Score

Ludwig van

BEETHOVEN

(1770 – 1827)

Octet in Eb Major, Opus 103

for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons

Octet in Eb Major, Op. 103

In 1792, Beethoven (1770-1827) who was already a recognized performer and composer left Bonn and settled in Vienna where he enjoyed the patronage of Max Franz, Elector of Bonn; Franz employed an ensemble consisting of pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons for informal afternoon and evening entertainment and for which this work was composed. It was not sold for publication until forty years later when it was assigned the high opus number. The composer did arrange a string quintet of this work which was published as Op. 4 in 1797 and which firmly establishes it as as one of his early works.

This four-movement piece is a joyful addition to the repertoire of any wind ensemble notwithstanding the nearly impossible task of getting eight live players together at the same time and place with the right combination of instruments. Most of us will have to content ourselves to playing along Karaoke style with synthesized computer accompaniment. To that end I have established the tempi to be reasonable compromises between what one would hear in a polished performance and a group of amateurs enjoying the occasional sight-read. The tempi of the MIDI and Finale .MUS files have been set according to the table below, more as a reflection of this musician's ability than any ill-informed recommendation I might offer:

Movement	Time Signature	Marked Tempo	MIDI/MUS assignment
I.	2/2	Allegro	𝅗𝅥 = 68
II.	6/8	Andante	♩. = 50
III.	3/4	Menuetto	𝅗𝅥. = 100
IV.	2/2	Presto	𝅗𝅥 = 80

It is a lively work, delightful to play, but it comes with the caveat not to start too fast and be left with the obligation to maintain the same spirit through the Presto. There is an offering of the piece on YouTube which ends in disaster with the group giving the last movement its best shot at a tempo of 140 (note 80, above) but with its precision in shambles before the last measure, so be prepared to curb your enthusiasm before launching into this exquisite piece.

At this writing the MIDI and Finale music notation files of the work may be downloaded from the Web site http://www.csudh.edu/oliver/clarmusi/clarmusi.htm .

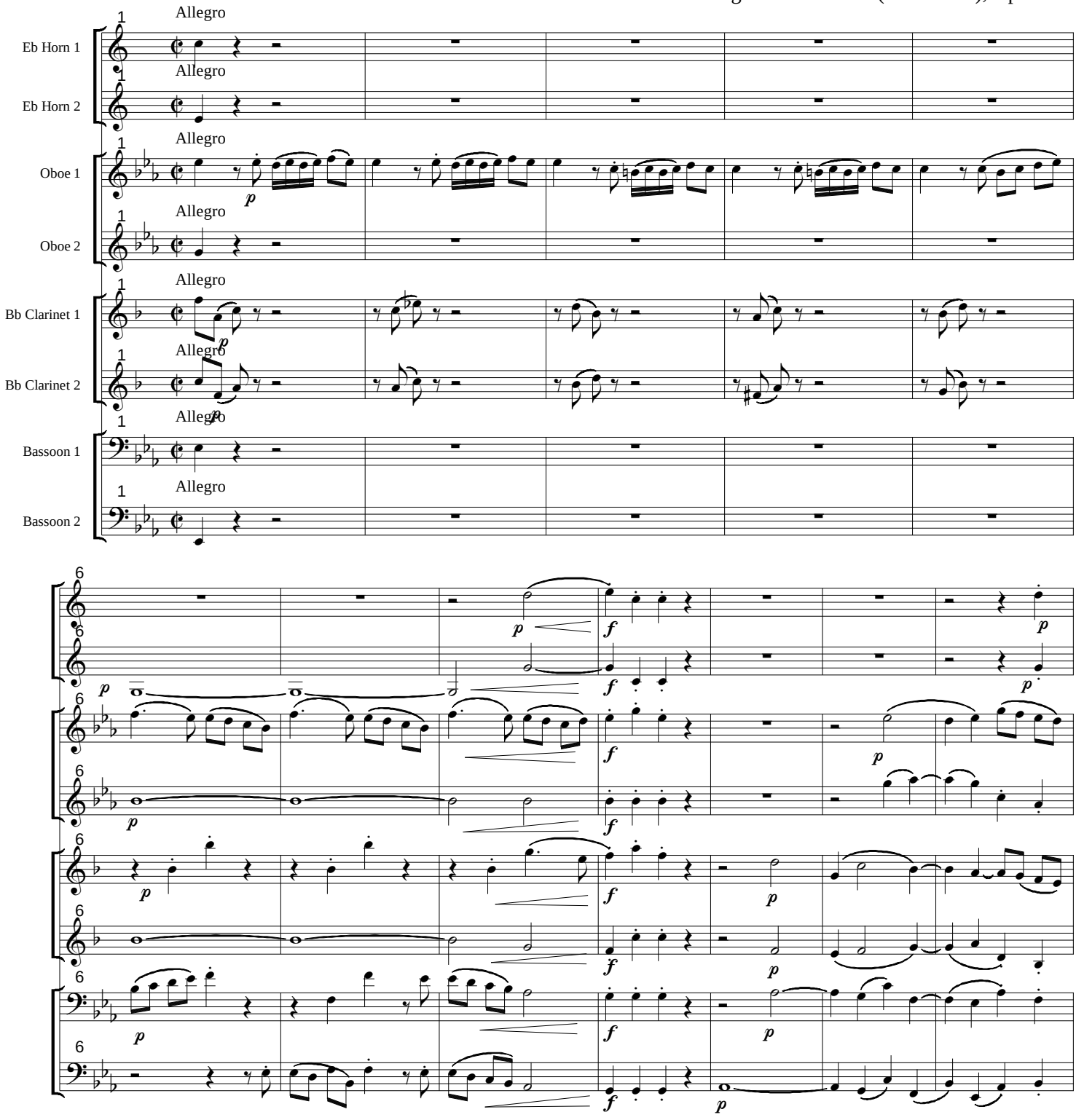
Happy playing, all.

