Romance

for Violin and Piano

by
Vanessa McClintock

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Romance was composed in July–September 2022.

This work came with no immediate purpose. One day, I simply wrote the opening two bars for the violin, with no intention of composing a new work.

I had been building a website to feature my compositions from the past 50-ish years and to make them freely available to the public. This had kept me busy physically and mentally, developing the structure of the website as well as determining the best way to present the works, including MP3 audio format, MP4 video format (for some works following the score, and some with photographic imagery), and with scrollable and downloadable PDFs to follow along with the audio.

Then, perhaps as a means of subconscious escapism from the exacting process of web design and coding, I began to delve into this work, which then occupied much of my thinking for about a month and a few weeks.

The form is somewhat of a loose rondo, freely moving from one developing and evolving variation to another. As with many of my works, it features bitonality (seen immediately with the entrance of the piano in bar two) and uses the harmonic theories and scales with which I have advanced since about 1970, while still an undergraduate at the then Sacramento State College, in California.

A note to the musicians: this work—as with most of mine—has many "cross-relation" or "conflicting-harmony" tones, e.g., you might encounter F# in the upper staff and F♮ in the lower staff, etc.

Performance time: approximately 8'46"

From a non-musical interpretive view…

When I hear this piece I think of our youth, and of the first—and perhaps only—time of falling truly in love. Think not of juvenile fantasies or teenage heartbreaks, but of that time when we are touched to the core in a way that makes us dizzy and very sober at the same time. It is a feeling not at all familiar, and to varying degrees that seem to revolve in an unsettling way while seeking and feeling a sense of balance and counterbalance. At first there is a sense of amazement and bewilderment at having met someone for the first time to whom we expose our truest inner selves with abandoned vulnerability. Then comes an energy: sparkling, effervescent, and boundless. These two ideas intermingle and evolve, and then take challenging turns wrought by questioning and doubt. Eventually comes that sense of floating in an infectious summer breeze, feeling carefree, yet confident and sensing true fulfillment. Because this might truly be love in an elevated realm, finally comes the weight of responsibility that develops permanence into the Eternal sense.

This music does this to me.

July 2024
Vanessa McClintock,
Composer

VIOLIN

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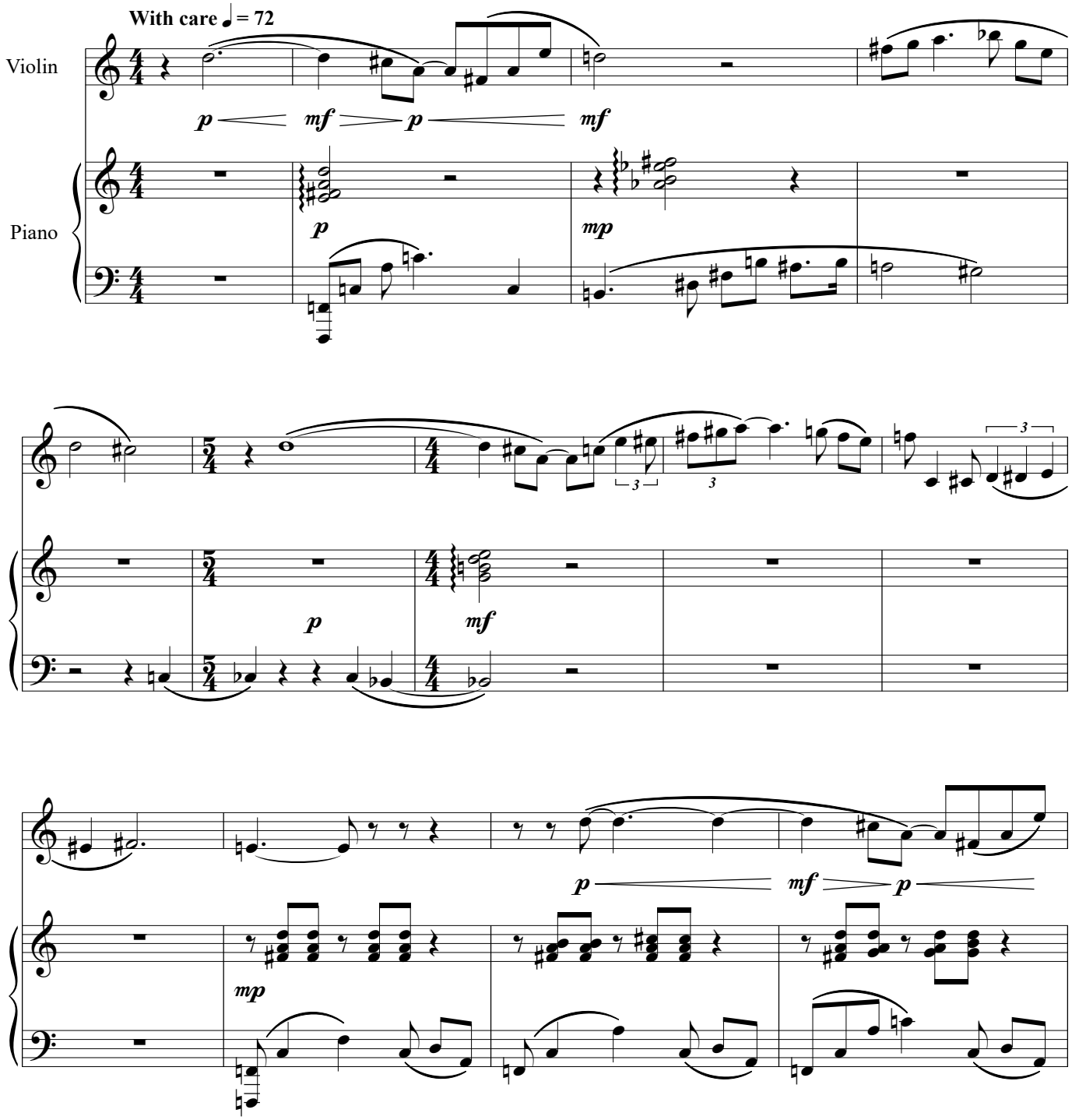

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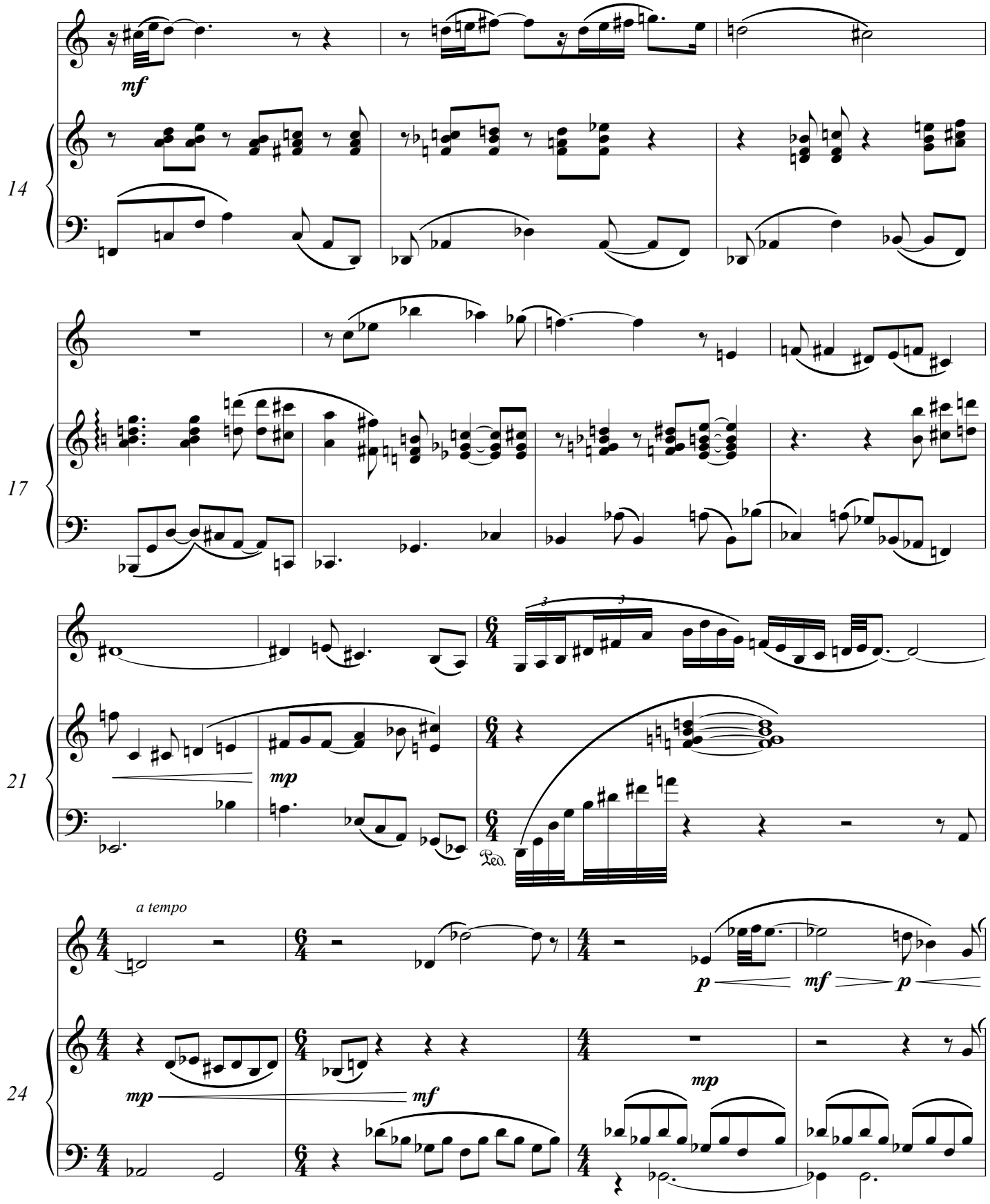

