The Division Flute

Preface

My intention in transcribing *The Division Flute* was to create a single, comprehensive edition that faithfully preserves the original content while allowing for comparisons with similar works from the same period. This project remains a work in progress, with the inclusion of pieces like *Old Simon the King*, *Tollet's Ground*, *Newmarket/Johney Cock Thy Beavor*, and *Green Sleeves* from *The Division Violin* designed to facilitate cross-referencing for flutists and violinists alike.

This volume highlights *The Division Flute* not only as a landmark in the history of improvisation but also situates it within the broader cultural and musical context of early 18th-century England.

To further enrich this edition, I have included selected pieces by Gottfried Finger from *A Collection of Musick in Two Parts* (published in 1691 by Thomas Moore in London).

The Division Flute and Its Context

After a period of exile, Charles II returned to the throne in 1660, and following the Puritan rule, during which public music-making was strongly discouraged, music was once again restored to a central position in cultivated life.

- *A Vade Mecum For the Lovers of Musick, Shewing the Excellency of the Rechorder: With Some Rules and Directions for the Same* by John Hudgebut (1679)
- *The Delightful Companion: or Choice New Lessons for the Recorder or Flute – Plain and Easie Instructions for Beginners, and the Several Graces Proper to the Instrument* by Robert Carr (1686)
- *The Compleat Flute-Master: The Whole Art of Playing on Ye Rechorder, Layd Open in Such Easy & Plain Instructions That by Them Ye Meanest Capacity May Arrive to a Perfection on That Instrument*, published by John Walsh (1695).

The end of the monarchy and the establishment of the Commonwealth under Cromwell caused a rift in English musical history. As music in cathedrals was forbidden and the court had ceased to exist, musicians and composers sought refuge in the homes and private

chapels of the aristocracy. During this period, there was a growing market for music that was suitable for amateurs to play. John Playford cleverly capitalised on this, establishing his own printing house.

In the first half of the 17th century, the violin was played almost exclusively at court, and mostly by musicians from the continent. It was after the Restoration that foreign masters introduced the newest playing techniques and compositional styles to England. One of the effects of Charles II returning to the throne was his exposure to the French musical scene. Having spent significant time in France, Charles was strongly influenced by what he had heard there. French and Italian musicians came to England and caused astonishment and excitement with their virtuosic playing. One of these musicians was Nicola Matteis.

The keyboardist Giovanni Baptista Draghi arrived in London in the 1660s and remained for the rest of his life, working in the court and theatre. The Albrici brothers (Vincenzo and Bartolomeo) sang in the exclusive Italian ensemble at the English court from 1663/4.

The Division Flute was published in London by John Walsh in 1705, following earlier influential works like John Playford's *The Division Violin* (1684) and *The Division Viol* (1659). The full title of *The Division Flute* is worth noting for its detail:
The First and Second Part of The Division Flute Containing The Newest Divisions upon the Choicest Grounds for the Flute as Also Several Excellent Preludes, Chacones, and Cibells.
The collection features 19 divisions on a ground, showcasing a range of melodic elaborations. Despite the title, the "flute" here refers to the alto recorder, which had gained popularity in England since its introduction from France in the 1670s. At the time, the transverse flute was virtually unknown in England.

The Division Viol, subtitled *The Art of Playing Ex Tempore upon a Ground*, serves as an instructional treatise that bridges the long tradition of divisions with later works like *The Division Violin* and *The Division Flute*. This tradition can be traced back to influential compositions and treatises, such as Diego Ortiz's *Recercadas*, Cipriano de Rore's *Ancor che col partire*, and writings by Ganassi, Ortiz, Dalla Casa, Bassano, Rogniono, Bovicelli, and Virgiliano.

The Division Flute and *The Division Violin* are best understood not as pieces to be performed as such, but rather as pedagogical materials intended for etudes and the study of technique, as well as models for improvisation. The ability to improvise on a ground was a respected

skill, and both *The Division Flute* and *The Division Violin* serve as examples of a practice which was improvised.

The first part of *The Division Flute* adapts pieces from *The Division Violin* with modifications to keys and division orders to accommodate the recorder. The "grounds" often derive from folk tunes, popular songs, or dance music, forming the basis for written examples of improvisation.

The Division Flute cannot be fully understood apart from *The Division Violin* or the broader Italian and French influences that shaped both works. During the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, England attracted many Italian musicians, and by Elizabeth's reign, 19 of the 29 royal musicians were Italian. French influence also played a significant role, especially during the Restoration, when Charles II, inspired by Louis XIV's court, introduced French musical forms and practices to England.

"Reading's Ground," a chaconne, appears in the collection of Henry Aldrich (1648–1710), which includes 17 anonymous suites for scordatura violin and bass in handgrip notation, using ten different scordatura tunings (GB-Och Mus. 940). Traditionally attributed to the keyboardist John Reading (c.1645–92), Valentine Reading is now considered a more likely composer.

First found for recorder in Humphrey Salter's (1683) *Mr. Reddins Ground* in *The Genteel Companion*, this version, together with those in *The Division Violin* and *The Division Flute*, are essentially simplified versions of the original.

In *The Division Violin*, this is the only piece with scordatura tuning and one of the earliest English examples of printed violin scordatura. However, the original key signature contains an error: it should indicate F-natural on the top string and F# only on the lower "D" string. The alternate tuning is not necessary—the piece is entirely playable on a violin with conventional tuning, including the double stops. The need for retuning then suggests an association with the Austrian/Bohemian school of playing, and the retuning would emphasise sonority (a valued feature in the aesthetic of the era, as was cantabile bowing) over virtuosity. The other possibility is that the practice was one adopted from folk music.

In *The Genteel Companion*, an instructional book for recorder, we find ornamentation details. The graces, which Salter explains in depth, include:

- **The Beat** – Executed by shaking the finger on the designated hole and releasing it.
- **The Shake** – Similar to the beat, but explicitly directed with marks in the notation.
- **The Slur or Slide** – Defined as connecting two or three notes with a single breath, indicated by a crooked dash beneath the notes.
- **The Slur and Beat** – Initiated with the tongue on the first note, followed by a quick transition to the second note, incorporating a beat on the return to the first.
- **The Double Shake** – Played by shaking the fourth finger of the left hand while maintaining the designated fingers on the appropriate holes.

This chaconne is non-typical for English music of the period for several key reasons. Firstly, the varying bass line is a trait more aligned with continental practices, particularly those of France and Italy. This style was virtually unknown in England before the 1680s and never became dominant in English music. Traditionally, English chaconnes relied on an ostinato bass line, a repetition of the same harmonic structure throughout the piece.

Secondly, the final cadences in *Reading's Ground* resolve on the last beat of the bar, a stylistic hallmark of the French Baroque, further emphasizing its continental influences. This type of resolution was notably uncommon in English music at the time, reinforcing the piece's departure from traditional English conventions.

Written before 1683, *Reading's Ground* predates its contemporaries and stands as an early example of variation pieces in non-standard tuning. The publication of this chaconne with a fixed bass line in some editions represents an attempt to align it with the traditional English "ground" form. However, this modification was unsuccessful, revealing the arrangers' unfamiliarity with the innovative varying-bass technique that had already been adopted in the continental Baroque tradition.

Valentine Reading was paid for performing with court string players during the summer of 1686, attending James II at Windsor. Additionally, Balthazar Reading, likely a relative, was employed as a bass violinist at court between 1685 and 1689. This suggests the Reading family's significant involvement in English court music during this period.

Johney Cock Thy Beavor/Newmarket, *Green Sleeves*, and *Tollet's Ground* share similarities between the two collections, with differences largely in key, slurring, and octave jumps. *Old Simon the King* varies more significantly, with notable differences in the bass line. These

differences reflect the fluidity of naming conventions and the cross-pollination of musical ideas in 17th-century England.

I opted to include a basso continuo line throughout the divisions, deviating from the early 18th-century English practice of providing a single line at the beginning or end. This approach allows for harmonic changes that complement the flute line—a style that had yet to be adopted in England at the time. One might consider, for example, in *Reading's Ground*, altering the harmony where necessary for the line to make sense with the flute part, or playing it unaccompanied. No figures are presented in *The Division Flute* or *The Division Violin*. I have kept editorial figures to a minimum but have added them where it seemed necessary.

Benji Rose
2022

Timeline

- **1509–1547 (Reign of Henry VIII)**:
    - **Ganassi**: Sylvestro Ganassi publishes *Opera Intitulata Fontegara* (1535)
    - **Francis I** (1515–1547)

- **1545 (Sinking of the *Mary Rose*)**:
  The Tudor warship *Mary Rose* sinks during a naval battle with the French. Recovered artifacts, including recorders and a fiddle, highlight music's role in maritime life.

- **1553–1592 (Giovanni Bassano)**:
  Bassano publishes *Ricercate, passaggi et cadentie* (1585), advancing ornamentation and division techniques.

- **1558–1603 (Reign of Elizabeth I)**:
    - **Shakespeare**: William Shakespeare writes landmark plays, including *Romeo and Juliet* (1595) and *Hamlet* (1600).
    - *Ortiz*: Diego Ortiz publishes *Trattado de Glosas* (1553), a treatise on ornamentation for viols and recorders.
    - **Henry II** (1547–1559): A patron of the arts. His court sees the flourishing of Renaissance music.

The Rise of Baroque Music and French Dominance

- **1603–1625 (Reign of James I)**:

- **1643–1715 (Reign of Louis XIV)**:
    - *Lully*: Jean-Baptiste Lully becomes the dominant figure in French music, known for his operas (*Armide*, 1686) and ballets.
    - *Couperin*: François Couperin, "Le Grand," represents the elegance of French harpsichord music in works like *Pièces de Clavecin* (1713–1730).

- **1660 (Restoration of Charles II)**:

    - *Playford*: John Playford publishes *The Division Violin* (1684), a seminal work on divisions and improvisation.
- **1679**: John Hudgebut publishes *A Vade Mecum for the Lovers of Musick*, promoting recorder playing in England.

Transition to the Galant Style and the Rise of the Transverse Flute

- **1705**: John Walsh publishes *The Division Flute*
- **1713–1730 (François Couperin's *Pièces de Clavecin*)**:
  Couperin's works blend French elegance with Italian virtuosity, exemplifying the *goûts réunis* (united tastes).
- **1732–1733 (Publication of Telemann's *Flute Fantasias*)**:
  Georg Philipp Telemann publishes *Twelve Fantasias for Solo Flute*, solidifying the transverse flute's role as a solo instrument.

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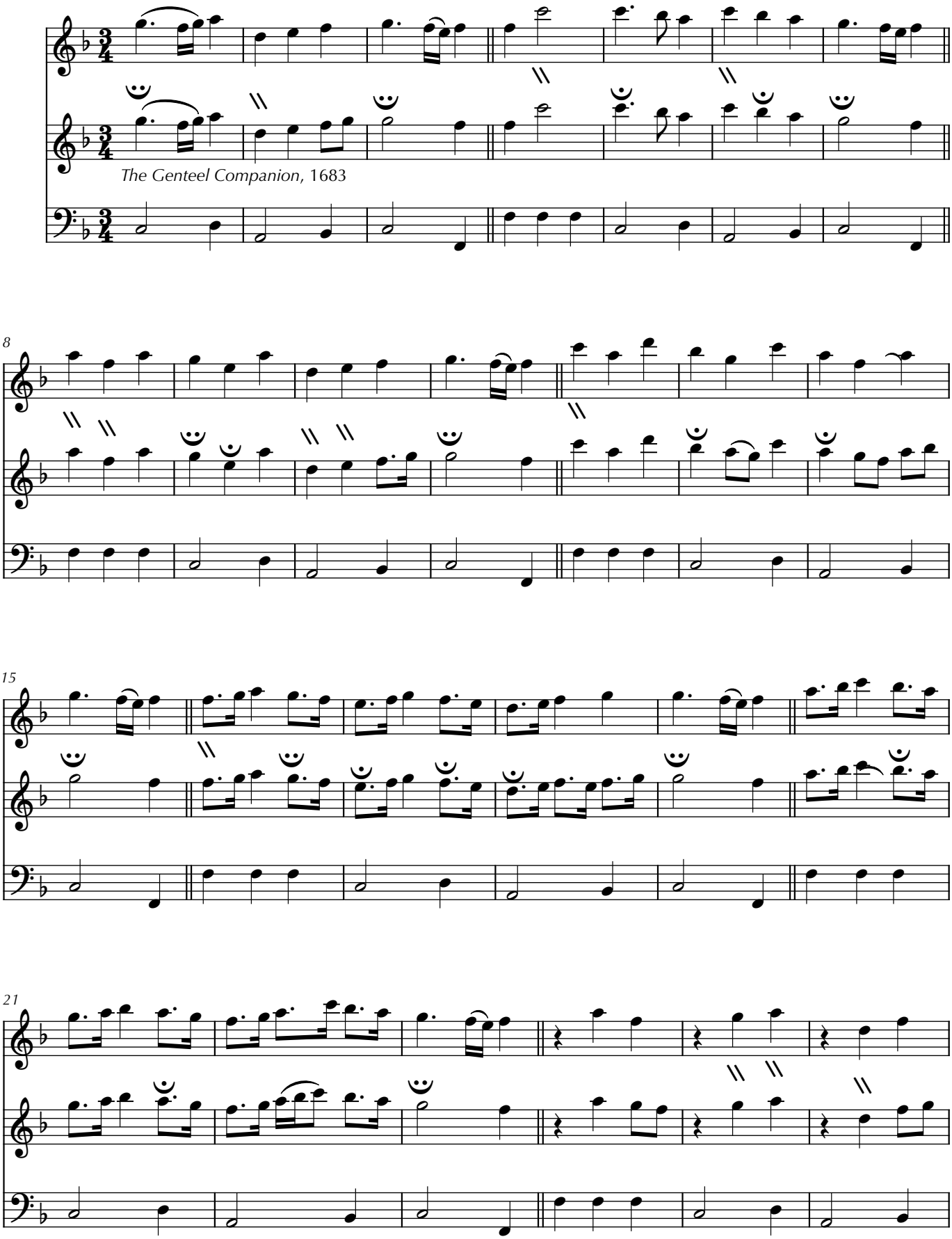
Readings Ground



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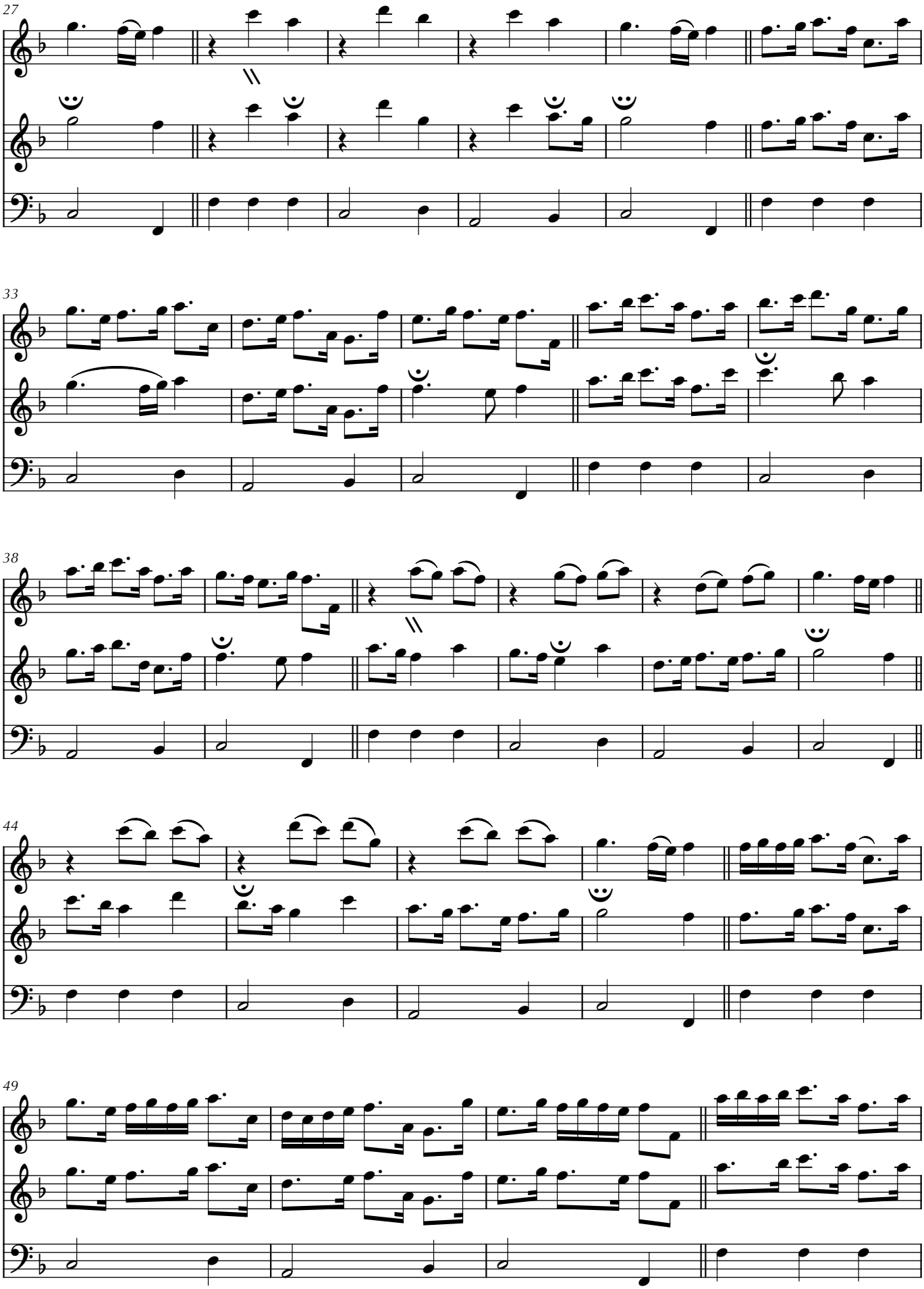

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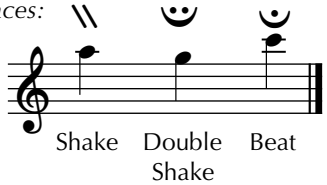
Salter's *Graces:*



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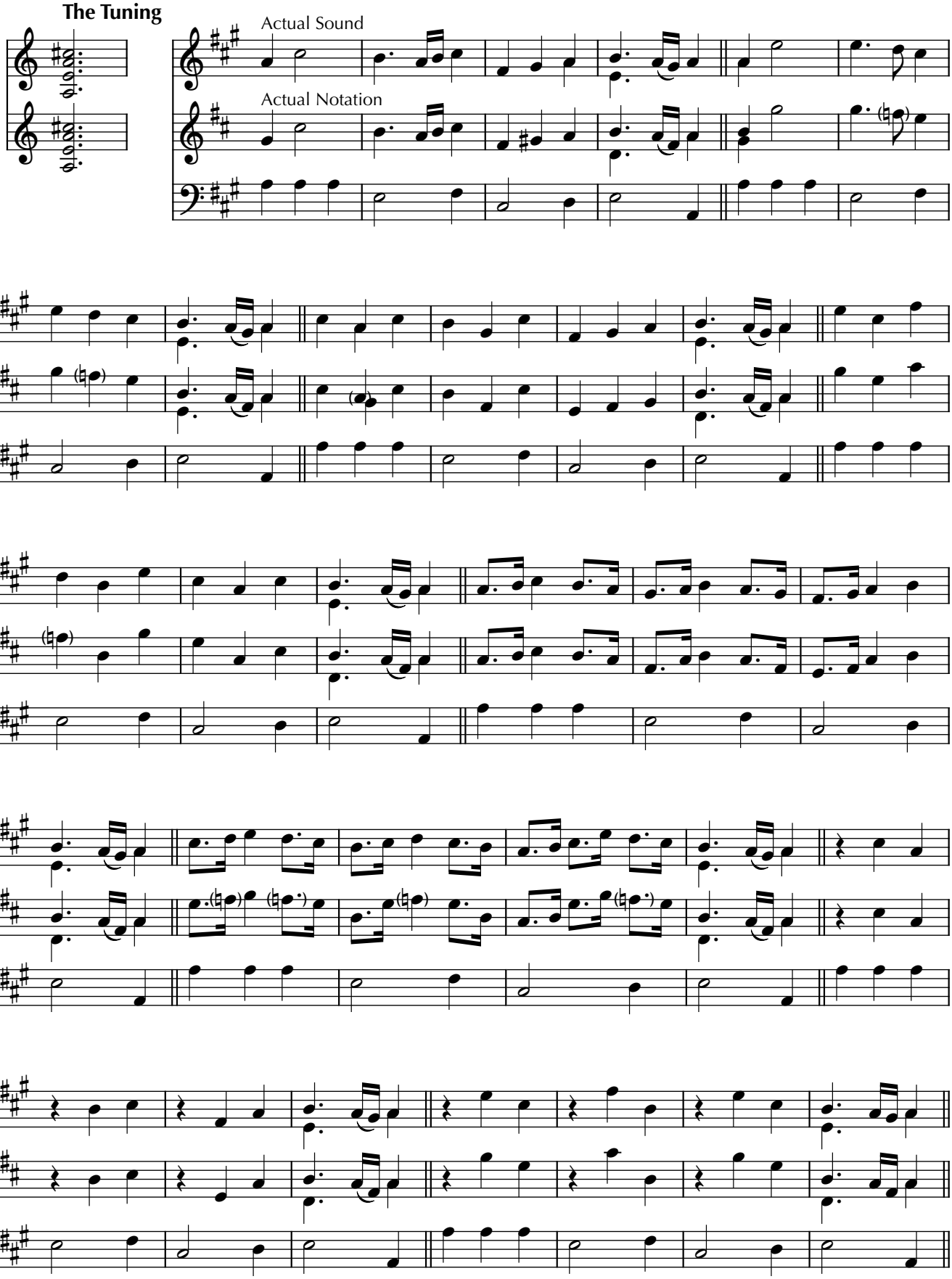
Readings Ground

The Division Violin, 1685

The Tuning



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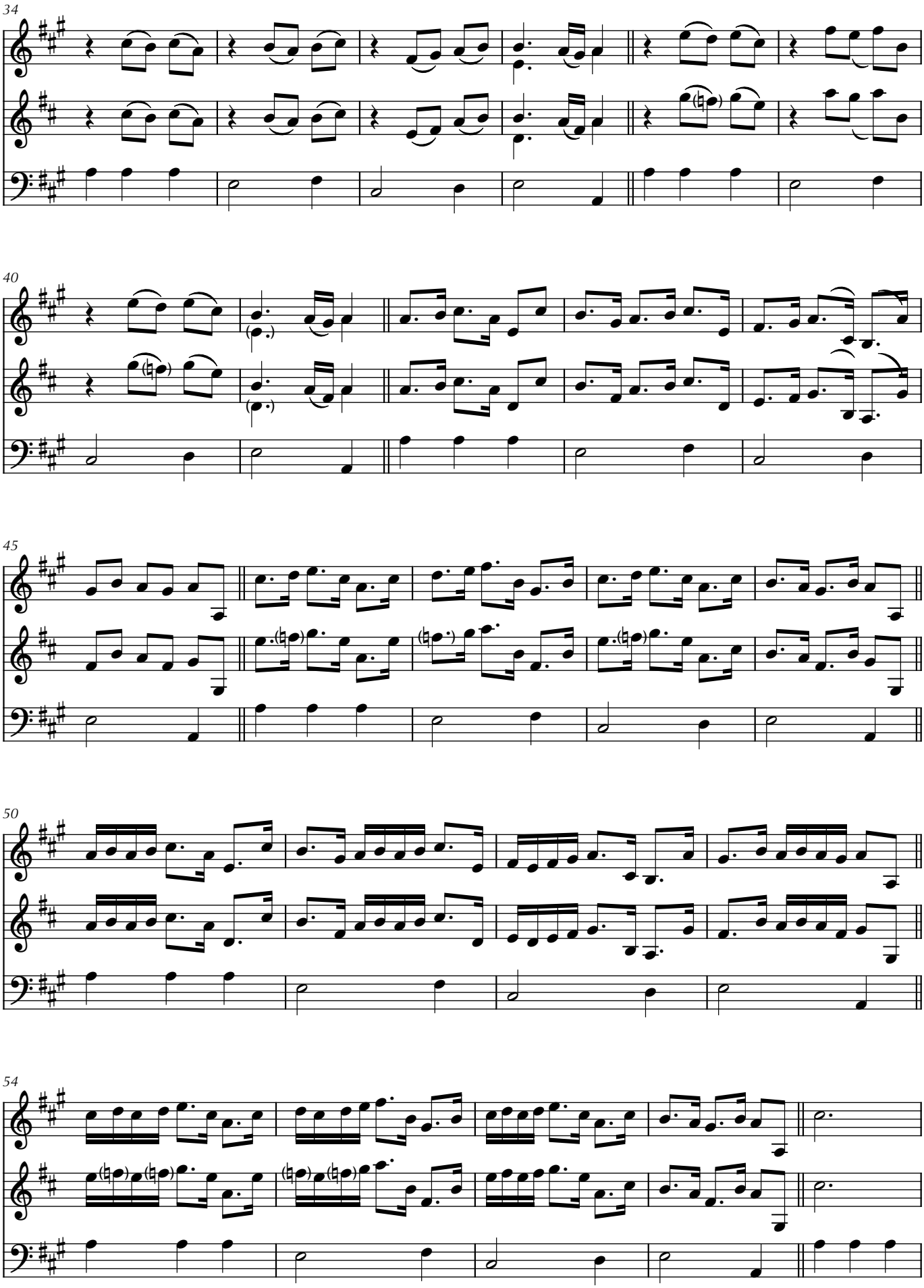

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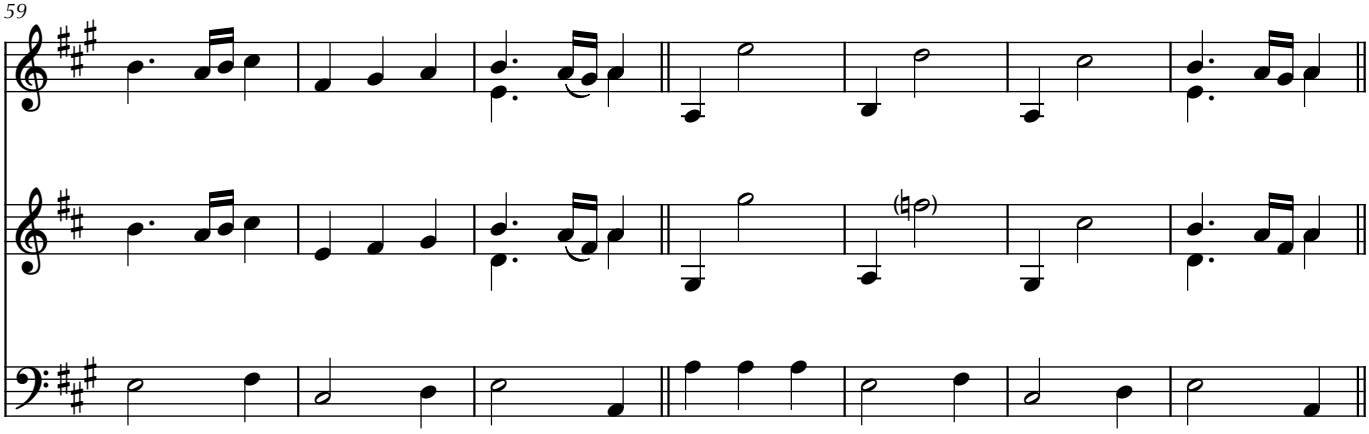

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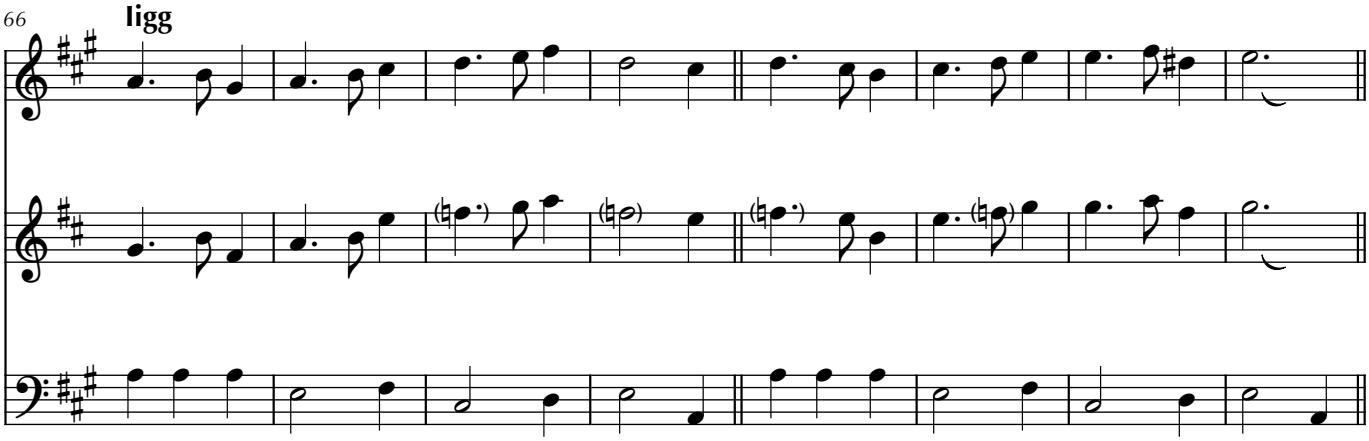

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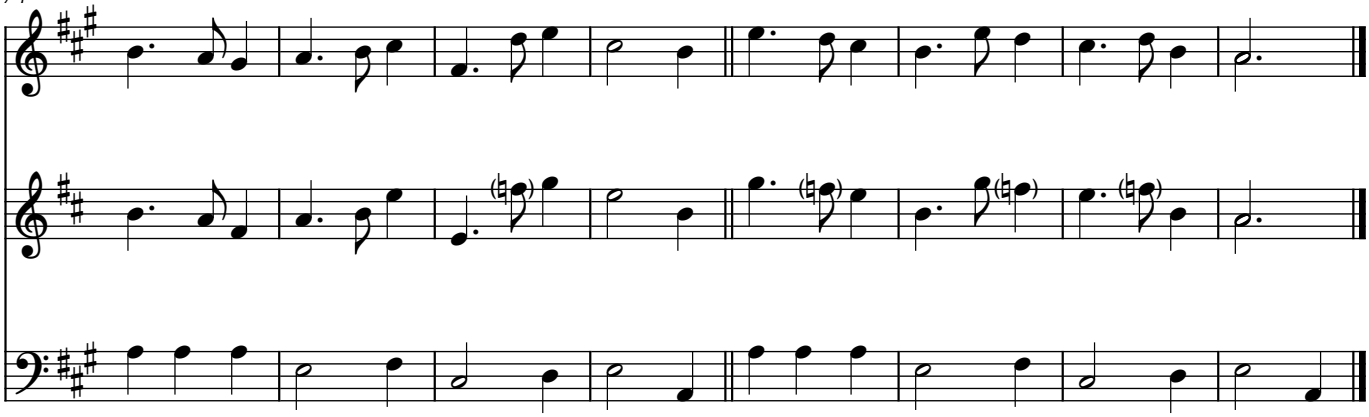

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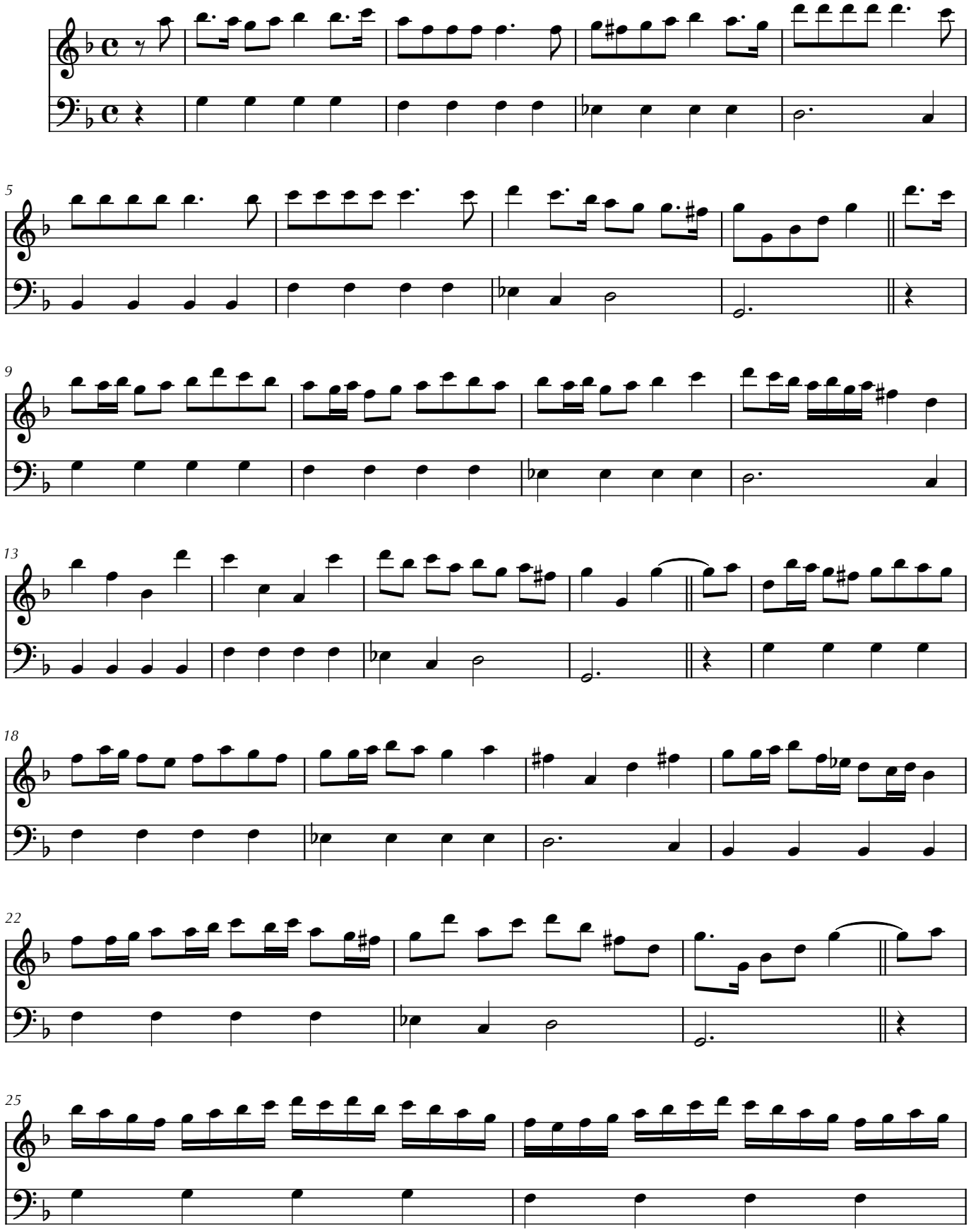
Pauls Steeple



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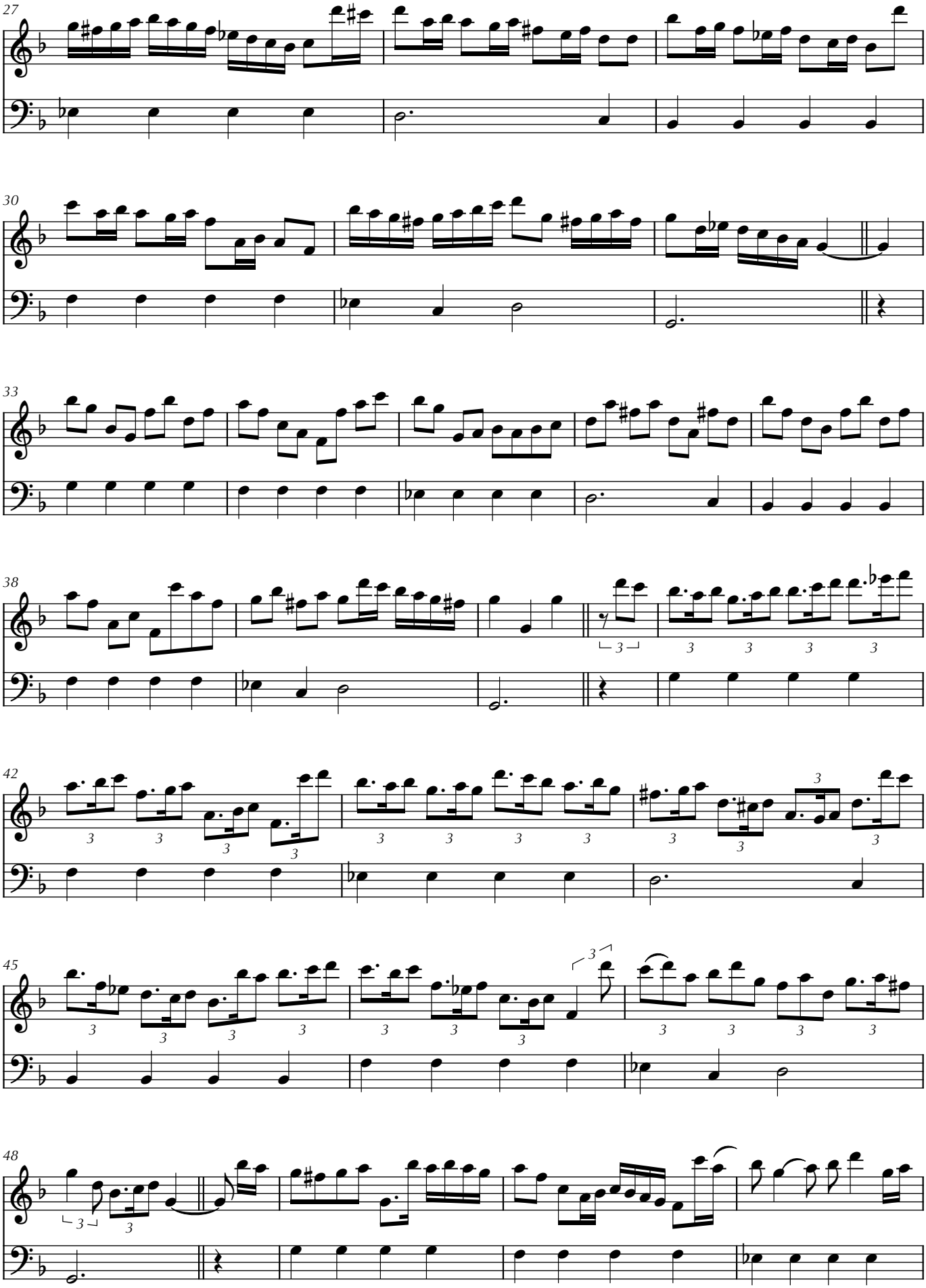

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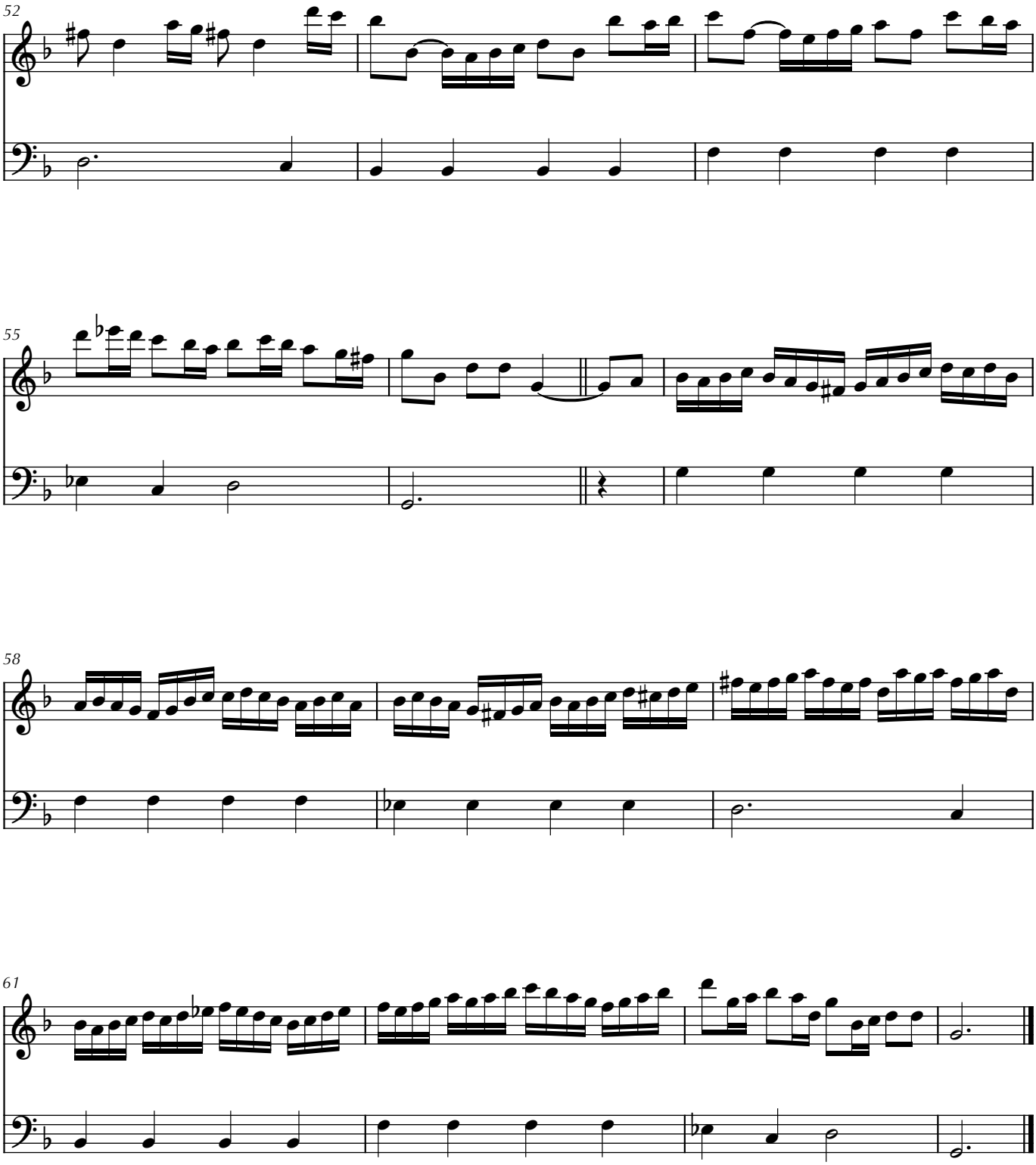

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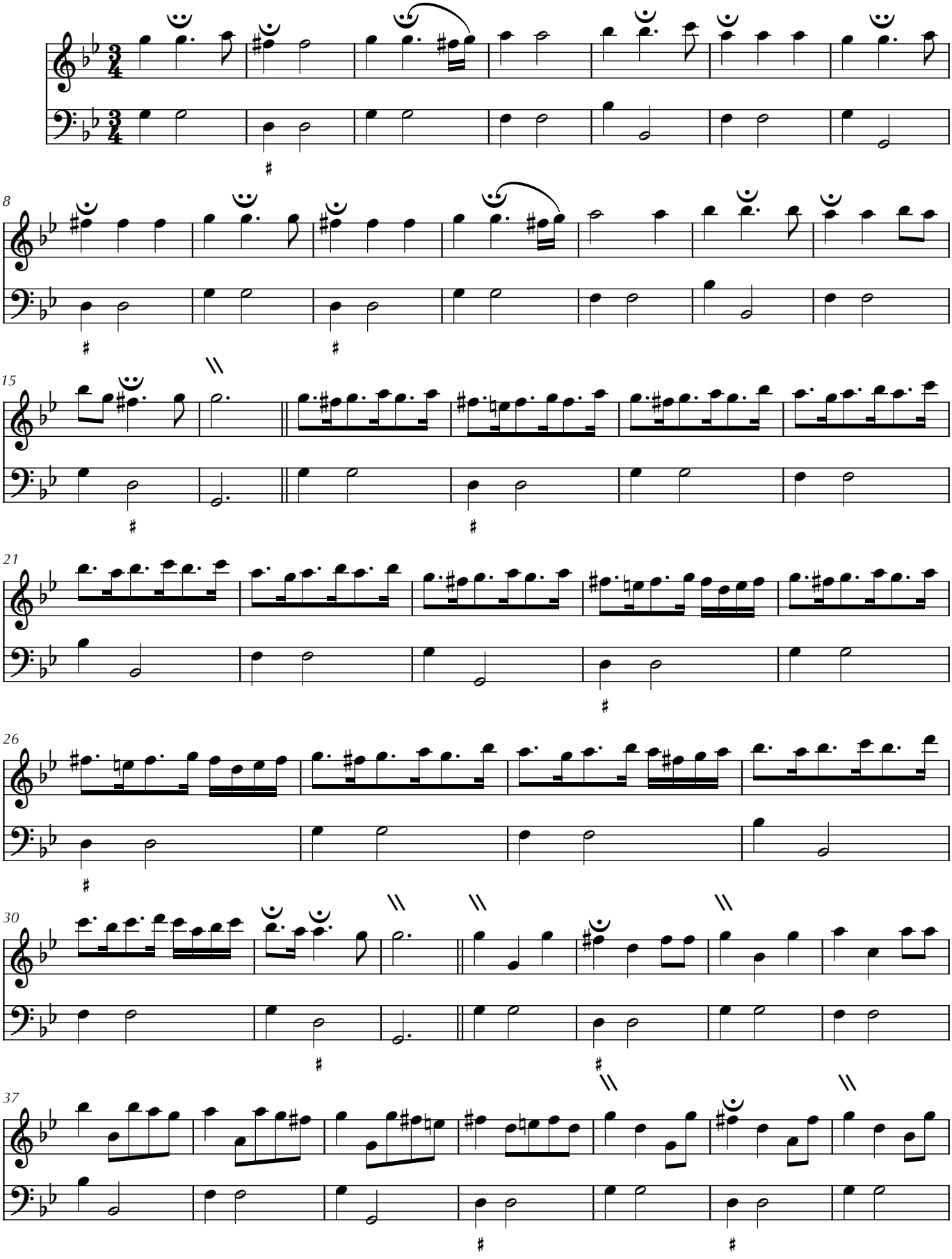
Faronells Ground

Graces from *Salter*



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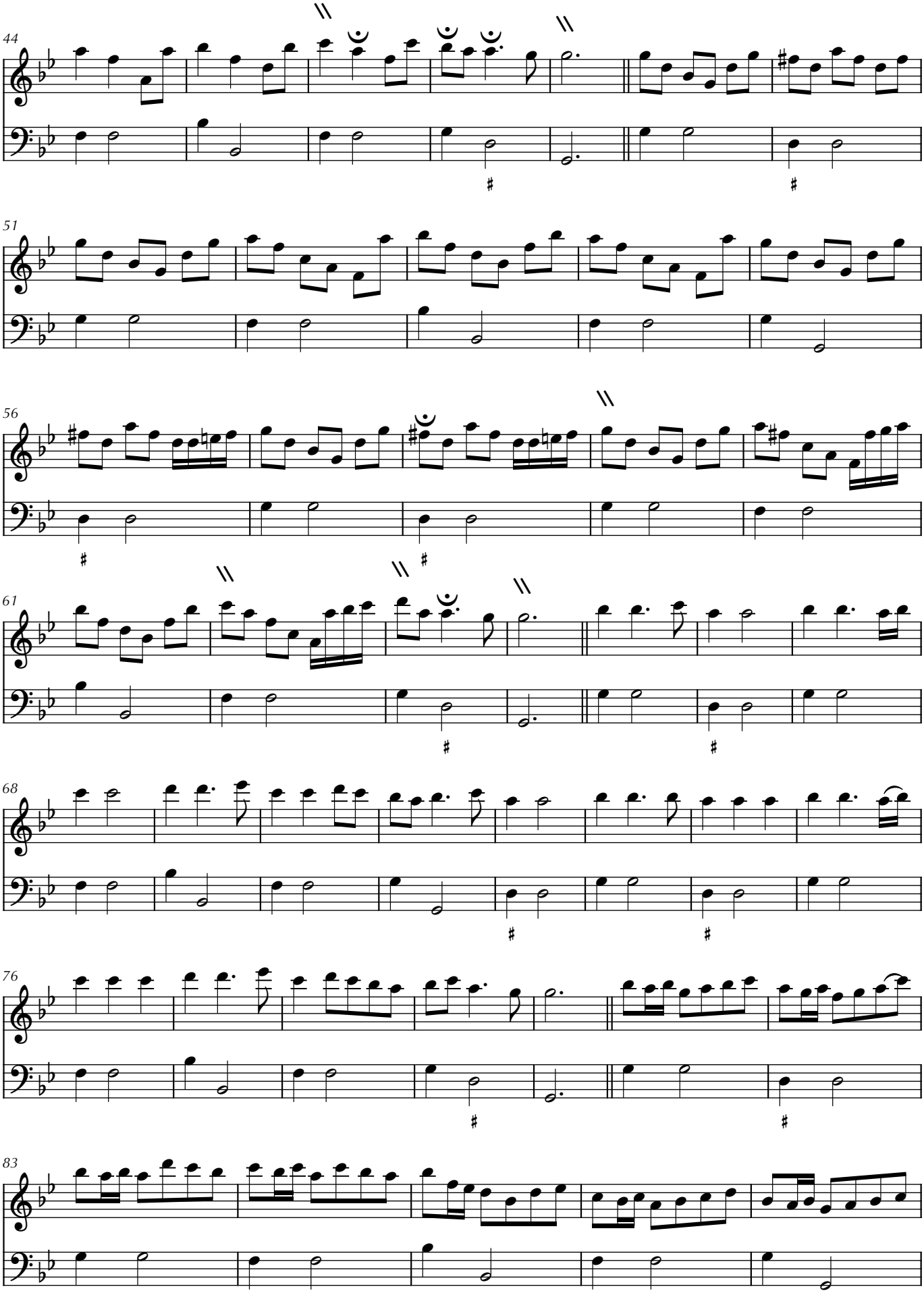

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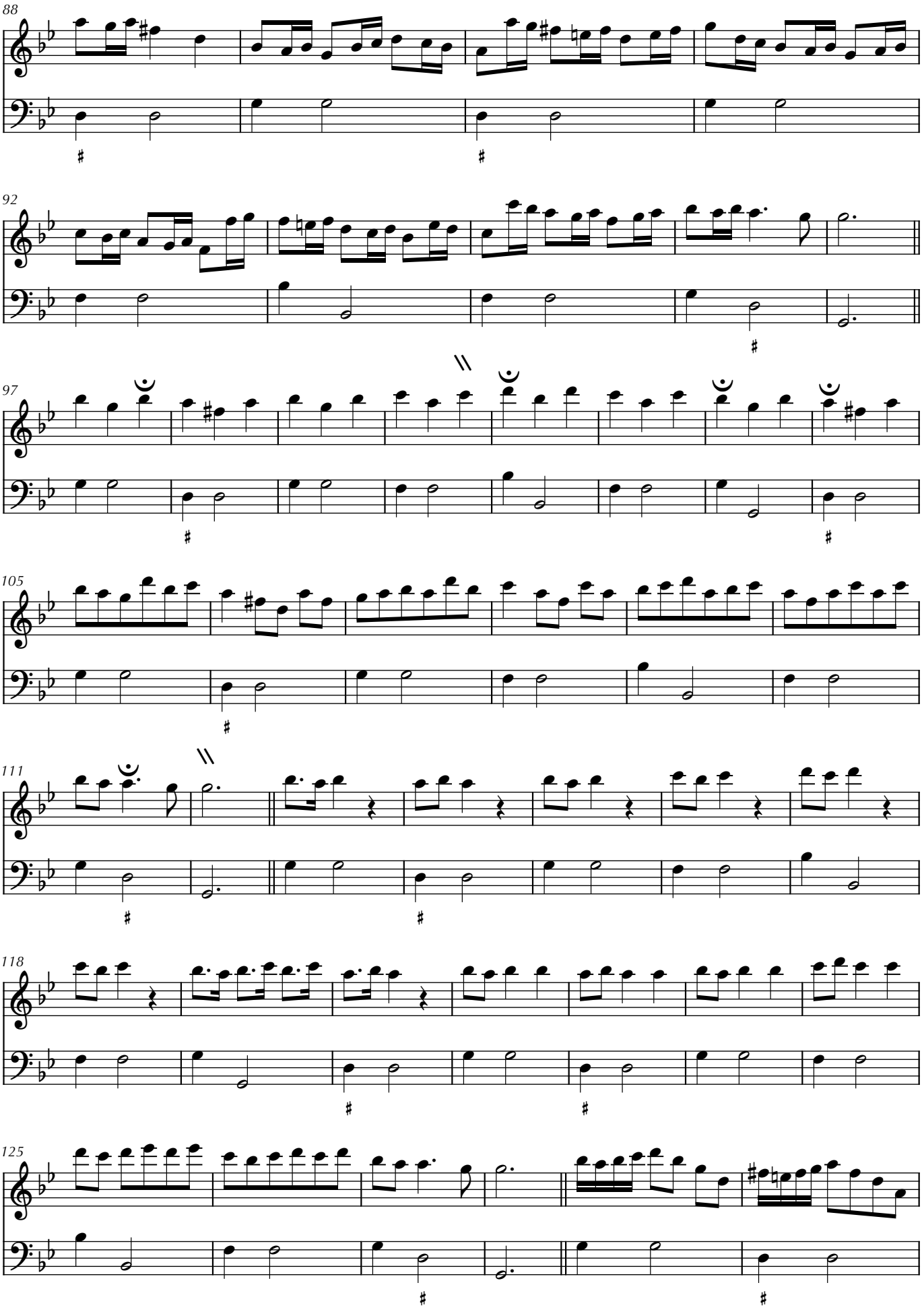

