21 Electronic Scores

Sonata IV

... in circles

Wolfgang Plagge [opus 116]

for Violin and Piano [part]

durata 16:30

composed 2001

version 09.10.2003

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Wolfgang Plagge:

... in circles [Sonata IV]

for violin and piano

Op. 116

The two sonatas for violin and piano – op. 93 and op. 116 – are in many ways mirror images of one another. Seen from the outside, both consist of one horizontal and one vertical time axis, one of them assertive and quick, the other introverted and gentle. Sonata no. III op. 93 (1997) begins impetuously and restlessly, but eventually flows into a quiet and stately final movement. **Sonata no. IV op. 116** (2001) has an altogether contrary pattern: a static, probing introduction ultimately leads into an explosive and extroverted conclusion. Also on a deeper level the two works circle one another like planets in a binary star system and form an aesthetic as well as an epic union: one gives where the other takes, one is tacit where the other speaks. In fact, all the inner and outer processes are distinguished by binary contrasts – strong-weak, fast-slow, light-dark, aggression-melancholy, sorrow-joy. The two sonatas can well be understood as two-faced extremes, or poles with opposing charges, but I rather conceive of them as two half circles that meet one another at their upper and lower points.
Precisely this aspect of bipolarity on all levels has captivated me in these two works, and my fascination for the musical history of the Middle Ages has furthermore left profound marks on Sonata no. IV in the form of a Gregorian sequence – an old Norwegian version of Thomas Aquinas' hymn "Lauda Sion" comprises one of the work's two primary elements. The tension between the old and the new is additionally reinforced through the use of extremely archaic (open fifths, violin playing without vibrato) as well as modernistic (quarter tones, aleatoric elements) instrumental means. As a composer I therefore took on the challenge of treading two apparently very dissimilar circles – only to discover that they are tightly connected, like links in a chain.

Oslo, 2003 *Wolfgang Plagge*

De to sonatene for fiolin og klaver op.93 og 116 er på mange måter speilbilder av hverandre. Ytre sett består begge av én loddrett og én vannrett tidsakse, den ene utagerende og rask, den andre innadvendt og stillferdig. Sonate nr. III op.93 (*1997) begynner heftig og urolig, men munner ut i en stille, staselig avslutningssats. **Sonate nr. IV op.116** (*2001) har et stikk motsatt forløp; en statisk, famlende innledning leder etter hvert over i en eksplosiv og utadvendt avslutning. Også på et dypere plan kretser de to verkene rundt hverandre som drabanter i et dobbelstjernekompleks og danner en estetisk så vel som en episk enhet: Den ene gir der den andre tar, den ene tier der den andre taler. I det hele tatt preges alle indre og ytre forløp av binære kontraster – sterkt-svakt, hurtig-langsomt, lys-mørke, aggresjon-melankoli, sorg-glede. De to sonatene kan gjerne oppfattes som Janus-ansikter eller to poler med motsatt ladning, men selv oppfatter jeg dem snarere som to halvsirkler som møter hverandre oppe og nede.

Jeg har i disse to verkene latt meg fascinere nettopp av bipolaritet på alle plan – min sterke interesse for musikalsk middelalderhistorie har dessuten satt dype spor i sonate nr. IV i form av en gregoriansk sekvens; en gammel norsk versjon av Thomas Aquinas-hymnen "Lauda Sion" utgjør det ene av to hovedelementer i verket. Spenningen mellom gammelt og nytt forsterkes ytterligere gjennom bruken av både svært arkaiske (åpne kvinter, fiolinspill uten vibrato) og svært modernistiske (kvarttoner og aleatoriske elementer) instrumentale virkemidler. Som komponist våger jeg meg dermed inn i to tilsynelatende svært forskjellige sirkler – bare for å oppdage at de henger tett sammen, som lenker i en kjede.

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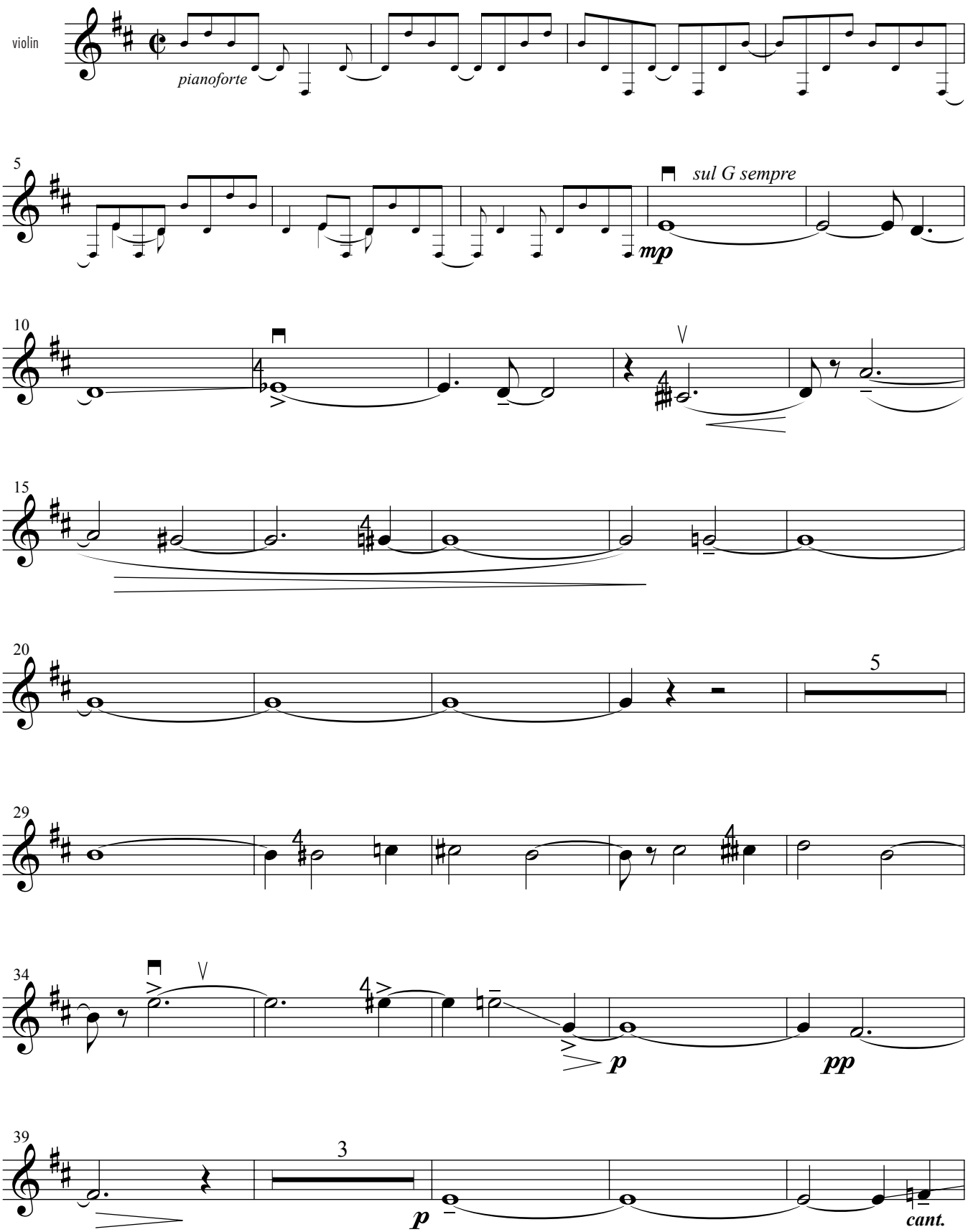
... in circles [Sonata IV]

