BEETHOVEN

Quintett

für Oboe, 3 Hörner in Es und Fagott

Studien-Partitur

(Hess)

Henning Hansen
Heinrich-Heine-Str. 84, Tel. 02303/5632
4750 Unna-Massen

EDITION SCHOTT

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LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770 – 1827)

Quintett

für Oboe, 3 Hörner in Es und Fagott

Mit L. A. Zellners Ergänzungen nach dem Autograph
erstmals herausgegeben von
Willy Hess

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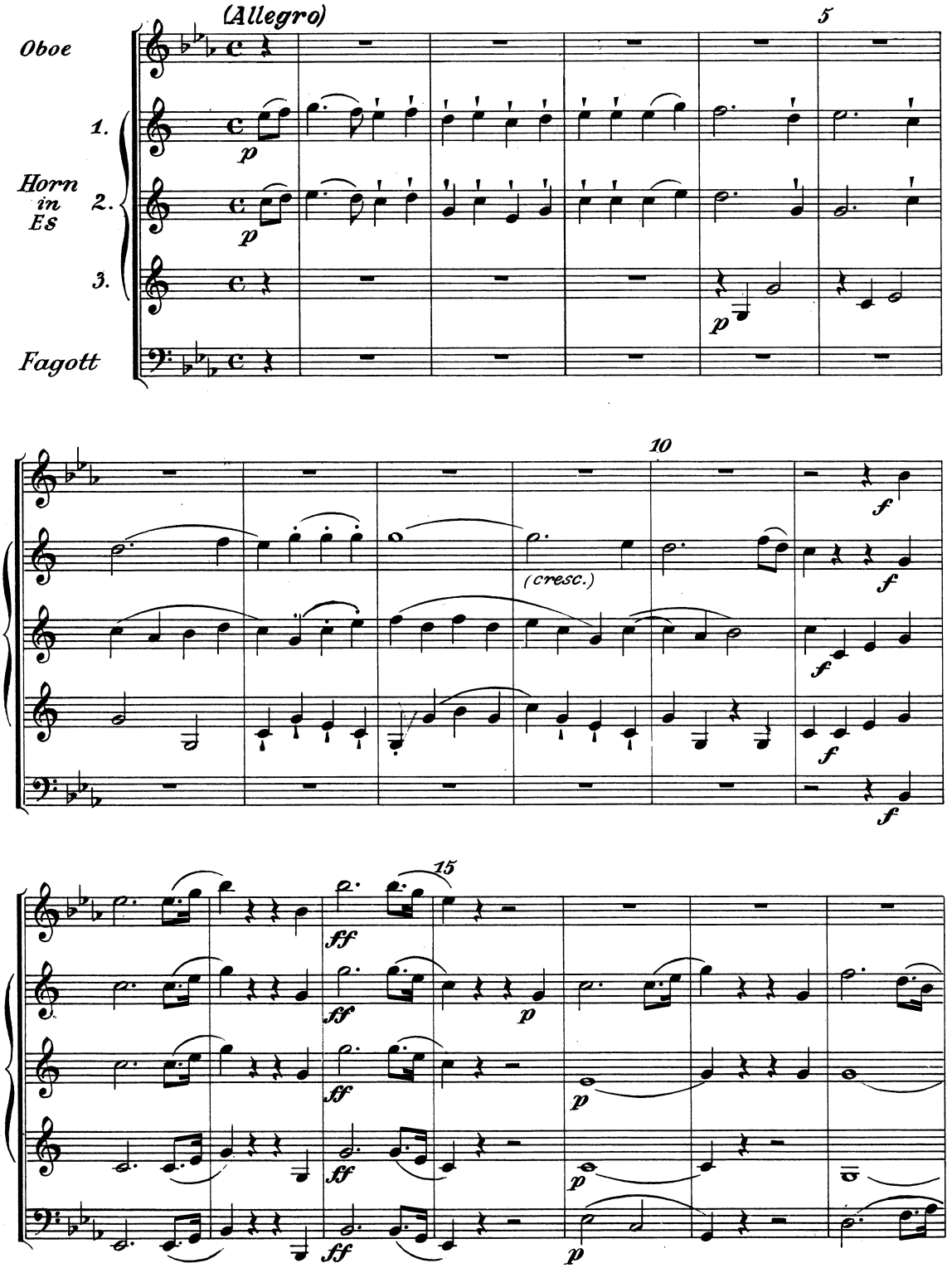
Ludwig van Beethoven



