Hollandse Boerenlieties

Volume 1: A–D

from the collection published by Estienne Roger
arranged by Victor Eijkhout

Introduction

If one tries to imagine music making in the homes of wealthy Dutch citizens of the 18th century, it is easy to think of the great composers of that era. However, that music may well have been beyond the skills of the average amateur, and so there was a large demand for more easy to play music. The Amsterdam publishers Estienne Roger and Pieter Mortier (largely plagiarizing Roger) capitalized on this, printing a collection of almost one thousand 'Peasant Songs and Contra Dances', in multiple volumes. In the following decades other publications in a similar vein, mostly of theatre melodies, followed. The success of these pieces is clear from the fact that the price of the volumes gradually more than doubled!

The Roger collection consists of fairly simple melodies, typically no more than 30 to 40 measures long and with a range of about an octave and a half, easy to play on the hand-viool, the flute, or oboe, as Mortier suggests on the title page. All pieces have appealing titles, sometimes suggesting a song ('Daer waeren drie Jonge Maegden': There were three young maidens) though no lyrics are given, sometimes indicating a theatrical connection ('Coridon en Isabelle', from a mid-17th century play) or a dance, and ranging from high-brow ('Als de son seyn paerden ment': when the sun drives his horses, a reference to Greek mythology) to rather low ('De stront moolen': the manure mill).

Some of the tunes in this collection were collected from playhouses, fairs, markets, the theatre and such. On the other hand, for many the source is unclear and it is not improbable that they were written especially for publication. Also, even for the melodies with dance-related titles ("Galjaarde", "Ballet"), no choreographies are given or known. In fact, many melodies have irregular phrasing (a number of measures that is not a multiple of 4 or even 2) making it unlikely that were actually intended for dancing.

With the above-mentioned theatrical collections there is some evidence of a custom of improvised accompaniment, though that seems unlikely for home music making. Thus, coming up with accompaniment is entirely up to the creativity of the arranger. While some melodies seem suitable for part writing, others suggest a more chordal accompaniment. Therefore, the present arranger has felt unconstricted by any historical accuracy, and has used a variety of styles, and harmonic idioms, to suit the pieces rather than to recreate a possible contemporary performance practice.

About this project

The project for producing these quartet arrangement of the Roger melodies was started in late 2014. Release into the public domain was supported by a Kickstarter campaign (http://tinyurl.com/lietiesproject). In particular, support by Barbara Beeton, Barbara Moore, Bill Grundmann, Colin Touchin, David Melanson, Ed Jay, Elaine Robbins, Evelyn Brengle, G. Barrett, Glen Shannon, Jack Hemby, Jay Boisseau, John Morgan, Karen Hoffman Blizzard, Maria Cox, Marie Yang Lee, Richard Parsons, Richard Rossi, Slobodan Vujisic, Victoria Starbuck is gratefully acknowledged.

About the arranger

Victor Eijkhout (born 1959 in Arnhem, the Netherlands; currently residing in Austin TX, USA) is a longtime multi-instrumentalist with a history of playing in, and writing for, wind ensembles, jazz and pop bands, choir, and other instrument combinations. Currently he plays recorder in the early music ensemble The Austin Troubadours. In recent years his composition activities have targeted the recorder, writing both faux-renaissance pieces and more intuitive pantonal pieces.

List of melodies

1. Achter de heylighe steegh (SATB) 9
2. Adieu schoon Rotterdam (SATB) 10
3. Adieu schoone liefde (SATB) 11
4. Ag waarde minnaar mijn (SATB) 12
5. Al de jonge luyde (SATB) 14
6. Al wat men doet men kan geen juffrouw winnen (SATB) 16
7. Allemode (SATB) 17
8. Allemande C. Kist (SATB) 20
9. Als de son seyn paerden ment (SATB) 21
10. America (SATB) 22
11. Amsterdamse sinjoor (SATB) 23
12. Anna Mitje is stout (SATB) 24
13. Aurora brenght den klaeren dagh (SATB) . 25
14. Balet la la la (SAAT) 29
15. Ballet voor de slappe coort langhsaem (SAAT) 30
16. Basques Dans (SAAT) 31
17. Bedroefde princess (SAAT) 32
18. Bedroefde tyden (SAAT) 33
19. Bedroefde ziel (SATB) 34
20. Ben ik dan alleen verlate (SAAT) 36
21. Bessie licht u hemd op (SAAT) 37
22. Blaeuwe Rosynen en Mandelen (SAAT) . . 38
23. Boek wijte koek (SAAT) 39
24. Botter by de kaese (SSAA) 40
25. Bourree 5 (SSAA) 41
26. Bourree of men laet hem in sijn gelt beurs bijten (AATB) 42
27. Brabants lietje (ATTB) 43
28. Branle d'orleans (AATB) 44
29. Bredaas Biertje (ATTB) 46

SSAA arrangements

Botter by de kaese 40
Bourree 5 41

AATB arrangements

Bourree of men laet hem in sijn gelt beurs bijten 42
Branle d'orleans 44

SAAT arrangements

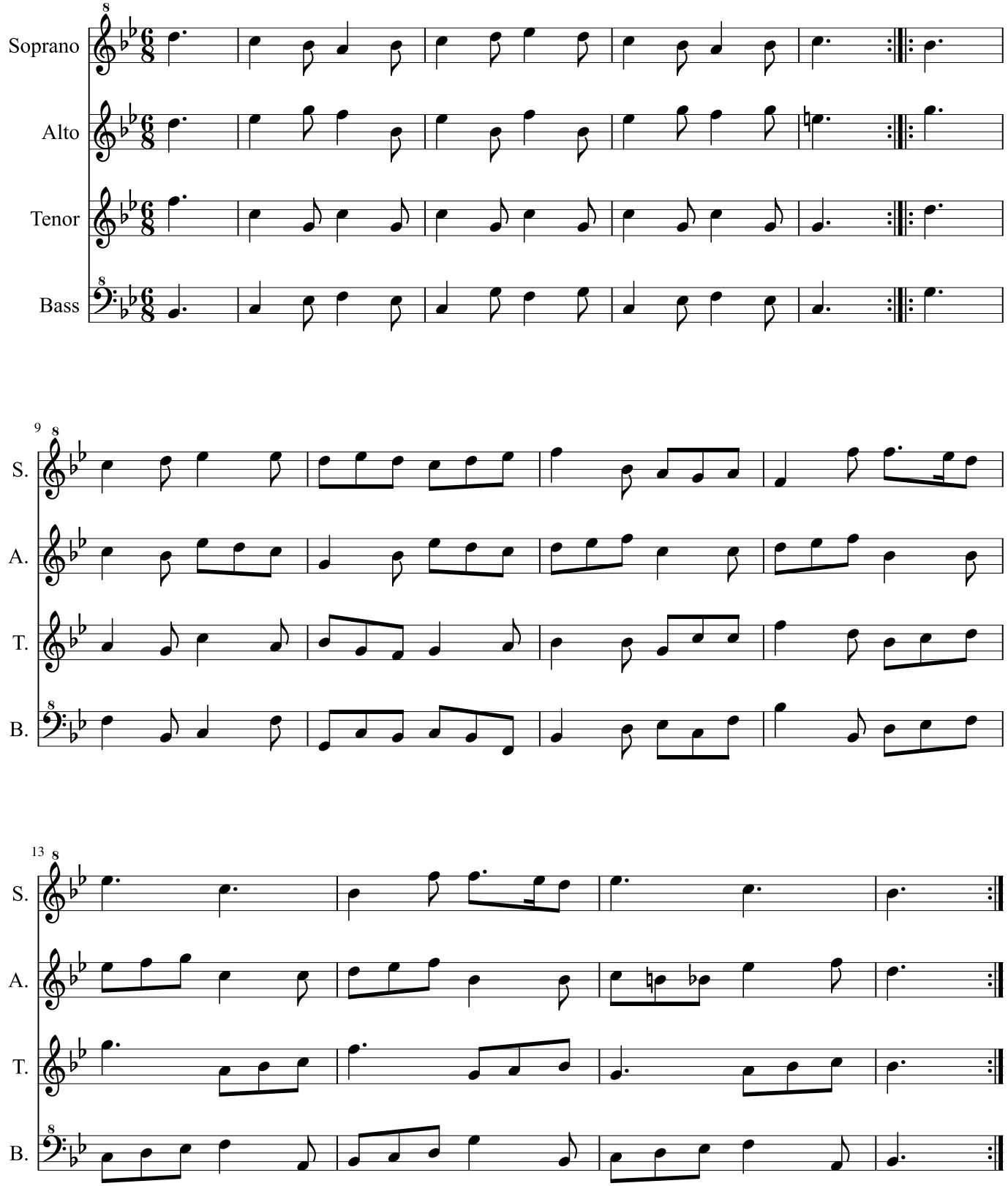
Balet la la la 29
Ballet voor de slappe coort langhsaem 30
Basques Dans 31
Bedroefde princess 32
Bedroefde tyden 33
Ben ik dan alleen verlate 36
Bessie licht u hemd op 37
Blaeuwe Rosynen en Mandelen 38
Boek wijte koek 39

ATTB arrangements

Brabants lietje 43
Bredaas Biertje 46

A

1. Achter de heylighe steegh



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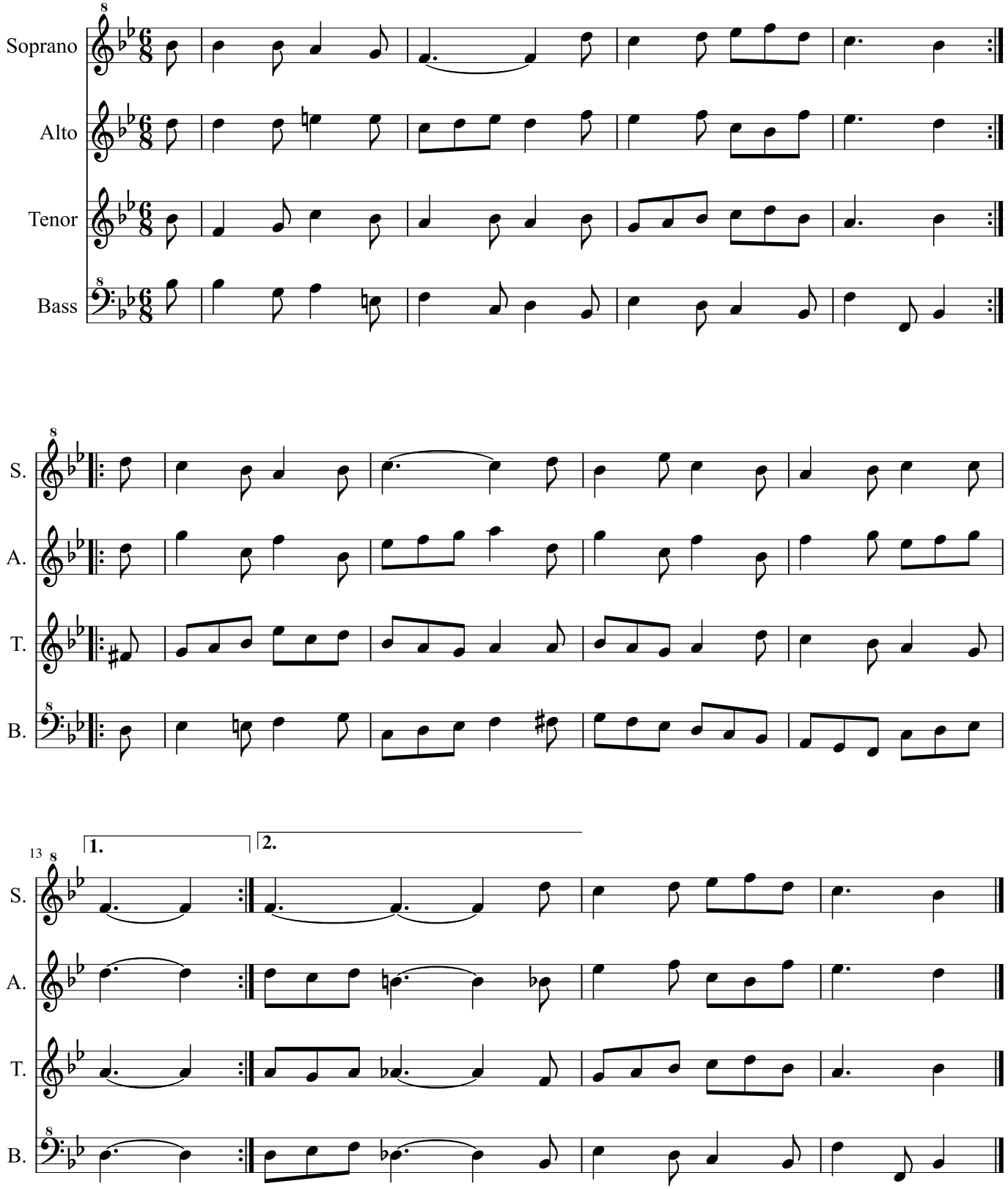

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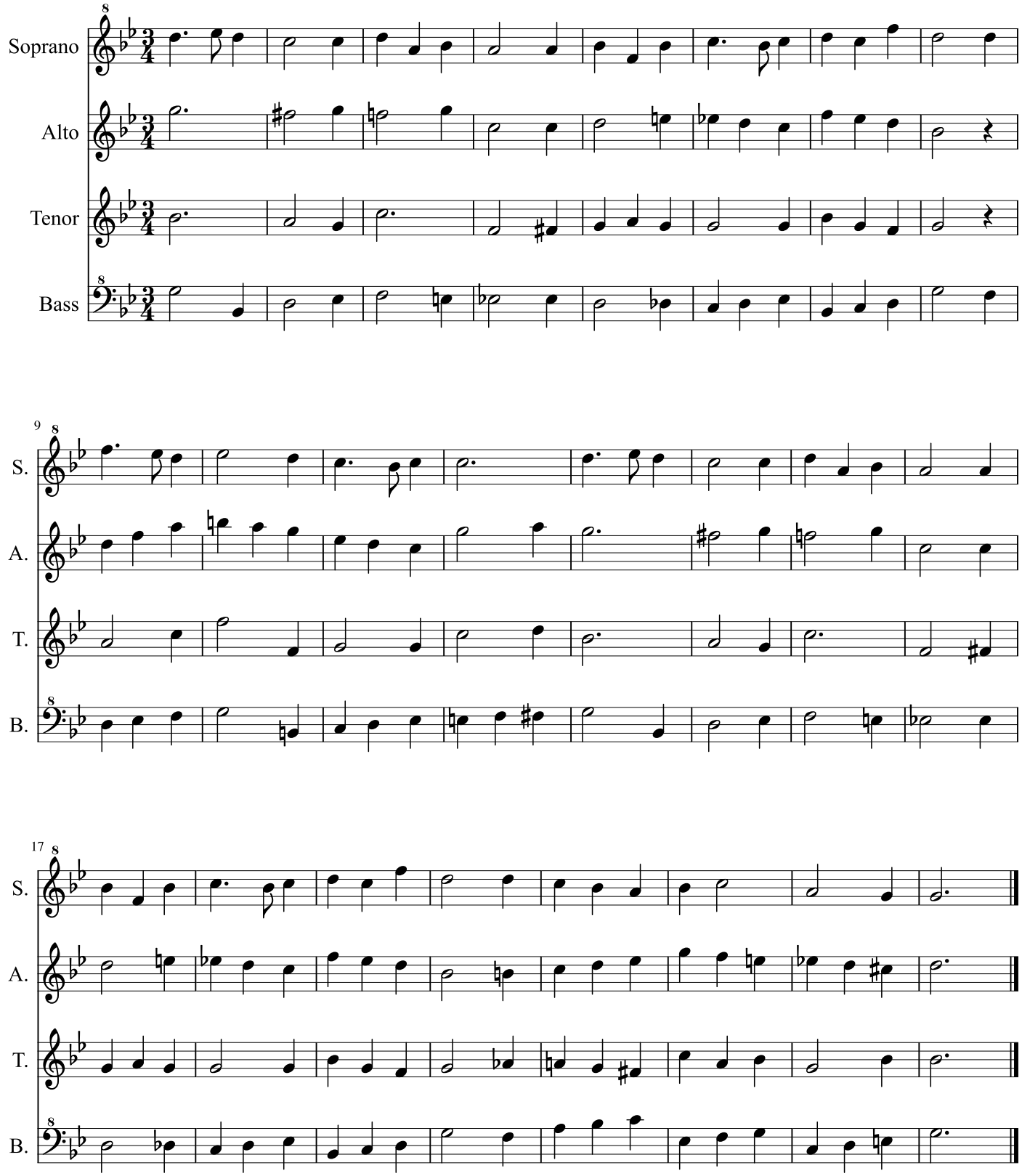
3. Adieu schoone liefde



