Eighth Note Publications

Eight Solo Sonatas

Girolama Fantini

Arranged by Henry Meredith

The earliest printed method book for the trumpet, published by Girolamo Fantini in 1638, presents the first real solo compositions for the instrument. One of the most famous trumpeters of his day, Fantini made no secret of his purpose, clearly stating it on the title page of his tutor: Modo per Imparare a Sonare di Tromba, Tanto di Guerra Quanto Musicalmente in Organo . . . The complete title in English reads: "Method for Learning to Play the Trumpet, As Much for War, as Musically with the Organ, and [with] Every Other Instrument, [even] with the Harpsichord, Using a Muted Trumpet. Added to this are several pieces, such as Balletti, Brandi, Capricci, Sarabande, Correnti, Passaggi, and Sonatas for the Trumpet and Organ Together. By Girolamo Fantini from Spoleto, Principal Trumpeter to The Most Serene Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinando II."

Up to this time, the trumpet's role as a military signal instrument and as an ensemble instrument at court had taken precedence, and Fantini paid due respect to those traditional aspects of trumpet technique. Nevertheless, he was interested in expanding the trumpet's possibilities, and he showed creative originality even with the simpler styles of warlike music. Despite acknowledging the formerly all-important military techniques of the trumpet, Fantini emphasized, for the first time, the instrument's artistic potential, and the extended range that trumpeters had begun to discover earlier in the 17th-century. In fact, after some initial exercises to explore the clarino (clear, high) register, the preponderance of his method book is taken up with binary dance compositions for solo trumpet and basso continuo (just as he had announced on the title page). Fantini's tutor culminates with advanced tonguing and ornamentation etudes, Nine Trumpet Duets (also available separately from Eighth Note Publications), and the present collection of full-blown solos composed specifically for trumpet with organ accompaniment. These Eight Sonatas for Trumpet and Organ represent the pinnacle of Fantini's creativity in this new idiom. They also embody all the skills Fantini sought to impart to trumpeters who followed the course he outlined in his method book.

PREVIEW ONLY

Perhaps Girolamo Frescobaldi, who was Fantini's performing partner and colleague for a time at the Medici court in Florence, inspired the compositions. Contemporary reports describe a concert in Rome where, accompanied by Frescobaldi on the organ, "Girolamo Fantini, the most excellent trumpeter of all Italy," displayed his mastery of performing notes outside of the harmonic series and therefore not usually possible on the trumpet. The harmonic series is the acoustic basis of the 17th century valveless trumpet. In the hands of a trumpeter without sufficient ability to "bend" normal pitches into extra-harmonic notes, the instrument's melodic capabilities prior to the advent of the clarino register (what Fantini called soprano) were thus severely restricted. In his preface, a paragraph of "Advice for those who would wish to learn to play the trumpet" admits that "a few notes will be found that are not indicated in the [harmonic series chart in the] beginning of the book. These notes are imperfect if one lingers on them, but because they pass by quickly, they can be used." Several times in the tutor, Fantini exploits such notes in many of his pieces and exercises, and the sonatas are no exception. Indeed, Sonata No. 5 ("Adimari") is one of the most difficult pieces in the entire method book because of its extensive use of extra-harmonic tones. One of the shorter sonatas requires f', d', and b' in a passage descending to the basso c, which is itself employed for only the second time in his accompanied pieces. Present-day performers may have to play that low c an octave higher, if they are unable to produce the fundamental note of the modern valved C trumpet.

Fantini's Eight Sonatas for Trumpet and Organ generally exhibit a tripartite structure with a duple-meter introduction followed by a triple-meter dance-like section and a return to a more stately duple-time section. The one exception is Sonata No. 6 known as "Morone" which, as the shortest of the eight at 30 bars, is in duple time throughout. Repeat signs separate the sections of much of Fantini's music, but in the sonatas they are employed only in No. 2. For the present edition, most meter changes are demarcated by a double bar, and repeats are optional, depending on the duration of the section or on the desired length of the whole piece. Repetitions would be effective in the shorter dance sections, and repeats should be ornamented according to Fantini's own "Passaggi di lingua" exercises, which were inadvertently inserted between Sonatas 6 and 7 in the tutor (an error acknowledged by the printer).

The editor has taken the liberty of suggesting some possible decorations to the melodies provided in a few places for Sonatas No. 1 and No. 2. Furthermore, the introduction to Sonata No. 4, with its tonic pedal point throughout in the bass line and its slowly ascending then descending arpeggio in the trumpet part, provides a perfect opportunity for elaboration. The contour of the trumpet's melodic outline here predicts the type of warm-up introduction used later by composers such as Maurizio Cazzati (e.g., his Sonata "La Bianchina" Op. 35, No. 11, published in 1665), and is also reminiscent of the manuscript "Abblasen" exercise displayed in trumpeter Gottfried Reiche's hand in the famous portrait of Bach's great trumpeter. Fantini's own Seconda Ricercata detta l'Acciaioli, one of his initial high register studies which reaches the highest note (d''') that he employed in the tutor, seems tailor-made to serve as an example of how Fantini might have embellished the simple triadic introduction in his "Seracinelli" Sonata (No. 4). For the present edition, six bars of the Acciaioli exercise have been superimposed over the original notes given to the trumpet in

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the sonata's introduction. The editorial keyboard part (right hand) therefore relates directly to the embellished trumpet line provided, and should be altered or simplified if the trumpeter is not playing the editor's suggested ornaments. Editorial tempo recommendations have been indicated by metronome markings or by equivalent note values at the beginning of most sections. These tempos should be lively but not so fast as to lose their noble character. The metric symbols for the triple dance movements should be interpreted mostly as the tempo ratios they were intended to be in the late renaissance and early baroque and not as meter signatures as we define them today. Commonly, a single pulse remains constant throughout the work, and the duple or triple time incorporates that uniform basic duration. Hence, for example, the introductory section might be played at quarter-note equals 96 beats per minute and the ensuing triple section would be played so that all three beats fit into the time taken by two ofthe previous section. In this case, 3/2 therefore would signifies the ratio of three beats to two, which works out to dotted-whole-note equals 48 beats per minute or half note equals 144. Flexibility of tempo is often desirable, and the actual speeds can vary due to the density or relative velocity of the notes or to similar difficulties.

At many places, Fantini indicated a trillo (tr), which was a rapid repetition of the given note achieved with machine-gun-like breath accents "made by the power of the chest and beaten with the throat" according to Fantini's instructions for executing the ornament in his introductory comments. Principally a vocal ornament, the trillo disappeared in later centuries. It was frequently preceded with a written out groppo or "group" of notes alternating between two pitches and usually in a dotted rhythm. This groppo became what we think of today as a "trill." The "Vitelli" Sonata (No. 7) exemplifies the execution of a typical groppo followed by a trillo in measures 27-29. It would be appropriate to add such embellishments to other internal and sectional cadences. A variation of the standard groppo and trillo combination is found in the last four bars of Sonata No. 8 (called "Nero"), the last and longest of these compositions which also possesses an interesting bass line (bars 11-14) that forecasts the subsequent trumpet theme in bar 14.

PREVIEW ONLY

Editorial procedures for this edition include consolidating (as either treble or bass clef) all of the different clef signs used by the original printer to reduce the need for ledger lines. Likewise, while original note values have usually been retained, the individually flagged notes (required by the separate blocks of movable type) are now beamed together to form more readable beat groupings. The printer's frequent use of a custos (a symbol to forewarn of the pitch starting the next line) is eliminated in this transcription. Rest symbols, bar lines, and accidentals have also been modernized, with cautionary accidentals given in parentheses. Accidental signs in brackets beneath the bass line are editorial figures. Although his bass lines are generally unfigured, Fantini did supply a few original figures, mostly 4-3 cadential suspension resolutions. Some additional figures are furnished in brackets by the editor. Editorial dynamics are similarly suggested in brackets, but Fantini did furnish numerous original dynamics, mostly "p." echoes of preceding, louder "f." phrases. His effective contrasts between loud and soft (perhaps reflecting similar usage in his Sonata di Risposte detta del Salviati, a "sonata of answers" among his Nine Trumpet Duets) are exemplified by the lengthy sequences of the final eight bars in the first Sonata, bars 24-27 of Sonata No. 2, the ending of Sonata No. 7, and measures 54-57 of Sonata No. 8.

