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On a Rose of Coals: Scherzo and Variations for String Quartet

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Robert Rothschild

Candidate

Music

Department

This thesis is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Thesis Committee:

,Chairperson

(Richard Hermann)

ON A ROSE OF COALS:
SCHERZO AND VARIATIONS
FOR STRING QUARTET

BY

ROBERT ROTHSCHILD

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS, CONTEMPORARY MUSIC
THE COLLEGE OF SANTA FE, 1999

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Music
Theory and Composition

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May, 2011

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Robert Rothschild

B.F.A. Contemporary Music, The College of Santa Fe, 1999

ABSTRACT

On a Rose of Coals is a single movement composed for string quartet and is approximately eleven minutes in duration. The work revolves around ostinati which incorporate rhythmic characteristics of West African and Balkan traditional music, against which are set melodies which emphasize the conflict between a bitonal and composite reading. Polyrhythmic structures and assymetrical rhythms dominate the work, and are used to effect many of the metric modulations between sections of the piece. The tension between a solid, relatively stable modal center and a melody which continually pulls toward disintegration of tonal stasis characterizes the work at large. The final section explores the inherent dissonances in a seemingly tonal ostinato, a discord which ultimately eclipses the sense of tonal and rhythmic stability entirely.

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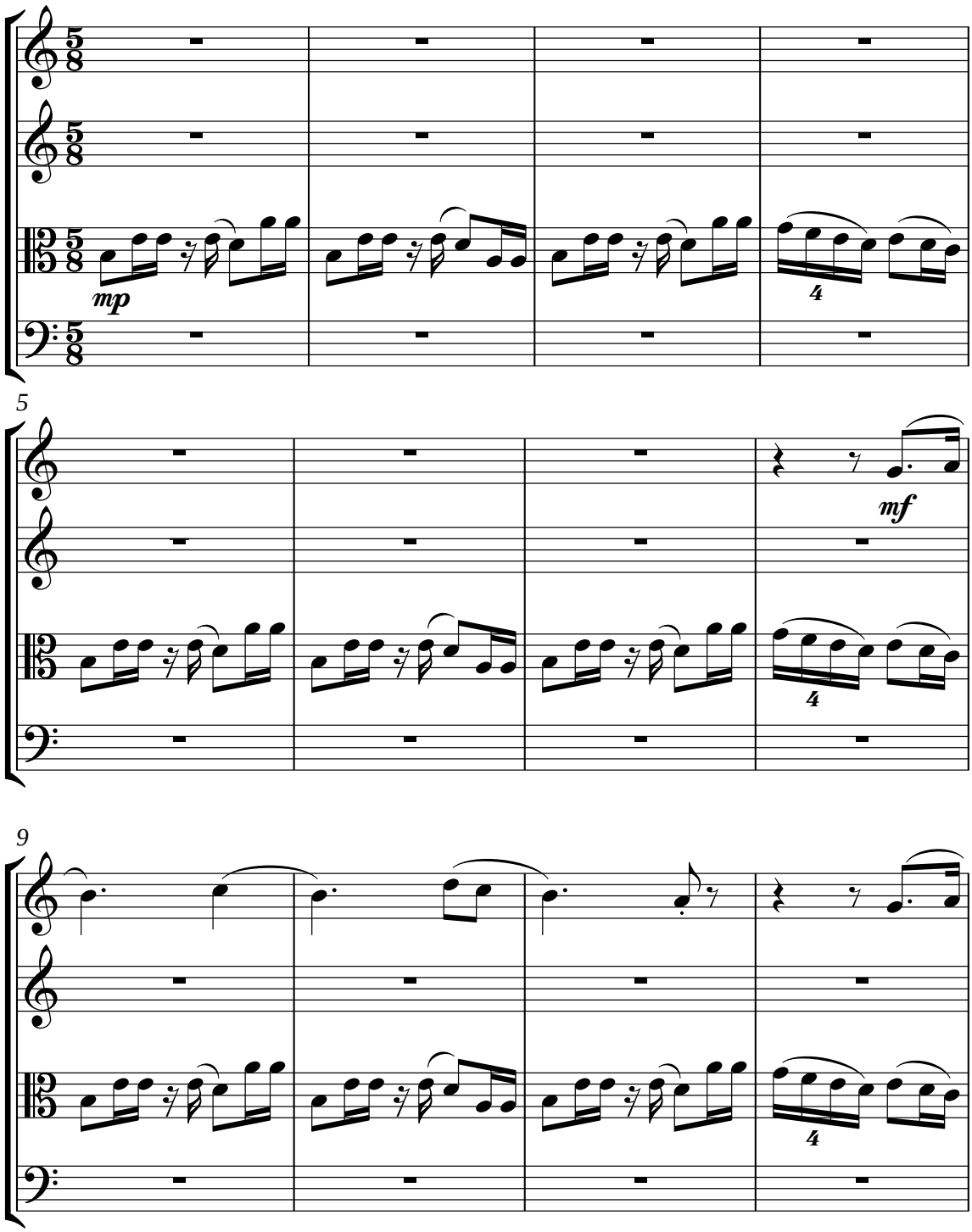
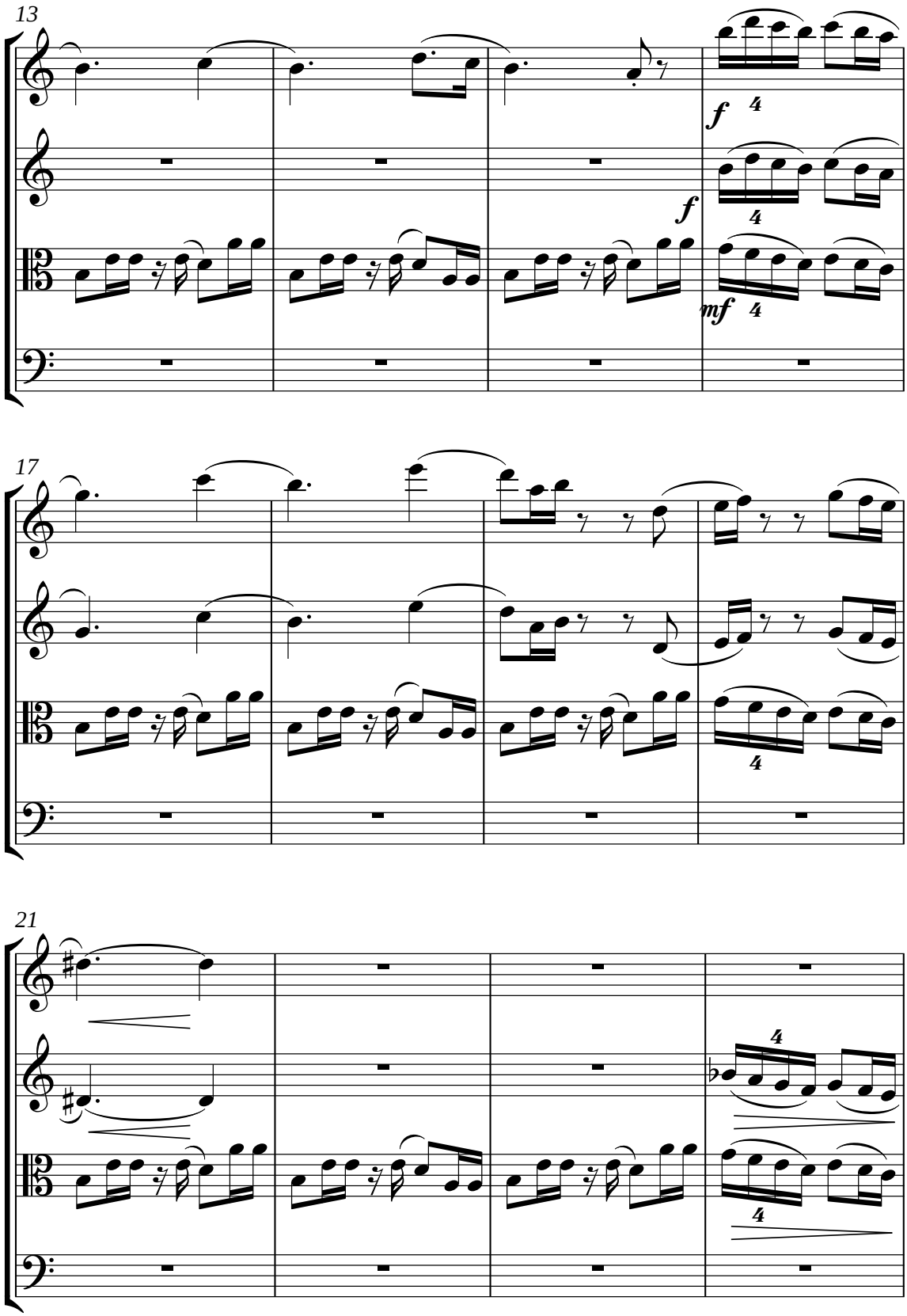
SCORE..... 1

♪=220 - with mischief

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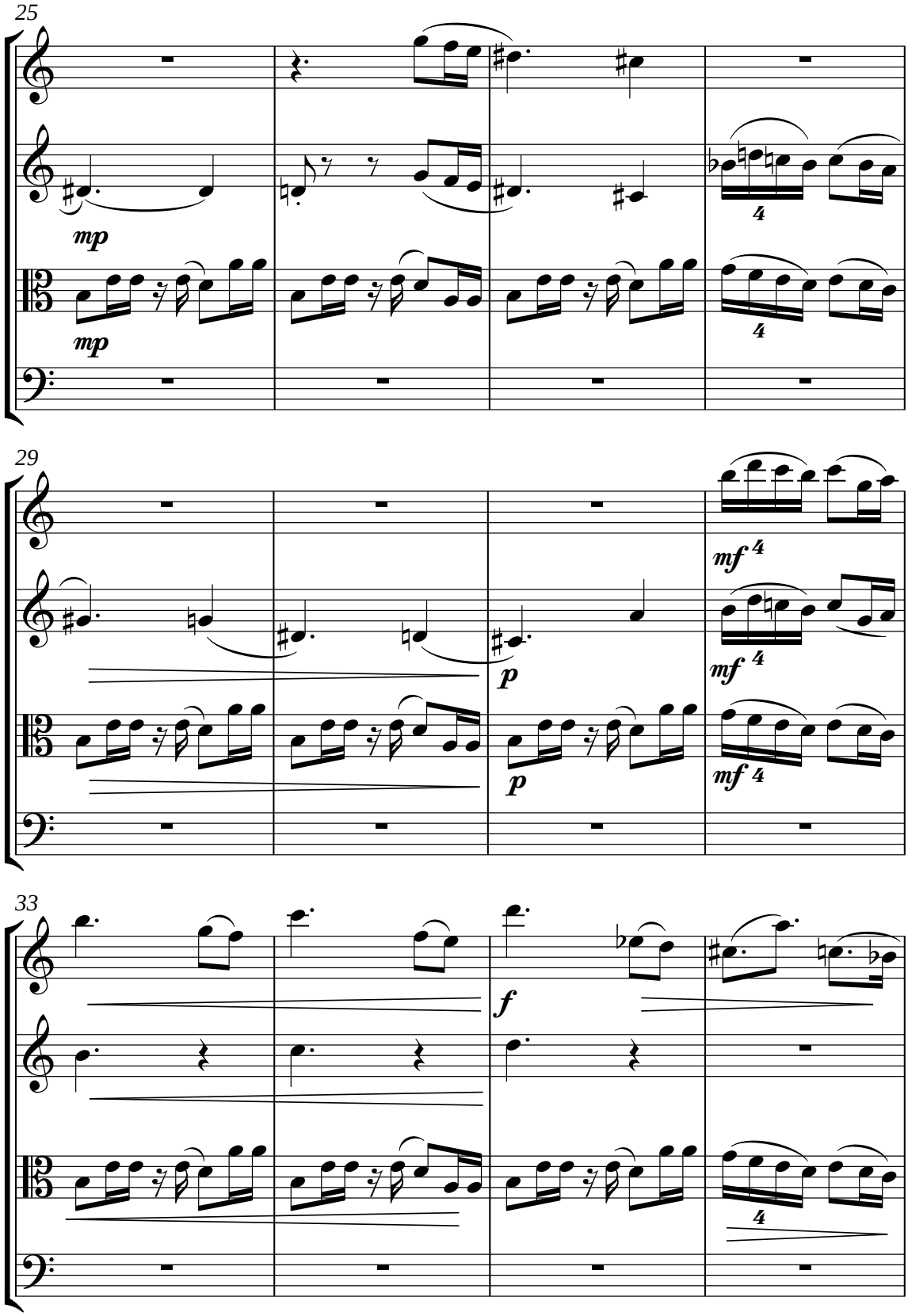
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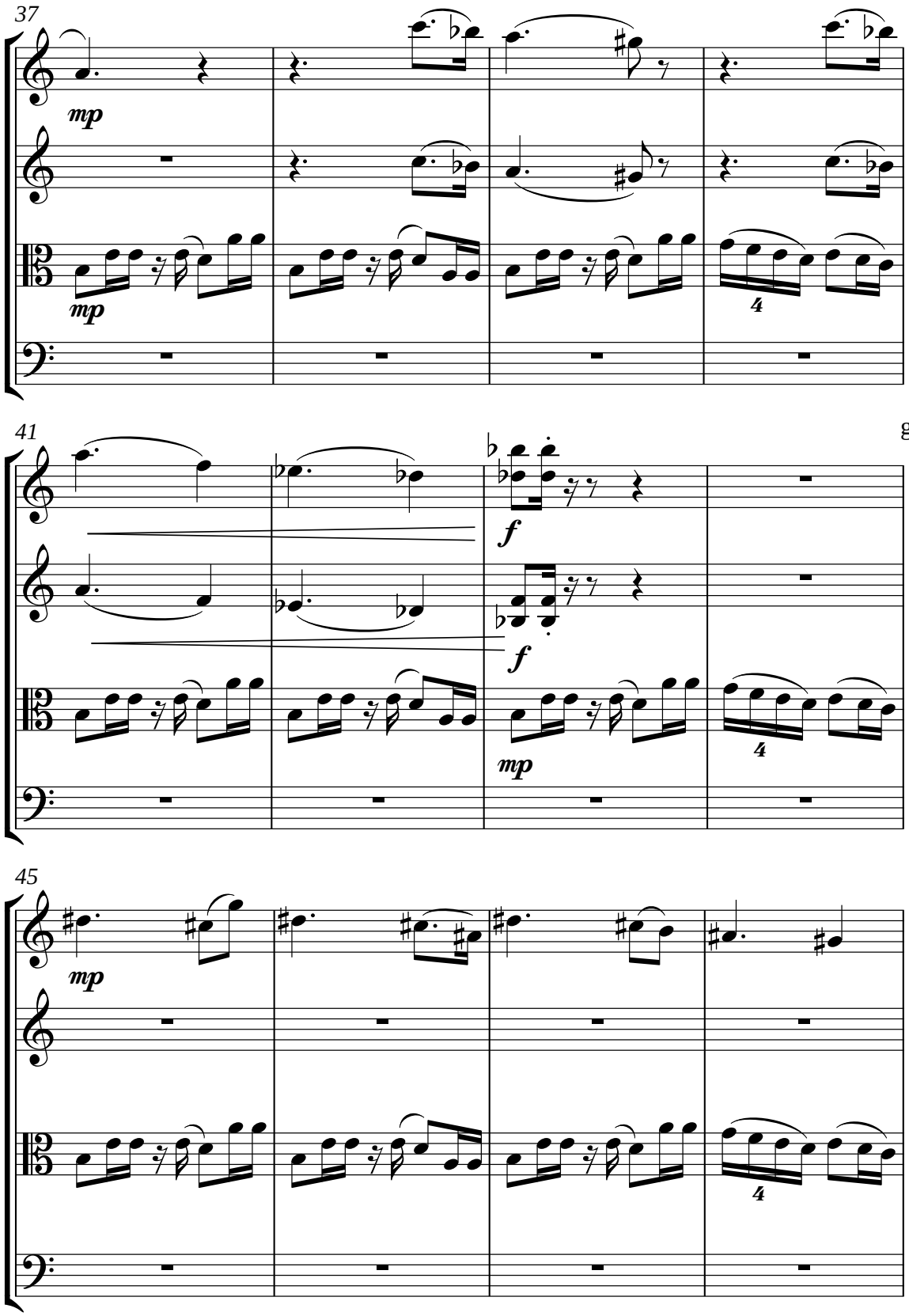

