"Lohengrin Preludes to Acts One and Three" (abridged)

Richard Wagner

Scored for 12 trombones

arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

Music from the

REVOLUTIONARY BONE COLLECTION

VOLUME FOUR

About the Composer

"Lohengrin" of Richard Wagner (1813-83) was premiered in Weimar, Germany in 1850 under the direction of his patron, Franz Liszt. It was composed during his years as Kapellmeister at the Dresden Opera House and was originally schedule to receive its premiere there, but his participation in the 1849 uprising forced him to flee for his life to Switzerland. Like Tannhauser, it was completed at approximately the same time as "Macbeth" (1847) and "Damnation of Faust" (1846), with Verdi still in the early stages of his career and Berlioz in the middle of his. It is the third of his operas to be regularly performed in Bayreuth at the famous "Festspielhaus", which was built to premiere the "Ring of the Nibelung" by King Ludwig of Bavaria, Wagner's most important Patron. It is also the first Wagner opera that Verdi actually heard, although that took place in 1871 after he had completed Aida.

Wagner's three early operas were all derivative of other composers. "Die Fleigende Hollander" is the first to be written in a totally original style, although he is still quite a ways away from the total maturity of the Ring of the Nibelung. One still finds arias and traditional operatic choruses, but he is beginning to use musical motives to represent characters and emotions throughout the opera. Lohengrin is the third and final step; afterwards, Wagner always referred to his works as Music Drama, with incredibly innovative techniques employed to unify the word and song as well as narrate the story on a spoken and unspoken form simultaneously. Lohengrin was also worshipped by King Ludwig; he named one of his castles after it (Neuschwanstein) and built an indoor lake at Linderhof Palace complete with a boat modeled after a swan. He frequently had musicians perform excerpts from the opera while he rode on the surface.

About the arranger

Bob Reifsnyder, a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, has two degrees from Juilliard and a Doctorate from Indiana University. As a trombone teacher, he has served on the faculties of the Juilliard Pre-College Division, Indiana University, Indiana State University, and Ithaca College. As a professional trombonist, he has been a member of the West Point band, the National Orchestra of New York, the Spoleto Festival orchestra, Goldman Band, Ringling Brothers, the German orchestras of Bielefeld, Kaiserslautern and Solingen, Terre Haute Symphony, Tri-Cities Opera, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Manitowoc Symphony and the Wisconsin Philharmonic. As a gig musician, he has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, the orchestras of Wuppertal and Dusseldorf in Germany, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Chamber Orchestra of Lausanne, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony, Binghamton Pops, Ithaca Opera, the Wisconsin orchestras of Sheboygan, Oshkosh, Green Bay and the Fox Valley Symphony.

Notes for this arrangement

1. Performance- These works are designed to add to the performance repertoire of the low brass choir.

2. Clef reading- These arrangements will hopefully also serve as advanced clef practice for trombonists playing the top parts. It is unfortunate that clef reading skills don't seem to be a priority for many contemporary trombone teachers, but the ability to transpose at sight remains a prerequisite for becoming an excellent professional musician. Please keep in mind that the first time one has to ask a conductor for a transposed part is likely the last time one will perform with that ensemble!

3. Scoring- There is some octave displacement to keep the individual parts within the comfortable range of the performing instruments and to establish the alto trombone as the highest voice.

4. Range- The basic range of these transcriptions is from high D to low B. For each of the three quartets, the ideal mix would be alto, .525 bore tenor, .547 bore tenor and bass trombone.

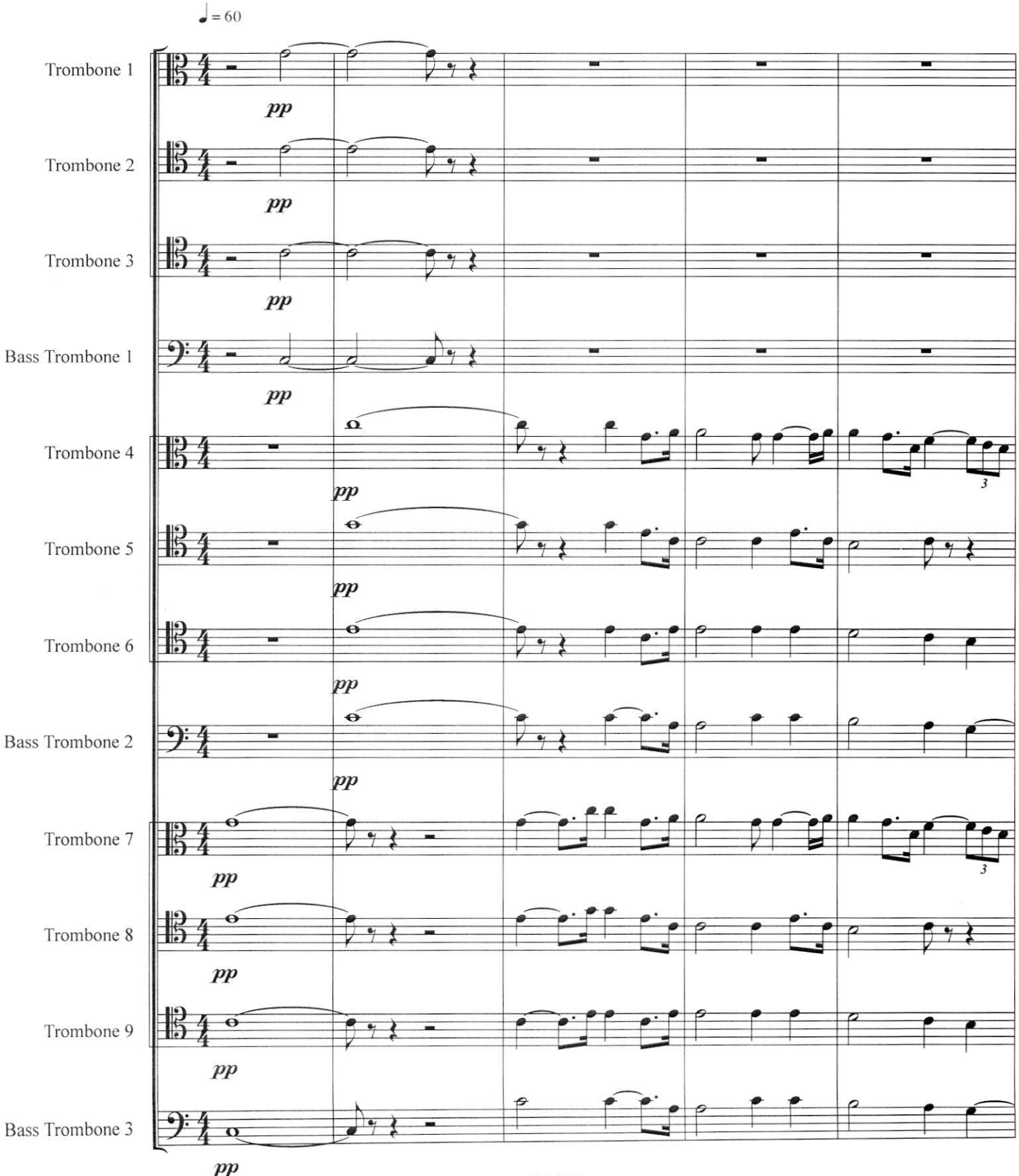
5. Breathing and Articulation- There are no breath marks in these transcriptions; that is perhaps the most personal decision a brass player ever makes. There are, however, notes left out in extended passages that would be otherwise impossible to perform well, hopefully in the most appropriate locations. Performers are also encouraged to add slurs whenever it is deemed appropriate.