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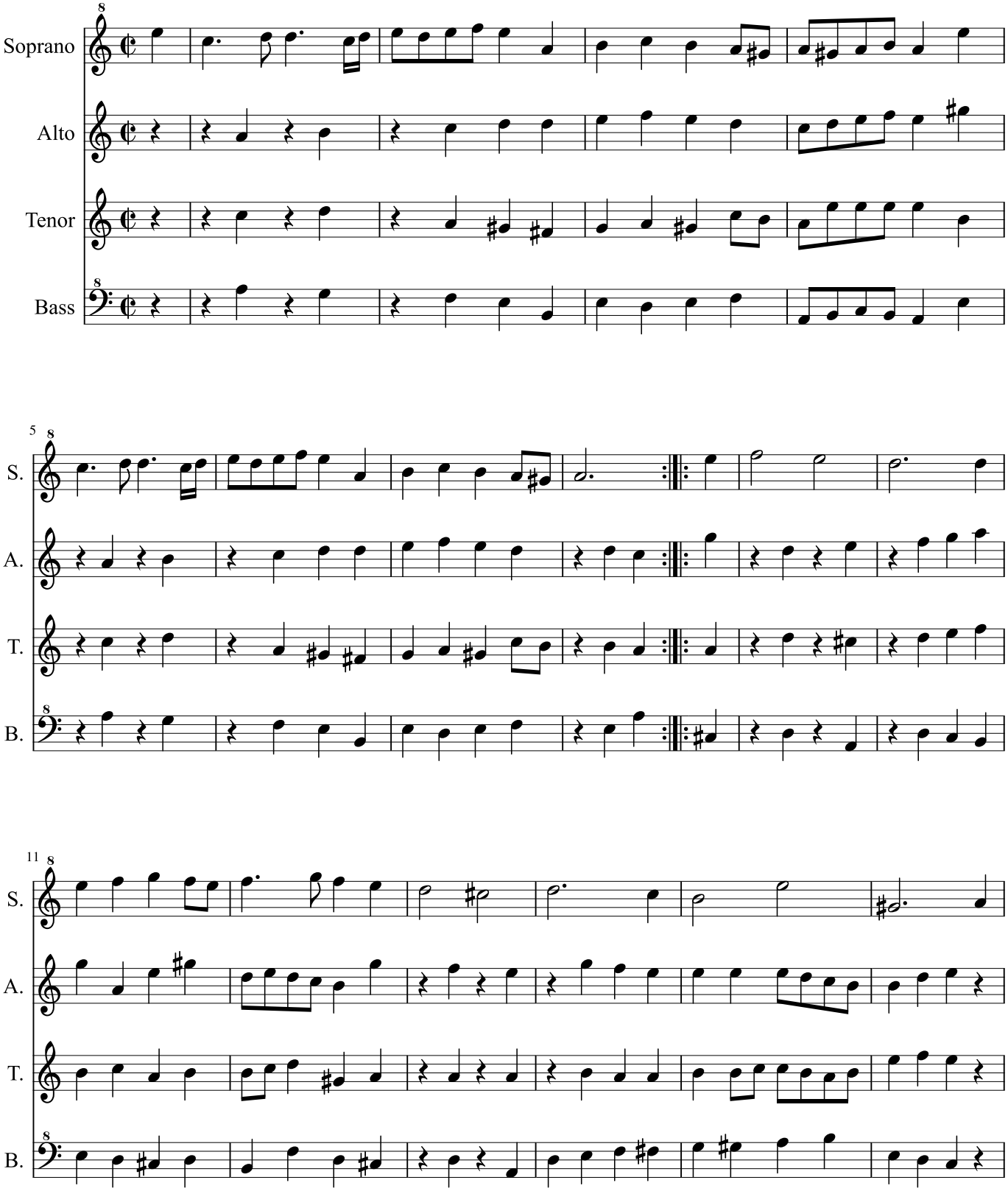

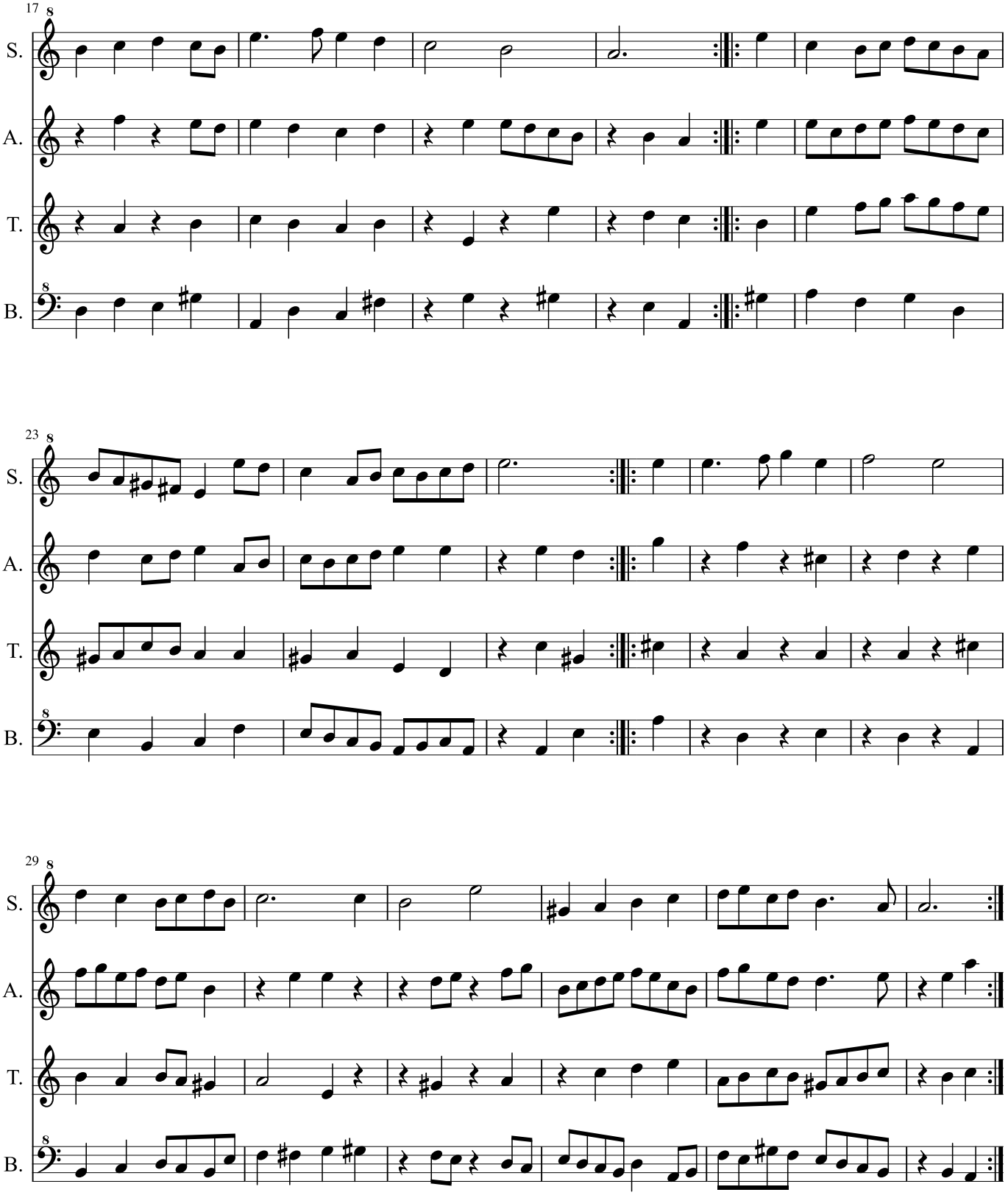
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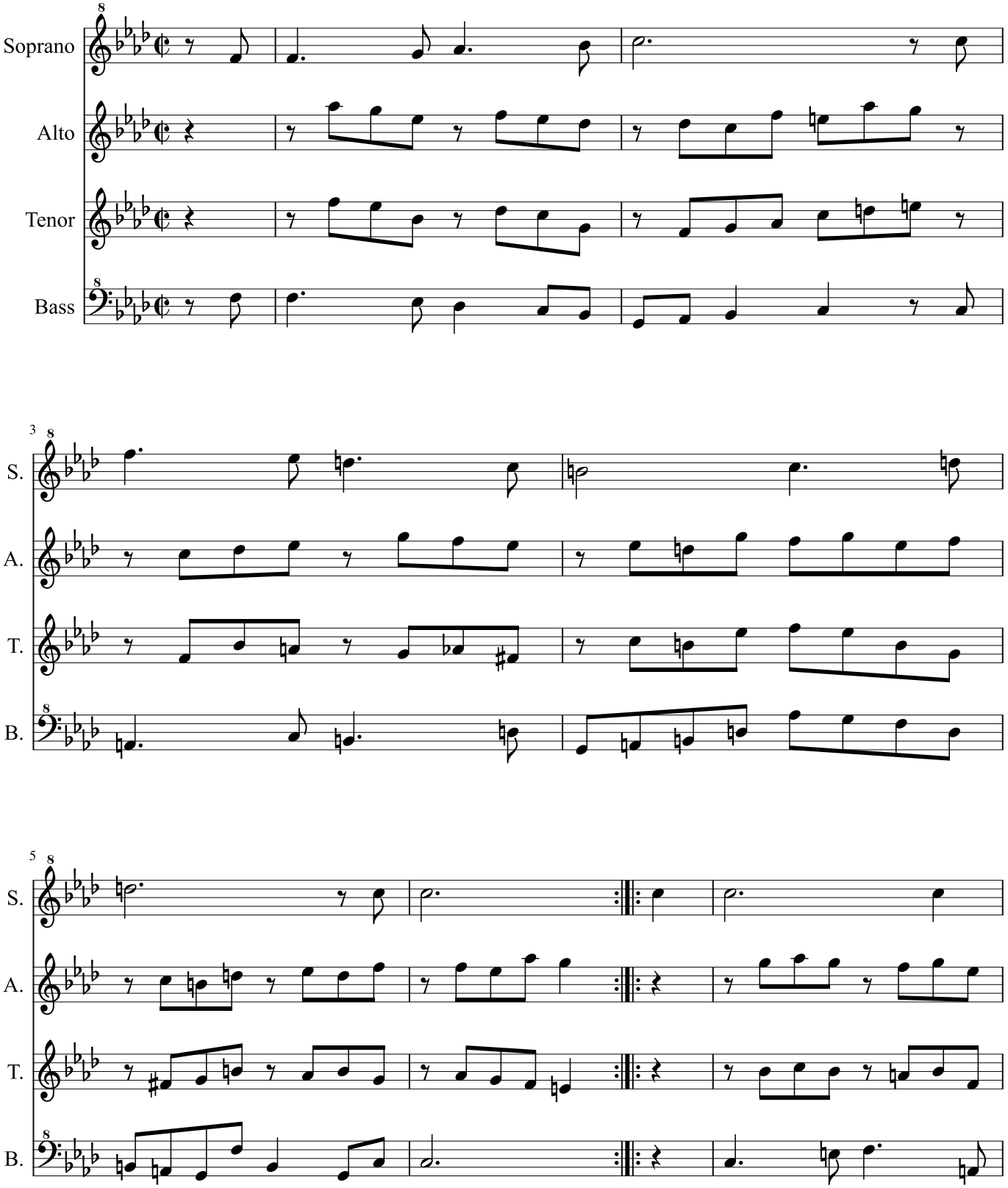
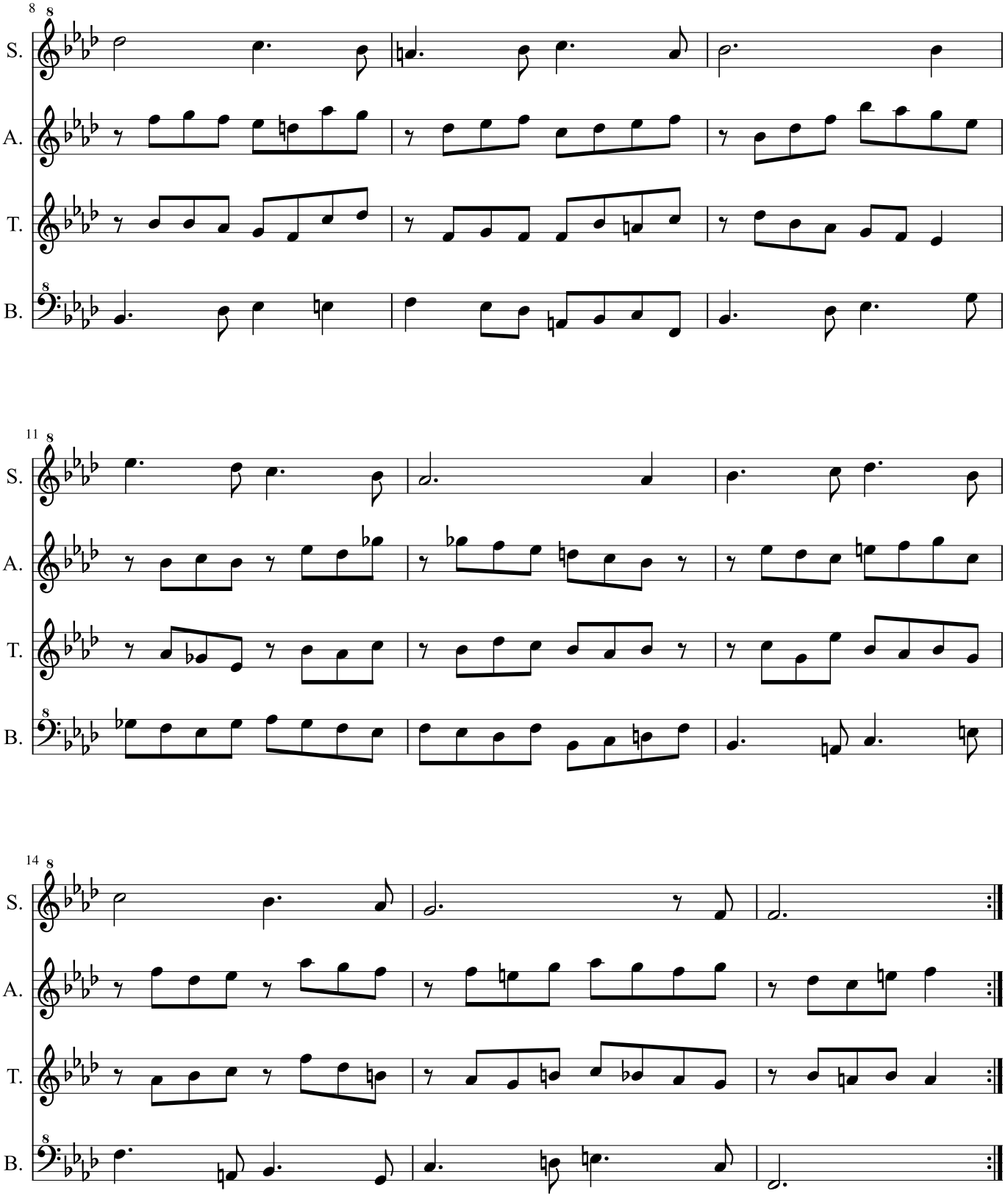
5. Al de jonge luyde

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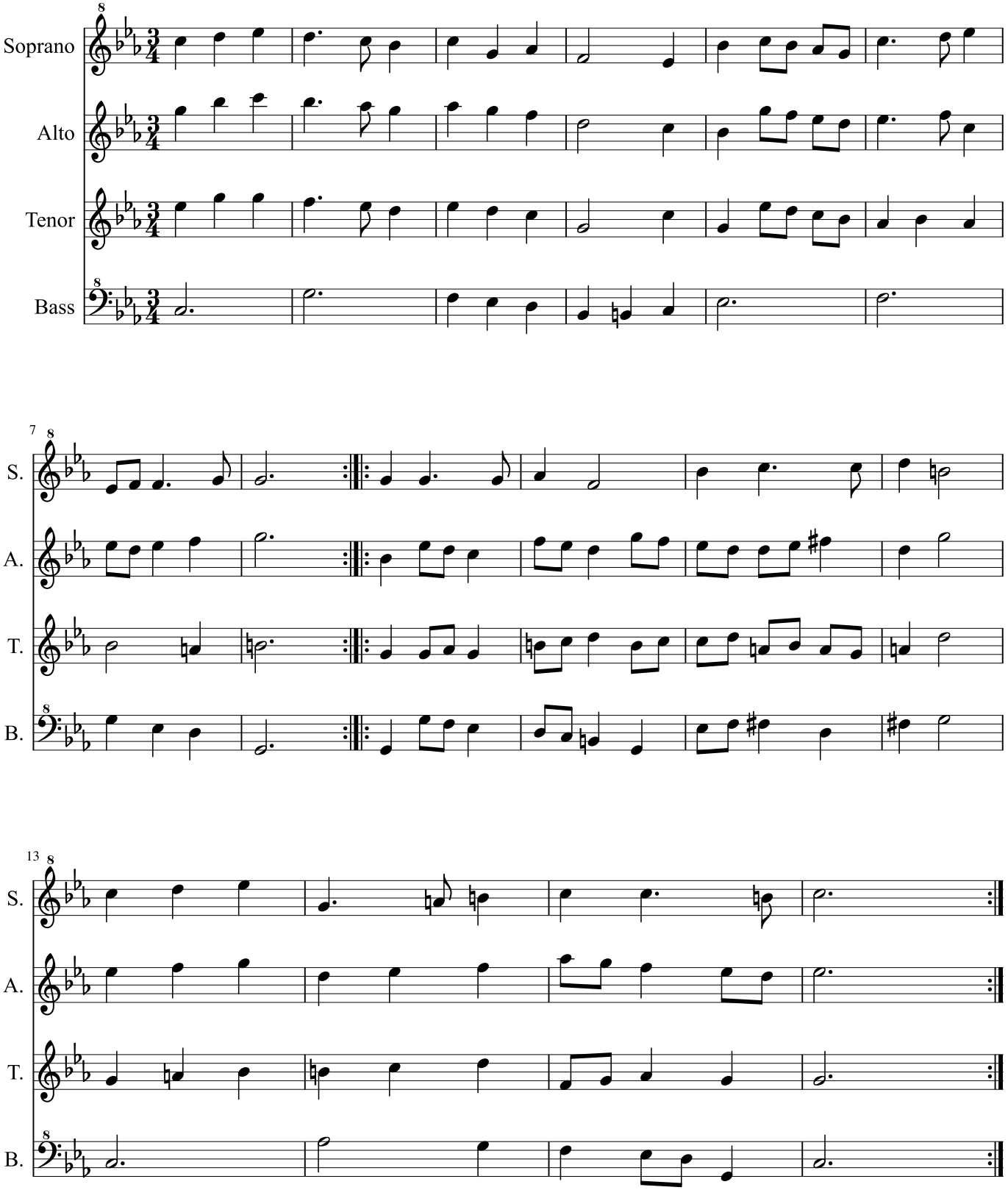
6. Al wat men doet men kan geen juffrouw winnen