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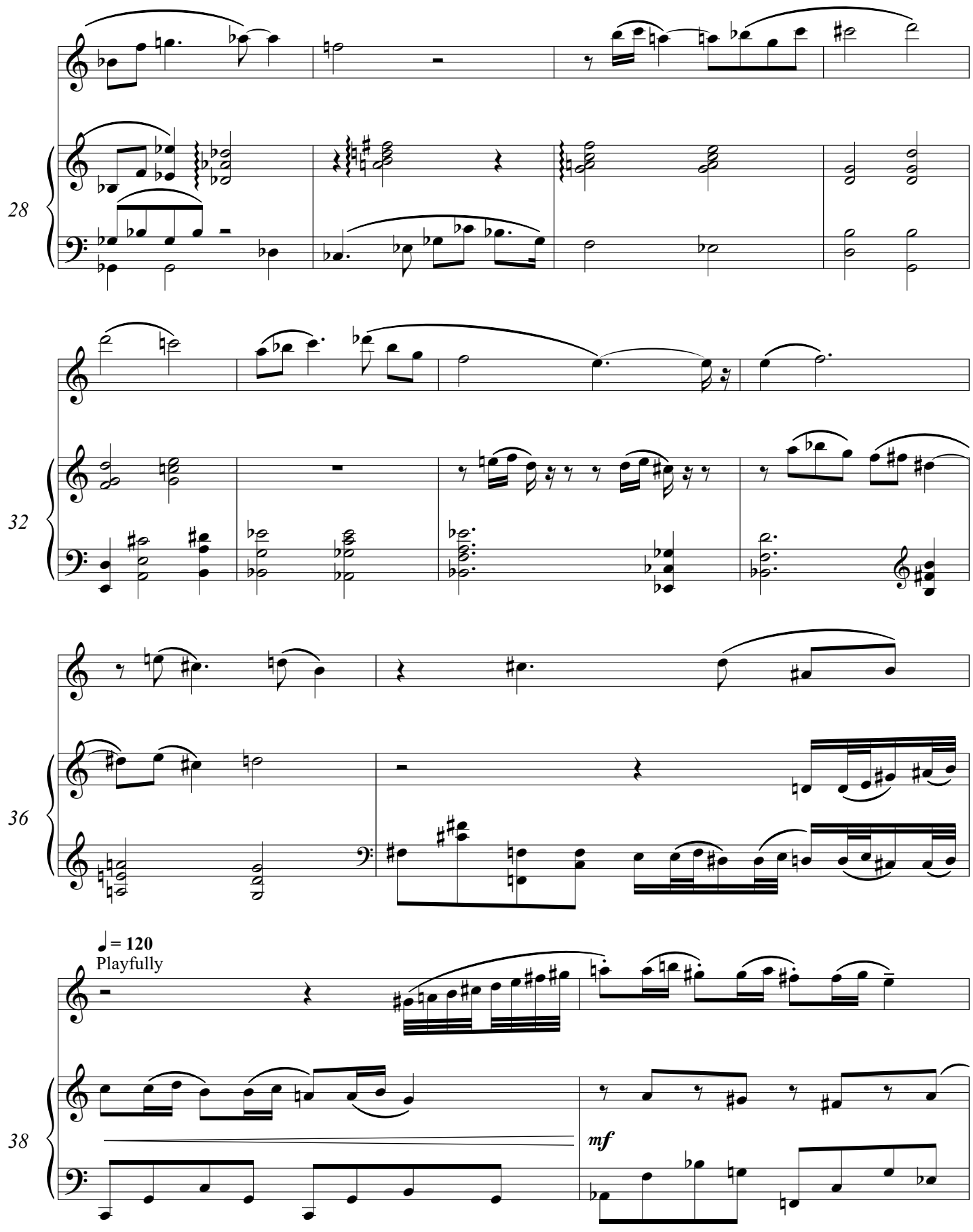

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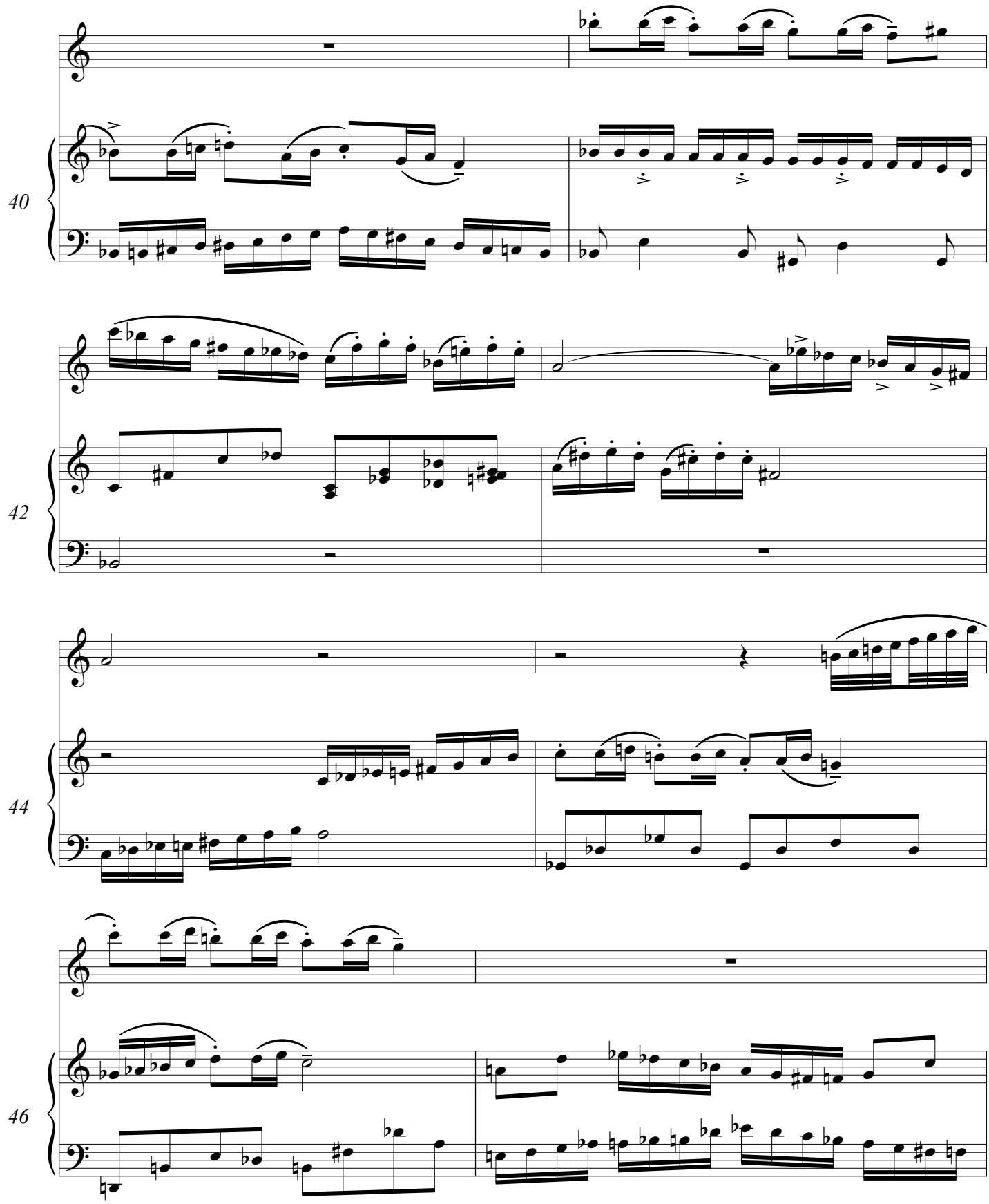