Score

Lohengrin Preludes to Acts one and three

Wagner

Bob Reifsnyder



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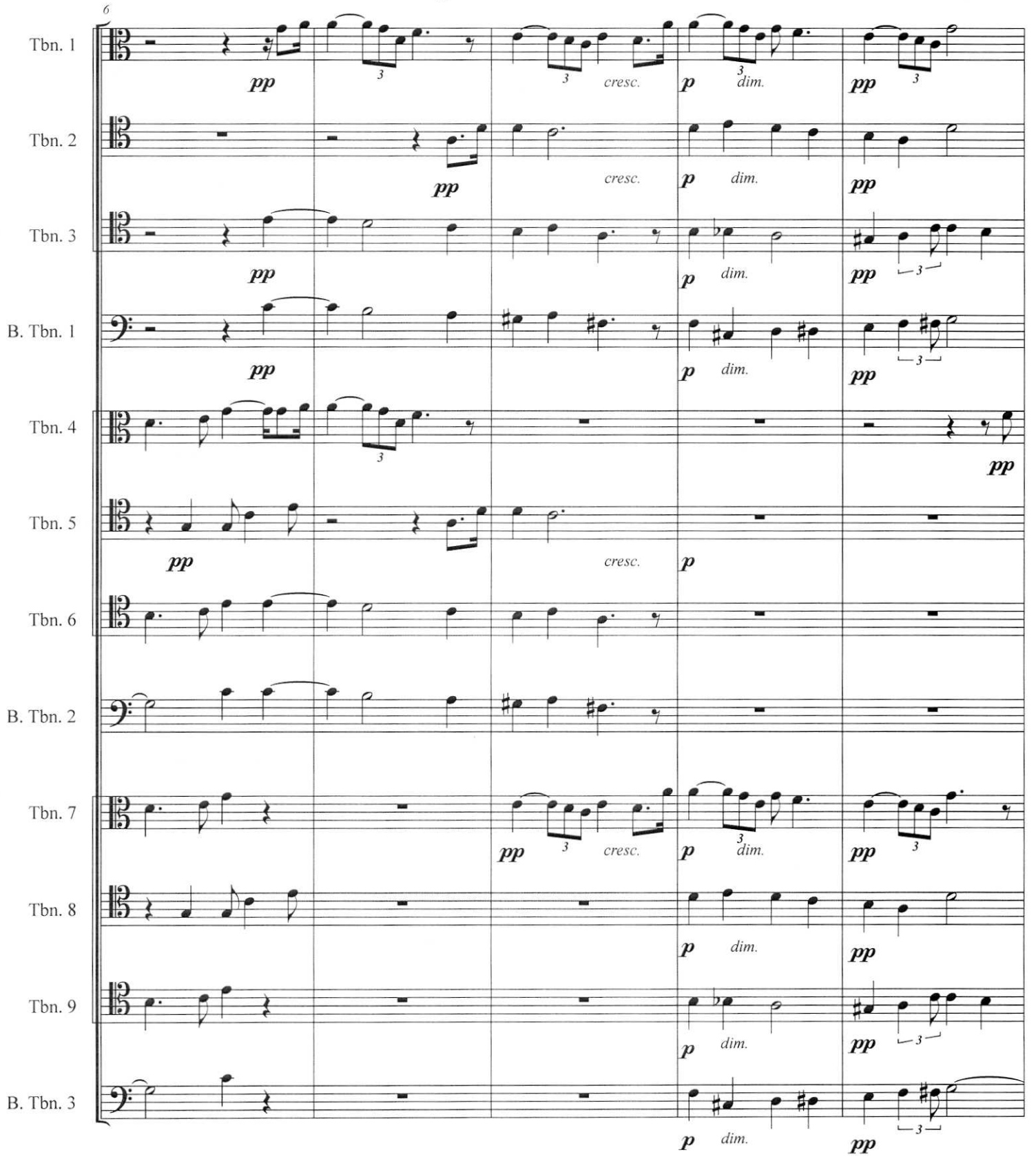
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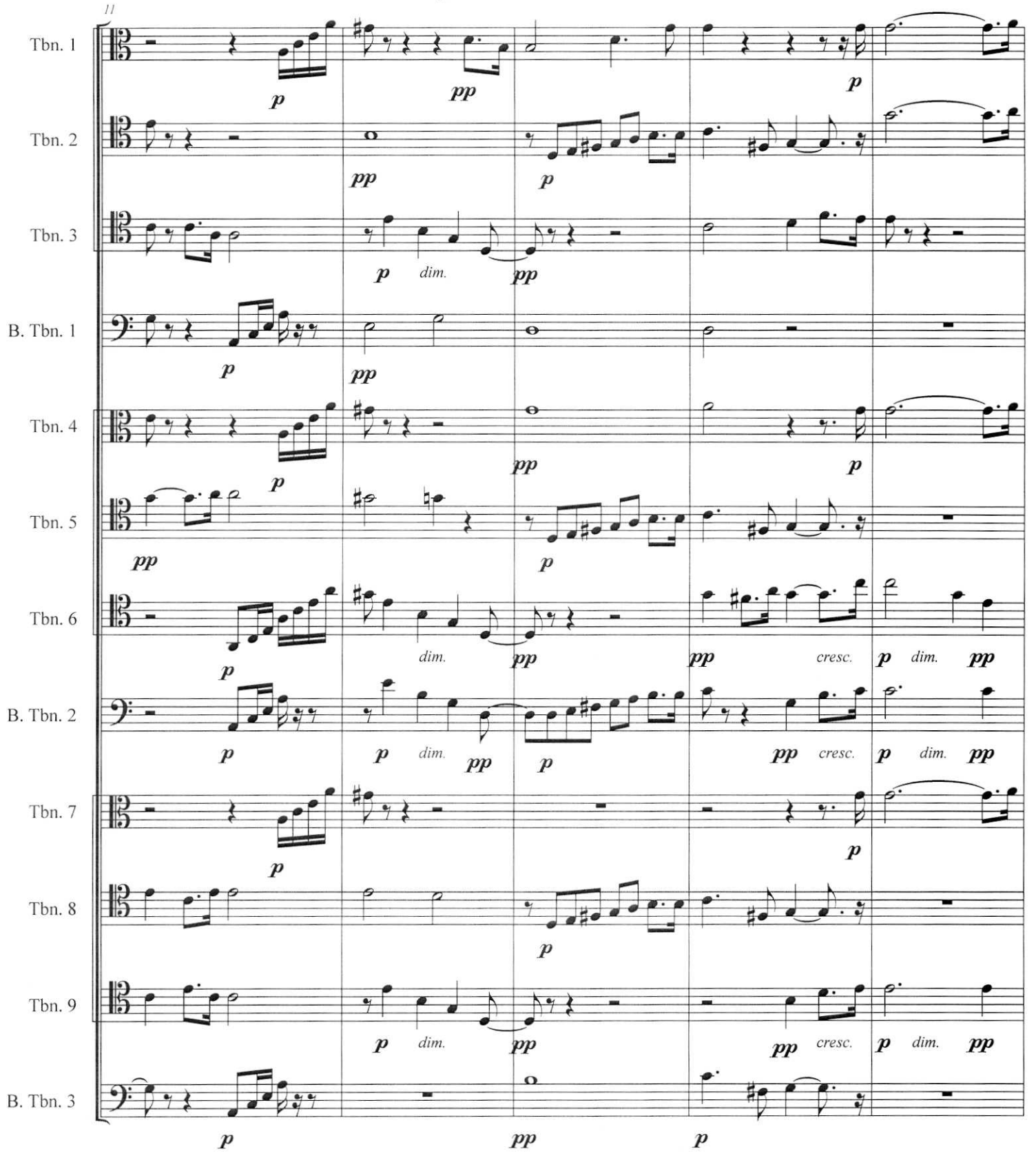
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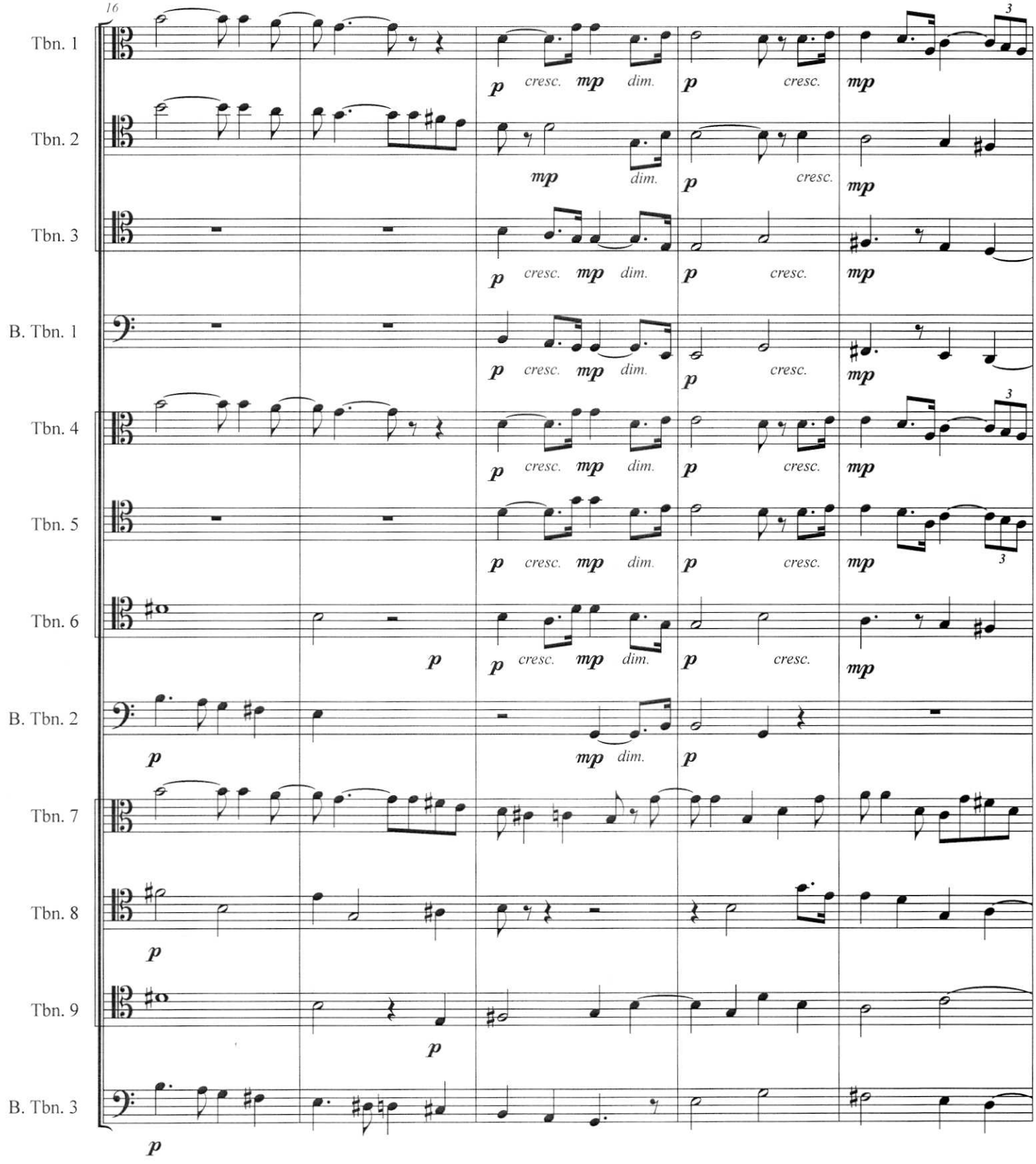
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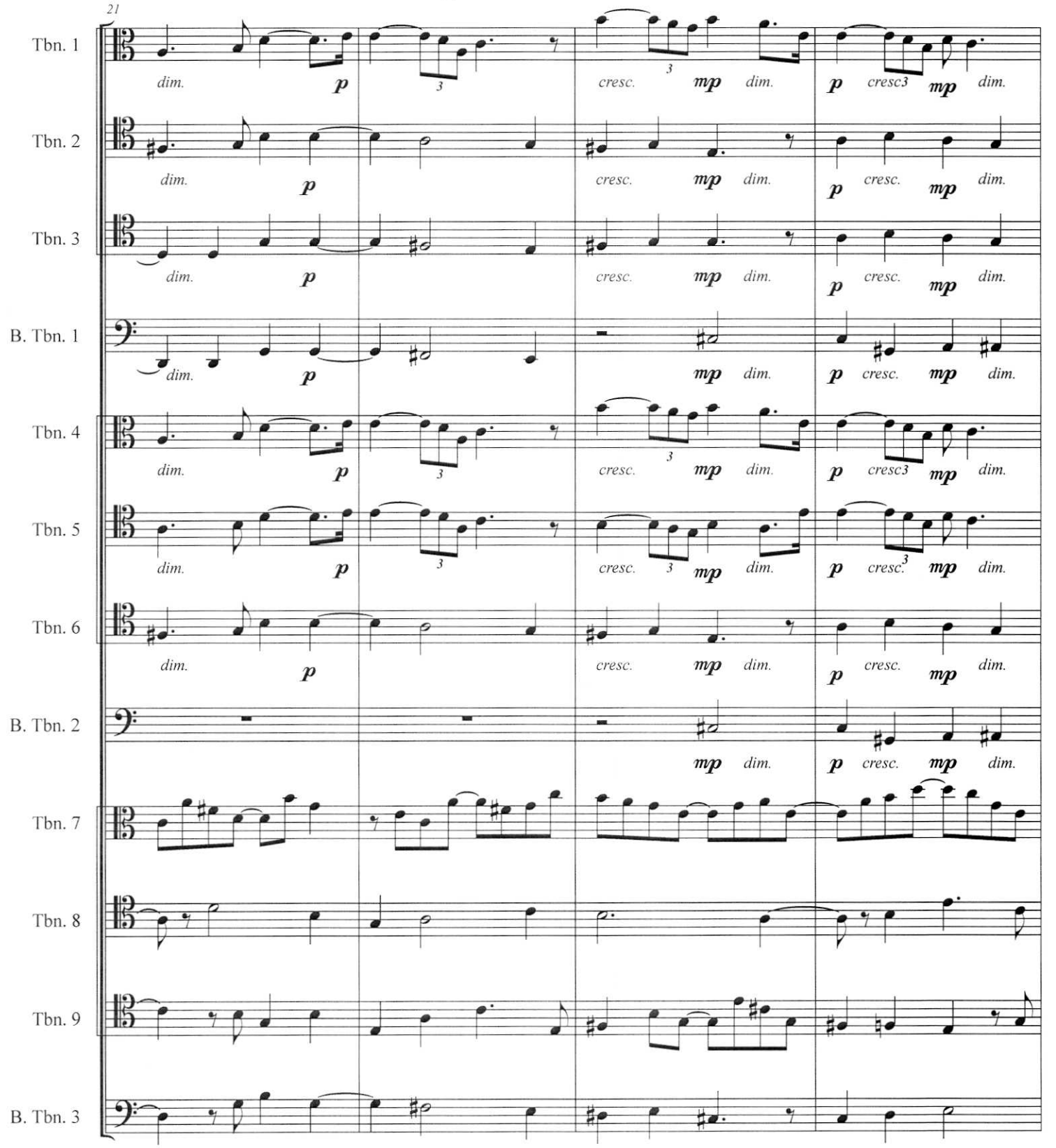