Complying with early 17th-century practice, the editor has rendered a very simple realization of the bass lines. Experienced players may choose to elaborate at their discretion. Some florid right-hand passages are proposed, usually to mirror or echo the melodic interest or specific editorial passaggi in the trumpet part. Original bass notes that are tied have been preserved as indicative of a change of chord or voicing for the second note. Otherwise, modern notational conventions prevail without comment.

To enhance quick identification and ready comparison with the original source, the present edition preserves the family names associated with the pieces in the original method book, as, after the first sonata ("Prima Sonata di Tromba, et Organo insieme detta del Colloreto"), Fantini did not give these sonatas numbers, only names. Obvious incongruities, omissions, and printers errors have been recognized and corrected or adjusted as necessary without further comment. The few such additional critical revisions to the original music can be gleaned by comparing this practical edition to the original publication -- Girolamo Fantini, Modo per Imparare a sonare di Tromba, (Francofort: Vuastch, 1638; facsimile editions, Milan: 1934, and Nashville: The Brass Press, 1972; English translation, Nashville: 1976). Though sometimes alternative decisions and modifications have occurred in preparing this edition, one can get a fairly accurate picture of the specific changes made by consulting the list of corrections and additions included in the editor's study of the entire tutor -- Henry Meredith, "Girolamo Fantini's Trumpet Method: A Practical Edition," (D.A. dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 1984), pp.210-11.

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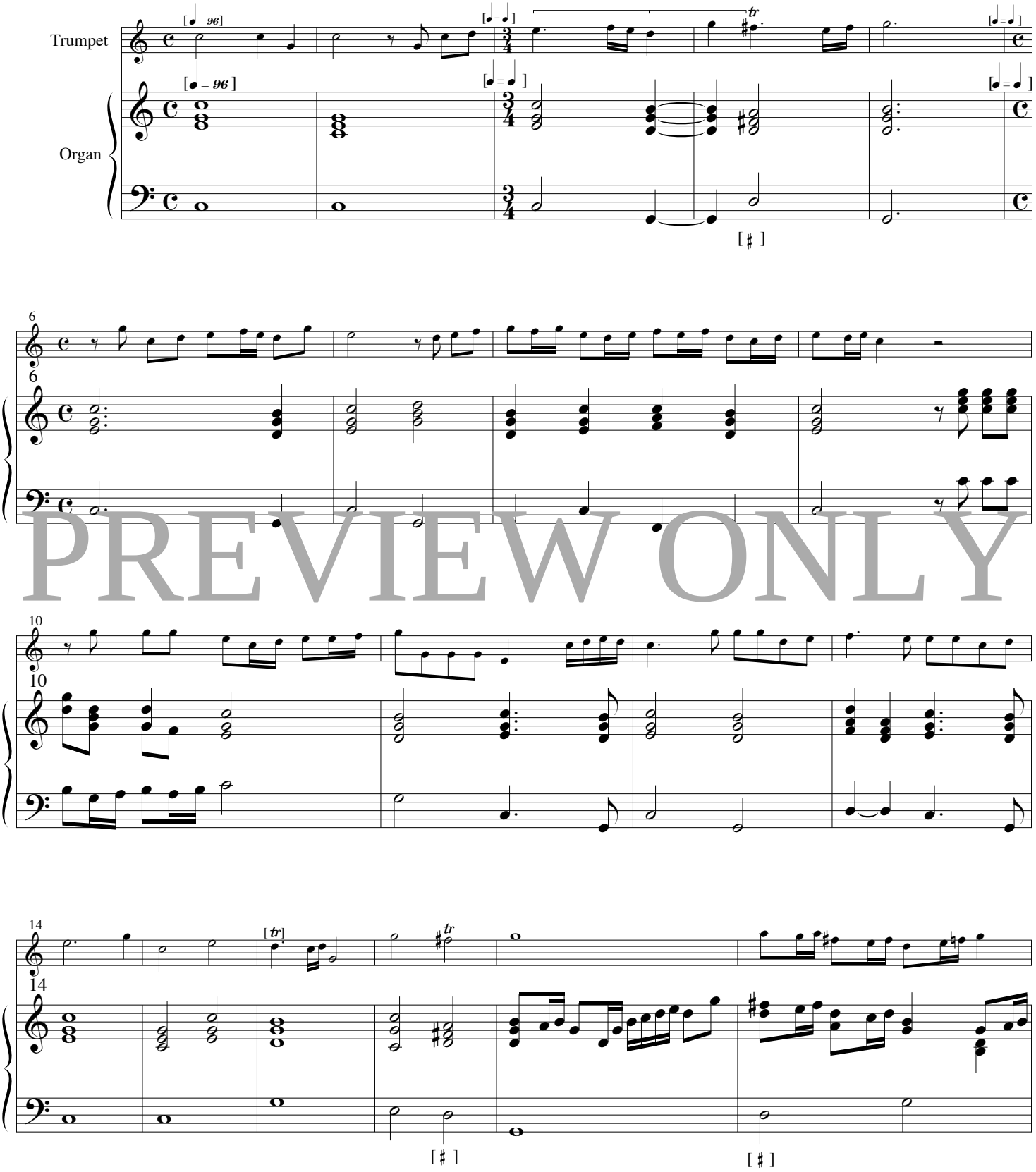
SONATA No. 1 - Colloreto



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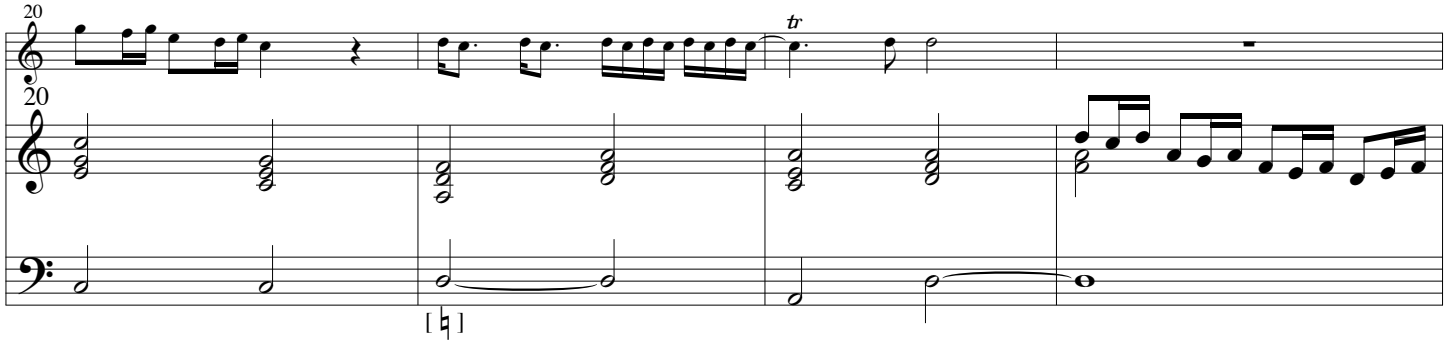

