Score

String Quartet no. 2

in b-minor, op. 13

by Ferdinand Hiller (1811 - 1885)

String Quartet No. 2 op. 13 by Ferdinand Hiller

Hiller's op. 12 and op. 13 appeared two years after Mendelssohn's first two quartets with the same opus numbers. If one compares these works one finds that Hiller's pieces are less ambitious. They do not attempt to respond to Beethoven's late quartets in the way Mendelssohn's quartets do--in the case of op. 13 in a-minor with impressive success. Hiller's quartets are cast in standard four movement designs and seem to take Haydn as a model rather than any later composer. They do sometimes show considerable originality however: The allegro carpiccioso in 2/4 of op. 13 for example, whose beginning is strongly reminiscent of Mendelssohn's similar movements begins with a repeated section. Everything sounds normal except for a motif, appearing in measures 9 and 10, consisting of four accented crotchets on d. It sounds like a foreign object in the context of the theme. The second section sounds as if it would be repeated also and would then be followed by a trio and da capo, the scheme Mendelssohn employed. Hiller however does not repeat this section and instead launches into a fugato based on the four note "foreign object" theme and some new counterpoints to it. In the course of the movement we hear the "foreign object" take over the music more and more and logically the movement ends on it. A nice piece of musical humor.

Great care is taken everywhere to individualize the four voices and to find original textures for the quartet sound. There is a striking absence of virtuoso passages (at least "virtuoso" in the sense of "show off") and the technical difficulties are relatively modest.

This typeset of Ferdinand Hiller's second string quartet op.13 is based on the edition by F. Hofmeister, Leipzig (1834), which is available on IMSLP. No modern edition of this work (and its "sister", op. 12) is available to date. This score and the parts that accompany it are intended for study, rehearsal and performance.

A look at the source reveals the composer's almost fussy concern for precise dynamic markings. The text is full of hairpin markings--in a way we typically encounter in music written one or two generations later. Somewhat by contrast we also observe inconsistencies in dynamic and articulation markings, presumably engraver errors.

For the typeset these inconsistencies were straightened out without comment and courtesy accidentals were added where required. A short list of "true" corrections follows below:

Moderato

M. 144: Viola: Unplayable double stop C#/F#. C# eliminated in typeset; there are C# in both violins already for this chord. However the cello can play it (double stop F#/C#) if desired.

Allegro capriccioso

M.74: Vln2: In the source this part has one measure more than the other parts. One measure of rest omitted after M. 74.

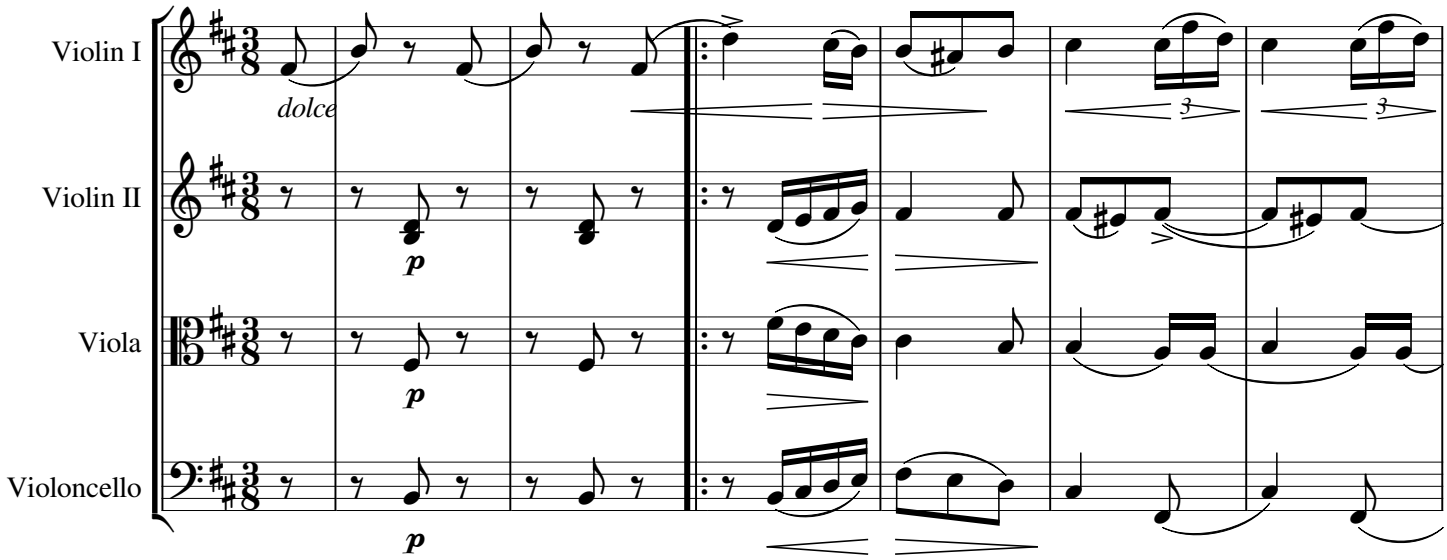
The motif consisting of four accented crotchets at the same pitch (first time at M. 9) is written differently in the source depending on the dynamics (accents in ***f***, staccato dots in ***p***). It is changed in the typeset to always look the same (accented crotchets). Since this motif is a “foreign object” in the movement it should be easily recognizable and be played with a different sound from the rest of the movement, e.g. closer to the bridge or non vibrato.

Vivace

M. 148: Vln2: Natural sign before the b corrected to apply to the c instead as in M. 8.

Approximate performance times: Moderato (♪ = 130): 7.5 min; Allegro capriccioso (♩ = 120): 2.5 min; Adagio quasi andante (♩ = 55): 4.5 min; Vivace (♩ = 140): 4 min. Total approximately 19 min.

