Tsuga

for solo piano

Charles Nichols

Commissioned by the Iowa Music Teachers Association and the Iowa Composers Forum

In the tradition of *24 Little Pieces* by Dmitri Kabalevsky and *Little Piano Book* by Vincent Persichetti, *Tsuga* is a concert piece for solo piano at the intermediate level. Inspired by the hemlock trees in the mountains of West Virginia, a majestic species that is under attack by a non-native insect, dying in large numbers, and recovering as new saplings grow, the composition moves through three attacca movements, each a different treatment of the melodic and harmonic material. This work was jointly commissioned by the Iowa Music Teachers Association and Music Teachers National Association in 2018, as a result of a competition cosponsored by the Iowa Composers Forum, and was premiered on June 3, 2018 in Iowa City, Iowa.

Composer, violinist, and computer music researcher **Charles Nichols** (www.charlesnichols.com) explores the expressive potential of instrumental ensembles, computer music systems, and combinations of the two, for the concert stage, and collaborations with dance, video, and installation art. His research includes motion capture for musical performance, spatial audio, data sonification, telematic performance, and haptic musical instrument design. He teaches Composition and Creative Technologies at Virginia Tech, is a Faculty Fellow of the Institute for Creativity Arts and Technology, and previously taught at the University of Montana. He has earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Yale University, and Stanford University, where he studied composition with Samuel Adler, Martin Bresnick, Jacob Druckman, and Jonathan Harvey, and computer music with Jonathan Berger, Chris Chafe, Max Mathews, and Jean-Claude Risset. He was a Research Associate at the Center for Studies in Music Technology at Yale, and a Technical Director at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) at Stanford.

He has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Science Foundation, New Music USA, and the Prop Foundation, and commissions from the Charlotte New Music Festival, Iowa Music Teachers Association, Montana State Music Teachers Association, Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Montana Institute on Ecosystems, Association of American Medical Colleges, Institute of Medicine and Humanities, Myrna Loy Center for the Performing and Media Arts, Missoula Art Museum, Butte America Radio, Montana Public Radio, Virginia Tech, Drake University, University of Oregon, University of Montana, and Temple University. He has worked with ensembles including Hypercube, the Beo String Quartet, Klang String Quartet, FLUX Quartet, Third Angle Ensemble, Namaste Ensemble, Sapphire Trio, Cascade String Quartet, the Missoula Symphony Orchestra, Headwaters Dance Company, and Montana Transport Company, and has received recognition from the Iowa Composers Forum, the Montana Arts Council, The American Prize in Composition, the National Academy of Music, the Institut International de Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges, and La Fundación Destellos.

His compositions have been presented at conferences and festivals in the US, Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Northern Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, and South Korea. His recent premieres include *Or Be Forever Fallen*, three movements for heavily processed amplified string quartet, accompanying animated sci-fi video, *What Bends*, for electric violin and interactive computer music in 3D immersive audio, accompanying narrated poetry, motion capture dance, animation, and processed video in 360º projection, *Beyond the Dark*, ambient synthesized sound and sonified space weather data, accompanying installation art and 3D lighting, and *Nicolo, Jimi, and John*, a three movement concerto, for amplified viola, orchestra, and computer, celebrating the virtuosity of Paganini, Hendrix, and Coltrane (www.youtube.com/user/CharlesSNicholsII).