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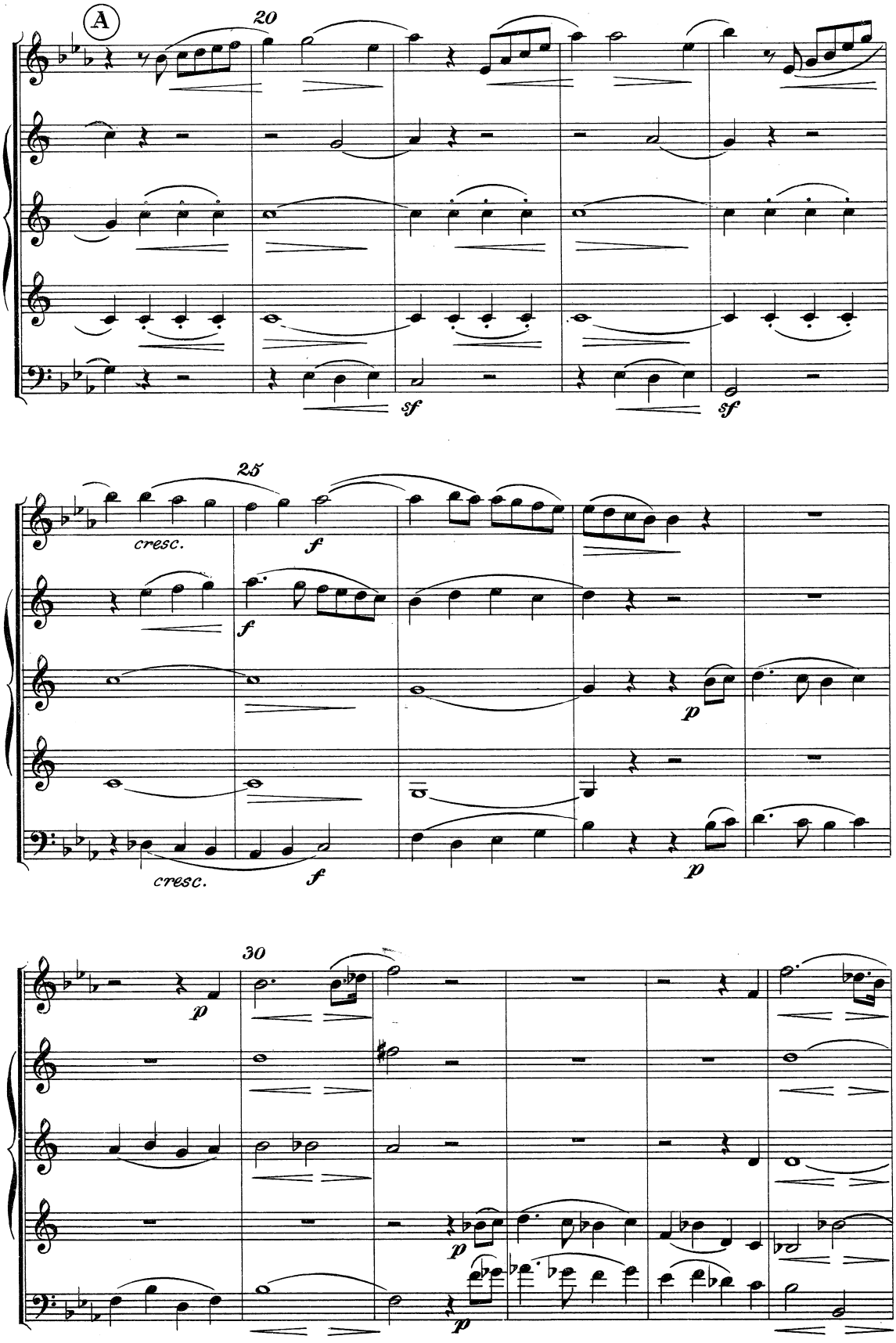
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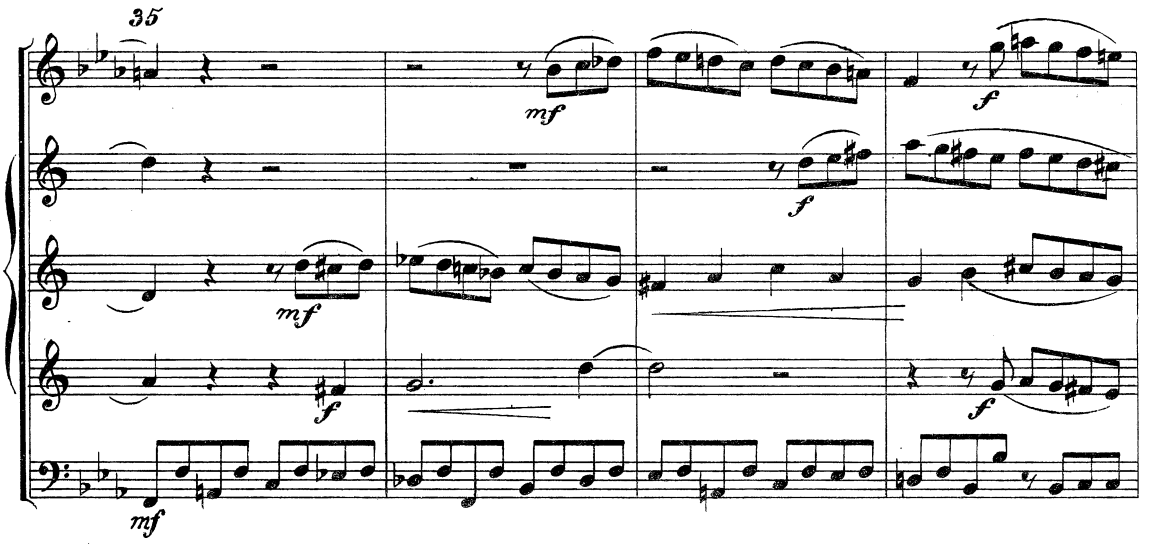
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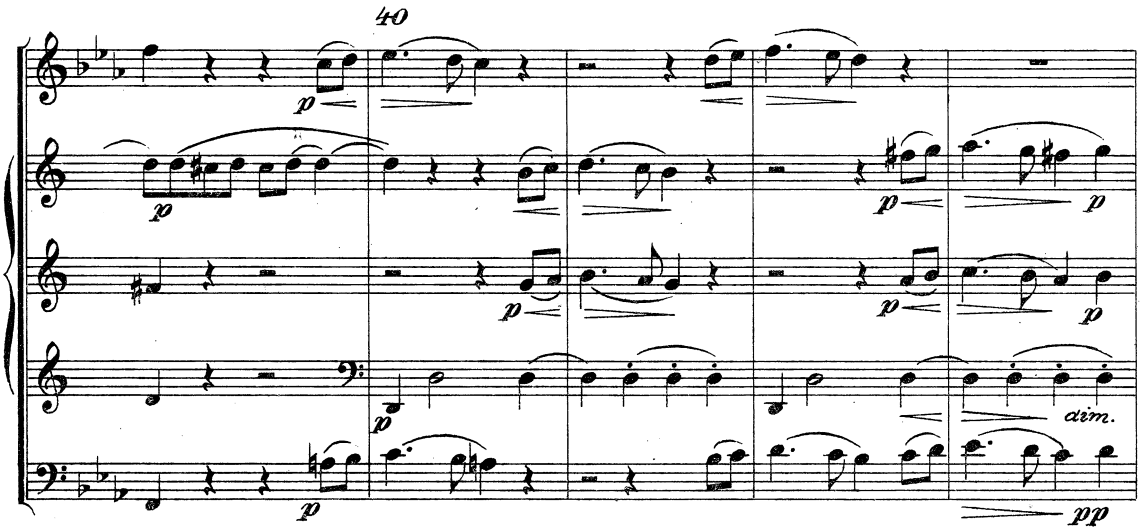
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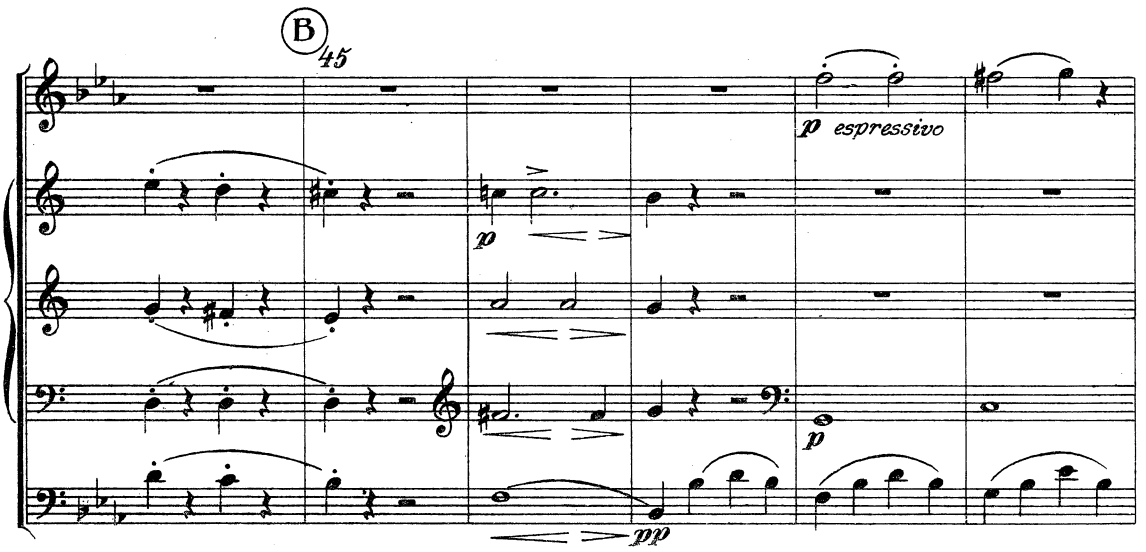
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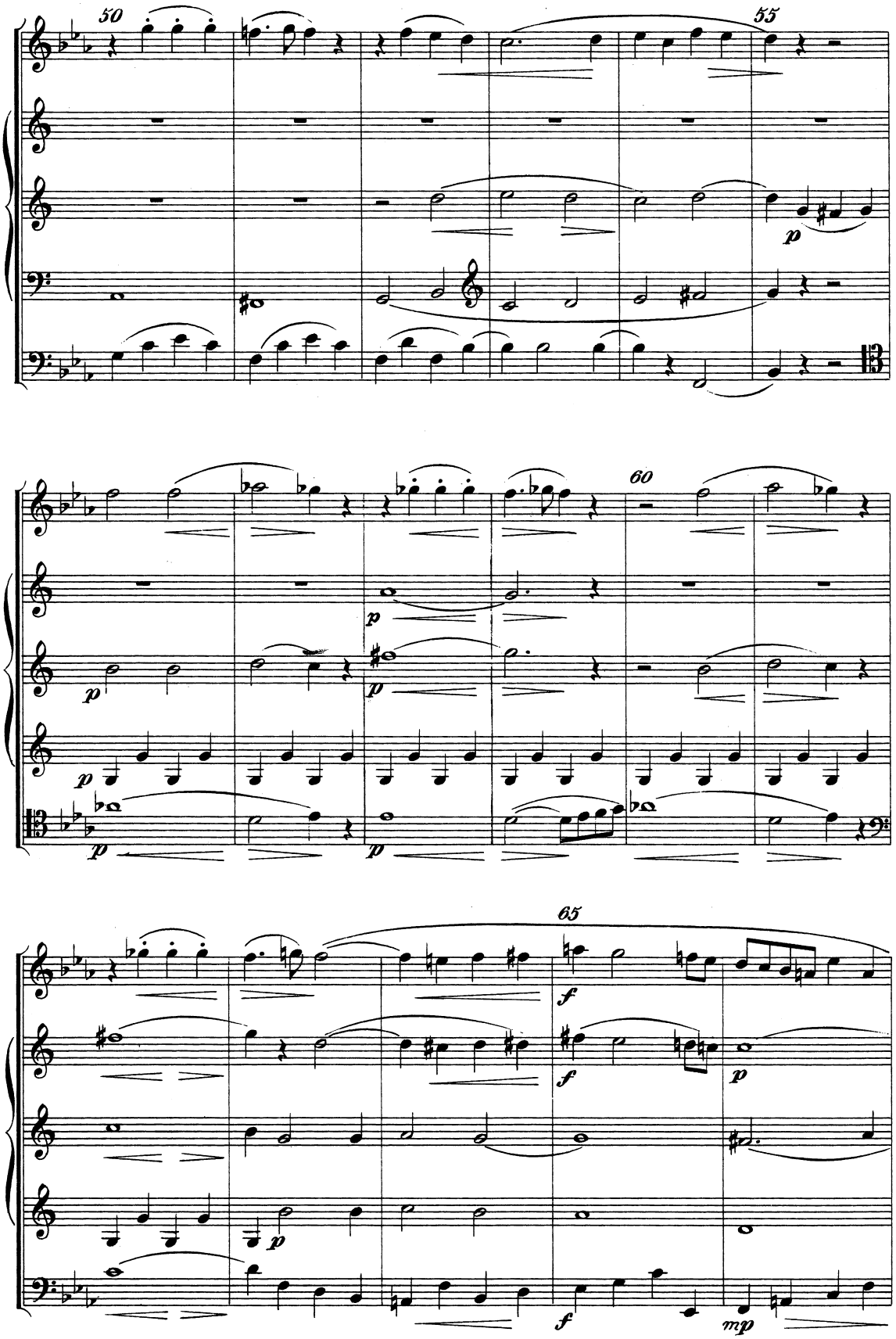