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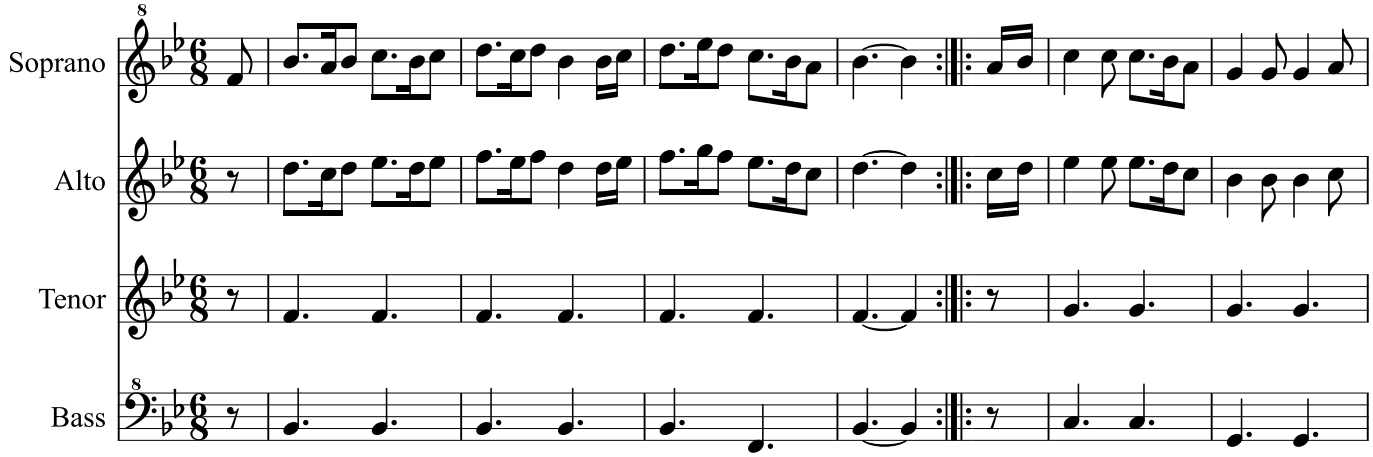
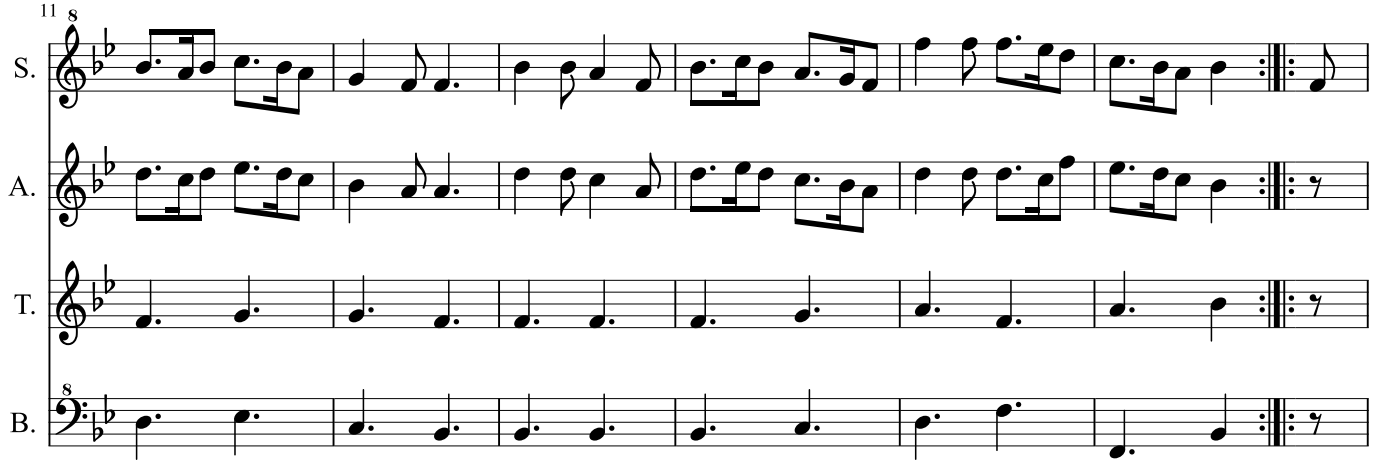
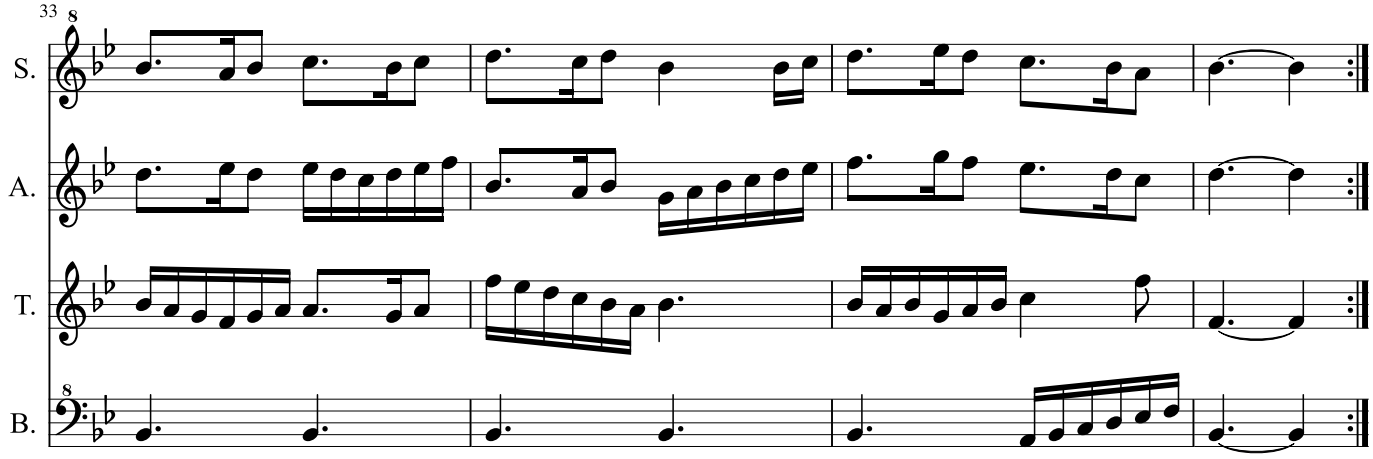
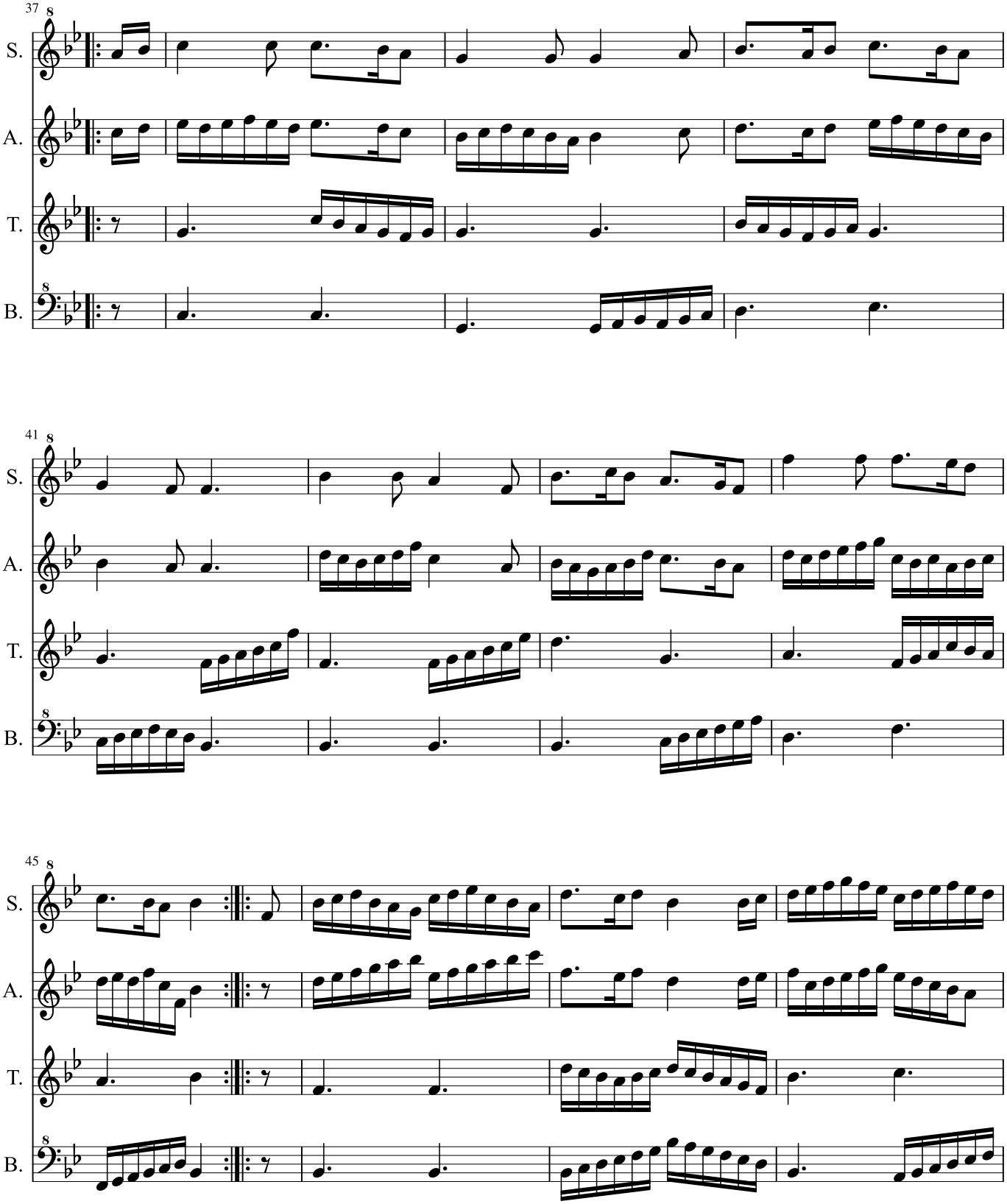






(variations added by the arranger)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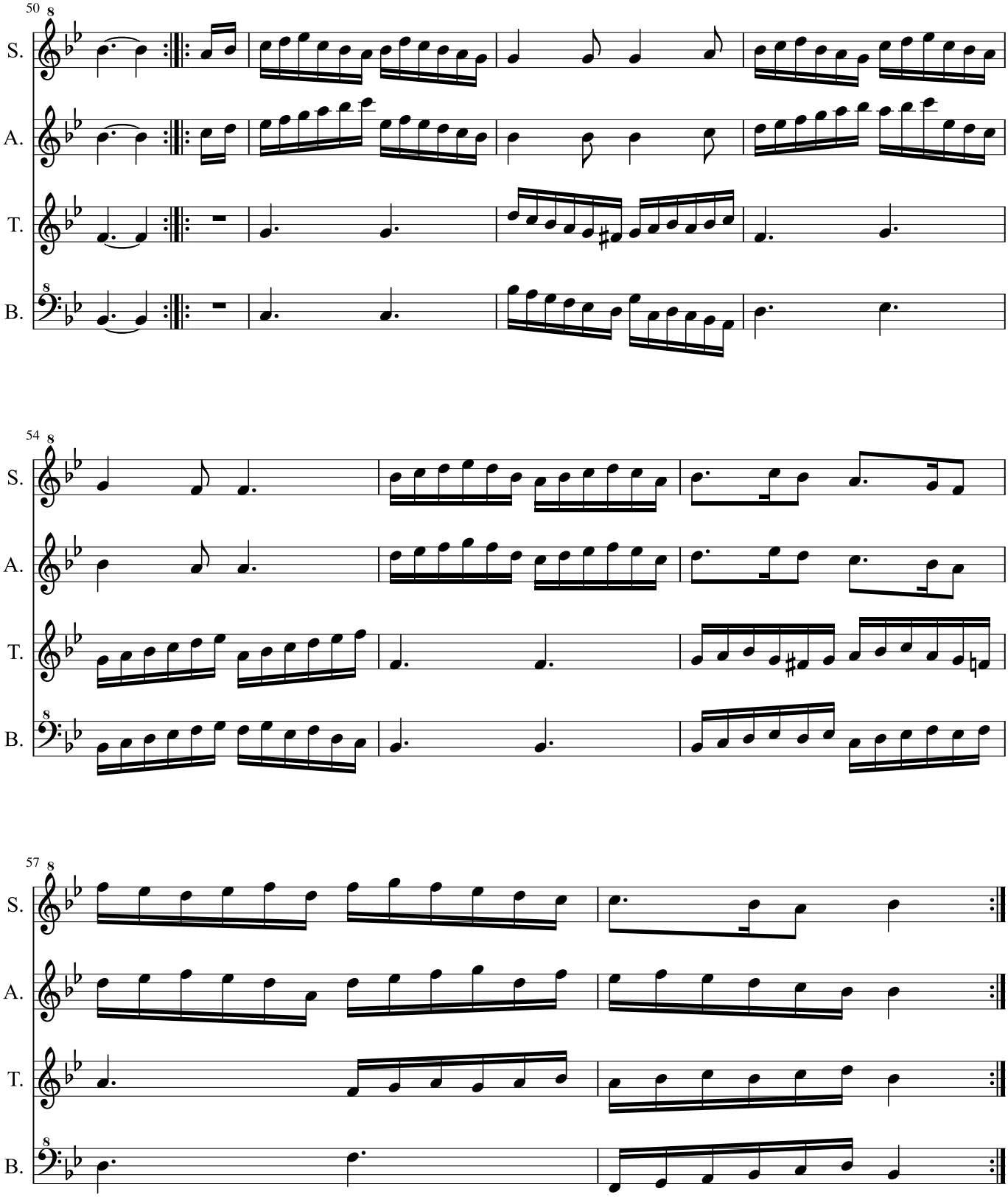
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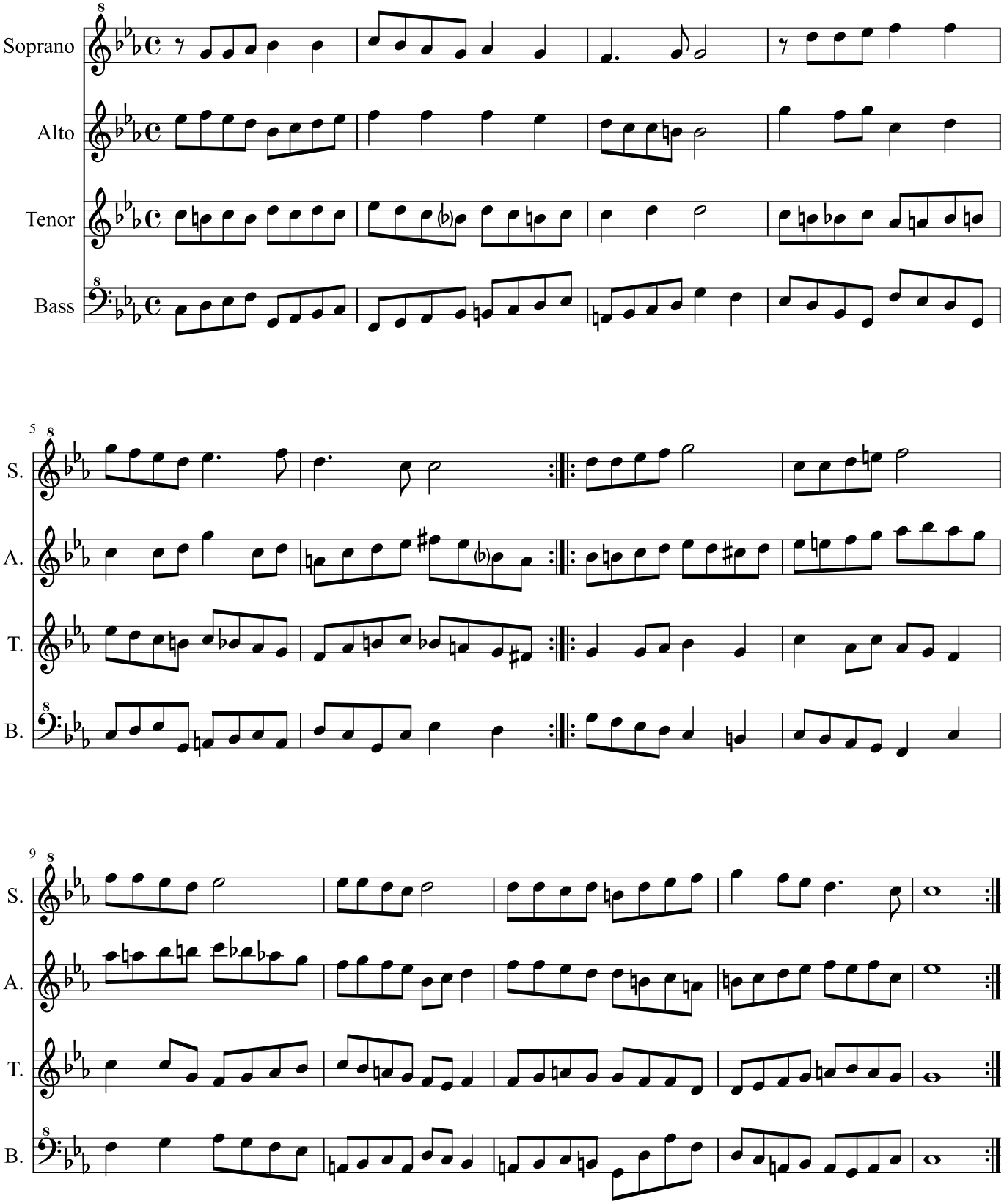
8. Allemande C. Kist



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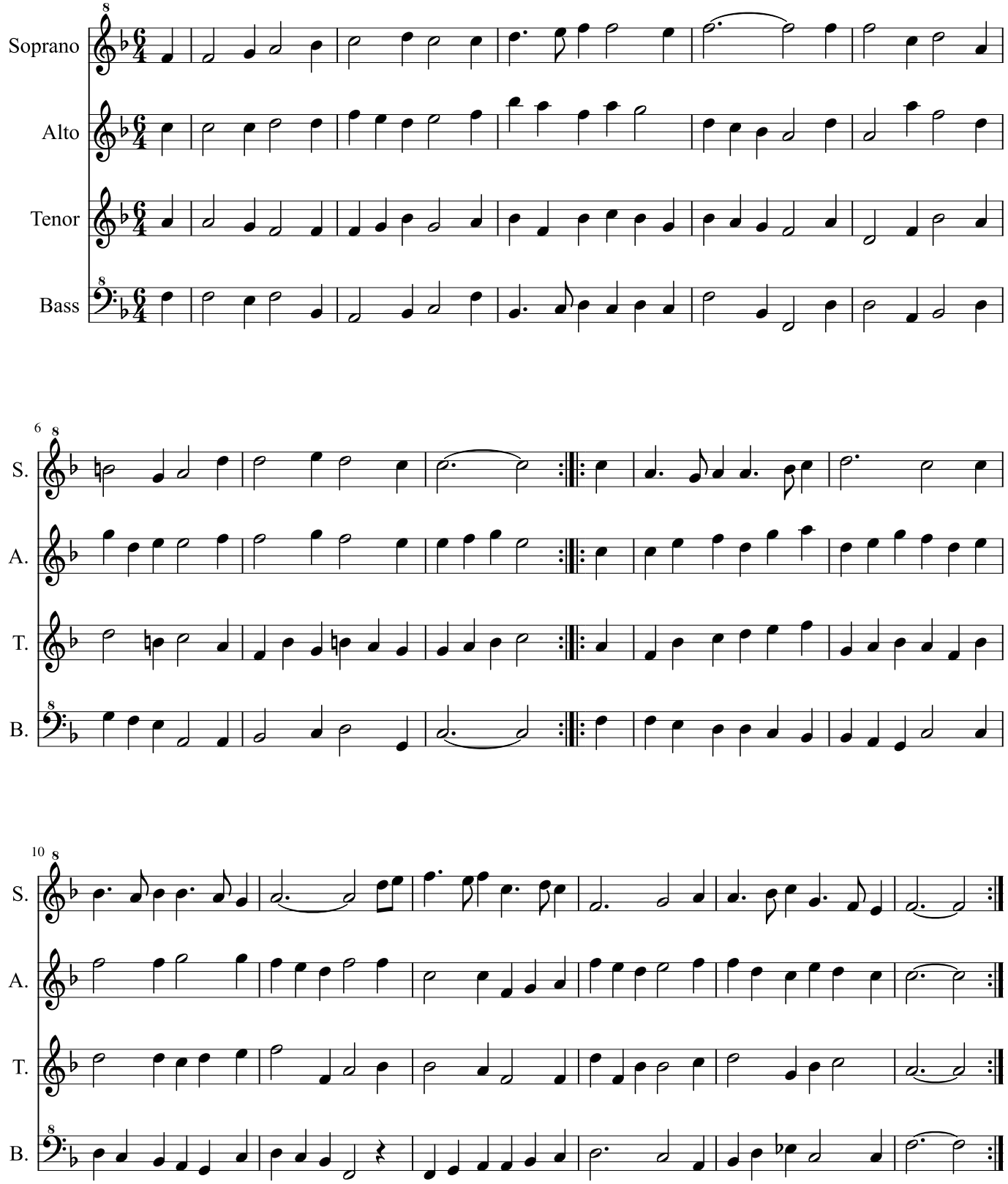
9. Als de son seyn paerden ment



