BENNACHIE

Scenes and Stories for Piano

Phillip A. Cooke

BAILIES of BENNACHIE
PROTECT SHARE ENJOY
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS 1973-2023

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BENNACHIE

Scenes and Stories for Piano

(2023)

Duration: 10 minutes

Cover photograph: www.pinterest.com

For more information: www.phillipcooke.com

Commissioned by the Baillies of Bennachie for their 50th Anniversary

CONTENTS

1) Hill of Foxes
2) Gouk Stane
3) Hosie's Well
4) Averon Knap
5) Westland Wallace
6) Jock o'Bennachie

PROGRAMME NOTE

Bennachie is a suite for piano taking inspiration from the eponymous hill that is so prominent in the relatively flat, fertile lands of east Aberdeenshire. The hill is prominent, not just in topographical terms, but also that it has such a rich and established cultural and historical legacy that embraces myth, legend and real, visceral events that have shaped the land and the people that live in its lee. *Bennachie* was commissioned by the Baillies of Bennachie (a charity that not only seeks to preserve the natural environs of the hill, but also to encourage interest in its cultural and historical past) for their 50th anniversary to engender further interest in the hill and to contribute to the existing artistic legacy associated with it.

Bennachie is subtitled 'scenes and stories' and consists of six episodes from the hill's colourful history. The work is aimed at beginner to intermediate players and aims to provide them with vivid and arresting short pieces, each trying to catch a different aspect of Bennachie's cultural history. The opening piece, 'Hill of Foxes' takes the English

translation of one of the three prominent peaks of the hill (Craigshannoch) as the impetus for a spirited depiction of fox cubs playing on the hillside. The second, the evocatively titled 'Gouk Stane' relates to a standing stone on the hill that has connotations of the arrival of spring ('Gouk' is Scots for cuckoo) and the first calls of the bird that suggest the end of winter. This is followed by 'Hosie's Well', a simple tune suggesting the heartache of a local man who's intended bride married elsewhere when he did not return from war. The fourth piece depicts a mossy promontory famed for its peat cutting and averons ('cloudberries'), with the fifth, 'Westland Wallace' a reverent memorial for a place crash on Bennachie which took the lives of two young servicemen on the very first day of the UK's involvement in WWII. The final piece is a rumbustious representation of Jock o'Bennachie, a giant who lives on the hill and is famed for throwing rocks at another giant for the love of a local woman.

PAC

BIOGRAPHY

Phillip was born in Cumbria in 1980, spending the first 18 years of his life in the Lake District. He studied composition in Durham and Manchester Universities and for a PhD with Anthony Powers at Cardiff University. His works have been performed in most of the leading cathedrals and churches in the UK and in many festivals in the country and further afield. Recent works have been performed by, amongst others, the BBC Singers and The Sixteen. His work has regularly been premiered and broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and has also recently been broadcast on BBC Radio 4, Classic FM and many European broadcasters. There are currently ten commercial recordings available featuring his music.

He is strongly influenced by his native Lake District and by history. His main musical influences are found in continuing and reconciling a pastoral British tradition; he has written many articles on contemporary British music. He co-edited a book of essays on Herbert Howells which was published by Boydell and Brewer in October 2013 and wrote the first major study on James MacMillan's music that was published by the same publishers in June 2019. He is married with two children, lives in Aberdeenshire and supports Everton (for his sins…). From 2007 – 08 he was a Career Development Fellow at the Faculty of Music, Oxford University and a Junior Research Fellow (2007 – 10) at The Queen's College, Oxford University. He was composition tutor at Eton College from 2011-12. In January 2013, he was appointed a Lecturer in Composition at Aberdeen University, becoming Deputy Head in 2015, Senior Lecturer in 2017 and was Head of Music from 2018-21. He became Professor of Composition in July 2022.

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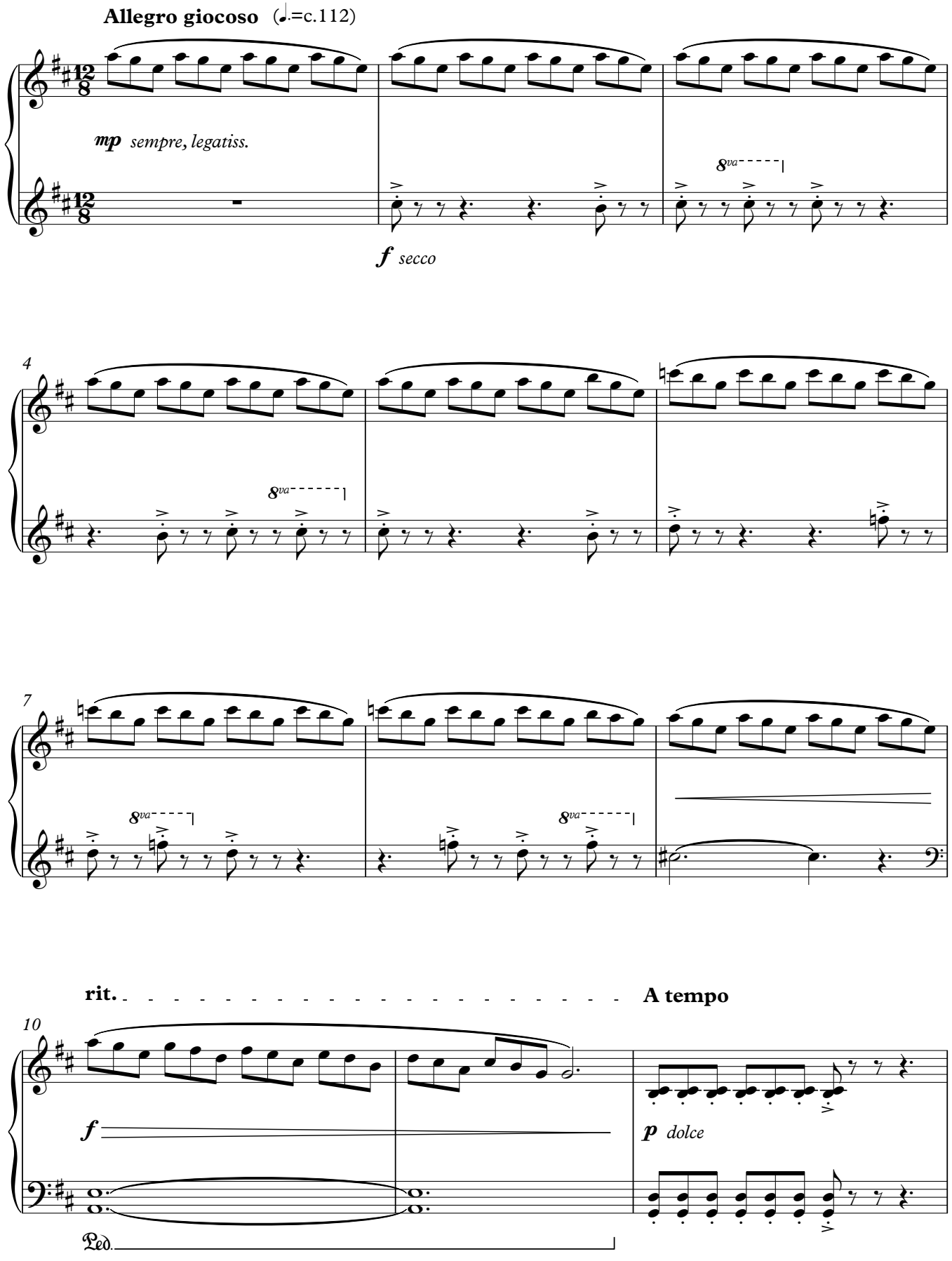
for The Ballies of Bennachie on their 50th Anniversary

