"Roman Carnival"
(abridged)

Hector Berlioz

Scored for 12 trombones

arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

Music from the

ROMANTIC BONE COLLECTION

VOLUME FIVE

About the Composer

"Roman Carnival" of Hector Berlioz (1803-69) was fashioned in 1844 using music from "Benvenuto Cellini". He had given up on the opera ever being produced in Paris (he was correct in this assumption) and decided to create a "showstopper" for his concert tours through Europe, which were hugely successful for him both artistically and financially. The music is taken from the Love Duet of the first act and the Carnival chorus of the second act; the latter is of course the inspiration for the work's title. Because of his constant touring, this was not a time of fertile composition, although its placement between "Les Nuits d'Ete (1841) and Damnation of Faust (1845) indicates that his incredible imagination was still in great abundance.

"Roman Carnival" is in no way, shape, or form a simple rehashing of previous material. A great analogy would be the "Venusburg" music that Wagner wrote for the Paris premiere of Tannhauser, where earlier music is completely transformed in the hands of a mature master. The Love Duet music is constantly developed through imitation, sometimes with as many as four different versions heard simultaneously before it reappears at the end in a different tempo, meter and character. The chorus is constantly modulating into a new key, each time with a freshly orchestrated version. It is no wonder that this work remains exceedingly popular today, surpassed only in number of performances by "Symphonie Fantastique". Of course, the original music was also glorious; the opera indeed deserves to be a repertoire work in the world's major houses.

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.