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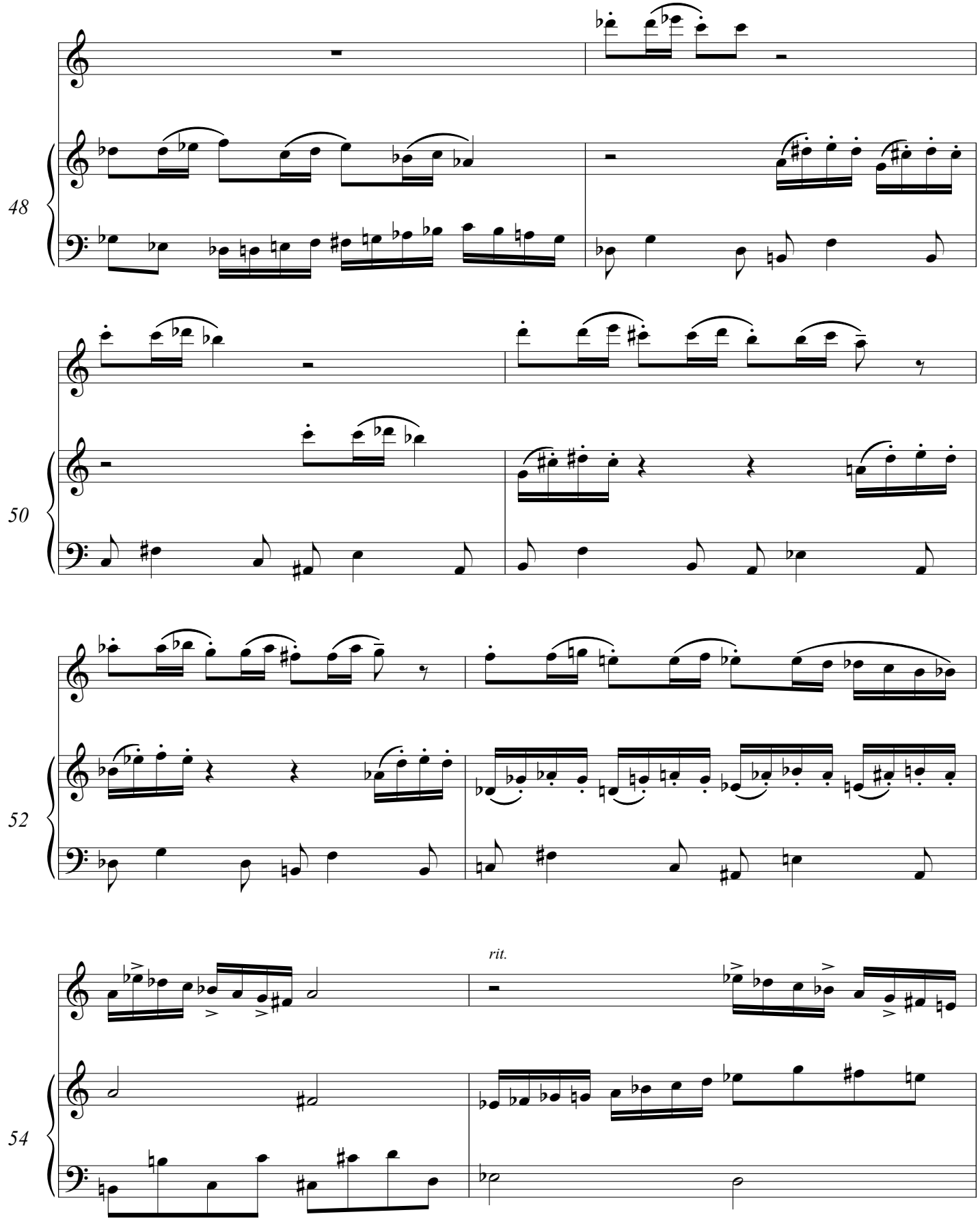

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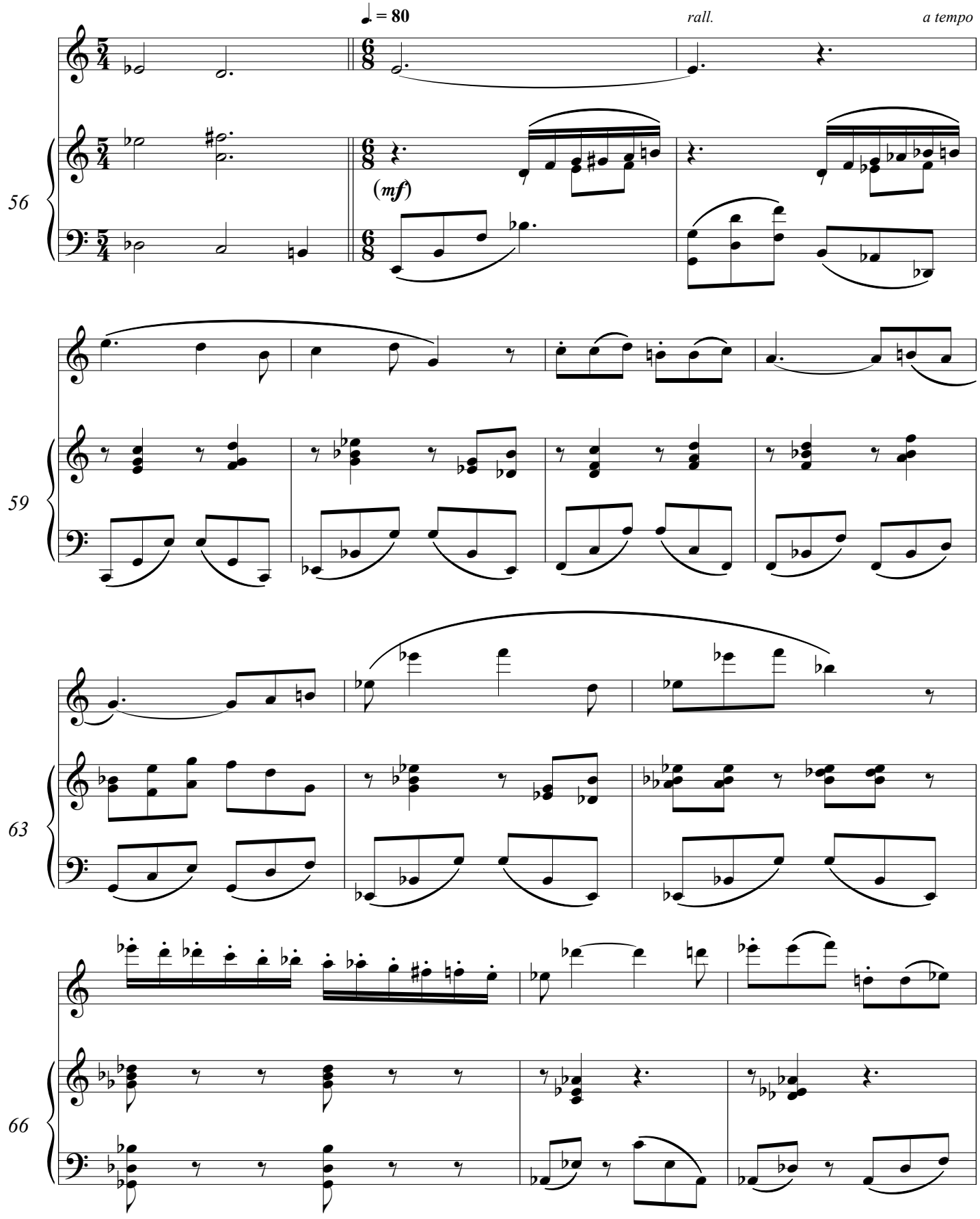

