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OUT OF FOUR ELEMENTS (1980)

by
Michael H. Keur

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Music
School of Music

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1980

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Assuredly, there are many influences which come to bear both directly and indirectly upon the development of a young composer--those of instructors, fellow students and composers, and the general educational and musical environment with which he is associated. It is truly regrettable that I cannot here individually note all of those faculty, staff members, and students at Western Michigan University who have helped to make my studies valuable, purposeful, and rewarding. I would be remiss, however, if I failed to express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation to Professor Ramon Zupko who, throughout the course of my study of composition, has provided me with the most helpful insight, guidance and encouragement, and the often necessary criticism and advice--all of which have contributed to make me much more of a musician than I would otherwise have become. I would also like to thank Professor Curtis Curtis-Smith for the direction which he has afforded me during my study of composition with him this past year. I am especially obliged for the sacrifices of time and effort which he graciously made to advise me and to inject his most welcomed and respected opinions concerning the composition of this music and the preparation of the score. To these and to my other friends in the School of Music, I respectfully dedicate this composition.

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Out of Four Elements -1980

for:

woodwind, brass, and string quintets; percussion; voices; and electronic tape.

Michael Keur

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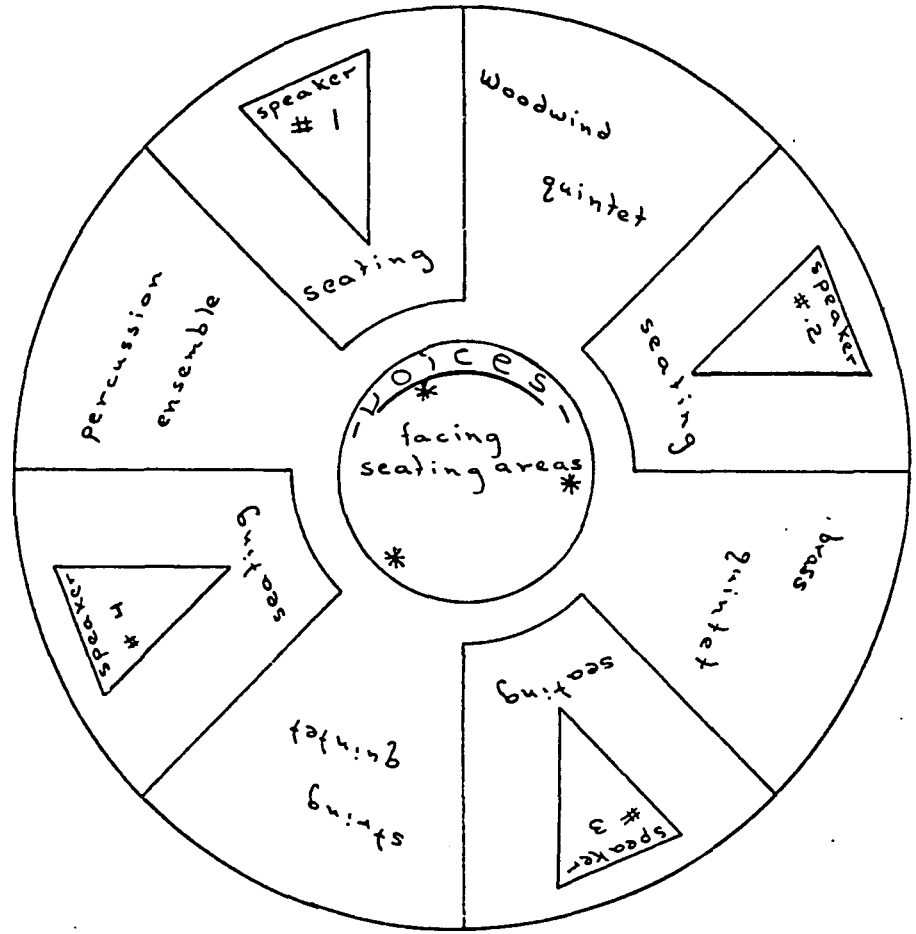
Performance Arrangement



iii

percussion instruments

1 tom toms - four small
snare drum
wood block

2 tom toms - four large
timpani - two
bass drum
temple blocks

3 suspended cymbals - three ("1" small, "2" medium, "3" large)
crash cymbals
triangle

4 vibraphone
xylophone

I.

Prelude

Hero and Leander--Donne

Both robbed of air, we both lie in one ground,
Both whom one fire had burnt, one water drowned.

II.

A Burnt Ship--Donne

Out of a fired ship, which, by no way
But drowning, could be rescued from the flame,
Some men leaped forth, and ever as they came
Near the foes ships, did by their shot decay;
So all were lost, which in the ship were found,
  They in the sea being burnt, they in the burnt
    ship drowned.

III.

The Earth, With Thunder Torn, With Fire Blasted, . . .

from, Cælica--Greville

The earth, with thunder torn, with fire blasted,
With waters drowned, and windy palsy shaken,
Cannot for this with heaven be distasted,
Since thunder rain and winds from earth are taken.
Man torn with love, with inward furies blasted,
Drowned with despair, with fleshy lustings shaken,
Cannot for this with heaven be distasted;
Love fury lustings out of man are taken.
Then, man, endure thyself, those clouds will vanish;
Life is a top which whipping sorrow driveth;
Wisdom must bear what our flesh cannot banish;
The humble lead, the stubborn bootless striveth.
Or, man, forsake thyself; to heaven turn thee;
Her flames enlighten nature, never burn thee.

IV.

Interlude

The Air Still Moves, . . .

from, Cælica--Greville

The air still moves, and by its moving cleareth;
The fire up ascends and planets feedeth;
The water passeth on and all lets weareth;
The earth stands still, yet change of changes breedeth.

V.

Sonnet--Drummond of Hawthornden

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought
In time's great periods shall return to nought;
That fairest states have fatal nights and days.
I know how all the muses' heavenly lays,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds of few or none are sought,
And that nought lighter is than airy praise.
I know frail beauty, like the purple flower
To which one morn oft birth and death affords;
That love a jarring is of minds' accords,
Where sense and will invassal reason's power;
  Know what I list, this all can not me move,
  But that, oh me, I both must write and love;

VI.

Postlude

Nature, That Framed Us, . . . --Tamburlaine

Nature, that framed us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.

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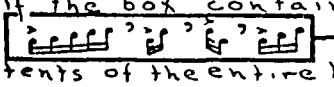
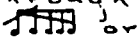
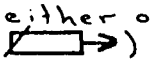
Special Notation

symbol	explanation
	proportional accelerando
	if the box contains single notes without stems (i.e.,), repeat the notes in a random order with random rhythms for the duration of the arrow; if the box contains figures (e.g., ), perform contents of the entire box in order (as written) and repeat for the duration of the arrow — however, tempos and rhythms, in this case, remain somewhat flexible to provide for a perception of "randomness."

note: a "slash" through either of the above symbols (i.e.,  or ) indicates that the prescribed function is to be performed as fast as possible.

	"bend" tone as indicated by the placement and configuration of the symbol in relationship to the staff.
	1/4 step sharp
	1/4 step flat
	straight mute
	cup mute
	harmon mute ("stem in" always, unless otherwise indicated).
	rim shot - on tom toms and snare drum.
	on the rim - on tom toms and snare drum. (please note, however, that this same symbol is employed for the woodblock notation in movement III.)

Also: movements I, IV, and VI are notated proportionally with one complete system representative of 10 seconds of "real time;" durations are indicated by beam lengths.

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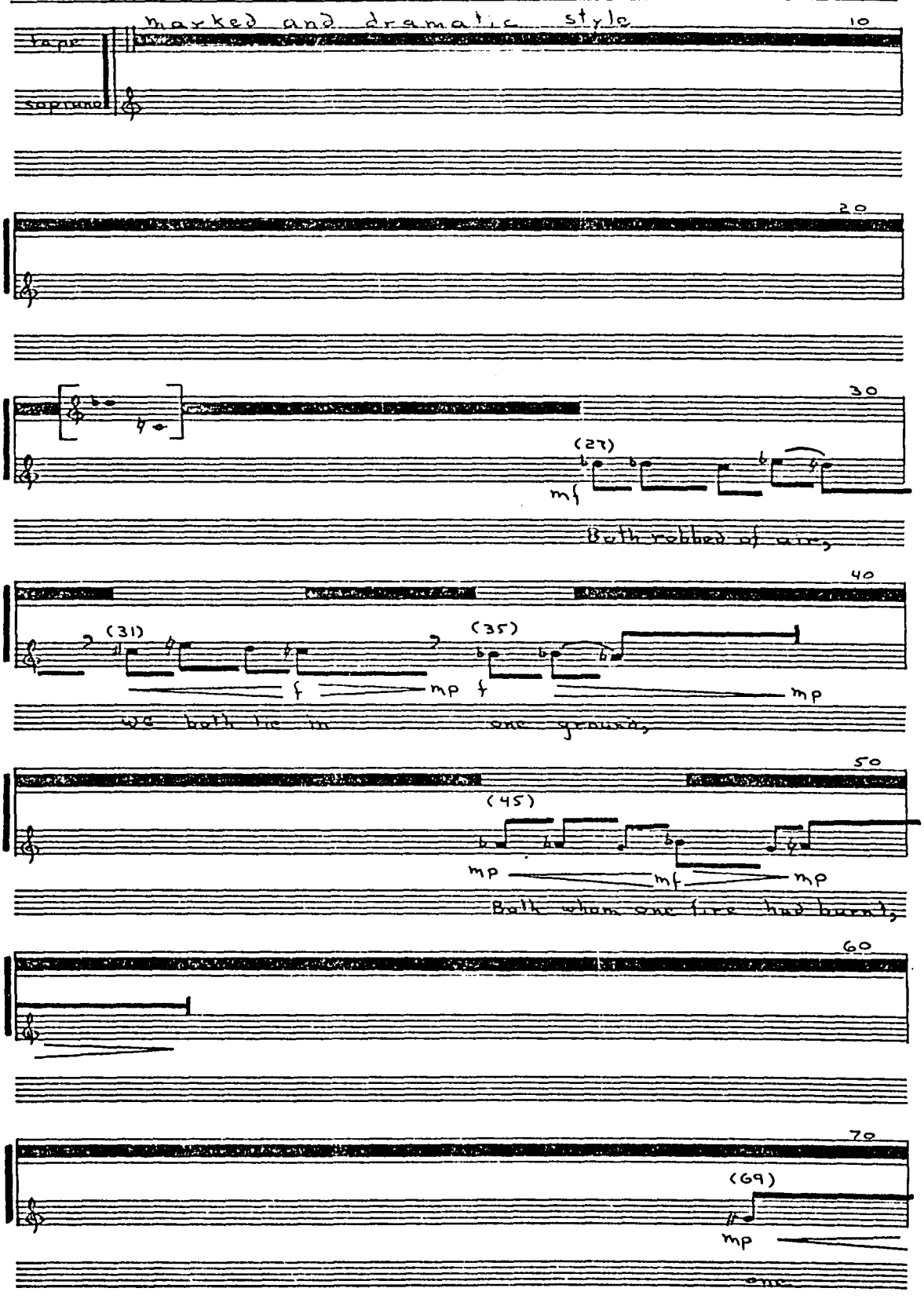
I.

Prelude

Hero and Leander–Donne



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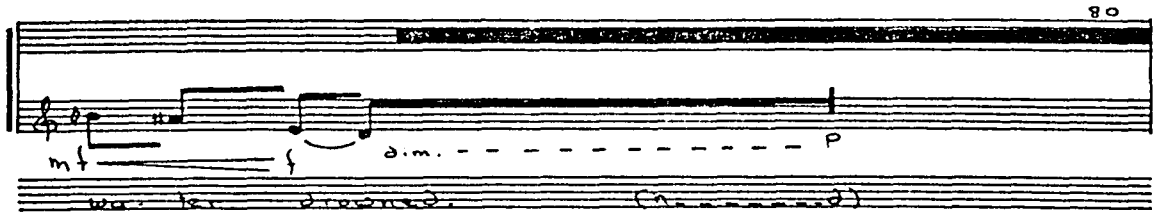

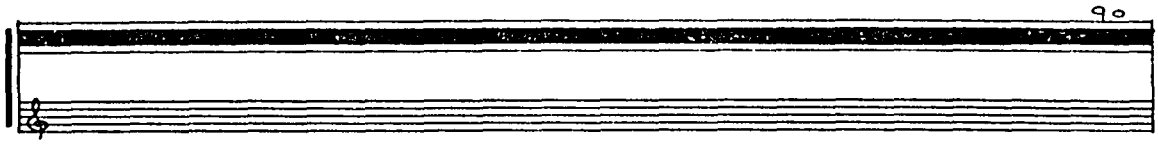

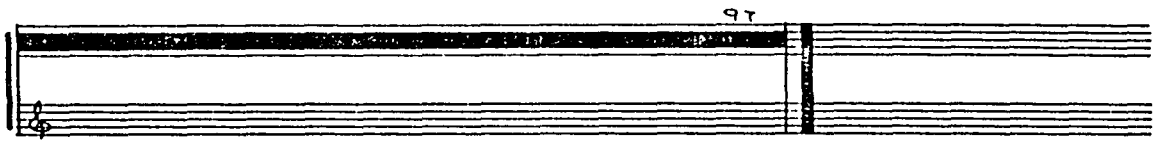

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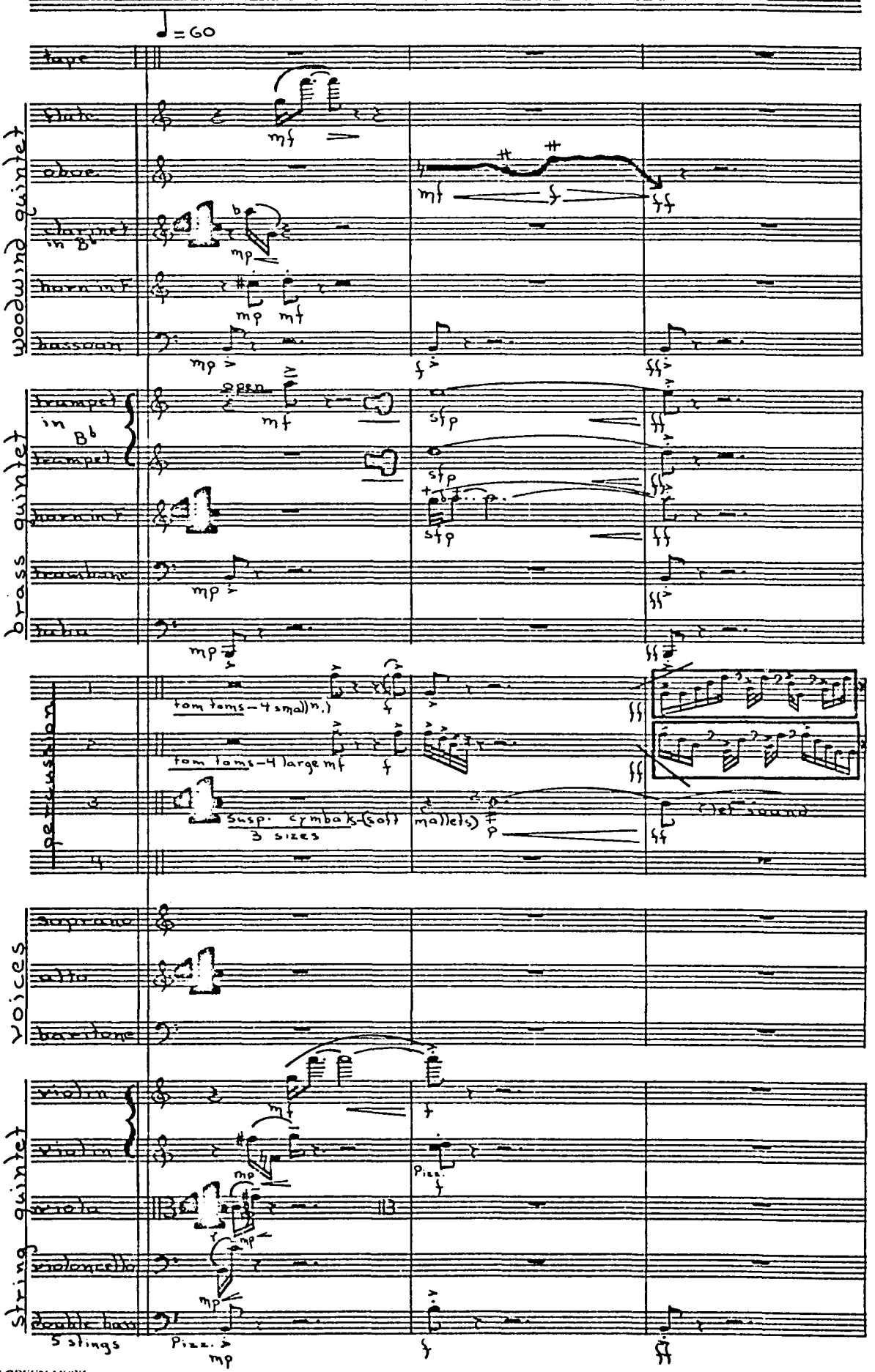
II.
A Burnt Ship–Donne



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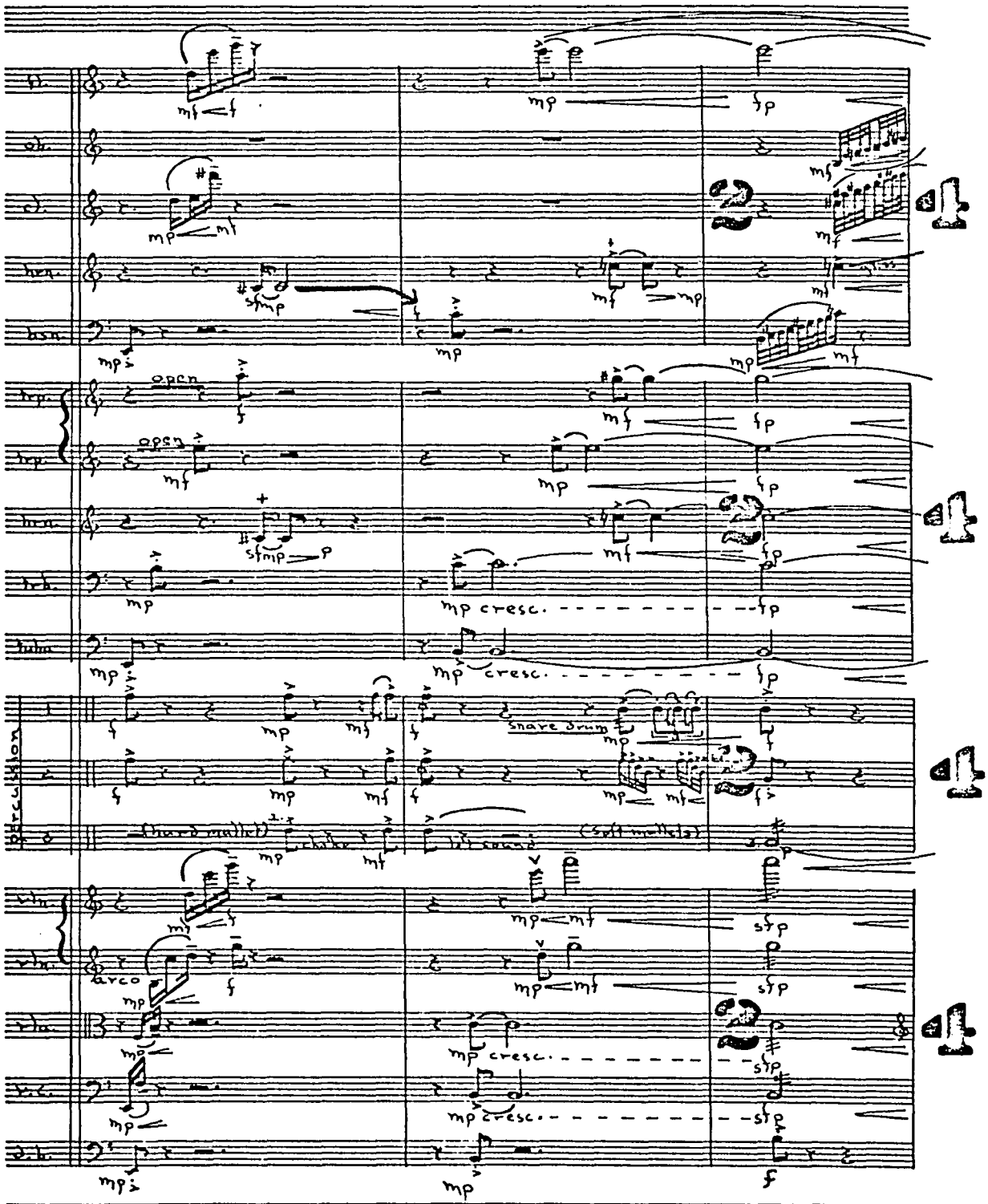

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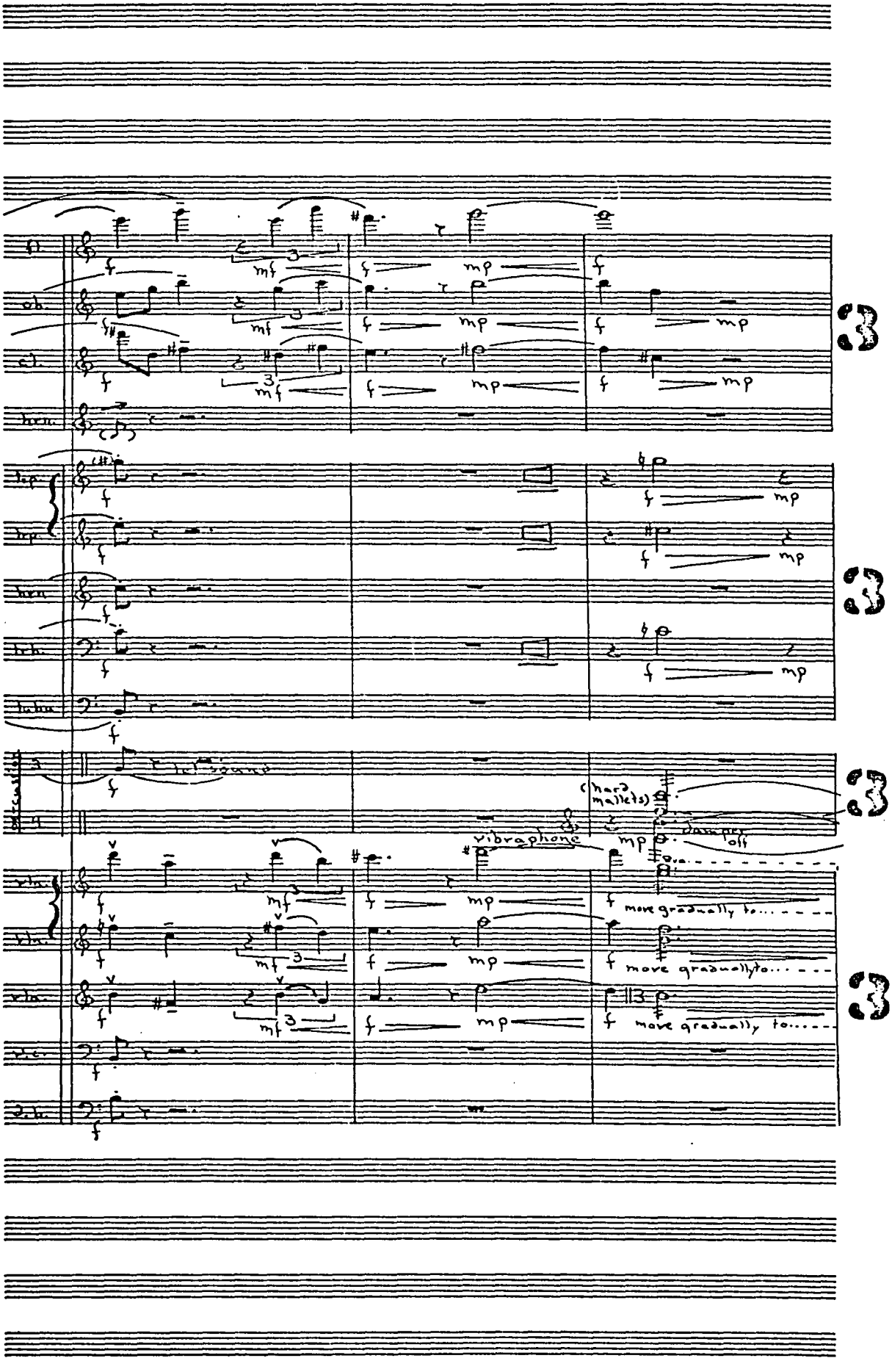

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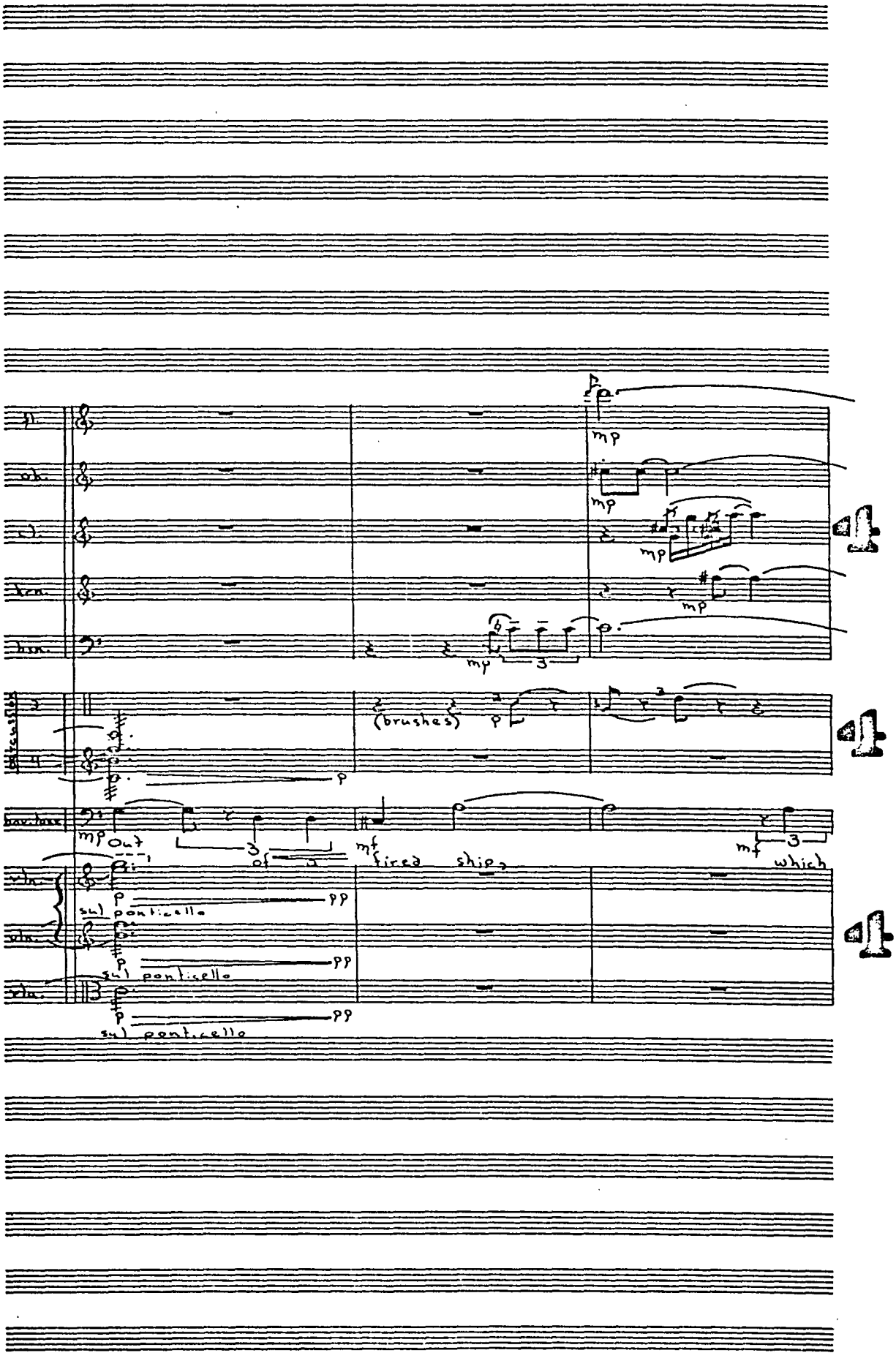

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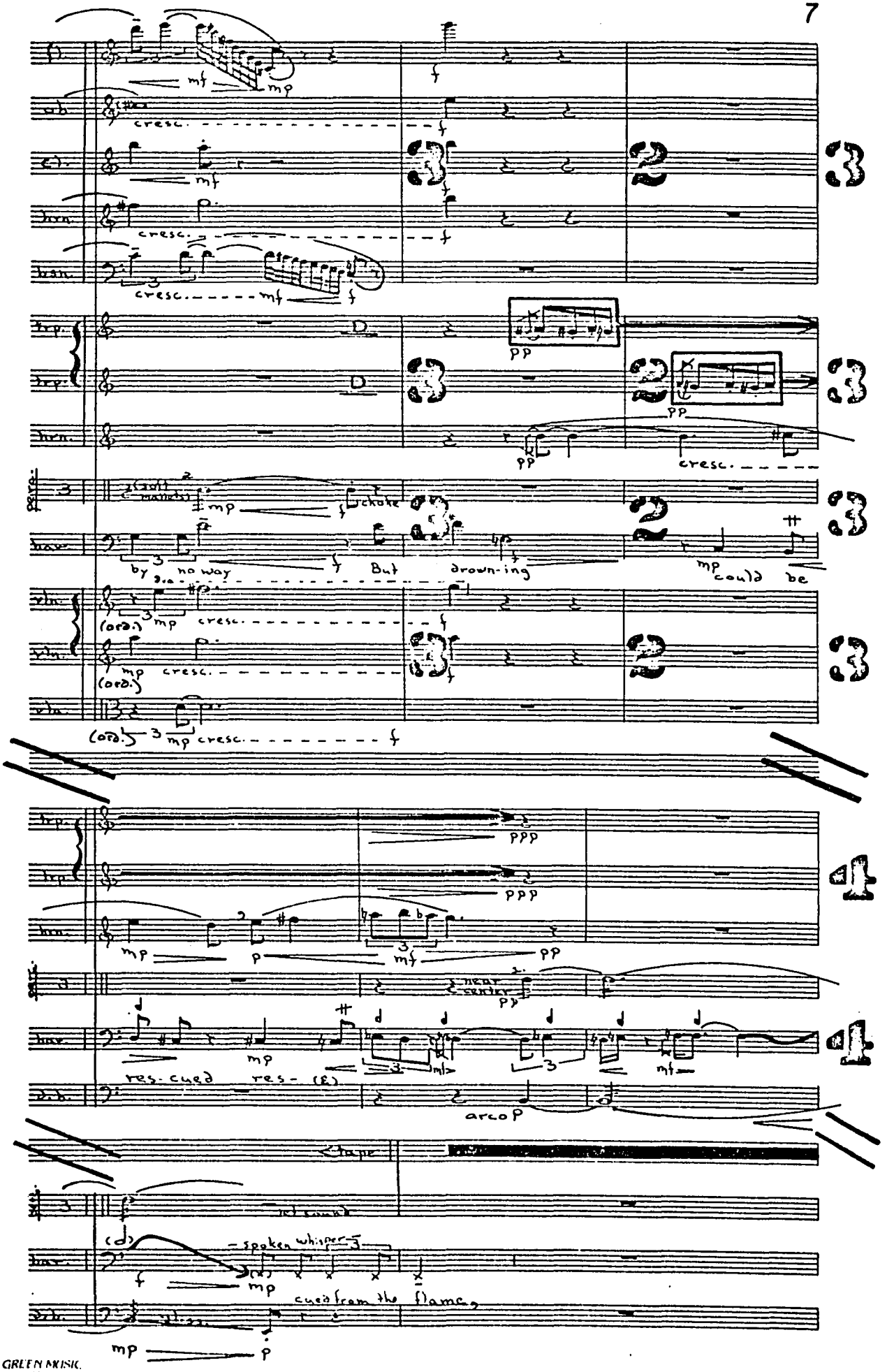