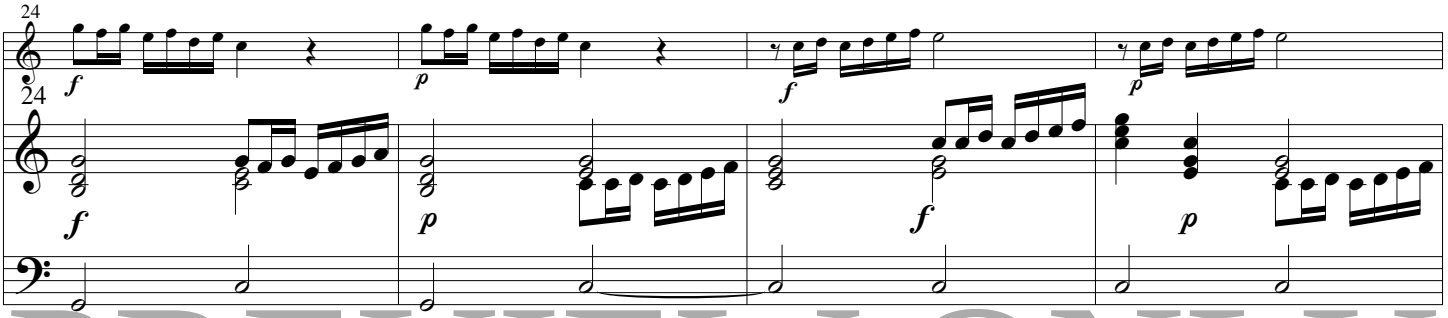

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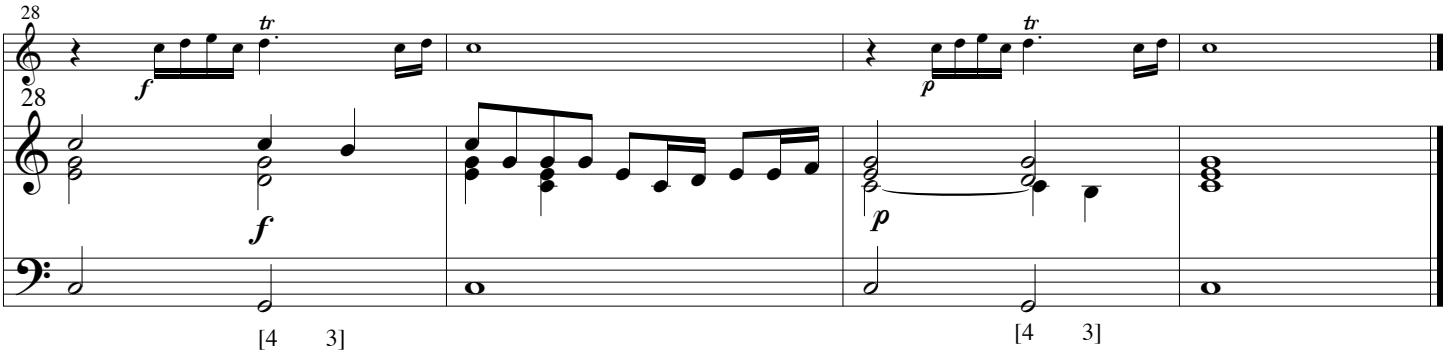