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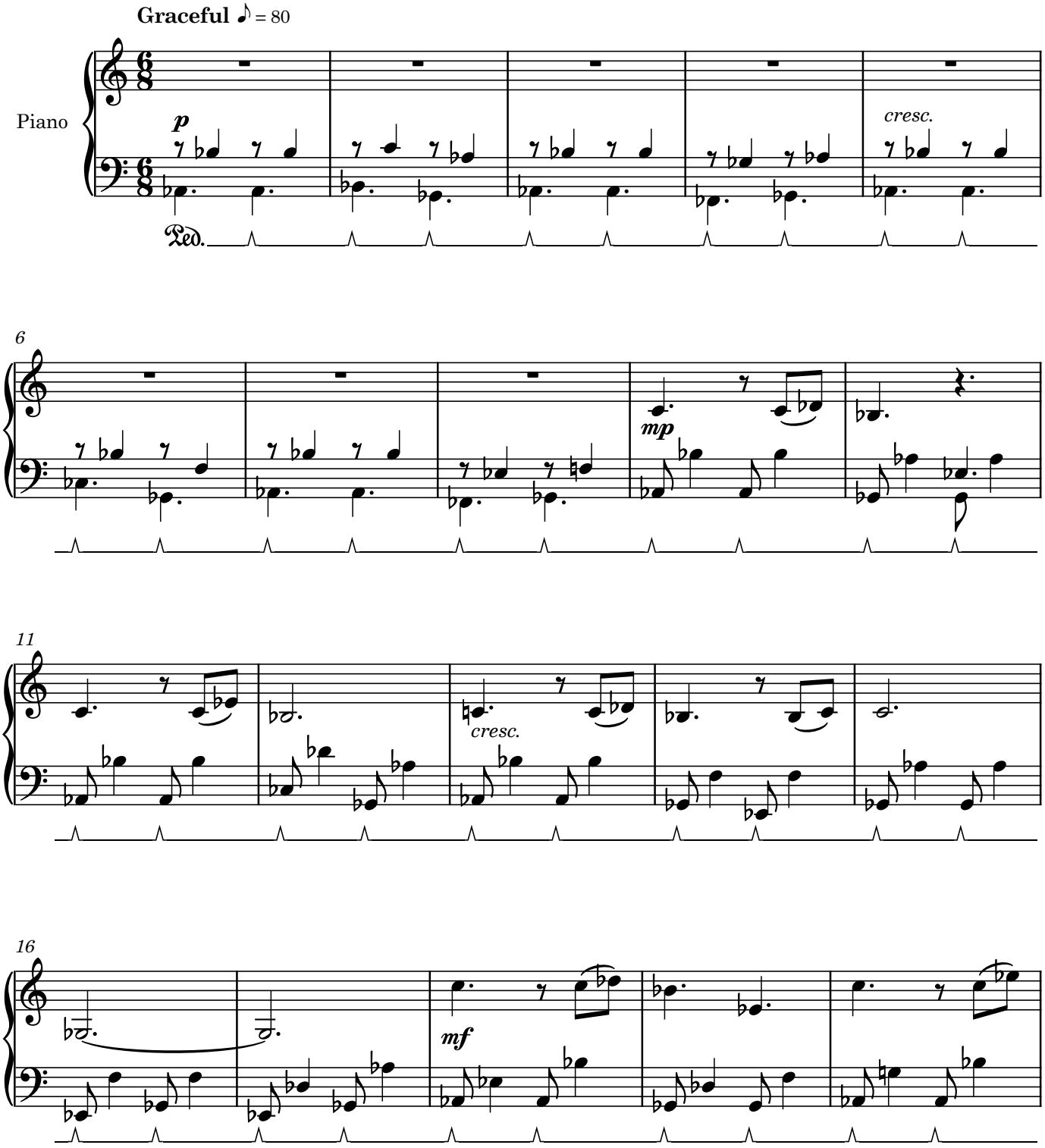

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