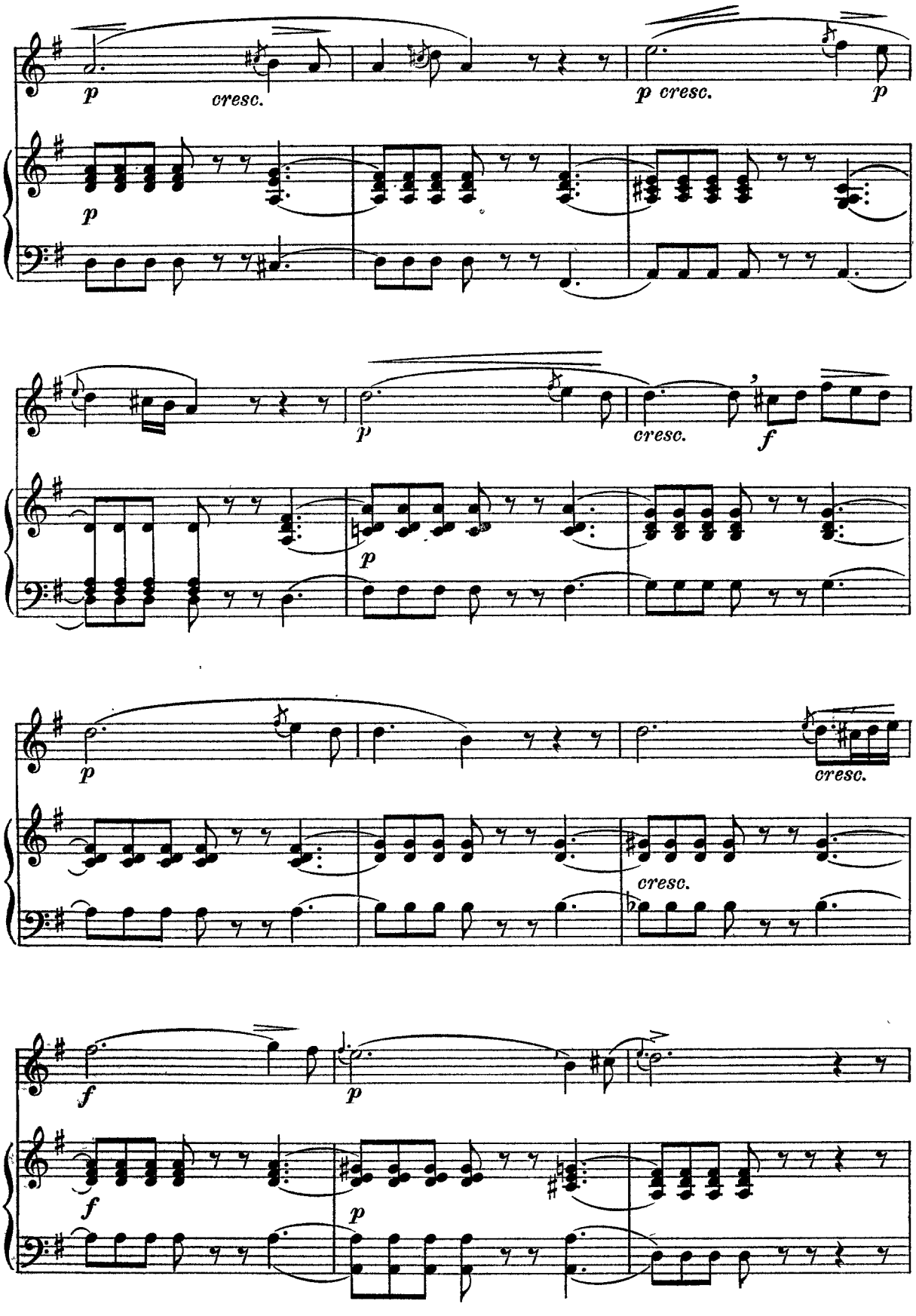
THIRD LESSON

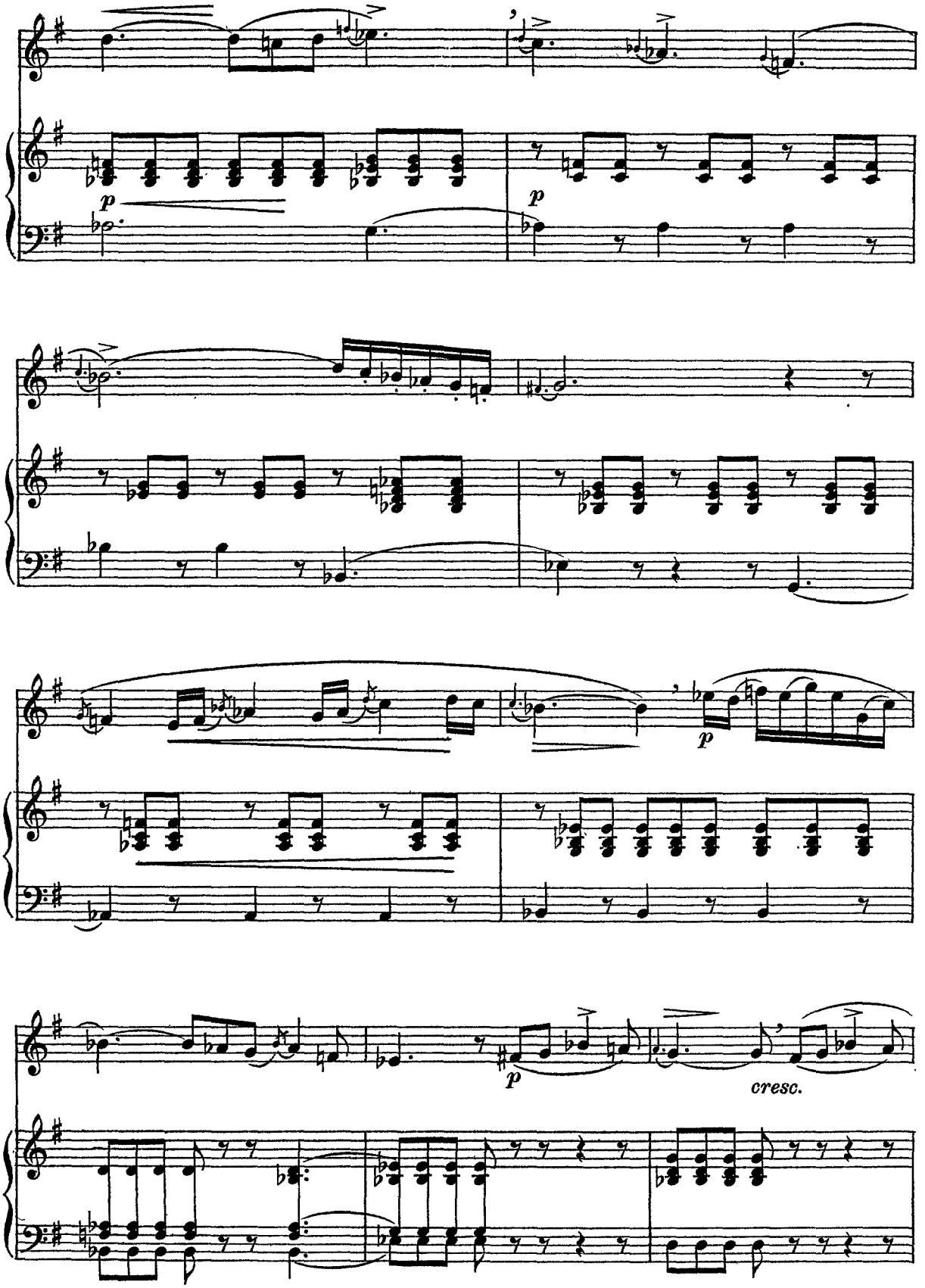
The Appoggiatura and Acciaccatura

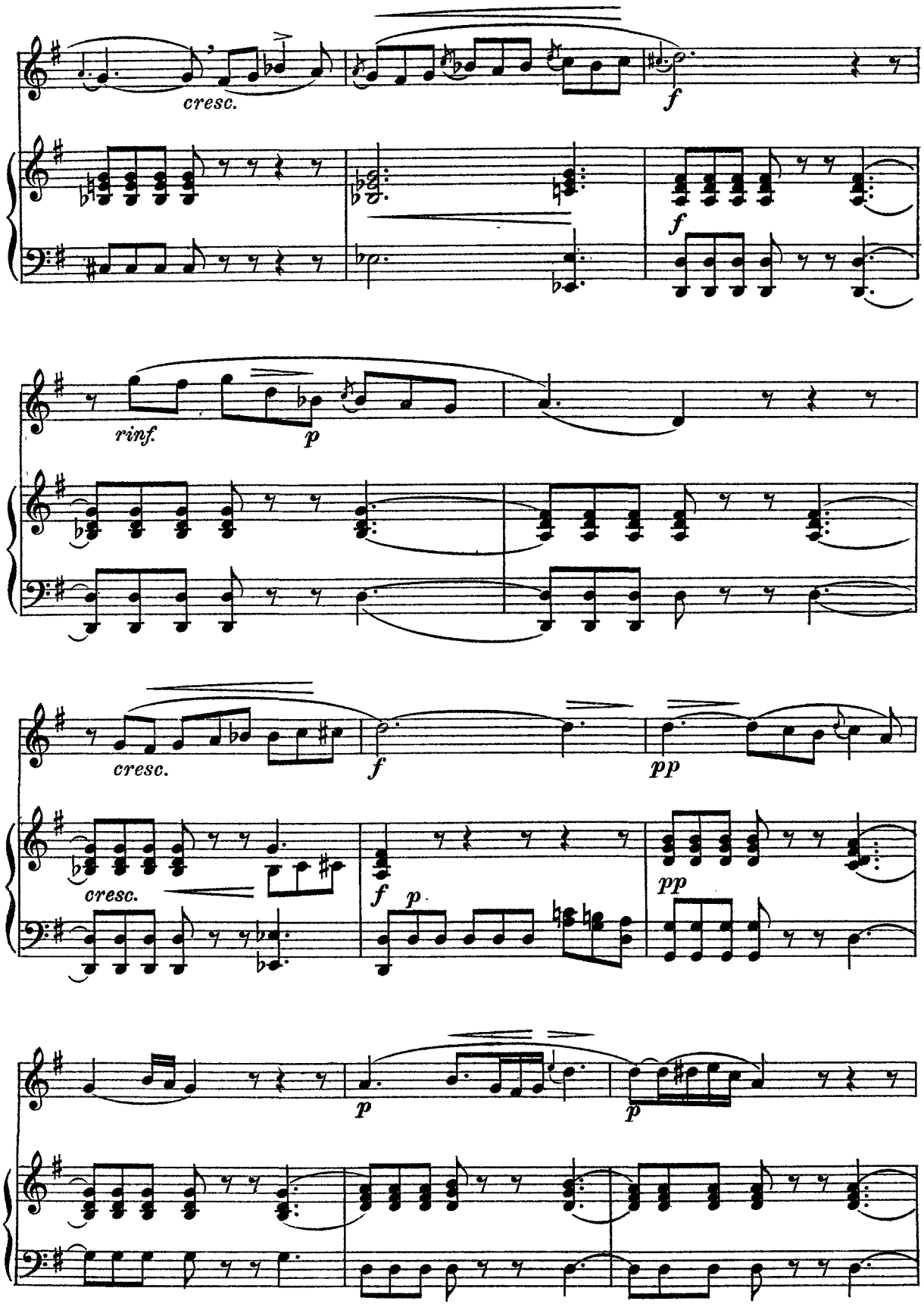
With great expression

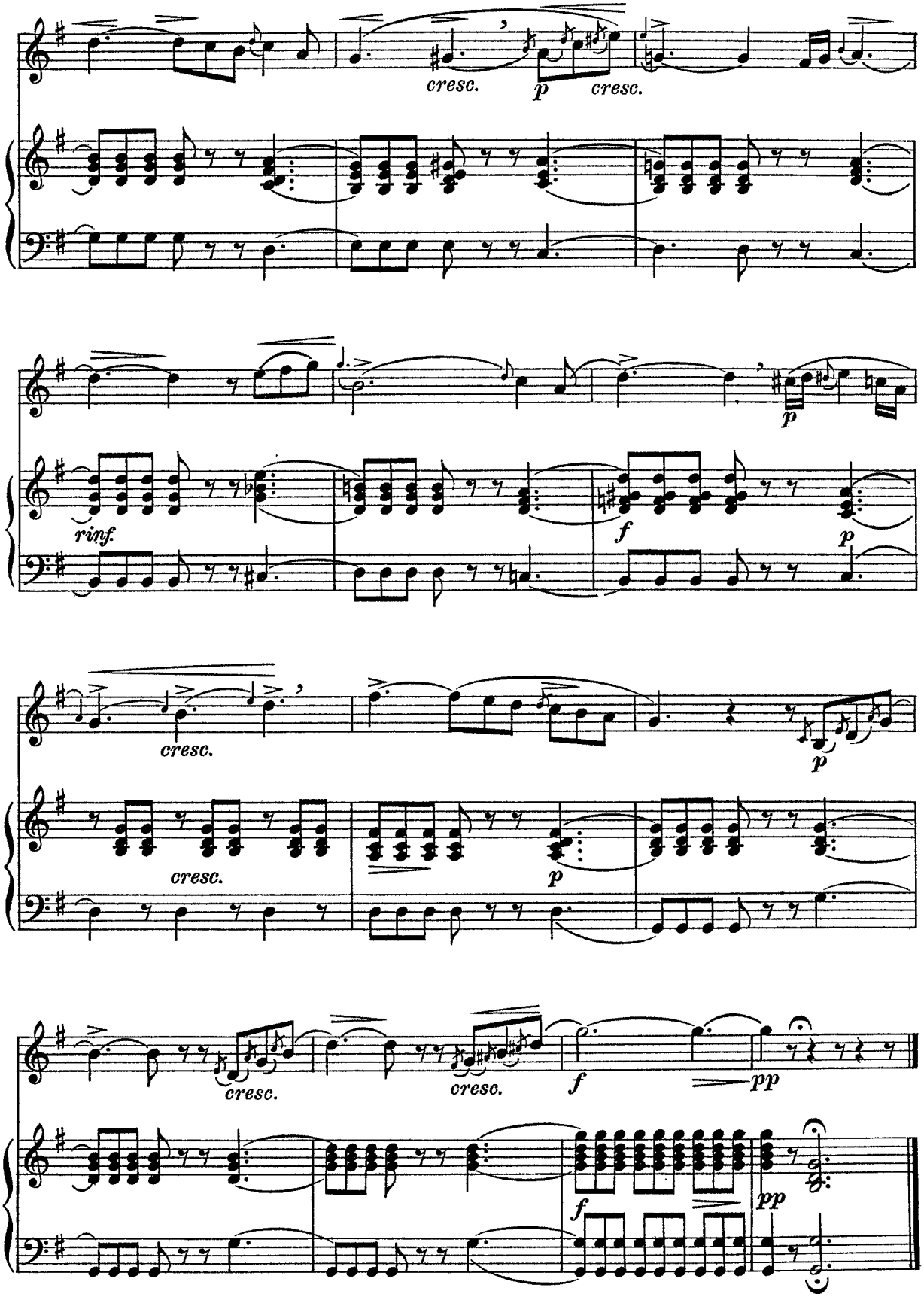
Appoggiatura is the term applied to the small notes which have not the oblique line across the stem. The appoggiatura has a definite duration of one-half, at least, of the note immediately following. It has a stronger accent than this main note following it. Acciaccatura is the term applied to the small notes which have the oblique line across the stem. The acciaccatura has no appreciable duration, and no accent, but serves to put additional stress upon the note immediately following. The acciaccatura must be delivered on the syllable under the note against which it is placed.




p
cresc.
p cresc.
p
p
p
cresc.
f
p
p
cresc.
cresc.
f
p
f
p


p
p
p
cresc.


cresc.
f
f
rinf.
p
cresc.
f
pp
cresc.
f
p
pp
p
p

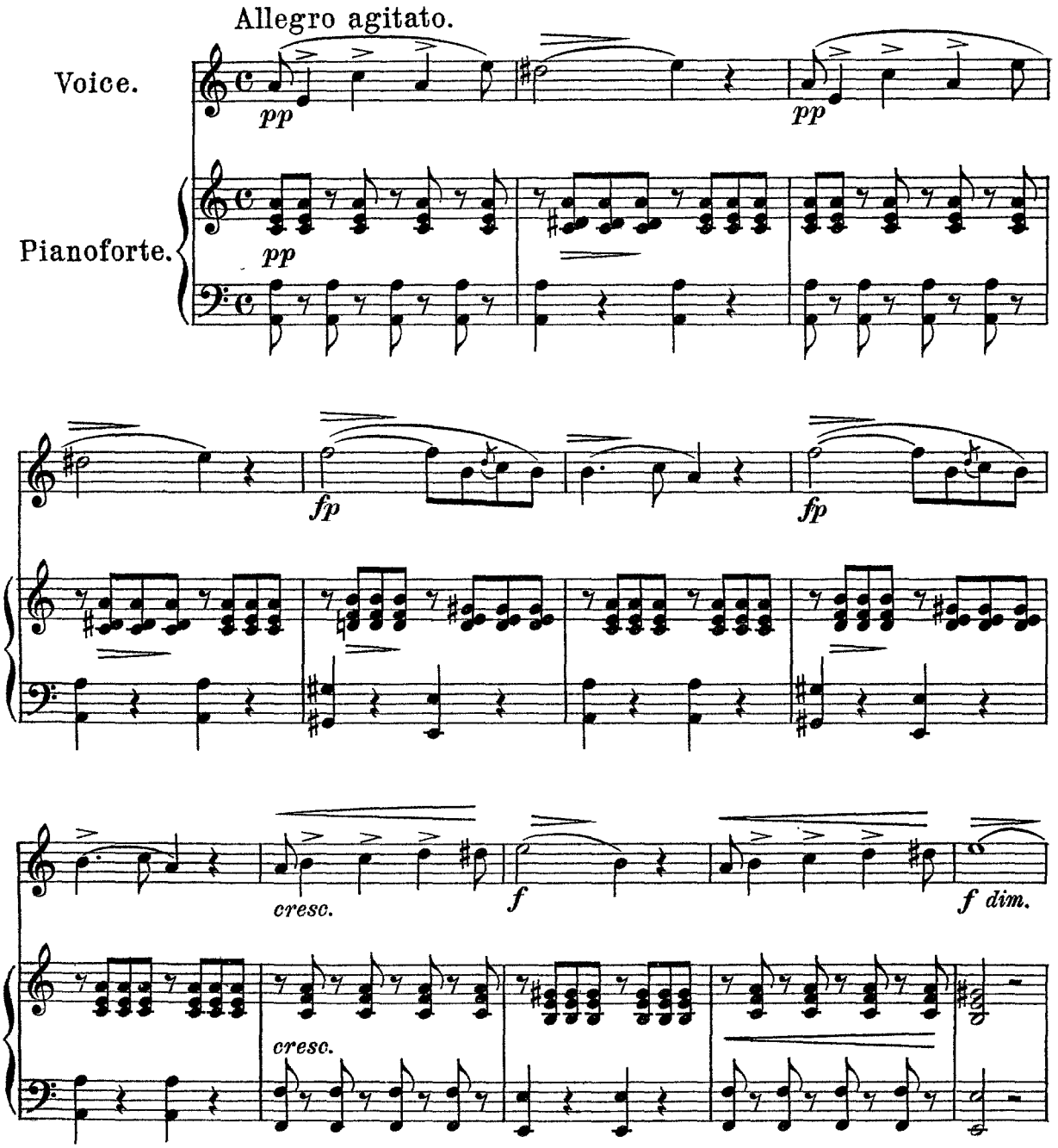

cresc.
p
cresc.
rinf.
f
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
pp
f
pp