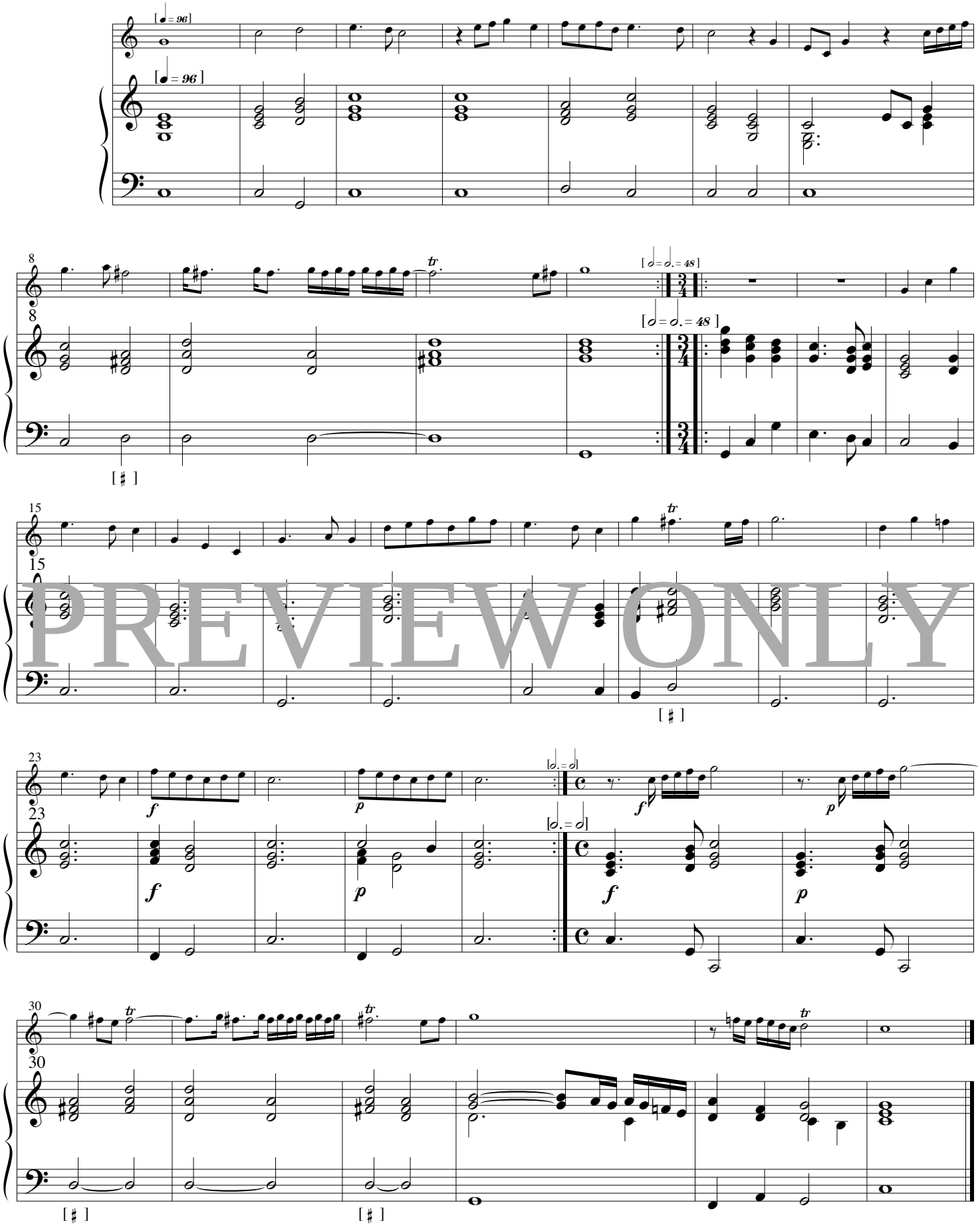

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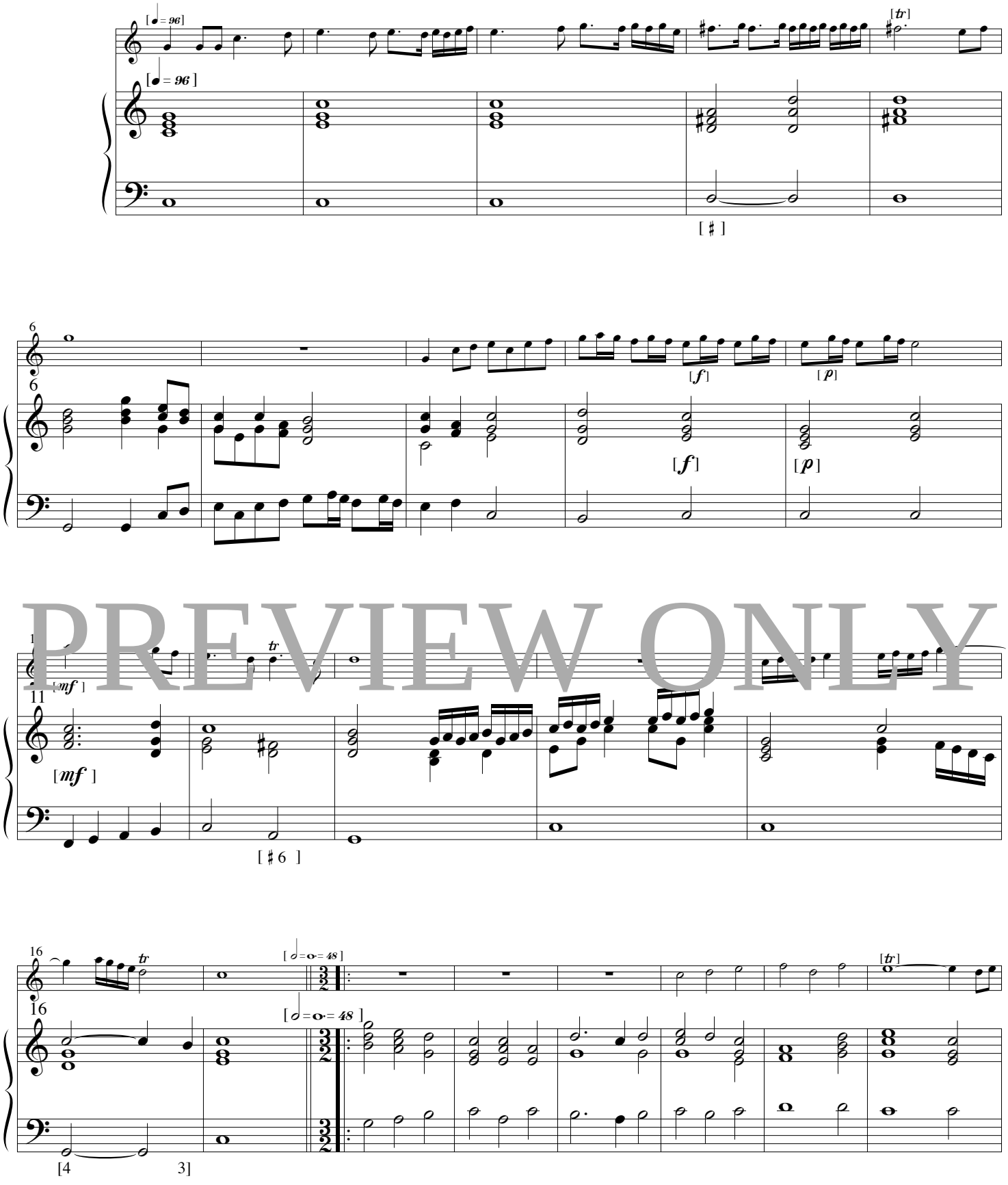

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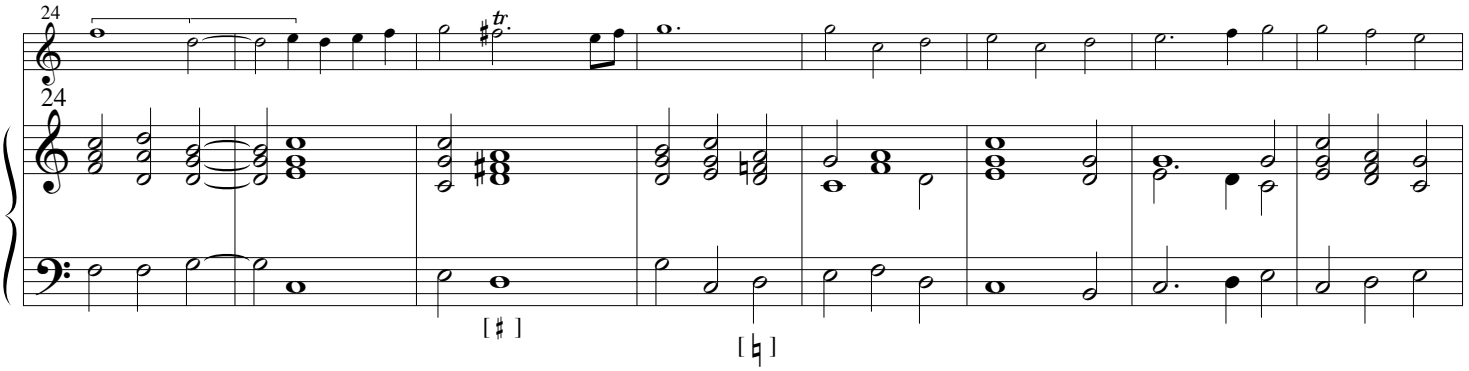

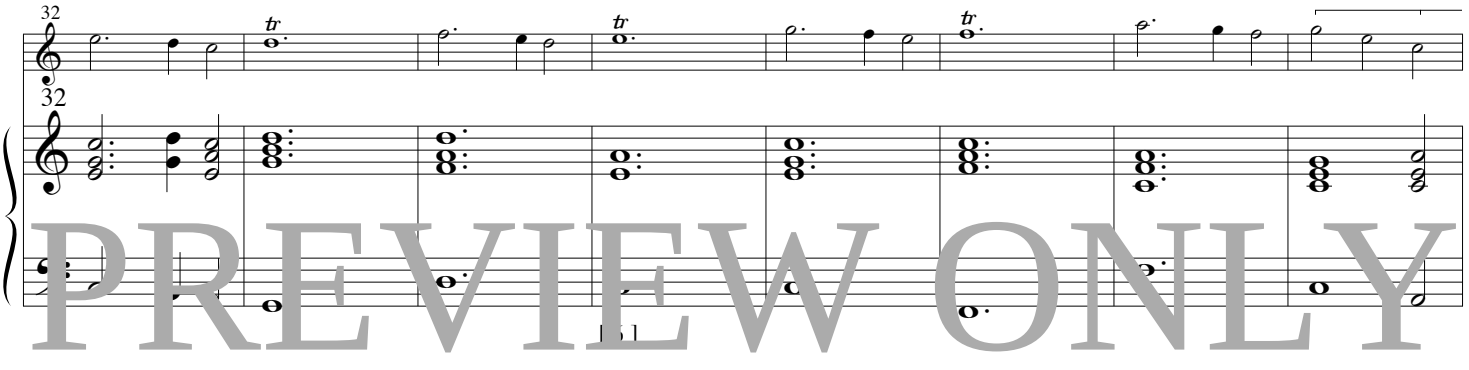

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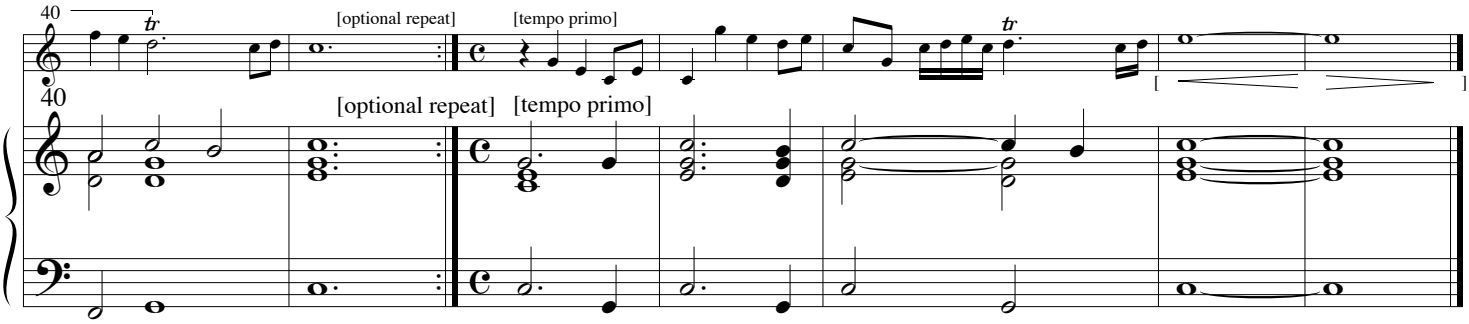

