# Anonymous

# Music from Gdańsk (Danzig) Manuscript

Ms. 300, R/Vv,123
(1591)

**For Organ or Harpsichord**

Restitution : Pierre Gouin & Marek Michalak

**Les Éditions Outremontaises - 2015**

# Preface

A manuscript with the signature "Ms. 300 R/Vv. 123" at the Gdańsk State Archive in Gdańsk (German: Danzig), Poland contains a varying collection of documents dating to a time period between 1571 and 1627[i]: the rights and duties of burghers, a list of city council members from 1343 to 1619, a city council balance sheet including musicians' pay from 1604 to 1605, a list of royal officials from 1457 to 1619, privileges granted to the Hanseatic cantorate in Lund, notes (excerpts from various city documents) by the city council secretary Martinus Lange, and forty-two keyboard pieces, two notated in *New German Tablature* and forty in Italian *Intavolatura* on two staves. The musical compositions can be roughly divided into two categories: seventeen Phantasias and twenty-five keyboard arrangements of different types of vocal music.

At the bottom of some of the pages are inscribed epigrams in Latin, Greek or German which perhaps point to the author's mindset at the time of writing. The manuscript cover carries the initials "PWSP", possibly the writer's or owner's initials, and the number 1591, which by now is commonly accepted as the year in which these stacks of loose papers were bound together.

This collection of music is frequently referred to as the Gdańsk Tablature (Polish: Tabulatura Gdańska; German: Danziger Tabulatur).

The composer of the music and its occasion or the purposes of its composition are unknown. In his 1931 monograph on the subject of the music of Gdańsk, Hermann Rauschning[ii] suggested that the likely composer of the music in the manuscript was Cajus Schmiedtlein, although it is unclear on what basis he made this statement. It could be supposed that he had sight of documents which are presumed lost since 1945 without referencing them in this 1931 book. This attribution of the music to Schmiedtlein has since become more and more accepted and his name is sometimes printed as composer in concert programmes and CD recordings.

Beckmann[iii] lists Key Schmedeke (the low German dialect form of Cajus Schmiedtlein) as having been born around 1555 in Dithmarschen. Küster[iv] traces his movements as having moved from Husum (modern day north Germany) to Helsingør (modern day Denmark) in March 1578 to become the organist at St. Olai's Church. Around 1579-1580 he is relieved from his duties there, and Küster loses his trail.

Beckmann lists Schmedeke as being organist at Hamburg Cathedral from 1580 to 1585 while Renkewitz & Janca[v] list him in October 1585 as having travelled to Gdańsk from

Hamburg. He auditions successfully for the post of organist at St. Mary's Church, the city's main church, and following some periods of absence is re-appointed for life in 1589 into the post until his death in 1611.

Küster describes Schmiedtlein as an accomplished organist as evidenced by his geographical travels, the fact that Helsingør paid for his removal costs in 1578, and that in 1596 he was invited to play at the inauguration of the organ at Gröningen Castle, Halberstadt, which was 650km (403 mi) from Gdańsk, a considerable distance to travel in the sixteenth century.

Schmiedtlein also held a notarial post at Gdańsk city council and Küster suggests it is possible that the music in Ms. 300 could have been hand copies of Schmiedtlein's music copied by a music loving fellow colleague of his in the council offices.

In their 1967 publication of the Phantasias from Ms. 300, Golos & Sutkowski[vi] state that *"the Gdańsk manuscript has nothing to do with church and liturgy. It was meant exclusively for private music-making."*

Kessler[vii] disagrees with this, criticising the 1967 publication for leaving out the arrangements of vocal music, including the sacred songs. Instead, he suggests the Phantasias were composed as "Preambulums" for the church services, while the arrangements of the vocal works would clearly have been intended for choral or congregational singing. Further, the collection would have been put together by Schmiedtlein as a template for his musical duties at church. According to Kessler, the composition of the Phantasias in nine church modes of the time supports that hypothesis.

Beckmann[viii] disagrees slightly, suggesting the Gdańsk manuscript to be selected study pieces, possibly copied by a music student, rather than a complete original collection by the alleged composer. He does agree that the music may likely be intended for church use and states that the inclusion of a choral setting on "*Vater unser im Himmelreich*" clearly points to a religious setting. Both, Kessler and Beckmann point to the 1931 publication by Kittler[ix] which described how the arranging of sacred and secular songs for the organ was common practice in the protestant music traditions.

The question of instrument is perhaps one that is more common from a modern perspec-tive than what it would have been back in the sixteenth century. Golos & Sutkowski suggest the works are written for the harpsichord: "*The Fantasias are especially interes-ting. Their style and notation lead us to assume that they are work for a keyboard instrument other than the organ. In fact, one can detect here the beginnings of harpsichord style modelled on lute music – a development characteristic of the 17th rather than the 16th century.*"

Kessler disagrees and states that the choice of keyboard instrument would have been secondary and that the organ and other keyboard instruments were interchangeable in those days; he then proceeds to edit the music to appear on three staves with a

dedicated pedal line, thus assigning the music specifically to the organ, in contradiction to his own assertions.

Podejko and Przybyszewska-Jarminska[x] describe how St. Mary's Church became the centre of musical life in Gdańsk. They point out that the choir was instrumentally accompanied at St. Mary's as early as the mid sixteenth century, and that the church's organist became the most influential person in the city's musical life.

Meanwhile Renkewitz and Janca inform us how between 1582 and 1778 there were no fewer than four organs in St. Mary's, including one on the western wall of each of the three naves.

Rauschning quite specifically describes the music in the manuscript as an "*Orgelpartitur*" – organ sheet music. Alas, none of this information helps to address what instrument the music should definitely be performed on.

Without any doubt parts of the music will have been composed away from the organ, for the simple reason that the organist would have had to arrange for the calcants to be available outside contractually agreed organ duty times, possibly at personal expense to pay their wages. This, in an era long before mobile phones and electricity, would have been a significant obstacle to ad-hoc practice sessions at the organ and thus the composer would have devised the basis of his compositions at a keyboard instrument of some sort at his own home.

The music, as written down, was probably never intended as a finished composition for publication. Rather, it served as skeleton or template for improvisation on a keyboard instrument.

This edition arose from a desire to create a royalty free publication with the aim of making the Gdańsk manuscript known to a wider audience, striving for an easy to read edition to modern typesetting standards.

This volume presents the seventeen Phantasias from the Gdańsk manuscript. Note values were left as in the original (Kessler and Golos & Sutkowski halved all note values). Editorial intervention in the music was kept to a bare minimum and is marked in the score where applied.

Where this edition differs from the original manuscript is in the use of accidentals, which was brought into line with modern music editorial standards, placed in front of notes. Suggested or reminder accidentals are placed in parenthesis above the notes. It also deviates from the original allocation of notes between the staves. The aim of these changes was to increase the ease of reading and playing the music.

**Acknowledgments**

I am indebted to Pierre Gouin for his work in interpreting the musical manuscripts and typesetting the music to a high standard. His knowledge of early music and editorial matters proved invaluable.

I would further like to extend a very special thank you to mgr. Piotr Wierzbicki, Director of the State Archive in Gdańsk, for his kind permission to edit and publish this music as a free of charge PDF document.

I also thank Jerzy Marian Michalak for all his help with archival research, and Andreas Osiander for translations and corrections of the Latin epigrams.

Marek Michalak
London, December 2015

**Translations of the epigrams inscribed on some pages is as follows:**

**(01) Phantasia Primi Toni**

*Discat qui nescit nam sic sapientia crescit.*
May he learn who knoweth not, for thus grows wisdom.

*Disce quid es, quid eris, memor esto quod morieris.*
Learn what thou art, learn what thou will be, be thou mindful that thou shalt die.

**(02) Alia phantasia primi toni**

*Ferendum et sperandum.*
One must bear and hope.

**(03) Phantasia secundi toni**

*Horat: Adde parum parvo magnum cumulabis acervum.*
Horaz wrote: Add little to little and you will accumulate a great amount.

*Homo nil nisi bulla levis.*
Man is nothing but a light bubble.

**(04) Phantasia tertii toni**

*Credo Deo, sufferque malum patienter et ora.*
Believe in God, suffer the evil patiently and pray.

*Teren in Andr: Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.*
Terent wrote in Andria: Compliance creates friends, truth creates hatred.

**(11) Phantasia sexti toni**

*MUSICA Laetjcia, comes et medicina dolorum.*
*Iure vocor, duce me, cura sepulta iacet.*

Music is joy, companion and remedy of pains.
One calls me quite rightly, for when I lead, the worries are buried.

**(12) Alia phantasia sexti toni**

*Dum fex dum fimus dum res turpissima simus.*
*Quid superbimus nescimus quando perimus.*

Since we are but dregs, but excrement, but something utterly shameful.
Why are we proud, not knowing when we shall die?

**(15) Phantasia septimi toni**

*Multis annis iam peractis*
*Nulla fides est in pactis*
*Mel in ora, verba lactis*
*Fel in corde, fraus in factis.*

With many years gone by already
There is no loyalty in contracts
Honey in the mouth, words of milk
Venom in the heart, deceit in deeds.

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[i] **Wozniak, Jolanata**, et. al: *Music Collections from Gdańsk – Volume 3: Thematic Catalogue of Music in Manuscript in the State Archive in Gdańsk*, (Musica Iagellonica & Akademia Muzyczna Gdańsk, 2008), pp. 154-155

[ii] **Rauschning, Hermann**: *Geschichte der Musik und Musikpflege in Danzig,* in: Quellen und Darstellungen zur Gschichte Westpreußens, (Danziger Verlags m.b.h, Danzig, 1931), p. 54

[iii] **Beckmann, Klaus**: *Repertorium Orgelmusik 1150–2000 – A Bio-bibliographical Index of Organ Music*, (Schott, 2001), pp. 108-109

[iv] **Küster, Konrad**: *Caj Schmedeke: Ein Dithmarscher Organist des 16. Jahrhunderts zwischen Husum, Helsingør und Danzig*, (Uni Freiburg, 2011), https://www.freidok.uni-freiburg.de/data/8449 (last accessed 19 Dec 2015)

[v] **Renkewitz, Werner** & **Janca, Jan**: *Geschichte der der Orgelbaukunst in Ost- und Westpreußen von 1333 bis 1944: Band 1***,** (Verlag Weidlich, 1984), p. 73

[vi] **Golos, Jerzy** & **Sutkowski, Adam**: *Keyboard Music From Polish Manuscripts, Vol. III, Fantasias from Ms 300. R Vv, 123*, (American Institute of Musicology, 1967)

[vii] **Kessler, Franz**: *Danziger Orgelmusik des 16. bis 18. Jahunderts*, (Hänssler Verlag, 1988)

[viii] **Beckmann, Klaus**: *Die Norddeutsche Schule – Orgelmusik im protestantischen Norddeutschland zwischen 1517 und 1755 – Teil 1*, (Schott, 2005), pp. 206-207

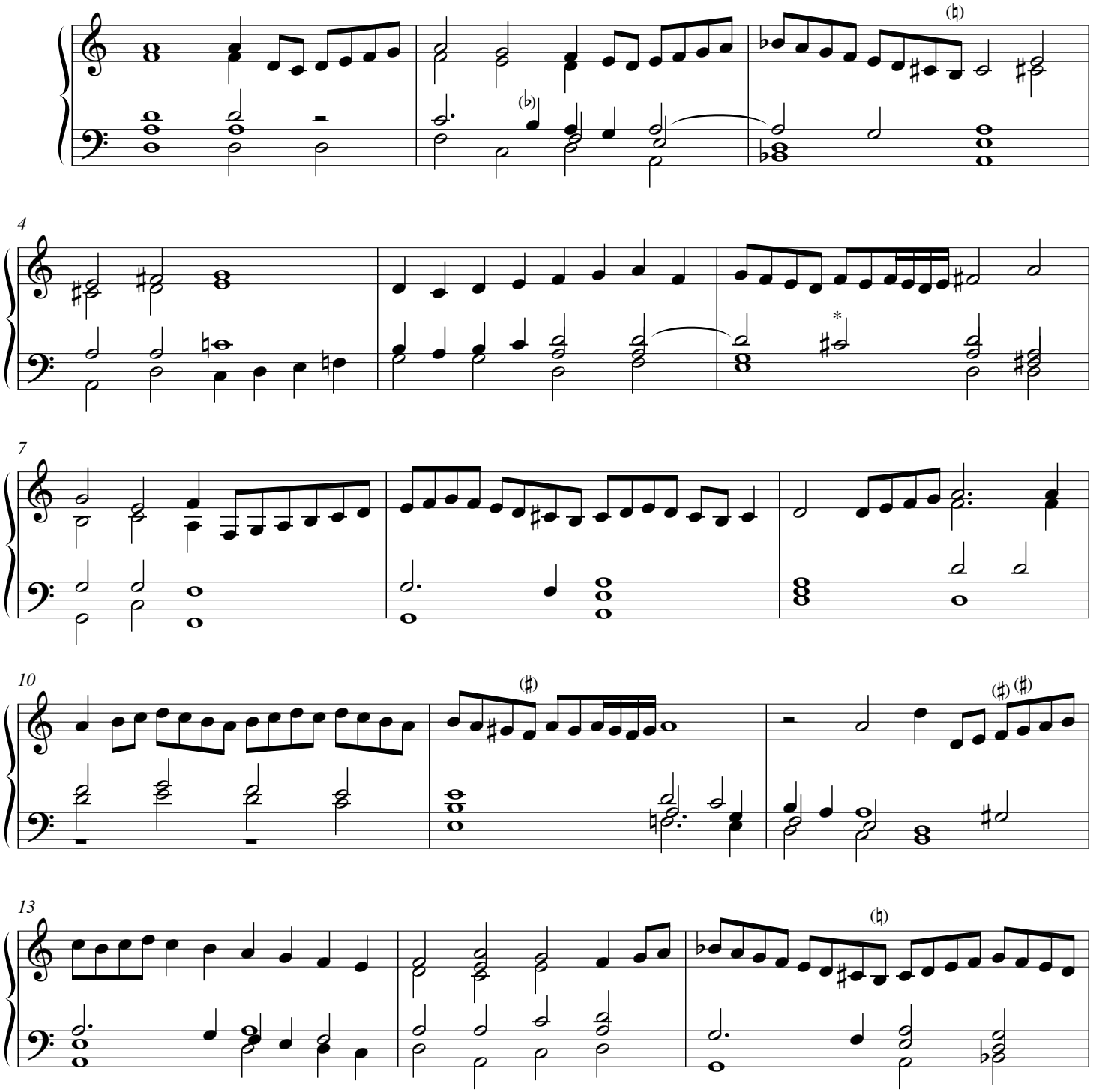
[ix] compare **Kittler, Günther**: *Geschichte des protestantischen Orgelchorals von seinen Anfängen bis zu den Lüneburger Orgeltabulaturbüchern*, (Köslin, 1931)

[x] **Podejko, Paweł** & **Przybyszewska-Jarminska, Barbara**: *"Gdańsk", The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, (Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, last accessed 21 Nov 2015)

# 1. PHANTHASIA PRIMI TONI

Anonymous (XVIth c.)

*Restitution : P. Gouin*
*& M. Michalak*



(* Ms. : b ♯.)

Discat qui nescit nam sic sapientia crescit.

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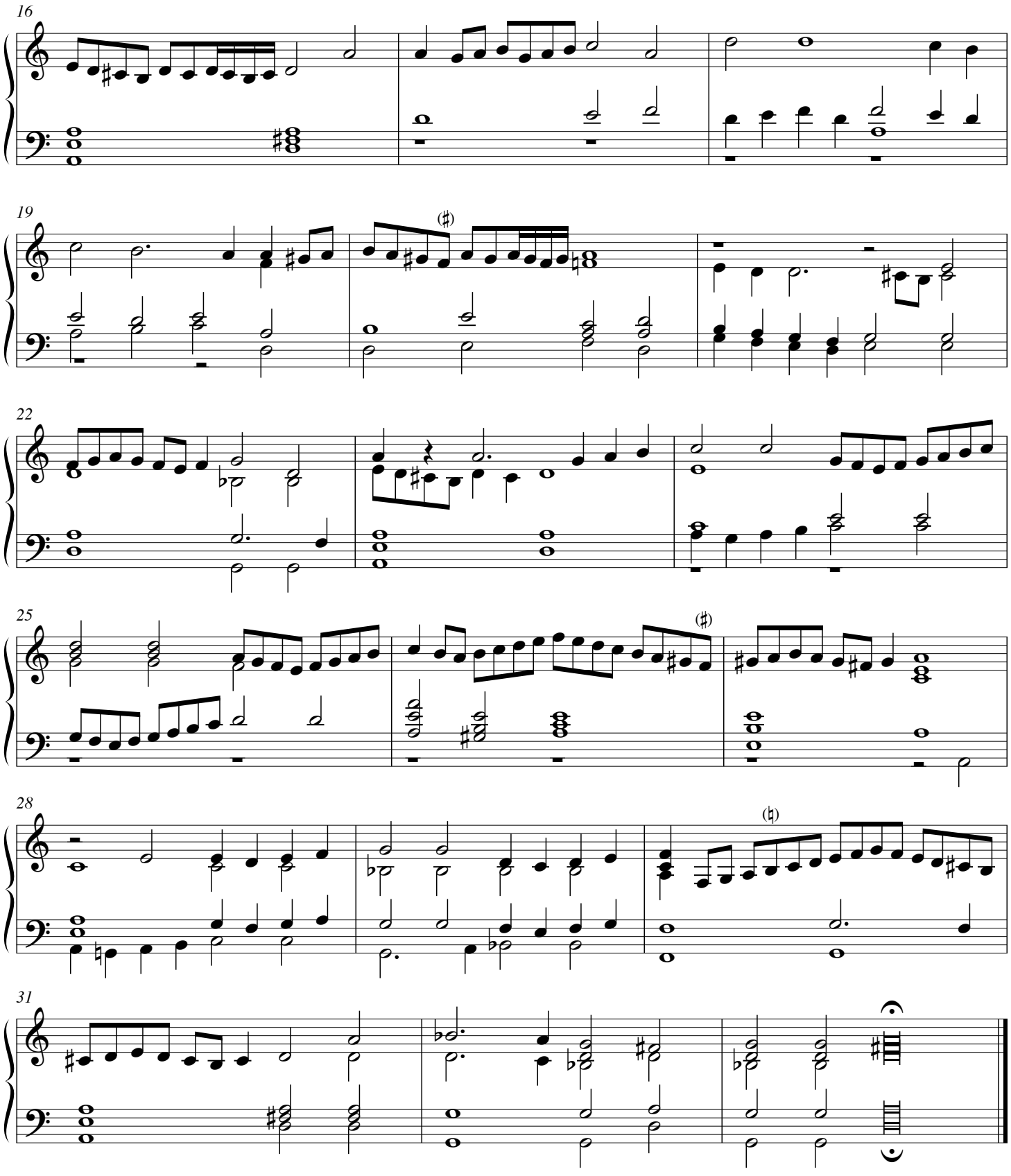


Disce quid es, quid eris, memor esto quod morieris.

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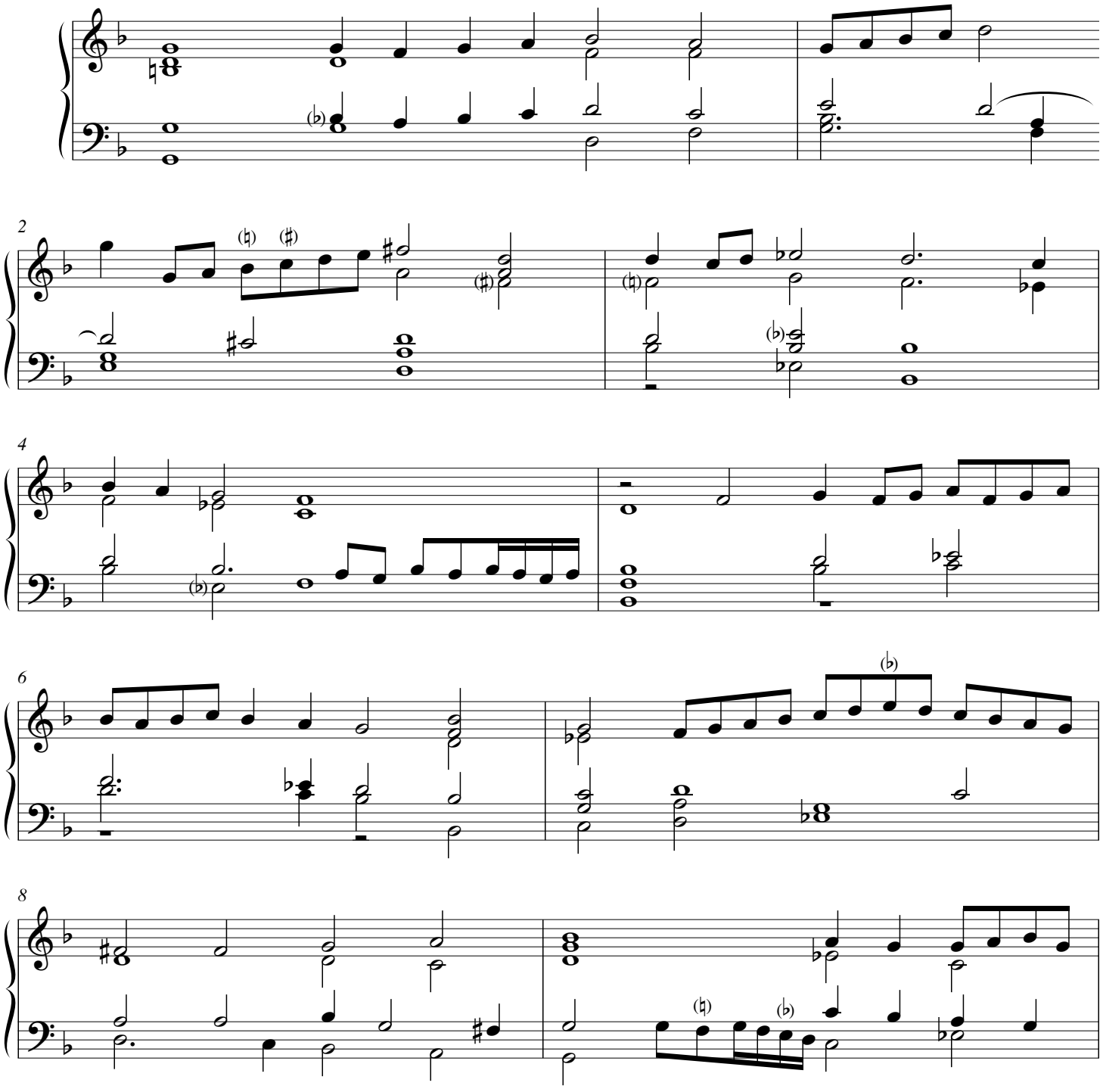
# 2. ALIA PHANTHASIA PRIMI TONI



Ferendum et sperandum.