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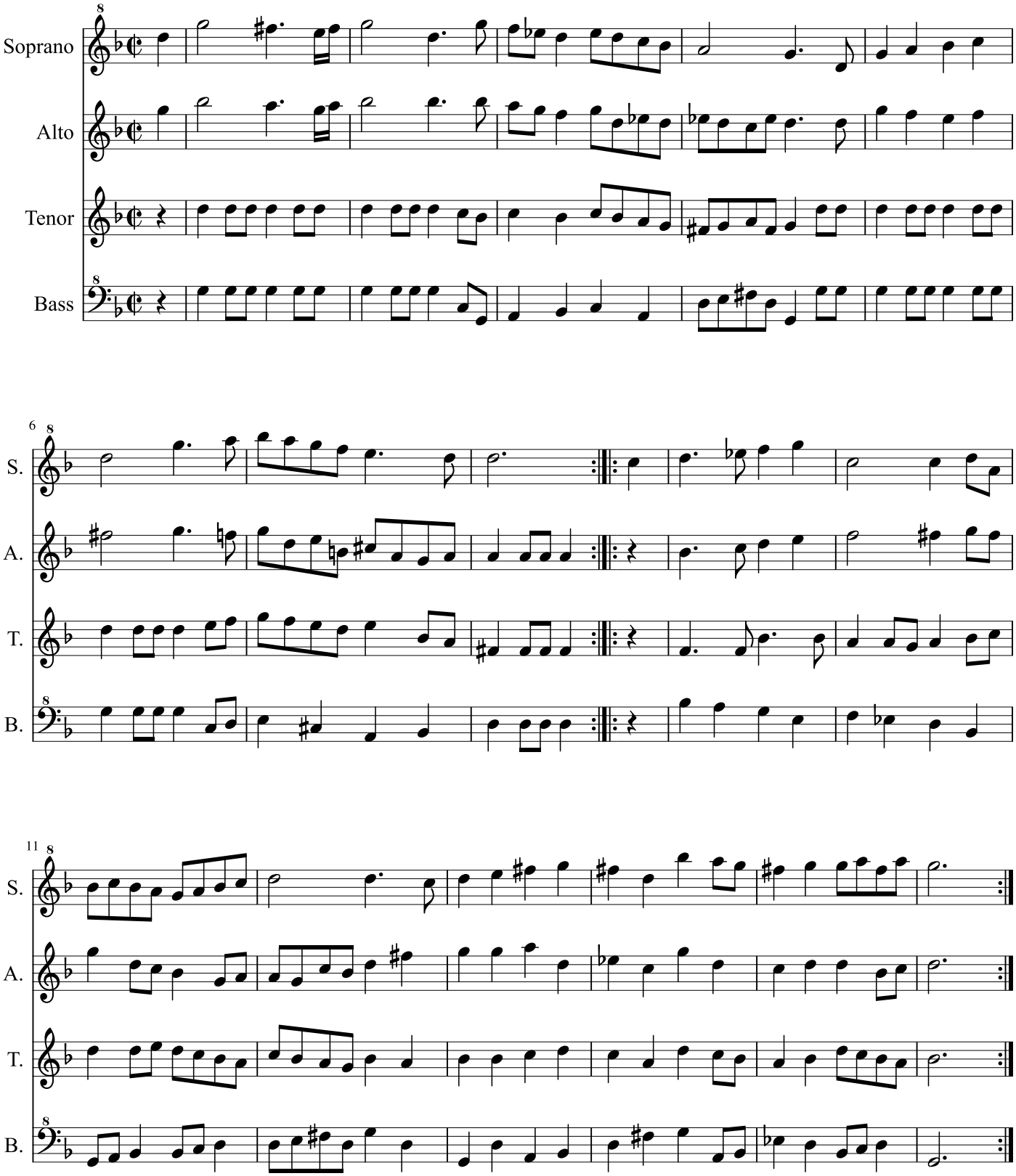

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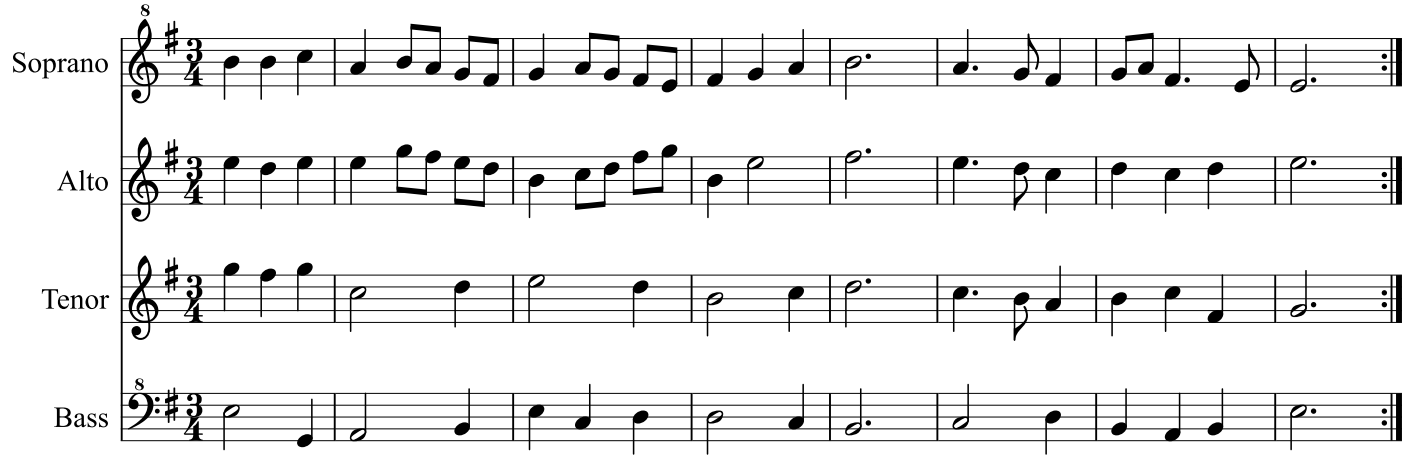

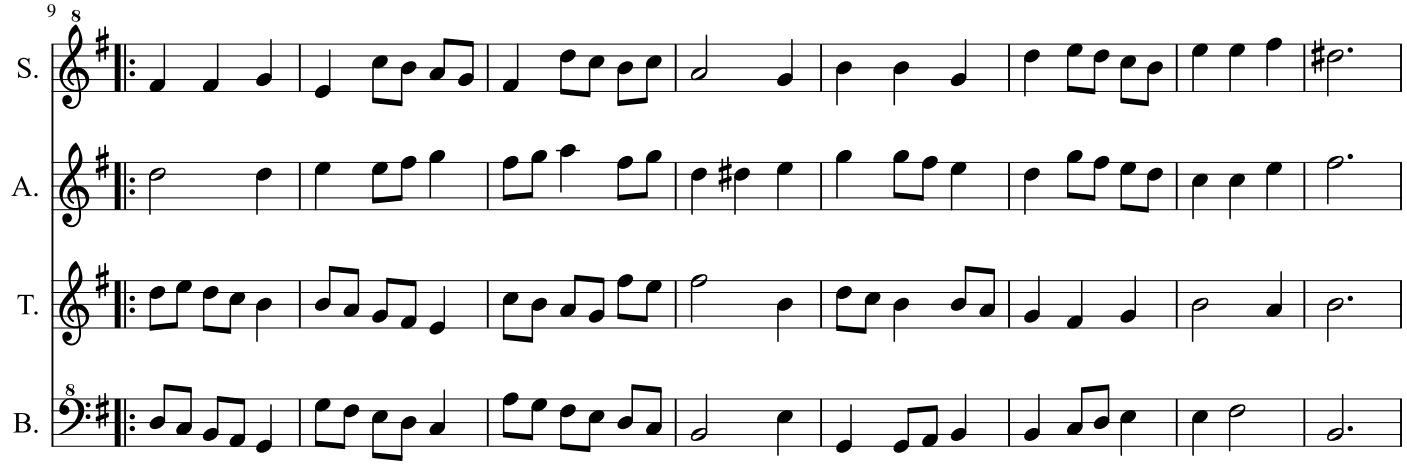

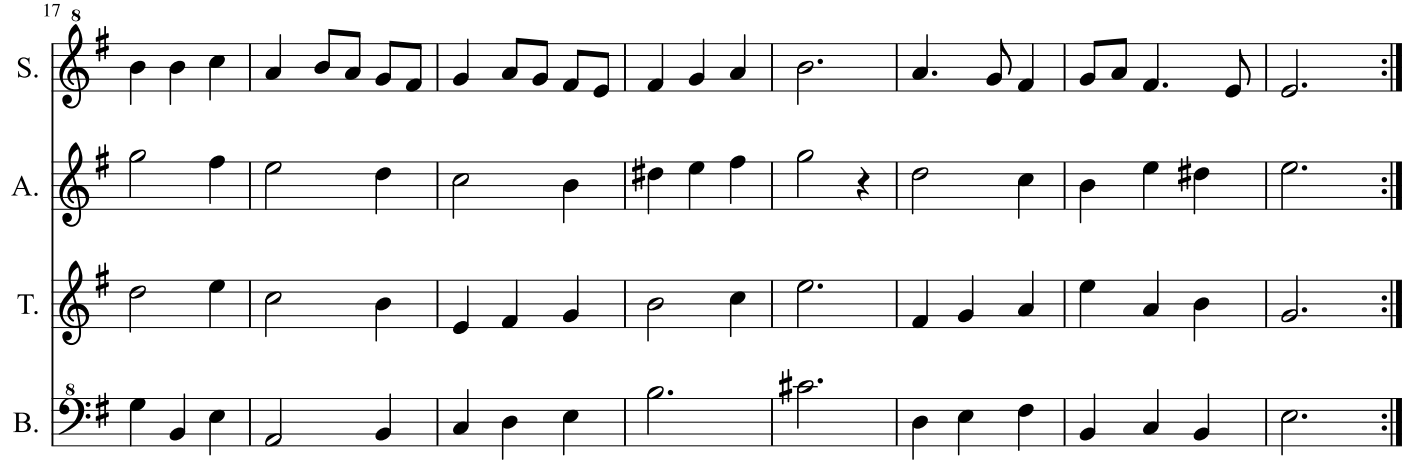

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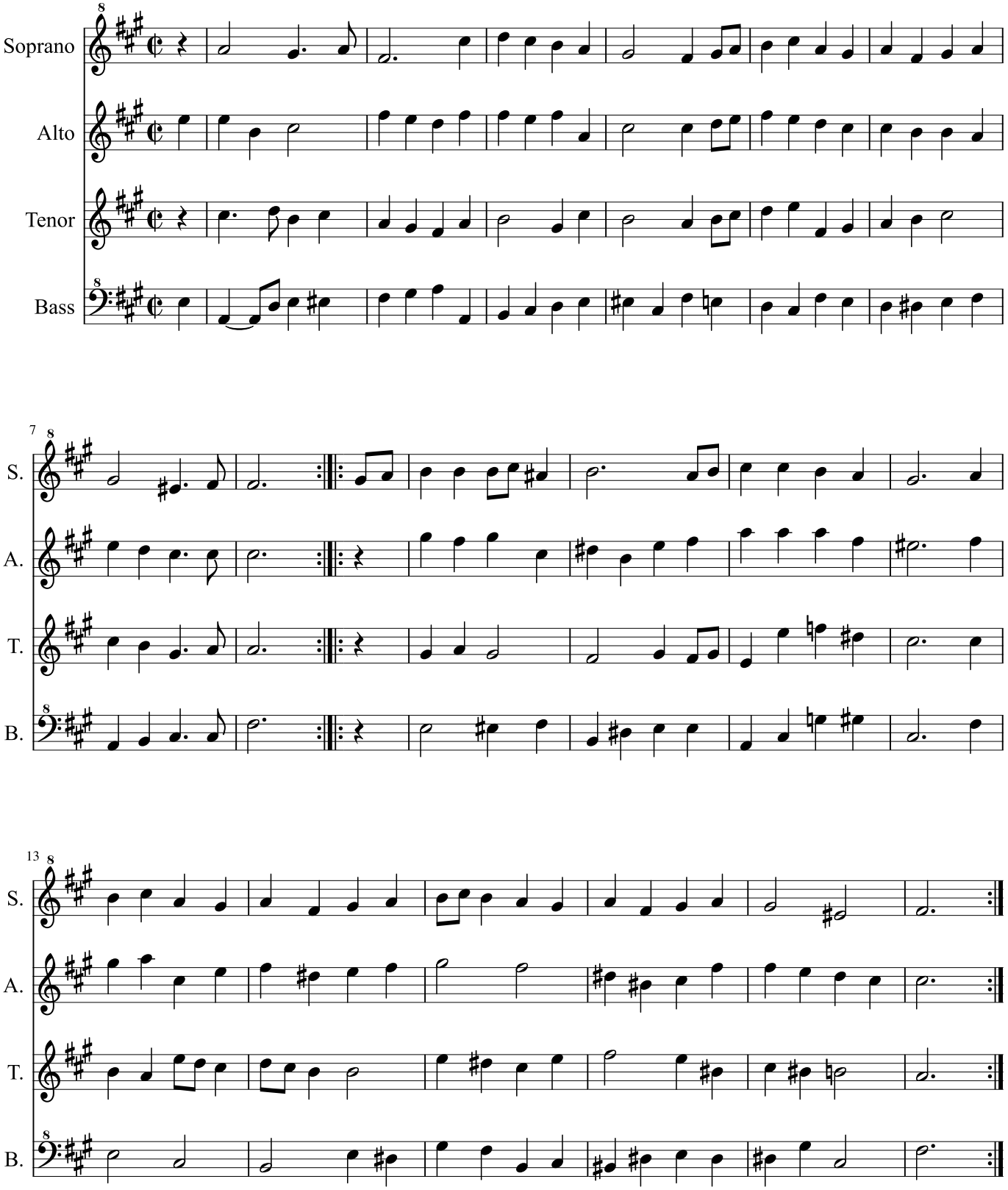

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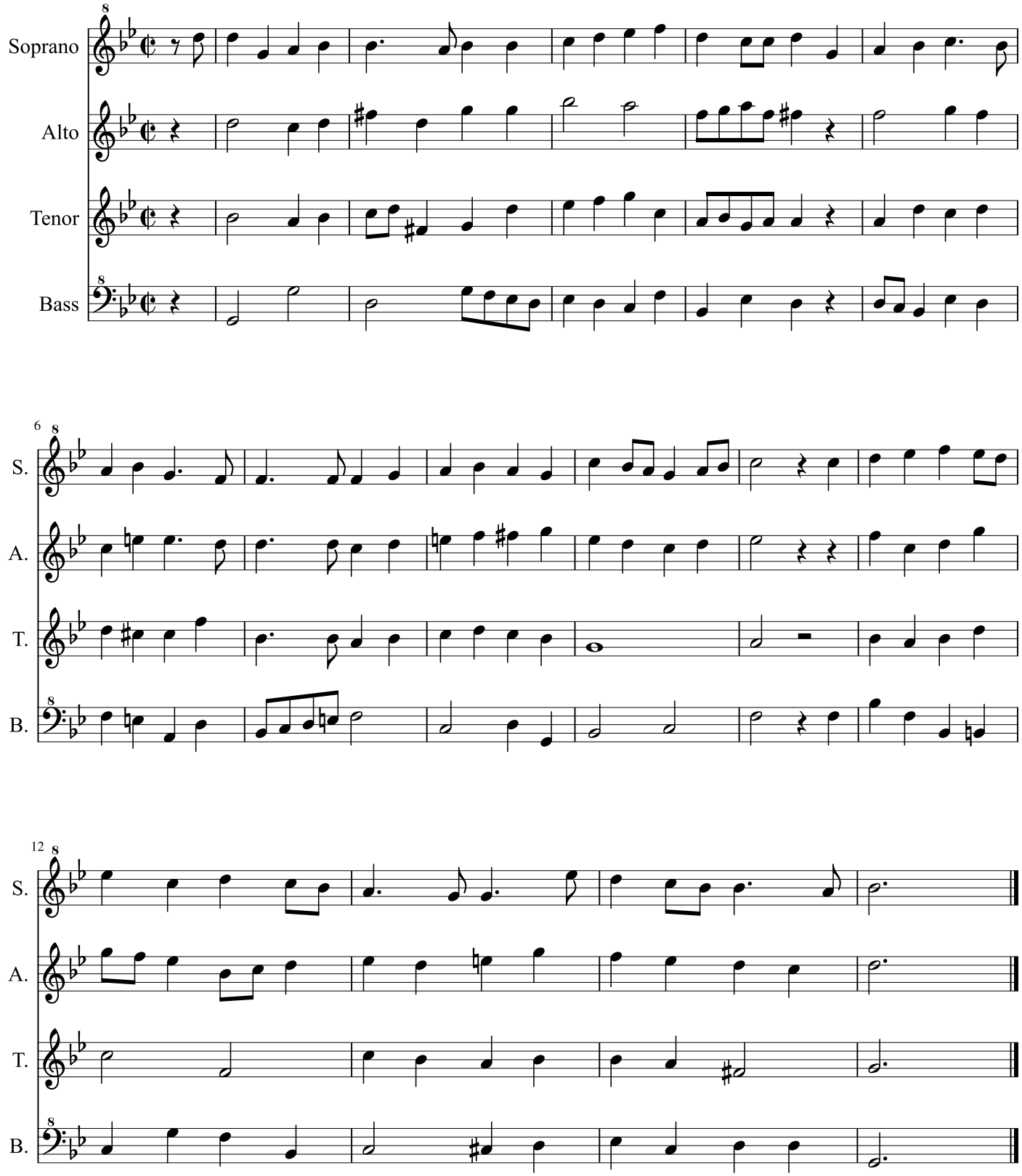
13. Aurora brenght den klaeren dagh