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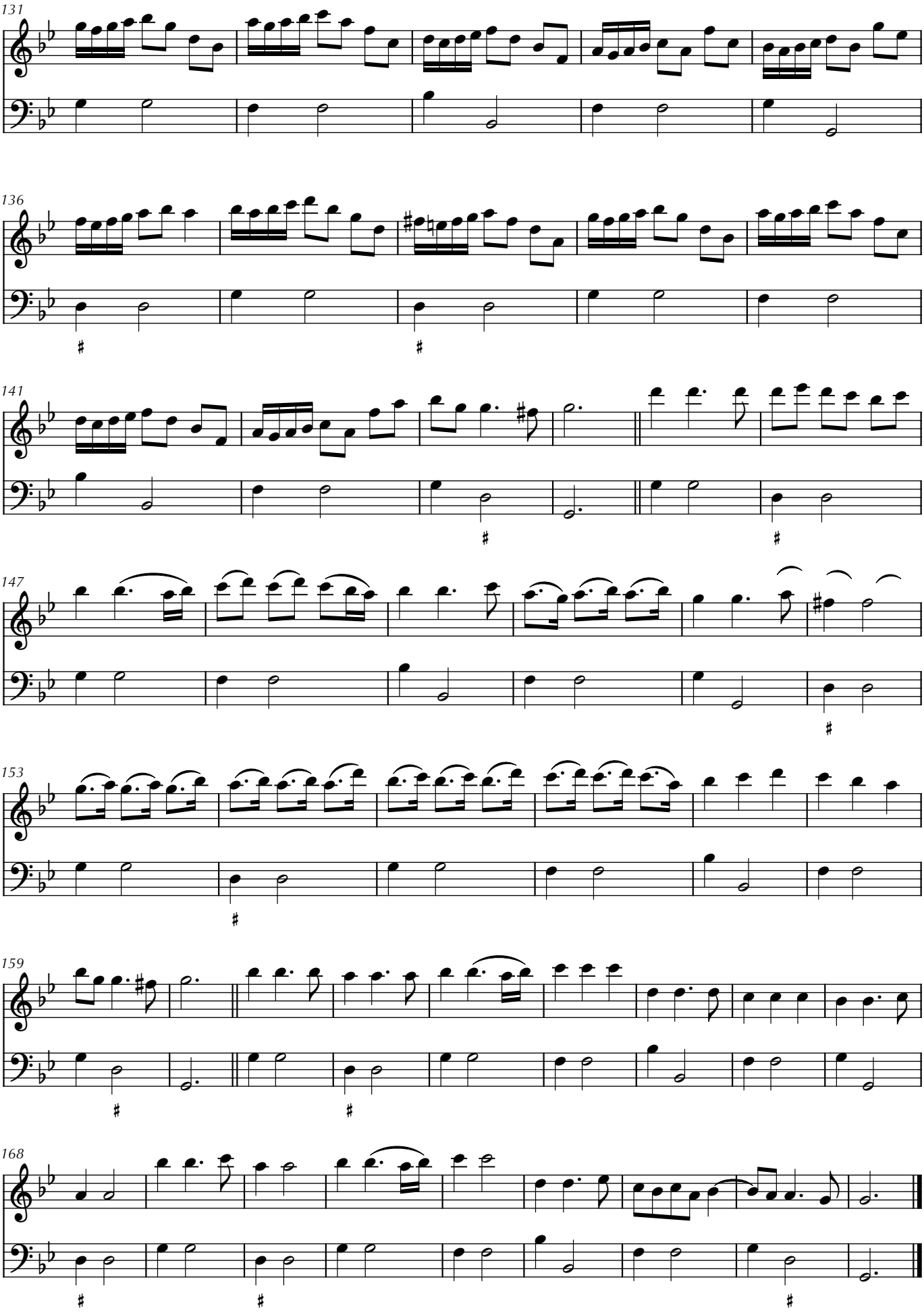

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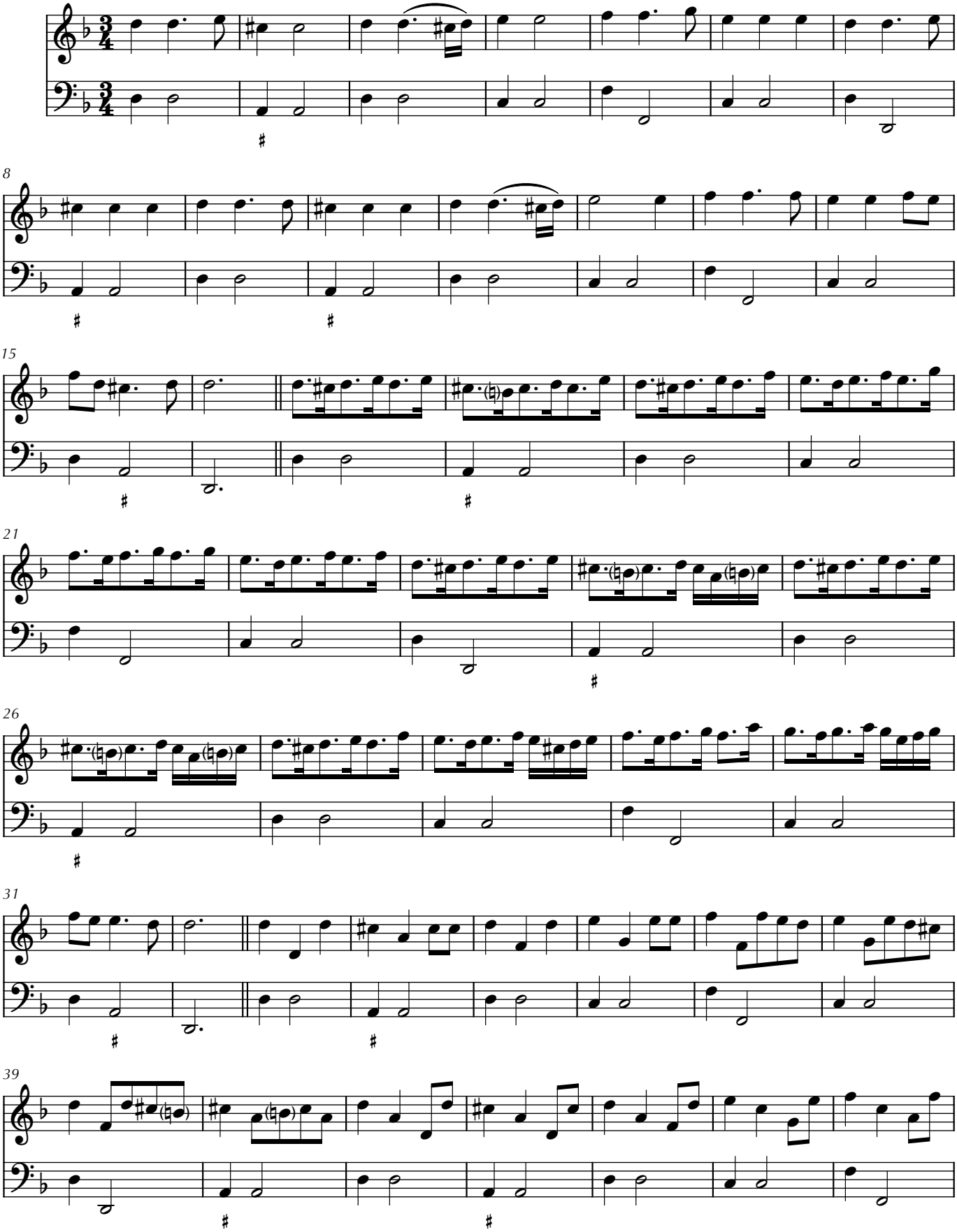
Faronells Ground

The Division Violin, 1685



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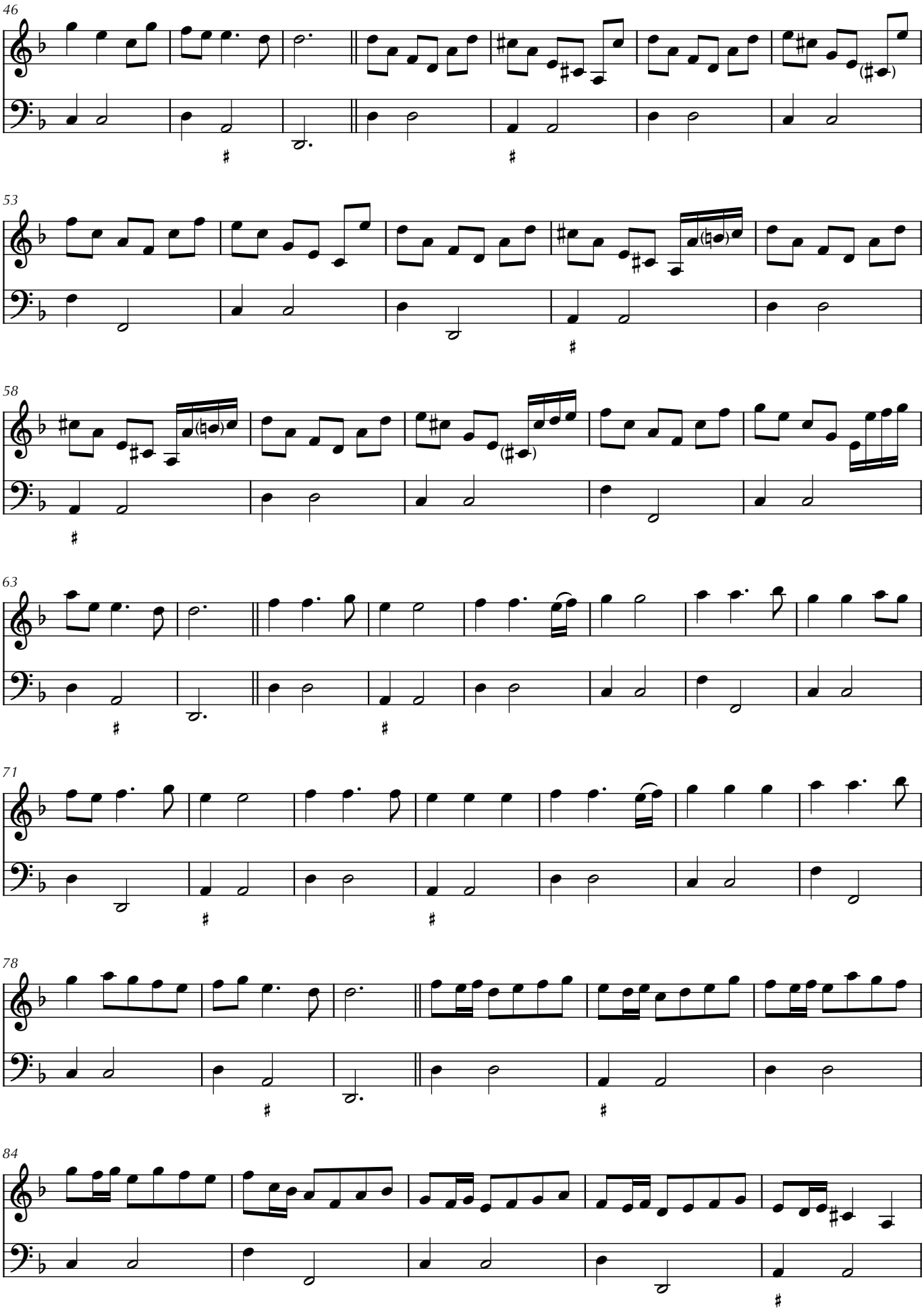

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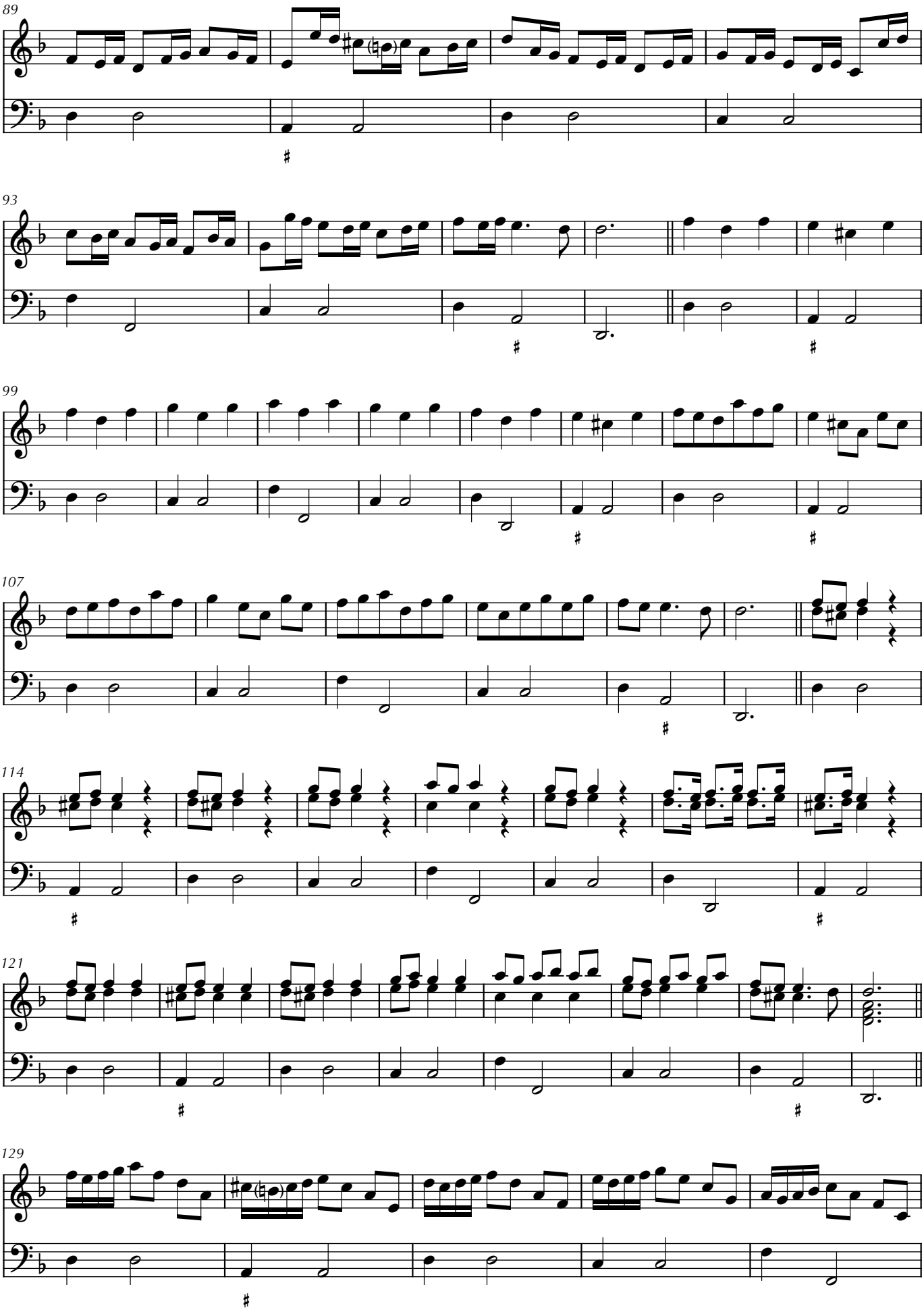

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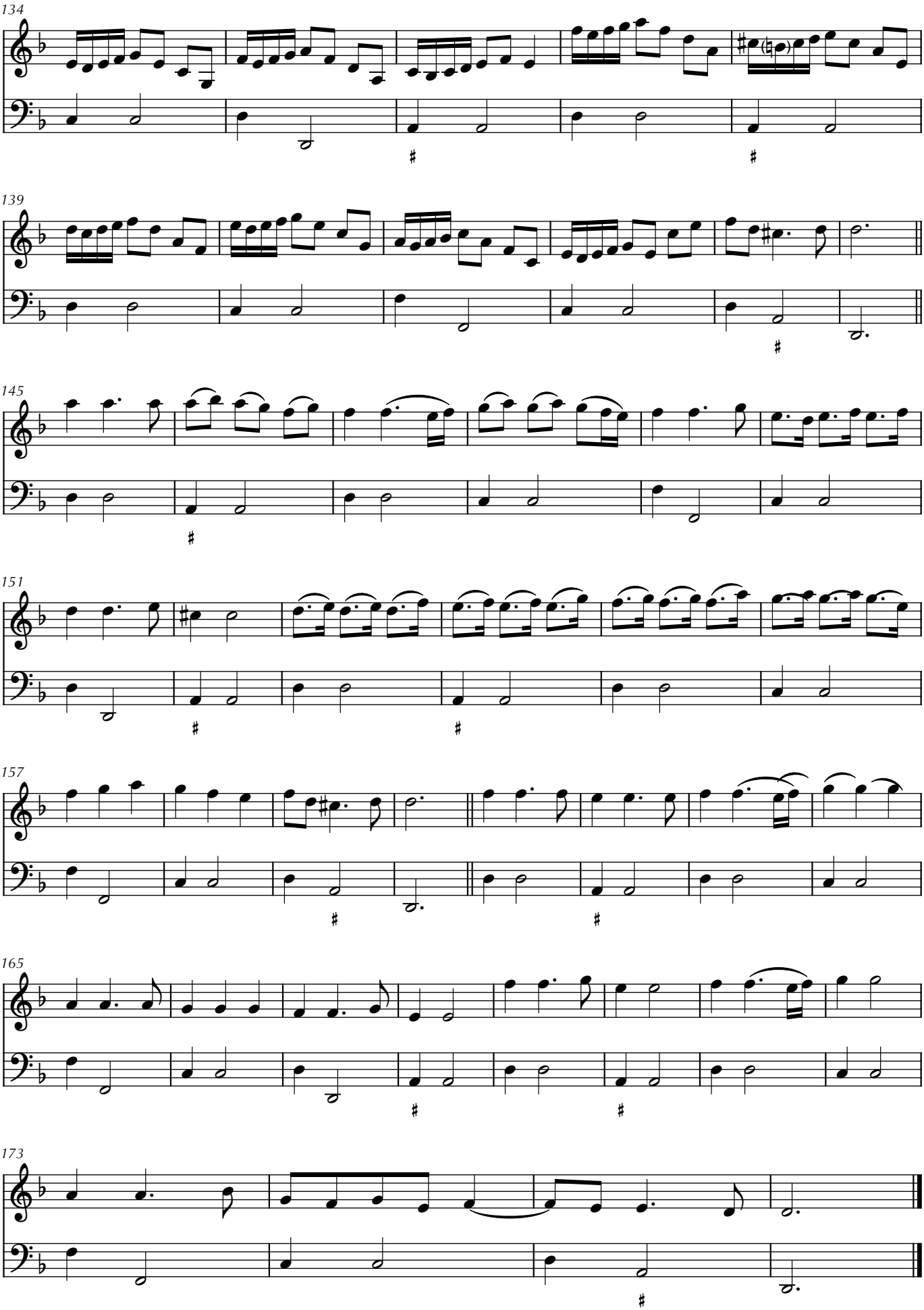

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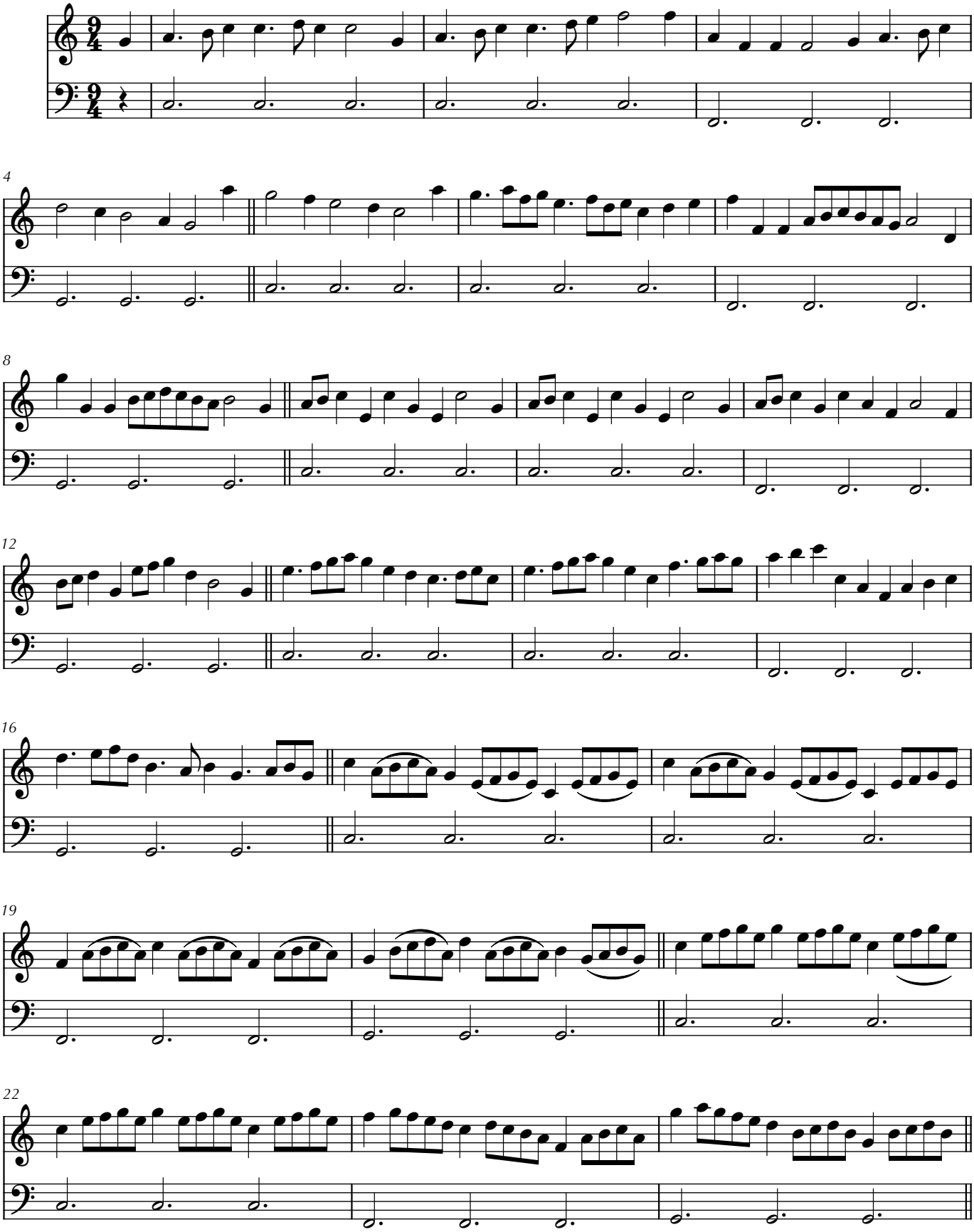
Old Simon the King

The Division Violin, 1685



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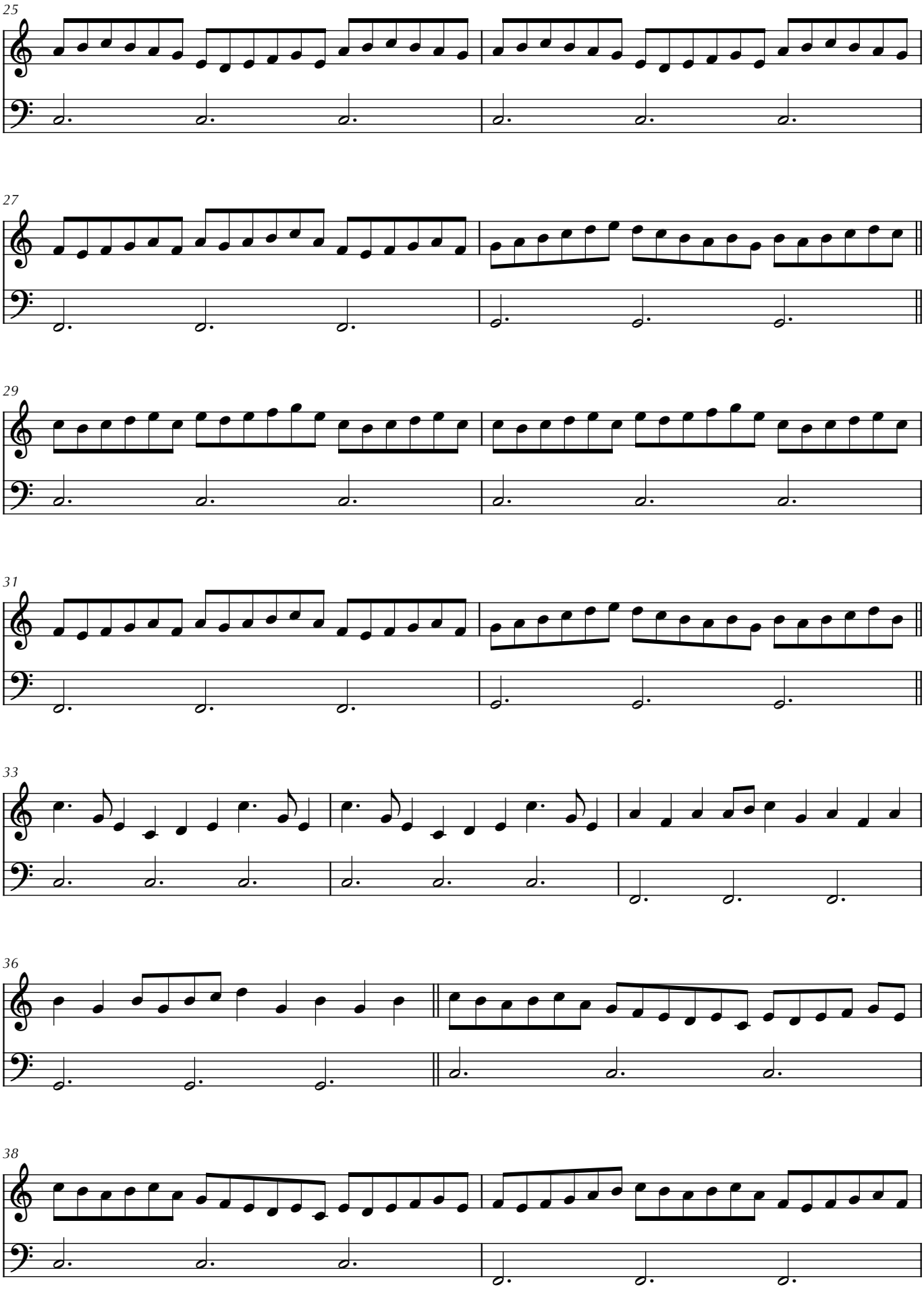

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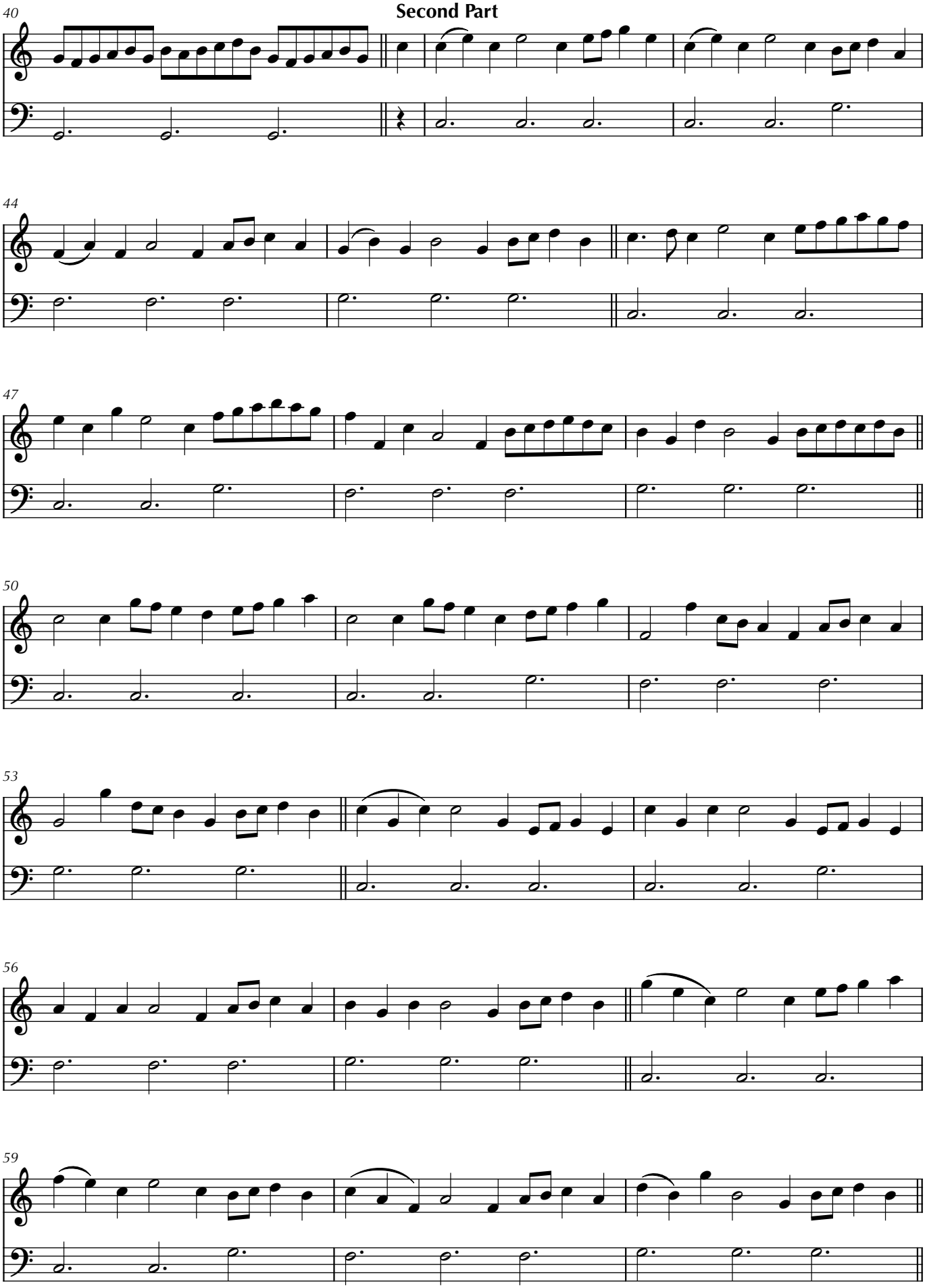

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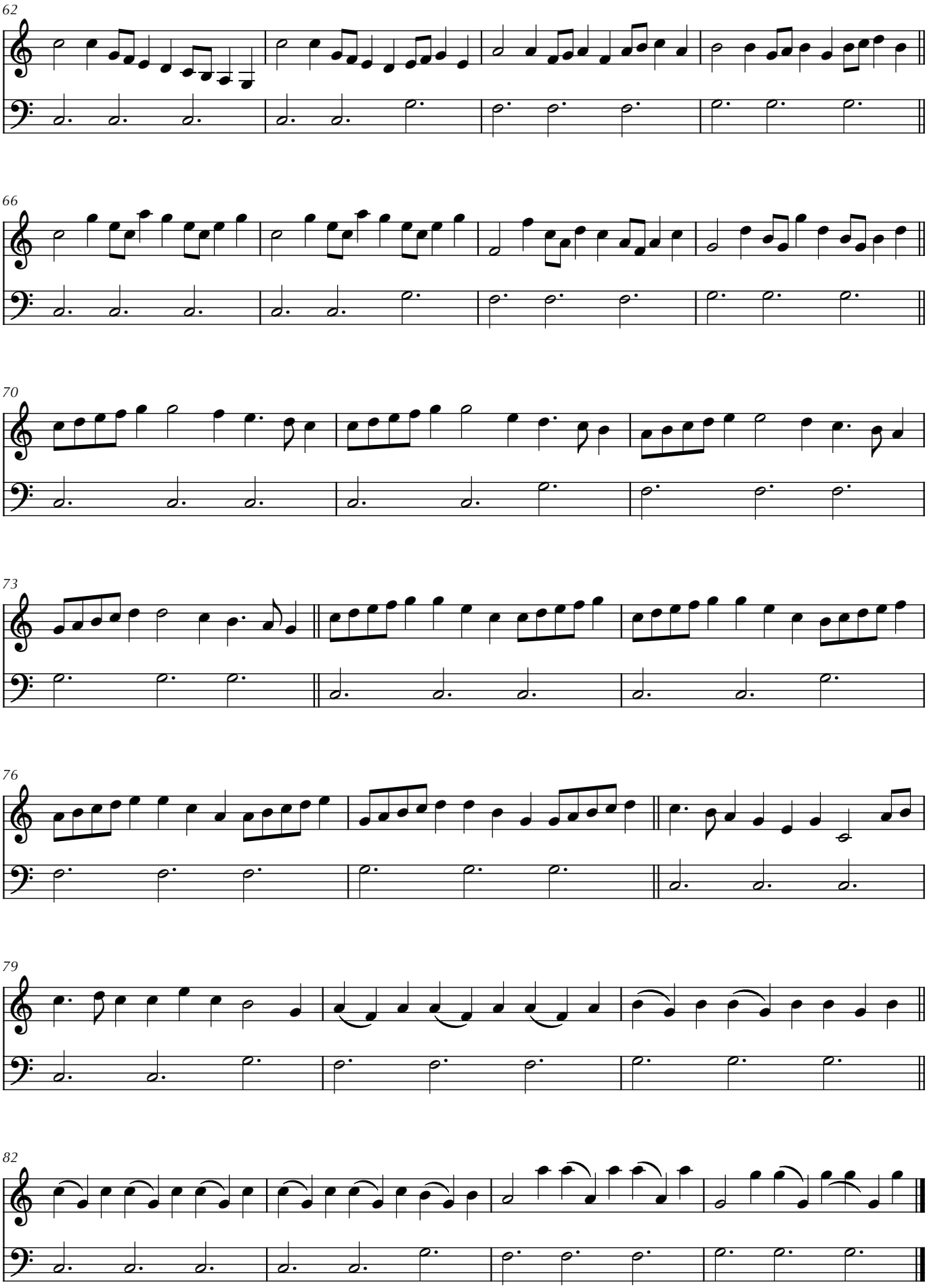

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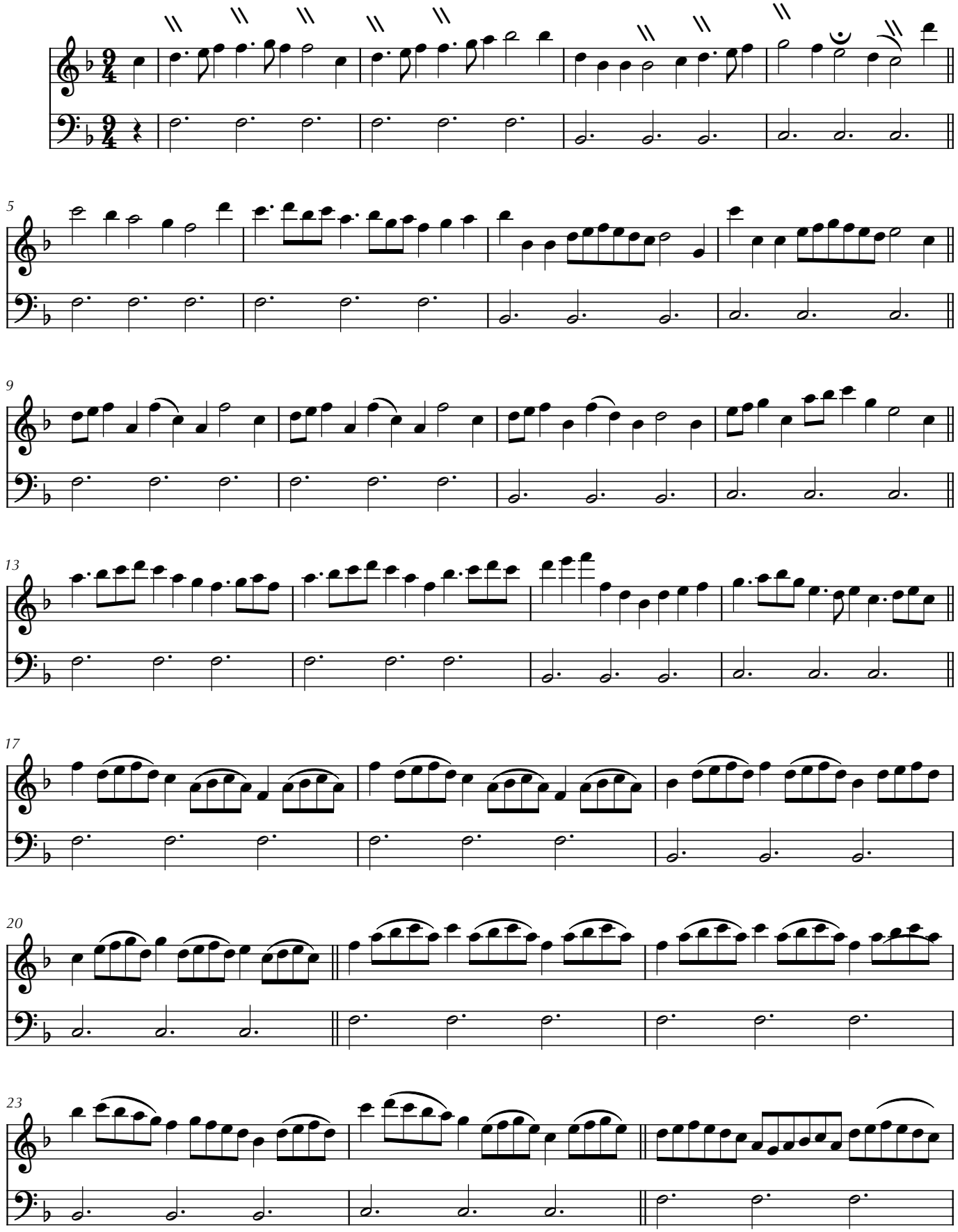
Old Simon the King

Graces from *The Genteel Companion,* 1683



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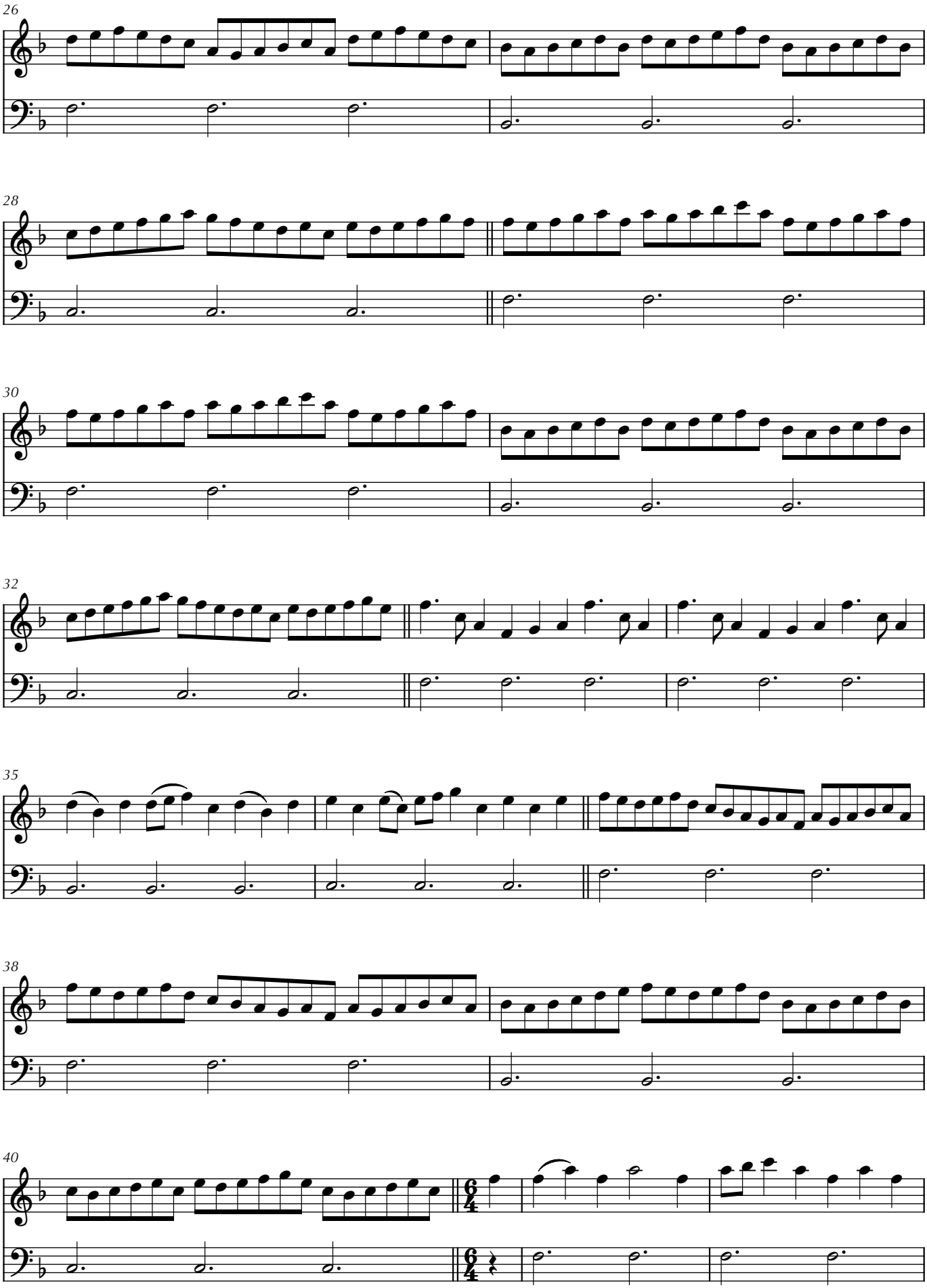

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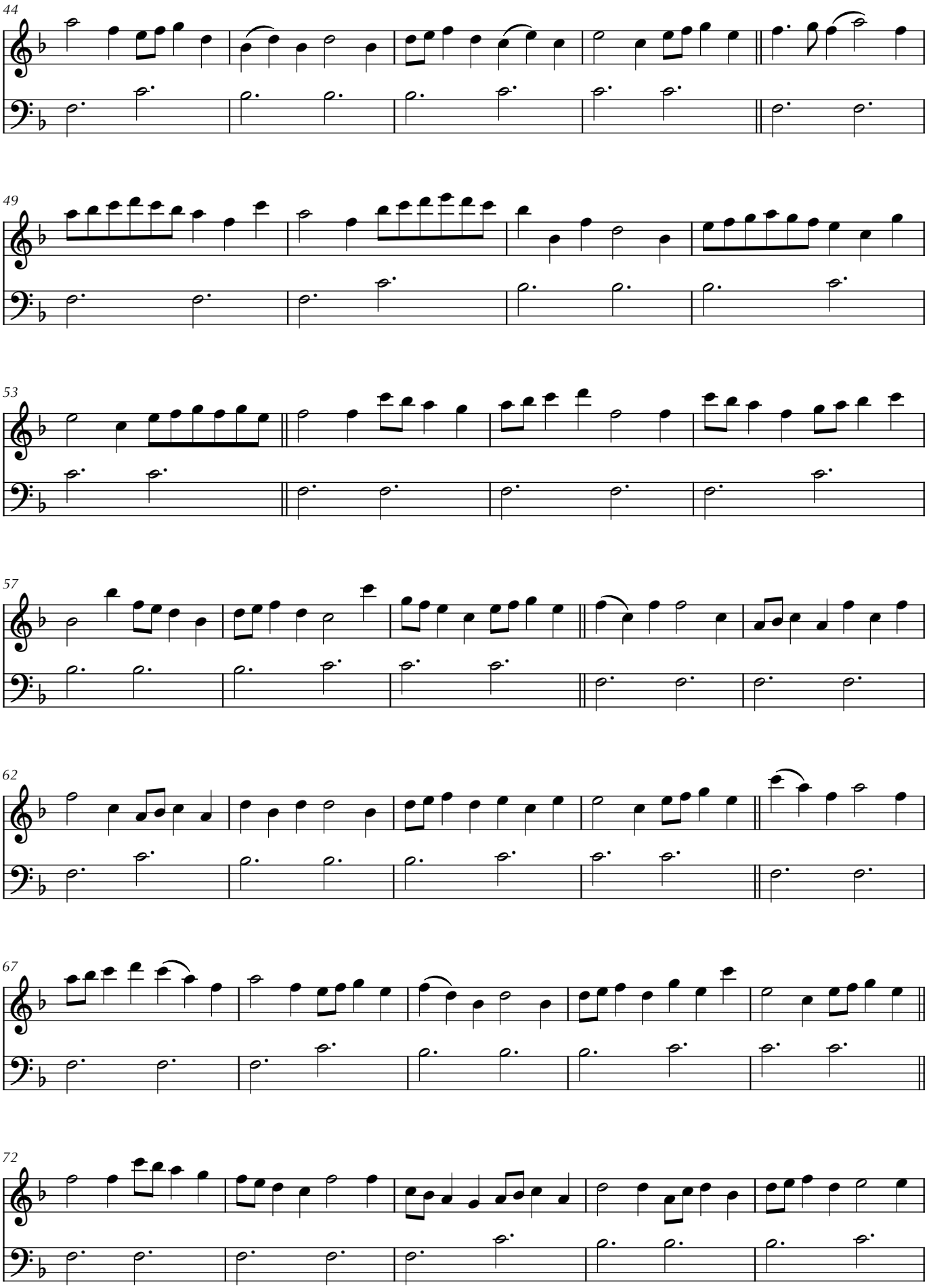

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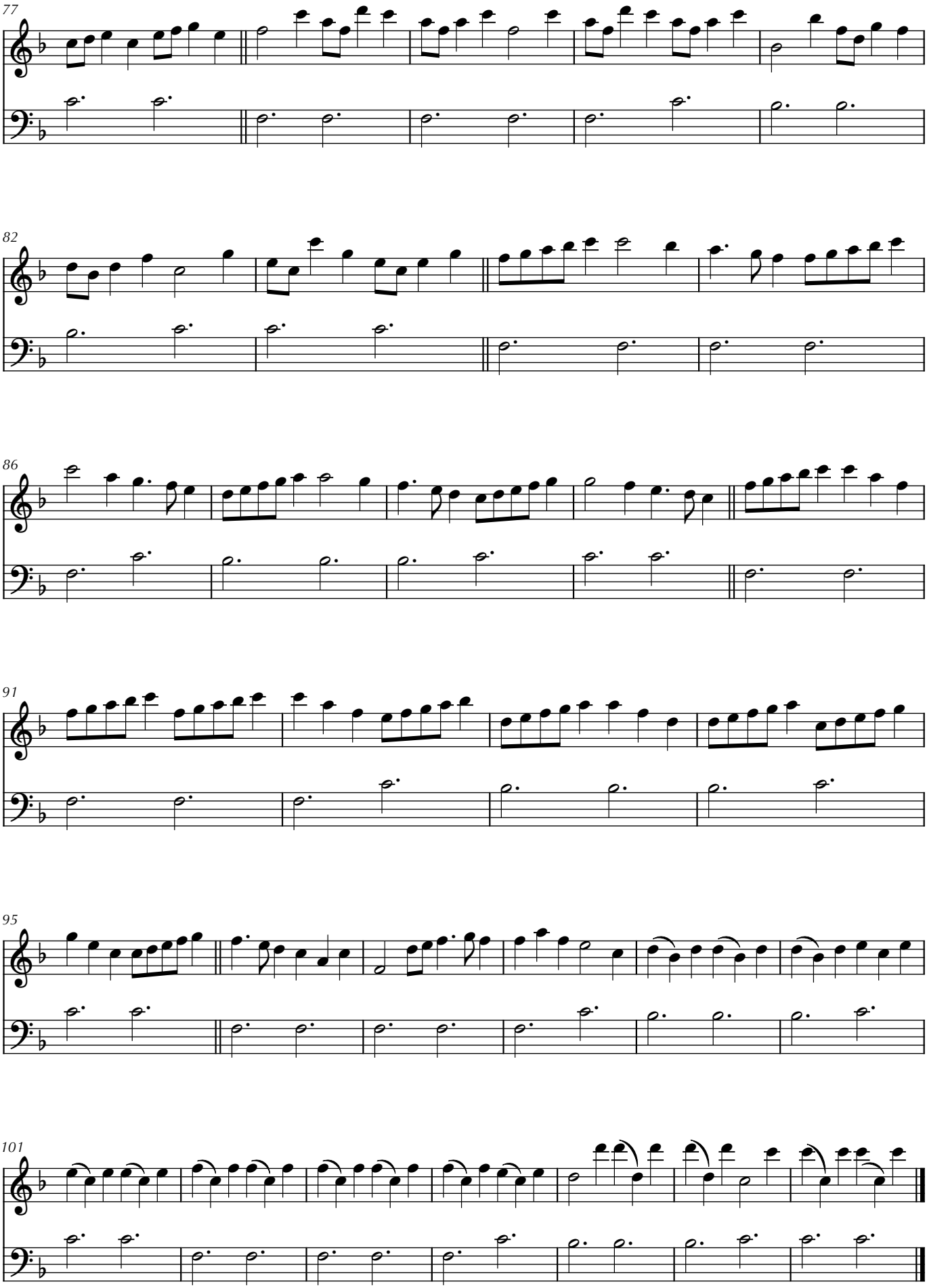

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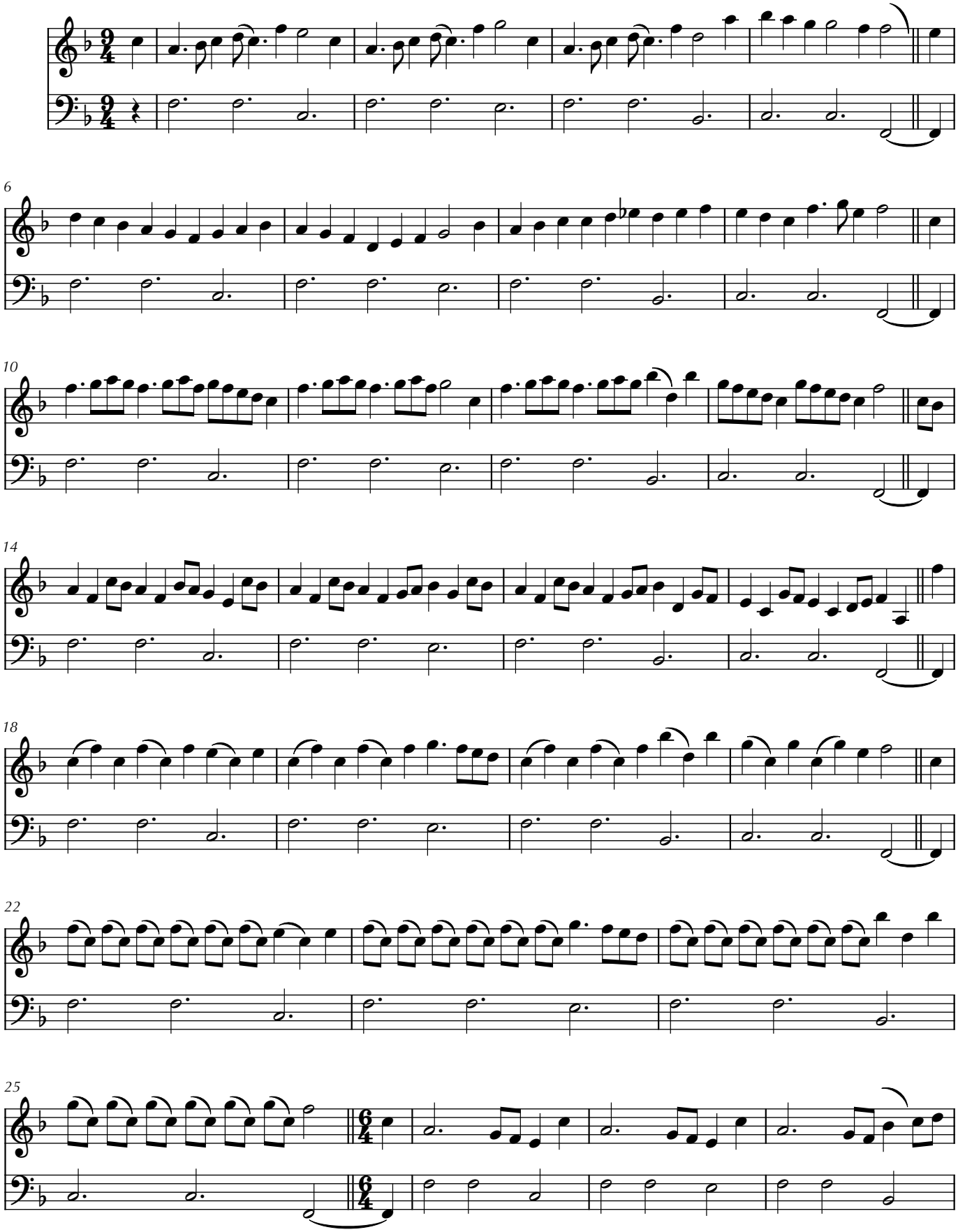
Tollets Ground

