Score

Arias and Sinfonias
from Oratorios by Women Composers of the Eighteenth Century

Vol. VI

Seven Sinfonias (1707-1710) for Strings and Continuo

by

Camilla de Rossi

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ClarNan Editions
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Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701

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Preface

Although Camilla de Rossi's oratorios were performed every year from 1707 to 1710 in the Imperial Chapel in Vienna, nothing is known of her life and career, except that the manuscript scores and some orchestra parts survive for her four large oratorios for Vienna. One undated cantata also survives in Dresden. Notice appears in Viennese Court calendars of performances, and cast-lists for the singers are given with some of the scores. The singers were principal singers of the Court Chapel establishment. On de Rossi's title pages she adds the word "Romana" after her name, indicating that she came from Rome.

All the oratorios are for solo voices and strings with some added instruments. Trumpets are used in *S. Alessio* for an approaching wedding festivity (which fact does not occur after all) and in *S. Beatrice d'Este* to denote the tyrant warrior who is the villain of the piece. The lute is used in *S. Alessio* and *Il Sacrifizio di Abramo* to stand for the innocence of the Saint in the one and of Isaaco in the other. In *Abramo,* chalumeaux were used to symbolize the peaceful dream of Father Abraham just before the Angel announces God's demand that he sacrifice his son Isaac, one of the very earliest uses of chalumeaux in an orchestra.

The oratorios are all large dramatic works in a two-act structure, with an orchestral piece labelled*Introduzione* before the first part and a *Sinfonia* before the second. Because the the very large scale of the total works, the orchestral preludes to each part are of necessity all quite brief. All except one are for strings and continuo (labelled Cembalo in one score). The one exception is the four-movement for lute and strings which precedes Part II of *Il Sacrifizio di Abramo*.[1] Because this Sinfonia is so different from the others, it is not included in the present volume, which includes only the seven string Sinfonias. The present grouping can be arranged as a suite with the choice of movements and their order to be determined by the conductor.[2] Therefore the score is printed in chronological order, while the orchestral parts are all separate, for easy grouping at the time of performance.

Except for *Il Sacrifizio di Abramo,* the first Sinfonia is the longer of the two. All the introductory pieces are in French overture form. In *Abramo*, the dotted French Overture rhythms of the opening slow section also seem to prefigure the climatic arias of the Angel's demand for the sacrifice and Abraham's revelation to Isaac that *he* is to be the victim. All the Allegro sections of the French Overtures are in conventional imitative style All the string Sinfonias which open second parts of the oratorios are short Allegro movements.

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[1] This Sinfonia was recorded by the Bay Area Women's Philharmonic (now The Women's Philharmonic) in 1989, with JoAnn Falletta, lutenist and conductor. It is on the CD *Baroquen Treasures,* Newport Classics.

[2] The twentieth century premiere of a suite of these works was given by the Women's Philharmonic on March 1, 1997, with Karla Lemon, conductor.

There are few figures in the bass except in some slow sections, although the Introduzioni of *S. Beatrice d'Este* and of *S. Alessio* are quite fully figured. Figures which are rendered redundant by the change to modern signatures are omitted without comment, as are the flats occasionally used to indicate a minor chord where no accidental would otherwise be used.

The instrumentation is not specifically marked in all the pieces, but Cembalo is used for the bass line in *S. Beatrice d'Este,* and Contrabasso and Violoncelli are specifically indicated as separate parts in the Sinfonia to Part II of*Il Figliuol Prodigo.* The cello and bass are also separate parts for the Introduzione of *Santa Beatrice d'Este* and the Sinfonia to Part II of *S. Alessio.* In all other movements the bass line is assumed to be Cello/bass. Soli for Violin 1 and Violin 2 alternate with tuttis in concerto style in the Introduzione of *S. Alessio.*

A few slurs are marked, mostly in the Introduzione of *Santa Beatrice d'Este,* which also has the most complete marking of trills. The only dynamics are *piano* and *piano piano* (pianissimo) at the end of the opening slow section of the Introduzione of *S. Alessio.* Other dynamics and articulations are left to the discretion of the performers and conductor. The harpsichord realization of the continuo part is very conservative, and may be elaborated according to circumstances of the performance.

Acknowledgements

All of Camilla de Rossi's oratorio scores are from the Music Collection of the Austrian National Library in Vienna, and I am grateful to the Library for permission to publish these works.

Aus der Musiksammlung der Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (A-Wn)

From Ms. 17312/13. Santa Beatrice d'Este. Oratorium, 1707. Ms. score and partial set of parts.
From Ms. 17306. Il sacrifizio di Abramo. Oratorium, 1708. Ms. score.
From Ms. 19122/23. Il figliuol prodigo. Oratorium, 1709. Ms. score and partial set of parts.
From Ms. 17307. S. Alessio. Oratorium 1710. Ms. score.

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S. Alessio
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[1] The varied spellings in the manuscripts have been regularized without comment.

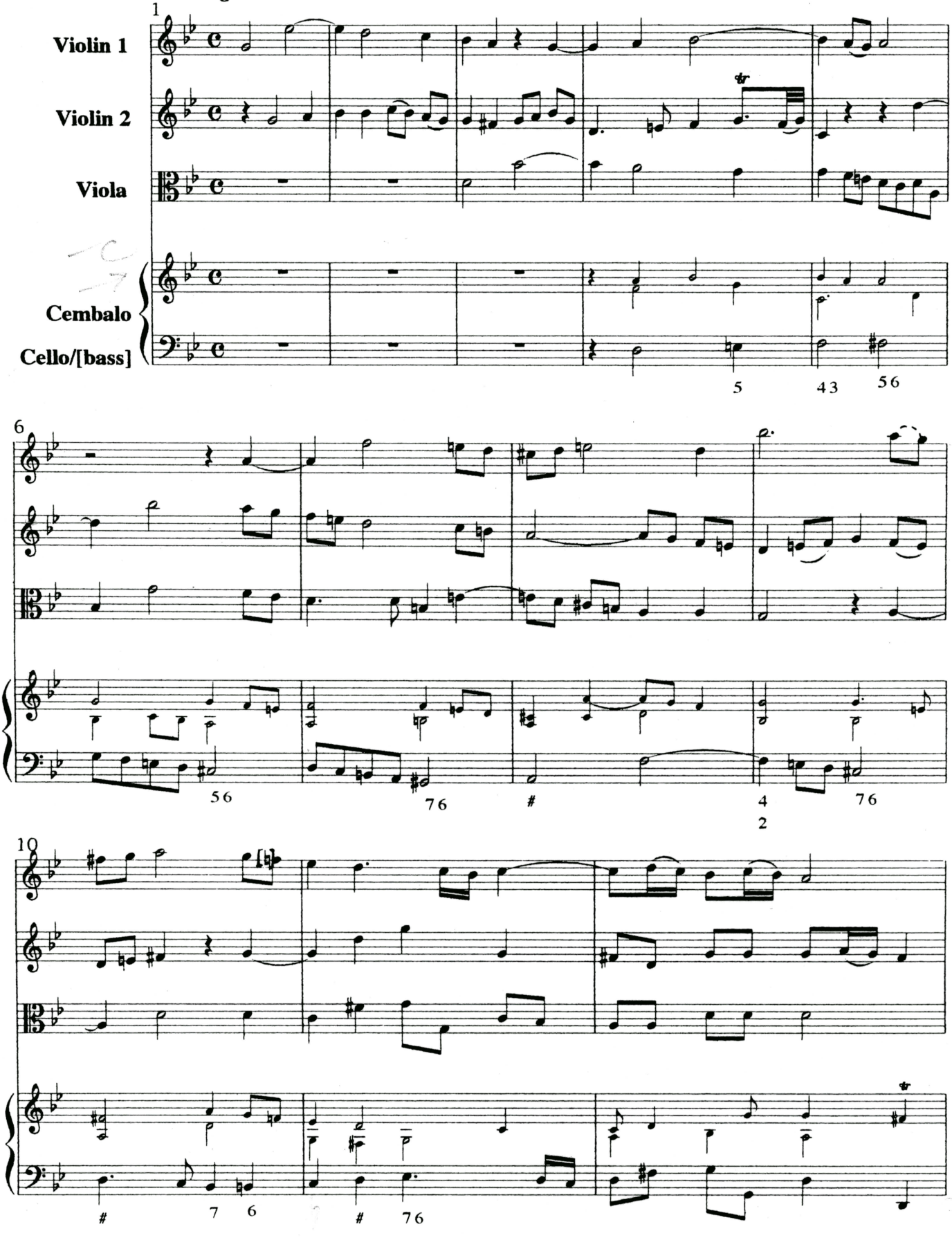
Santa Beatrice d'Este (1707)

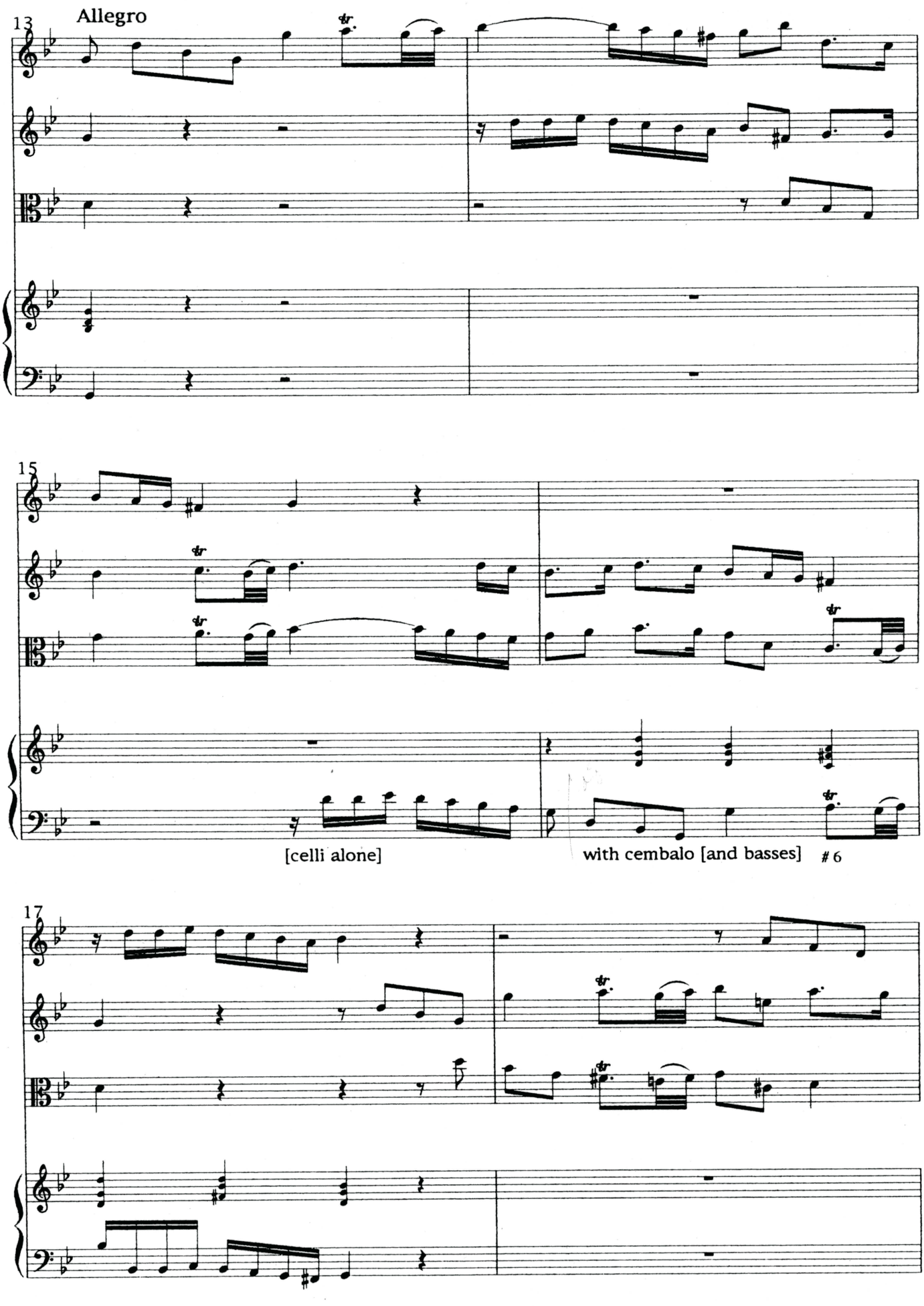
Original key signature had one flat.