Wolfgang Plagge [opus 116]

1st movement



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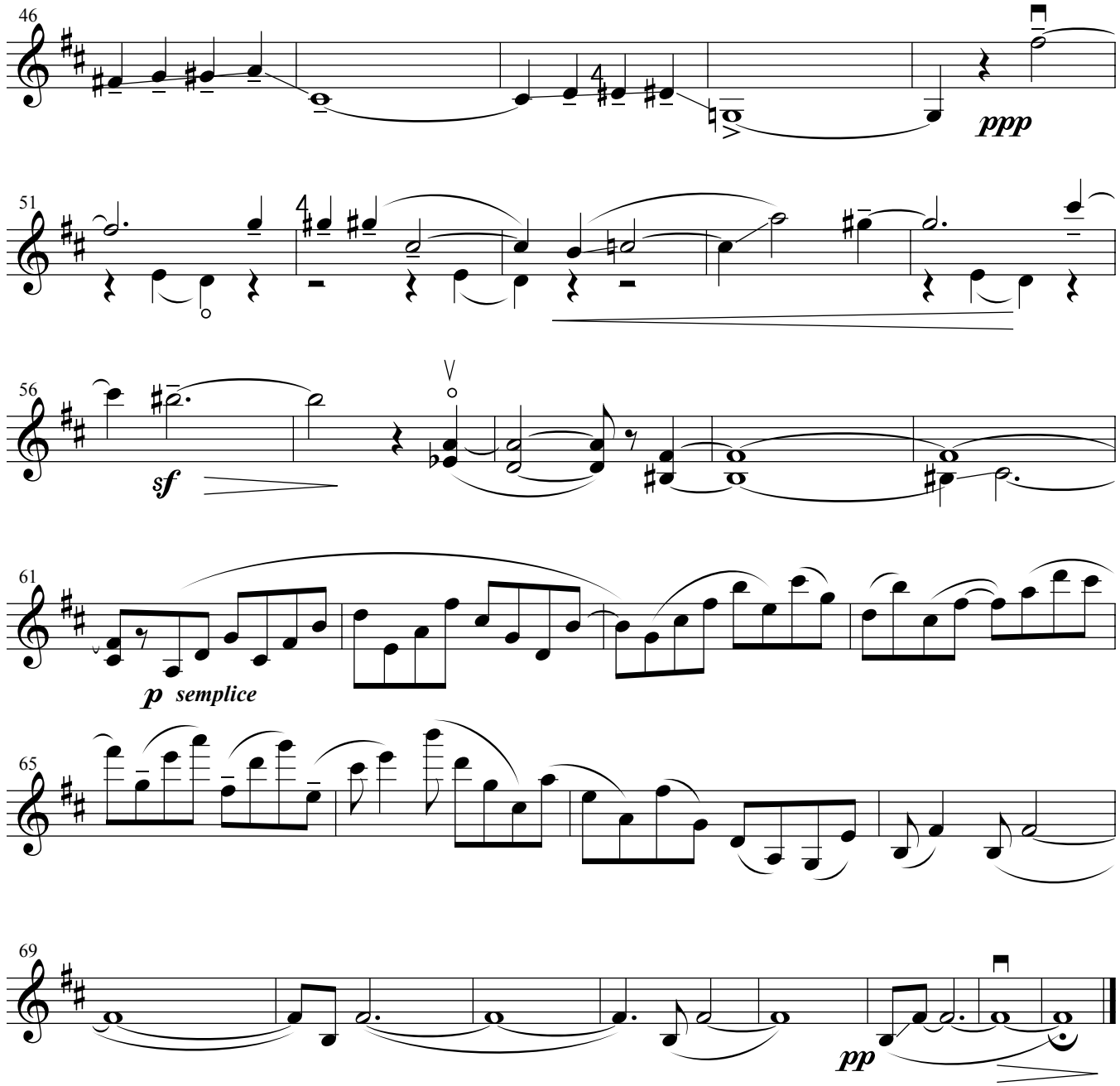