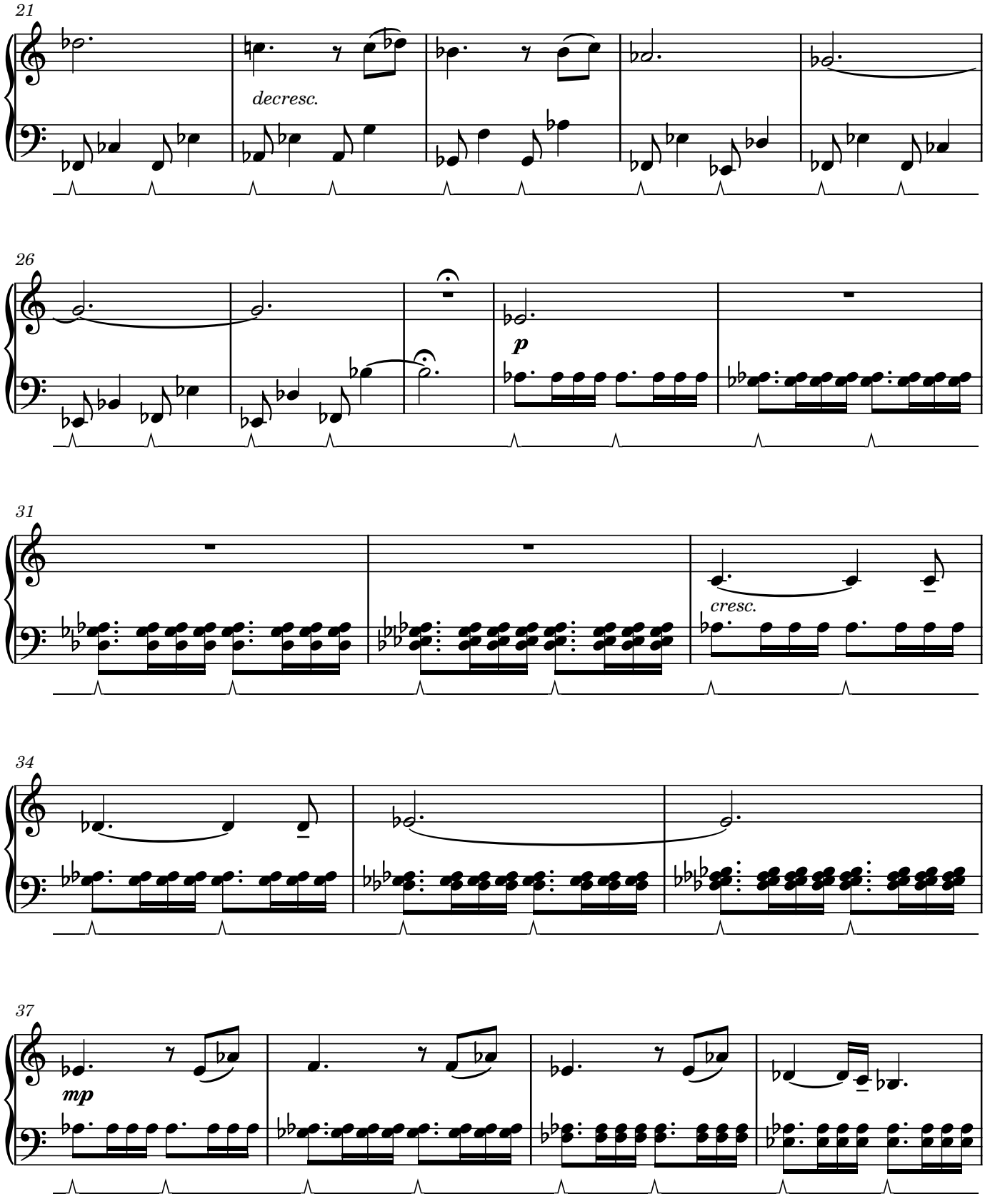
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