Marc Sabat

4 piano inventions

for solo piano

PLAINSOUND MUSIC EDITION

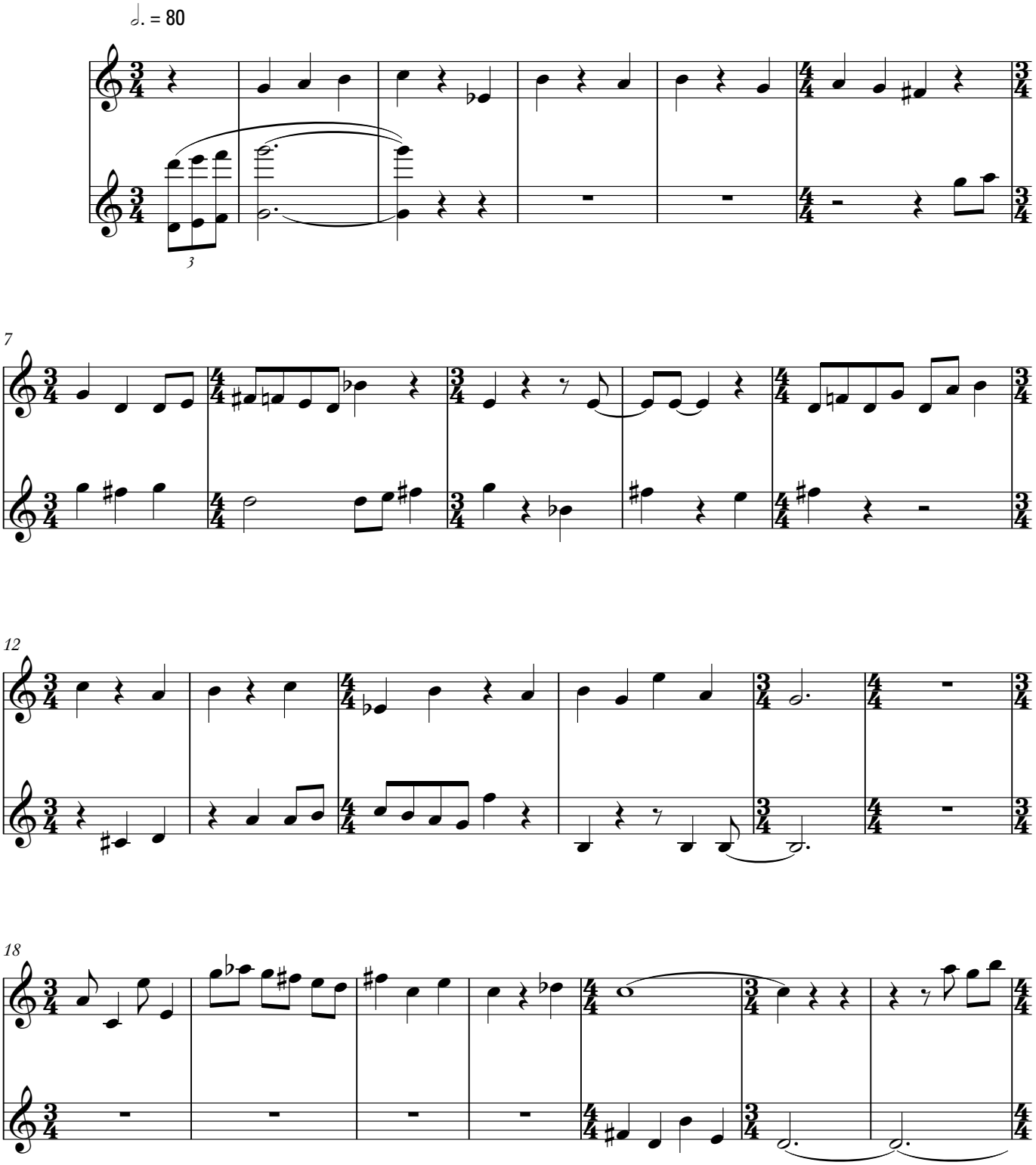
4 piano inventions (1999)

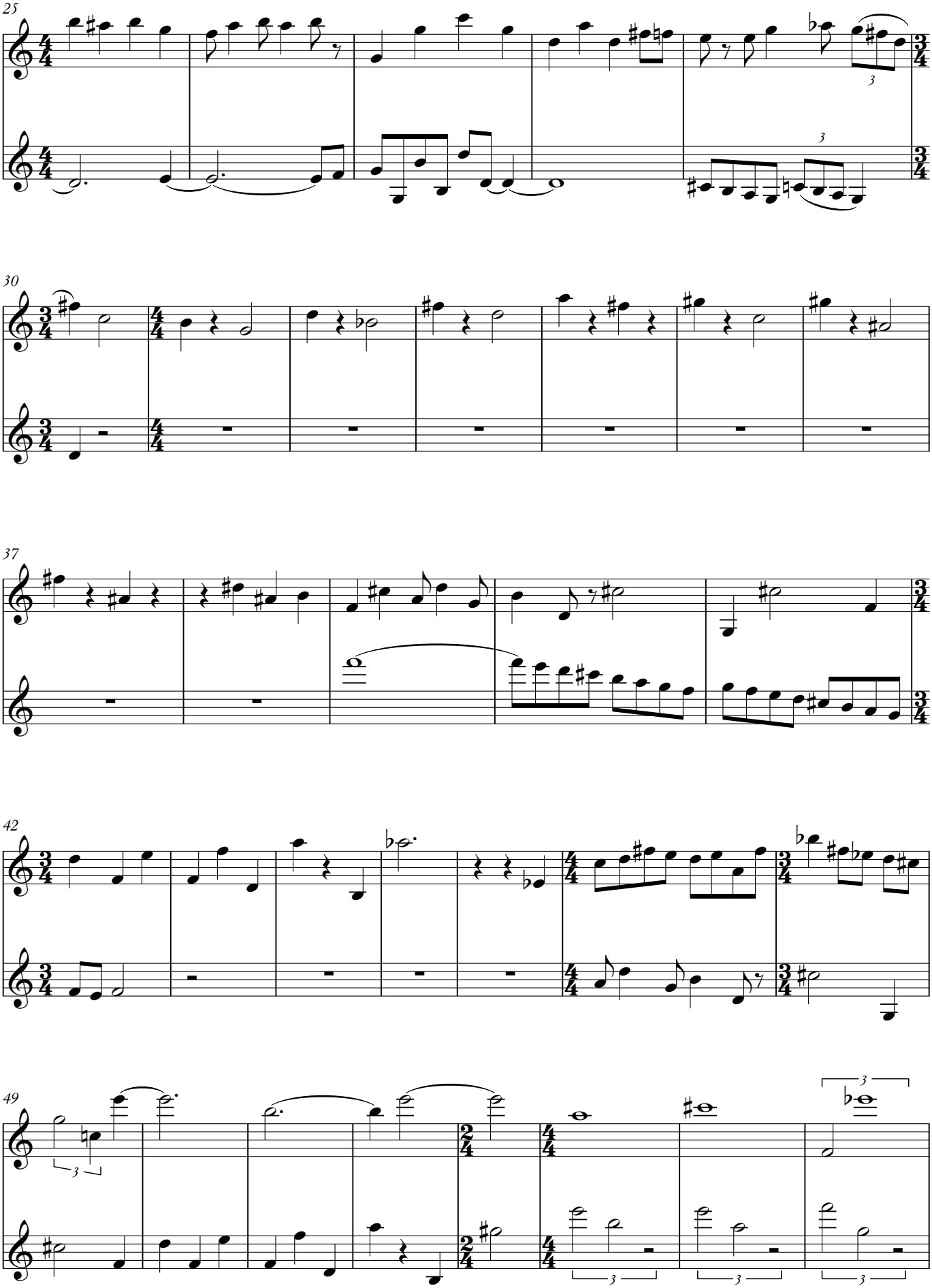
for solo piano

Martin Arnold, one morning, mentioned to me how much he would like to be