Thumb Position for Cello

Book 1

by Rick Mooney

SUMMY-BIRCHARD INC.

EVA Mª SIERRA

Thumb Position for Cello

Book 1

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0-87487-763-6

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A Note to Students

This book has been designed to give you a solid understanding of the four basic thumb position fingering patterns. In the first part of the book, each section deals with one pattern. The pieces in the last section have a variety of patterns in them. It will be up to you to figure out which ones to use!

Please follow your teacher's instruction about playing in thumb position. Here, though, is a summary of some important points to observe:

- Let the side of your thumb lie across two (and only two) strings.
- Keep your thumb in a natural, loose "straight" position. Your thumb should neither bow backward nor bend at the first joint. Both of these things usually indicate tension -- which you should avoid at all costs.
- Use the weight from your back to stop the strings. Be careful that your fingers do not poke down into the string causing the knuckles to stick up. Your hand shape should be curved and the base knuckles should be soft and flexible.
- Since your thumb will be resting on harmonics in this book, it is not required that you firmly stop the strings with the thumb. However, I usually recommend that you try to balance some weight from your back onto the thumb. That way it will remain in one spot on the string and not wander around the harmonic spot. Be sure that you do not collapse your knuckles or tighten your thumb as you do this.

Here are a few practice hints:

- The Daily Warm-ups at the beginning of each section are designed to help you establish each finger pattern carefully and correctly. Please practice them slowly with careful attention to intonation. Practice them every day, but don't feel that you must finish all of them before starting on the pieces.
- As you play the pieces, notice the names of the notes and the distances between them so you will know which finger pattern you must use. Then pay attention to how each pattern feels. If you memorize the feelings, you can successfully use these patterns in other pieces.
- You will notice that there are very few fingerings in this book. That is because your hand will remain basically in the same place on the fingerboard all the time. Since there is no shifting, you should be able to figure out the fingerings for yourself.
- In addition to the fast fiddle tunes in this book, I have included several pieces in each section which are slow and melodic. Please try to vibrato on these pieces. Using a mellow, relaxed vibrato will help make sure that your hand stays loose and balanced.

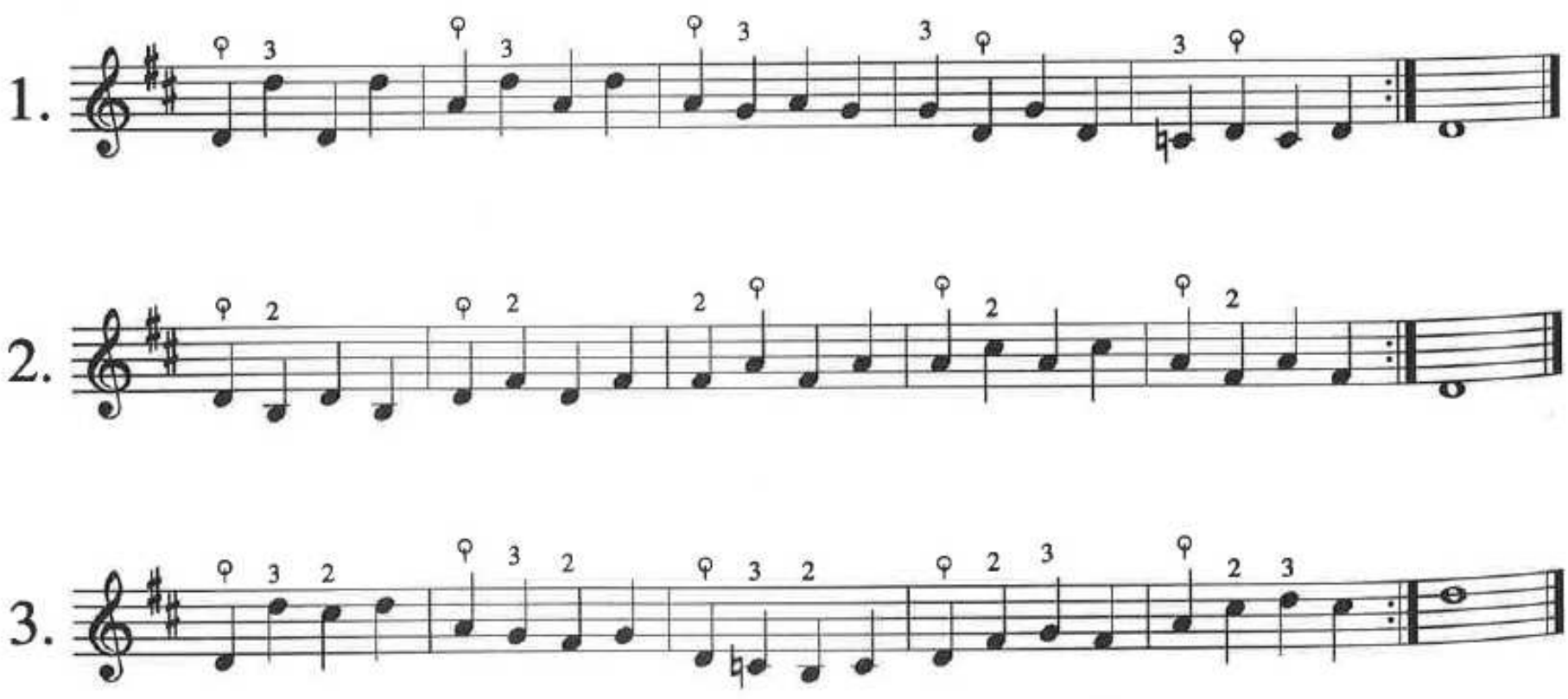
I hope you enjoy playing these pieces. I really believe that developing good technique can be a lot of fun!

-- Rick Mooney

Thumb Position Pattern I

half step between 2nd and 3rd fingers

Daily Warm-ups



Thumb Position Pattern I -- Daily Warm-ups (continued)

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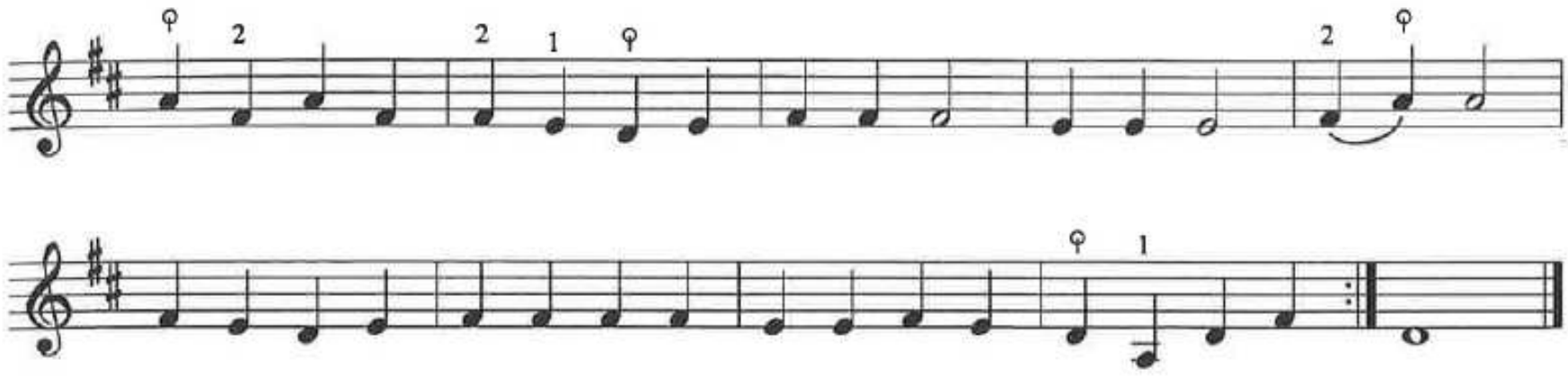

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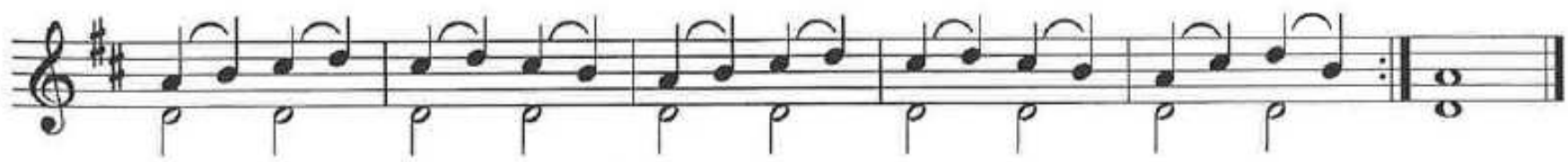
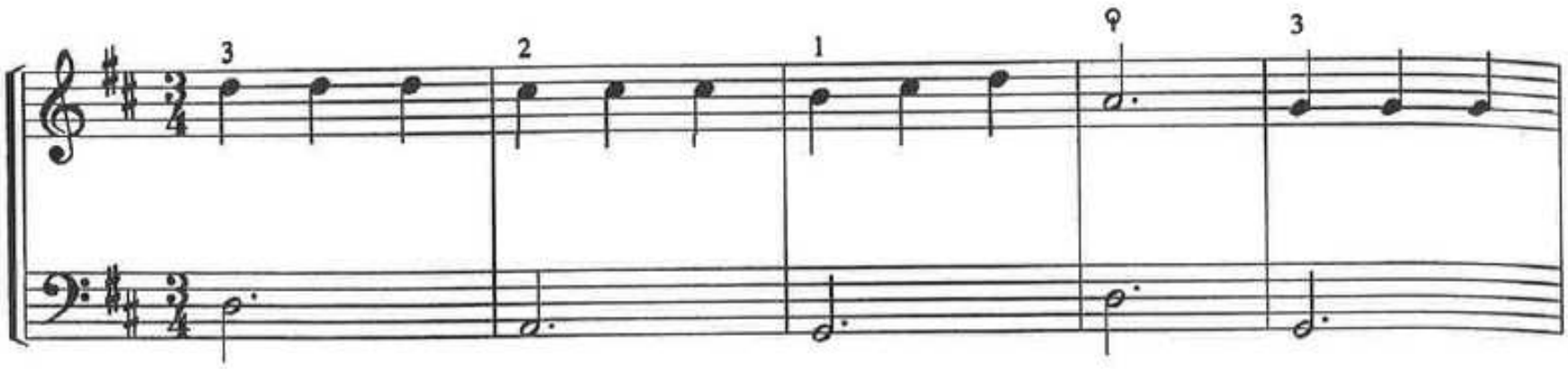
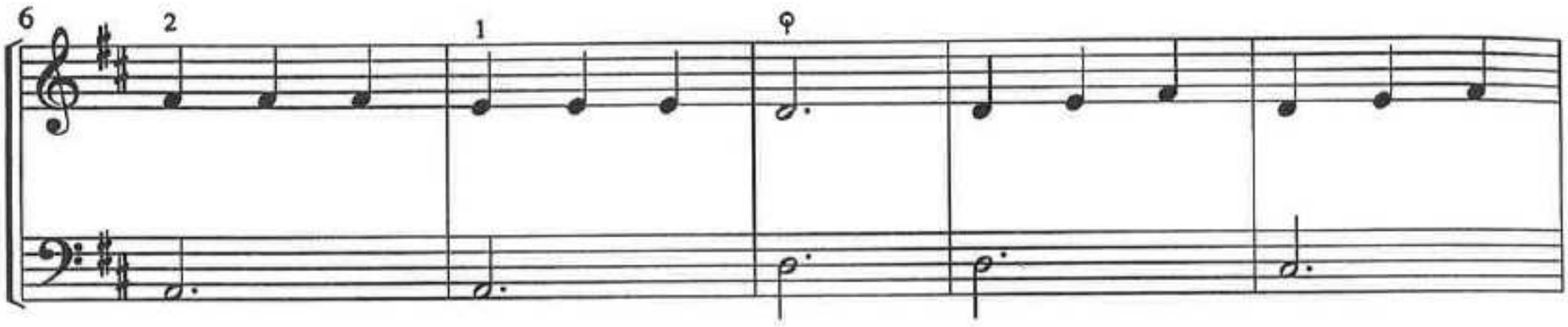
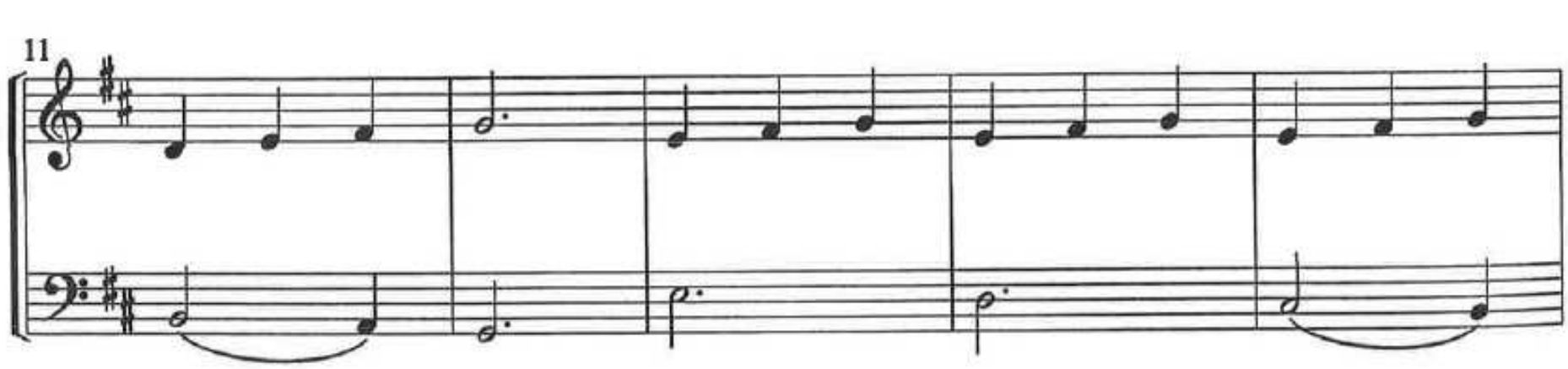


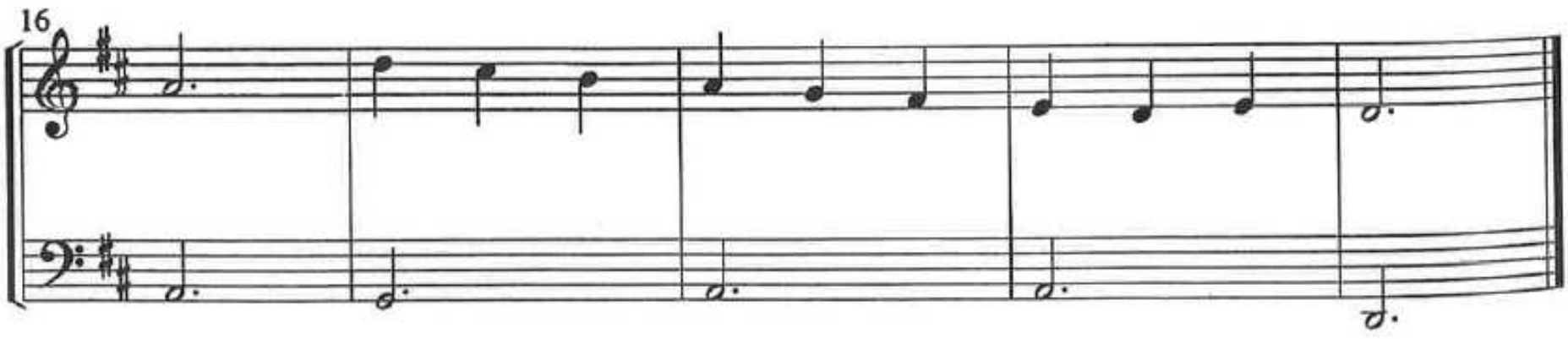
10.

French Folk Song

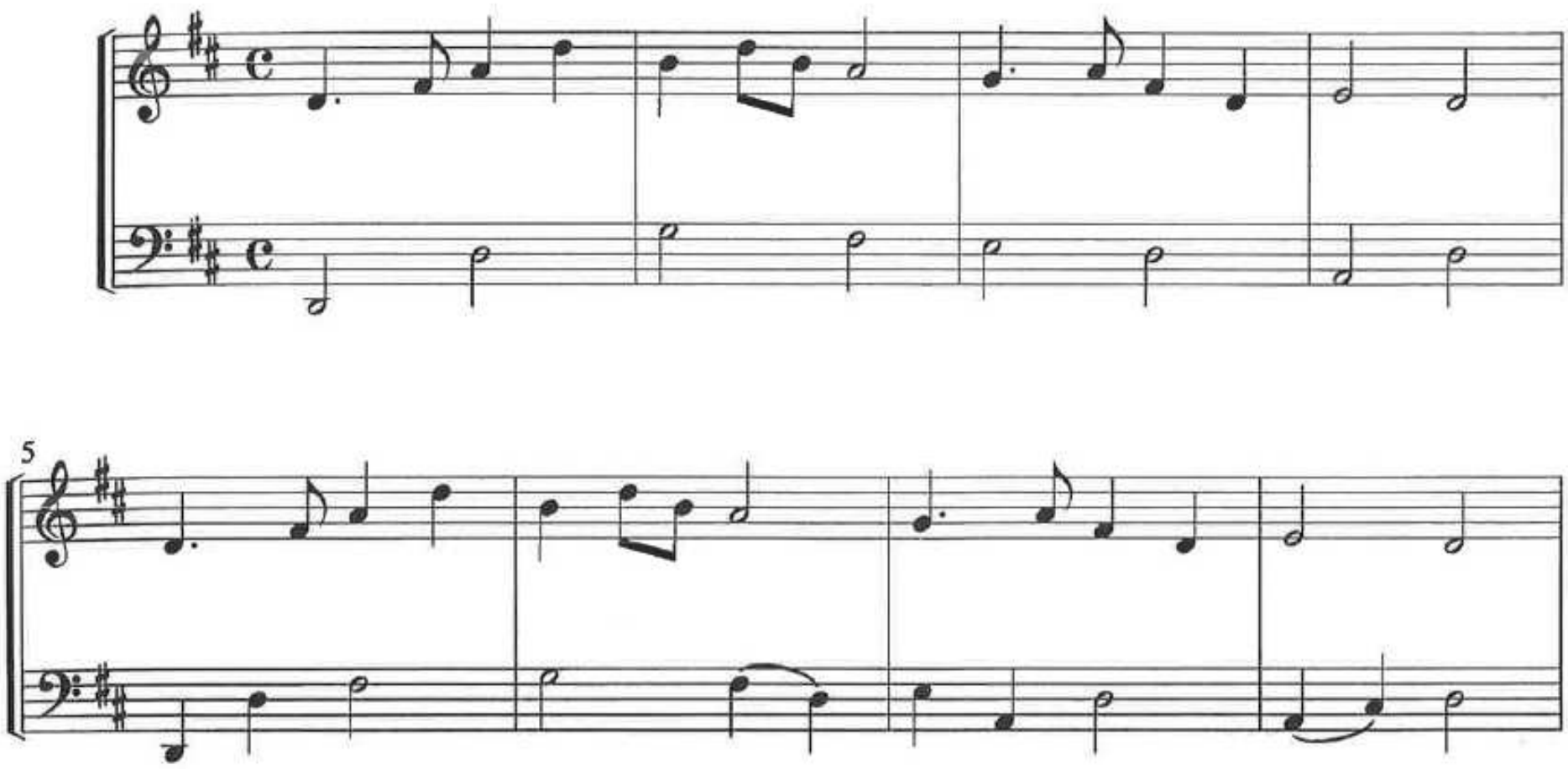








May Song
(Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da)



Oh Susannah

Stephen Foster

V

sempre pizz.

5

1.

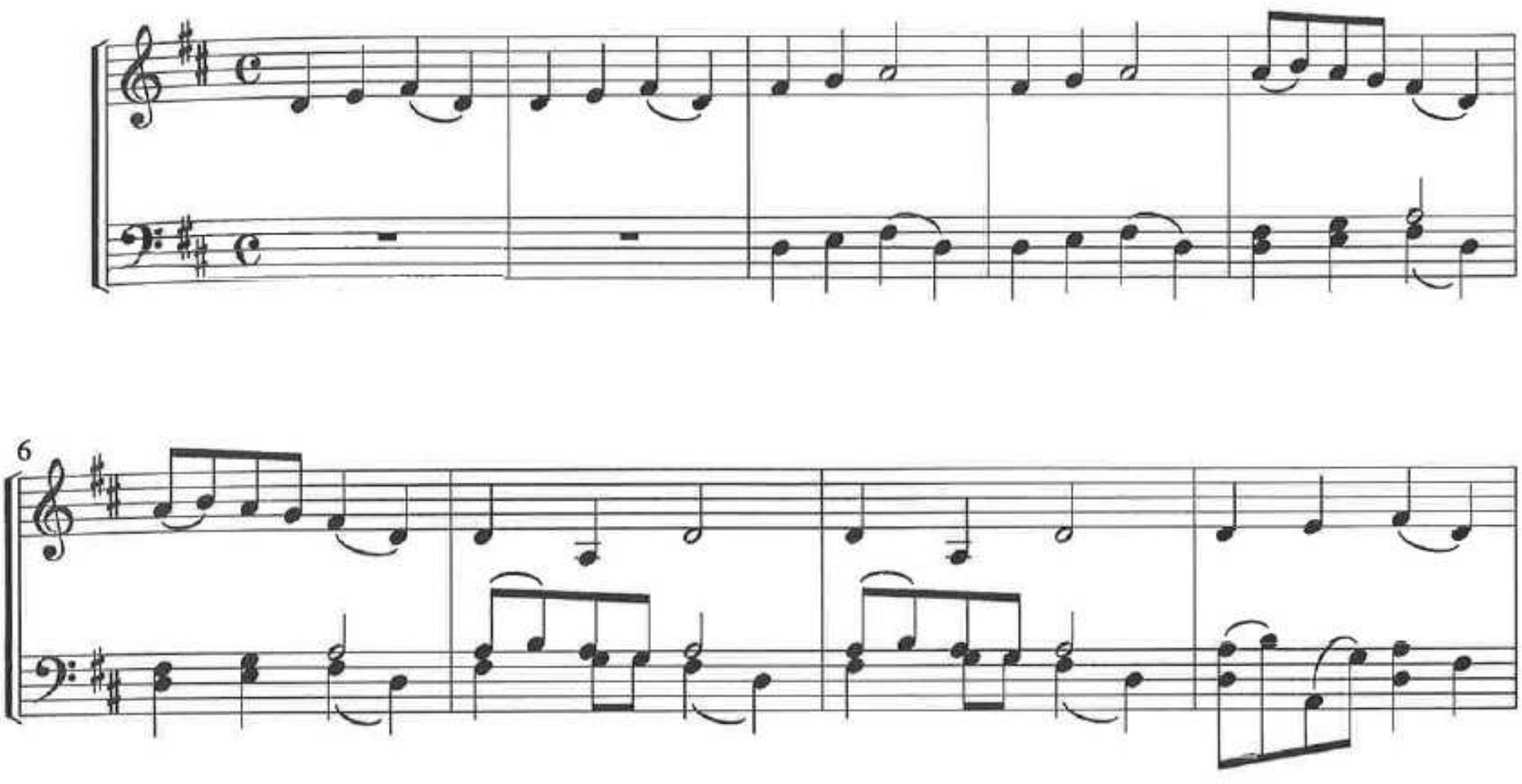
2.

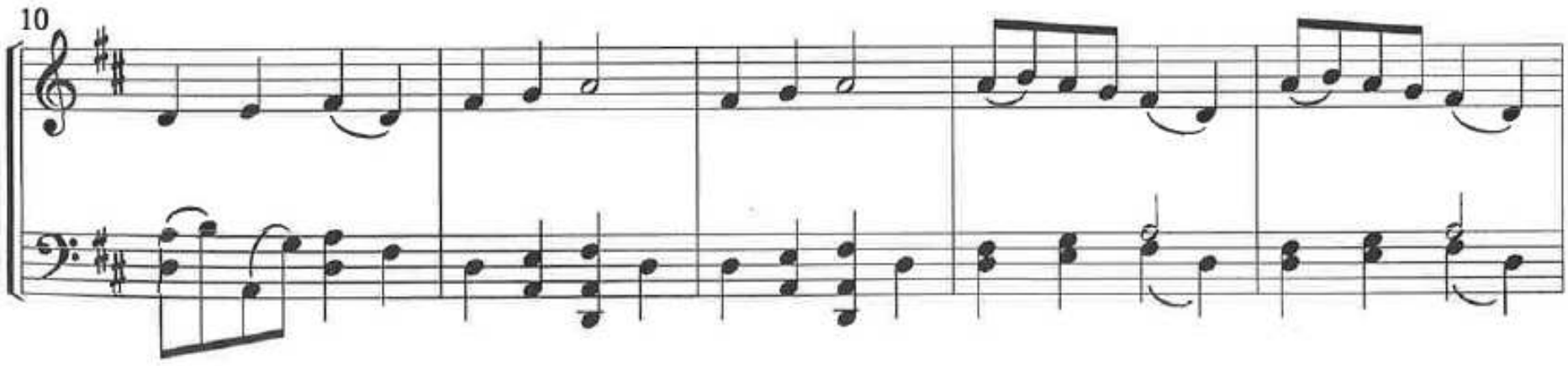
10

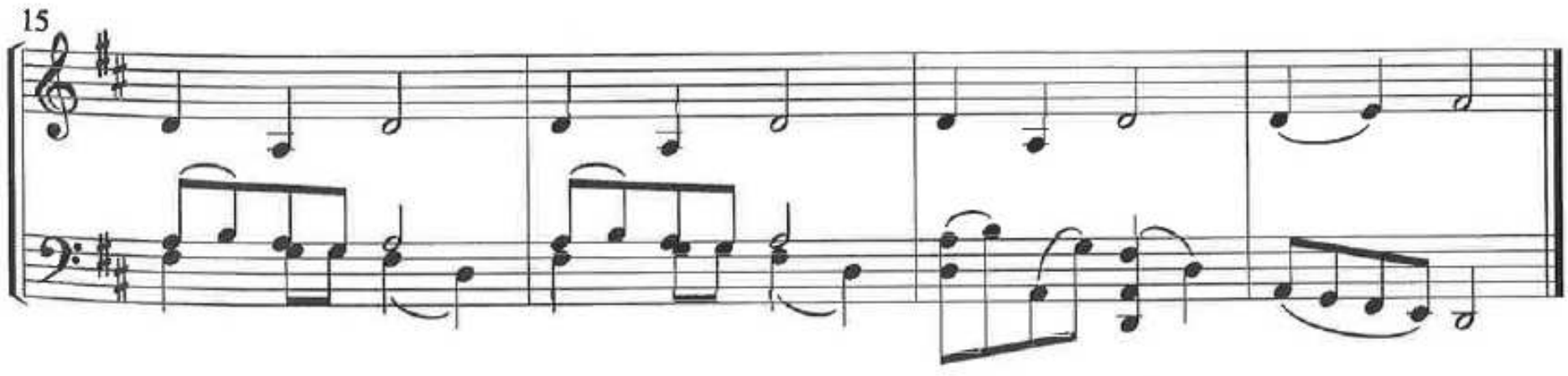
V

14

Are You Sleeping?
(Frère Jacques)







I'll Always Remember You

Rick Mooney

V

sempre pizz.

5

1.

2.

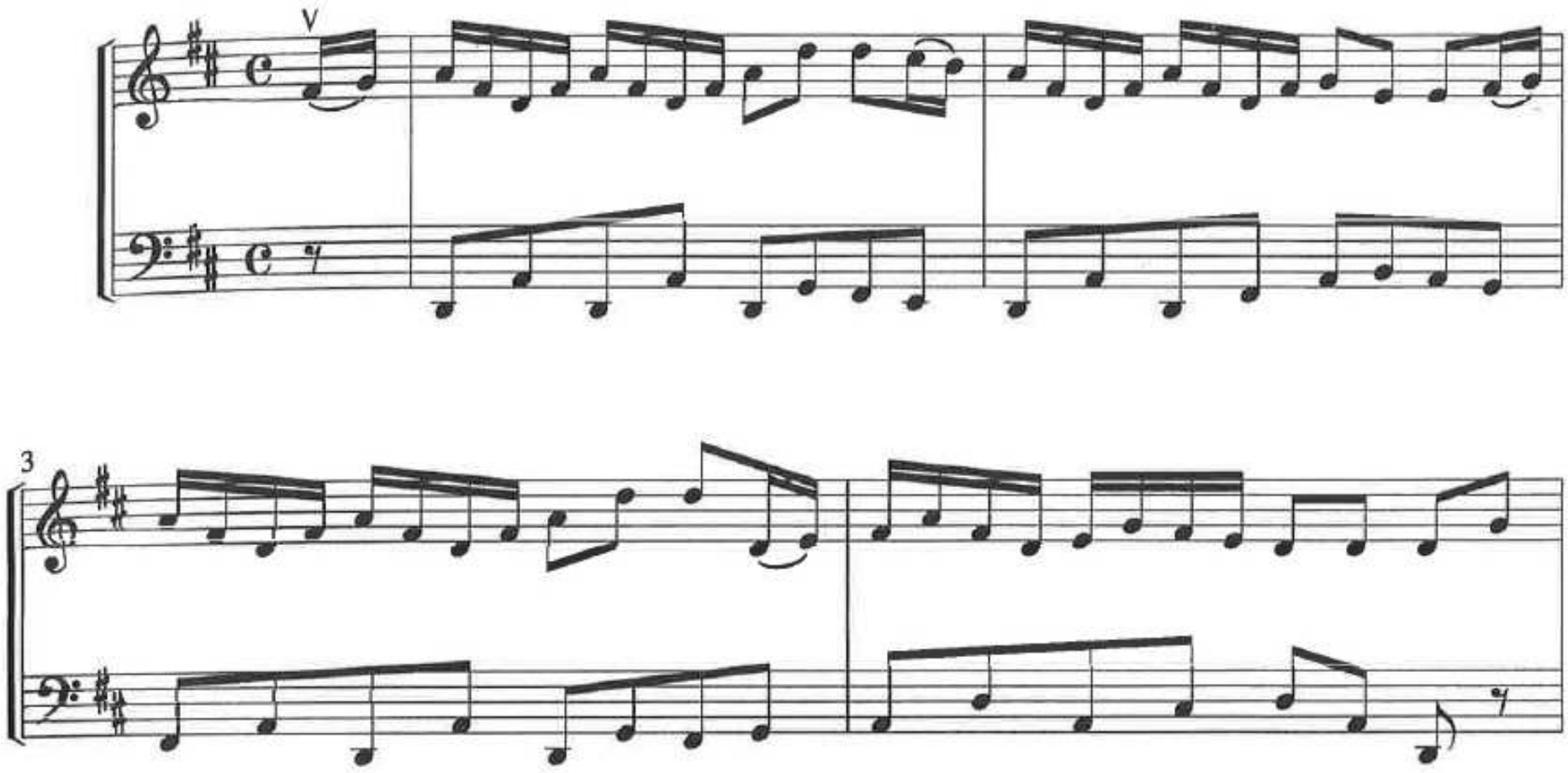
10

14

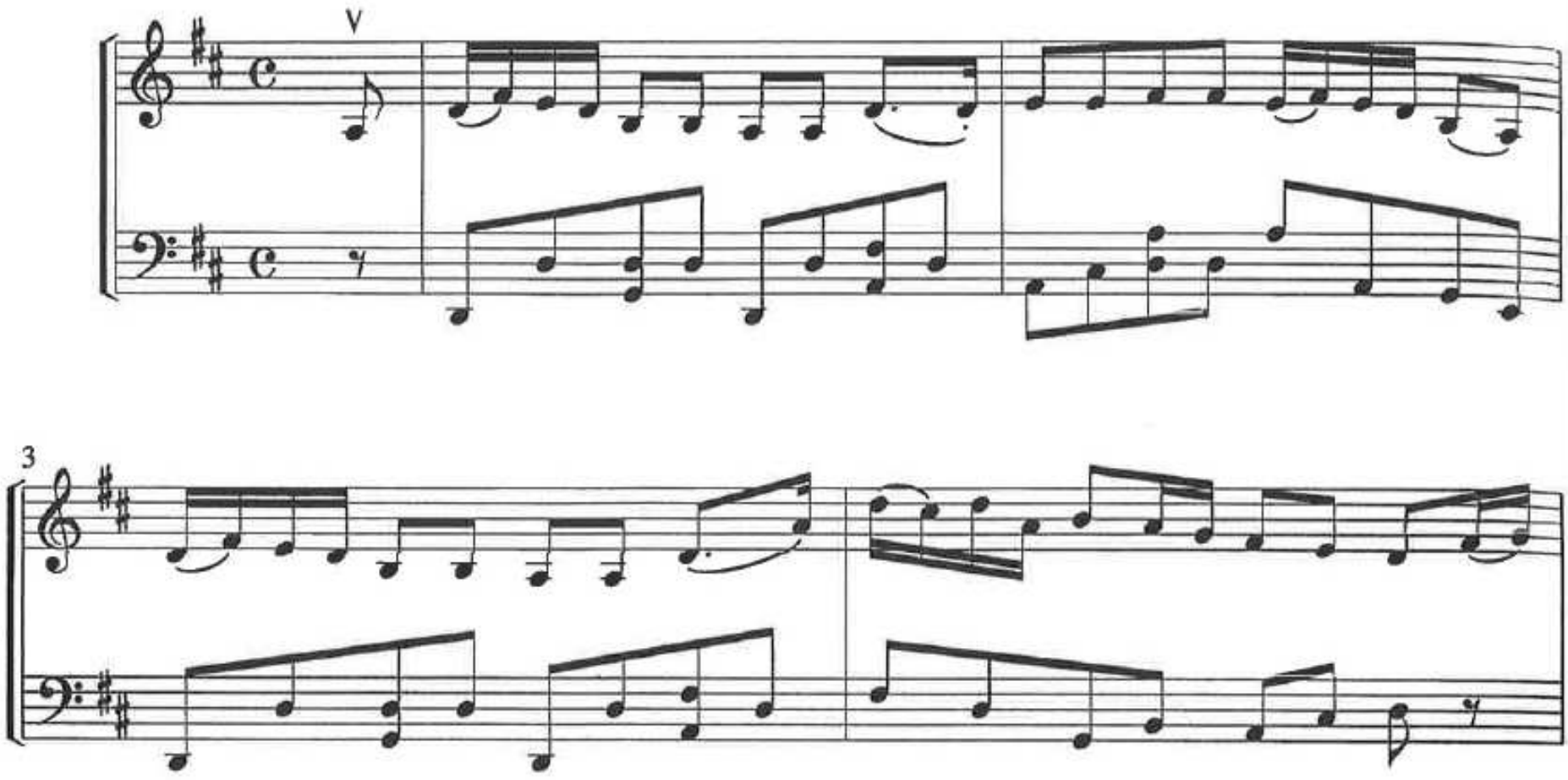
1.

2.