Oliver Seely, oseely@hotmail.com
Lakewood, California
October 30, 2017

Octett

for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Opus 103



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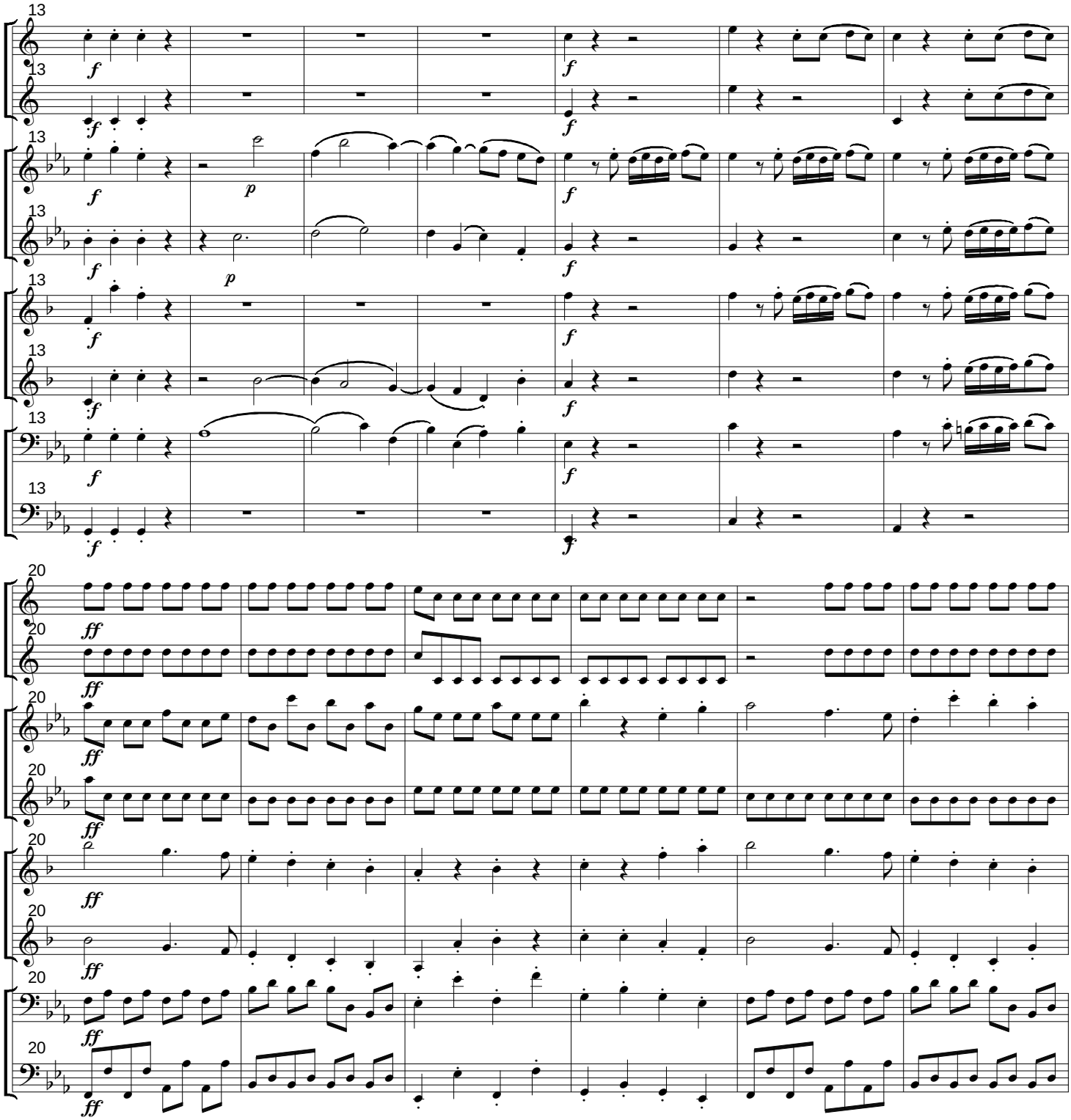
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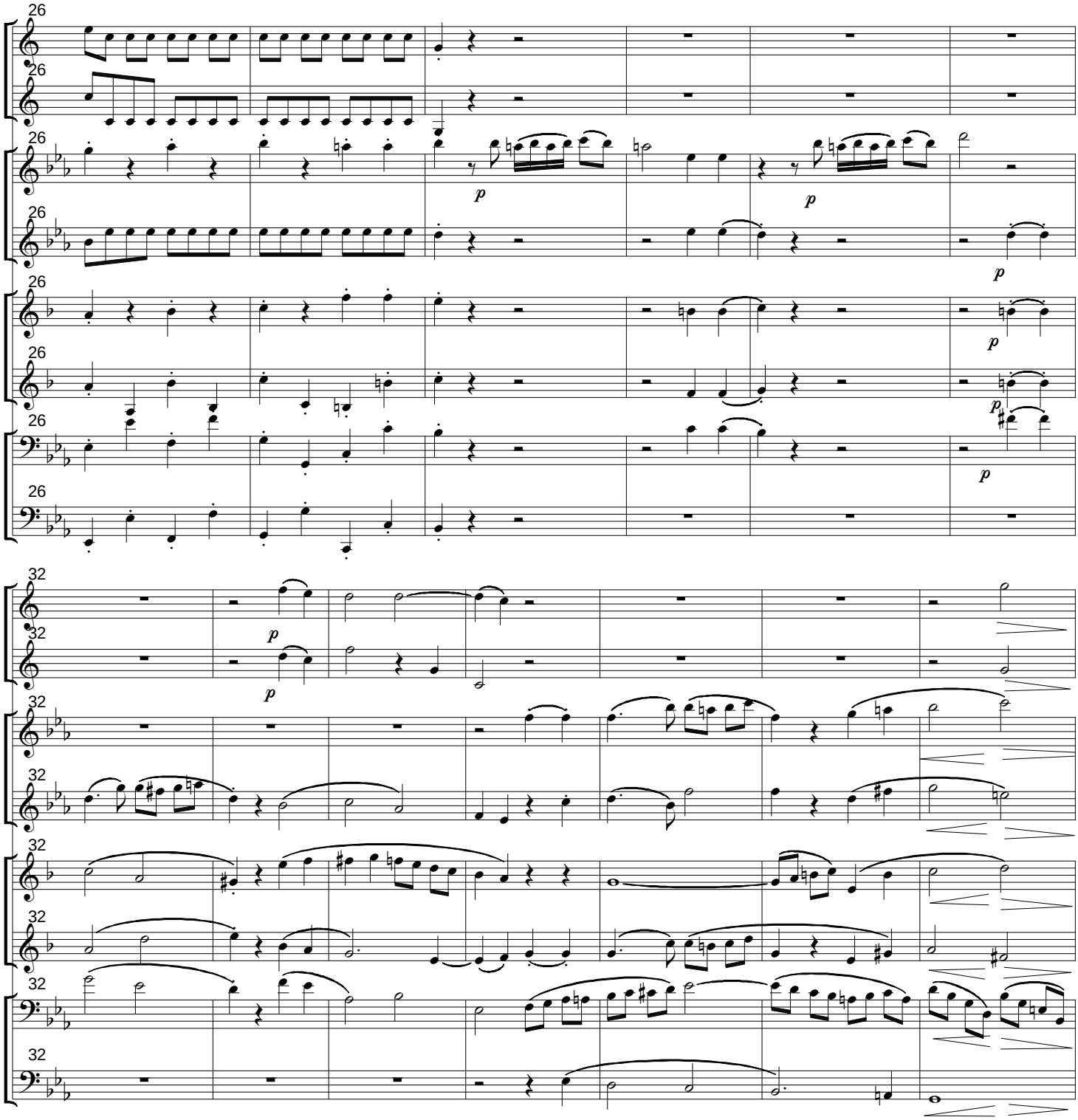
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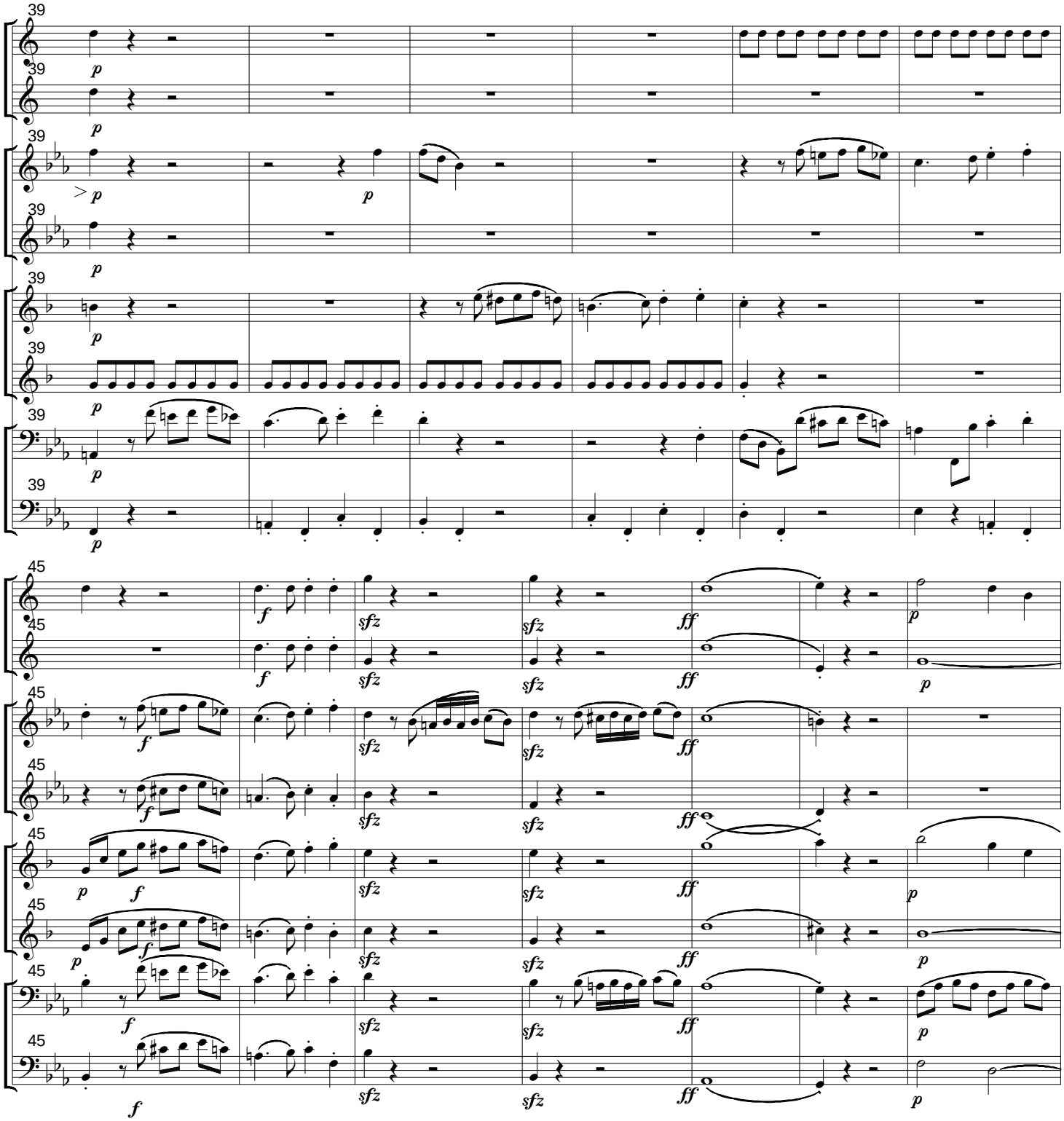
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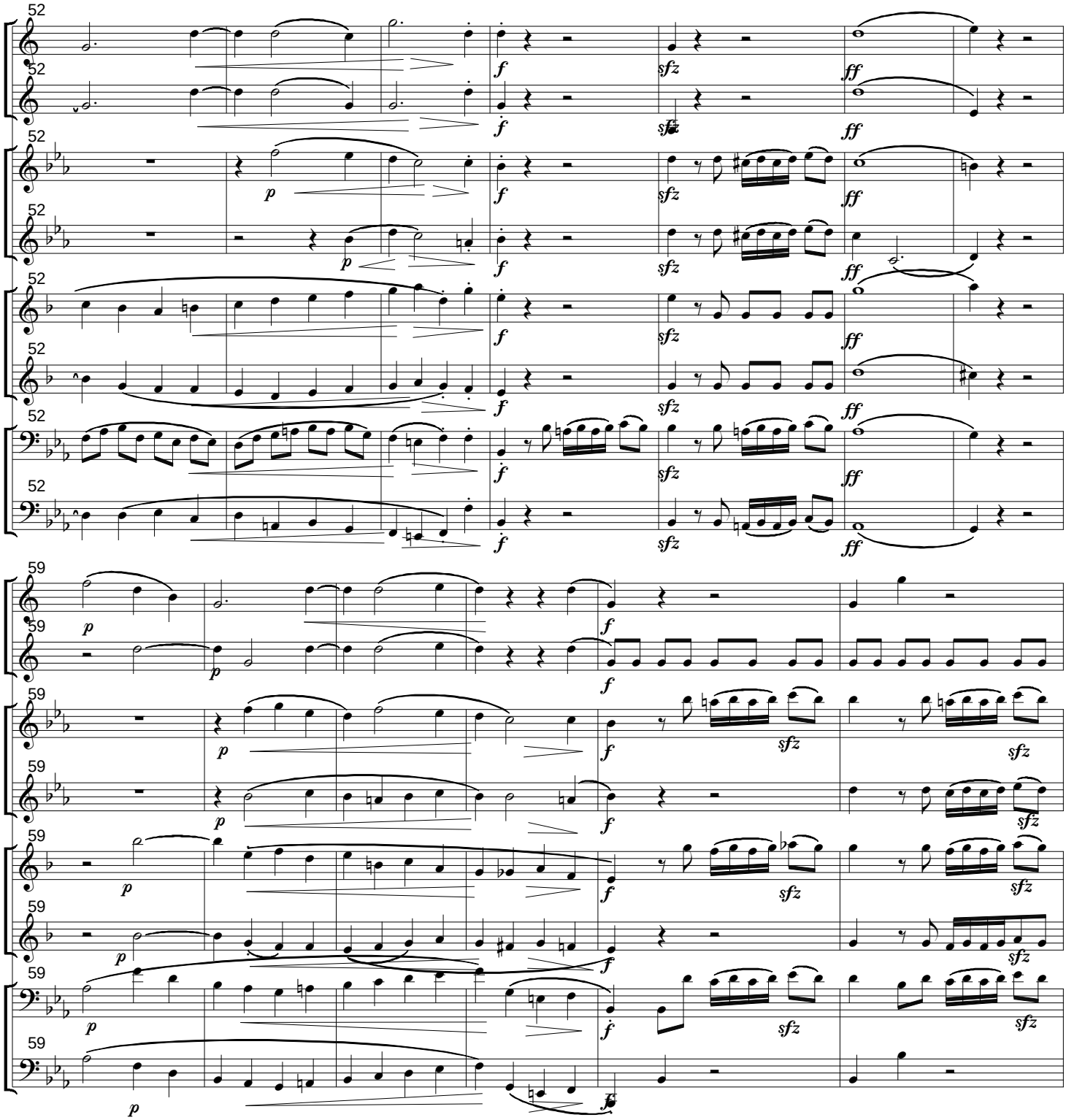
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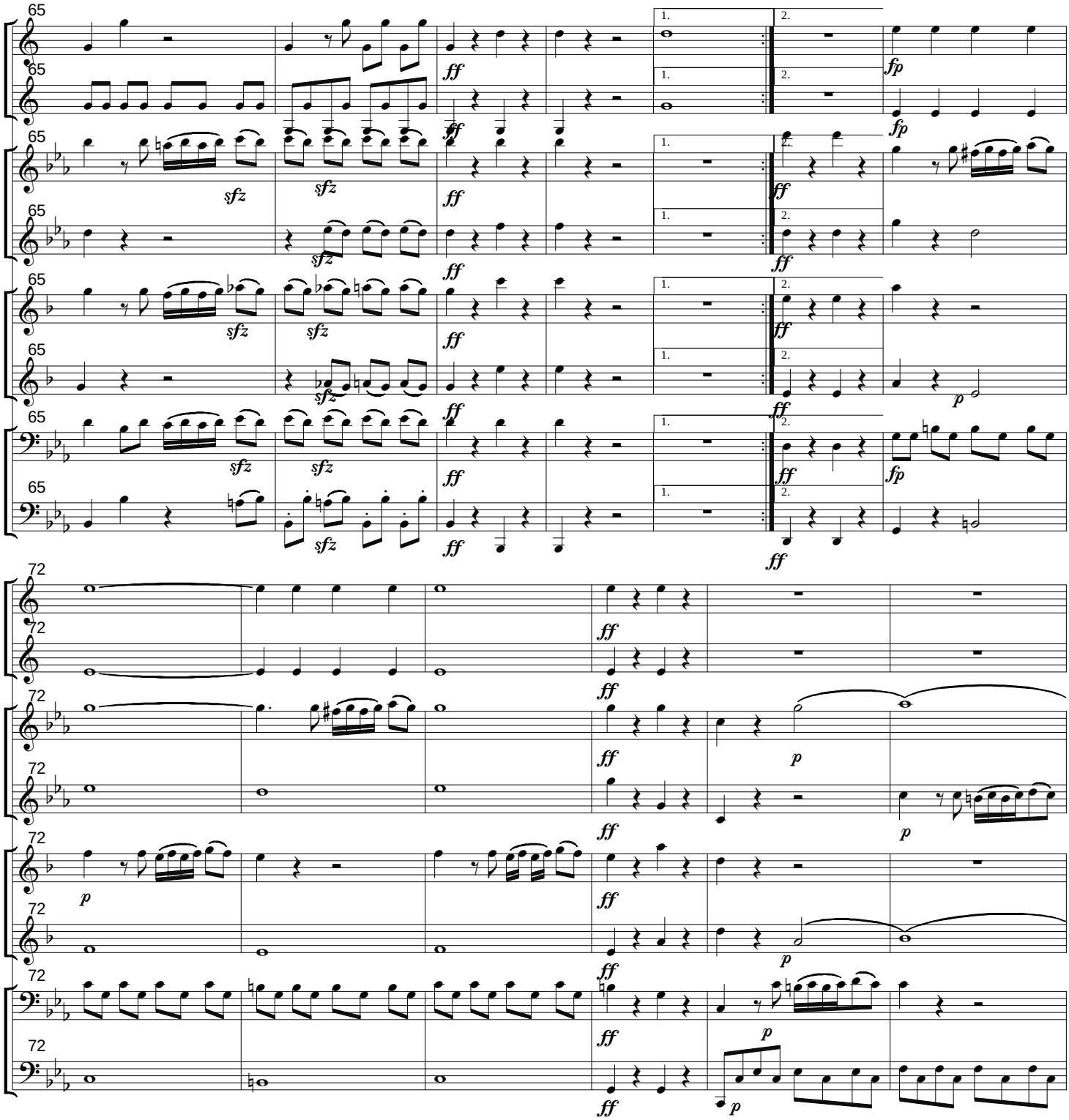
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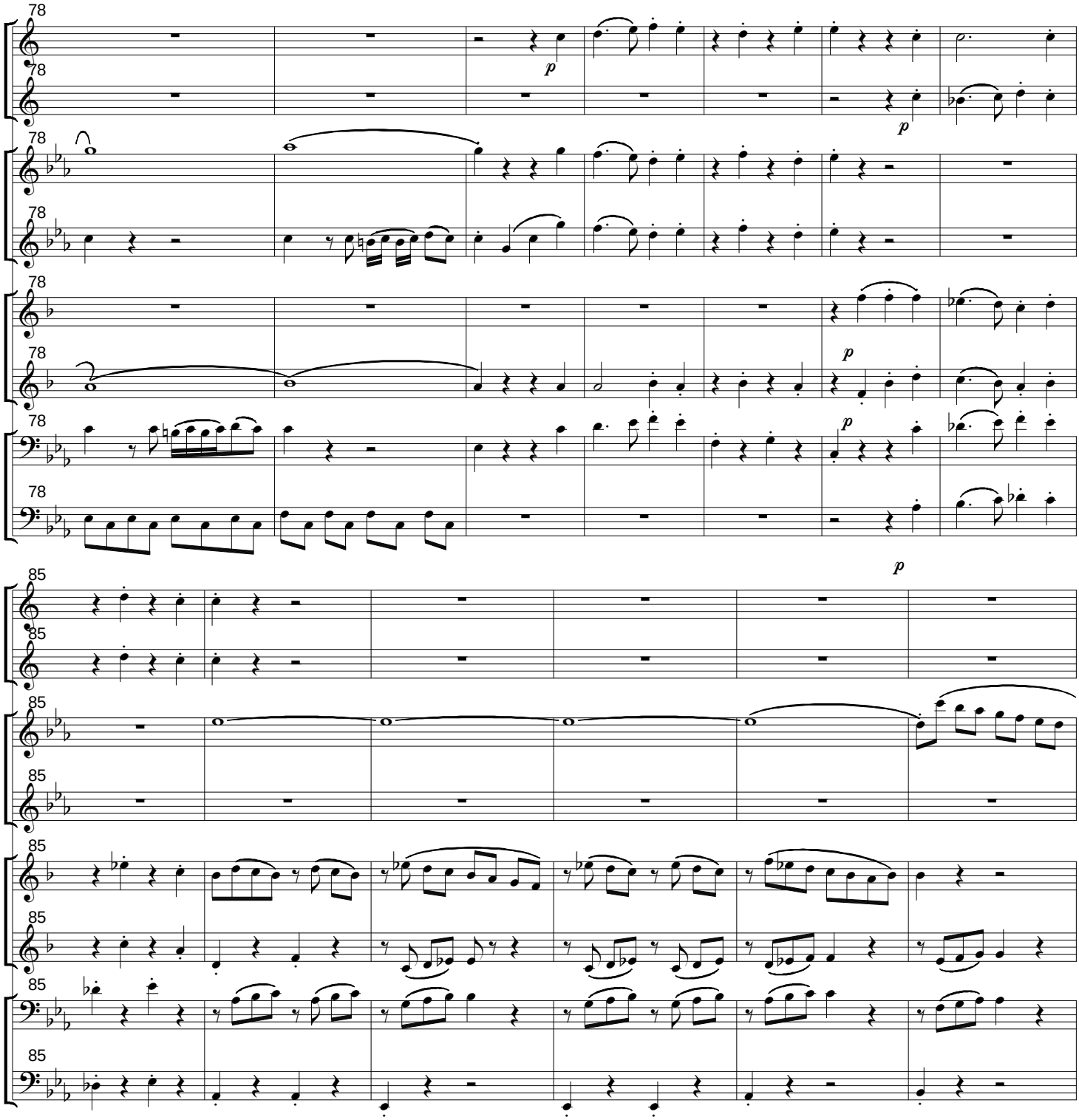
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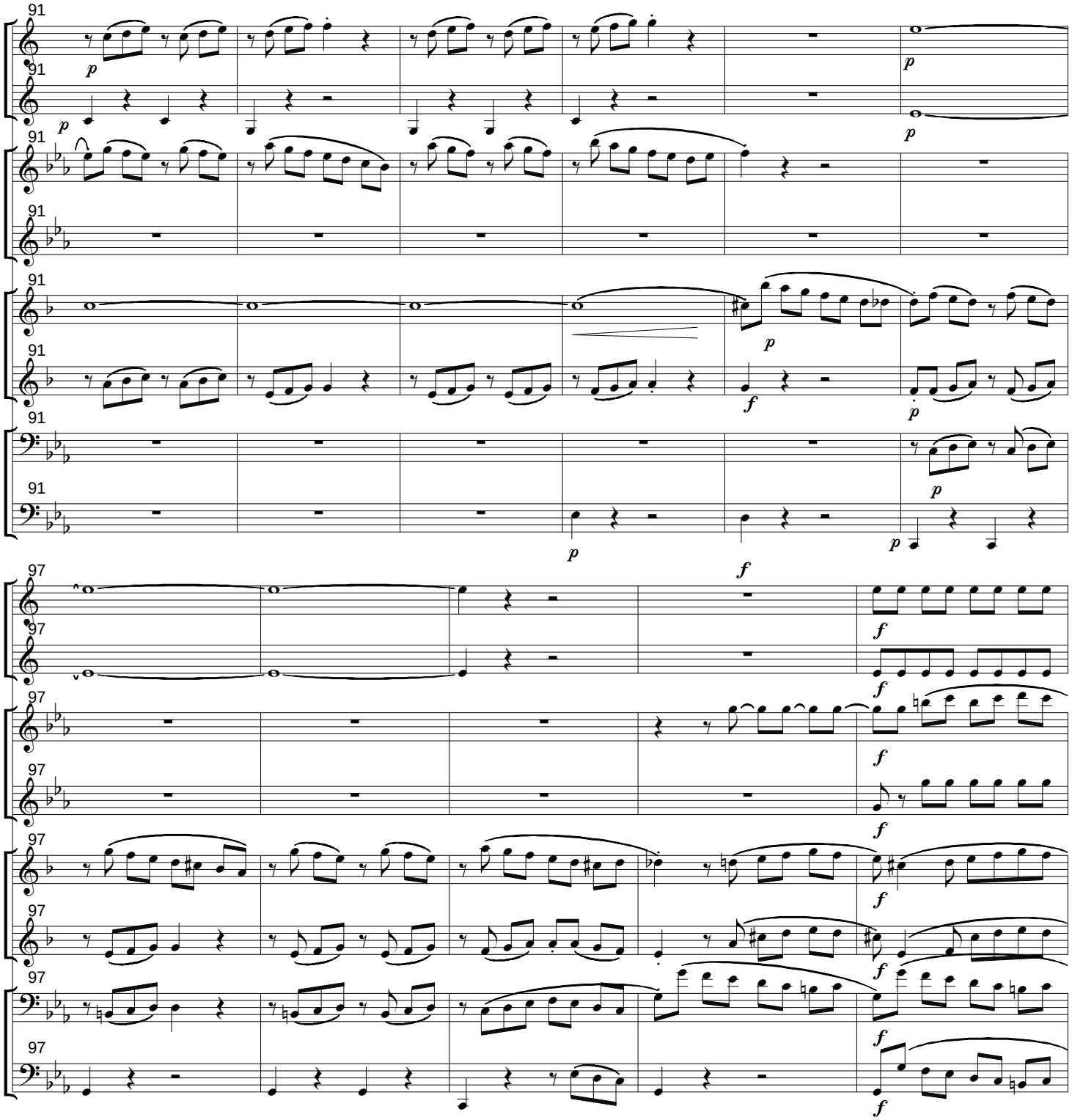