Moderato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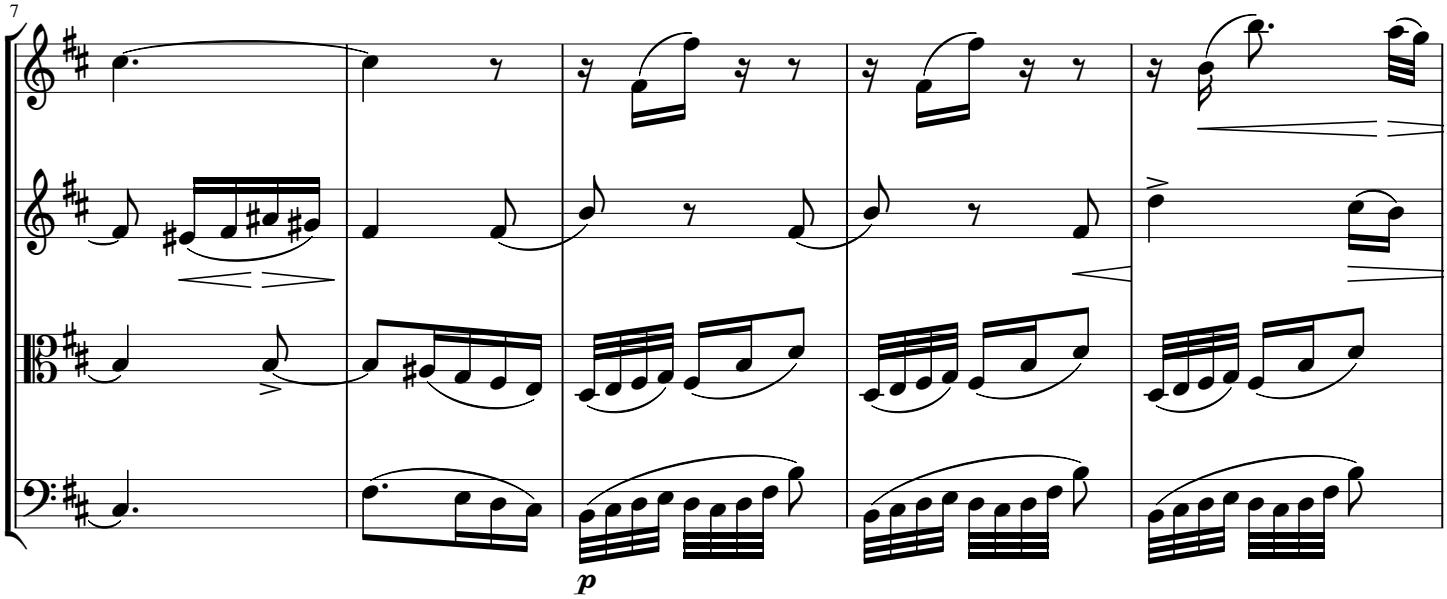
dolce
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
p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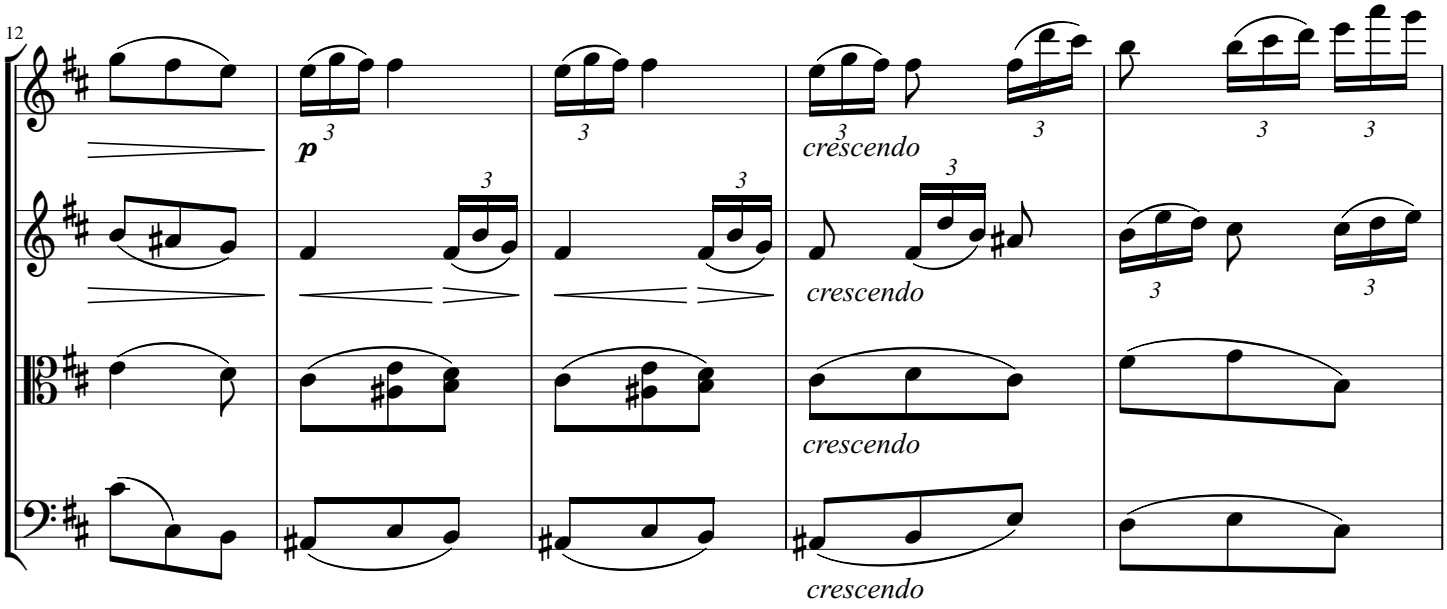
p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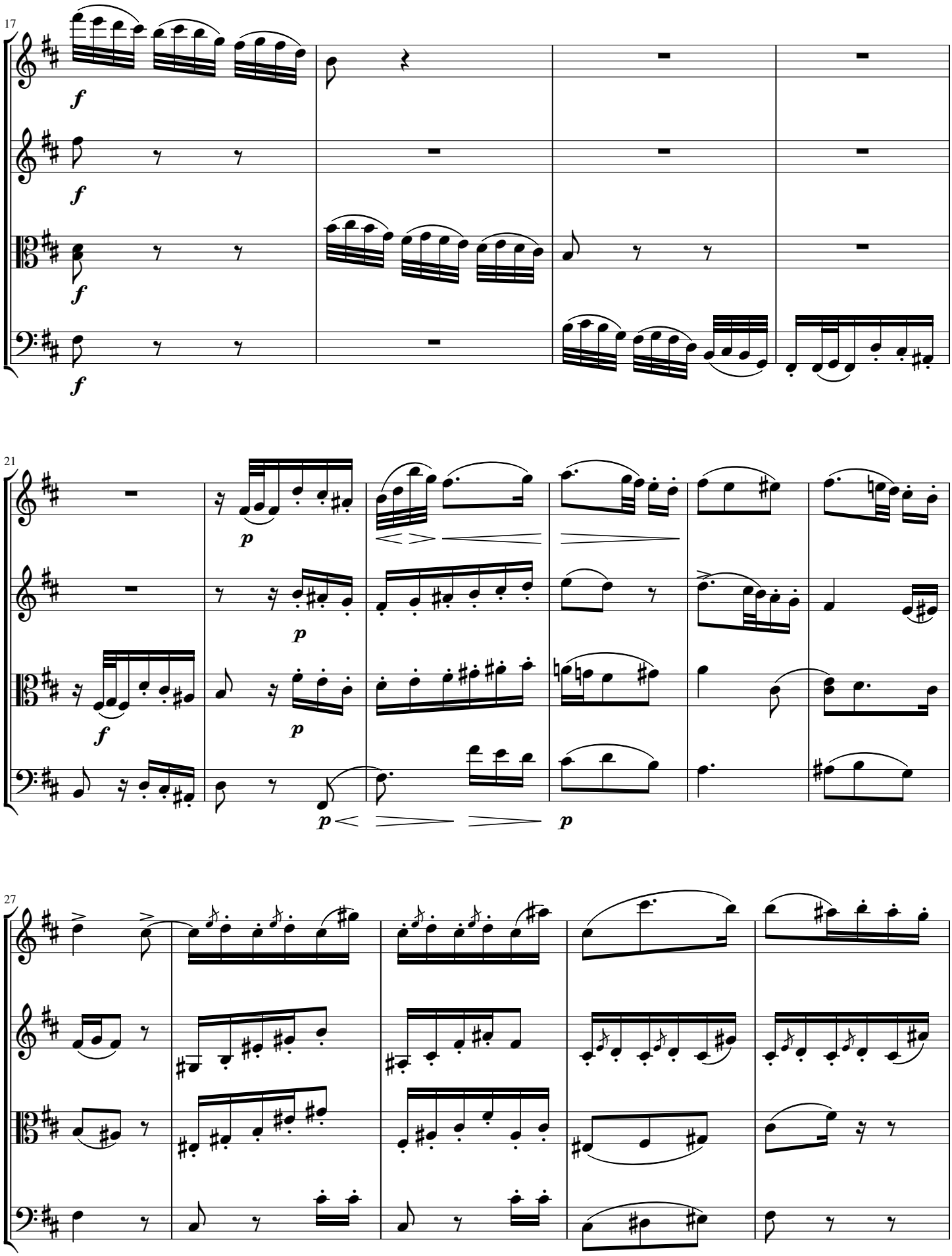
p
crescendo
crescendo
crescendo
crescendo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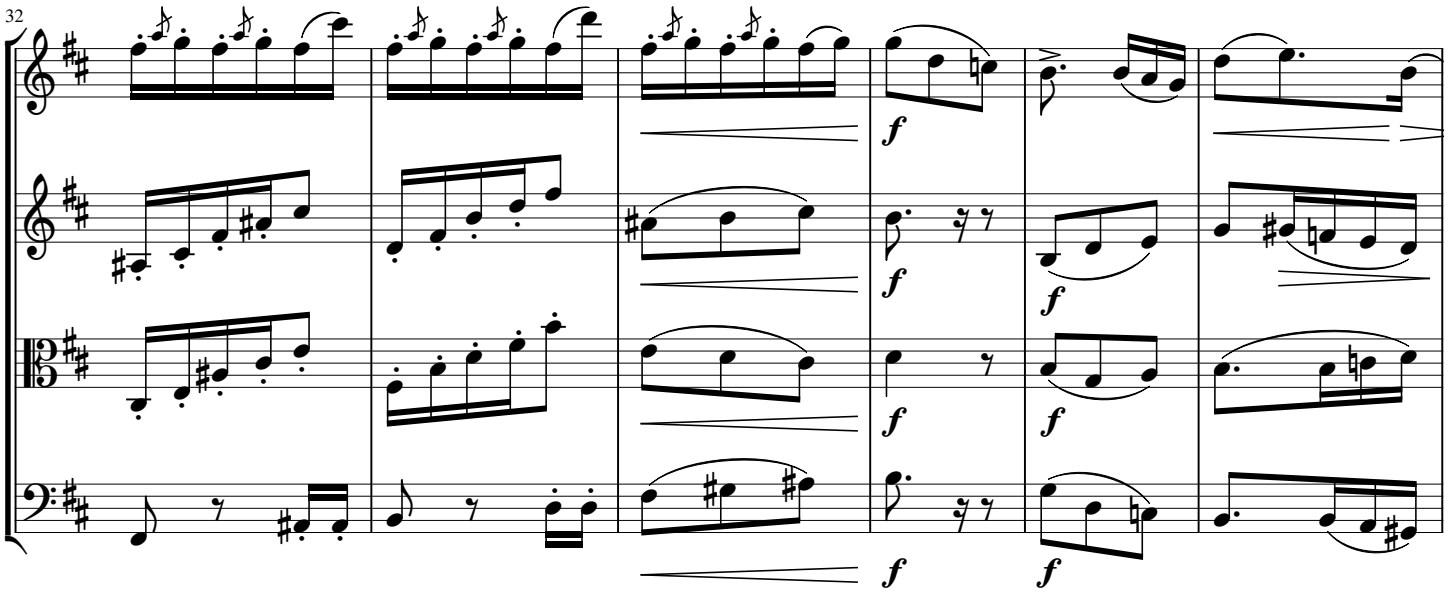
f
f
f
f
21
p
p
f
p
p
p
27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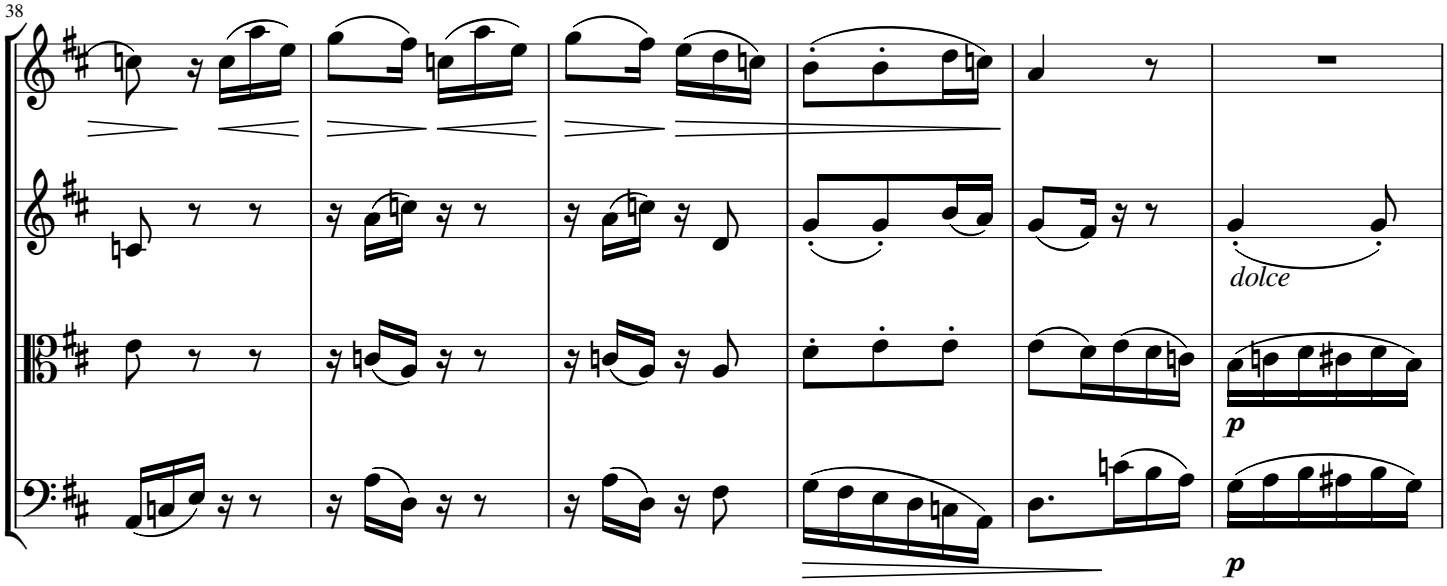
f
f
f
f
f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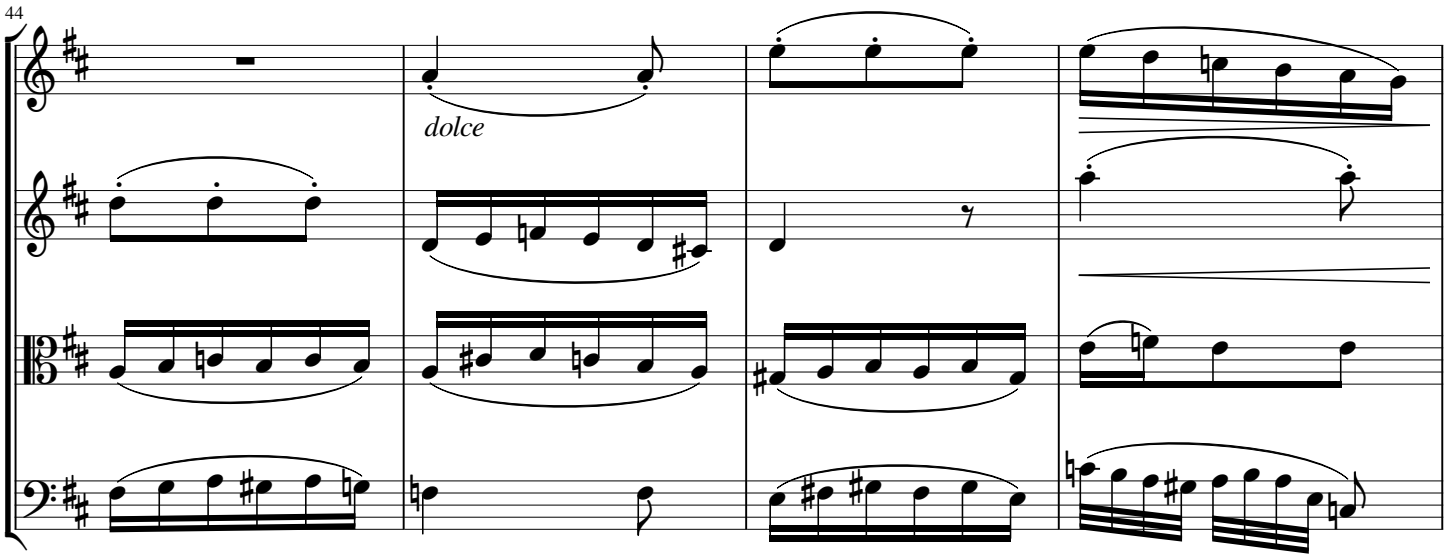
dolce
p
p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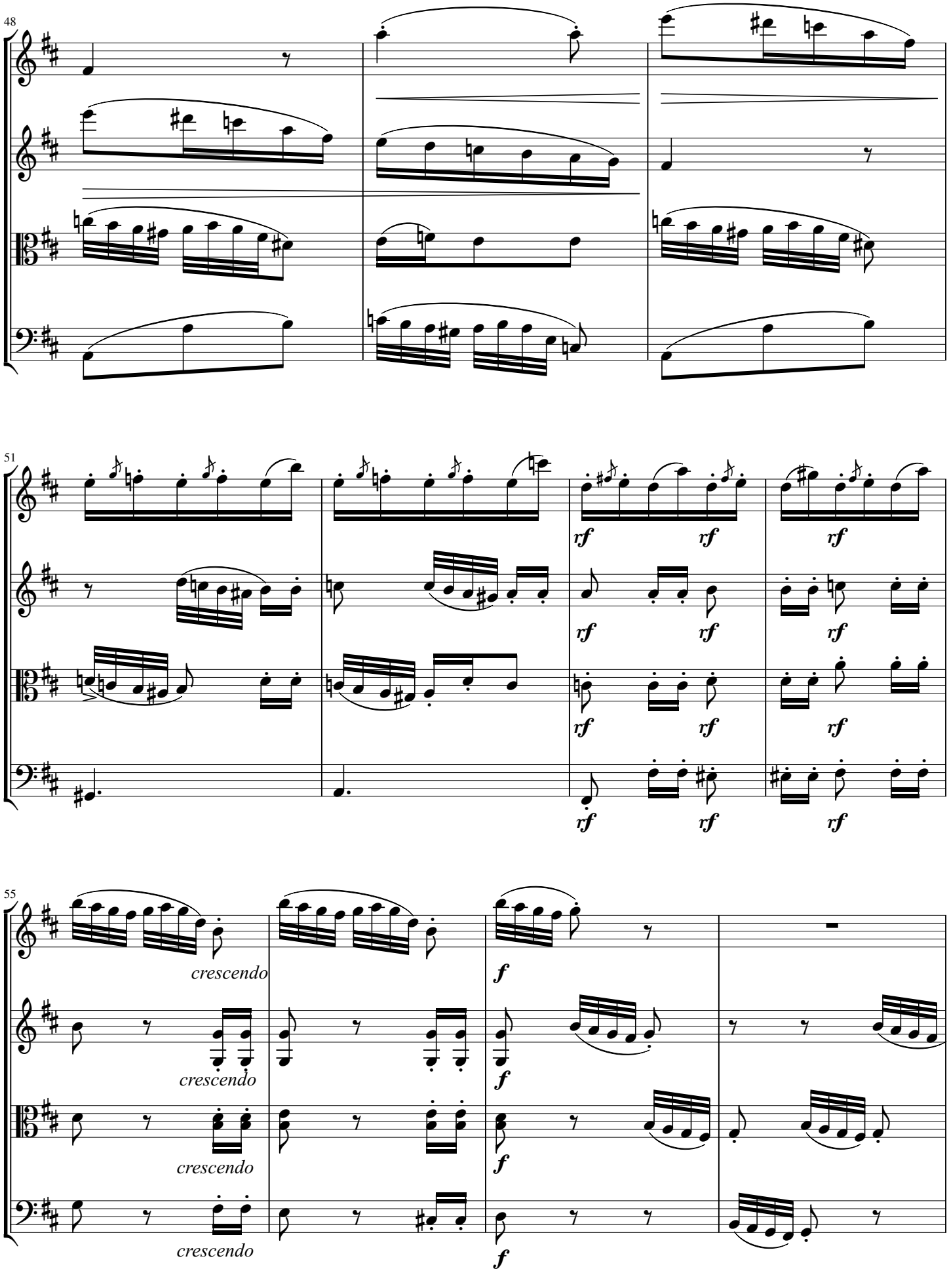
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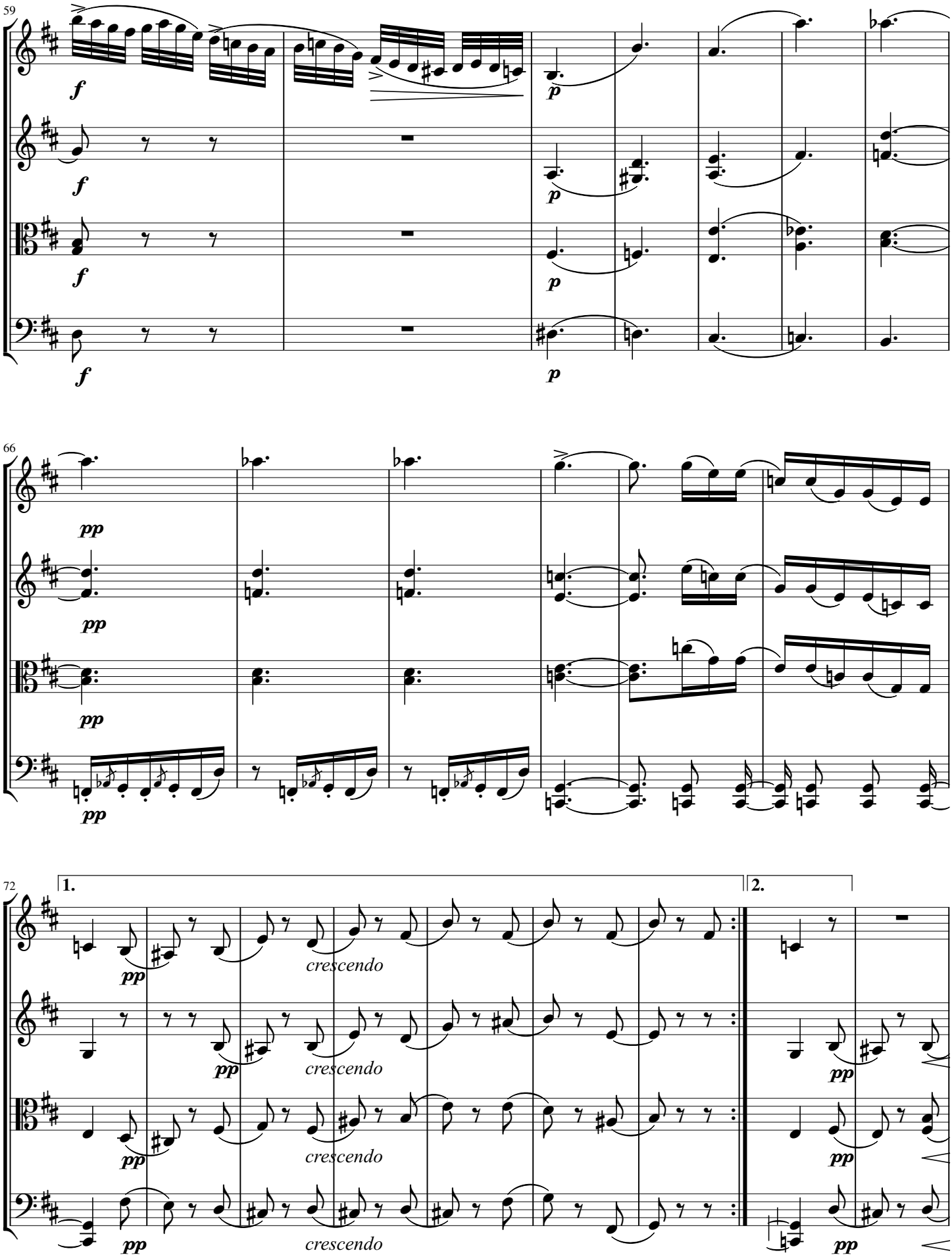
rf
55
crescendo
f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f
p
66
pp
72
1.
2.
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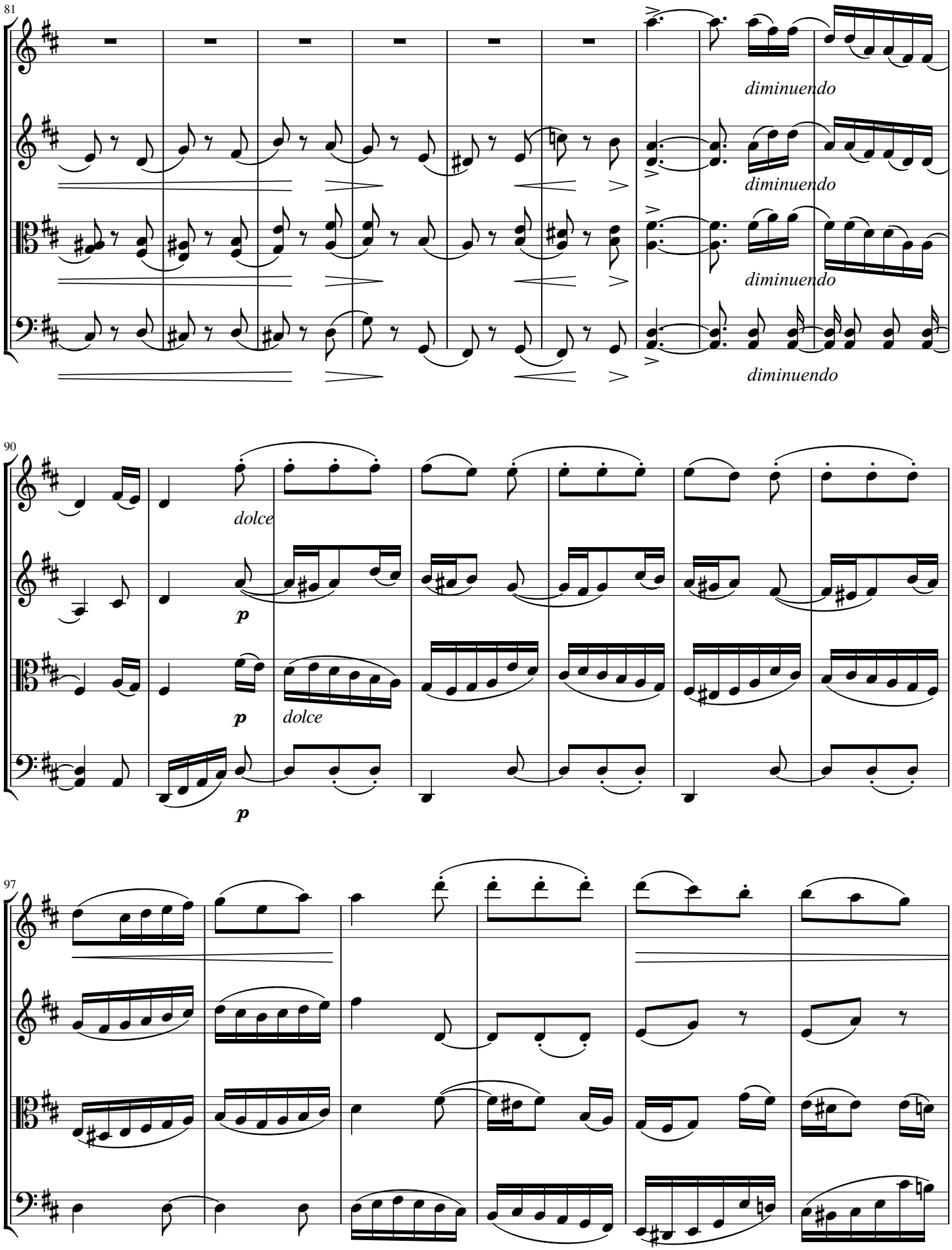
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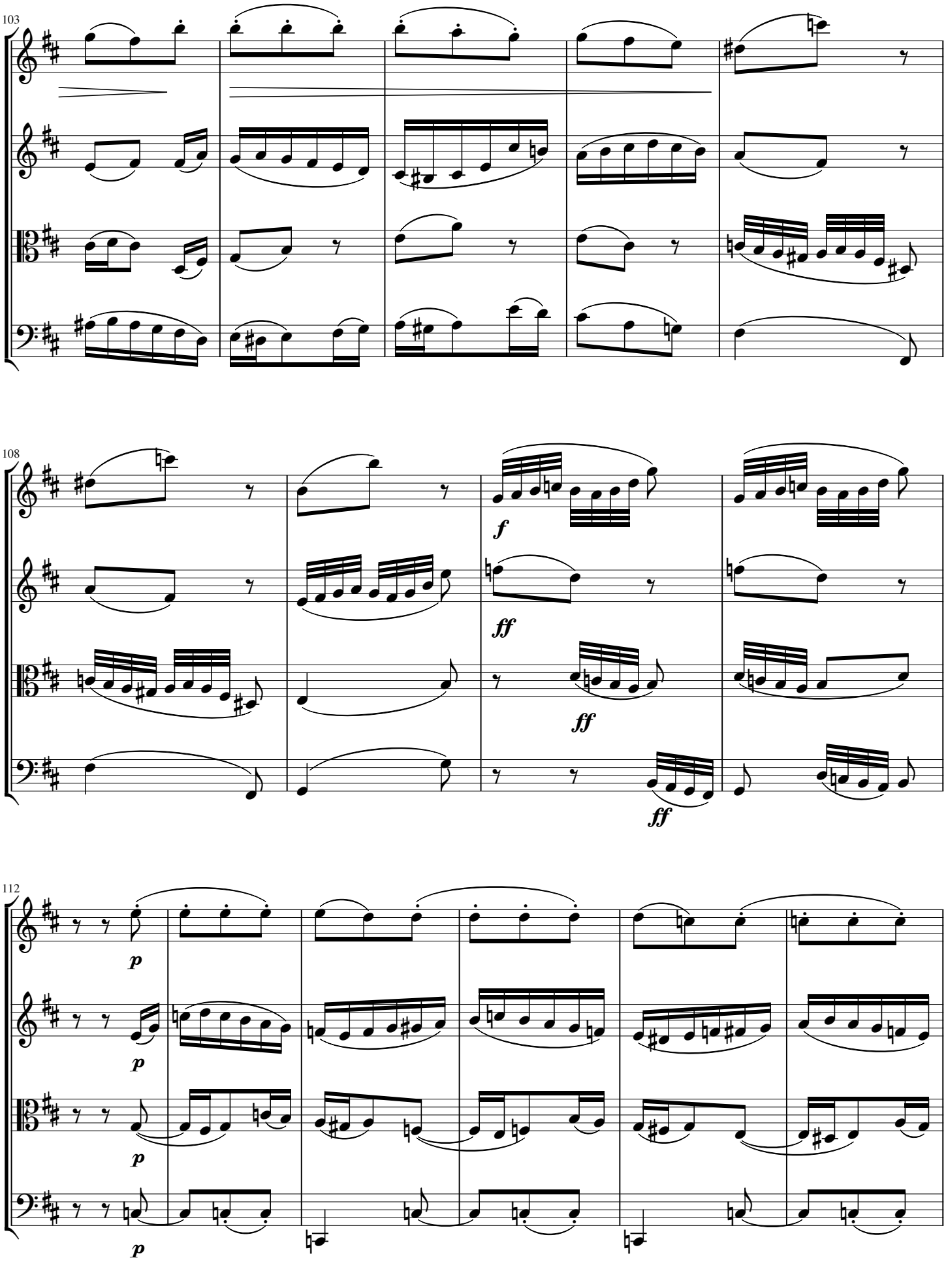
diminuendo
diminuendo
90
dolce
p
p
dolce
p
97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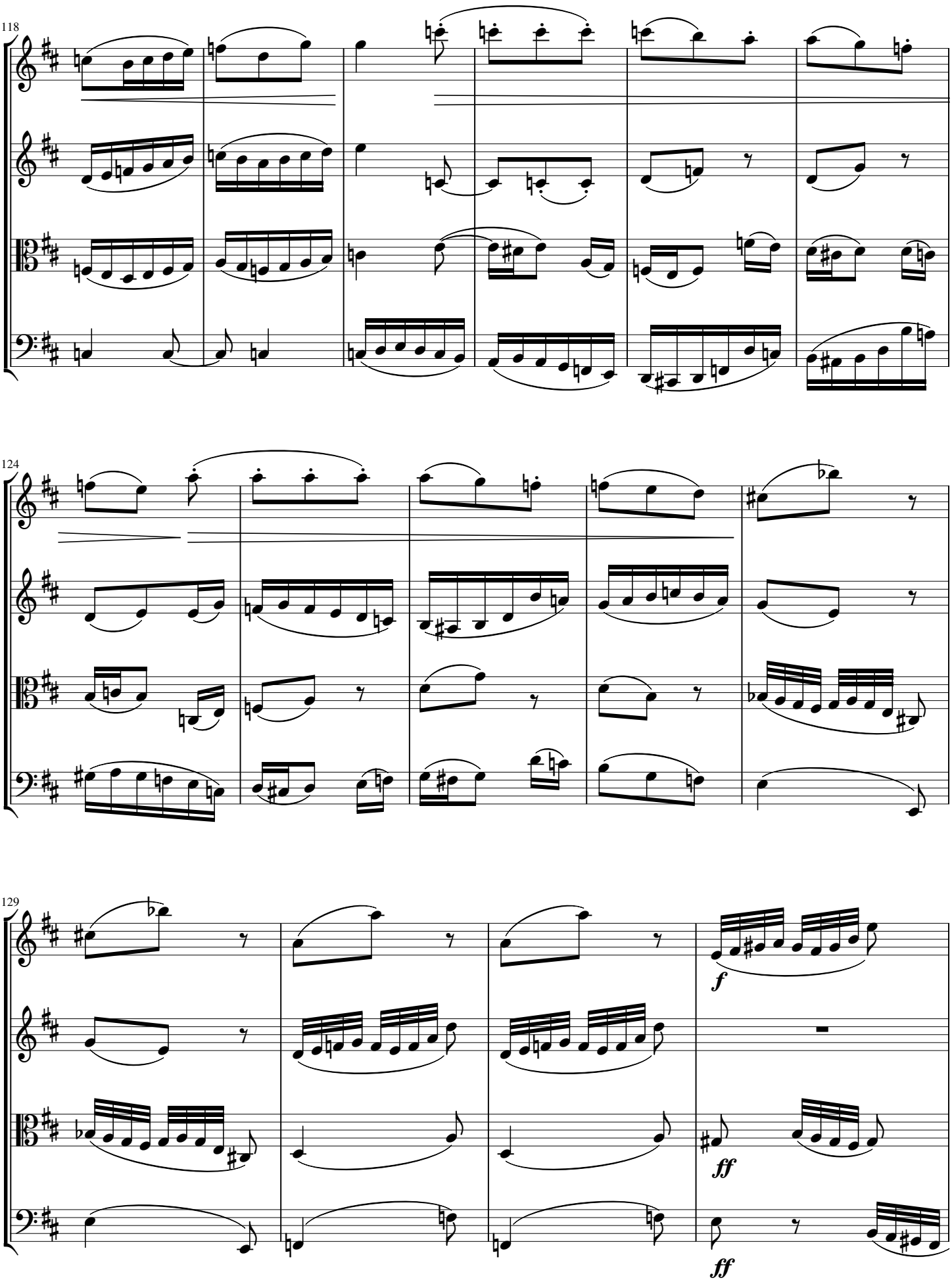
108
f
ff
ff
ff
112
p
p
p
p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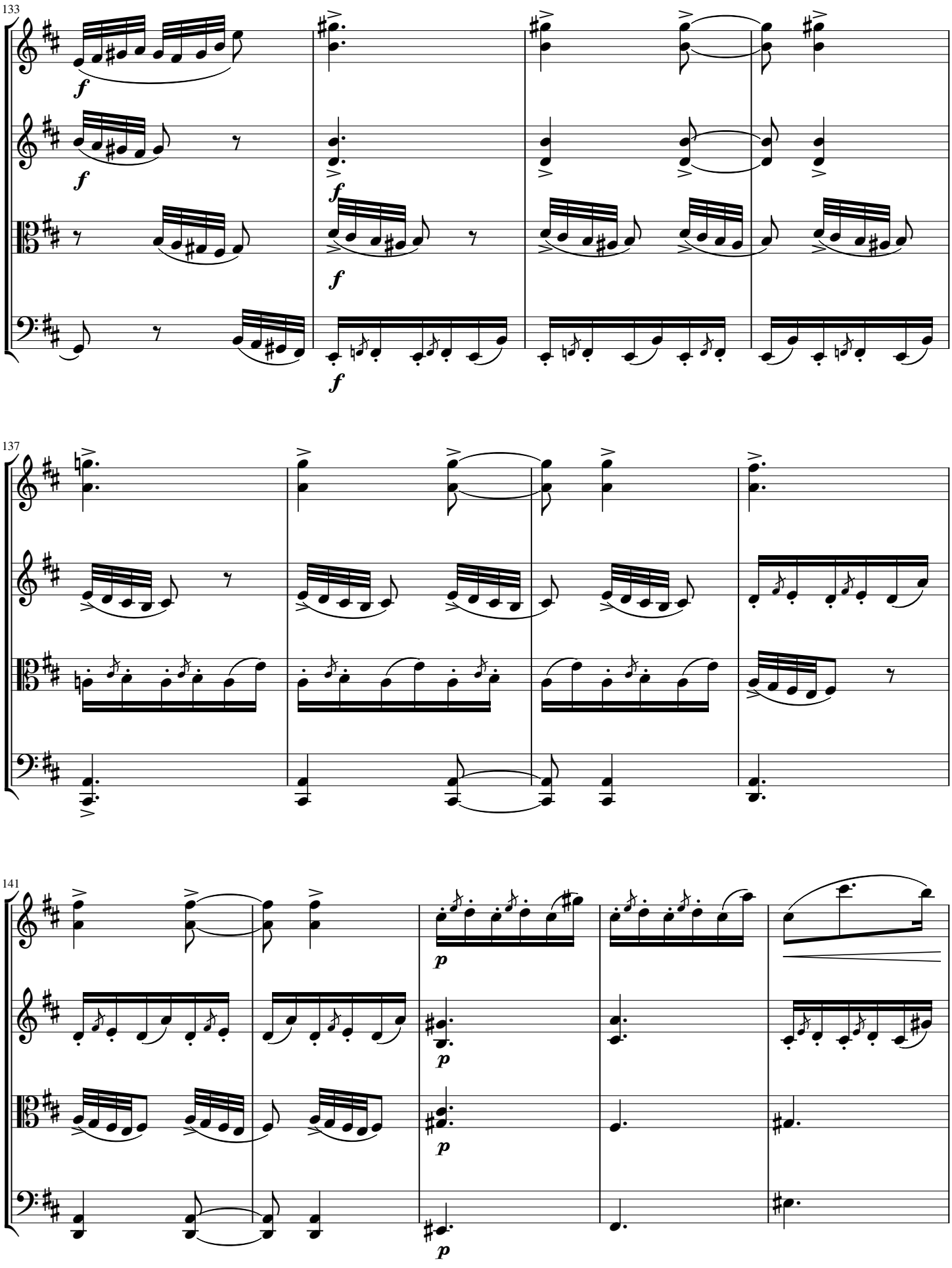
129
f
ff
ff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f
f
f
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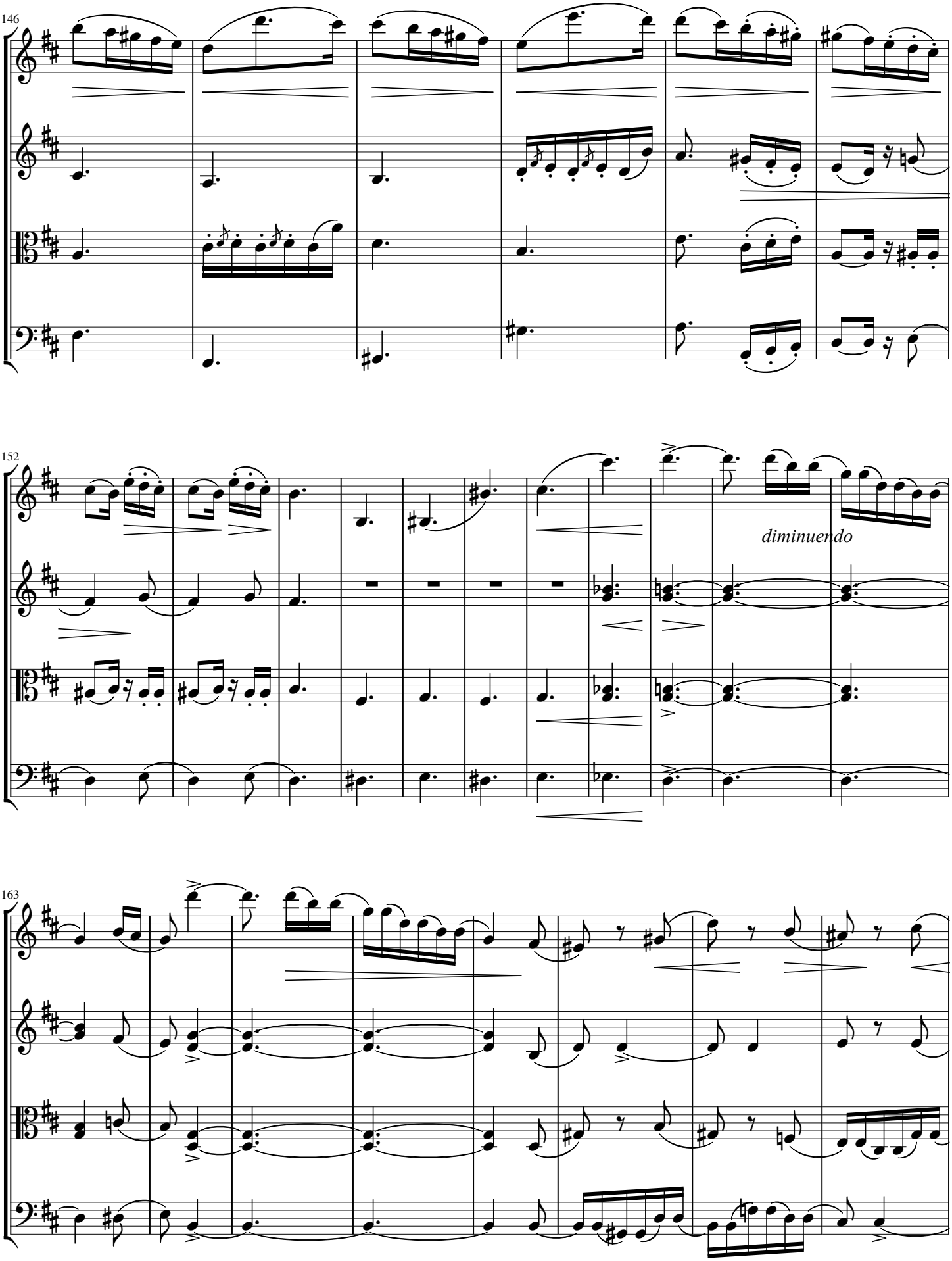
137
141
p
p
p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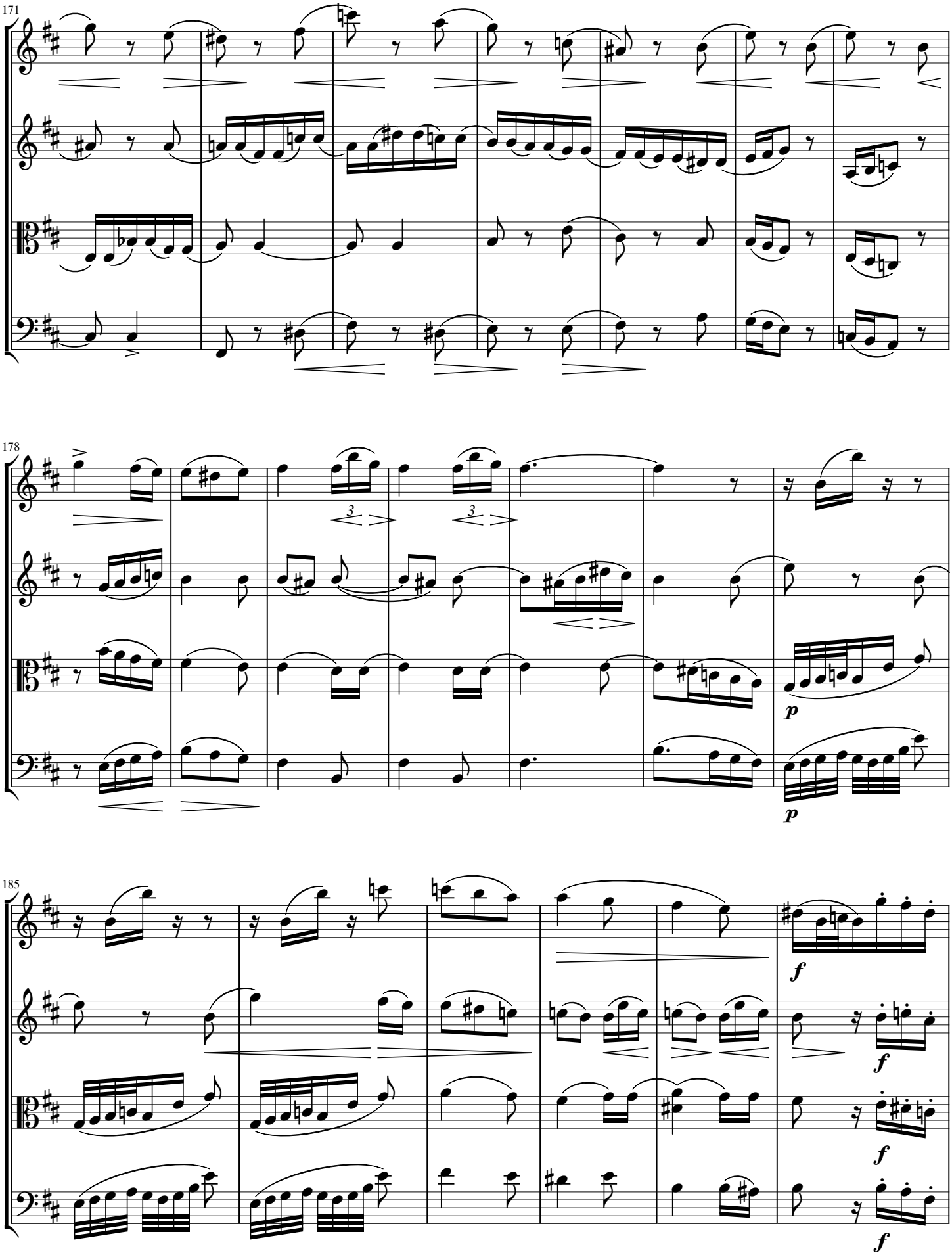
152
diminuendo
163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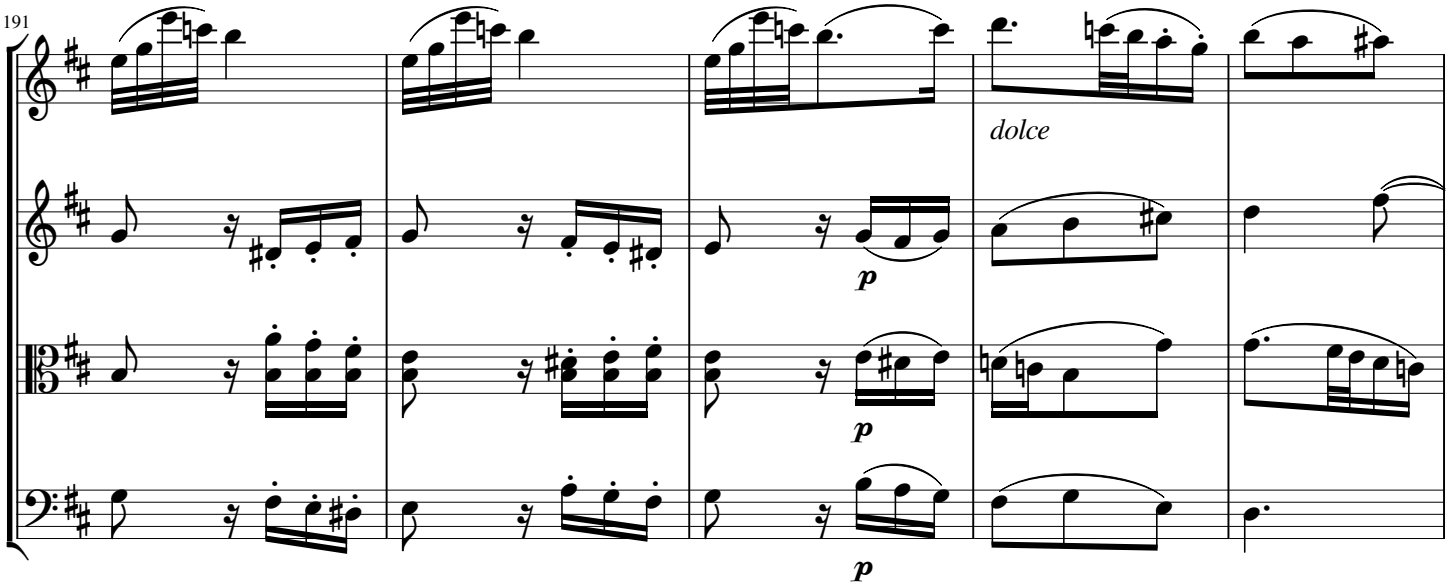
178
3
3
p
p
185
f
f
f
f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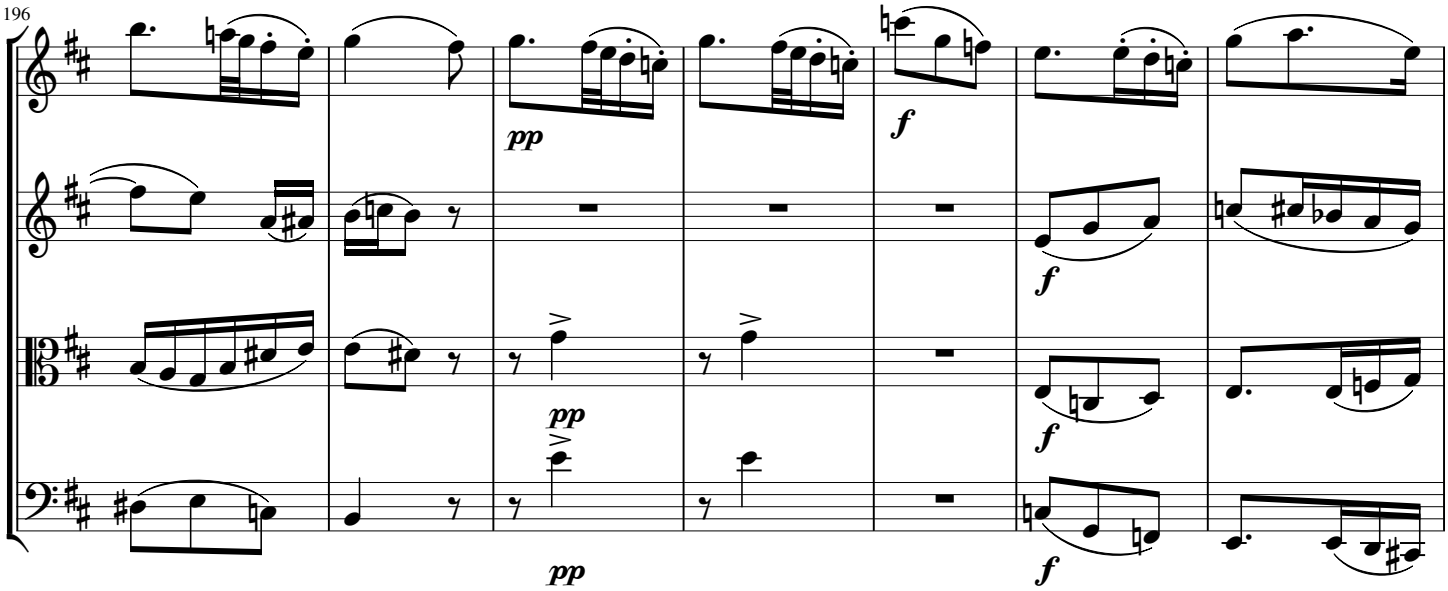
dolce
p
p
p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f
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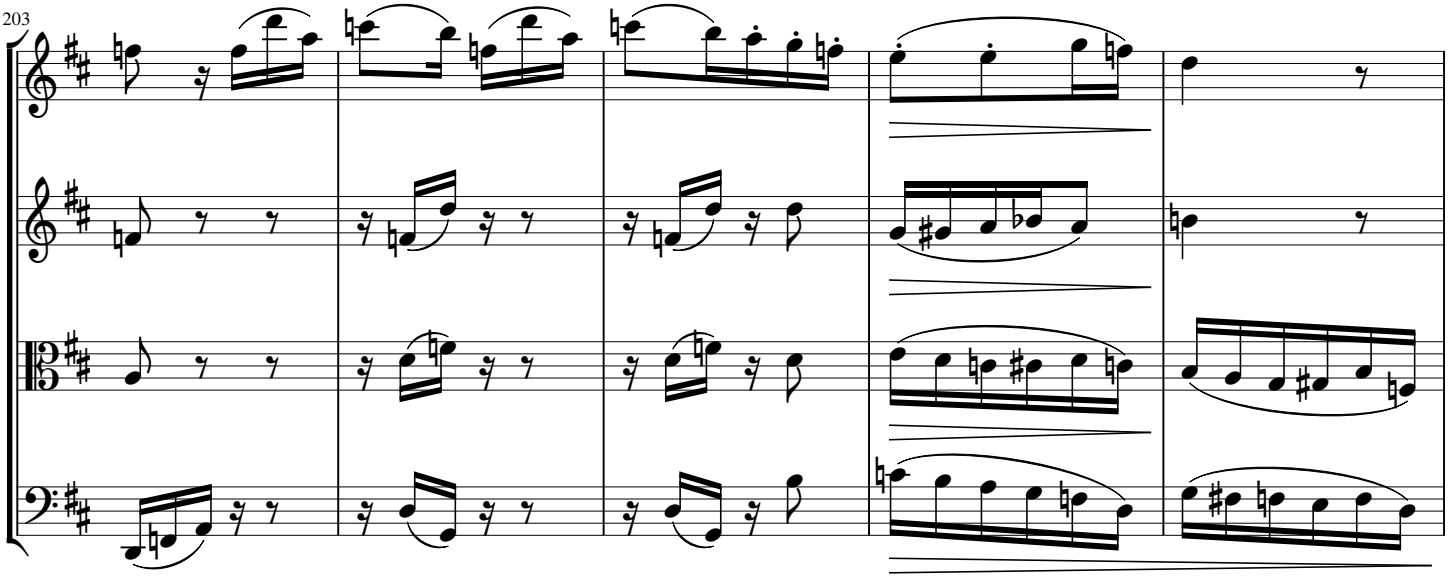
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208