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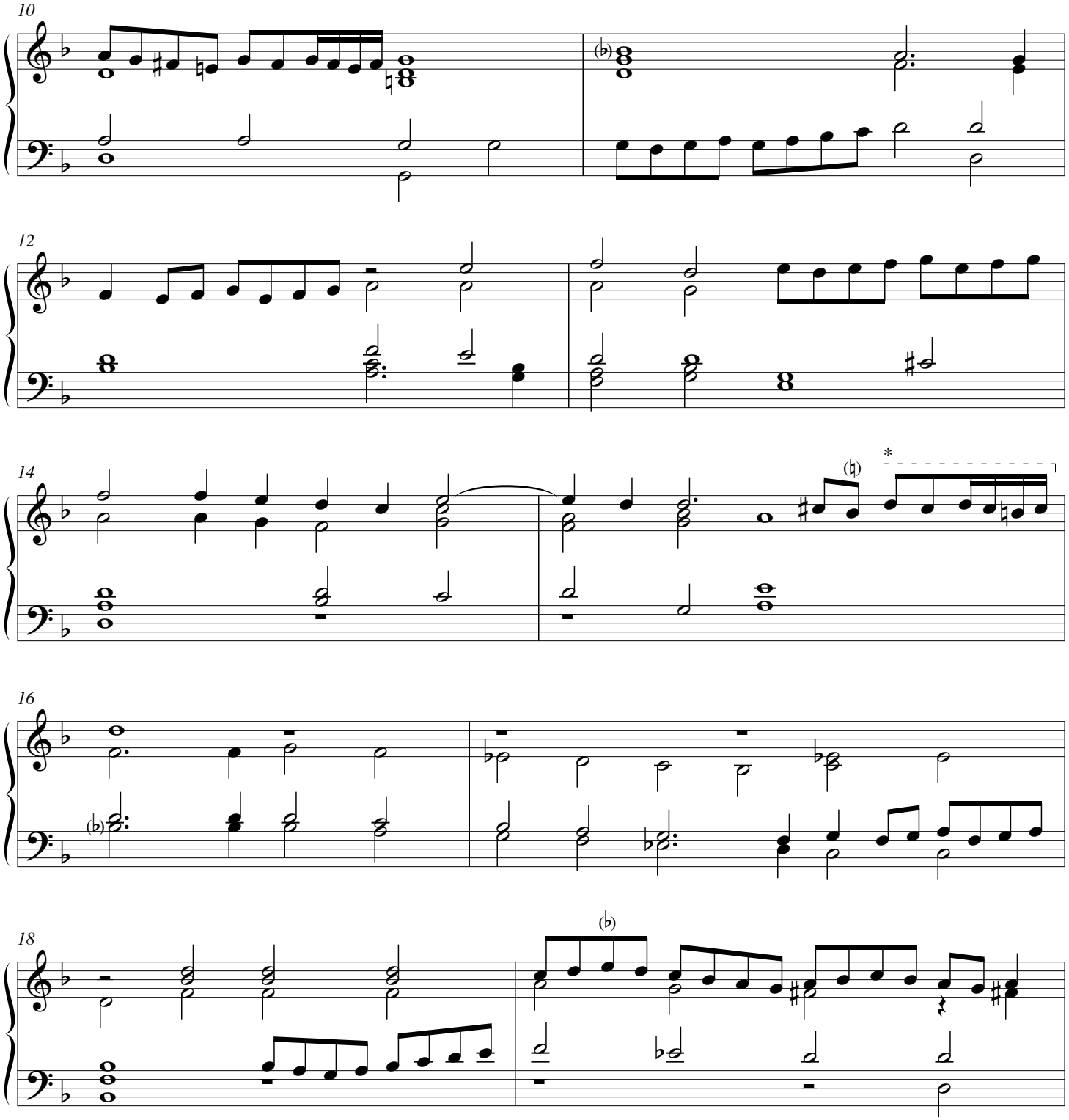


*(* Ms.: one third lower.)*

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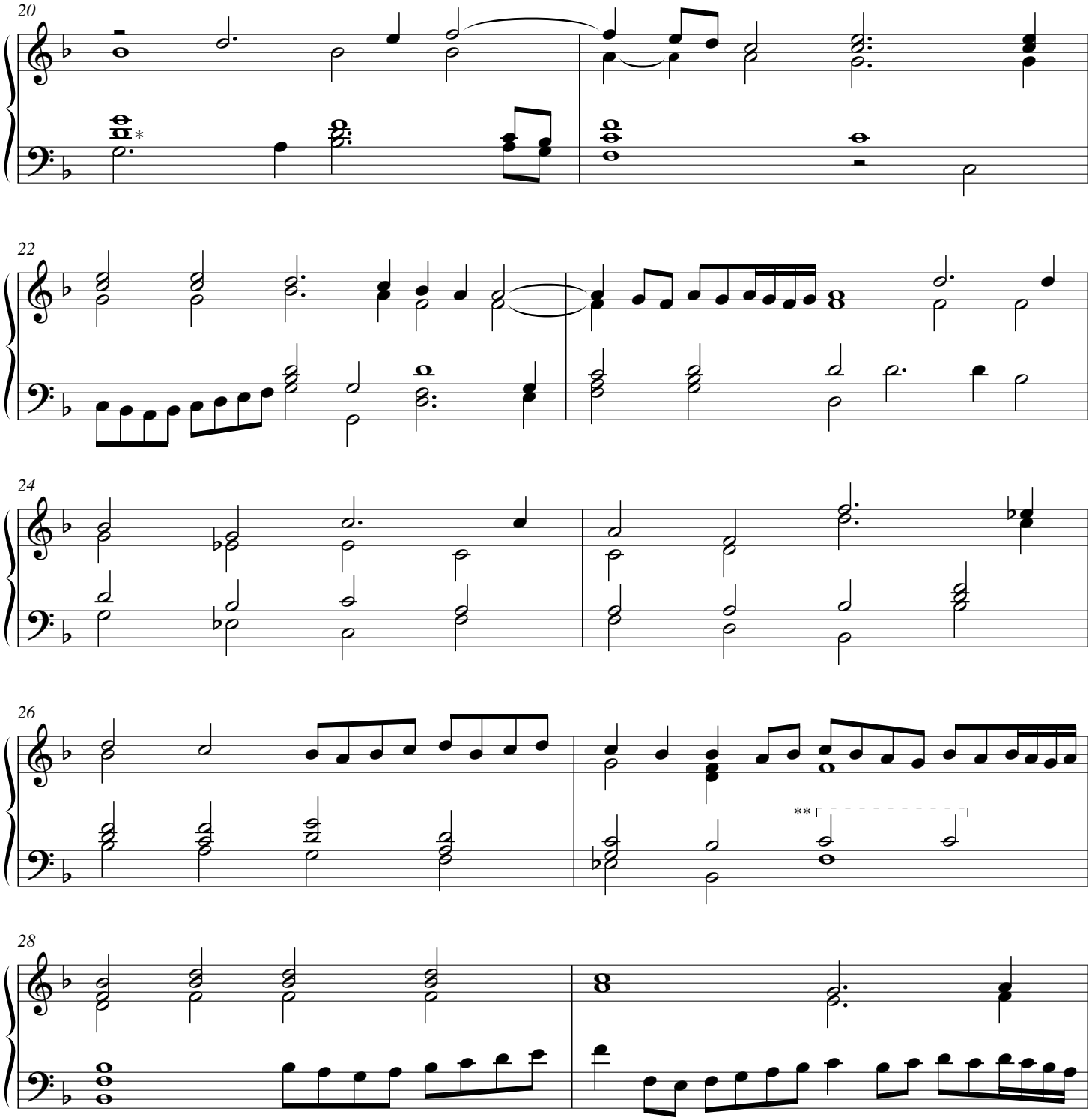


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*(** Ms.: D instead of C.)*

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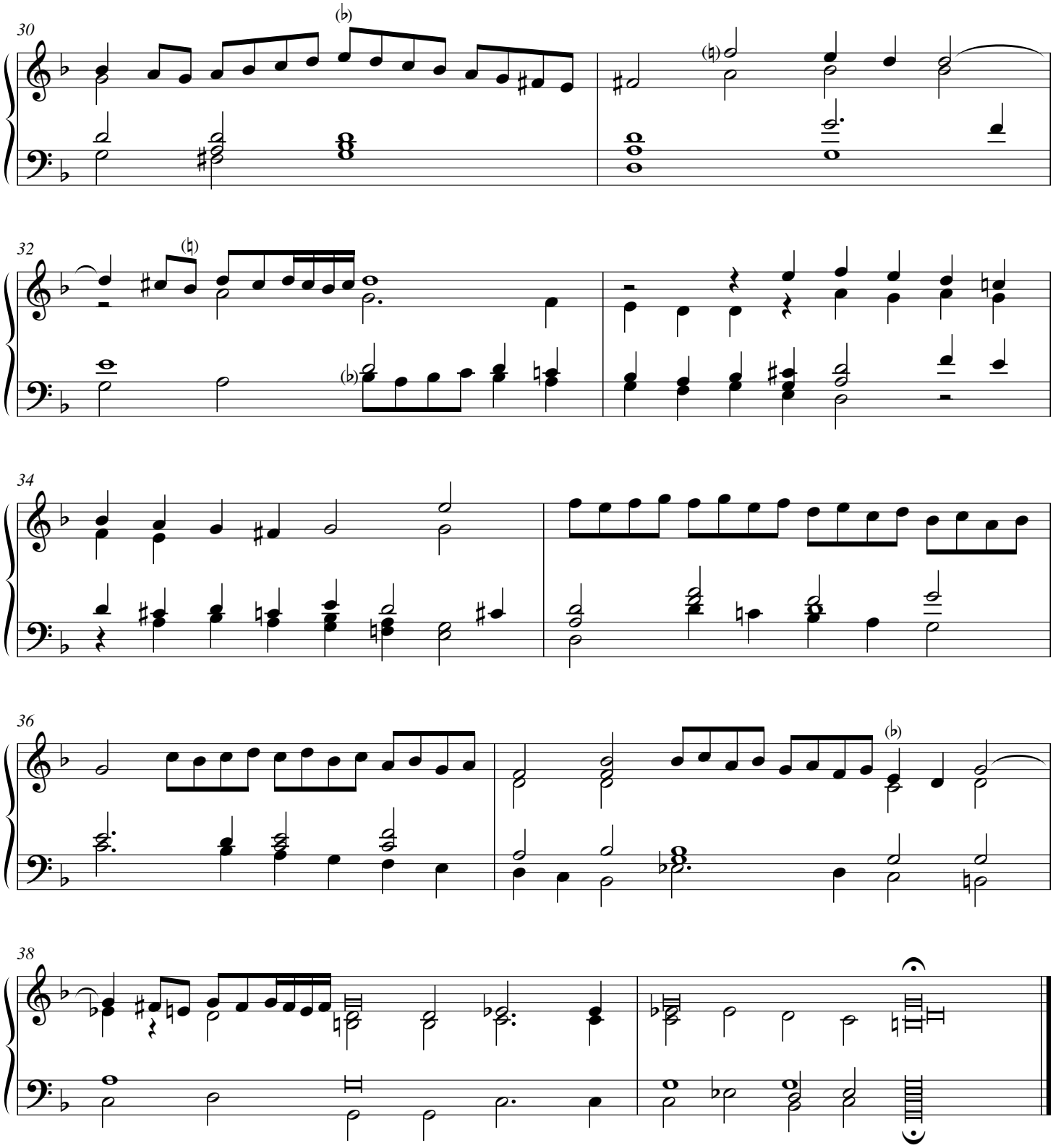


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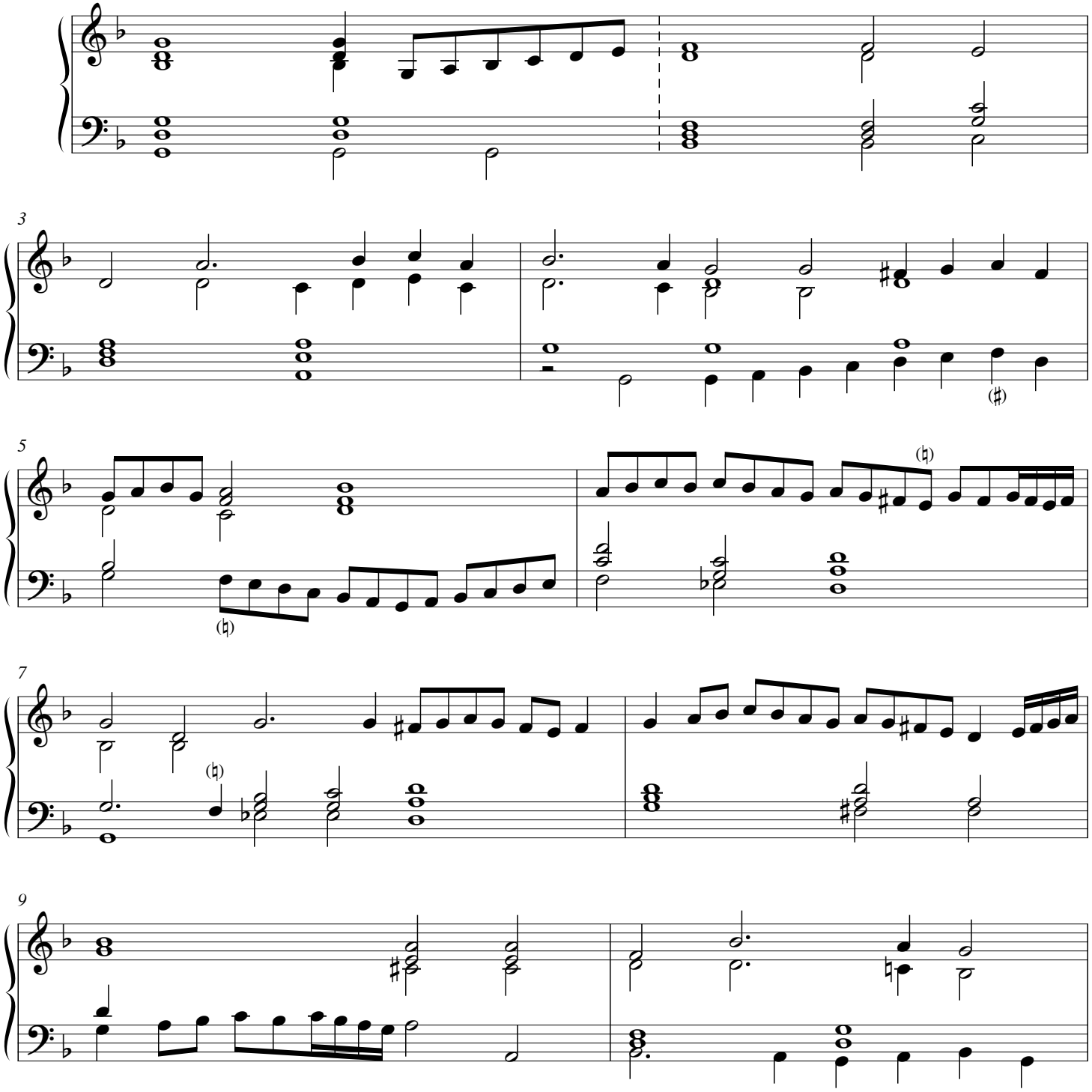
# 3. PHANTHASIA SECUNDI TONI



Horat : Adde parum paruo magnum cumulabis acervum.

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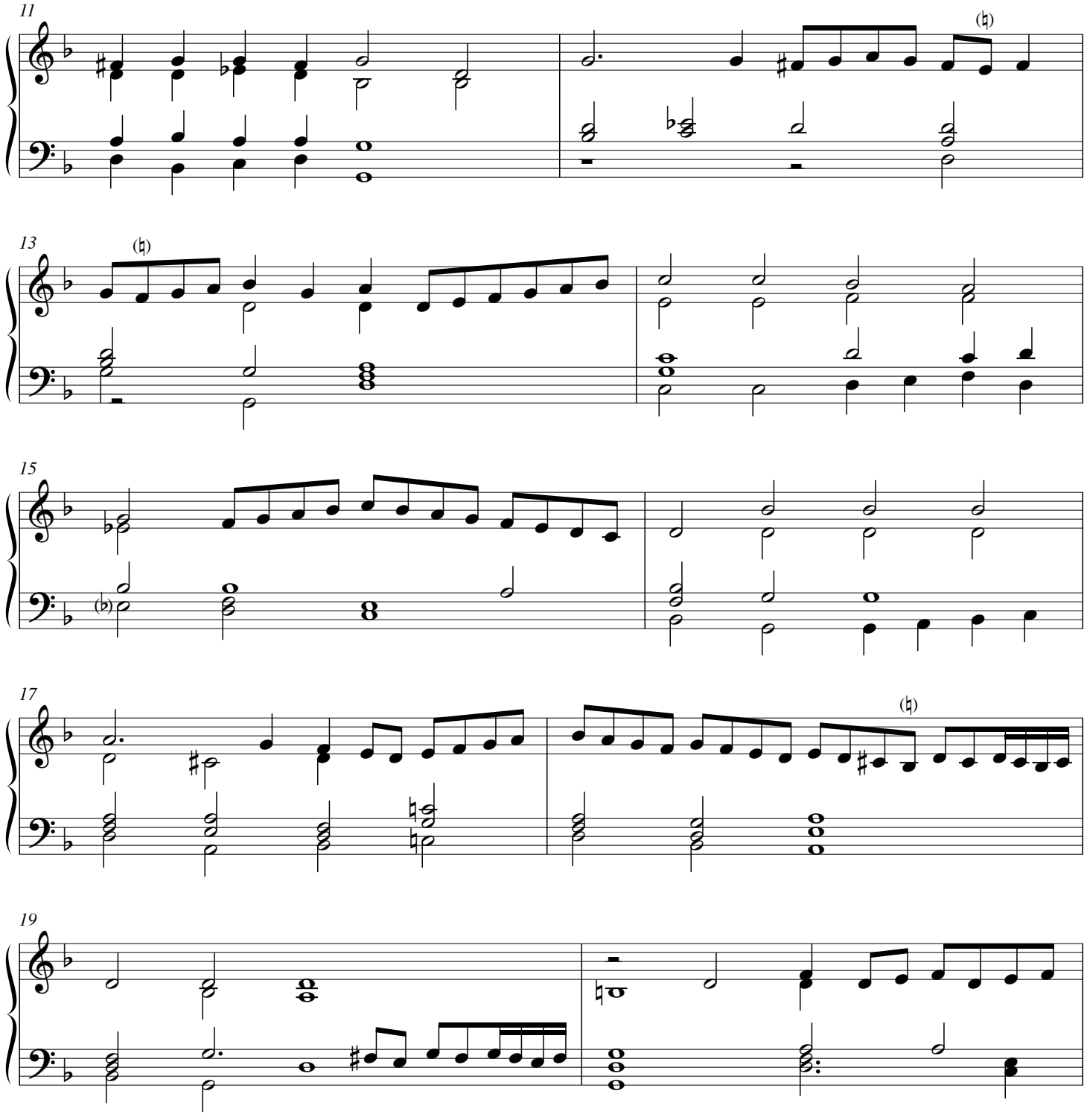


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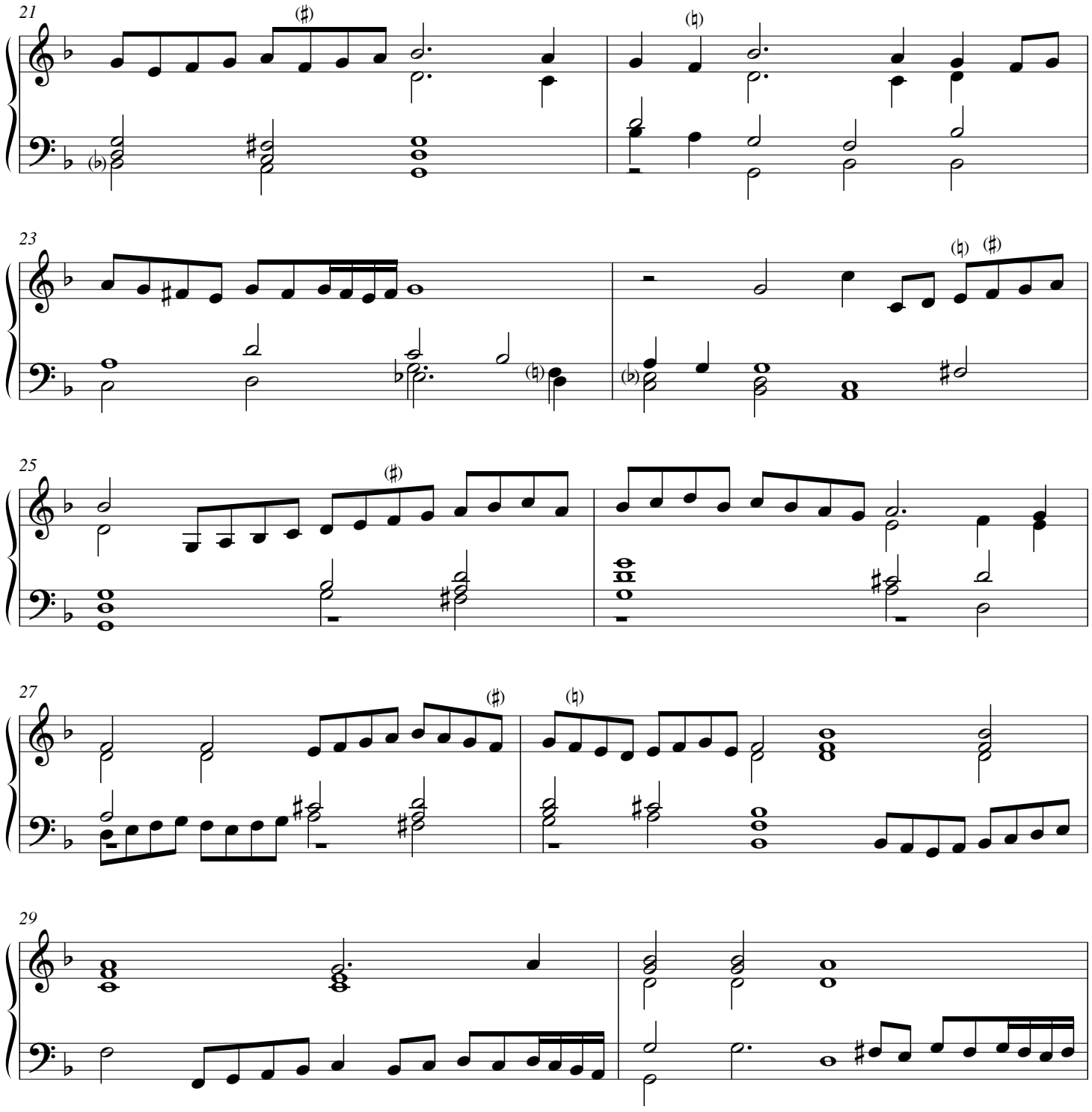


