Heldenmusik

A Suite of twelve movements

each portraying one of

the Heroic Temperaments

by

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681 - 1767)

Telemann lived at the same time as George Frideric Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach and Telemann obviously had a great deal of mutual respect of each other's musical talents. Telemann stood in as godparent for one of Bach's children. However, they were very different in the way they approached music and the type of music each produced. In many respects, Telemann was much more similar to Handel. Both of them wrote extensive sonata literature for solo recorder. Bach obviously wrote extensive music in which recorders played a part, but no sonatas for recorder survive in published form.

It can be argued that Handel and Telemann share a rich passion for producing fine, singable melodic lines which not only sing themselves, but generally have a great deal of substance. It is this particular gift of Telemann's that bring us to the present work.

It is believed that the origin of the *Heldenmusik* was an opera about a heroic personage. The name of the opera, *Melante*, is an acrostic for the name Telemann. Since the composer was apparently writing about himself in this heroic opera, it means that he was a composer of incredible vision, as he predates Richard Strauss by two centuries. The music was incidental music for the opera, and is believed to have featured the oboe. The original music has been lost.

Several things are apparent about this music: The twelve heroic virtues for which Telemann wrote are, in my opinion, very well chosen. Furthermore, his writing is not only original and charming, but it also beautifully paints each of these virtues. In addition. the material is what one could call conversational. There is a lot of statement and response throughout the music. This convinced me to write not merely a solo work, but a work for two solo instruments, always in dialogue. In my case, I chose the treble and the tenor recorder. While they are very similar, they have a distinctive sound, and their ranges are slightly different. I believe that, had I merely written a pice for solo instrument and continuo, the result would be charming but ultimately would sound boring. With the constant interchange of the two voices, I believe I have arrived at a means for producing an interesting and provocative work.

I have decided to place the solo parts in the same music so that the performers can instantly tell when they have these exchanges with one another. In this styple of music, certain amounts of ornamentation are expected, and I have taken the liberty of supplying these, but it is expected that the performers will add ornamentation of their own, especially in the repeats, when additional ornemantation is virtually required.

The tempi are suggestions. I would only point out that in the opinion of many experts today, if any musician were to be able to hear his music being played by musicians today, almost all of them would begin their response by saying, "You're playing it too fast." One should not confuse playing rapidly with playing well, and one also must not confuse playing the notes on the page with playing the actual music behind those notes. In the present work, expression and phrasing is absolutely essential. I have included markings to point as much as possible to phrasing that will make the pieces come alive. My markings are, of course, also merely suggestions -- very strenuous suggestions, but suggestions nevertheless. I hope this brings you much joy!

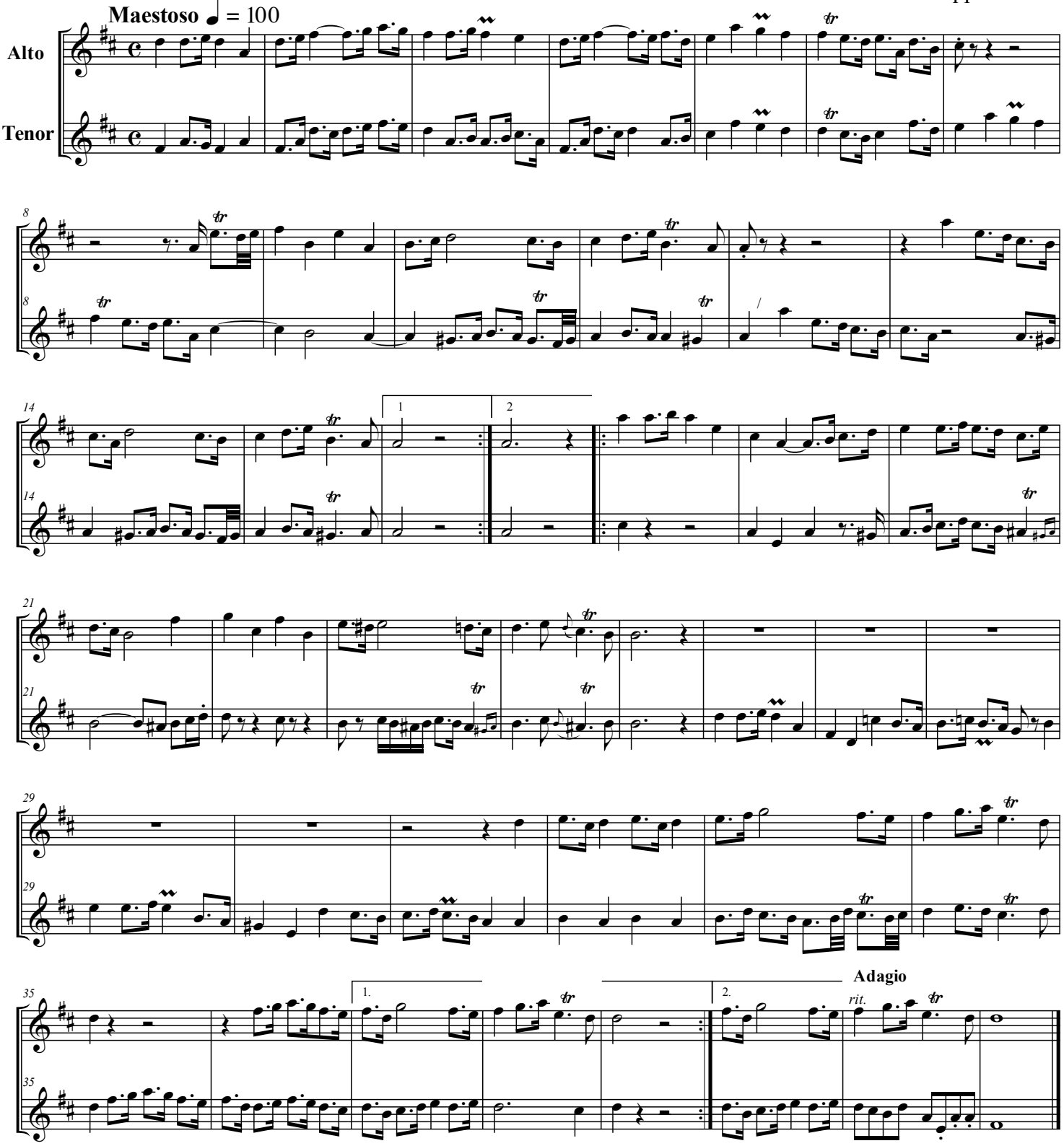
James Oppenheimer

Alto and Tenor Recorders

Die Heldenmusik
"Heroic Music"