p

dolce

p

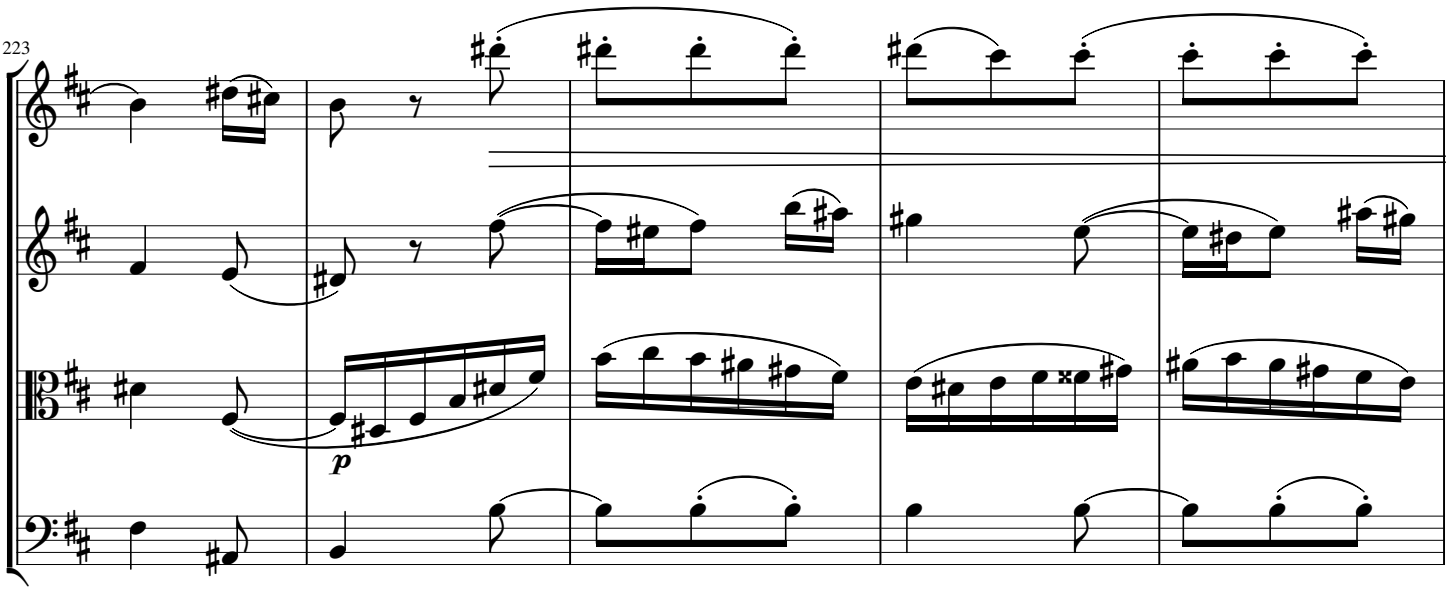
p

213

217

crescendo

cresc.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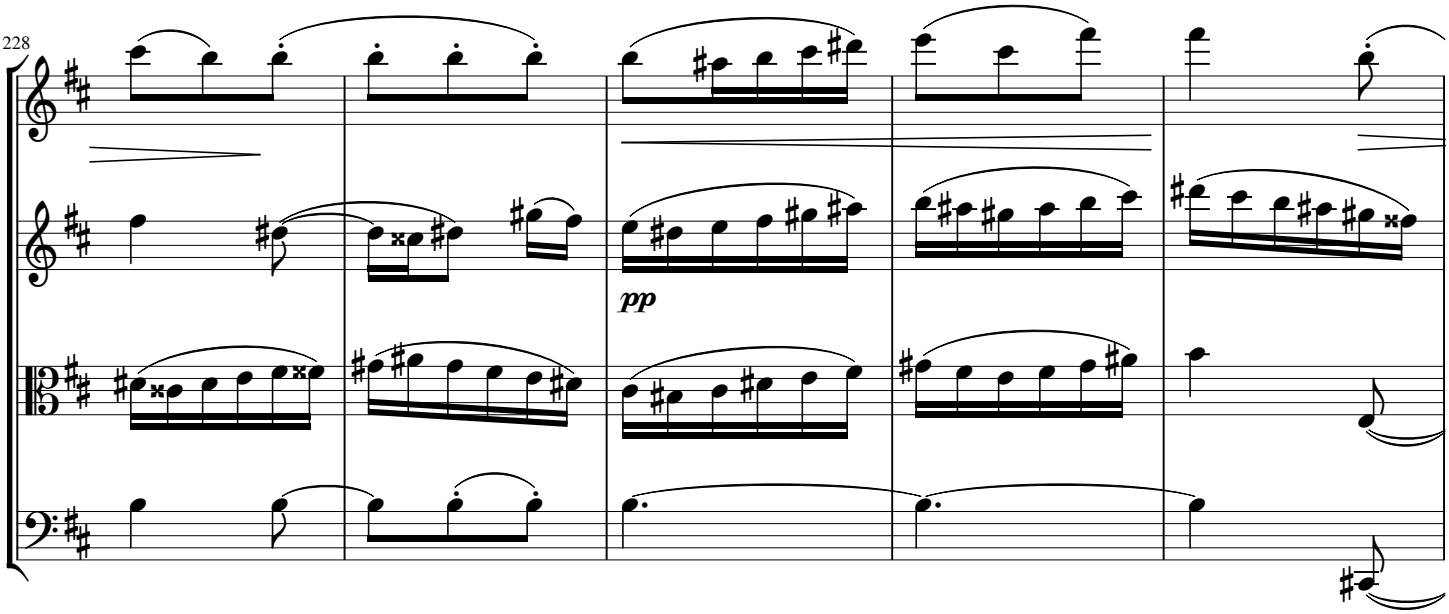
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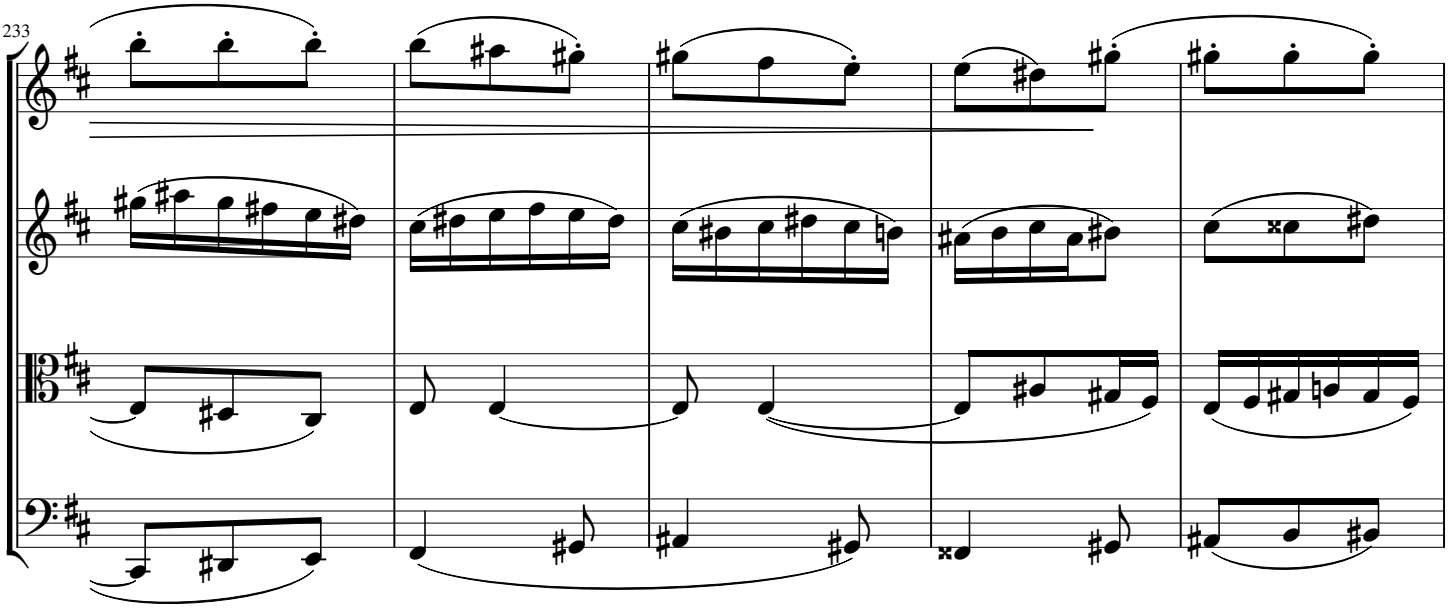
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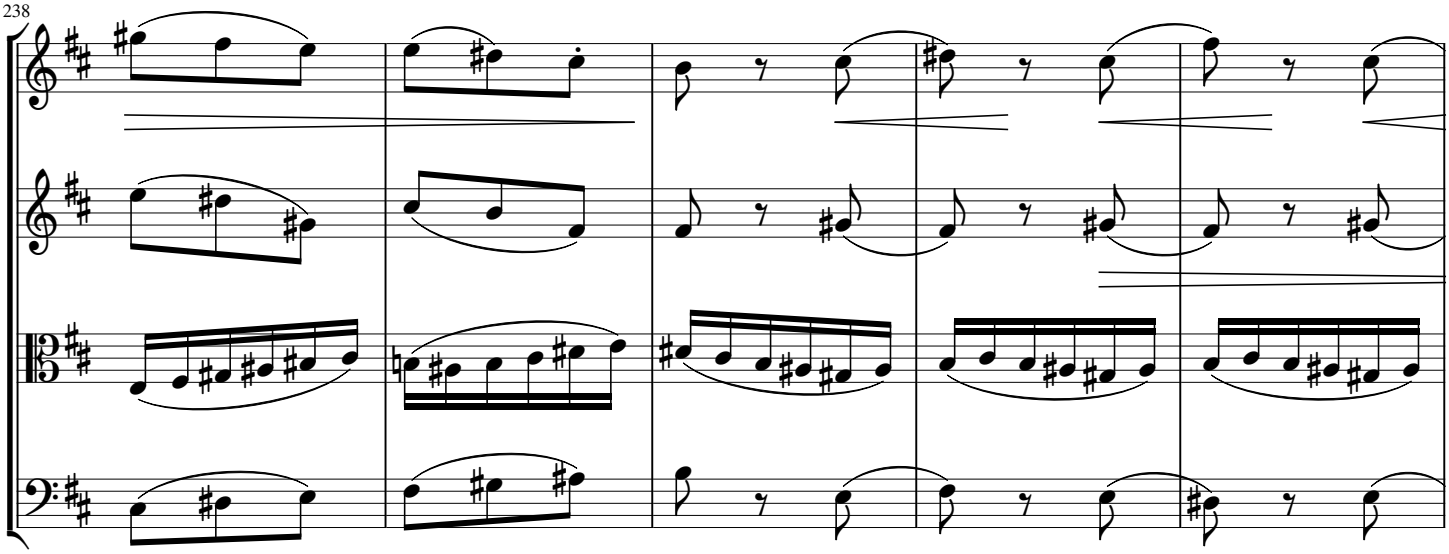

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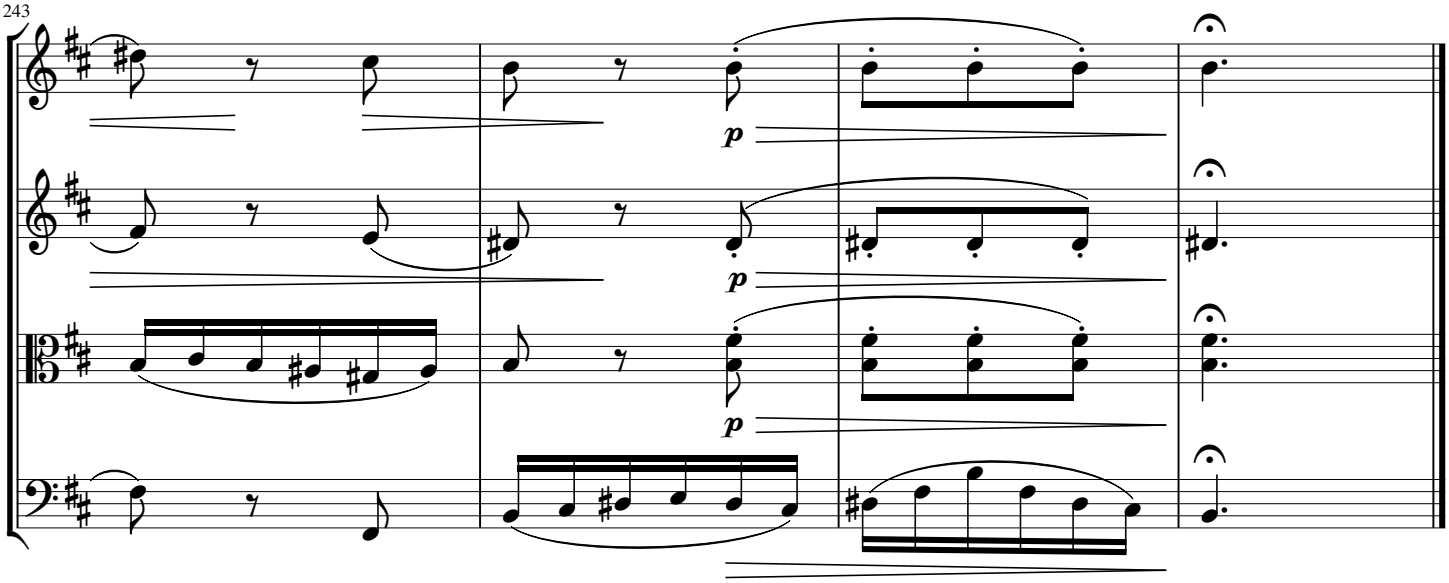
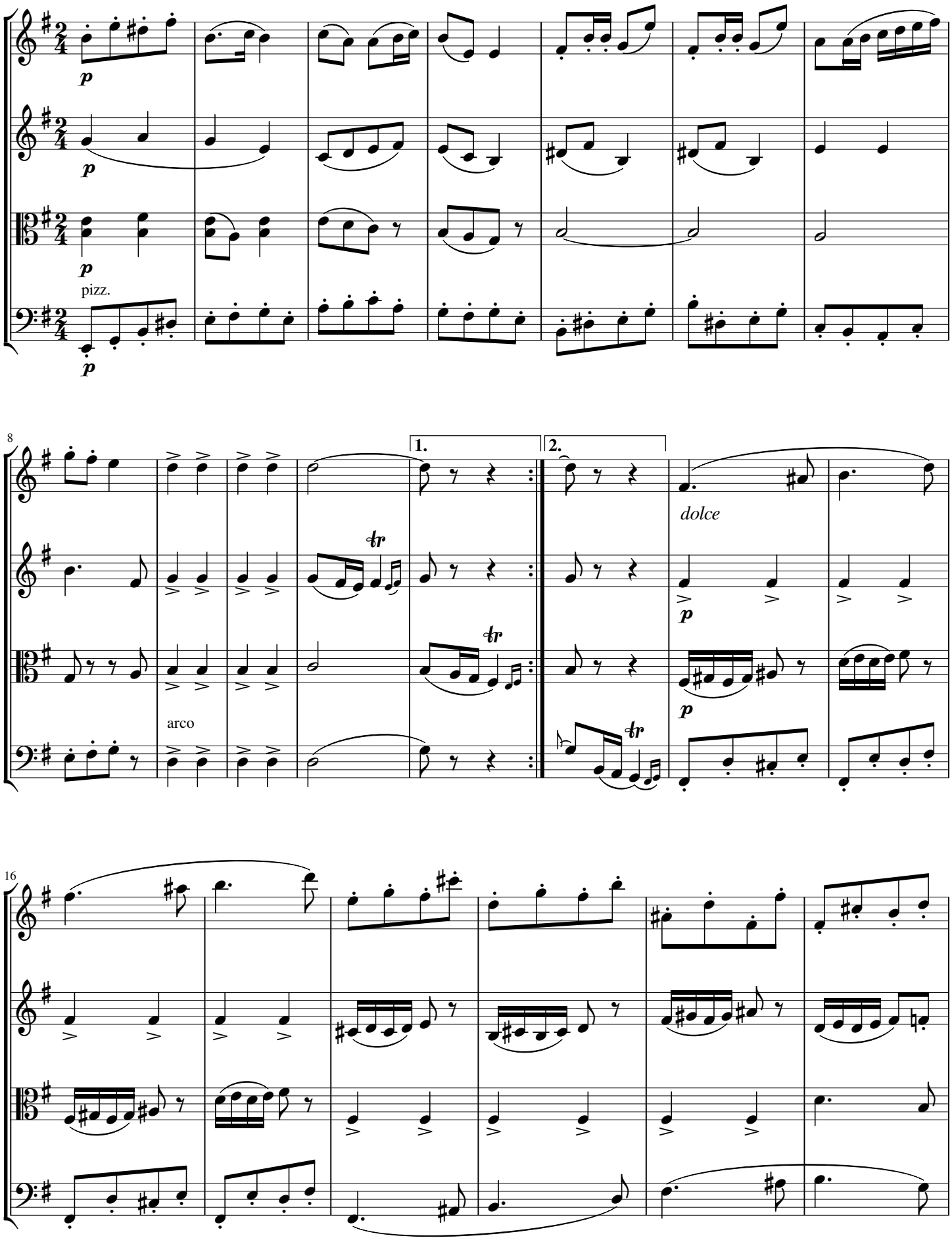
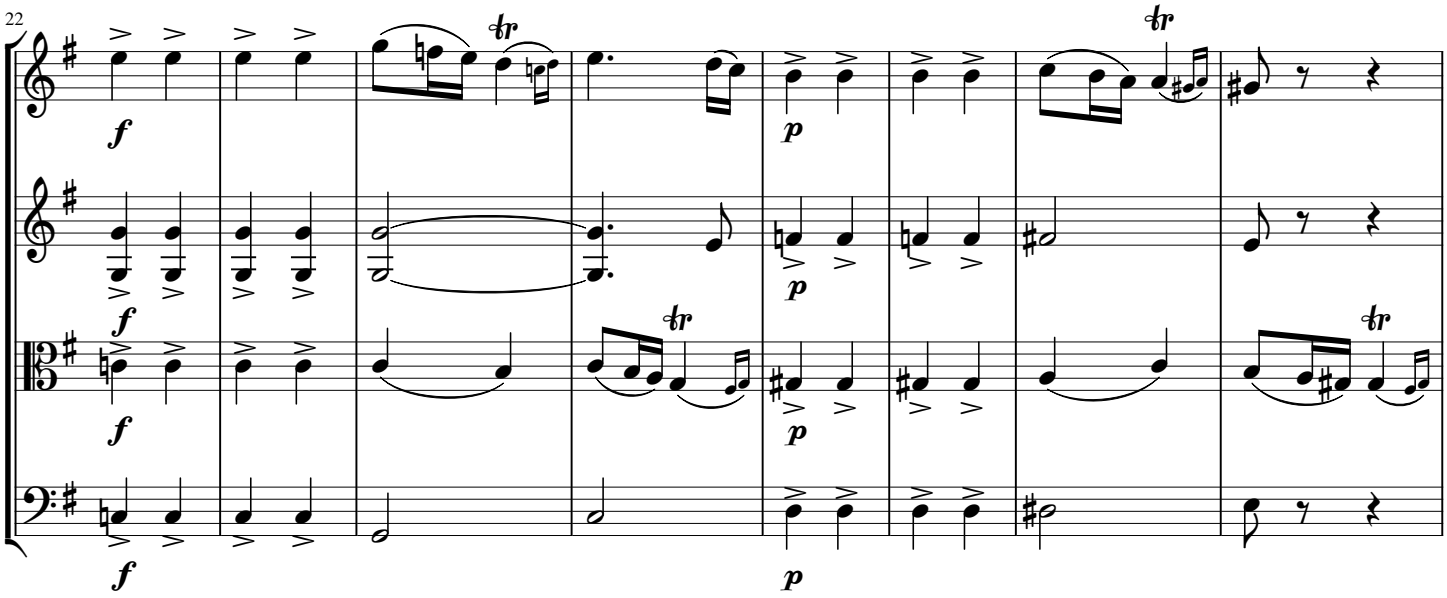