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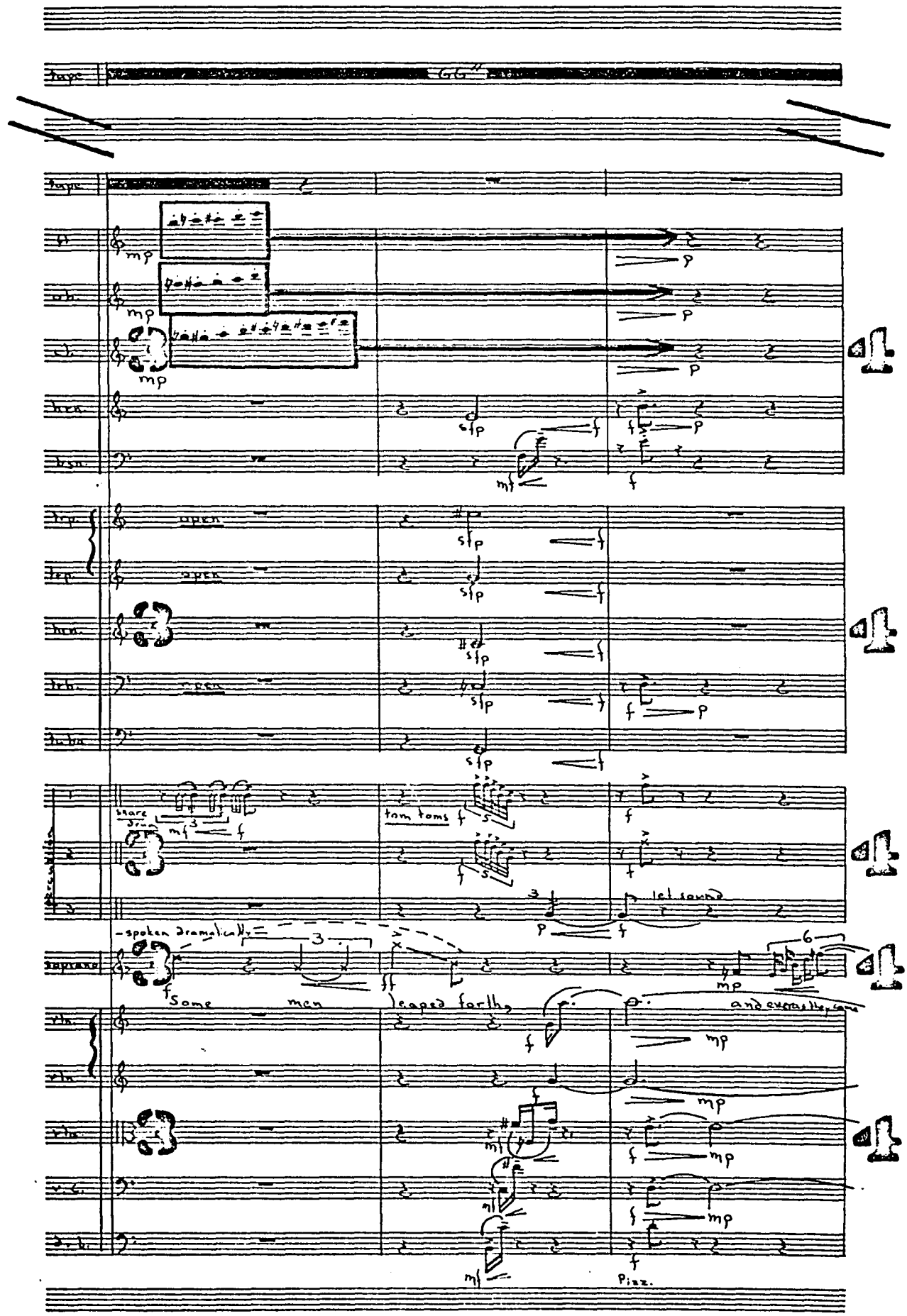

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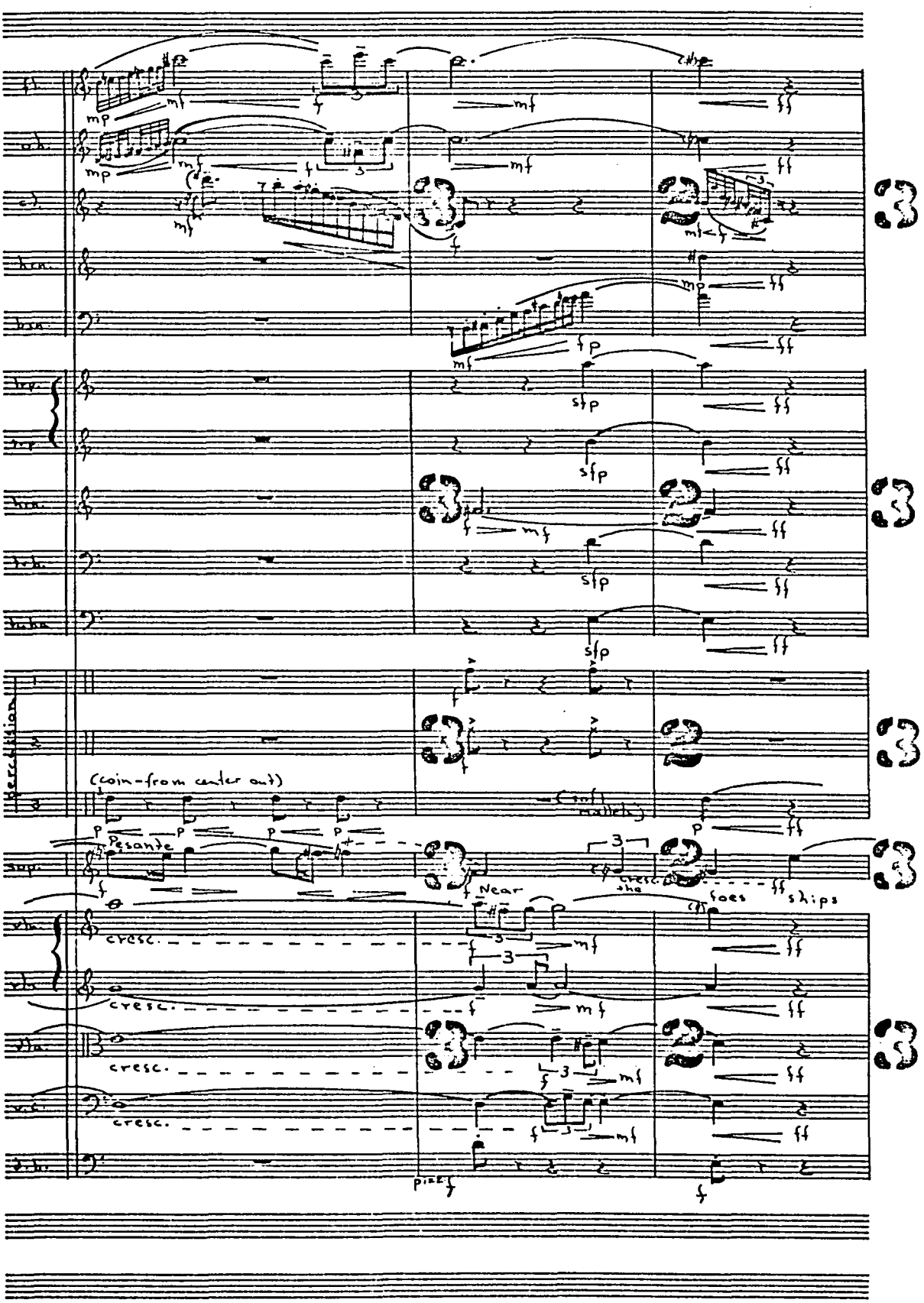

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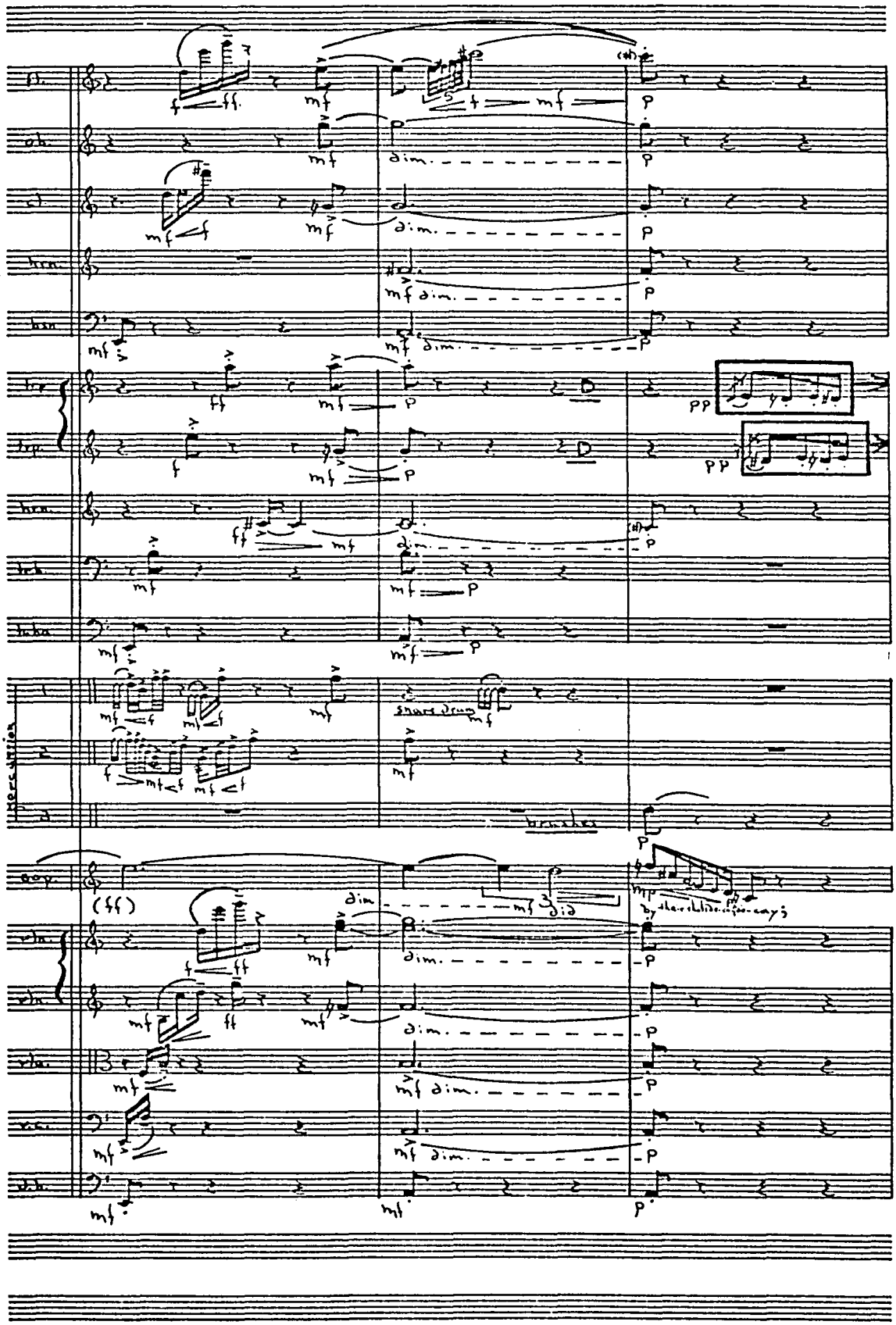

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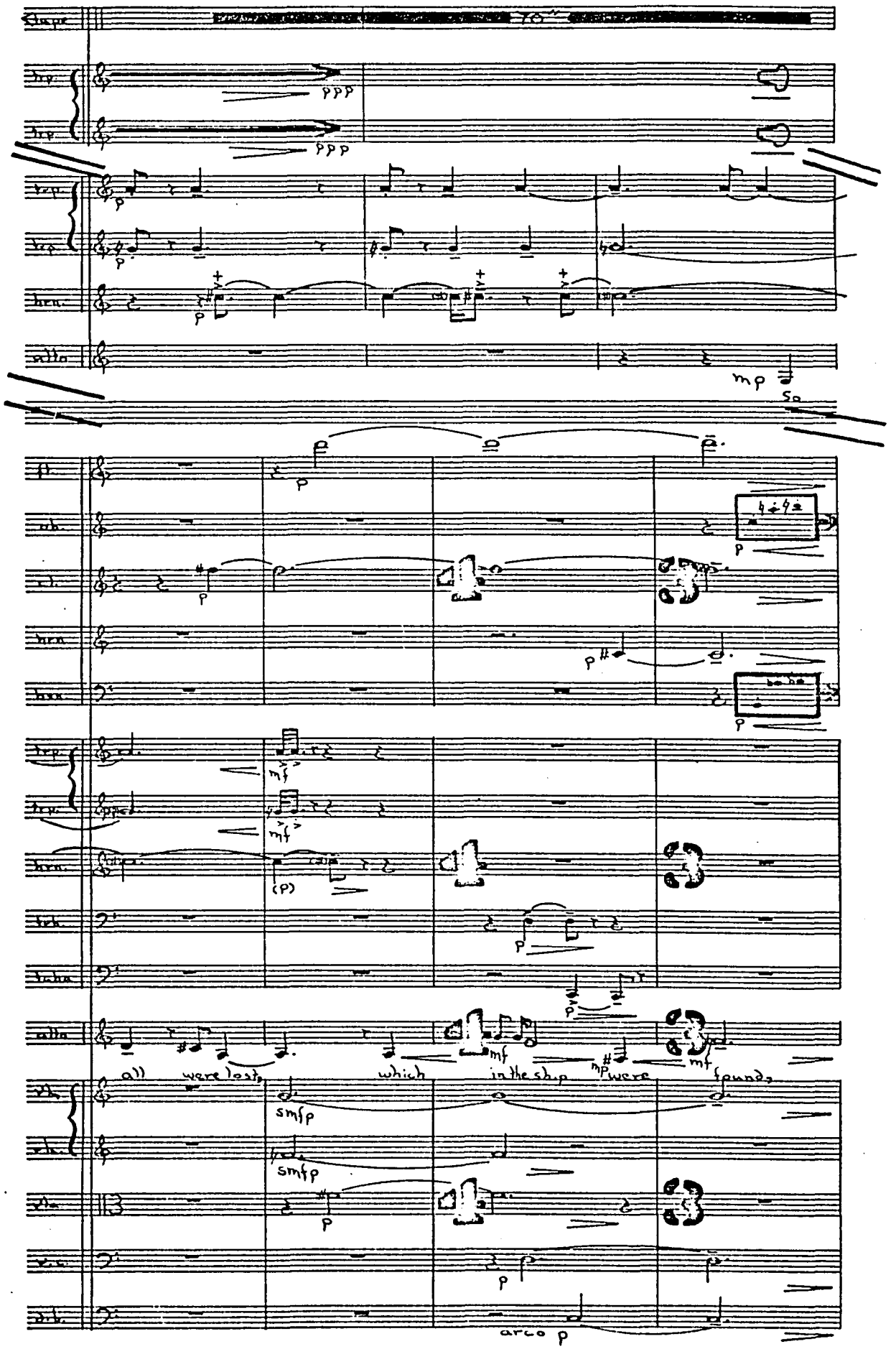

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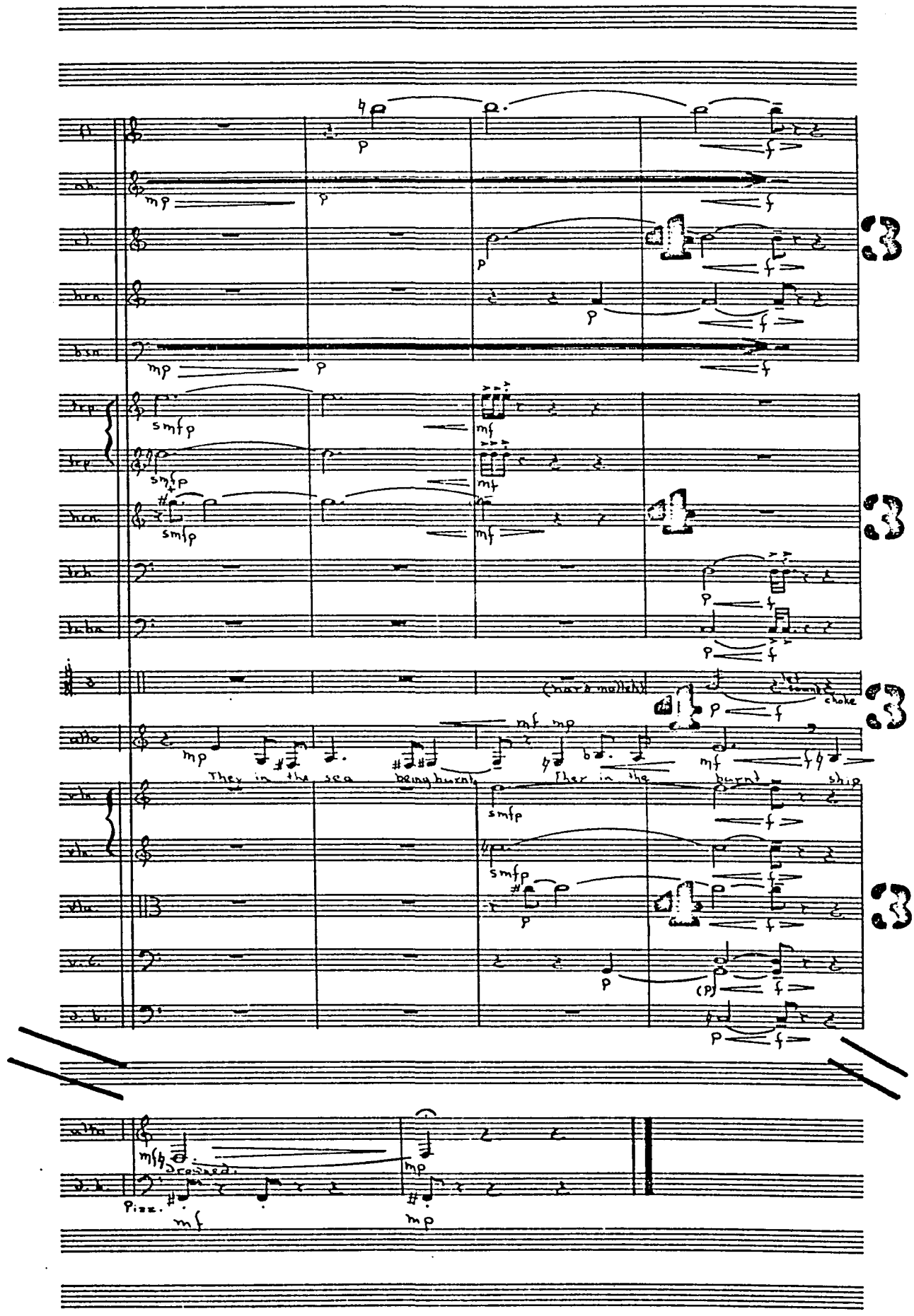

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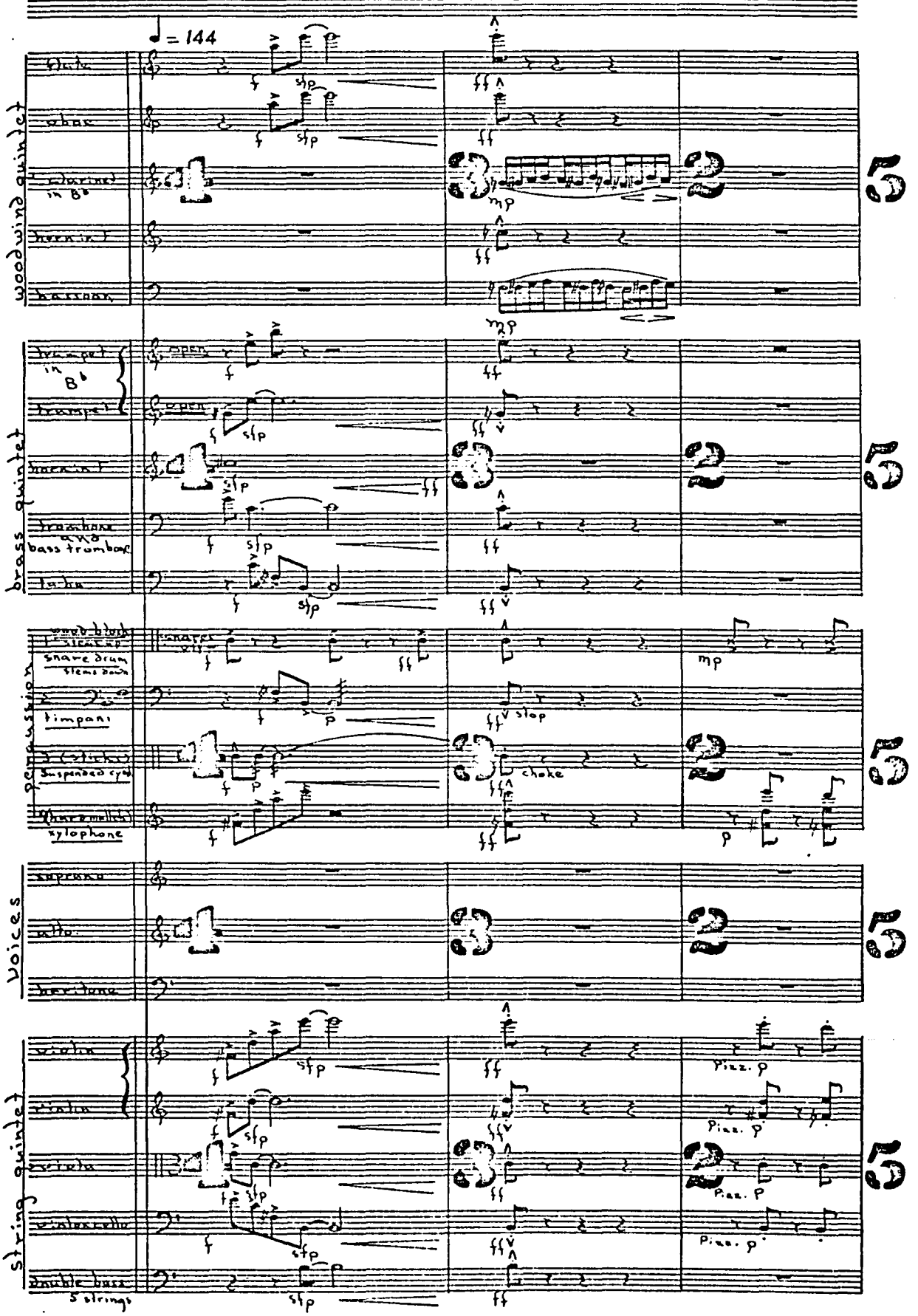
III.

The Earth, With Thunder Torn, . . .

from Caelica–Greville



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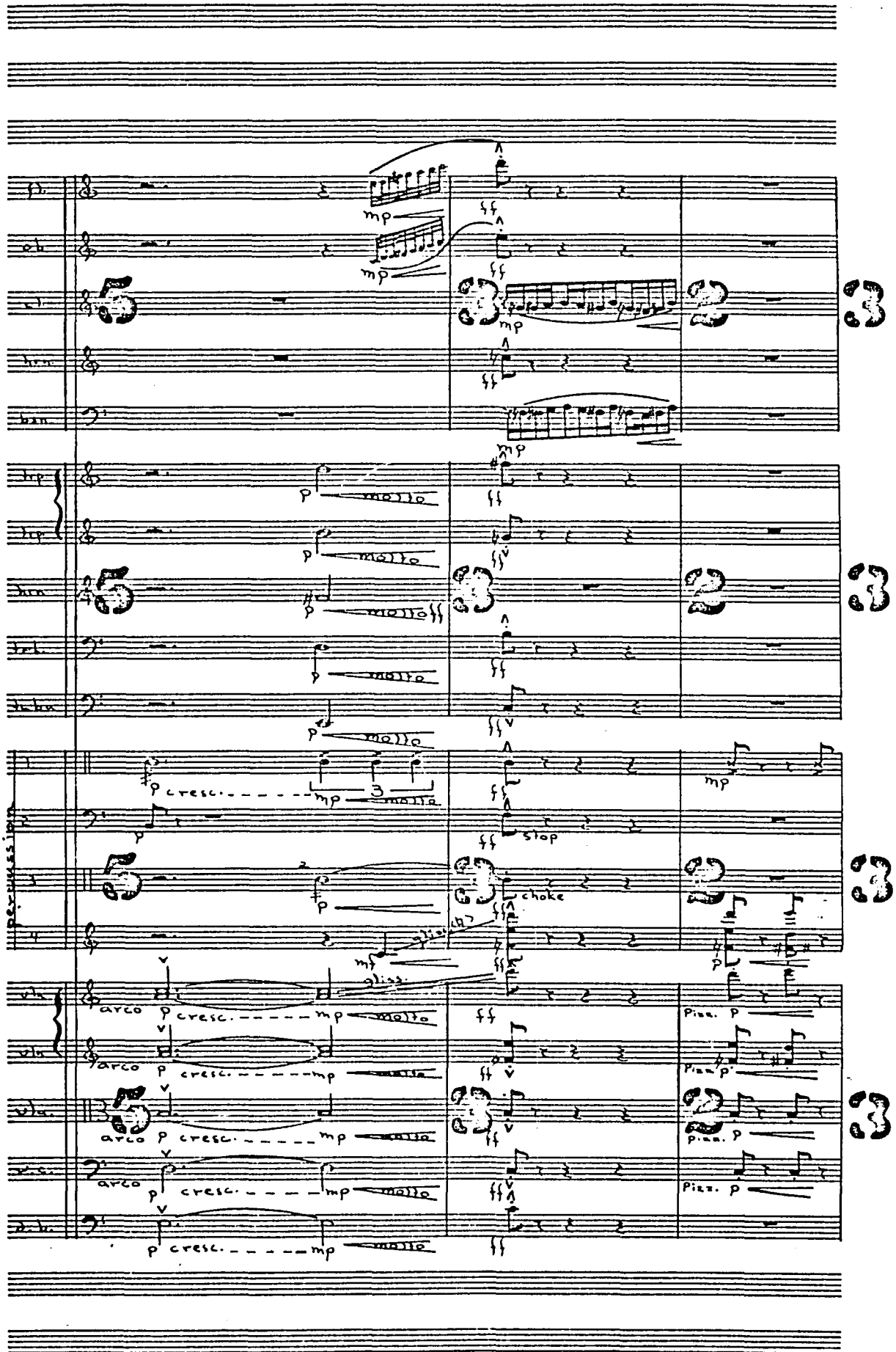

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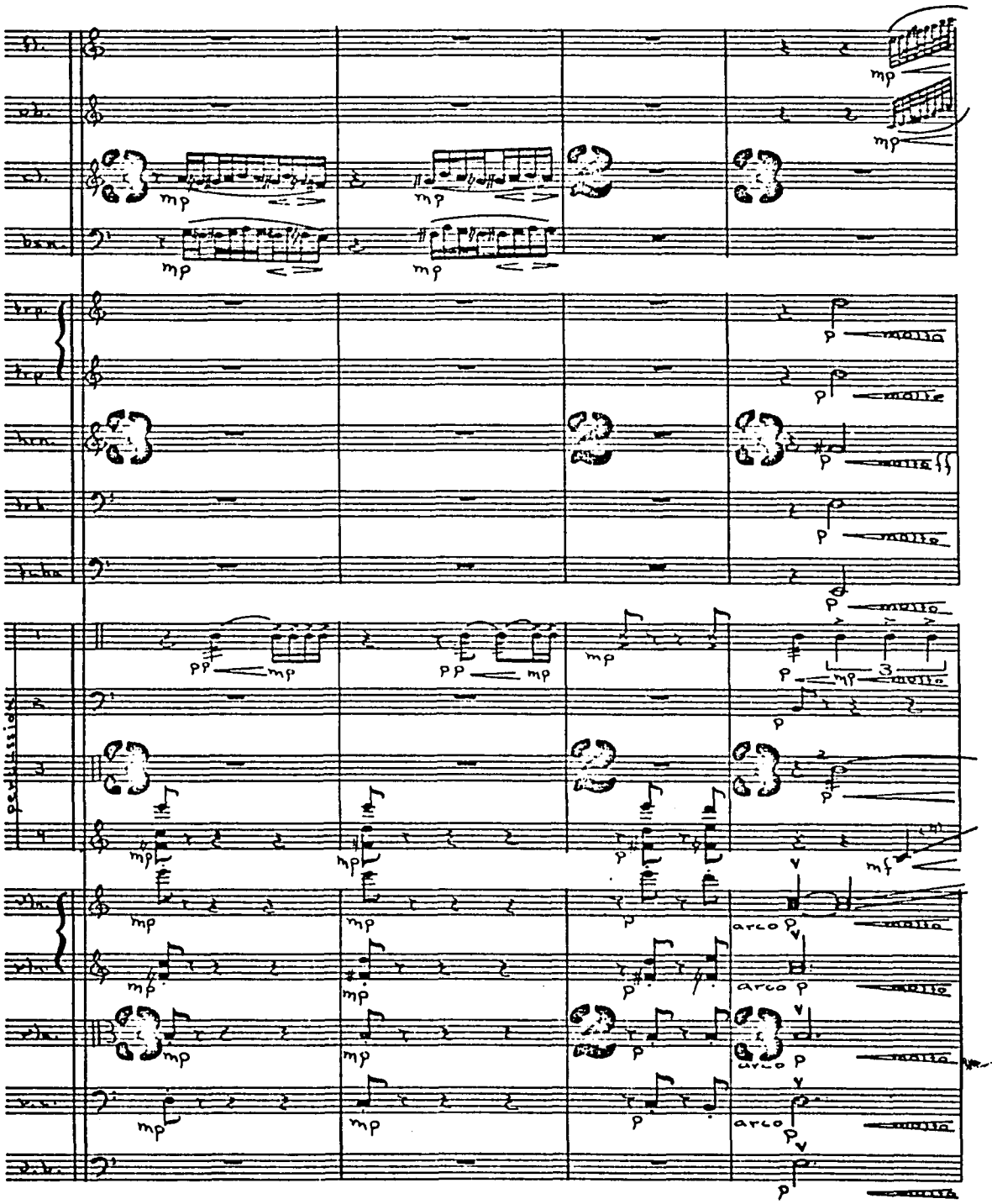