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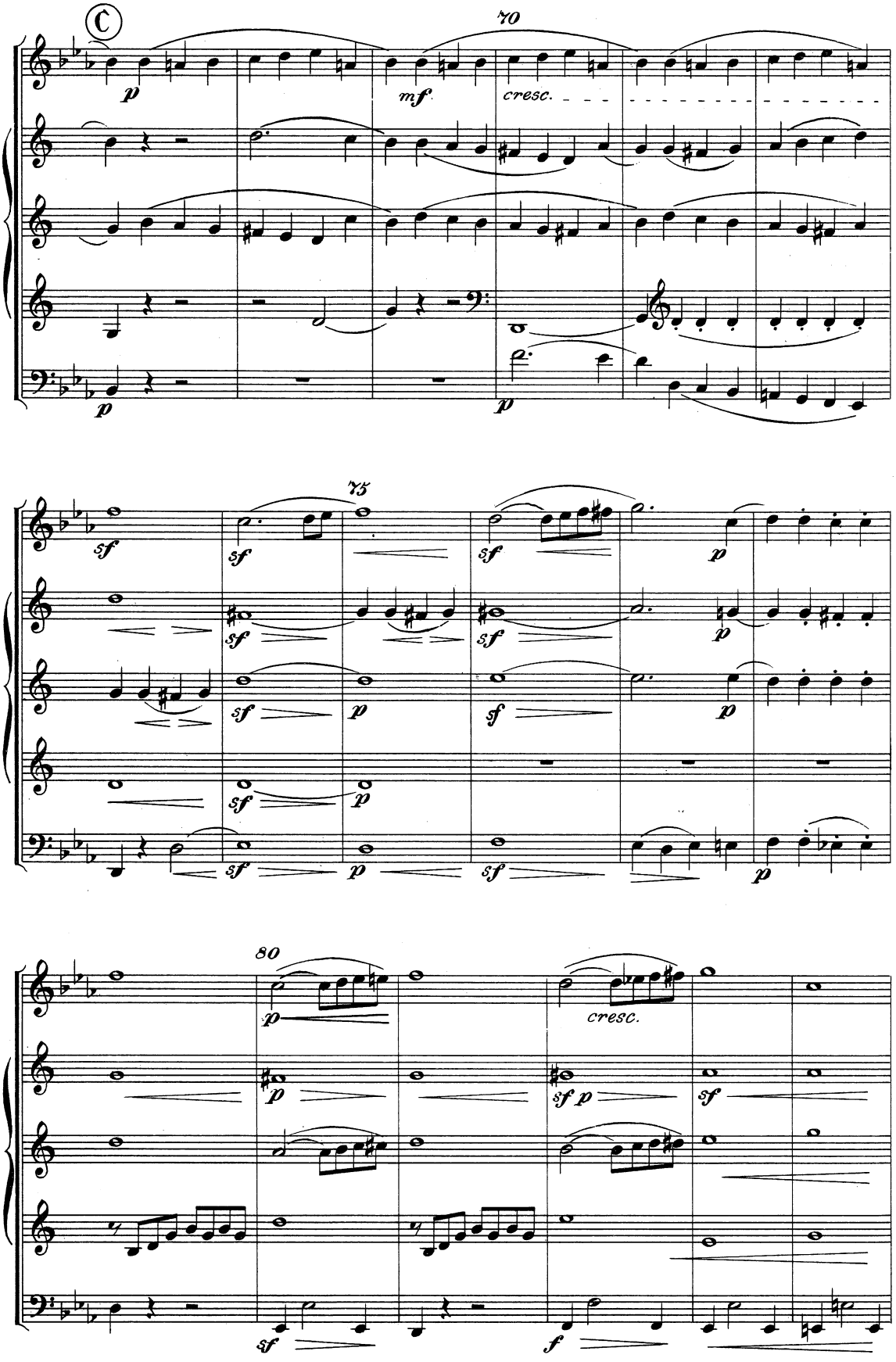
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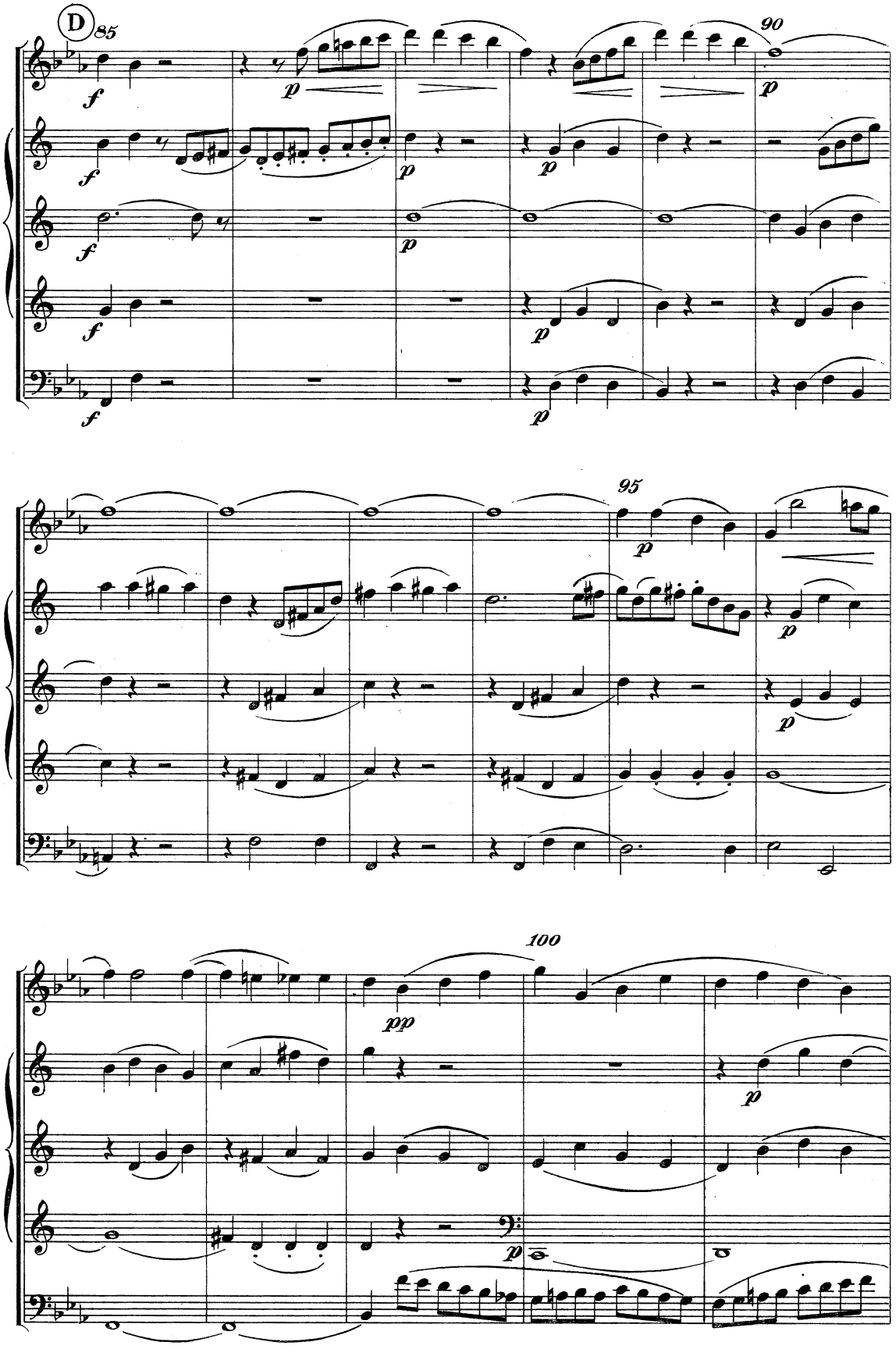
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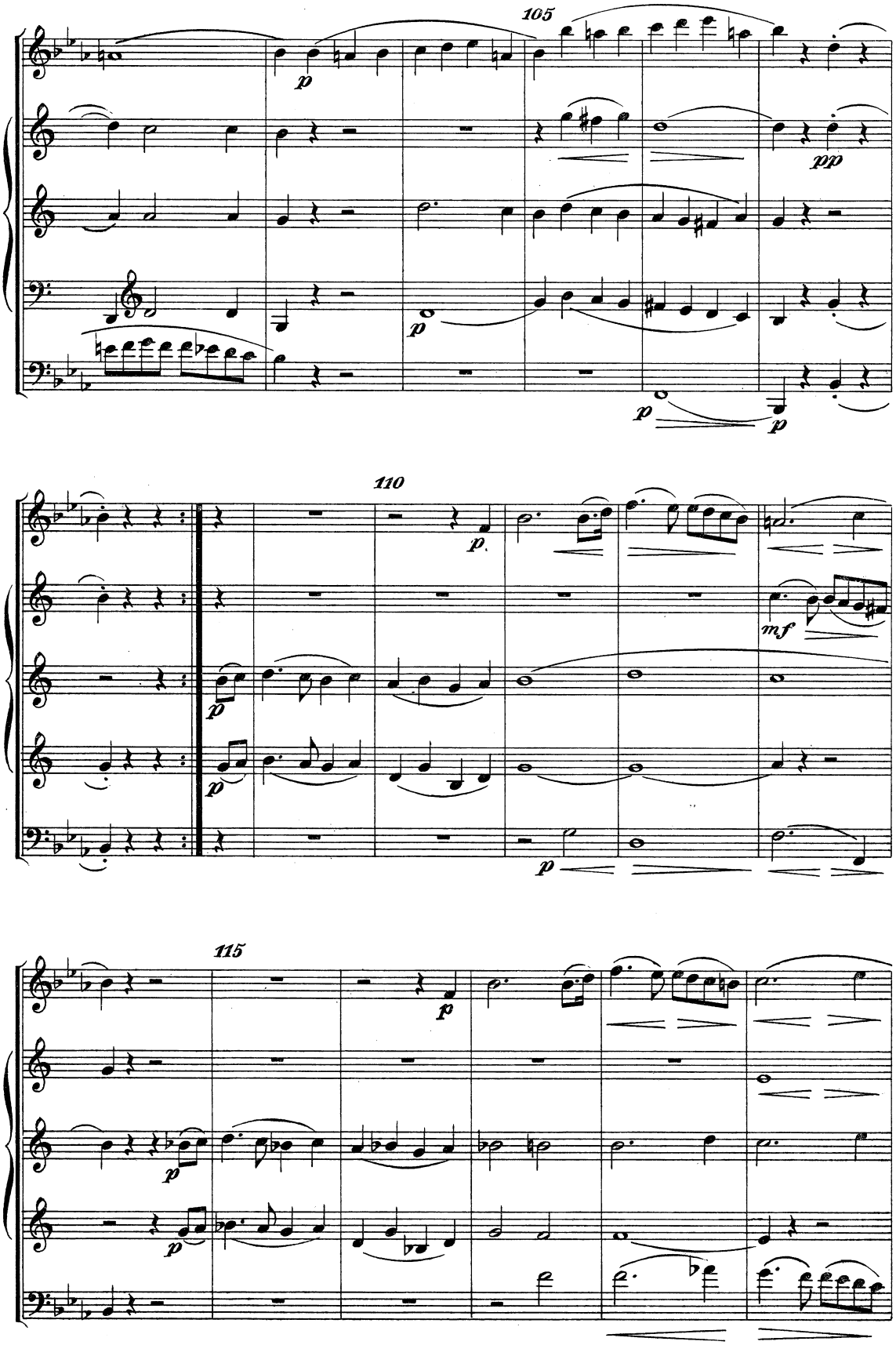
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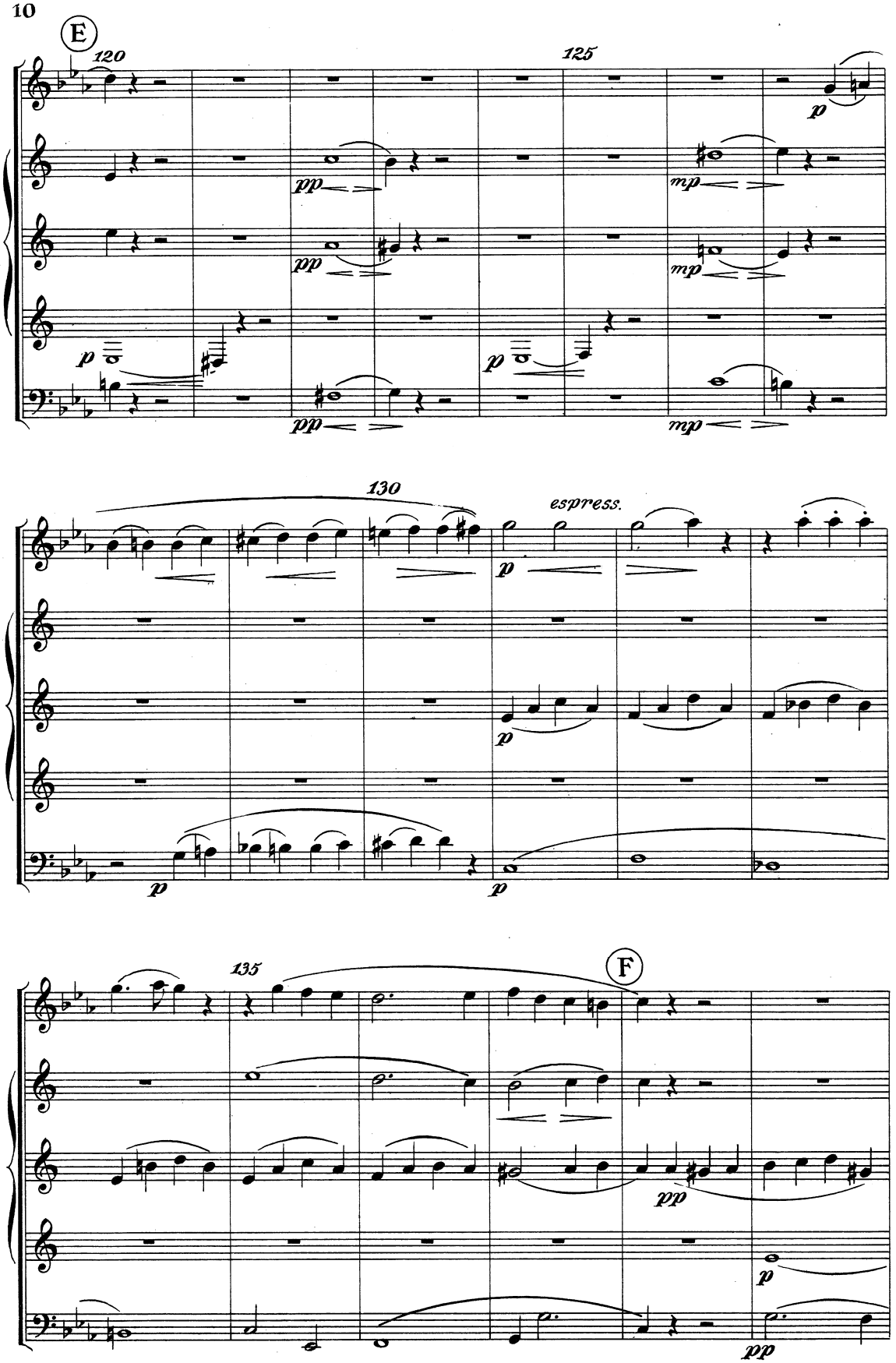