*Homo nil nisi bulla lenis.*

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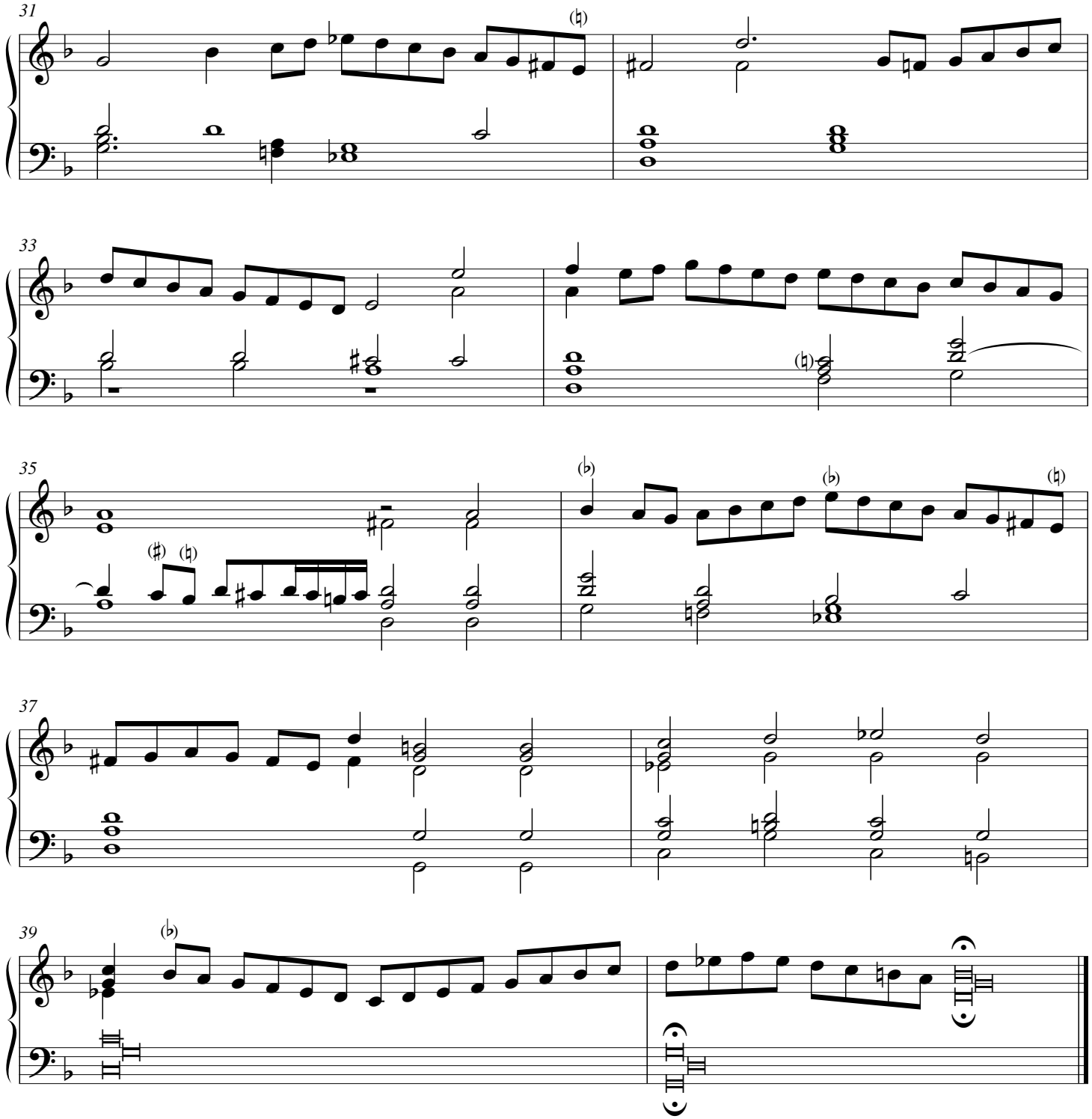


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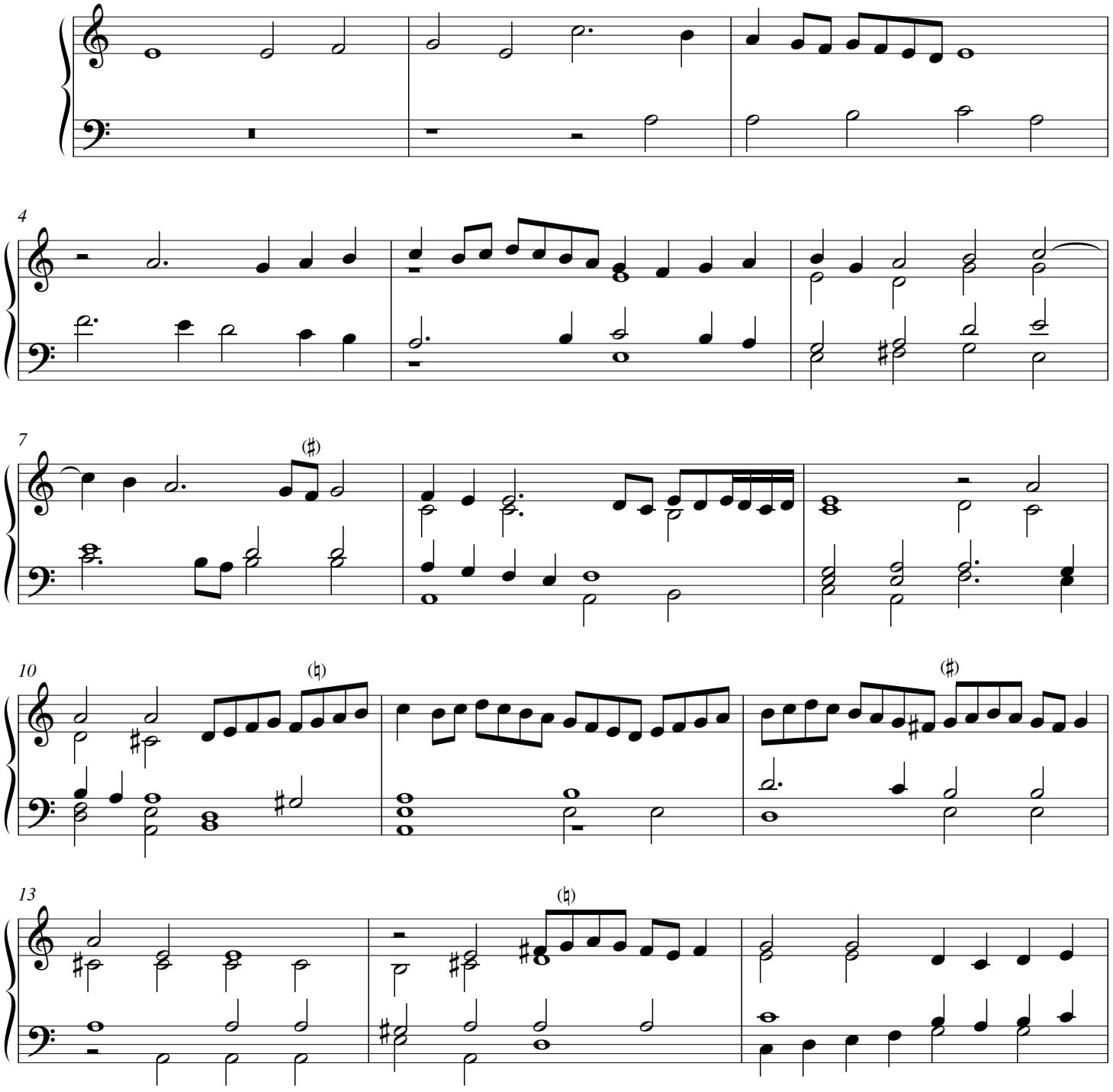

Credo Deo, sufferque malum patienter et ora.

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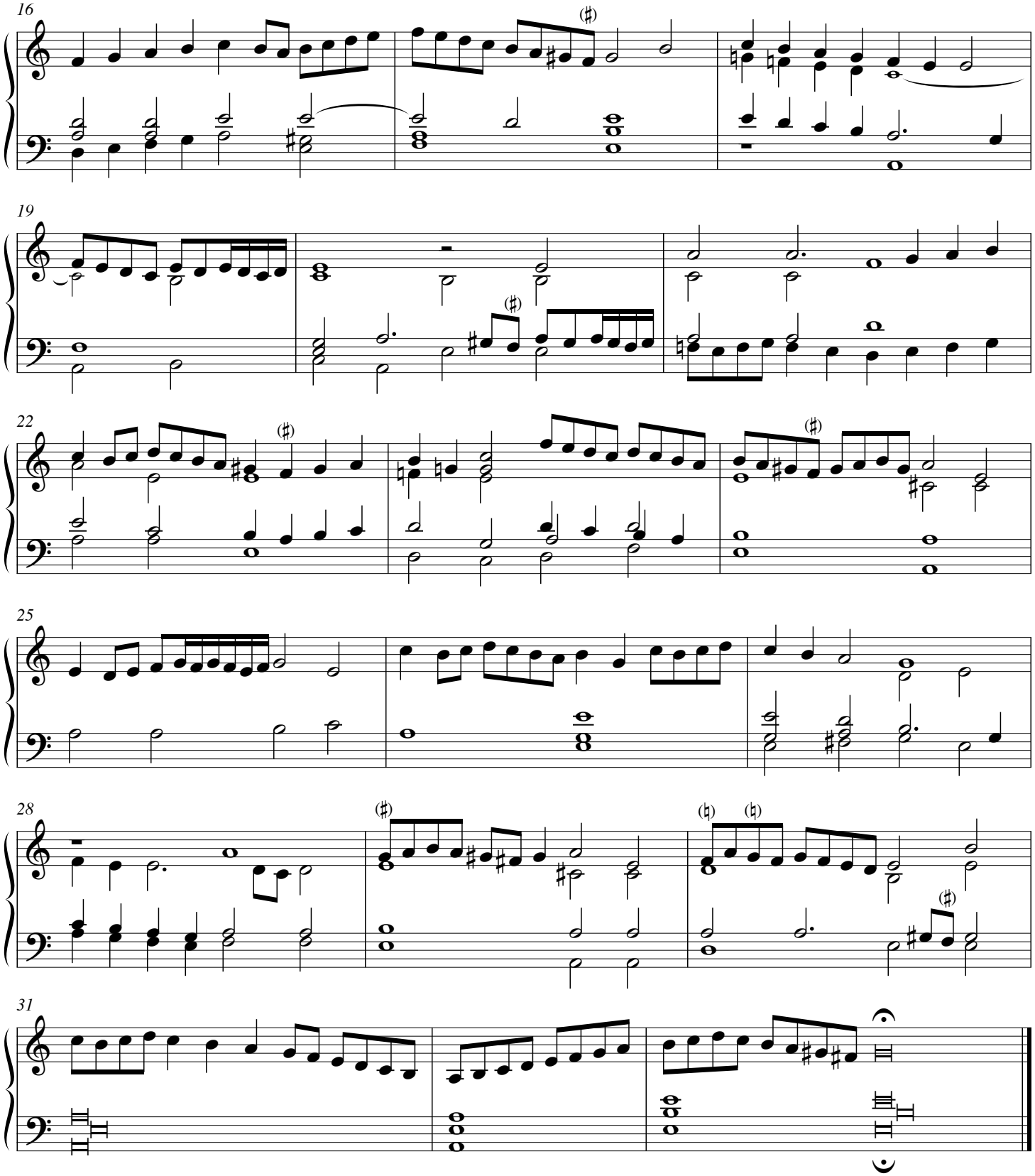


Teren in Andr : Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.

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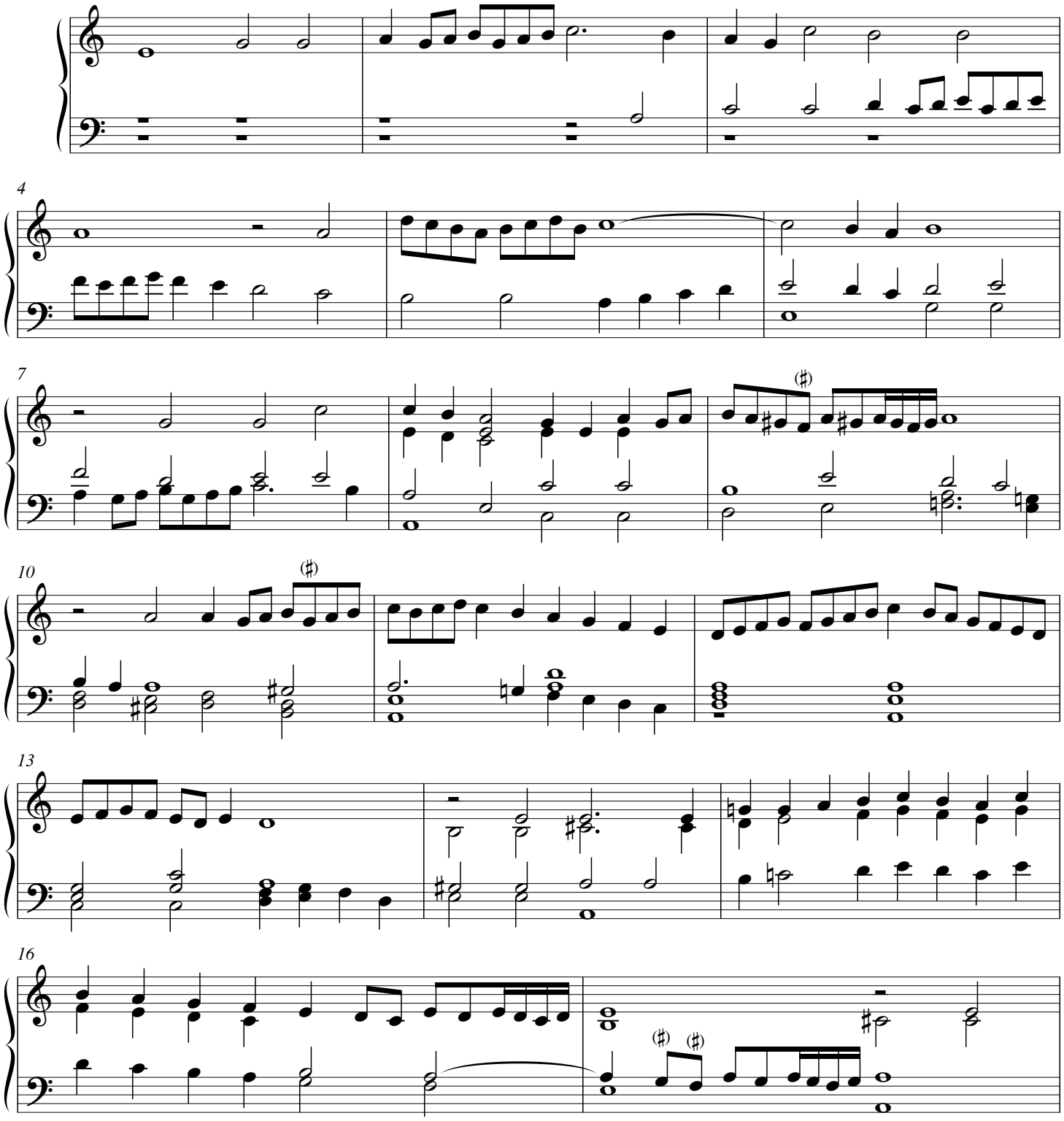

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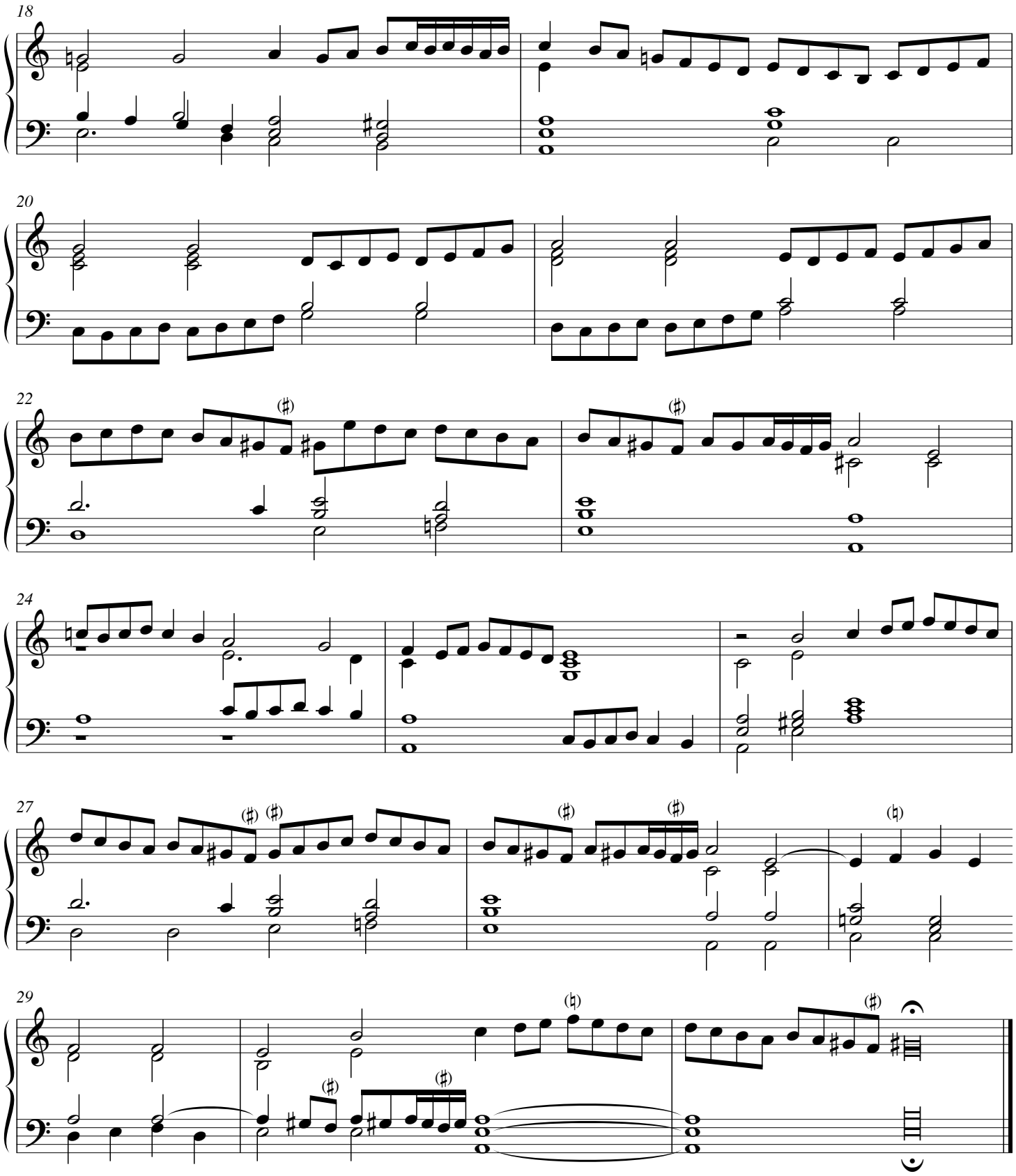


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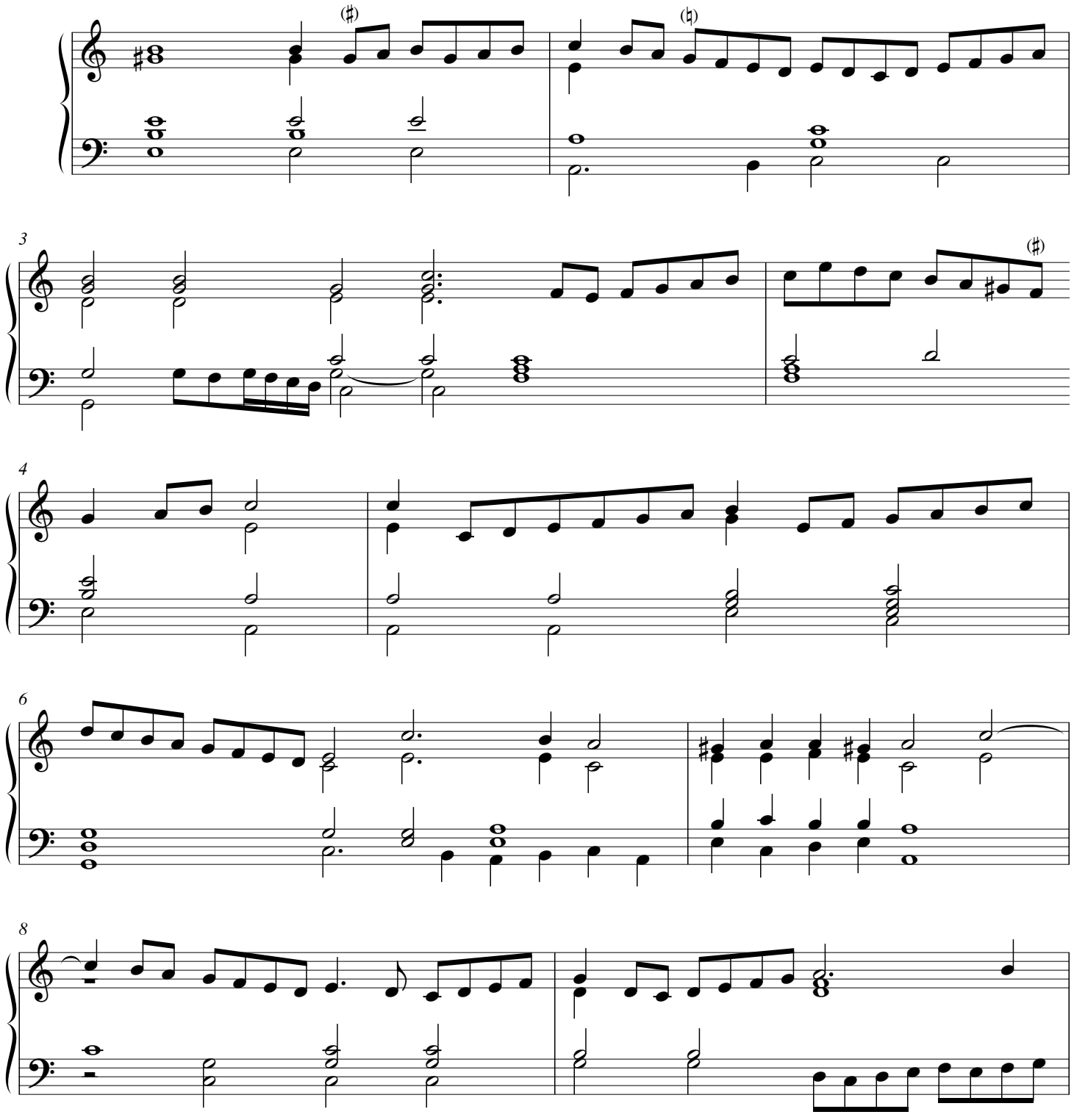