BENNACHIE

Scenes and Stories for Piano

PHILLIP A. COOKE (2023)

I. Hill of the Foxes



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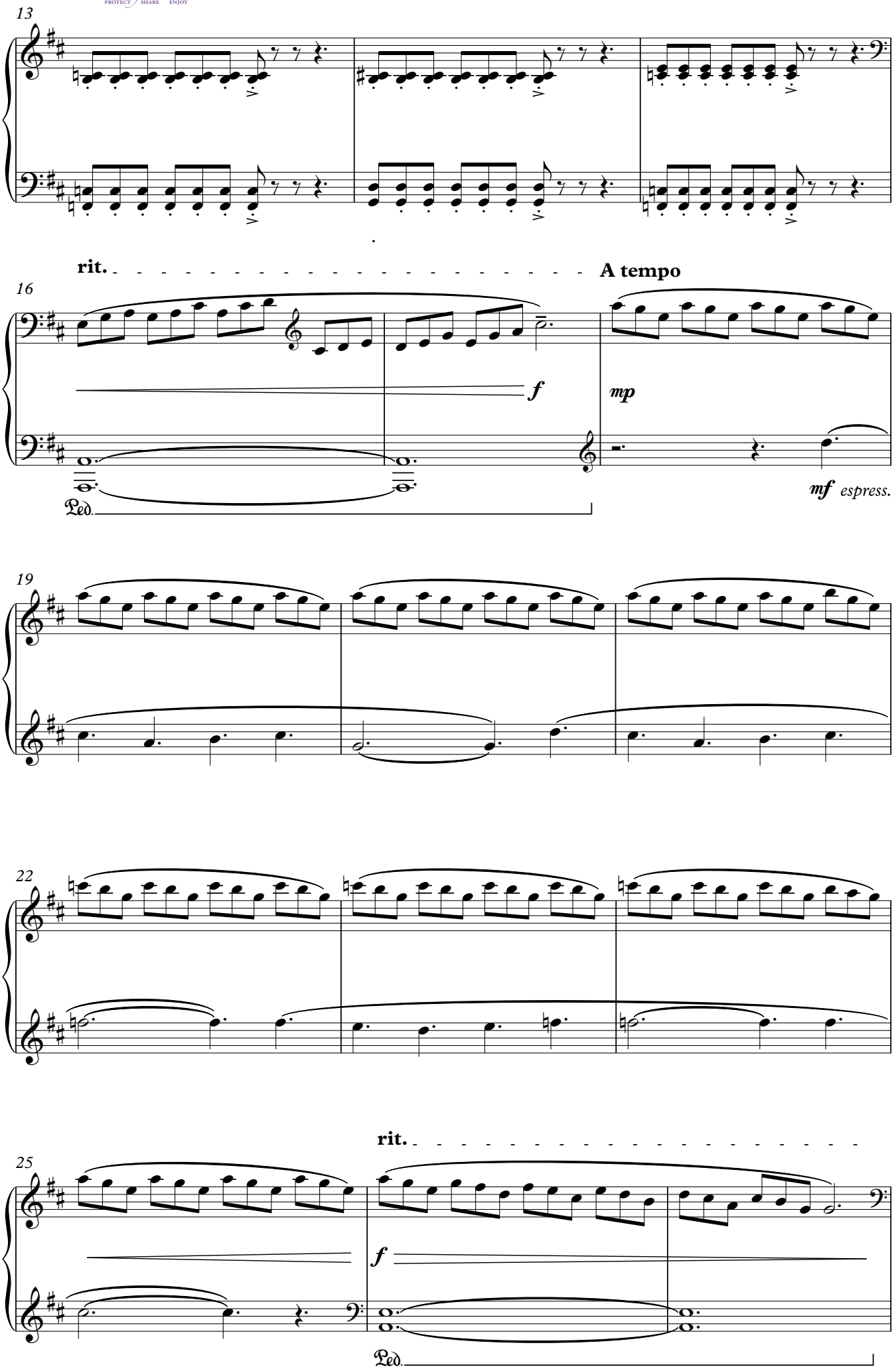
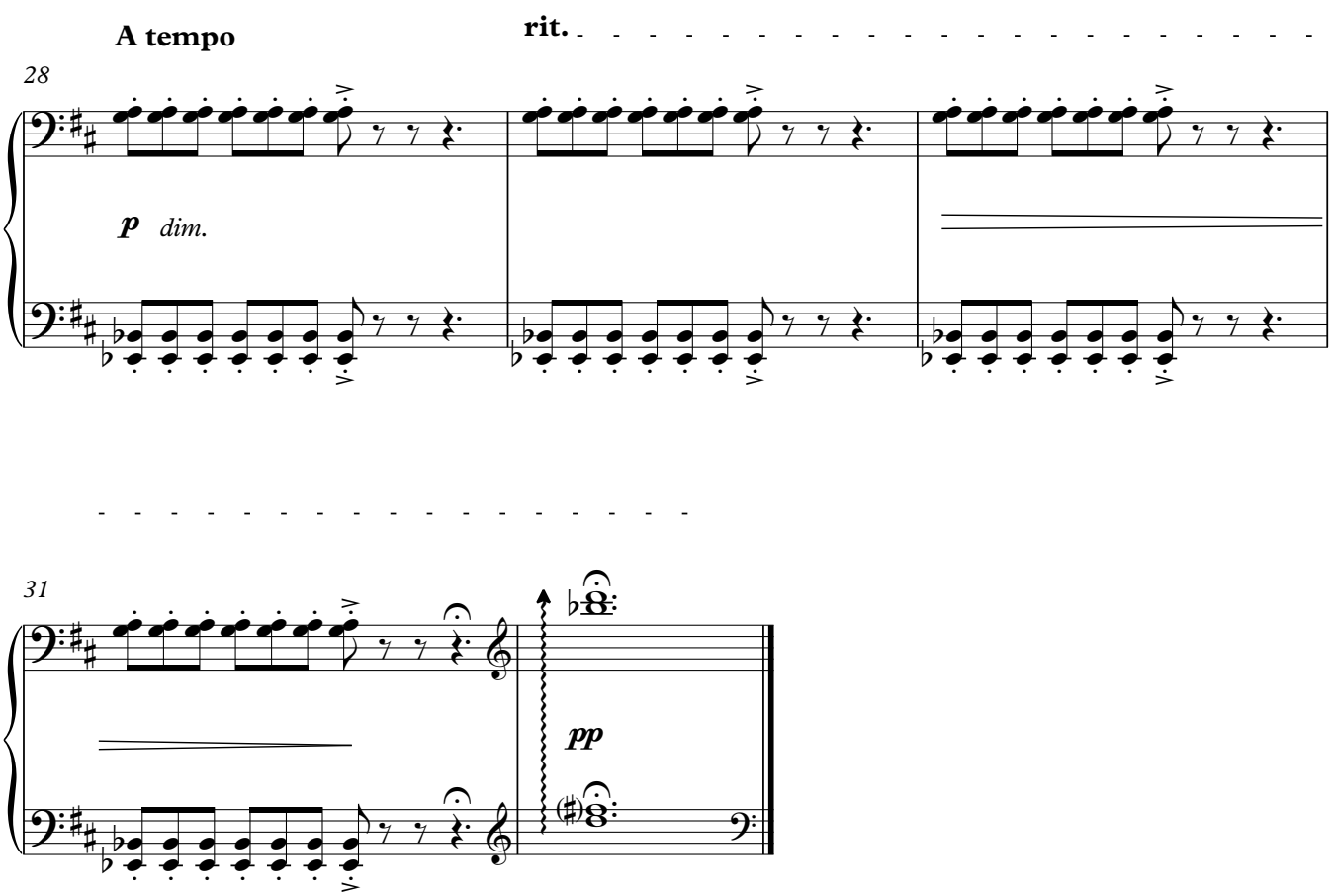

13
rit.
A tempo
16
f
mp
mf espress.
Ped.
19
22
rit.
25
f
Ped.