I. Introduzione

Adagio

Camilla de Rossi

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15
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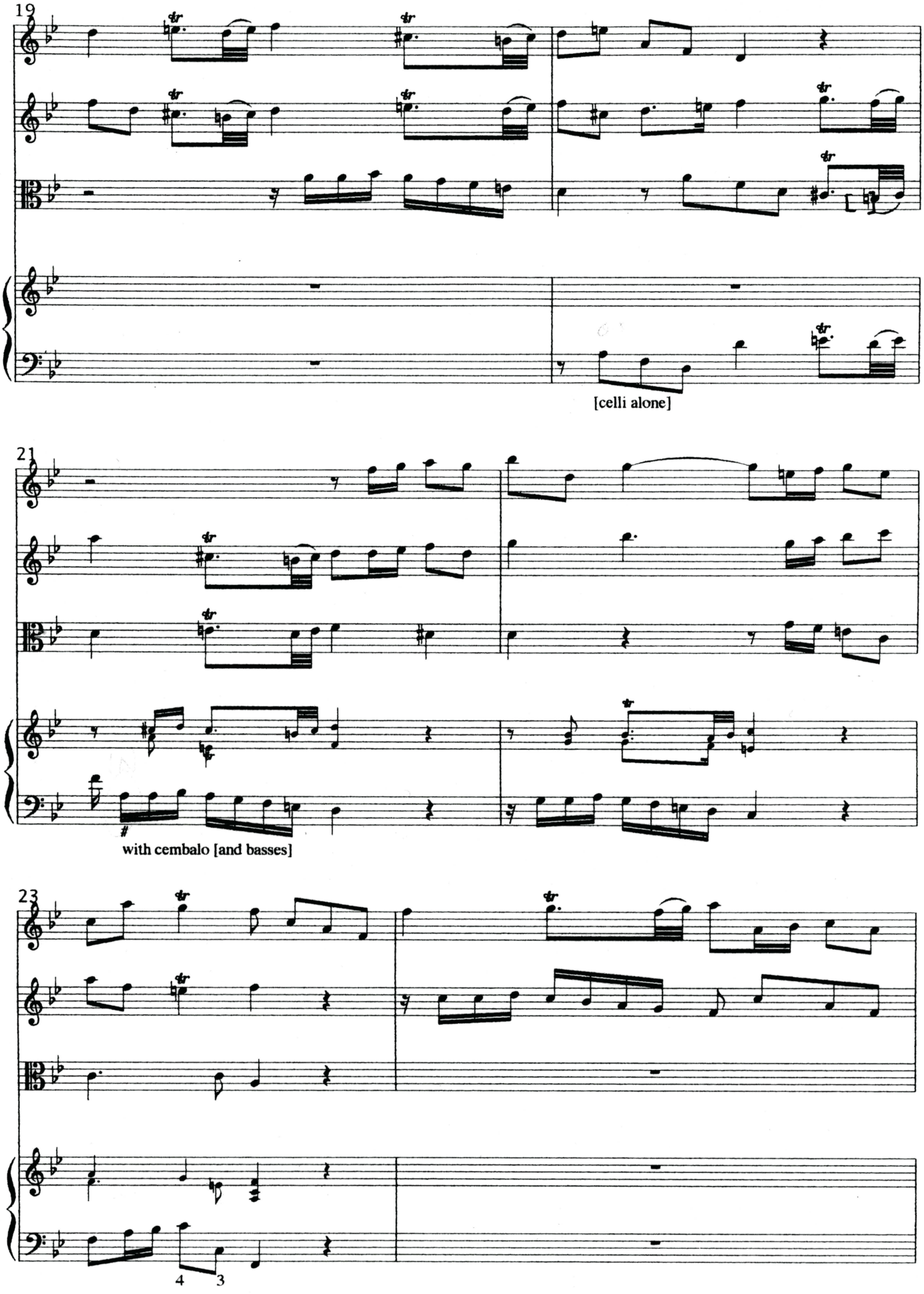
with cembalo [and basses]
6
17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[celli alone]
21
with cembalo [and basses]
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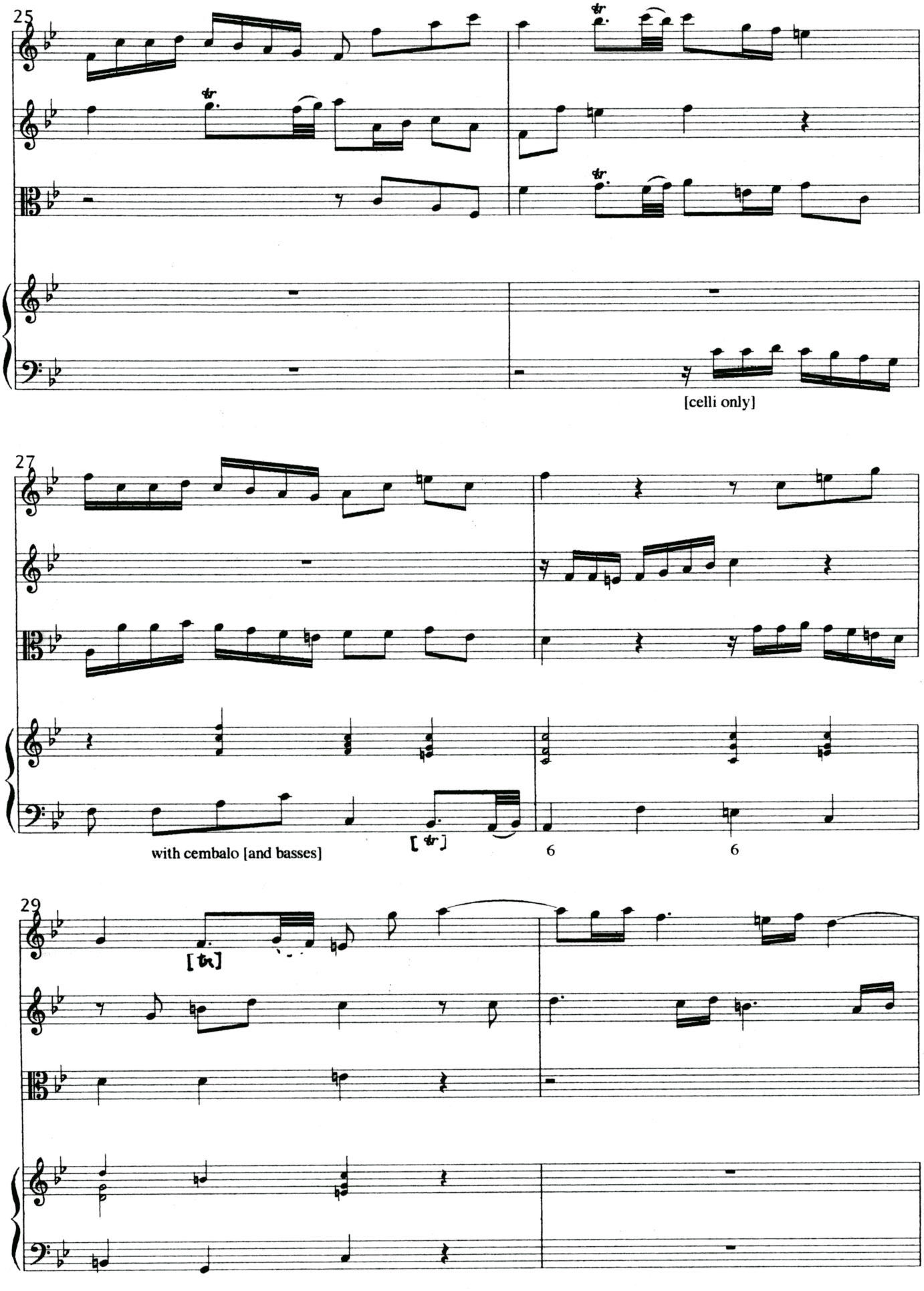
4
3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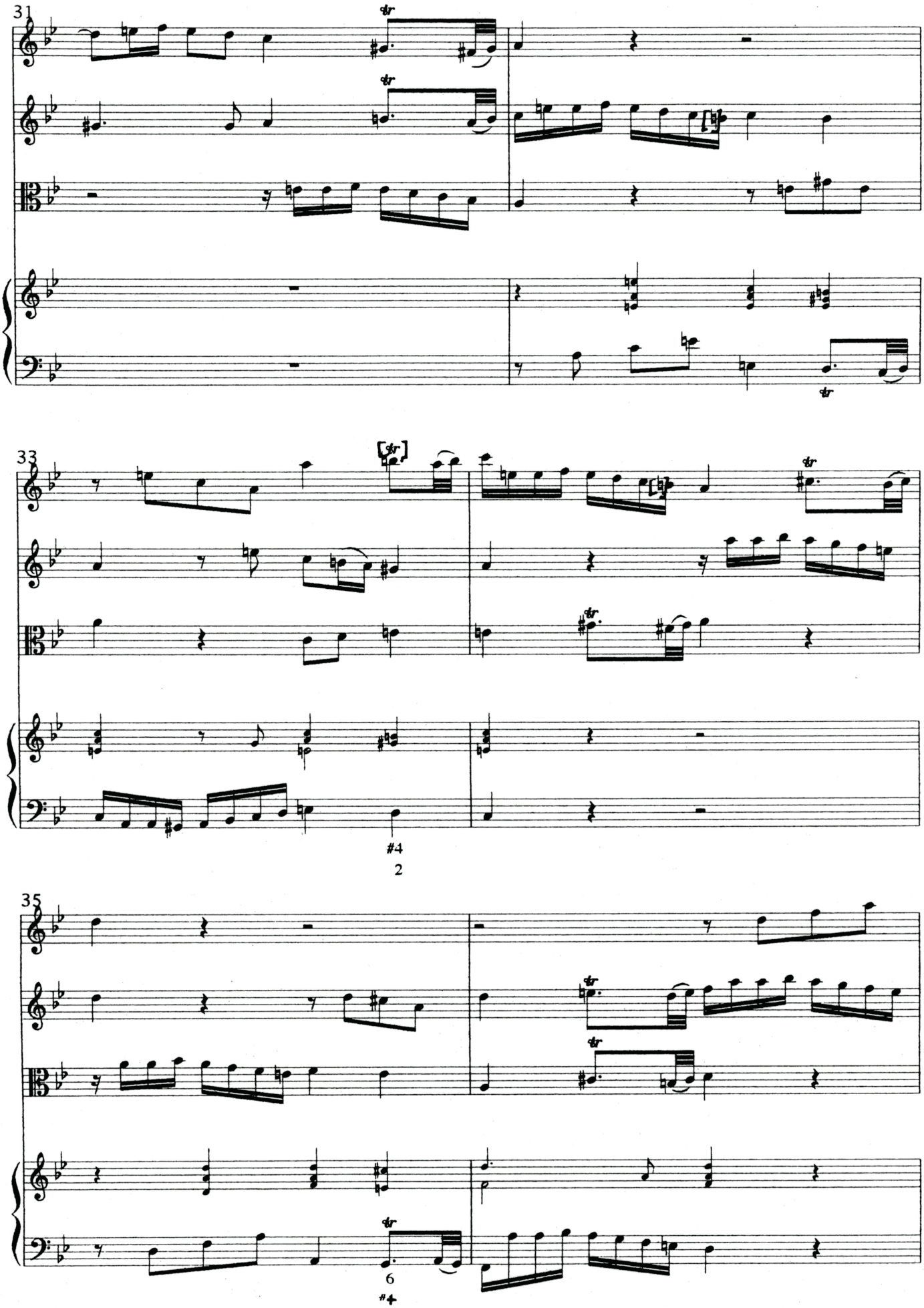
with cembalo [and basses]
[tr]
6
6
29
[tr]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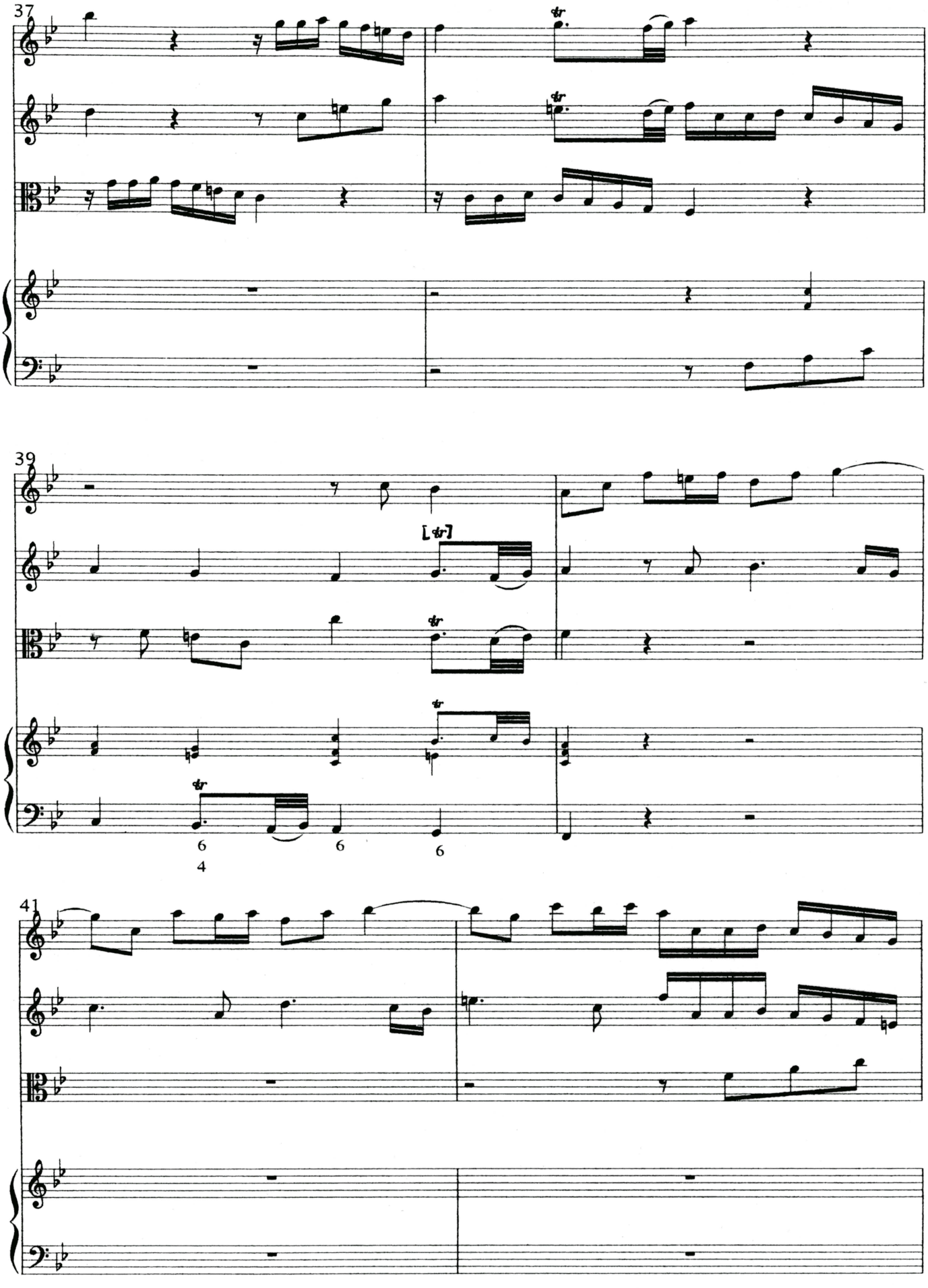
#4
2
35
6
#4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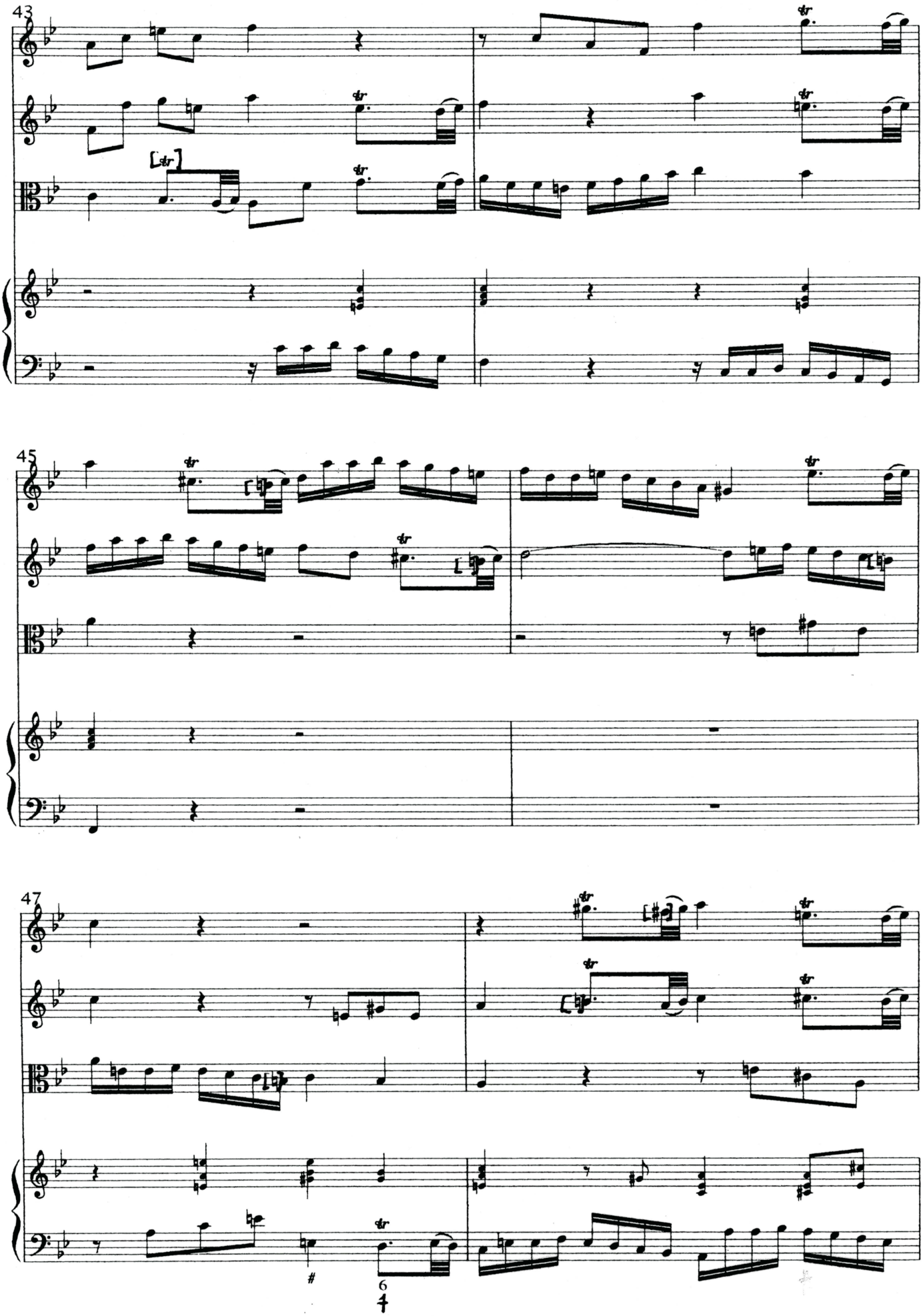
41
[tr]
6
4
6
6
6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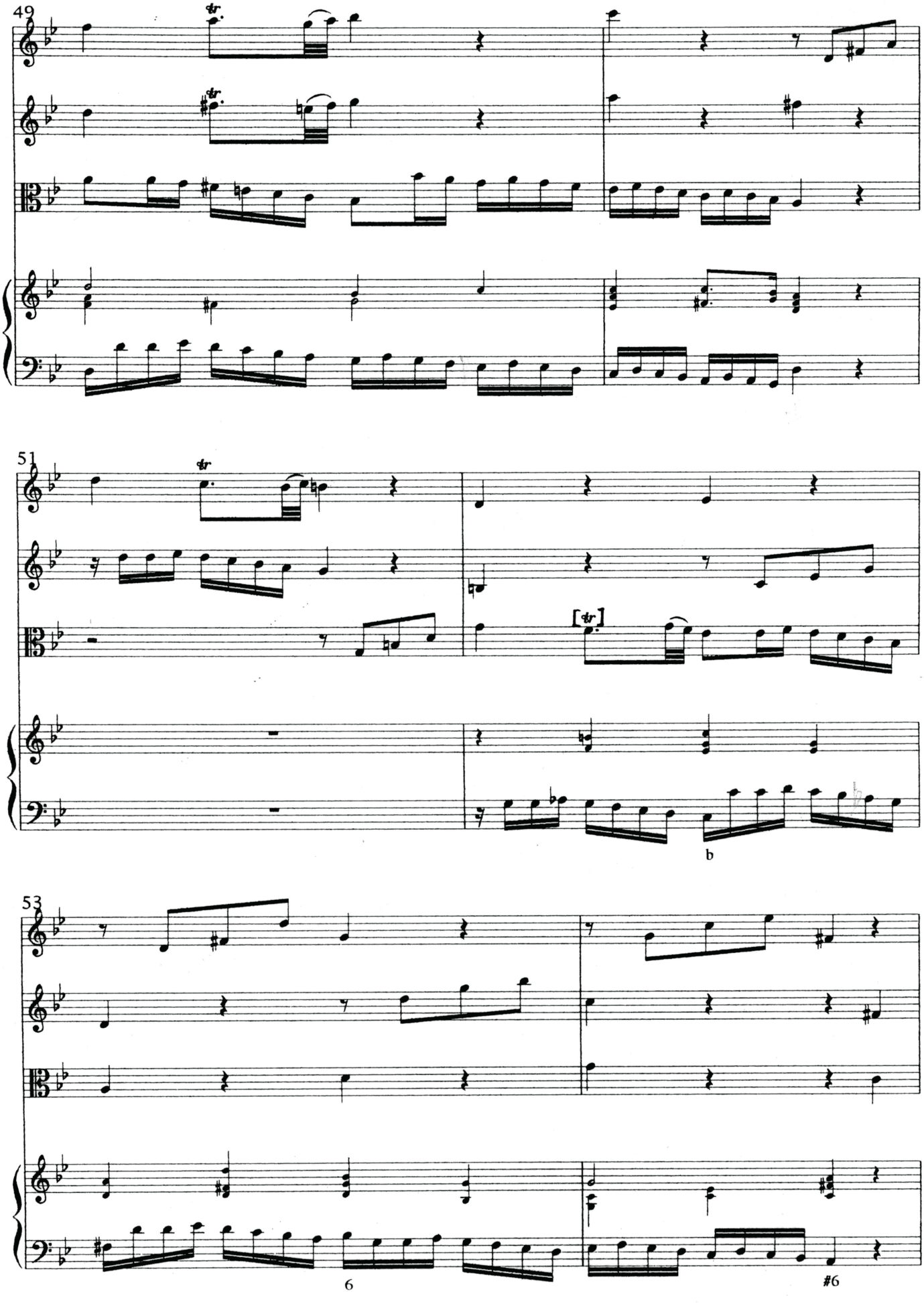
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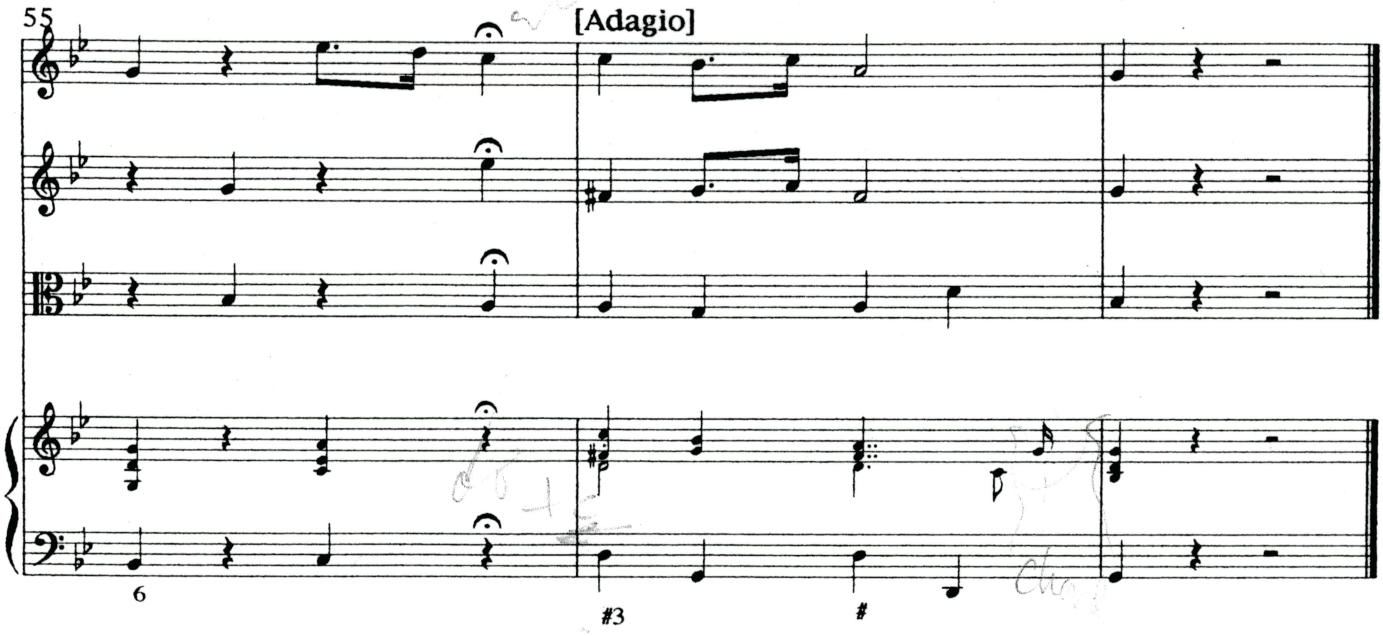
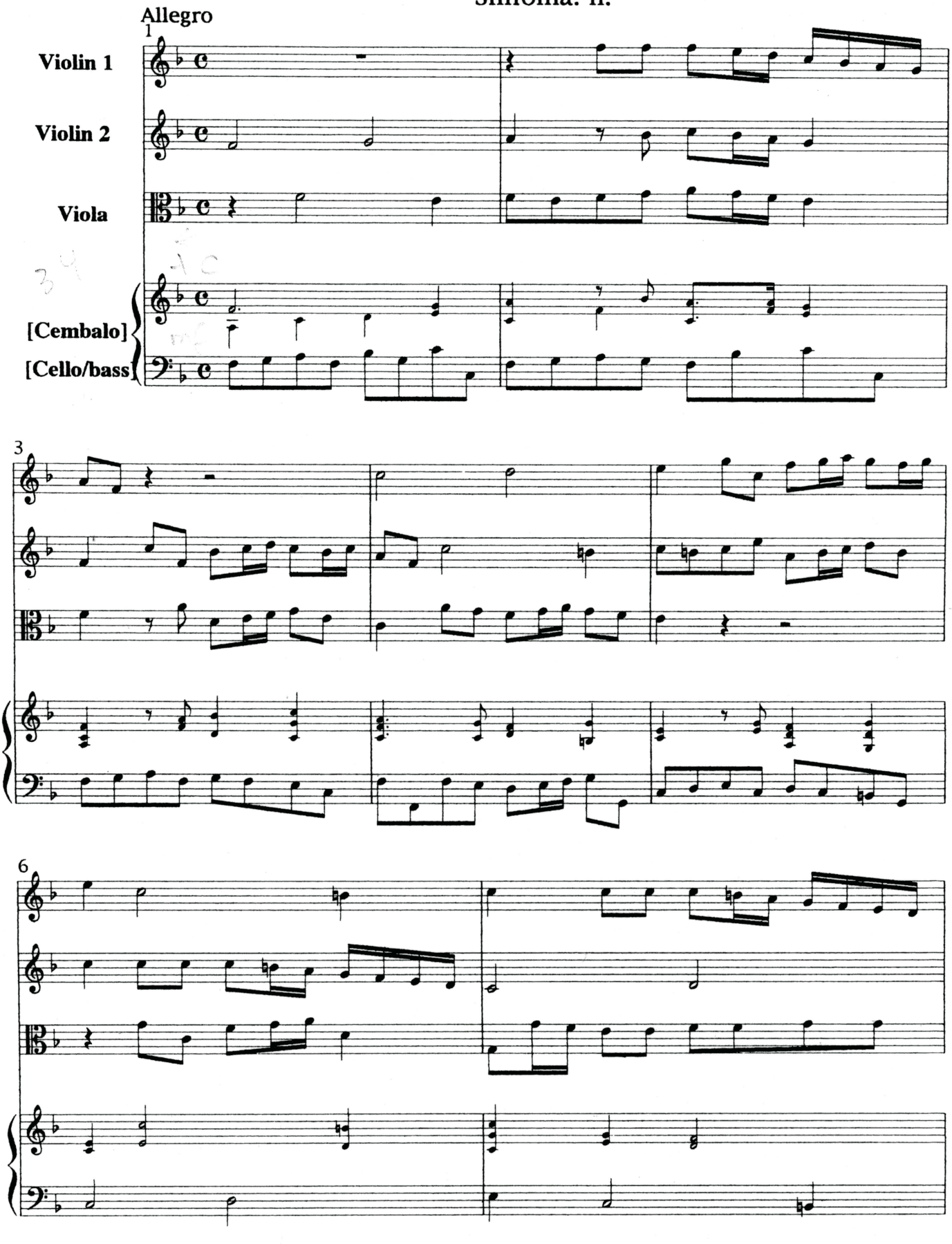
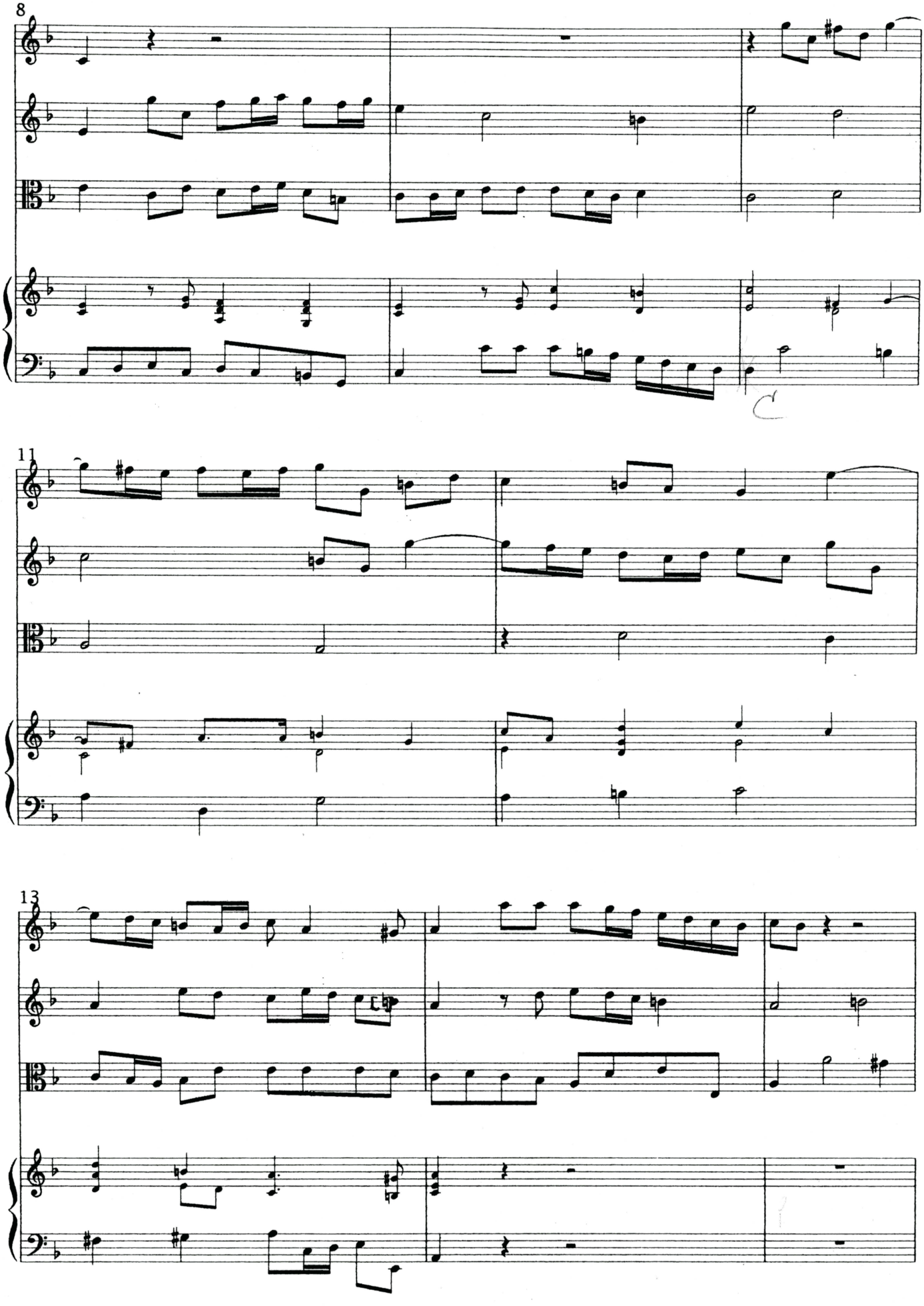
b
53
6
#6


55
[Adagio]
6
#3
#

Santa Beatrice d'Este (1707)

Sinfonia. II.

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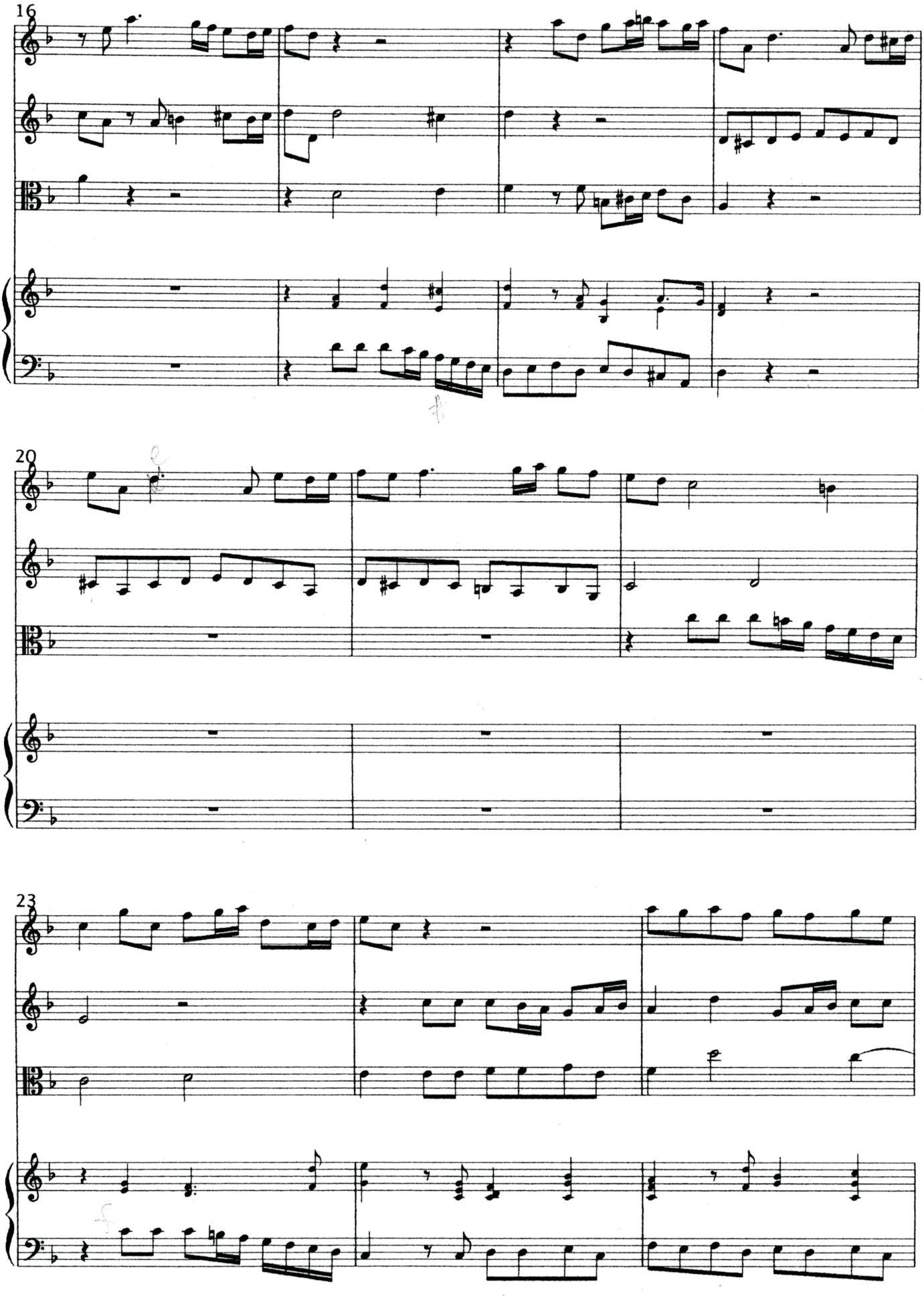
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20
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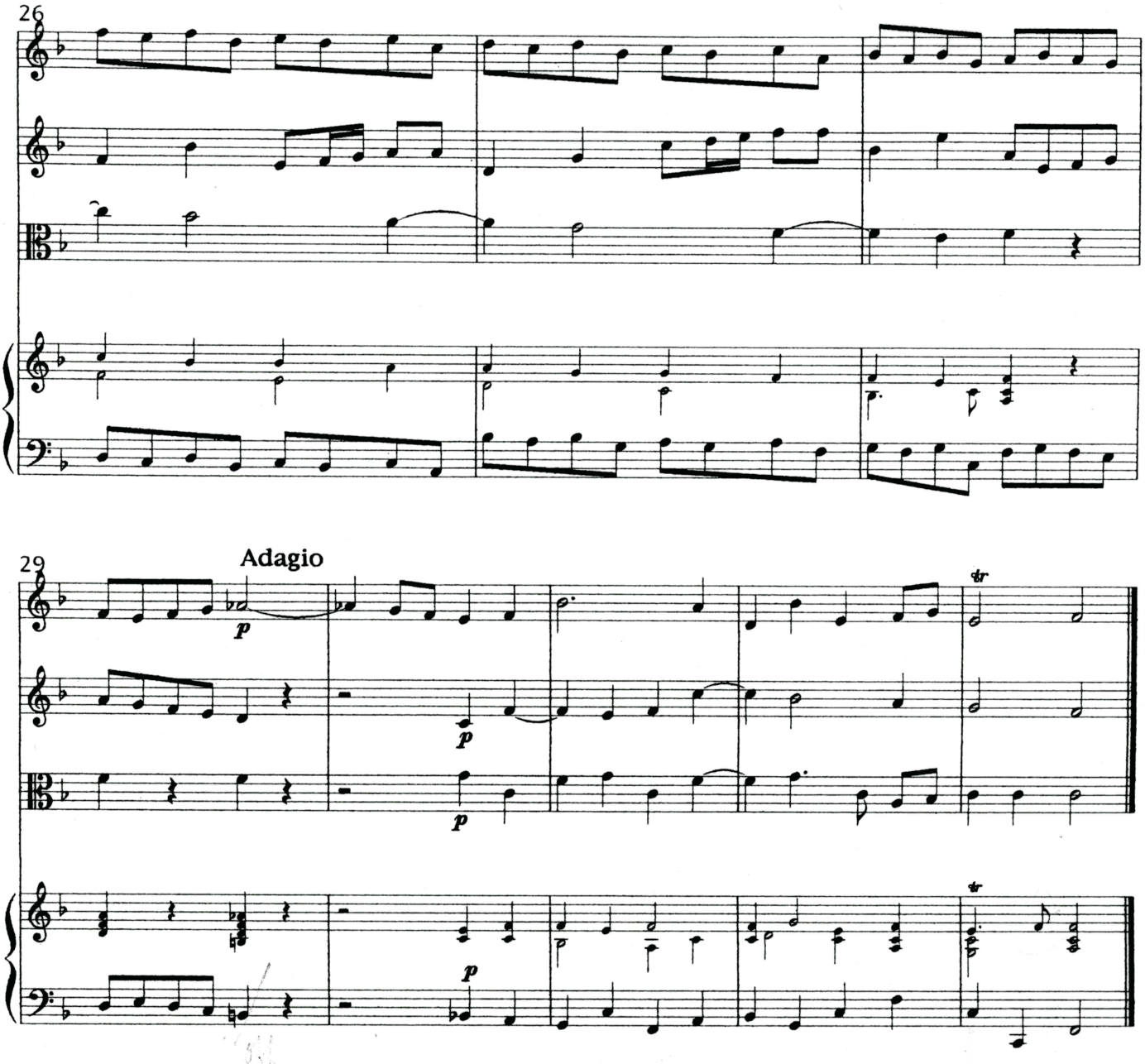
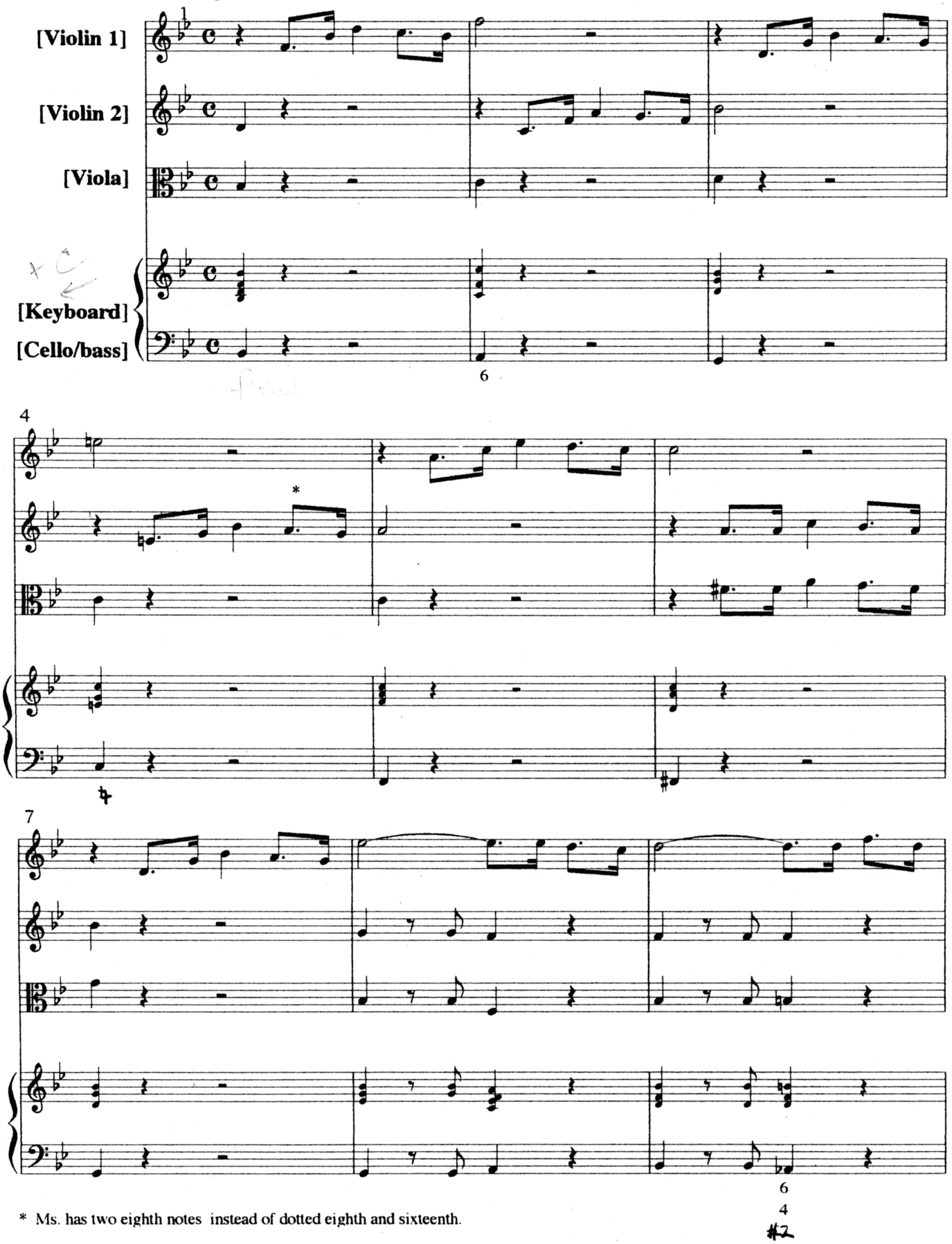