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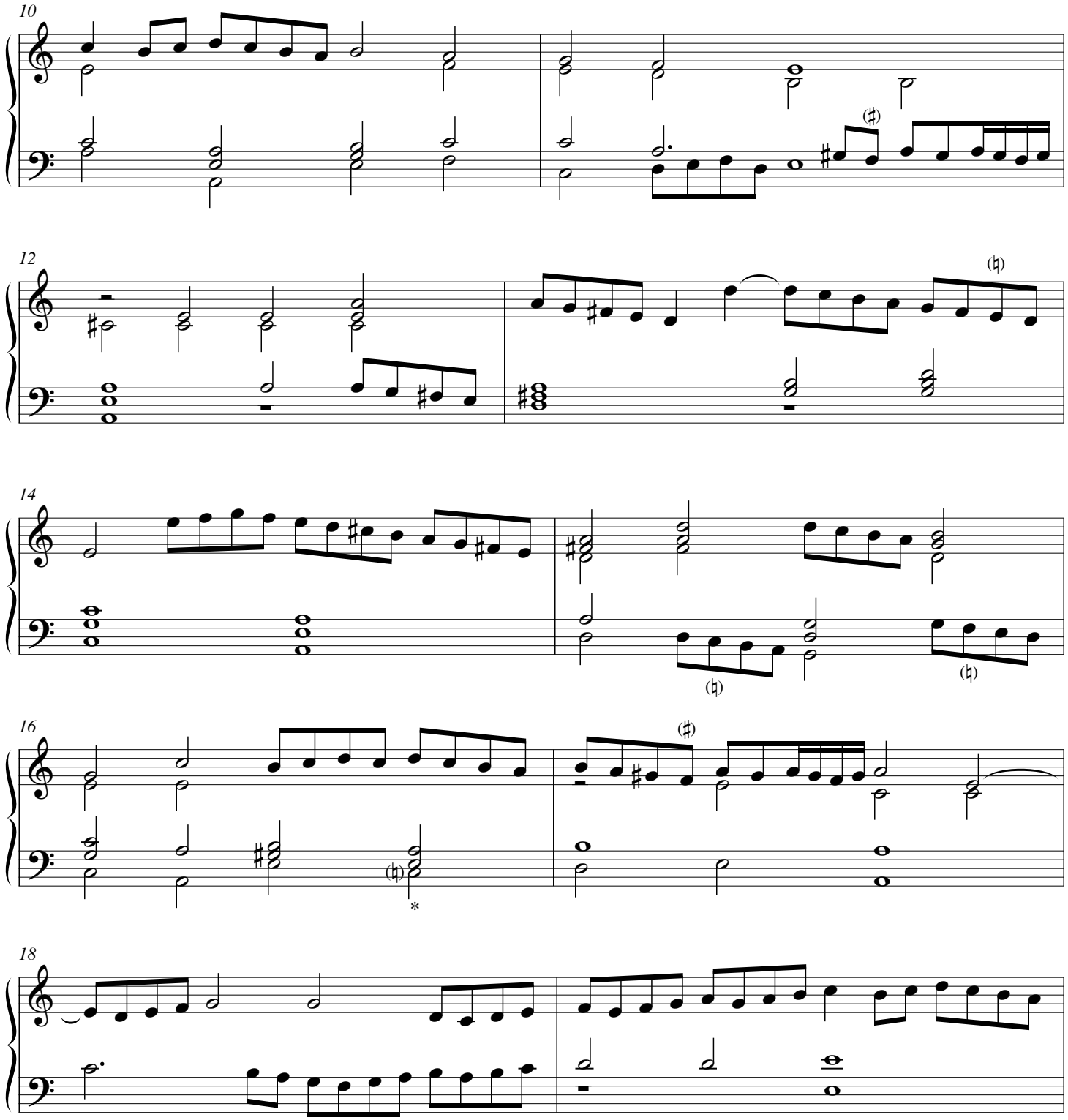


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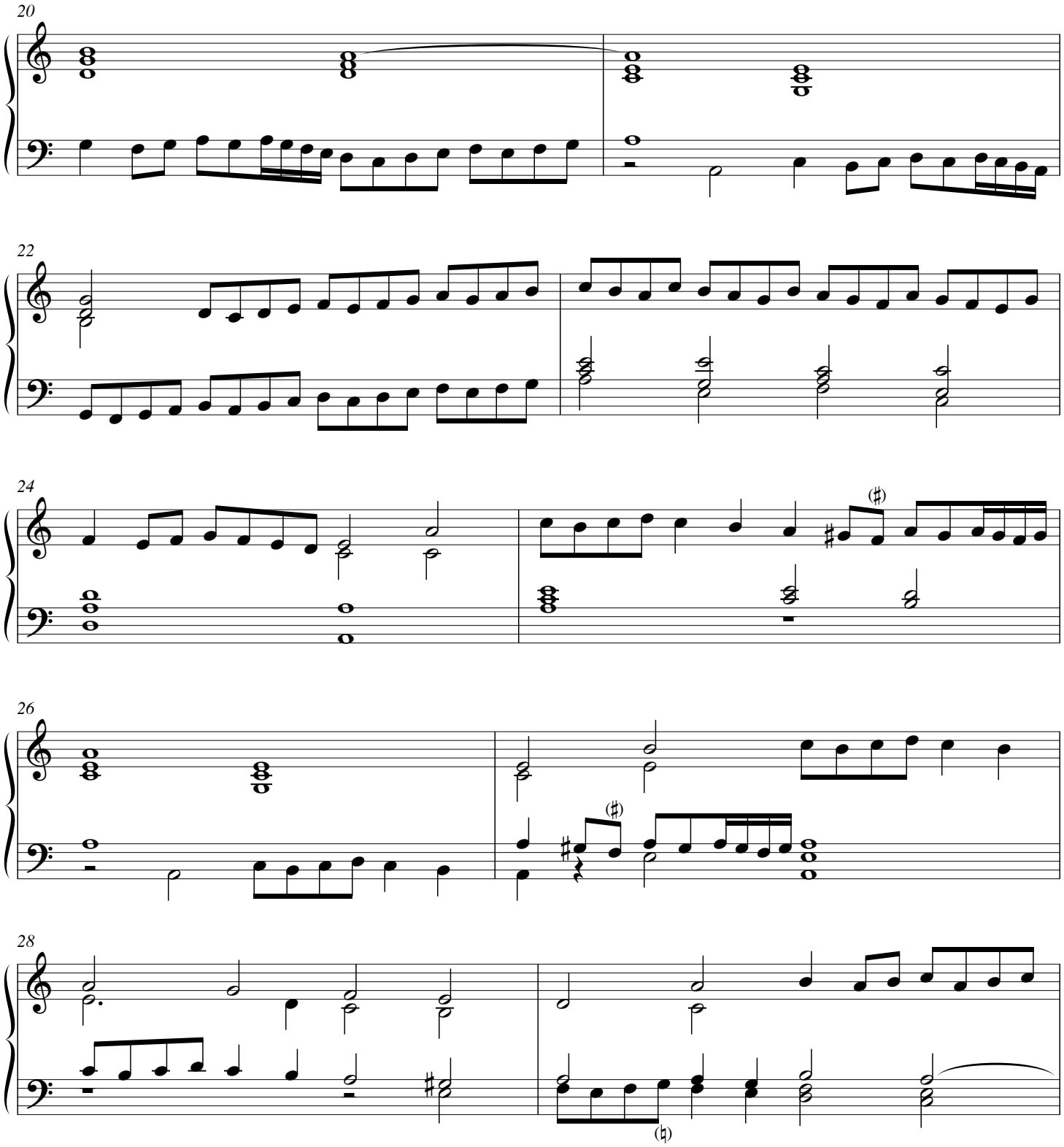


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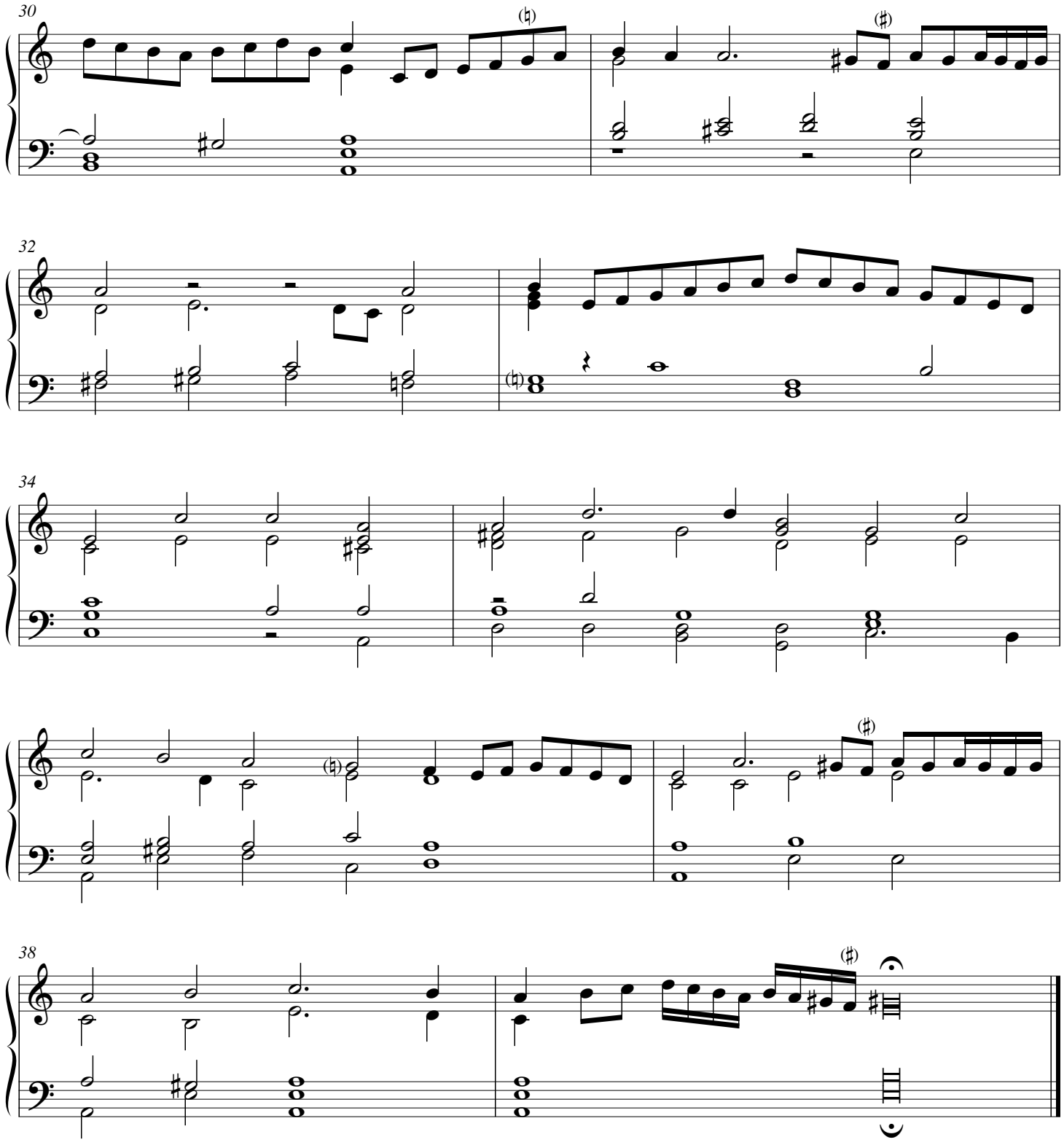


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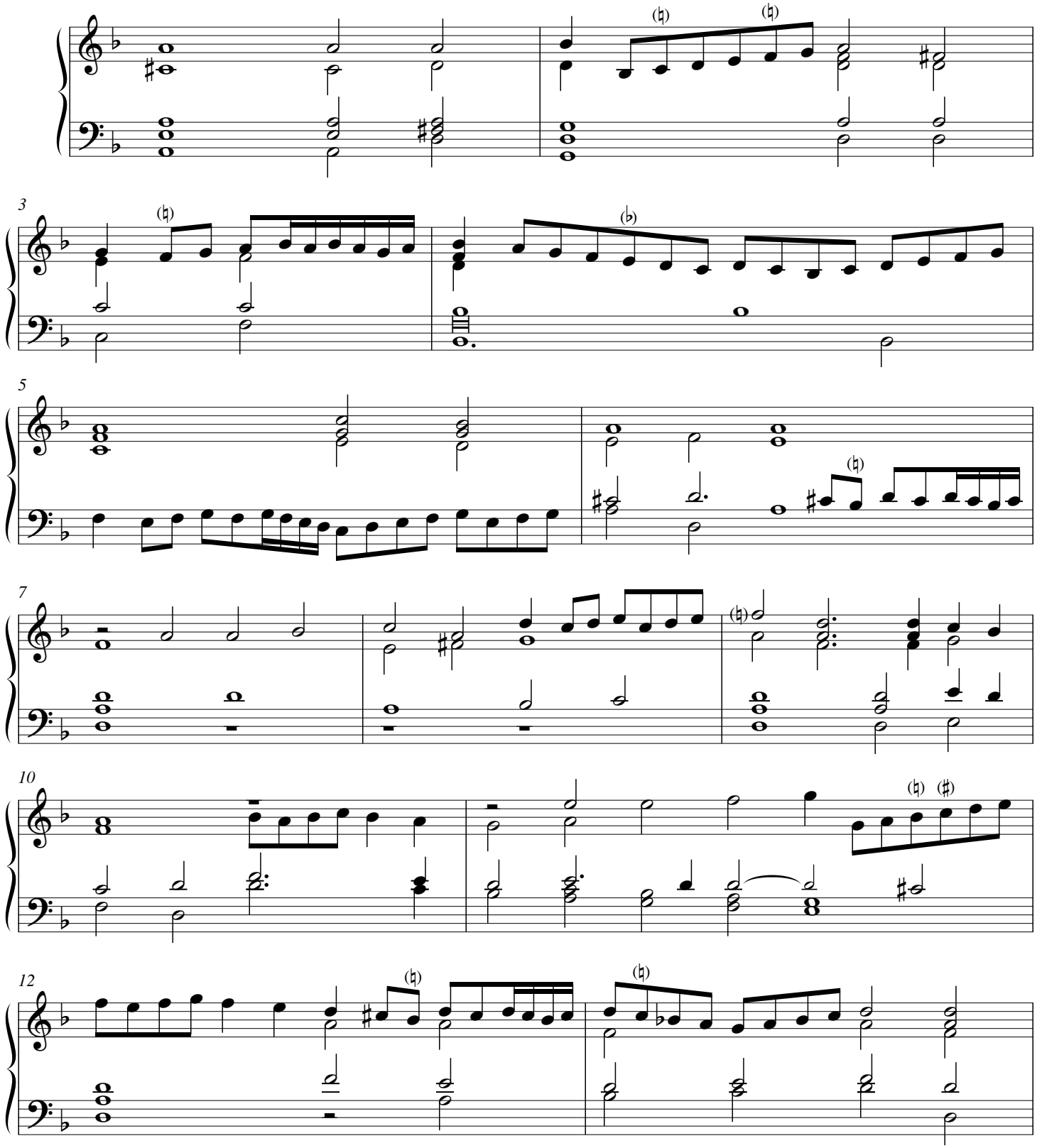

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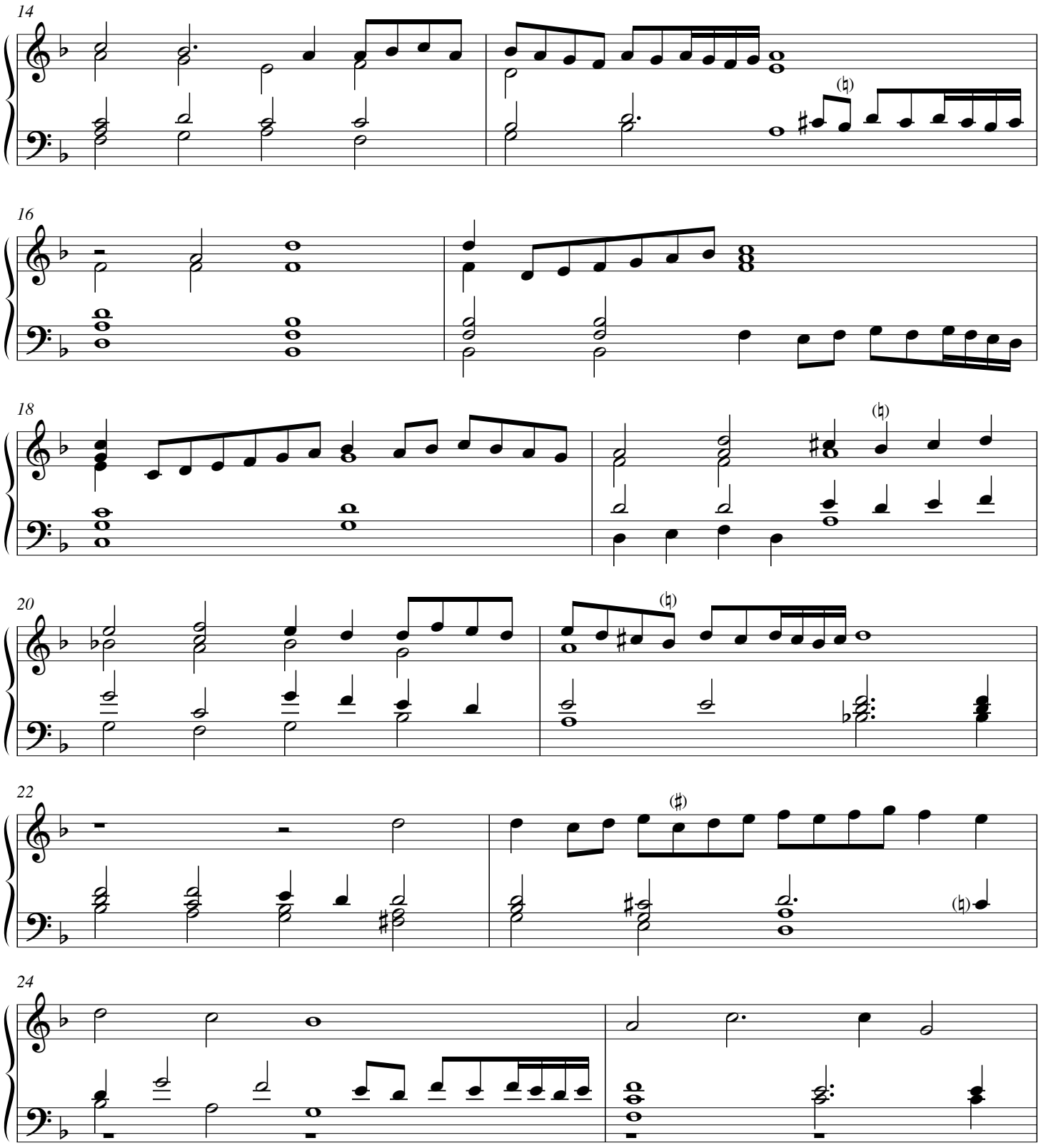


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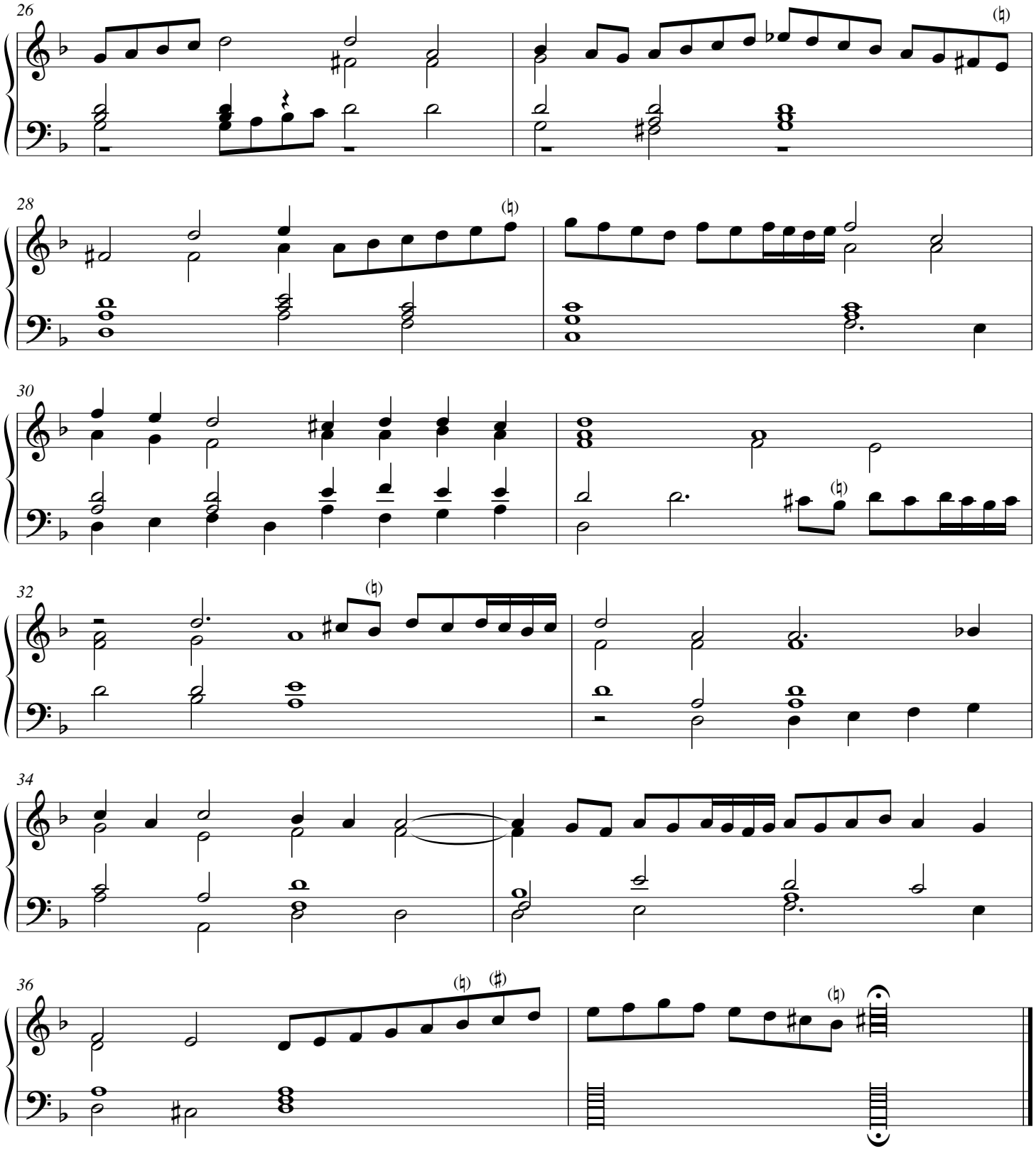


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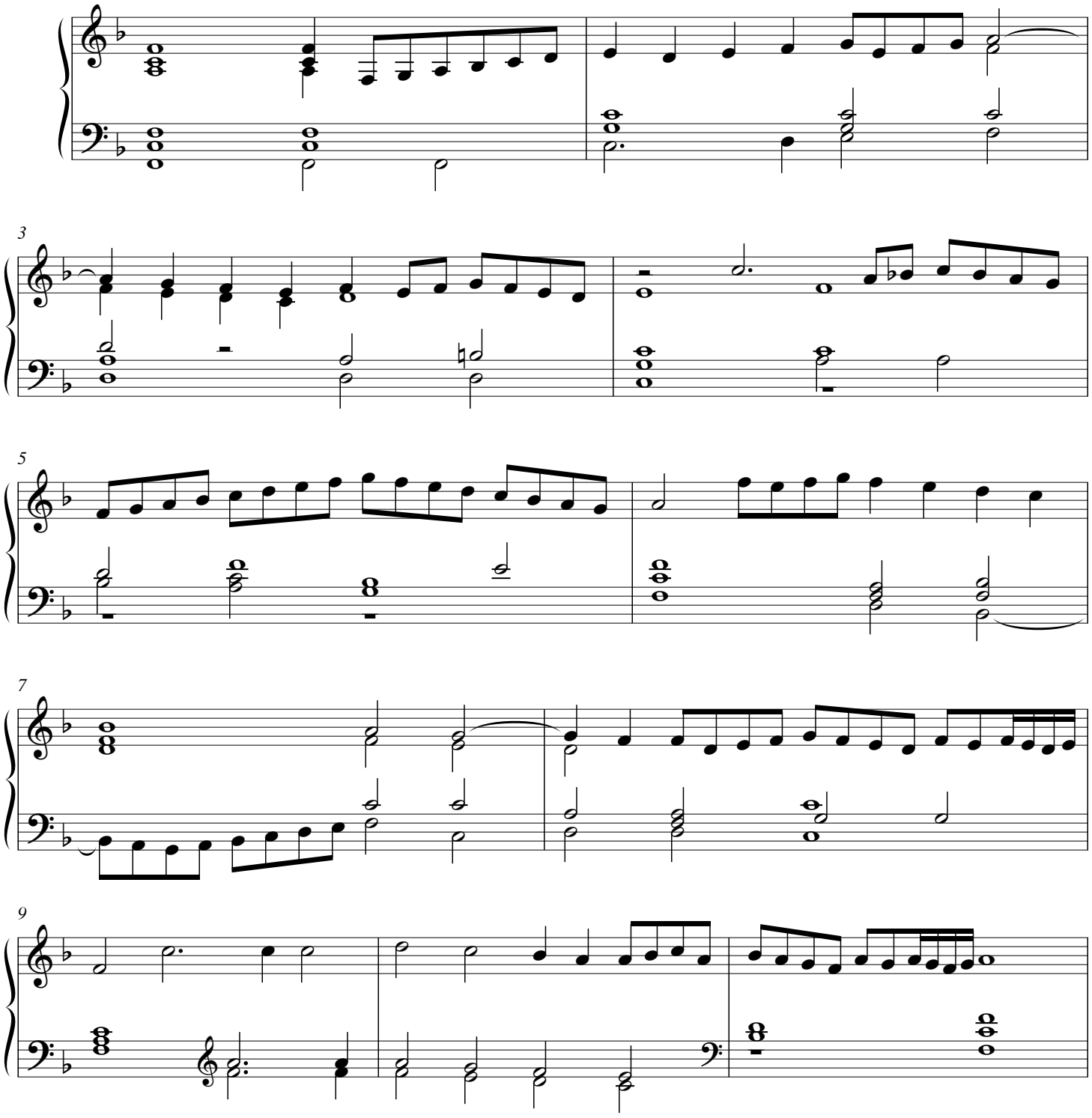
# 8. PHANTHASIA QUINTI TONI