ALLEGRO Capriccioso




22
f
p
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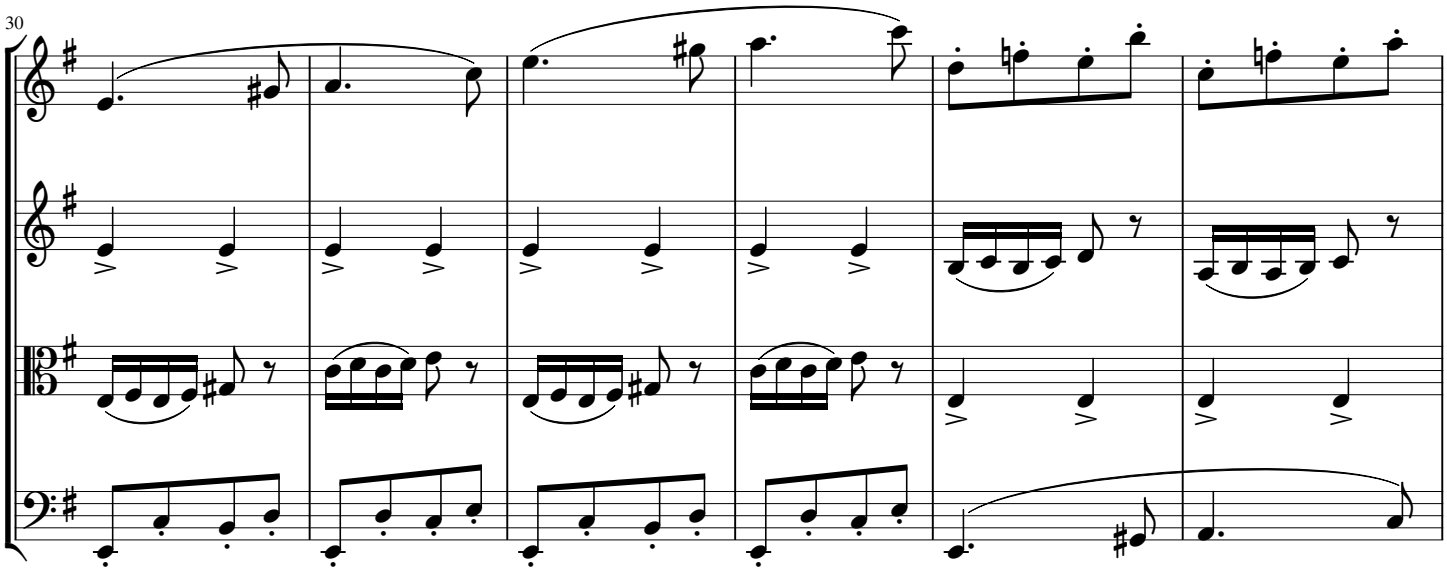
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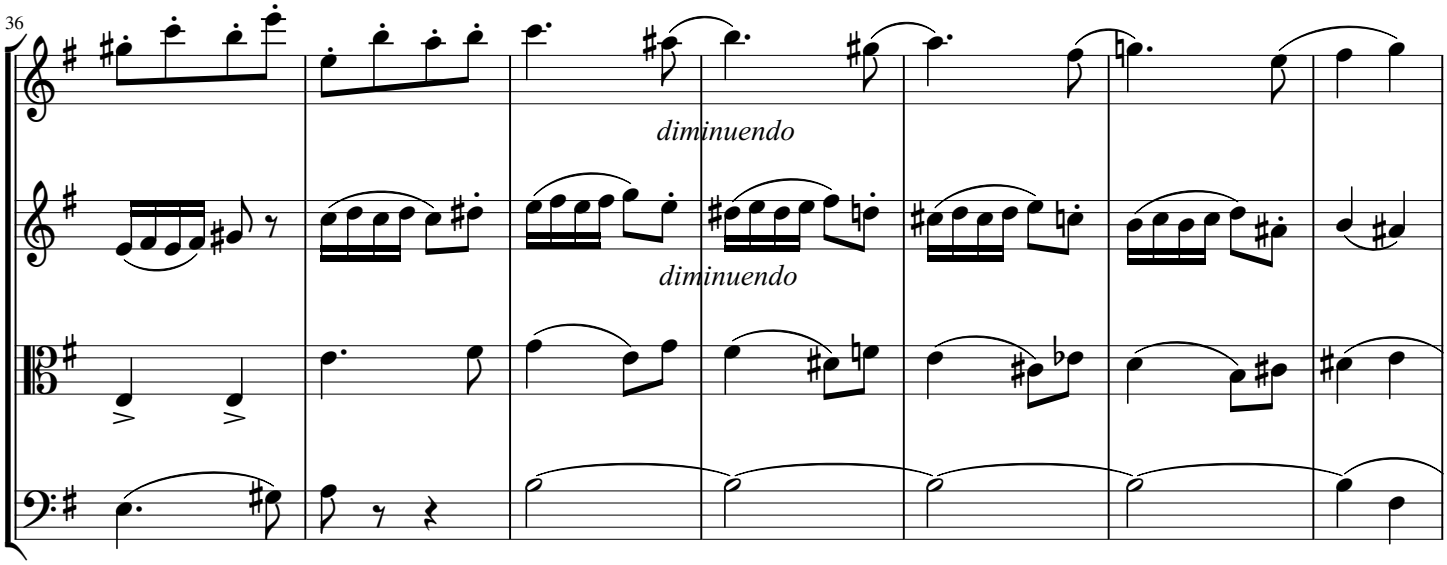
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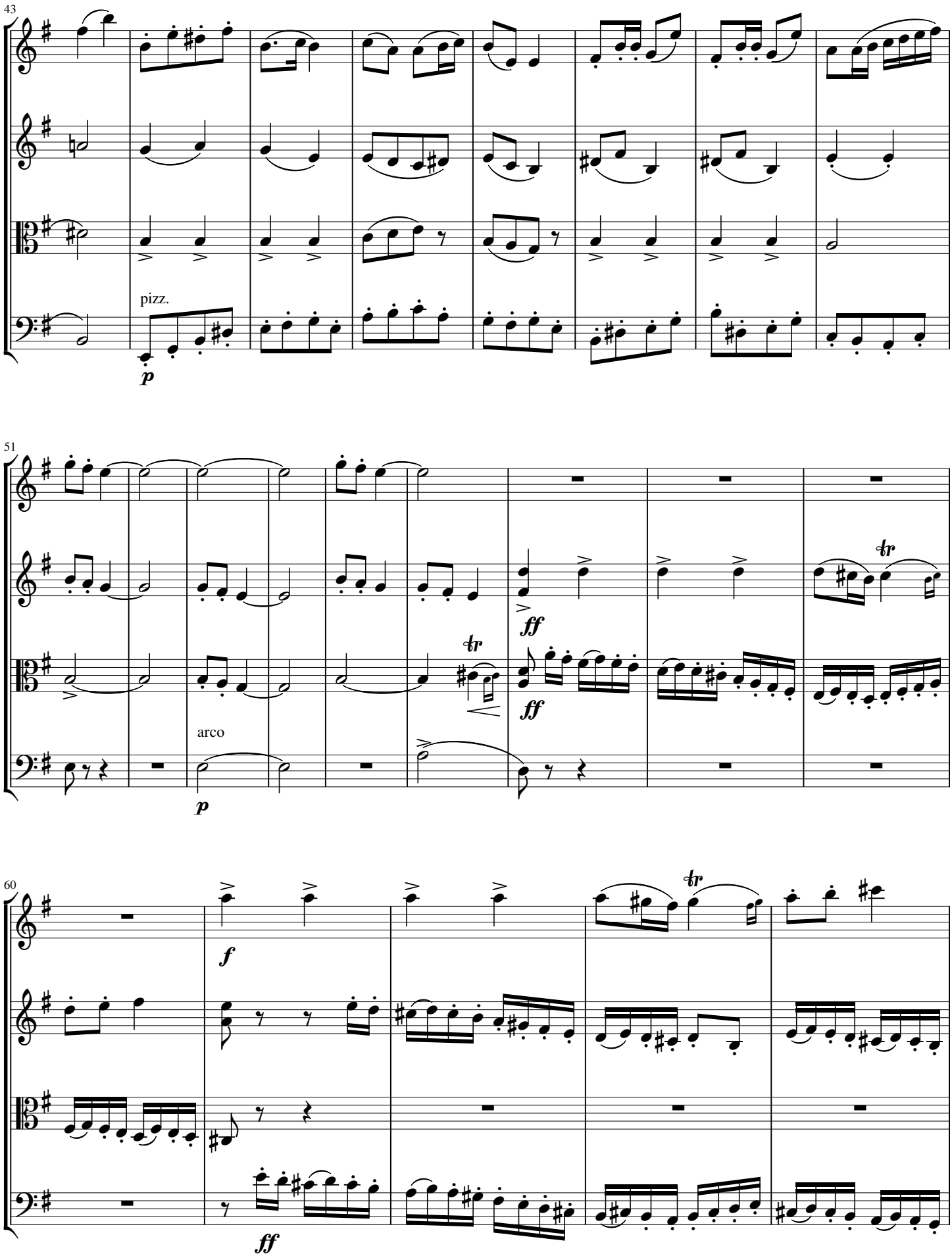
diminuendo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ff
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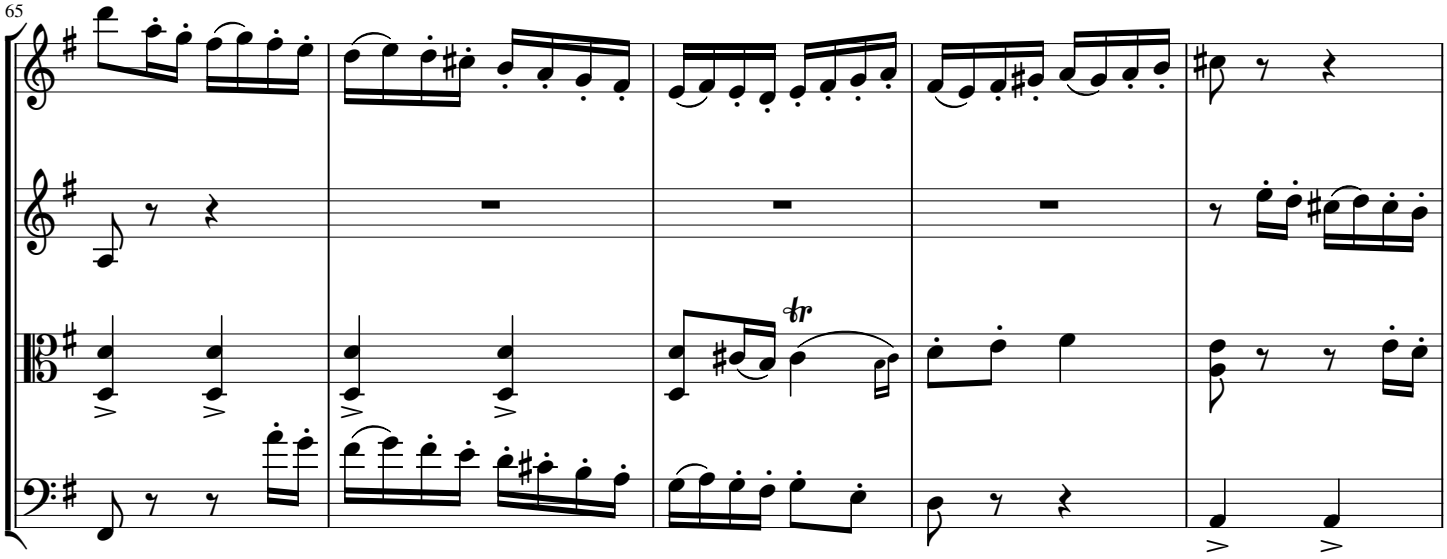
f
ff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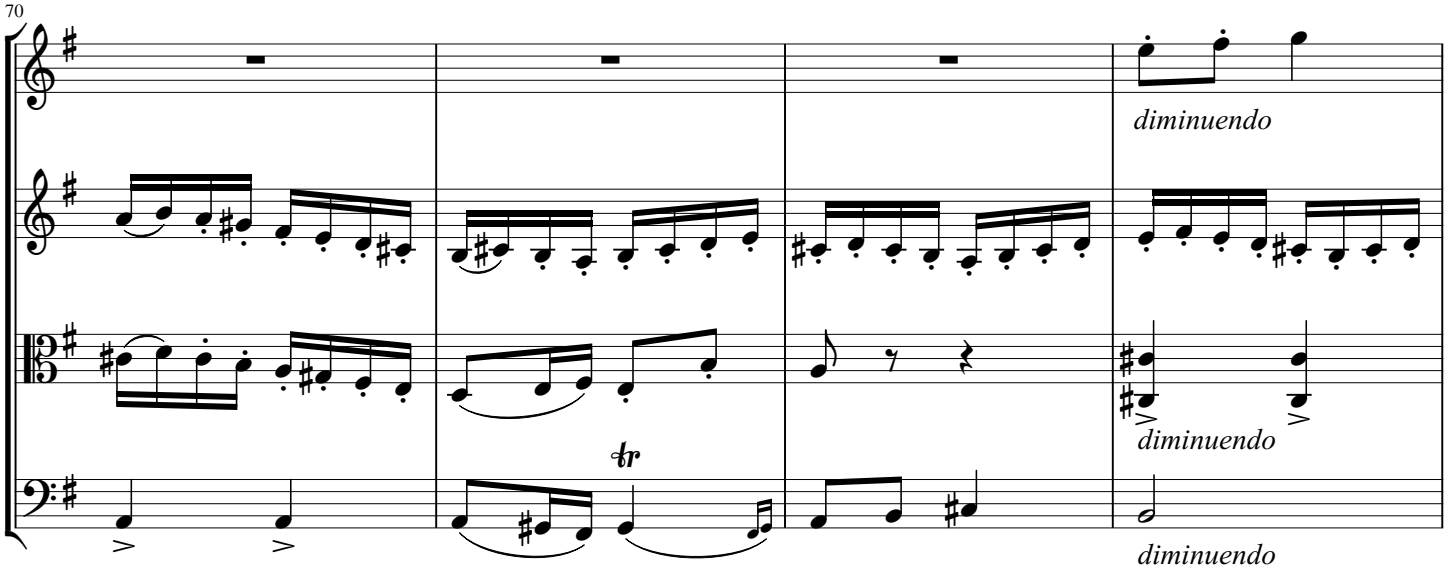
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diminuendo
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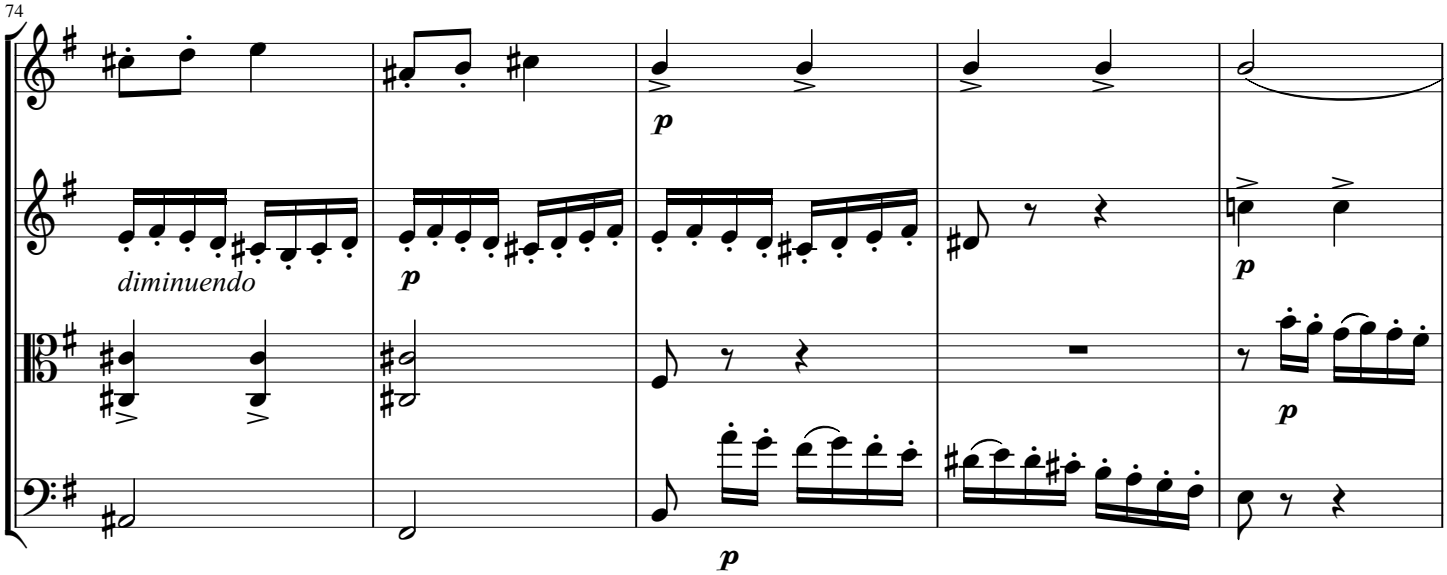
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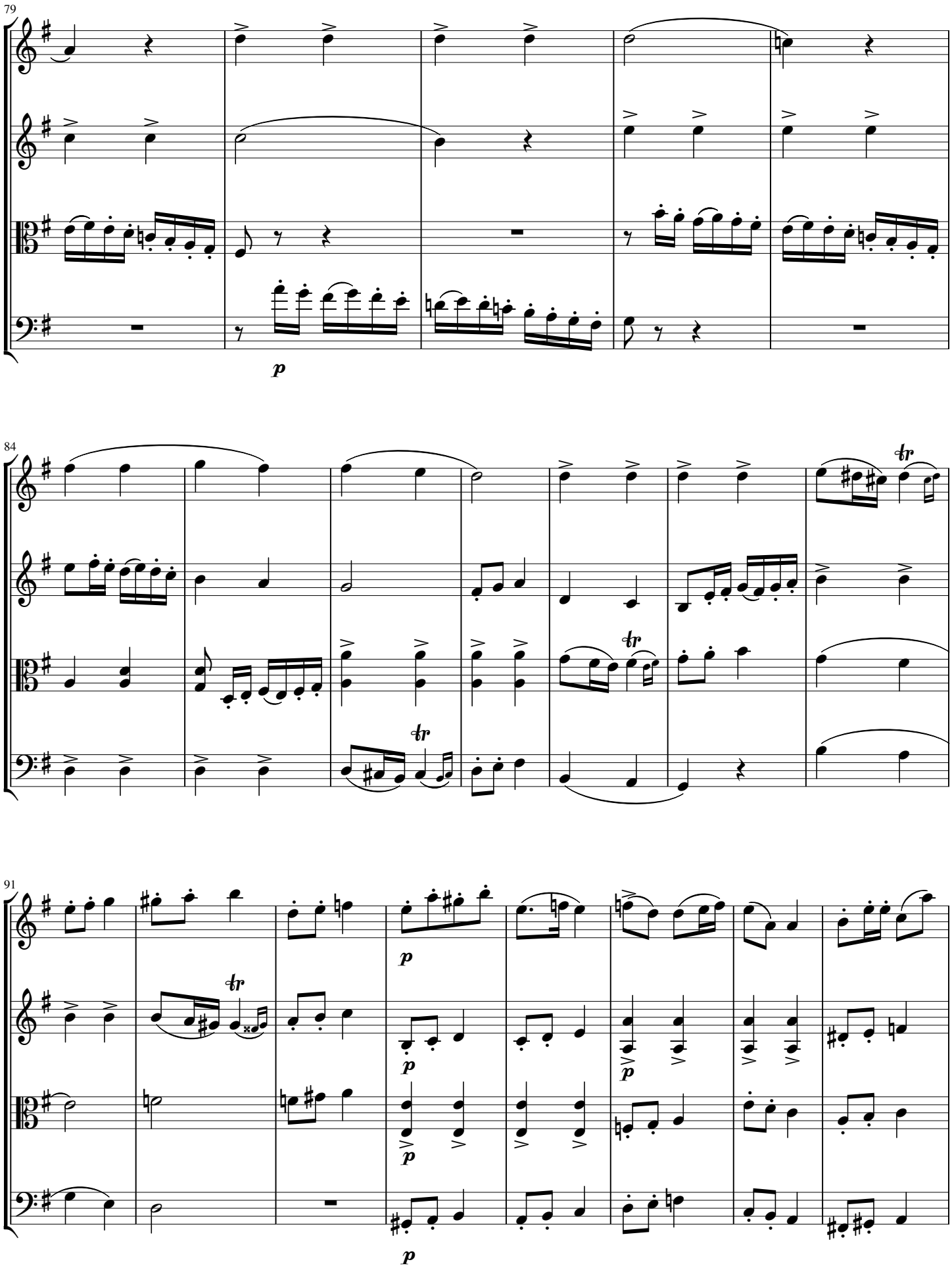
p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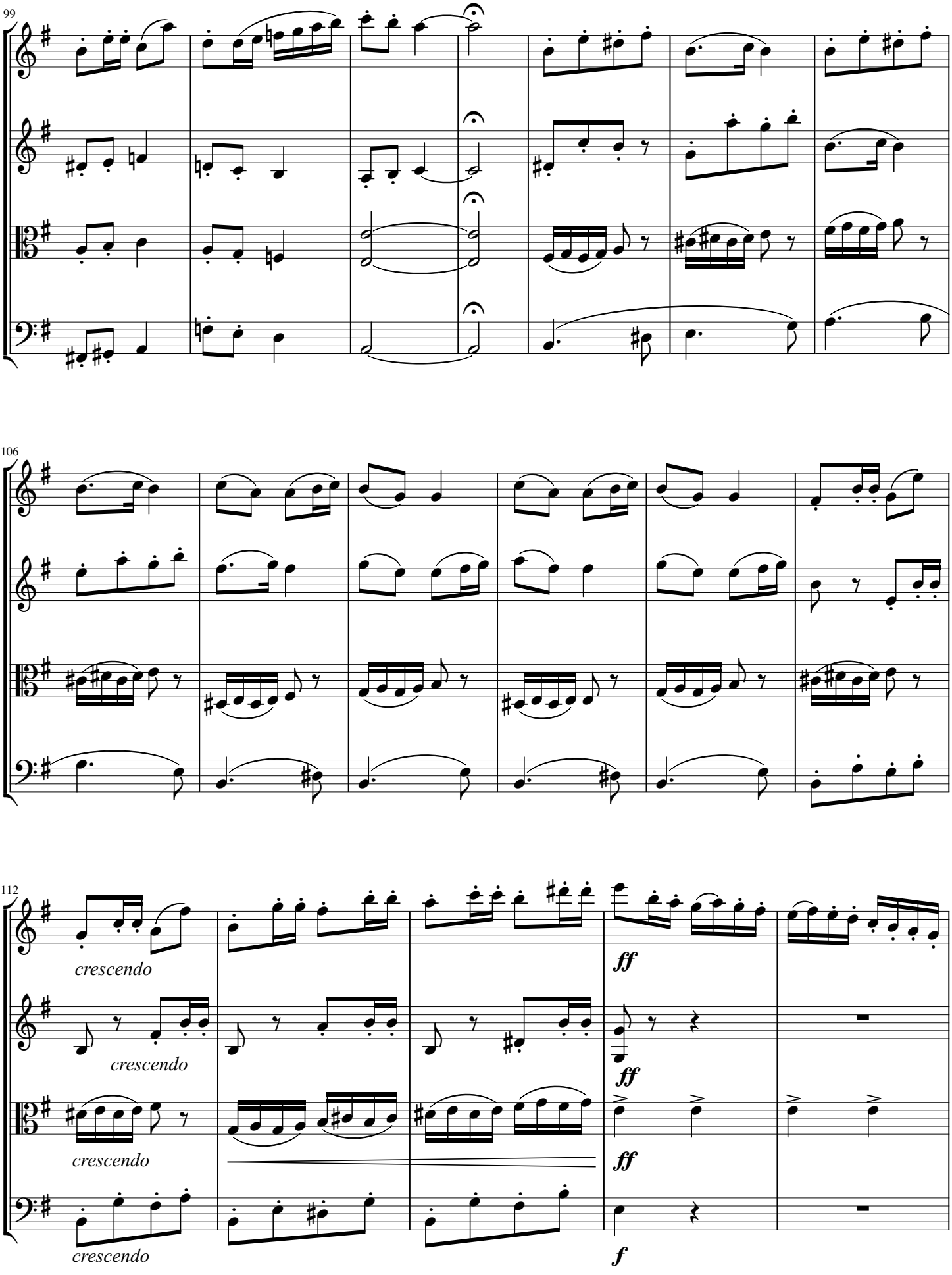
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crescendo
crescendo
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ff
ff
ff
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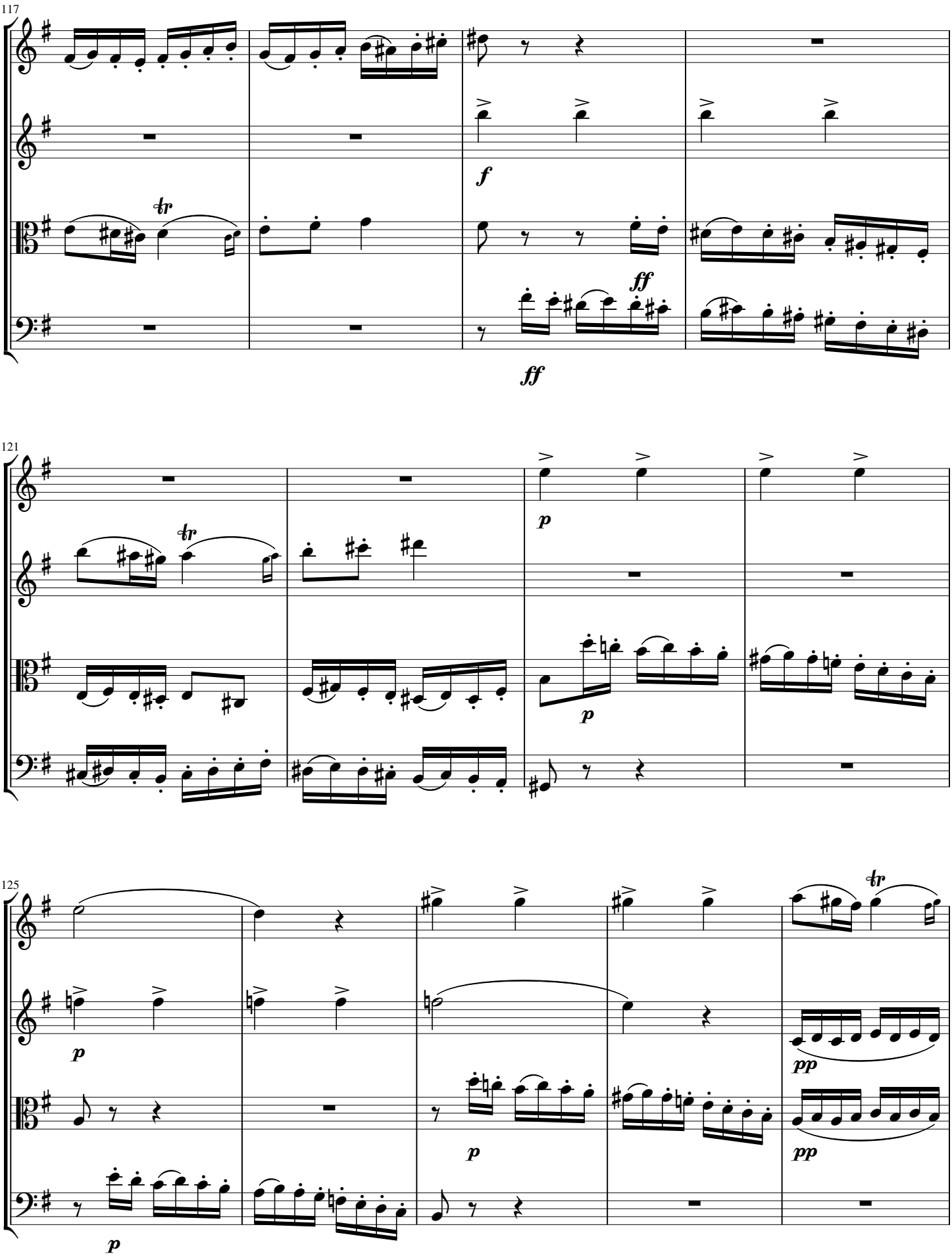
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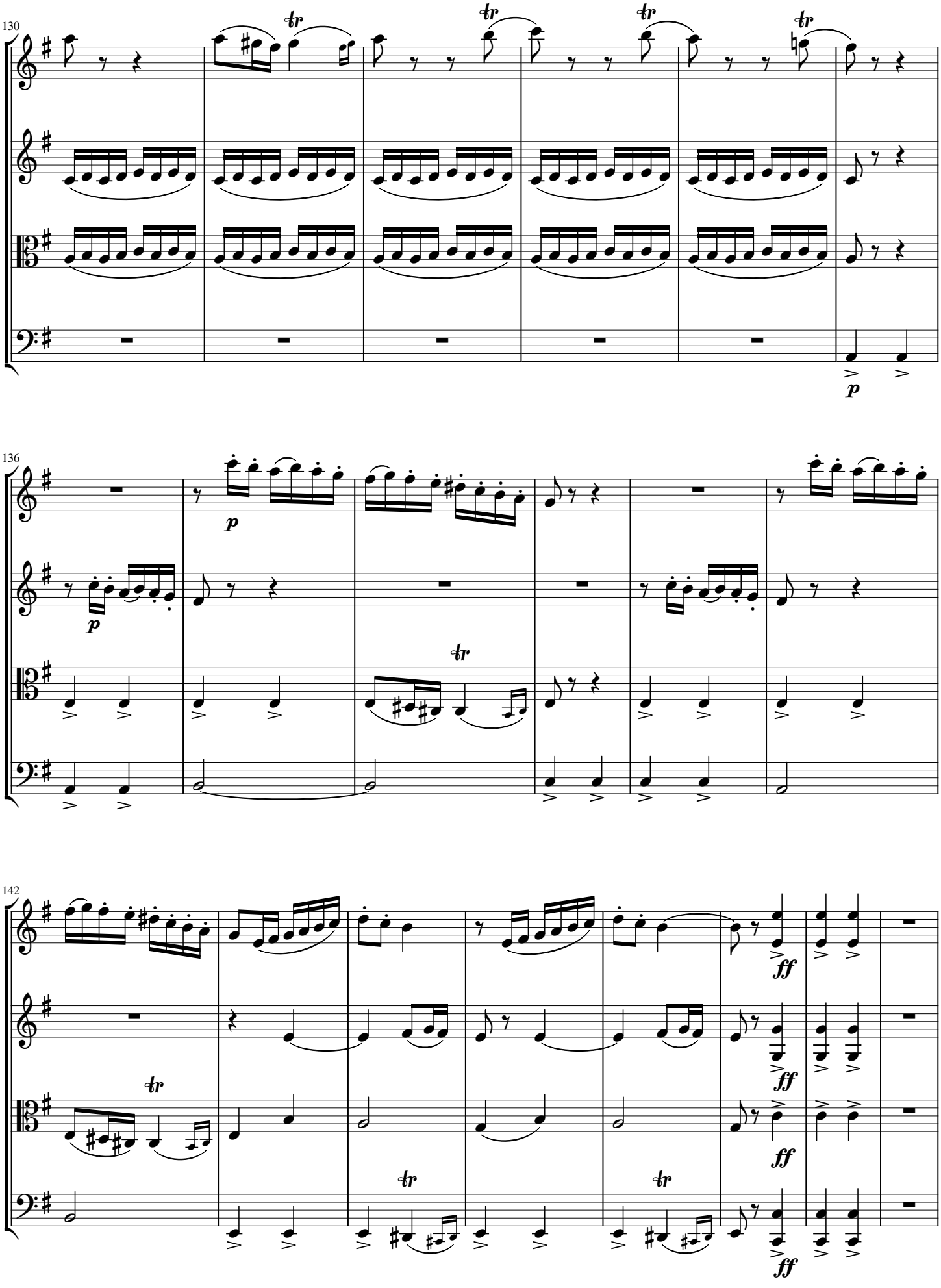
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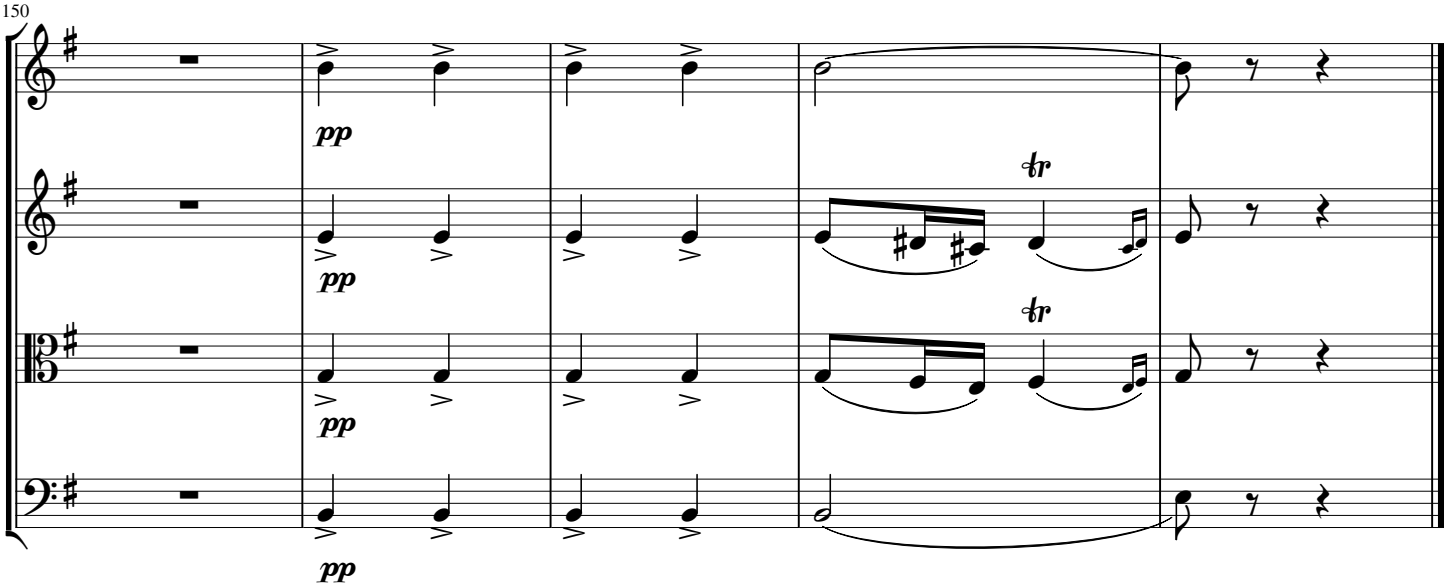
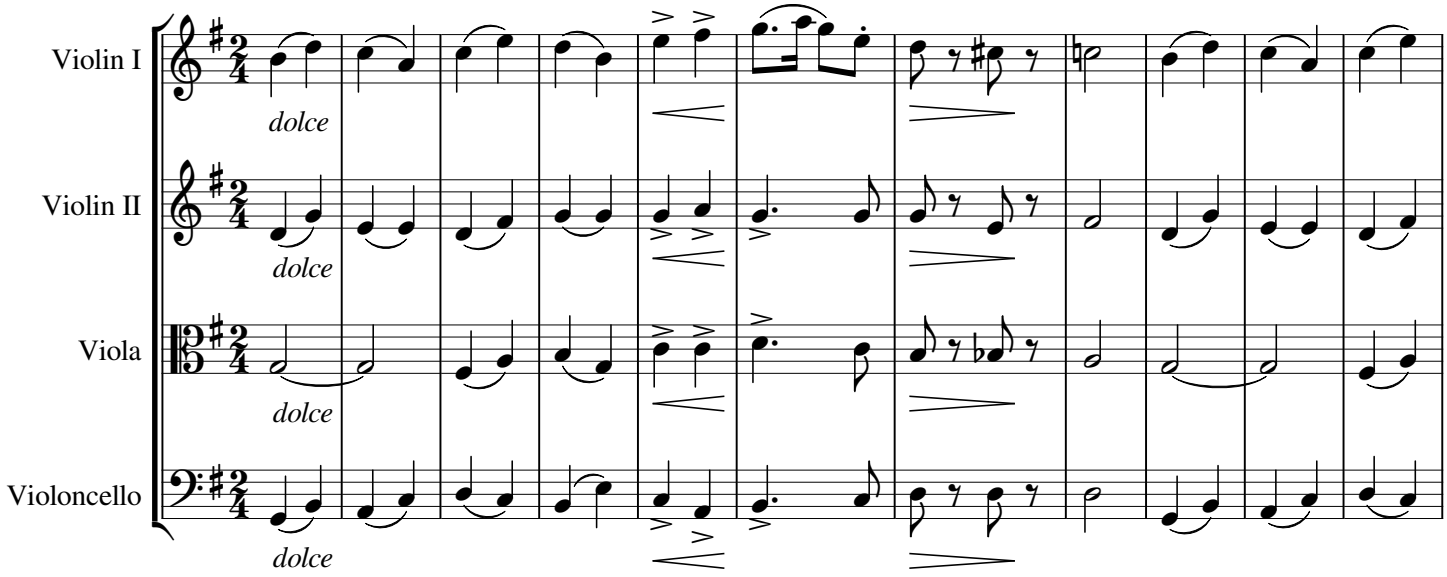
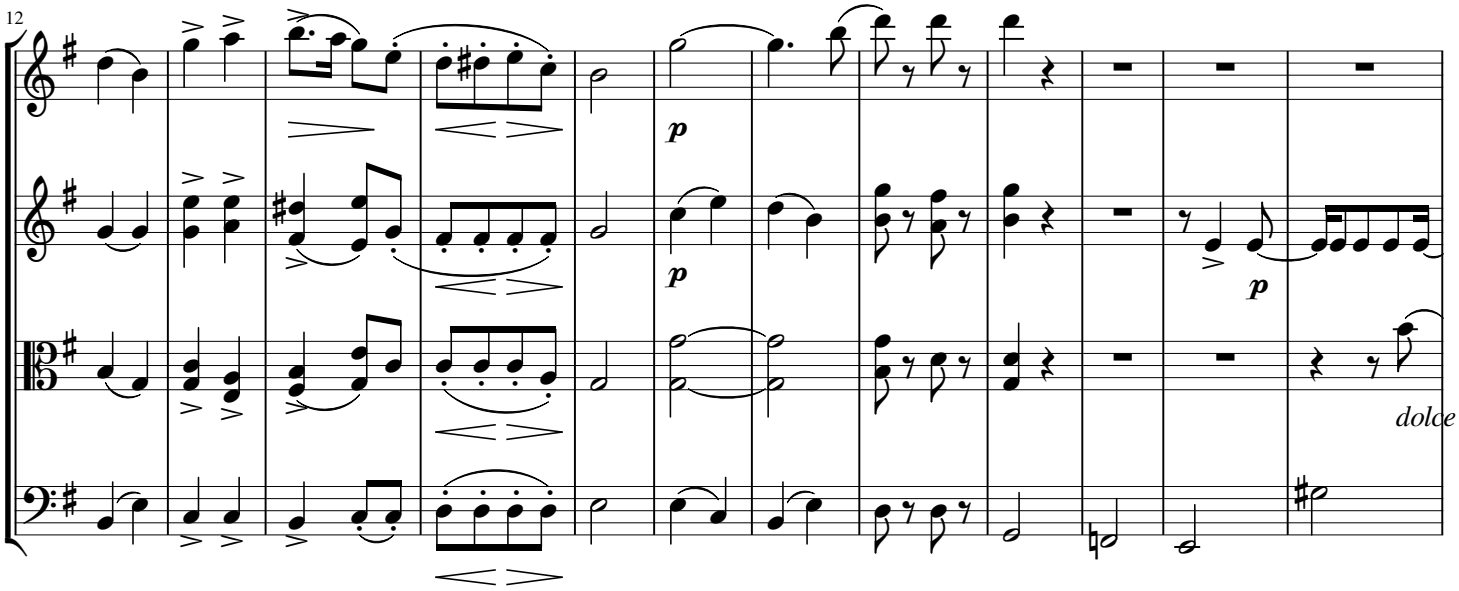
136
142
p
ff