able to write rhythmically simple music. In 4/4 time, without complicated meters or elaborate subdivisions, music that still sounded odd and strange. At the time, I was in the thick of writing a piece filled with scales, flying up and down at changing speeds, like Haydn gone wrong, so I didn't think about it too much. Some months later, while walking by the river in Fredericton, I wondered about his question. If the tempo were fast enough, each bar flying past in a single pulse, then maybe it would be possible to keep the notation to simple durations and still have unusual-sounding music with ordinary sounds. To test the idea, I imagined a simple solo piano piece, just one or two lines, simple melodies with leaps. The first piece was written without any system, and each new piece was derived from the one before through simple alterations (filling in notes, transposing pitches, reversing the order of events, changing tempo). They became free one- and two-part inventions, suggesting more complicated textures without explicitly producing them. In a sense, they are four successive attempts to think about Martin's question.

I

Marc Sabat

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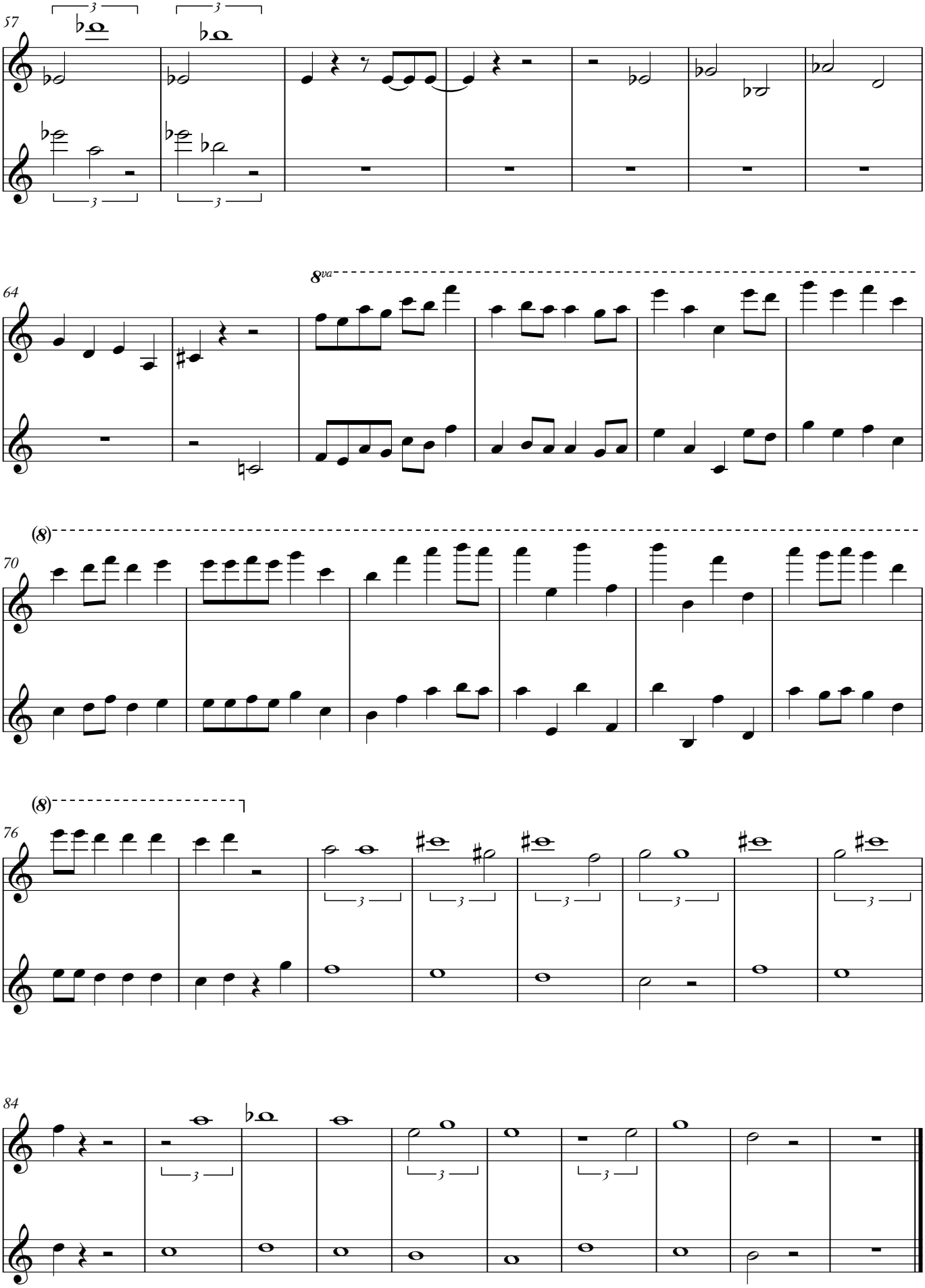
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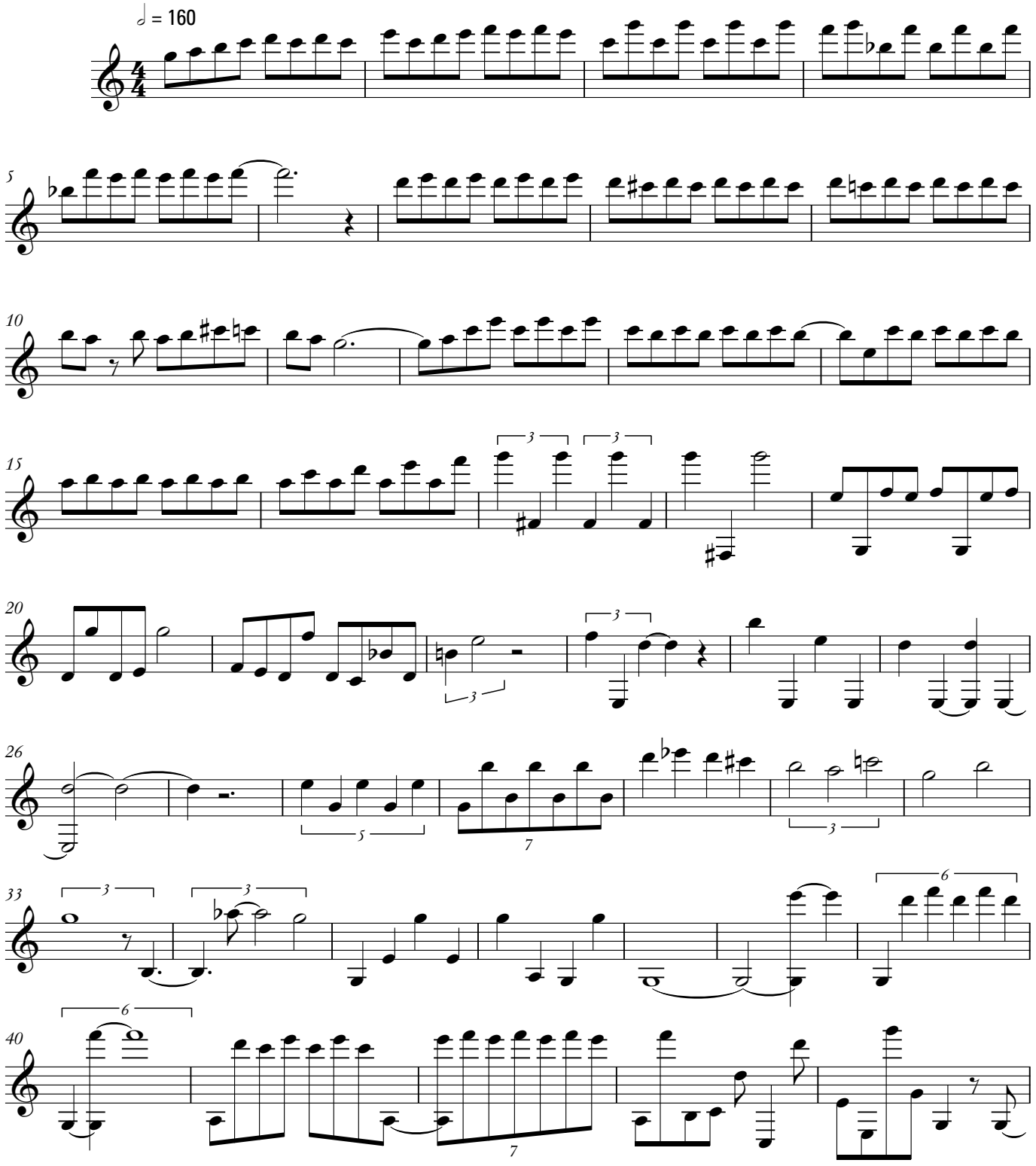

