Guillaume de Machaut

15 Two-voice Ballades

Arranged for viola da gamba duo

Dick Yates
March 2022

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	Treble	Alto	Bass
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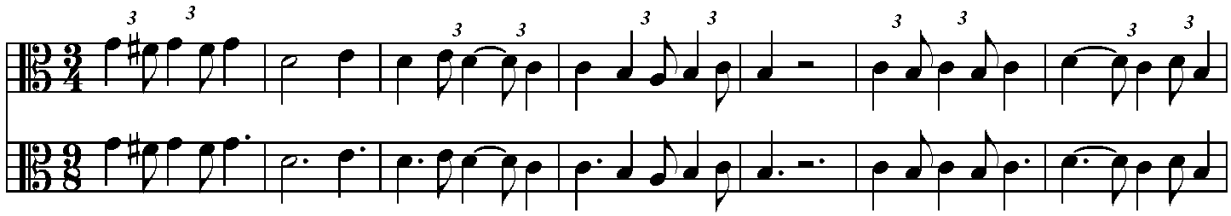
Introduction

Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377) was the pre-eminent composer of the late medieval period. While his best-known work was the *Messe de Nostre Dame*, the first complete setting of the mass, he also wrote numerous chansons, rondeaux, lais, virelais and ballades. The ballades are in two, three and four parts.

This music is remote enough that to modern ears, even those well-accustomed to Baroque and Renaissance textures and tonality, it can be baffling on first hearing. With time and repetition, though, the structures, idioms, melodic arcs and cadential formulas become more familiar and the beauty emerges. This experience is well-worth the initial difficulty. You might ease in with Ballade 9.

The present collection is of the 15 ballades written for two voices found in the Breitkopf & Härtel edition, here transcribed for two viols. There are three versions of each ballade using treble, alto and bass clefs, with appropriate change of keys, so that they can be played by two treble, two tenor, or two bass viols. The voice ranges are narrow enough that many of the ballades are also playable by mixed pairs of treble-tenor or tenor-bass.

The transcription from the Breikopf & Härtel score was in most cases quite straightforward. In one of the ballades, number 10, I took an experimental approach to the notation. Rather than use the pervasive and, to my mind, visually cluttered and confusing triplet notation, I instead altered the time signatures to be compound ones that obviated the need for triplets. Here is a comparison:



The tradeoff is triplets versus augmentation dots and in this excerpt the change seems reasonable. One drawback is that you are sometimes forced into some rather unusual time signatures. For instance, a measure of 9/4 must become 27/8!

Dick Yates
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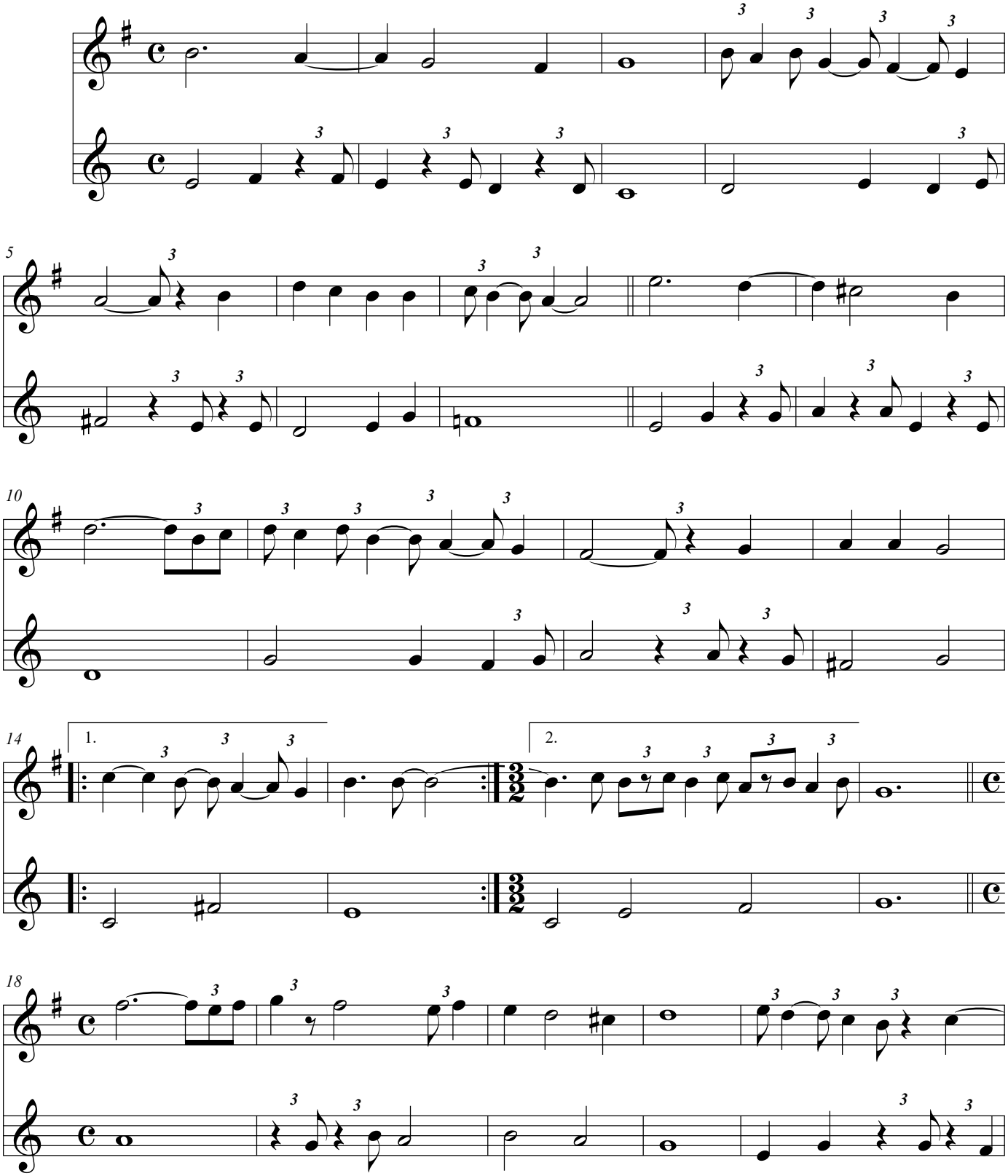
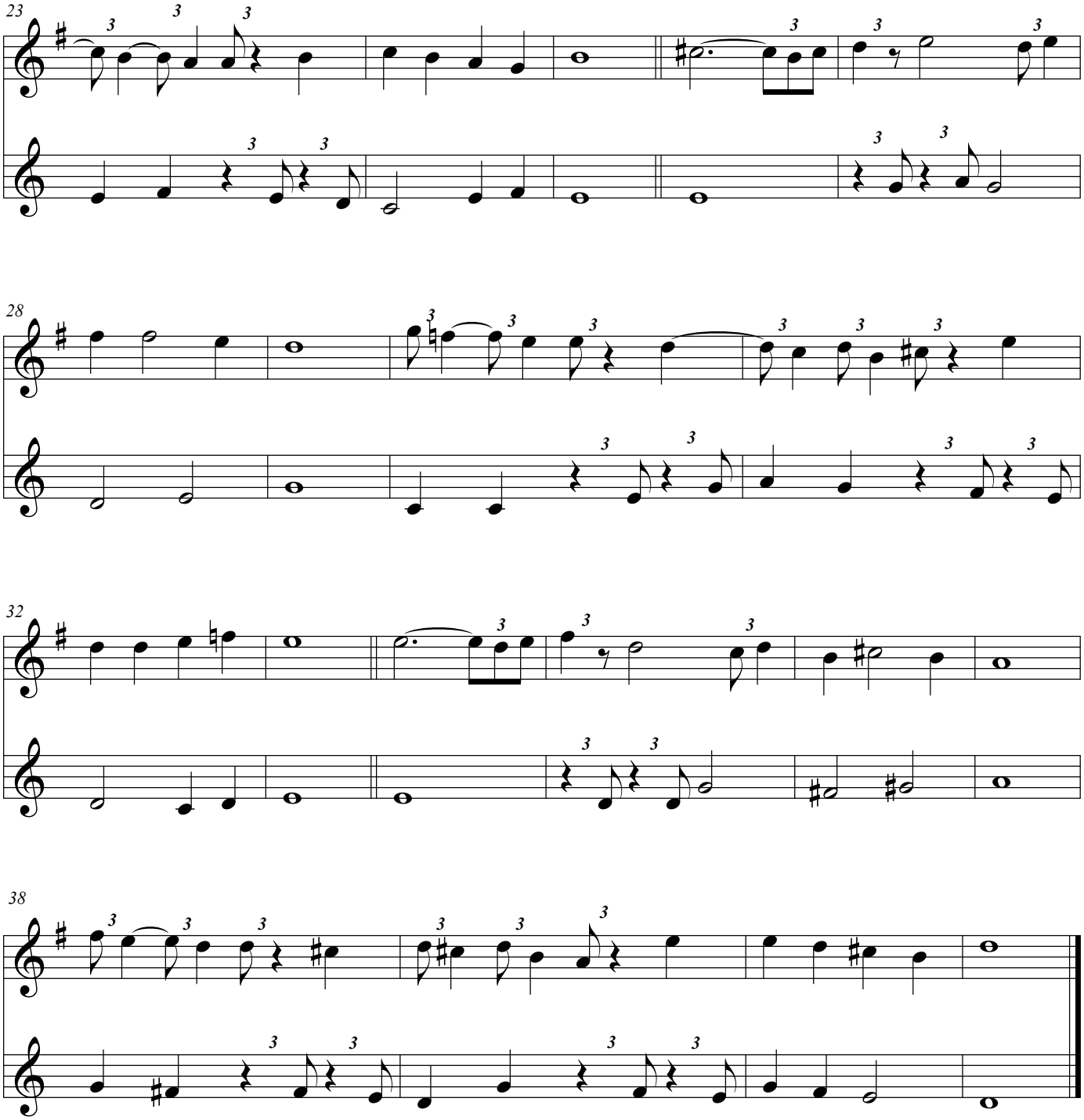
S'amours ne fait pas sa grace