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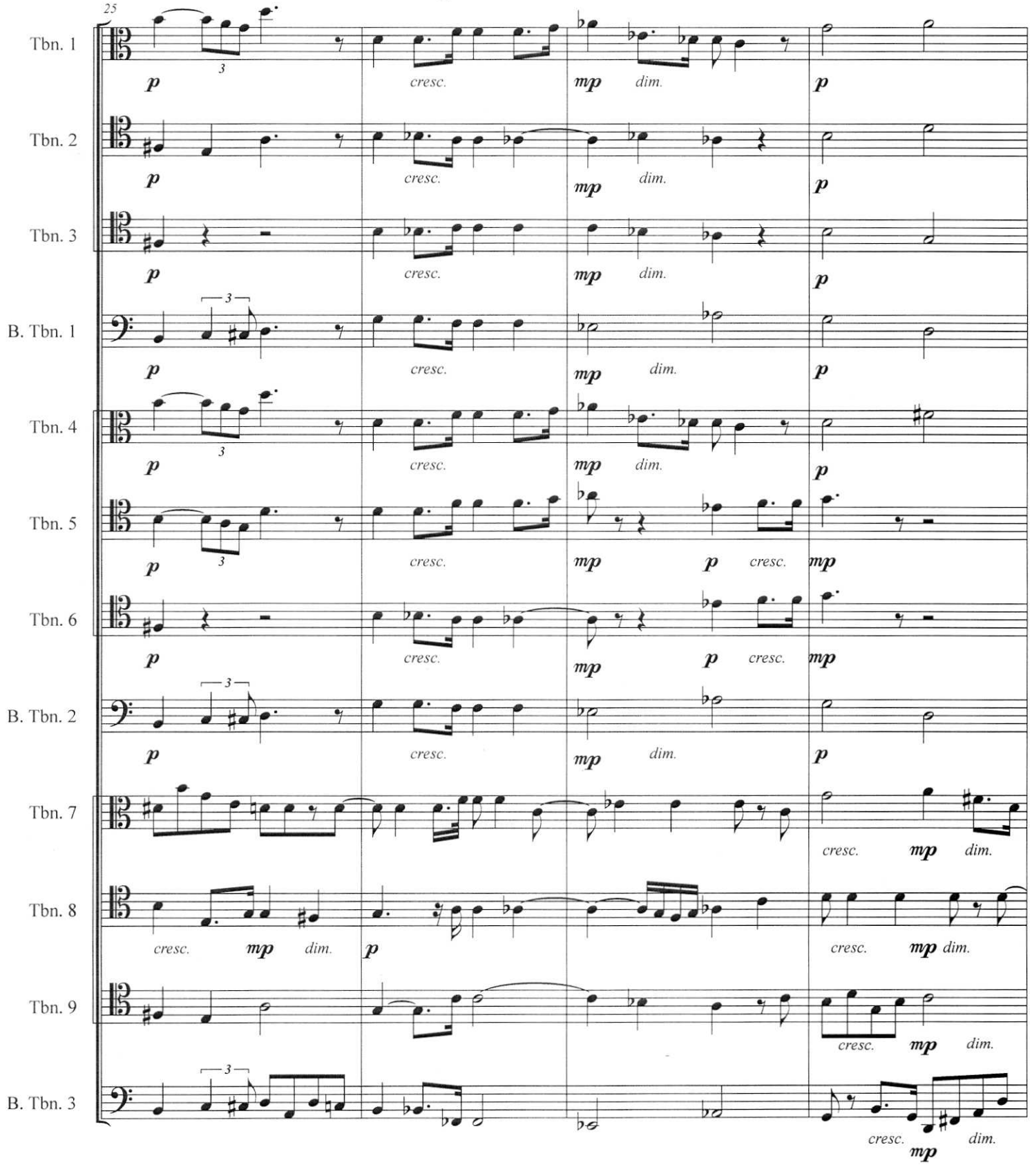
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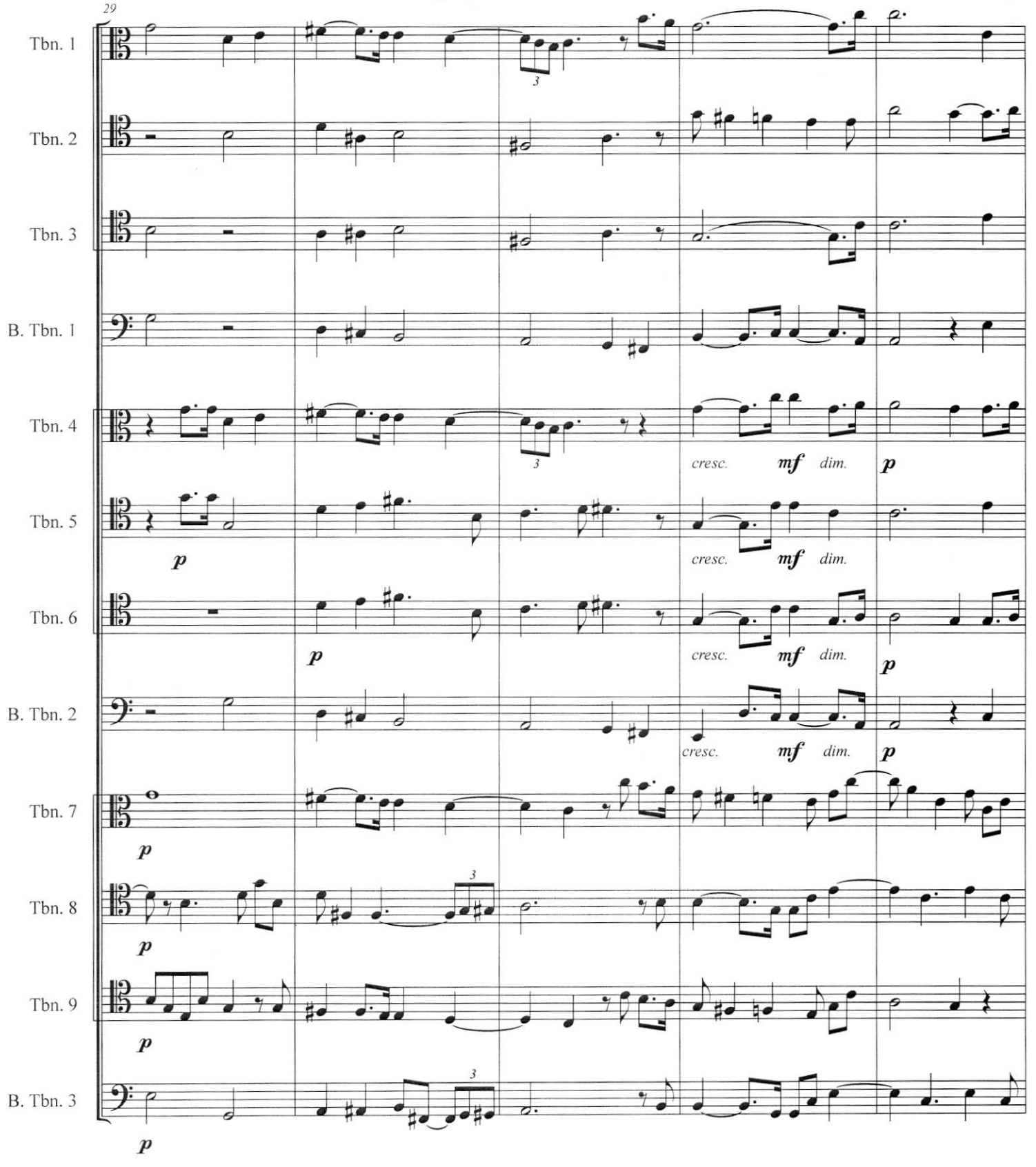
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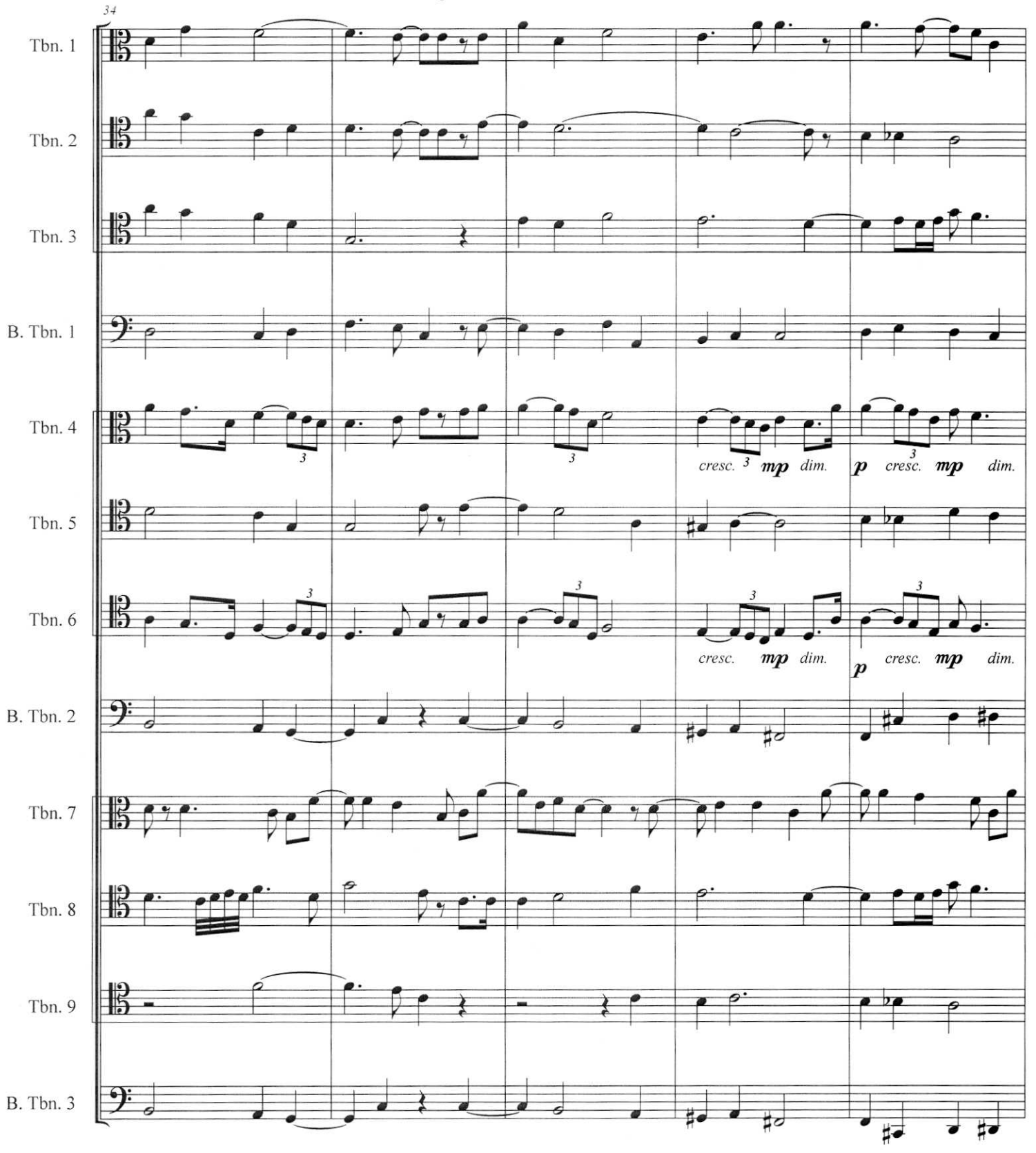
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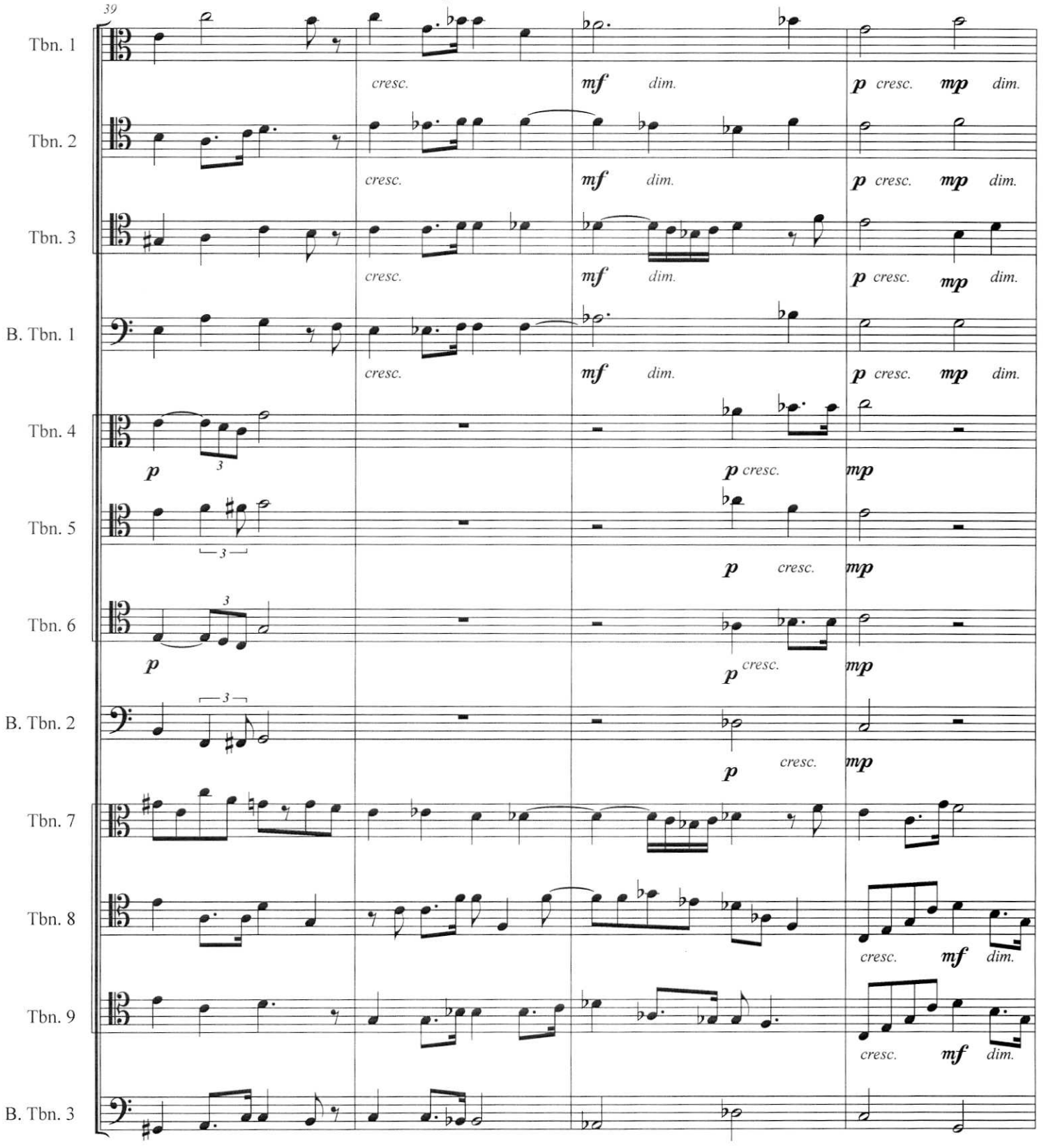
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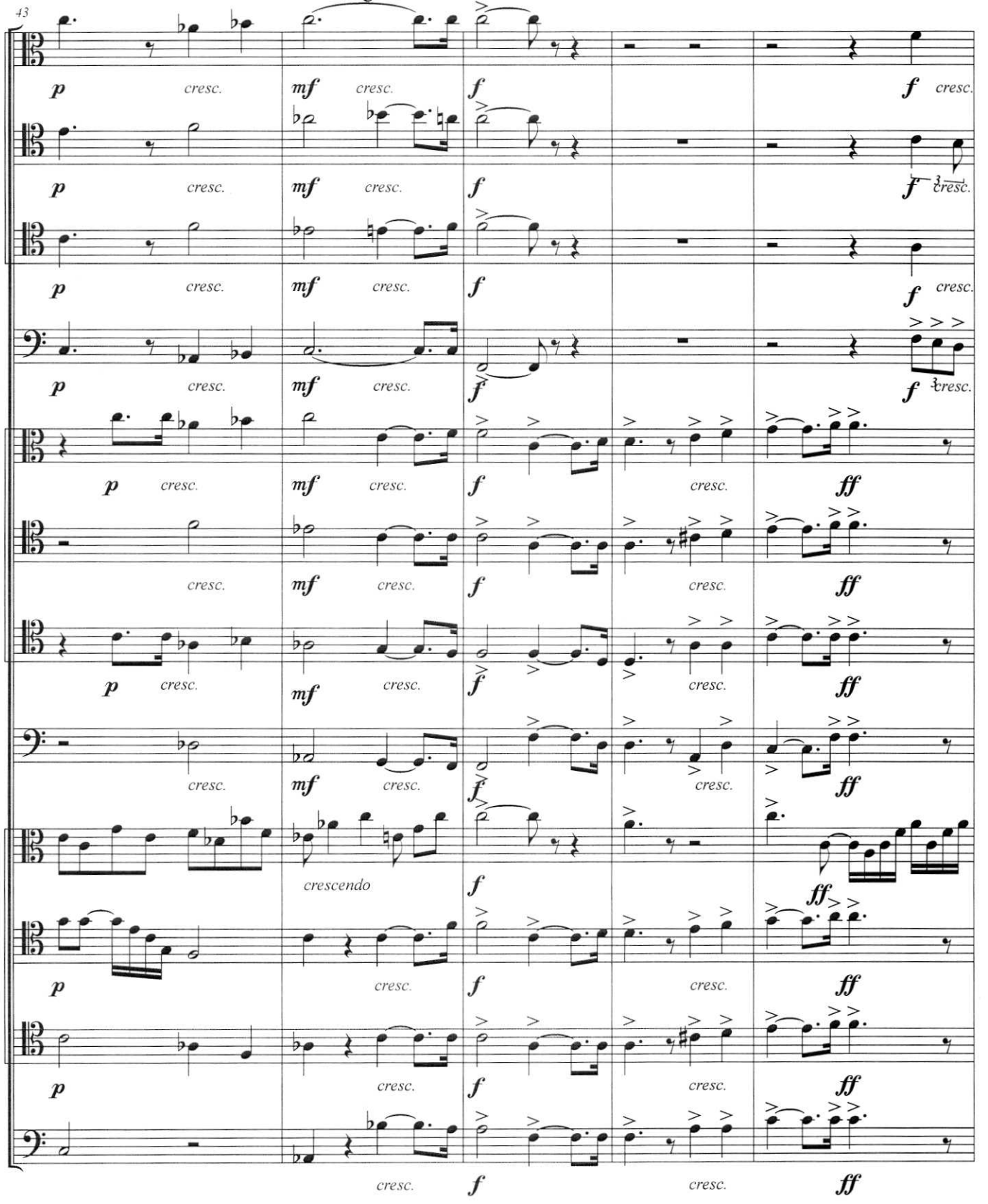