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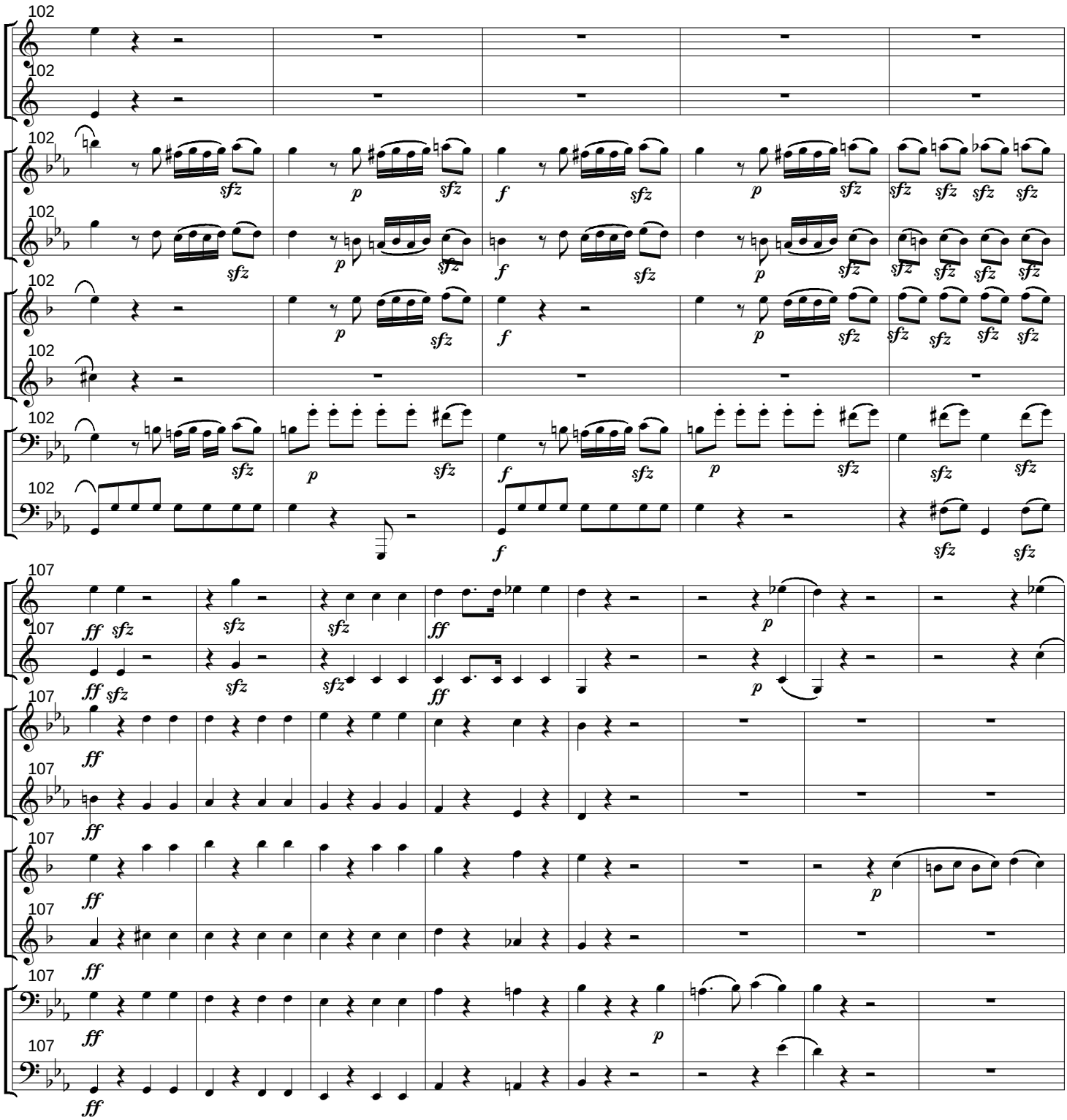
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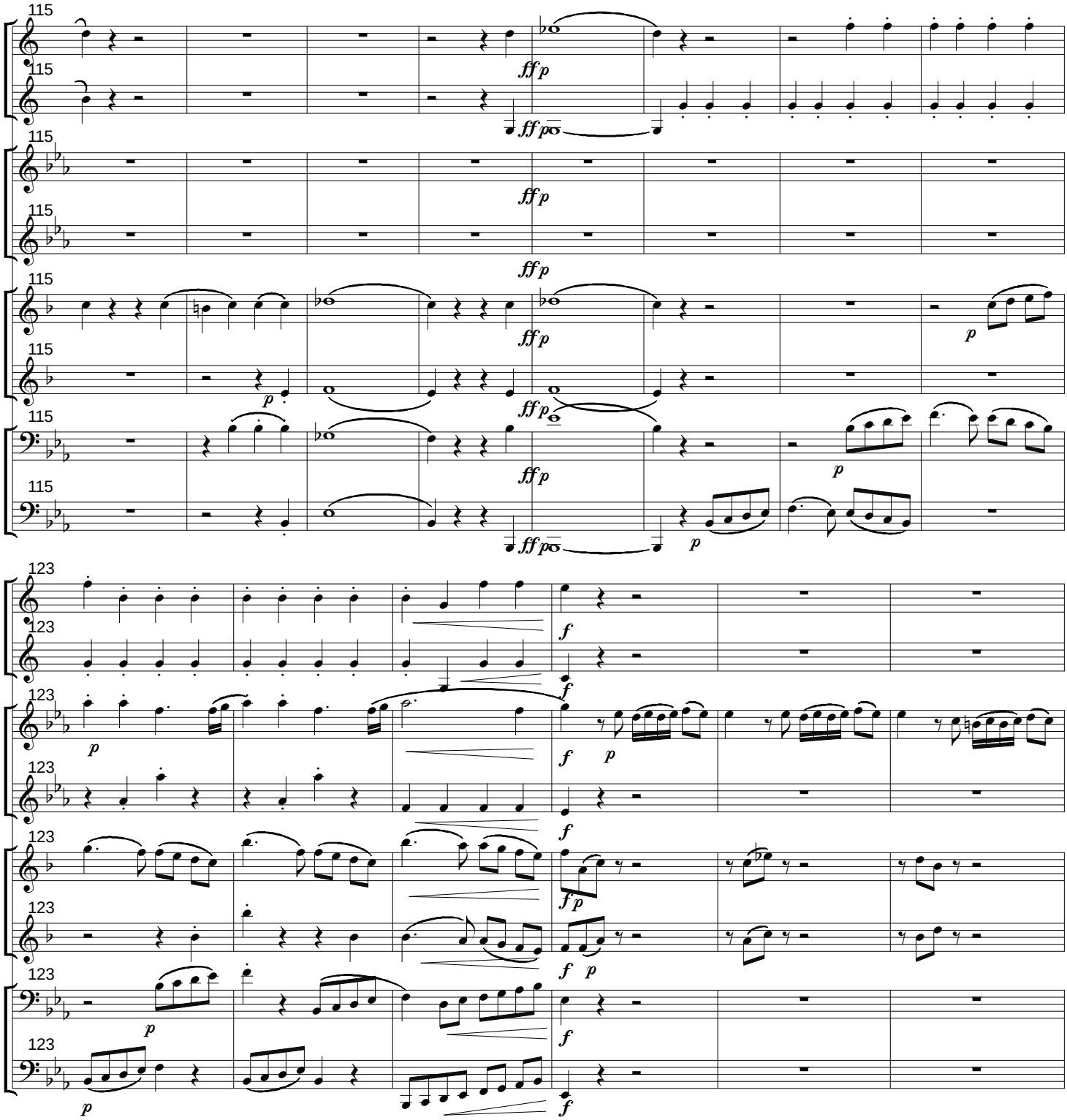
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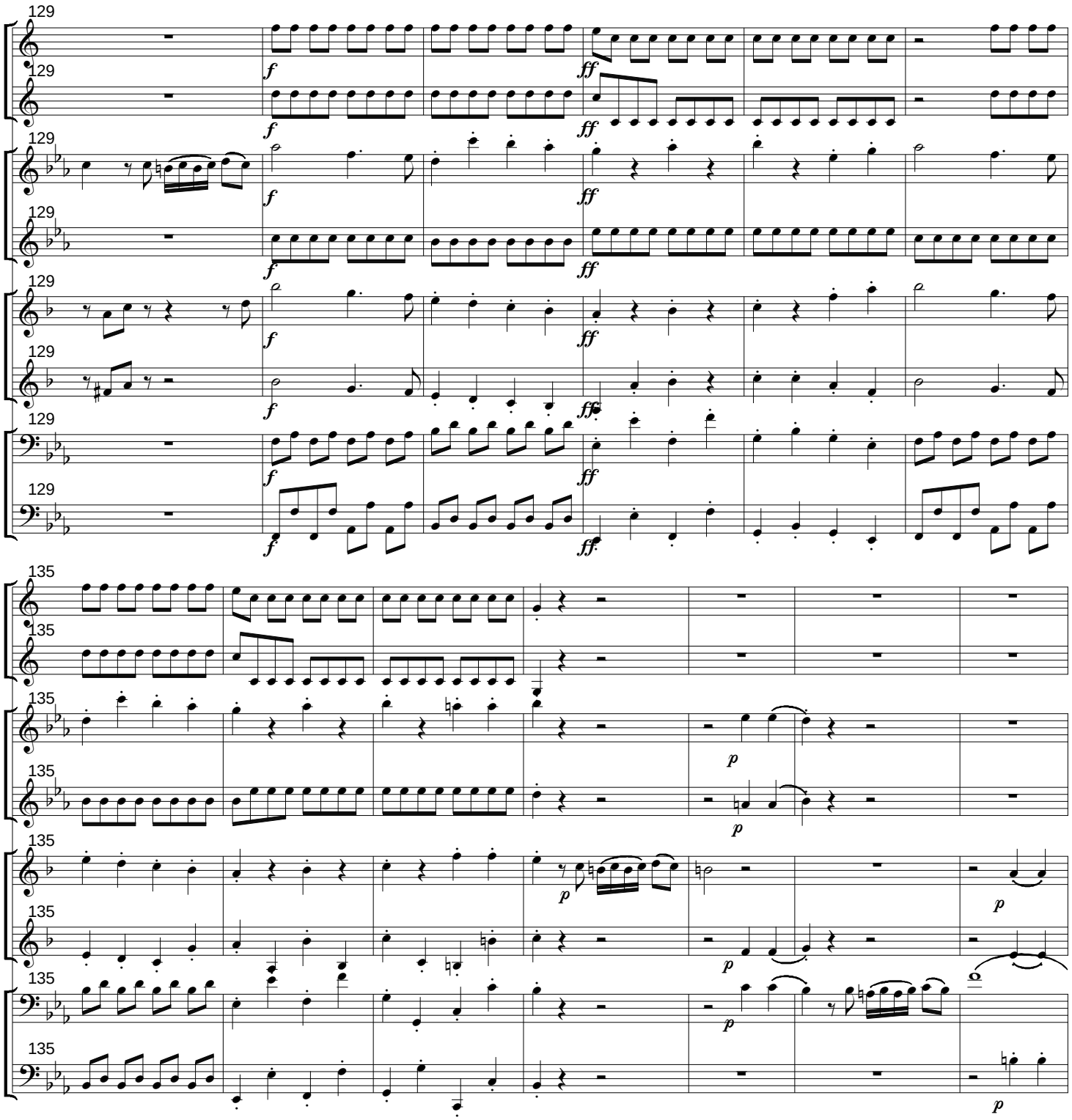
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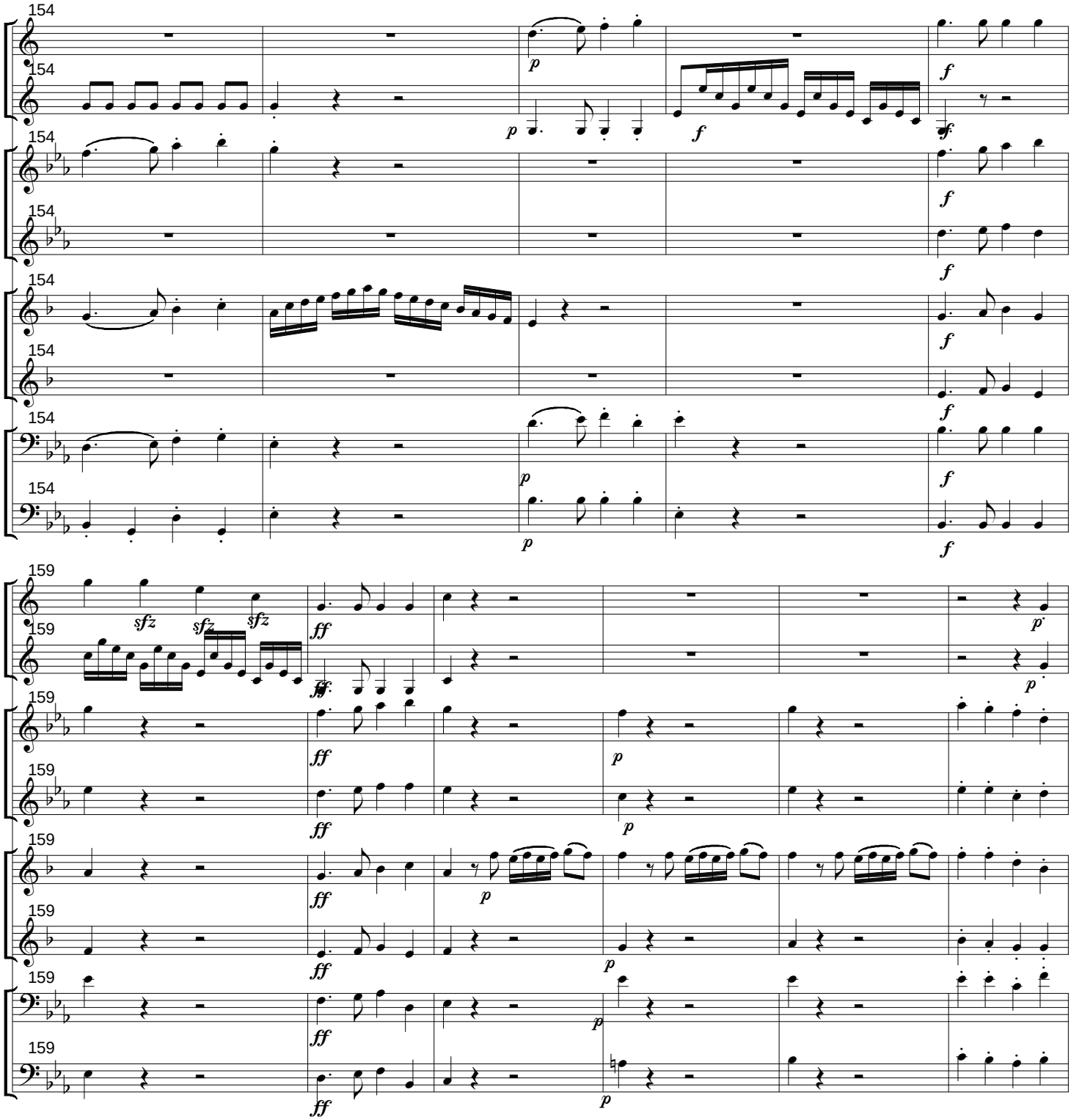
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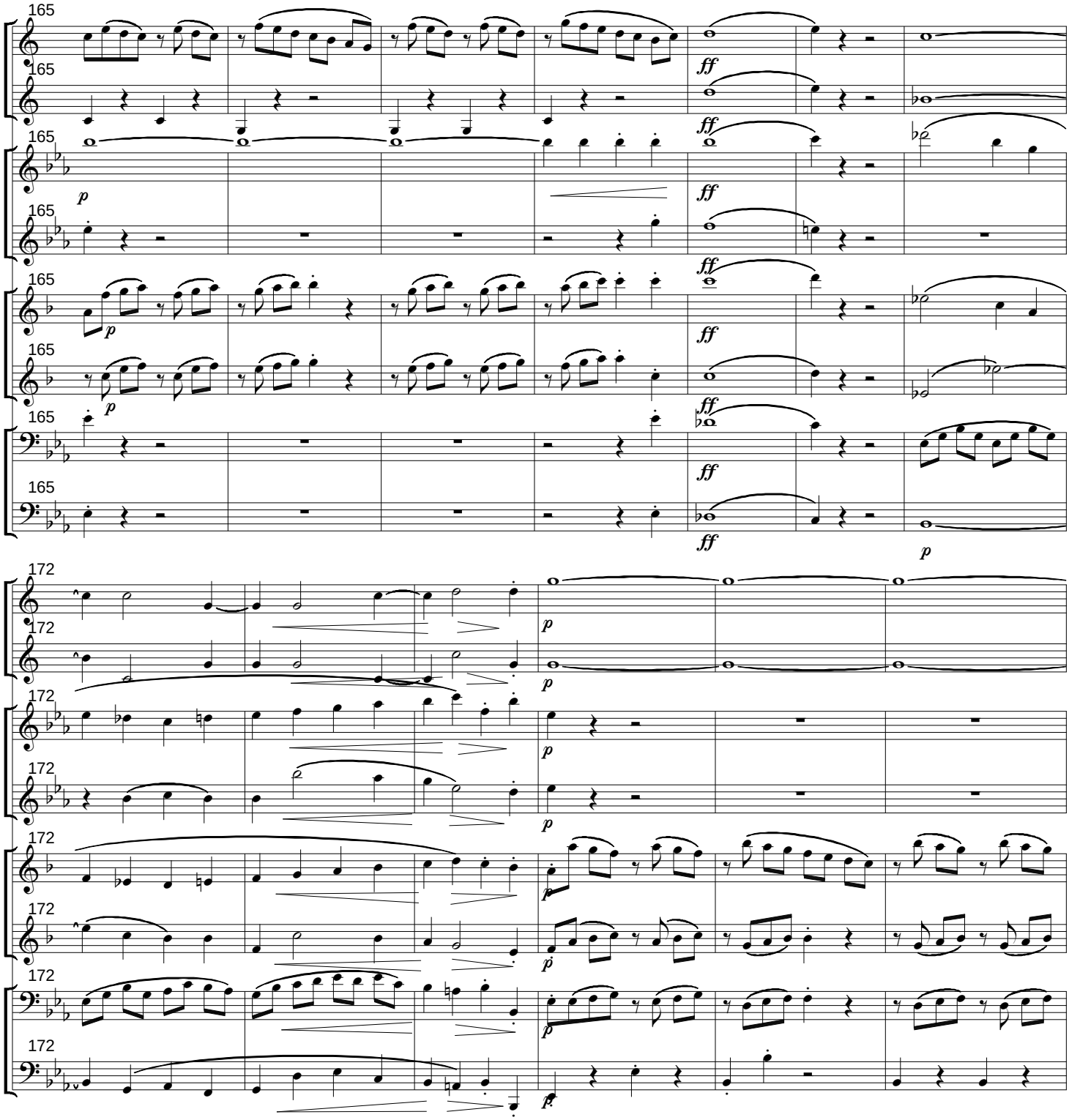
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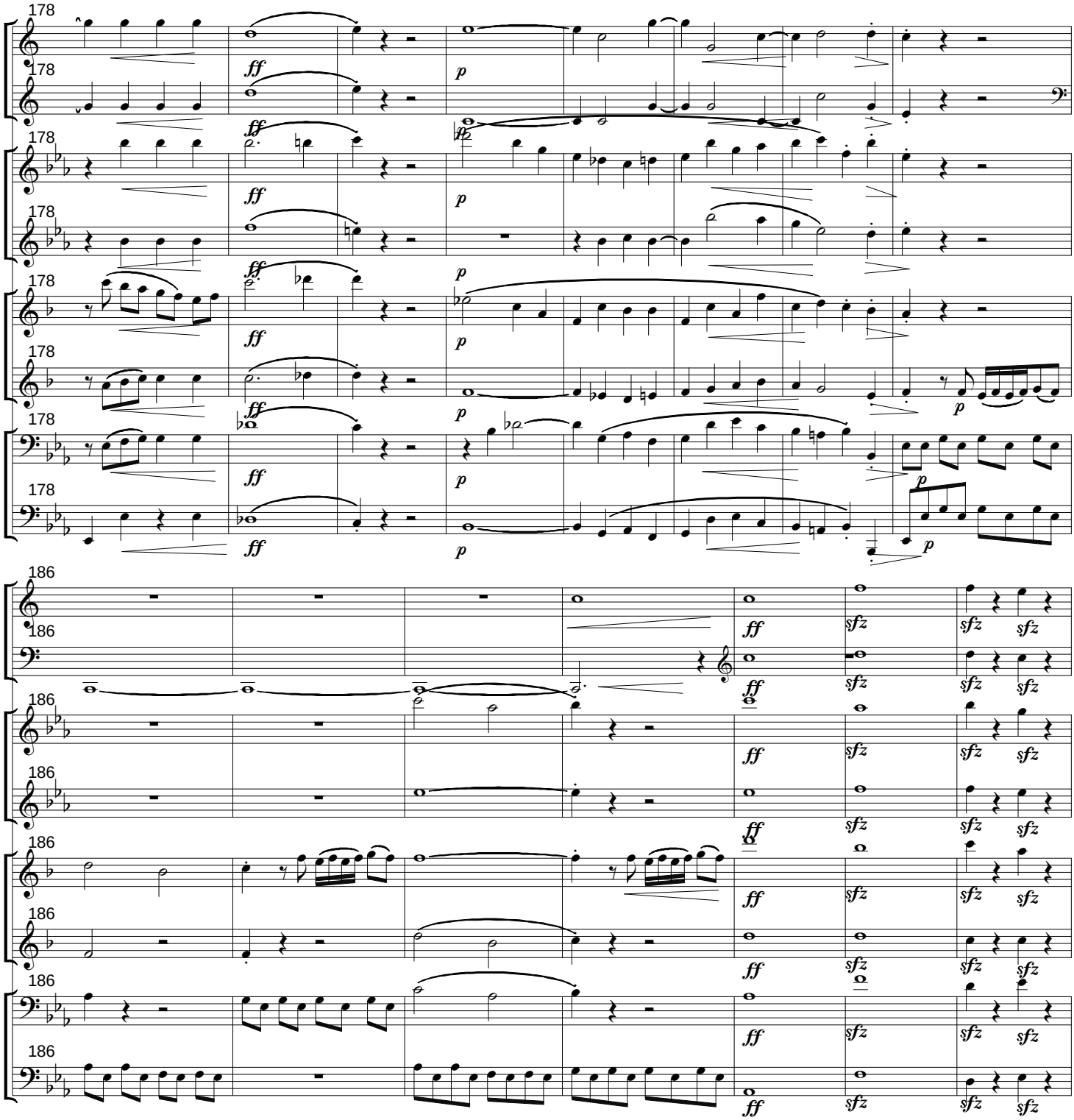
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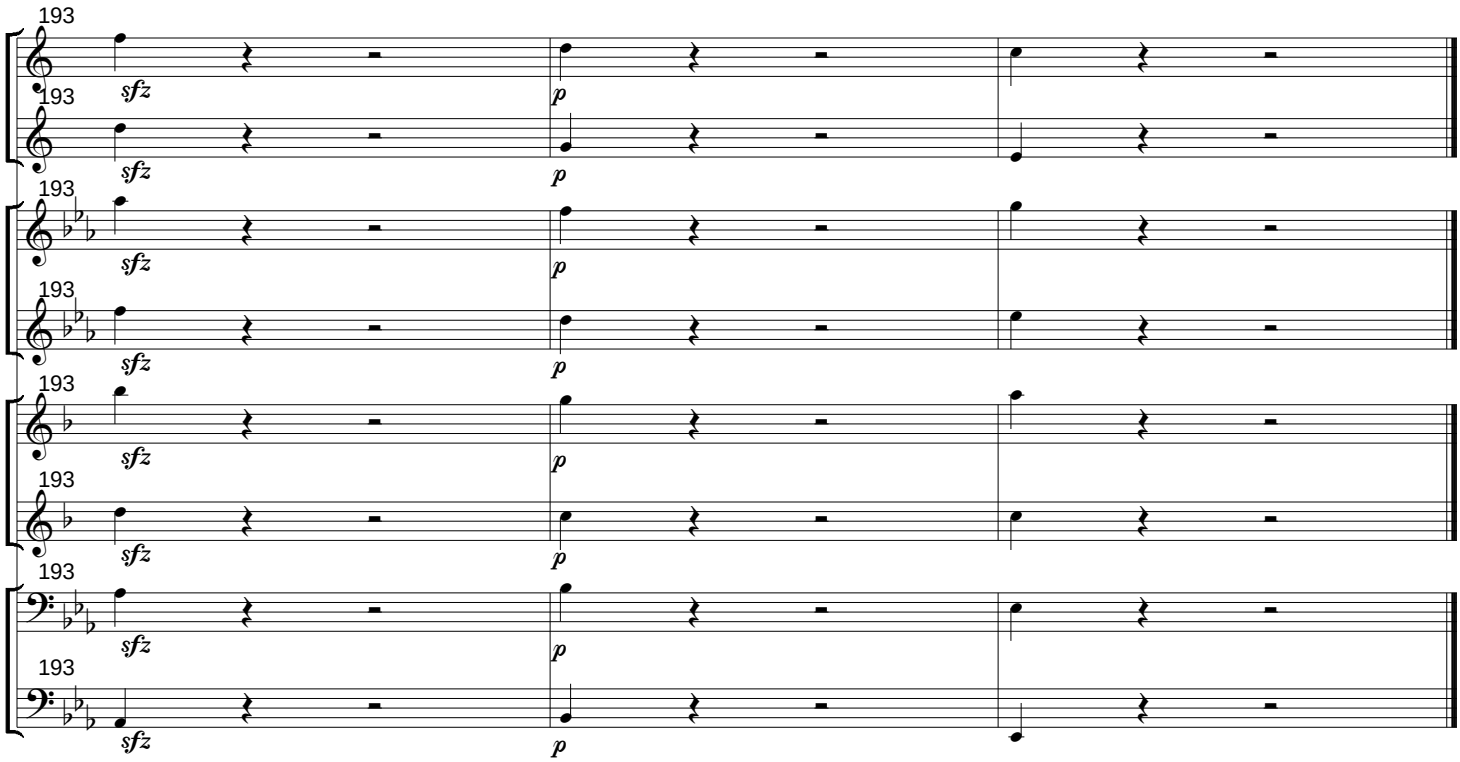
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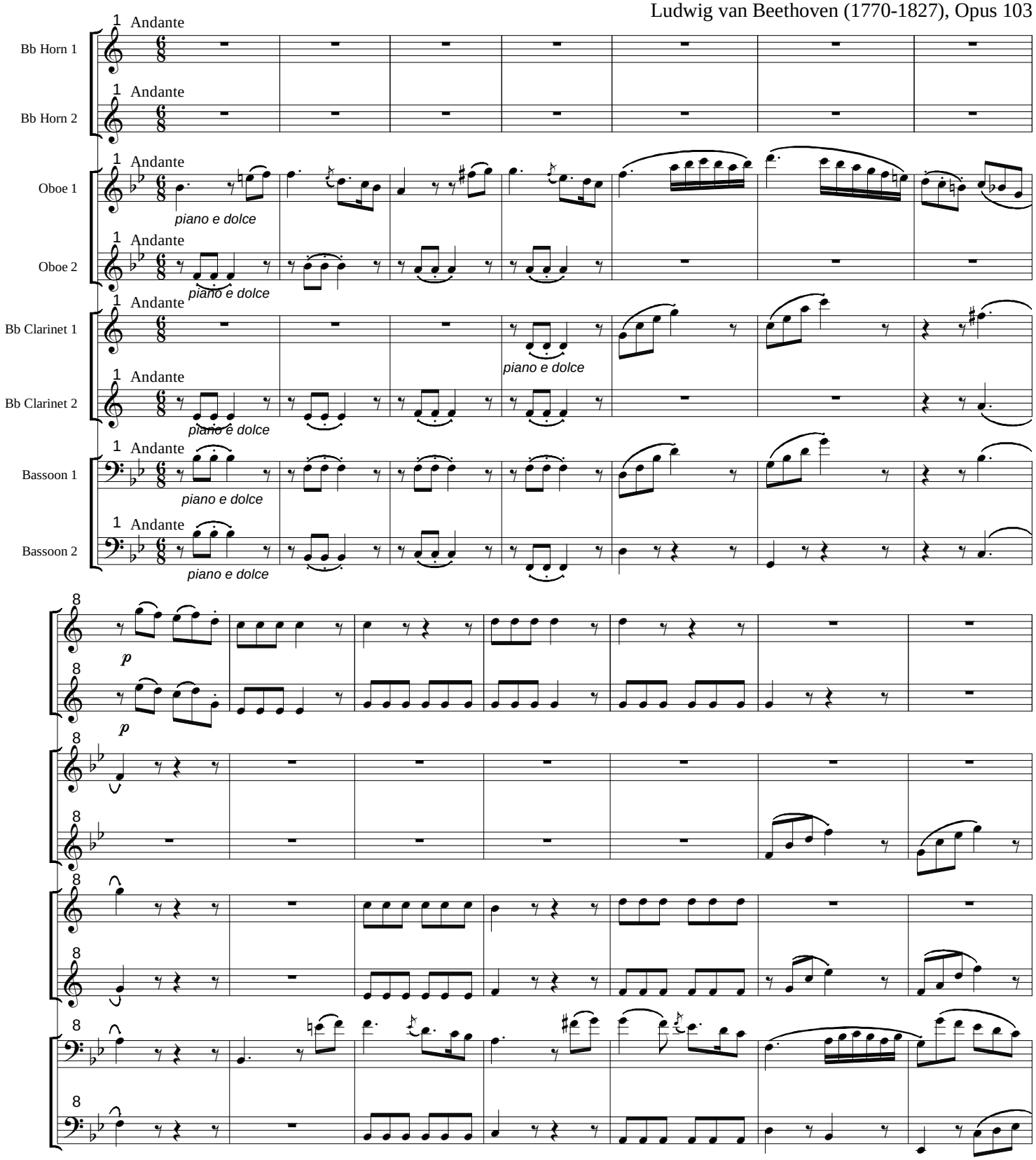
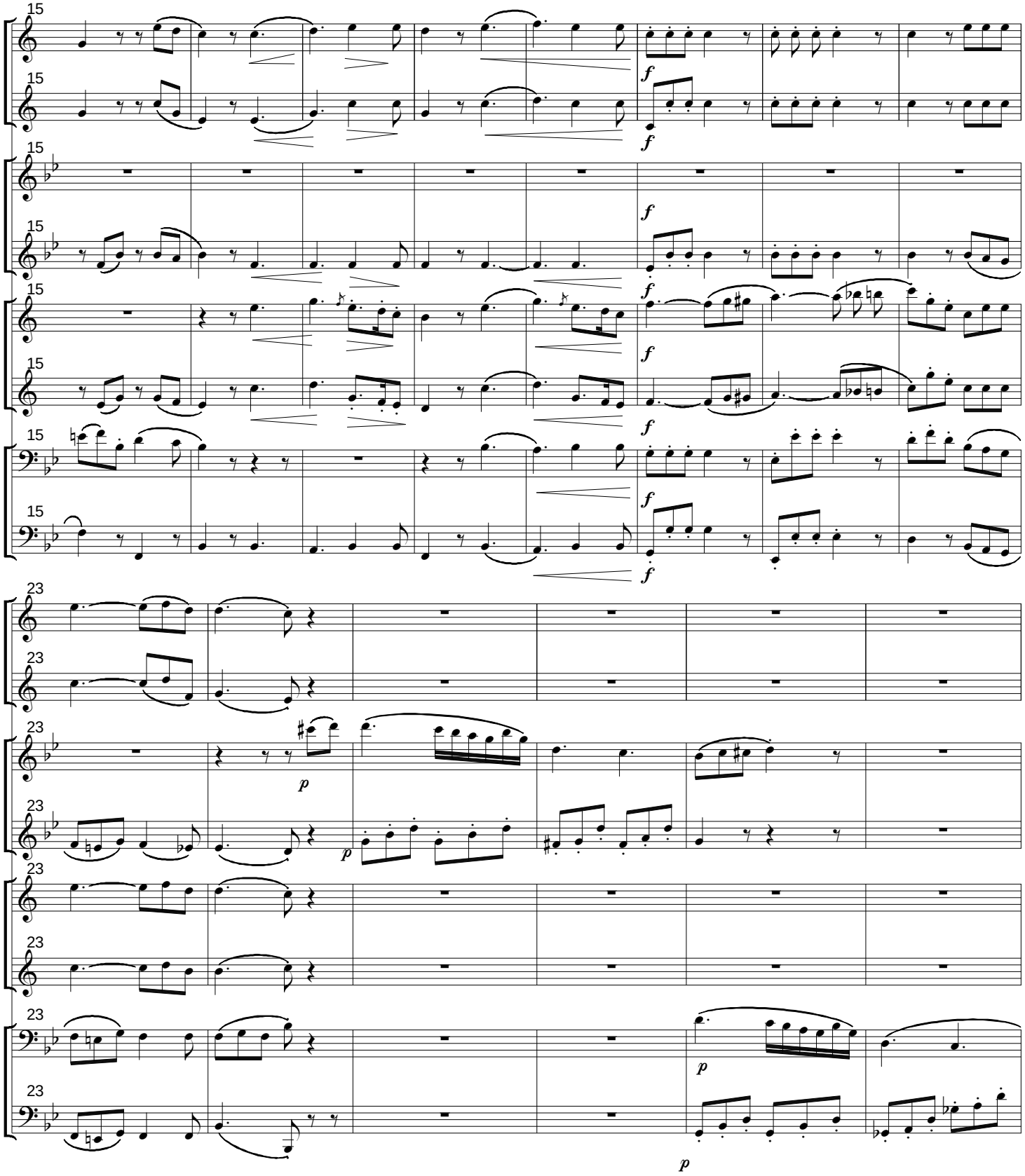
Octett