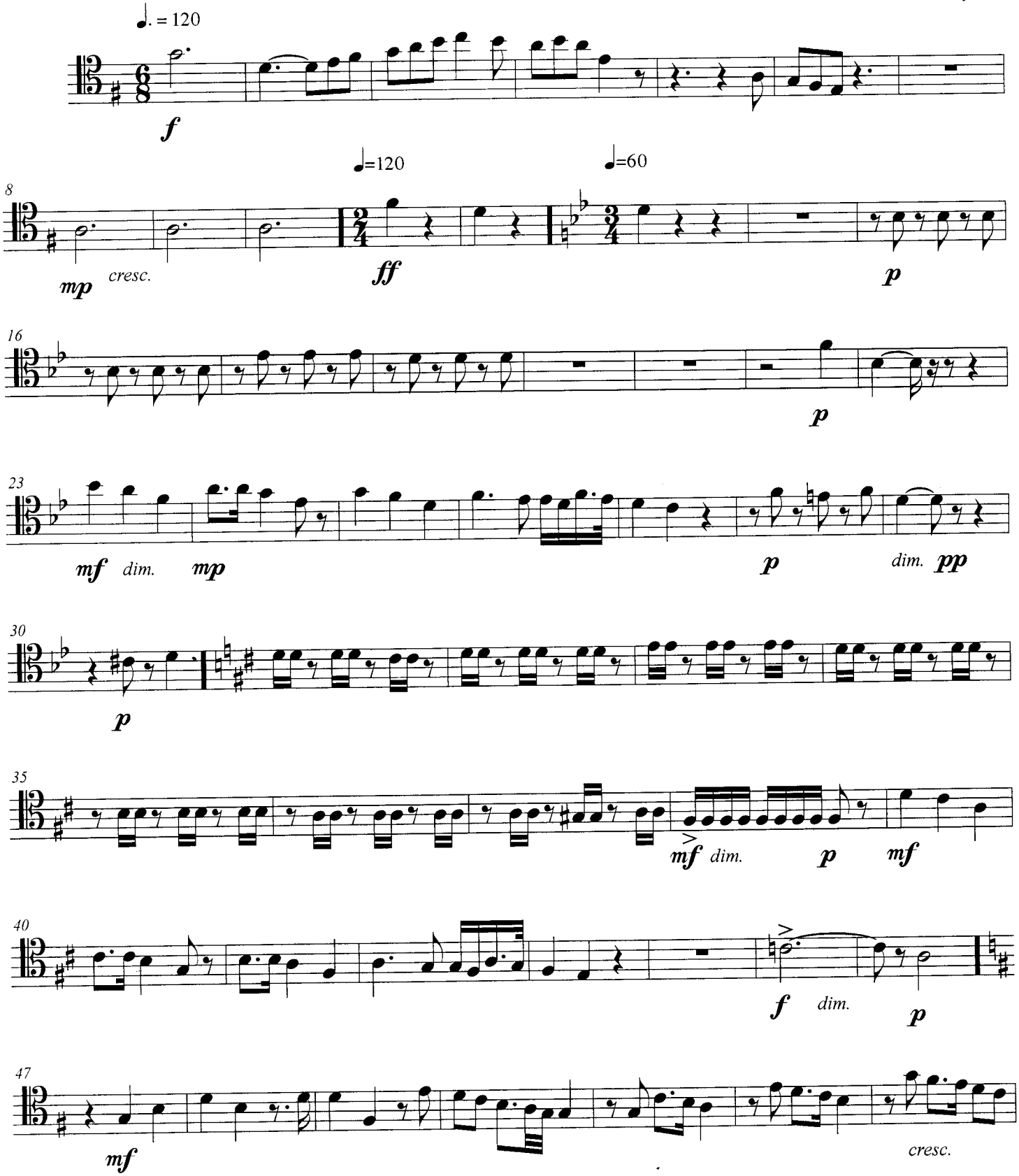
Trombone 8

"Le Carnaval romain"

from "Benvenuto Cellini"

