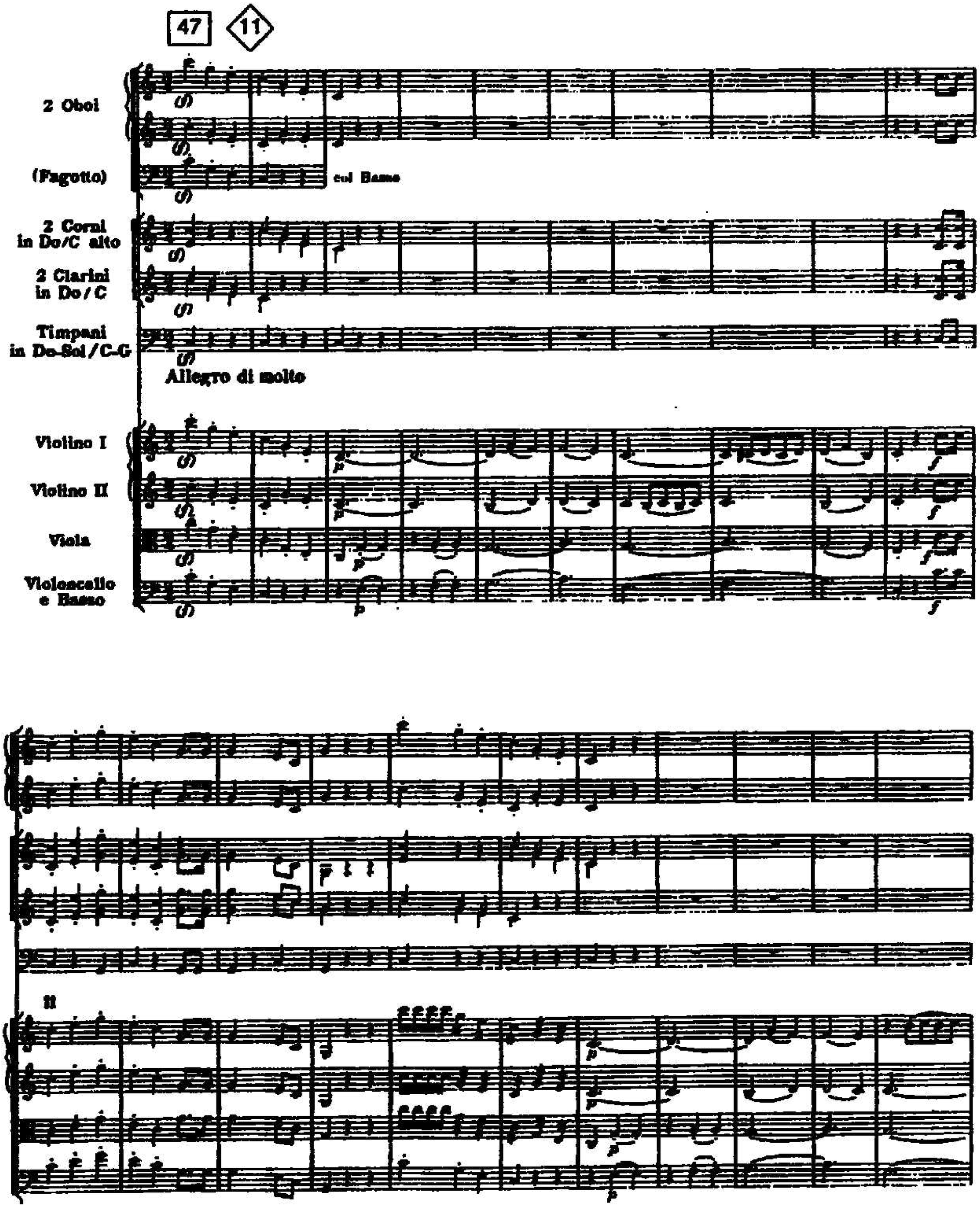
FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)

Symphony No. 56 in C Major, Hob. I:56 CD 7 CD 3

Allegro di molto (first movement)



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1.