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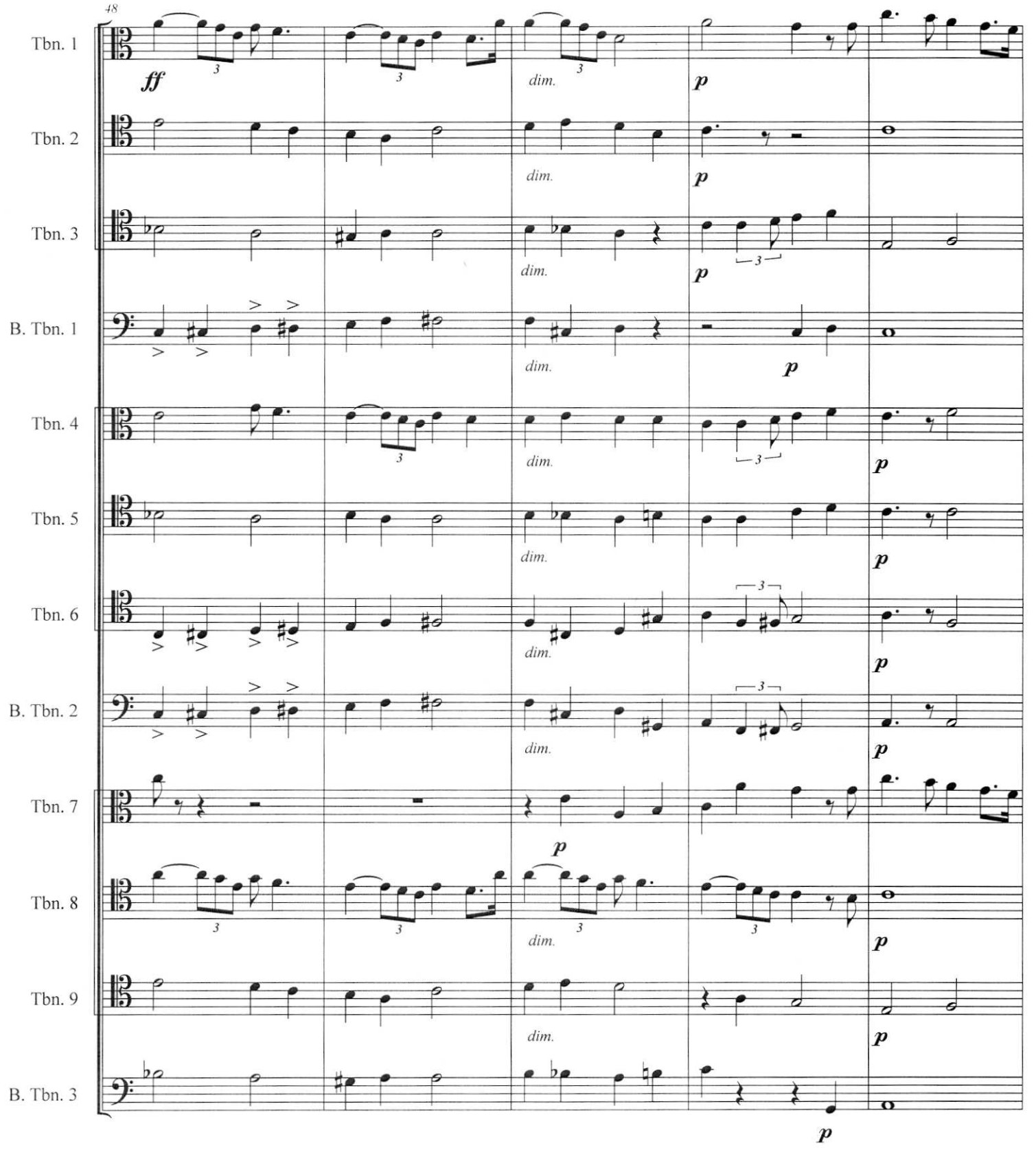
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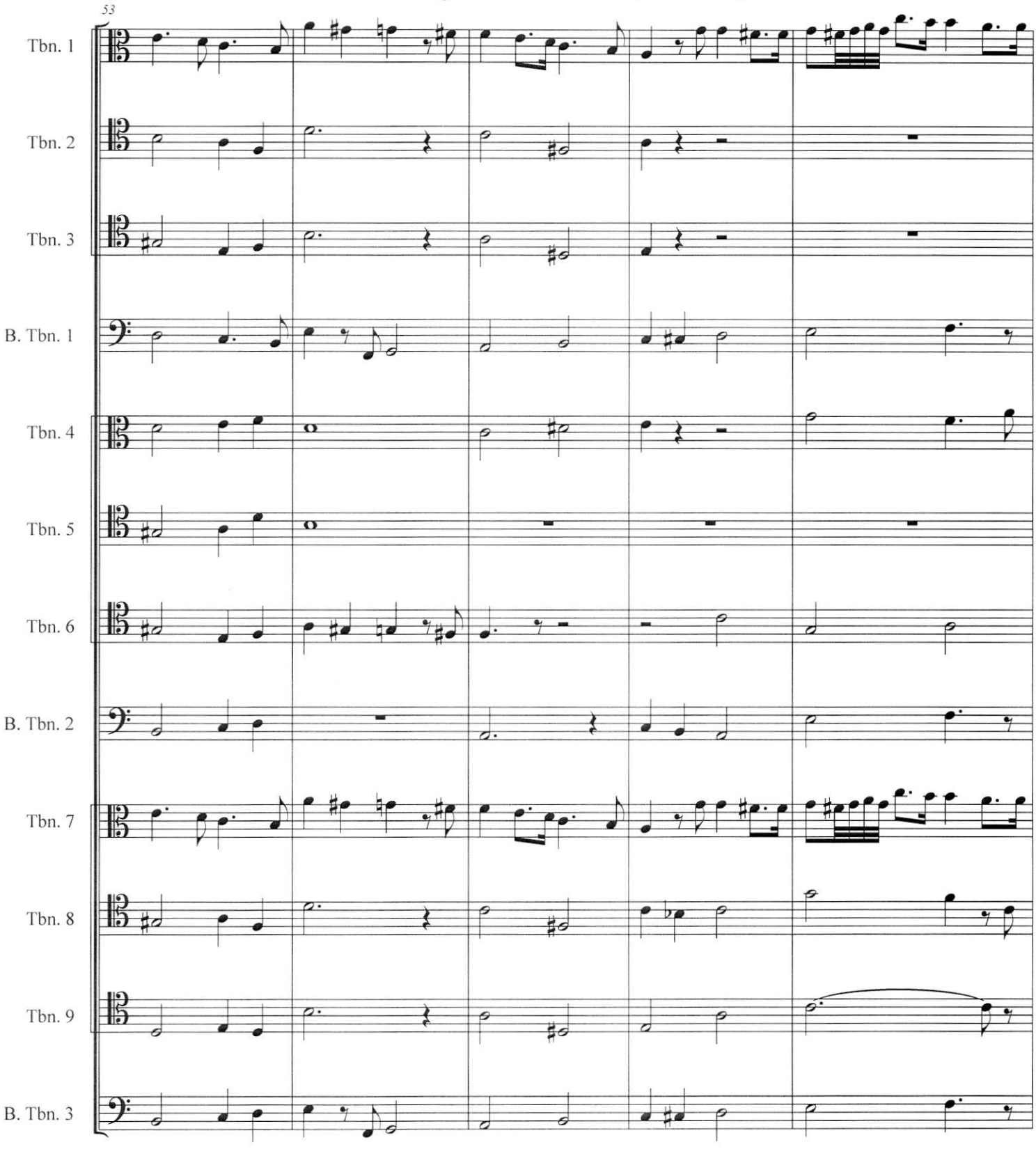
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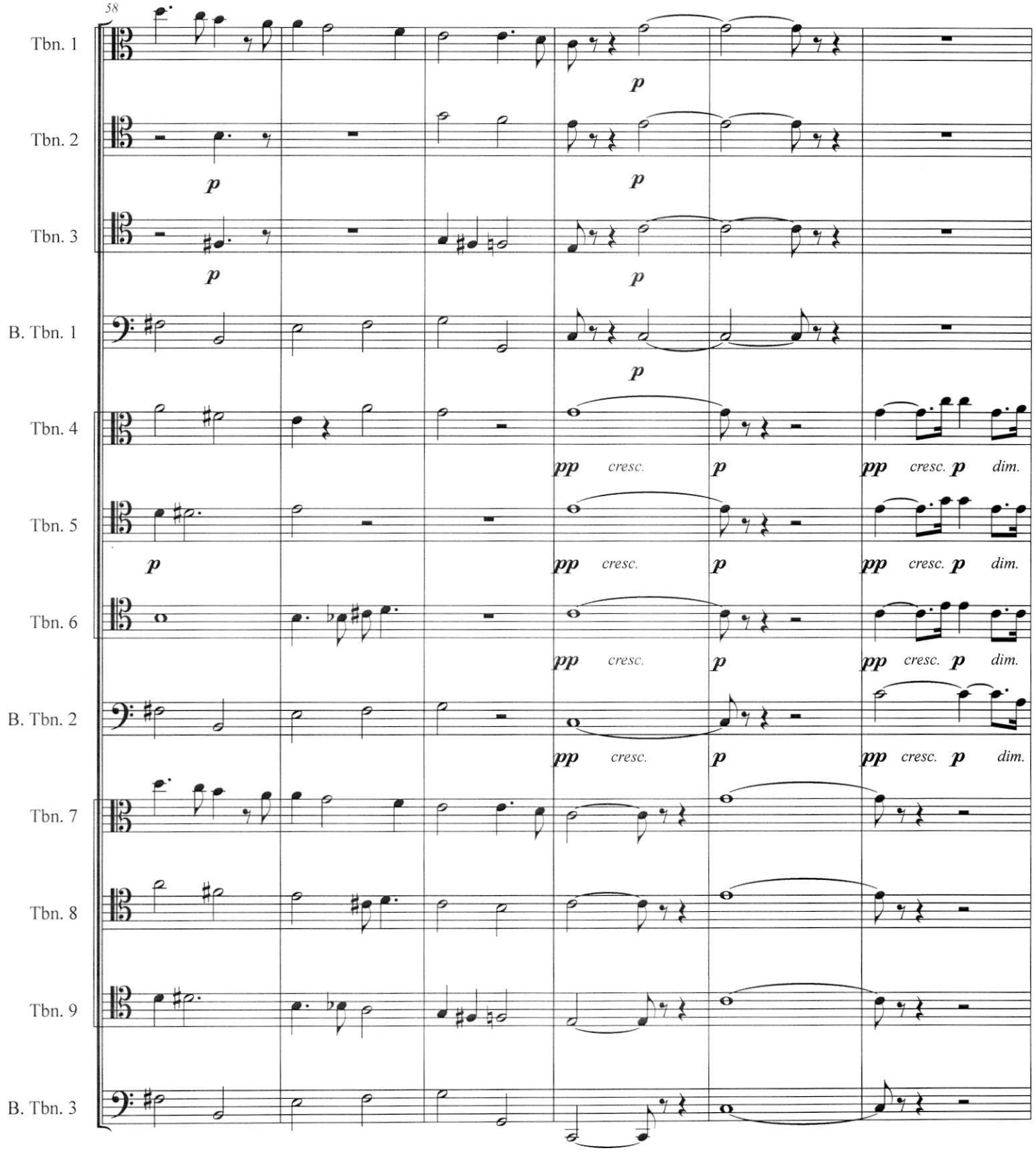
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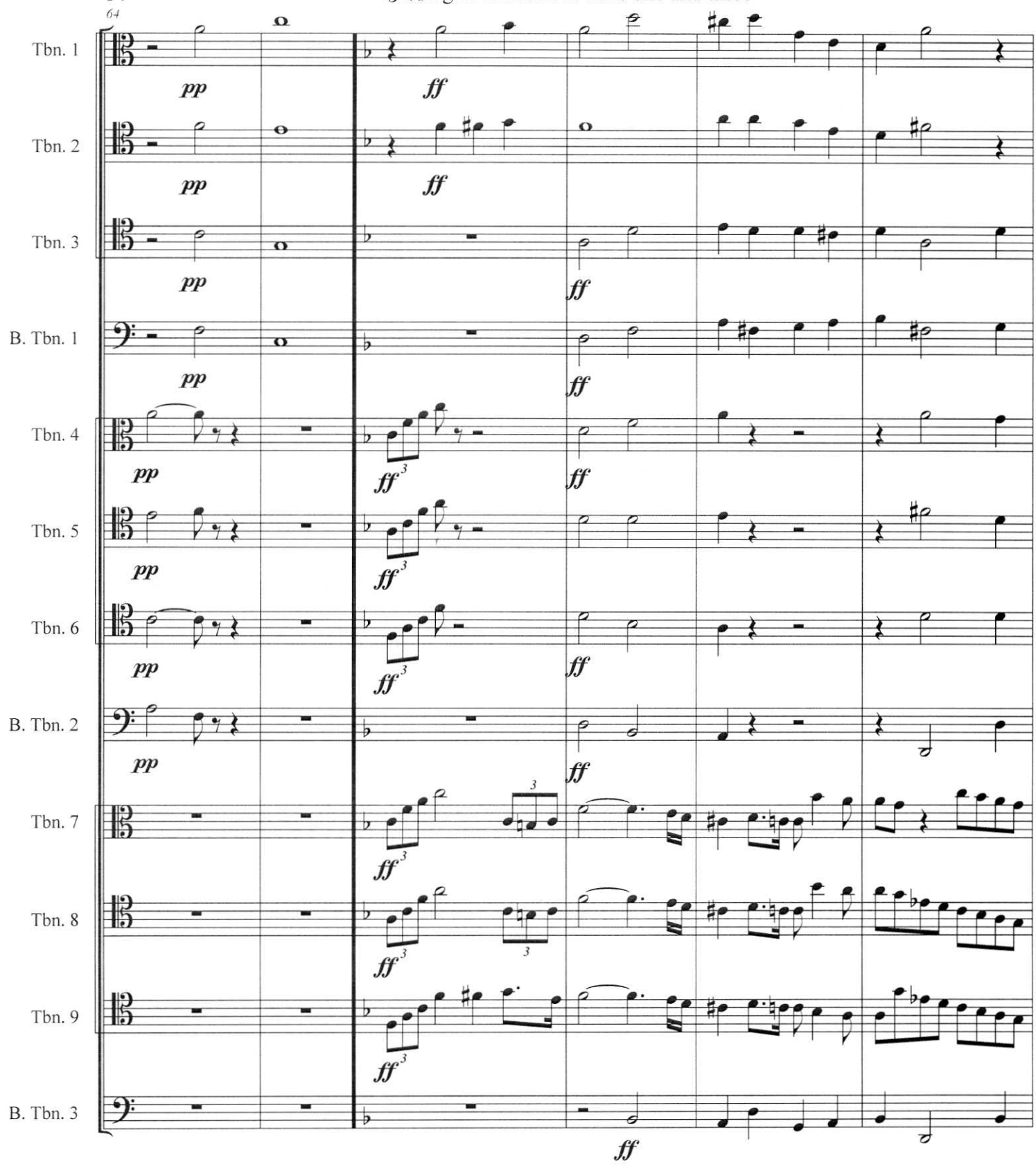
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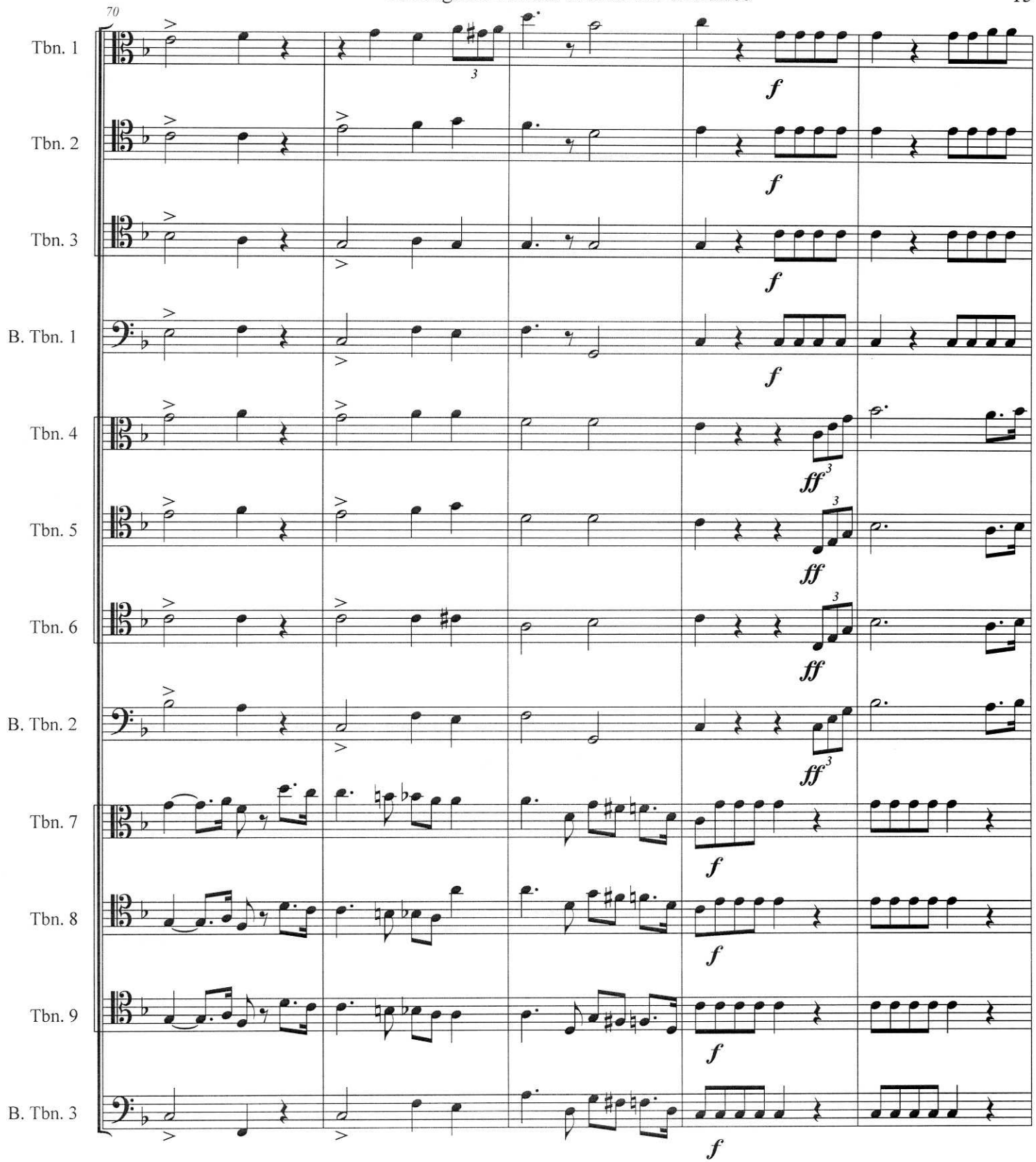