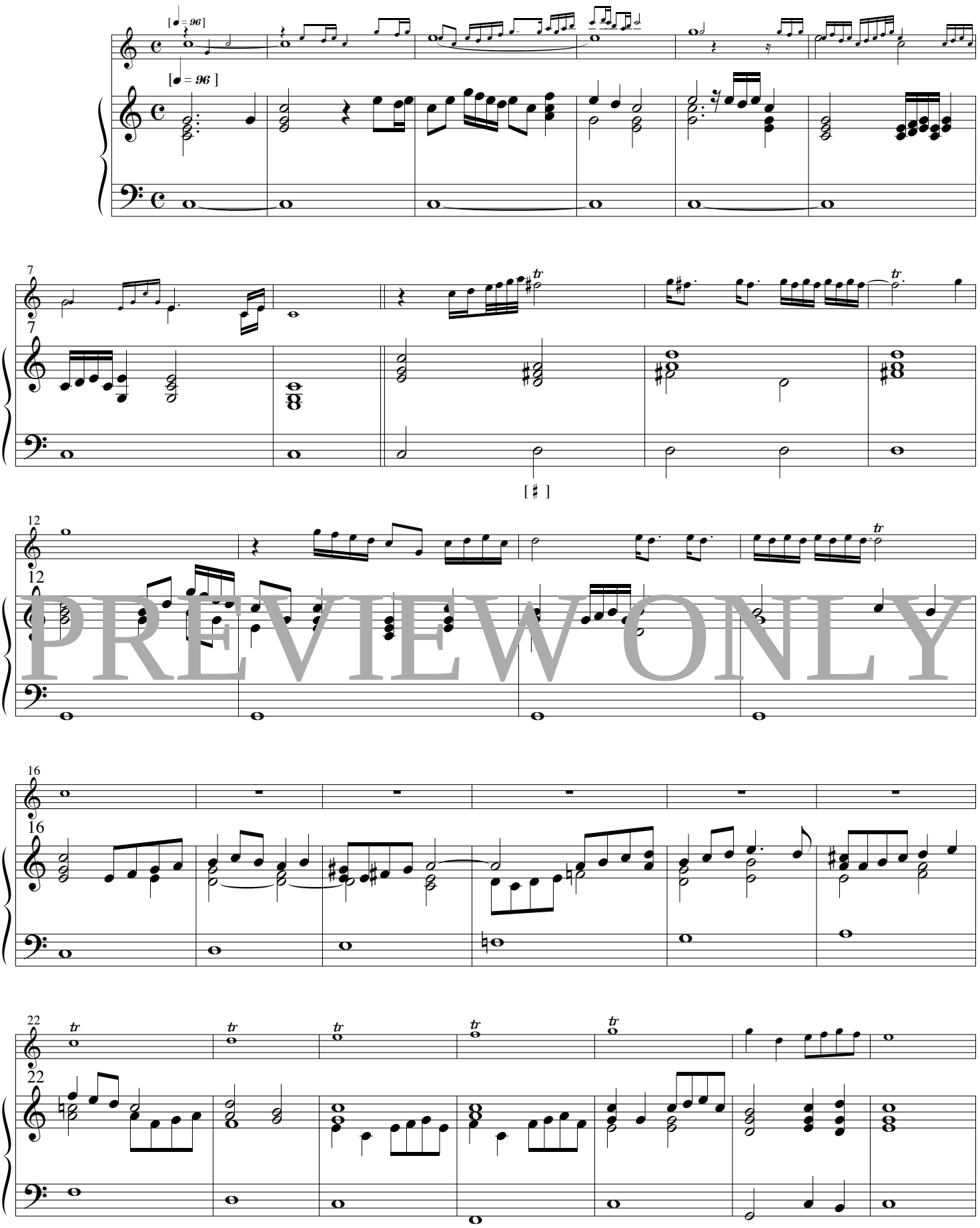

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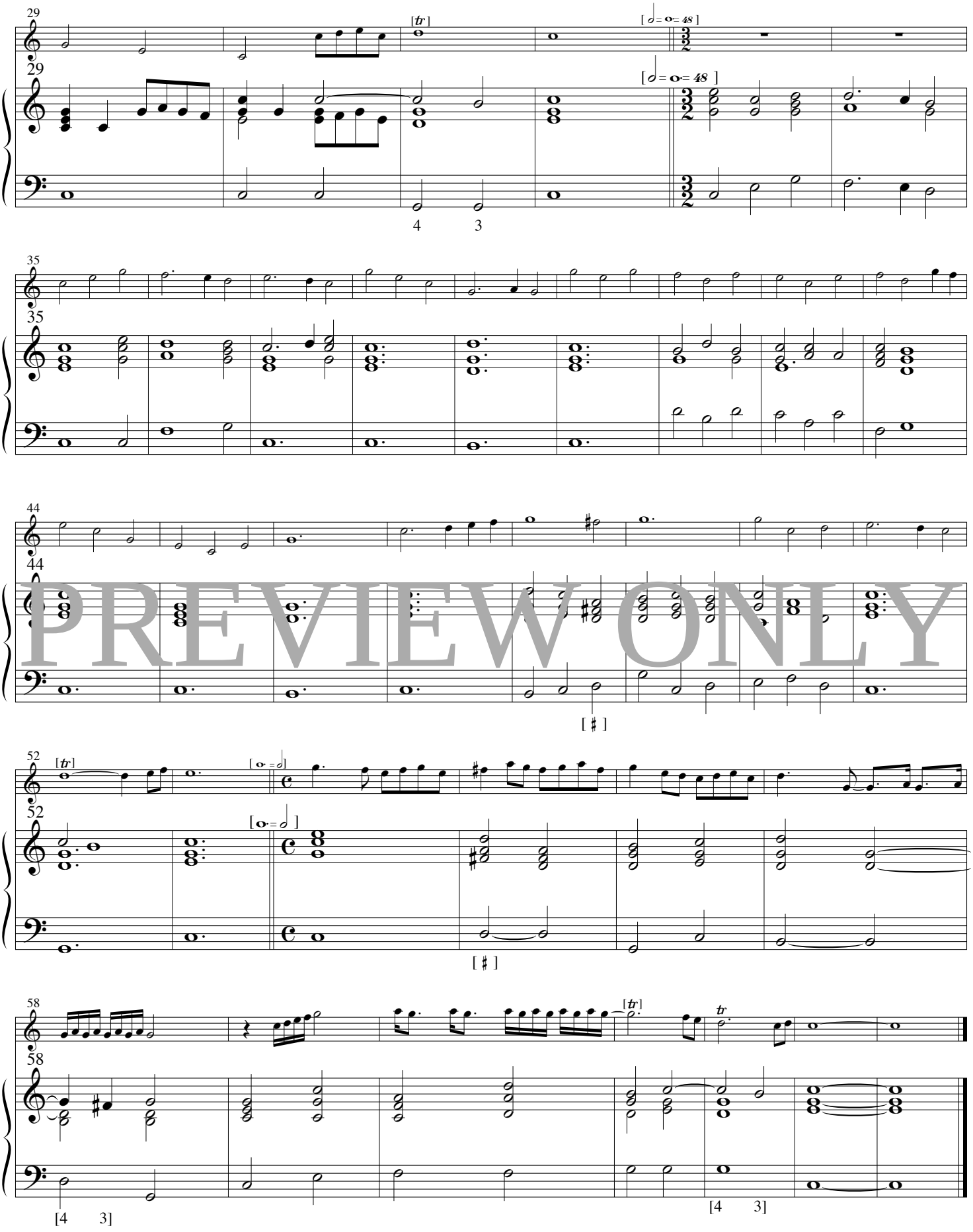