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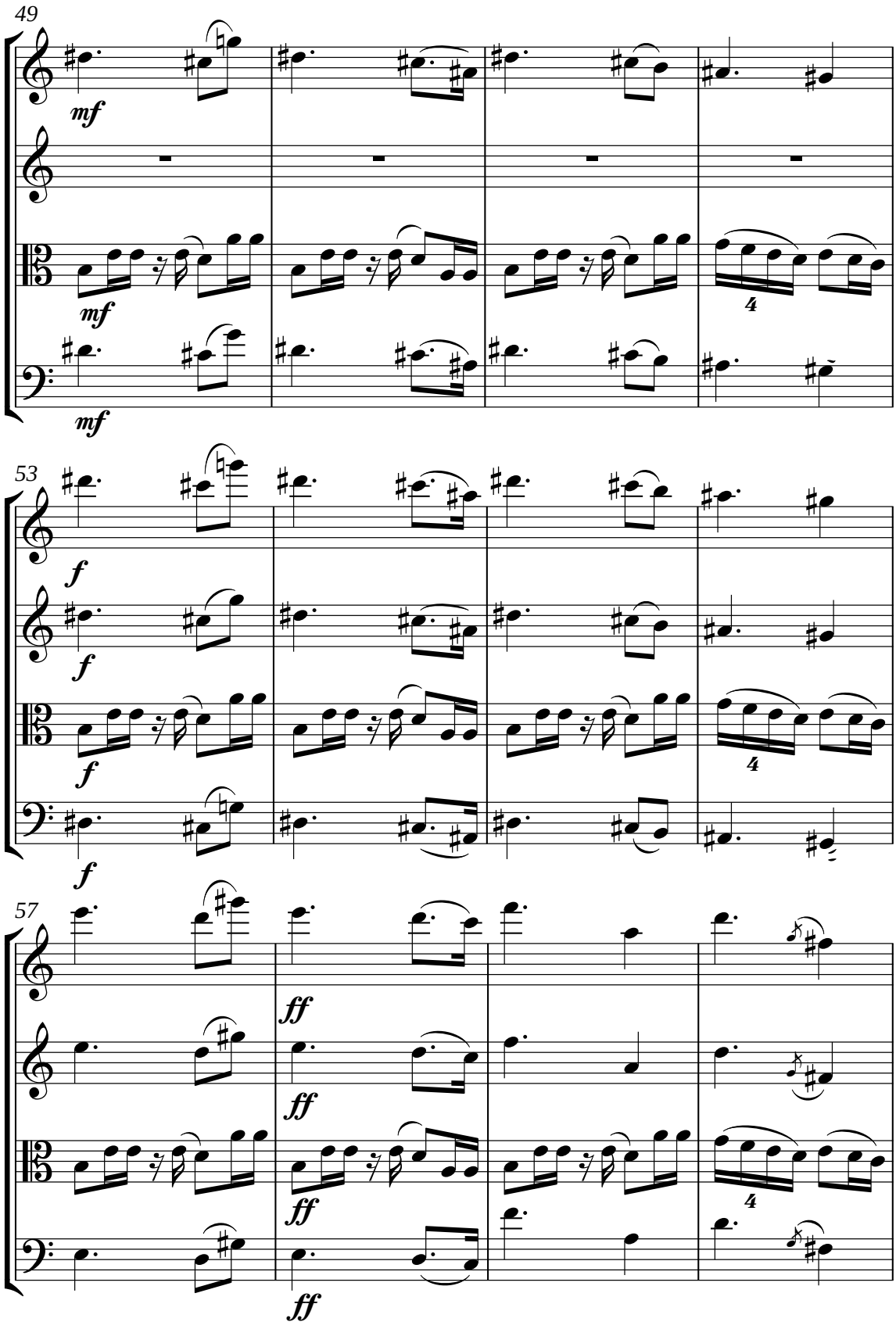
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4
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ff
ff
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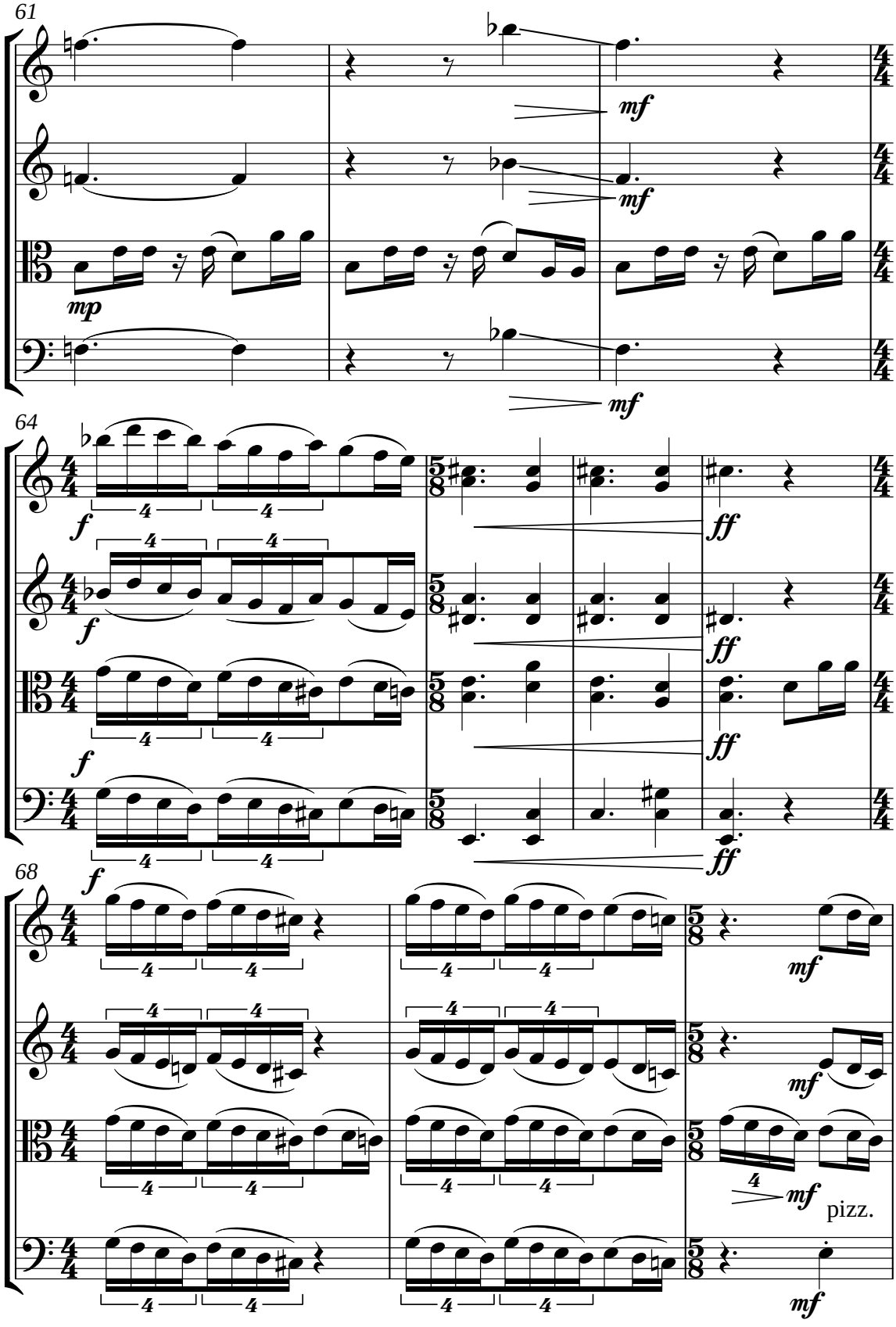
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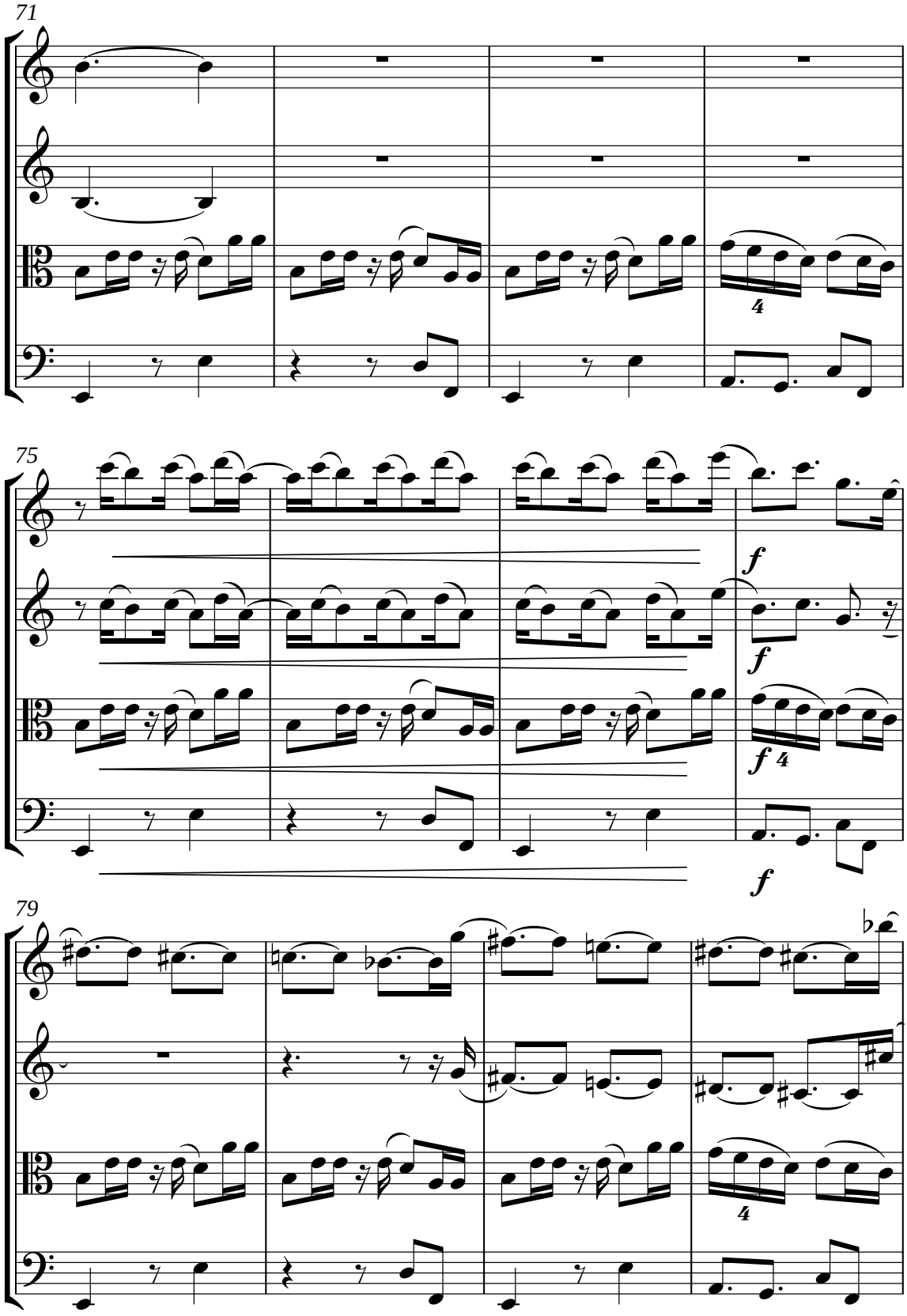
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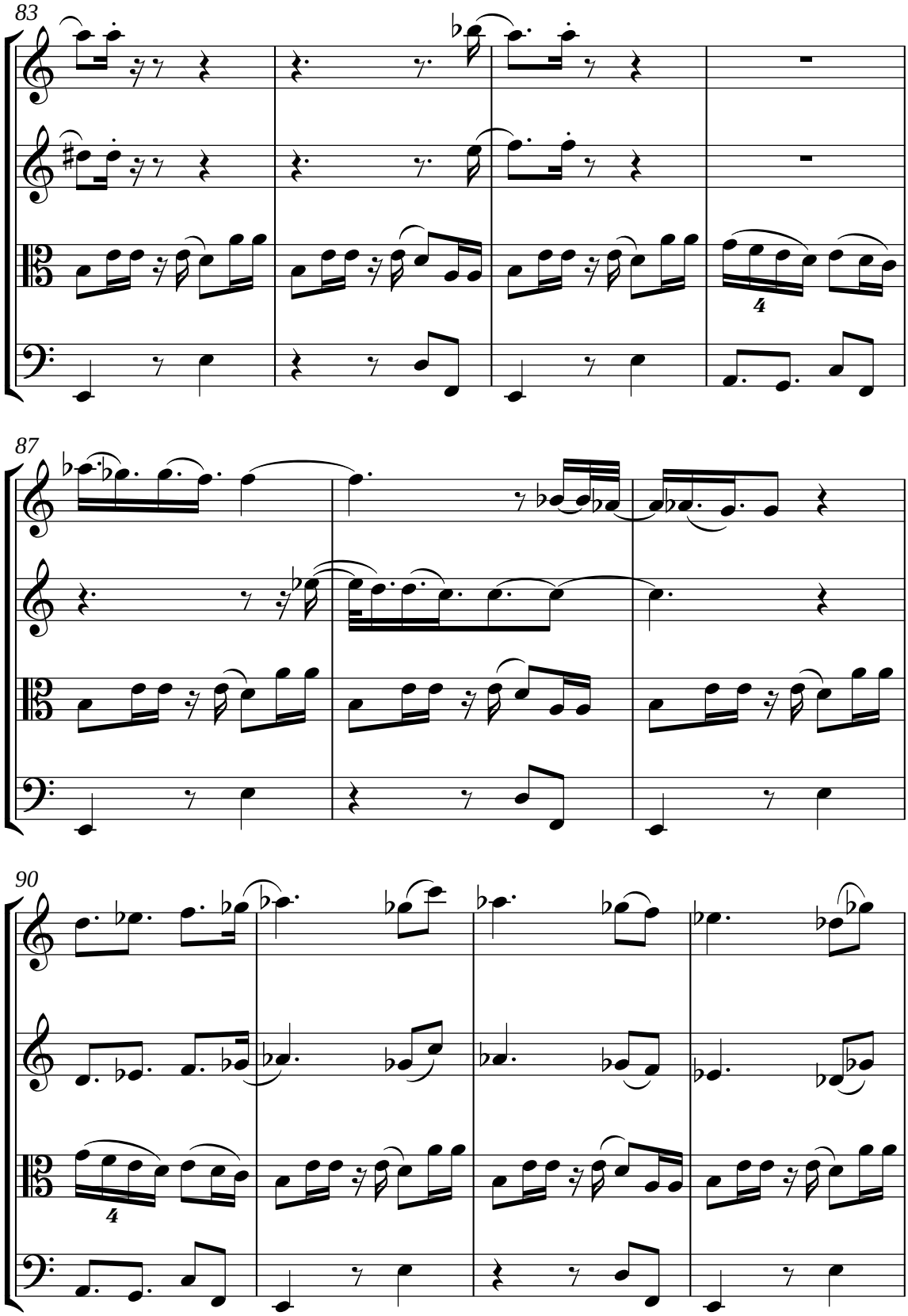
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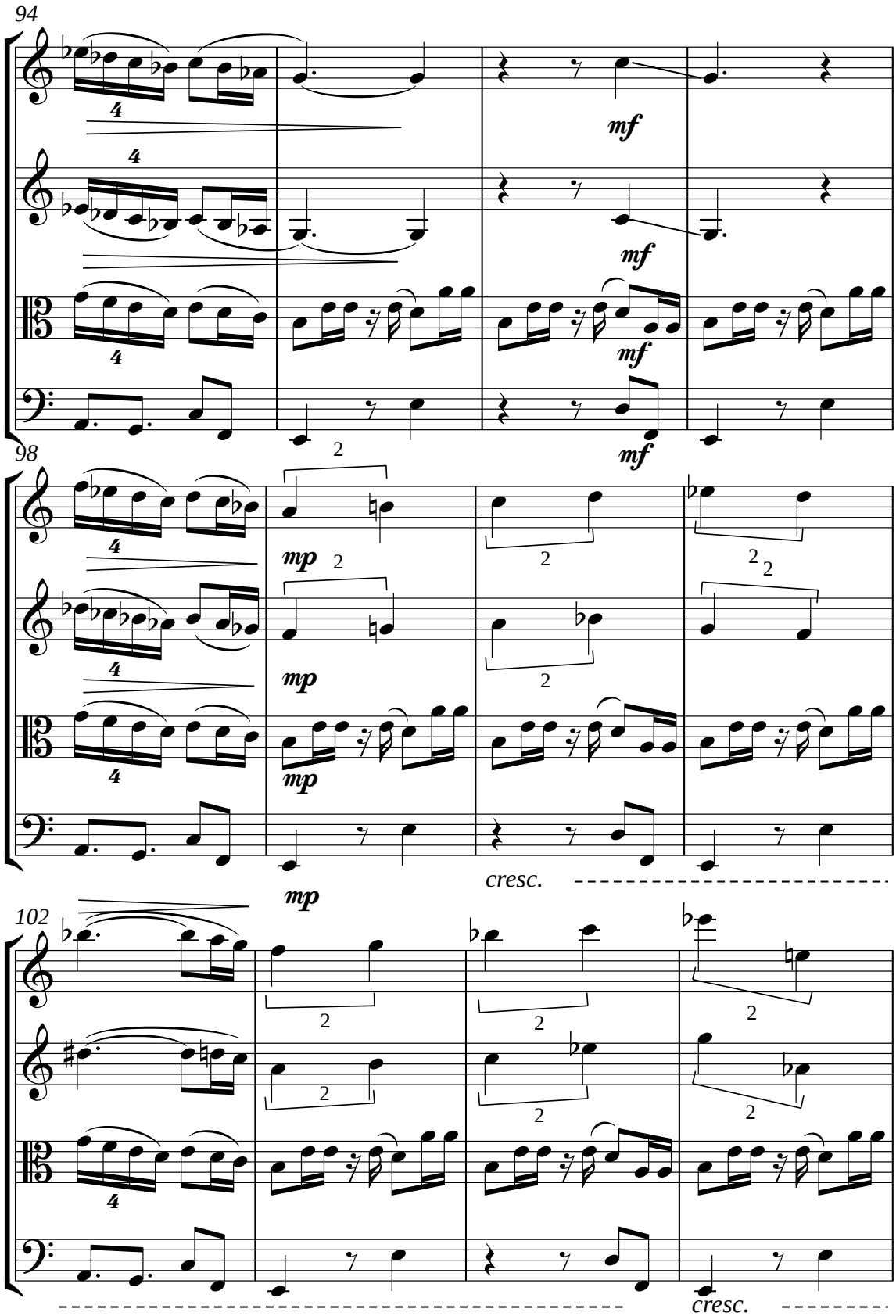
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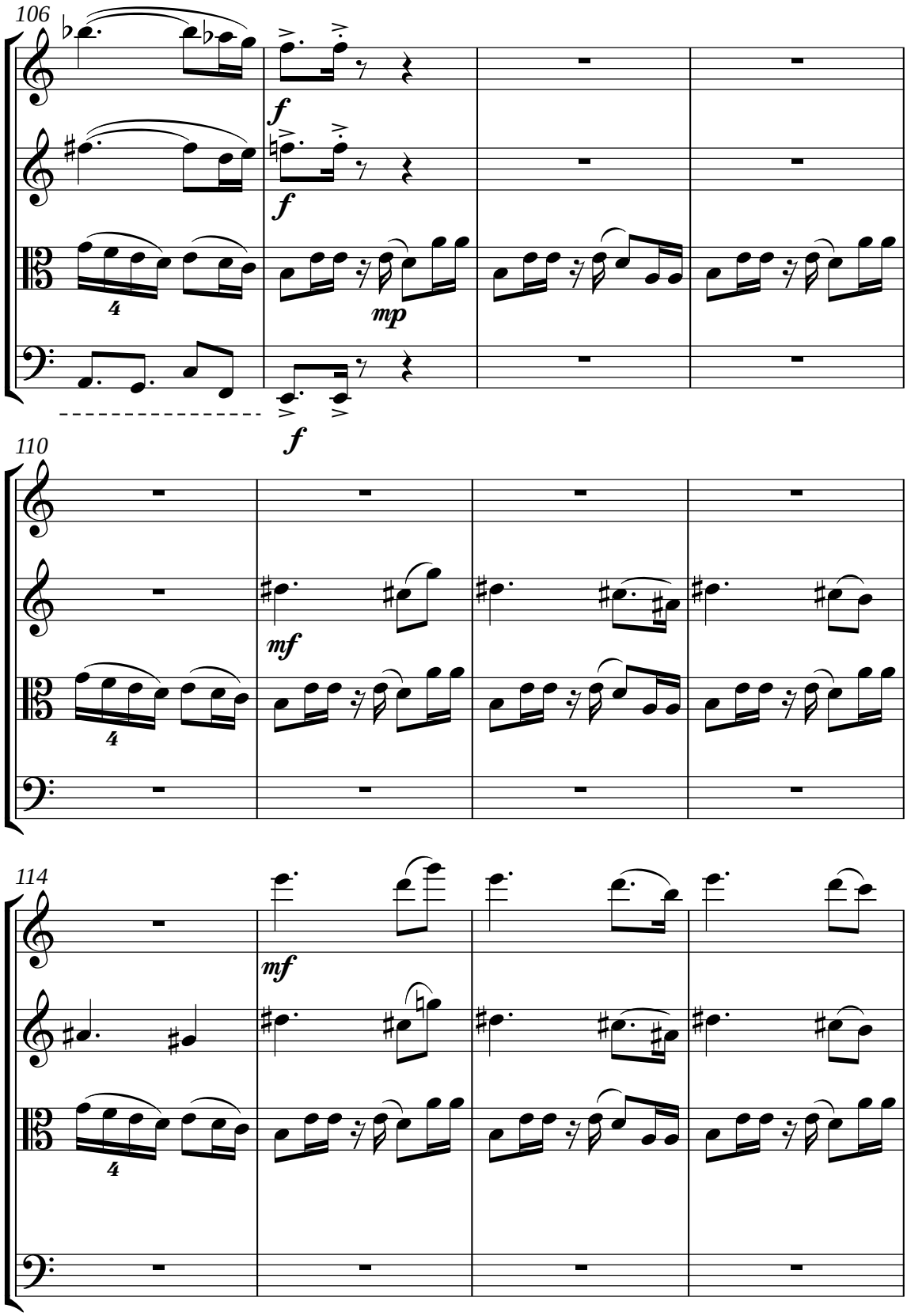
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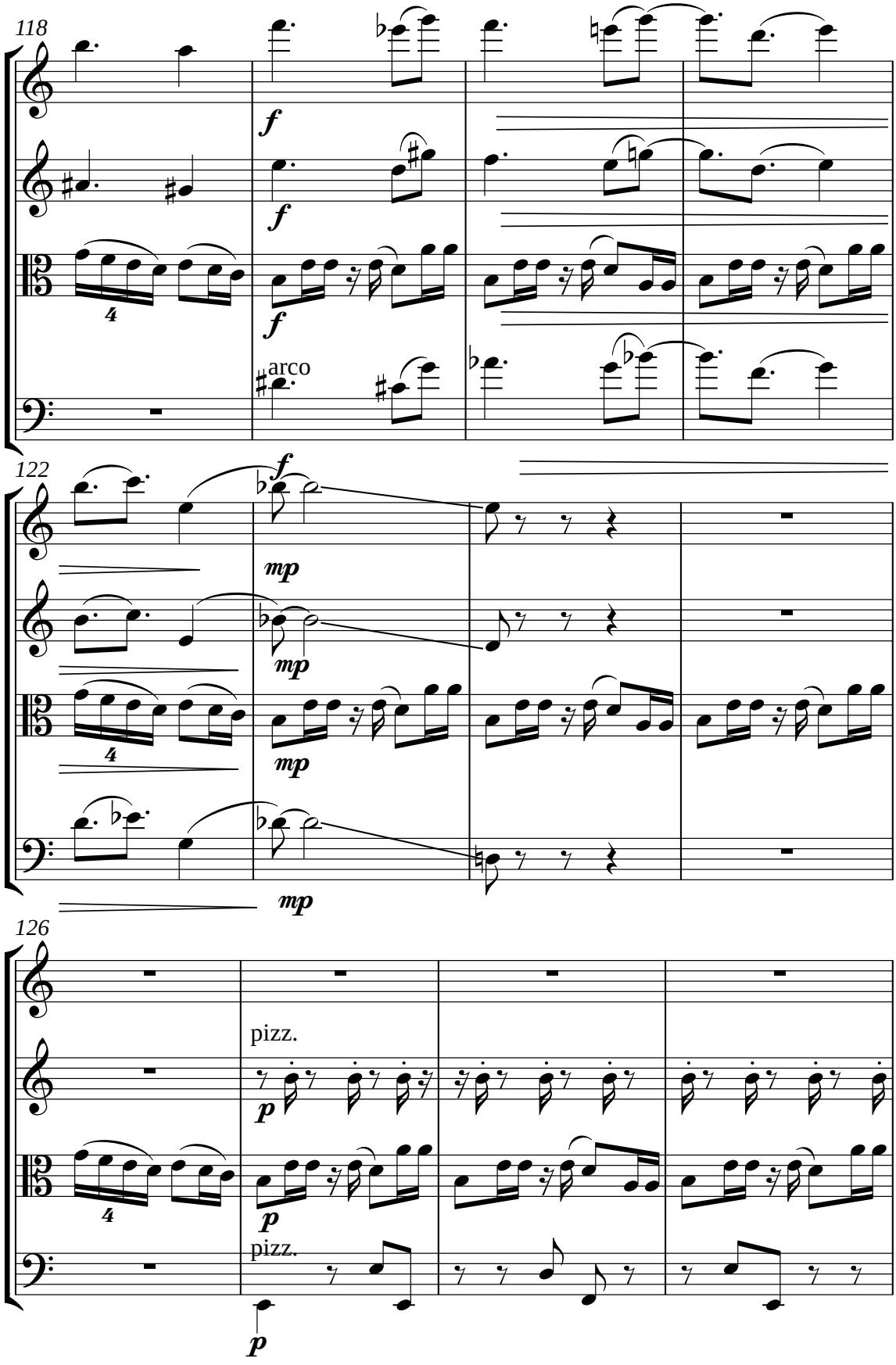
mf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mp
mp
mp
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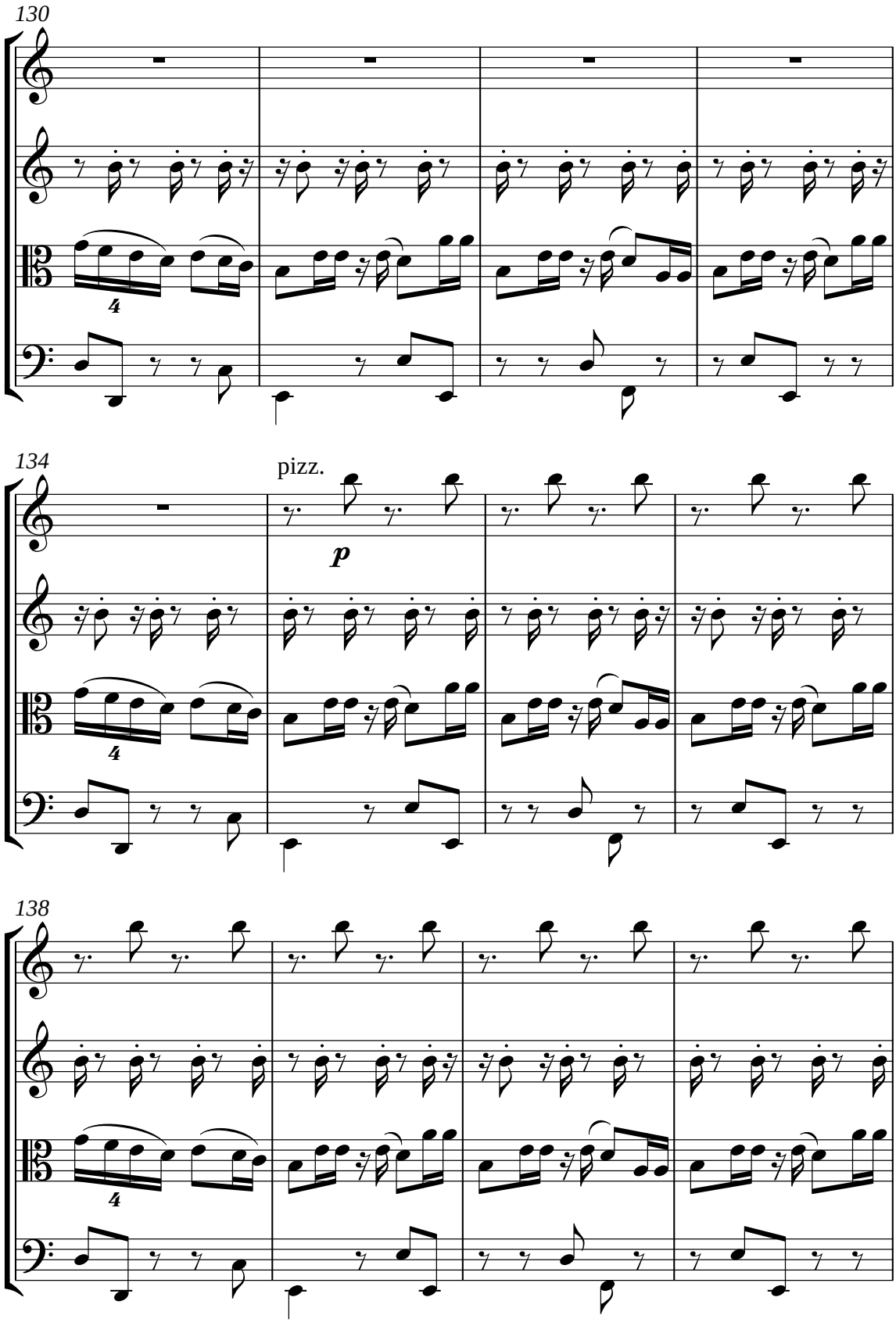
p
pizz.
p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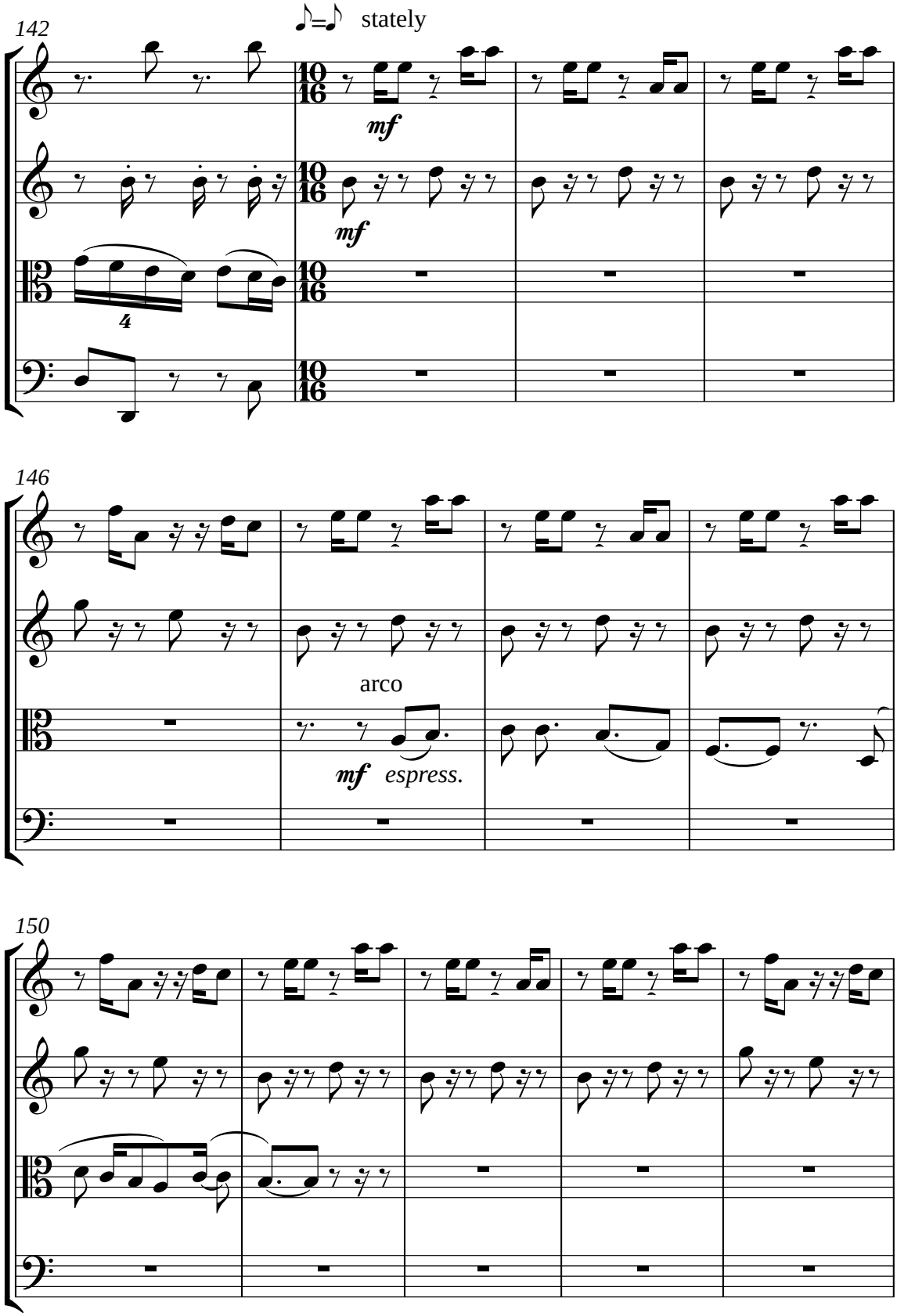
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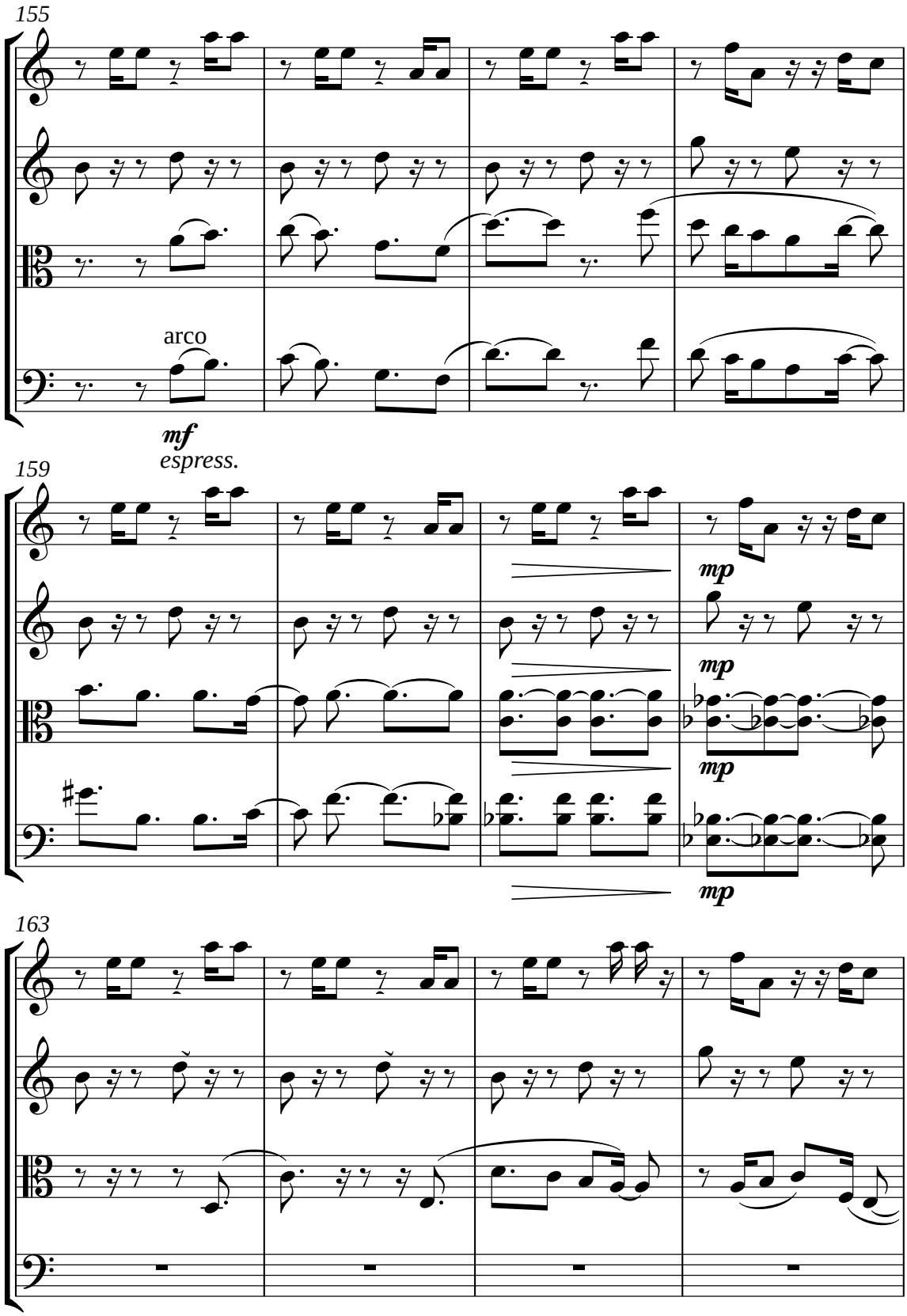
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mp
mp
mp
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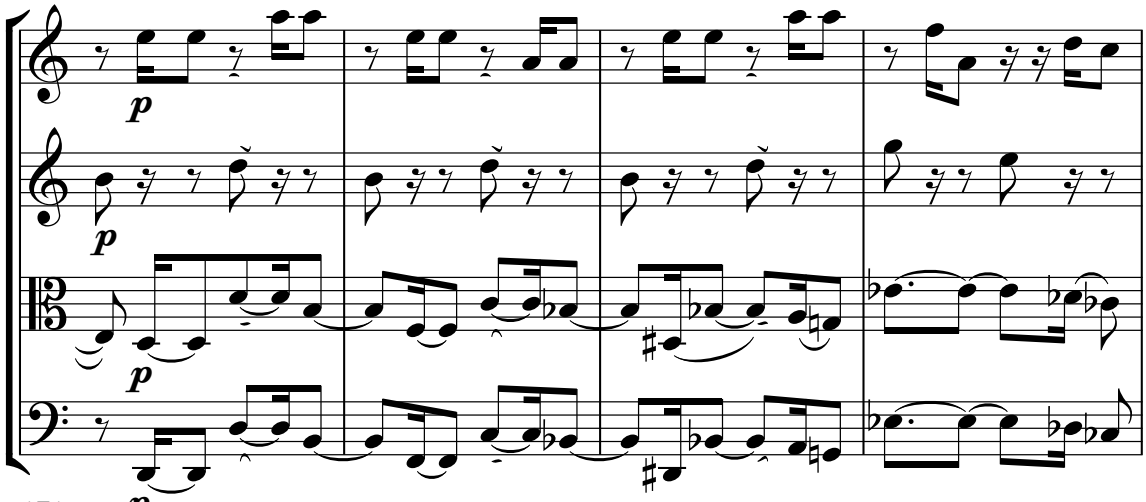
167 hushed disbelief