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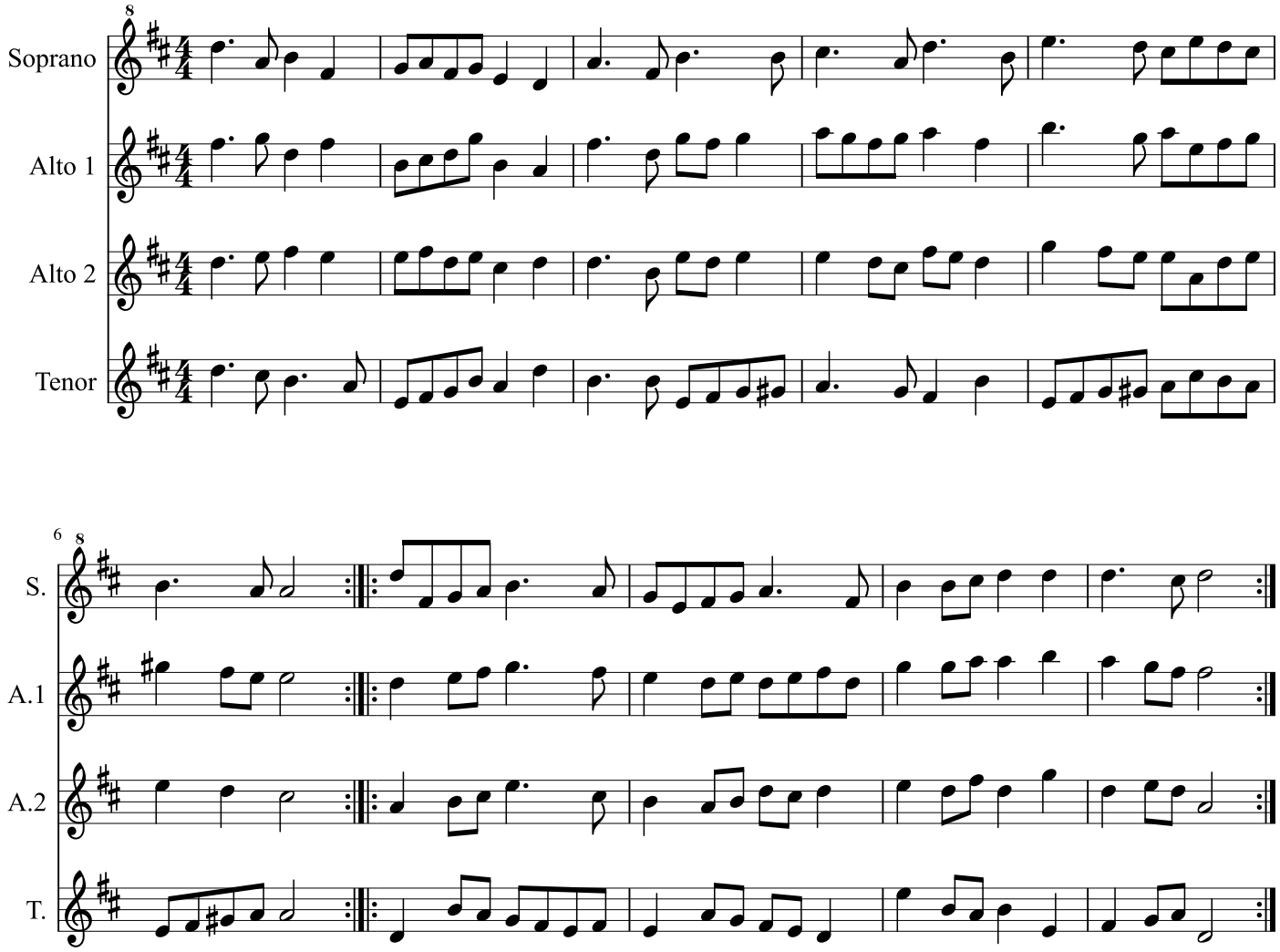

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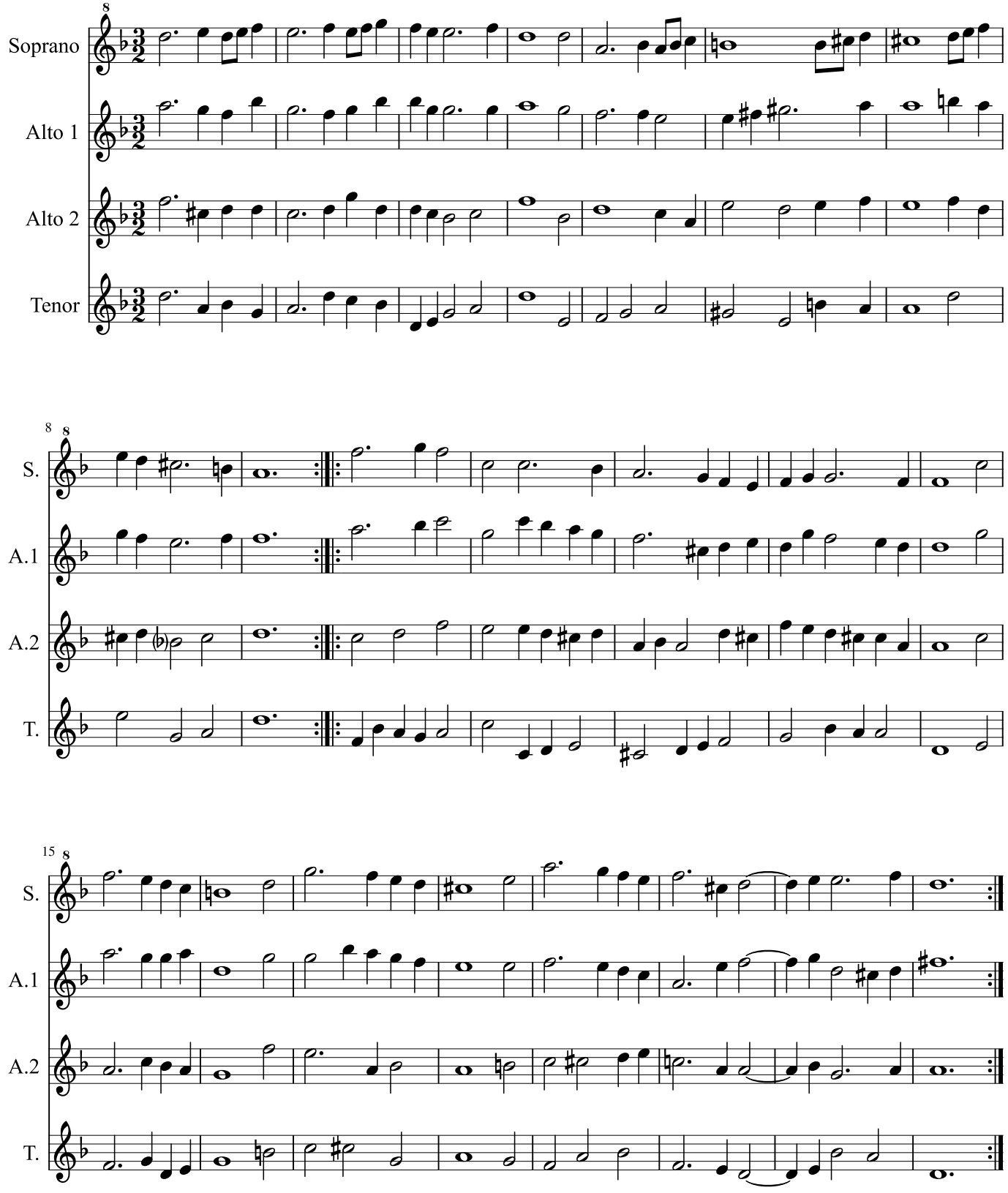

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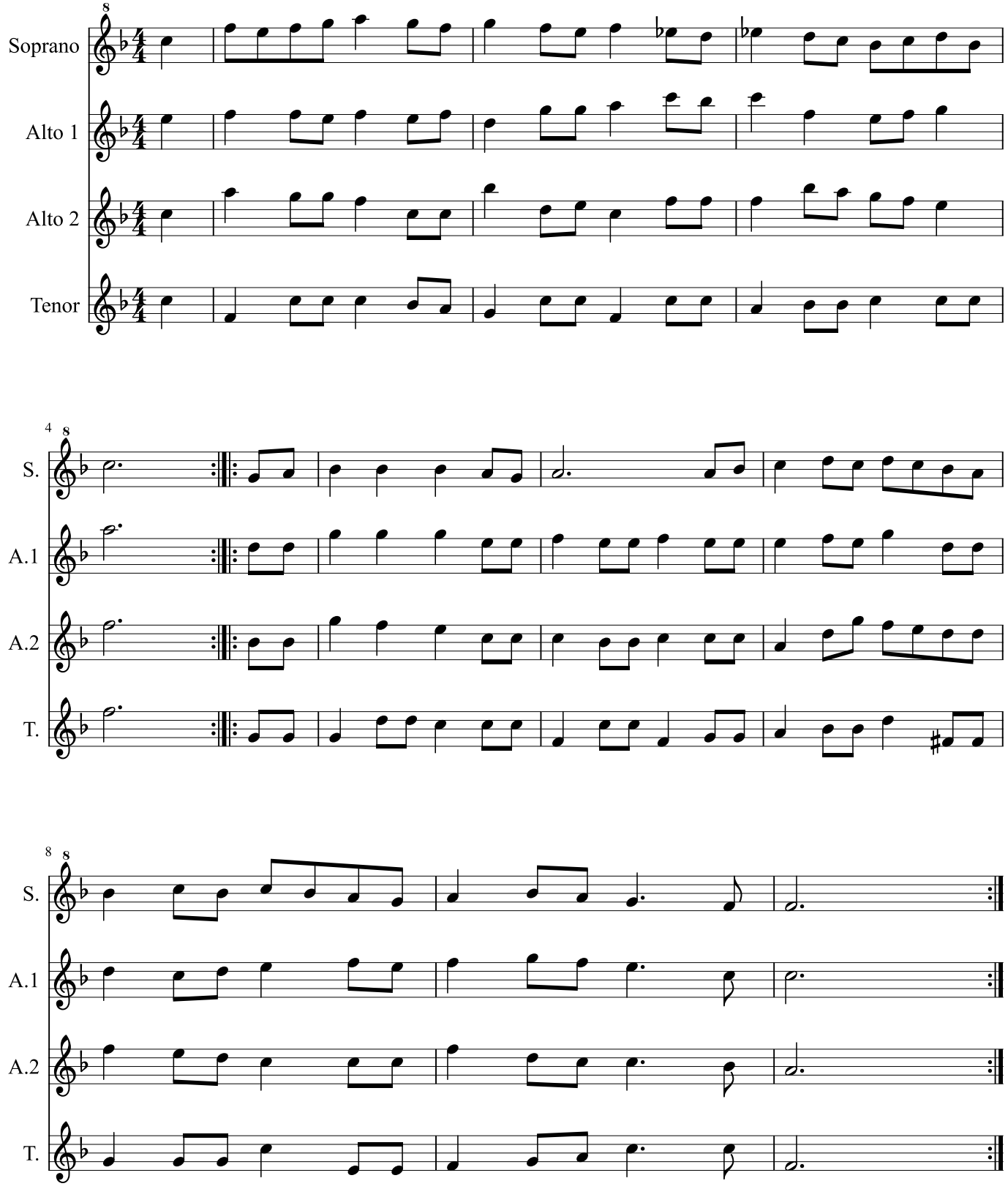

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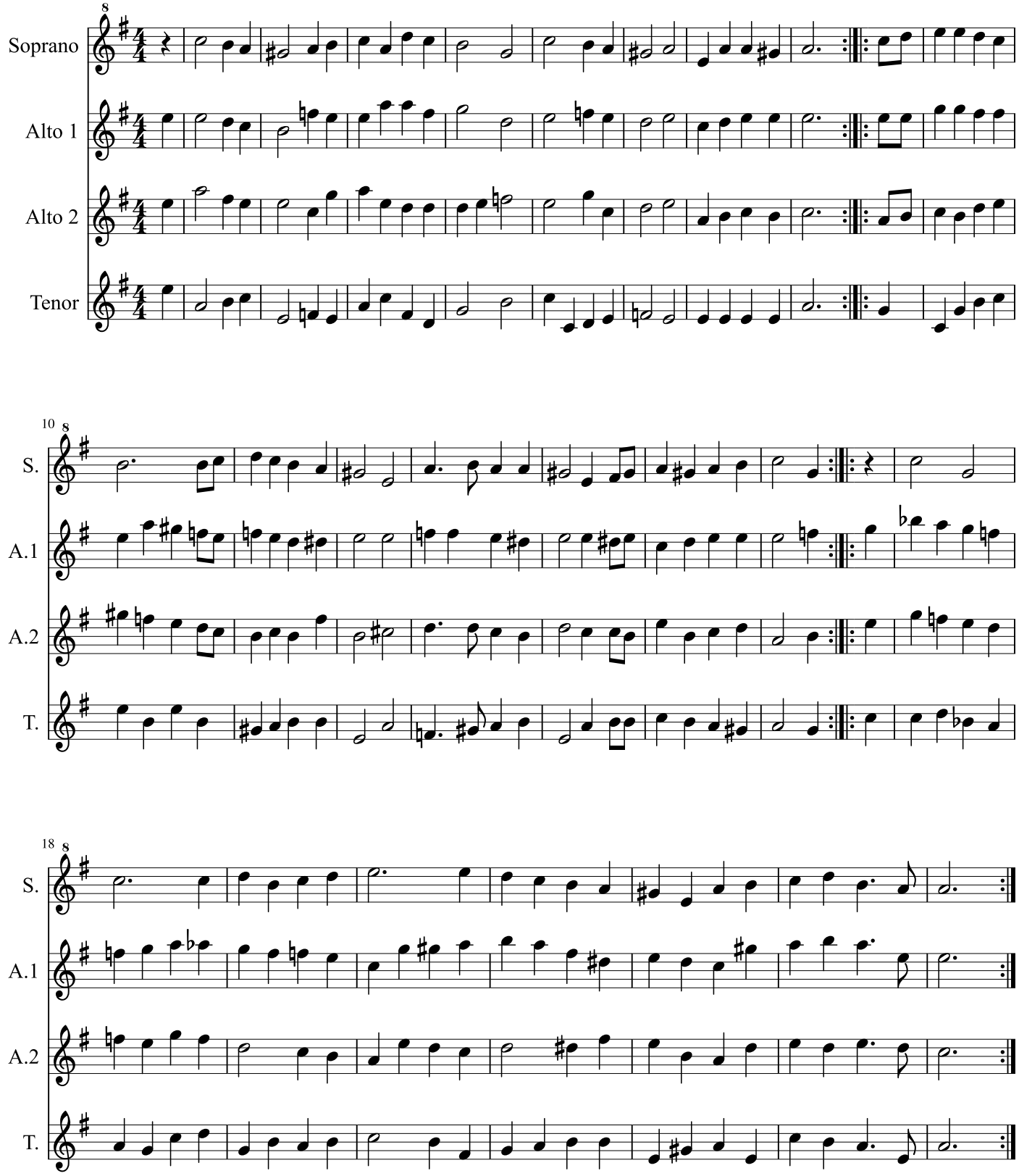

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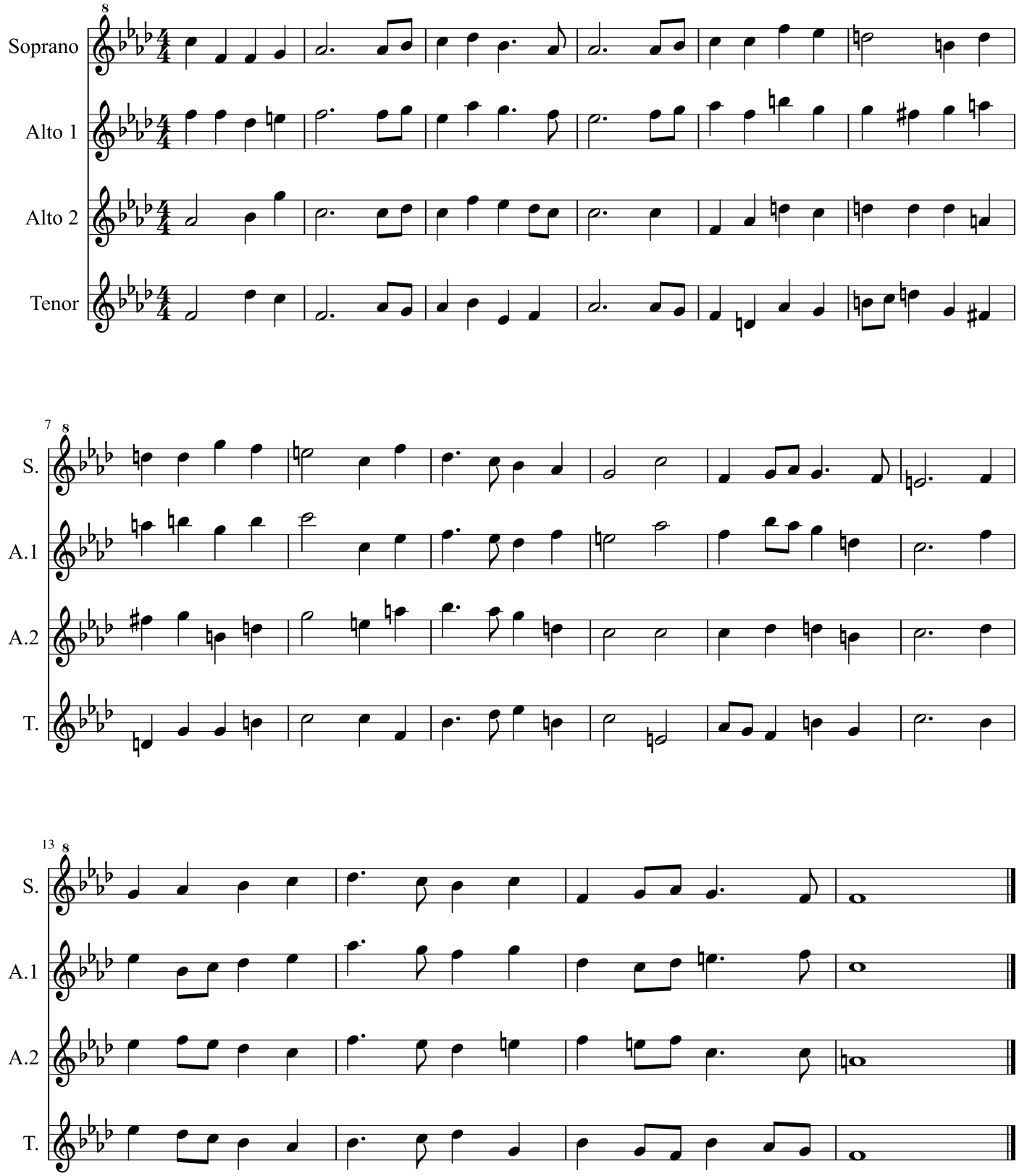
18. Bedroefde tyden