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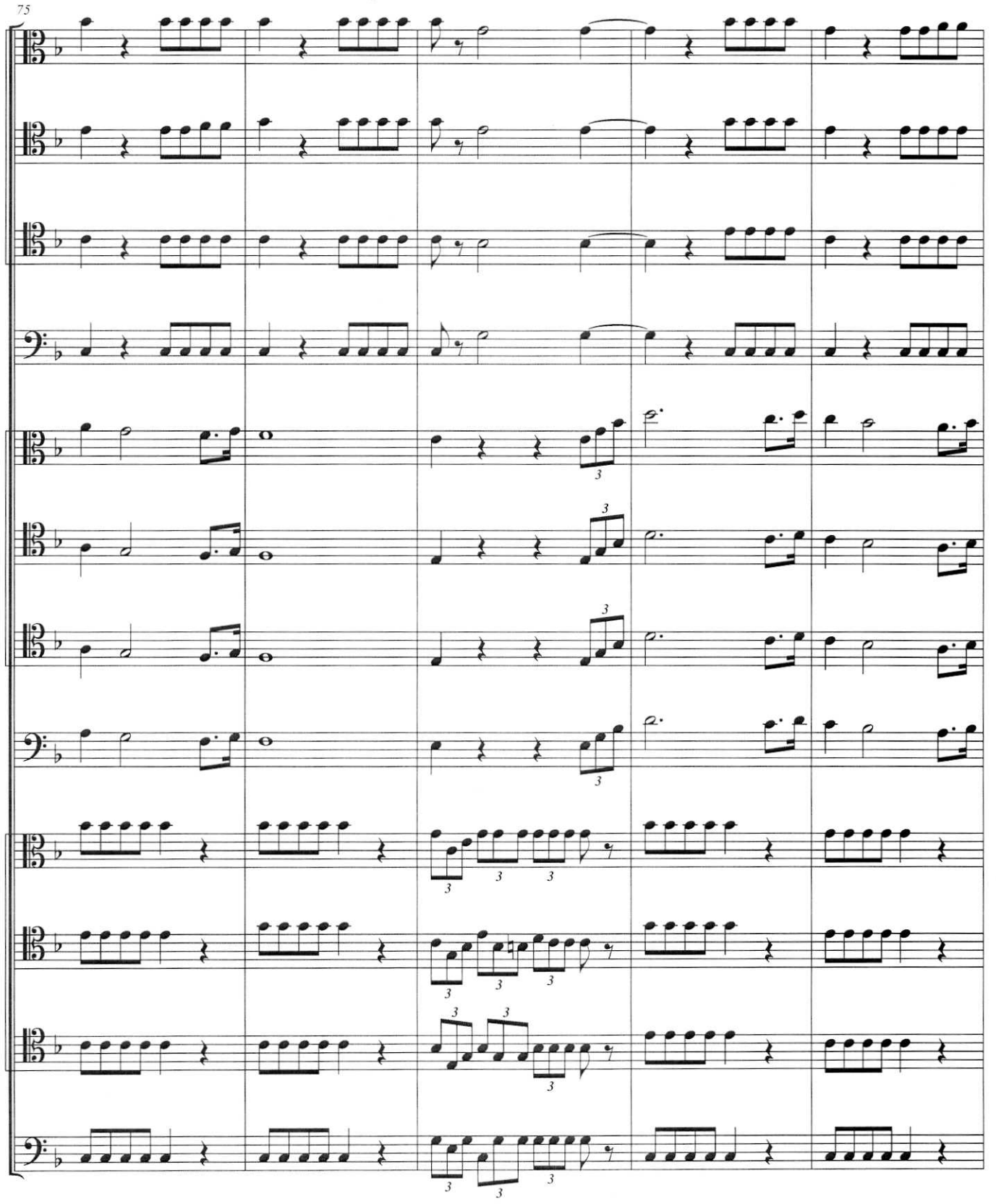
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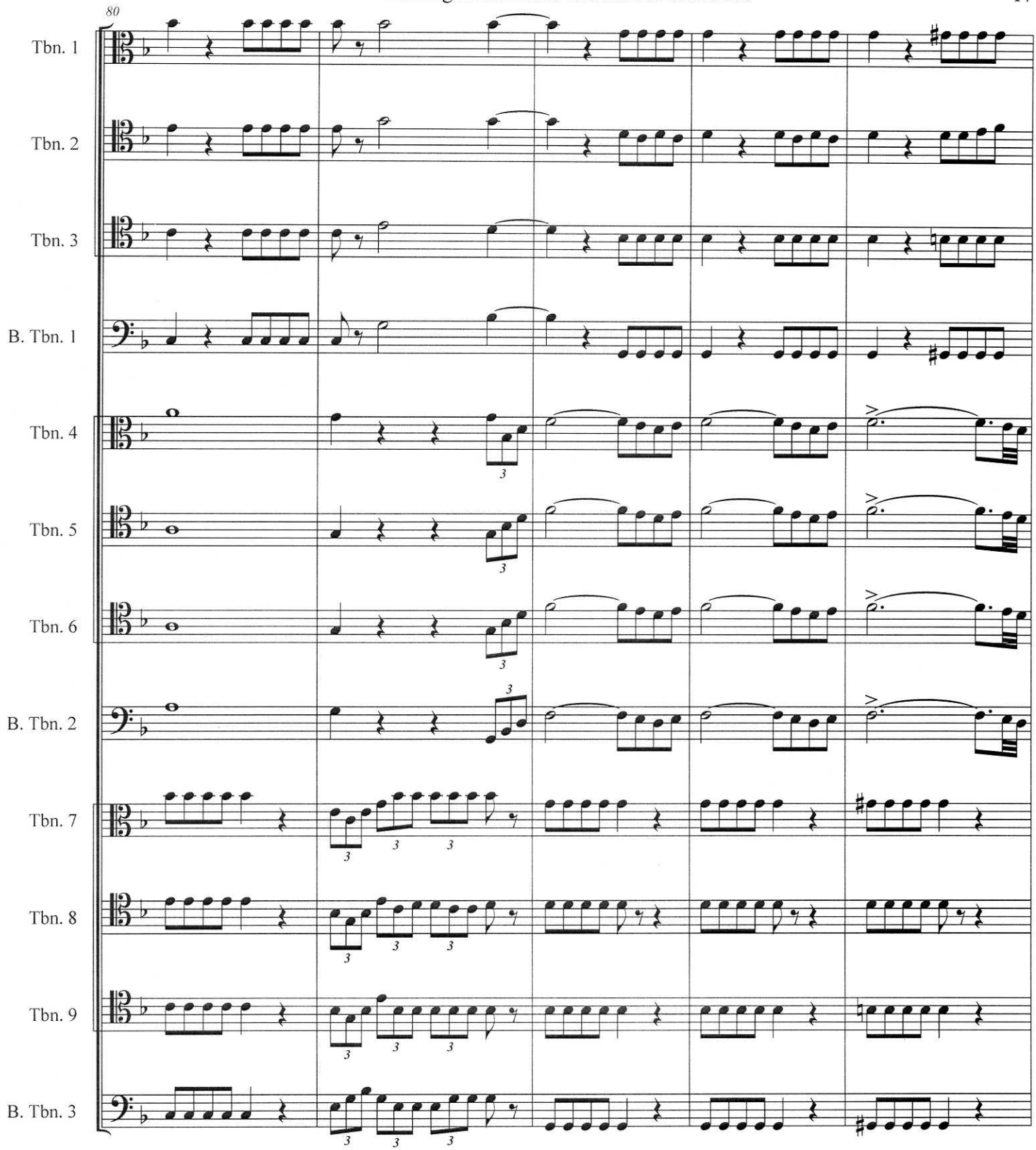
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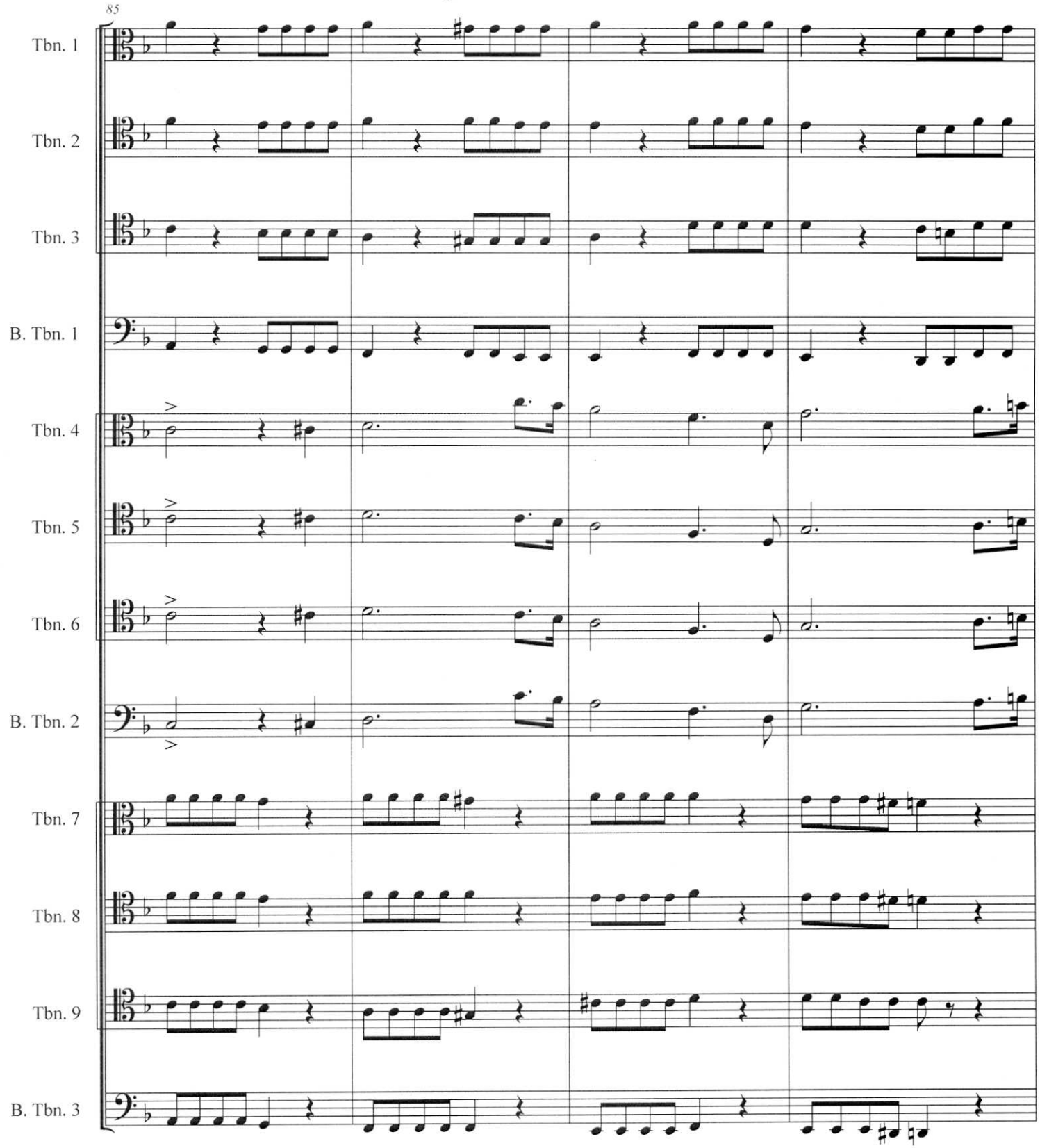
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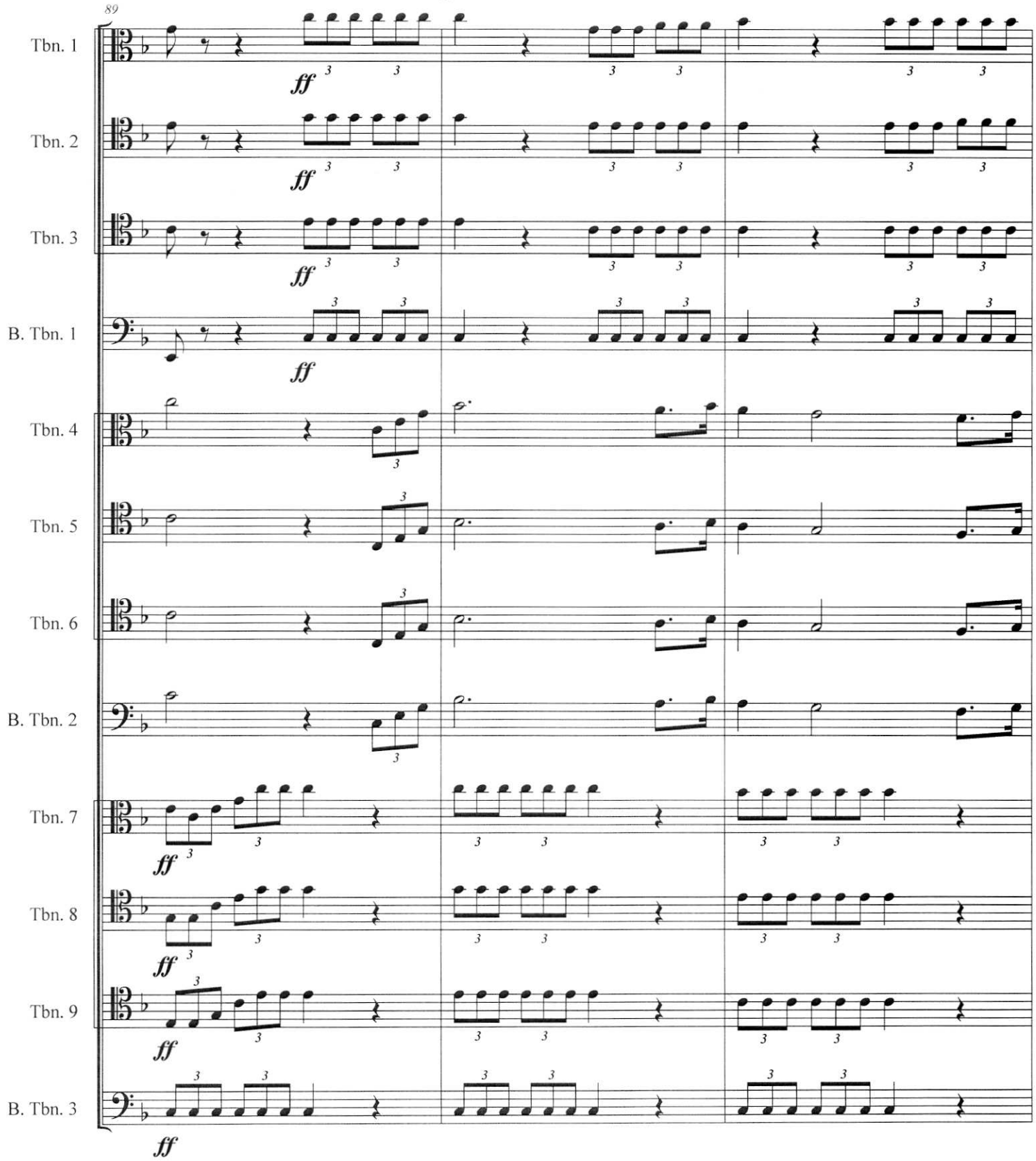
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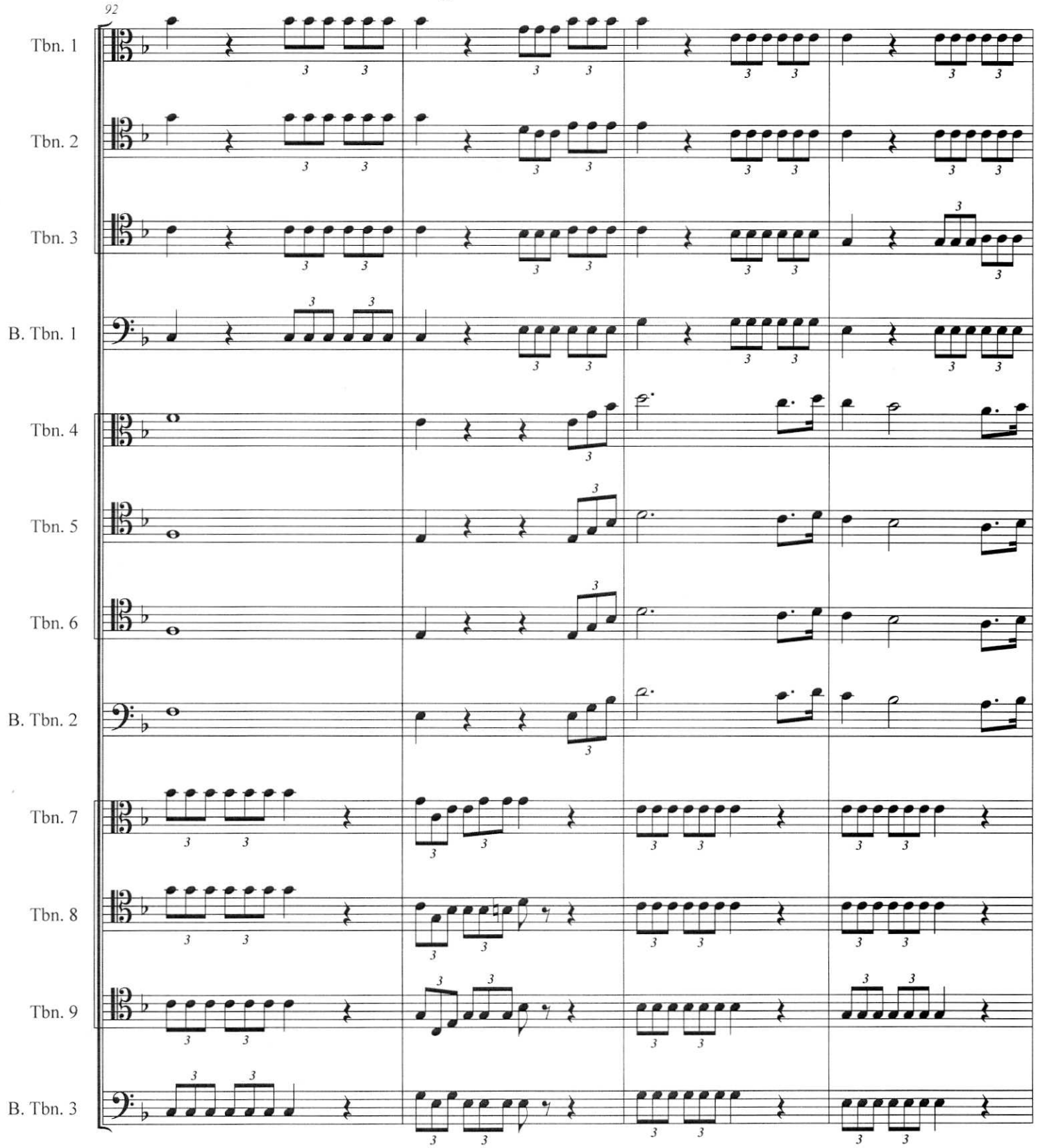