The Division Violin, 1685



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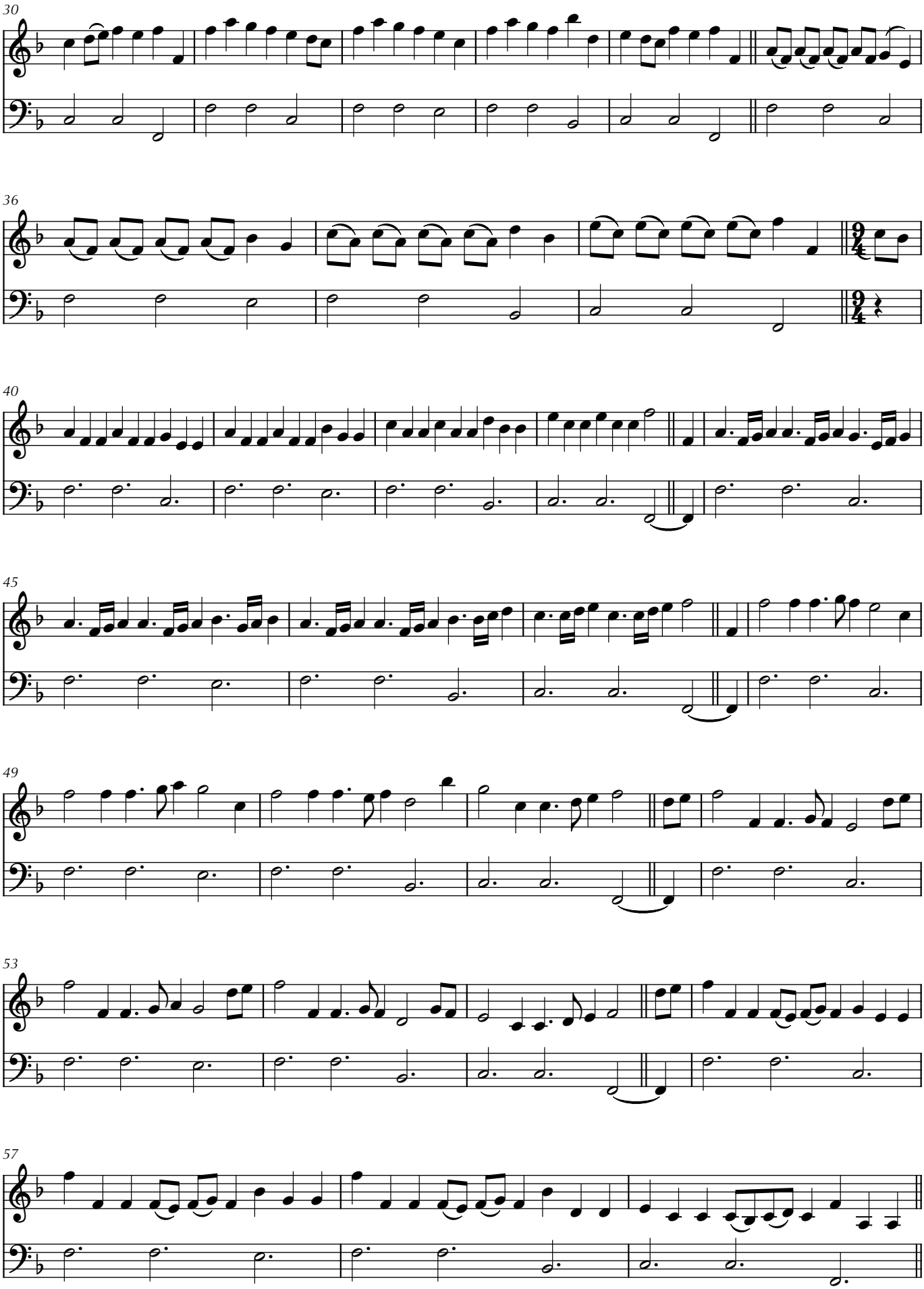

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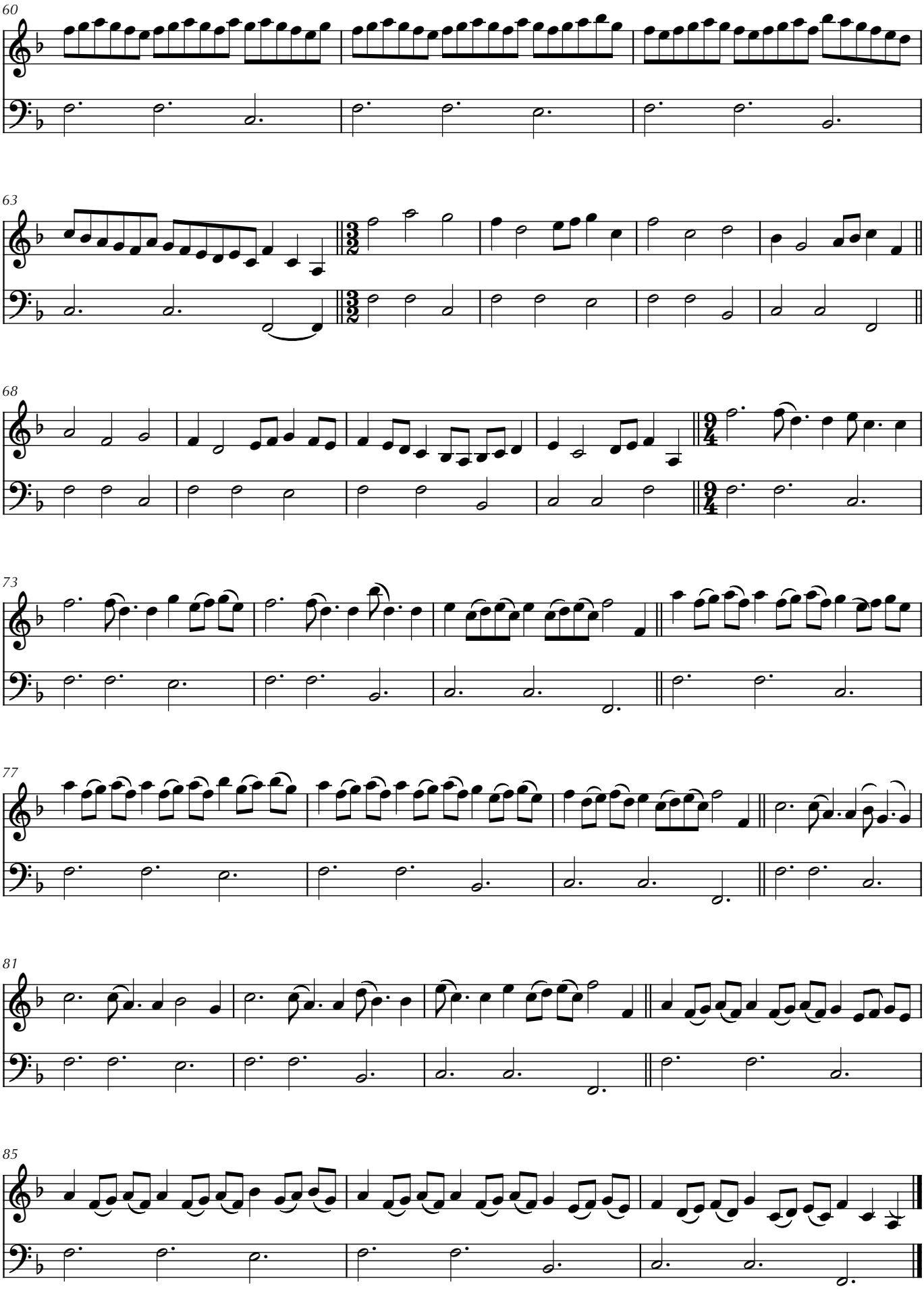

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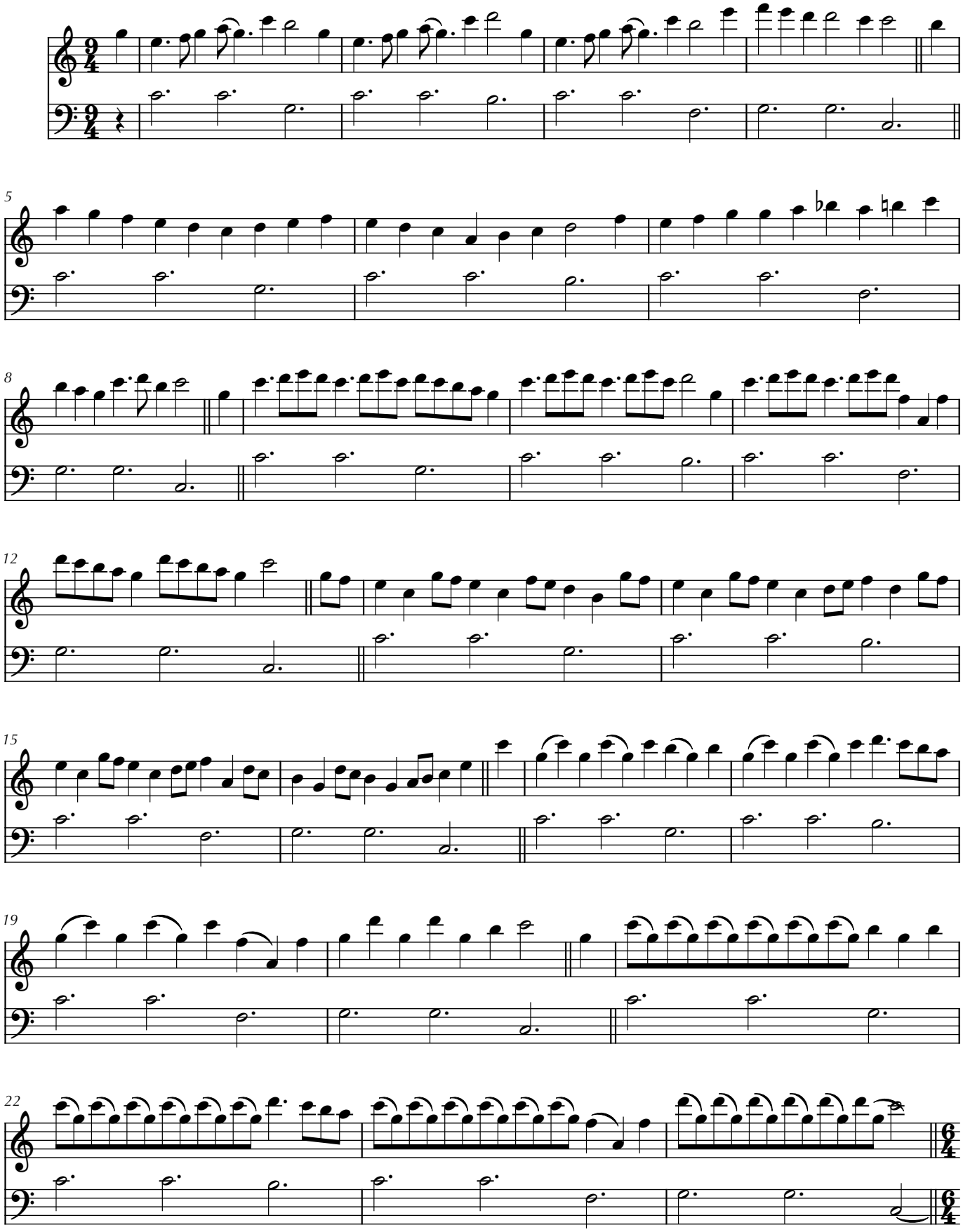

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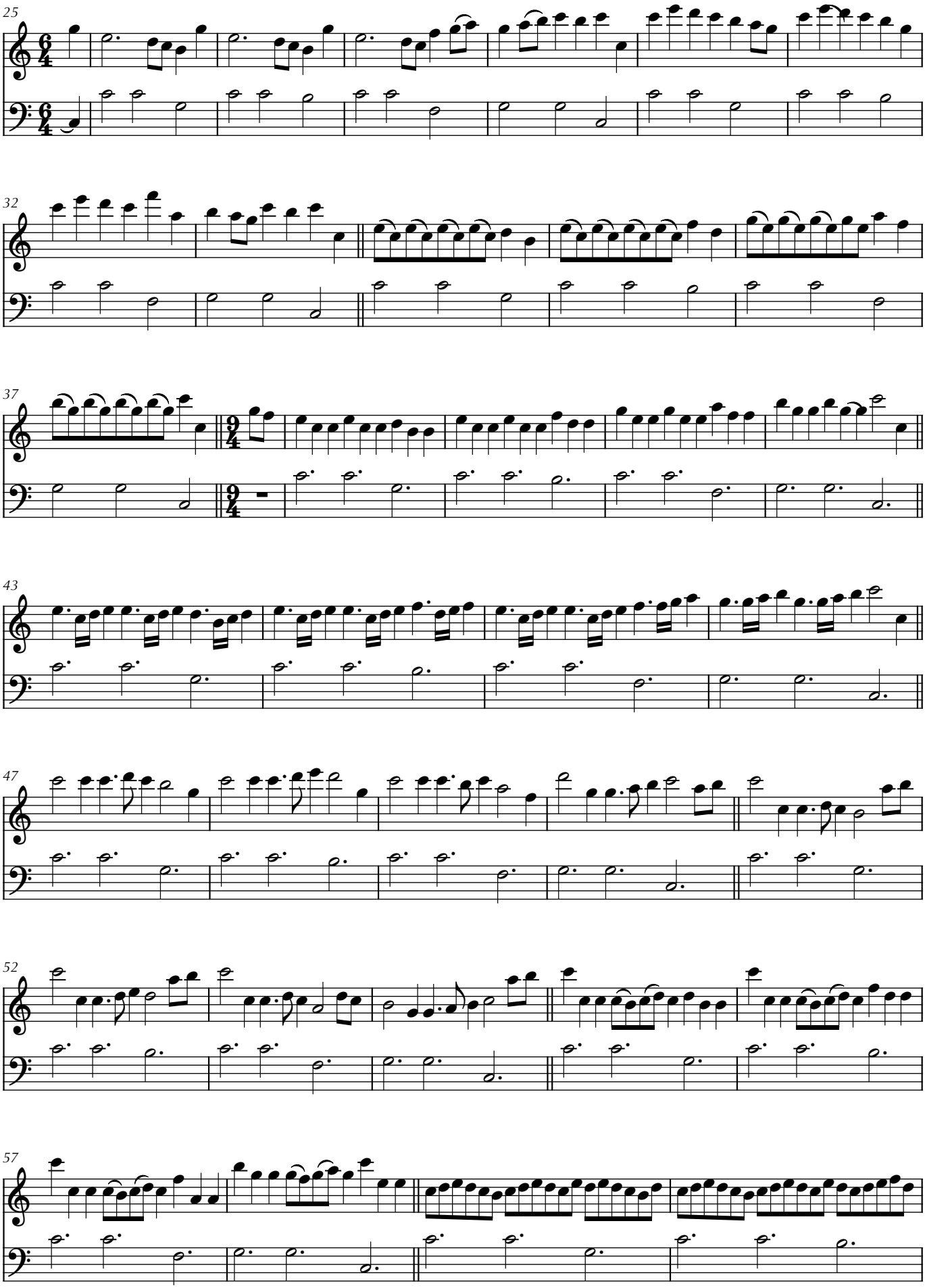

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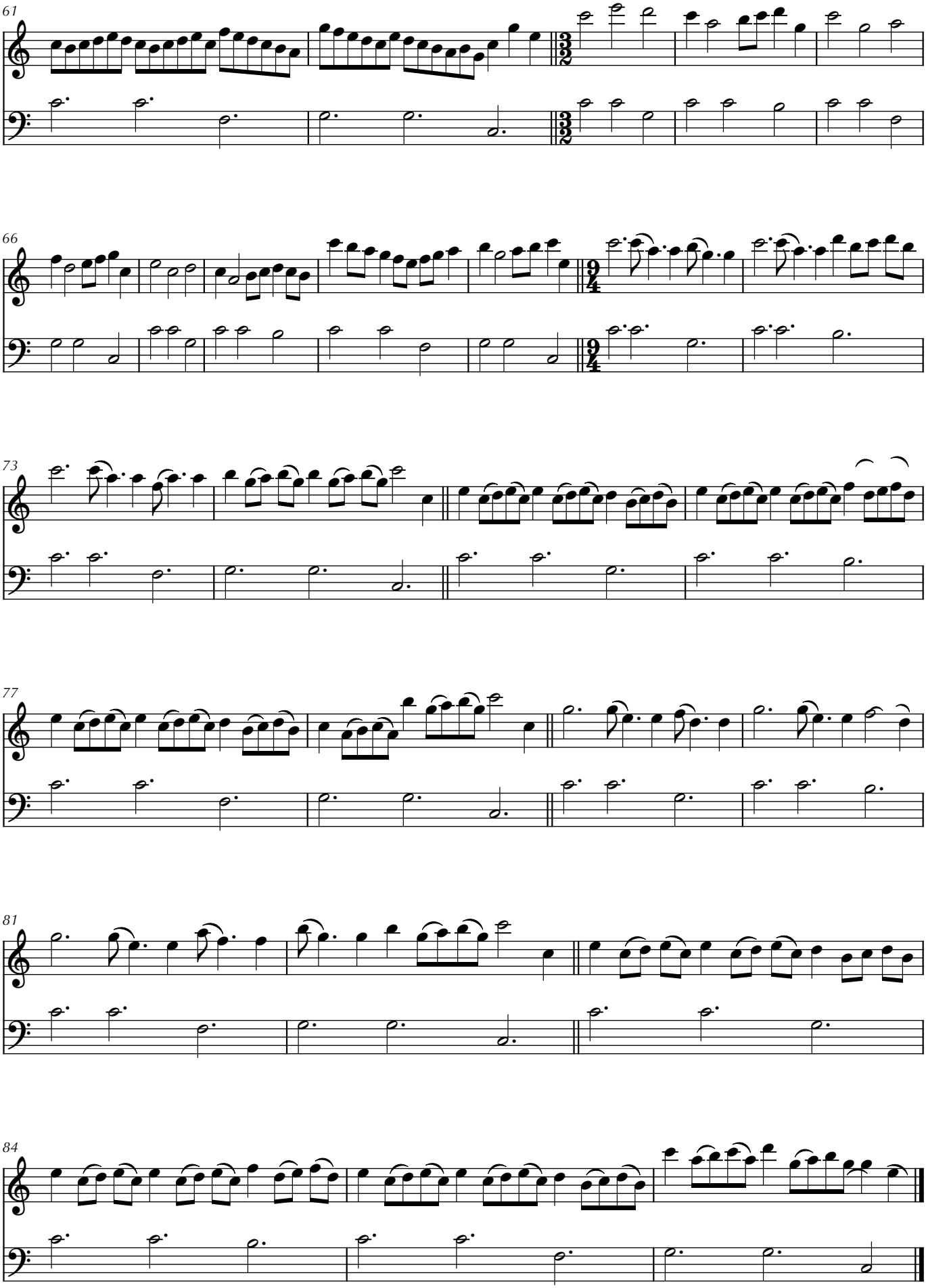

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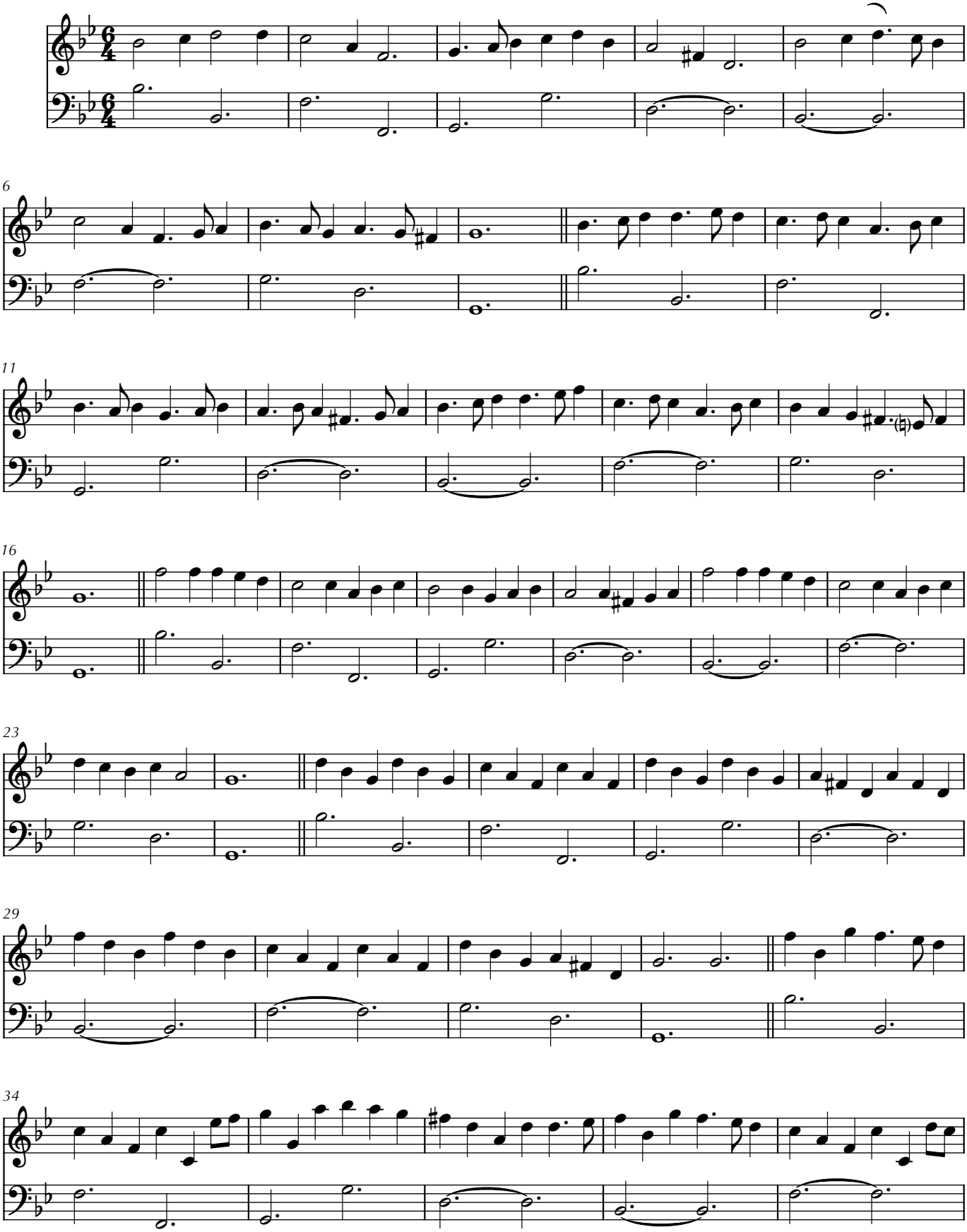
Green Sleeves to a Ground

The Division Violin, 1685



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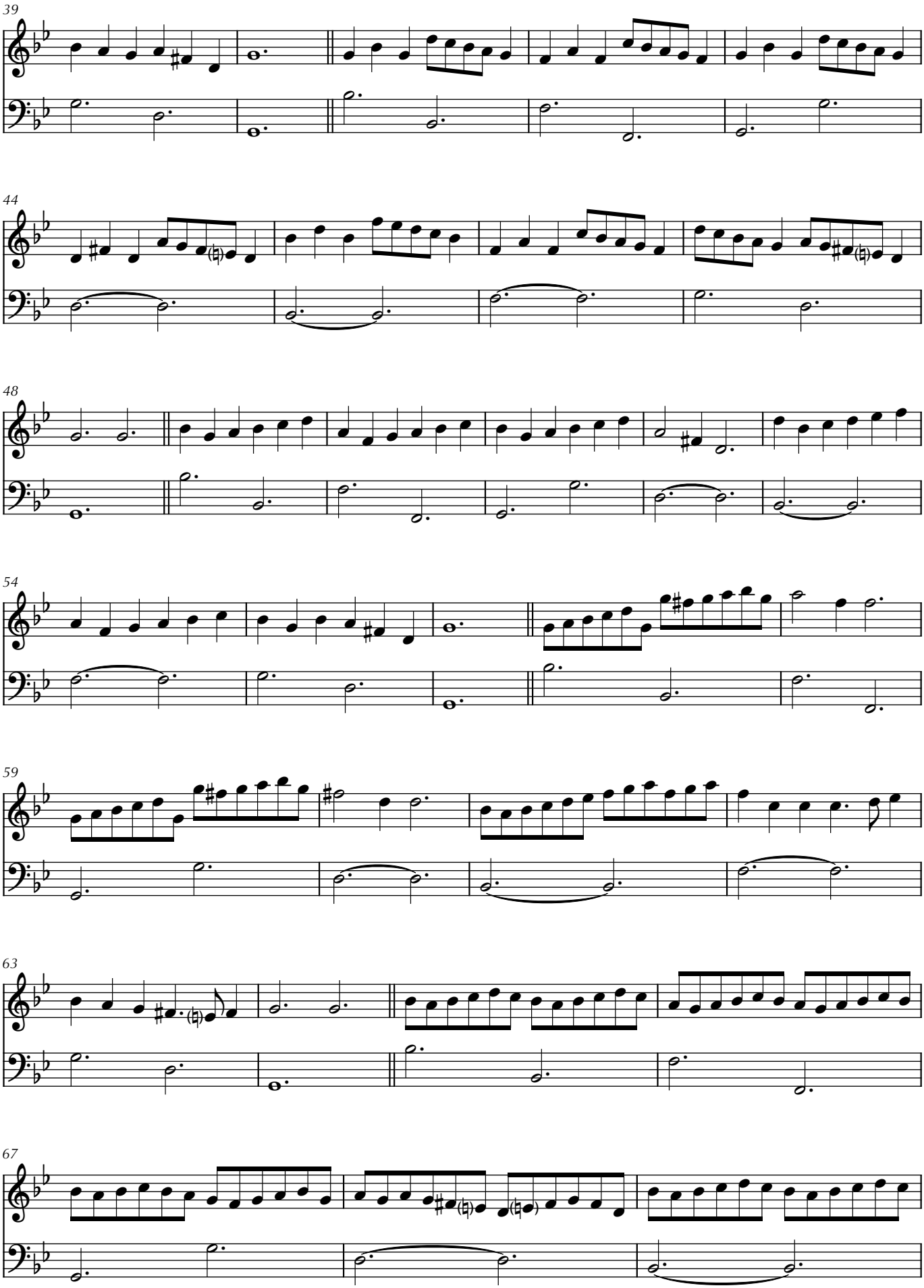

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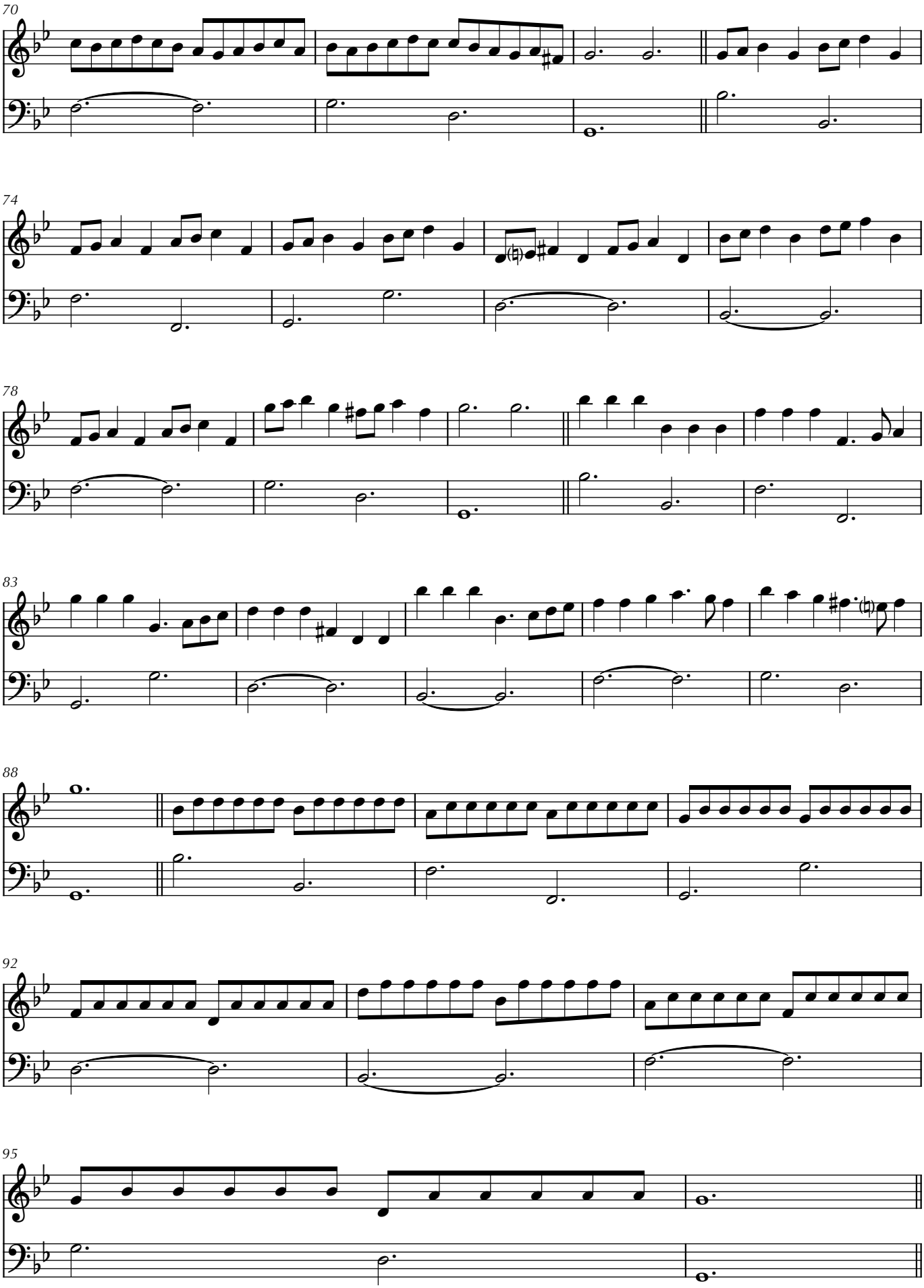

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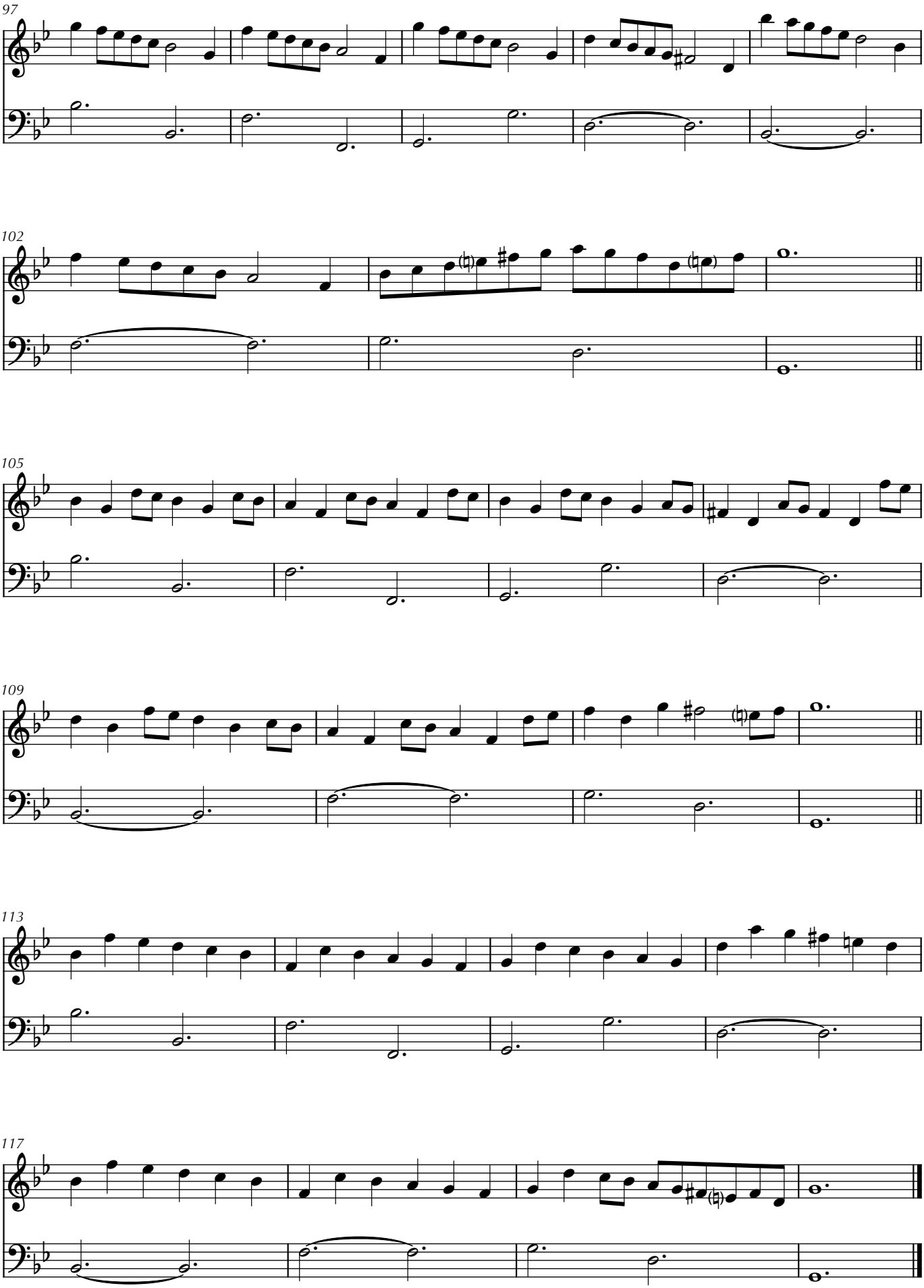

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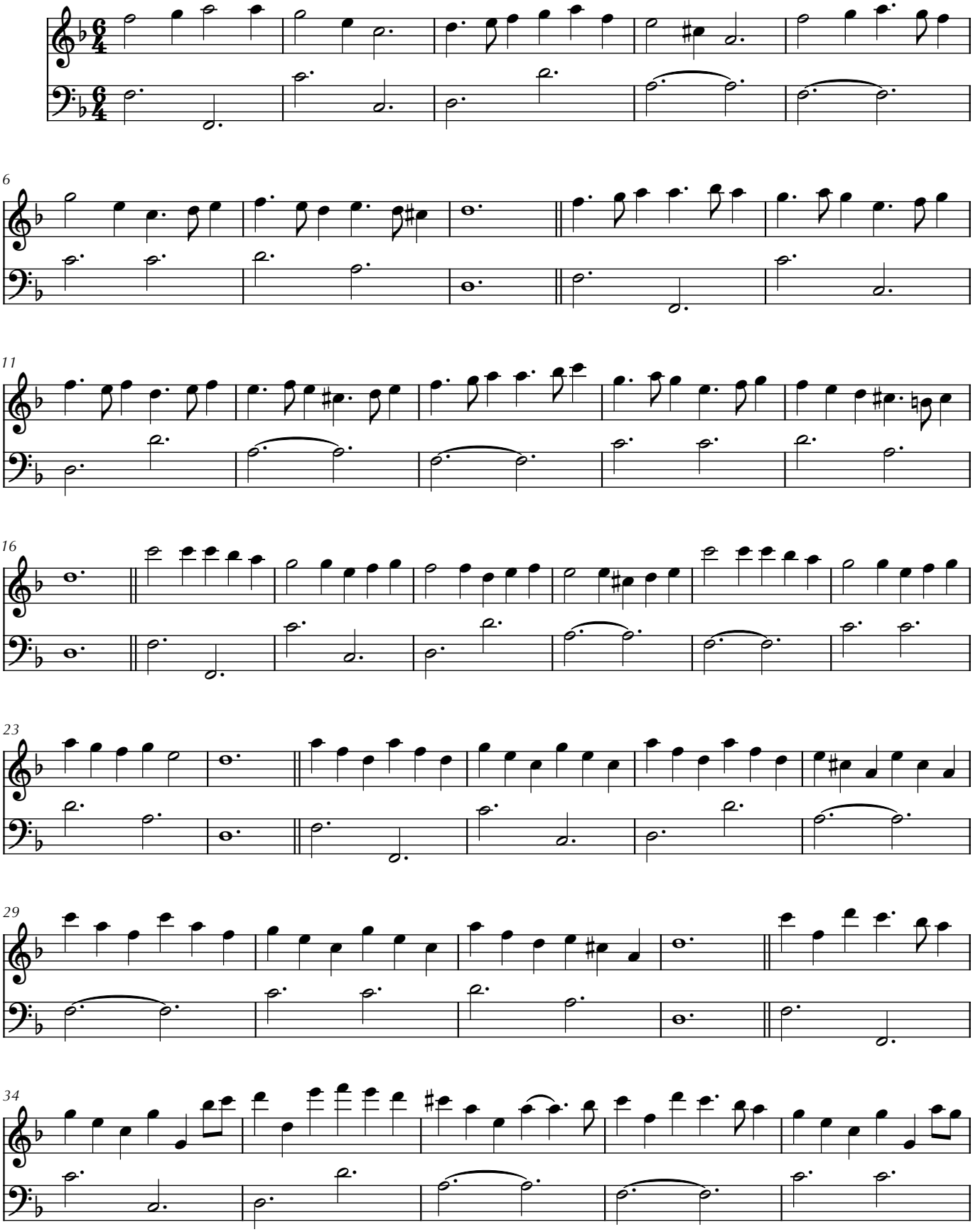
Green Sleeves to a Ground



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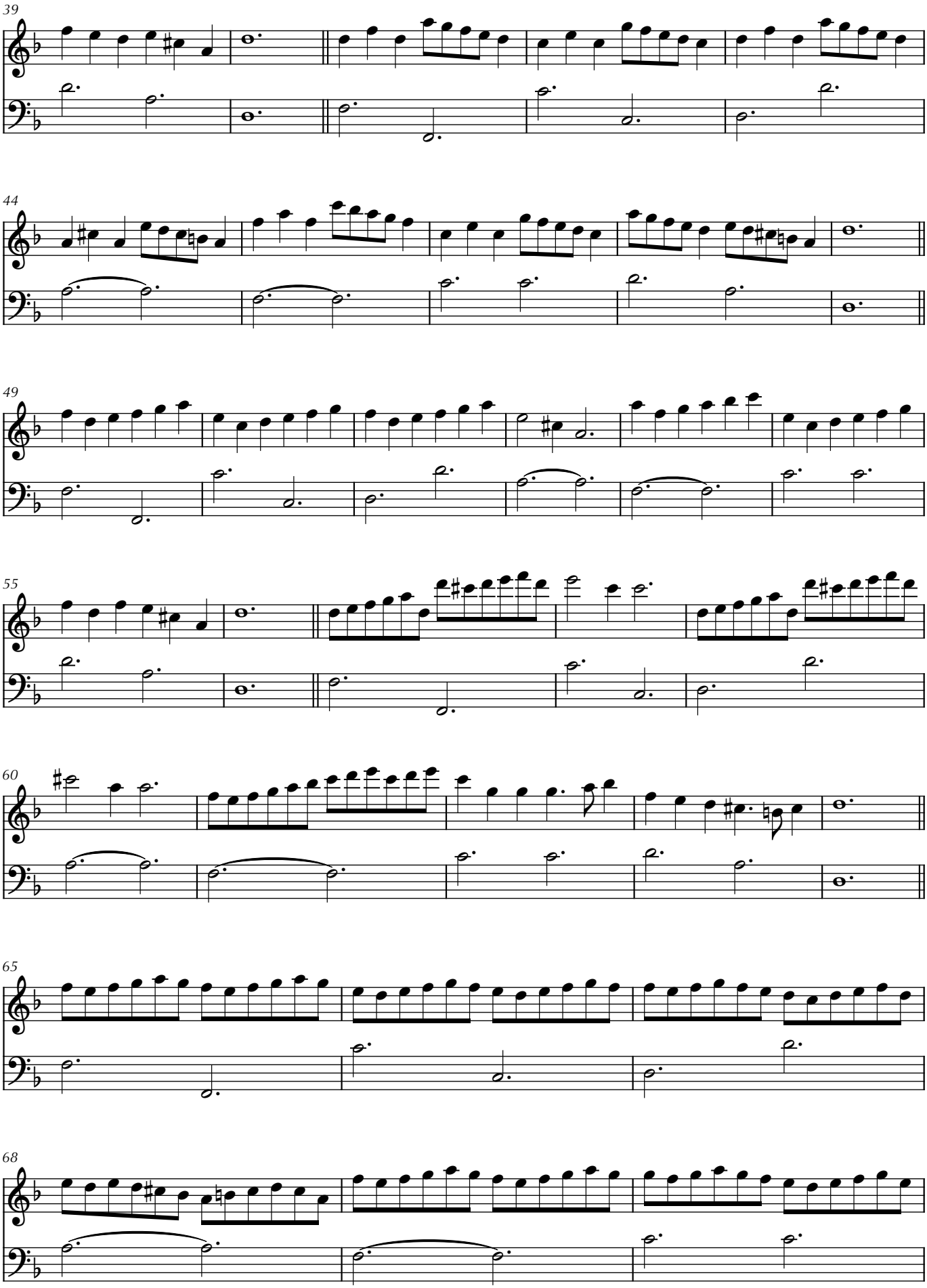

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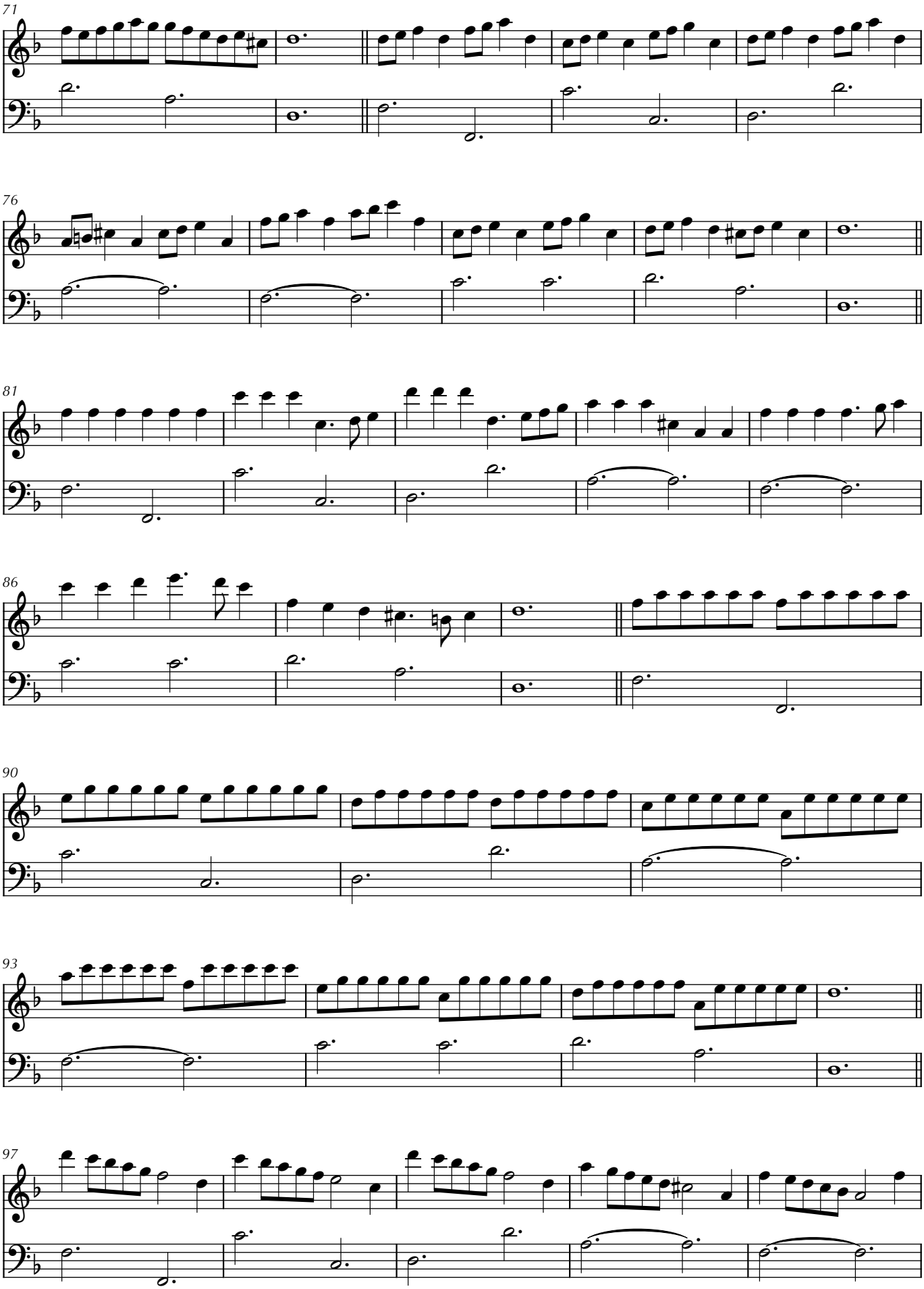

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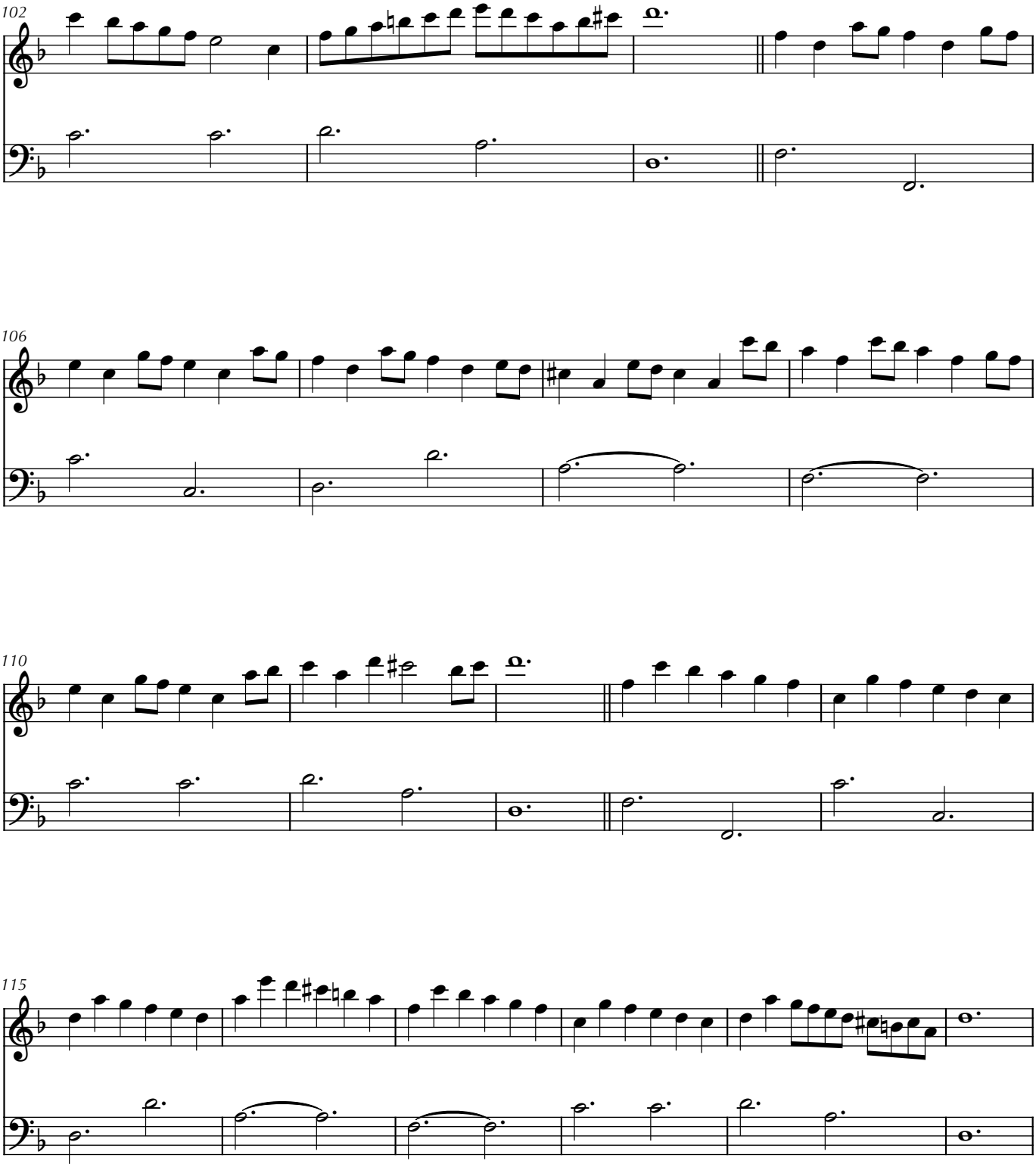

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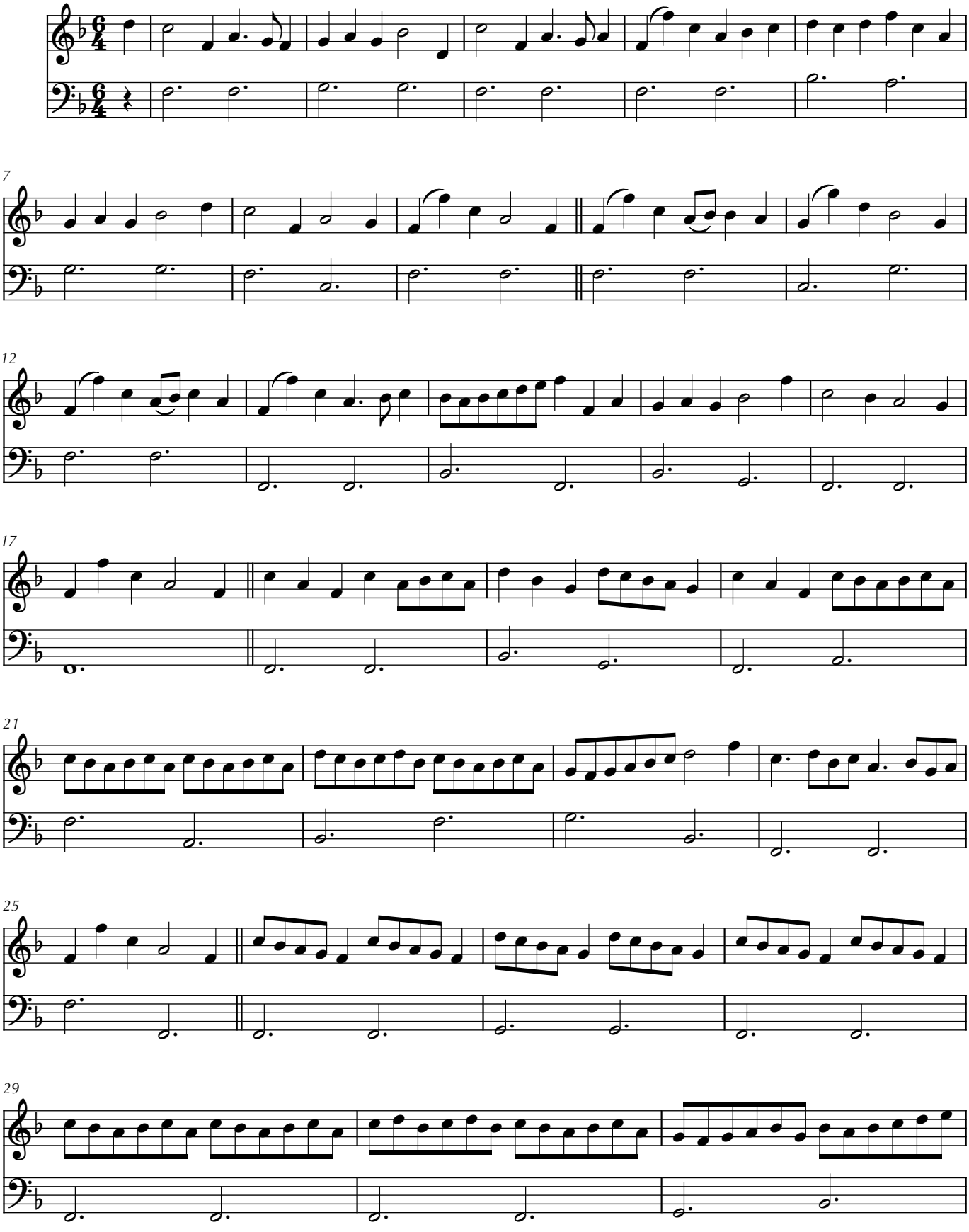
The Ground to Newmarket