for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons

II

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Opus 103

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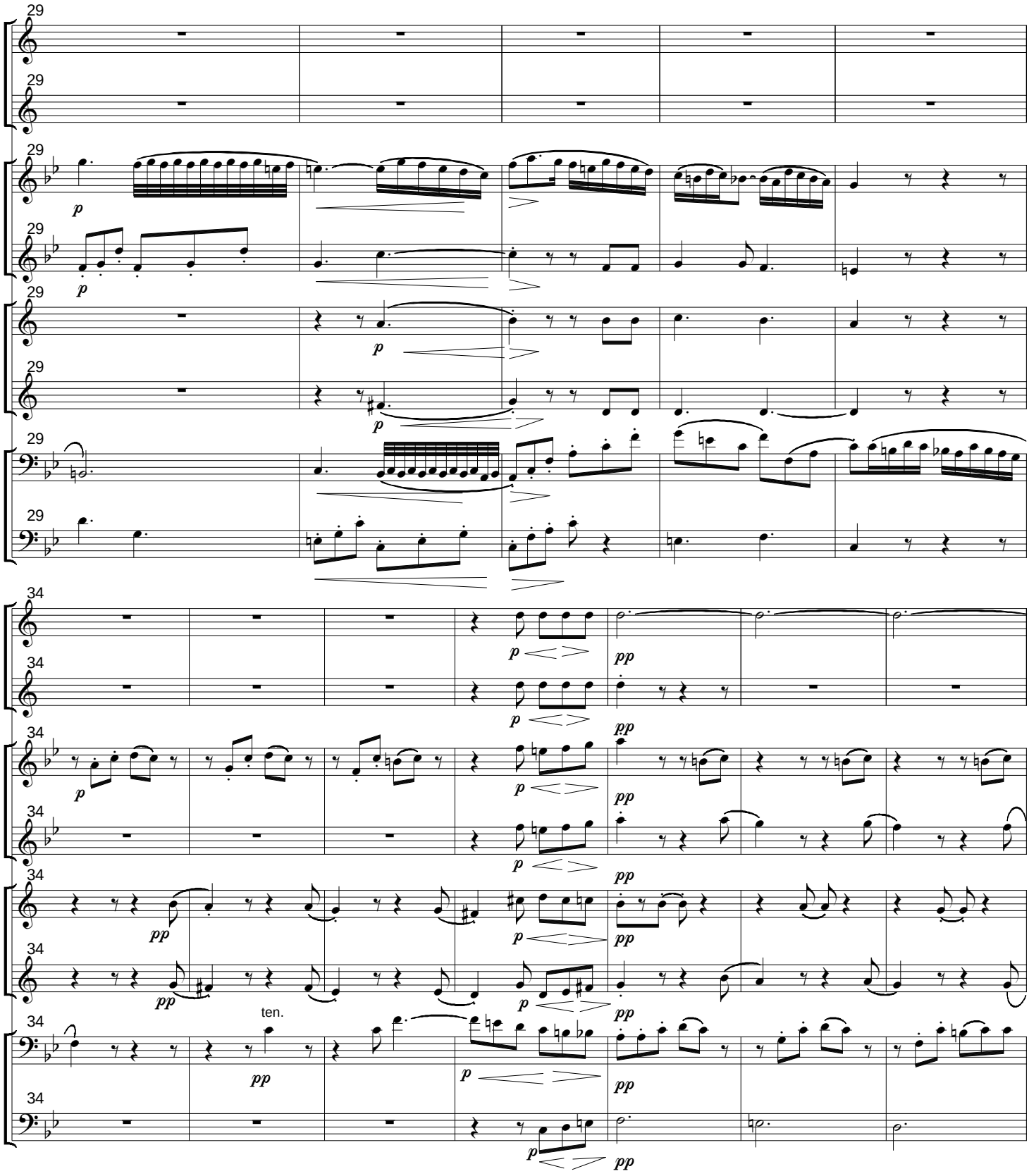
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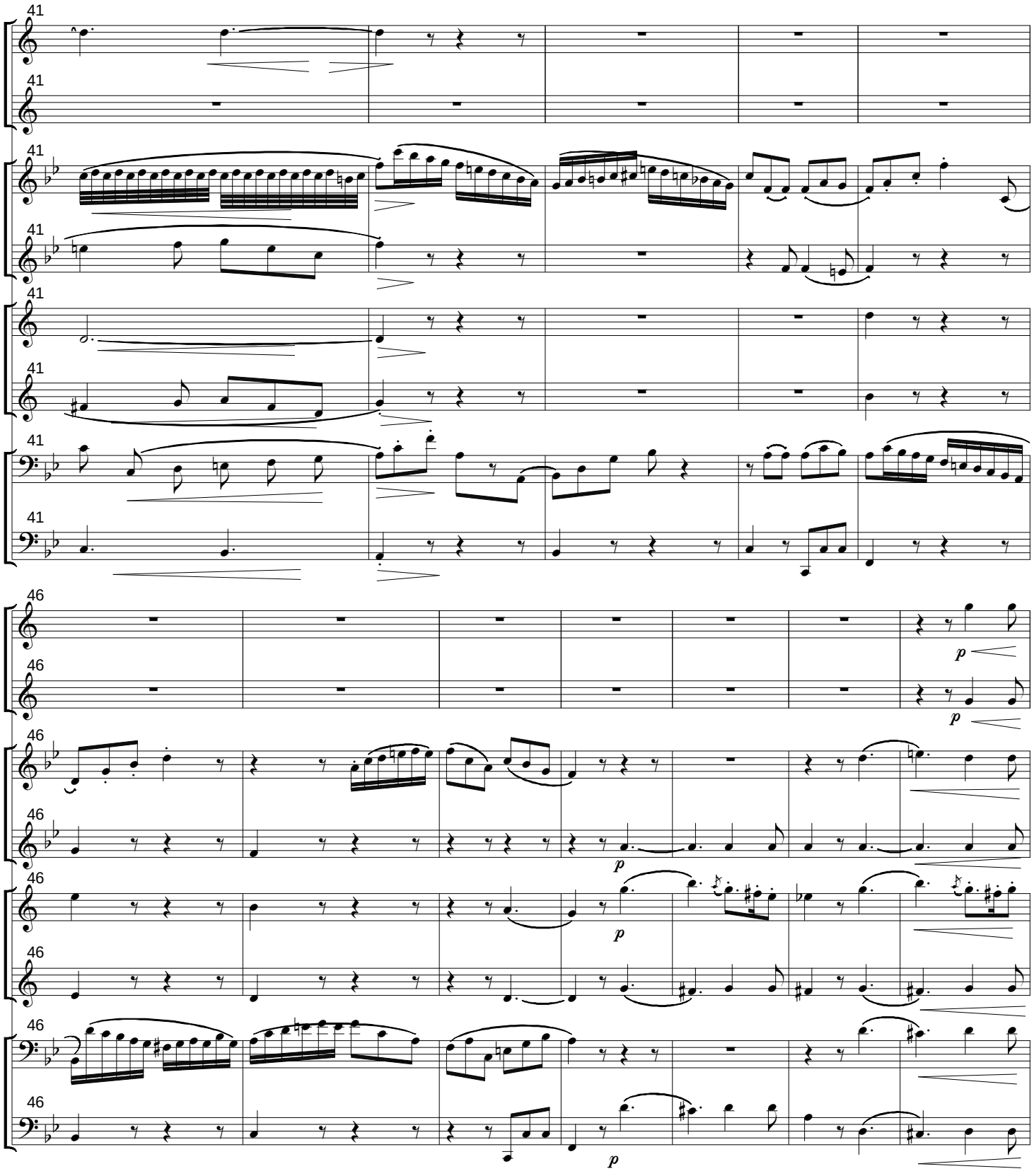
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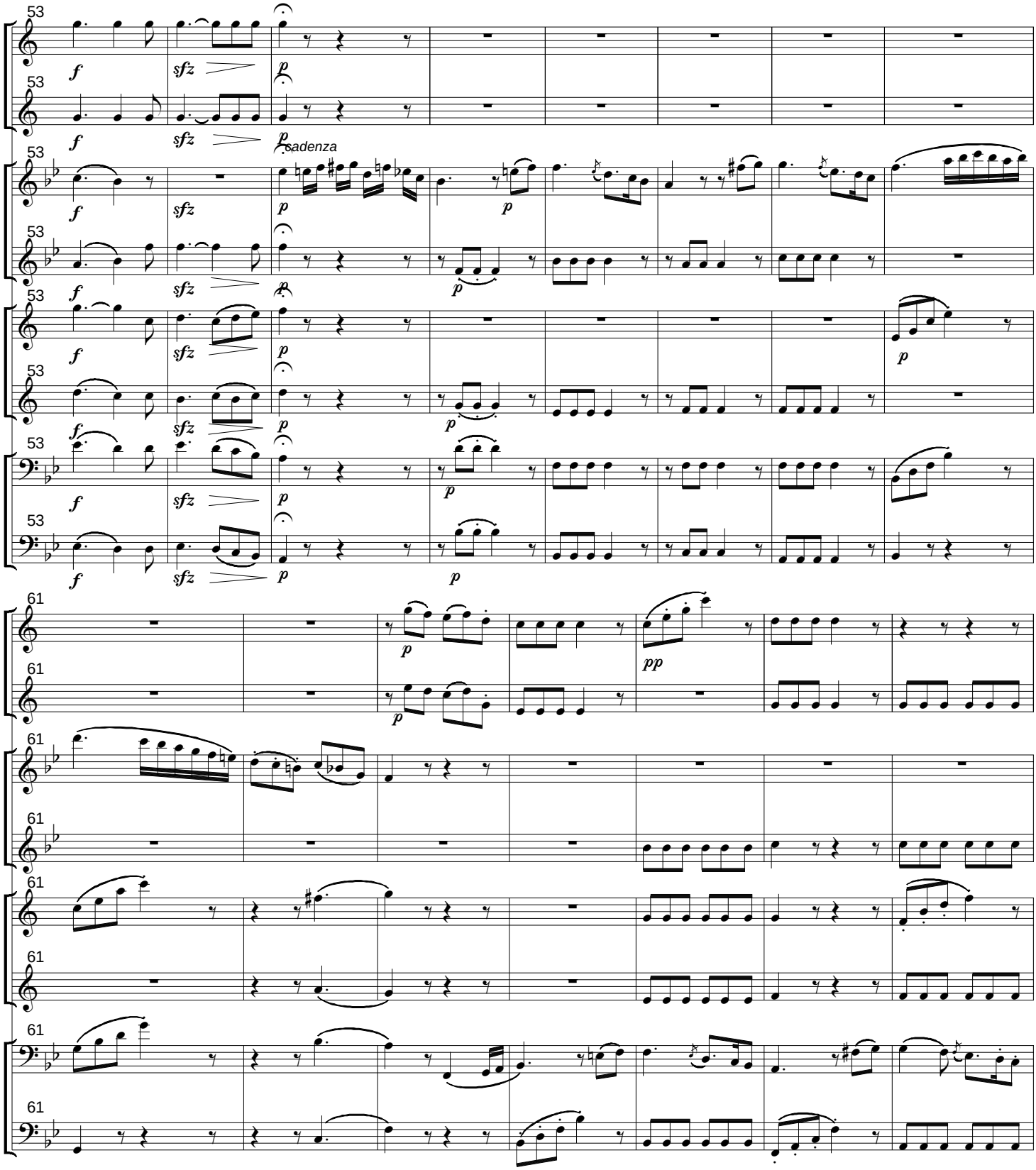
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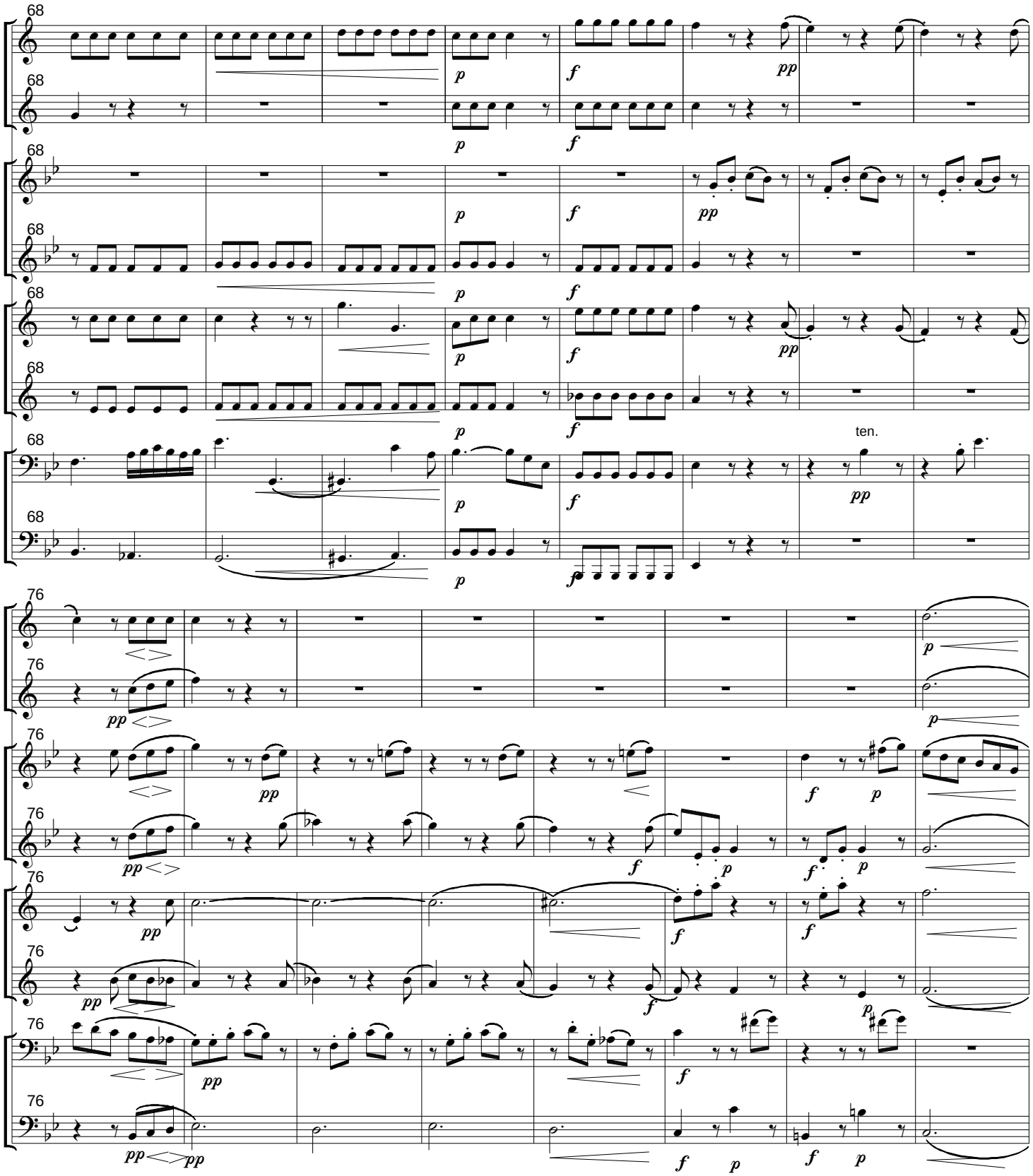
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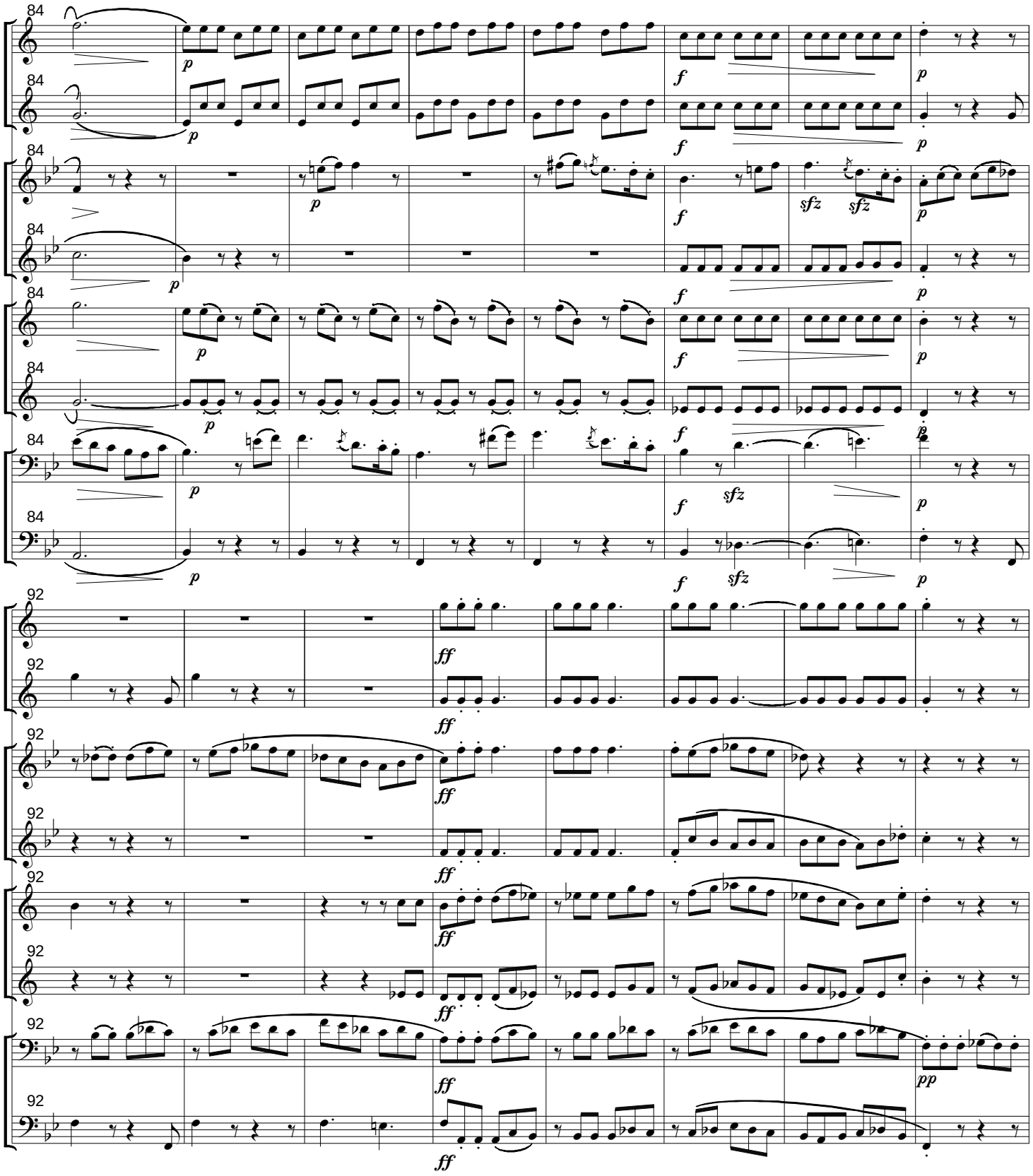
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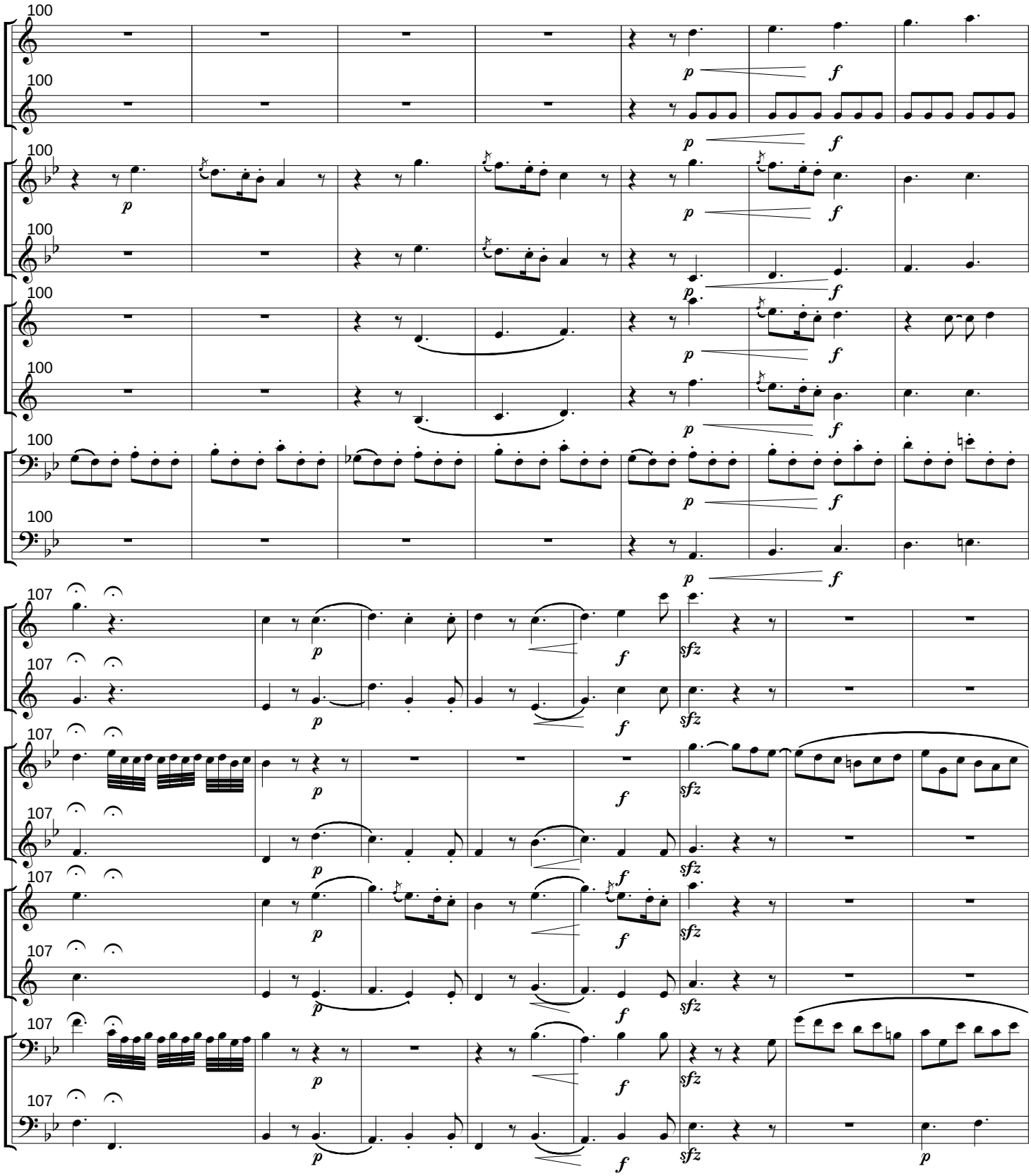
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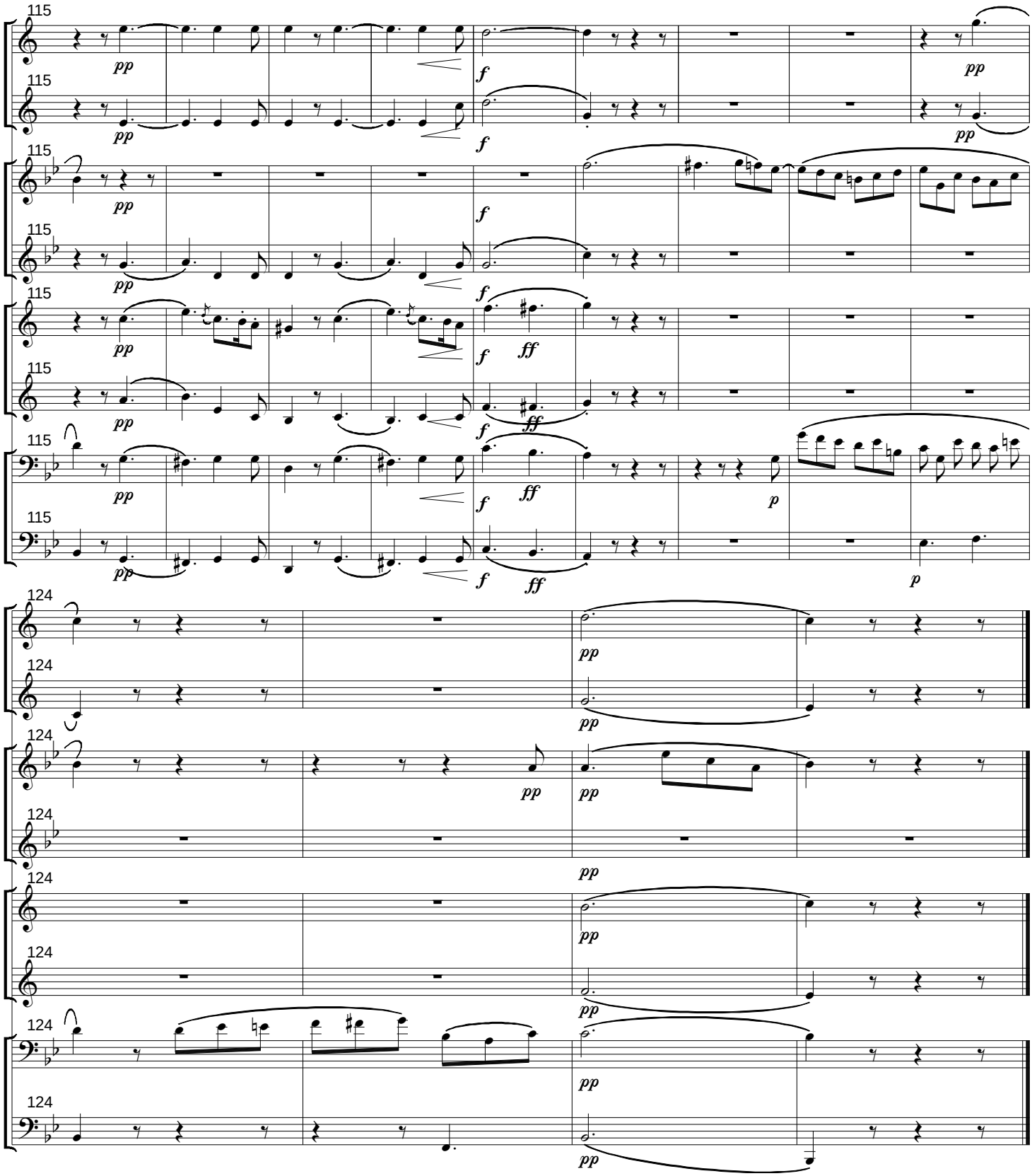
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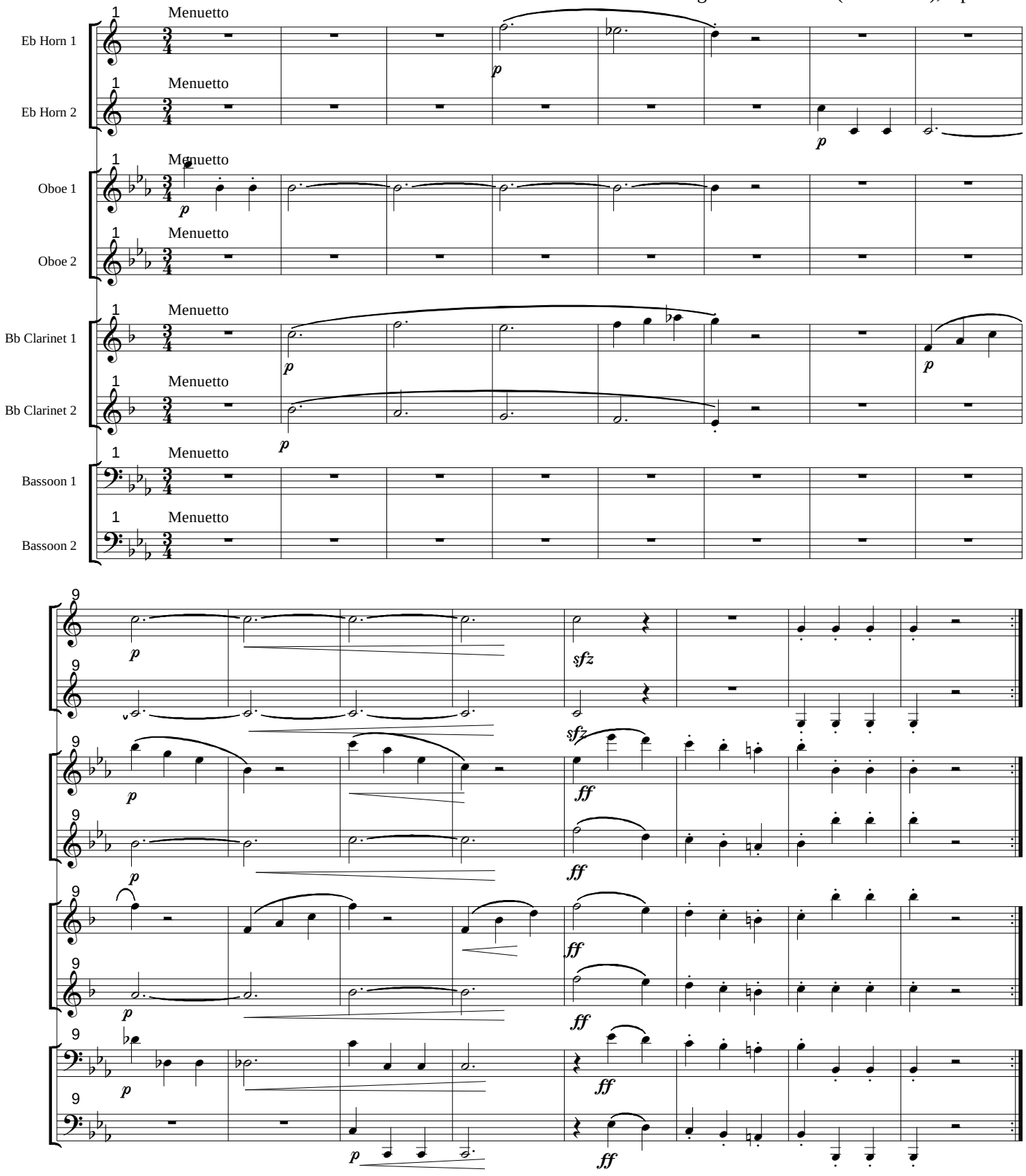
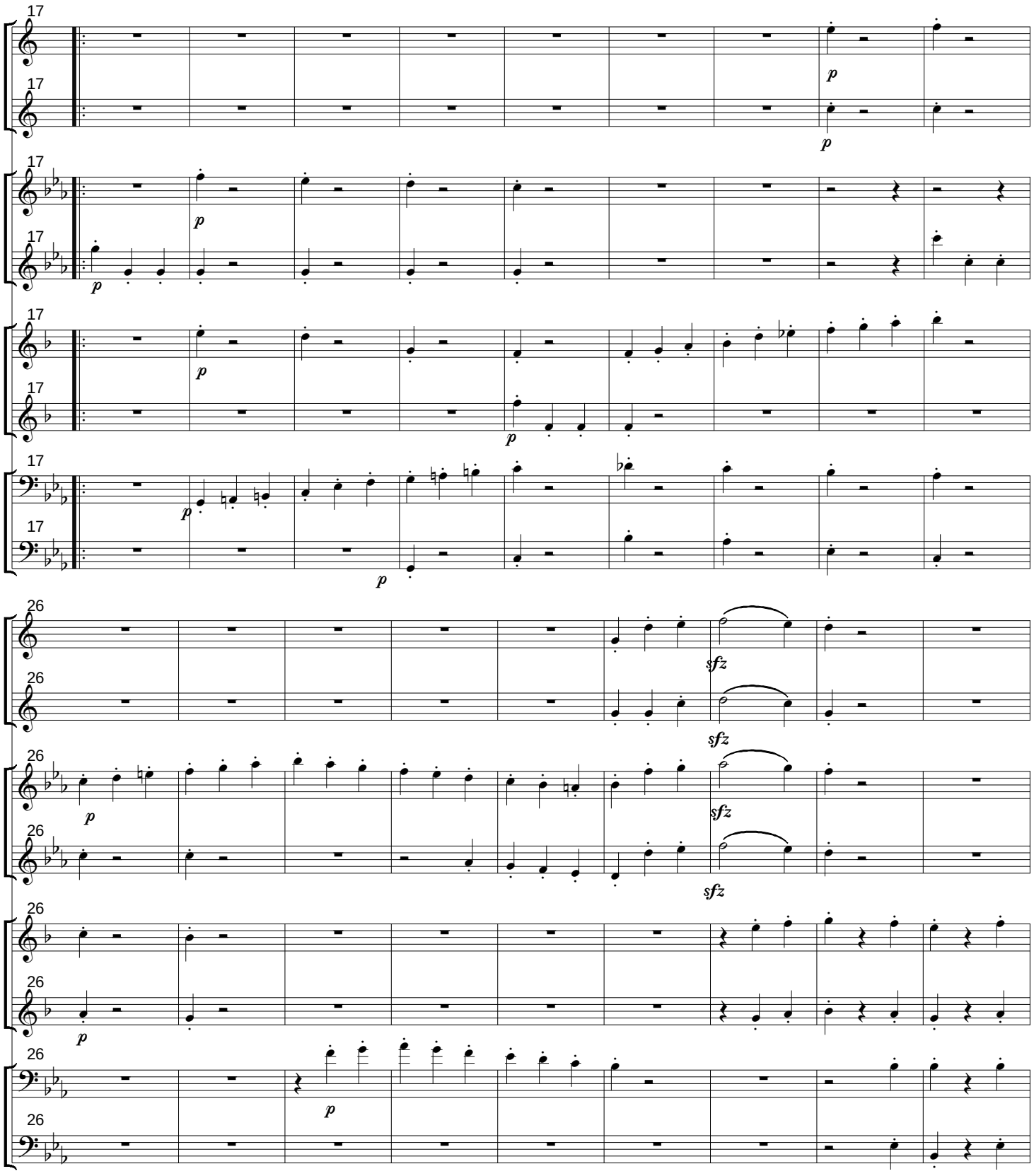
Octett