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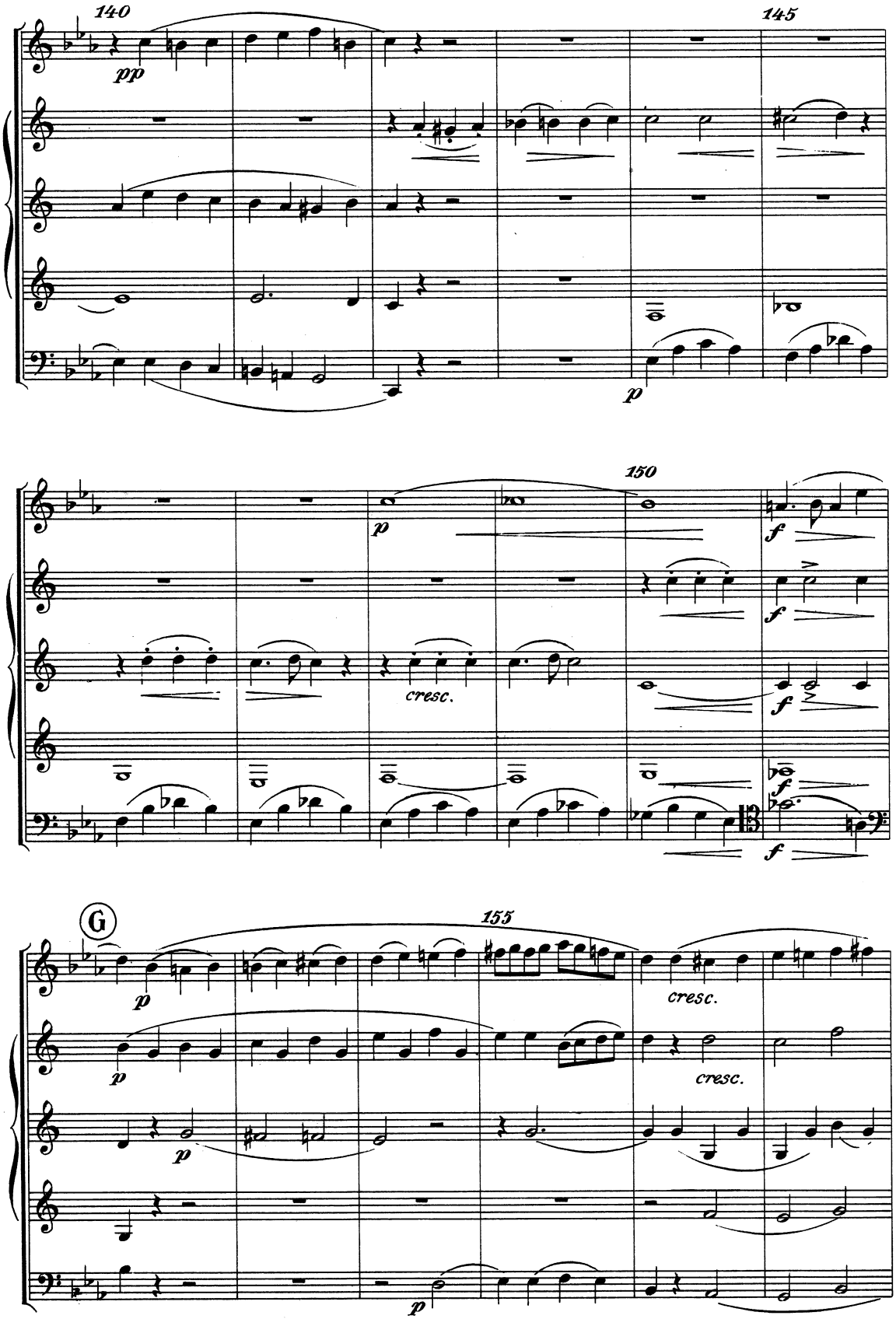
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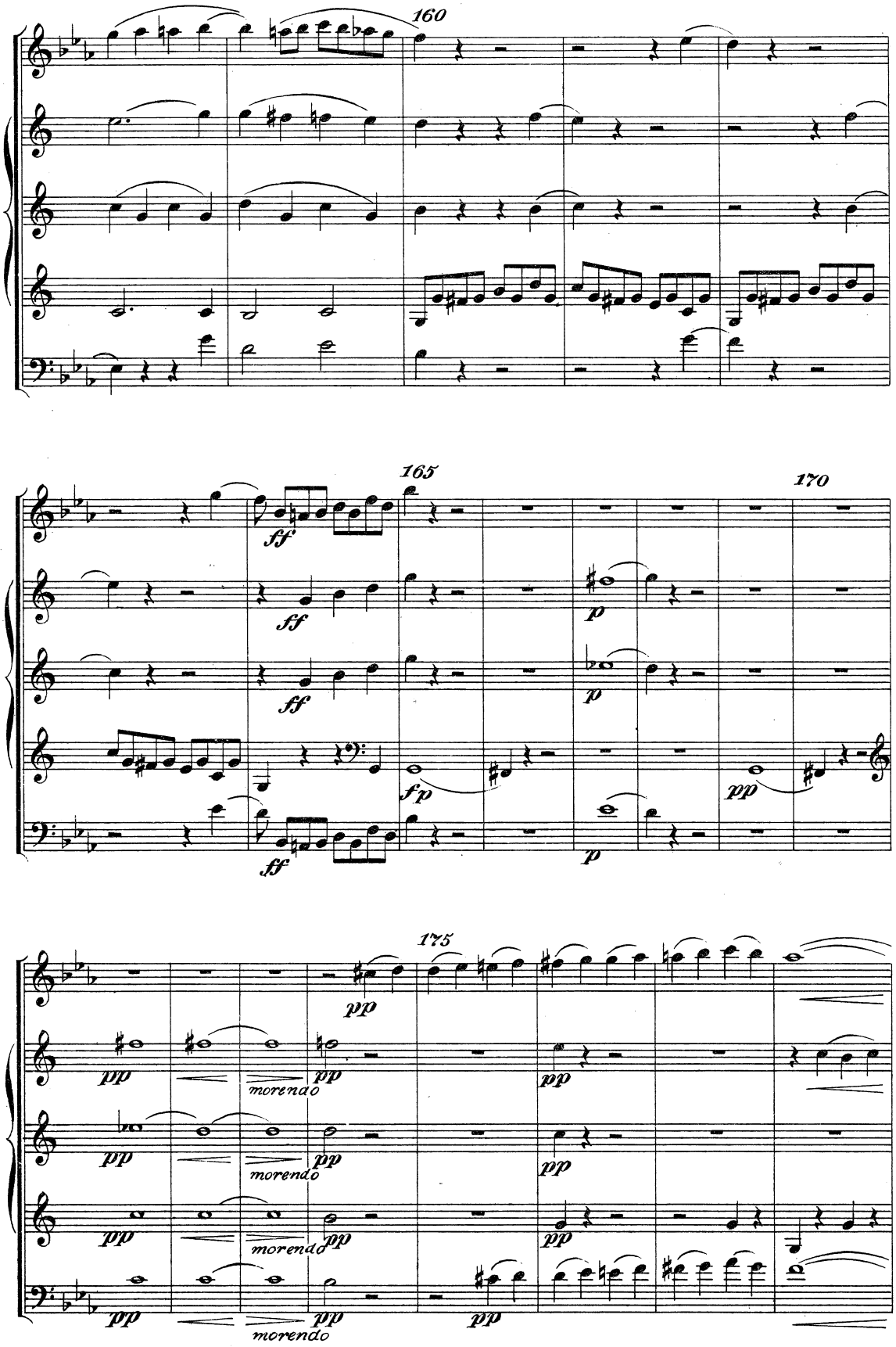
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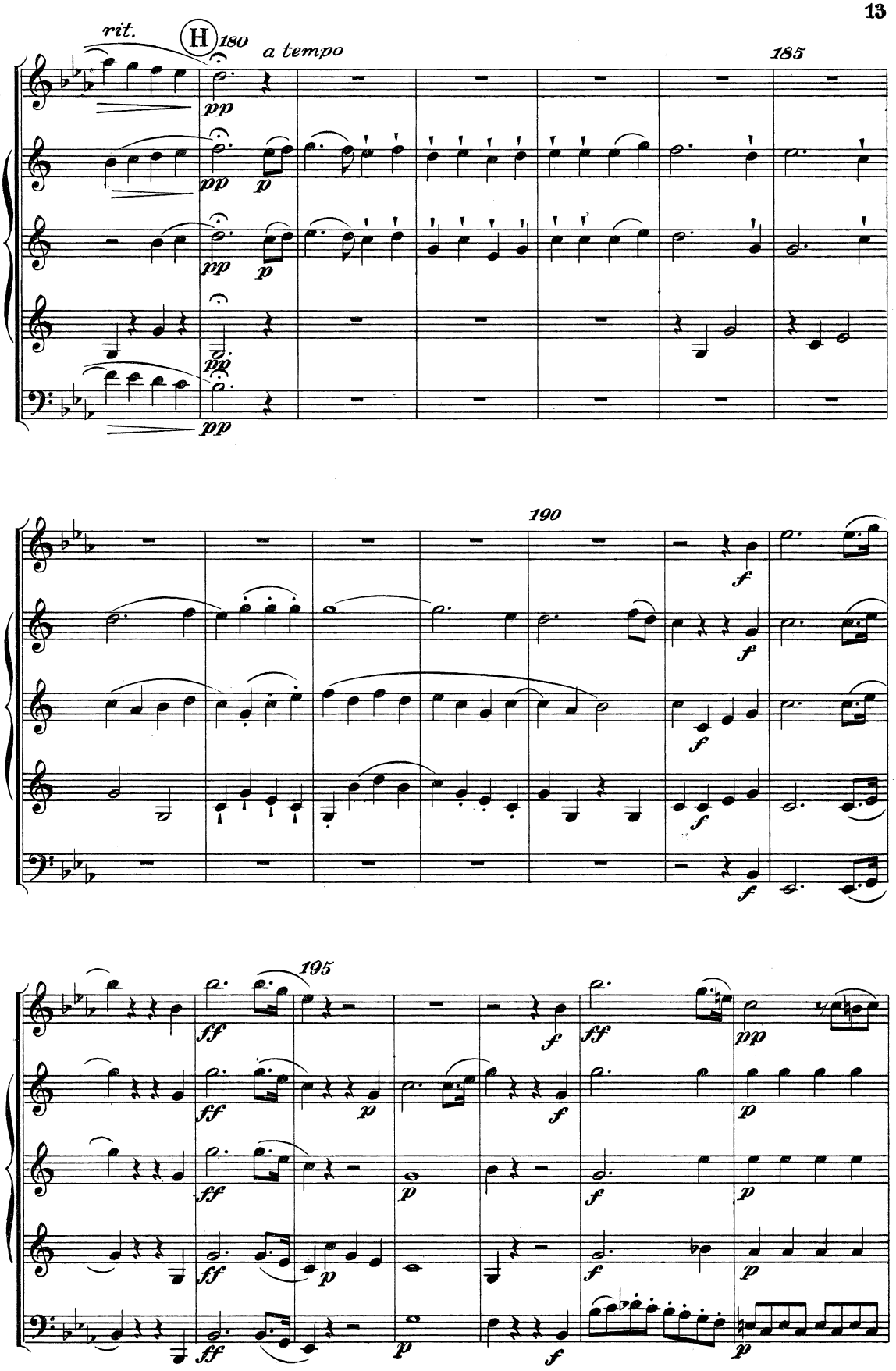
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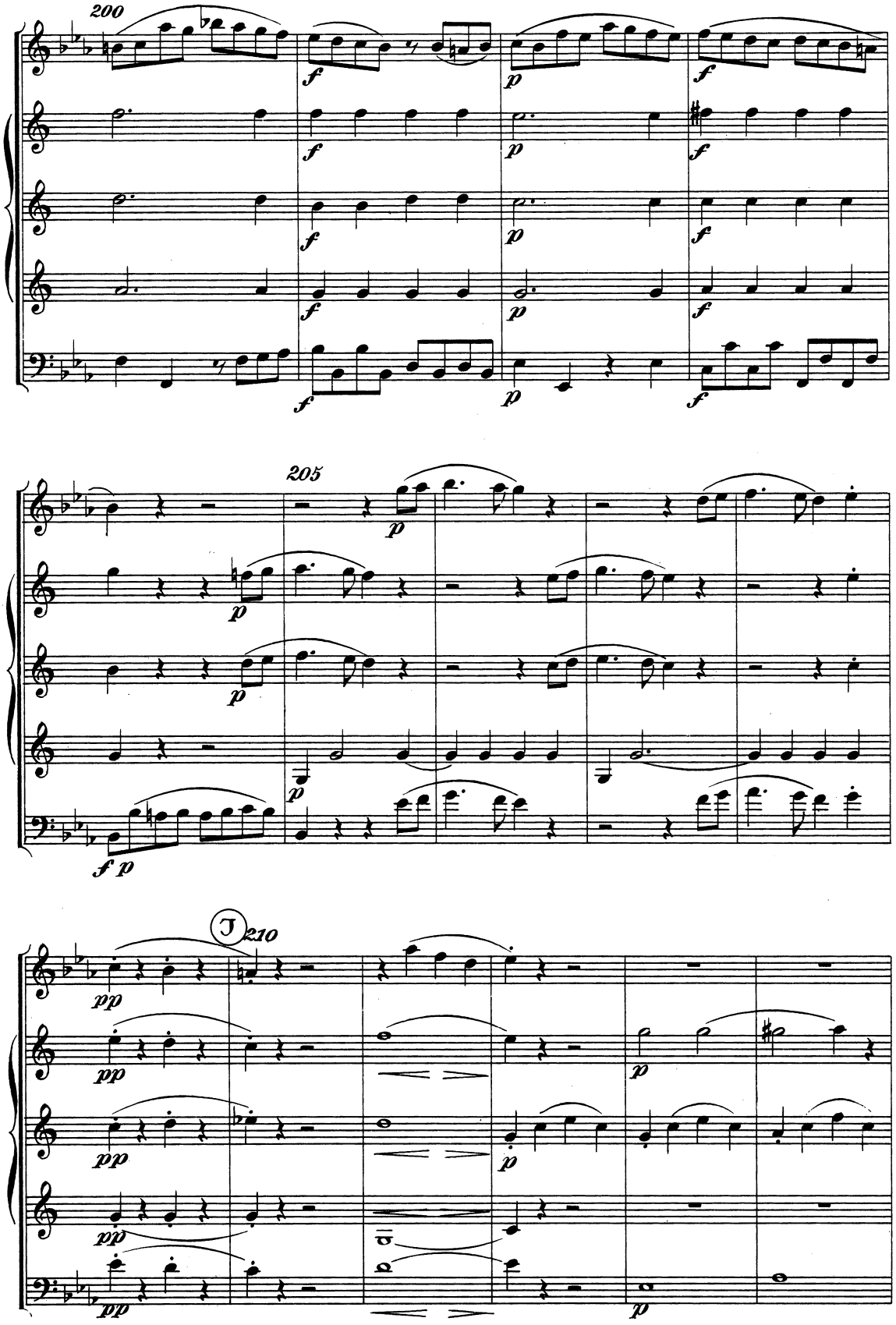
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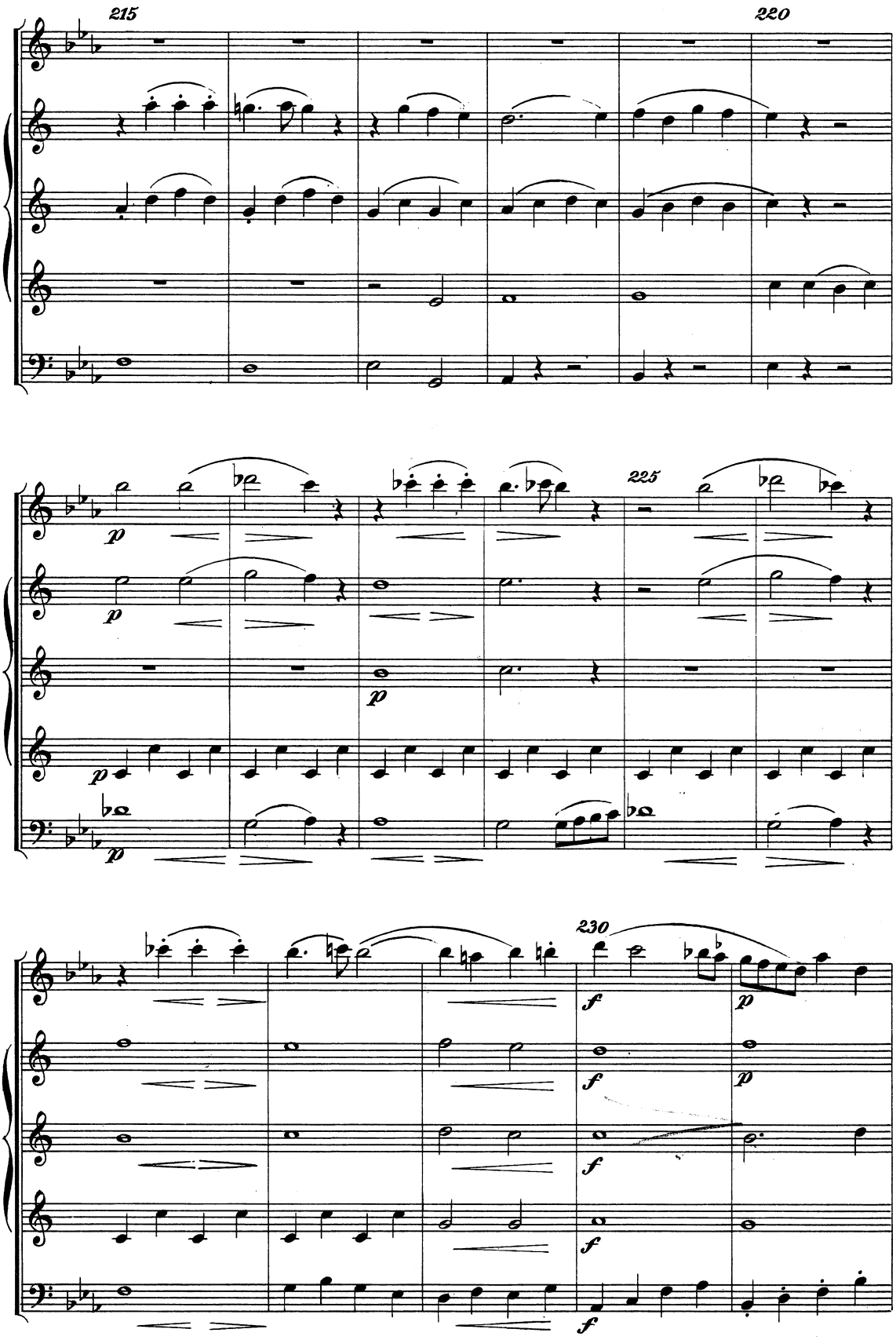