The Division Violin, 1685



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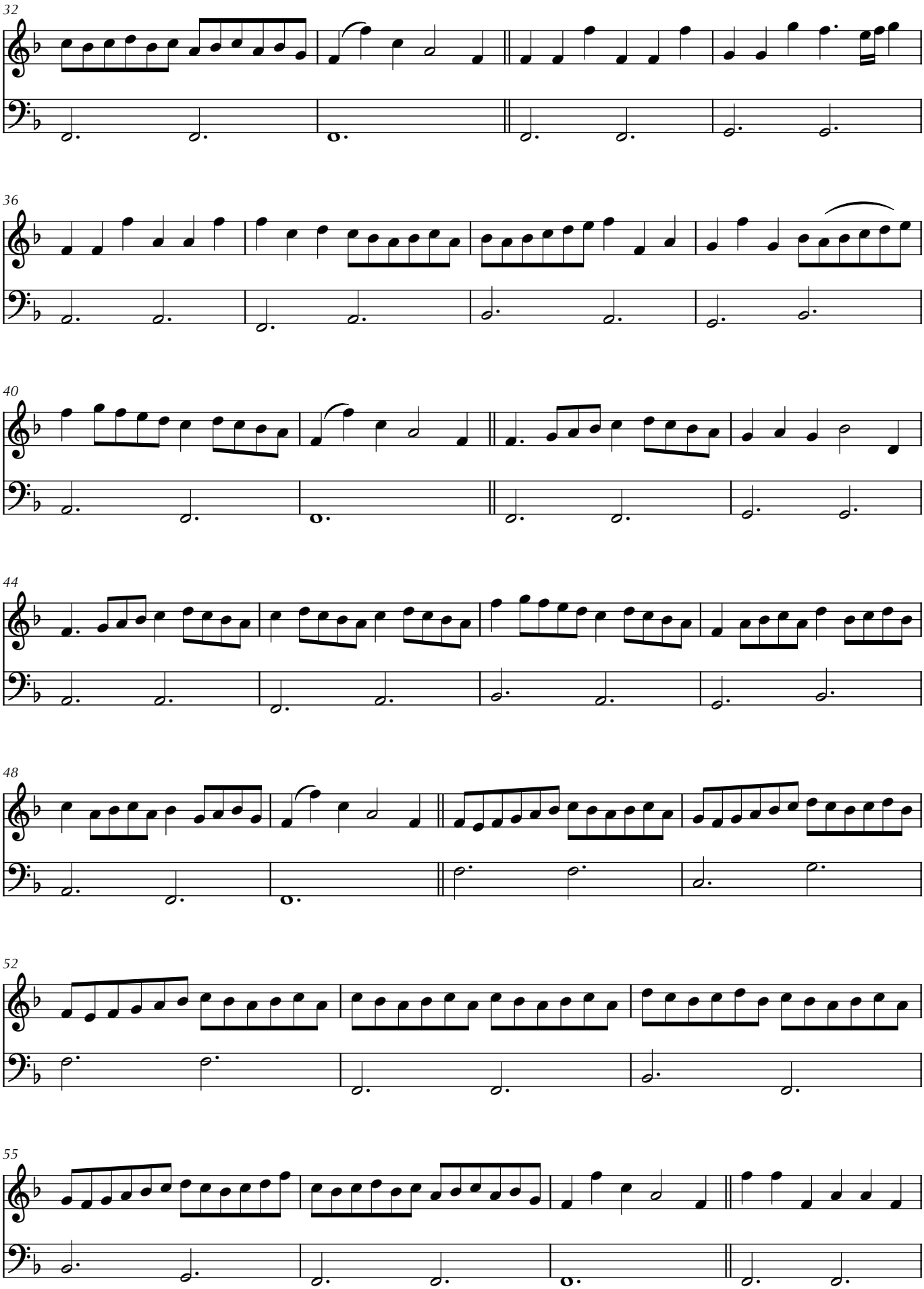

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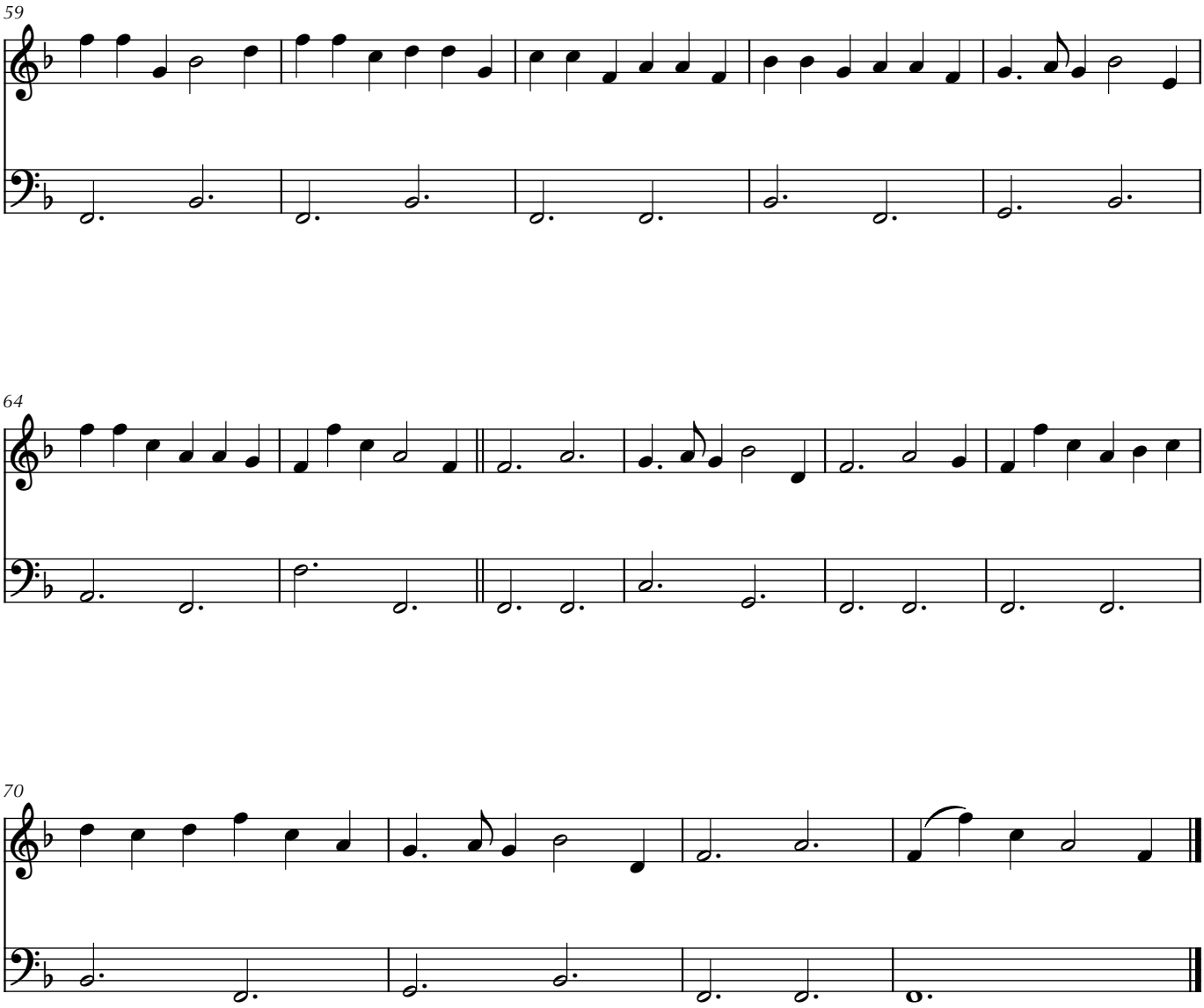

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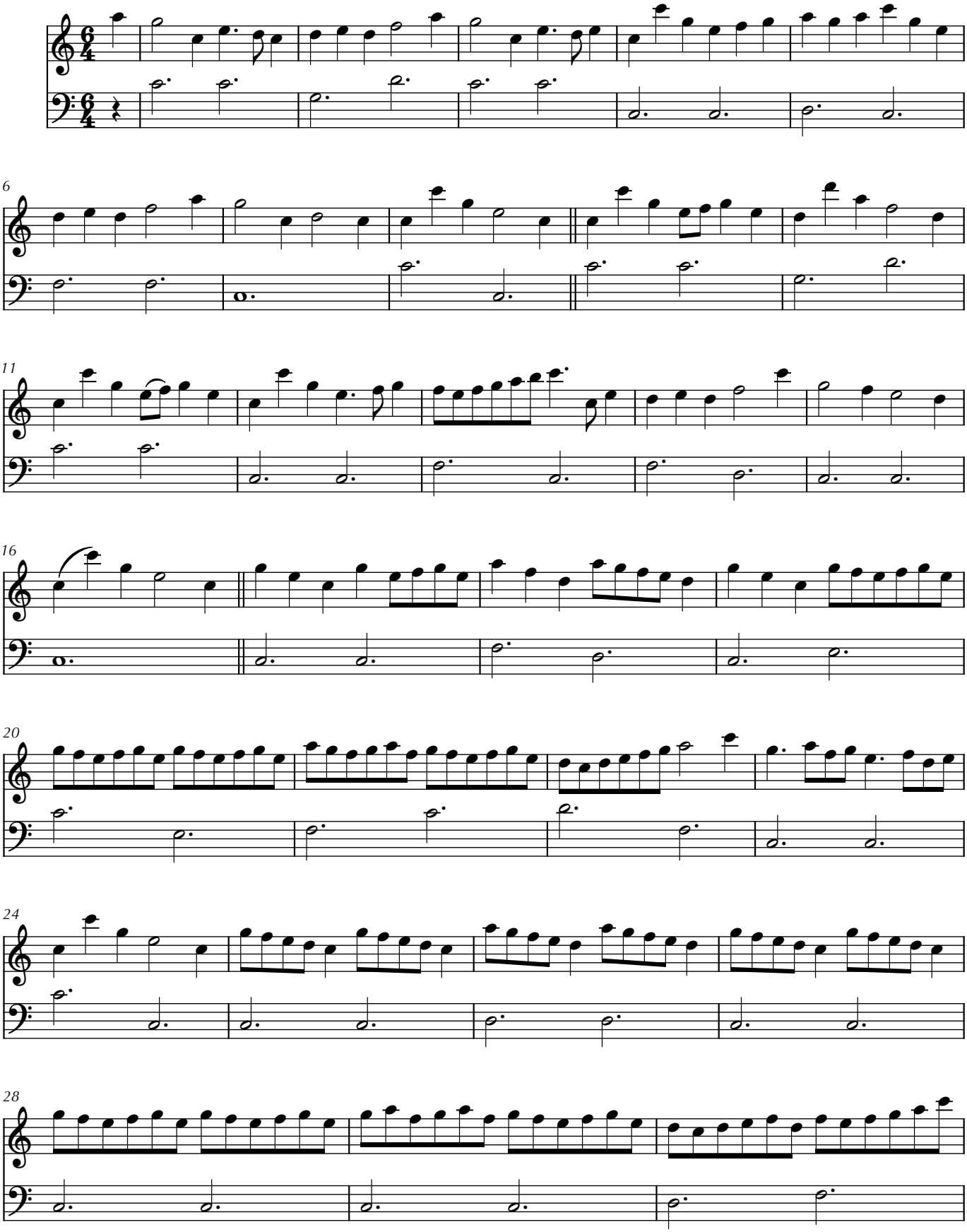

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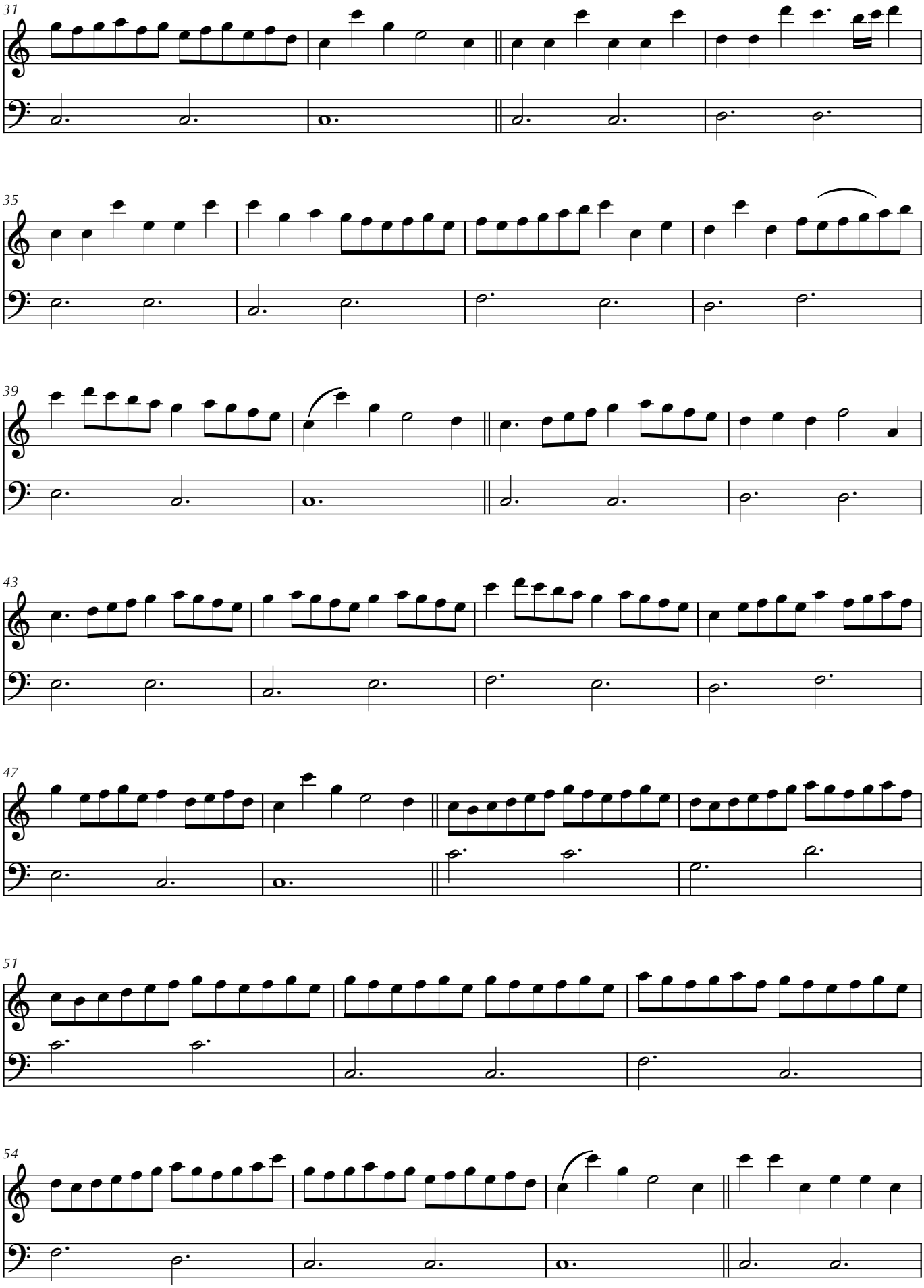

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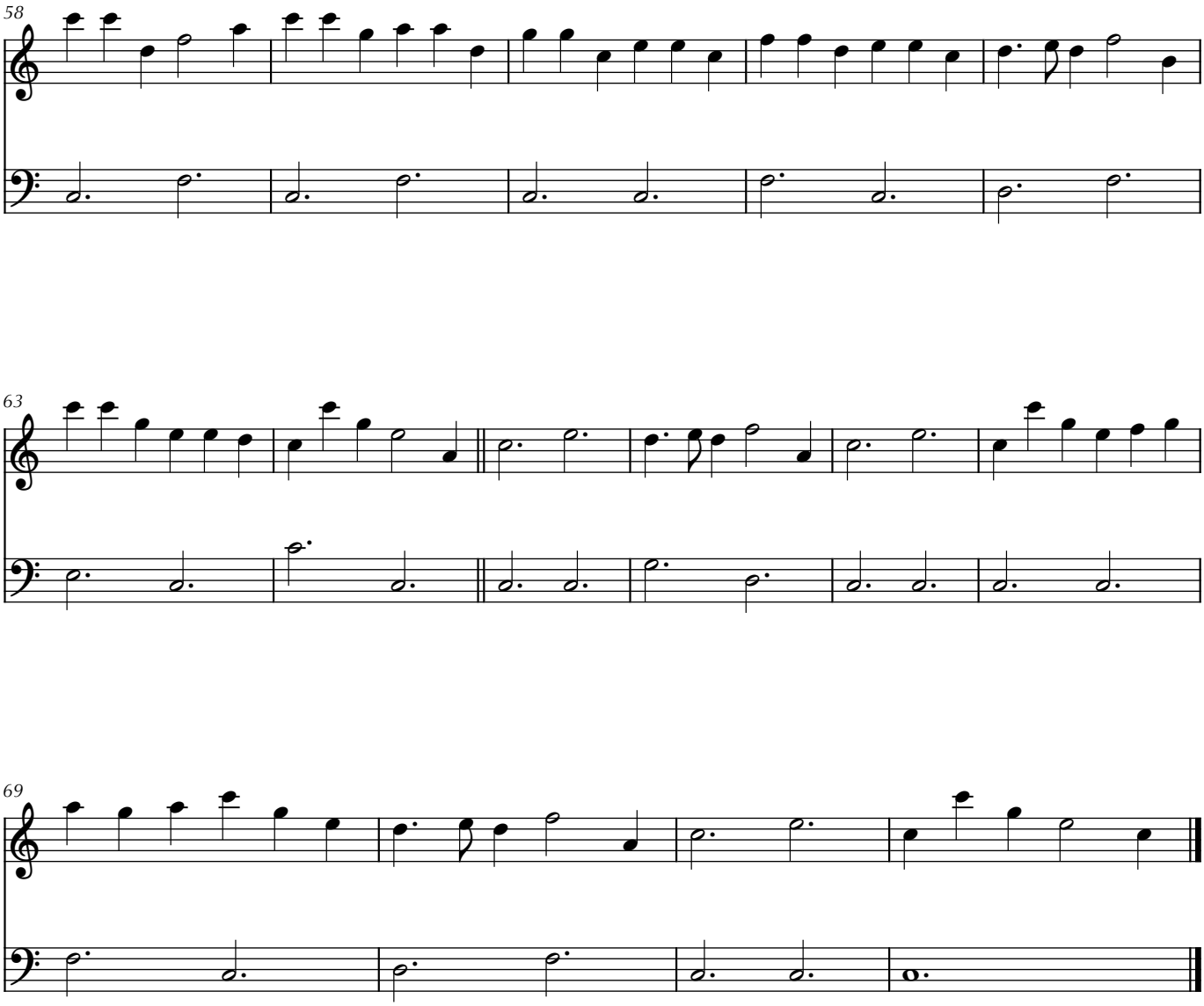

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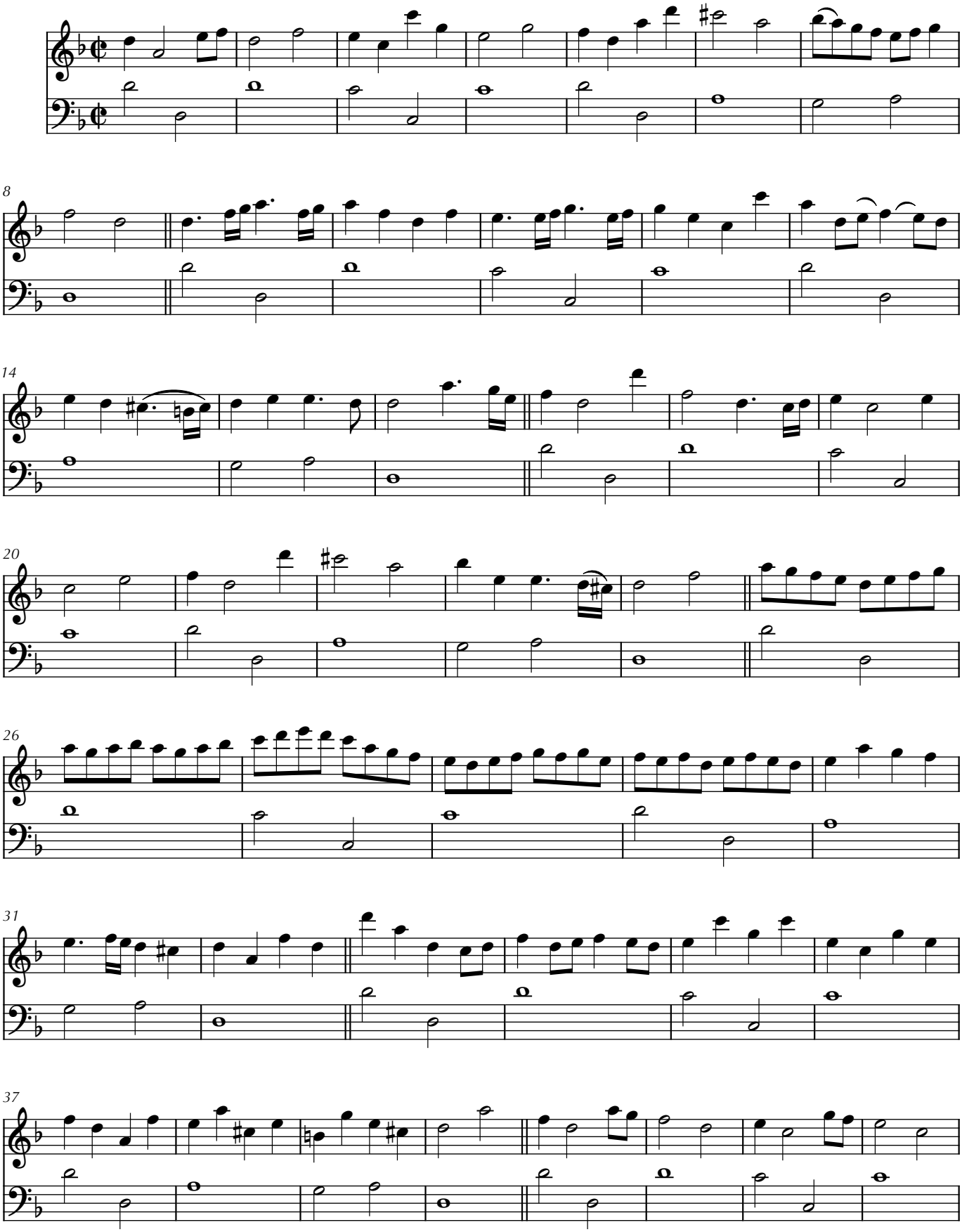
Division on a Ground

(Bellamira)



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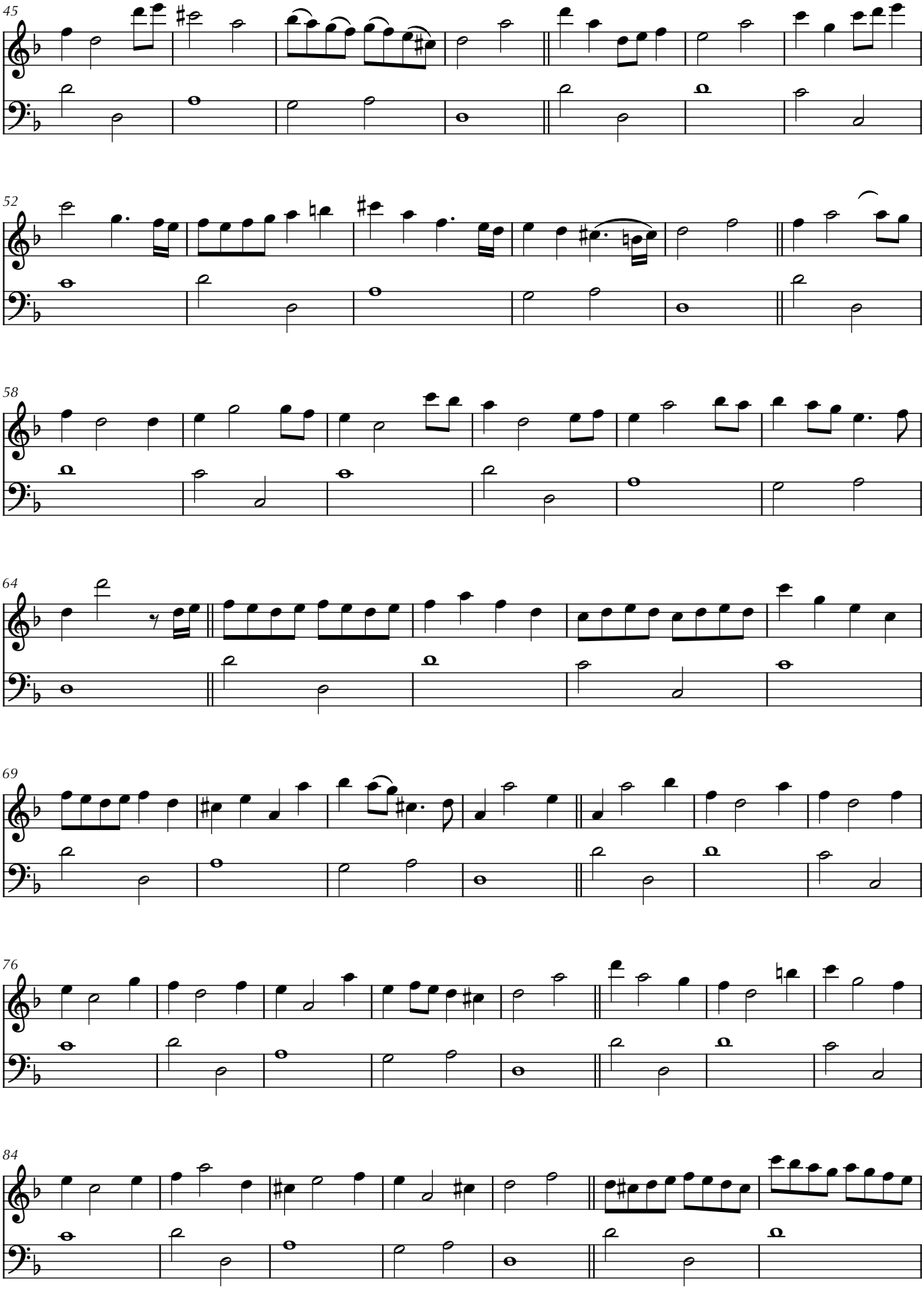

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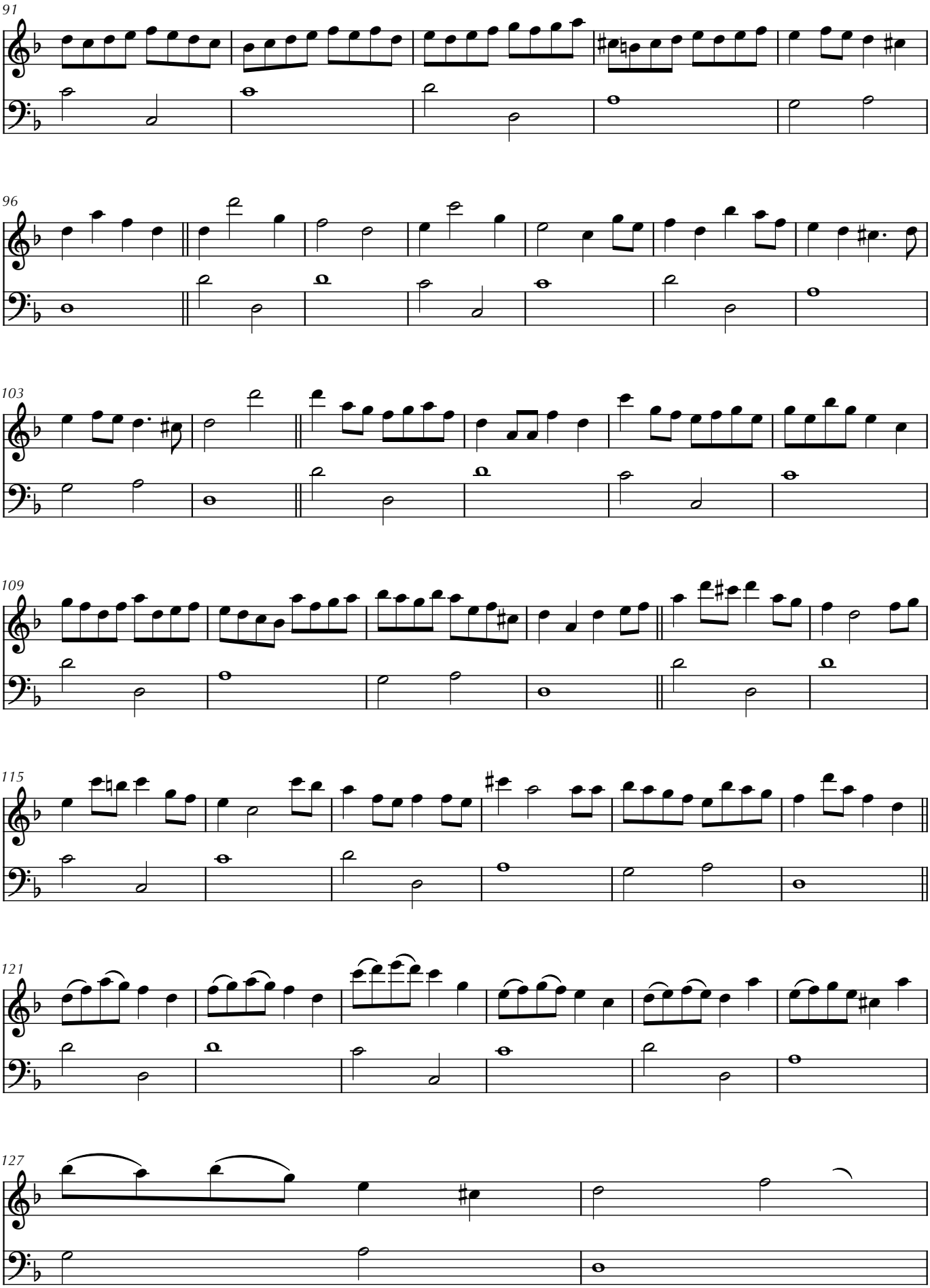

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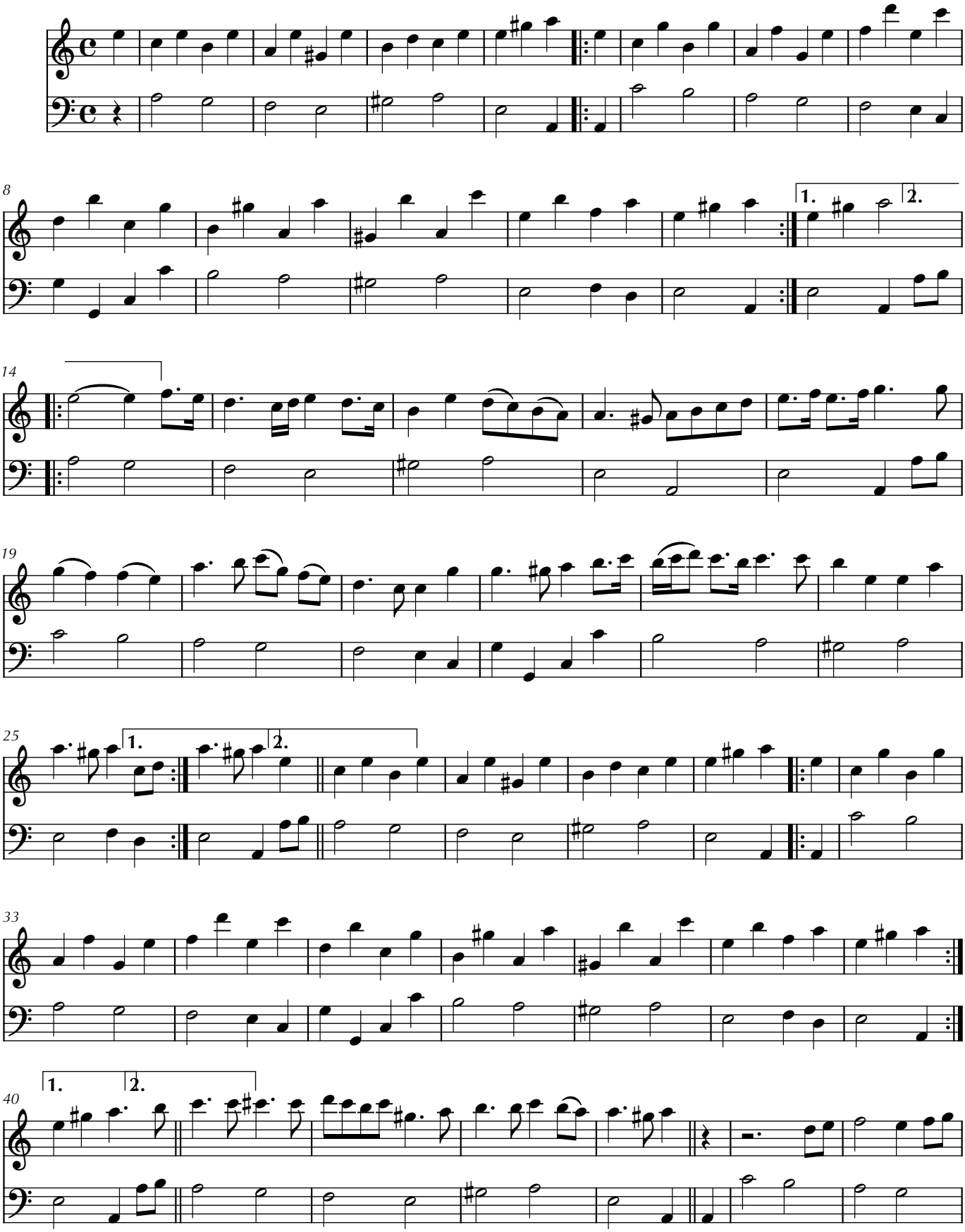

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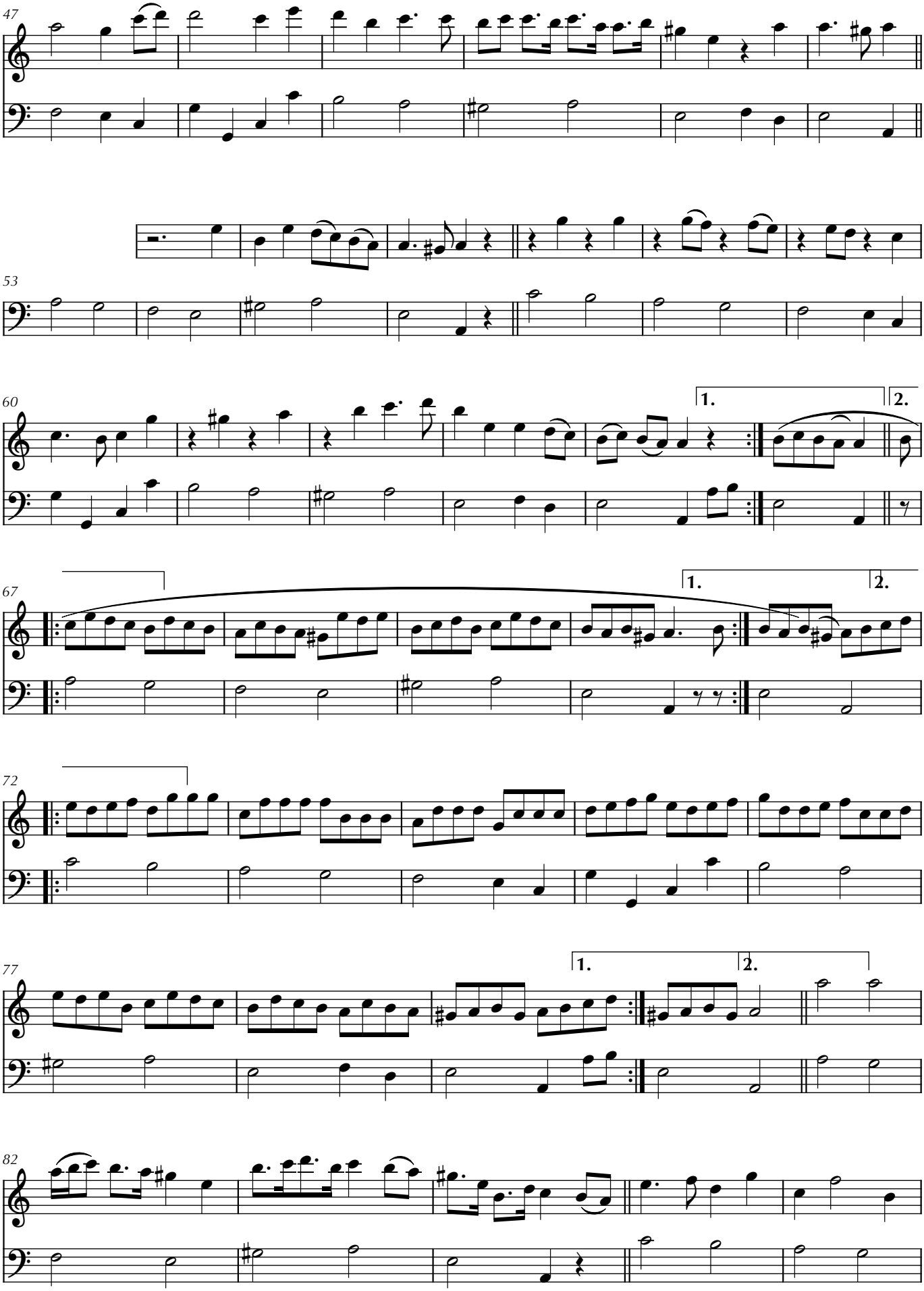

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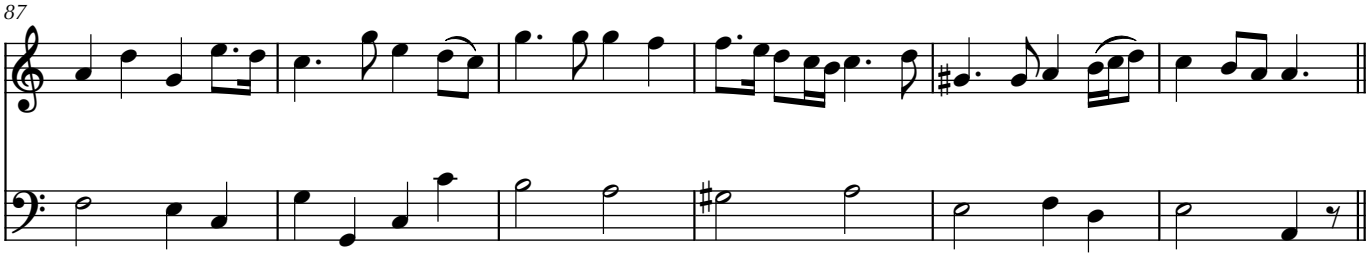

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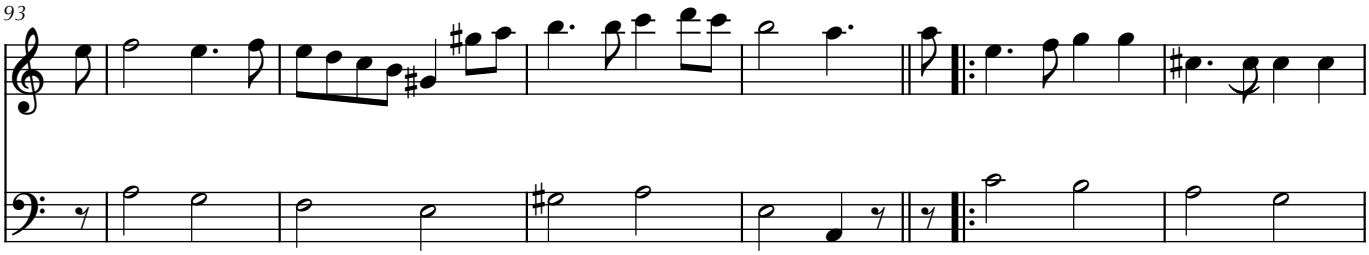

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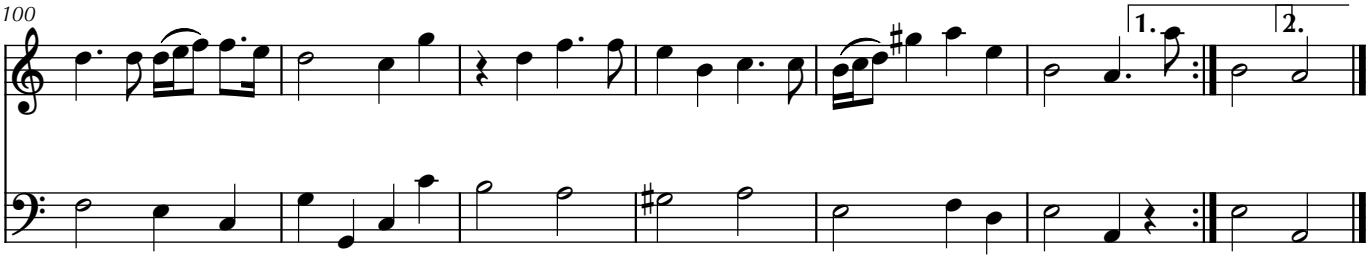

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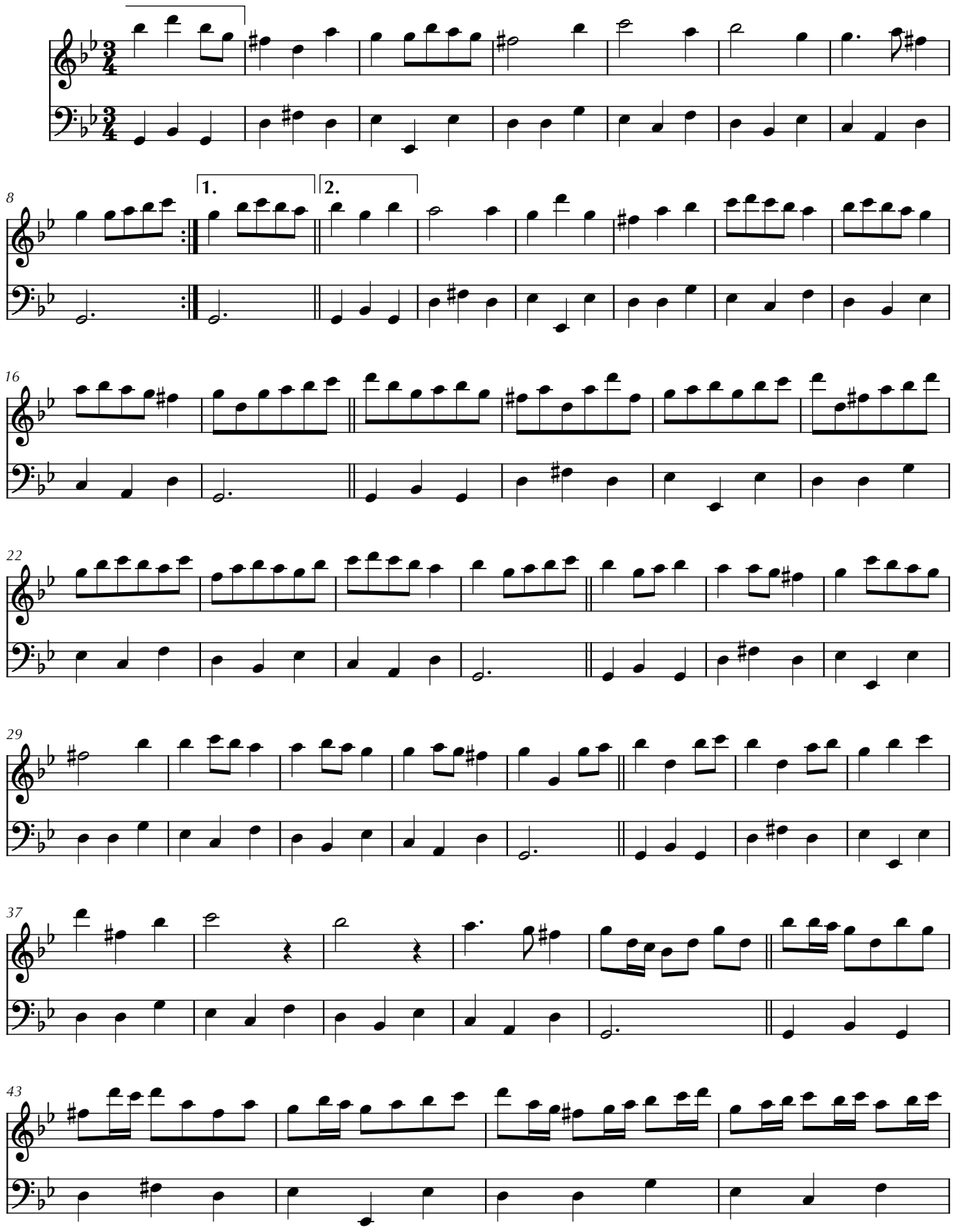
A Division on a Ground by Mr. Finger



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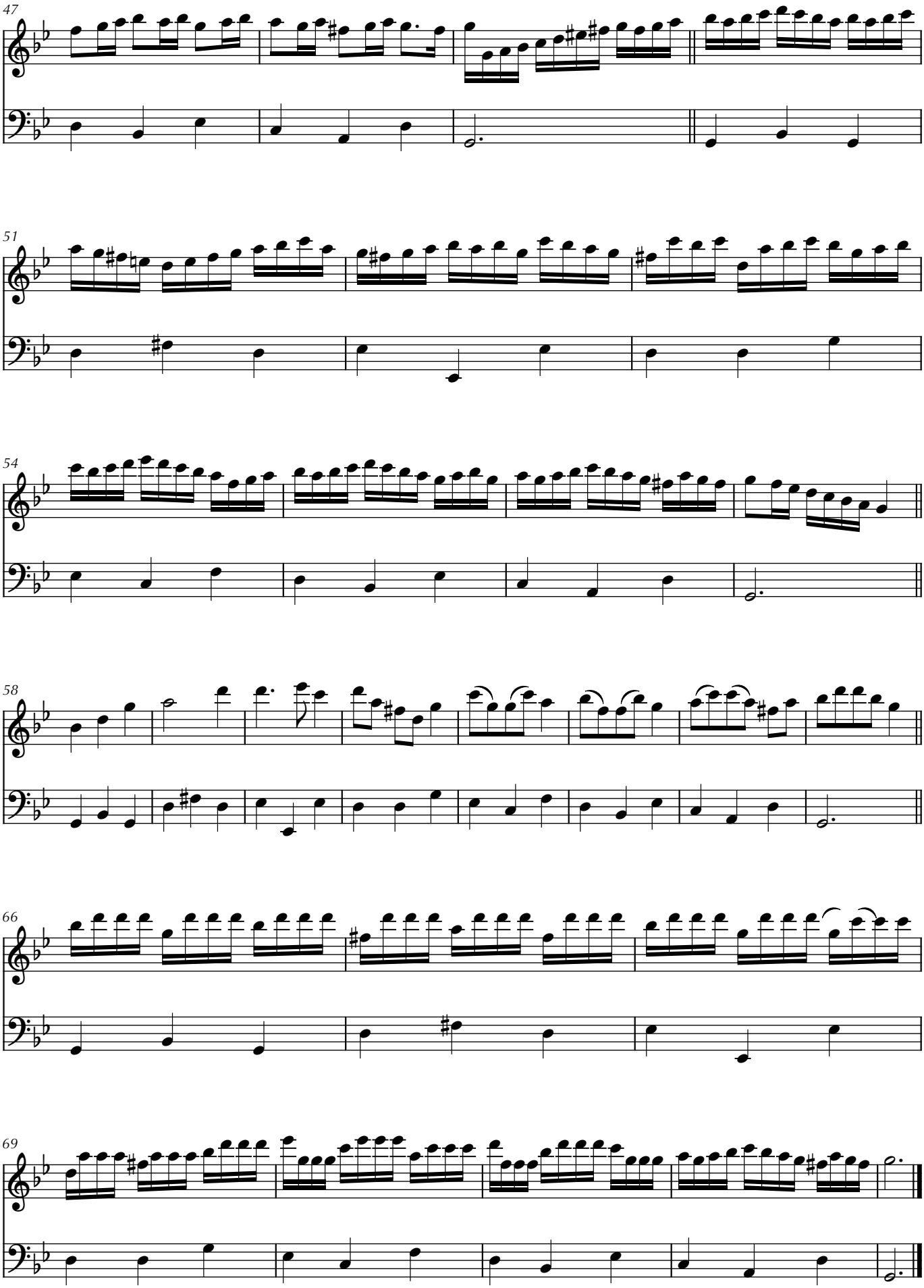

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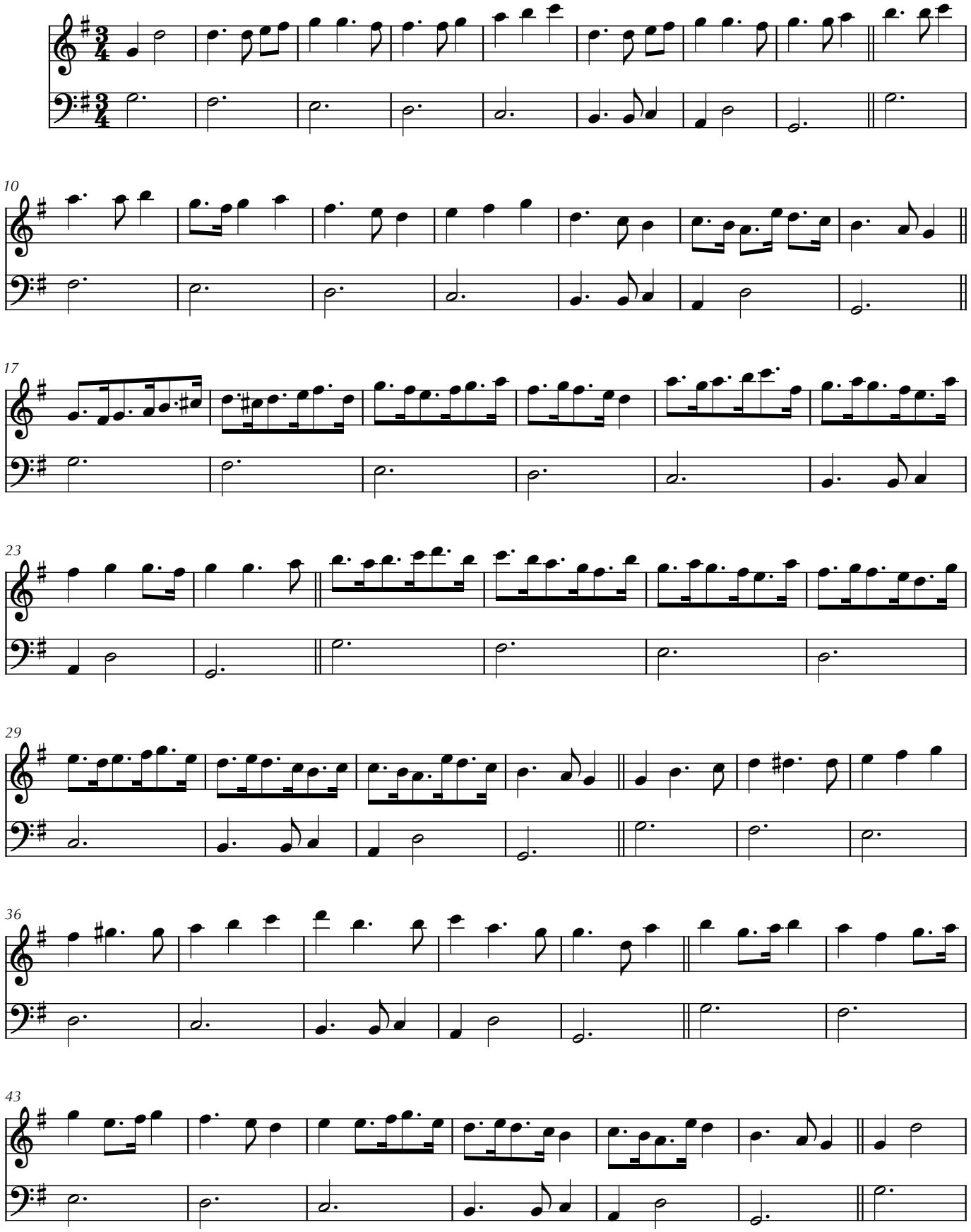
A Division on a Ground