for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons

III

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Opus 103

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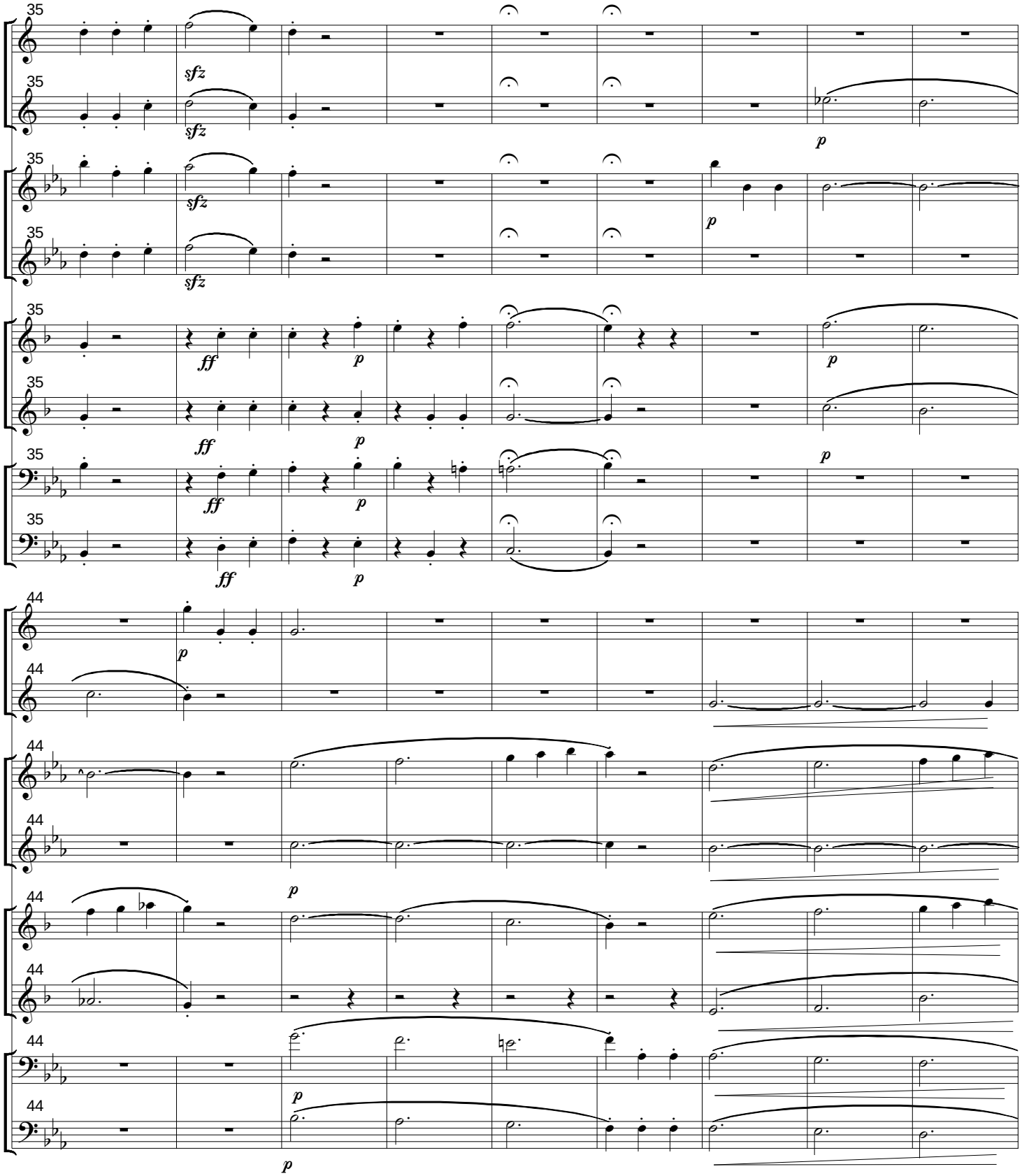
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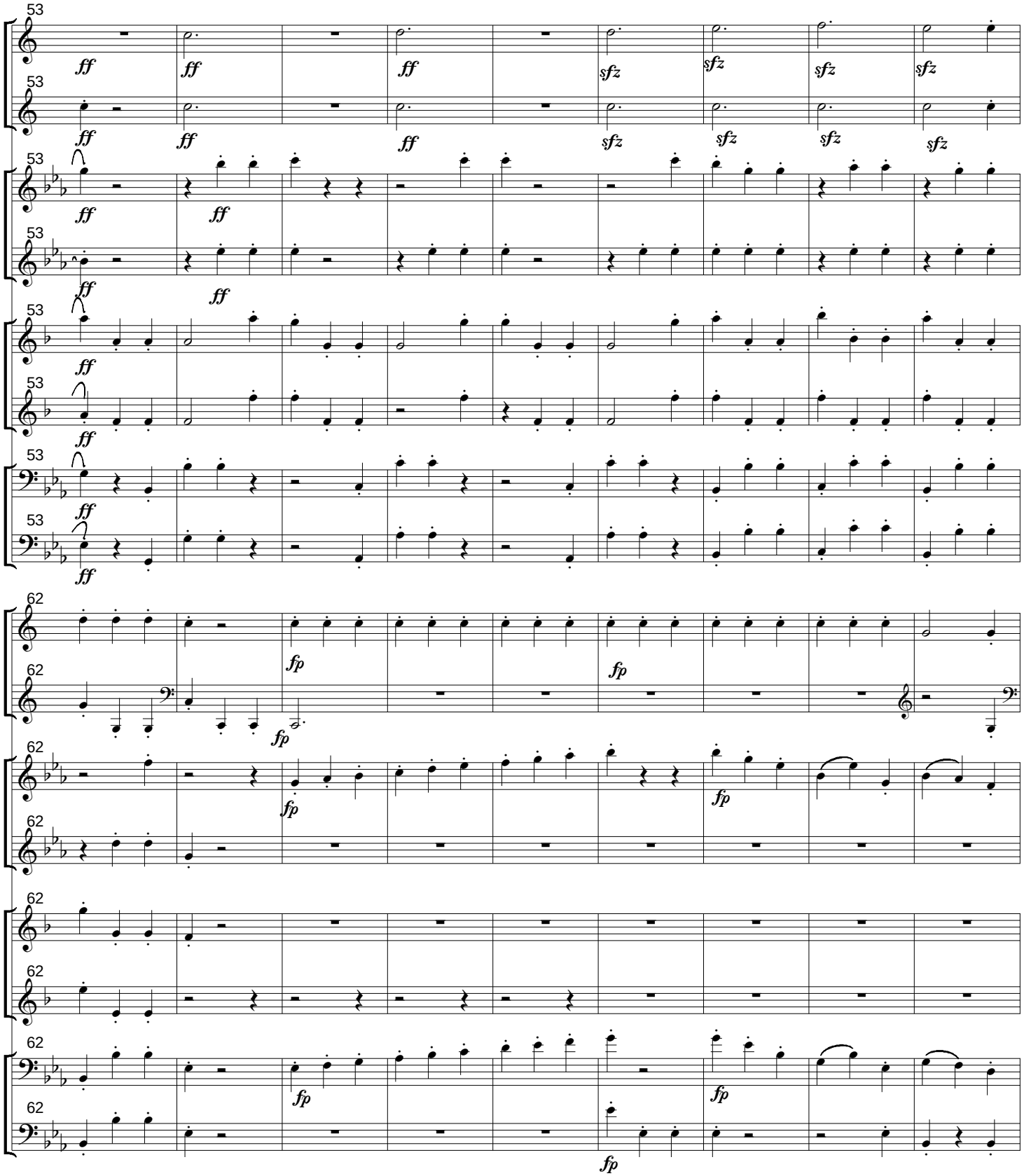
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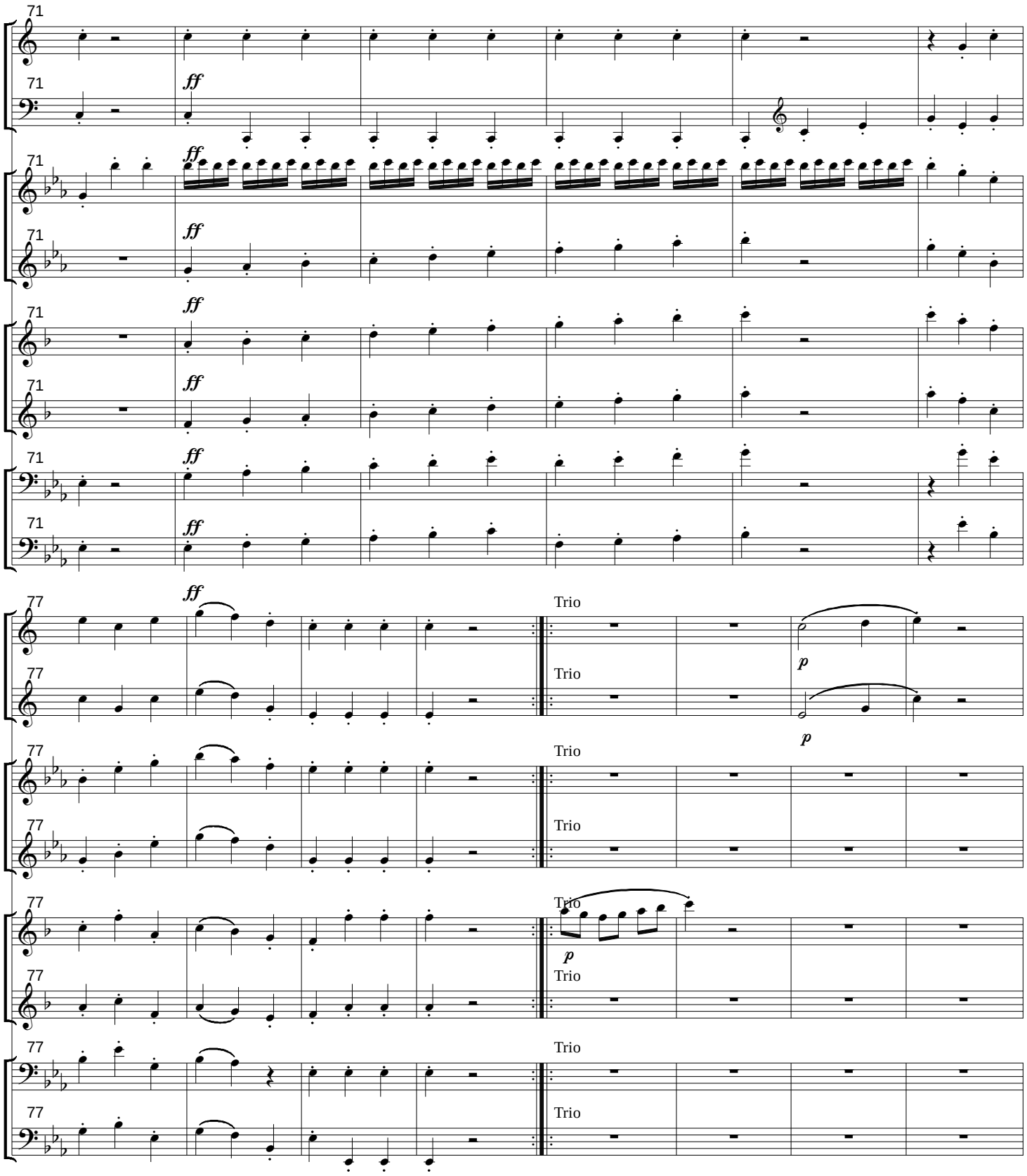
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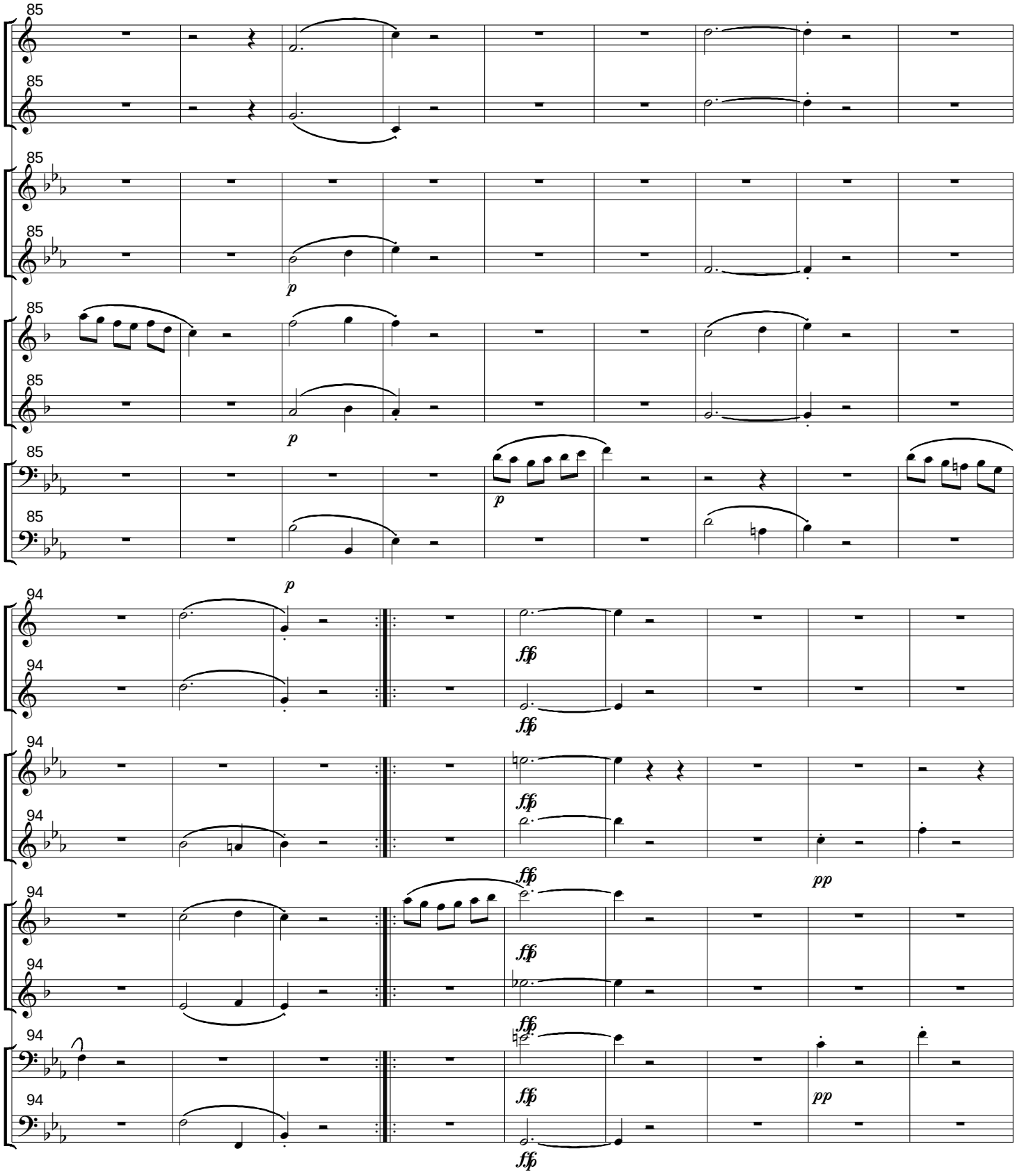
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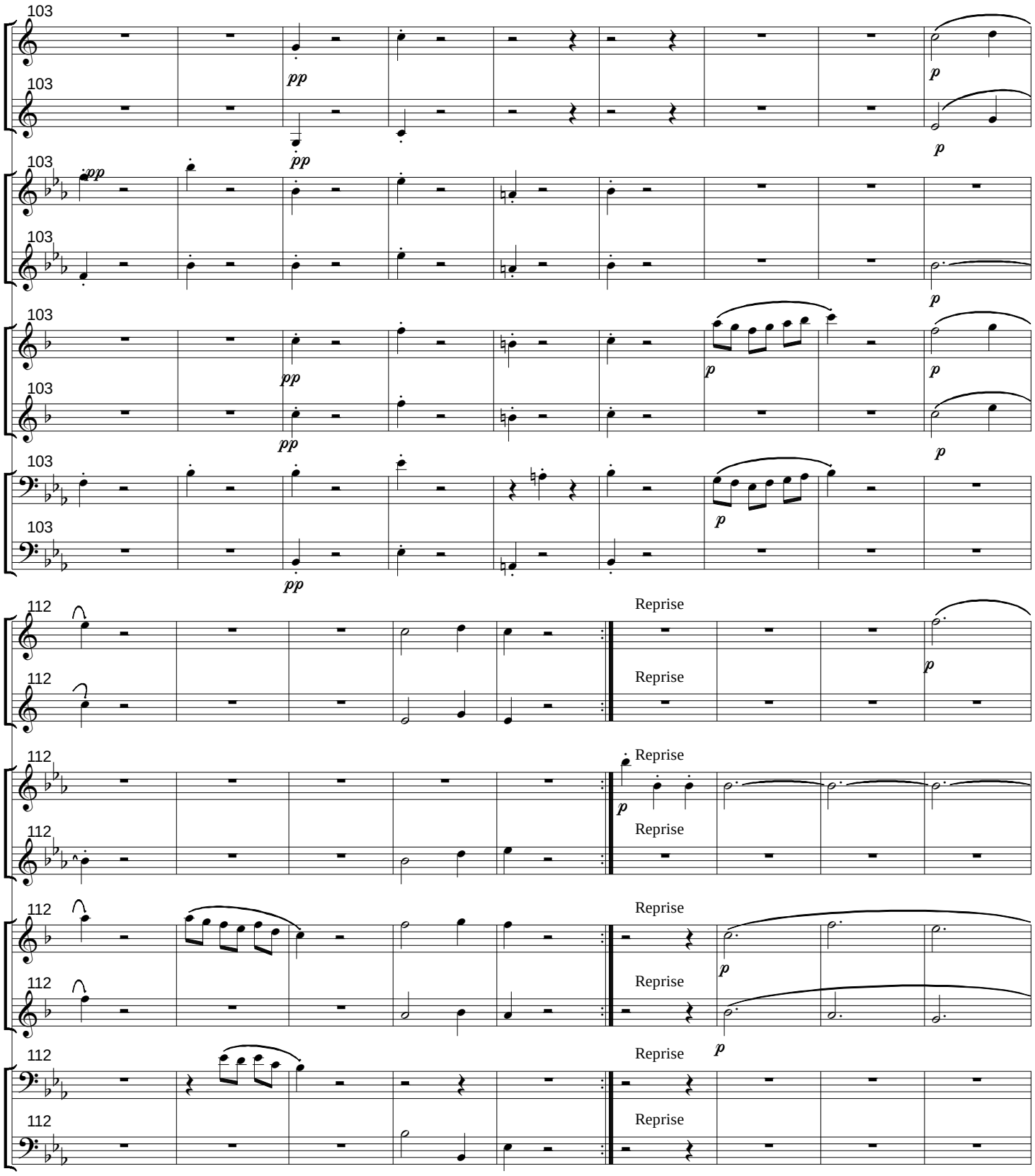