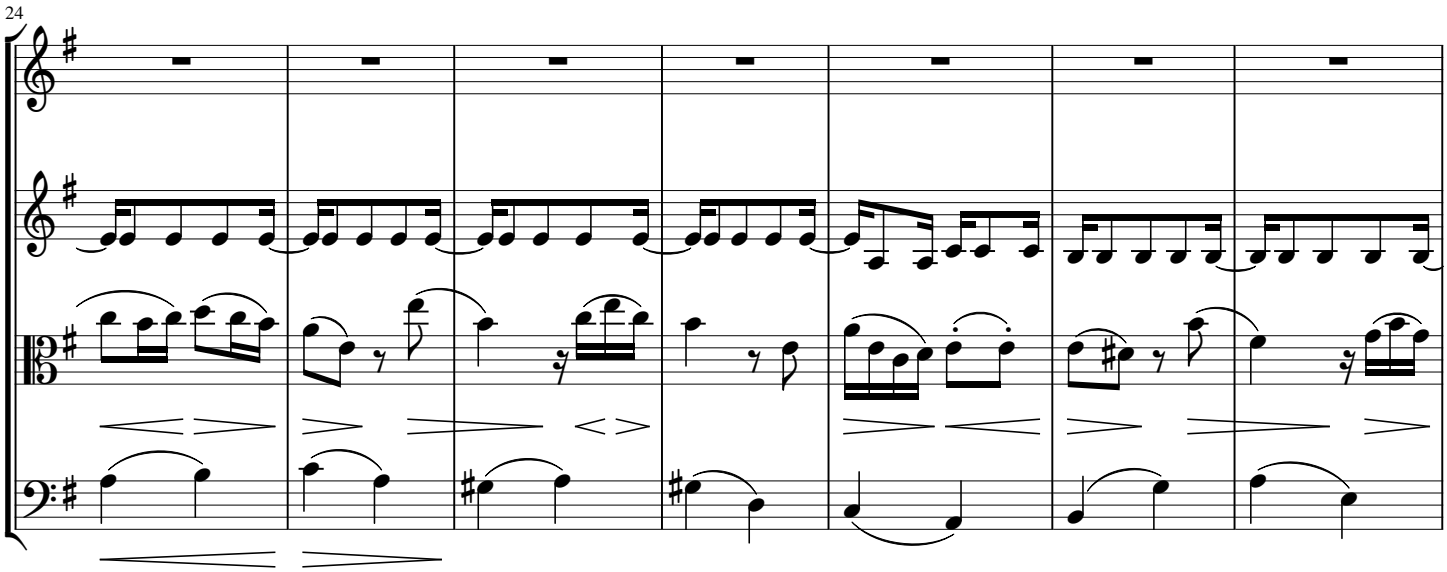
150

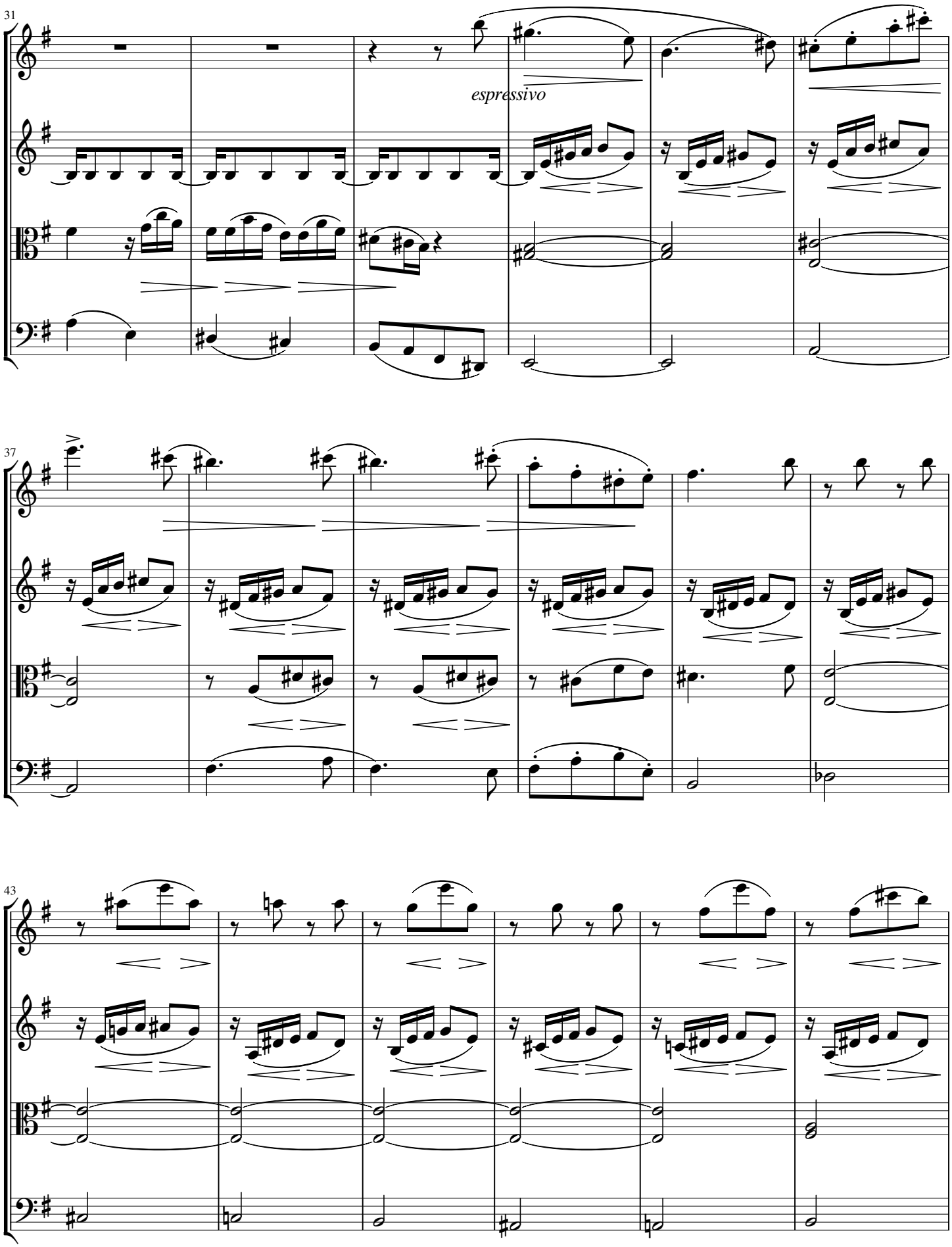


ADAGIO quasi andante





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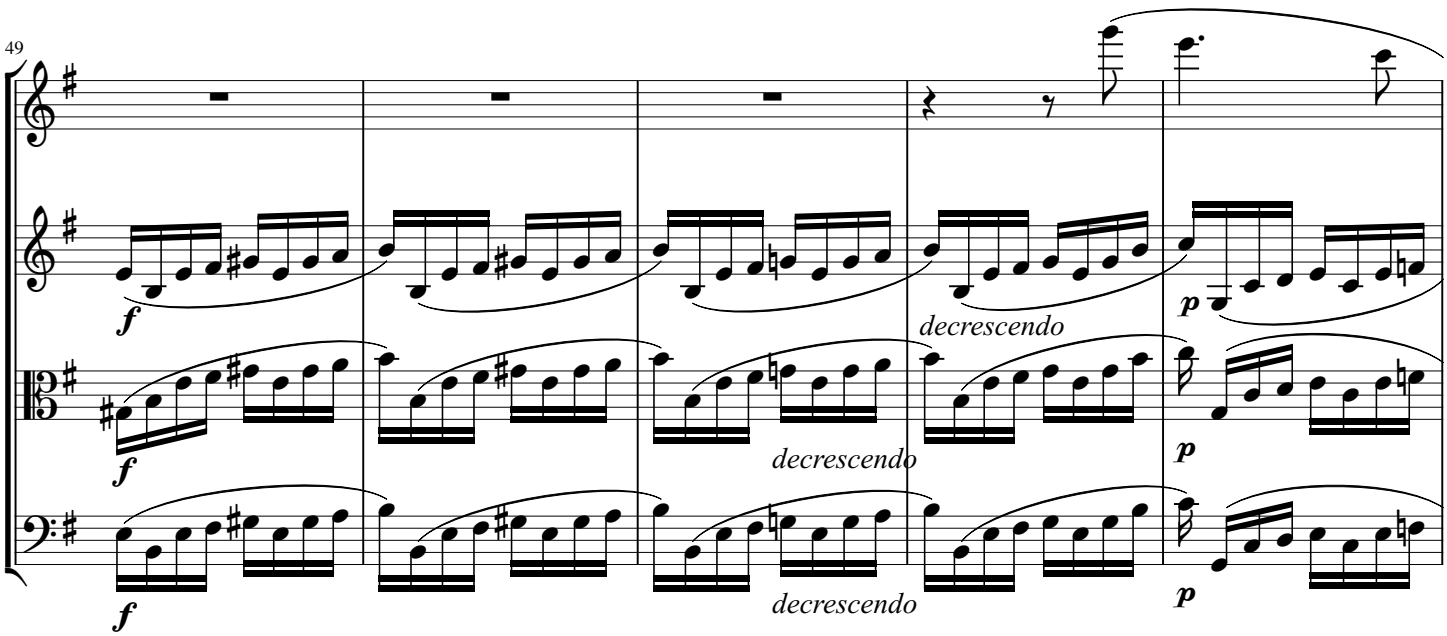
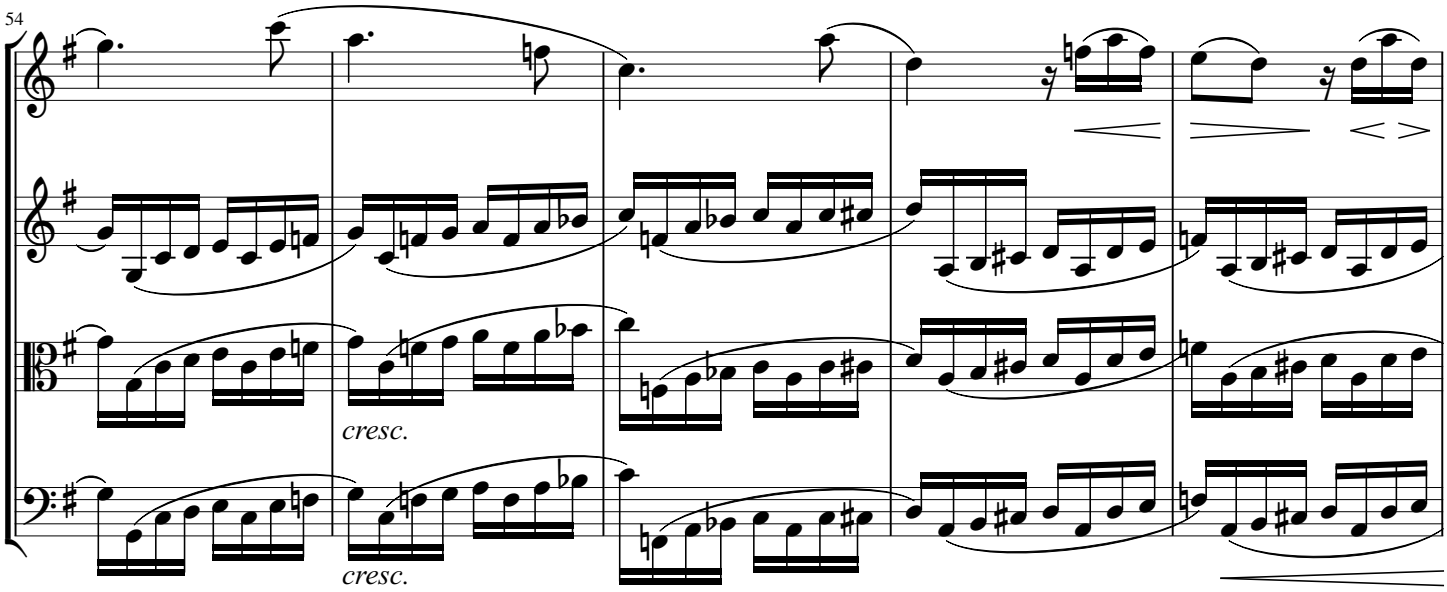
37
43