Berlioz

Bob Reifsnyder



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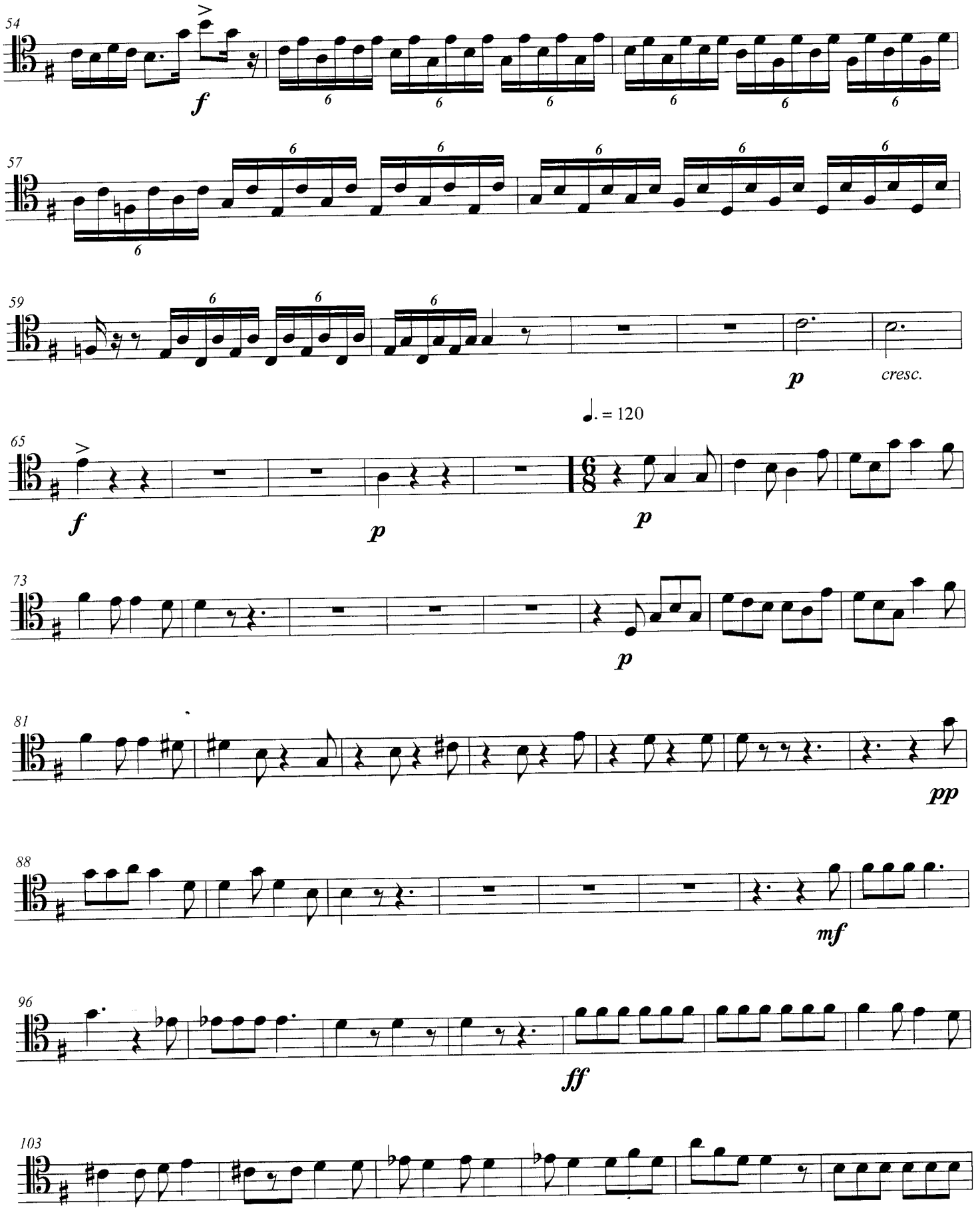