A tempo
rit.
28
p
dim.
31
pp

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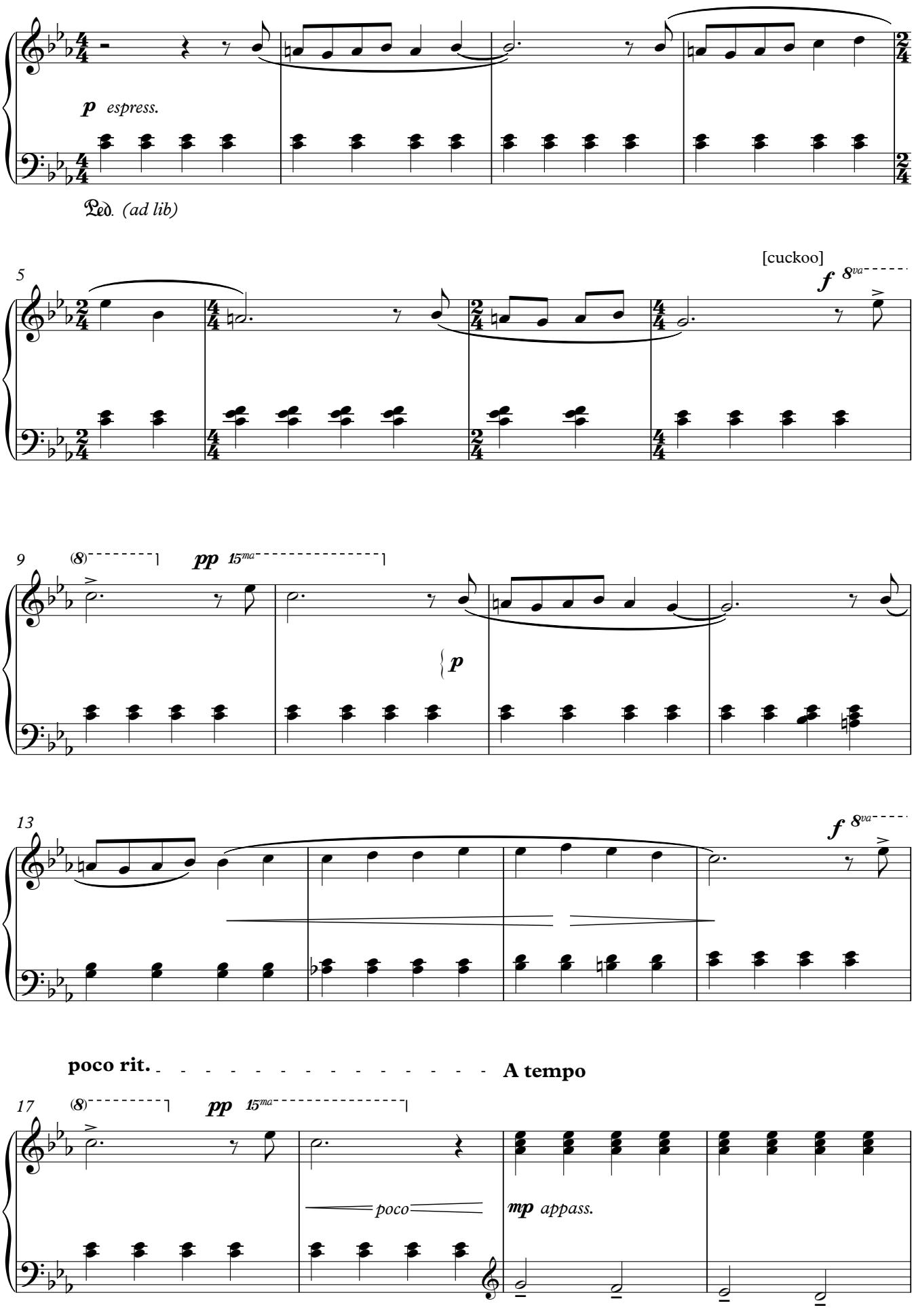
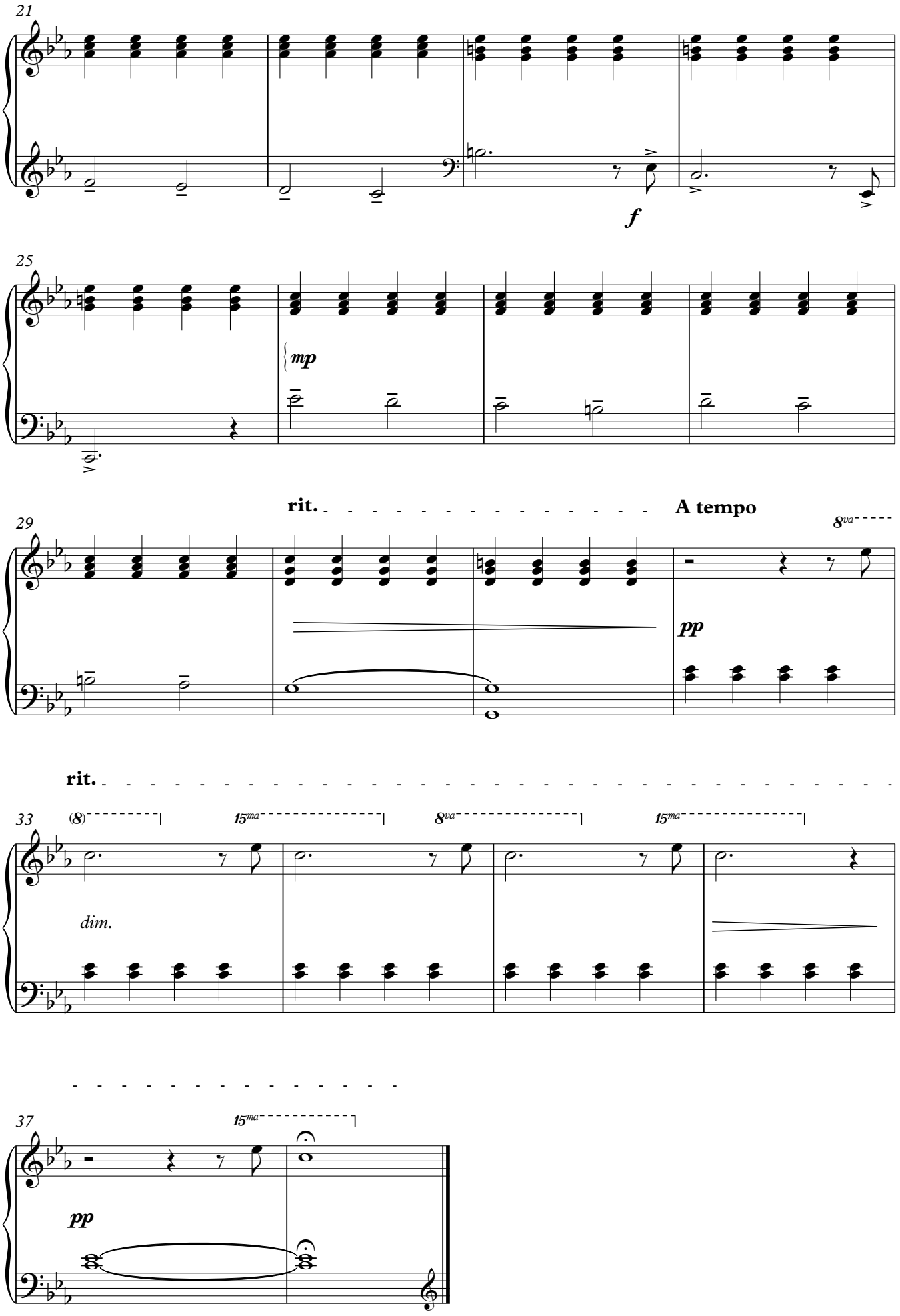
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