49
f
f
f
decrescendo
decrescendo
decrescendo
p
p
p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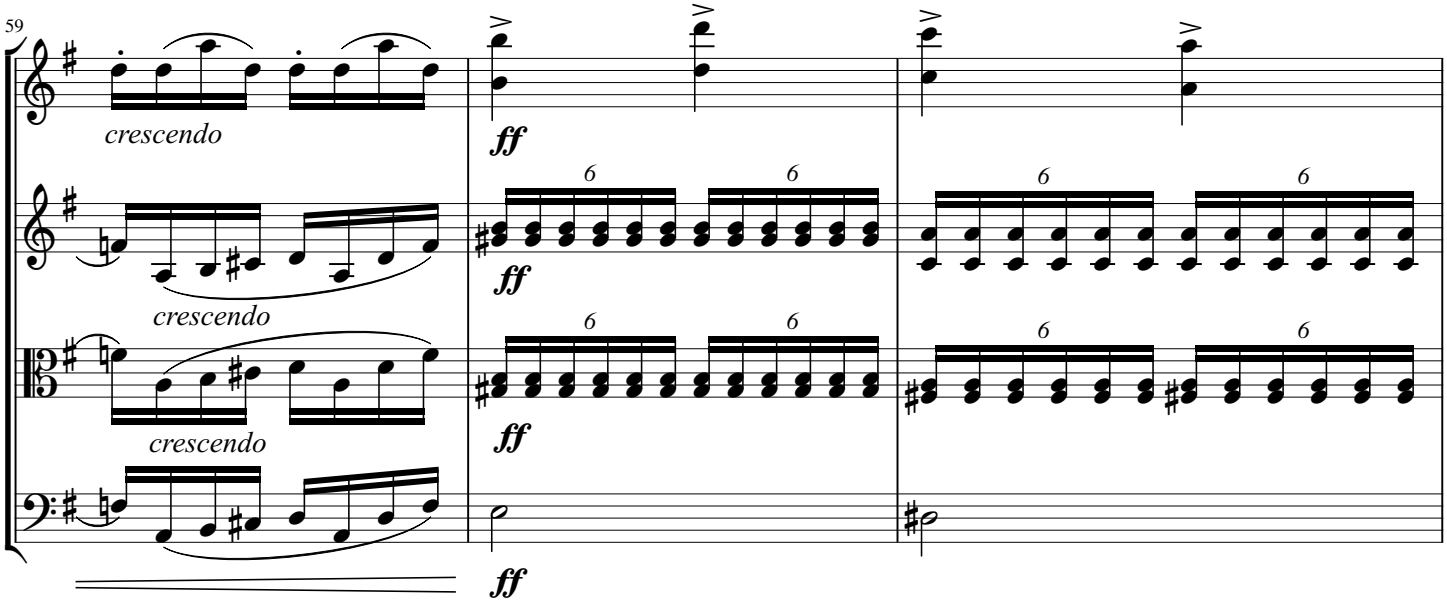
cresc.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crescendo
crescendo
ff
ff
ff
ff
6
6
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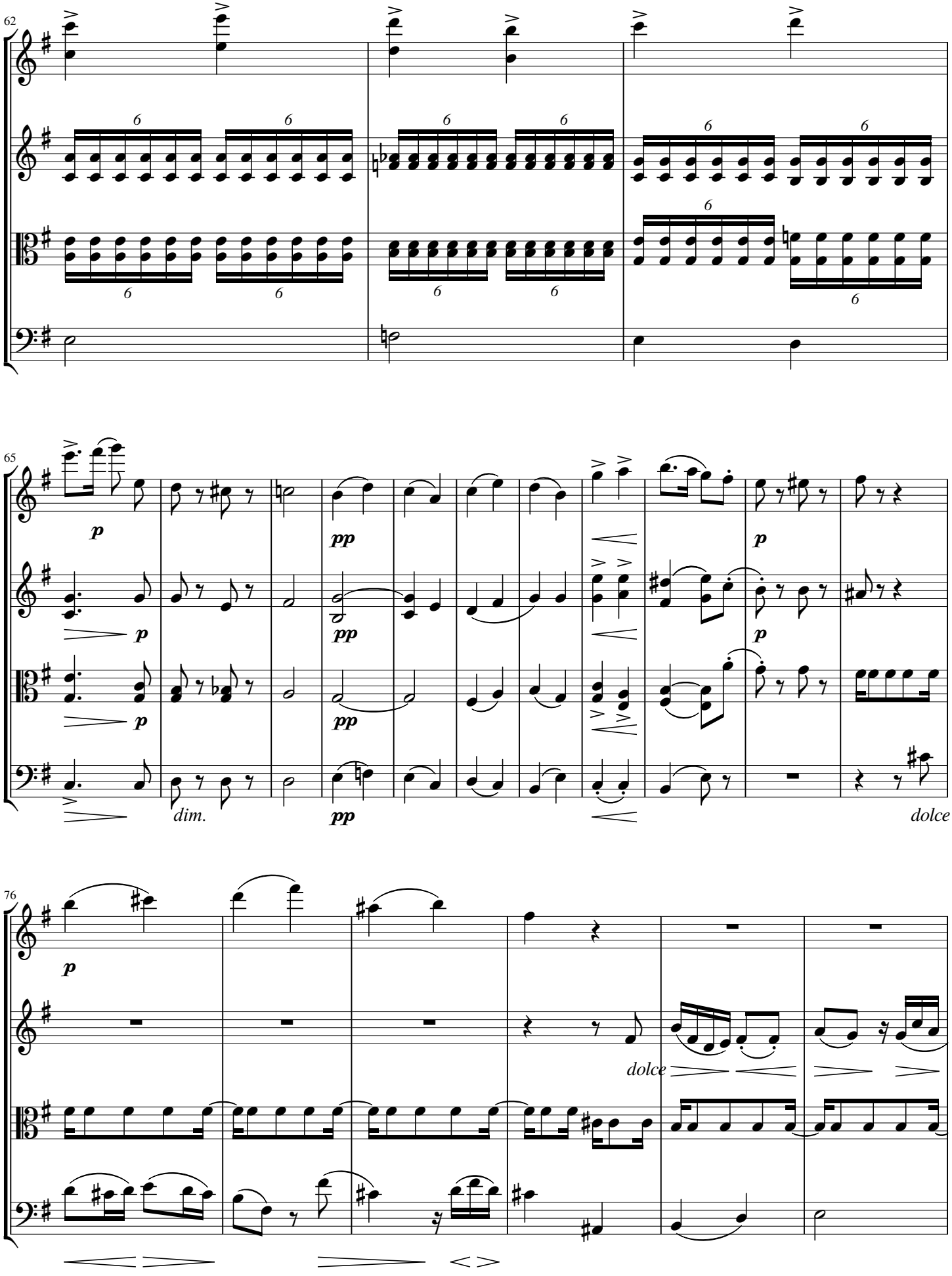
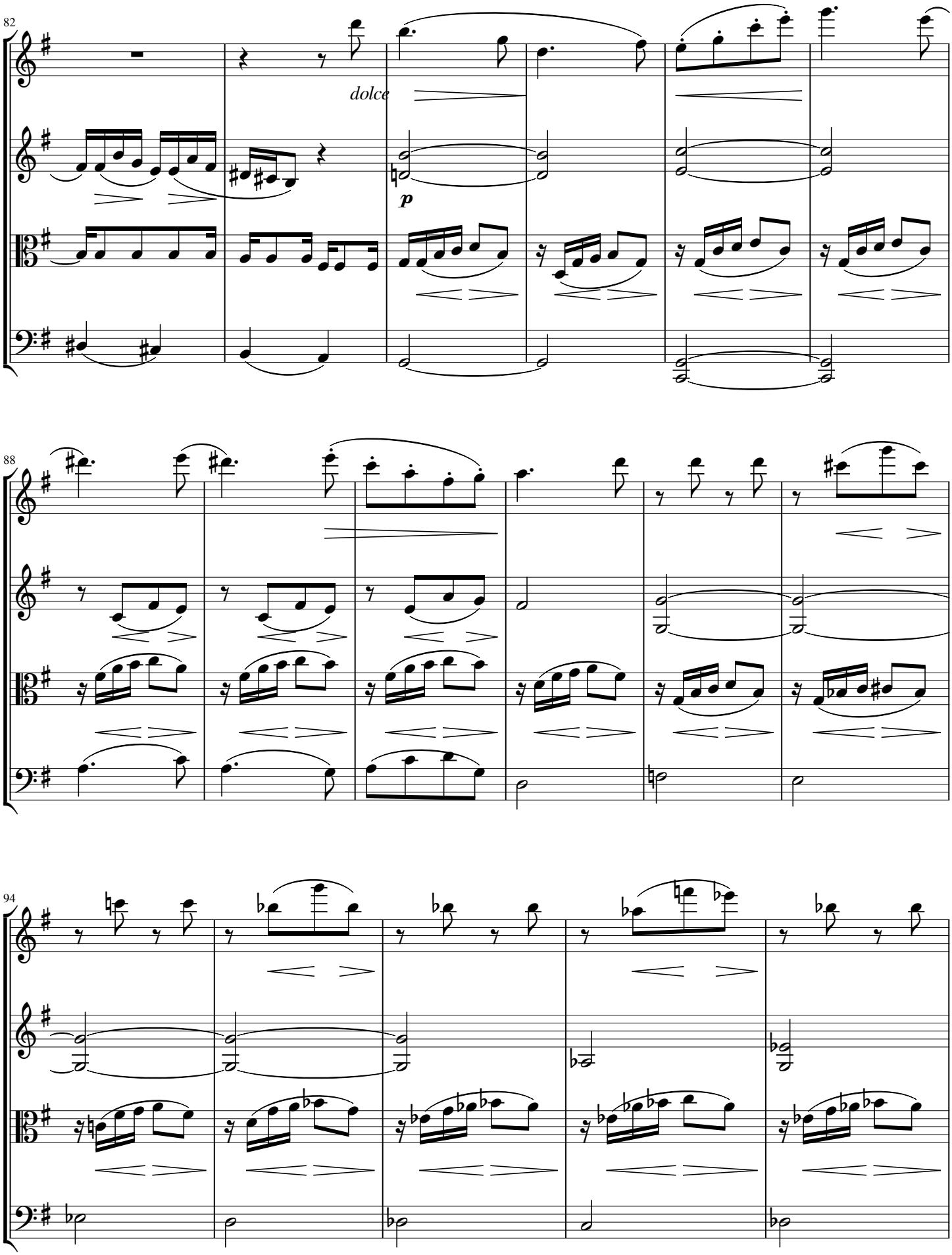
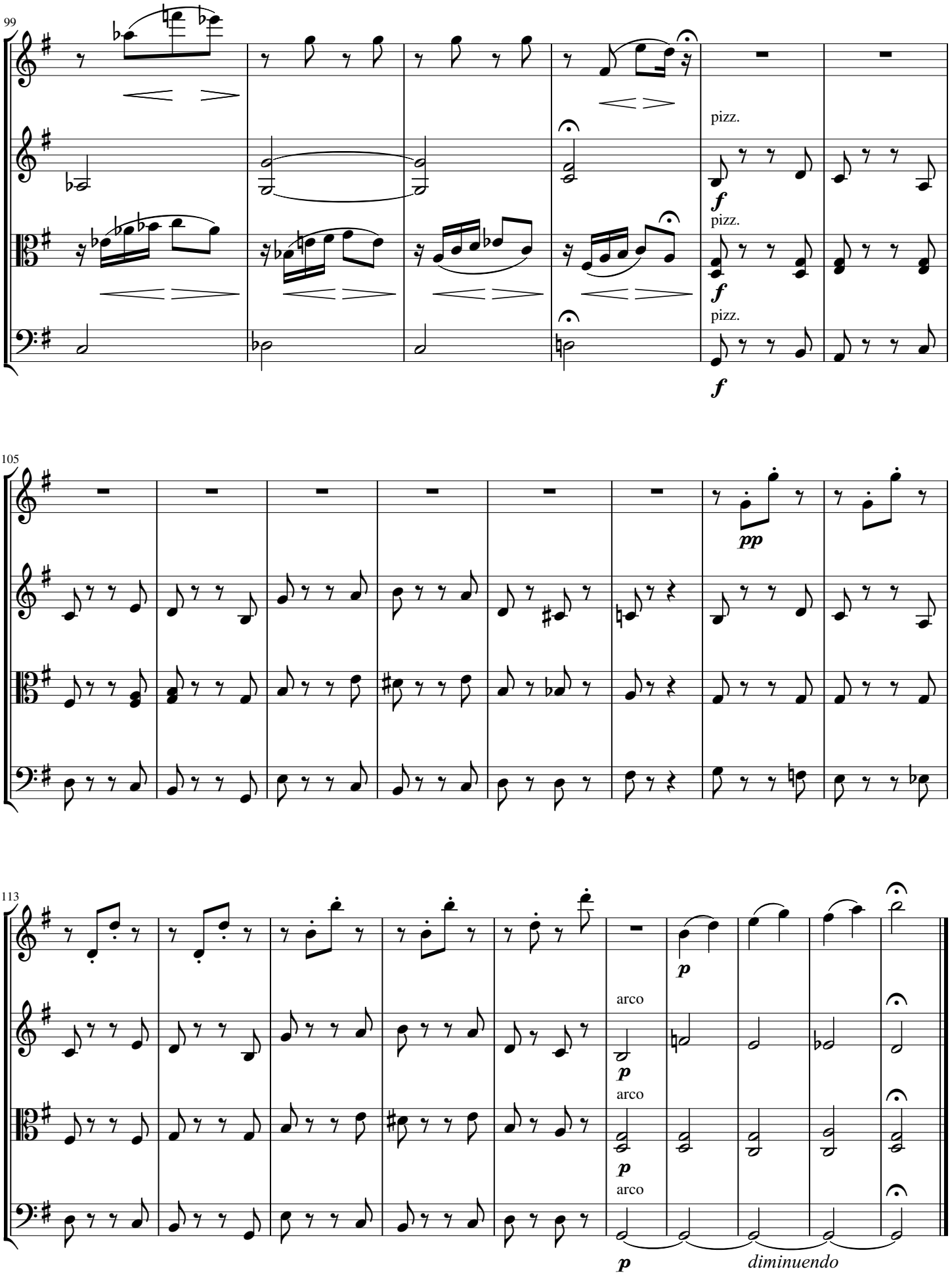
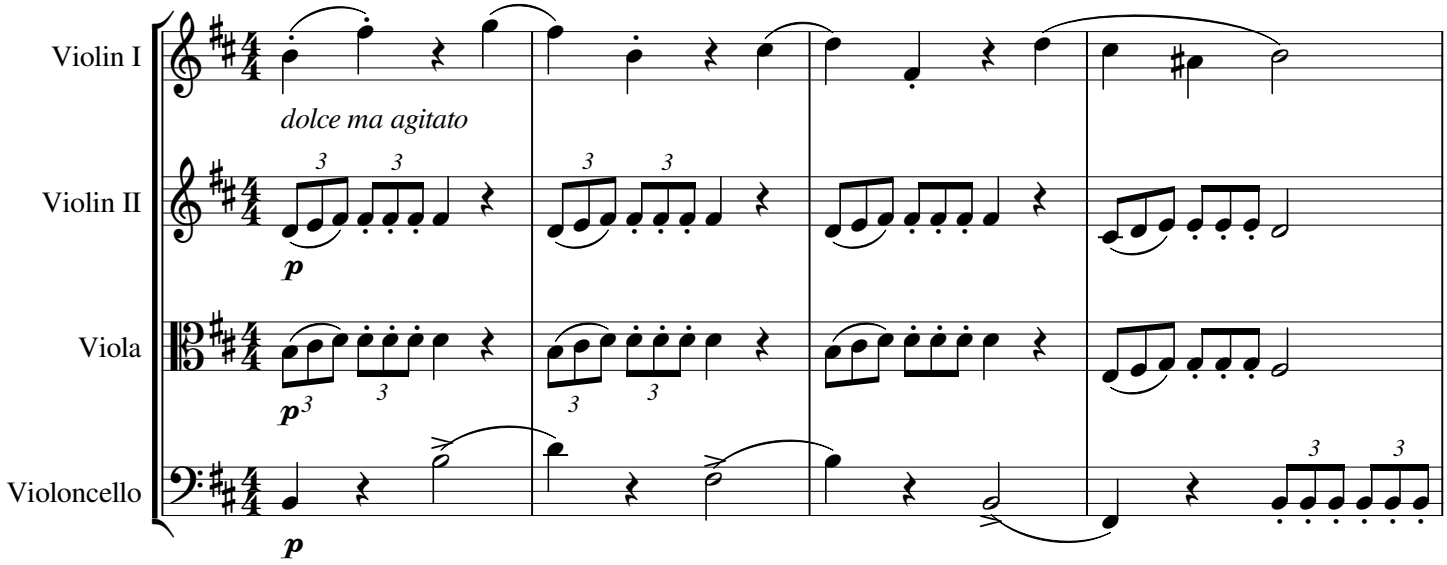
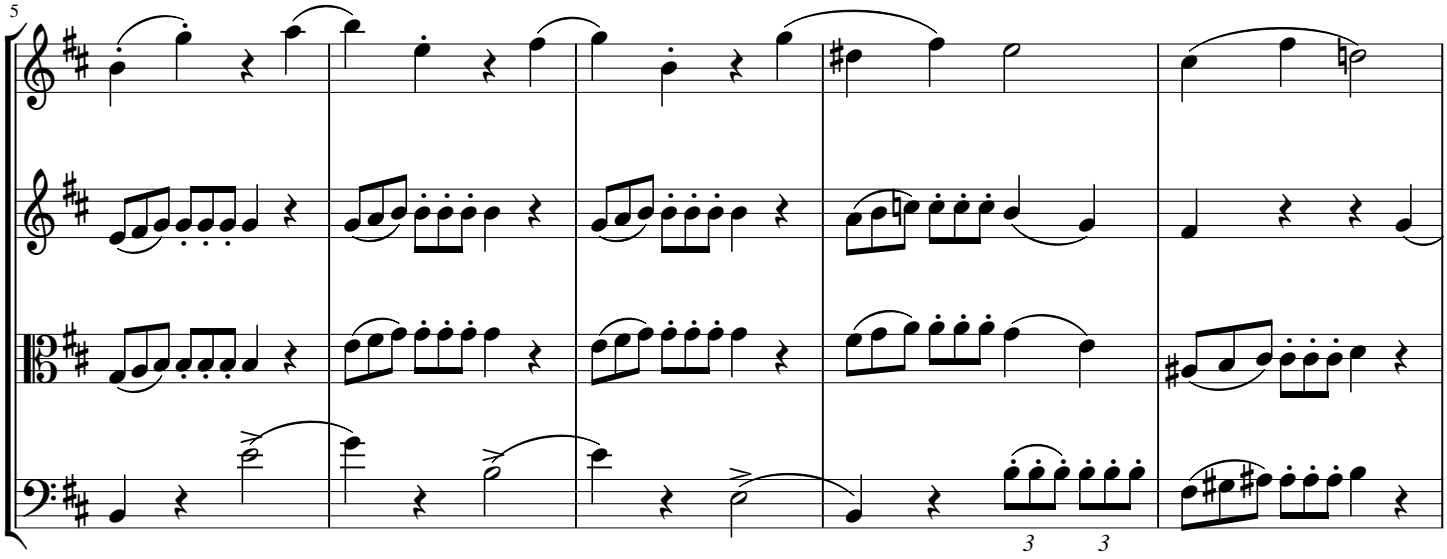