Ballade 1

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

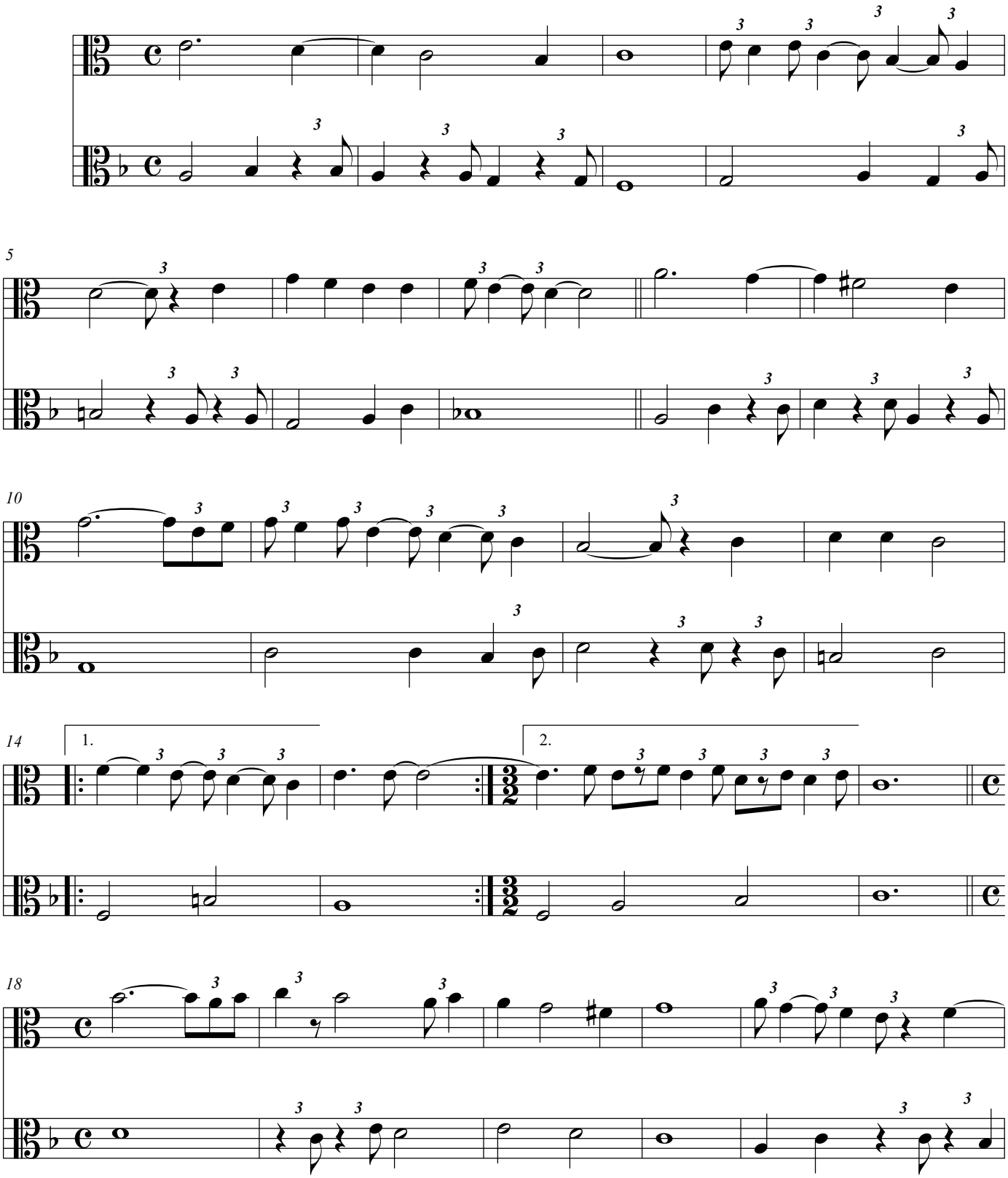


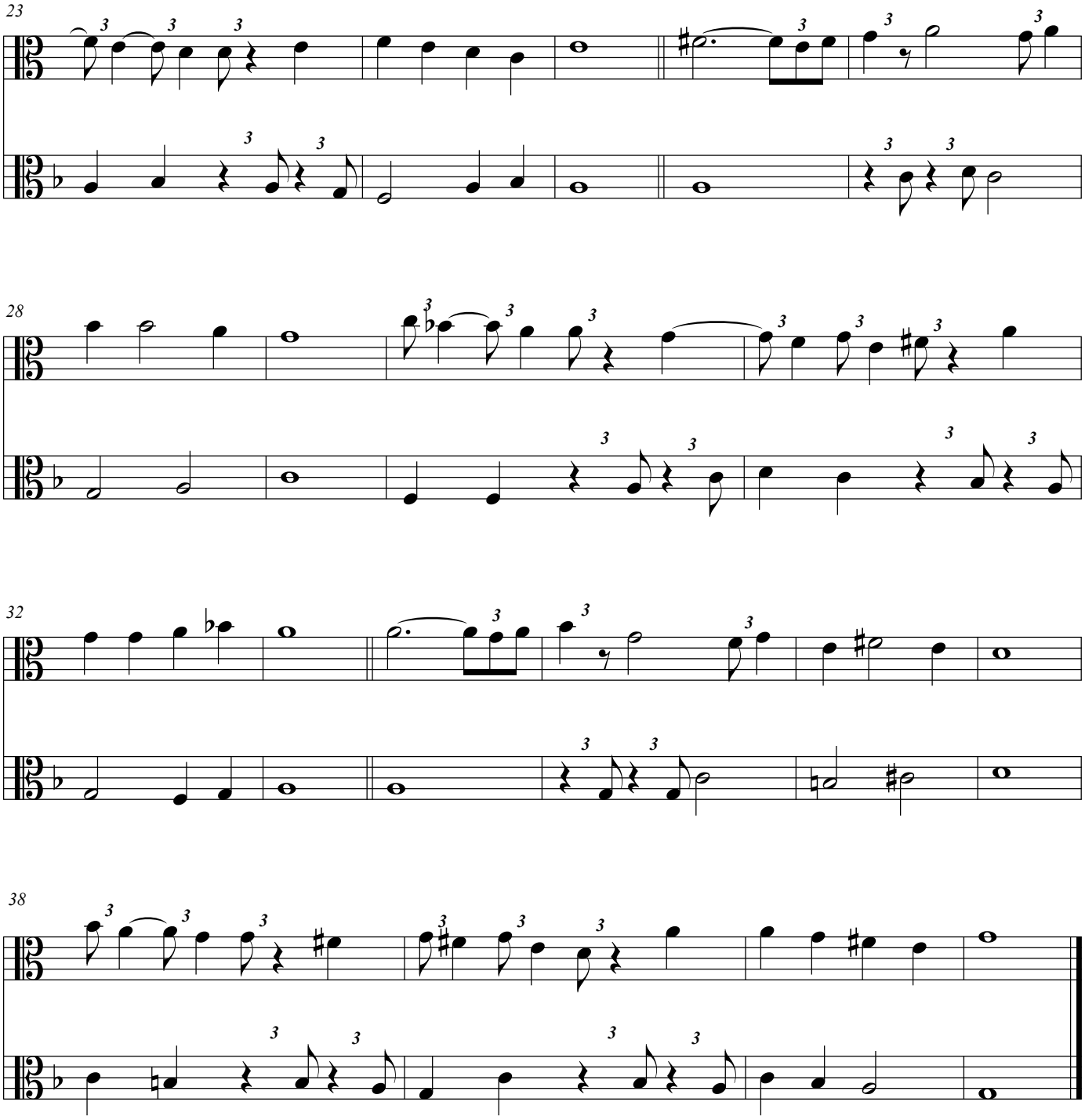


S'amours ne fait pas sa grace

Ballade 1