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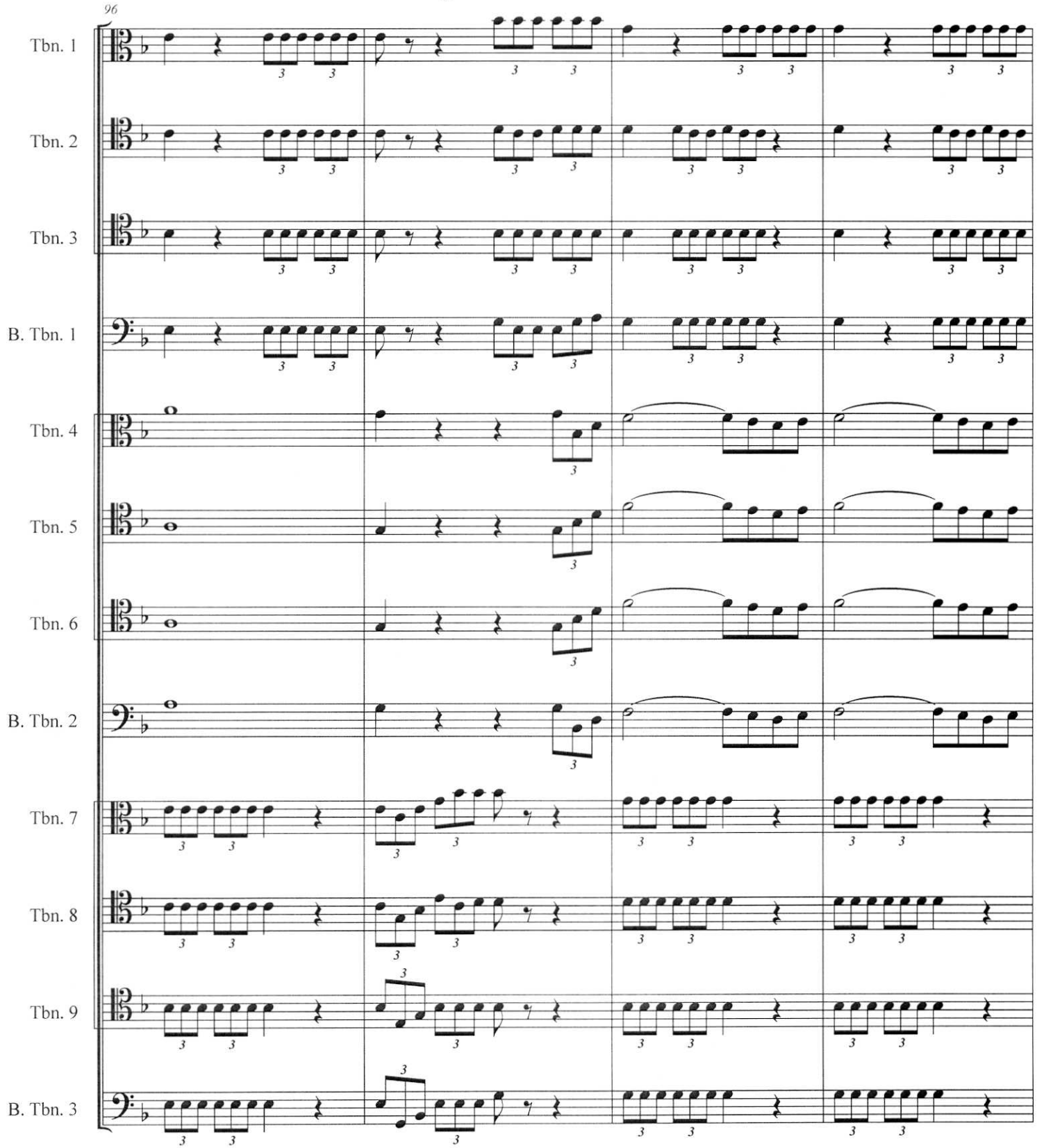
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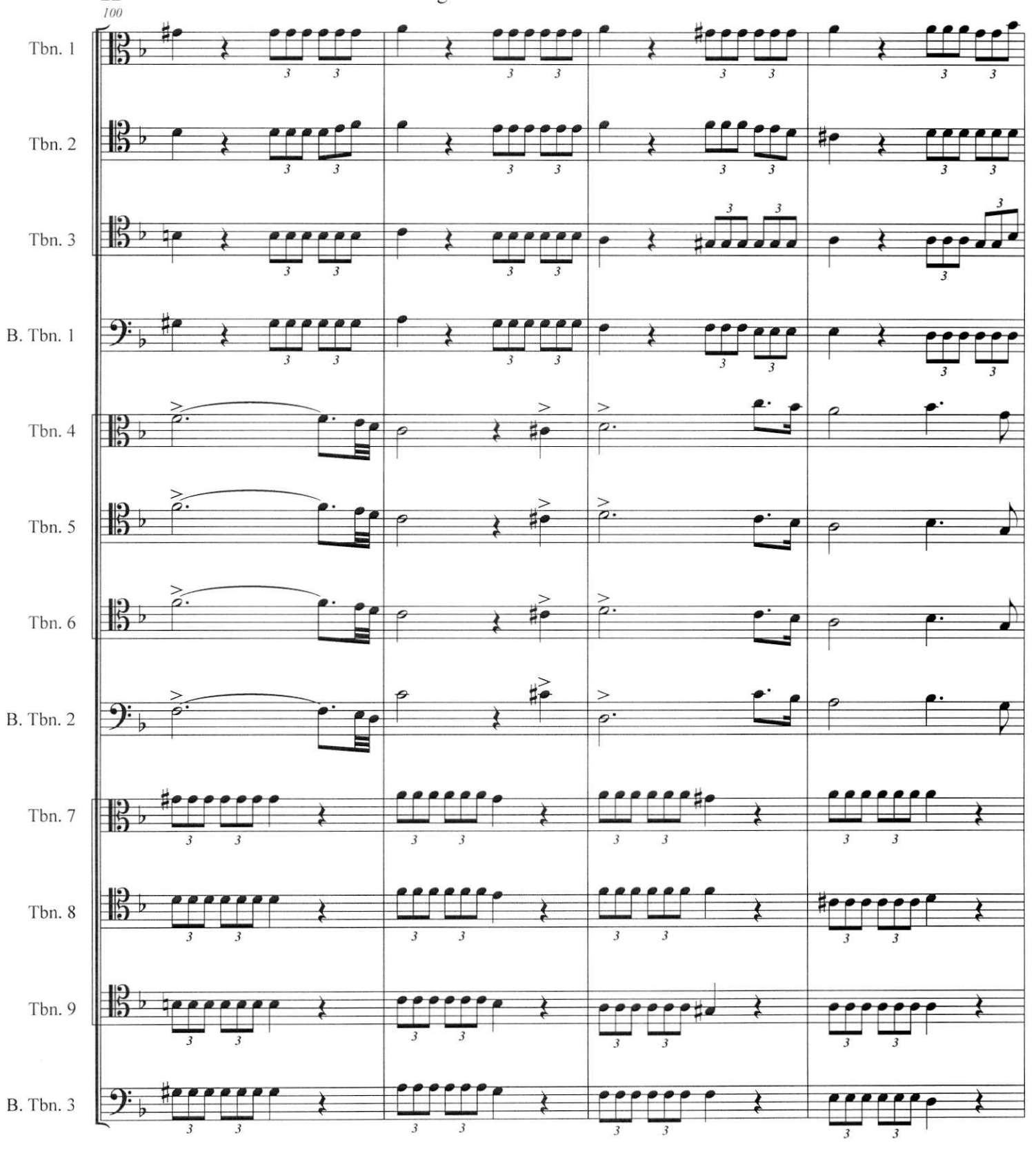
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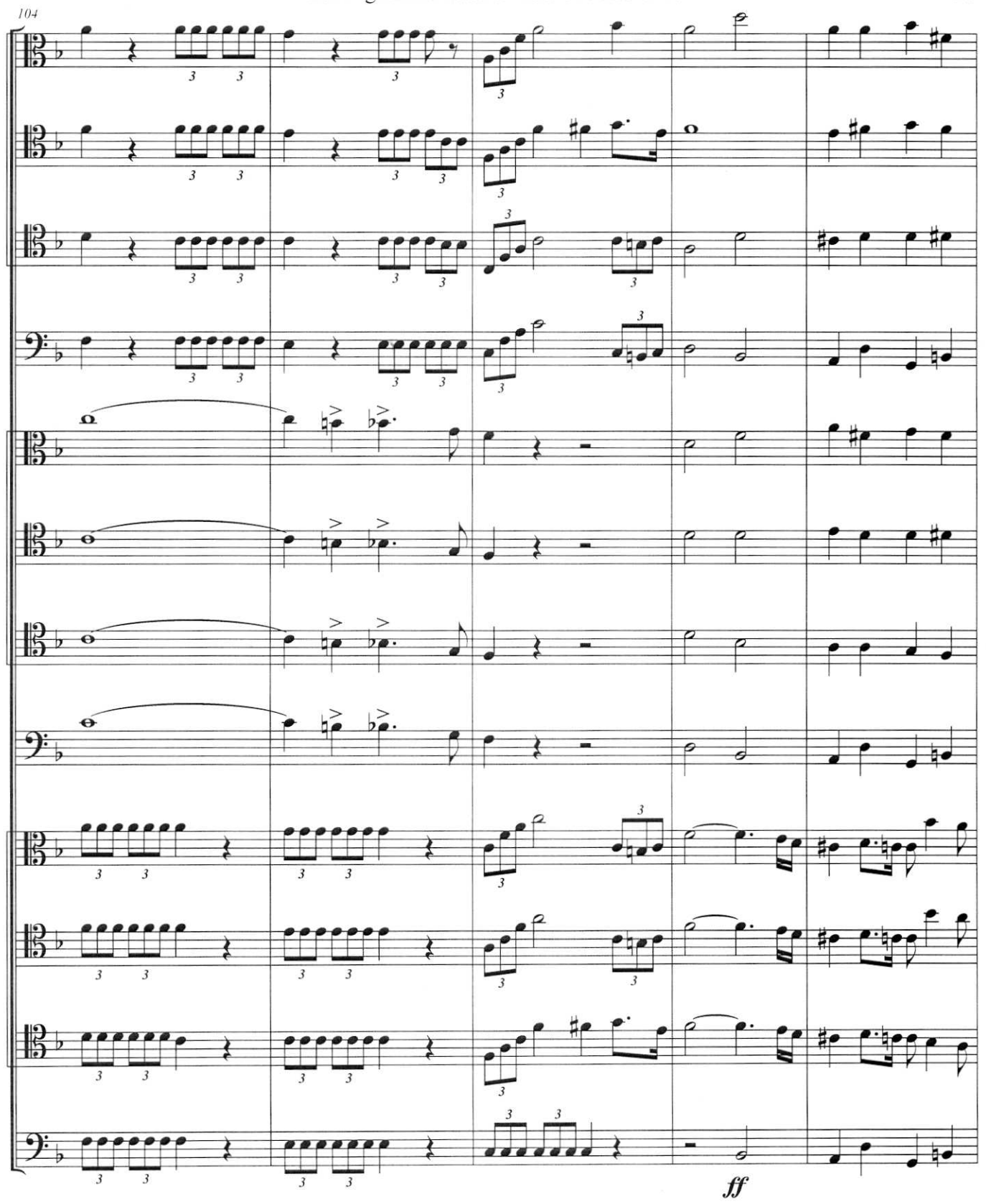
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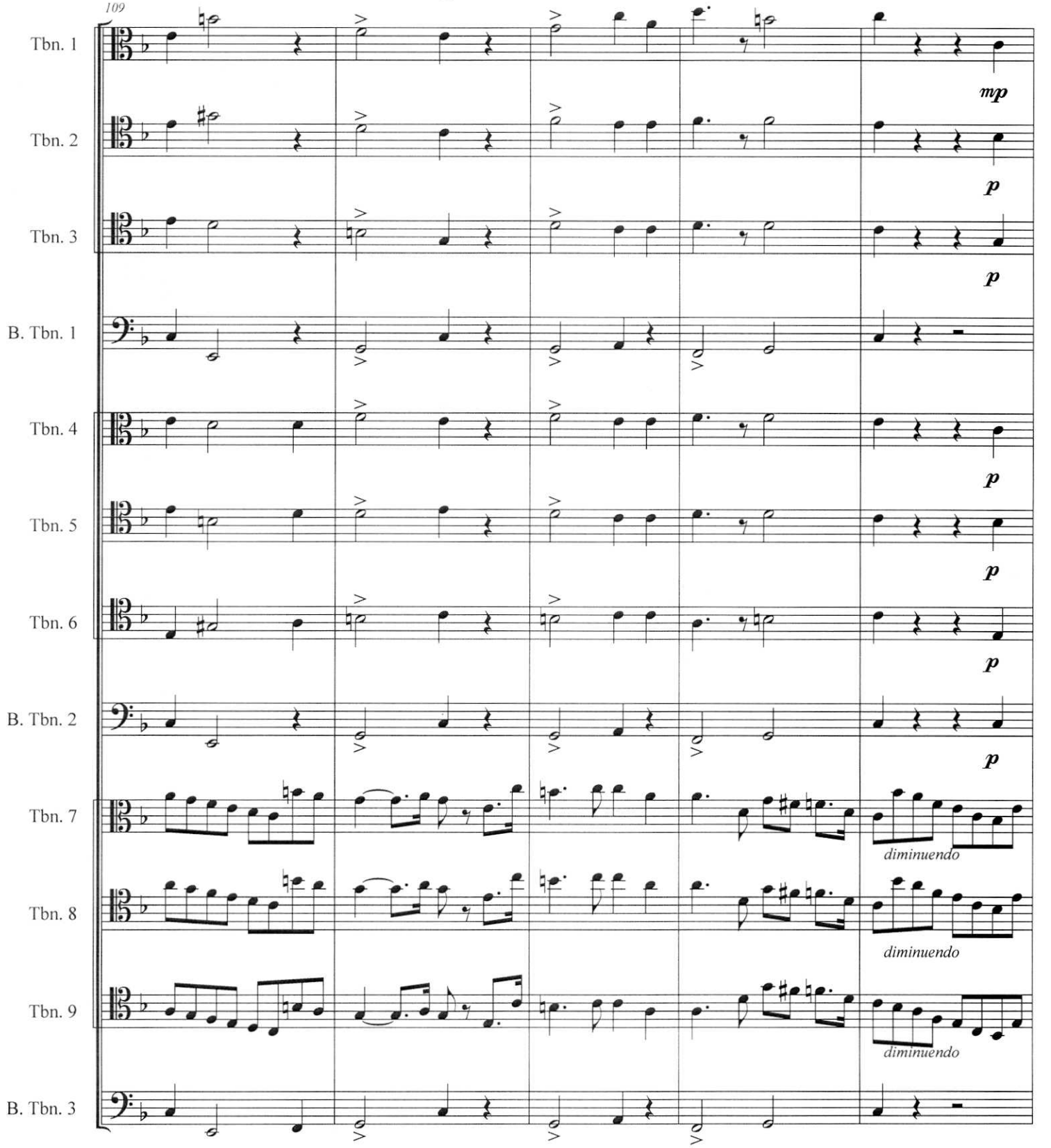
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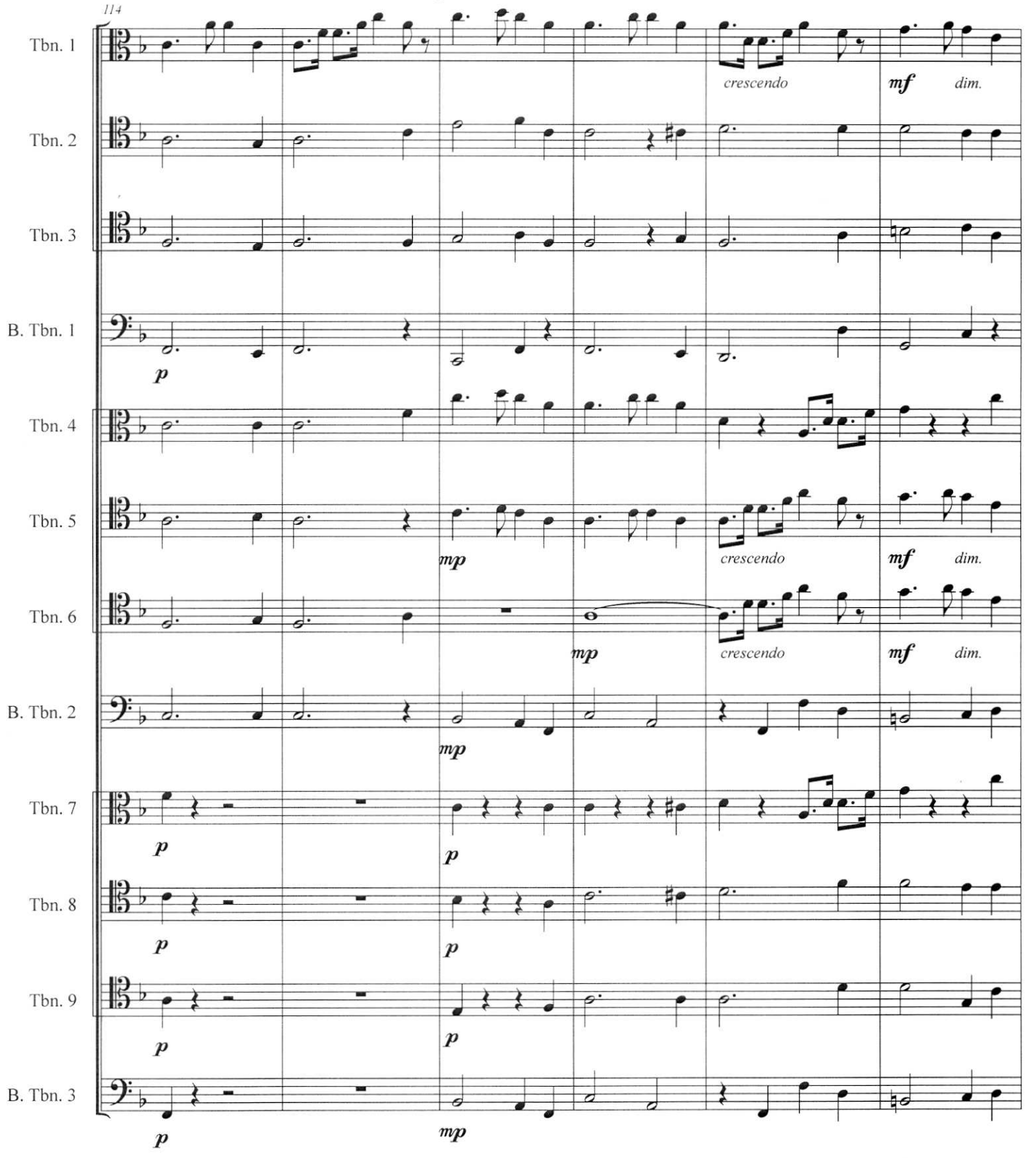