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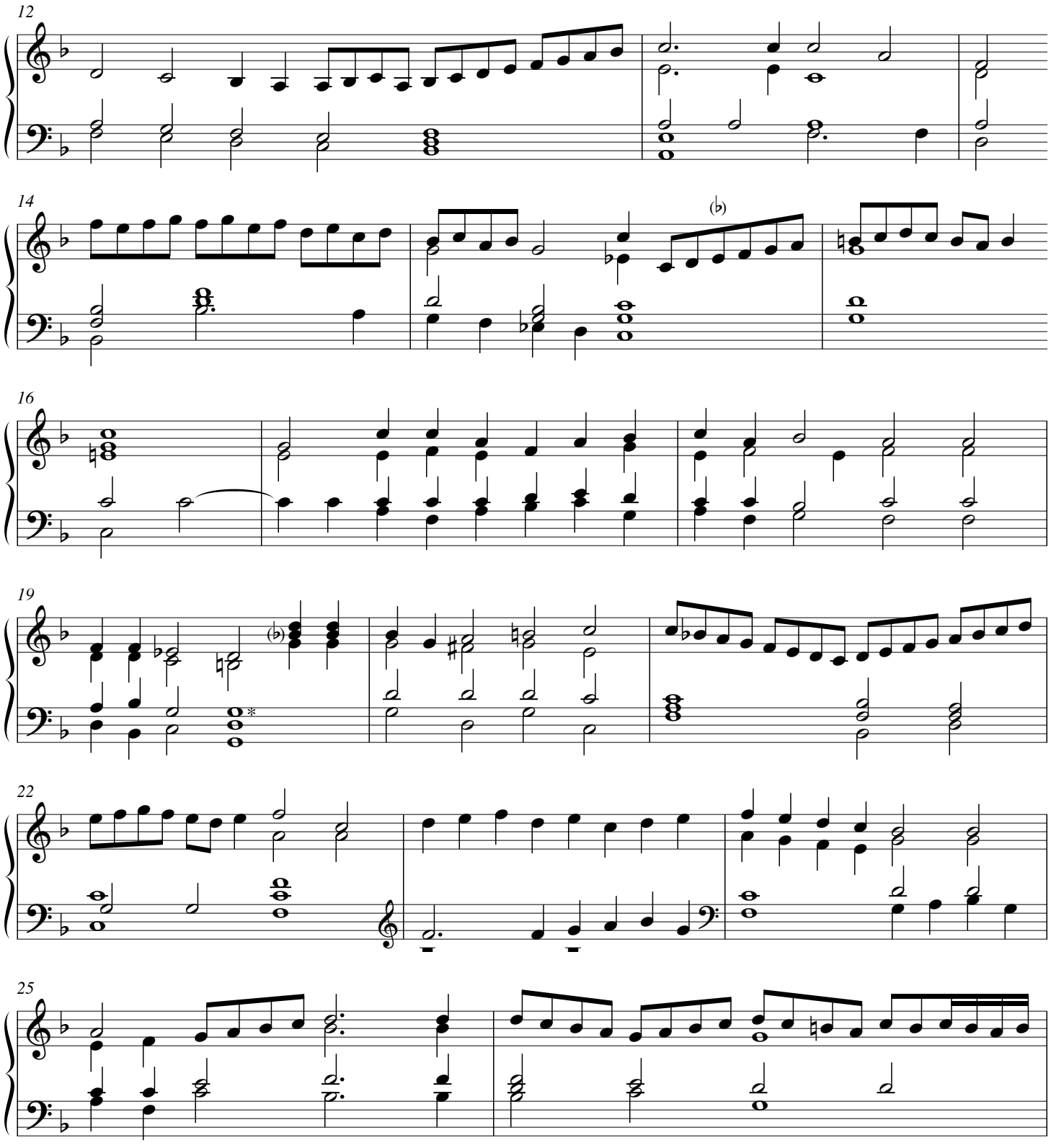


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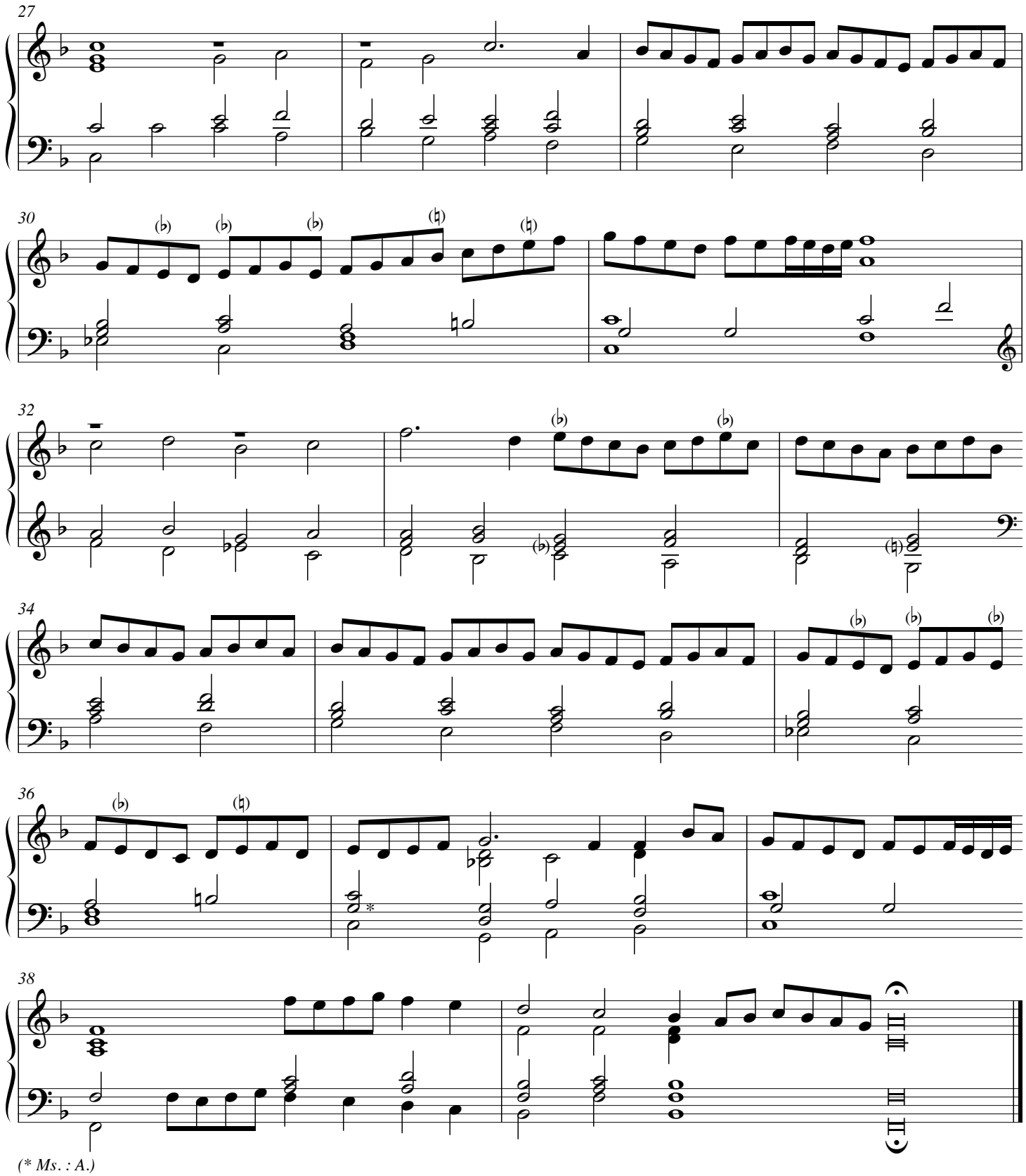


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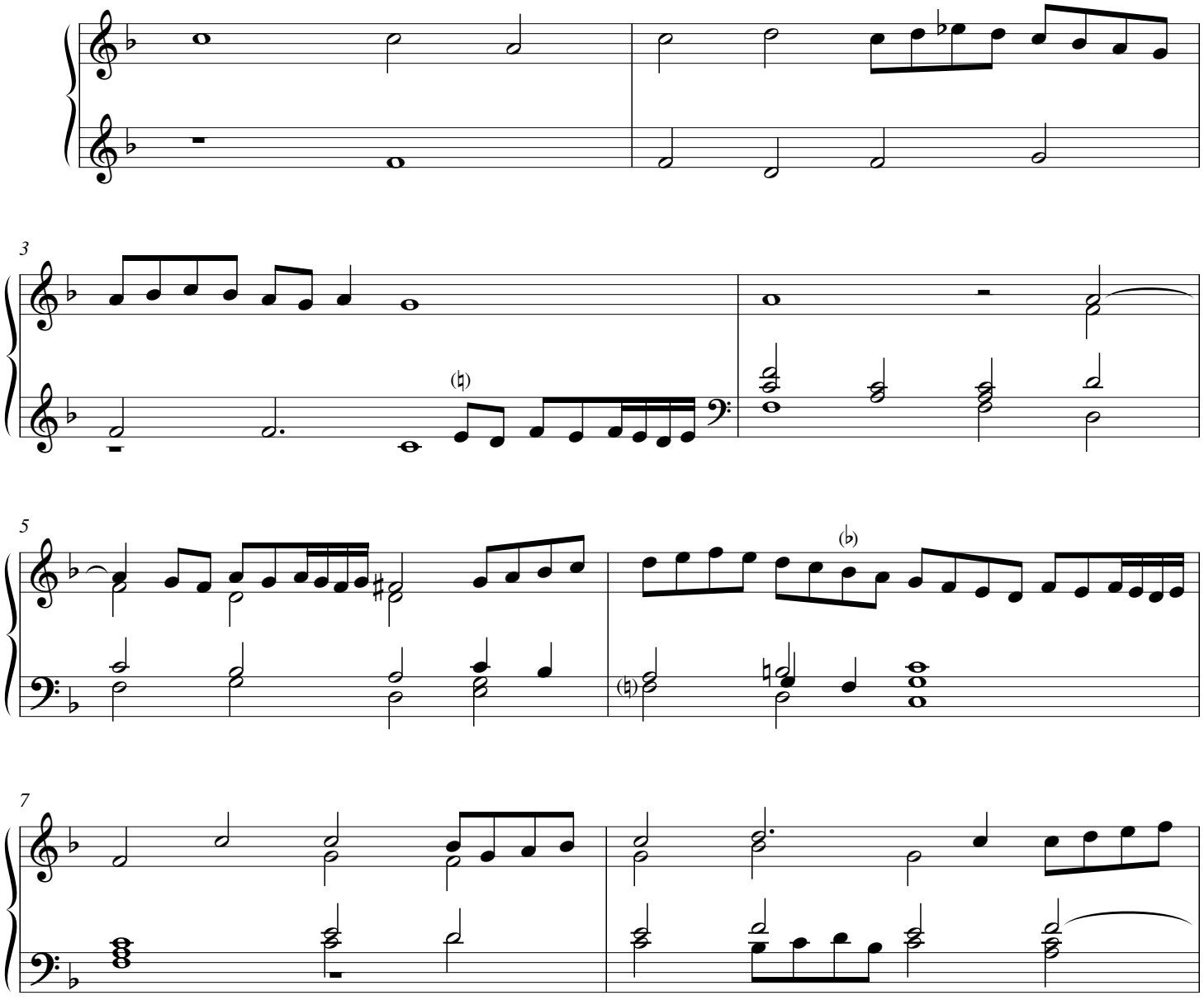
# 9. ALIA PHANTHASIA QUINTI TONI



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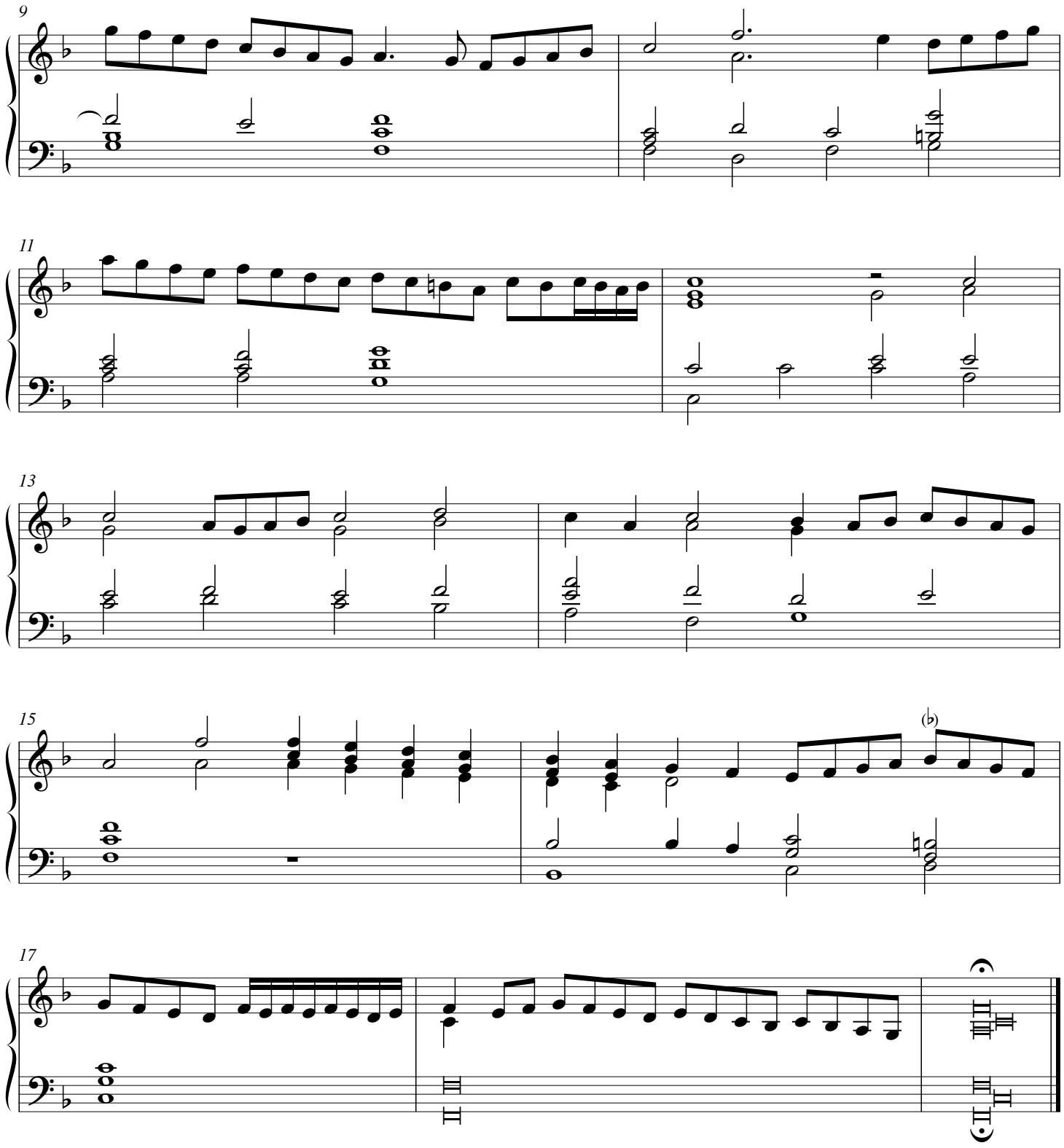


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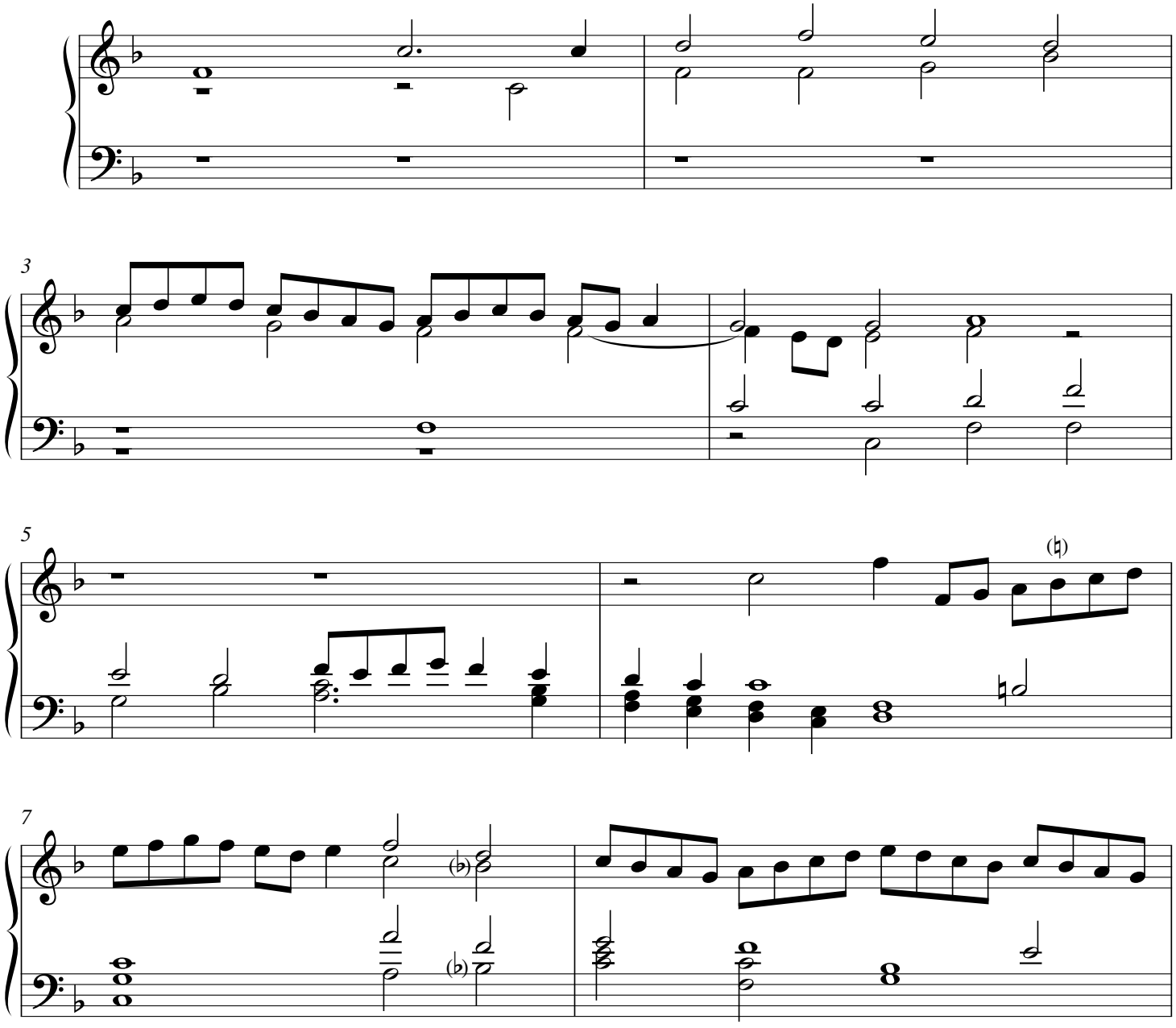
# 10. ALIA PHANTHASIA QUINTI TONI



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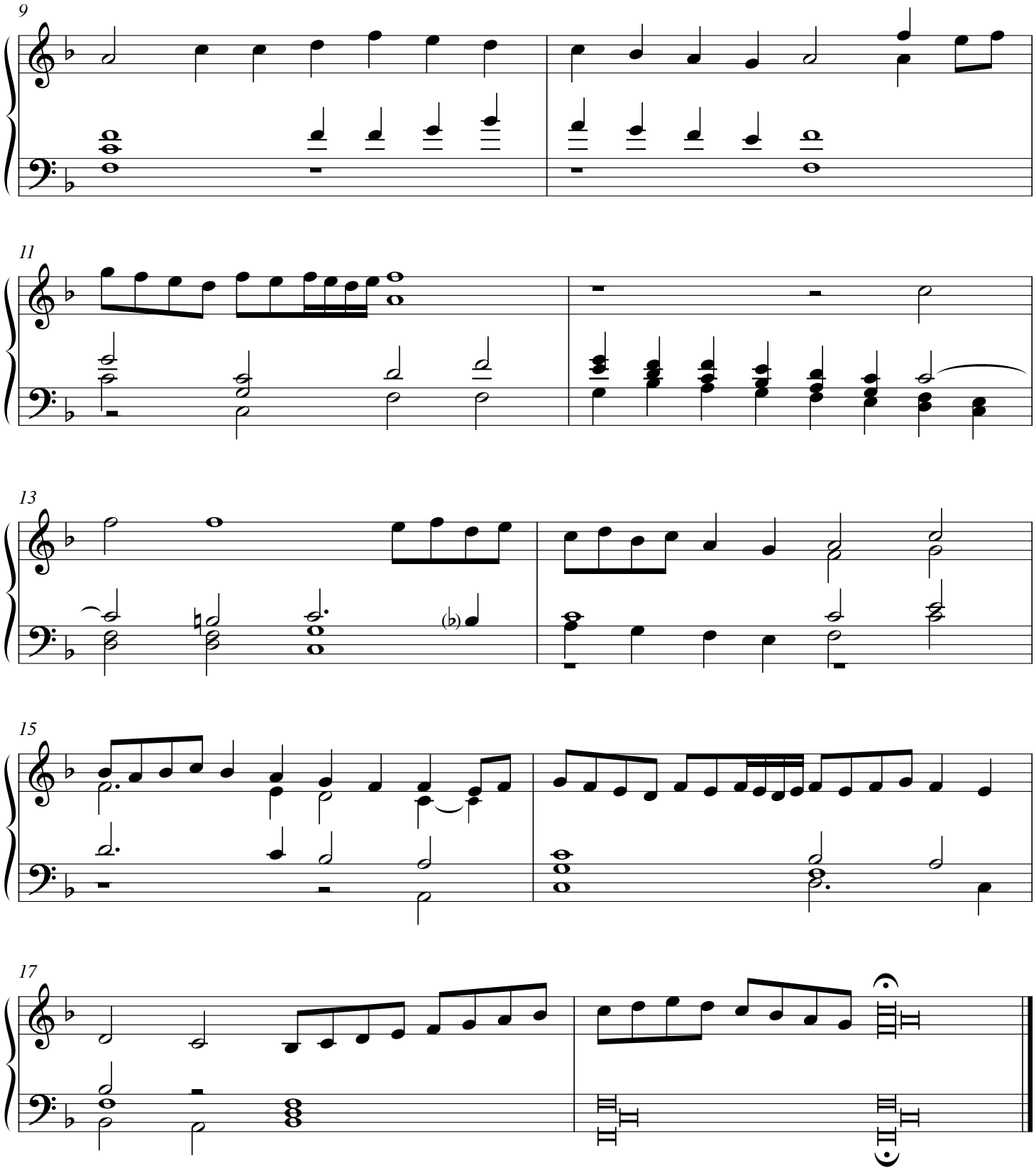


