Songs of Wartime:

Music Composed by Women in Europe during the Second World War

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Elsa Barraine

Avis

French-Jewish composer Elsa Barraine (1910-1999) was born in Paris, France, where she studied at the Paris Conservatoire with the composer Paul Dukas.[1] Barraine took a job at French Radio as pianist, sound recorder, and head of singing from 1936-1940, and then as a sound mixer at the end of the Second World War.[2] After working as the musical director of Chant du Monde from 1944 to 1947, Barraine became a professor of sight-reading and analysis at the Paris Conservatoire until 1974.[3] During the war, Barraine joined the French Resistance and assumed the name of Catherine Bonnard so as to hide her Jewish background from the Nazis who were occupying France.[4] Along with the conductor Roger Desormiere, Barraine founded the *Front National des Musiciens* in 1941, inviting many notable French composers to join. This group began to publish the newspaper *Les Musiciens d'Aujourd'hui,* which set up secret concerts that highlighted banned music including those of Jewish composers, helped Resistance soldiers and supported them with musical demonstrations, and exposed "musical traitors" who collaborated with the Germans.[5] Through these activities and her own music, Elsa Barraine helped promote

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1. Françoise Andrieux, "Elsa Barraine," Grove Music Online, January 20, 2001, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.lib.pepperdine.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000002102?rskey=W40oT0.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Hervé Roten and Bruno Fraitag, "Elsa Barraine," Institut Européen des Musiques Juives, n.d., https://www.iemj.org/en/barraine-elsa-1910-1999/.

5. Daisy Fancourt, "Front National Des Musiciens," Music and the Holocaust, n.d., https://holocaustmusic.ort.org/resistance-and-exile/french-resistance/front-national-des-musiciens/.

French culture, keeping it alive in the people's hearts and giving them hope that they would one day overcome the struggles and tyranny they were faced with. Her compositional style was mostly tonal, with a sense of passion and political awareness also appearing throughout her music. She wrote numerous works, including film scores, ballets, orchestral works, choral pieces, chamber music, and keyboard works.[6]

Avis was written for chorus and orchestra in 1944, to a text by the poet Paul Éluard. *Avis*, which translates most closely in this context to "notice", was written by Éluard in 1943 to reflect the horror and fear upon seeing execution "notices", posters, and other such paper threats posted by the Germans.[7] The poem goes through one man's journey through the night before his execution, describing his anger and horror at the situation. The poem's takes a turn when the man realizes he has millions of fellow comrades behind him to avenge this great injustice and speaks of the liberation he experiences because of this enlightening knowledge. Barraine dedicates her setting of *Avis* to Georges Dudach, who was killed by the Germans. The pedal tone throughout the piece represents the impending doom of death the speaker is experiencing, and chromaticism highlights the uncertainty and uneasiness of the situation. Barraine also uses musical elements to text paint, for example using a slow languishing triplet on the word *sang* ("blood") and a marcato marking on the word *force*. The piano begins to play an eighth note accompaniment, and, eventually dotted sixteenths to represent the vengeful marching of the people rising up to resist. The piece, which starts off in a minor mode, transitions to a major mode once the text begins

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6. Andrieux, "Elsa Barraine".

7. "Étude Du Poème Avis De Paul Eluard," La Dissertation, May 20, 2013, https://www.ladissertation.com/Littérature/Littérature/Étude-du-poème-Avis-de-Paul-Eluard-94168.html.

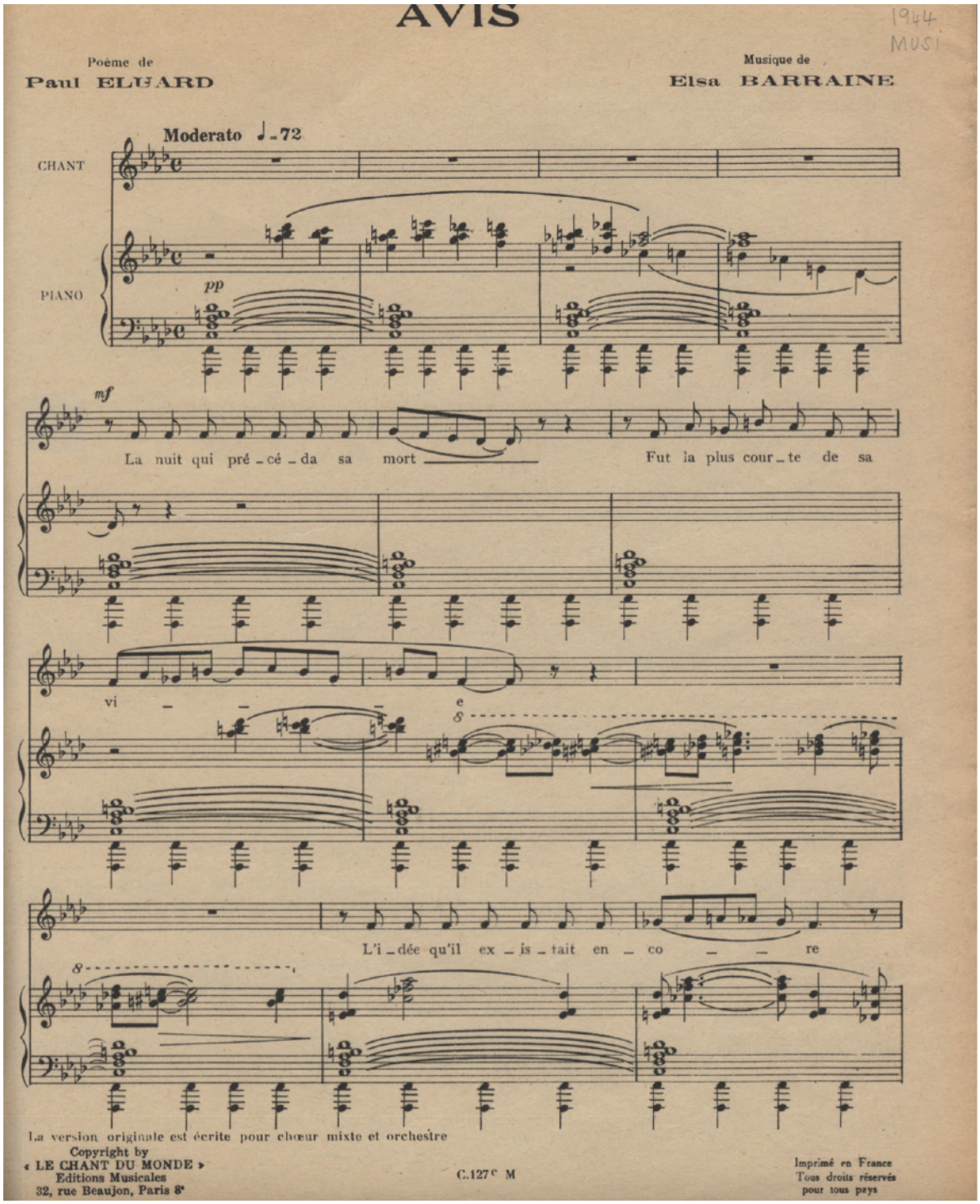
speaking of the millions and millions who will rise up to avenge the speaker's death and resist the Nazi forces. Barraine uses *Avis* to express the sadness, fear, and despair the French people were feeling, but offers a sense of hope and resistance upon the conclusion of the piece.

Text and Translation:

La nuit qui précéda sa mort	The night before his death
Fut la plus courte de sa vie	Was the shortest of his life
L'idée qu'il existait encore	The idea that there still was
Lui brûlait le sang aux poignets	Burning blood on his wrists
Le poids de son corps l'écoeurait	The weight of his body sickened him
Sa force le faisait gémir	His strength made him moan
C'est tout au fond de cette horreur	It is deep inside this horror
Qu'il a commencé à sourire	That he began to smile
Il n'avait pas UN camarade	He didn't have ONE comrade
Mais des millions et des millions	But millions and millions

Recording:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ehsg_P7Y20U

Score:


AVIS
1944
MUSI
Poème de
Paul ELUARD
Musique de
Elsa BARRAINE
Moderato ♩=72
CHANT
PIANO
pp
mf
La nuit qui pré-cé-da sa mort
Fut la plus cour-te de sa
vi - - - e
L'i-dée qu'il ex-is-tait en - co - - - re
La version originale est écrite pour chœur mixte et orchestre
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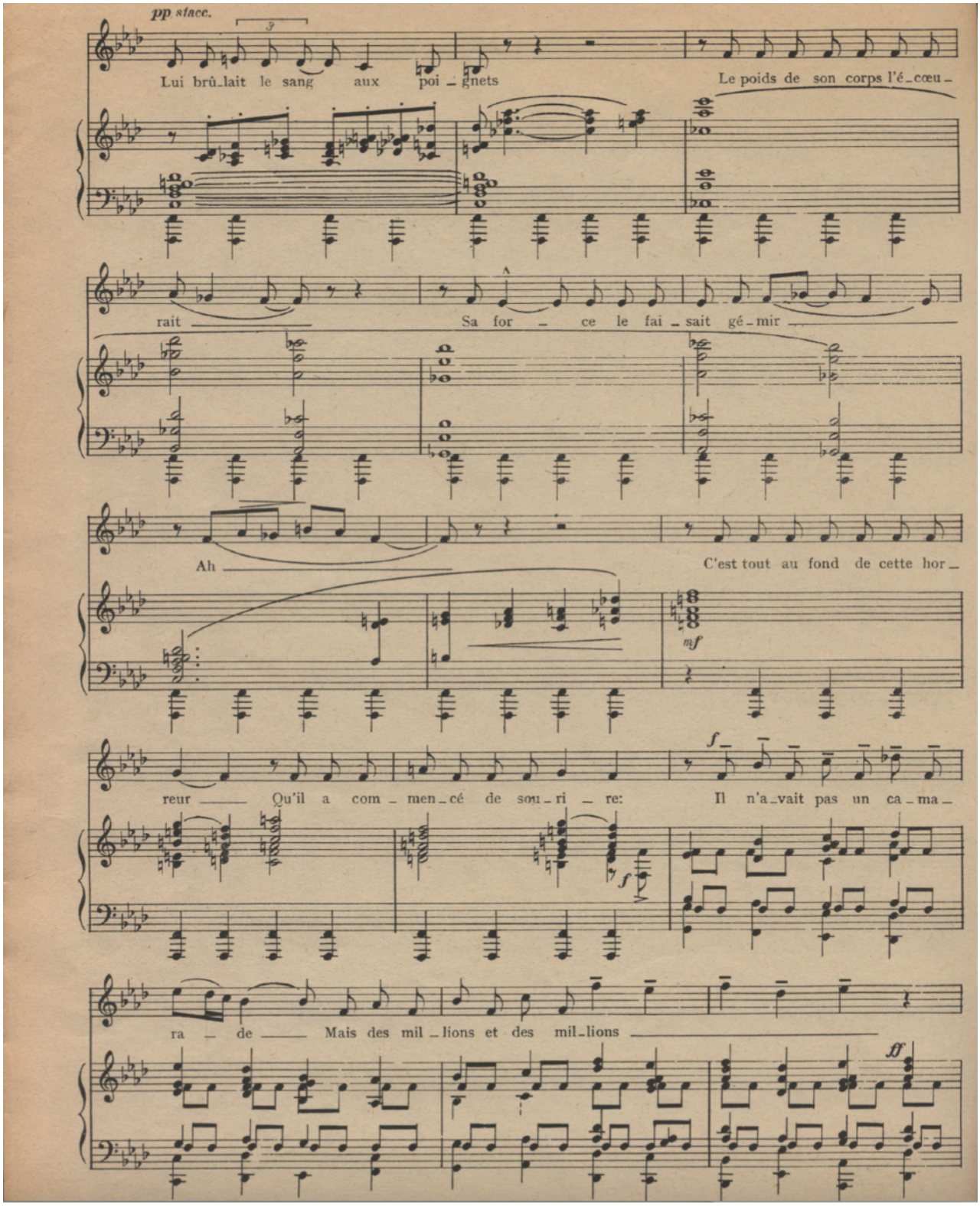
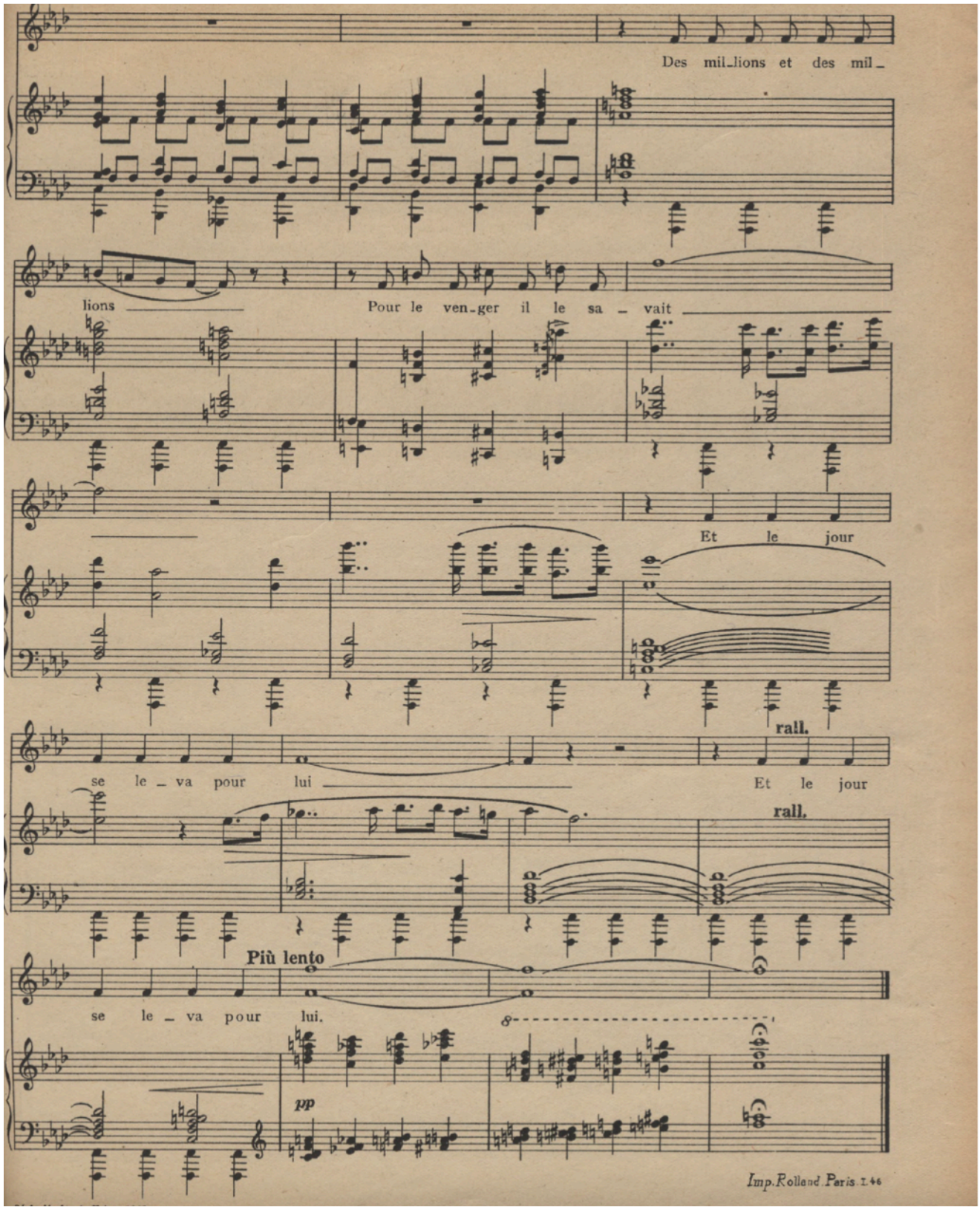

pp staccato
Lui brû-lait le sang aux poi-gnets
Le poids de son corps l'é-cœu-
rait
Sa for-ce le fai-sait gé-mir
Ah
C'est tout au fond de cette hor-
mf
reur Qu'il a com-men-cé de sou-ri-re:
Il n'a-vait pas un ca-ma-
f
ra-de Mais des mil-lions et des mil-lions
ff


Des mil_lions et des mil_
lions
Pour le ven_ger il le sa _ vait
Et le jour
rall.
se le _ va pour lui
Et le jour
rall.
Più lento
se le _ va pour lui.
pp
Imp. Rolland. Paris. 1.46

Ilse Weber

Und der Regen rinnt

Jewish author and songwriter Ilse Weber was born in what is now the Czech Republic in 1903.[8] She wrote numerous poems, stories, and songs, including the 1929 children's book *Mendel Rosenbusch: Tales for Jewish Children.*[9] Weber was extremely musical, with her instruments including singing, guitar, balalaika, lute, and mandolin.[10] Weber, along with her husband and two children, were living in the town of Vítkovice when it was annexed by the Nazis in 1939. Although they were able to send their son Hanuš out of the country, Weber, her husband Willi, and her other son Tommy were transported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1942.[11] Although the letters she sent out from the camp seemed relatively cheerful, her poems and songs said otherwise. While working in the children's hospital as a nurse, Weber kept spirits alive by singing and playing for the patients; the songs she wrote reflected the harsh and grim conditions of the camp.[12] Her brave spirit shined through as she carried her guitar illegally under the watchful eyes of the Nazi soldiers who stood guard in the camp.[13] When the children's infirmary patients were deported to Auschwitz in 1944, Ilse Weber voluntarily went with them,

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8. Gabriella Di Laccio, "Ilse Weber," Donne, January 13, 2021, https://donne-uk.org/ilse-weber/.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

along with her son Tommy. Tragically, they were both killed there that same year. Her husband Willi survived, however, and was able to preserve his wife's songs and poems.[14]

Und der Regen rinnt was written by Ilse Weber in Theresienstadt; the exact date is unknown. The text conveys the heaviness Weber must have been feeling due to the separation from her son Hanuš. It also served as a wider reflection for all parents within the camp, as some of them had sent their children away as Weber had, while others feared for their health and safety within the infirmary. The sixteenth note pattern in the piano represents the falling rain of the song's text and title, relentlessly pouring down like tears. A particular chord progression of the song is something of note, going from D minor, to A Major, back to D minor, transitioning to Bb Major, then to the fourth of that chord Eb Major, then to a first inversion A Major over E chord, then to F Major. This progression provides a sense of uneasiness until the audience can "breathe out" when we land in F Major. The "climbing" sensation the listener experiences reflects the speaker's struggle and heartbreak, quite literally reaching the top on the F Major chord with the words *"hoch sind die Berge"* ("high are the mountains"). This song, although relatively simple, conveys the pain of uncertainty and loss that Weber was experiencing due to separation.

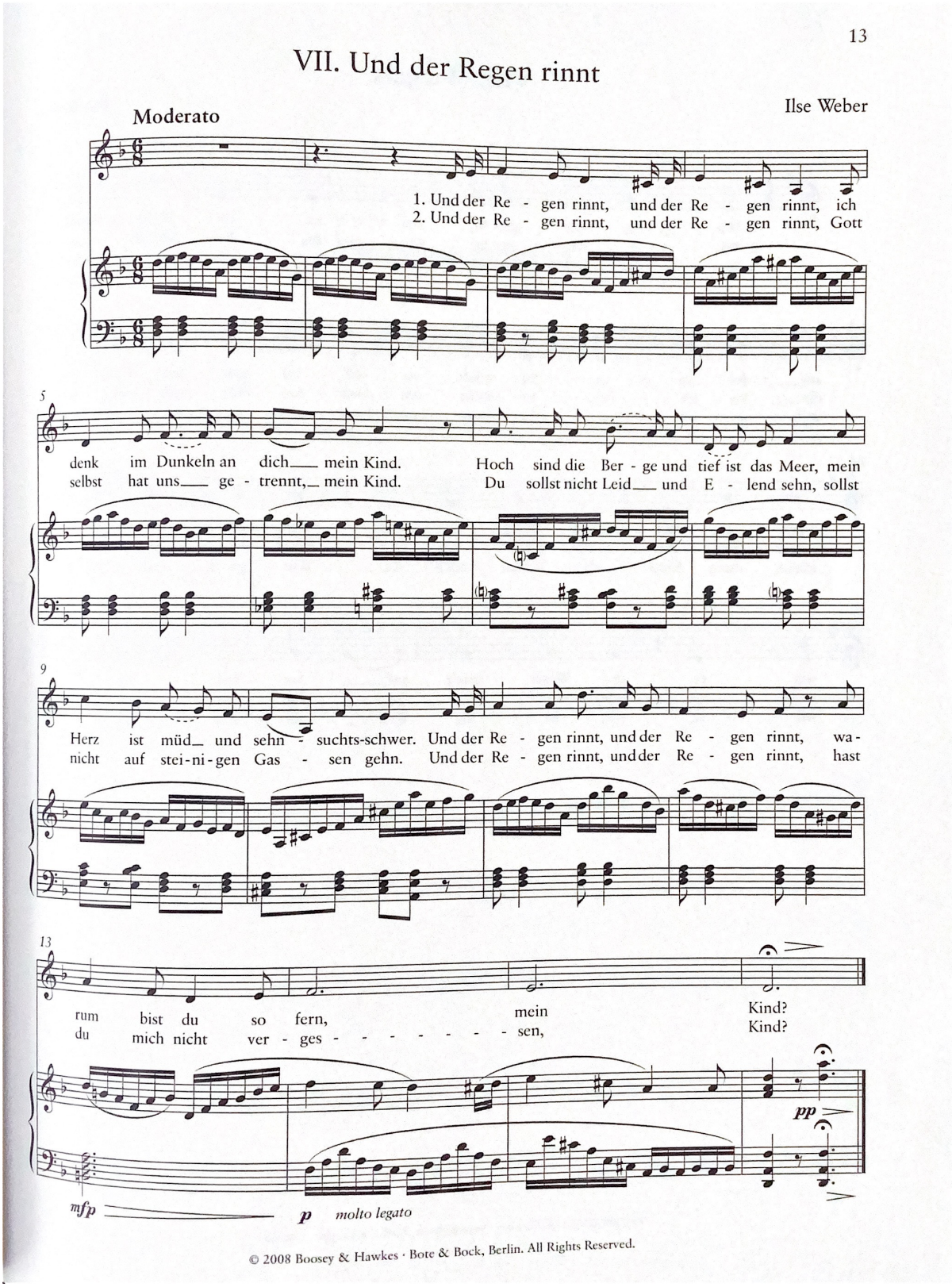
14. Di Laccio, "Ilse Weber".

Text and Translation:

Und der Regen rinnt, und der Regen rinnt	And the rain falls, and the rain falls,
Ich denk im Dunkeln an dich mein Kind.	In the darkness I'm thinking of you, my child.
Hoch sind die Berge und tief ist das Meer, mein	The mountains are high, and the sea is deep, my
Herz ist müd und sehnsuchtsschwer.	heart is tired and weighted with longing.
Und der Regen rinnt, und der Regen rinnt, warum	And the rain falls, and the rain falls,
bist du so fern, mein Kind?	Why are you so far away, my child?
Und der Regen rinnt, und der Regen rinnt,	And the rain falls, and the rain falls,
Gott selbst hat uns getrennt, mein Kind.	God himself has separated us, my child.
Du sollst nicht Leid und Elend sehn, sollst nicht	You are not to see pain and suffering, you are not

Recording:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T51kgOPY7BQ

Score:


13
VII. Und der Regen rinnt
Ilse Weber
Moderato
1. Und der Re - gen rinnt, und der Re - gen rinnt, ich
2. Und der Re - gen rinnt, und der Re - gen rinnt, Gott
5
denk im Dunkeln an dich mein Kind. Hoch sind die Ber - ge und tief ist das Meer, mein
selbst hat uns ge - trennt, mein Kind. Du sollst nicht Leid und E - lend sehn, sollst
9
Herz ist müd und sehn - suchts-schwer. Und der Re - gen rinnt, und der Re - gen rinnt, wa -
nicht auf stei-ni-gen Gas - sen gehn. Und der Re - gen rinnt, und der Re - gen rinnt, hast
13
rum bist du so fern, mein Kind?
du mich nicht ver - ges - - - - - - - sen, Kind?
pp
mfp
p molto legato
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Josima Feldschuh

Sabbathiade No. II

Polish-Jewish prodigy pianist and composer Josima Feldschuh was born on June 26, 1929 to Perła Feldschuh, a musicologist, and Rubin Feldschuh, a writer.[15] Josima was taught piano from a very early age by her mother and impressed everybody with her intuitive musicality. In 1941, at the age of 11, she gave her first concert in the Warsaw ghetto to the delight and amazement of the audience, who gave her a standing ovation and requested an encore.[16] Josima's aunt, Rachel Auerbach, recalled that her niece had perfect pitch and wanted to become a composer in order to prove that women were just as capable of composing music as men.[17] Josima composed her pieces in a notebook, writing piano works that were inspired by nature as well as the Jewish Shabbat tradition.[18] In 1942, the Warsaw ghetto liquidation began and the Feldschuh family went into hiding.[19] Although they were able to escape deportation, Josima fell ill with pneumonia and passed away in April 1943 from tuberculosis at the age of 13.[20] Sadly, as a result of her daughter's death her mother took her own life shortly after, with her father being the only member of the family to survive the war. Despite the tragic circumstances

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15. "Josima Feldschuh - A Wunderkind," Polin: Museum of the History of Polish Jews, n.d., https://www.polin.pl/en/josima-feldschuh-a-wunderkind.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. "Music Notebook Belonging to Josima Feldschuh from Warsaw, 1940," Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center, n.d., https://documents.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&search=global&strSearch=josima%20feldschuh&GridItemId=3688551.

19. "Josima Feldschuh - A Wunderkind".

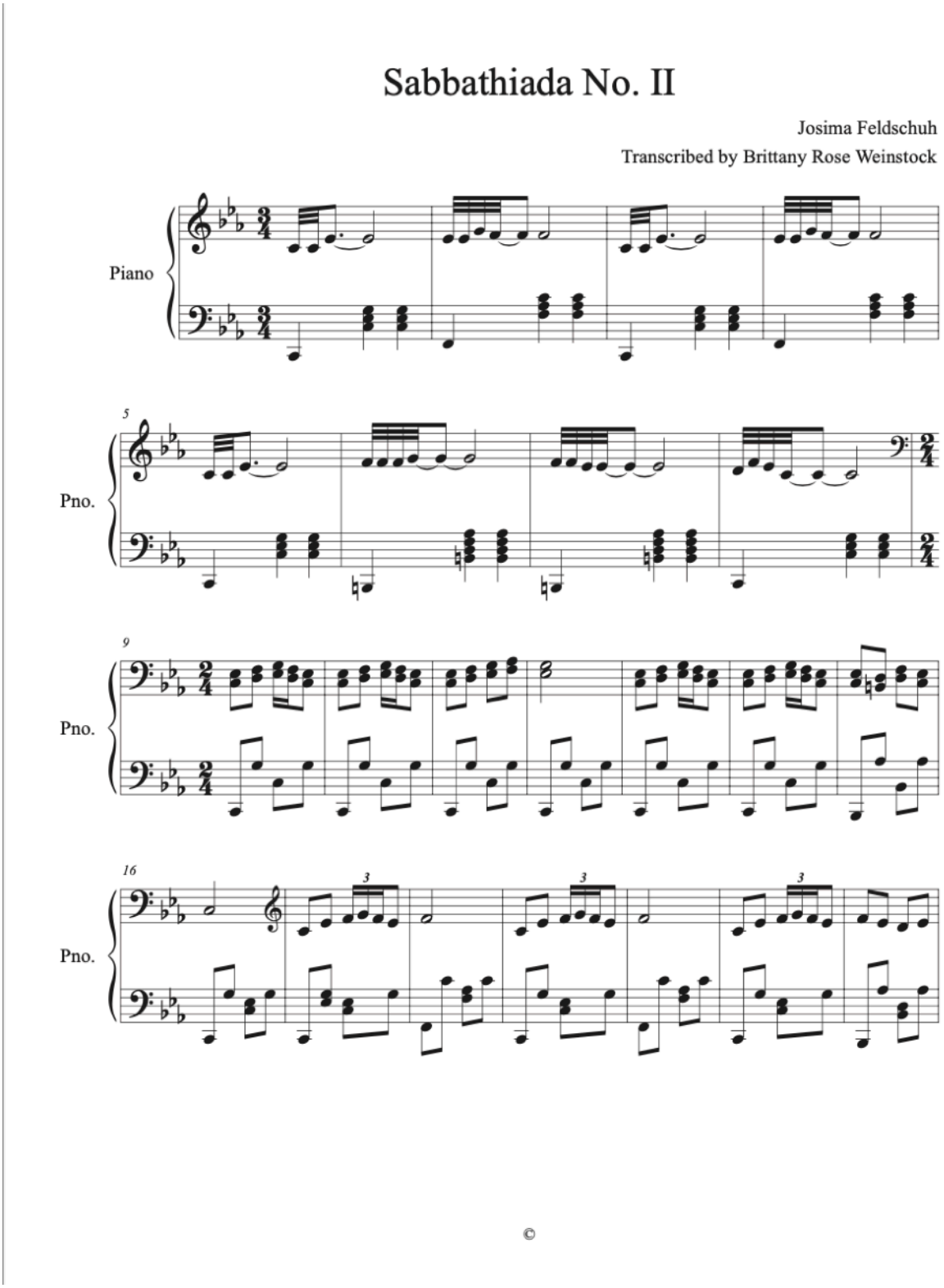
20. Ibid.

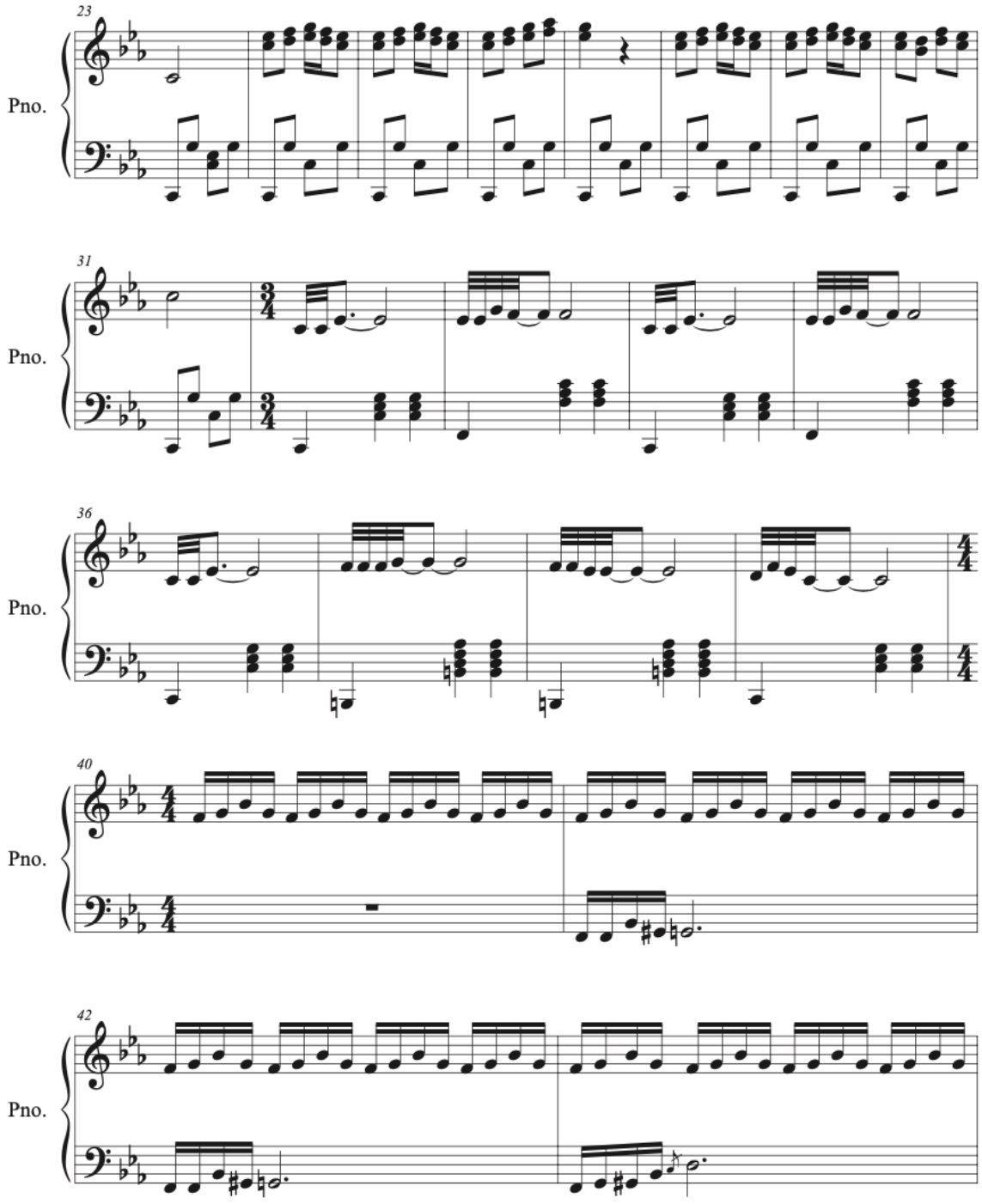
of her death, Josima's musical legacy lives on and her music is still performed in concert today for both young and old.

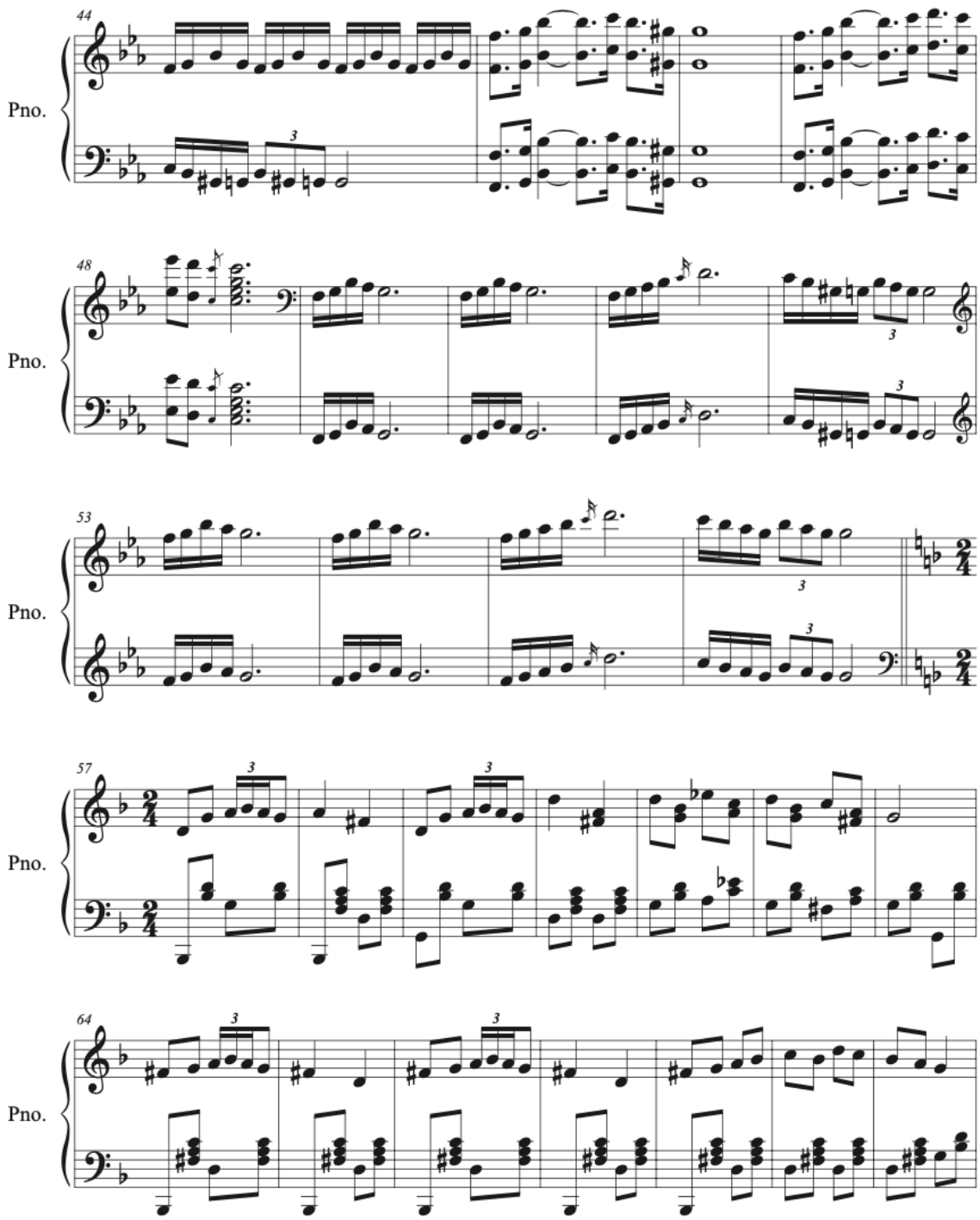
Sabbathiade No. II (1940) was written for solo piano. The piece starts off in the key of C minor and then transitions to D minor, switching between 3/4, 2/4, and 4/4 meters throughout. The 3/4 sections have a heavy, Chopin-esque feel to them, whereas the 2/4 sections are more influenced by Jewish folk song. Feldschuh utilizes sixteenth, thirty-second, and grace notes to provide a sense of urgency and at times surprise. Chromaticism also appears throughout the piece, further illustrating a Chopinic influence. *Sabbathiade's* contemplative moments appear in the 4/4 sections, with fast sixteenth-note passages leading up to three-beat-long held notes. This represents the contemplative nature of Shabbat, a quiet moment of prayer to honor God. The piece is in ABACDBD form, structured around a few different ideas with repeating sections, mostly marked by change in meter. Although simple in composition, this piece shows Josima's great potential as a composer and hints at the tragedy of a life cut too short.

Recording:
https://youtu.be/dMZ_pRkda1g?t=1066

Score:


Sabbathiada No. II
Josima Feldschuh
Transcribed by Brittany Rose Weinstock
Piano
Pno.
Pno.
Pno.
5
9
16
3
3
3
©


23
Pno.
31
Pno.
36
Pno.
40
Pno.
42
Pno.


44
Pno.
48
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53
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57
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64
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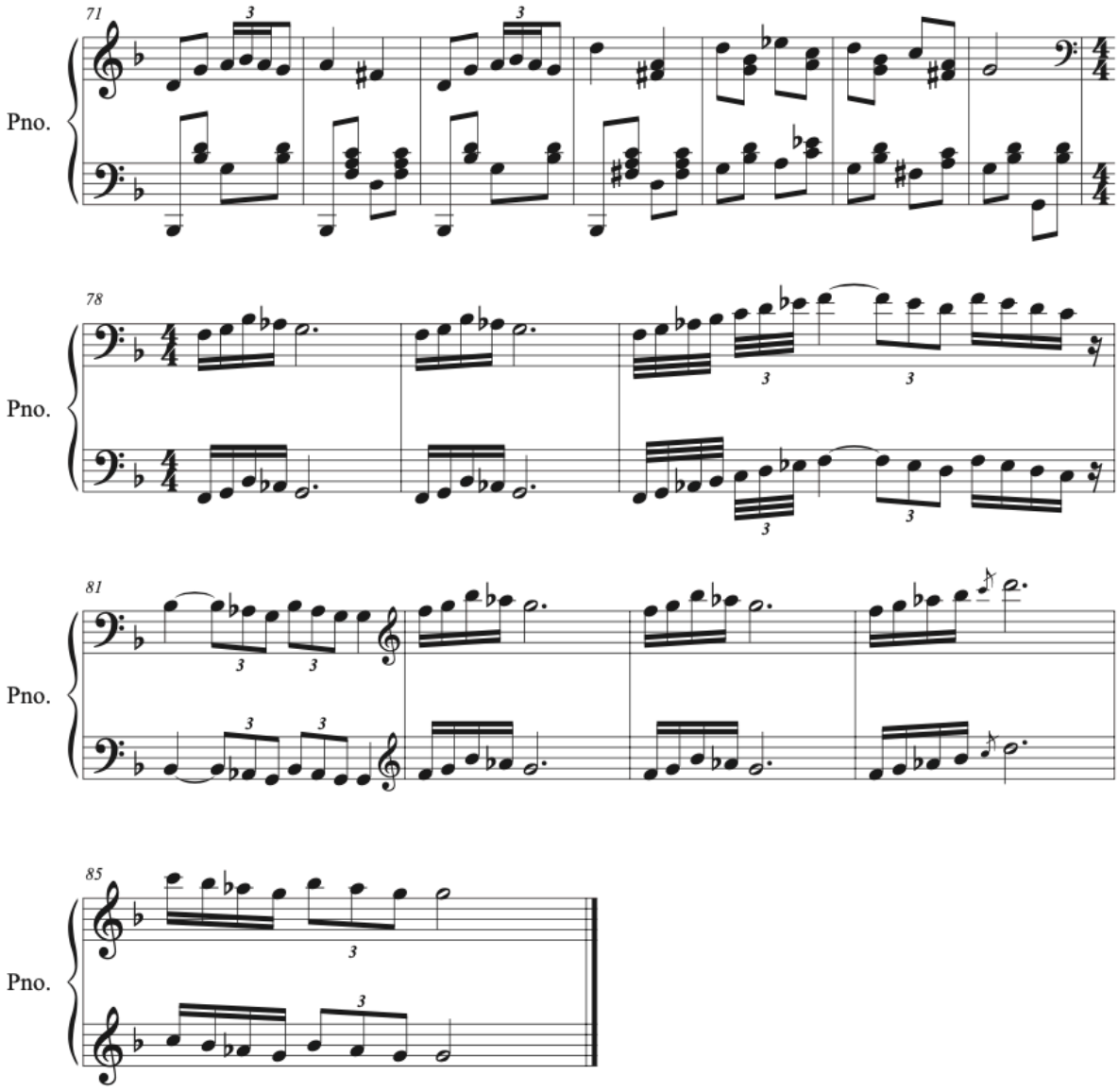
71
Pno.
78
Pno.
81
Pno.
85
Pno.