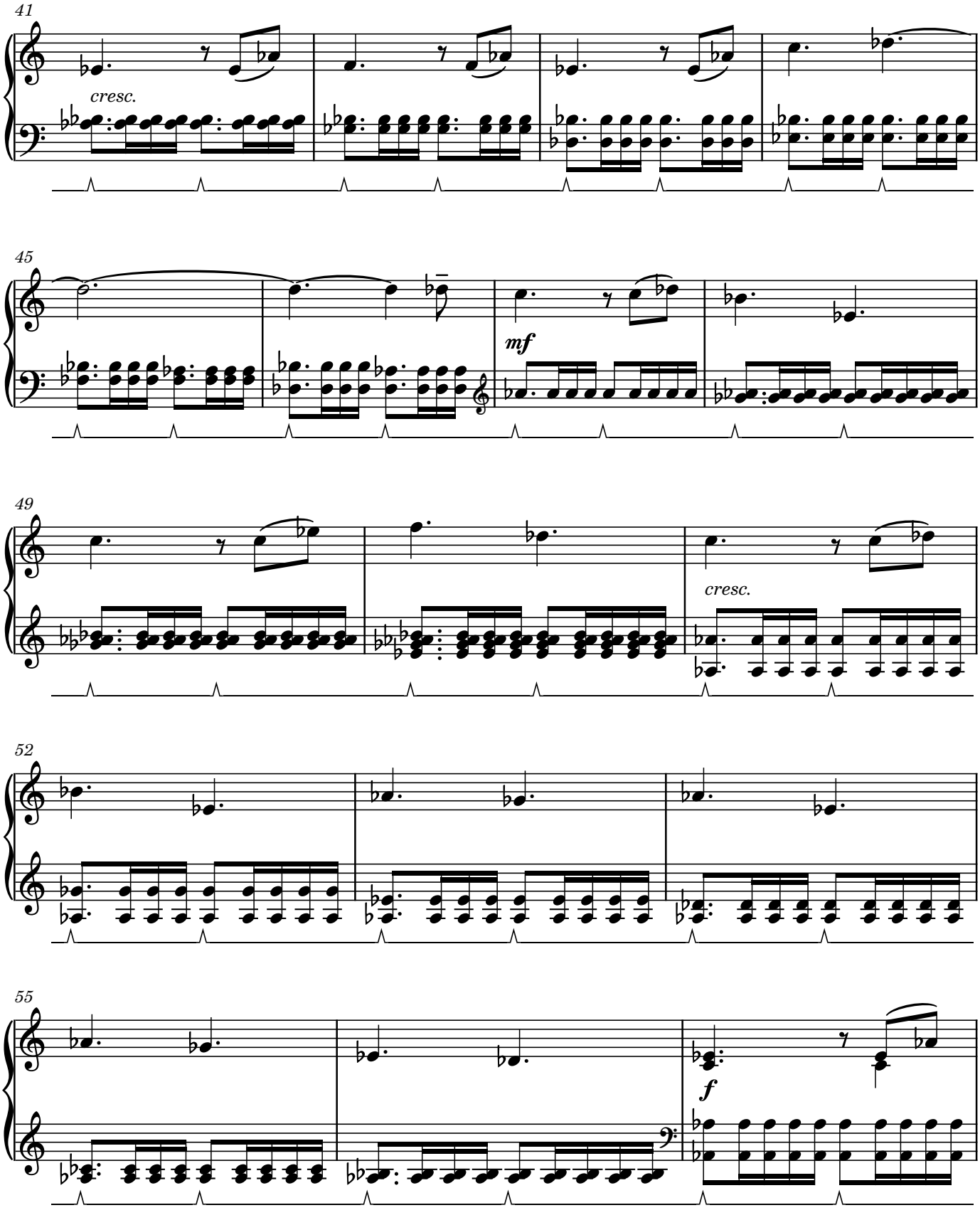
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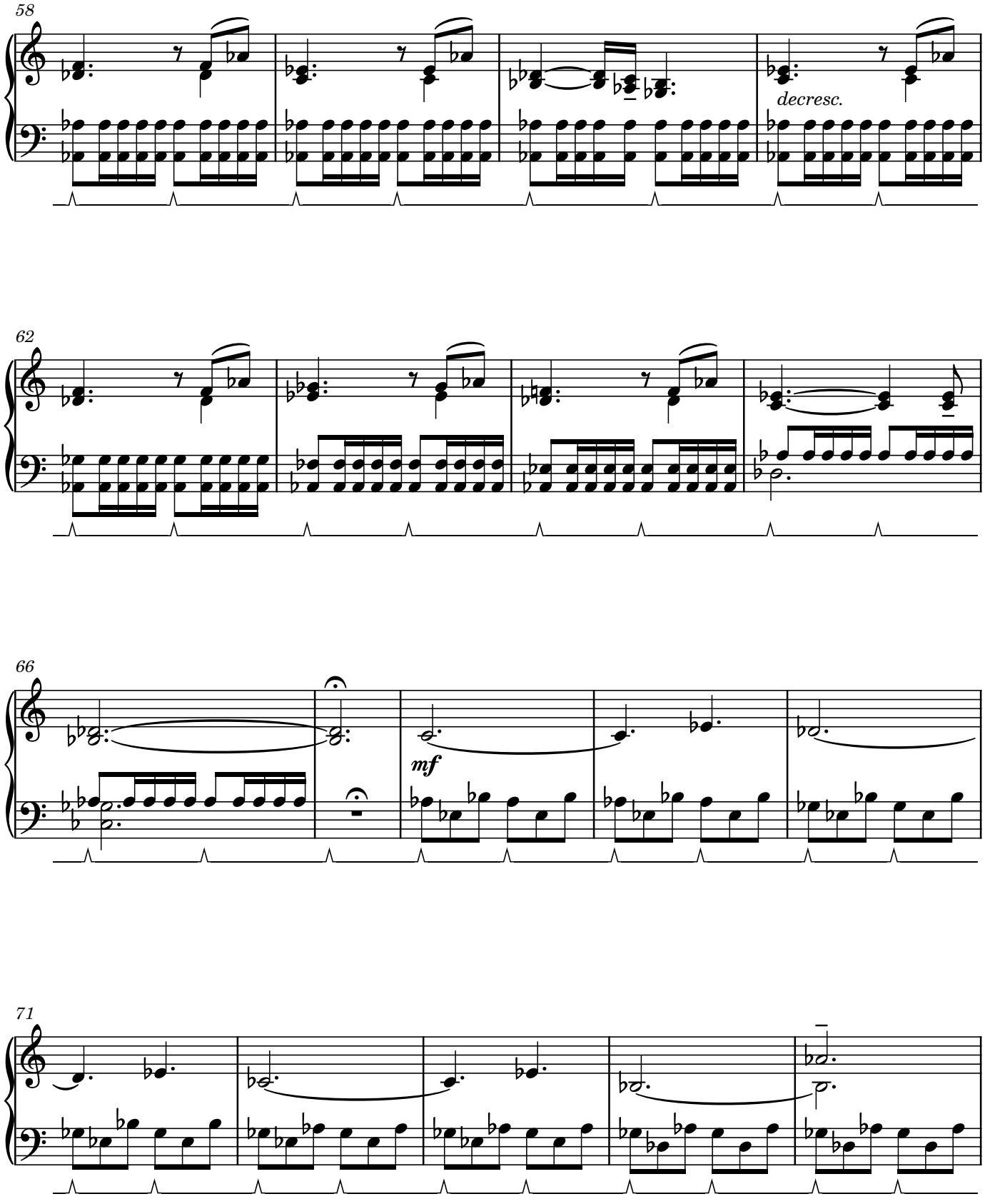