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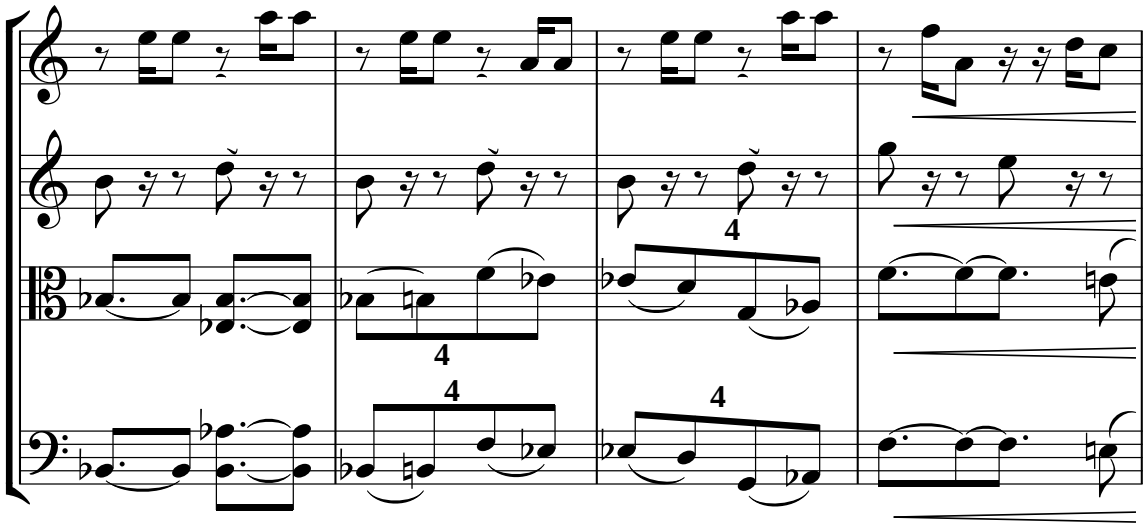