26
29
Adagio
p
p
p
p
tr
tr

Il Sacrifizio di Abramo (1708)

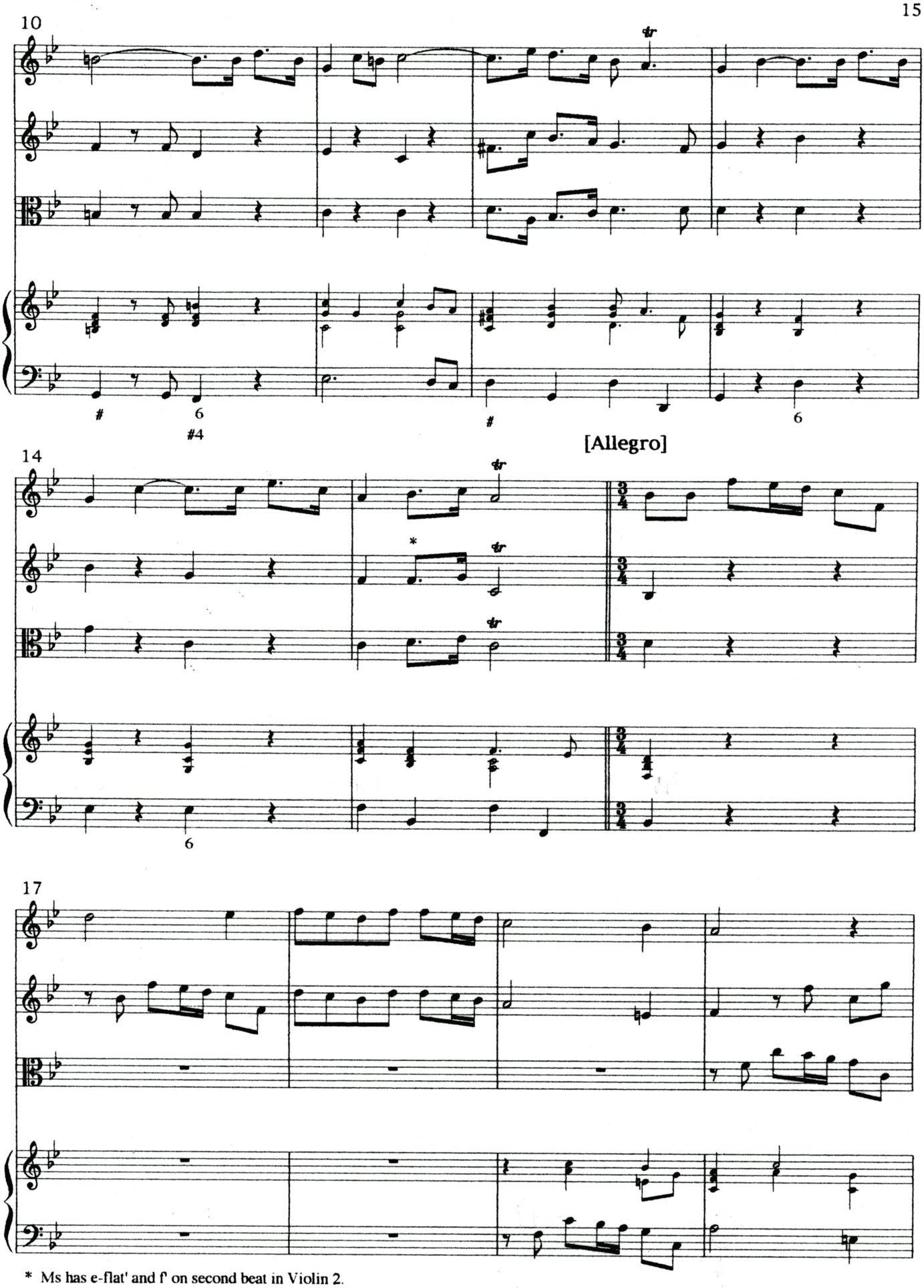
I. Introduzione

Largo

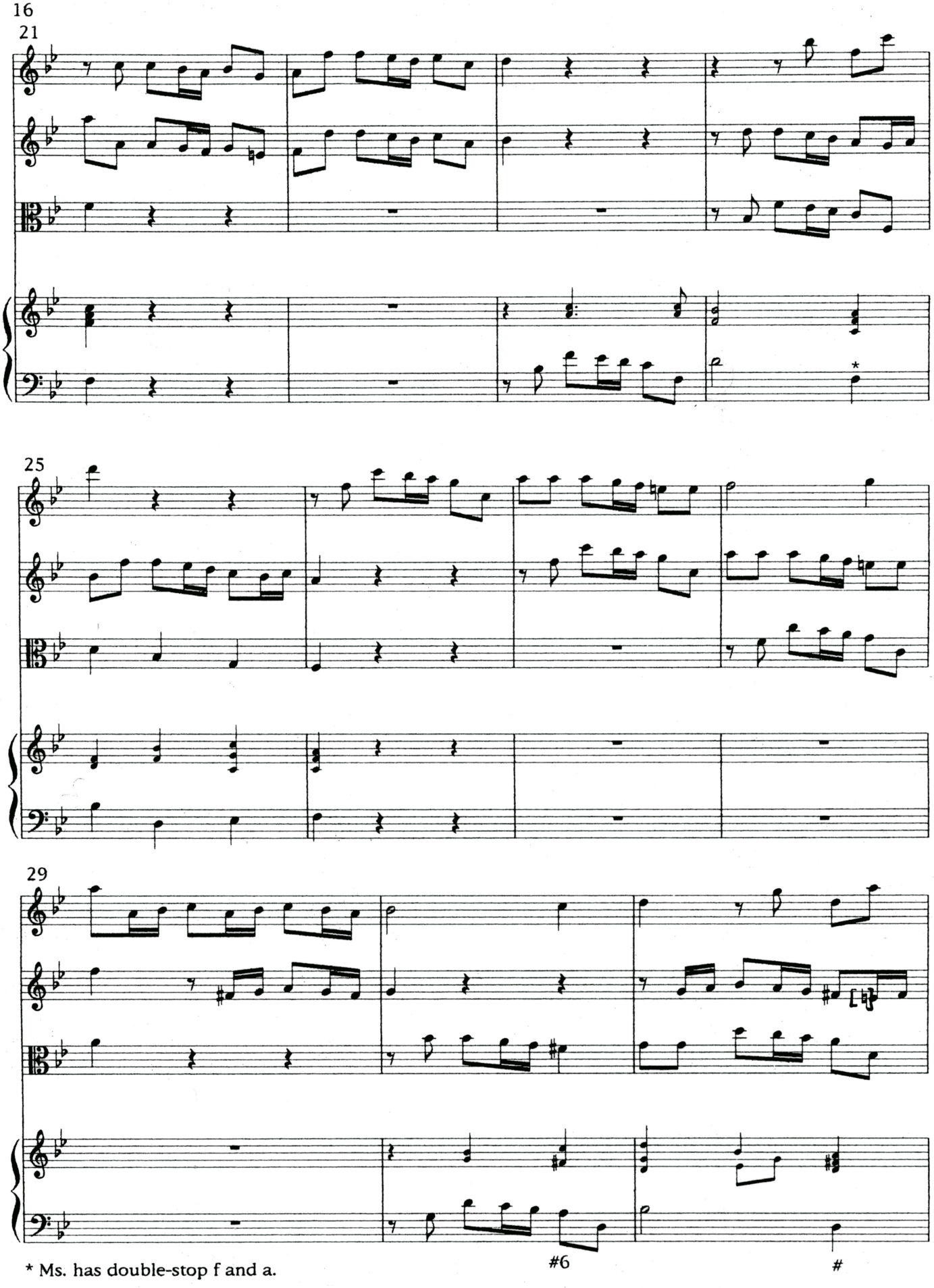
Camilla de Rossi



* Ms. has two eighth notes instead of dotted eighth and sixteenth.



* Ms has e-flat' and f' on second beat in Violin 2.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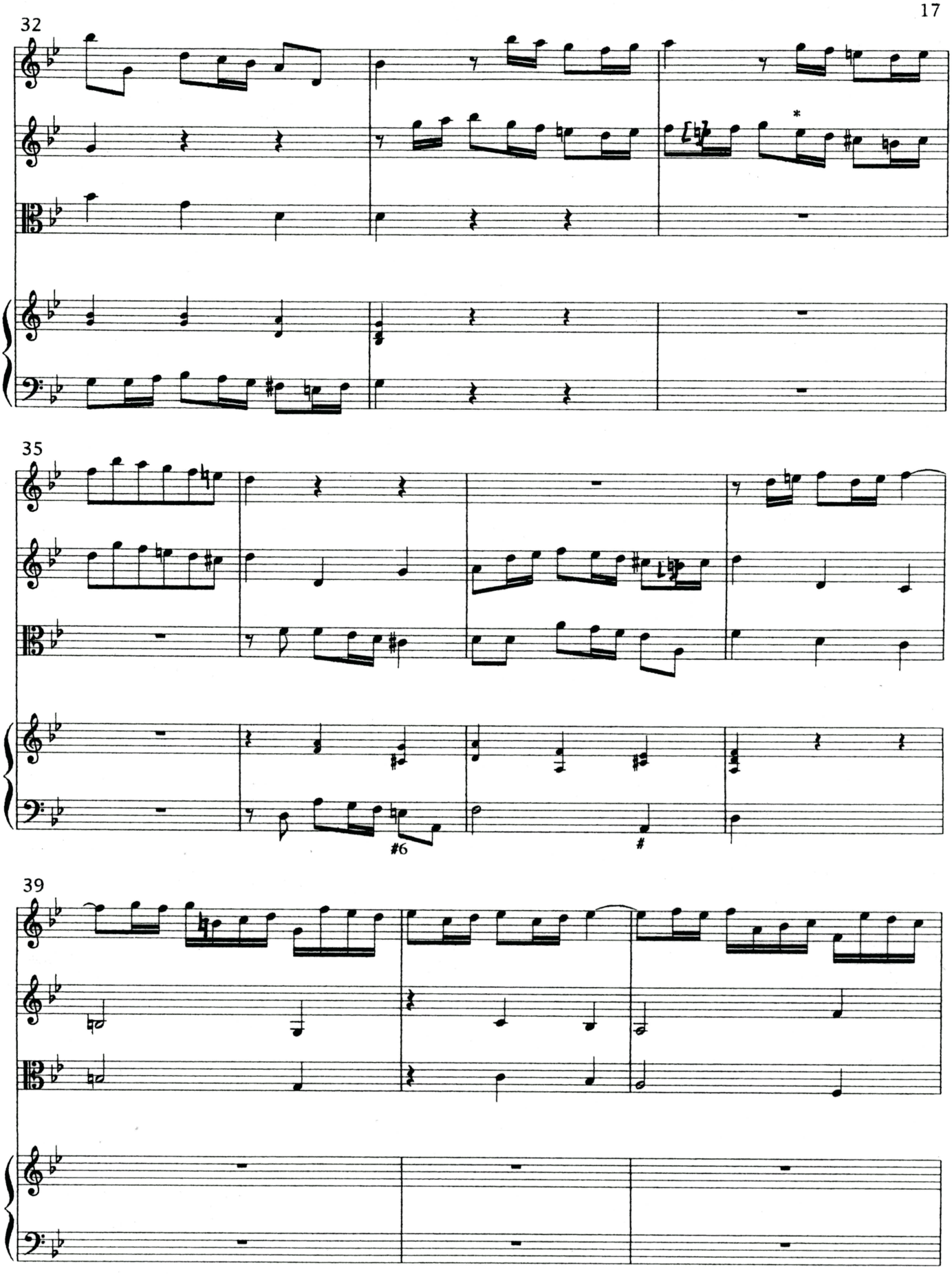
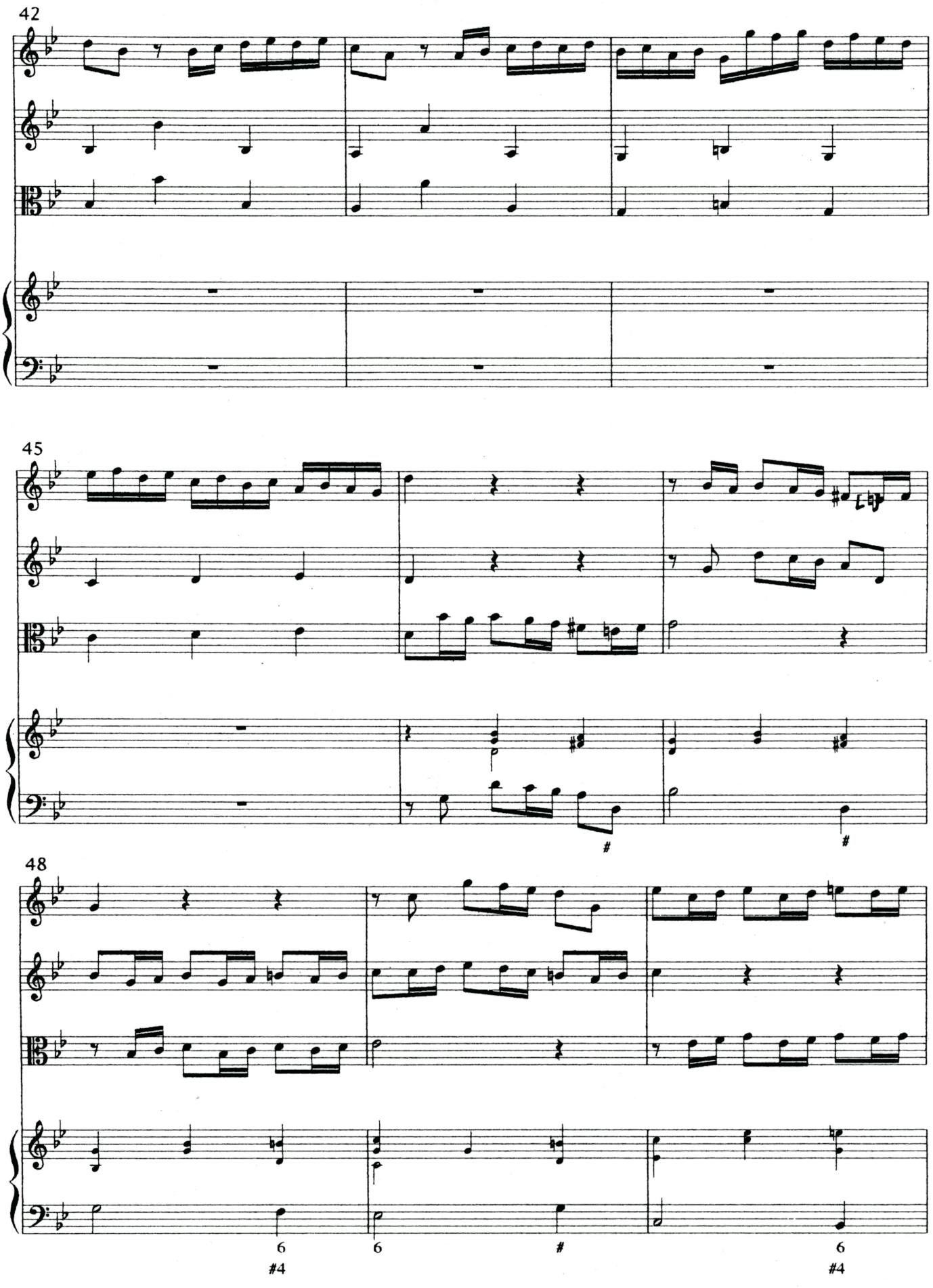
25
29
* Ms. has double-stop f and a.
#6
#



* Ms. has f " and e" for sixteenth notes on second beat.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48
6
#4
6
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6
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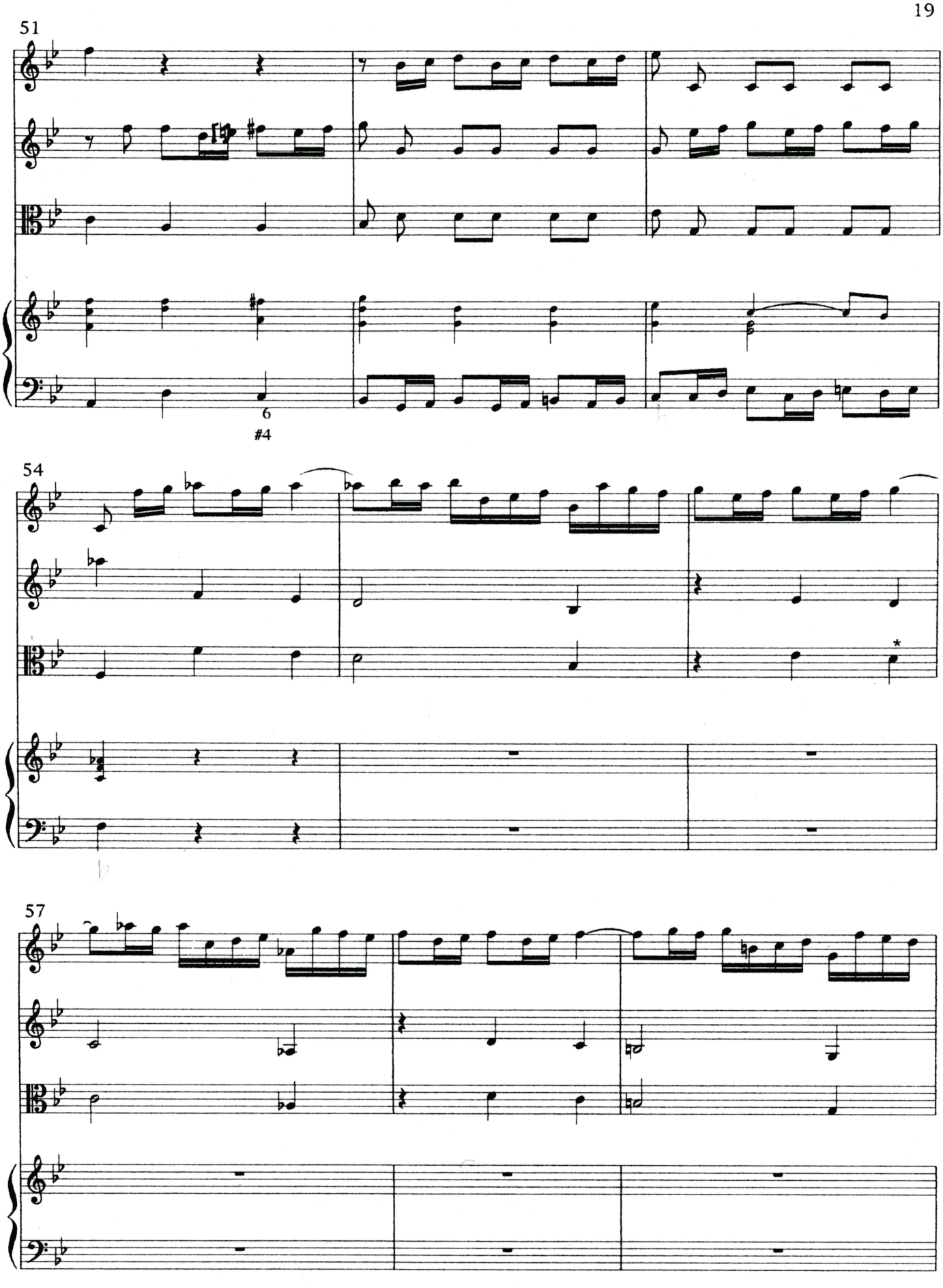
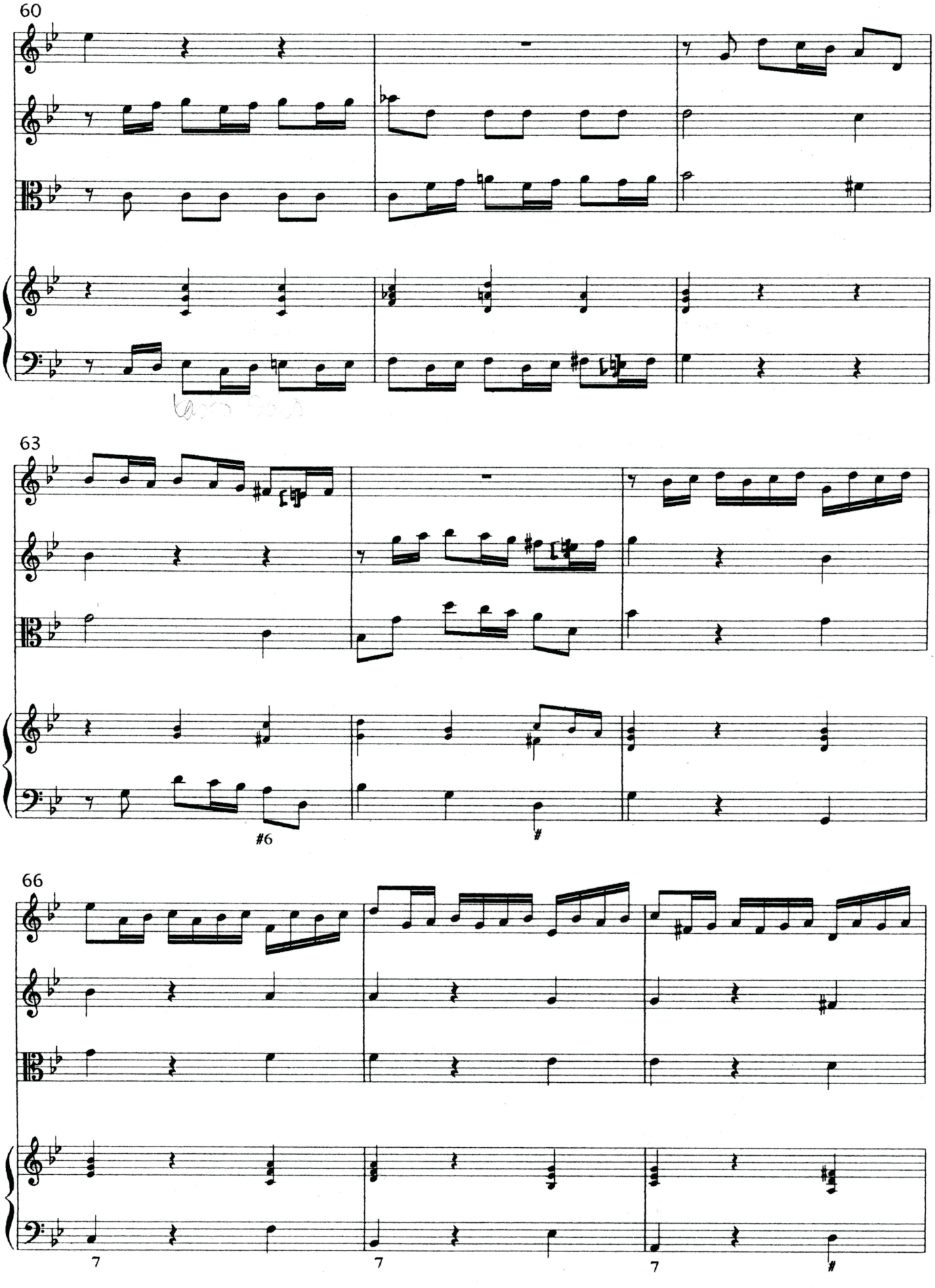