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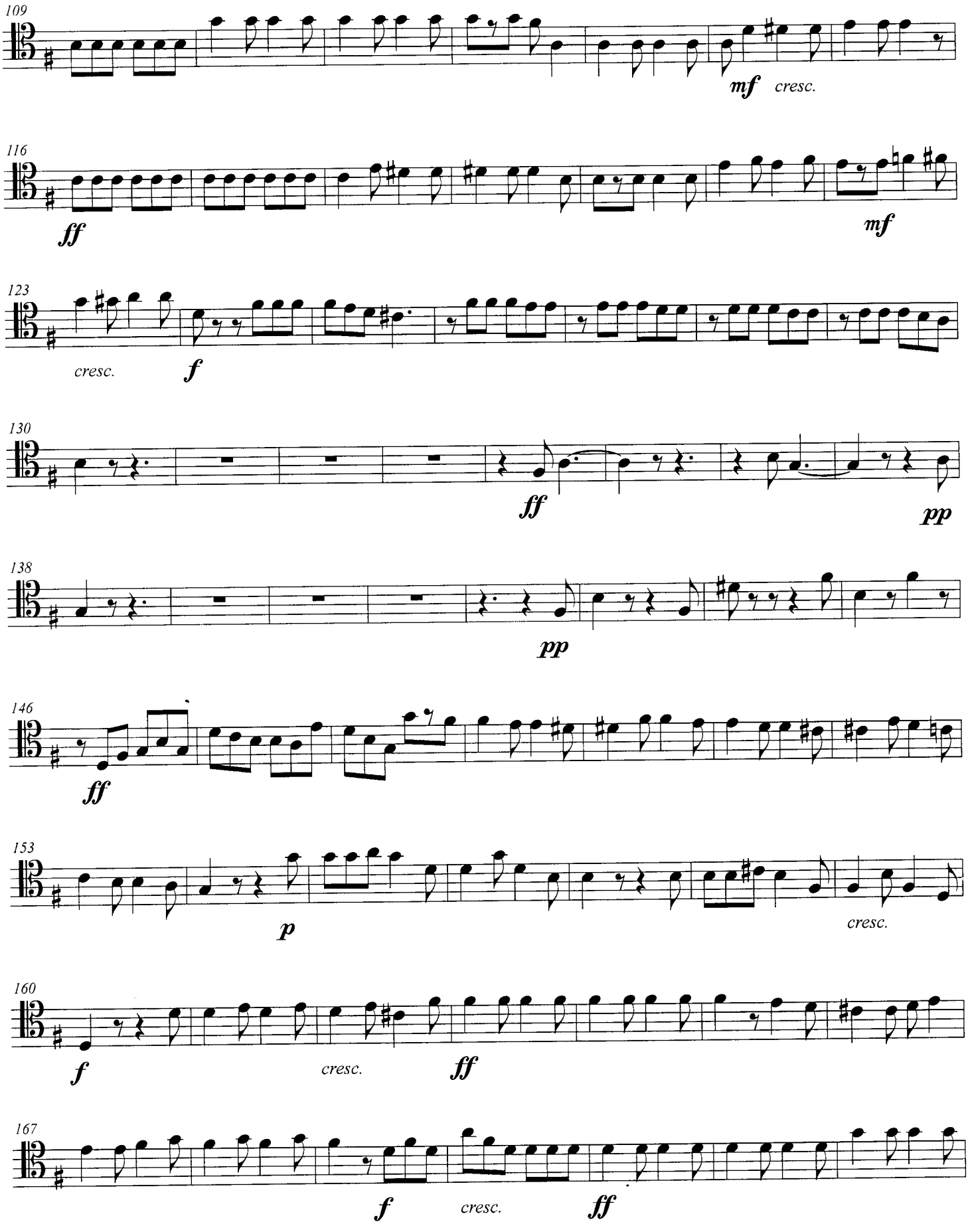
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