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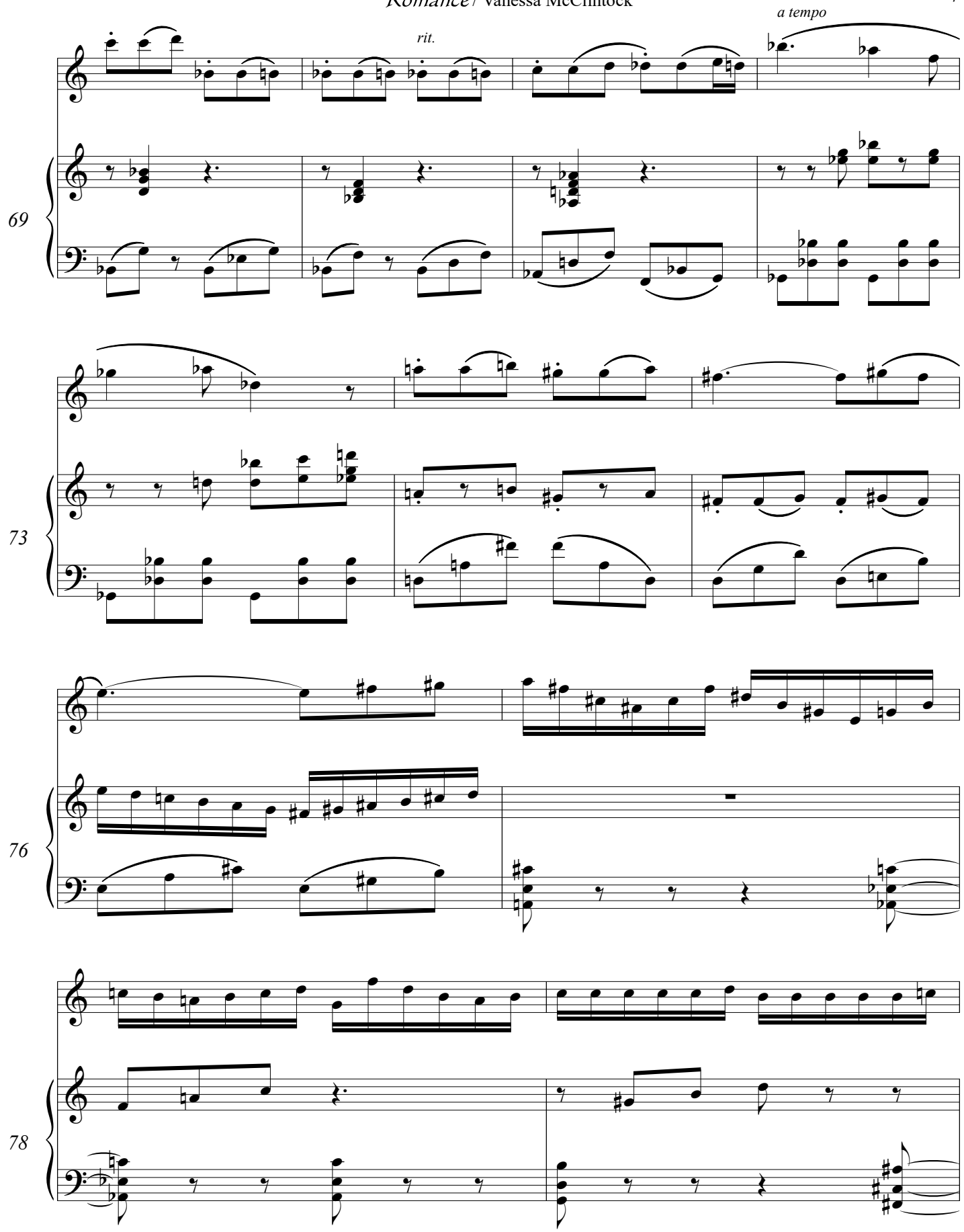

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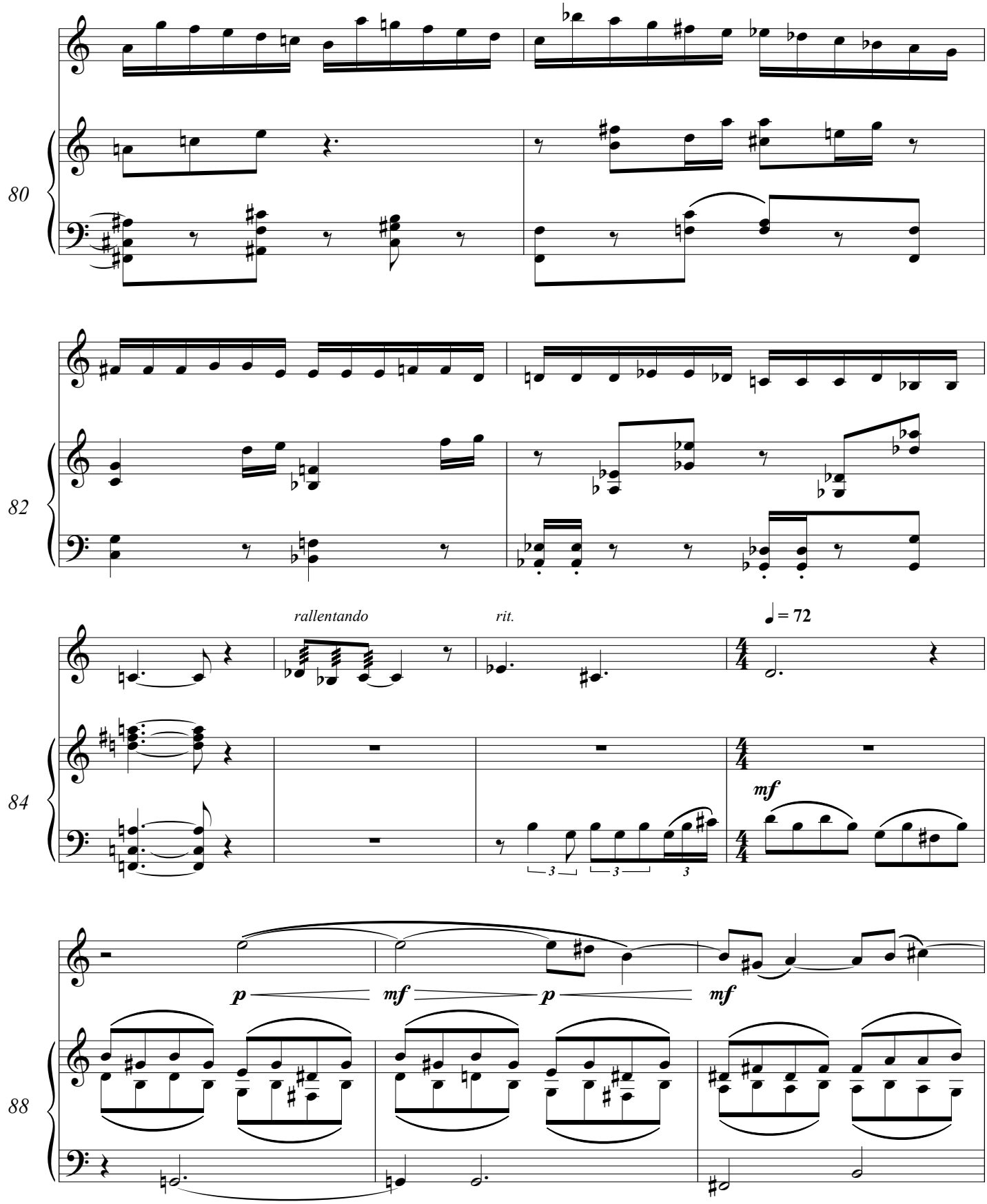