Ms. has e' on third beat in viola.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#6
#
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7
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7
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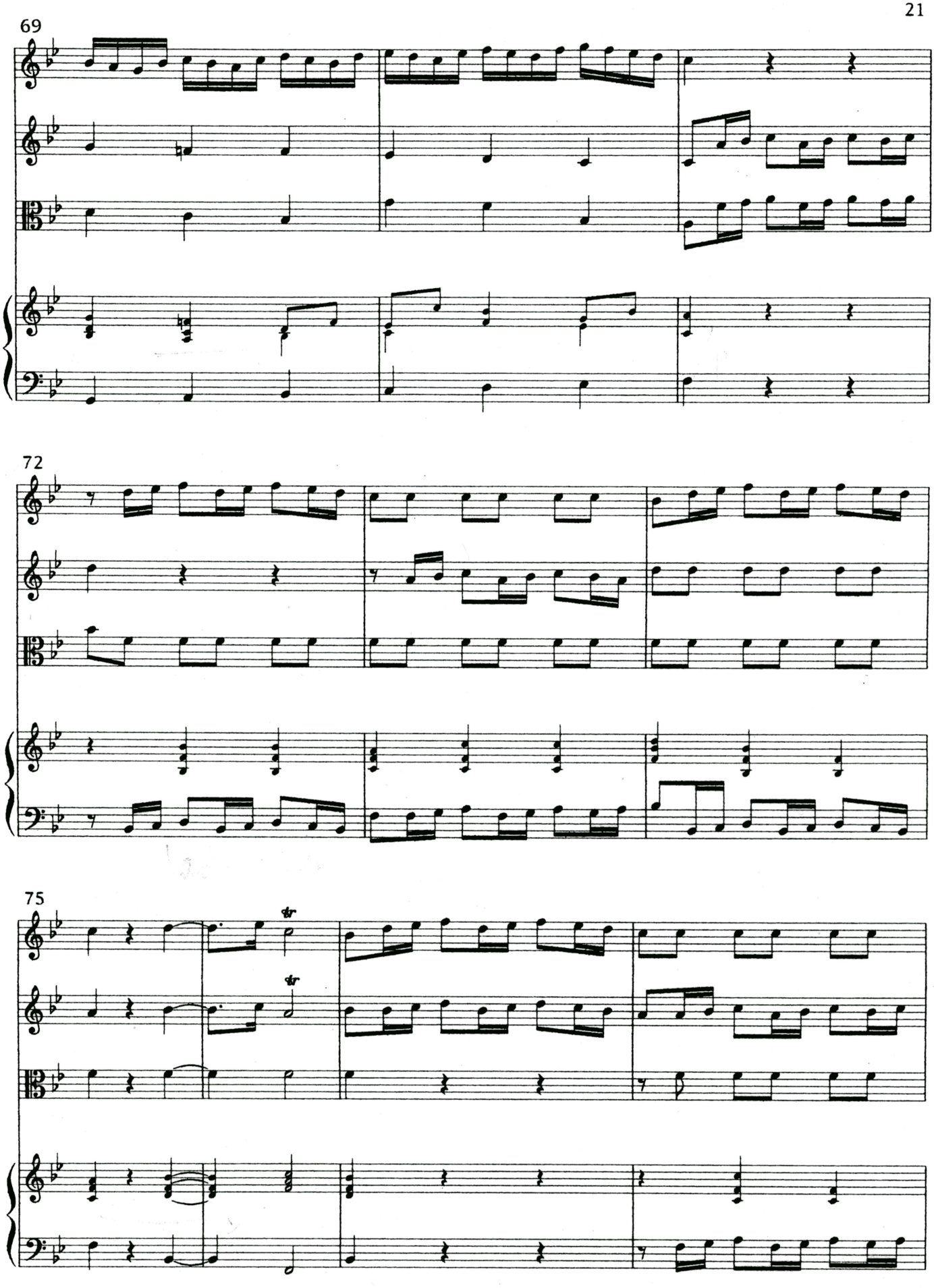
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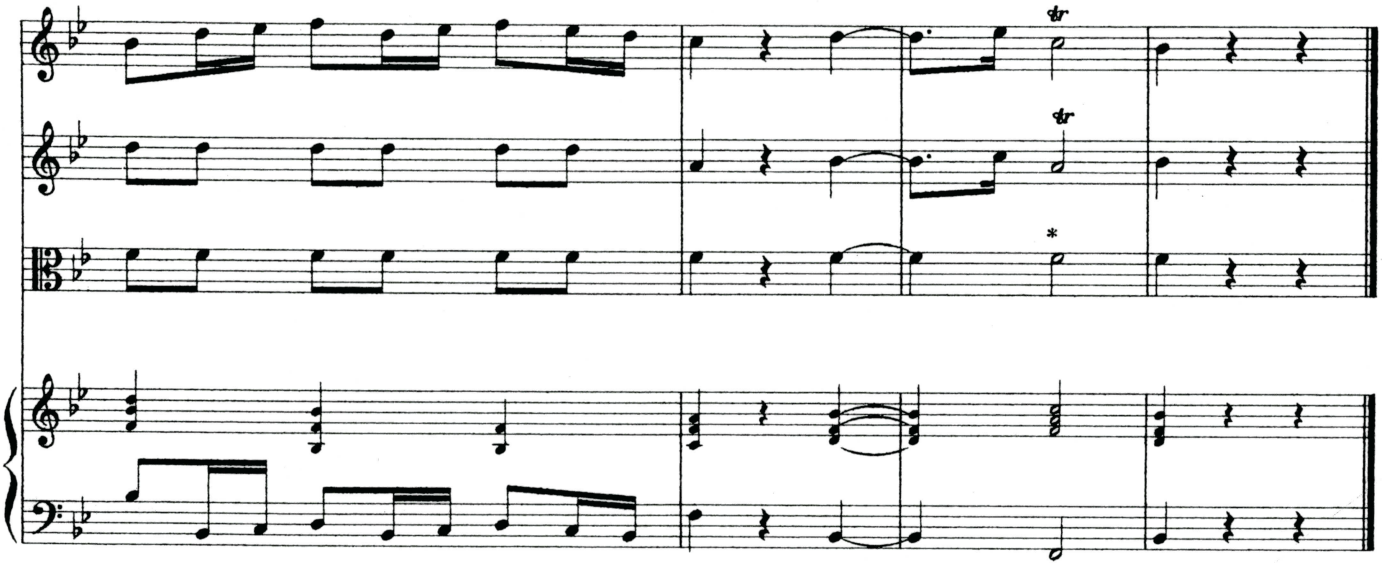
72
75
tr
tr

79



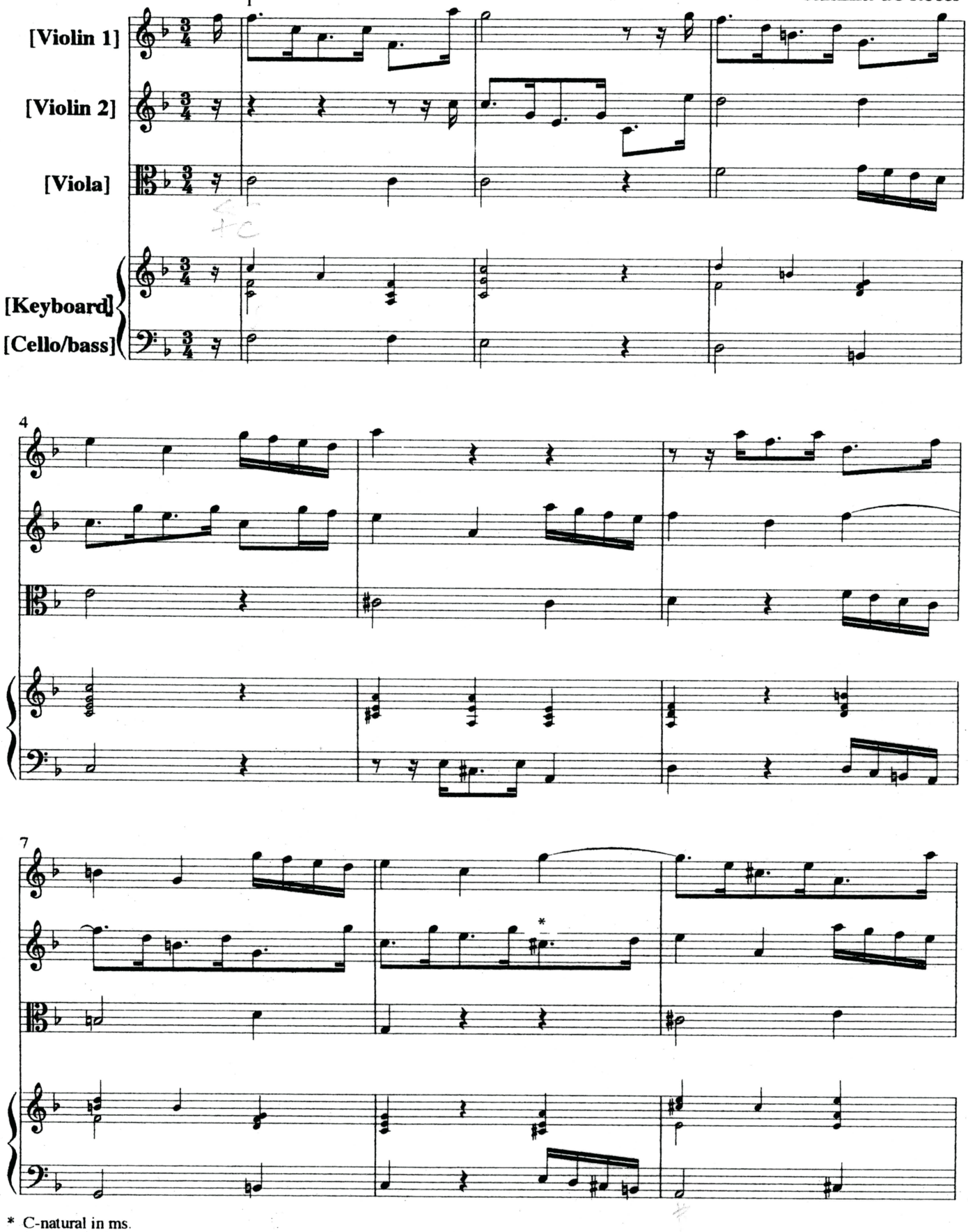
* Ms. has e' on second beat in viola.

Il Figliuol Prodigo (1709)

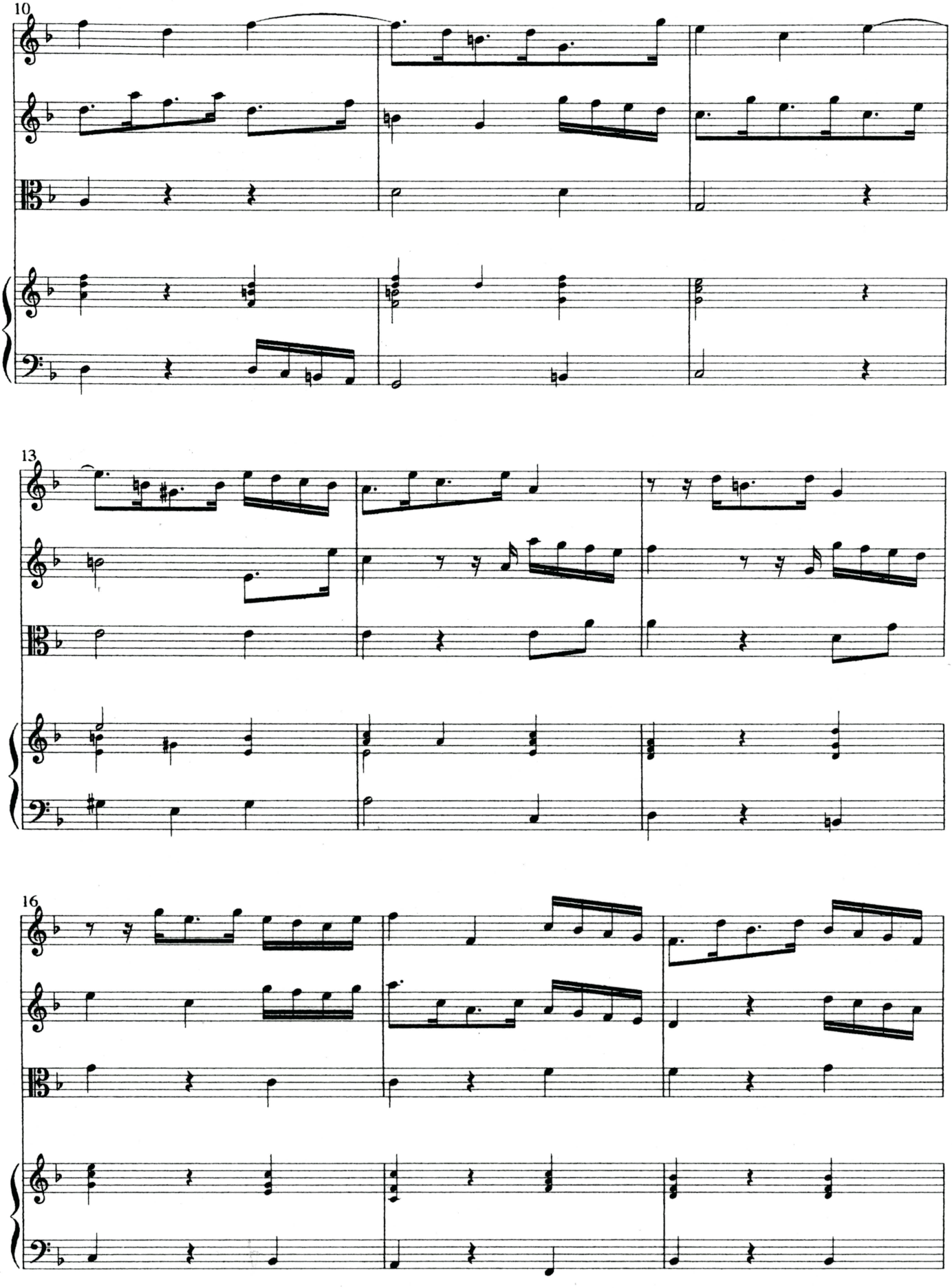
I. Introduzione

Adagio, e staccato

Camilla de Rossi



* C-natural in ms.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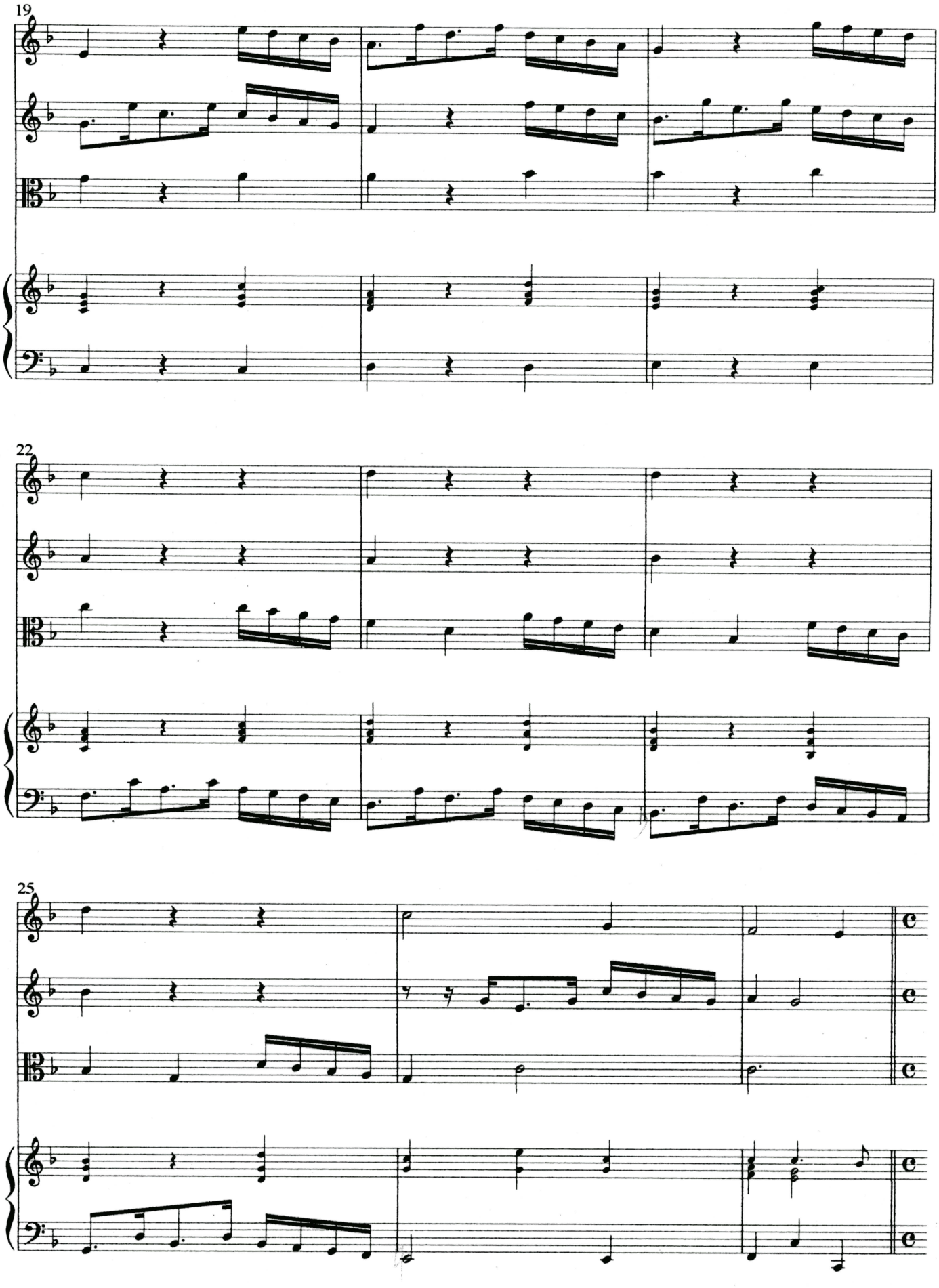
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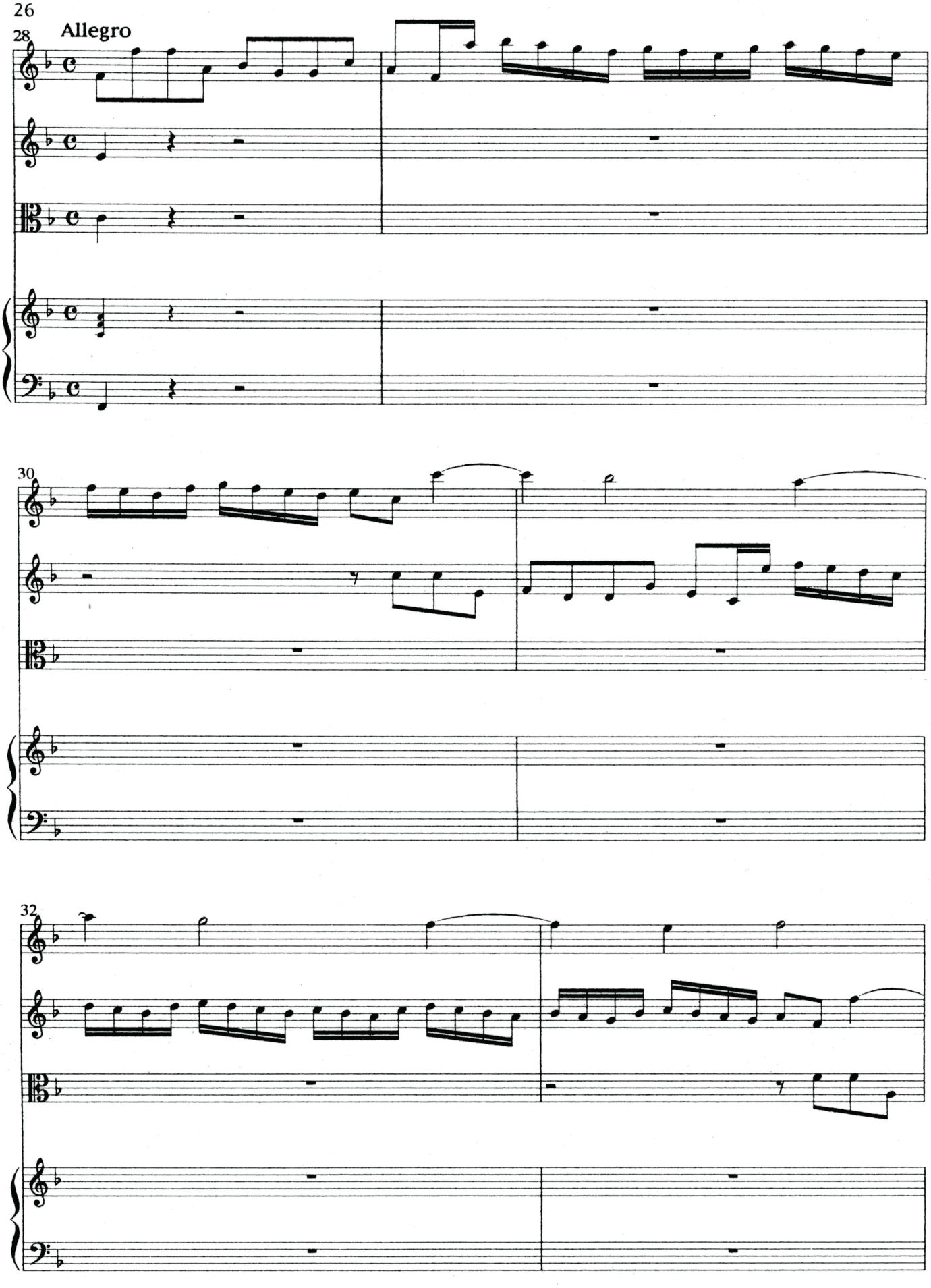
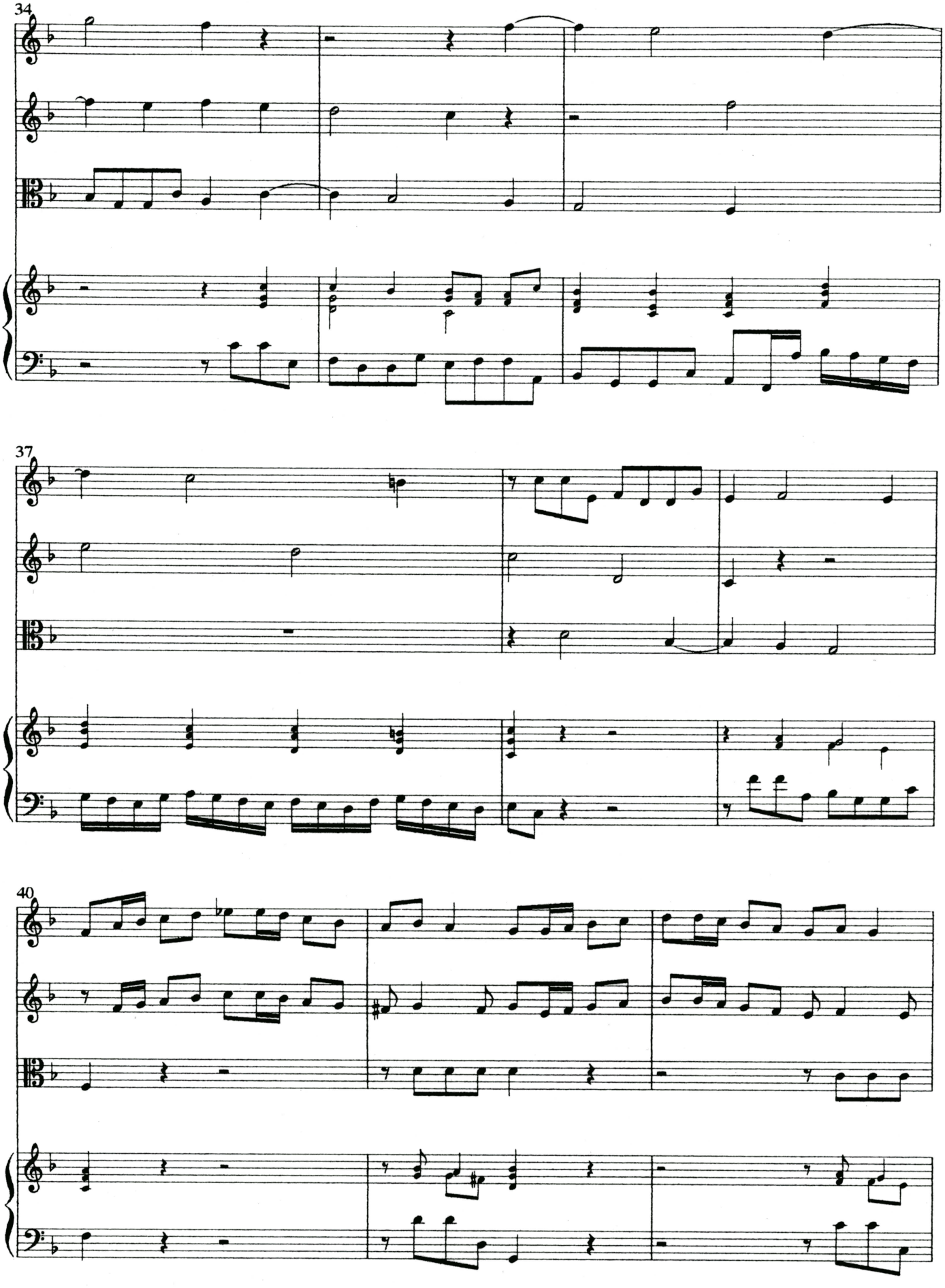

