Edward Lambert

Aspects of Work

Piano Duet:
one piano, four hands

for Julian Jacobson and Mariko Brown

The piano duet was the medium by which most concert music in the nineteenth century was disseminated: two persons at one piano was a fashionable entertainment and I wanted to create some 'symphonic parlour music' in this piece. It evolved around the important painting *"Work"* by Ford Madox Brown (1865). This compresses the activities of a cross-section of Victorian society into a portrait of a London street scene populated by folk engaged in occupations of many different sorts. Its central focus is the digging of a hole which recalls the construction - by hand - of Bazalgette's sewers or the first underground railways, and the immense industry of the Victorian age in general. (How many shovel-fulls of soil were displaced, and how many bricks laid during the course of the nineteenth century!) This toil clearly has consequences for those caught up in it but the picture also hints at the enormous impact that productive labour can have on society at large and for generations to come. '*Aspects of Work'* is a tapestry spun over a traditional four movement structure - allegro, scherzo, adagio and fugue; it zooms in and out on figures in the painting while illustrating (1) the energy of the labourers, (2) the traditions of rural life and the skills and beauties of the Aesthetic movement, (3) the tragedy of the deprivation which was ever present, but with a growing social conscience also, and (4) the vision of the 'brainworkers' which planned and oversaw great projects and the money of the powerful which paid for them.

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Duration: ca. 24 minutes

16/10/2014

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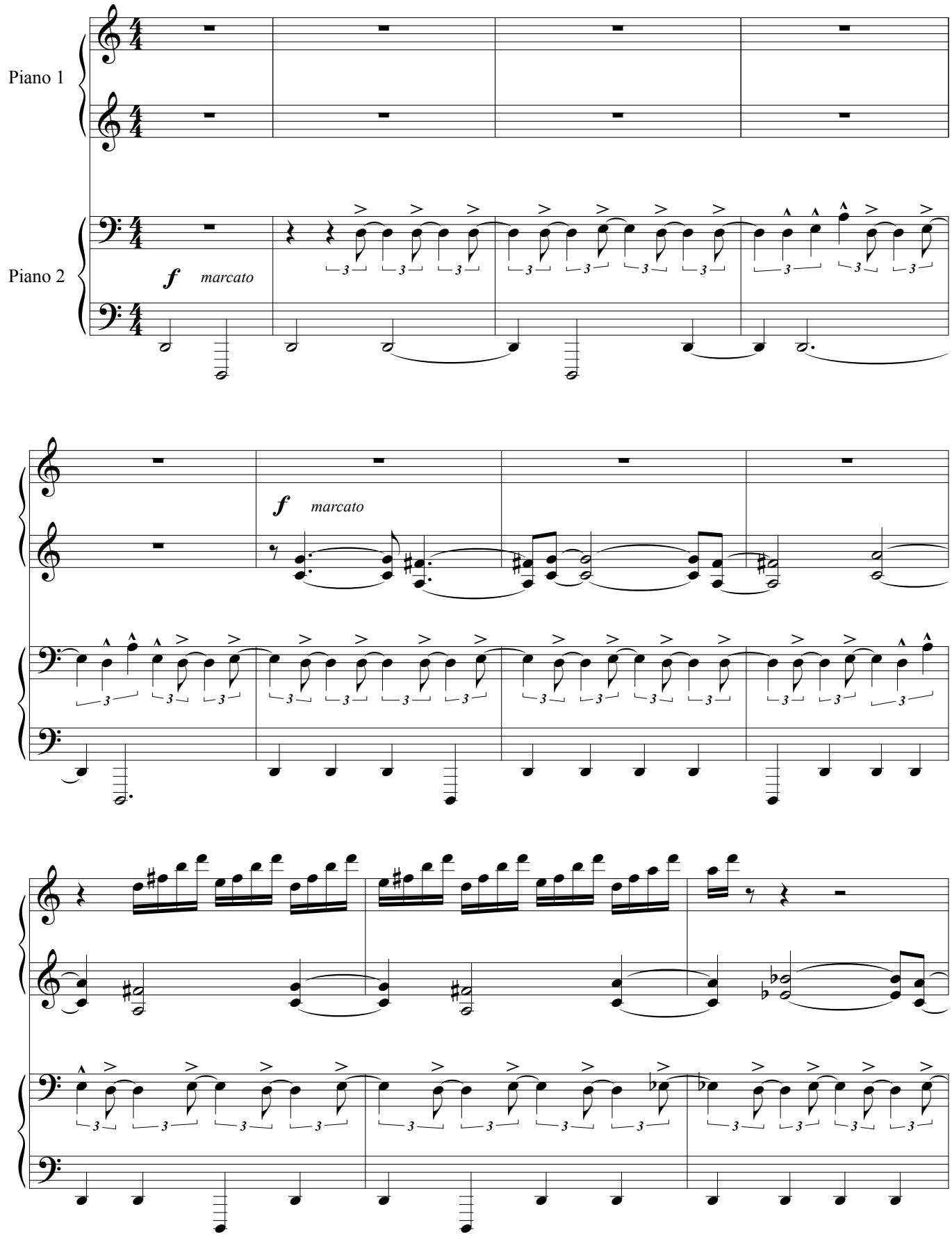
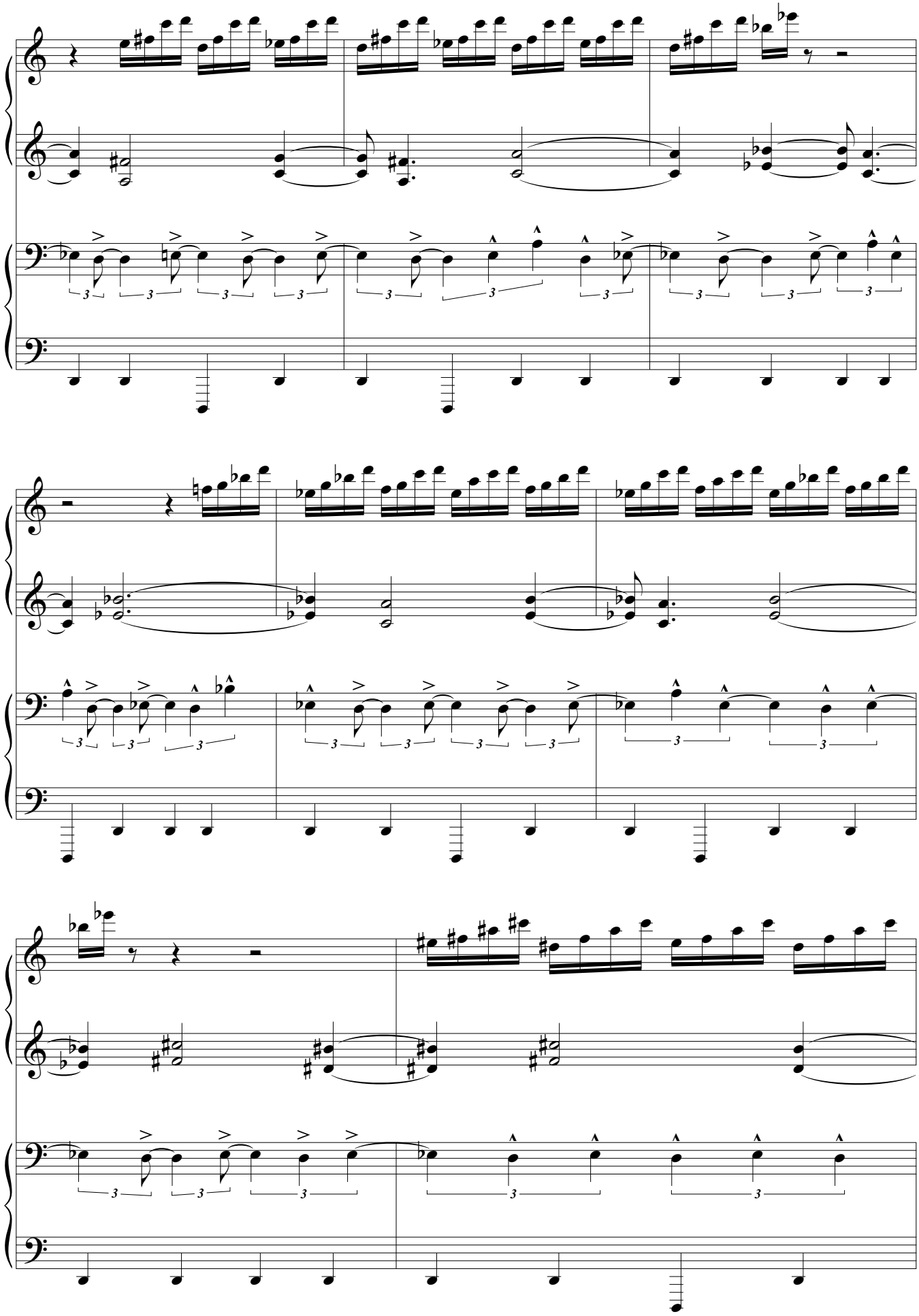
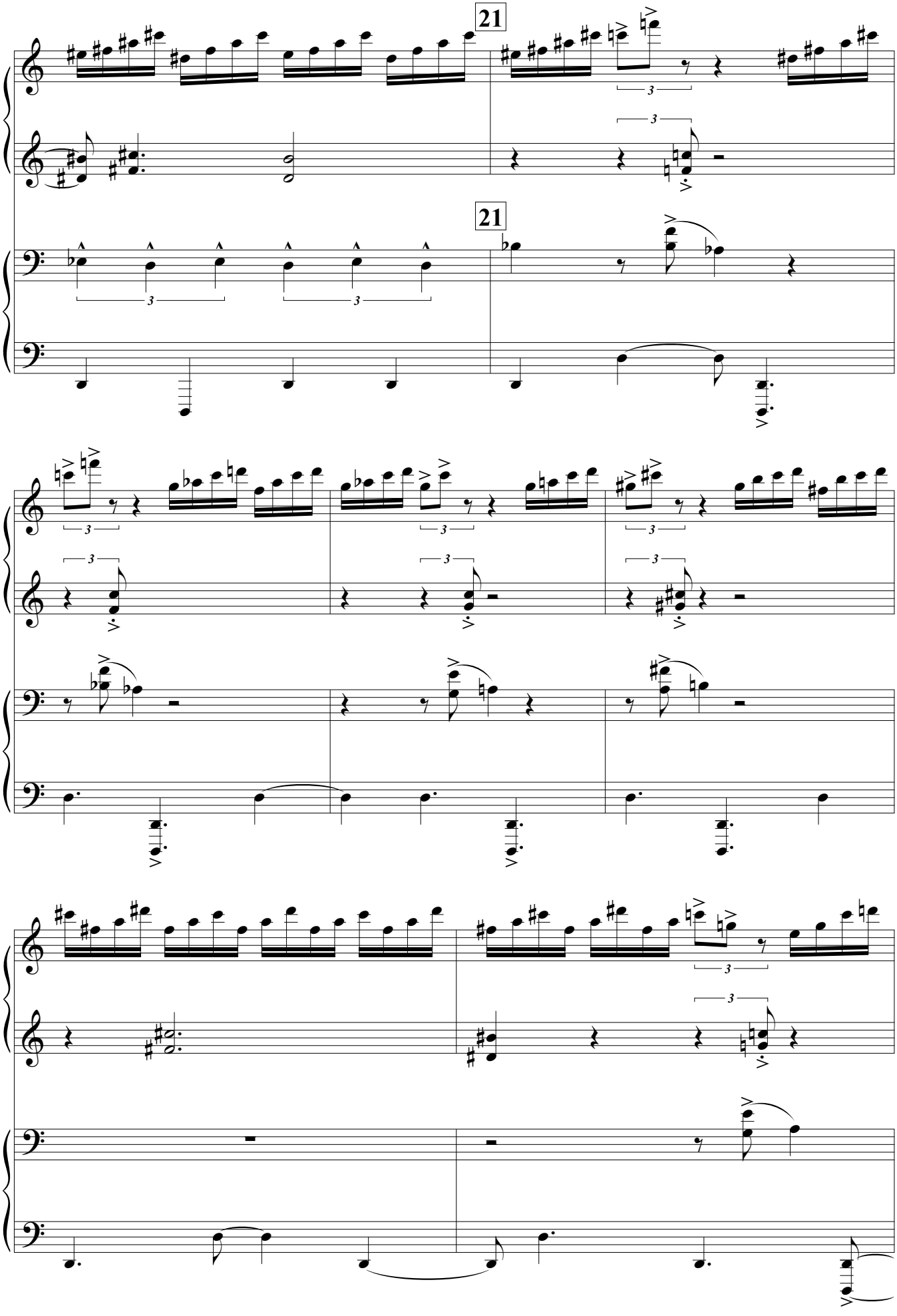
1. Allegro ♩ = 126 **Very energetic**



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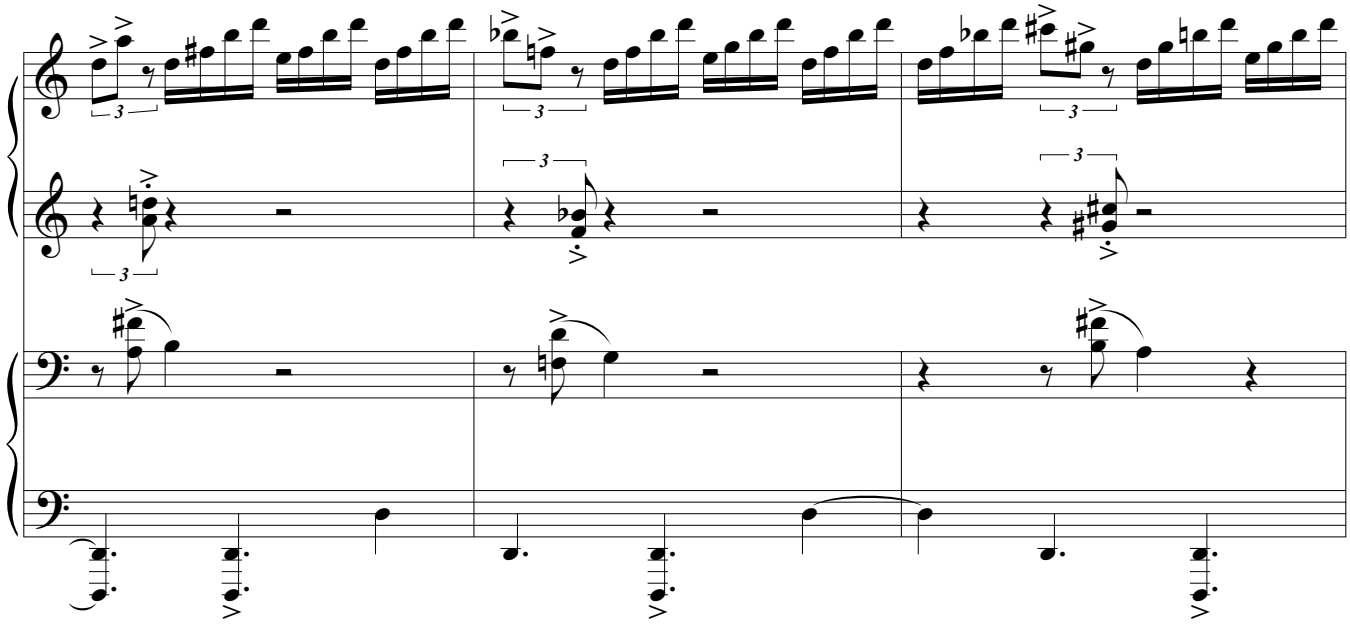

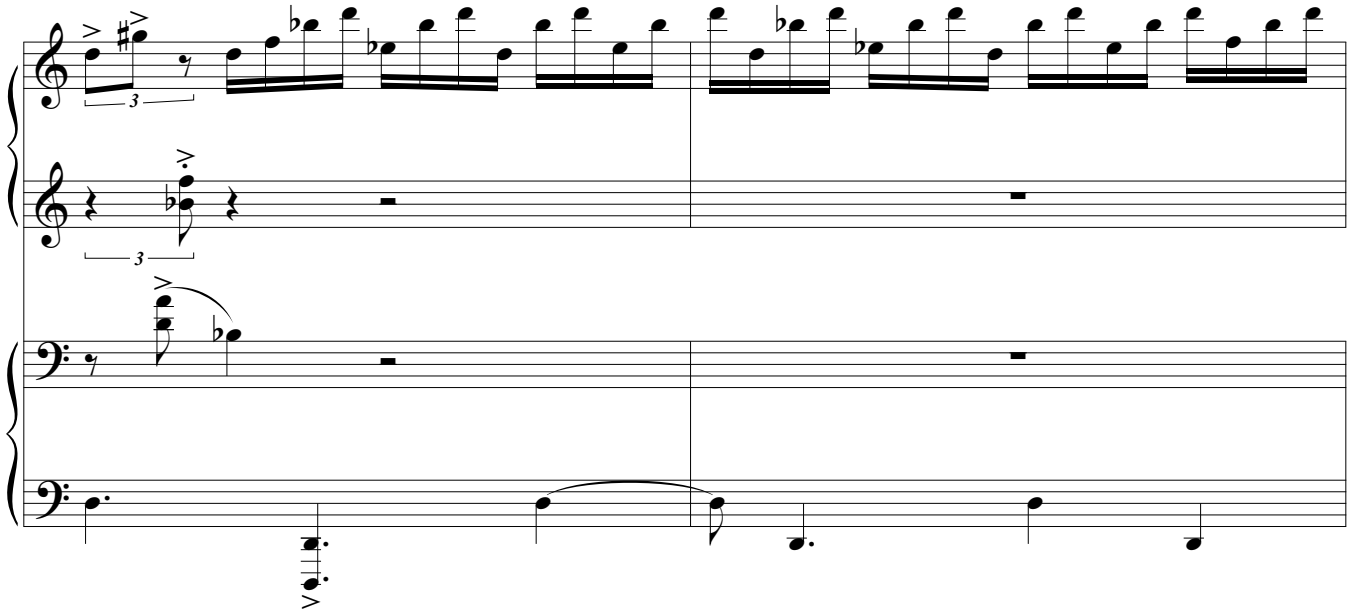

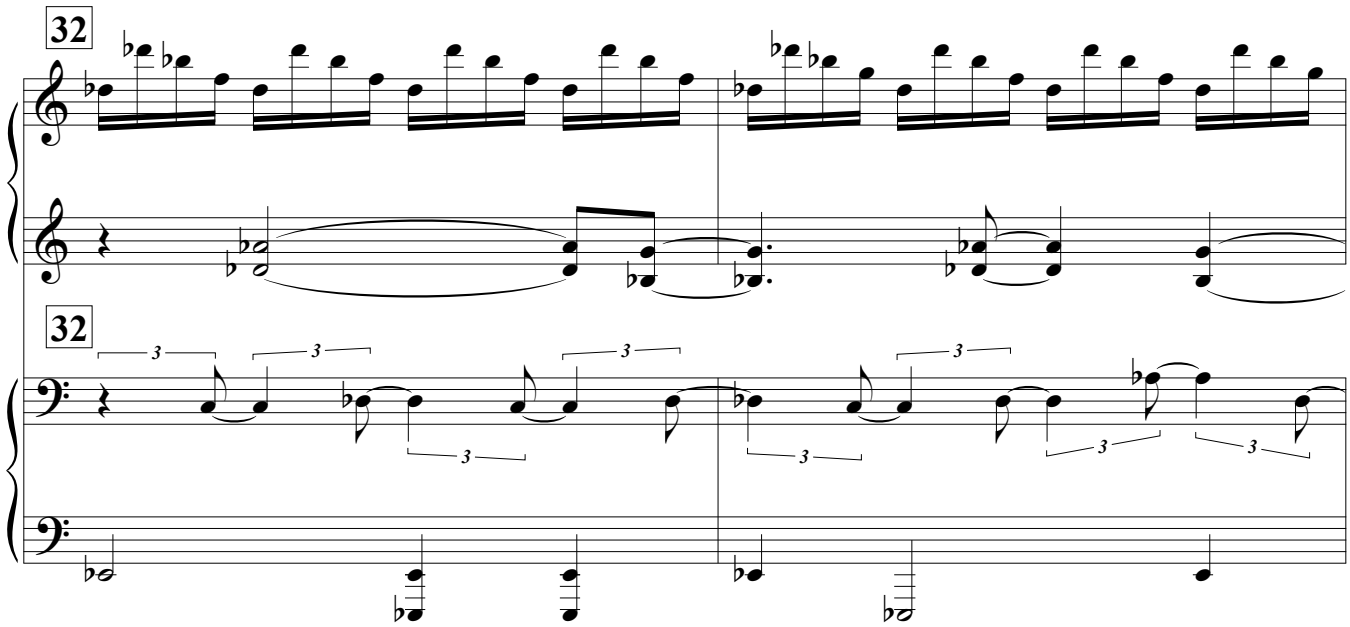
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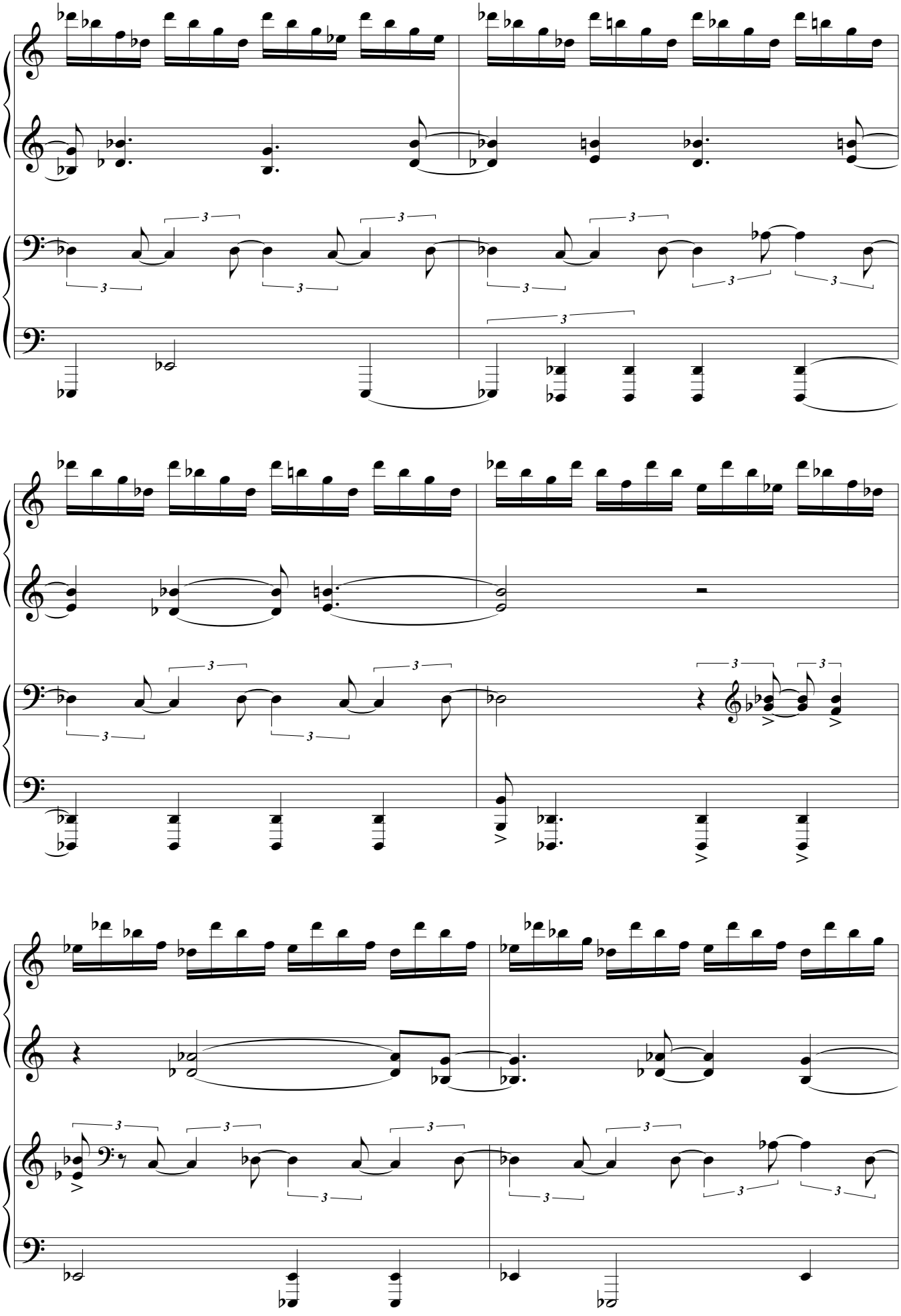
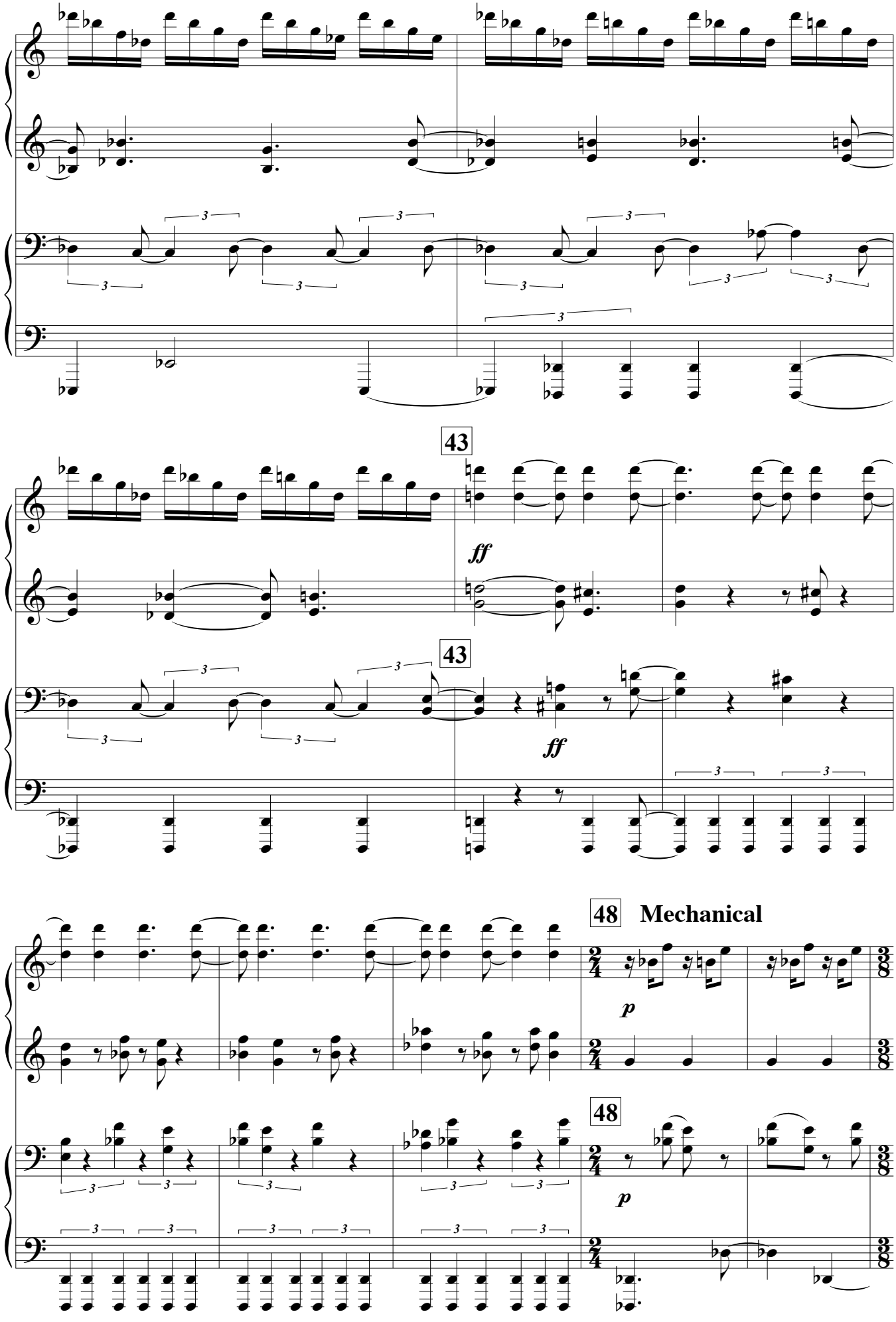
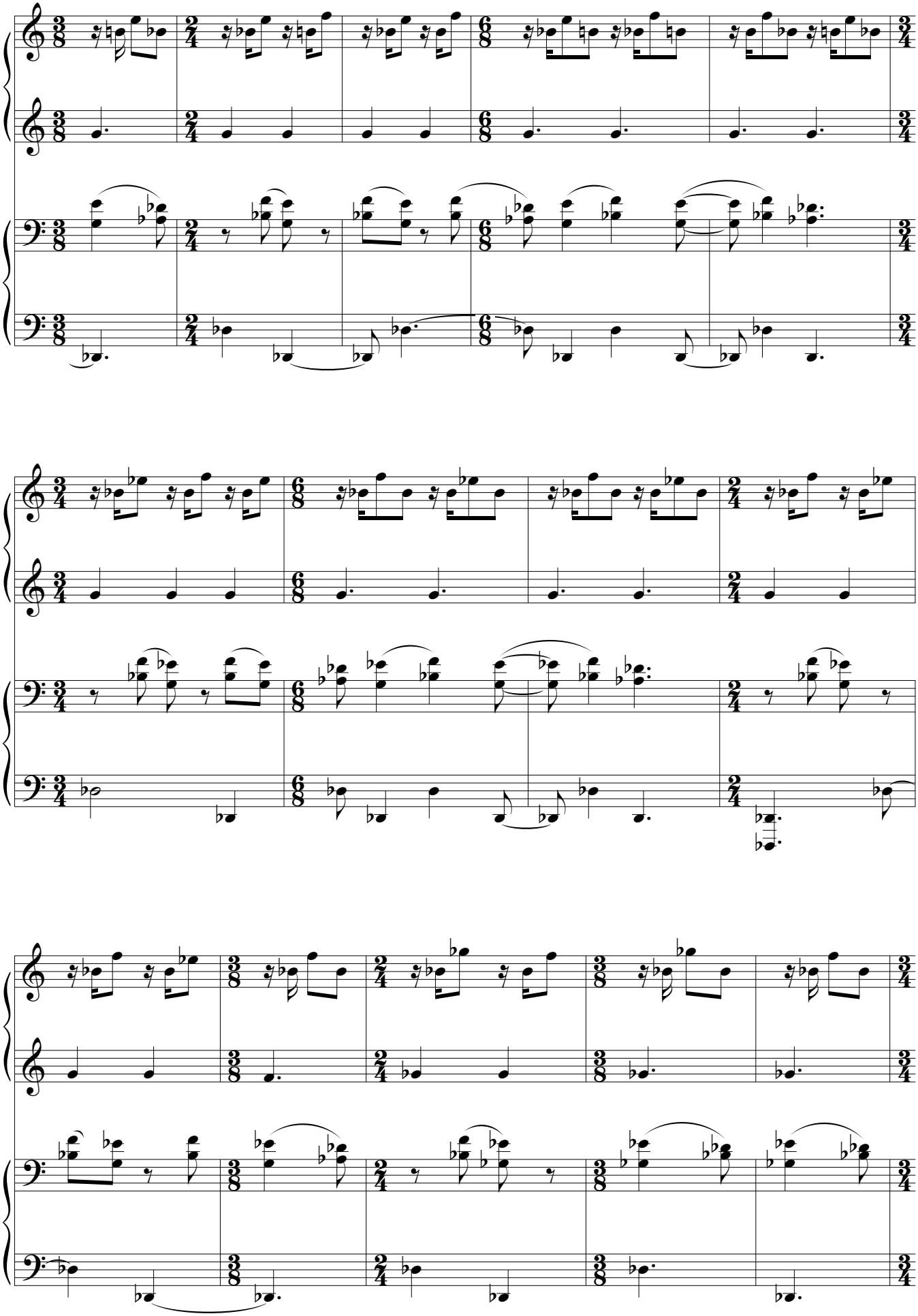
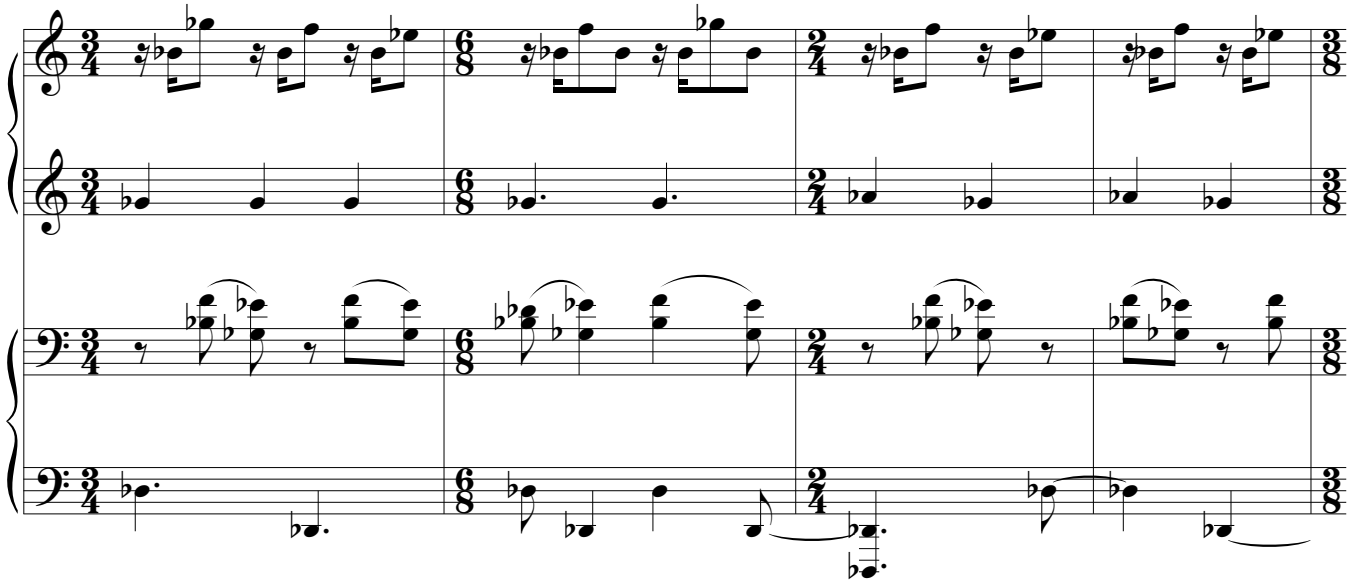
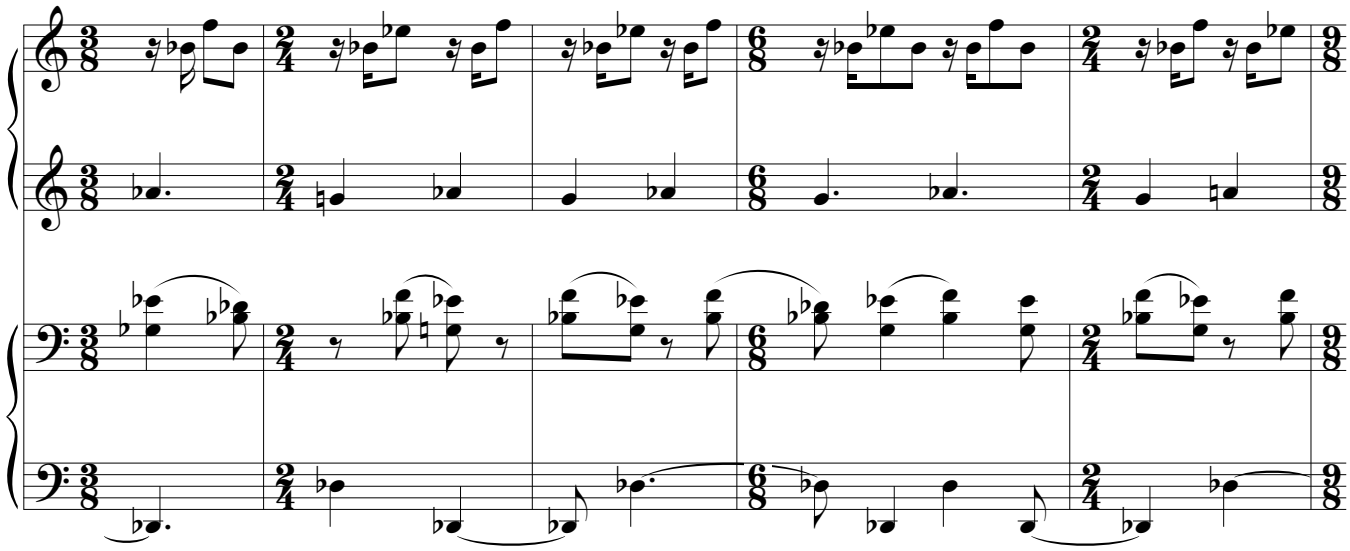
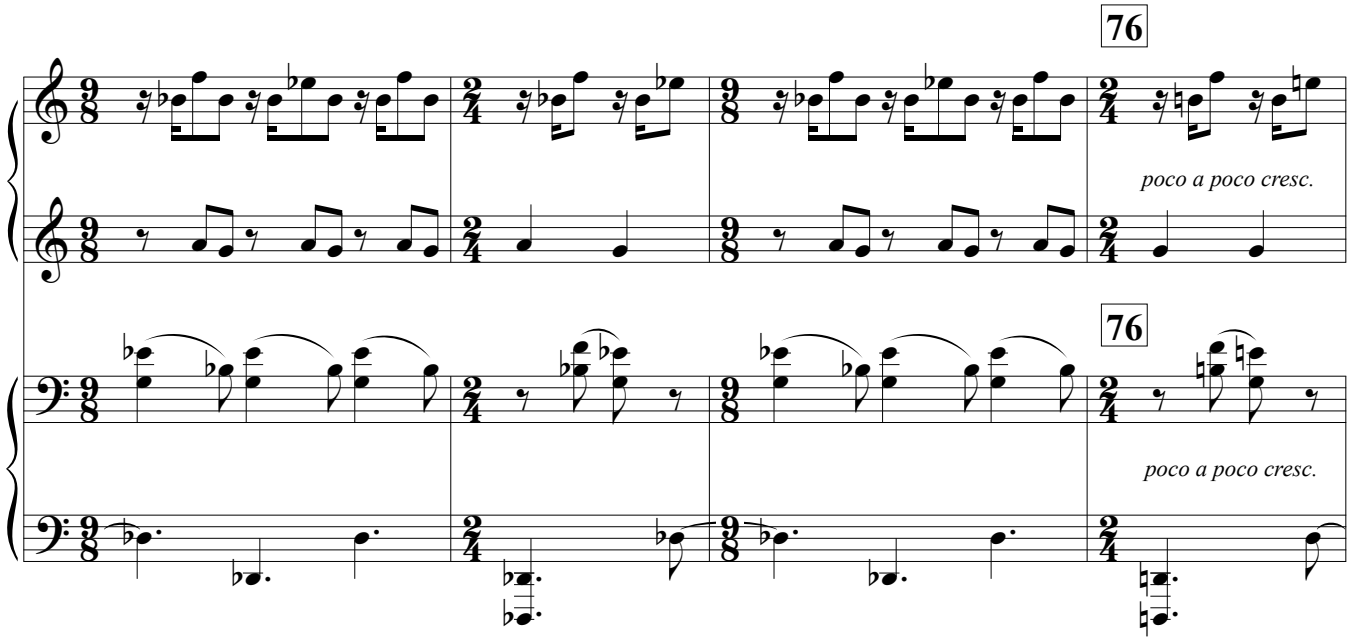