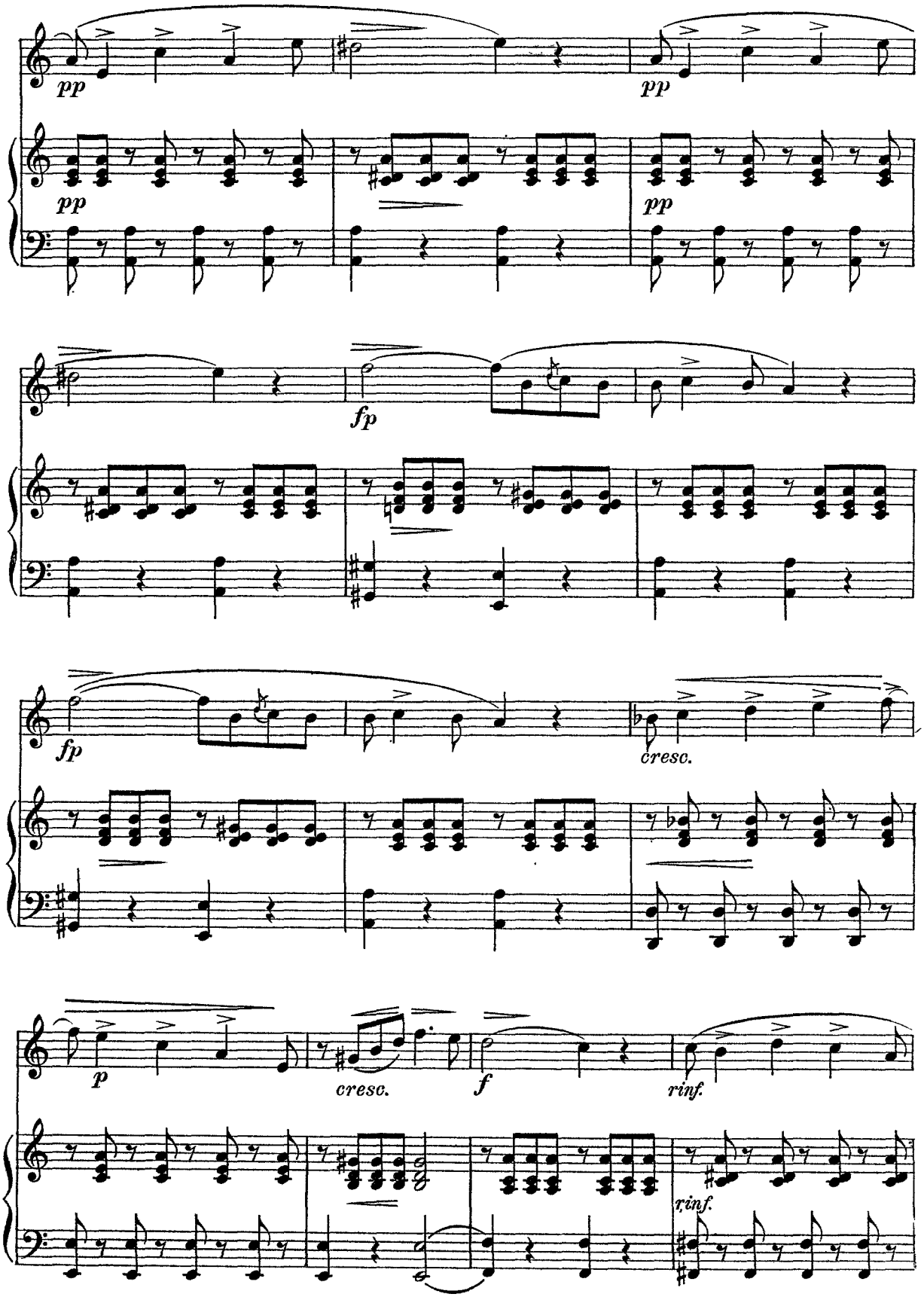
FOURTH LESSON

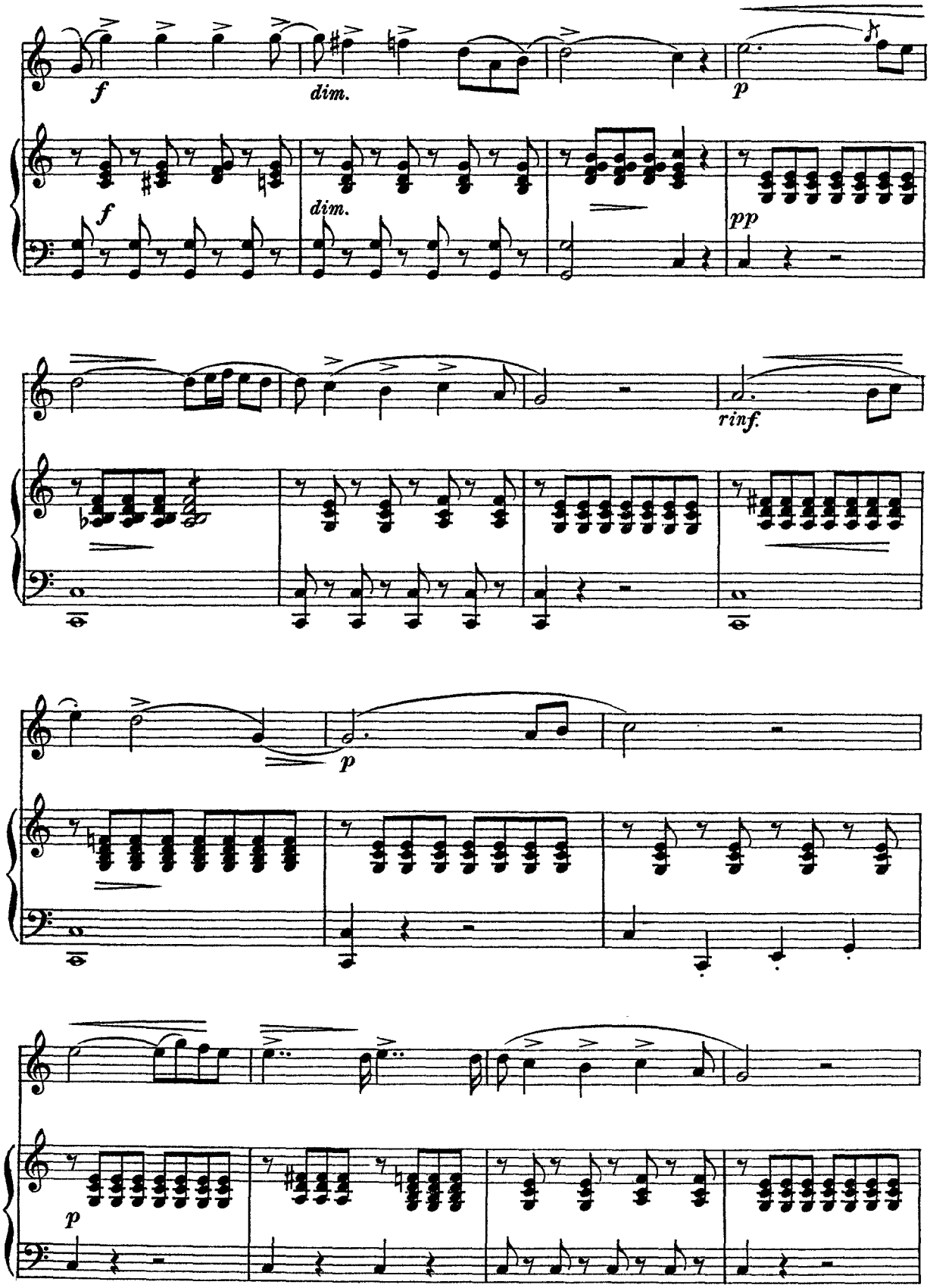
Syncopation

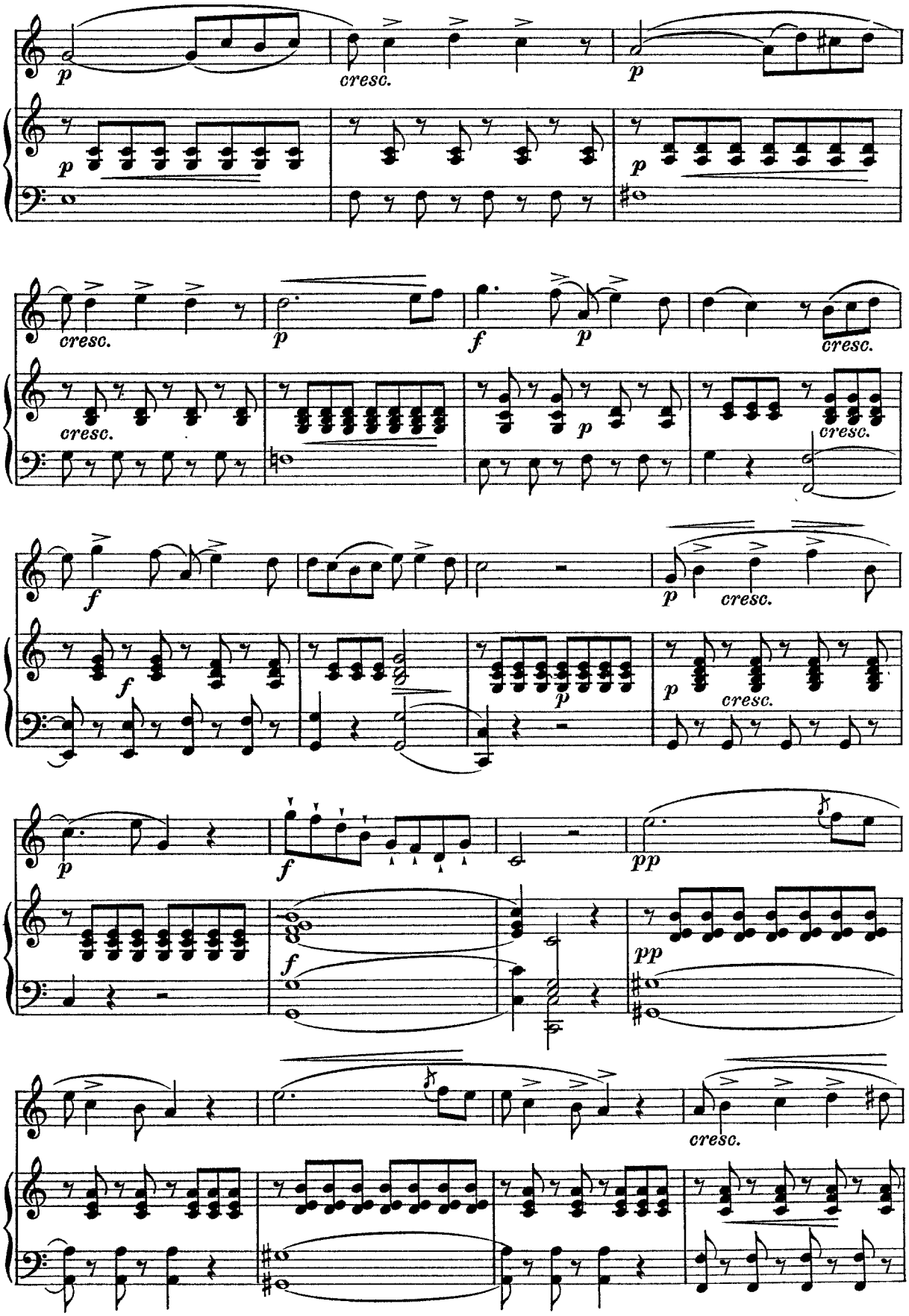
With great animation

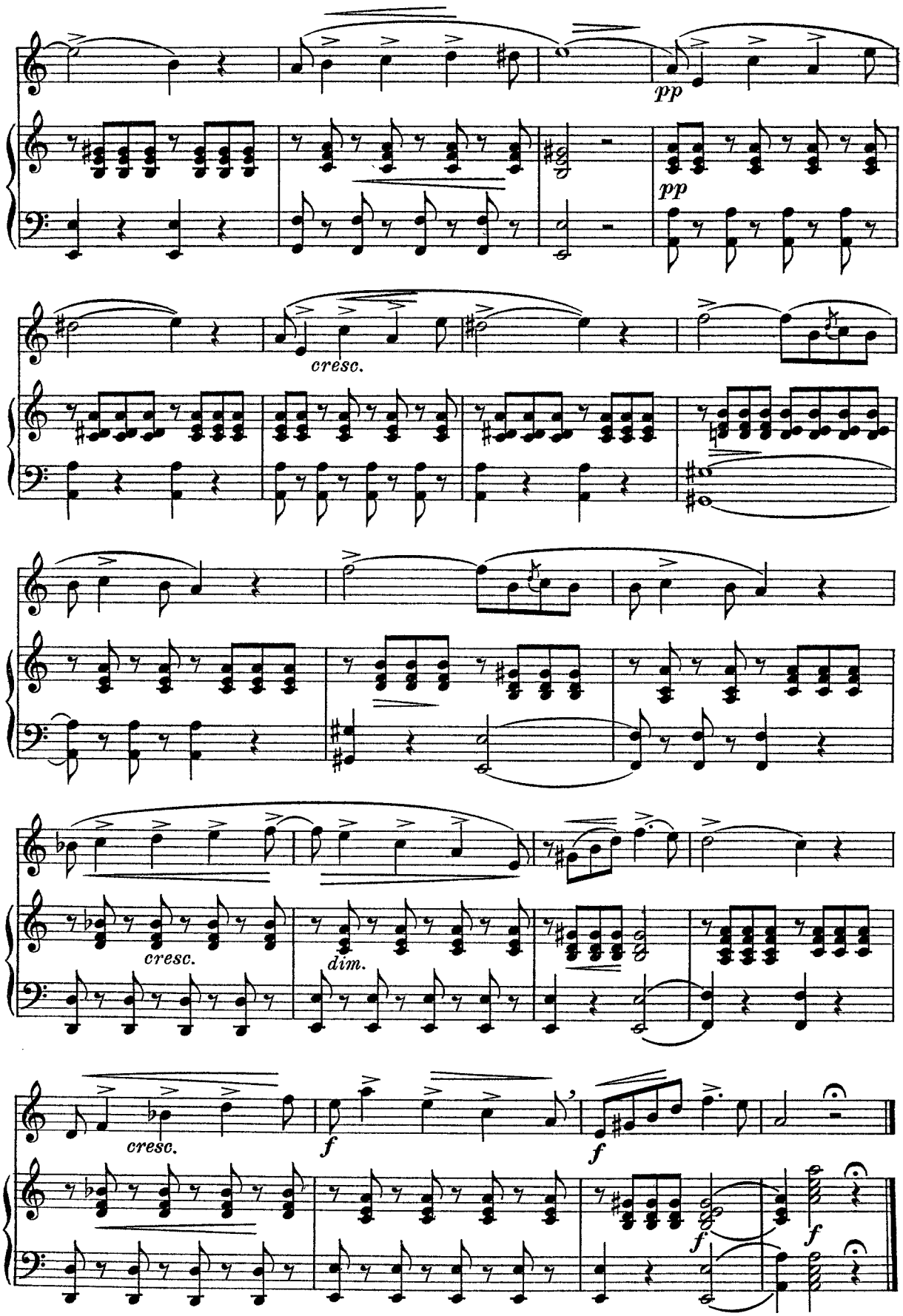
The sign > does not always signify *fortepiano*. When the phrase is to be executed *piano* or *pianissimo*, it merely indicates that the note over which it is placed should receive a little more accent.




pp
pp
pp
pp
fp
fp
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
rinf.
rinf.


f
dim.
p
f
dim.
pp
rinf.
p
p


p
cresc.
p
cresc.
p
f
p
cresc.
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
p
f
pp
f
pp
cresc.

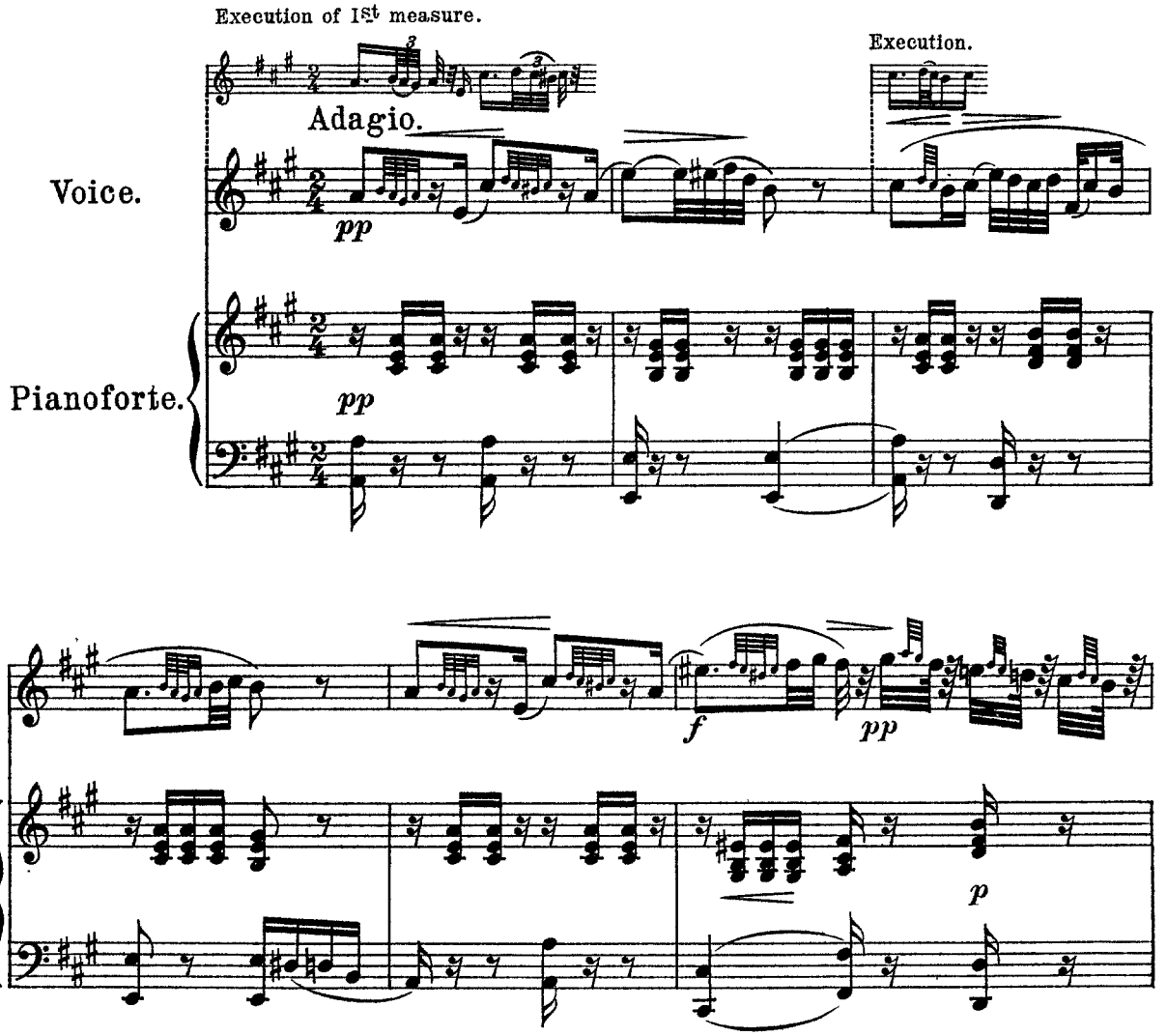

pp
pp
cresc.
cresc.
dim.
cresc.
f
f
f
f

FIFTH LESSON

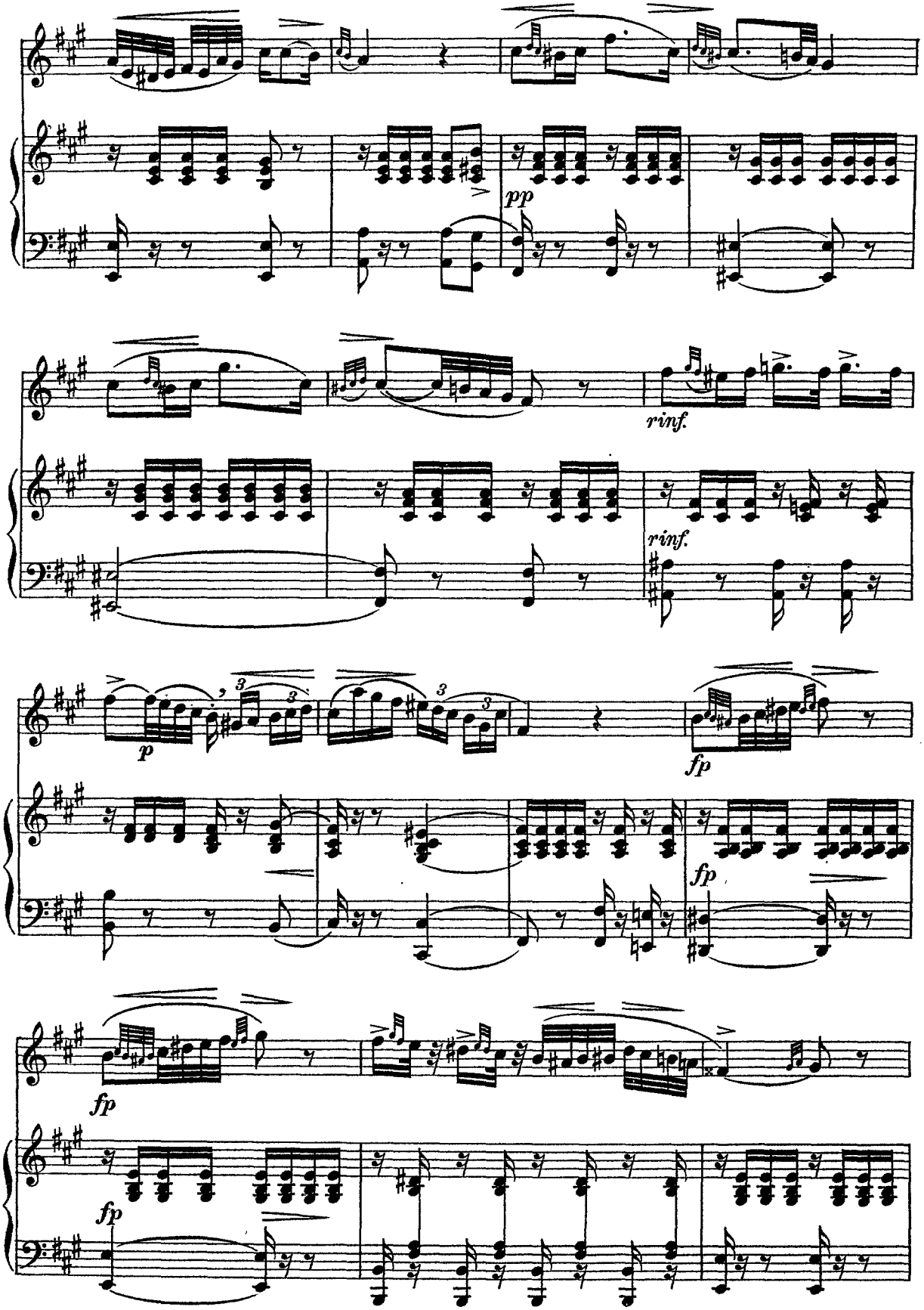
The Gruppetto and the Mordent

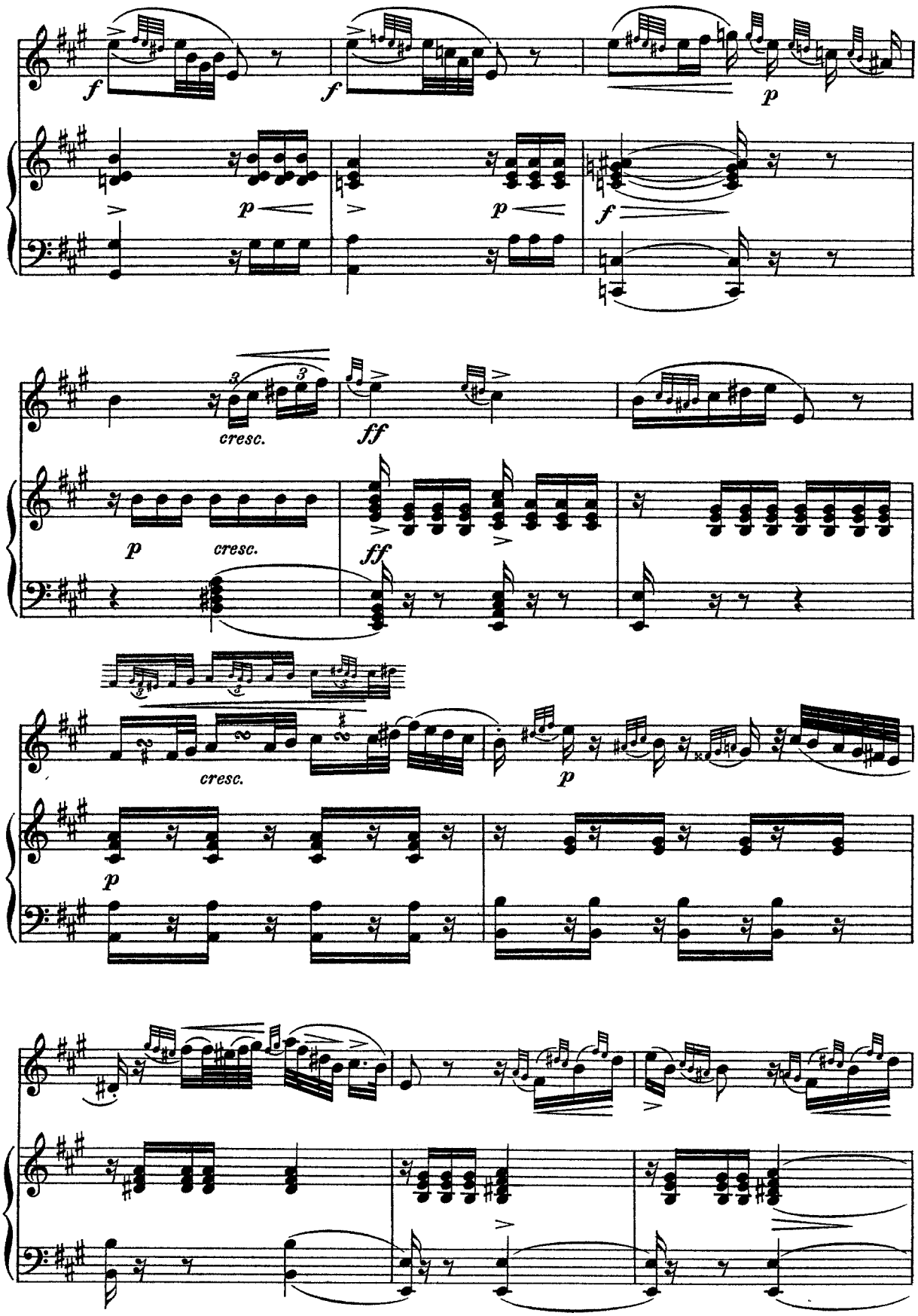
With elegant and light execution

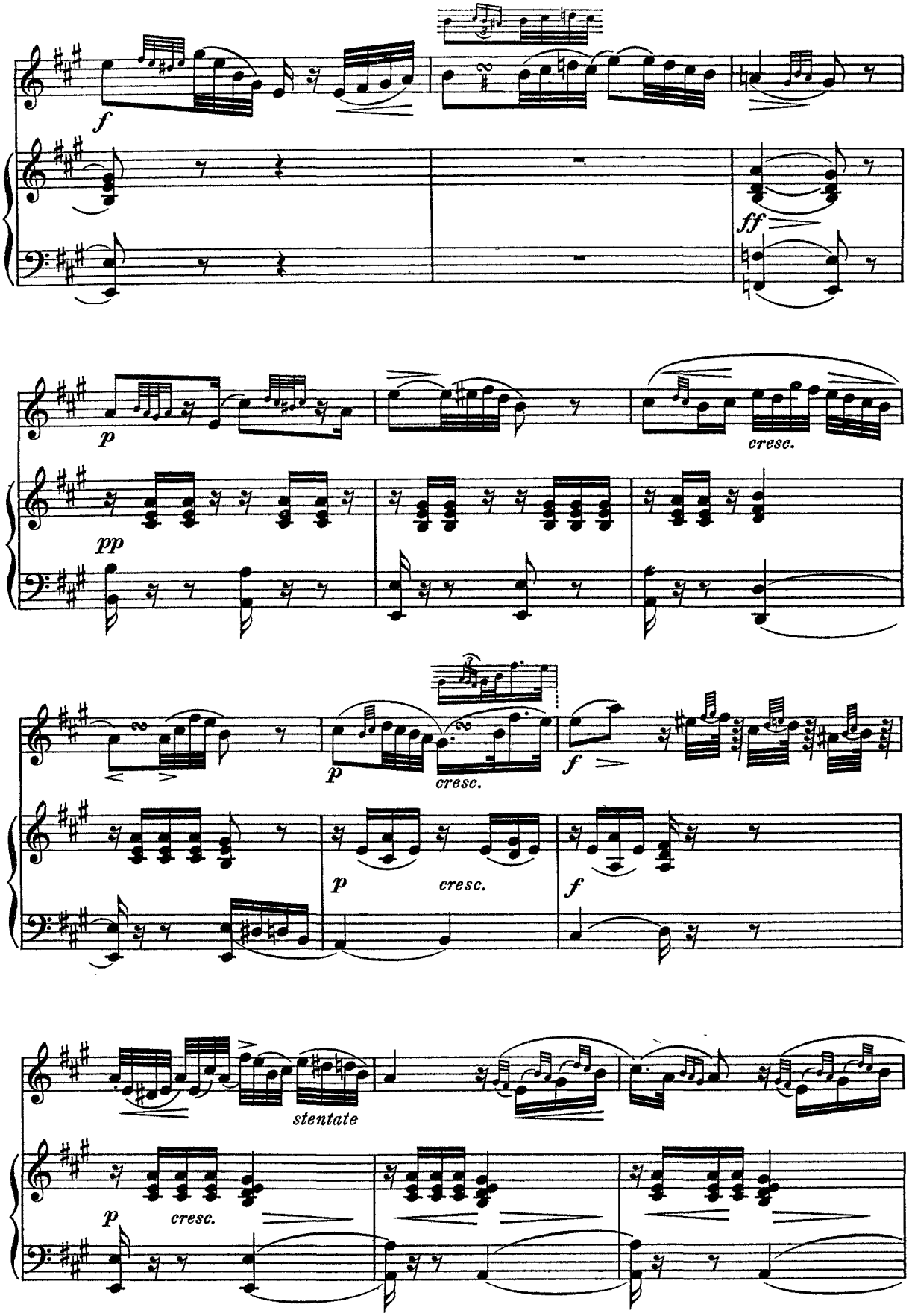
The *gruppetto* is a group of either three or four notes. The time for its execution must be taken from the value of the note preceding it.
The *half-gruppetto* or mordent is a group of two notes used like a *double acciaccatura.*

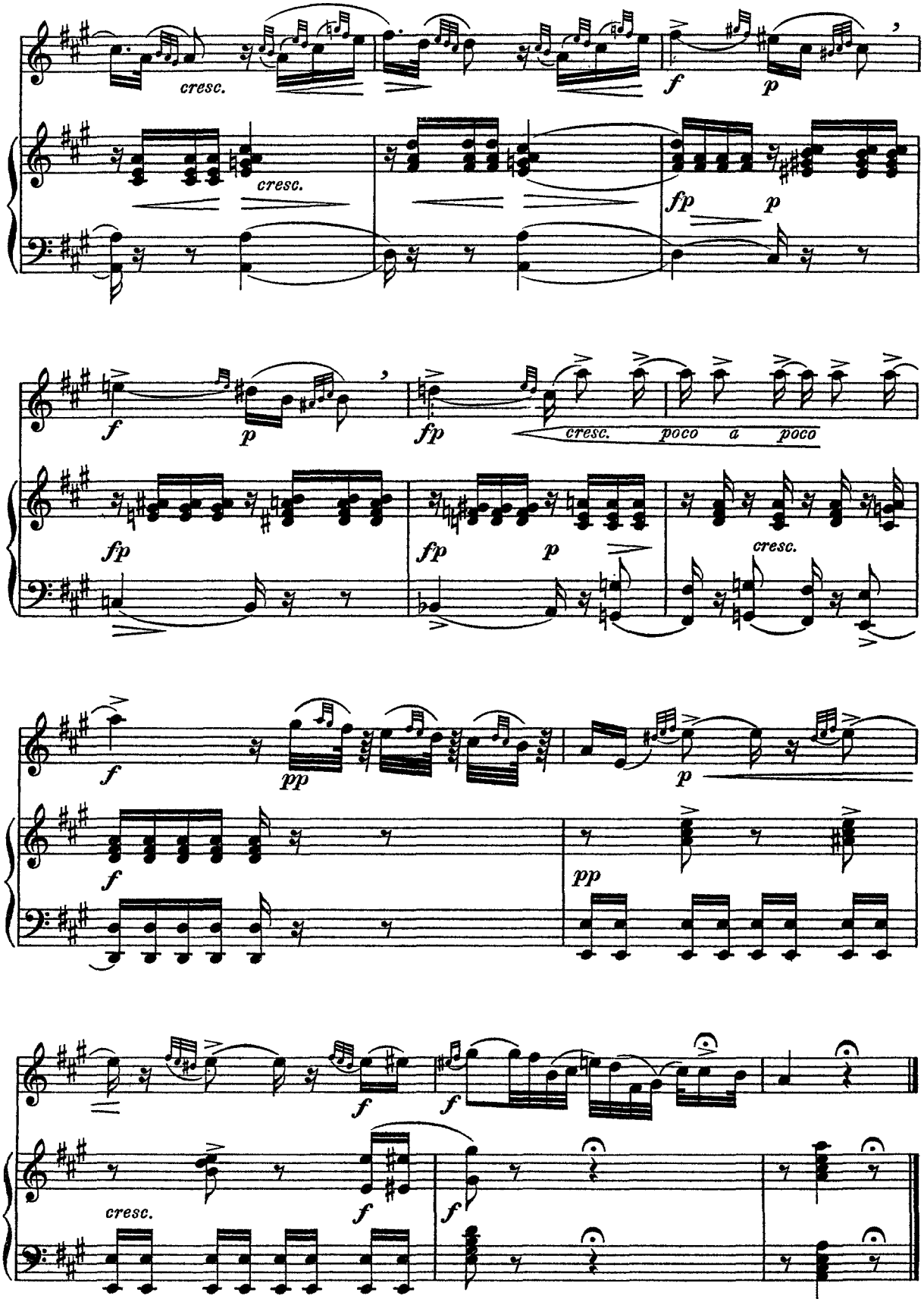


Note. The half-gruppetto emphasizes the note after it. Whether tied to the note after which it stands or to the note following it, the effect is the same. If no note precedes, it remains always the *double acciaccatura.* (See Lesson III.) The three-note gruppetto is crisp and light, but the character of any gruppetto depends upon that of the composition in which it occurs. This is especially true of the four-note gruppetto. It will be noticed that many of the apparently four-note gruppetti in this lesson are to be executed as triplet gruppetti with a short but definite value on the fourth of the group as written.


pp
rinf.
rinf.
p
fp
fp
fp
fp
fp


f
f
p
p
p
f
cresc.
ff
p
cresc.
ff
cresc.
p
p


f
ff
p
pp
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
stentate
p
cresc.