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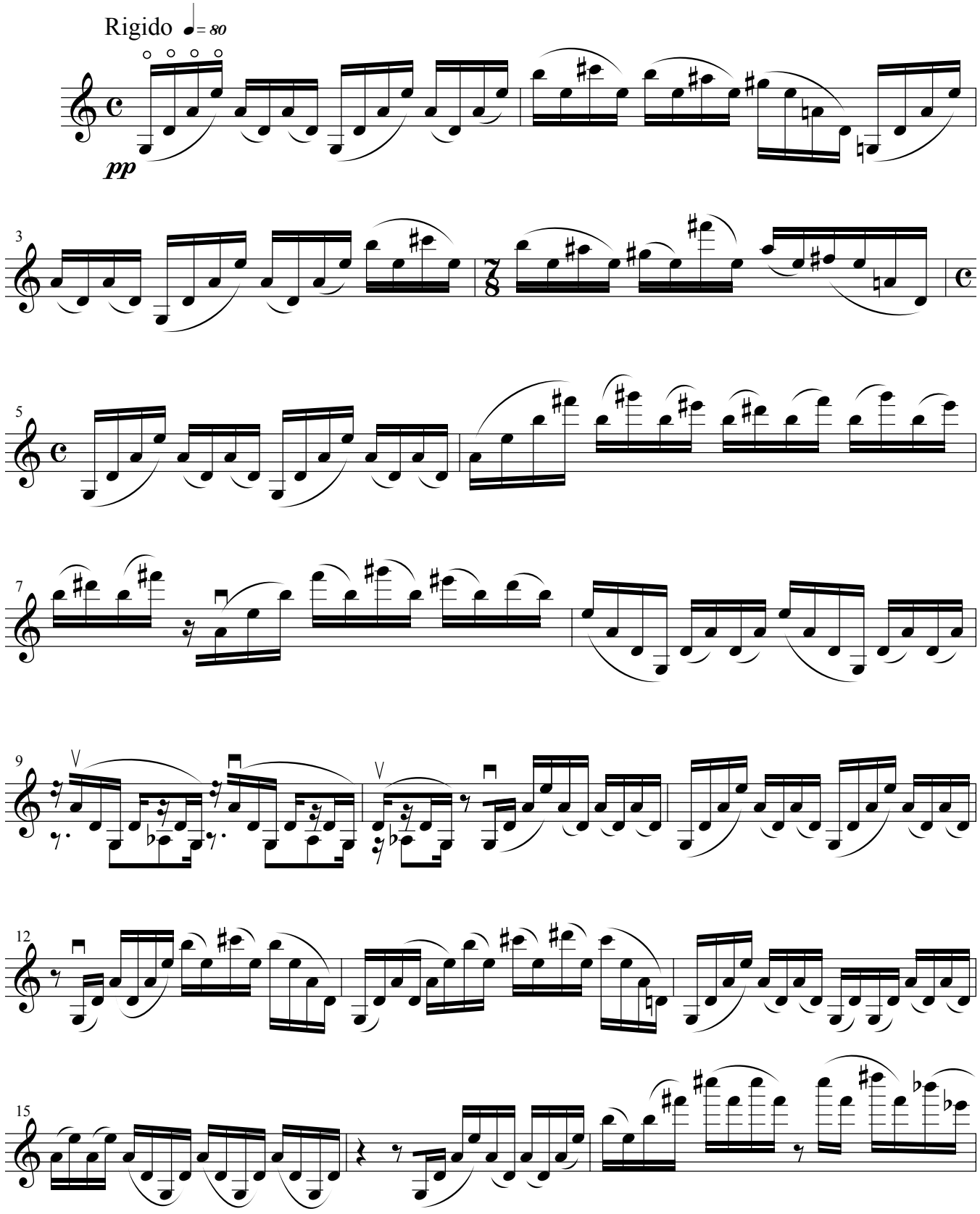

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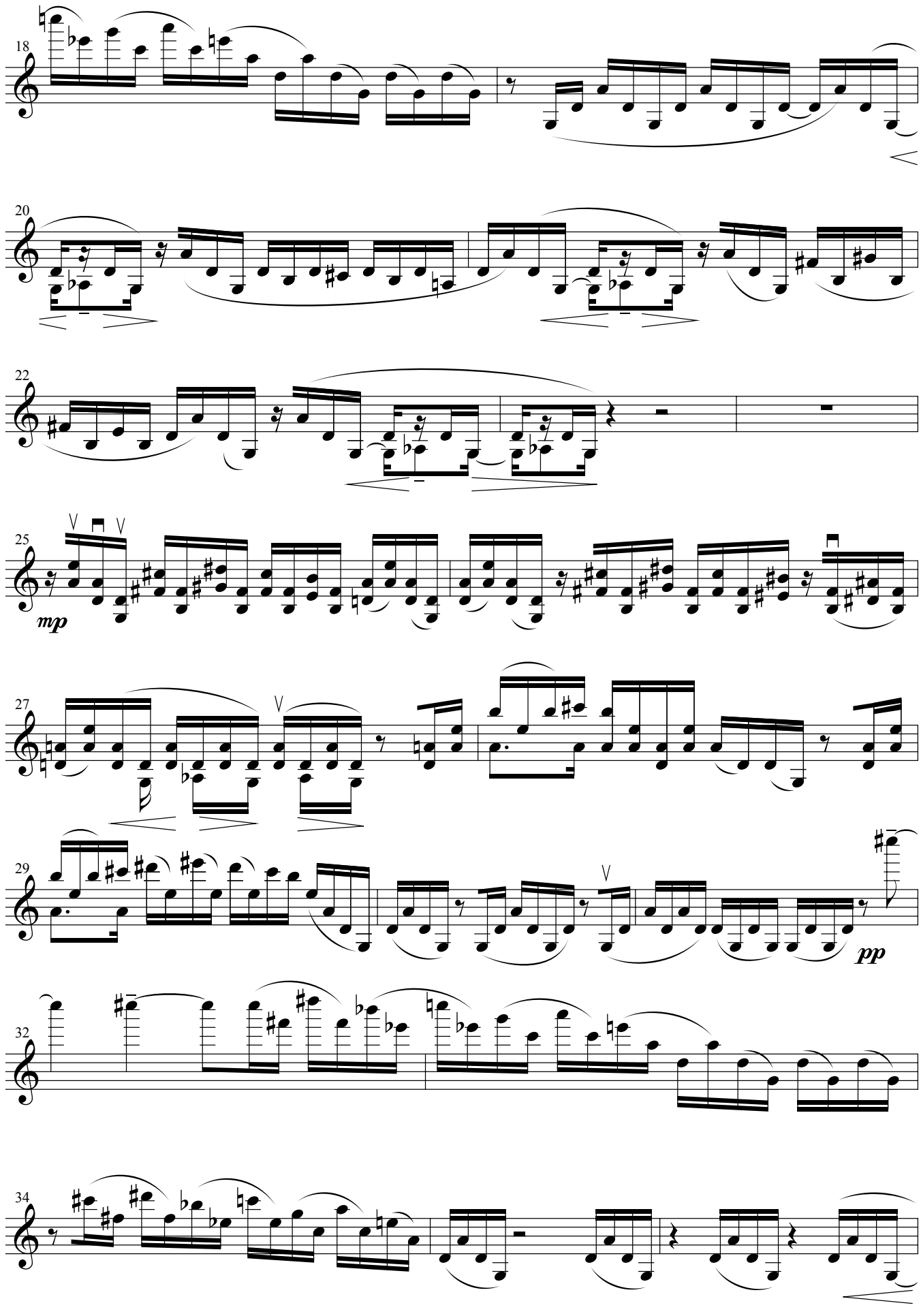