43
ff
43
ff
48
Mechanical
p
48
p





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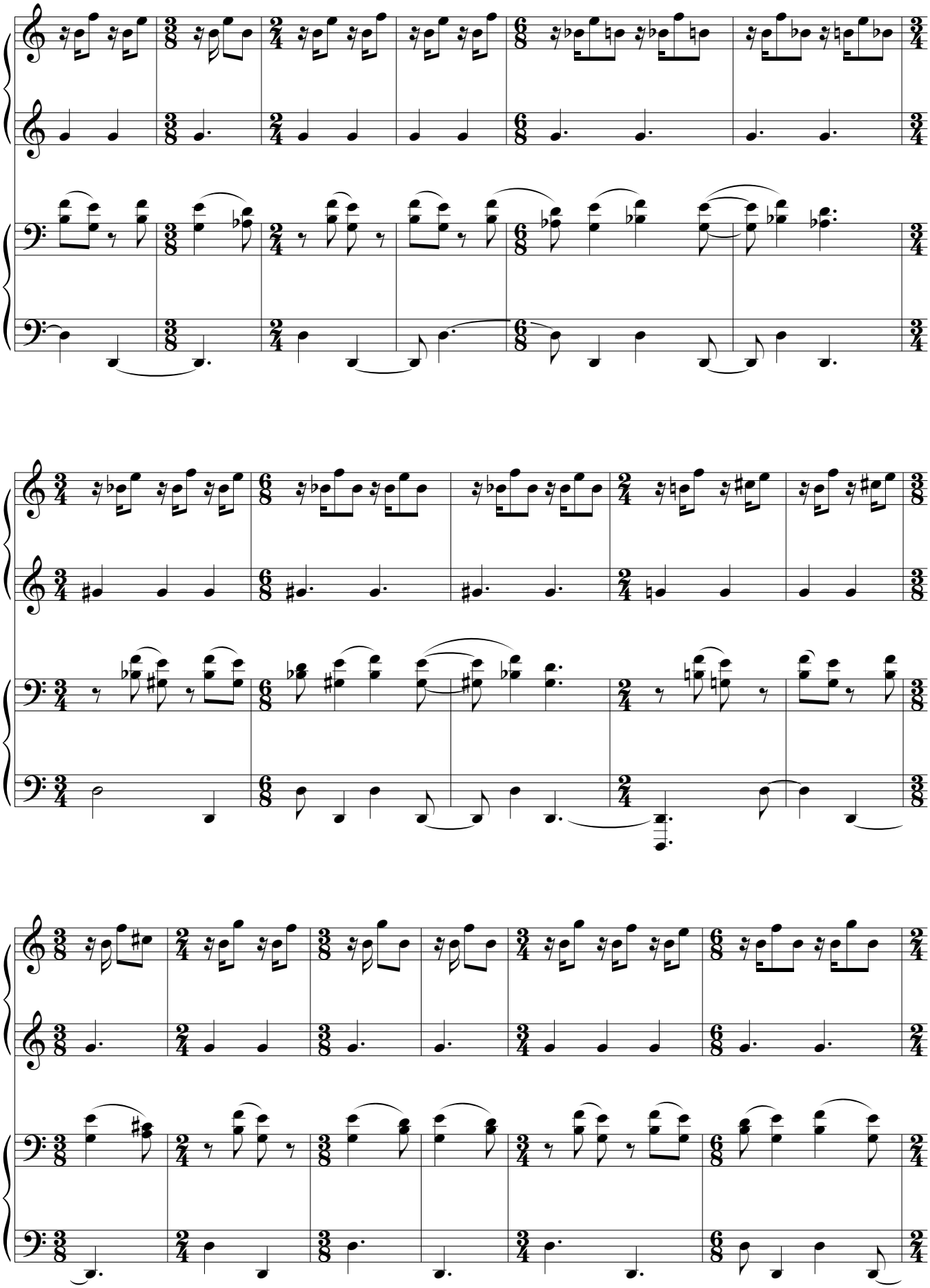
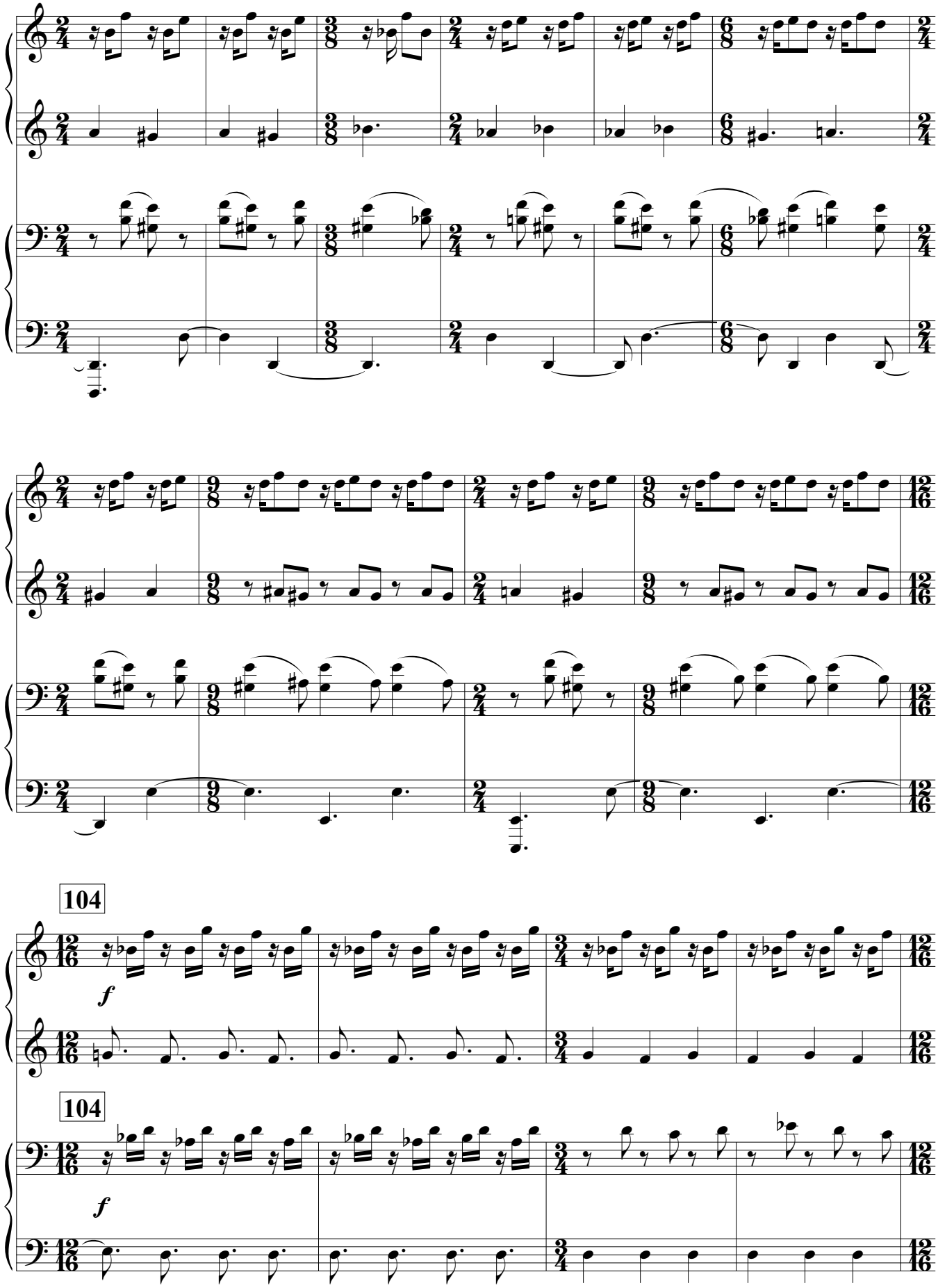
poco a poco cresc.
76
poco a poco cresc.

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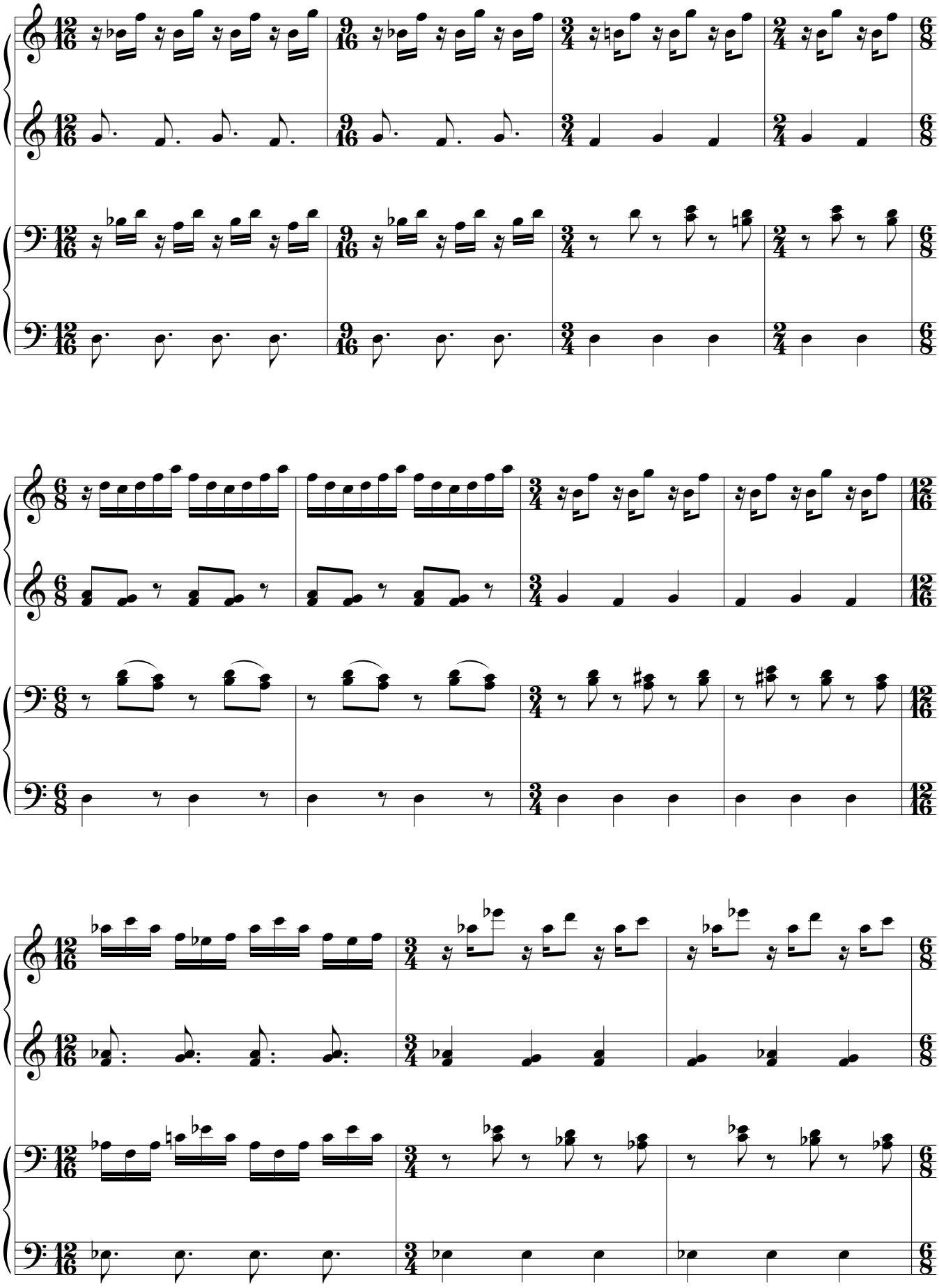

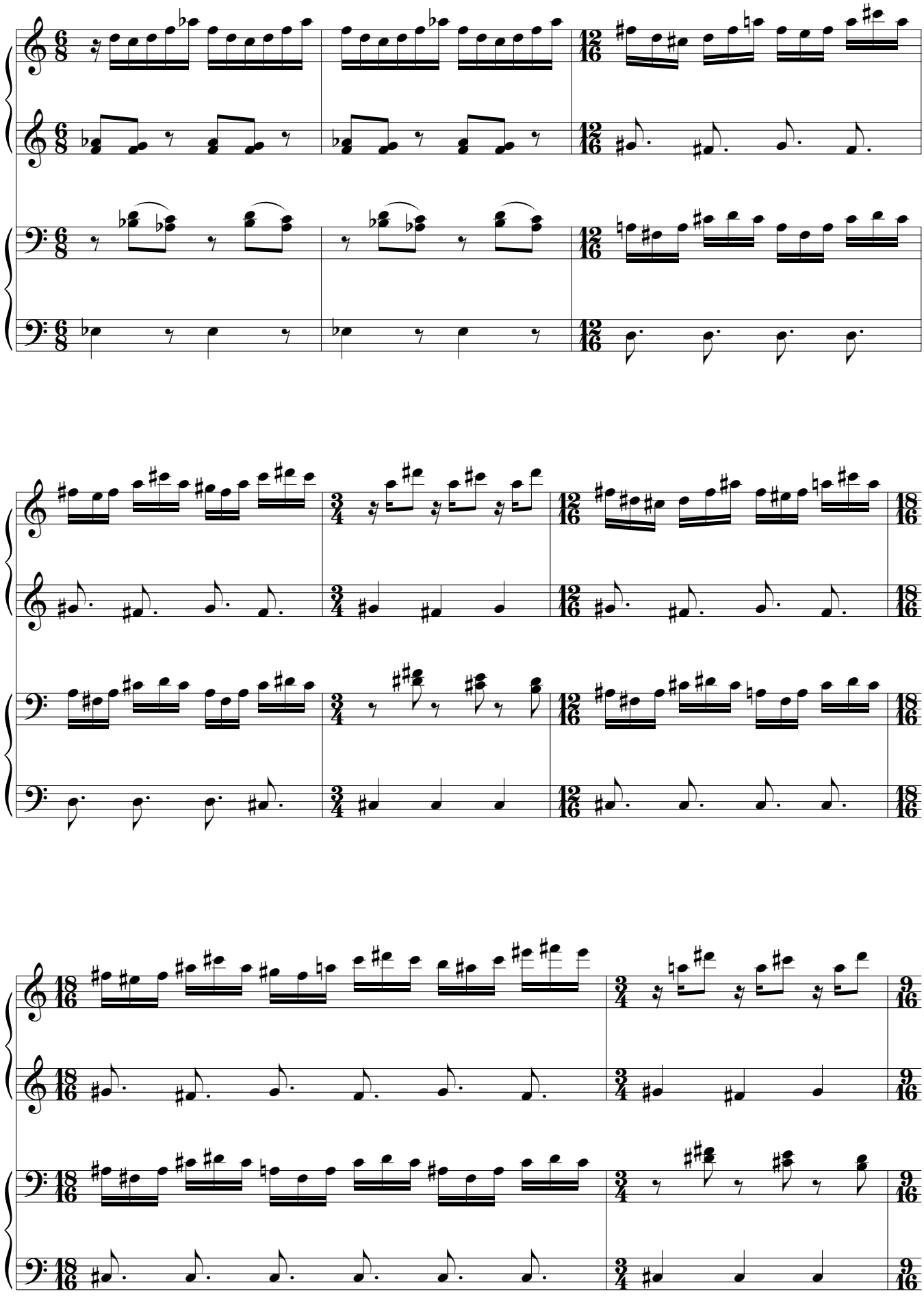

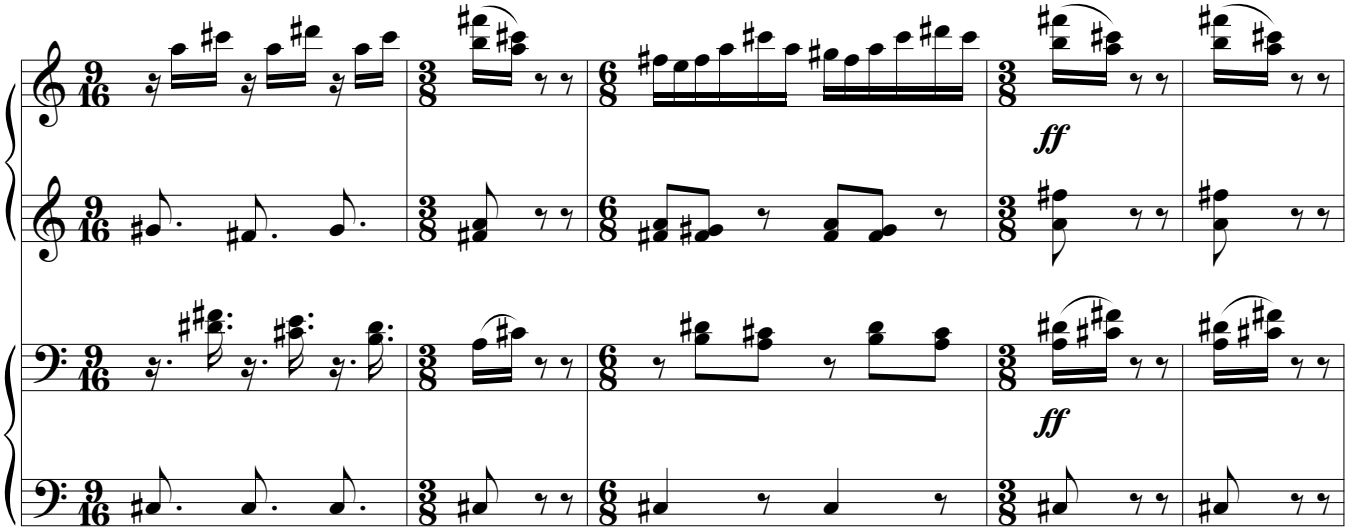
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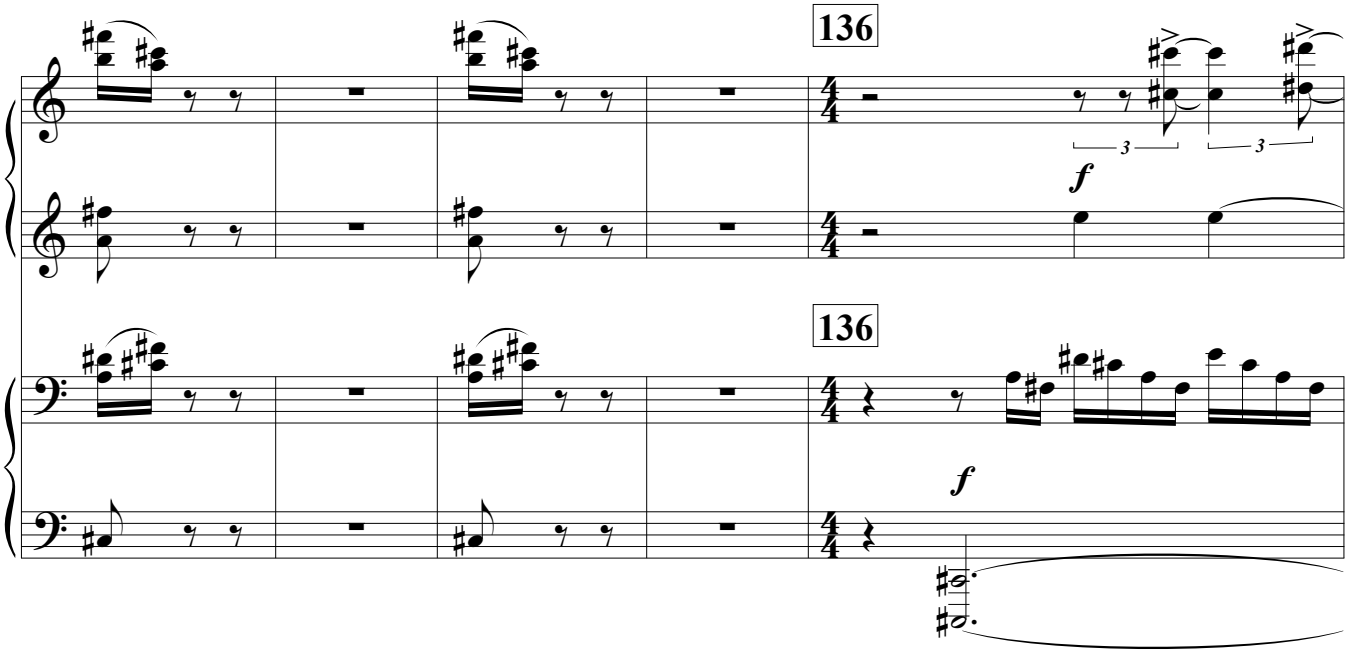
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f
136
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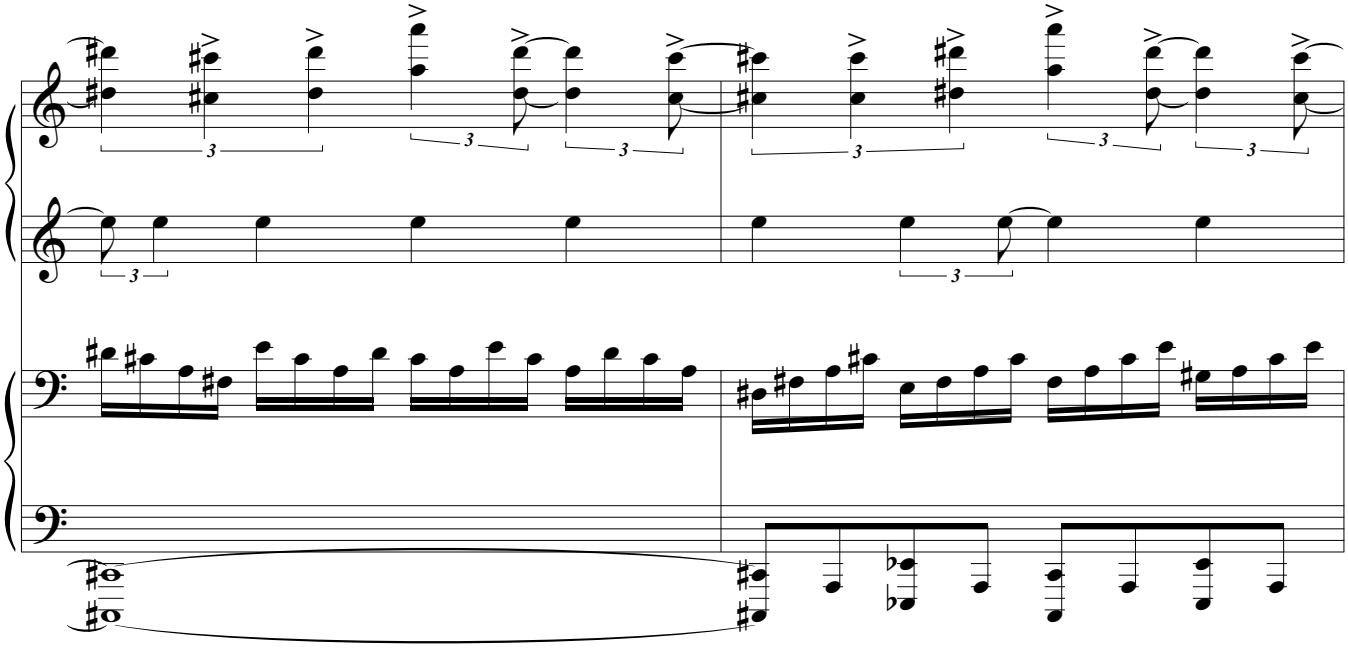

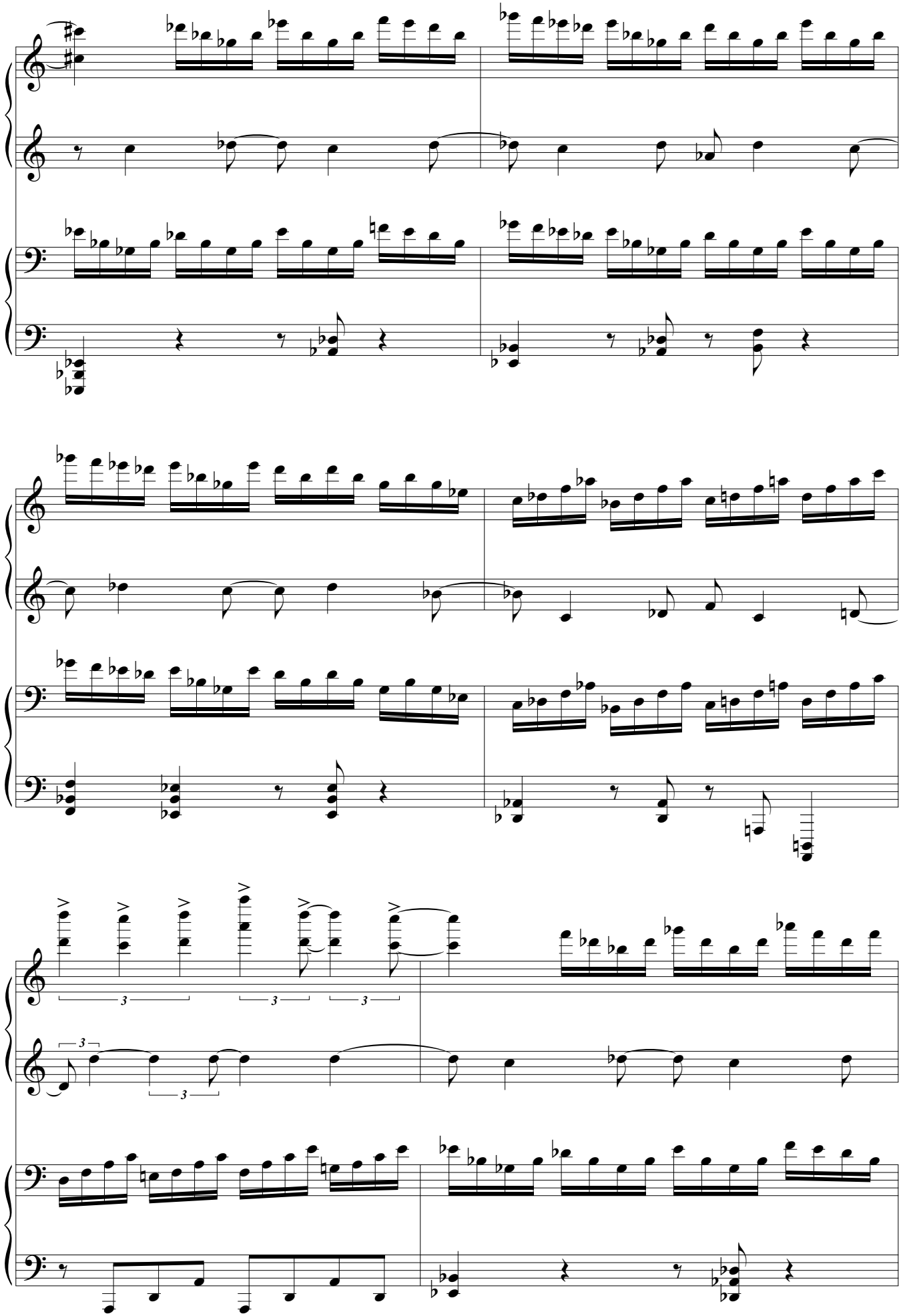

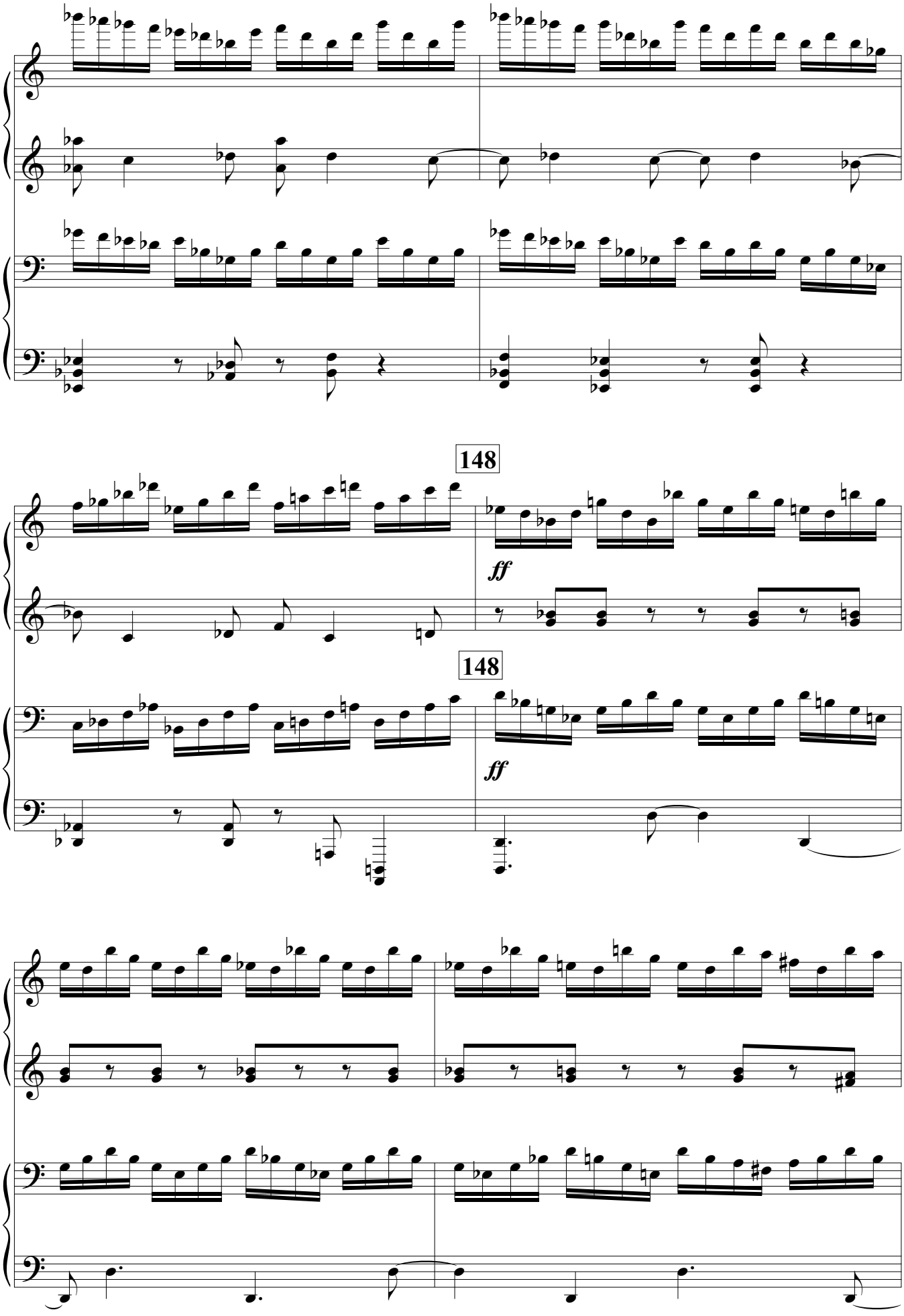
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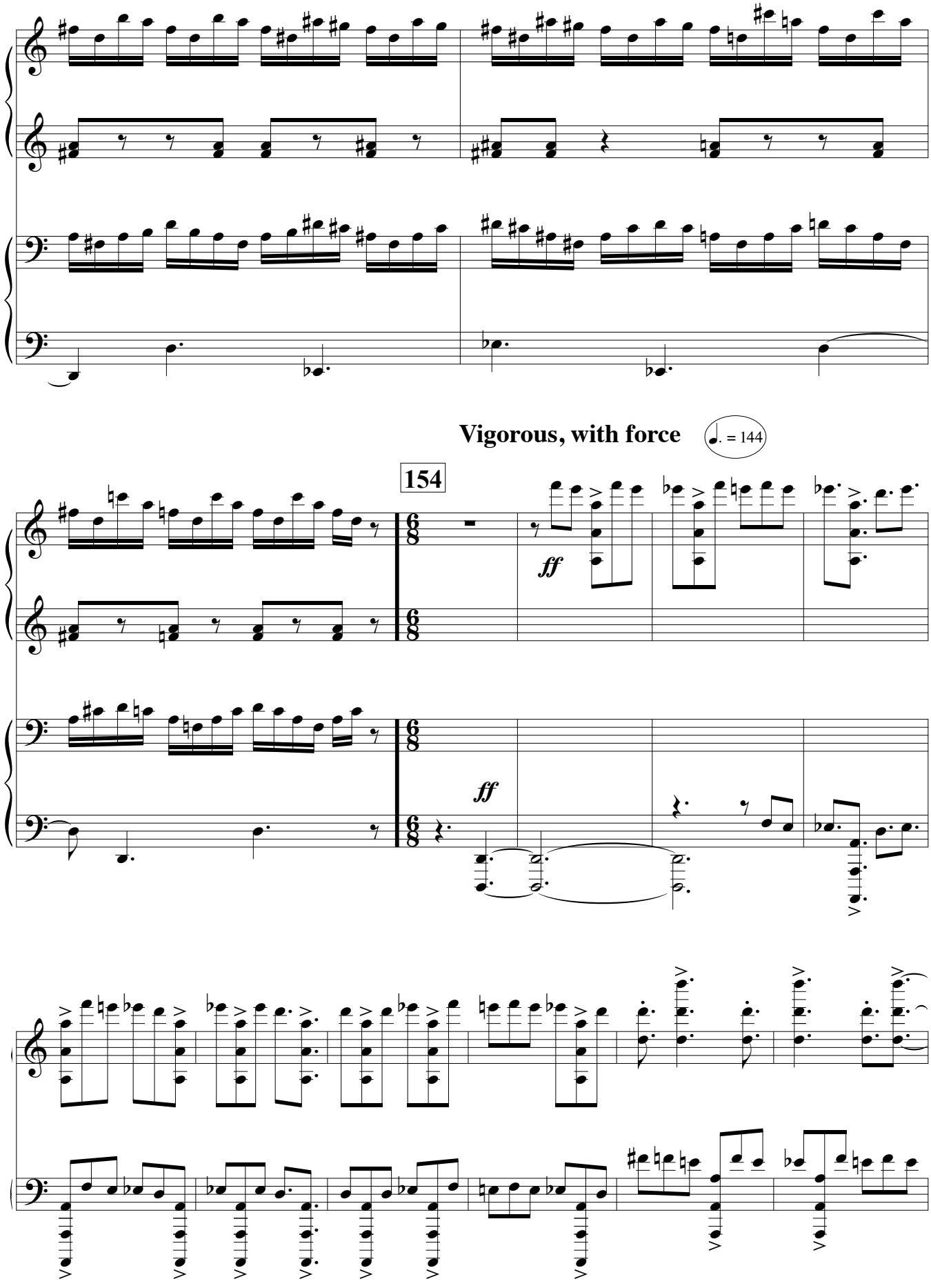
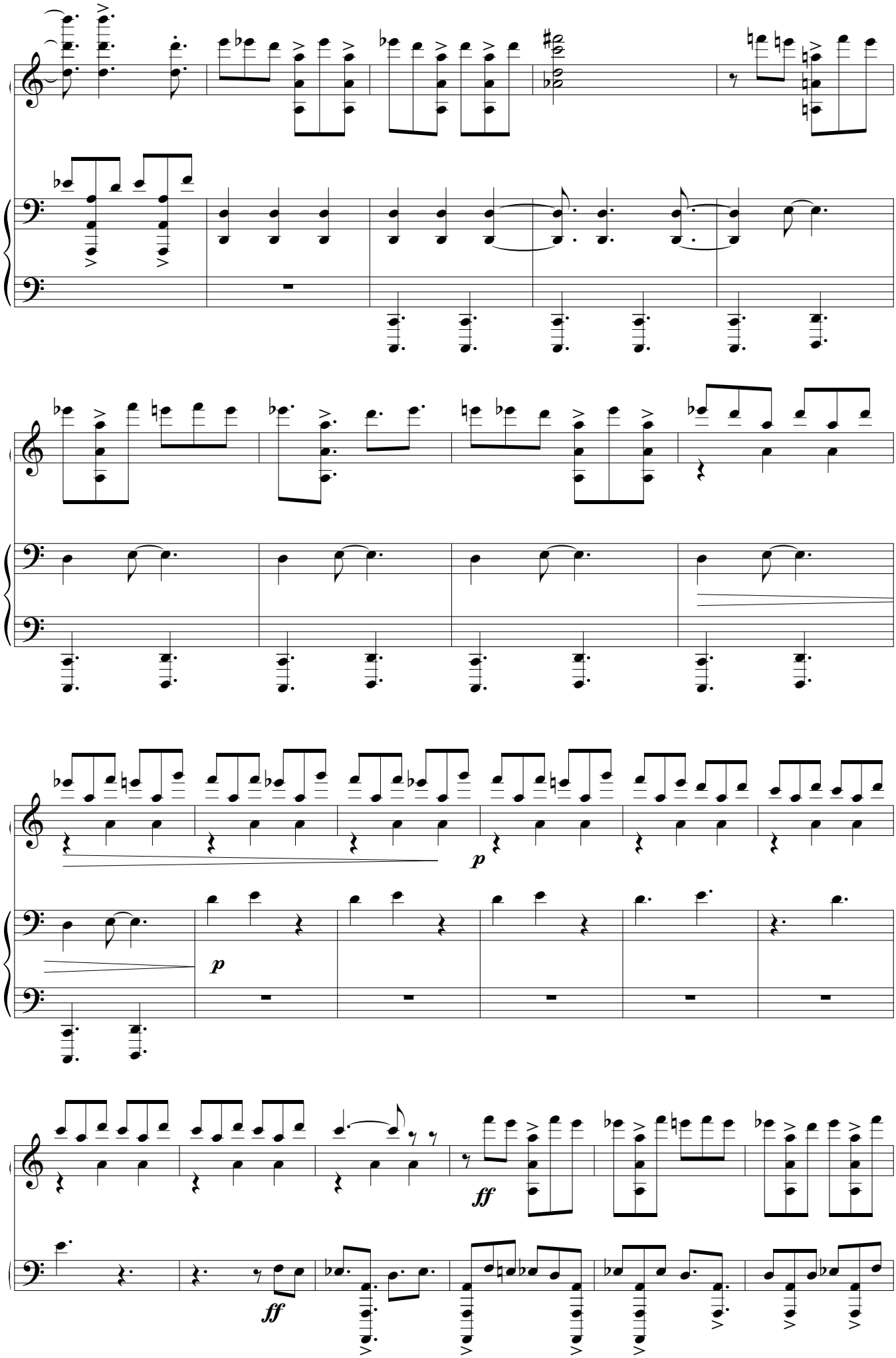