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

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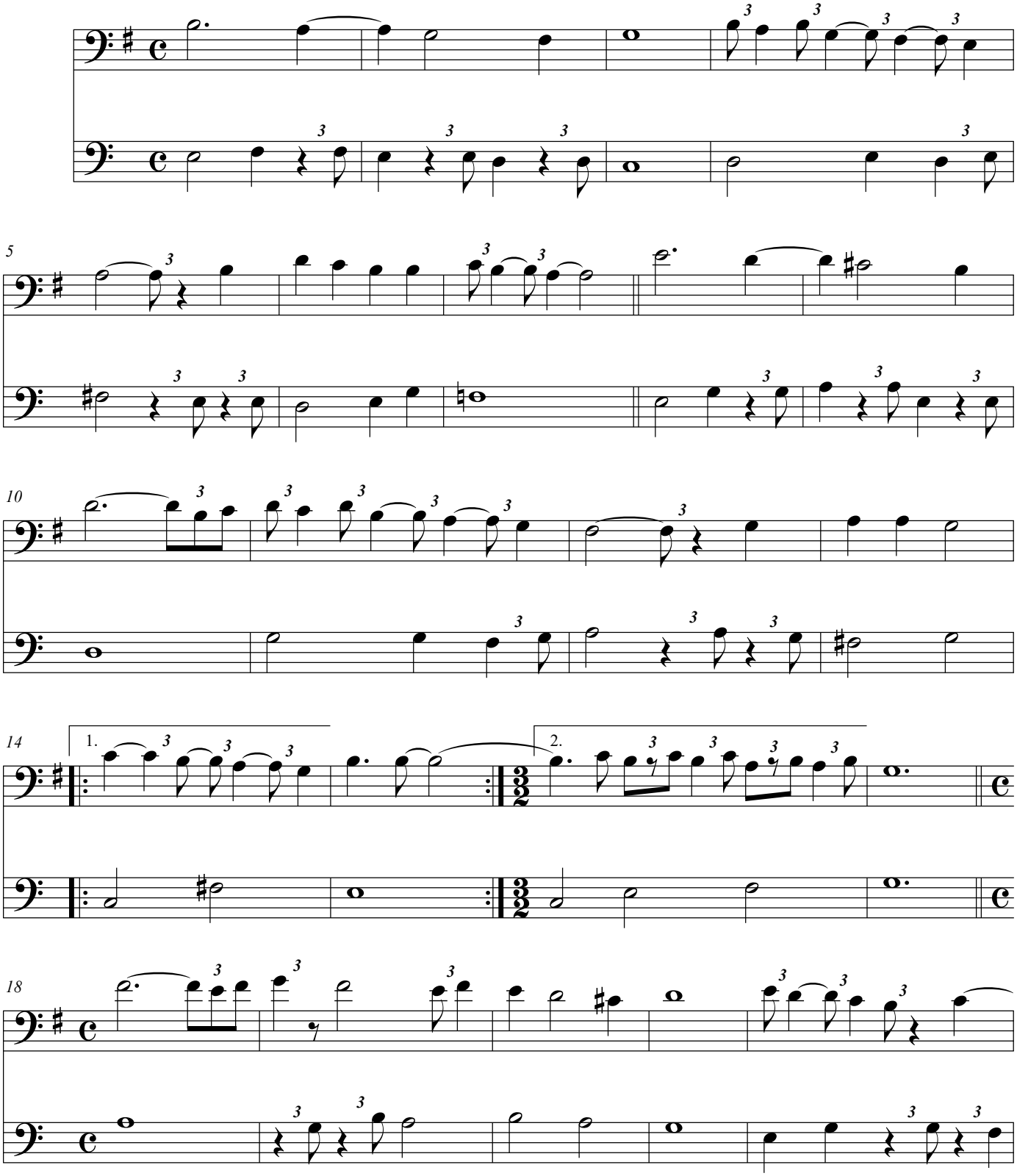
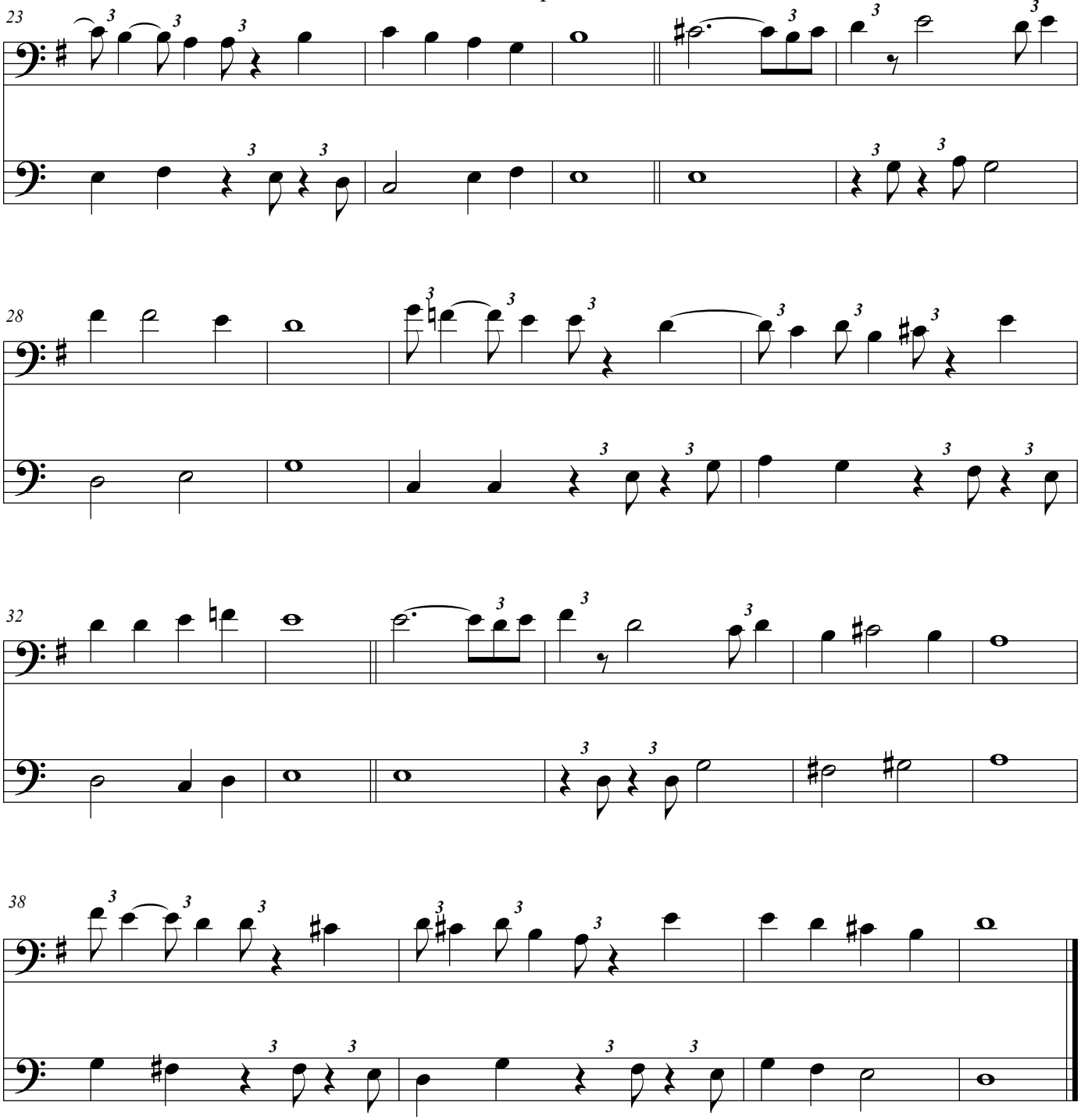
S'amours ne fait pas sa grace