28
Allegro
30
32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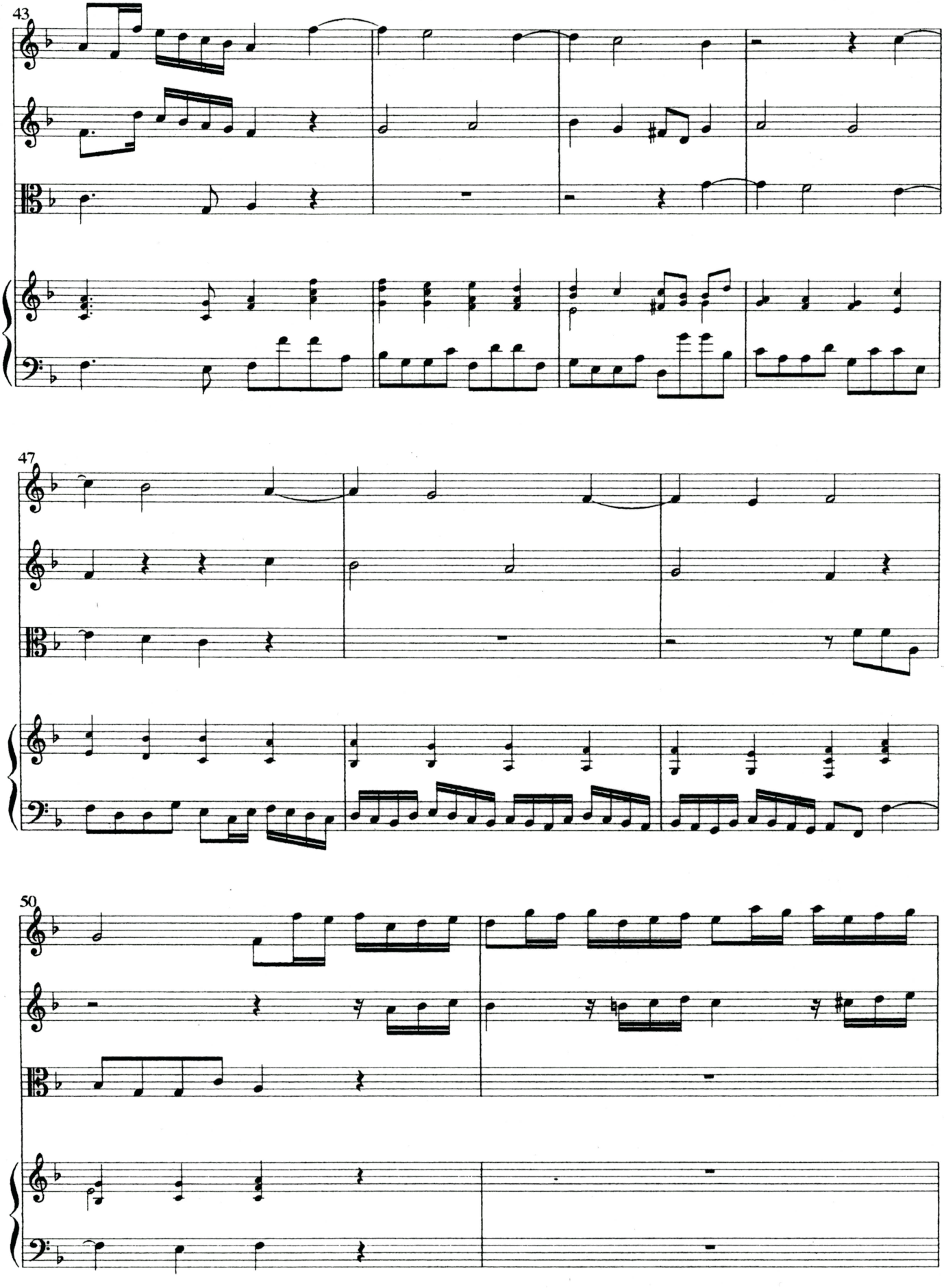
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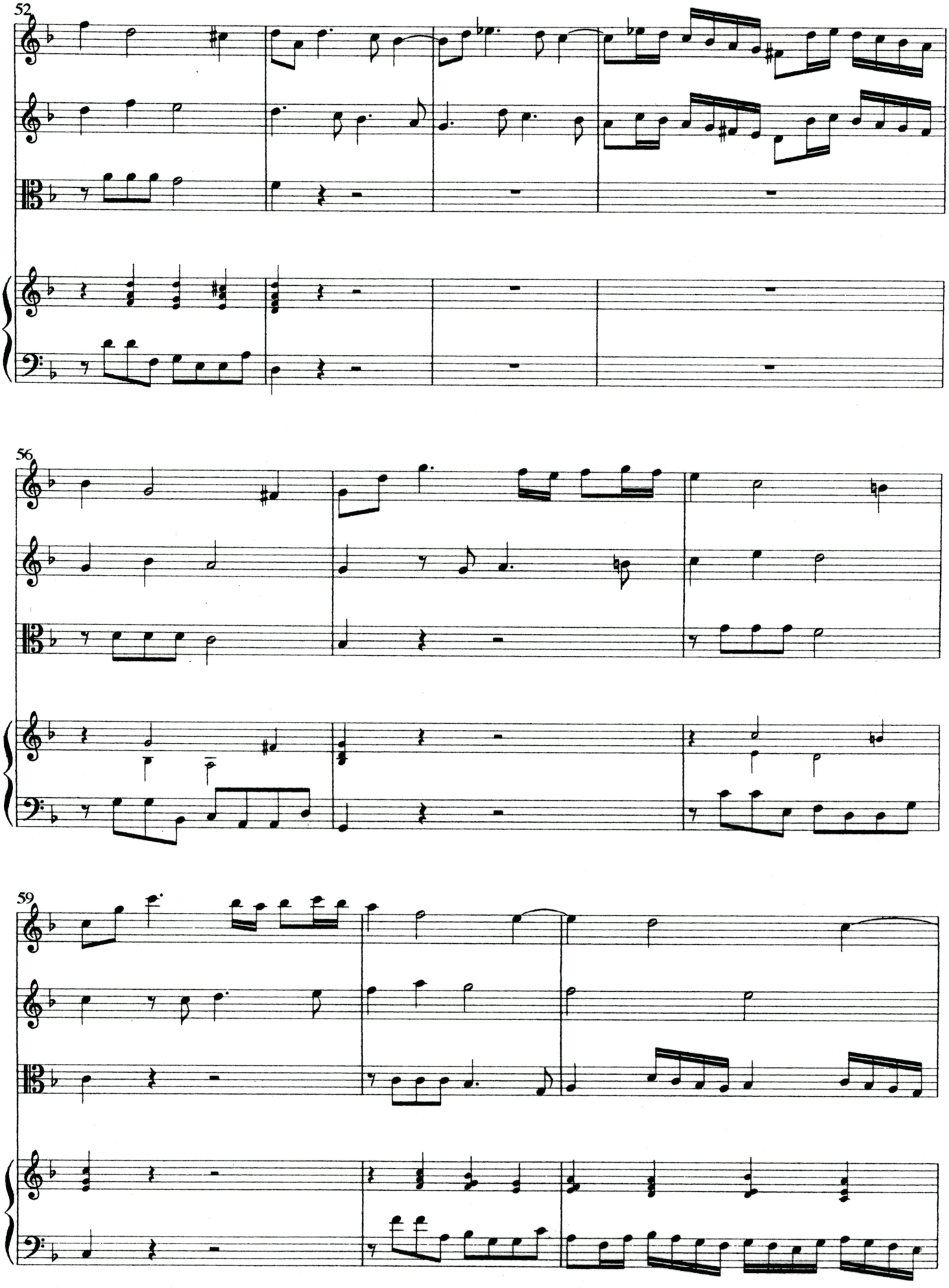
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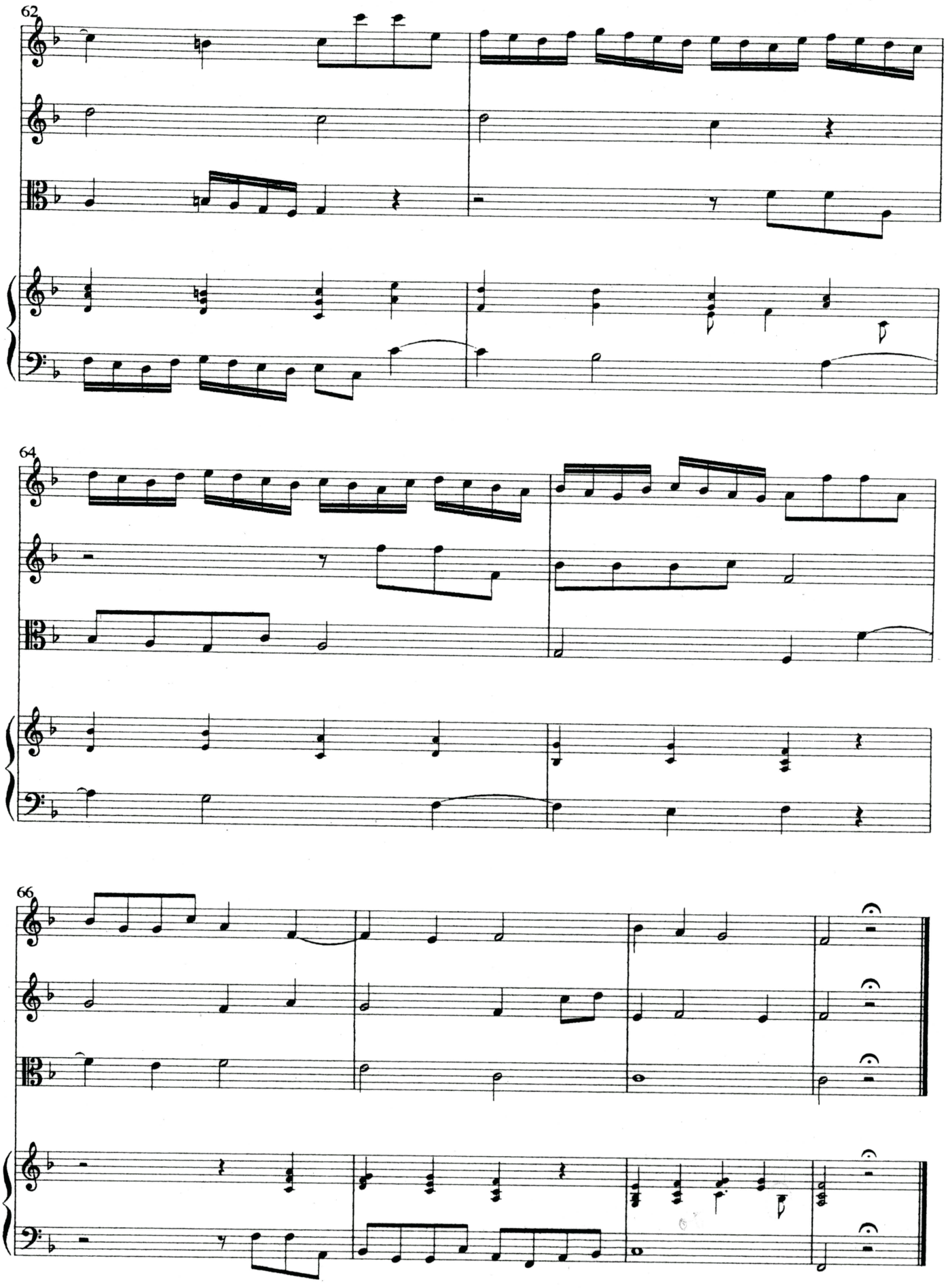
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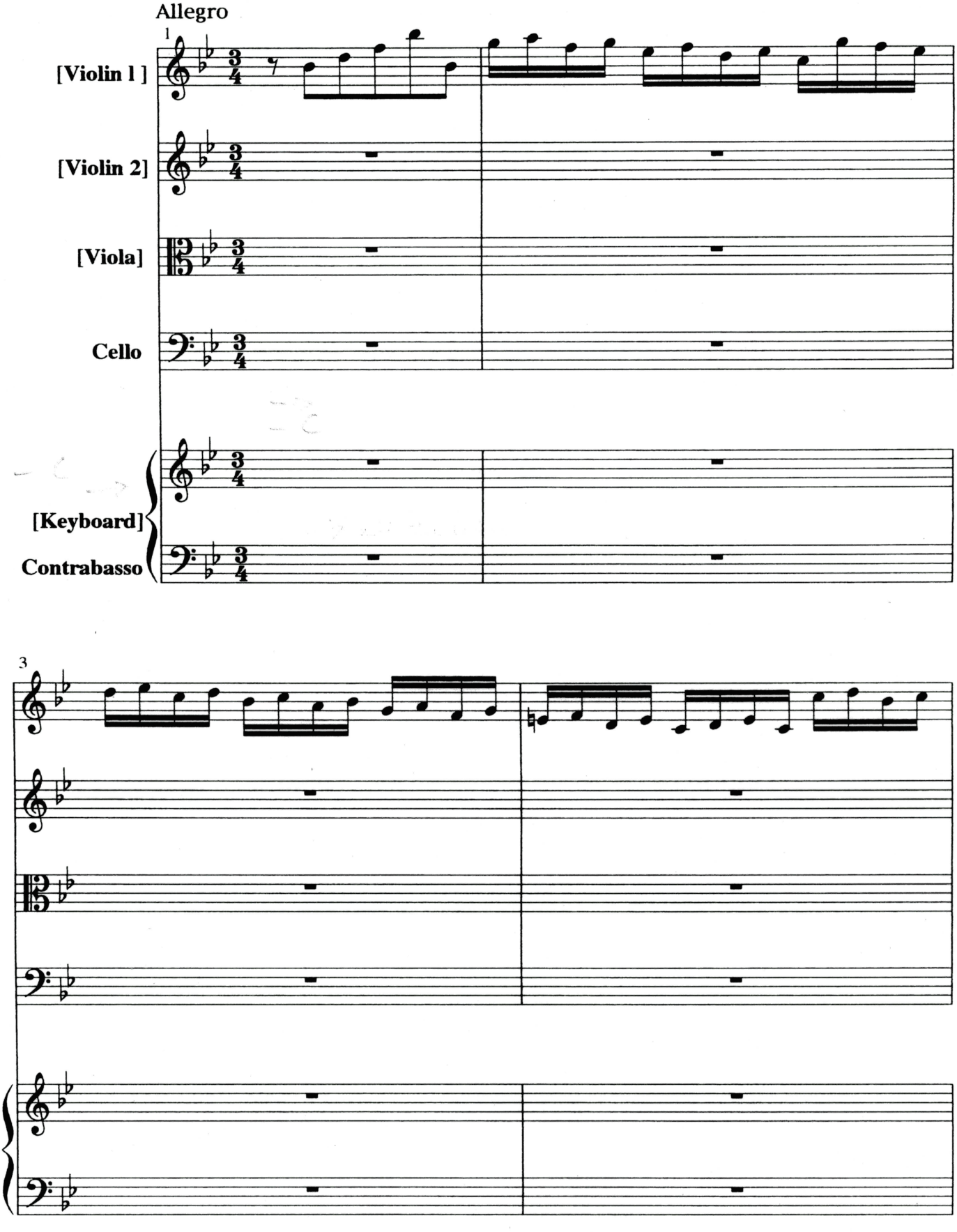
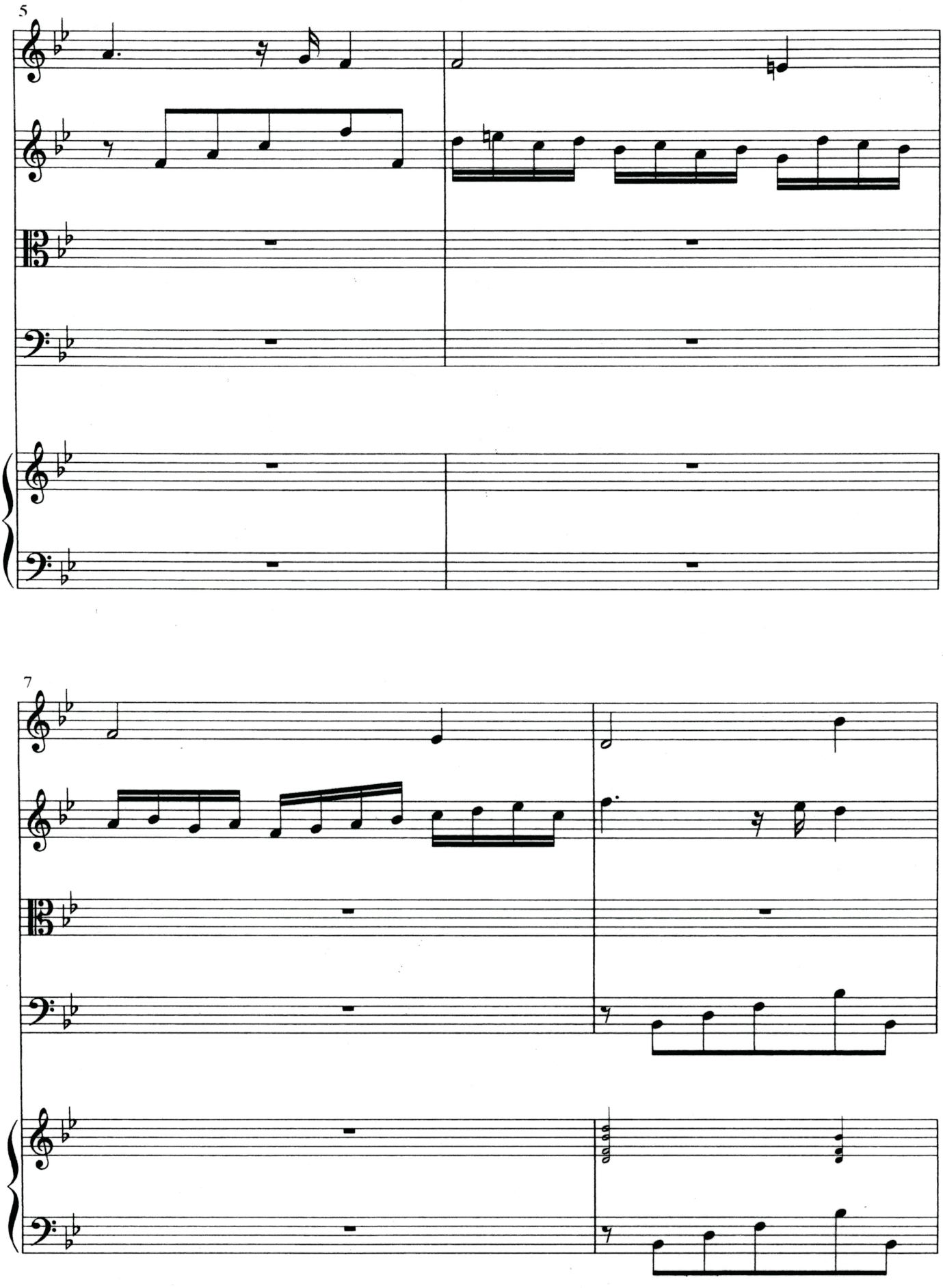
64
66

Il Figliuol Prodigo (1709)

Original signature, one flat

Sinfonia. II.

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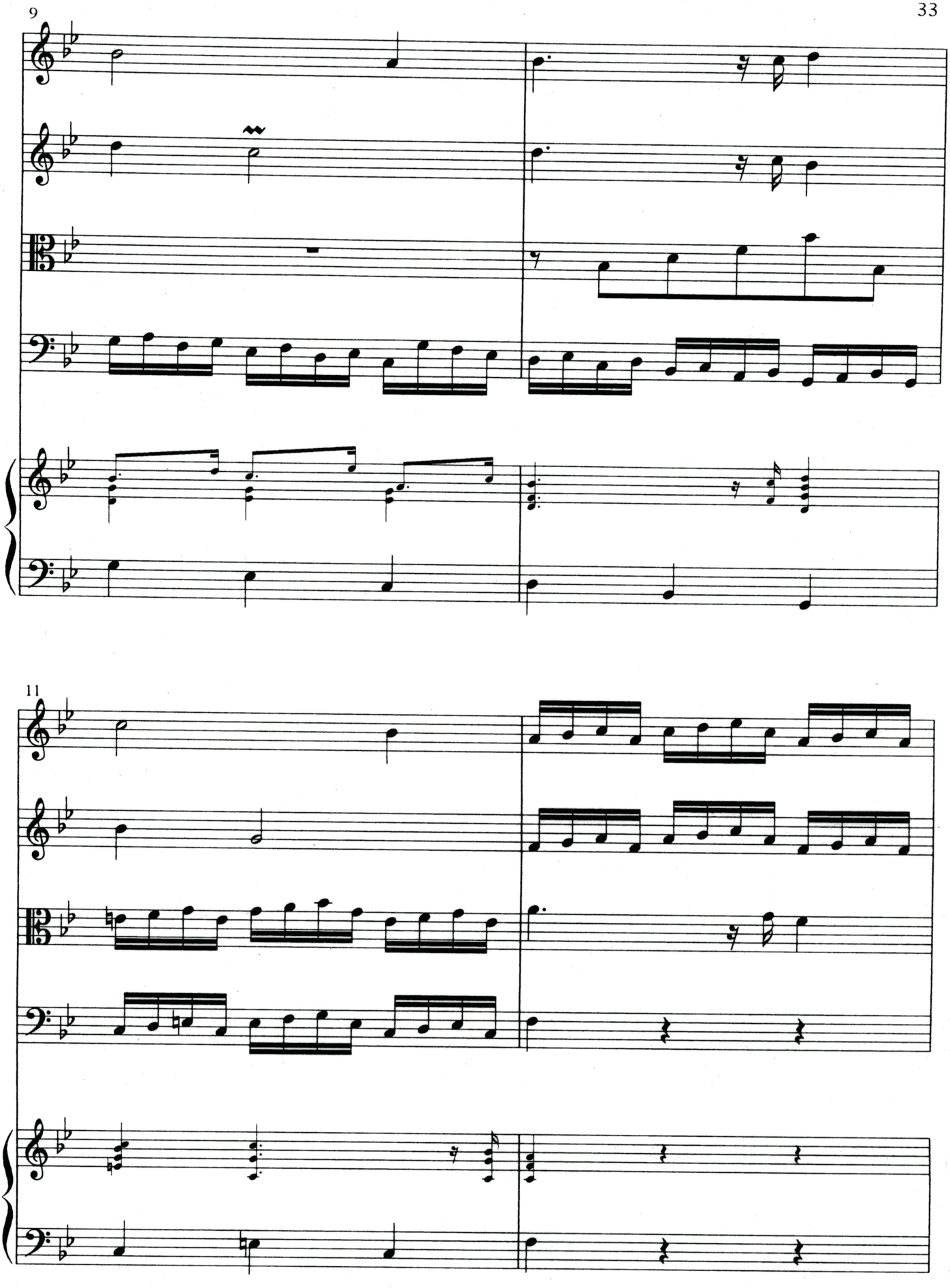
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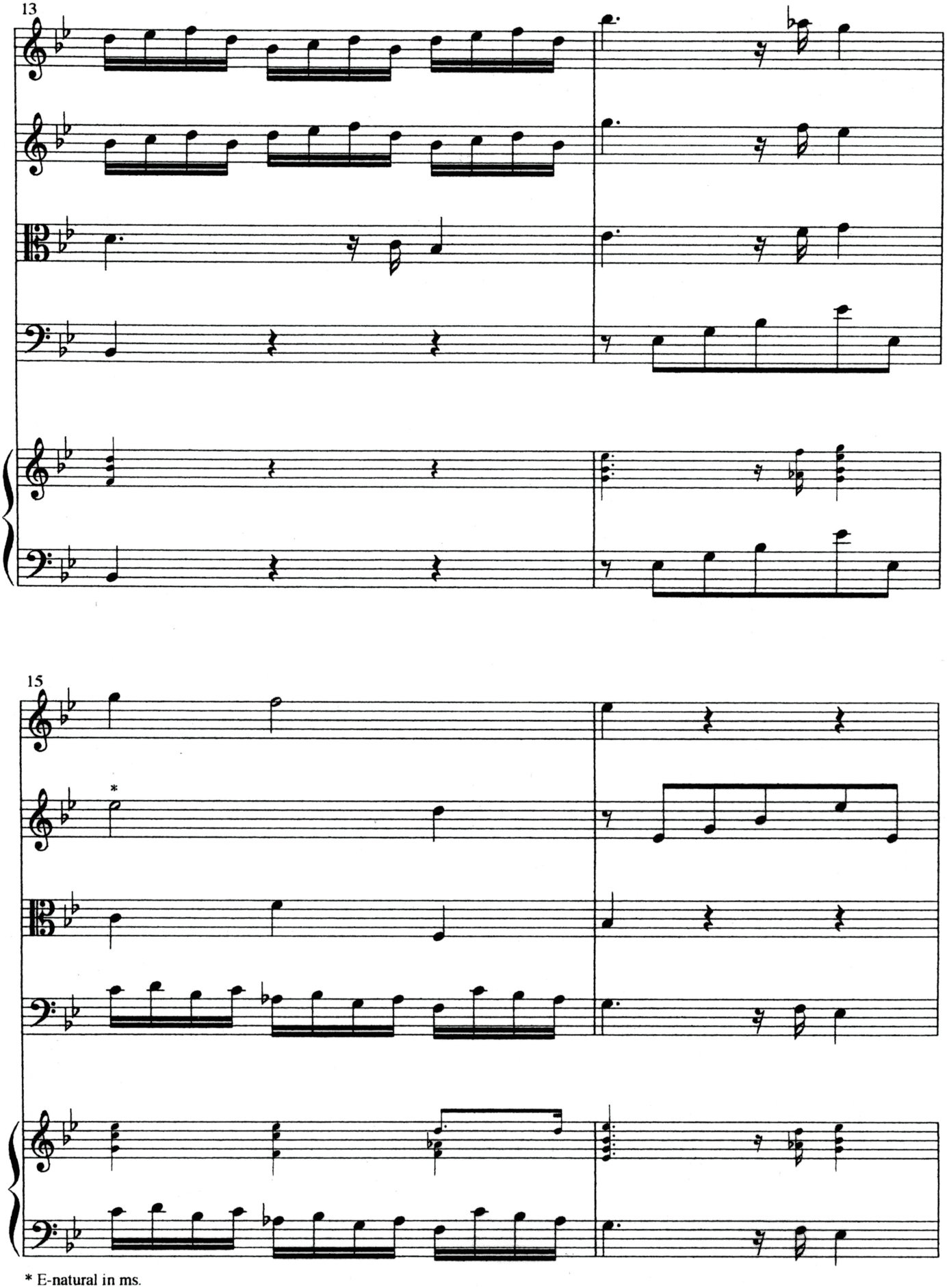
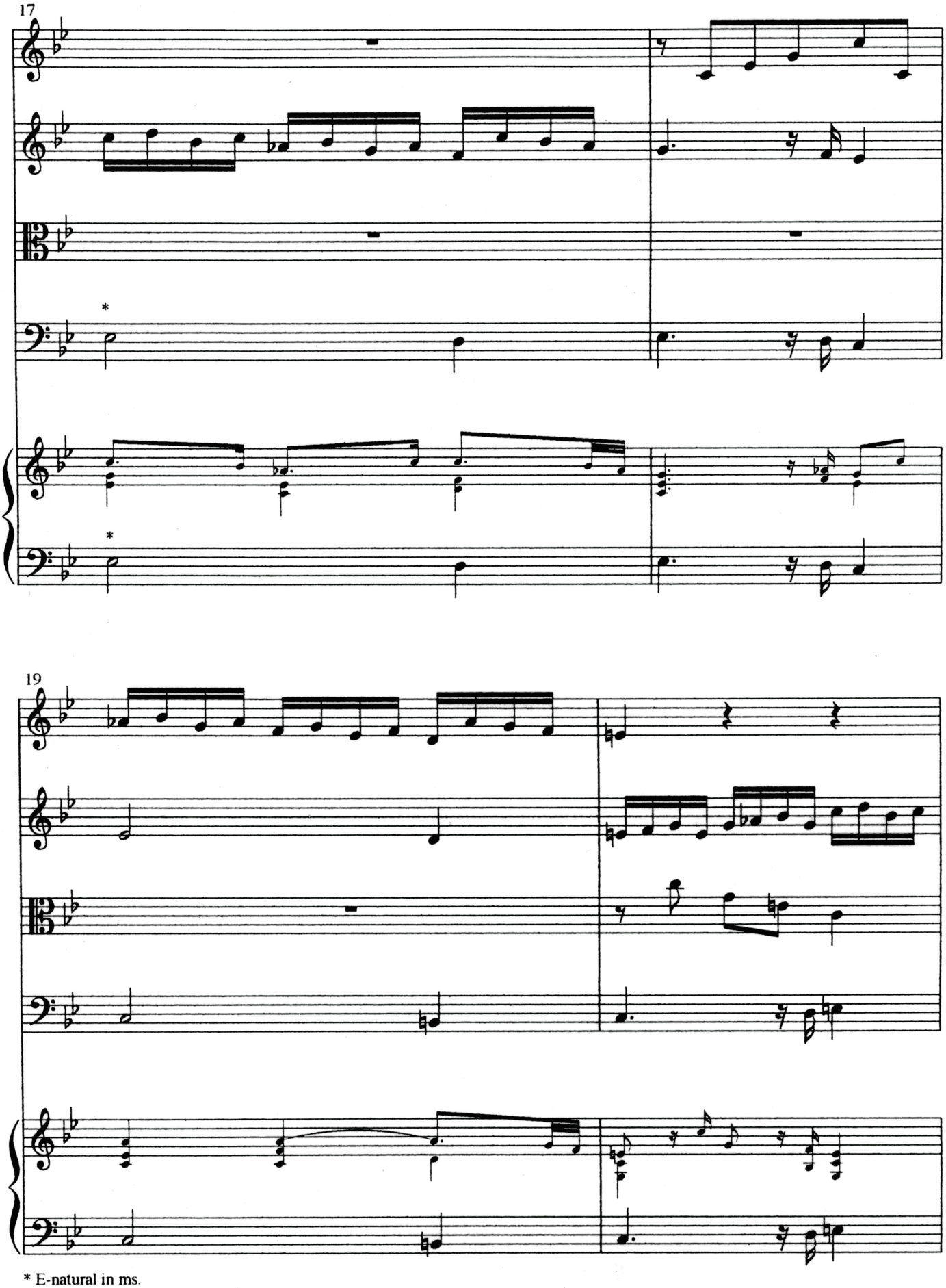


* E-natural in ms.