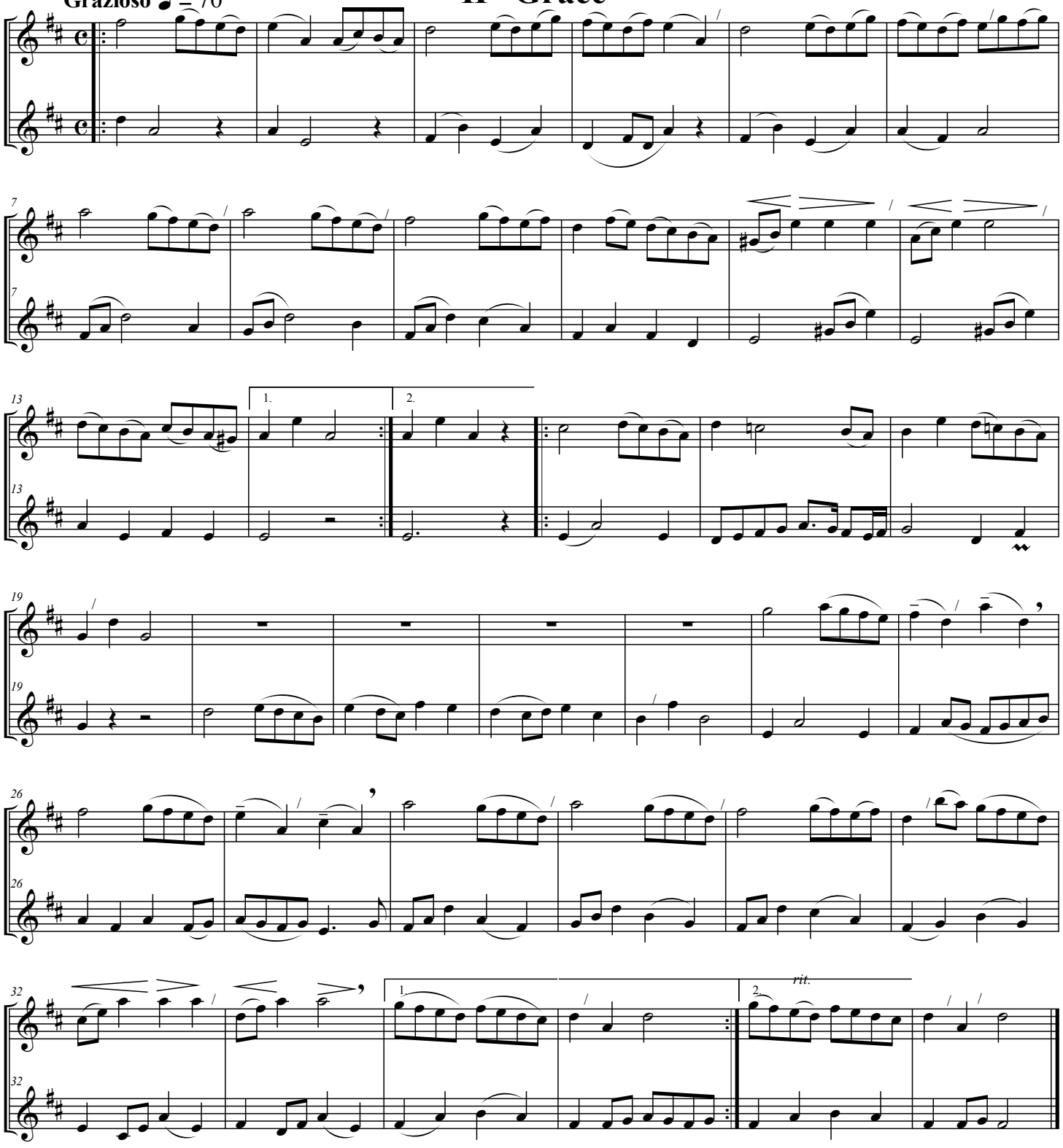
I Honor

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)
Arr. James Oppenheimer



II Grace

Grazioso ♩ = 70