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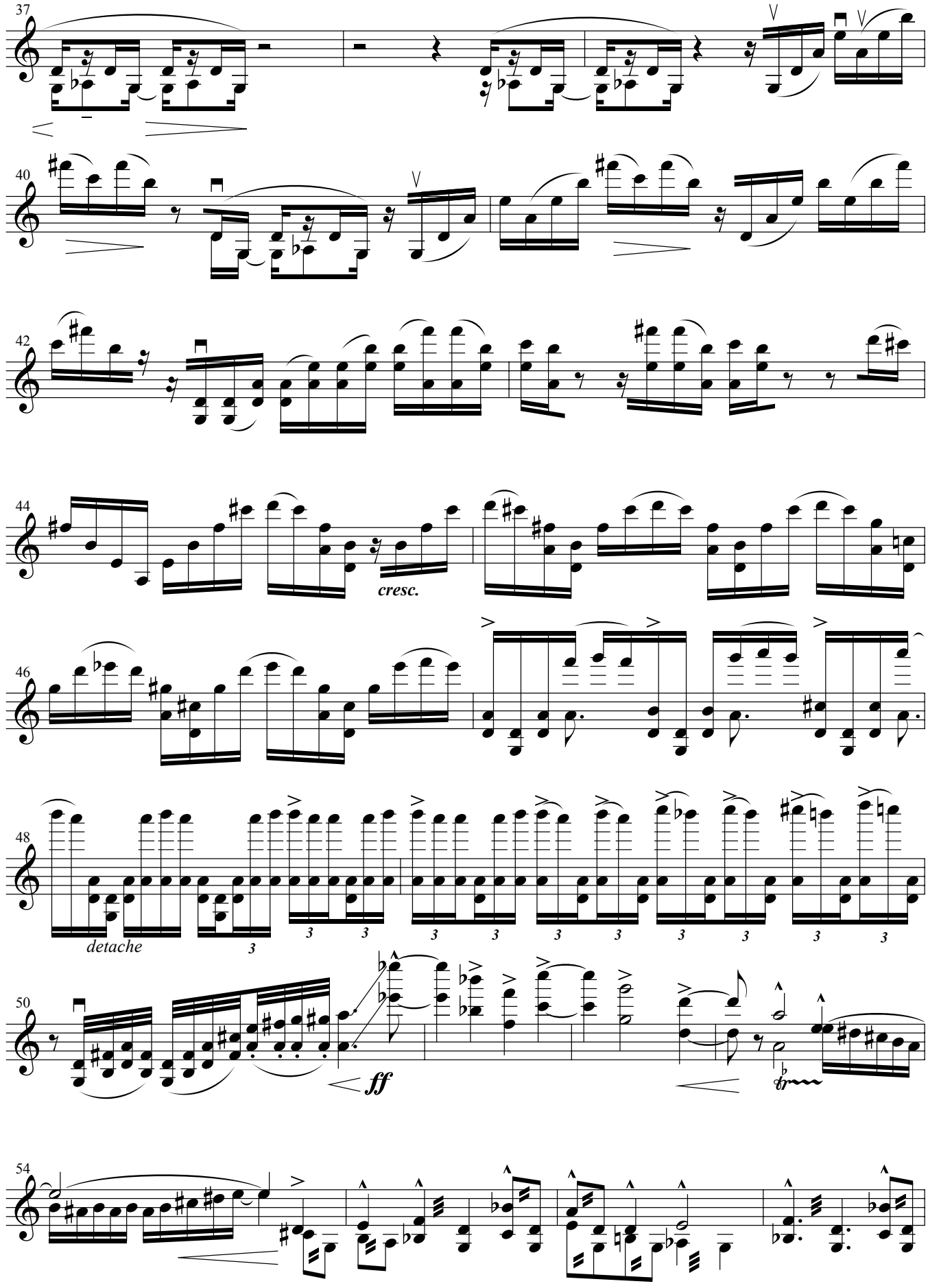

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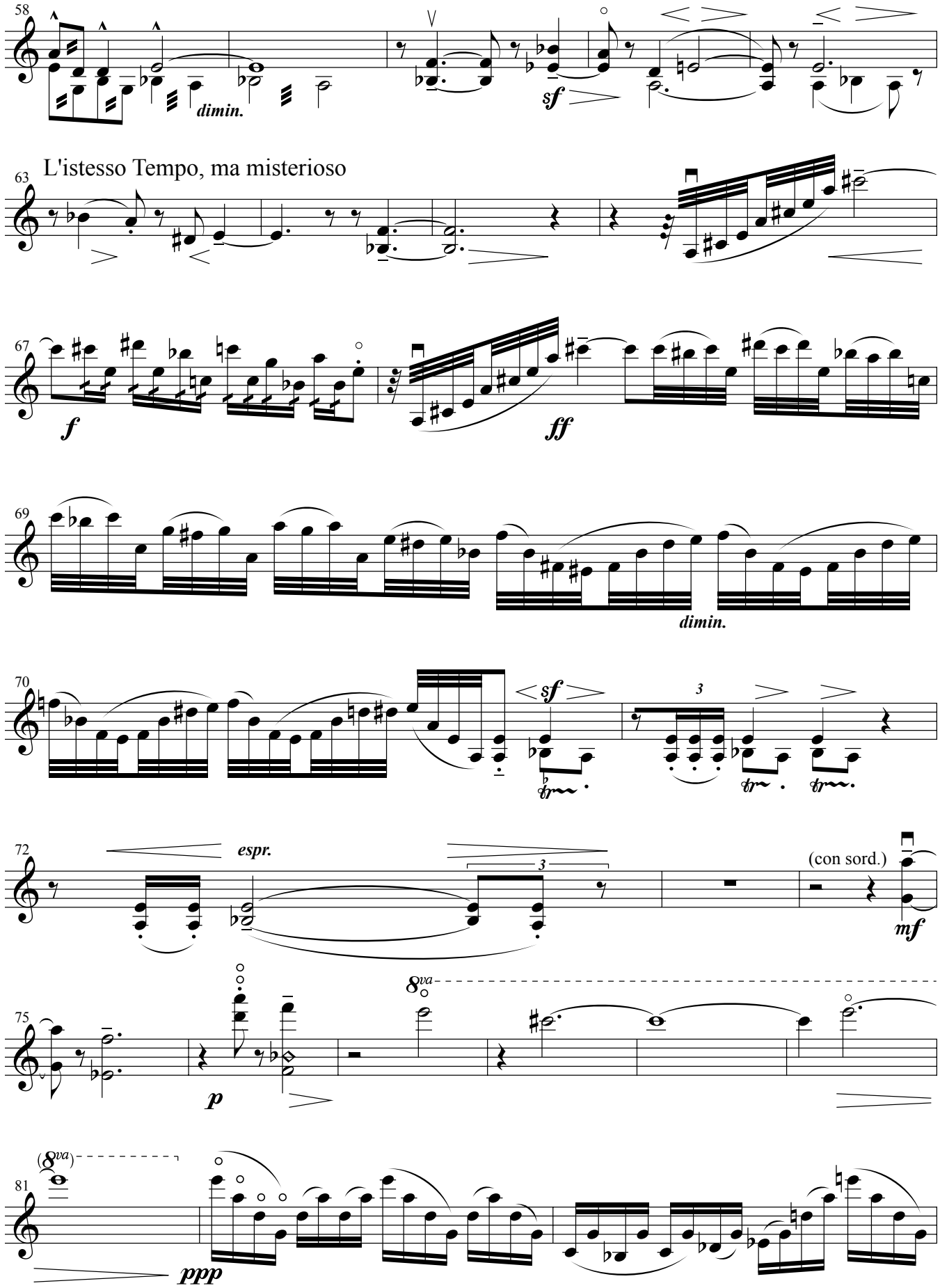