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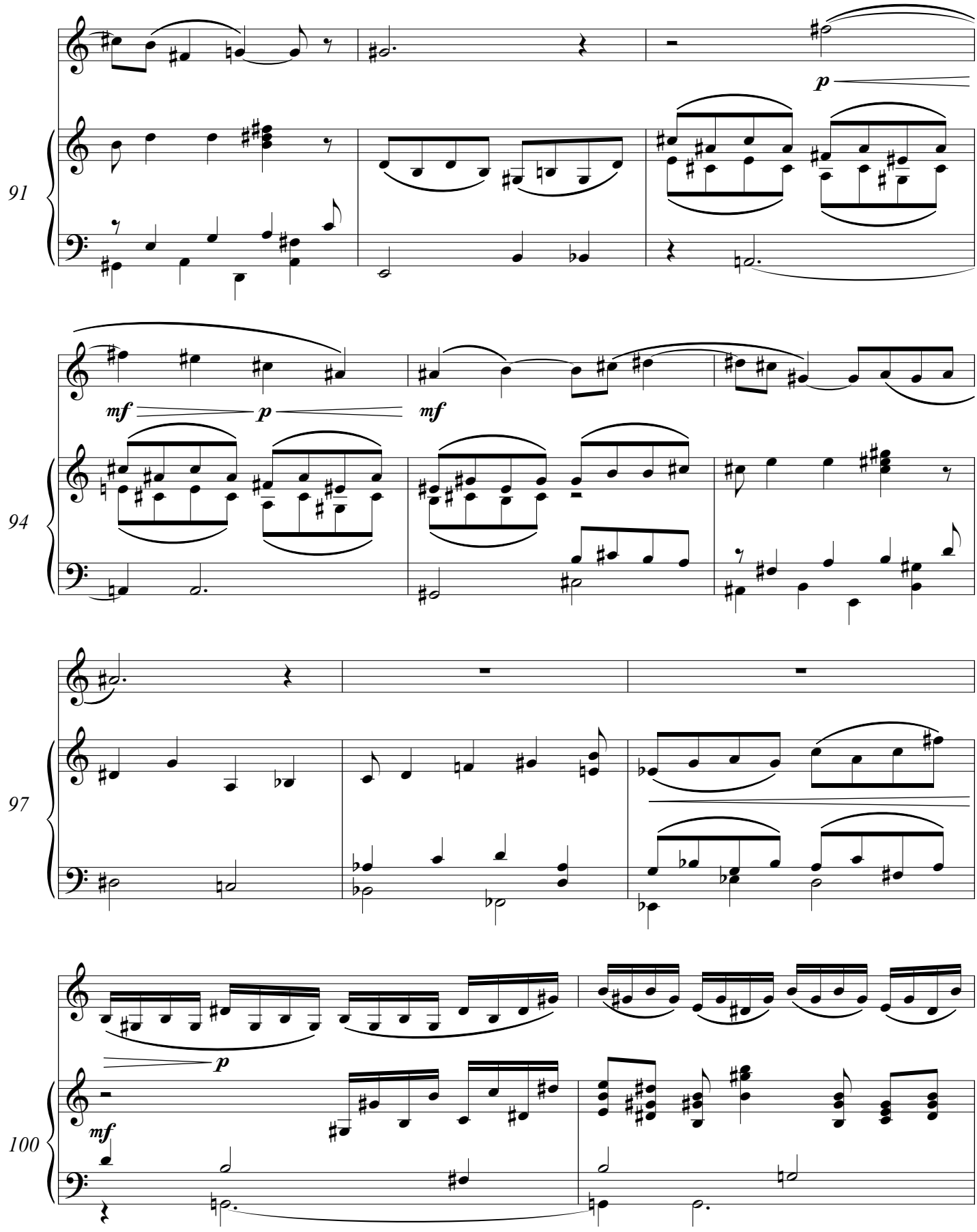

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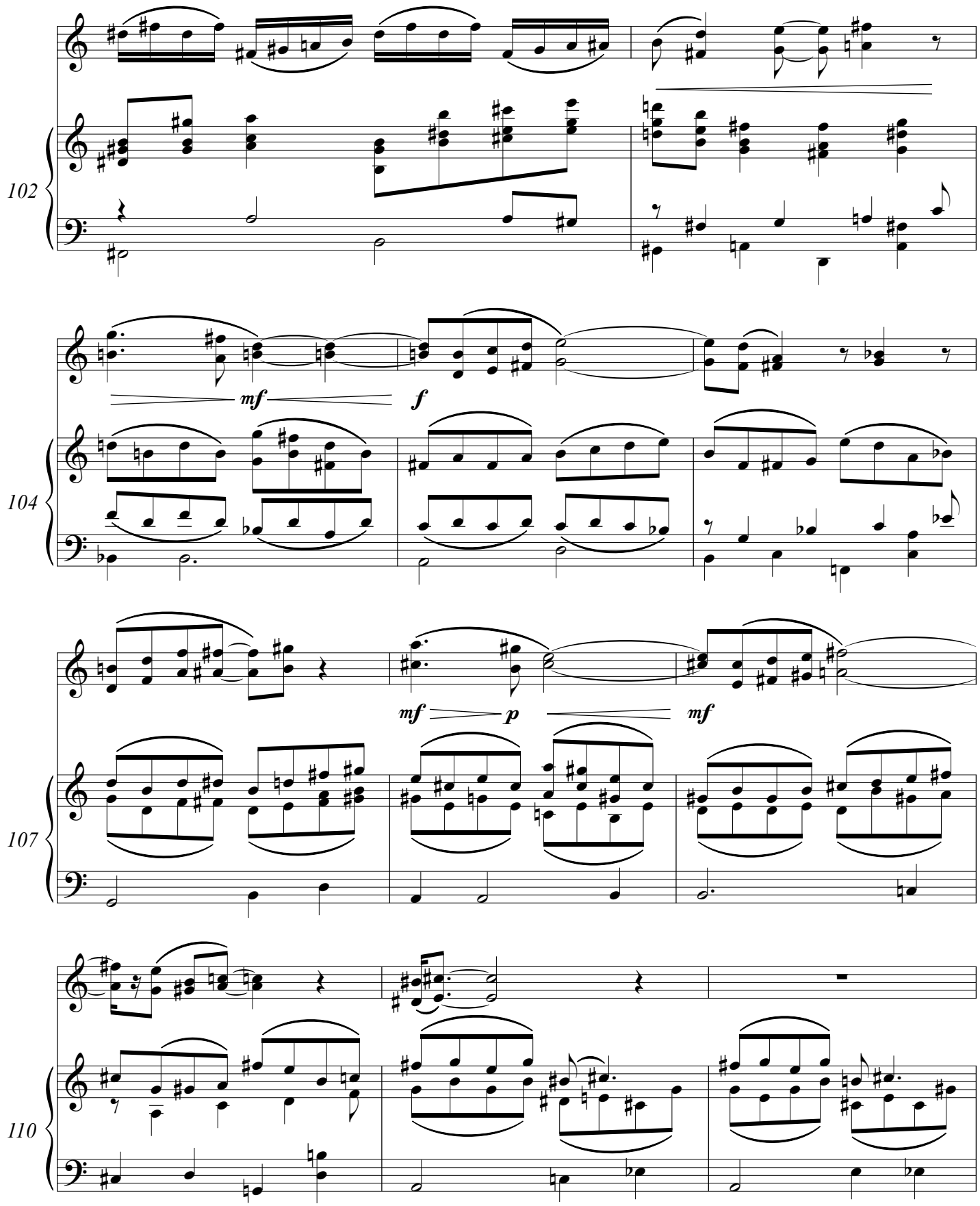