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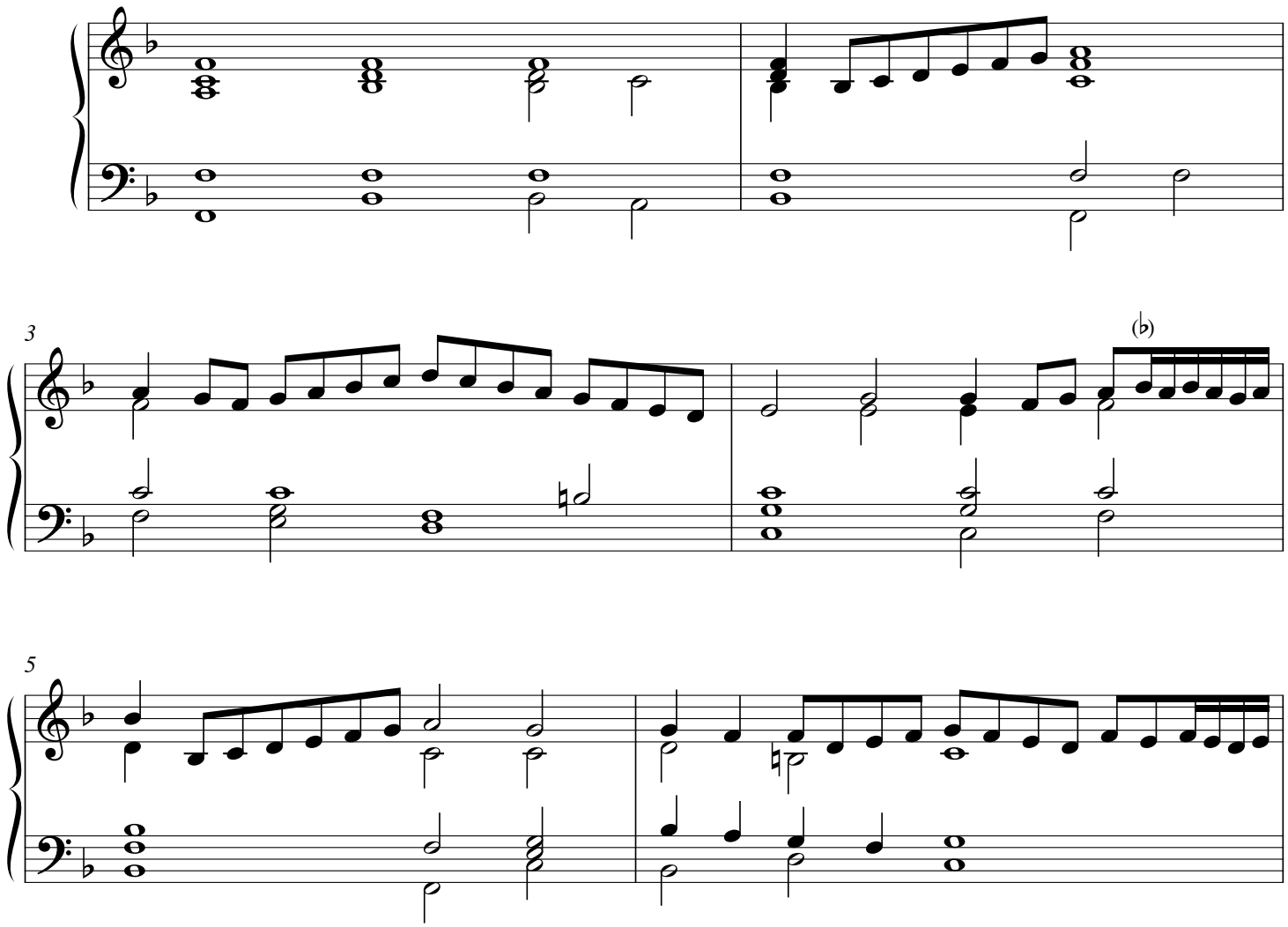
# 11. PHANTHASIA SEXTI TONI




Musica Lætjcia, comes et medicina dolorum.
Lure vocor, duce me, cura sepulta lacet.

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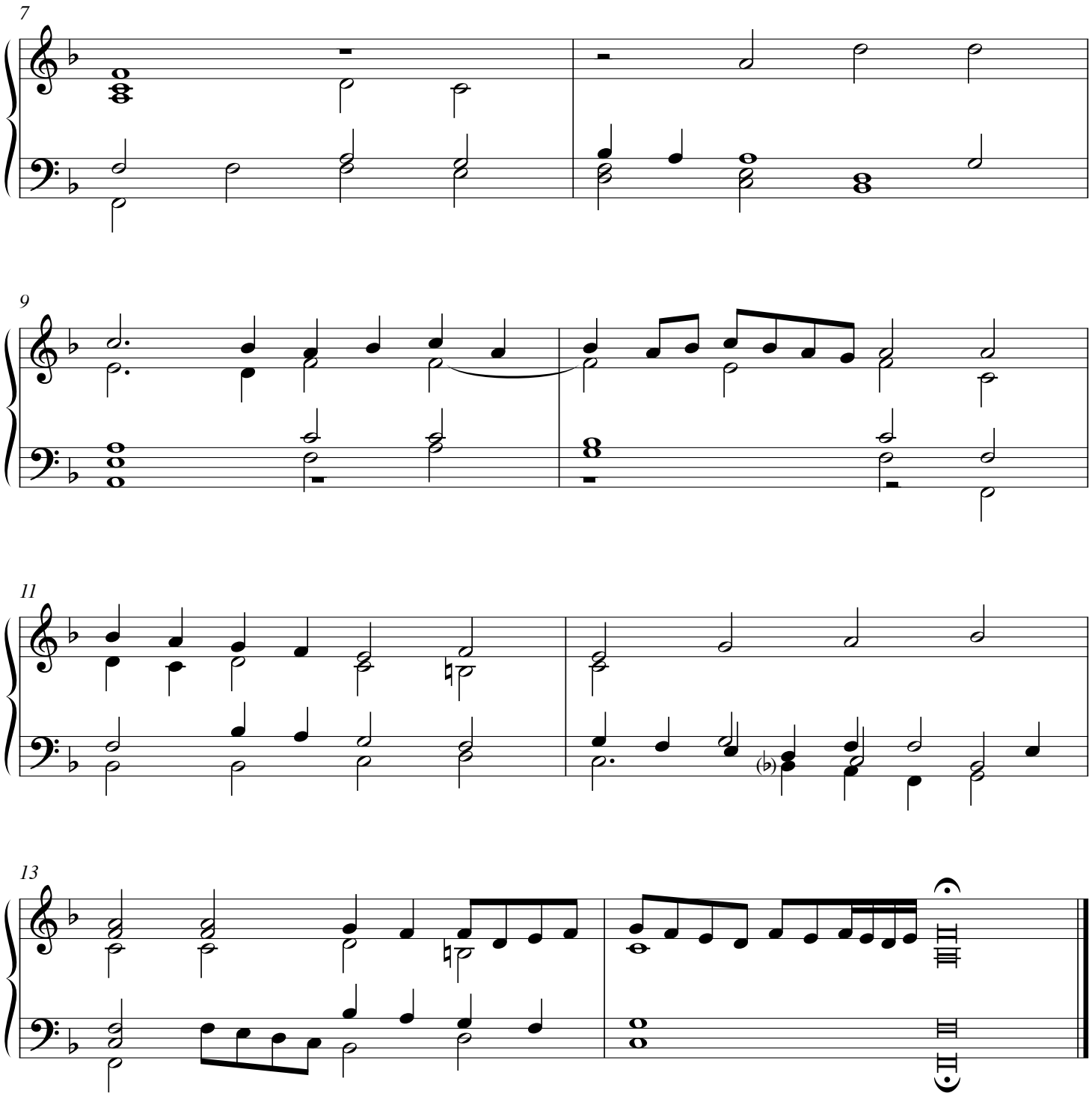


Dum fex dum fimus dum res turpissima simus.
Quid superbimus nescimus quando perimus.

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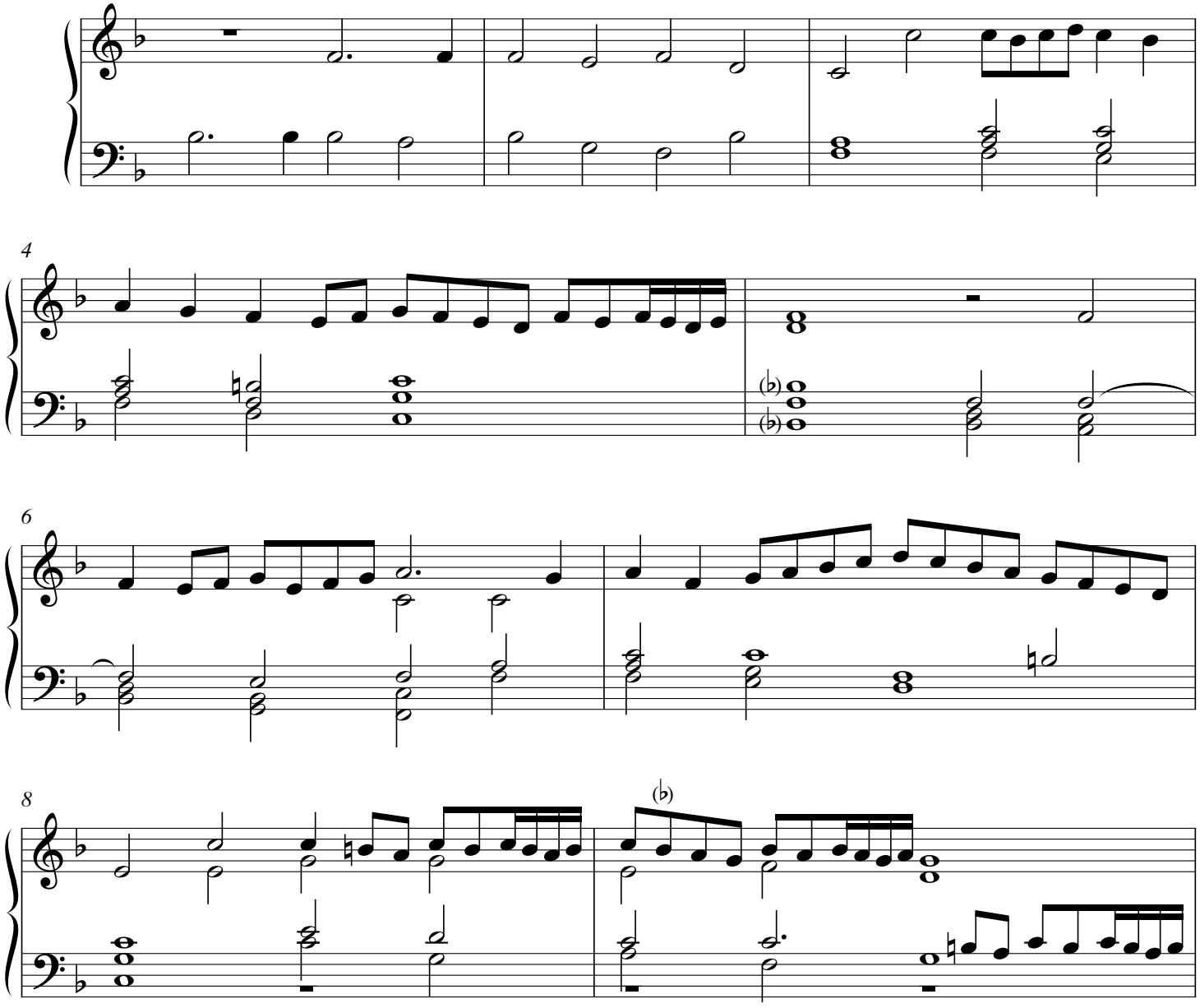
# 12. ALIA PHANTHASIA SEXTI TONI



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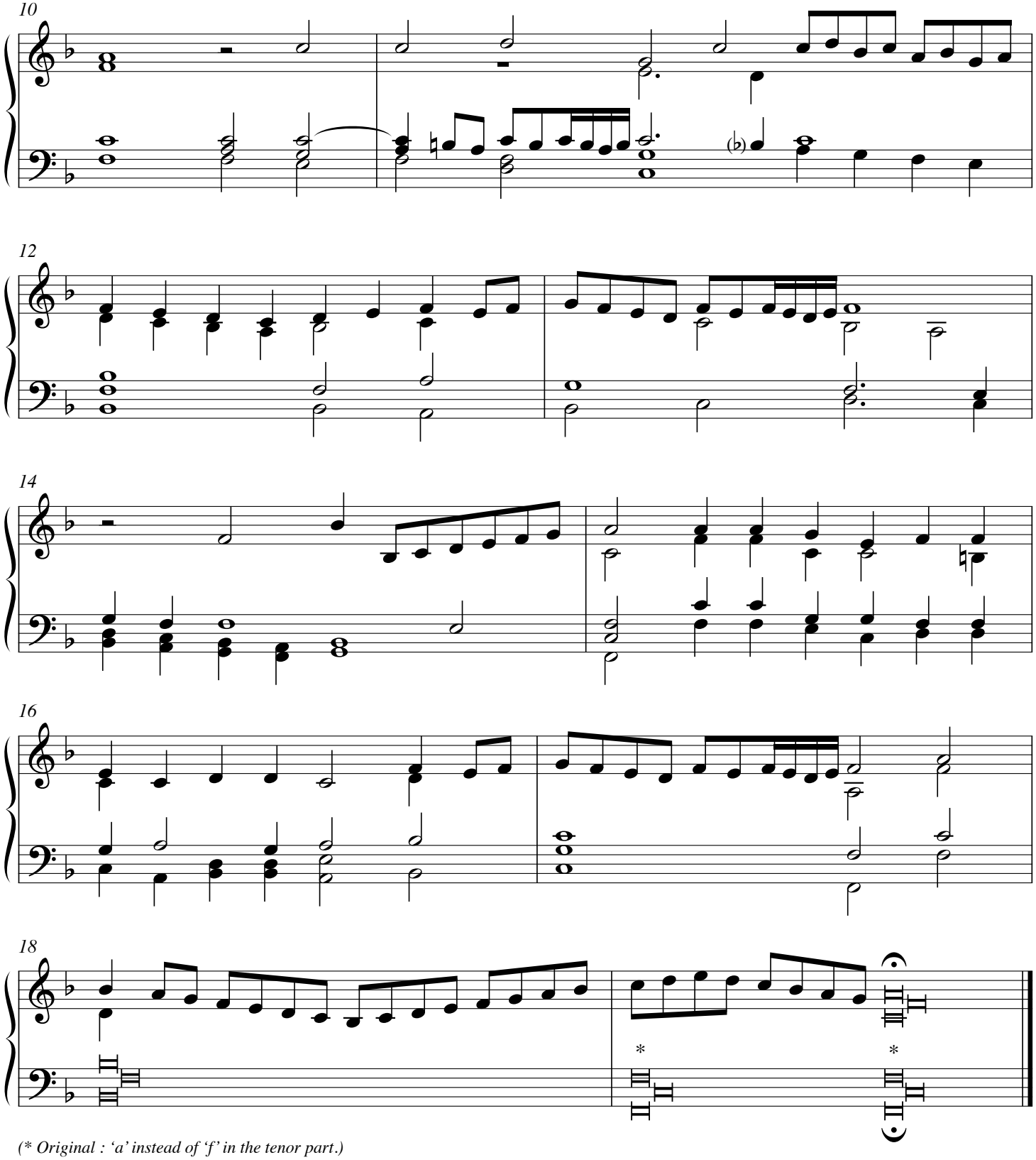


*(* Original : 'a' instead of 'f' in the tenor part.)*

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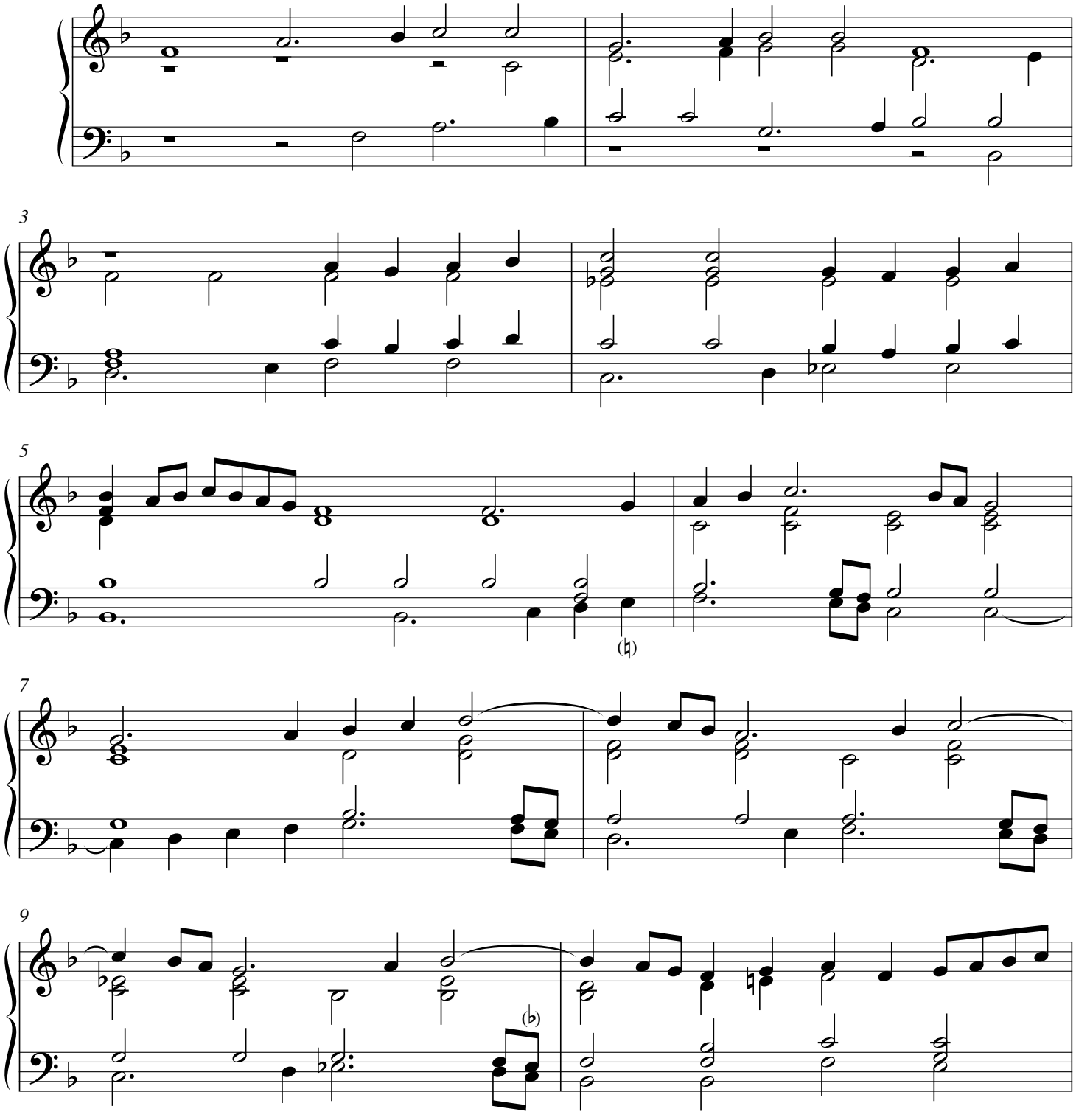
# 13. ALIA PHANTHASIA SEXTI TONI



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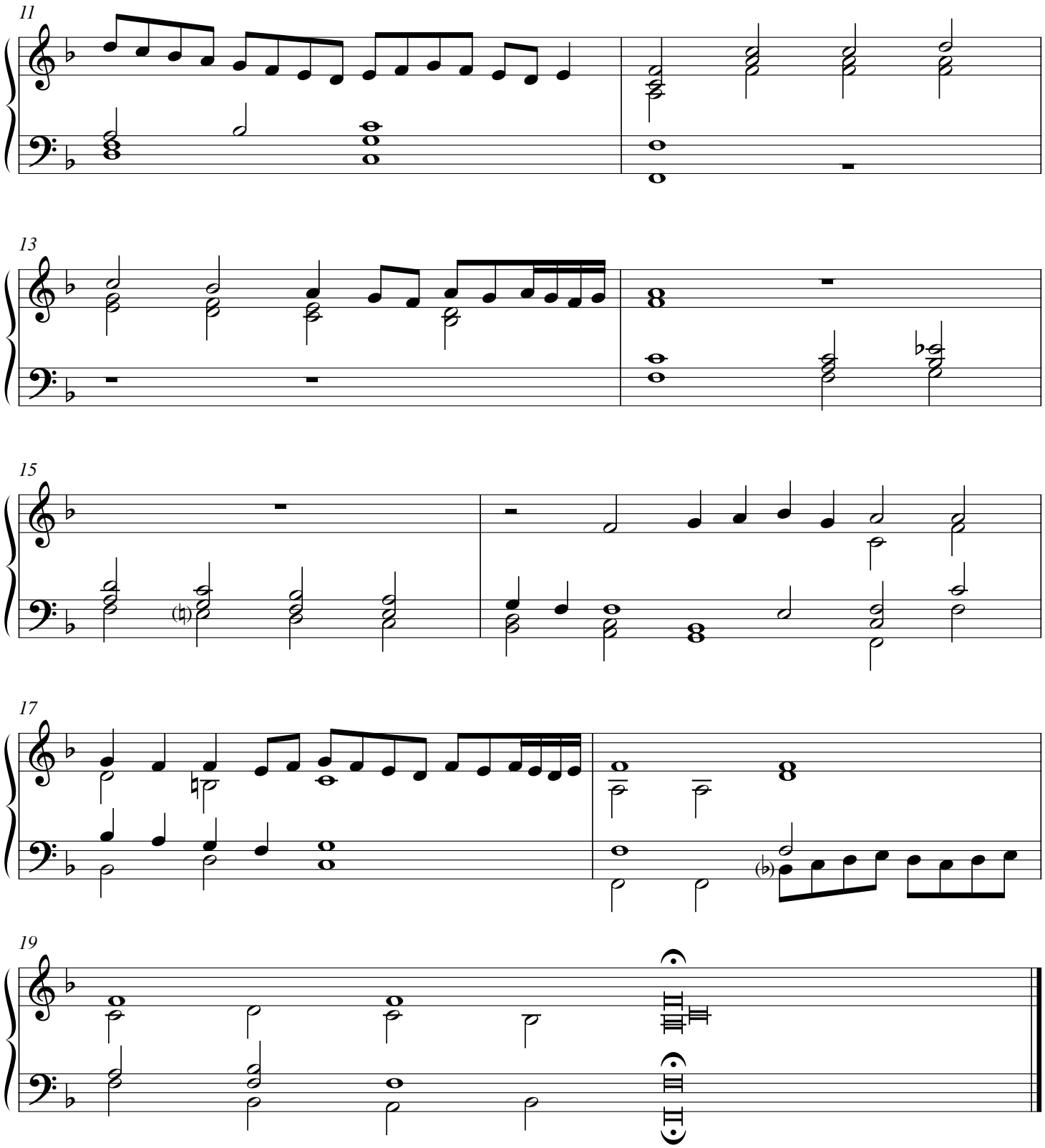