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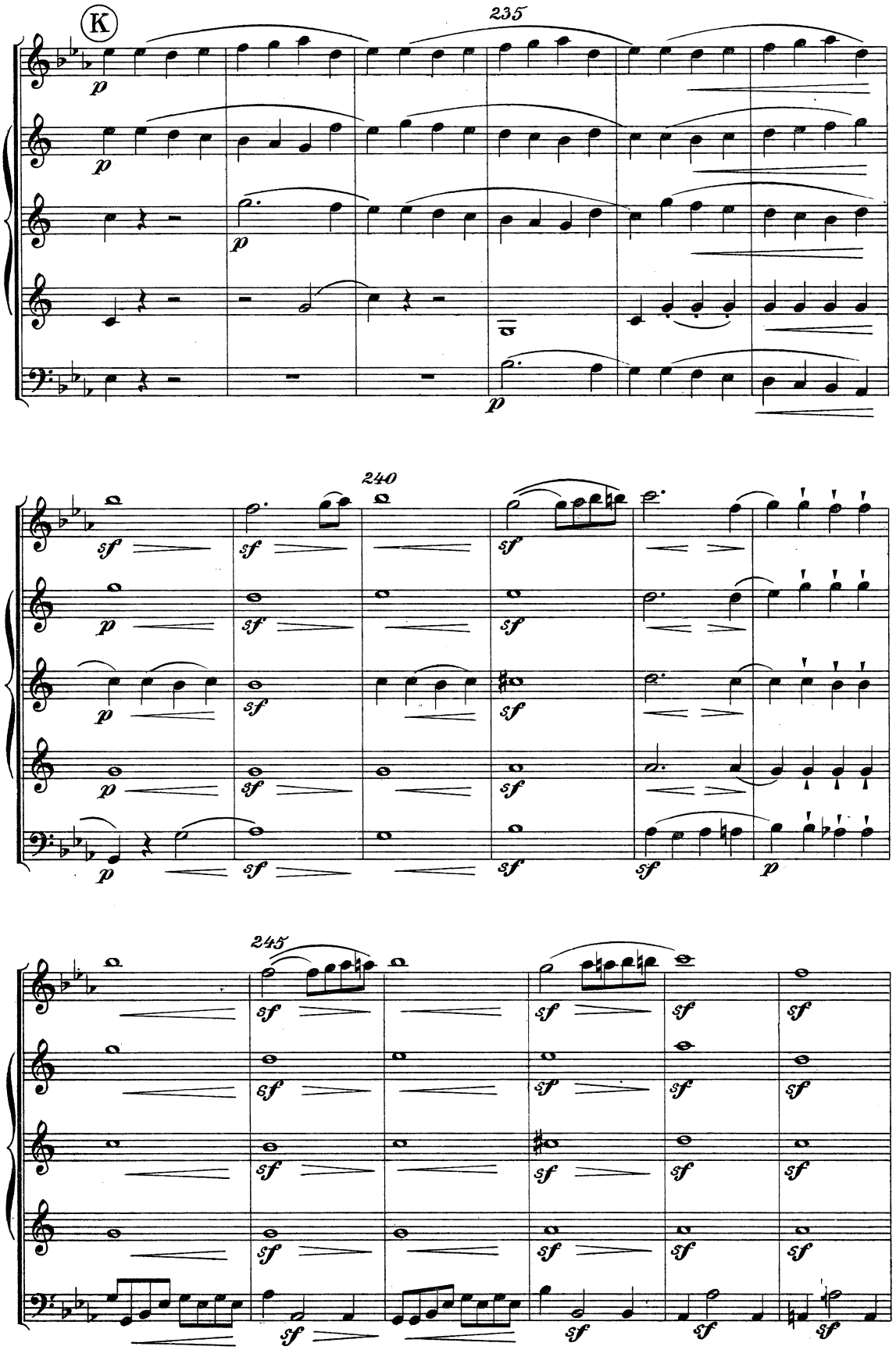
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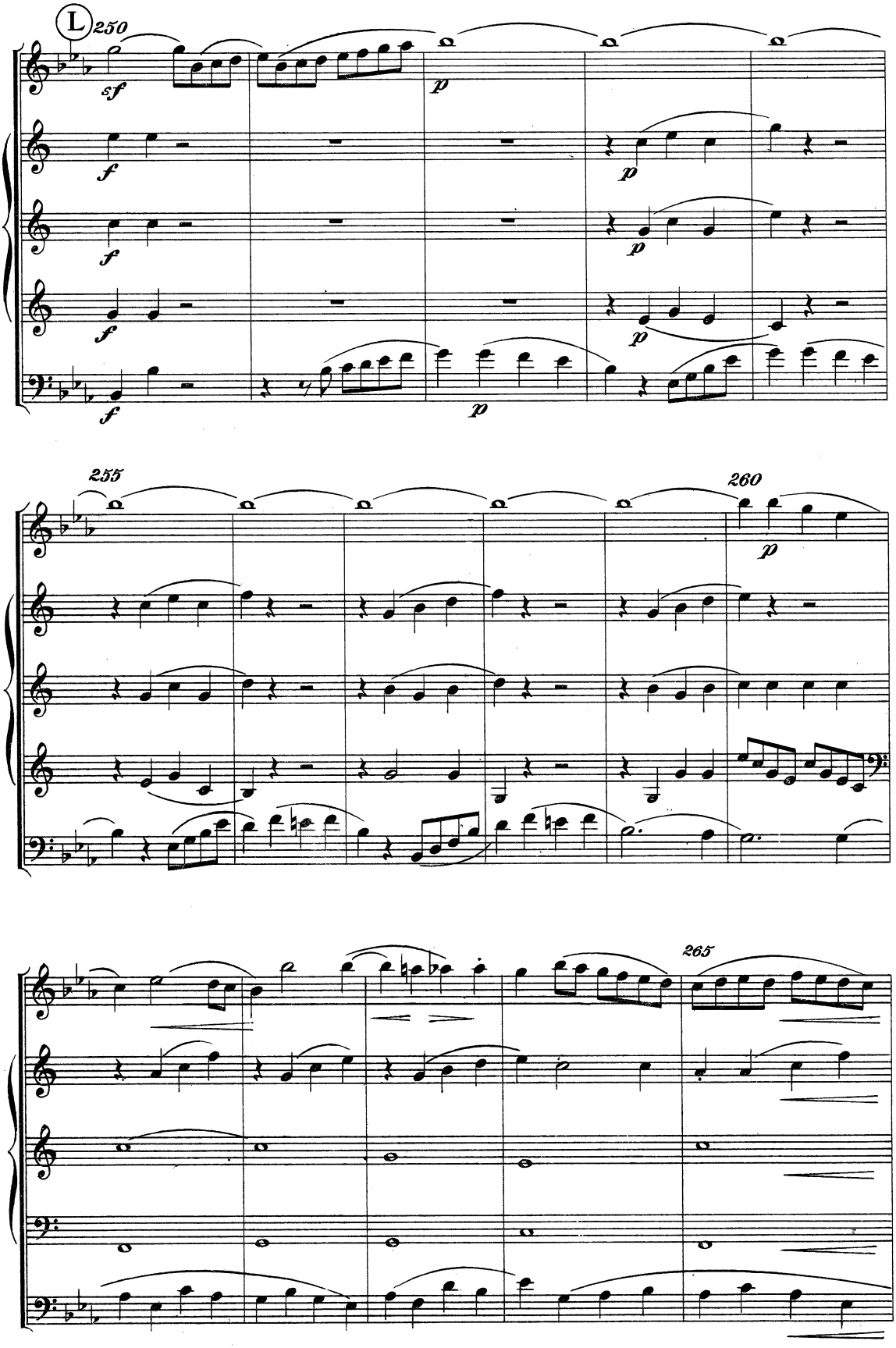
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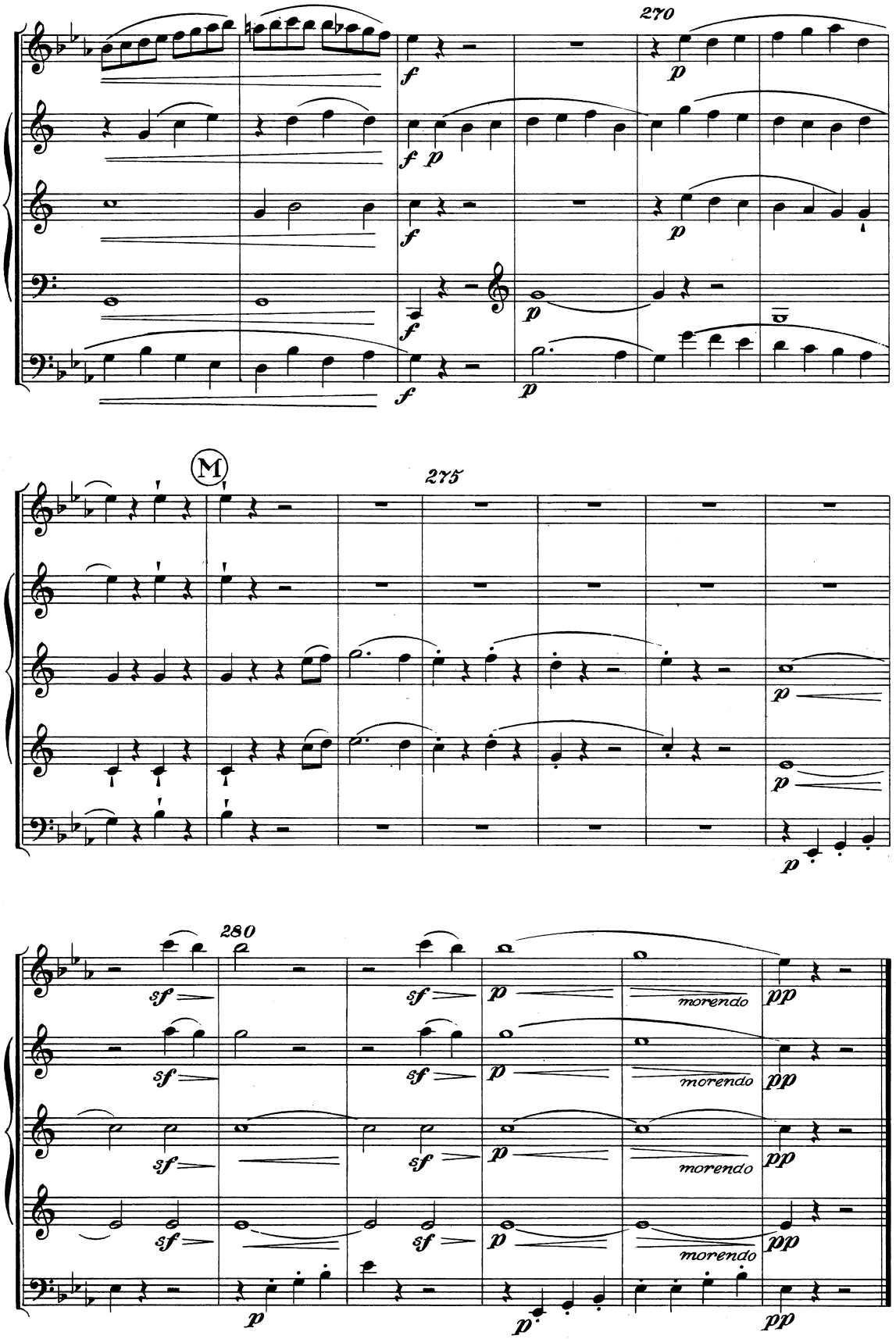
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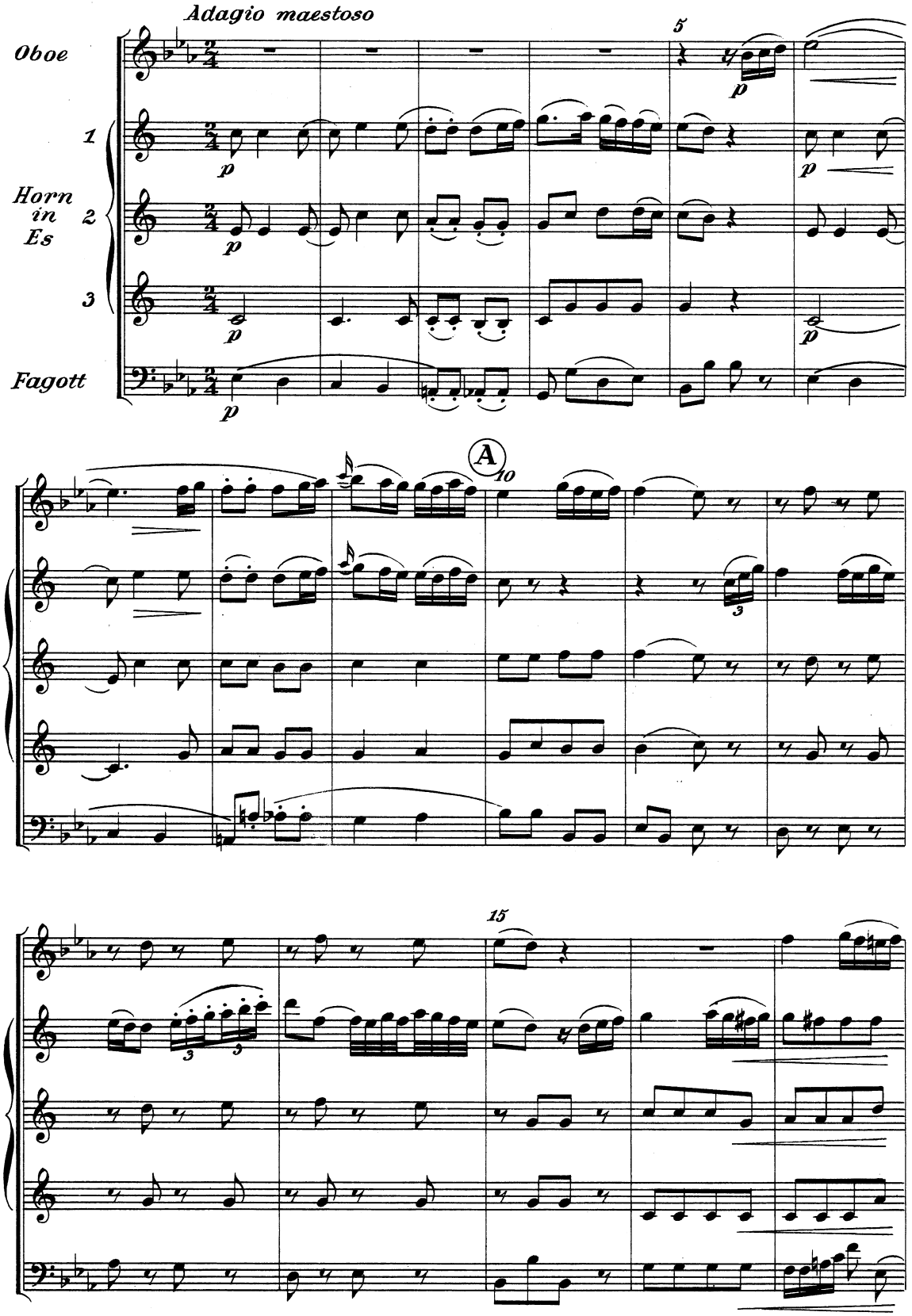