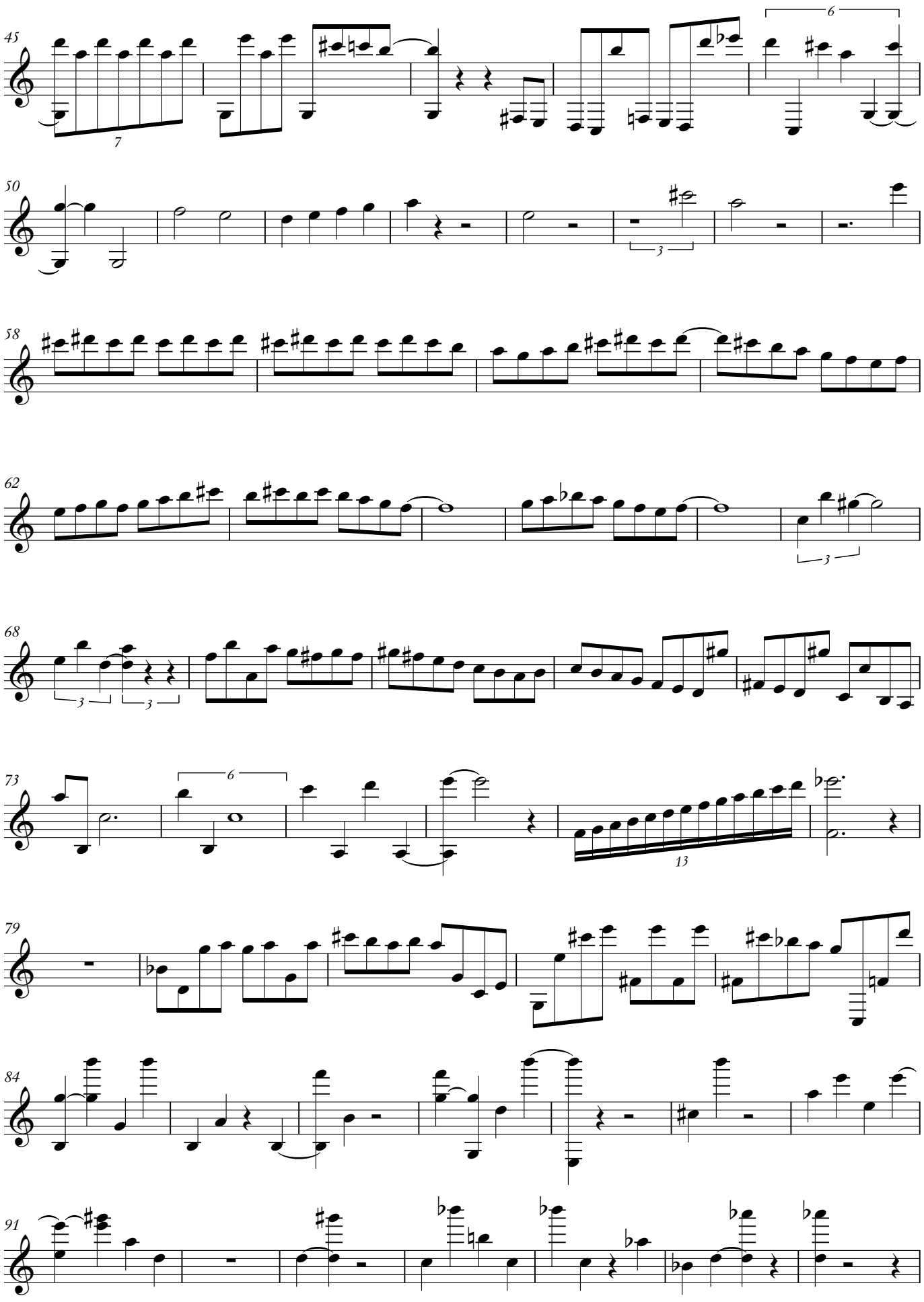
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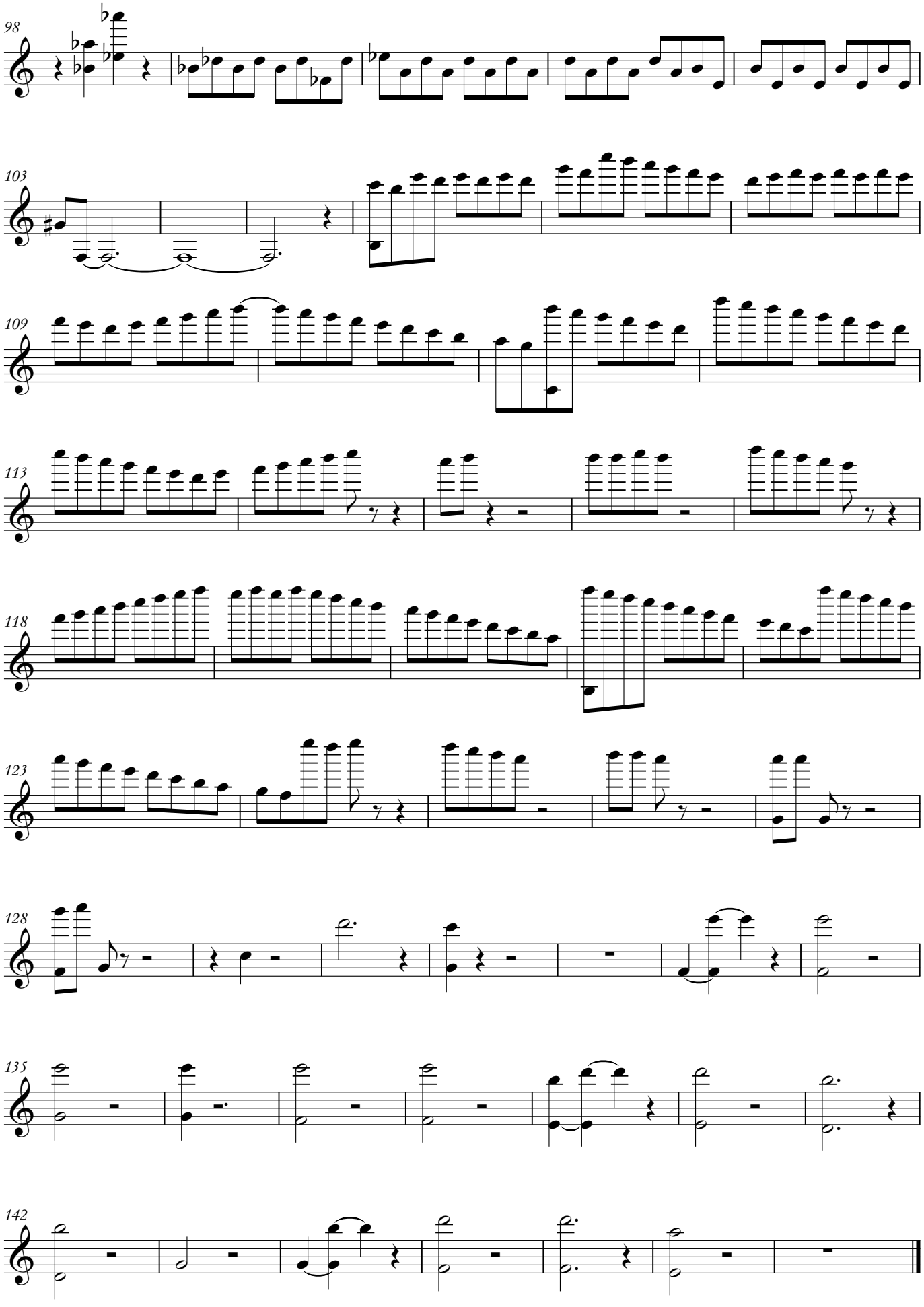
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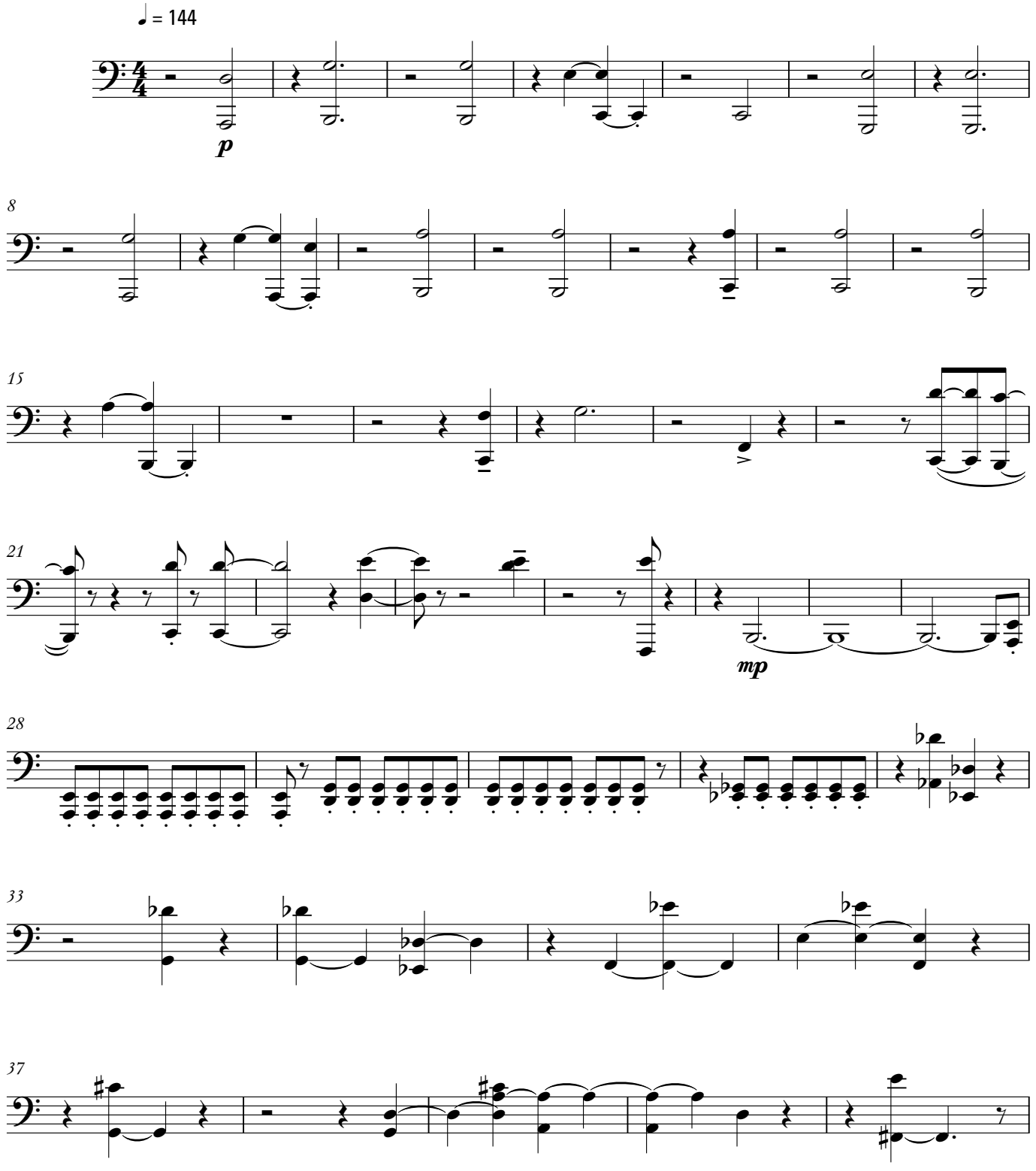

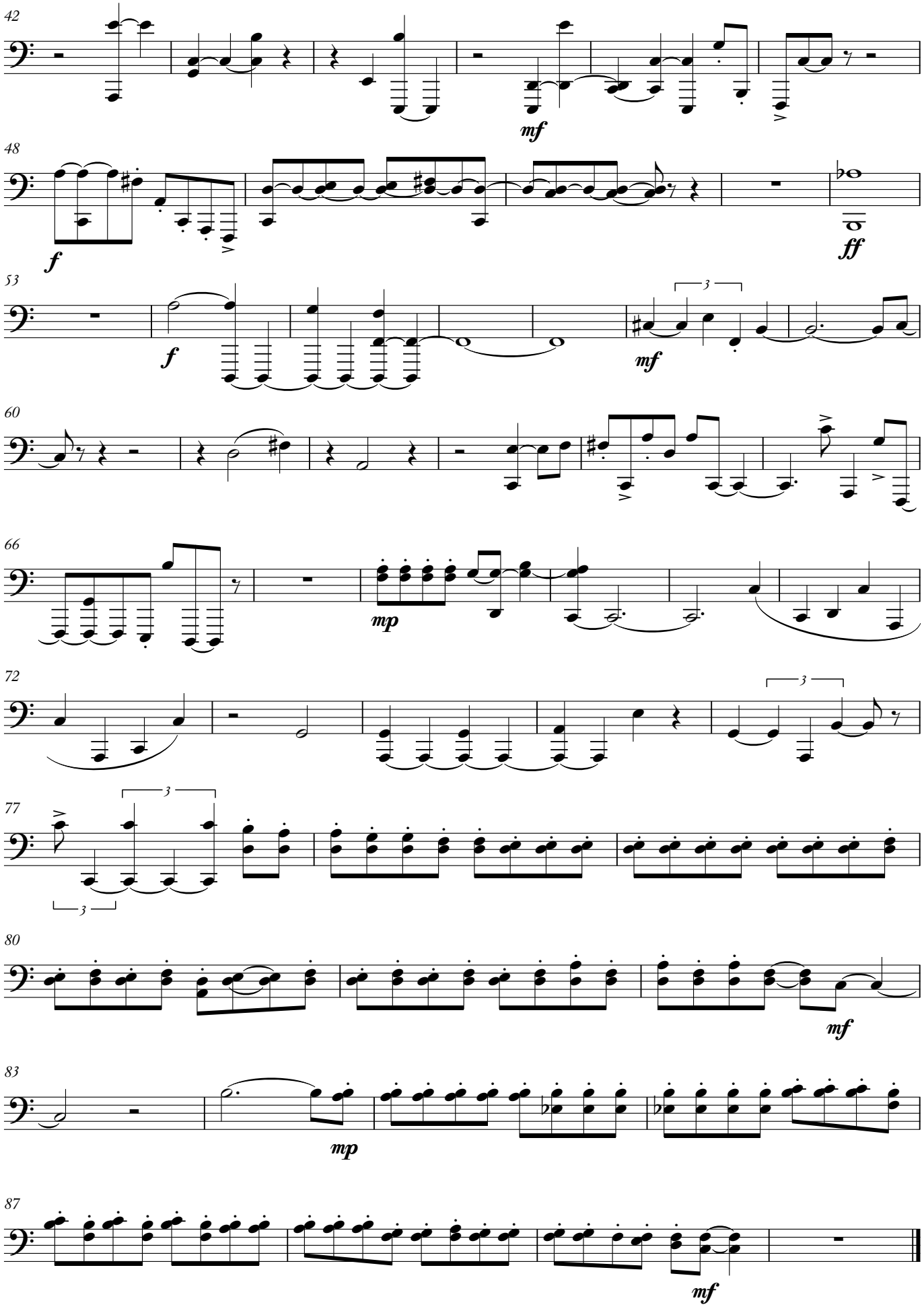