Vigorous, with force
♩. = 144
154
ff
ff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ff
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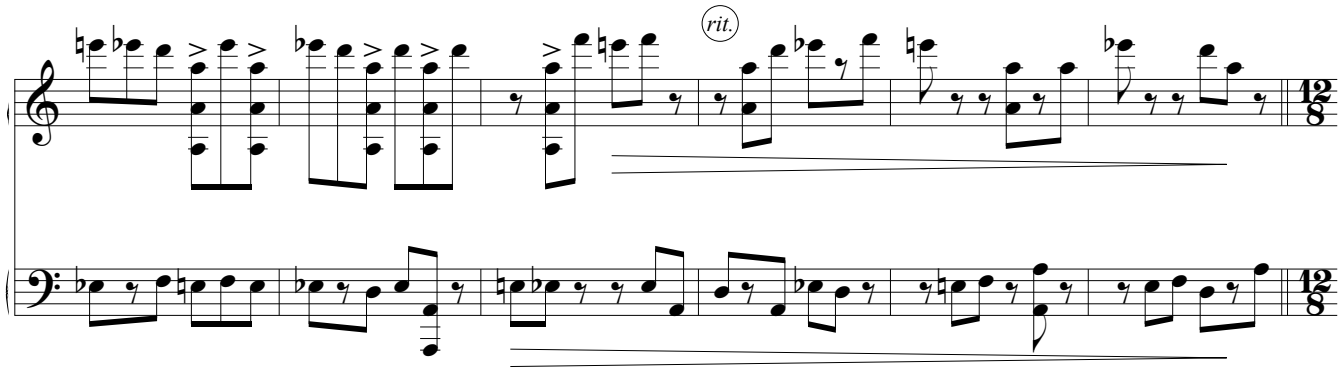
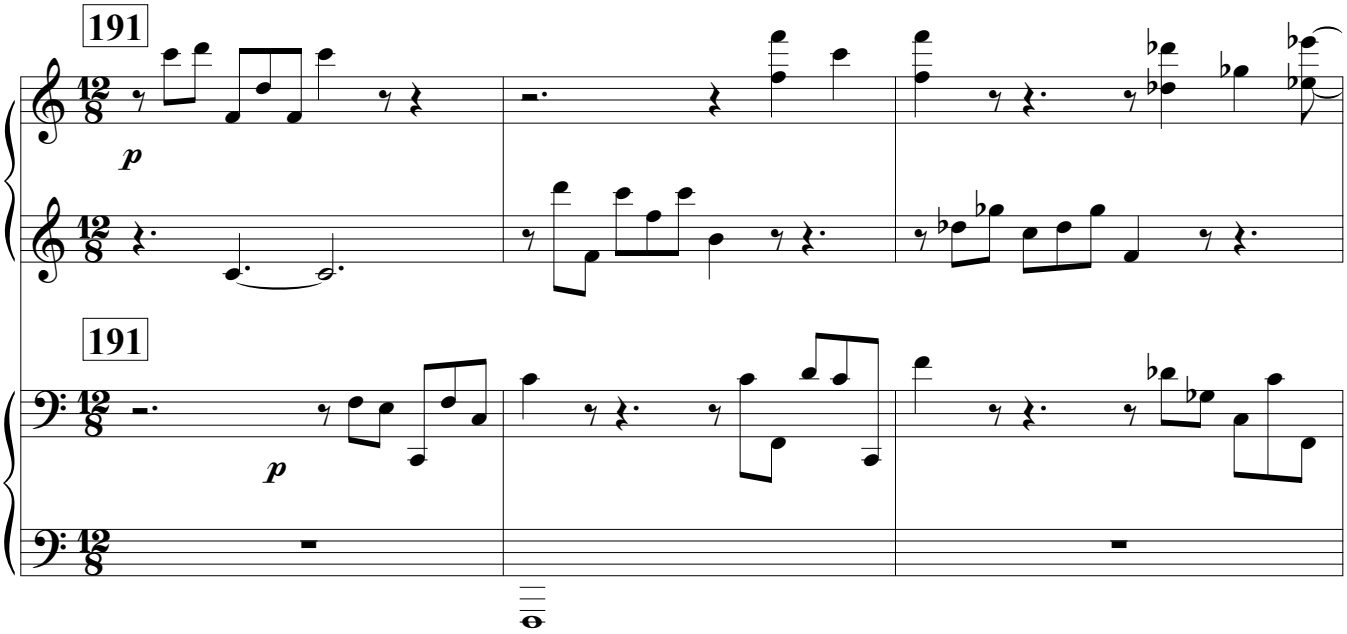
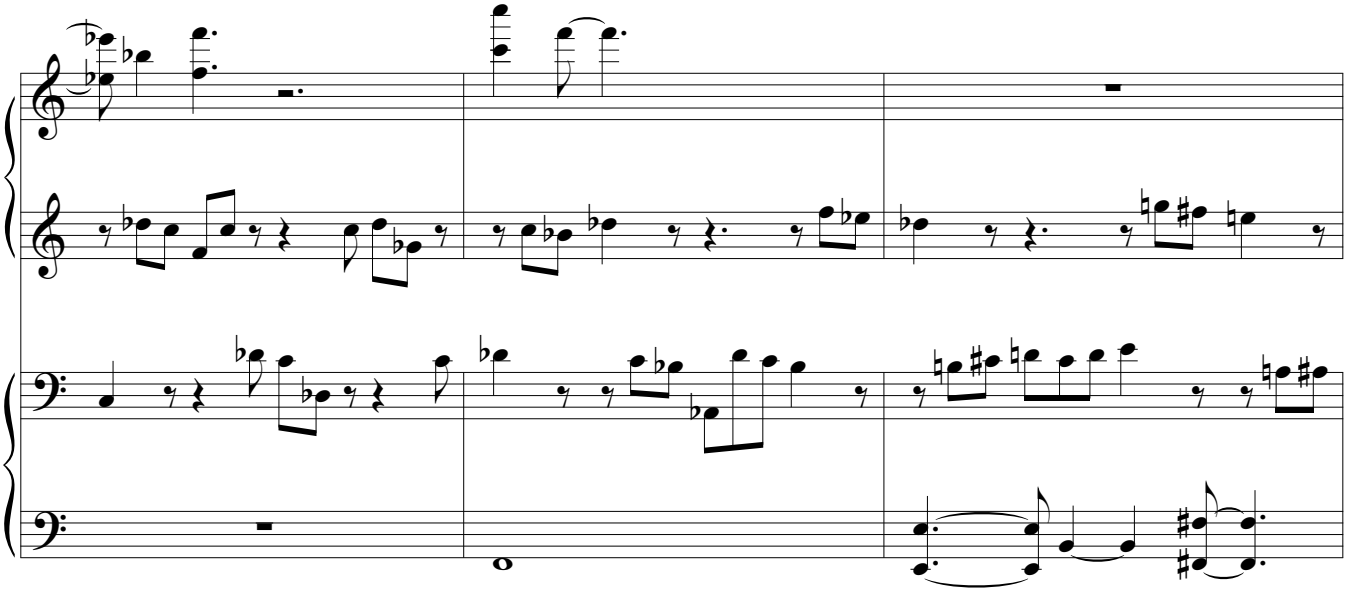
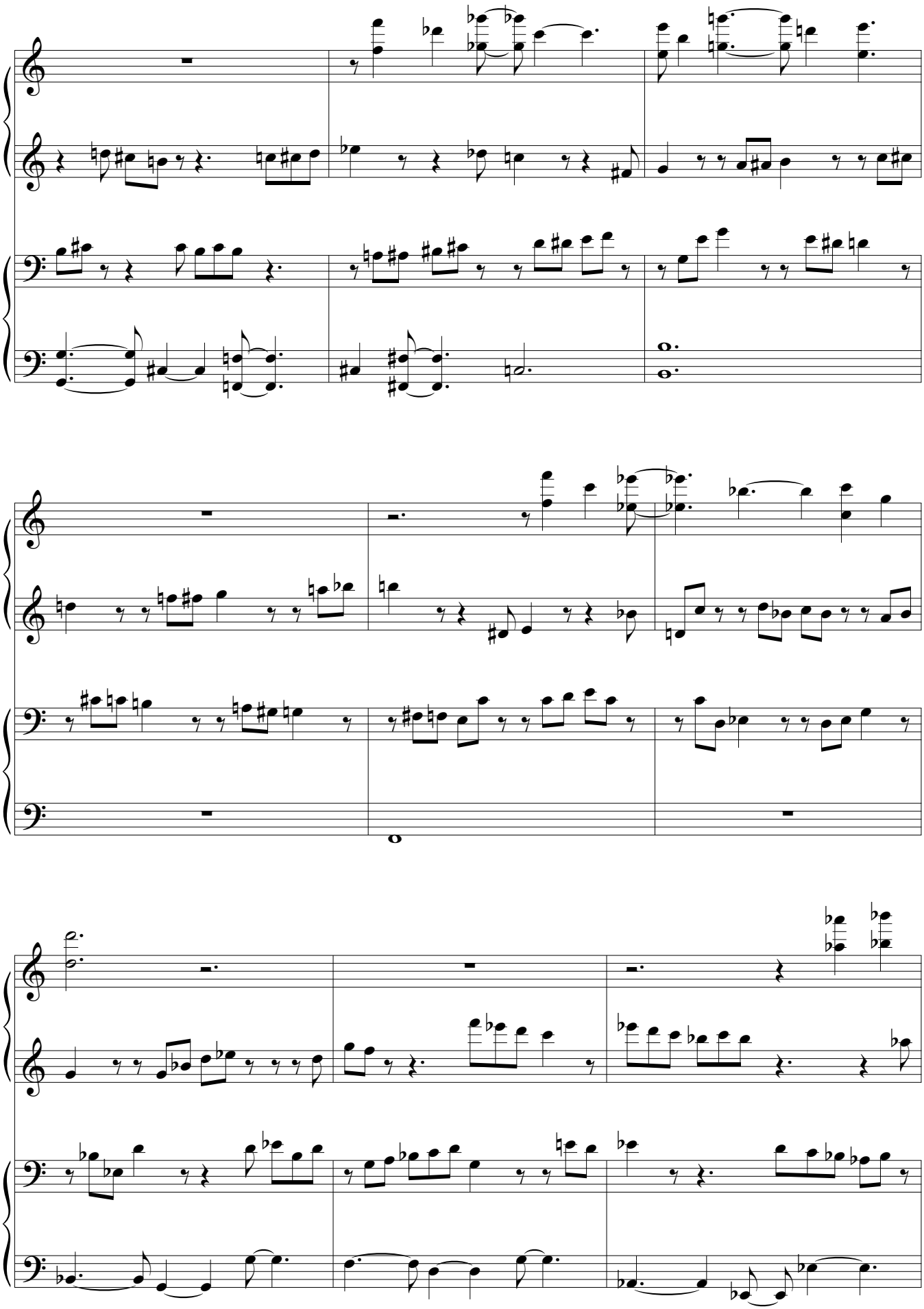
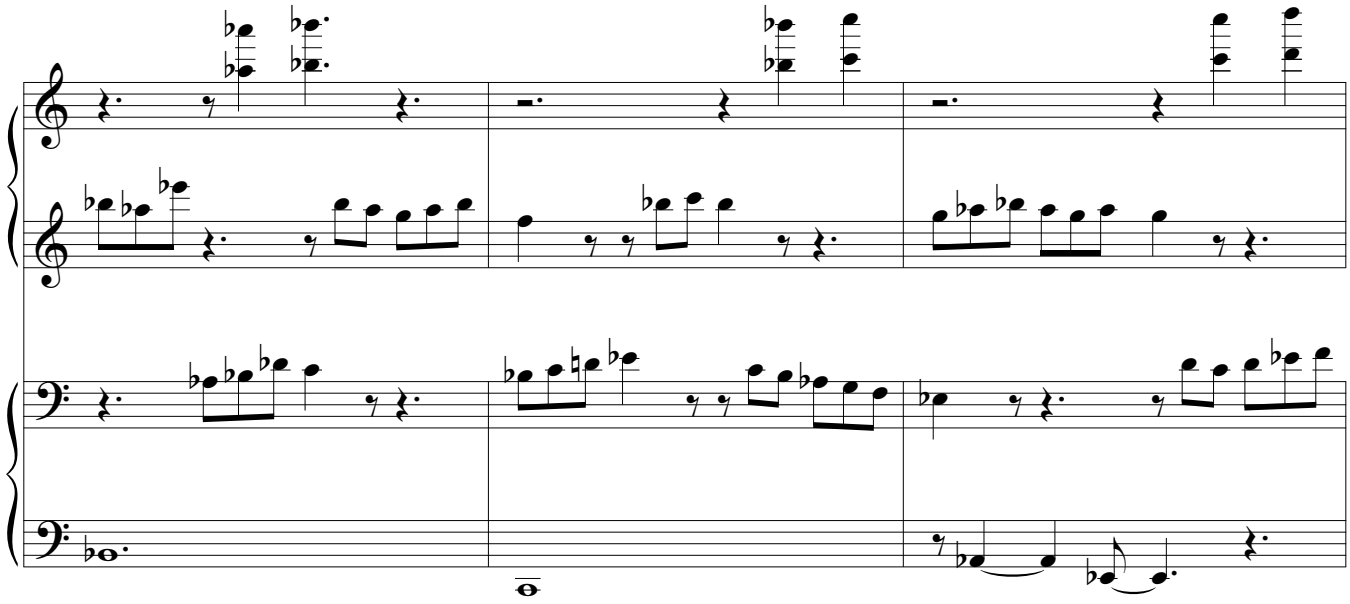


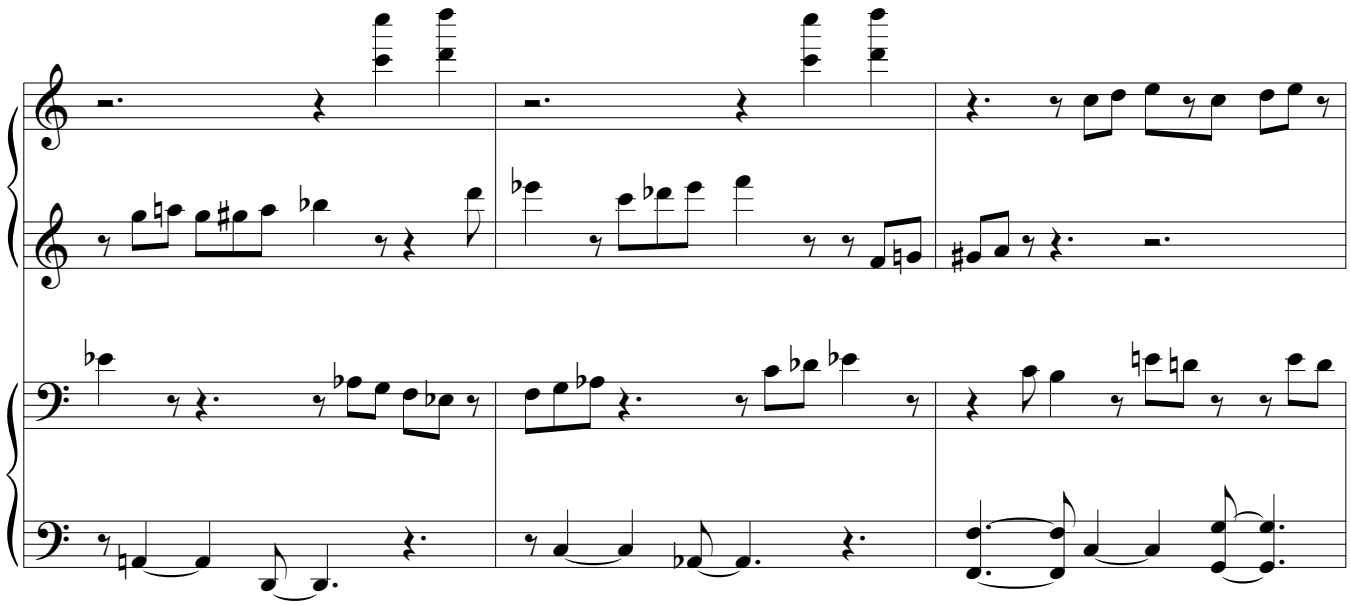
2. Scherzo ♩. = 54 **Playful**











214

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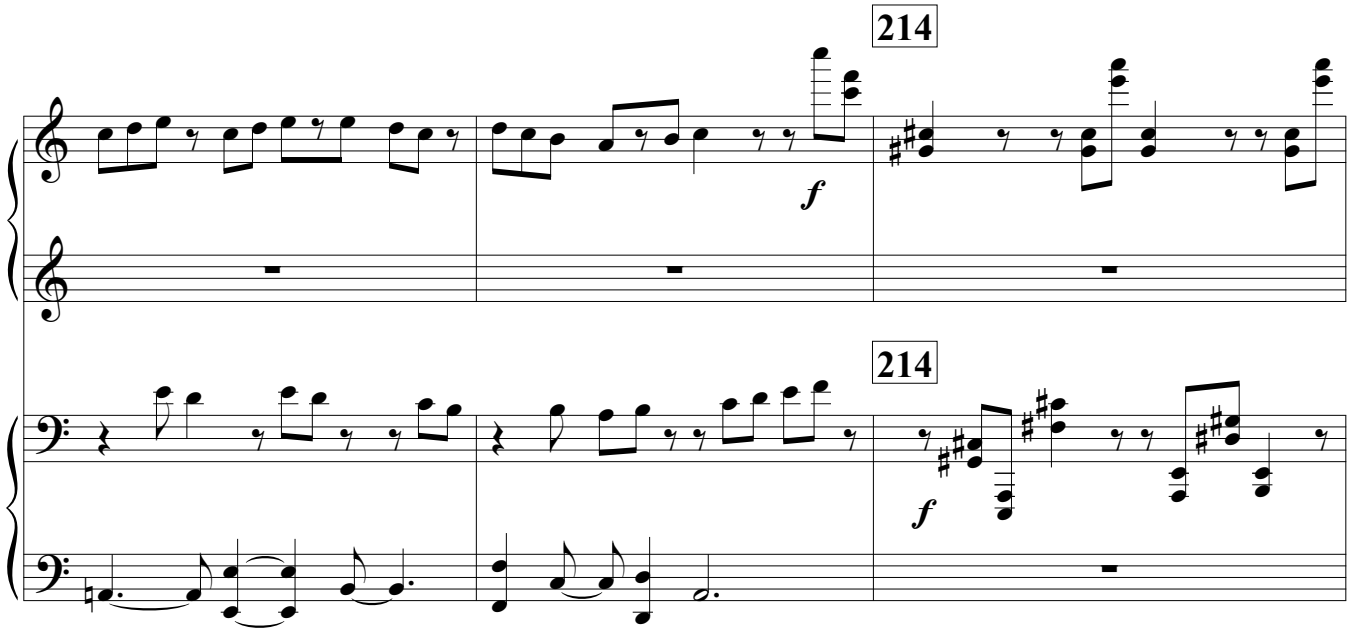

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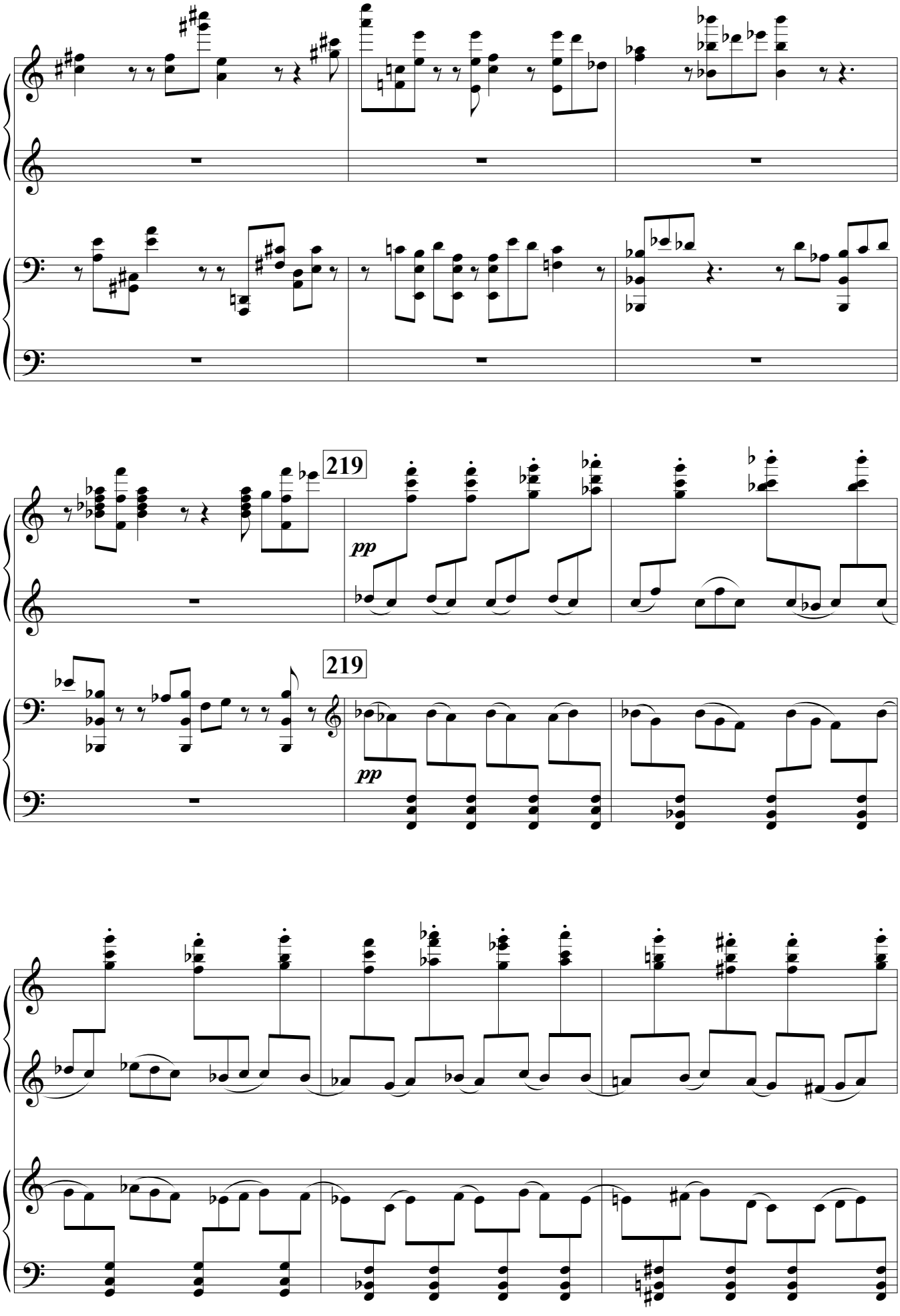
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219
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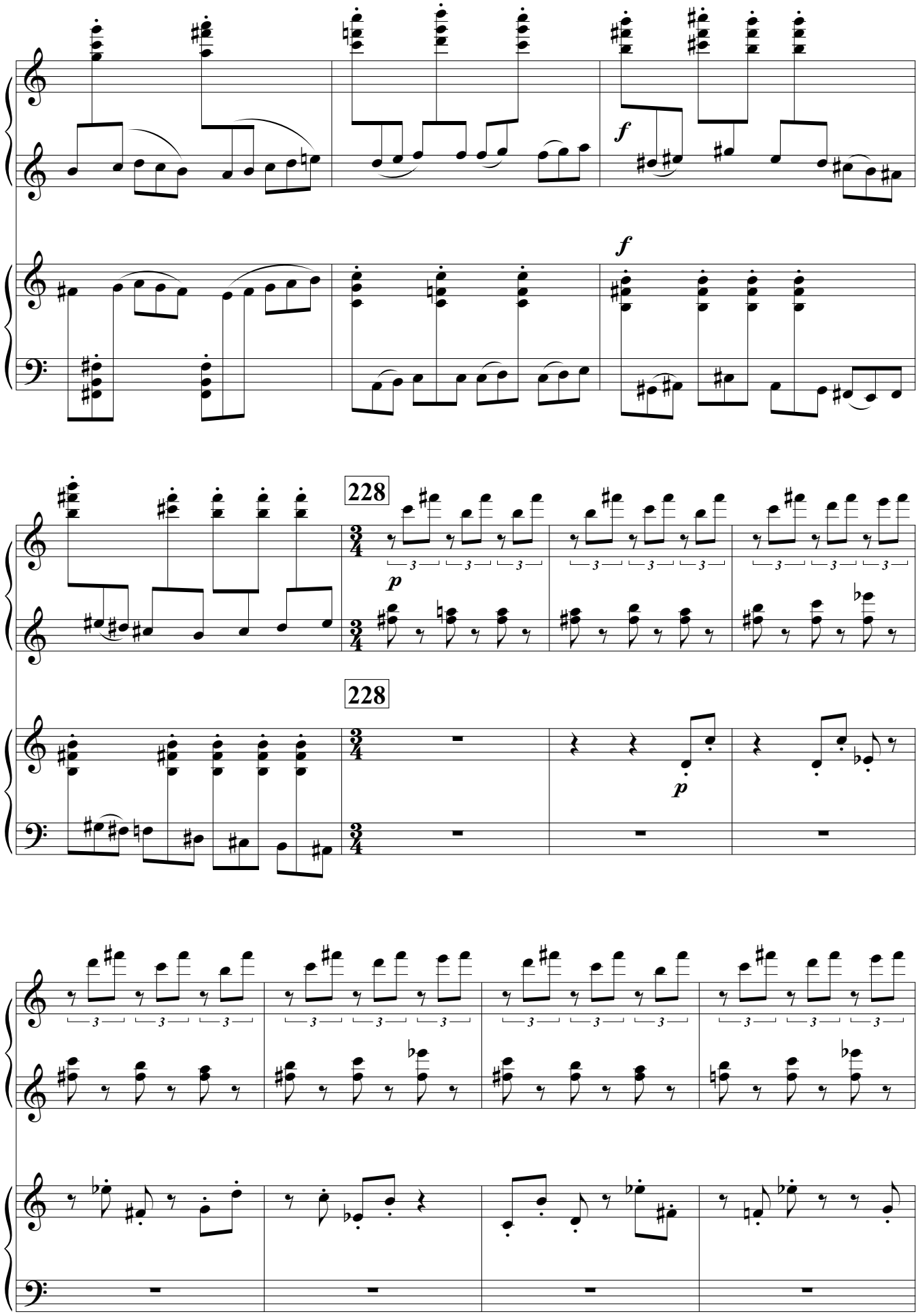
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228
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228
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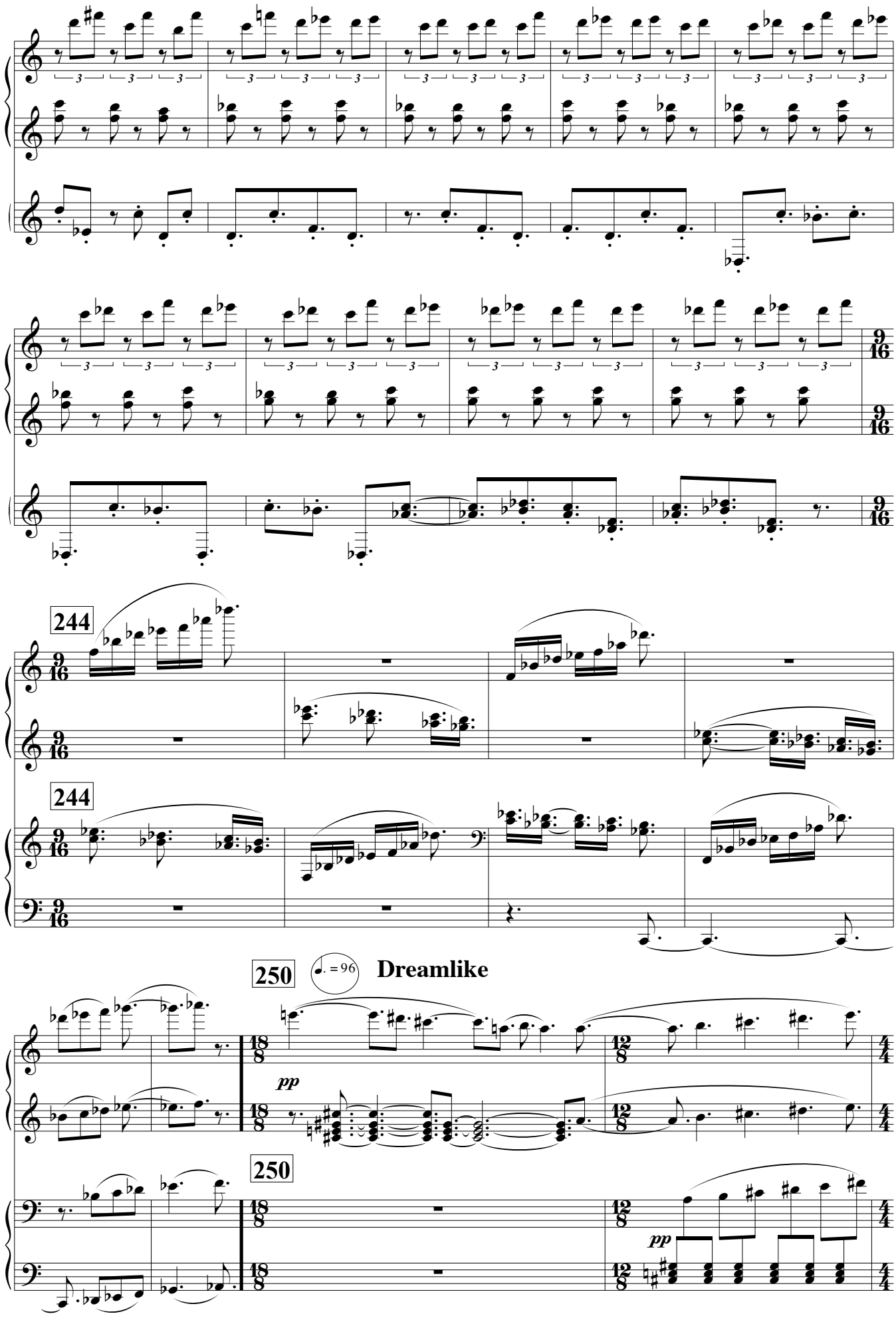
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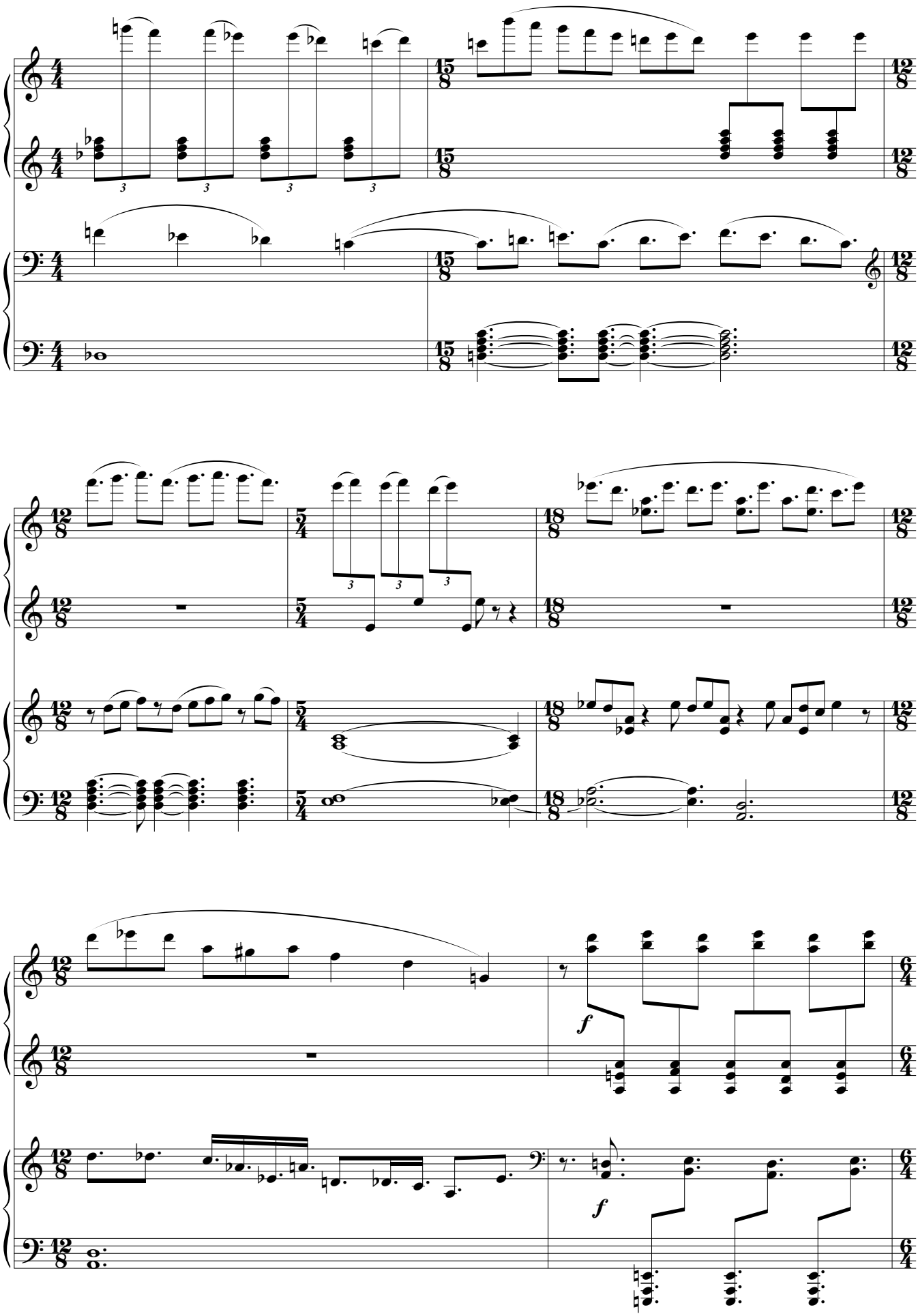
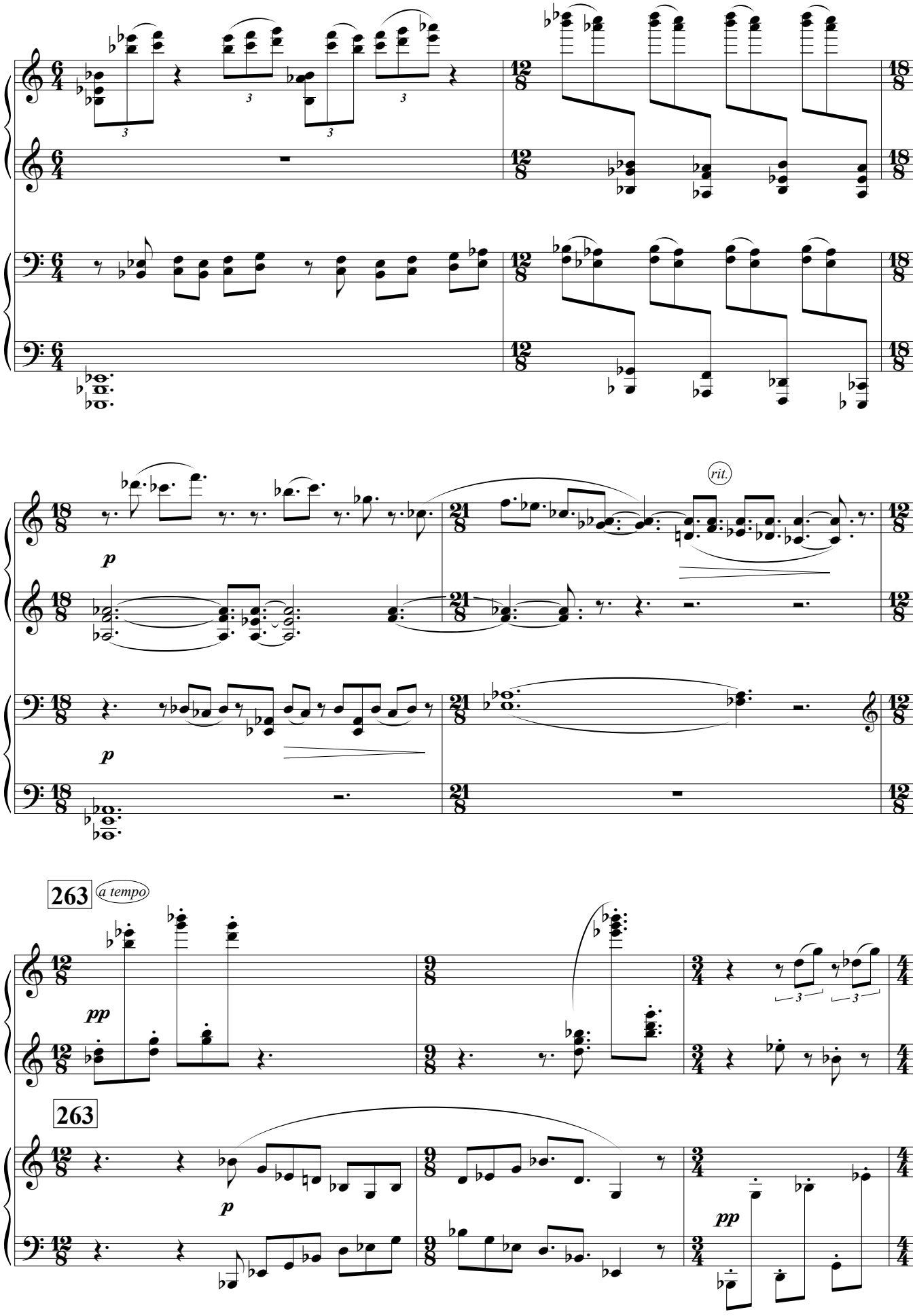
244
250
= 96
Dreamlike
pp
250
pp