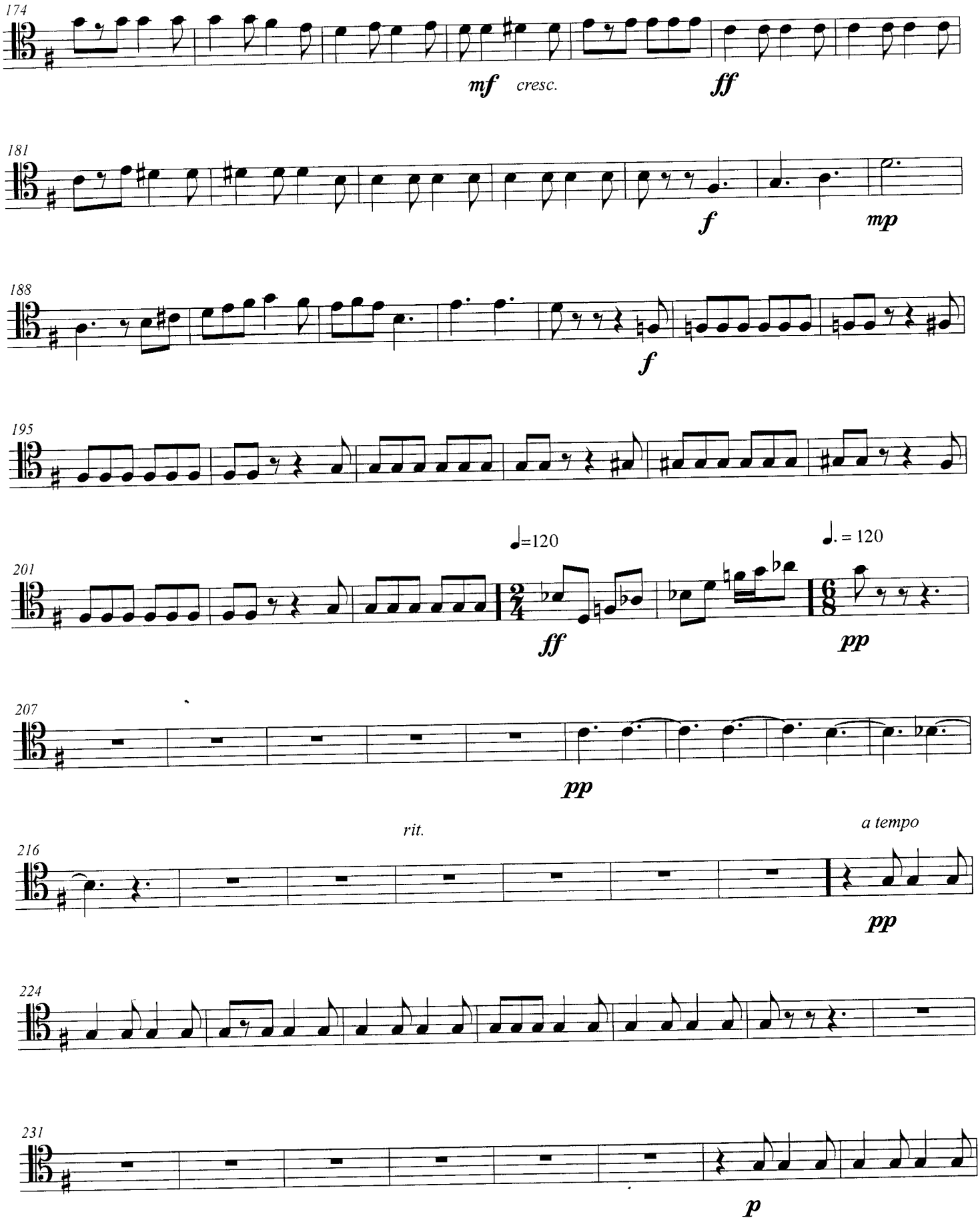
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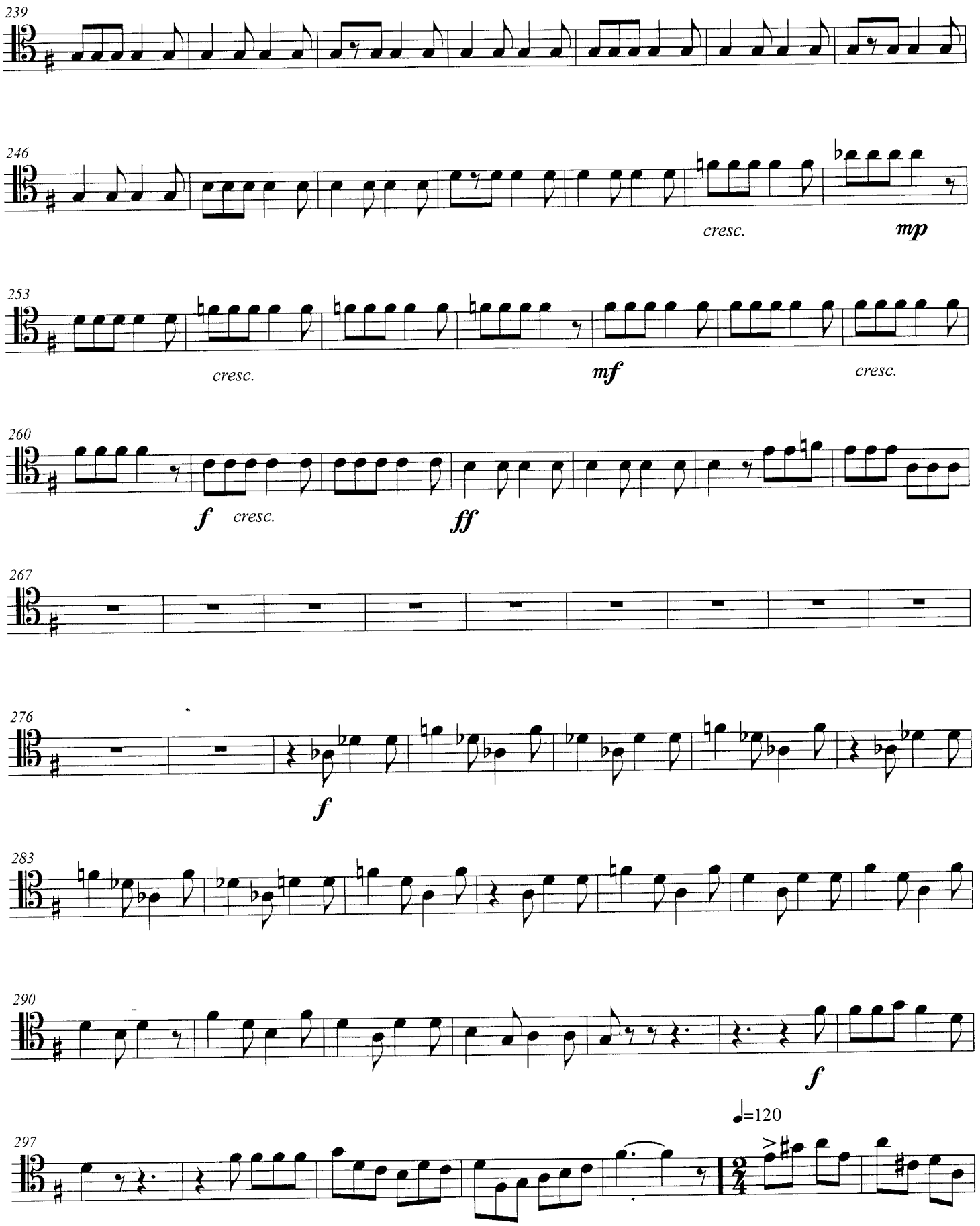