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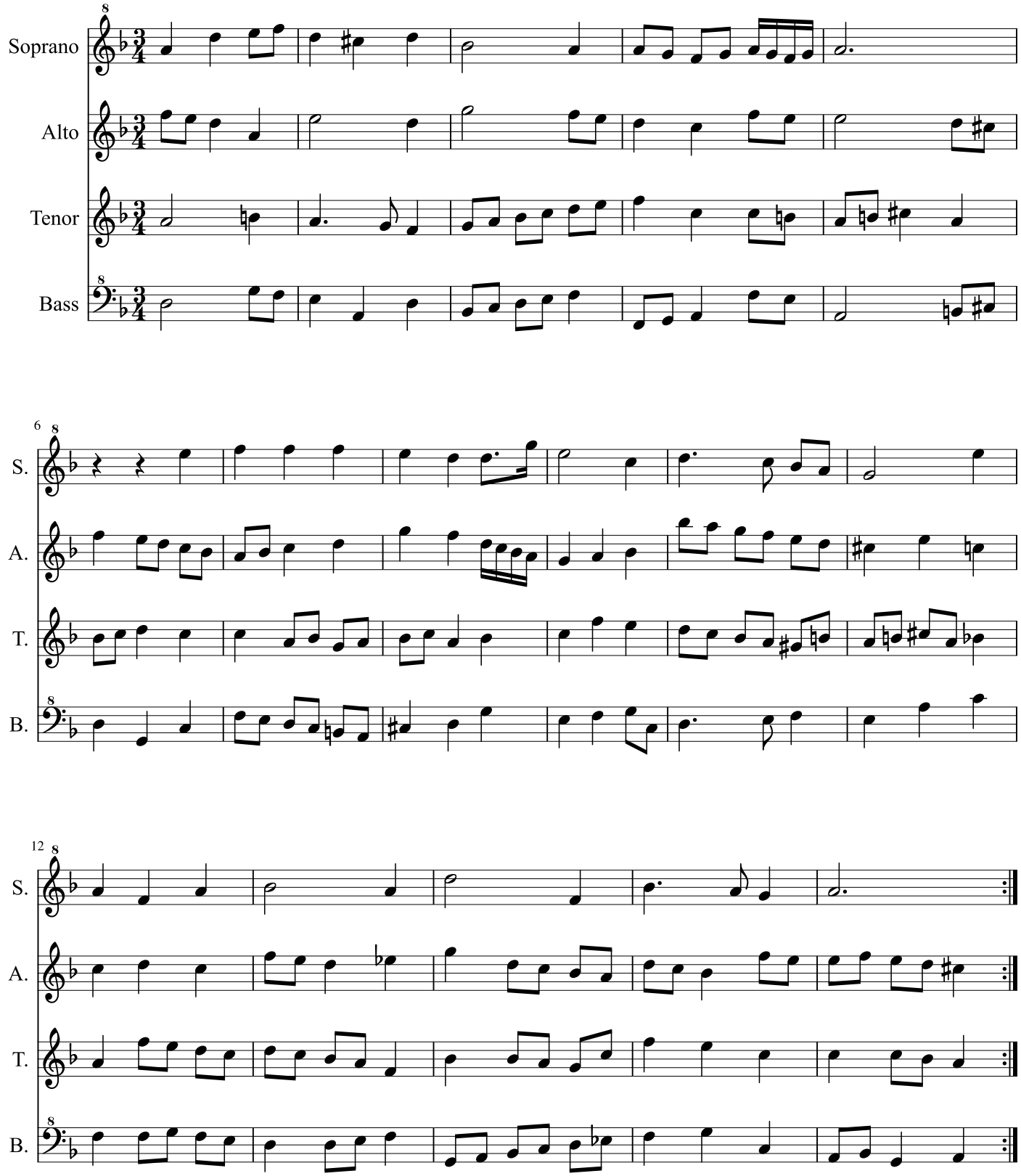

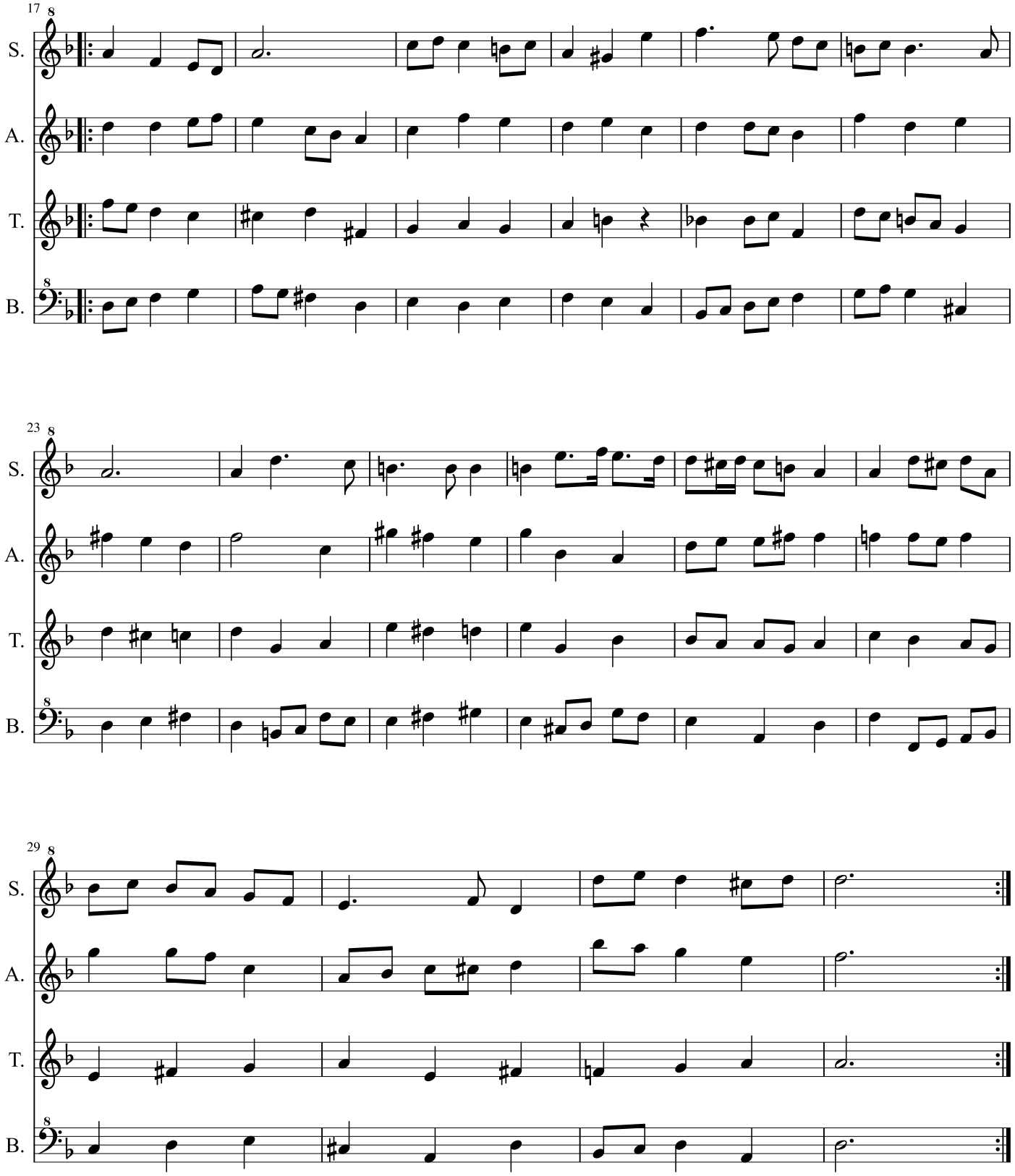
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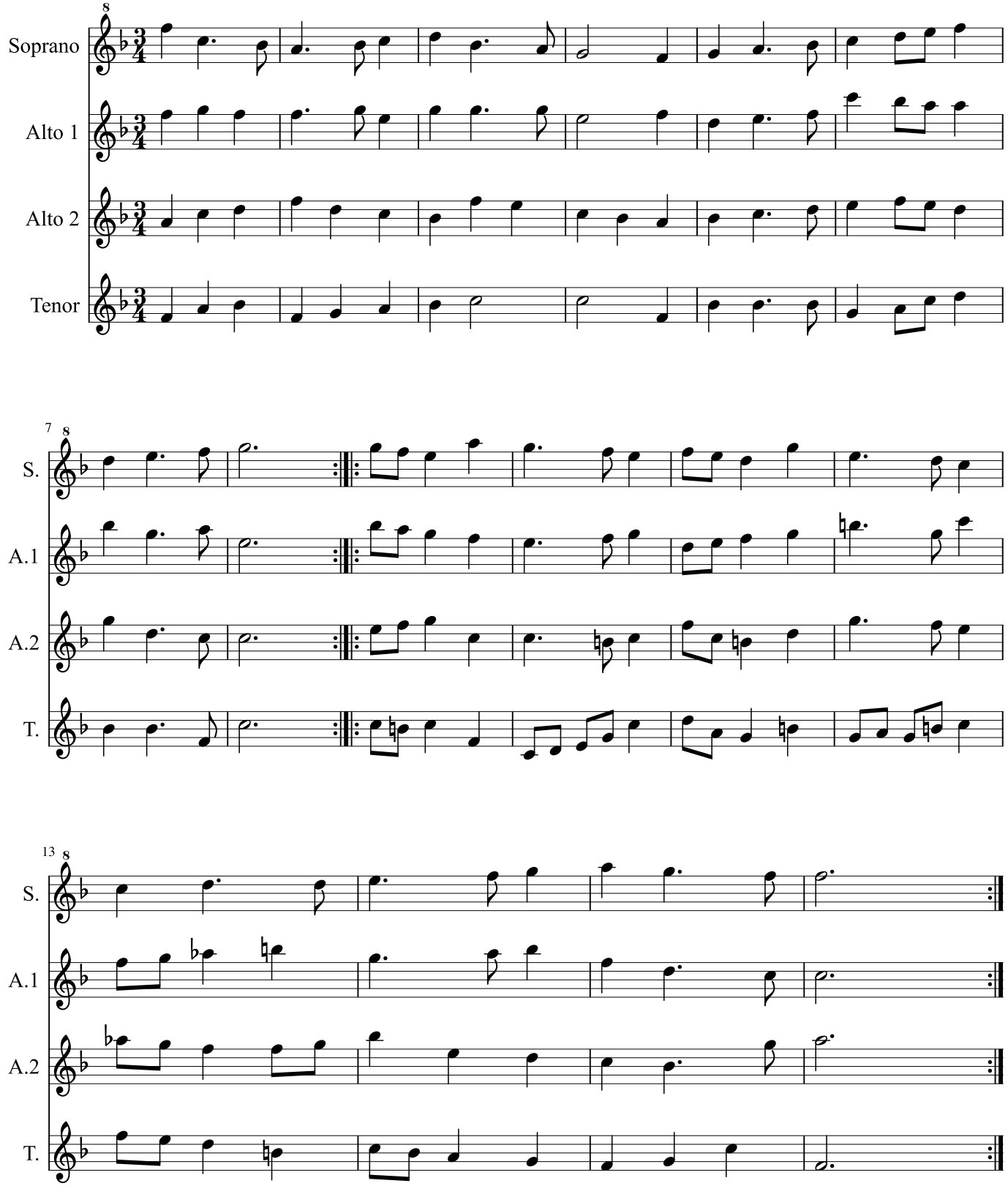
20. Ben ik dan alleen verlate



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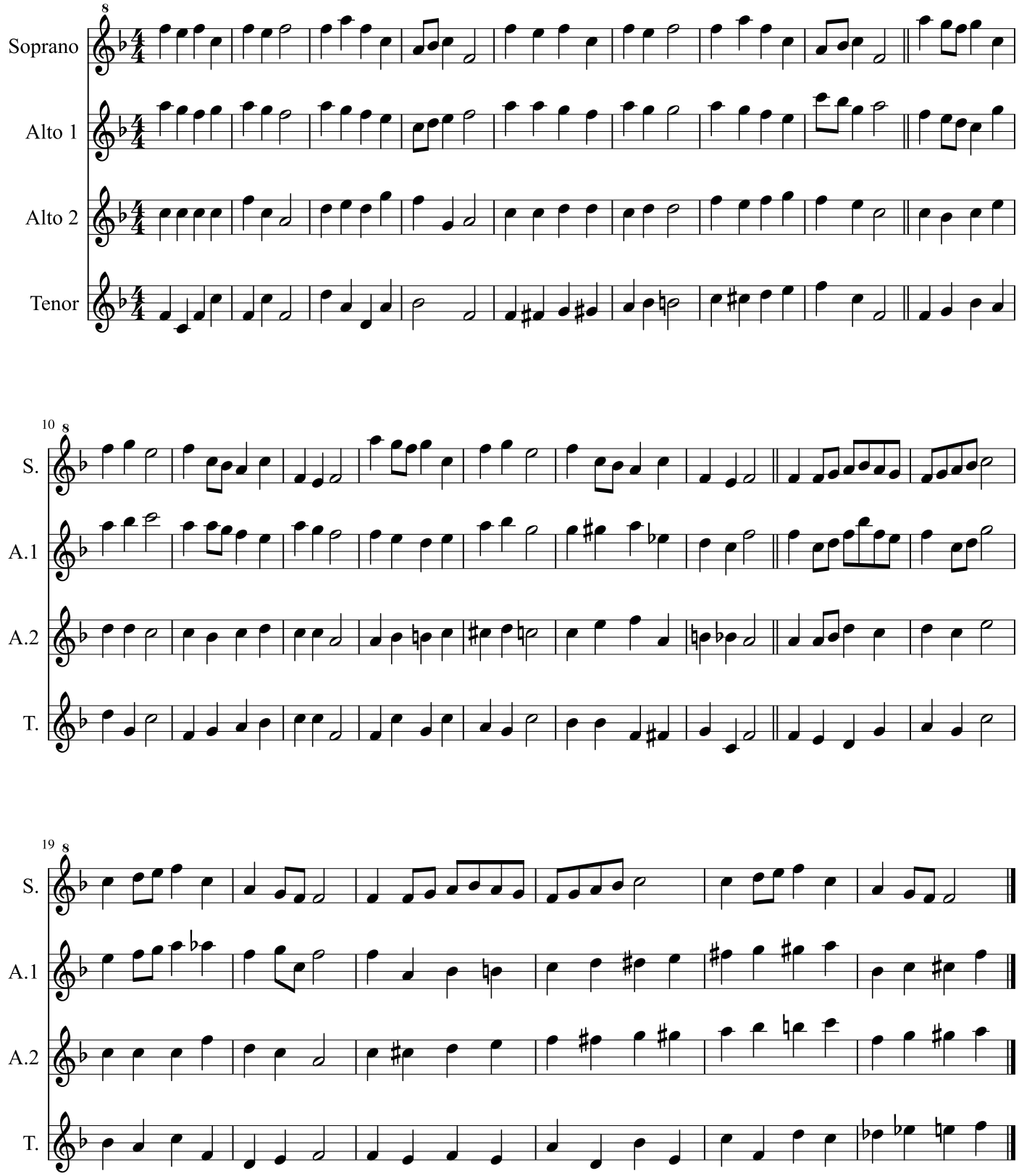

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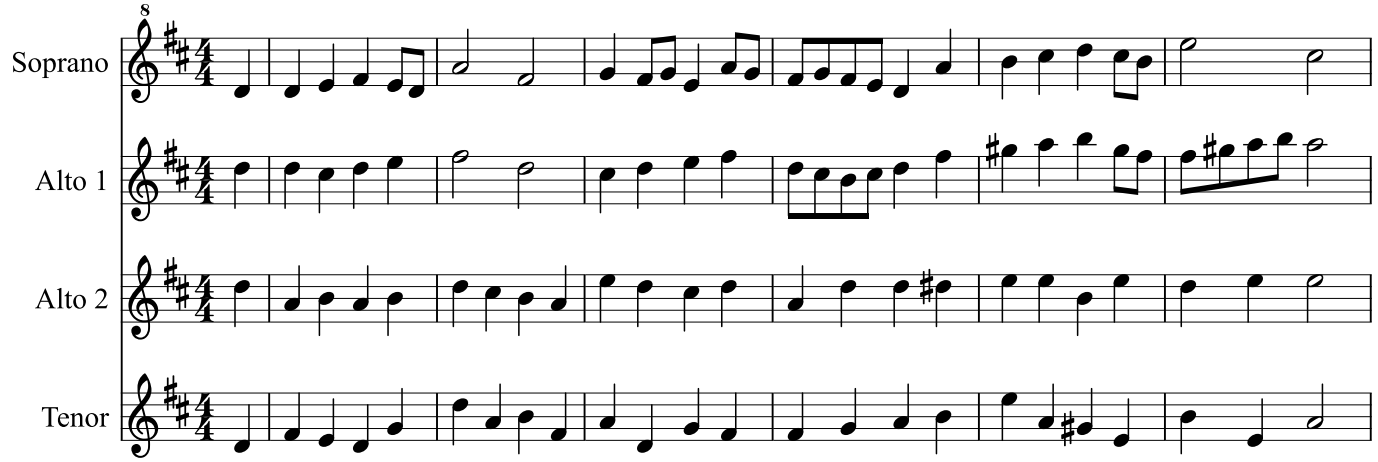