4/4
15/8
12/8
5/4
18/8
6/4
f
f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263
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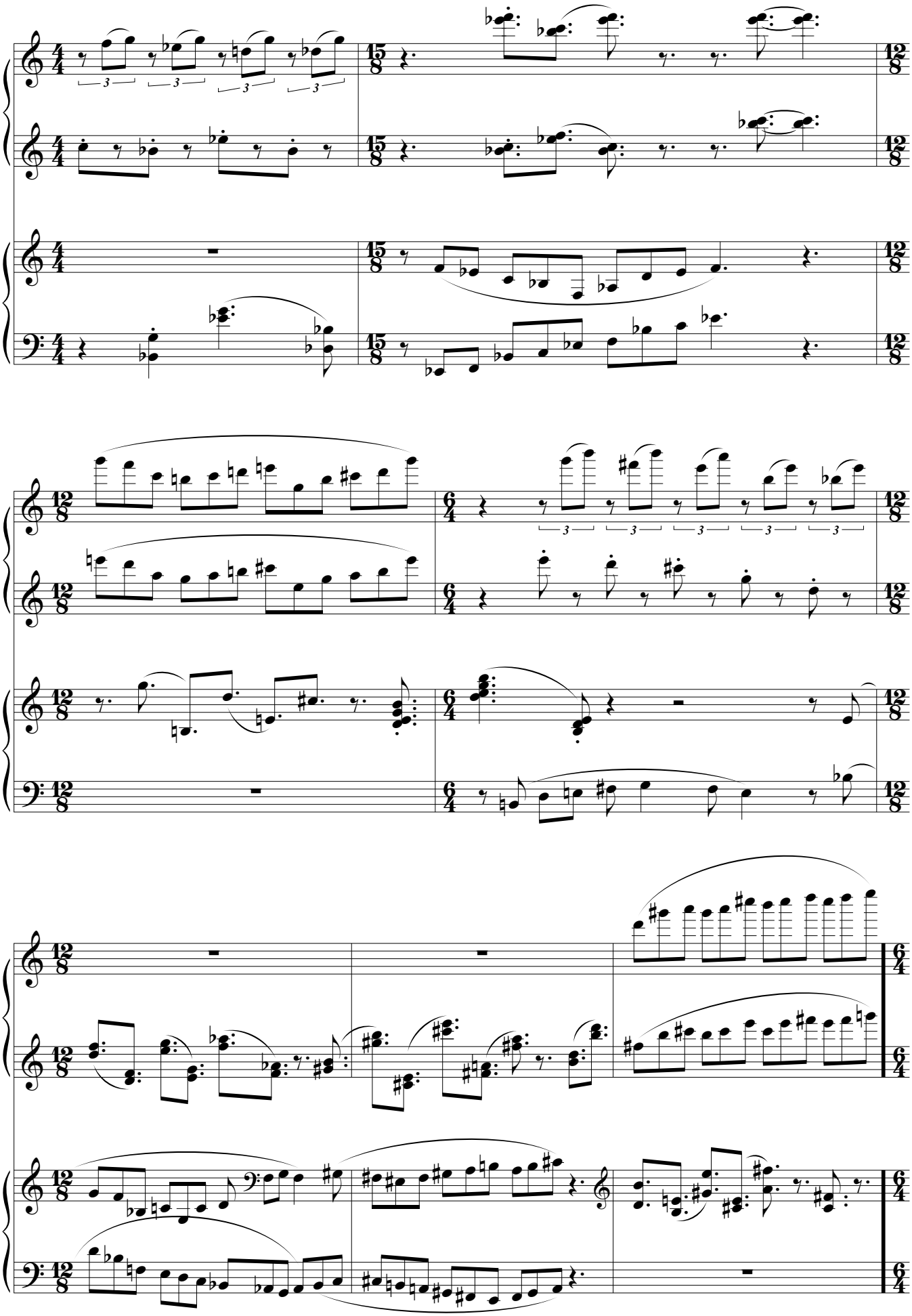

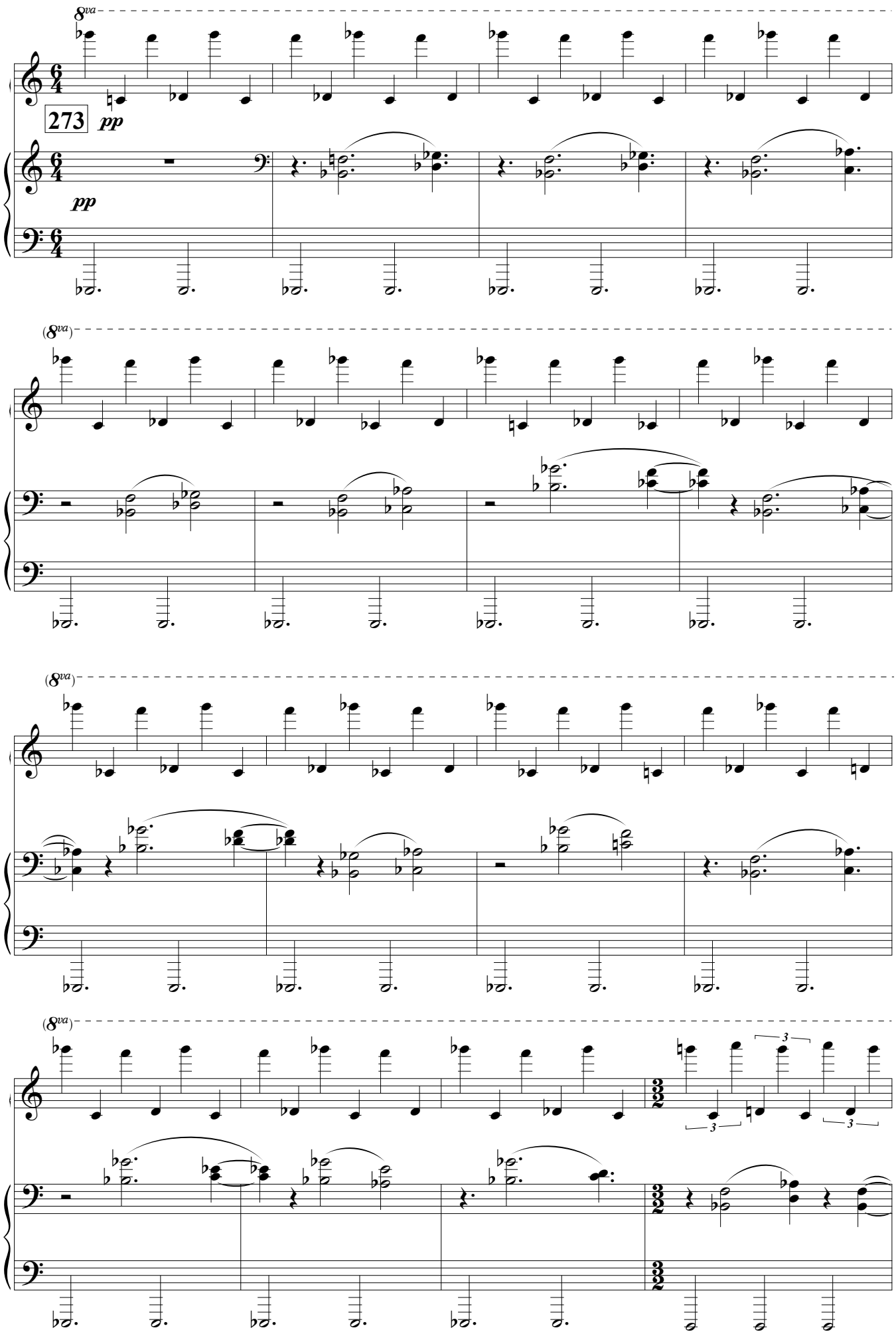
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♩. = 54
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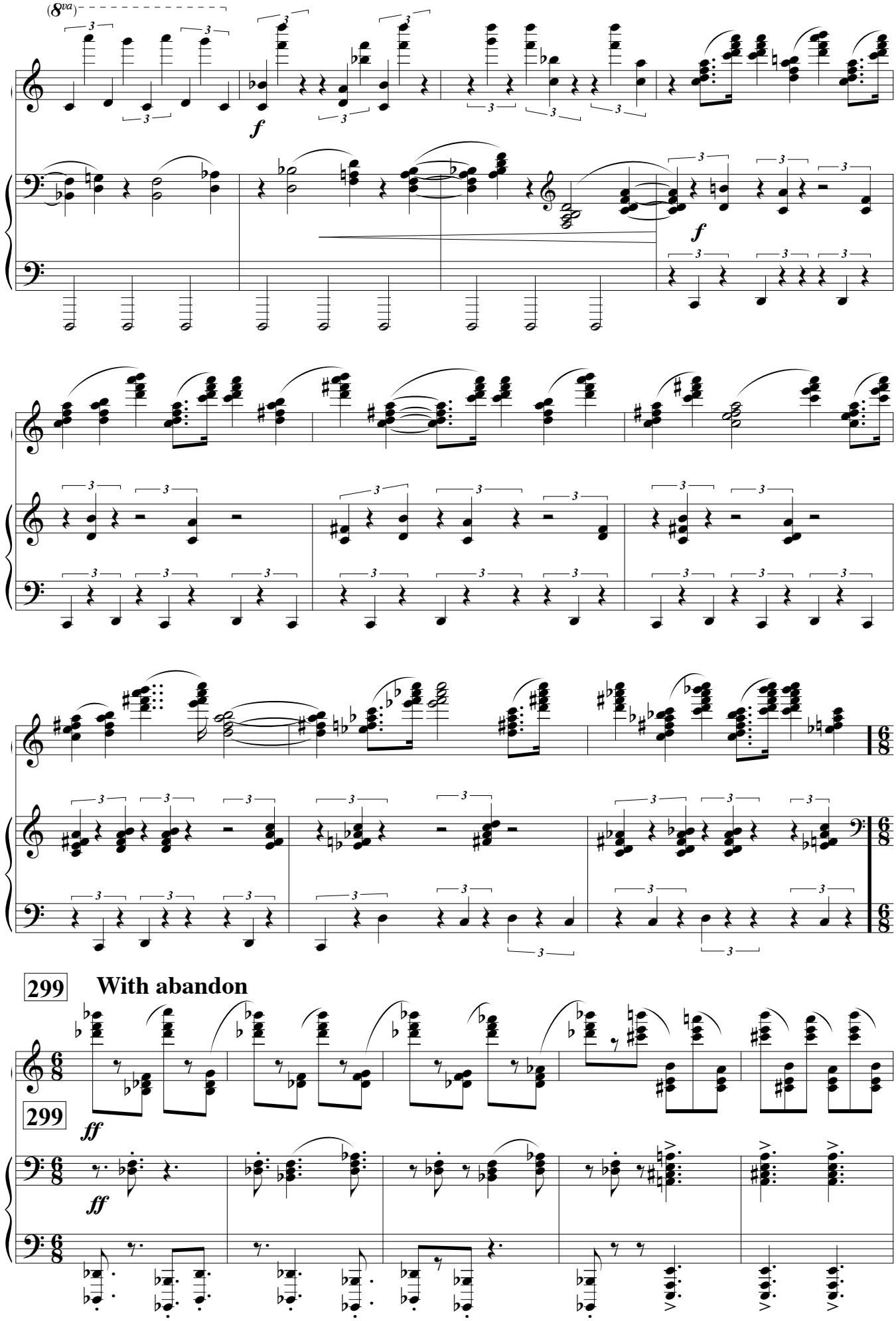
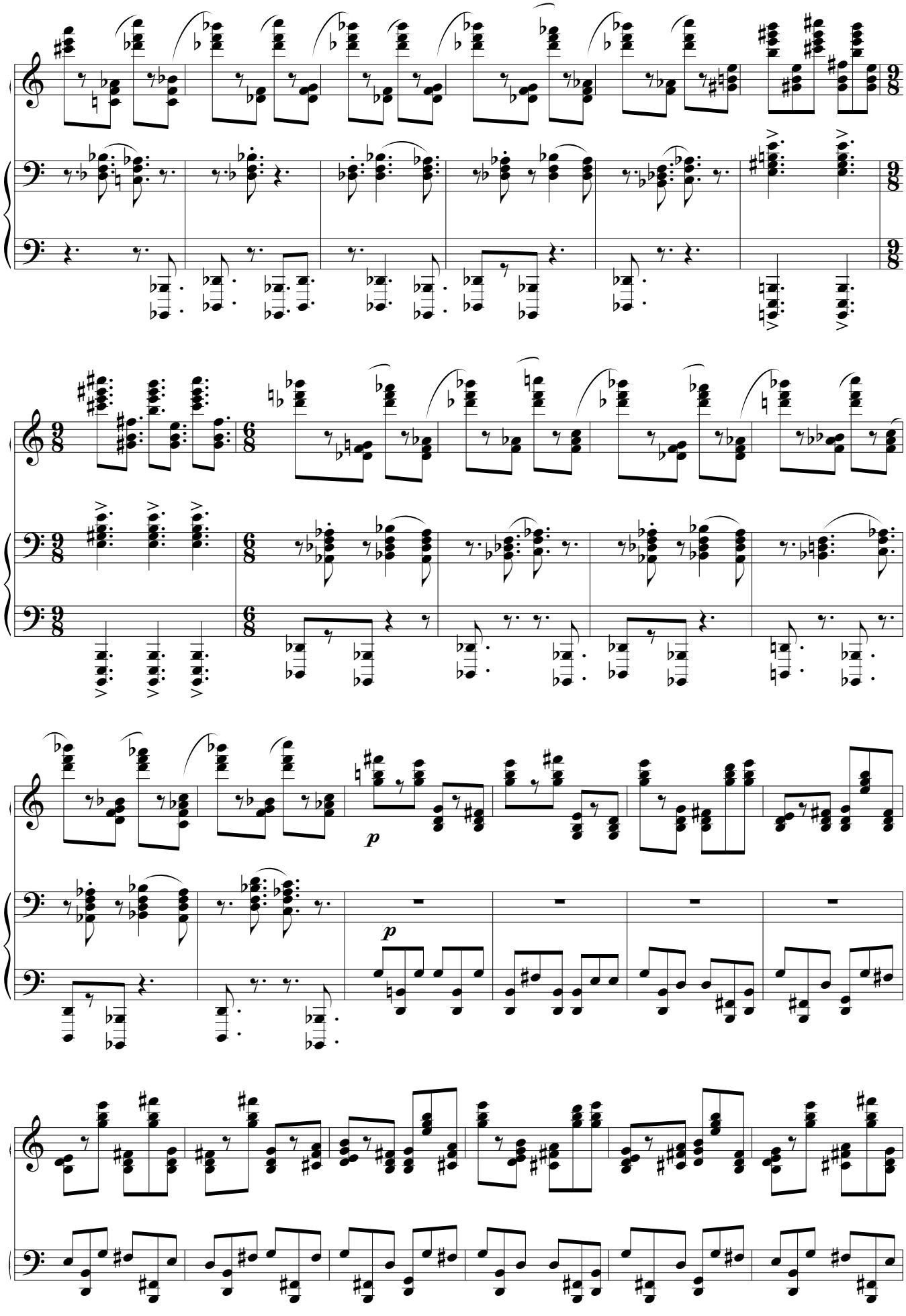
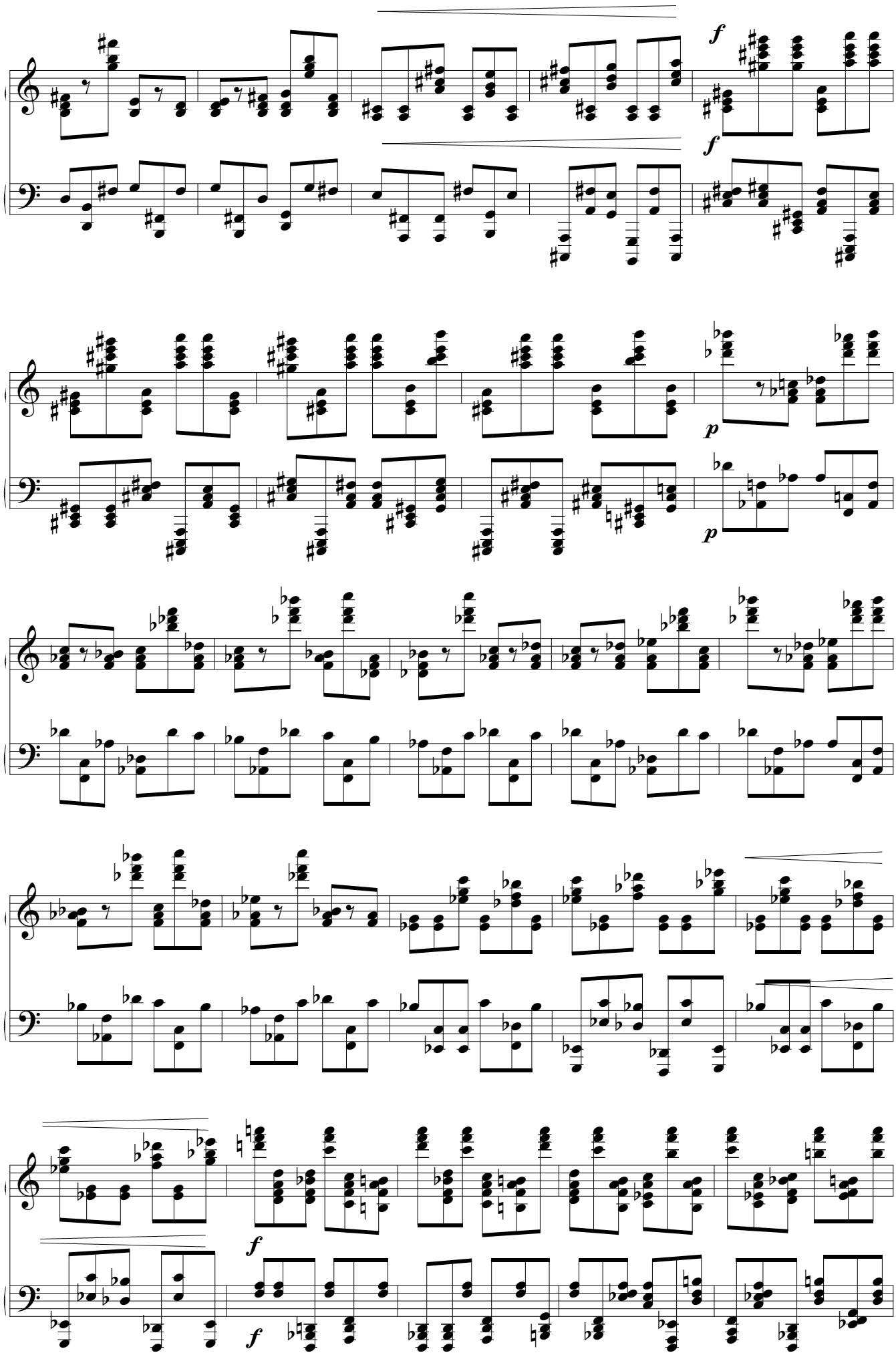
273
pp
pp
(8va)
(8va)
(8va)
3
3
3


(8va)
f
f
299
With abandon
299
ff
ff


9/8
6/8
p
p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f
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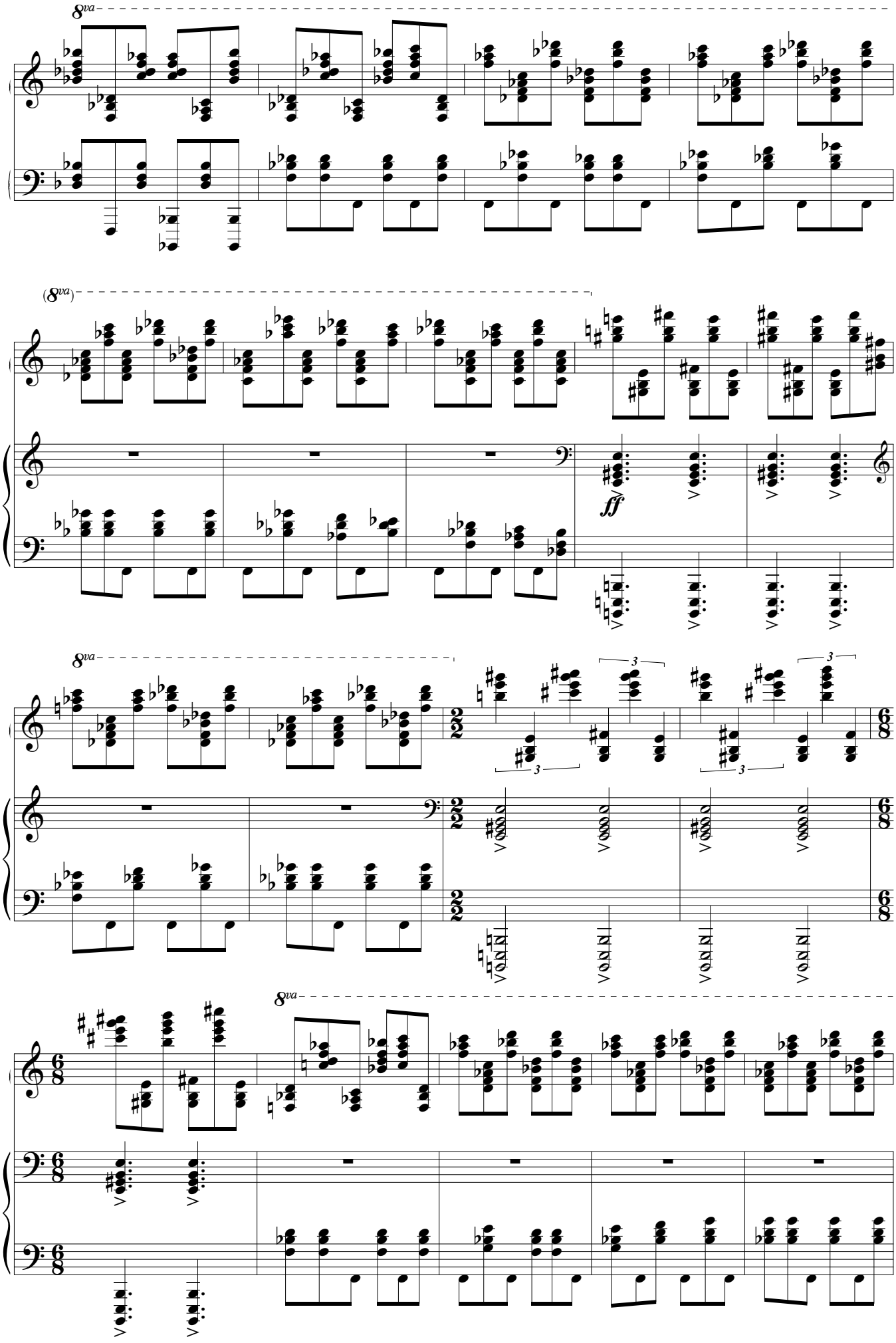
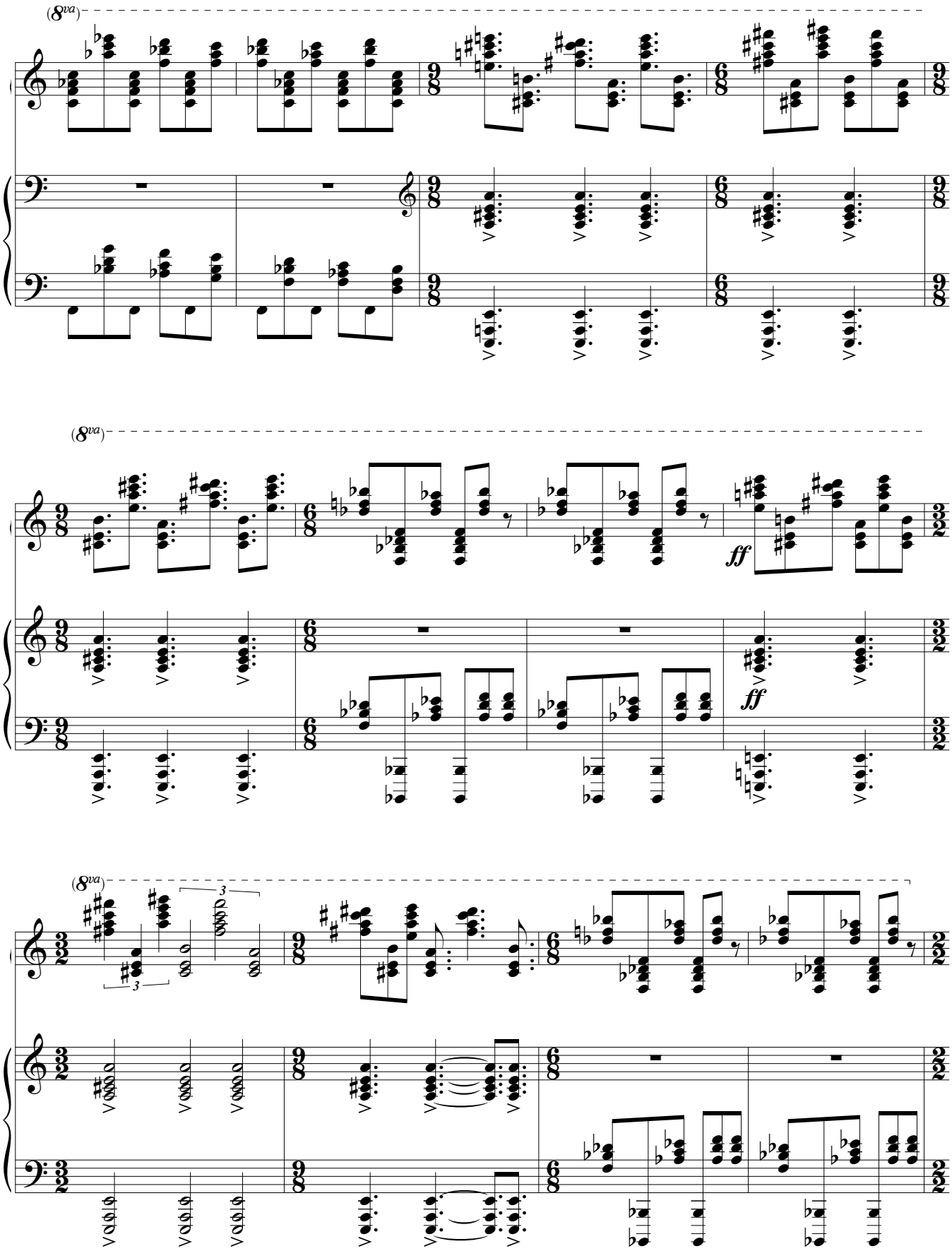

8va
(8va)
ff
8va
3
3
3
8va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ff
ff
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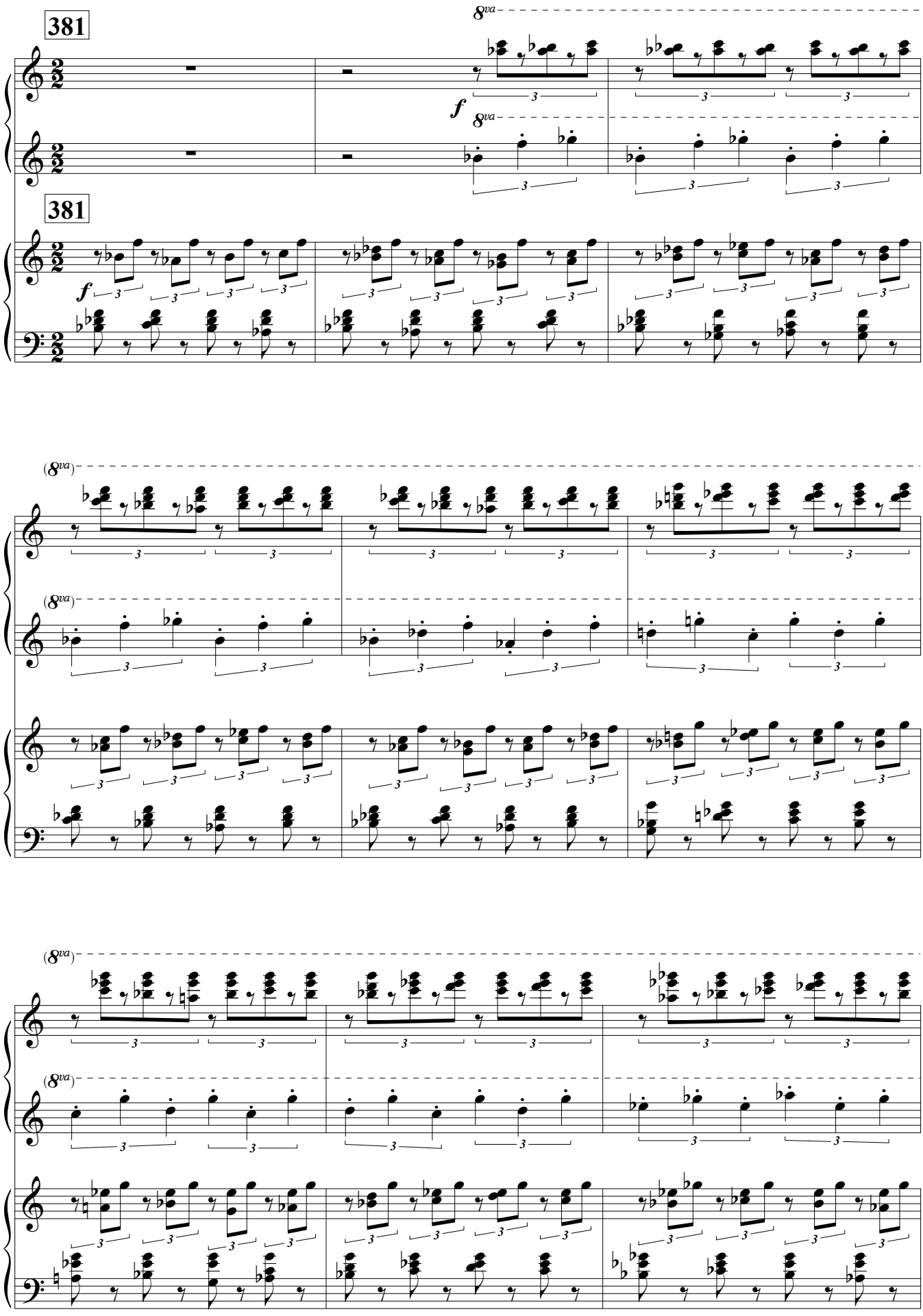
3
3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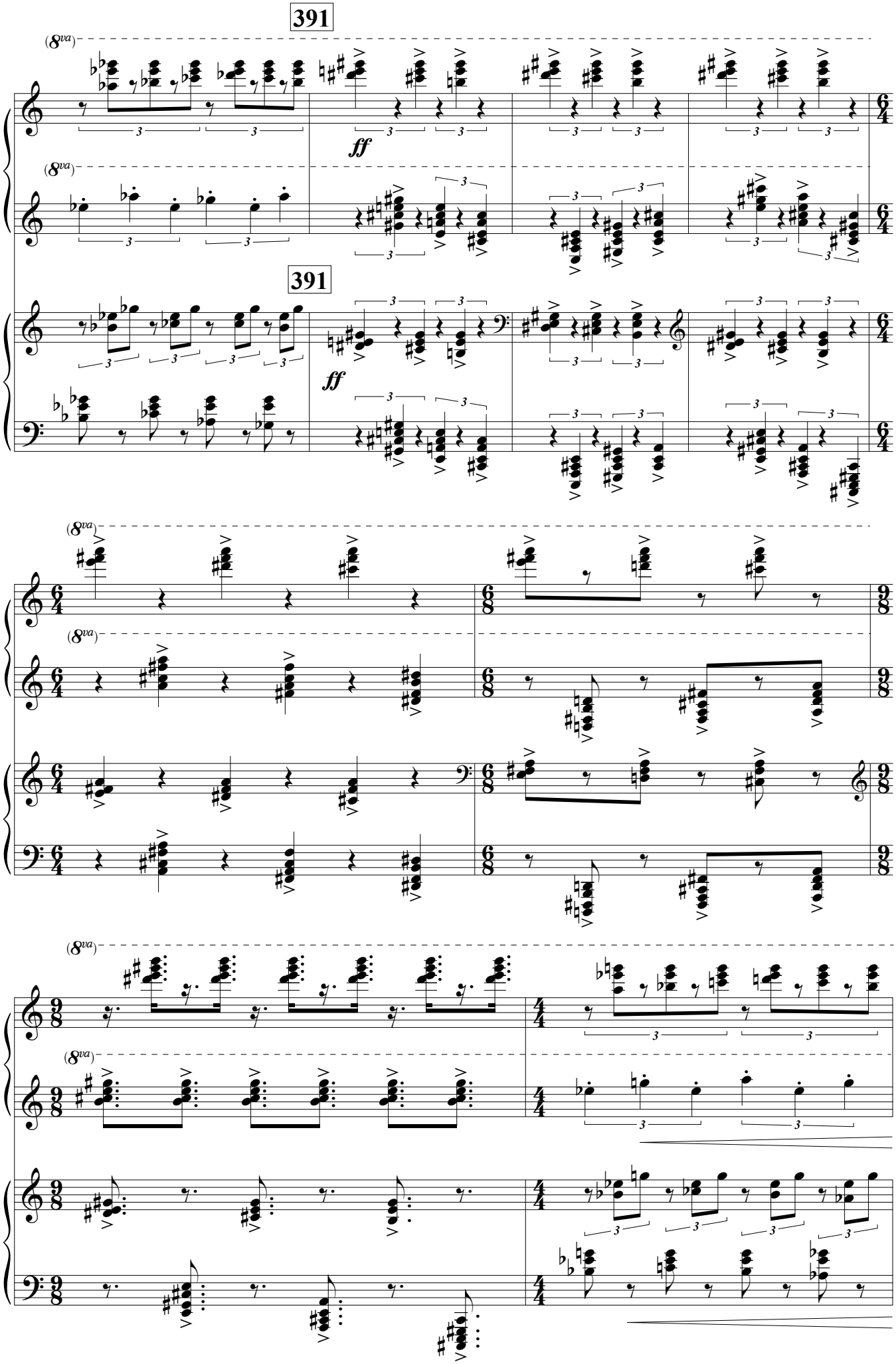
8va
f
381
f
(8va)
(8va)
(8va)
(8va)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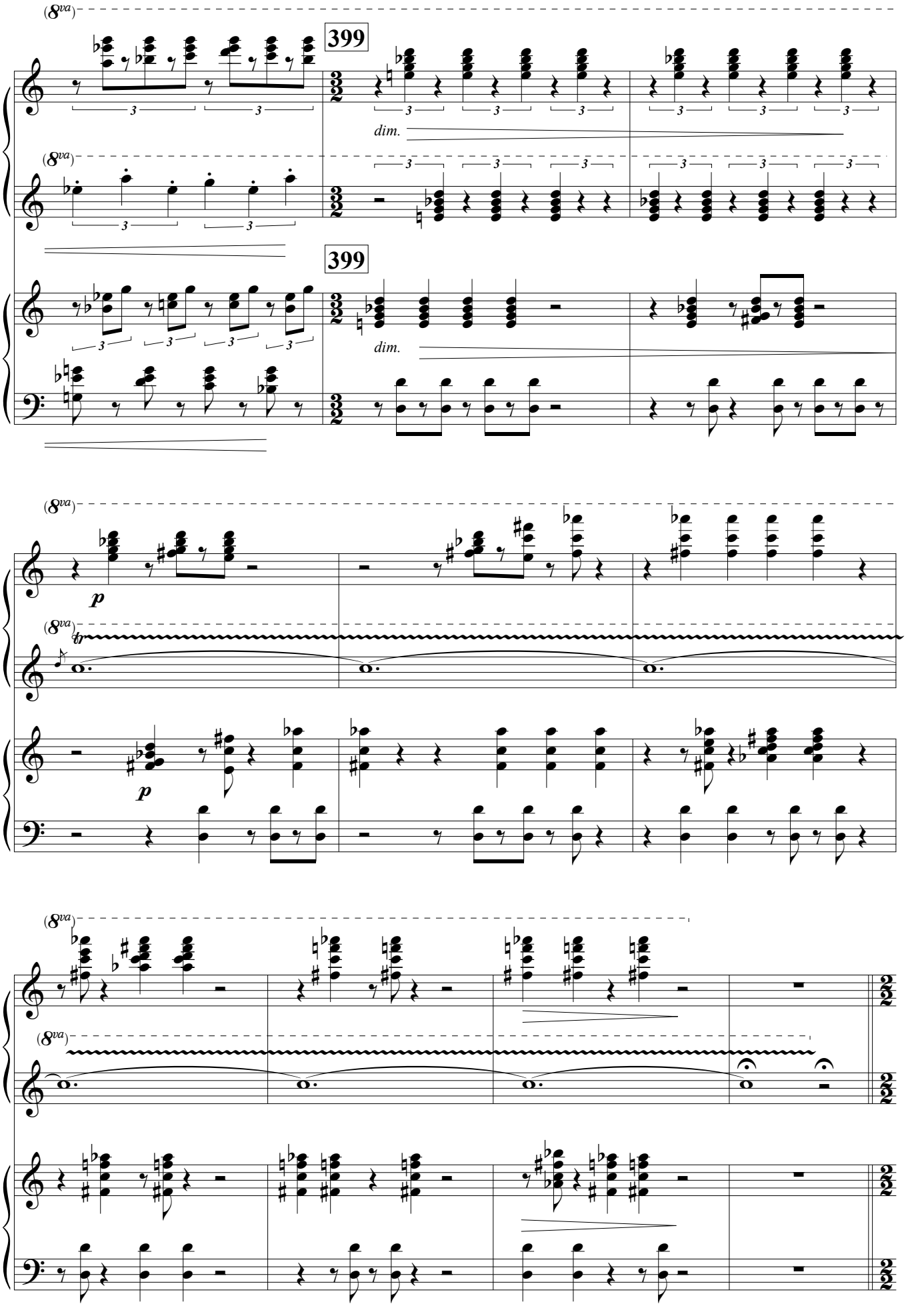
(8va)
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(8va)
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(8va)
tr
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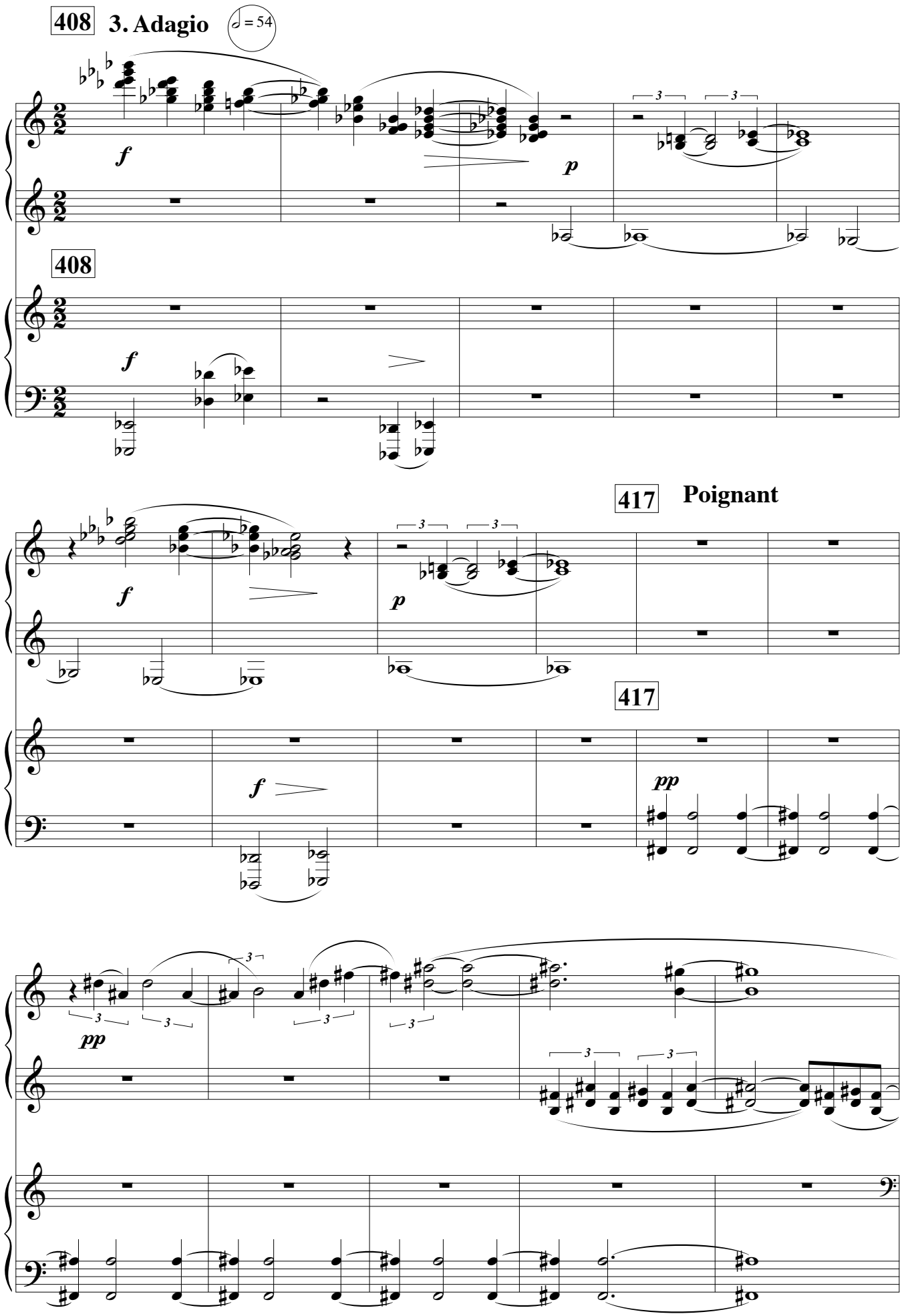
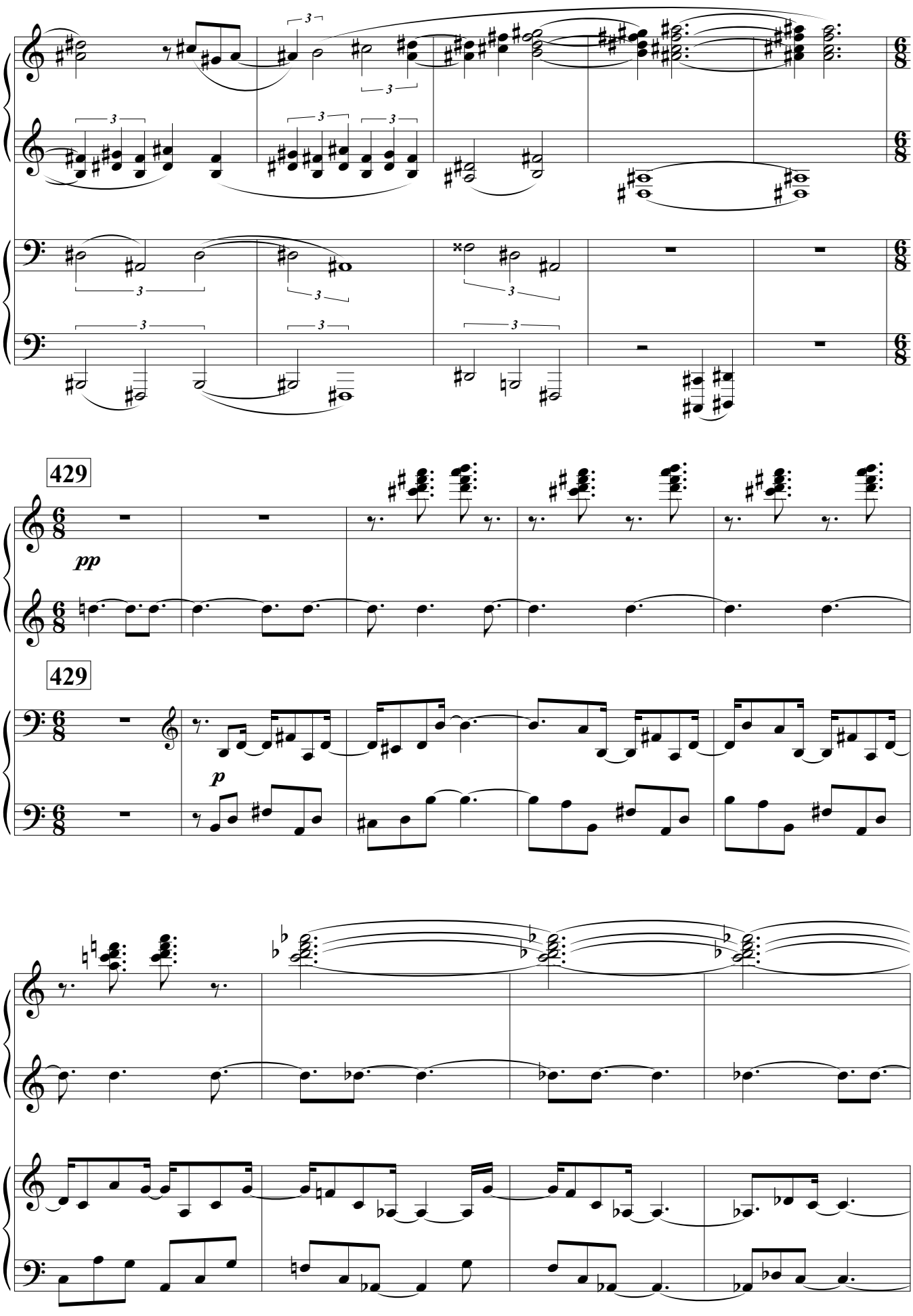
(8va)
(8va)