62
65
p
pp
dim.
dolce
76
p
dolce

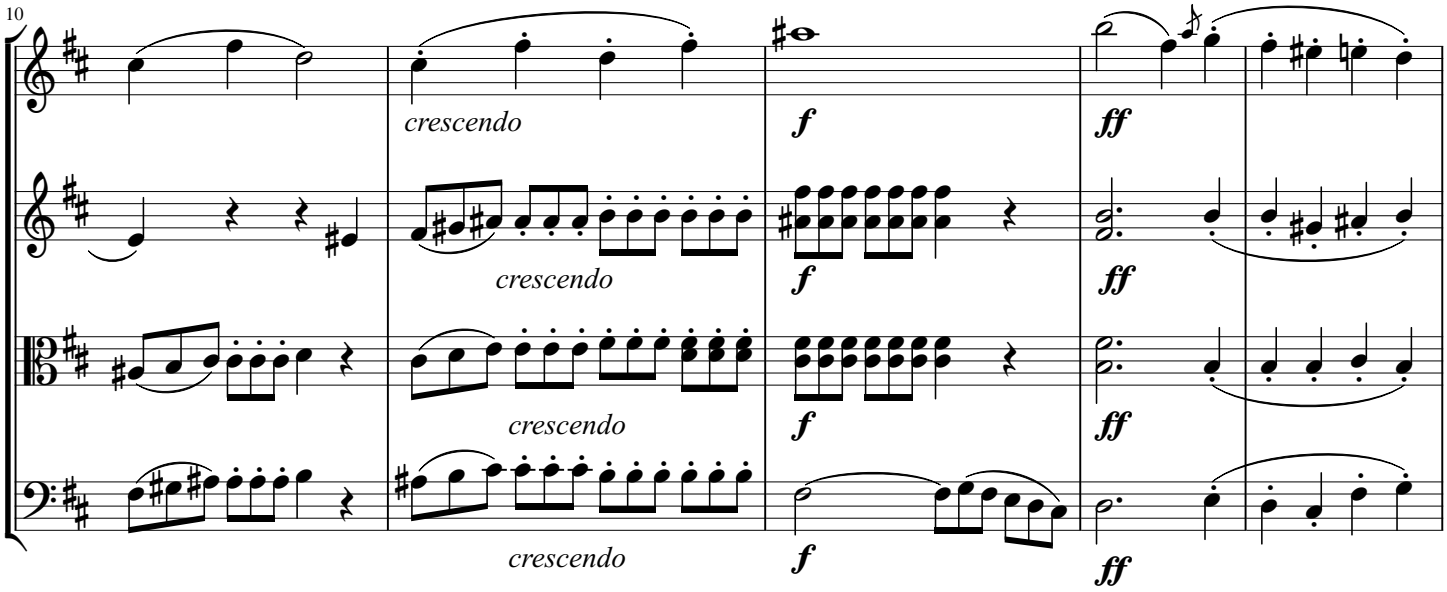

82
dolce
p
88
94

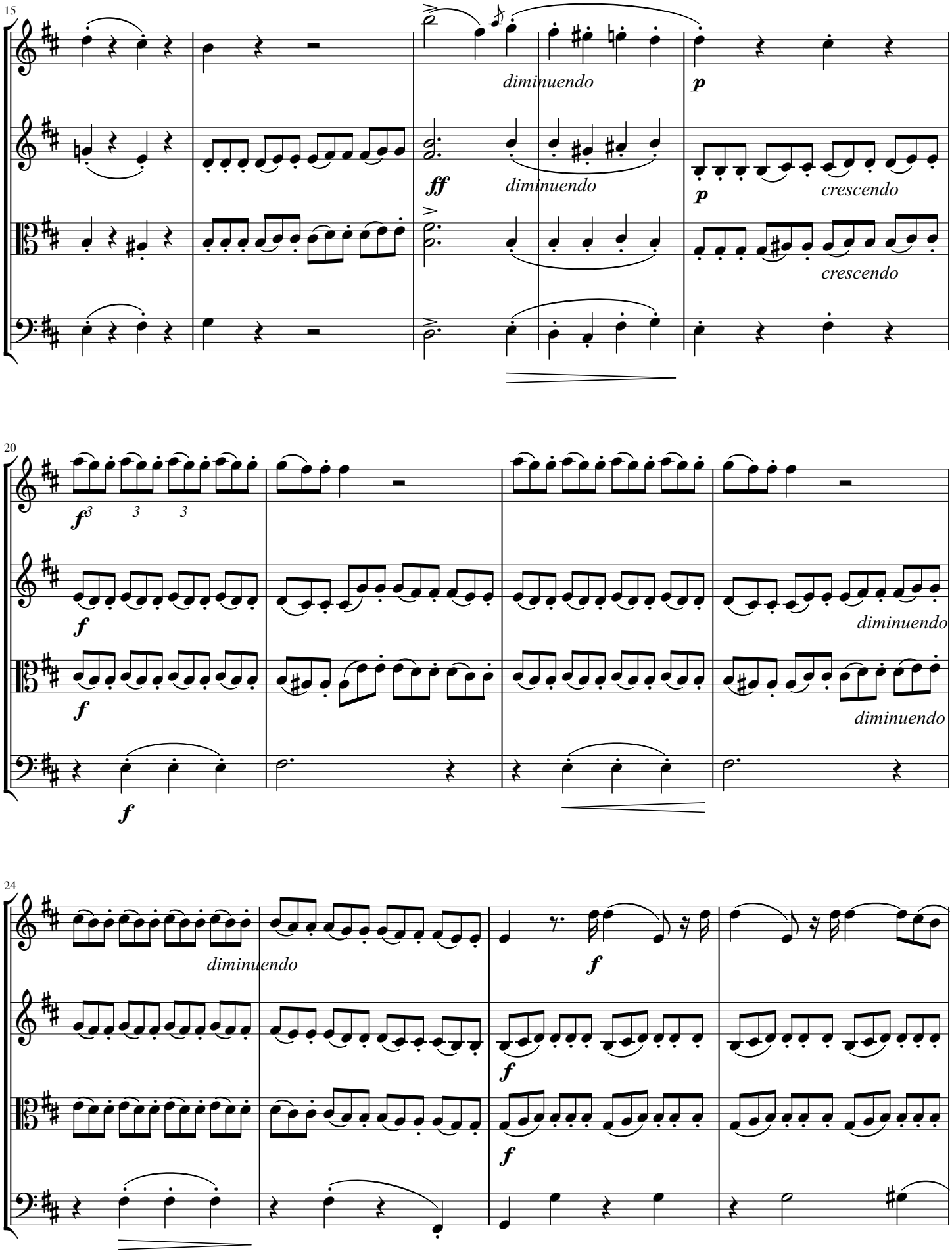

99
pizz.
f
pizz.
f
pizz.
f
105
pp
113
arco
p
arco
p
arco
p
p
diminuendo

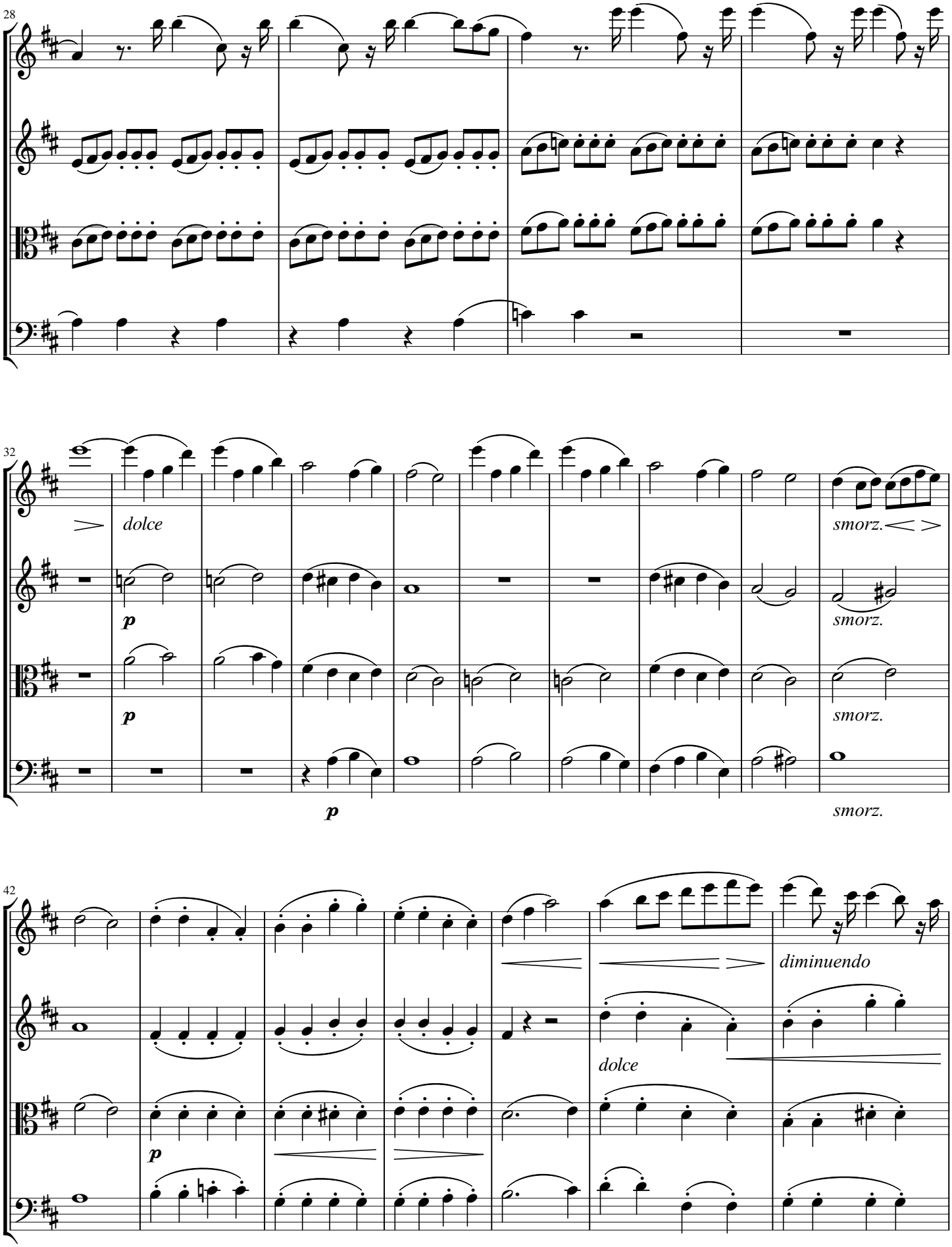
FINALE. Allegro molto

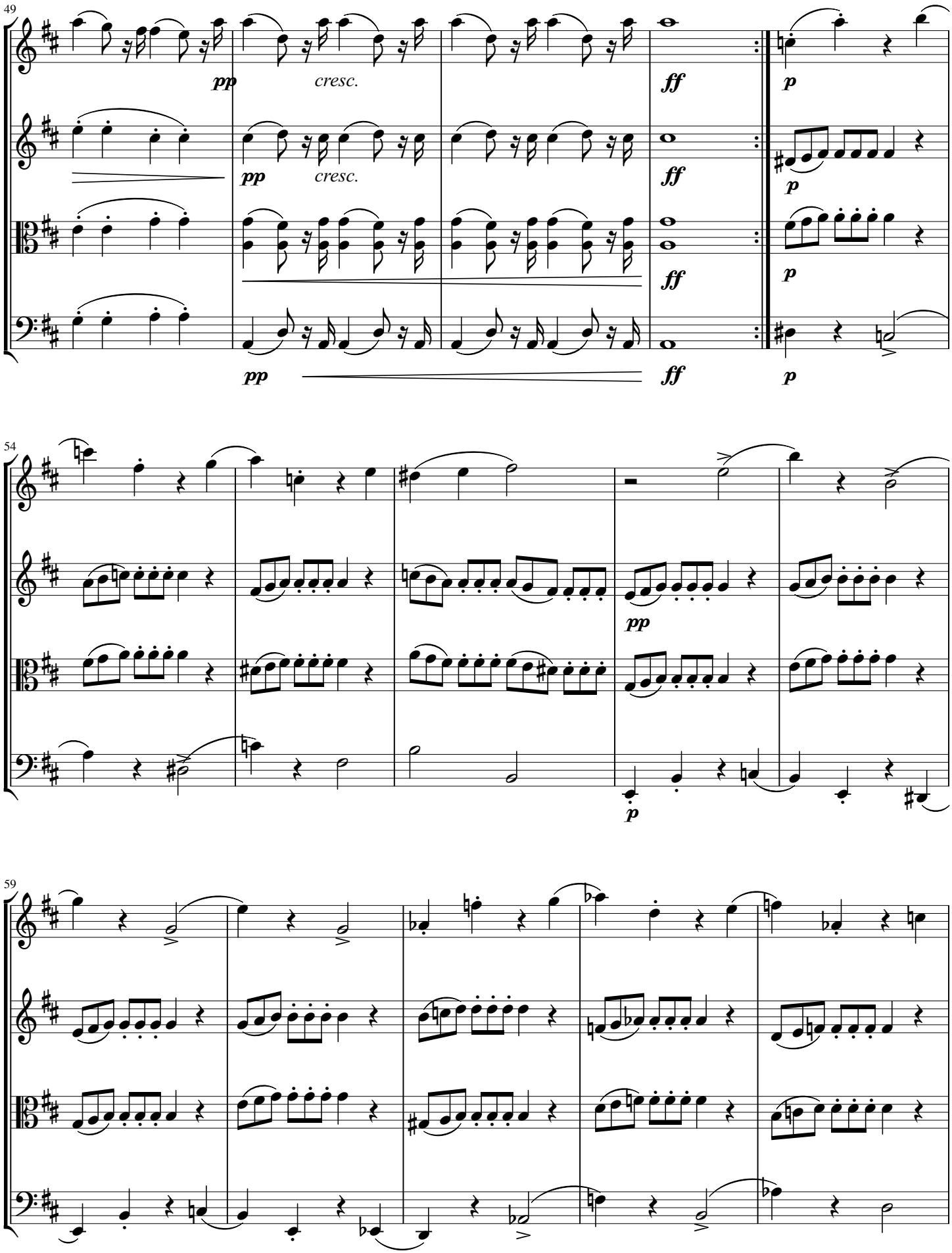


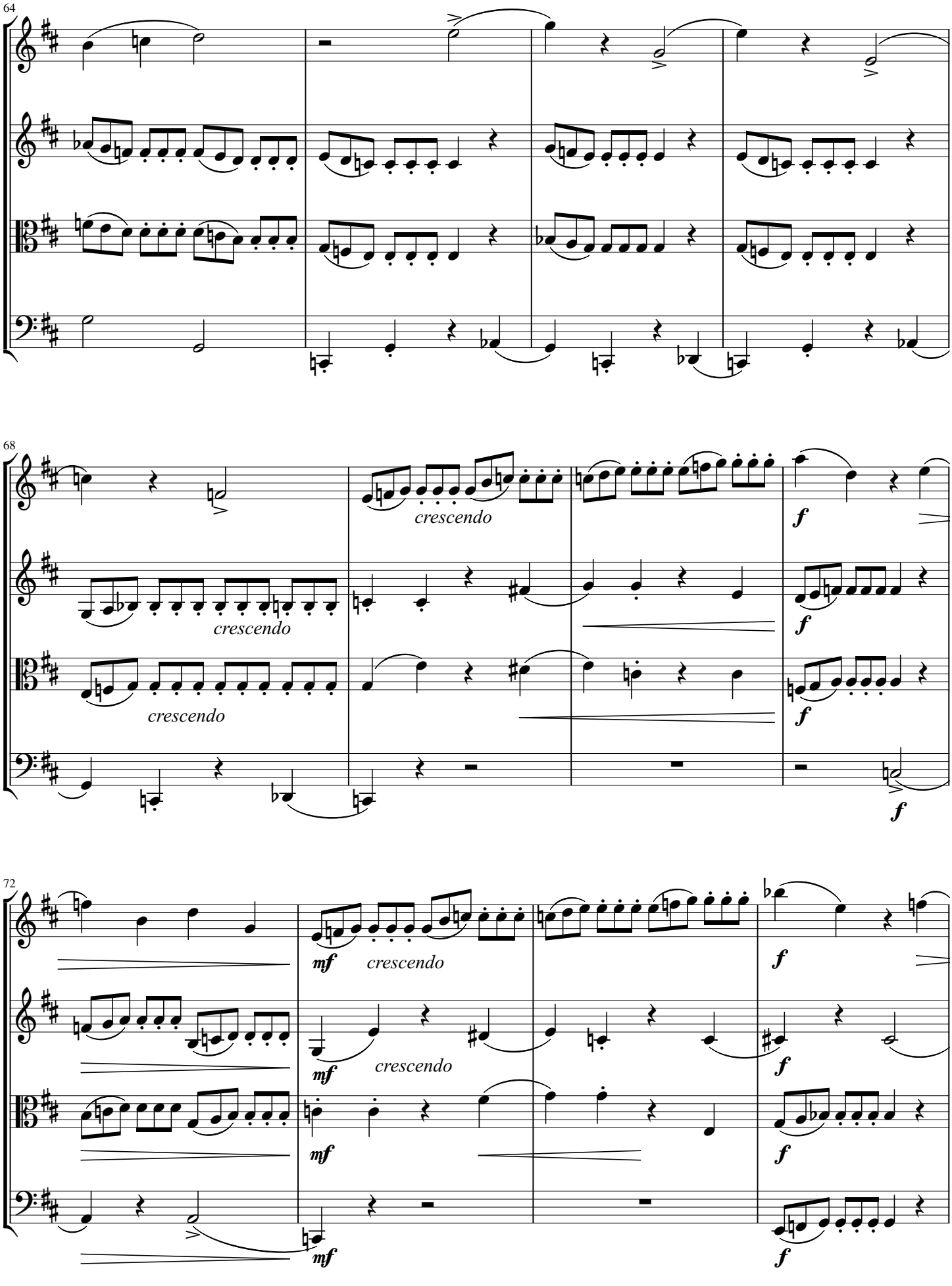


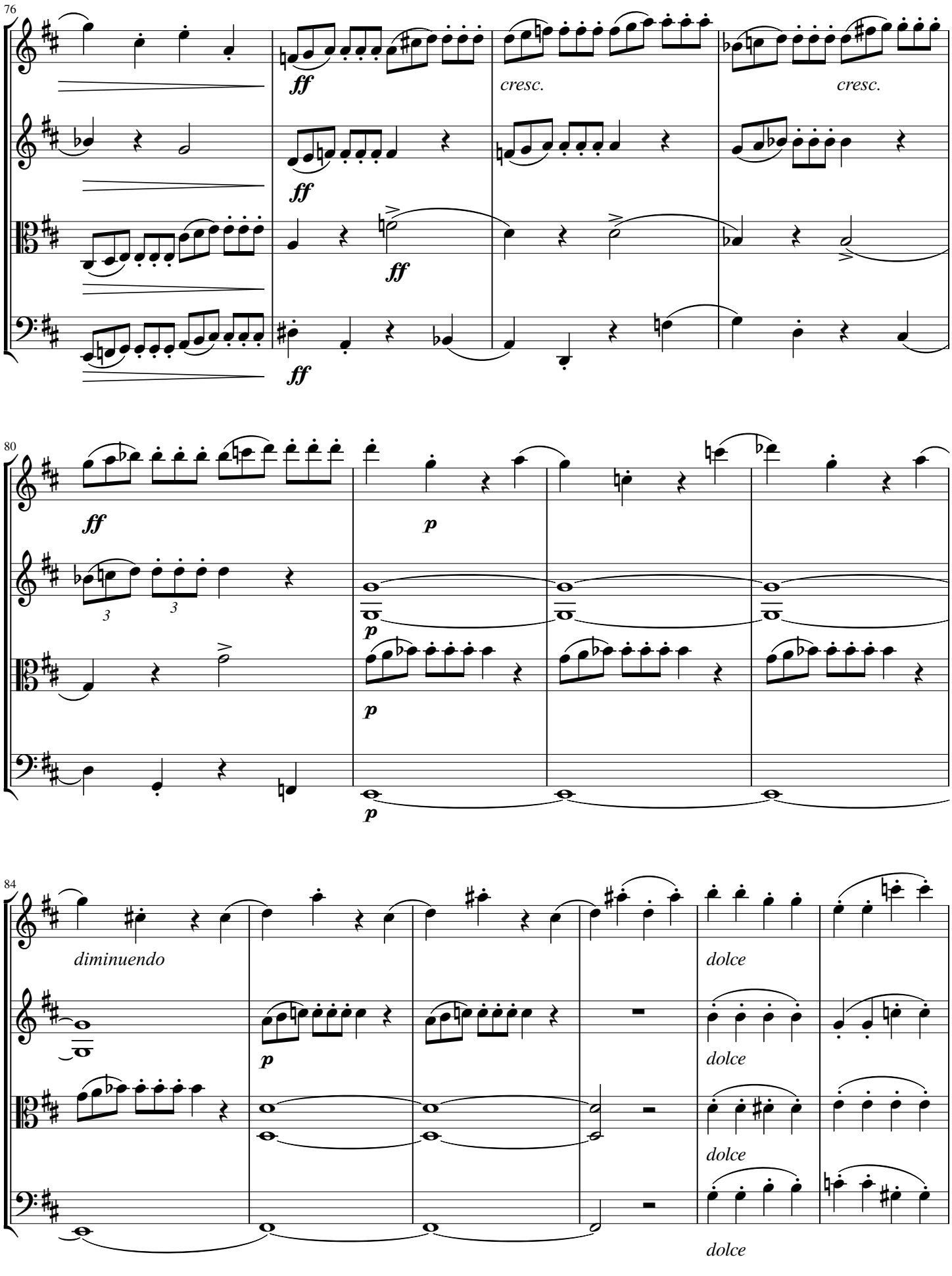


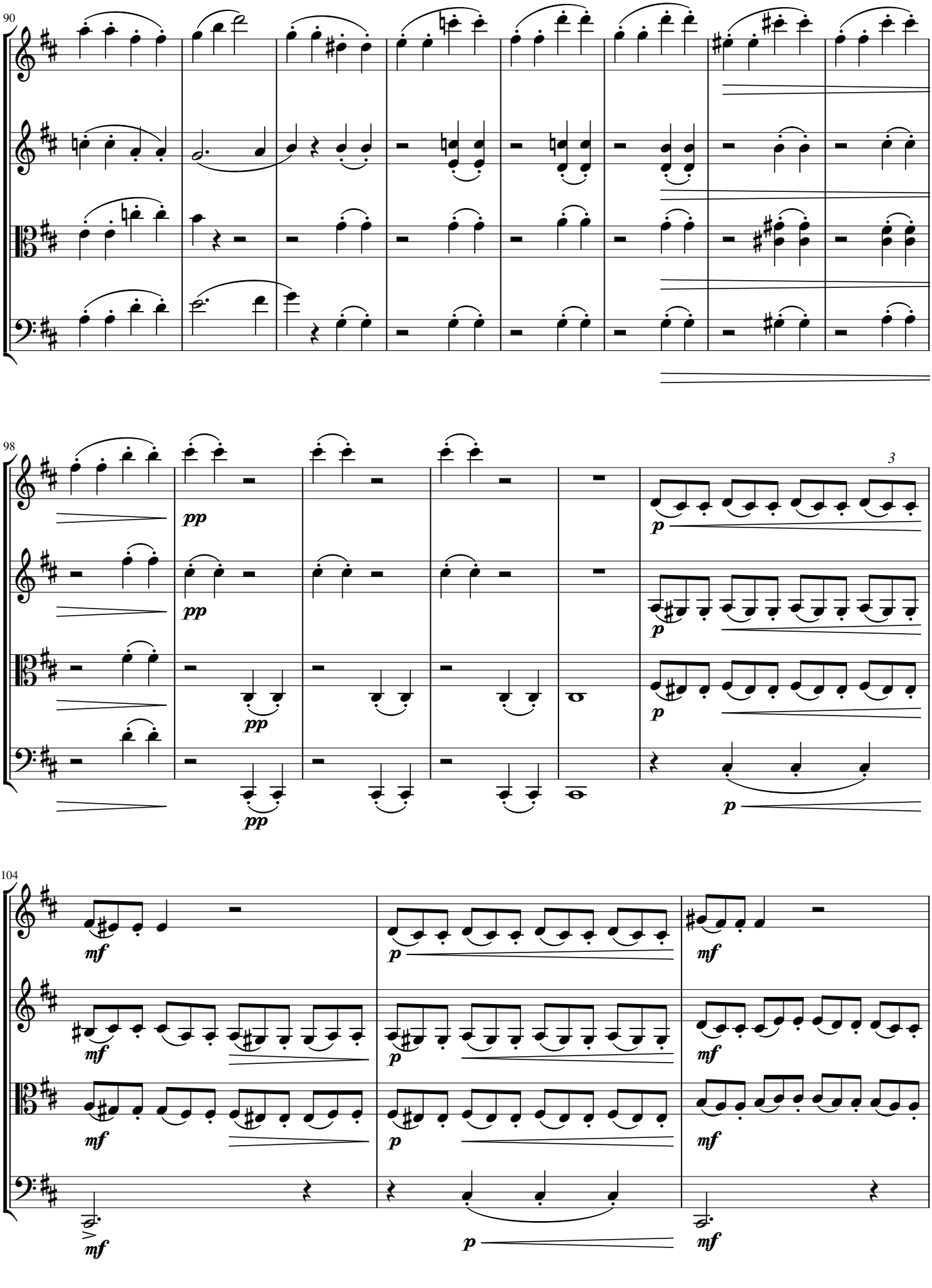

15
diminuendo
p
ff
diminuendo
p
crescendo
crescendo
20
f
3
3
3
f
diminuendo
f
diminuendo
f
24
diminuendo
f
f
f