Ballade 1

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

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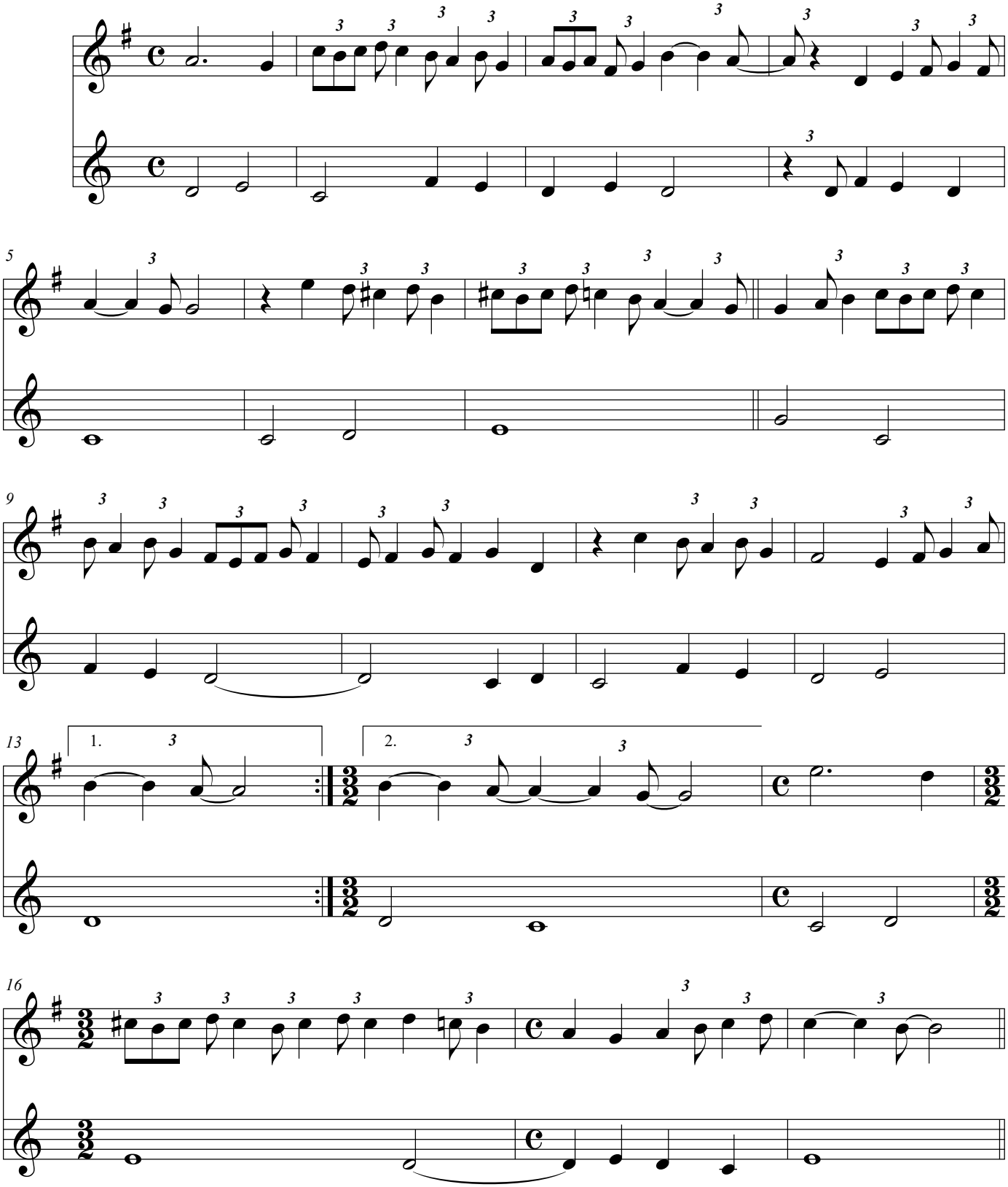
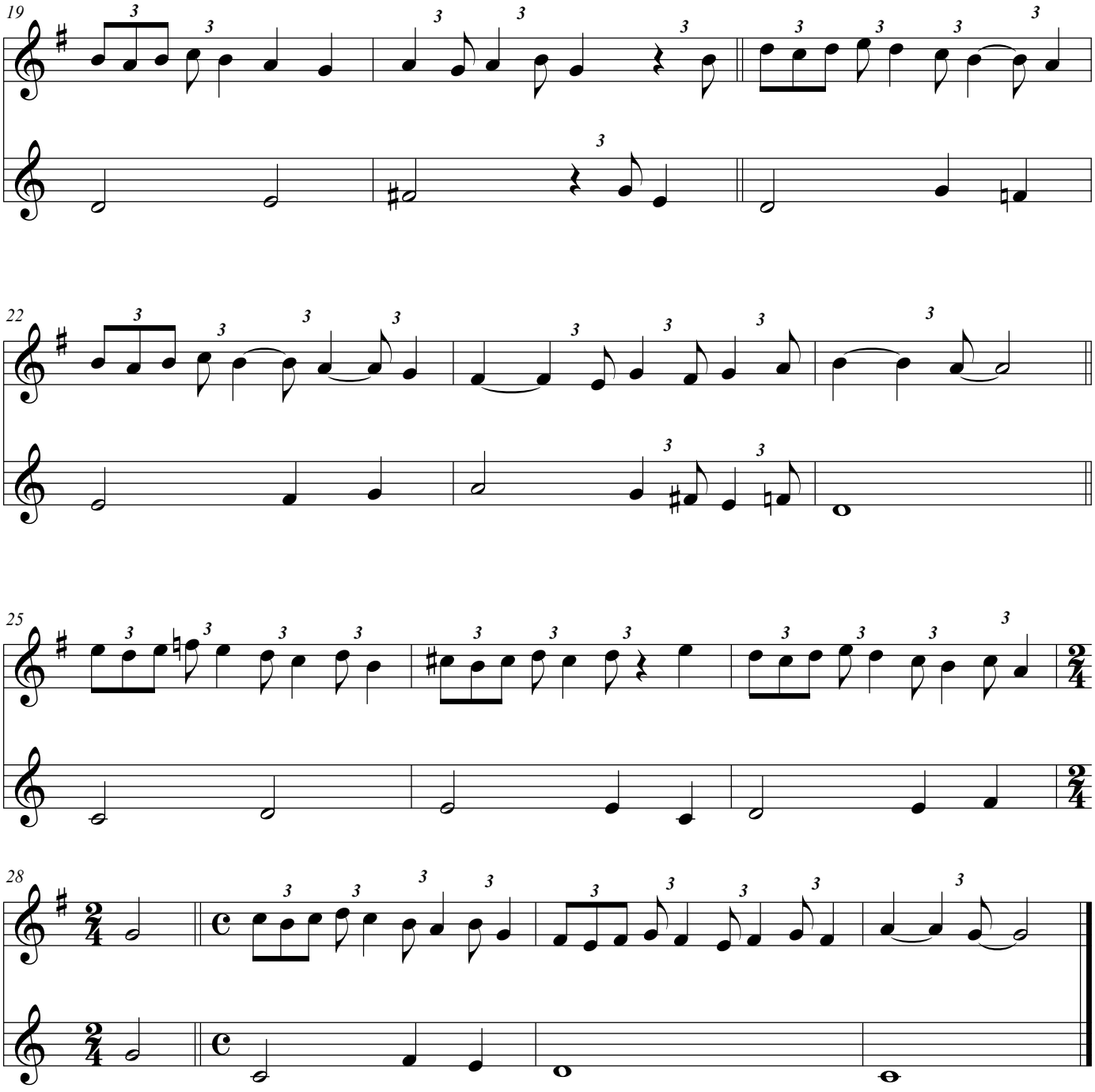
Helas! tant ay dolour et peine

Ballade 2

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

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Helas! tant ay dolour et peine

Ballade 2

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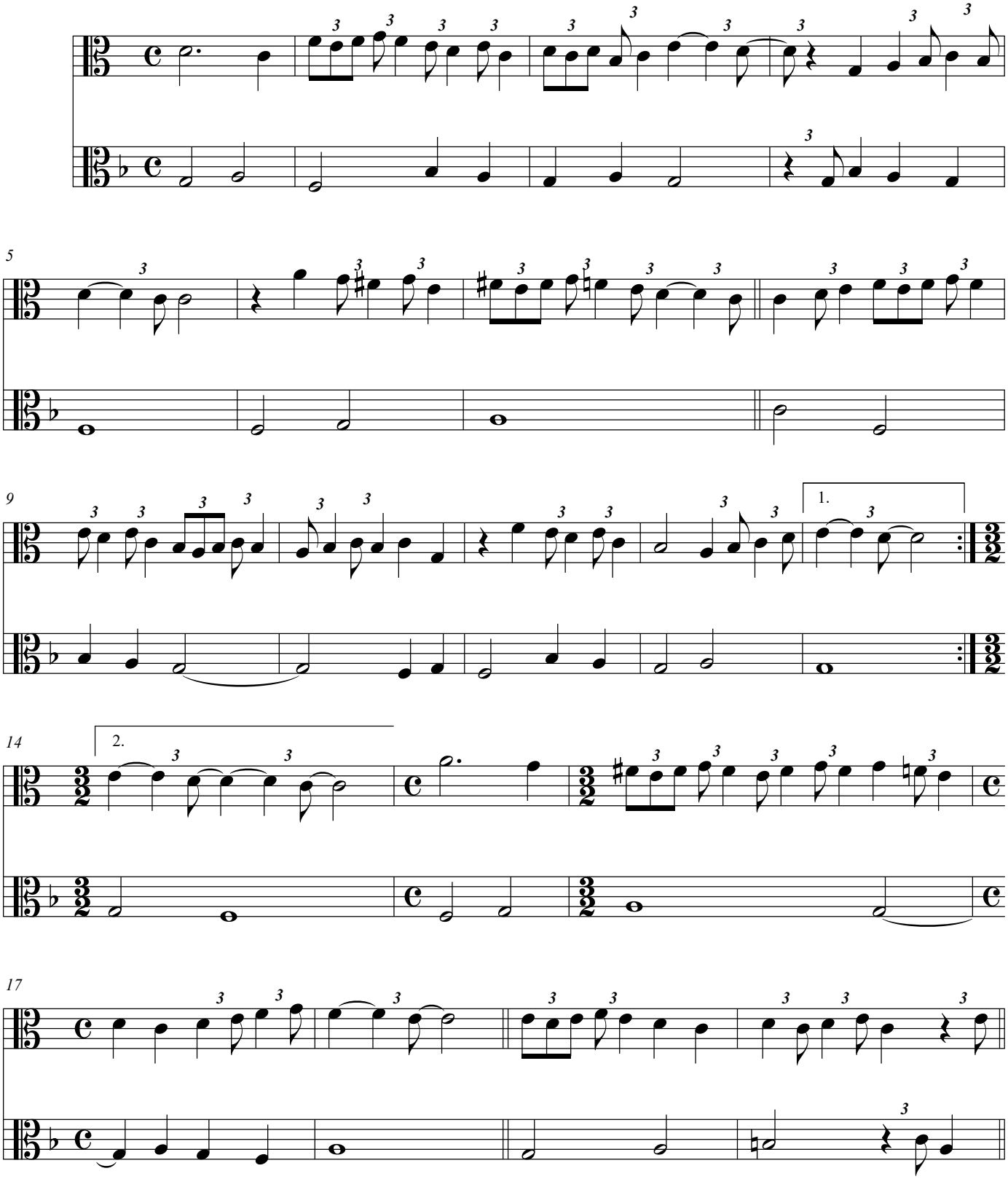