408
3. Adagio
♩ = 54
f
p
408
f
417
Poignant
f
p
417
f
pp
pp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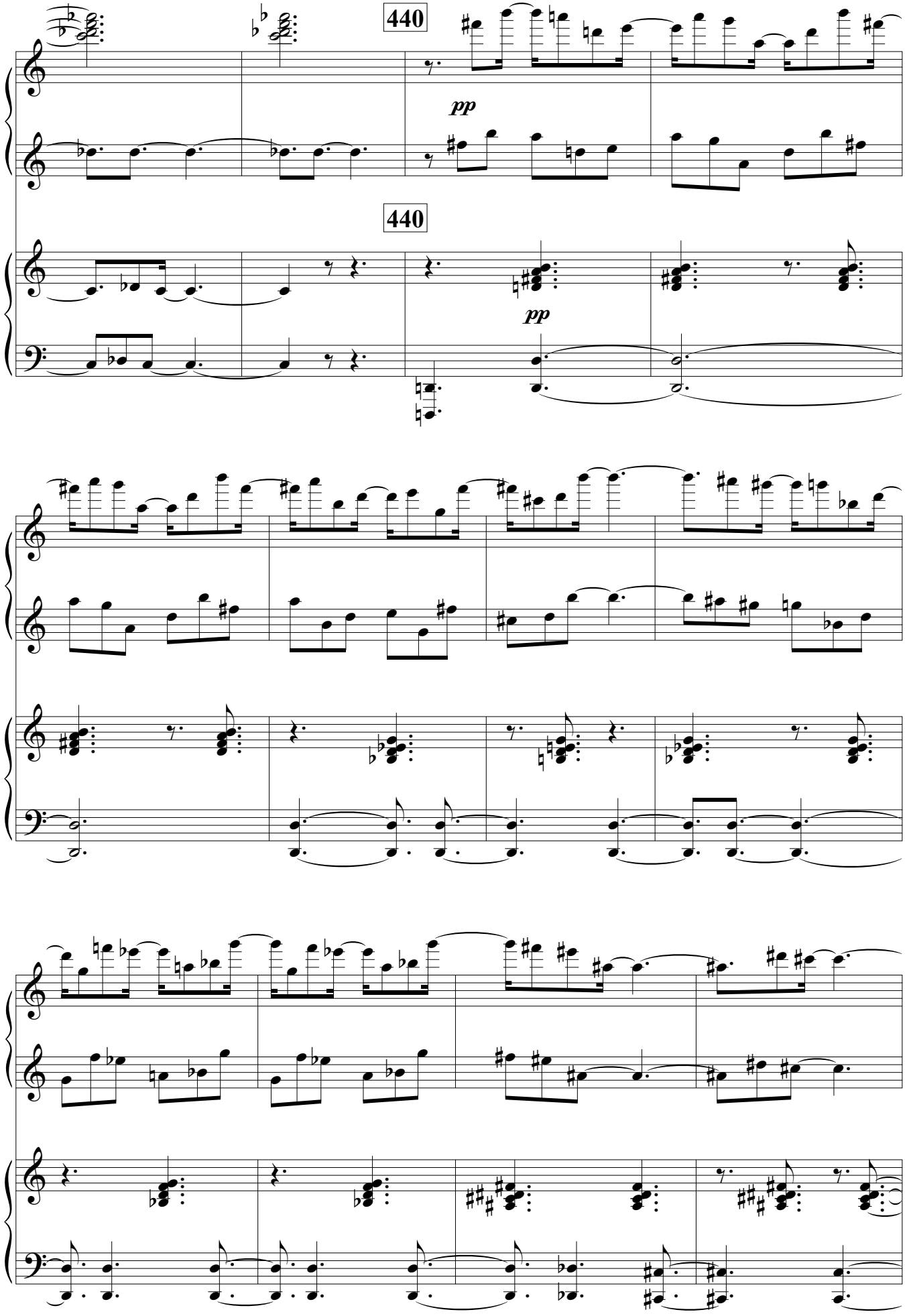
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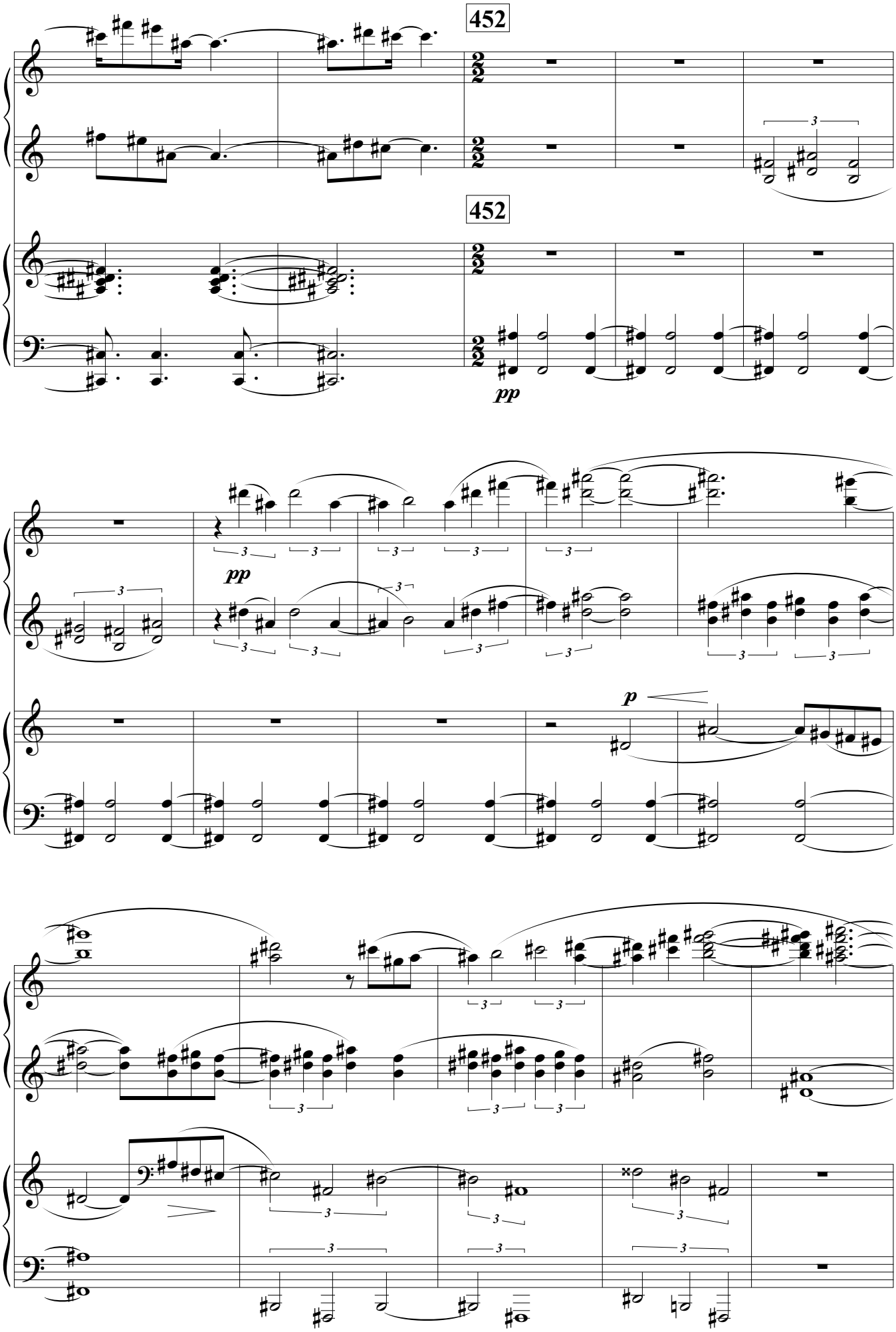
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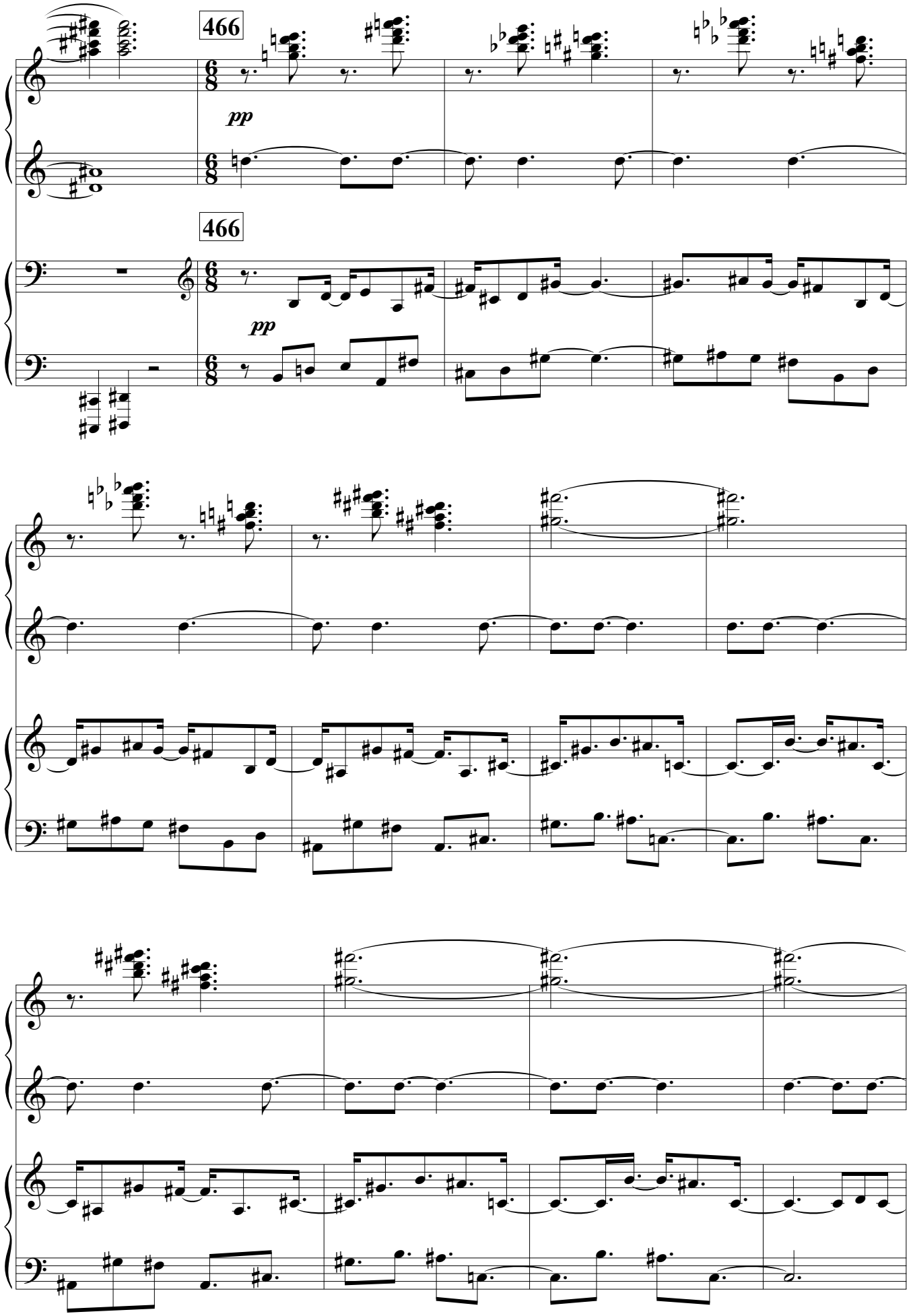
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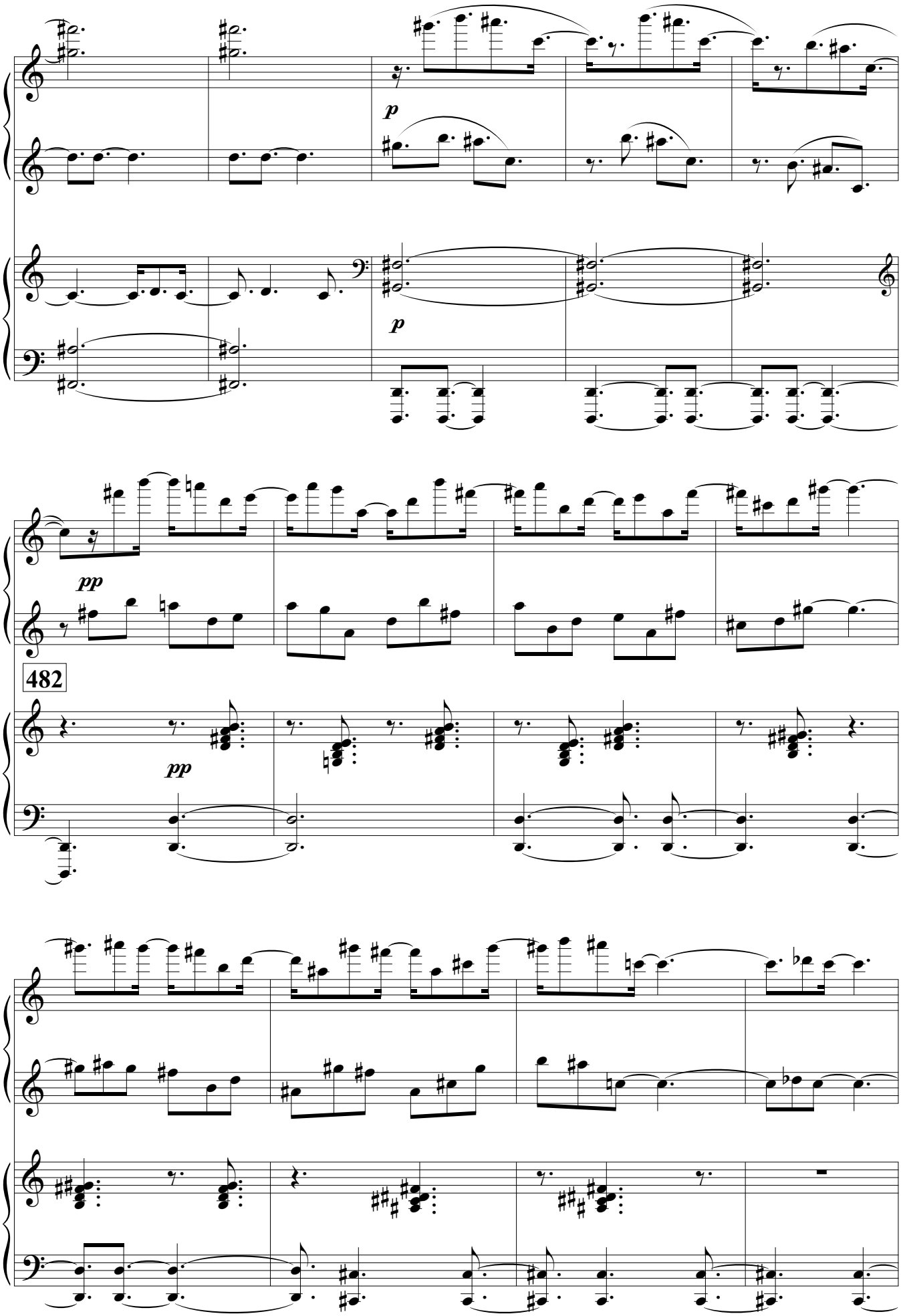
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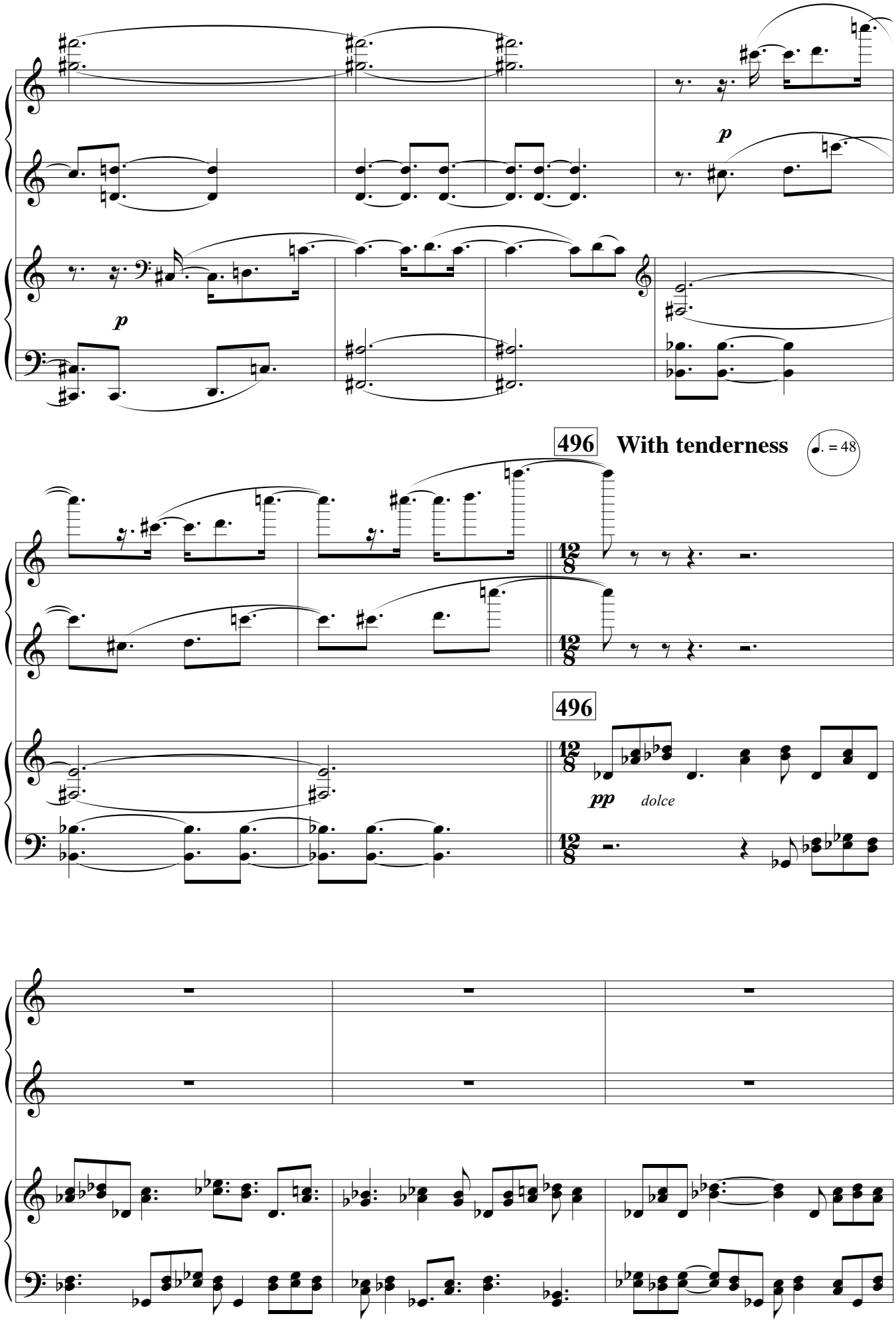
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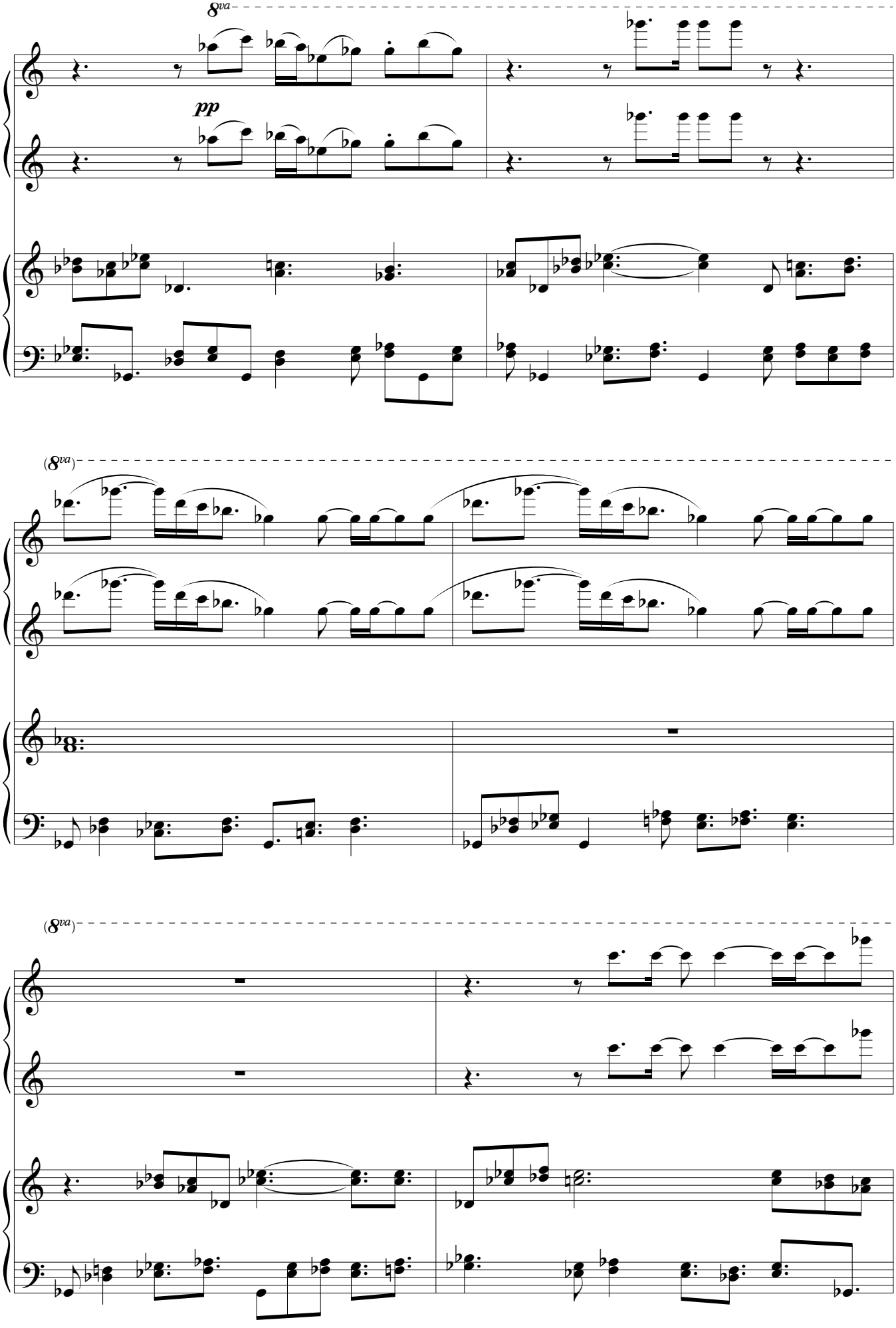
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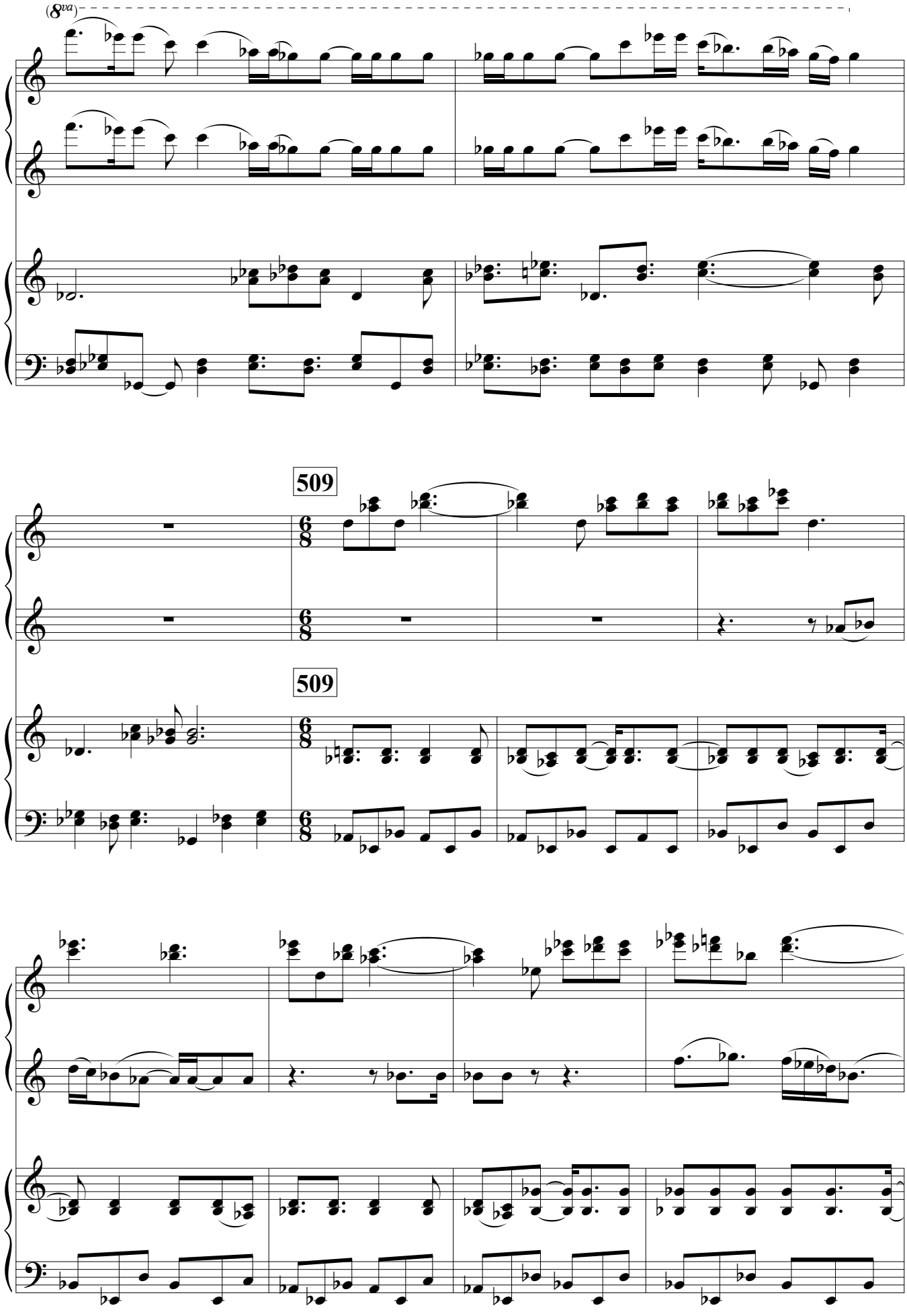
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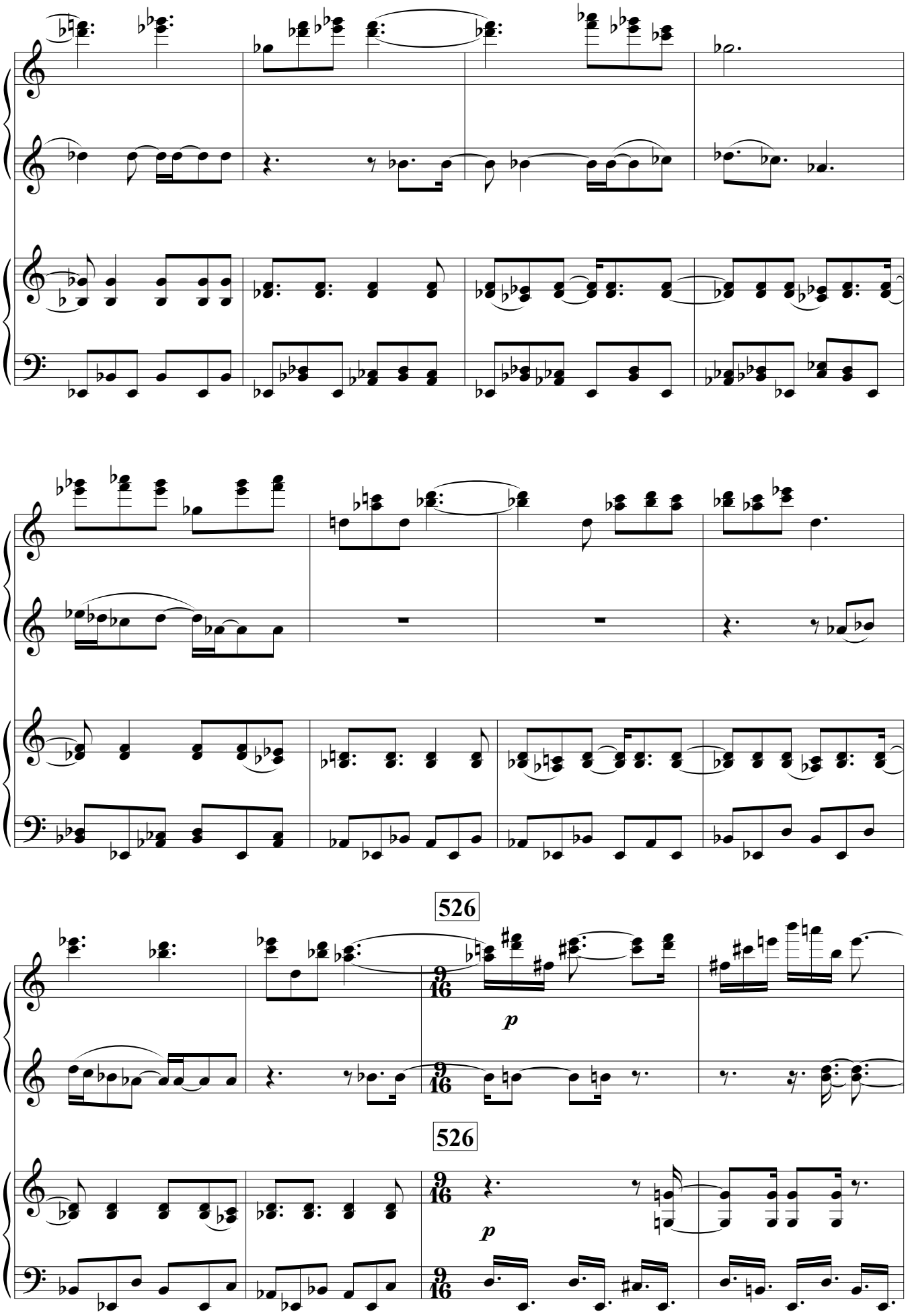
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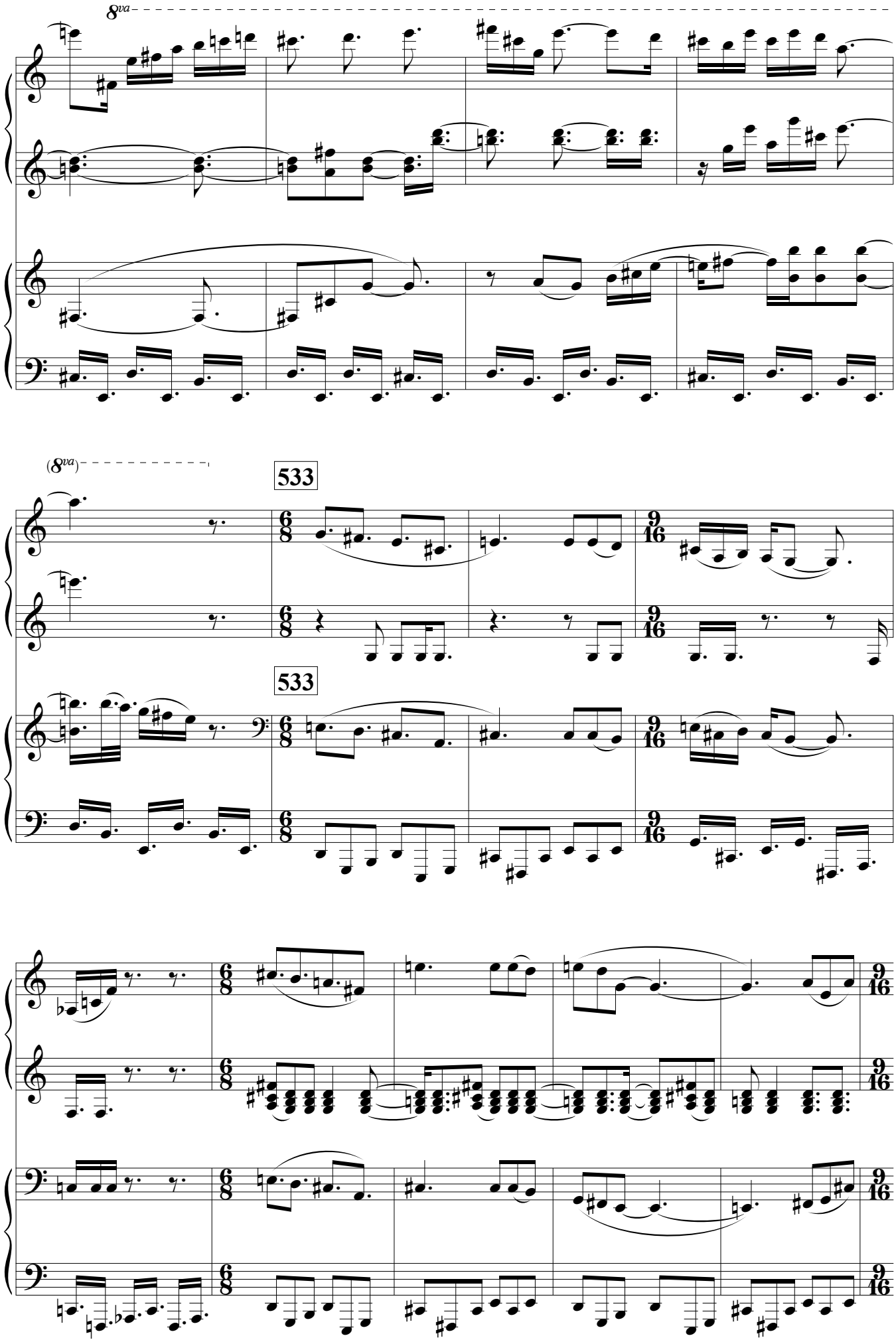
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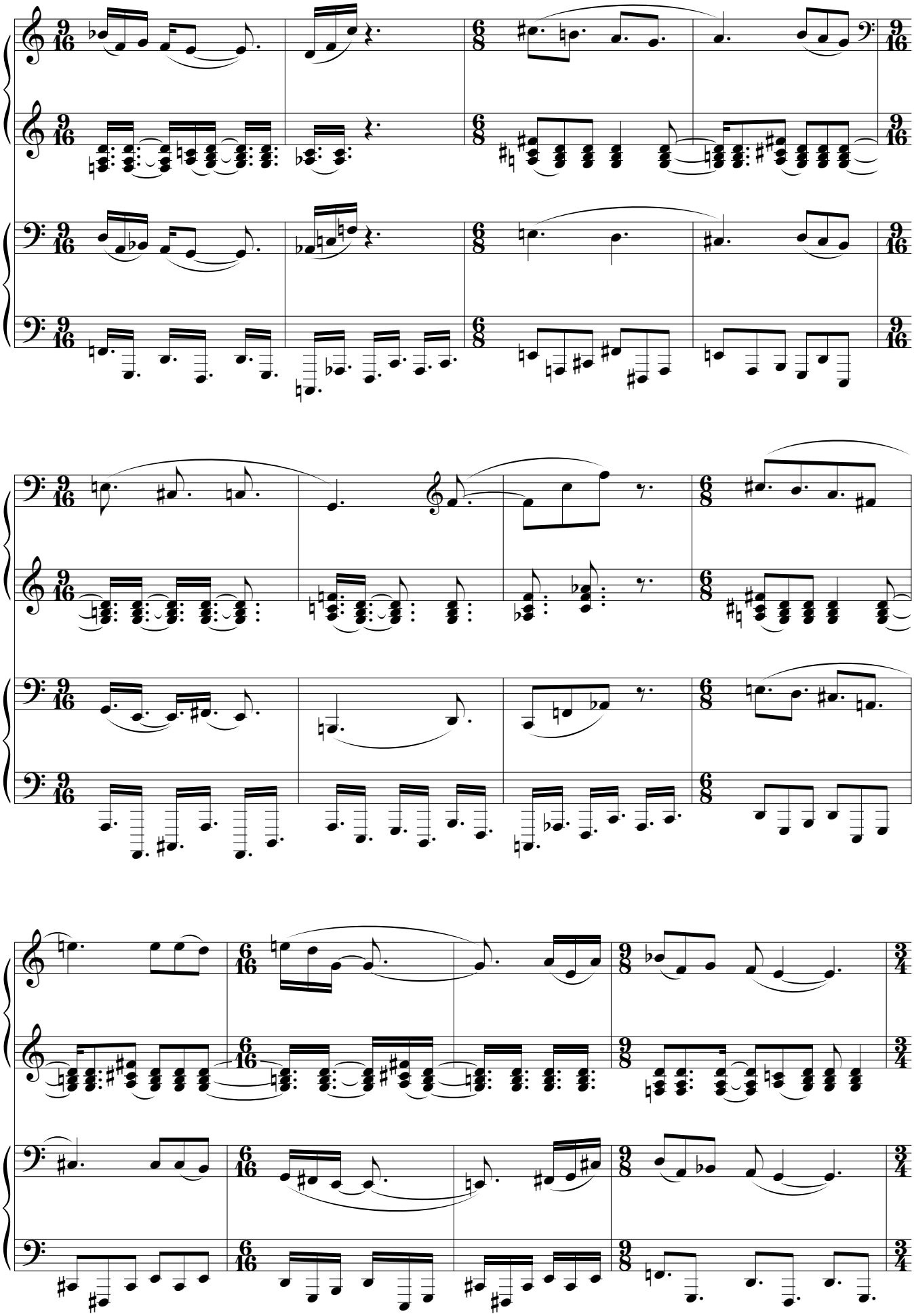