Soldier's Joy



Arkansas Traveller



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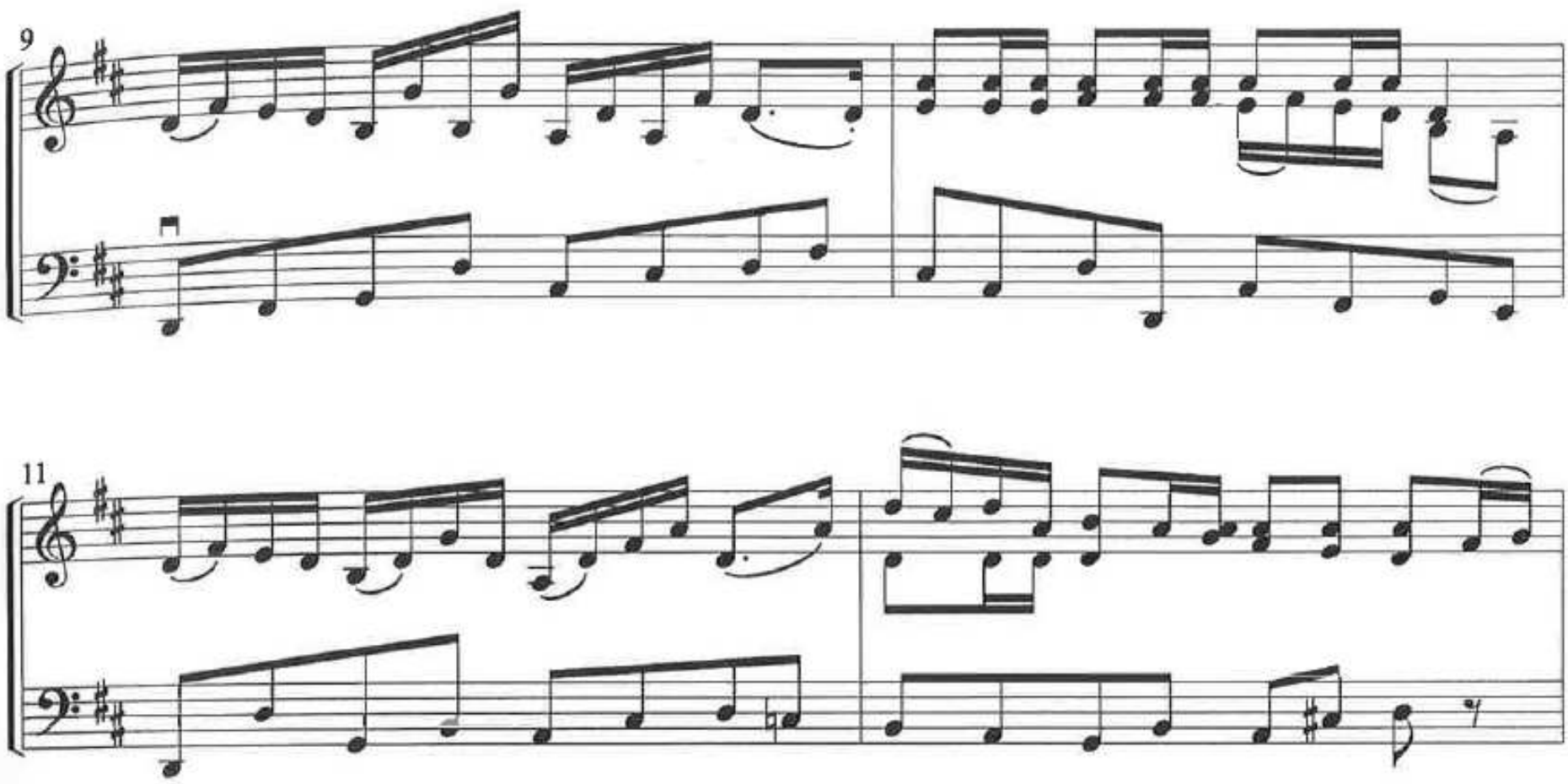
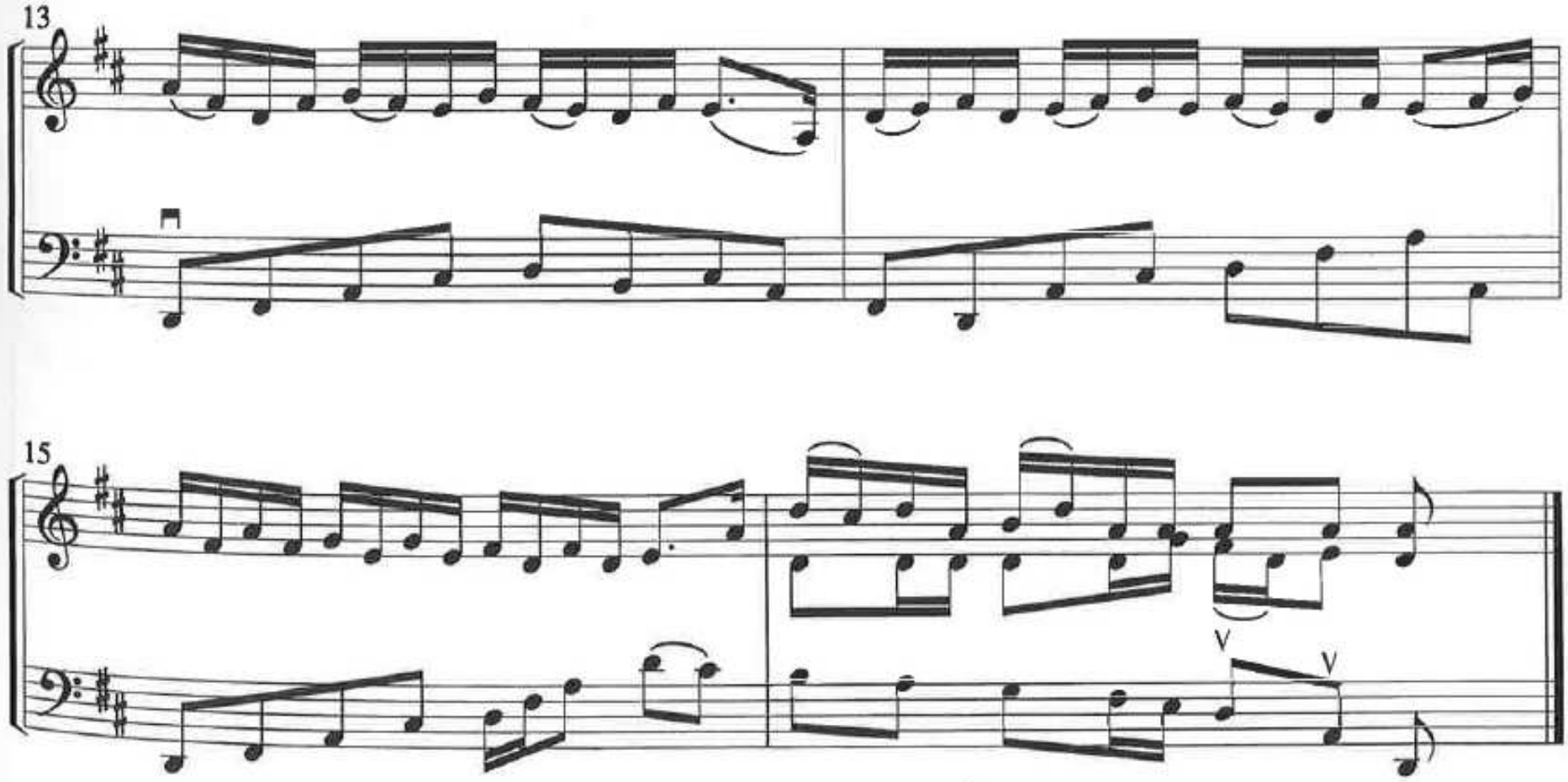
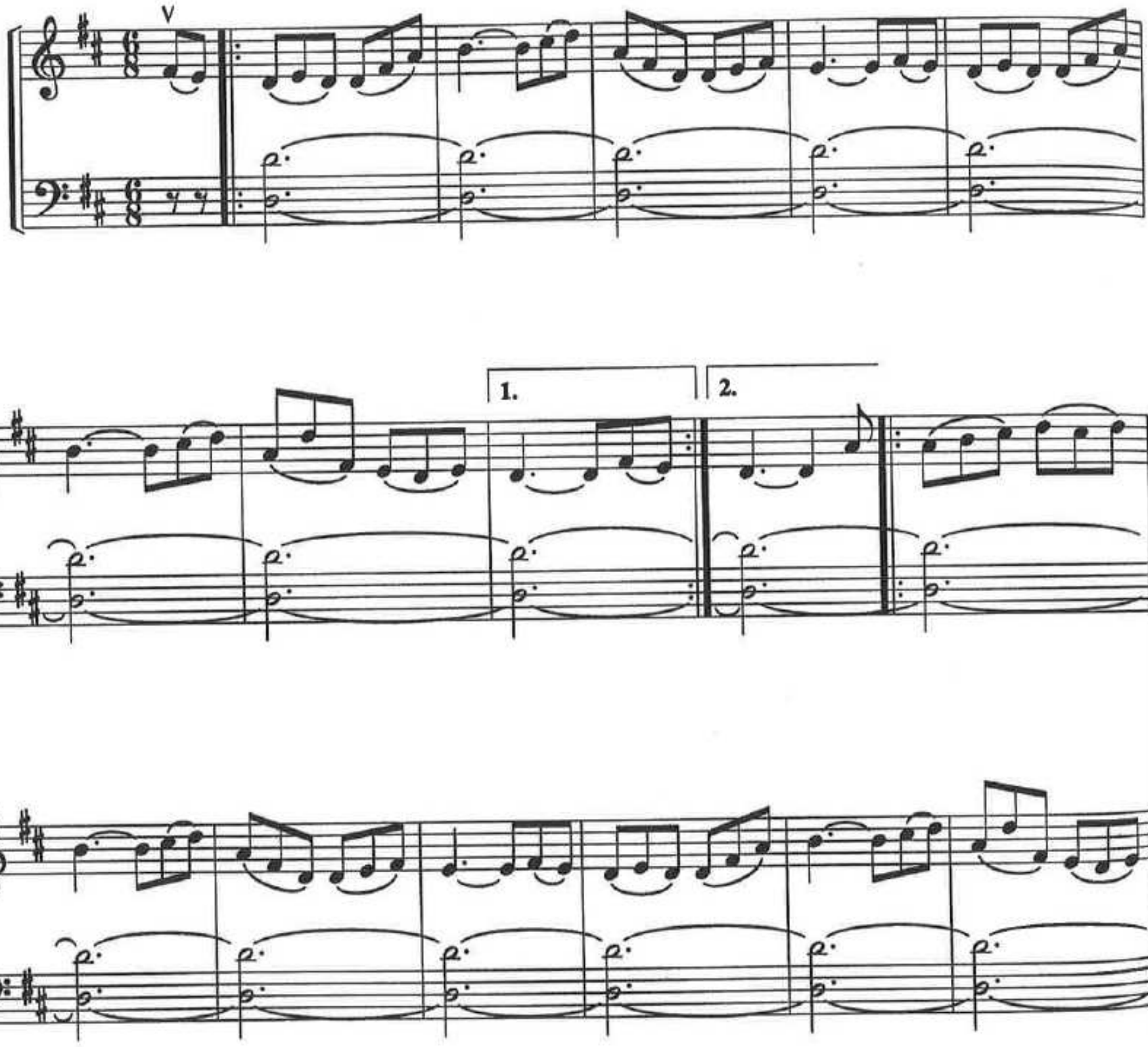
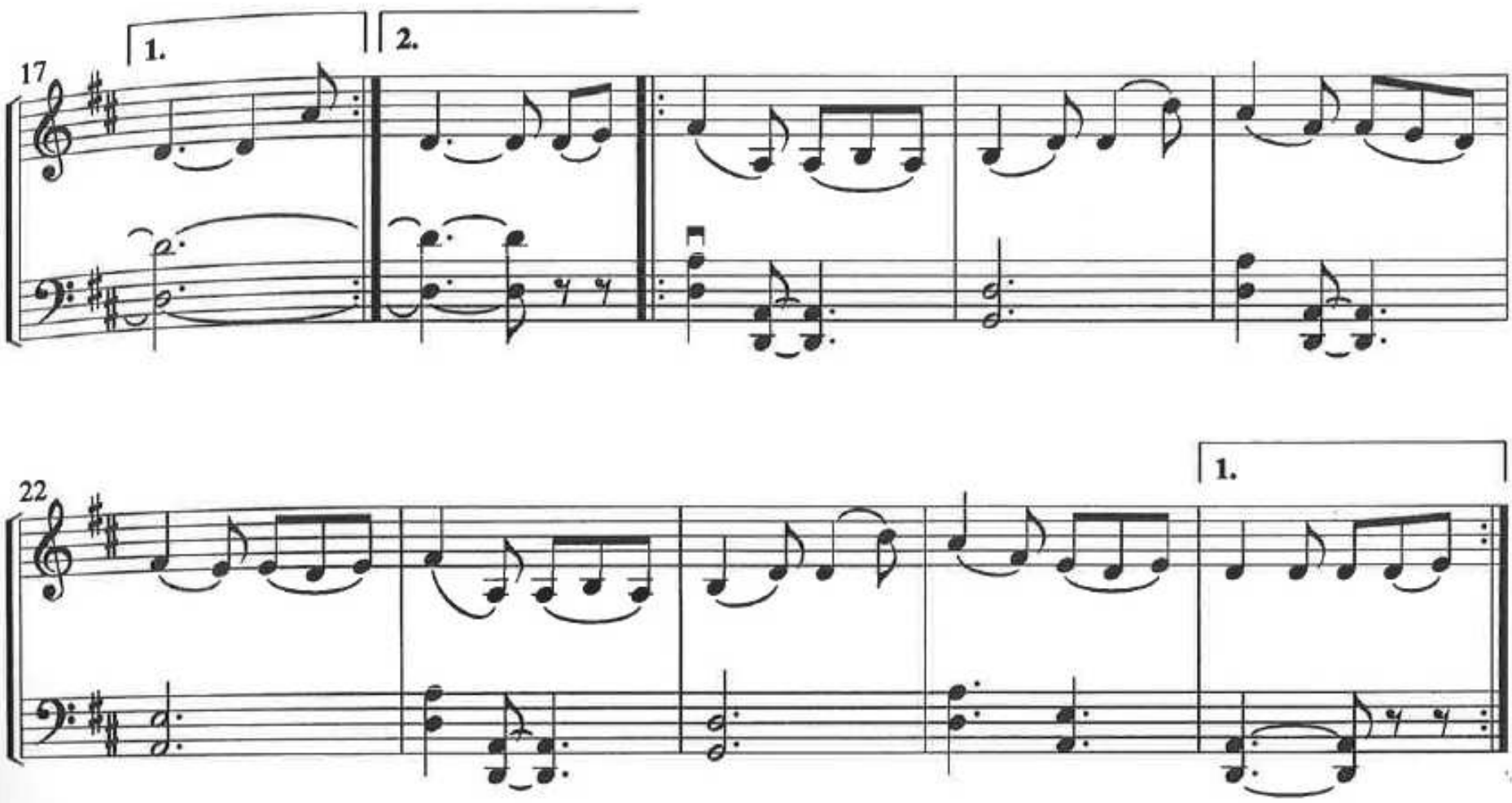




The Hundred Pipers



The Hundred Pipers



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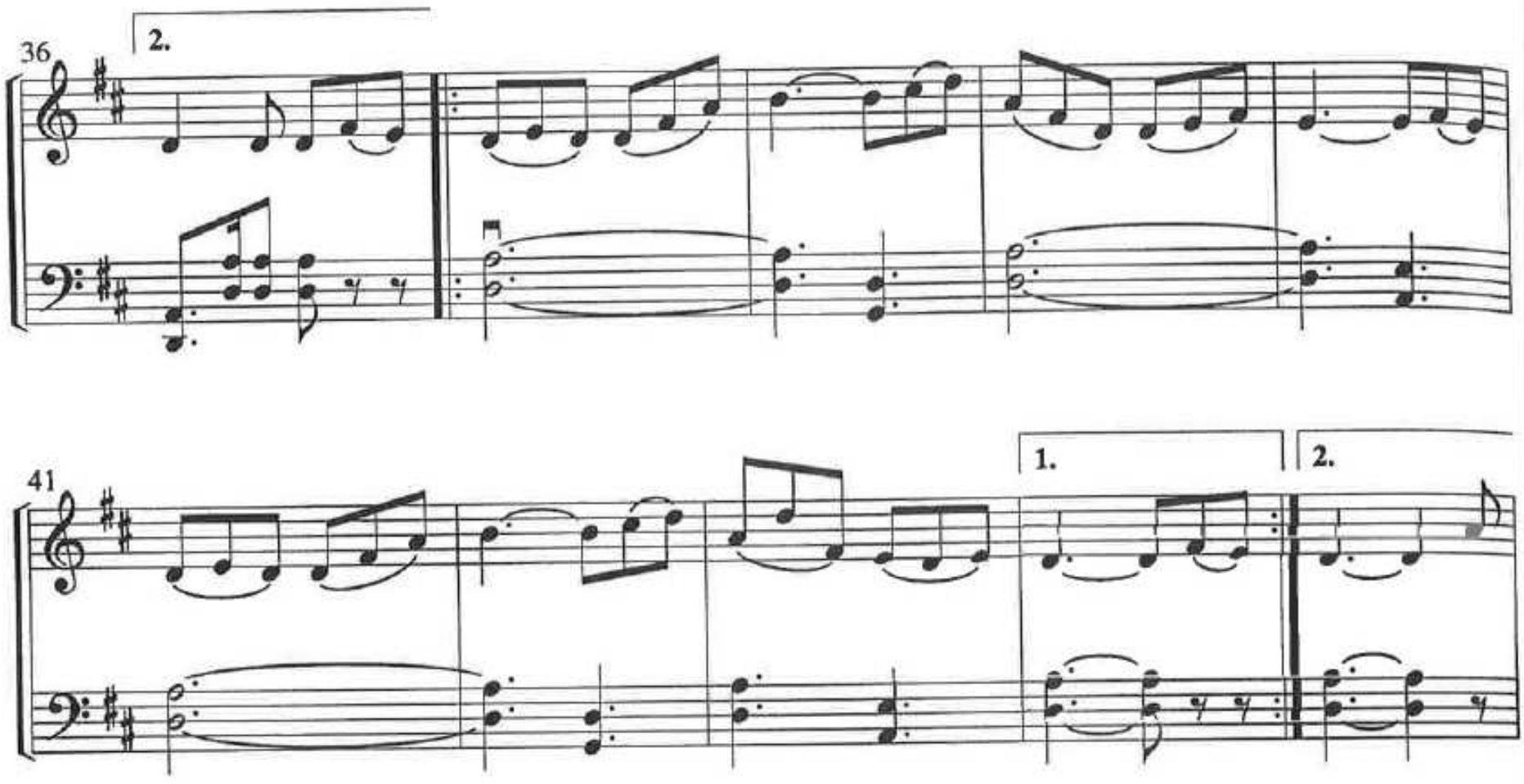
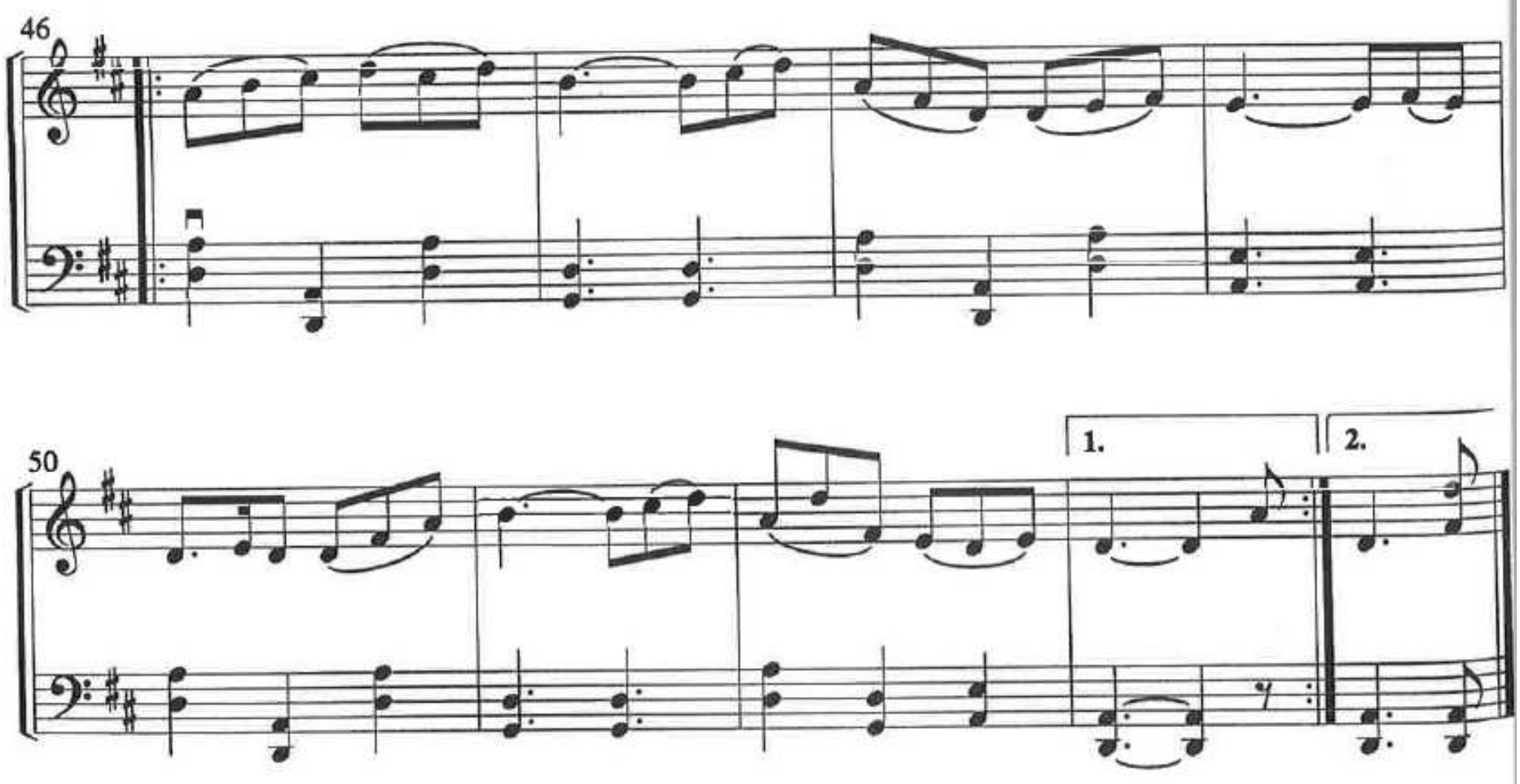
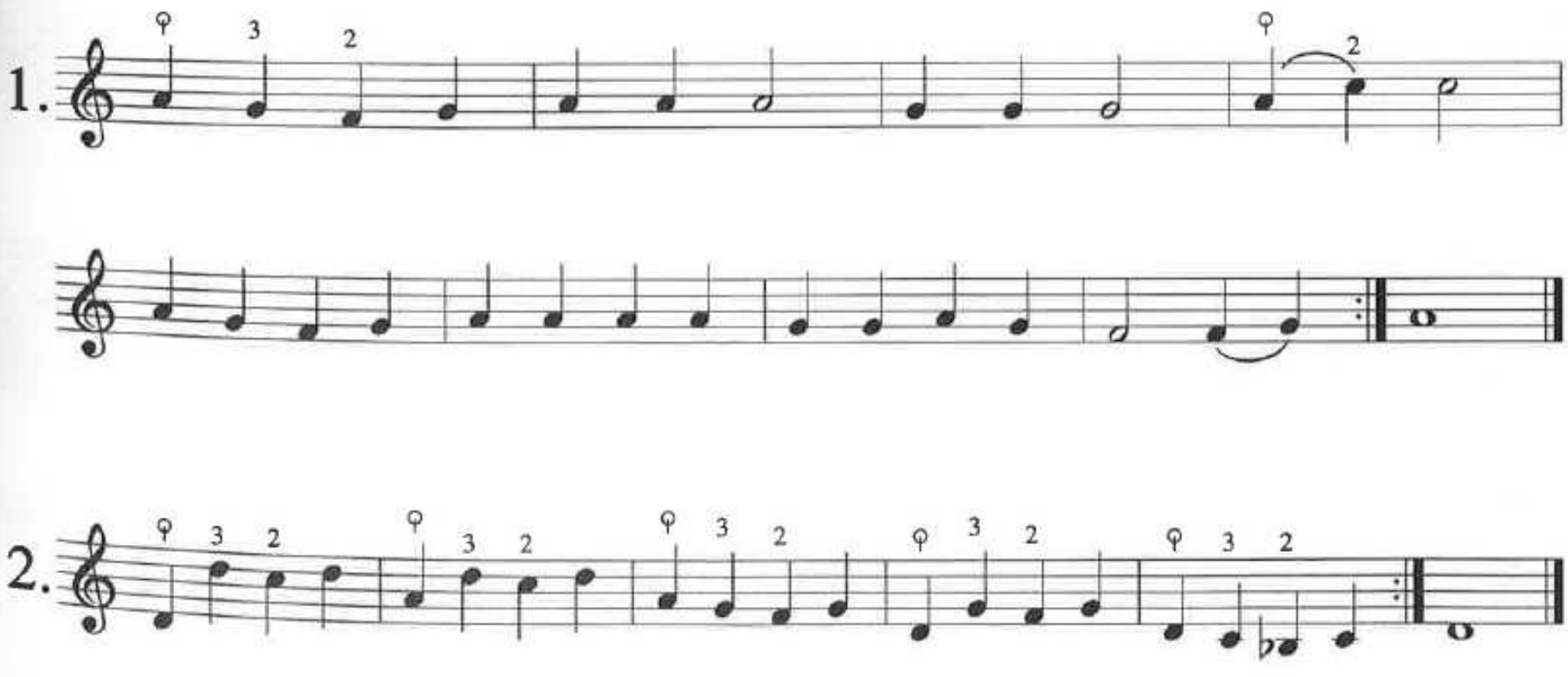




Thumb Position Pattern II

half step between 1st and 2nd fingers

Daily Warm-ups



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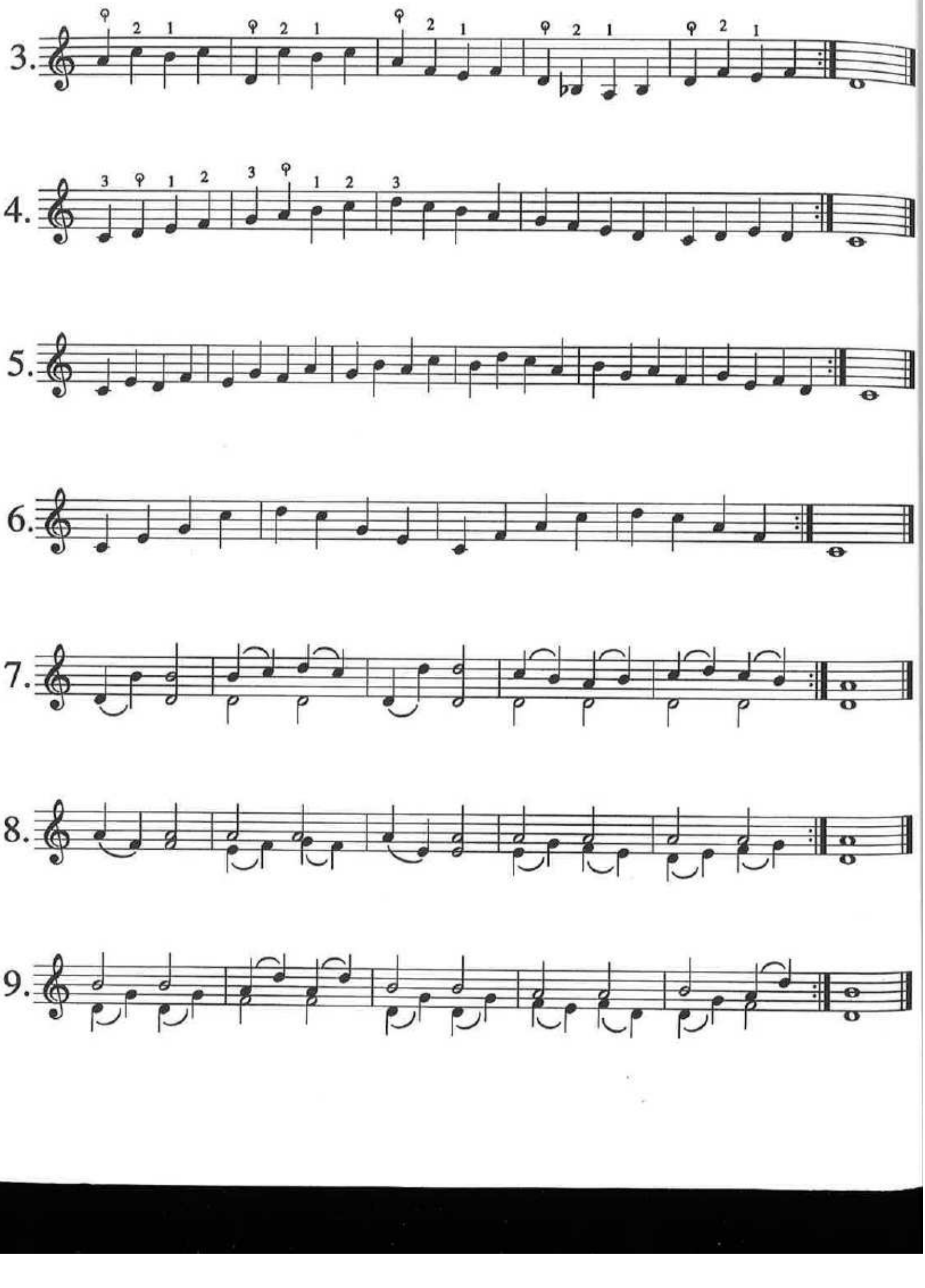
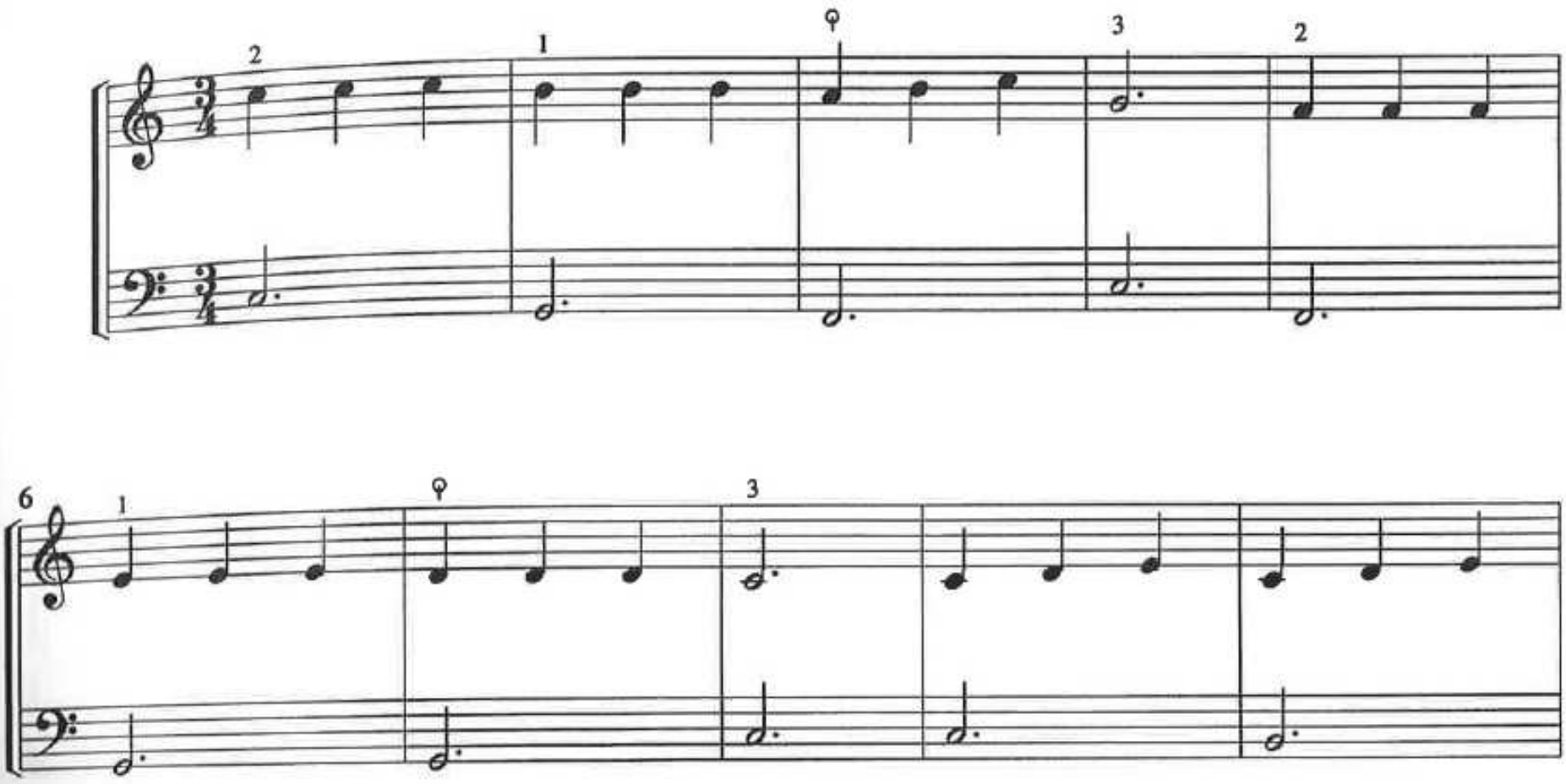
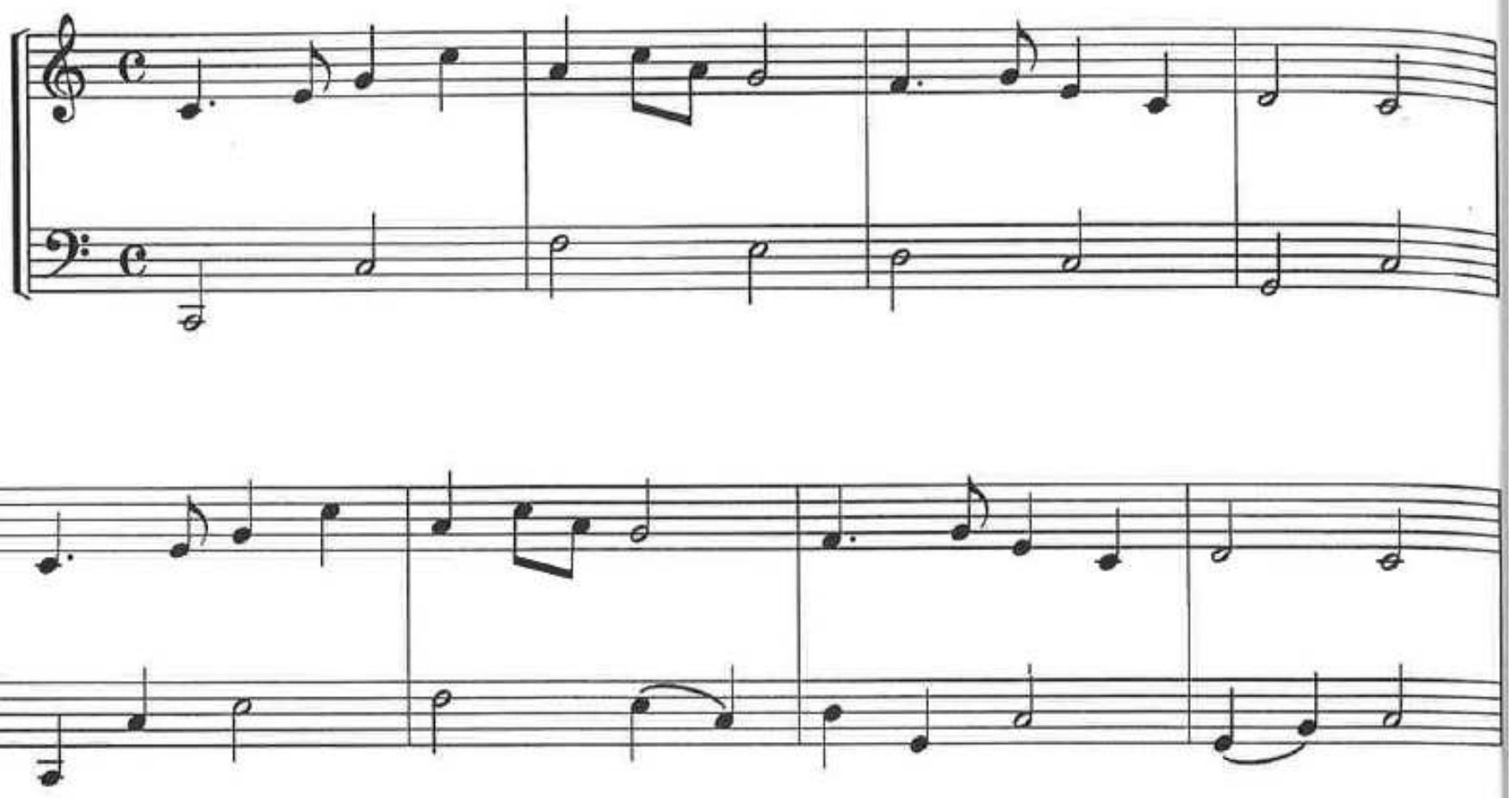