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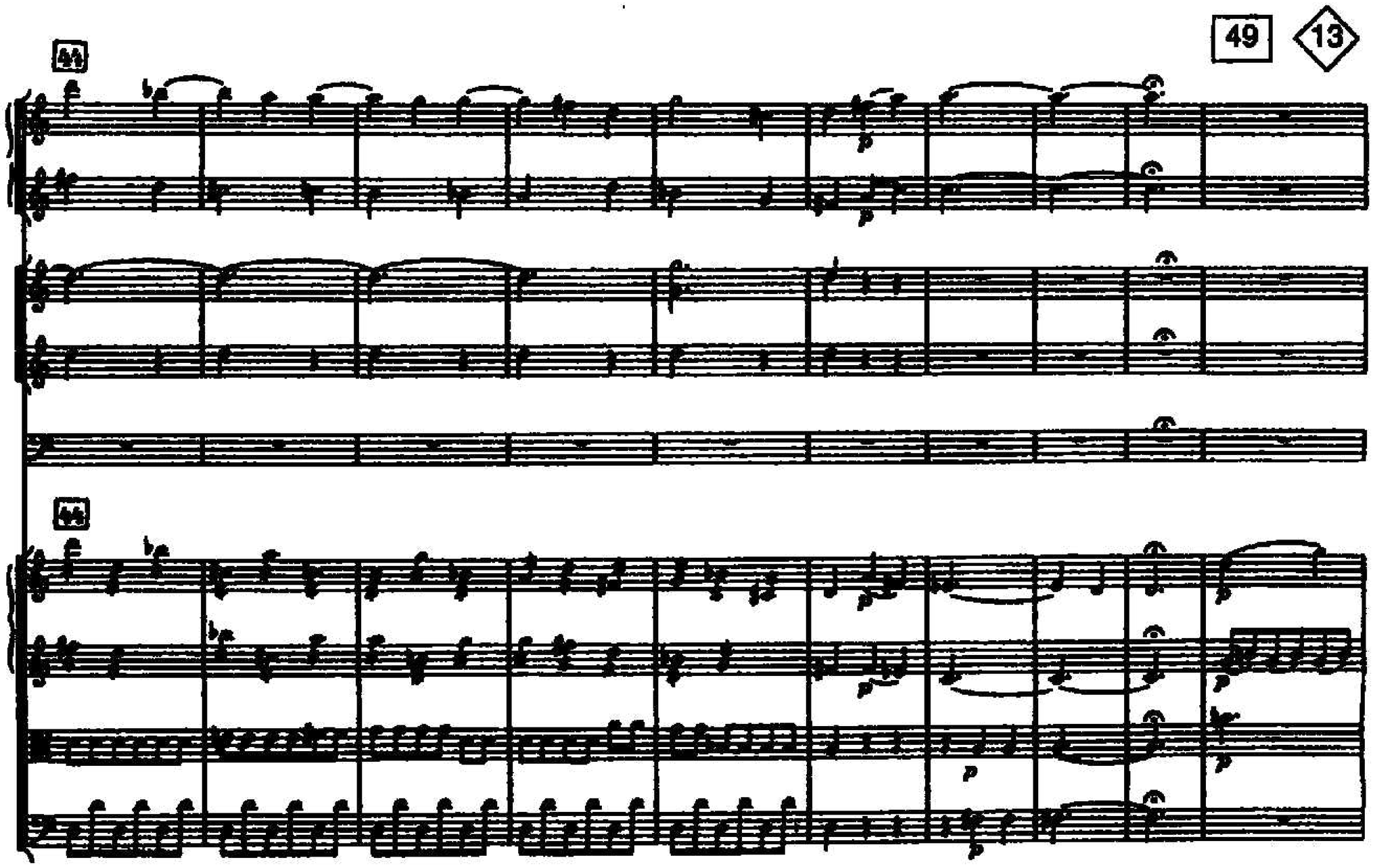
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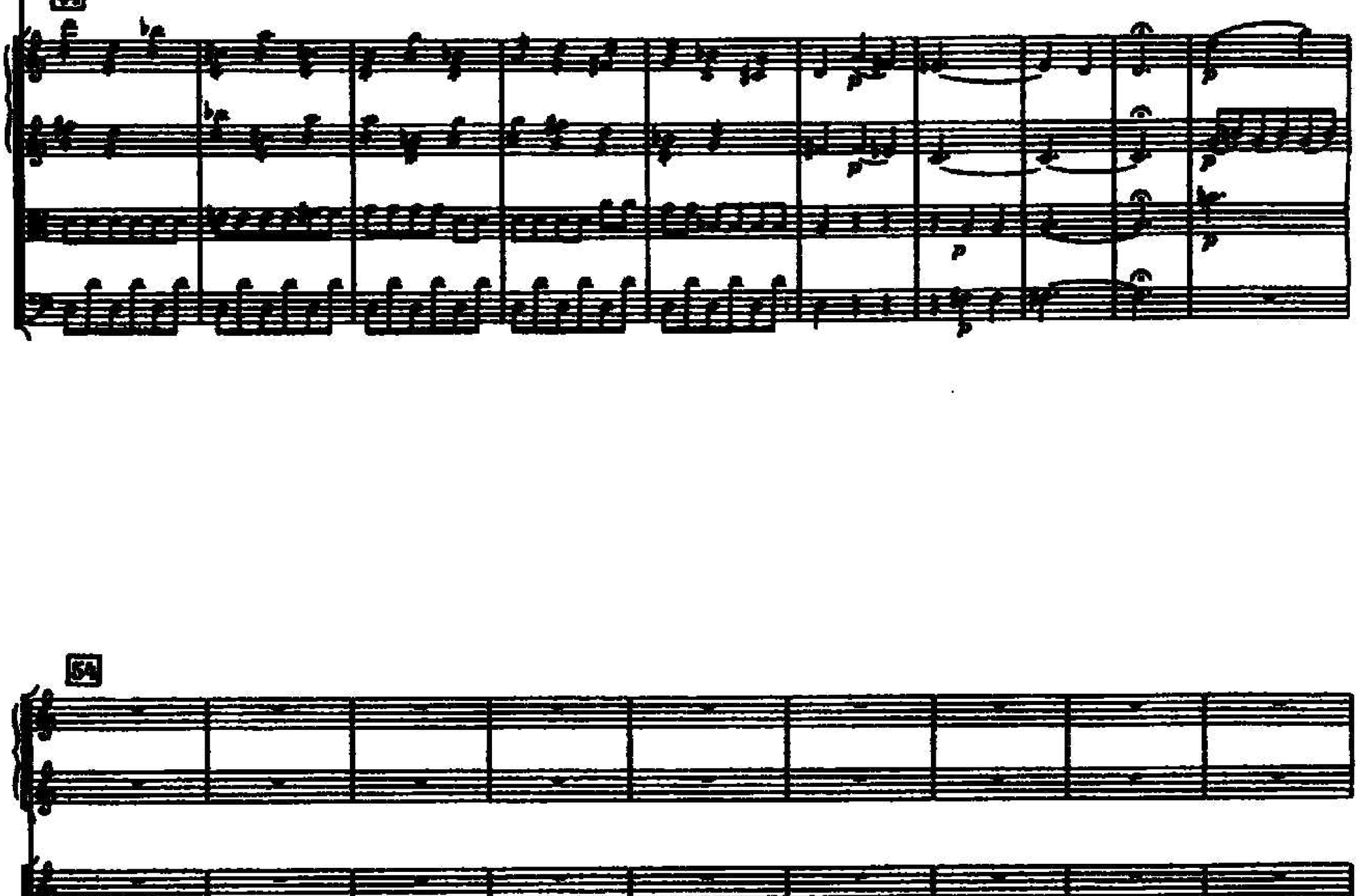
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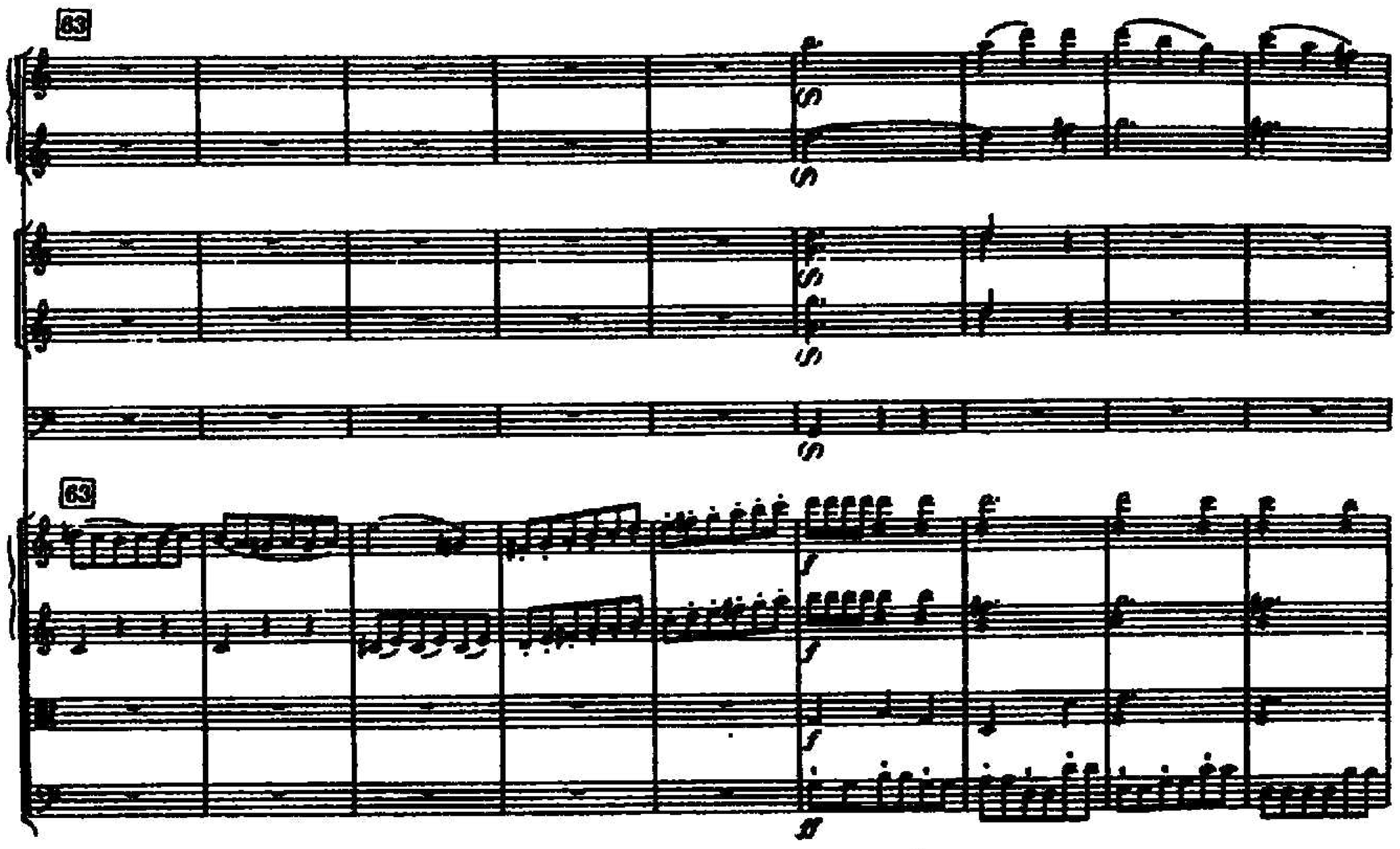
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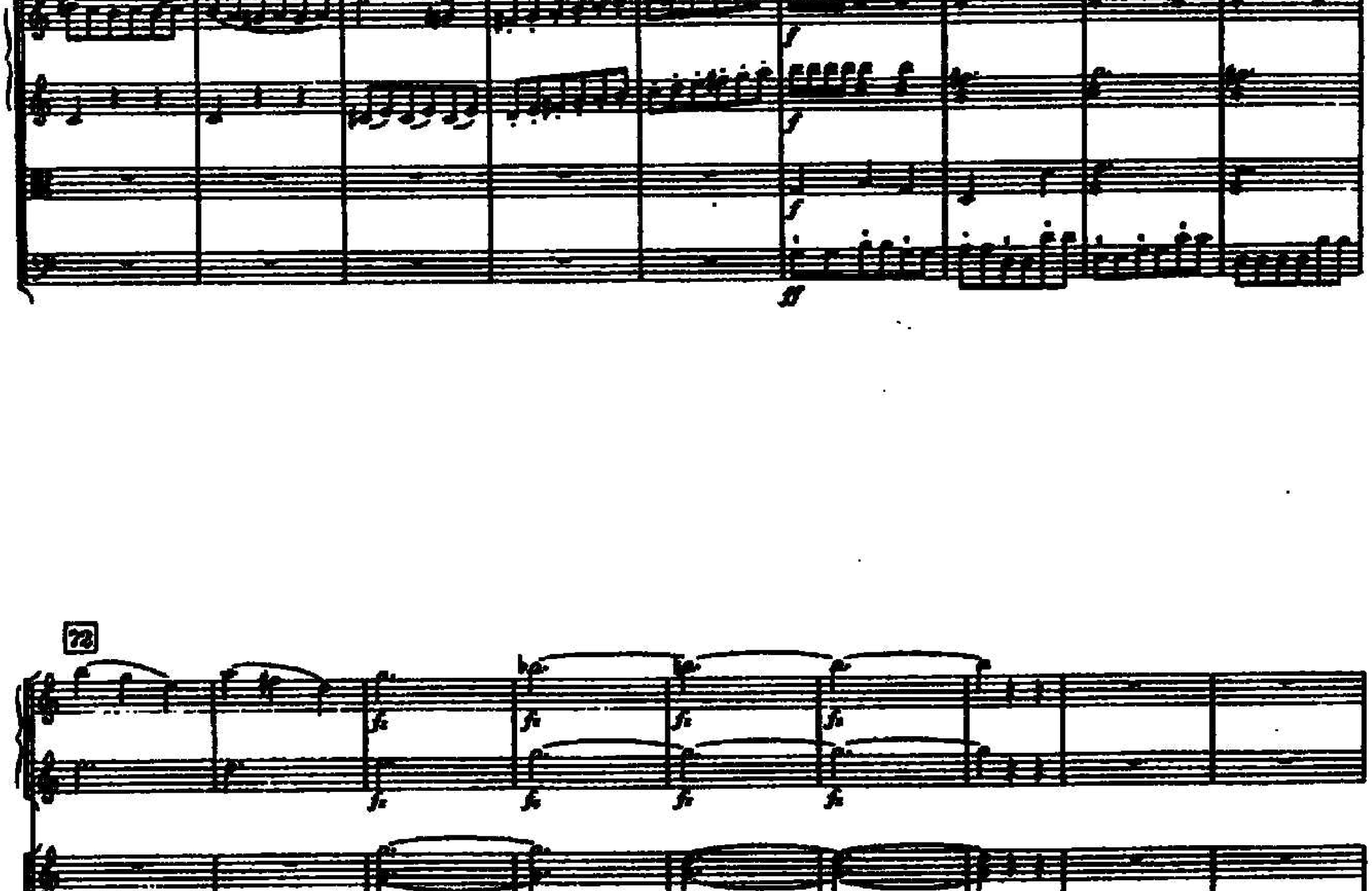