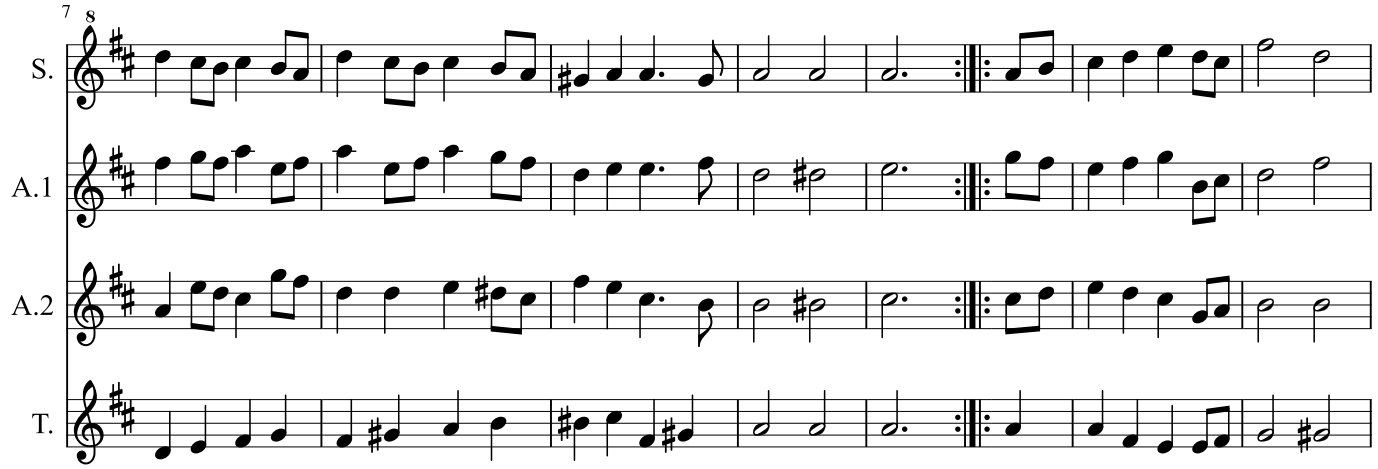

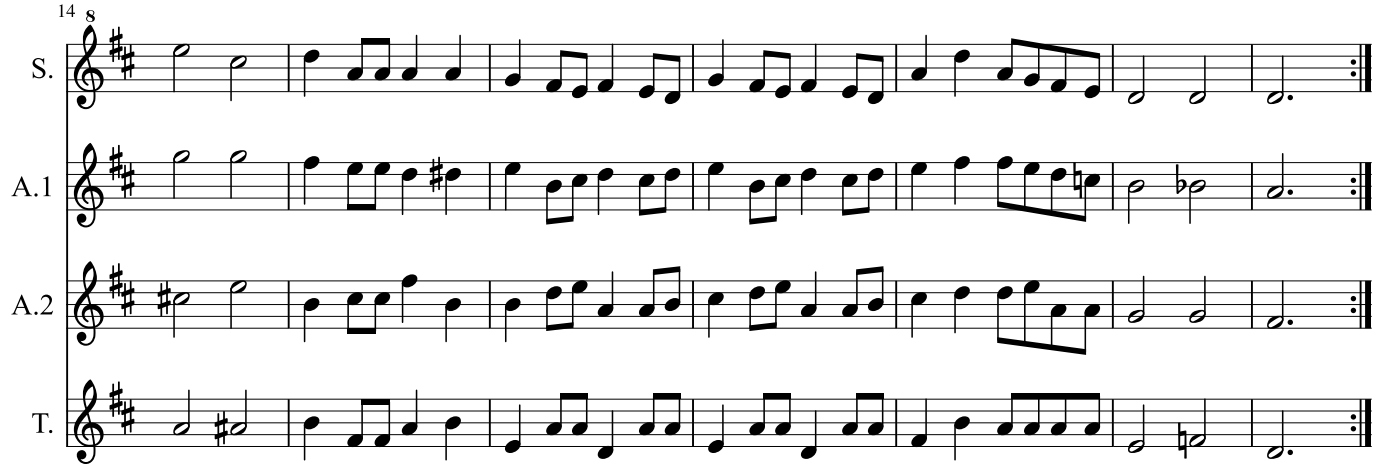

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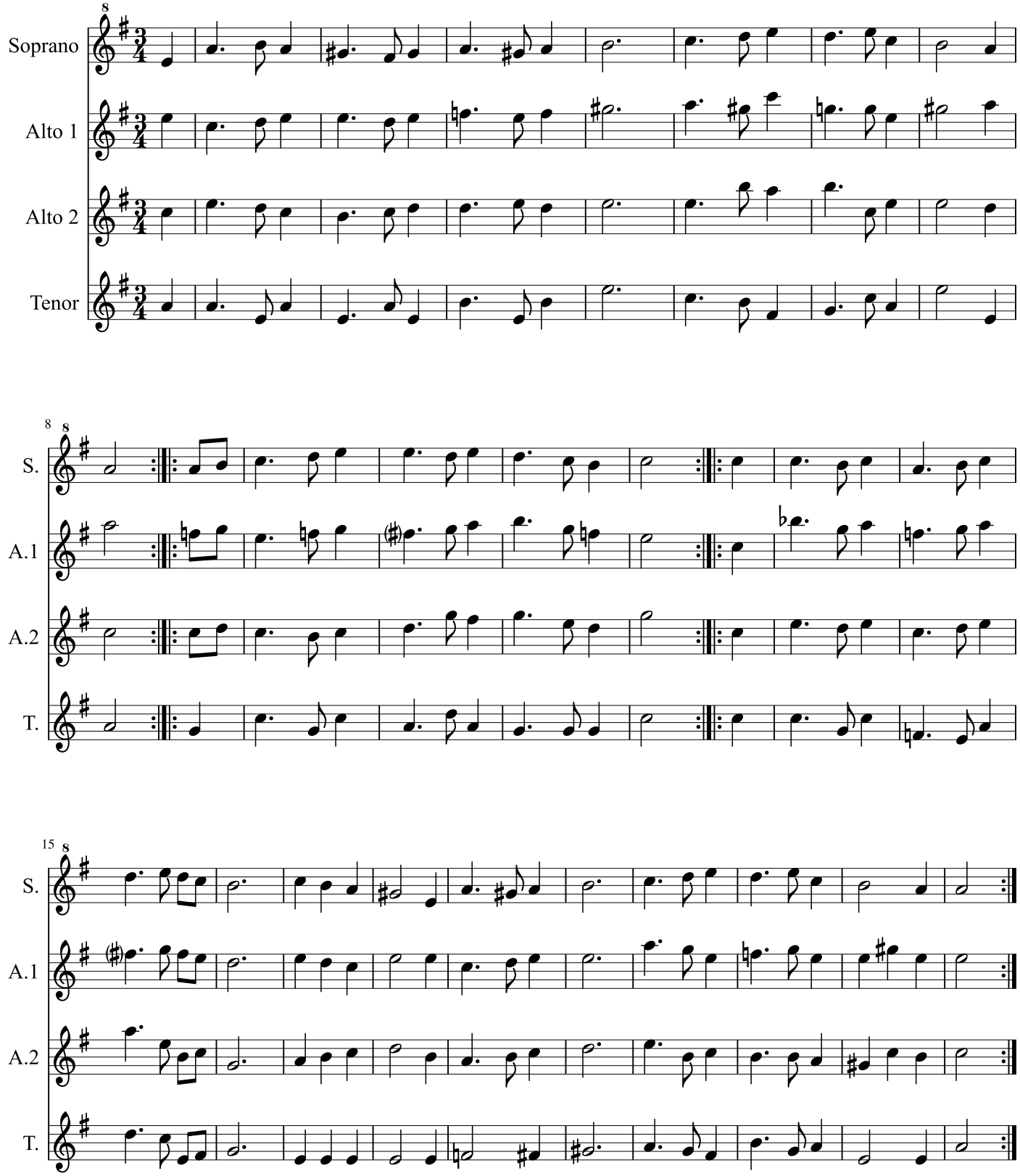

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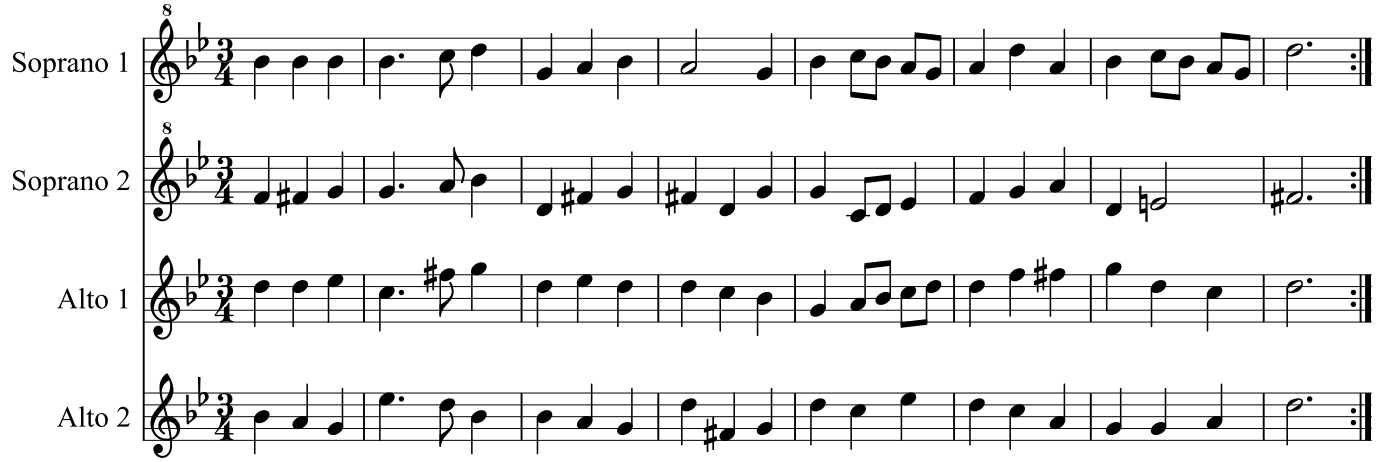

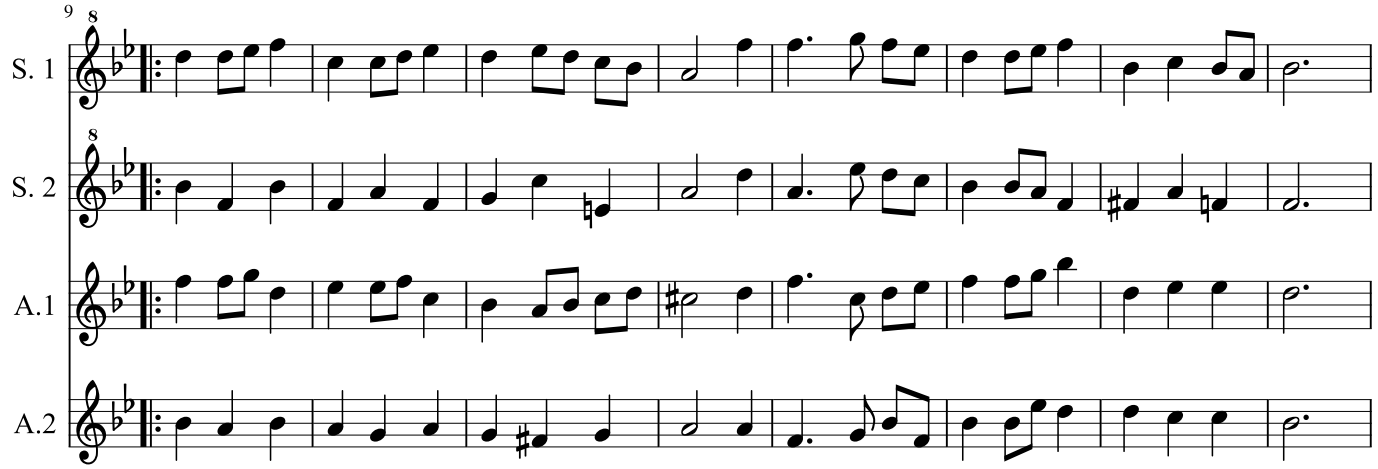

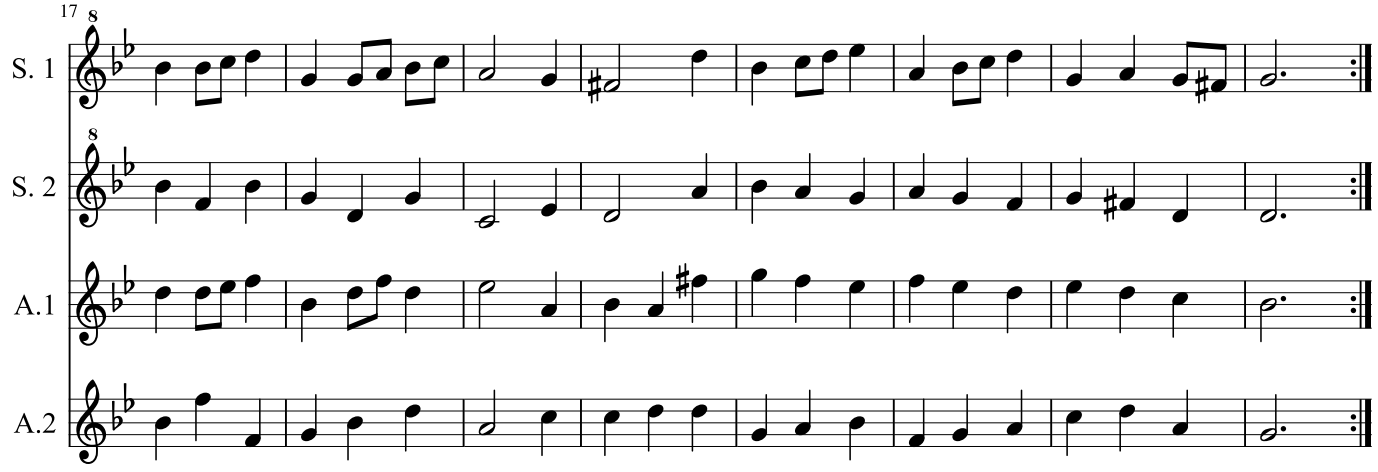

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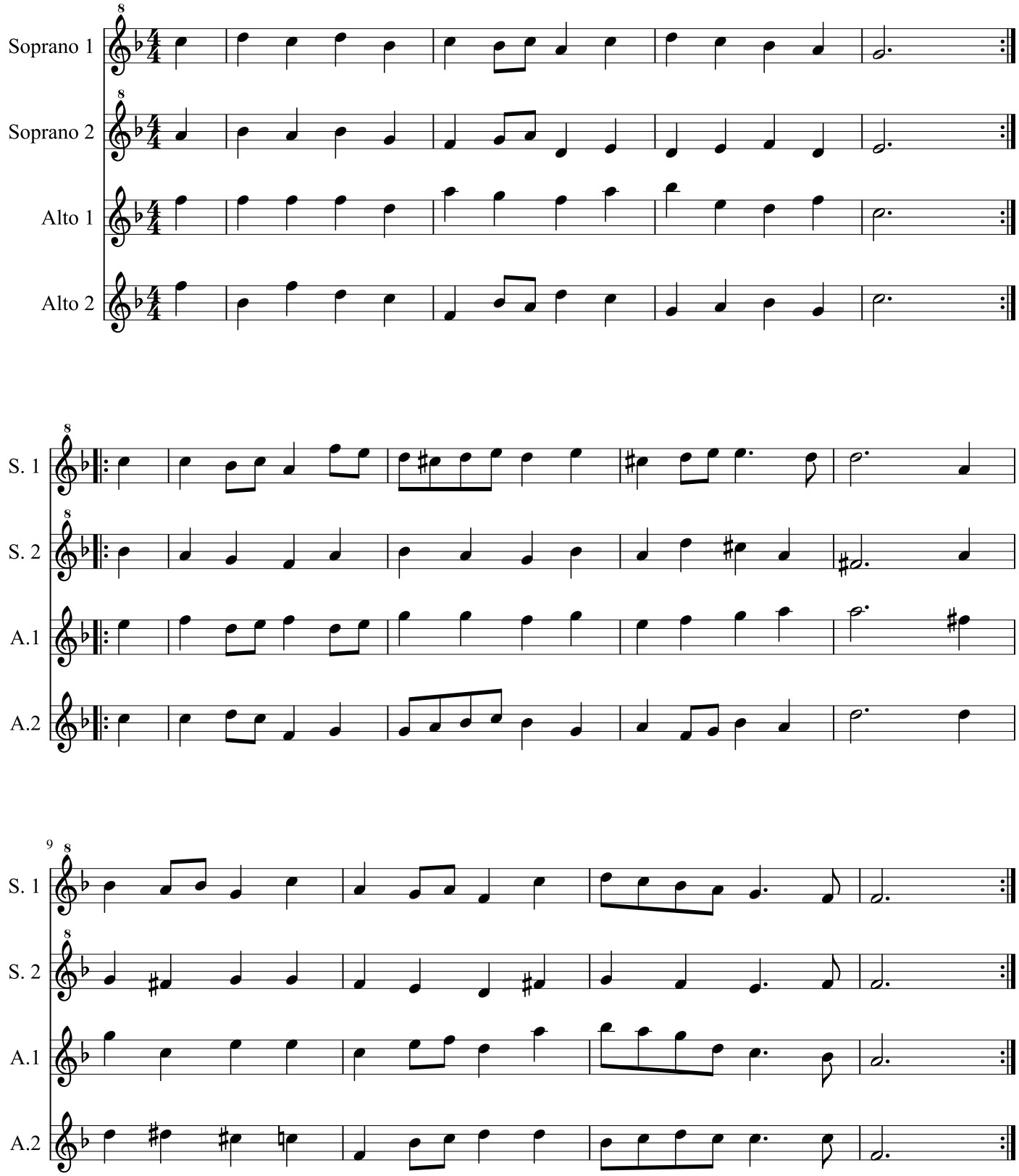
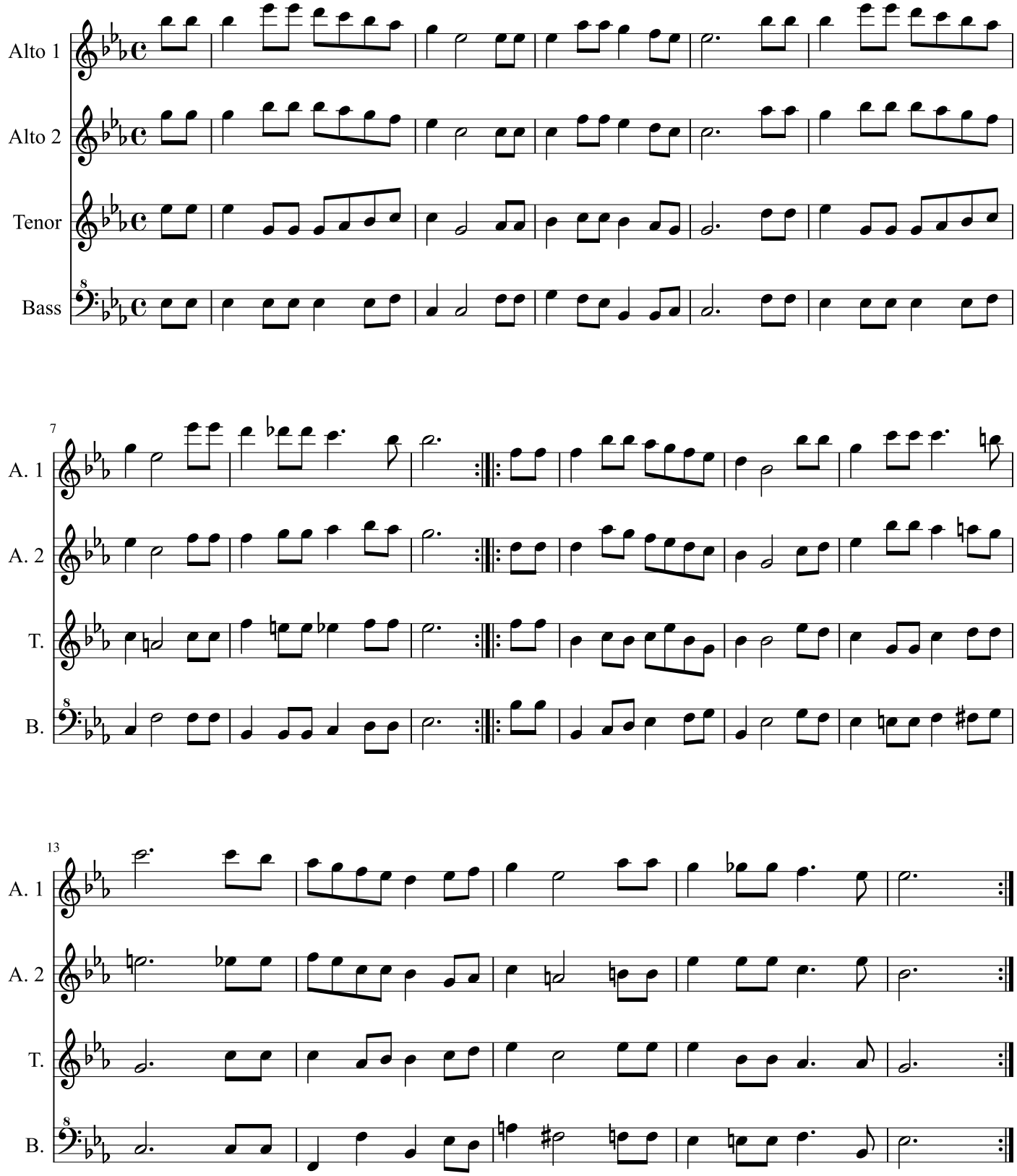