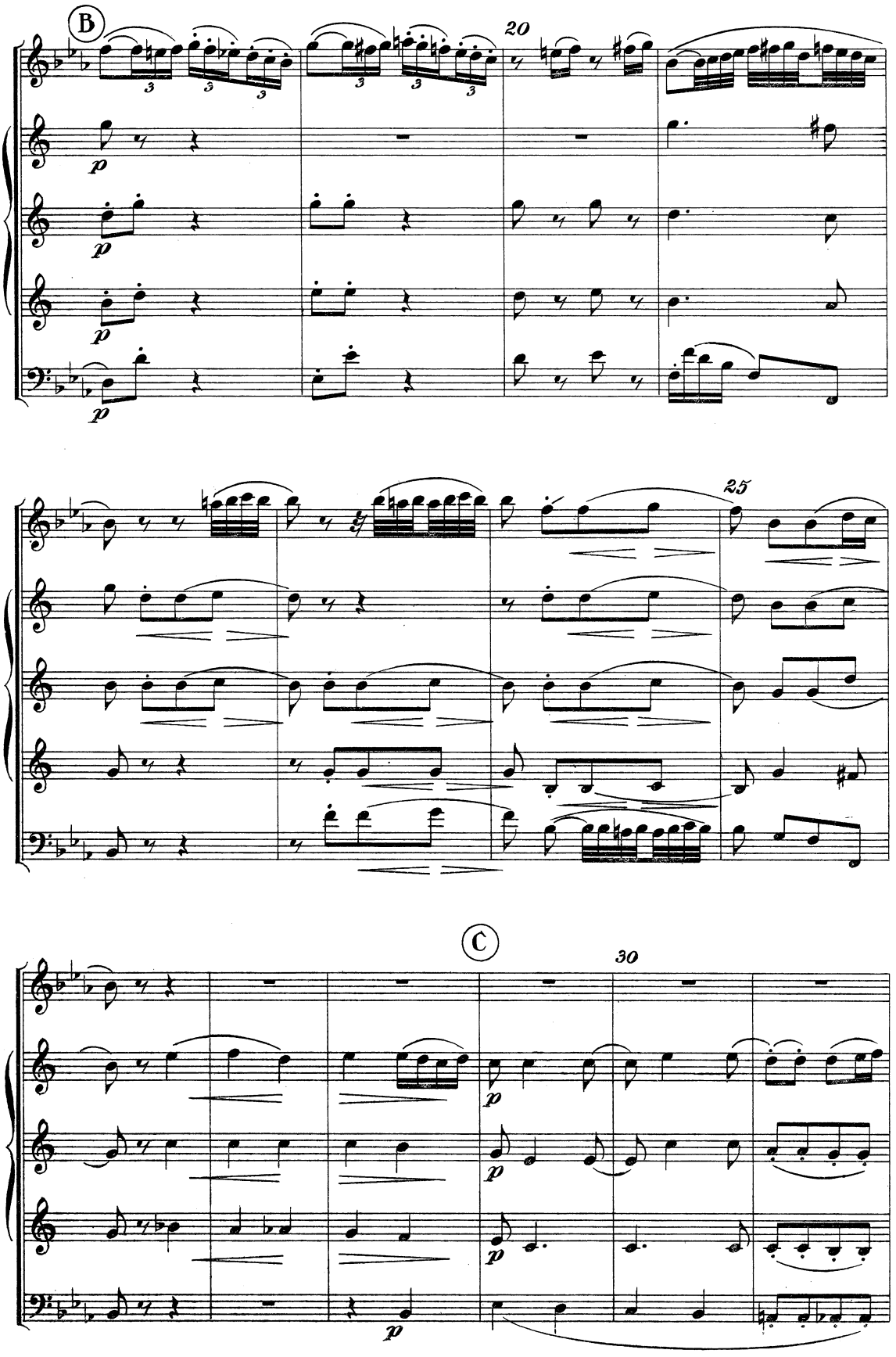
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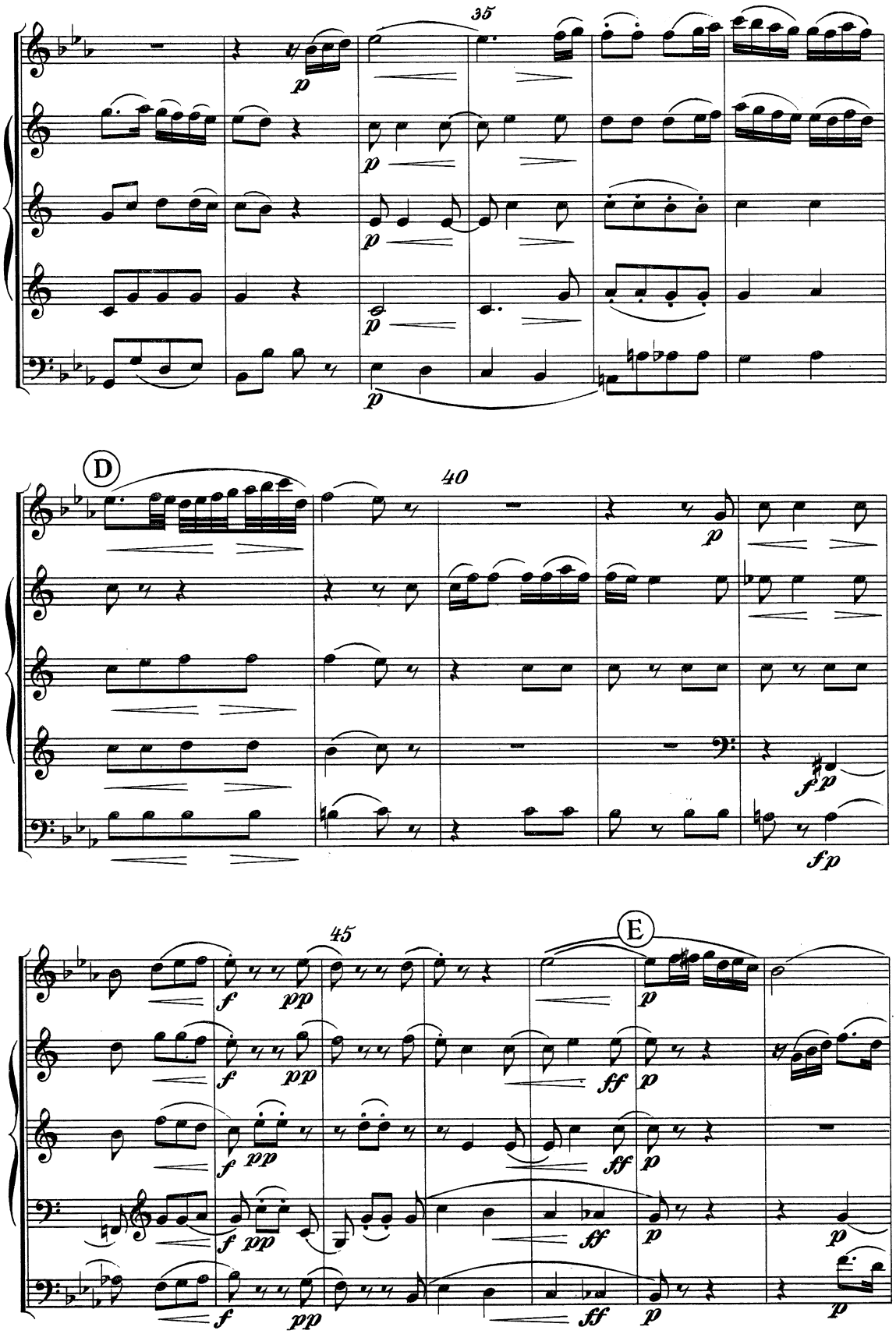
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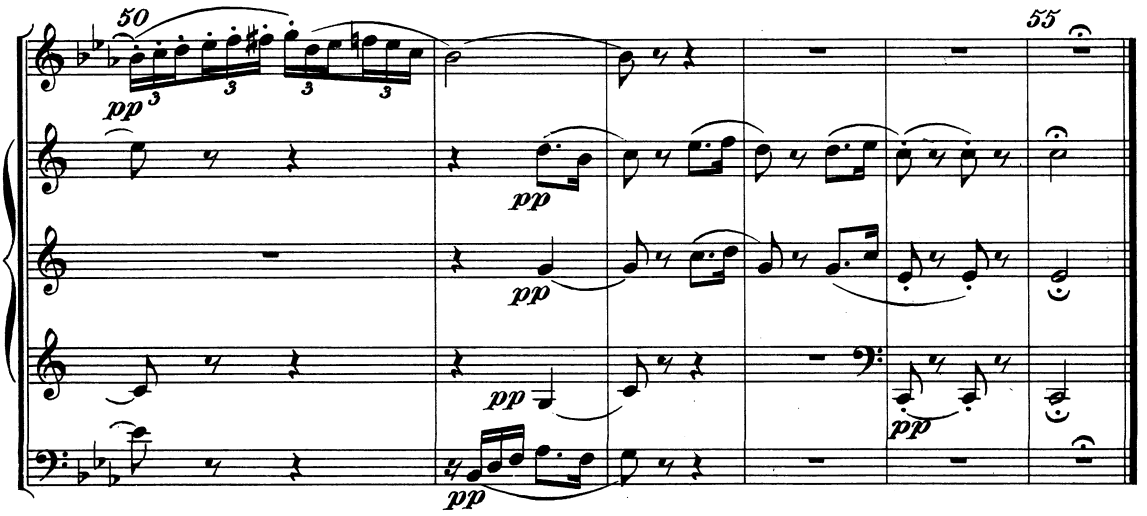