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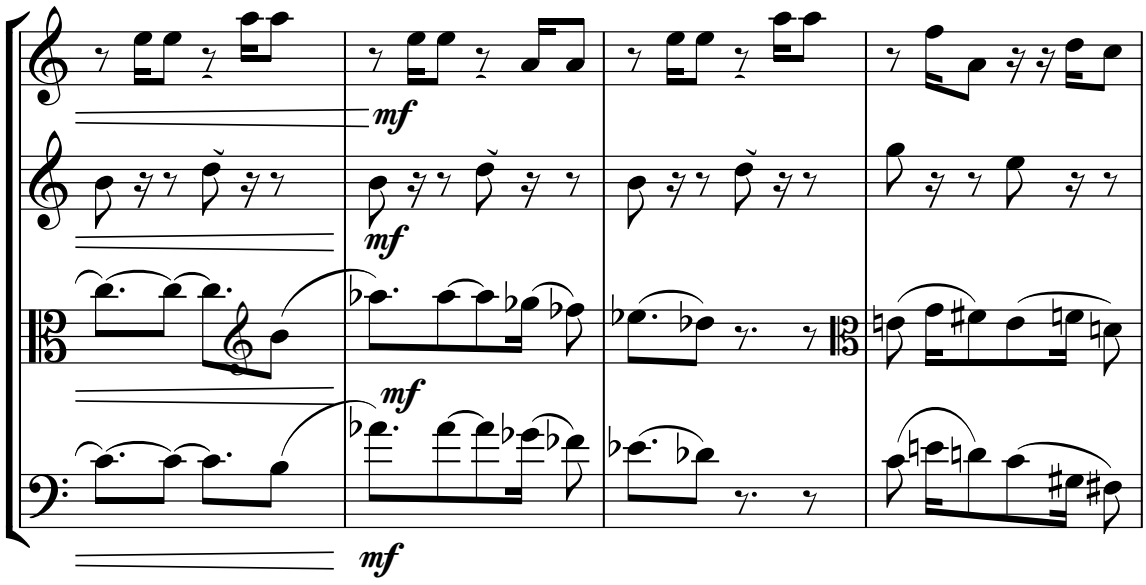

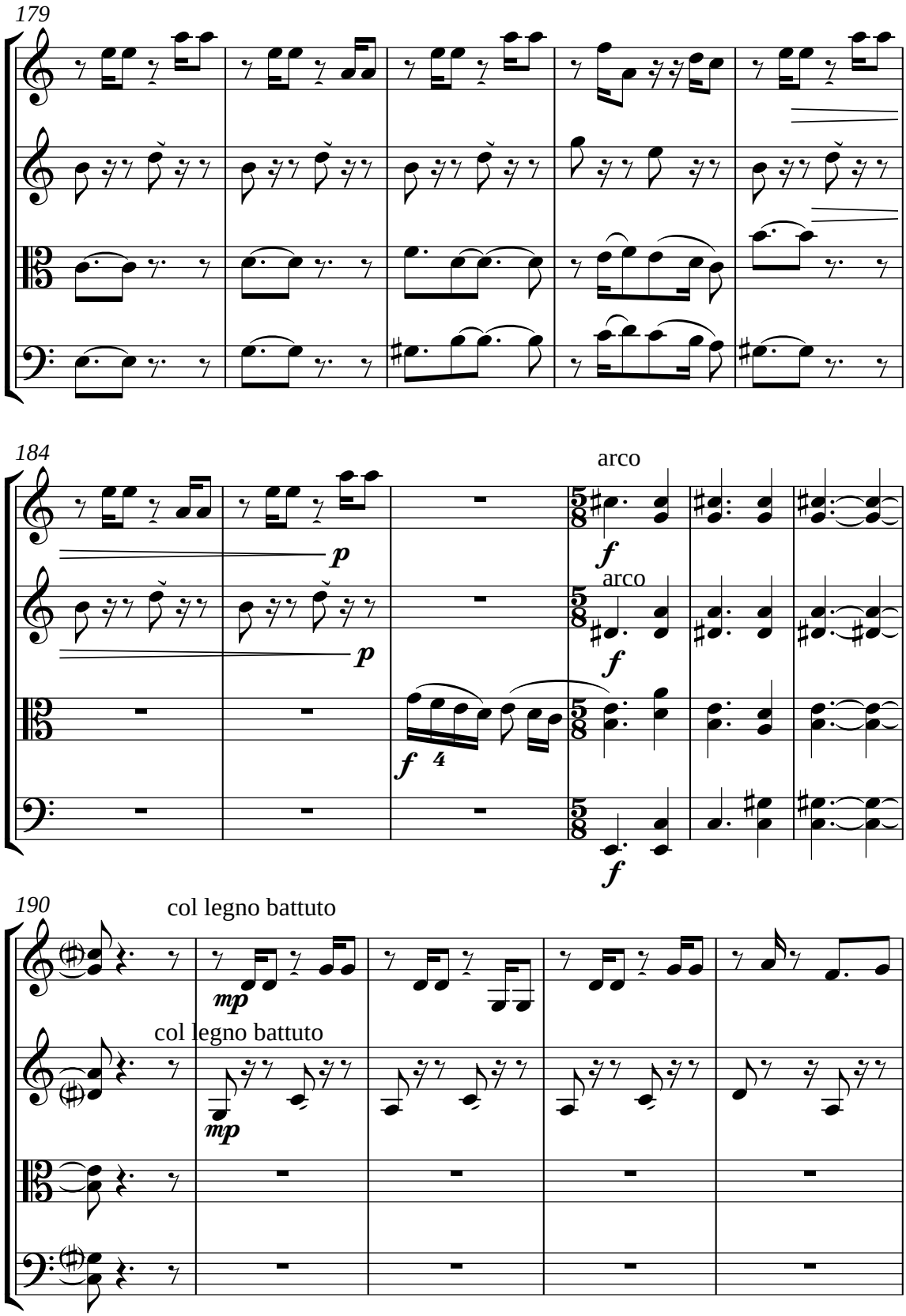
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arco
190
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col legno battuto

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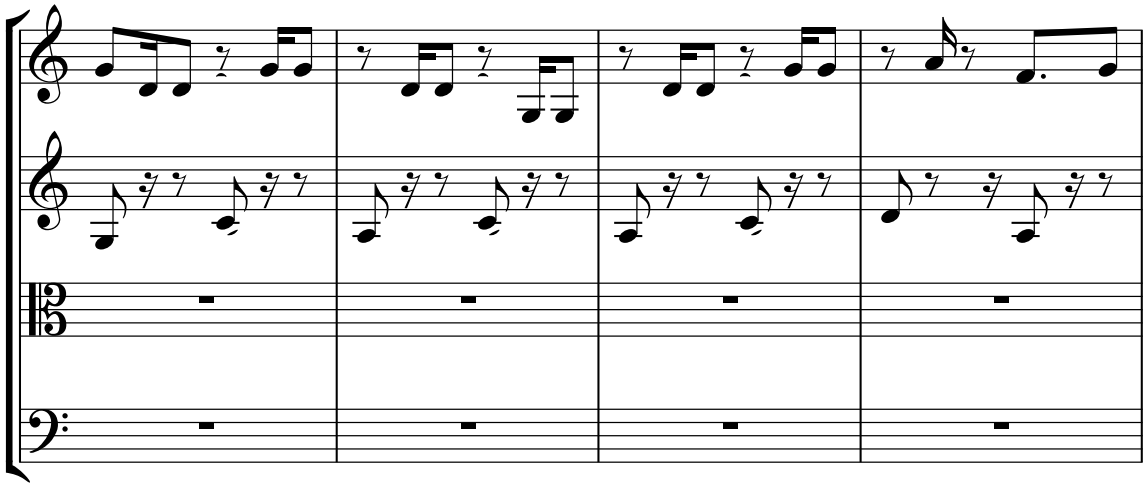

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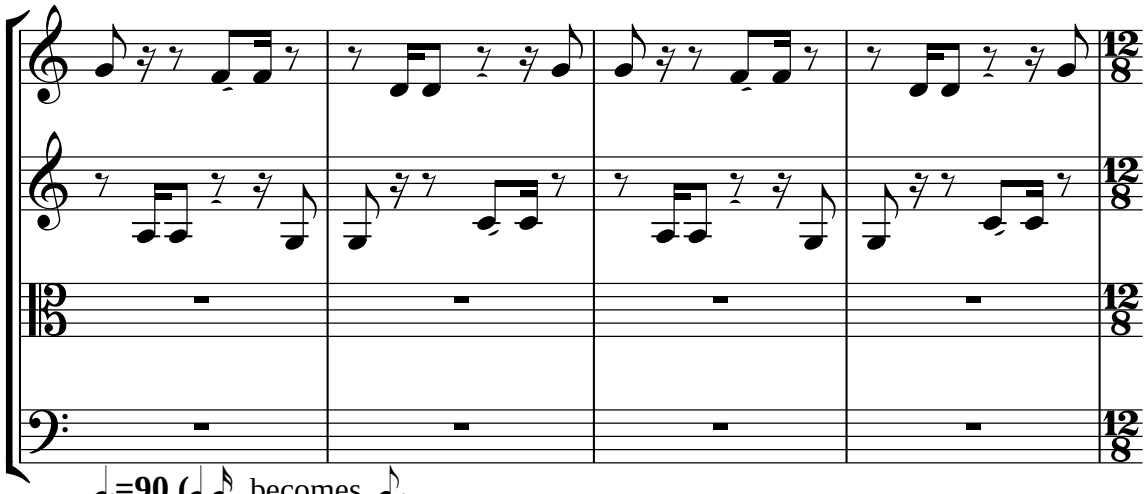
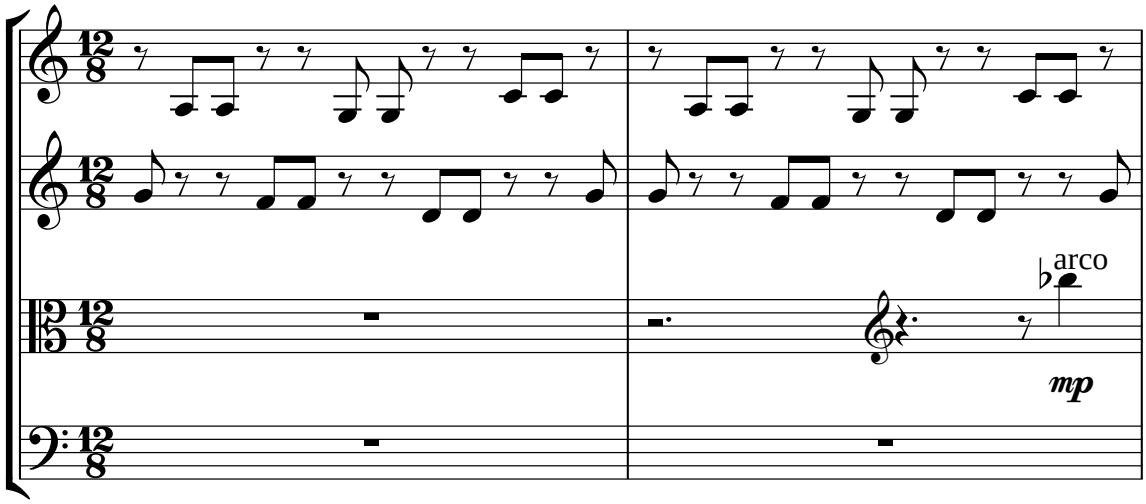
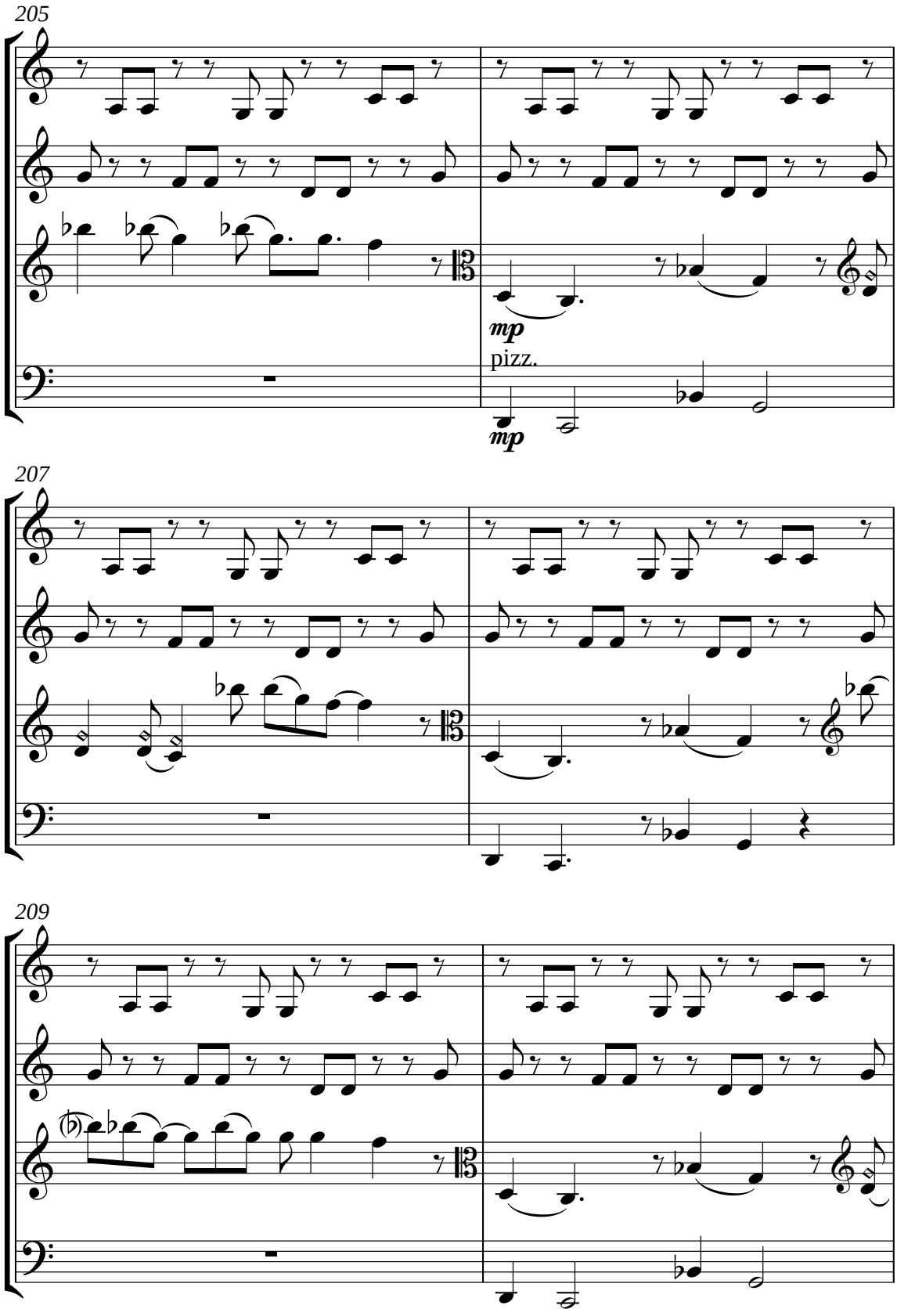