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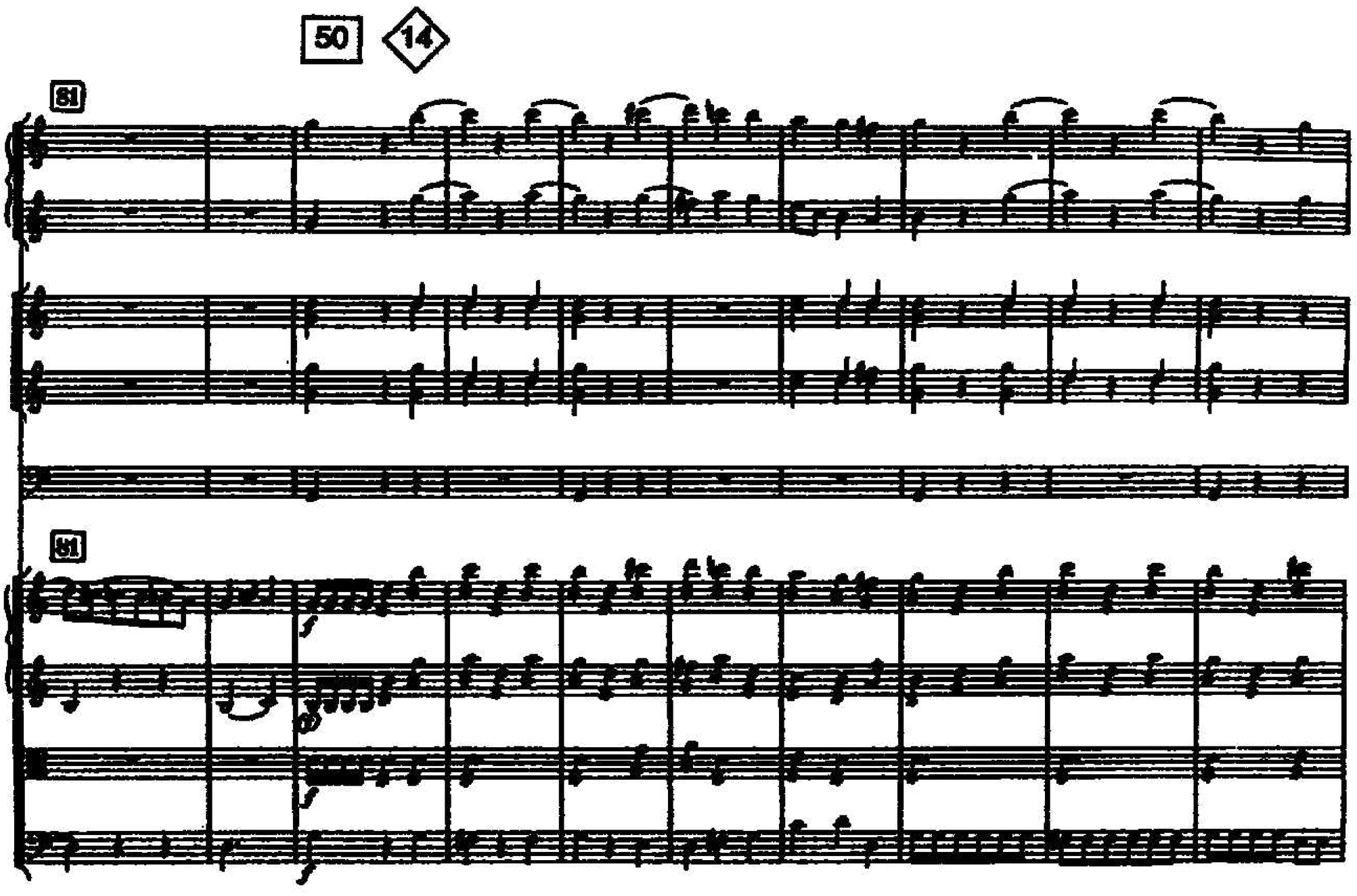
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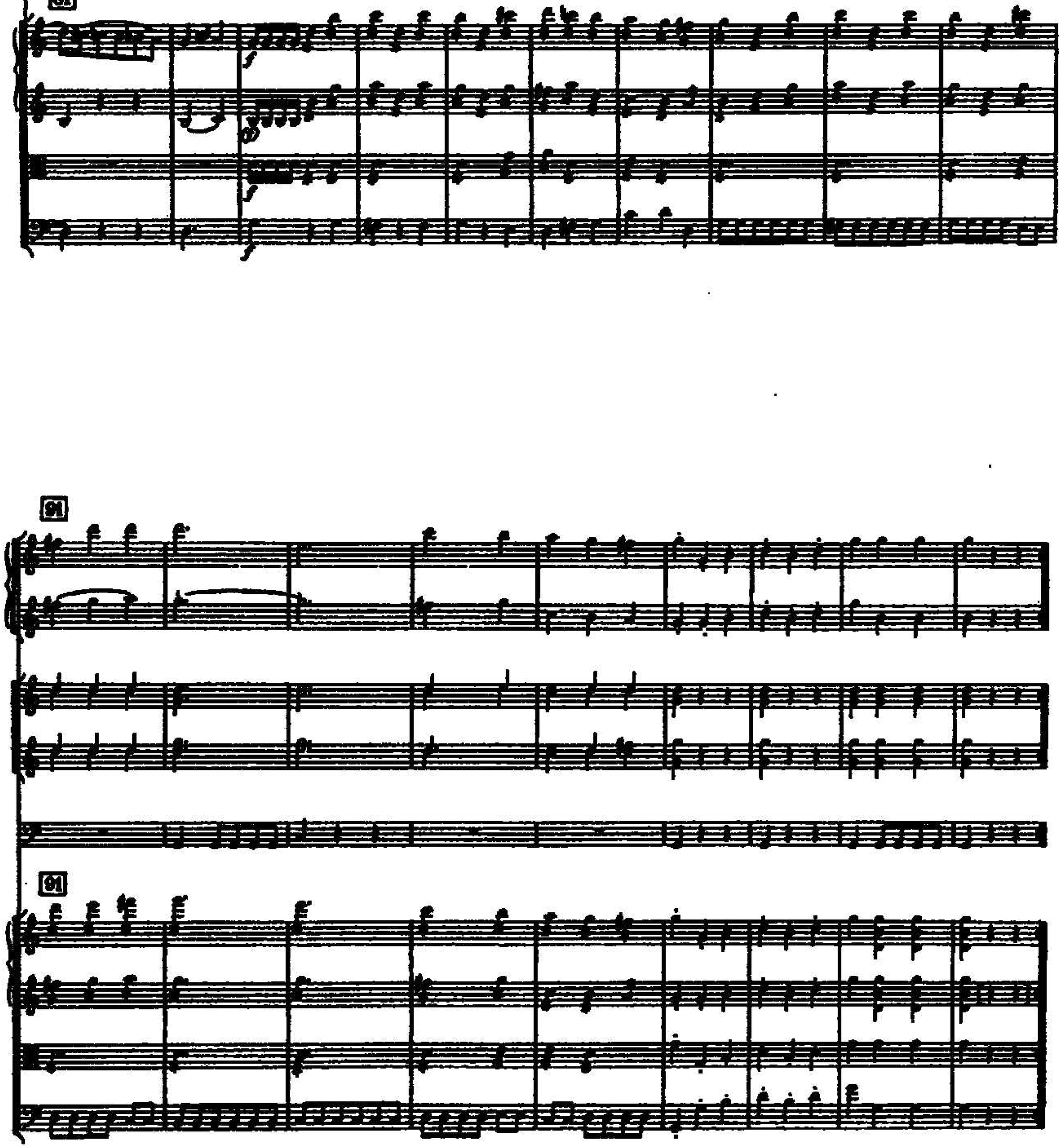
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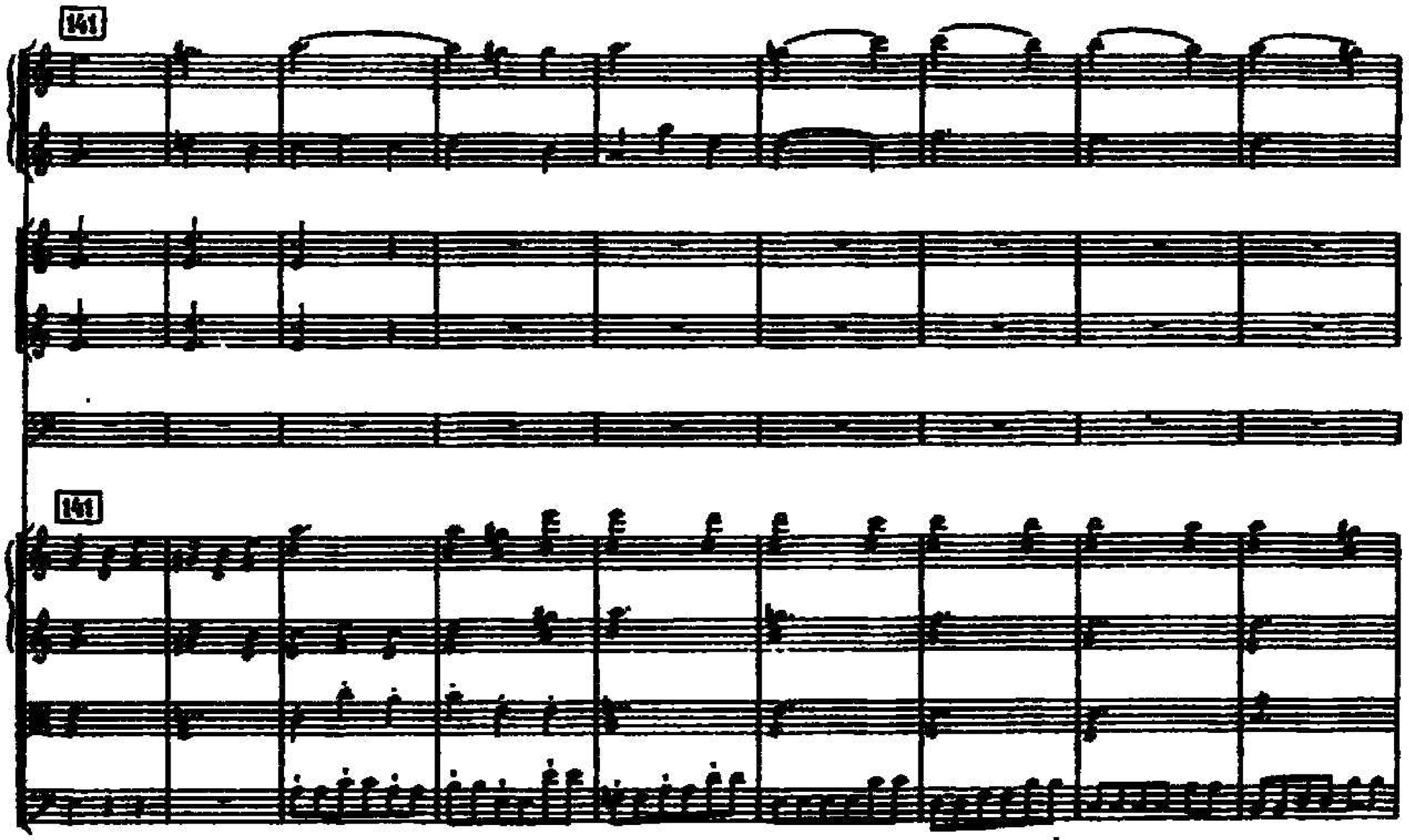
51 15