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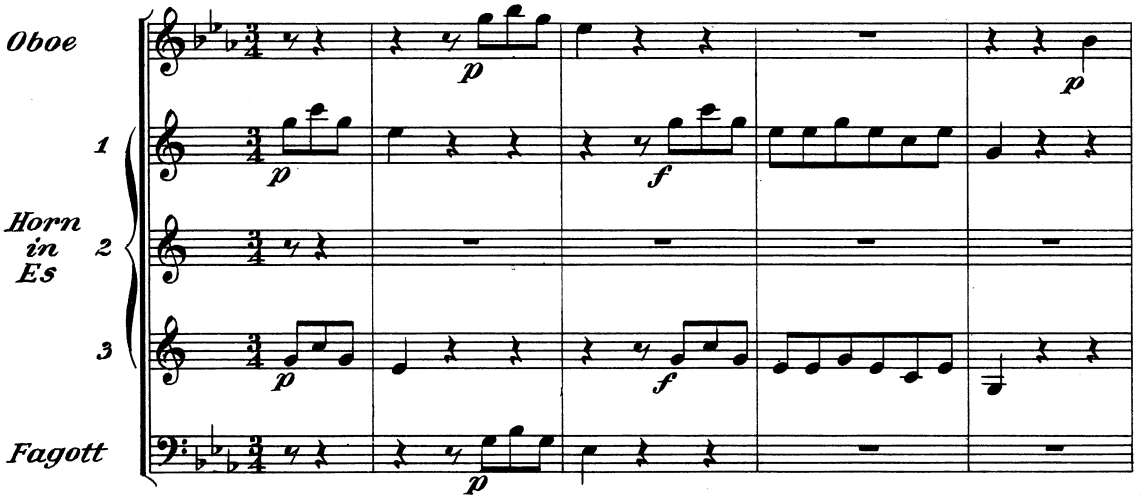