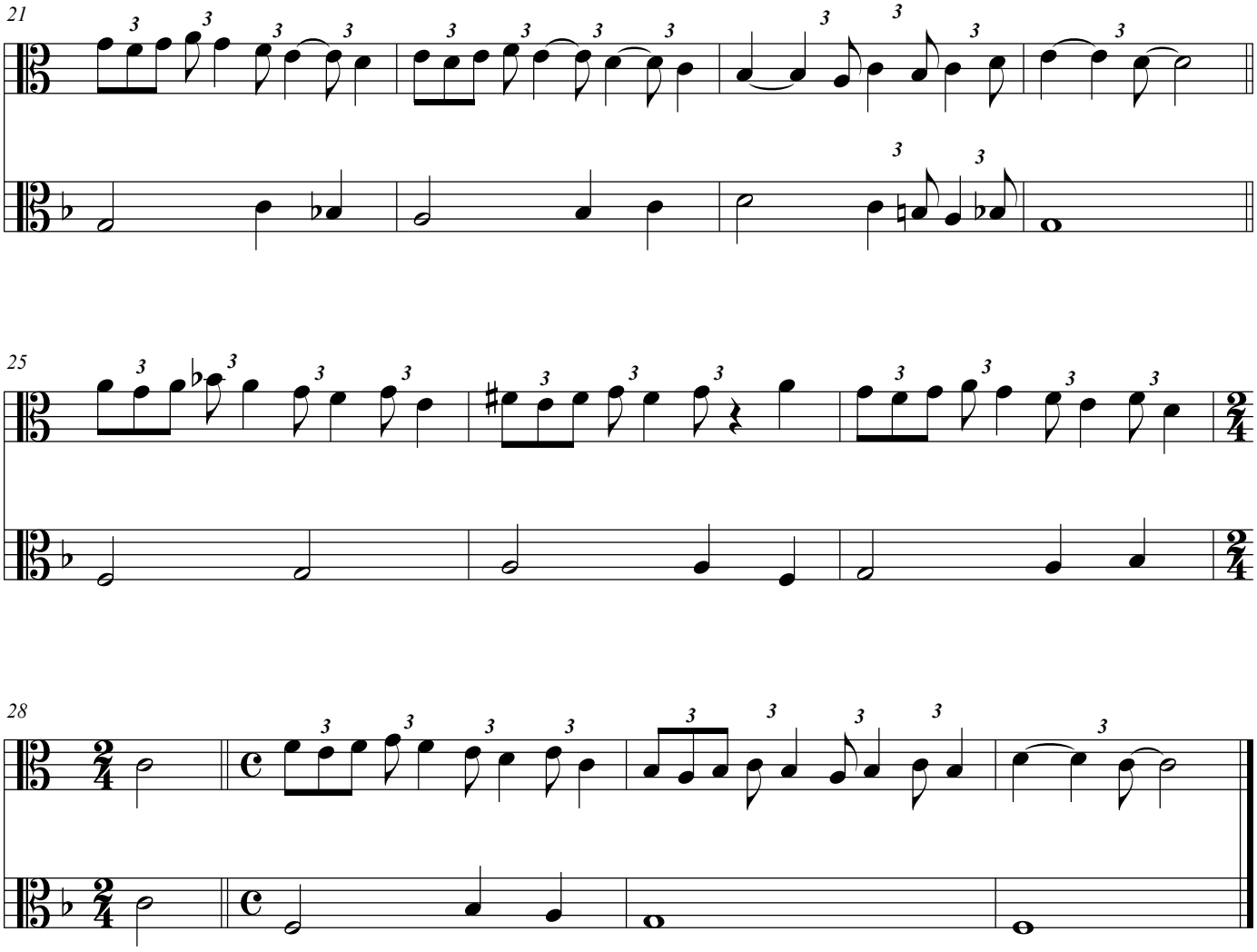
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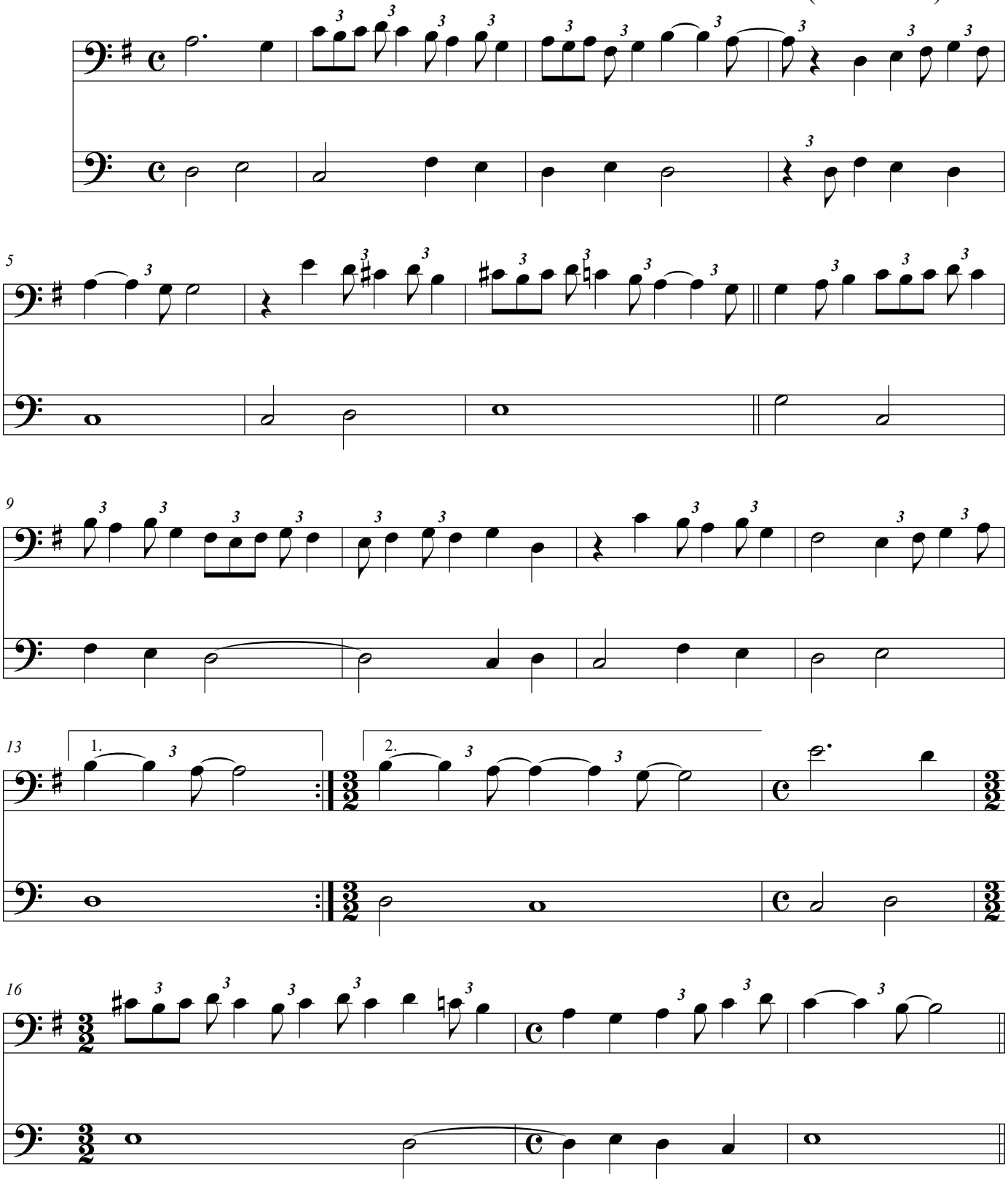