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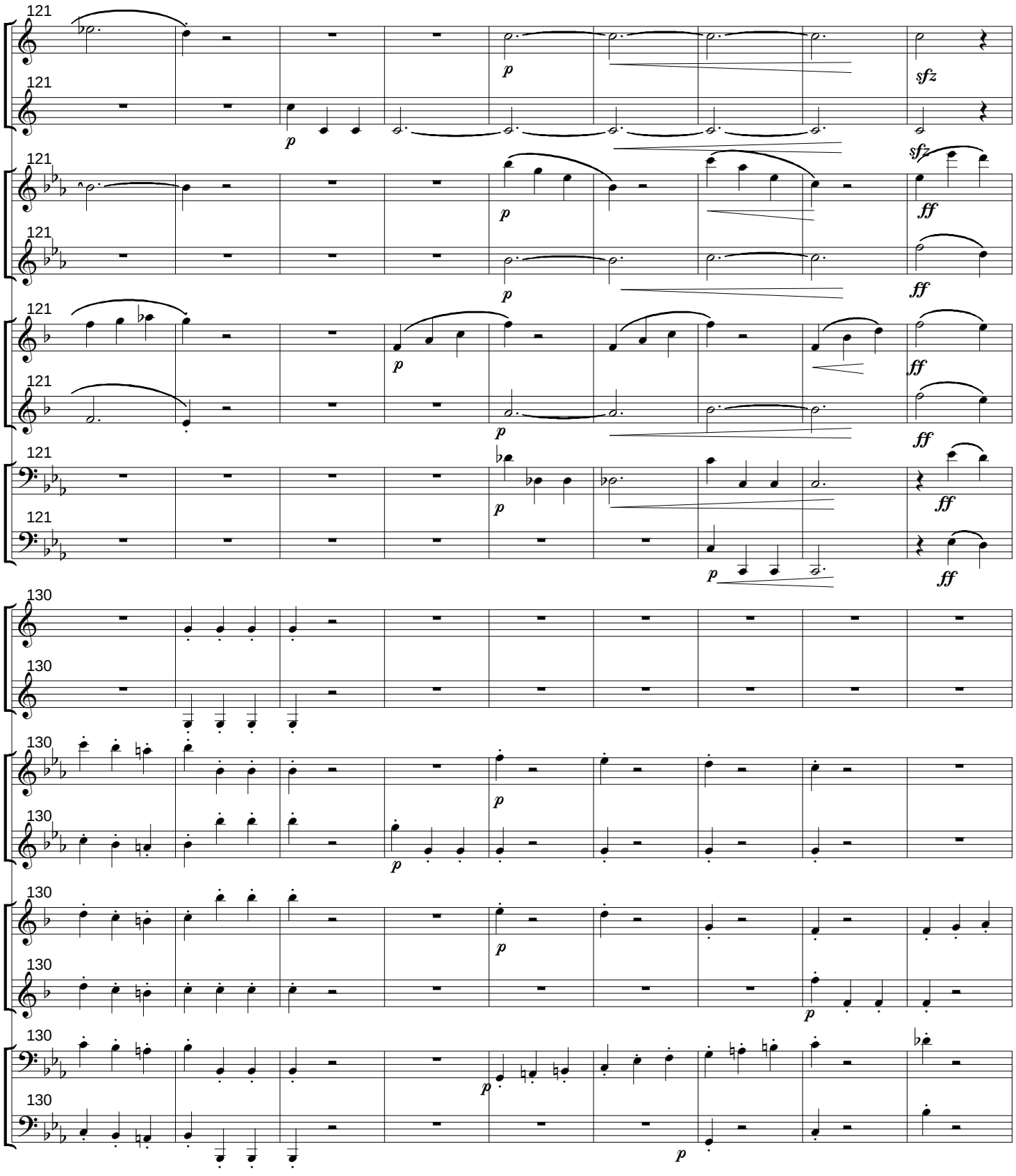
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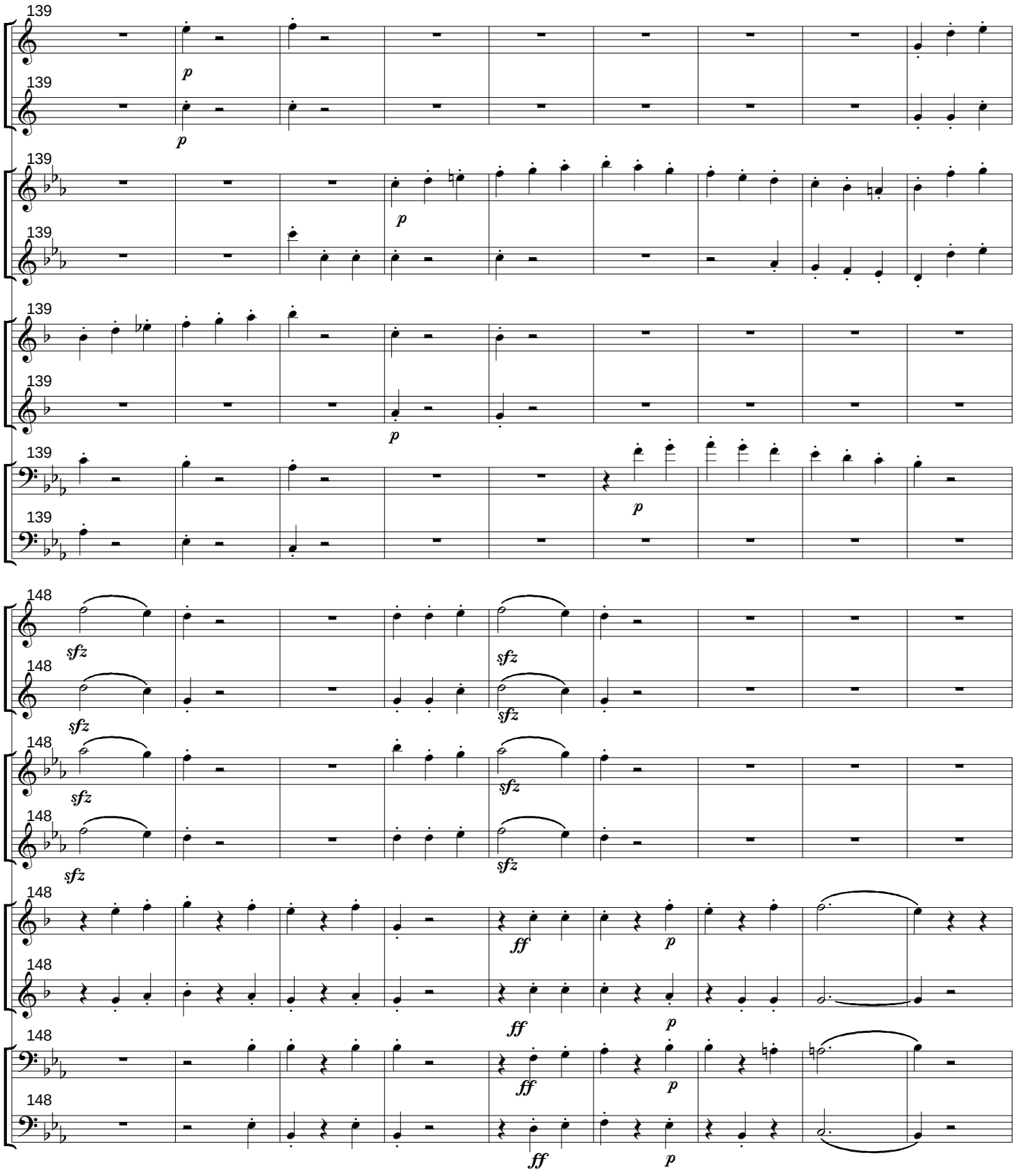
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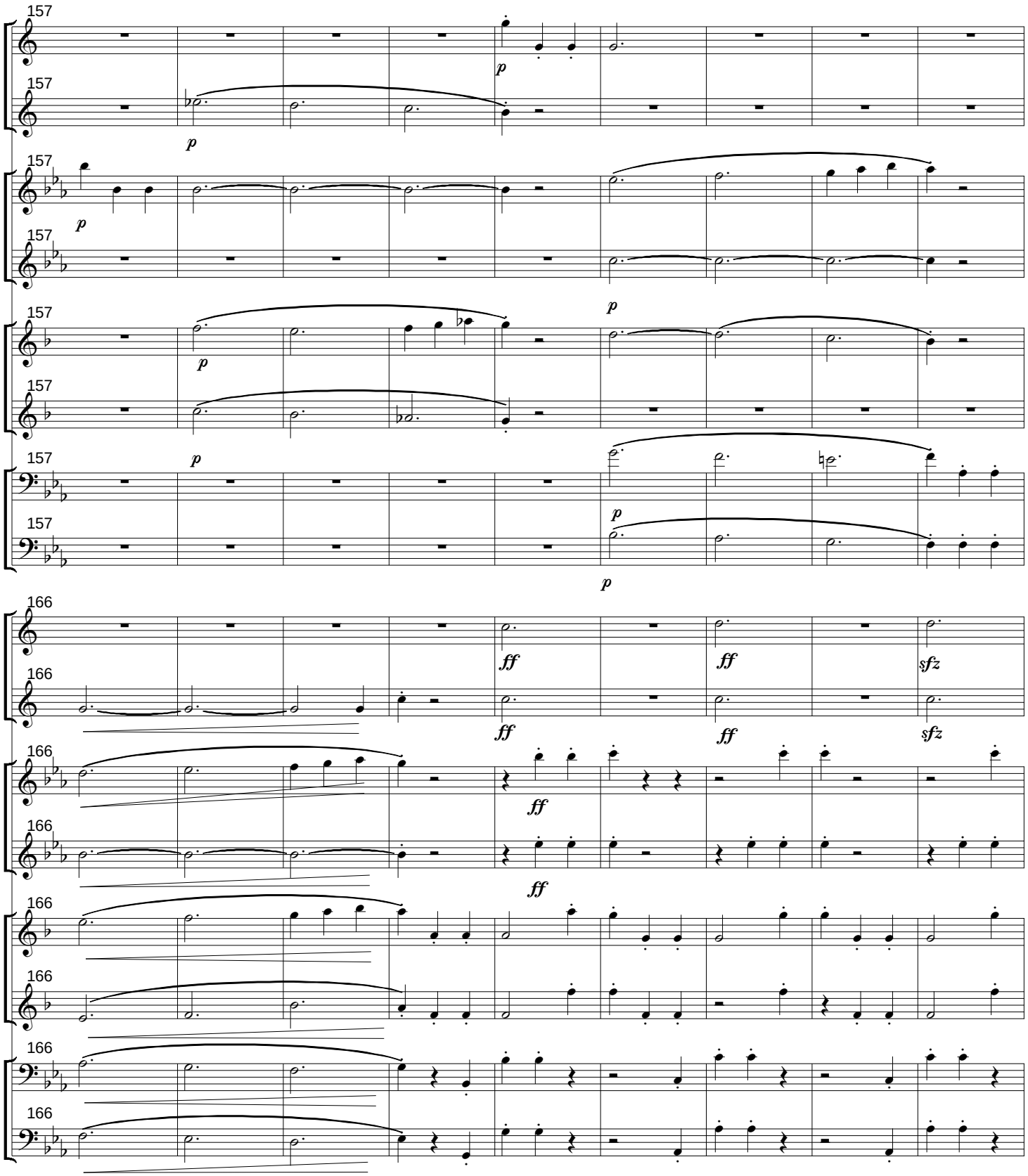
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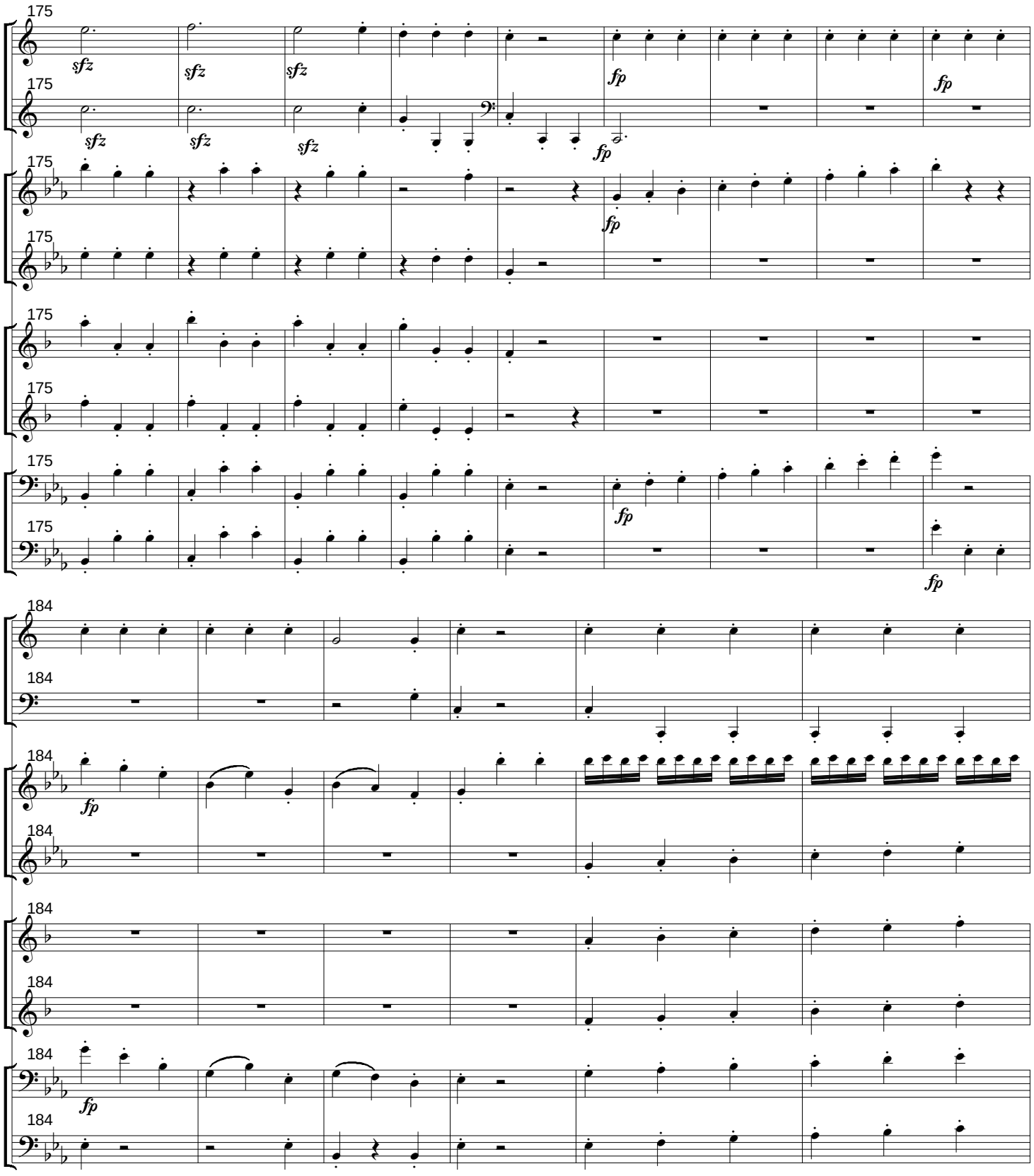
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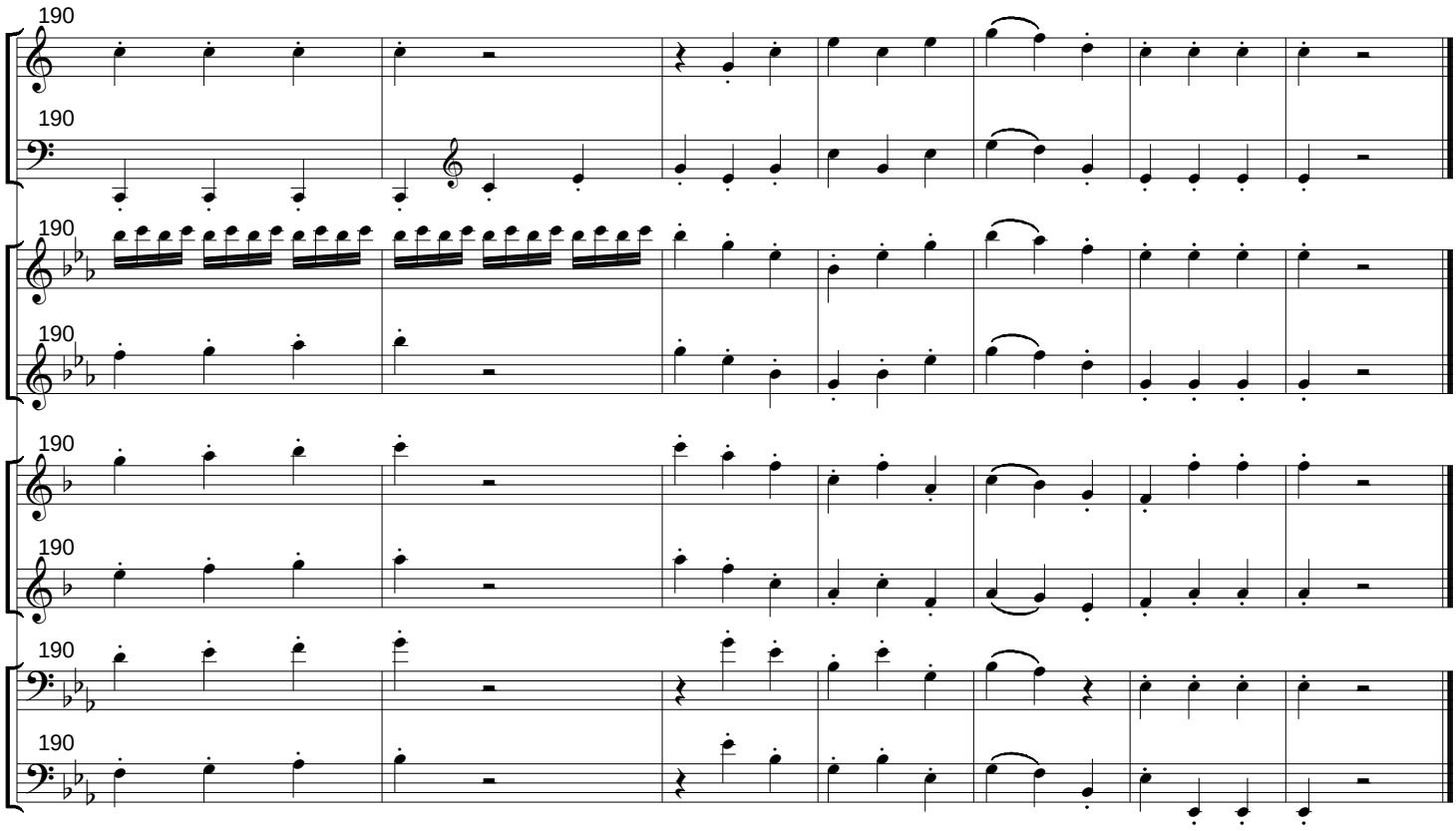
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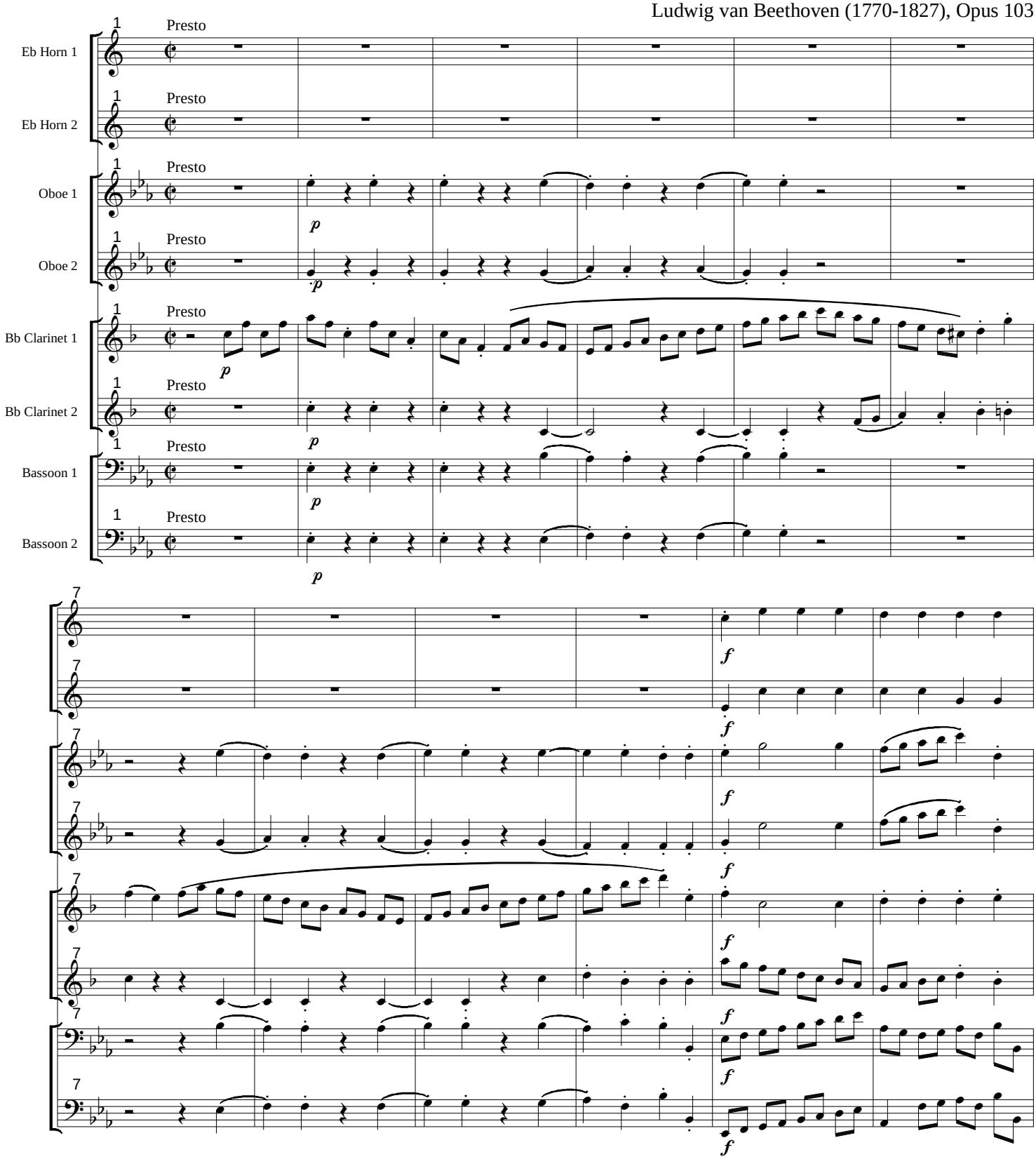
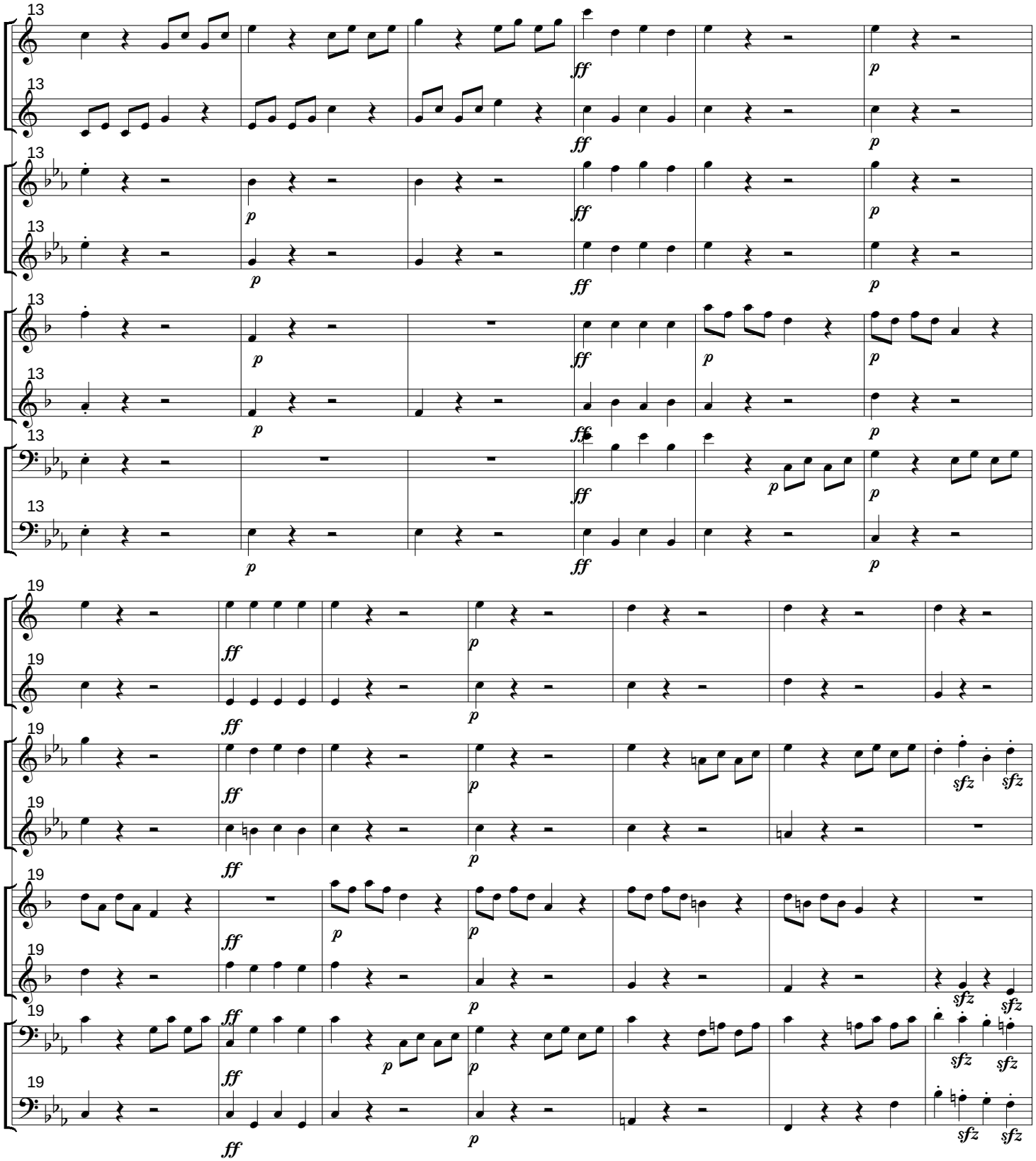
Octett