French Folk Song

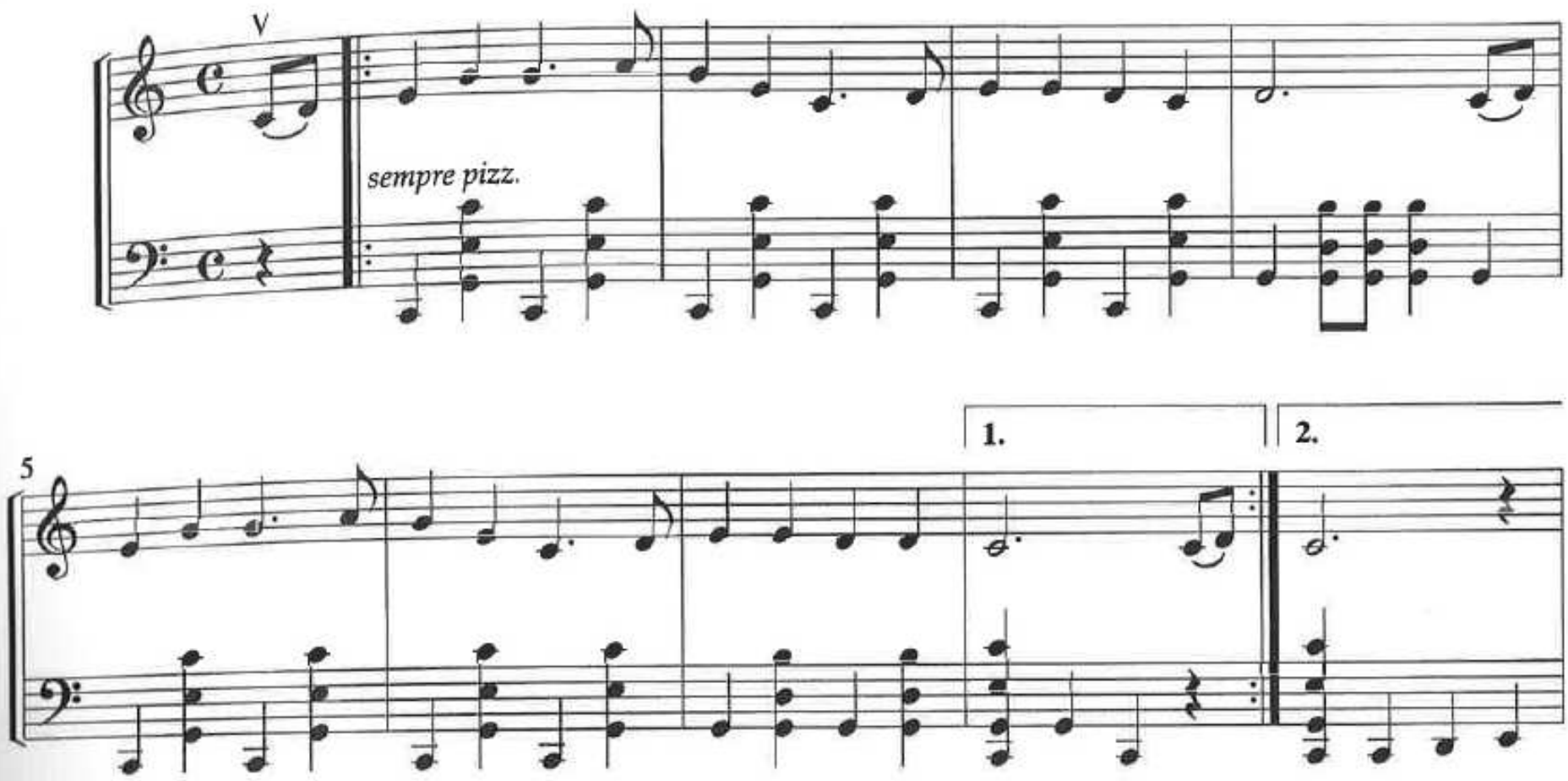


May Song
(Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da)



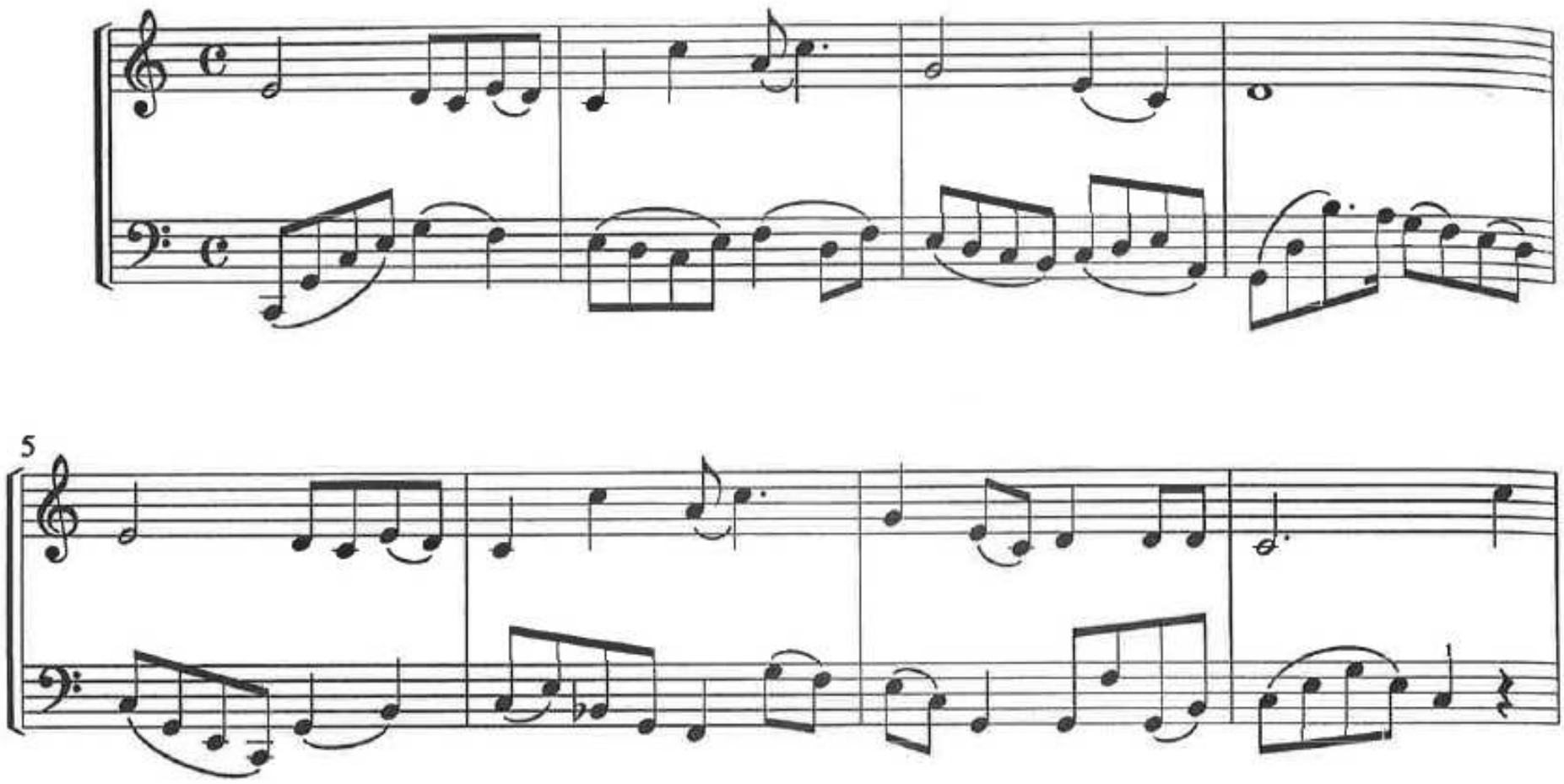
Oh Susannah

Stephen Foster

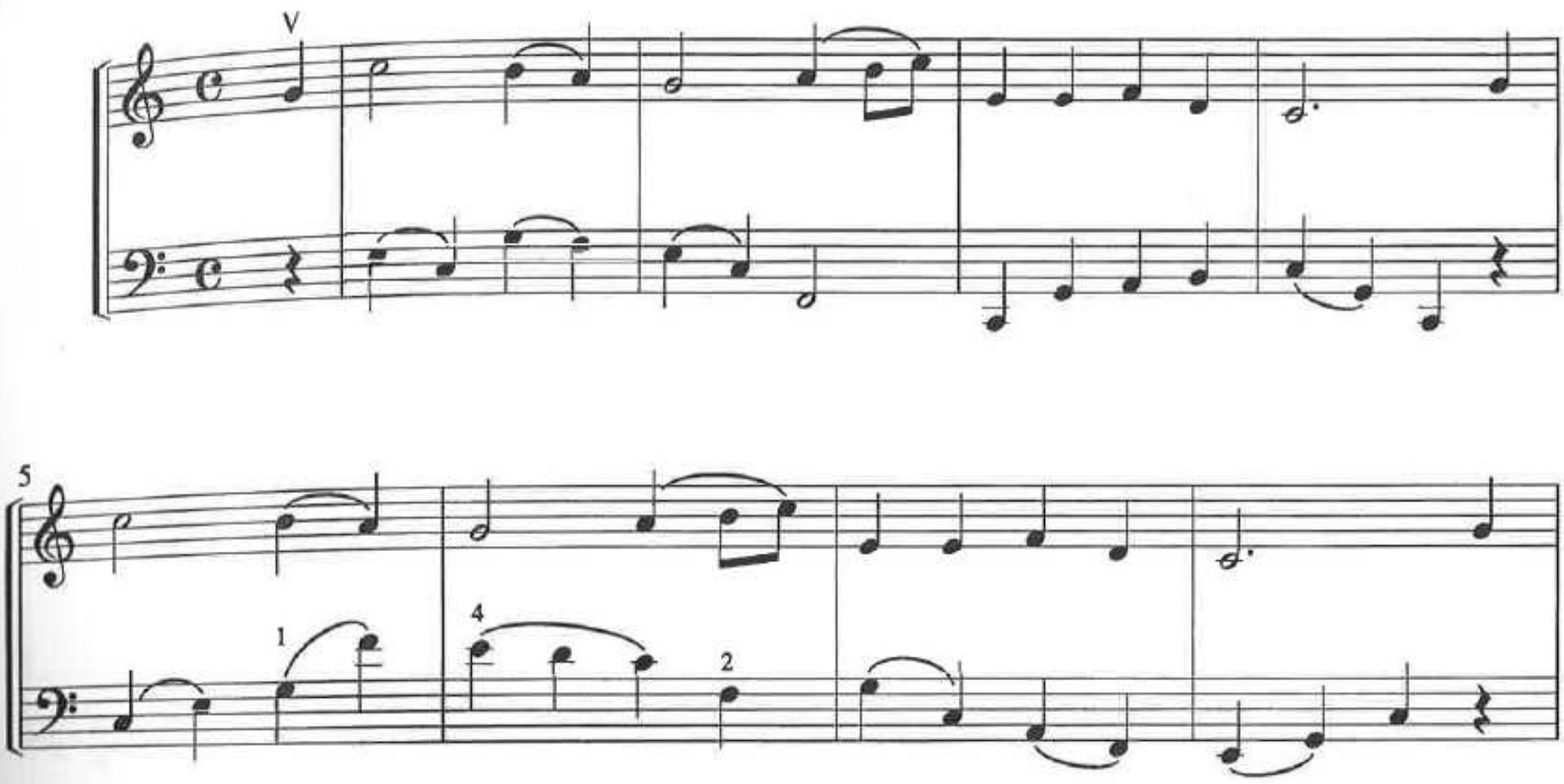


Old Folks at Home

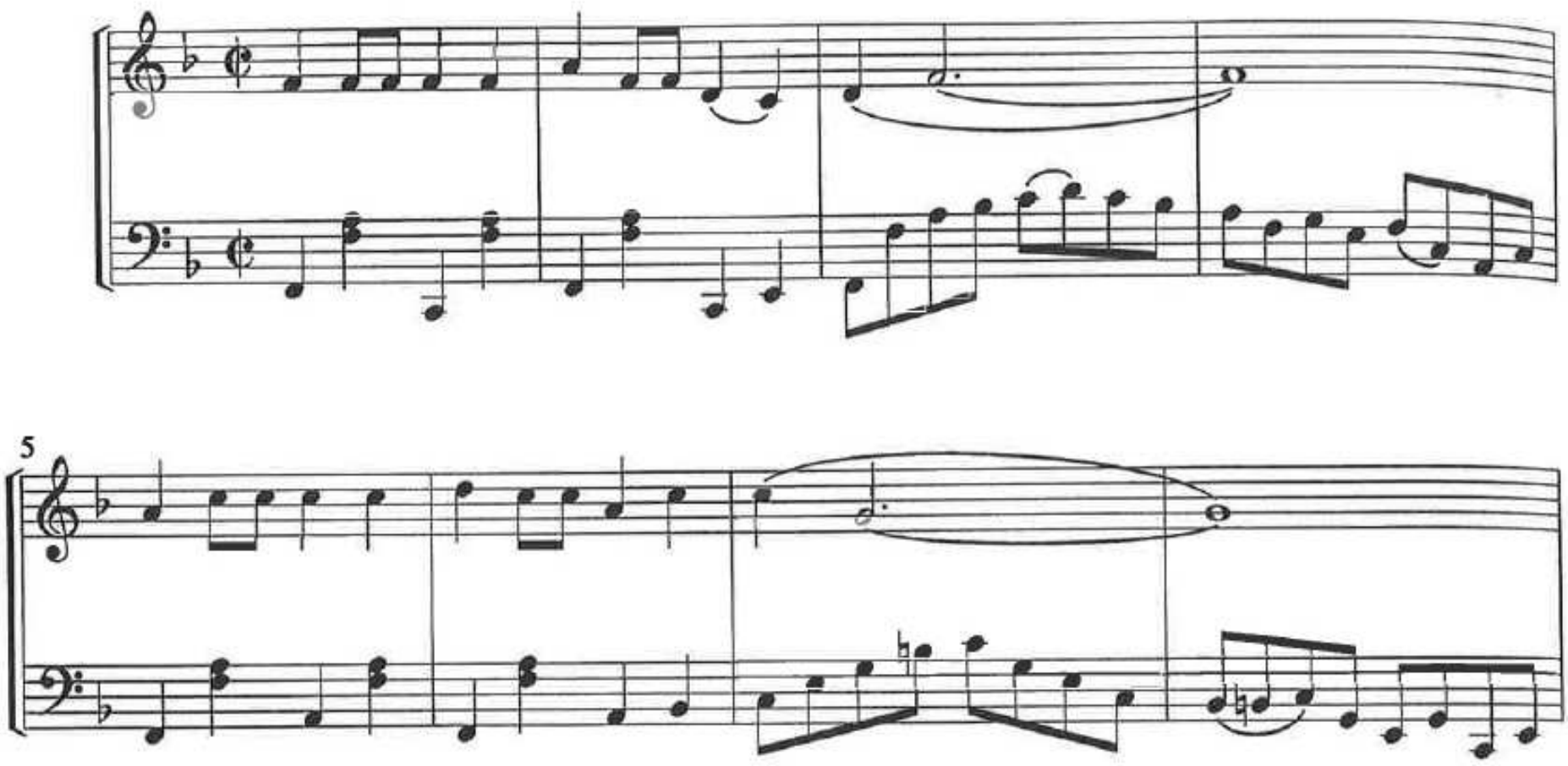
Stephen Foster



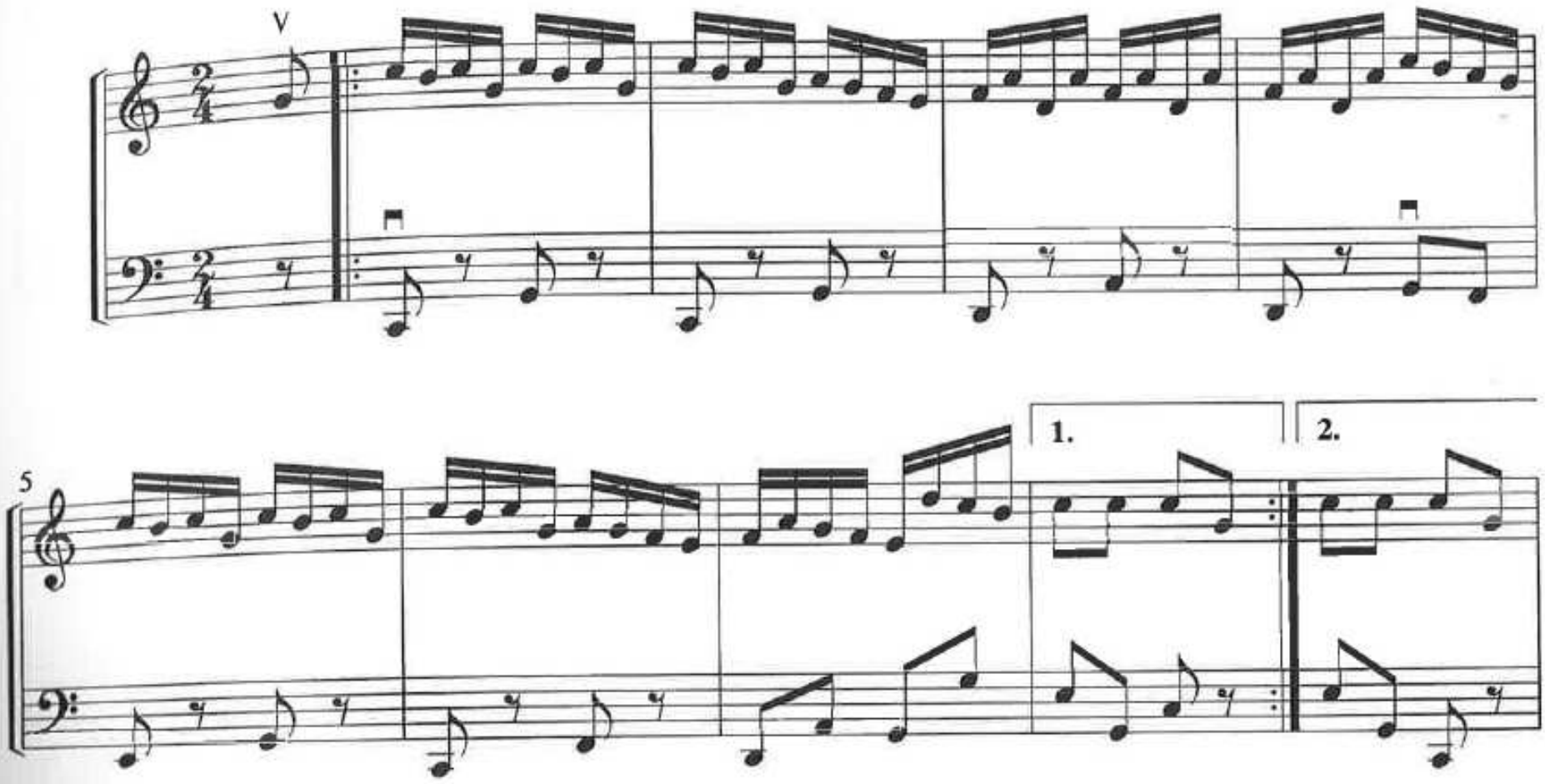
The Blue Bells of Scotland



Crawdad

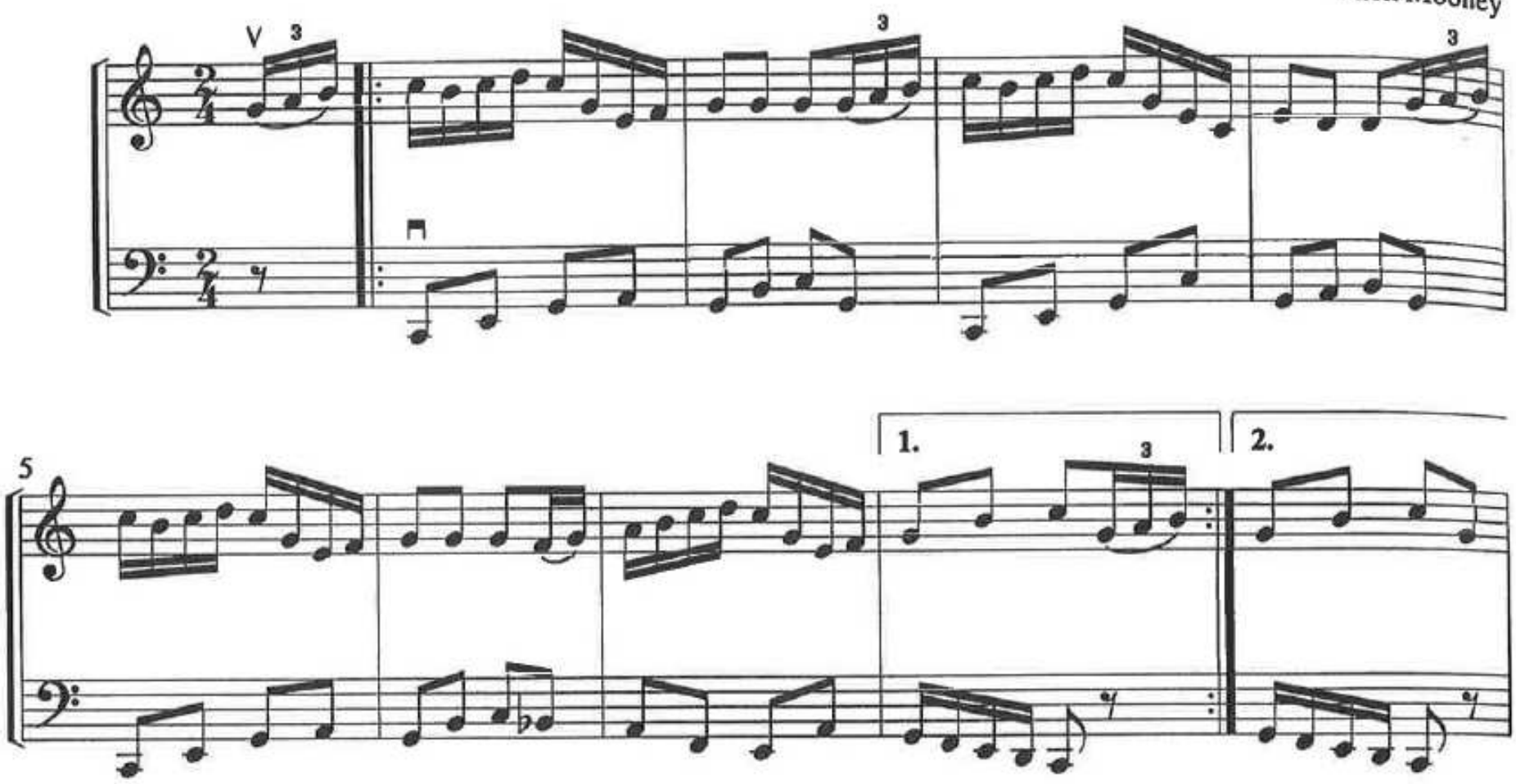


The Devil's Dream



The California Traveller

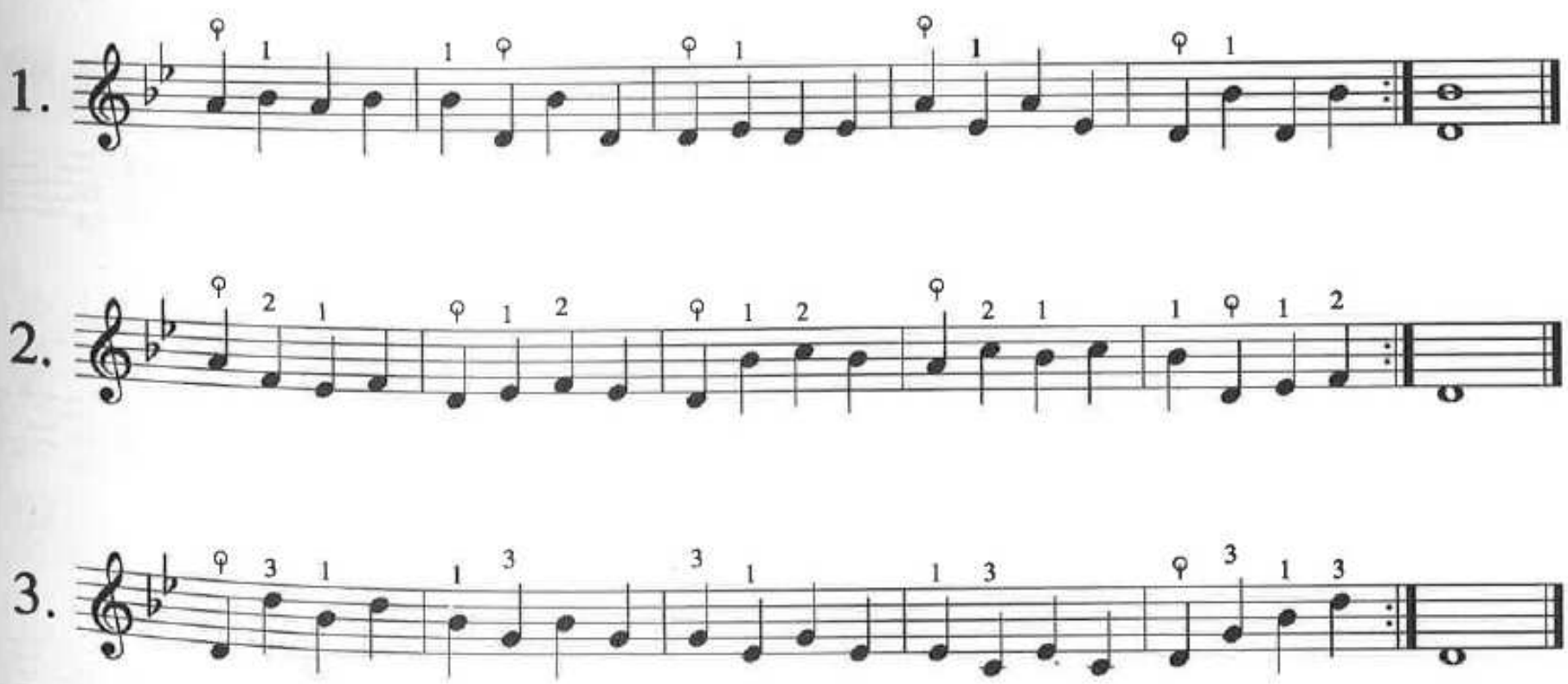
Rick Mooney



Thumb Position Pattern III

half step between thumb and 1st finger

Daily Warm-ups



Thumb Position Pattern III -- Daily Warm-ups (continued)

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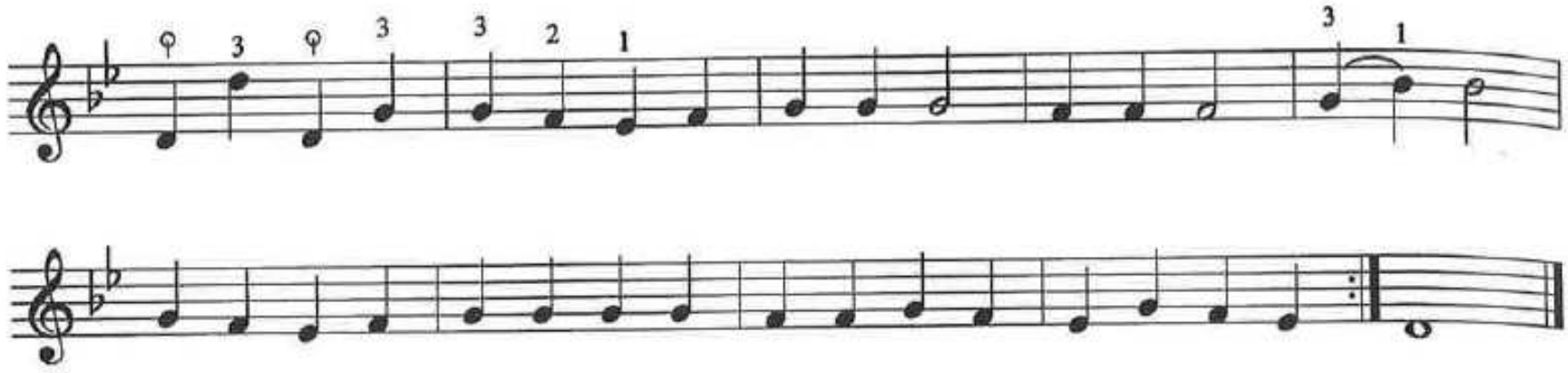

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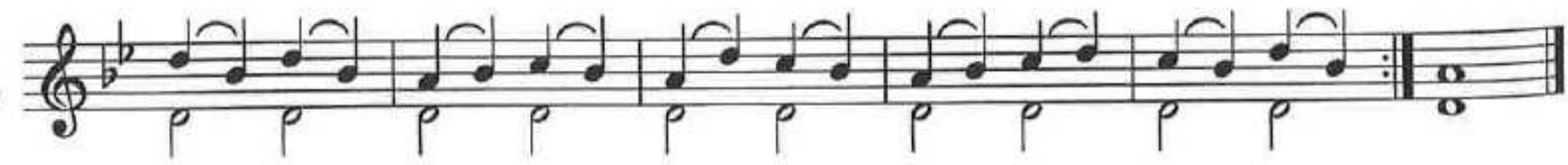

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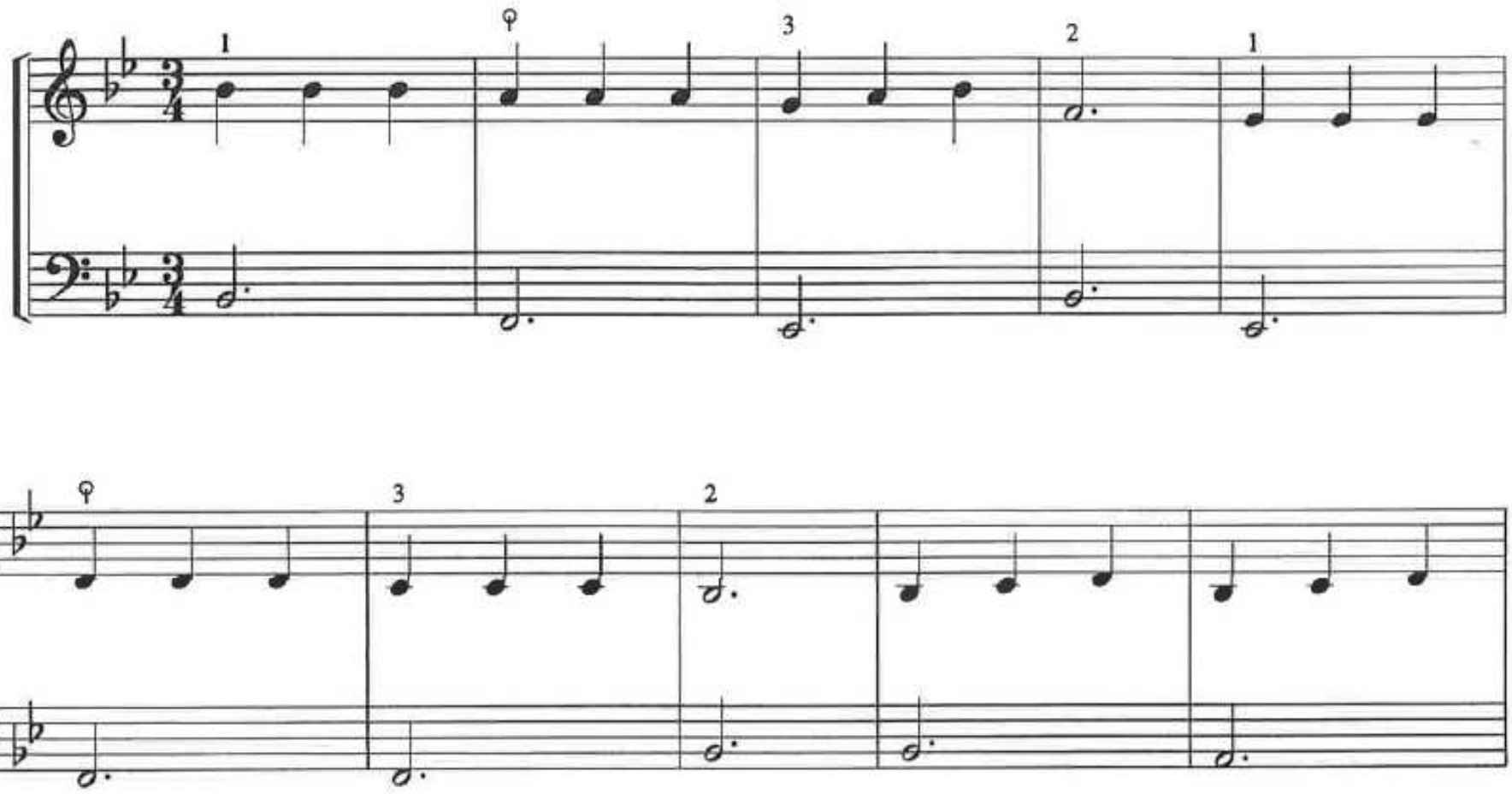
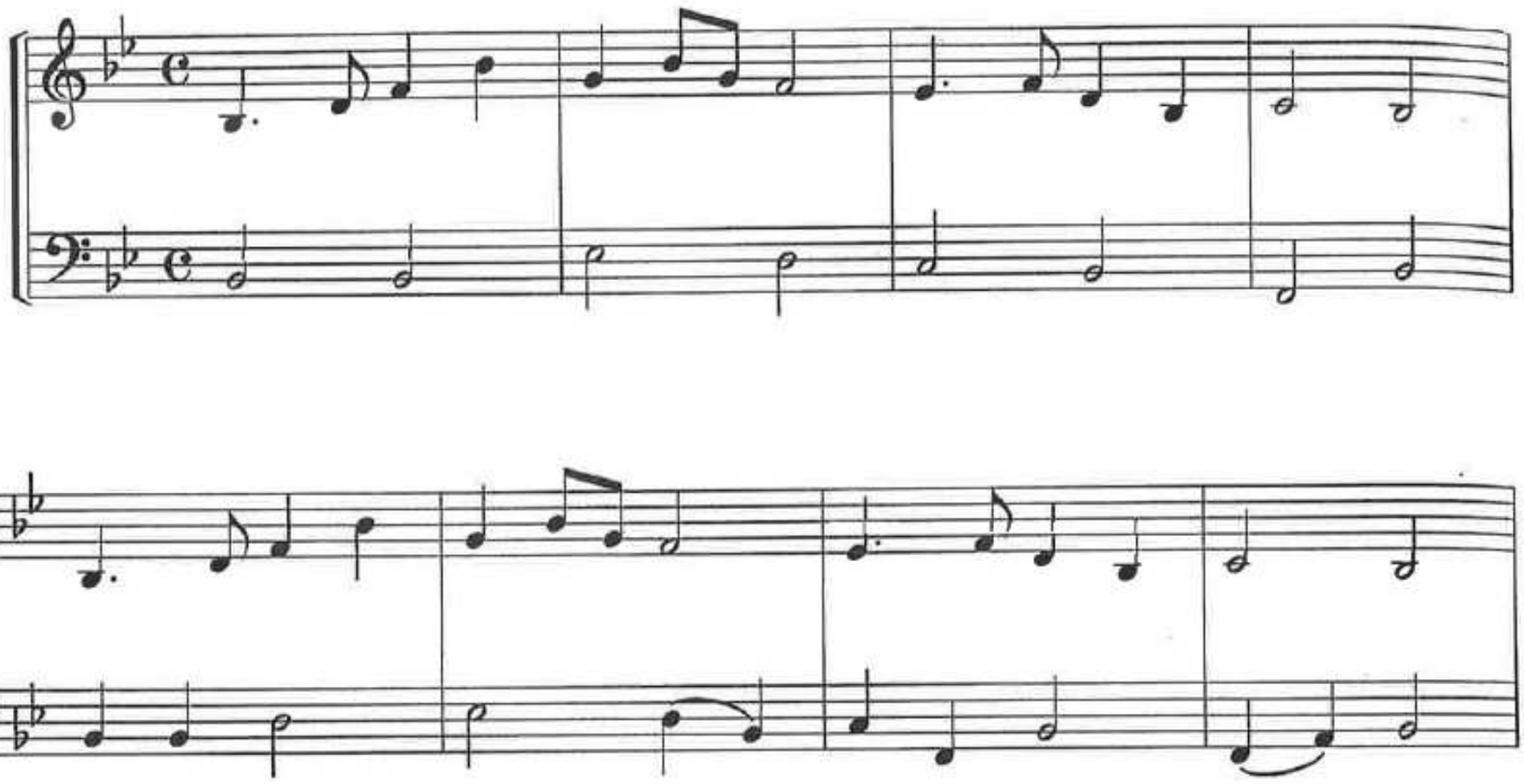
French Folk Song



May Song
(Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da)



Oh Susannah

Stephen Foster

V

sempre pizz.