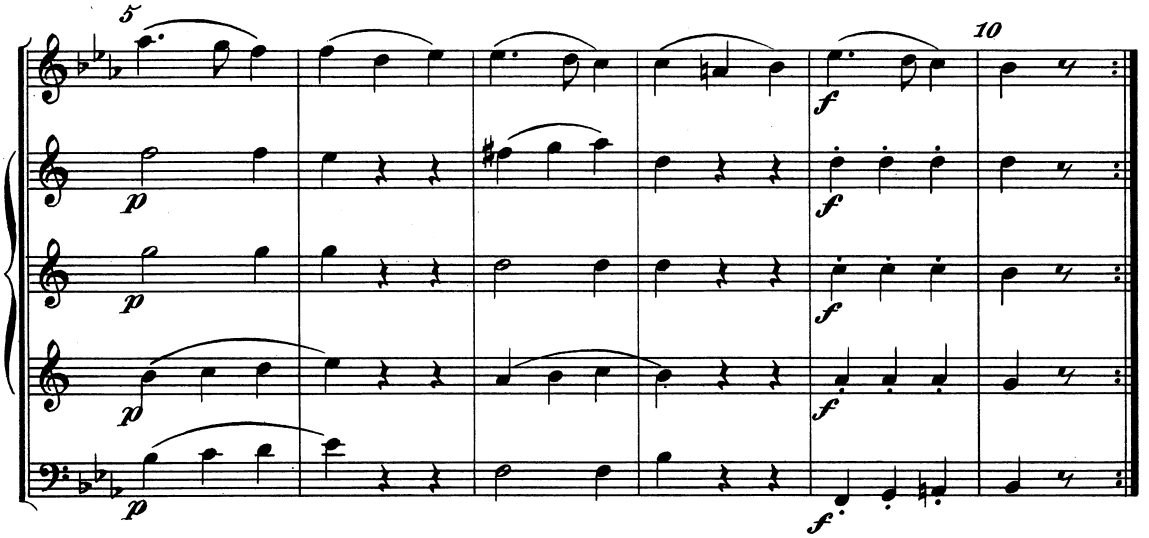

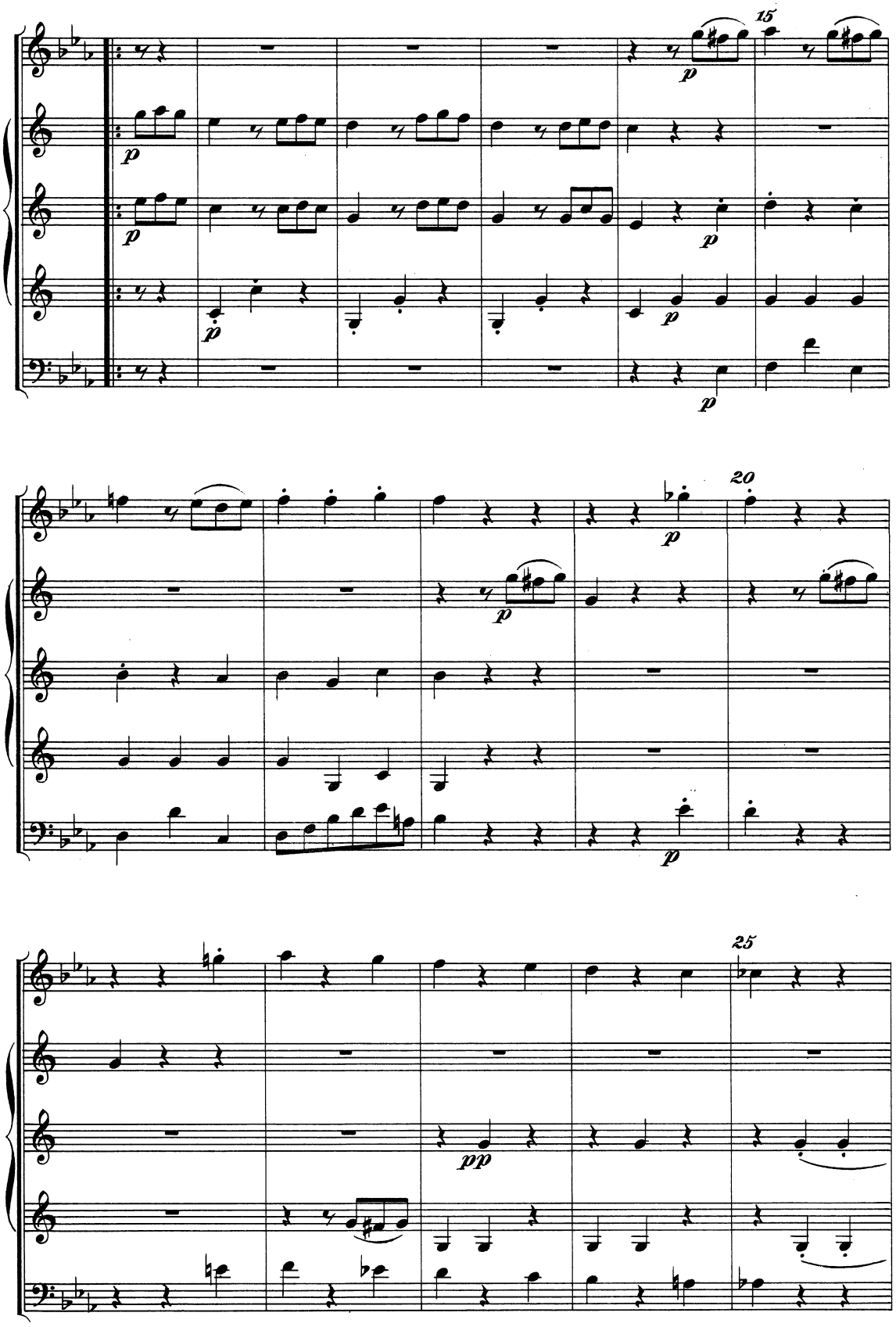
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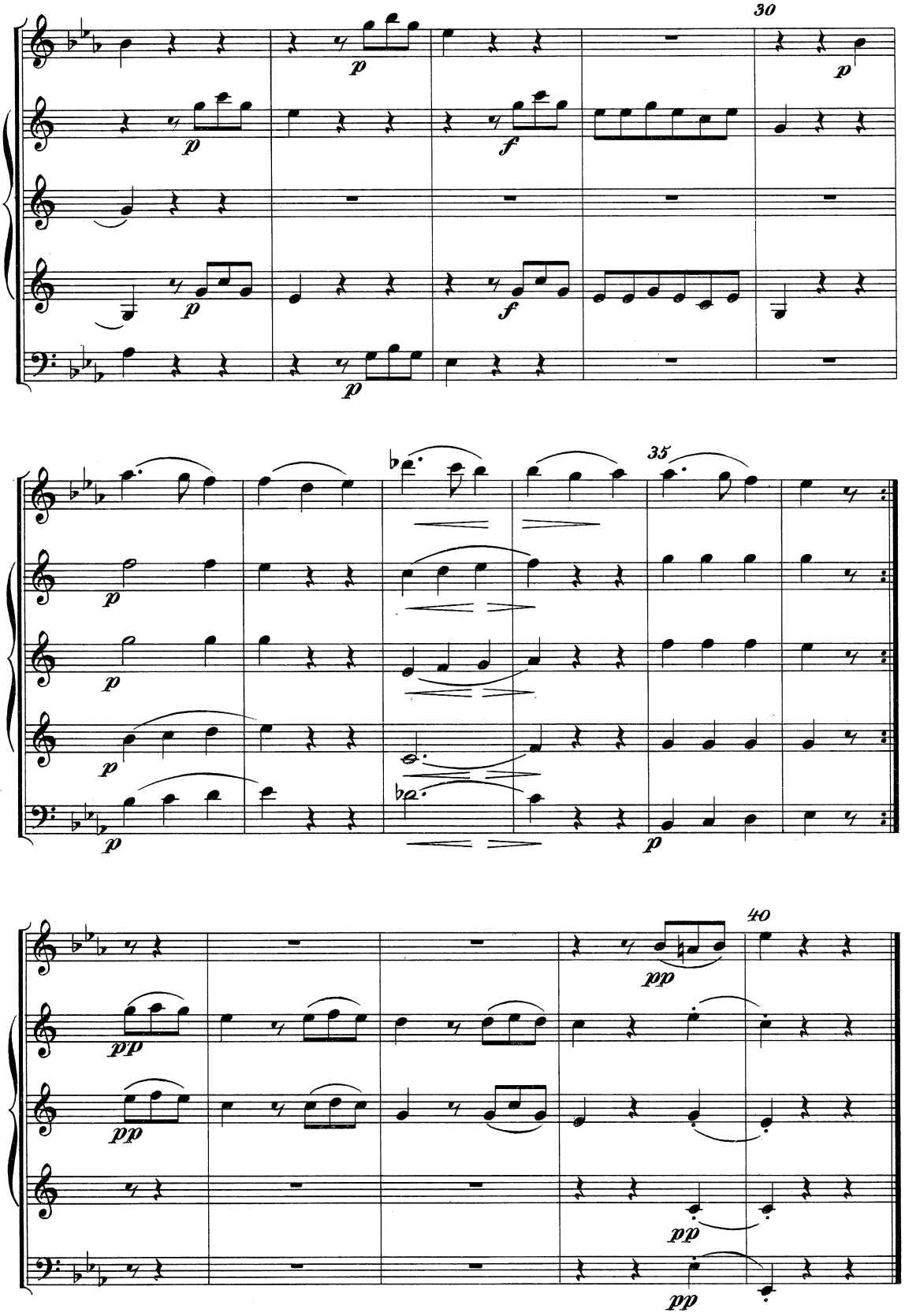

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PREFACE

This work by Beethoven, now published for the first time, is probably identical with No. 282 by A. W. Thayers "Chronological Catalogue of Beethoven's works"[1]) an "incomplete Sextet for Oboe, Clarinet, three Horns and Bassoon". In fact, the autograph contains a clarinet part in Bb (not filled out); the material about tempi etc. is present, but not a single note is written. The great work by Thayer-Deiters-Riemann says about this piece[2]): the whole character is of his first Viennese period, as the choice of instruments shows. The charms of the first movement show a relationship with the septet; and the adagio is of a tender nature. The surviving theme from the third movement is reminiscent of the first movement of the sextet. The melodic line is individual, the sound of the horns being used for especial subtlety; it must be extremely effective. Another critic characterises the work as follows: "Content and form far more developed than the sextets op. 71 and 81 a, marked by climaxes of an elegiac nature, it is a contrast to the useful septet op. 20. Particularly effective are the climaxes despite the innate limitations of the horns.

Unfortunately only a portion of the work survives[3]); pages are missing, both at the beginning and the end. The fragment which survives starts shortly before the recapitulation in the first movement, that is to say, with bar 158 of our edition; the second movement is complete, but the third breaks off at the 19th bar, so that it is hard to visualise the picture in its full form. Erich Prieger surmises there must once have been also a fourth movement.

The MS. seems to have been incomplete even in Beethoven's lifetime. After his death it was included in Artaria's collection as No. 185, and thence passed through Erich Prieger into the then existing royal Library in Berlin. We are dealing with an unusually clear Beethoven autograph worked out in detail, and manifestly in Beethoven's hand, which was ready for print without further ado. I have only completed a few phrasing marks and dynamics in accordance with analogous passages and set to right patent oversigts. It seems that Beethoven only made changes in two passages: in the first movement the third horn originally rested for bars 217 and 220, and its part was given to the bassoon. In spite of his erasures, the original reading is still apparent. In the same movement in bars 280-3 the bassoon part read differently, but here the erasures have rendered the original version illegible. There are also some obscurities in the third horn part in bars 176-7.

The whole work was played by the Viennese musician L. A. Zellner in 1862 with great skill. In particular, he showed a sense of style in reconstituting the first movement from the recapitulation, and in particular he made a development out of Beethoven's motifs admirably suited to the surviving sections. The completion of the third movement was, of course, of necessity a pis aller.

With Zellner's additions, the work had its first performance (if we do not consider performances in Beethoven's lifetime), in Vienna on the 28th of February, 1862. In Bonn it was played on Ascension Day in 1909 and in Switzerland for the first time on the 2nd December 1934. I know nothing of any further performances.

Zellner's parts also came into the former Berlin State Library. This served as a complement for the lost parts of Beethoven's score.

I should like to thank Prof. D. W. Virneisel for his friendly permission to publish the work[4]).

Willy Hess

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1) F. Schneider, Berlin 1865.

2) Bd. 2, Leipzig 1922, S. 42.

3) Prieger: „Ein ungedrucktes Quintett Beethovens" (Frankfurt 6th of May 1909), and „Das Quintett für Blasinstrumente von Beethoven" (Cologne 6th of May 1909). For excerpts from both these articles I should like to express my gratitude to Prof. J. Schmidt-Görg, of Bonn.

4) Only after I prepared this edition did I find in the archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna two further scores of Zellner's as well as a set of parts under the title „Serenade" (Signatur VIII 49858).