John Banister (1630-1679)



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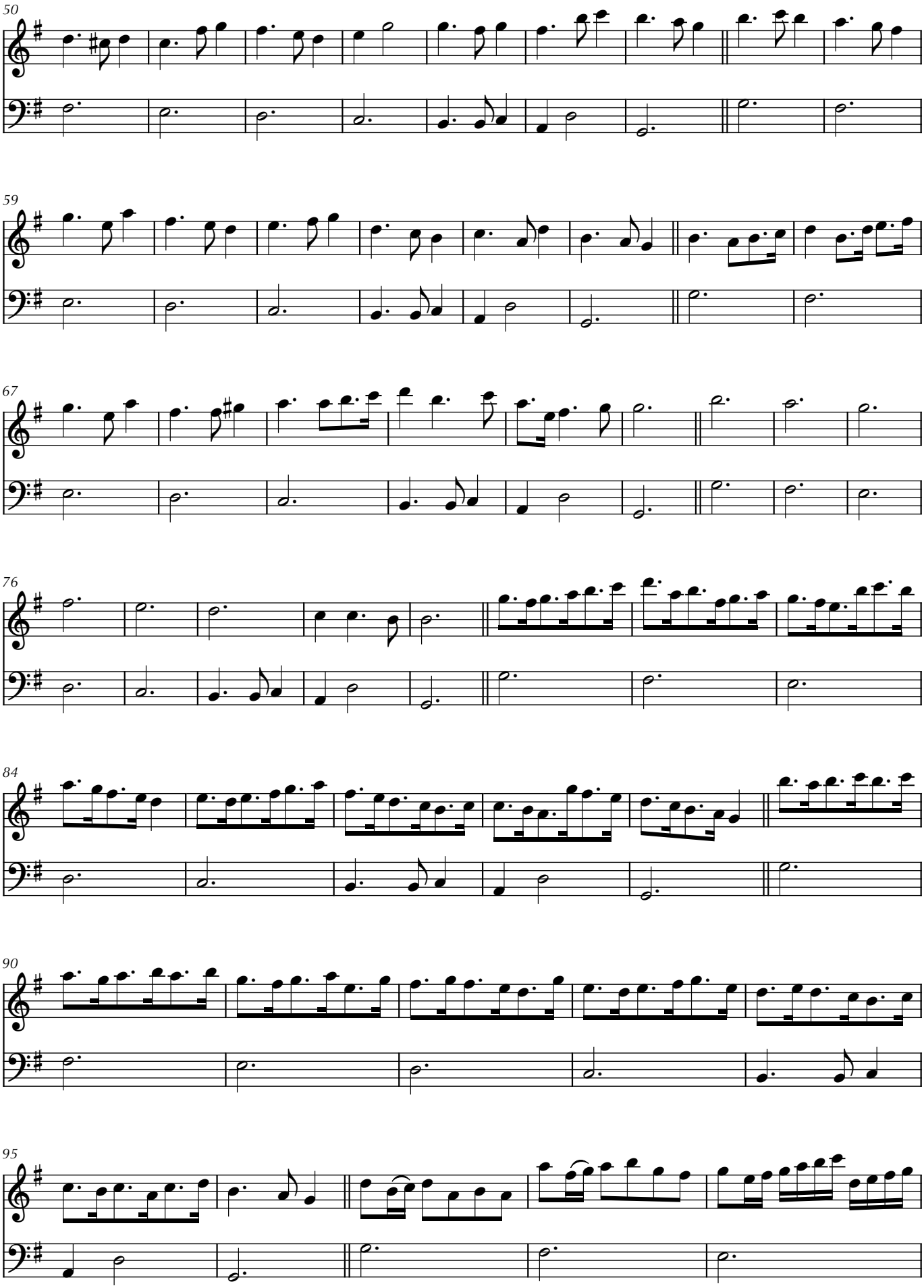

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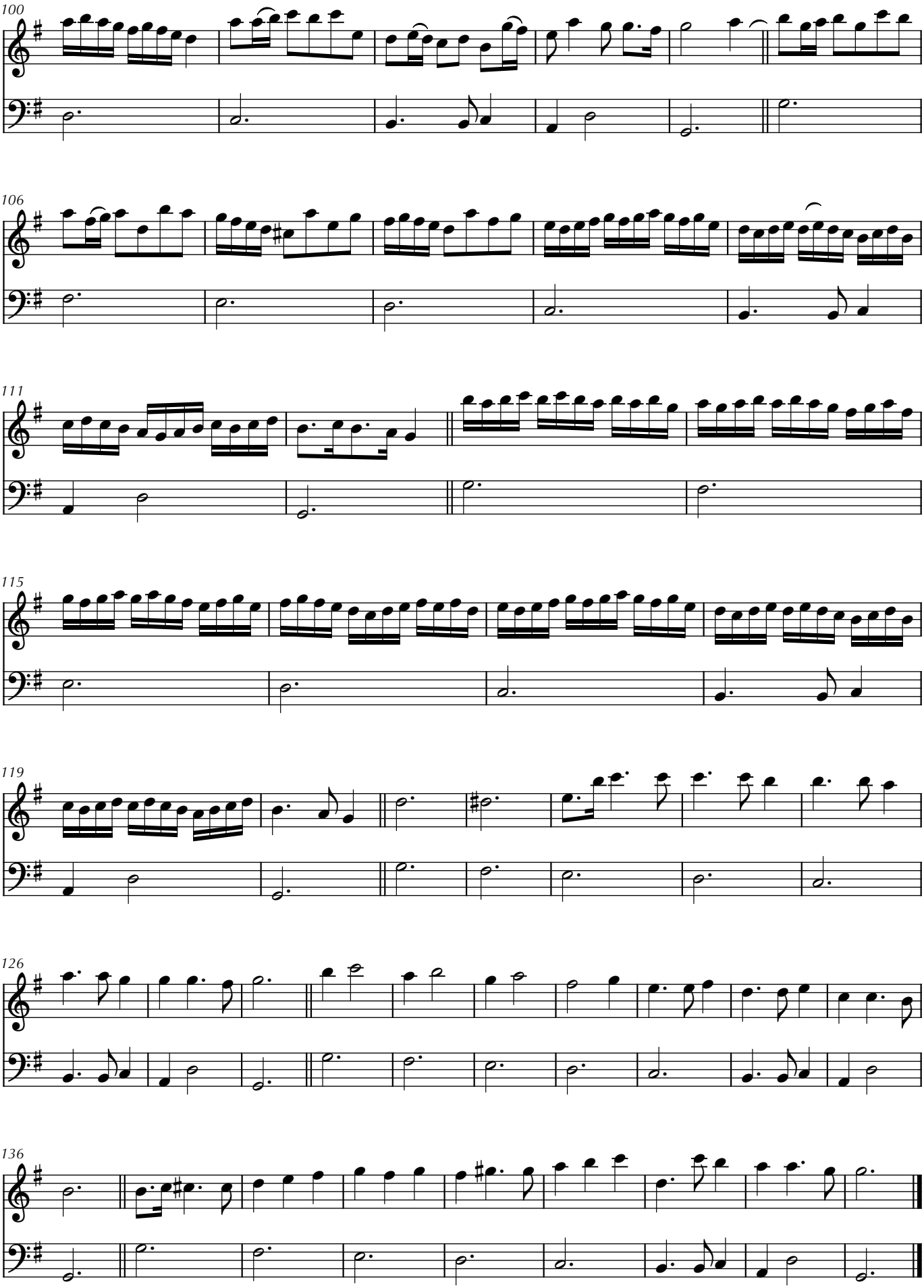

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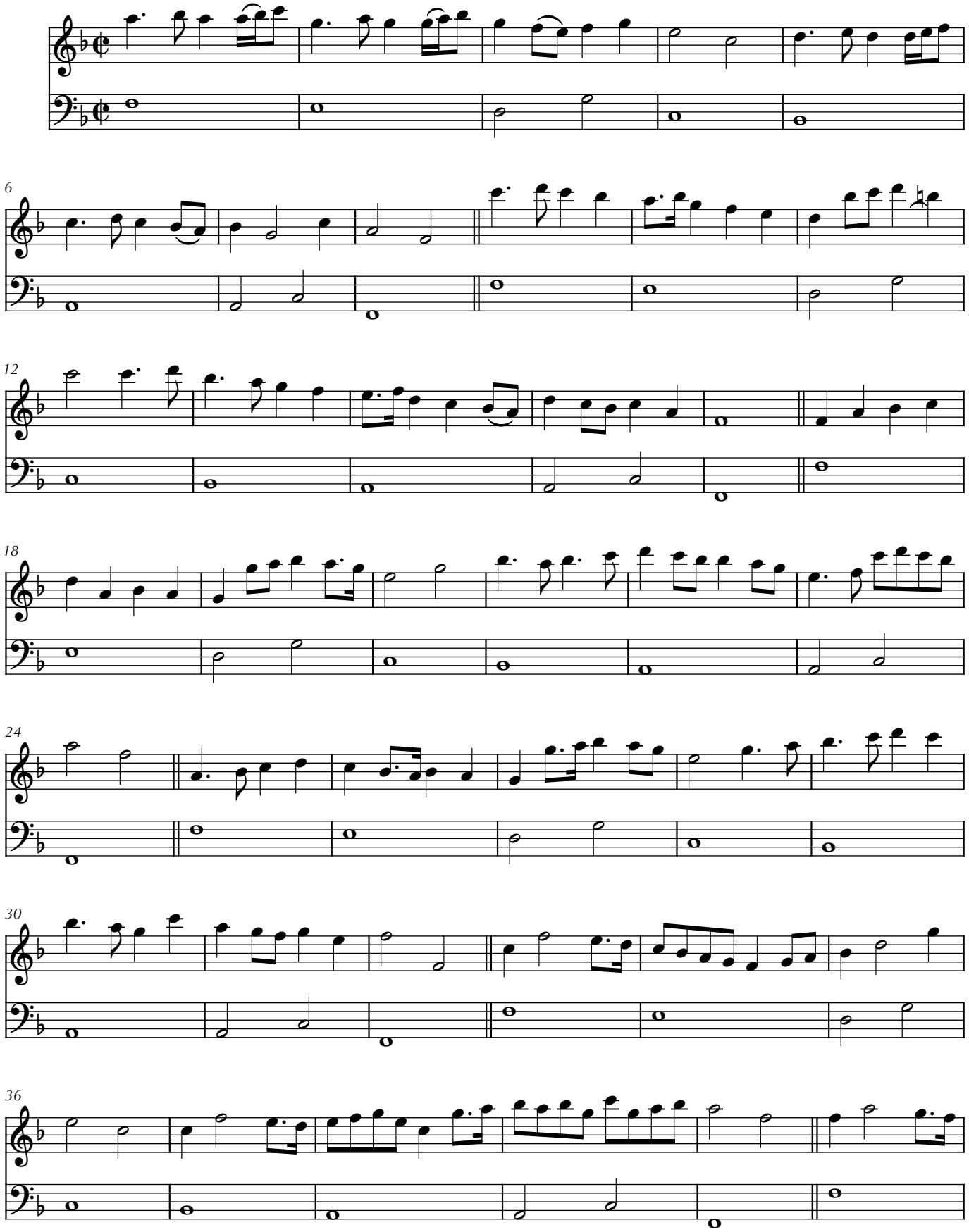

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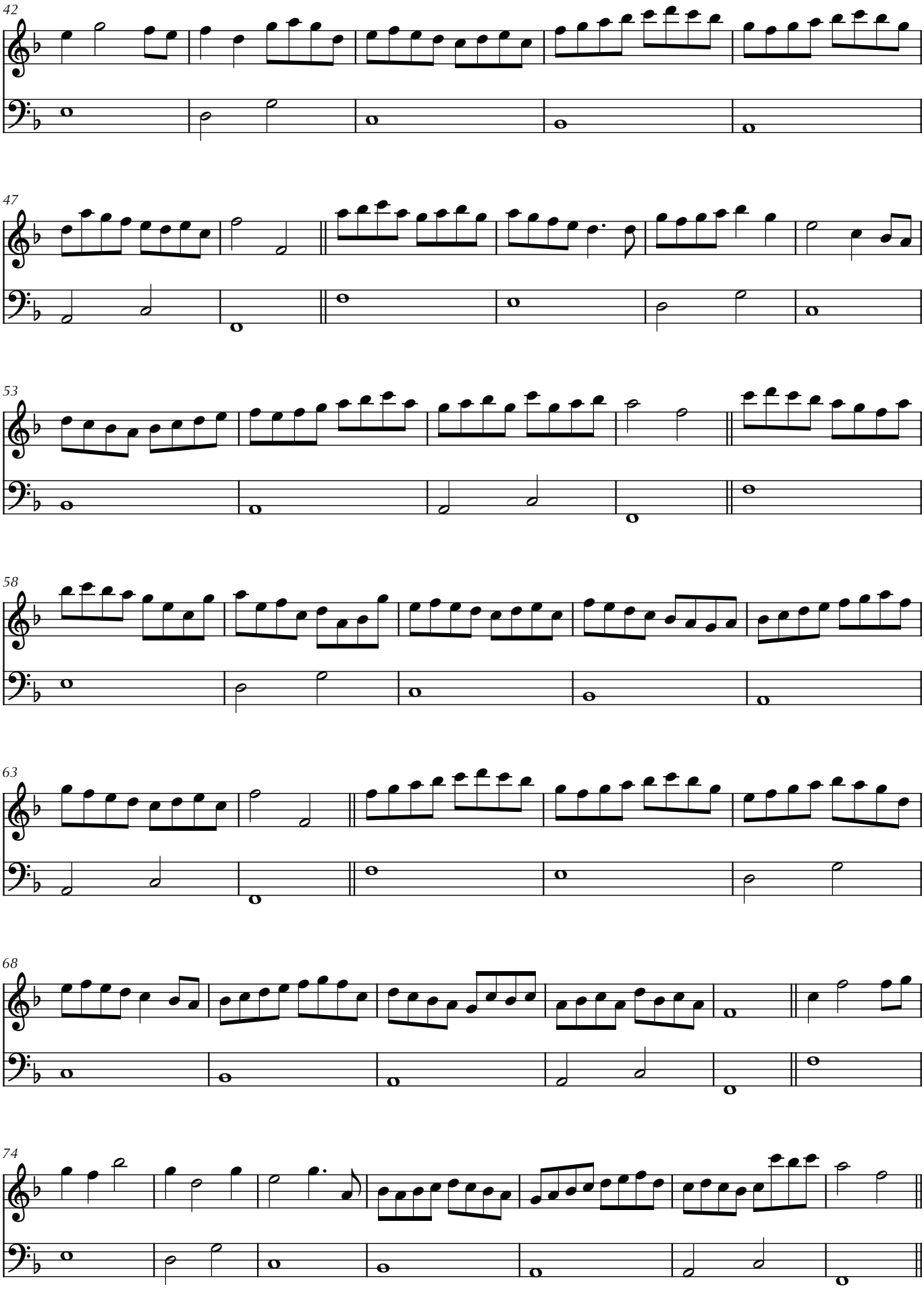

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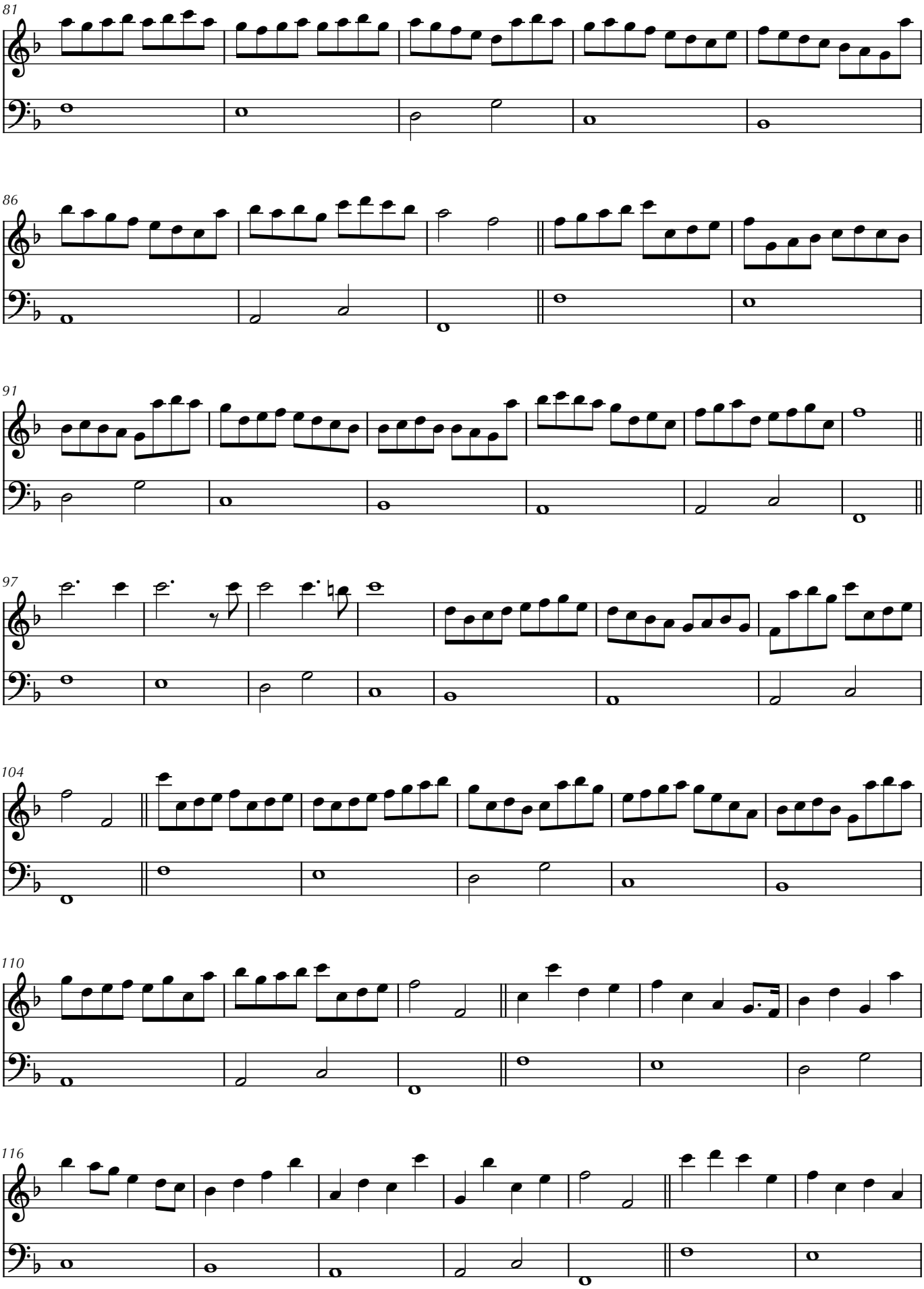

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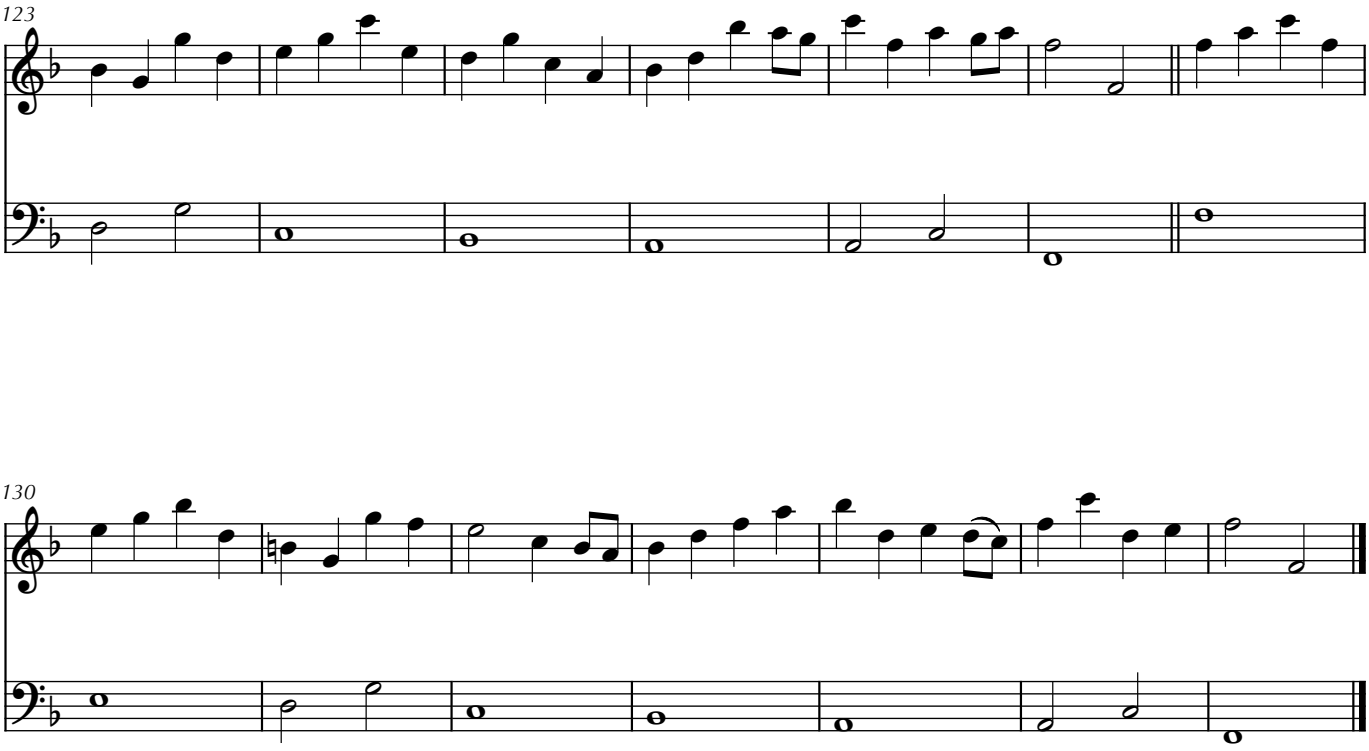

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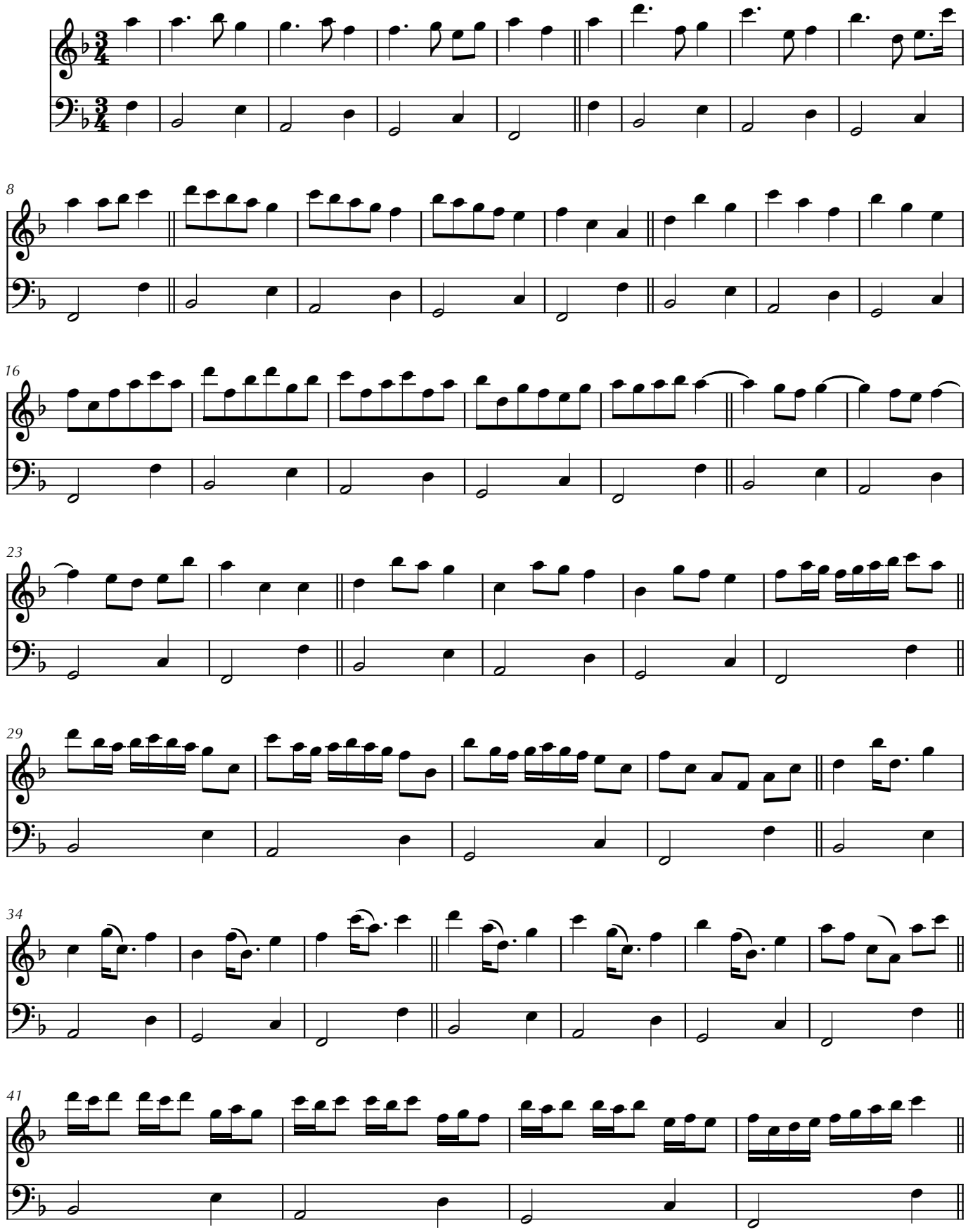

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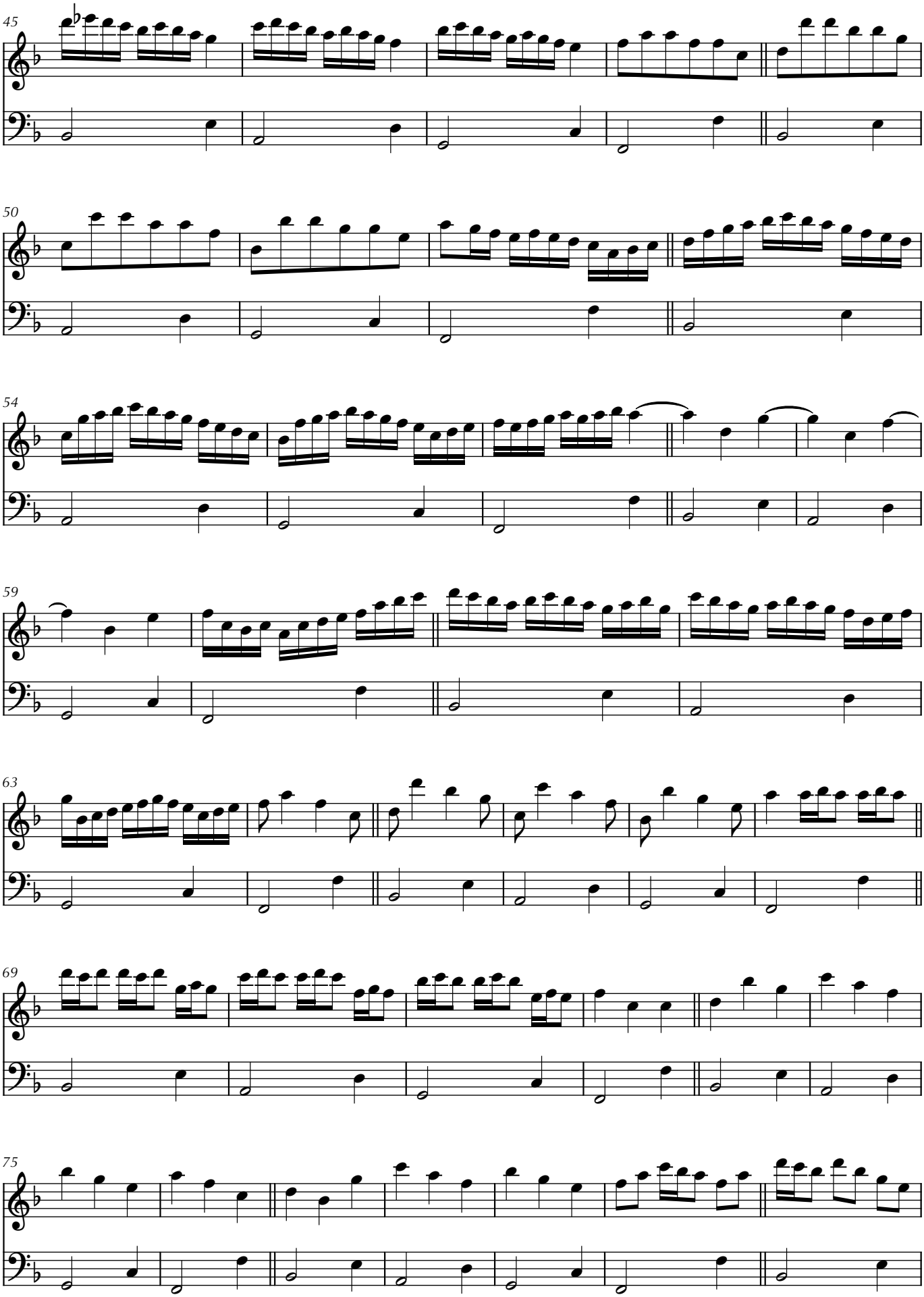

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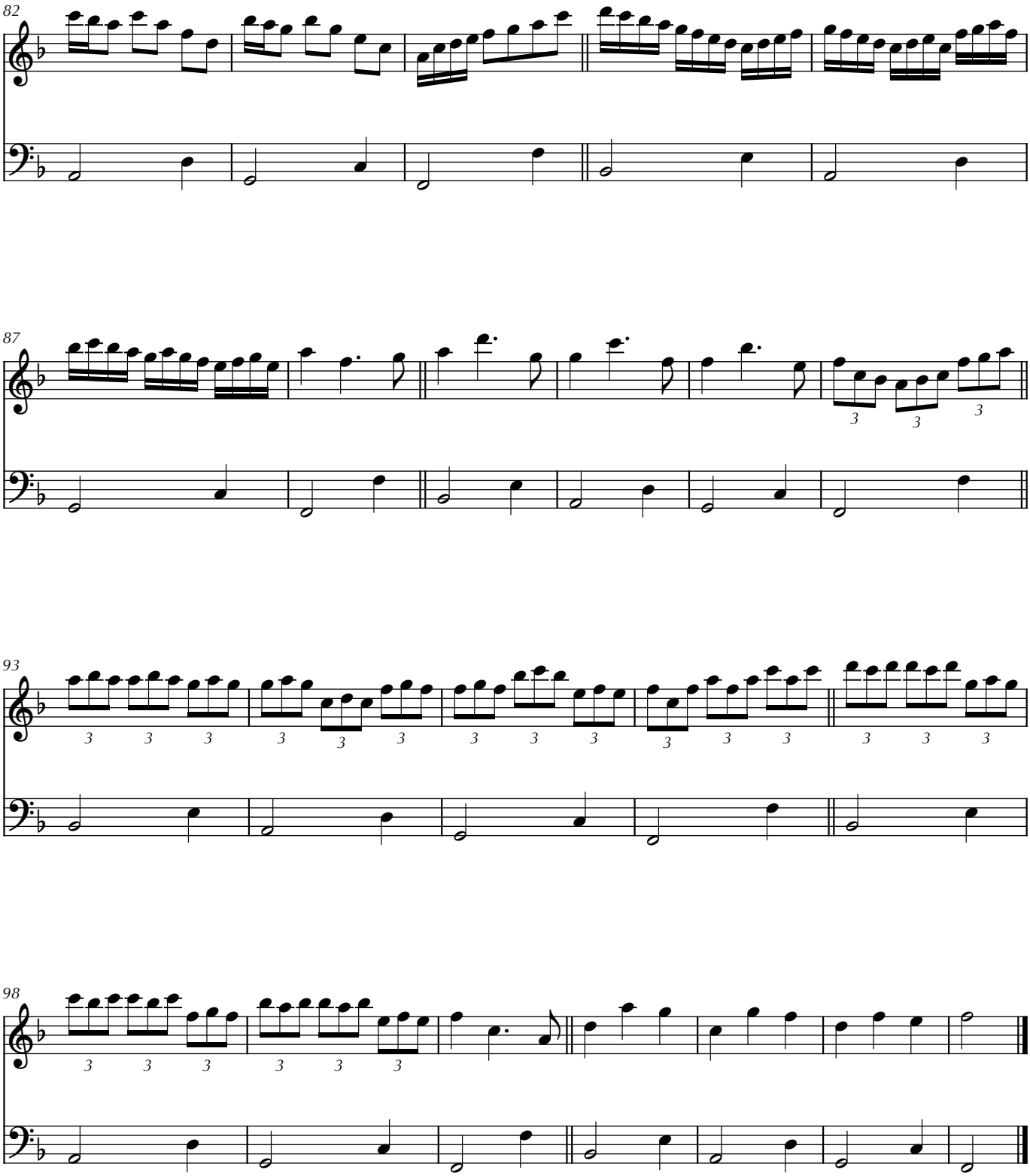

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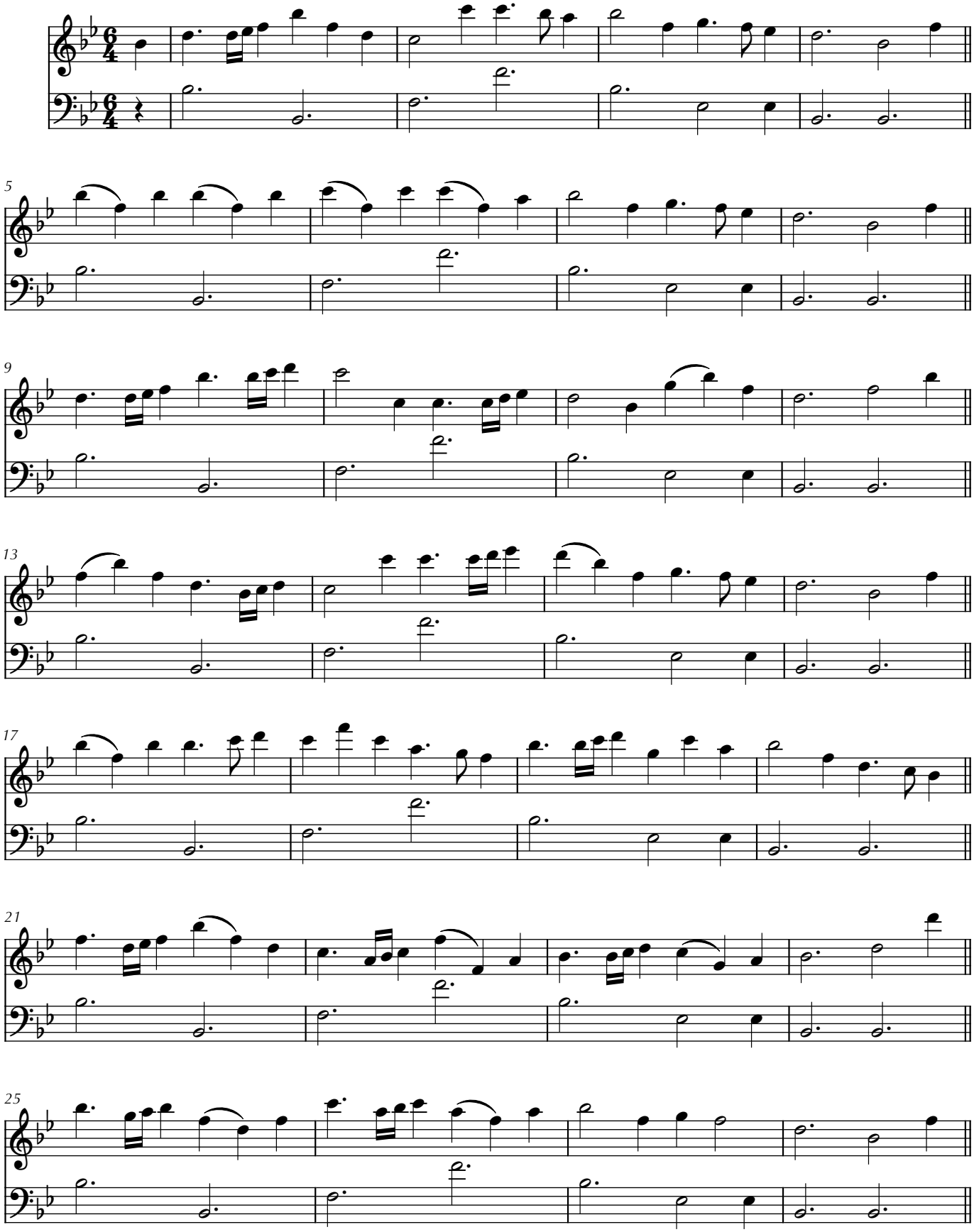

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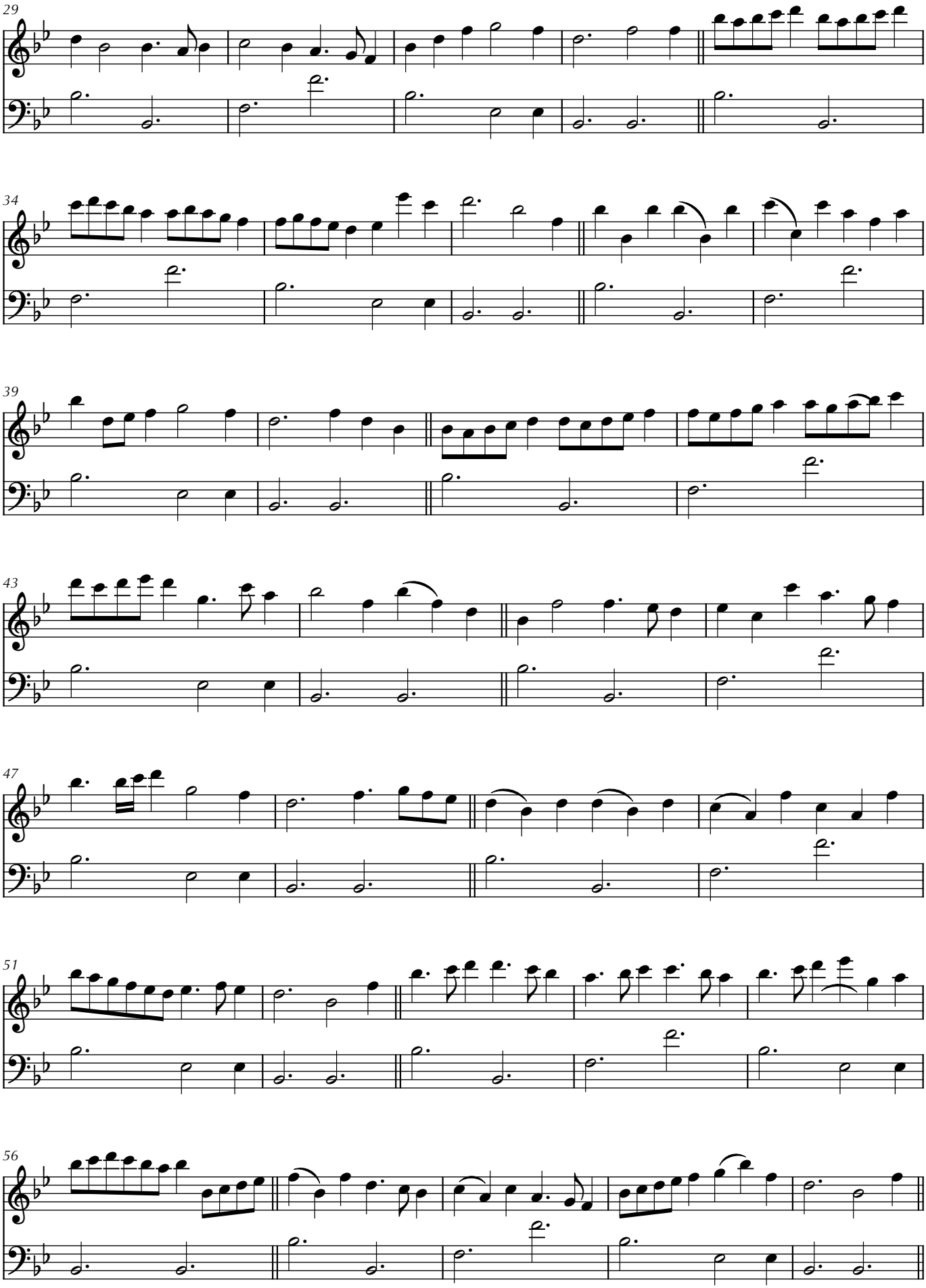

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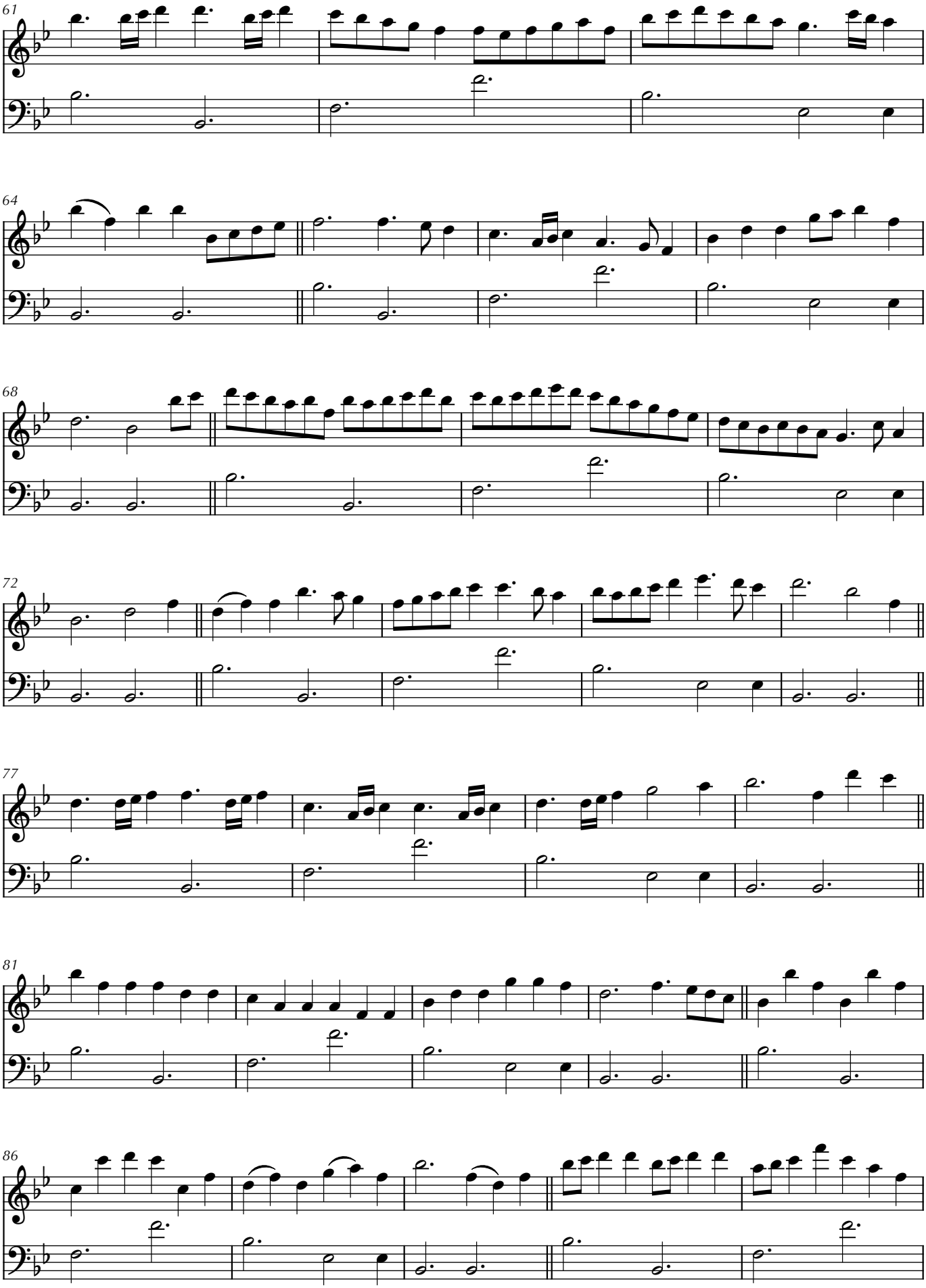

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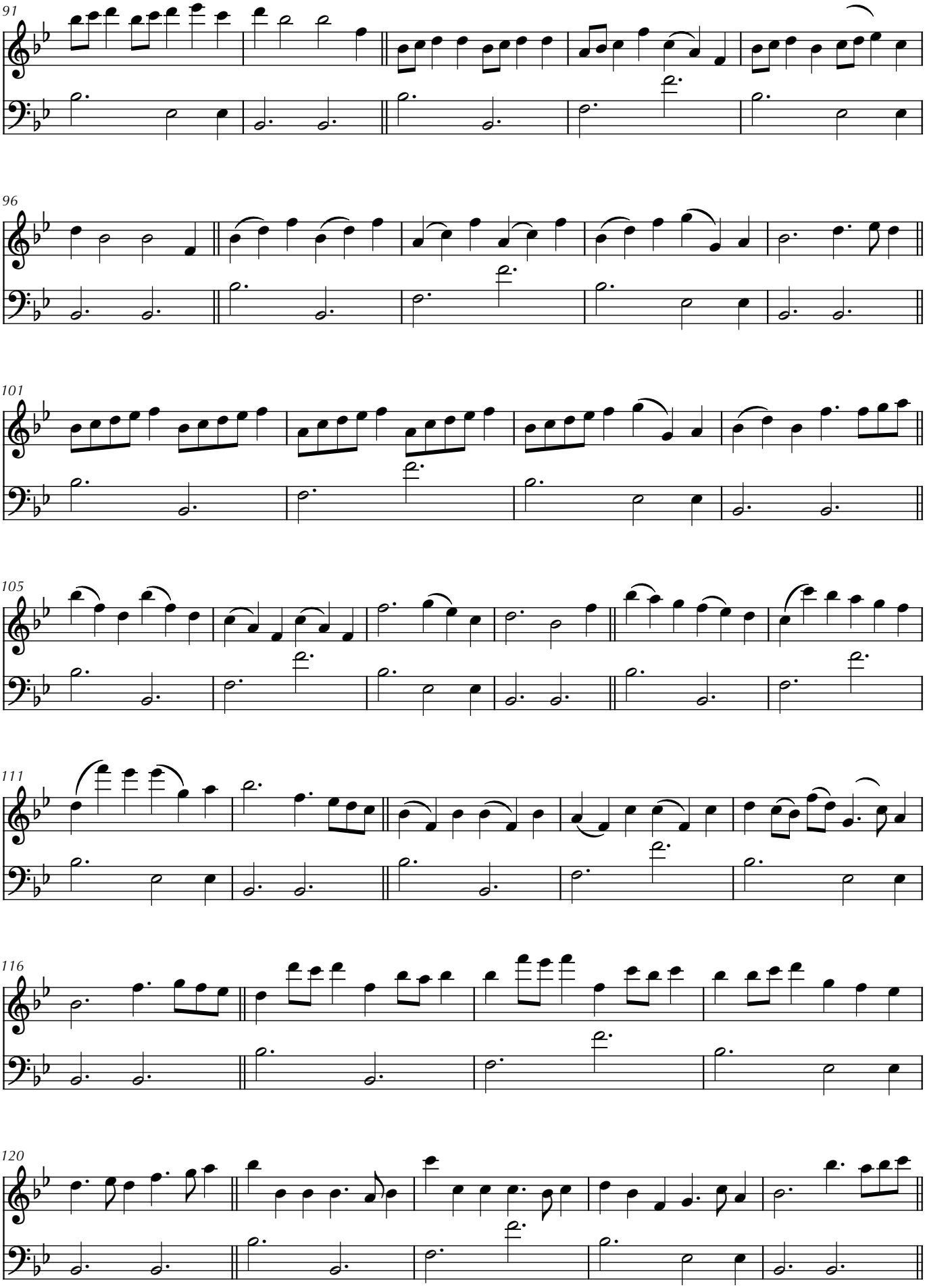

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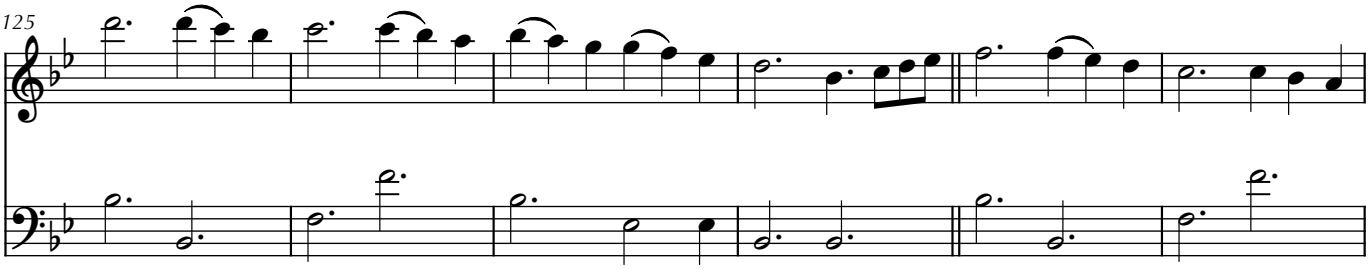