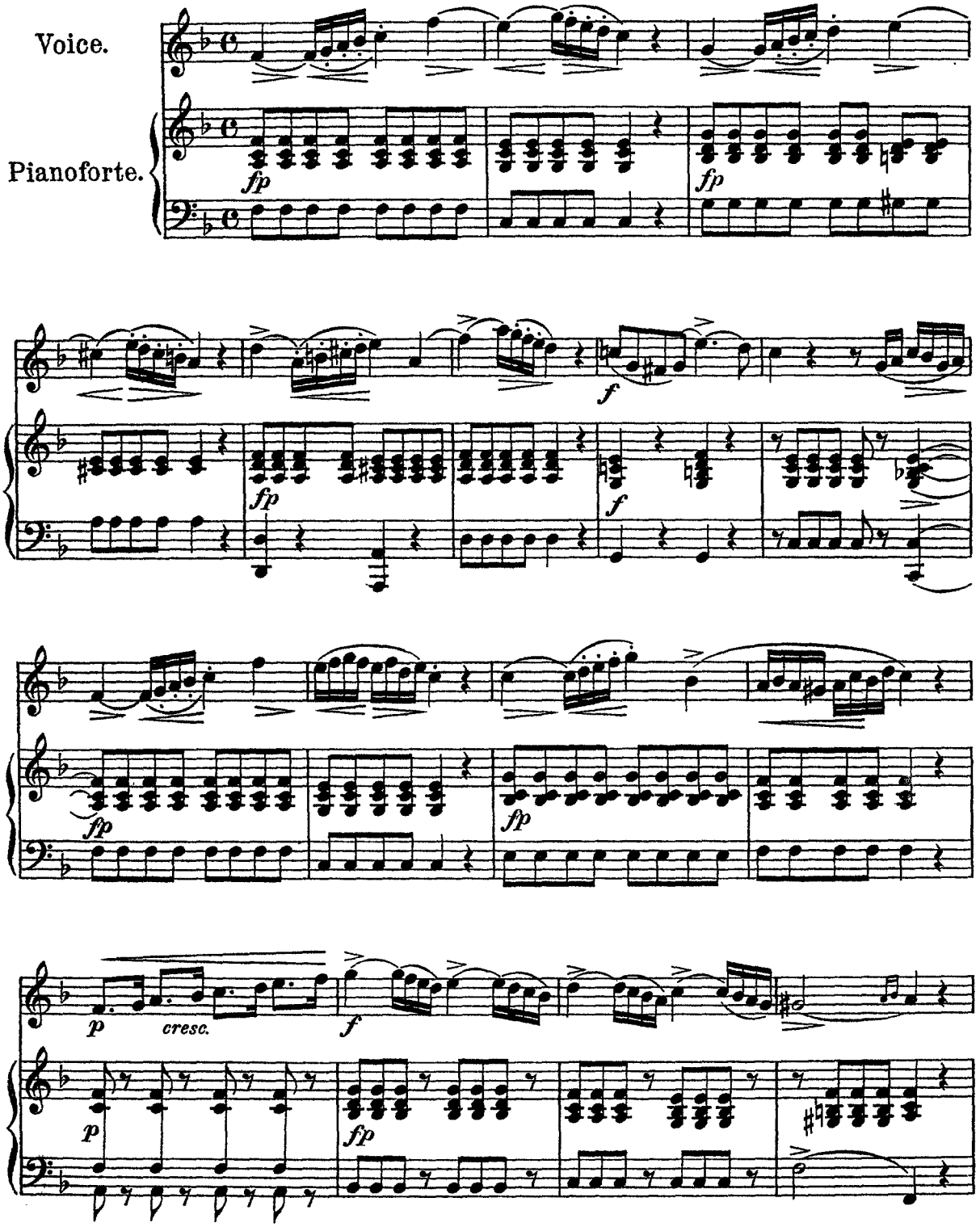

cresc.
cresc.
f
p
fp
p
f
p
fp
cresc.
poco a poco
fp
fp
p
cresc.
f
pp
p
f
pp
f
f
cresc.
f
f

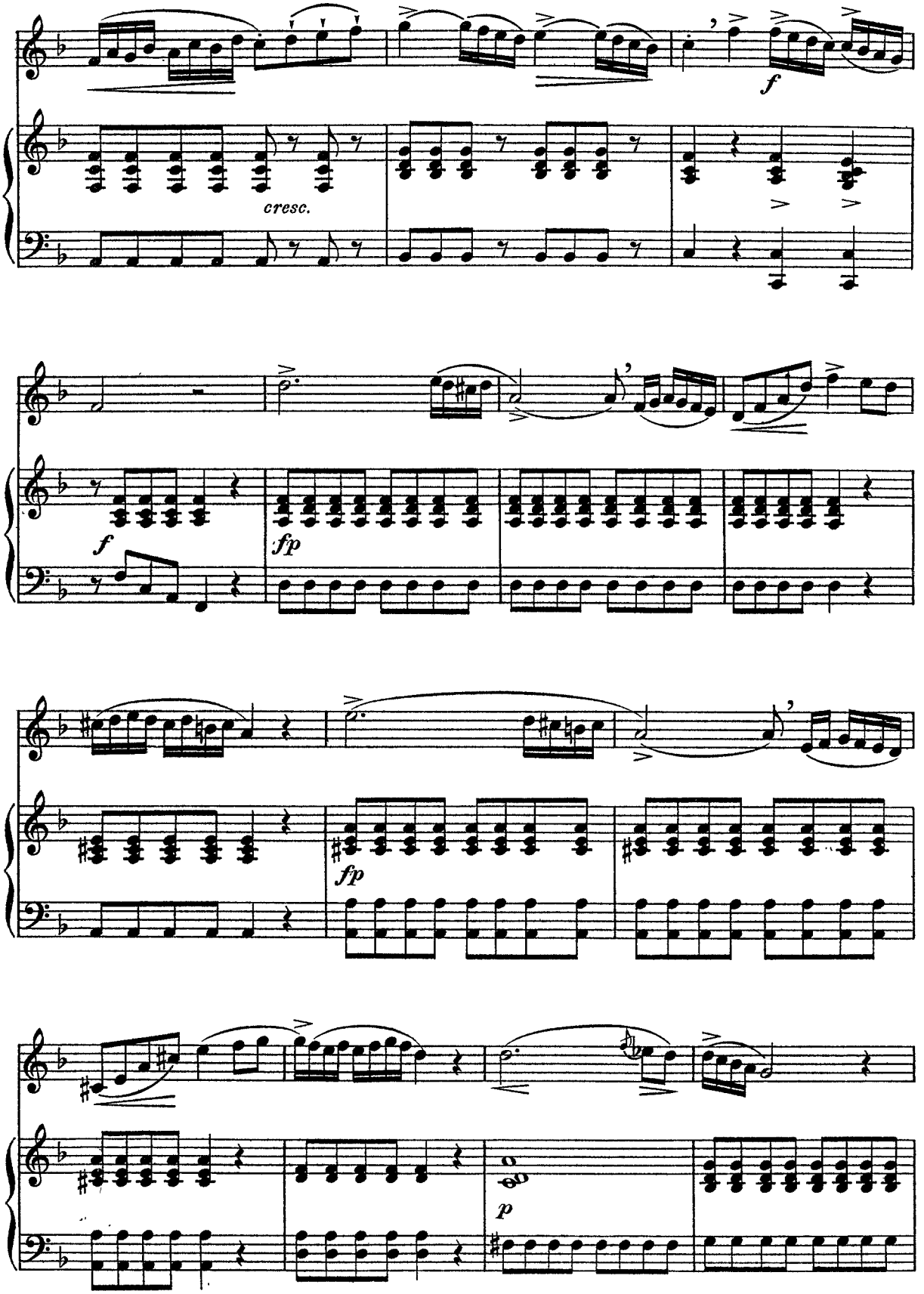
SIXTH LESSON.

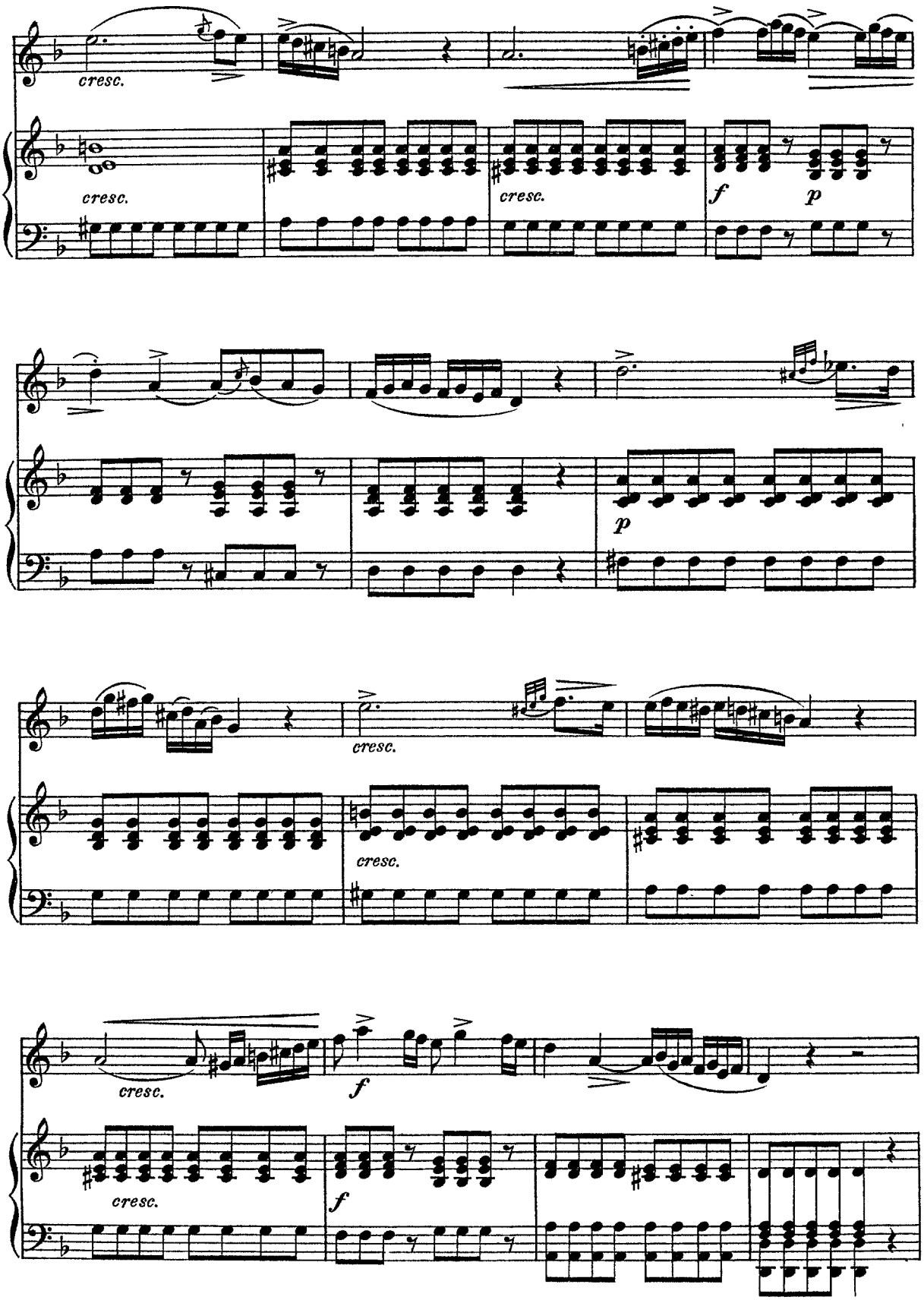
Preparation for the Roulade.

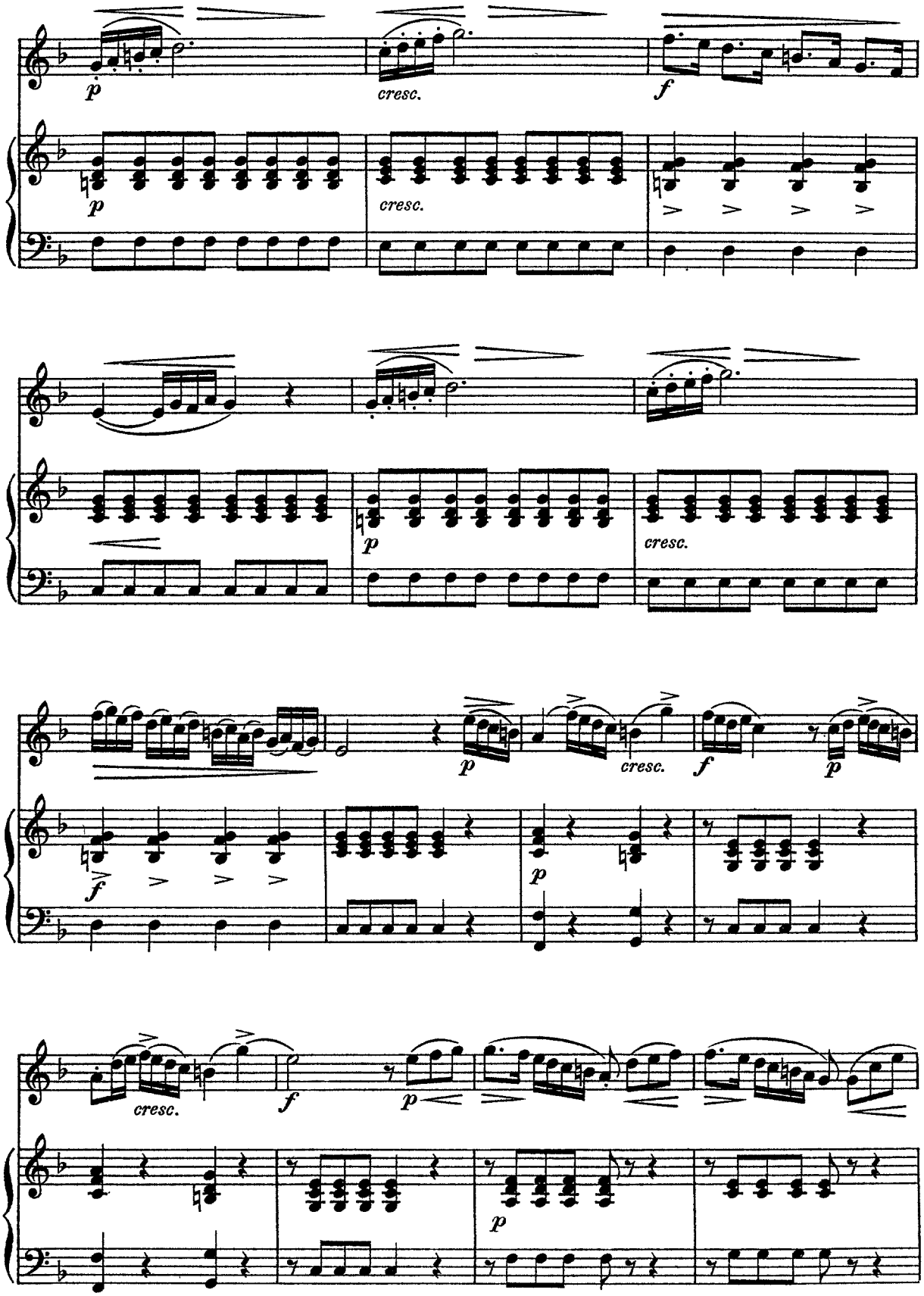
To be executed with vigor and decision

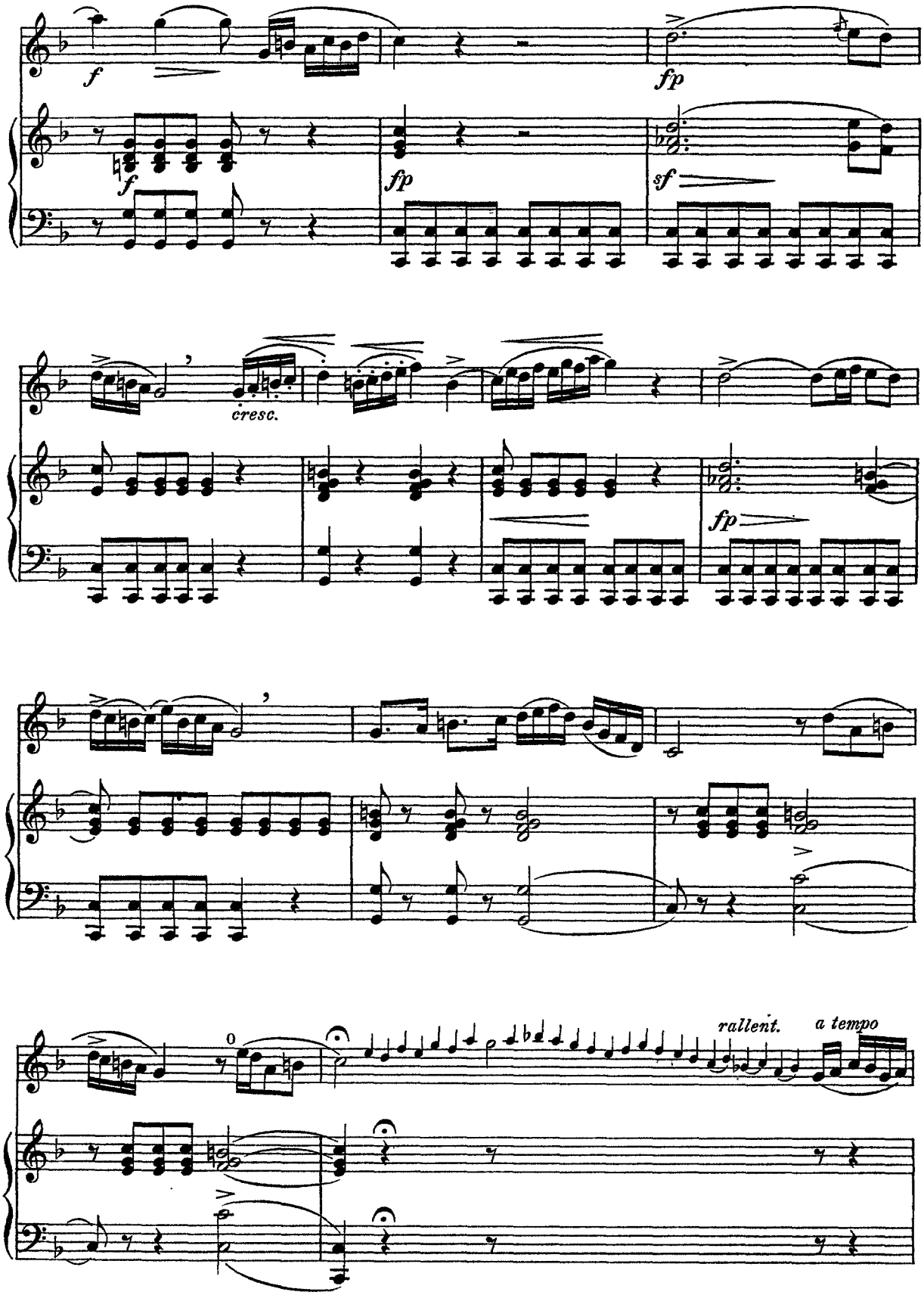
Allegro giusto.

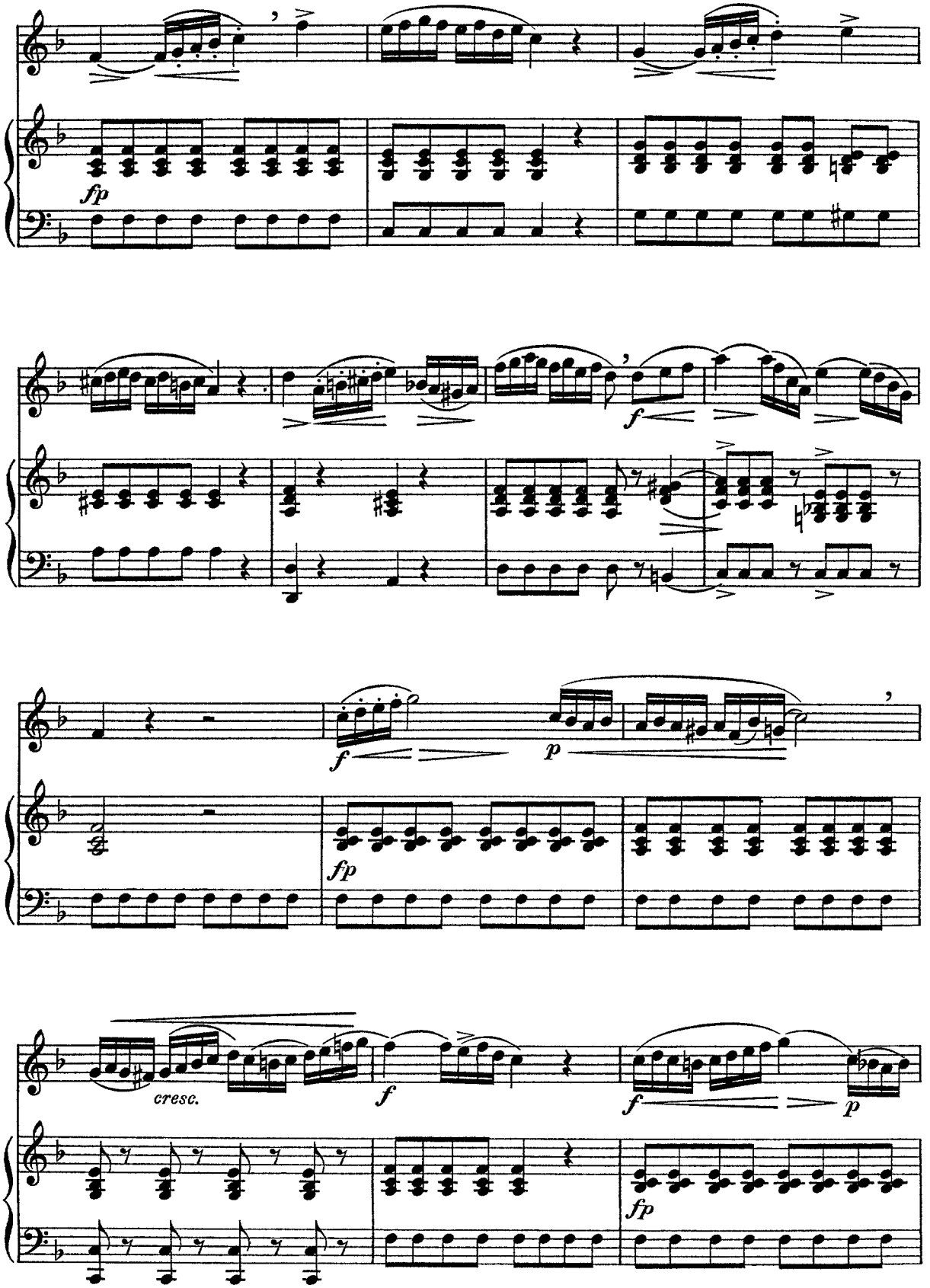


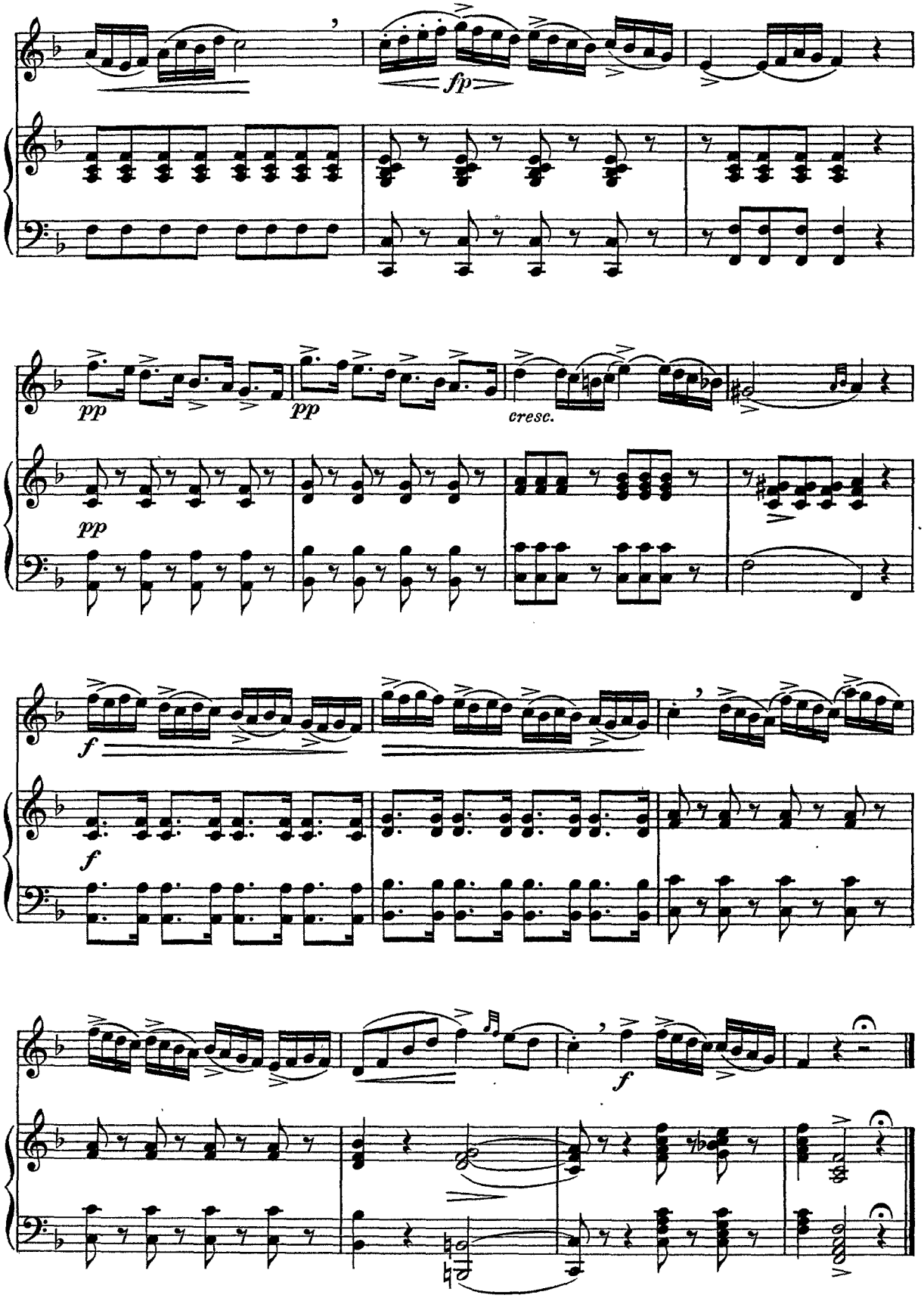

cresc.
f
f
fp
fp
p


cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
f
p
p
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
f