♩.=90 (♩♪ becomes ♪.
/ go slightly faster)

with gravity

203

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mp
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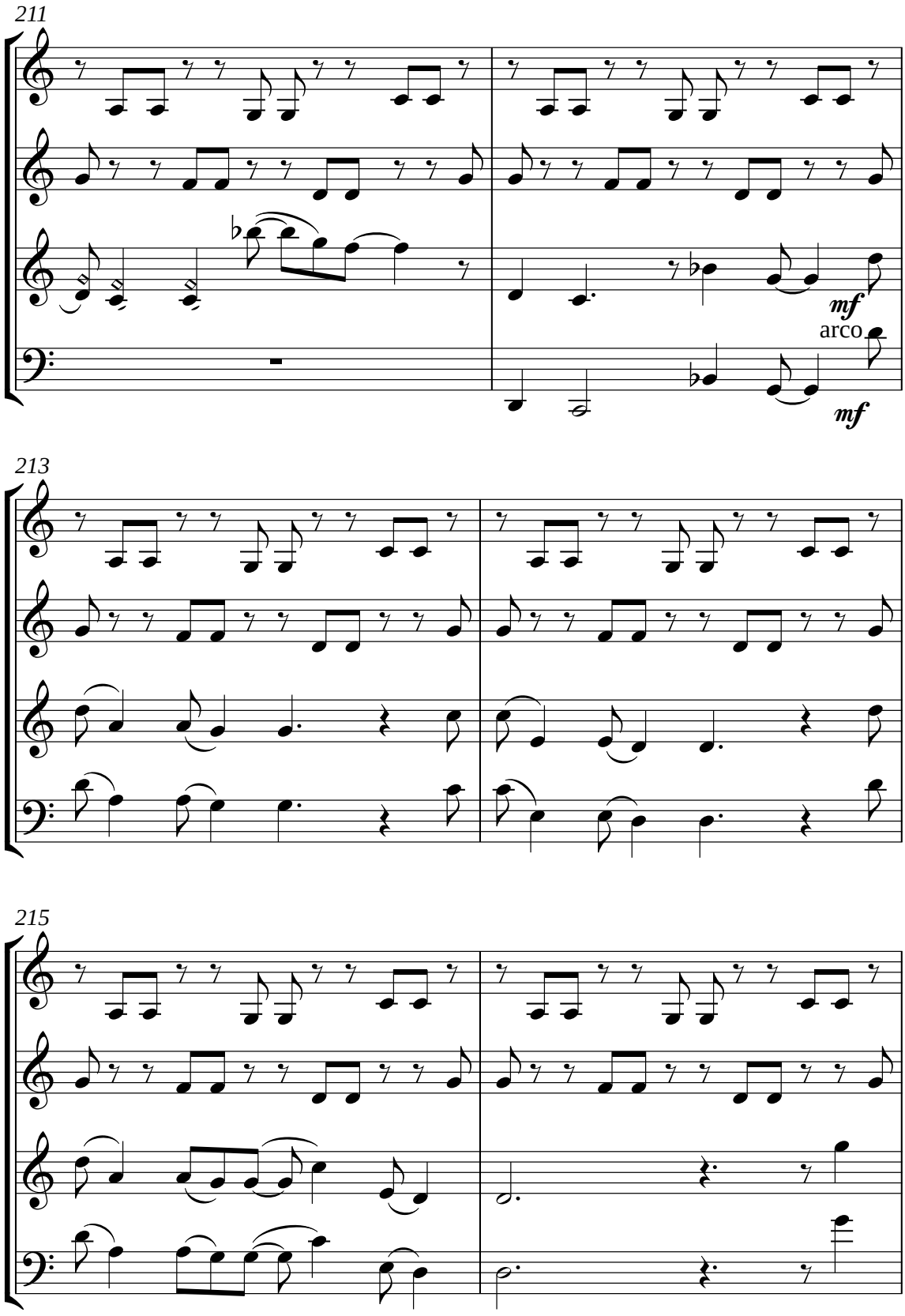
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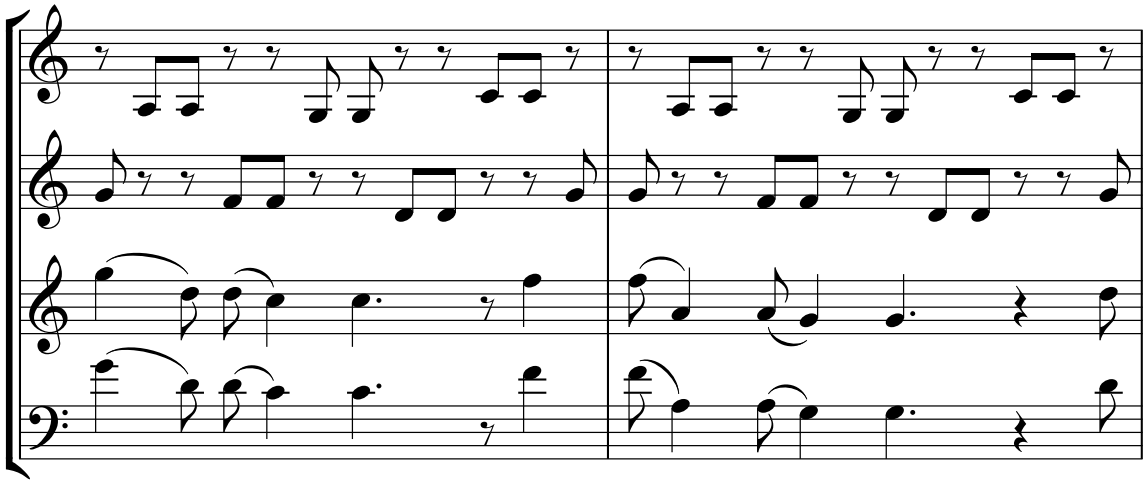

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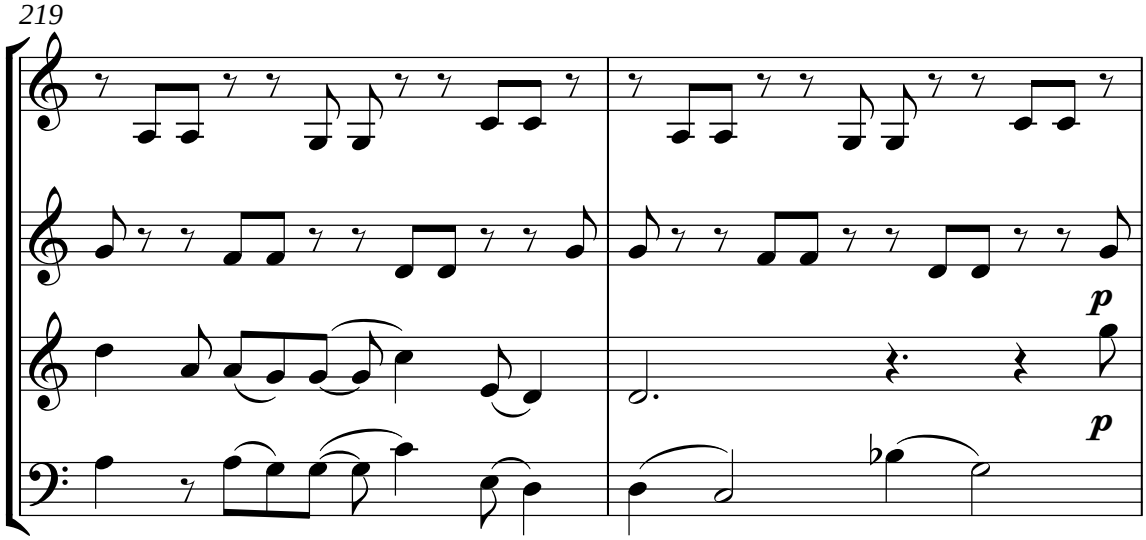

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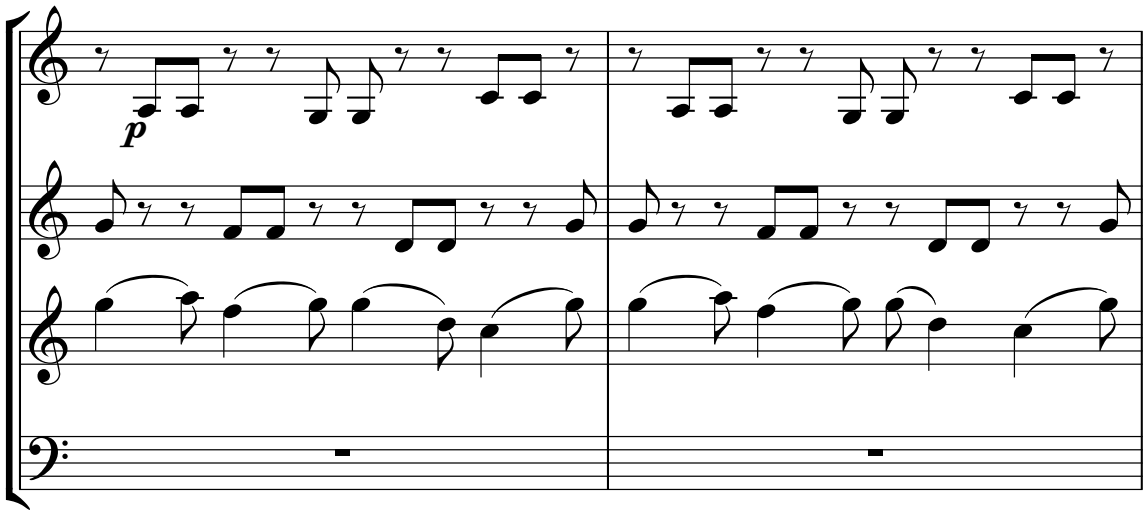