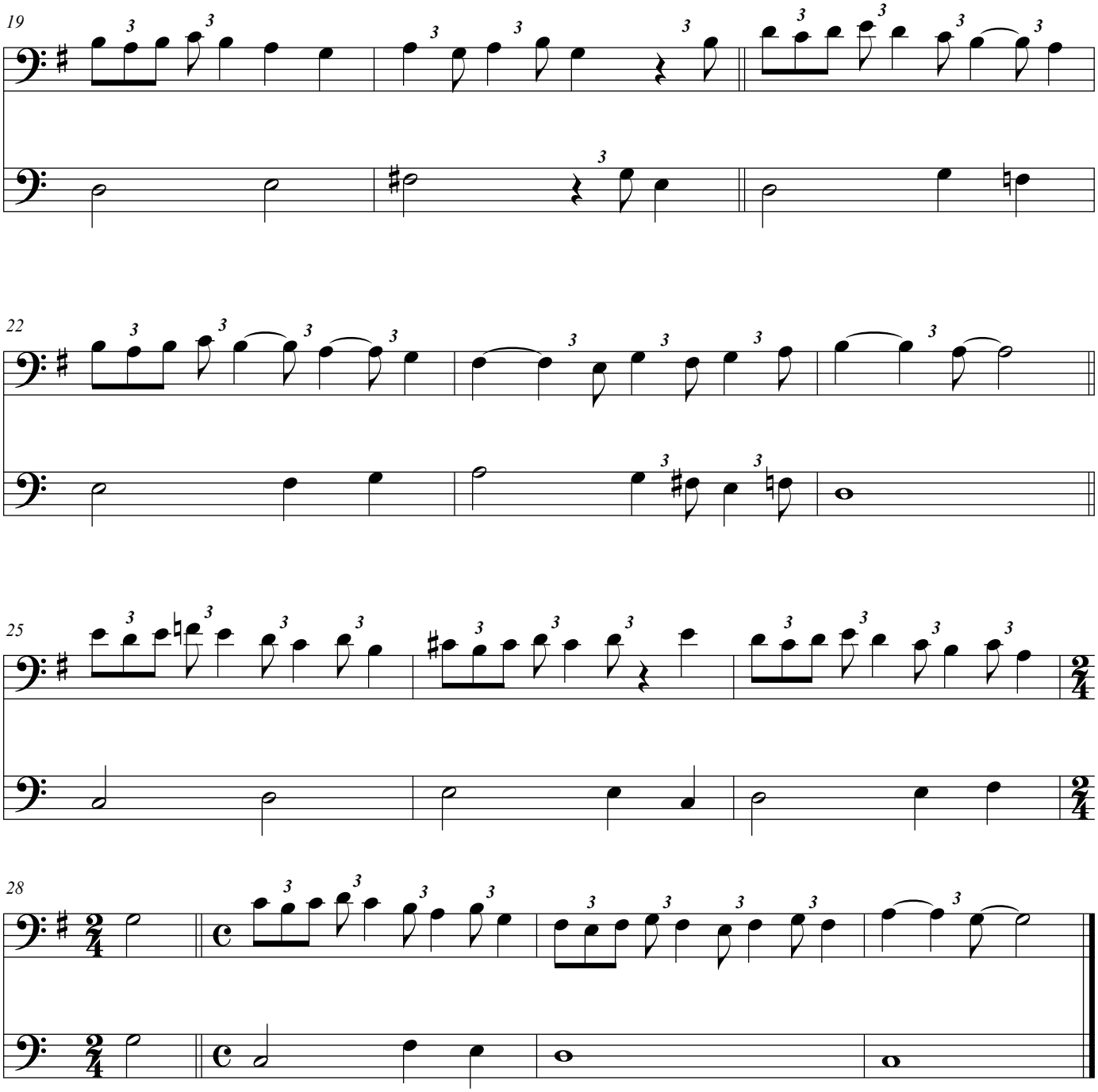
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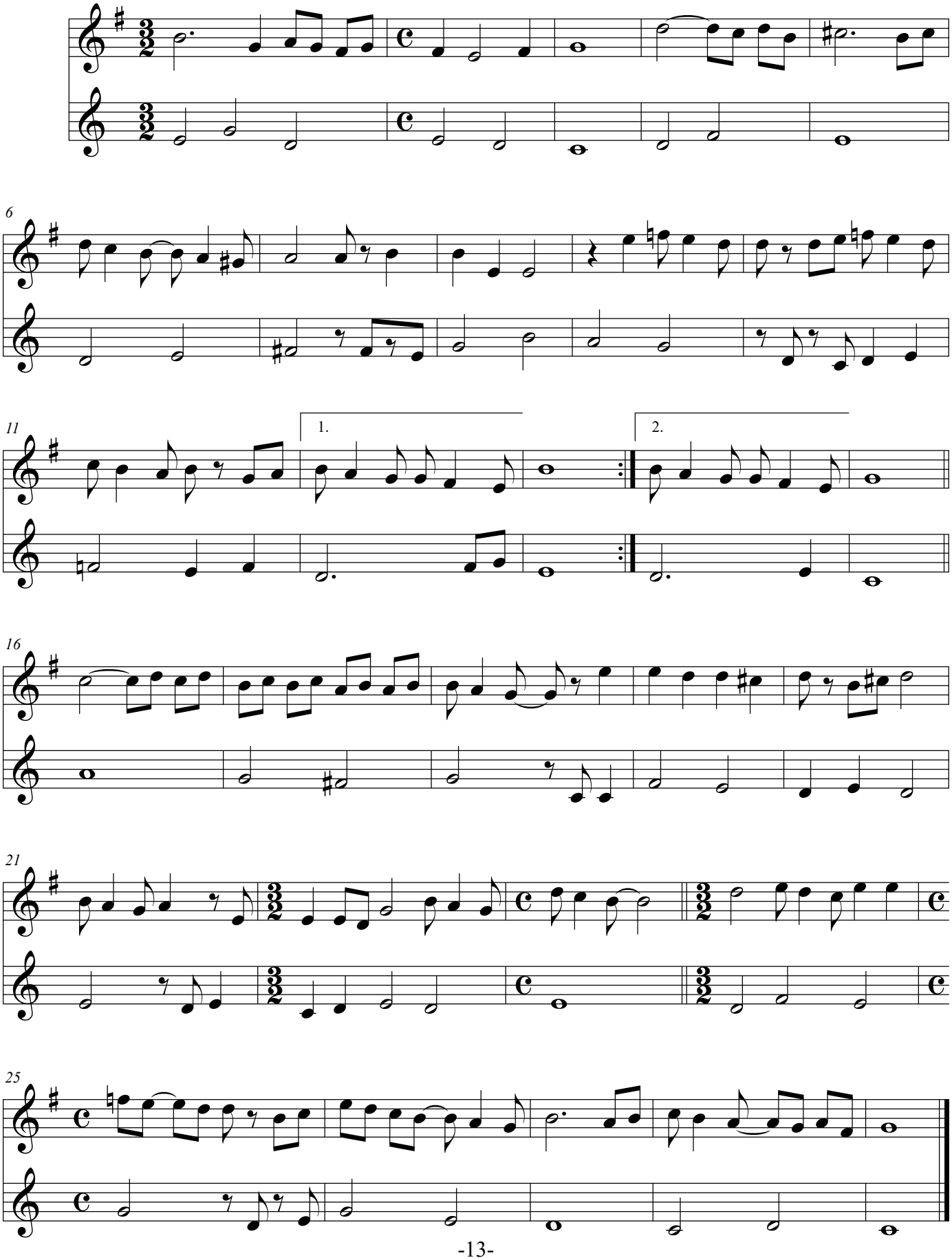
Riches d'amour et mendians d'amie

Ballade 5

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Riches d'amour et mendians d'amie