100

100

111

111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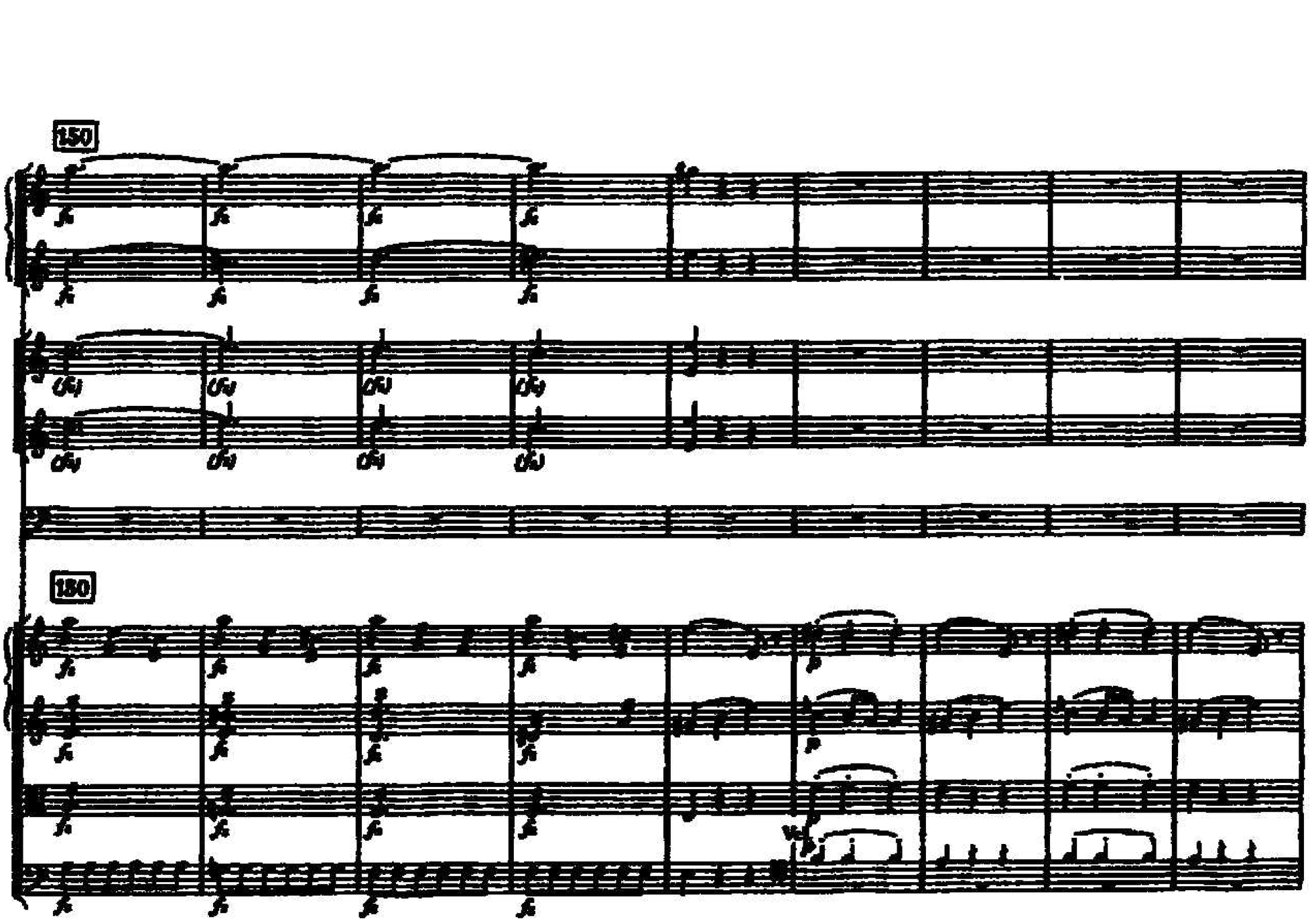

150
180

52 16

159

Solo

(f)

159

pp

pianissimo

(pp)

(ppp)

(ppp)

(pp)

(ppp)

Vl. I.

Tutti

(f)

Cb.