p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
p
p
cresc.
f
p
p


f
fp
f
fp
sf
cresc.
fp
rallent.
a tempo


fp
f
fp
f
p
fp
cresc.
f
f
p
fp

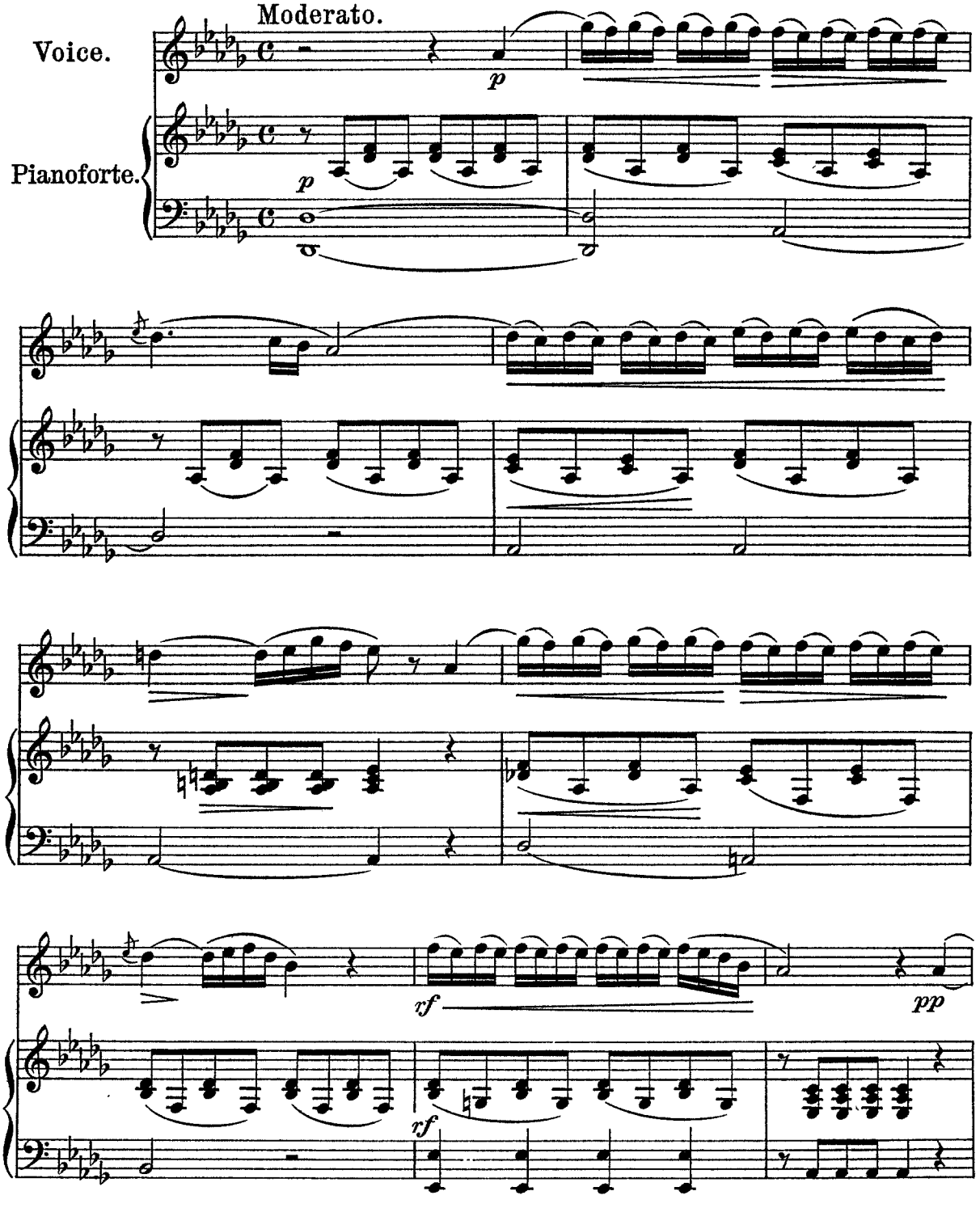

fp
pp
pp
pp
cresc.
f
f
f

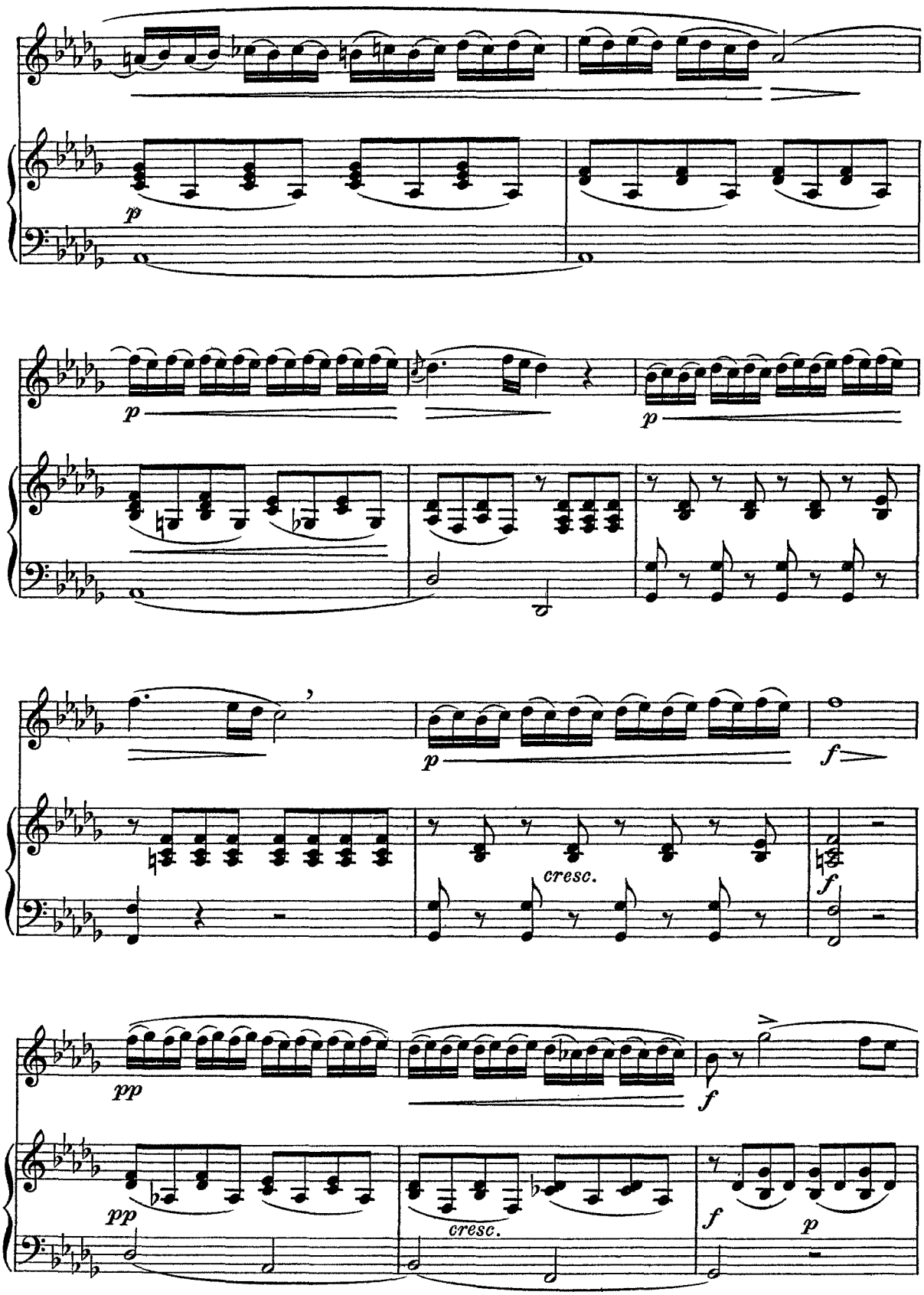
SEVENTH LESSON

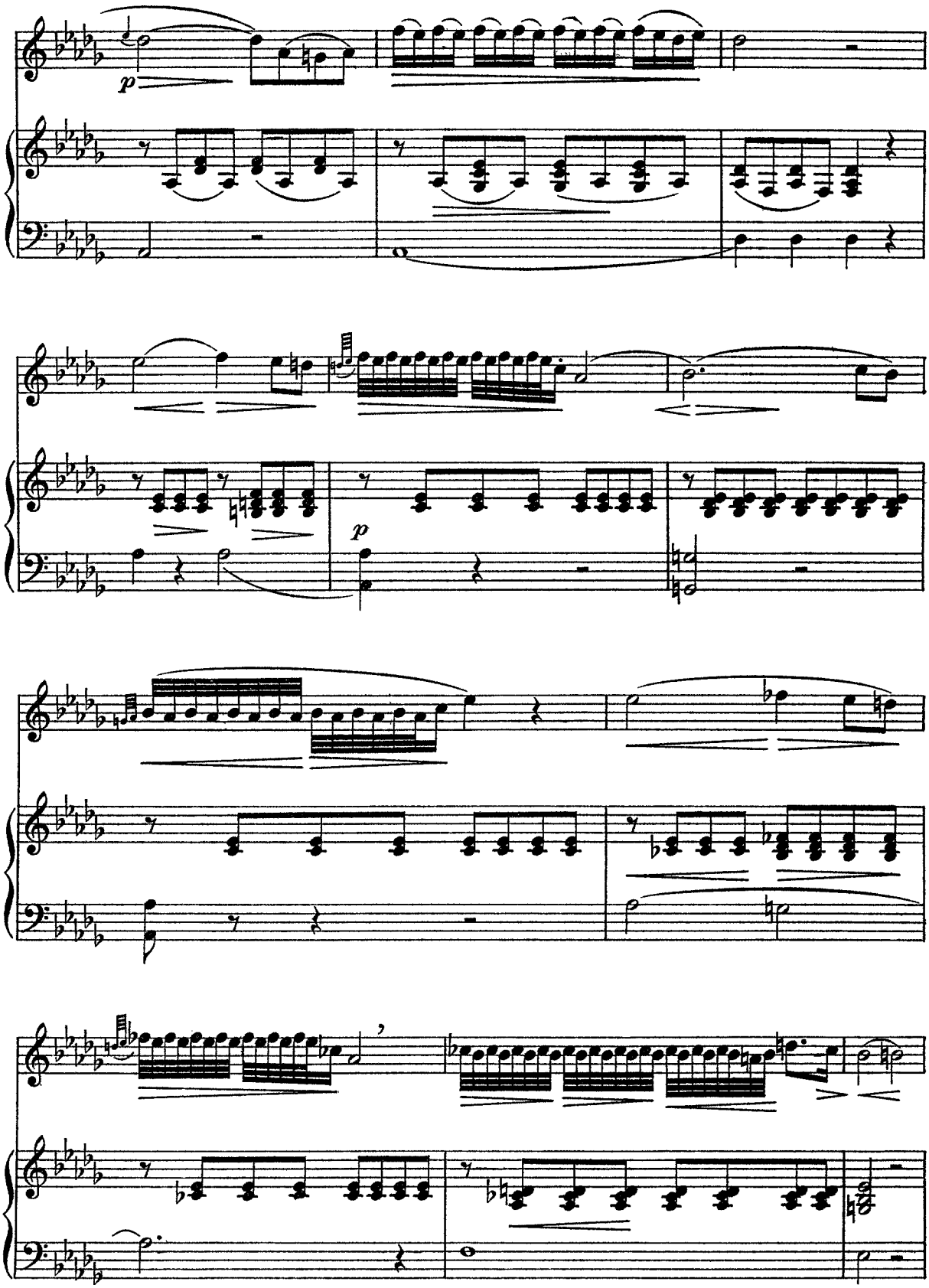
The Trill

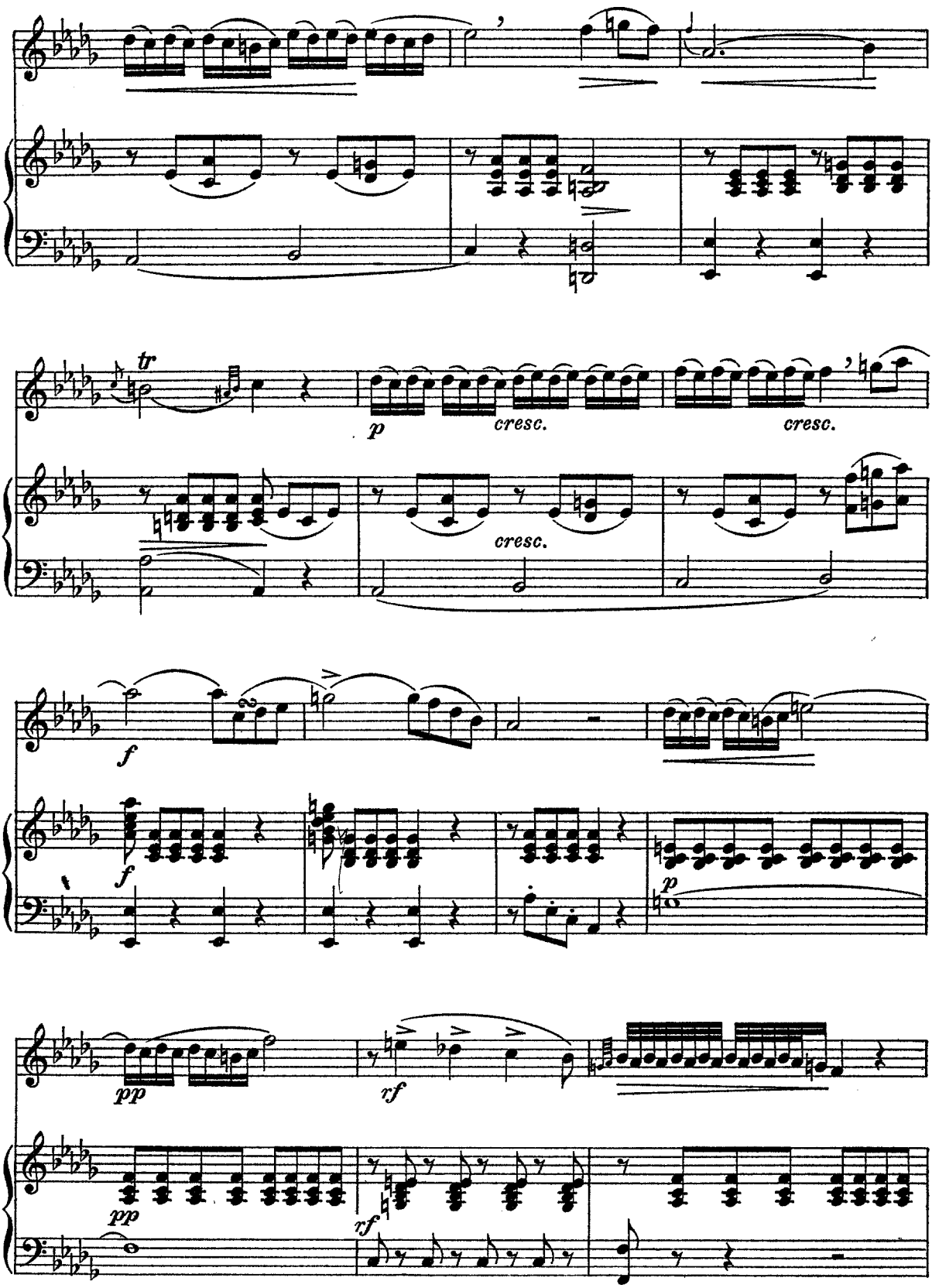
Lightly and gracefully

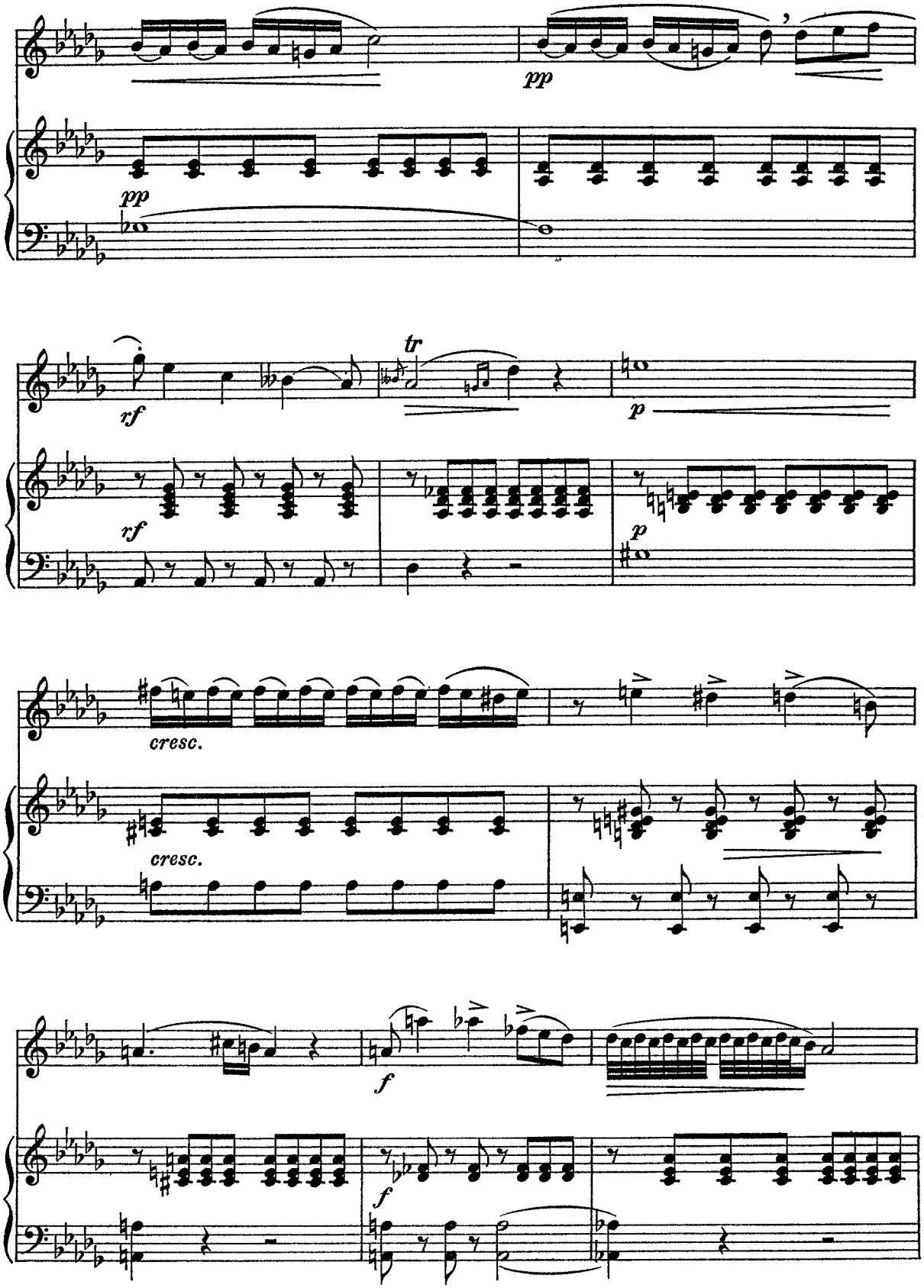
This exercise is to be repeated, gradually accelerating the movement.