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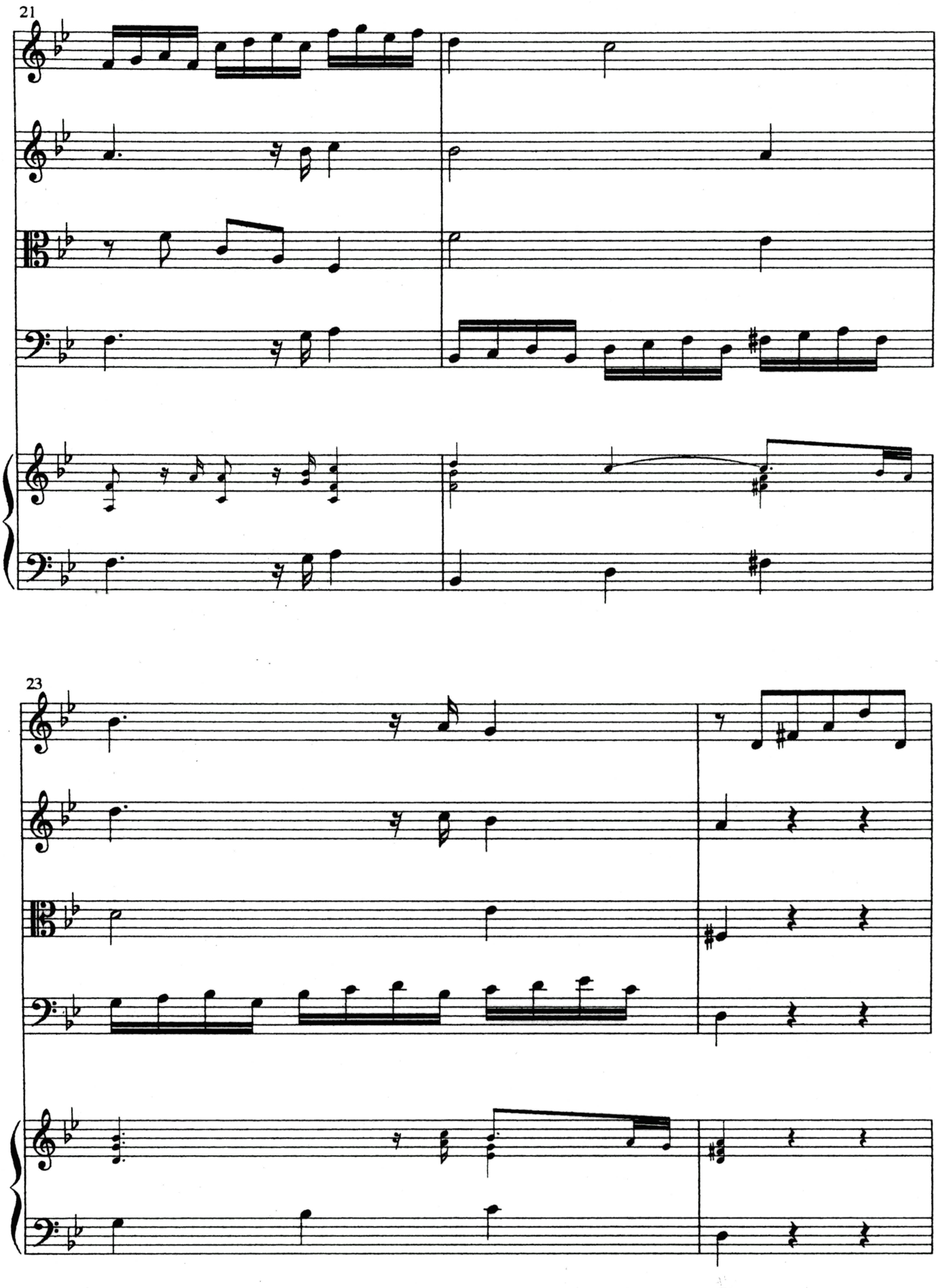
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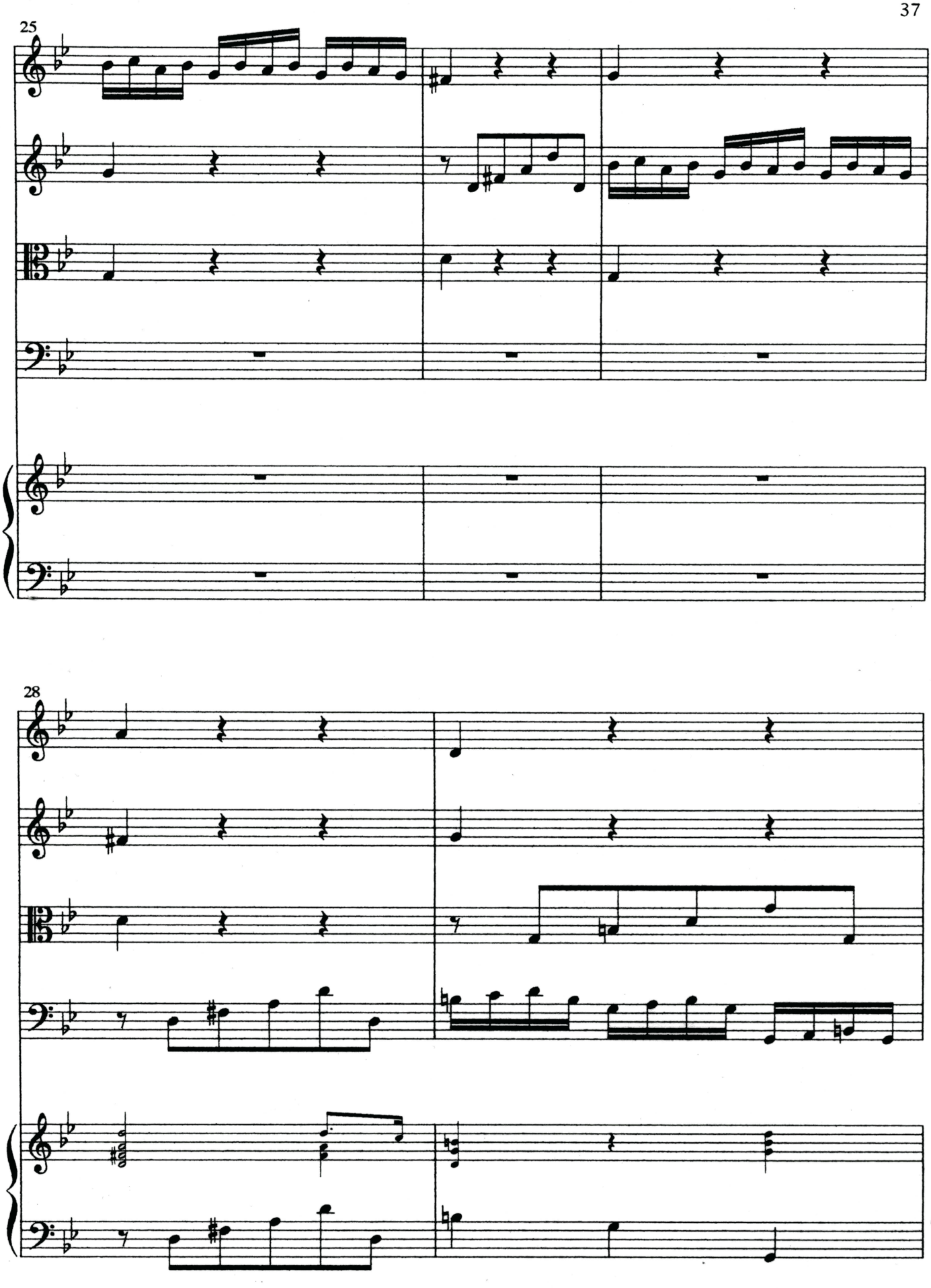
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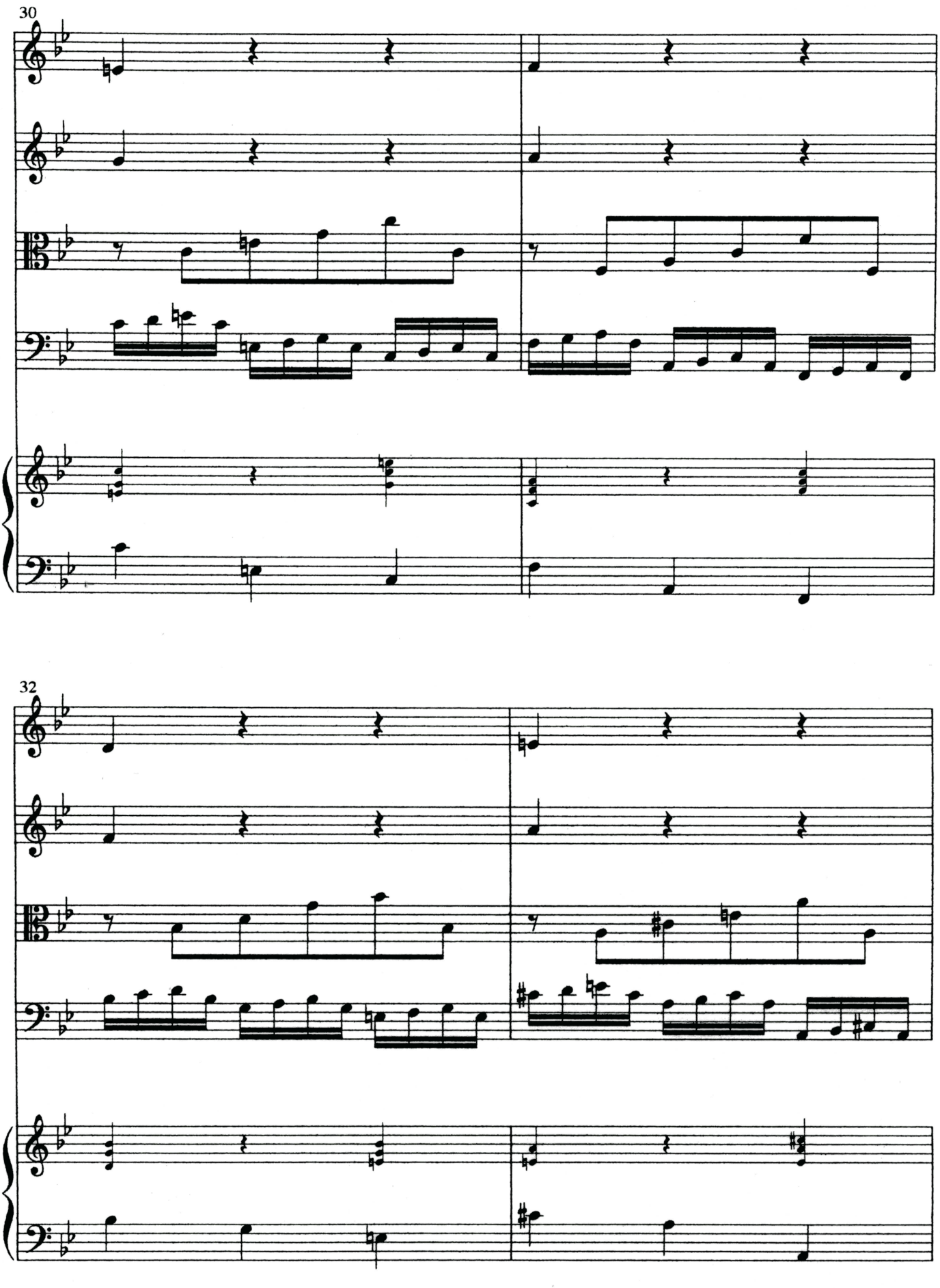
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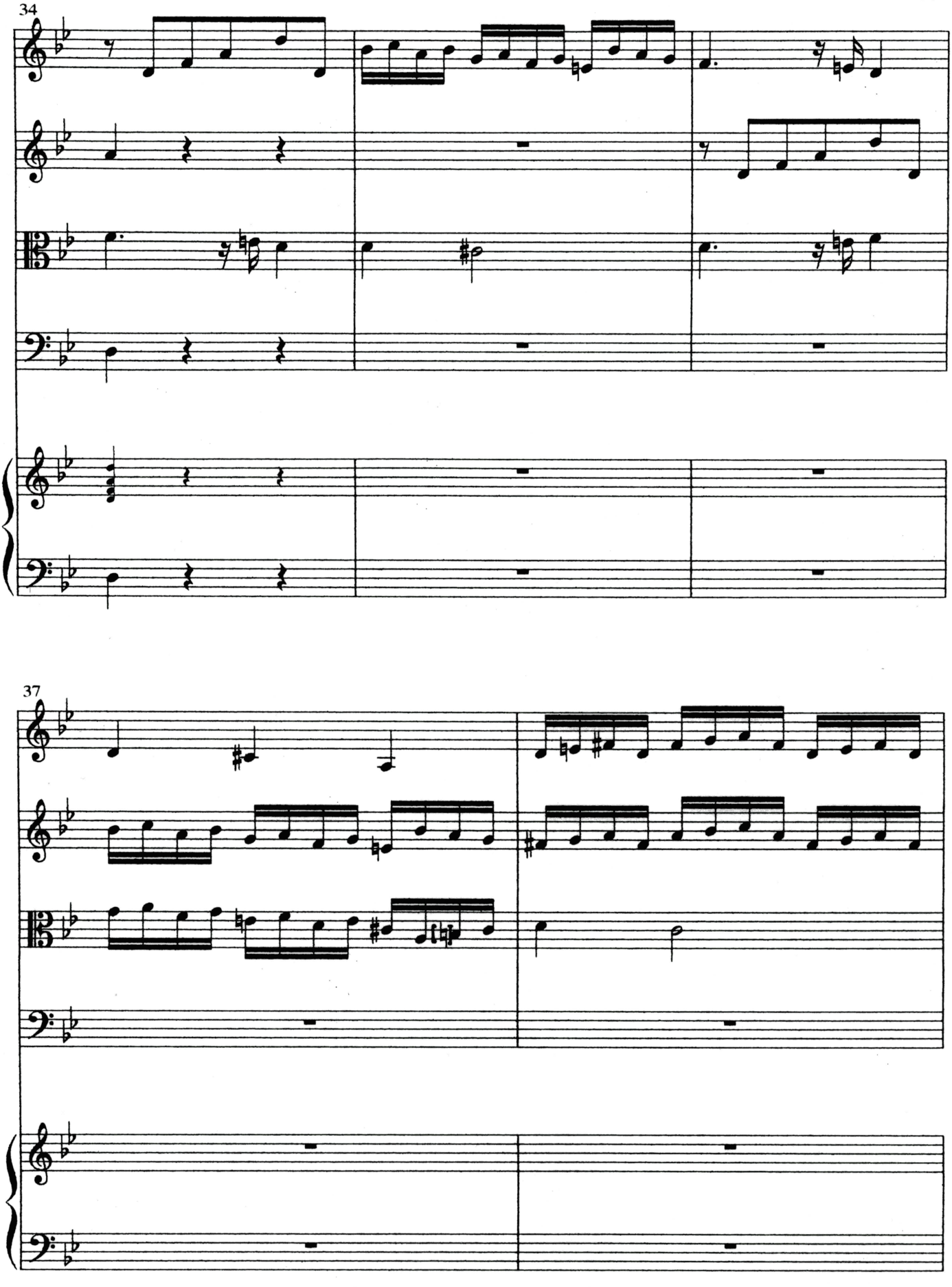
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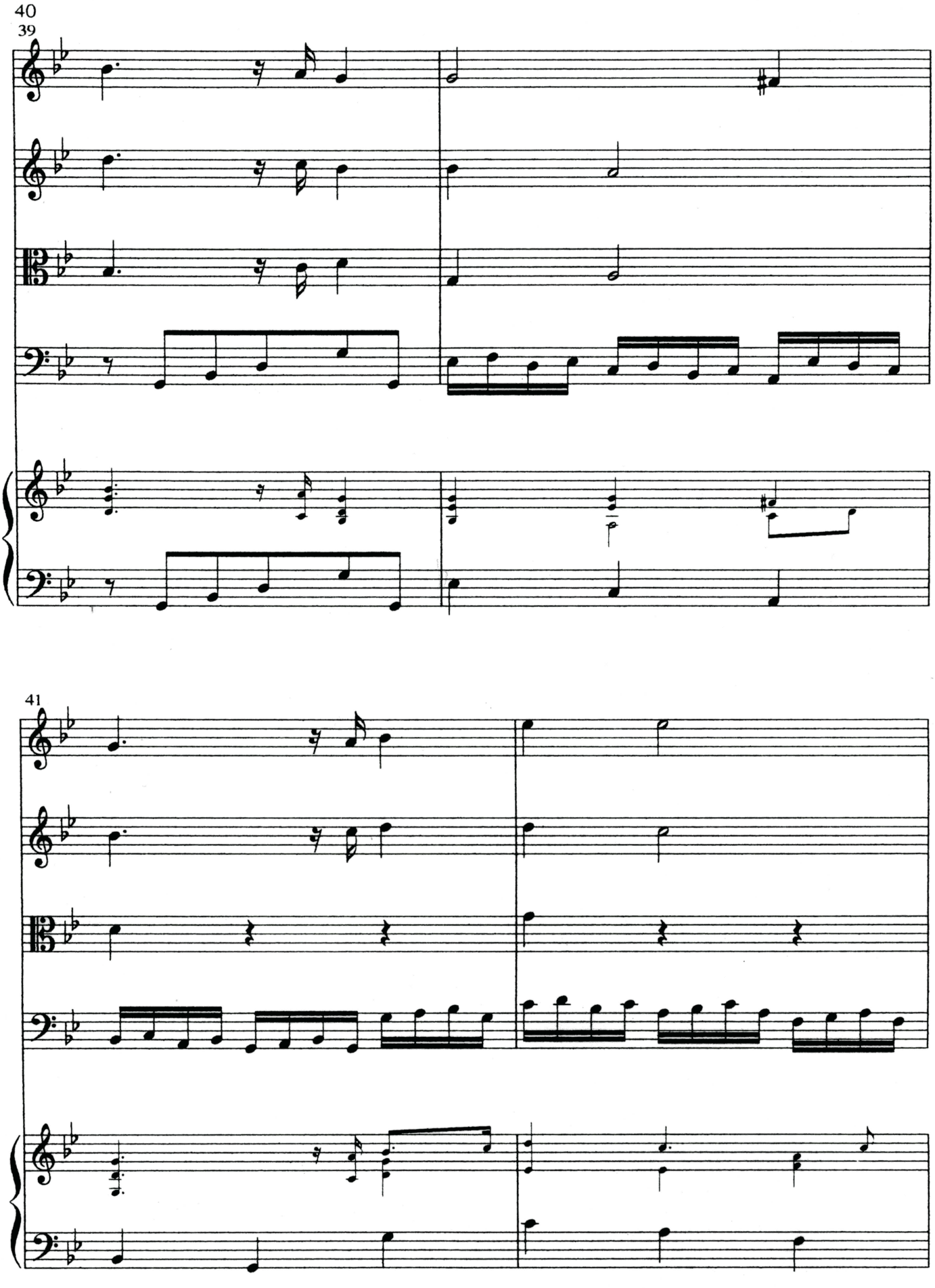
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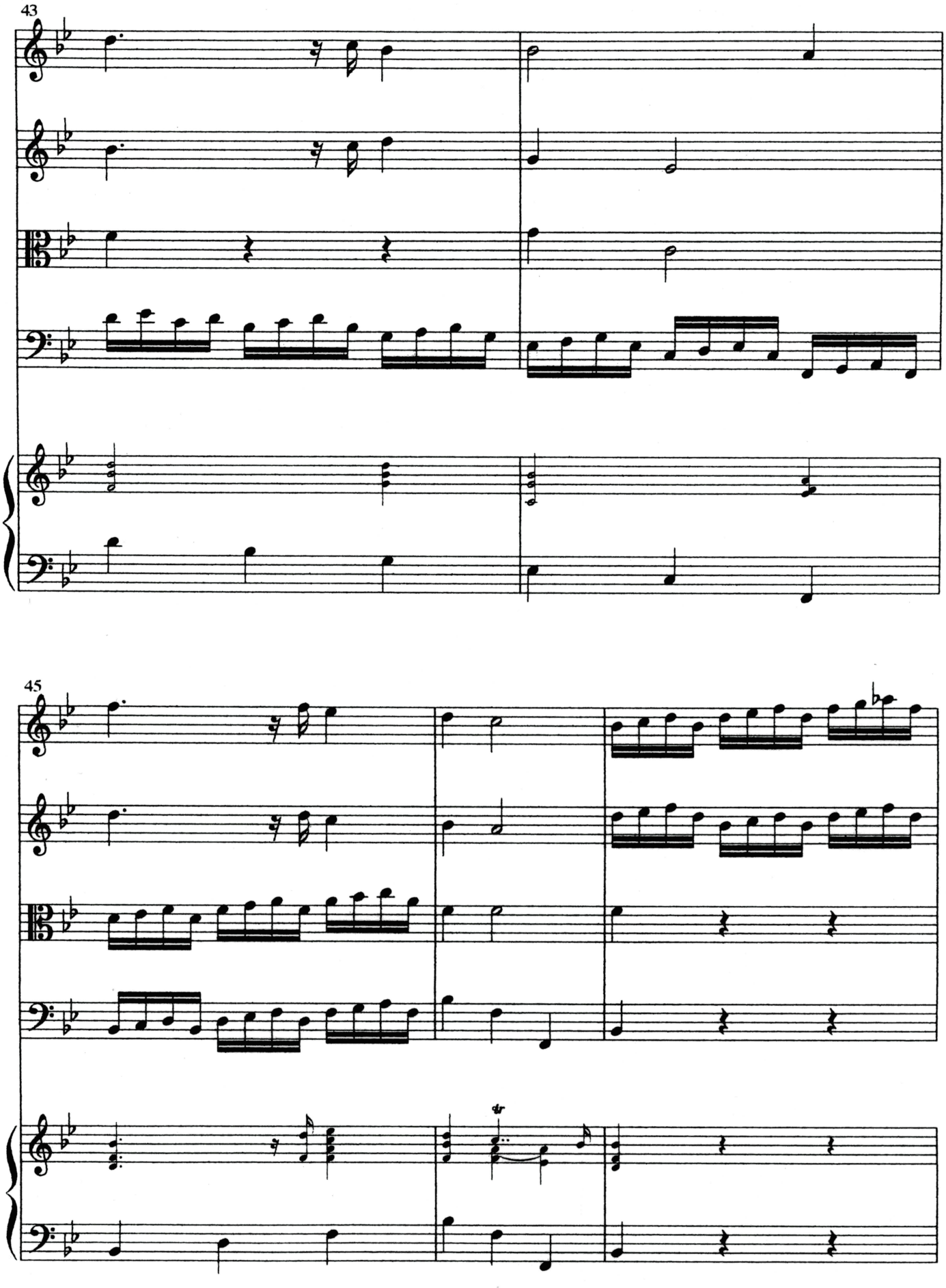
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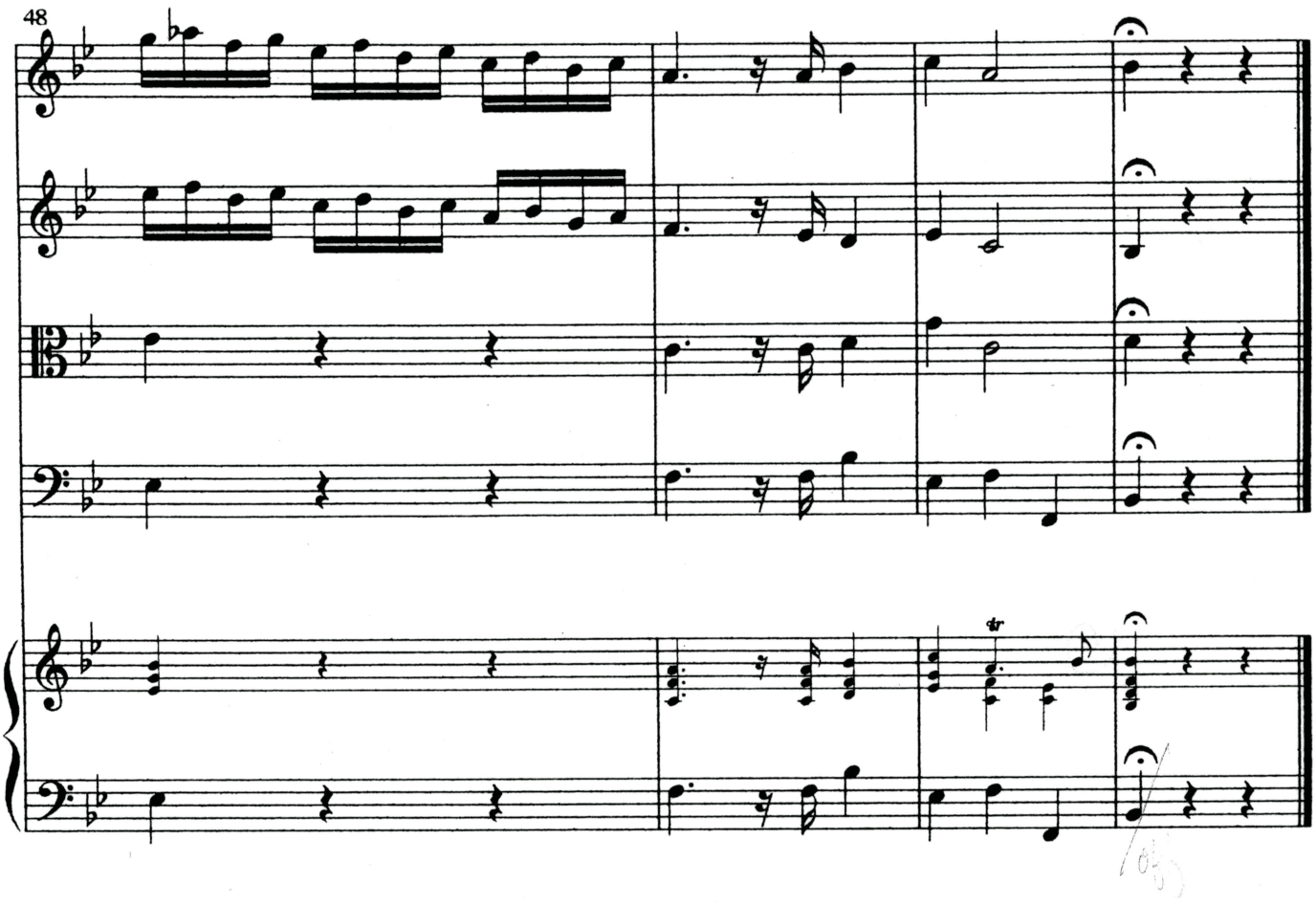
45