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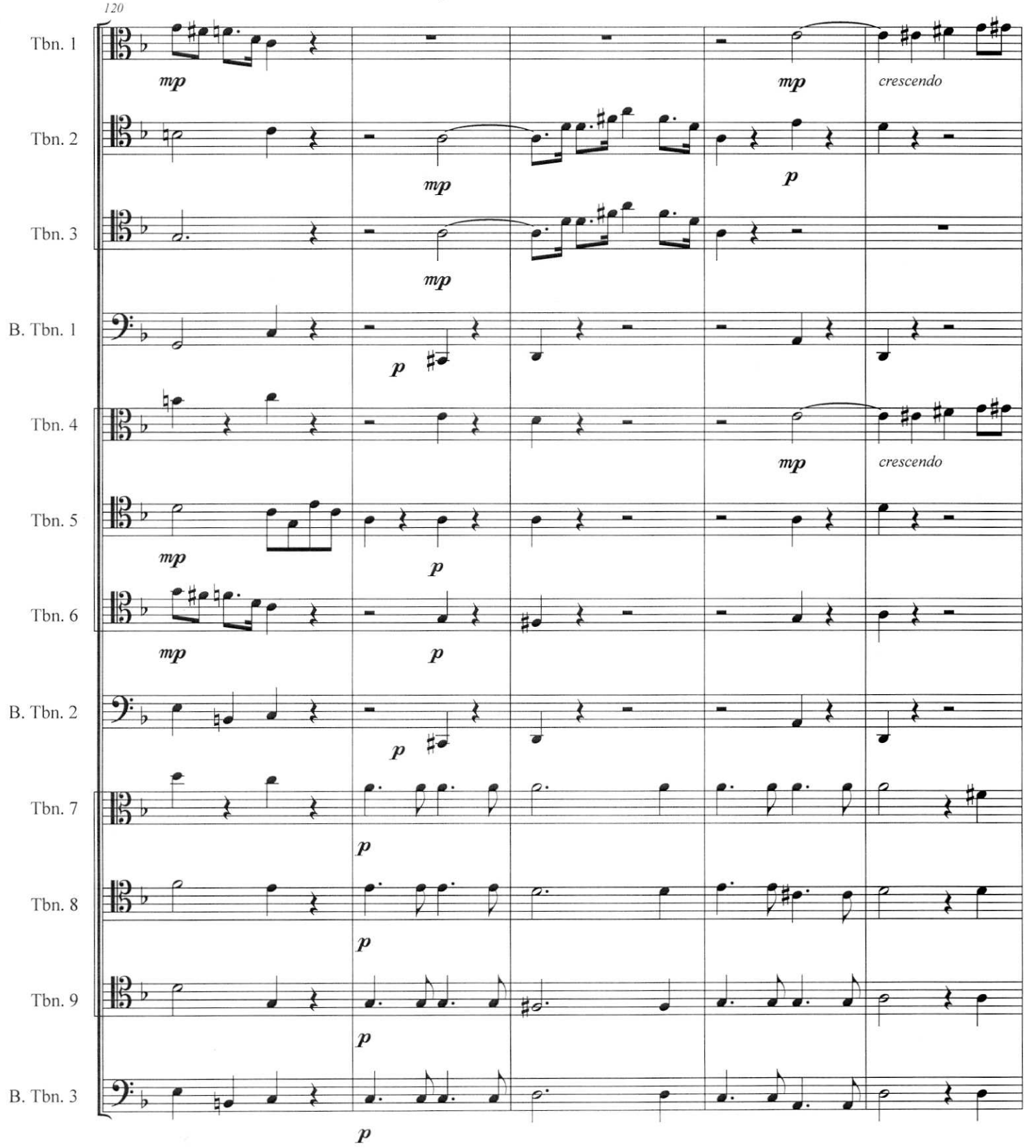
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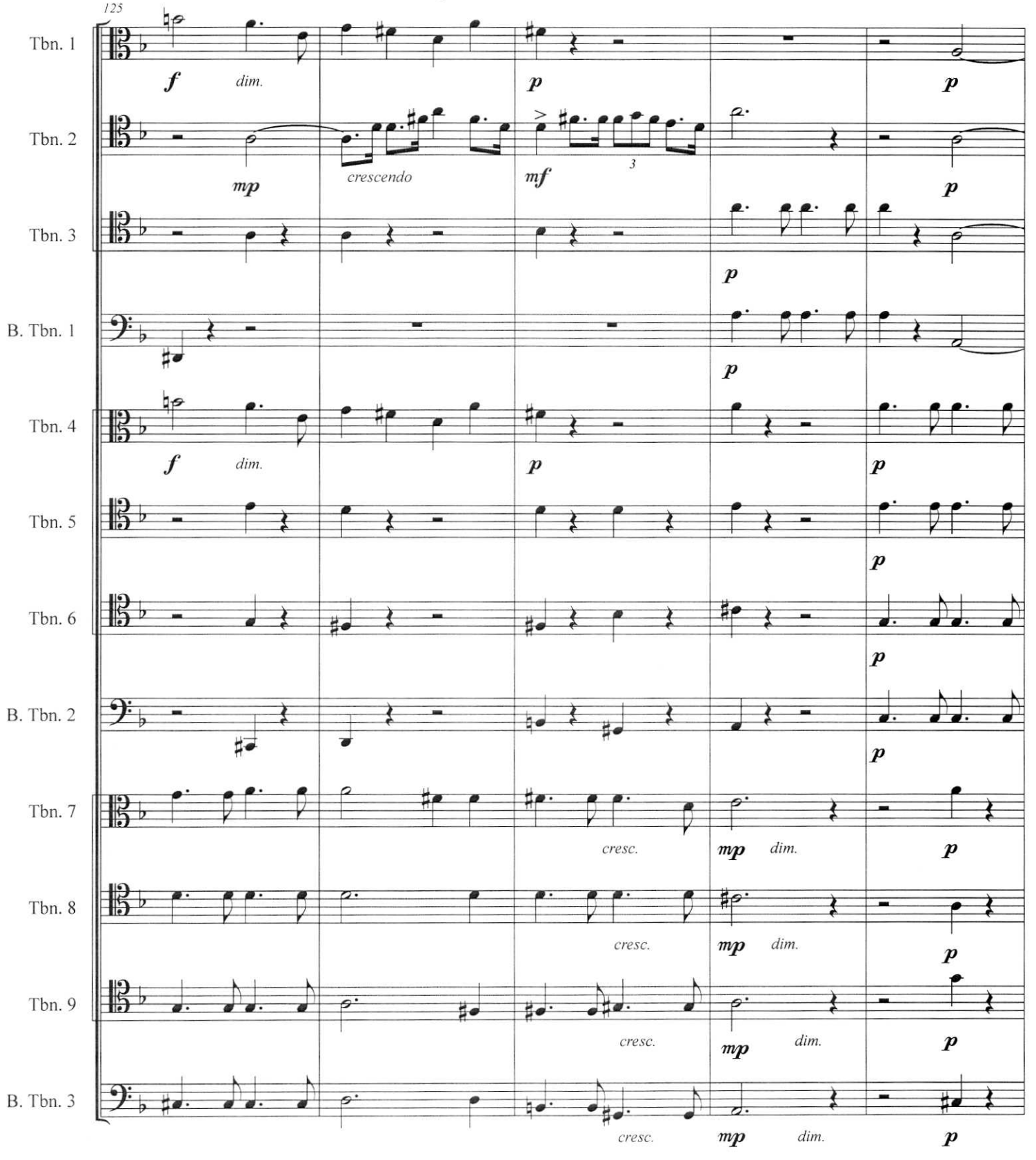
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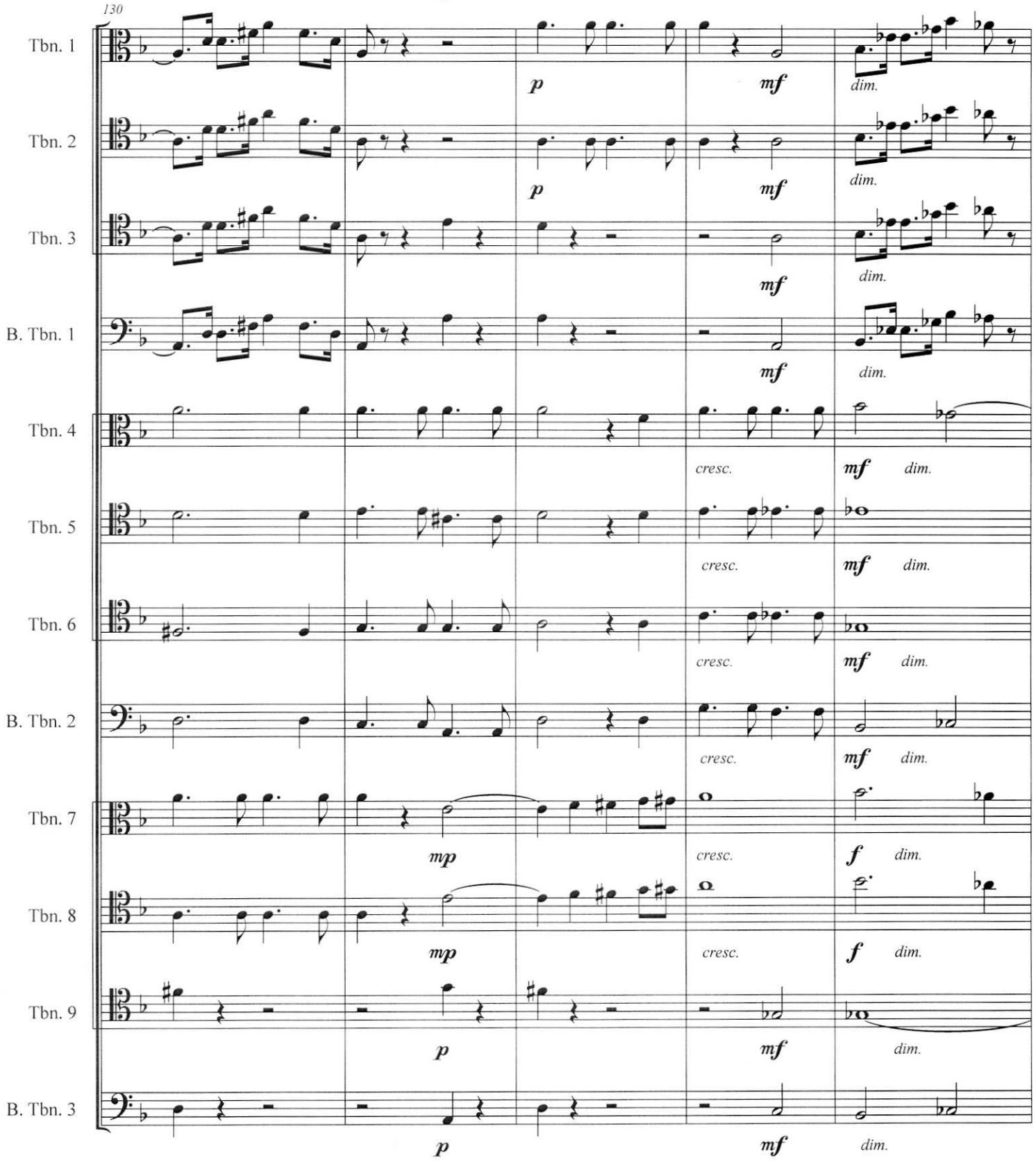
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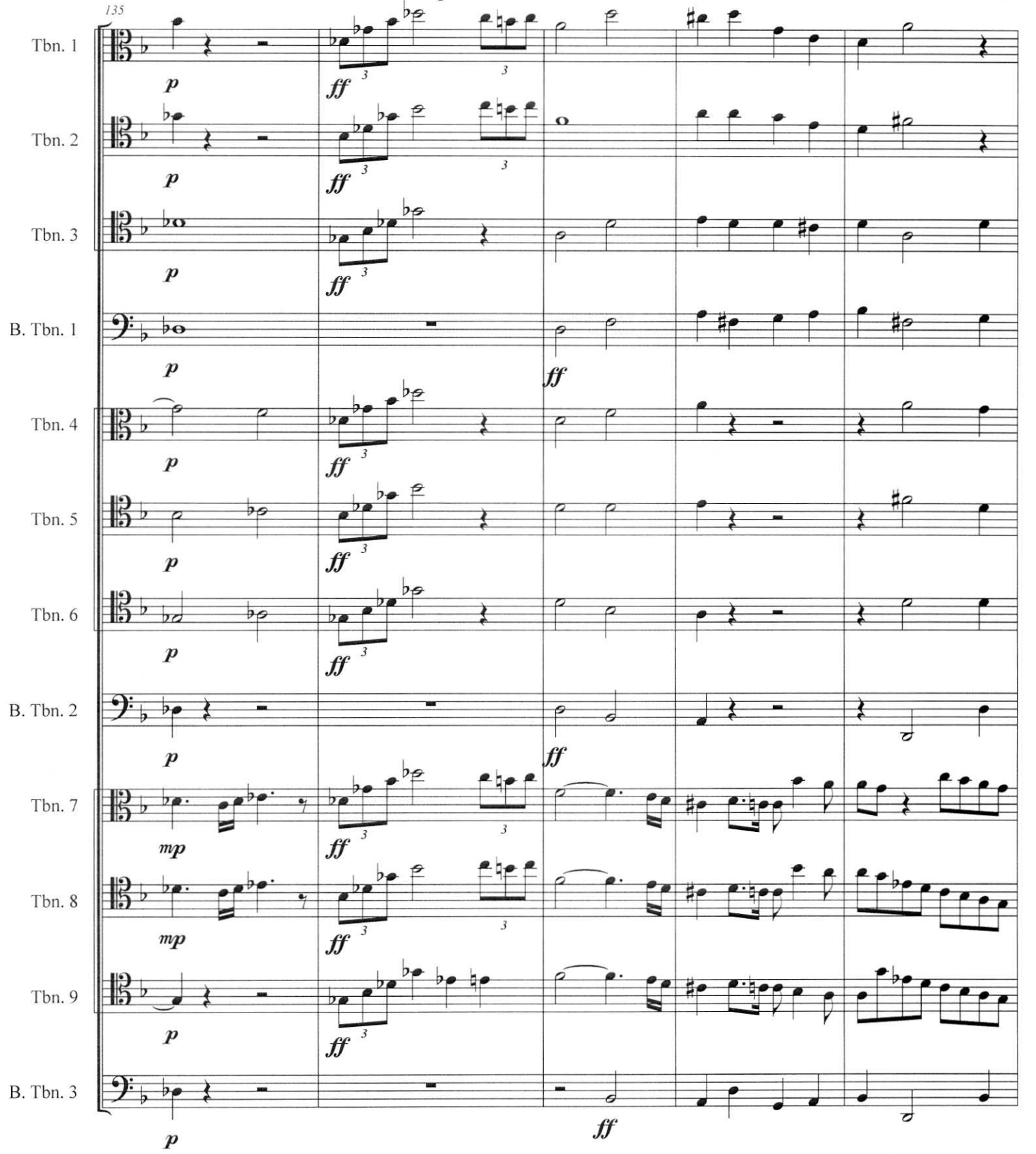
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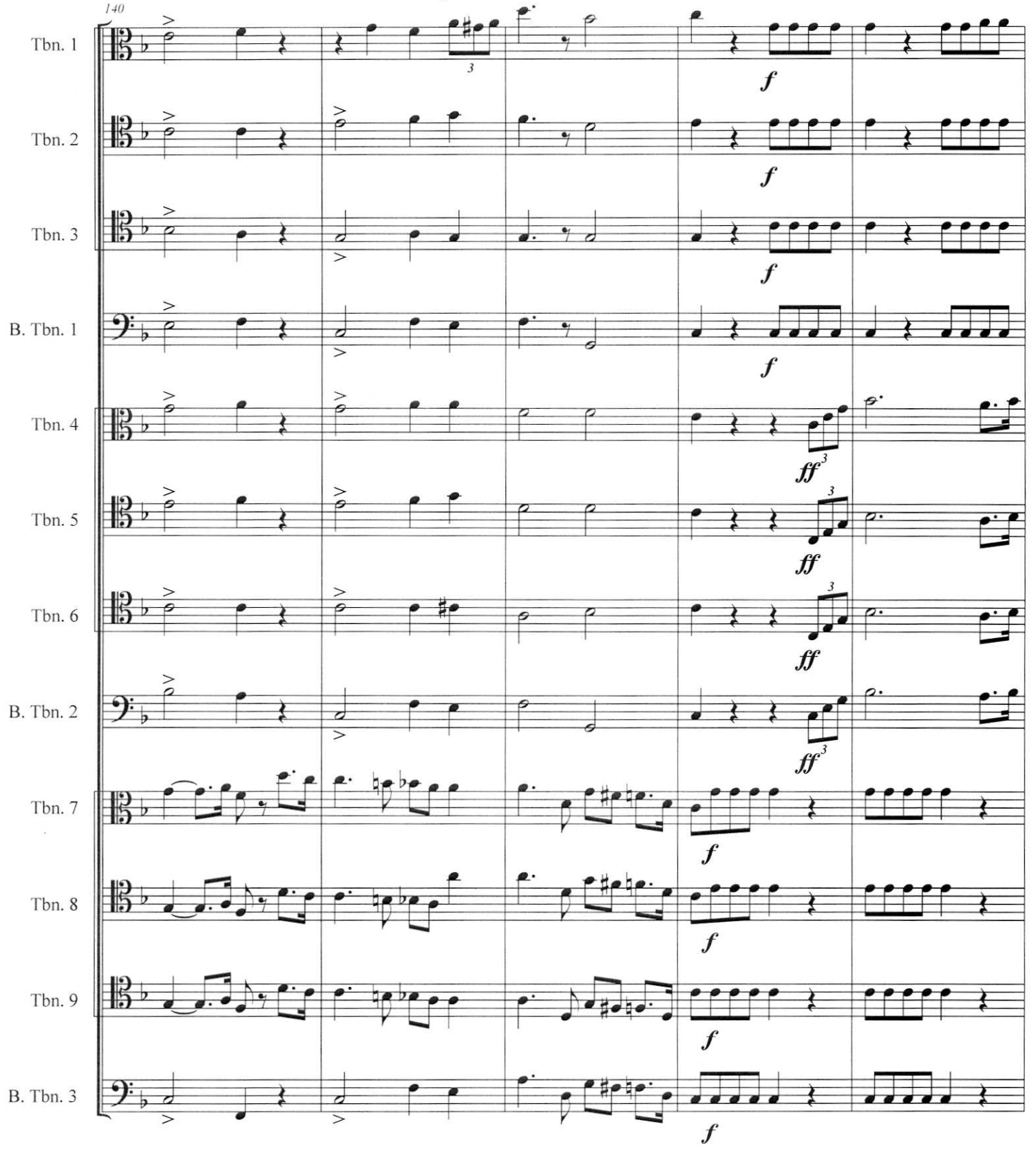