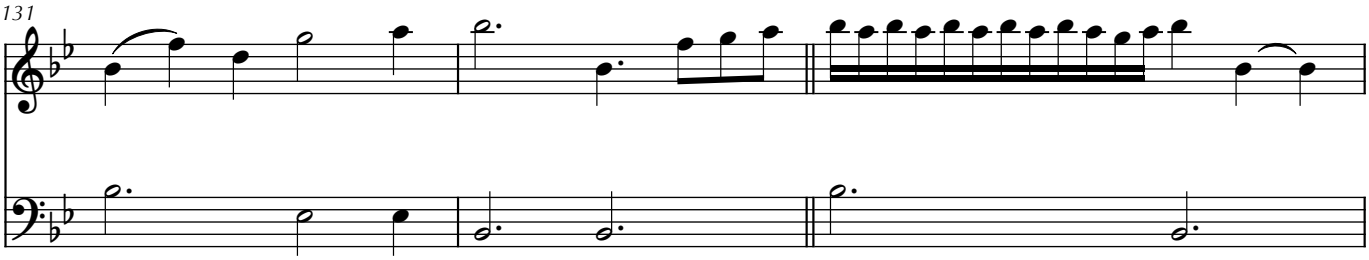

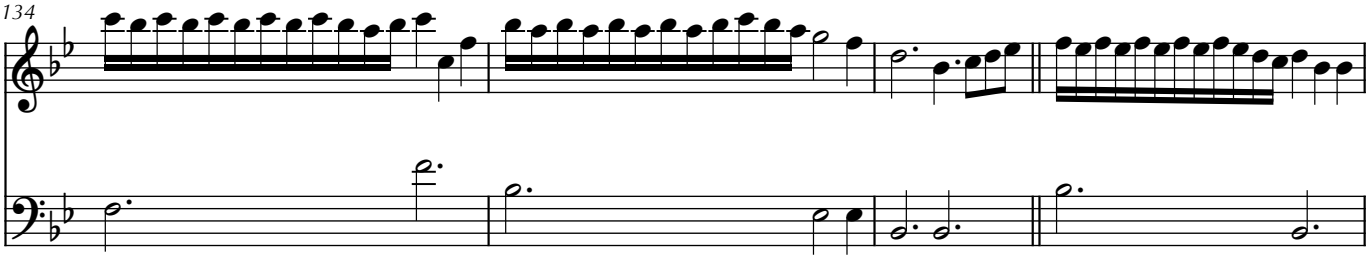

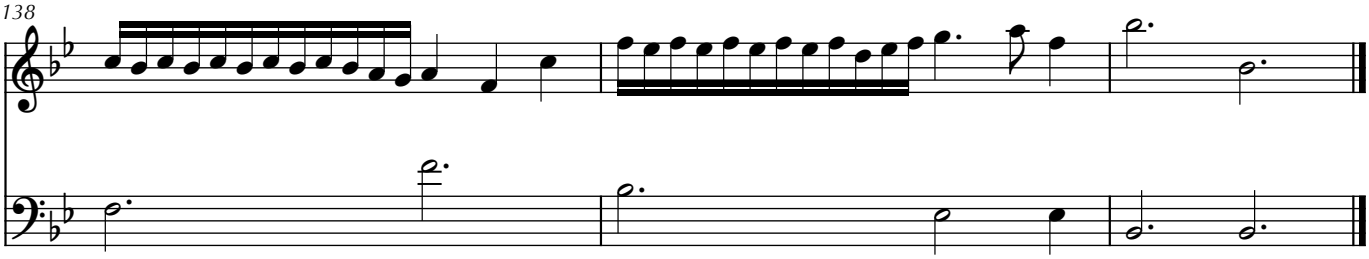

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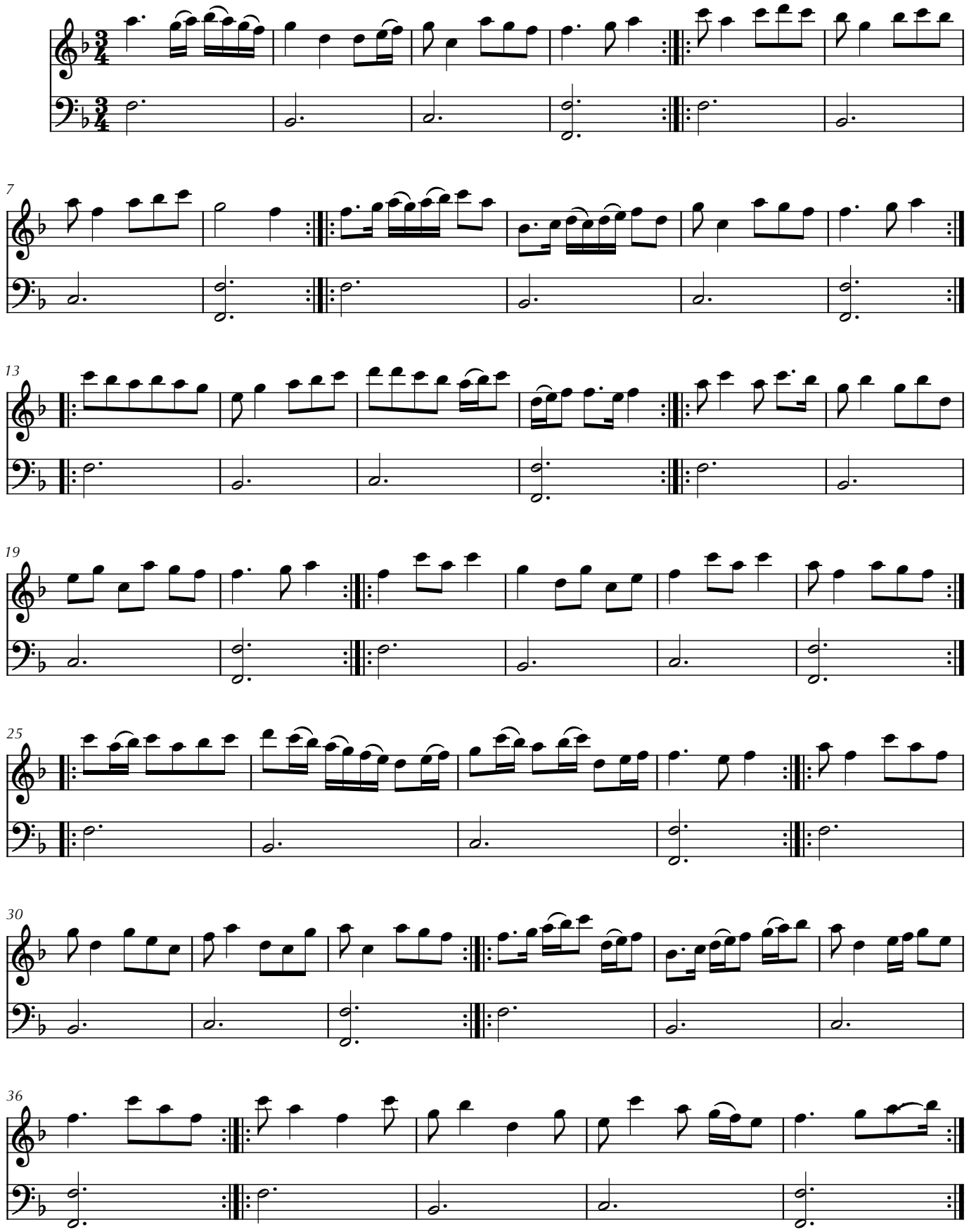

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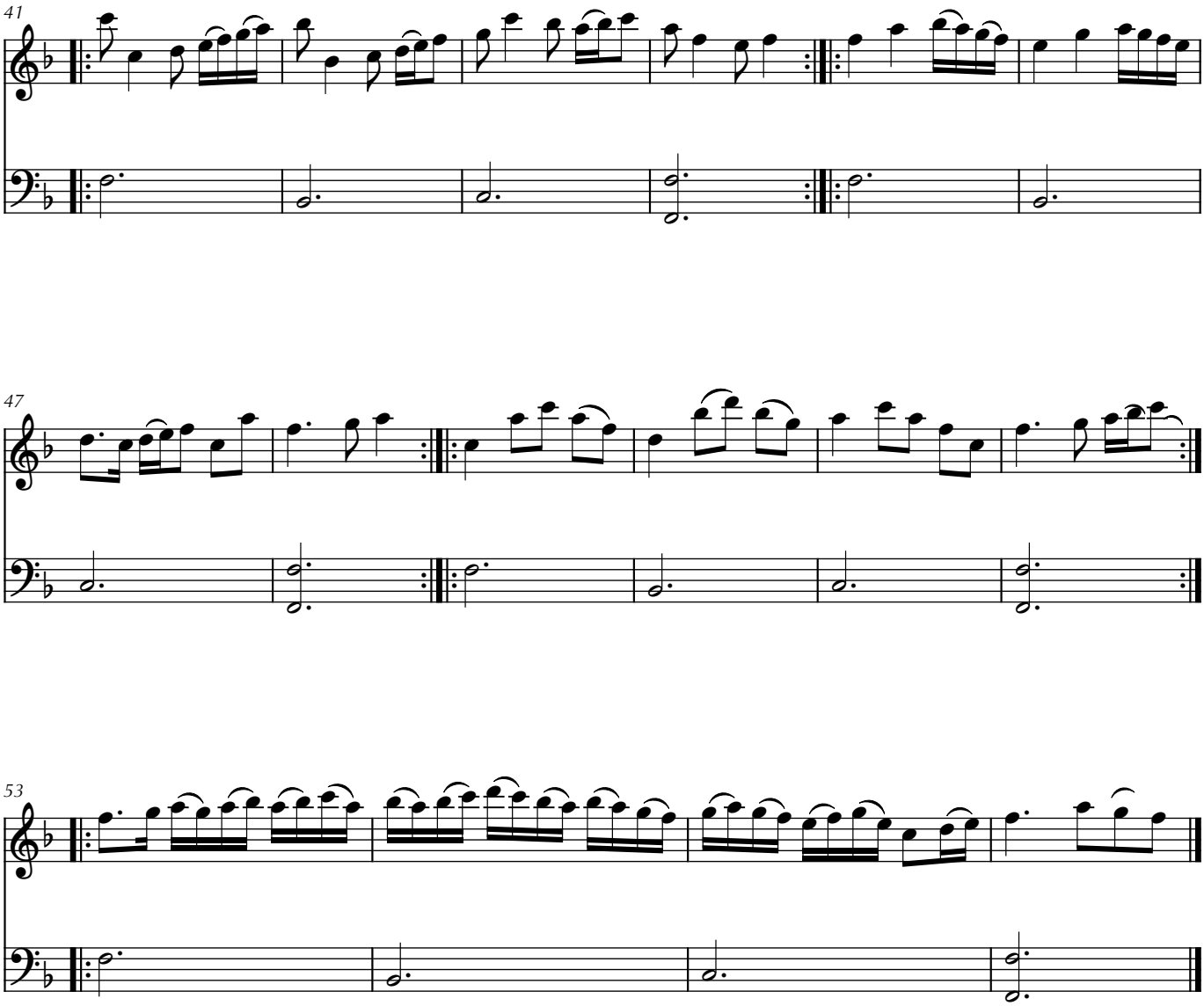

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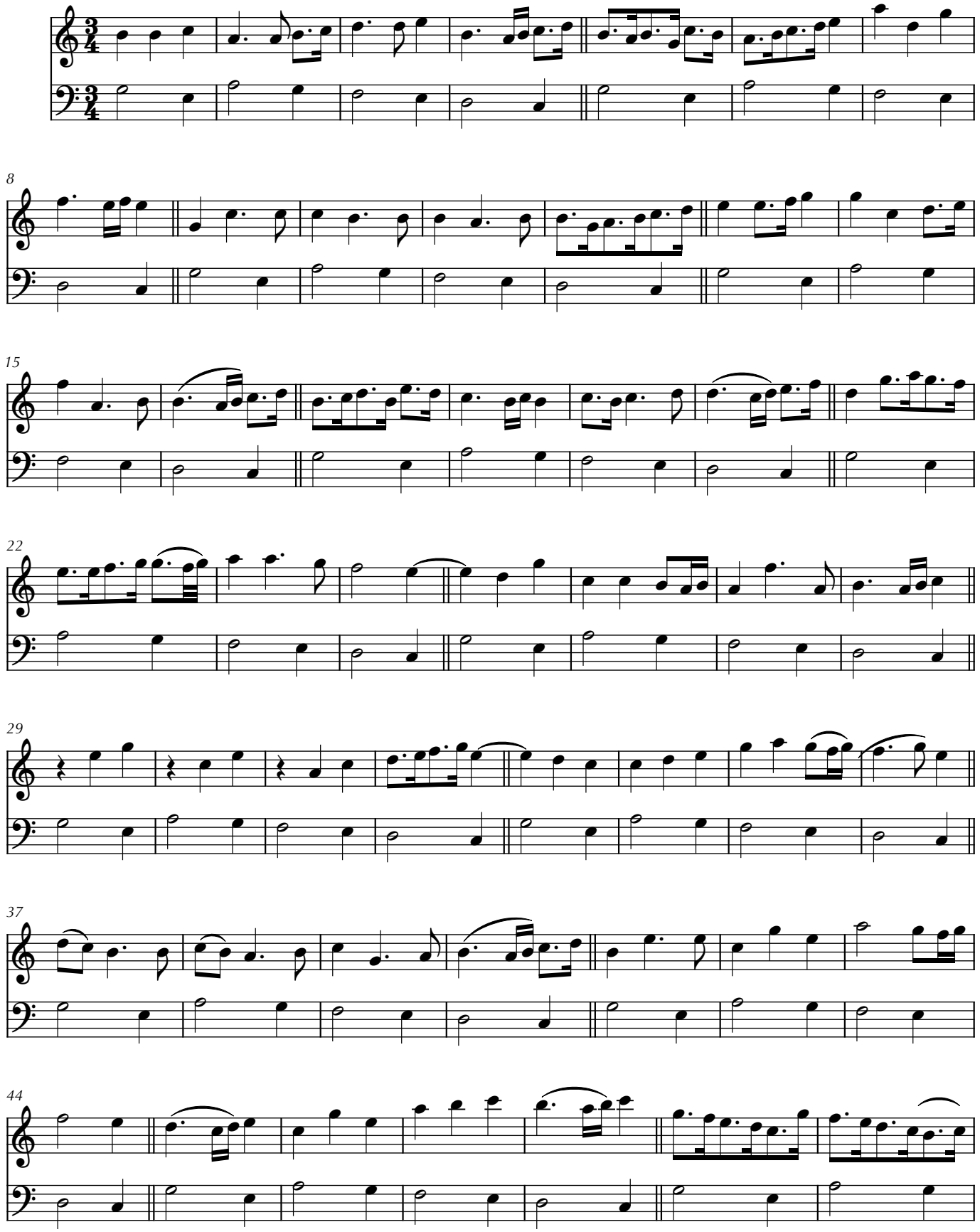
A Ground by Mr Solomon Eccles



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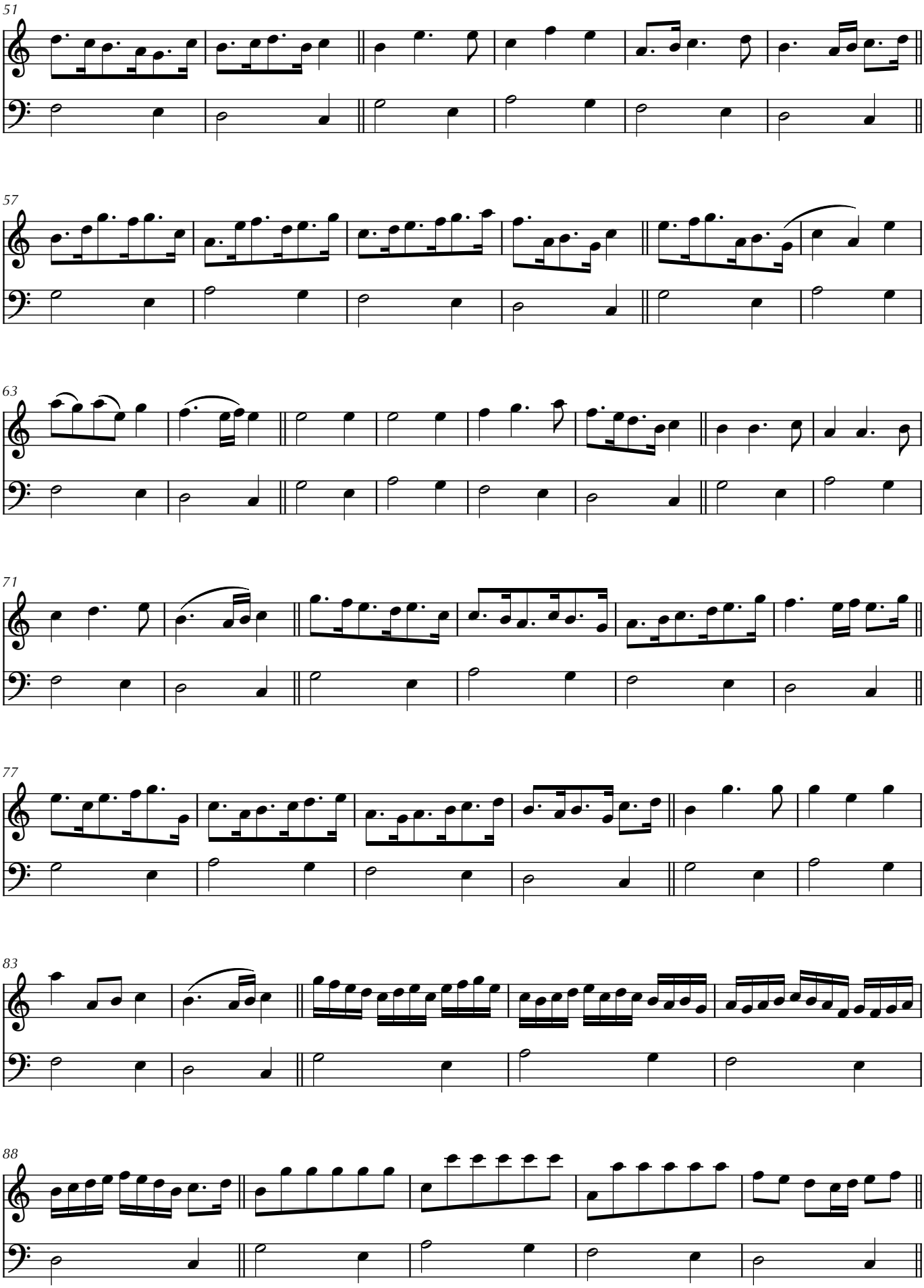

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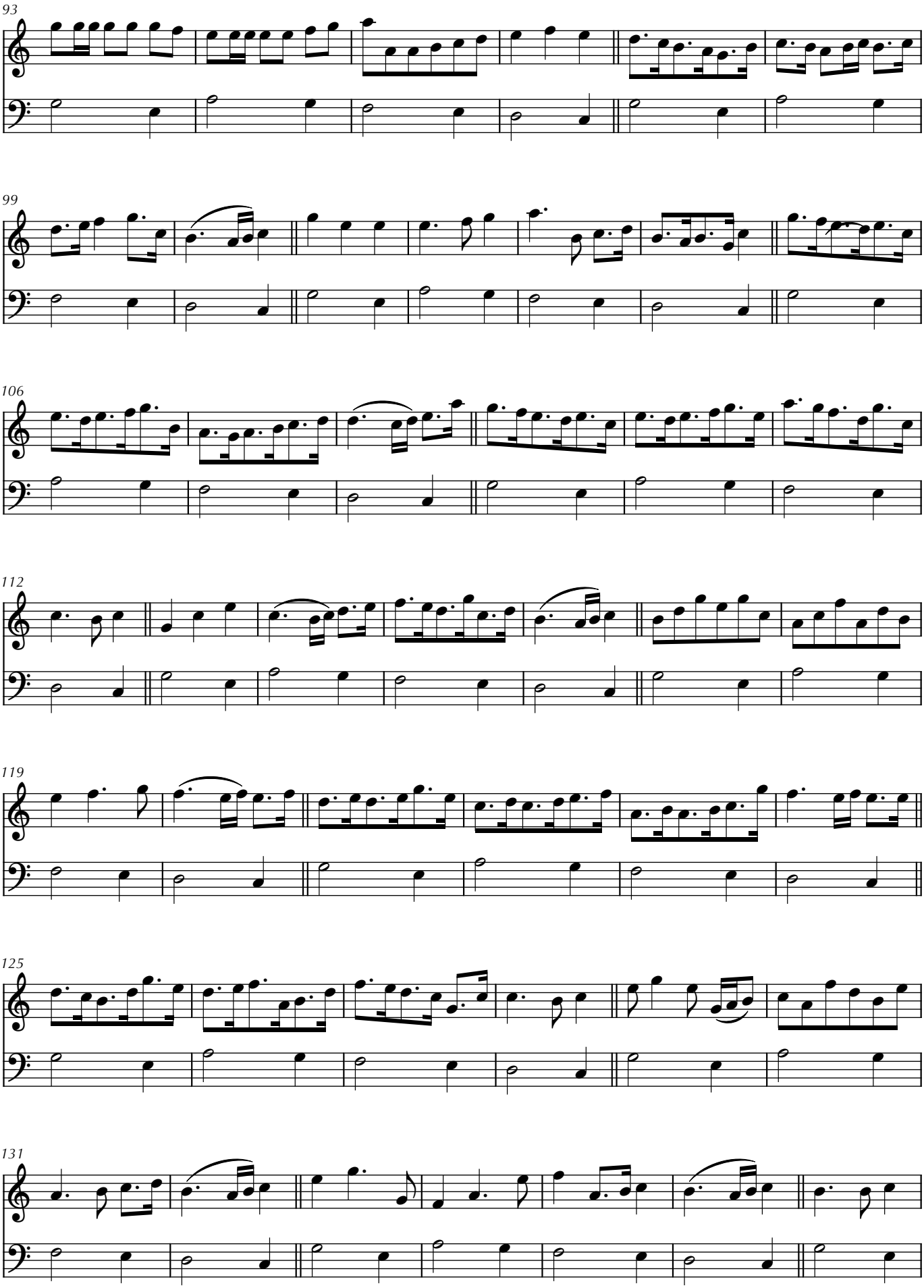

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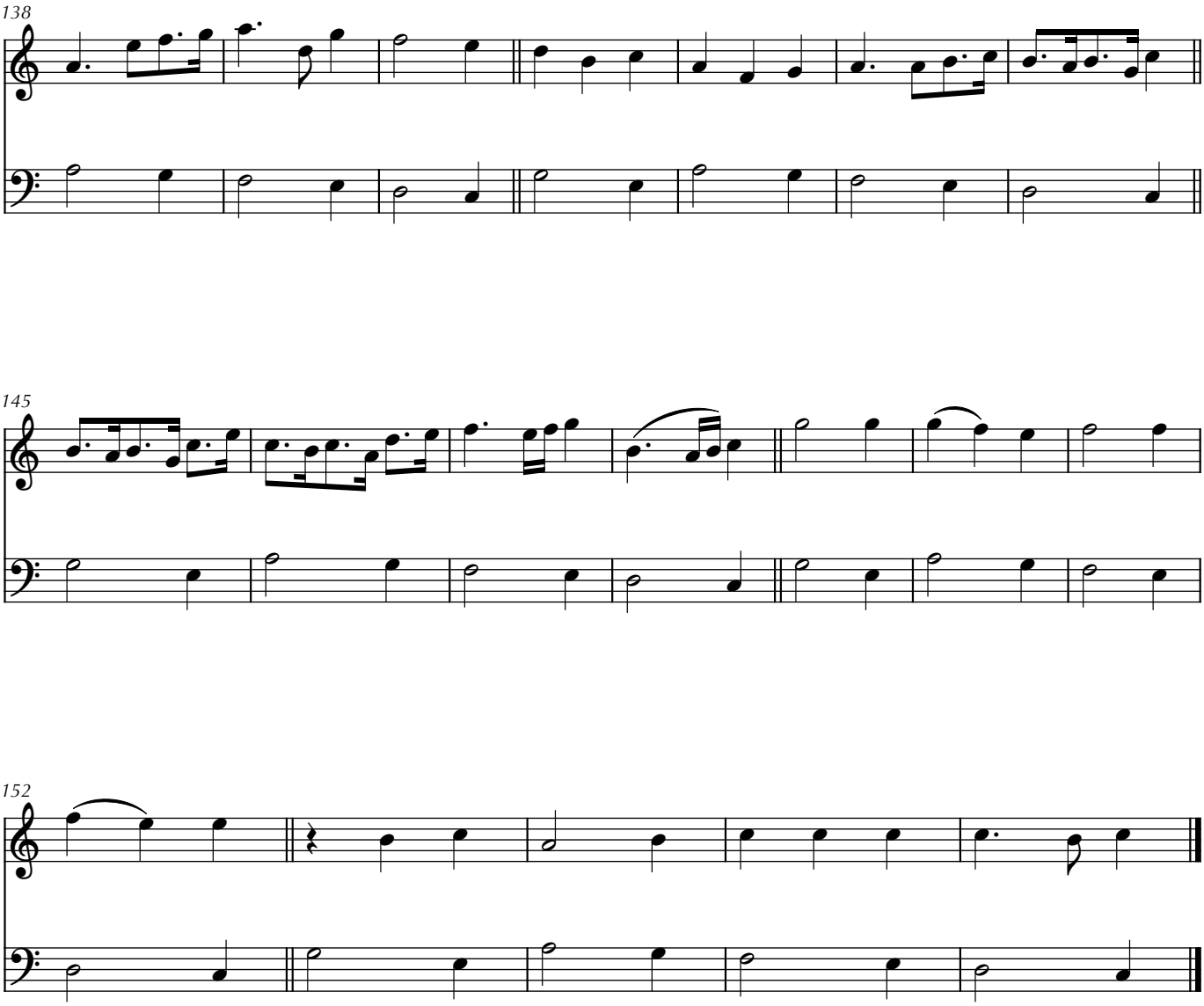

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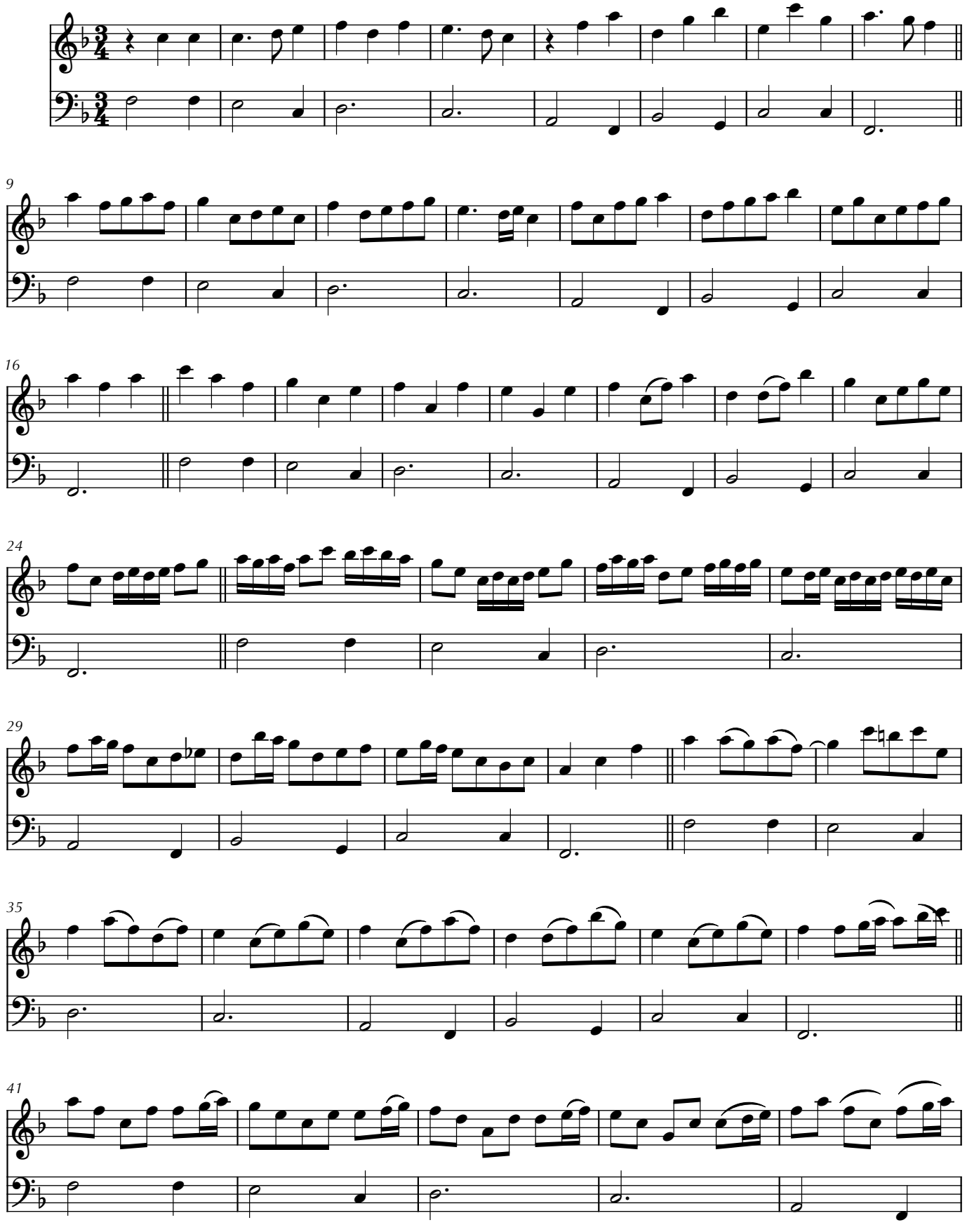
A Division on a Ground

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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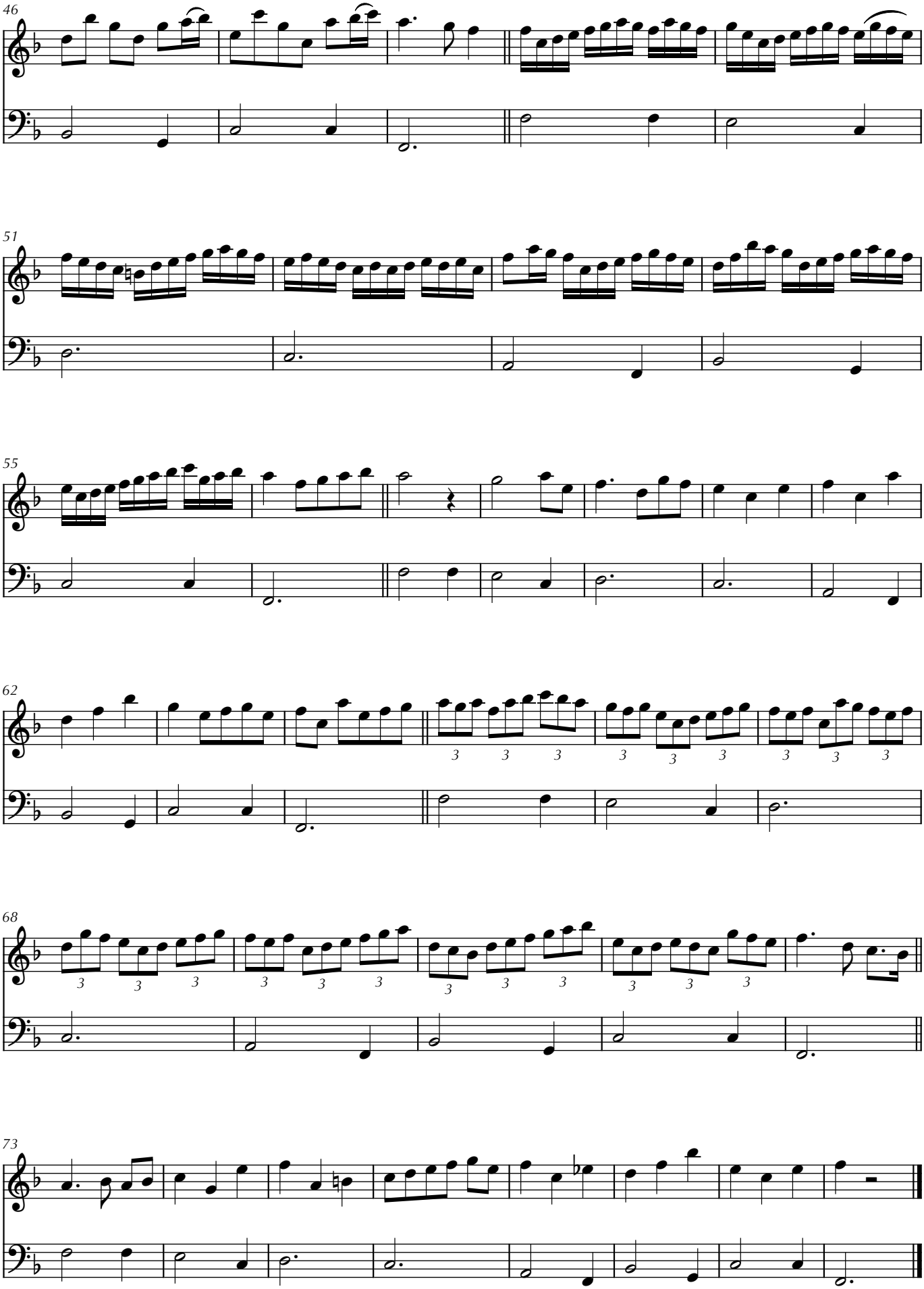

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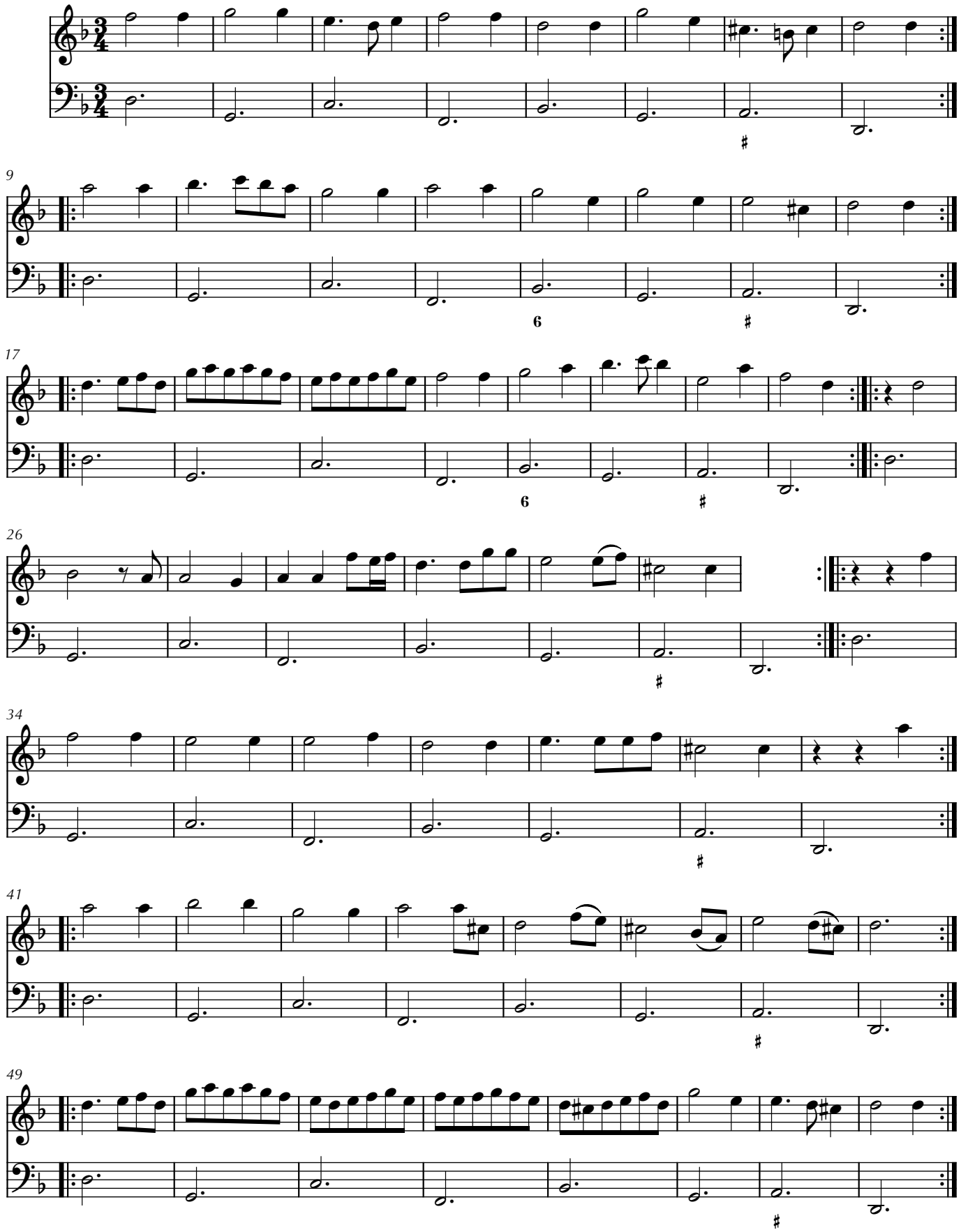
An Italian Ground



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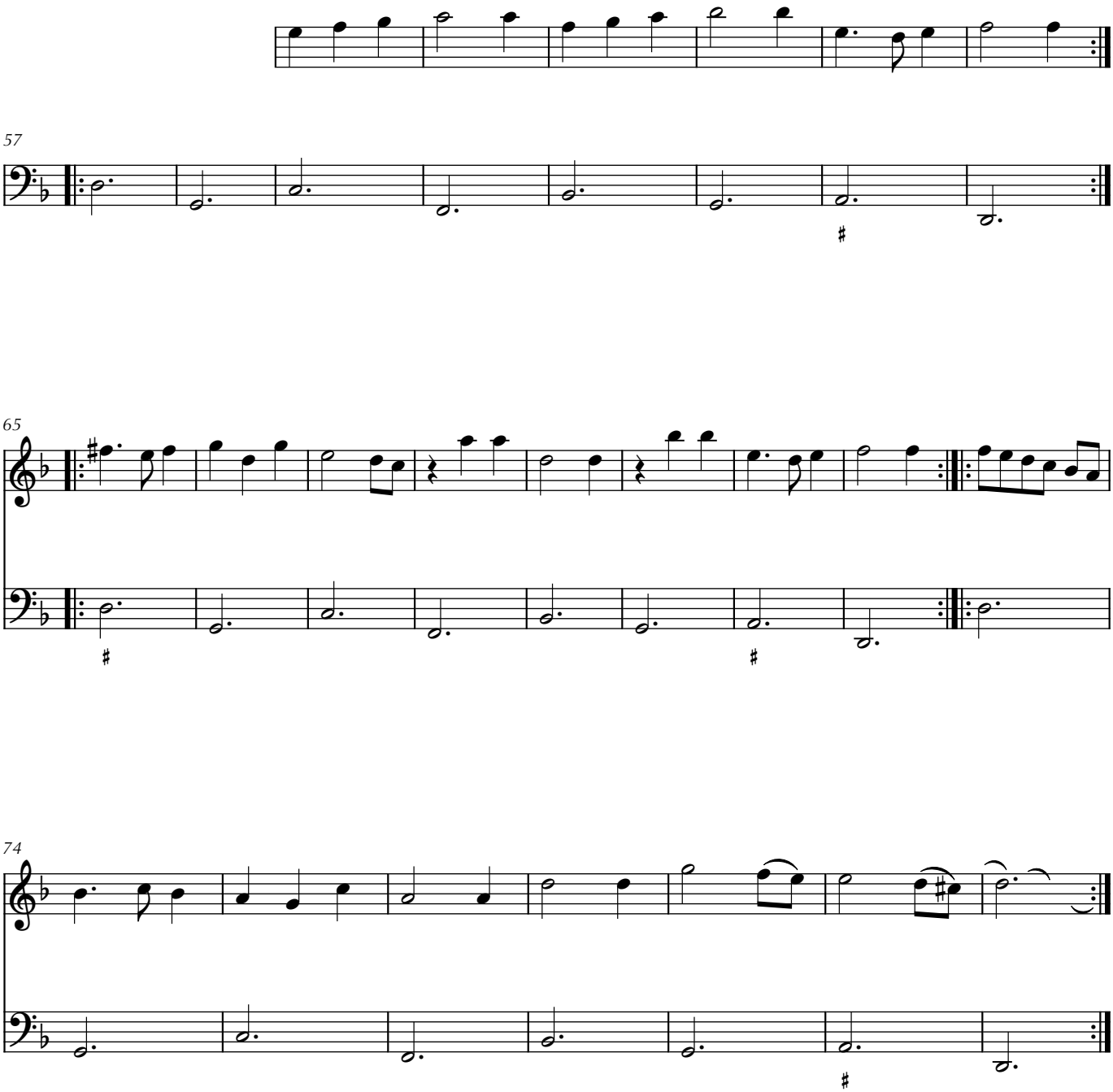

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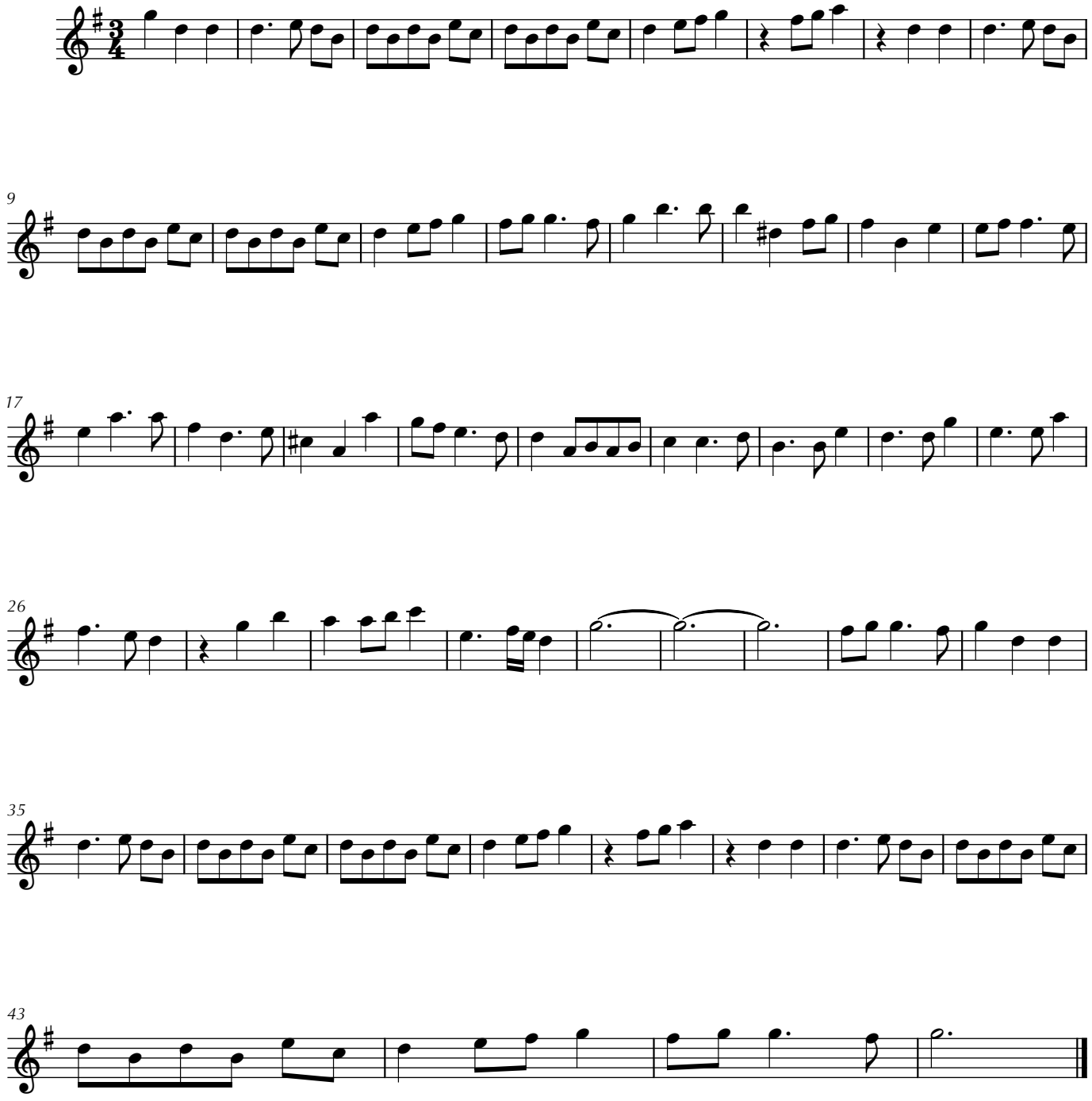
Chacone by Mr Morgan



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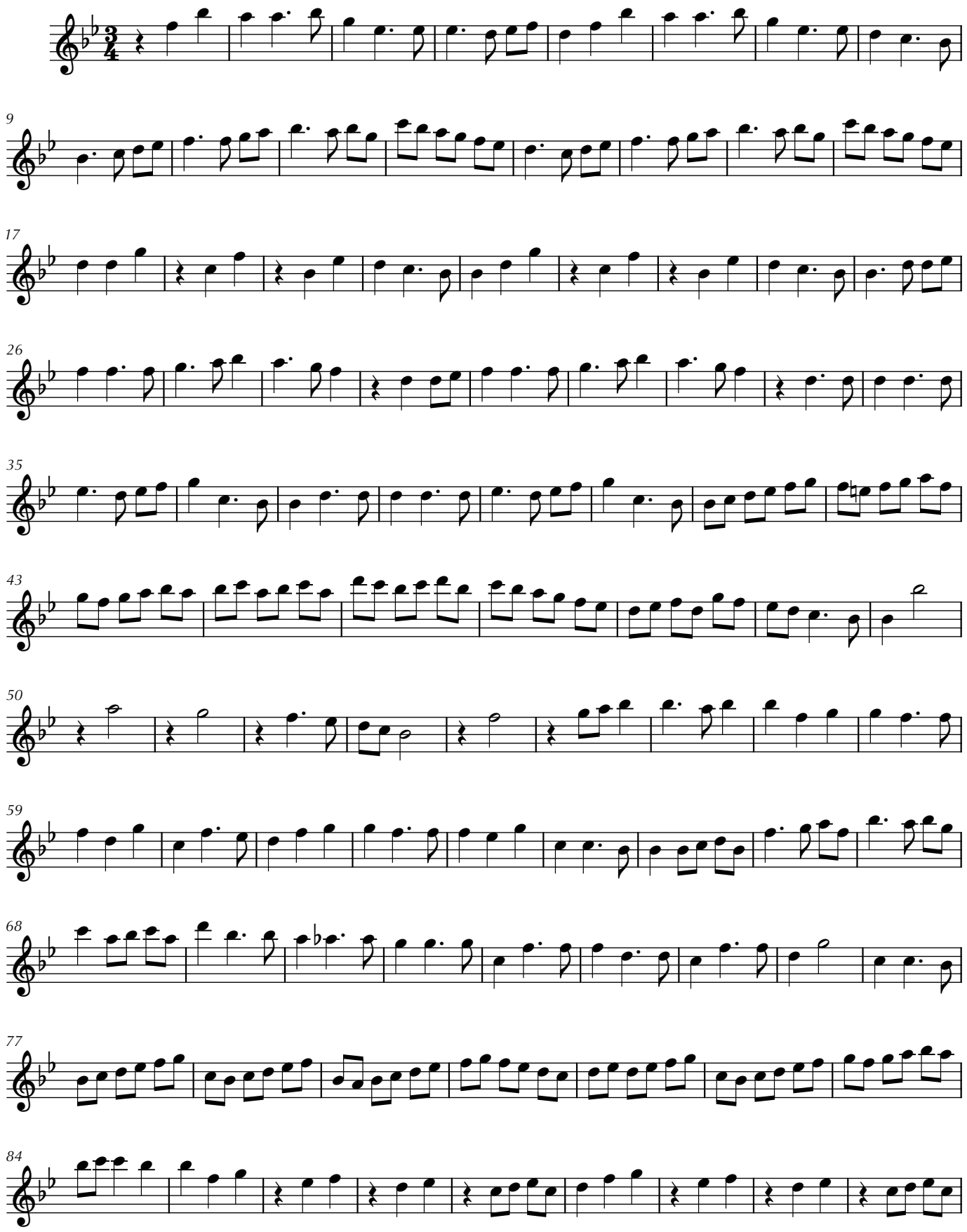
A Chacone



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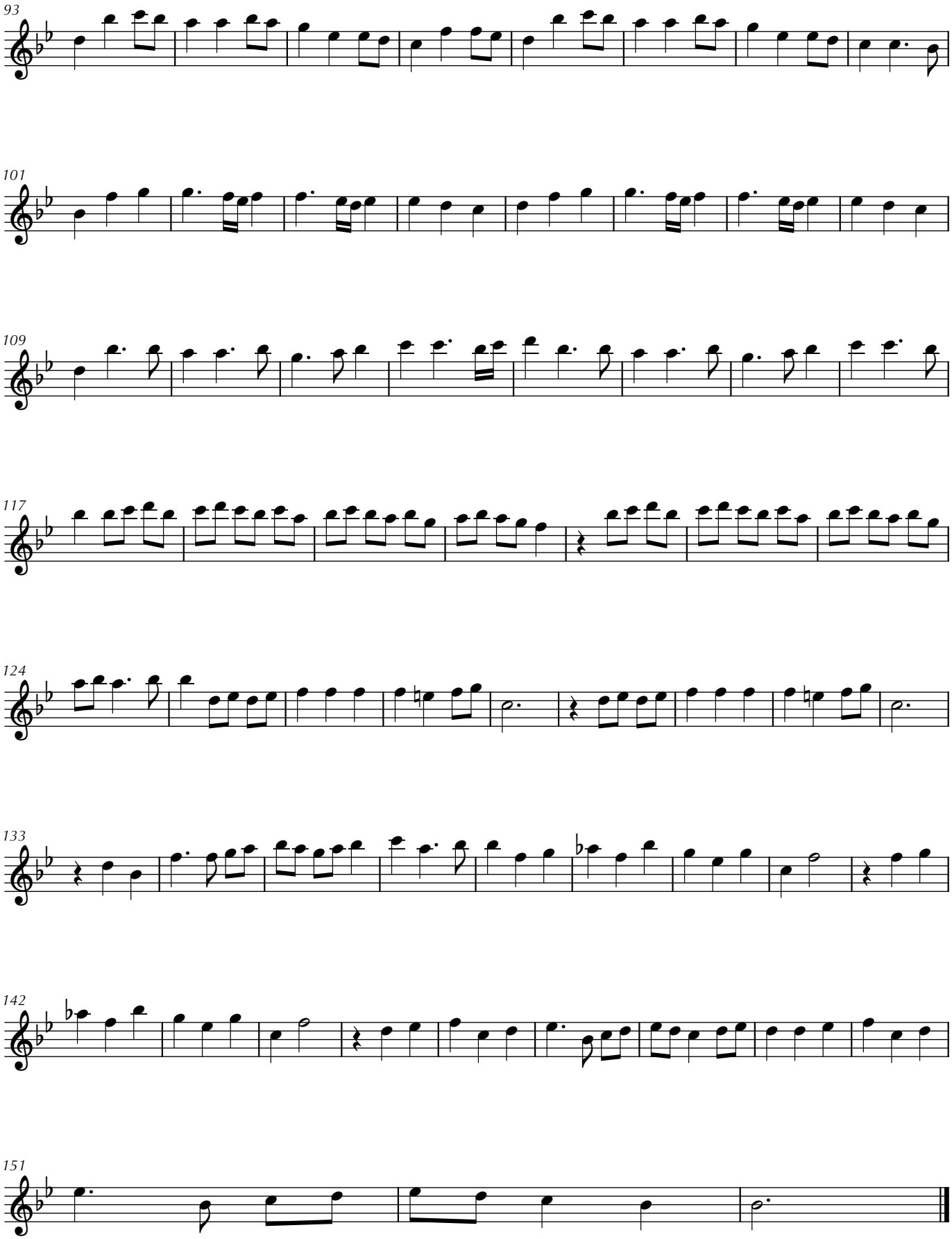

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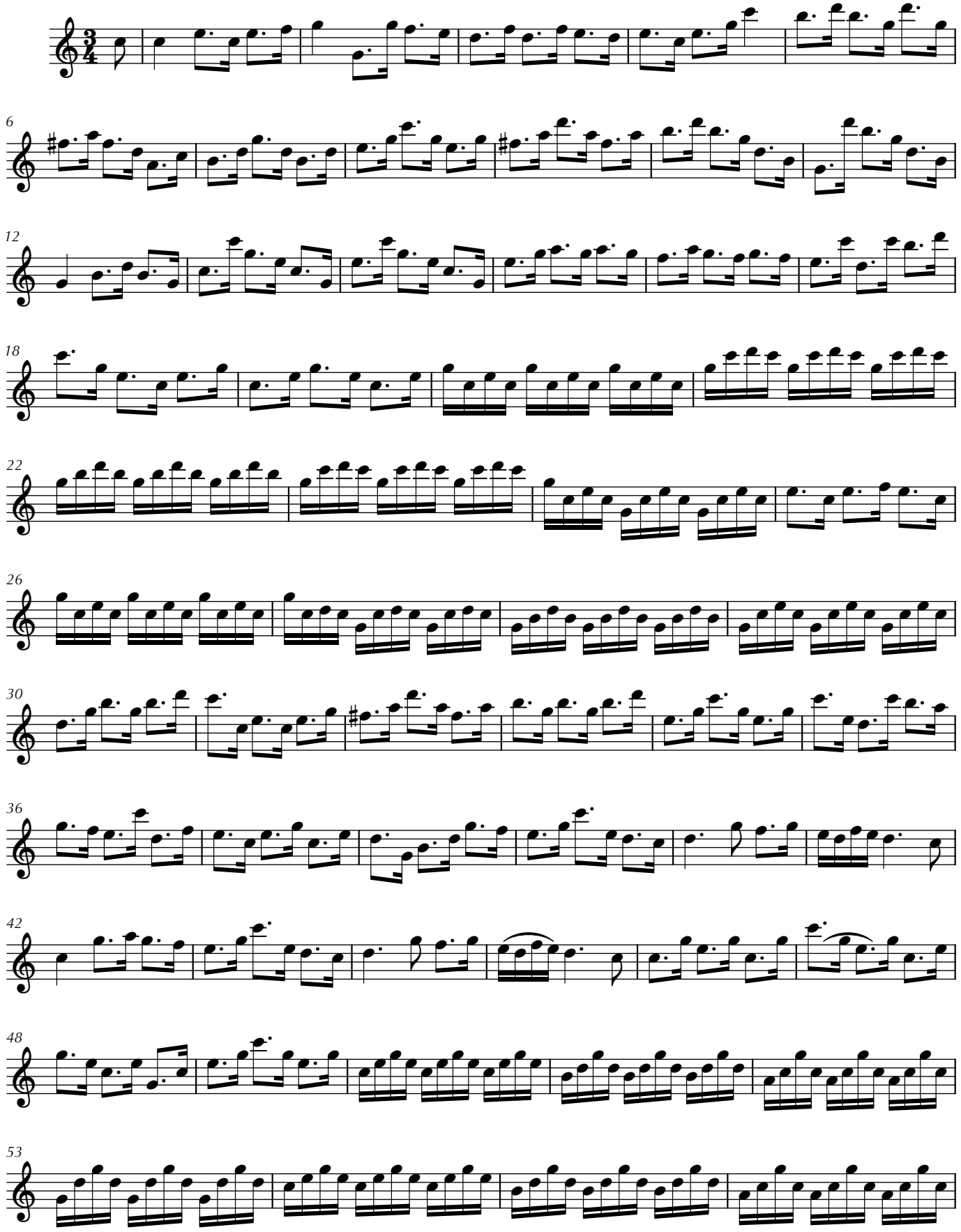
Division