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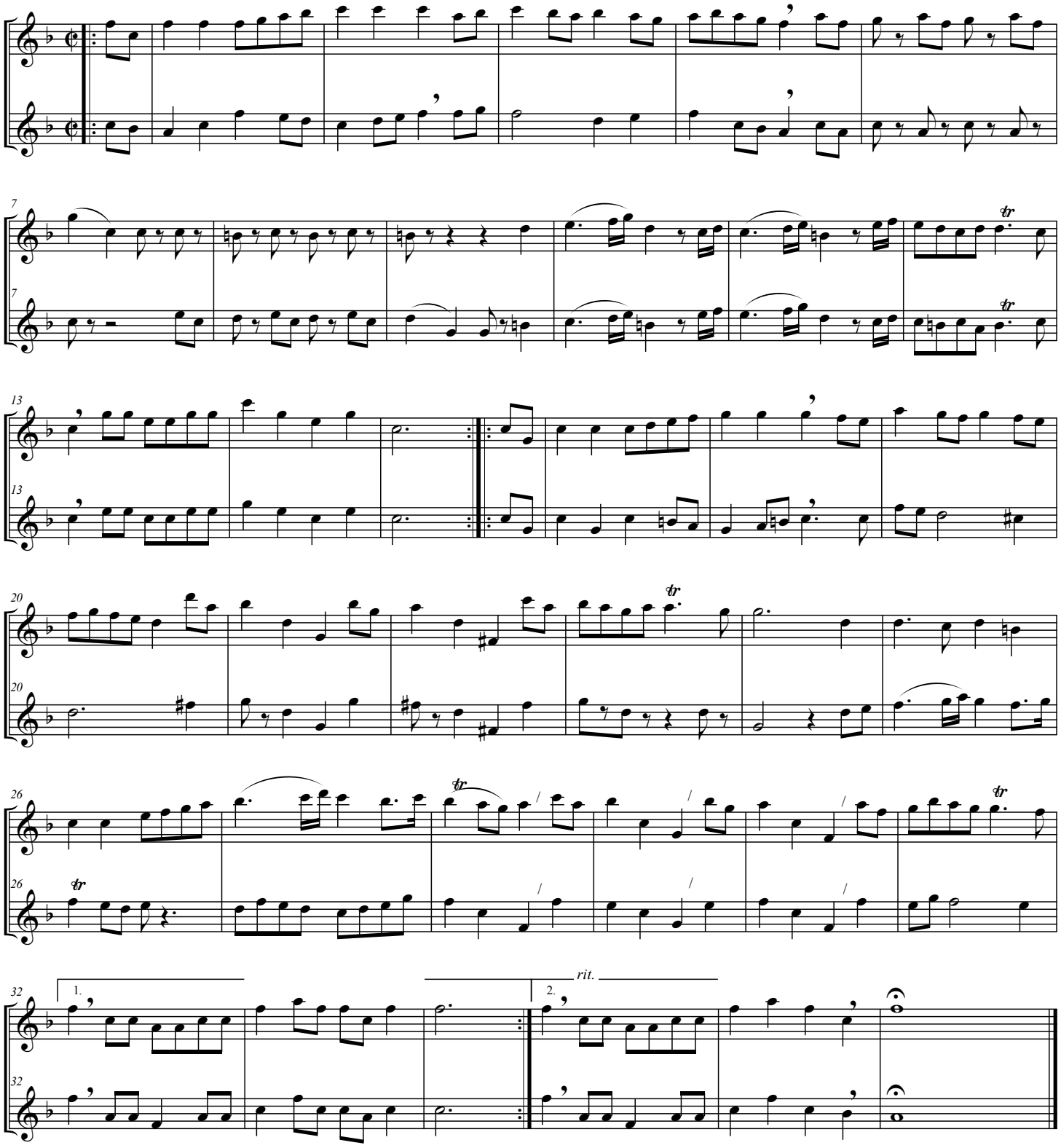
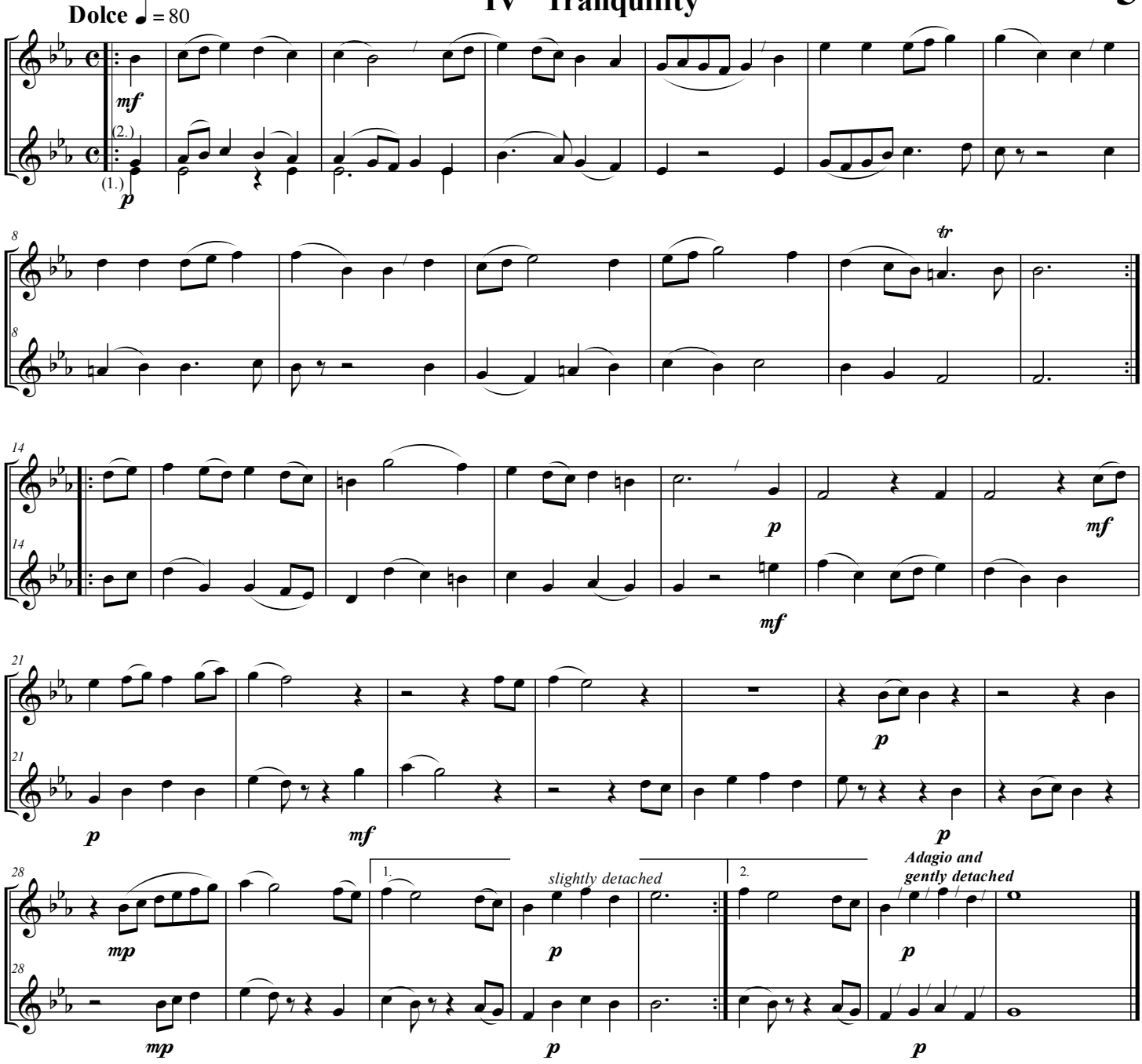
III Bravery