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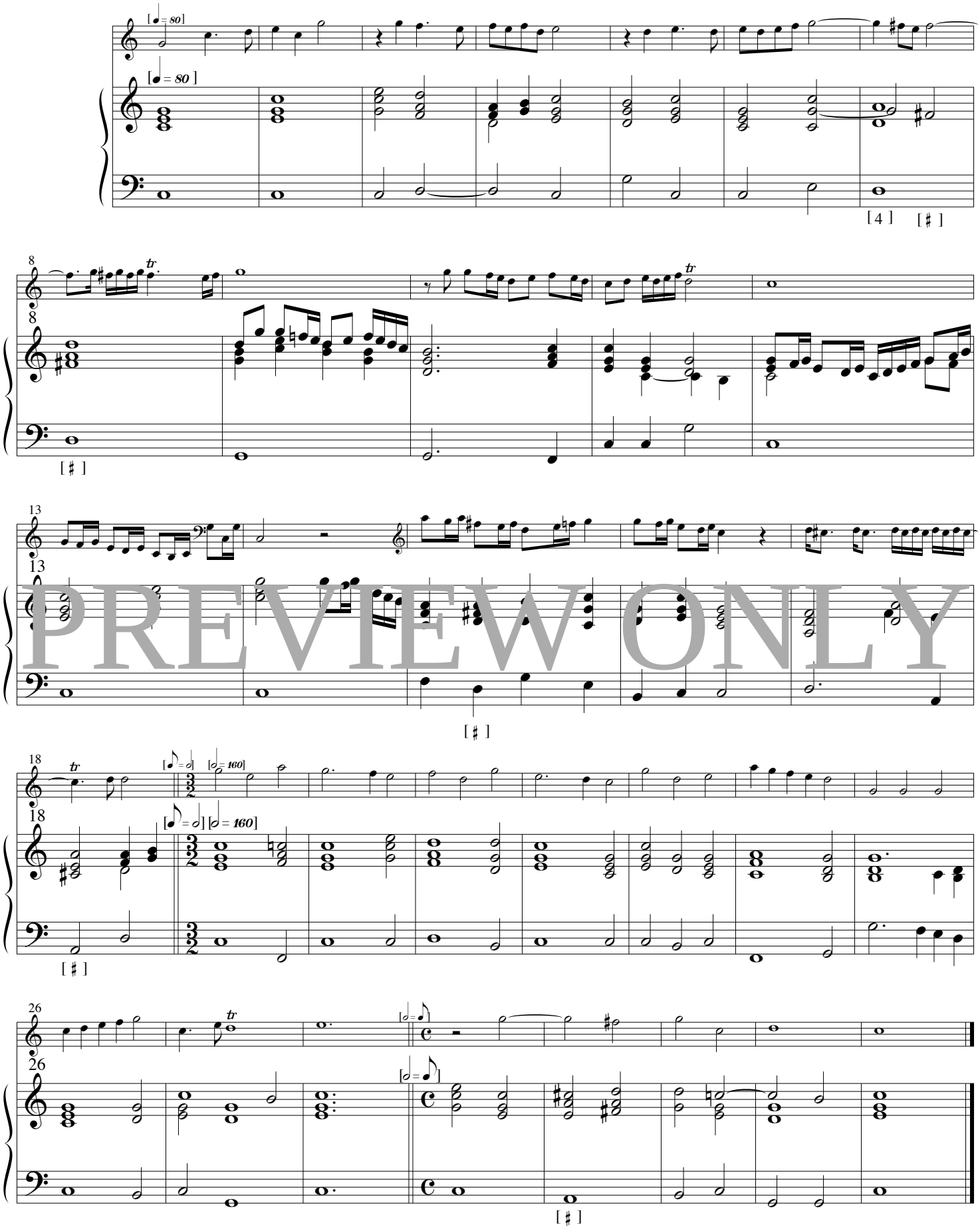

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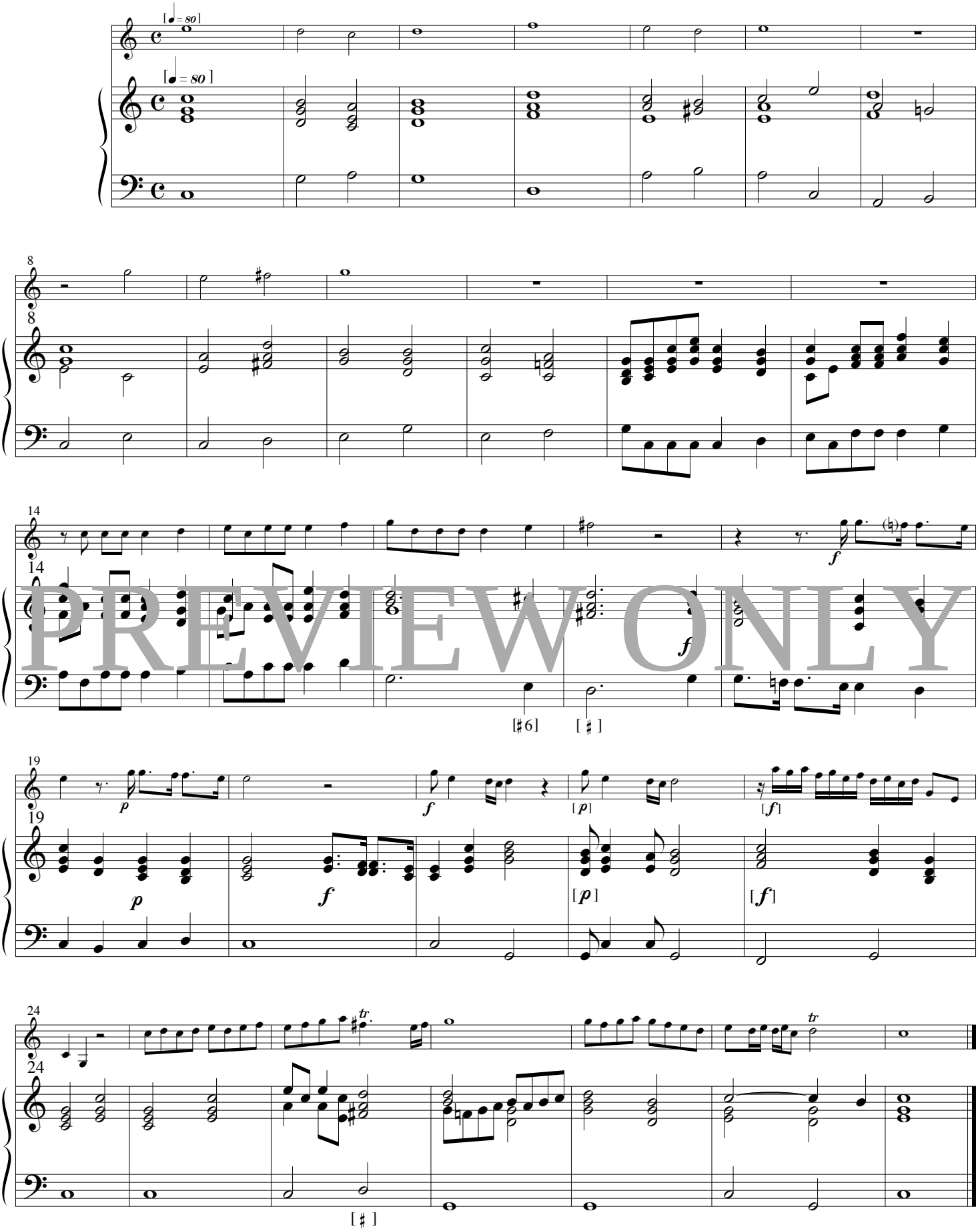