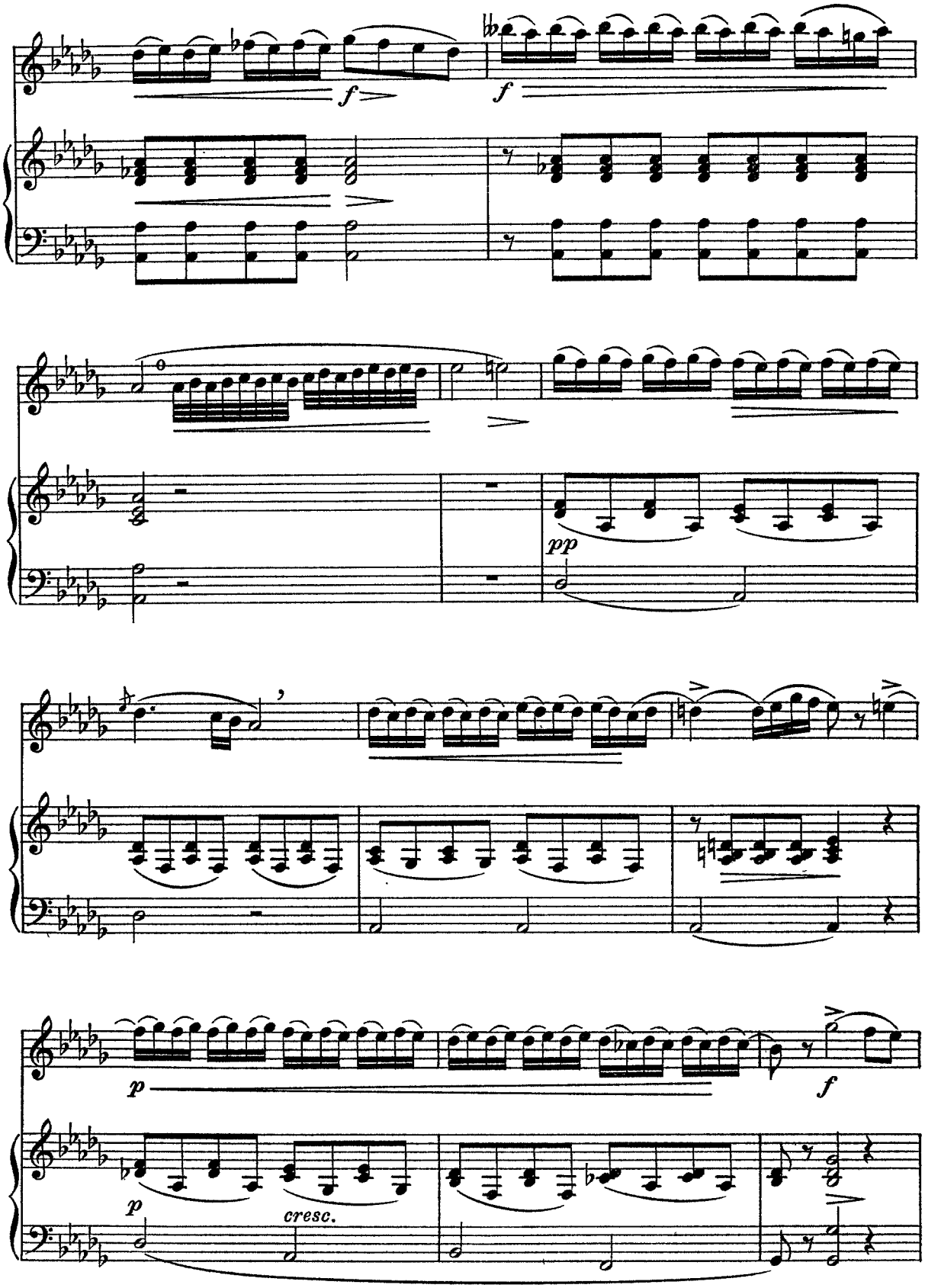


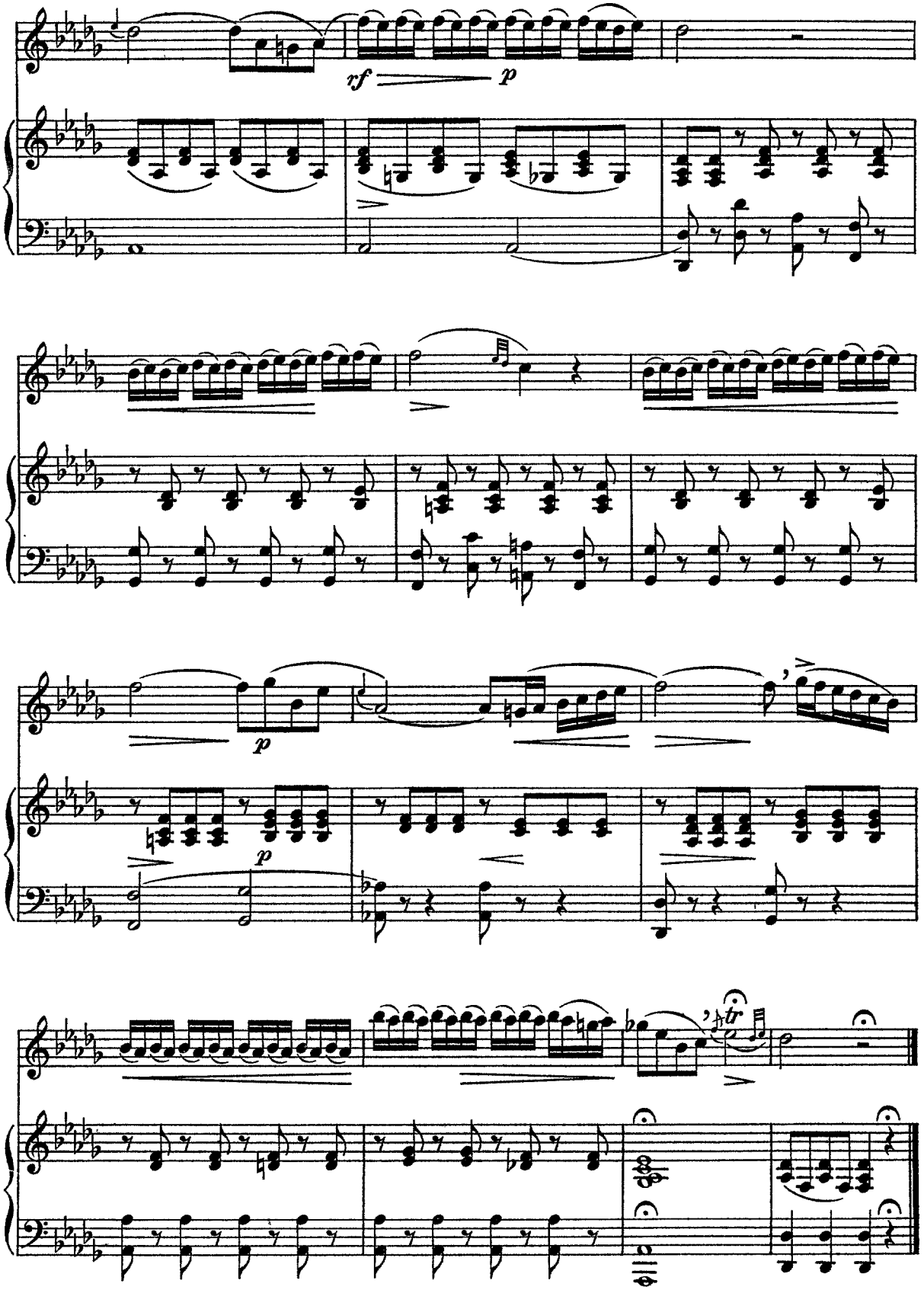

p
p
p
p
f
cresc.
f
pp
f
pp
cresc.
f
p


p
p


tr
p
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
f
f
p
pp
rf
pp
rf


pp
pp
rf
tr
rf
p
p
cresc.
cresc.
f
f

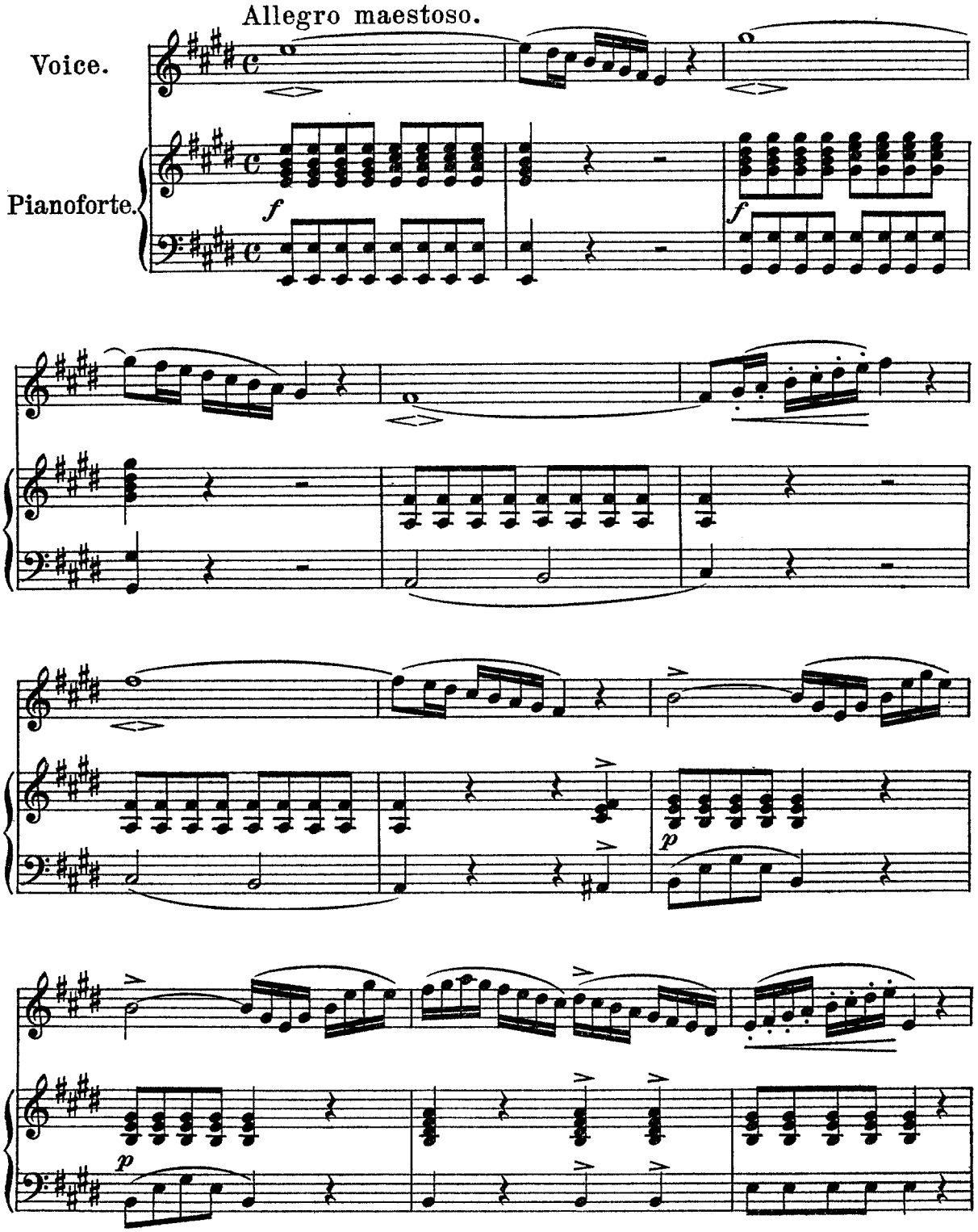

f
f
pp
p
cresc.
f

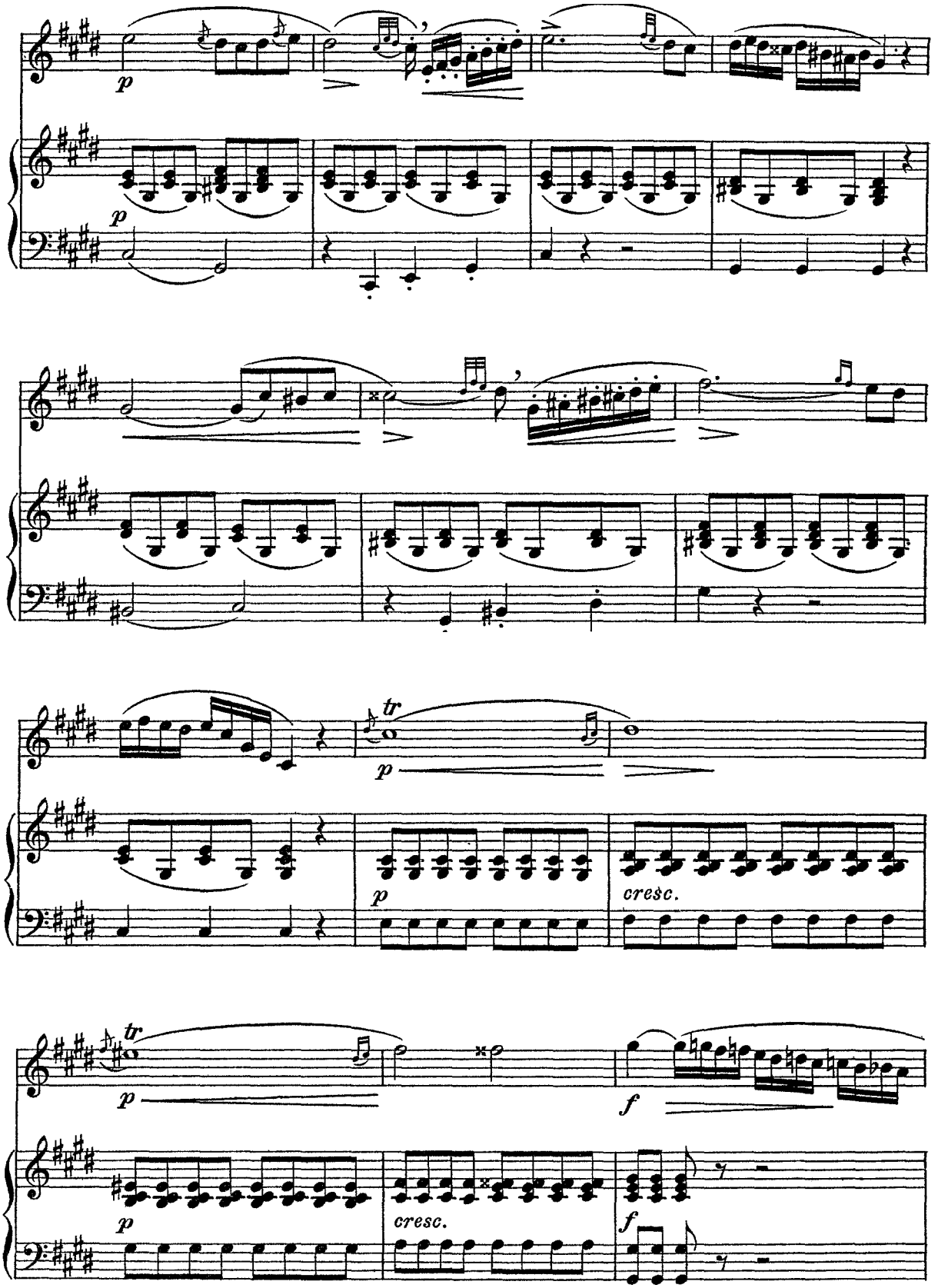

rf
p
p
p
tr

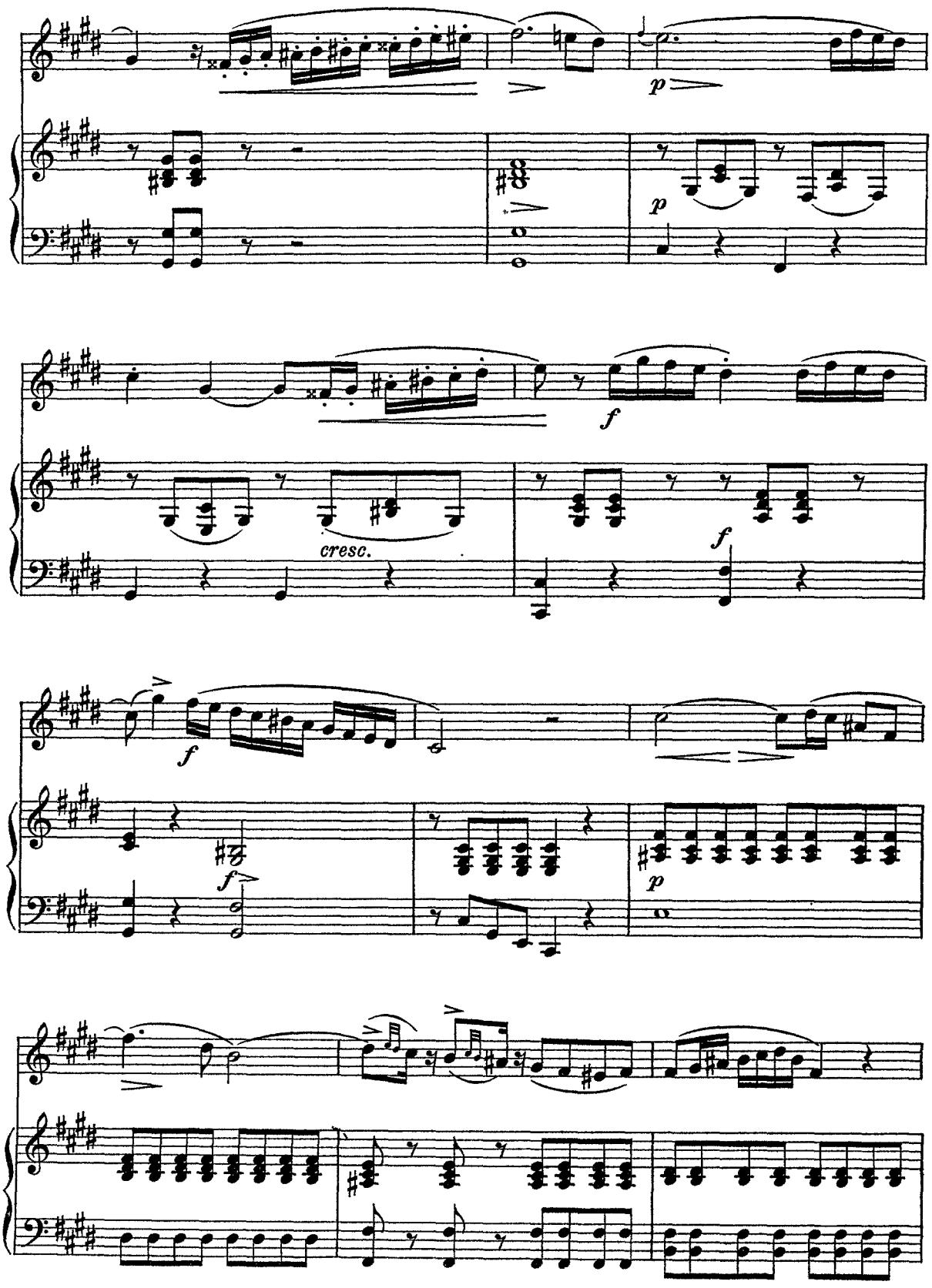
EIGHTH LESSON

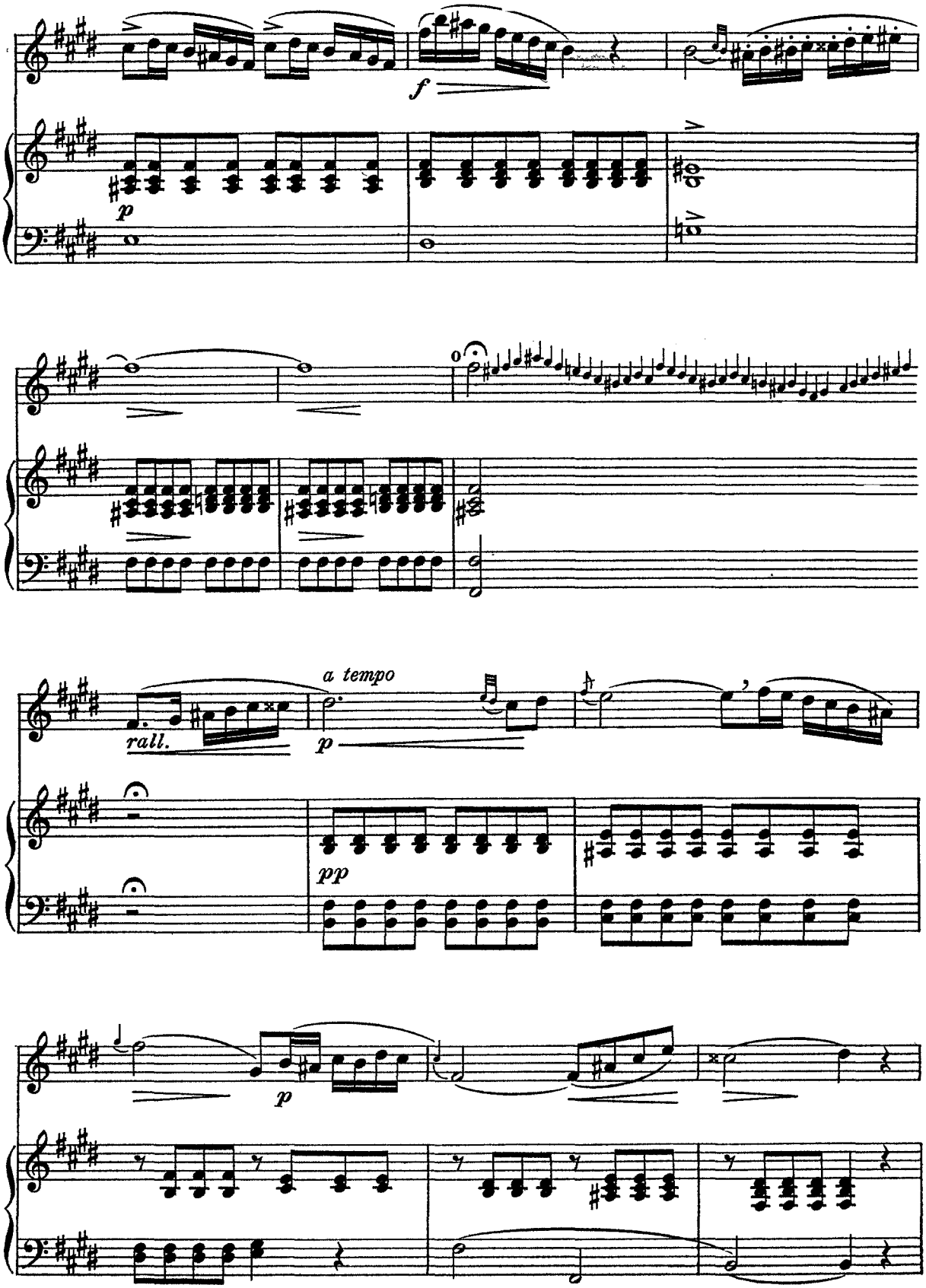
Runs, or Roulades.

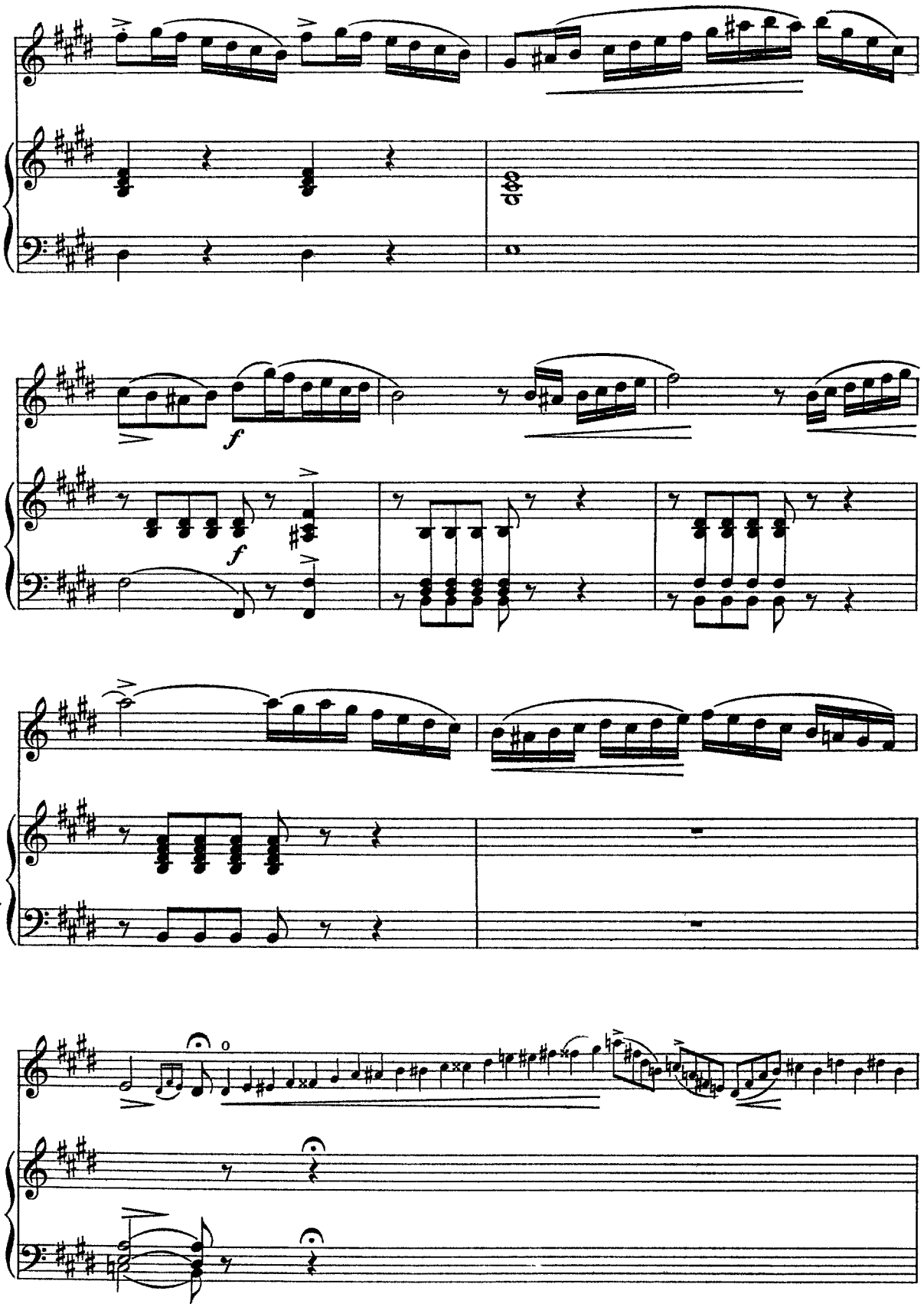
Forte and well accented.

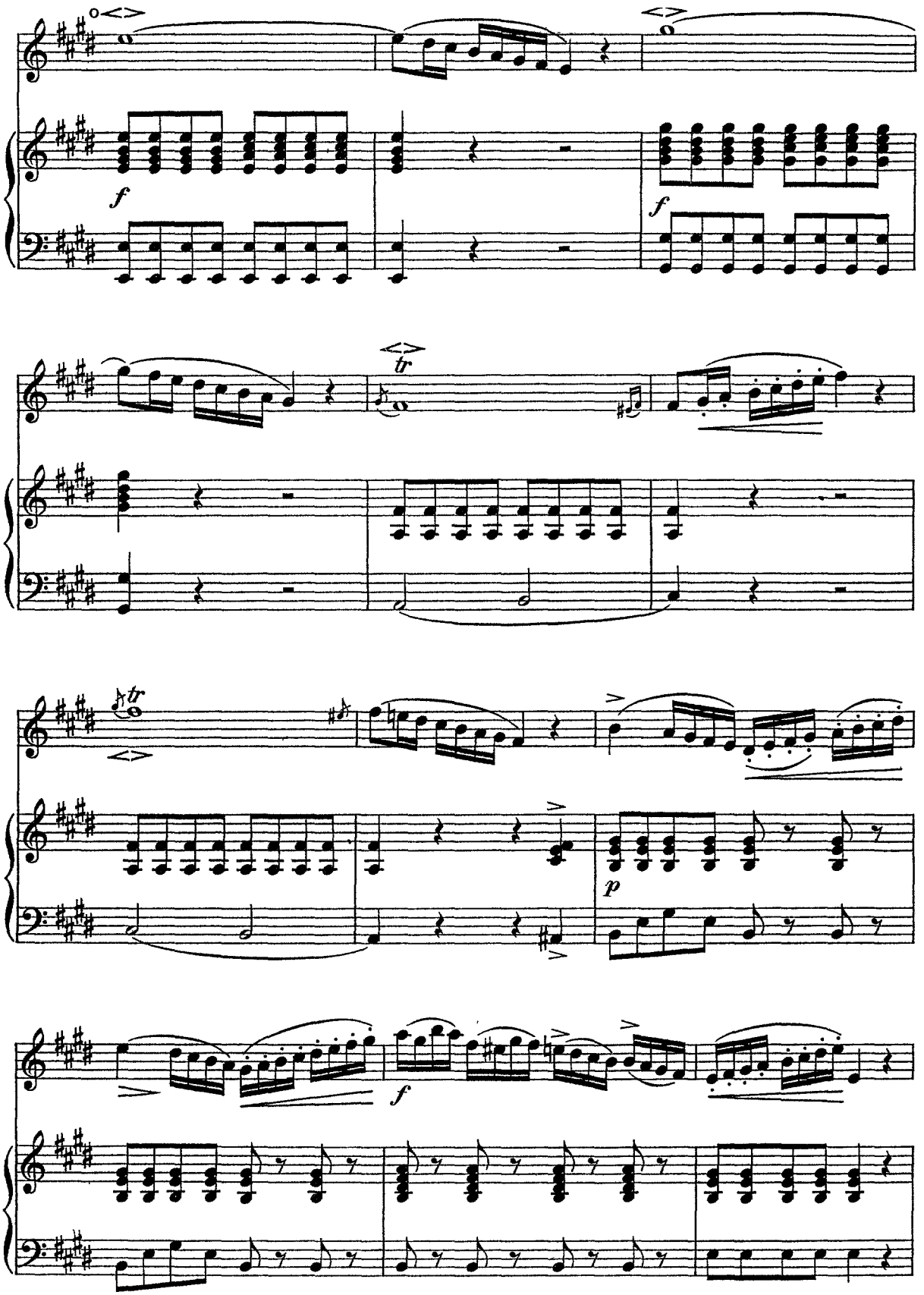


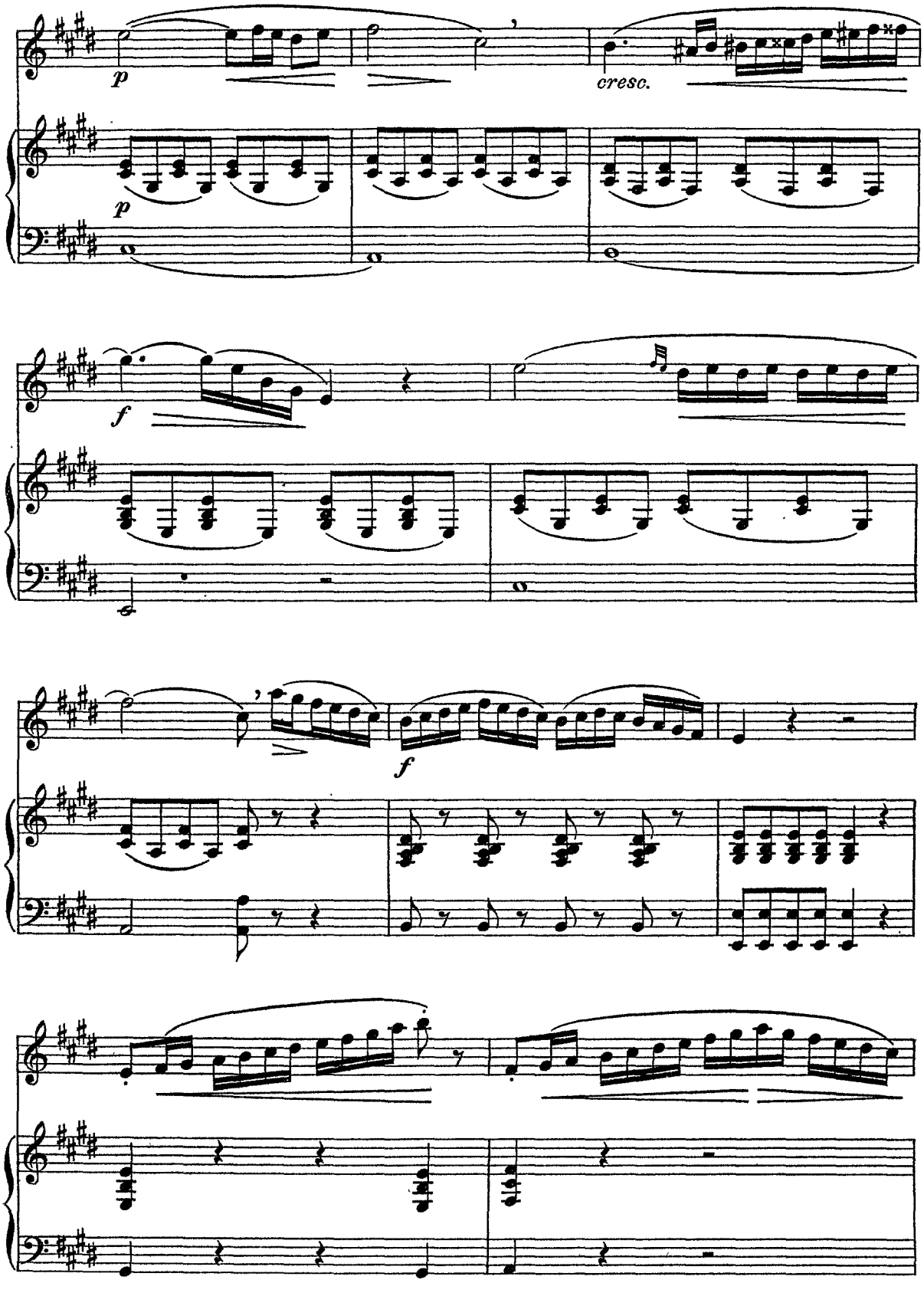

p
p
tr
p
p
cresc.
tr
p
f
p
cresc.
f

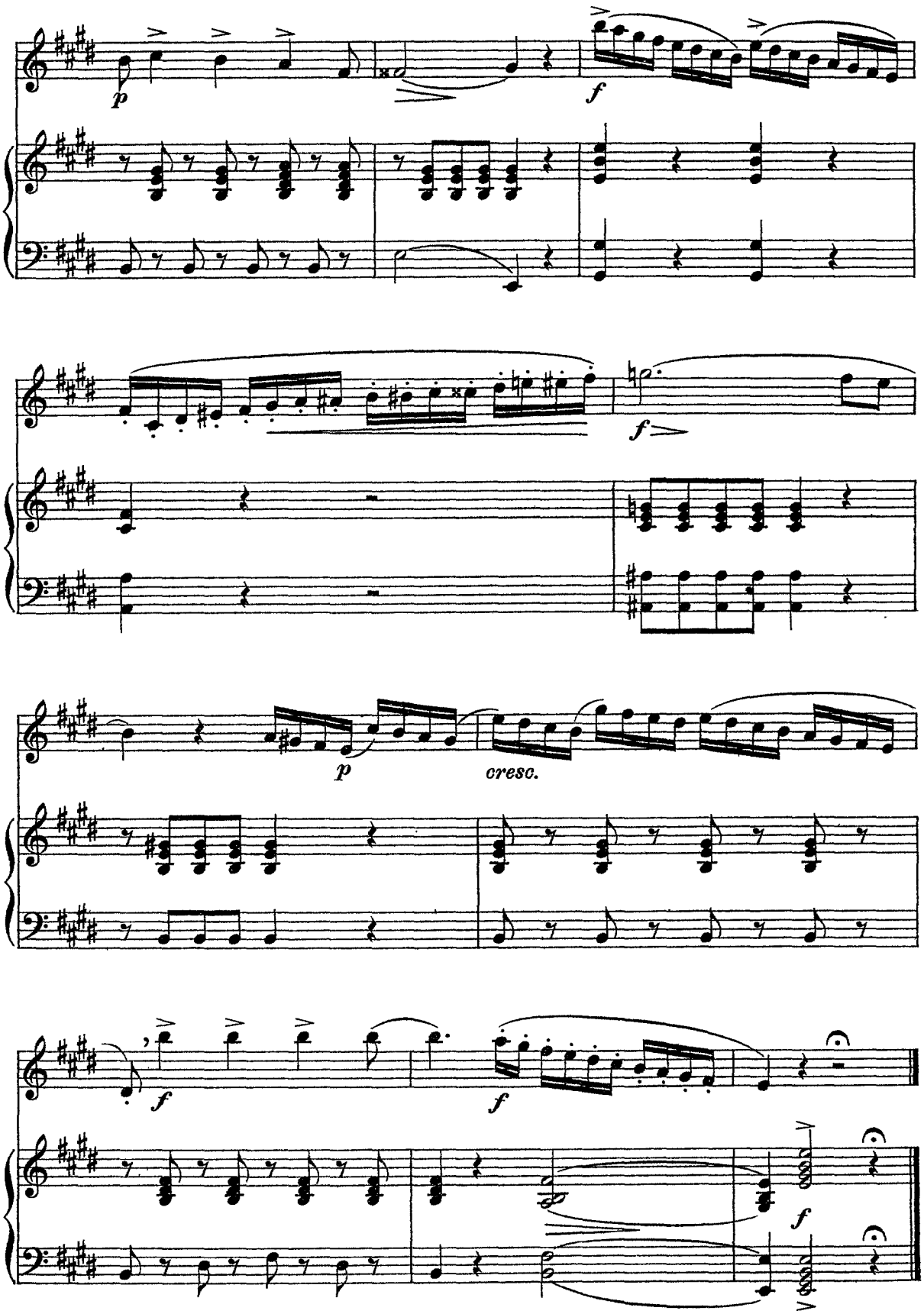

p
cresc.
f
f
f
p


f
p
rall.
a tempo
p
pp
p


f
f


f
f
tr
tr
p
f


p
cresc.
p
f
f


p
f
f
p
cresc.
f
f
f

NINTH LESSON.

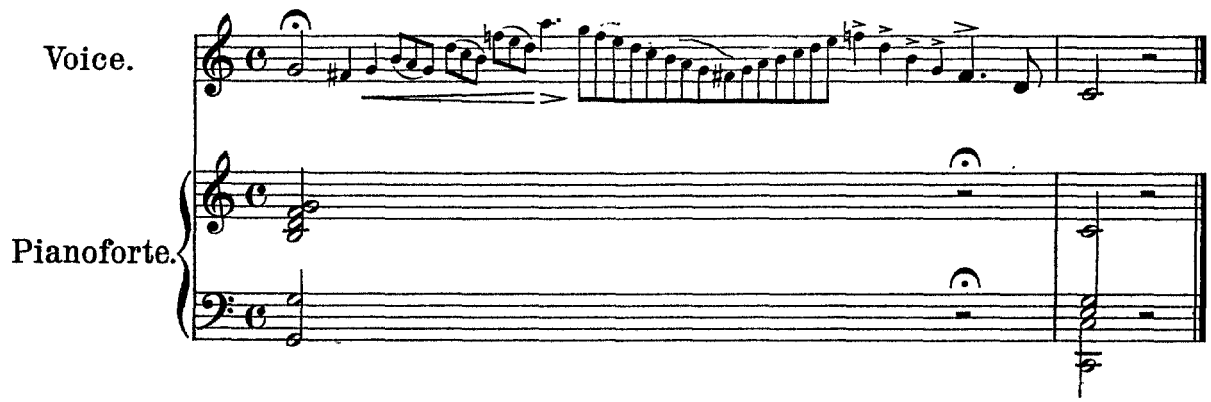
Cadenza and Closing Cadence.