Allegro ♩ = 85



IV Tranquility



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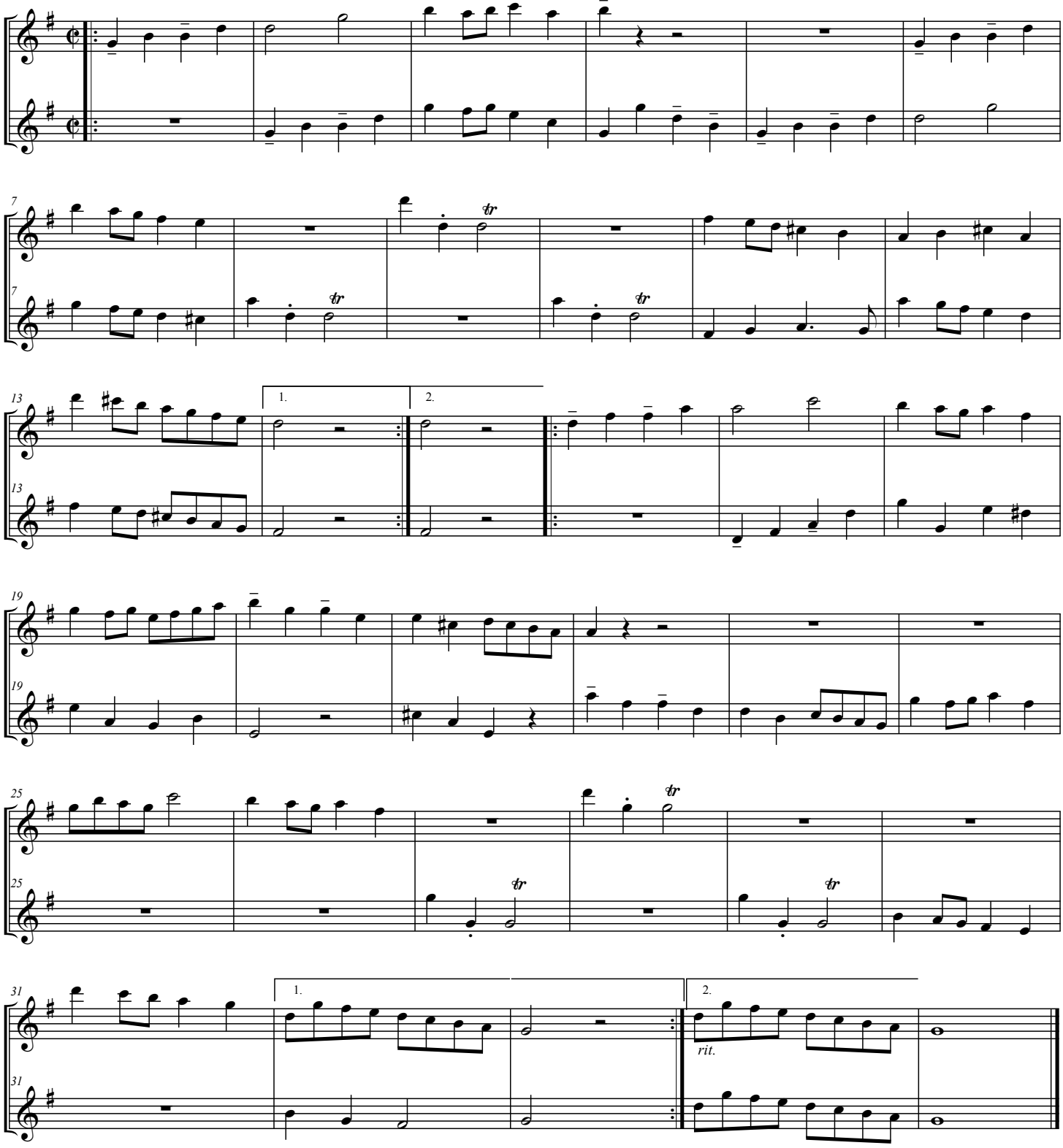
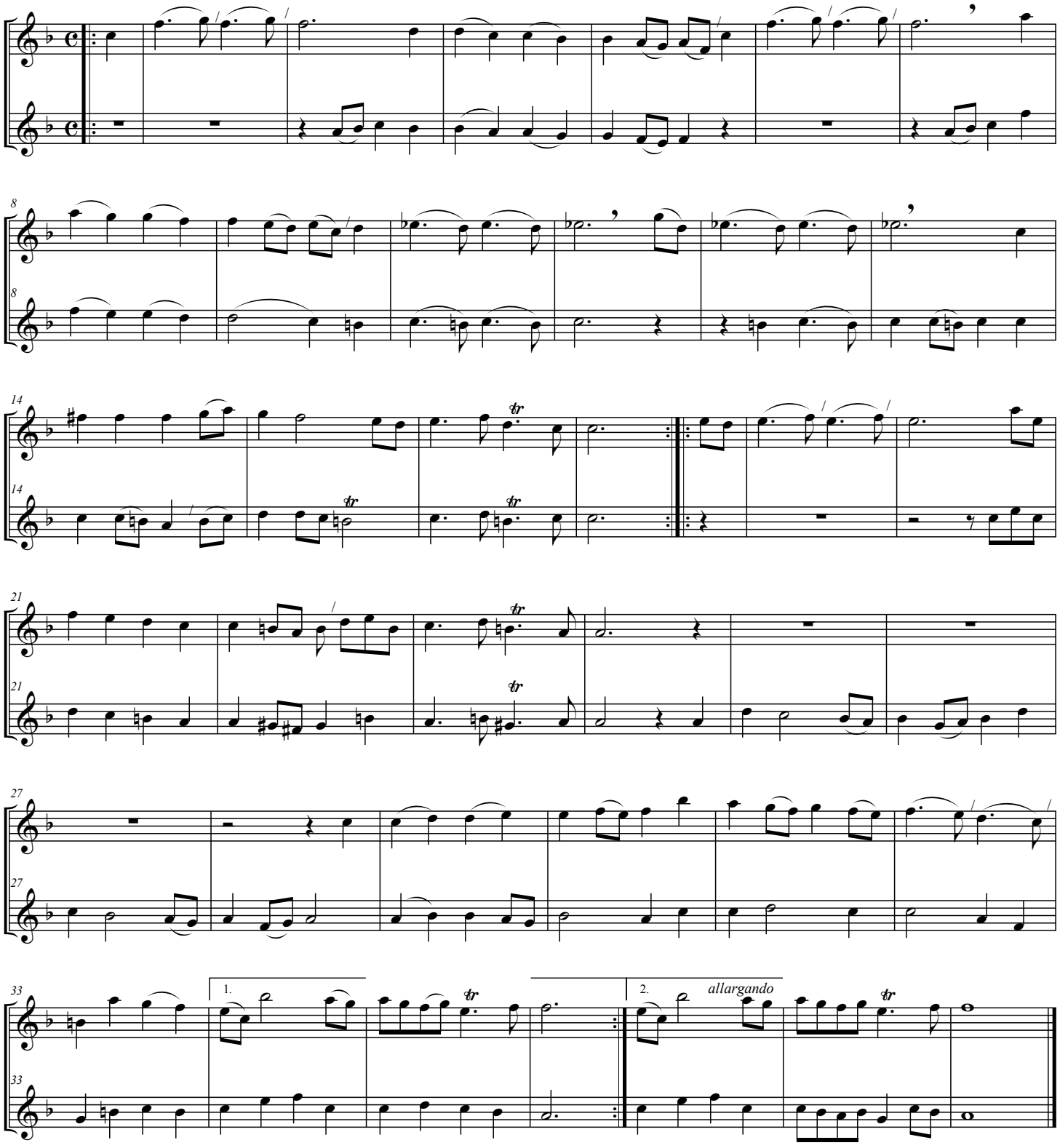
6 V Vigor