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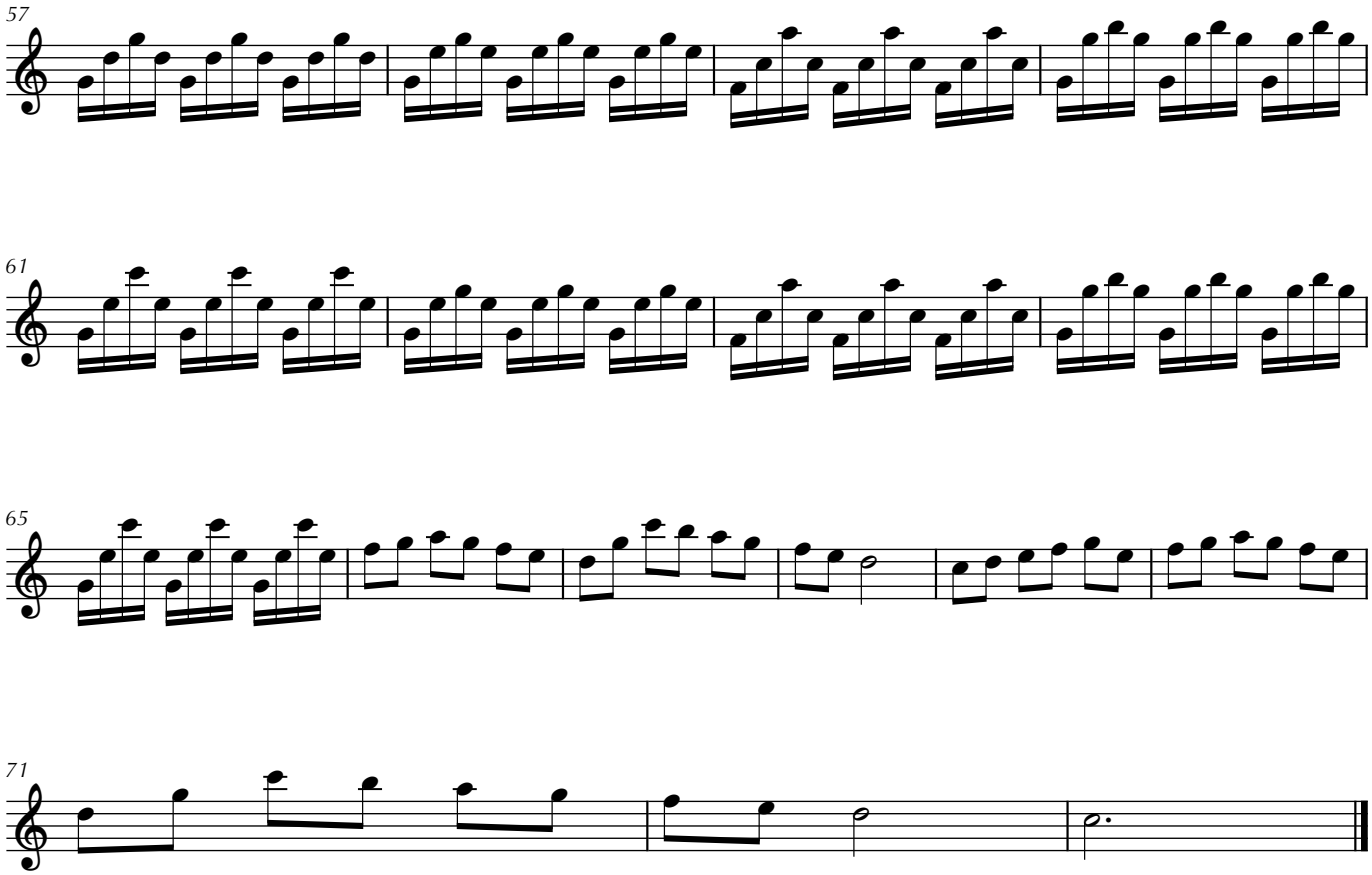

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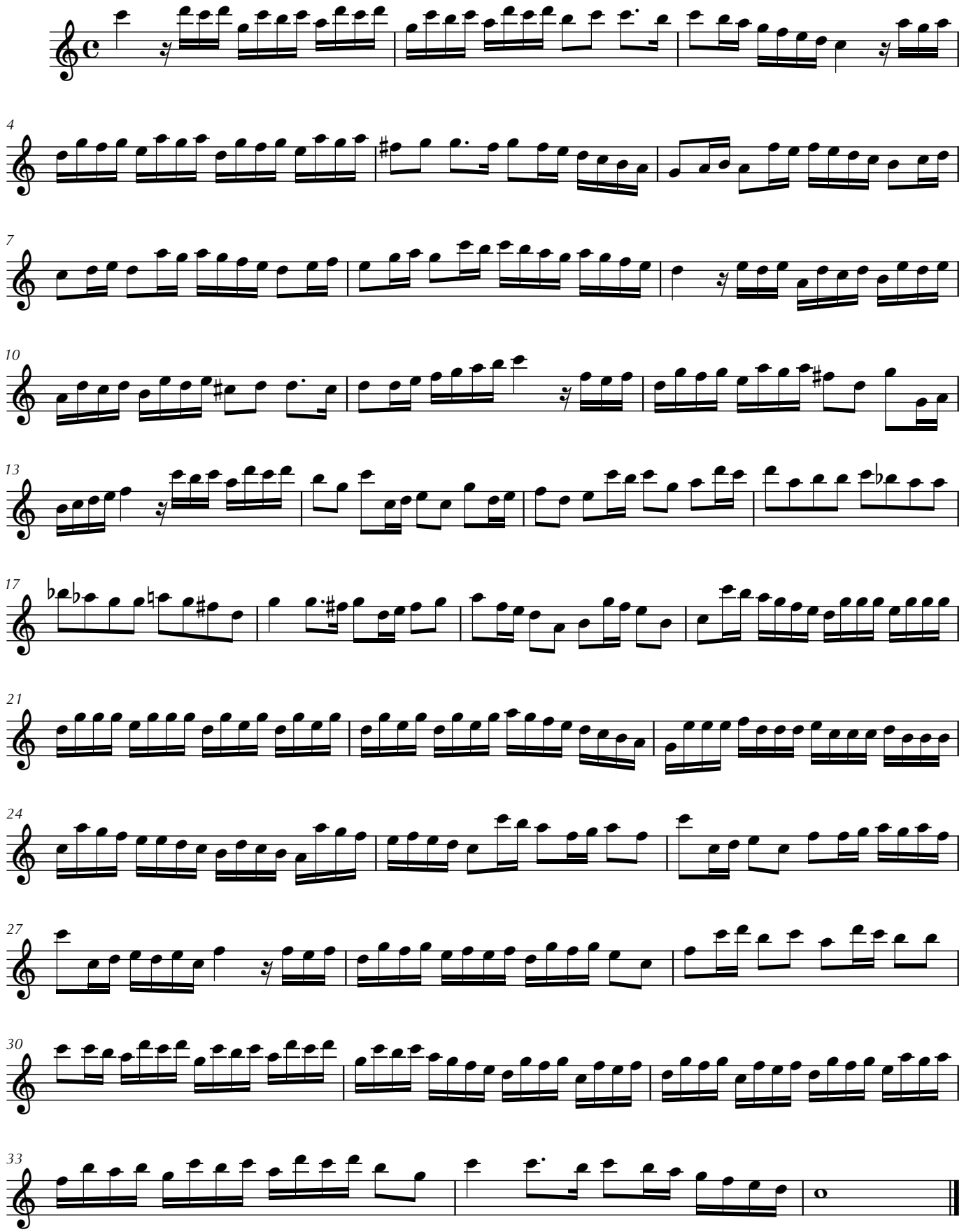
Division



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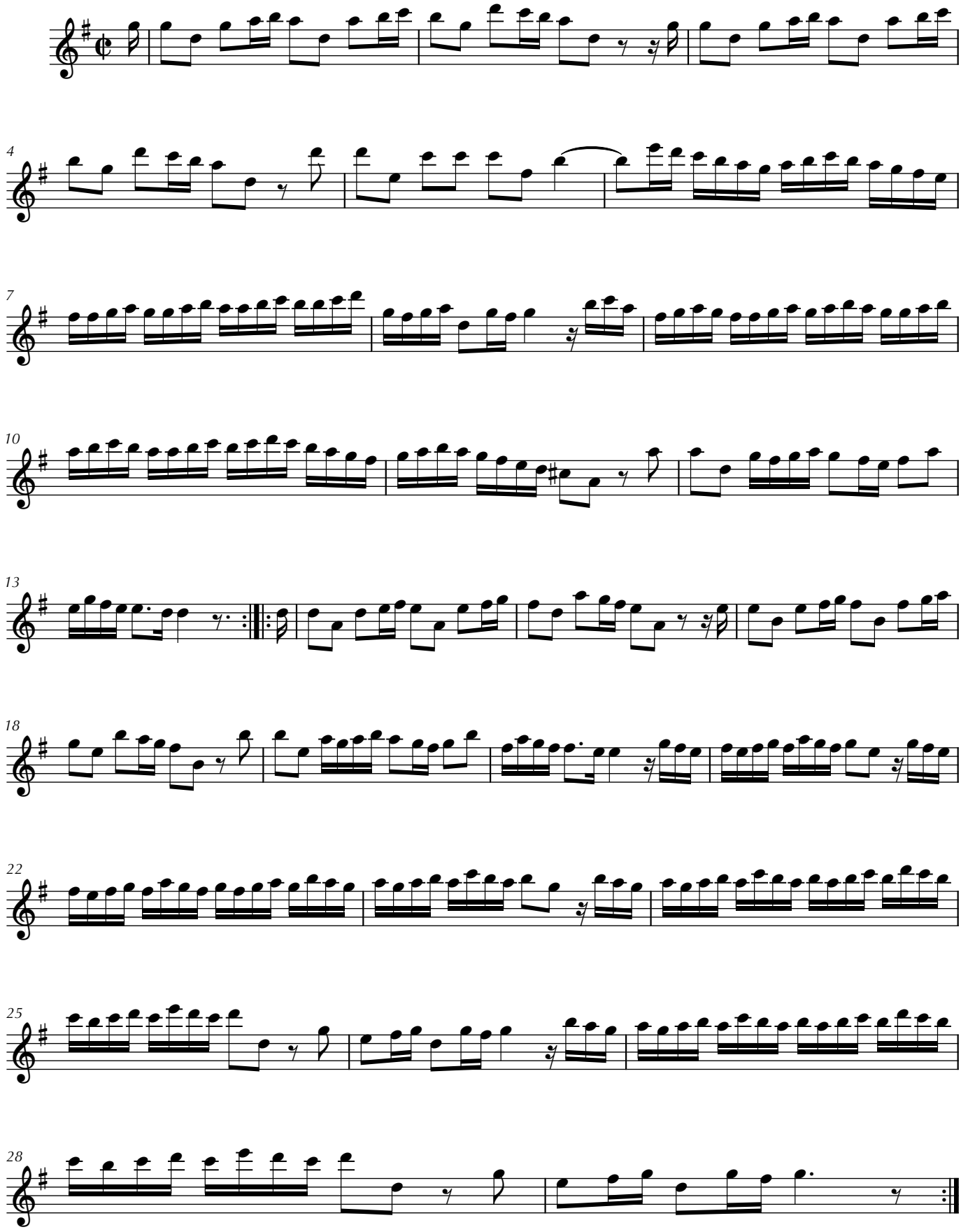
Prelude

Johann Pepusch (1667 - 1752)



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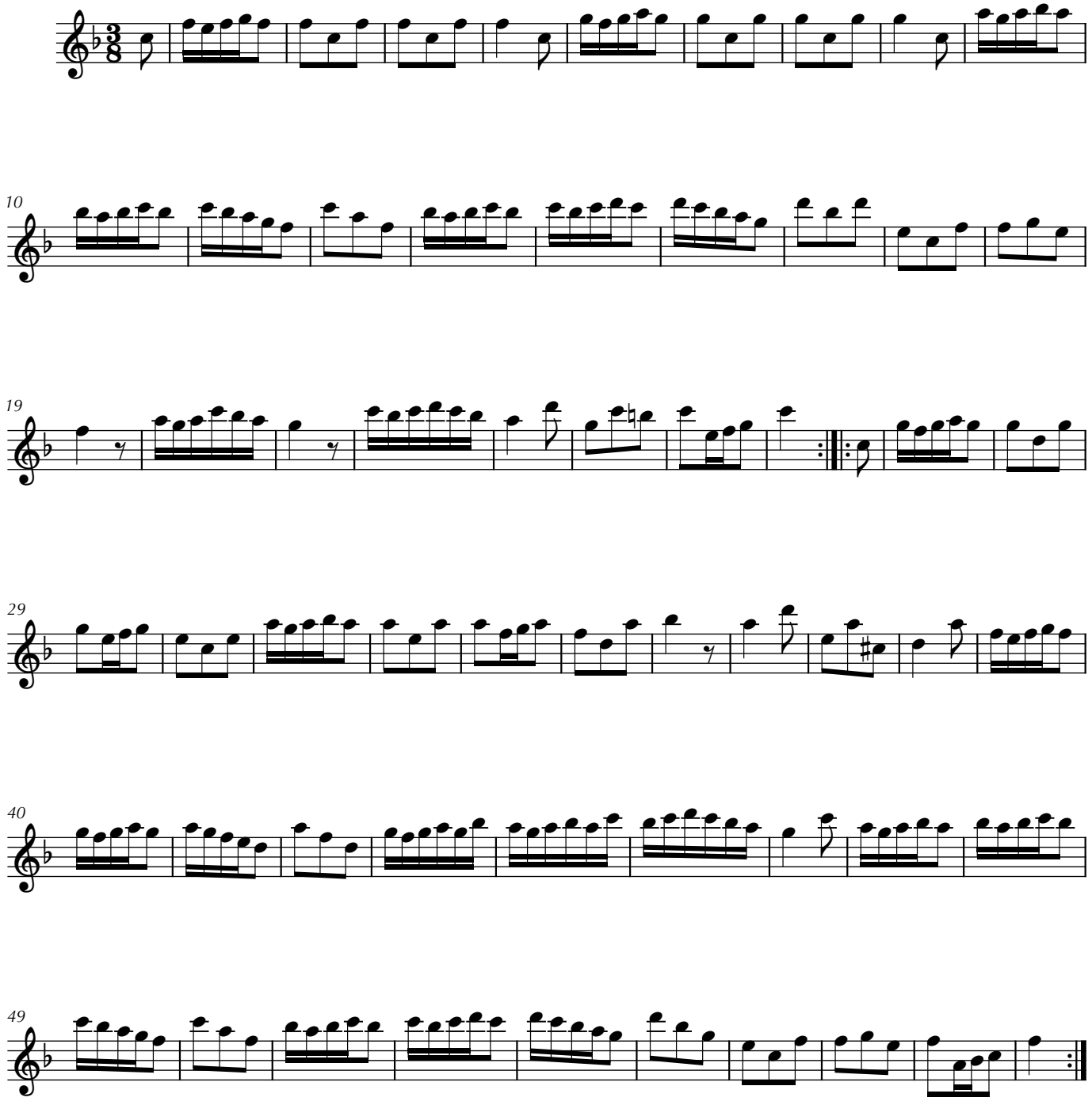
Prelude

Johann Pepusch (1667 - 1752)



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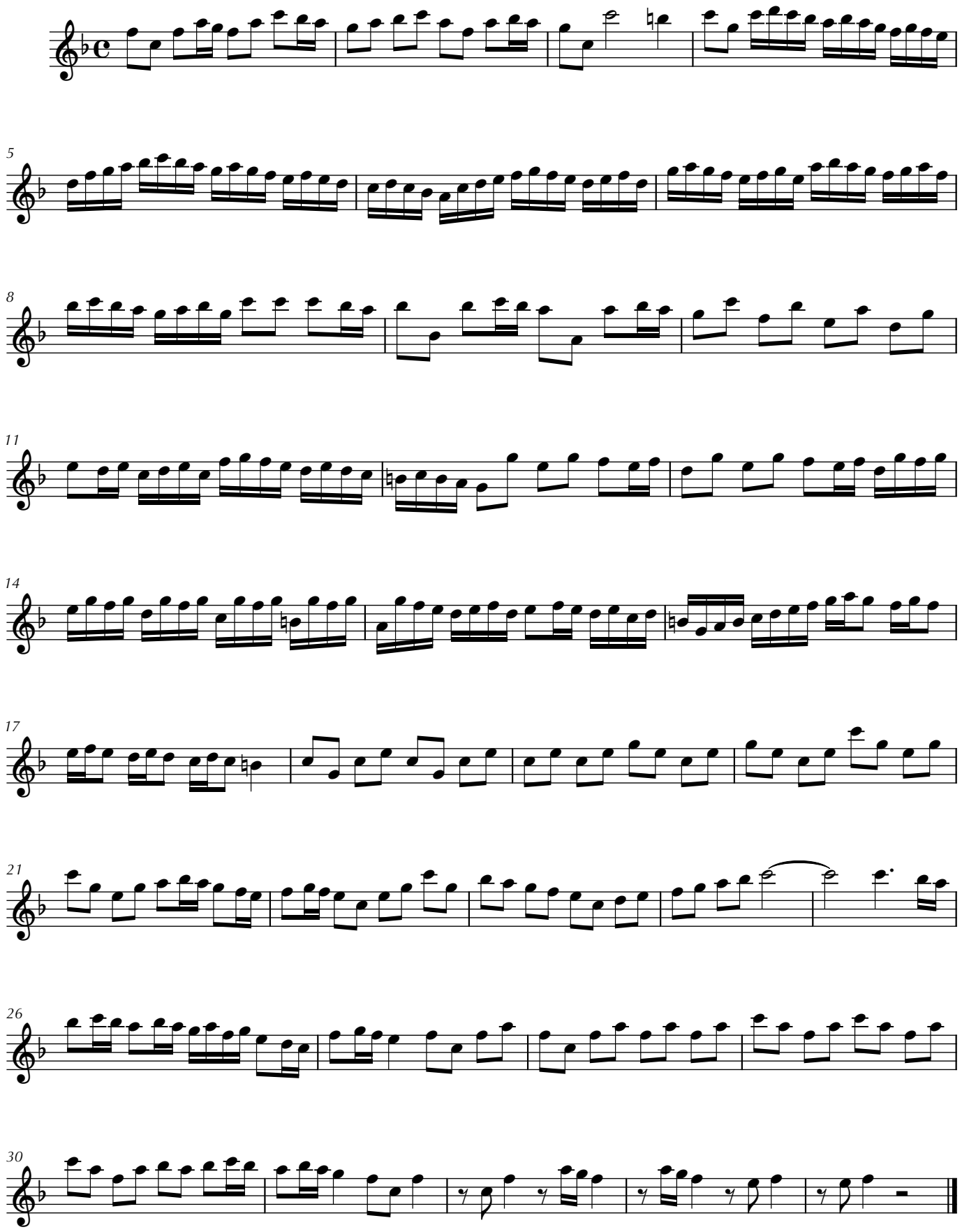
Prelude

Daniel Purcell (c. 1664 – 1717)



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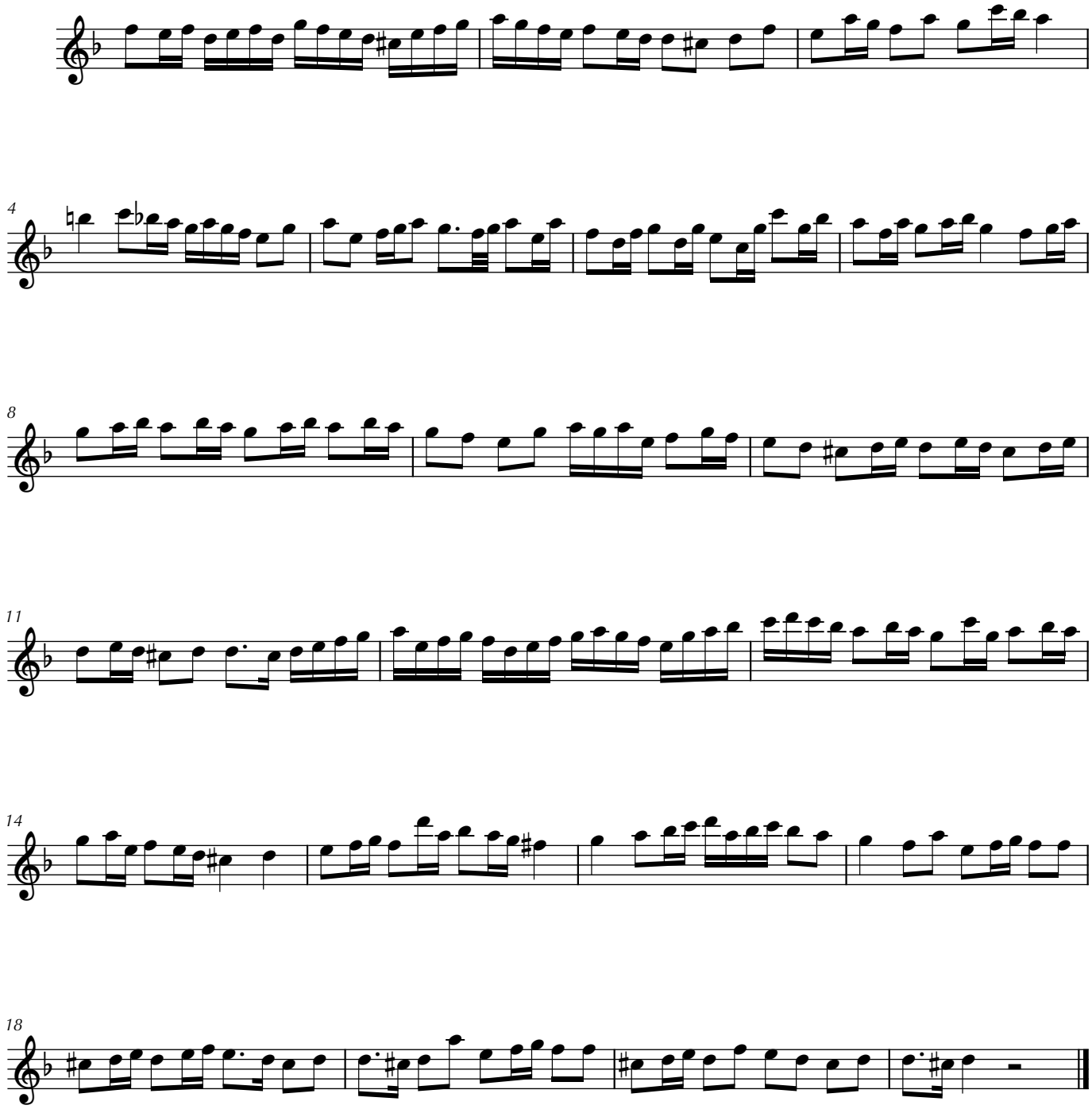
Prelude

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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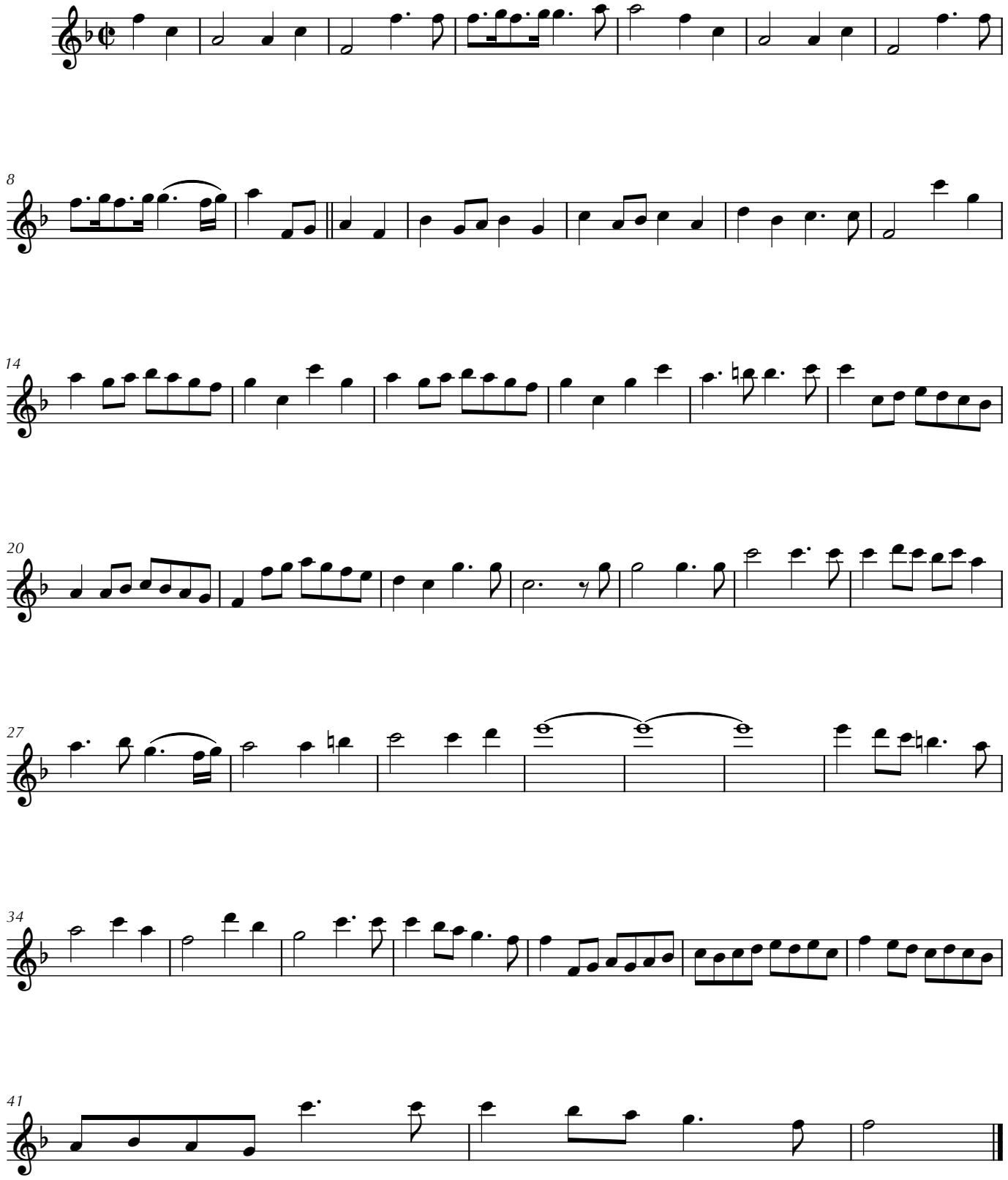
Cibell by Mr Henry Purcell



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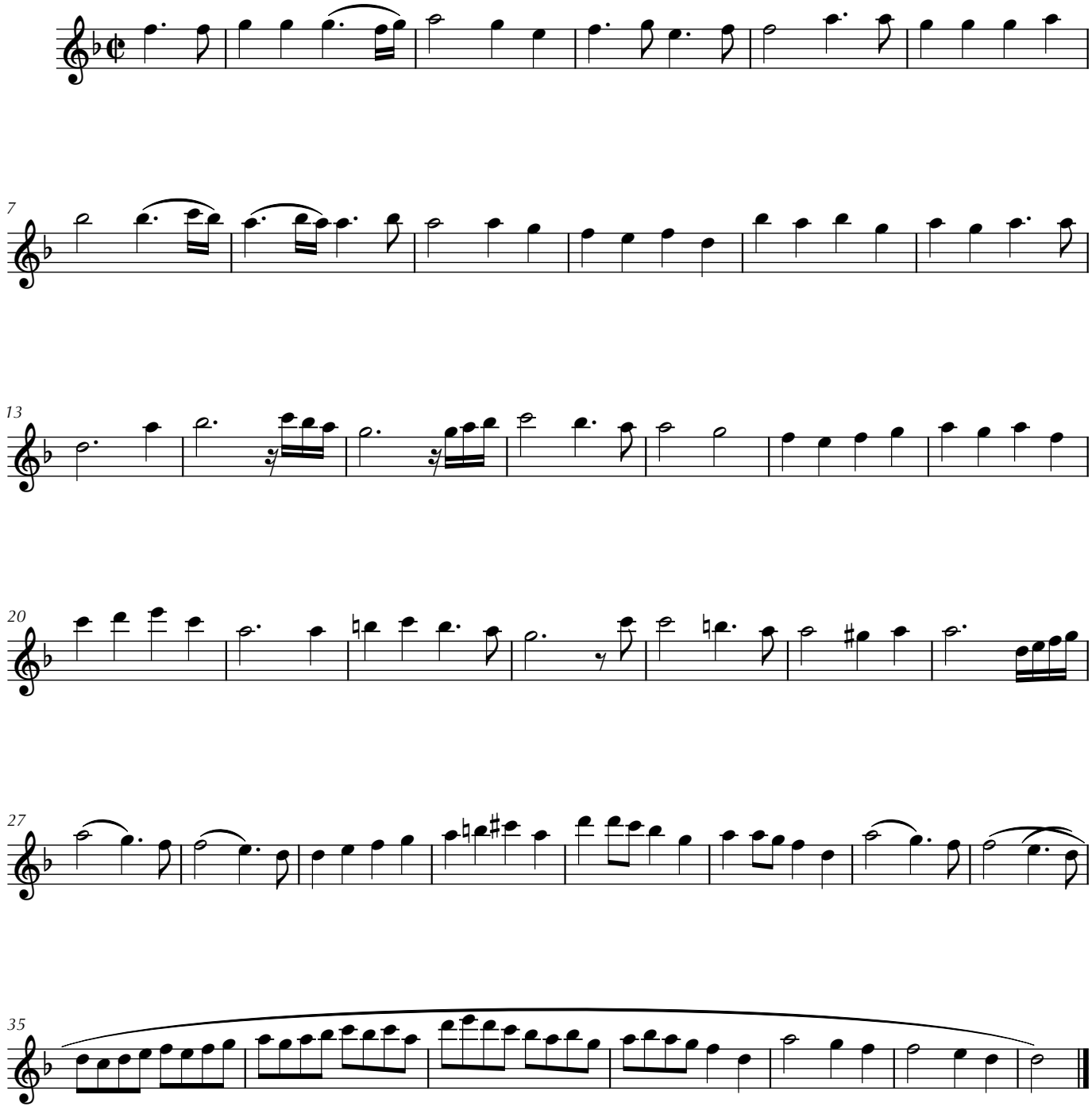
Cibell by Signr. Baptist



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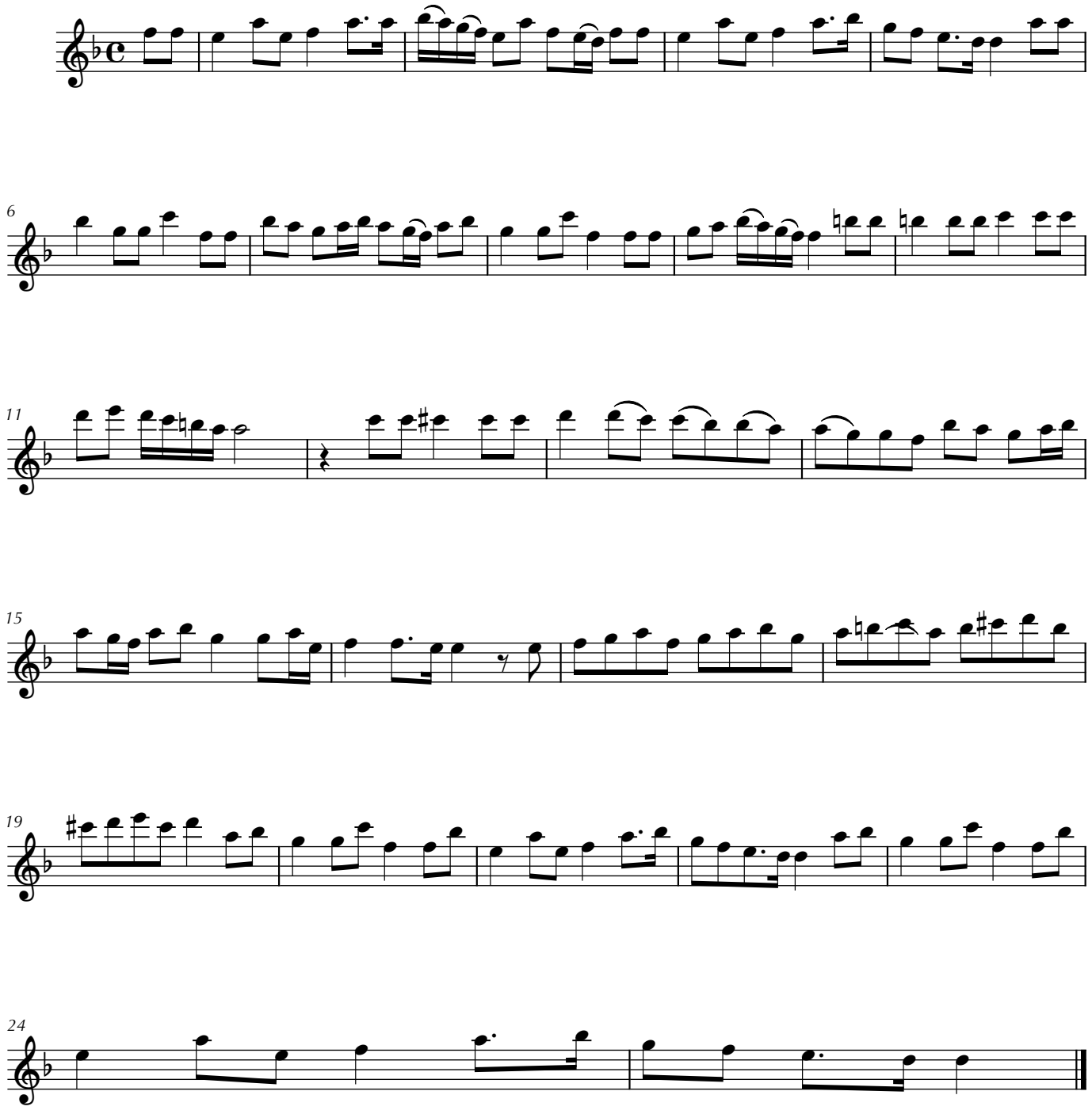
Cibell



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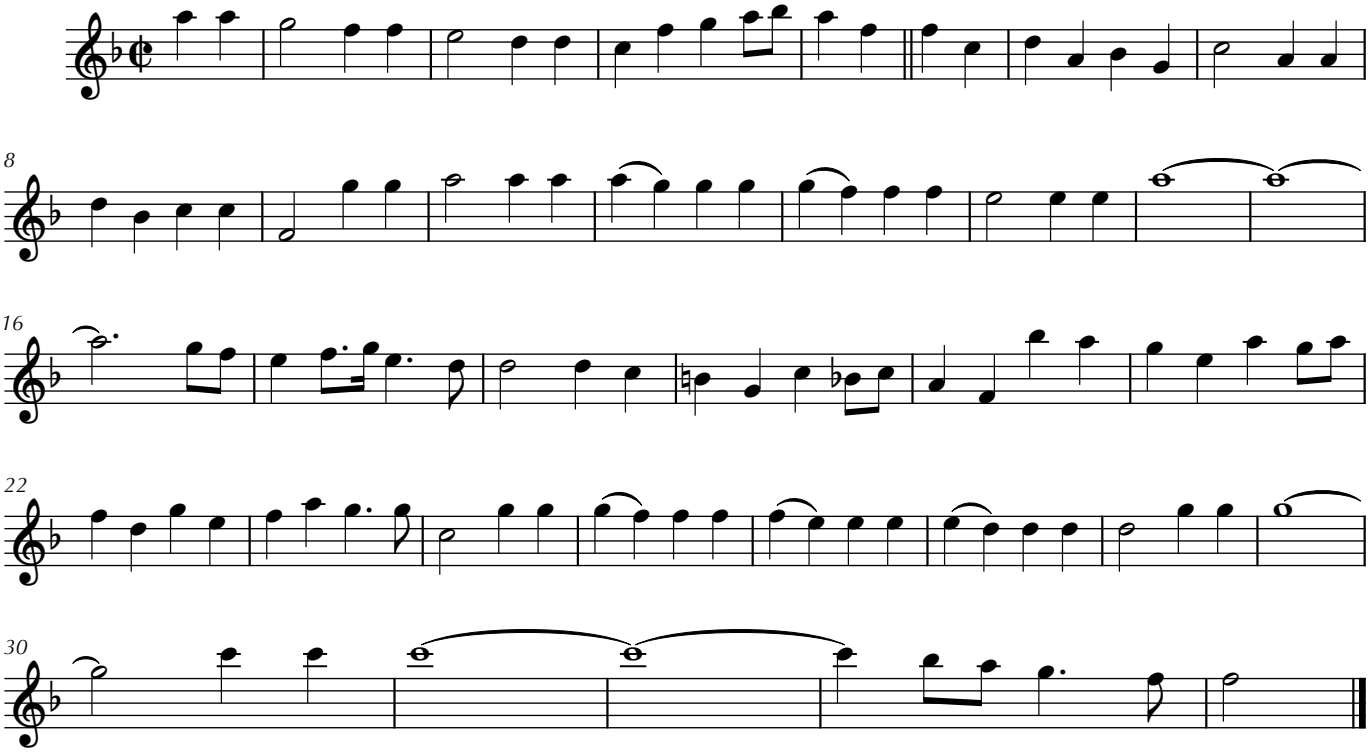
Cibell by Mr King



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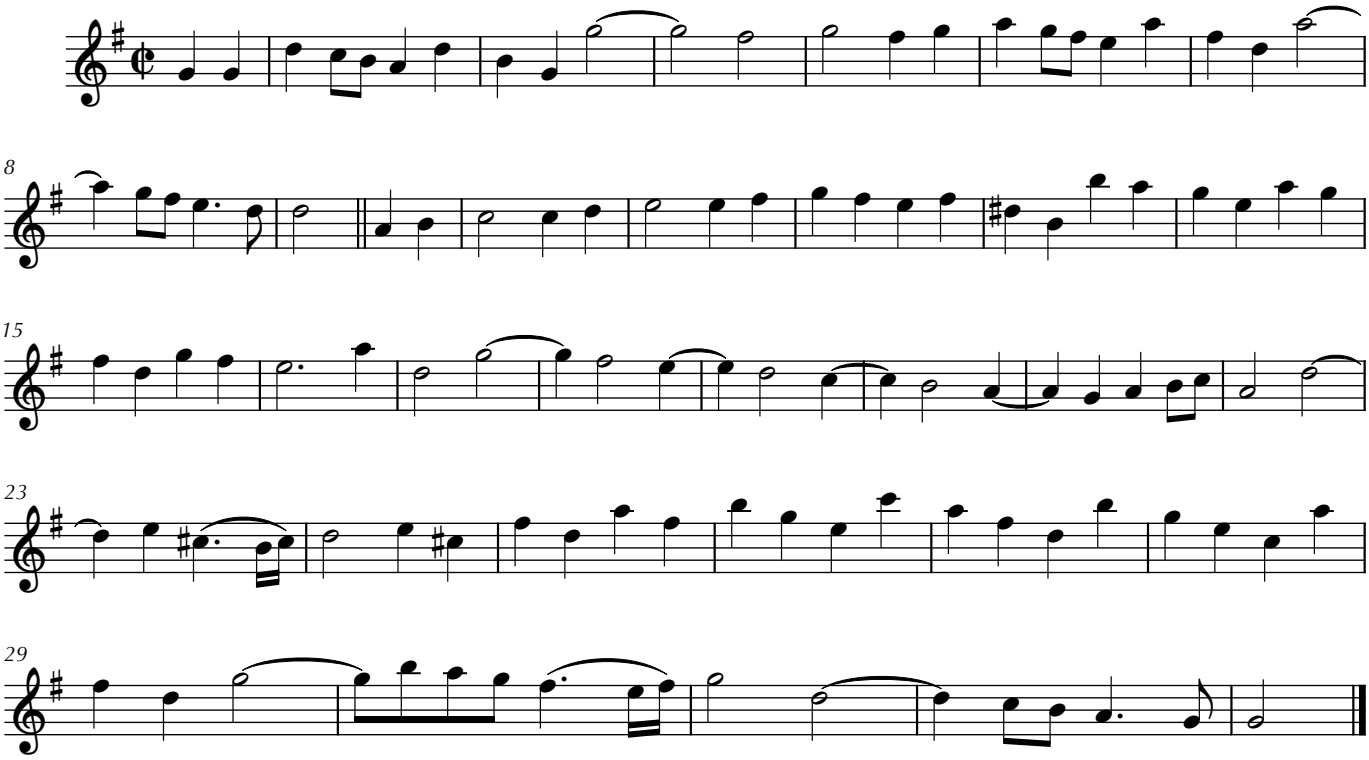

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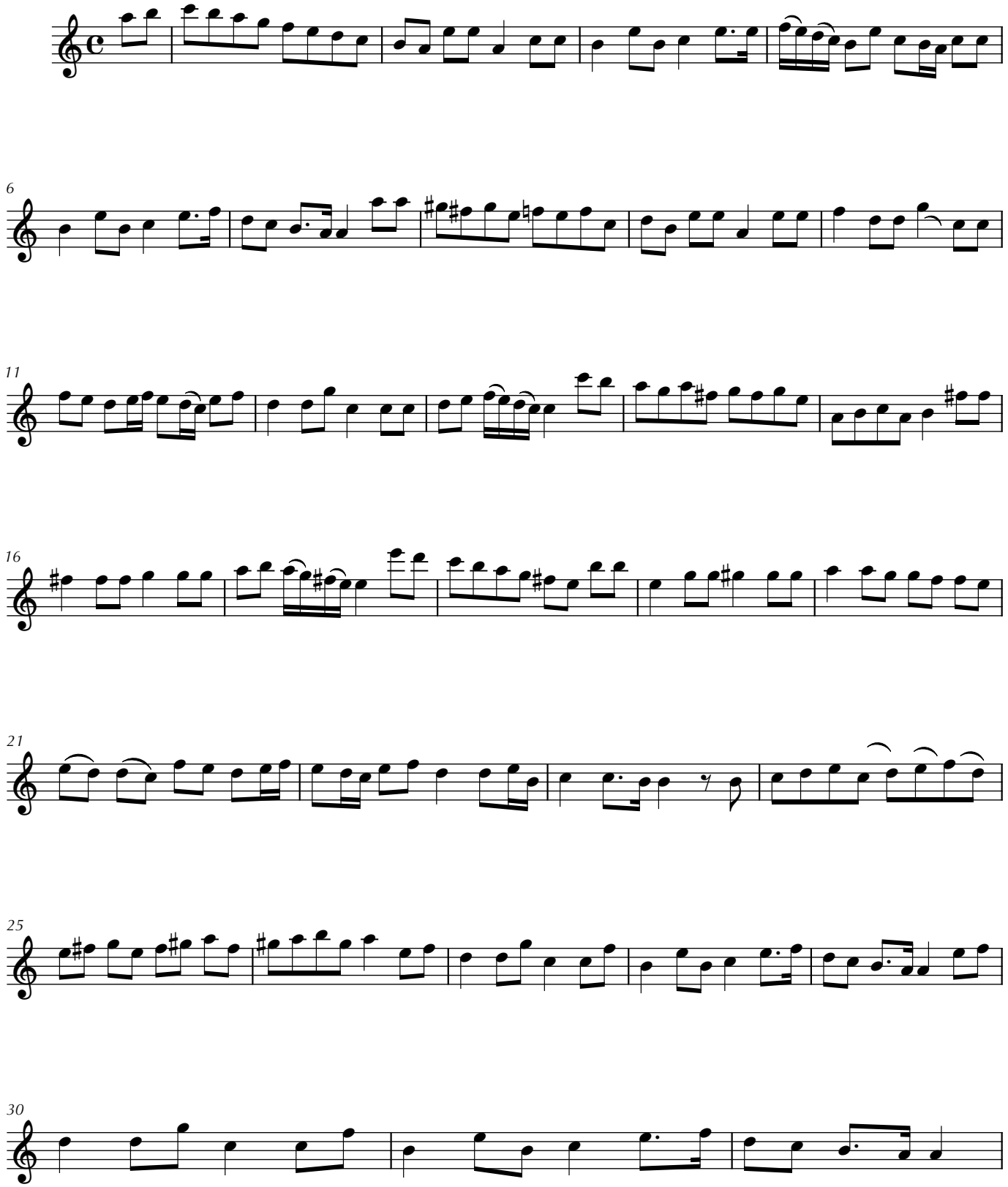
Cibell by Mr. O



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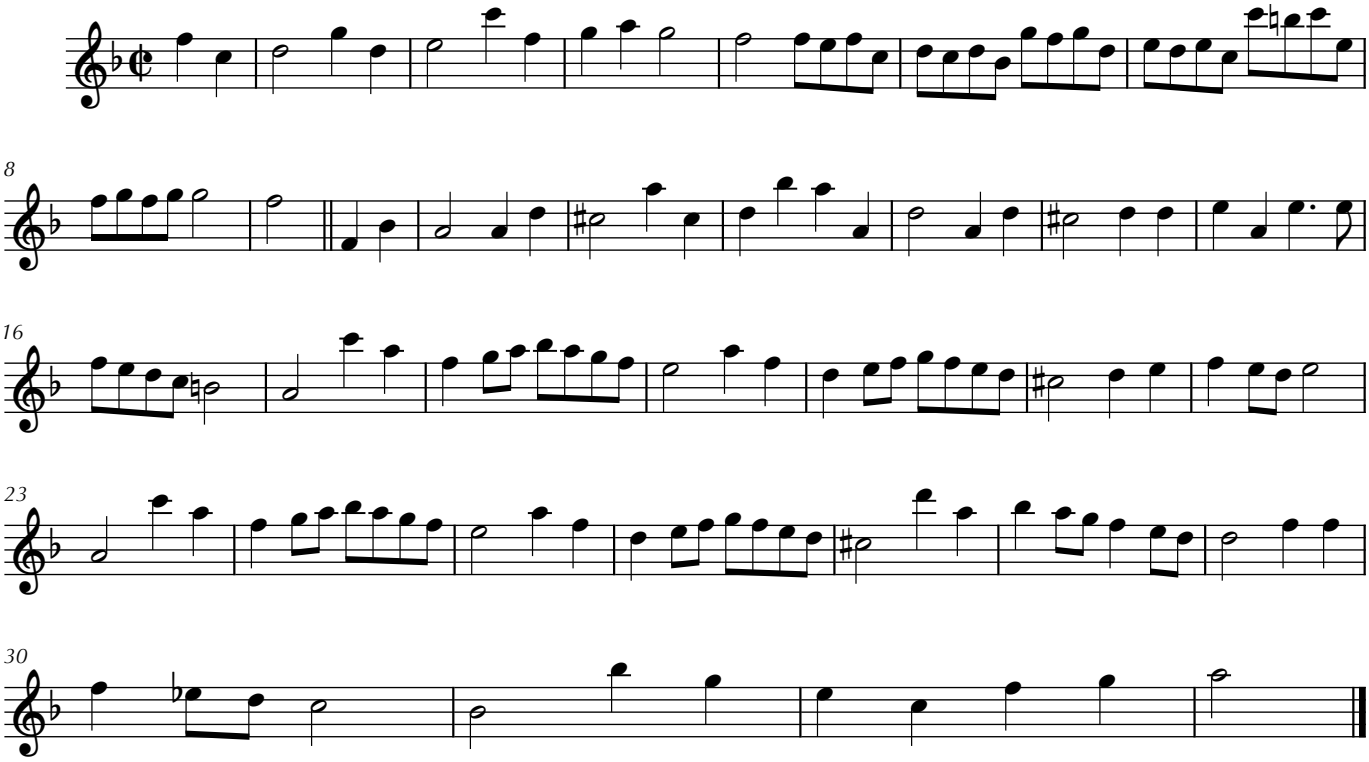
Cibell by Mr Clark



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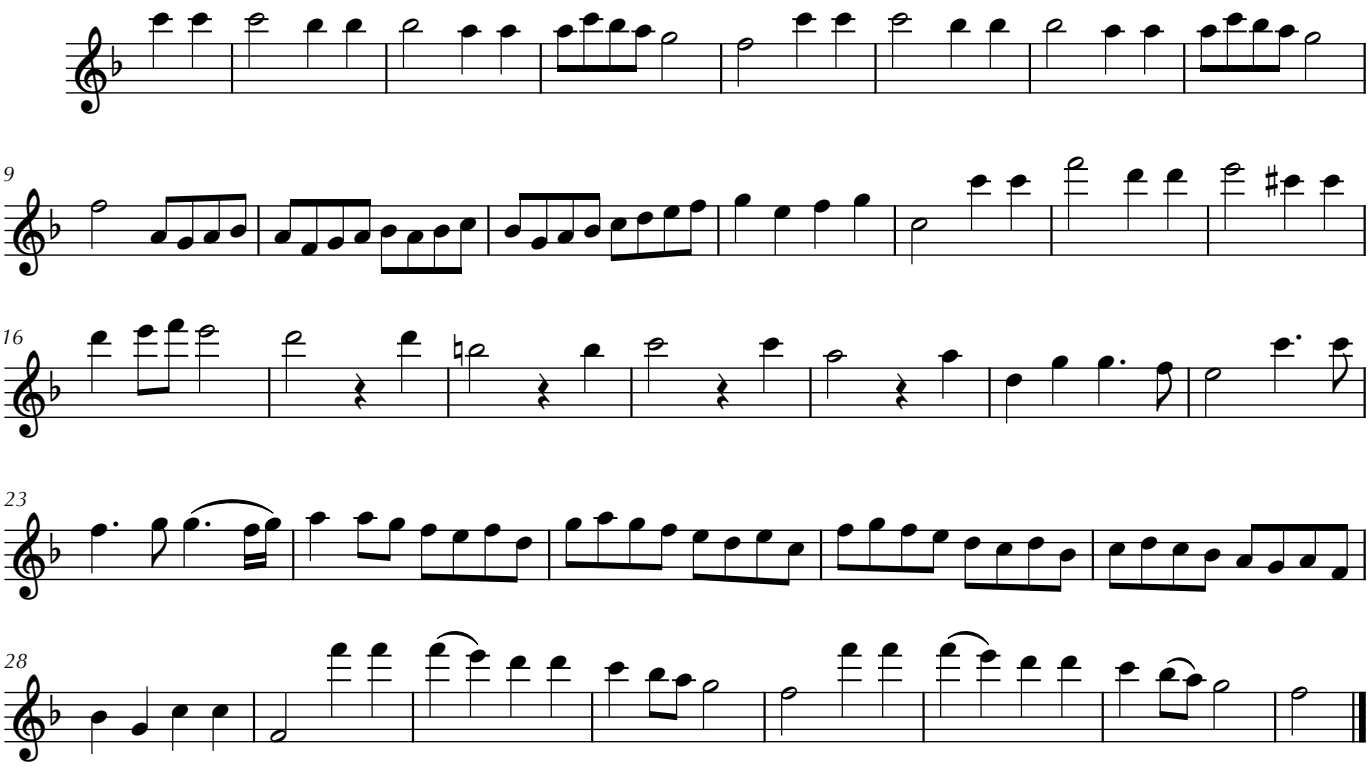