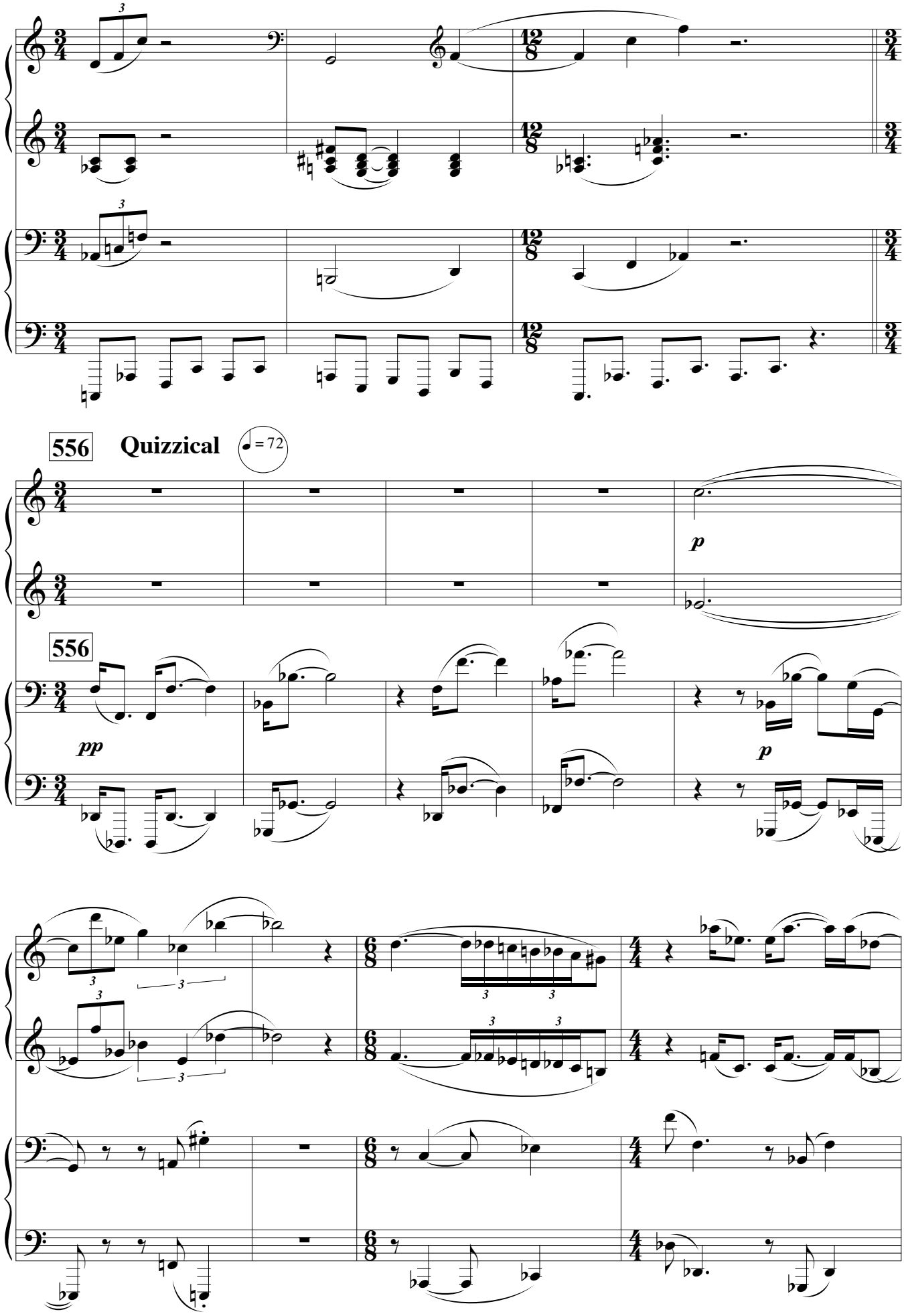
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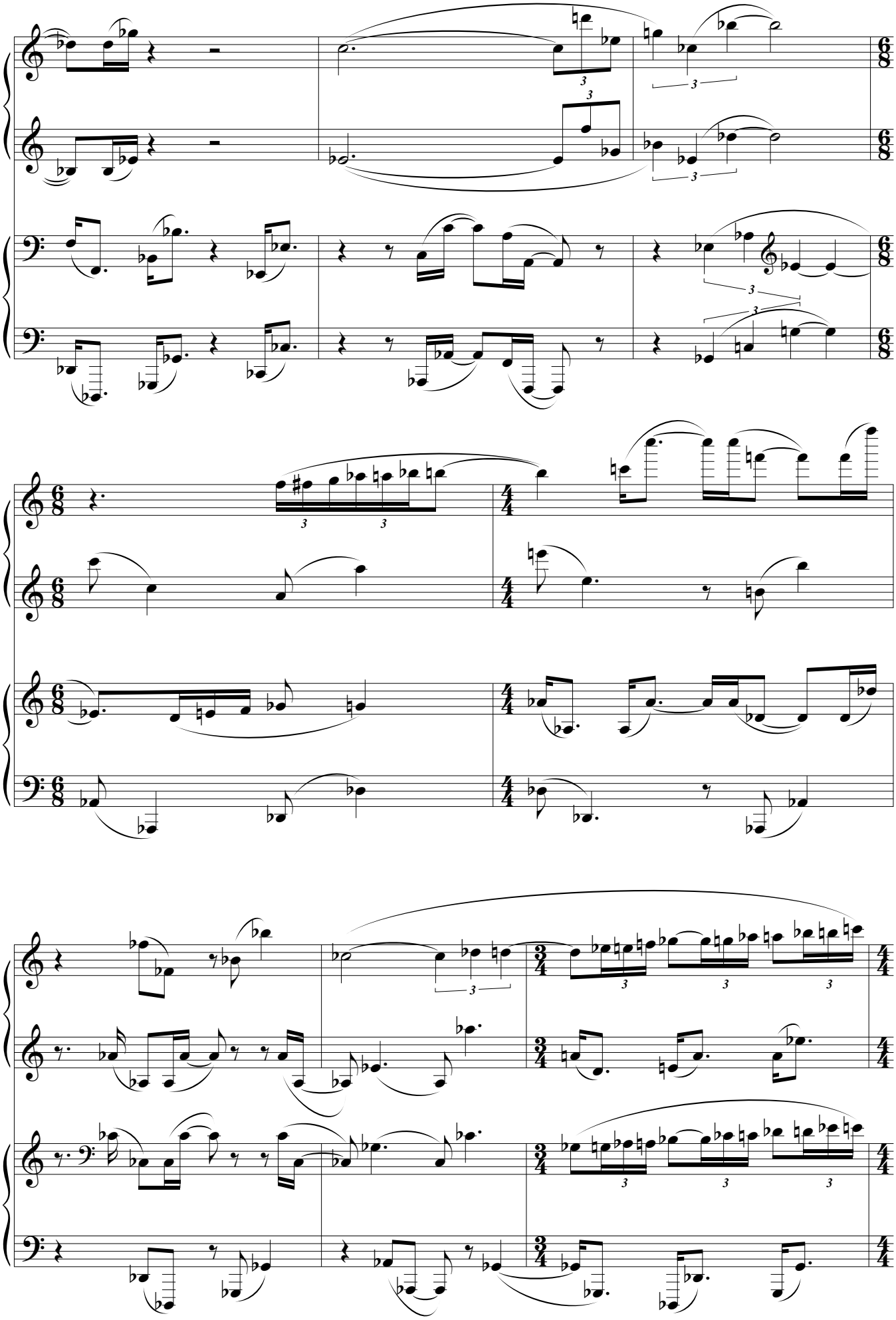

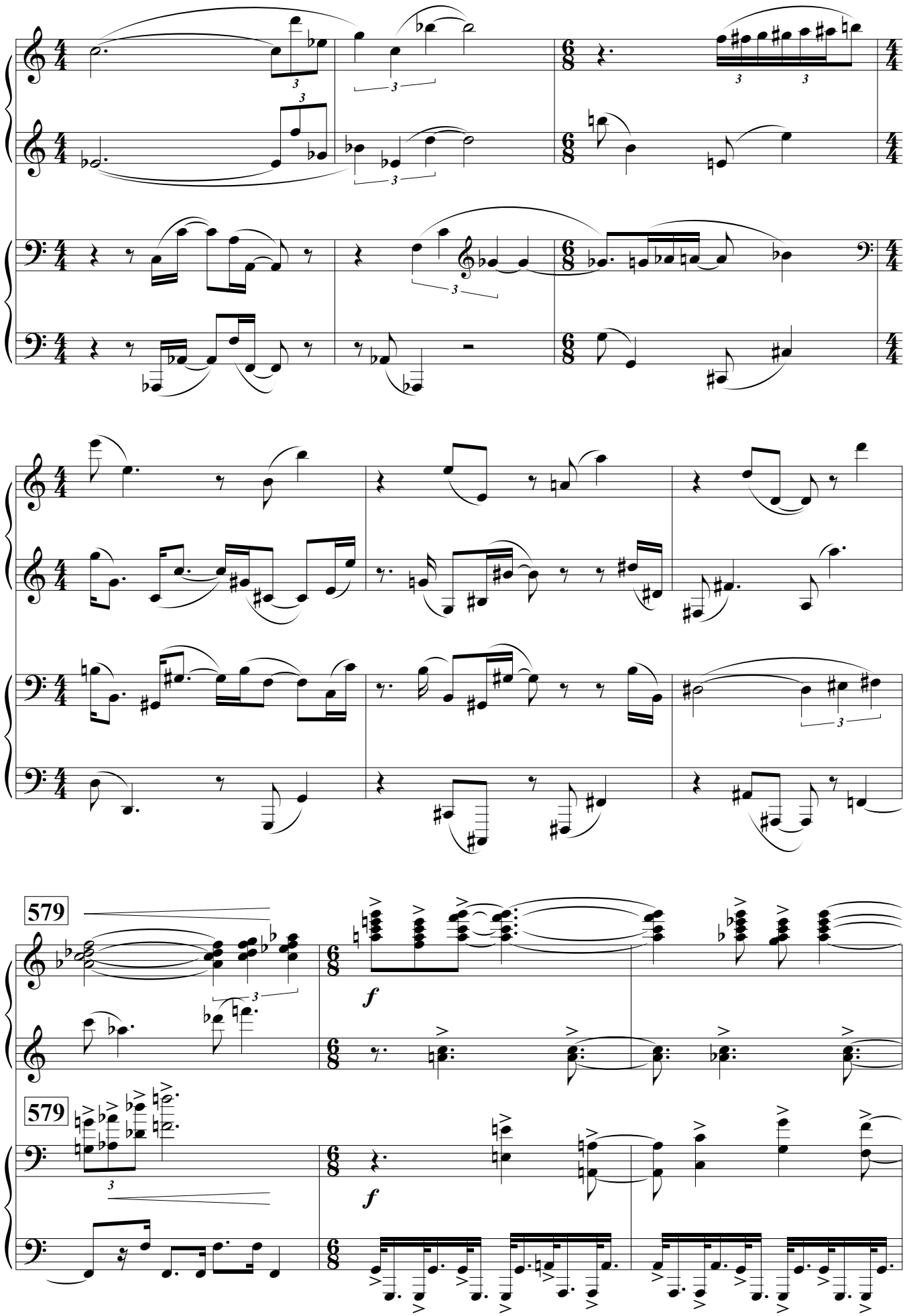
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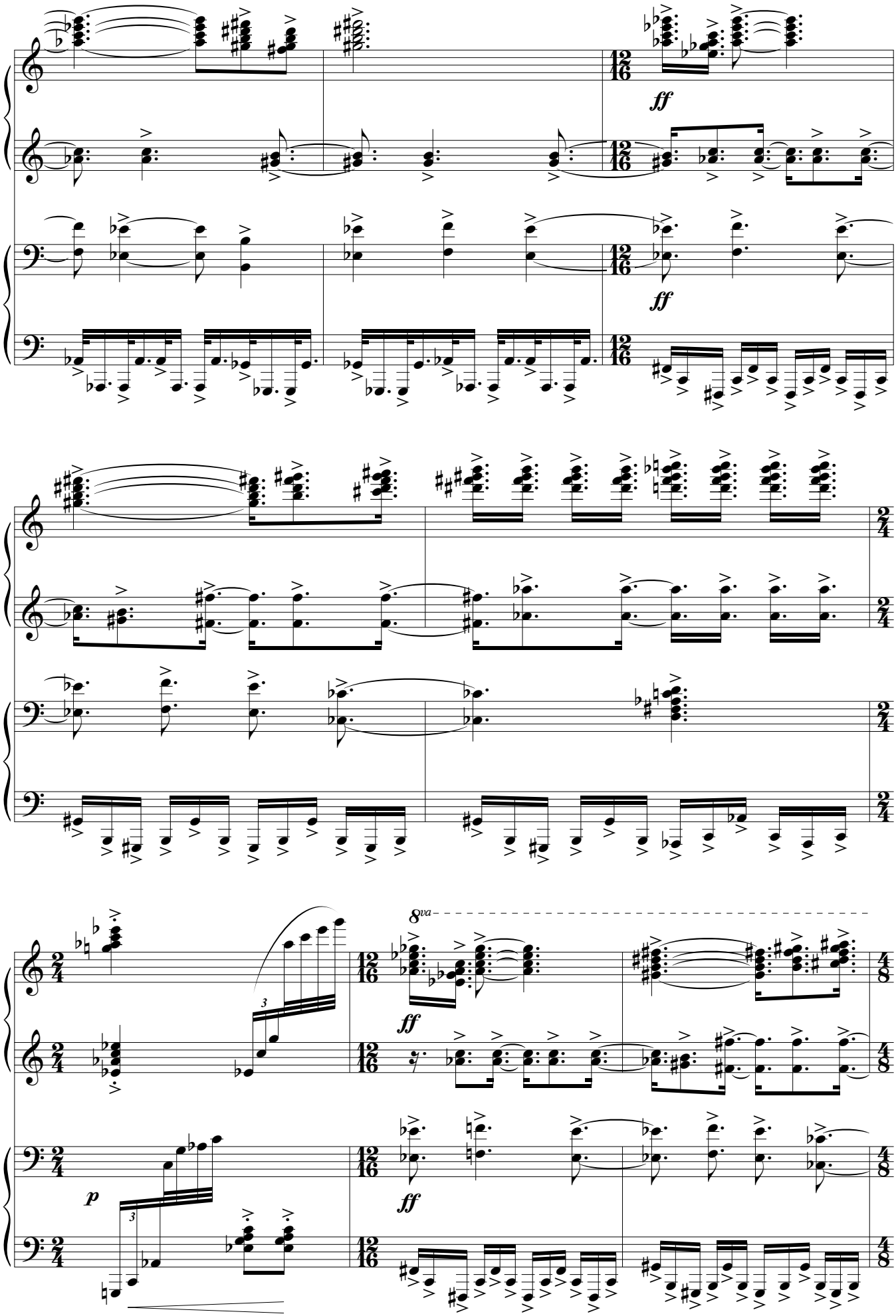
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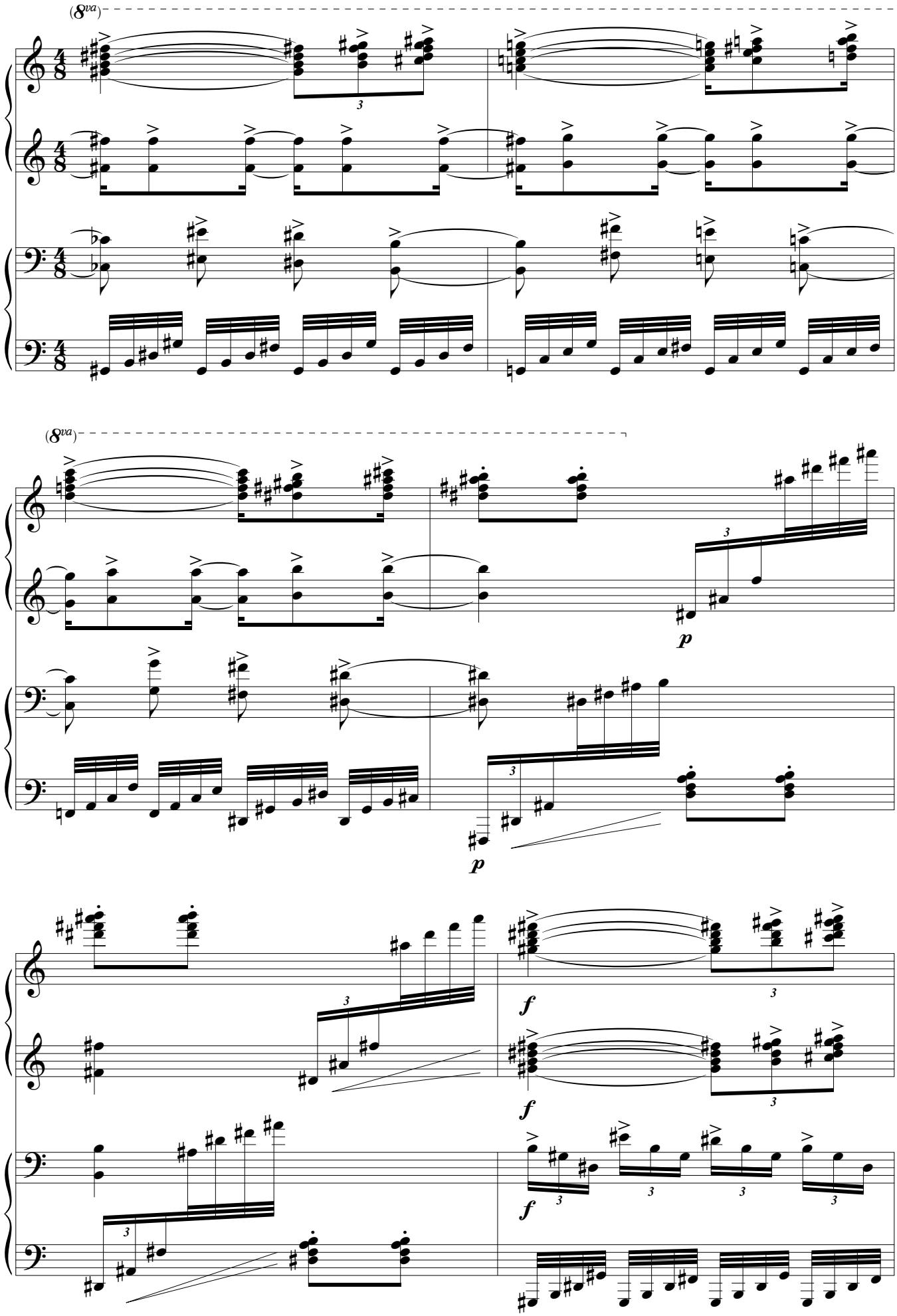
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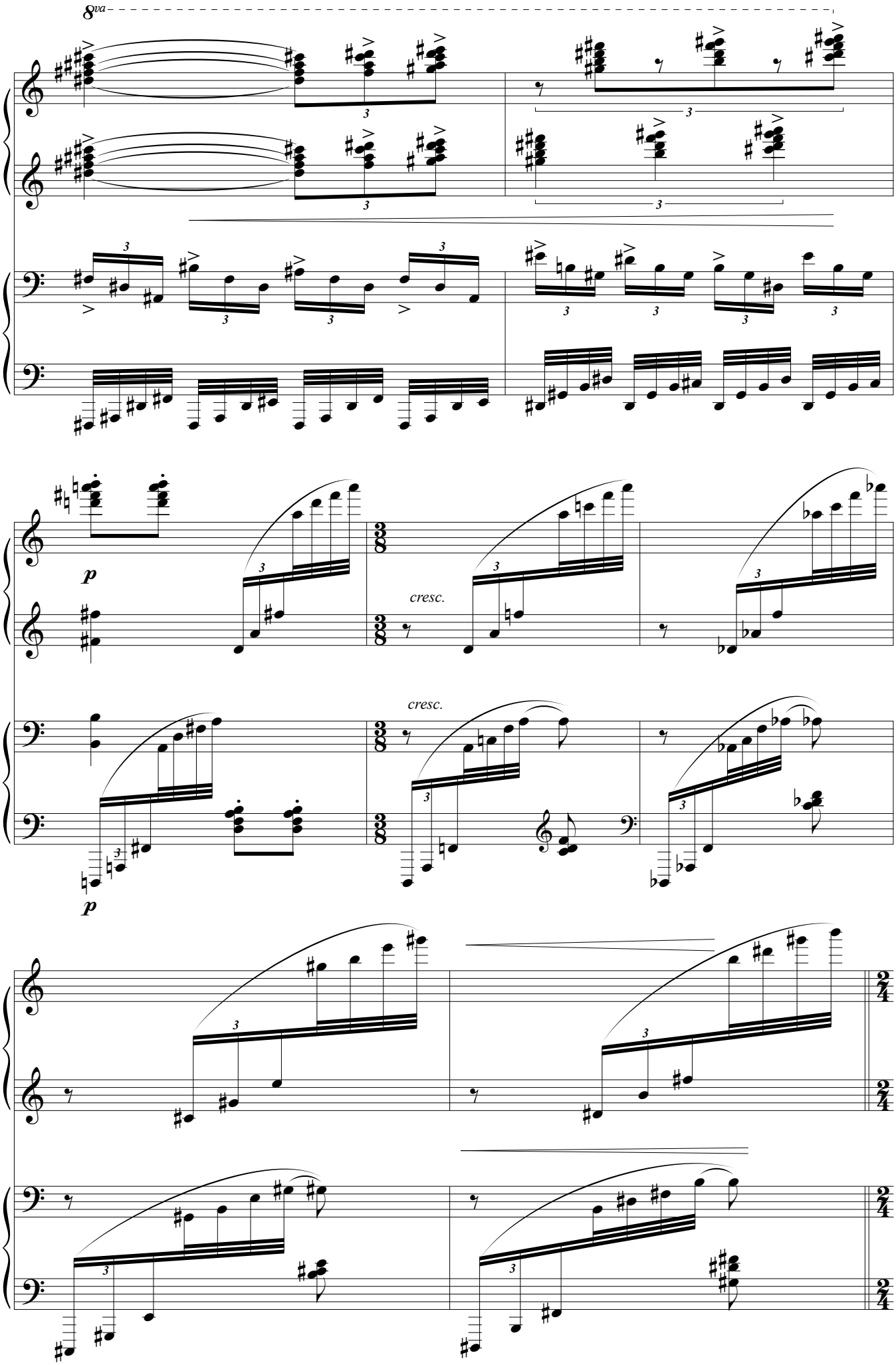
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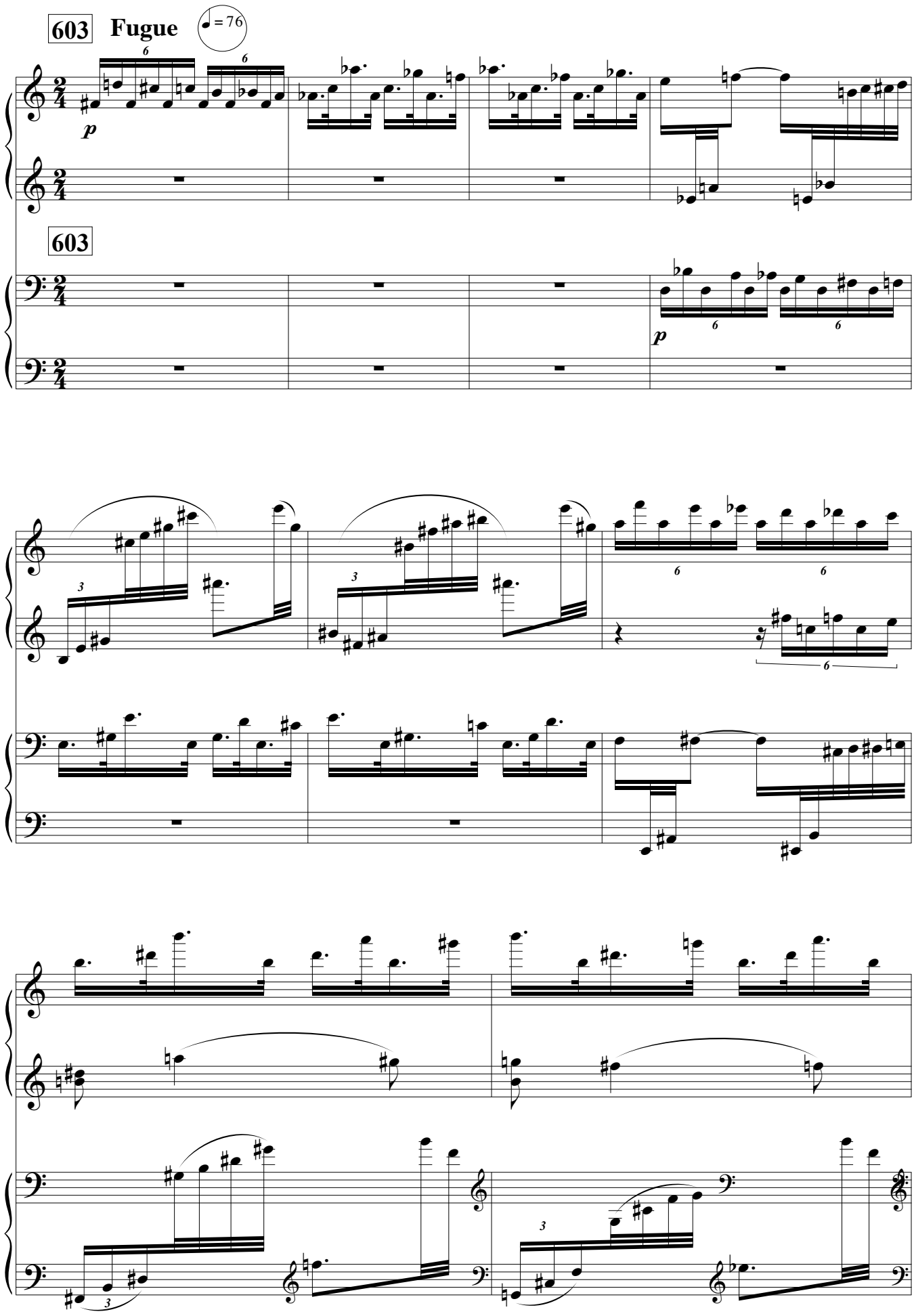
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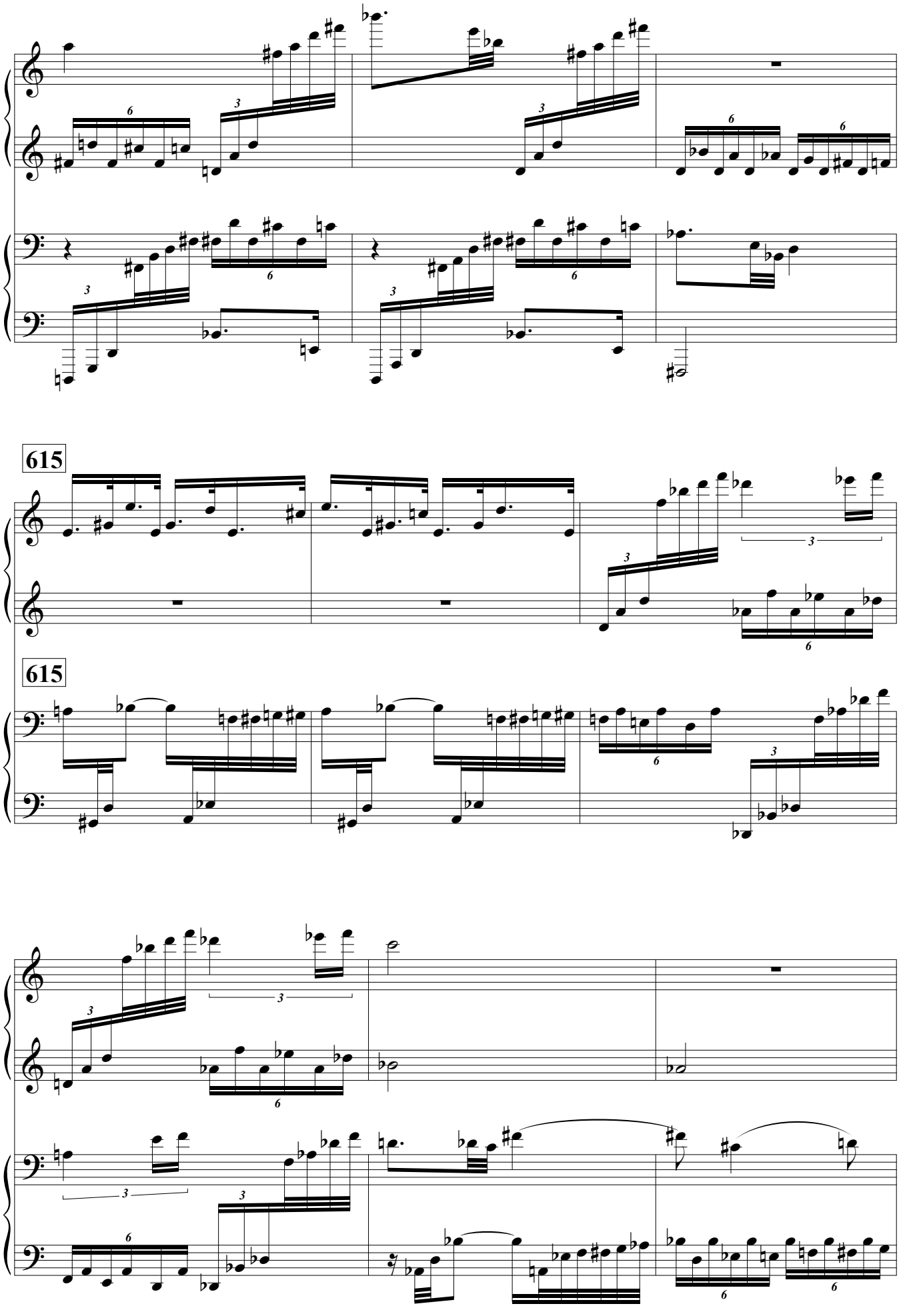
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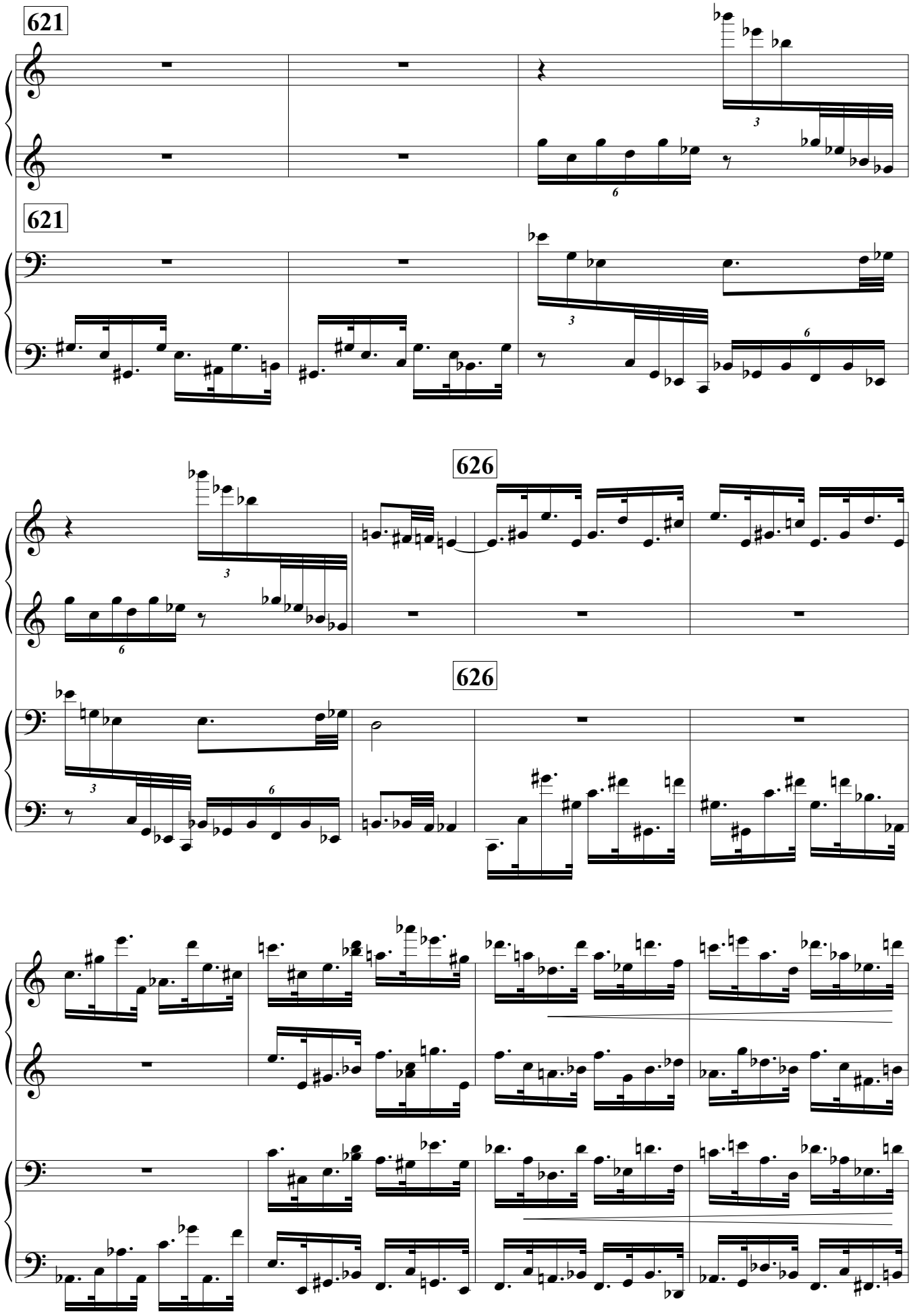
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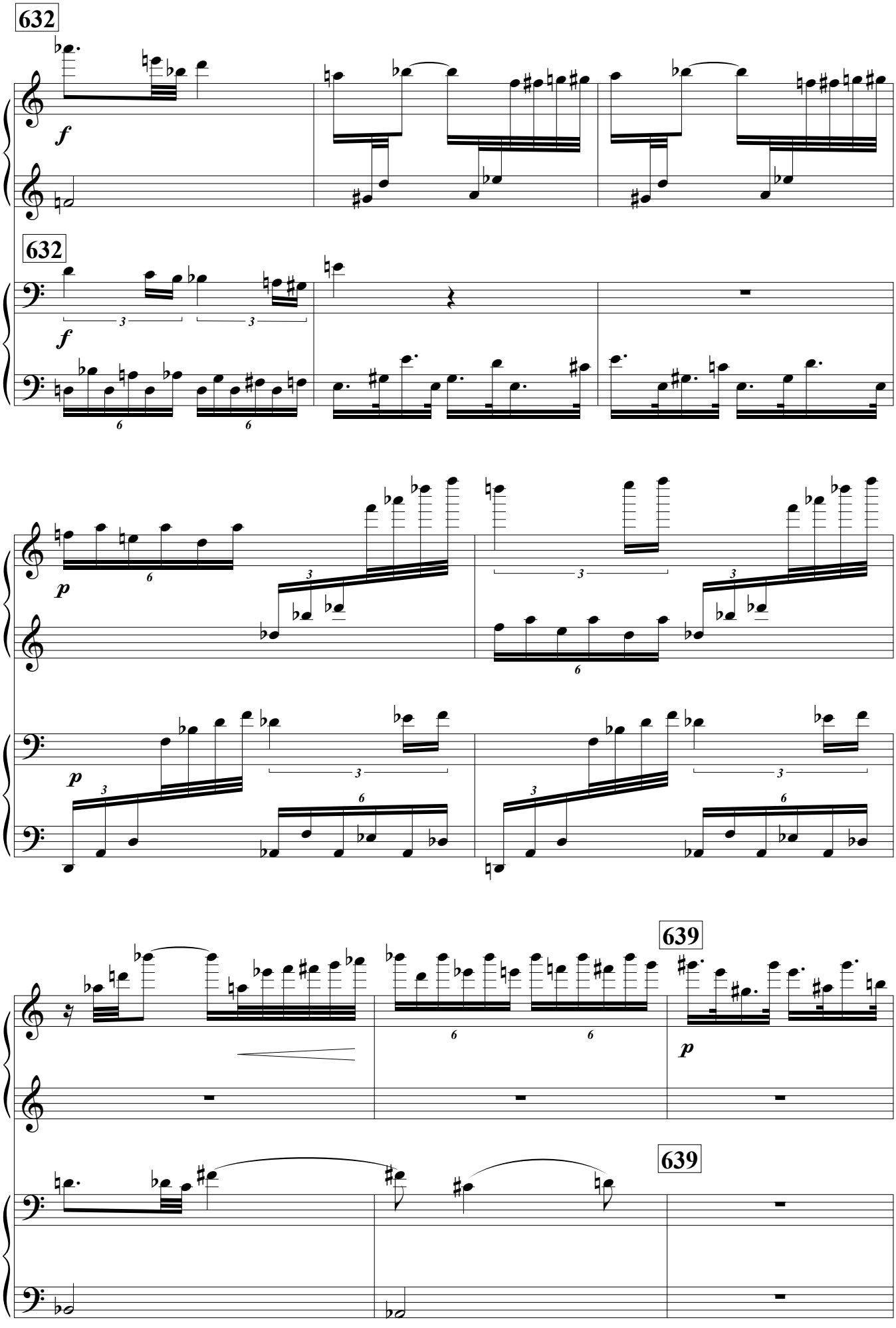
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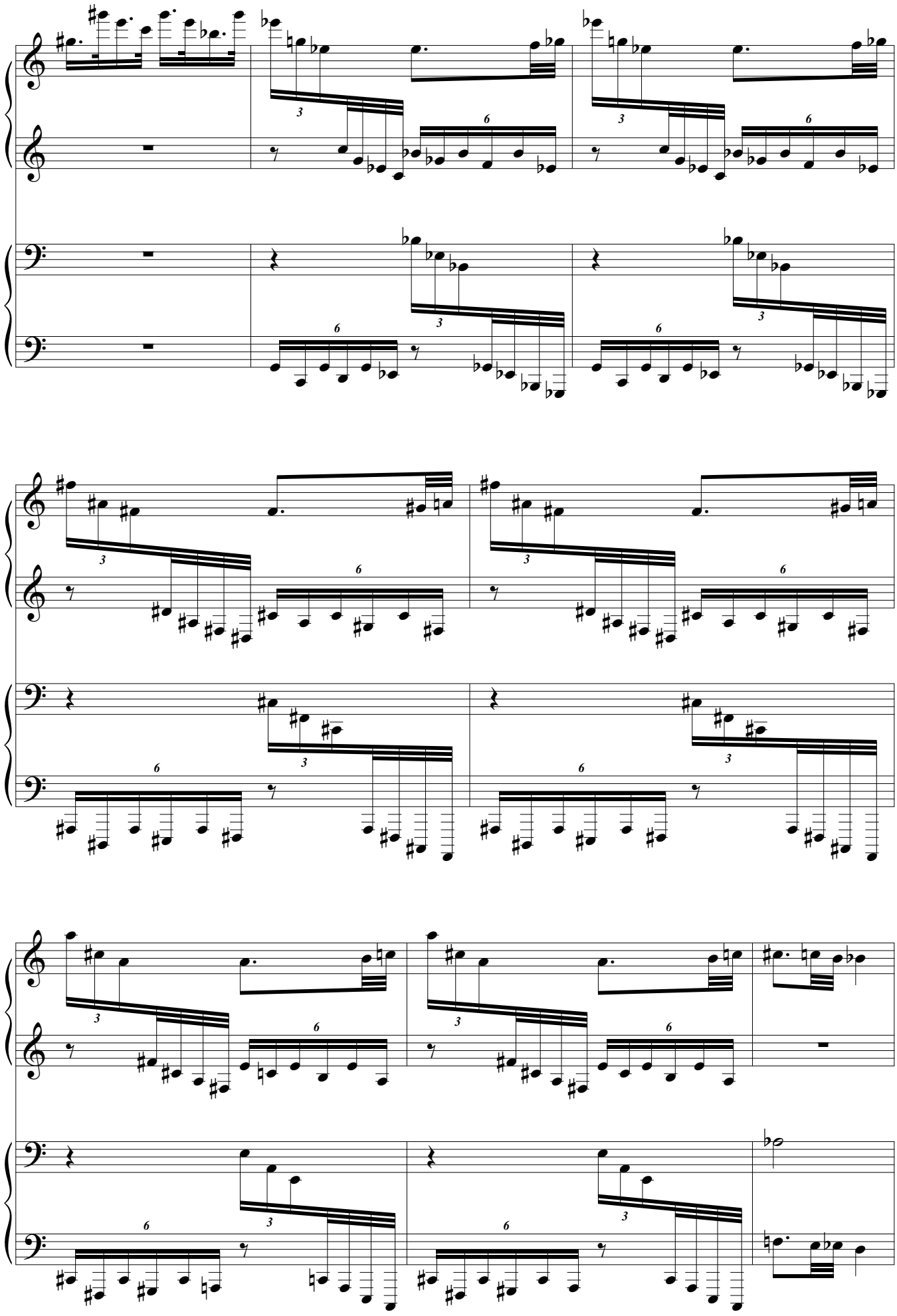