Vivace ♩ = ca. 100



VI Love



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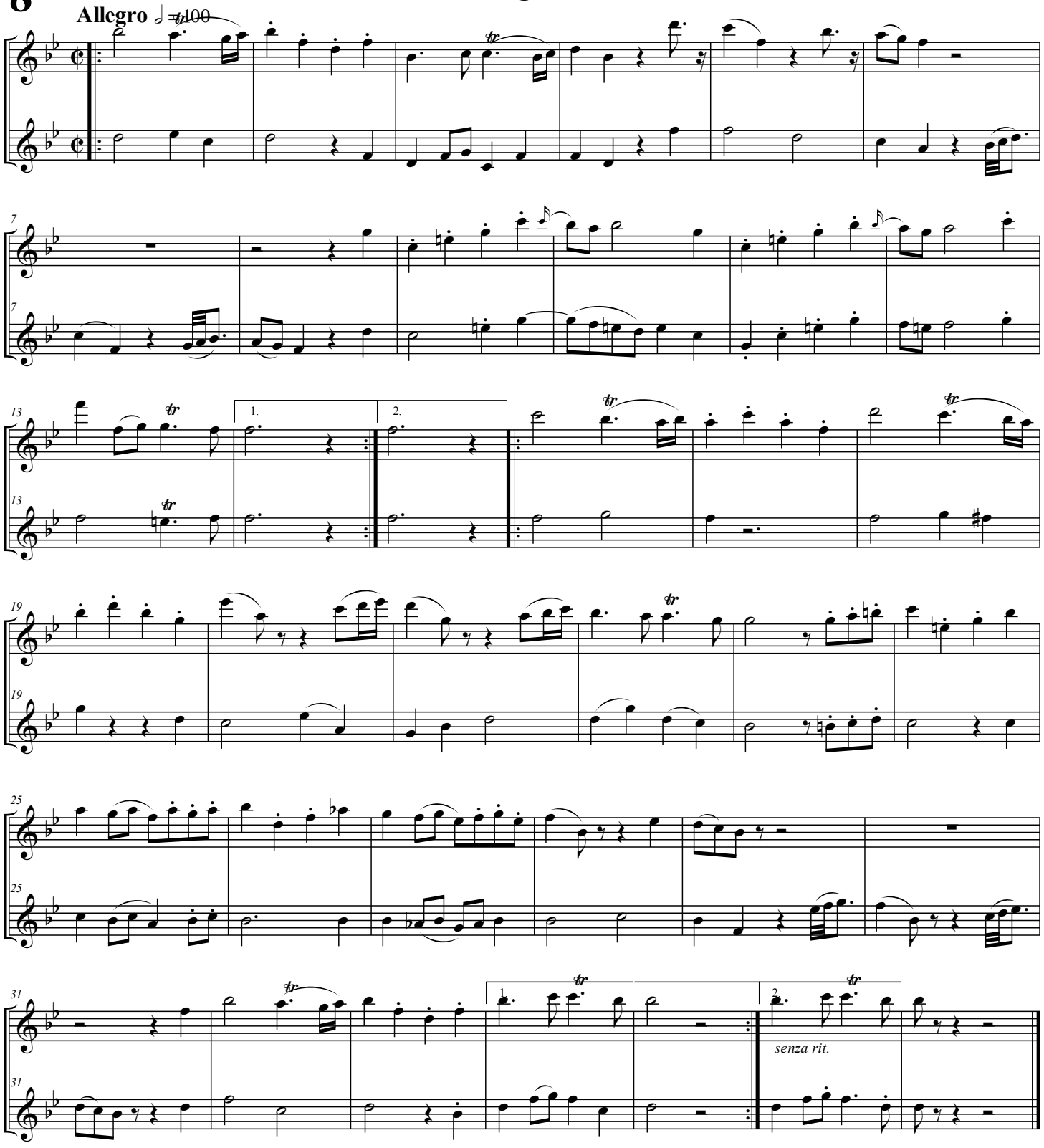
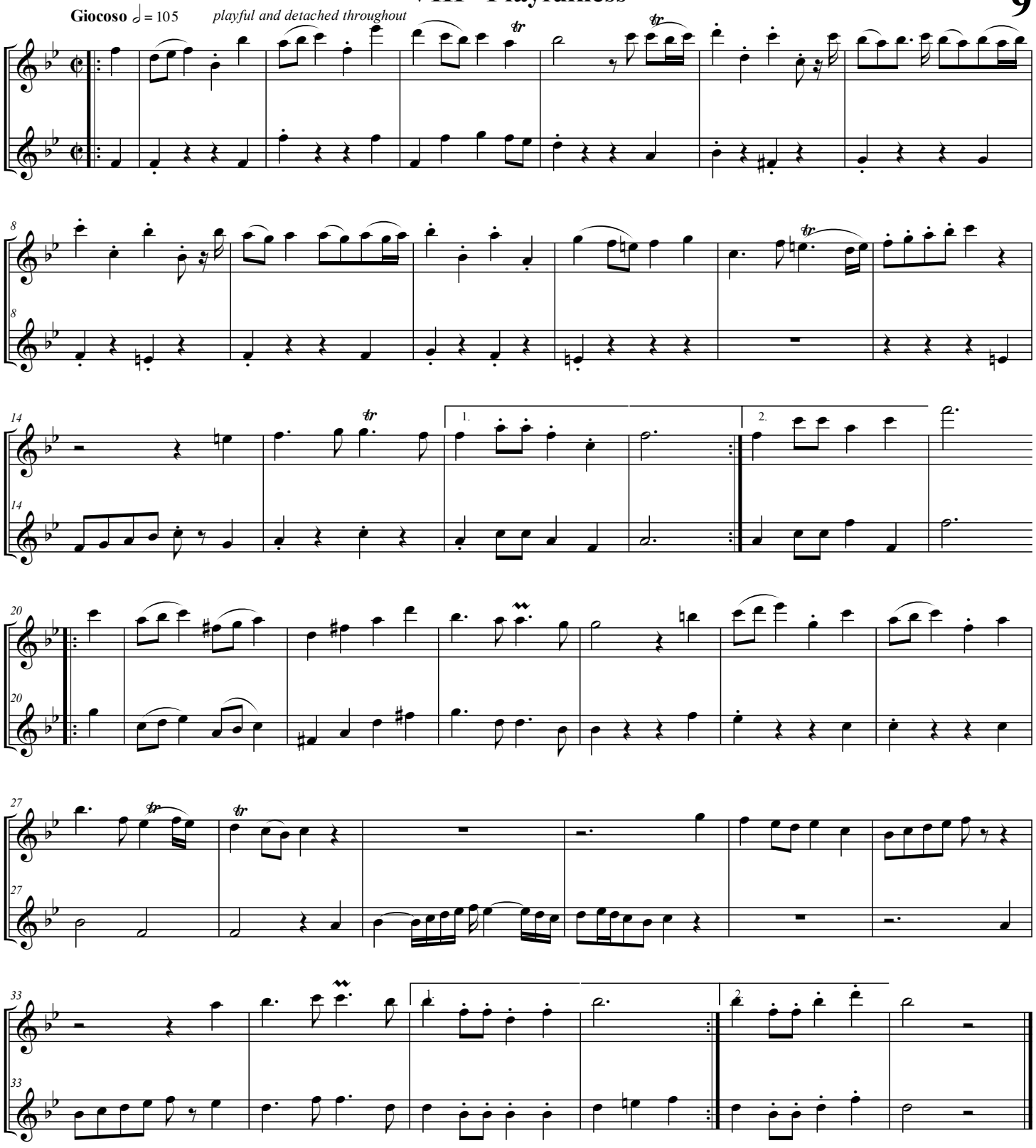
VII Vigilance