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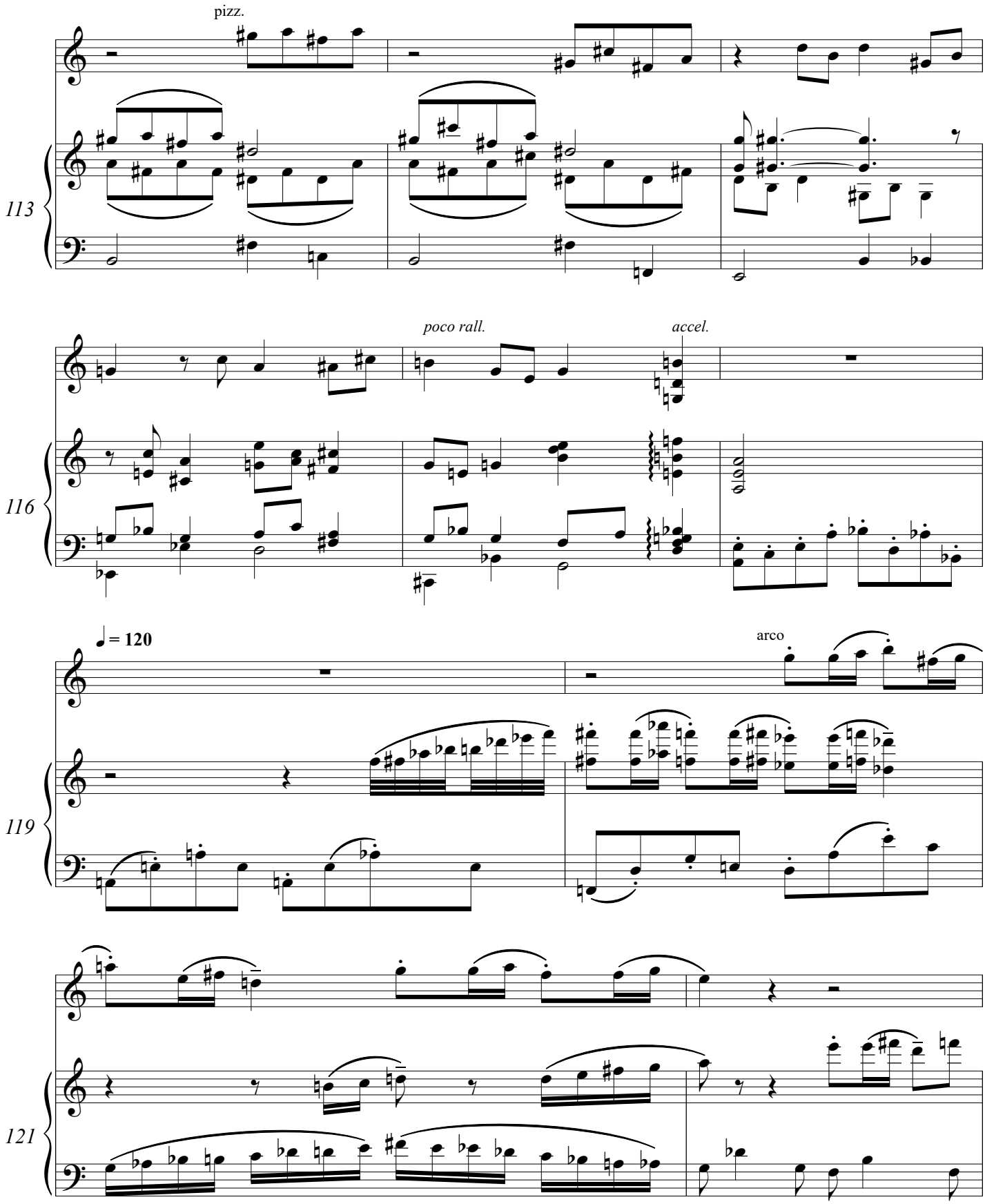

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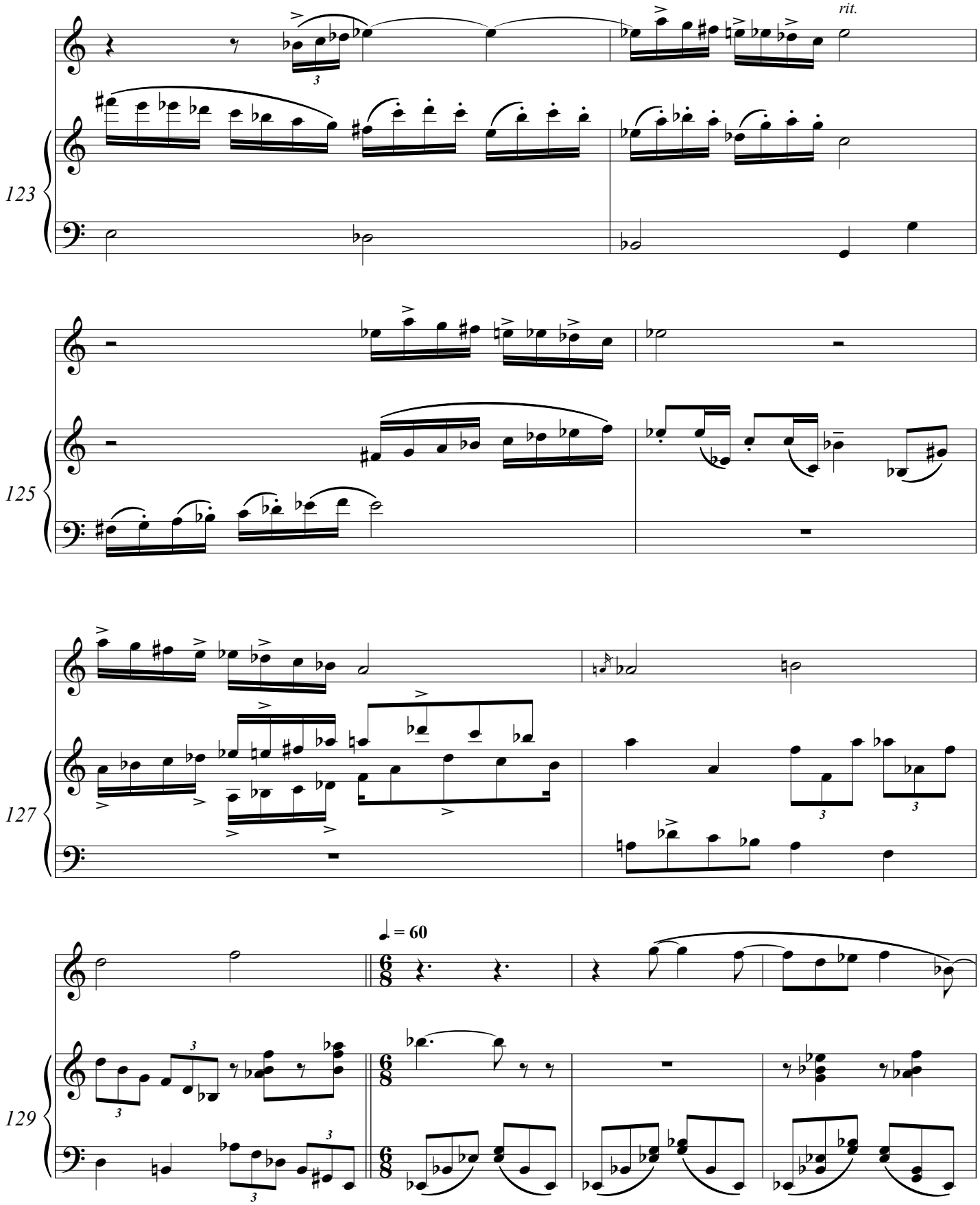