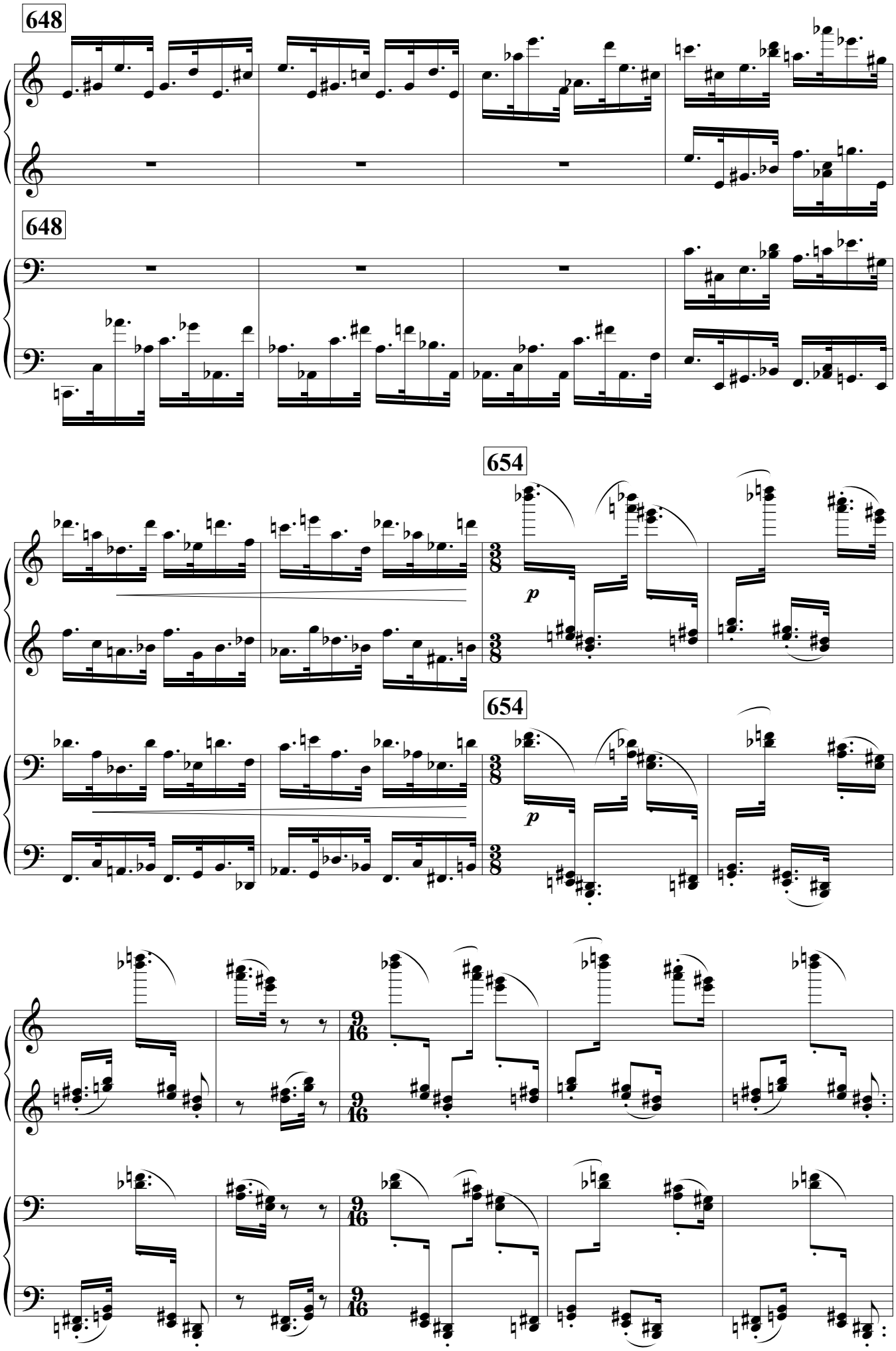
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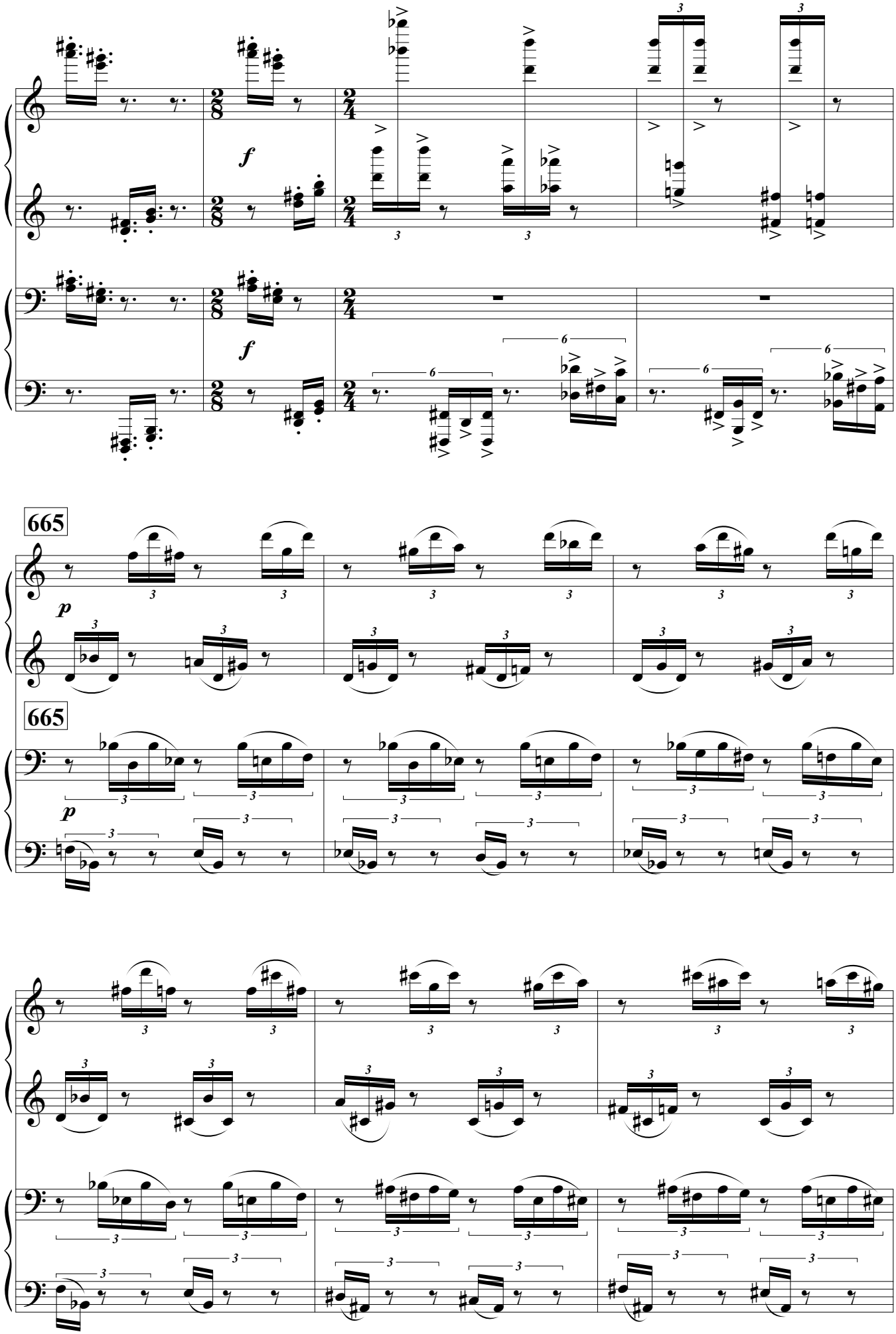
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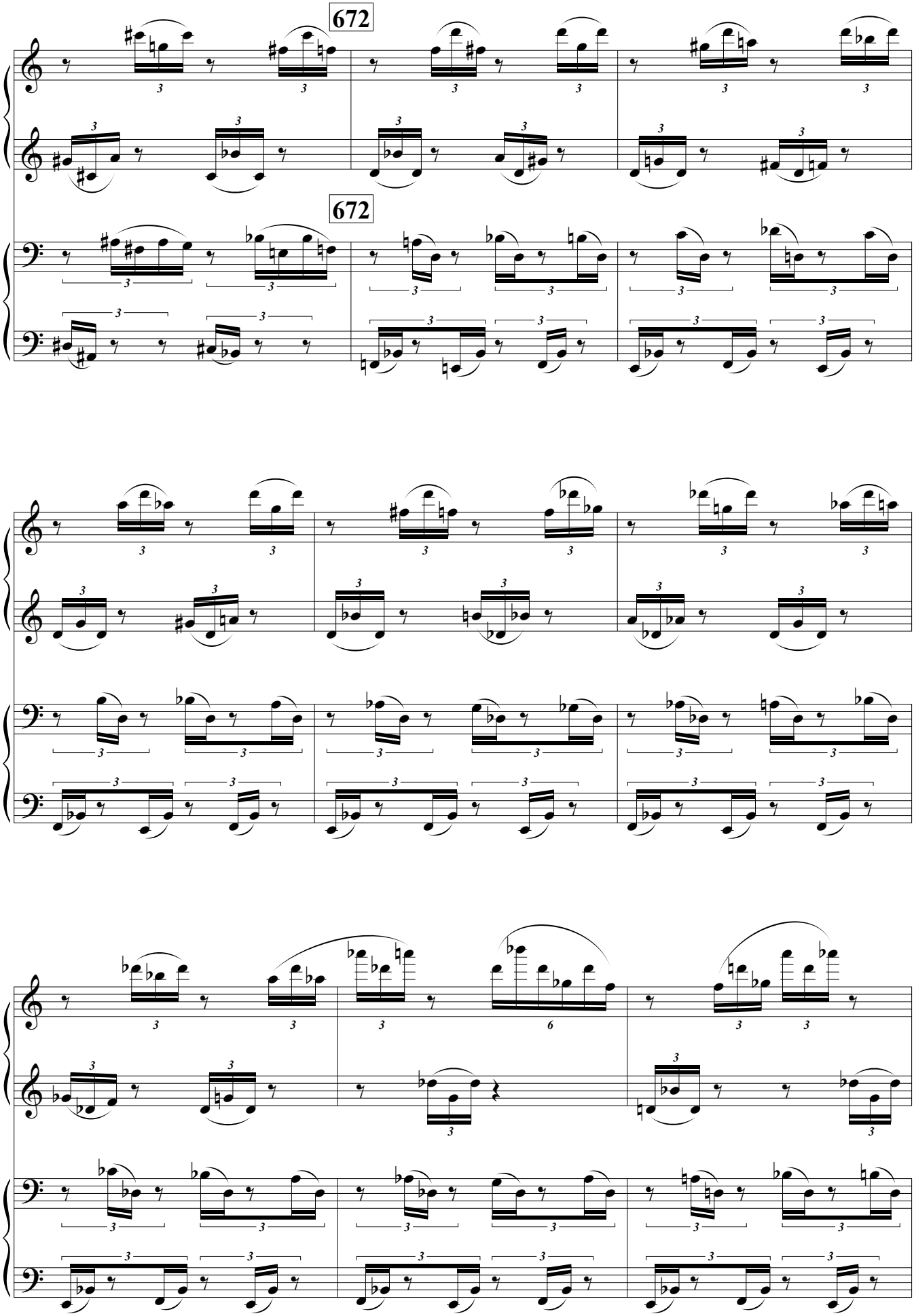
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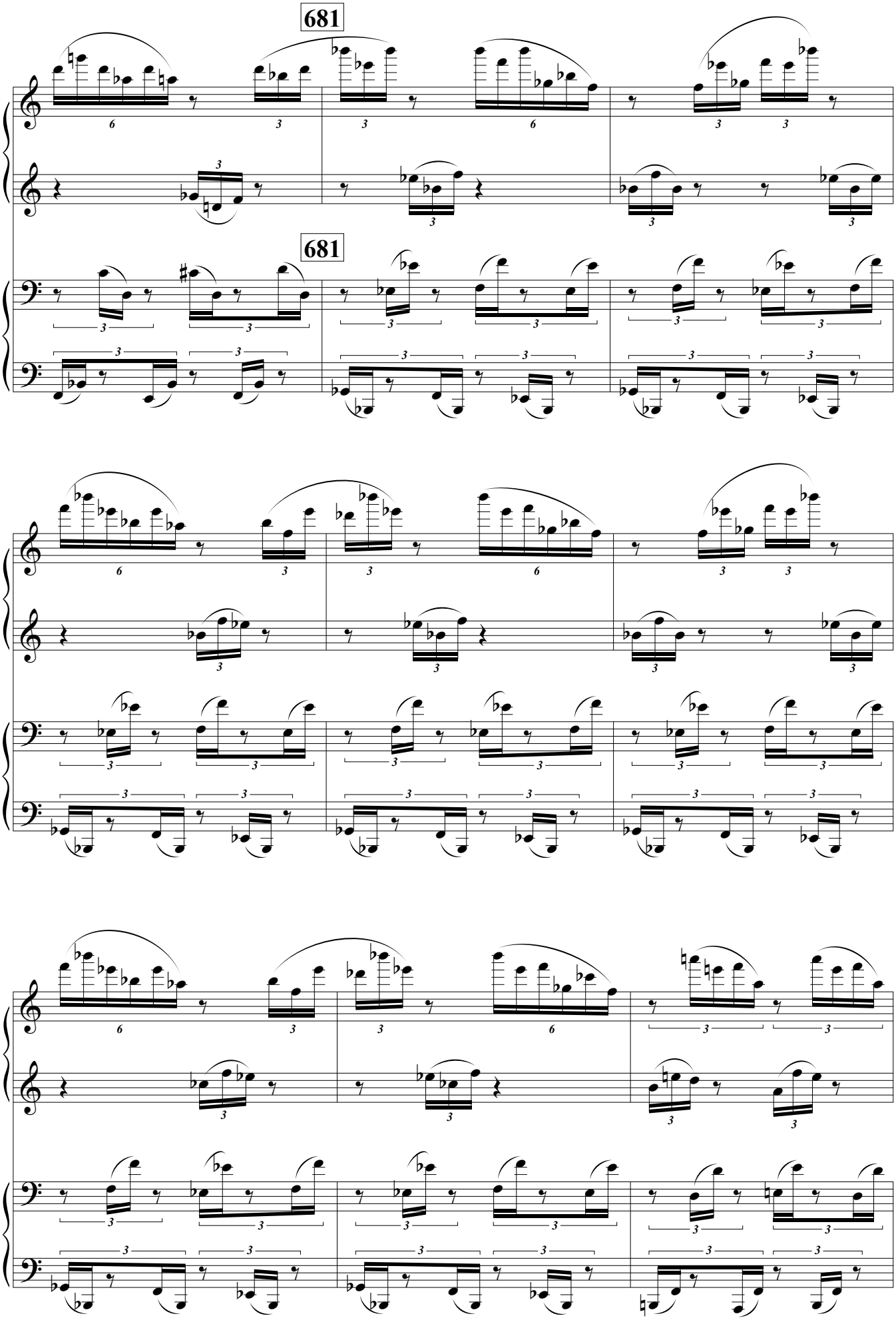
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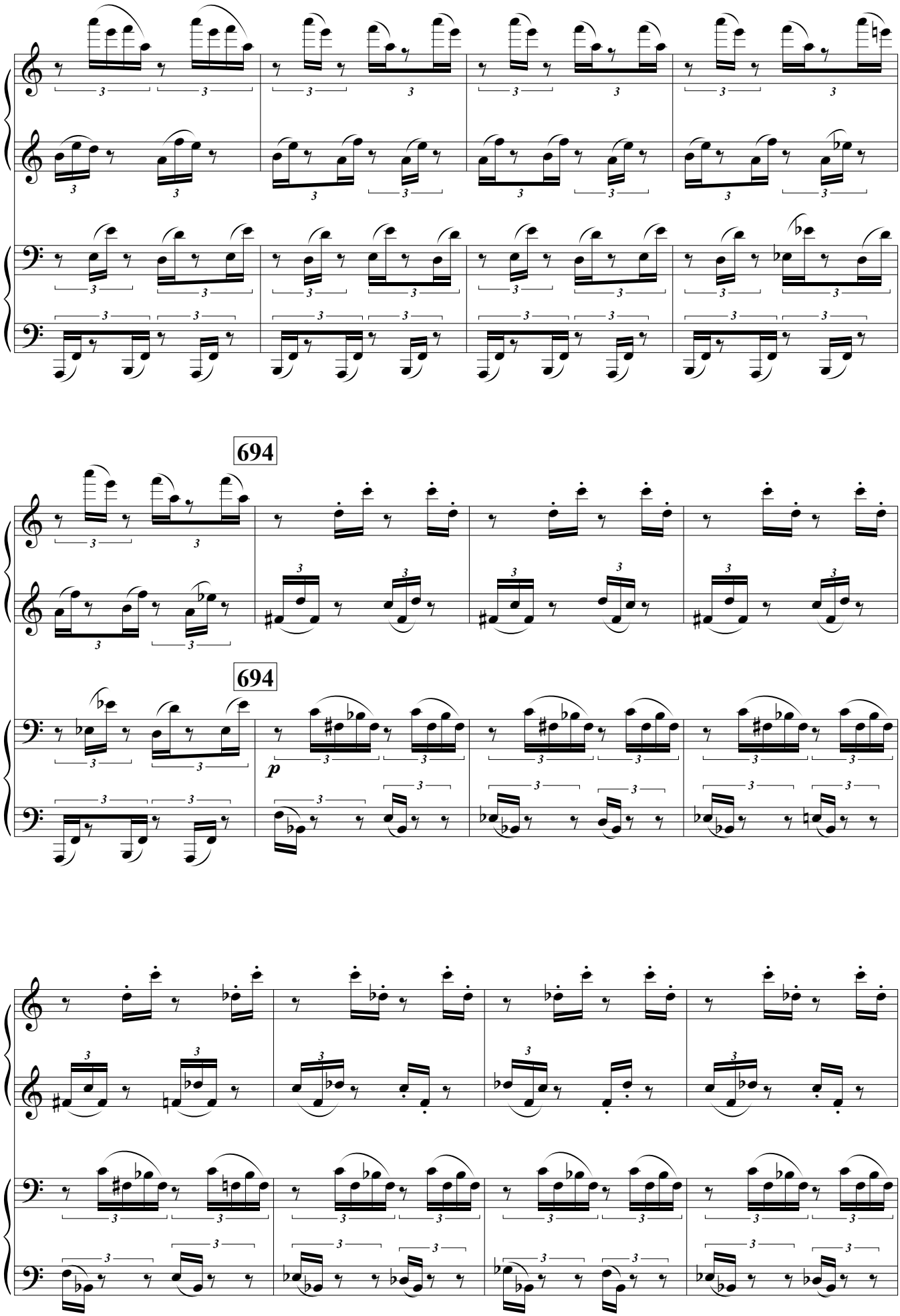
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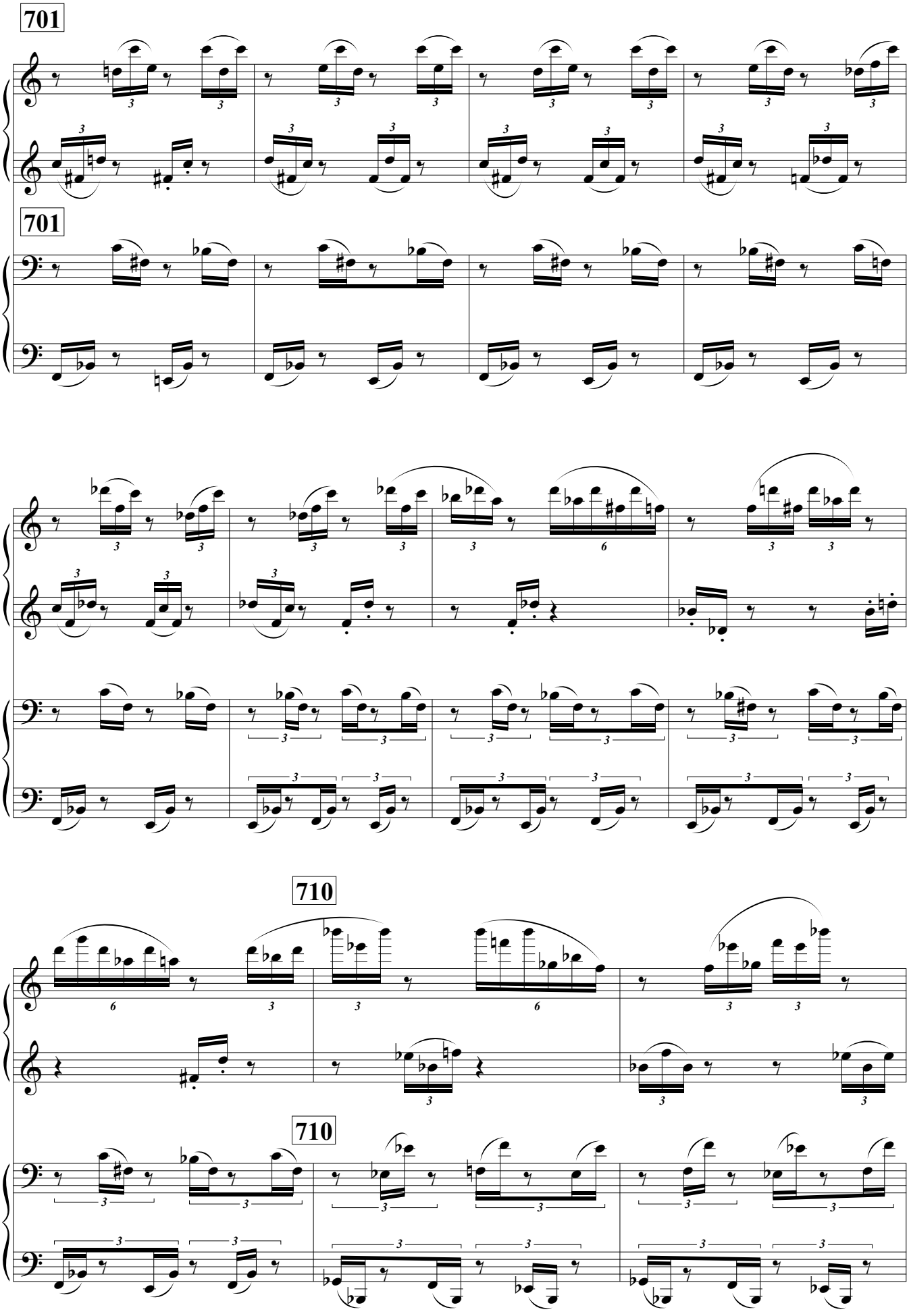
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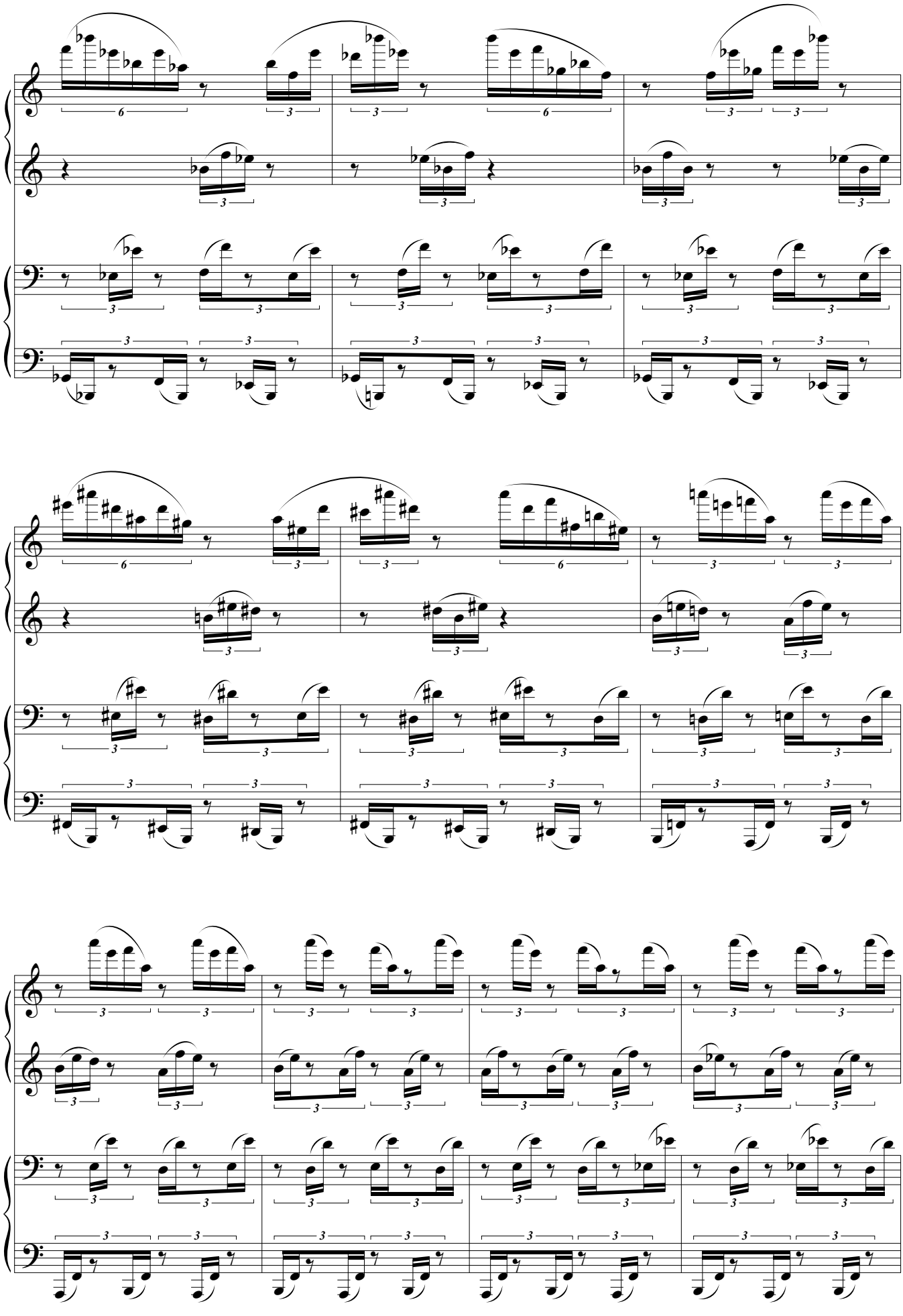