26. Bourree of men laet hem in sijn gelt beurs bijten



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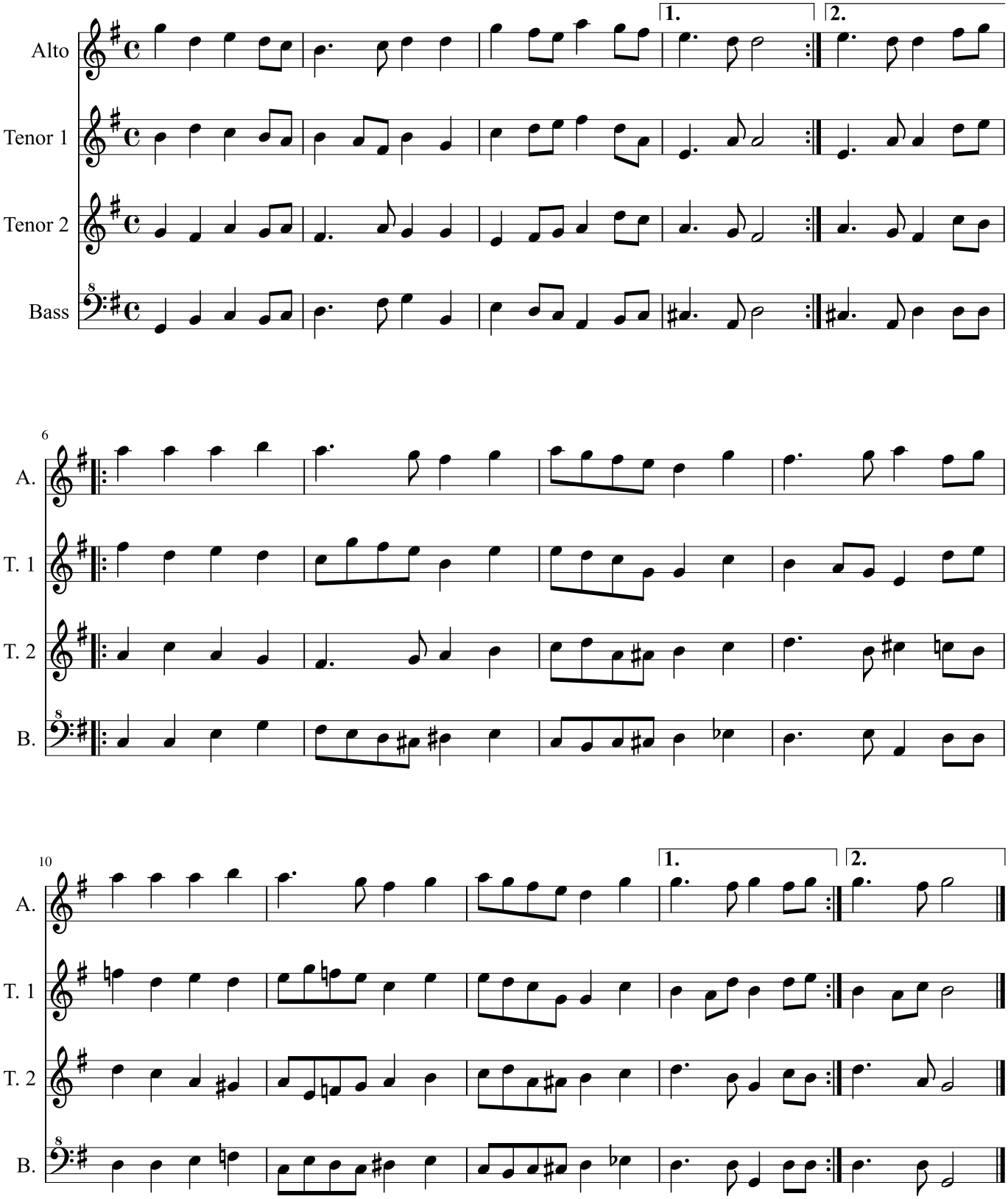
27. Brabants lietje



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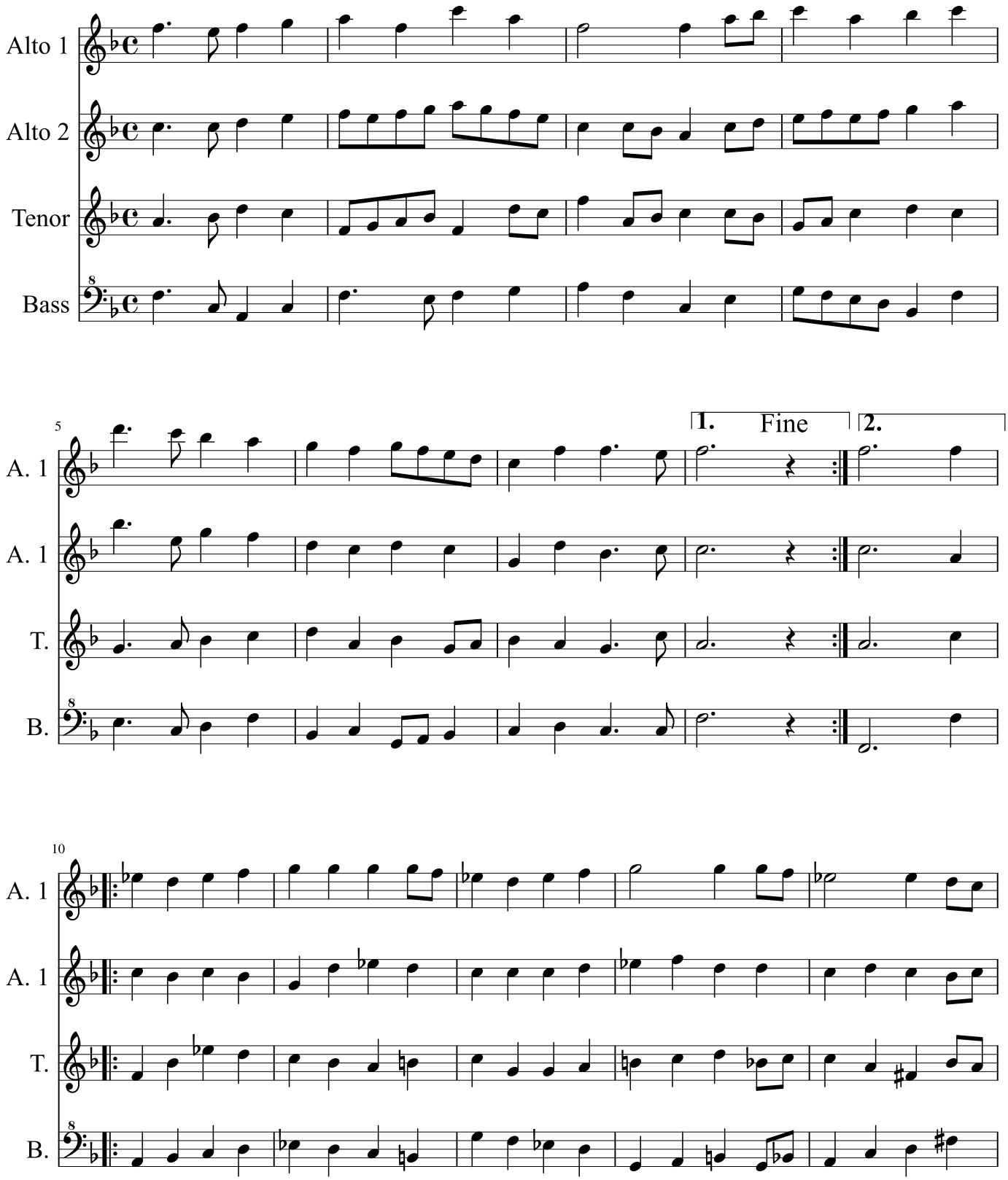

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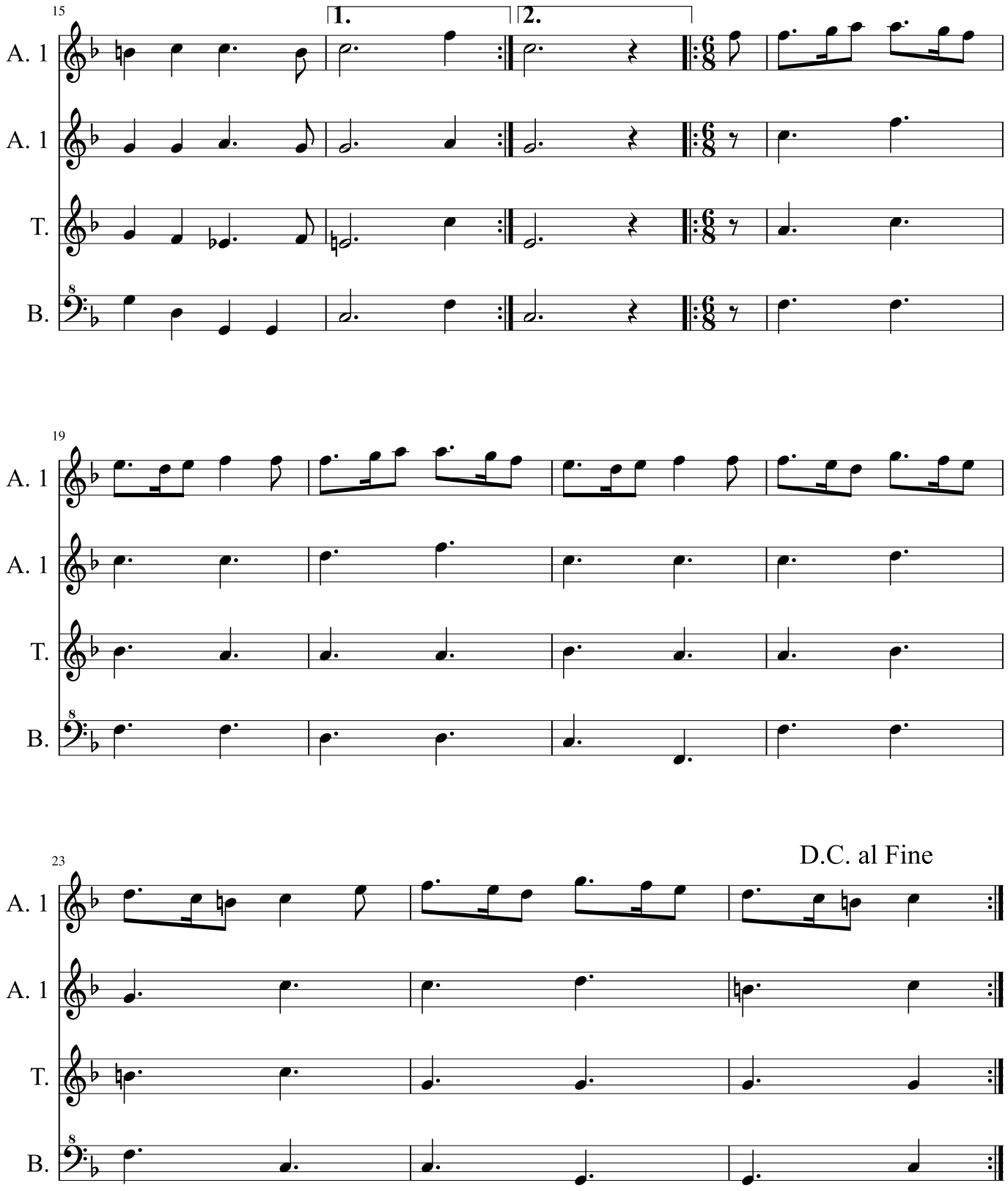
15
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B.
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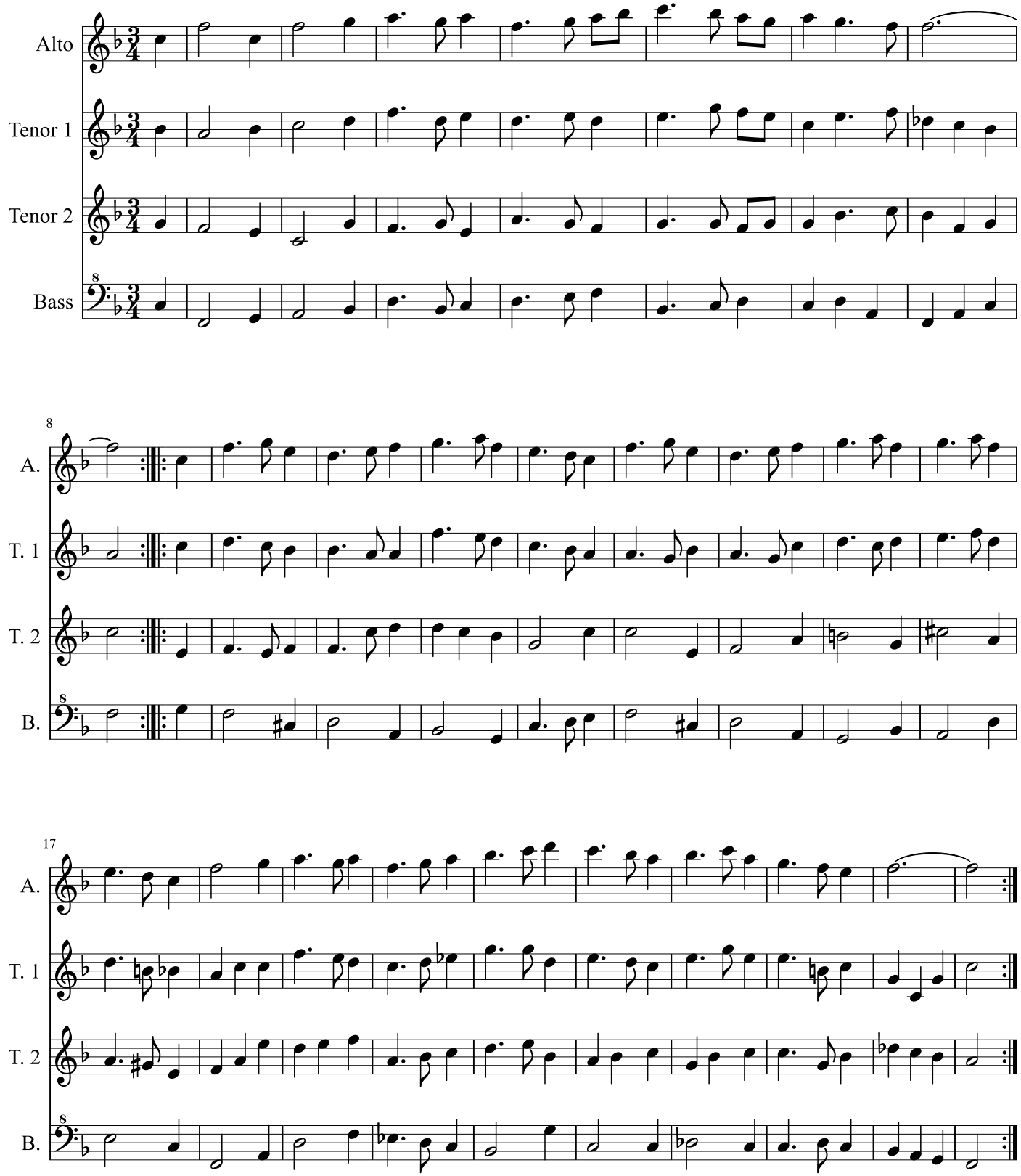
A. 1
A. 1
T.
B.
23
D.C. al Fine
A. 1
A. 1
T.
B.

29. Bredaas Biertje



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