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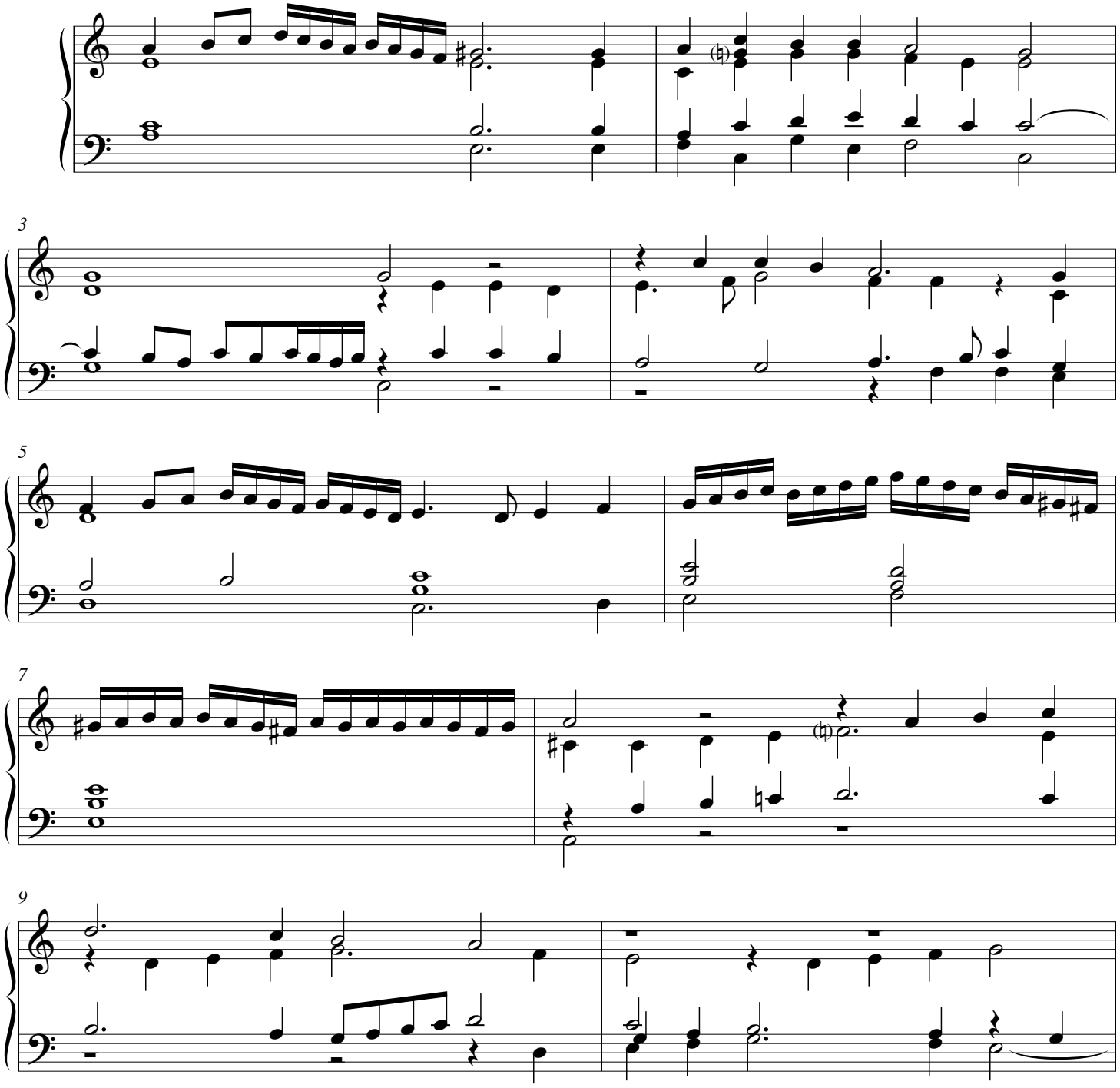
# 14. PHANTHASIA ALIQUA



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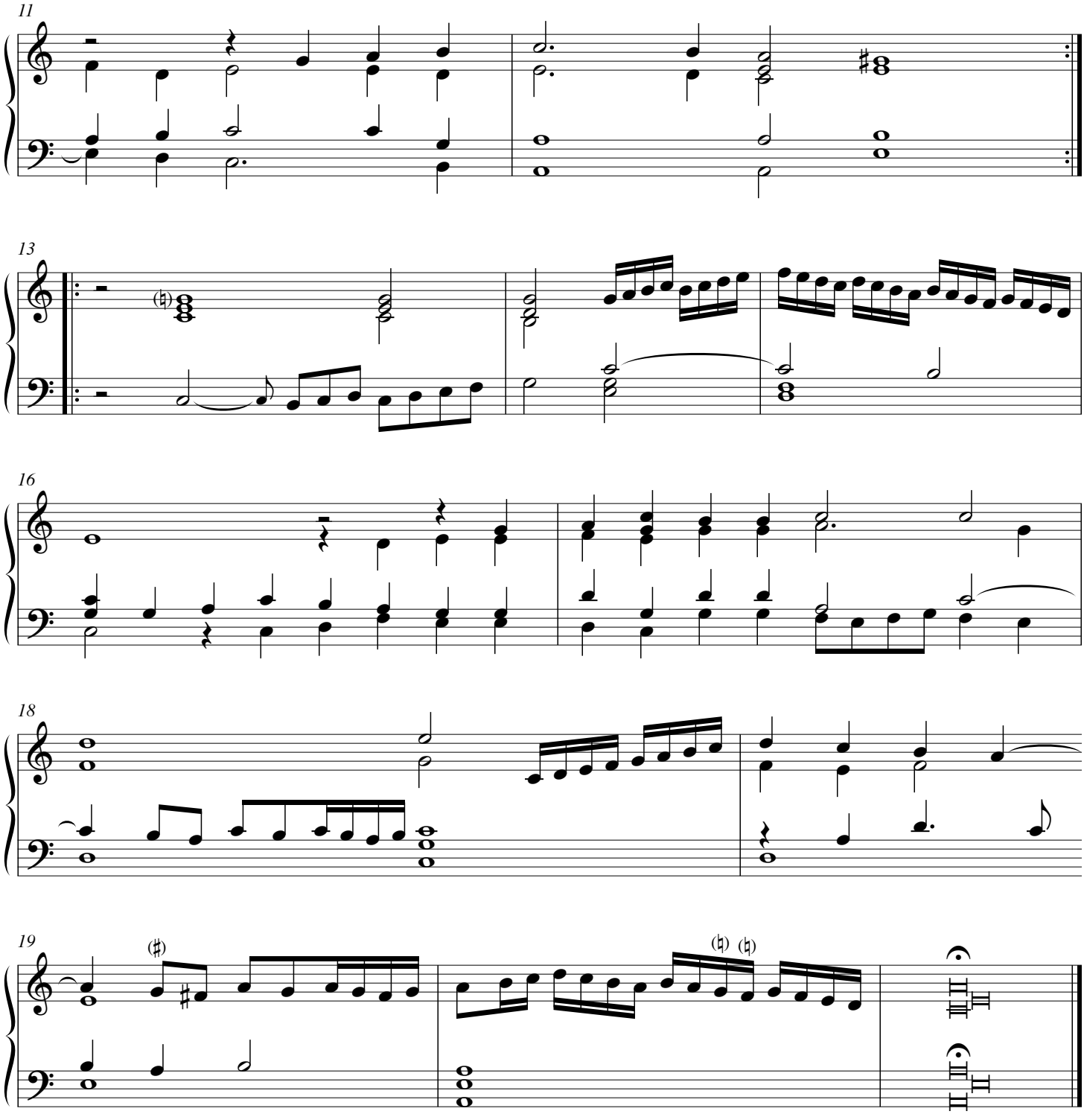


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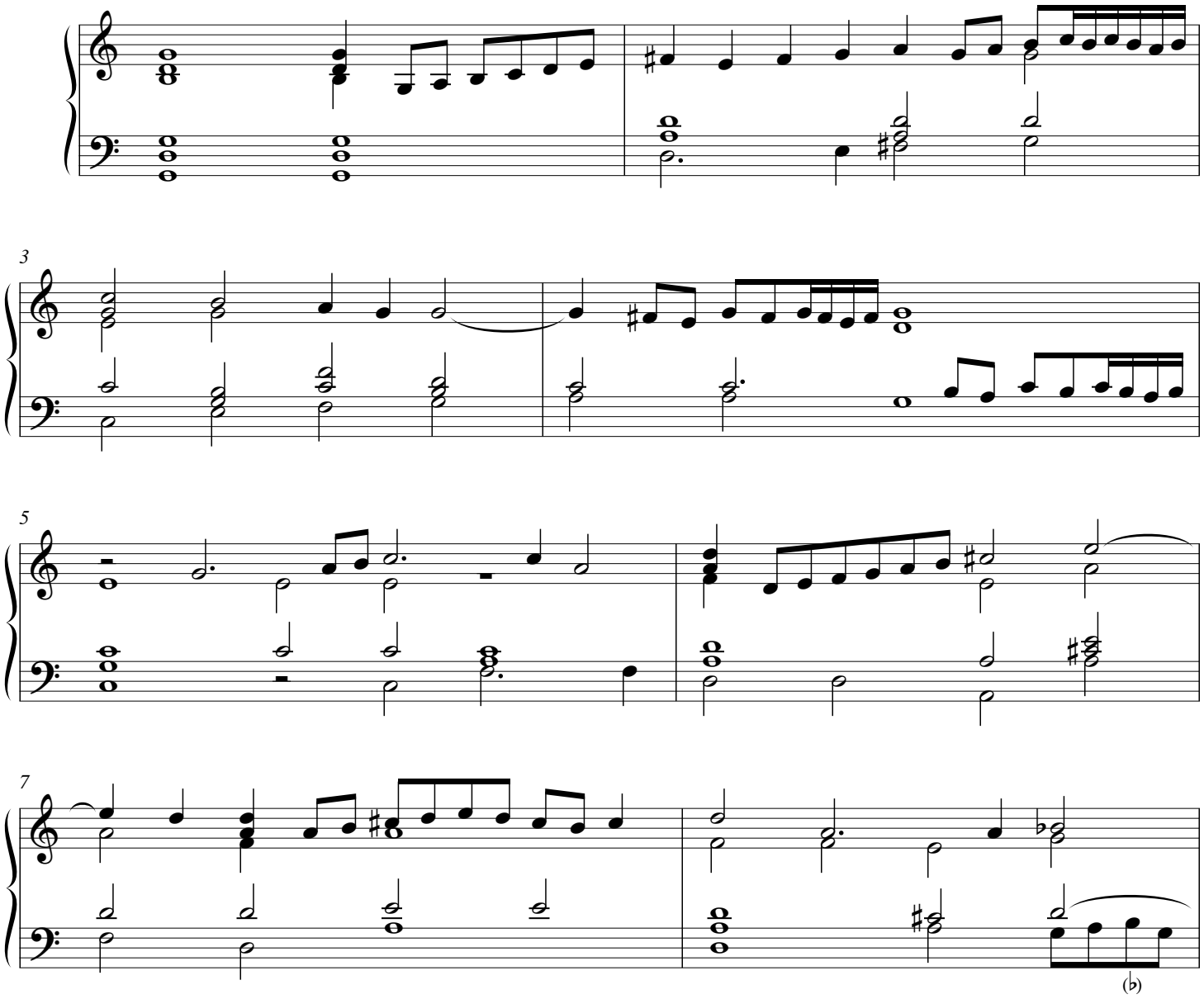
# 15. PHANTHASIA SEPTIMI TONI



Multis annis iam peractis
Nulla fides est in pactis
Mel in ora, verba lactis
Fel in corde, fraus in factis.

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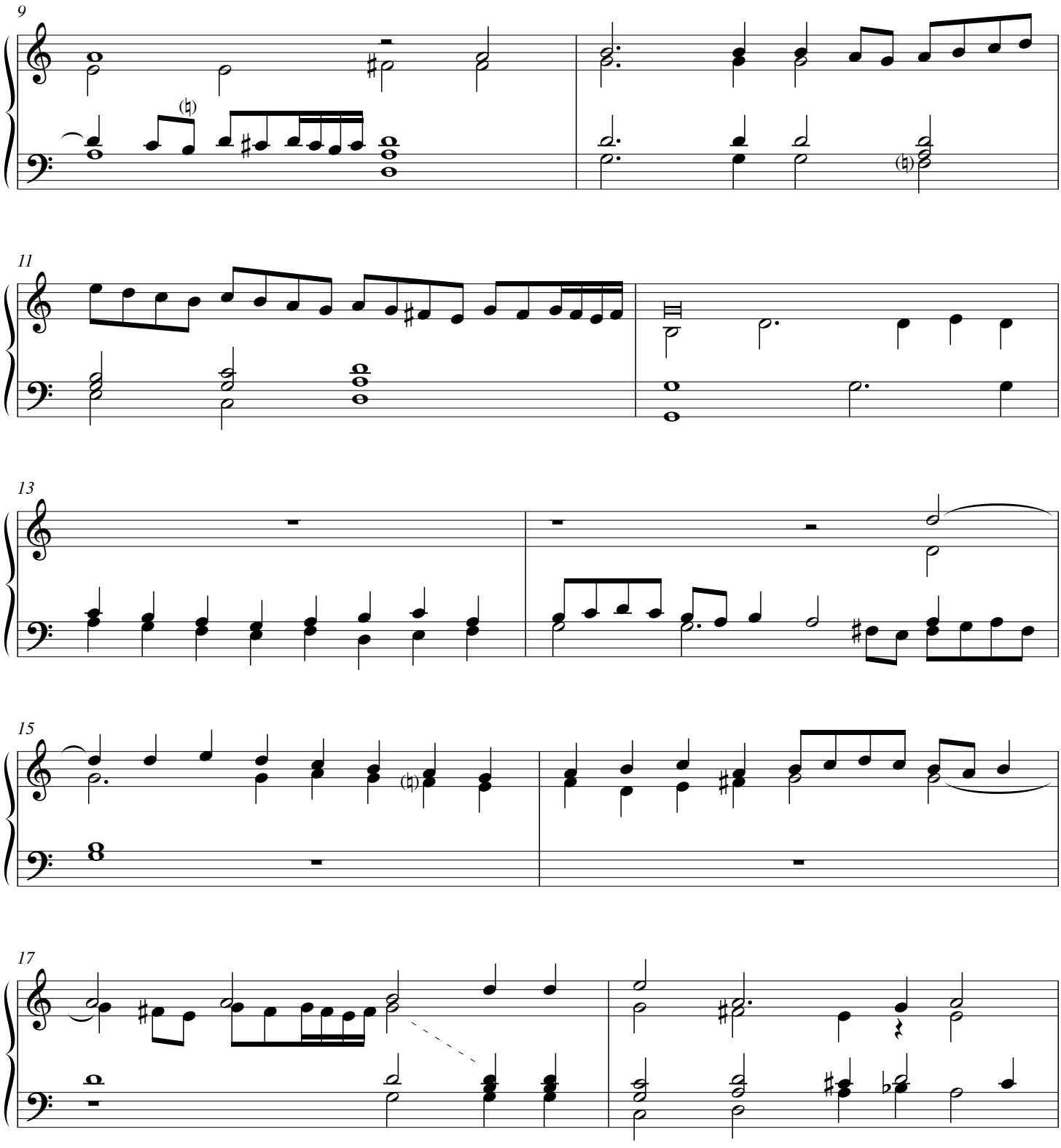


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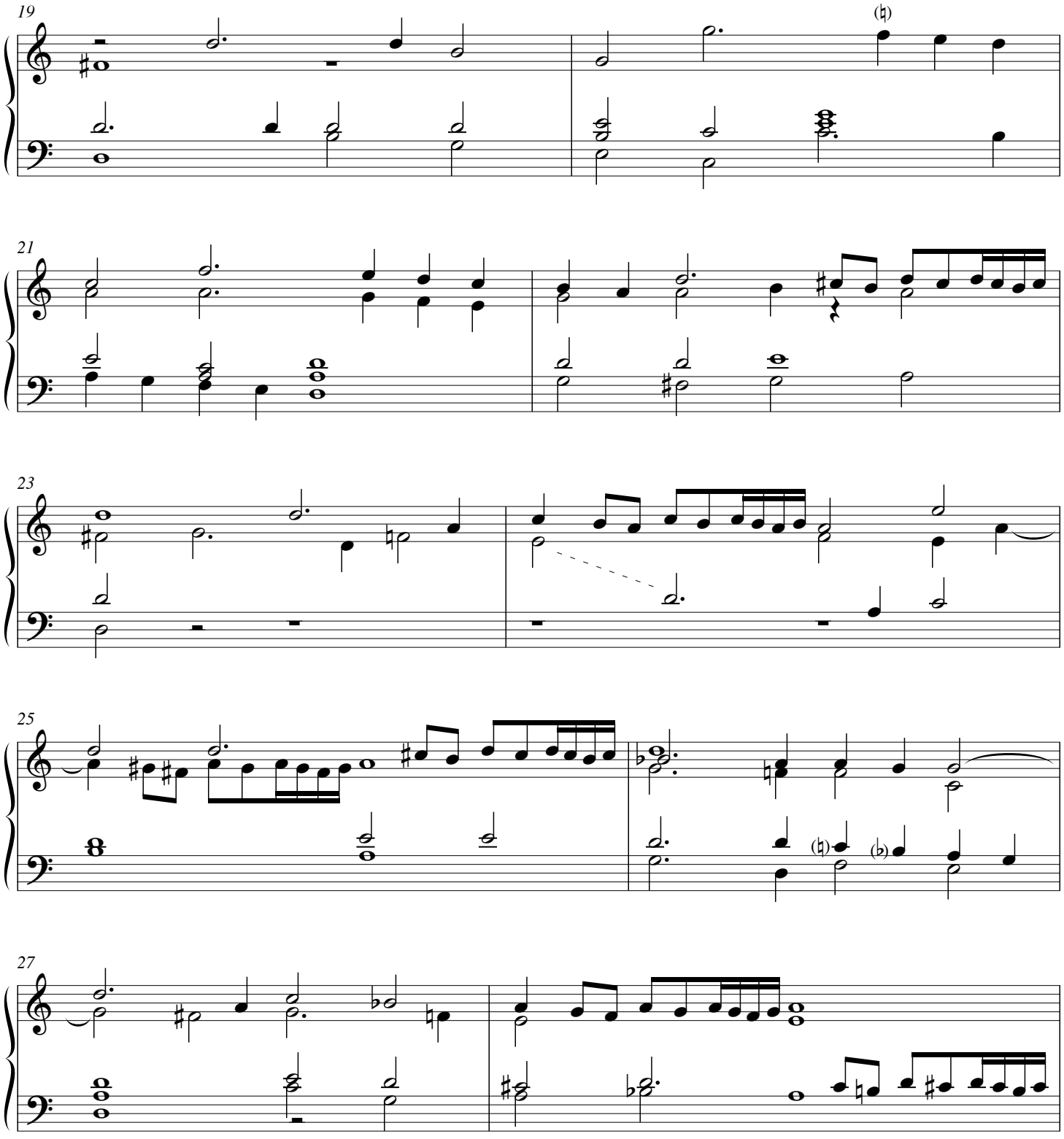


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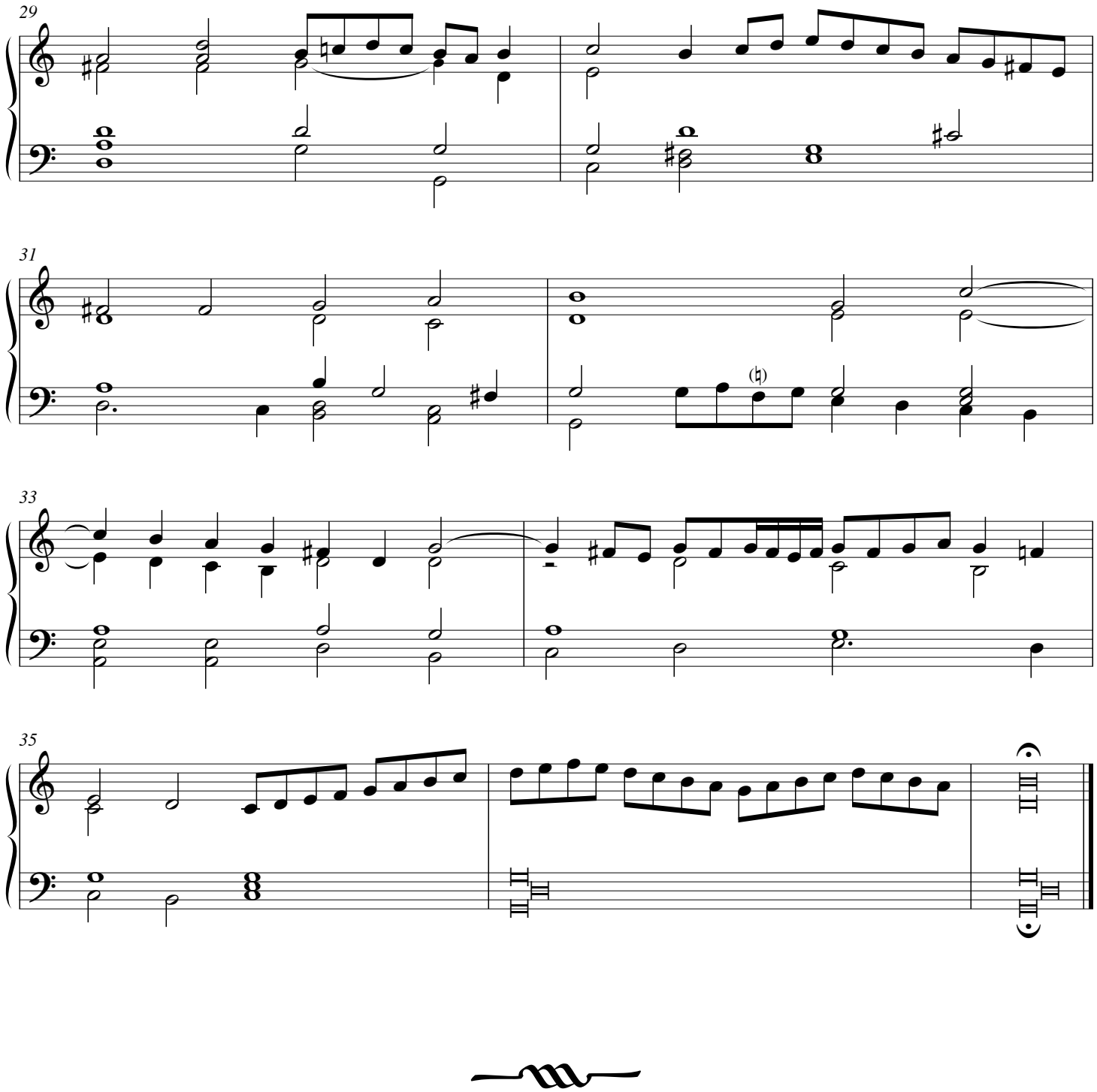