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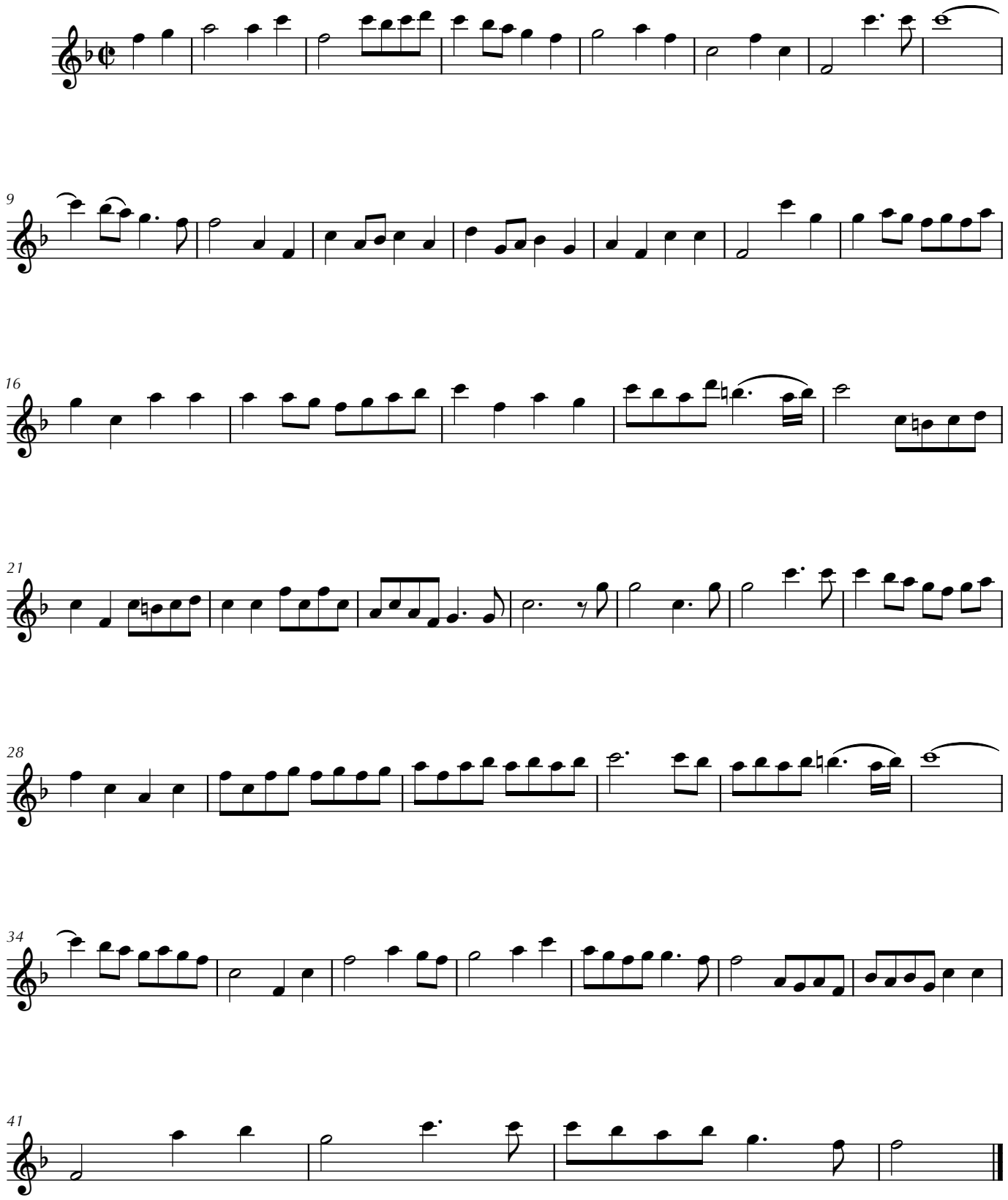
Cibell by Mr Clark



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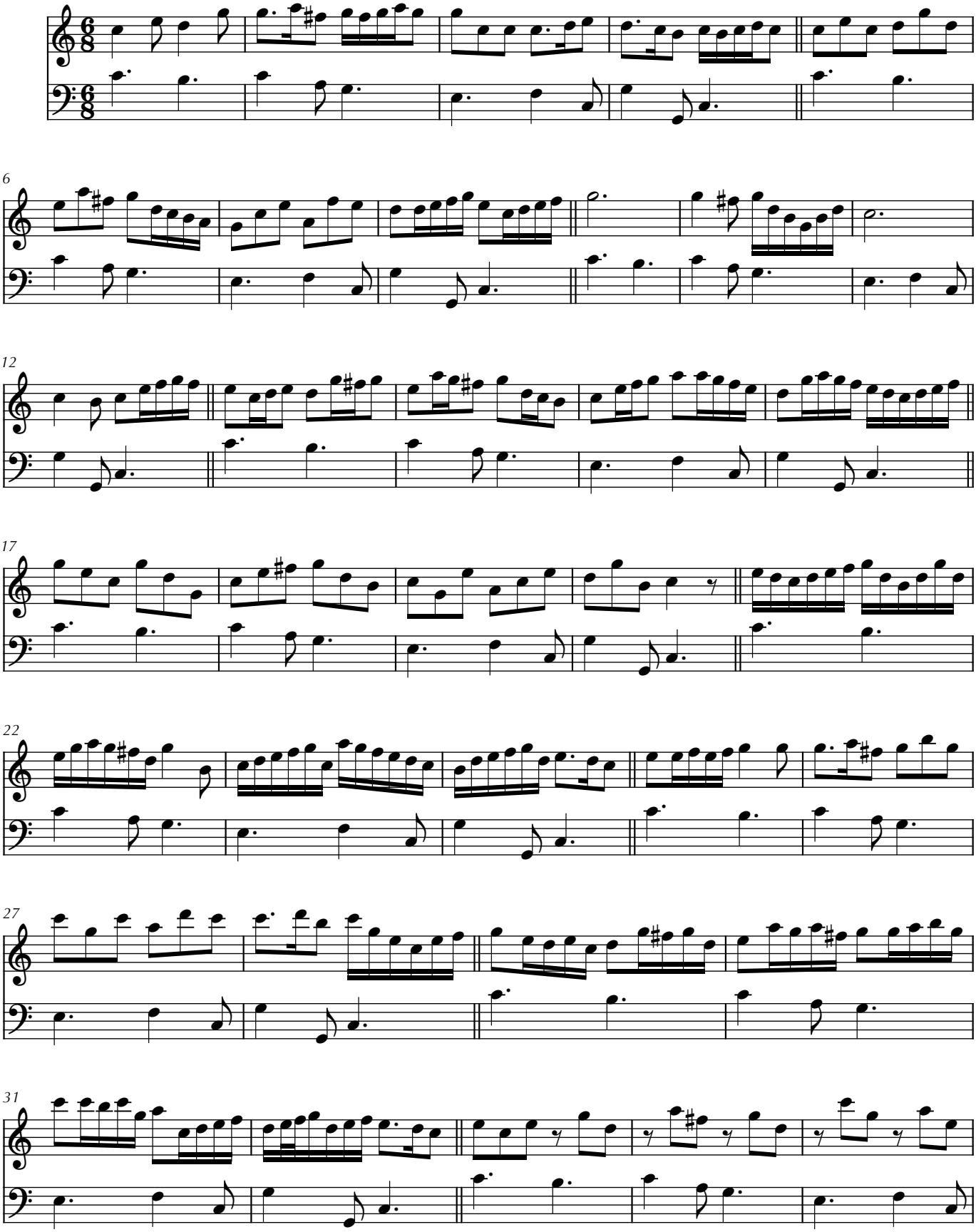
A Division to a Ground

A Collection of Musick, 1691

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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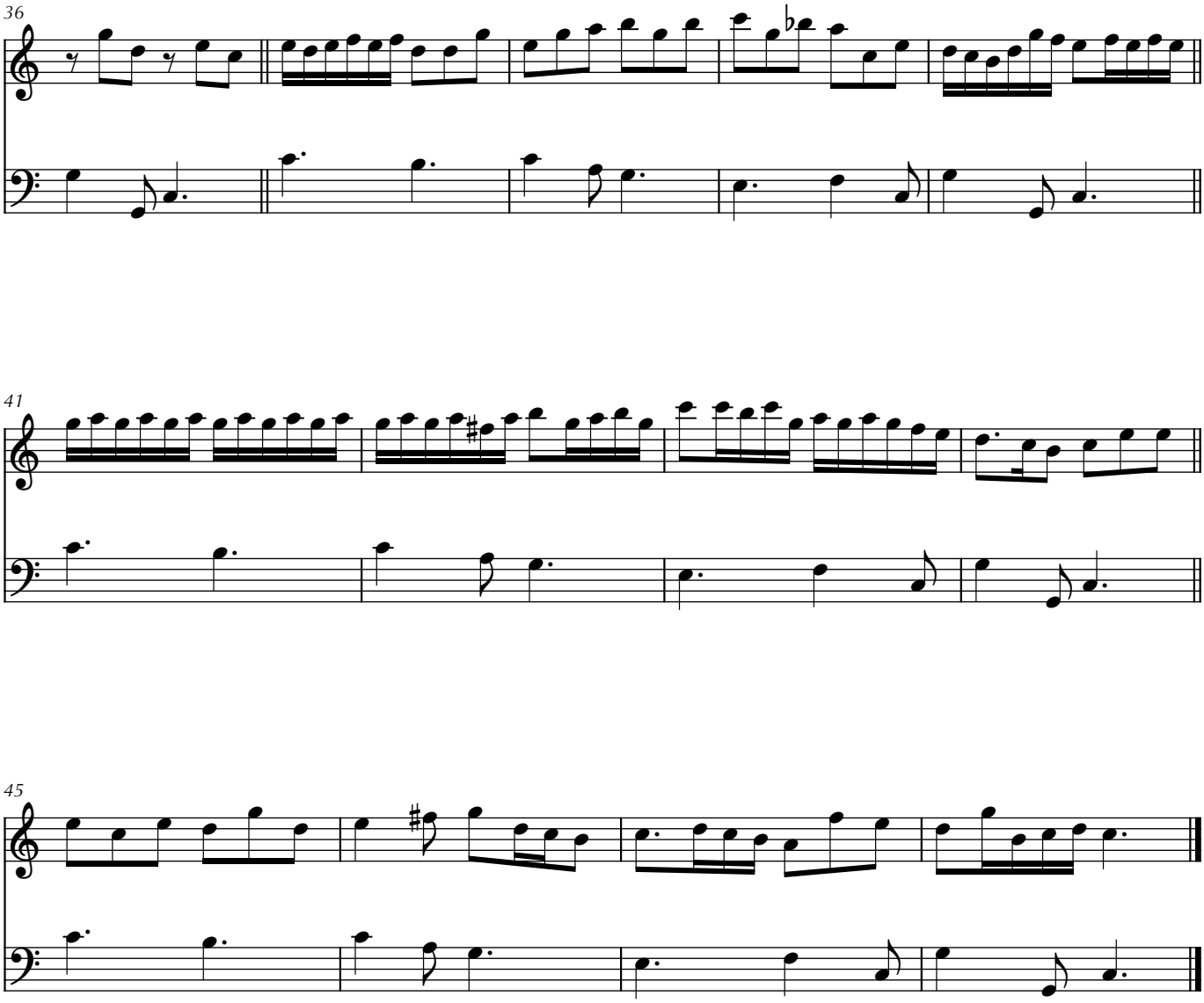

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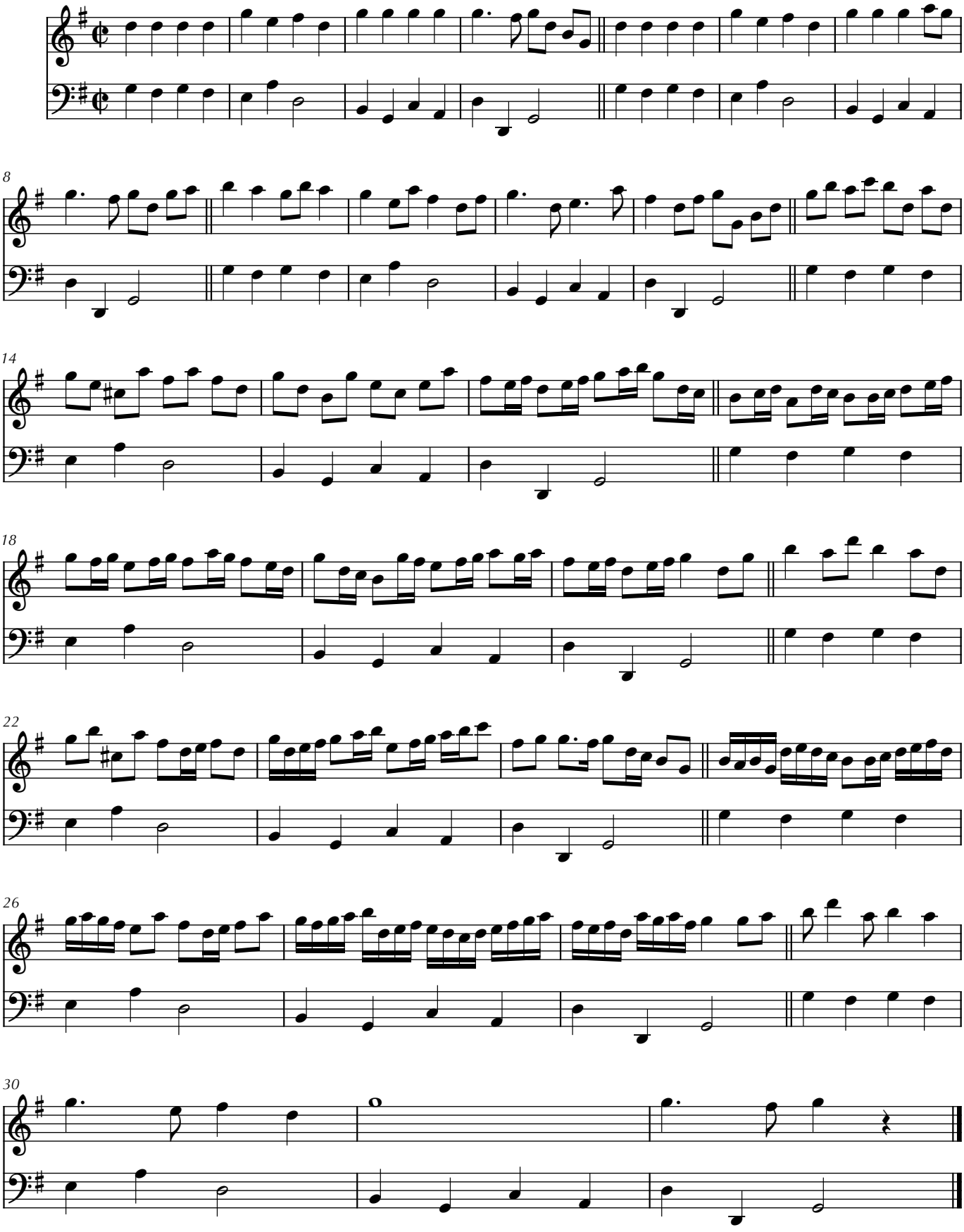
Ground in Gamut

A Collection of Musick, 1691

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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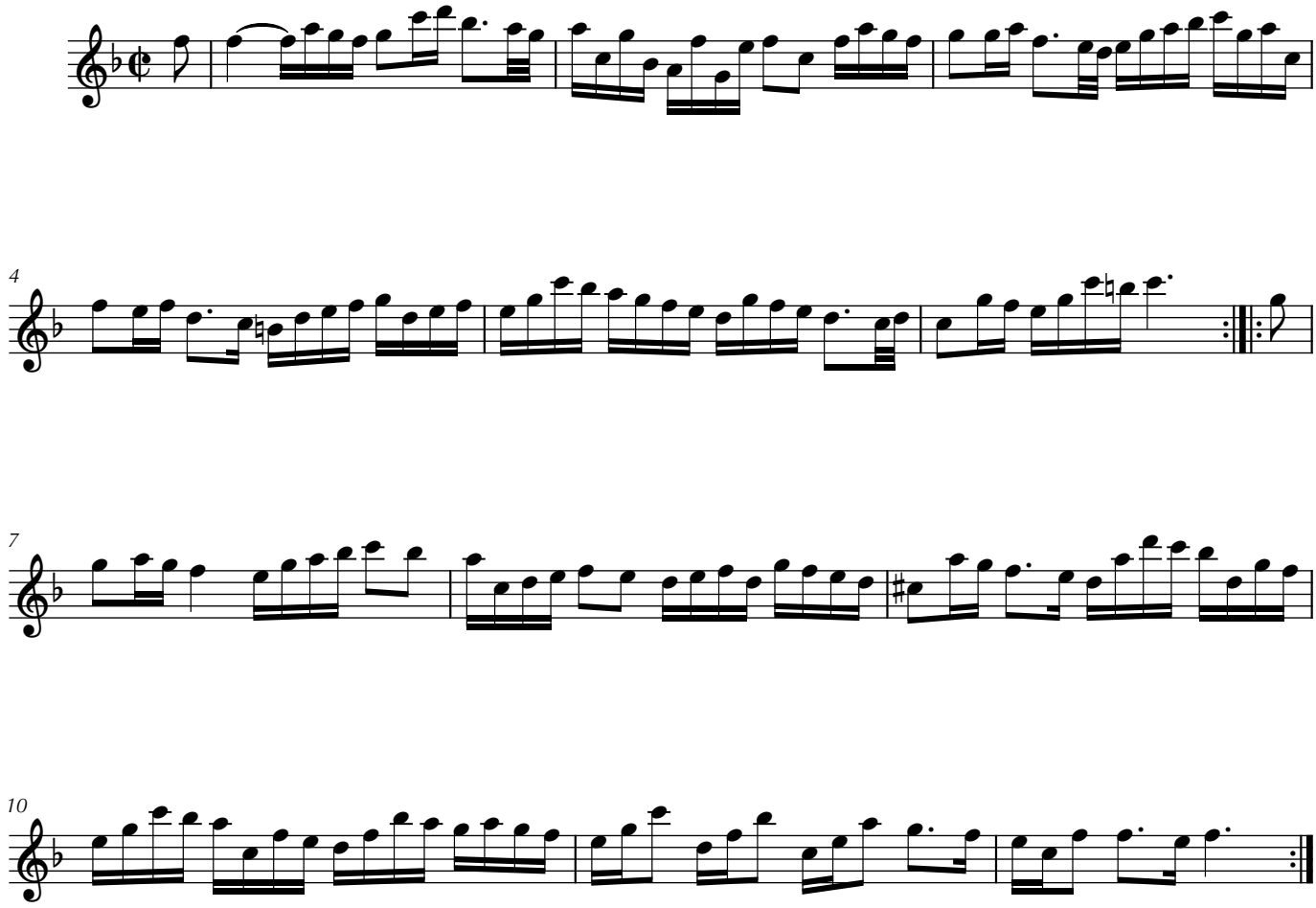
For the Flute alone

A Collection of Musick, 1691

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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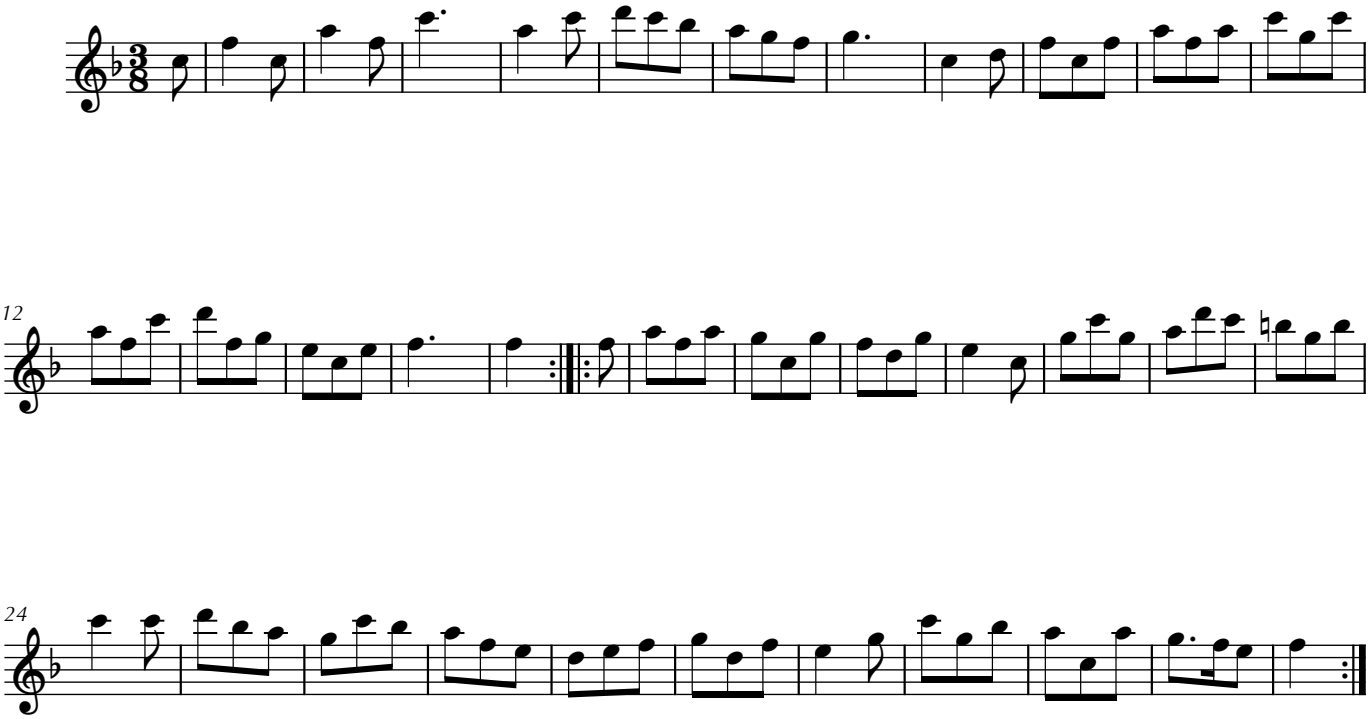
Flute Solo

A Collection of Musick, 1691

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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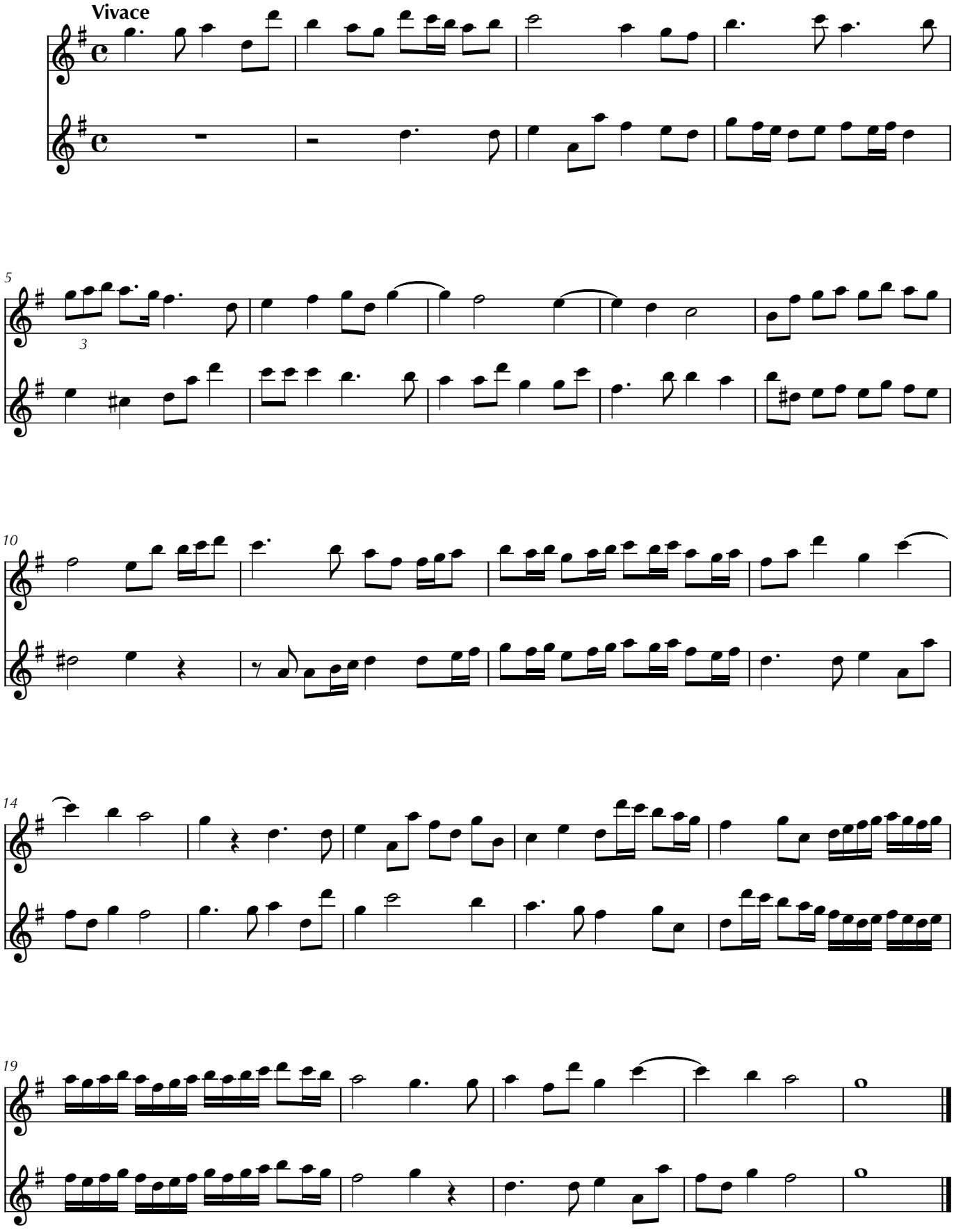
Sonate

Six Sonatas, John Walsh, London, 1688(?)

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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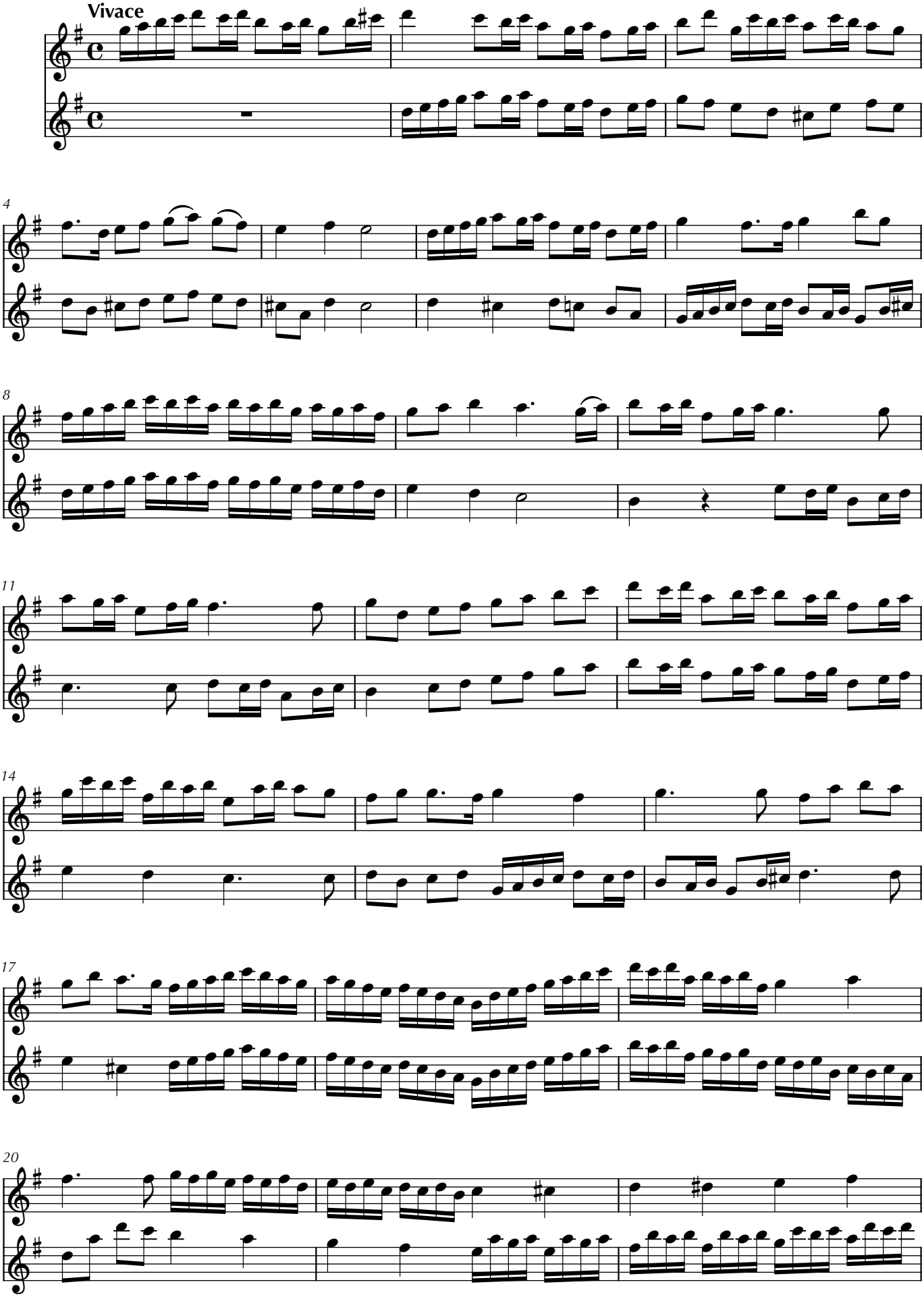

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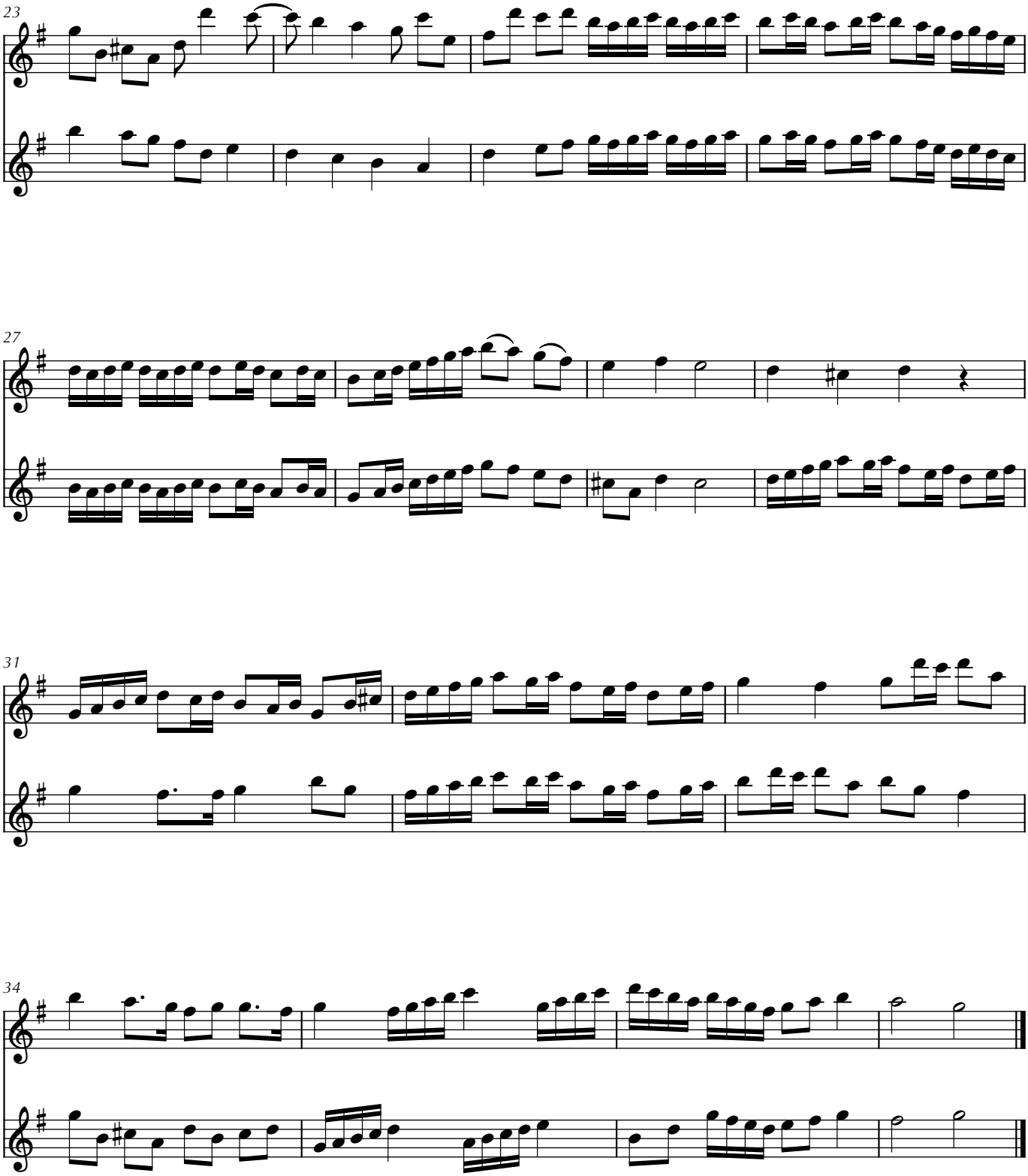

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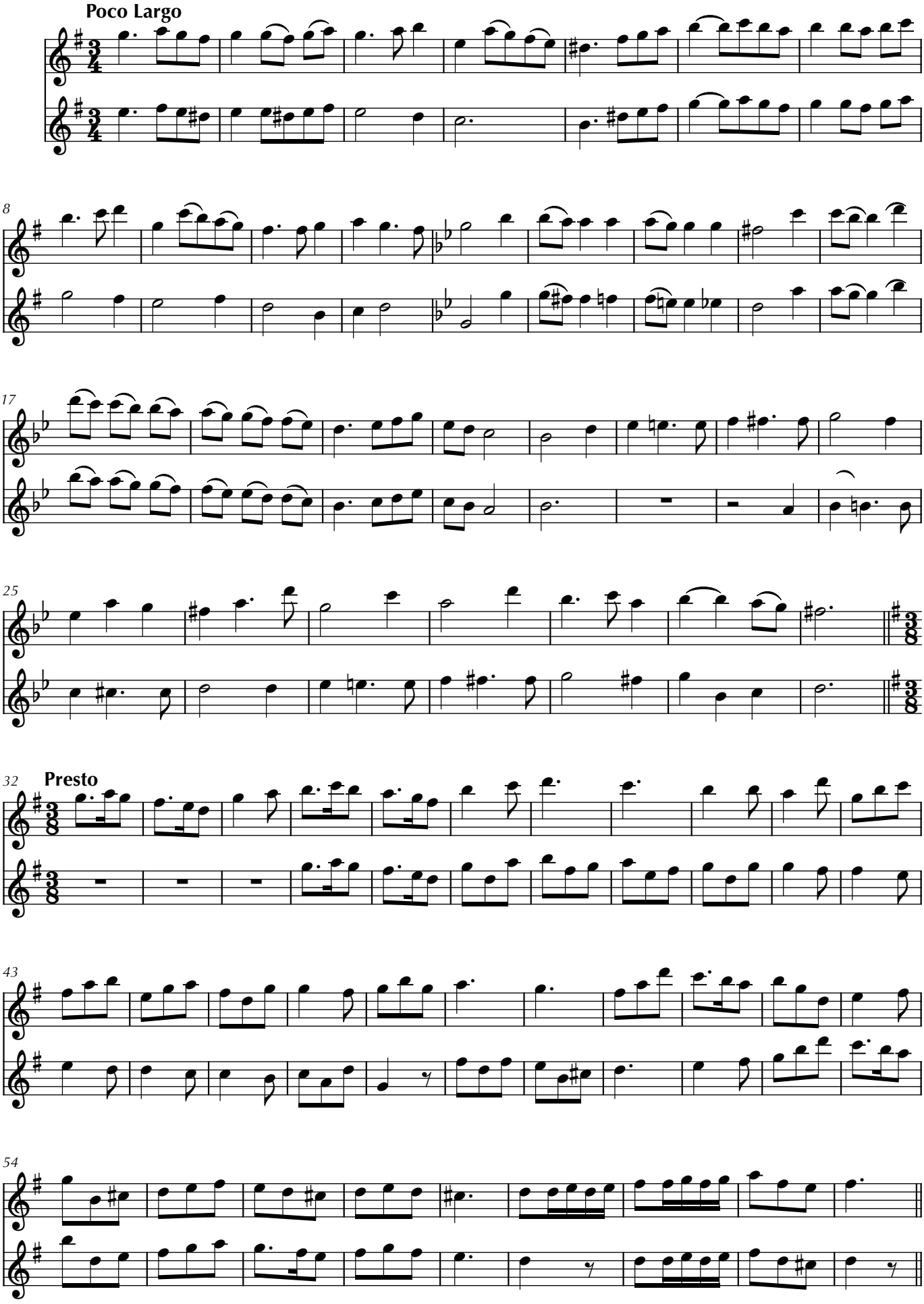

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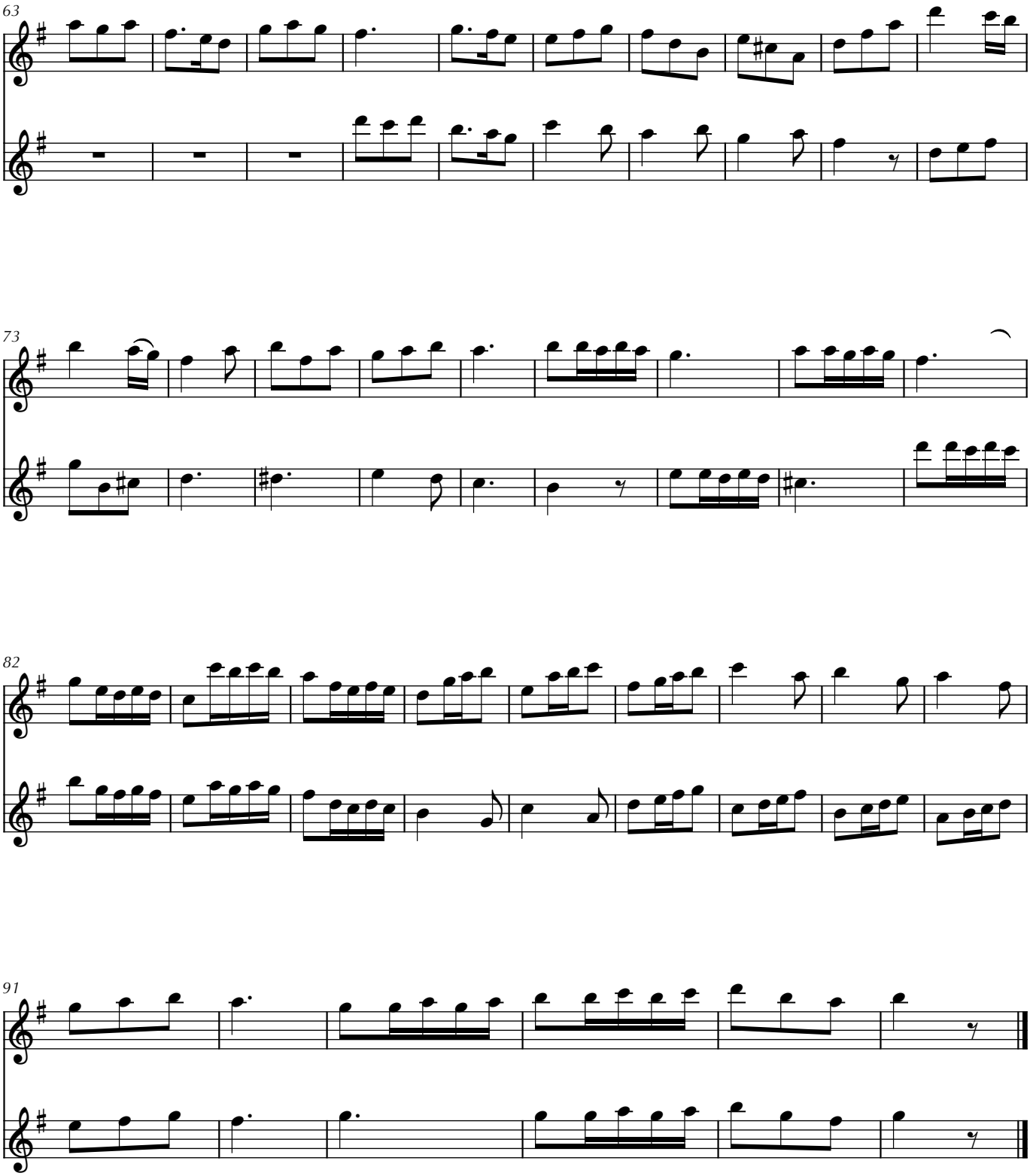

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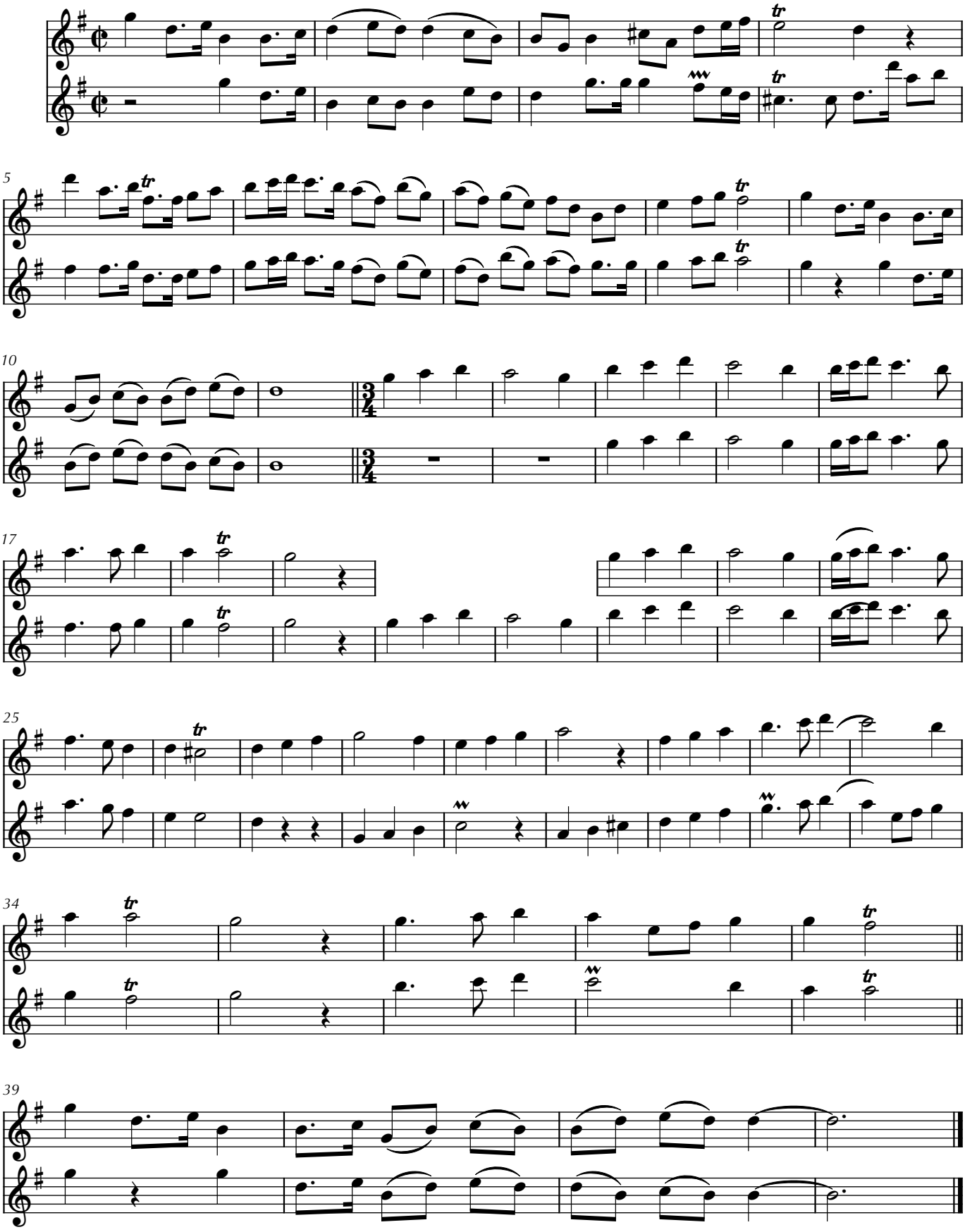
Sonata

A Collection of Musick, 1691

Gottfried Finger (c. 1660–1730)



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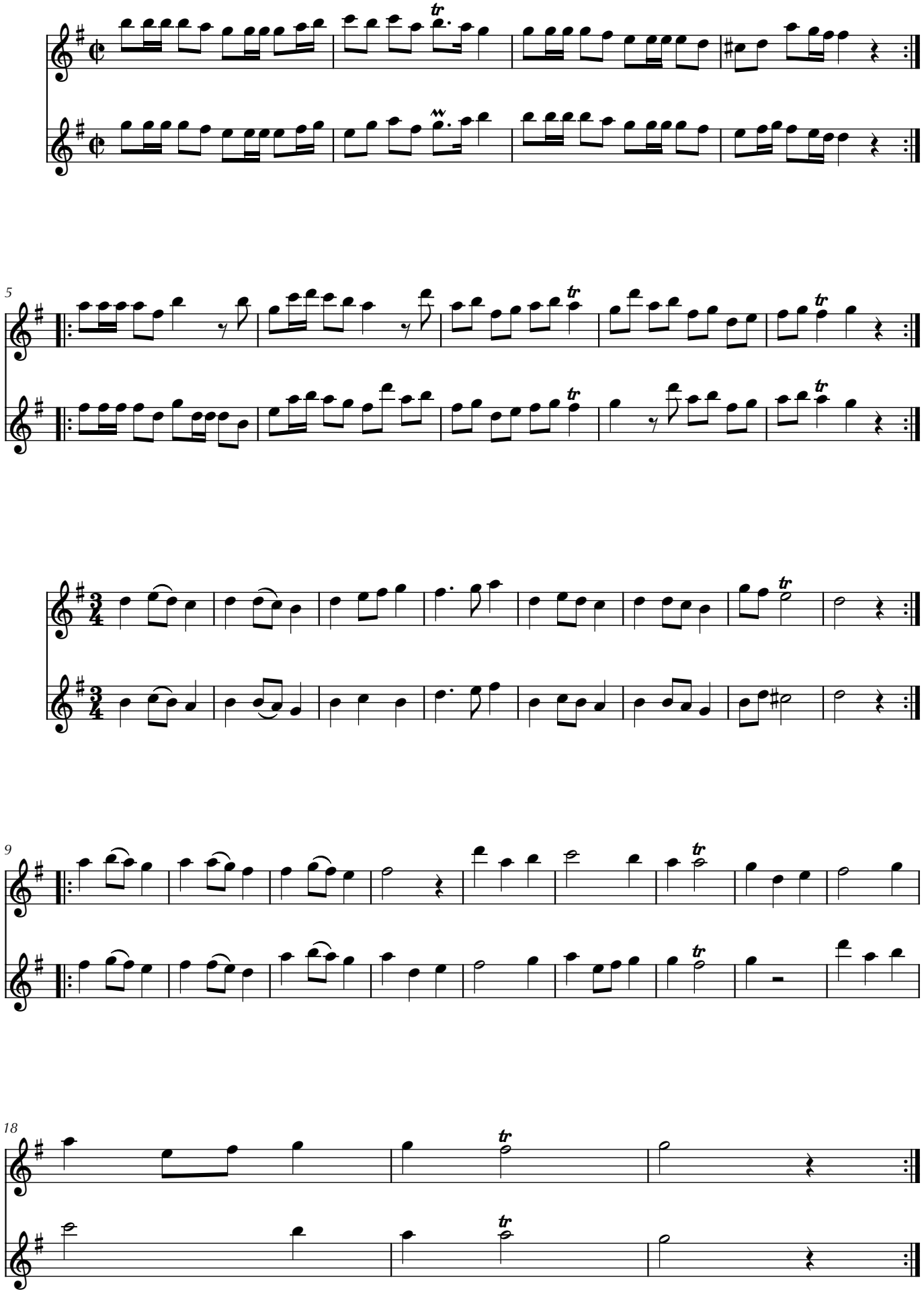

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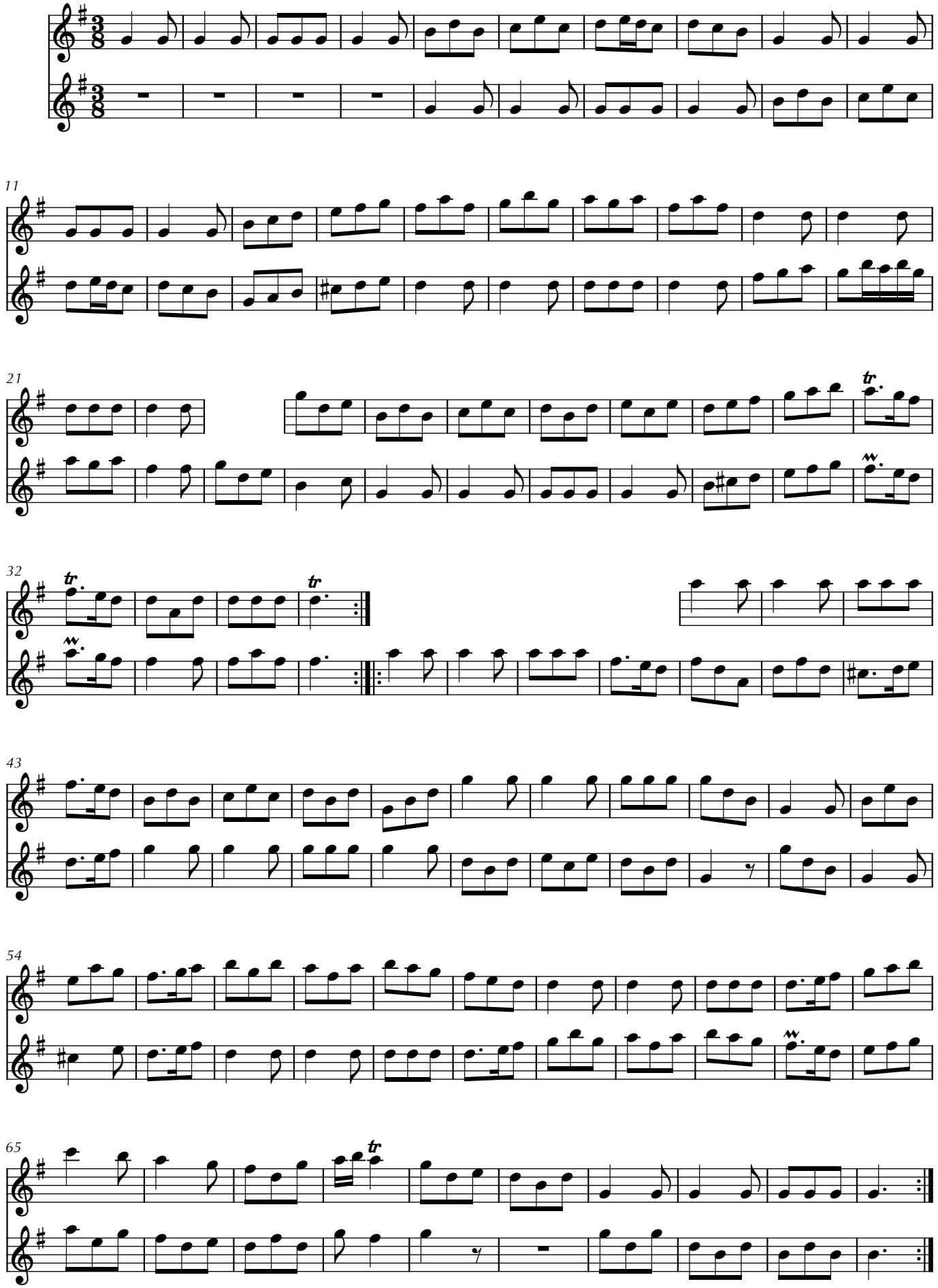

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