Grażyna Bacewicz

Suite for Two Violins

Polish-Lithuanian composer Grażyna Bacewicz was born in 1909 in Łódź, Poland.[21] Bacewicz grew up learning violin, piano, and music theory from her father.[22] She was a child prodigy who composed her own pieces from an early age and frequently gave concerts together with her brother.[23] Bacewicz studied violin and piano at the Warsaw Conservatory of Music and philosophy at the University of Warsaw, later traveling to Paris to study composition with Nadia Boulanger.[24] Bacewicz was mostly a neoclassical composer and achieved recognition as both a performer as a composer, playing as the principal violinist of the Polish Radio Orchestra, which also performed some of her compositions.[25] When the Second World War broke out in Europe, Bacewicz remained in Warsaw, where she hosted underground concerts.[26] After the war, she became a professor at the State Conservatory of Music in Łódź and decided to focus more on the compositional rather than the performance aspect of her career.[27] Bacewicz was also affected by the authoritarian control of the post-war Stalinist government, but this did not diminish the

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21. "Grażyna Bacewicz," University of Southern California Thornton School of Music Polish Music Center, July 13, 2018, https://polishmusic.usc.edu/research/composers/grazyna-bacewicz/.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

quality of her compositions.[28] In 1954, she was involved in a car accident that left her seriously injured, solidifying her dedication to composition.[29] She won numerous awards all over the world and made a pathway for female composers with her accomplishments and plethora of compositions.[30] She wrote a variety of works, from chamber music to symphonies to concertos to vocal music to film scores.[31] Her compositional career can be understood in three separate periods: the First (1932-1944) a development of her neoclassical style, the Second (1945-1959) breaks out of the structure seen in her first period, and the Third (1960-1969) is influenced by the avant-garde movement.[32] The end of her Third compositional period also marks her death in 1969 in Warsaw.

Suite for Two Violins was written in 1943 for one of Grażyna's wartime underground concerts in Warsaw and was premiered by violinists Irena Dubiska and Eugenia Umińska.[33] The suite consists of seven movements, alternating between slow and fast tempos: *I. Allegro, II. Andante, III. Vivo, IV. Tempo di menuetto, V. Allegro, VI. Andante Fughetta, VII. Allegro*. The violins work together in close camaraderie as they blend into each other harmonically, tonally, and rhythmically. Each instrument provides, at times, the accompaniment for the other, at at

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28. "Grażyna Bacewicz".

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Grażyna Bacewicz, *Suite for Two Violins*. (Poland: PWM Edition, 2020).

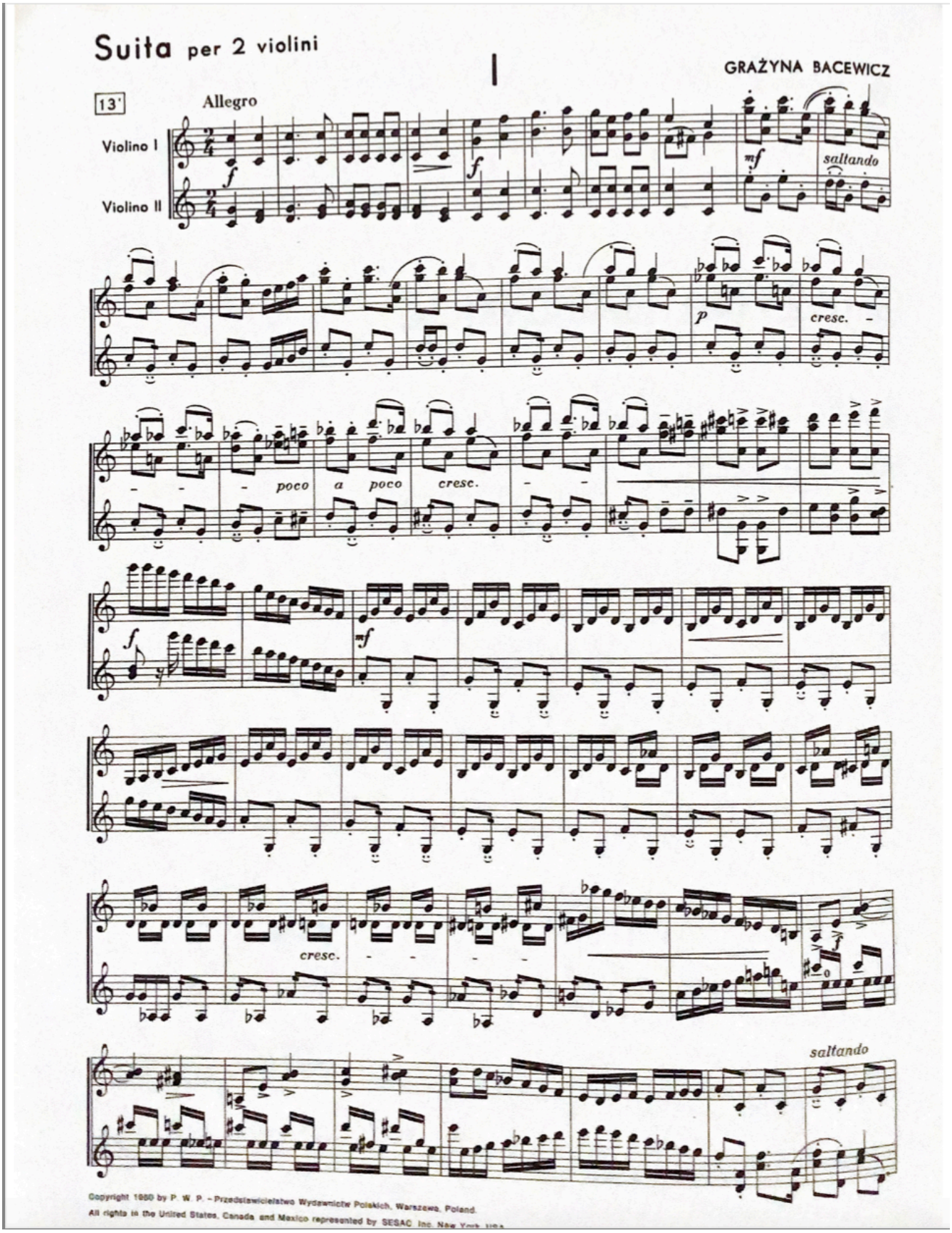
32. Adrian Thomas, "Grażyna Bacewicz," Grove Music Online, January 20, 2001, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.lib.pepperdine.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000001669?rskey=lwbaMl.

33. "Recording of Grażyna Bacewicz's Suite for Two Violins," Veronika Miecznikowski, October 15, 2018, http://violinista.ch/language/en/1512-2/.

other times they play the same note values on different pitches against each other. The contrast between movements is something of note, especially between the allegro and andante movements. The lively, frantic feeling of the faster movements are juxtaposed with the legato, contemplative movements, providing a rich variety of dances within the larger work. Bacewicz makes great use of chromaticism throughout the piece in both violin parts, utilizing this tool harmonically and transitionally. Neoclassical elements are evident in the Suite, especially that of restraint. The piece does not ever reach a state of over-emotionalism, choosing instead to focus on order and balance. Throughout various points in the piece, Bacewicz chooses to use a *sul G* marking, giving the violin a heavy, almost viola-like sound. This adds to the weight and color of the passage but does not, in this case, necessarily lead to emotionalism. The *Suite* is one of the defining pieces composed by women during the war and continues to serve as a reminder of resilience during difficult times.

Recording:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r63UMjYsee8

Score:


Suita per 2 violini
I
GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ
13'
Allegro
Violino I
Violino II
saltando
cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
cresc.
saltando
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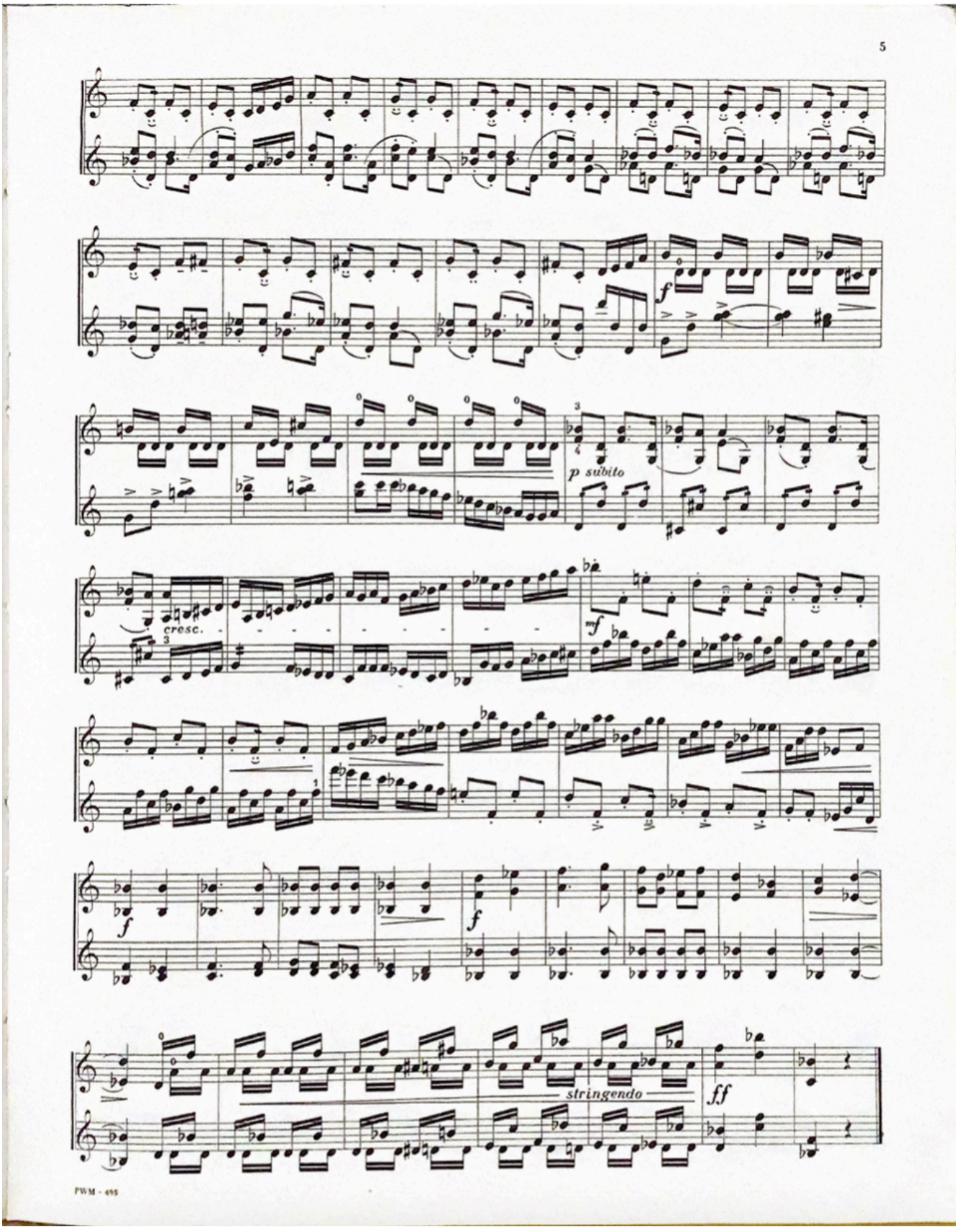
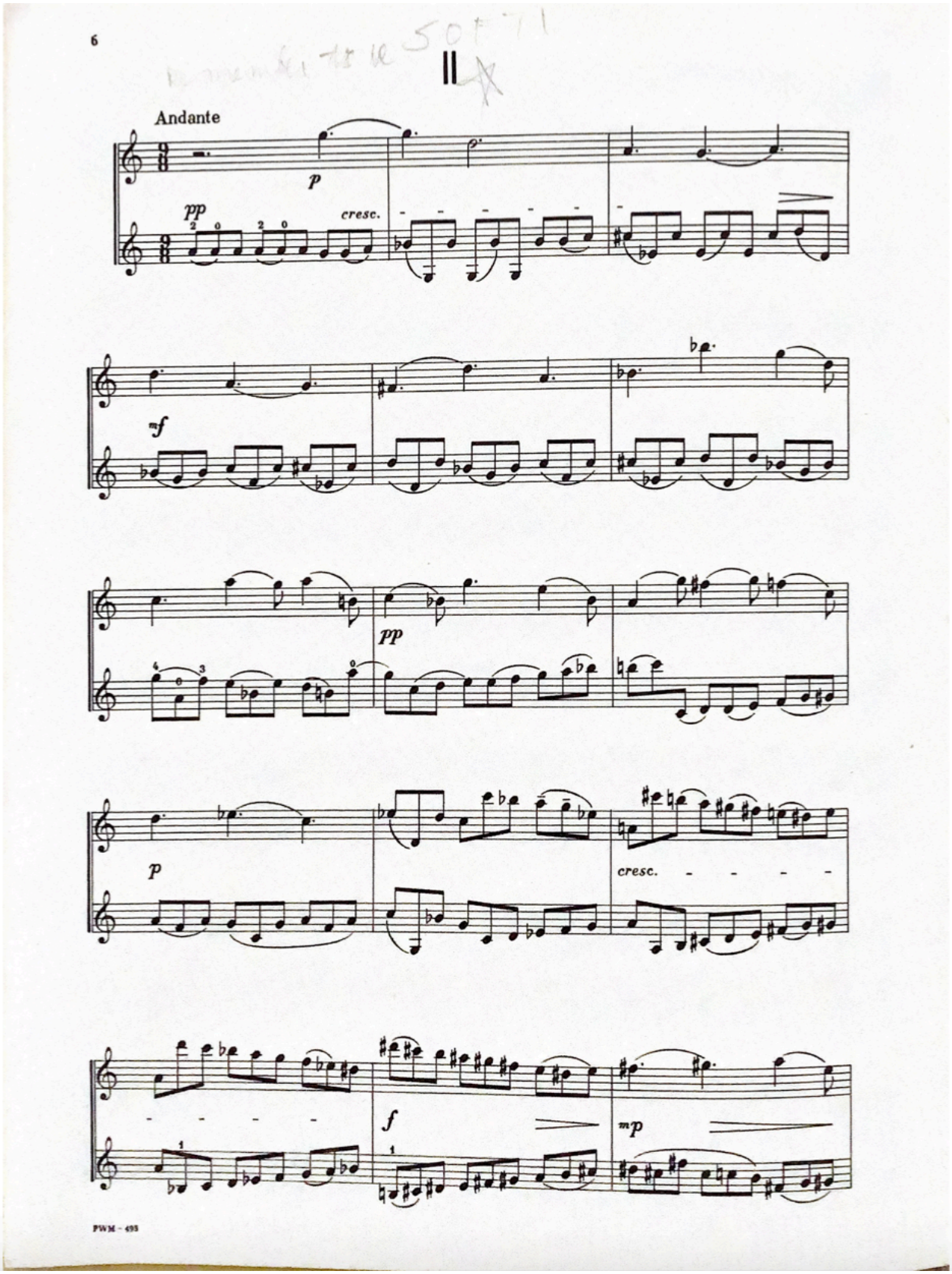
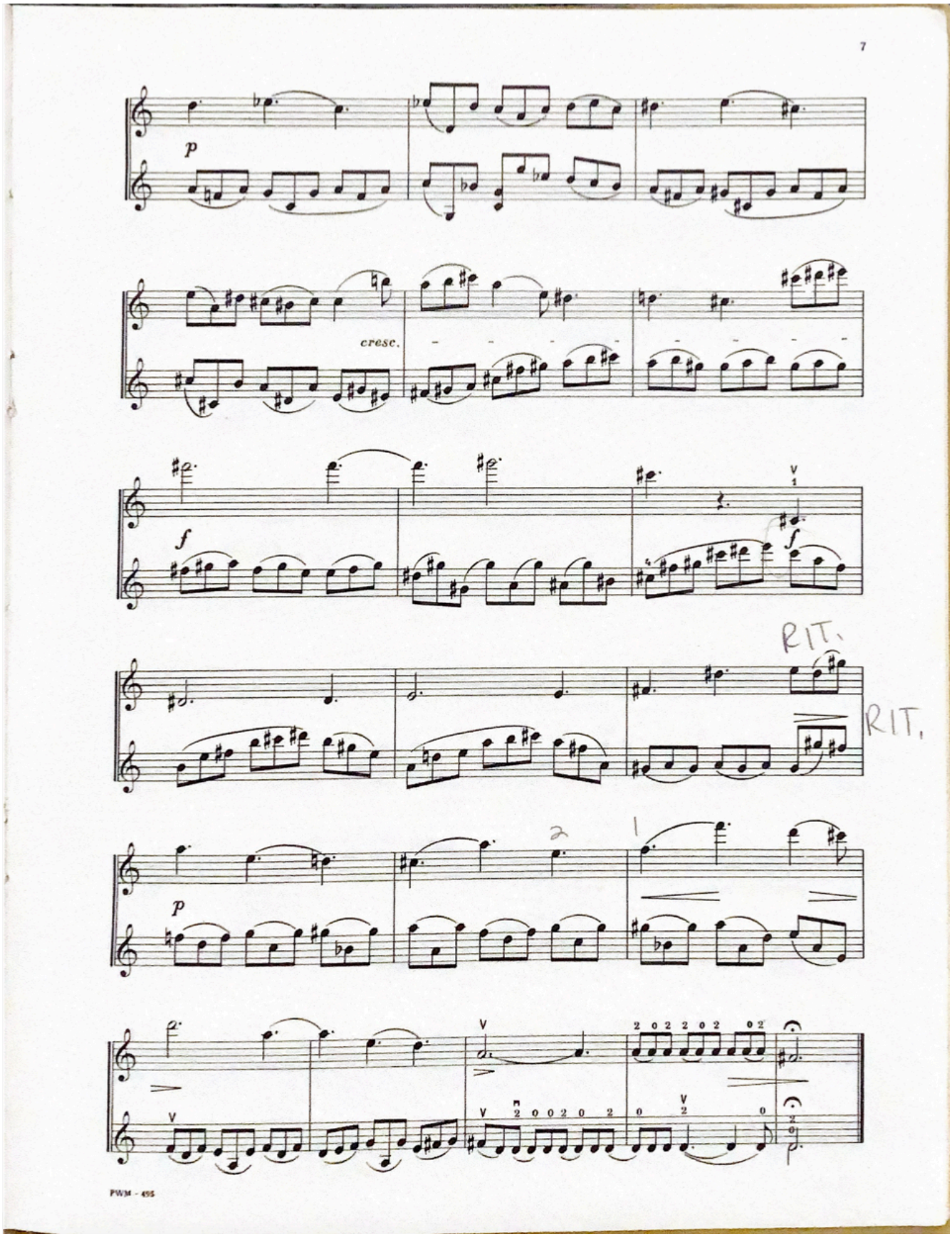
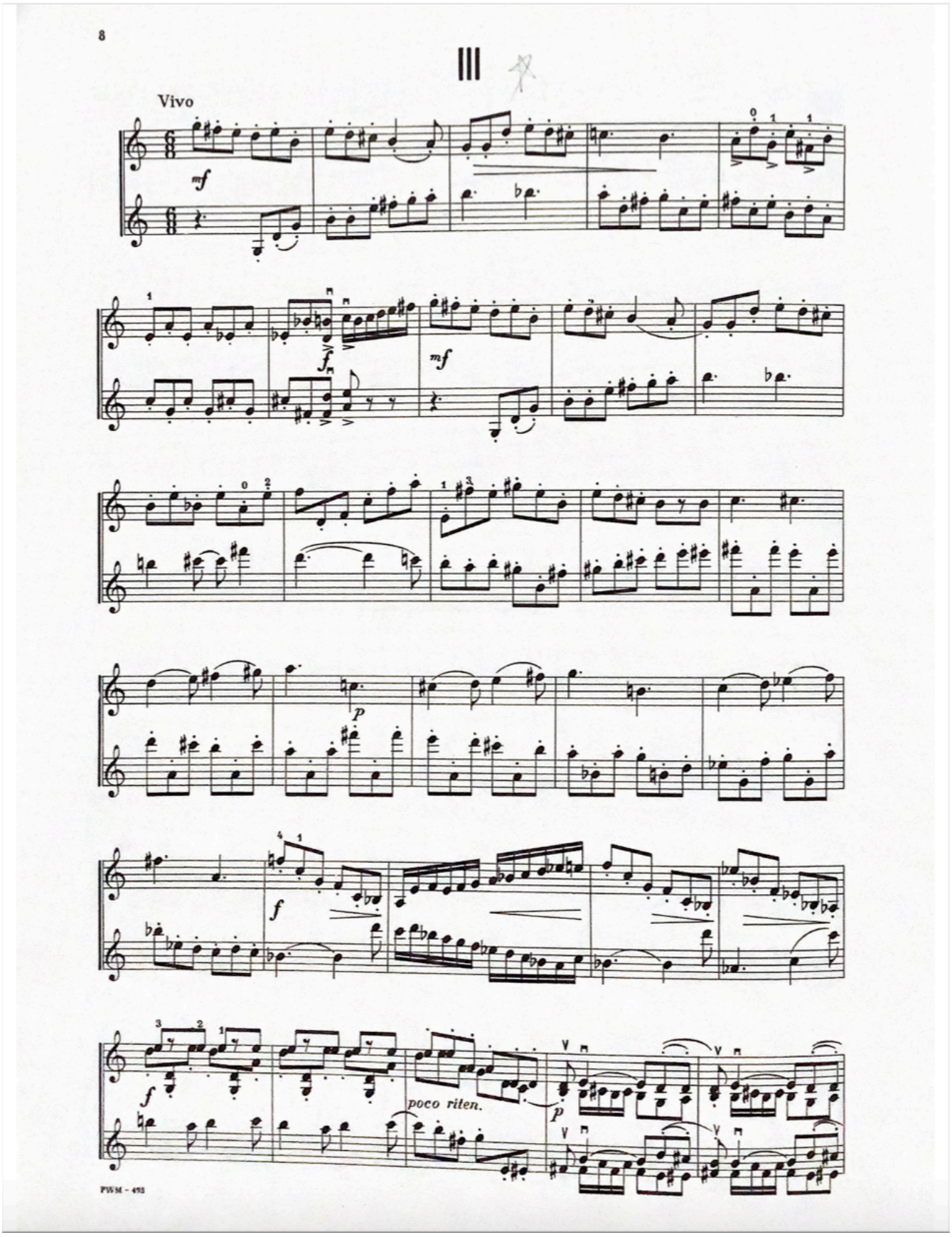
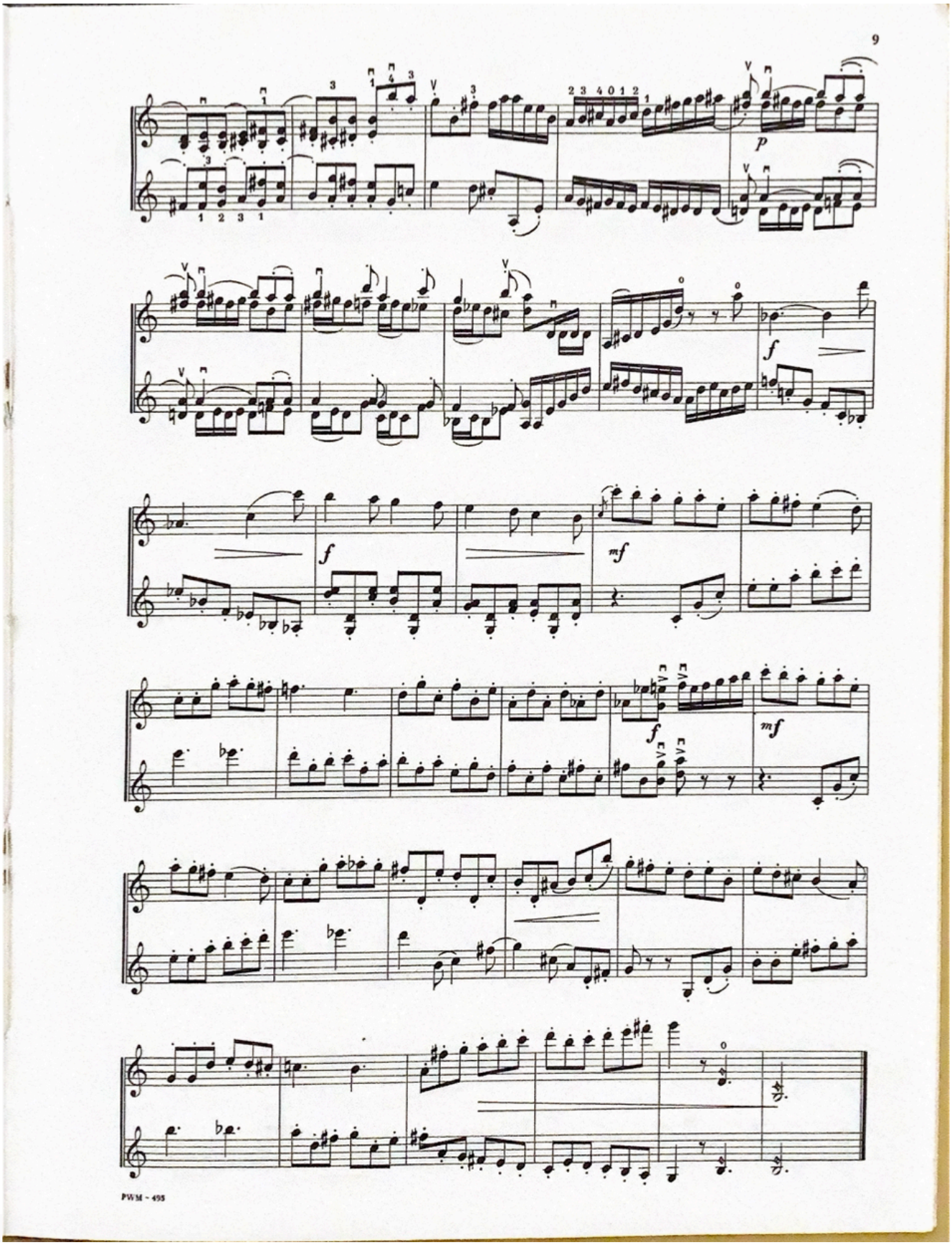
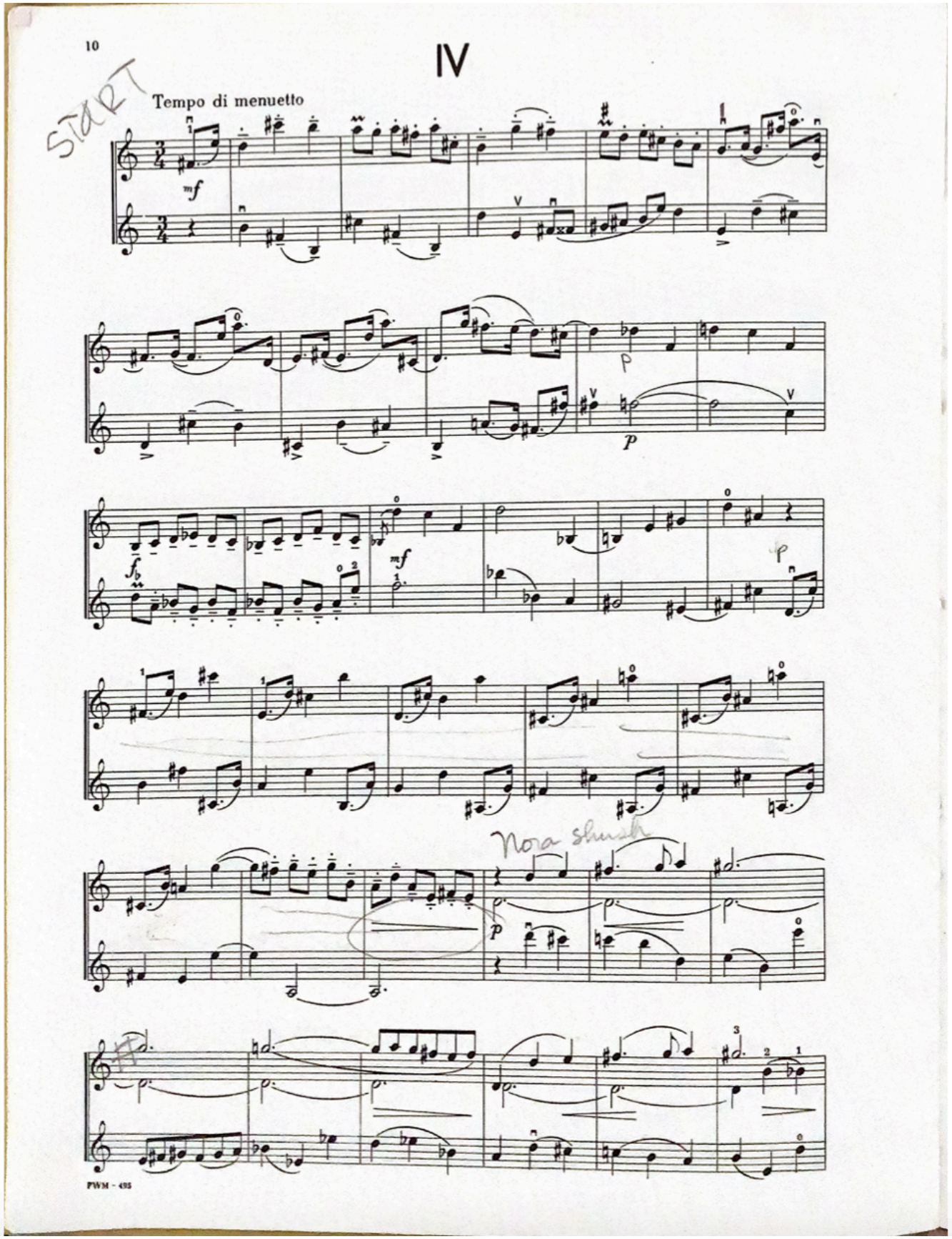