5

1.

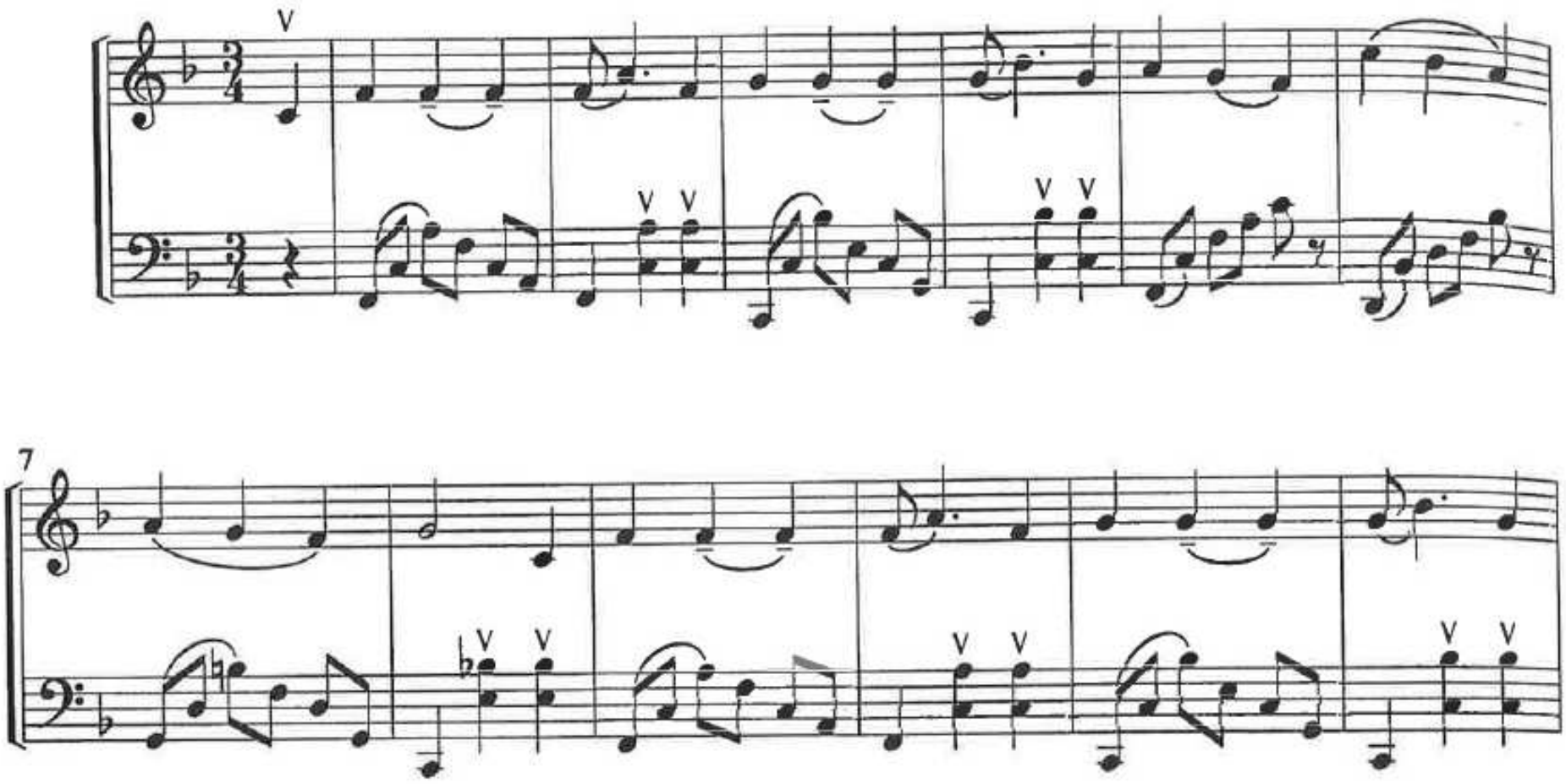
2.

10

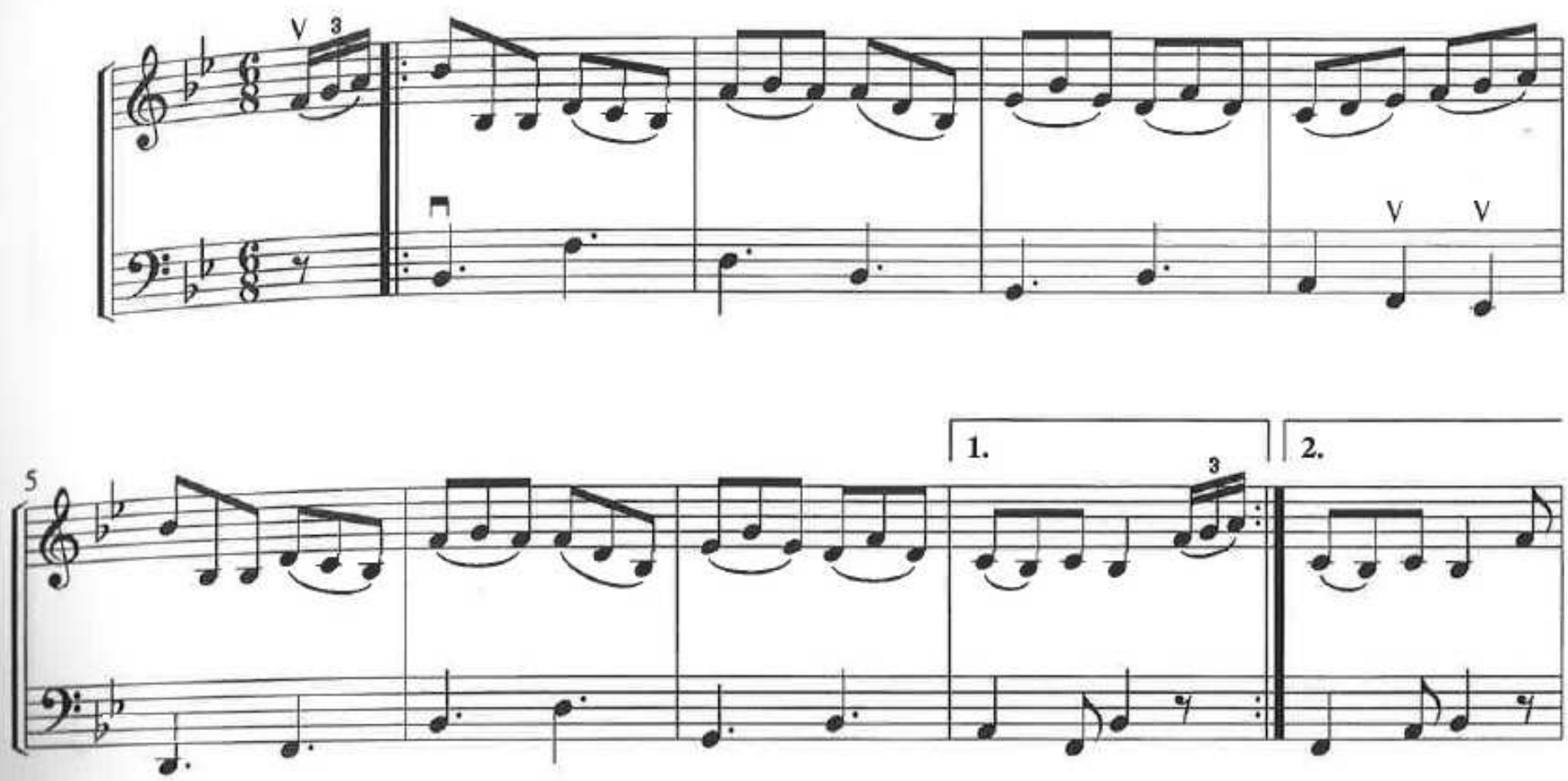
V

14

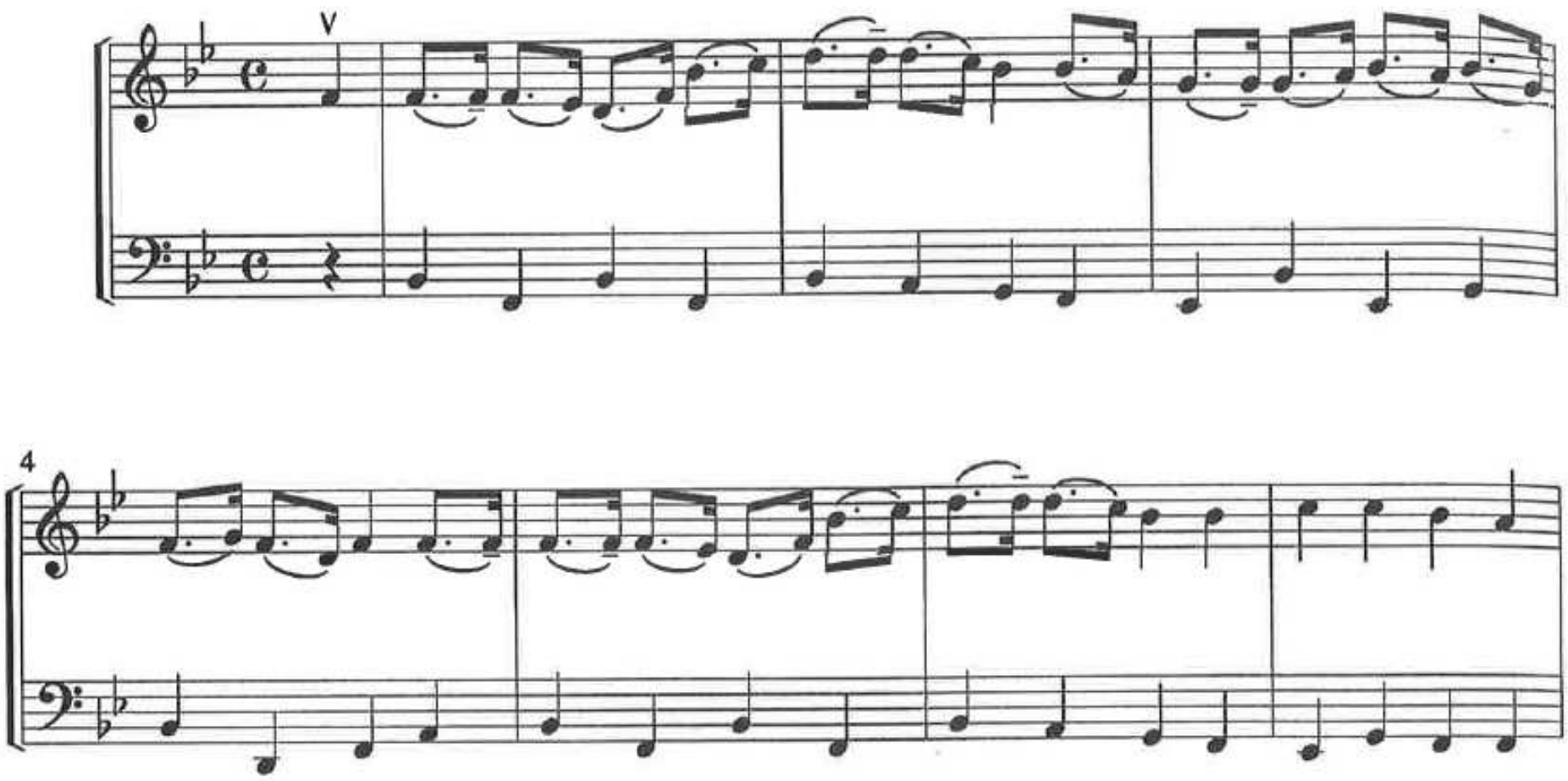
Cockles and Mussels



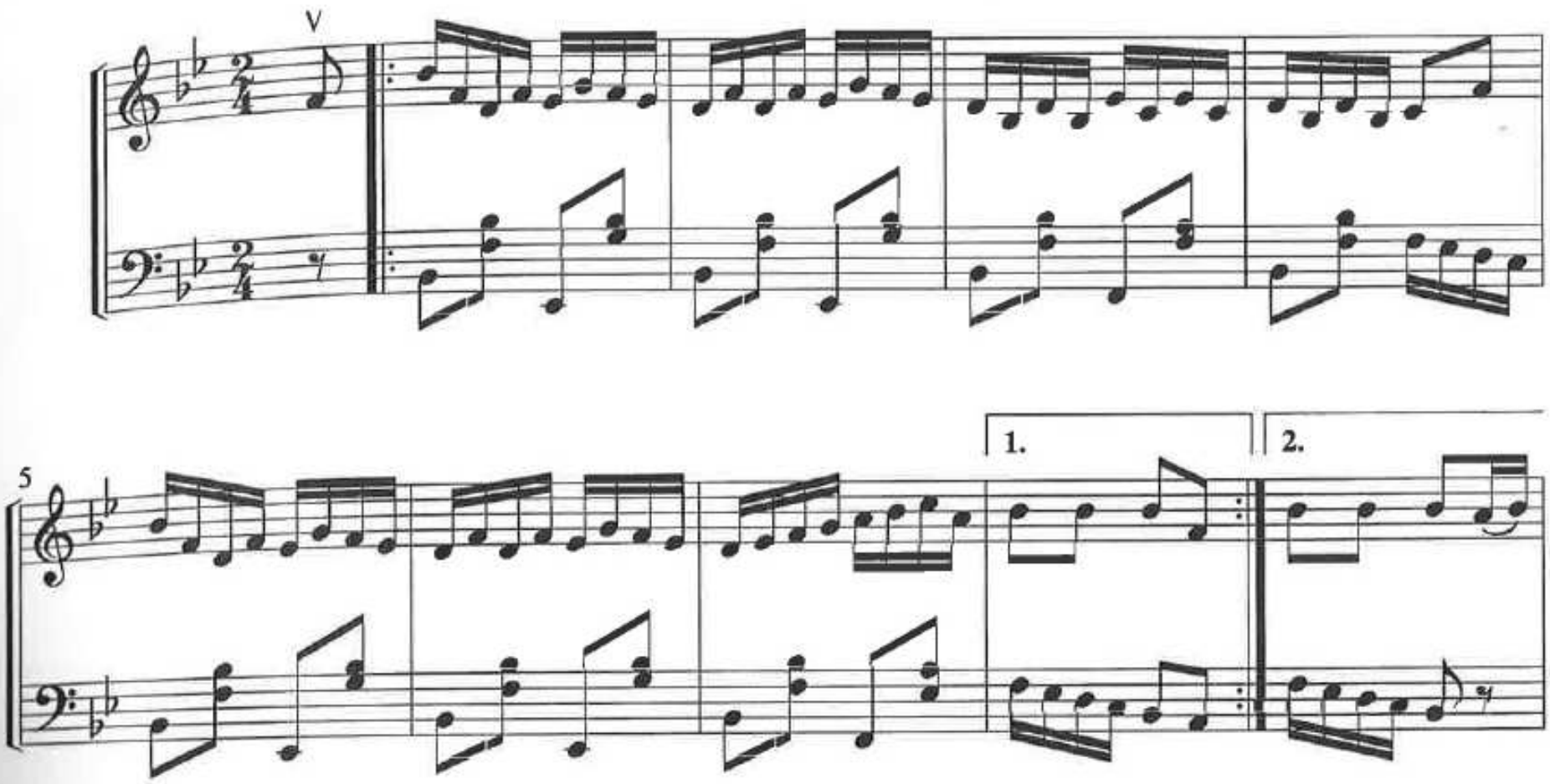
Larry O'Gaff



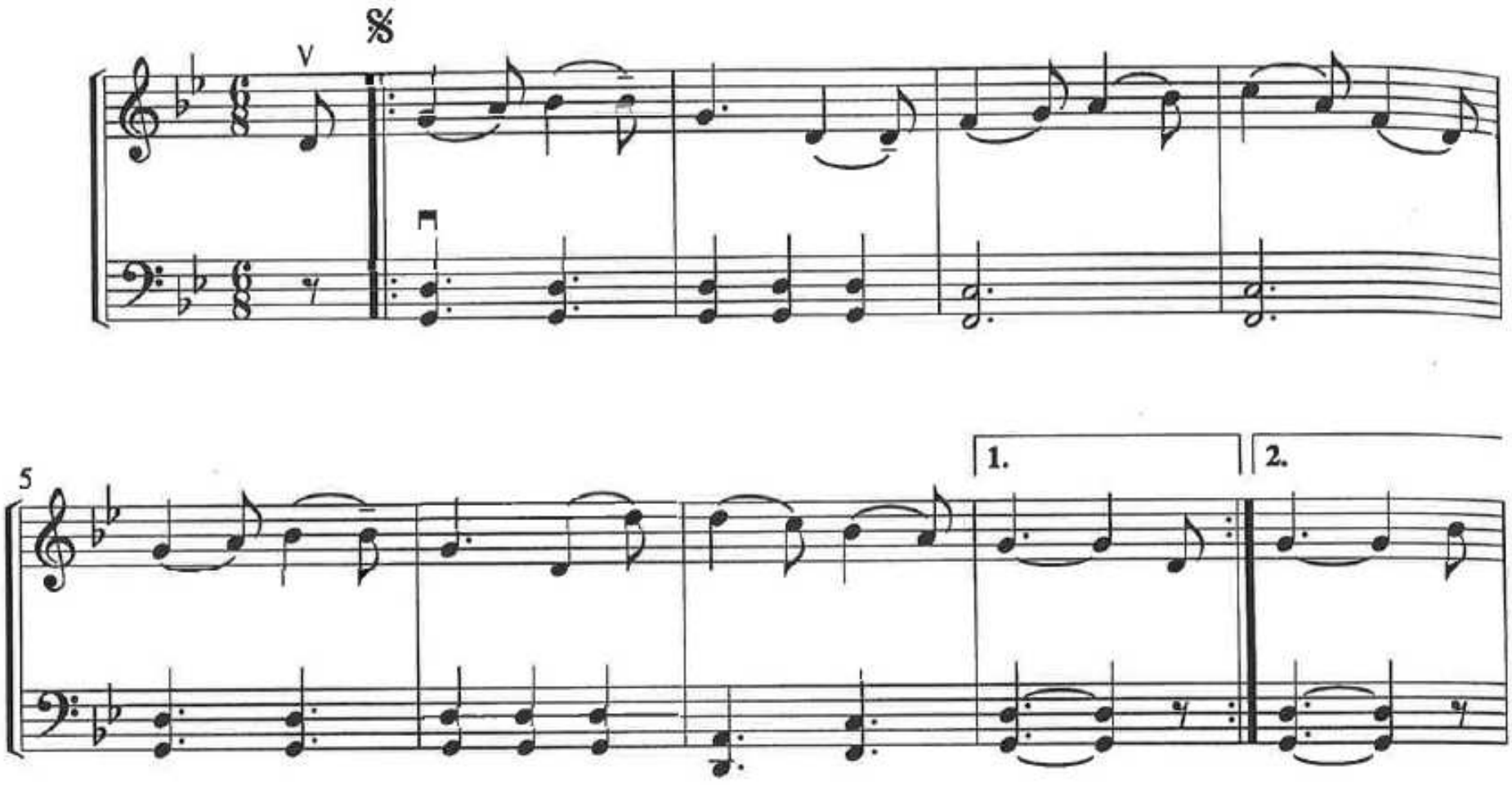
Battle Hymn of the Republic



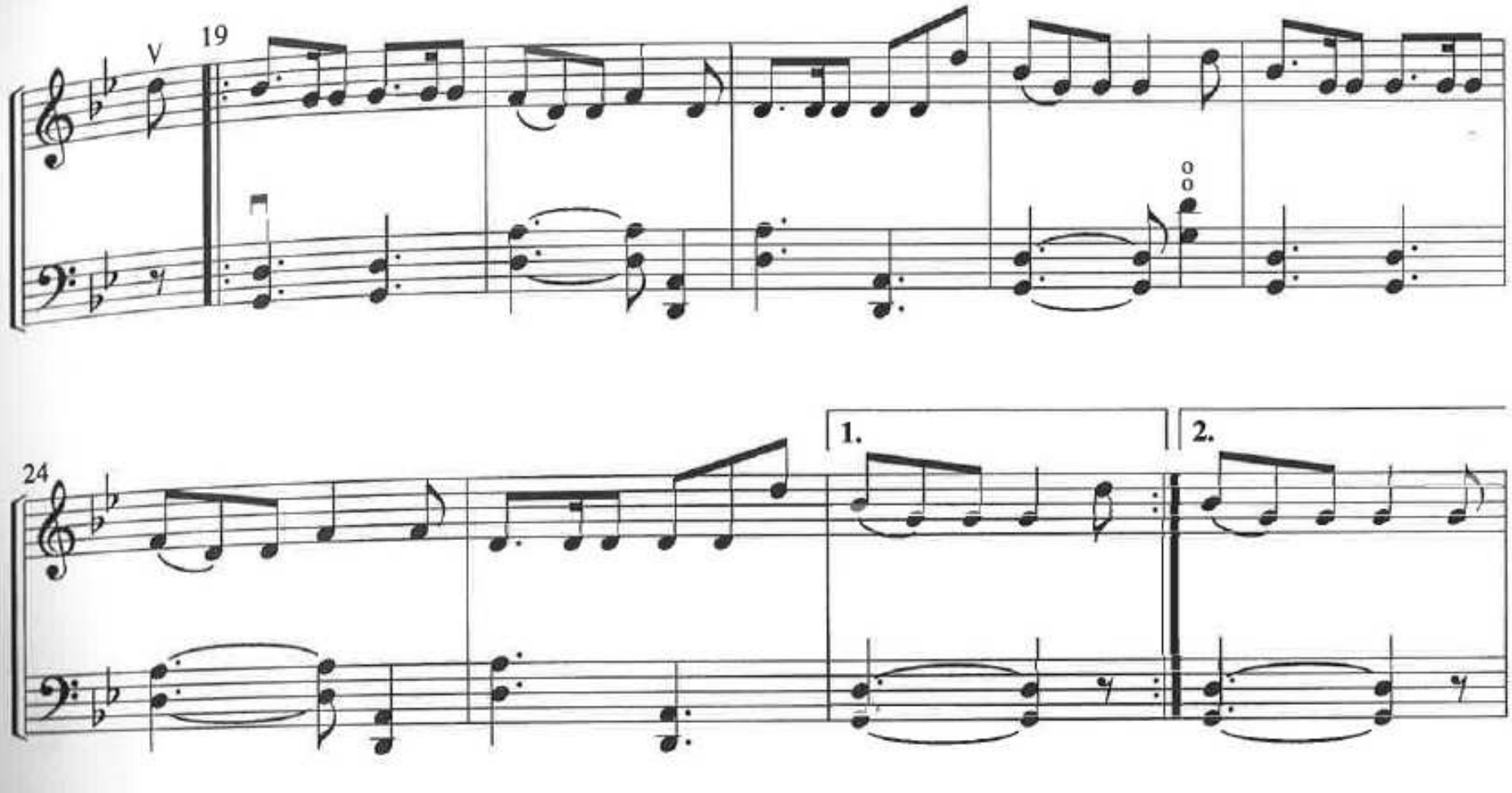
Fisher's Hornpipe

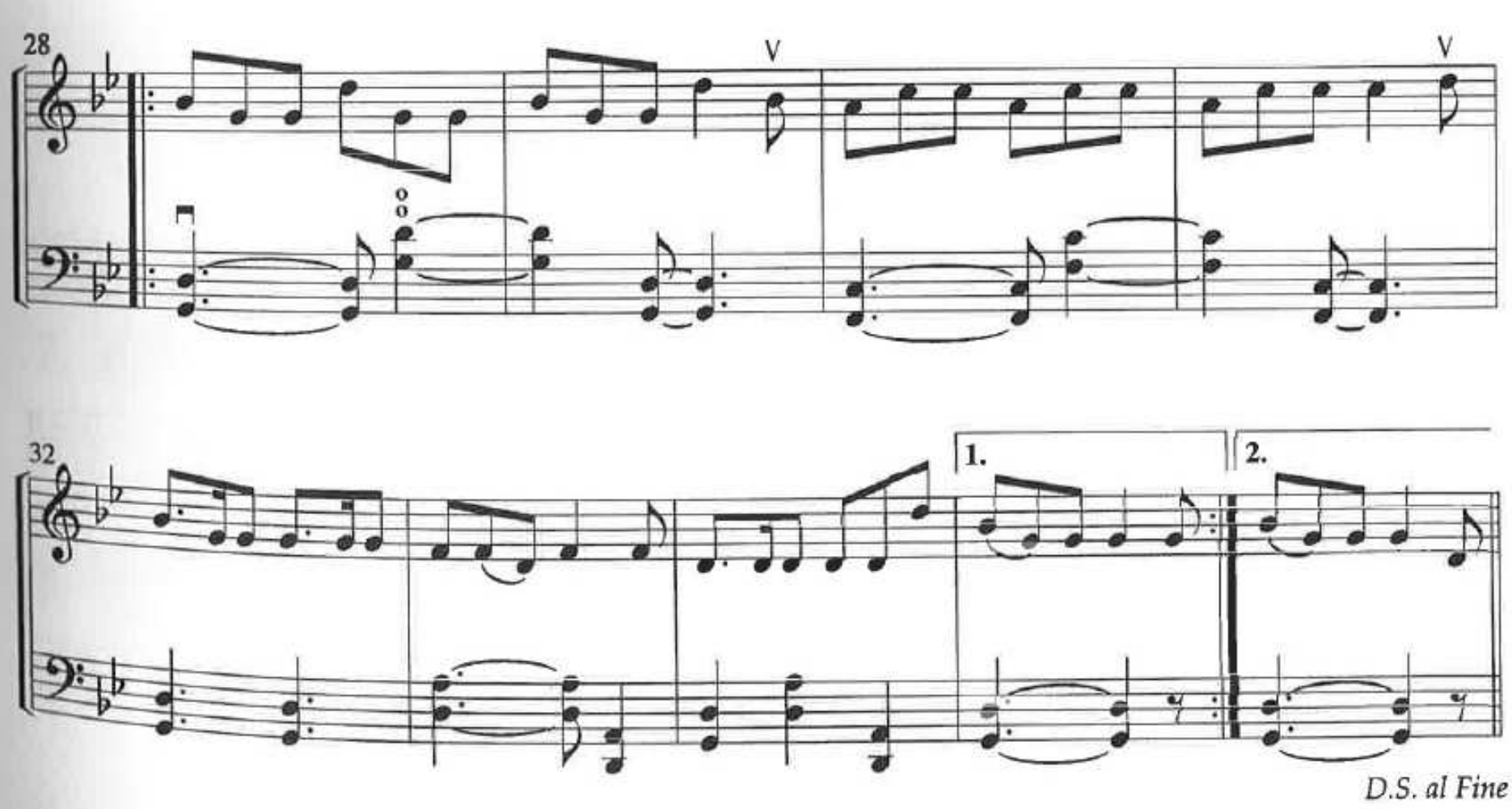


The Piper of Dundee



The Piper of Dundee





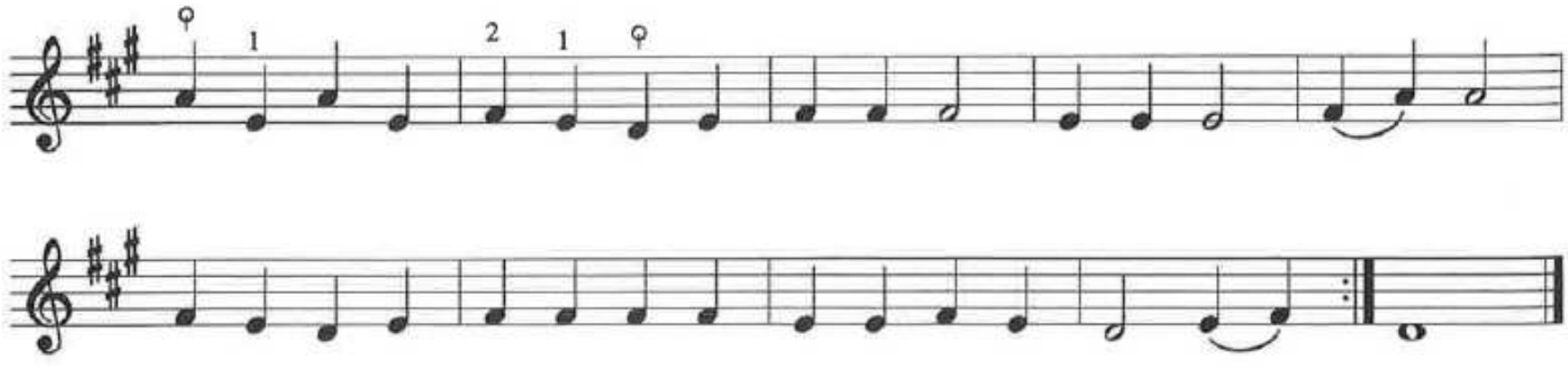
D.S. al Fine

Thumb Position Pattern IV

no half steps

Daily Warm-ups

1.