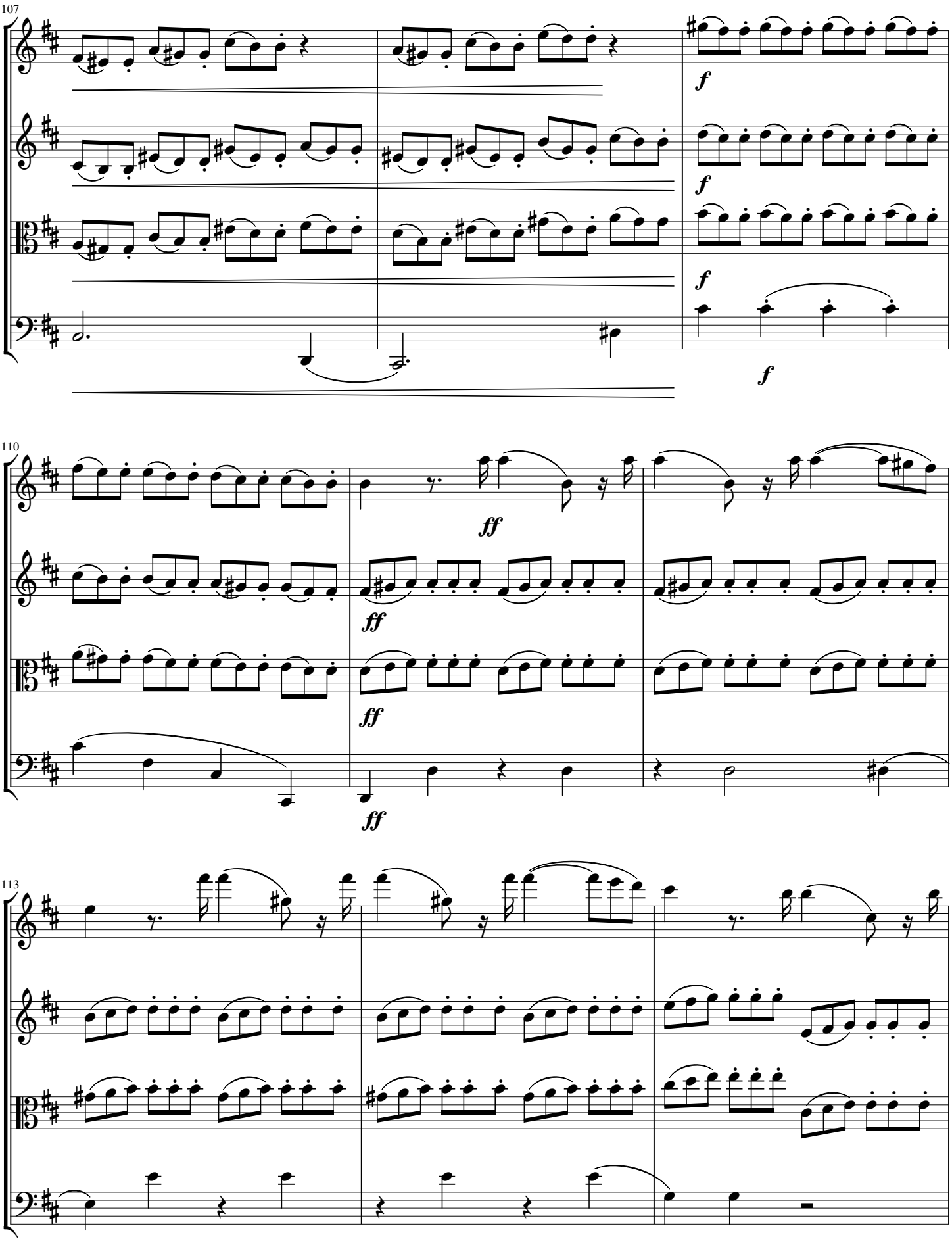

28
32
dolce
smorz.
p
smorz.
p
smorz.
p
smorz.
42
diminuendo
dolce
p

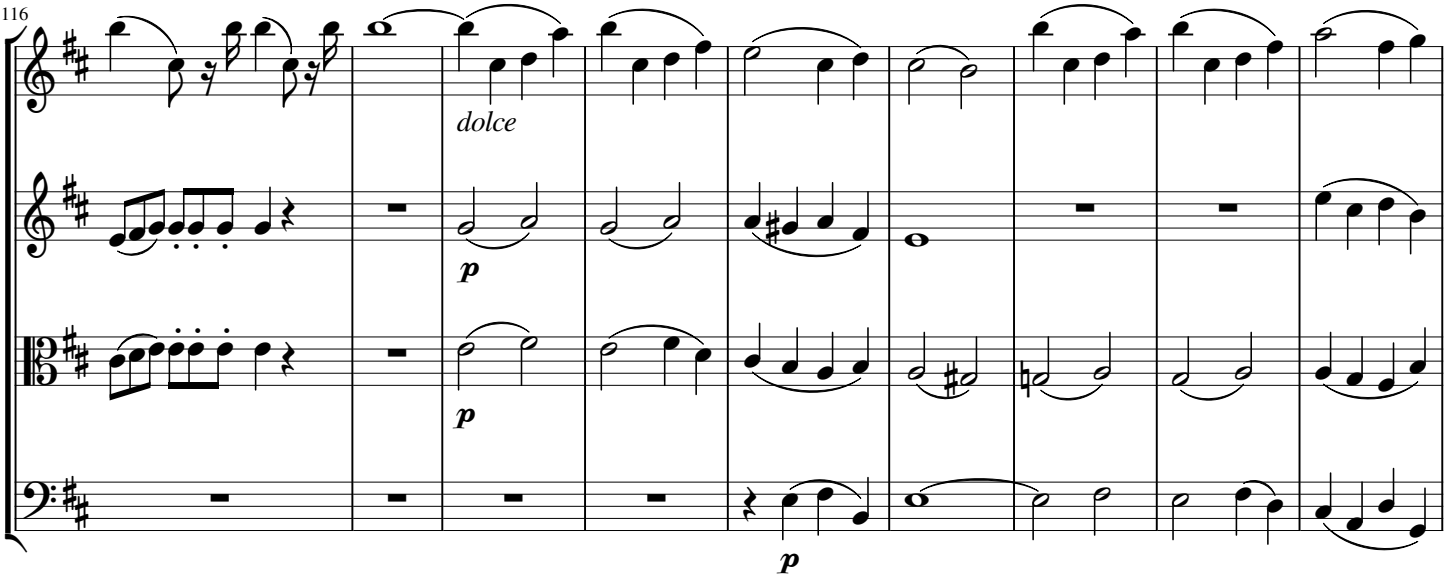

49
pp
cresc.
ff
p
54
59

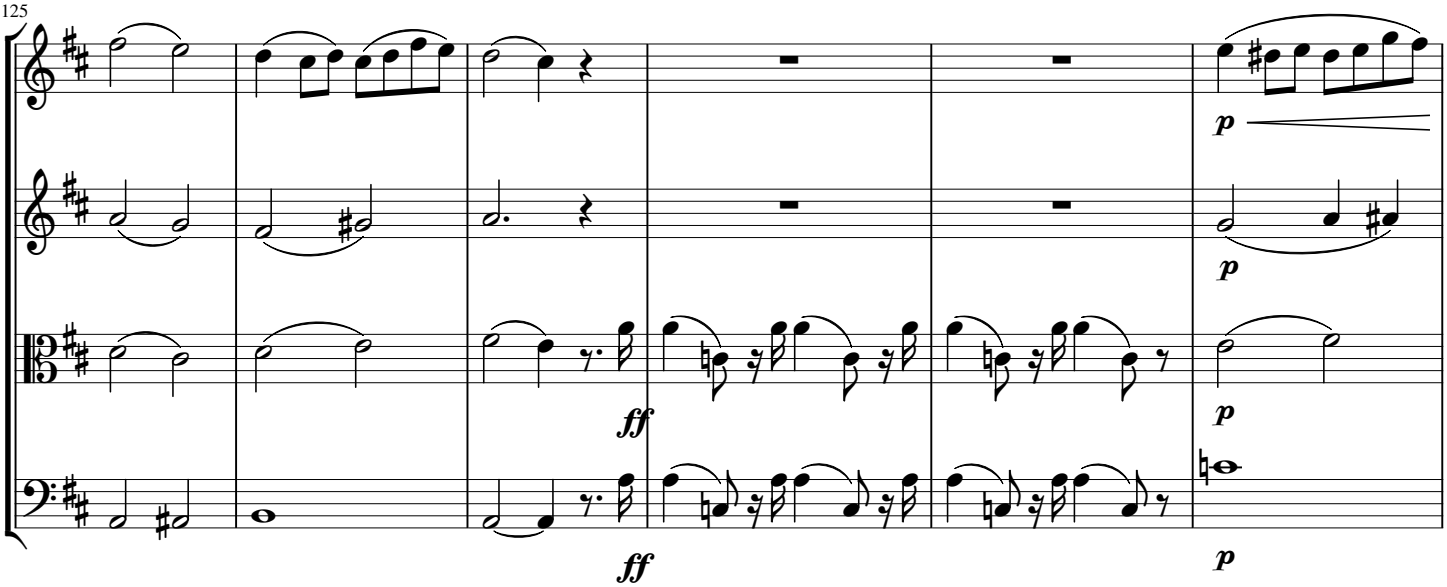

64
68
crescendo
crescendo
crescendo
f
f
f
f
72
mf
crescendo
mf
crescendo
mf
mf
f
f
f

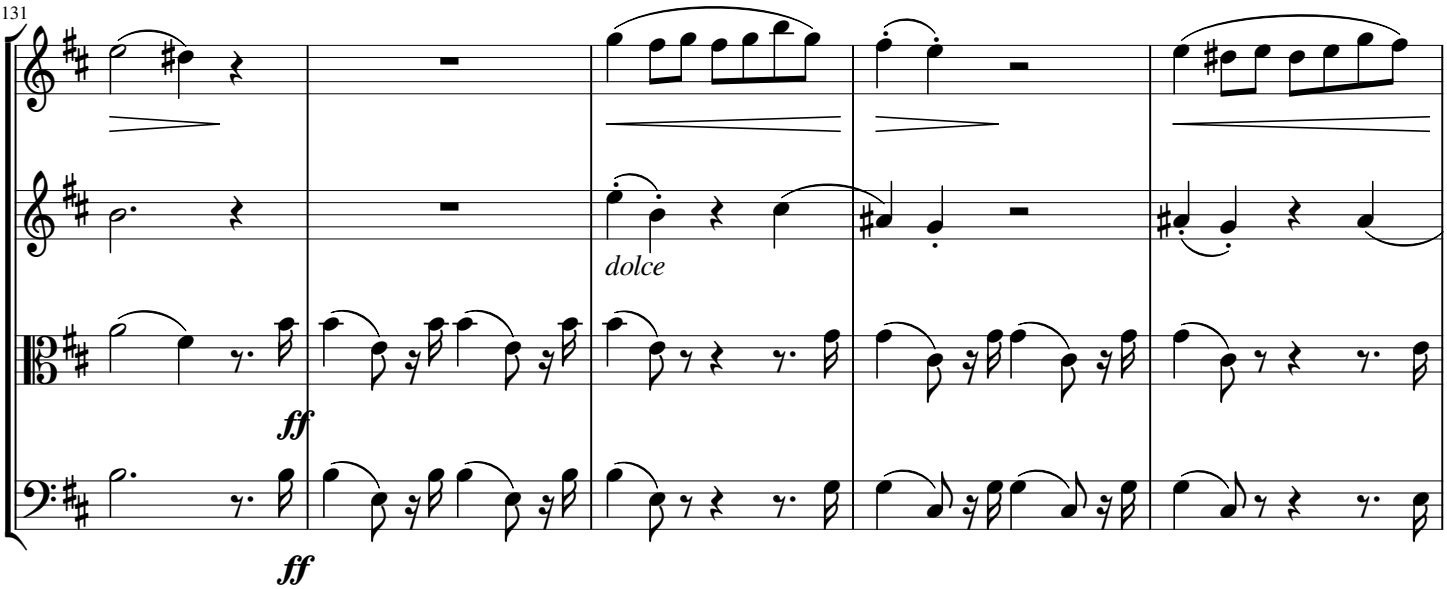

76
ff
cresc.
cresc.
80
ff
p
3
3
84
diminuendo
dolce
dolce
dolce
dolce

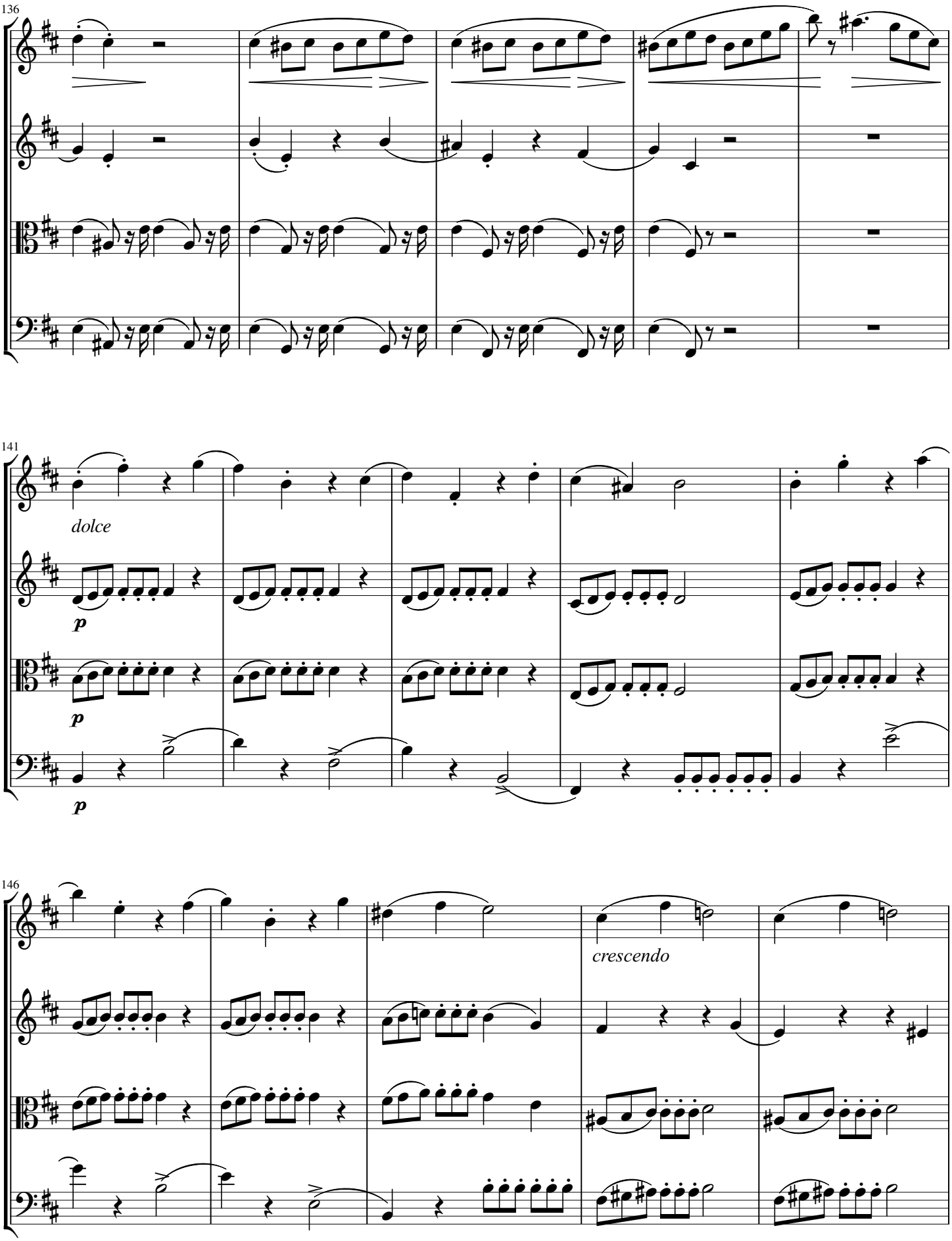

90
98
3
104
pp
p
mf

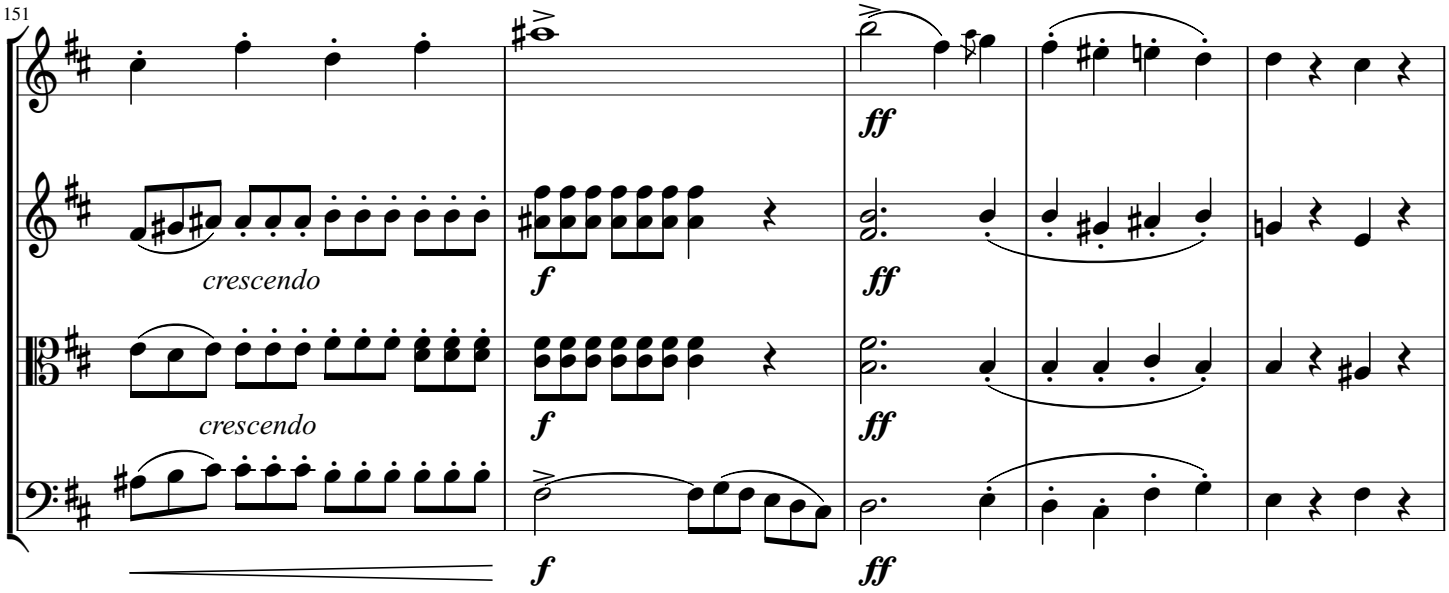

107
f
f
f
f
110
ff
ff
ff
ff
113

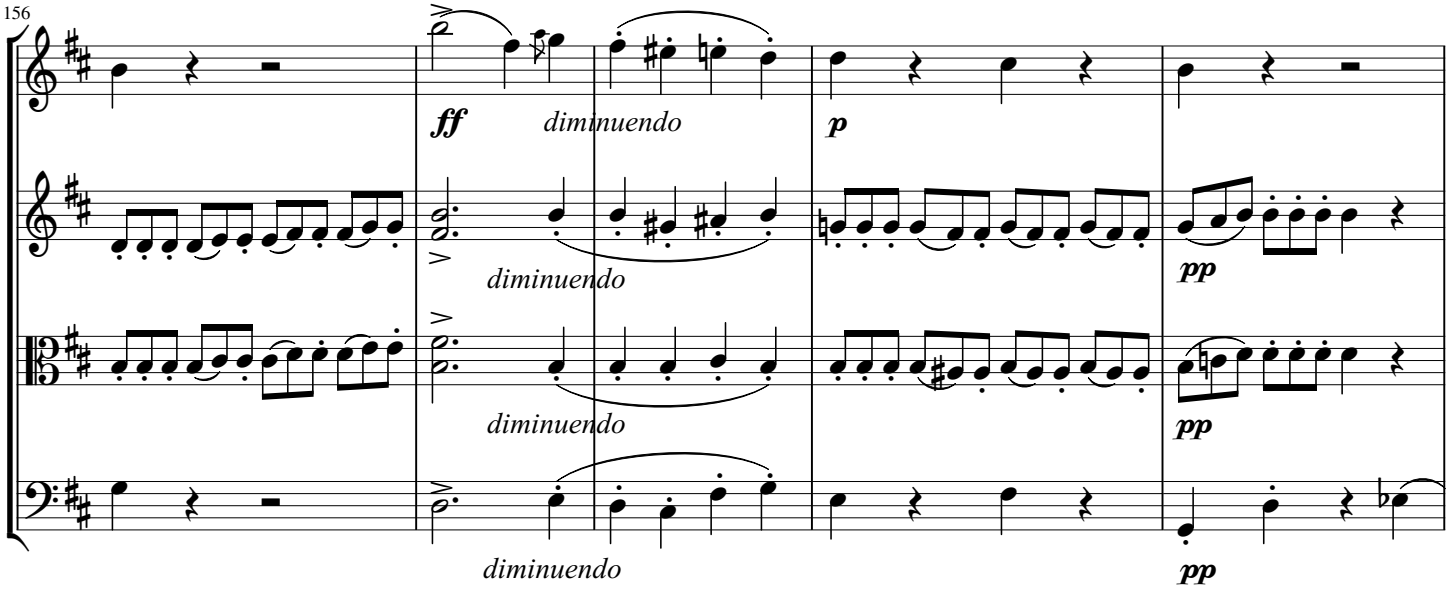

116
dolce
p
p
p

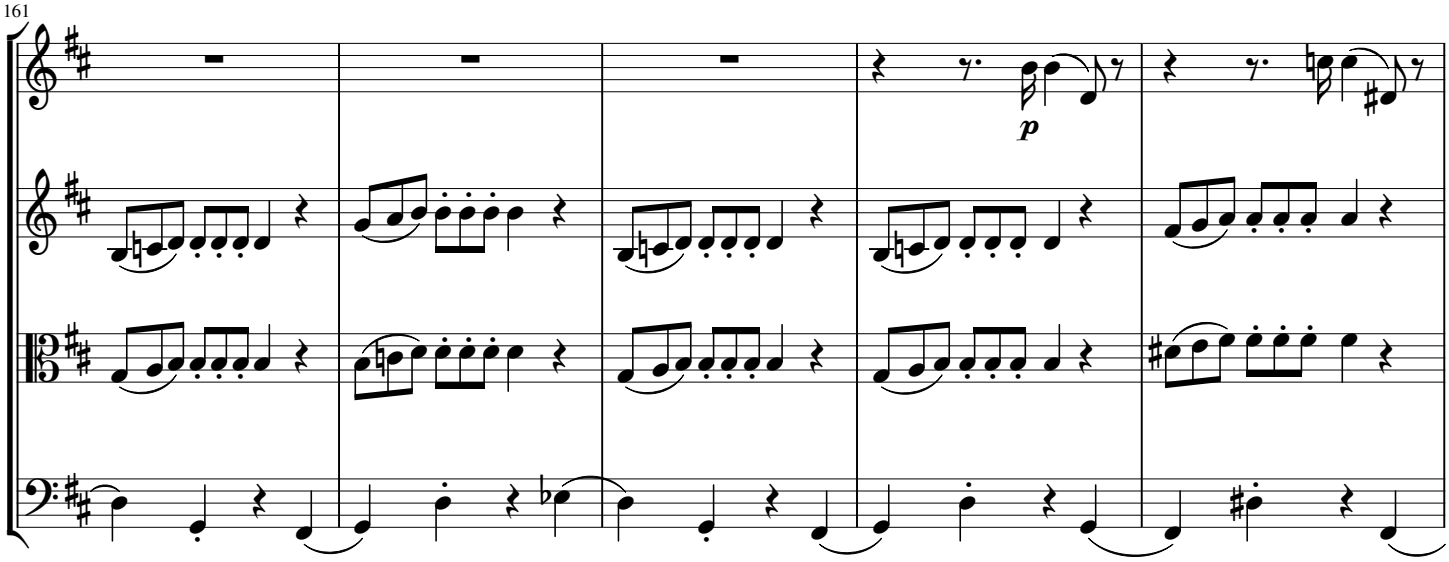

125
p
p
ff
p
ff
p


131
dolce
ff
ff


136
141
dolce
p
p
p
146
crescendo


151
crescendo
crescendo
ff
f
ff
f
ff
f
ff


156
ff
diminuendo
p
diminuendo
pp
diminuendo
pp
diminuendo
pp


161
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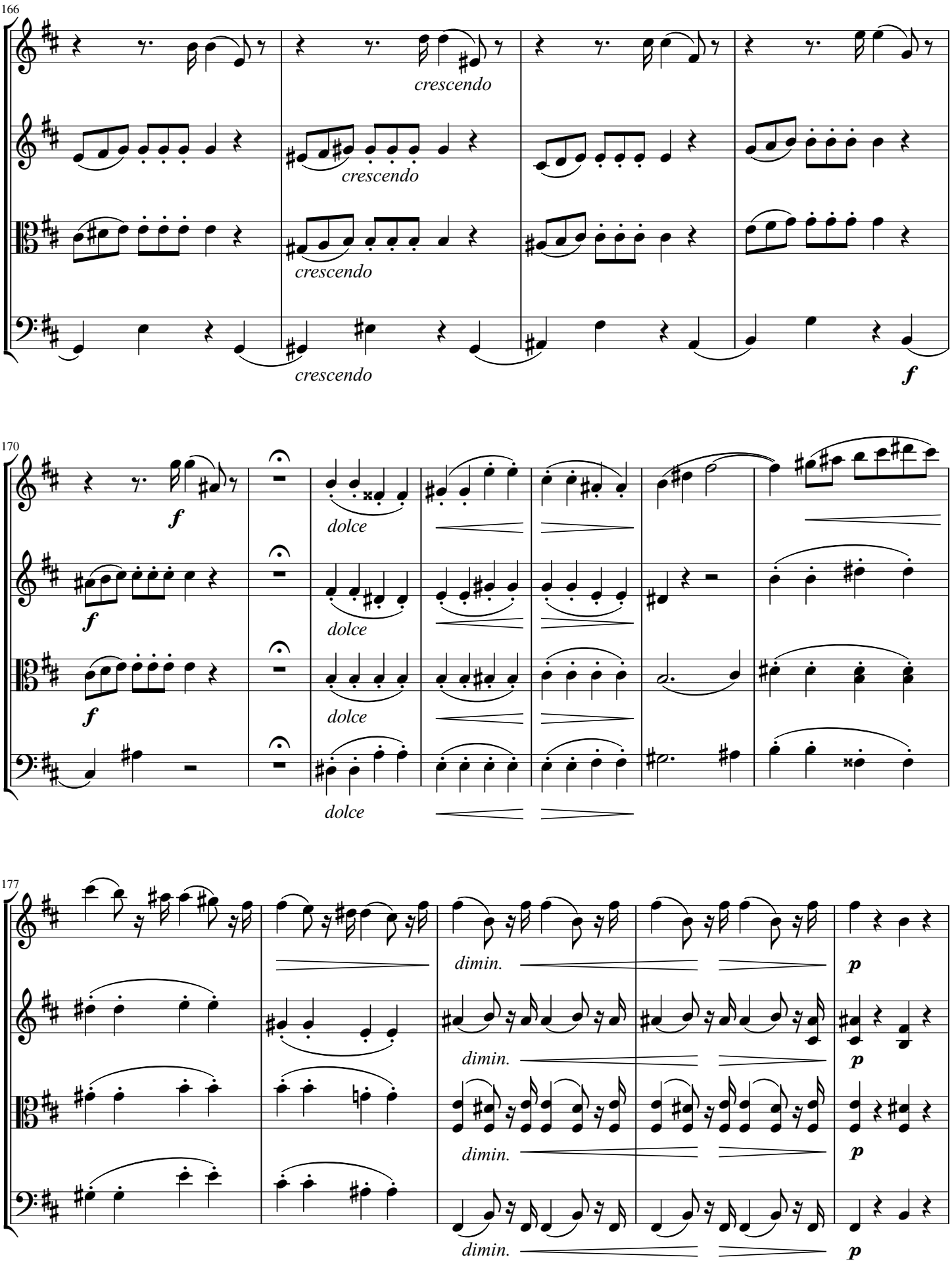
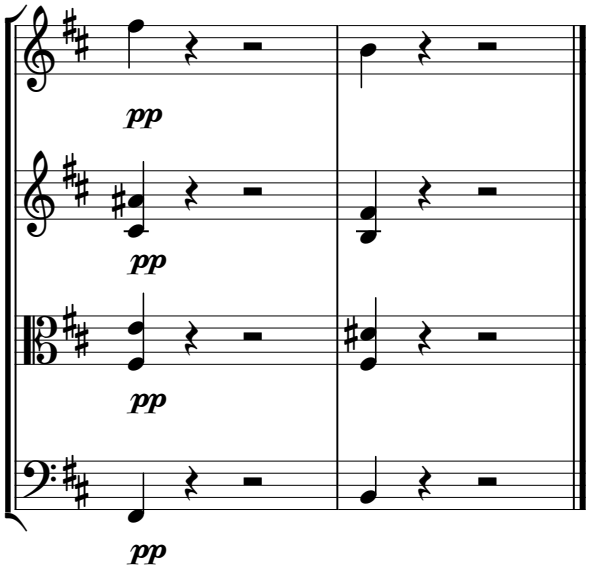

166
crescendo
crescendo
crescendo
crescendo
f
170
f
f
f
dolce
dolce
dolce
dolce
177
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
p
p
p
p

182