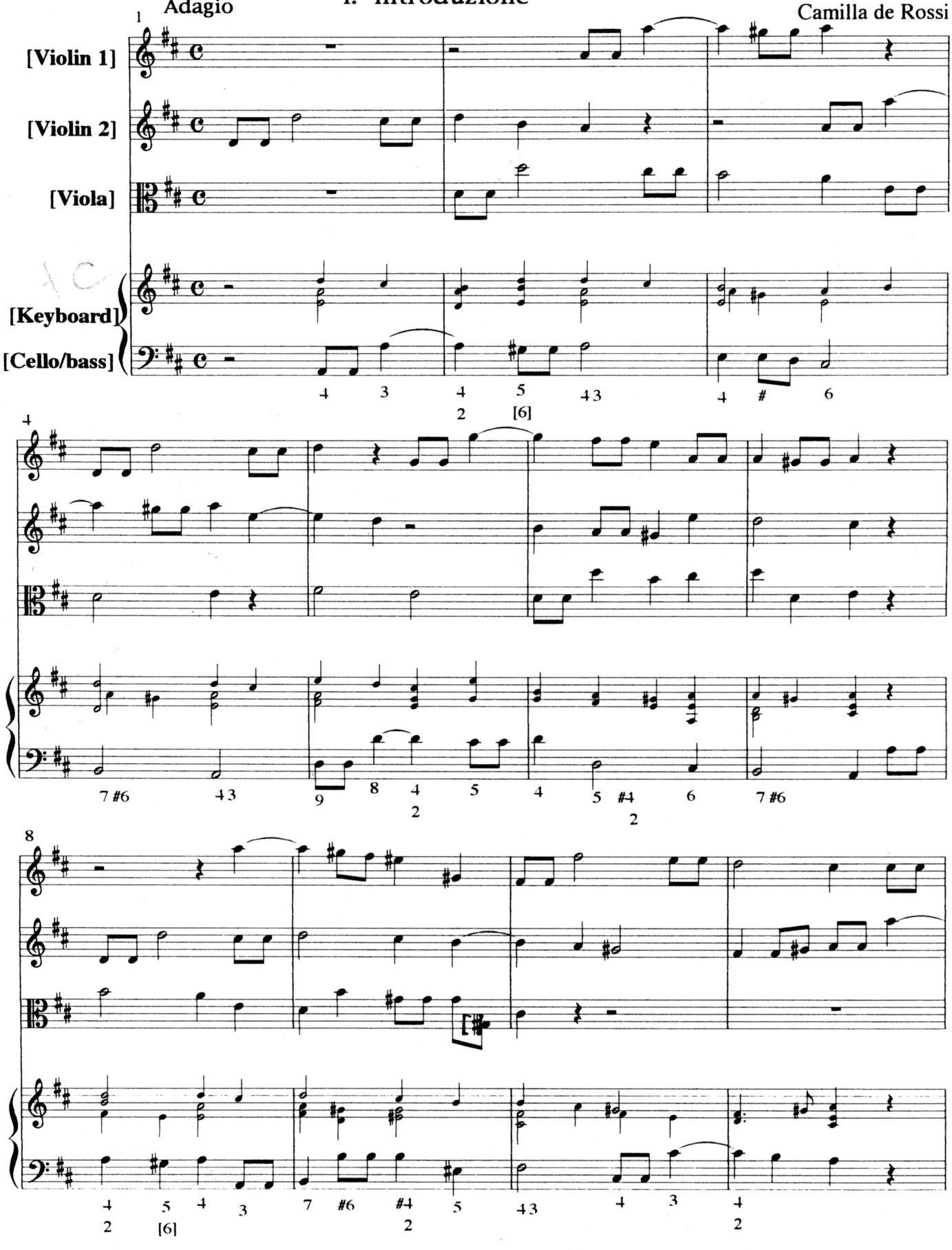

48

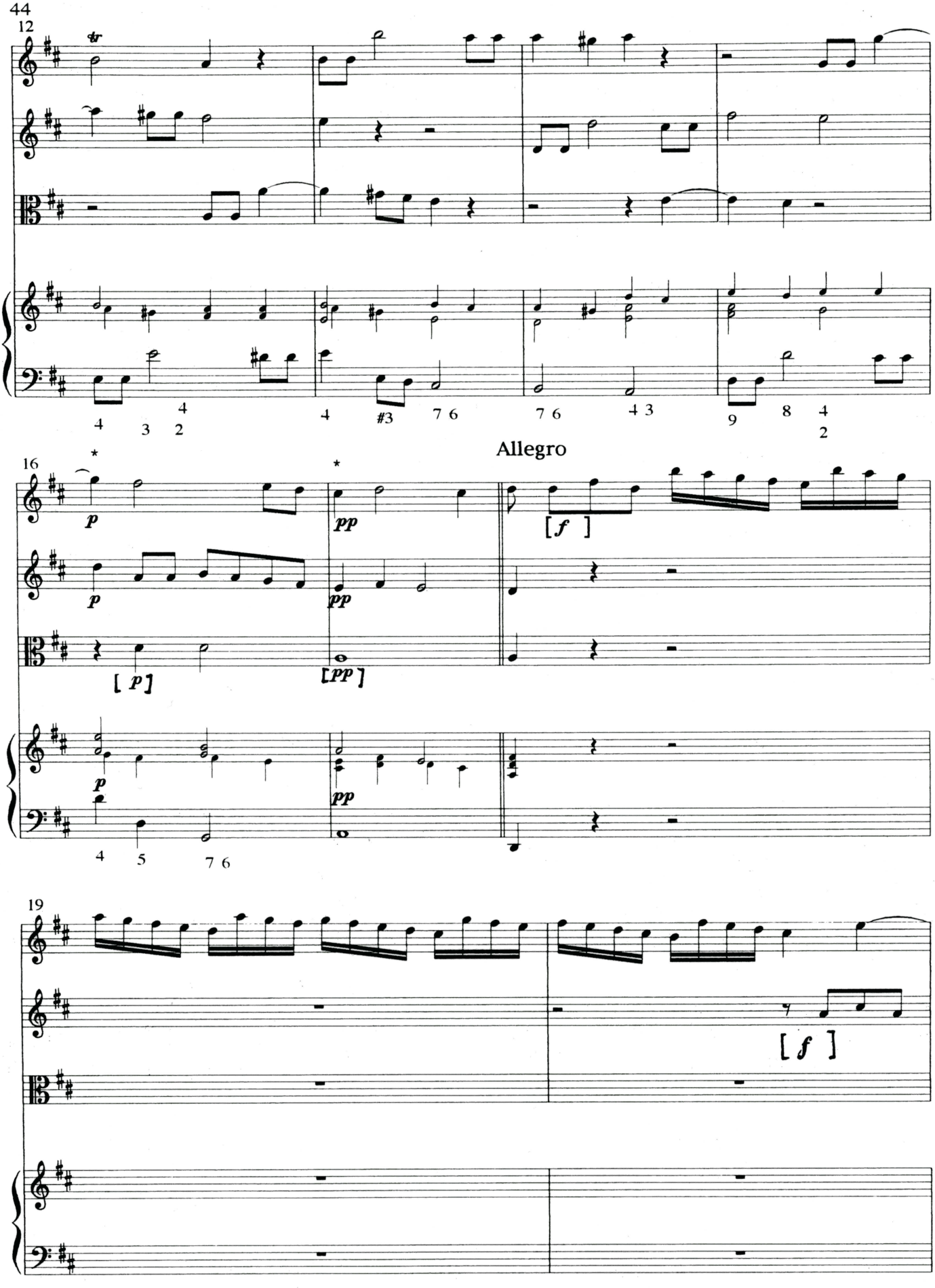
S. Alessio (1710)

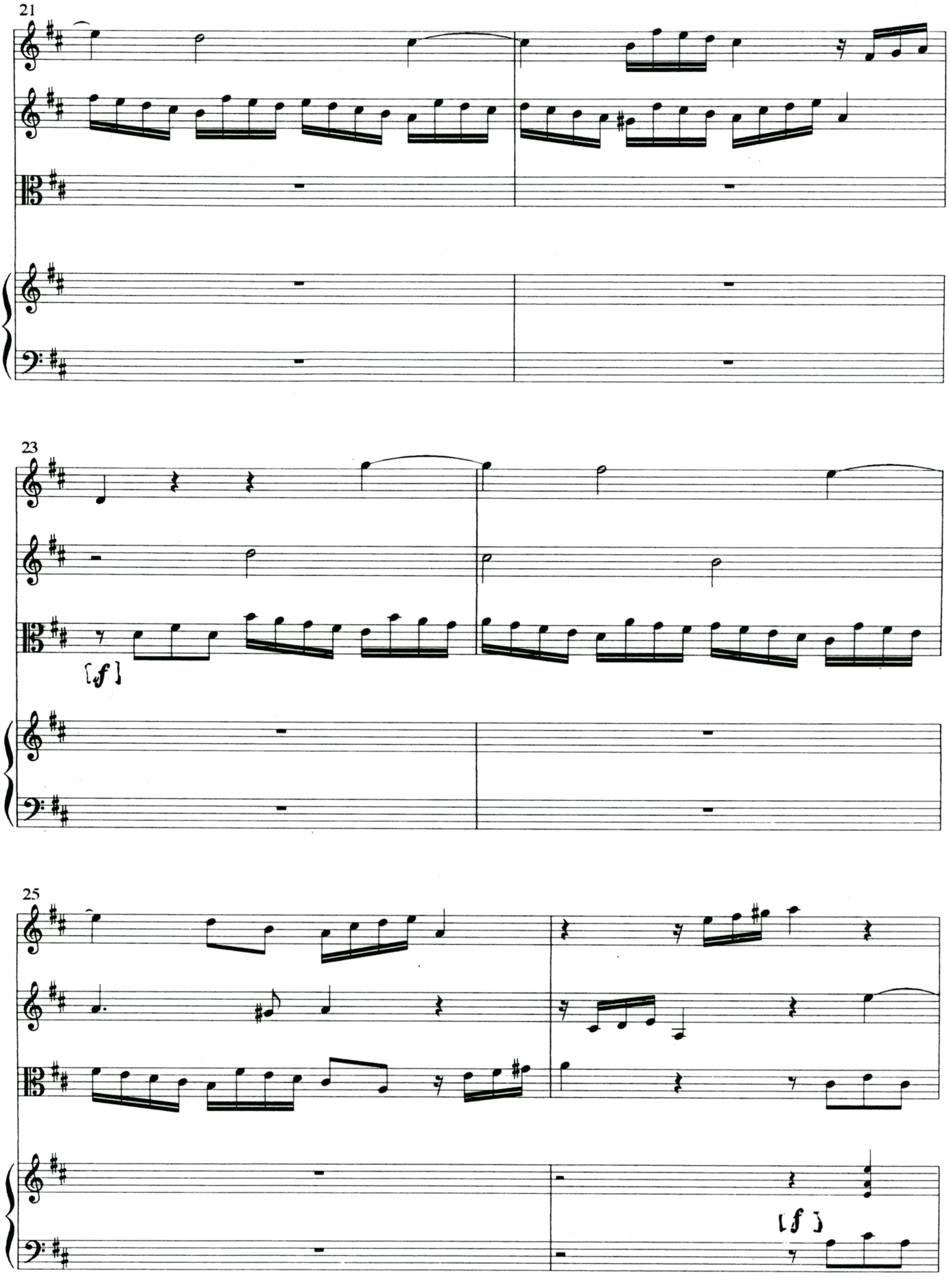
I. Introduzione

Adagio

Camilla de Rossi




12
16
Allegro
19
* Ms. has *piano* for all parts in measure 16 and *piano piano* in measure 17.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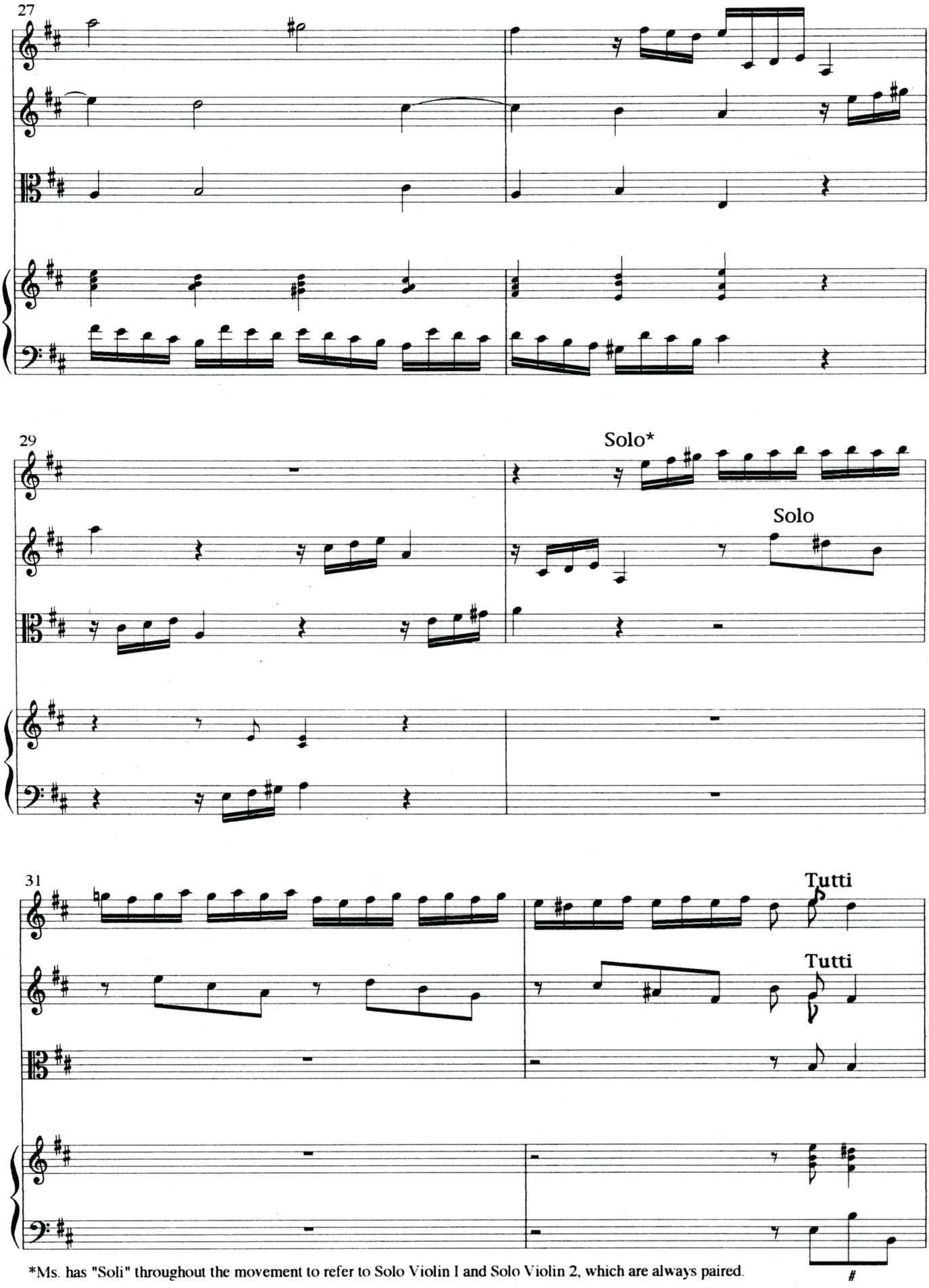
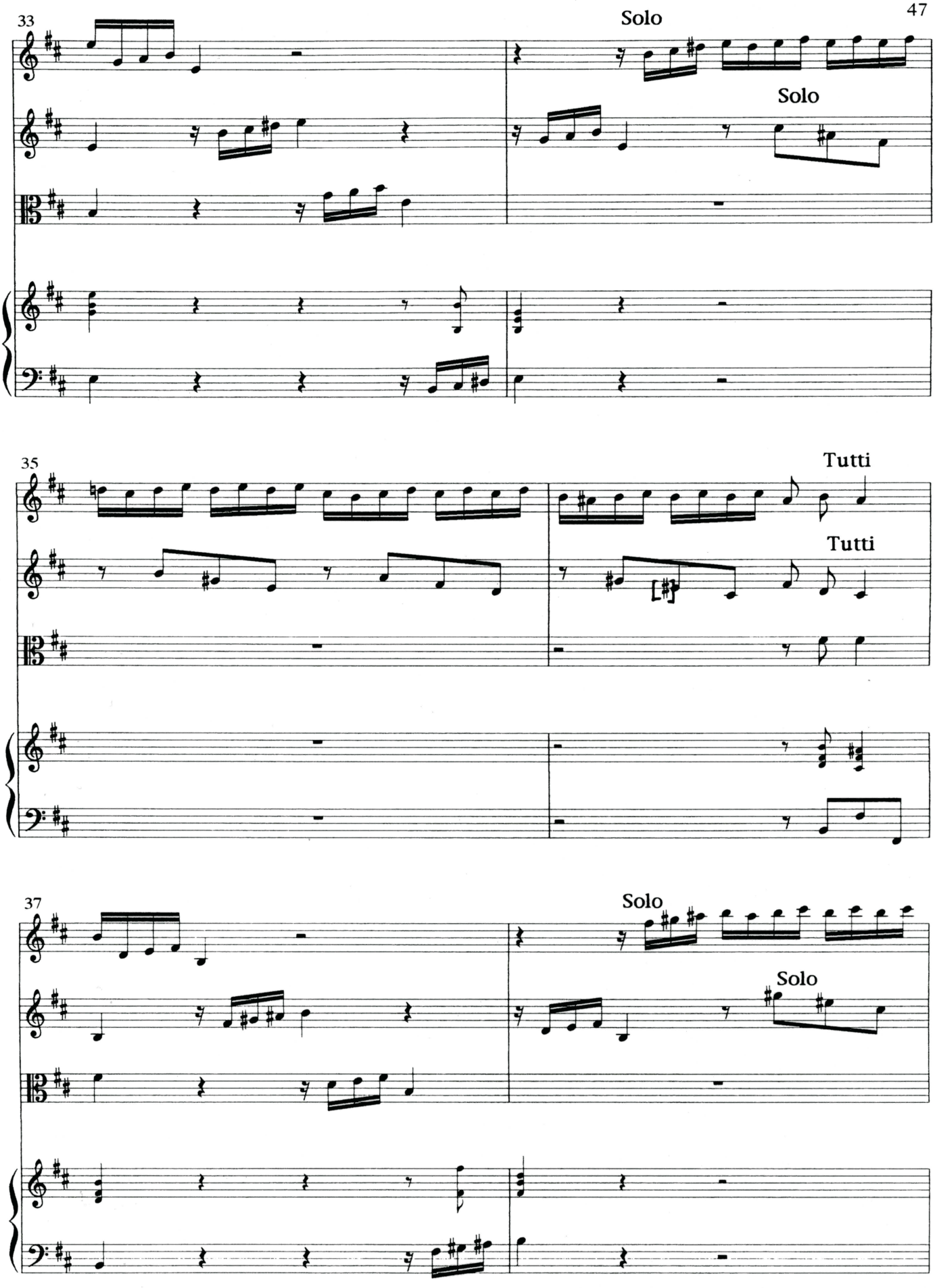
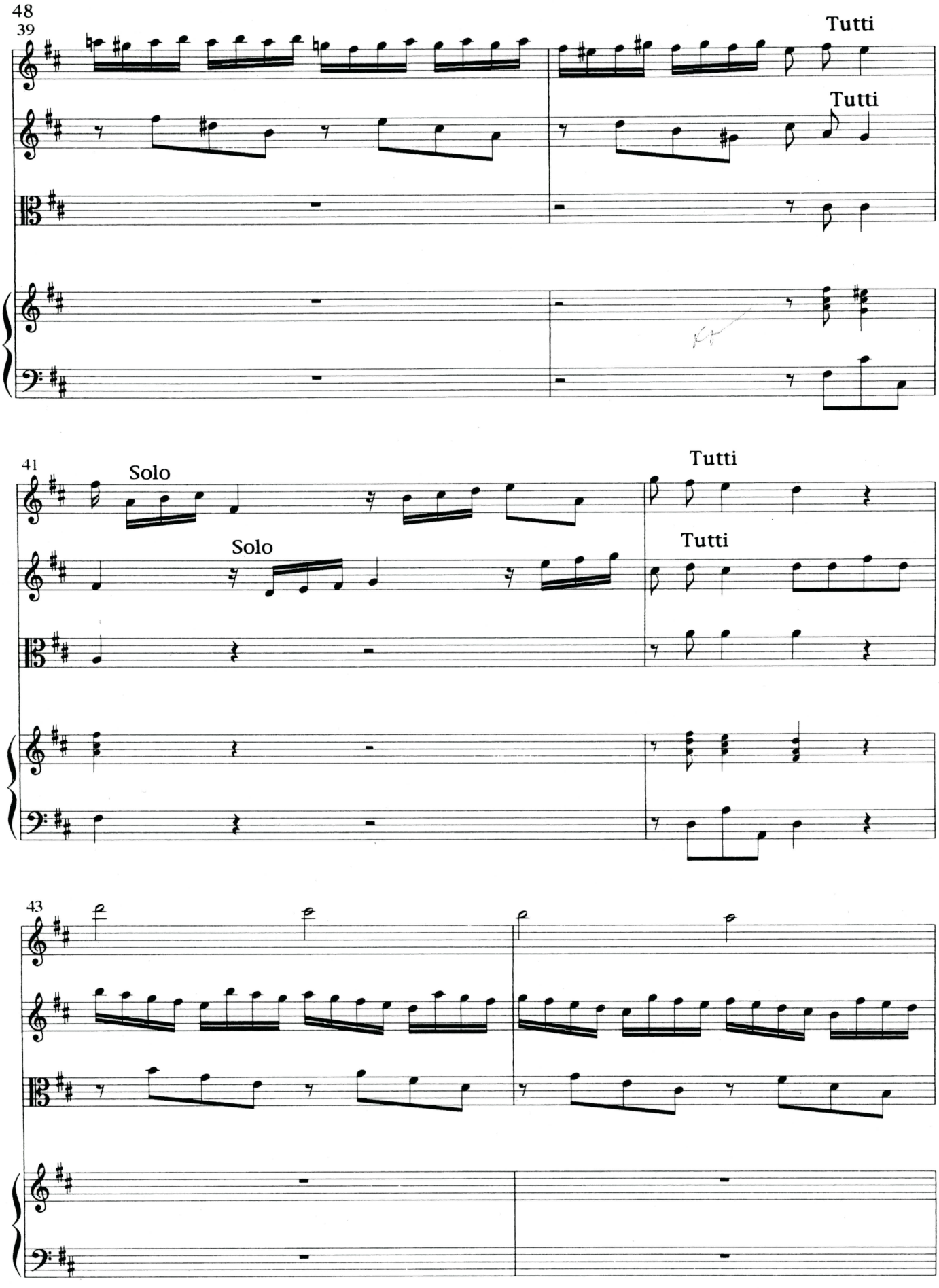
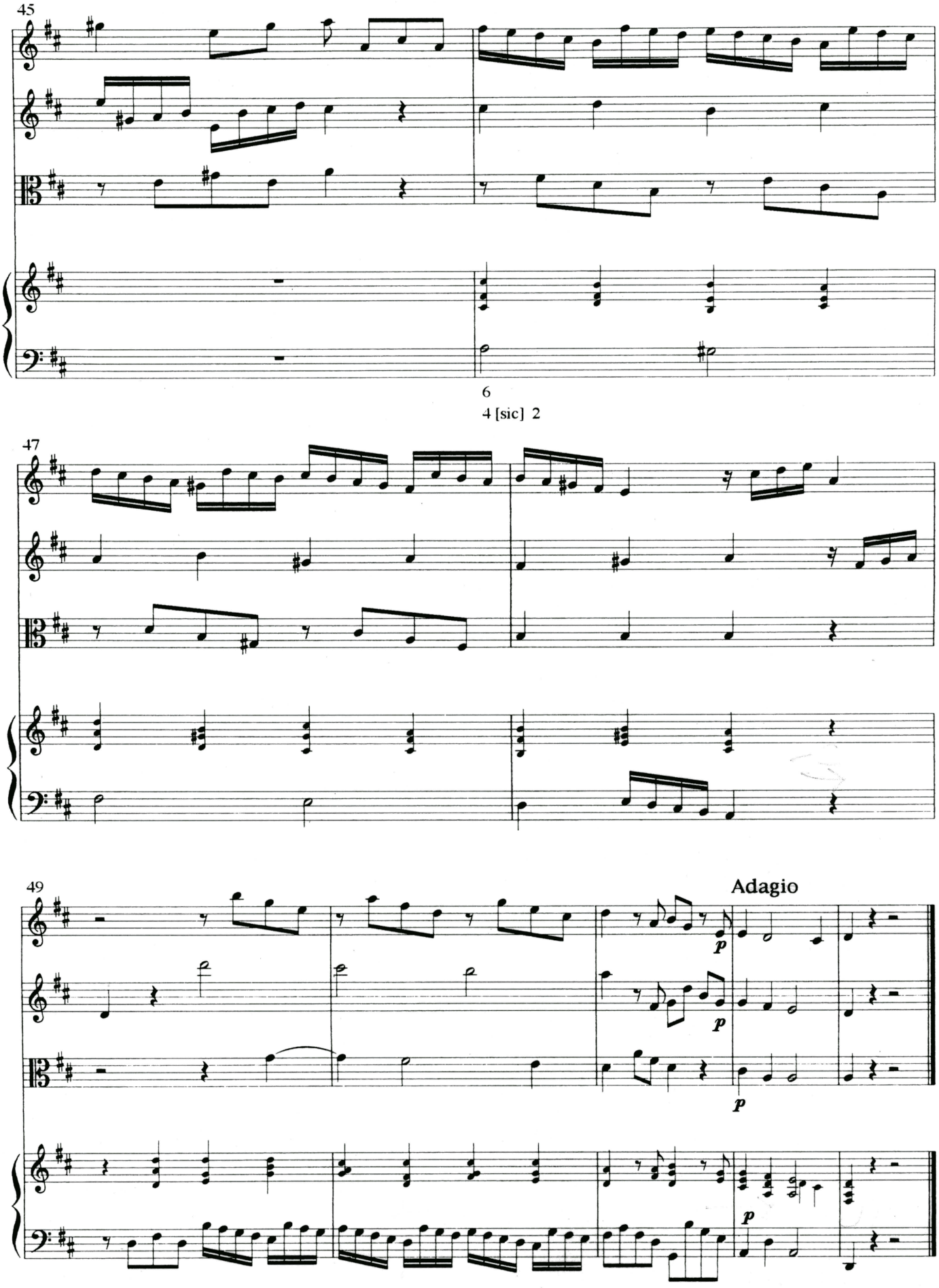
23
[sf]
25
[sf]



*Ms. has "Soli" throughout the movement to refer to Solo Violin I and Solo Violin 2, which are always paired.