VIII Playfulness



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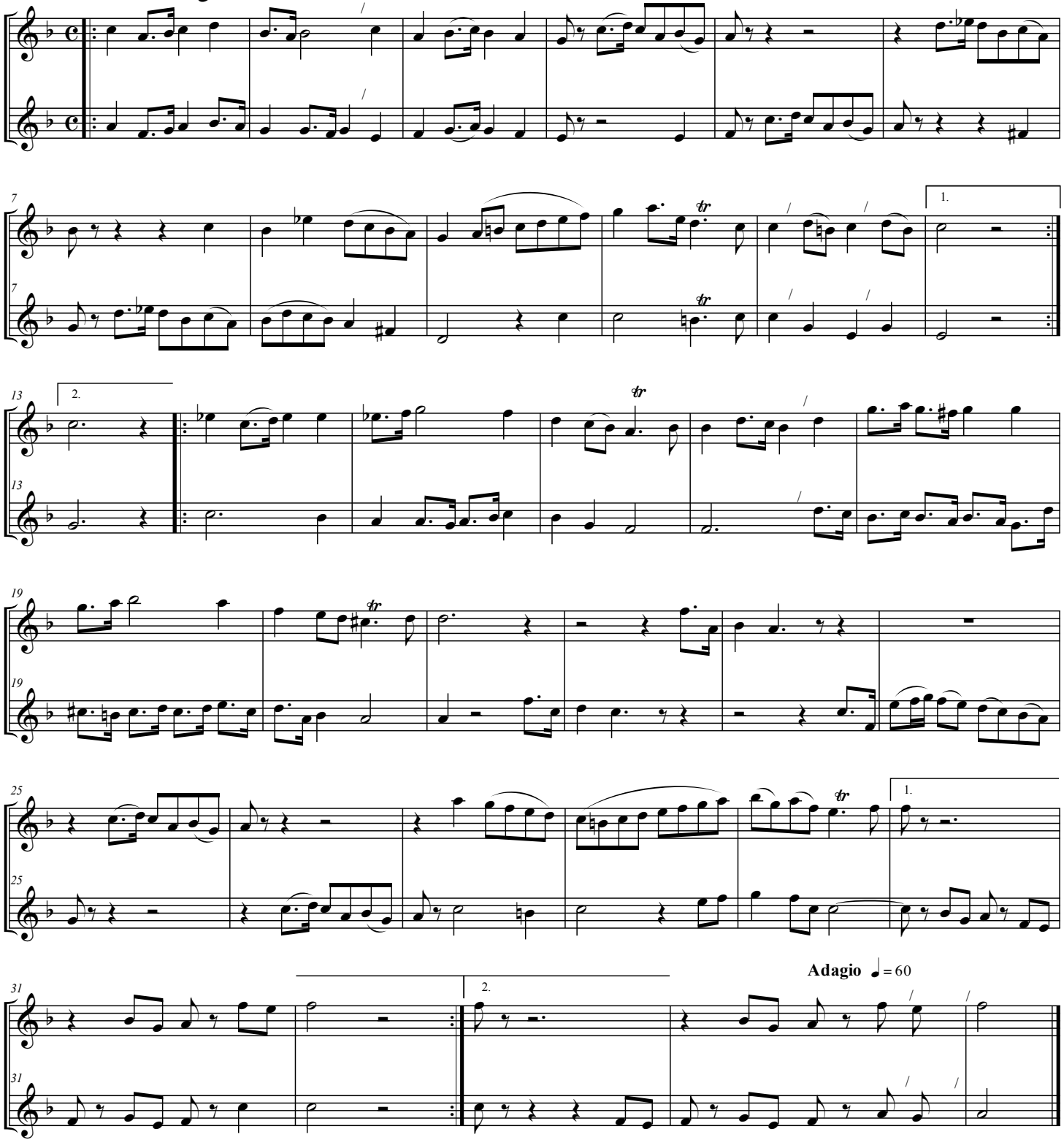
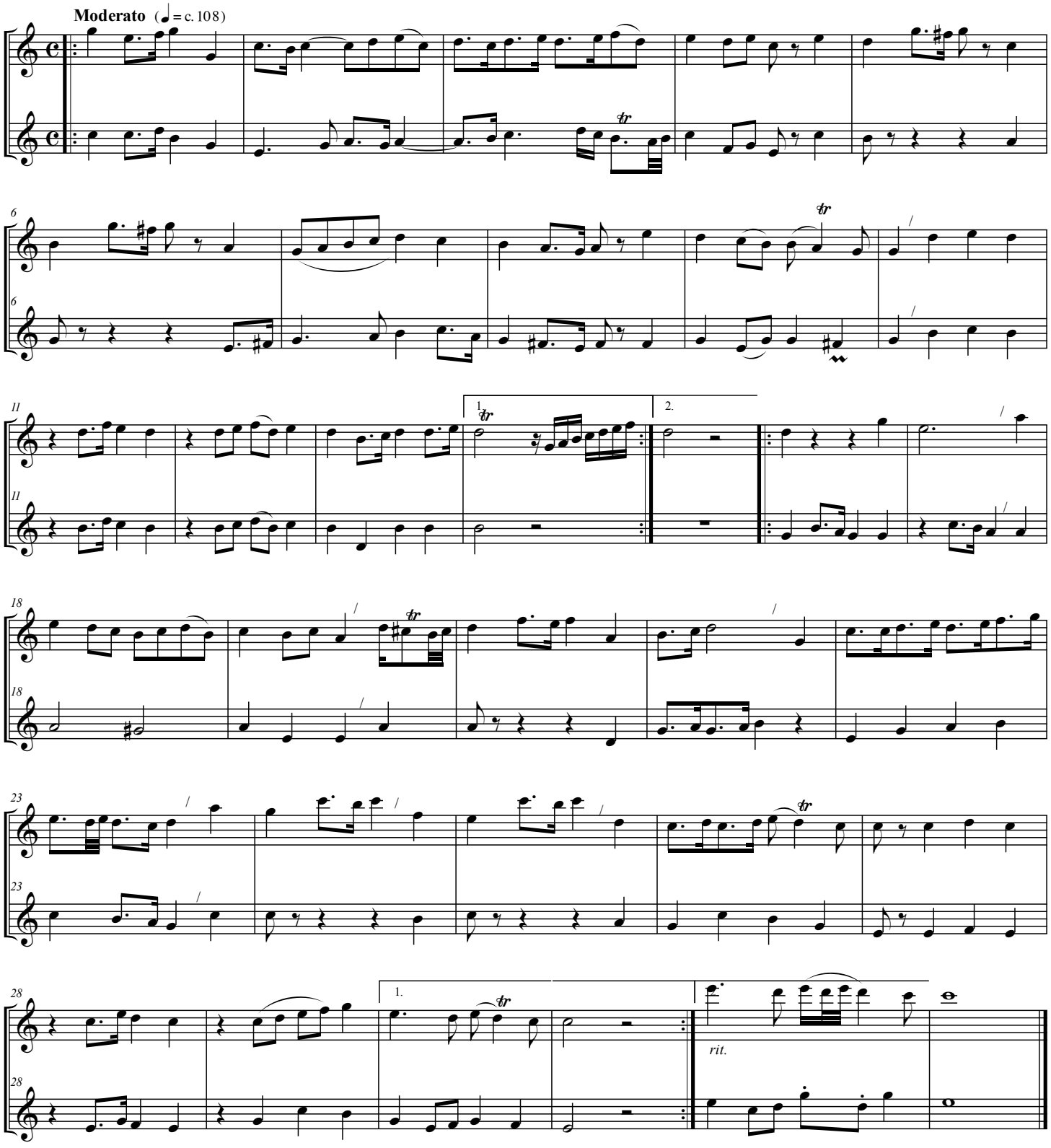
10 IX Sweetness