for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons

IV

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), Opus 103

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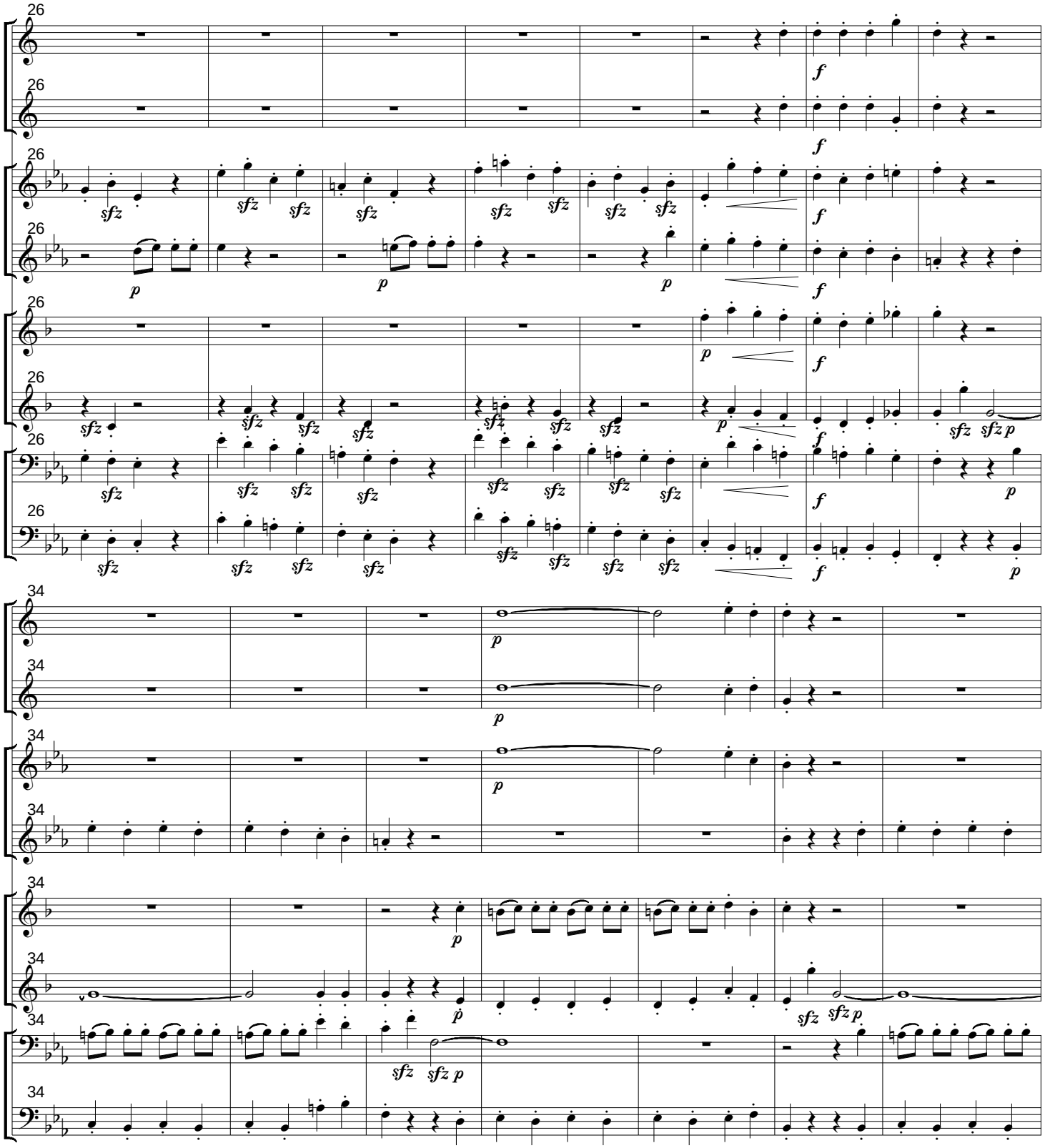
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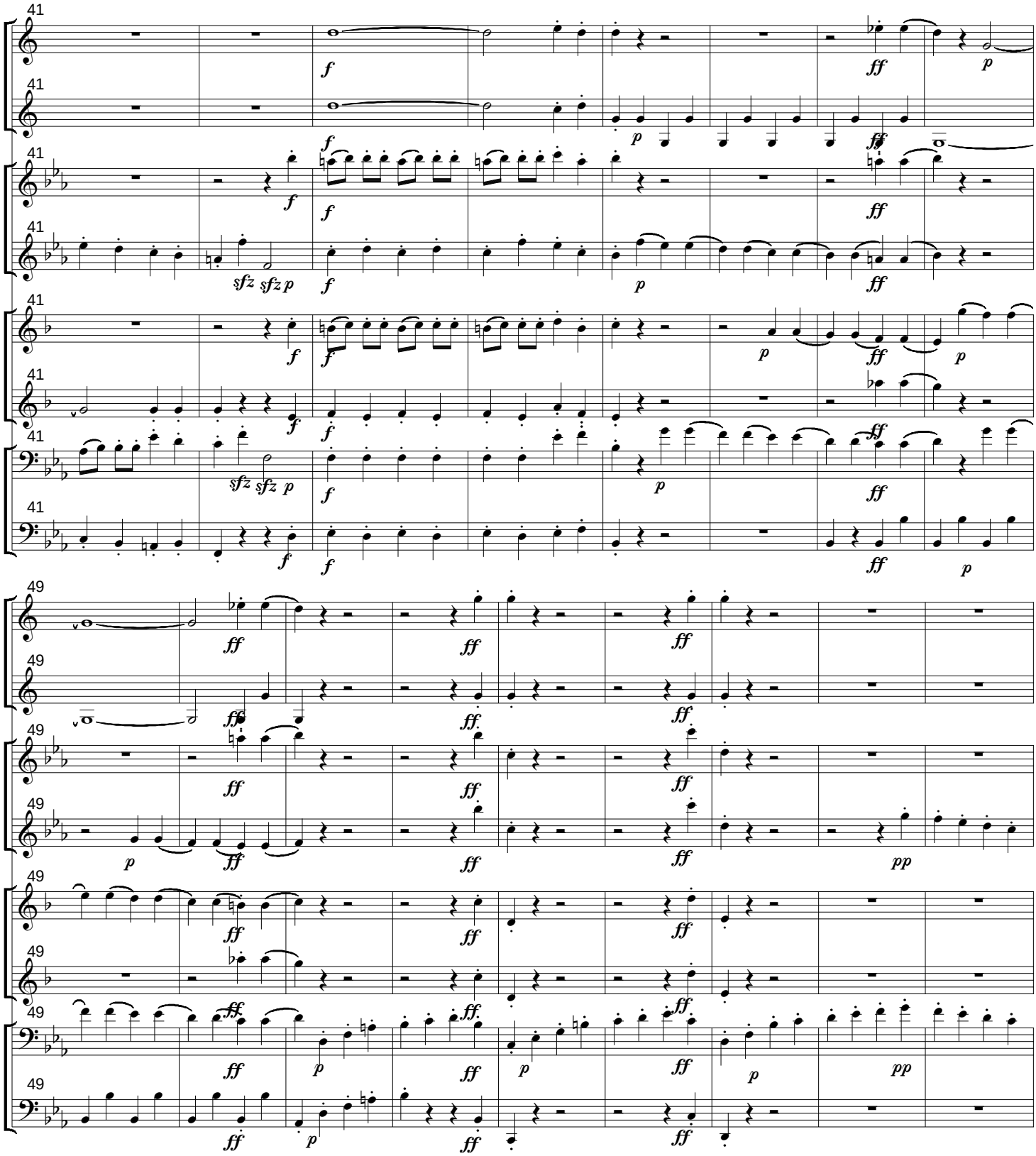
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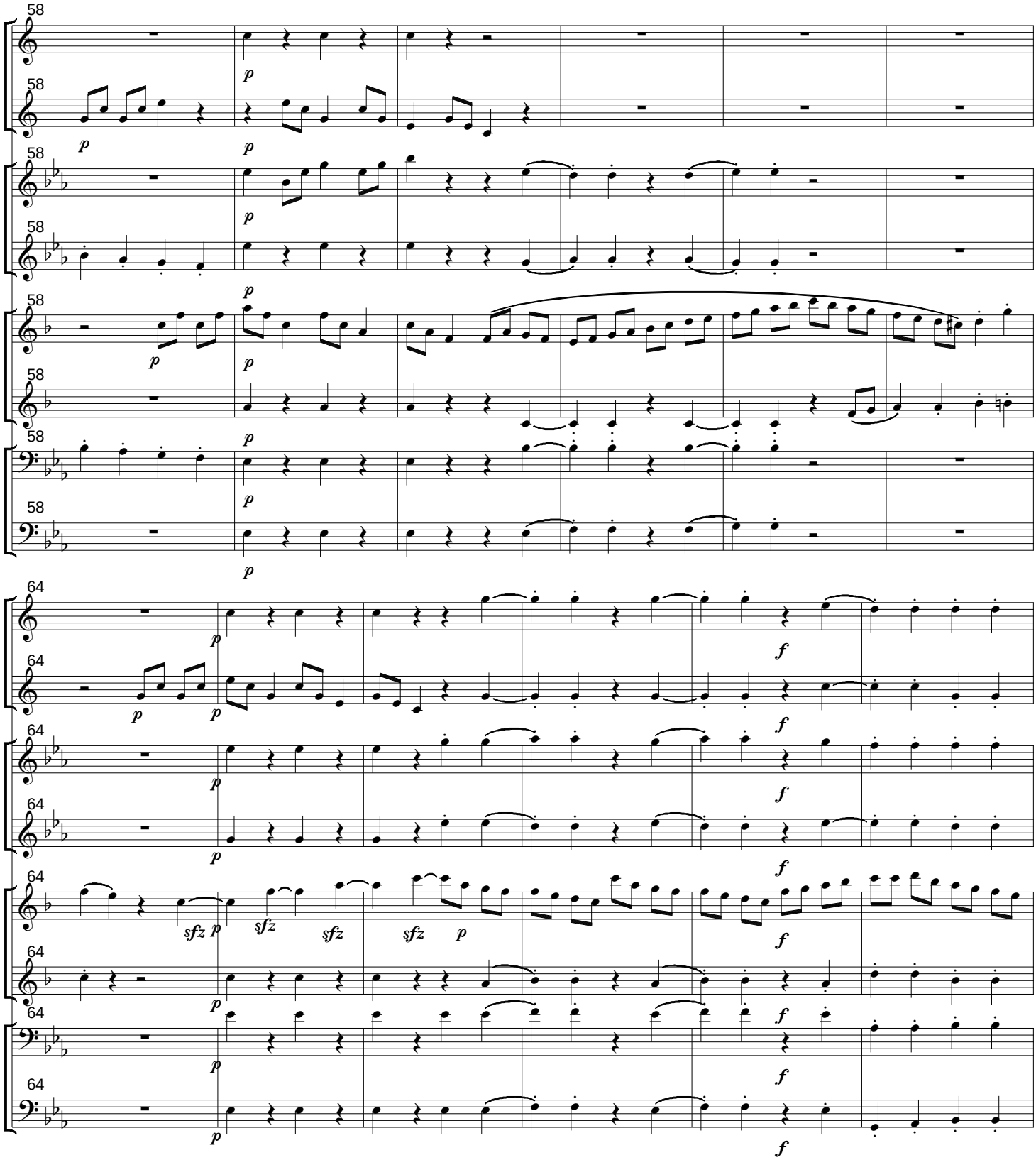
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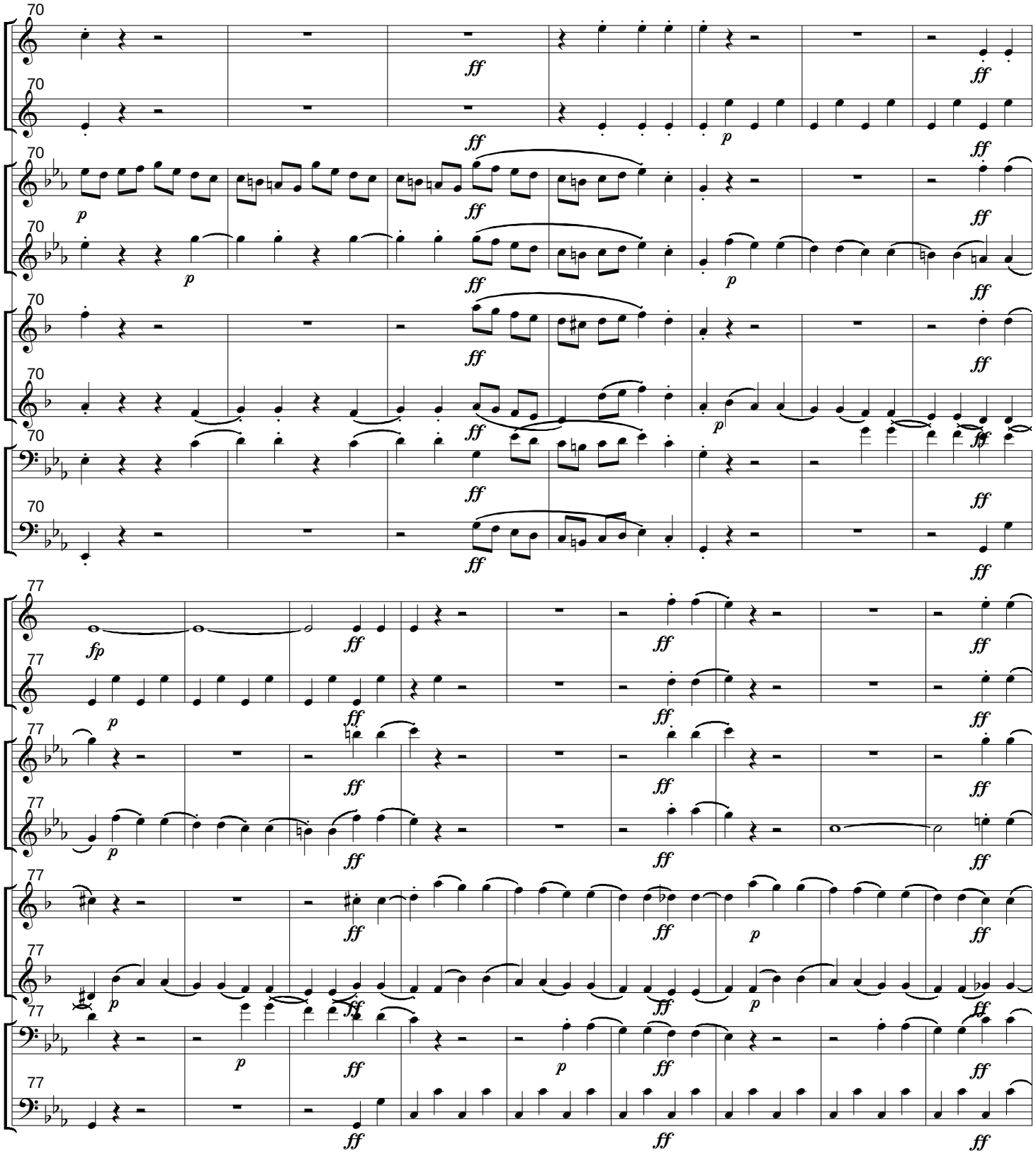
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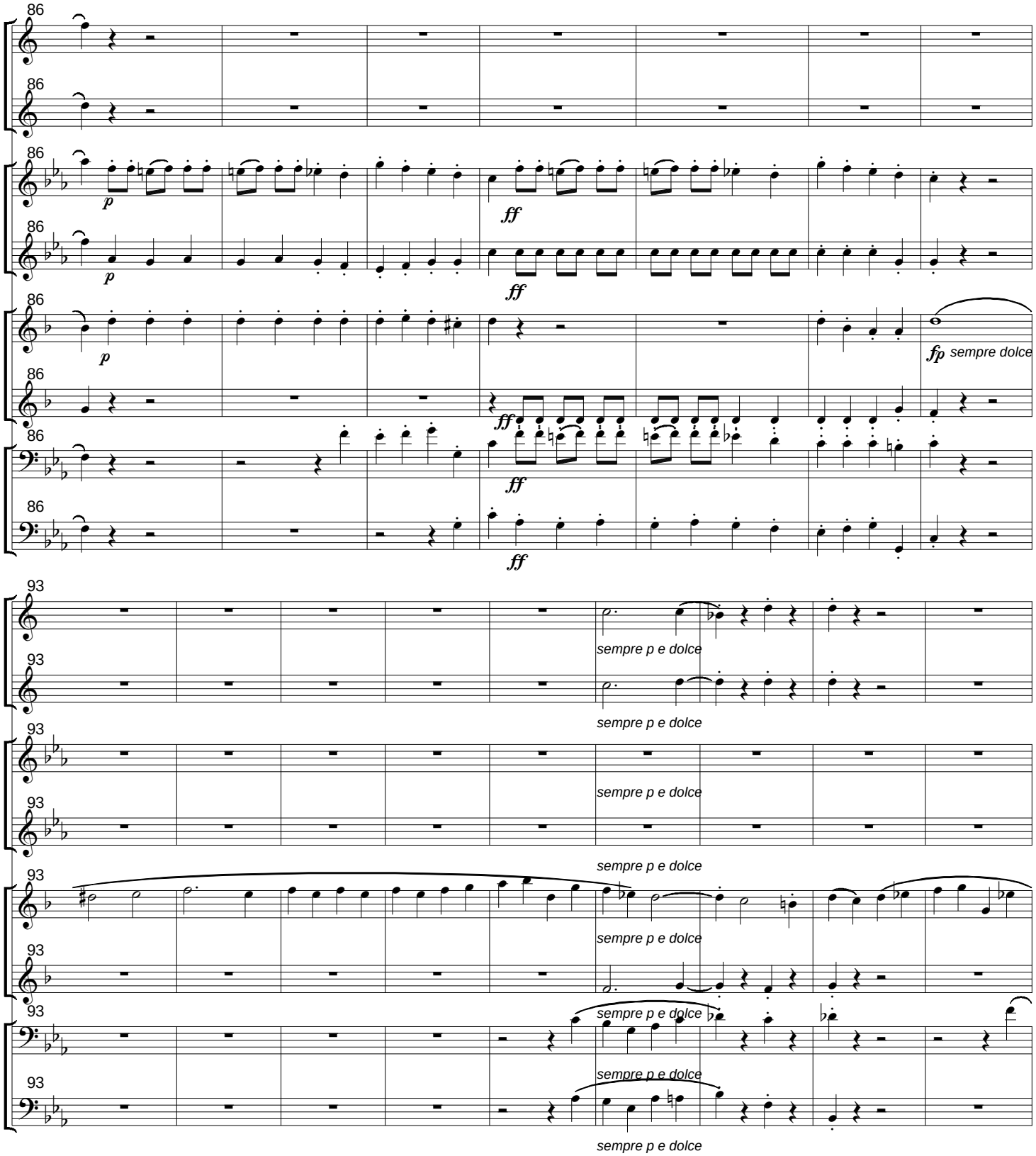
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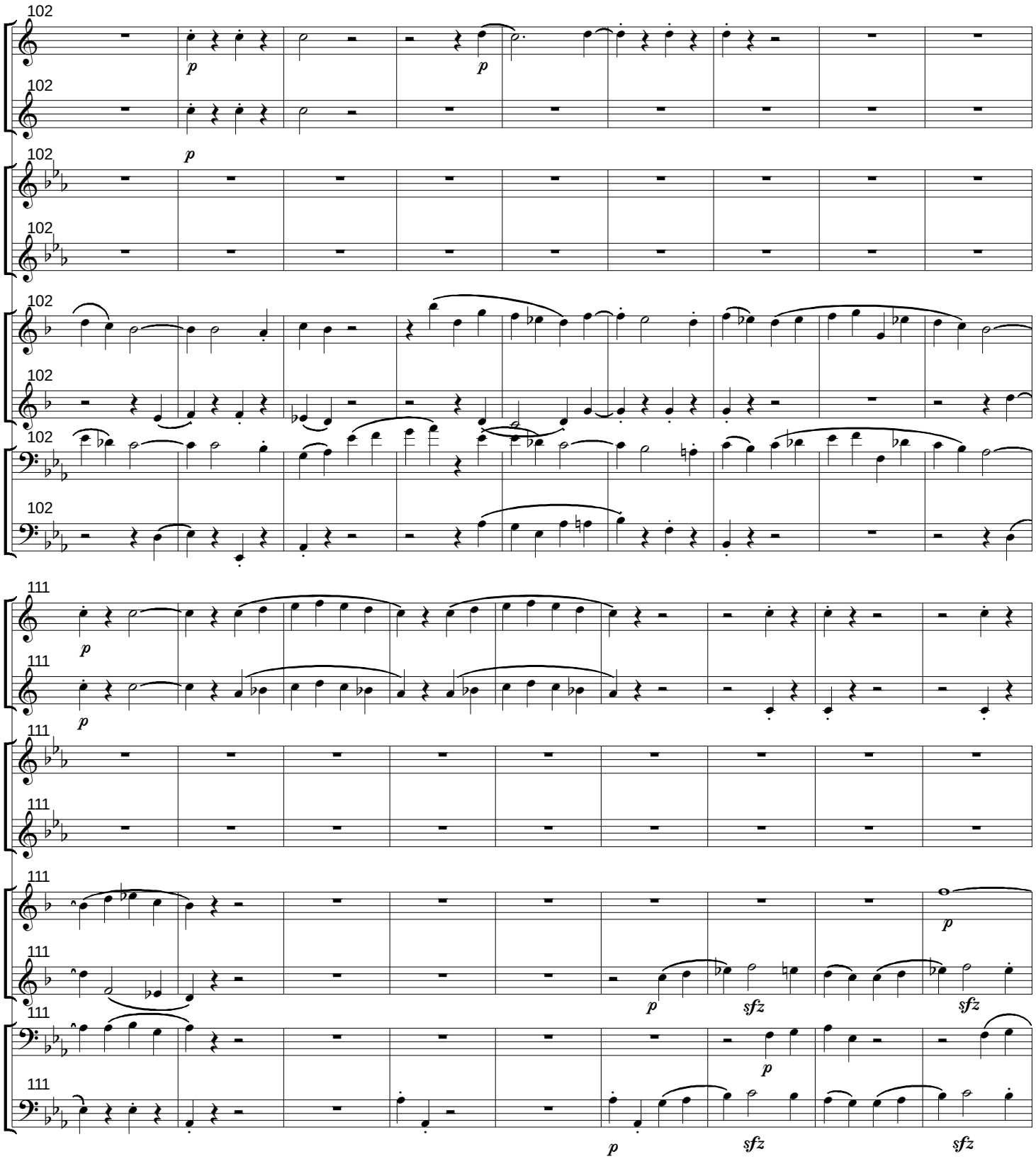