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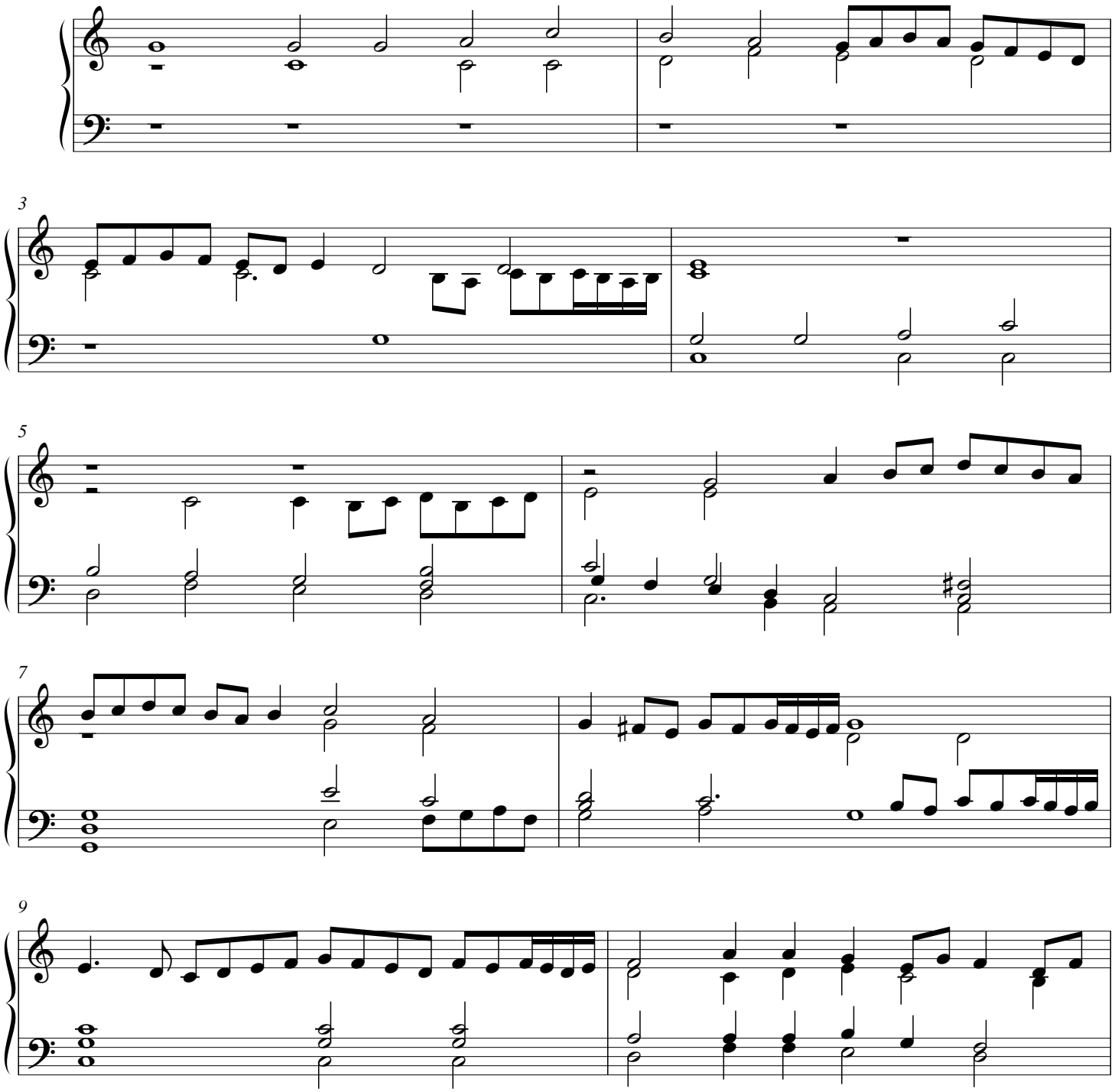
# 16. PHANTHASIA OCTAVI TONI



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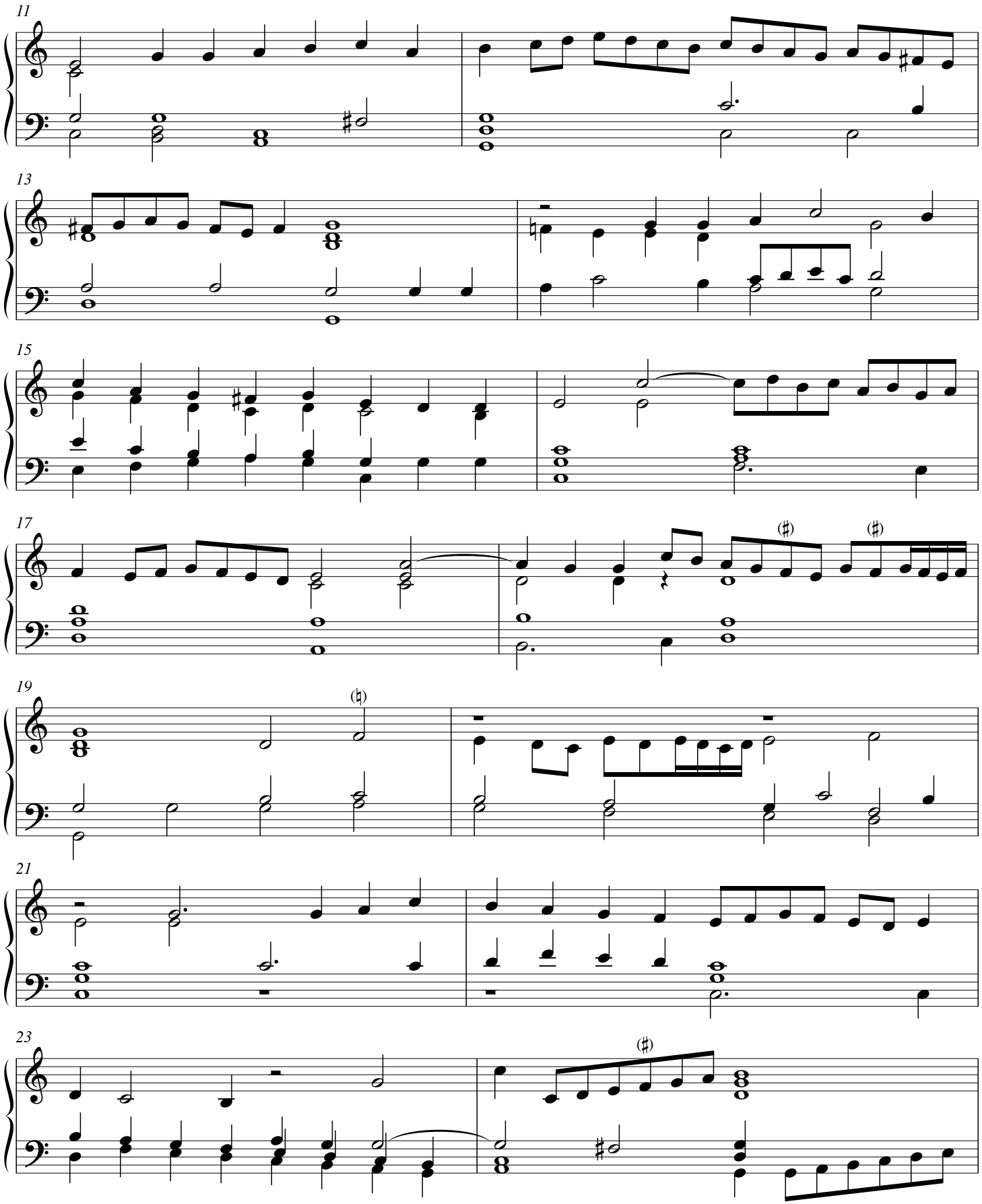


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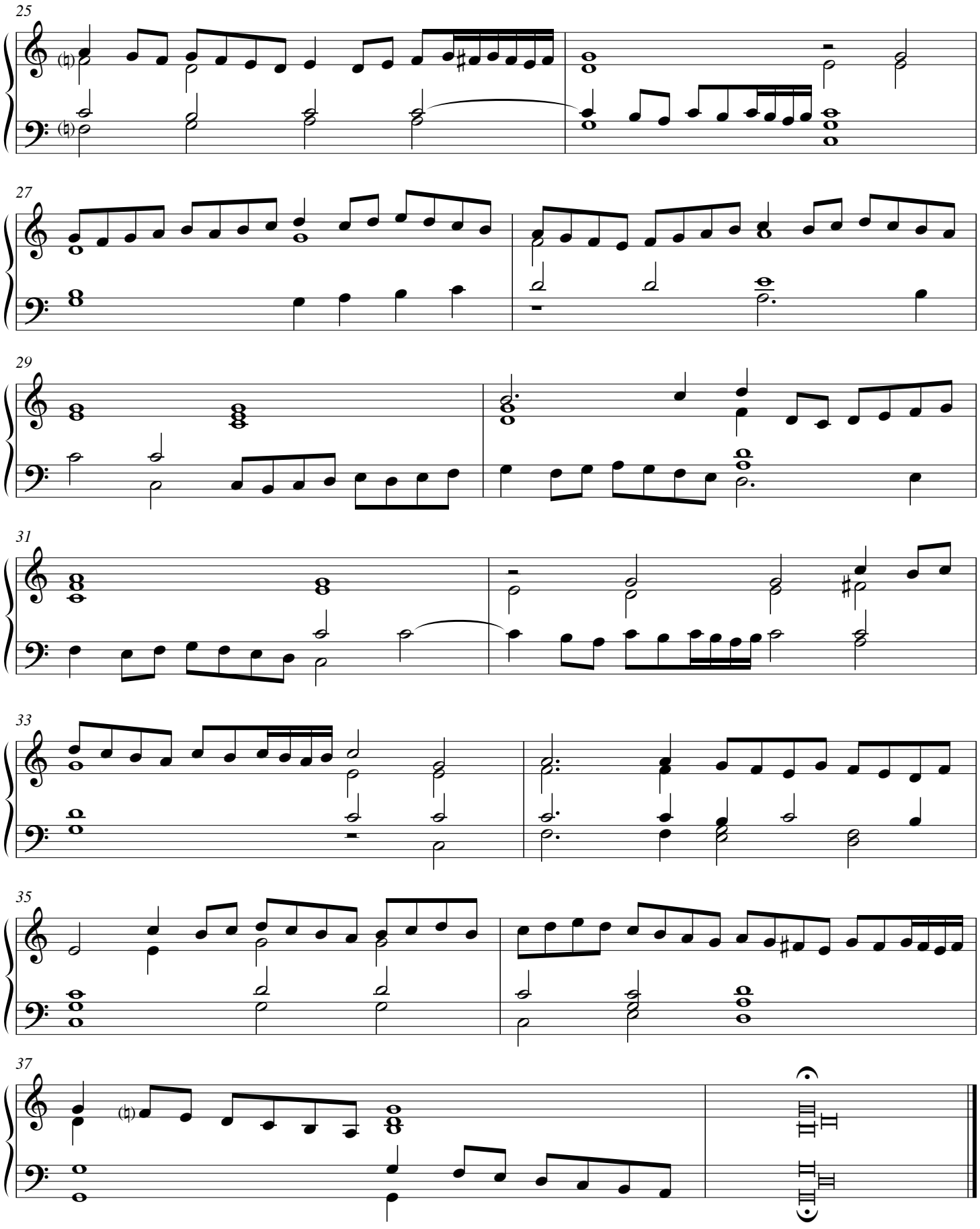


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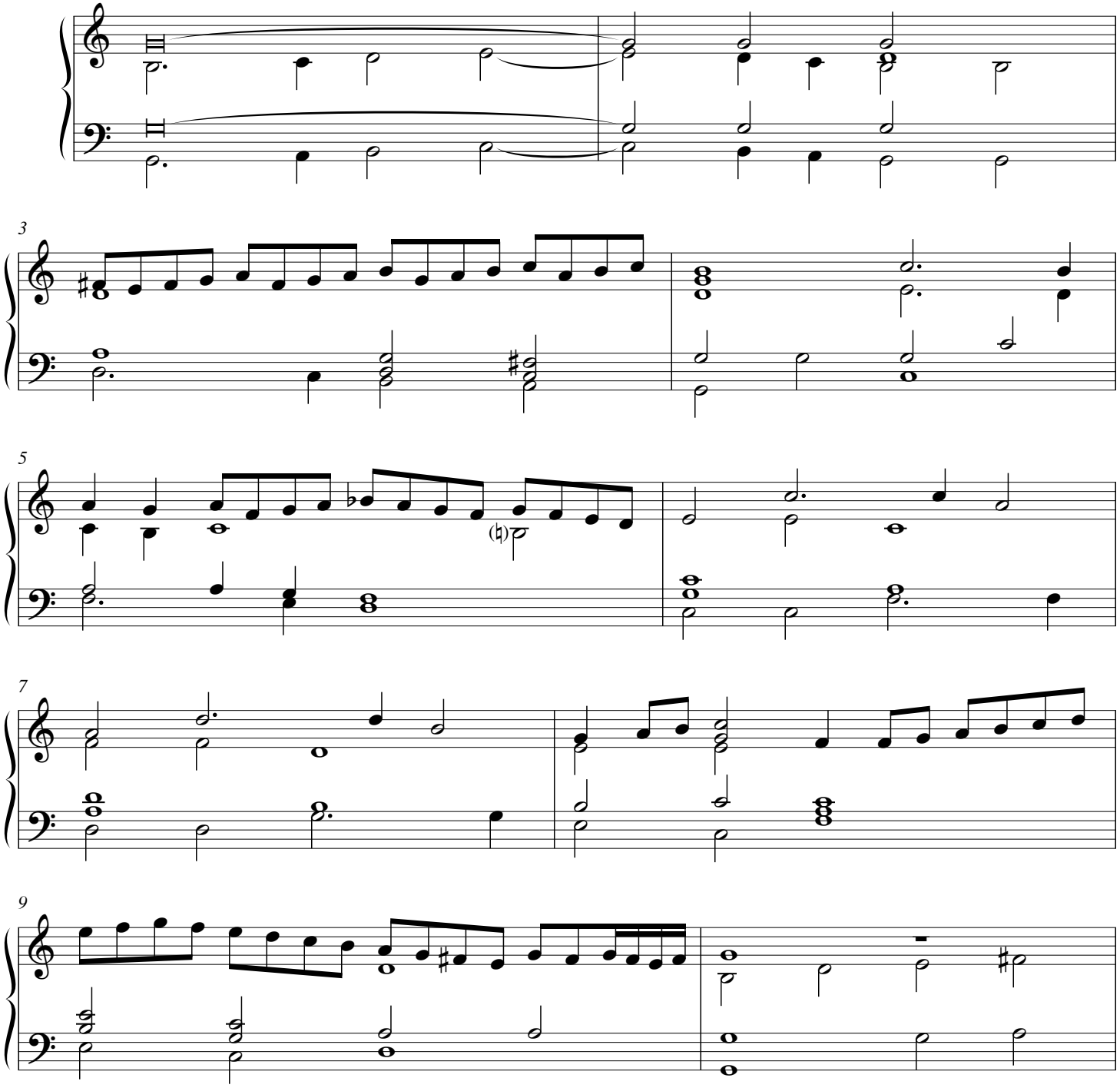
# 17. PHANTHASIA OCTAVI TONI



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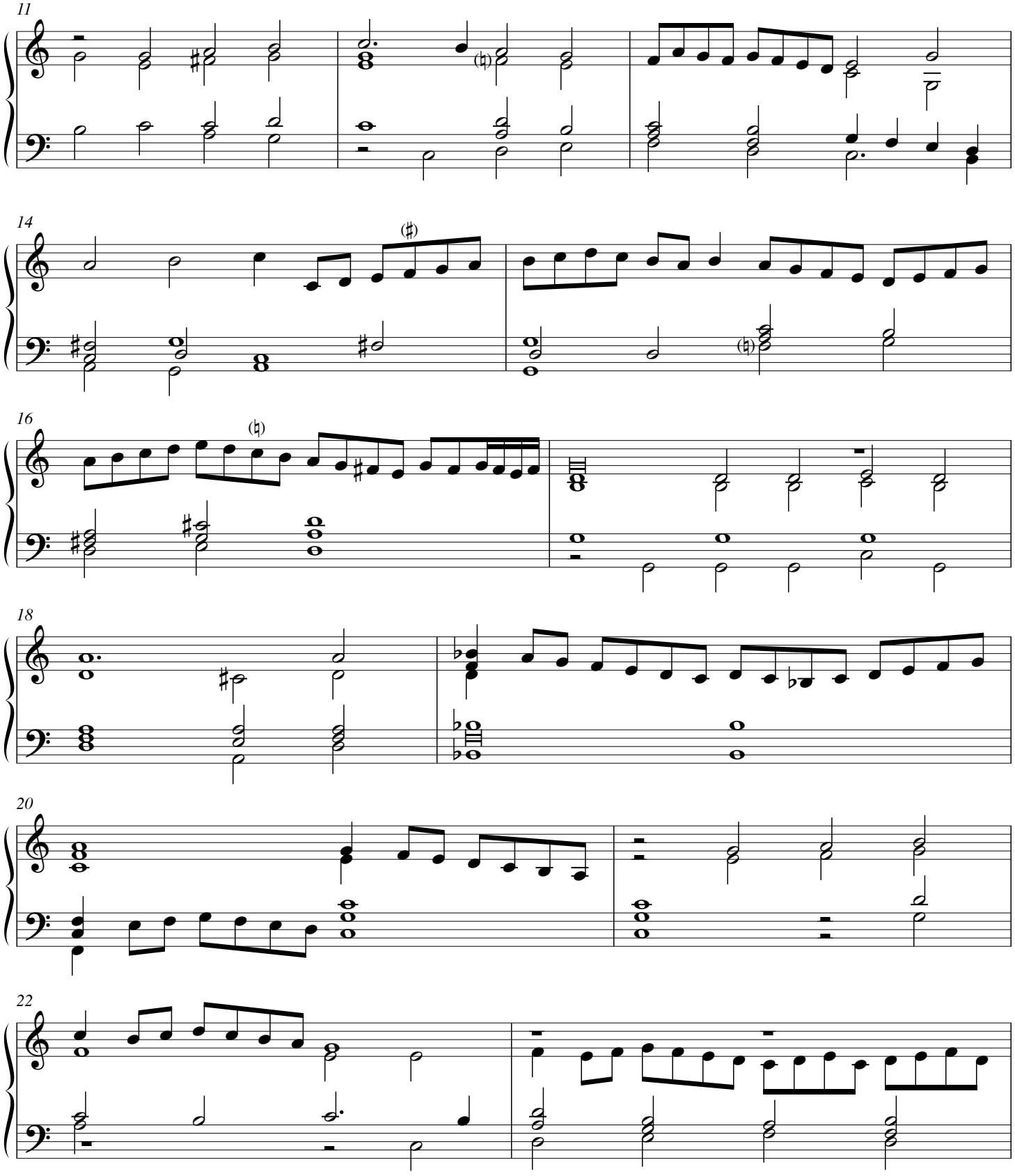


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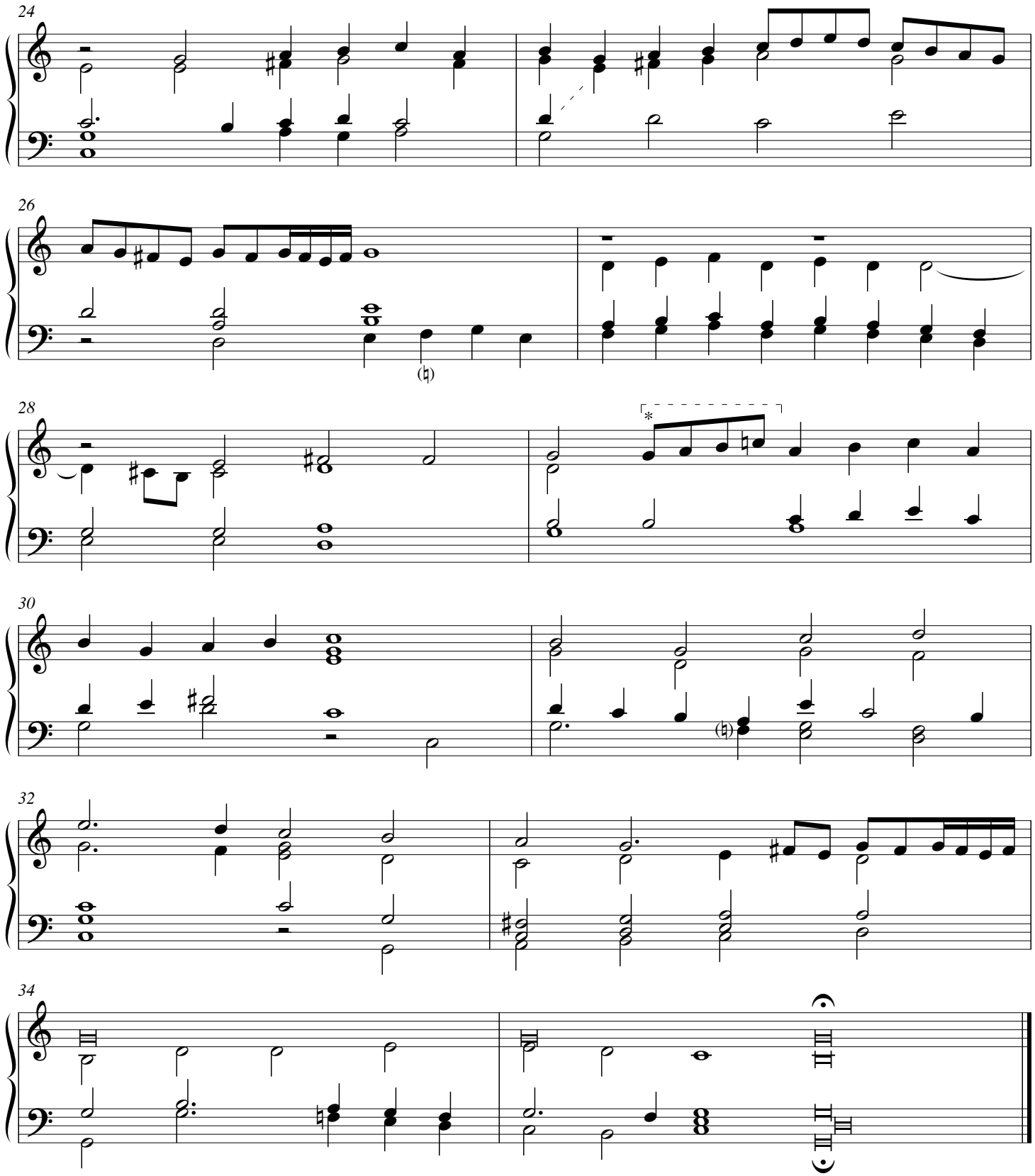


*(* A third lower in the original ms.)*

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# TABLE

Preface by Marek Michalak, p. I-VI
1. Phanthasia Primi Toni, p. 2
2. Alia Phanthasia Primi Toni, p. 4
3. Phanthasia Secundi Toni, p. 8
4. Phanthasia Tertii Toni, p. 12
5. Alia Phanthasia Toni tertii, p. 13
6. Alia toni Tertii Phanthasia, p. 16
7. Phanthasia Quarti Toni, p. 20
8. Phanthasia Quinti Toni, p. 23
9. Alia Phanthasia Quinti Toni, p. 26
10. Alia Phanthasia Quinti Toni, p. 28
11. Phanthasia Sexti Toni, p. 30
12. Alia Phanthasia Sexti Toni, p. 32
13. Alia Phanthasia Sexti Toni, p. 34
14. Phanthasia Aliqua, p. 36
15. Phanthasia Septimi Toni, p. 38
16. Phanthasia Octavi Toni, p. 42
17. Phanthasia Octavi Toni, p. 45

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