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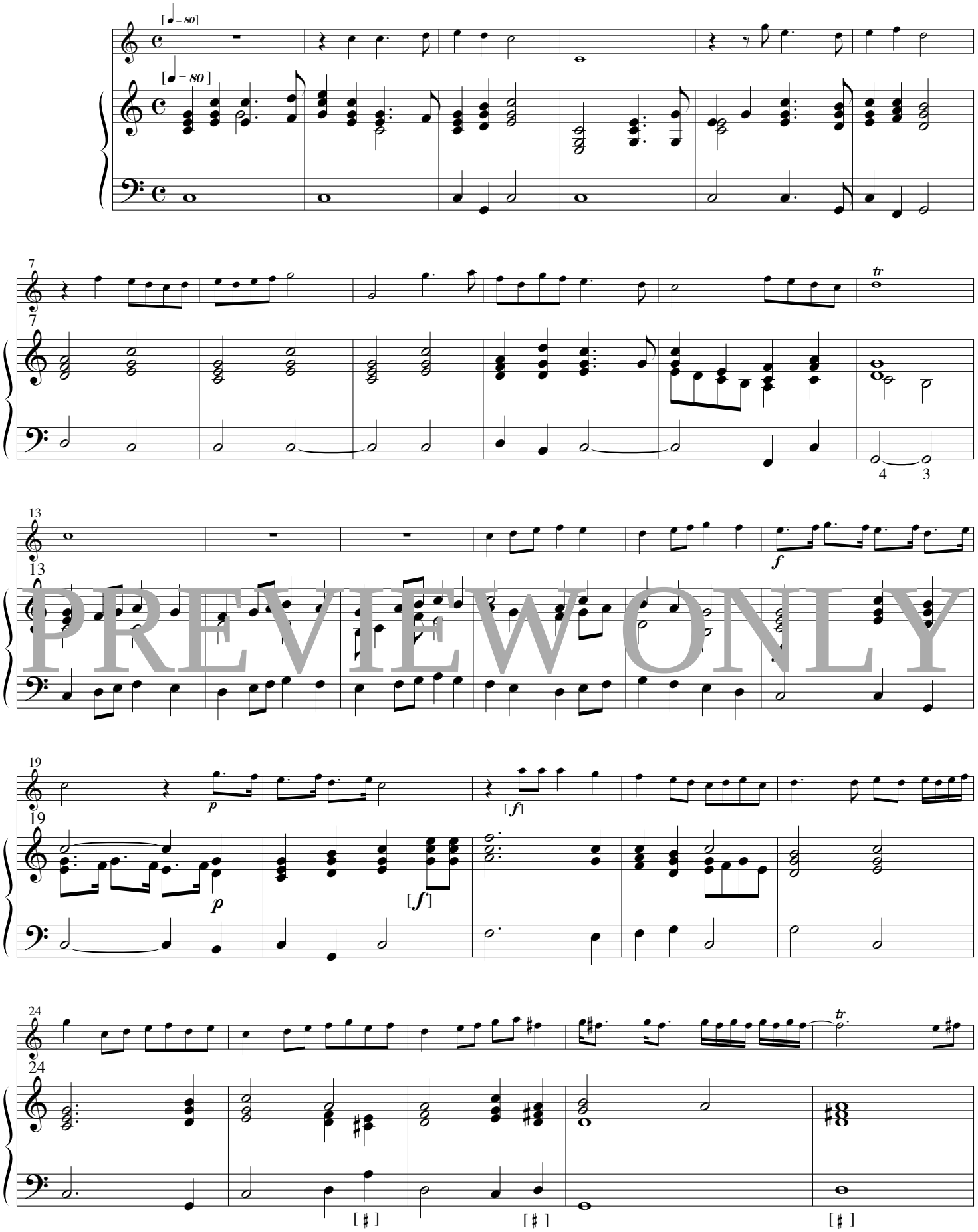

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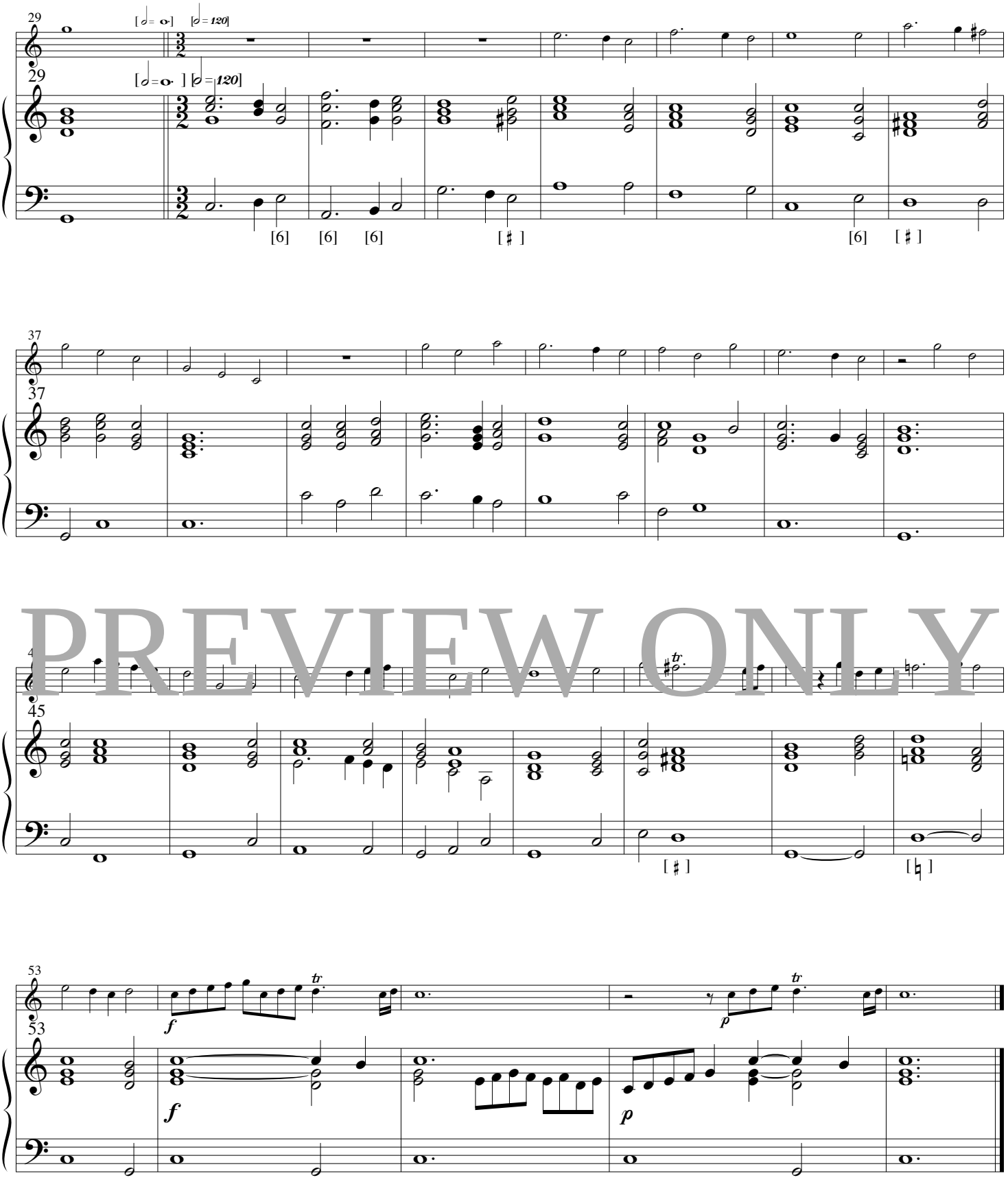