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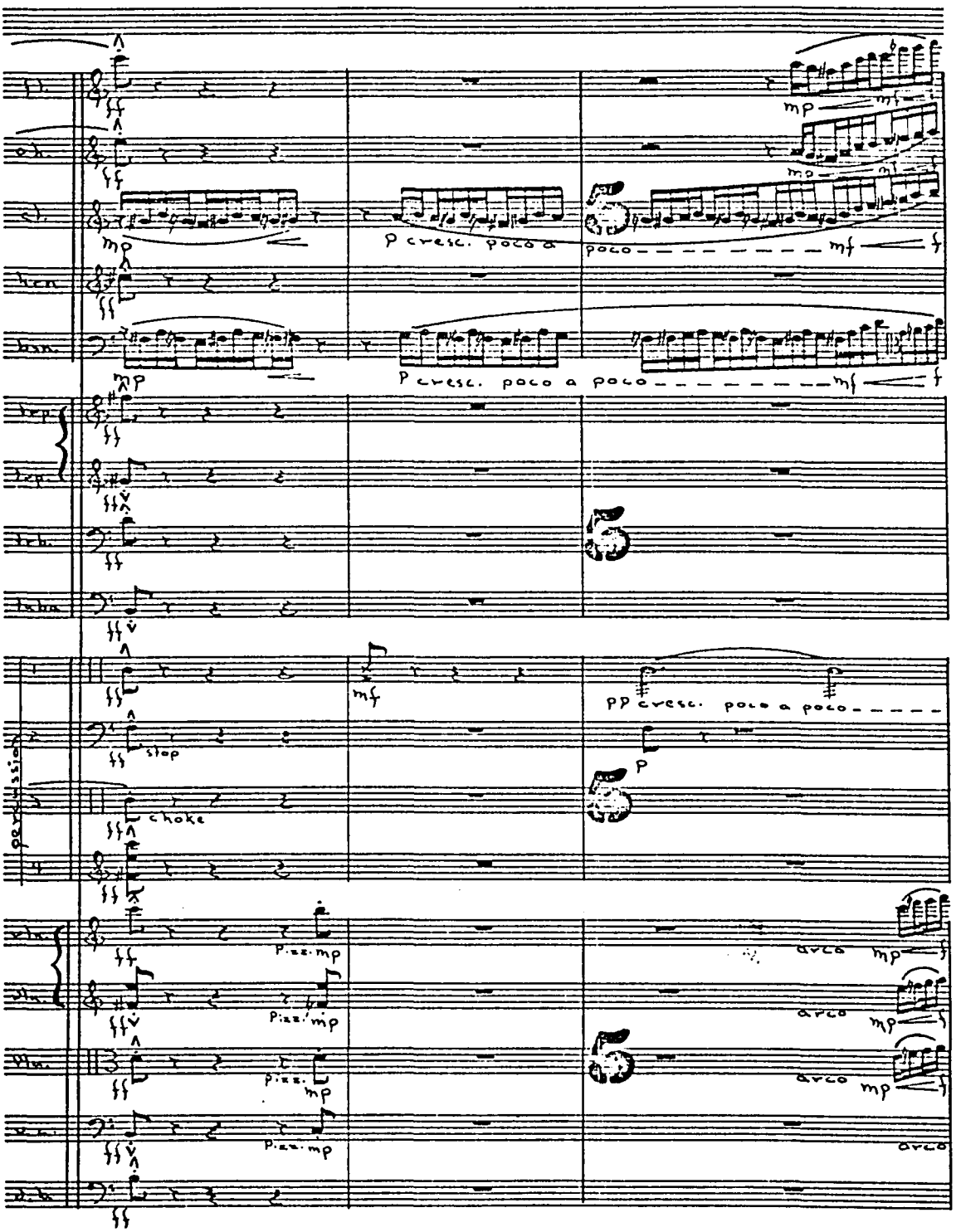

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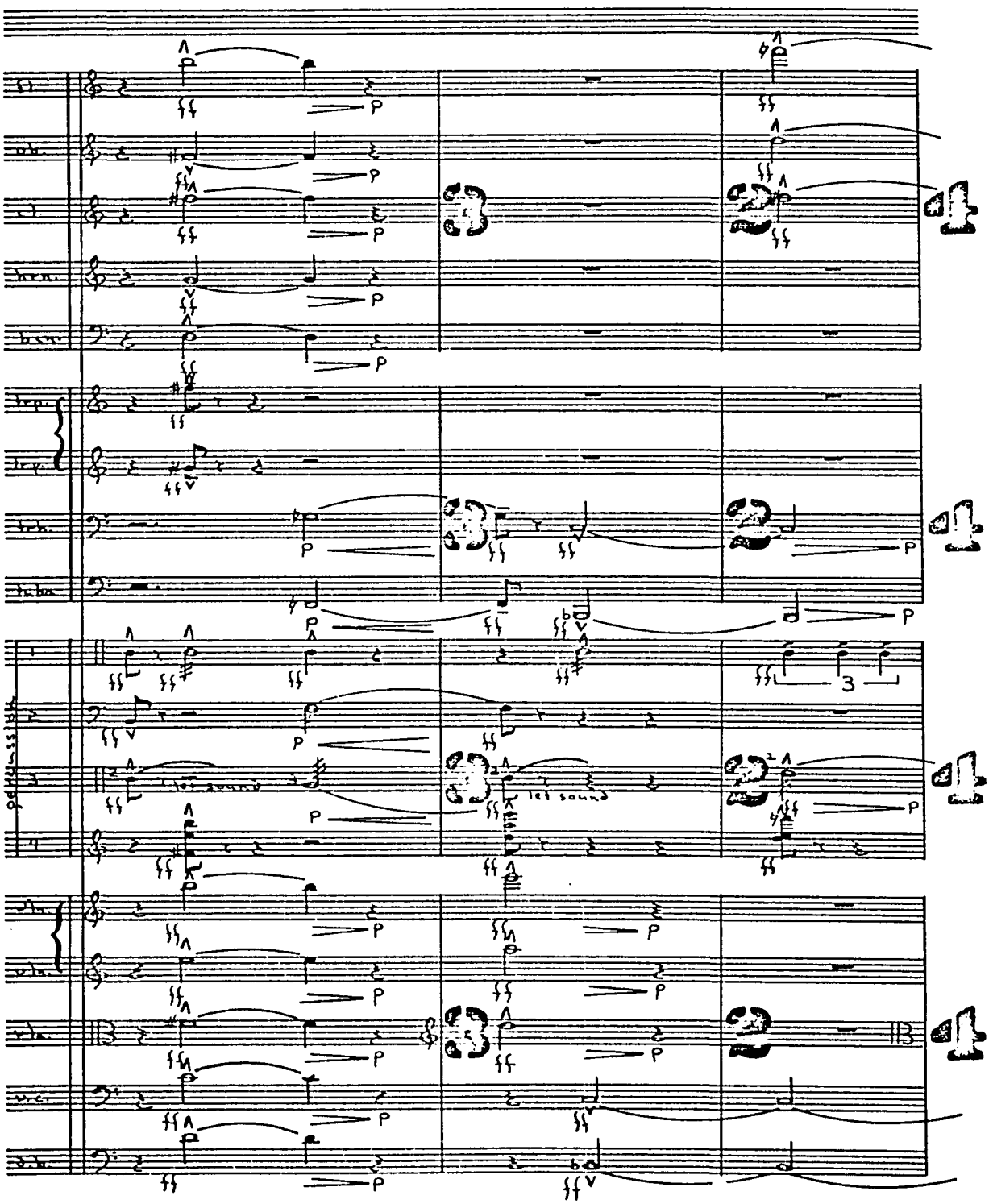

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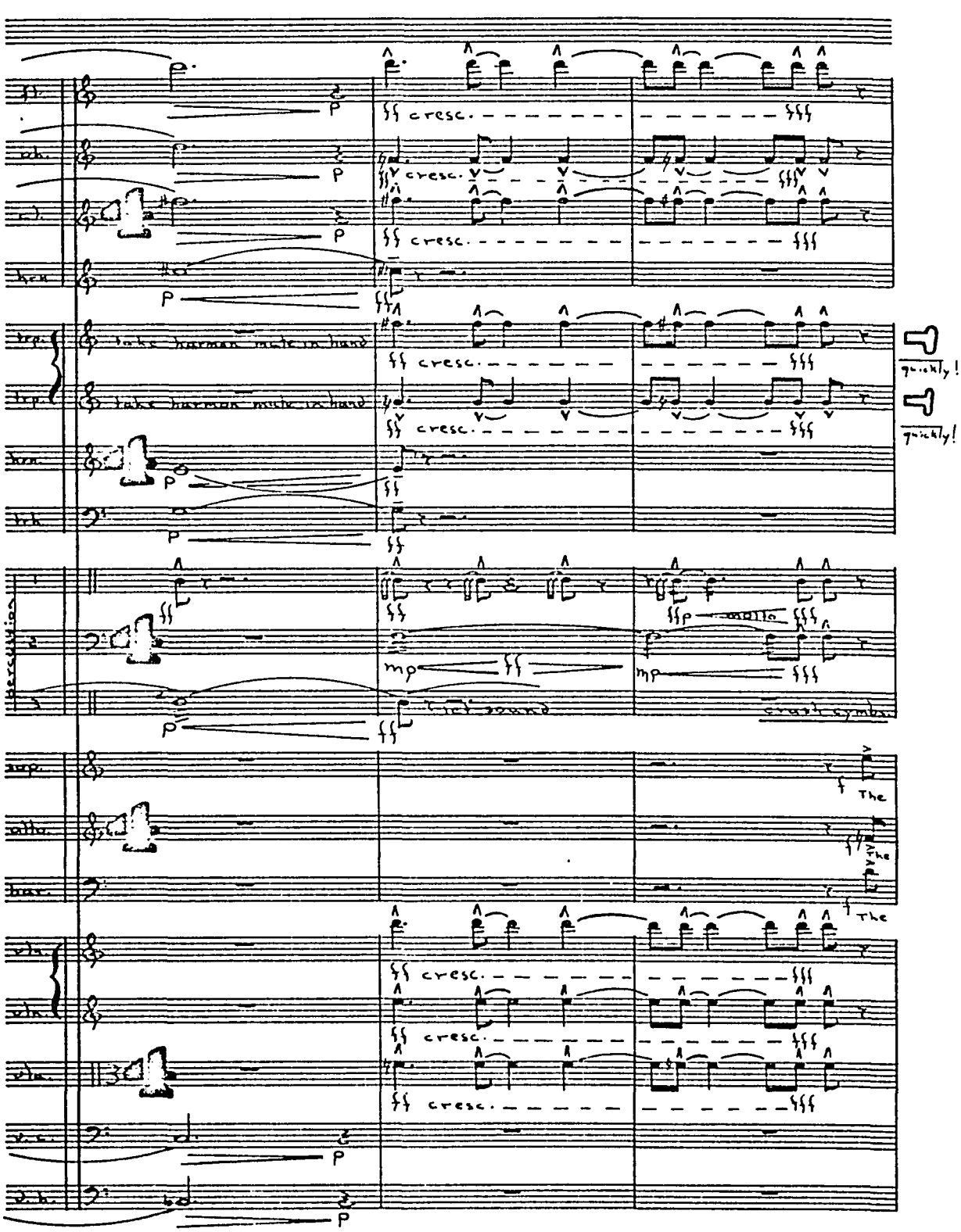

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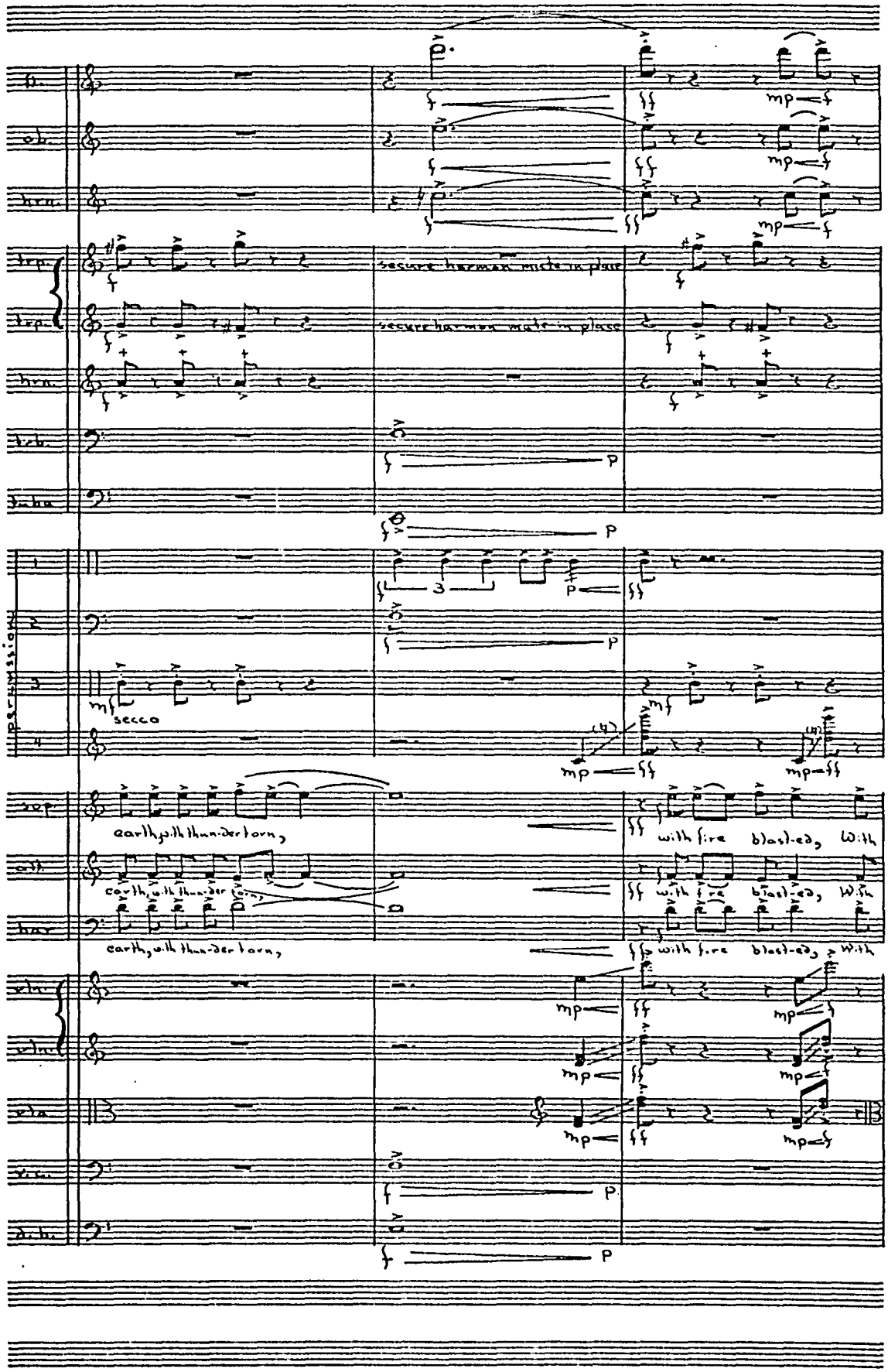

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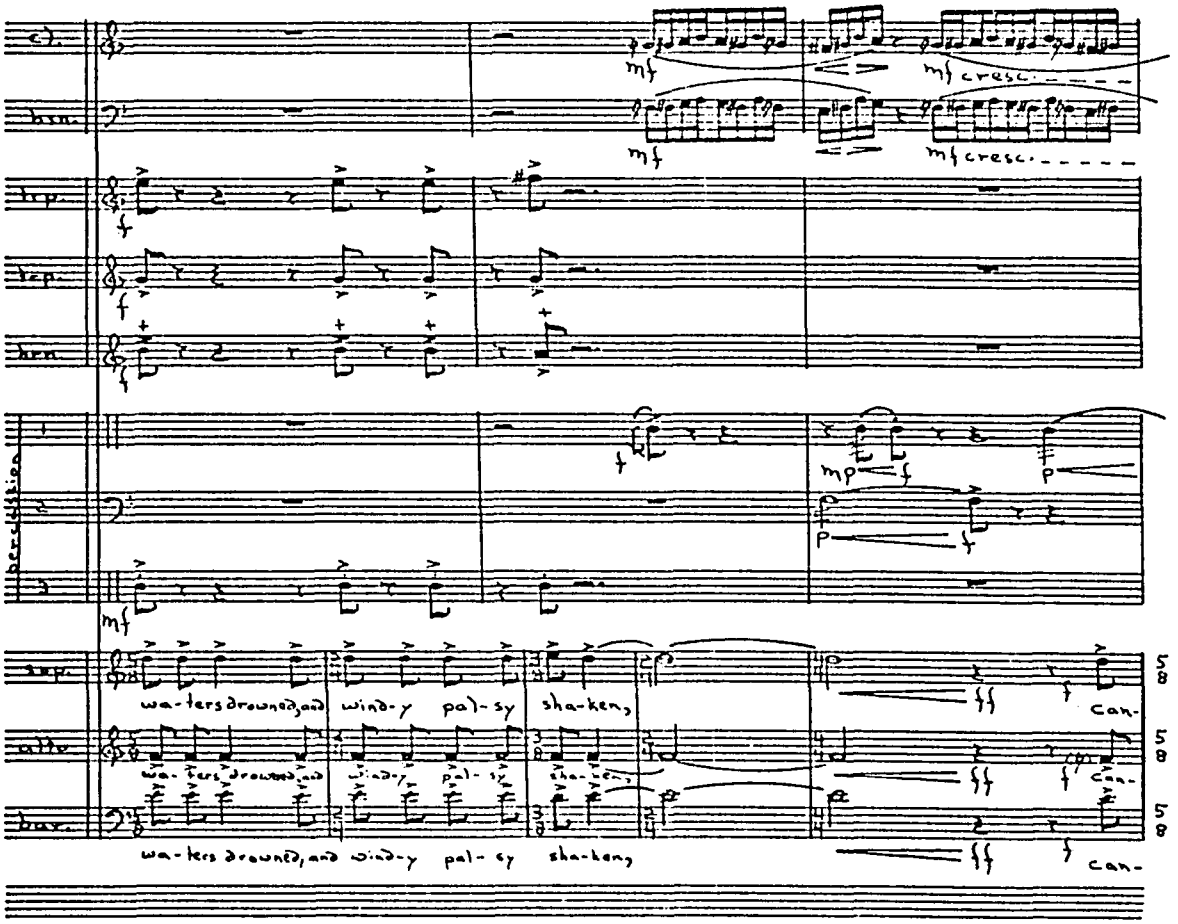

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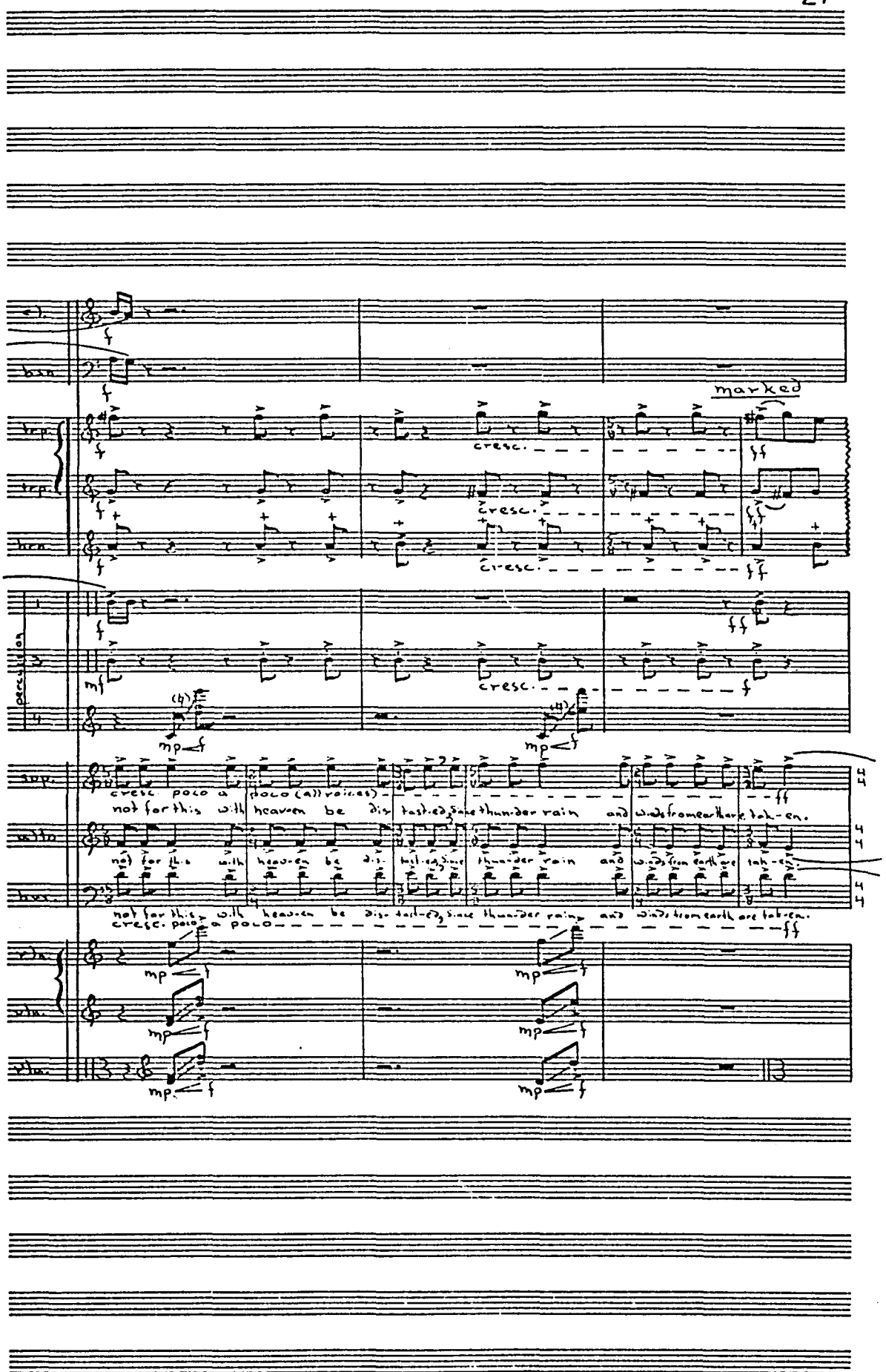

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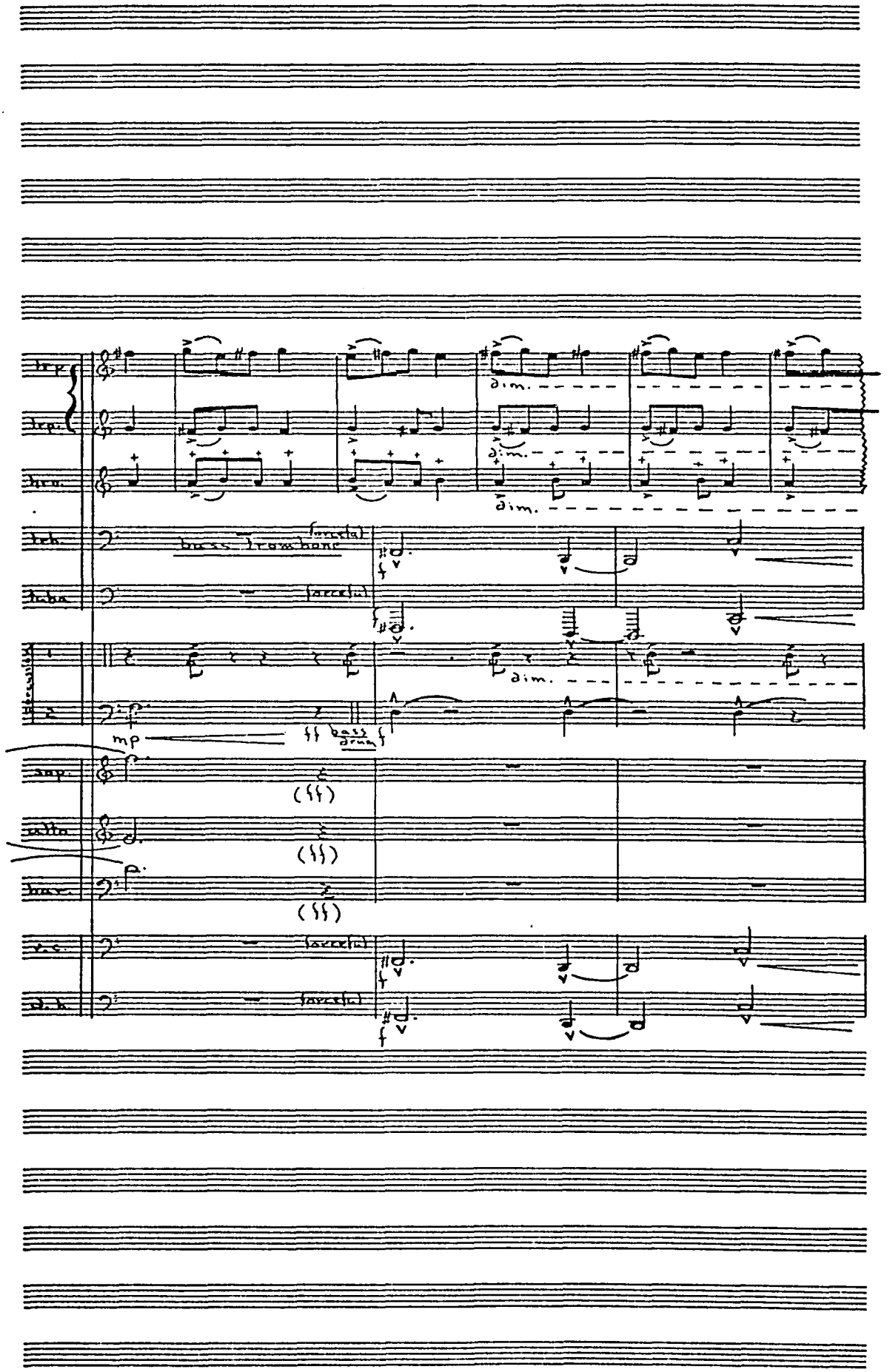

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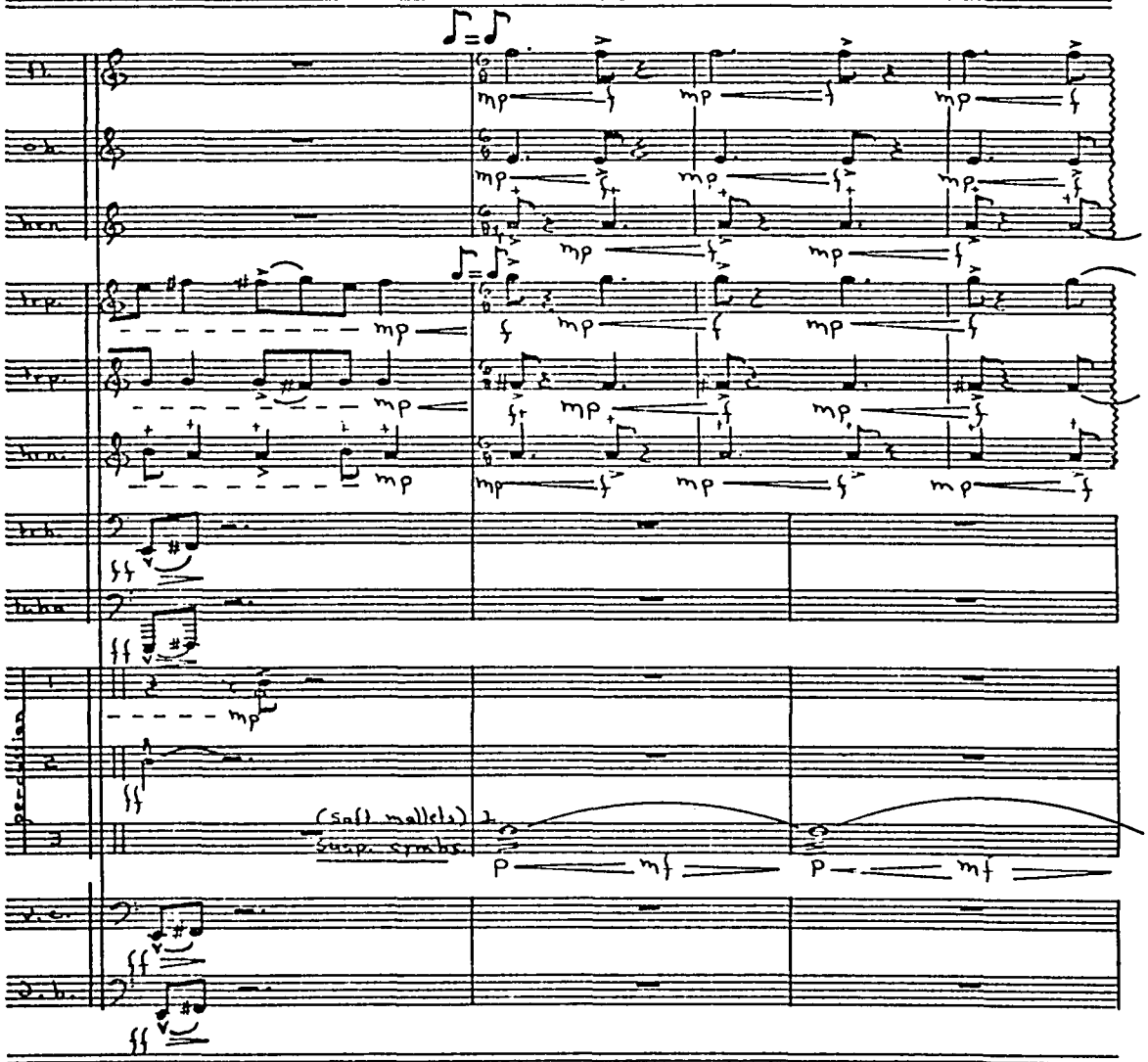