II. Gouk Stane

Allegro non troppo (♩=c.120)




21
f
25
mp
rit.
A tempo
29
8va
pp
rit.
33
(8)
15ma
8va
15ma
dim.
37
15ma
pp

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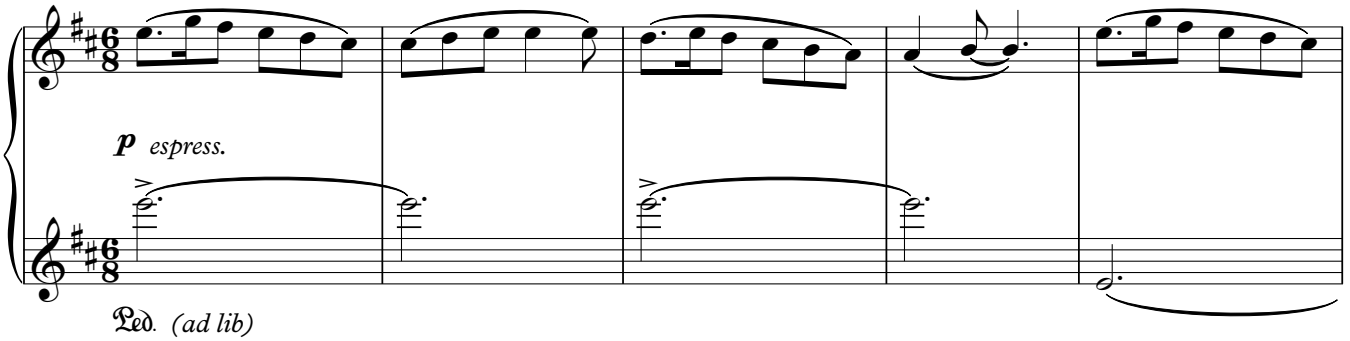
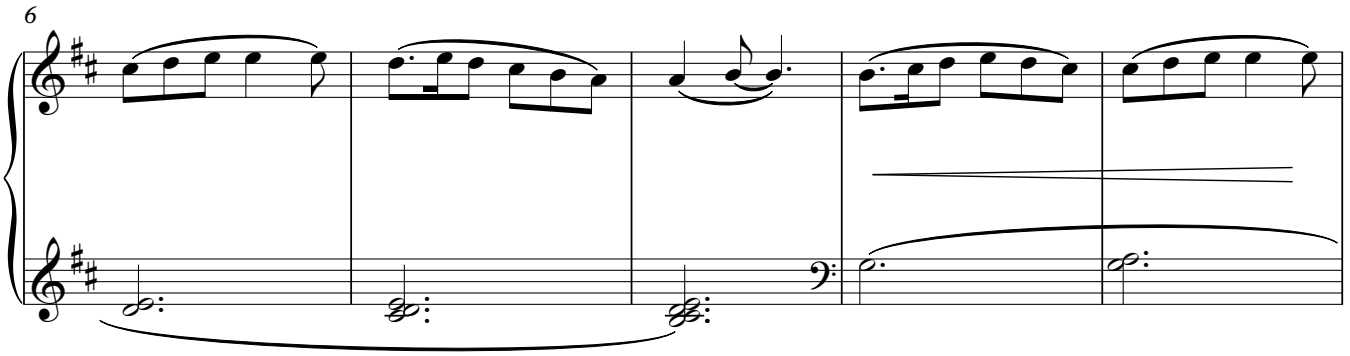
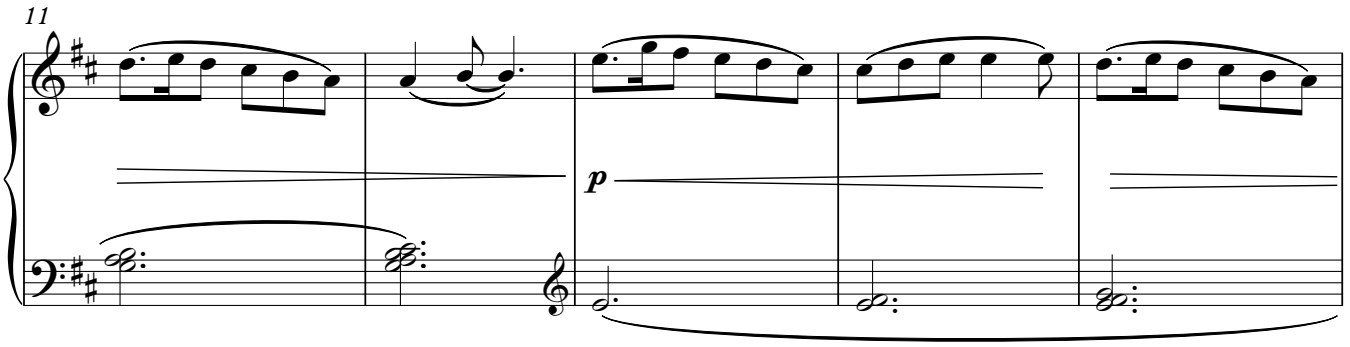
50