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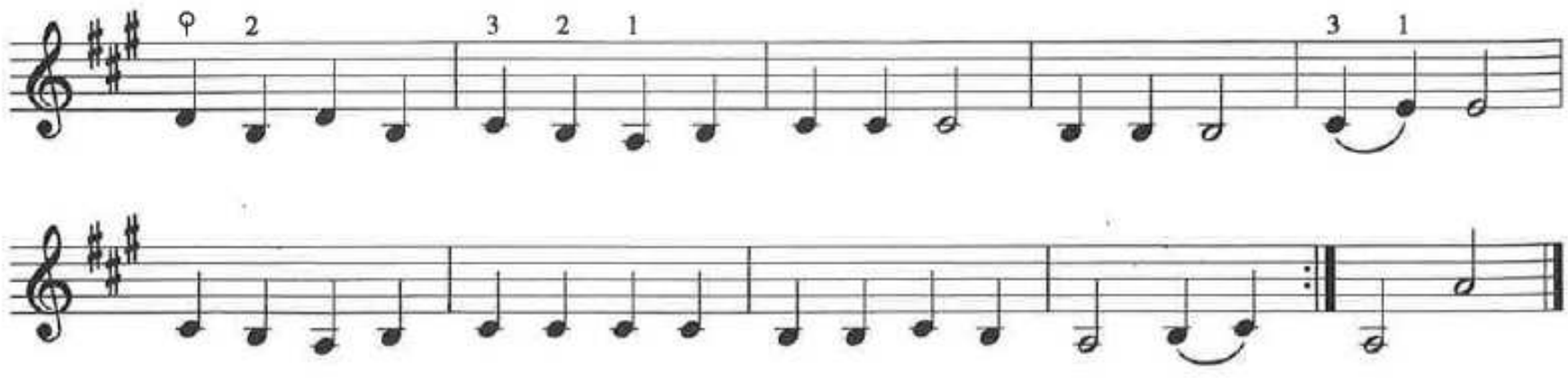
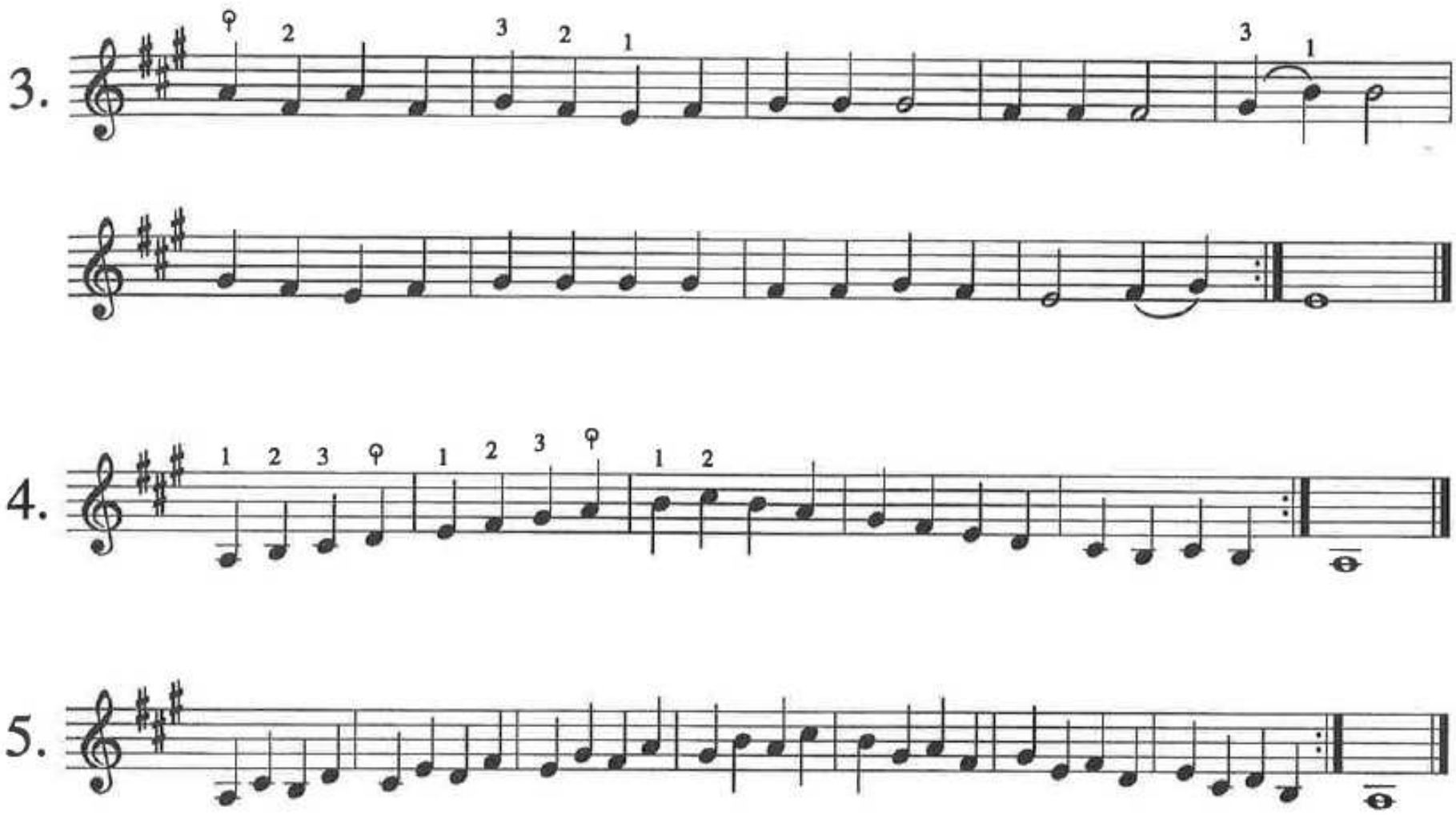
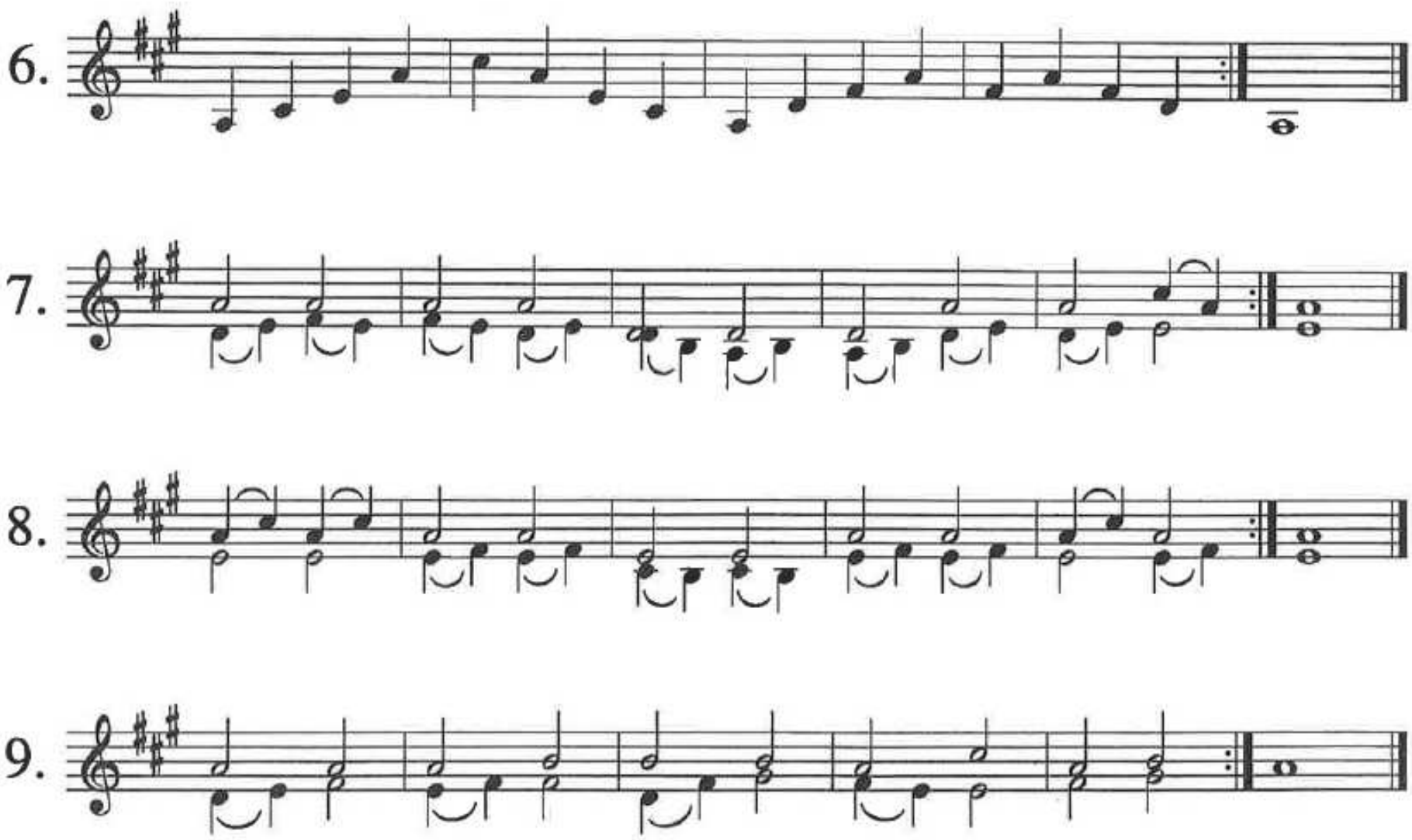
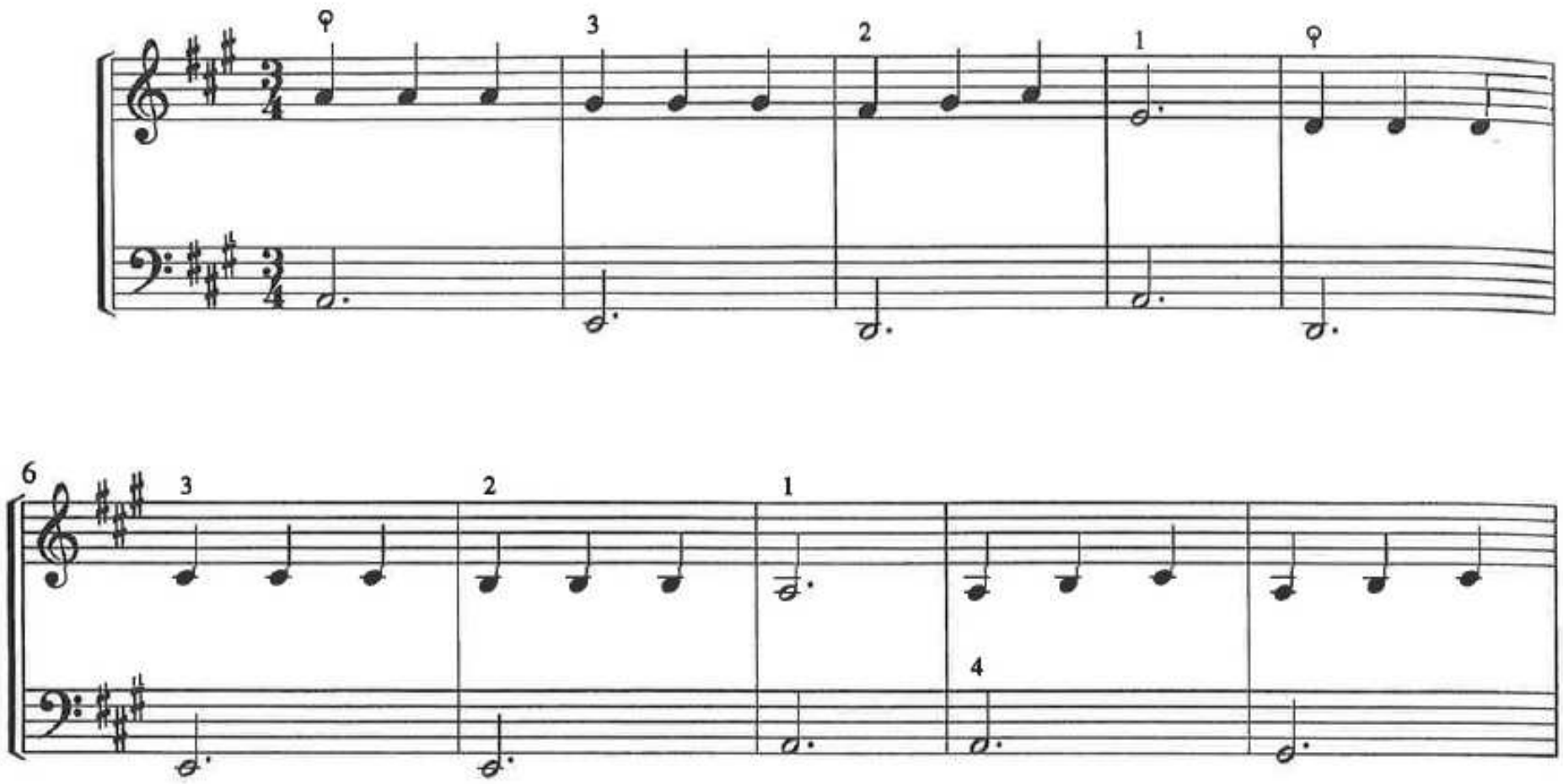


Thumb Position Pattern IV -- Daily Warm-ups (continued)

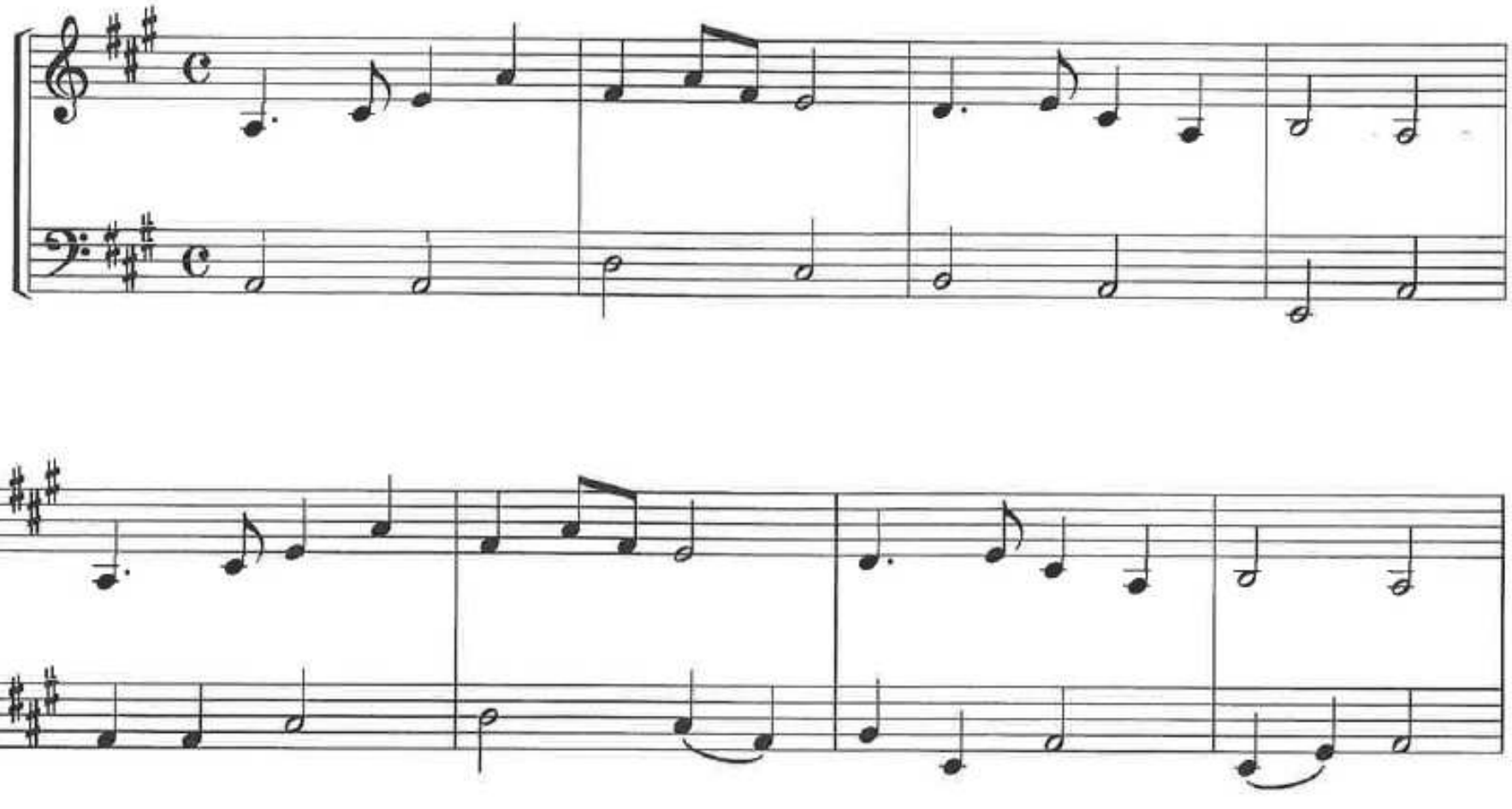




French Folk Song



May Song
(Alle Vögel Sind Schon Da)



Oh Susannah

Stephen Foster

V

sempre pizz.

5

1.

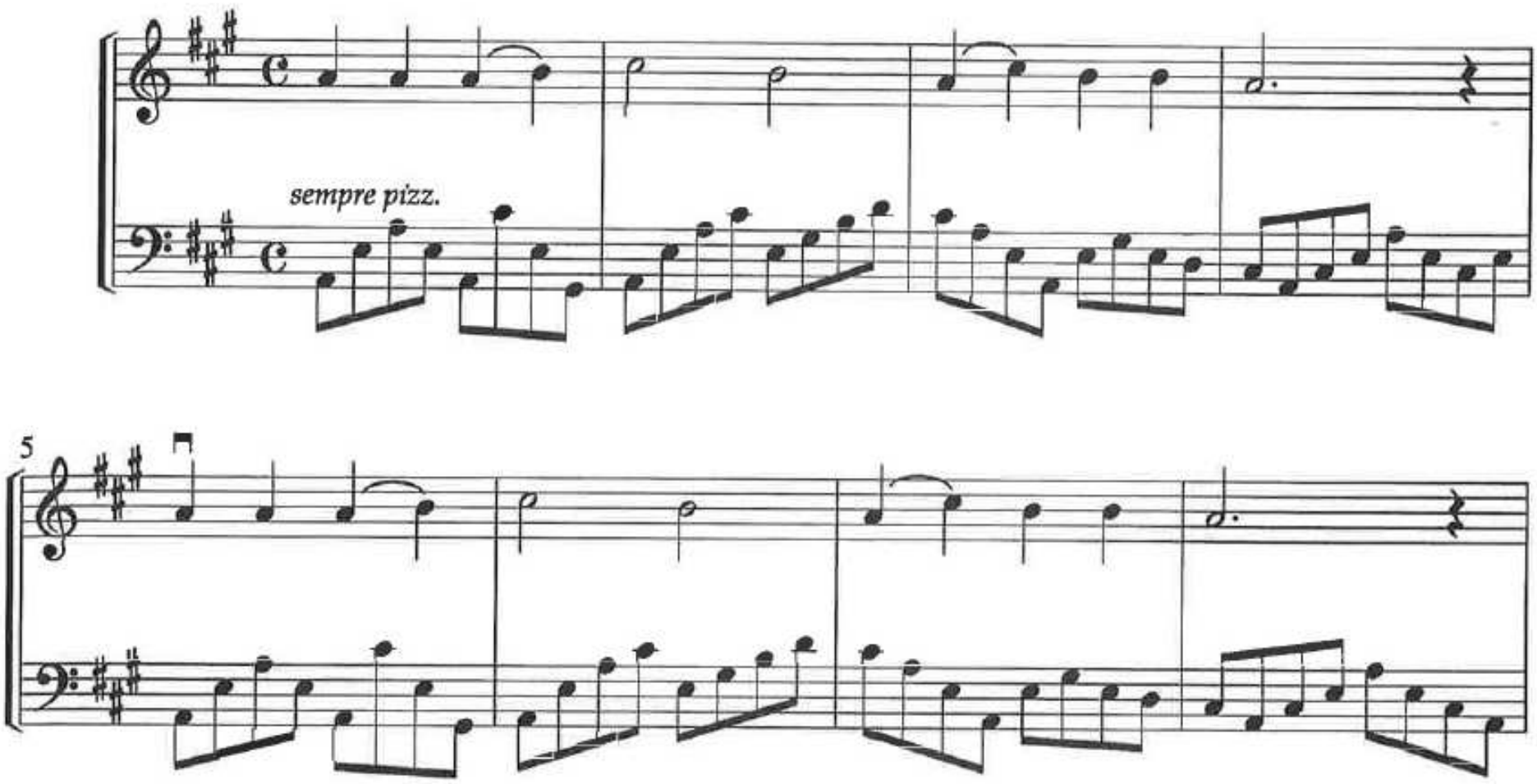
2.