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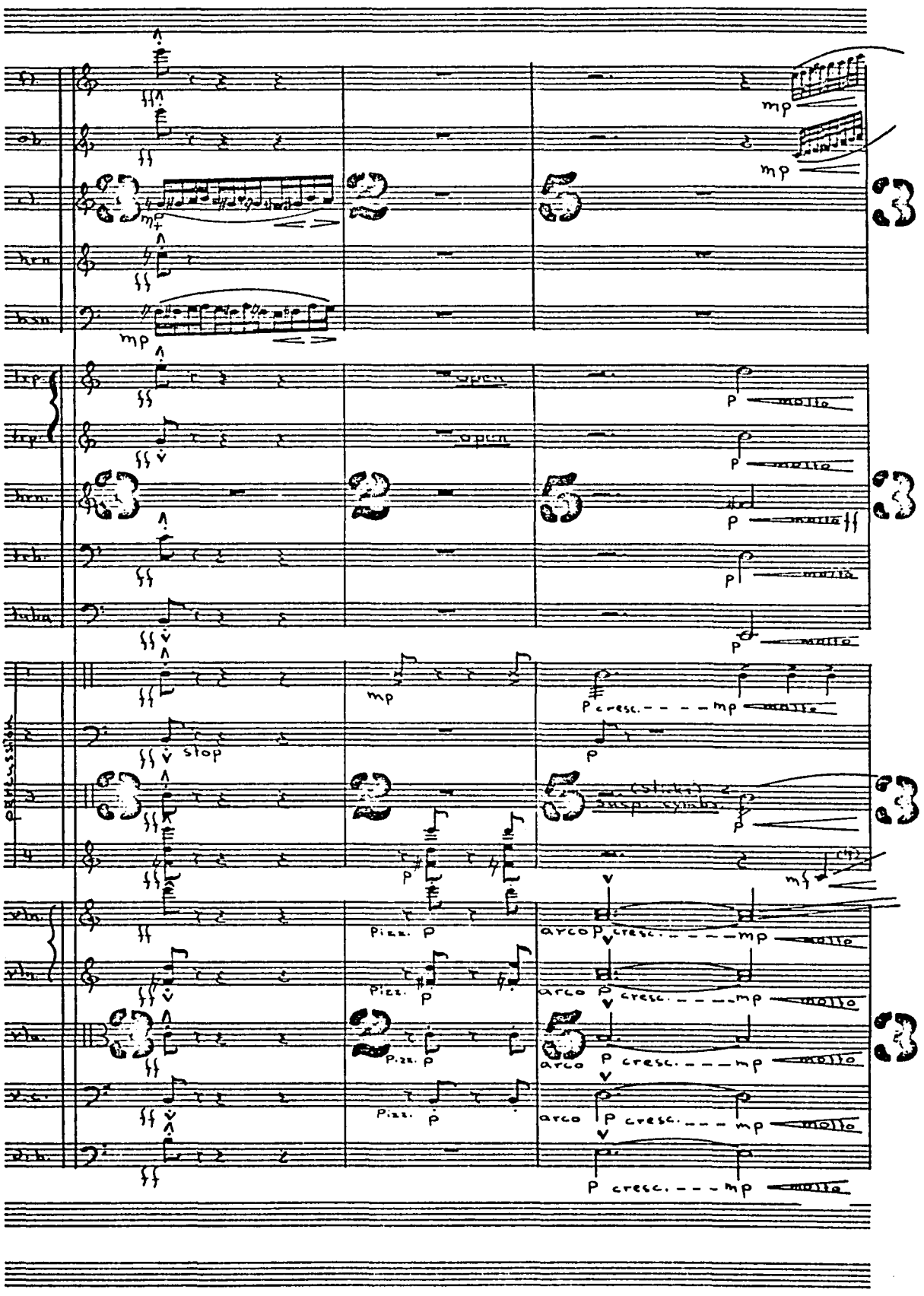

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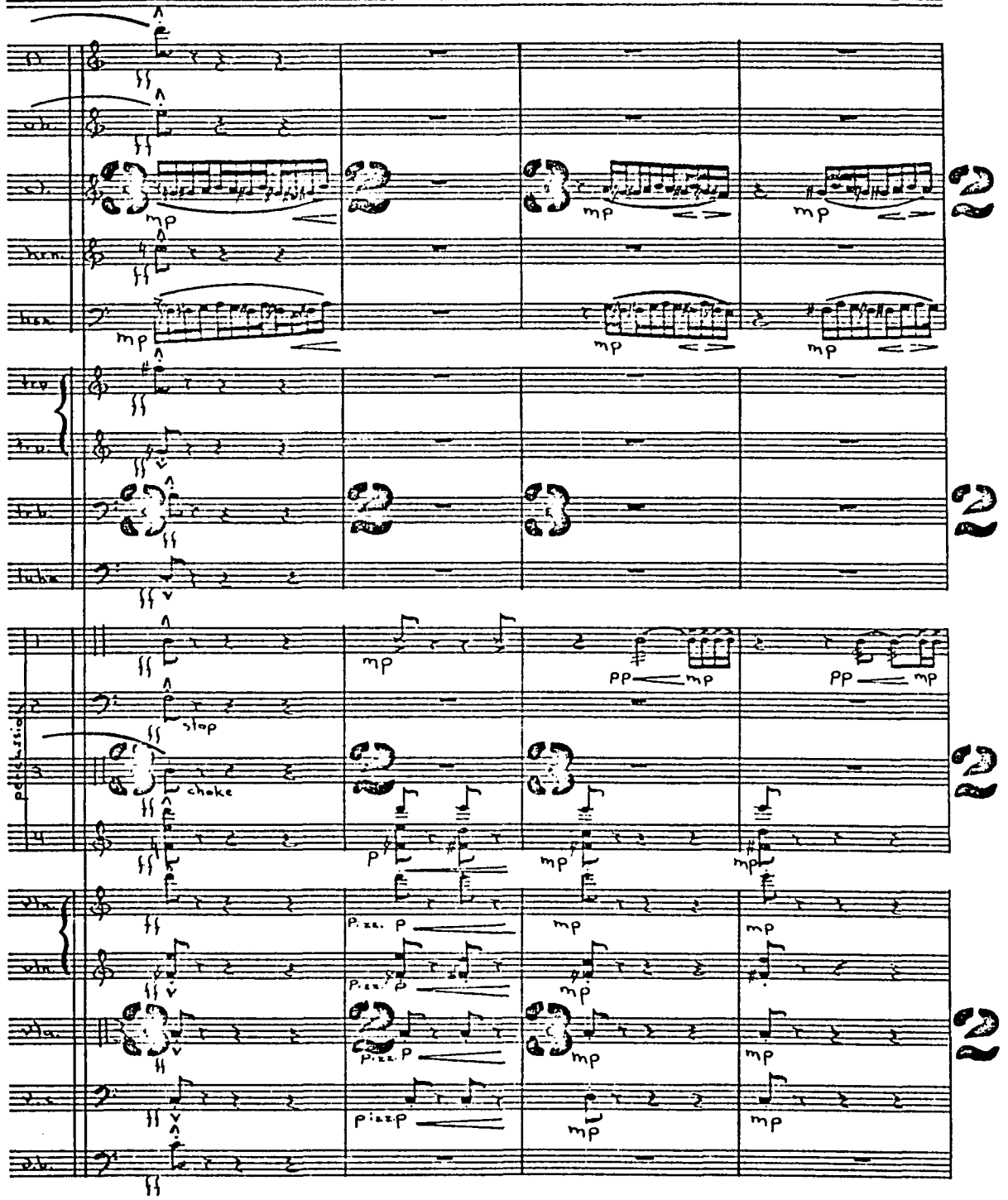

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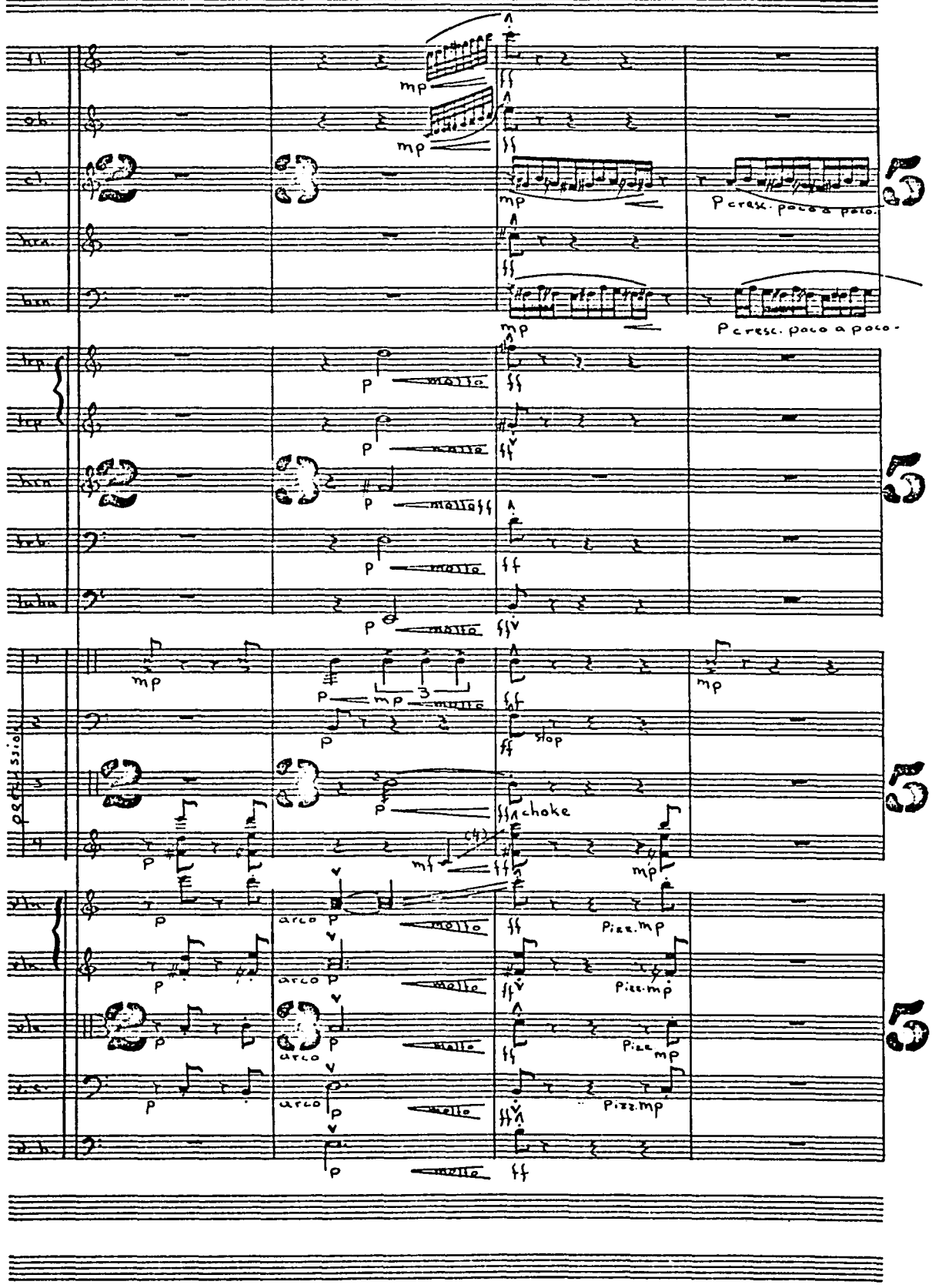

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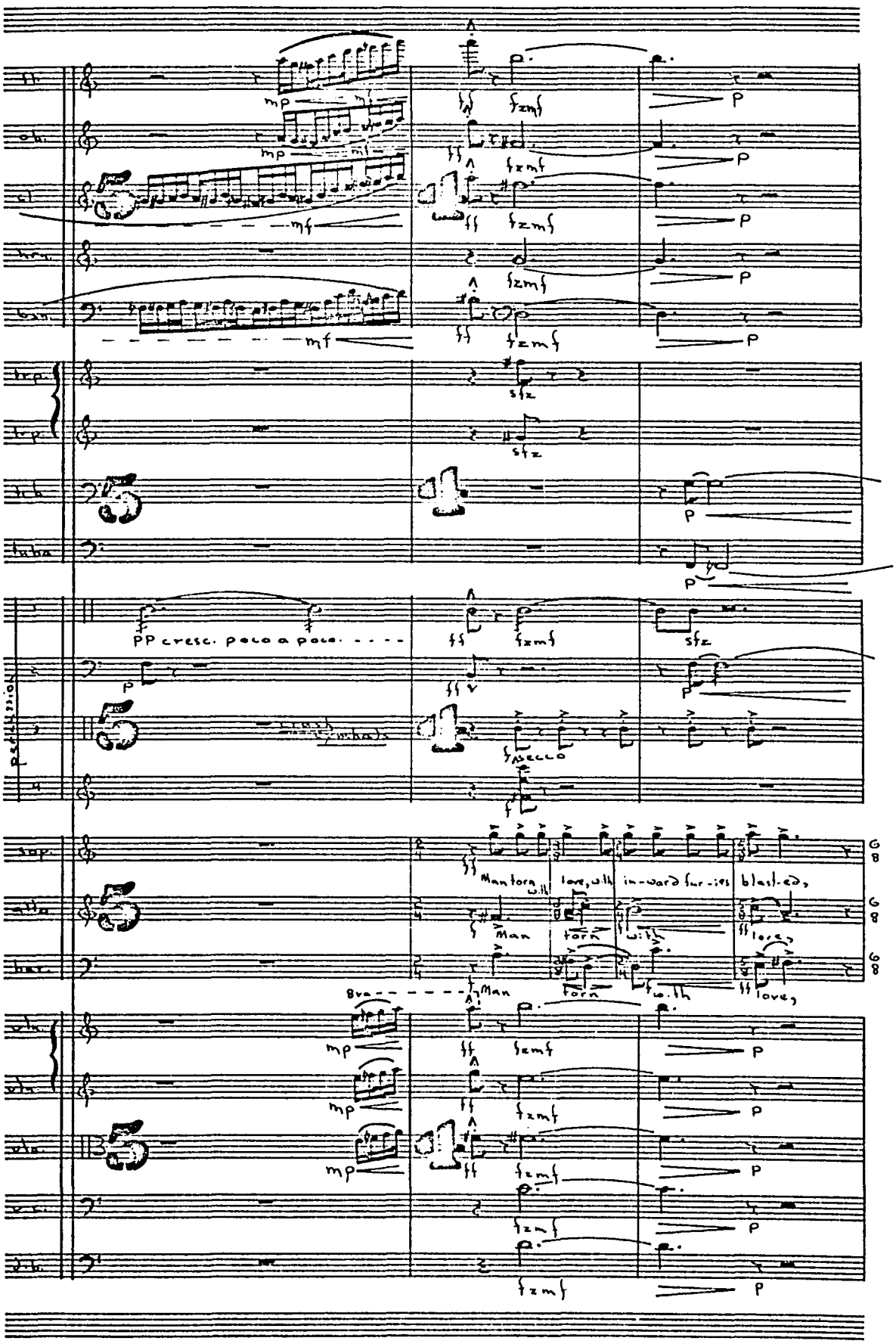

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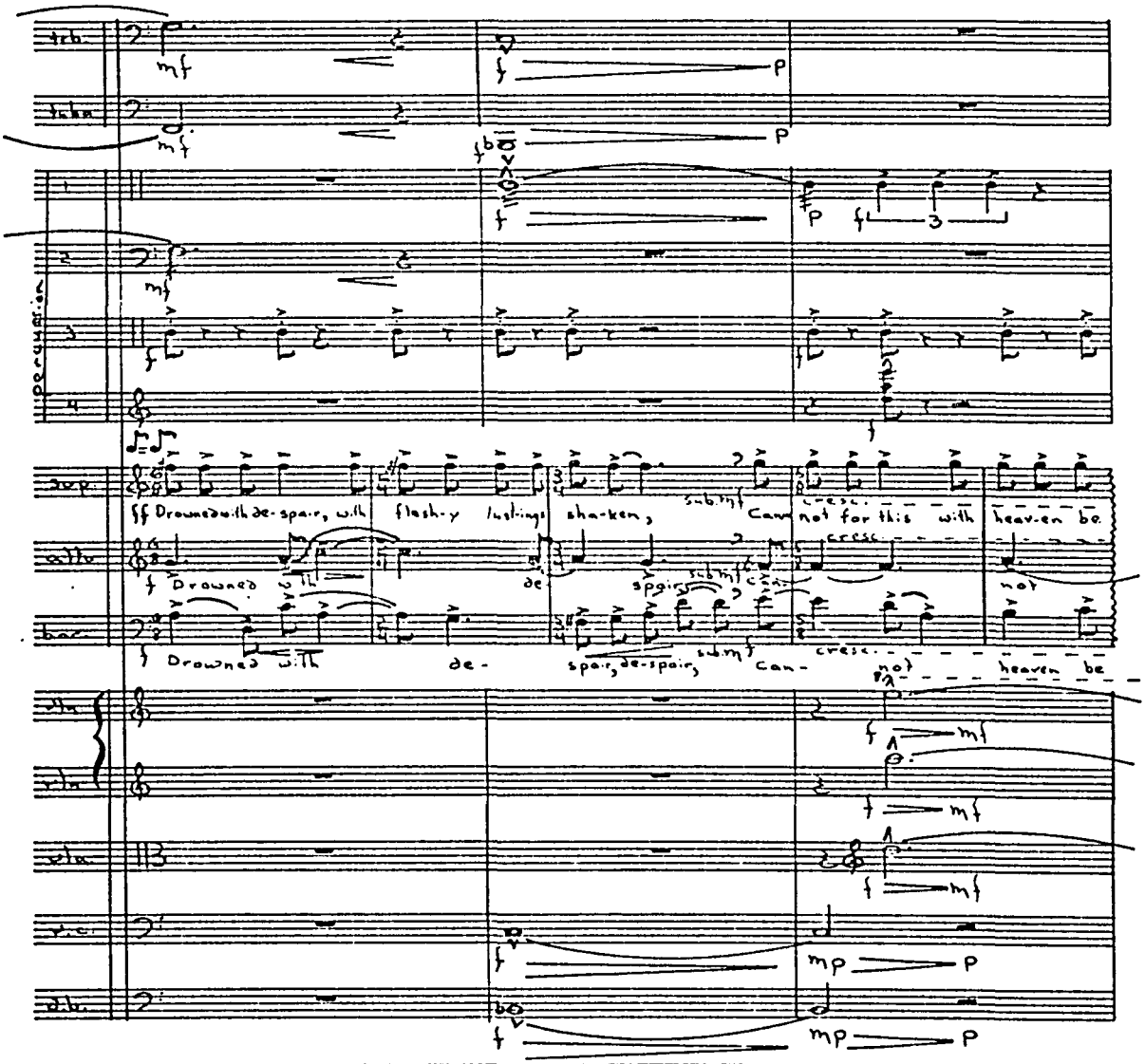

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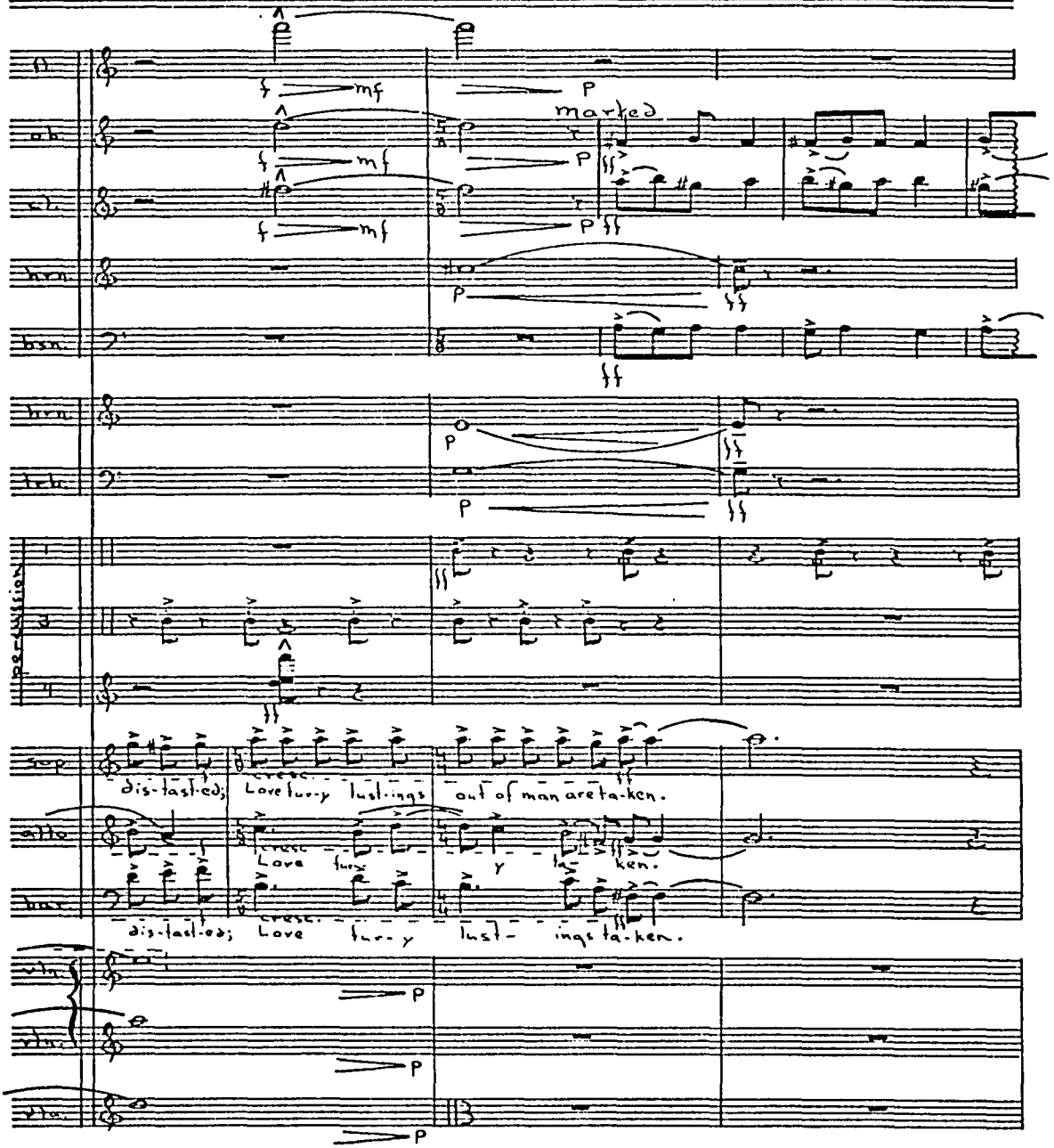

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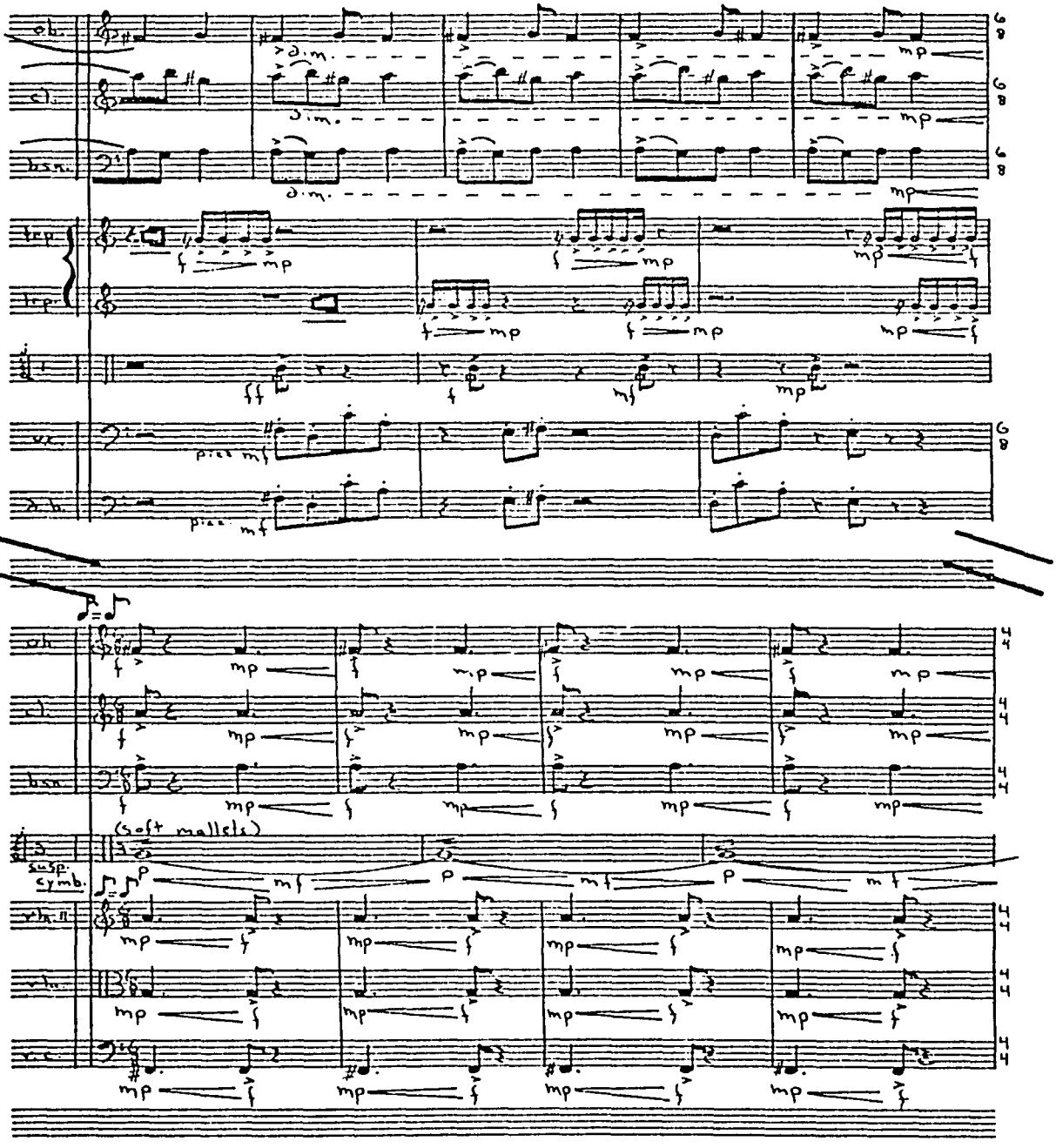

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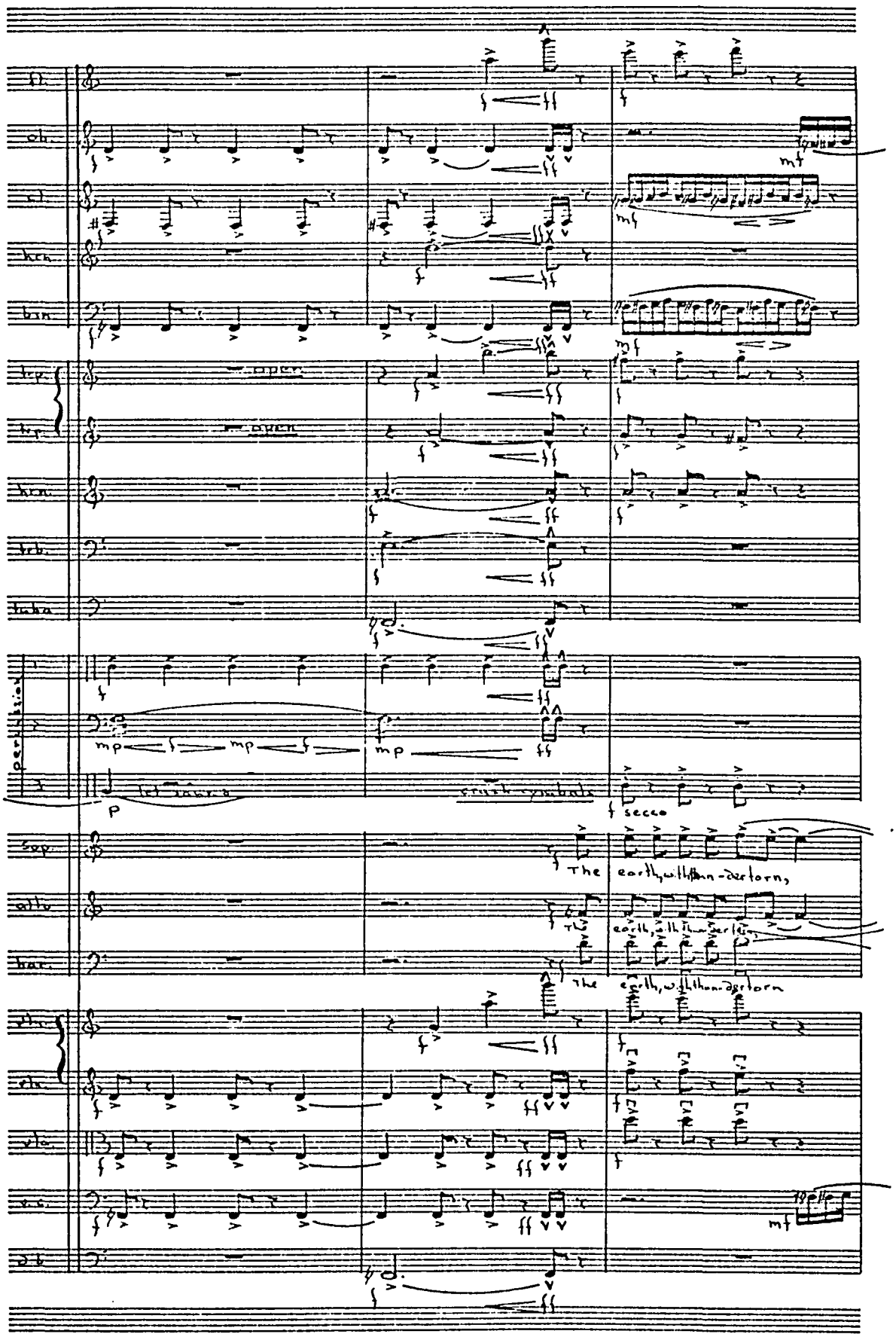