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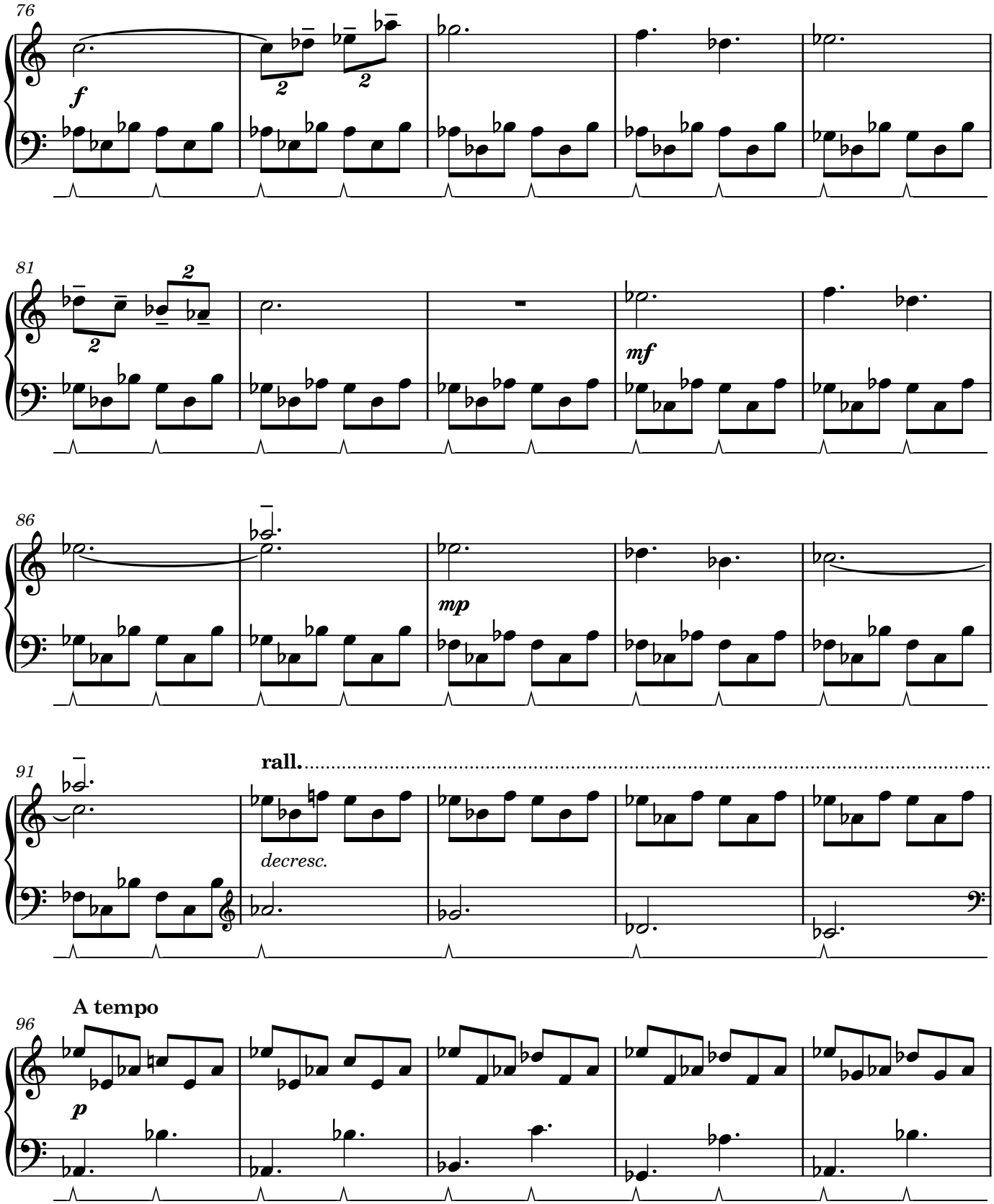