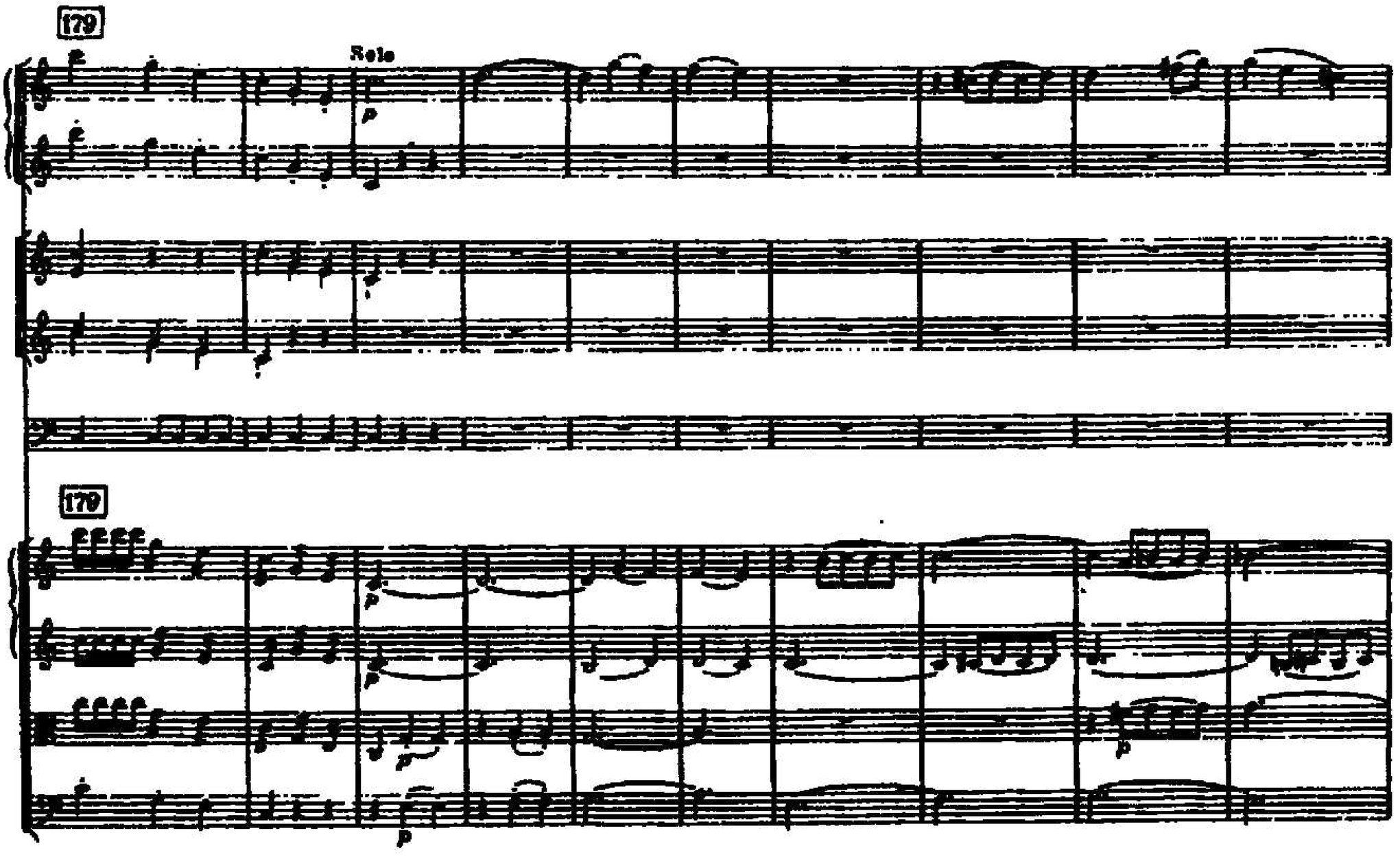
169

(f)

(f)

(f)

169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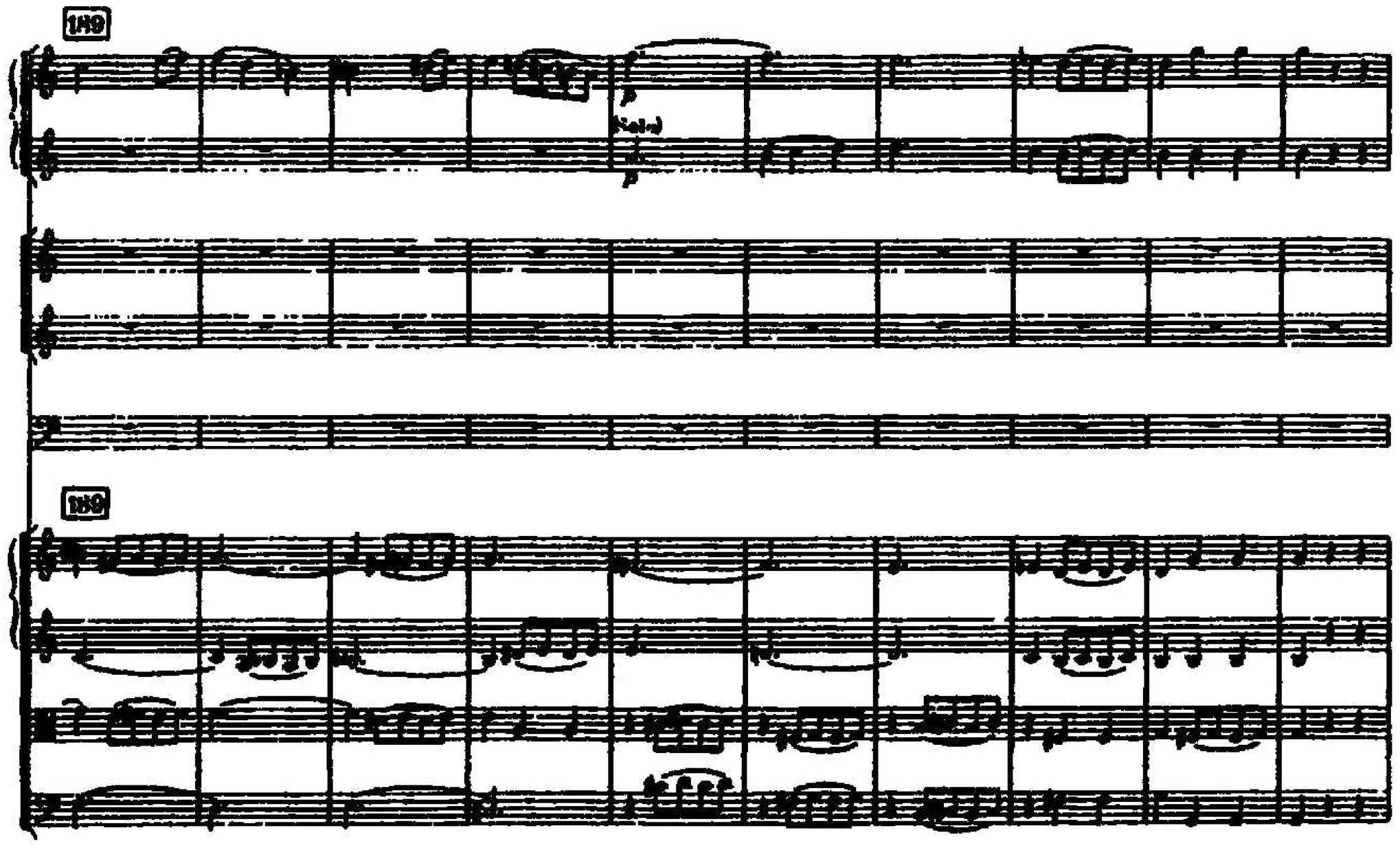
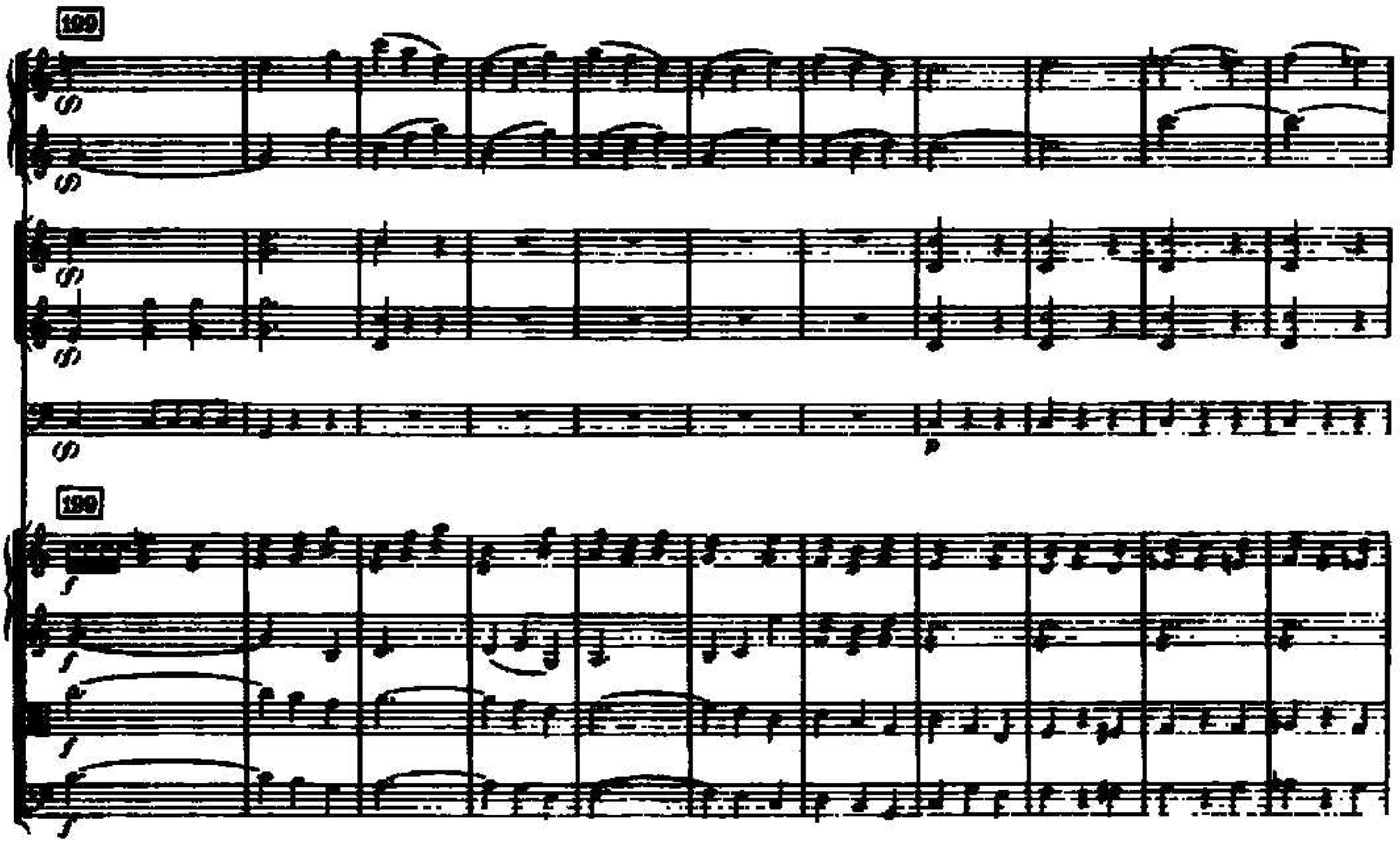
Solo
179