5
f
p subito
cresc.
mf
f
f
stringendo
ff
PWM - 495

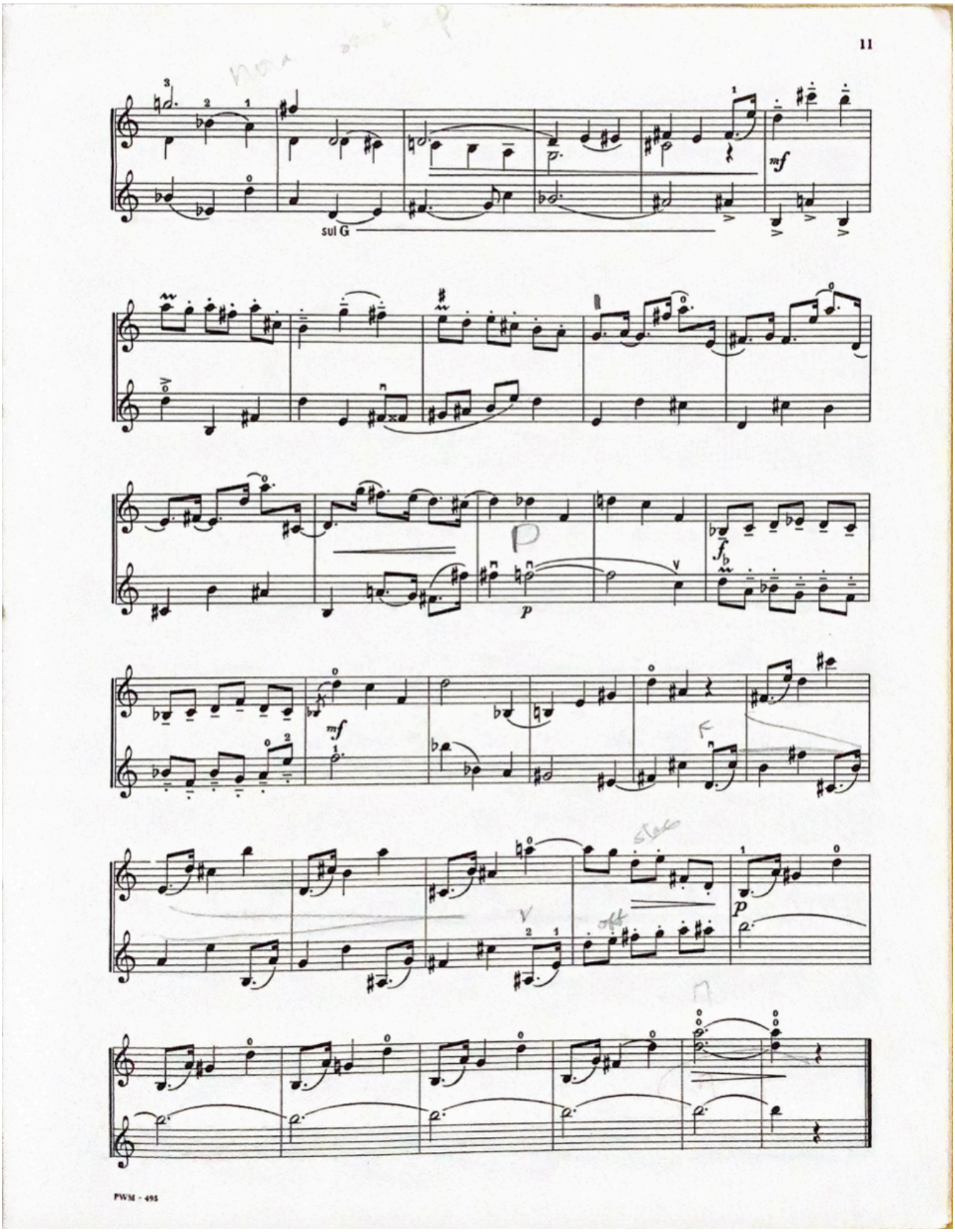

6
II
Andante
p
pp
cresc.
mf
pp
p
cresc.
f
mp
PWM – 495

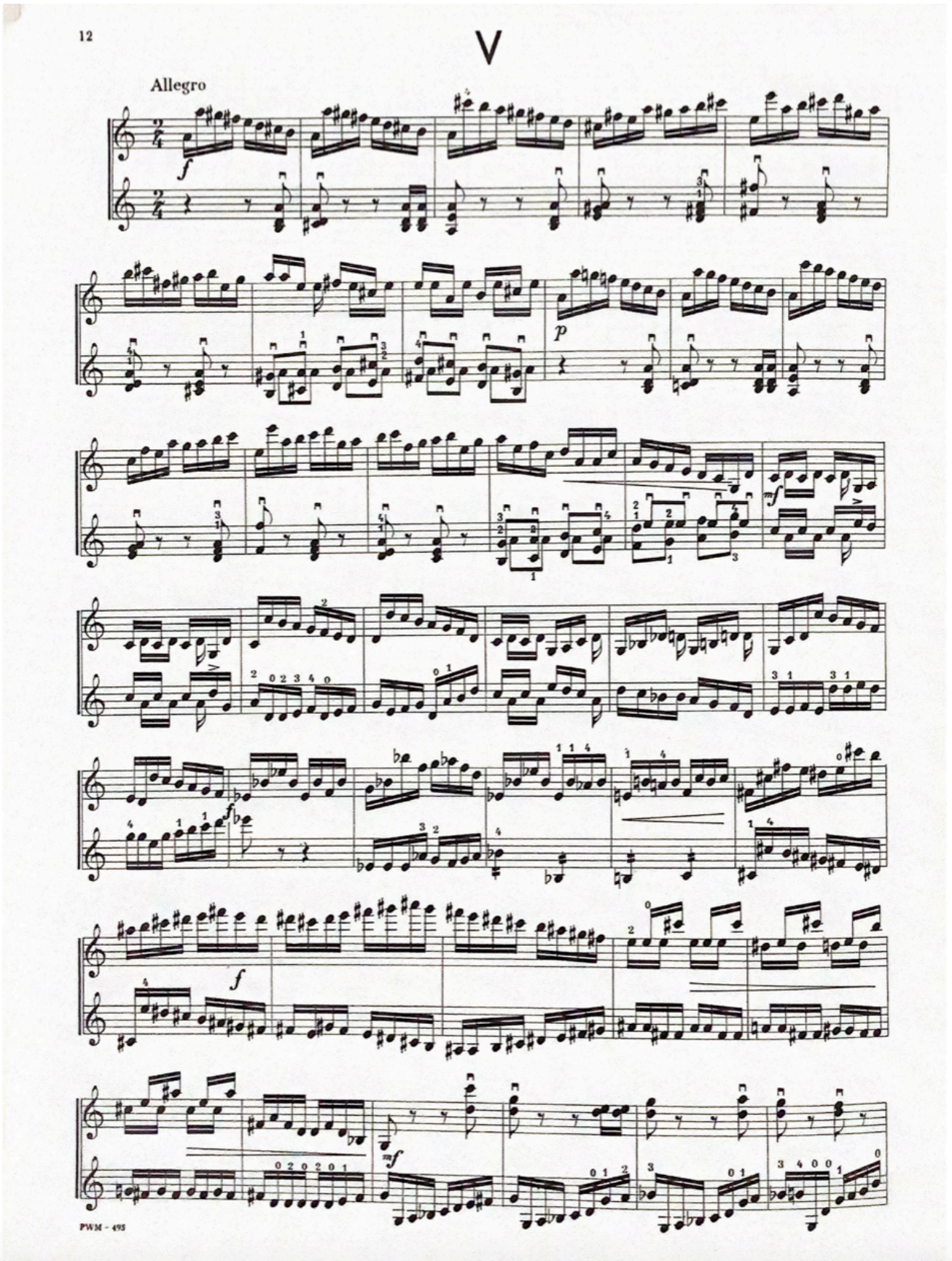

7
p
cresc.
f
RIT.
RIT.
p
PWM - 455

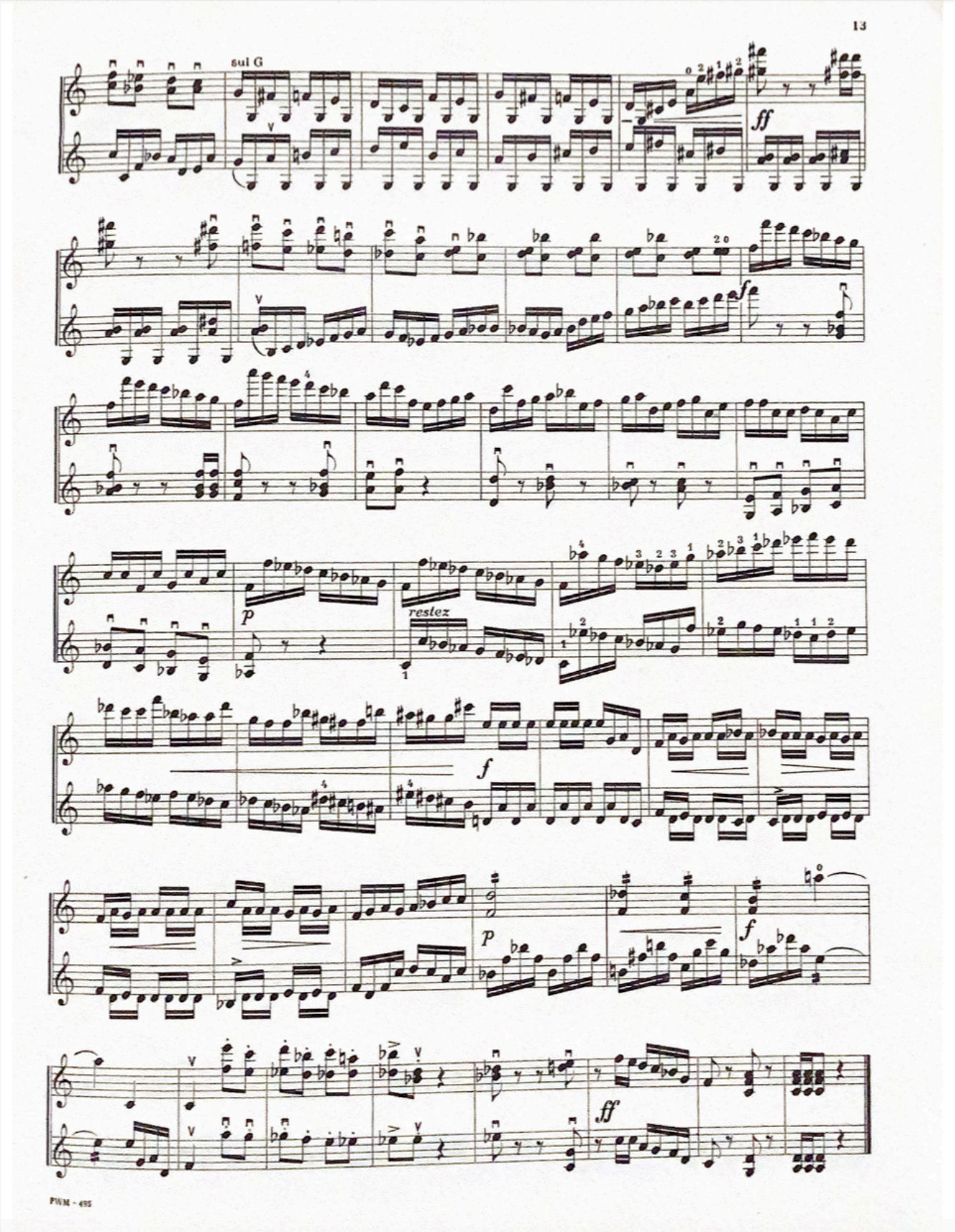

8
III
Vivo
mf
fp
mf
p
f
f
poco riten.
p
PWM - 493

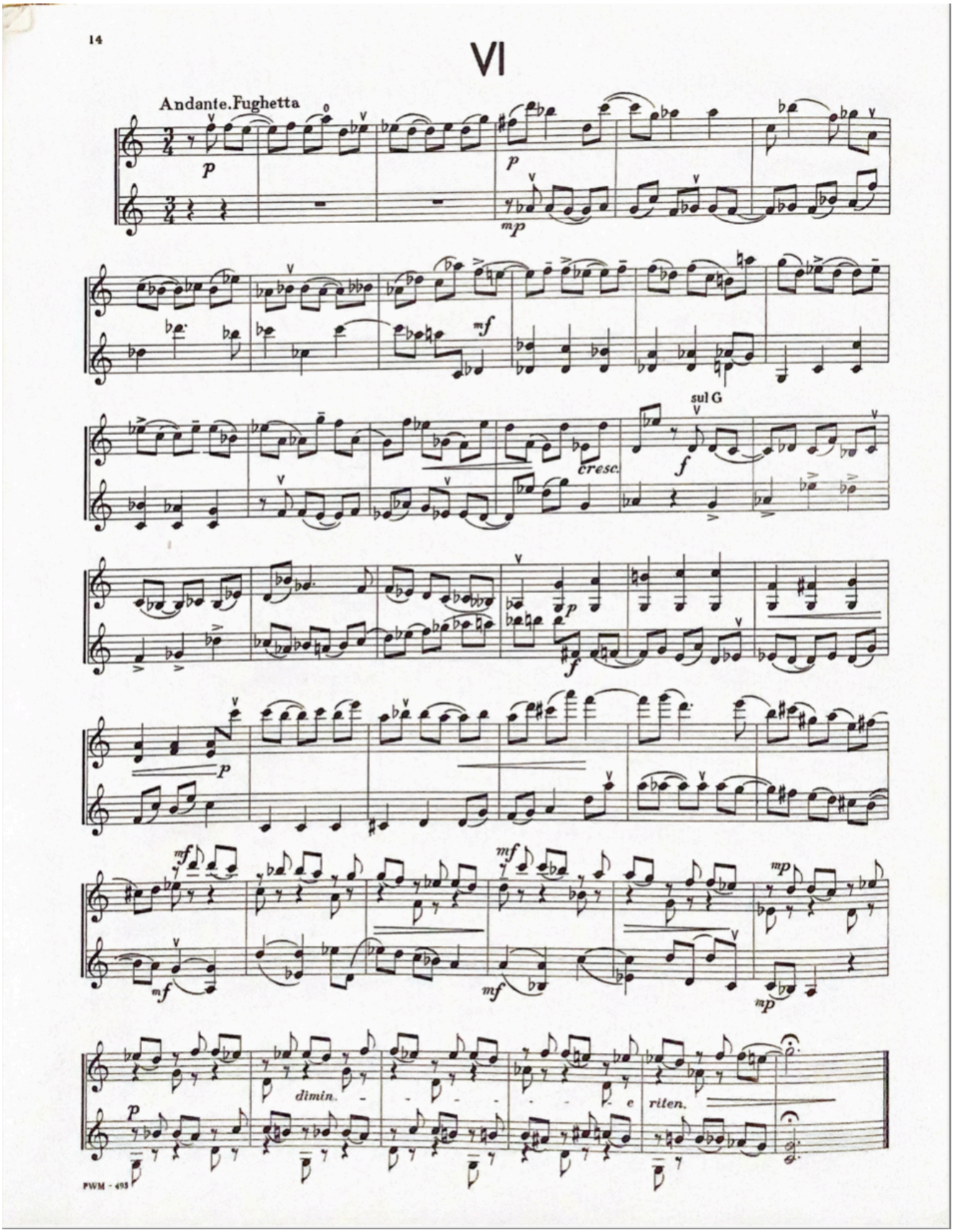

9
p
f
f
mf
f
mf
PWM ~ 455


10
IV
Tempo di menuetto
START
Nora shush
PWM - 495


11
sul G
PWM - 495


12
V
Allegro
PWM - 495


13
sul G
ff
fz
p
restez
f
p
f
ff
PWM - 495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PWM - 493

Germaine Tailleferre

Trois Études pour deux Pianos

French composer Germaine Tailleferre was born in Paris in 1892.[34] She began her formal musical studies at the Paris Conservatoire in 1904 and became a piano-playing prodigy.[35] Tailleferre joined the famous French group of composers *Les Six* upon its formation in 1919-20 as the only female member of the group; the others being Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, and Louis Durey.[36] Her compositional style was marked by neoclassicism, as well as influences from Gabriel Fauré and Maurice Ravel.[37] Ravel in particular became her mentor for many years and provided a great influence on her music.[38] Her compositions included ballets, piano concertos, violin sonatas, film music, and operas.[39] Although her bibliographical information isn't very well documented, her compositions and awards provide an insight into her life. Sadly, her personal life conflicted with her musical output, her modesty and low-self esteem hindered her compositional career, and her financial

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34. Robert Orledge, "Germaine Tailleferre," Grove Music Online, January 20, 2001, https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.lib.pepperdine.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027390?rskey=4hrIzk.

35. Ibid.

36. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Les Six," Britannica, August 13, 2012, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Les-Six.

37. Robert Orledge, "Germaine Tailleferre".

38. Louis K Epstein, "Germaine Tailleferre," Oxford Bibliographies, April 22, 2020, https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199757824/obo-9780199757824-0275.xml.

39. Robert Orledge, "Germaine Tailleferre".

situation forced her to write on commission.[40] Tailleferre never stopped composing or teaching, however, and would do so until her death in 1983.[41]

In 1942, Tailleferre escaped German-occupied France for America, leaving all her scores behind.[42] Although she left *Trois Études* in a two-piano version, it was likely intended to be orchestrated. Tailleferre would never carry out this musical vision, however, even when she returned to France after the war in 1946.[43] The three movements differ in mood, with the first beginning optimistically but soon becoming more dramatic, the second movement being mournful and wistful, and the third movement being emotion-charged and forceful.[44] The two pianos interact in the first movement with the Piano I part providing the sixteenth note embellishments and the Piano II part providing the chords and colors. The *Allegro Moderato* marking provides a quick tempo that keeps the movement of the piece flowing. The second movement is marked *Lent,* which slows down the tempo considerably in contrast to Movement I. In this movement as well, the Piano I part plays the rhythmic elements for the most part, while Piano II part provides the chordal accompaniment. Movement III is set at an *Allegro* tempo, differing from the first two movements with a mixture of rhythmic elements in both piano

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40. "Germaine Tailleferre," Wise Music Classical, n.d., https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/composer/1557/Germaine-Tailleferre/.

41. "Lesser-Known Composer of the Month: Germaine Tailleferre," Florida State University College of Music, January 13, 2022, https://guides.lib.fsu.edu/c.php?g=353115&p=2383519 .

42. Germaine Tailleferre, *Trois Études pour deux Pianos*. (France: Musik Fabrik, 2000).

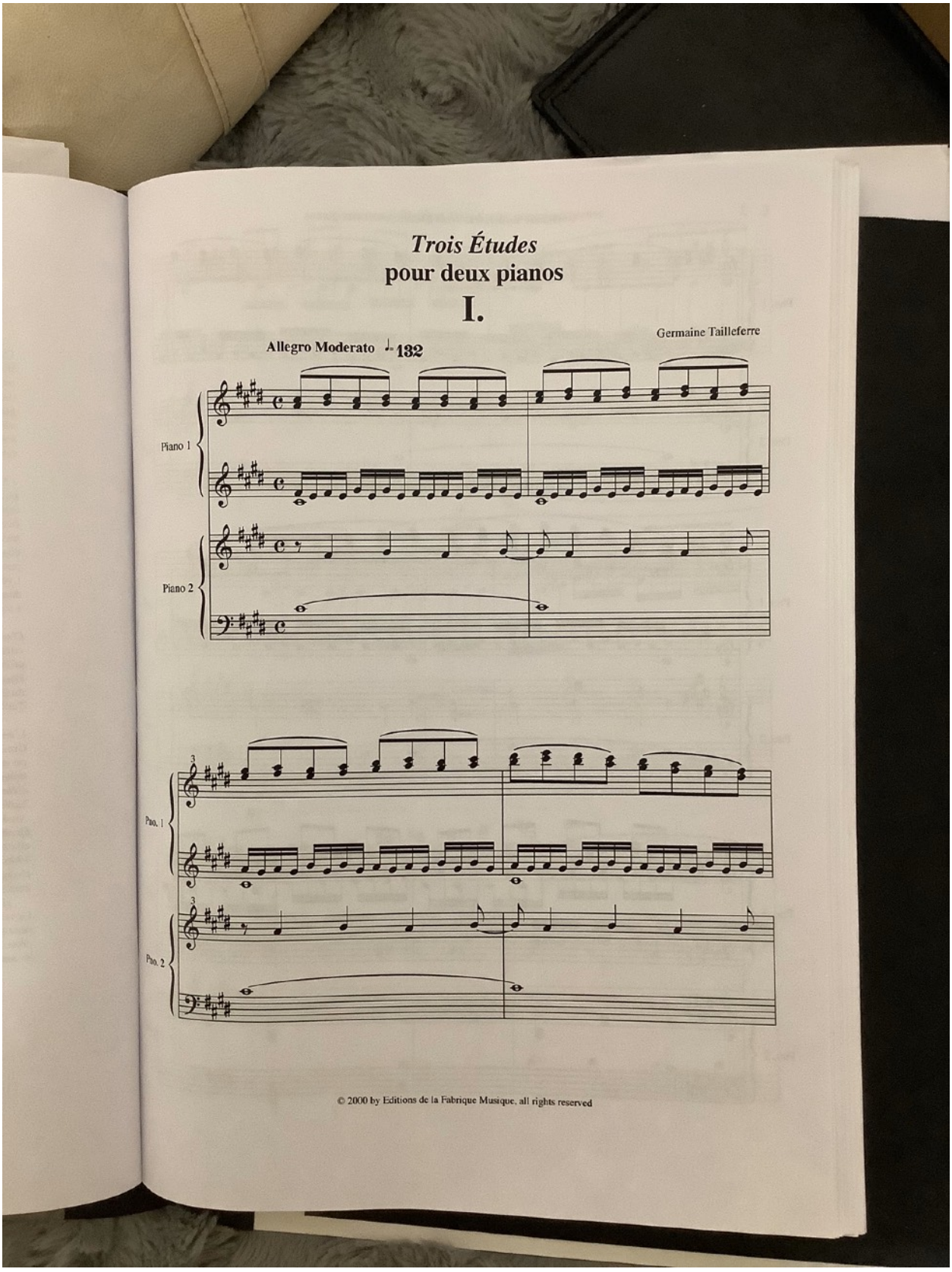
43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

voices. This piece is a beautiful work that sadly was never fully realized, but the two piano version provides an alternative version that is a product of the time in which it was written.

Recording:
No recording available

Score:


Trois Études
pour deux pianos
I.
Germaine Tailleferre
Allegro Moderato ♩= 132
Piano 1
Piano 2
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
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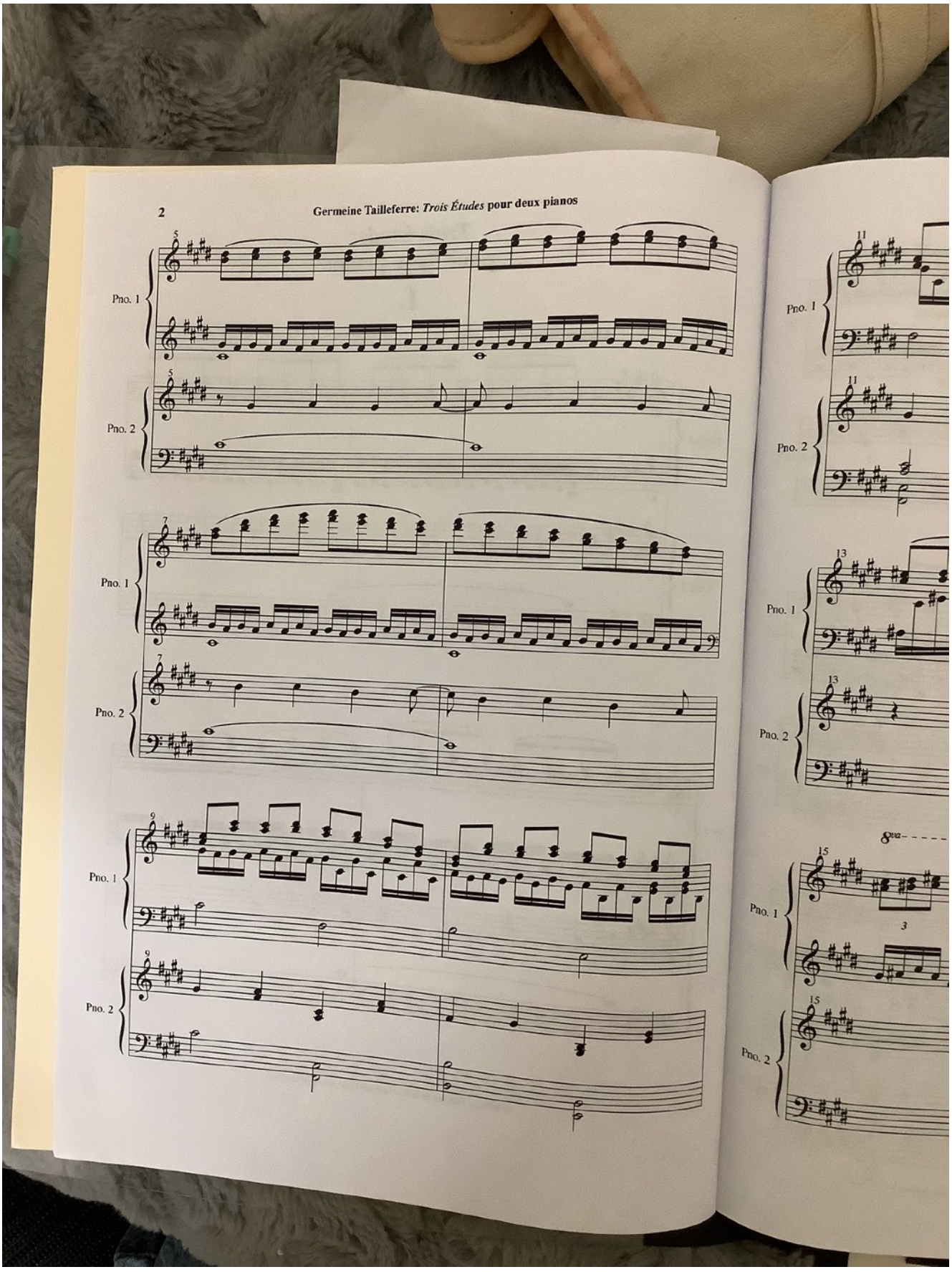
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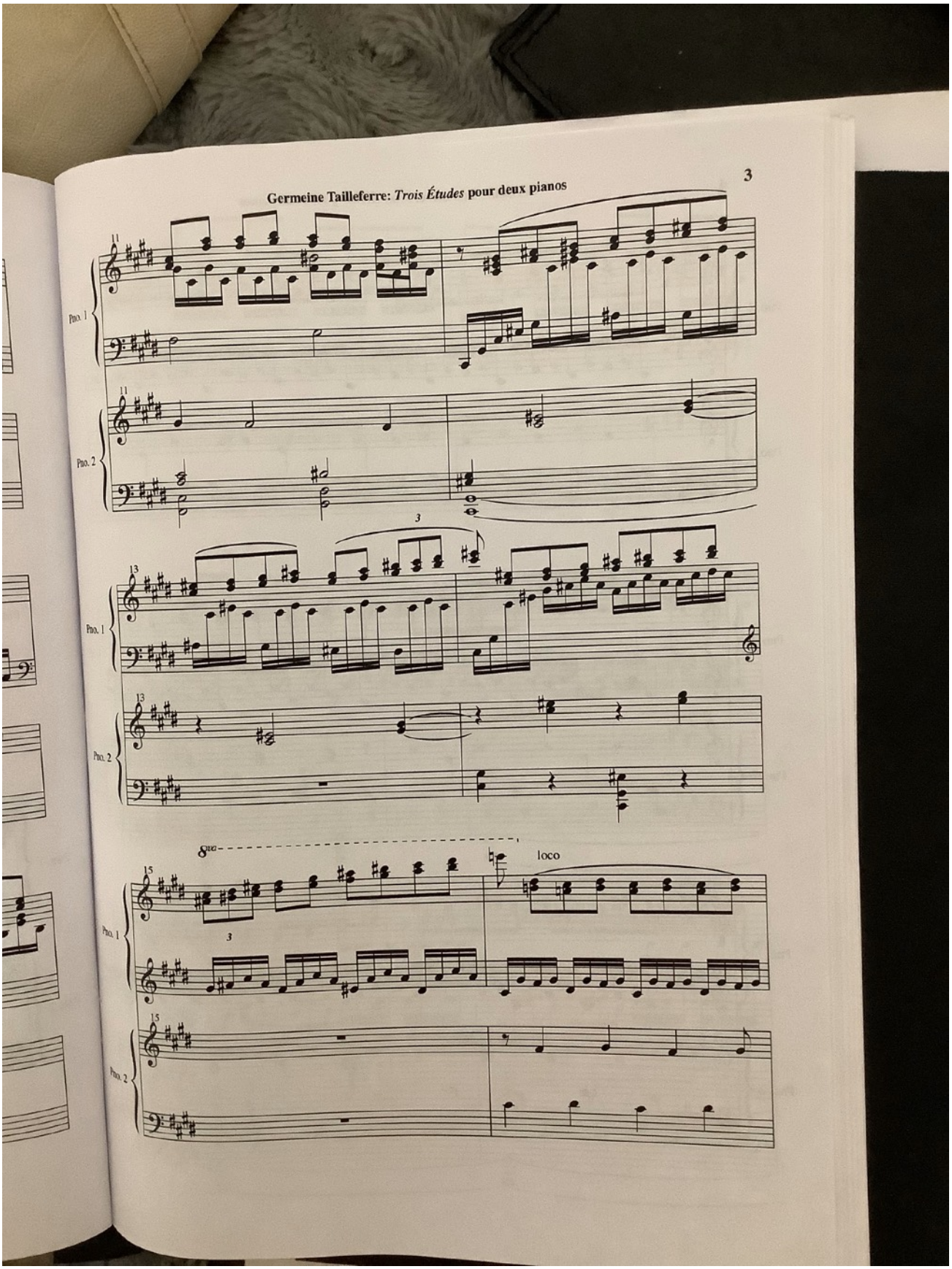
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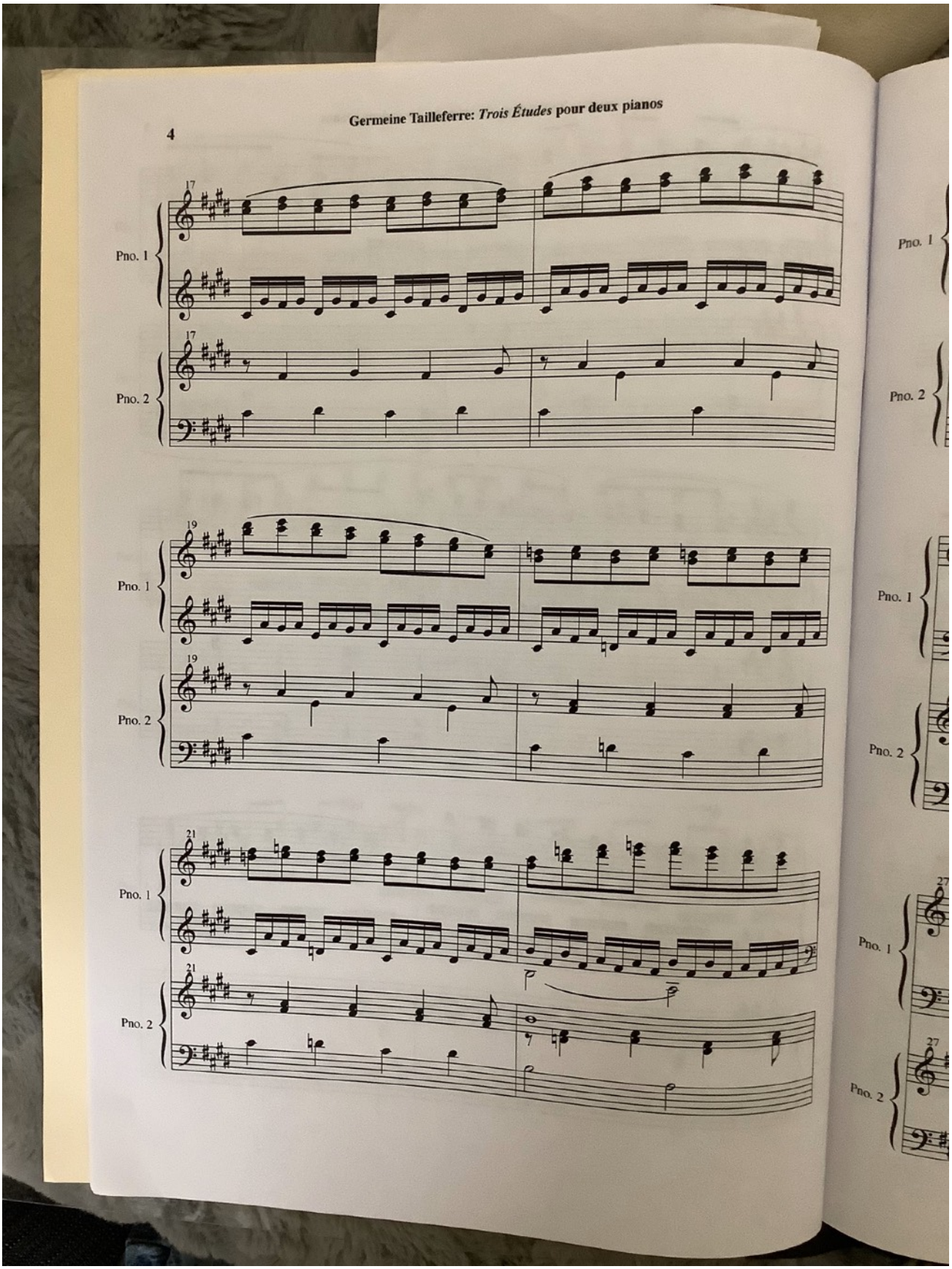
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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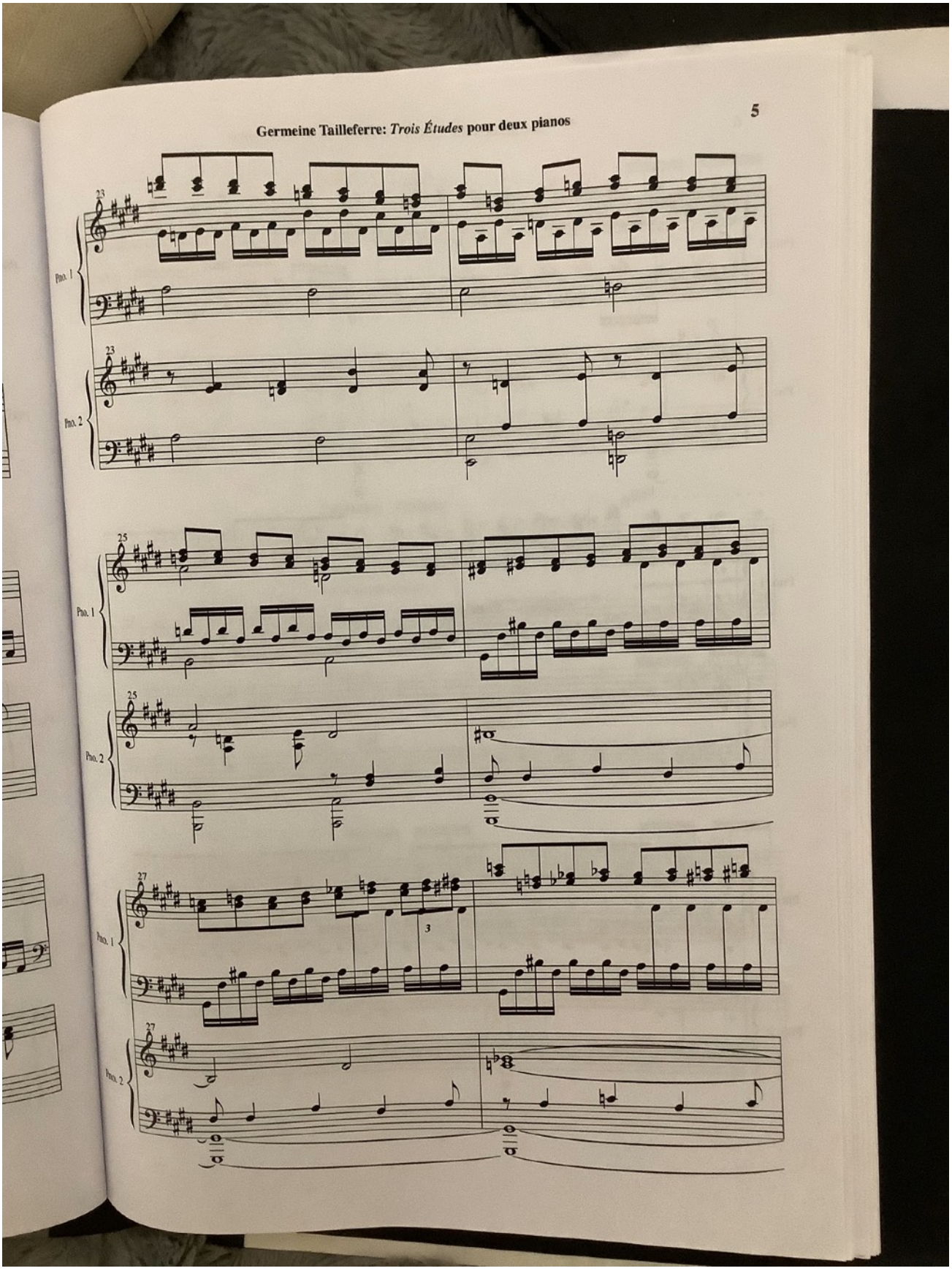
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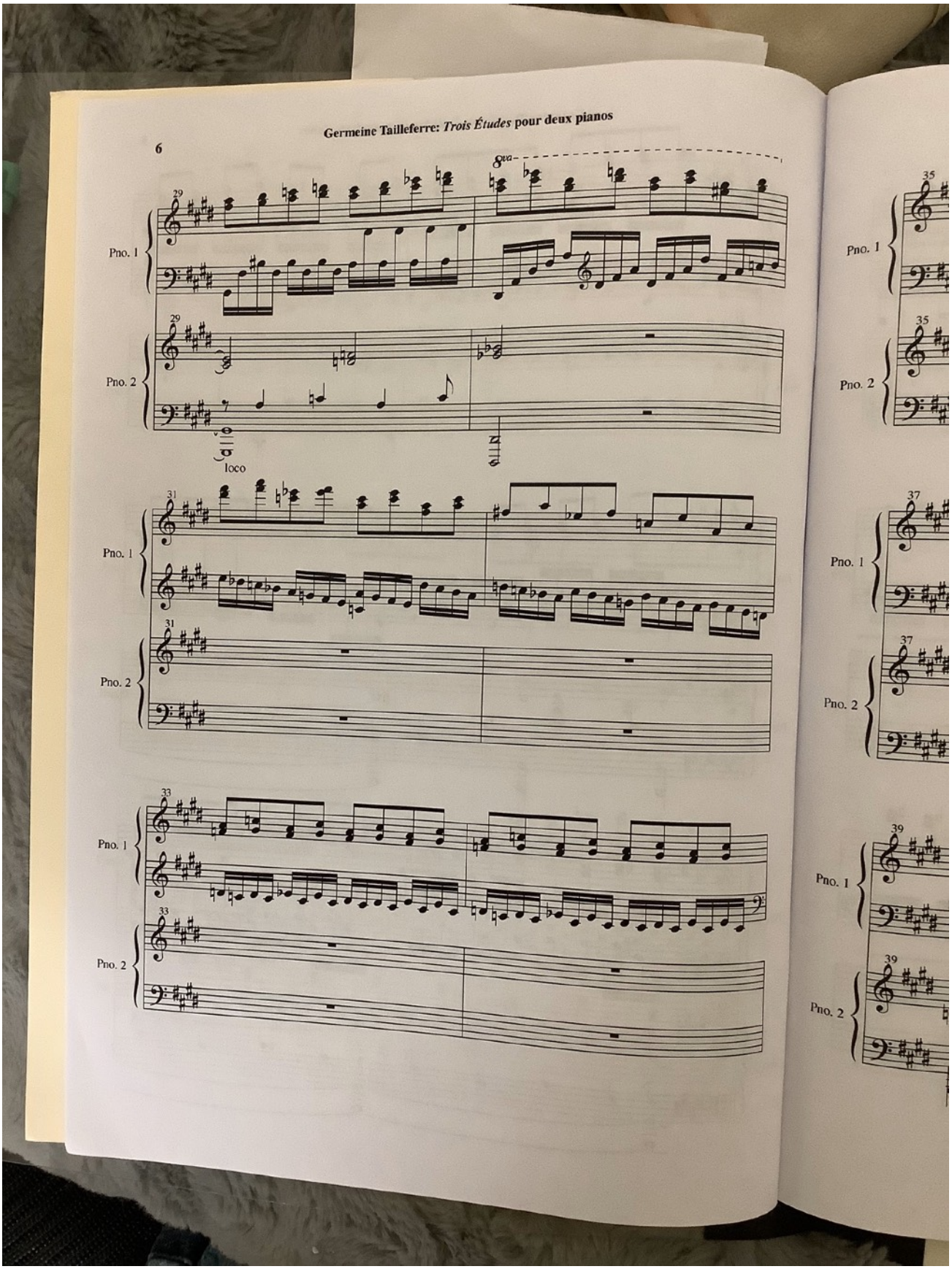
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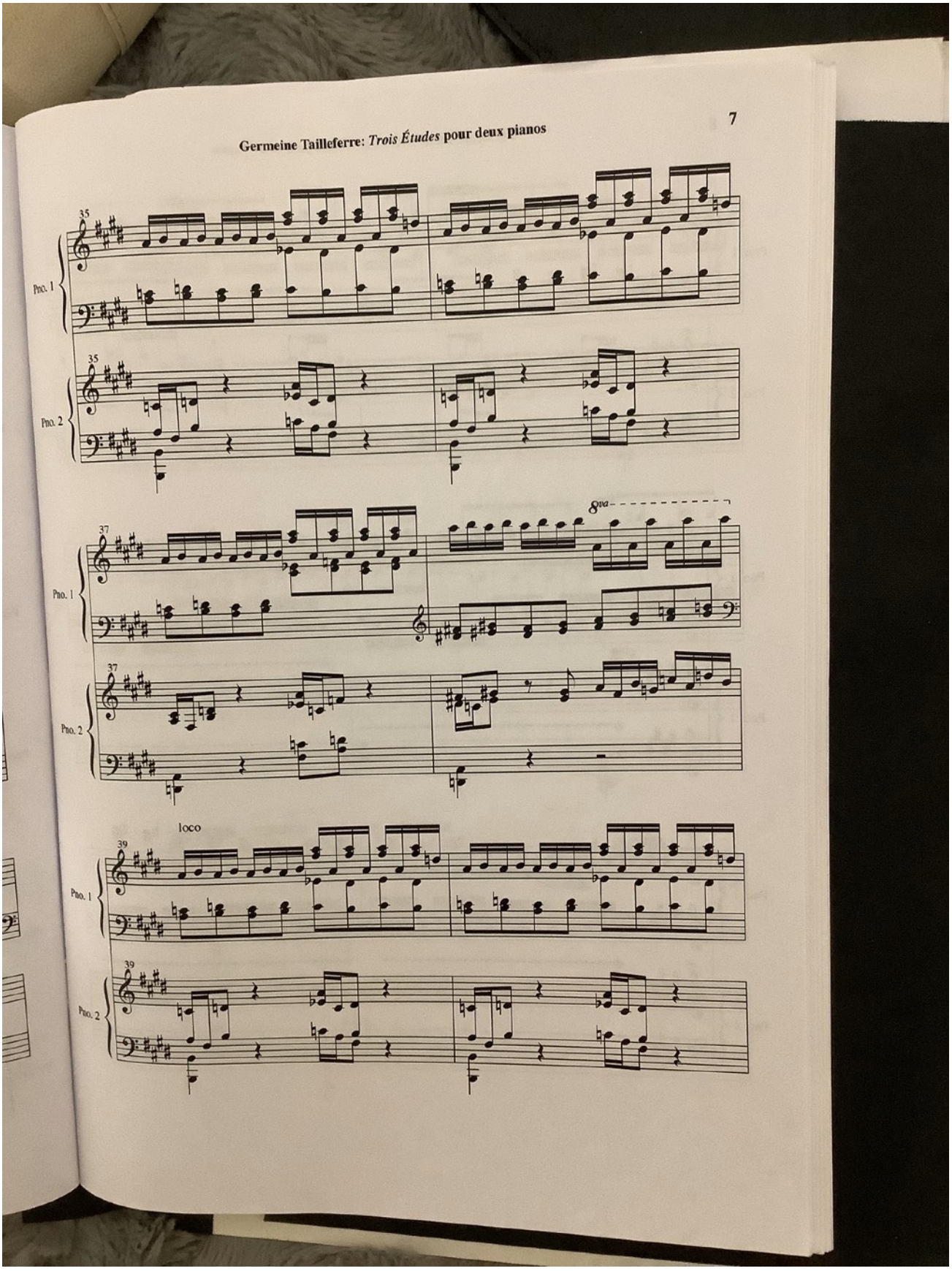
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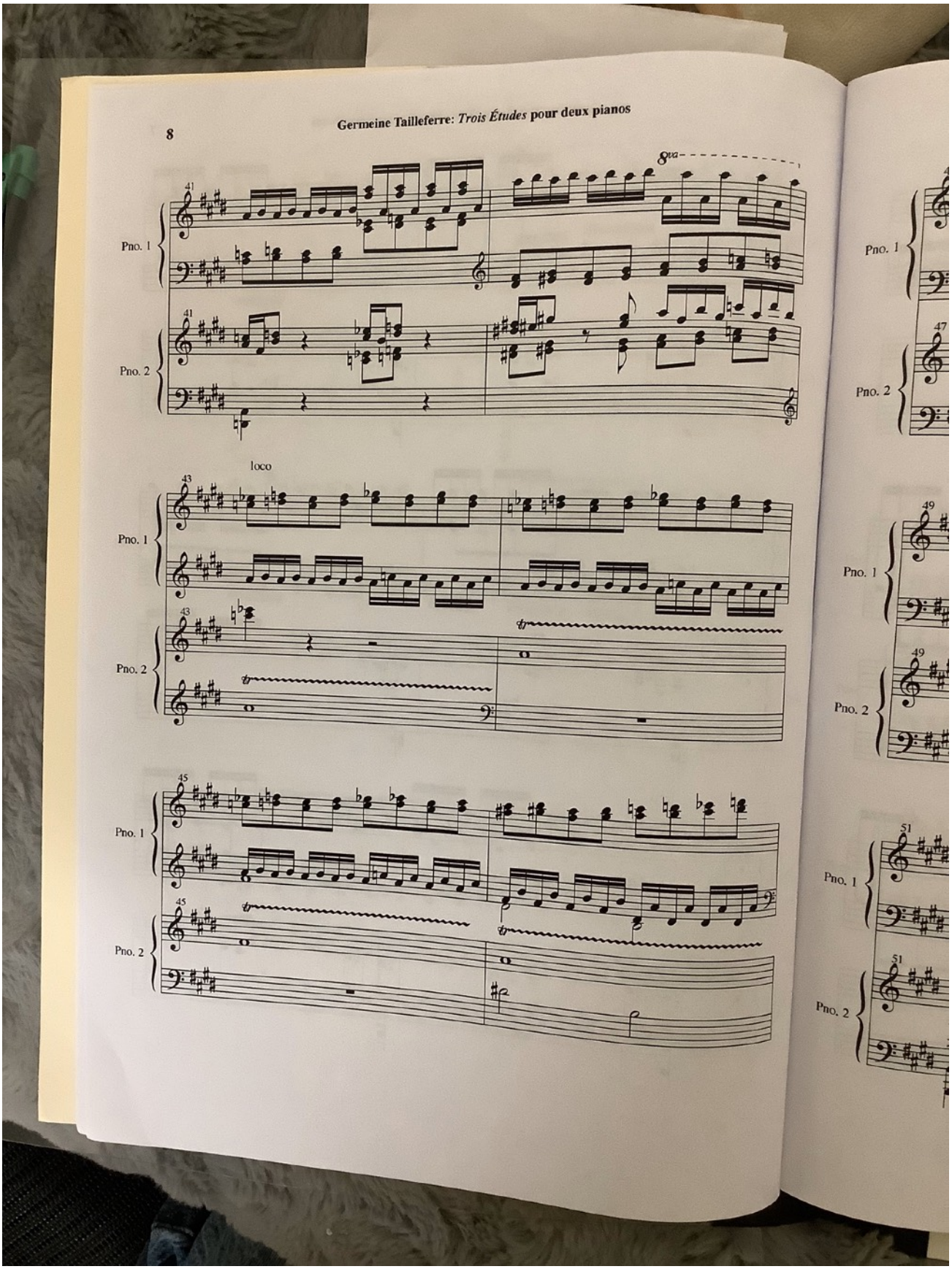
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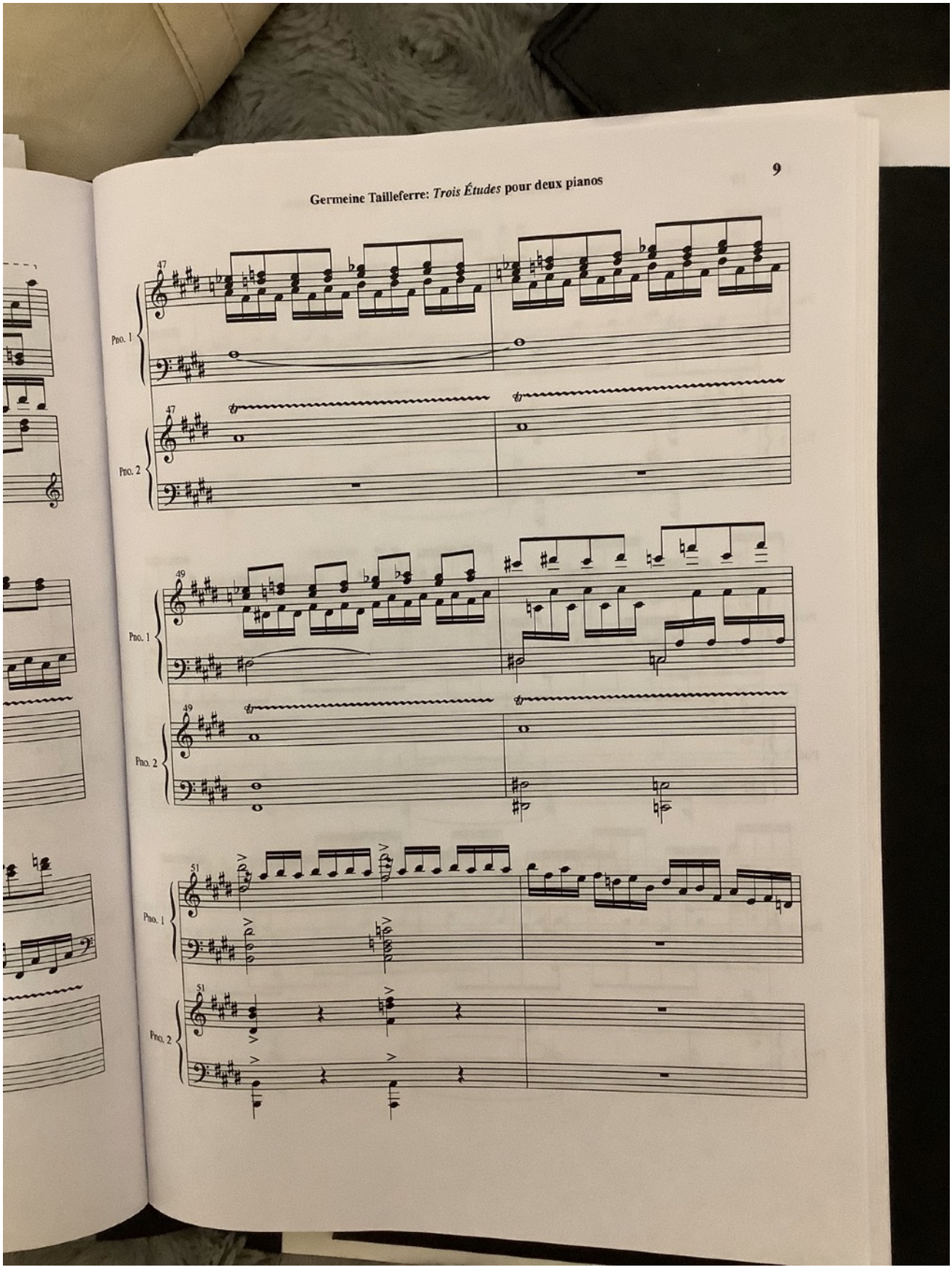
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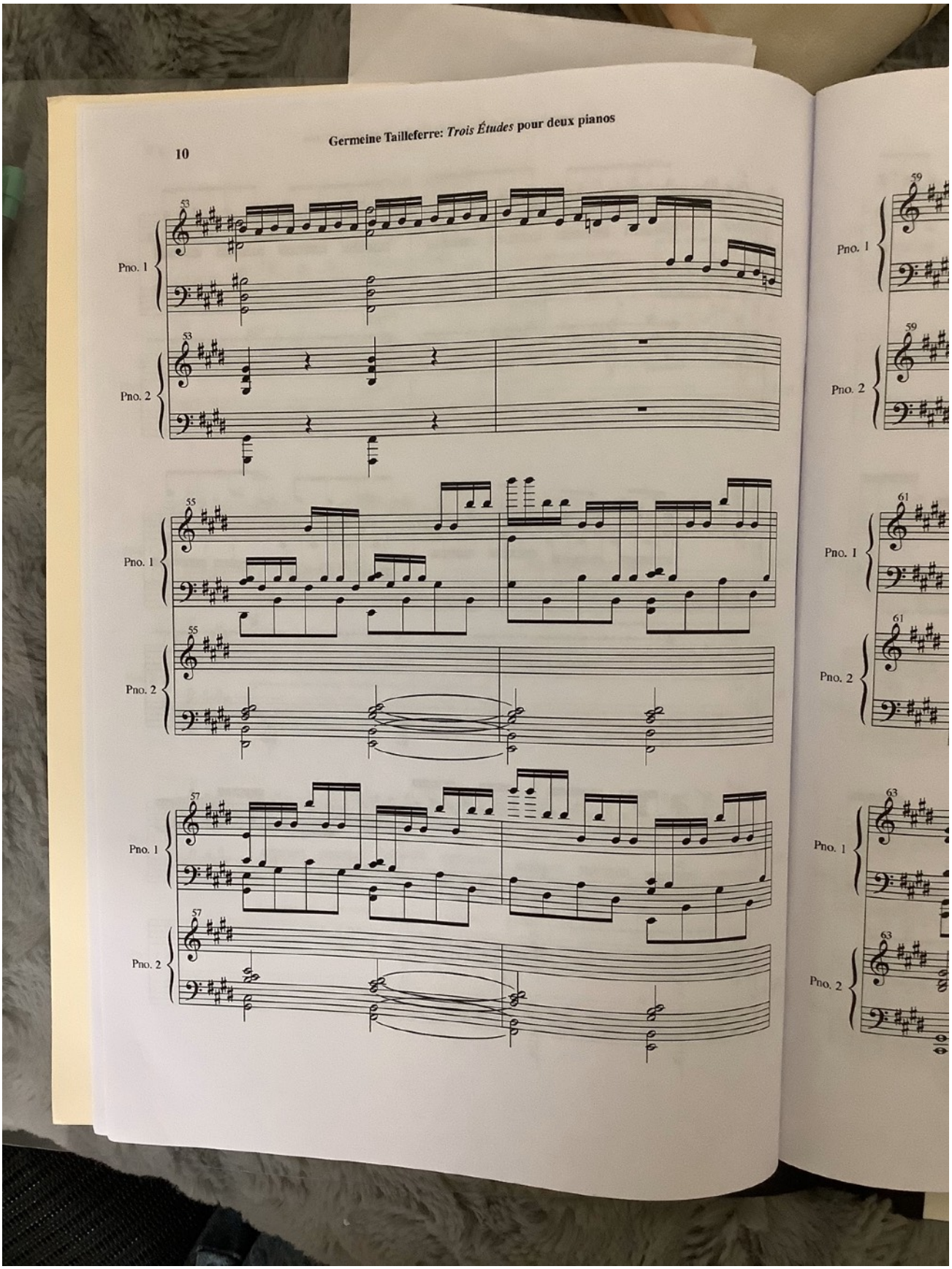
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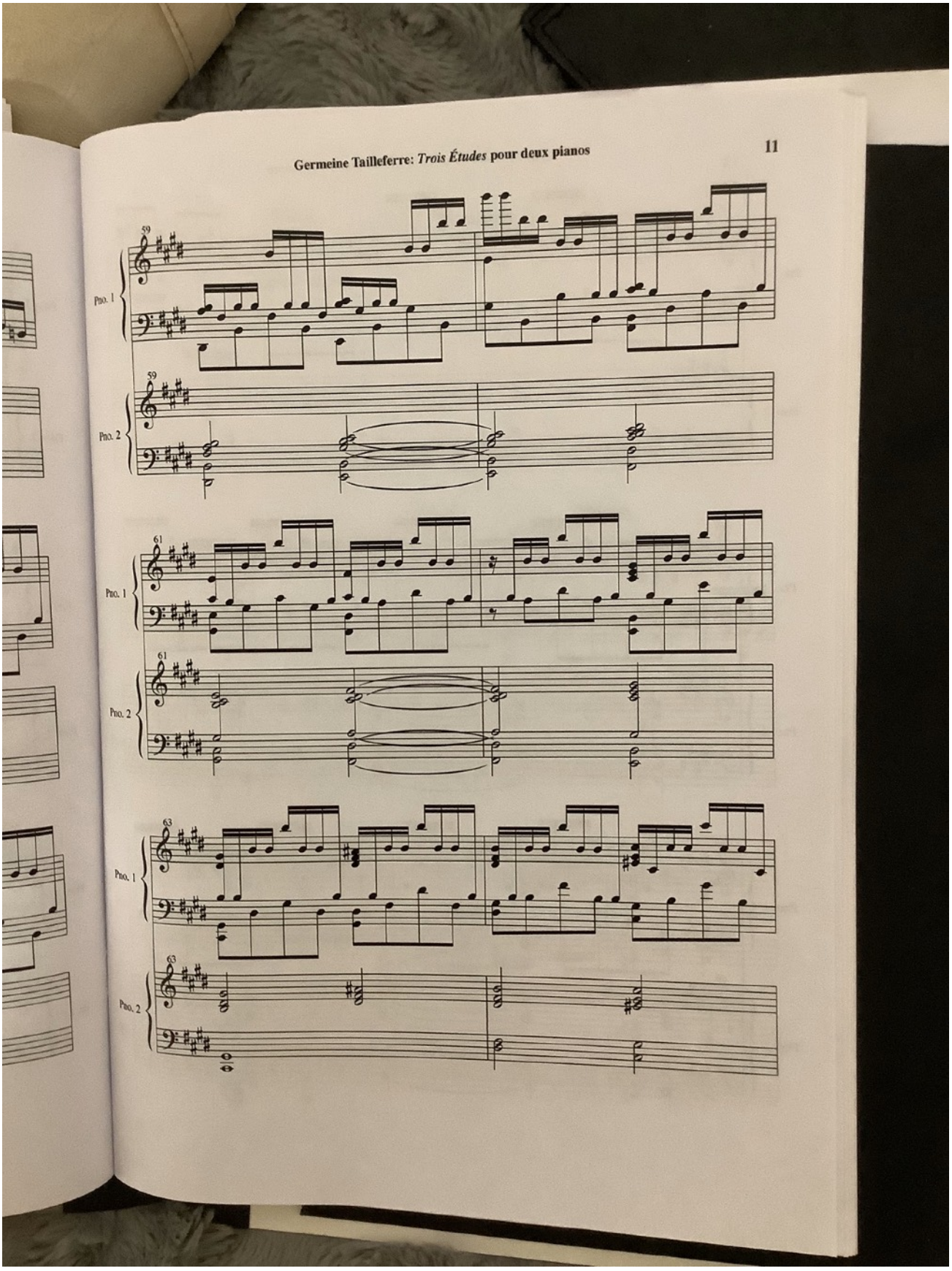
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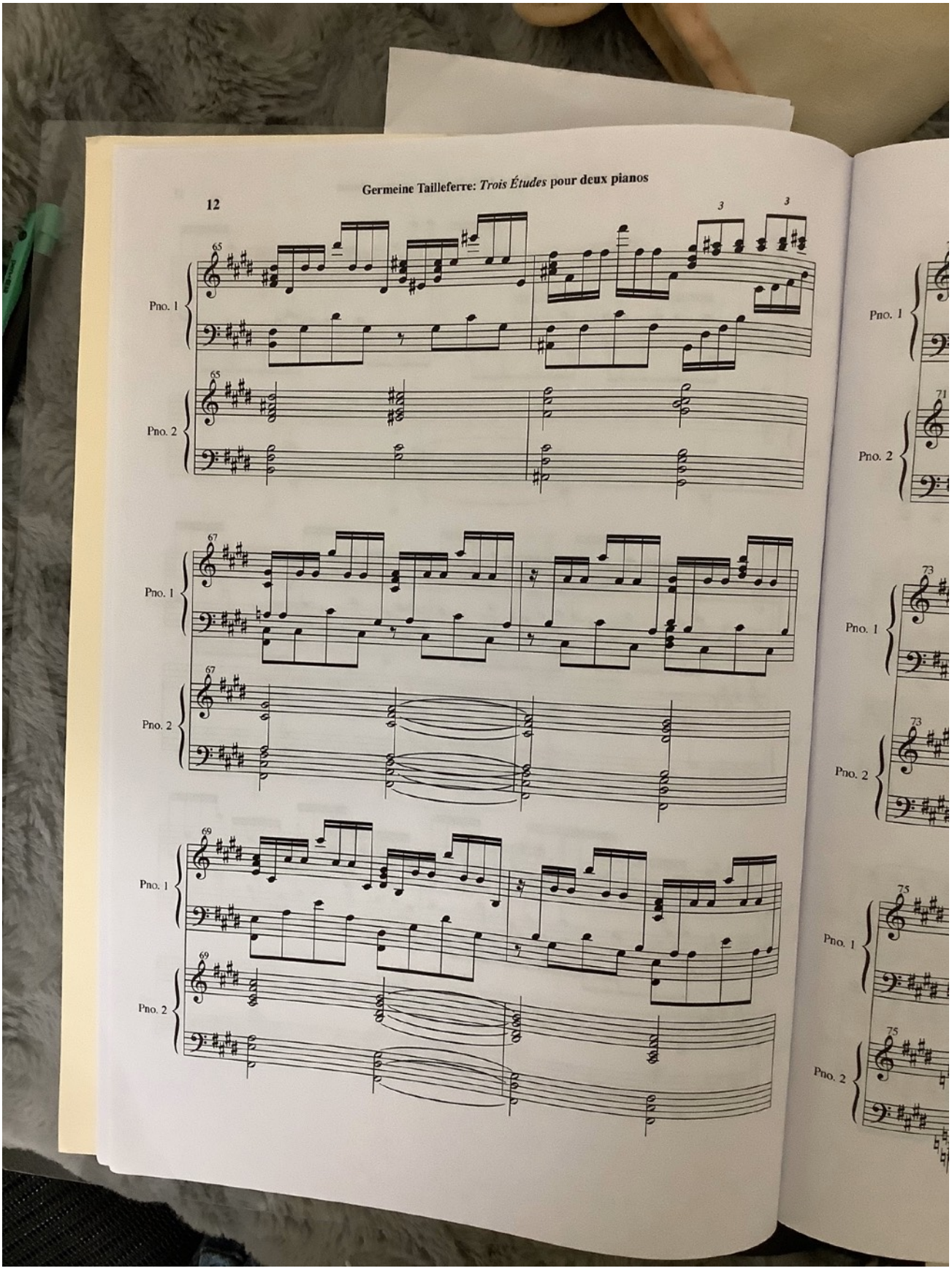
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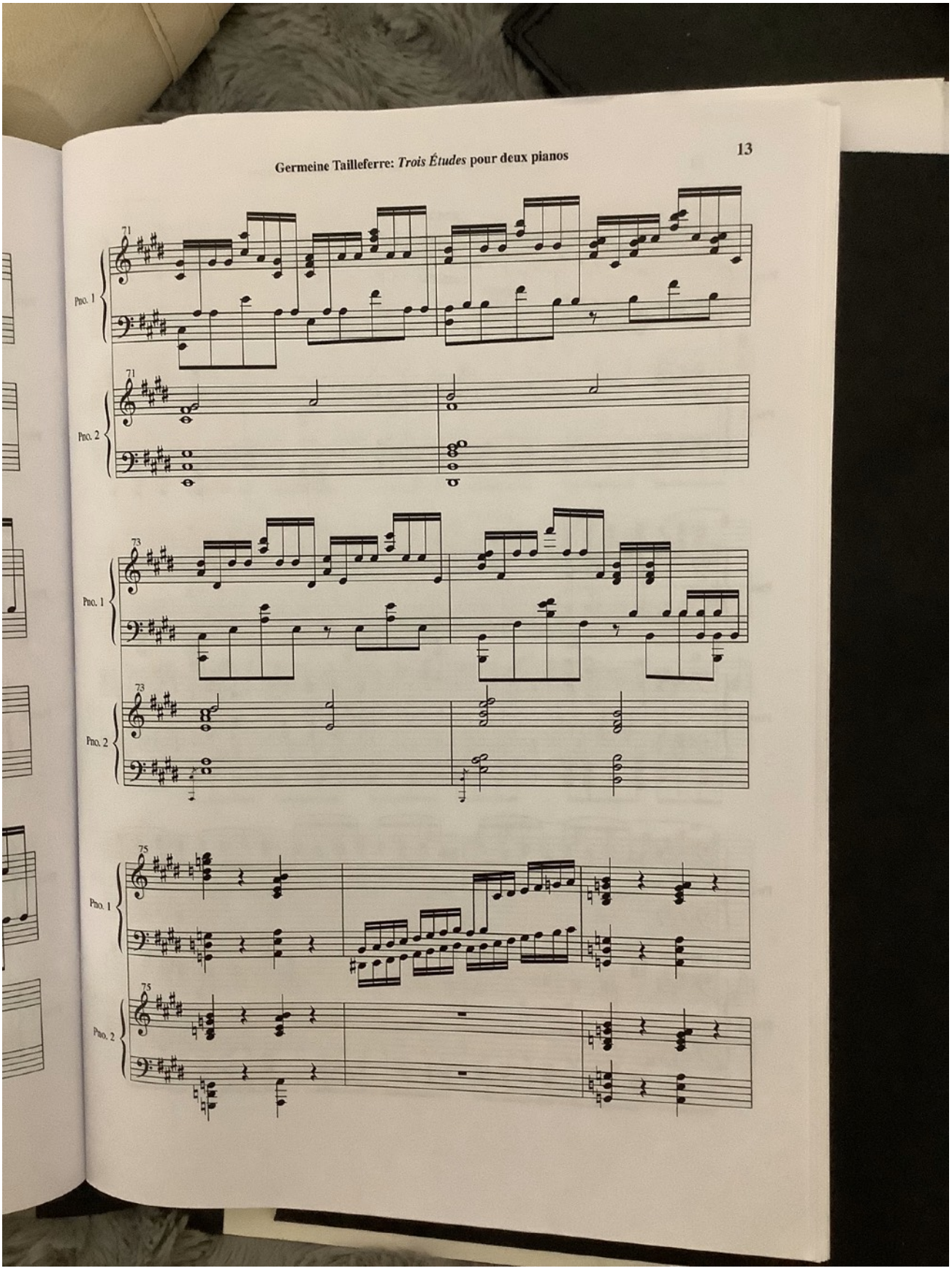
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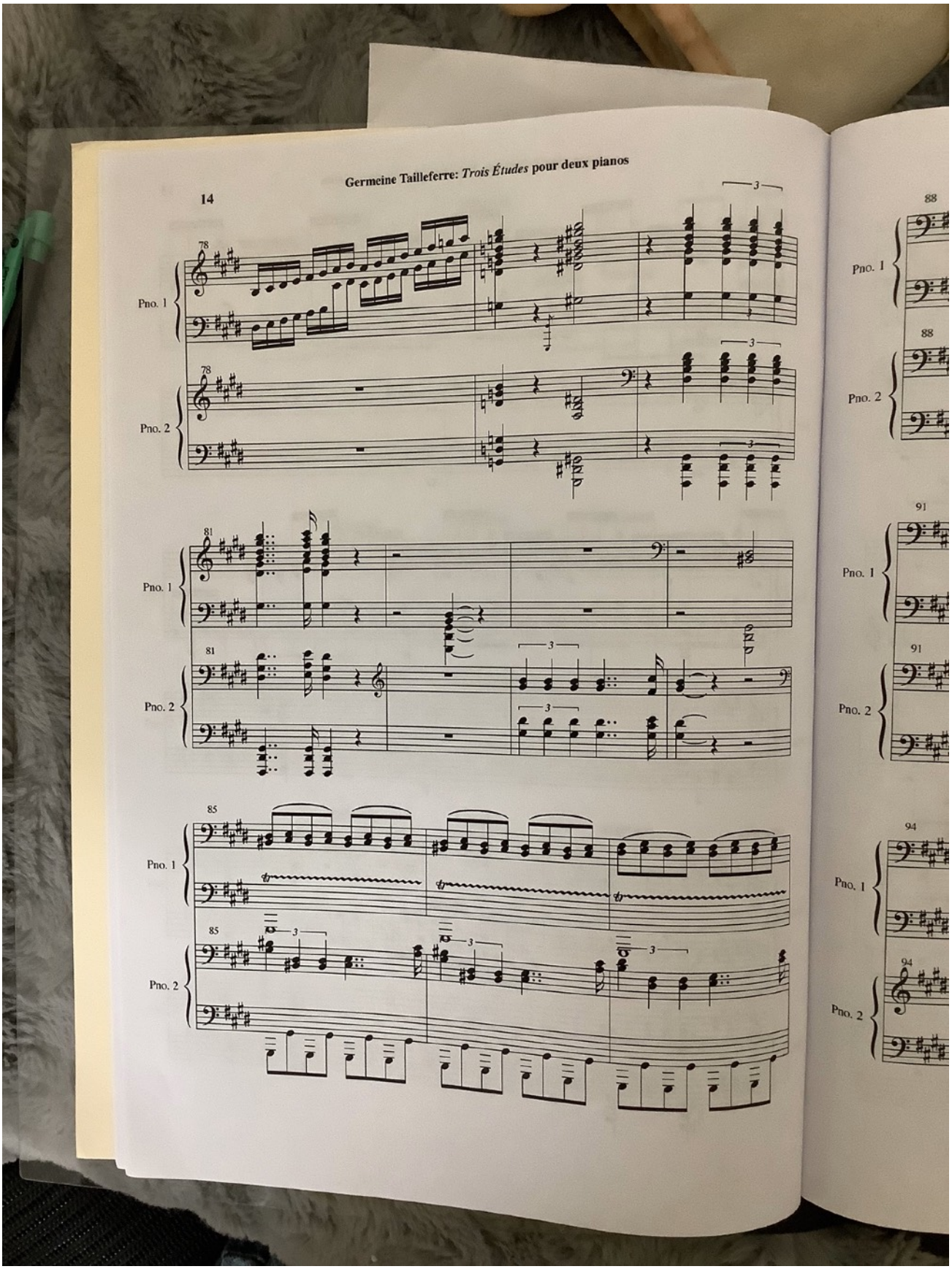
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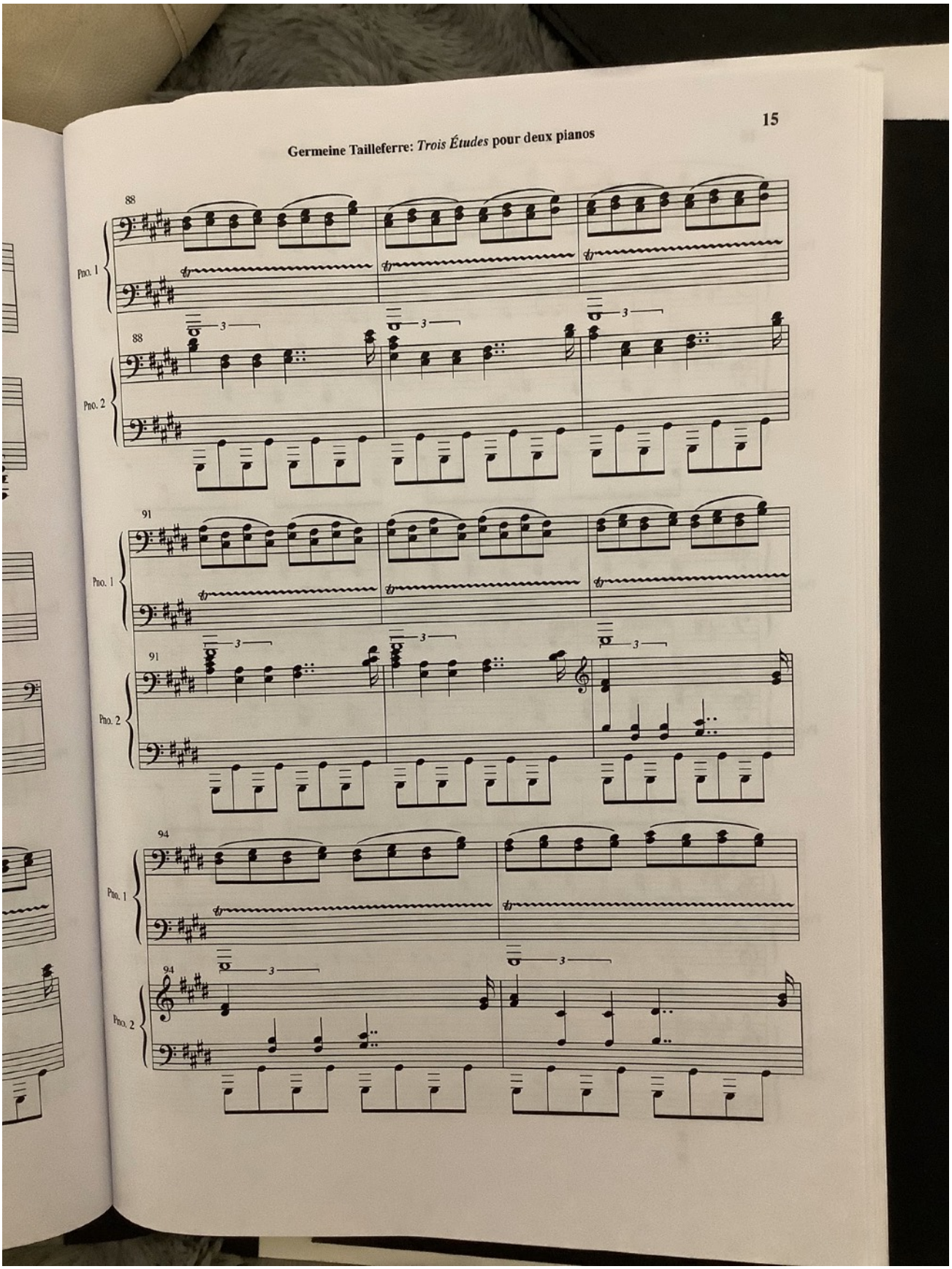
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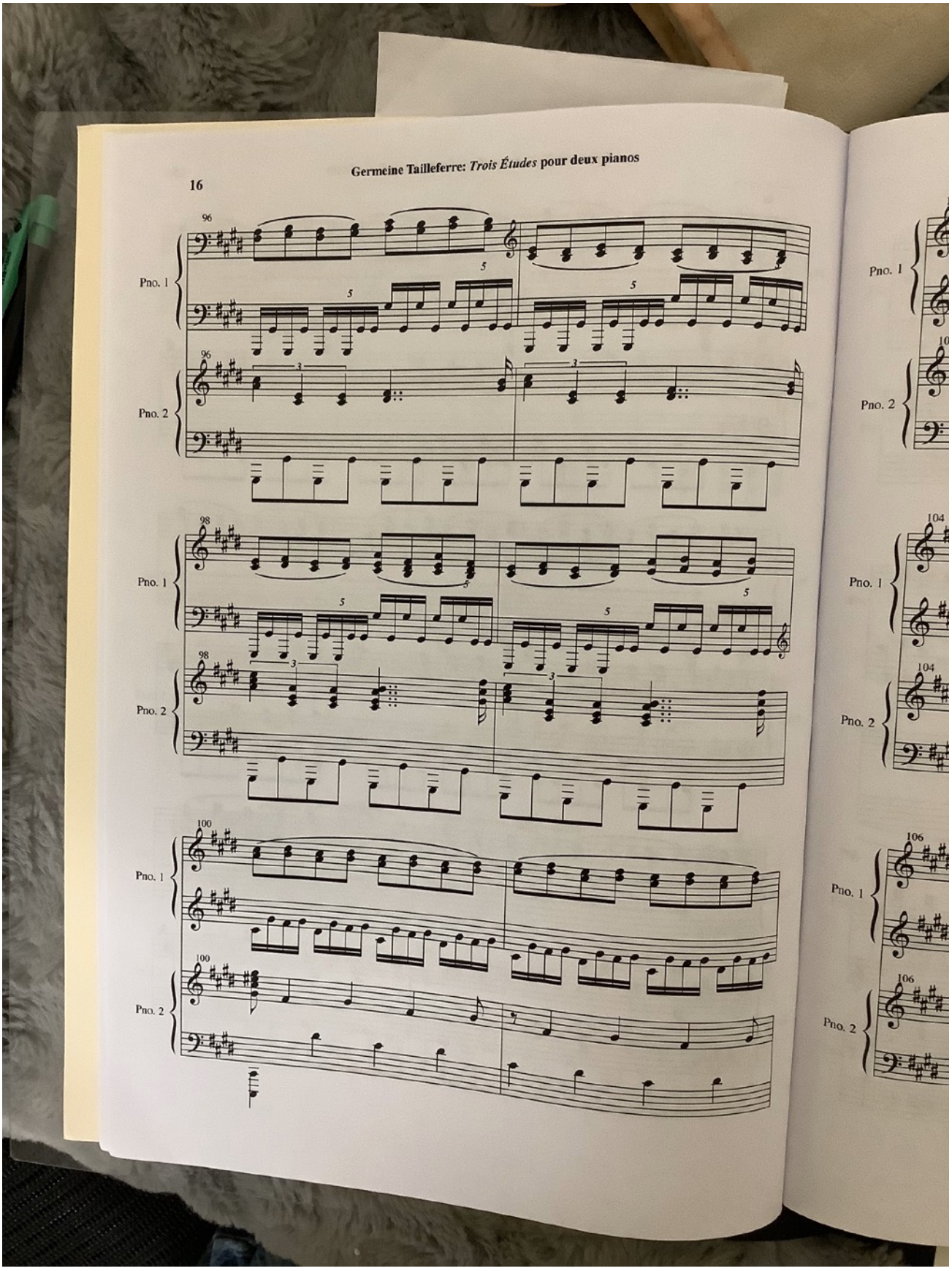
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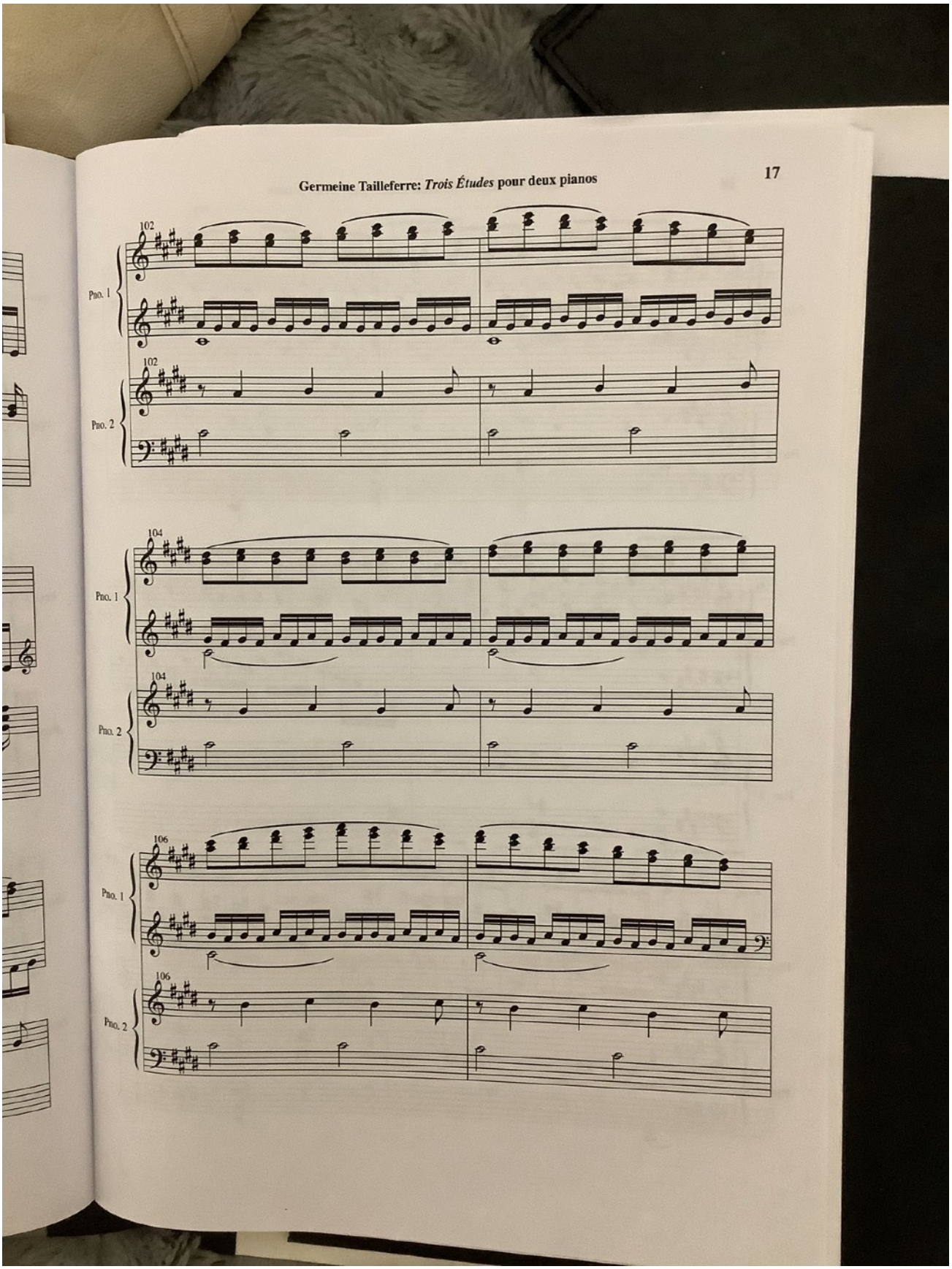
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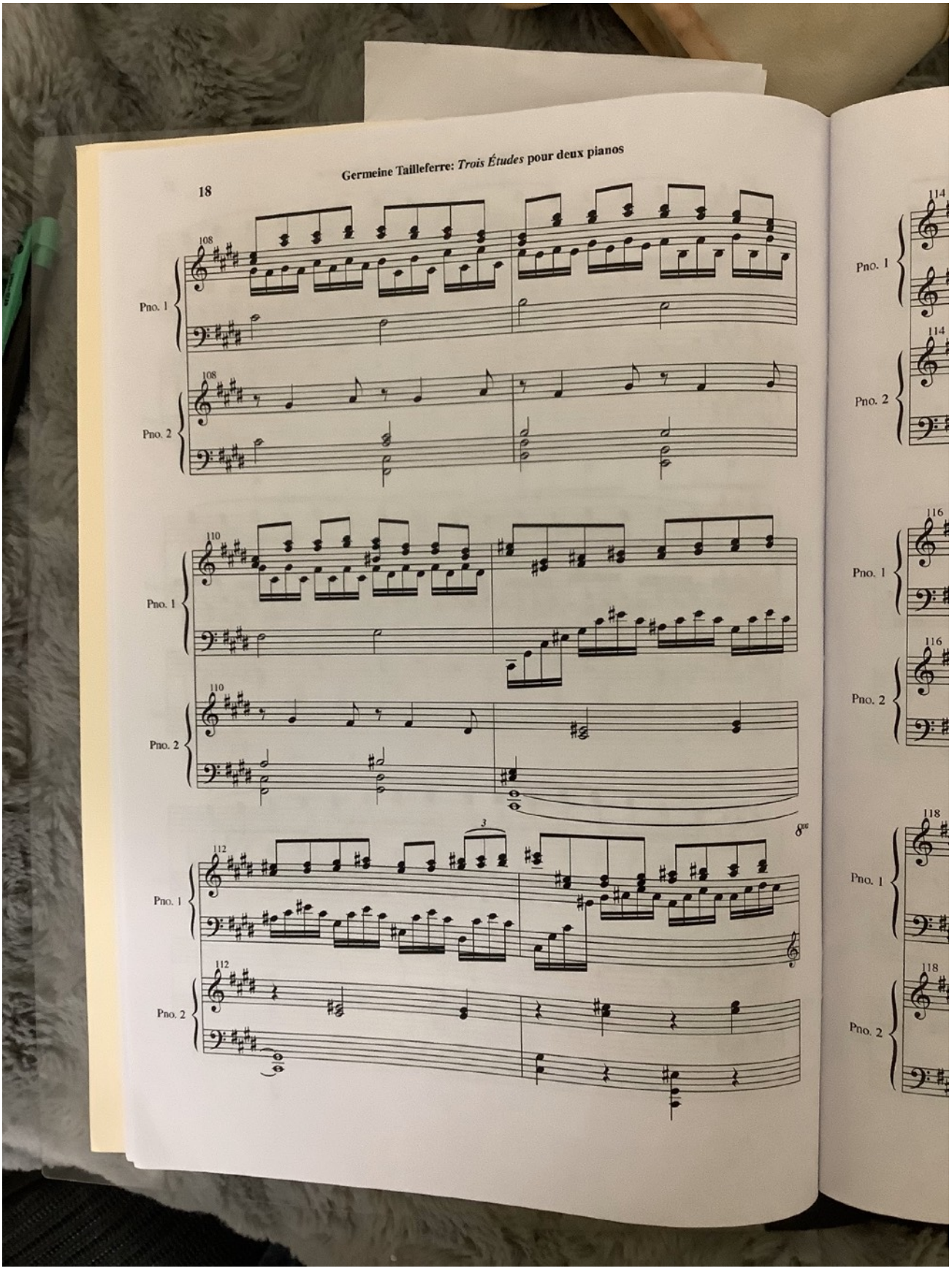
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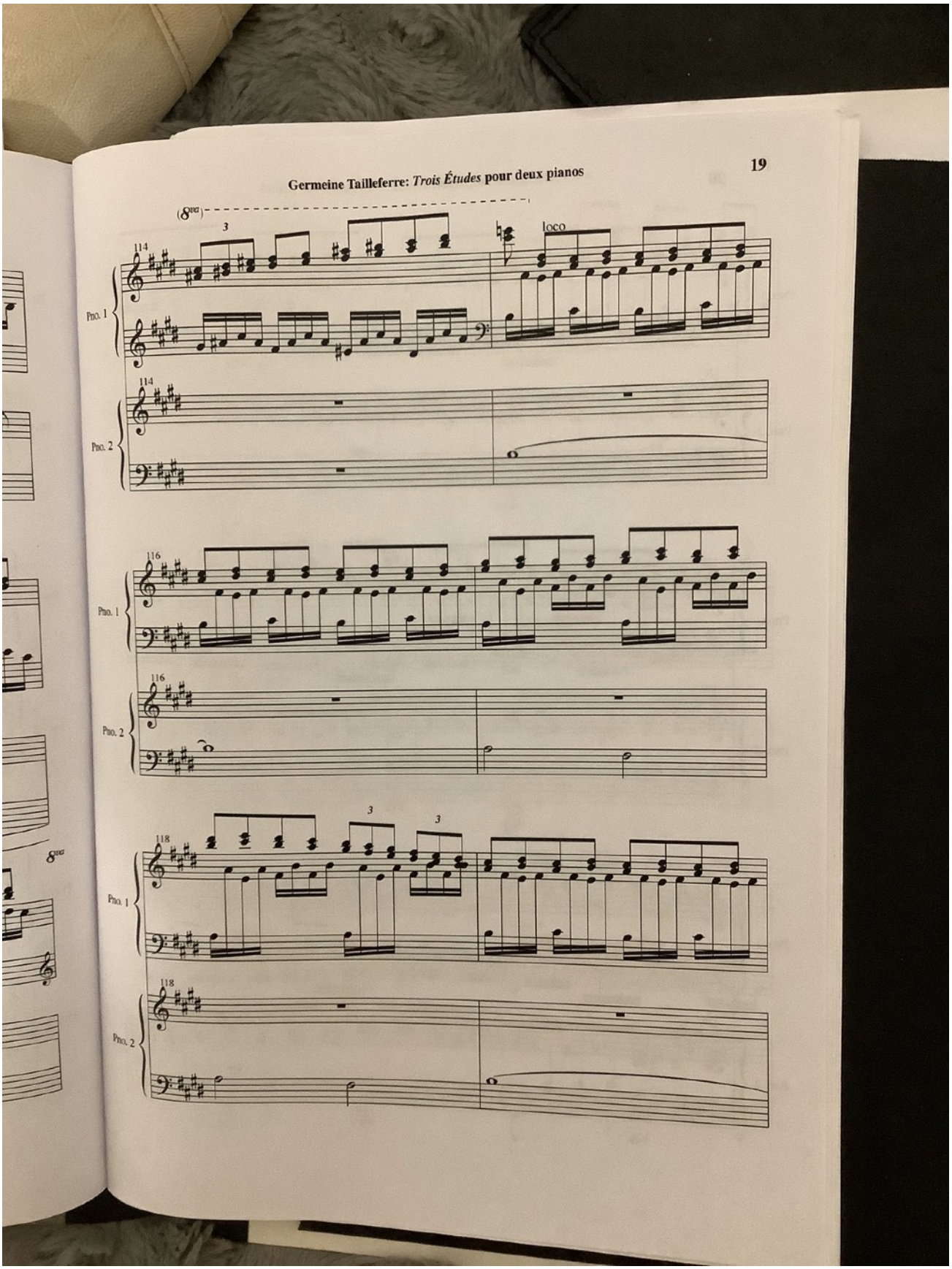