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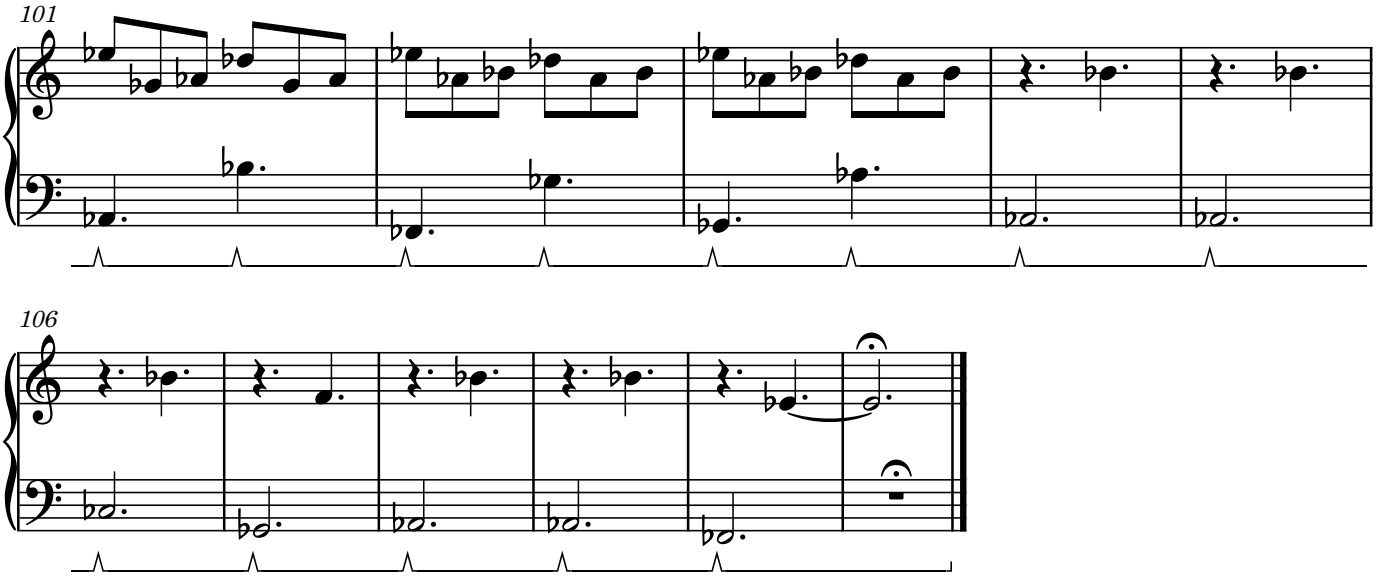
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