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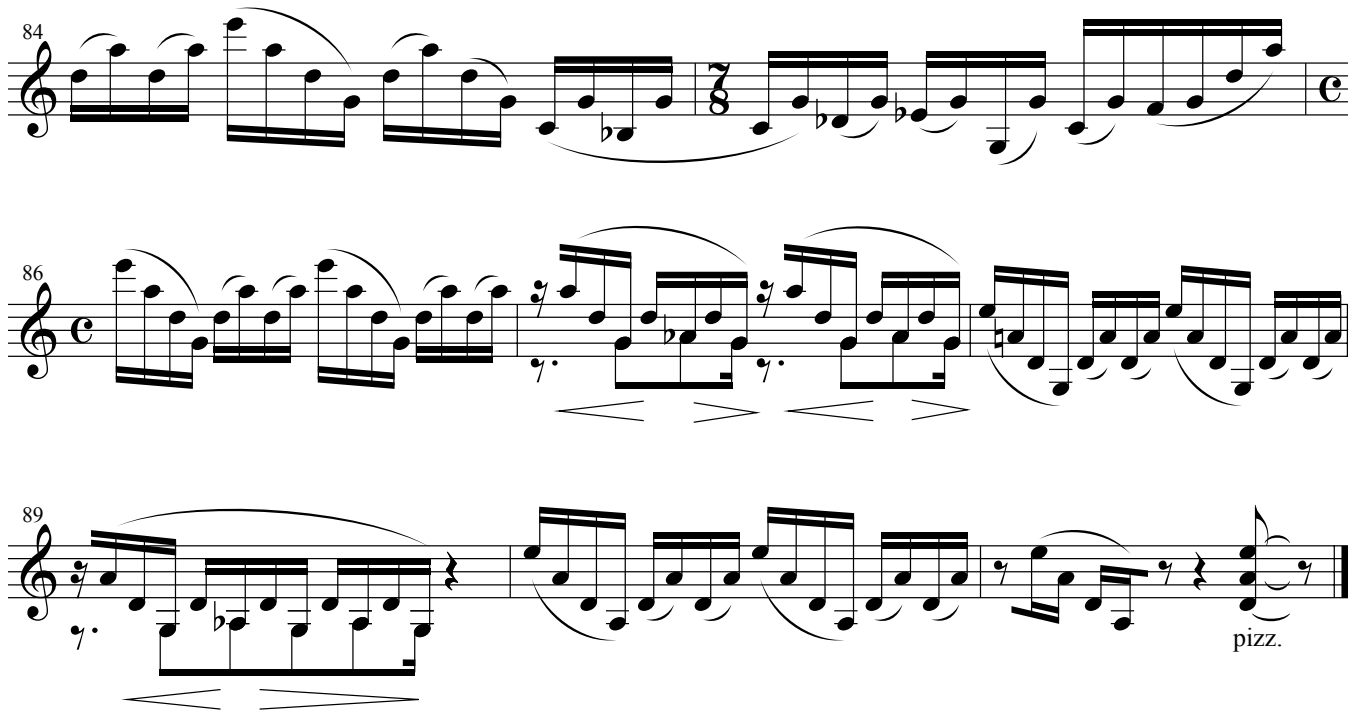

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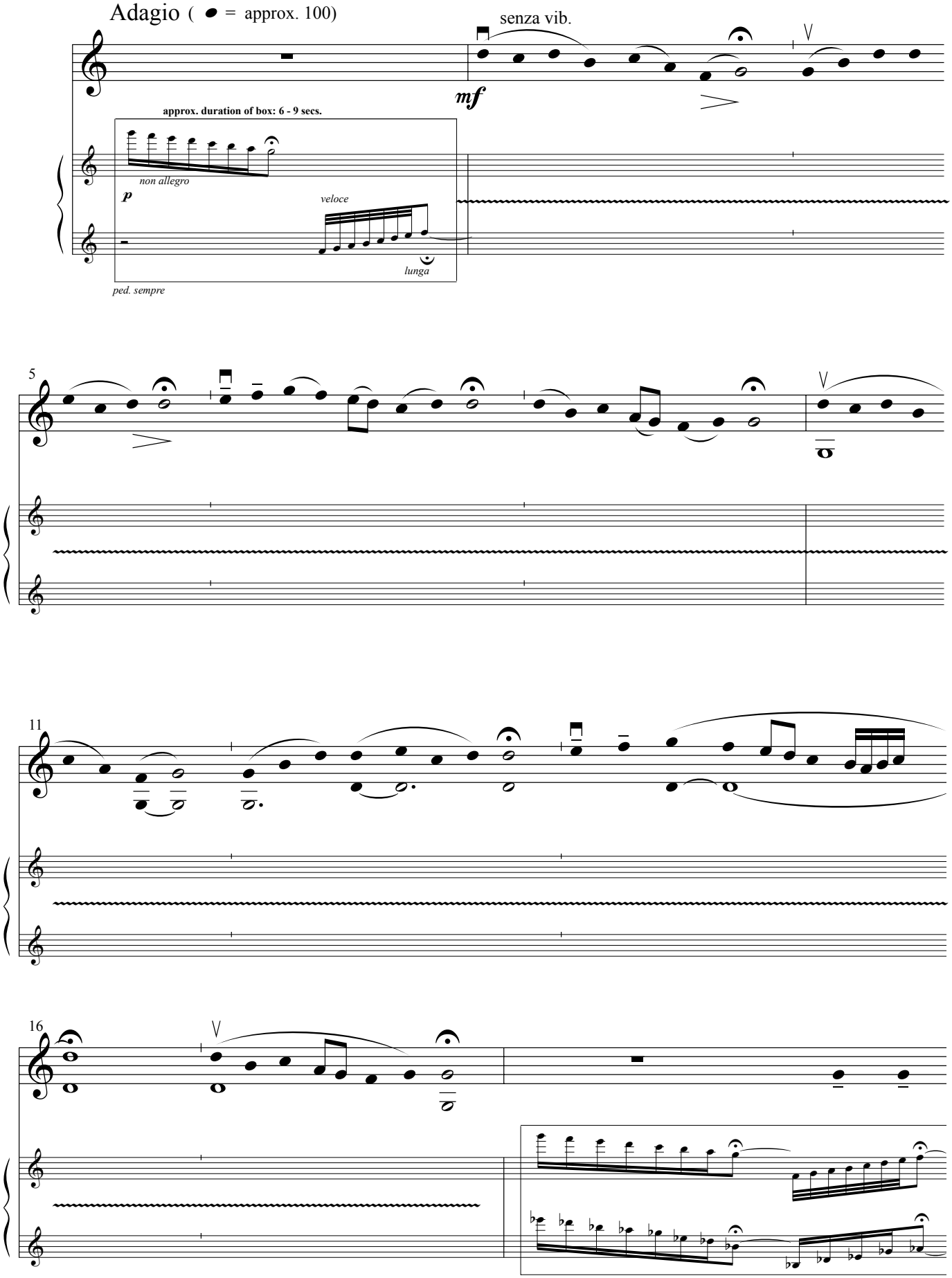