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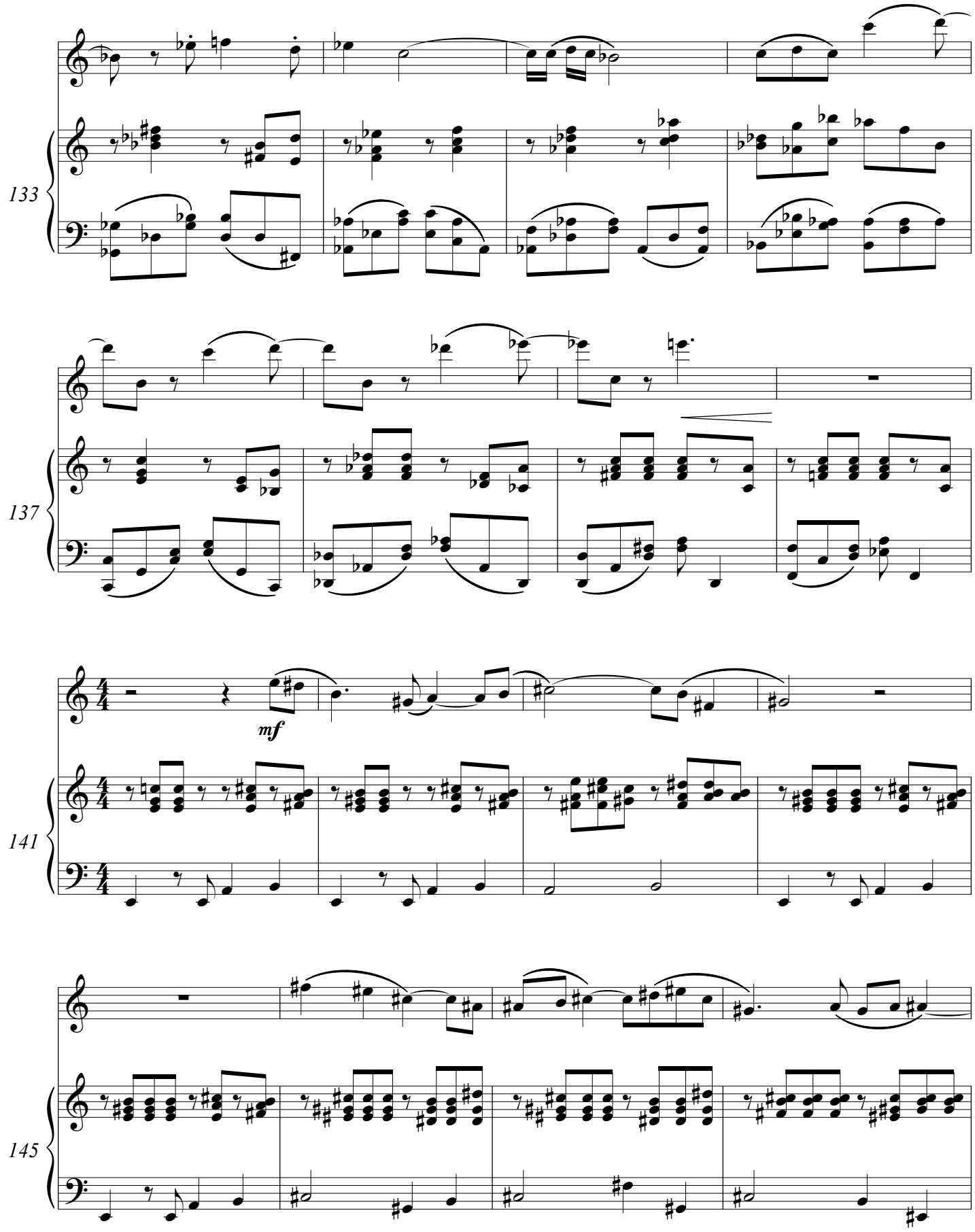

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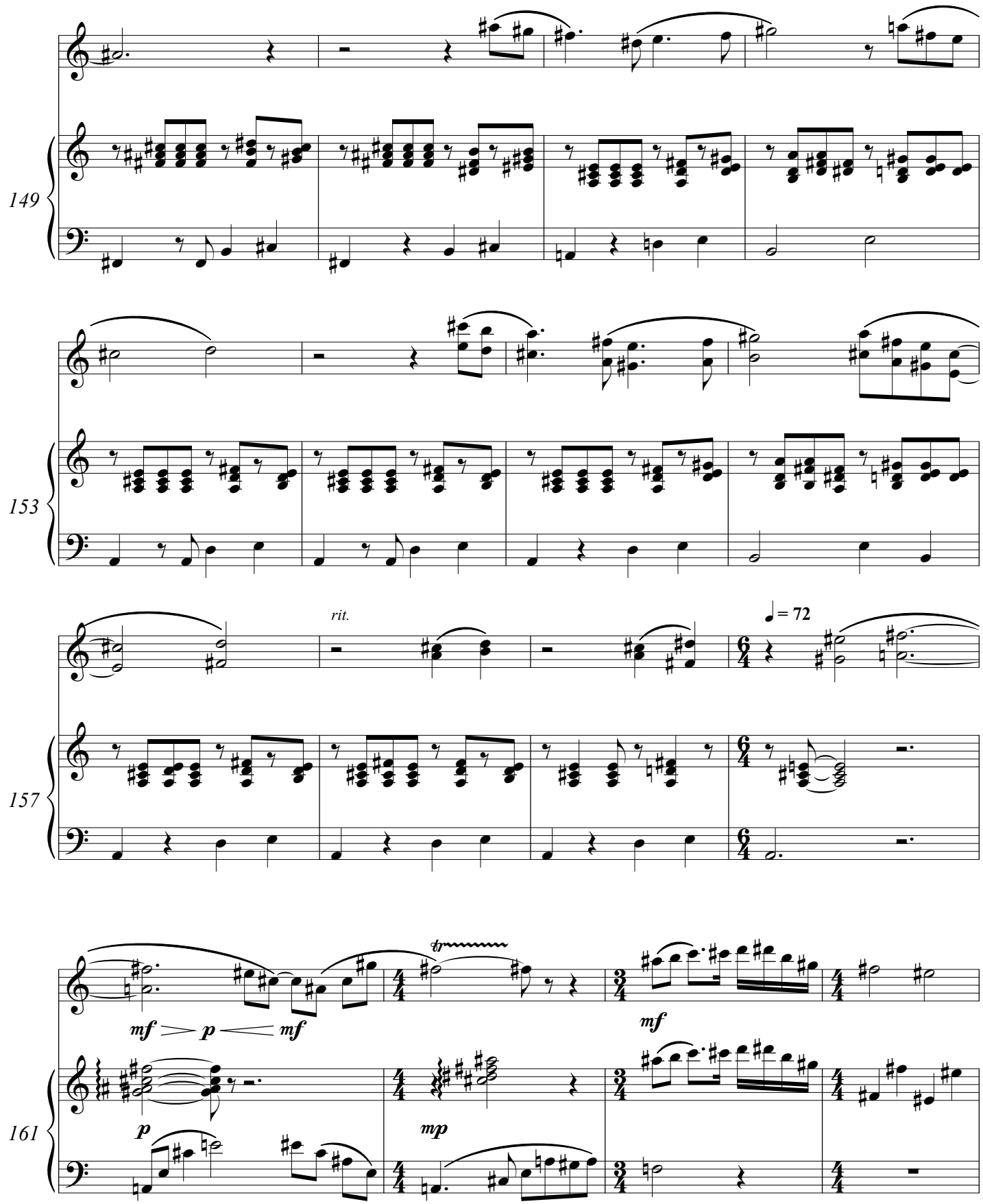