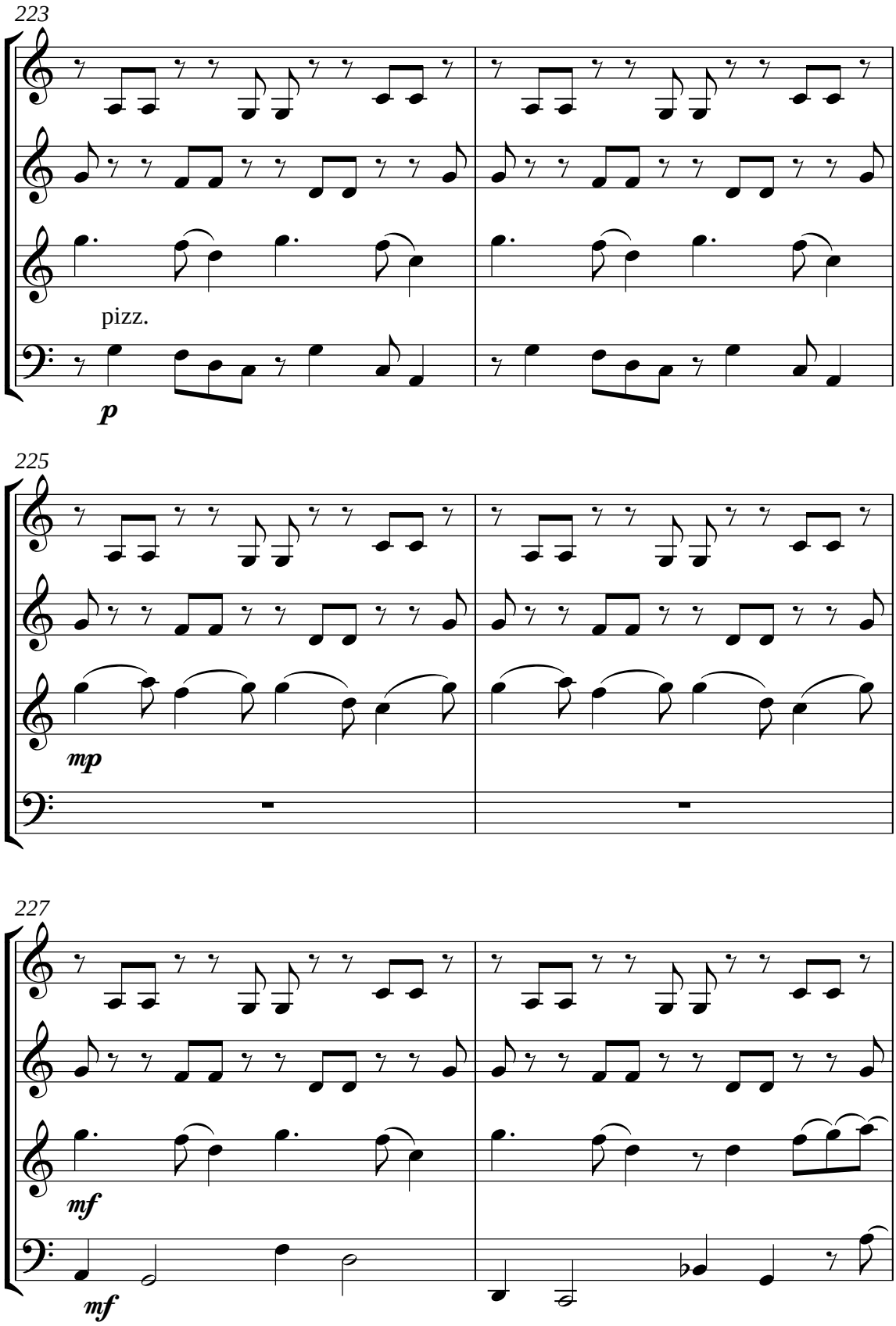
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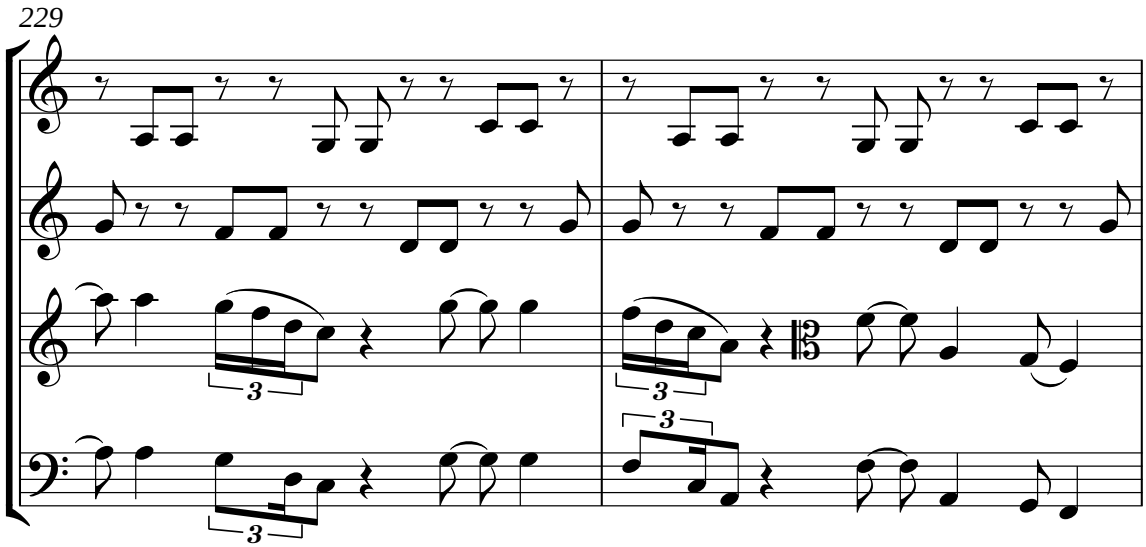
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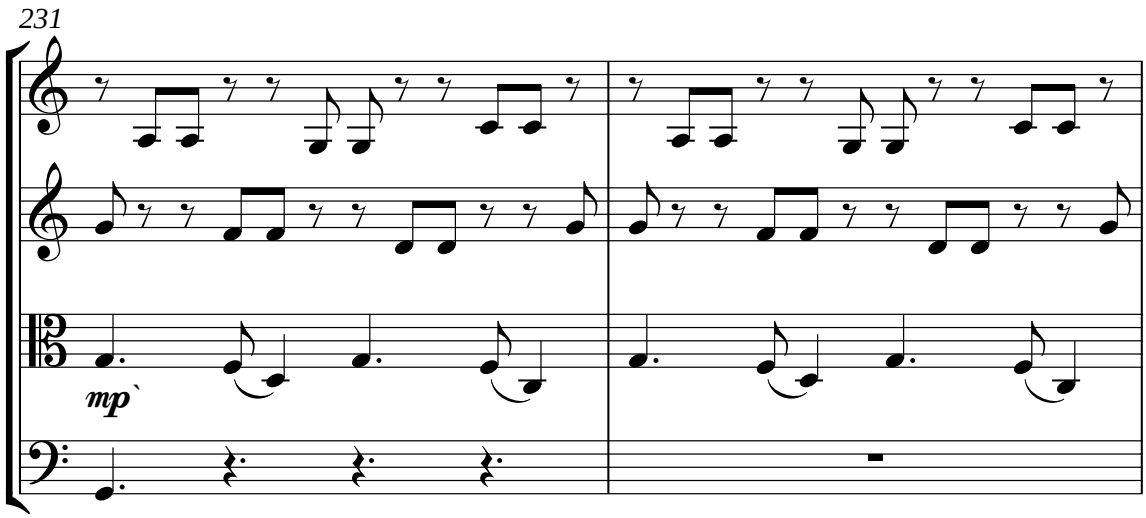
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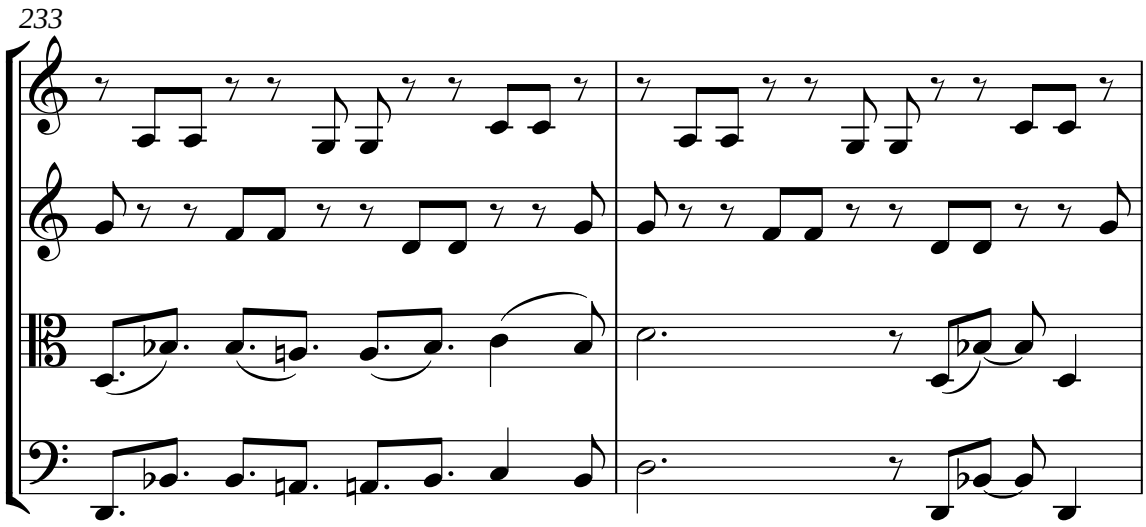
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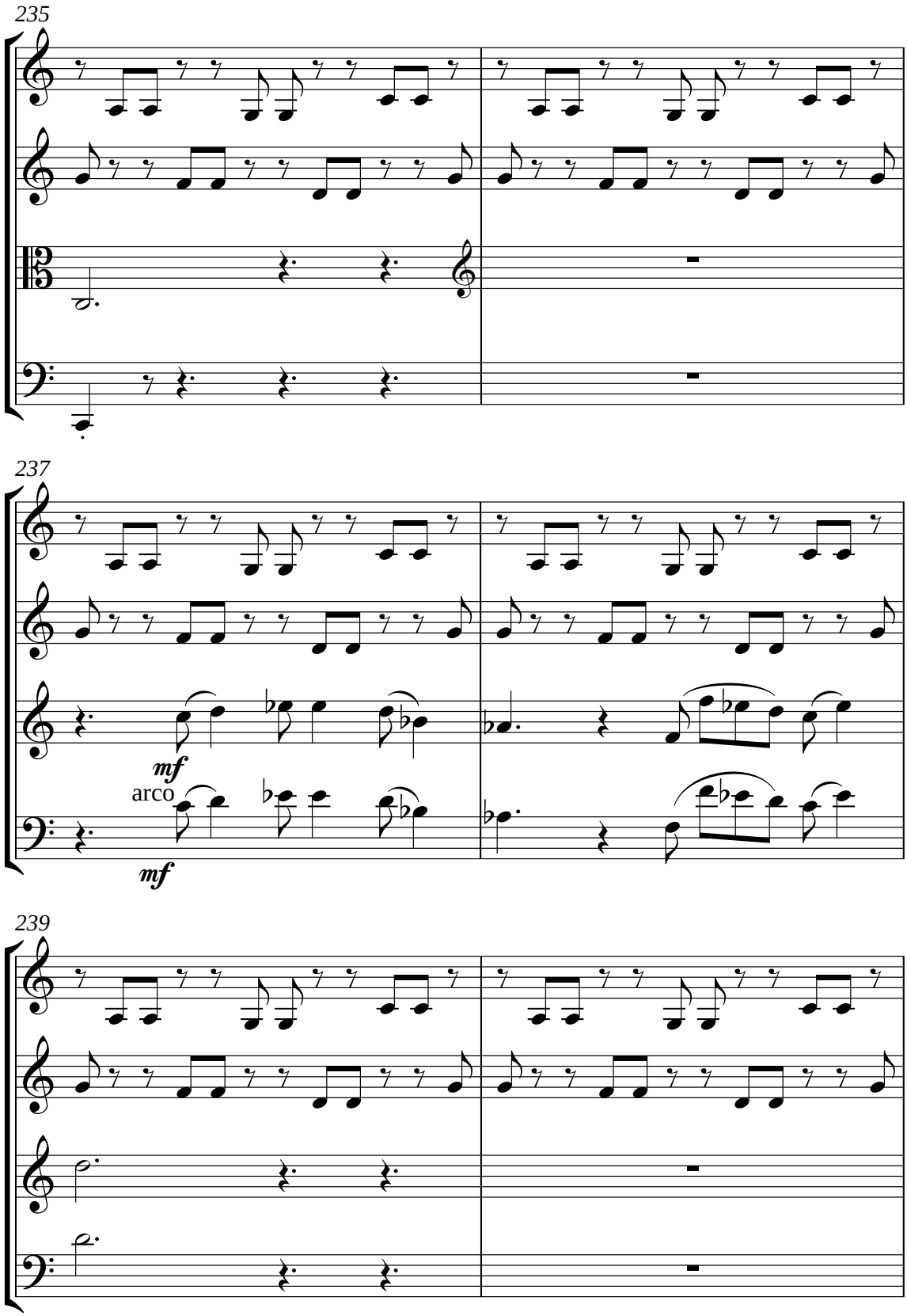
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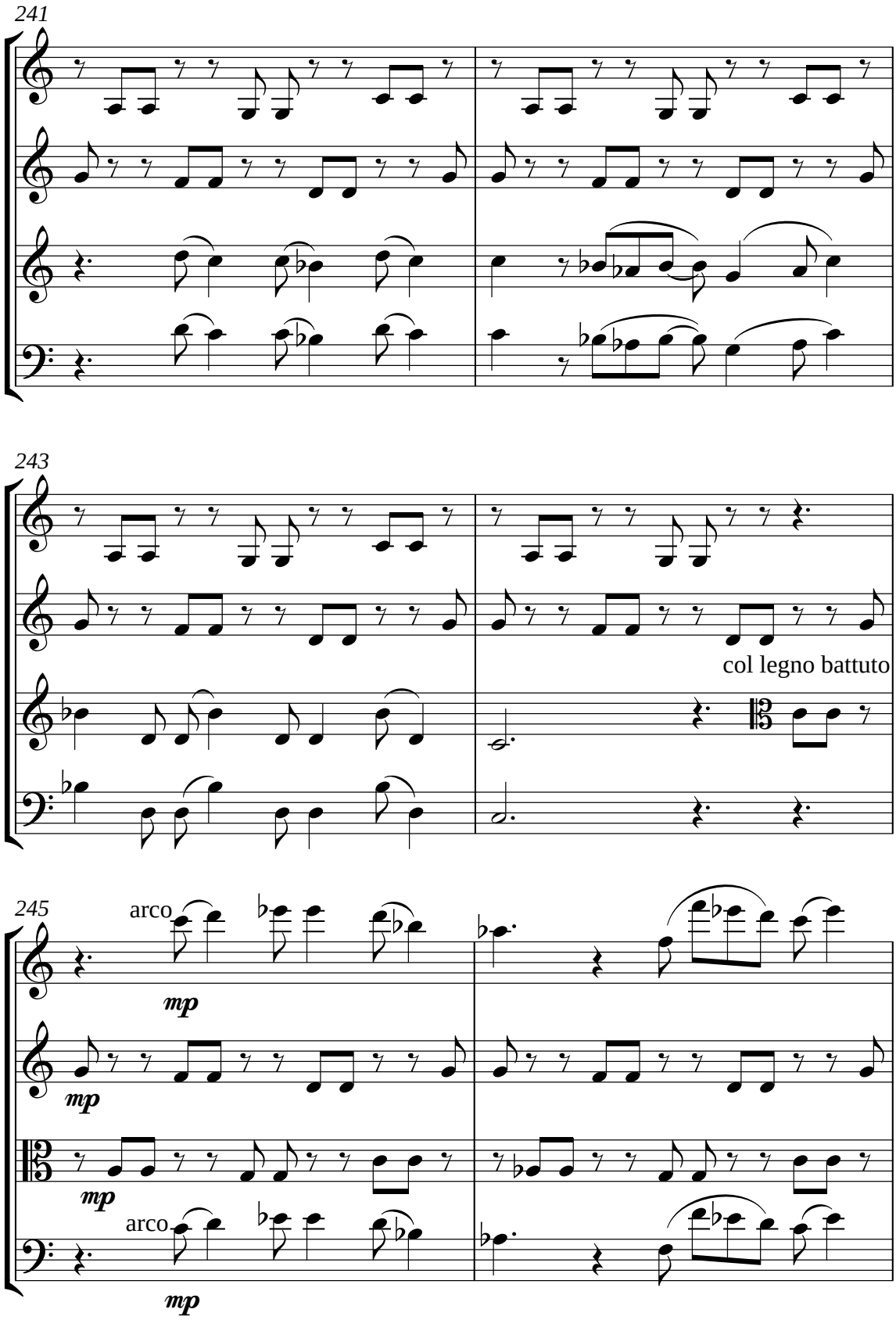
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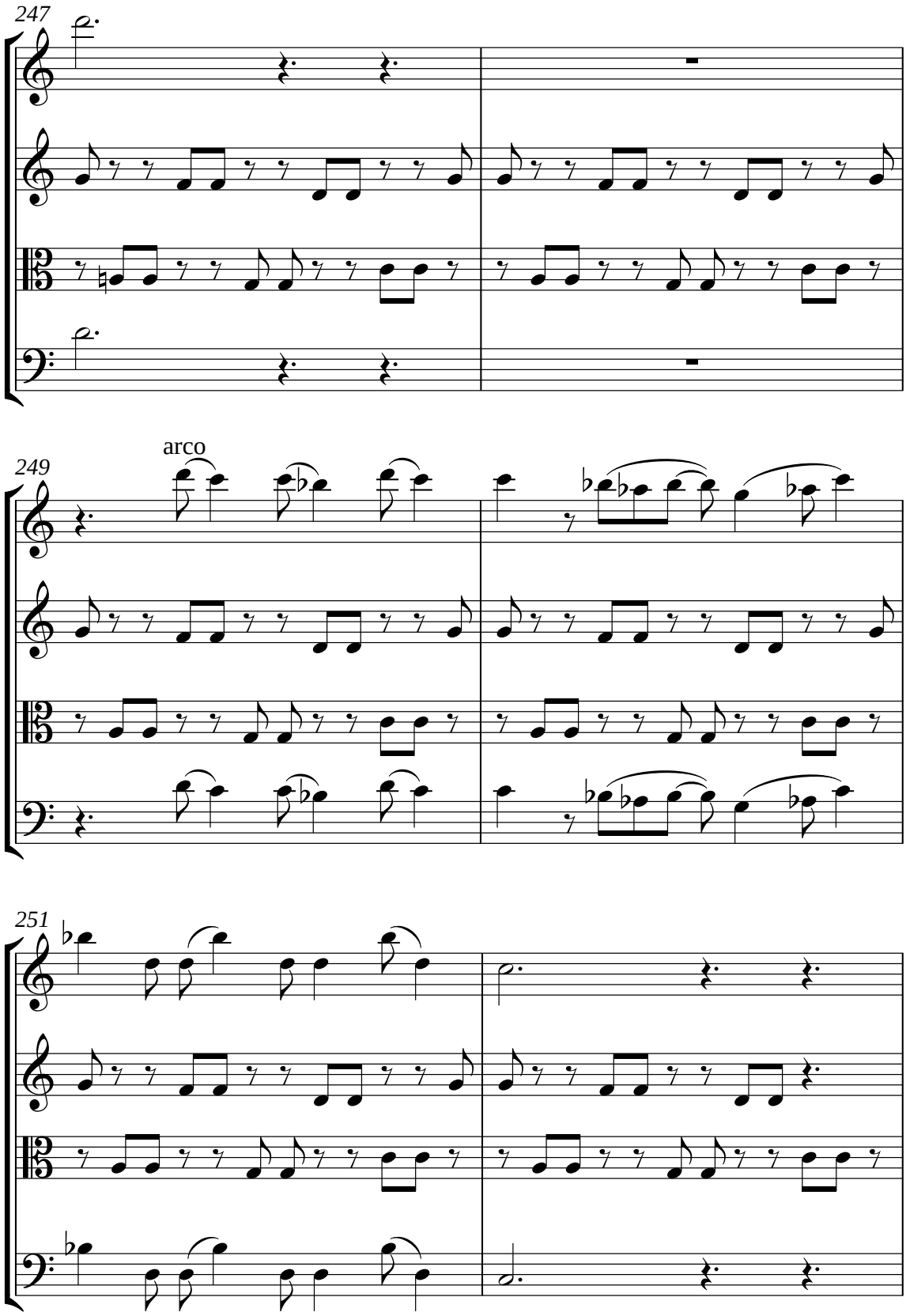
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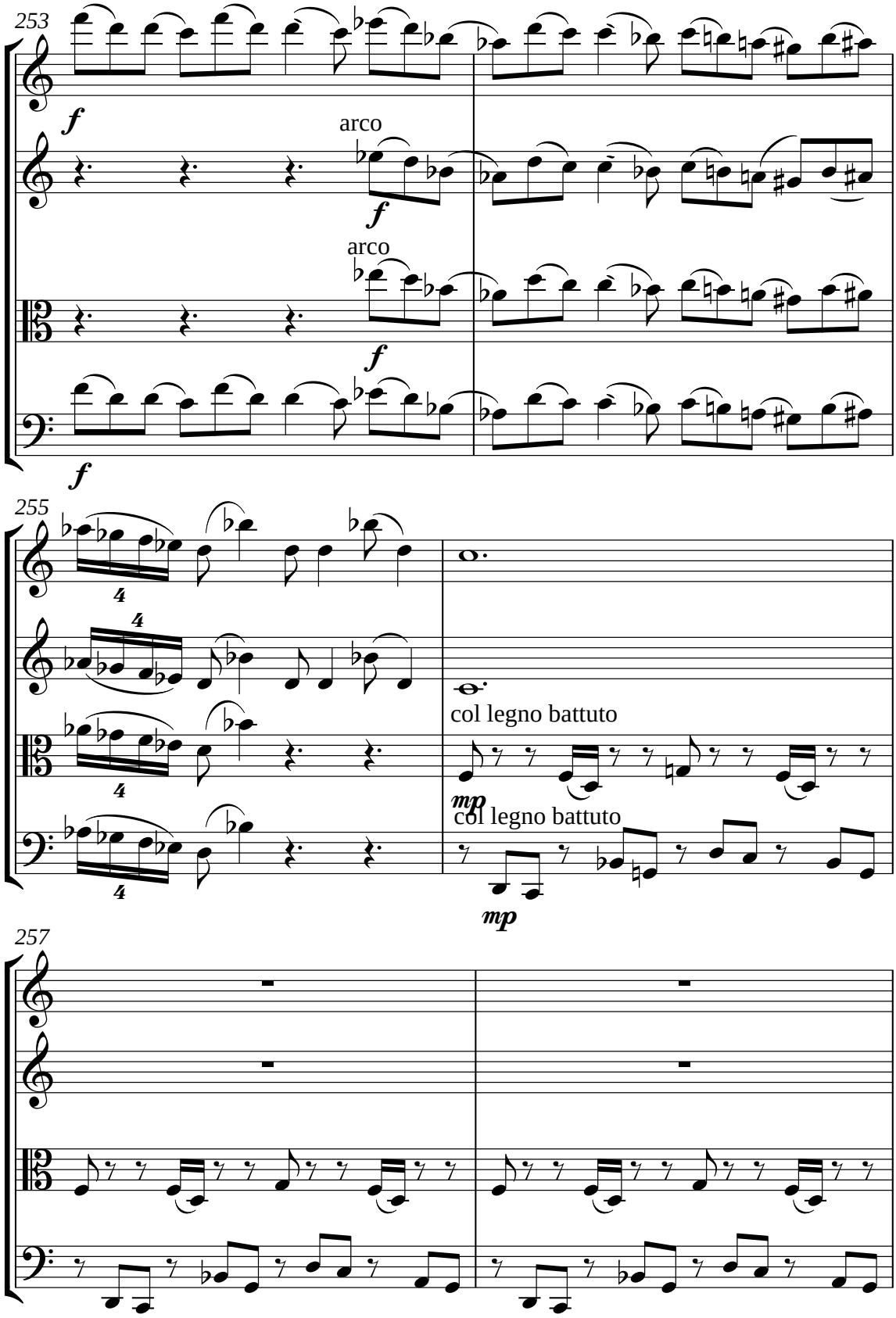
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arco
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4
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4
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col legno battuto
mp
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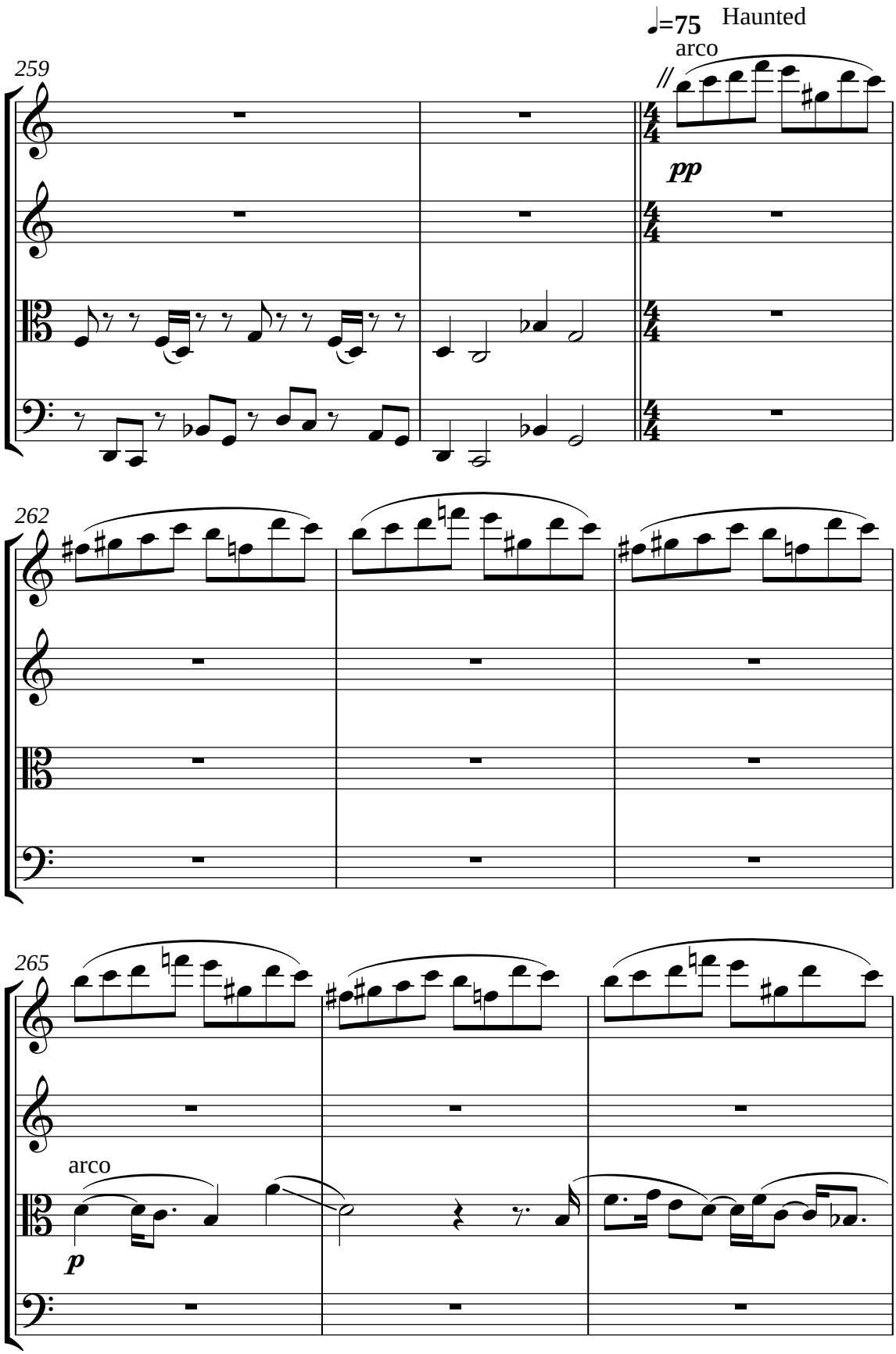
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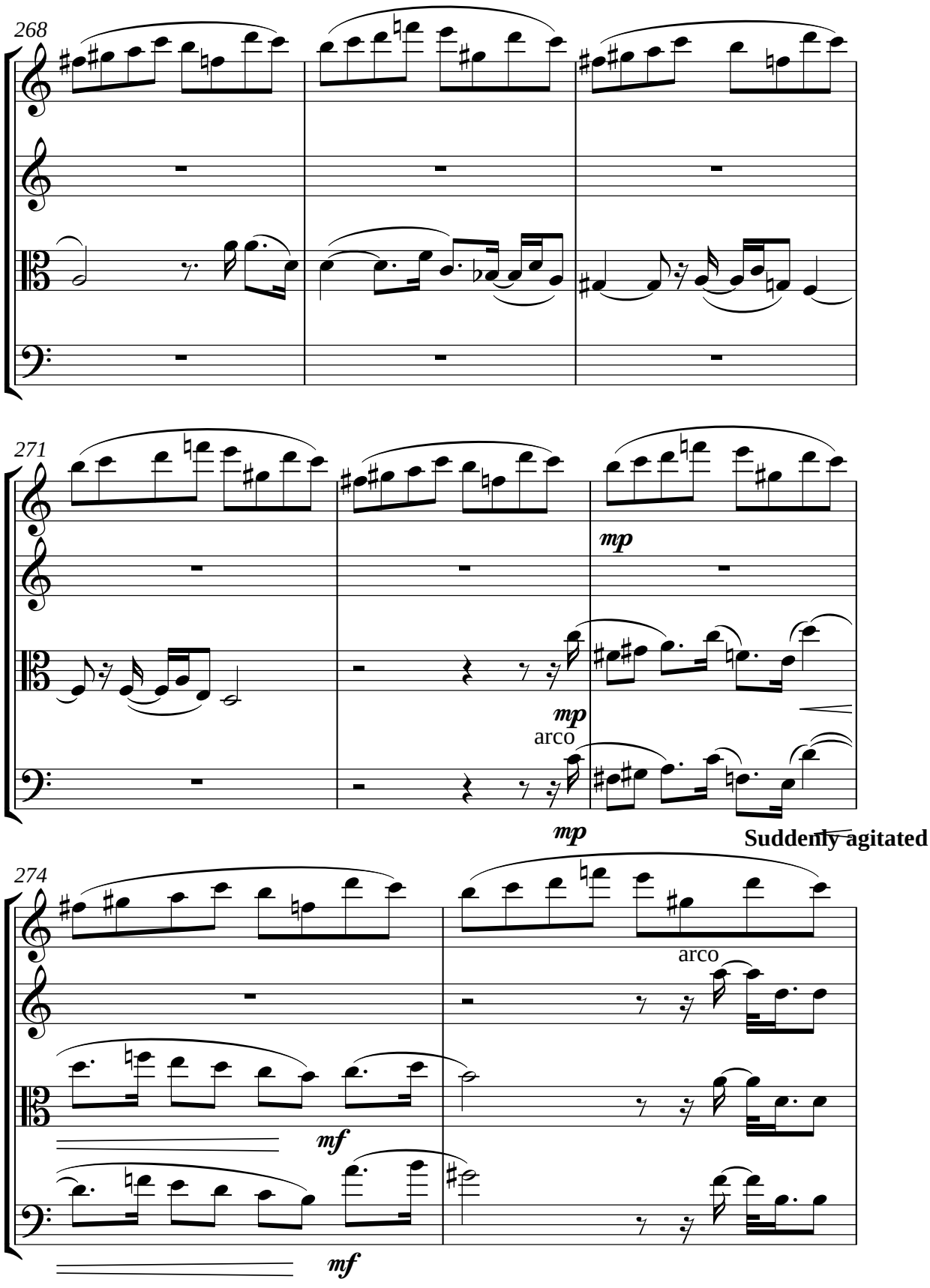
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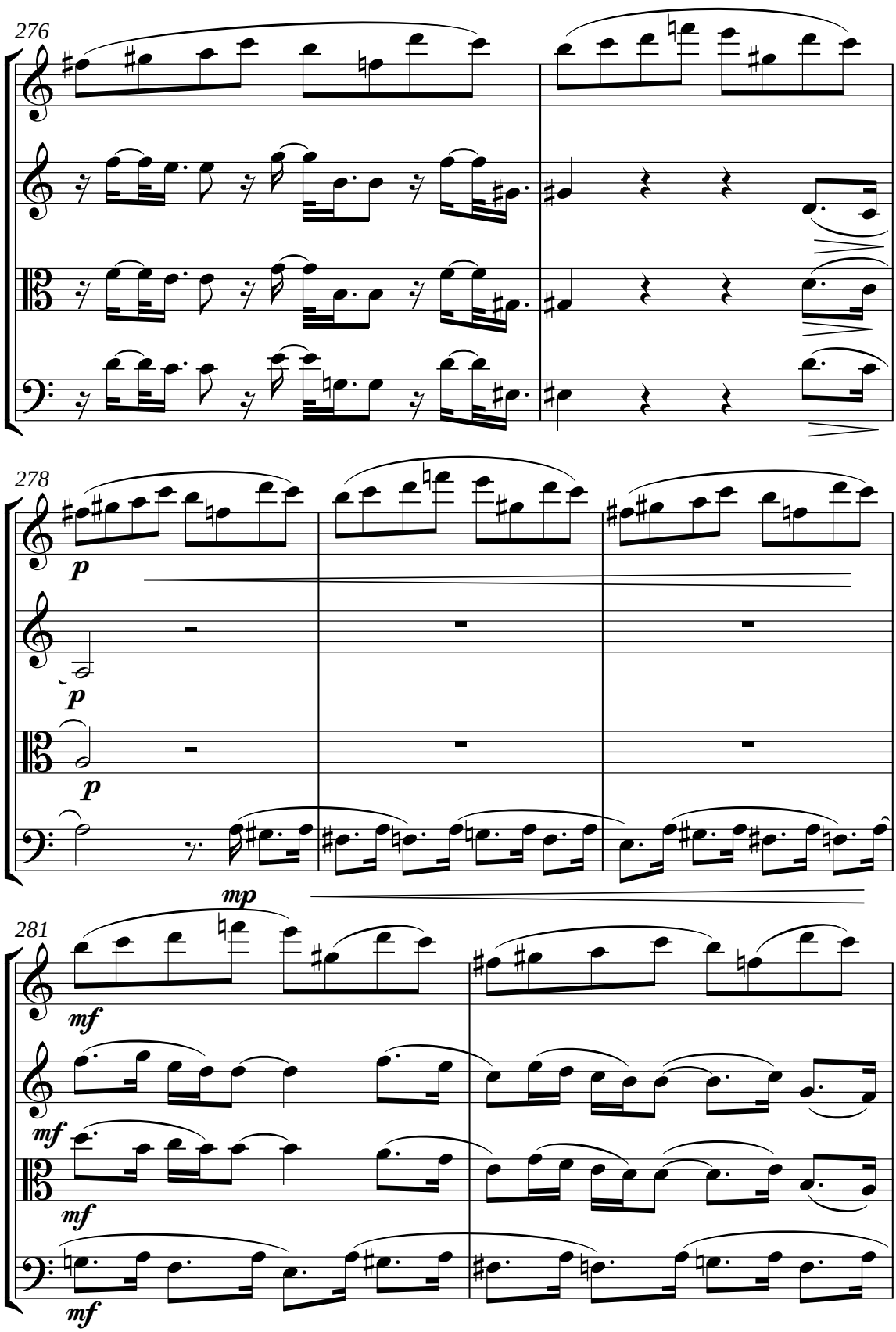
mp
arco
mp
Suddenly agitated
274
arco
mf
mf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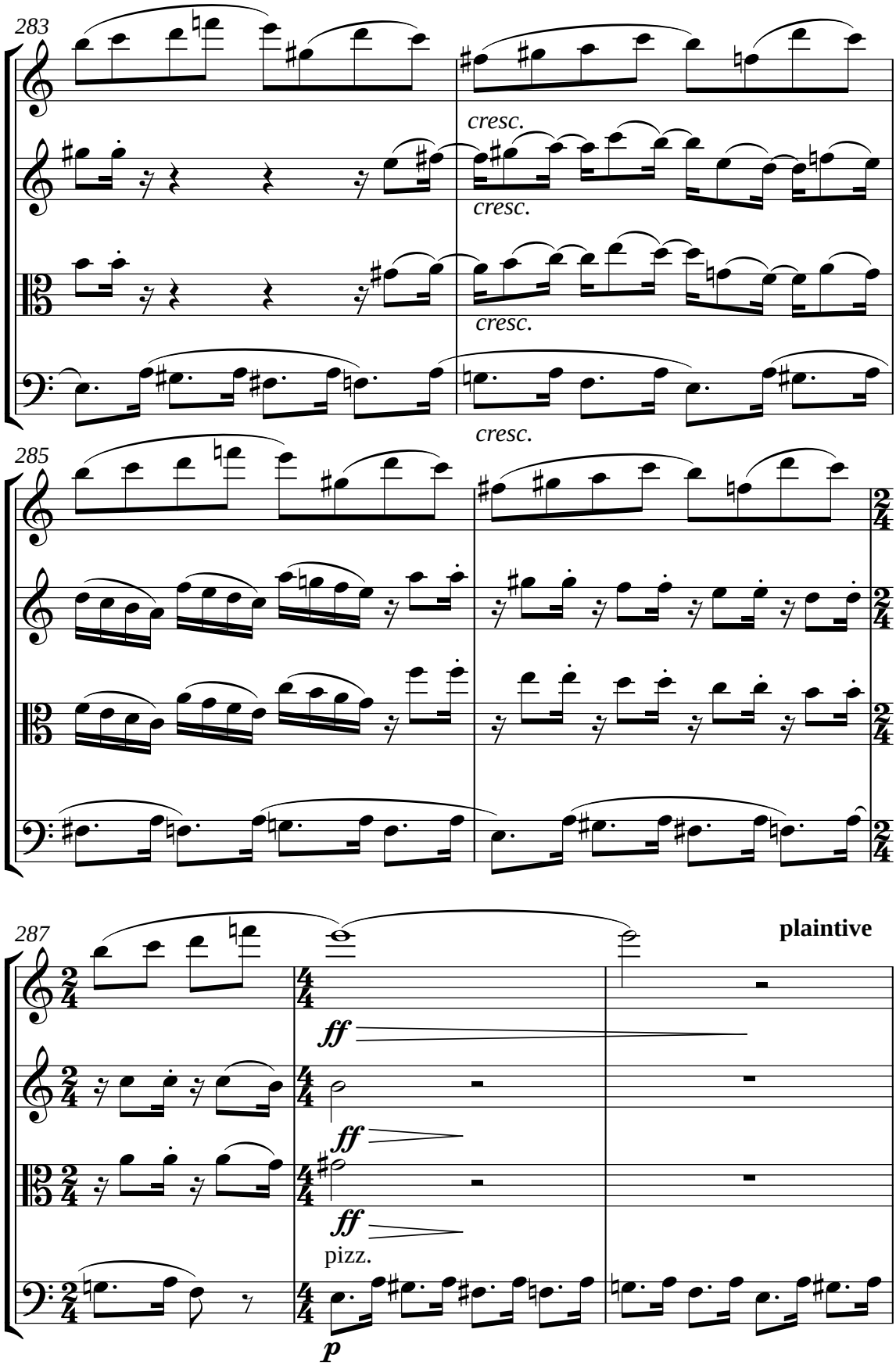
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cresc.
cresc.
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cresc.
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287
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ff
ff
pizz.
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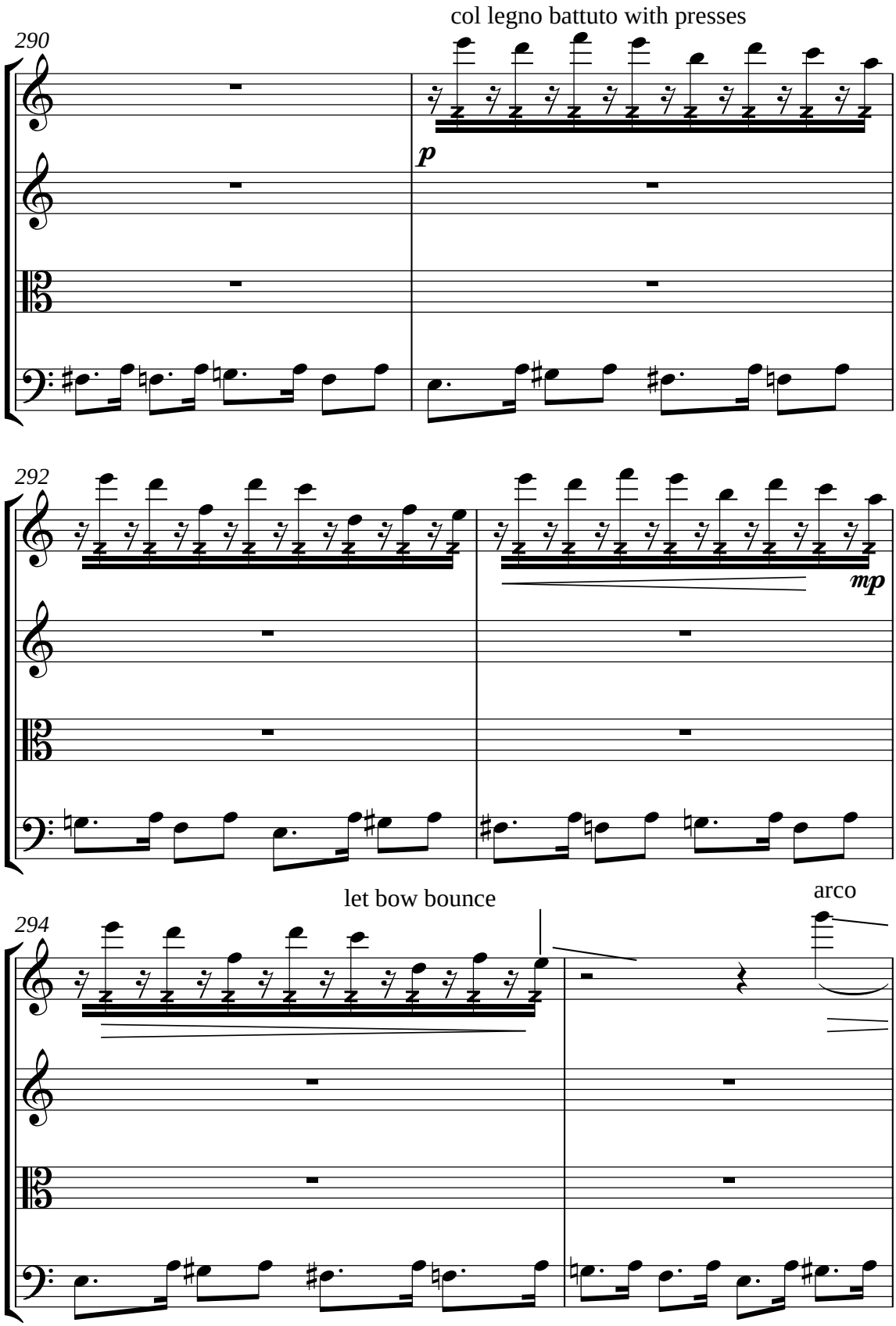
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let bow bounce
arco
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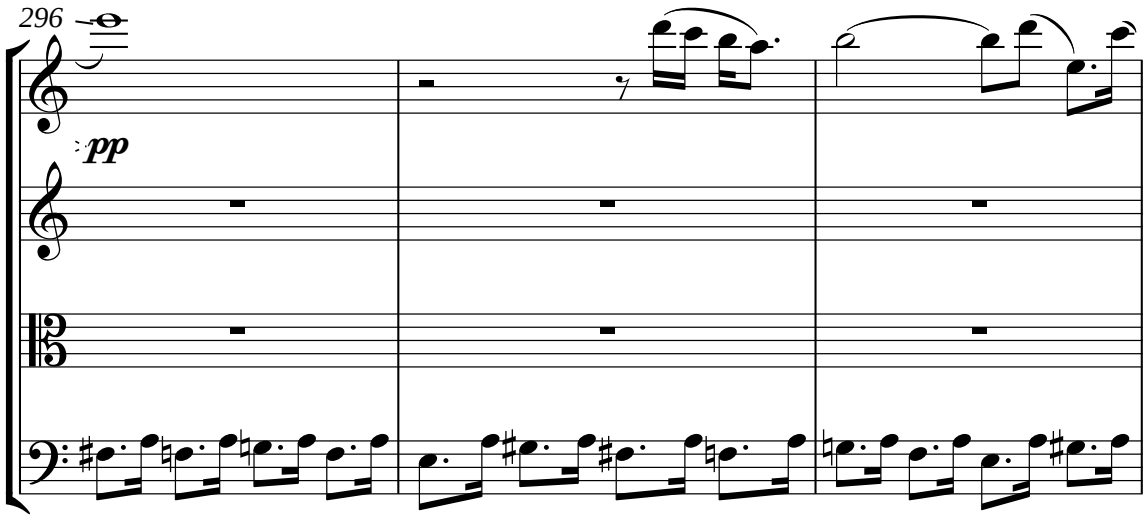