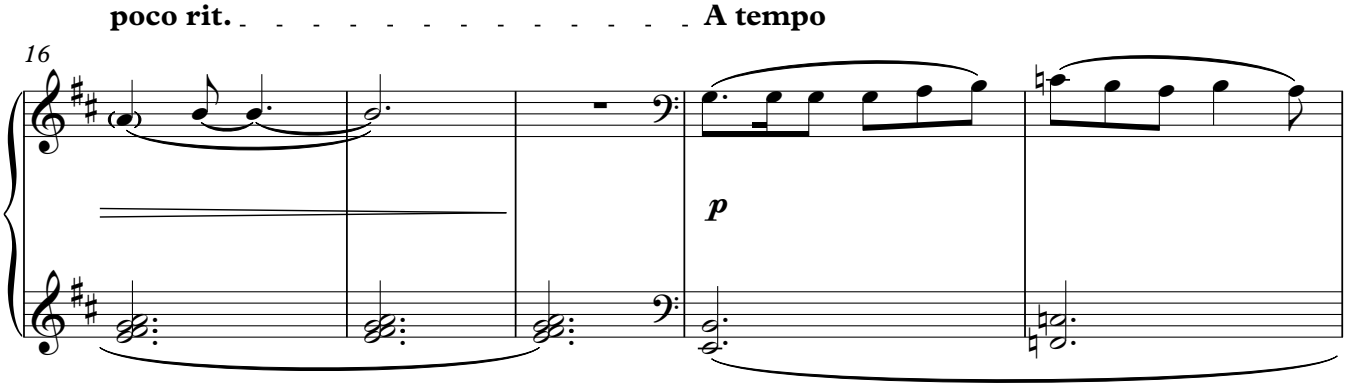
III. Hosie's Well

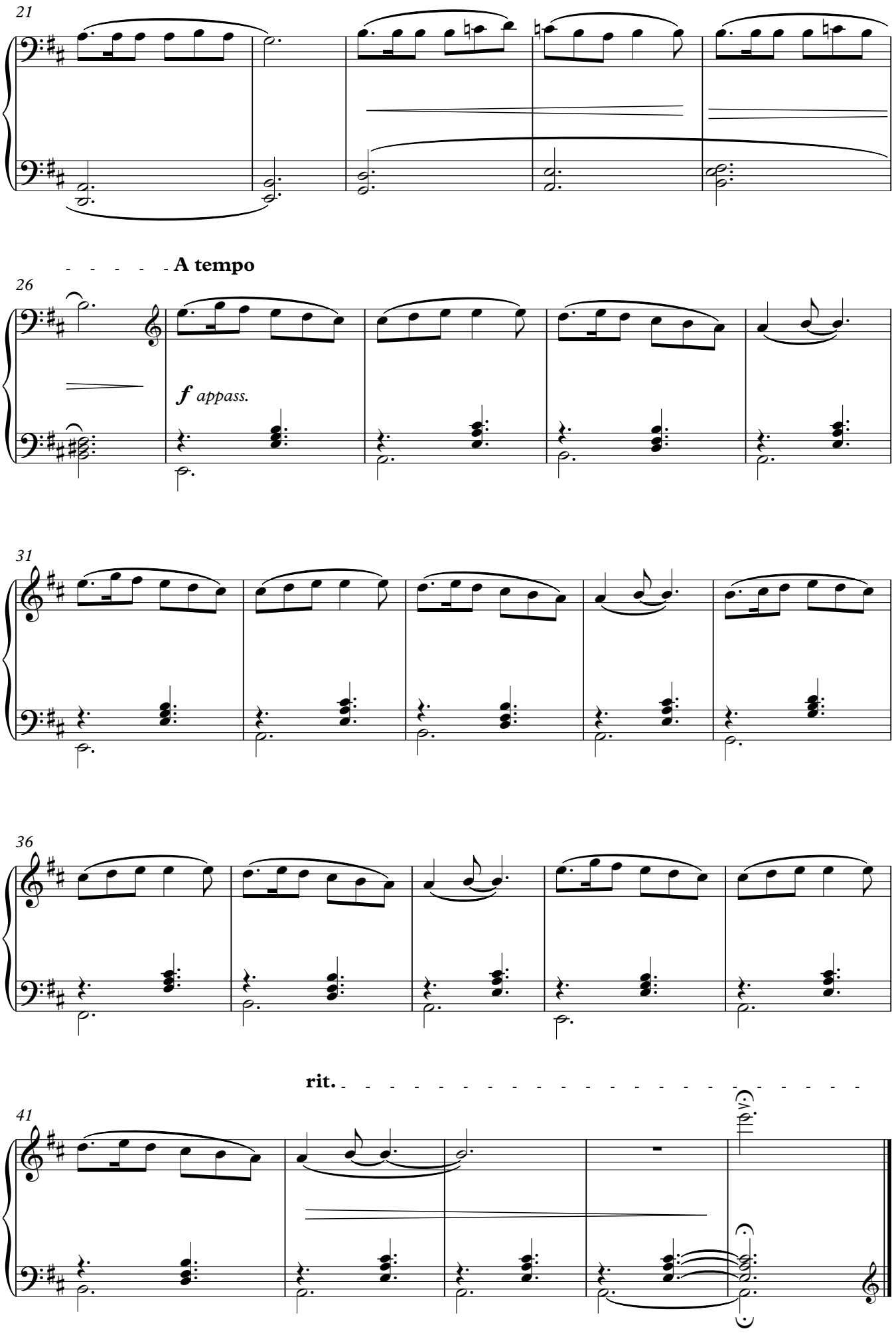
Andante semplice (♩.=c.52)