189
Solo
189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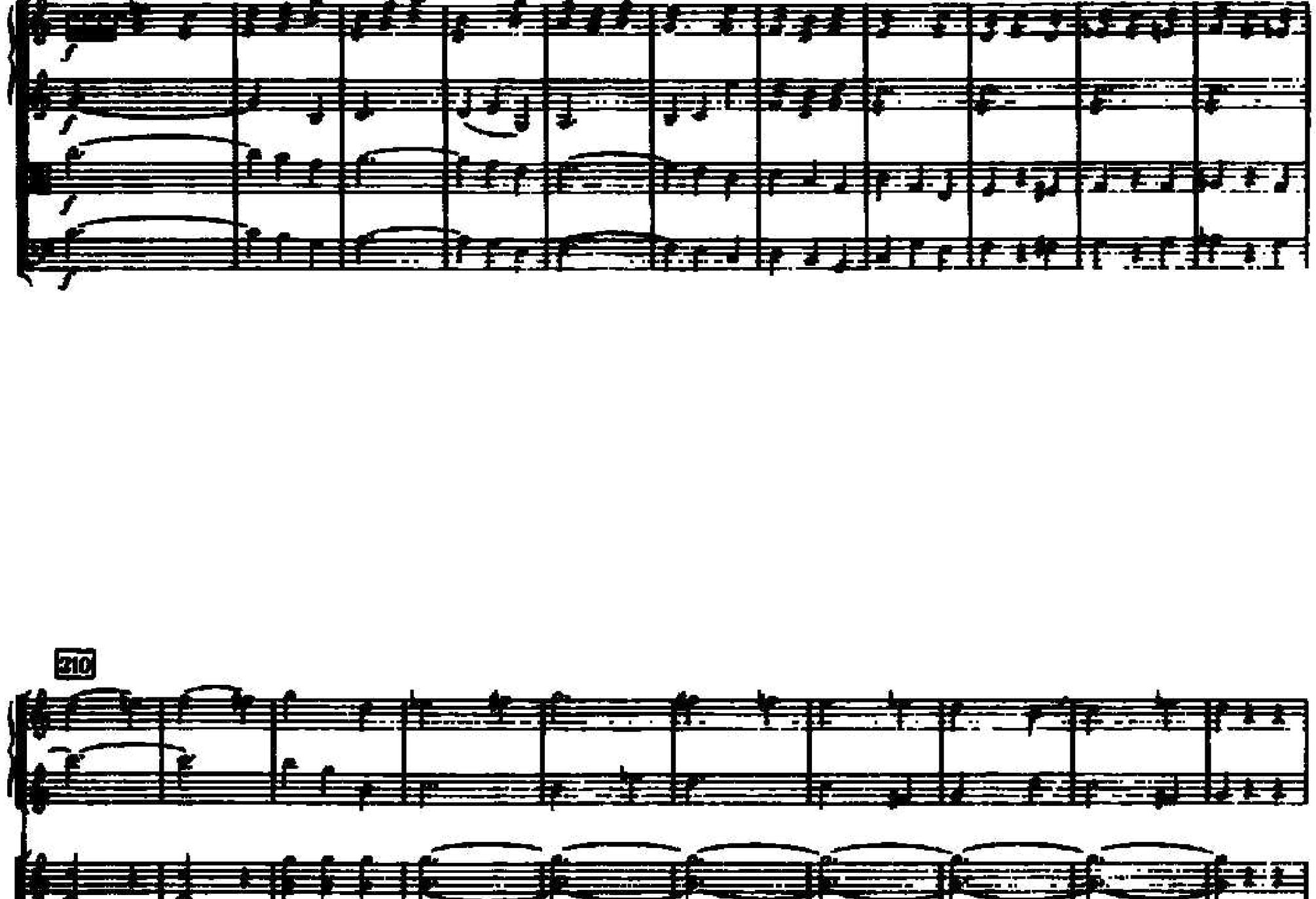
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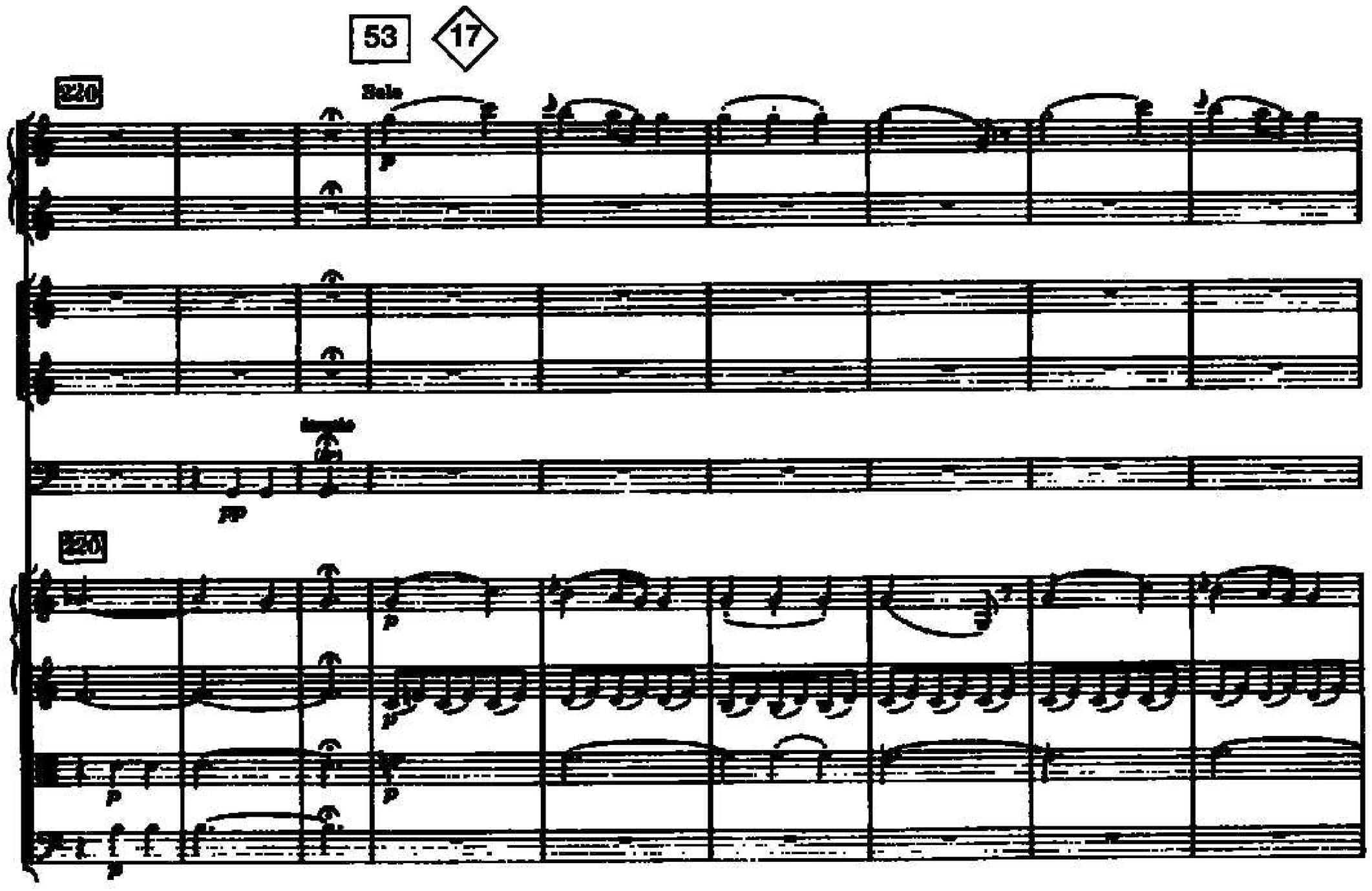
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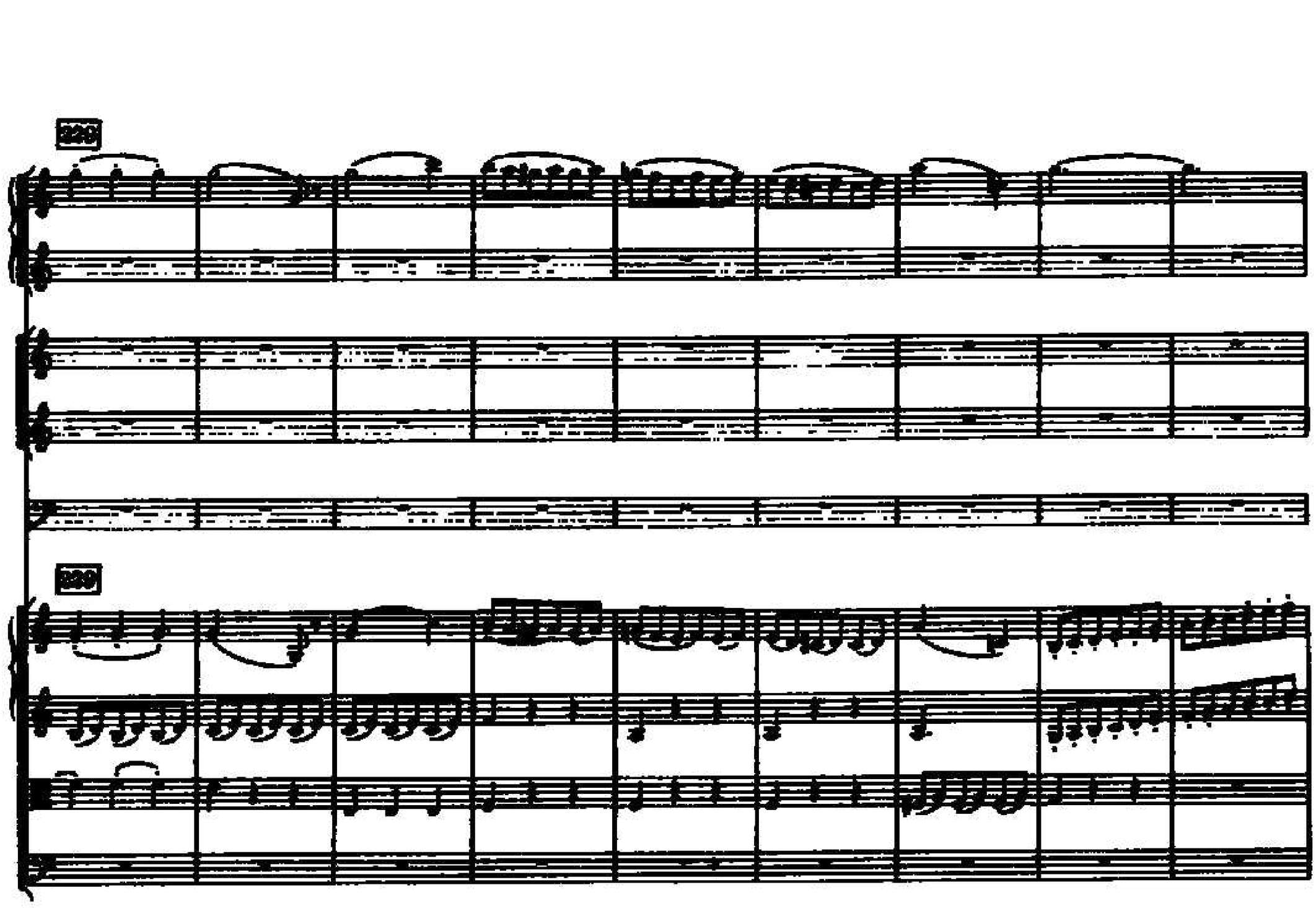
17
220
Solo
pp
220
p
p
p
p
p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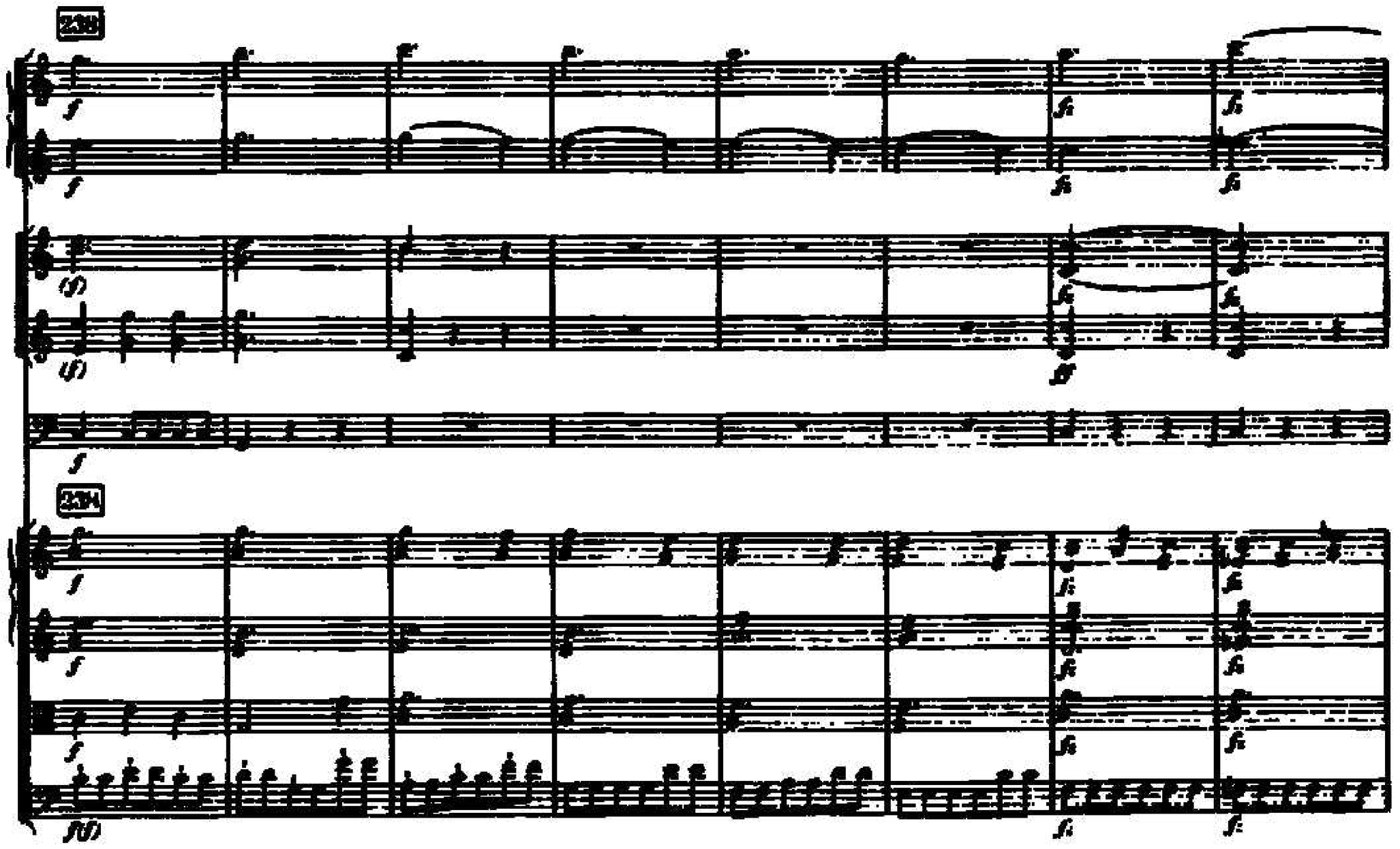
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234
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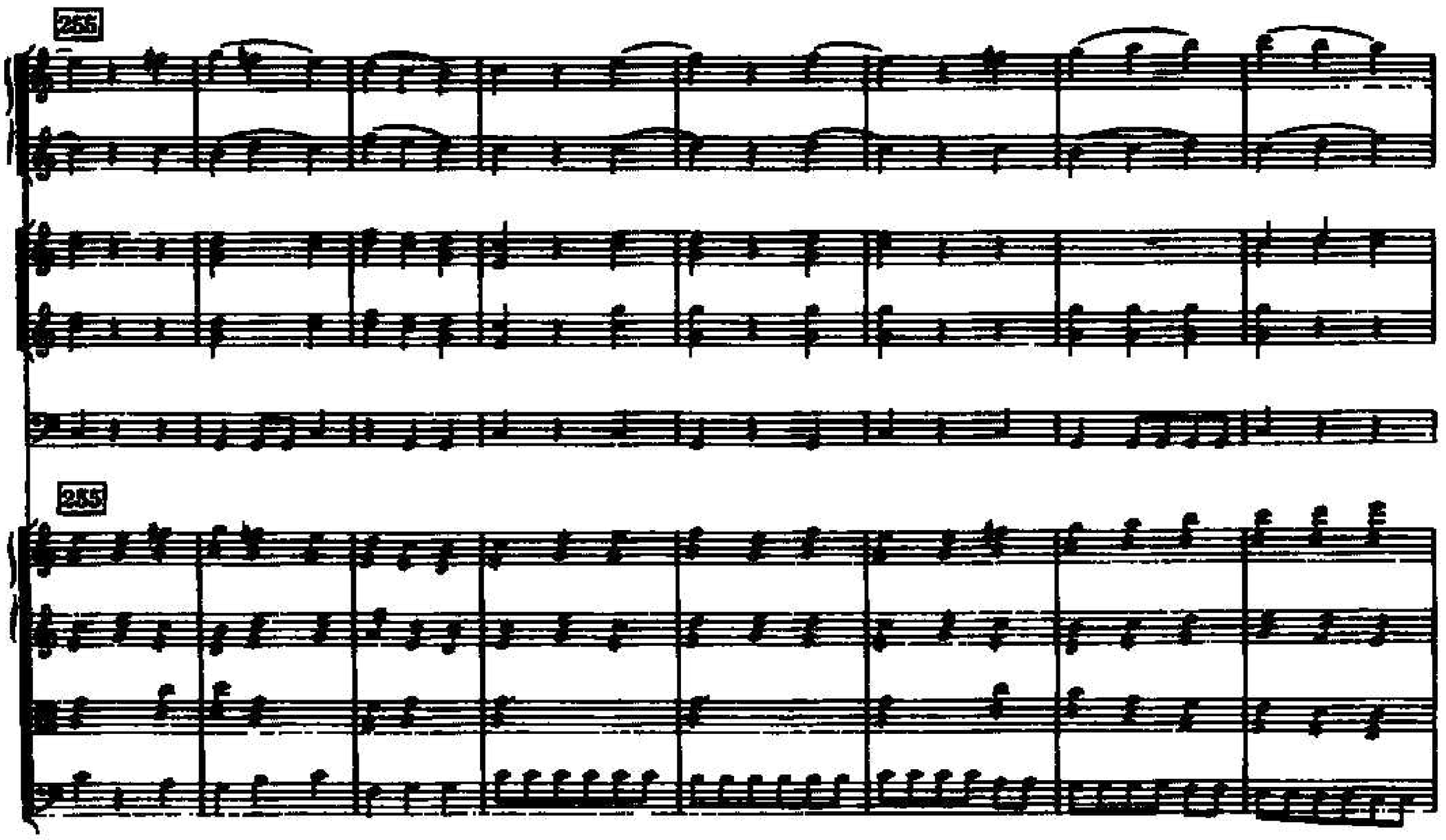