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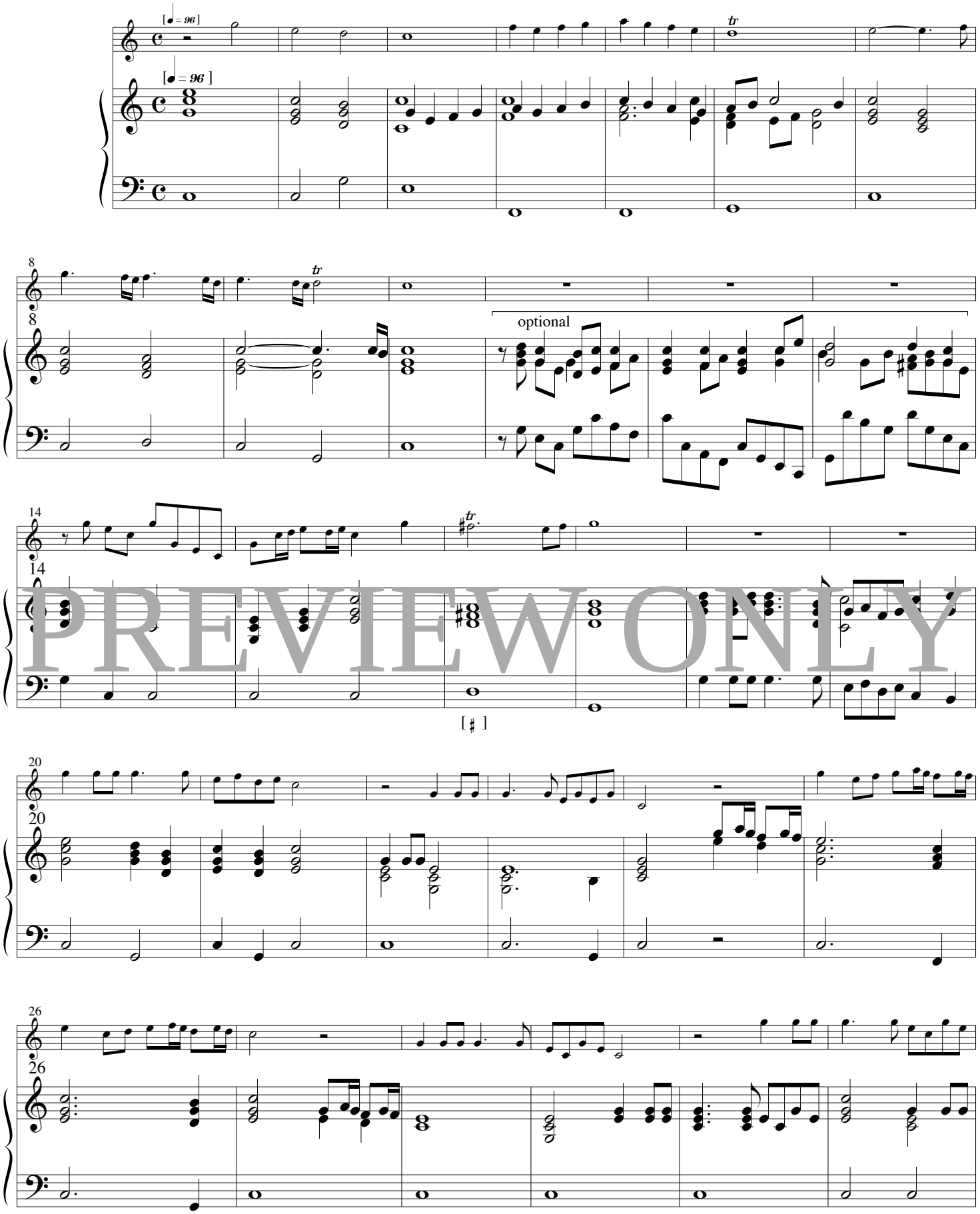

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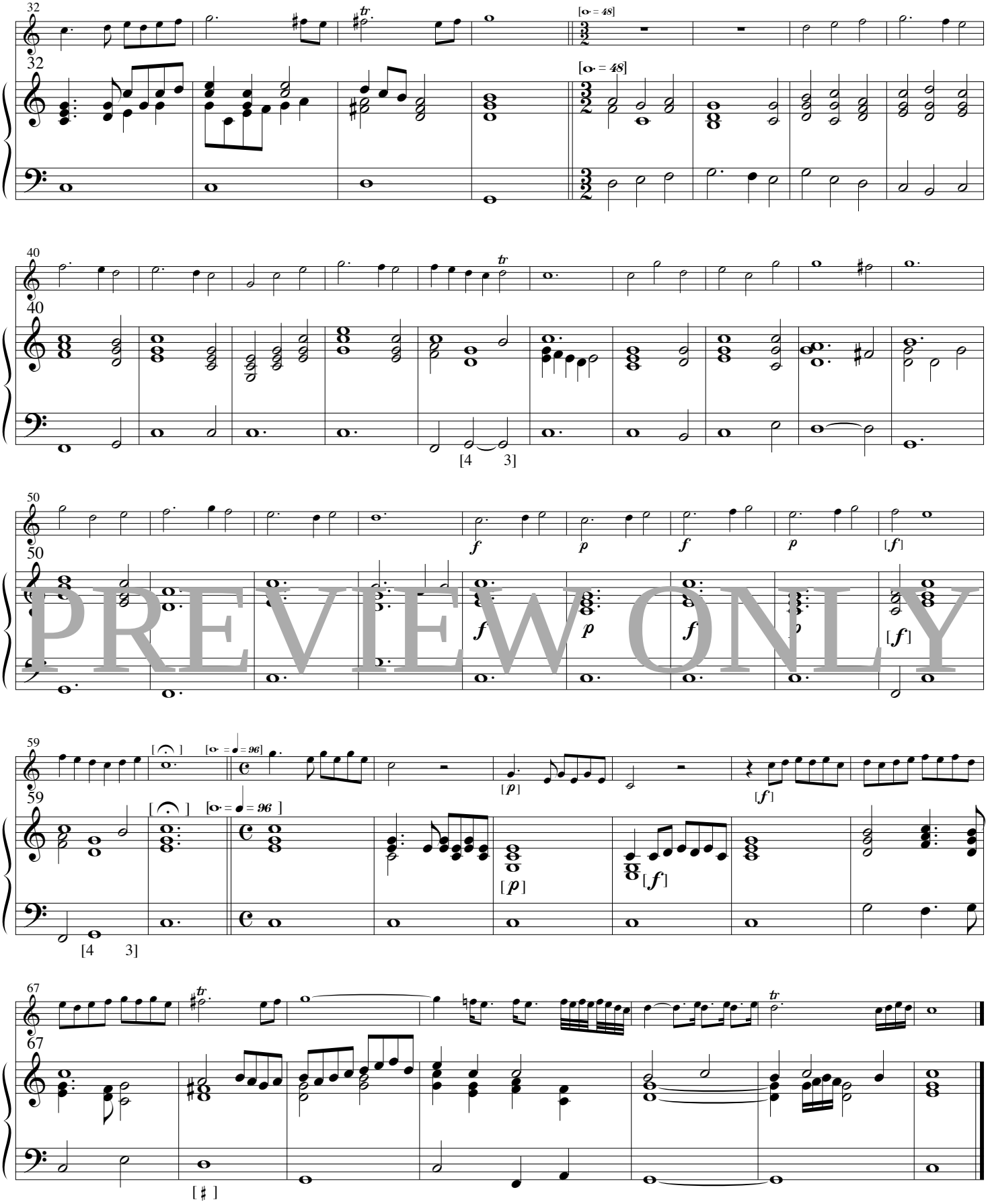

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