10

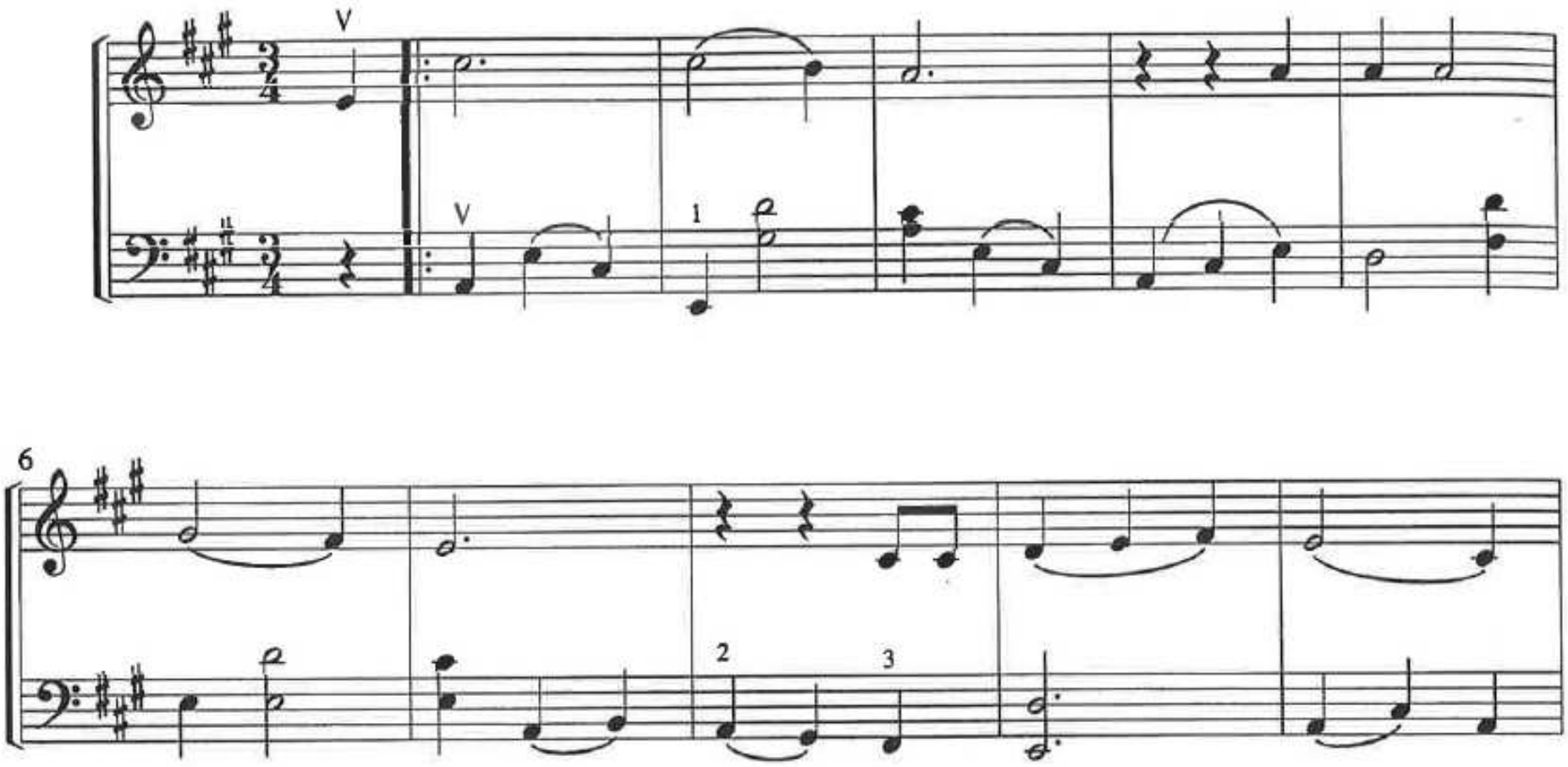
V

14

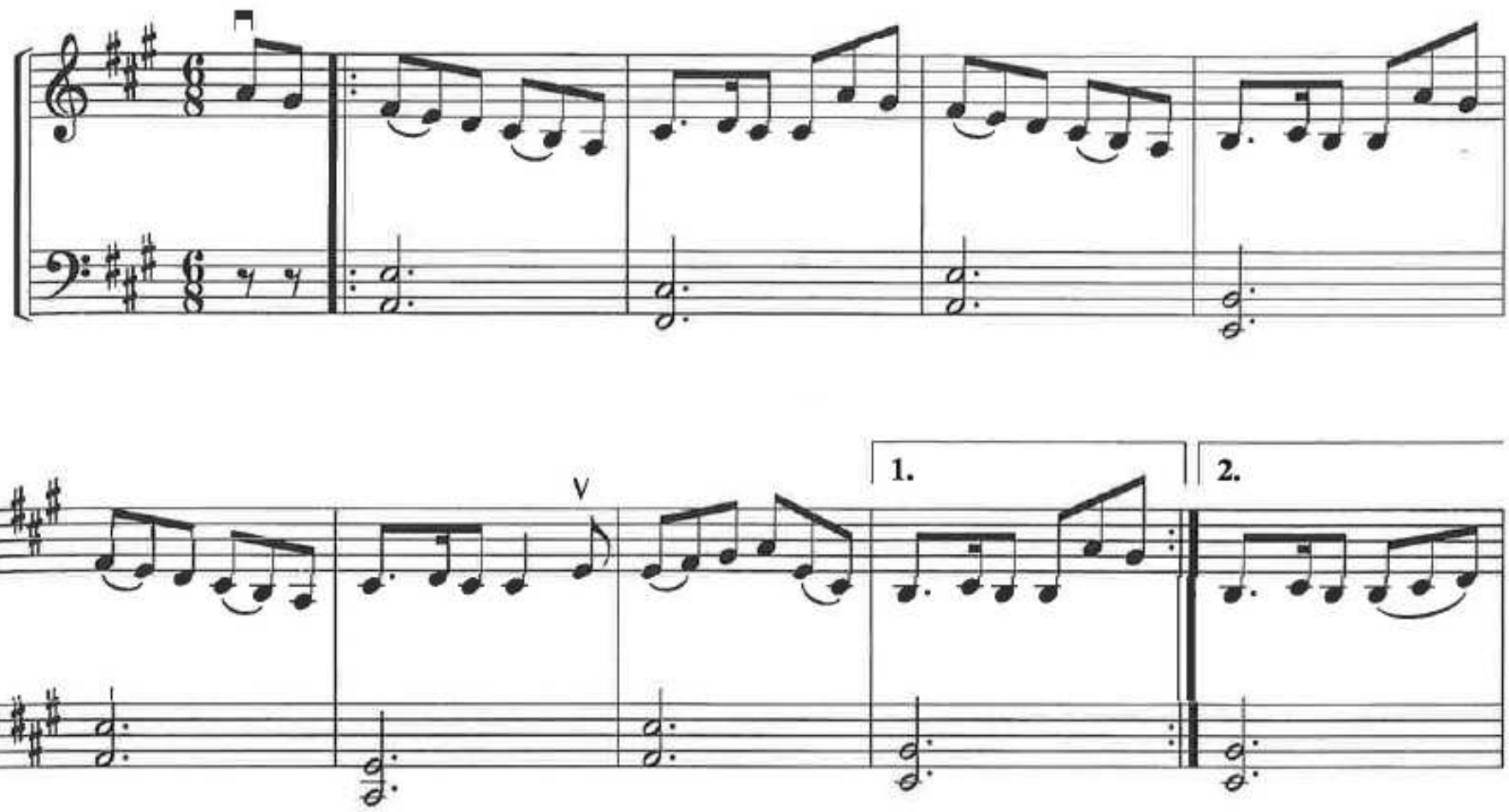
Clair de Lune



My Wild Irish Rose

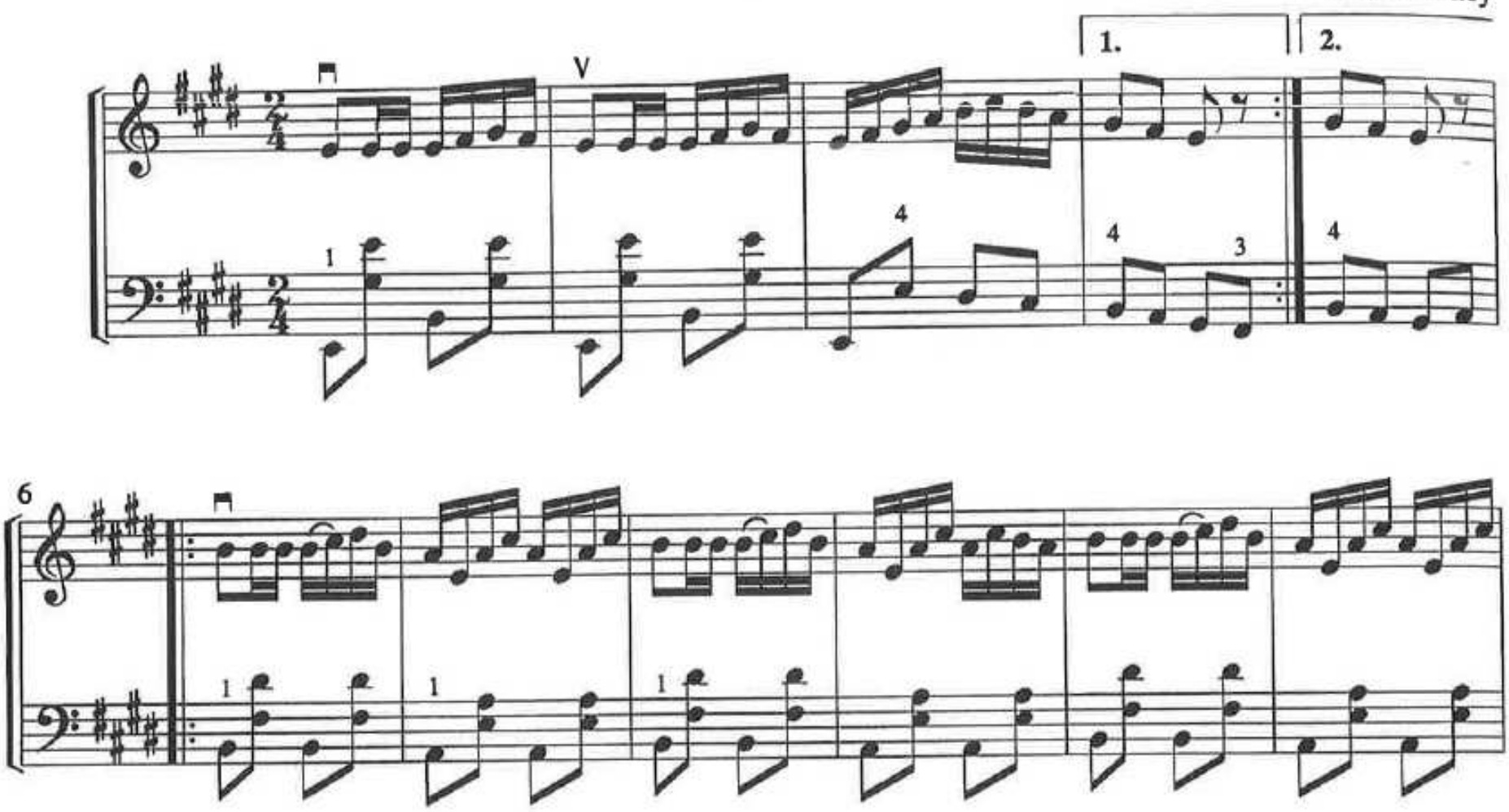


Garry Owen



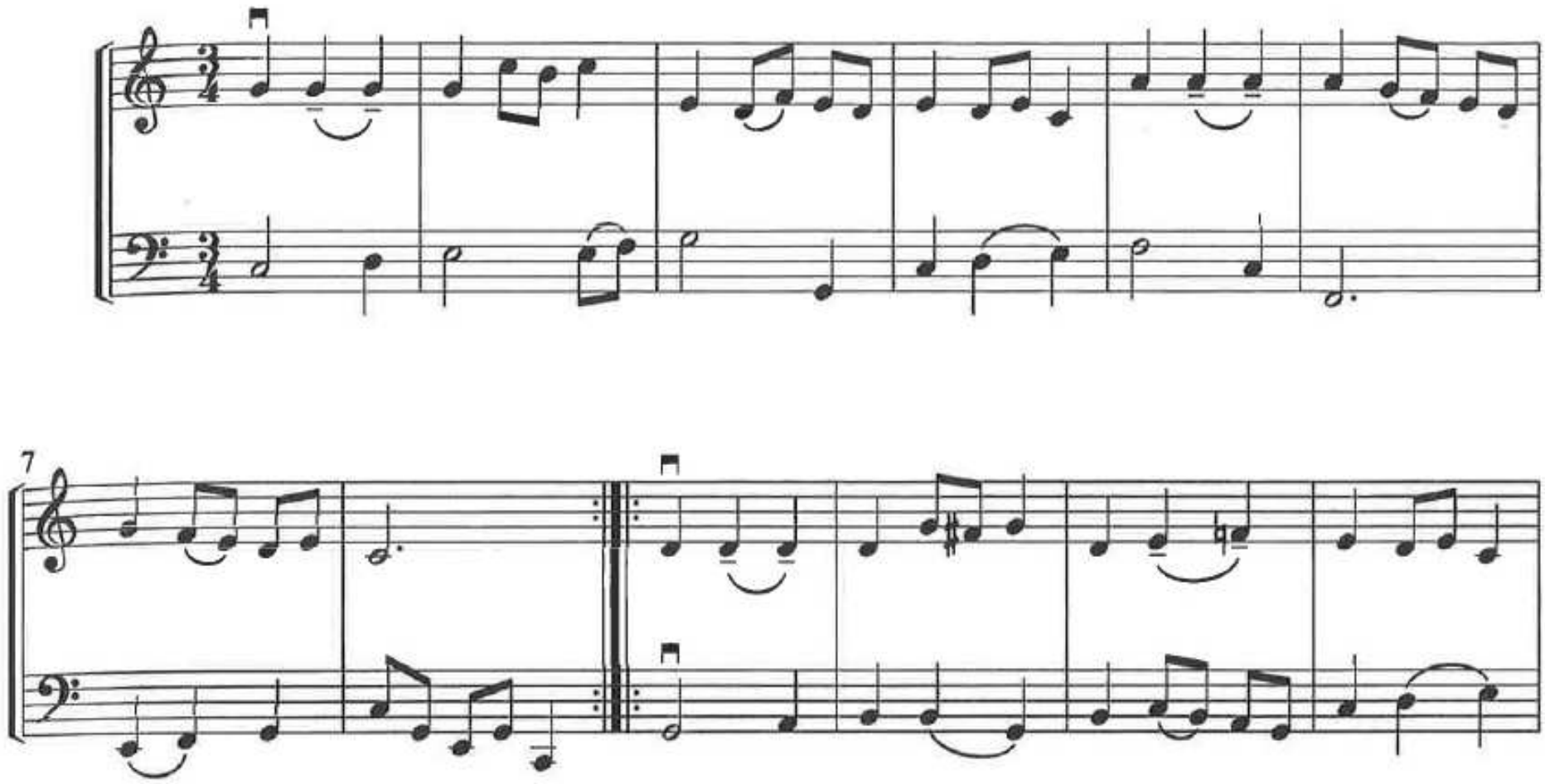
Eat My Dust

Rick Mooney



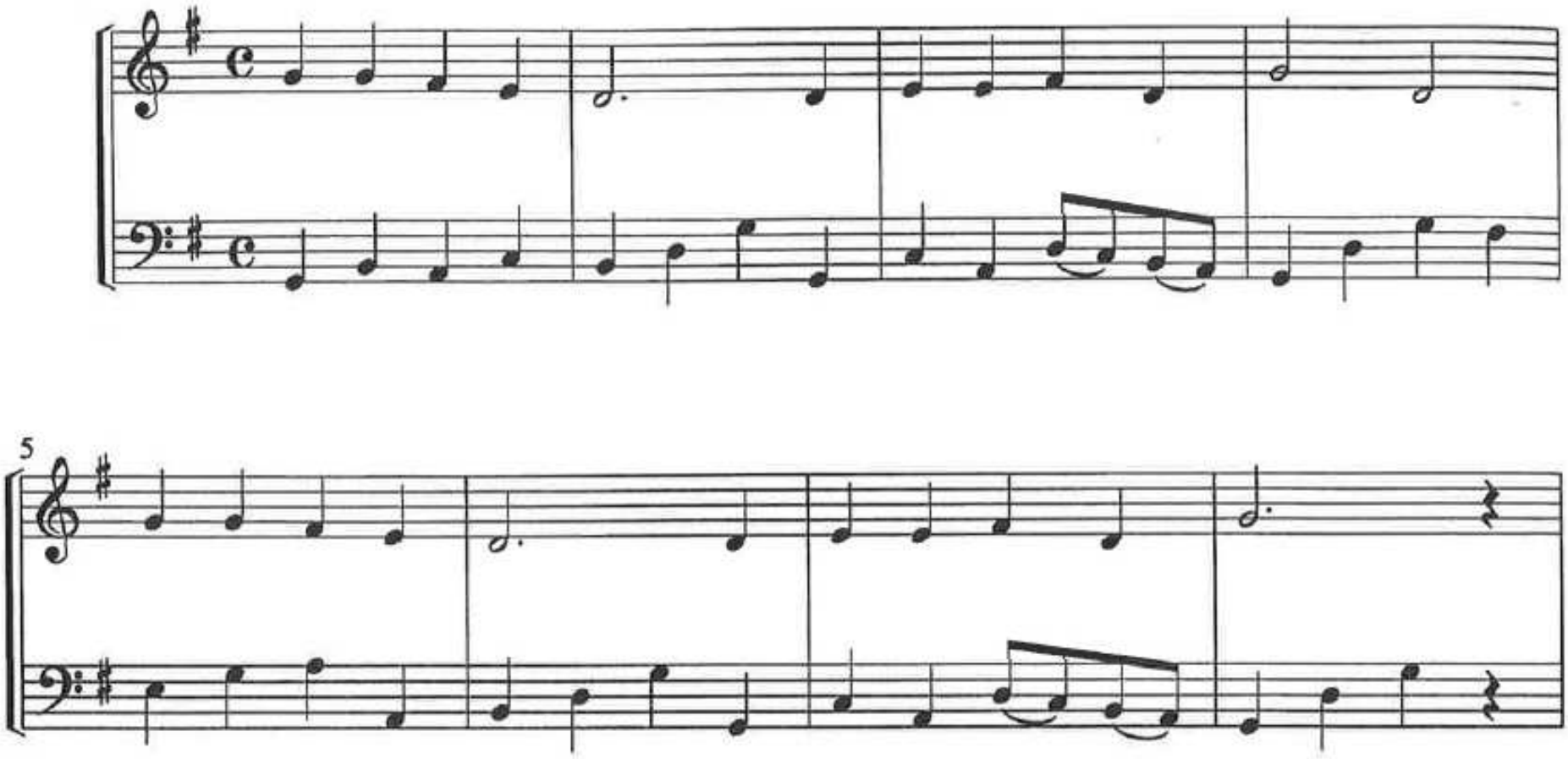
Minuet

J. S. Bach

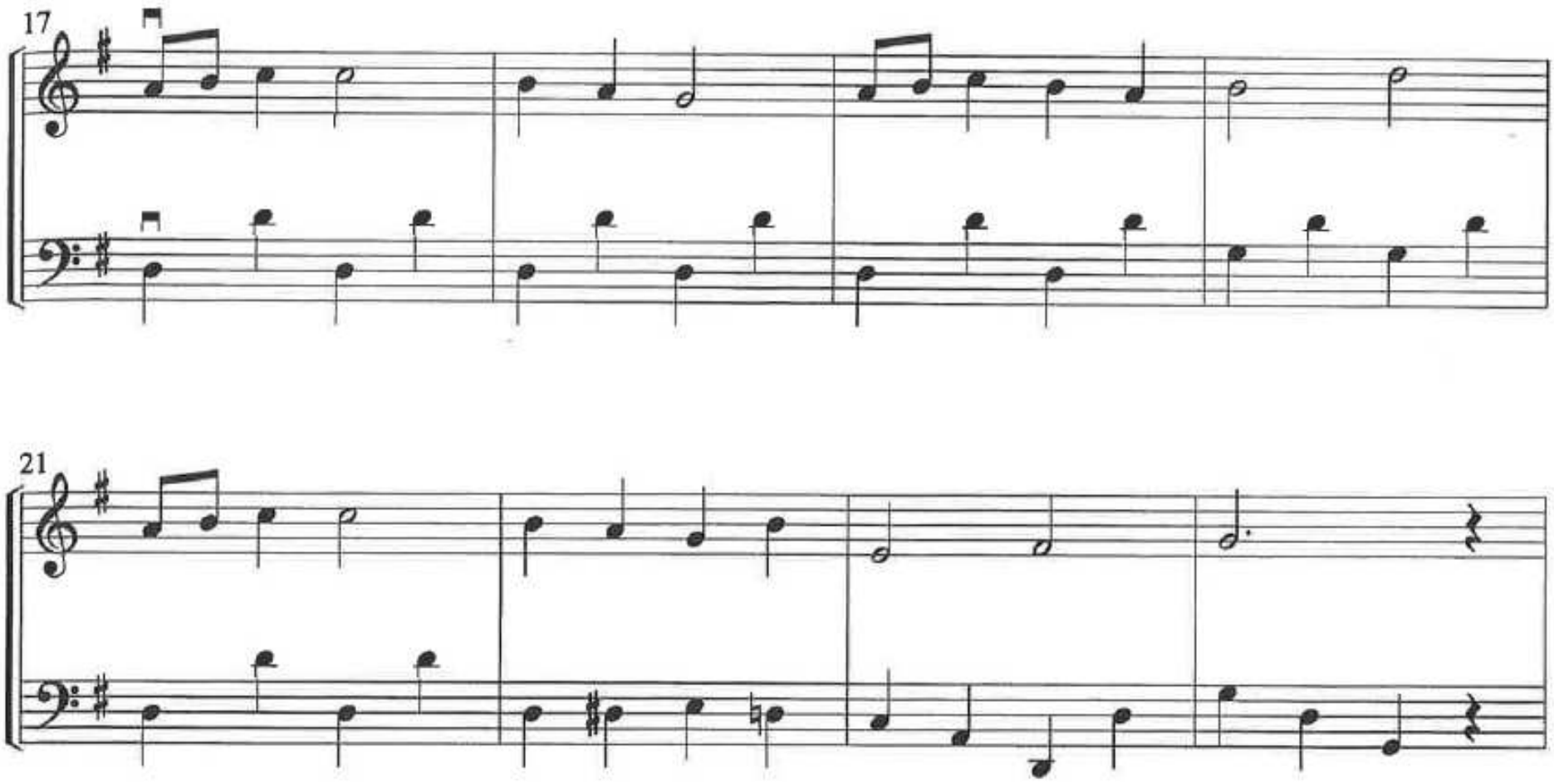


Rigadoon

Henry Purcell



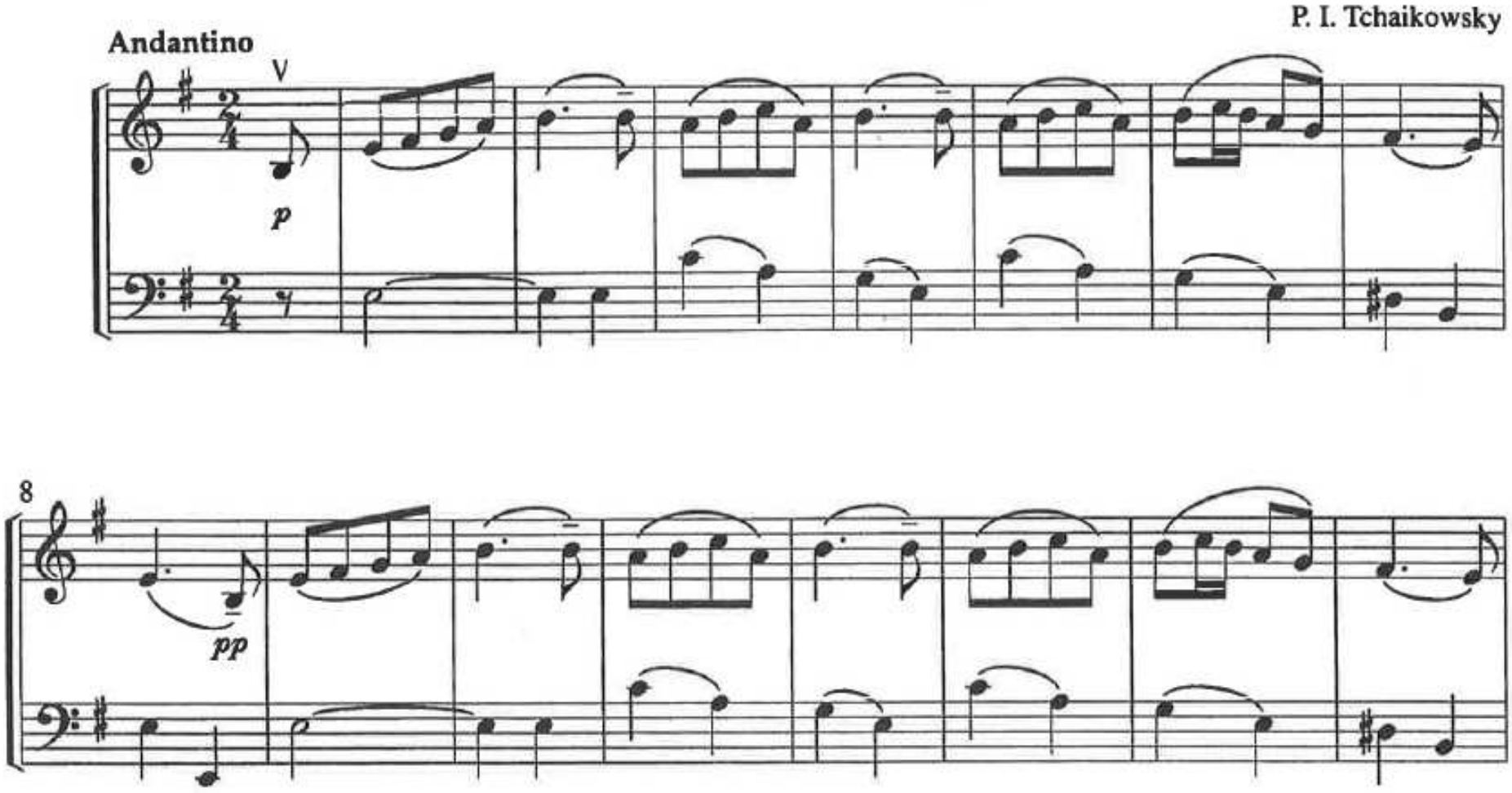
Rigadoon



Old French Song

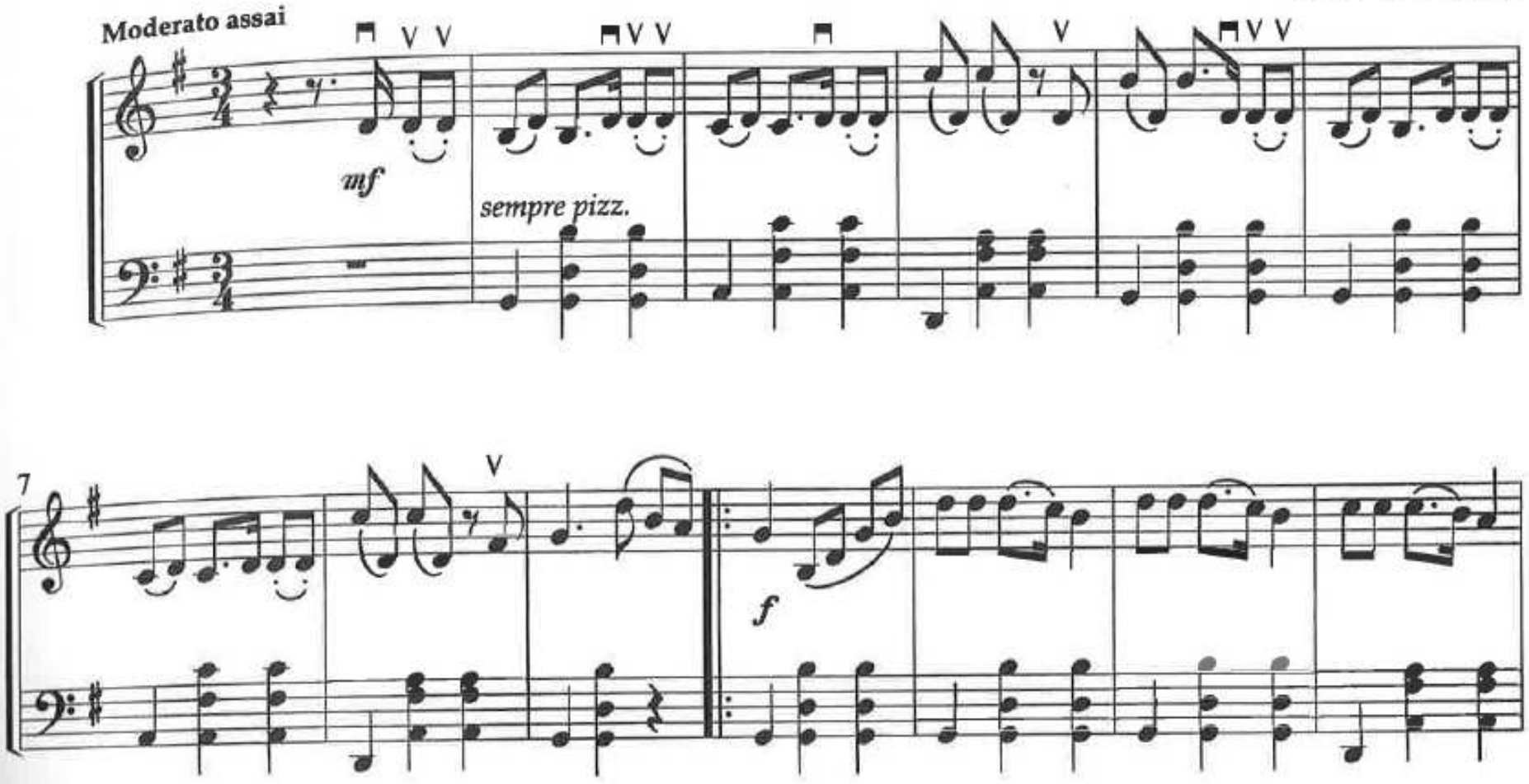
P. I. Tchaikowsky

Andantino

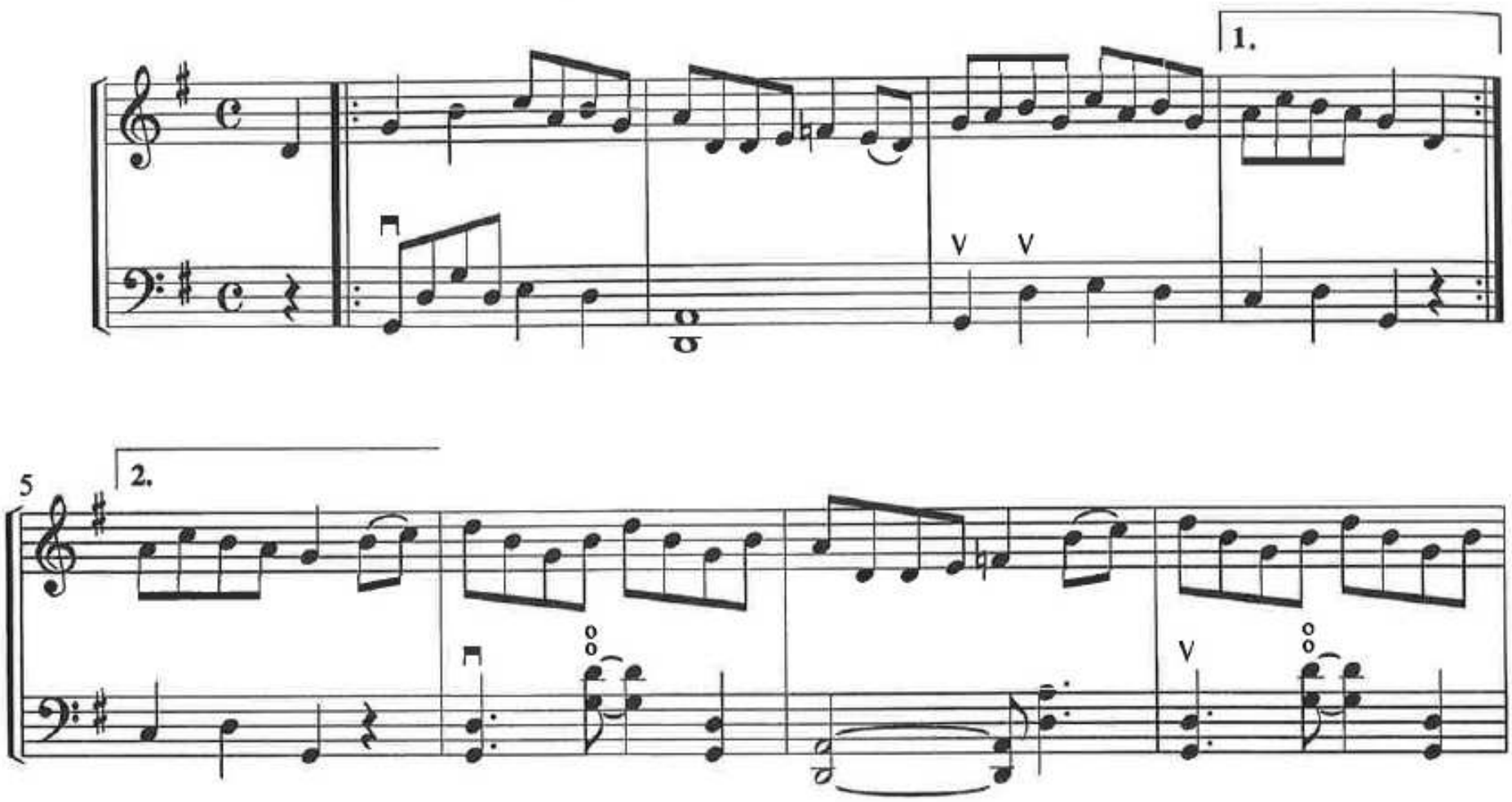


German Dance

P. I. Tchaikowsky



Highland Hoedown



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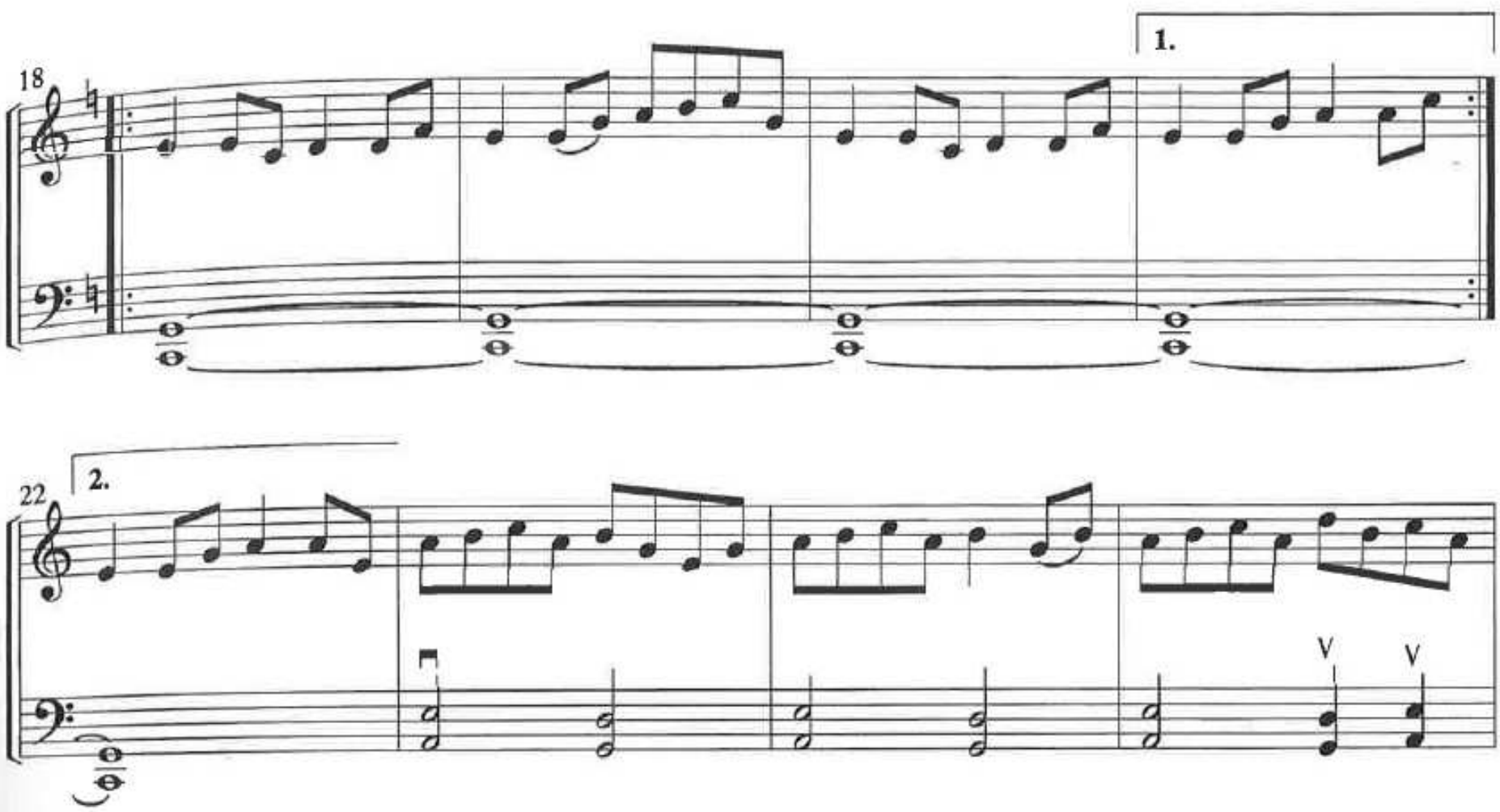

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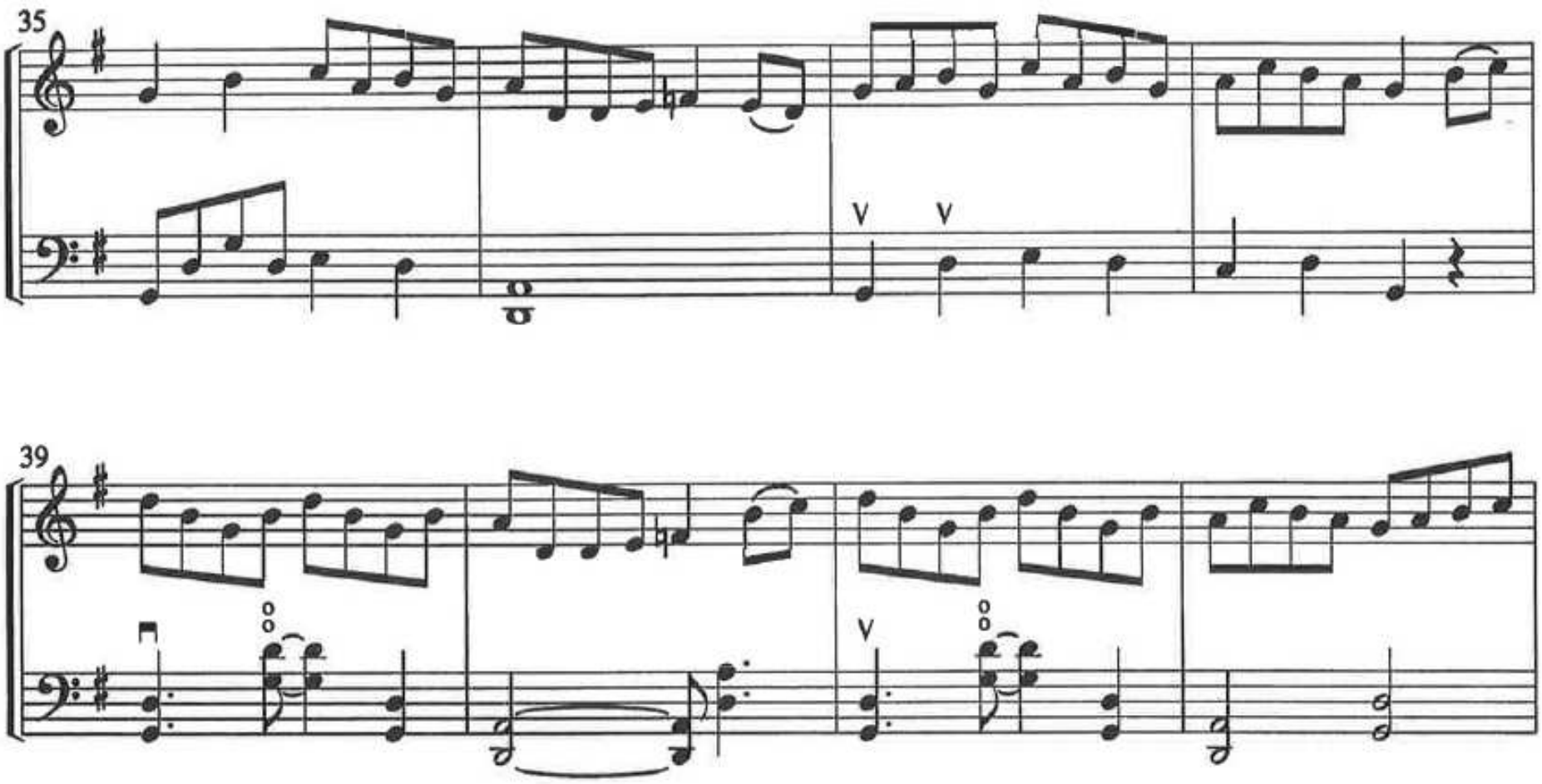
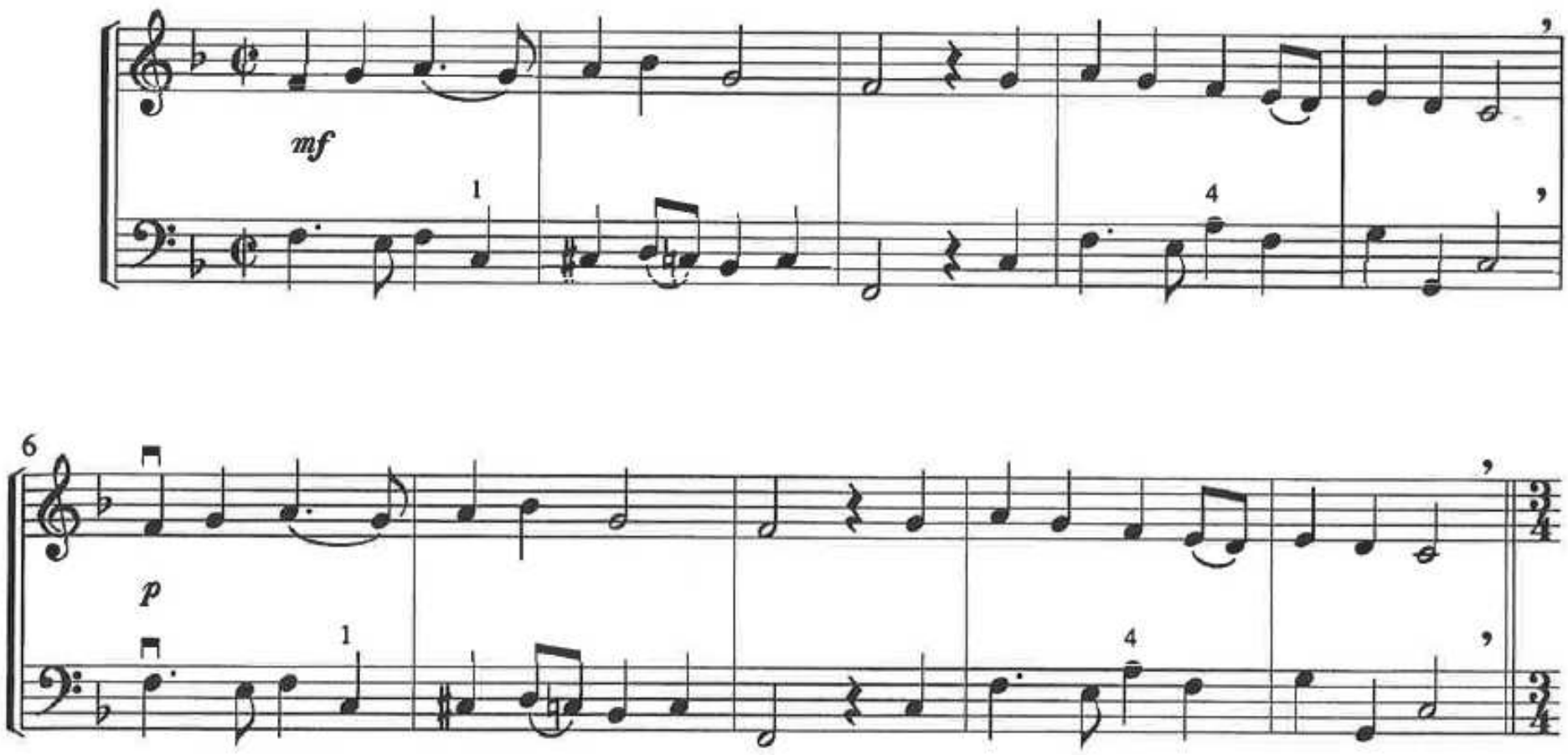