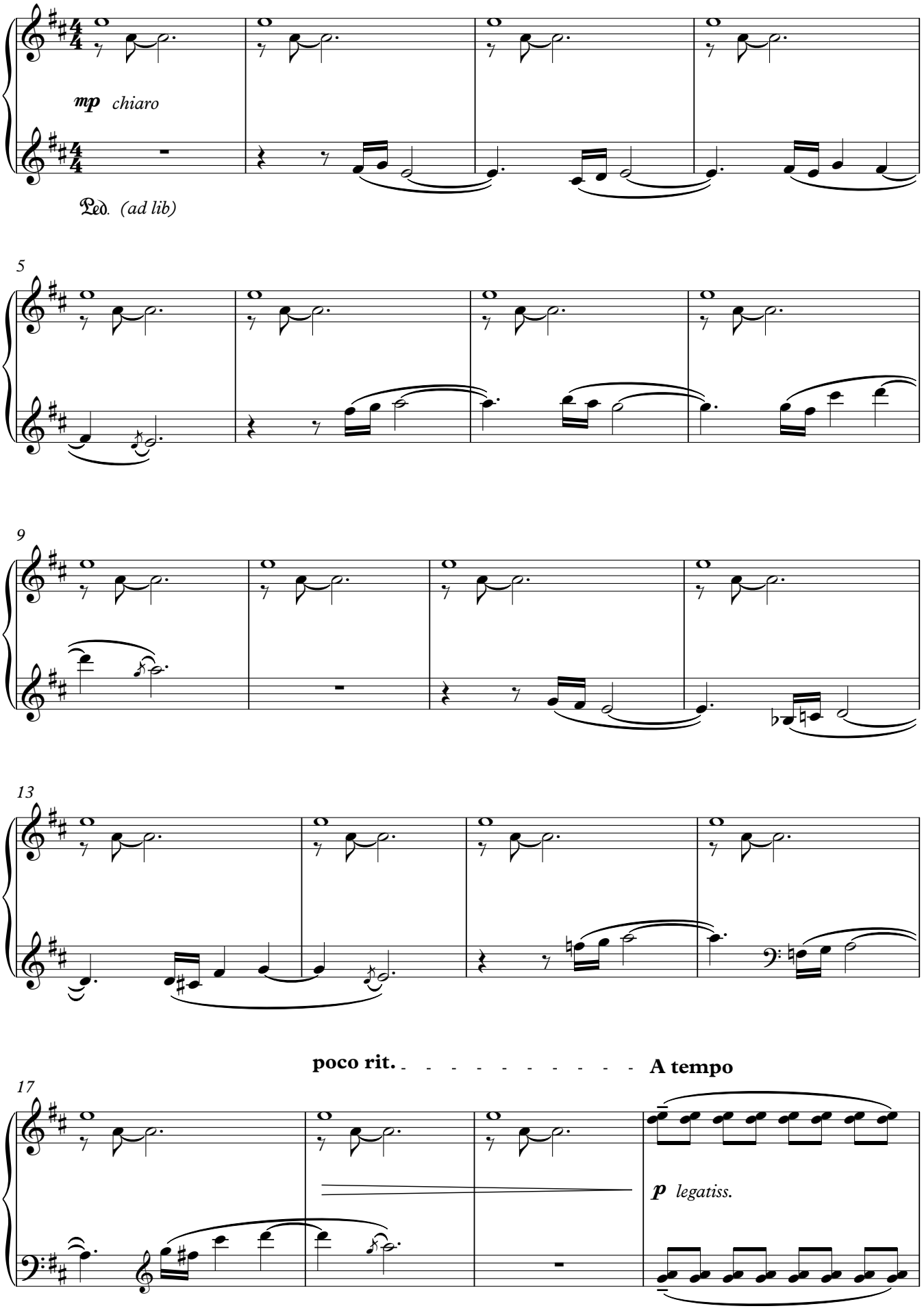


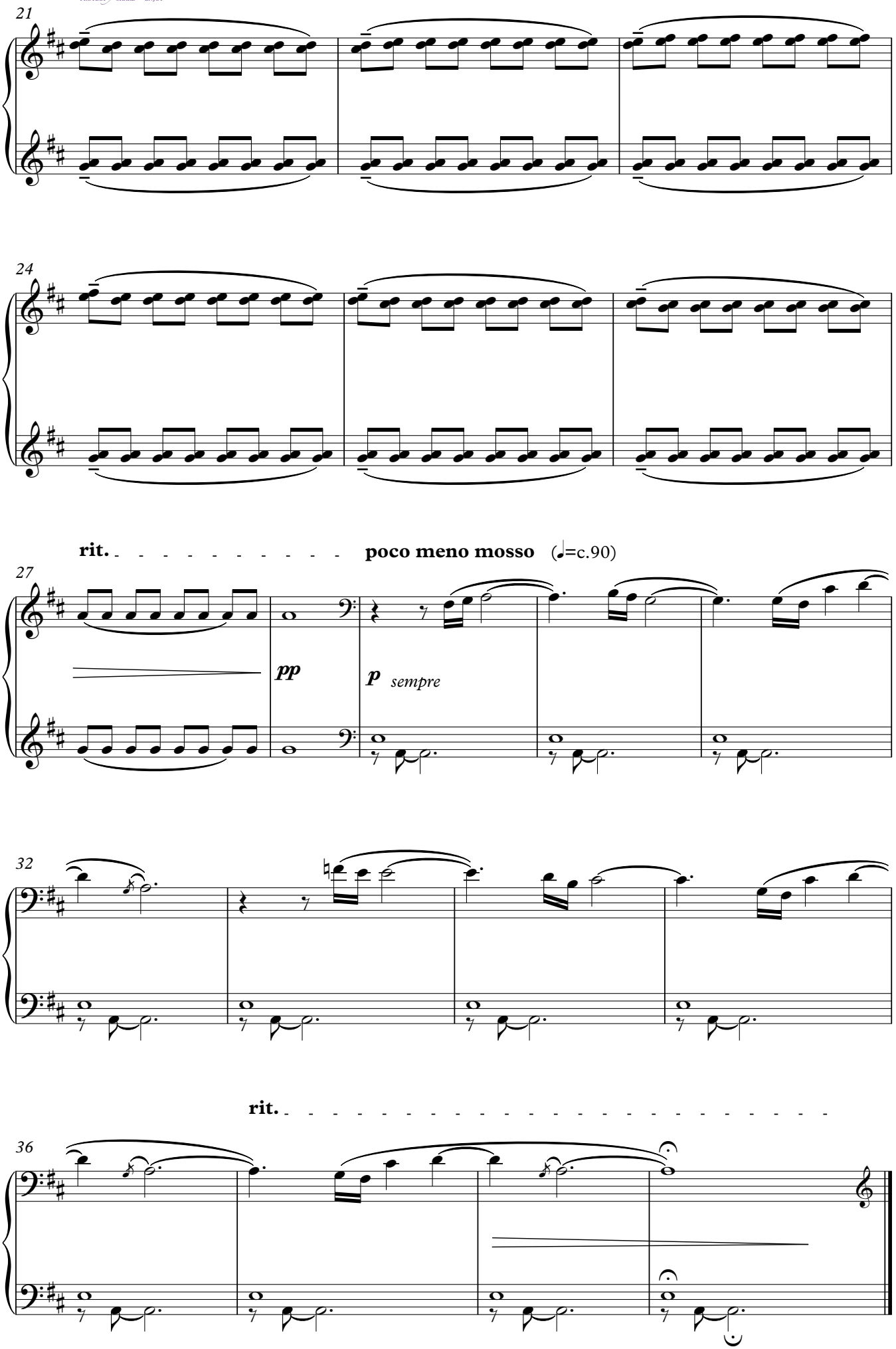



rit.
21
A tempo
26
f appass.
31
36
rit.
41
(8va)

IV. Averon Knap

Moderato spazioso (♩=c.100)



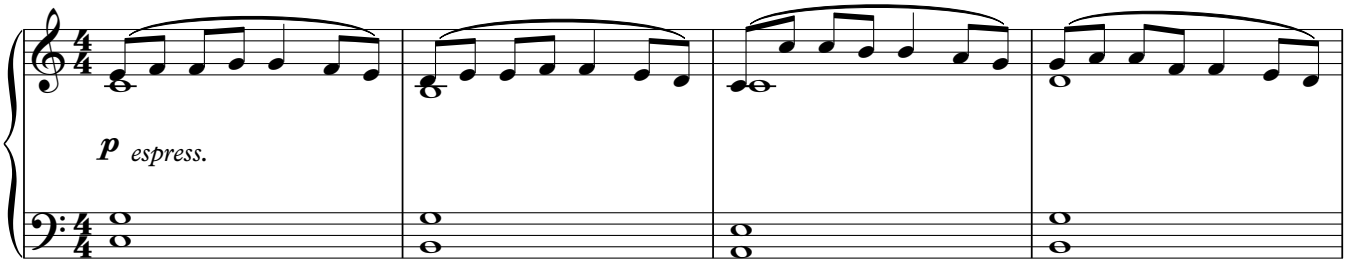

21
24
rit.
poco meno mosso
(♩=c.90)
27
pp
p
sempre
32
rit.
36

In Memory of Ellard Cummings and Ronald Stweart

V. Westland Wallace

Adagio nobilmente (♩=c.60)