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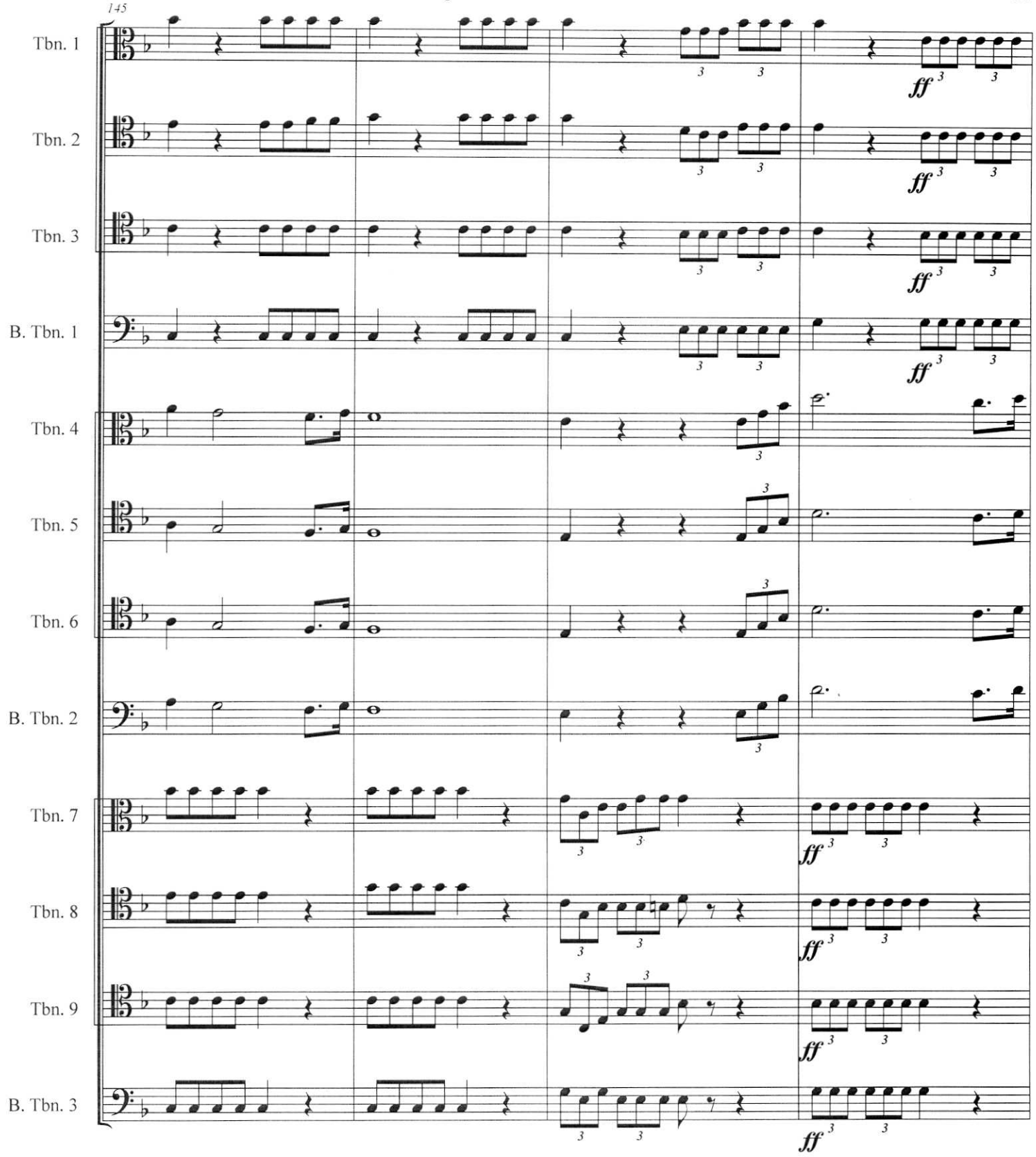
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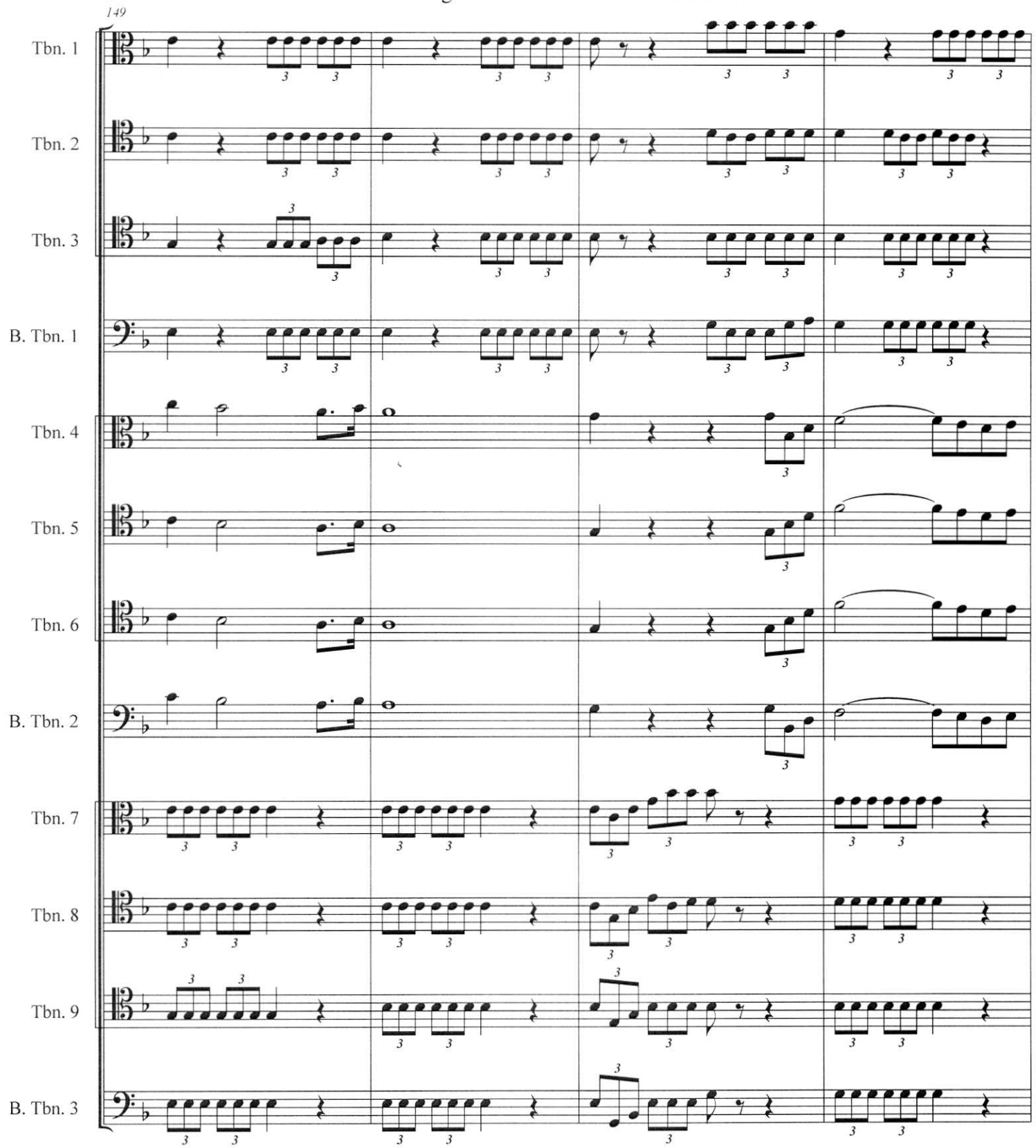
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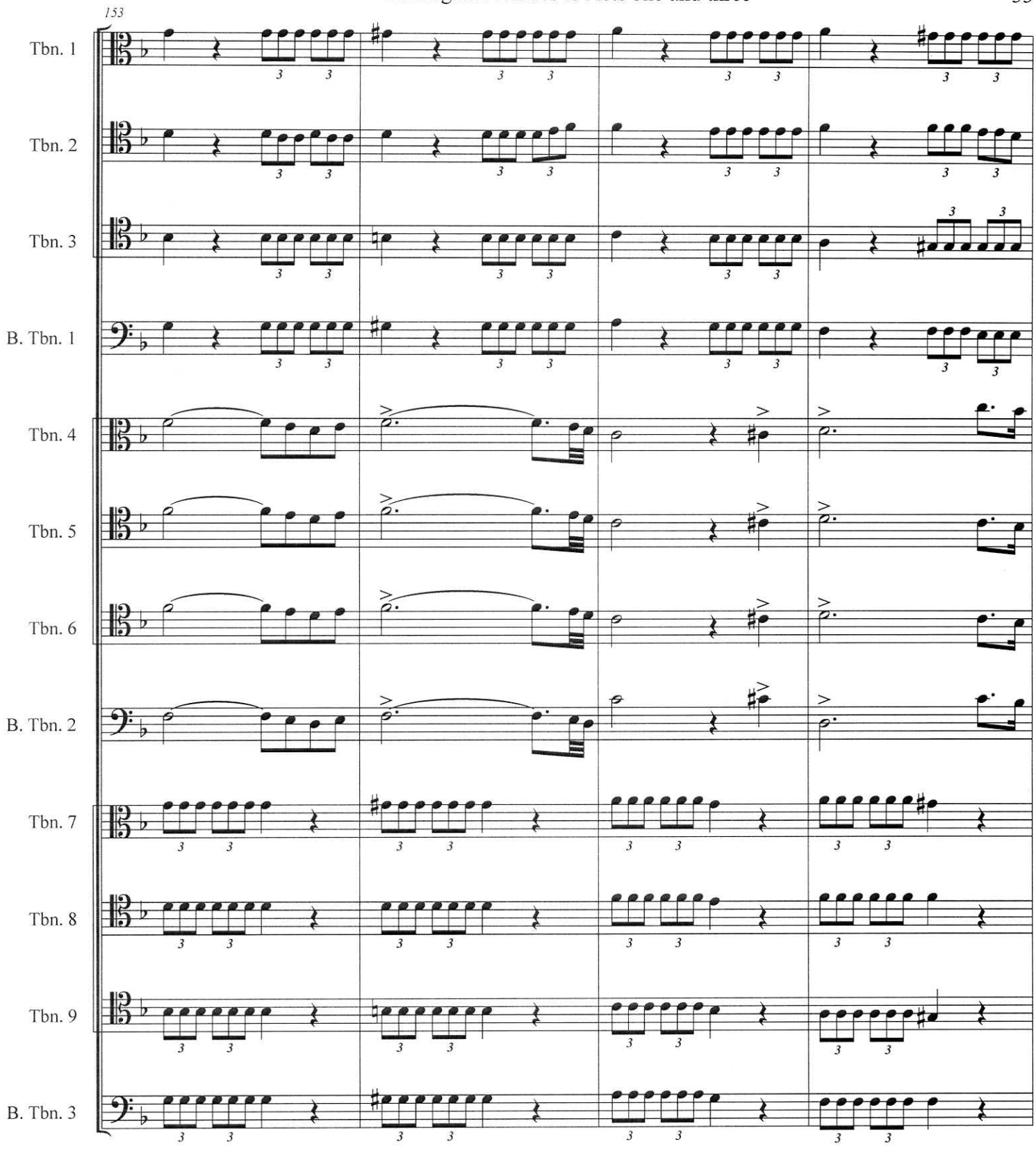
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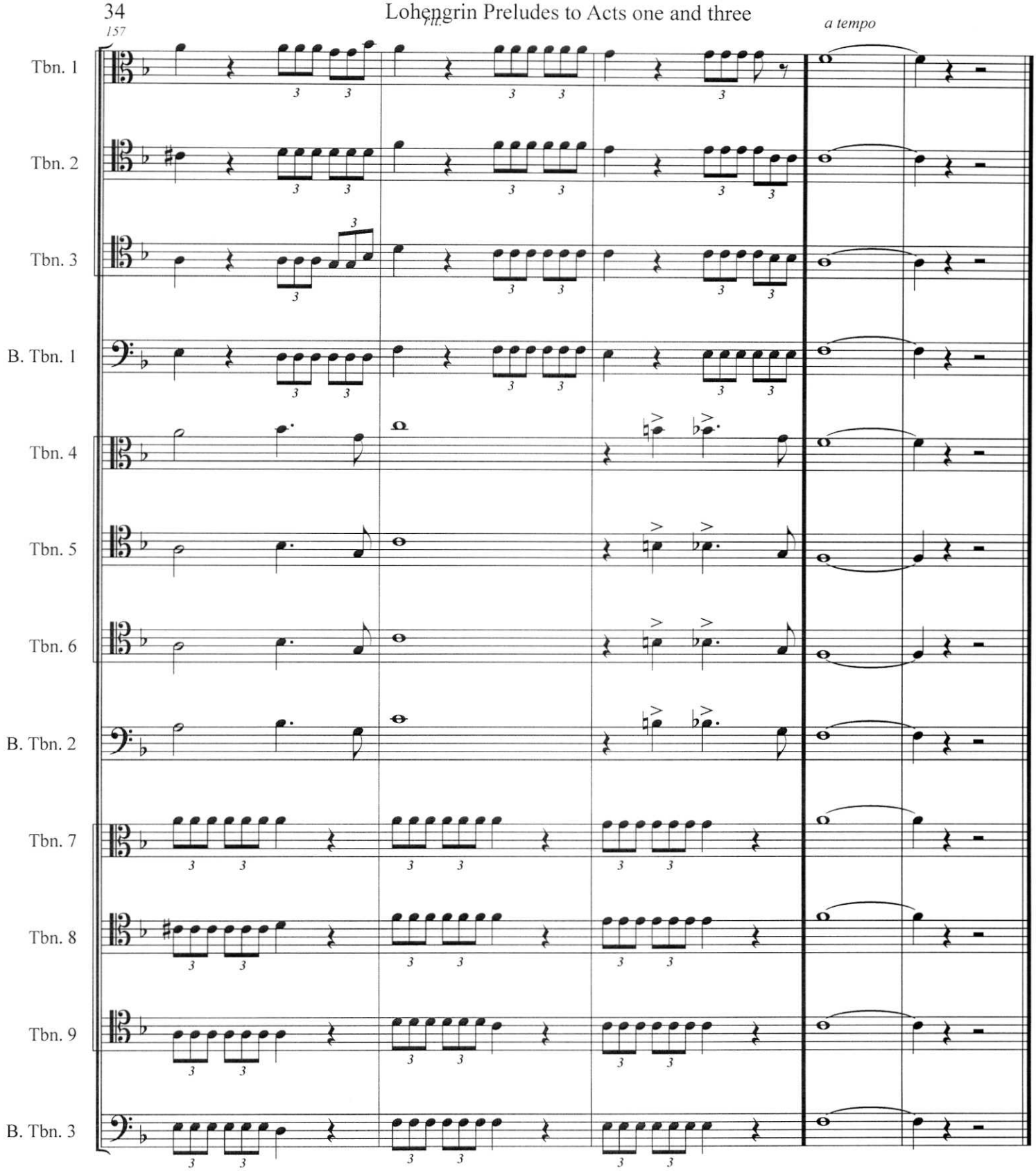
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