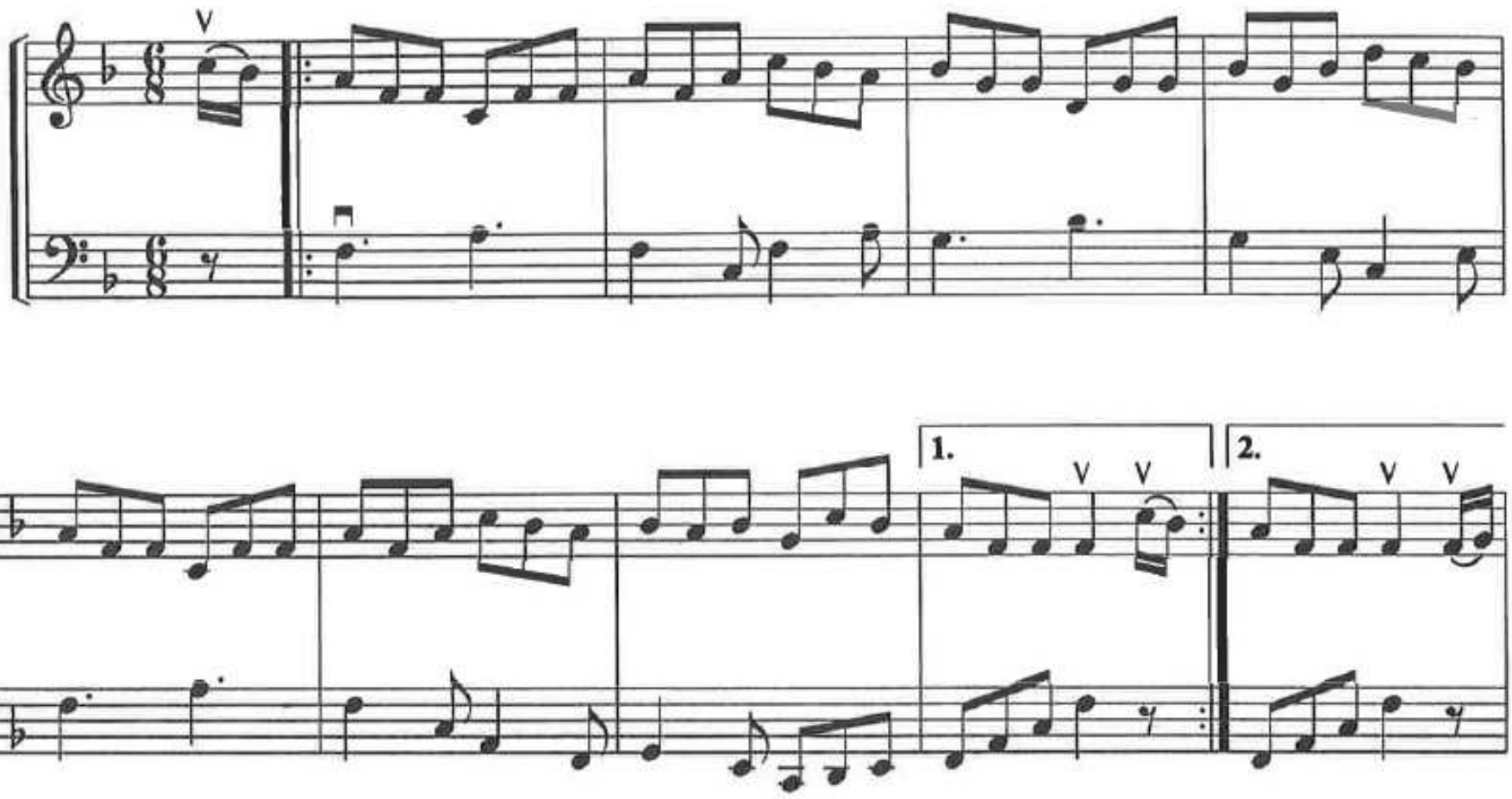
Chorale

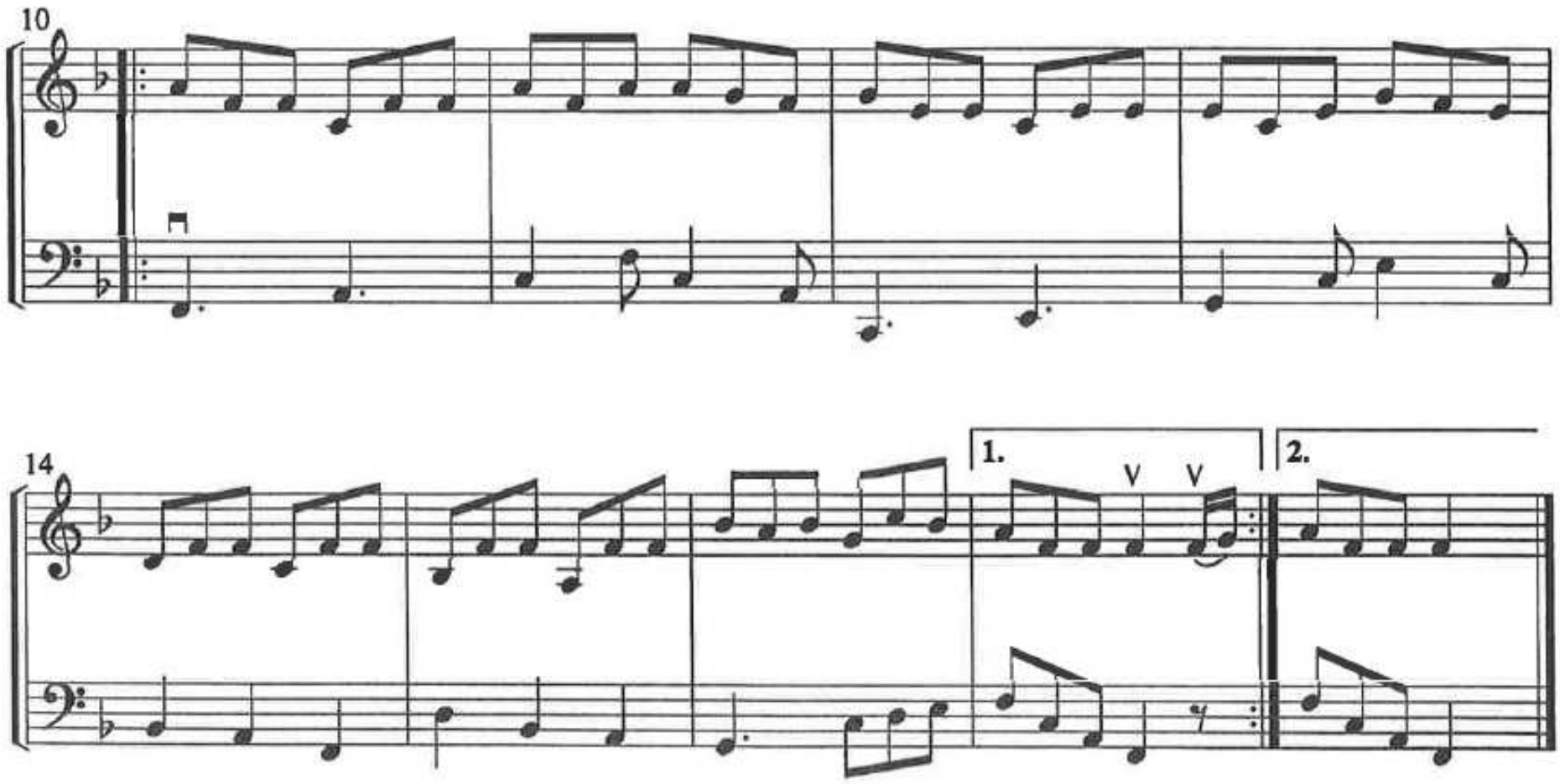
Brich Entzwei, Mein Armes Herze

J. S. Bach

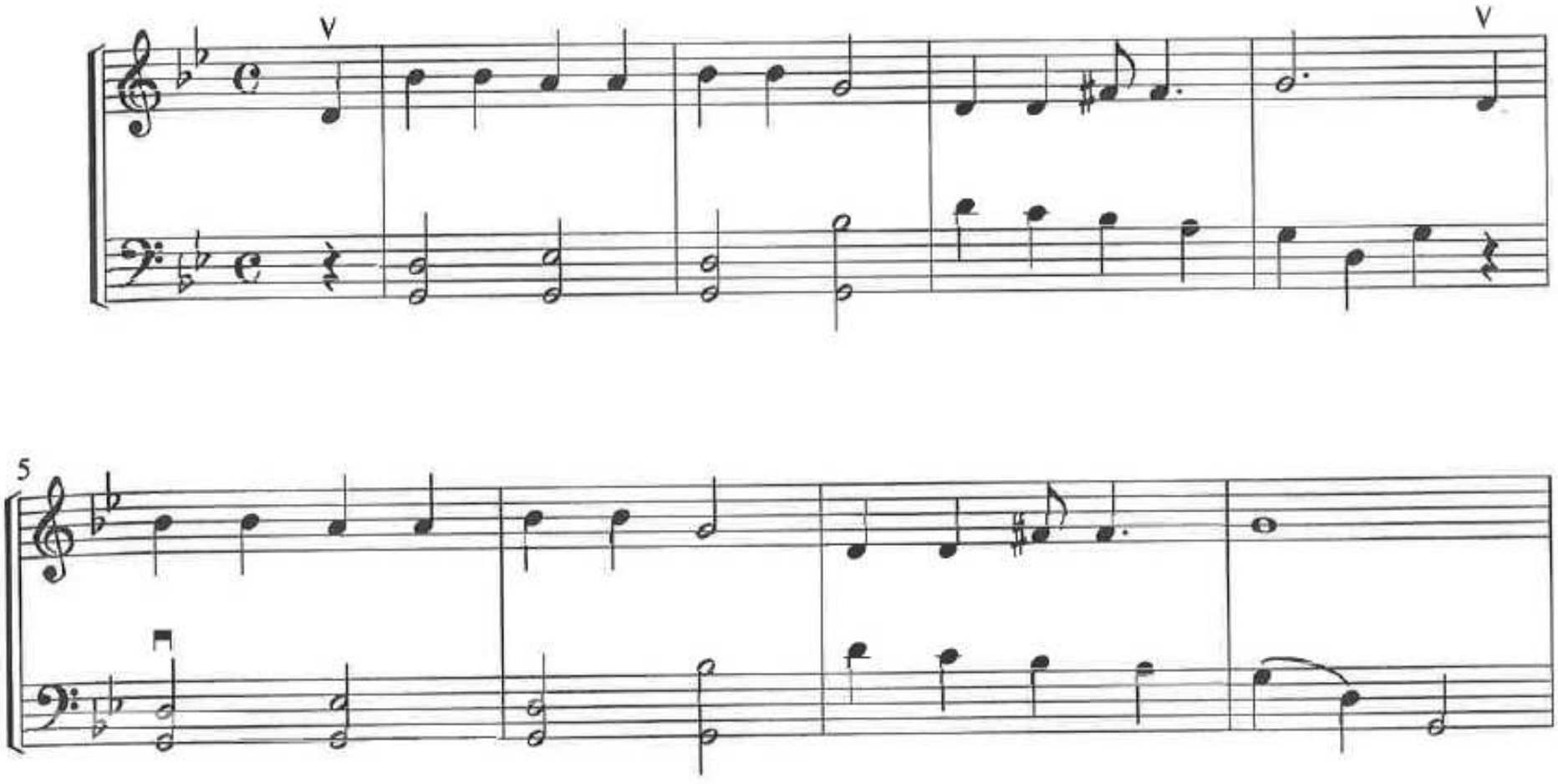


The Irish Washerwoman





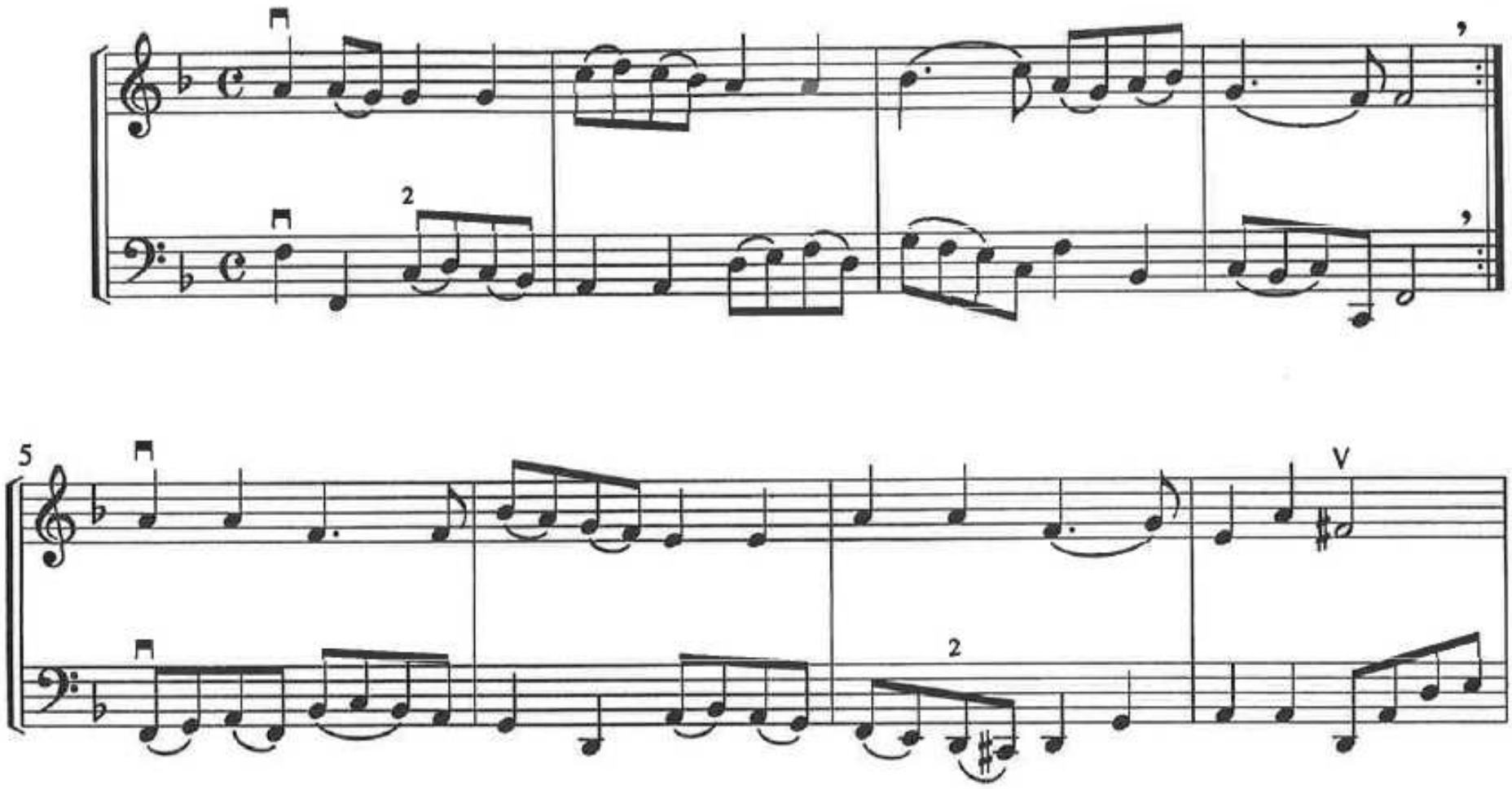
Go Down, Moses



Chorale

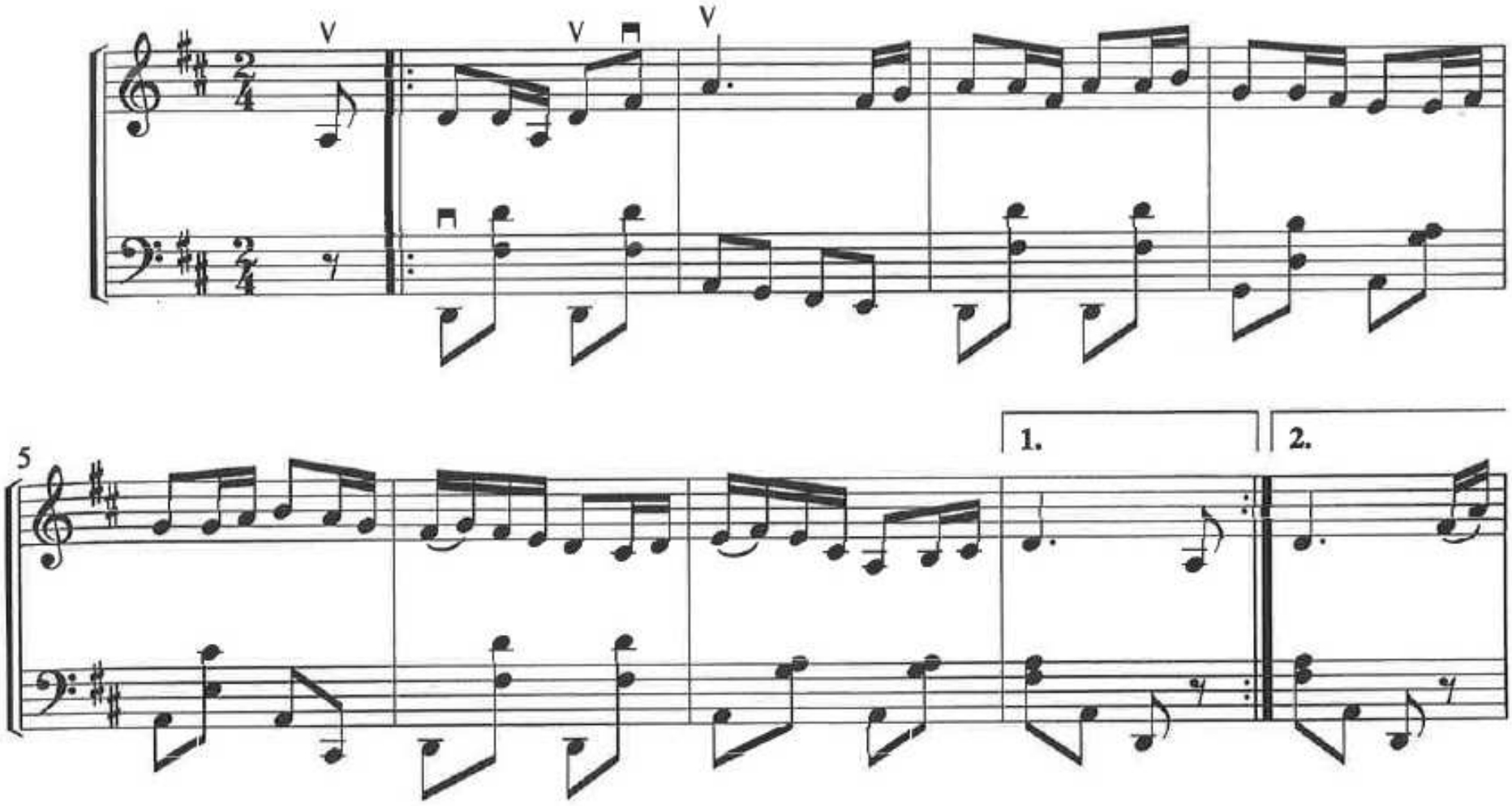
Gott, Wie Gross Ist Deine Güte

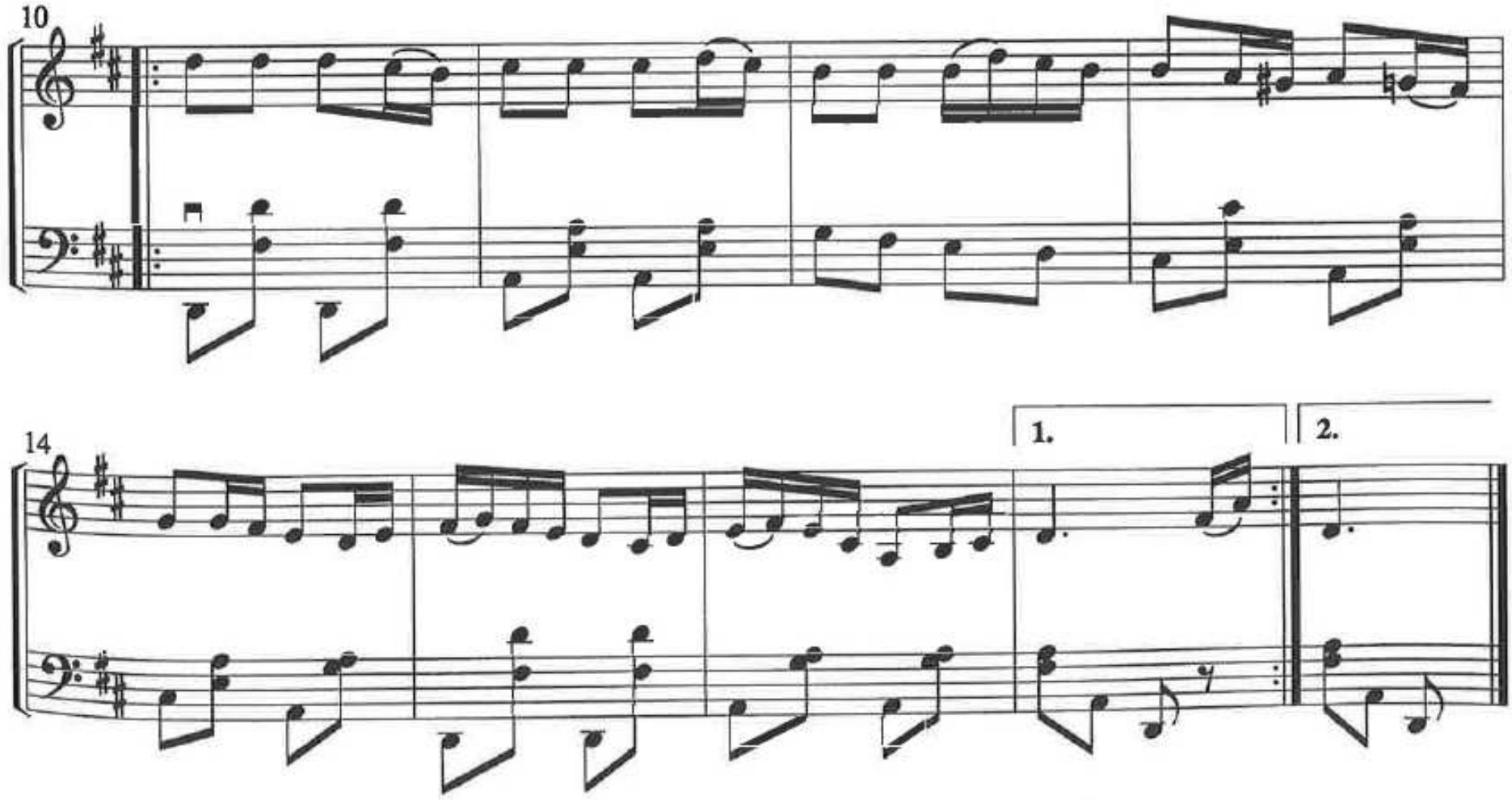
J. S. Bach



Walking Music from Appelbo

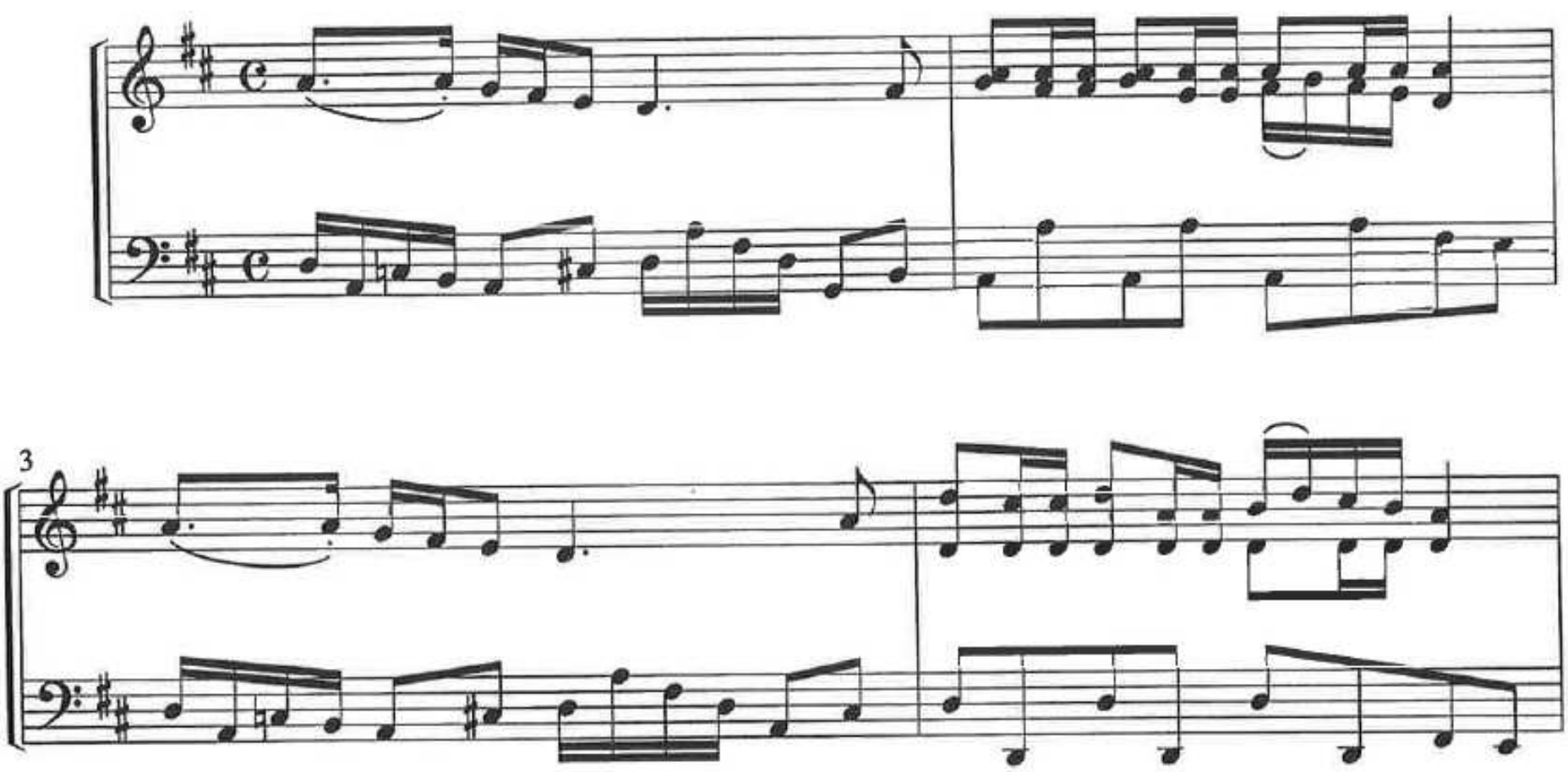
(Gånglåt Från Äppelbo)