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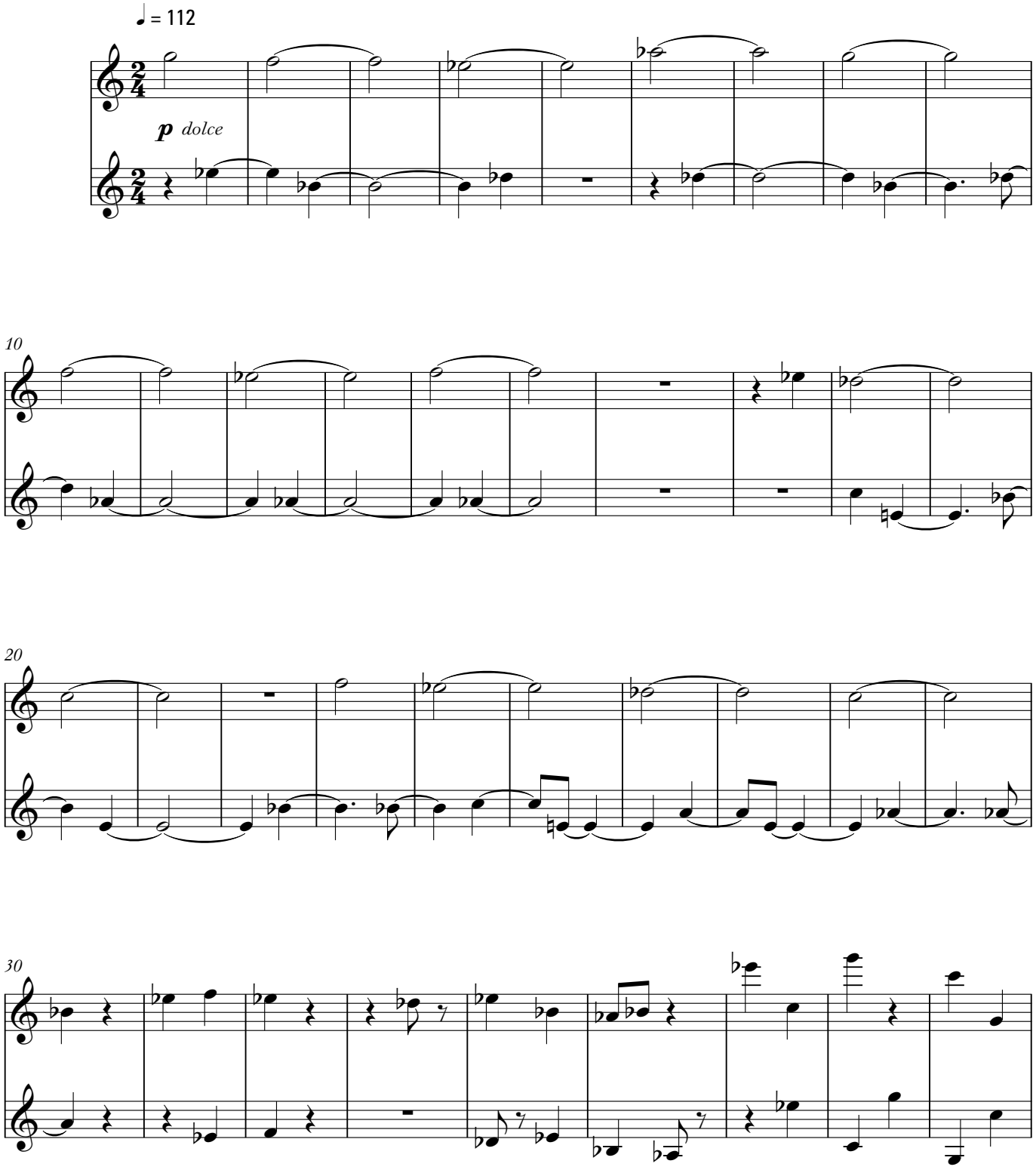

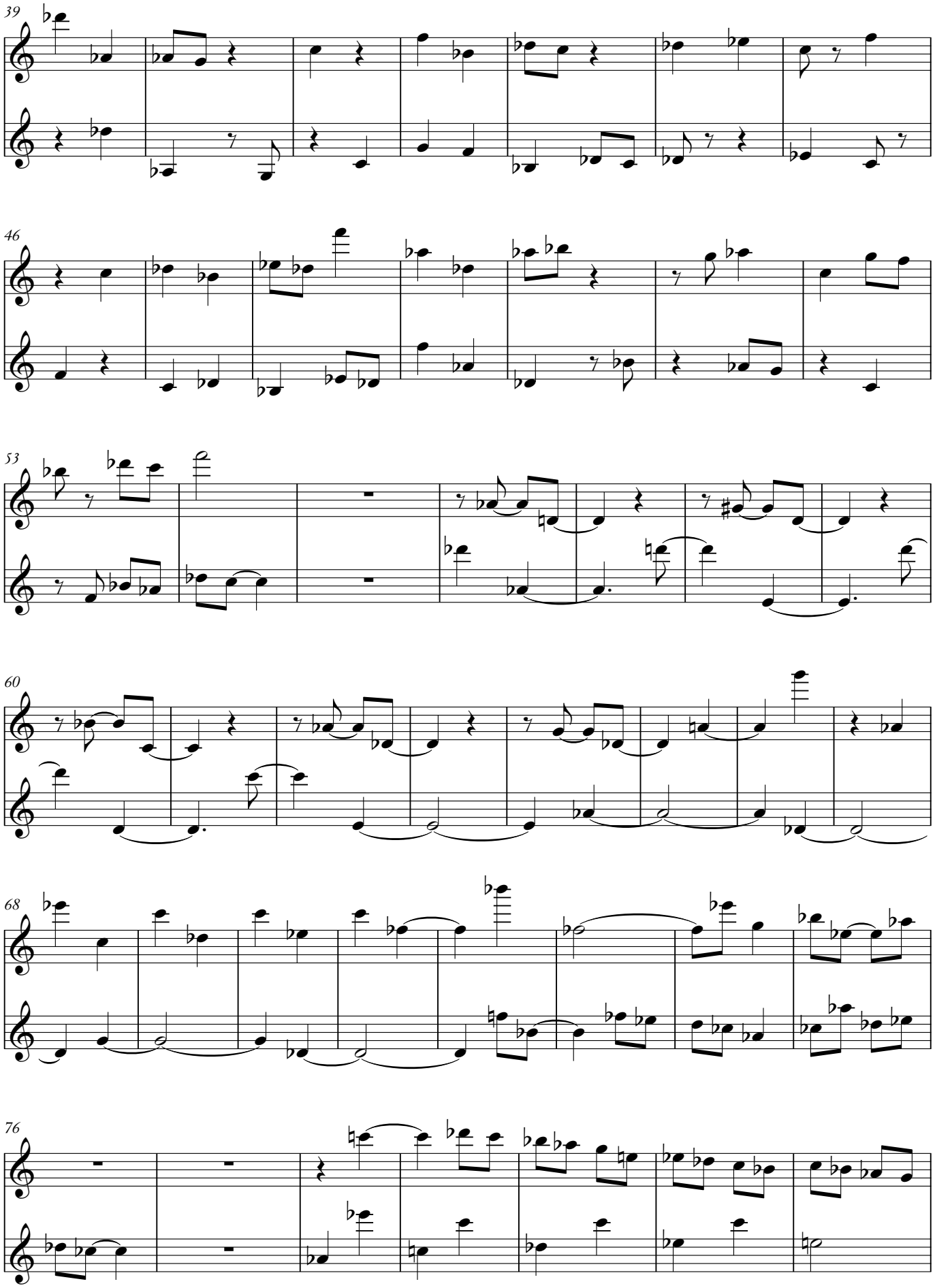
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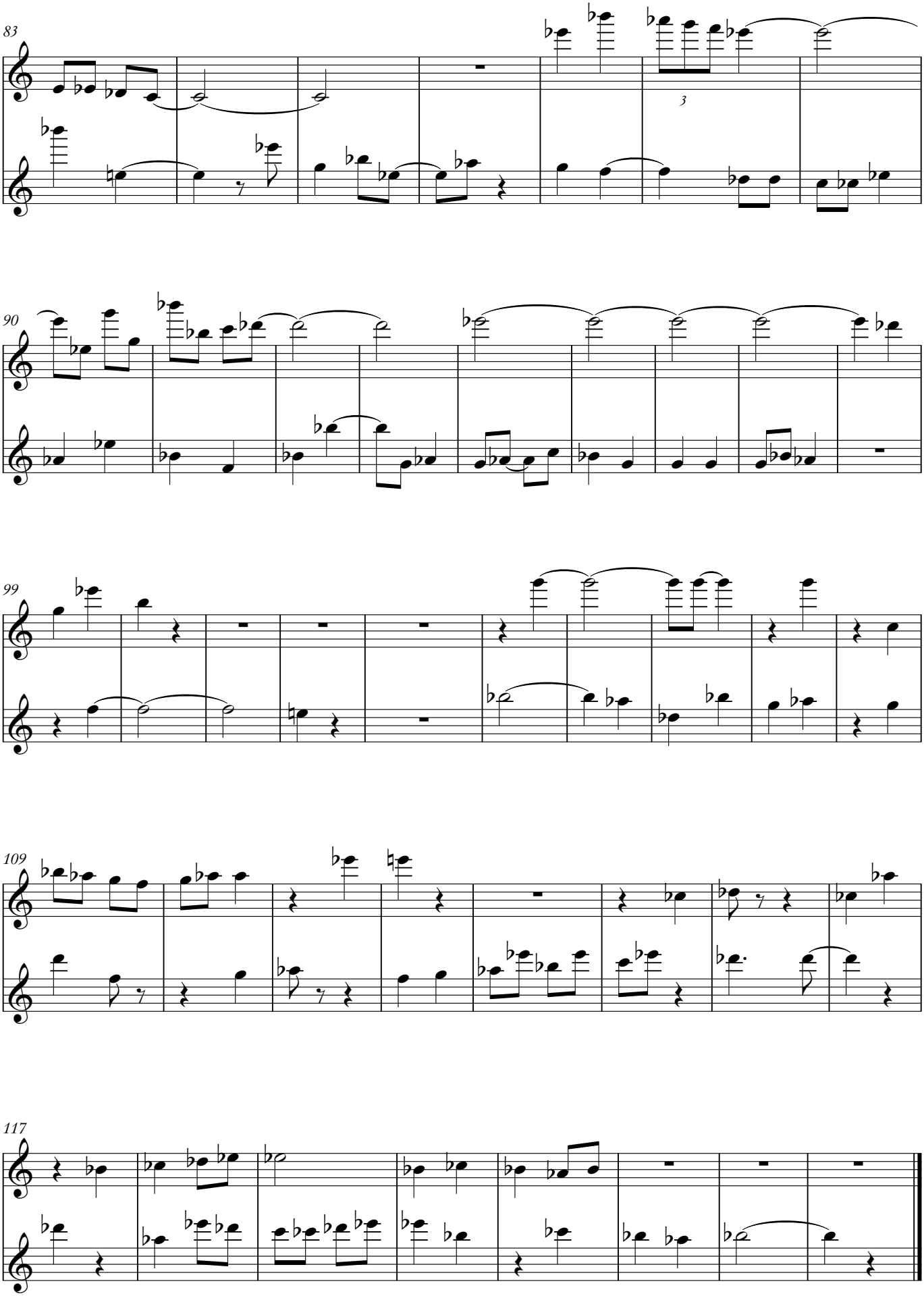
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