Ballade 5

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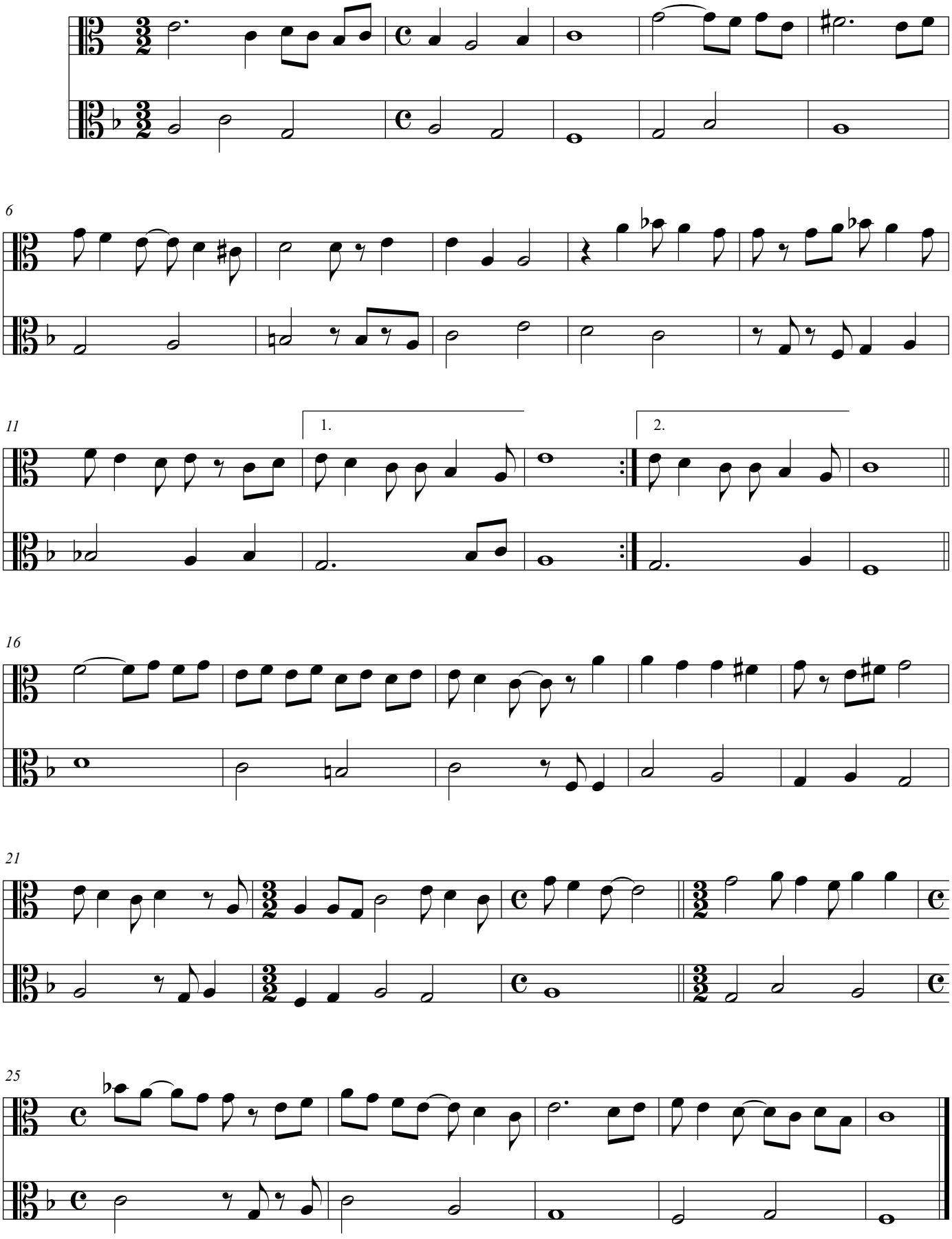

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Ballade 5

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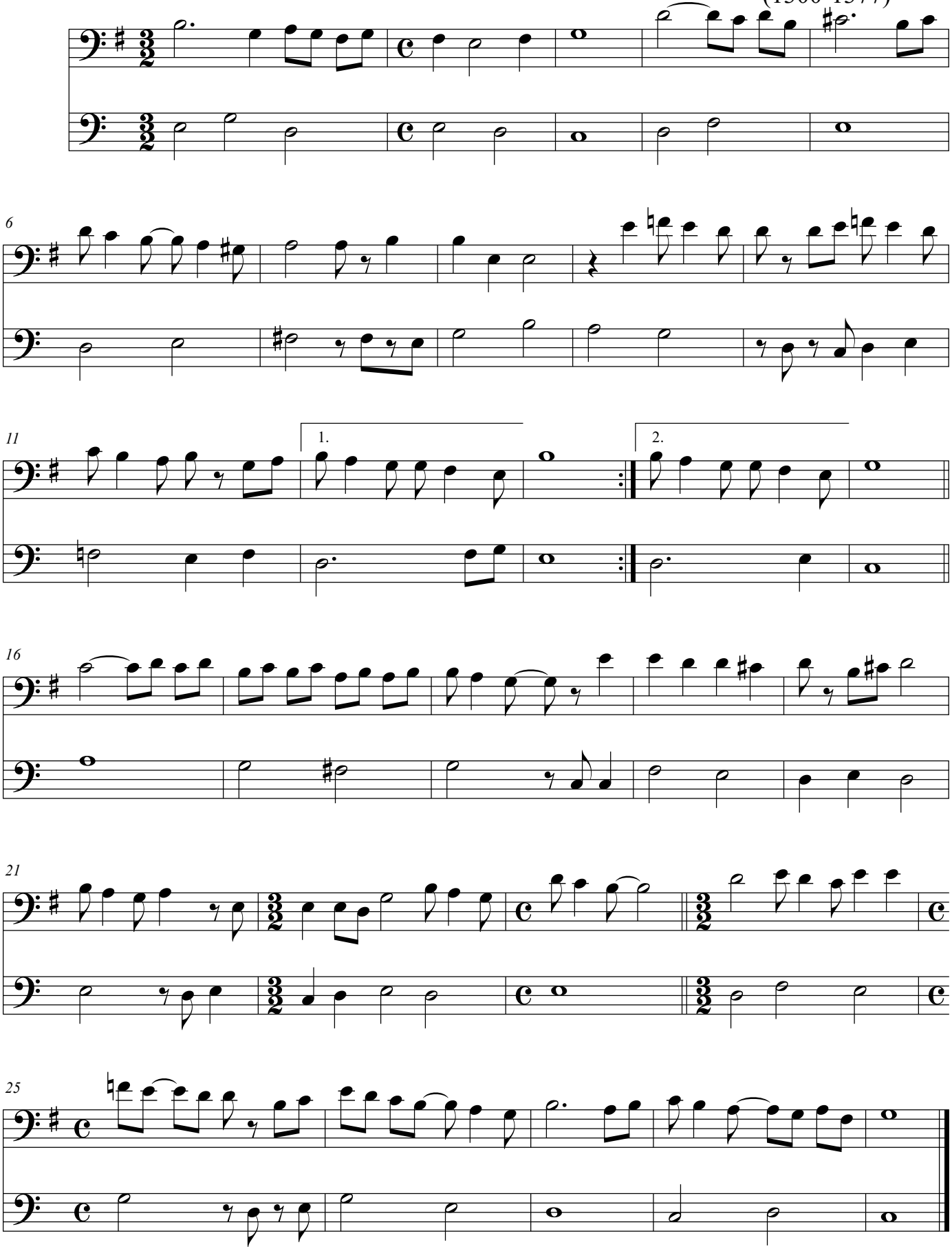
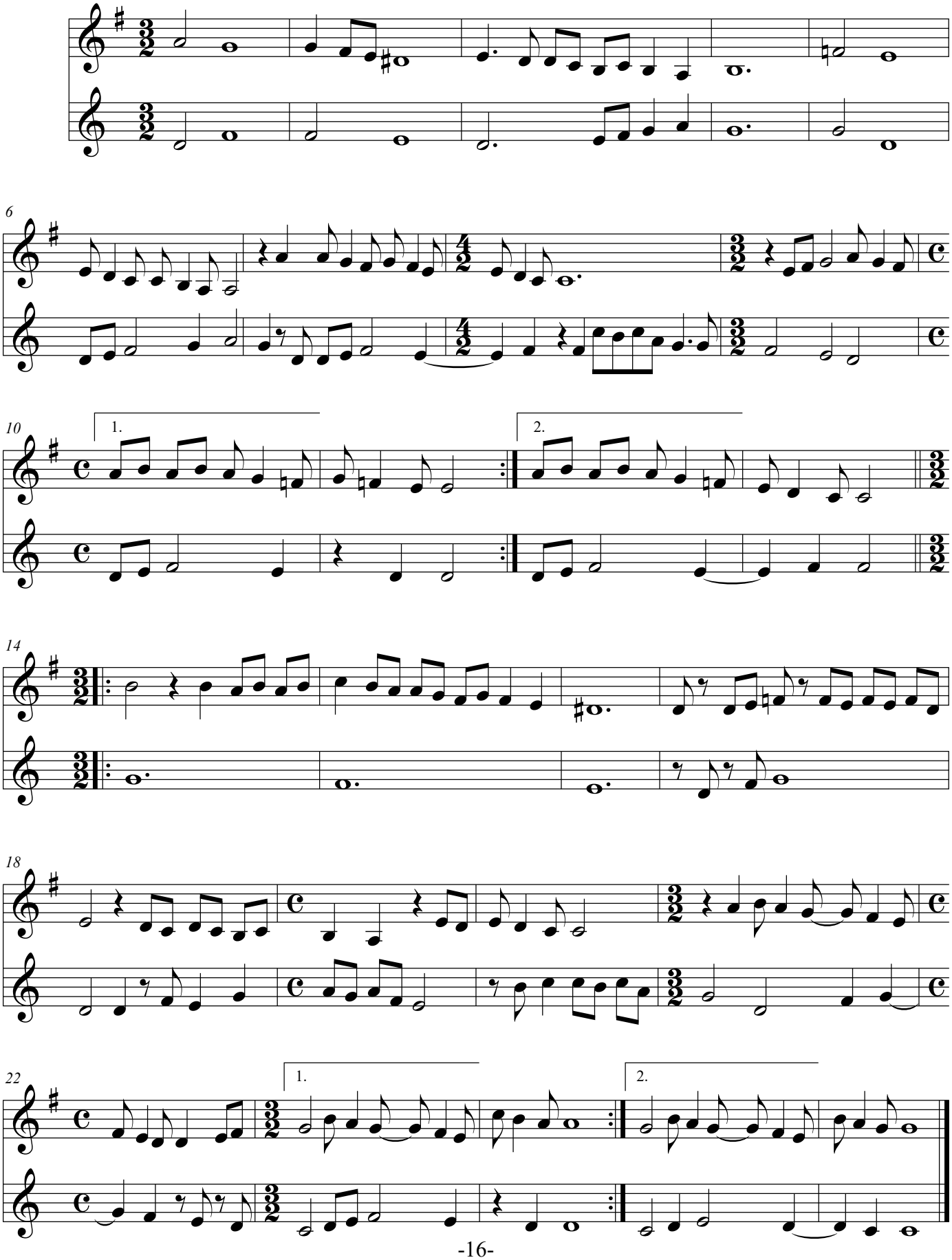