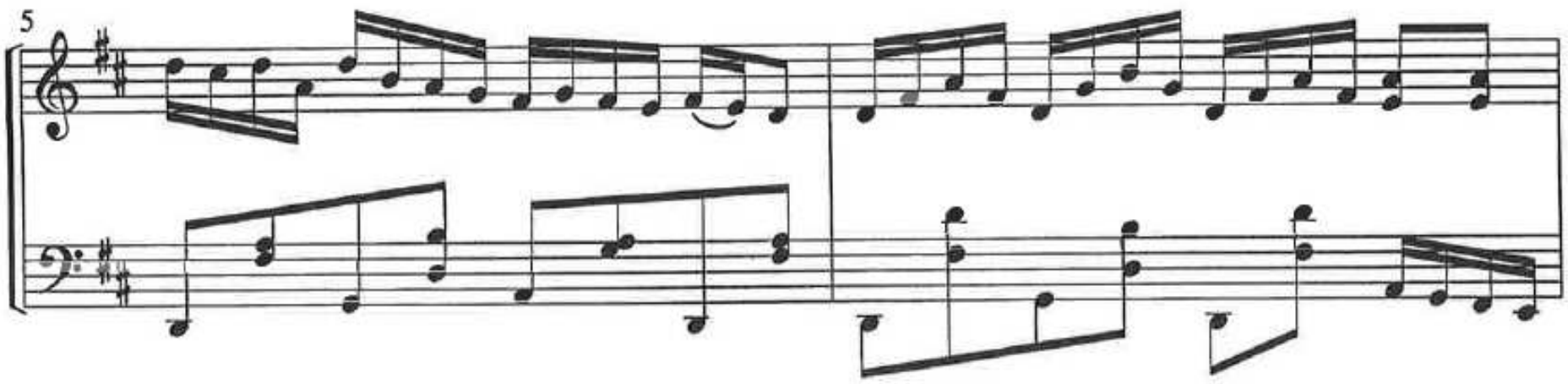


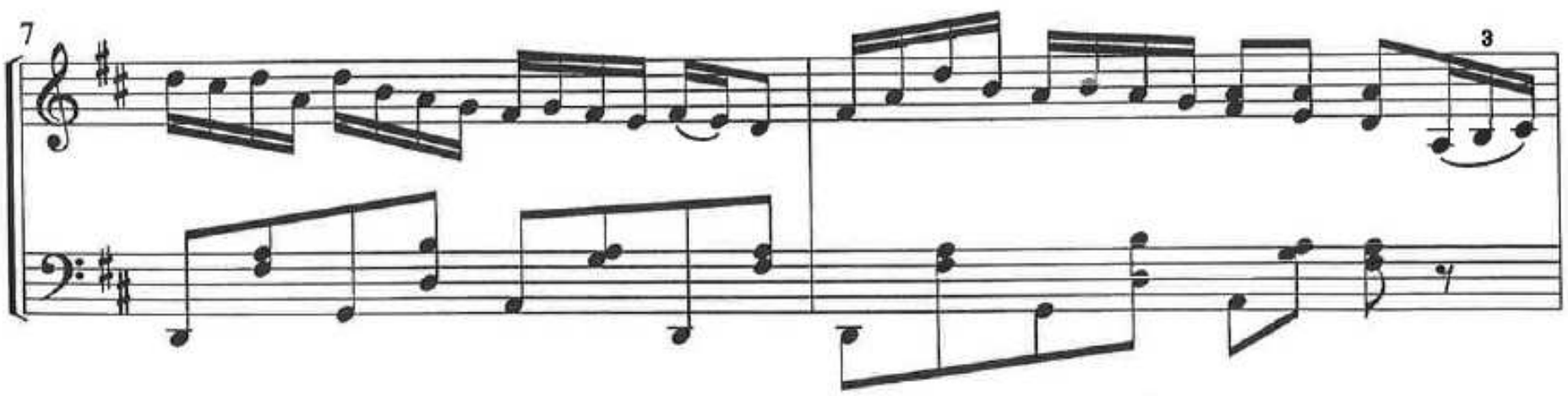


The Coyote's Bark

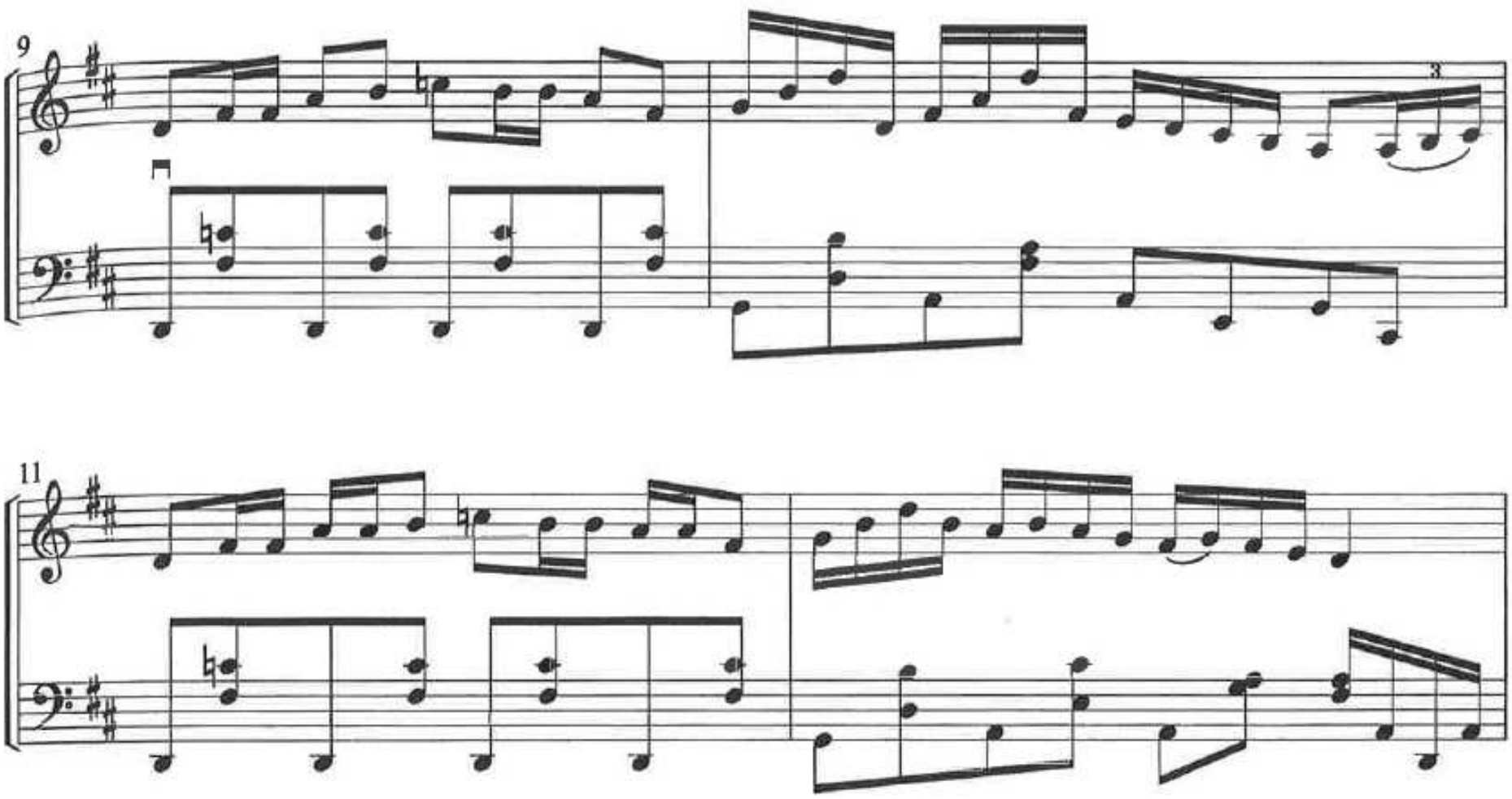
Rick Mooney







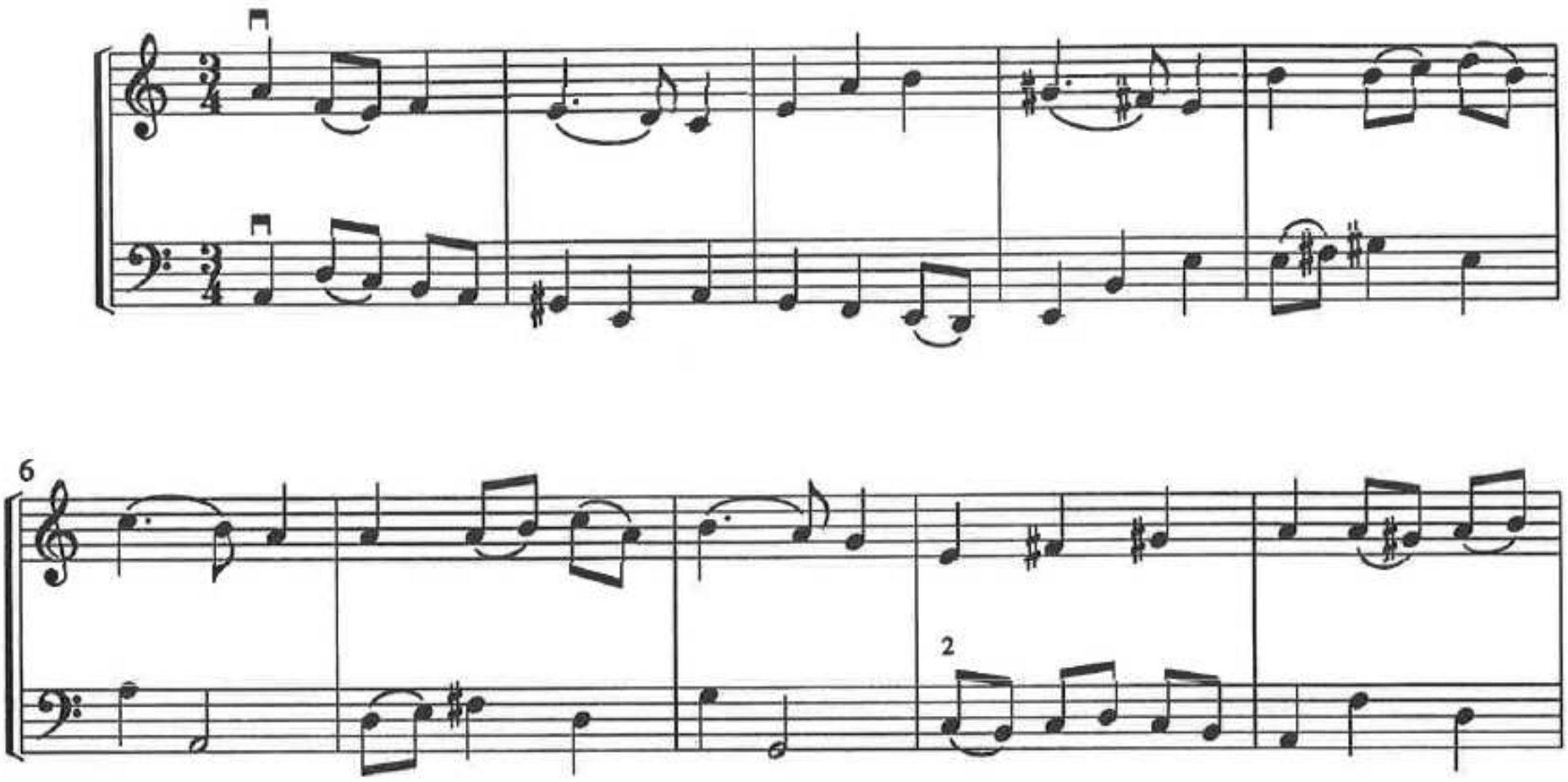
The Coyote's Bark



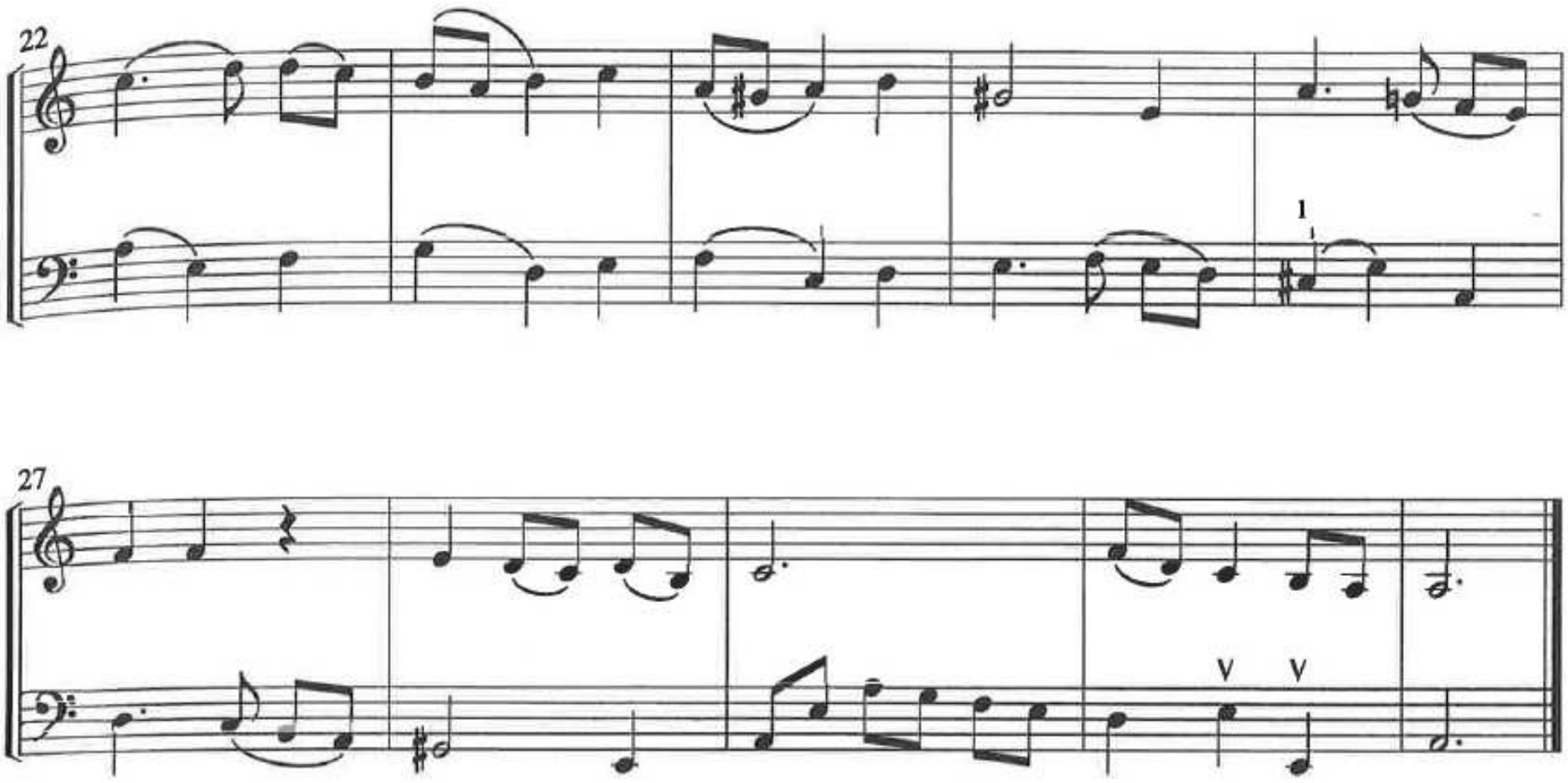
Chorale

Die Bittre Leidenszeit

J. S. Bach



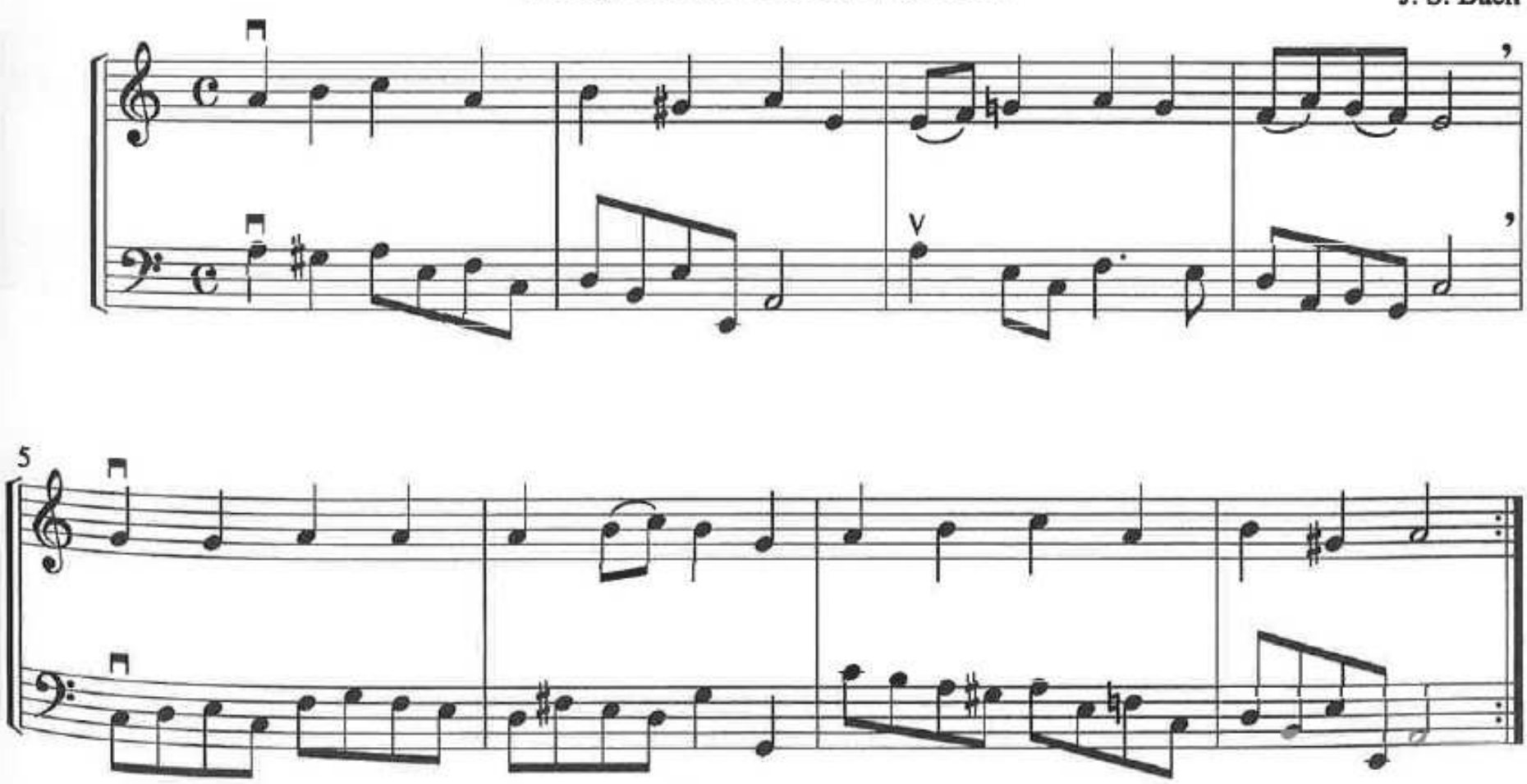
Die Bittre Leidenszeit



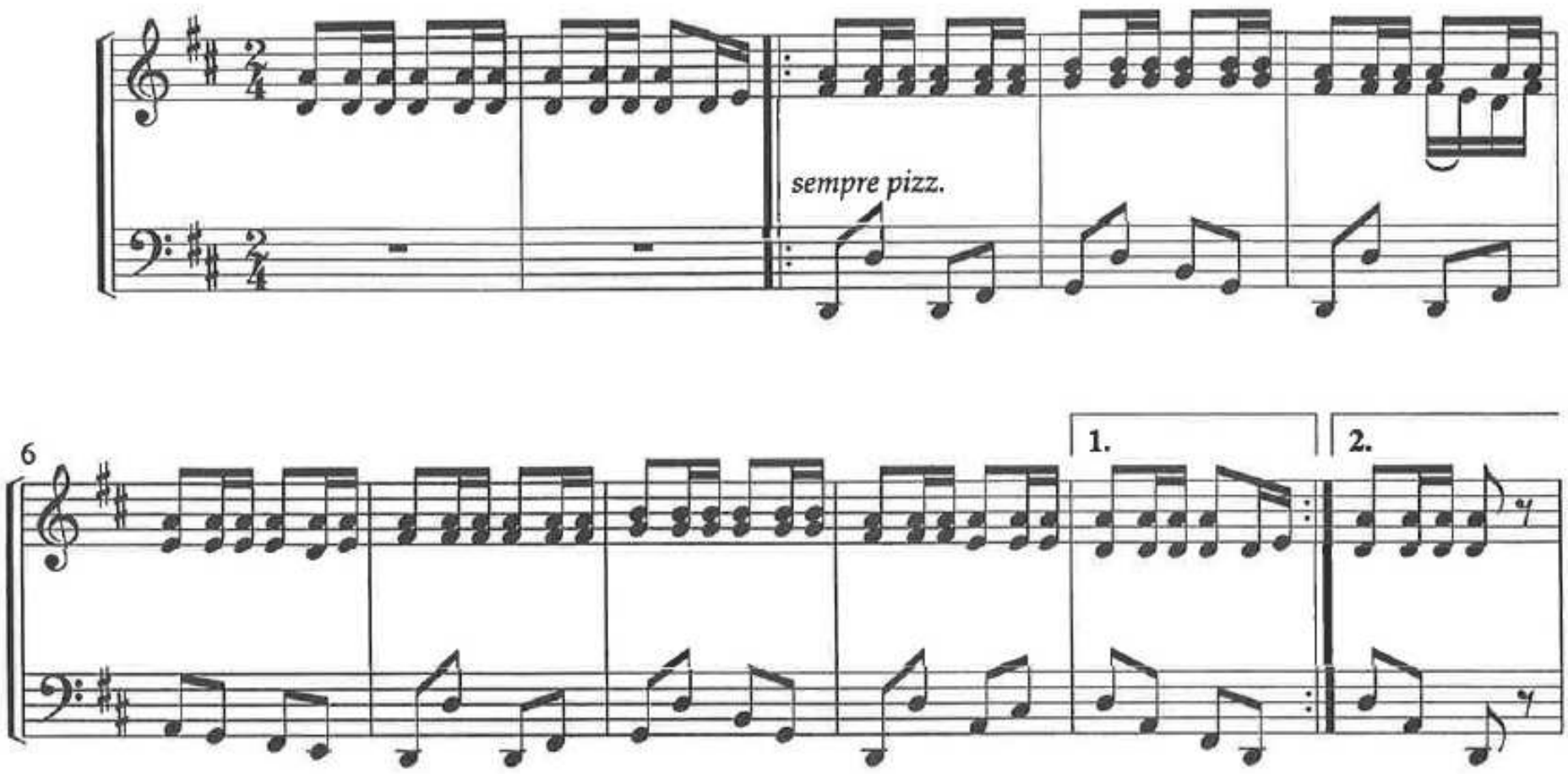
Chorale

Jesu, Deine Liebeswunden

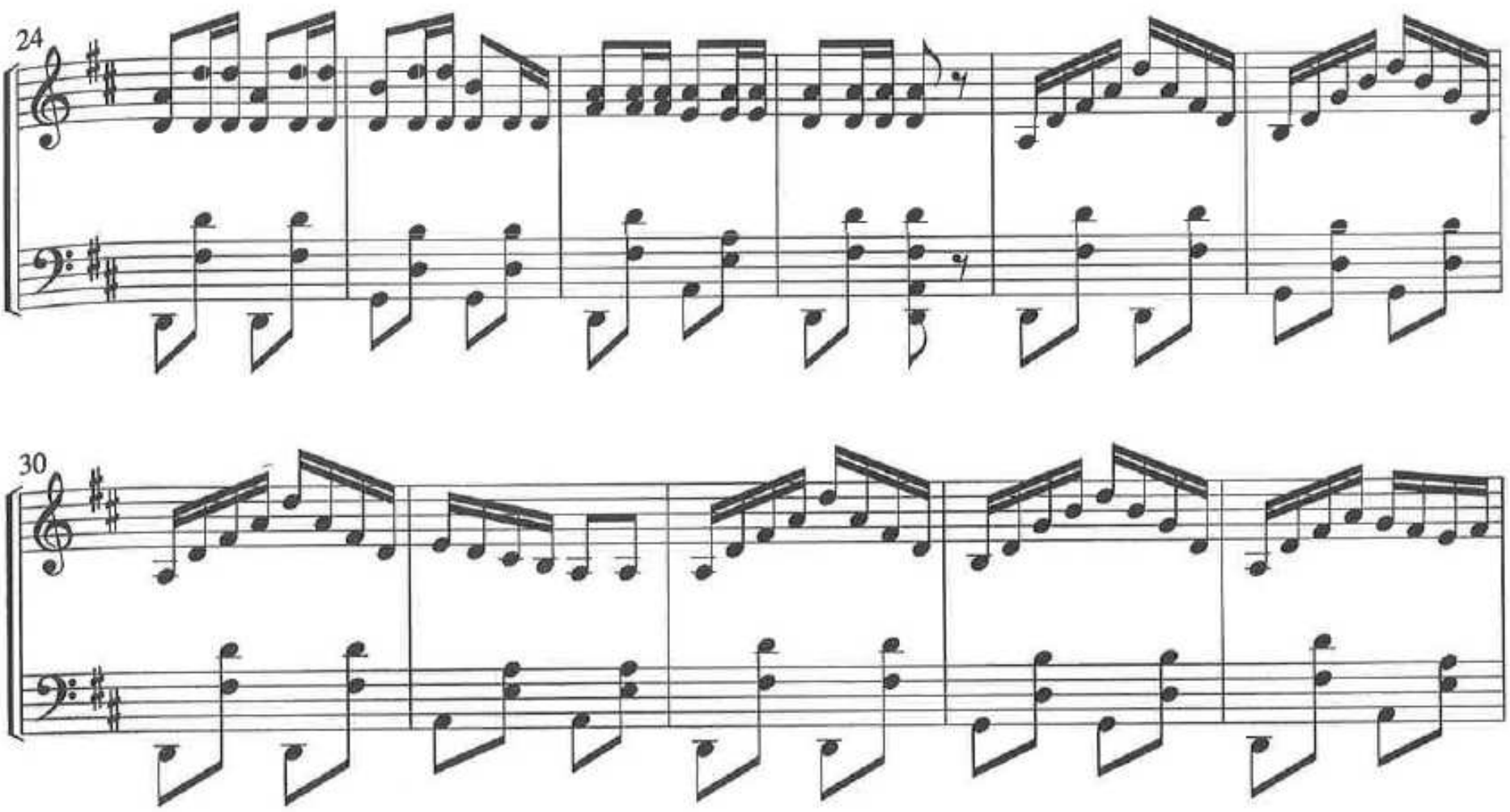
J. S. Bach



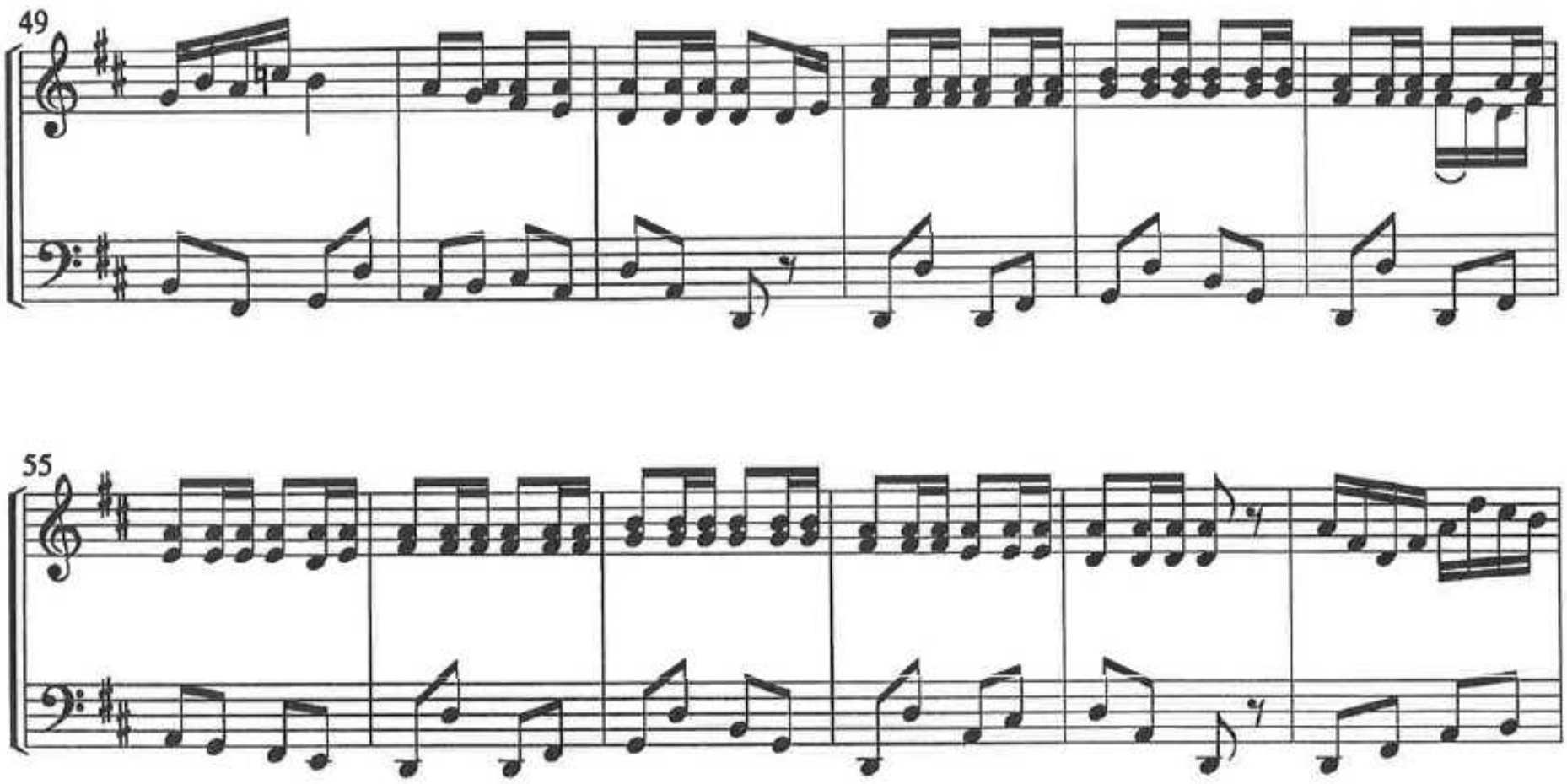
Boil Them Cabbage Down



Boil Them Cabbage Down



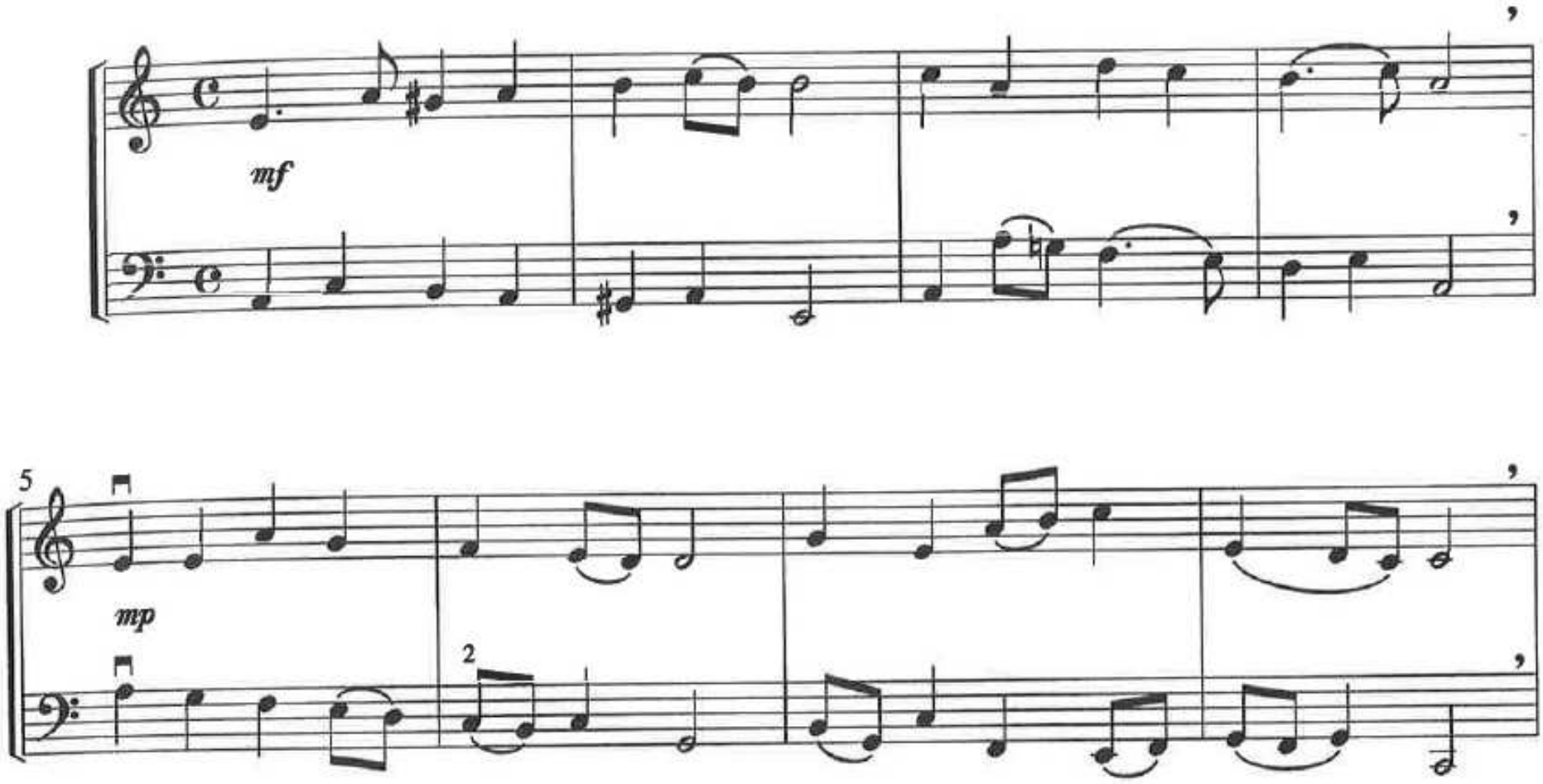
Boil Them Cabbage Down



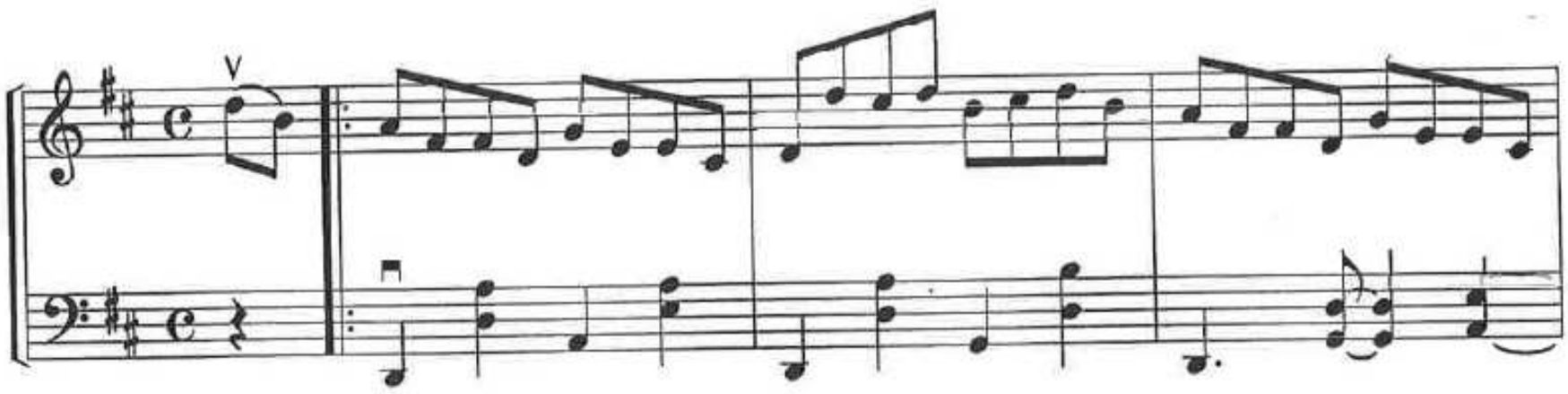
Chorale

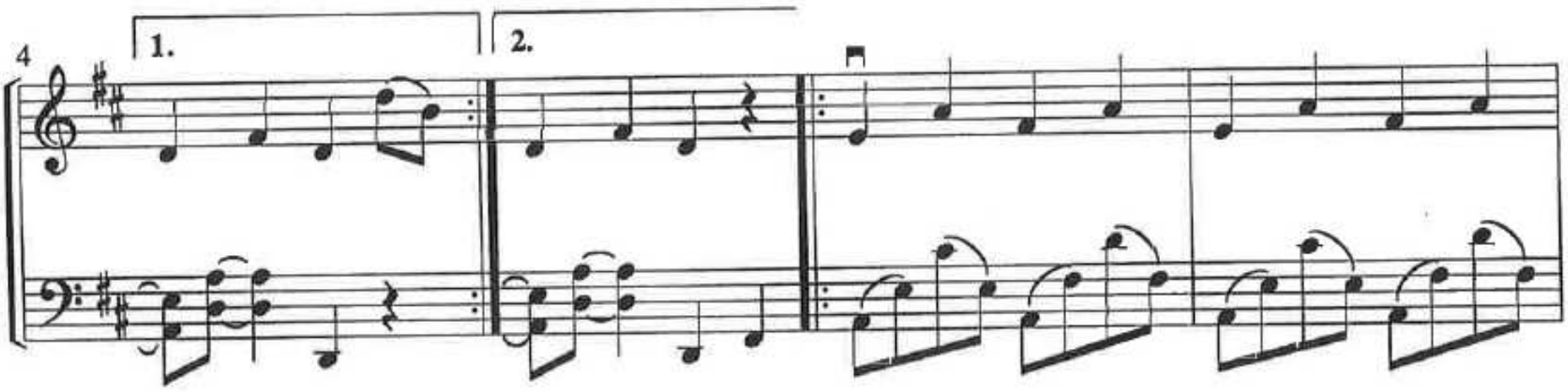
Jesu, Jesu, Du Bist Mein

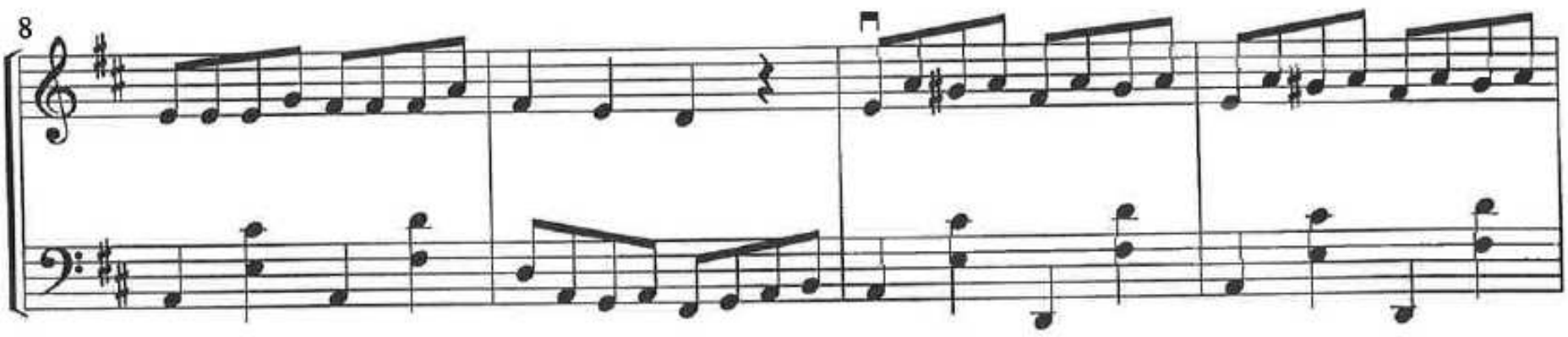
J. S. Bach



The Triumph







The Triumph

12

16

V

20

1.

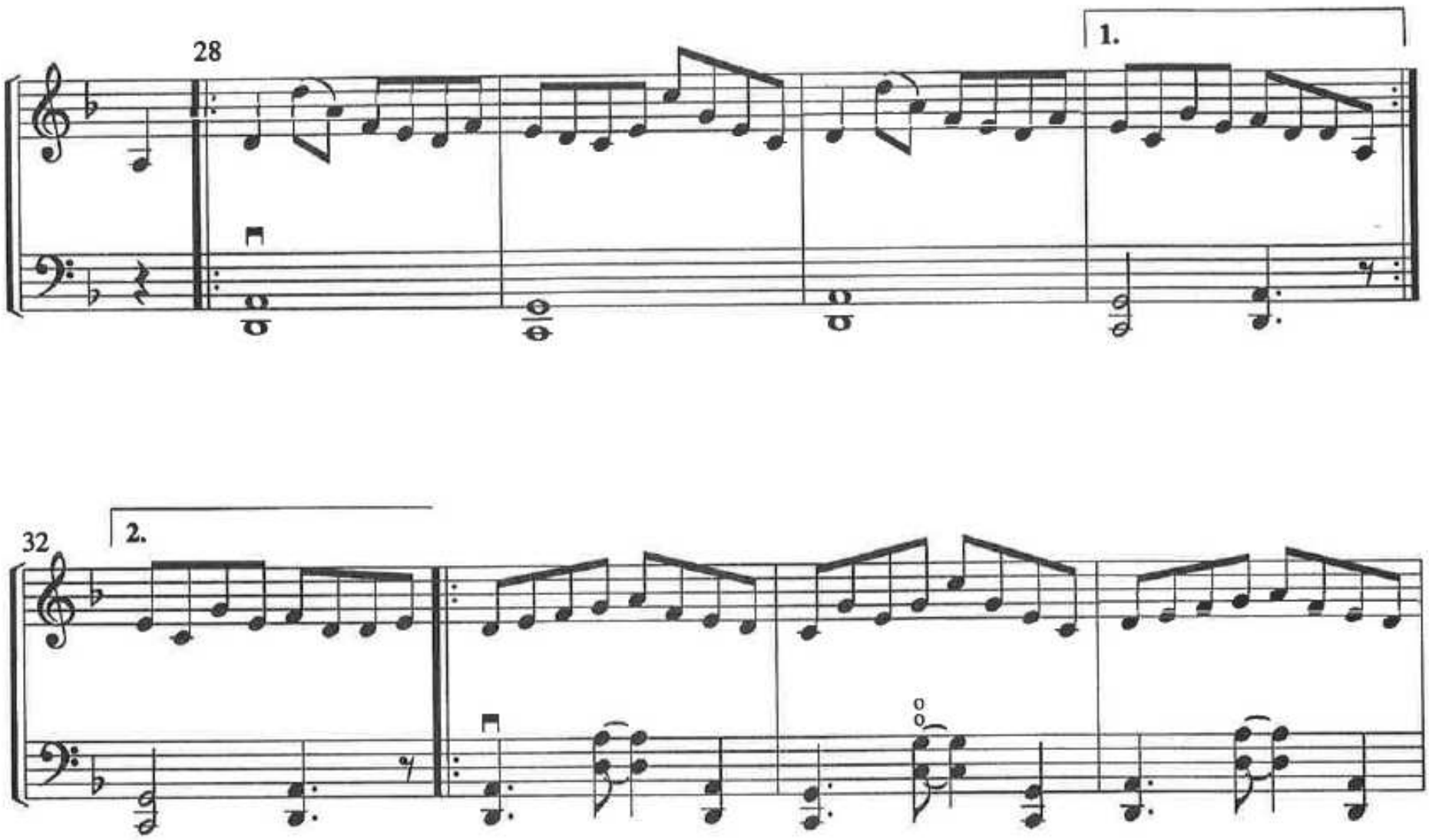
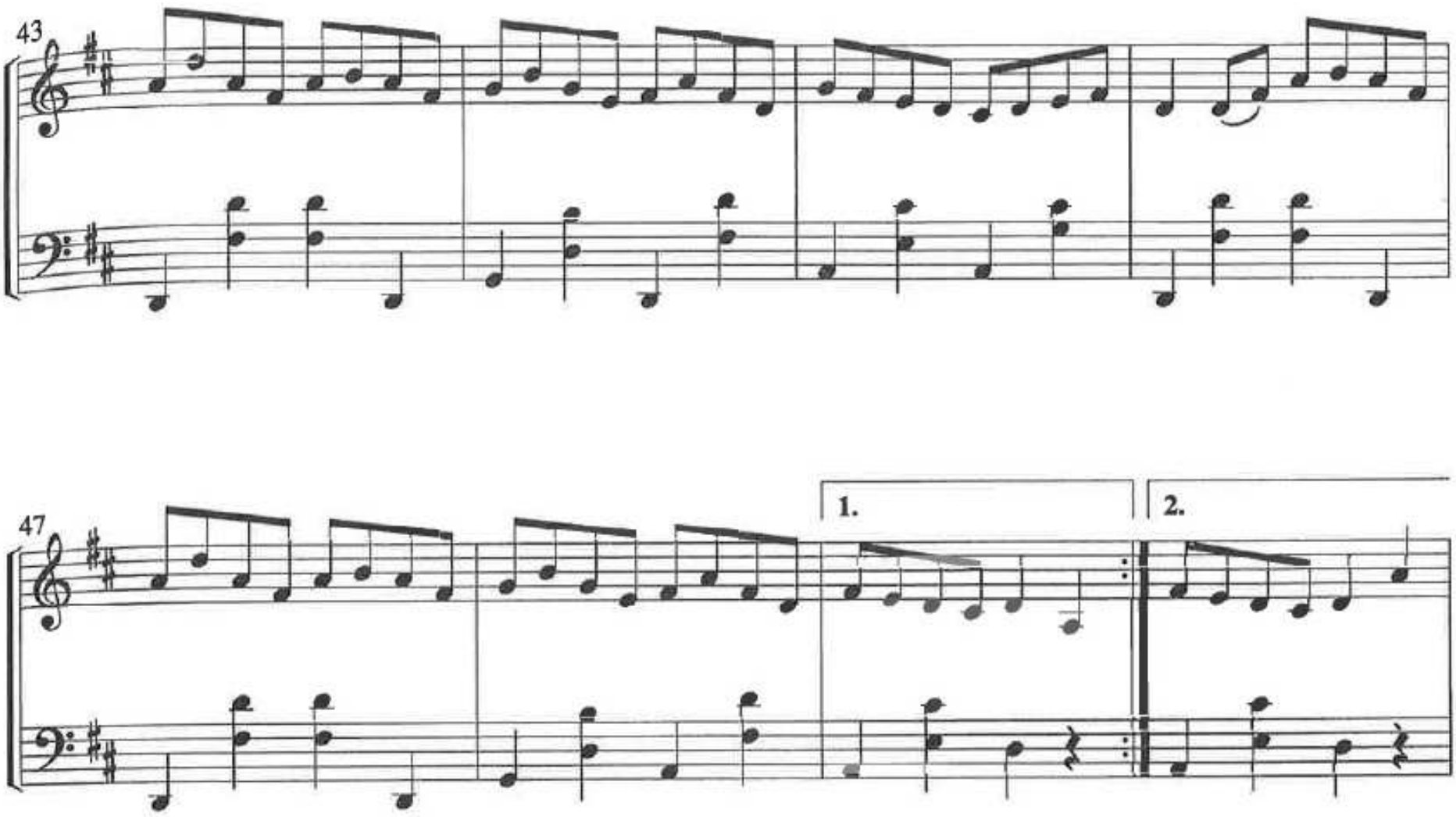
2.

24

1.

2.

The Triumph



The Triumph