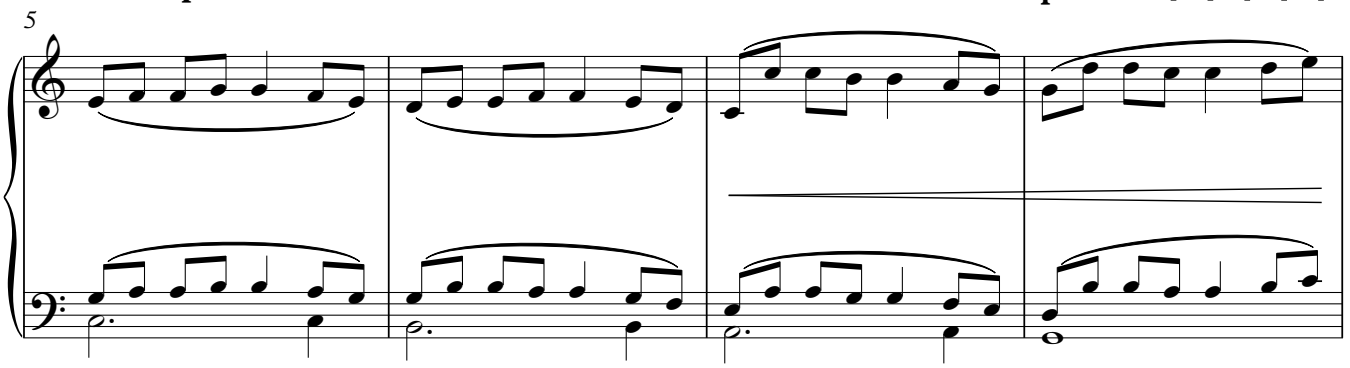
poco rit.



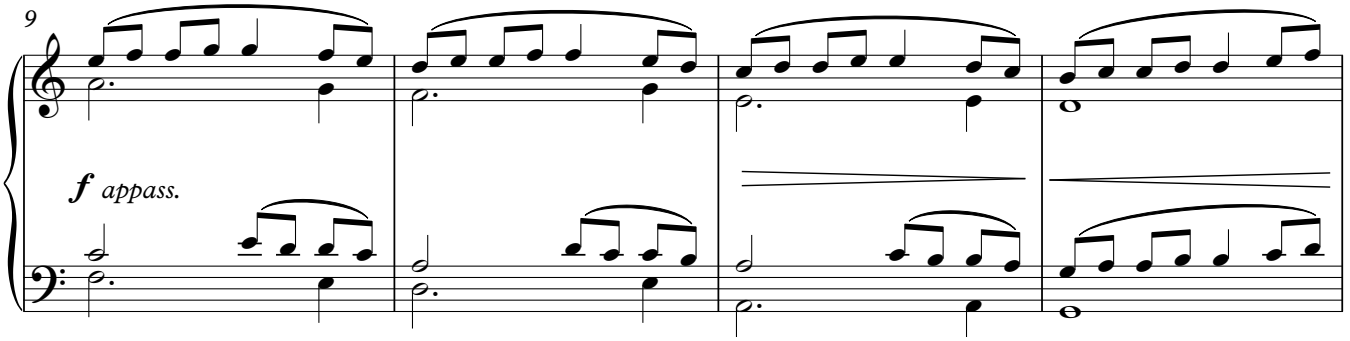
Ped. *(ad lib)*

A tempo

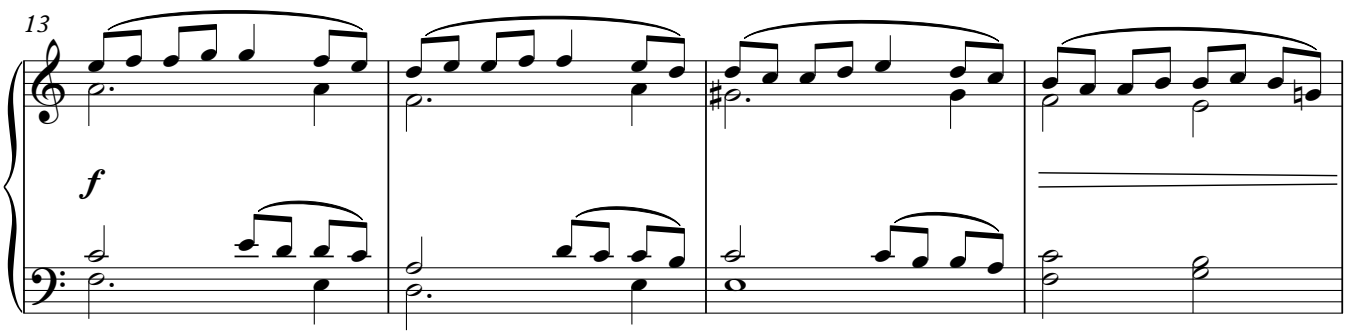
poco rit.



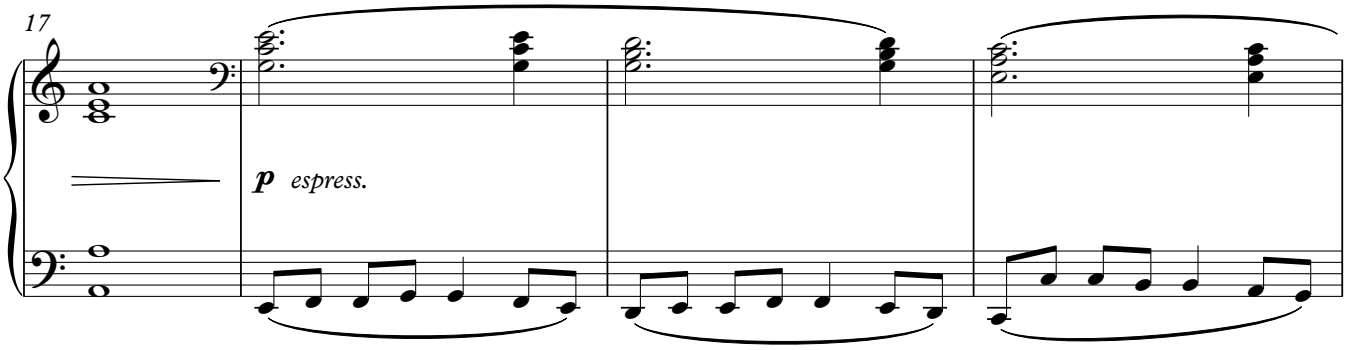
A tempo



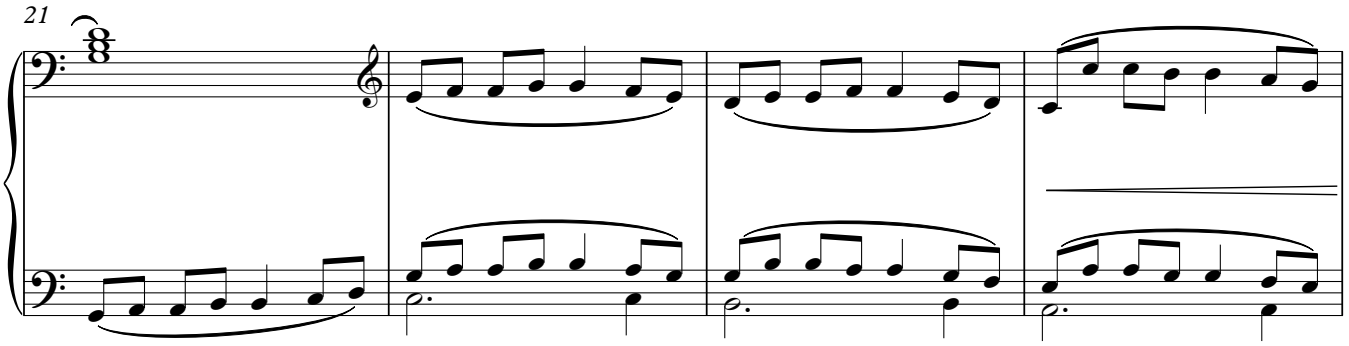
poco rit.