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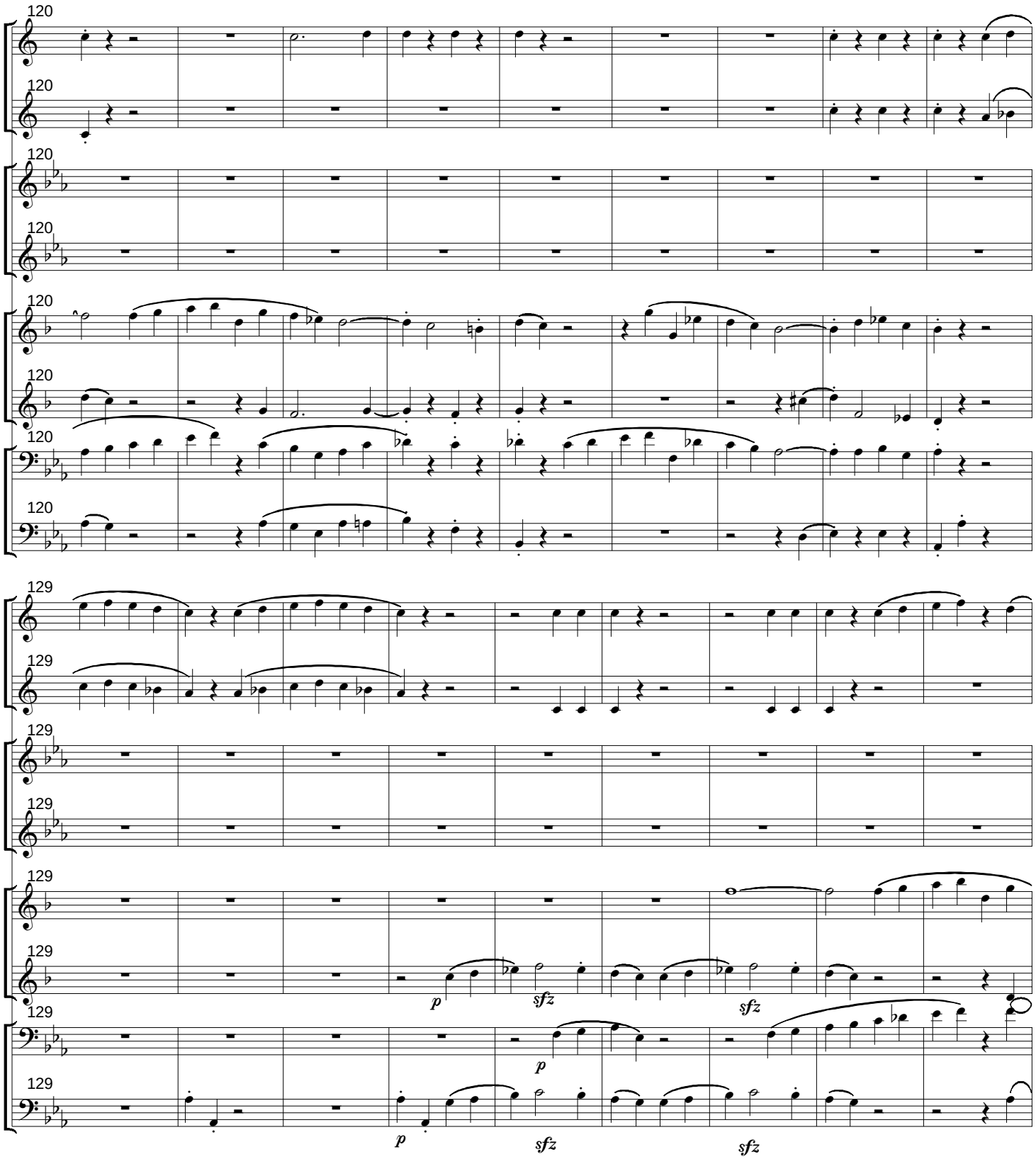
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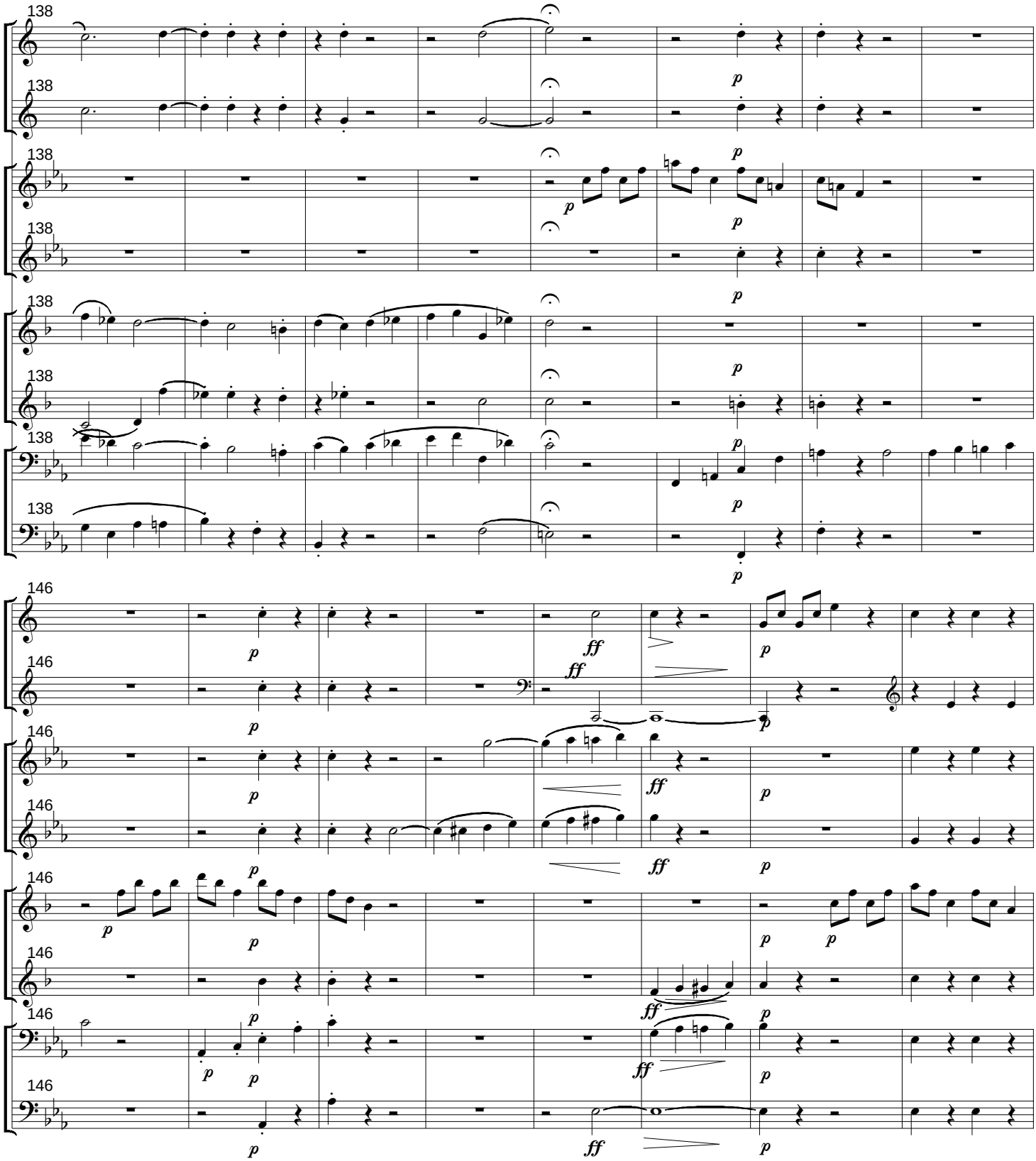
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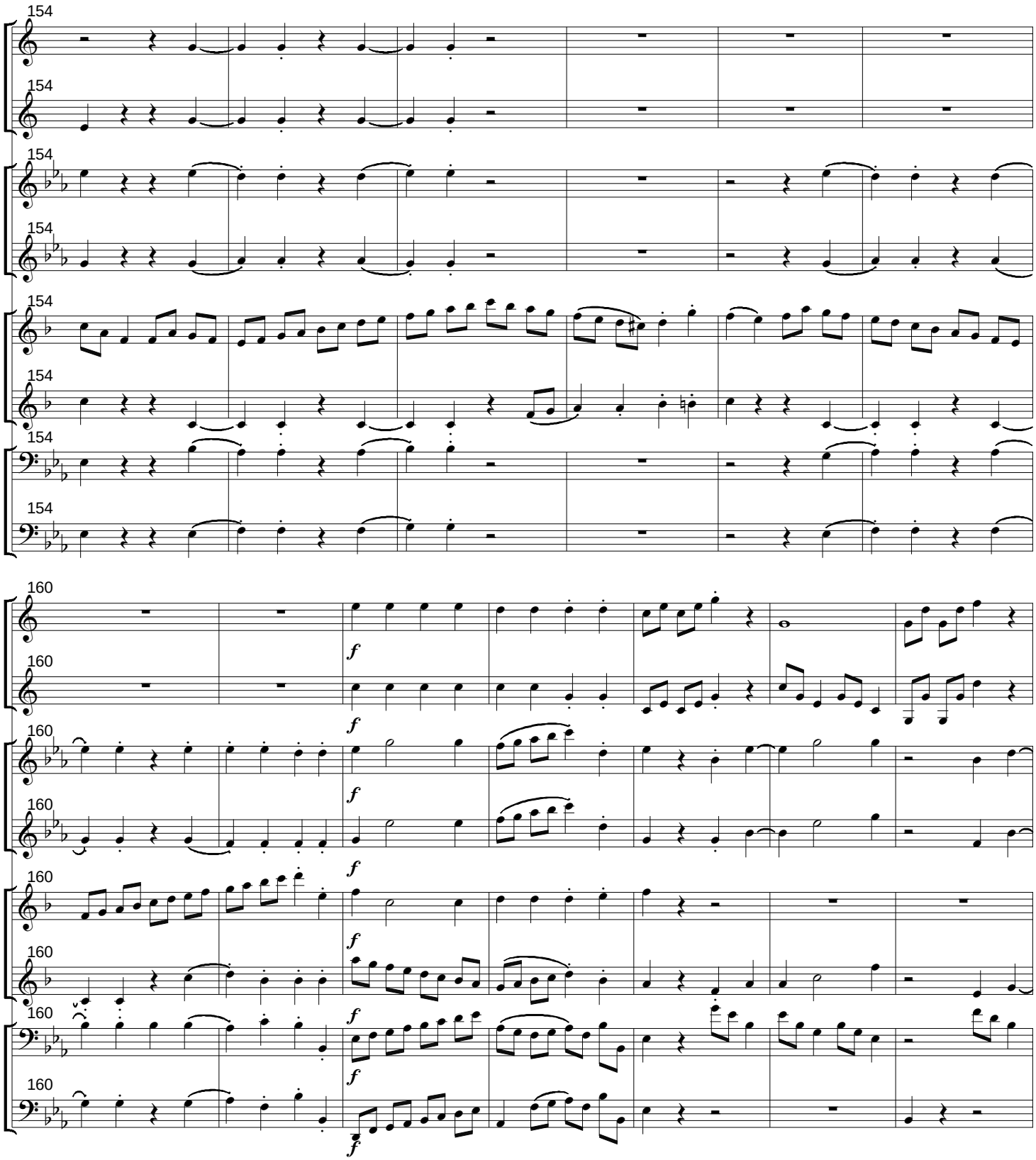
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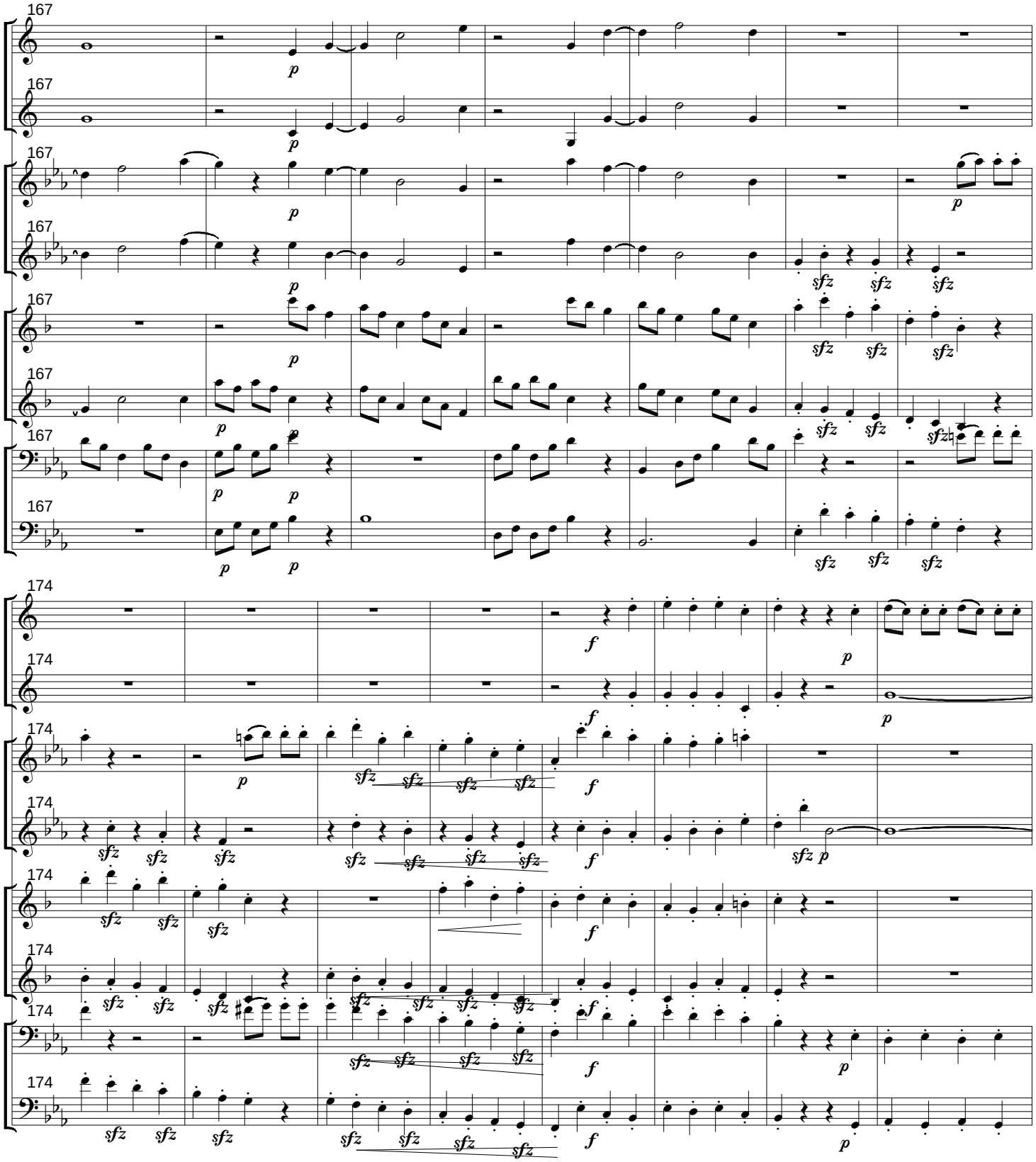
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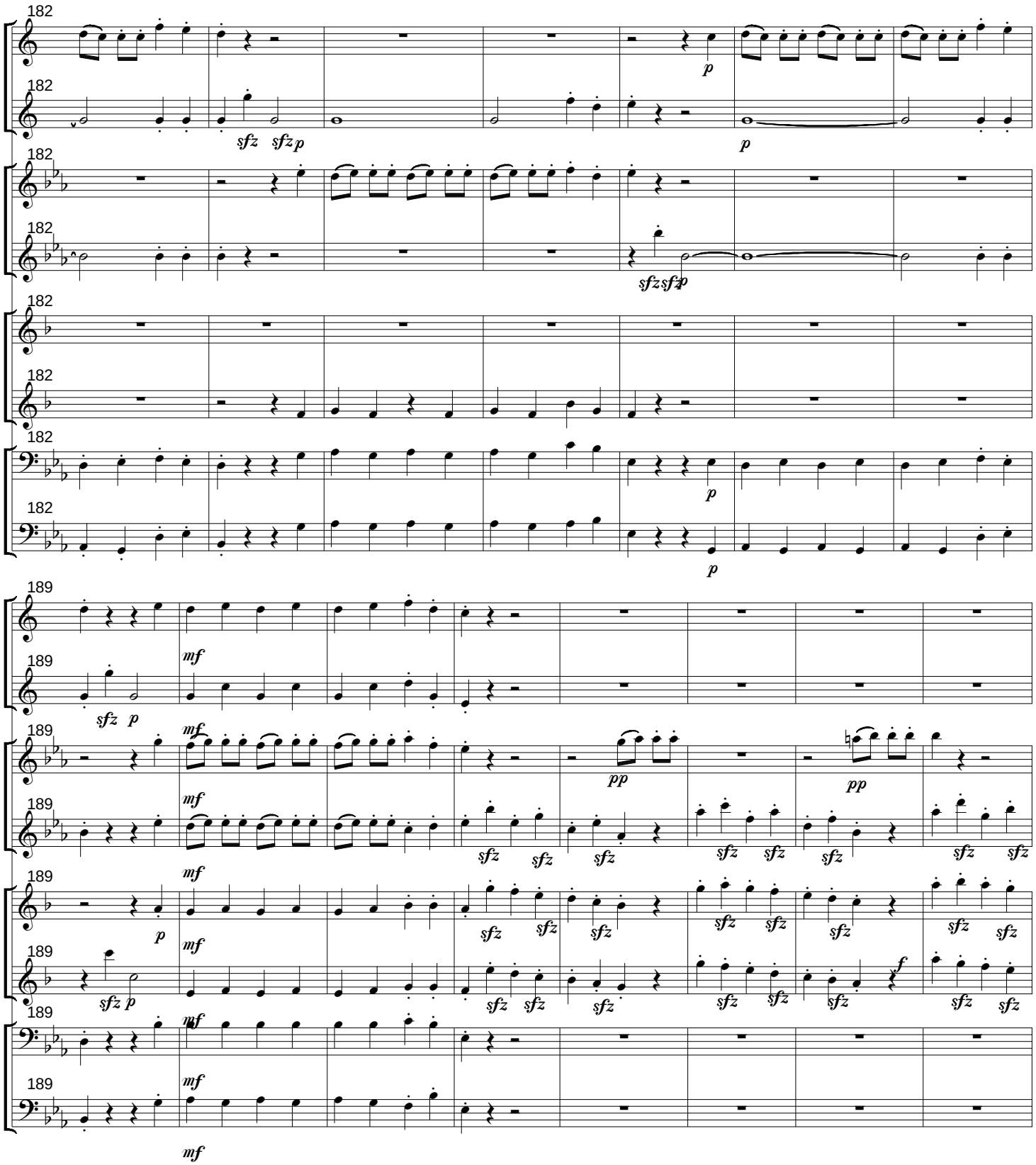
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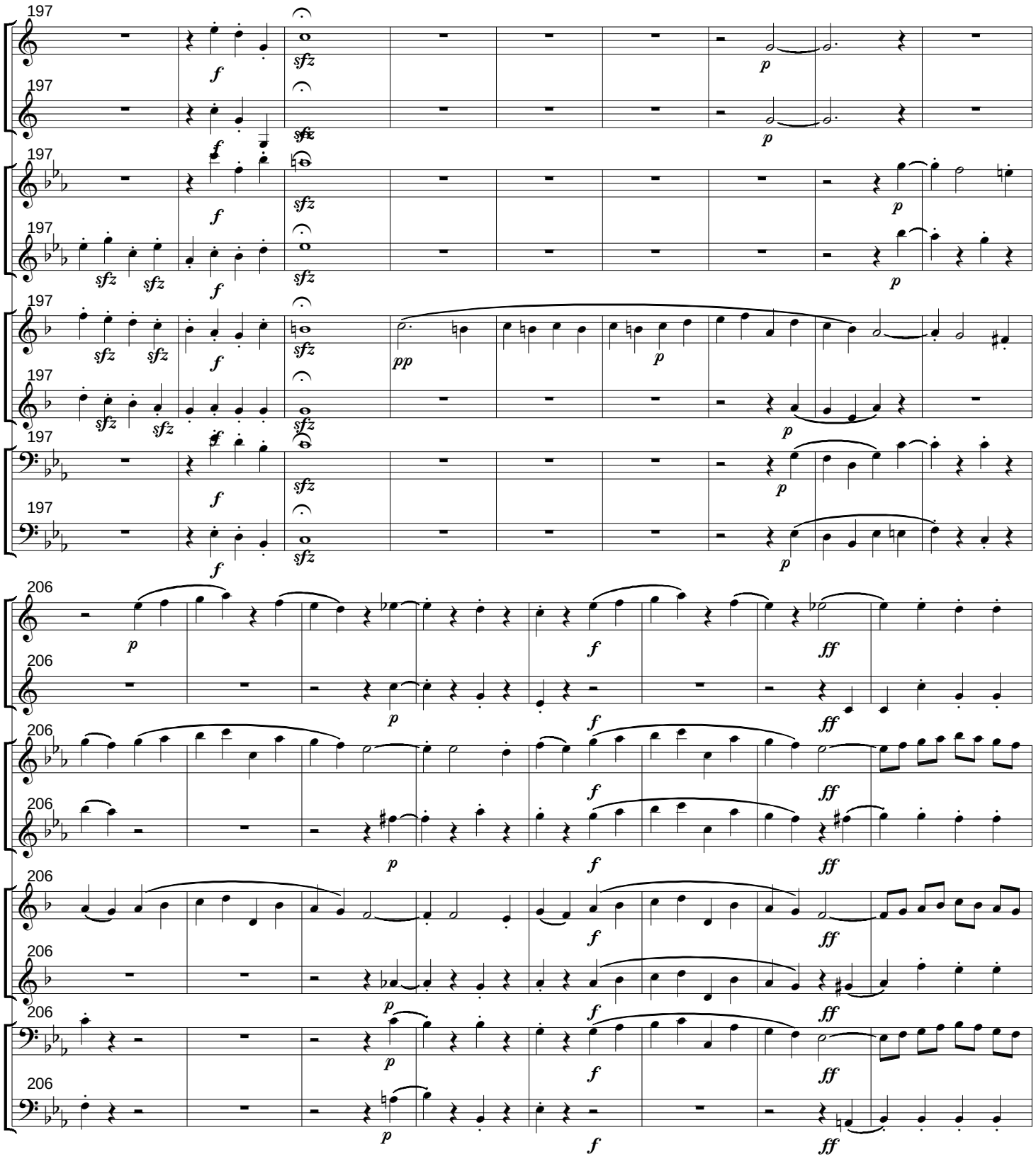
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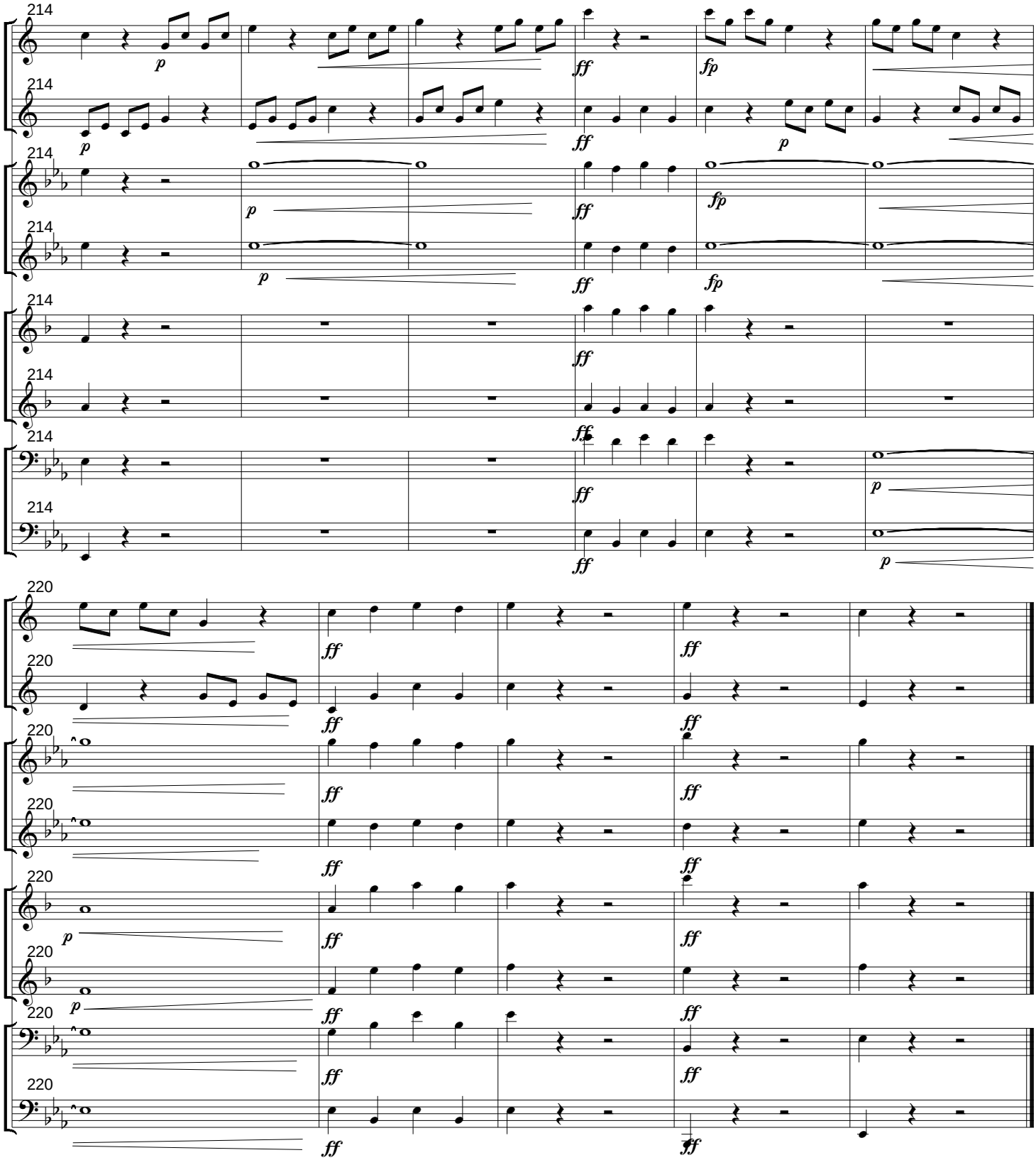
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