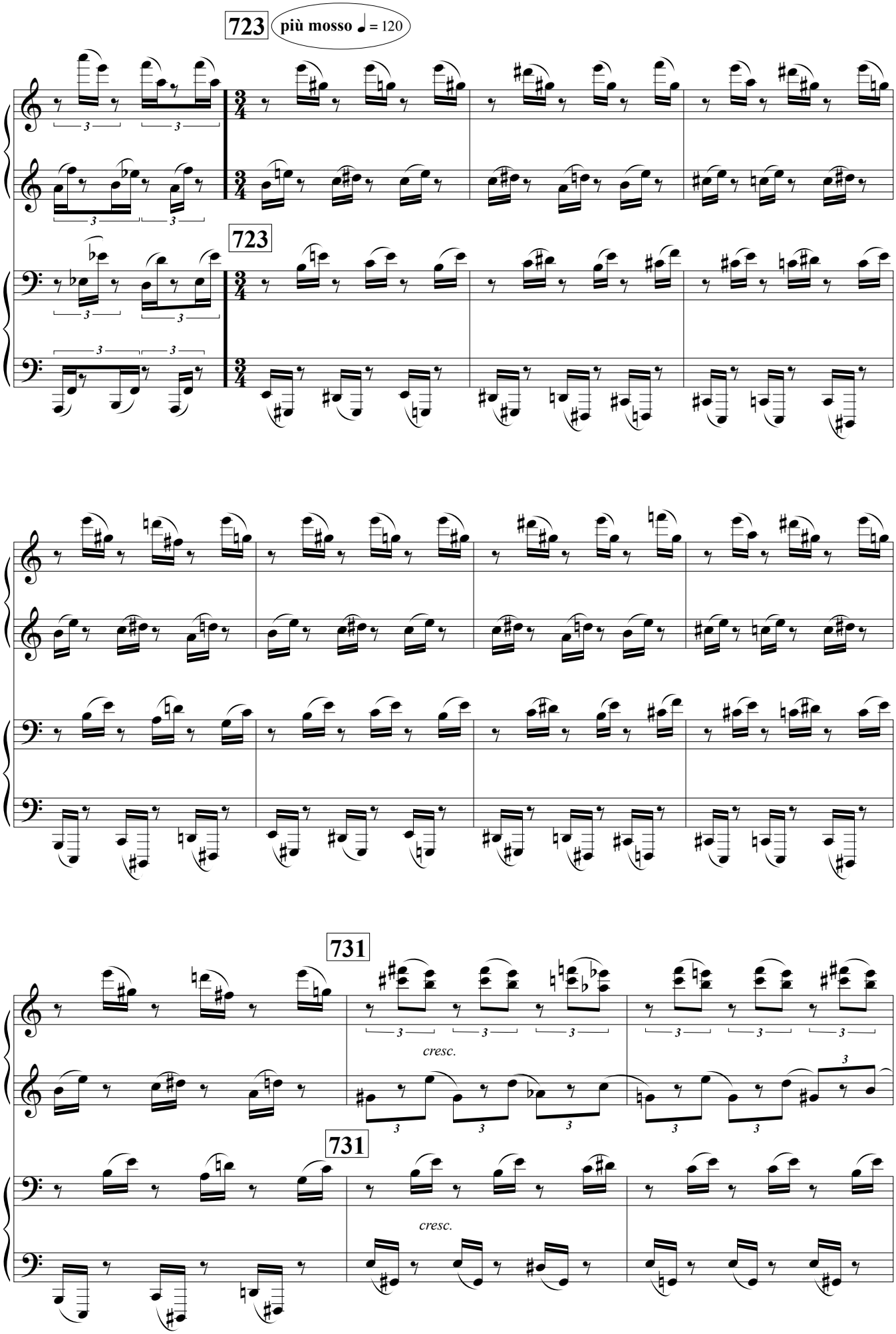
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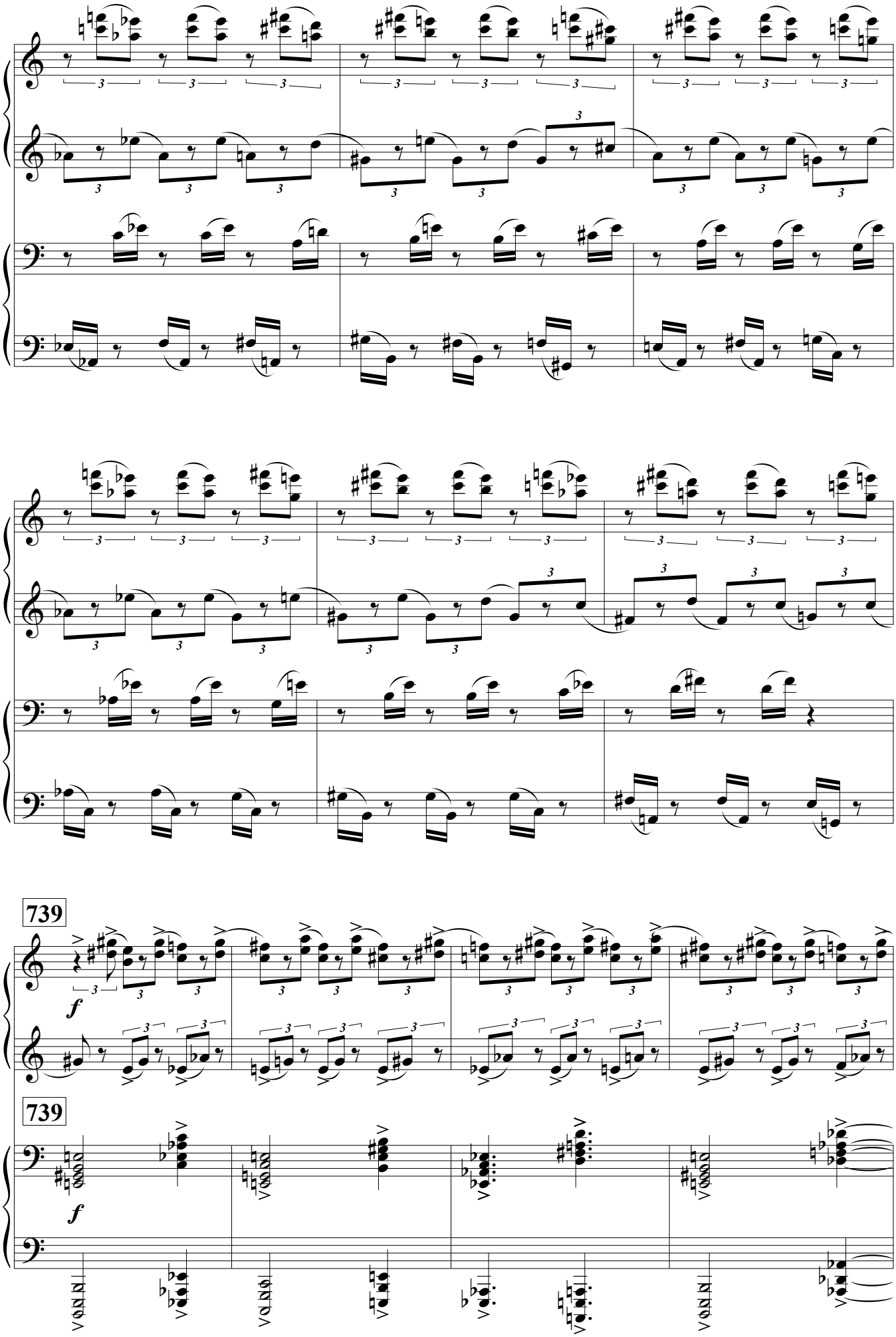
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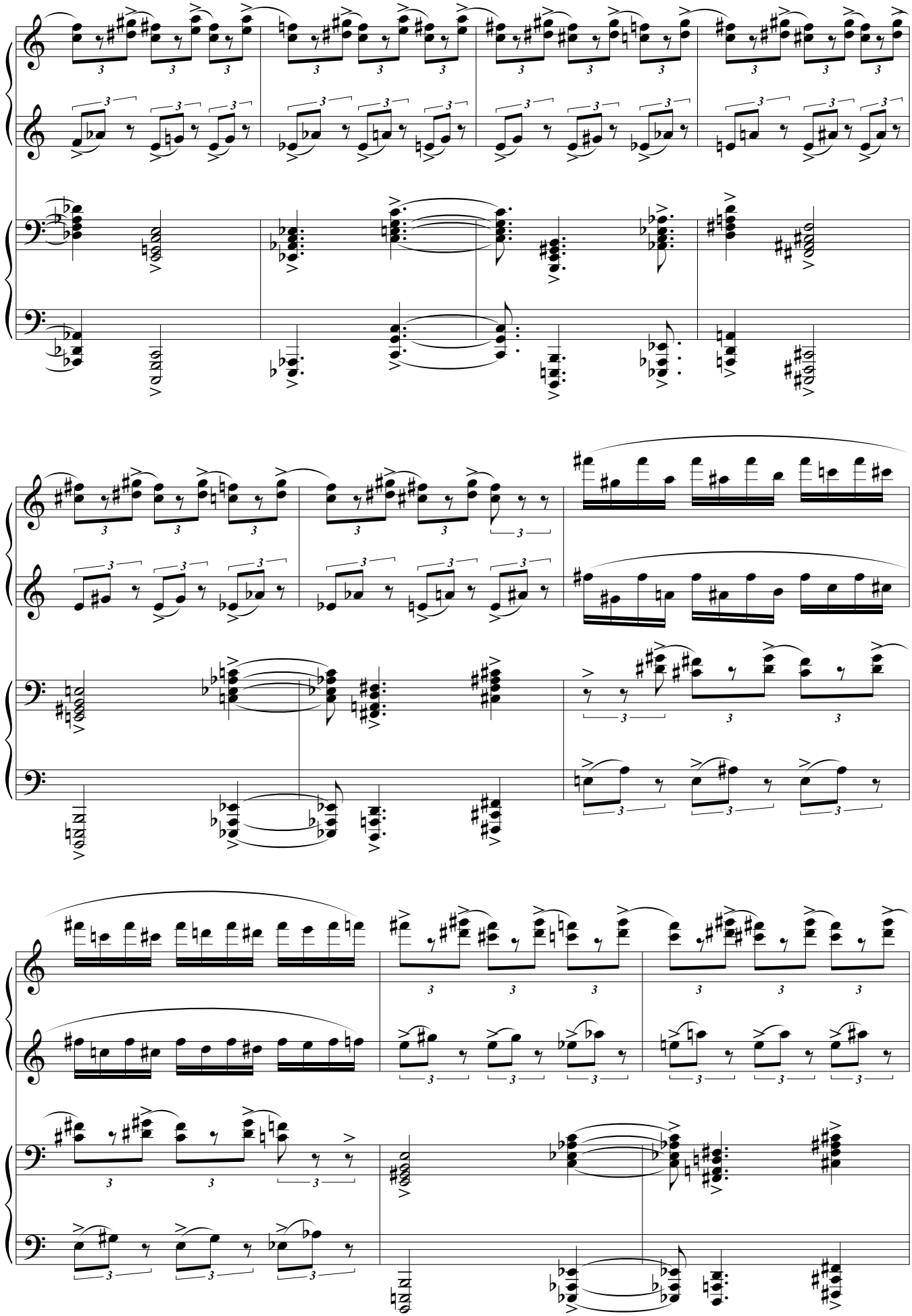

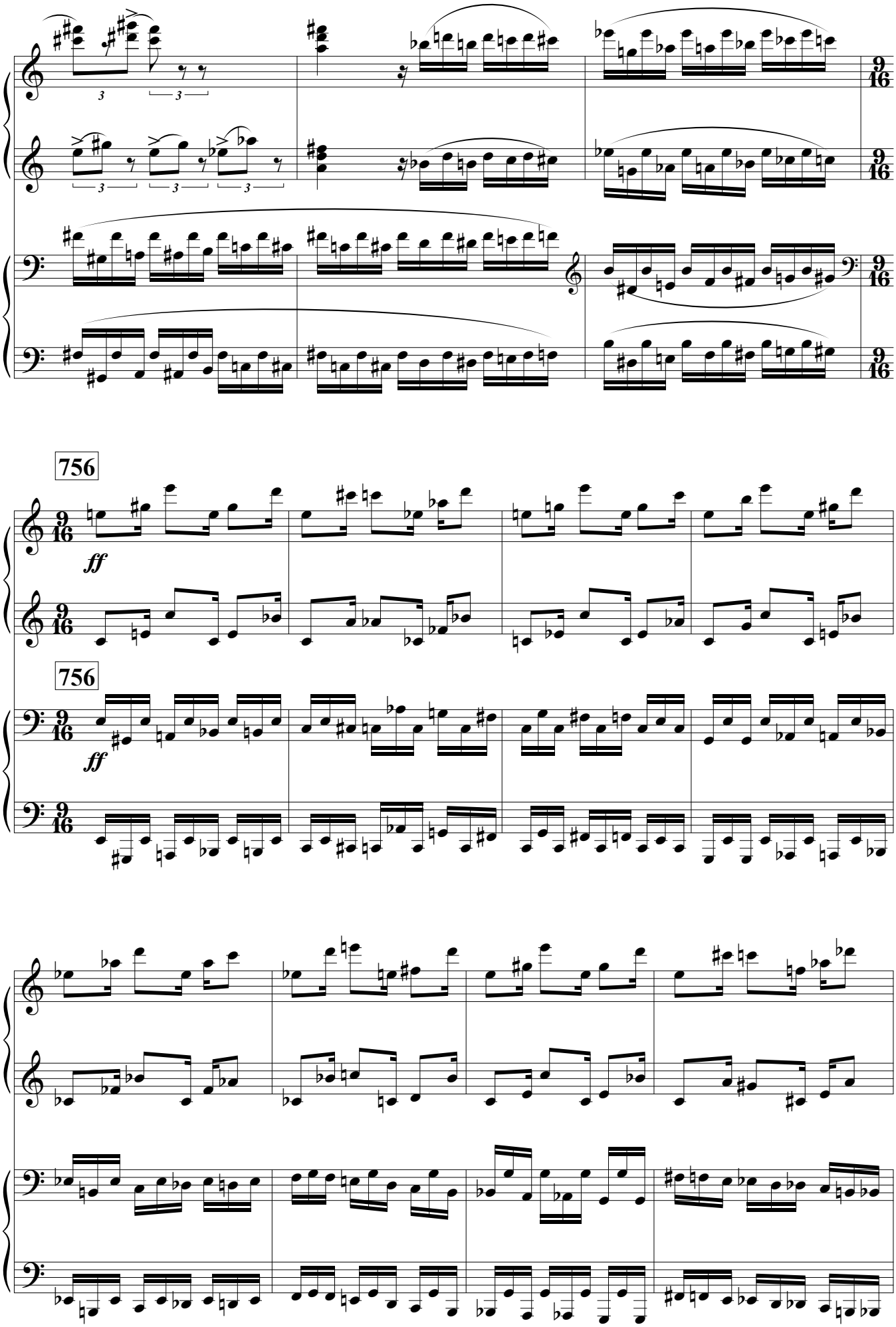
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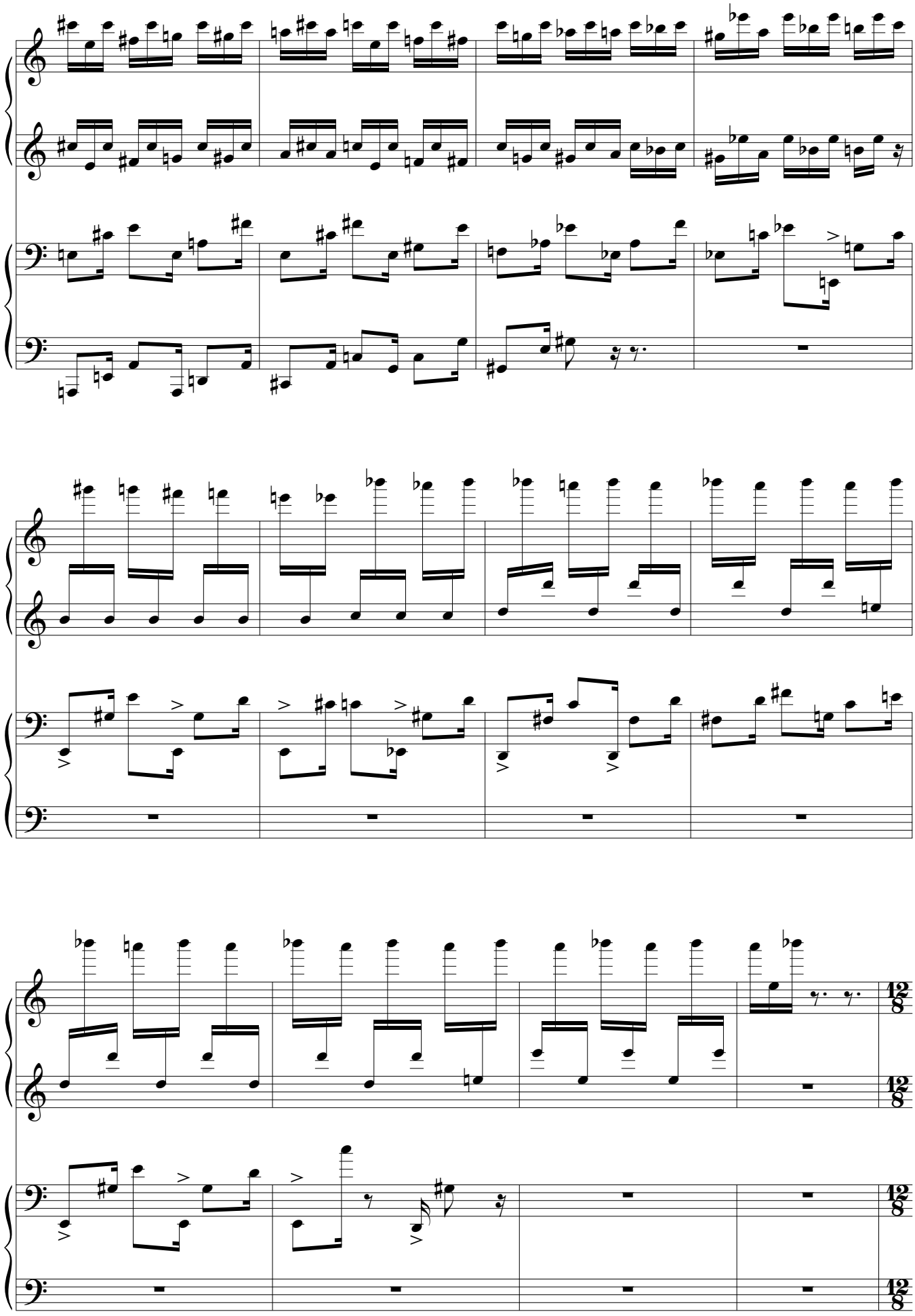

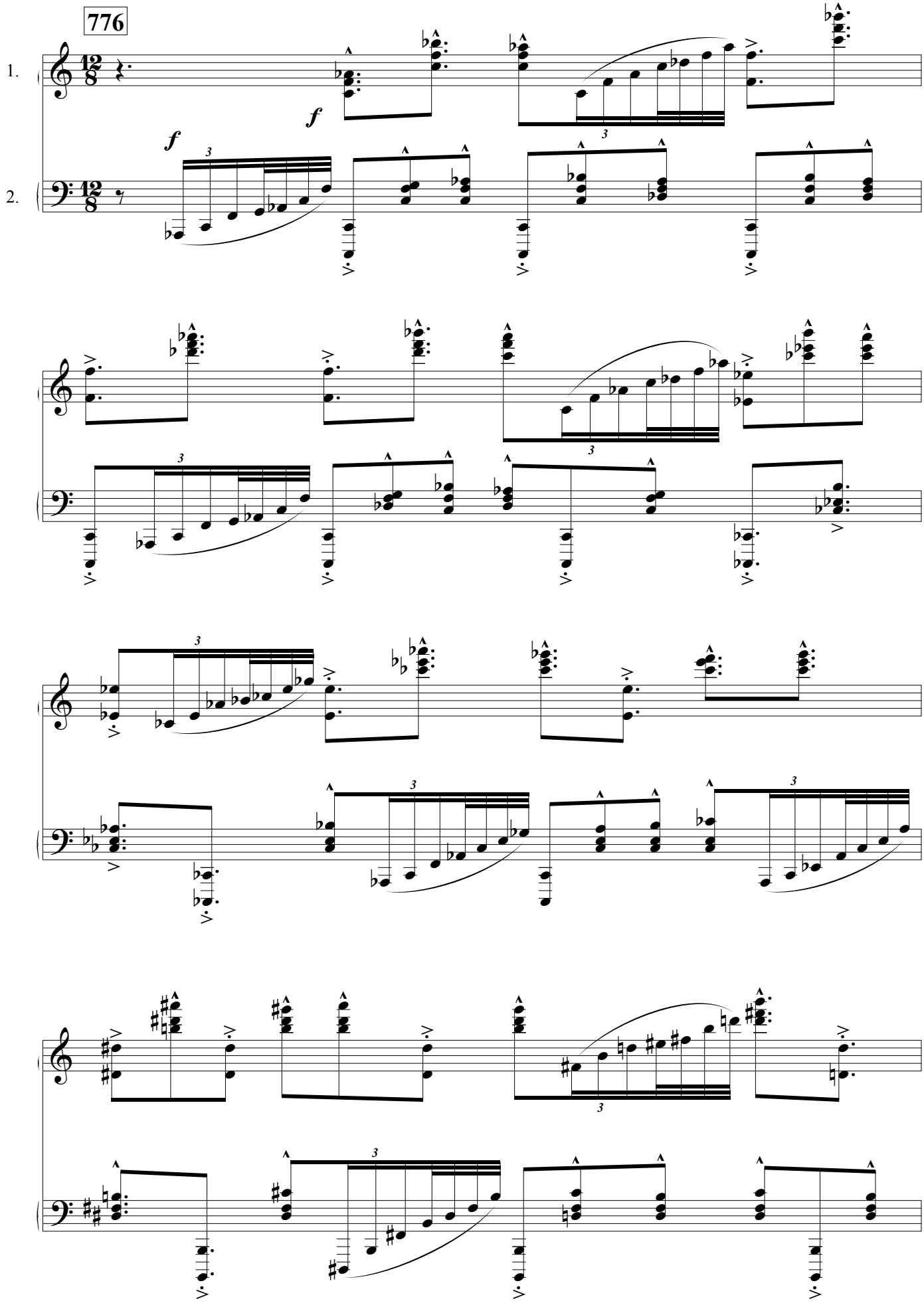
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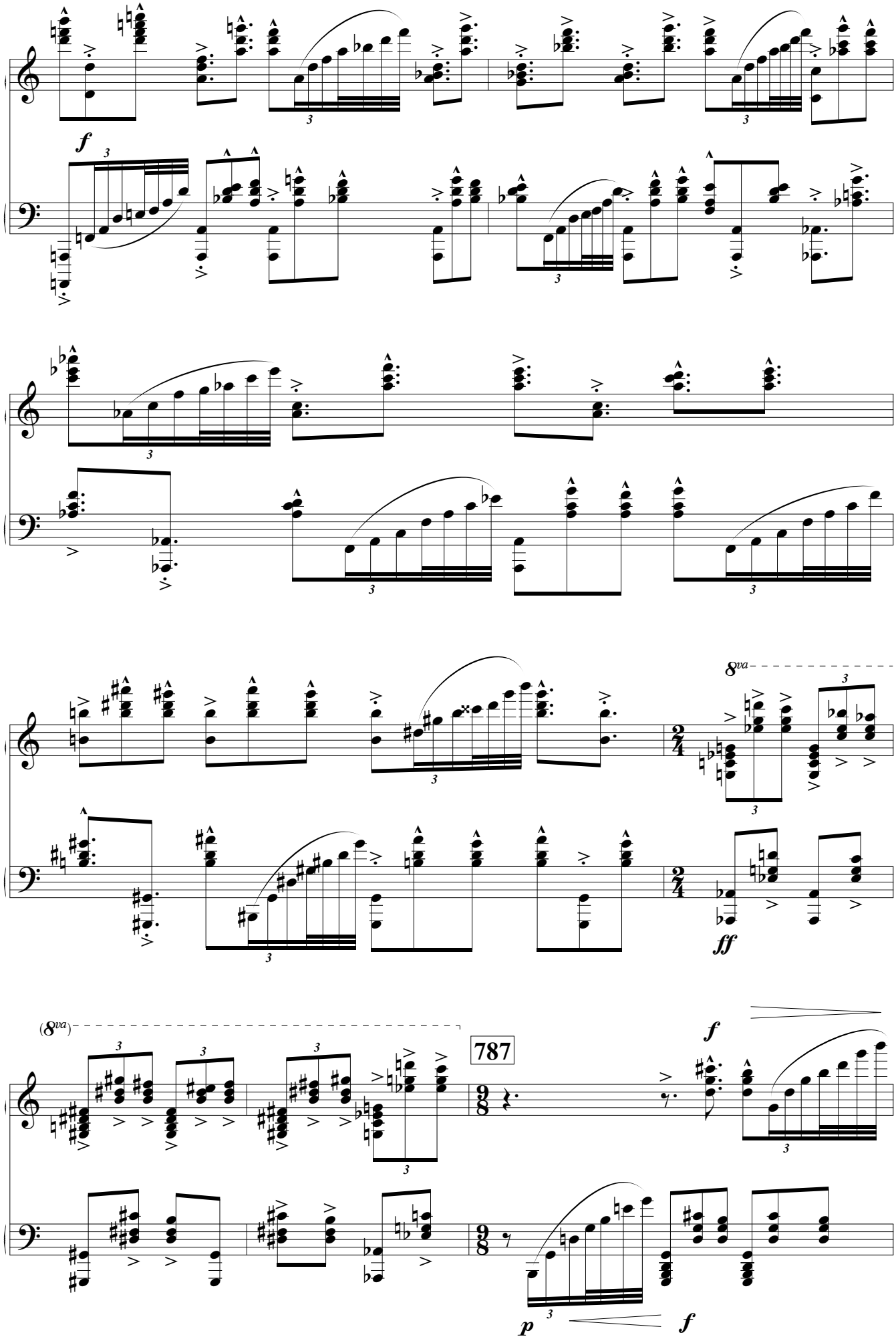
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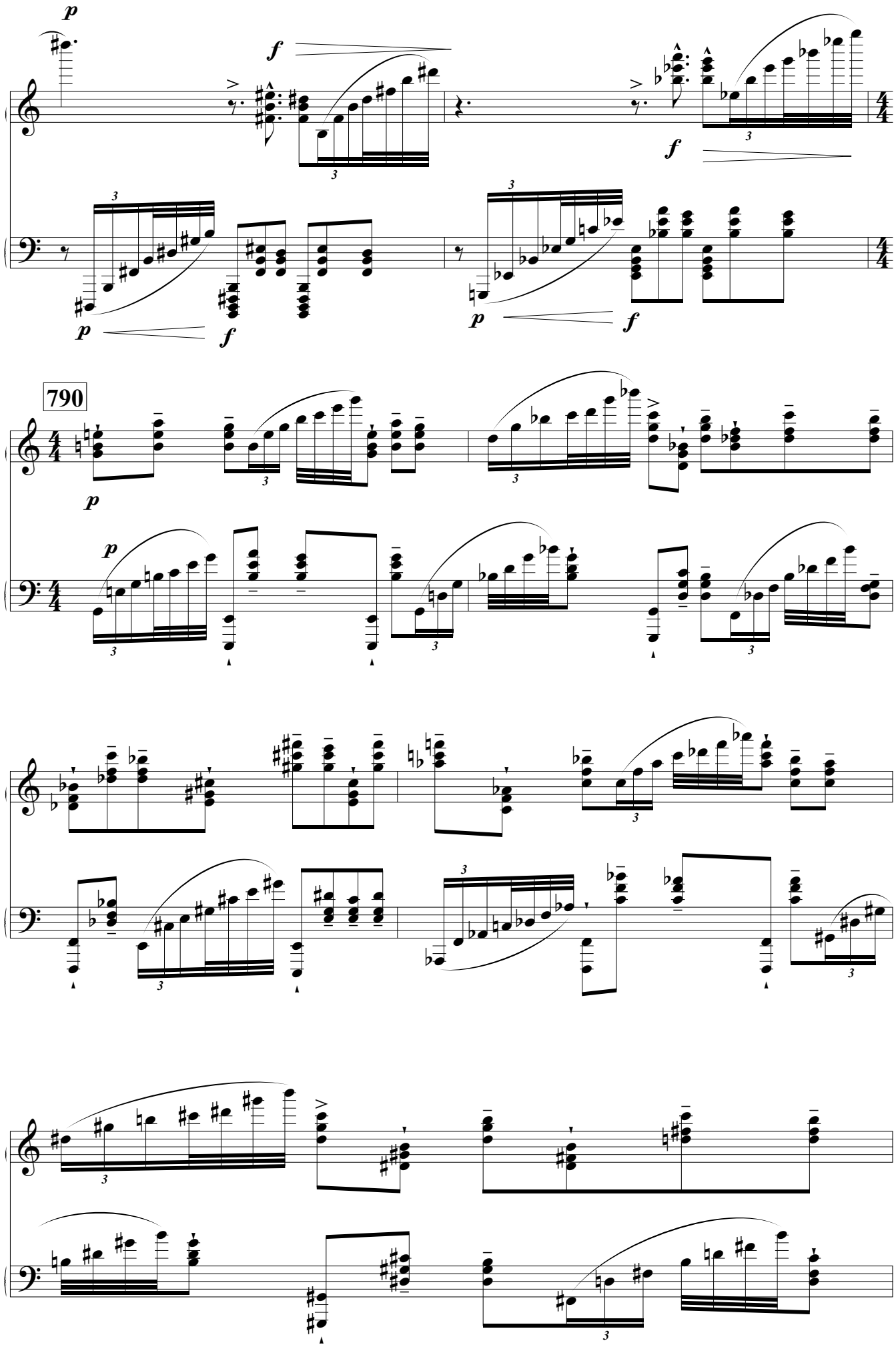
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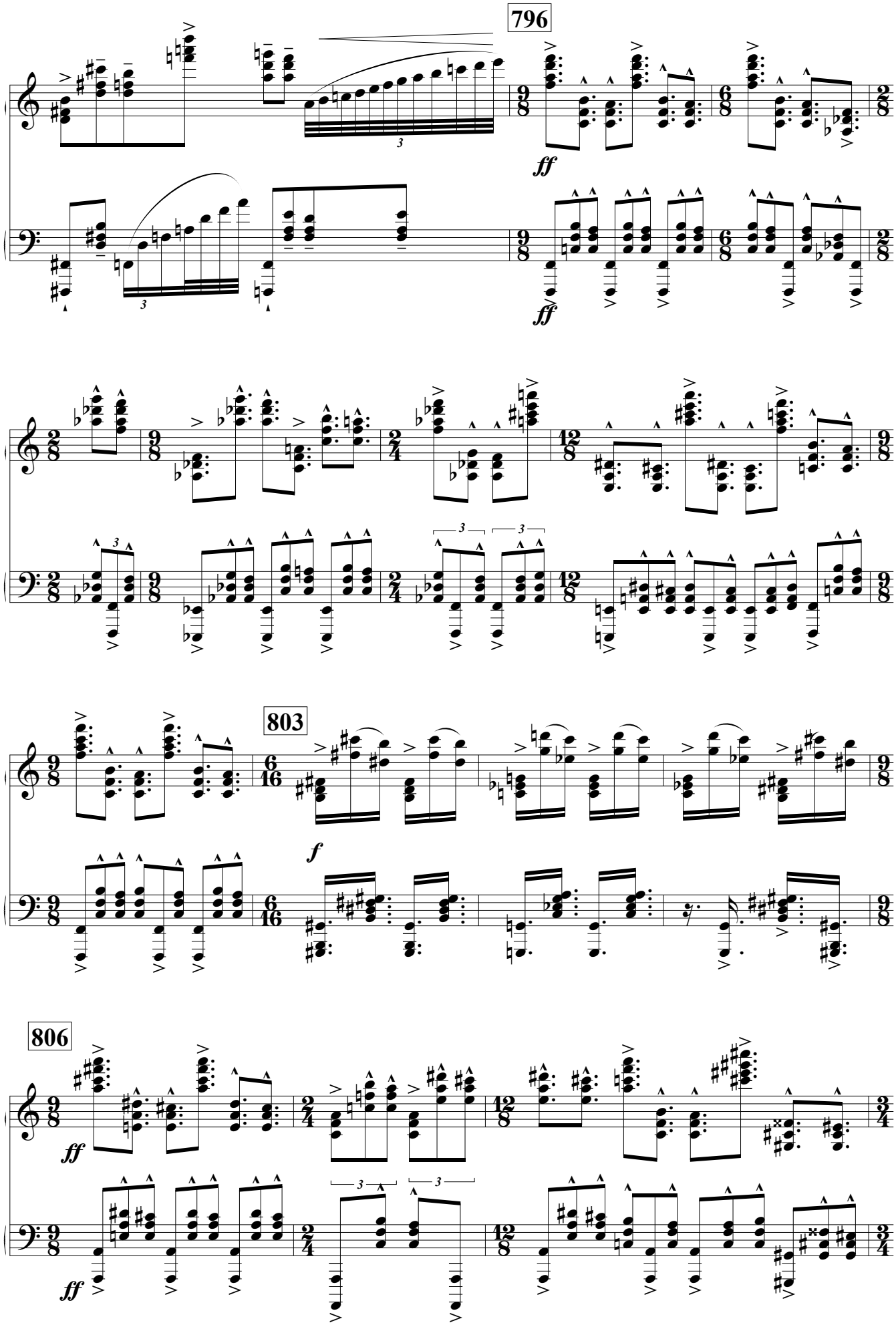
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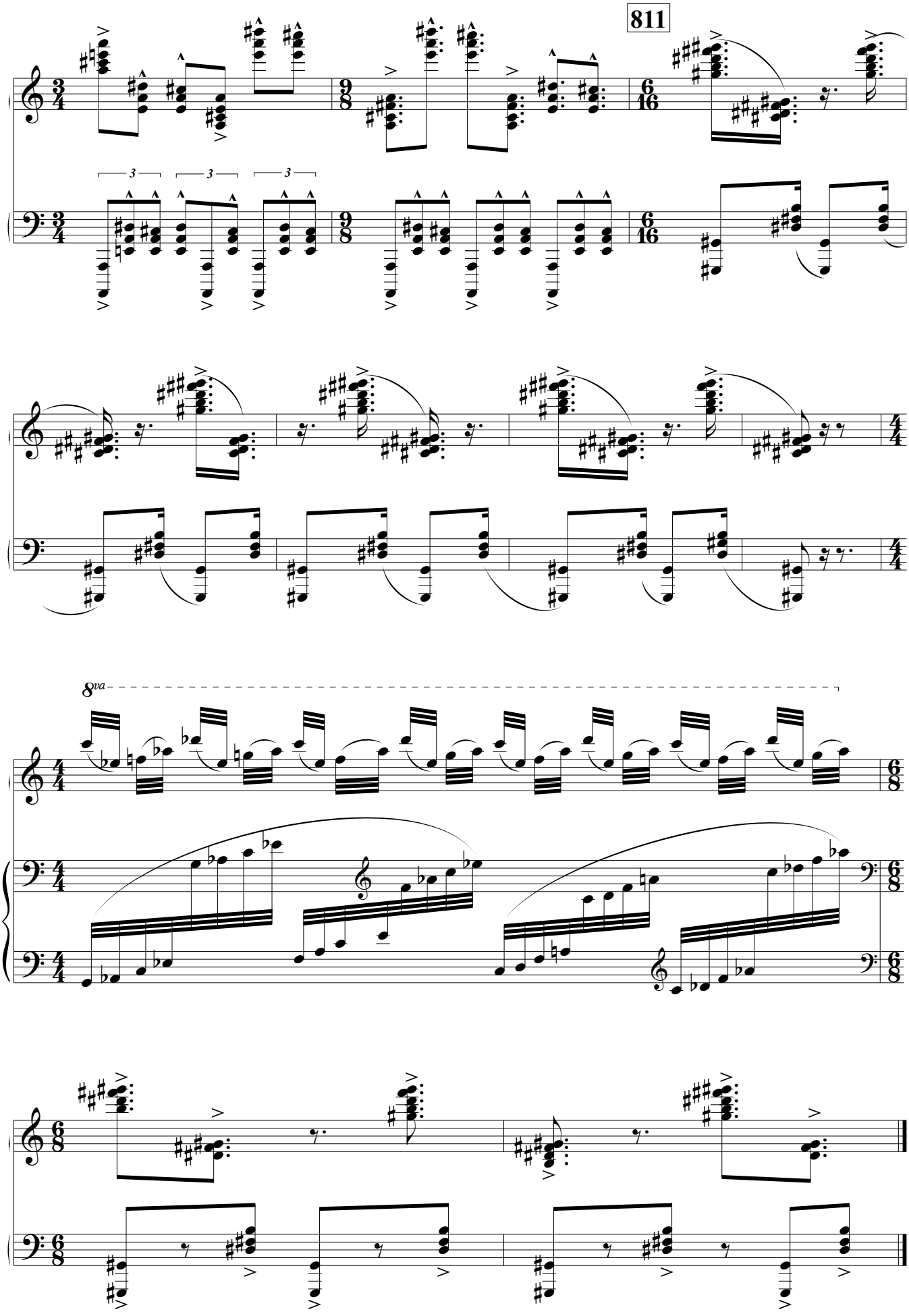
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