The cadenza is susceptible of a great variety of interpretation, depending entirely upon the ability and good taste of the executant. It is, therefore, necessary to warn against its misuse.

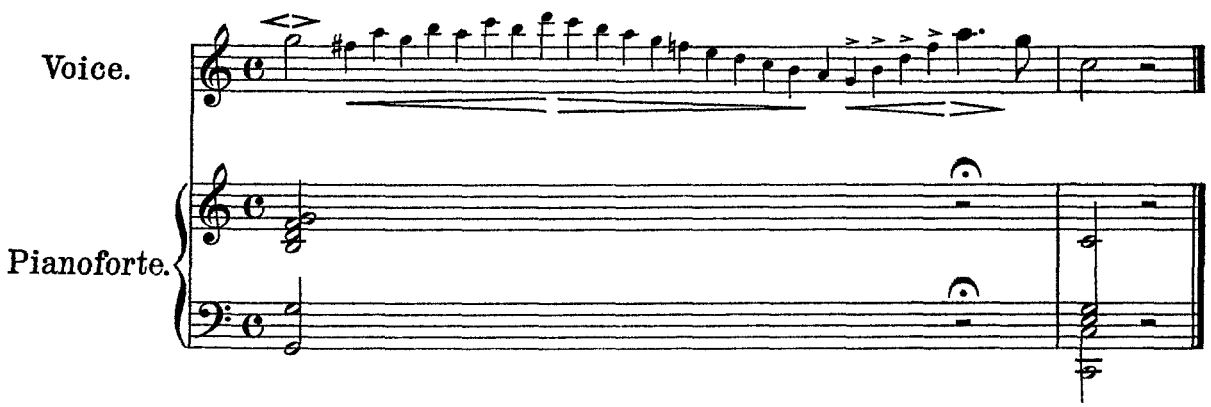
Embellishments introduced not only in the cadenza but also in other parts of a piece must never conflict with the general character of the composition. It would be badly out of place to make a brilliant display of embellishments in a composition characterized by a high degree of passion, or in a composition expressive of tender melancholy. In such examples it is better to employ but very few interpolations, and these always in sympathy with the character of the piece. It is also very important that the singer should economize the breath as much as possible, in order that the close of the cadenza may be delivered with all necessary firmness and strength. A weak ending destroys the effect of the cadenza, and thereby compromises the artistic perfection of the entire piece.

The pupil will have already encountered various examples of the cadenza in the course of these lessons, but others are given here to make clearer still the manner of its treatment.

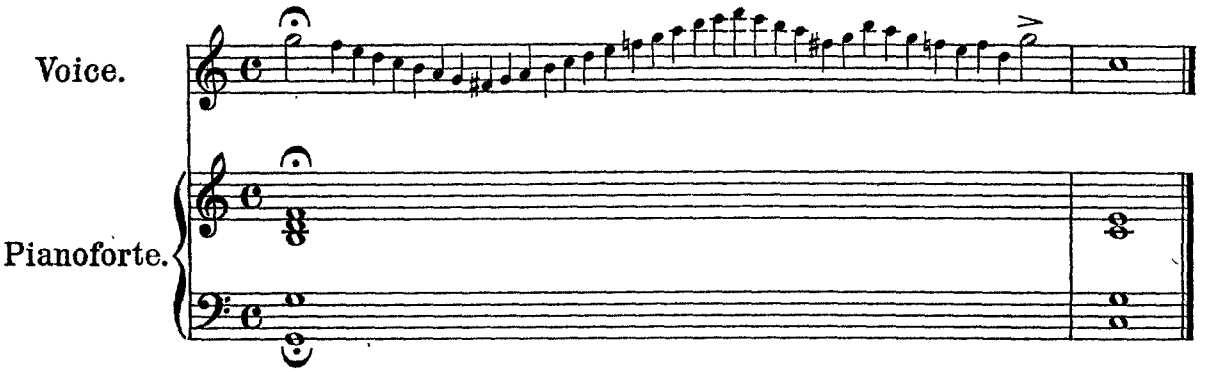
To be ended with force.



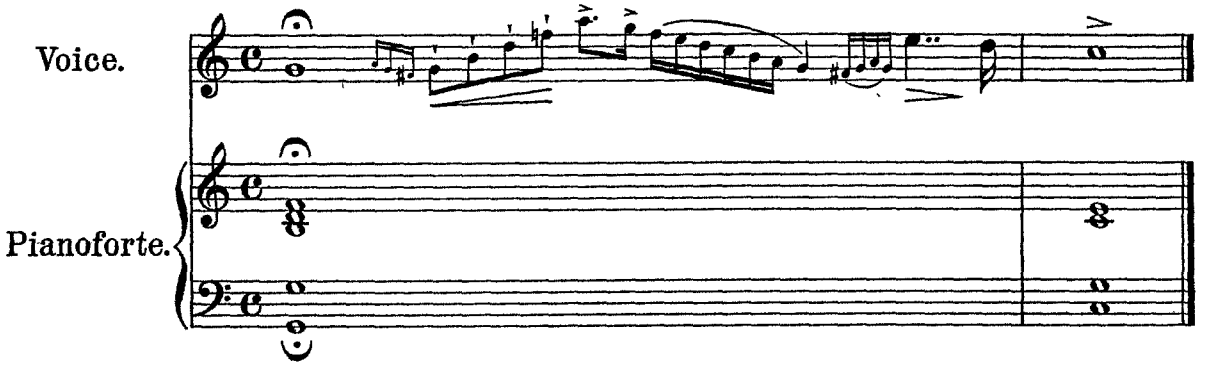
The same, ending above.



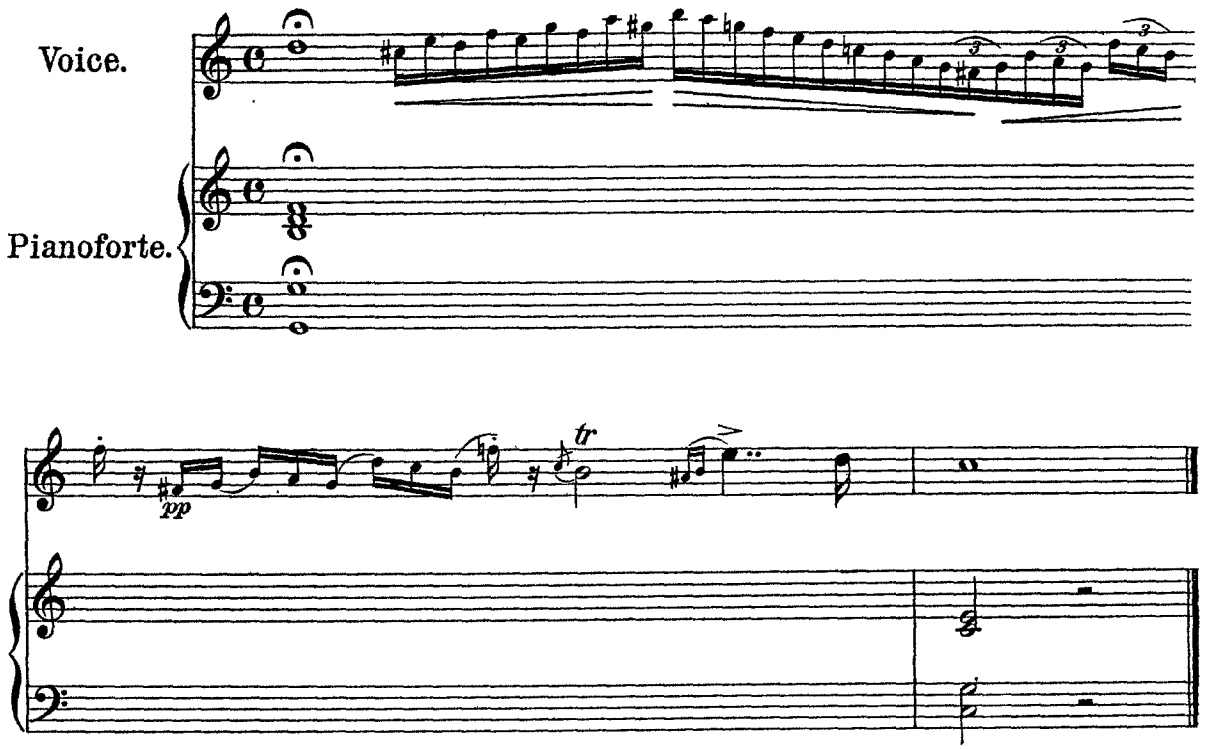
Another style, for graceful ending.



With force. Another style.

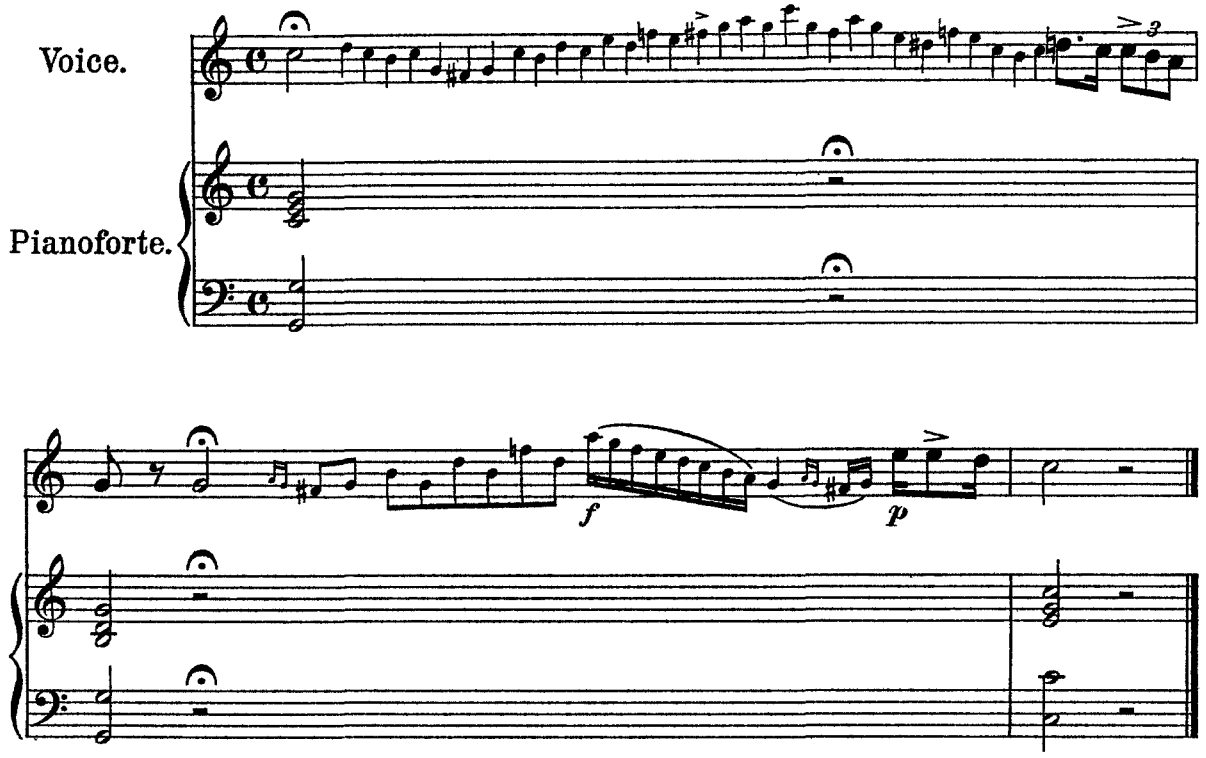


The same, to finish with grace and lightness.

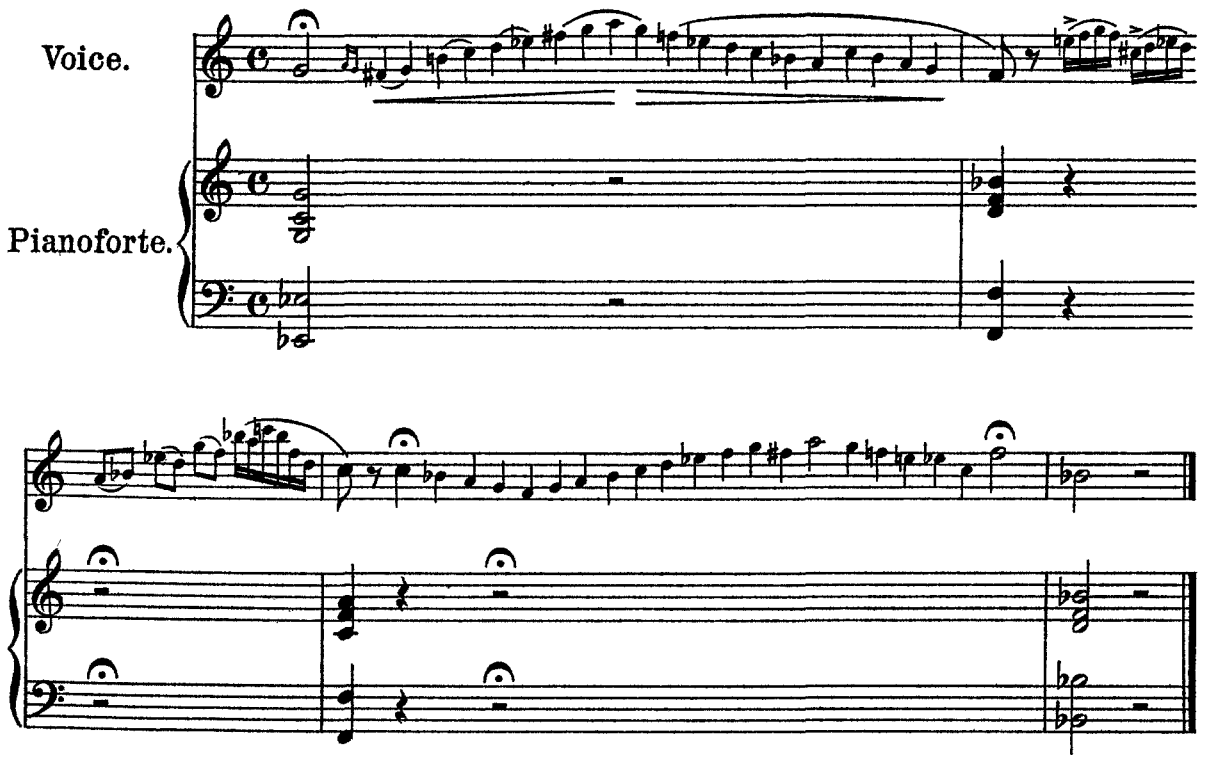


Double cadenza.

Gracefully.



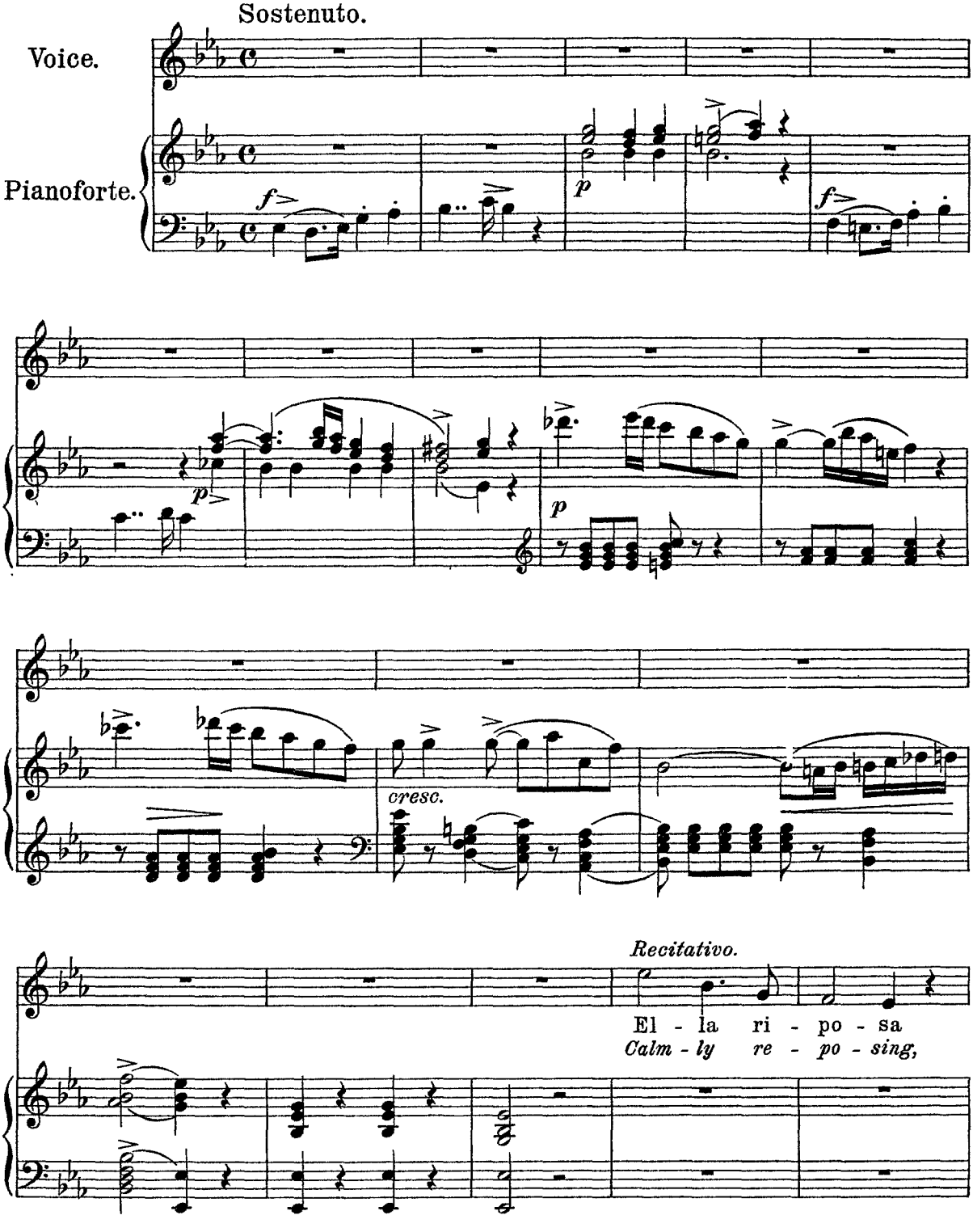
Triple cadenza of the same kind.

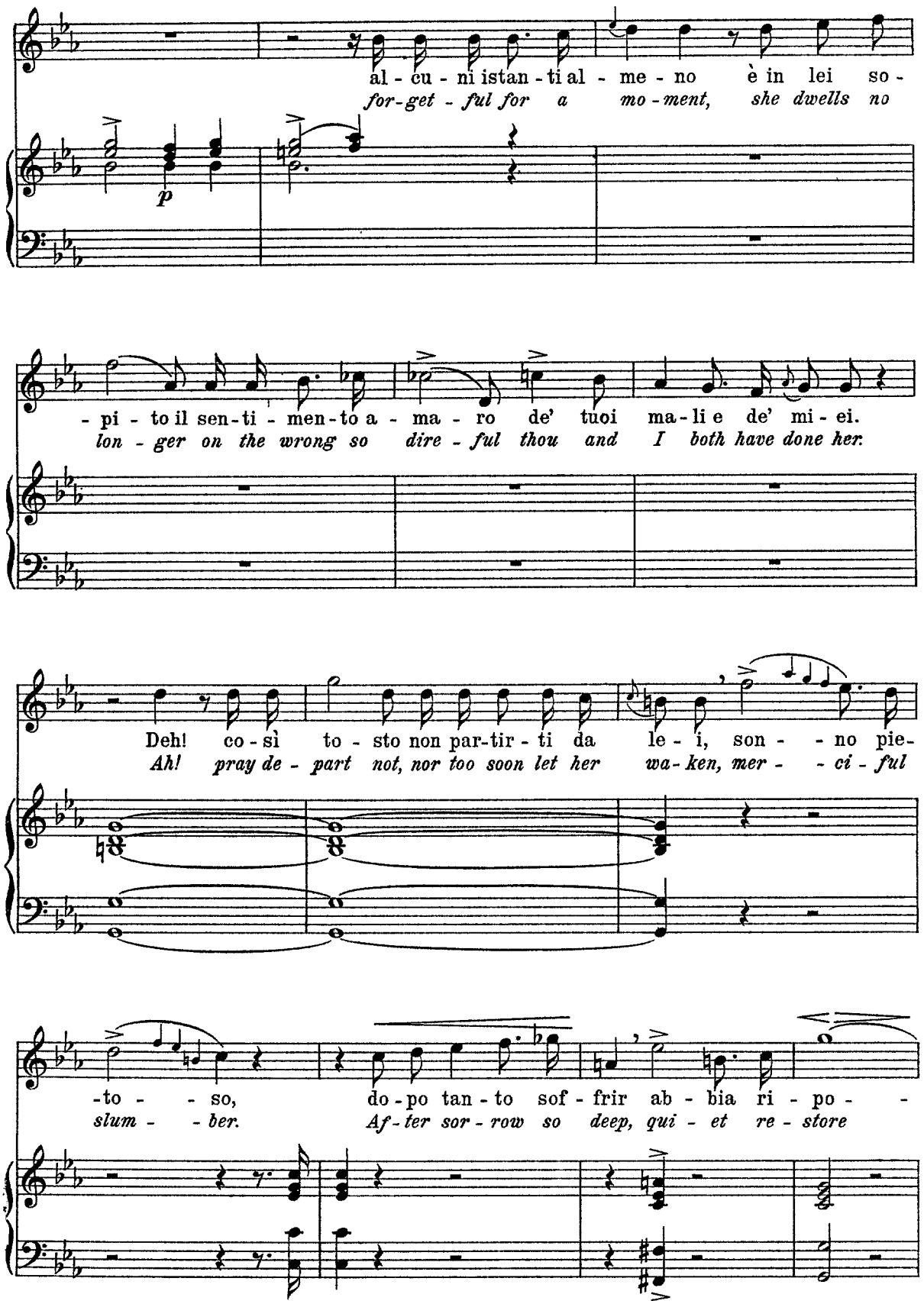


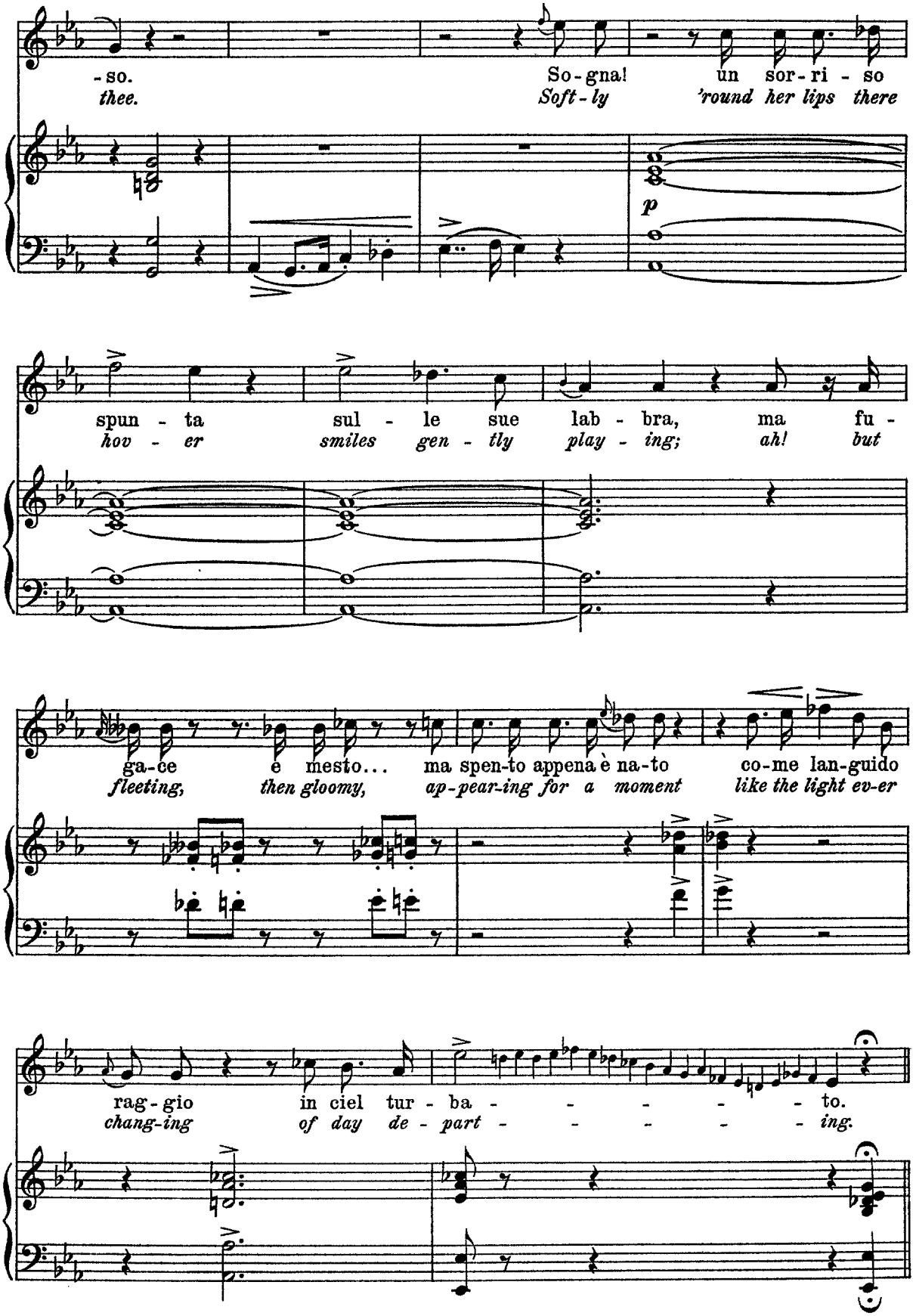
TENTH LESSON.

Recitative.

Broad and well accented.