Doucement ♩ = 80



X Generosity



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XI Hope

12

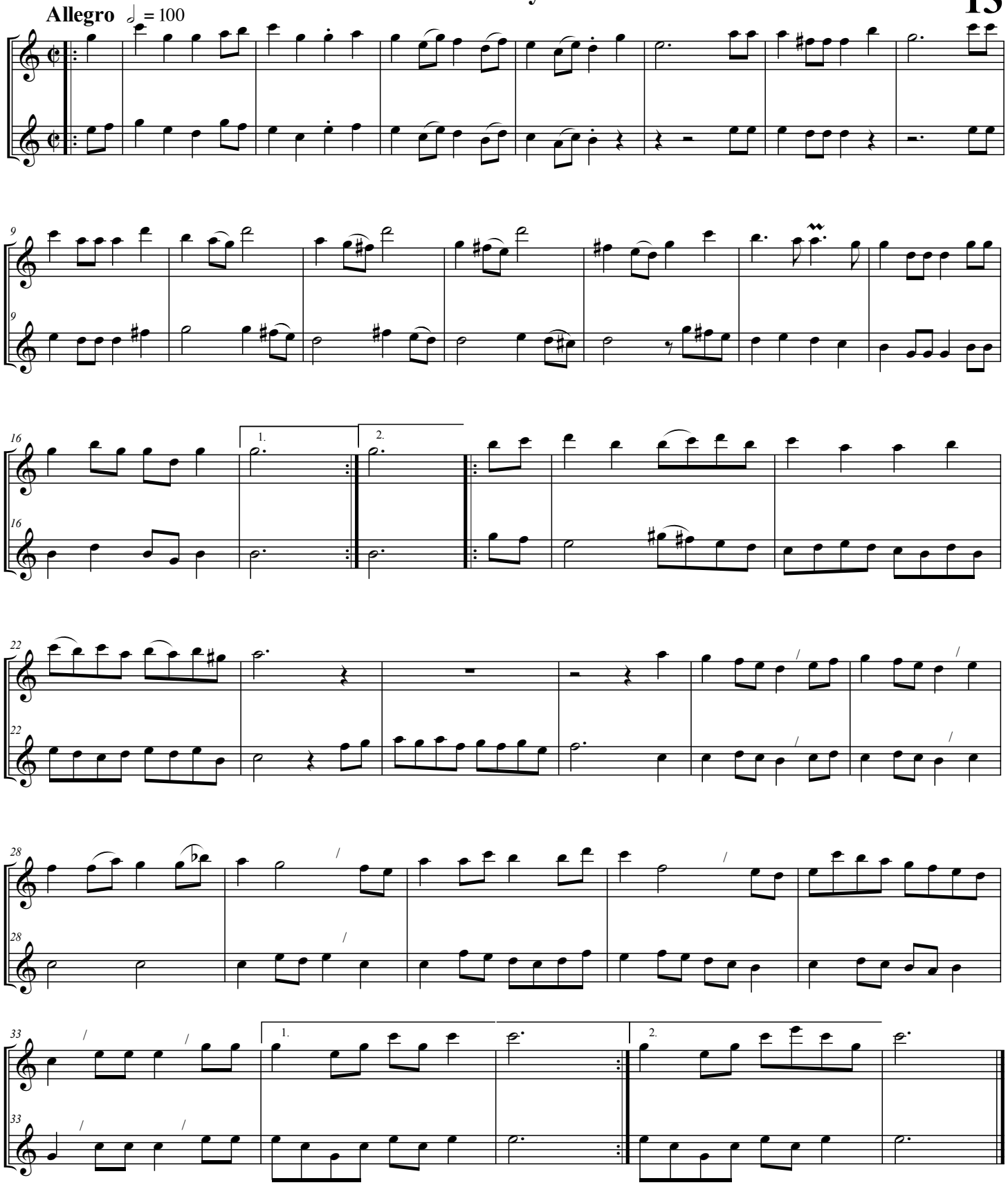
con Spirito ♩ = 95

light, detached, esp. quarter notes

Extremely light and detached. Subordinate to alto

Solo

XII Joy



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