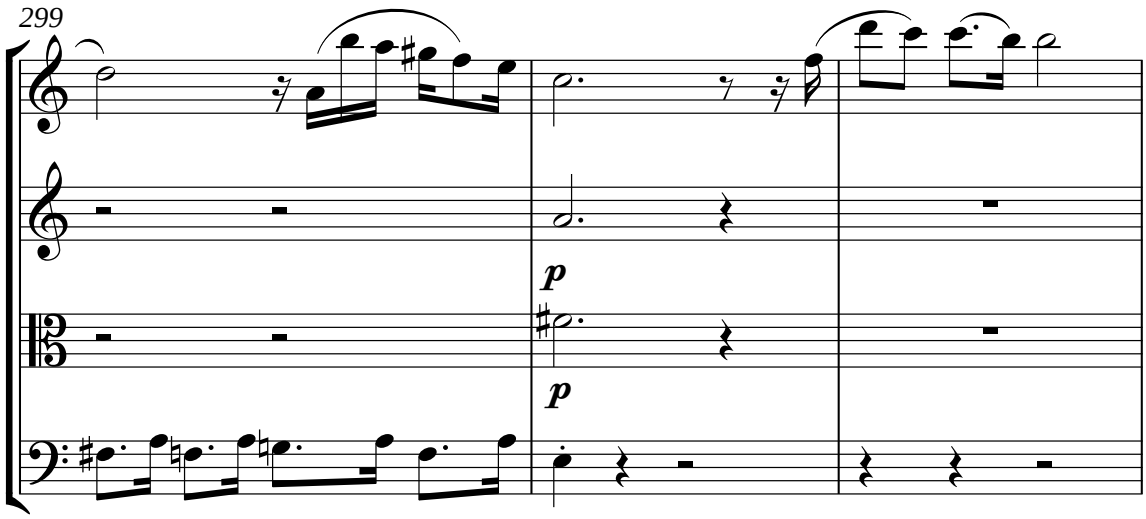

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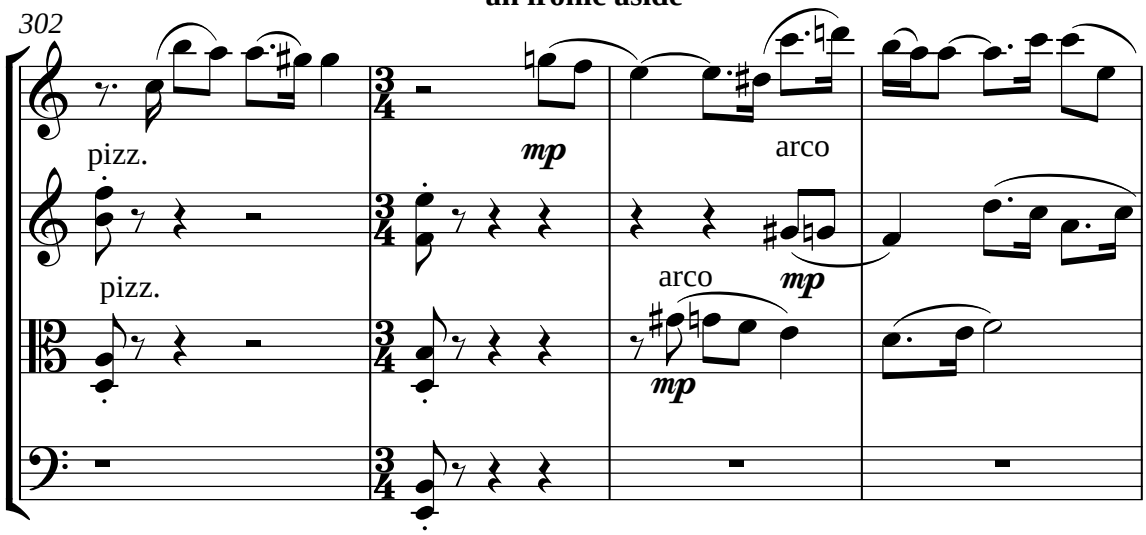