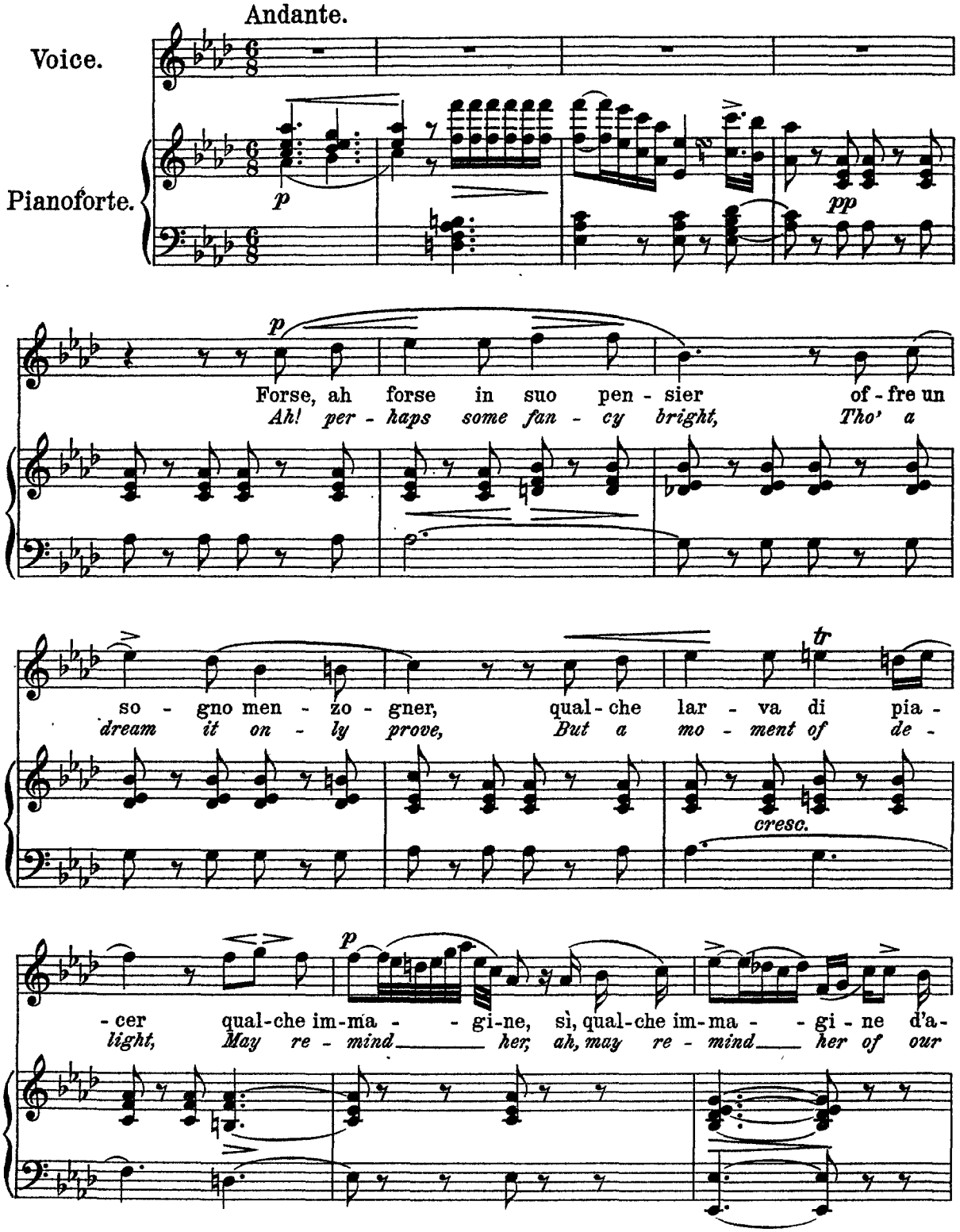

al - cu - ni istan - ti al - me - no è in lei so -
for-get - ful for a mo-ment, she dwells no
p
- pi - to il sen-ti - men-to a - ma - ro de' tuoi ma-li e de' mi - ei.
lon - ger on the wrong so dire - ful thou and I both have done her.
Deh! co - sì to - sto non par-tir - ti da le - i, son - - no pie-
Ah! pray de - part not, nor too soon let her wa-ken, mer - - ci - ful
-to - - so, do-po tan - to sof - frir ab - bia ri - po - -
slum - - ber. Af-ter sor - row so deep, qui - et re - store

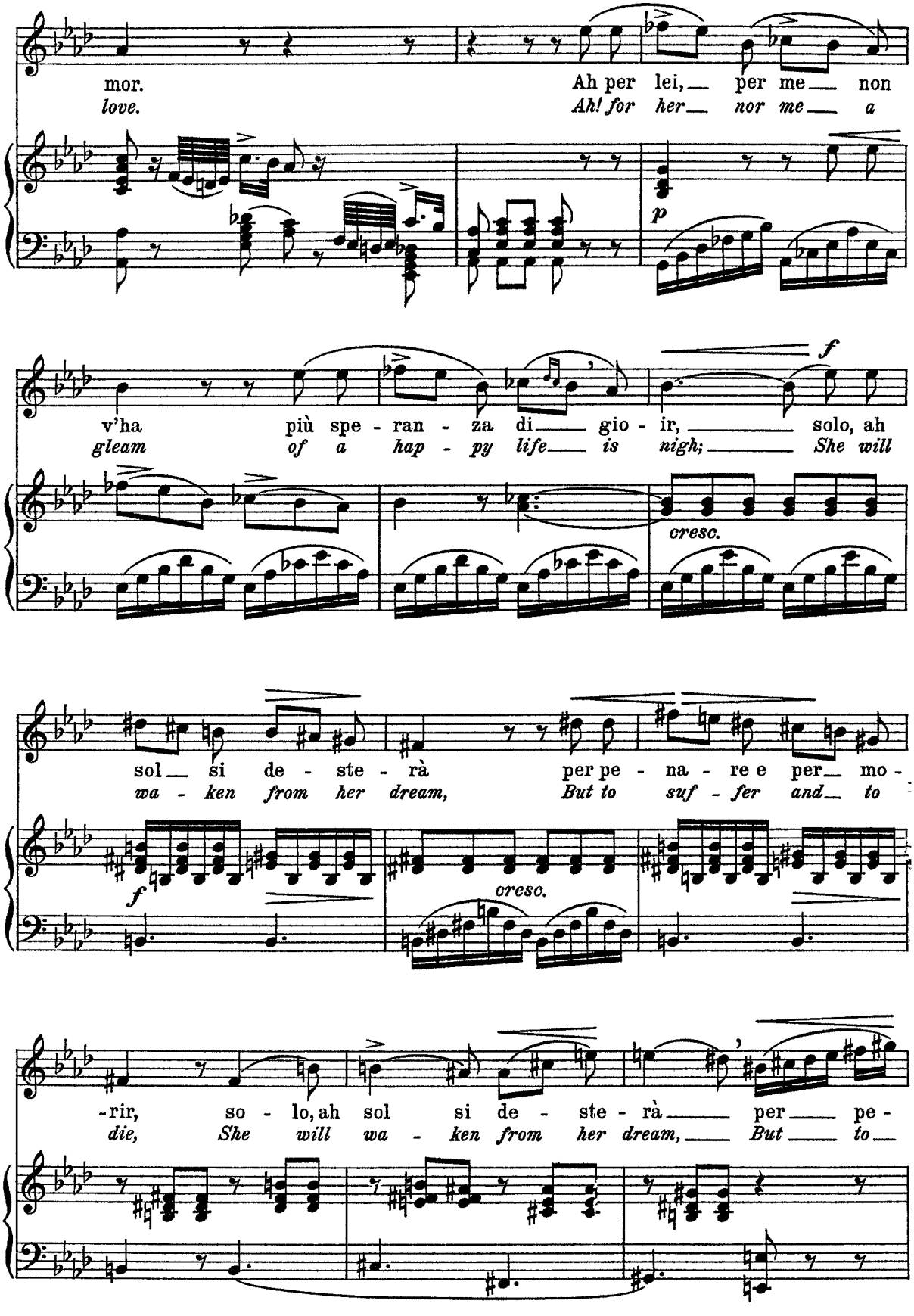

-so.
thee.
So-gna!
Soft-ly
un sor-ri-so
'round her lips there
p
spun-ta
hov-er
sul-le sue lab-bra, ma fu-
smiles gen-tly play-ing; ah! but
ga-ce
fleeting,
è mesto... ma spen-to appena è na-to
then gloomy, ap-pear-ing for a moment
co-me lan-guido
like the light ev-er
rag-gio
chang-ing
in ciel tur-ba-to.
of day de-part-ing.

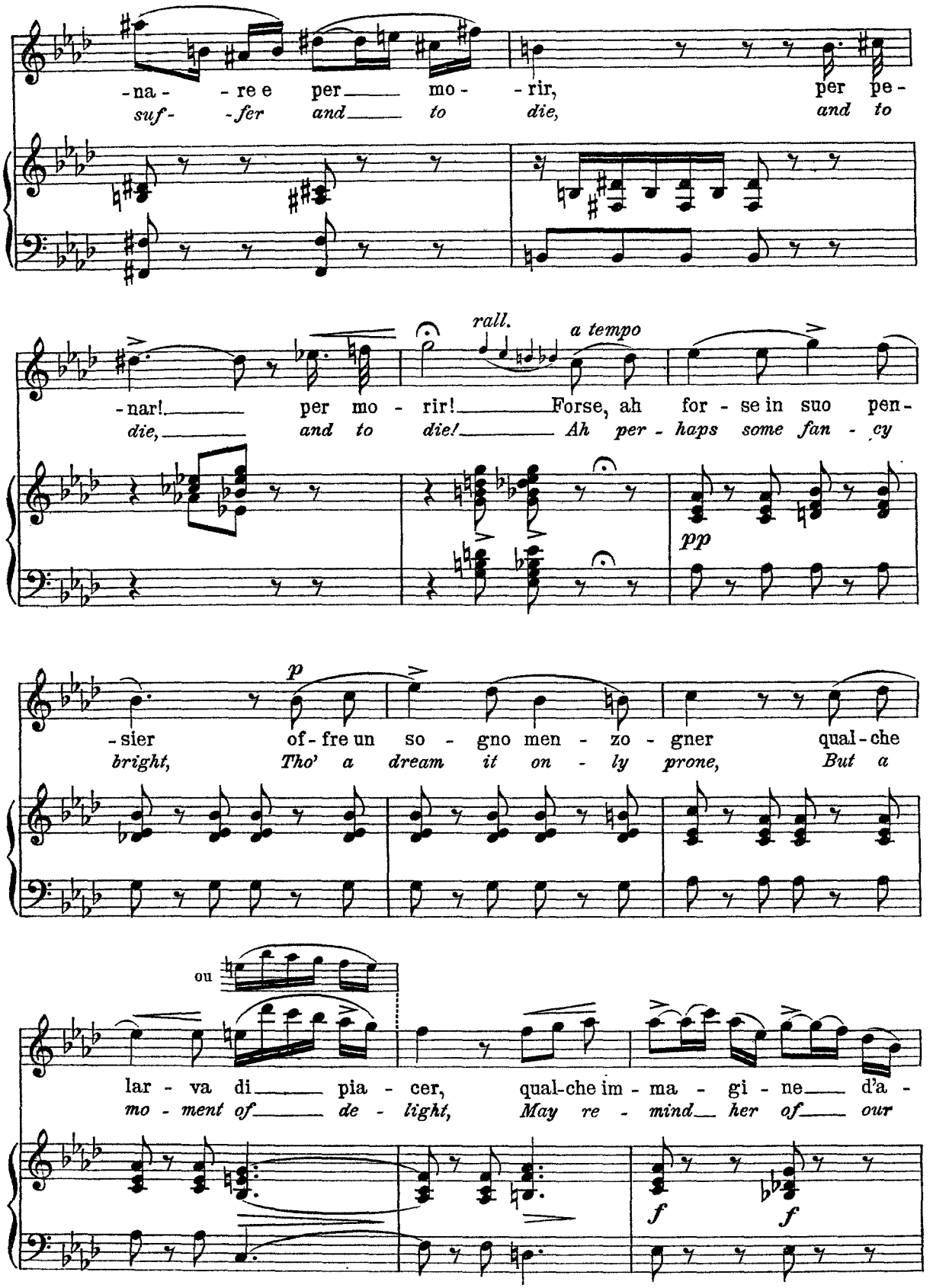
ELEVENTH LESSON

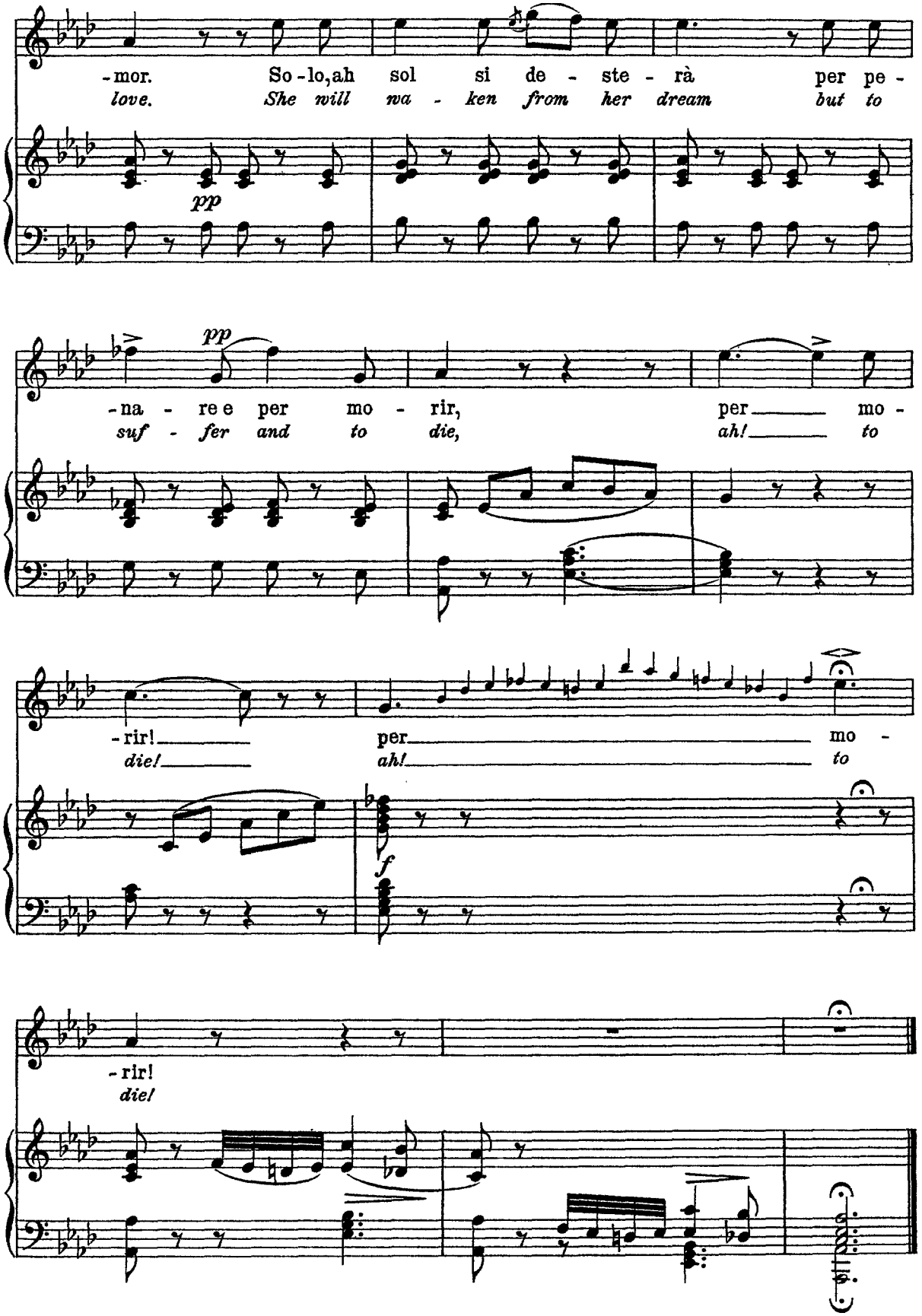
Expressive Singing.

With half-voice.




mor.
love.
Ah per lei, per me non
Ah! for her nor me a
p
v'ha più spe - ran - za di gio - ir, solo, ah
gleam of a hap - py life is nigh; She will
f
cresc.
sol si de - ste - rà per pe - na - re e per mo -
wa - ken from her dream, But to suf - fer and to
f
cresc.
-rir, so - lo, ah sol si de - ste - rà per pe -
die, She will wa - ken from her dream, But to

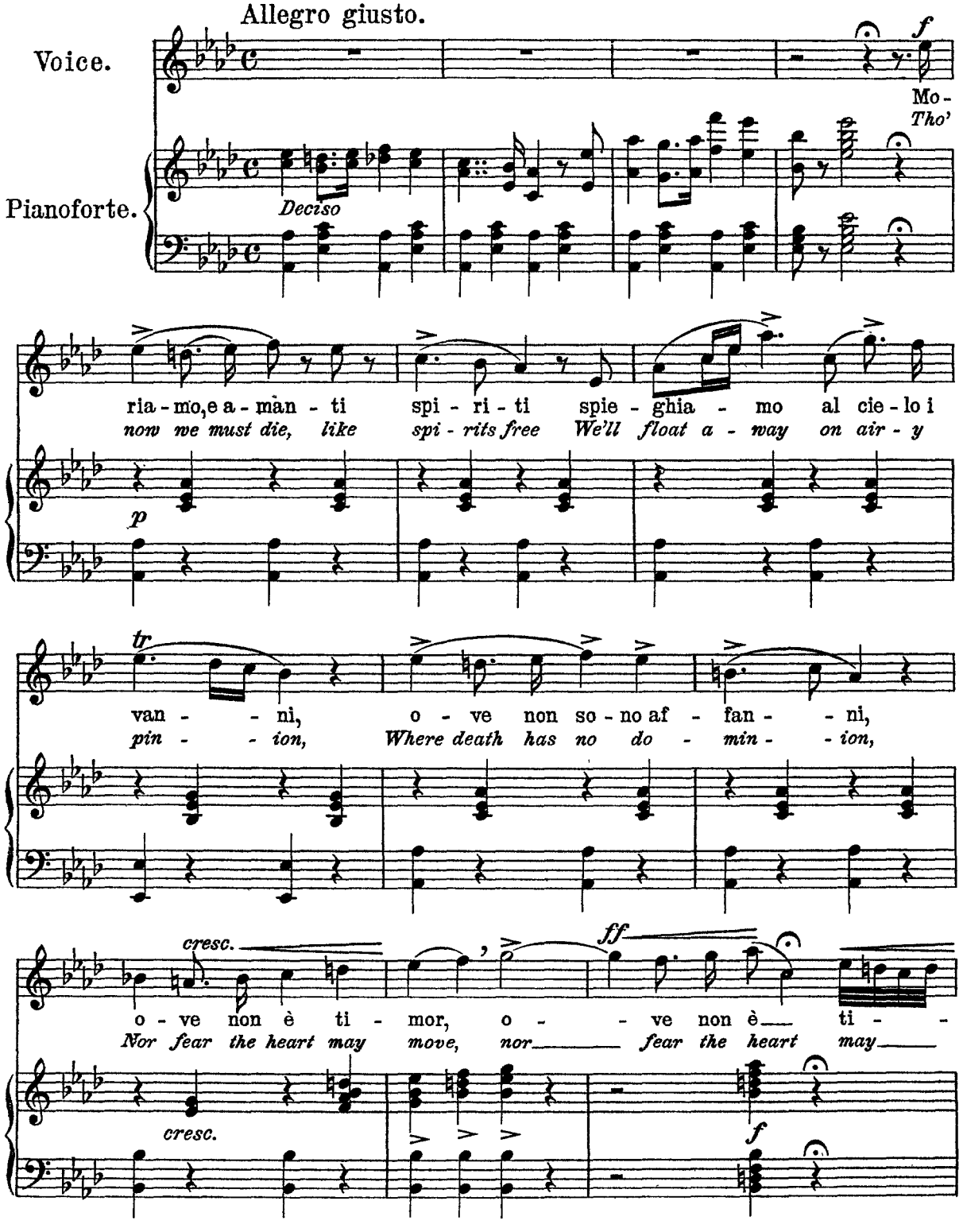

-na- re e per mo- rir, per pe-
suf- fer and to die, and to
rall.
a tempo
-nar! per mo- rir! Forse, ah for- se in suo pen-
die, and to die! Ah per- haps some fan- cy
pp
p
-sier of- fre un so- gno men- zo- gner qual- che
bright, Tho' a dream it on- ly prone, But a
ou
lar- va di pia- cer, qual- che im- ma- gi- ne d'a-
mo- ment of de- light, May re- mind her of our
f
f

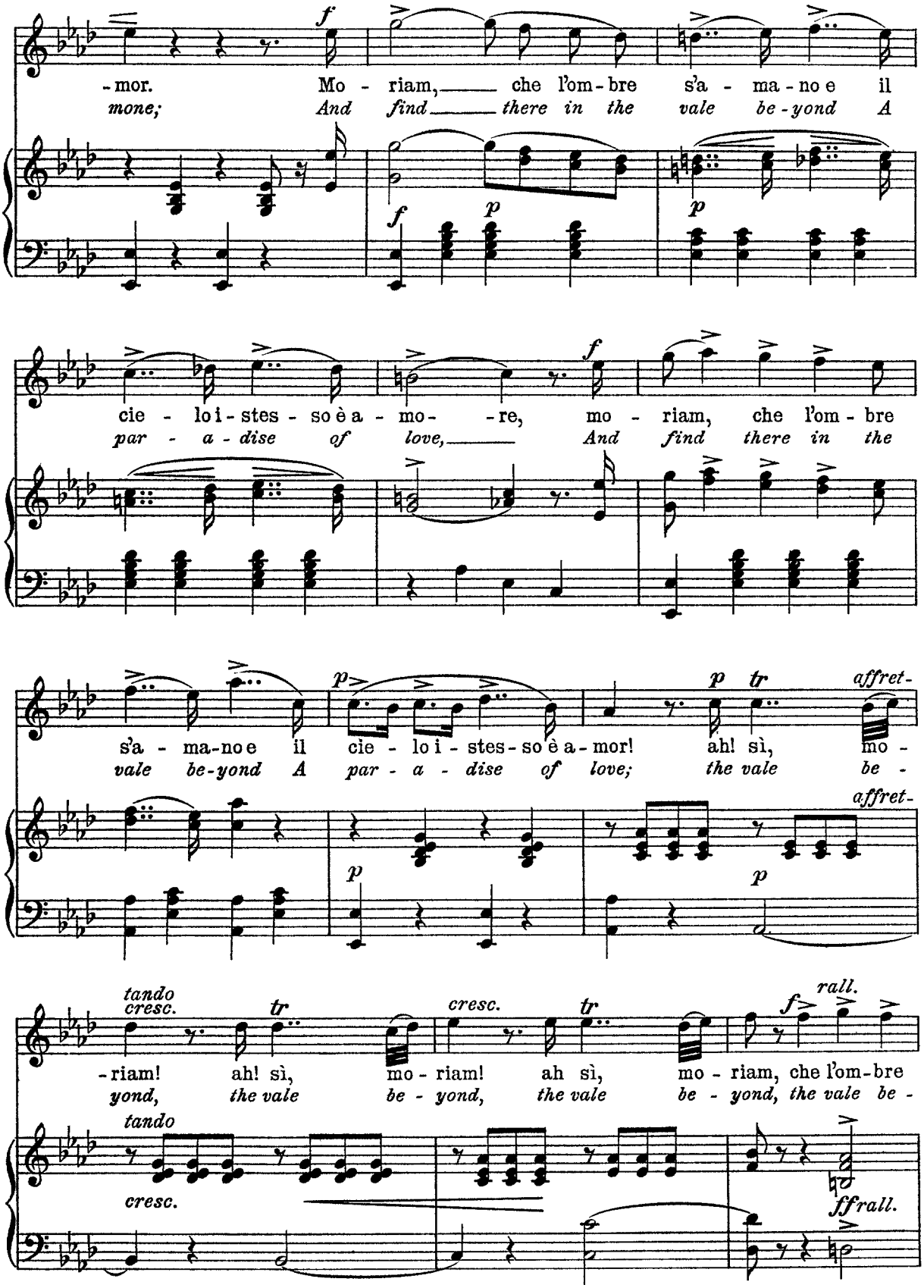

-mor. So-lo, ah sol si de-ste-rà per pe-
love. She will wa-ken from her dream but to
pp
pp
-na-re e per mo-rir, per mo-
suf-fer and to die, ah! to
-rir! per mo-
die! ah! to
f
-rir!
die!

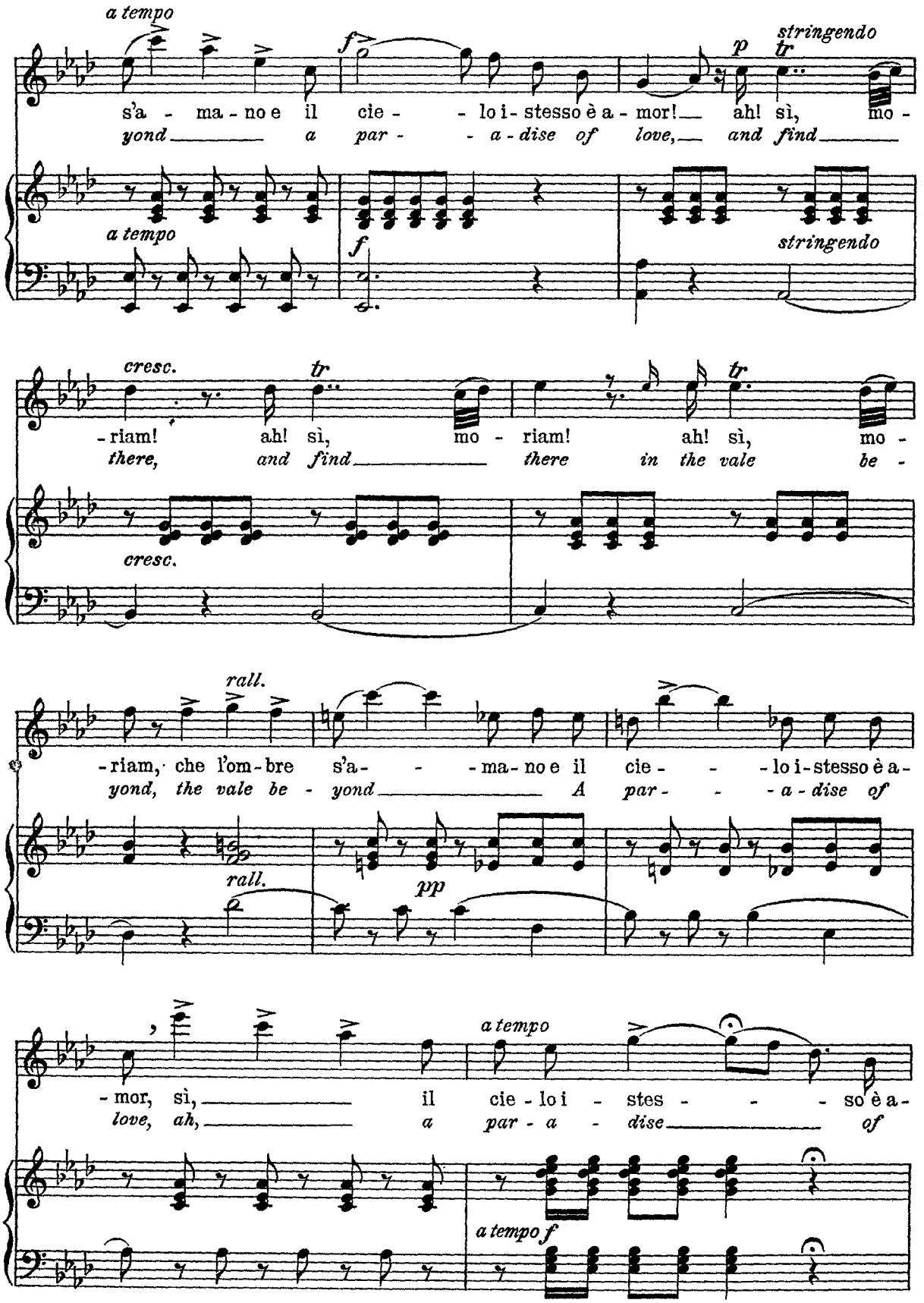
TWELFTH LESSON

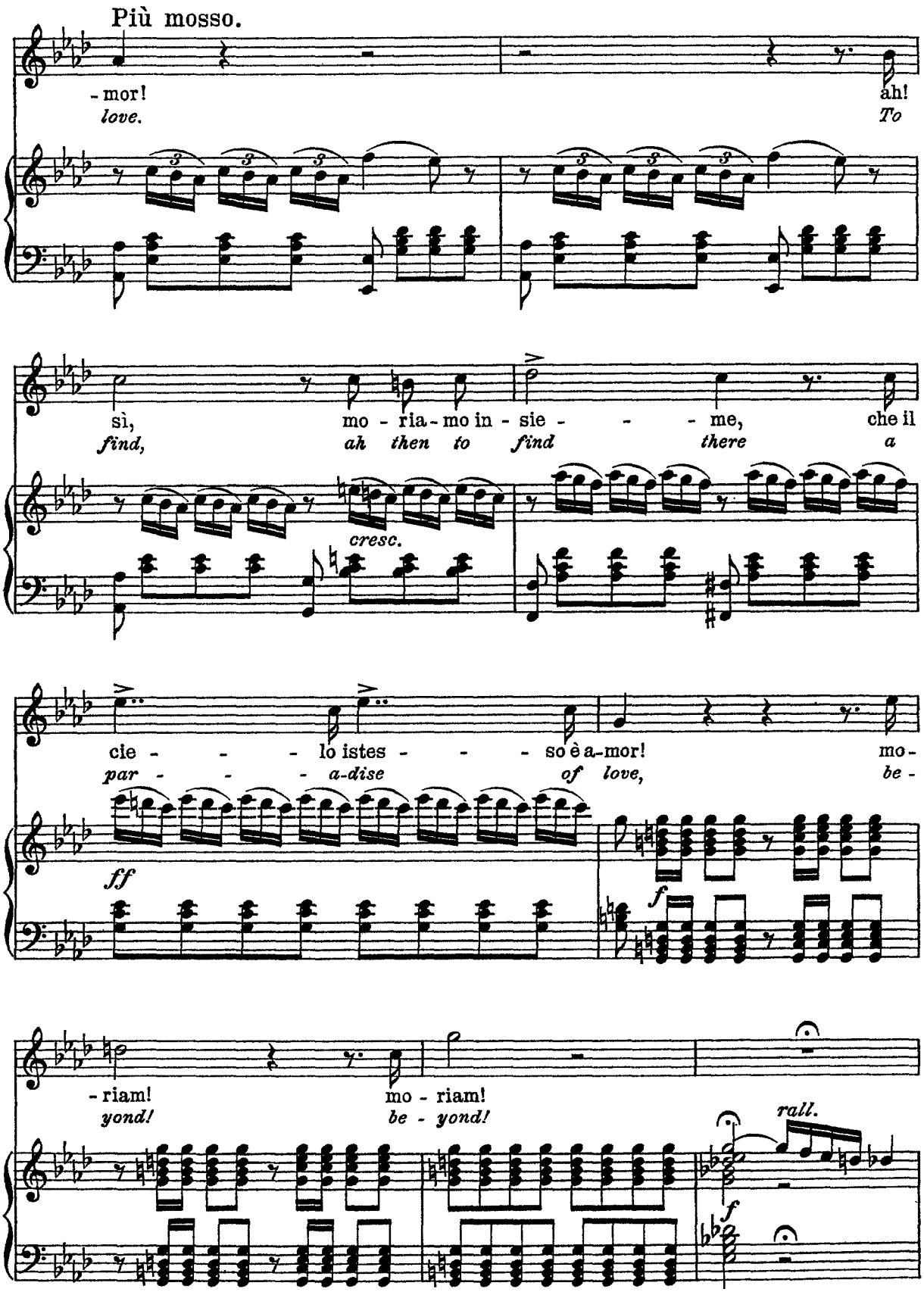
Animated Singing.