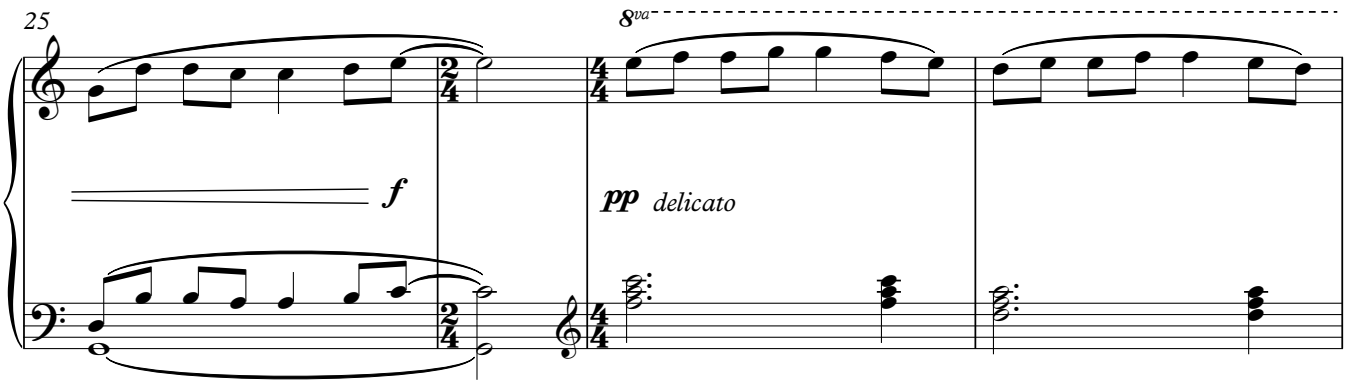
A tempo



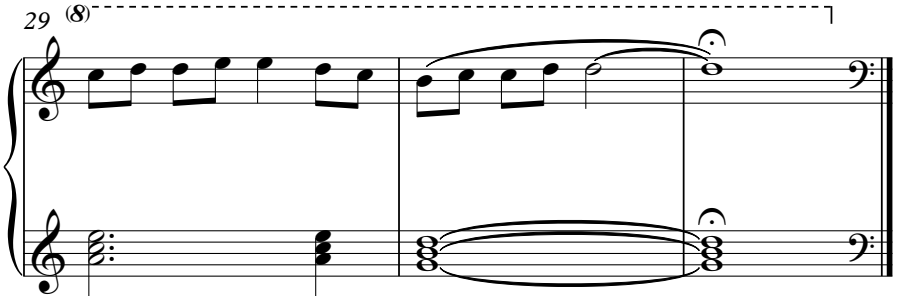
poco rit. A tempo



poco rit. poco meno mosso

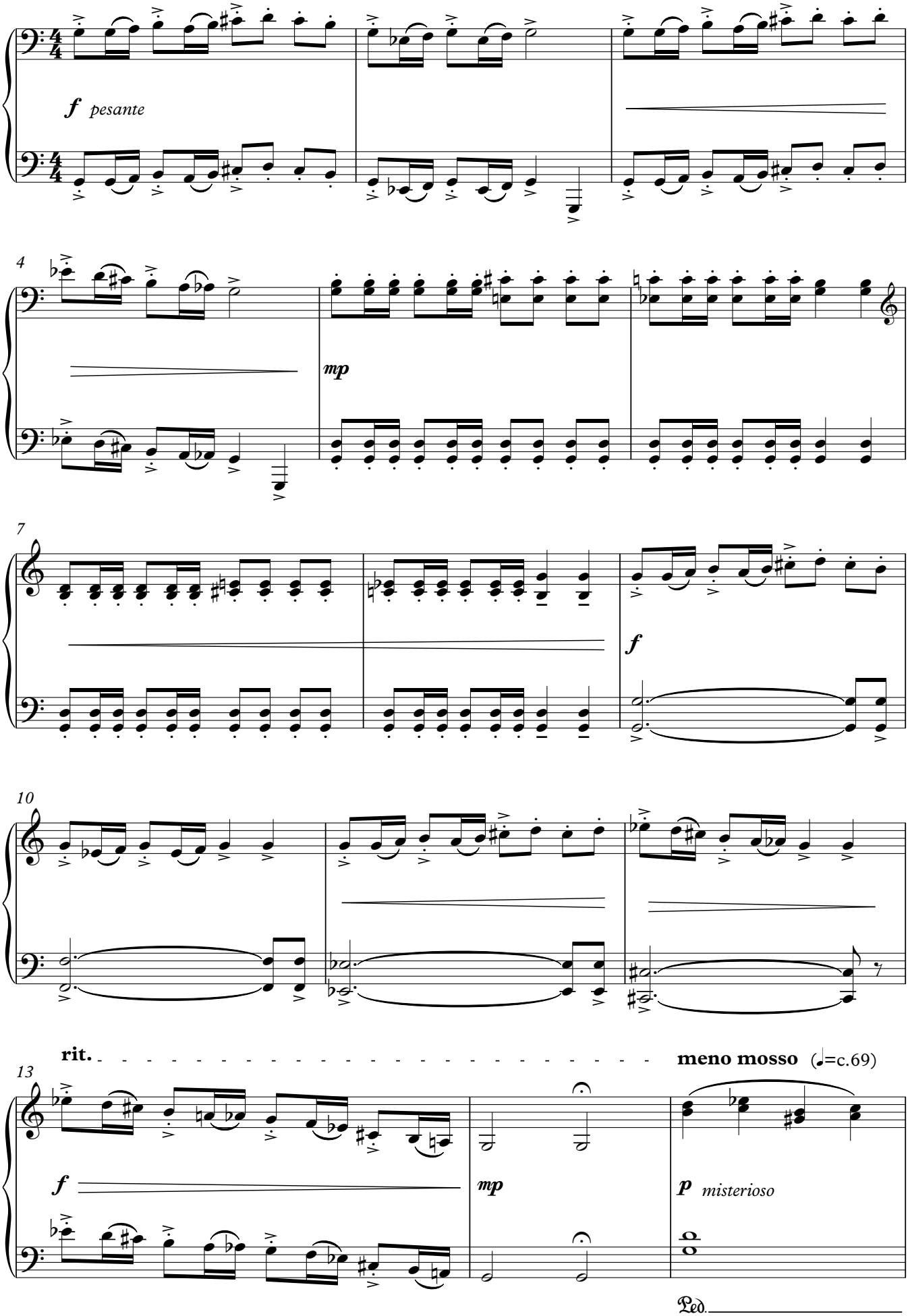


rit.



VI. Jock o'Bennachie

Moderato giocoso (♩=c.100)



16

rit.

21

Moderato giocoso (♩=c.100)

poco rit.

pp

25

A tempo

f pesante

29

ff cresc.

accel.

32

8va

fff

8vb

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