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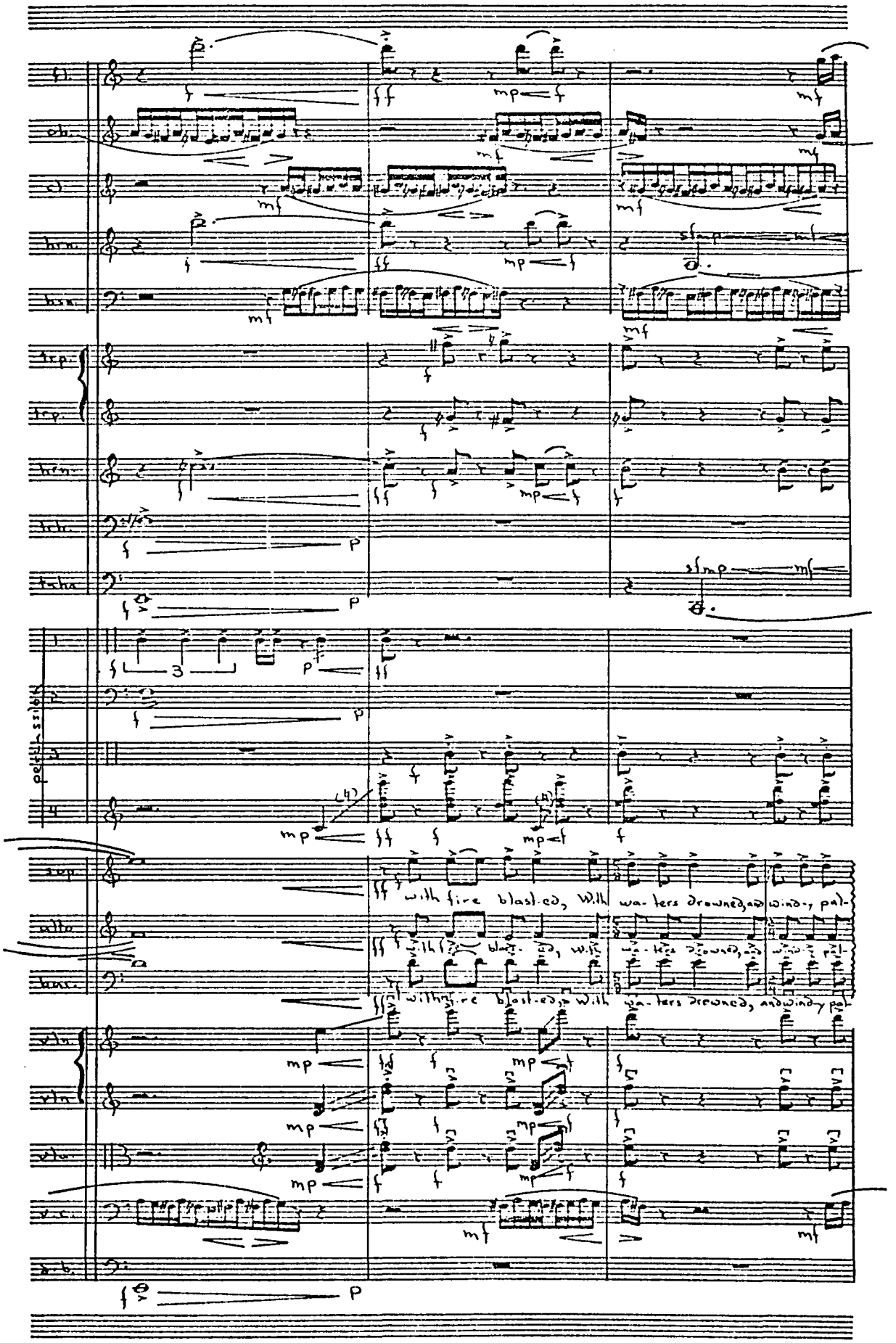

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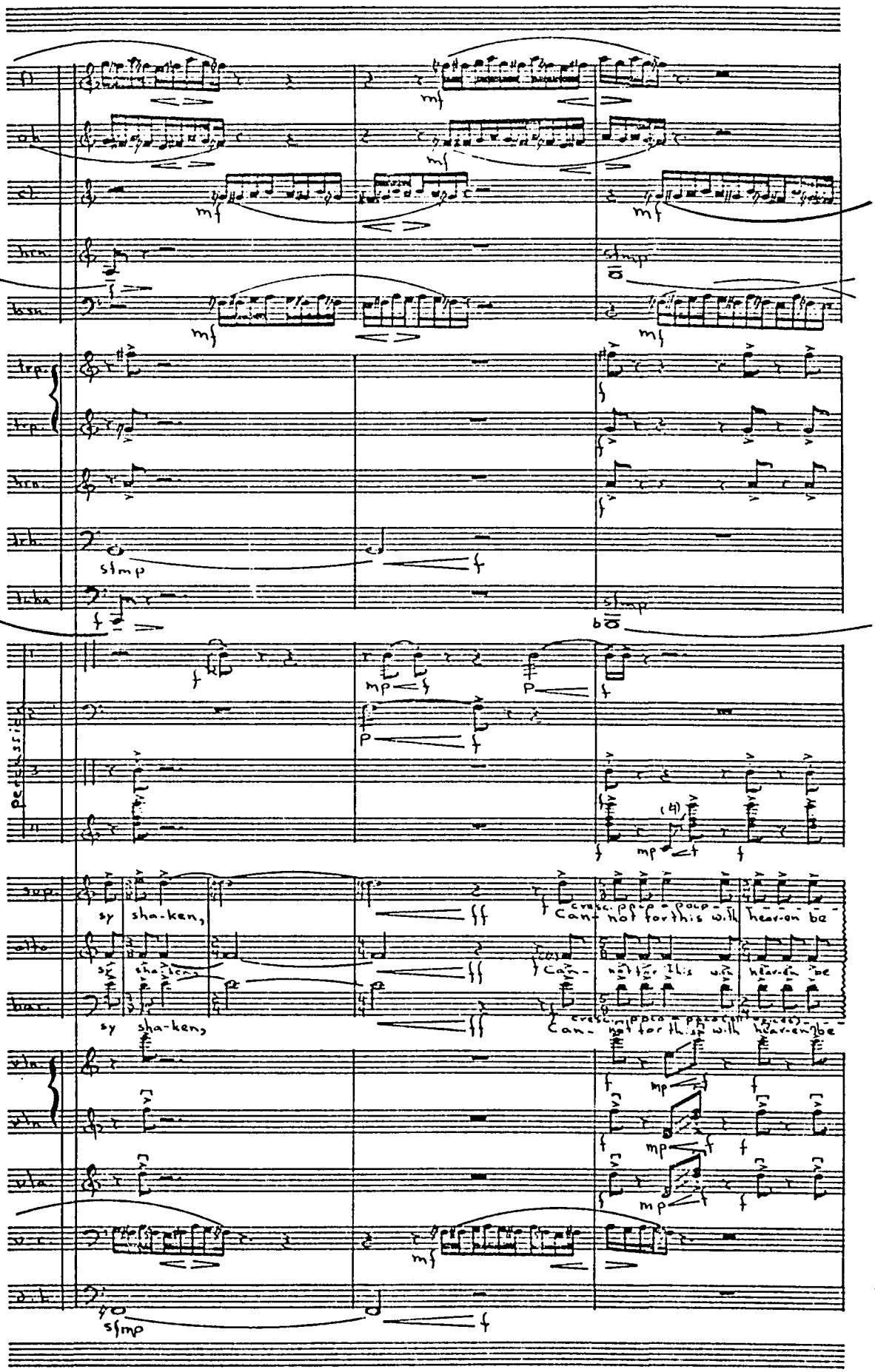

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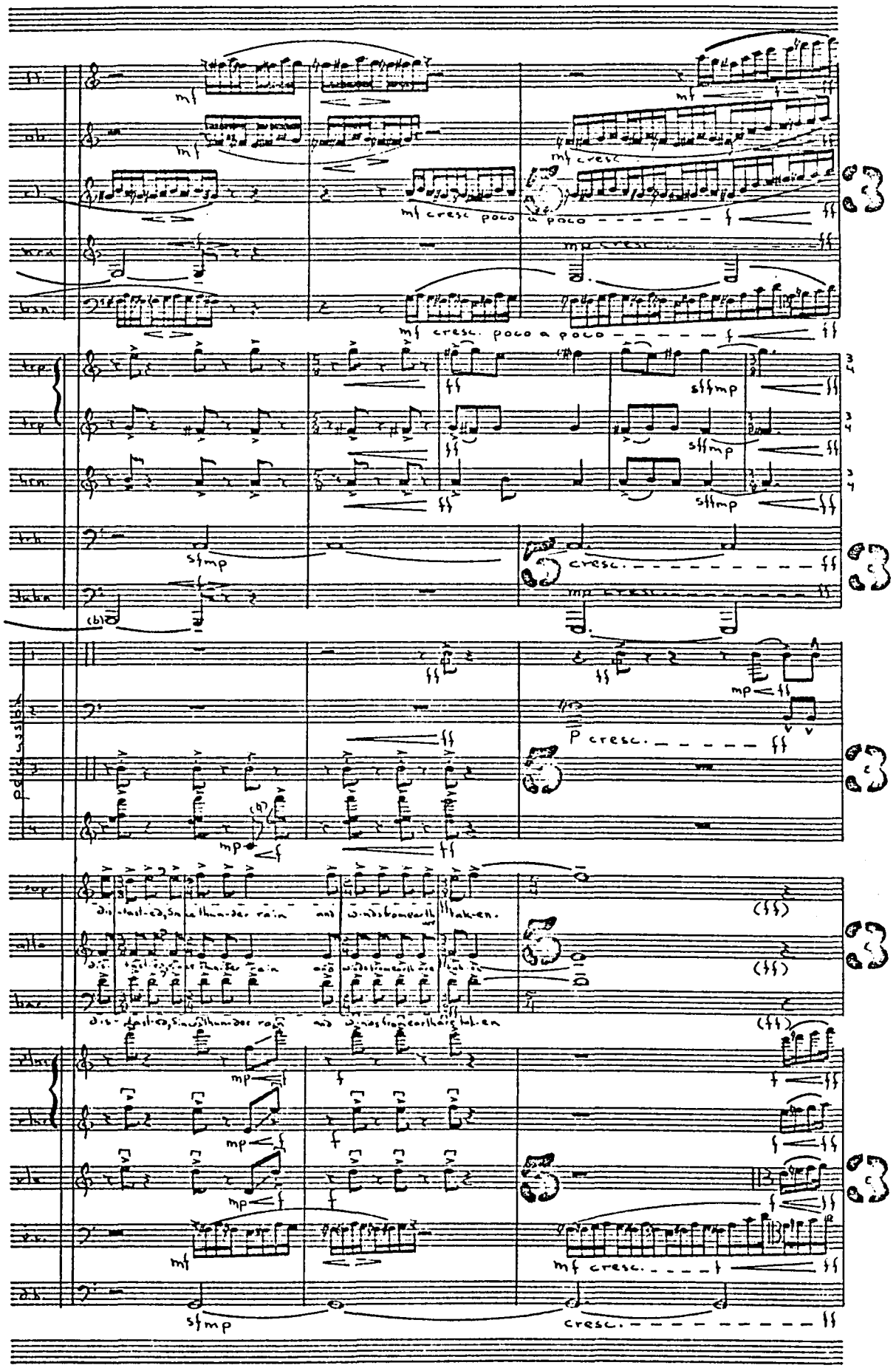

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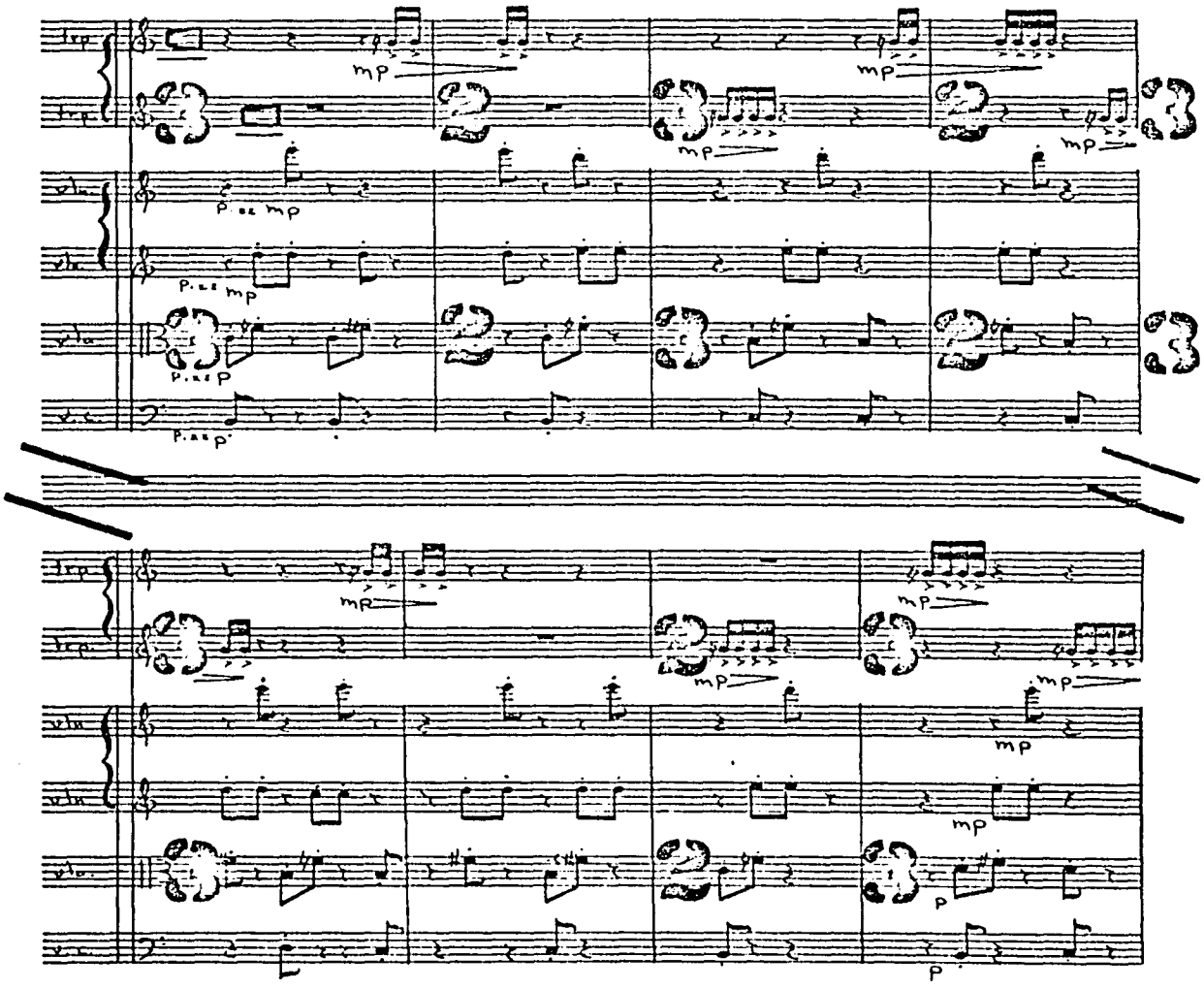

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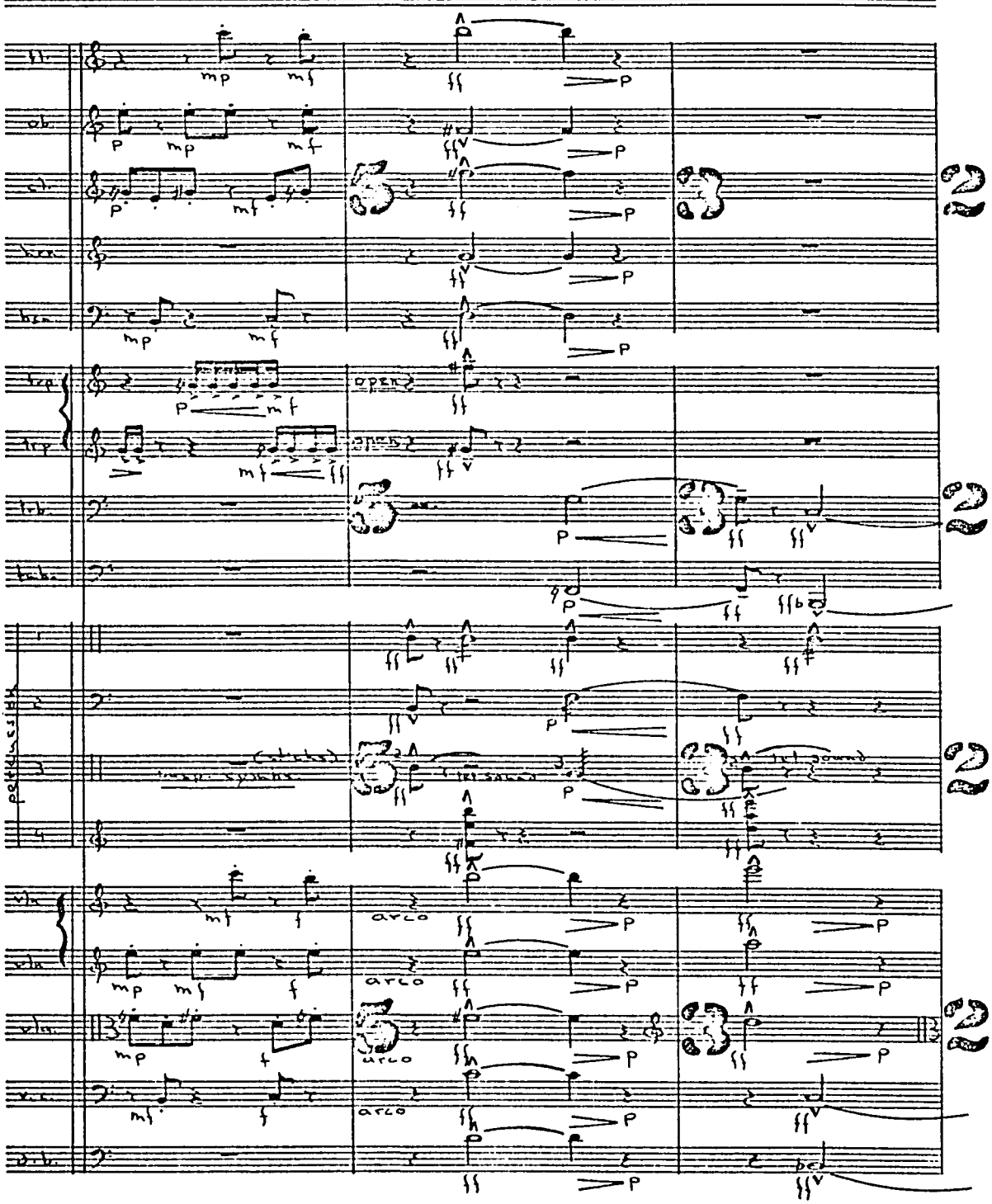

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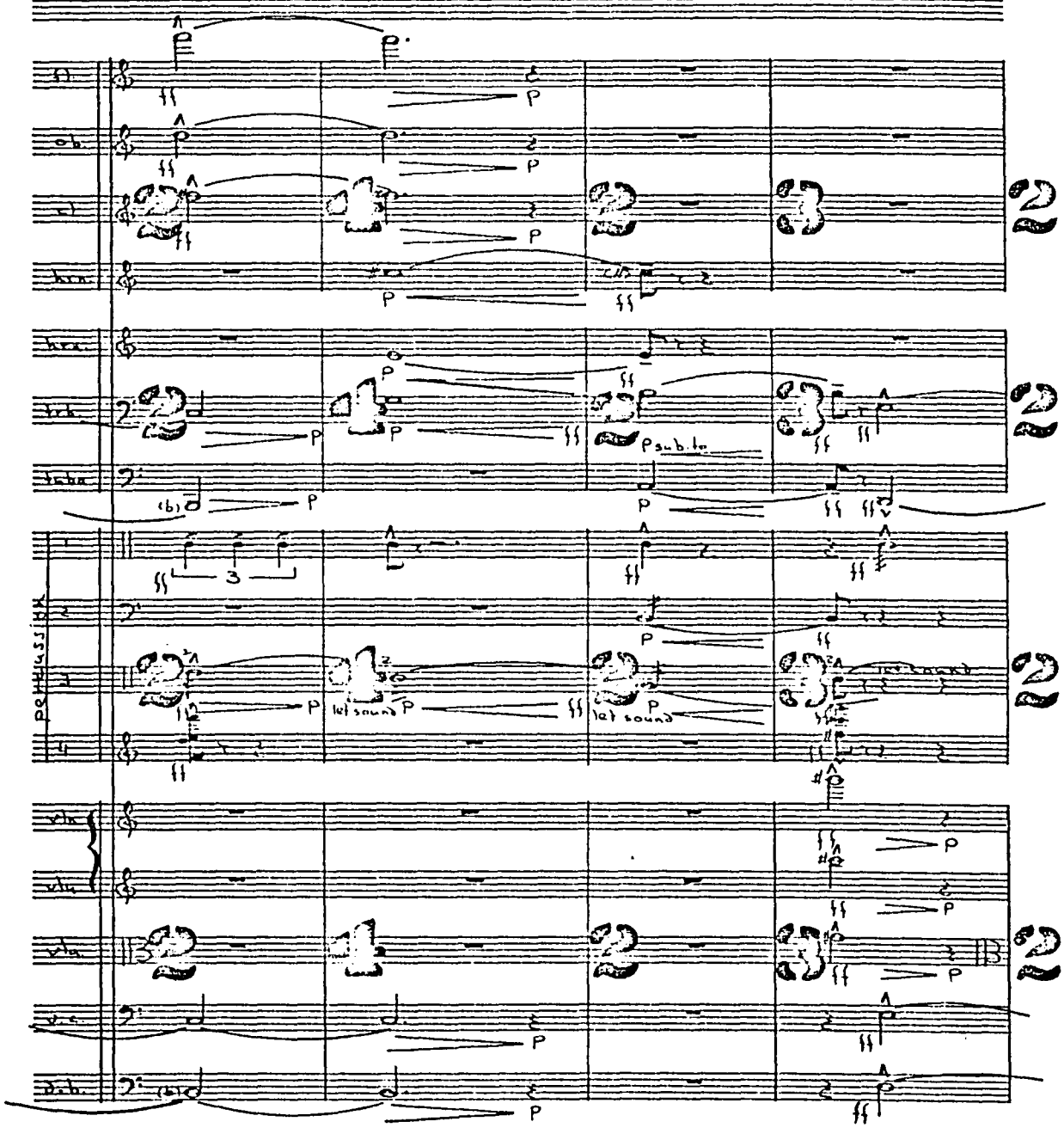

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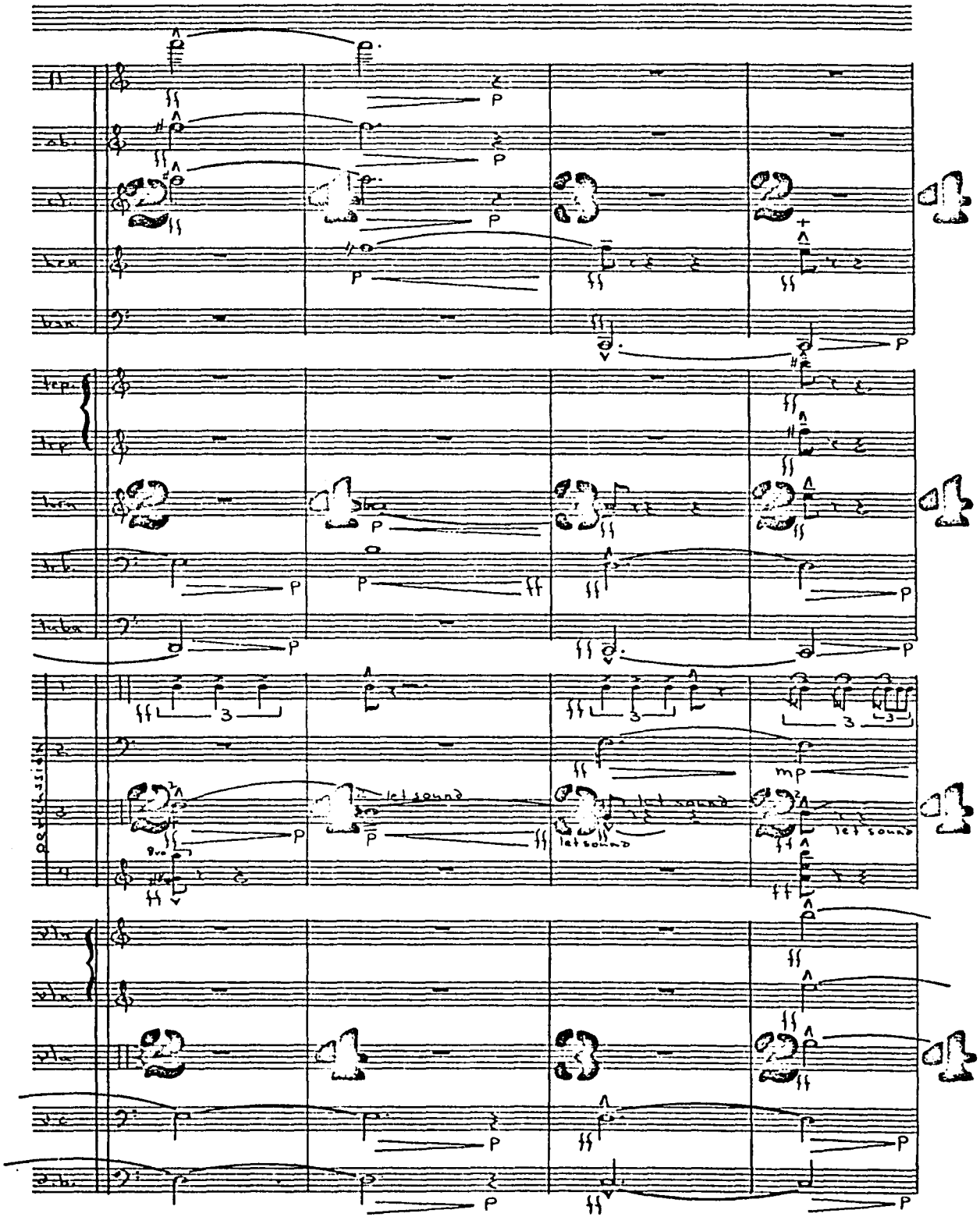

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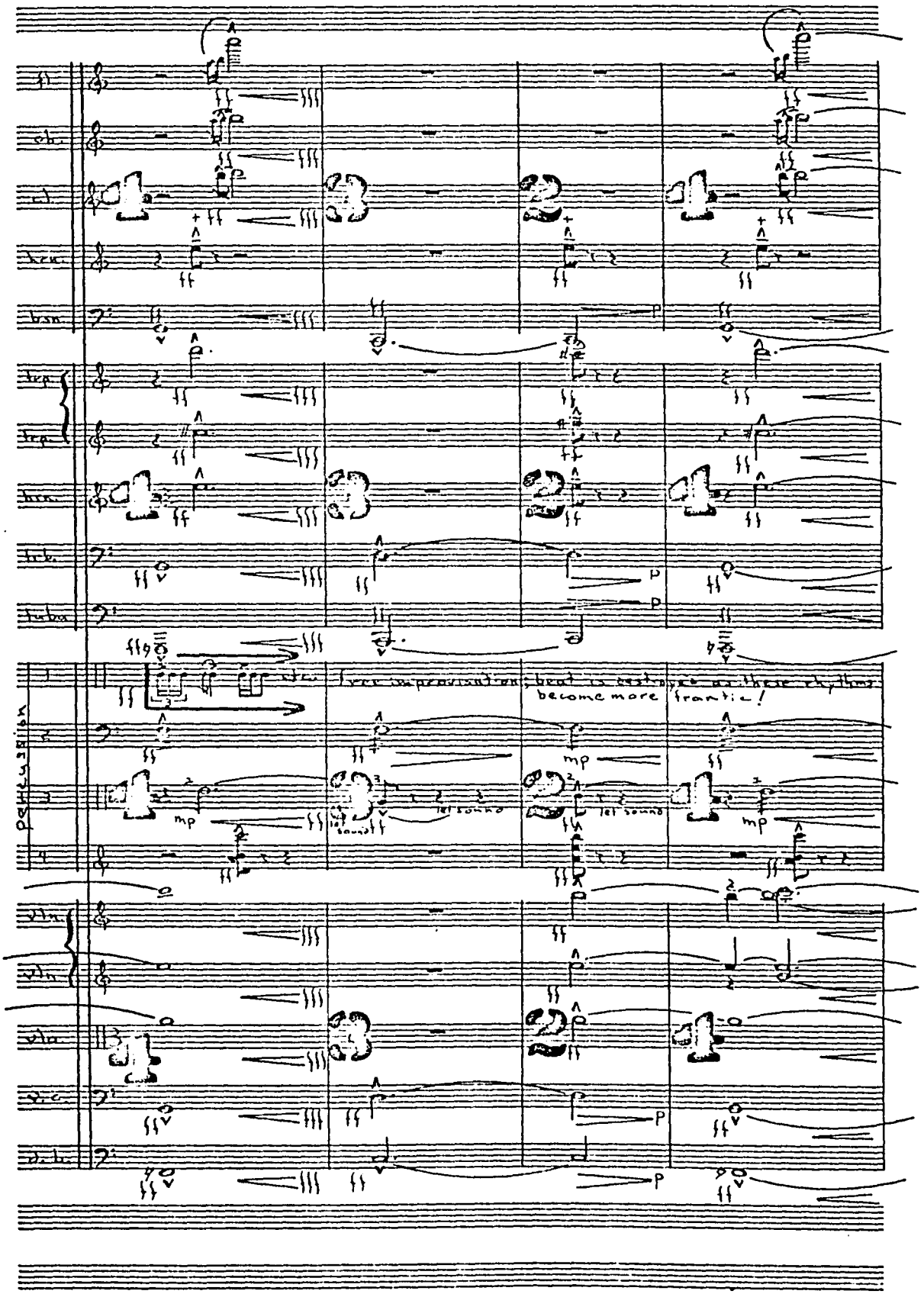