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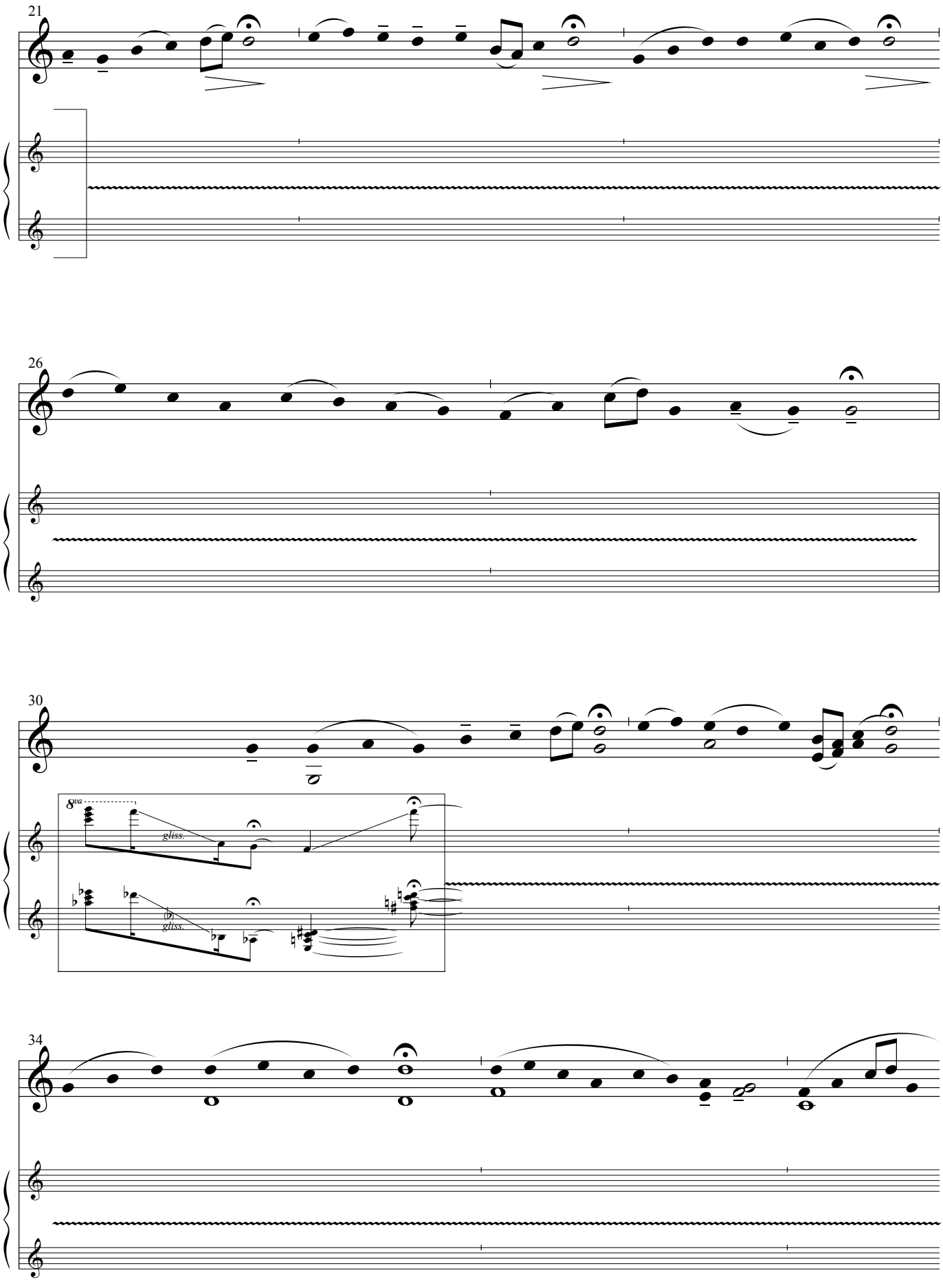

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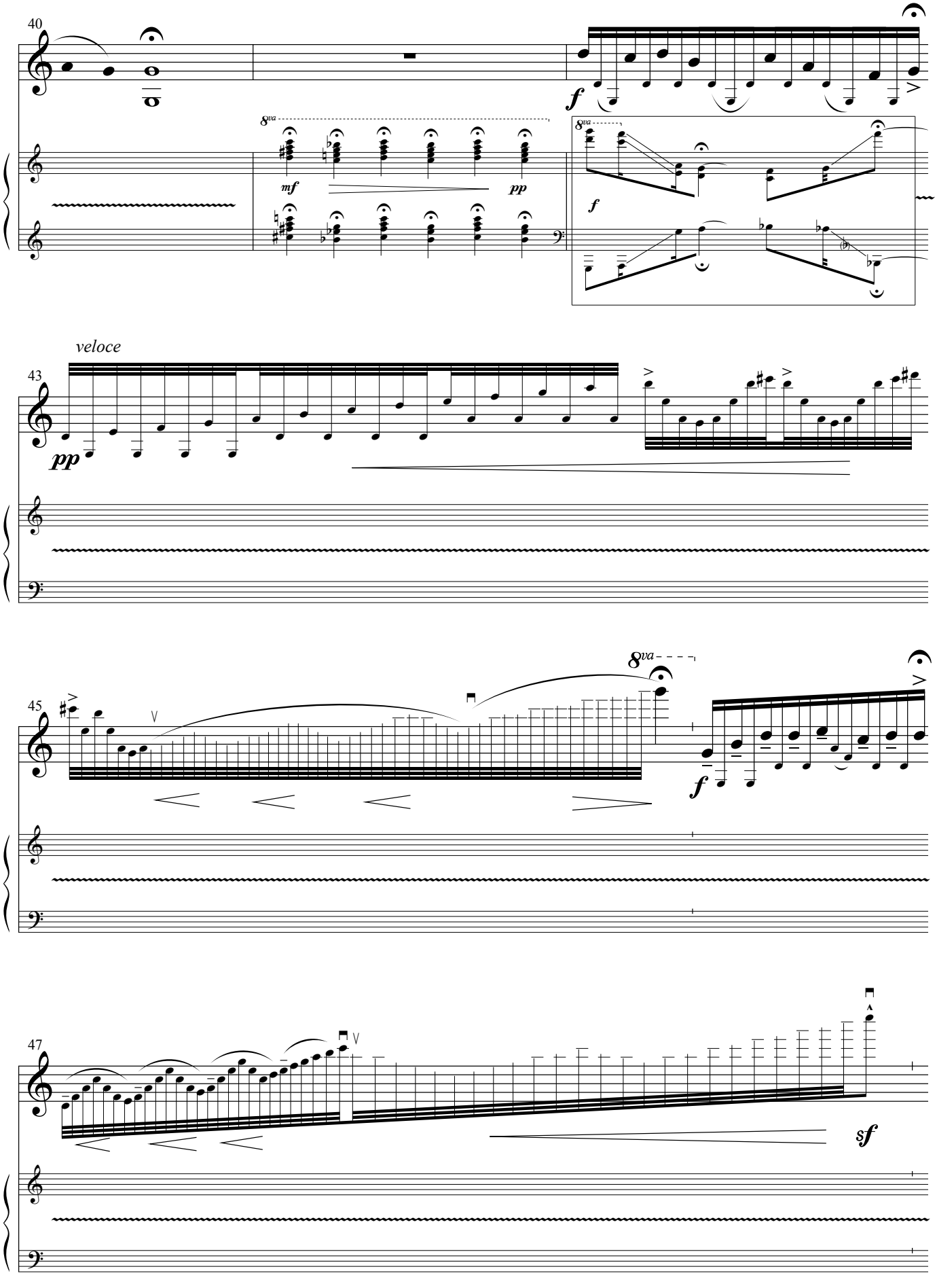