33
Solo
Solo
35
Tutti
Tutti
37
Solo
Solo


39
Tutti
Tutti
41
Solo
Solo
Tutti
Tutti
43

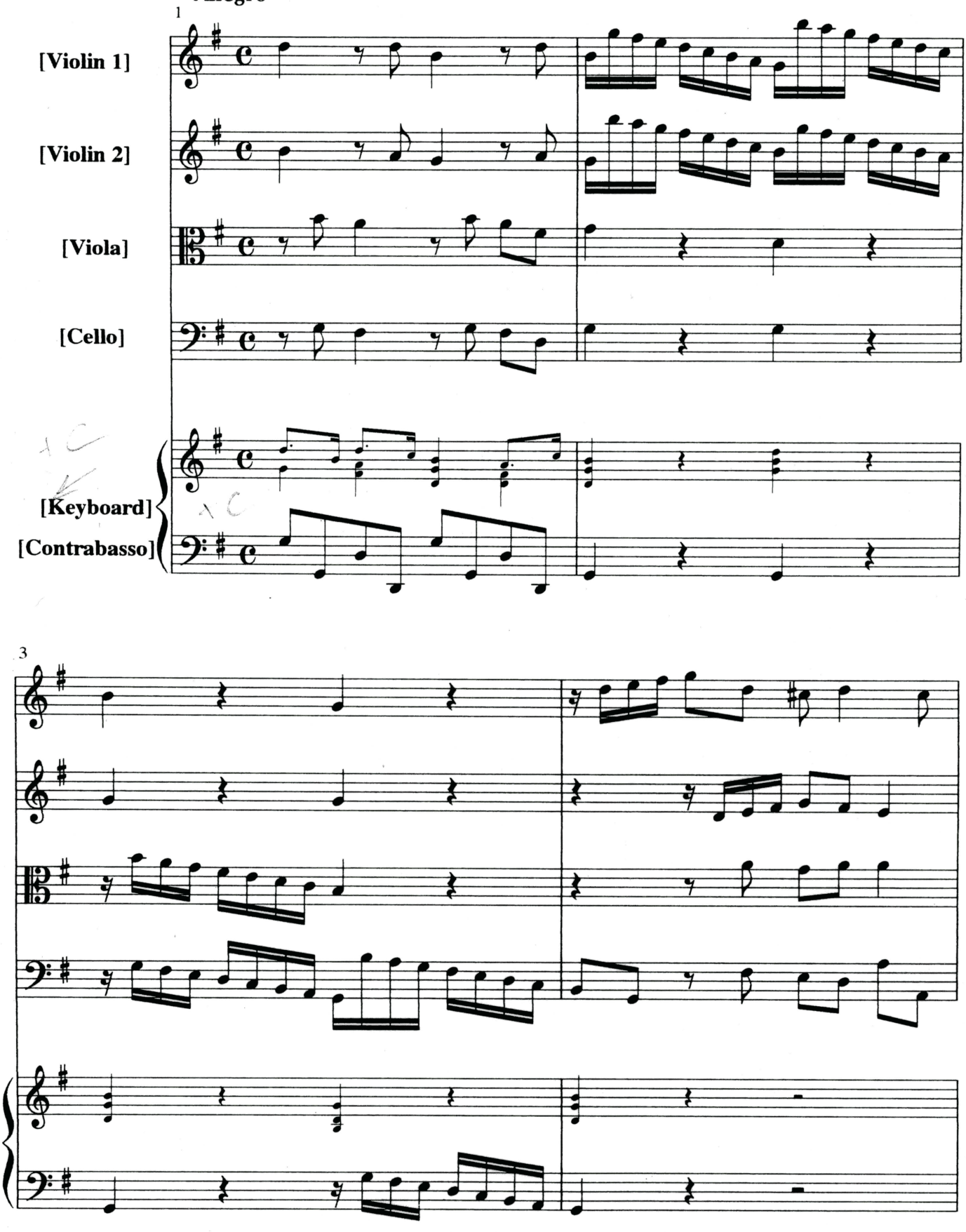

45
6
4 [sic] 2
47
49
Adagio
p
p
p
p

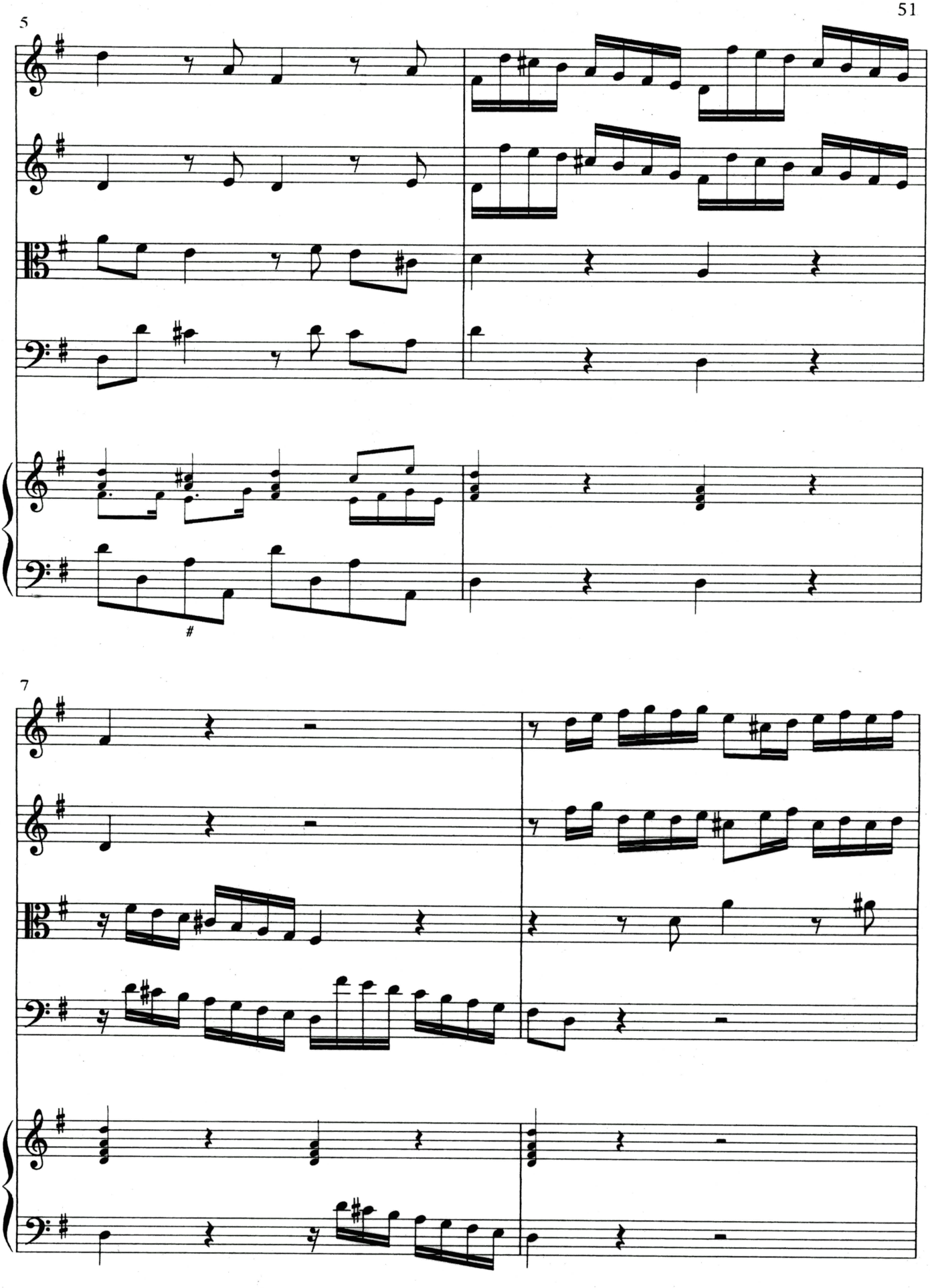
Original signature, no sharp or flat

S. Alessio (1710)

Sinfonia. II.

Allegro

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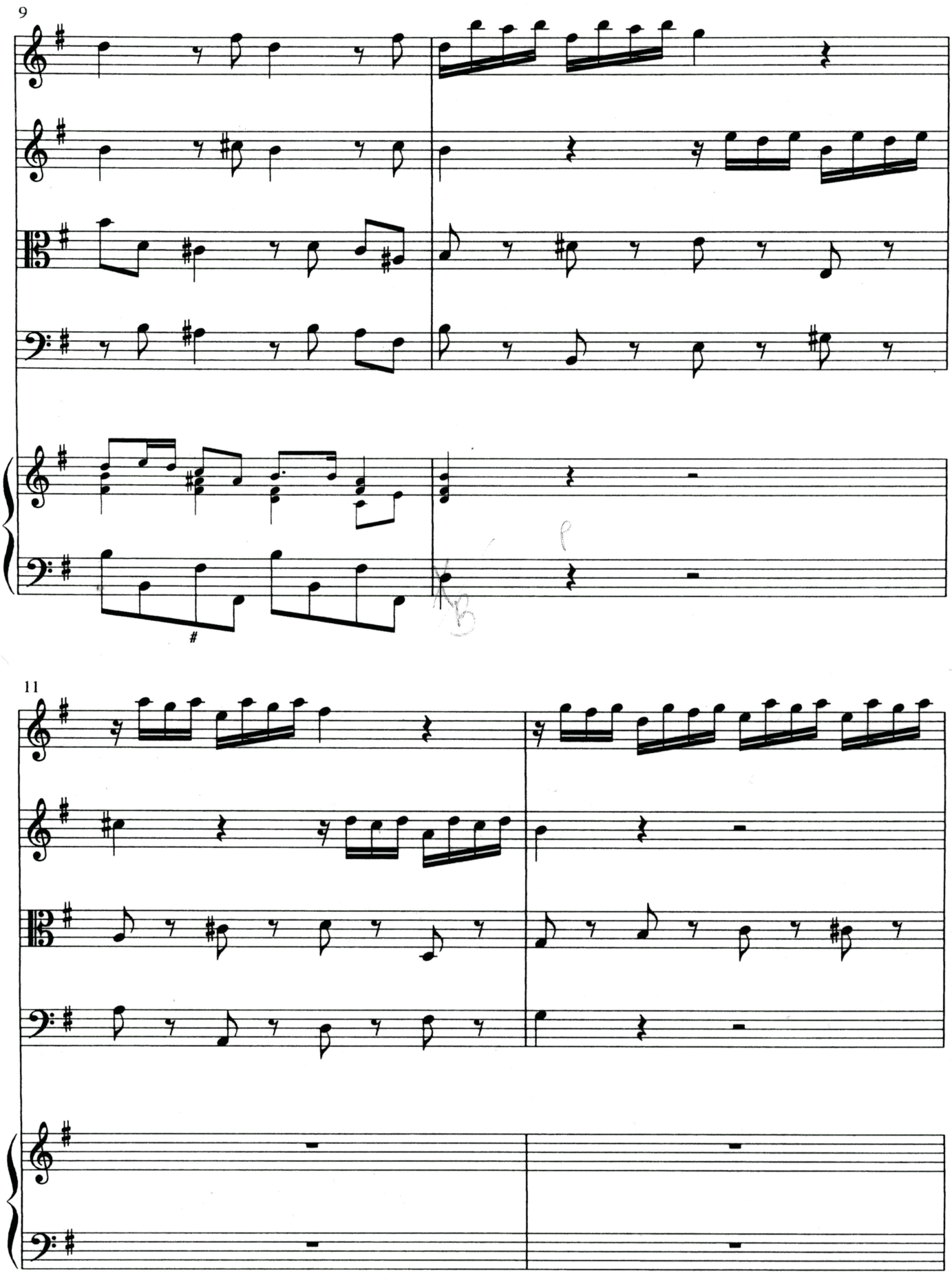
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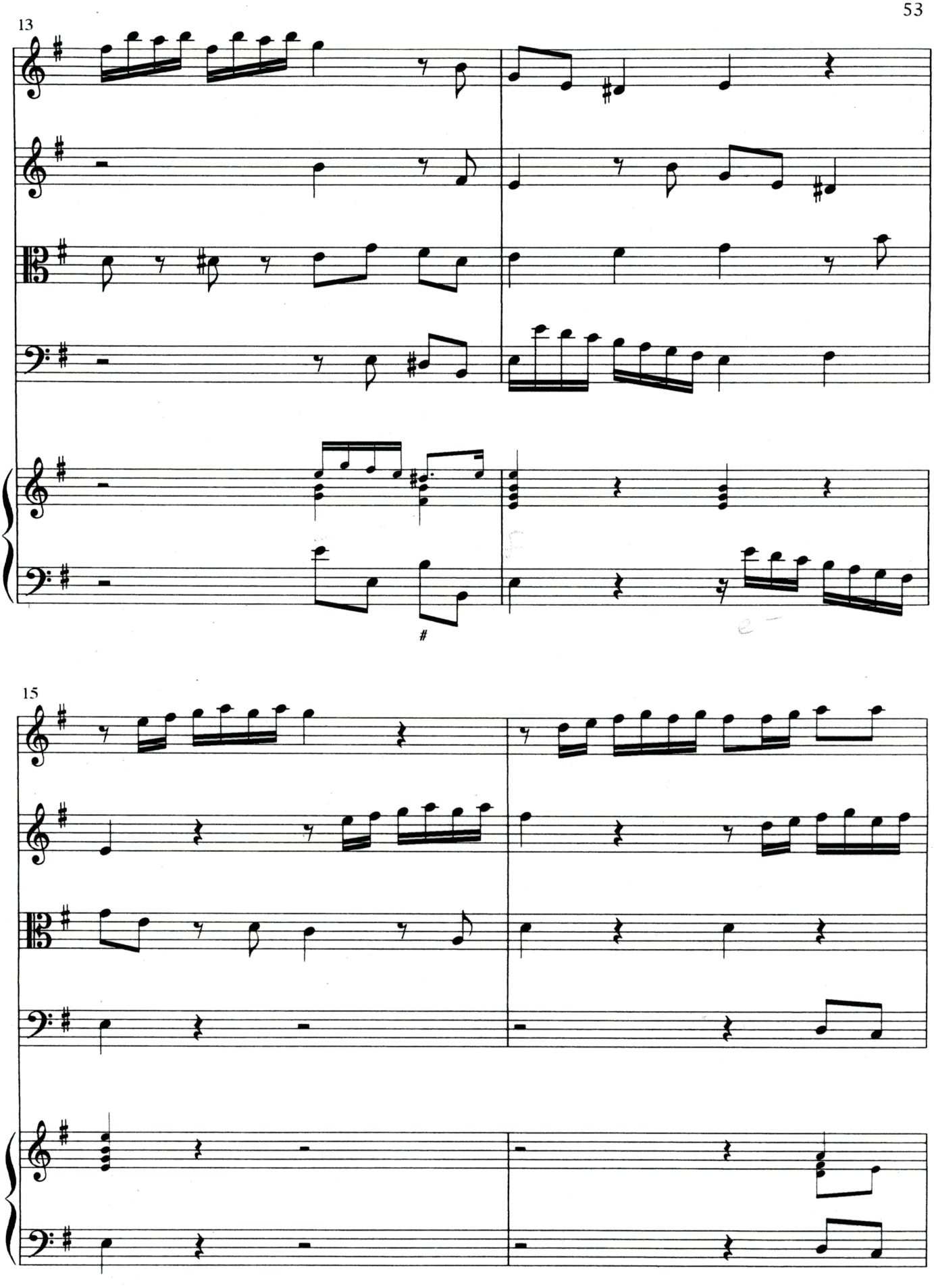
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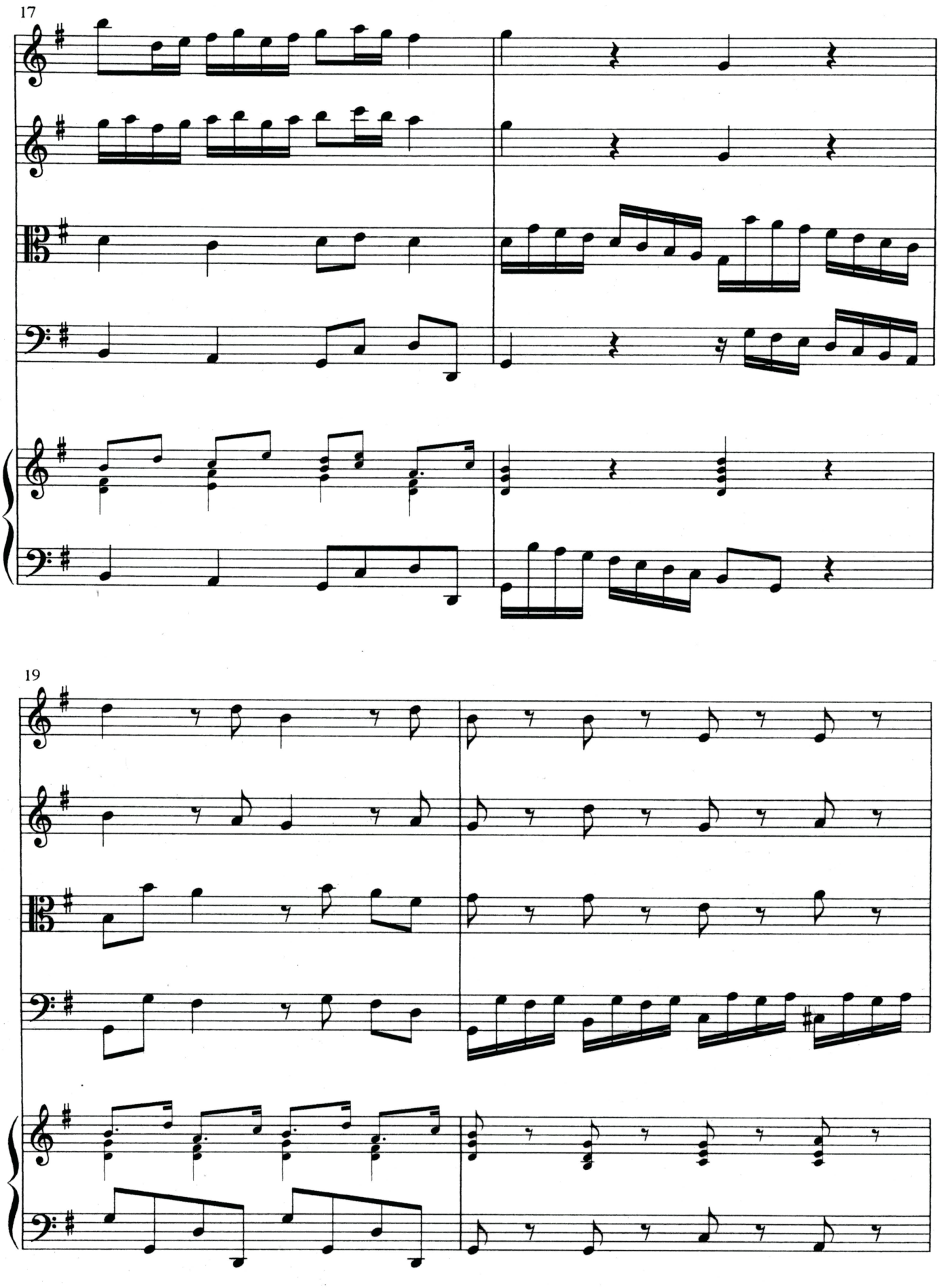
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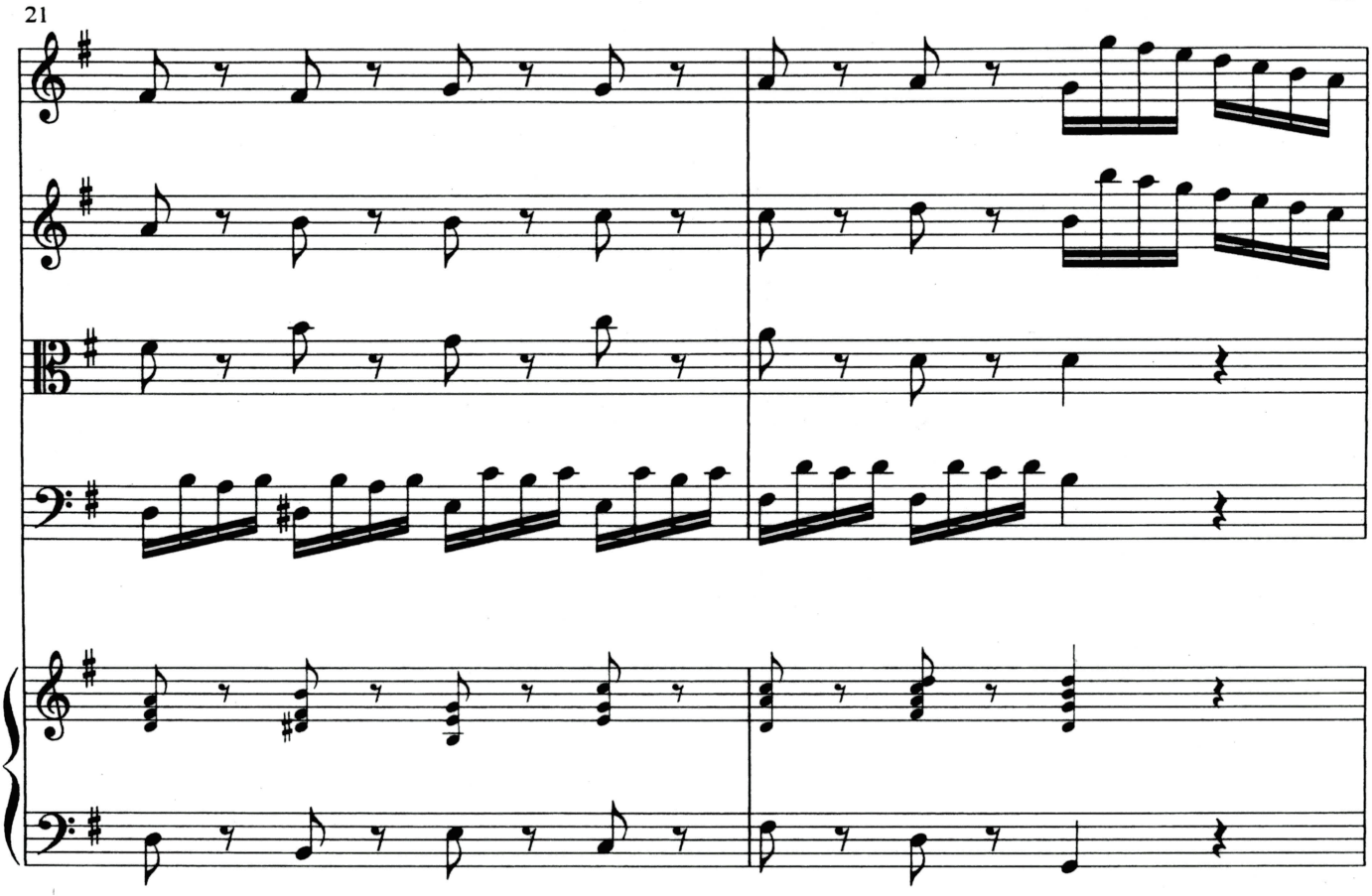
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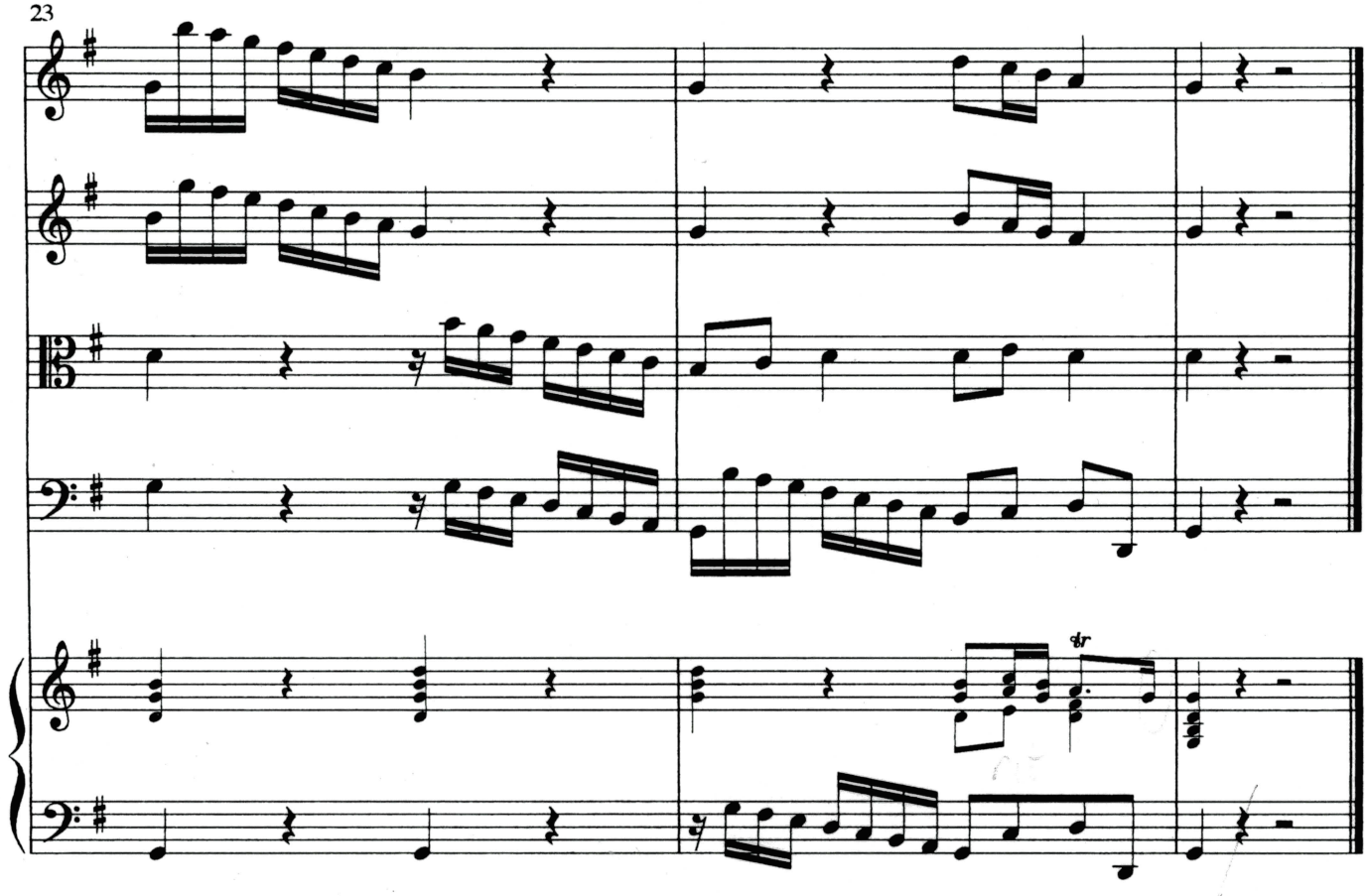
23
tr