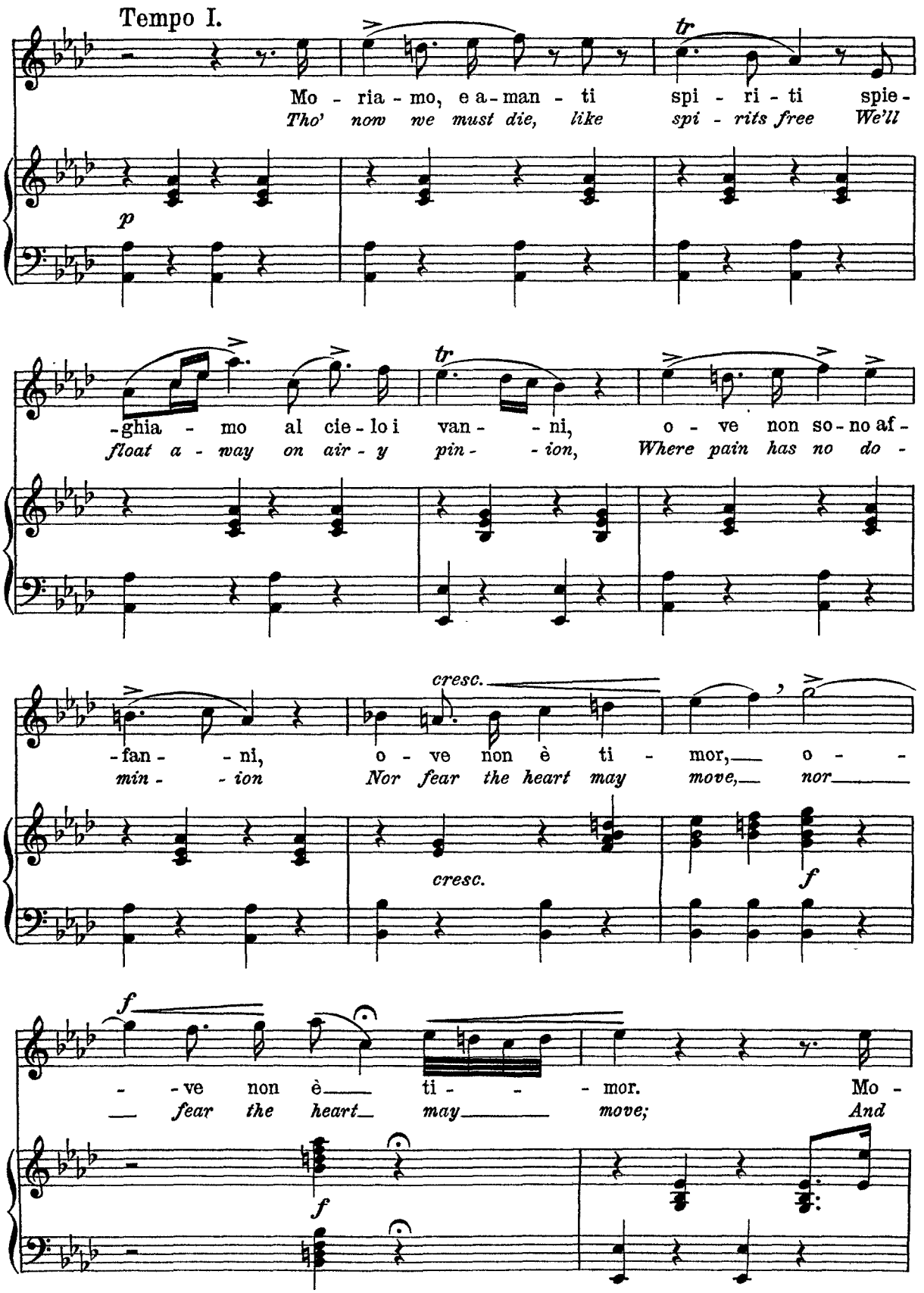
With the full voice.

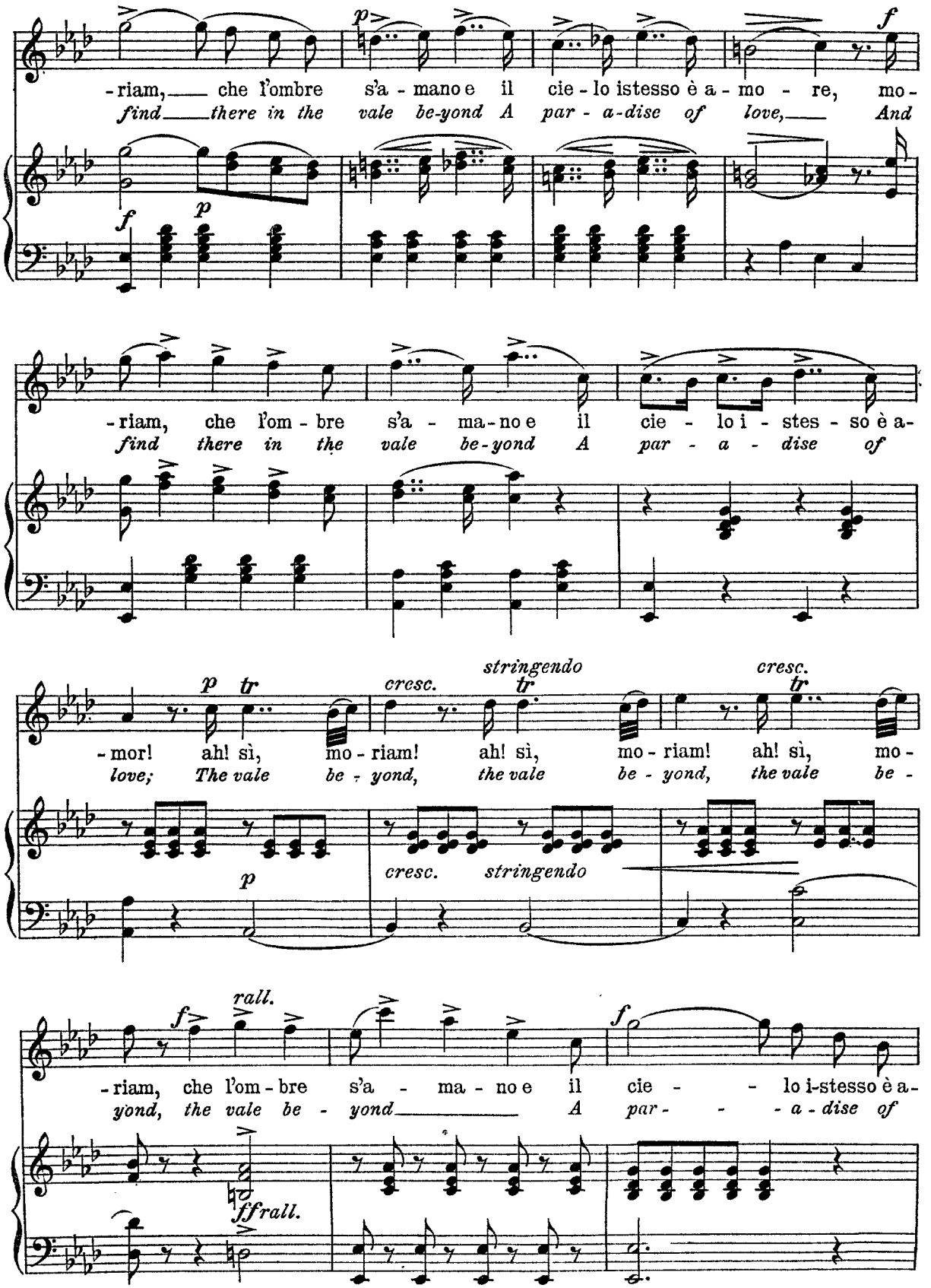


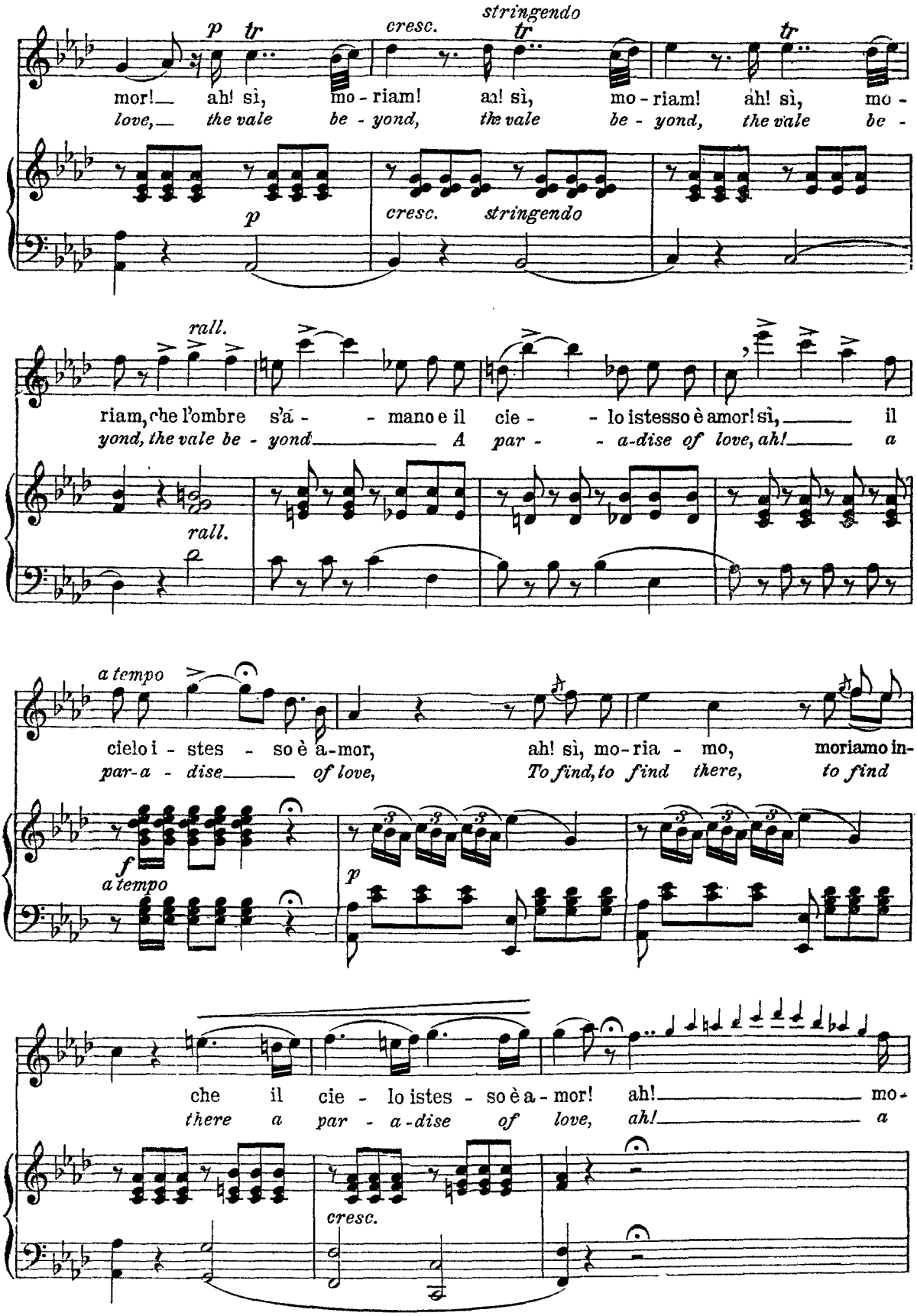

-mor. Mo - riam, che l'om-bre s'a - ma-no e il
mone; And find there in the vale be-yond A
cie - lo i-stes-so è a-mo- re, mo - riam, che l'om-bre
par - a-dise of love, And find there in the
s'a - ma-no e il cie - lo i-stes-so è a-mor! ah! sì, mo-
vale be-yond A par-a-dise of love; the vale be-
affret-
affret-
tando cresc.
-riam! ah! sì, mo-riam! ah sì, mo-riam, che l'om-bre
yond, the vale be-yond, the vale be-yond, the vale be-
tando
cresc.
rall.
ffrall.

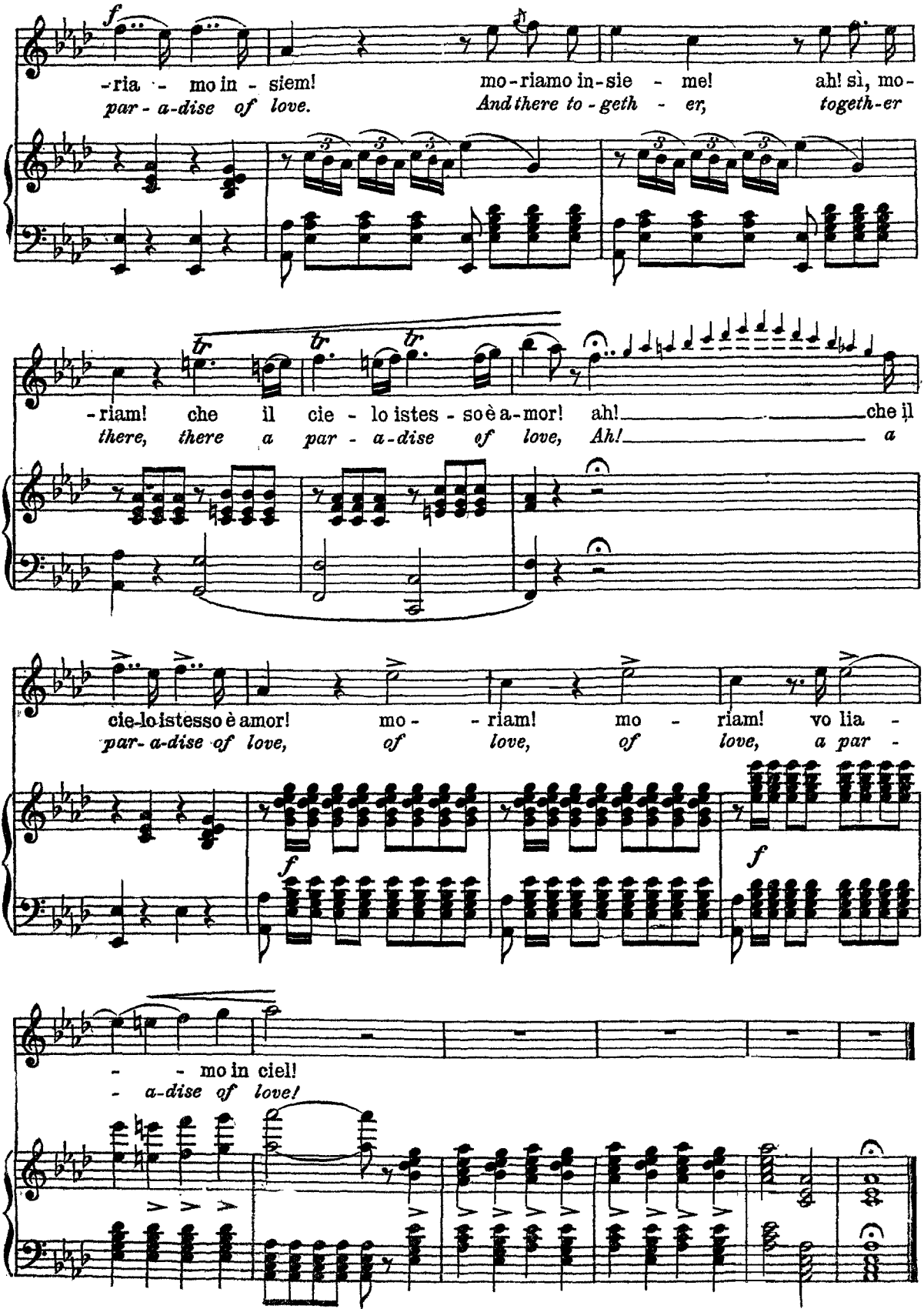

a tempo
f
p
stringendo
tr
s'a - ma - no e il cie - - lo i - stesso è a - mor! ah! sì, mo -
yond a par - - a - dise of love, and find
a tempo
f
stringendo
cresc.
tr
- riam! ah! sì, mo - riam! ah! sì, mo -
there, and find there in the vale be -
cresc.
rall.
- riam, che l'om - bre s'a - - - ma - no e il cie - - - lo i - stesso è a -
yond, the vale be - yond A par - - - a - dise of
rall.
pp
a tempo
- mor, sì, il cie - lo i - stes - - - so è a -
love, ah, a par - a - dise of
a tempo f


Più mosso.
-mor!
love.
ah!
To
sì,
find,
mo - ria - mo in - sie - - - me,
ah then to find there
che il
a
cresc.
cie - - - lo istes - - - so è a-mor!
par - - - a-dise of love,
mo-
be-
ff
f
-riam!
yond!
mo - riam!
be - yond!
rall.
f


Tempo I.
Mo - ria - mo, e a - man - ti spi - ri - ti spie -
Tho' now we must die, like spi - rits free We'll
p
tr
-ghia - mo al cie - lo i van - - ni, o - ve non so - no af -
float a - way on air - y pin - - ion, Where pain has no do -
tr
-fan - - ni, o - ve non è ti - mor, o - -
min - - ion Nor fear the heart may move, nor
cresc.
cresc.
f
f
- - ve non è ti - - - mor. Mo -
fear the heart may move; And
f


-riam, che l'ombre s'a - mano e il cie - lo istesso è a - mo - re, mo-
find there in the vale be-yond A par - a-dise of love, And
-riam, che l'om - bre s'a - ma-no e il cie - lo i - stes - so è a-
find there in the vale be-yond A par - a - dise of
-mor! ah! sì, mo - riam! ah! sì, mo - riam! ah! sì, mo-
love; The vale be - yond, the vale be - yond, the vale be -
-riam, che l'om - bre s'a - ma - no e il cie - - lo i-stesso è a-
yond, the vale be - yond A par - - - a - dise of
cresc.
stringendo
cresc.
rall.
ffrall.


p tr
cresc.
stringendo
tr
tr
mor! ah! sì, mo - riam! aa! sì, mo - riam! ah! sì, mo -
love, the vale be - yond, the vale be - yond, the vale be -
p
cresc. stringendo
rall.
riam, che l'ombre s'a - - mano e il cie - - lo istesso è amor! sì, il
yond, the vale be - yond A par - - a-dise of love, ah! a
rall.
a tempo
cielo i - stes - so è a-mor, ah! sì, mo-ria - mo, moriamo in-
par-a - dise of love, To find, to find there, to find
f
a tempo
p
che il cie - lo istes - so è a - mor! ah! mo-
there a par - a-dise of love, ah! a
cresc.


-ria - mo in - siem!
par - a-dise of love.
mo-riamo in-sie - me!
And there to - geth - er,
ah! sì, mo-
togeth-er
-riam! che il cie - lo istes - so è a-mor!
there, there a par - a-dise of love,
ah! che il
Ah! a
cie-lo istesso è amor!
par- a-dise of love,
mo - - riam!
of
mo - riam!
of
vo lia -
a par -
- - mo in ciel!
- a-dise of love!

GIOVANNI BATTISTA RUBINI

GRISI, Malibran, Persiani, Alboni, Mario, Lablache, Ronconi, Tamburini, Rubini—those were the names that made famous the Théâtre des Italiens of Paris in the early days of the nineteenth century. It was a group of singers possessed of remarkable voices and trained in the polished technics of the elder school of *bel canto.* To this training most of them had added through the development of lyric art something in the way of stronger dramatic accent, something in the manner of histrionic action.

Grisi died in 1869, Mario in 1883, and there are people in this country who well remember their singing at the old Academy of Music, New York. Owen Meredith sang of Mario's power to charm a soul in purgatory, but after all the greatest tenor of his time was Giovanni Battista Rubini, who never trod the operatic boards on this side of the Atlantic. Rubini was born at Romano, Italy, on April 7, 1795. Just precisely how he acquired the vocal method which he seemed to understand so thoroughly, it is difficult to determine.

His first instruction was obtained from his father, who was a music-teacher. At the age of eight the boy sang in a church and also played a little on the violin. Probably the study of the violin throws some light on the subsequent accuracy of his ear and his skill in phrasing. His childish voice must have seemed to be worth cultivating for choir purposes, for he was placed under an organist at Adro; but that teacher soon dismissed him on the ground that he had no talent.

The father now resumed the boy's instruction, and permitted him at the age of twelve to appear in a woman's part in the Romano Theatre. After that he went to Bergamo as a chorus-singer, and while he was there a drama was produced containing a difficult air. No one could be found capable of singing it till young Rubini was tried, and he delivered the aria with much applause. He then endeavored to get an engagement as a chorister in the opera at Milan, but was refused on the ground that he had not enough voice.

His career was now for a time a checkered one. He was one of an unhappy strolling company; he went on an unfortunate tour with an obscure violinist; and at length he obtained engagements at Pavia and Brescia. Next he succeeded in gaining an entrance into the San Mosè Theatre at Venice, and thence he went to Naples, where the former barber Barbaja was the impresario. This manager engaged Rubini to sing in Fioravanti's "Adelson e Salvina" and another work, together with Pellegrini and Nozzari. He appears to have pleased the audiences, but Barbaja evidently made little account of him and was ready to let him go at the end of the season. Rubini consented to remain at a reduced salary. The secret of his willingness to remain at a sacrifice is to be found in the fact that he was studying with Nozzari. He profited much from this singer's instruction, and had brilliant successes in "La Gazza ladra" in Rome and Palermo. It was about this time, in the year 1819, that he married Mlle. Chomel, a singer known on the Italian stage as Signorina Comelli.

Rubini went to Paris to sing at the Italiens in 1825, making his first appearance on October 6 in "La Cenerentola." His success in this work and in "Otello" and "La Donna del Lago" was such that he was acclaimed as the greatest of tenors. From this time forward his career was one of unbroken triumph. He was still under contract to Barbaja, and had to return to Italy to sing in Naples and Milan. He sang also in Vienna.

It may now be understood that Rubini was a specialist in the school of Rossini. He was, however, to enter a new field—to become the chief exponent of the tender sweetness of Bellini. It has been said that he and Bellini were made for one another, but Donizetti owed not a little to Rubini's voice and style. It was in his "Anna Bolena," written after twenty-nine failures, that Donizetti found success with the powerful aid of Rubini. The same tenor was the making of "Lucia" and "Lucrezia Borgia." The recent popularity of these works will give the student some conception of the kind of rôles in which Rubini excelled.

Bellini wrote "Il Pirata" for Rubini, and the tenor remained with him during the composition of the opera. "La Sonnambula" and "I Puritani" came from Bellini's pen while it was still under the influence of the famous singer.

In 1831 Rubini visited England for the first time. He had at last outlived his contract with Barbaja, and for the next thirteen years he divided his time between London and Paris. In England he sang not only at the opera, but at concerts and music festivals. His beautiful voice and exquisite style aroused enthusiasm everywhere. In 1843 he went with Franz Liszt on a tour through Holland and Germany. At Berlin they parted and Rubini went to St. Petersburg, where his success was immense. The Emperor Nicholas conferred upon him the title of "Director of Singing" and also the rank of Colonel.

In the ensuing summer he returned to Italy, but in the winter of 1844 he visited Russia once more. His voice had now entered upon its decline, and he resolved to retire from the stage. He purchased an estate near his birthplace at Bergamo and there quietly spent the final years of his life. He died on March 3, 1854, leaving behind him a considerable fortune and the reputation of having been a man of a simple and lovable nature. In view of the pride and extravagance of so many famous musicians, these facts are well worthy of record.

According to his contemporaries Rubini was a singer pure and simple. He either had no talent for acting, or he did not care to exercise it. He was not well favored for the stage, for he was short and squat of figure, awkward in action, and had plain features scarred with smallpox pits. He was by no means a master of recitative, and in singing he invariably worked entirely for effect. He reserved himself for climaxes, and in concerted numbers frequently went so far as to preserve silence. Sometimes he did not even take the trouble to open his mouth to make believe that he sang. At any rate, such is the testimony of Escudier, a critic of authority in his day.

His voice was not robust, but of very tender quality, yet it was not incapable of occasional bursts of power. His chest compass extended from low E to high B flat, and he had a falsetto running up to high G. He made excessive use of his head tones,

but this was by no means a defect in the ears of his hearers. Escudier said of him that his emission was so exquisite that it was impossible to detect the passage from one register to another.

"Gifted with huge lungs," continues this critic, "he can control his breath so that he never employs more of it than is precisely necessary to give the exact degree of sound he desires. So cleverly does he conceal the act of respiration that it is impossible to discover when the breath renews itself, inspiration and expiration being seemingly simultaneous, like filling a cup with one hand while emptying it with the other. Thus he can deliver the longest and most drawn-out phrases without any interruption of continuity."

Chorley, in his "Thirty Years' Recollections," says: "He would walk through a good third of an opera languidly, giving the notes correctly and little more—in a duet blending his voice intimately with that of his partner (in this he was unsurpassed); but when his own moment arrived there was no longer coldness or hesitation, but a passion, a fervor, a putting forth to the utmost of every resource of consummate vocal art and emotion which converted the most incredulous, and satisfied those till then inclined to treat him as one whose reputation had been overrated."

It will be understood from this that Rubini was a singer, not an operatic delineator. In fact, he never identified himself with the characters which he assumed, but, like the famous Brignoli of later years, was content to express himself in two or three principal arias. To these he devoted his study and on these he expended the inexhaustible riches of his art. He made remarkable effects by sudden transitions from *piano* to *forte*, and this in time became a pronounced mannerism. He introduced into singing the *vibrato*, without which no singer now regards himself as equipped for the stage. He was the first to use that peculiar sobbing break of the breath, in the holding-note of a final cadence, which Italian singers now employ without rhyme or reason.

But all those who heard him, even in his later years, when his voice was almost gone and his mannerisms had become exaggerated to the verge of grotesquery, agreed that in finish of production, polished phrasing, and expression, he was a wonderful master. He formed a style which was the model of many successors; but it must be borne in mind that too many of them copied his mannerisms without being able to imitate the beauties of his delivery. His only publications were an album of twelve songs, entitled "L'Addio." and "12 Lezioni di Canto Moderno per tenore o soprano."

W. J. HENDERSON