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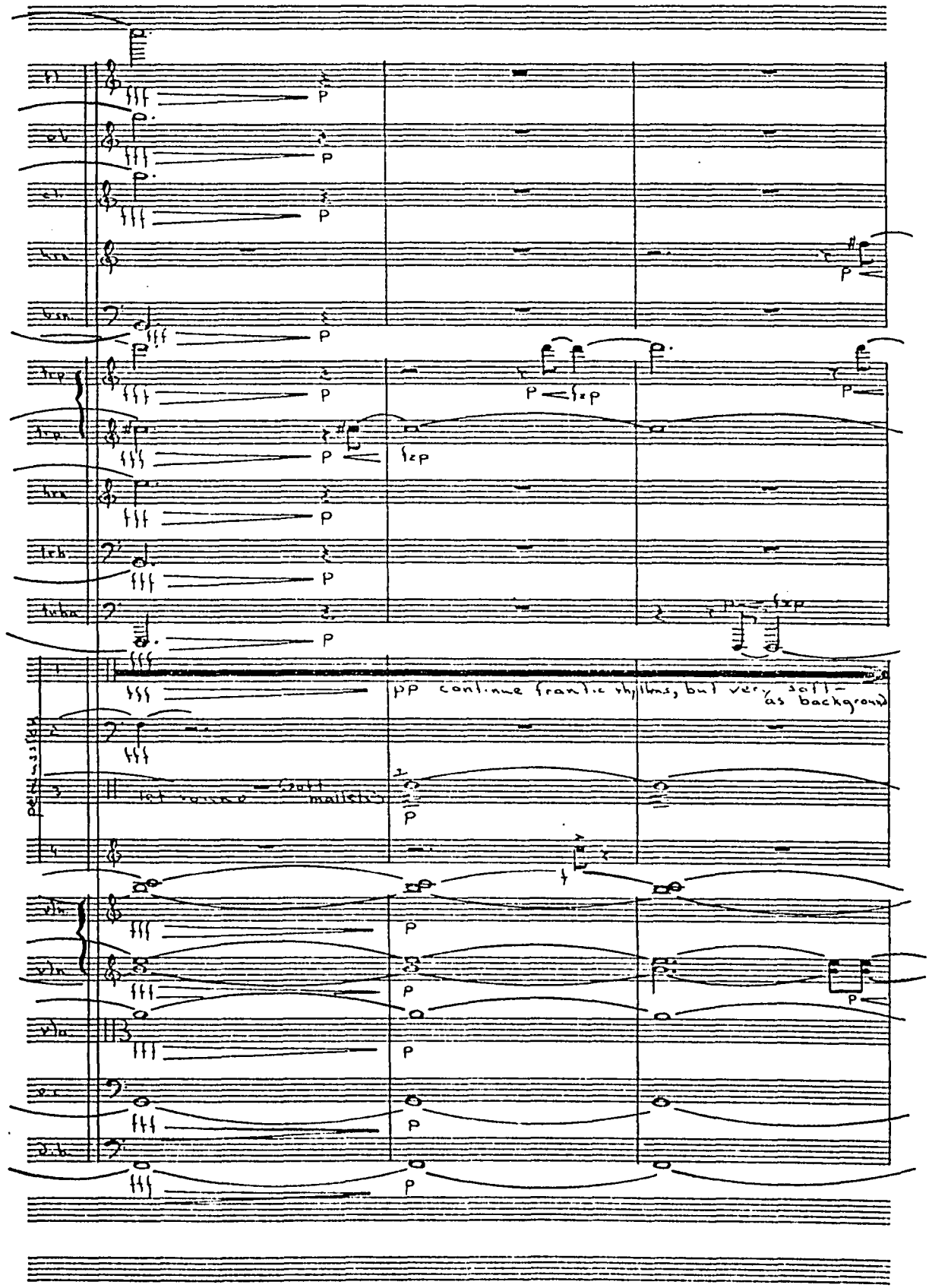

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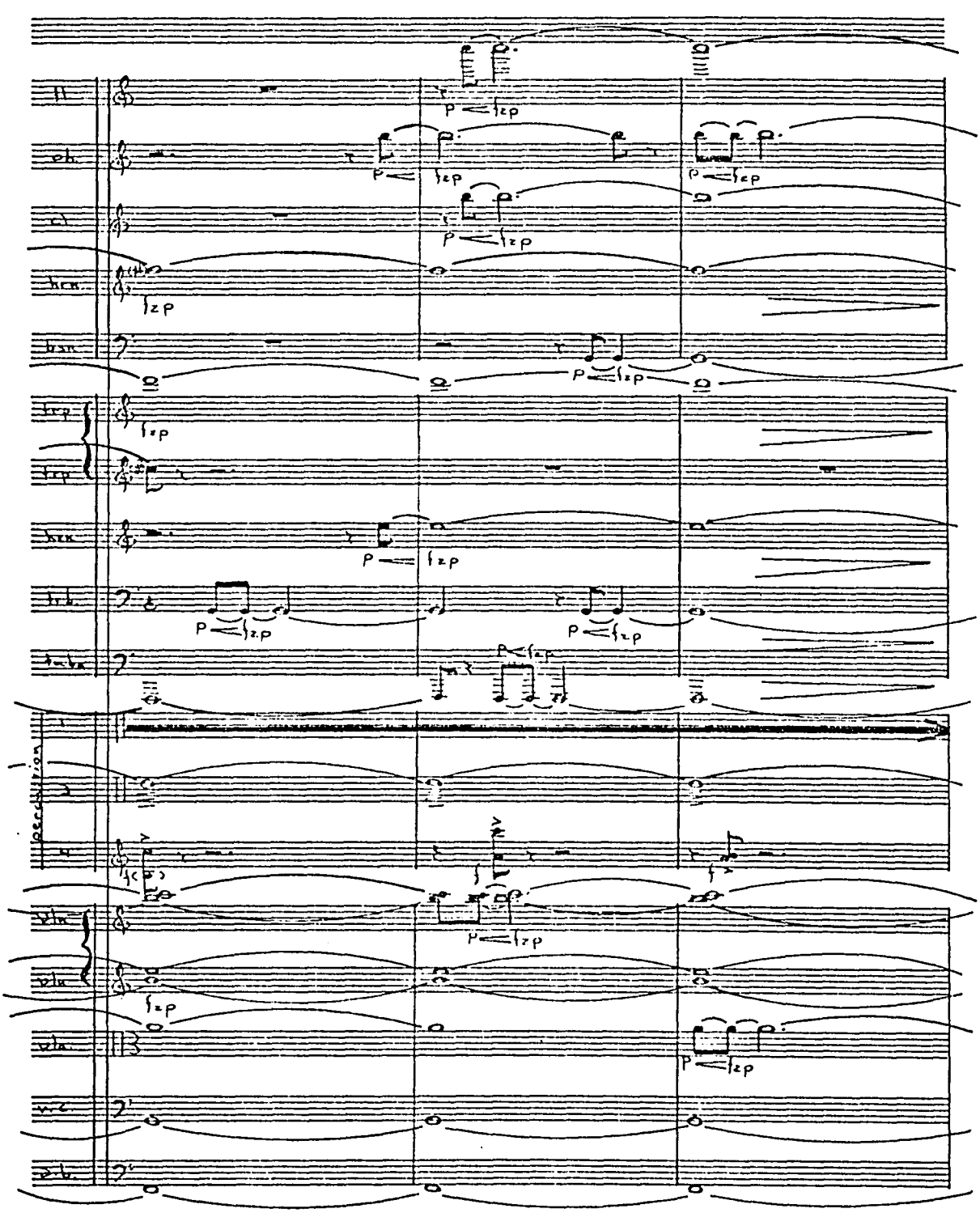

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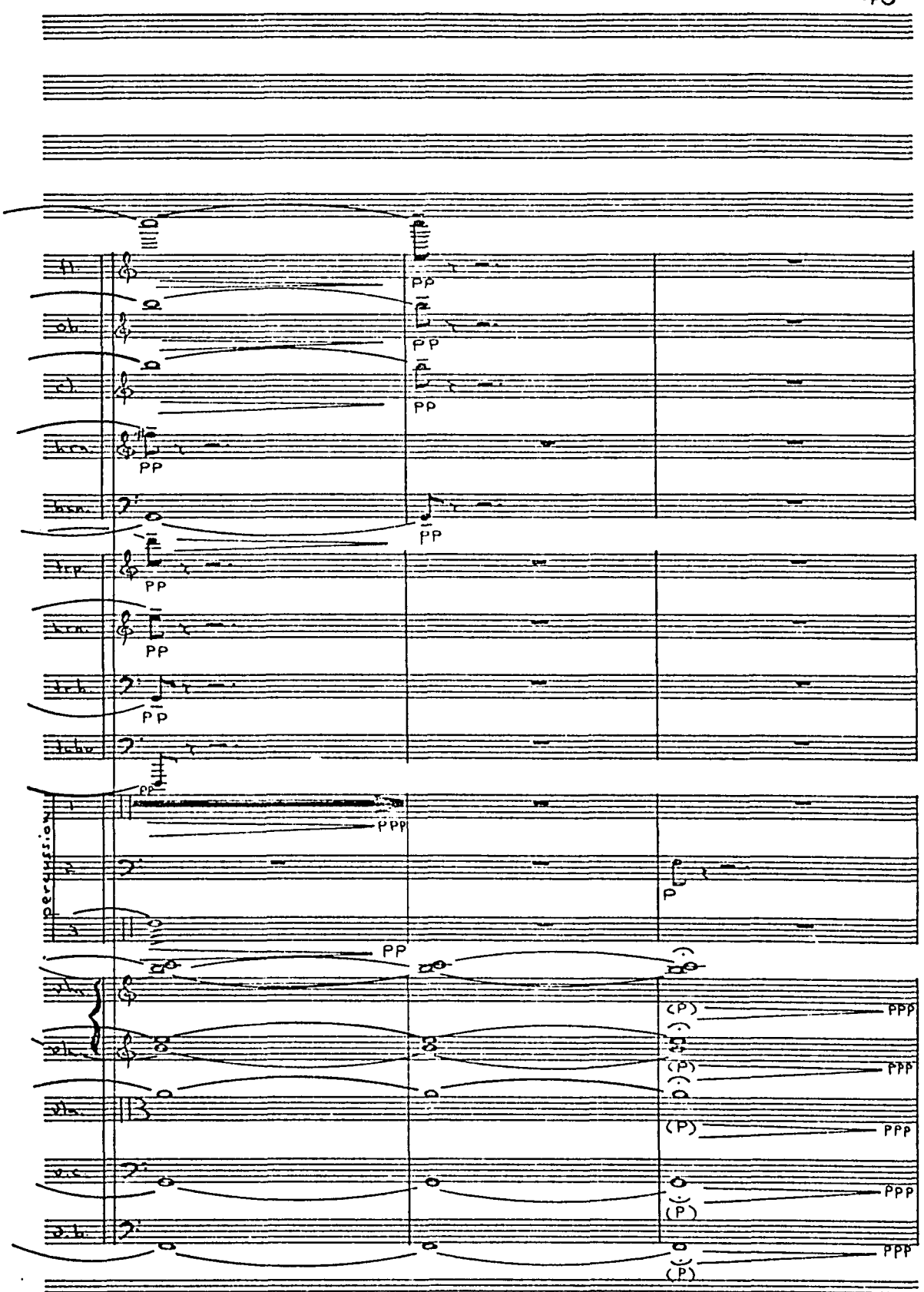

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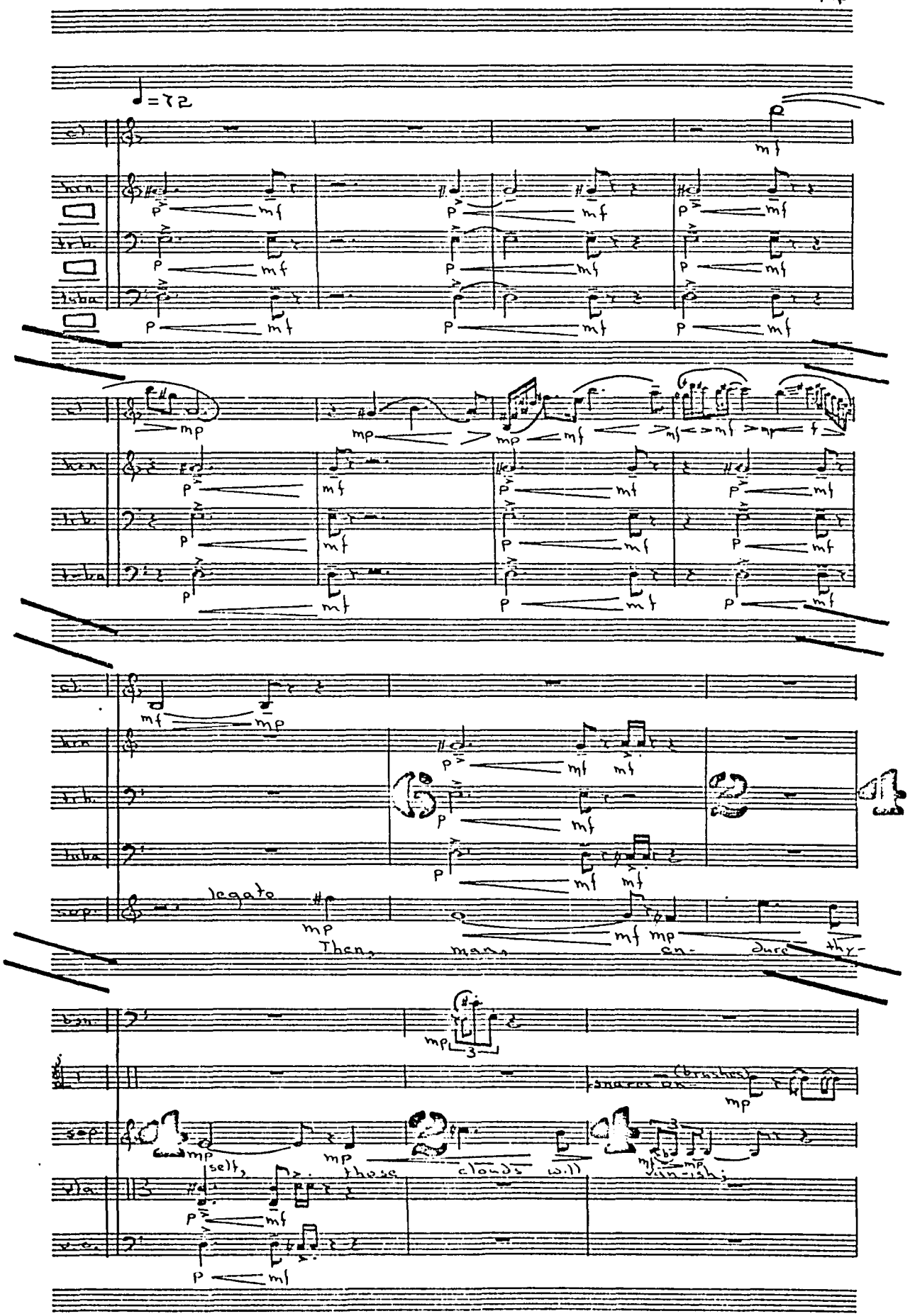

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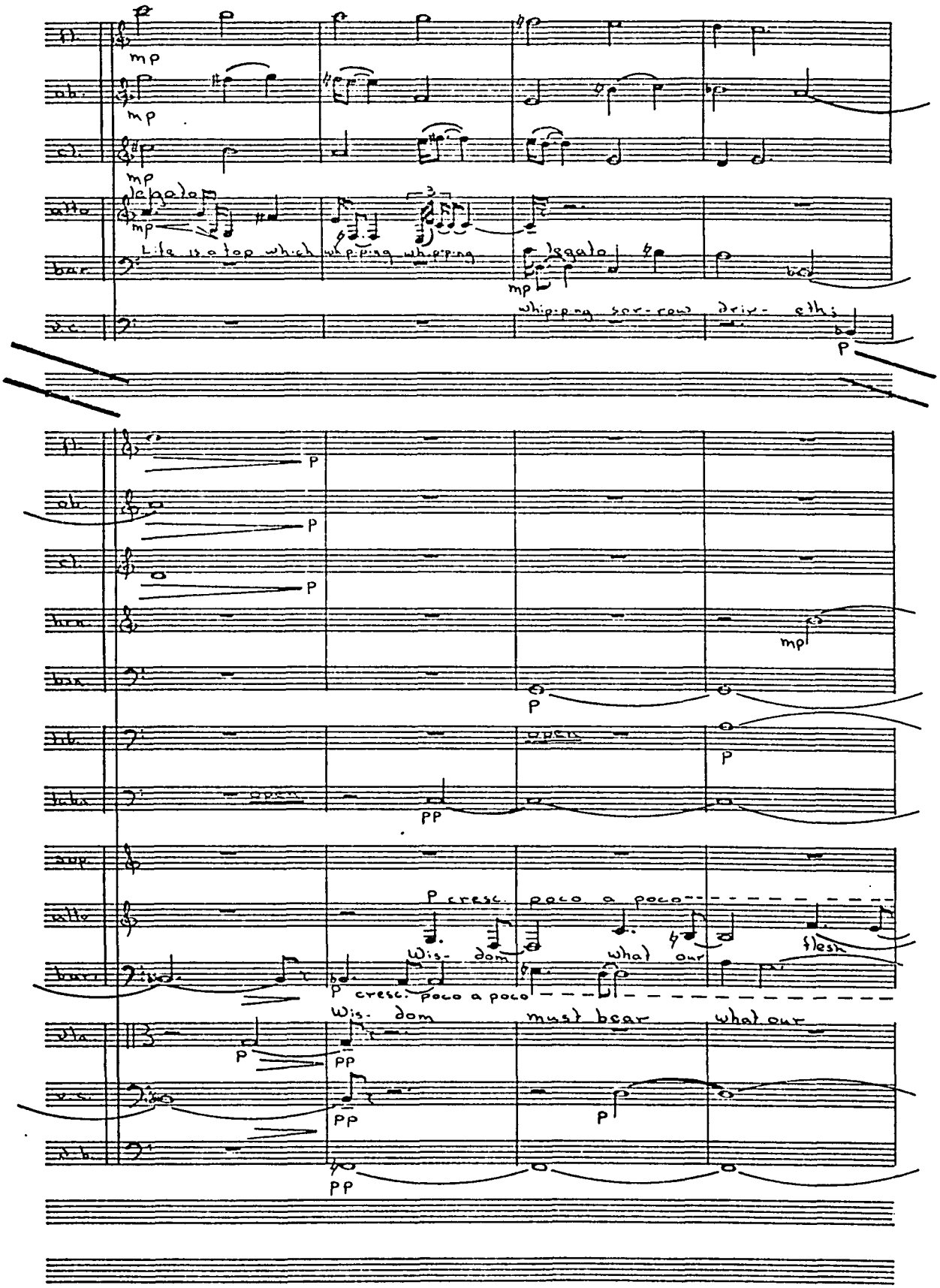

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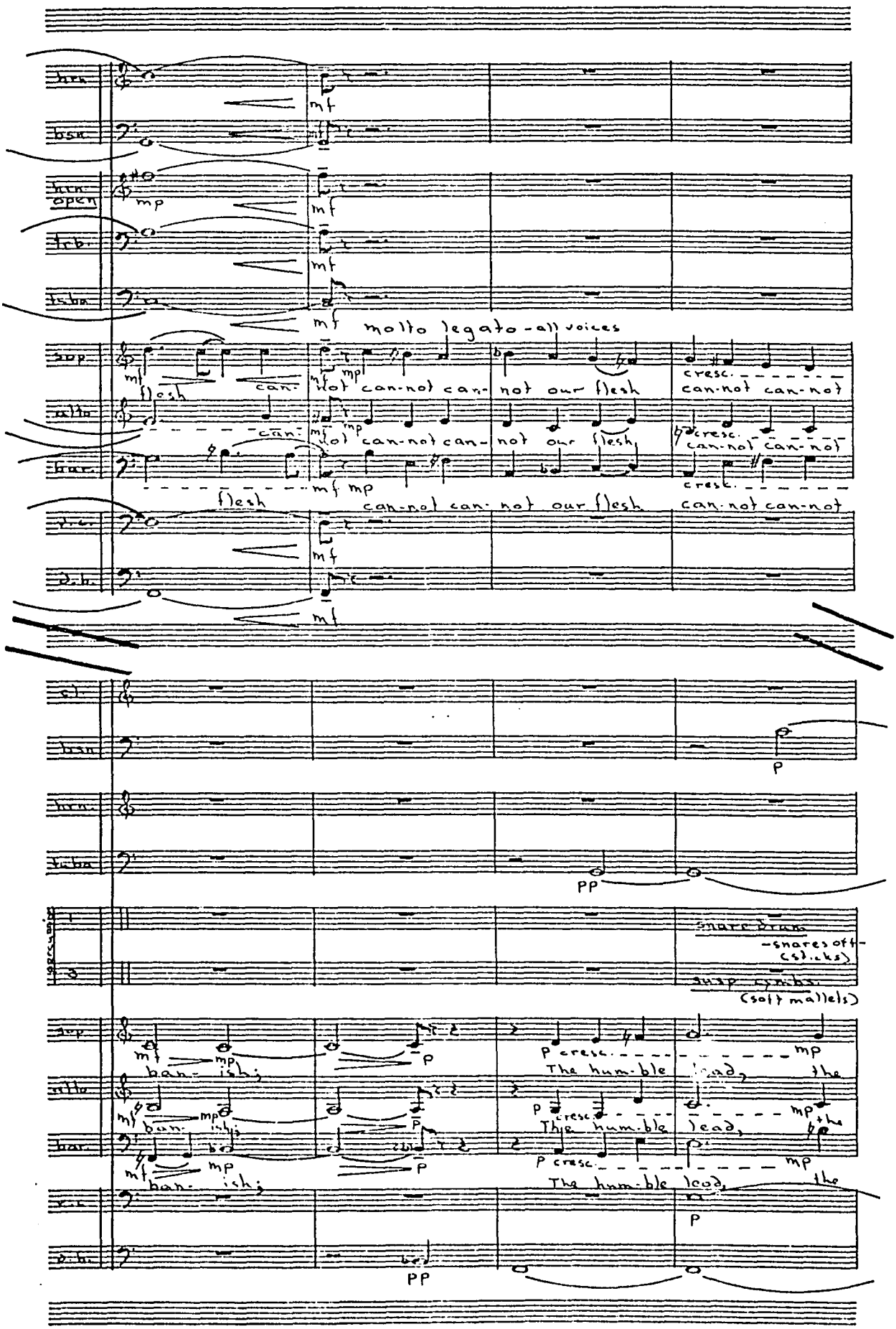

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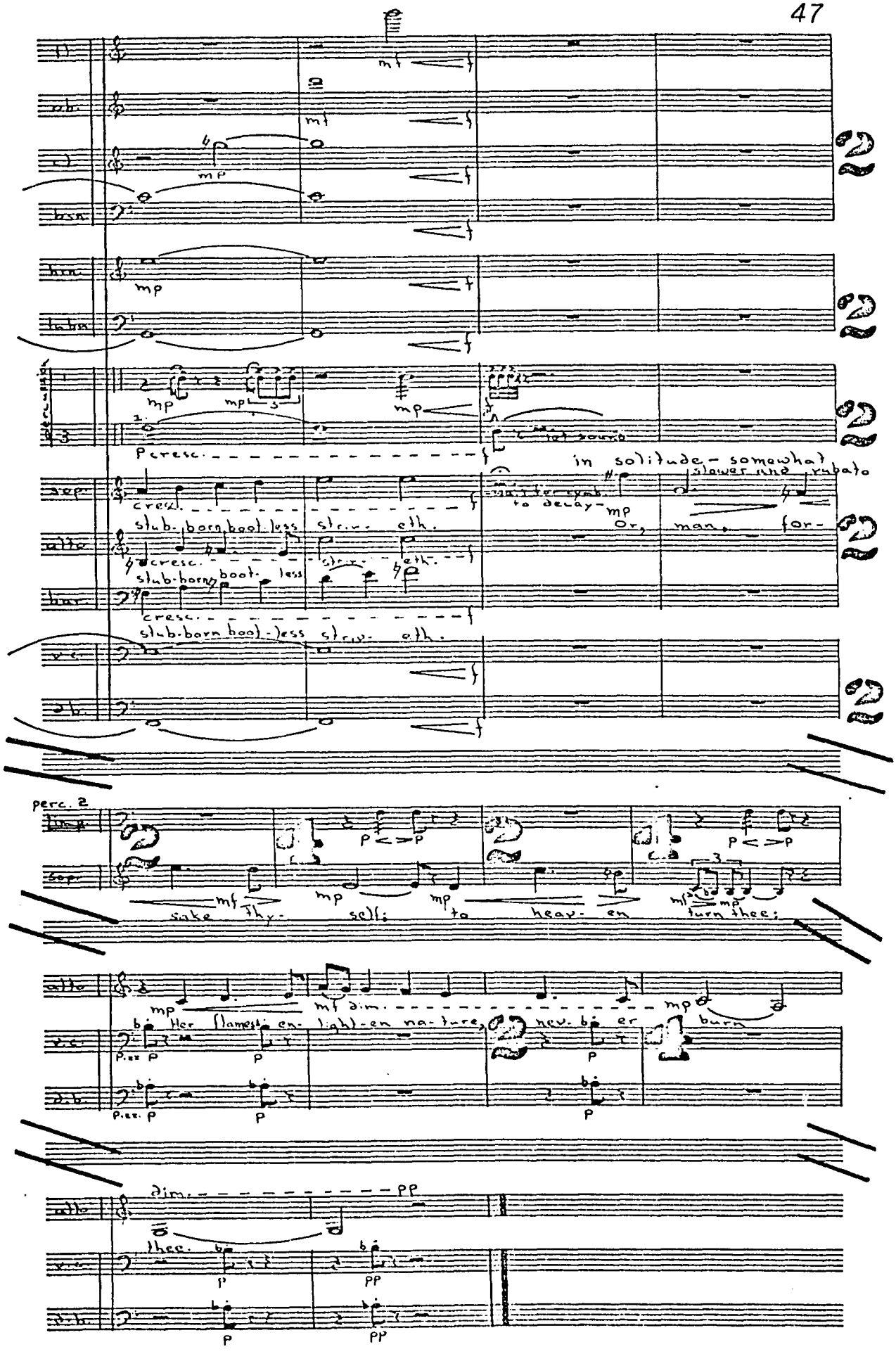

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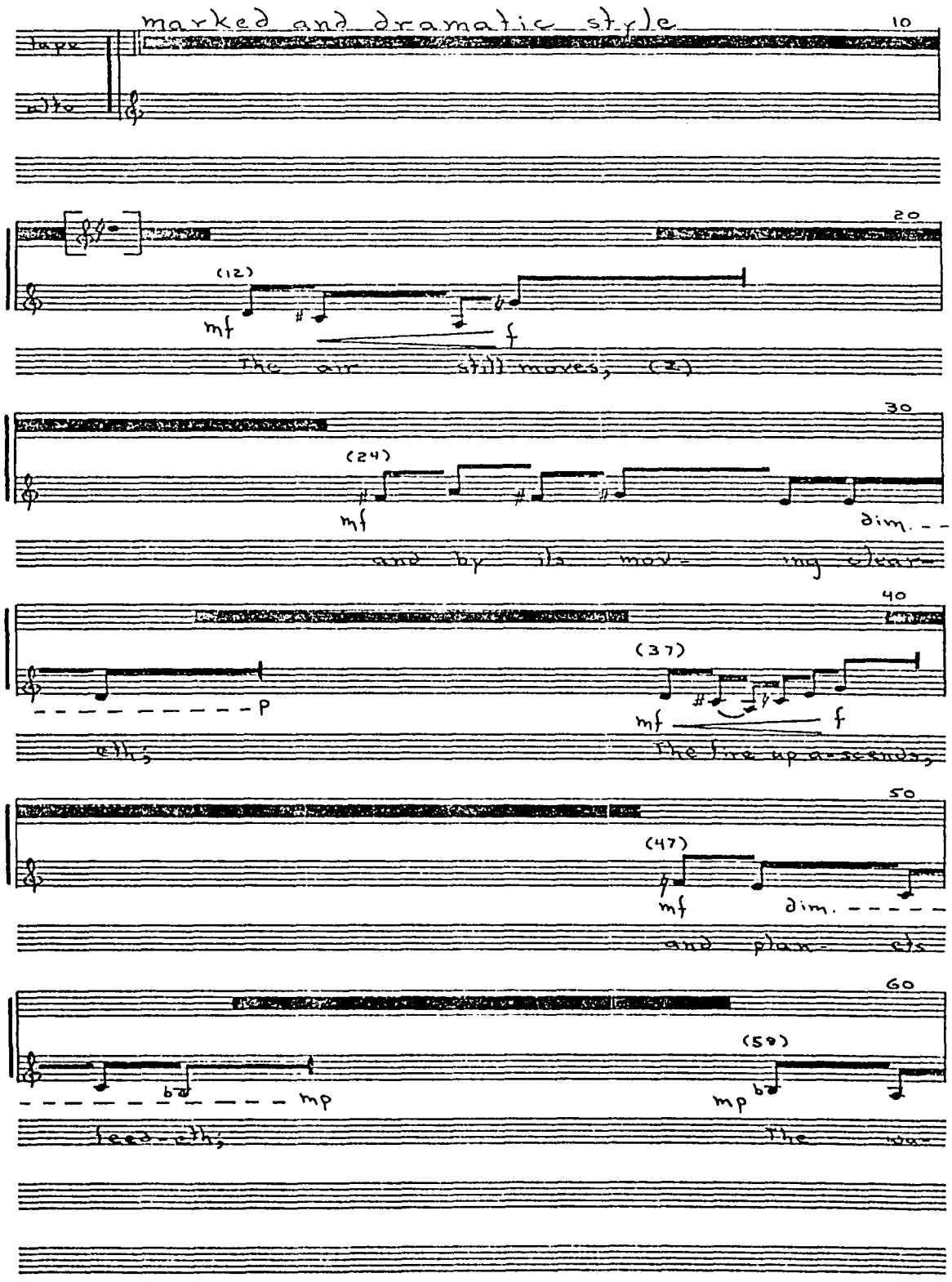
IV.