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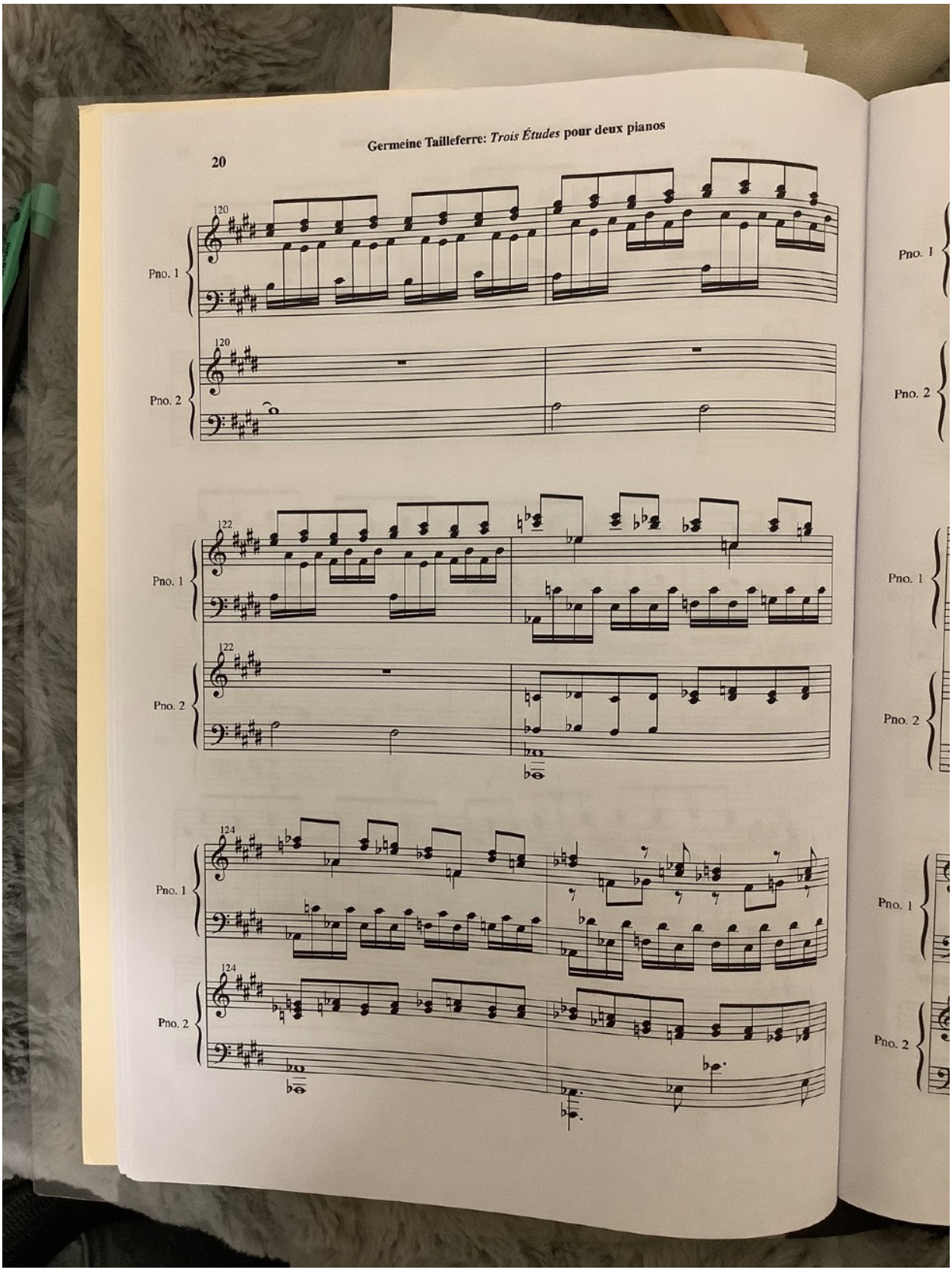
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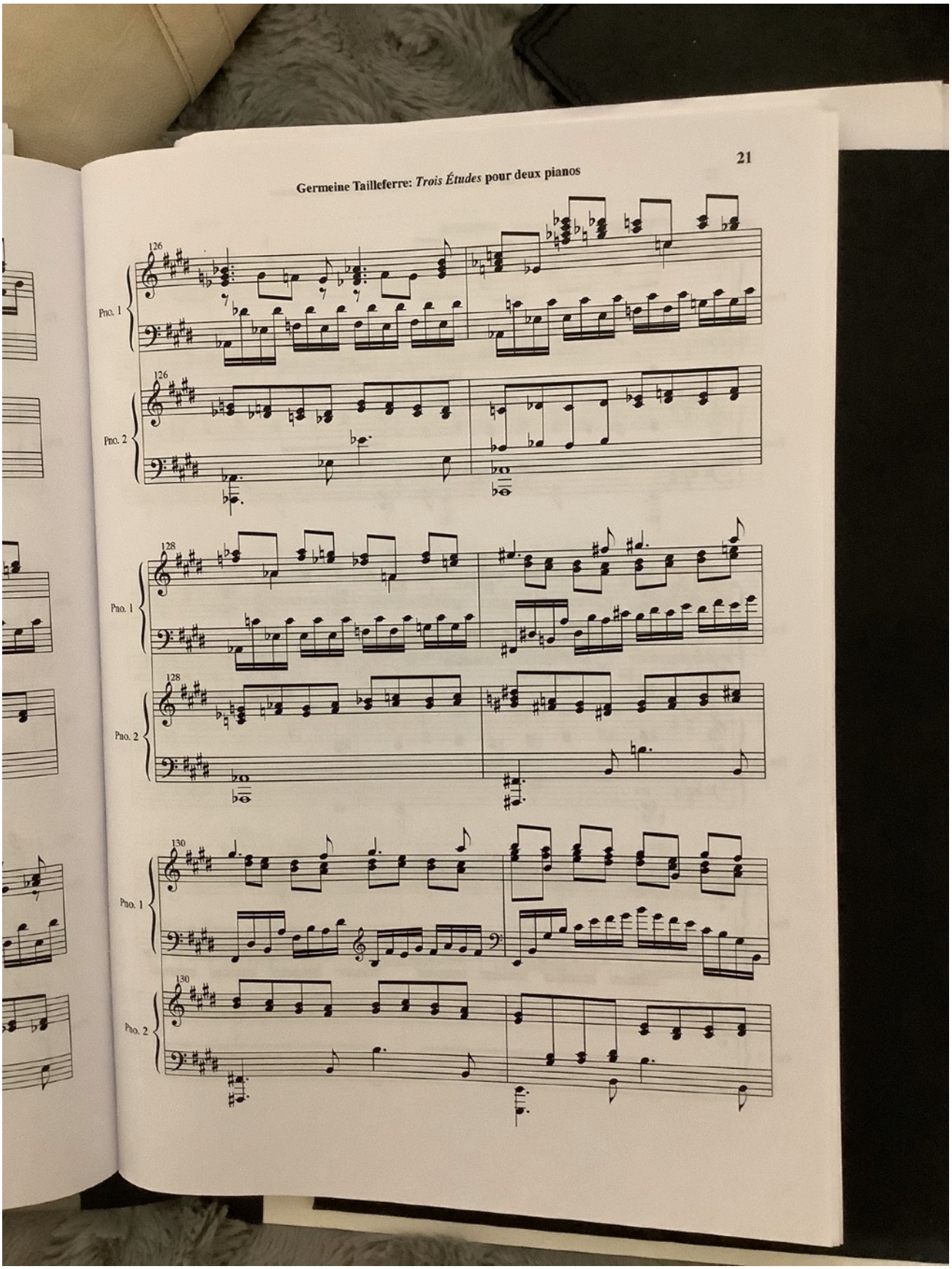
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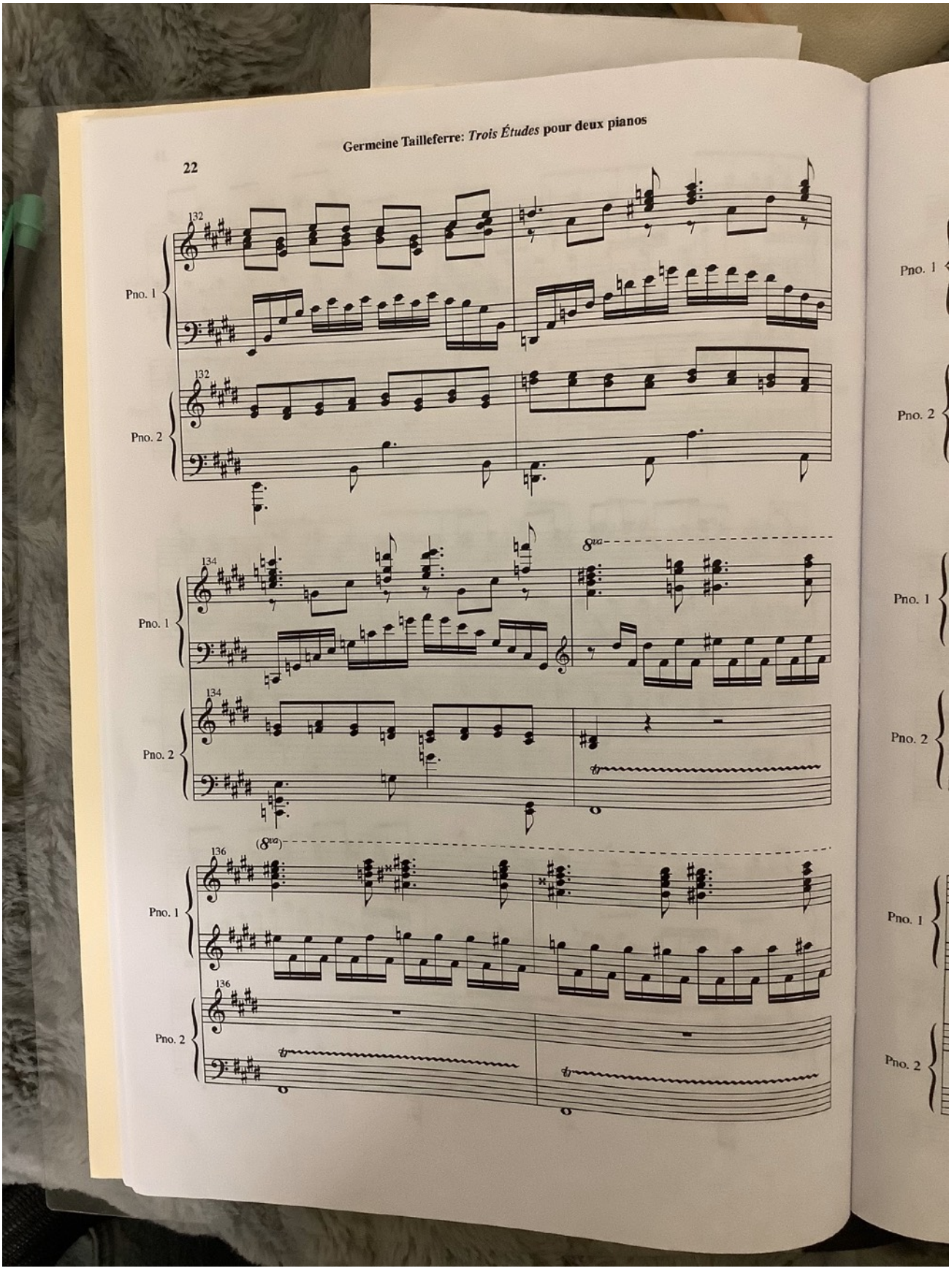
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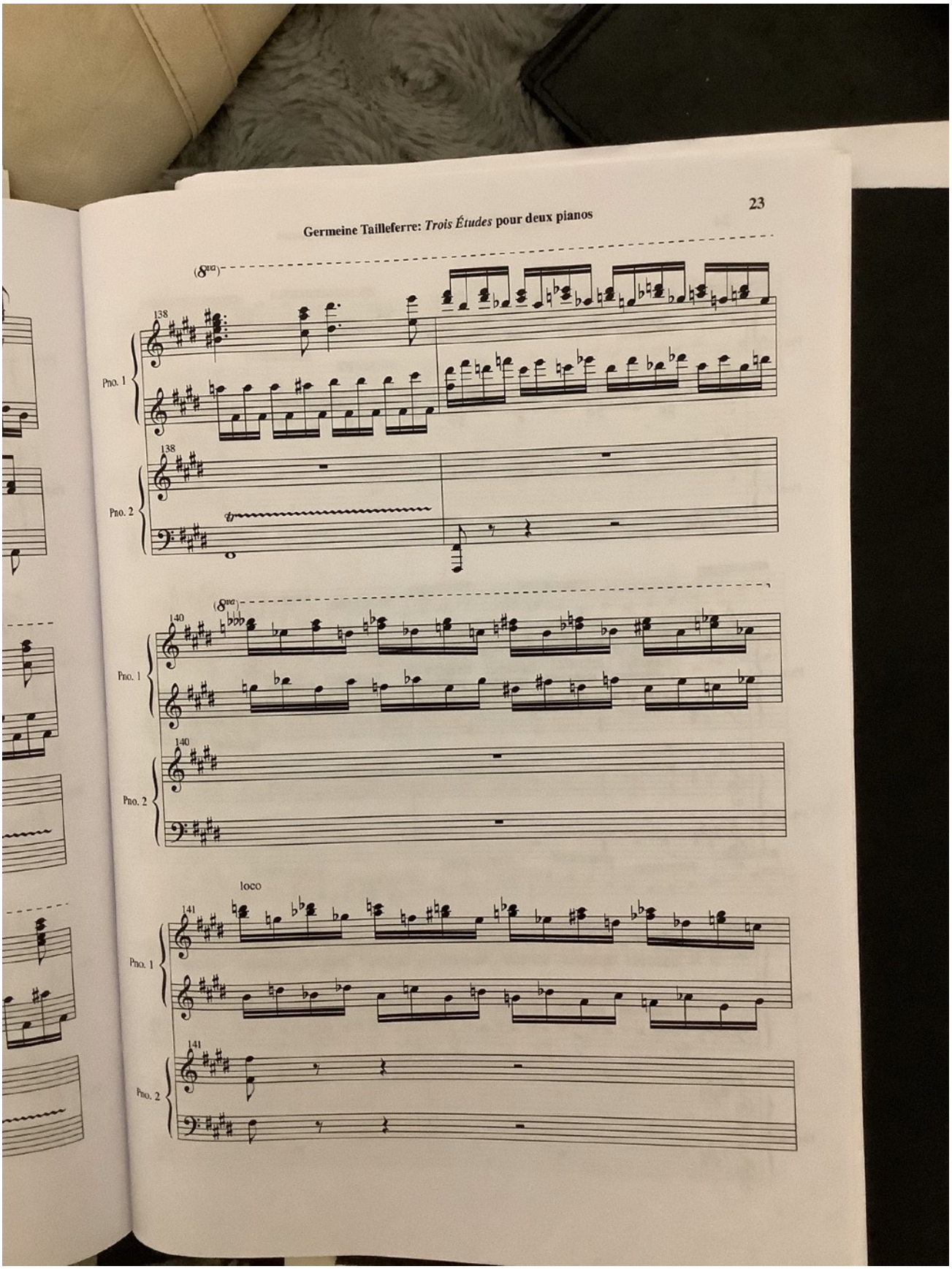
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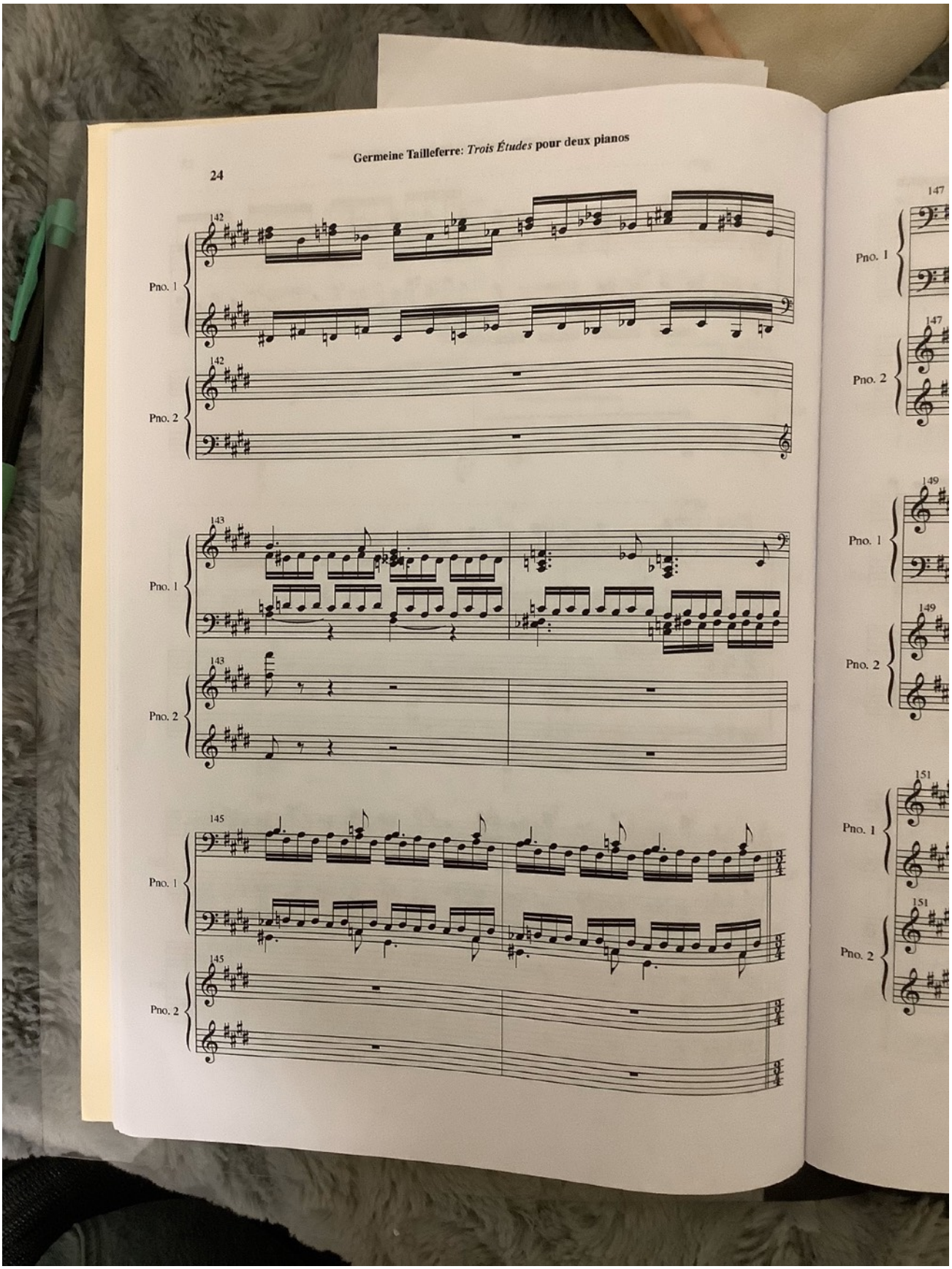
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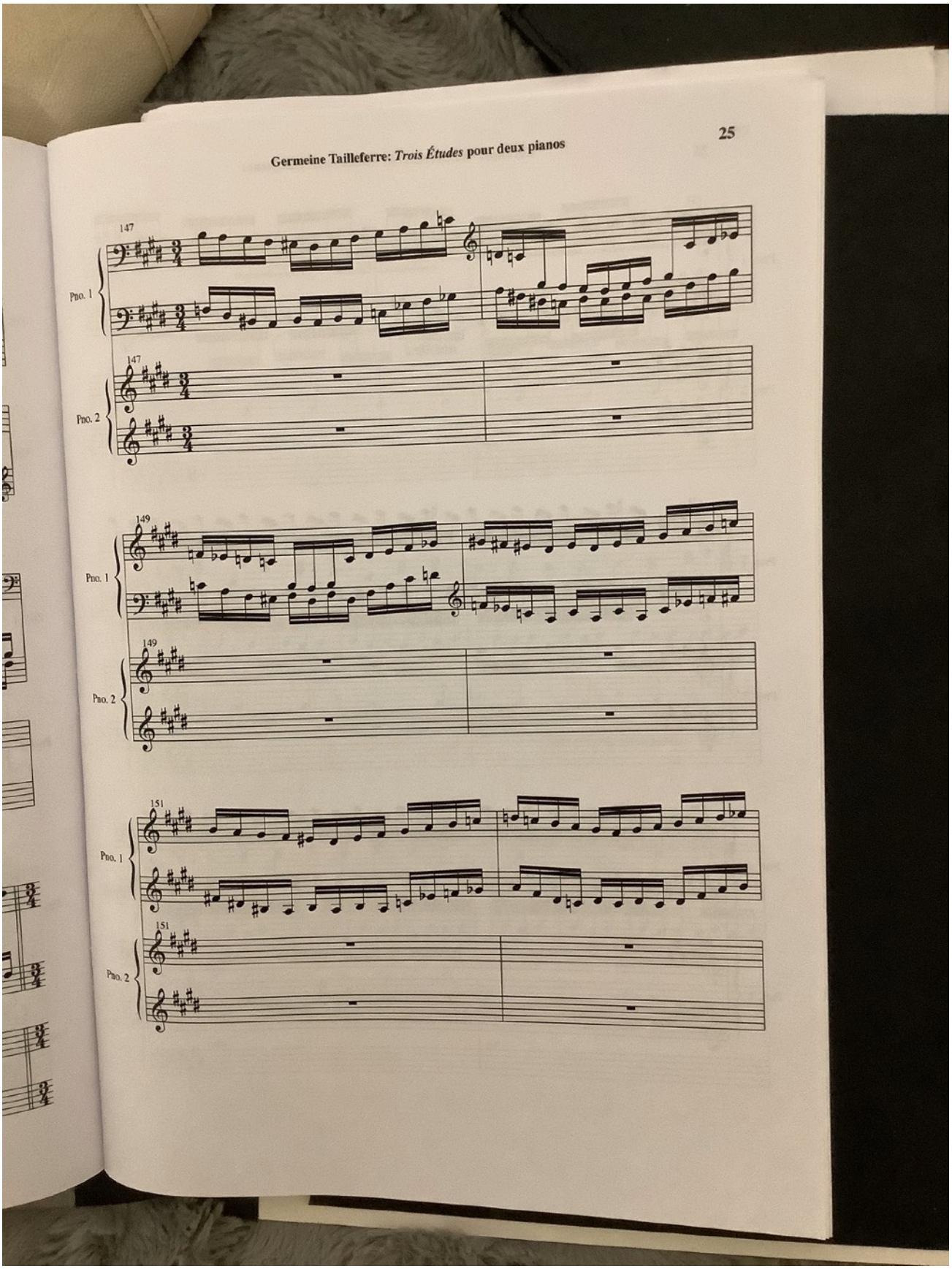
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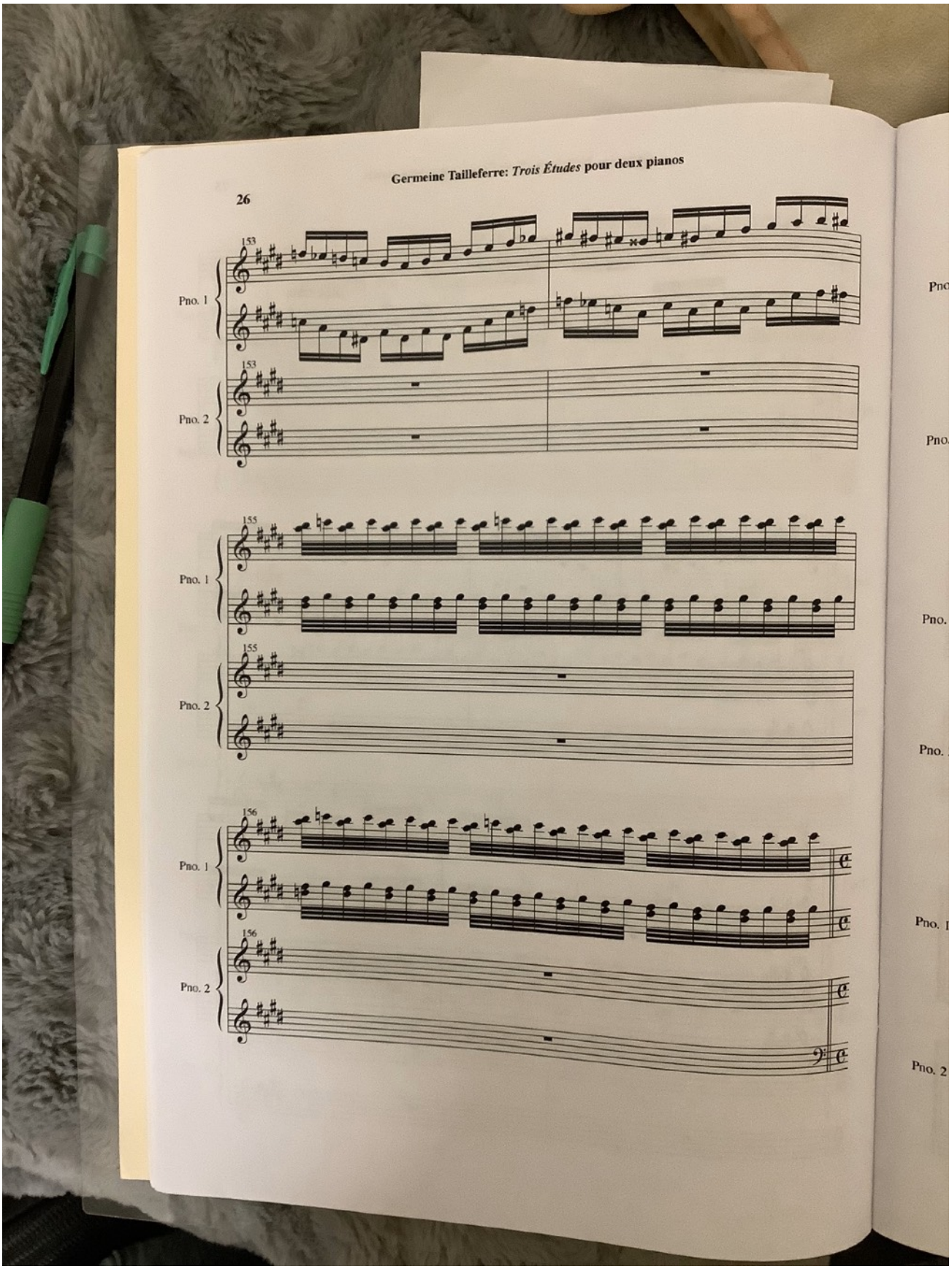
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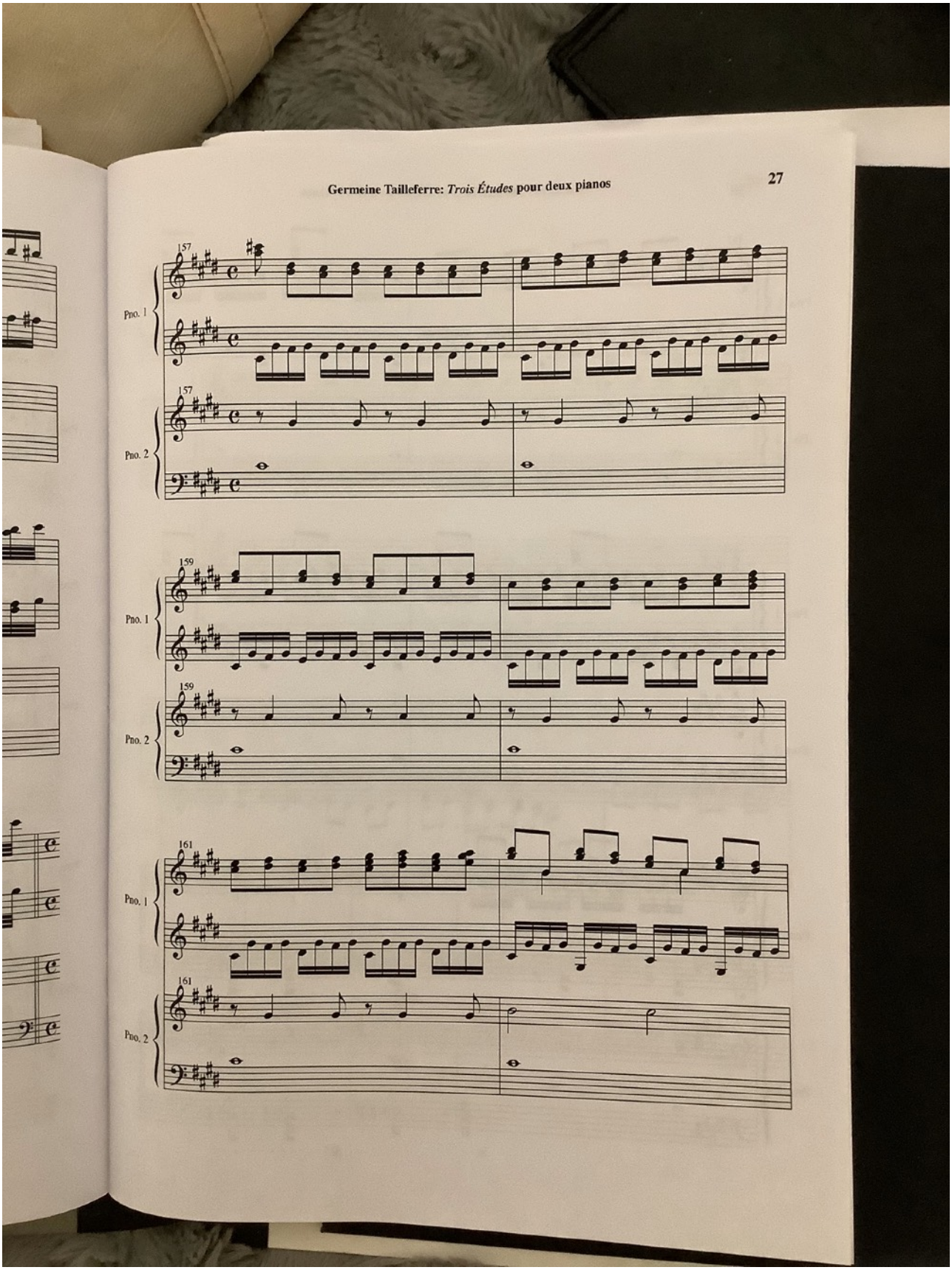
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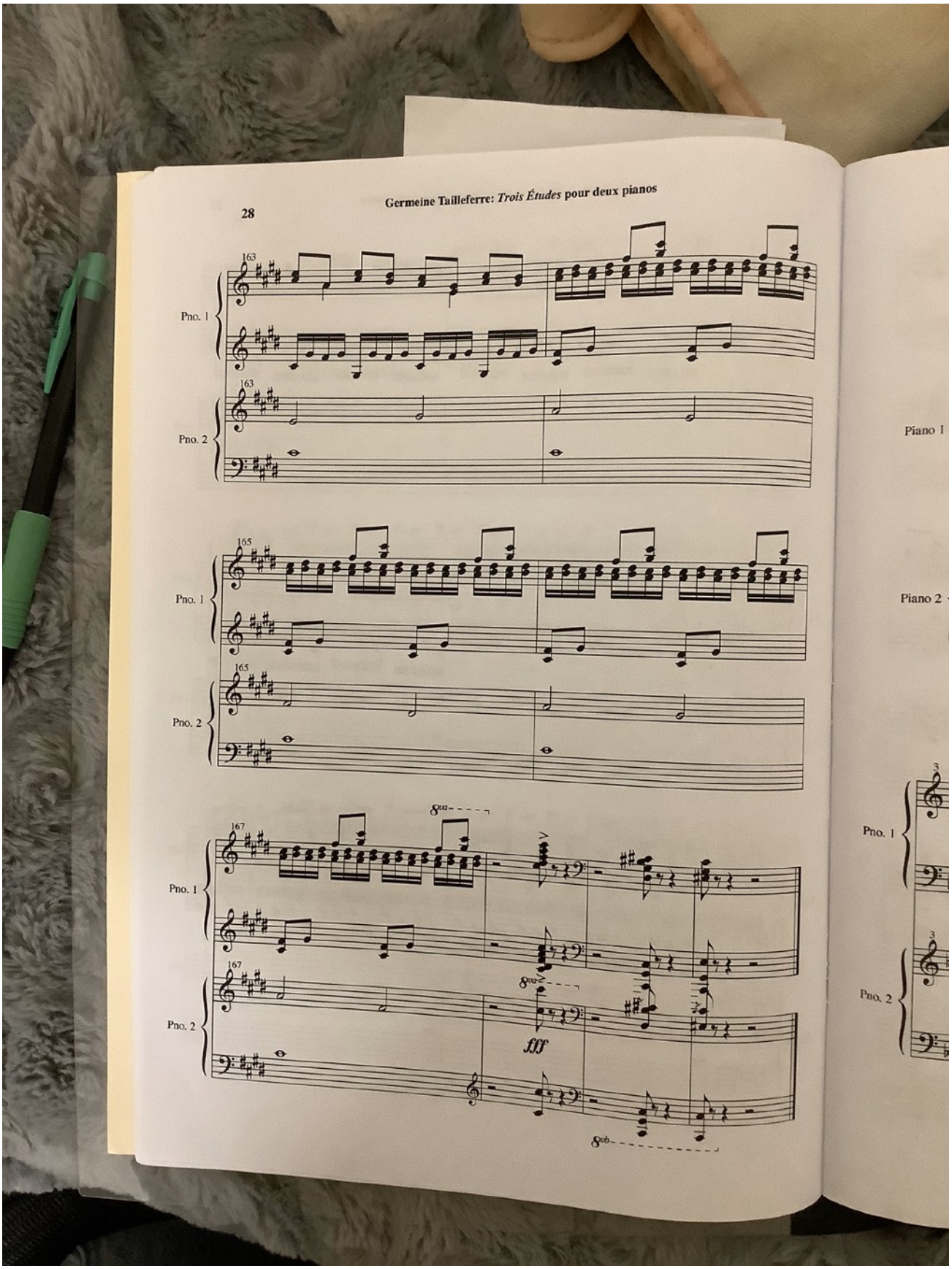
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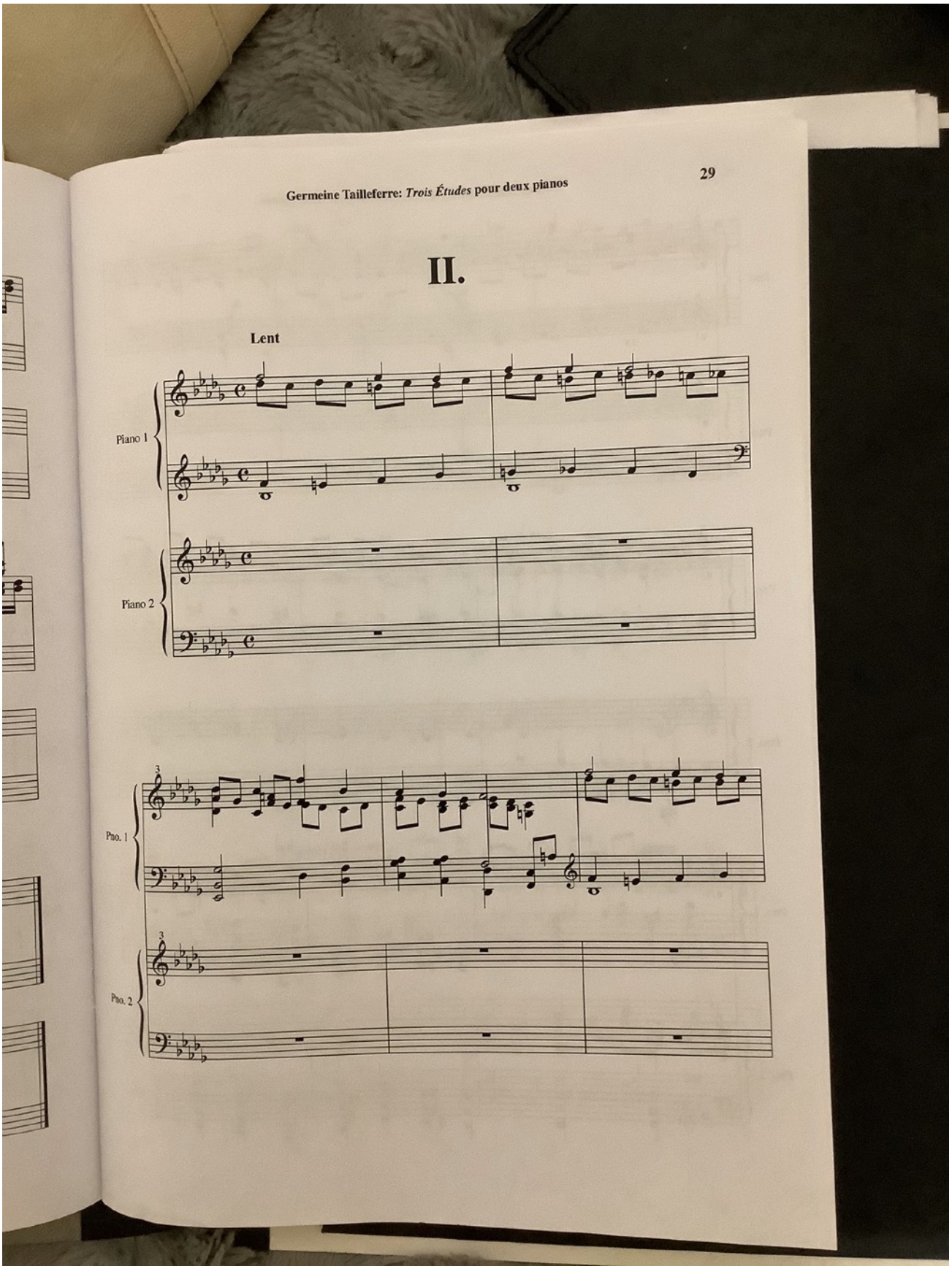
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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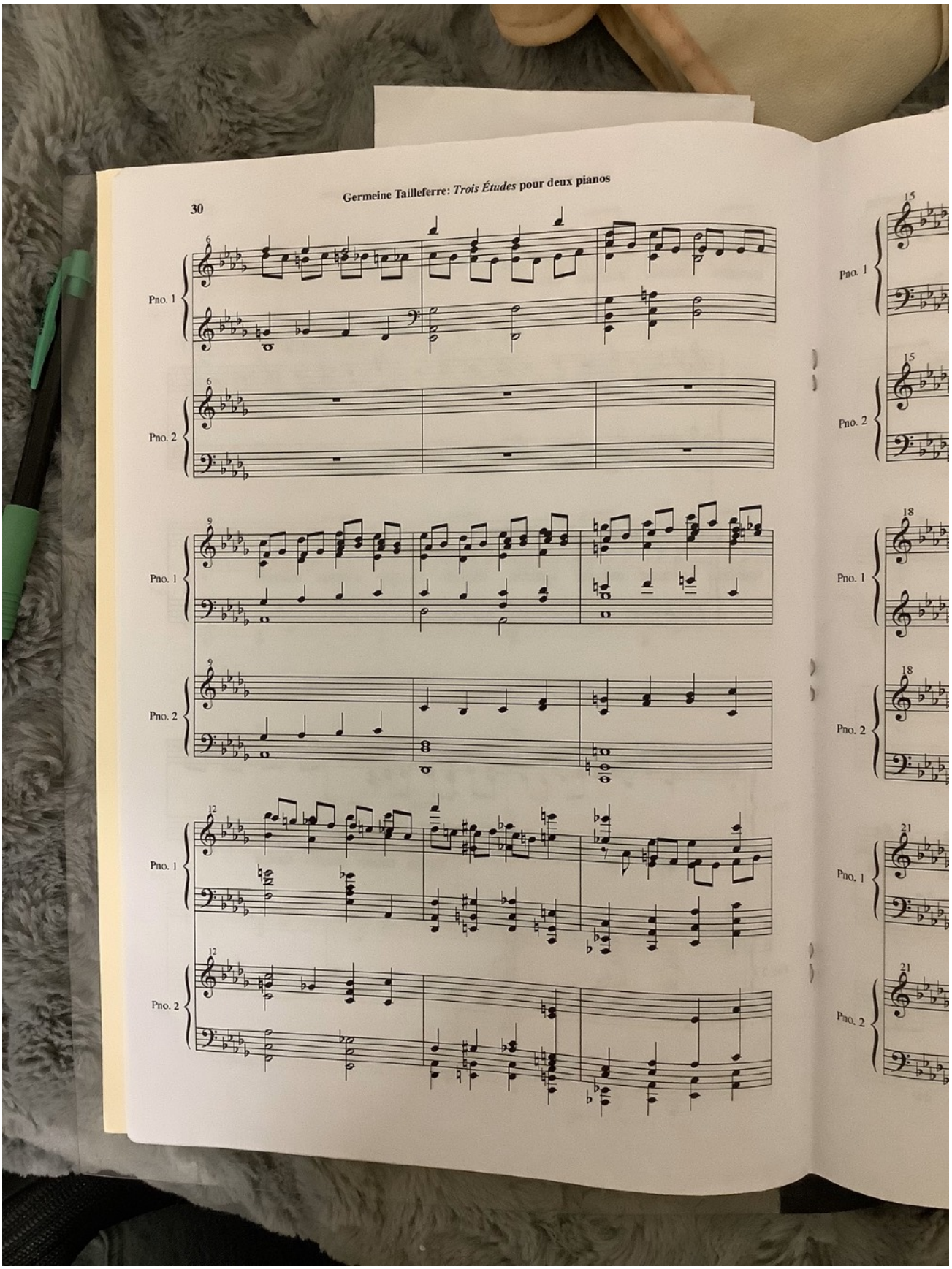
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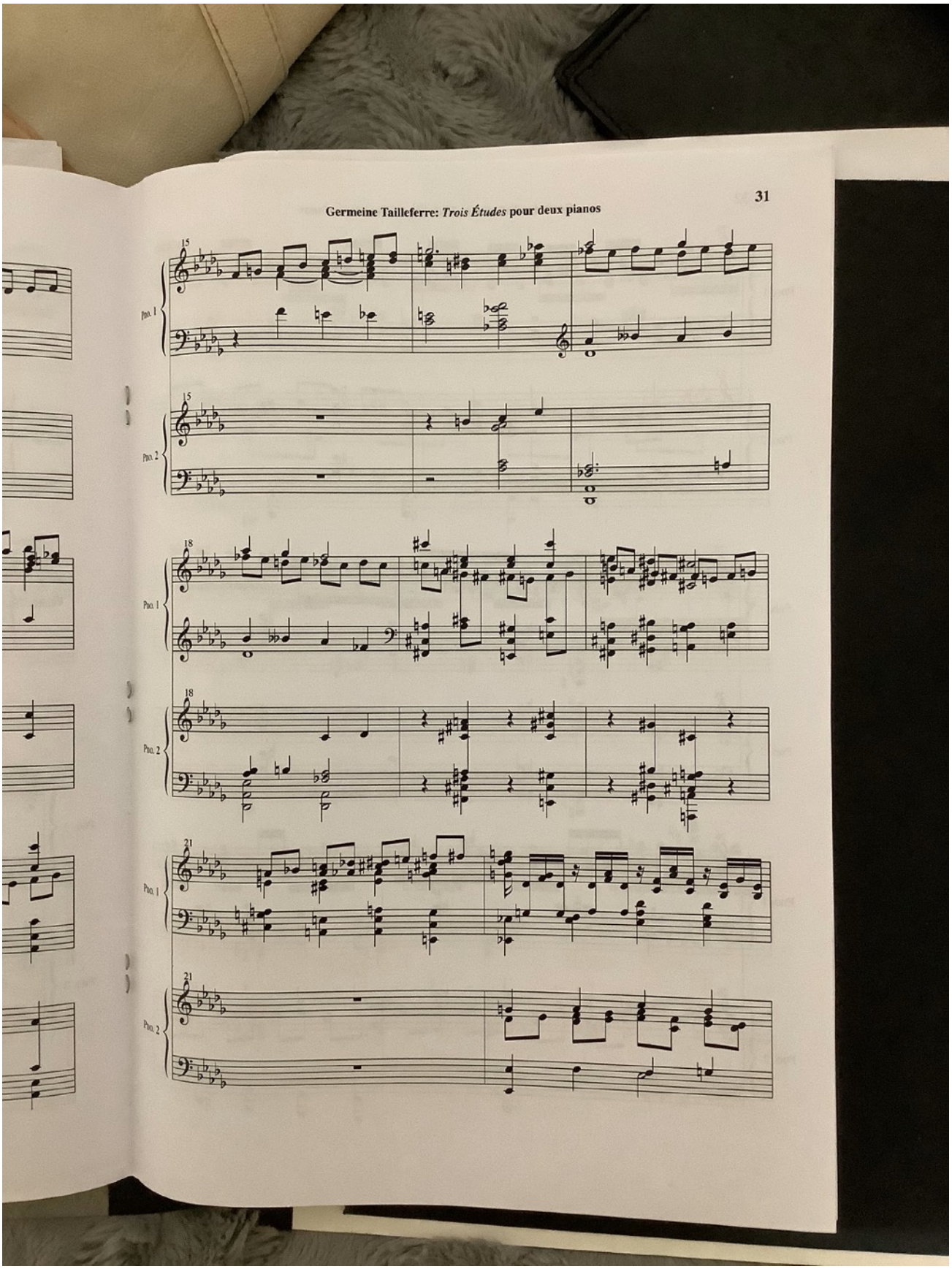
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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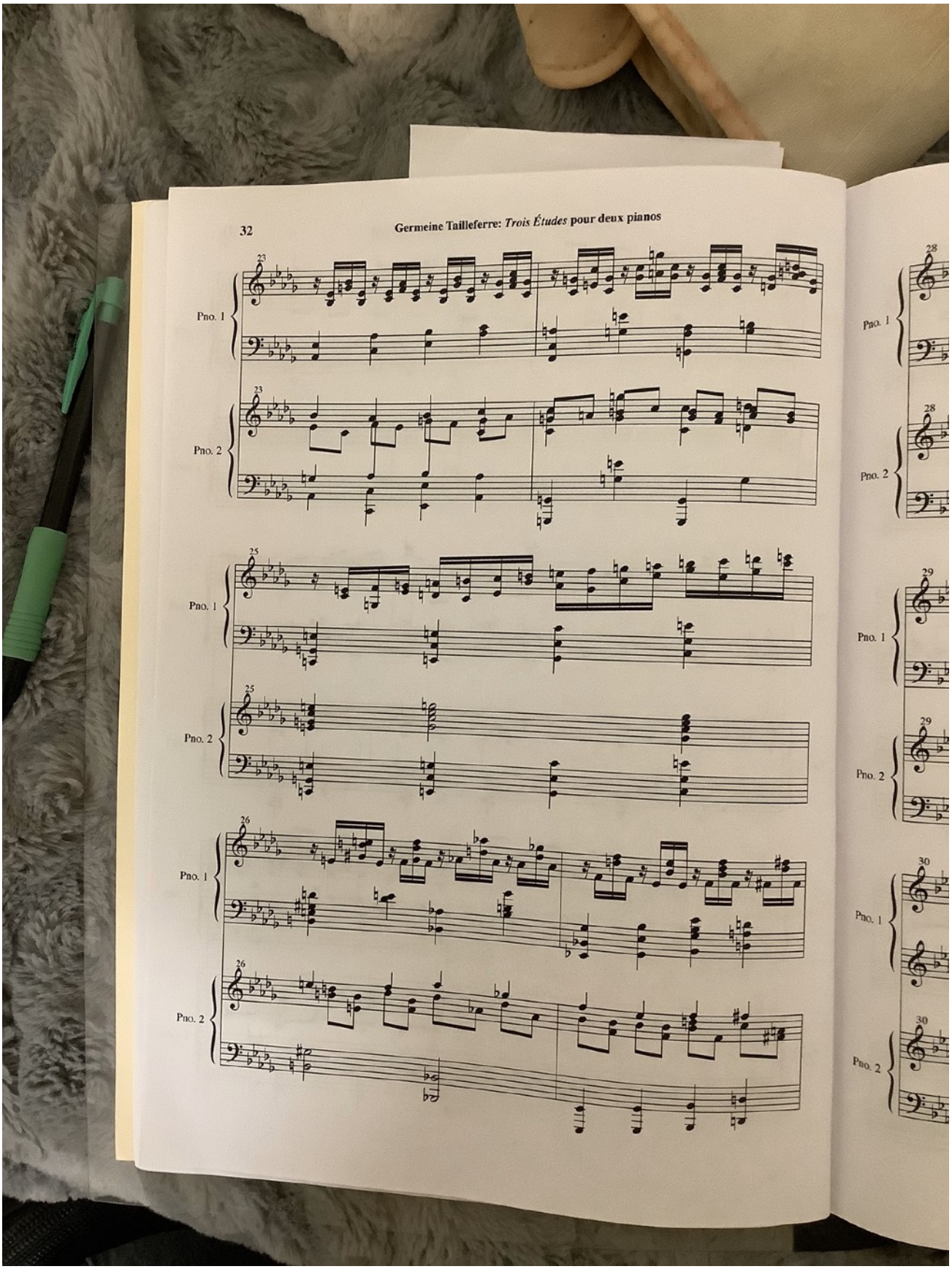
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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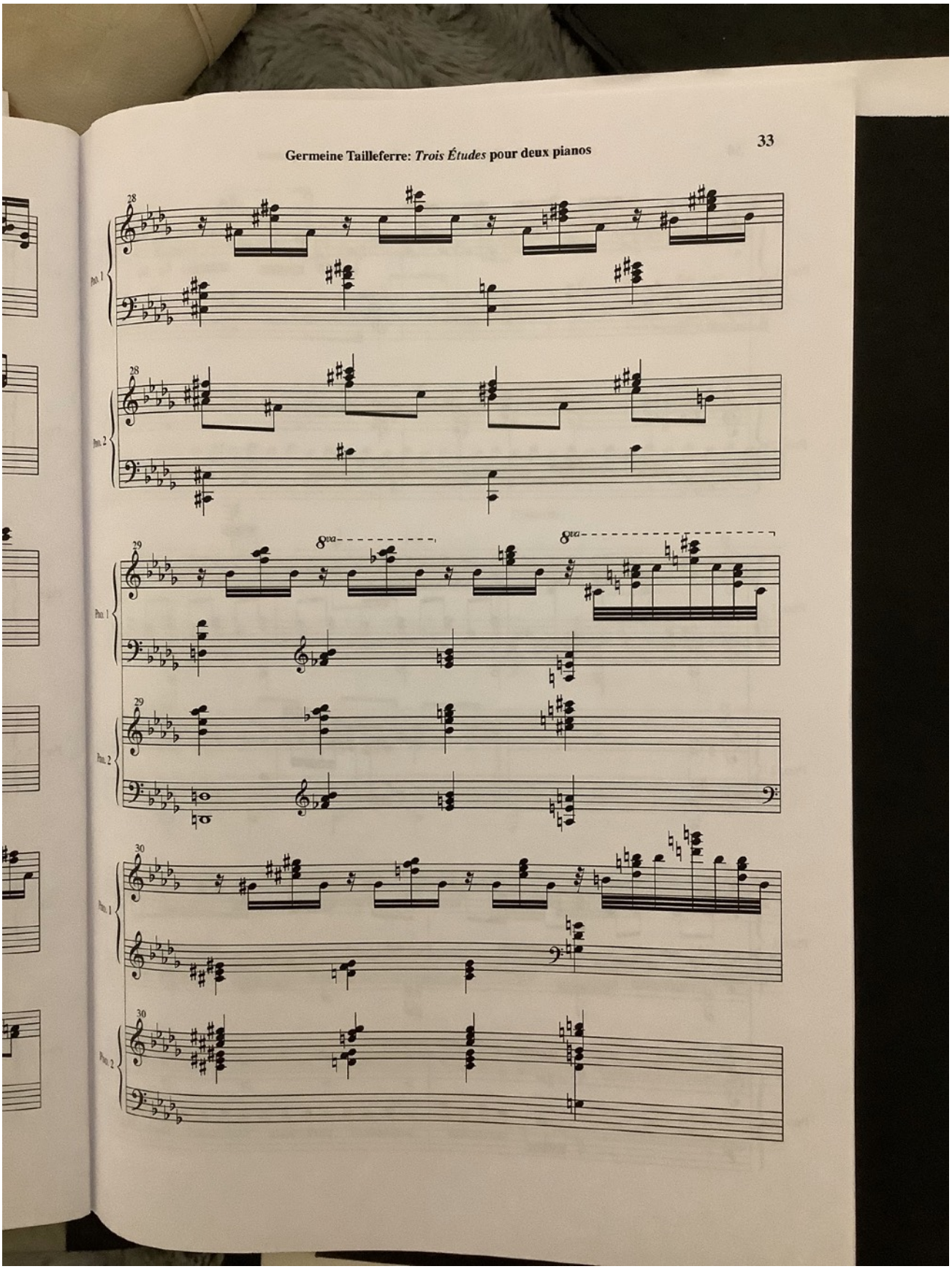
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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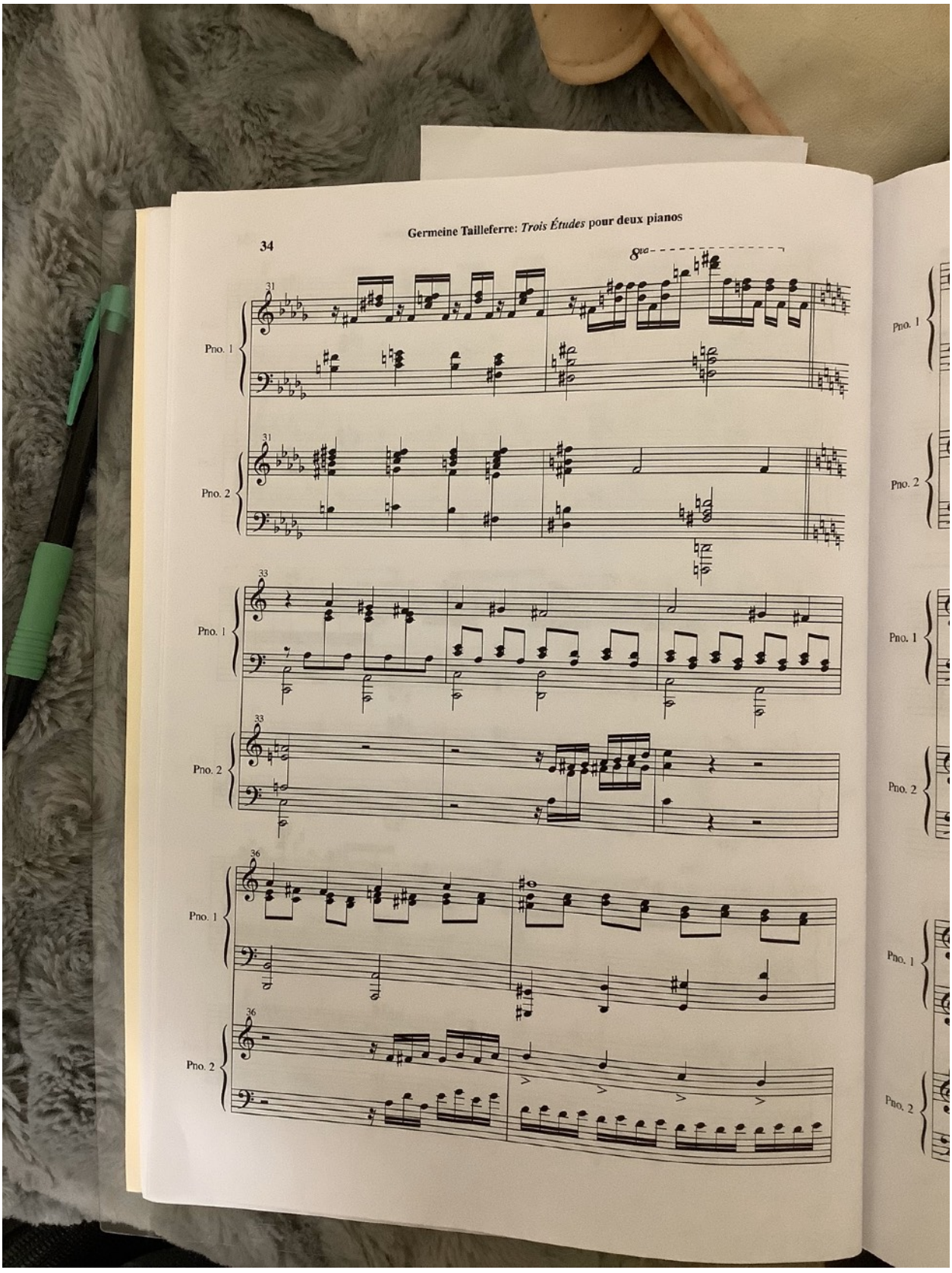
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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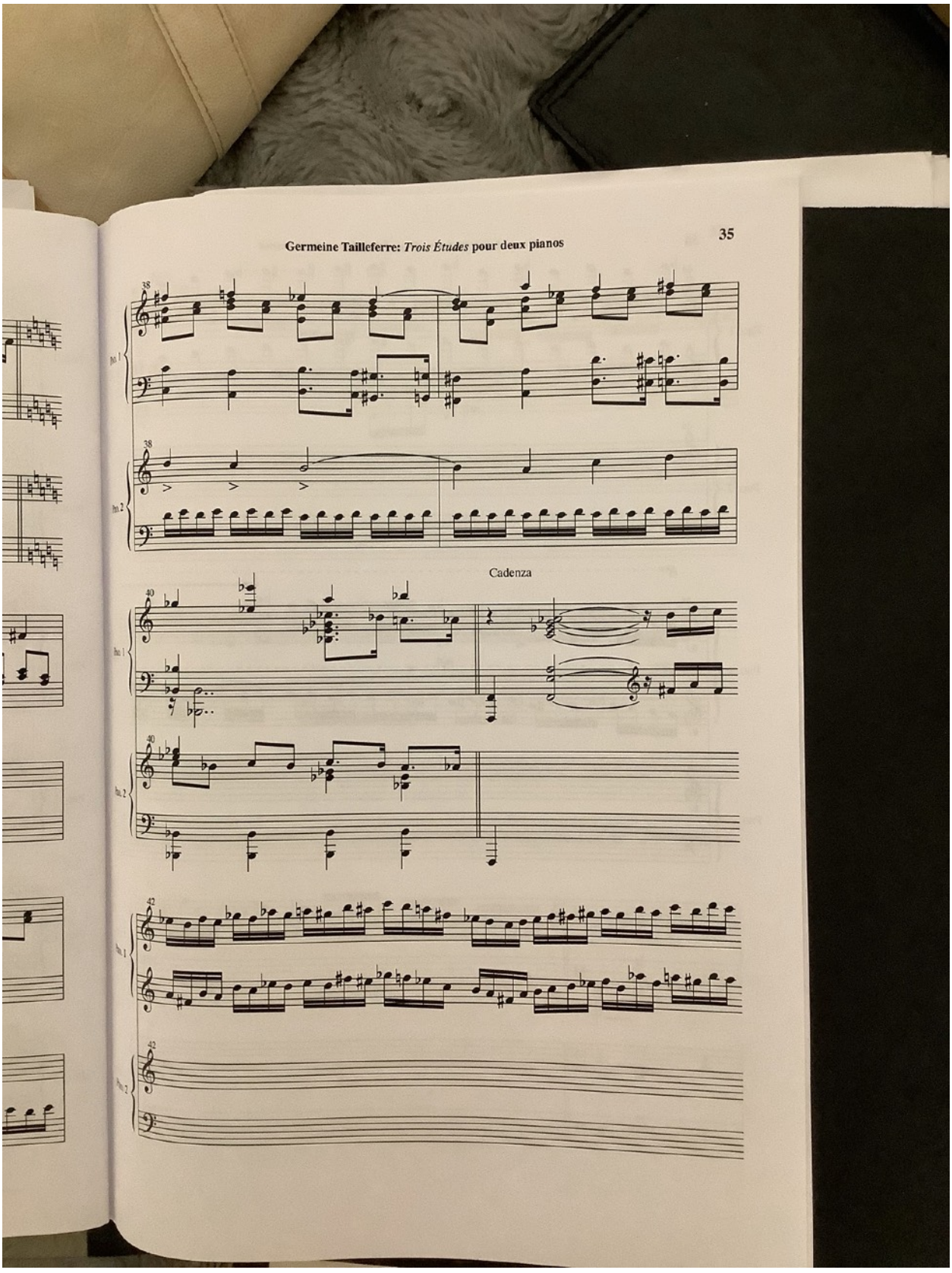
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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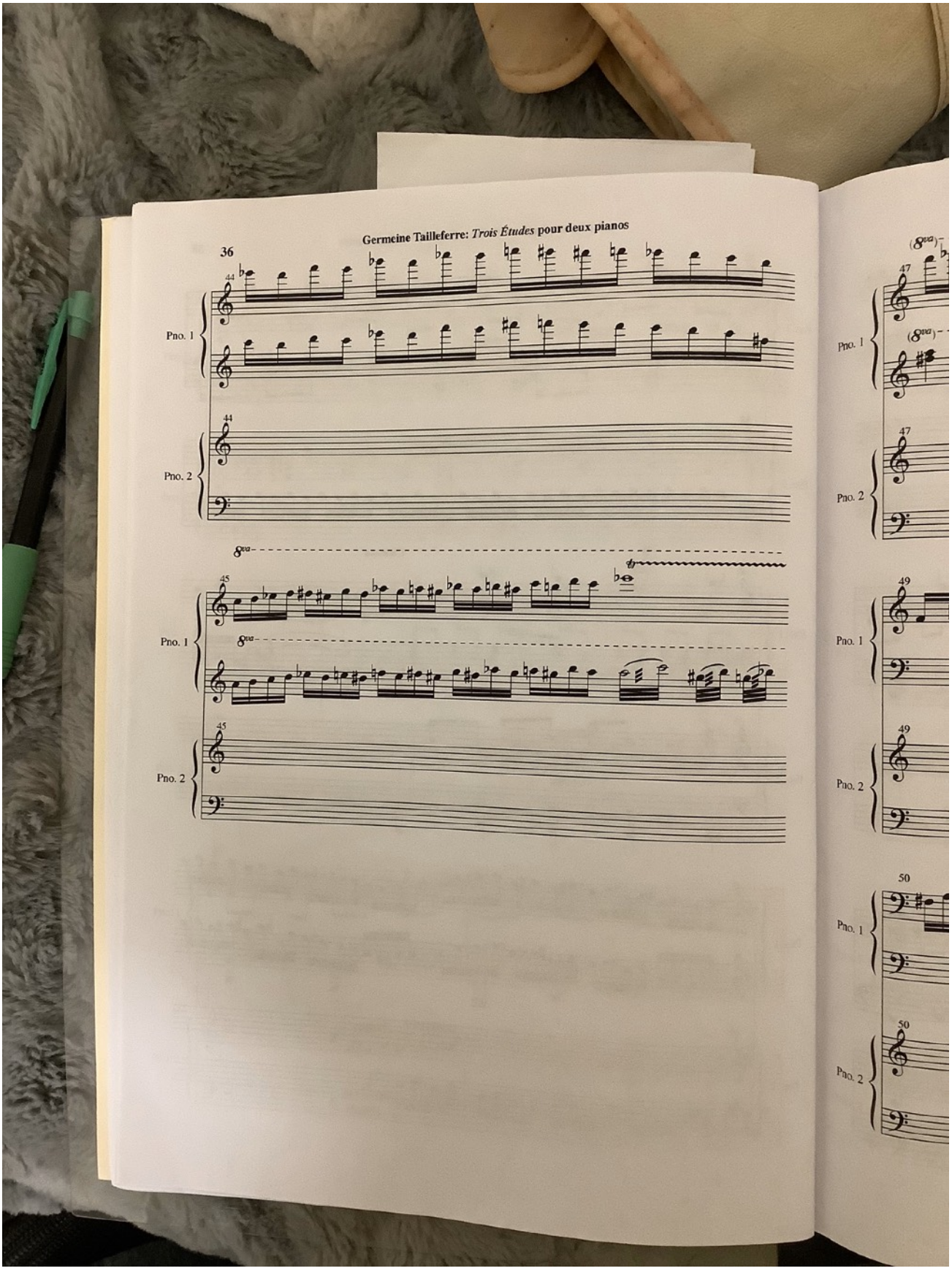
Cadenza


Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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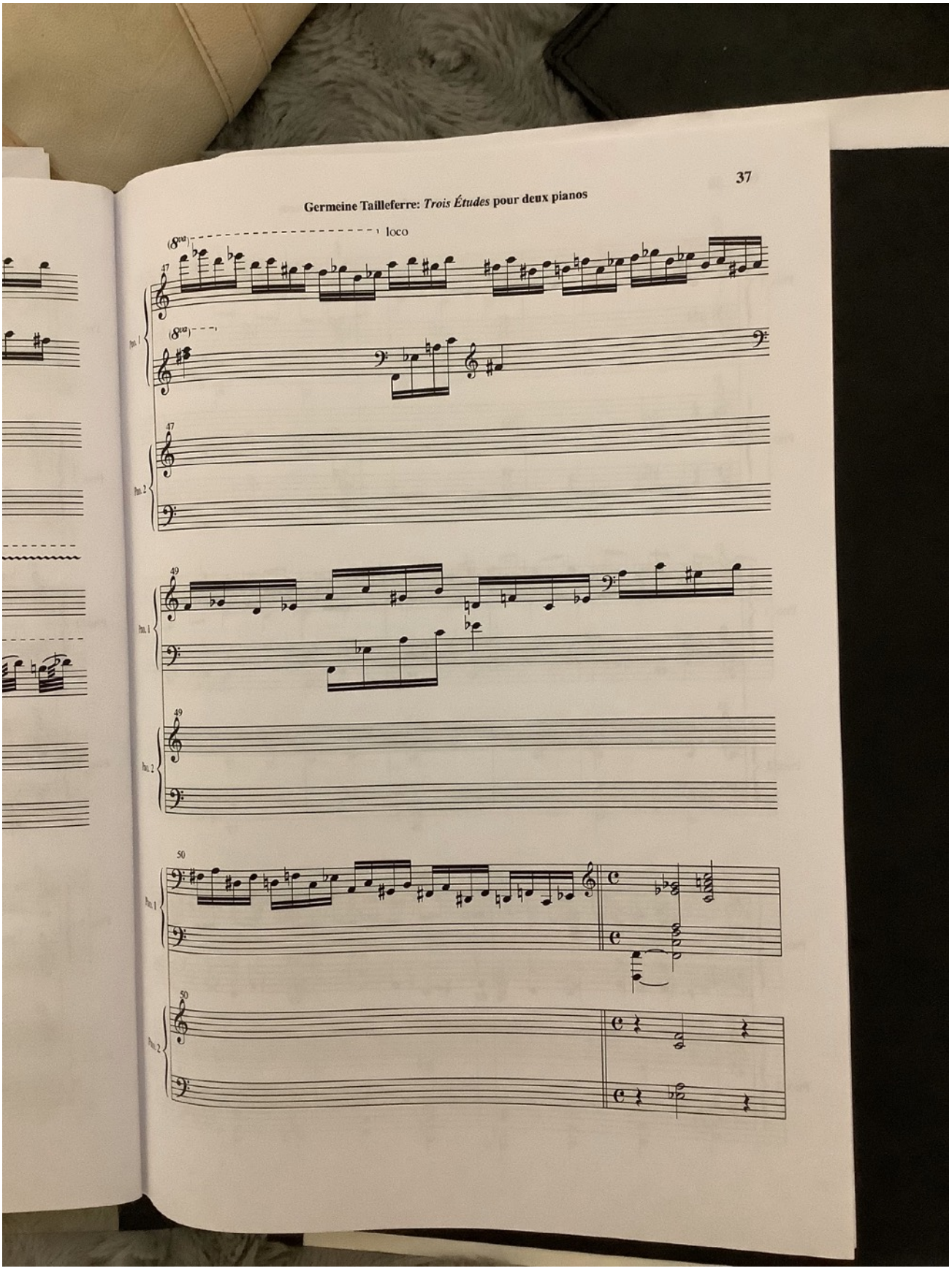
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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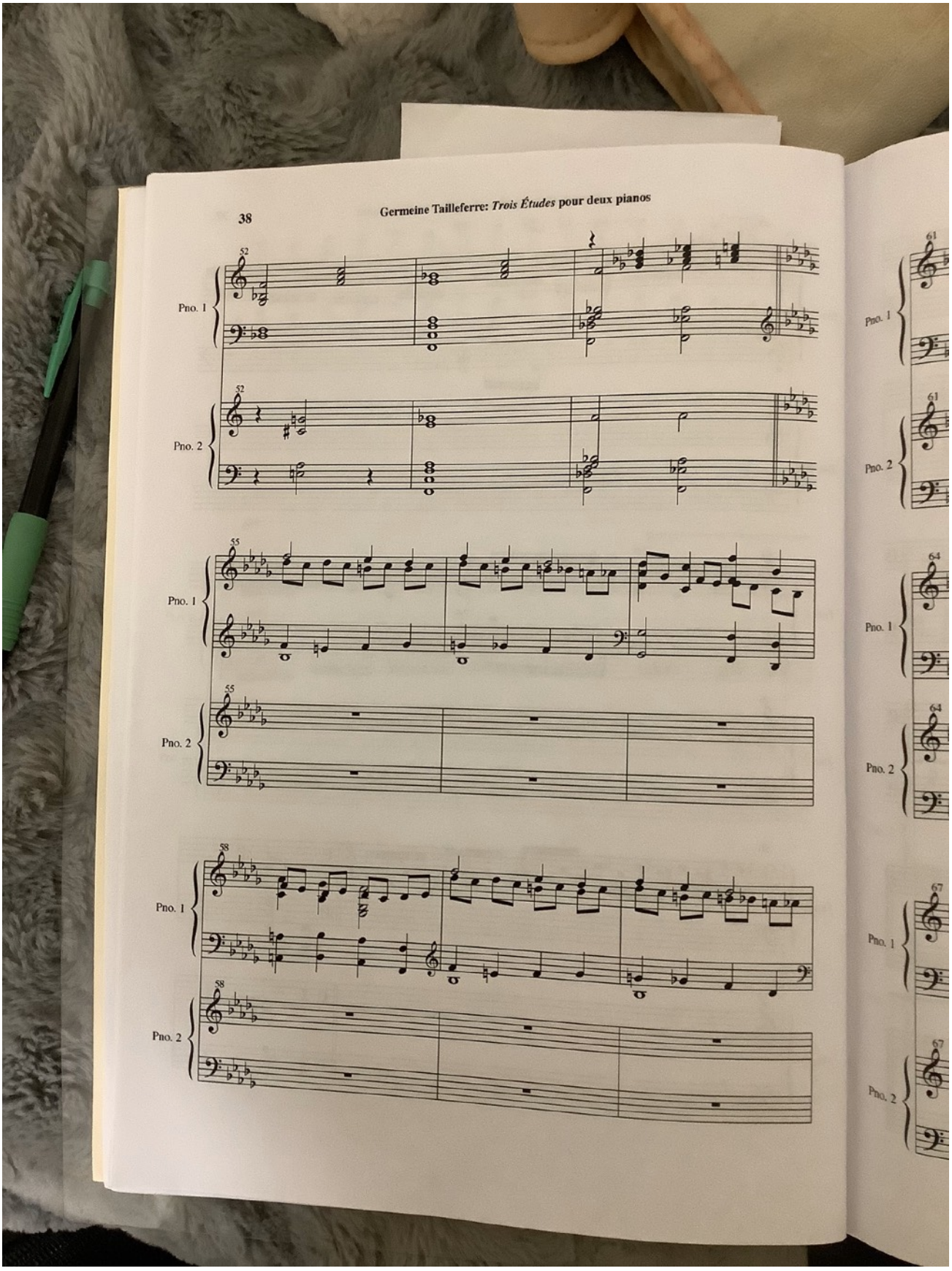
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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Pno. 2
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Pno. 1
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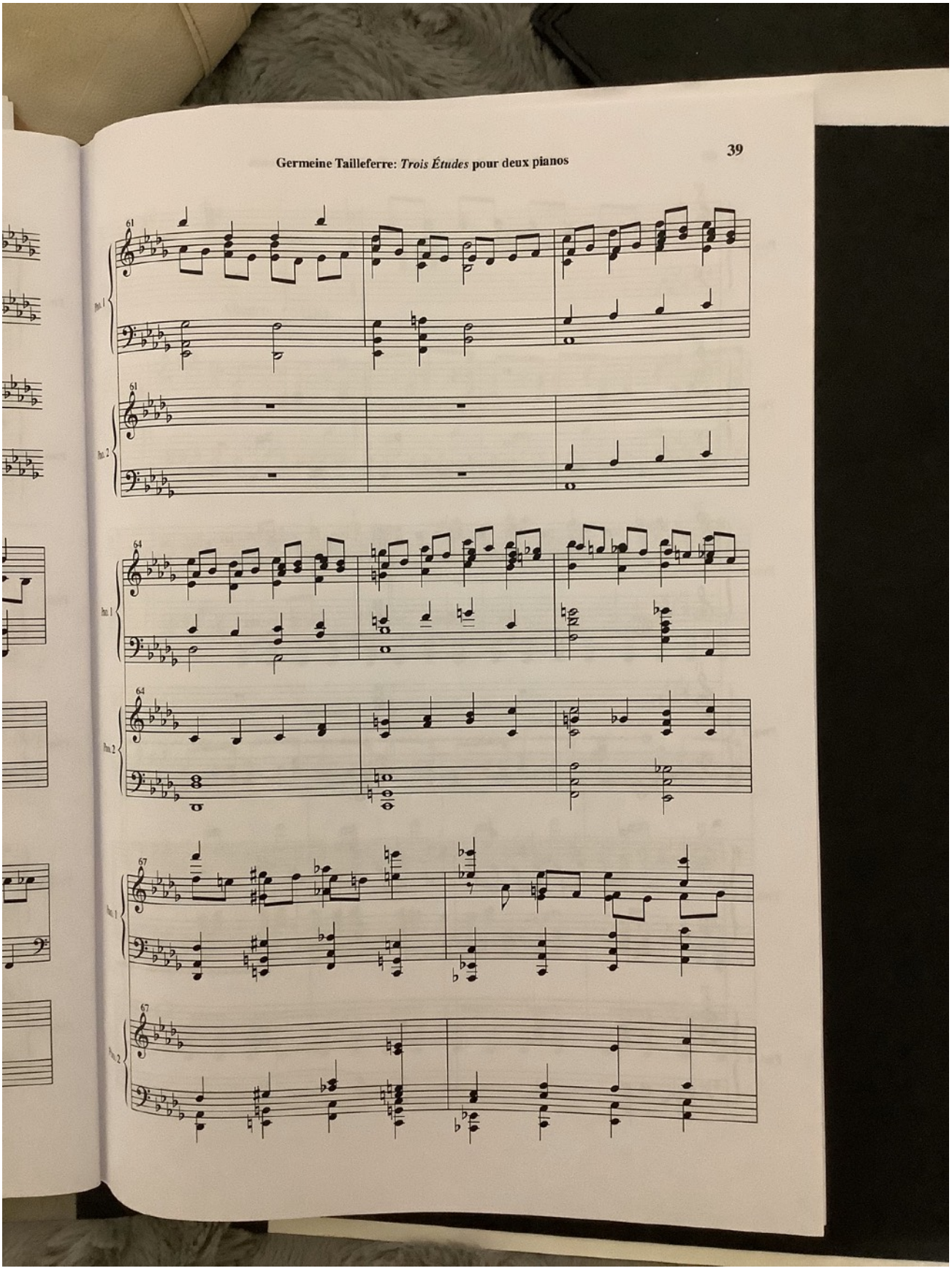
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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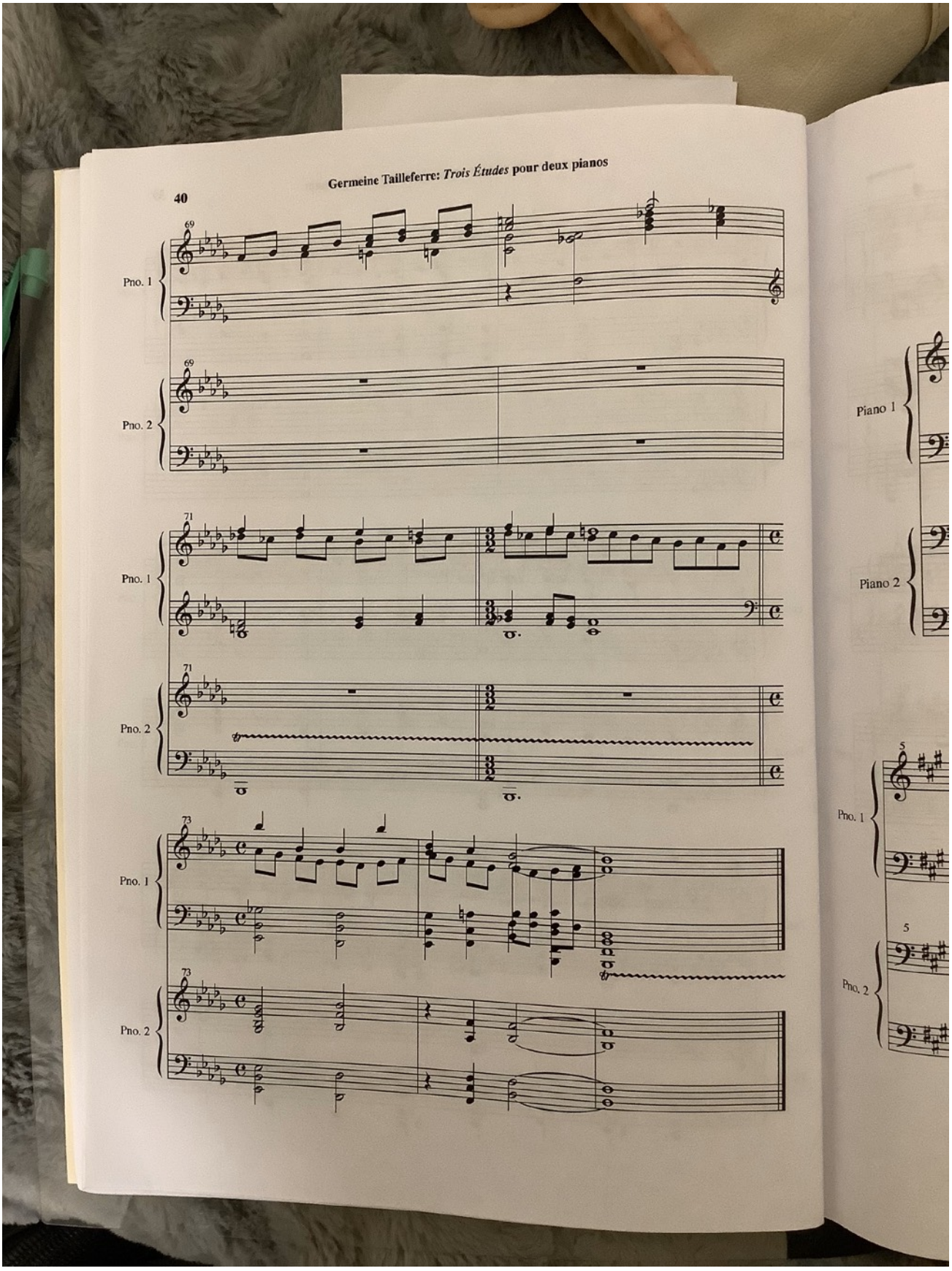
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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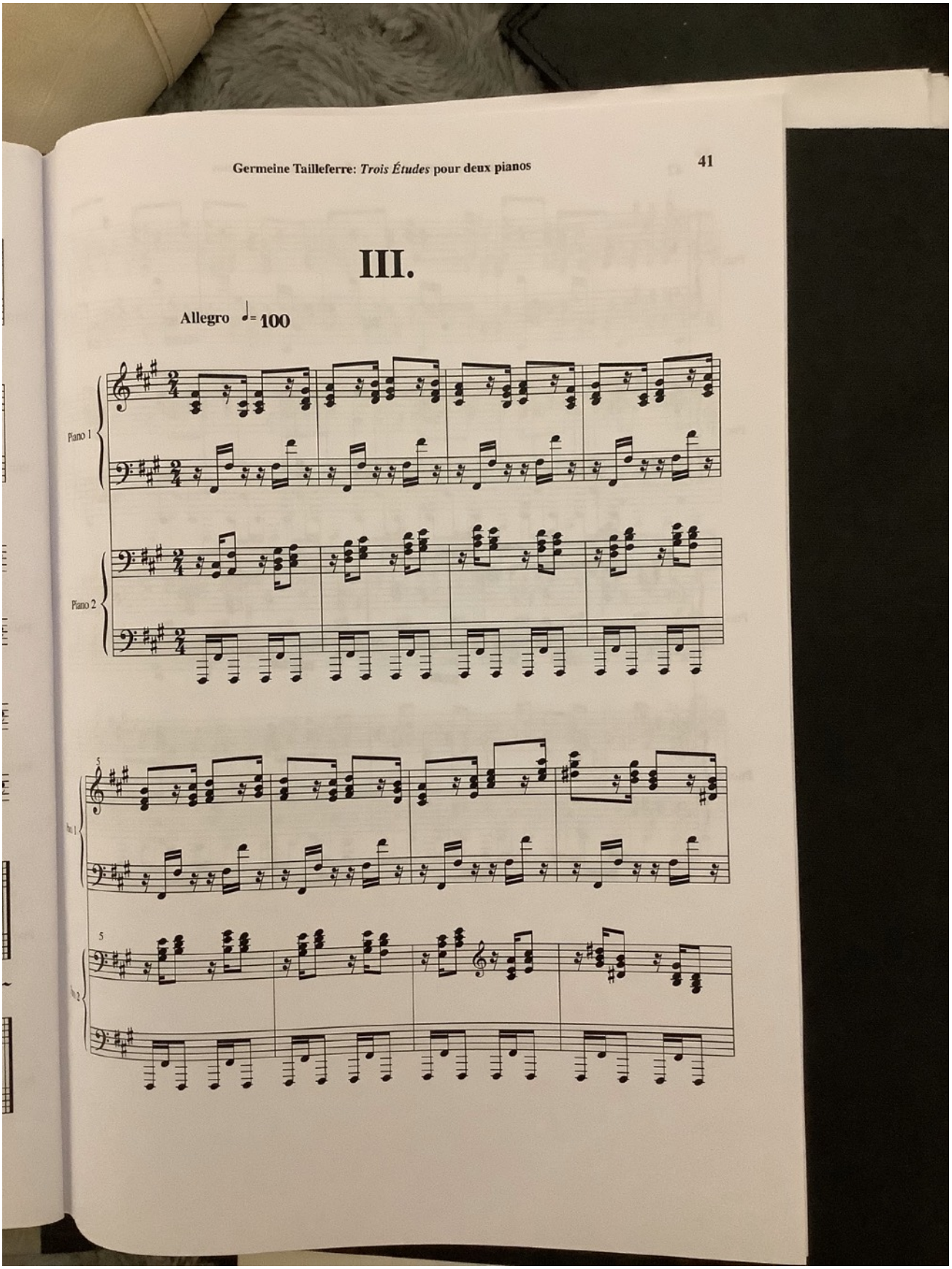
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
Piano 1
Piano 2


Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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Piano 1
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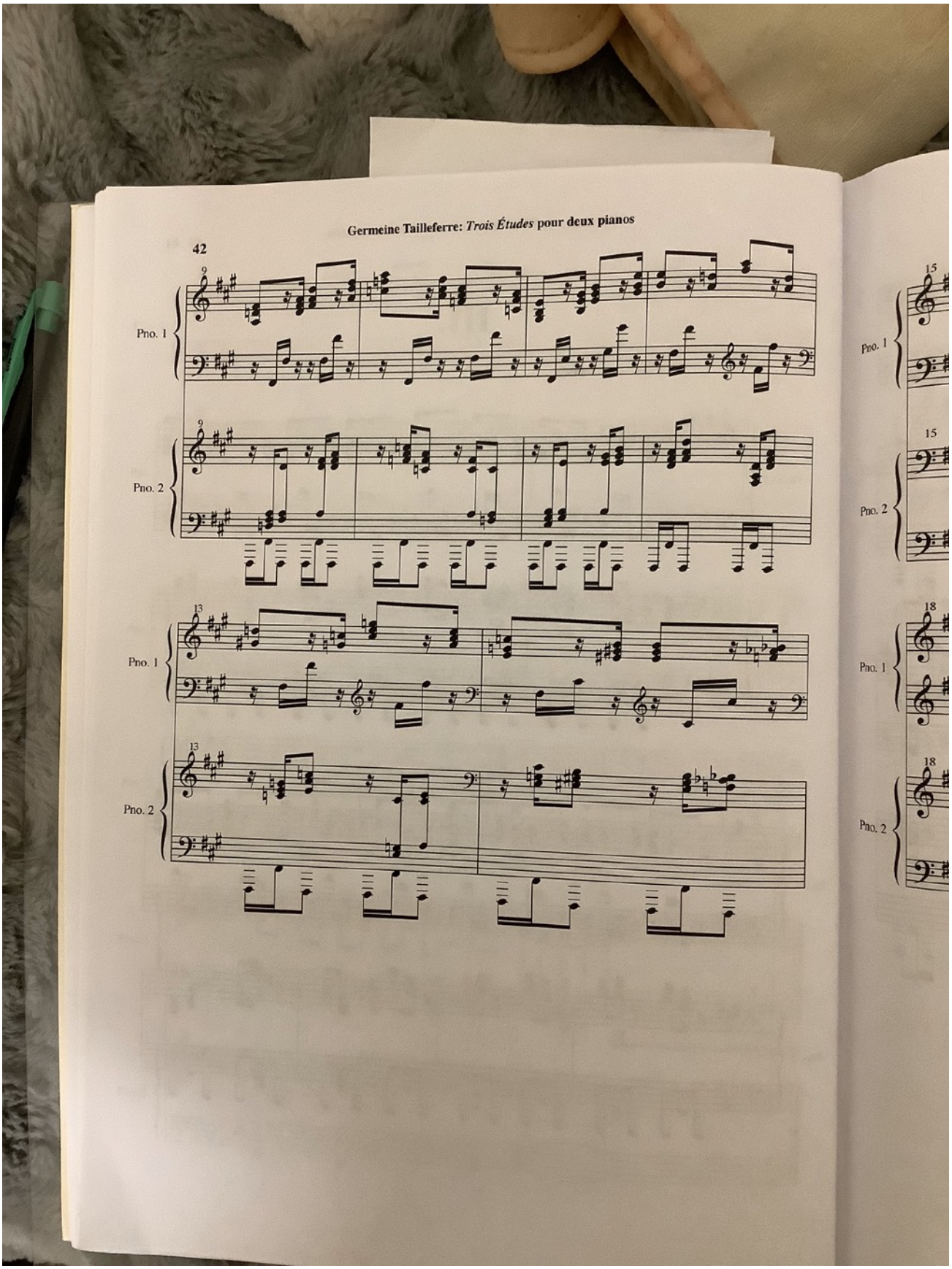
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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Pno. 2
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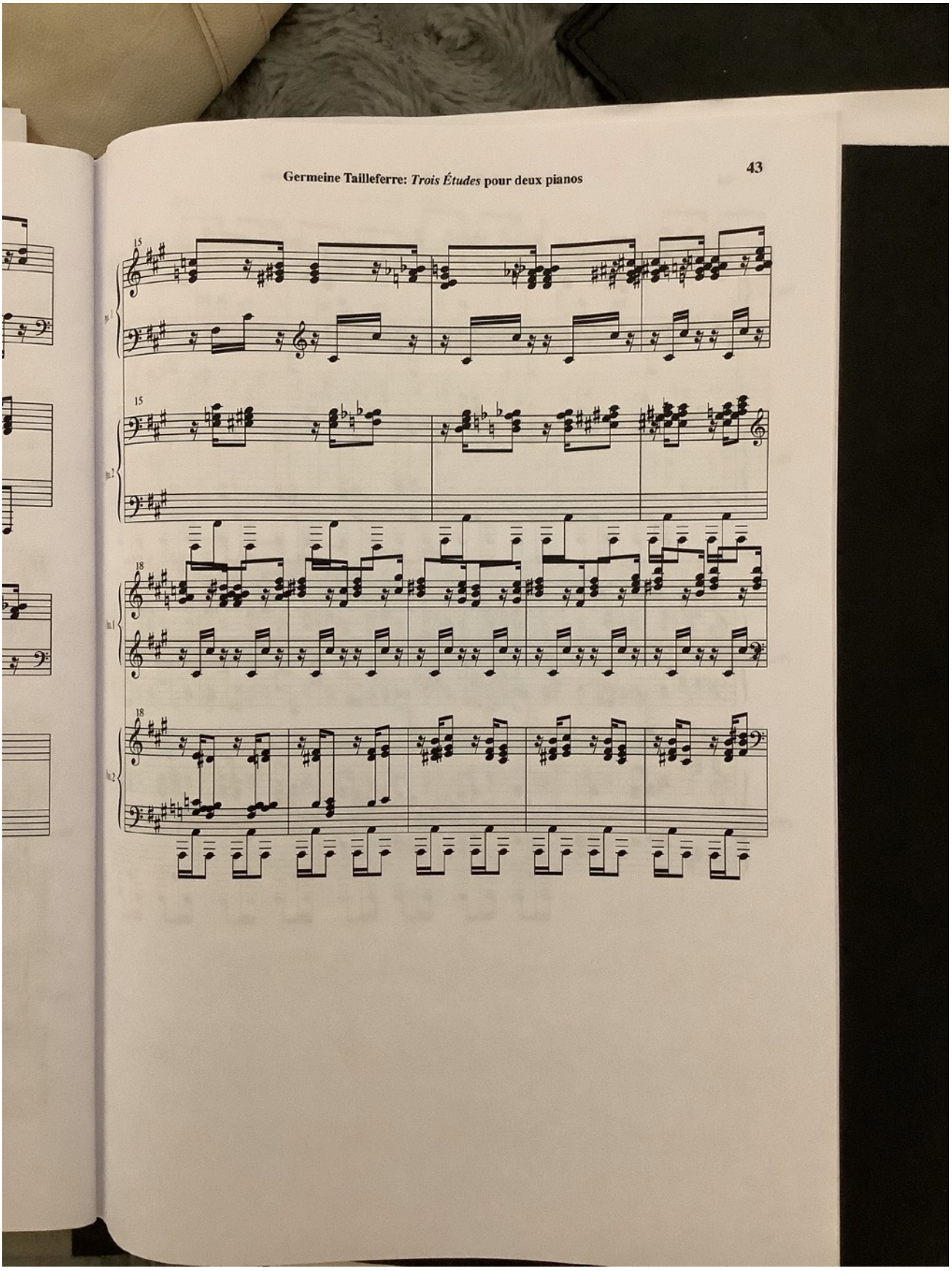
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Pno 1
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Pno 2
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Pno 1
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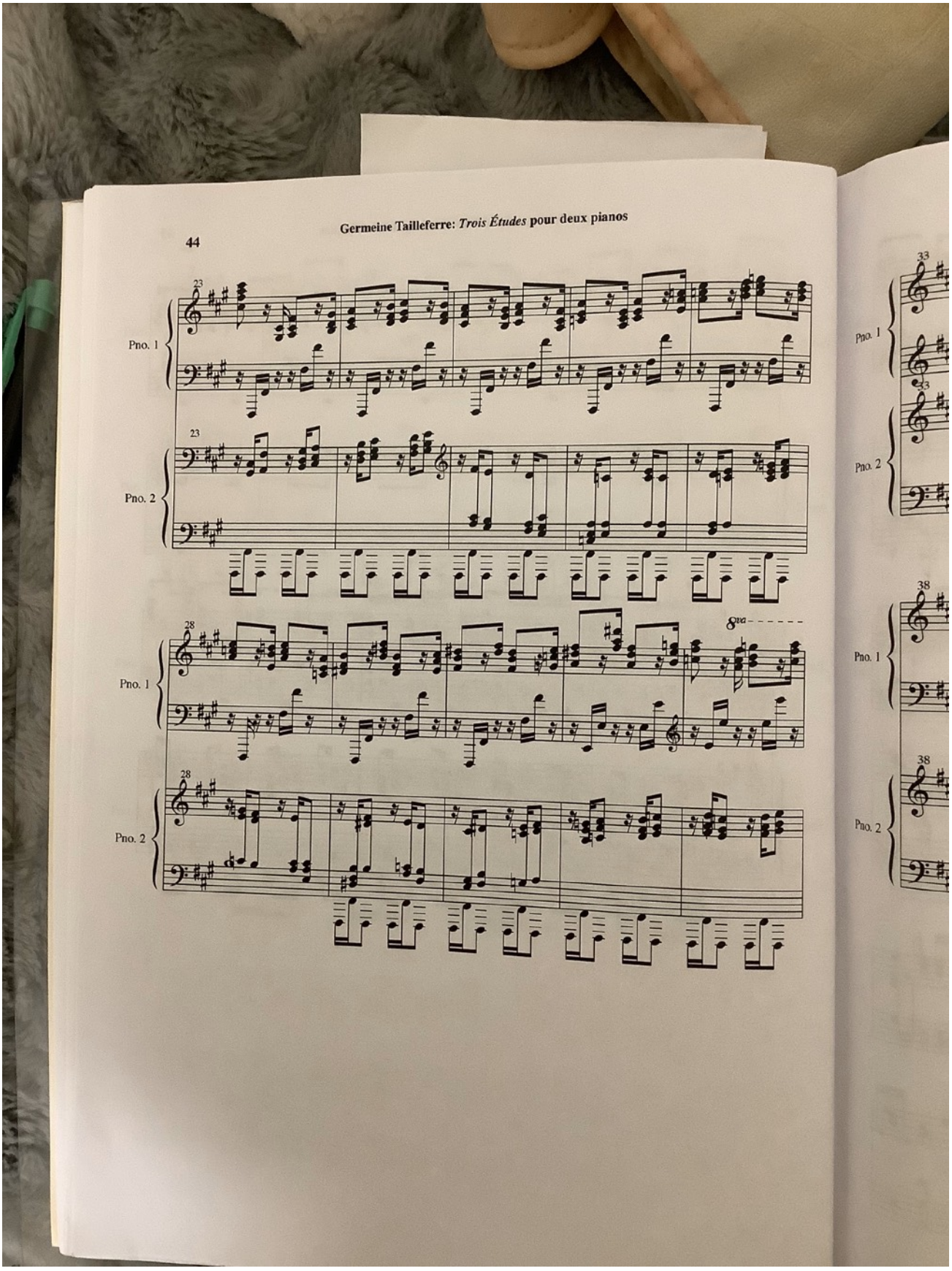
Pno 2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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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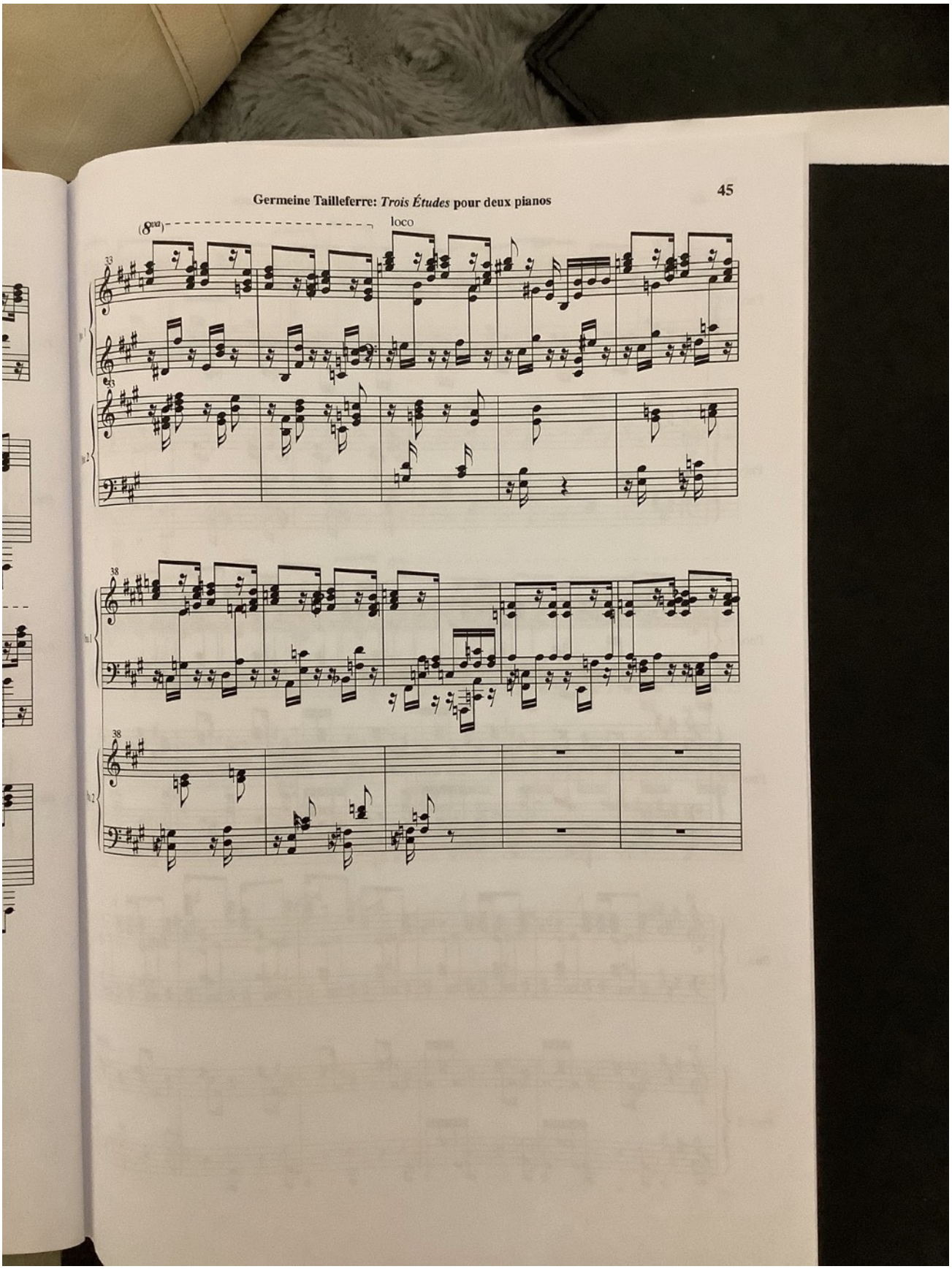
8va


Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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(8va)
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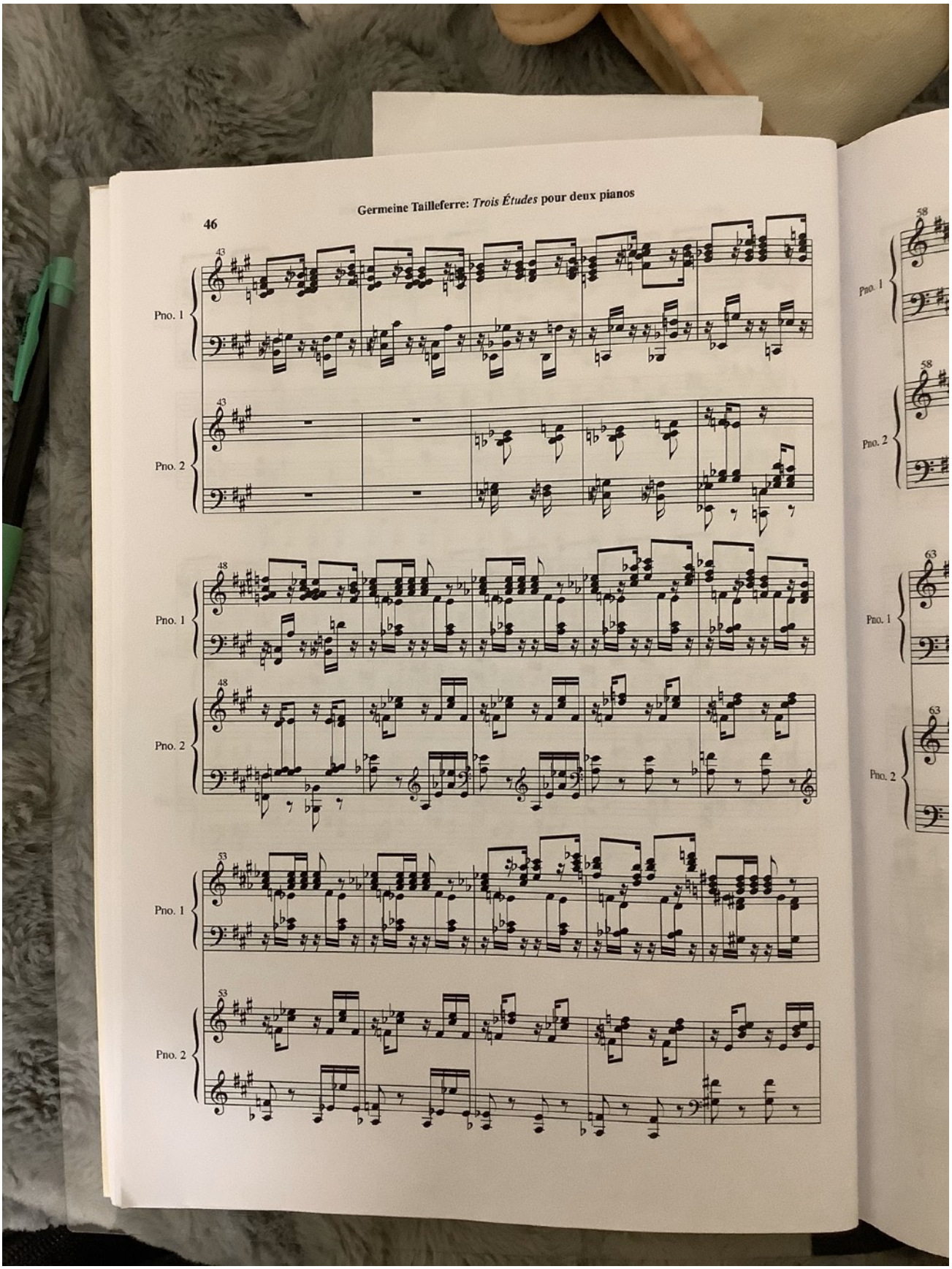
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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Pno. 2
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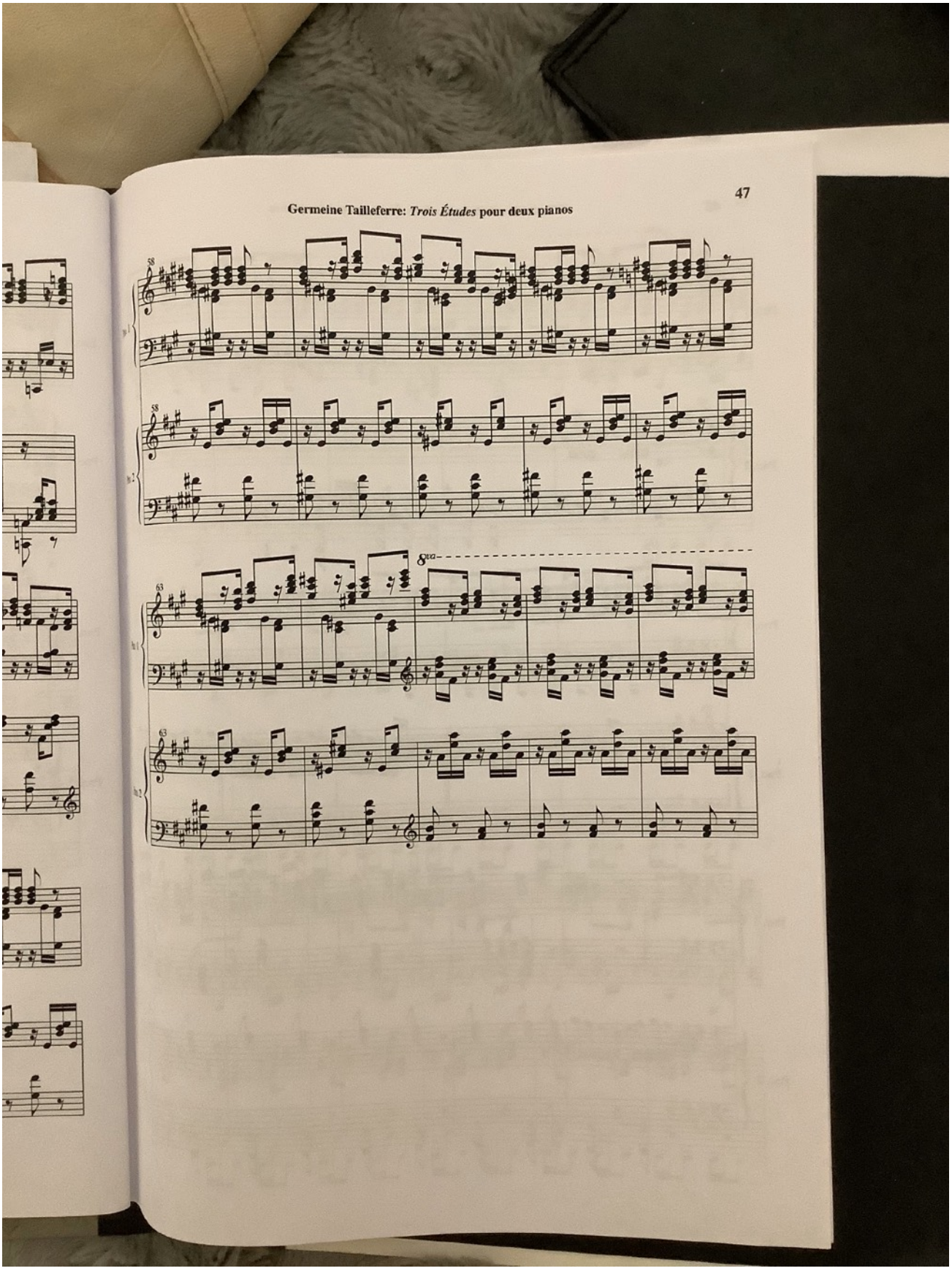
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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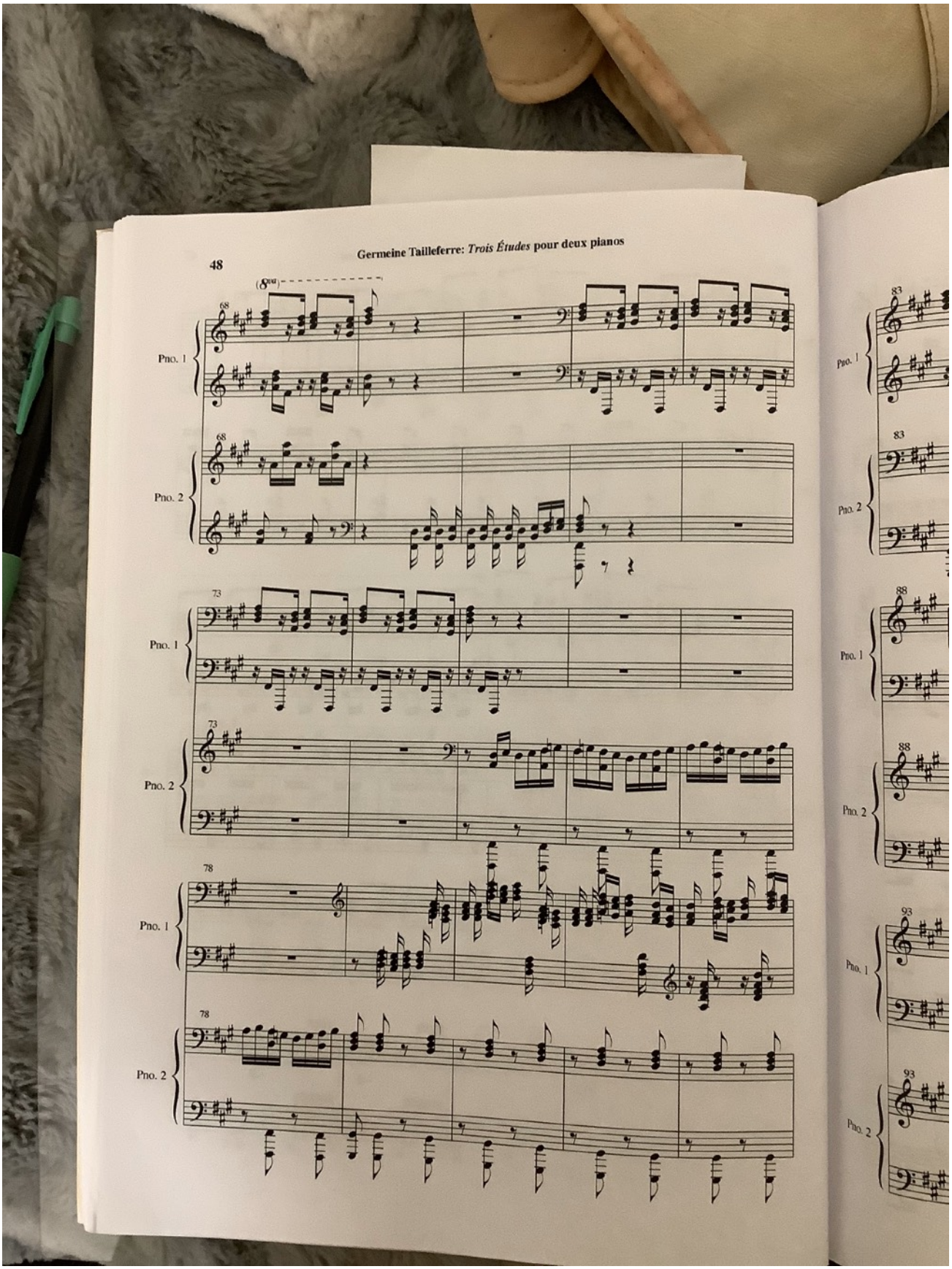
8va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(8va)
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
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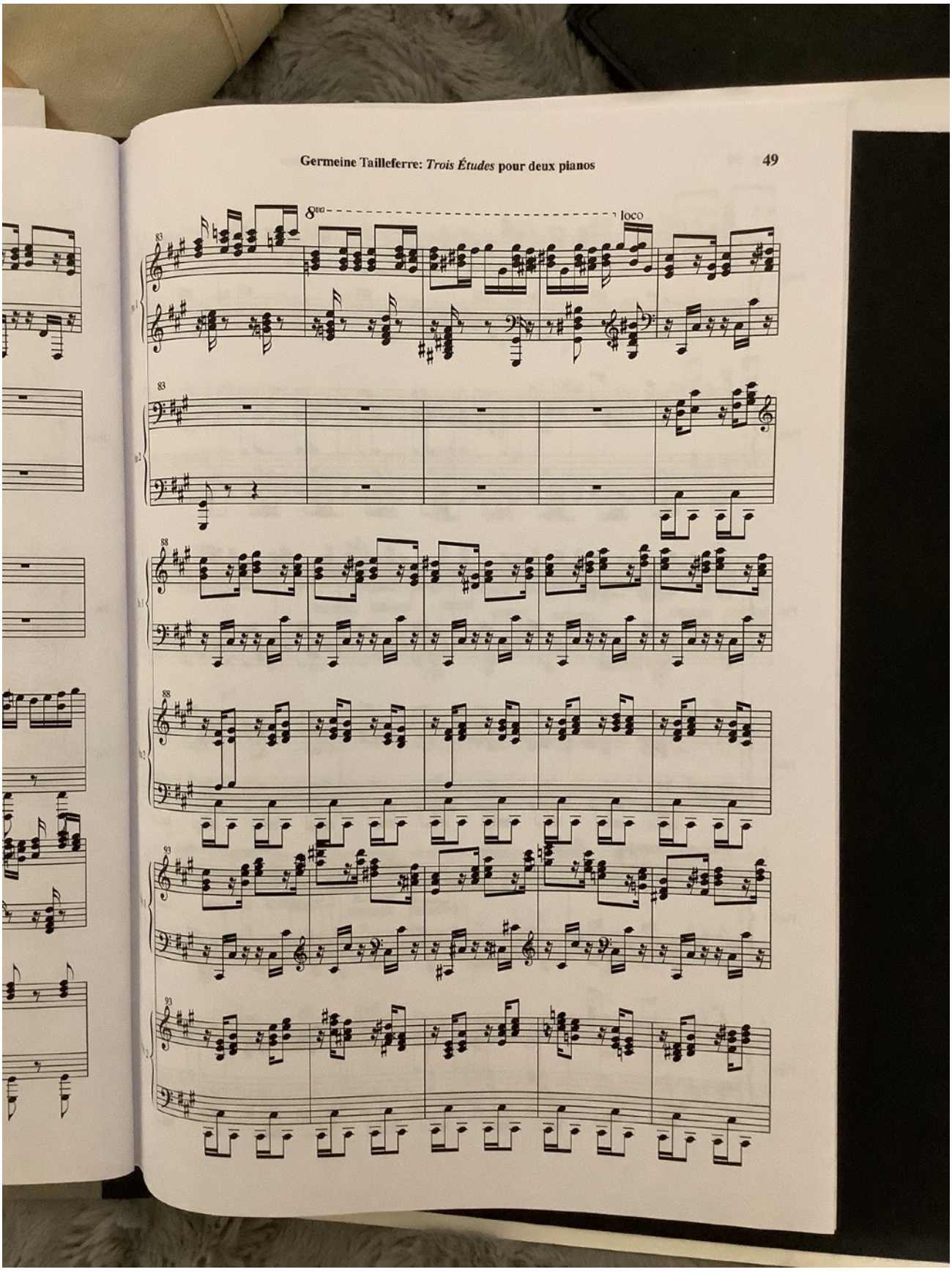
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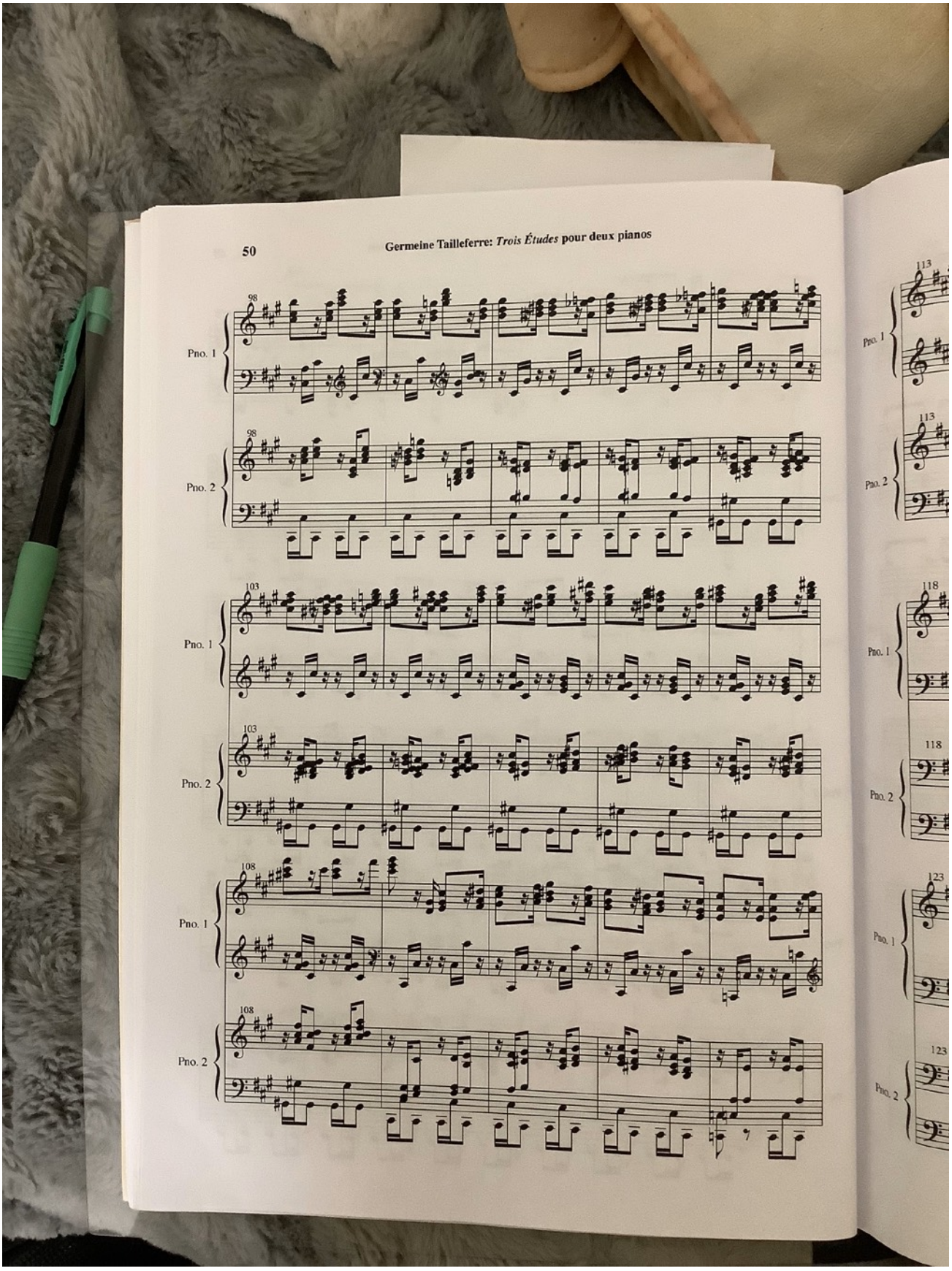
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
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Pno. 2
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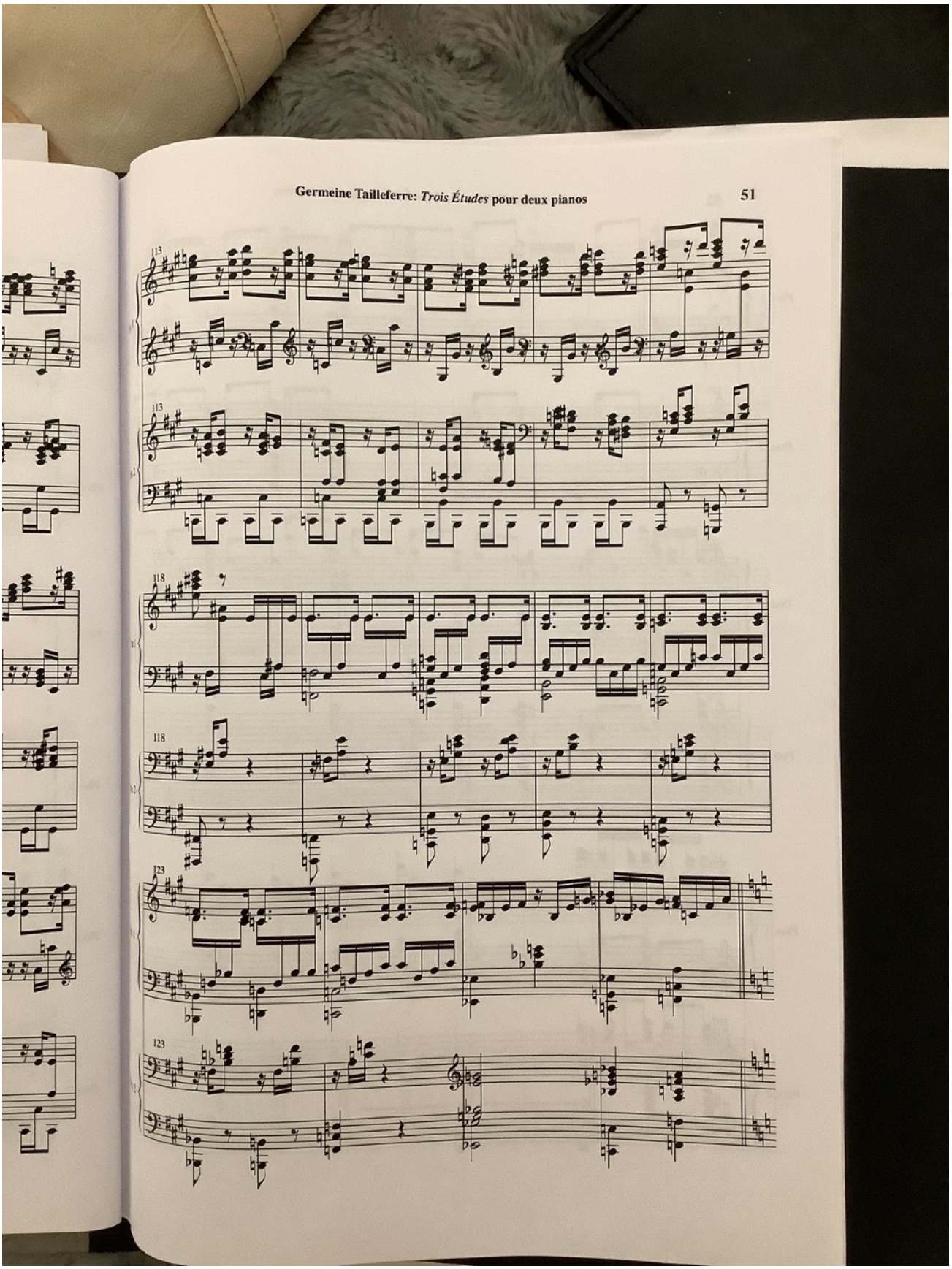
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos 51
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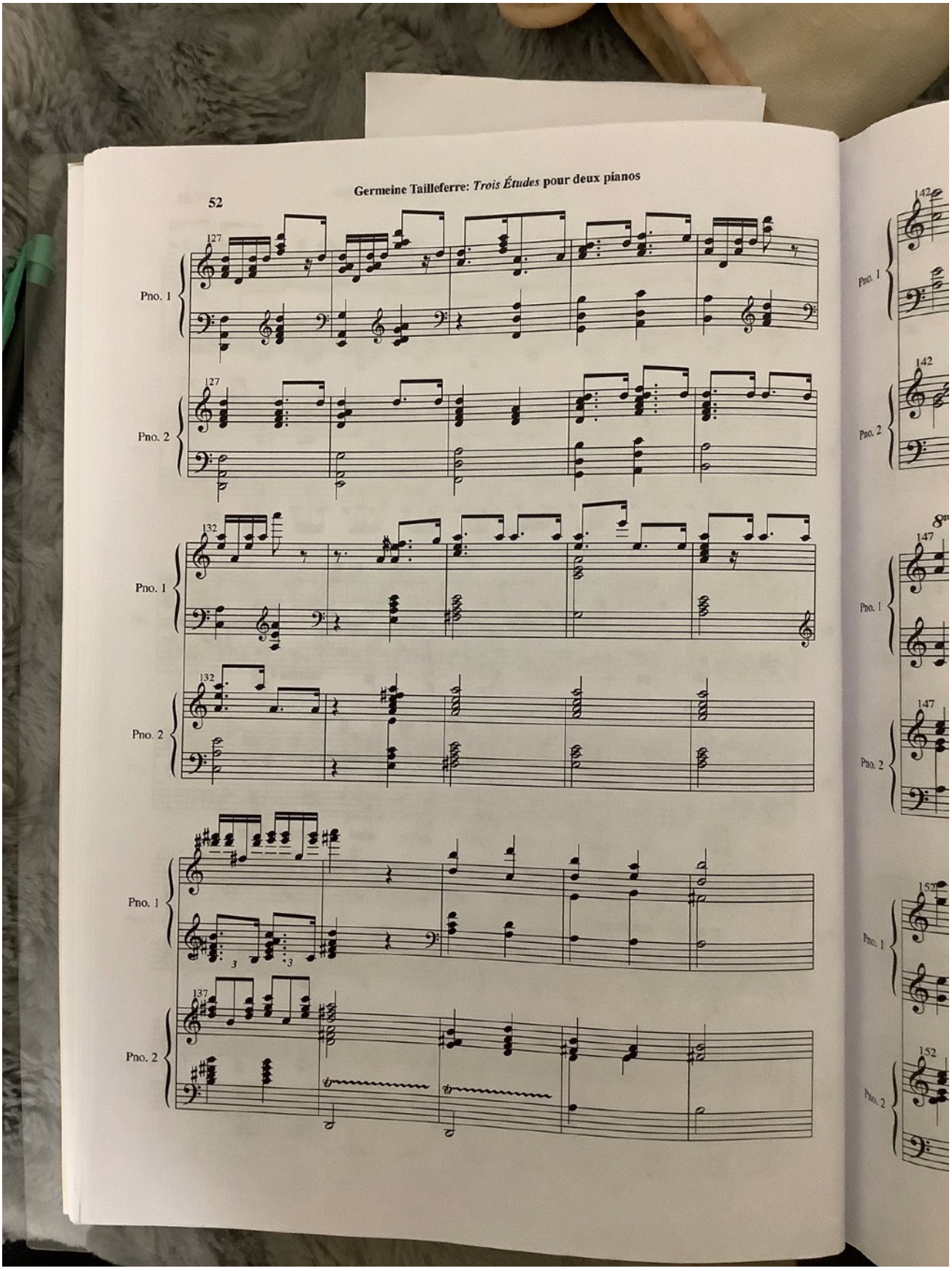
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Pno. 2
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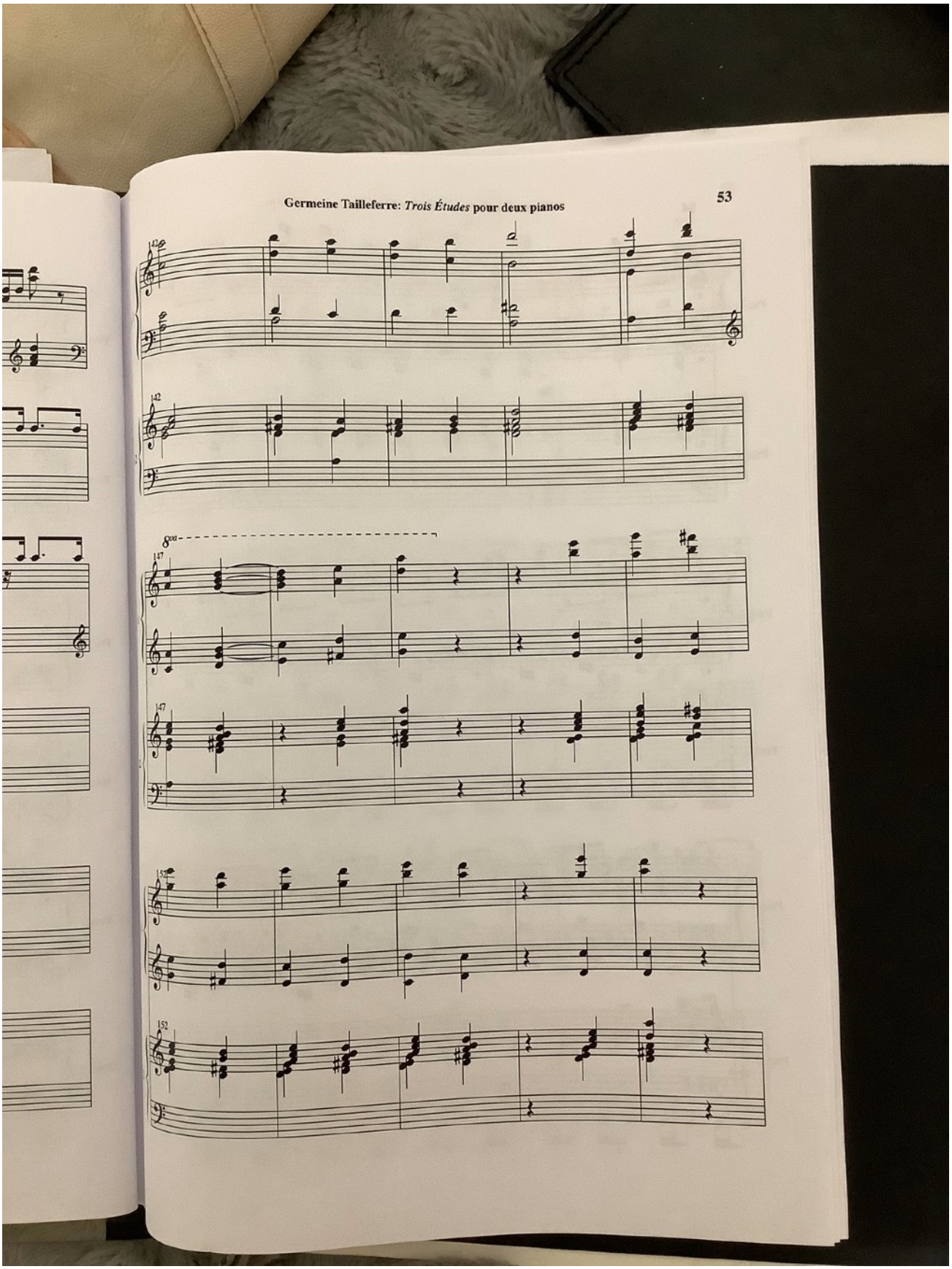
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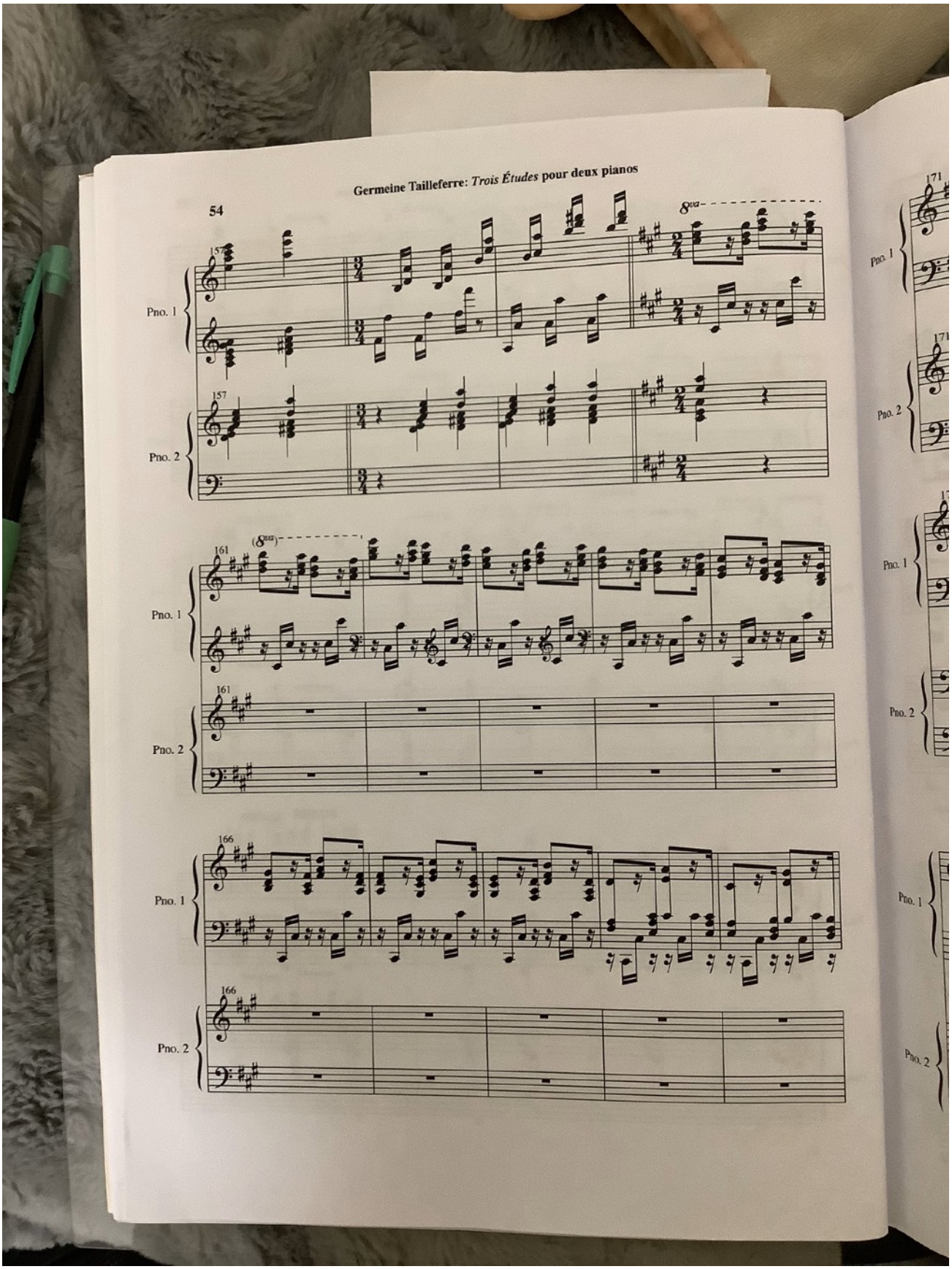
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Pno. 1
Pno. 2
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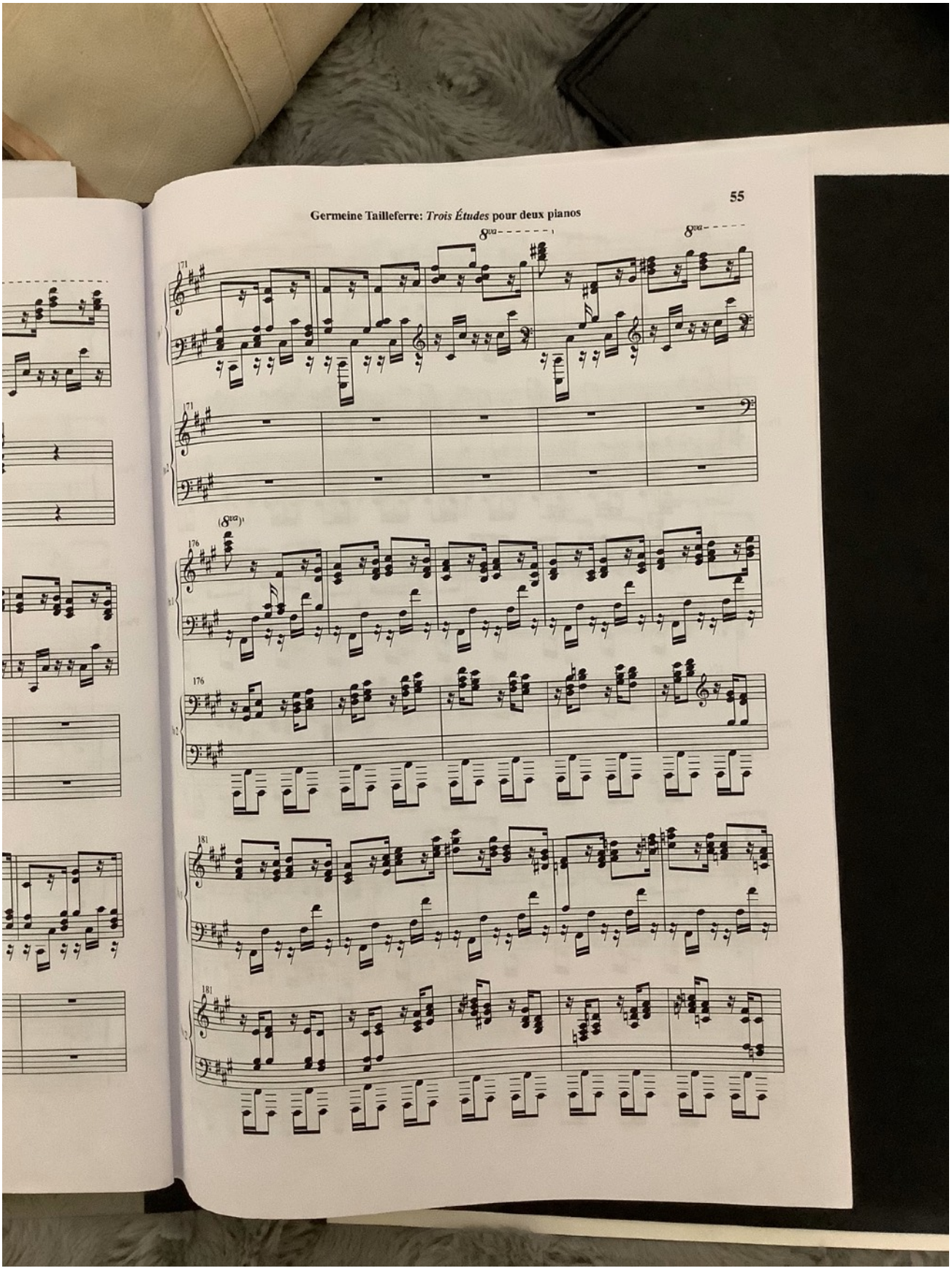
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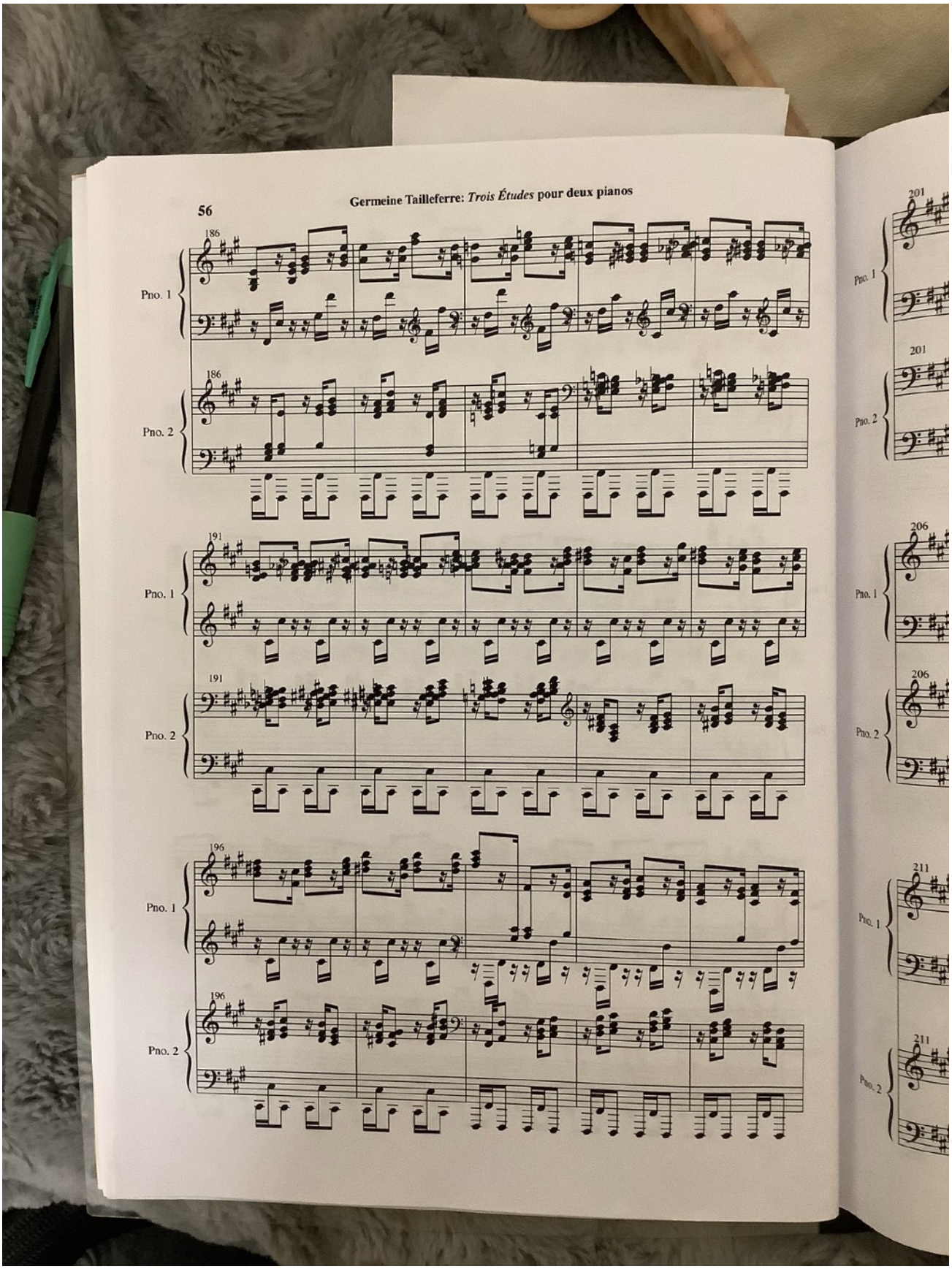
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Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos
186
Pno. 1
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Pno. 2
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Pno. 1
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Pno. 1
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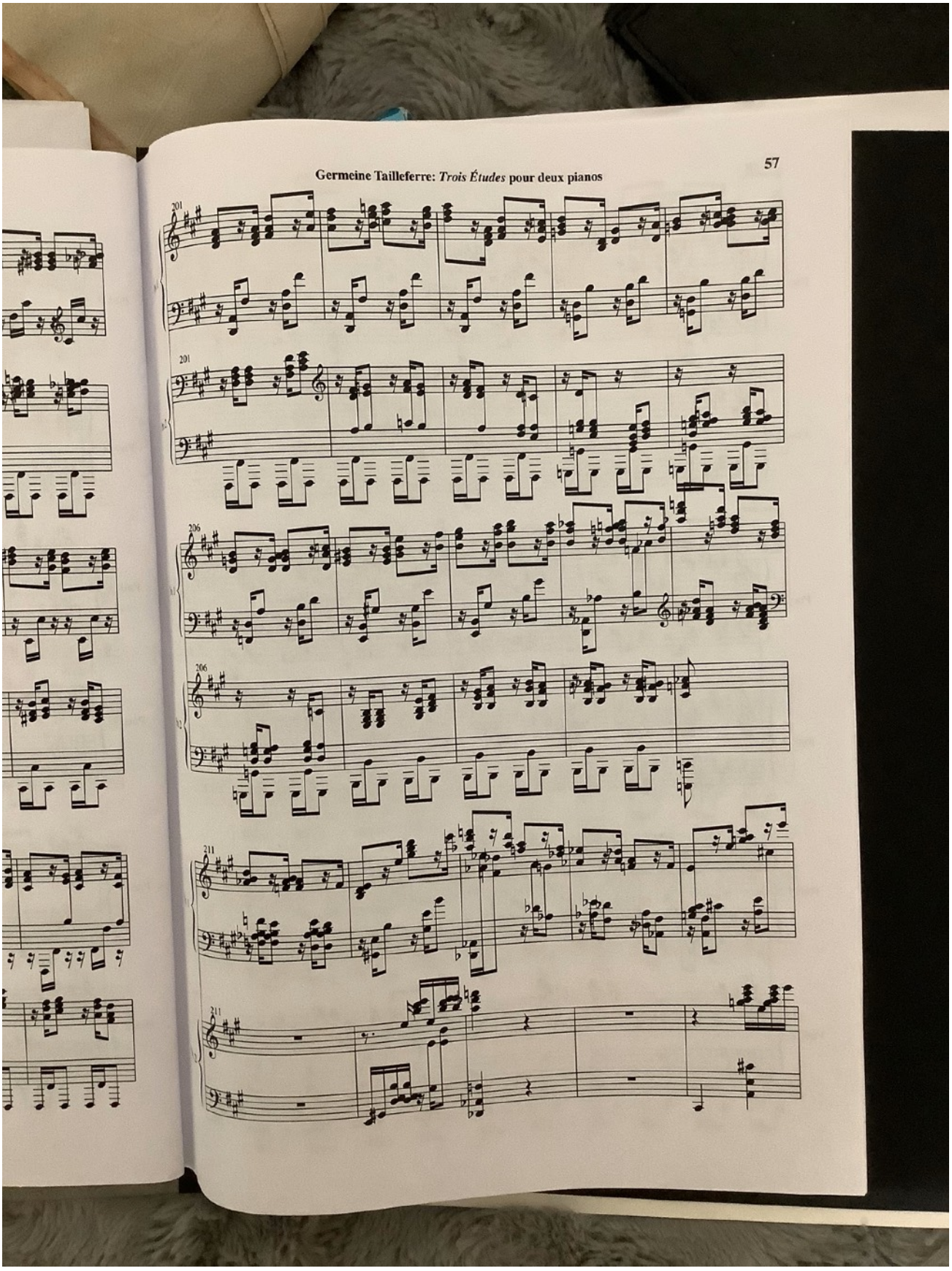
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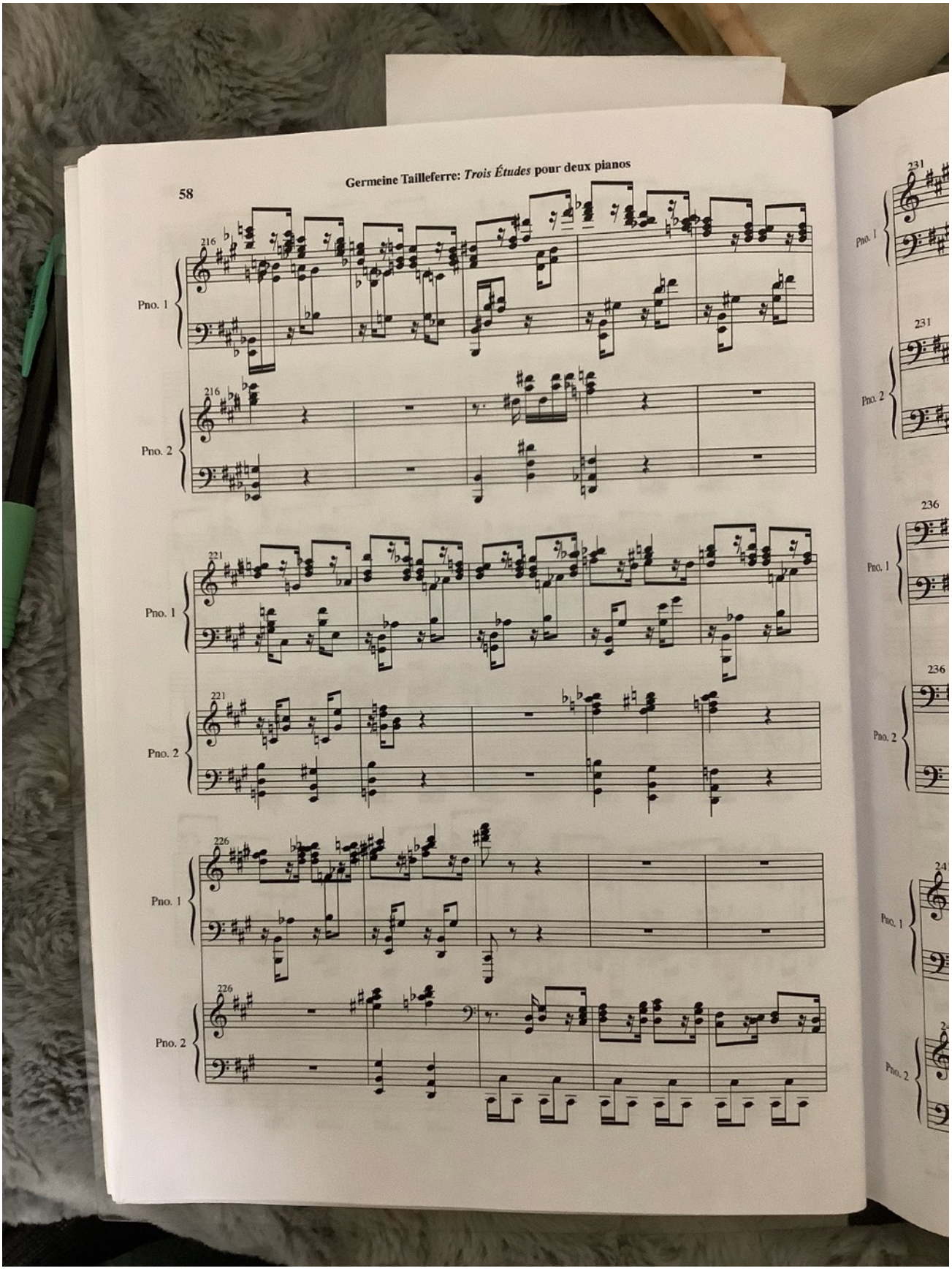
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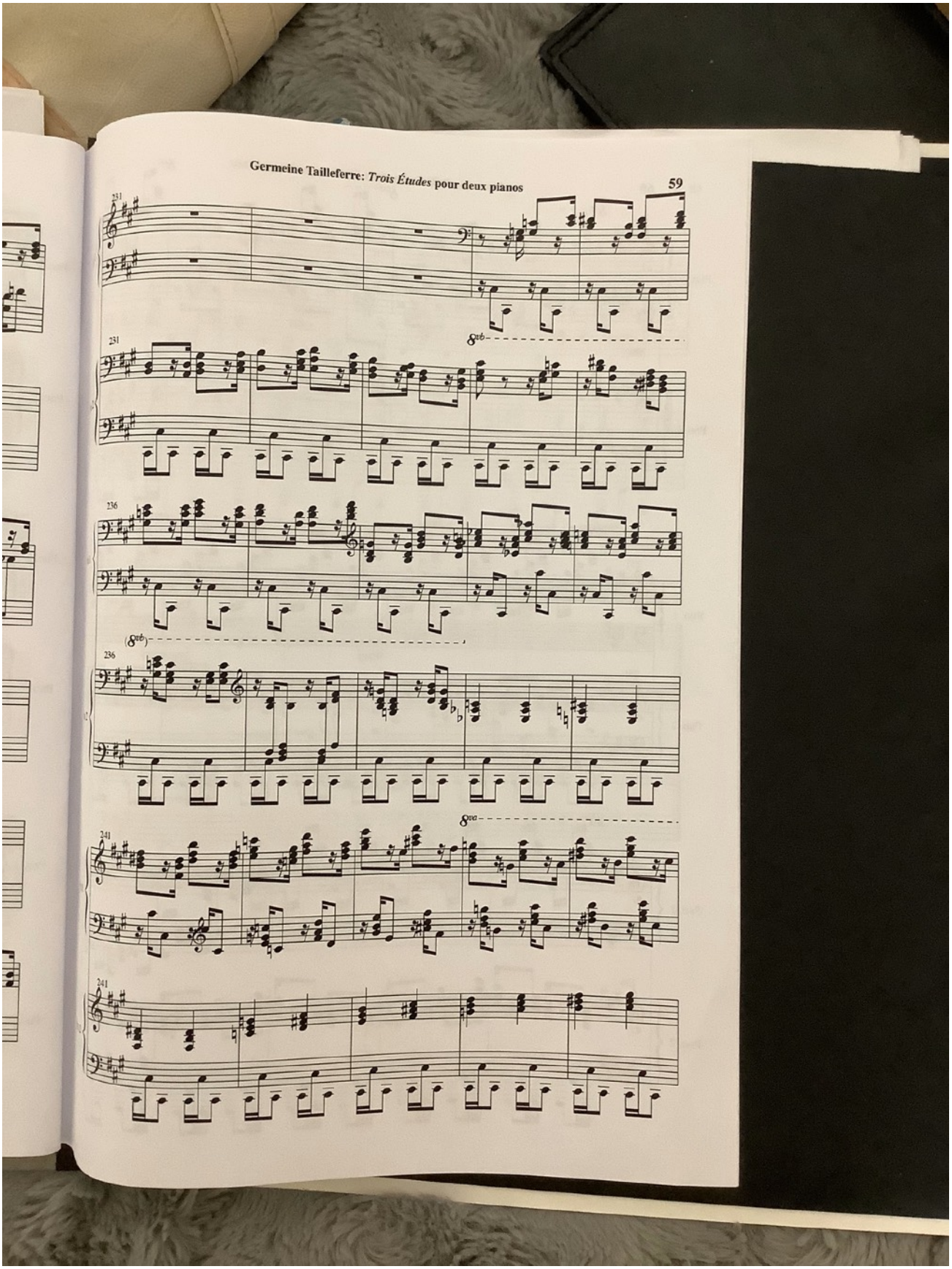
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8va
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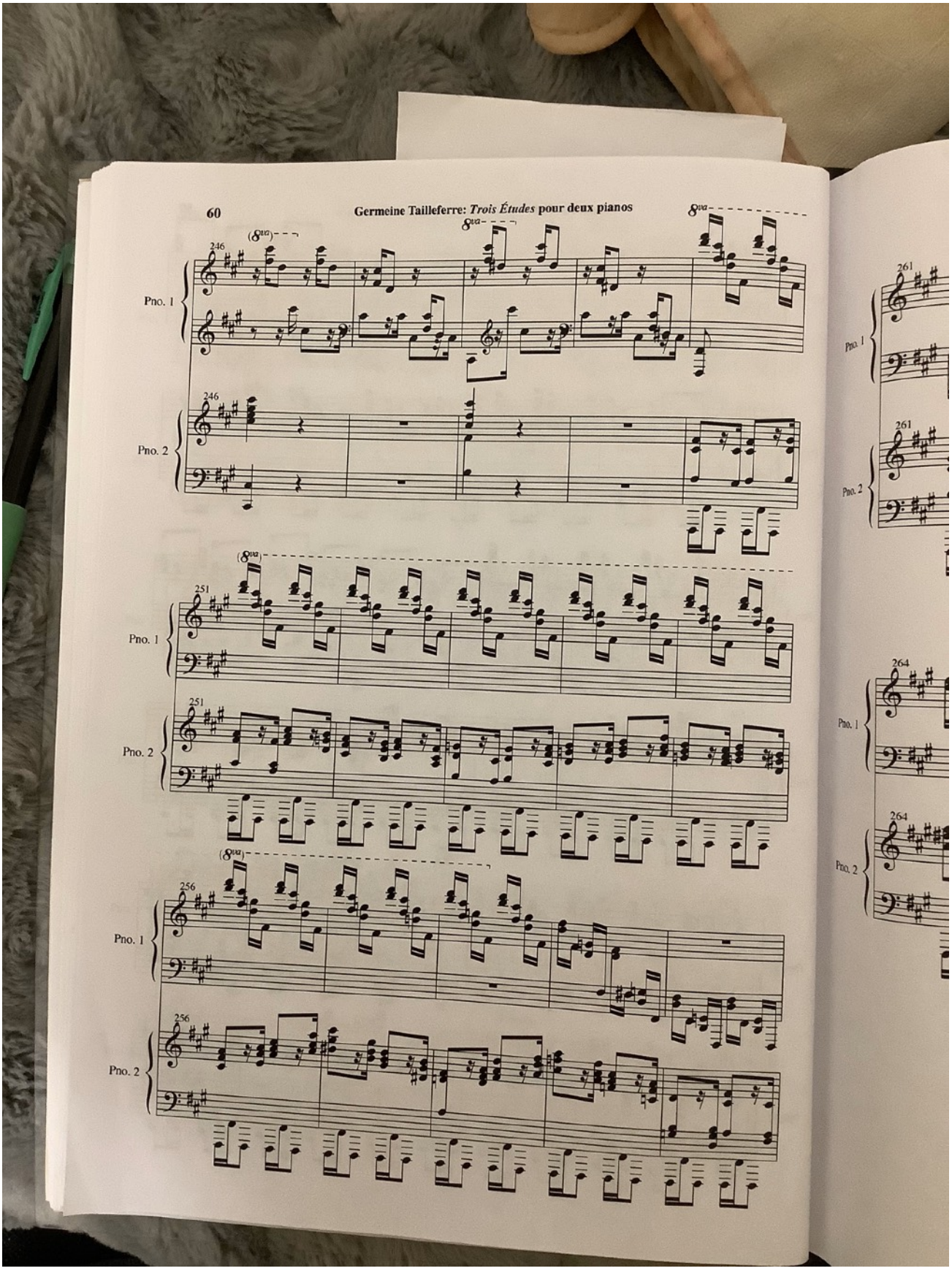
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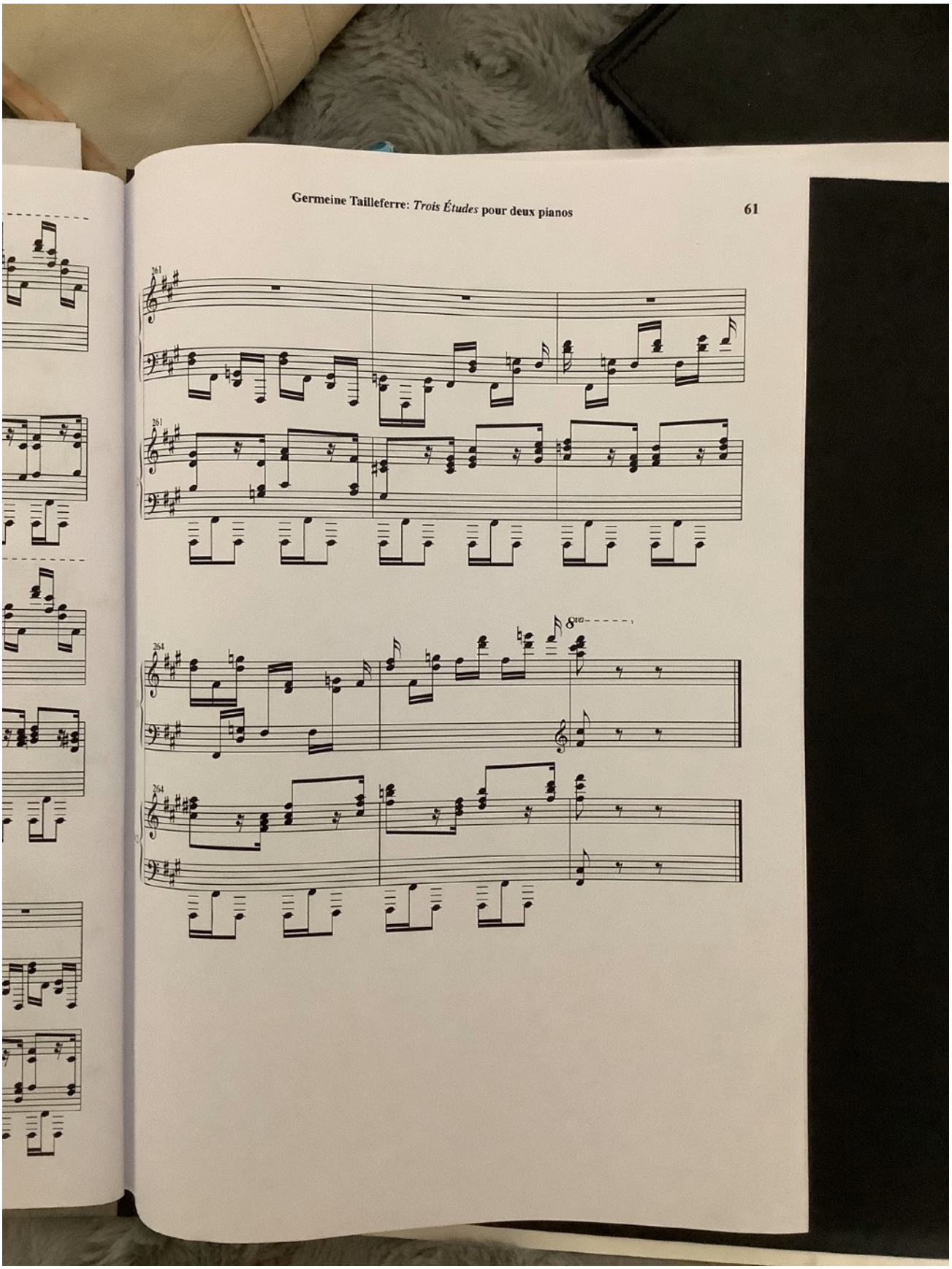
Germeine Tailleferre: *Trois Études* pour deux pianos 61
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8va
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