Viola
246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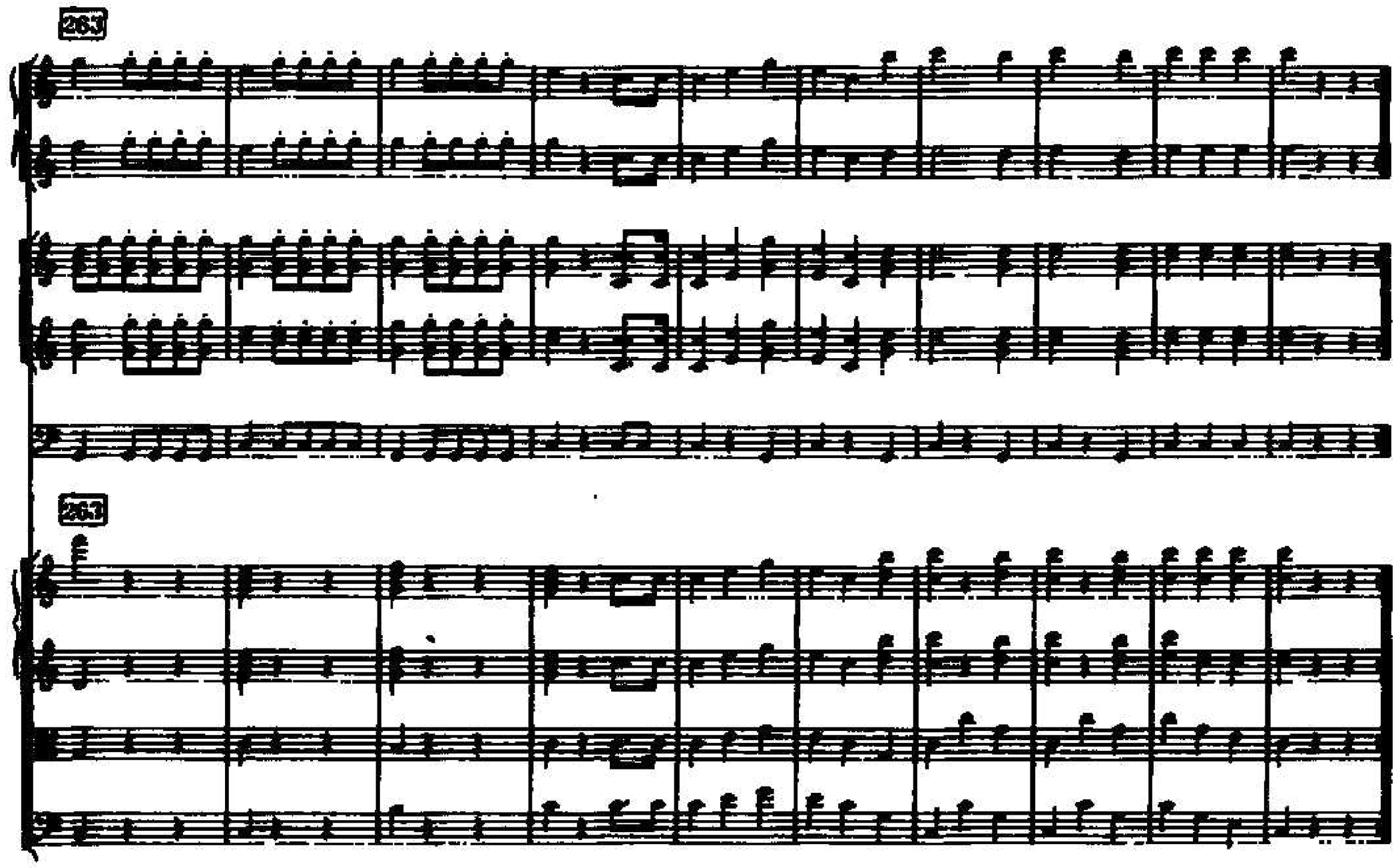
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Like his previous C-major symphonies (Nos. 20, 33, 38, 41, and 48), this symphony, written in 1774, is festive and brilliant, with high trumpets (labeled clarino in the score), alto French horns (played at written pitch), and timpani. There are two oboes and a bassoon but no flutes, which Haydn used then only rarely.