Interlude

The Air Still Moves, . . .

from Caelica—Greville



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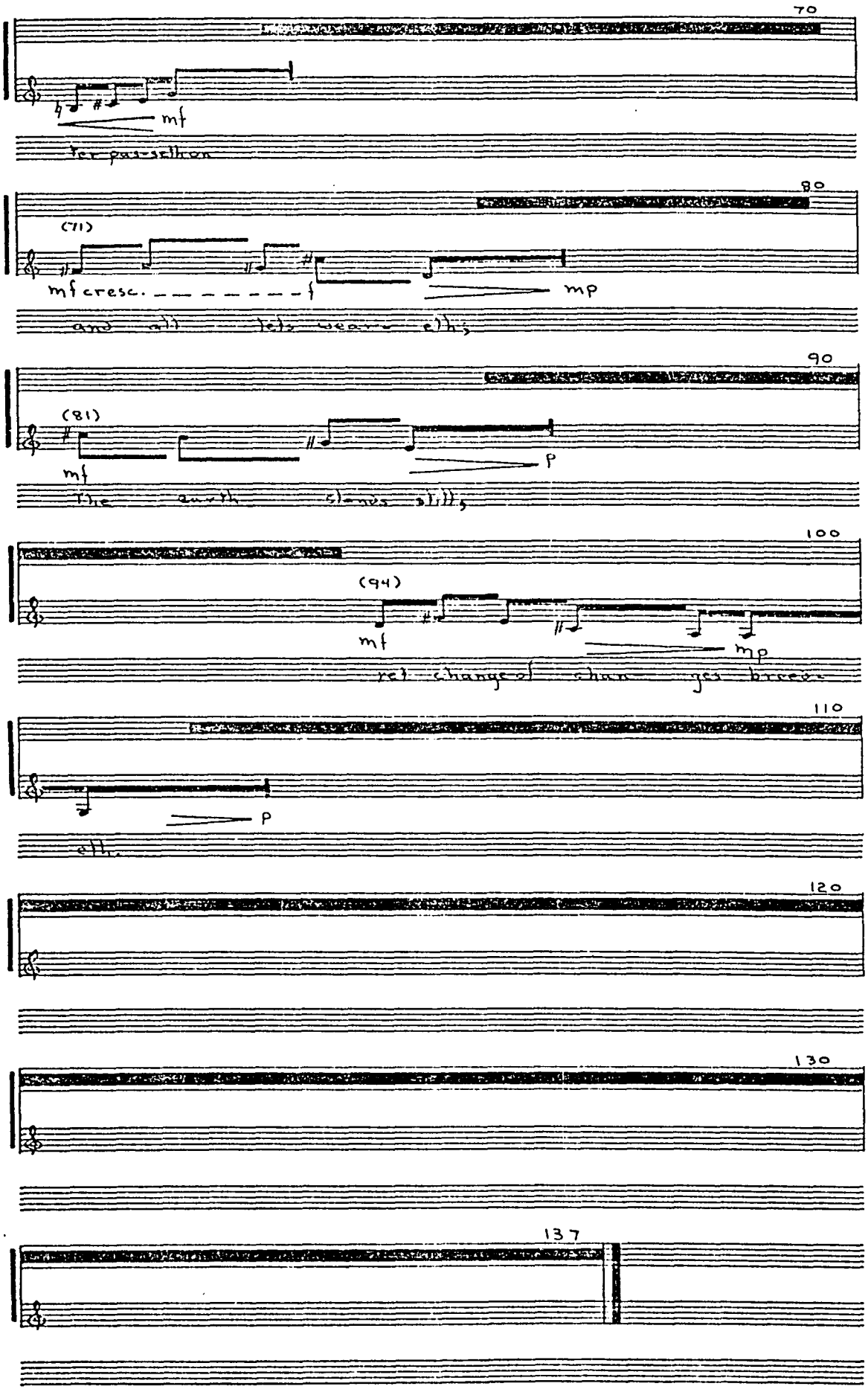

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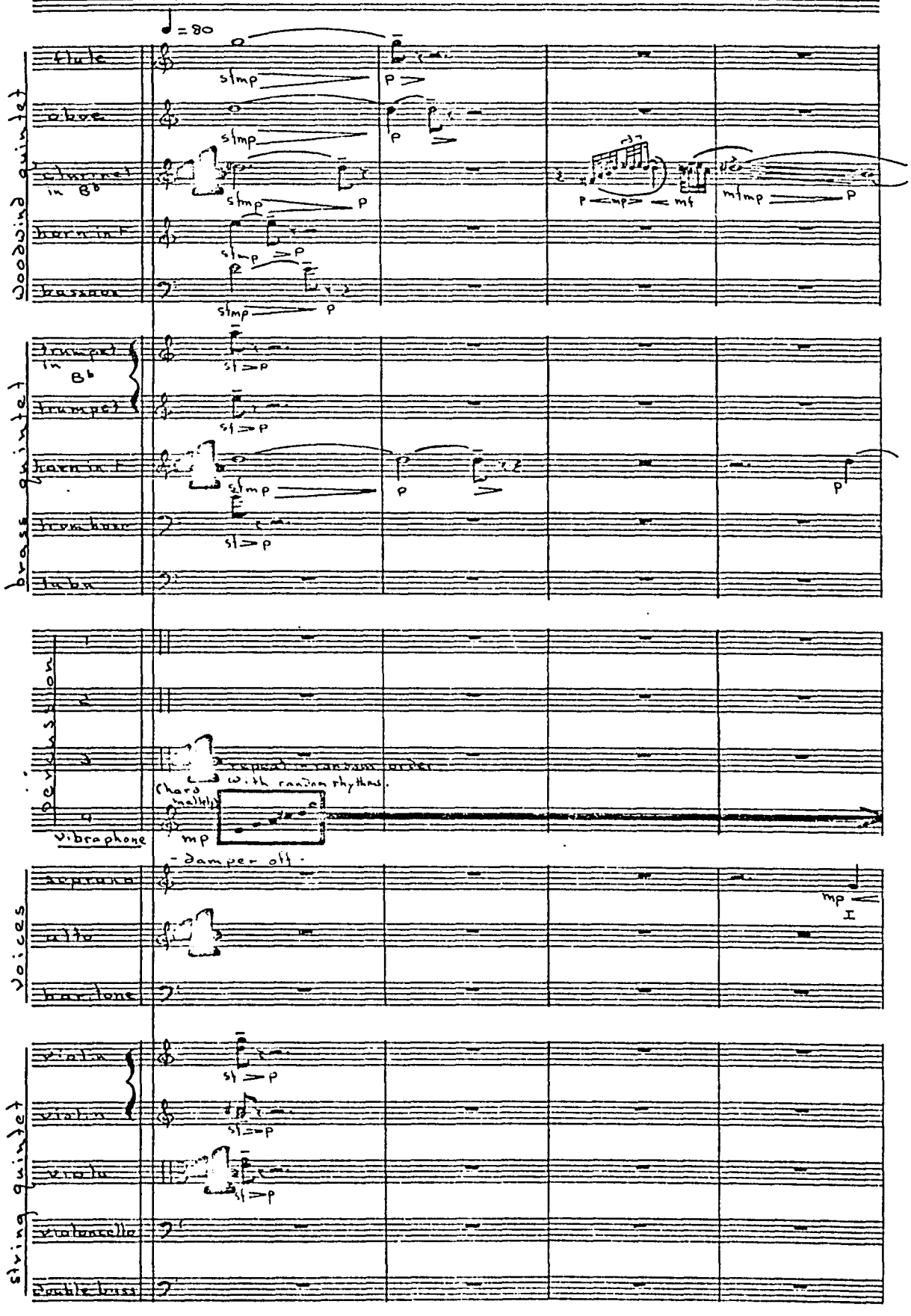
Sonnet–

Drummond of Hawthornden



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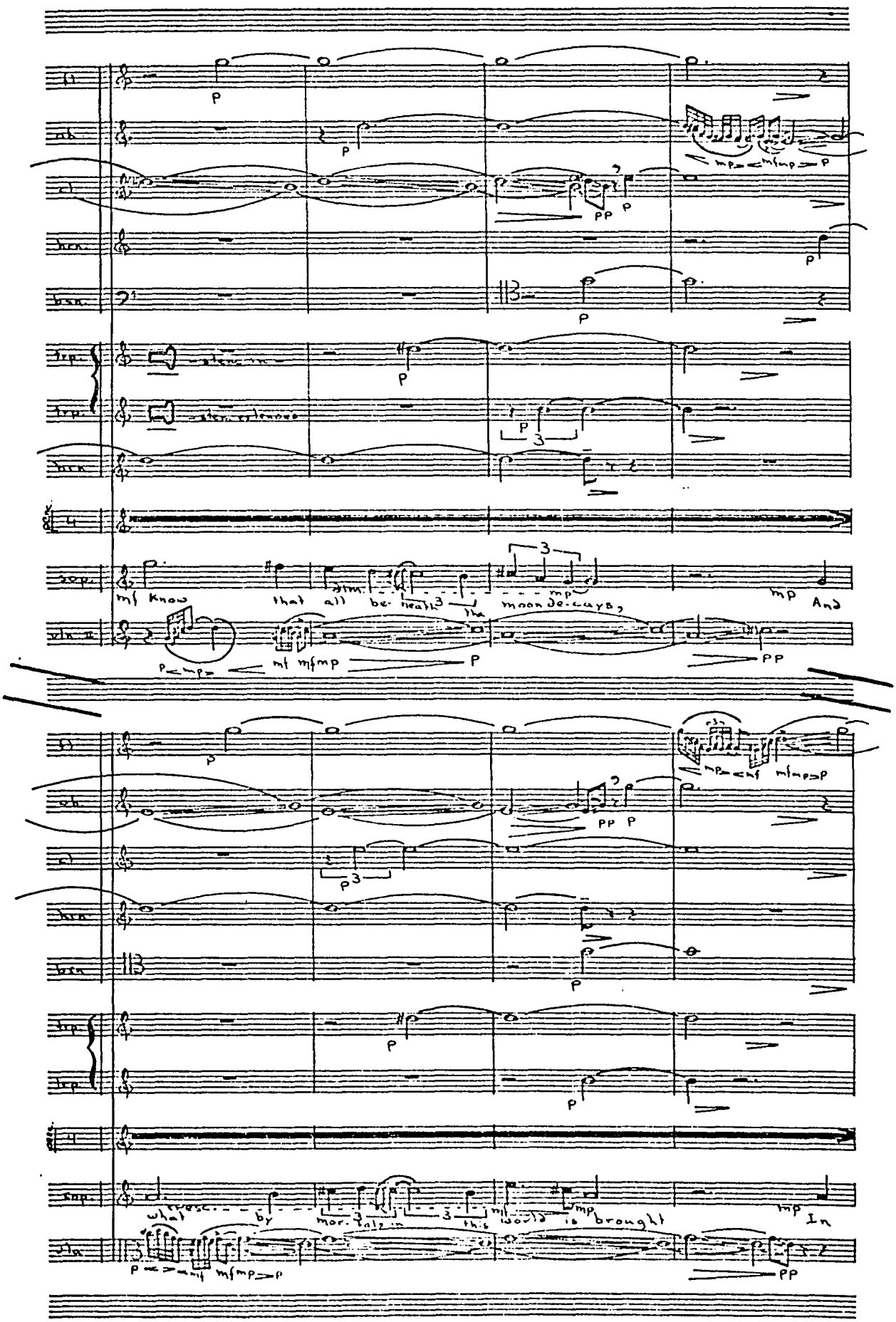

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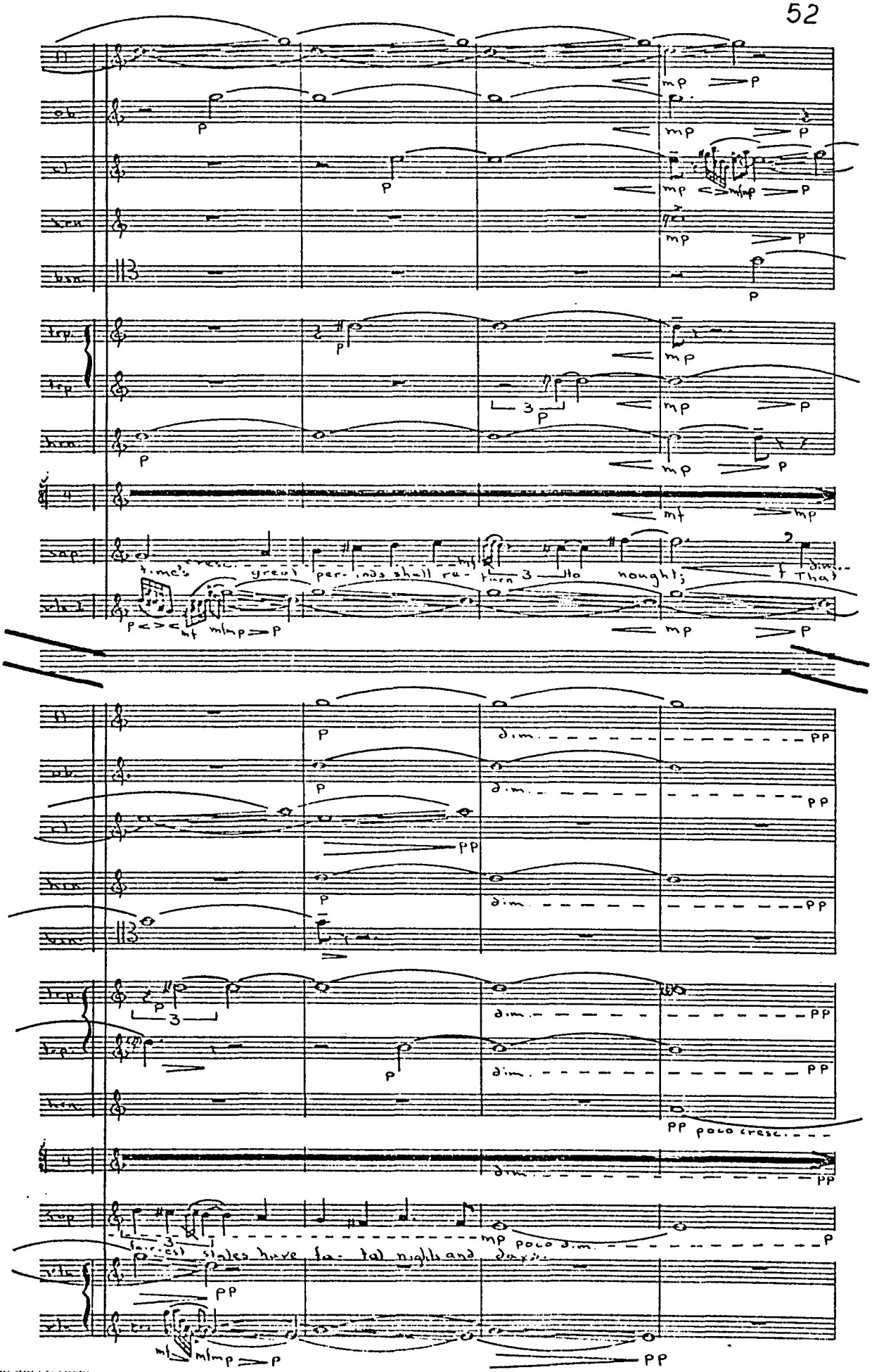

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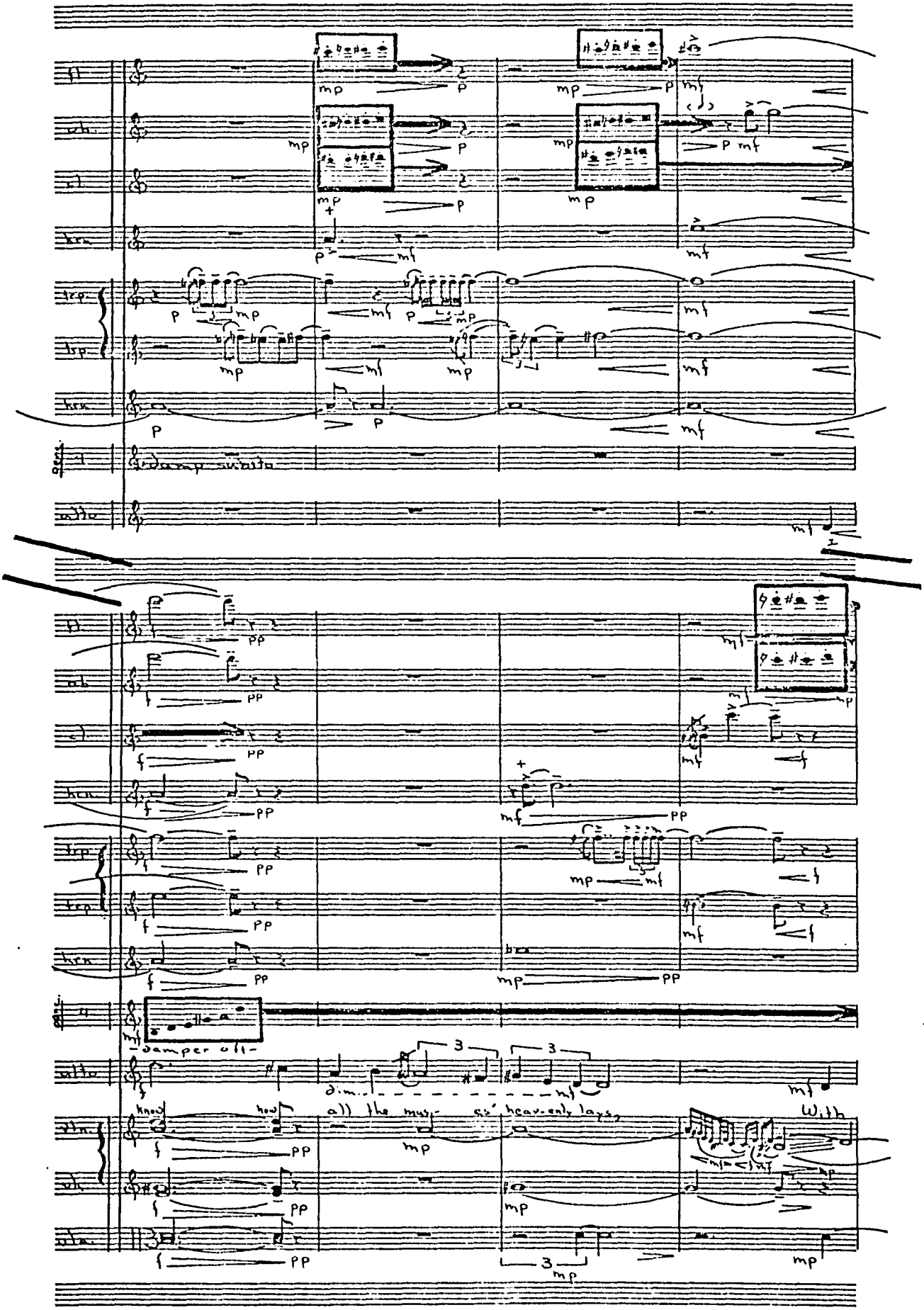

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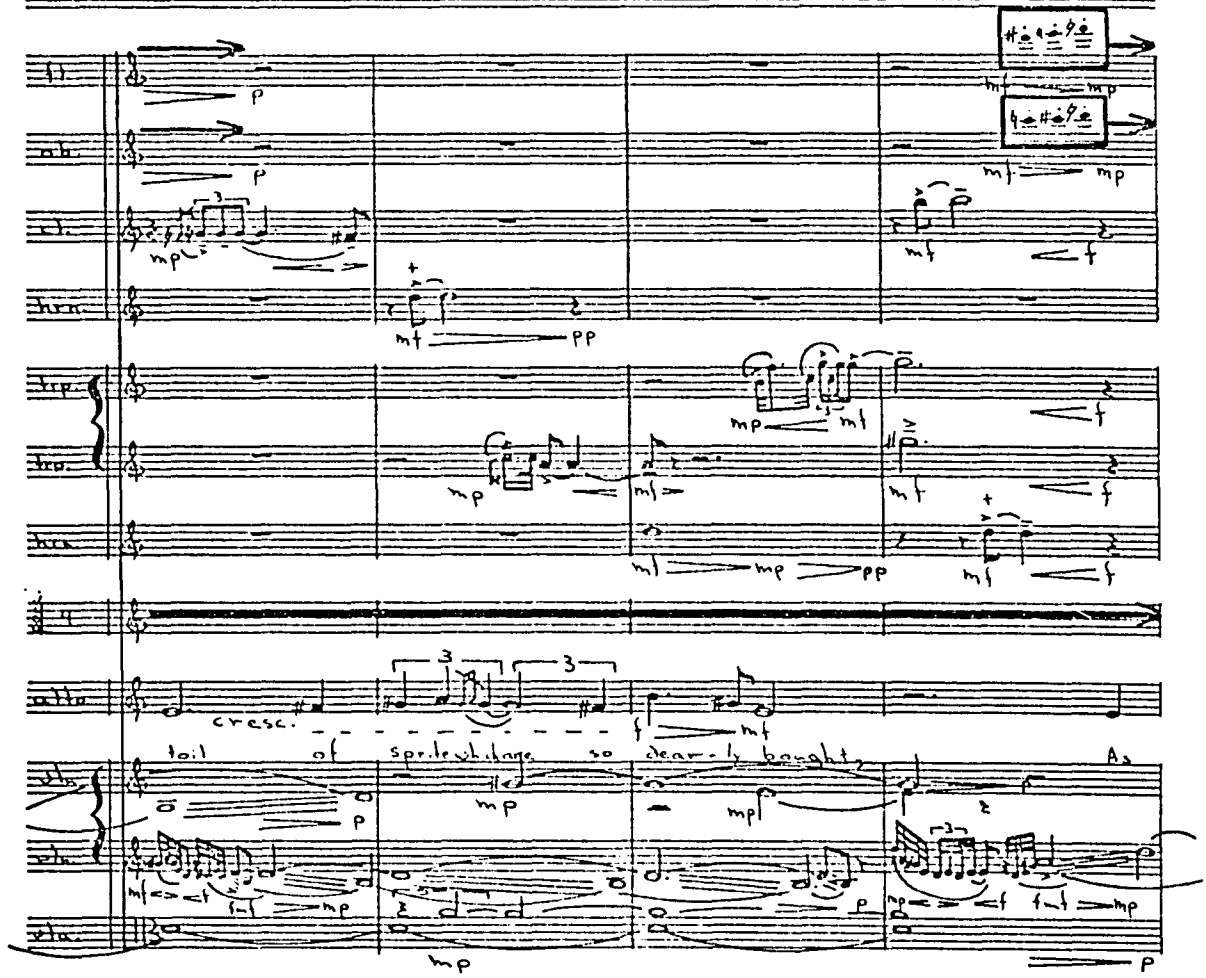

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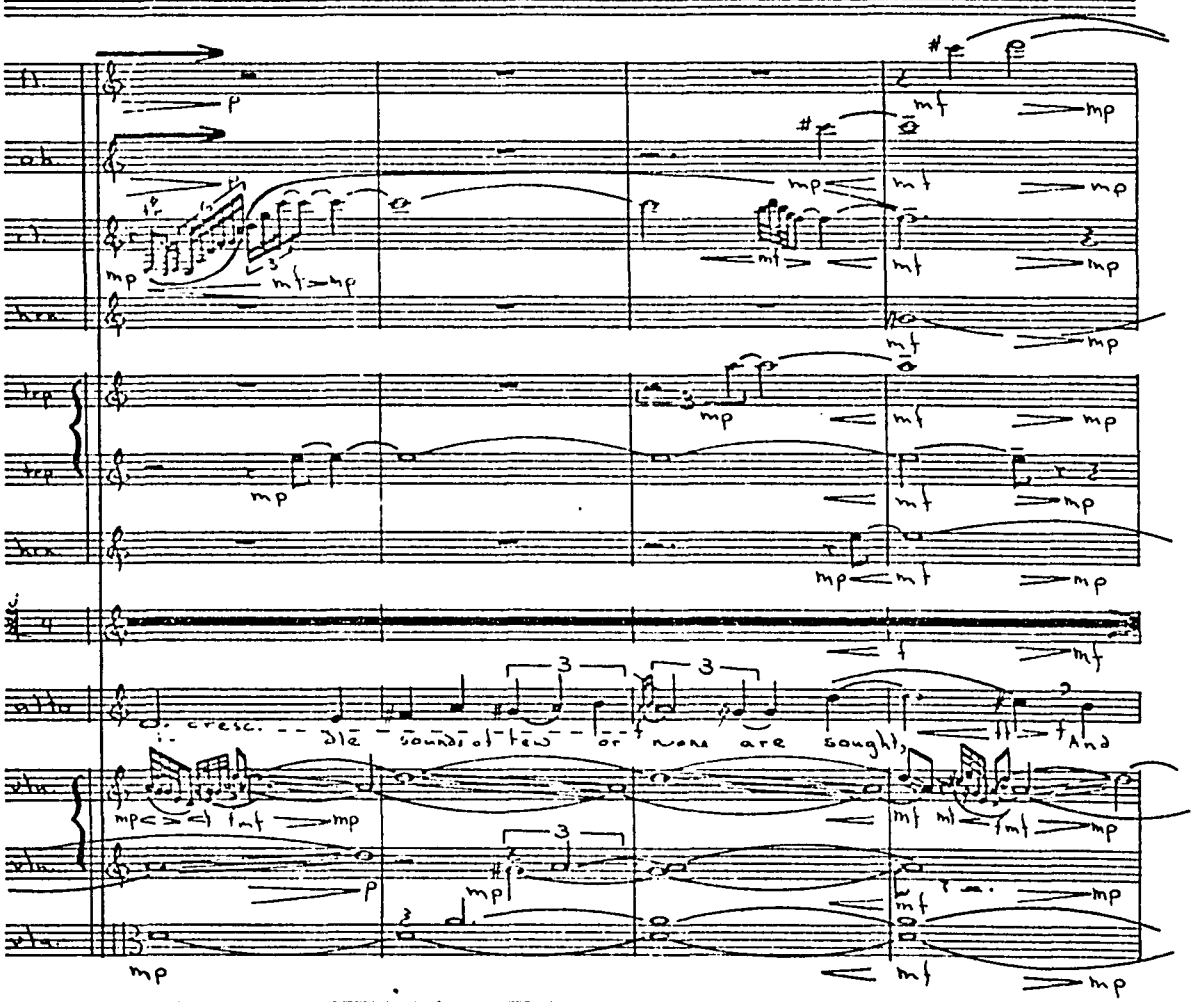

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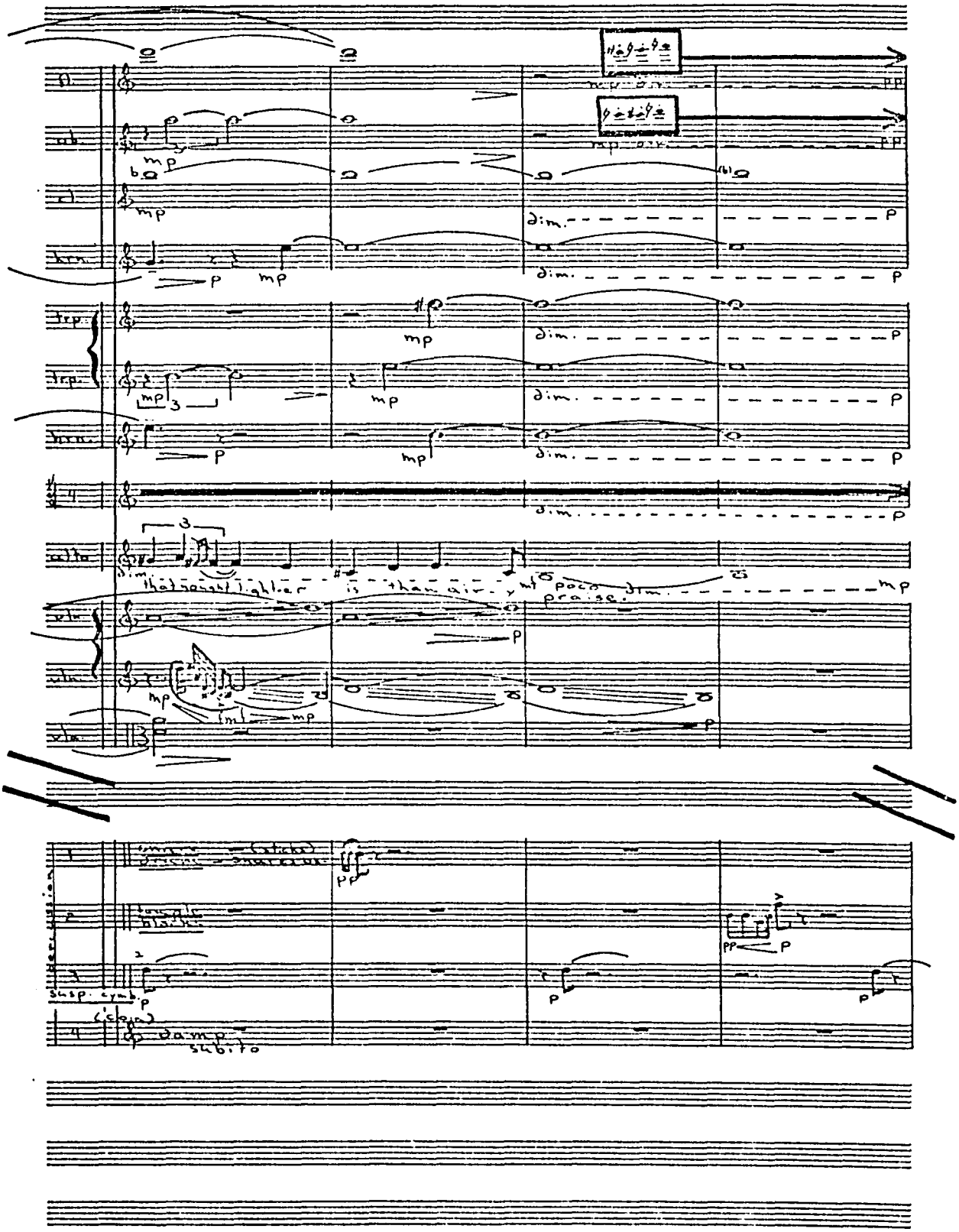