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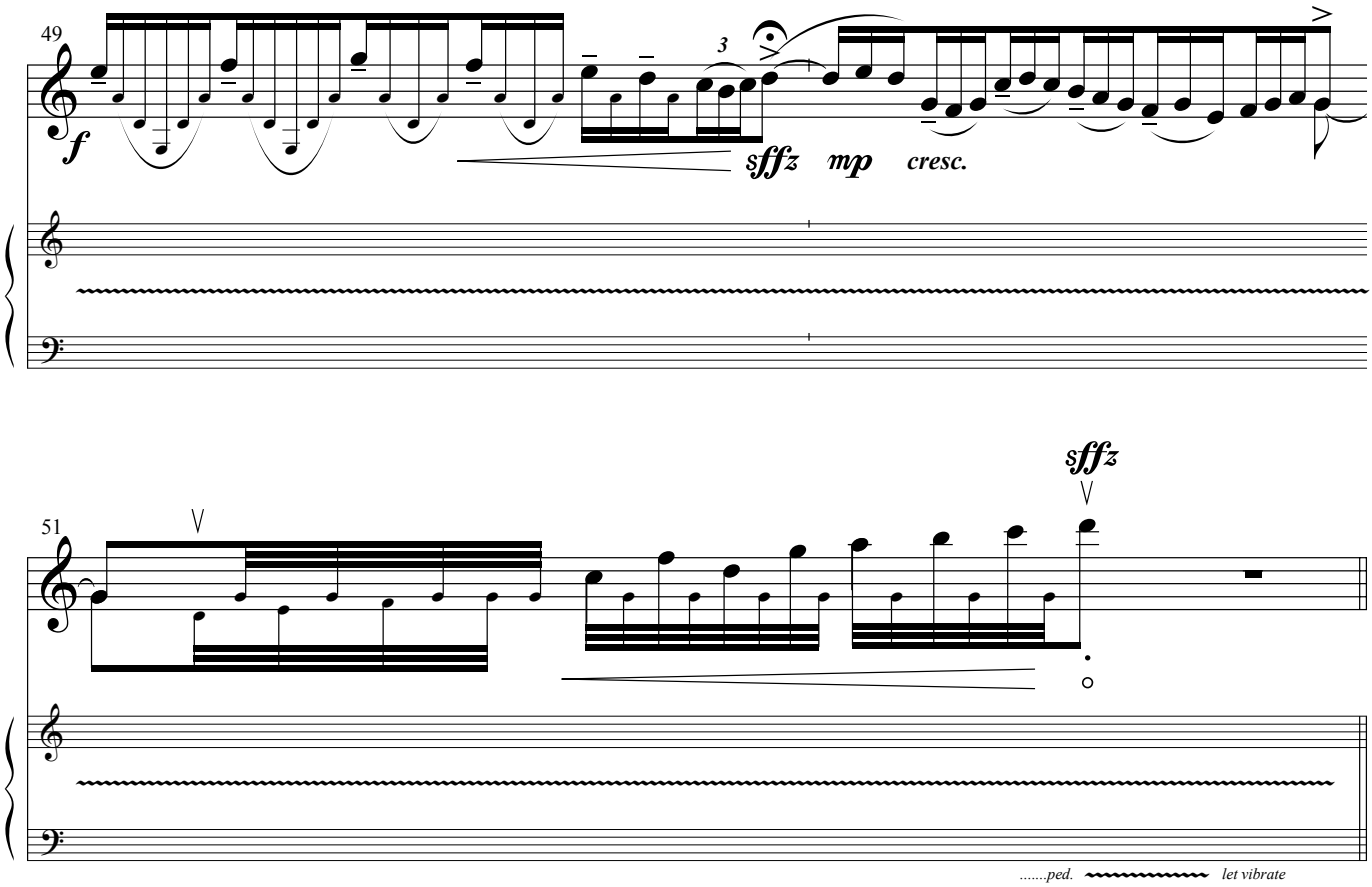