Controlled exuberance and restrained tenderness characterize the first movement, Allegro di molto. It reflects the high regard in which the genre was held in the 1770s: that it be serious, ambitious, stirring, and impressive, yet immediately accessible and appealing. The principal subject contains three elements: (a) a two-octave descending unison sweep of the major triad (measures 1–3), (b) a soft passage built on a suspension (measures 3–6), and (c) a cadential phrase dominated by a repeated appoggiatura figure (measures 8–10). In a four-measure codetta to this theme group, a martial dotted figure turns the broken-chord unison into a fanfare.

The form is articulated not so much by cadences as by dramatic gestures and pauses. For example, a unison fanfare and rests announce the bridge to the second subject (which begins in measure 29). A chord succession from diminished seventh to dominant seventh, the last held by a fermata, heralds the second subject (measure 53). The closing section is ushered in by a playful lingering on the six-four chord that abruptly ended the previous tutti (measures 79–81). The transitions and the closing section are built on the broken-chord motive a, and, as so often in Haydn, are scored for tutti. Although the second subject contrasts with the first, it is subtly related to the c-motive by the upward leap *D–G* and the suspended *C* resolving to *B*. Thus the movement, though rich in ideas, is highly integrated.

All of the material of the exposition figures in the development section (measures 100–64). But the order of events in the primary theme is scrambled and minor keys take over. Two parallel statements of this transformation, in A minor and G minor, are heard, after which the triadic motive, now distorted and drawn out, is played against the appoggiatura motive in an excursion to the tonally most remote harmony in the movement, the dominant of E minor (measure 132). The transitional material leads to a statement of the secondary theme in E major (measure 154), now tinged with dissonance. As the strings continue to muse on this subject, shifting to the dominant of C, the full orchestra decisively breaks in with the recapitulation of the opening theme (measure 165), oboe solos now delicately coloring the soft passages. The tutti bridge to the second subject gathers energy as it simulates a modulation to C minor, stopping on a *pianissimo* timpani roll on the dominant (measure 222). But the minor mode is brushed aside by the return of the graceful second subject in major, with solo oboes prominent again. A recall of the fanfare fittingly caps the closing tutti.