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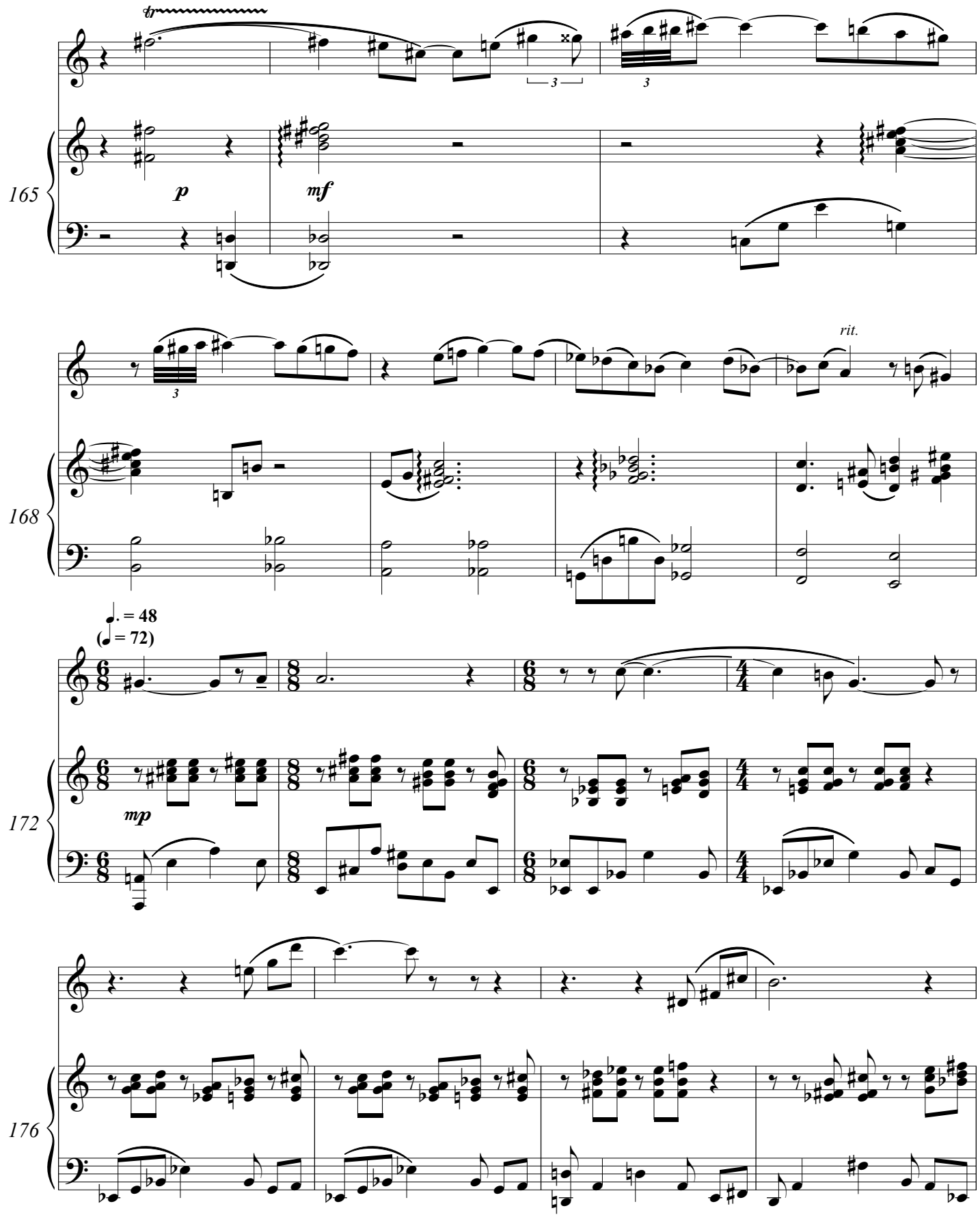

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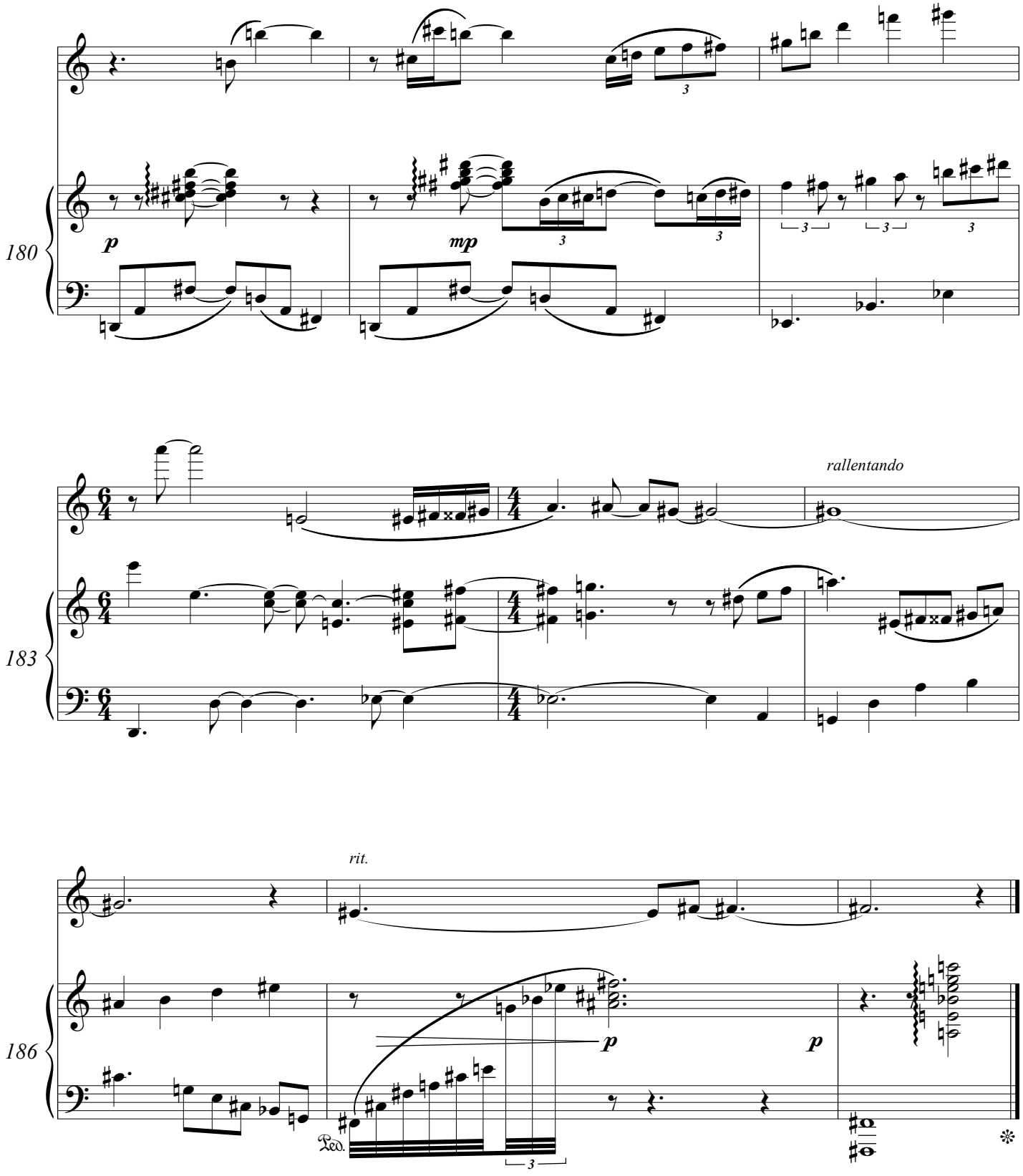

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