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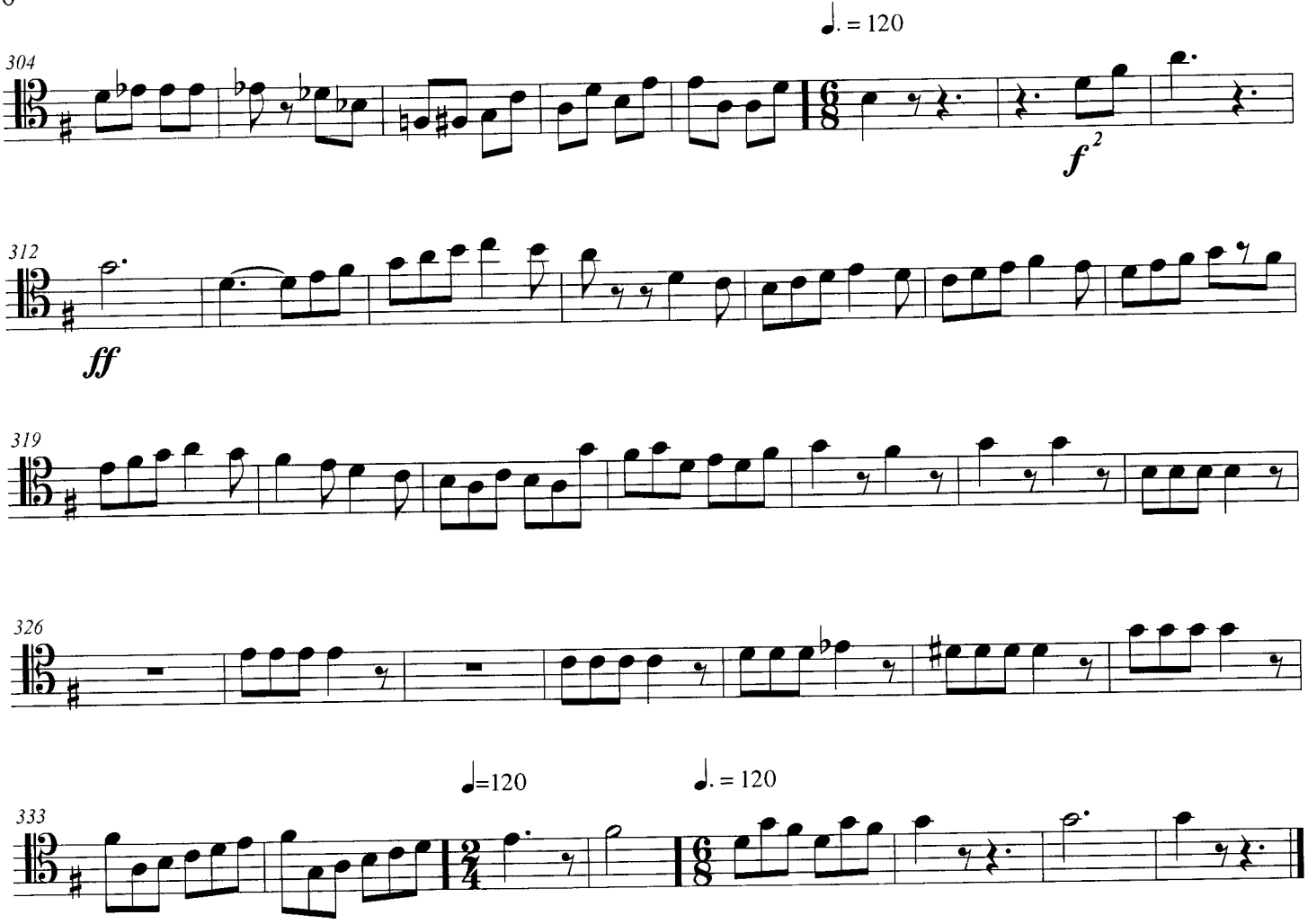
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