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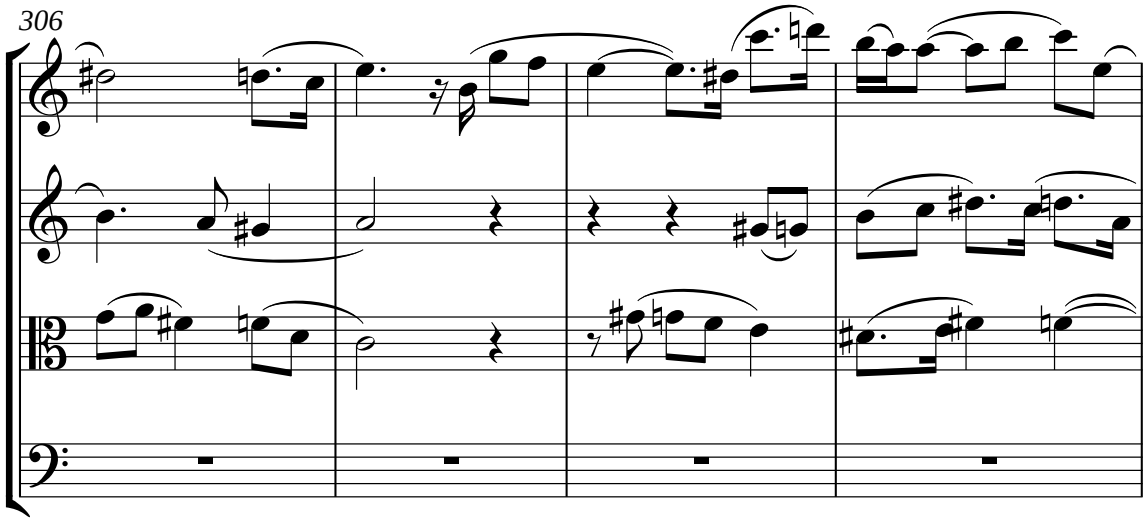

Dark, but with fire

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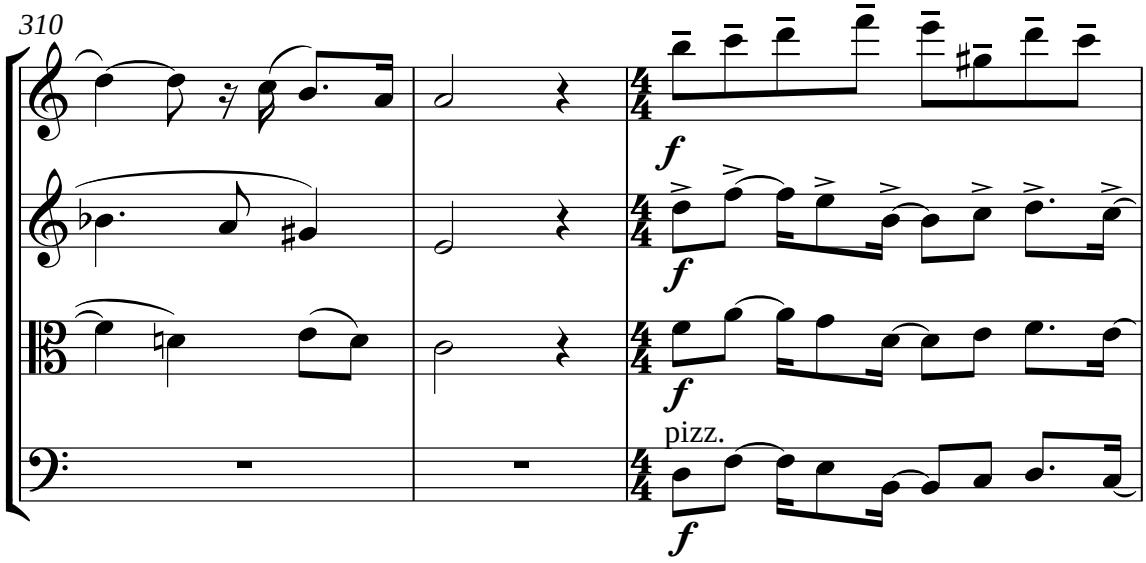

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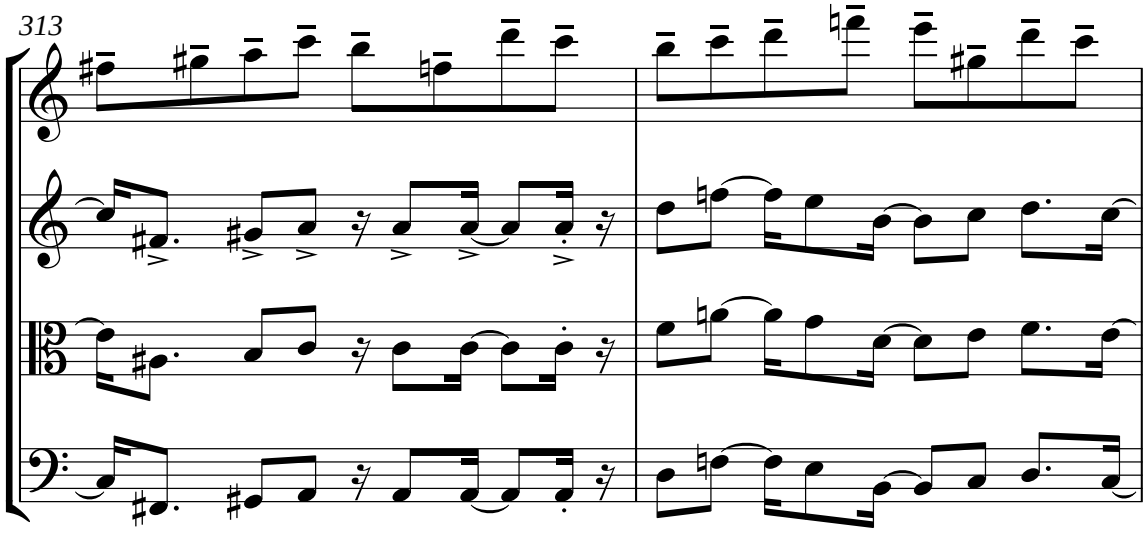

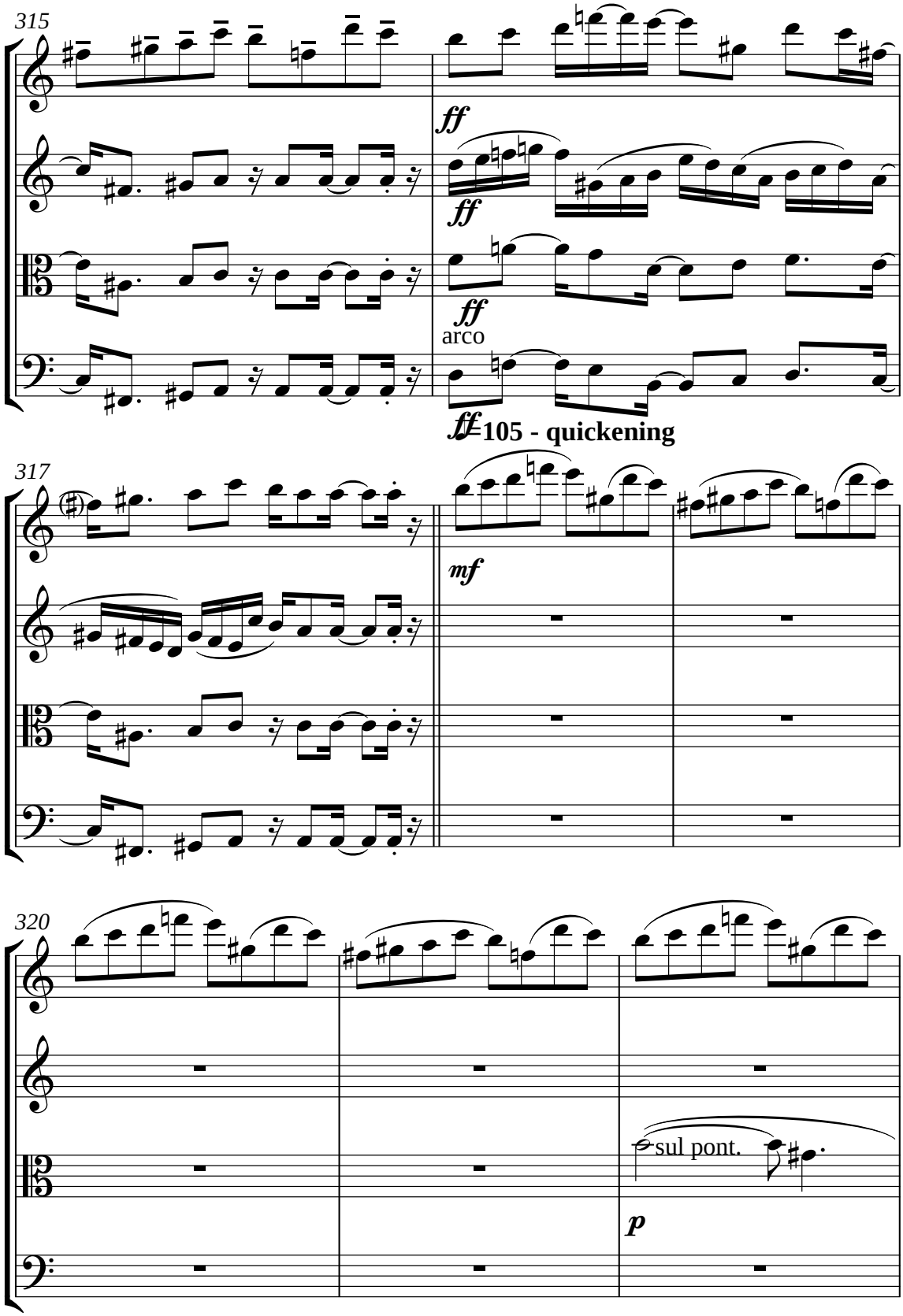
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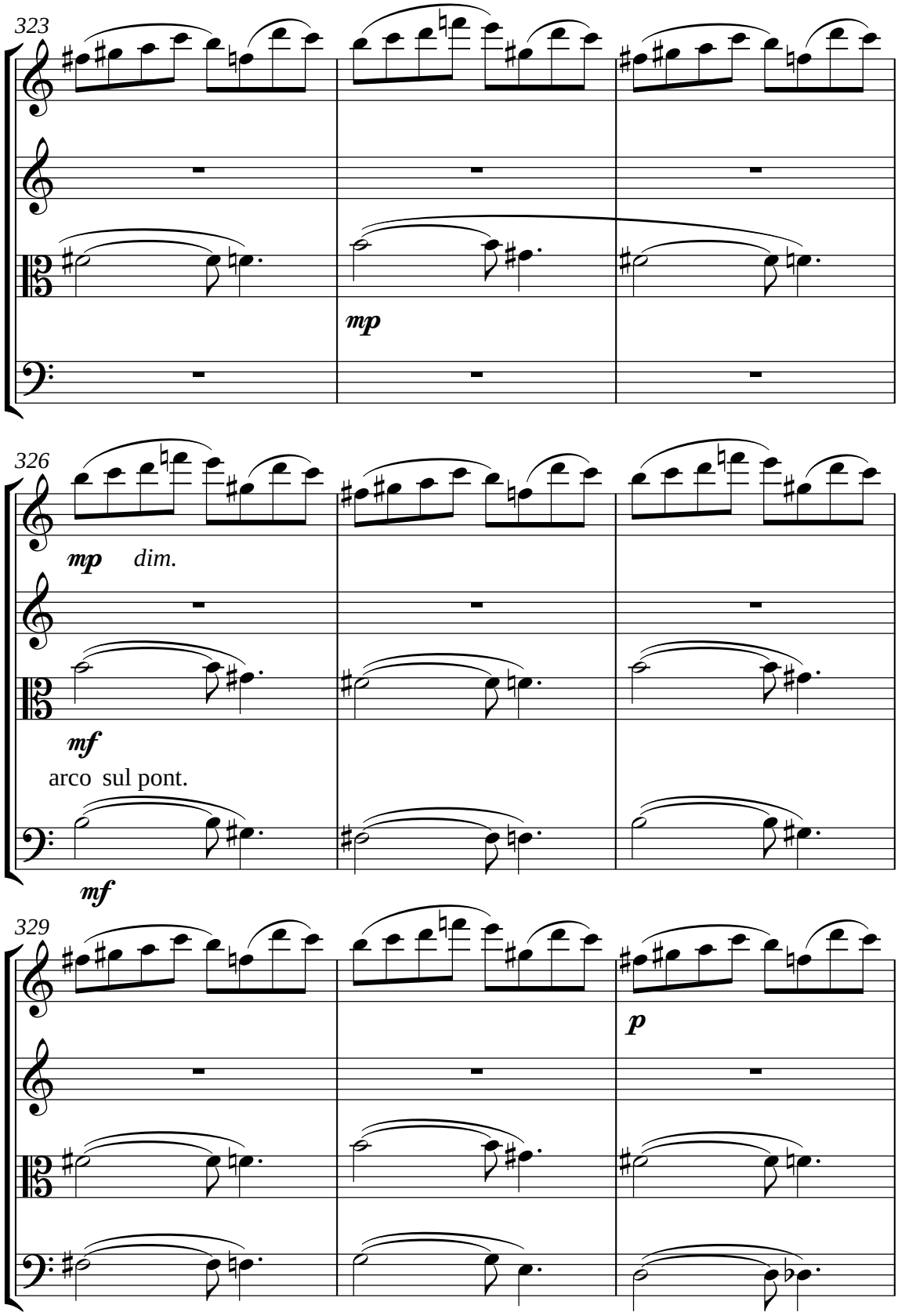
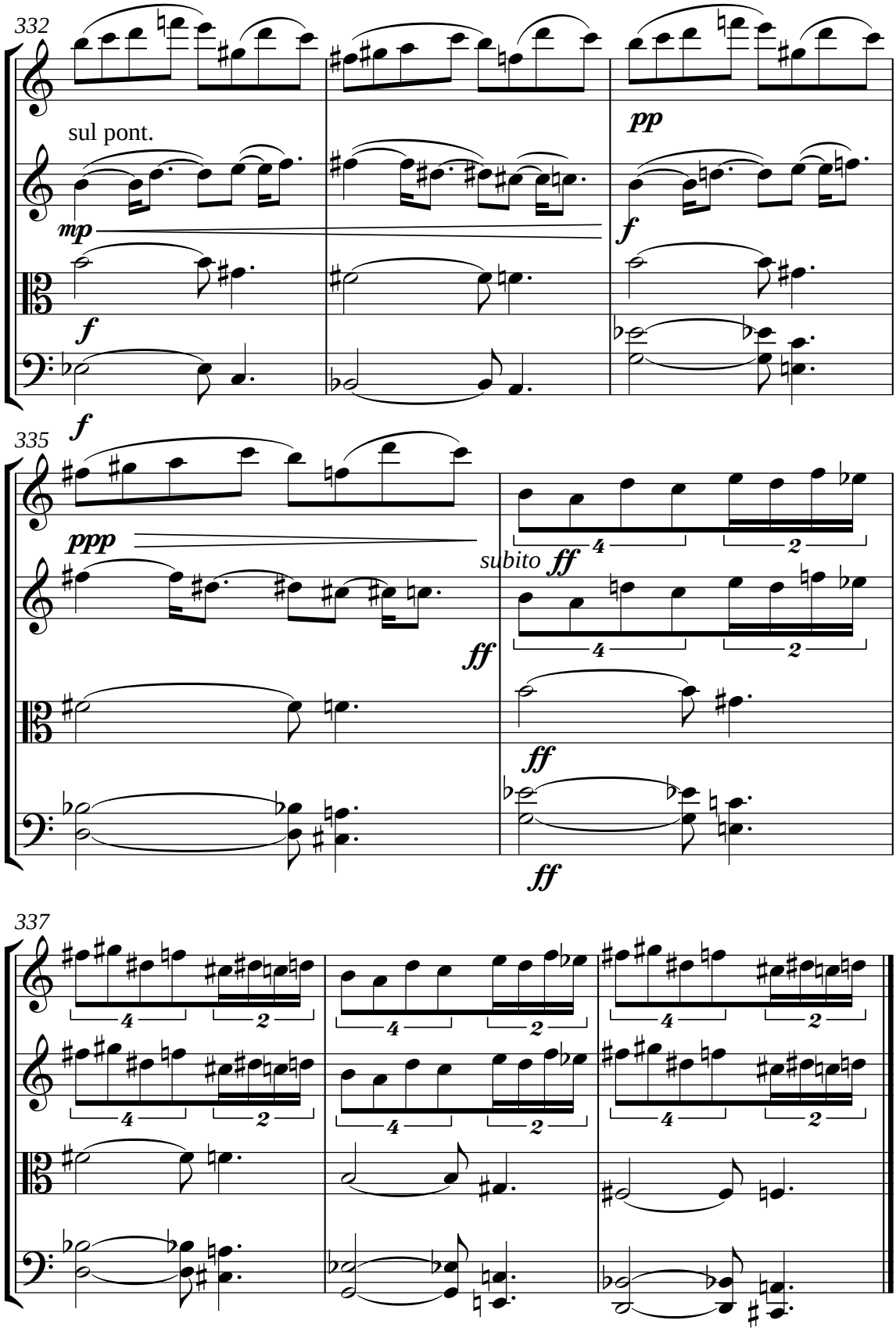
ff
ff
ff
arco
ff
105 - quickening
317
mf
320
sul pont.
p


323
mp
326
mp dim.
mf
arco sul pont.
mf
329
p


332
sul pont.
mp
f
pp
f
f
335
ppp
ff
subito ff
ff
ff
337
4
2