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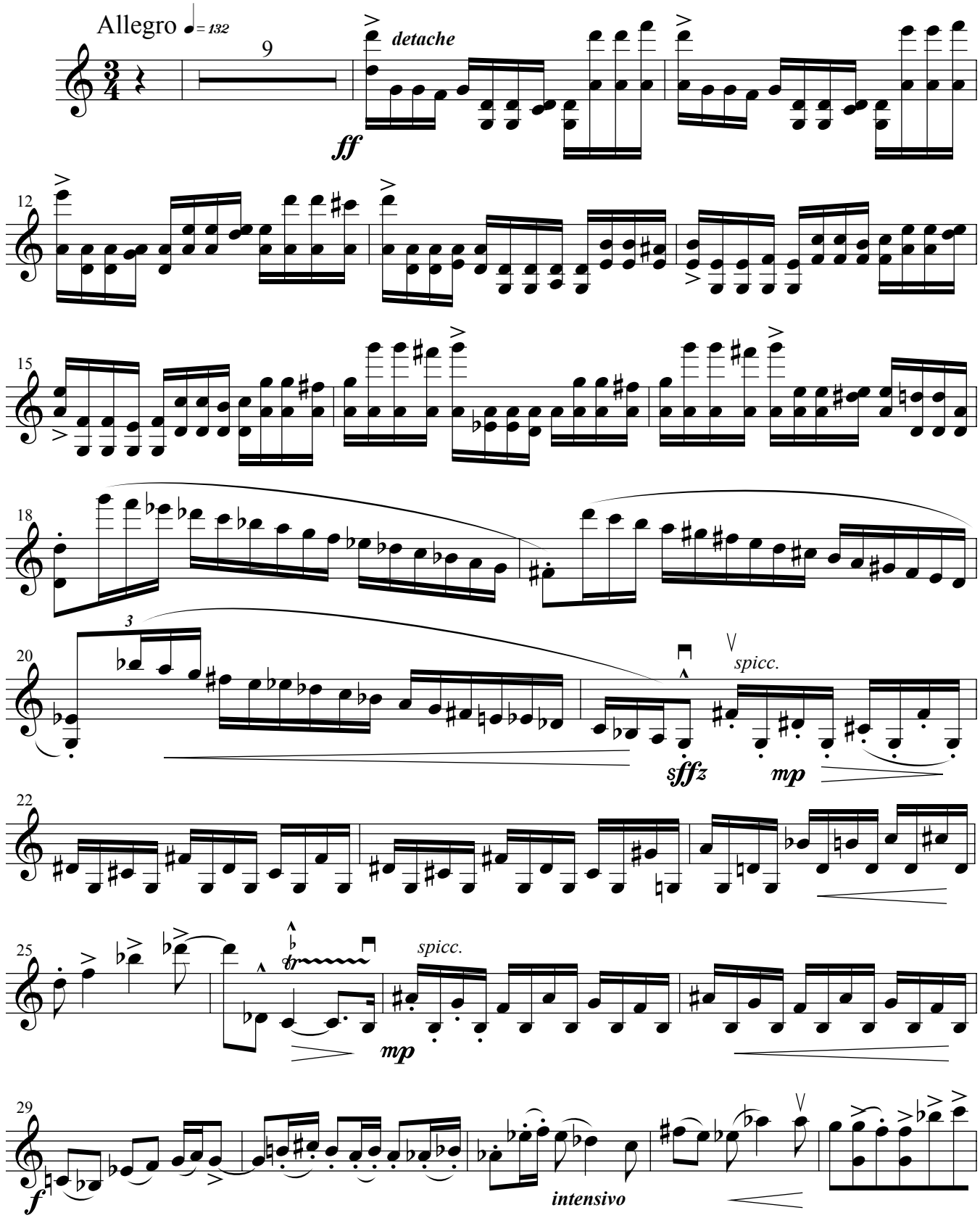

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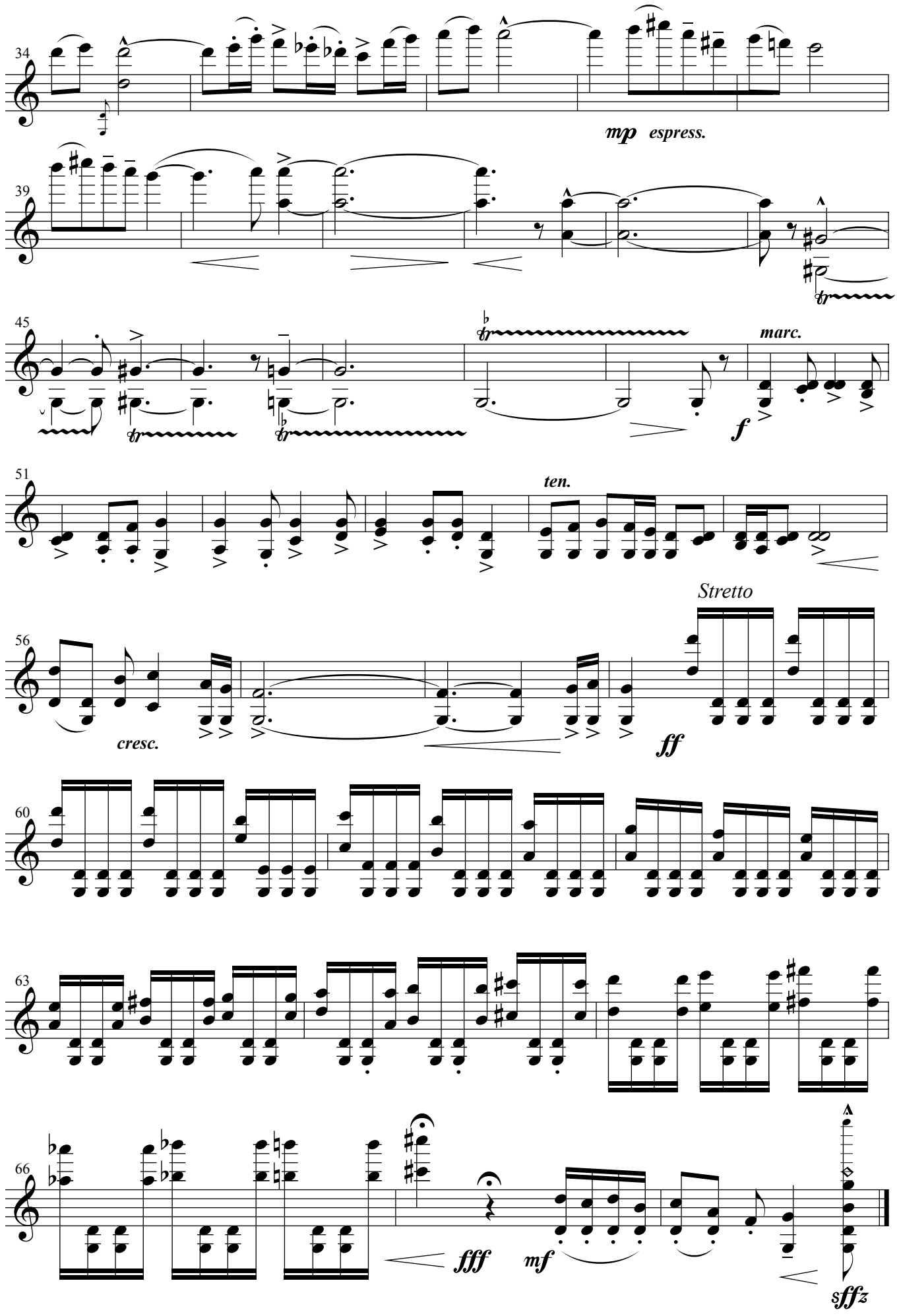

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