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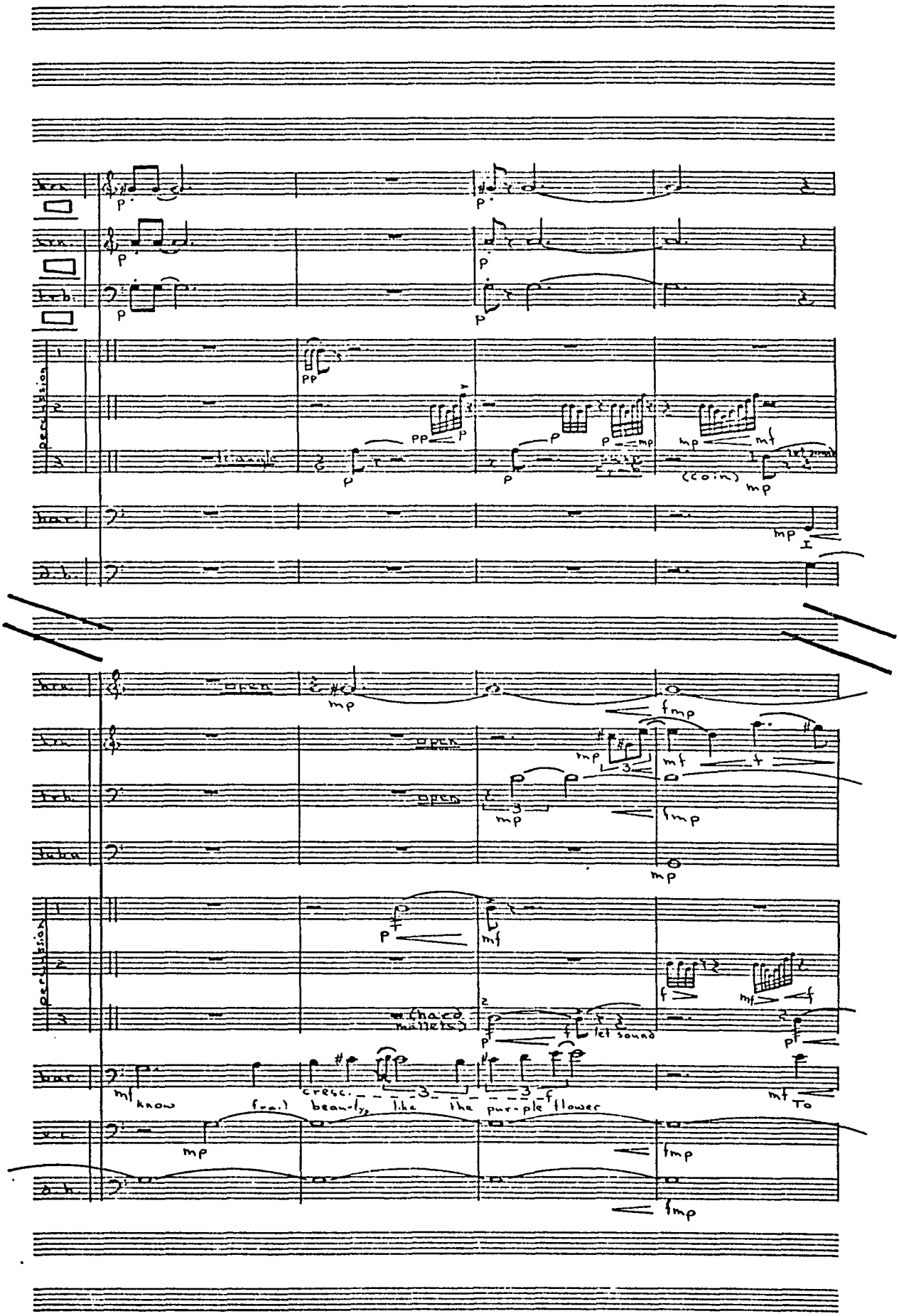

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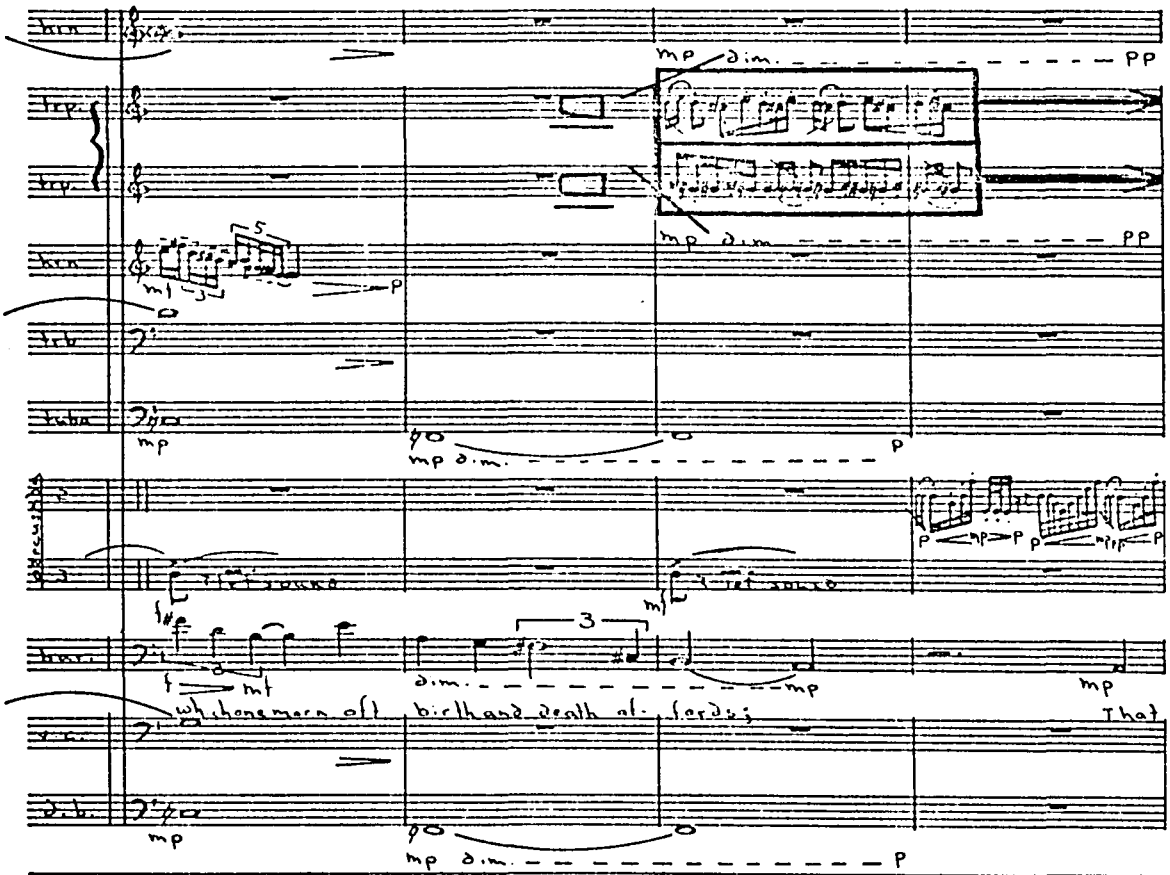

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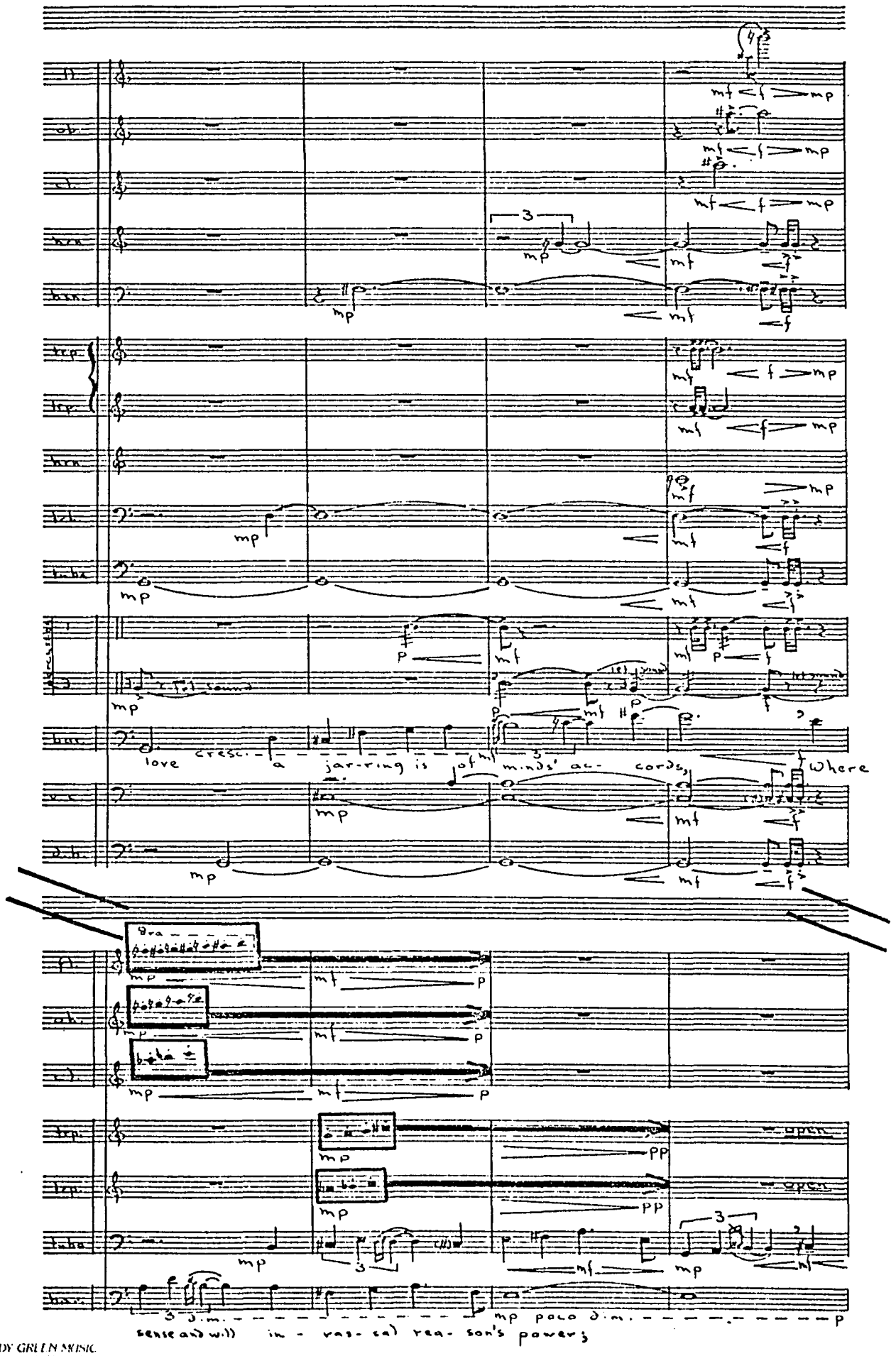

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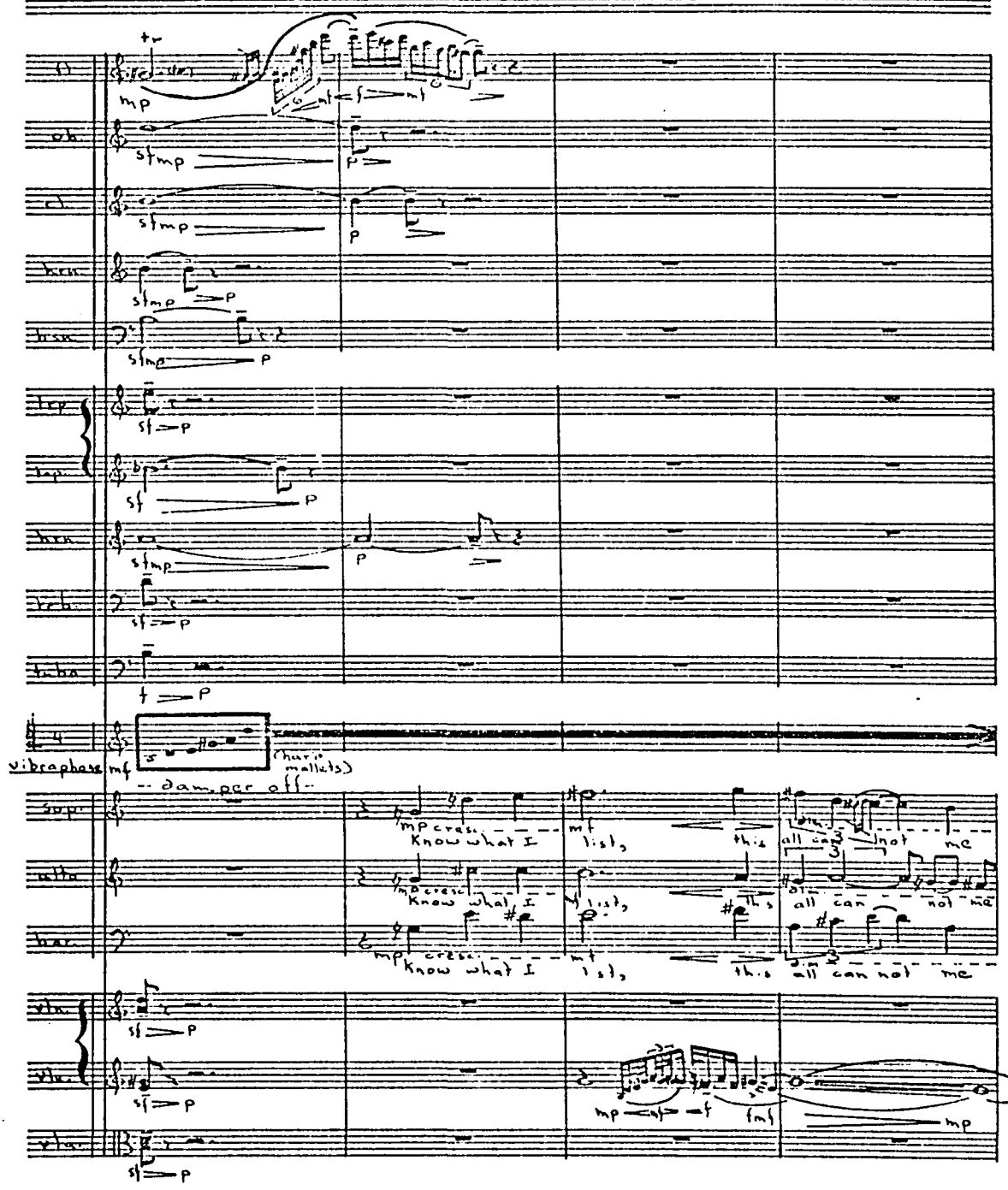

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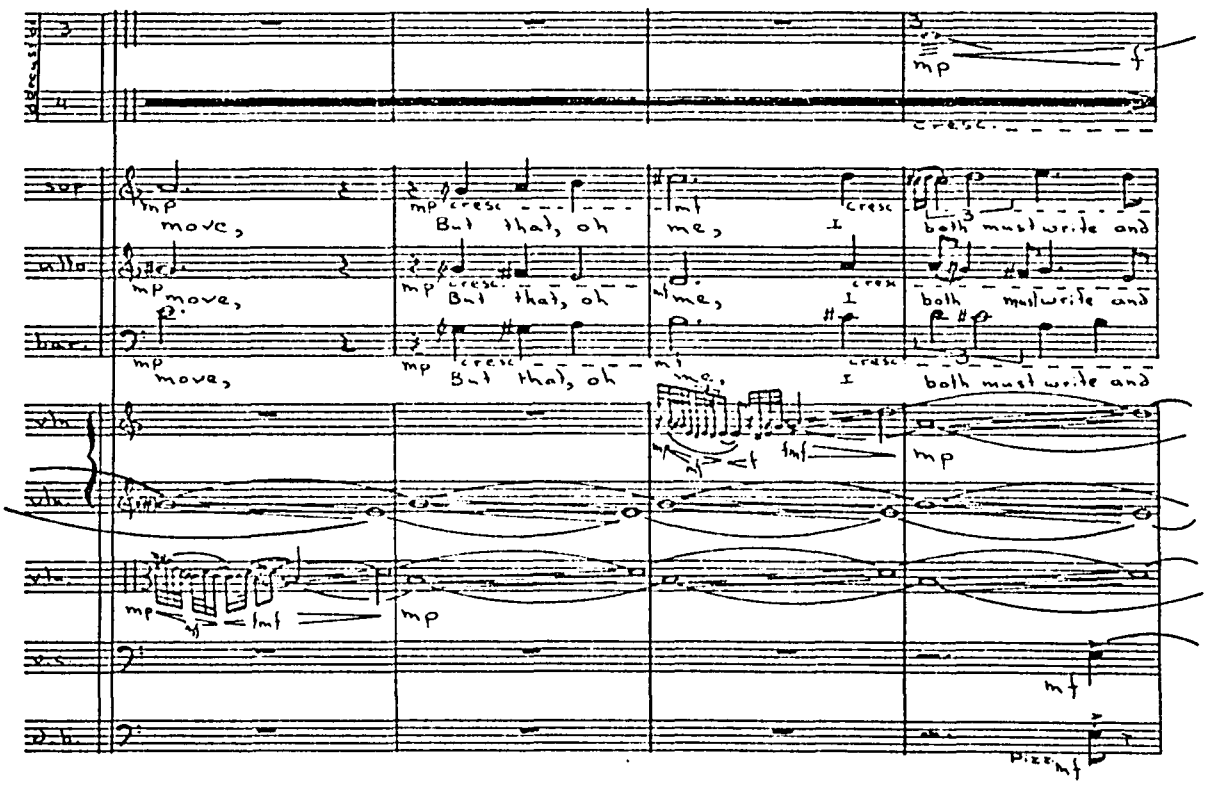

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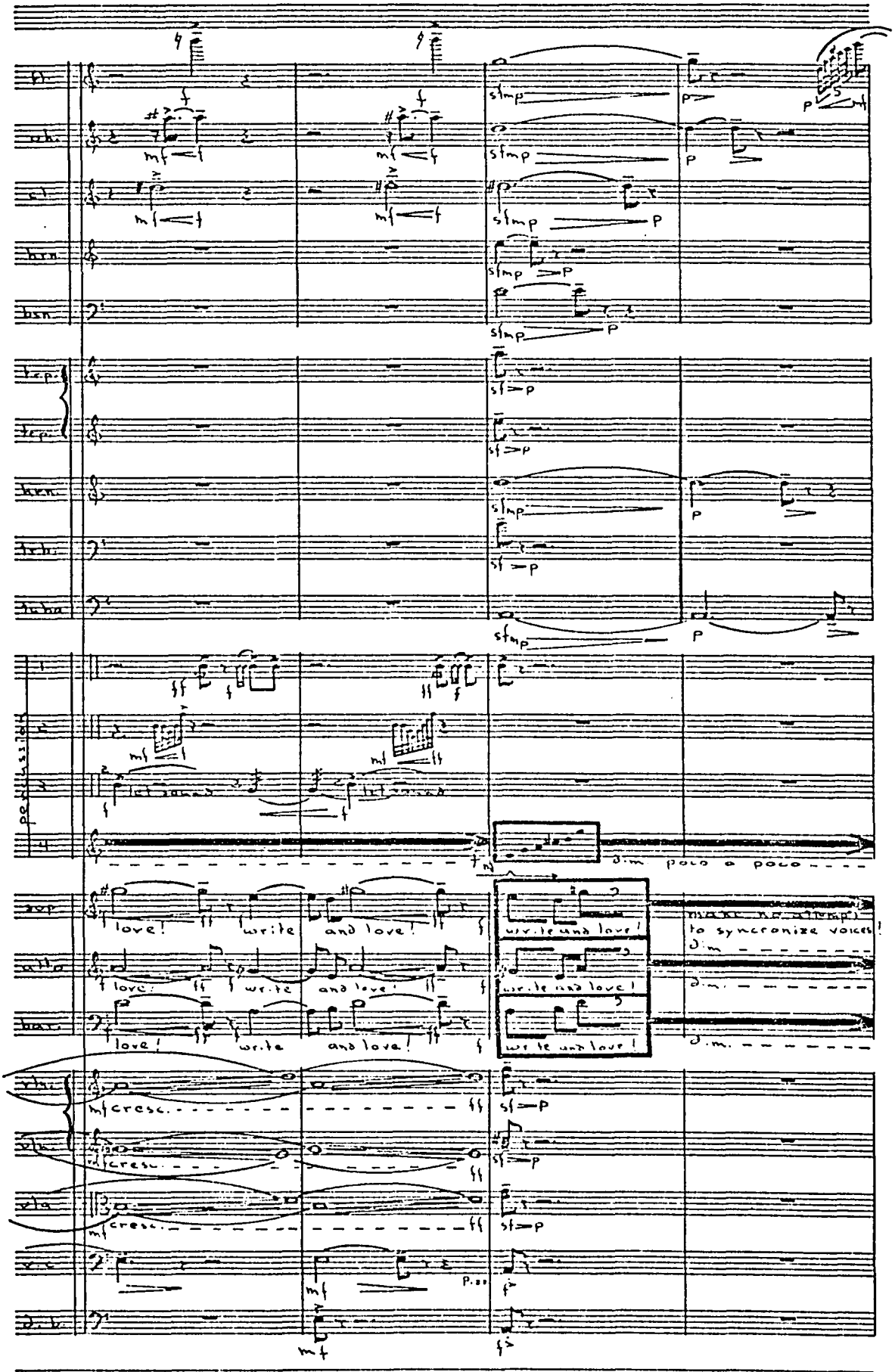

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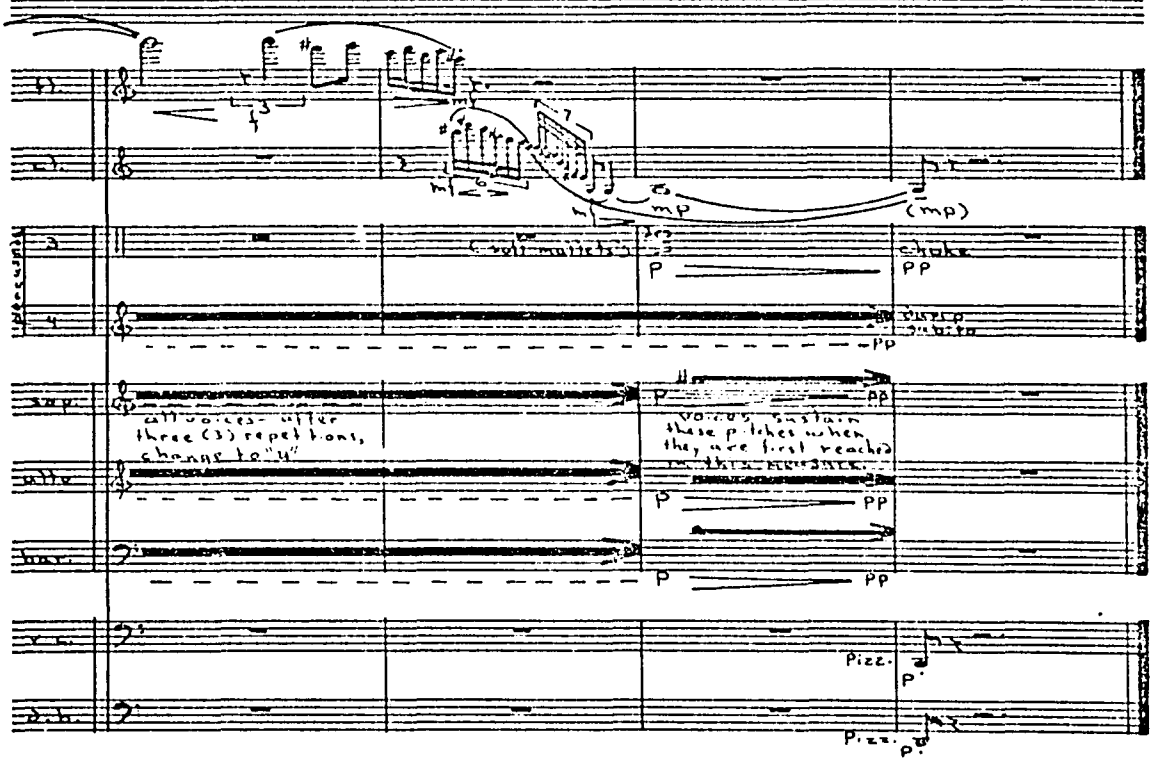

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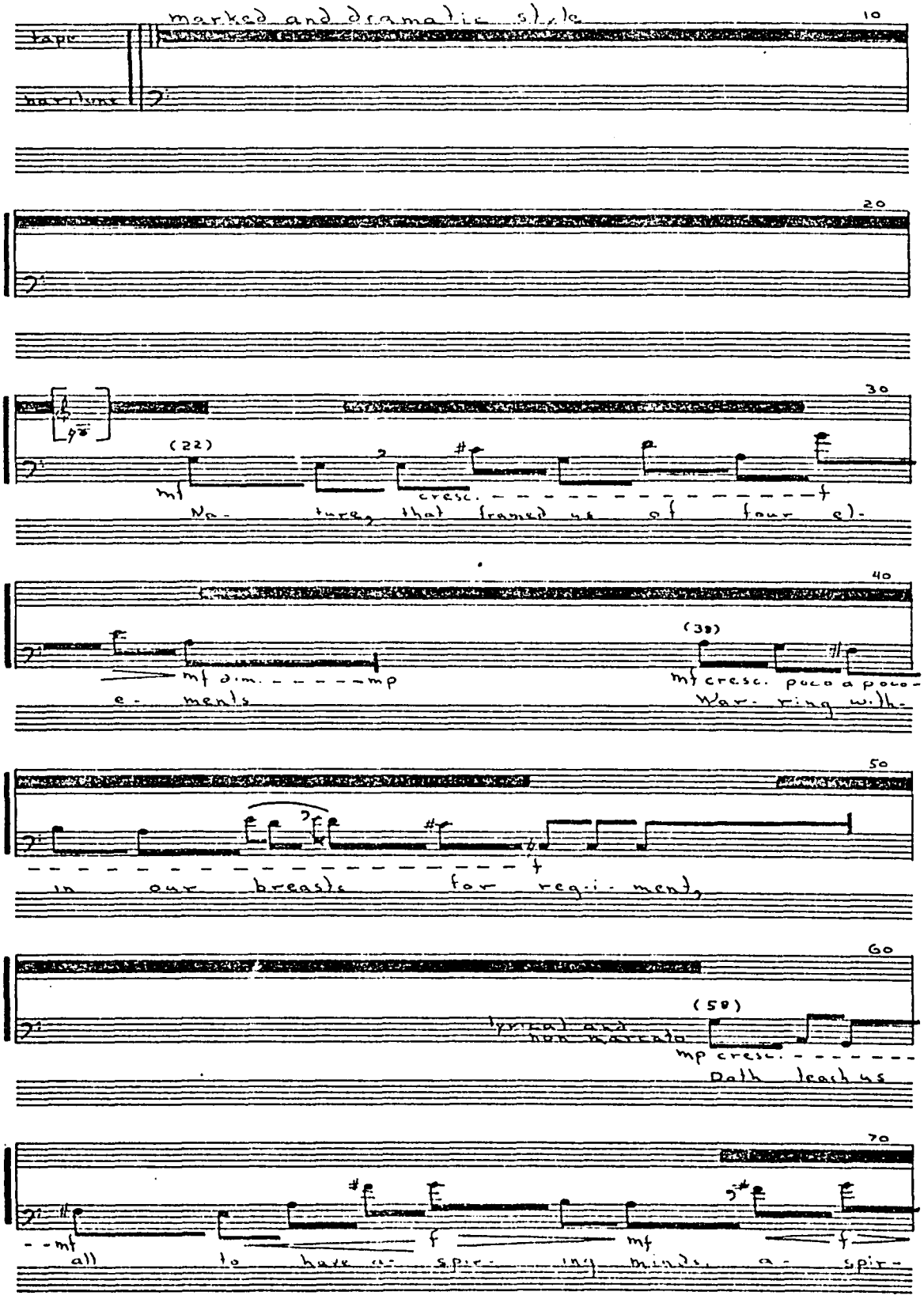
VI.

Postlude

Nature That Framed Us...—Tamburlaine



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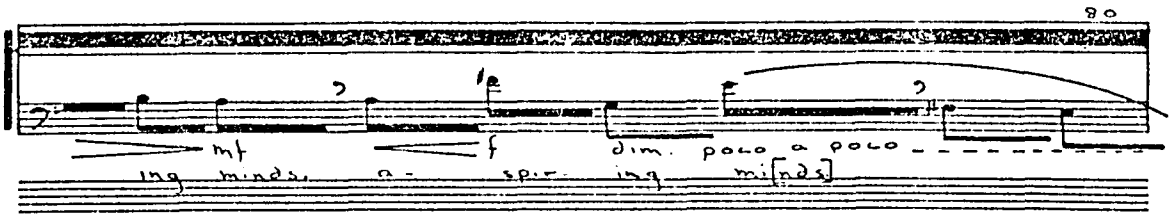

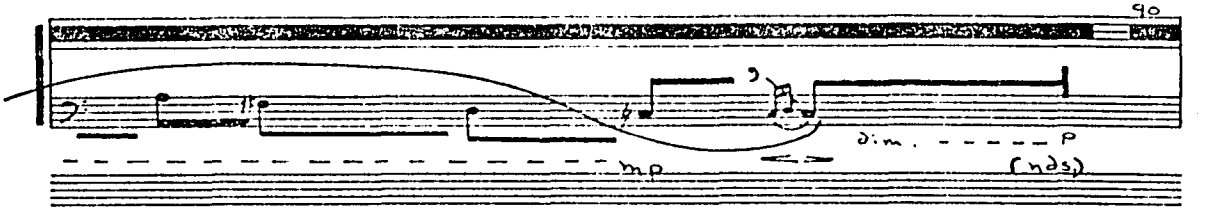

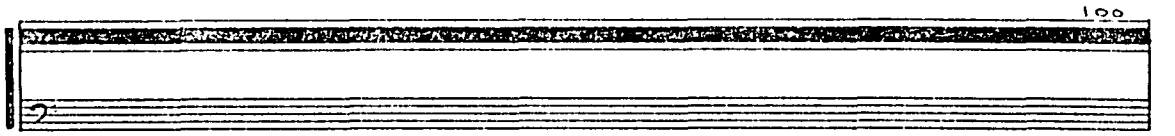

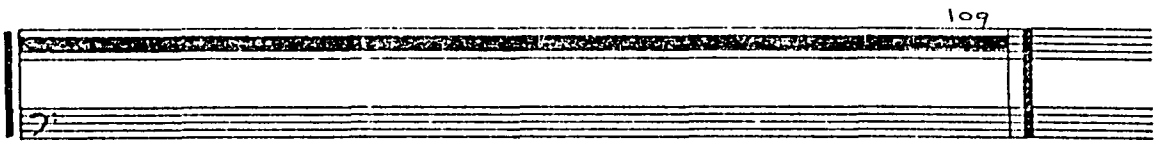

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Kalamazoo

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