Doulz amis, oy mon compleint

Ballade 6

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Doulz amis, oy mon compleint

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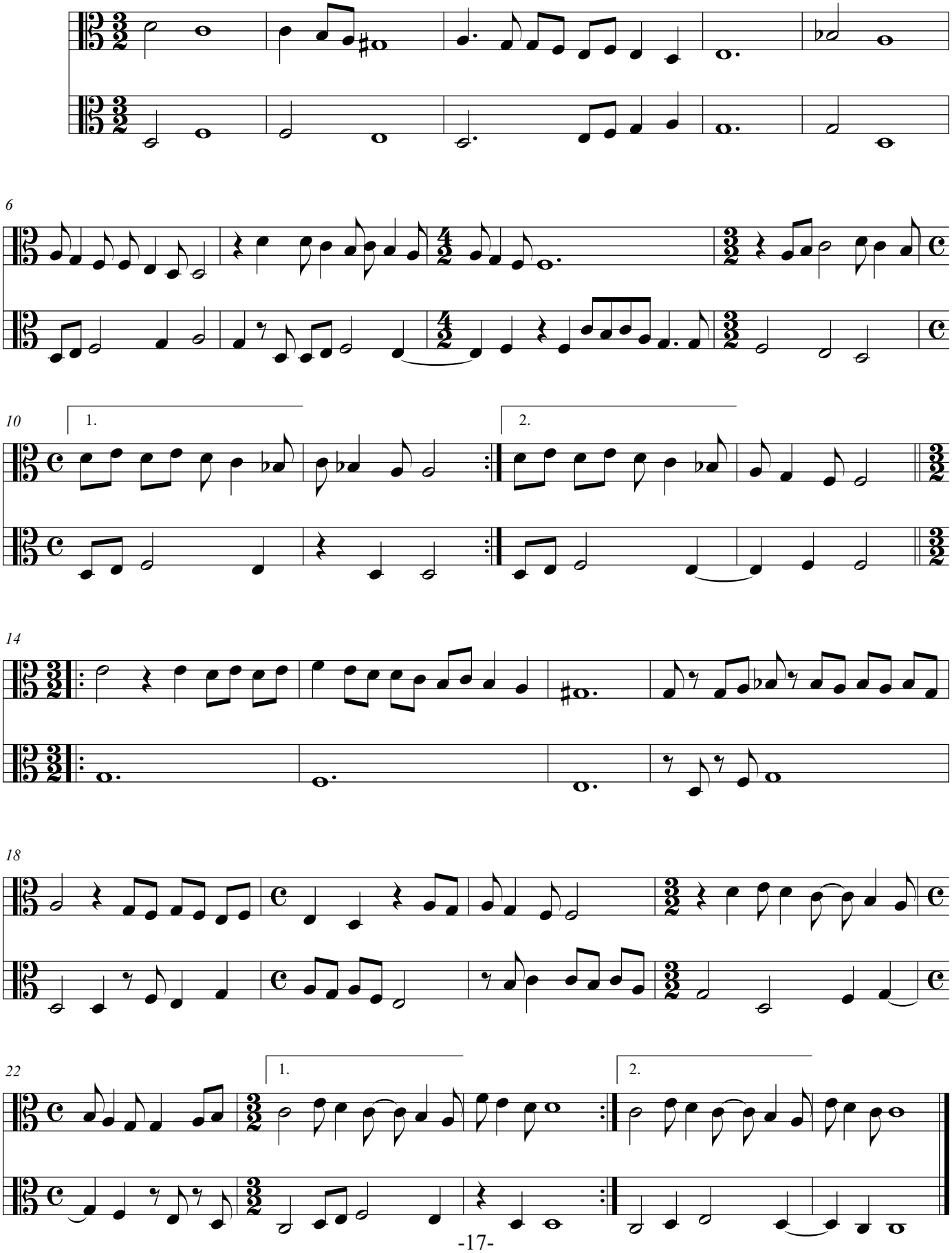

Doulz amis, oy mon compleint

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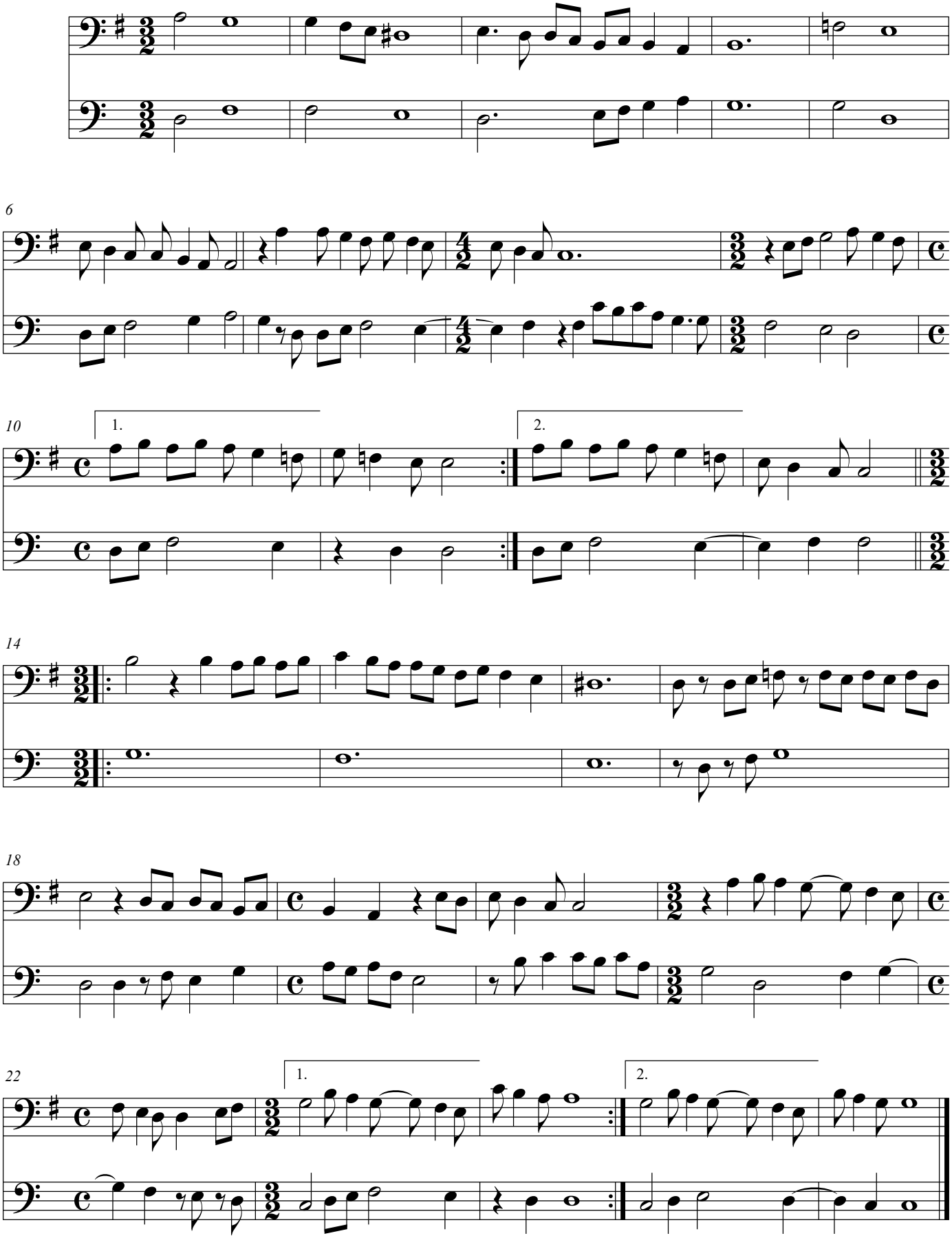
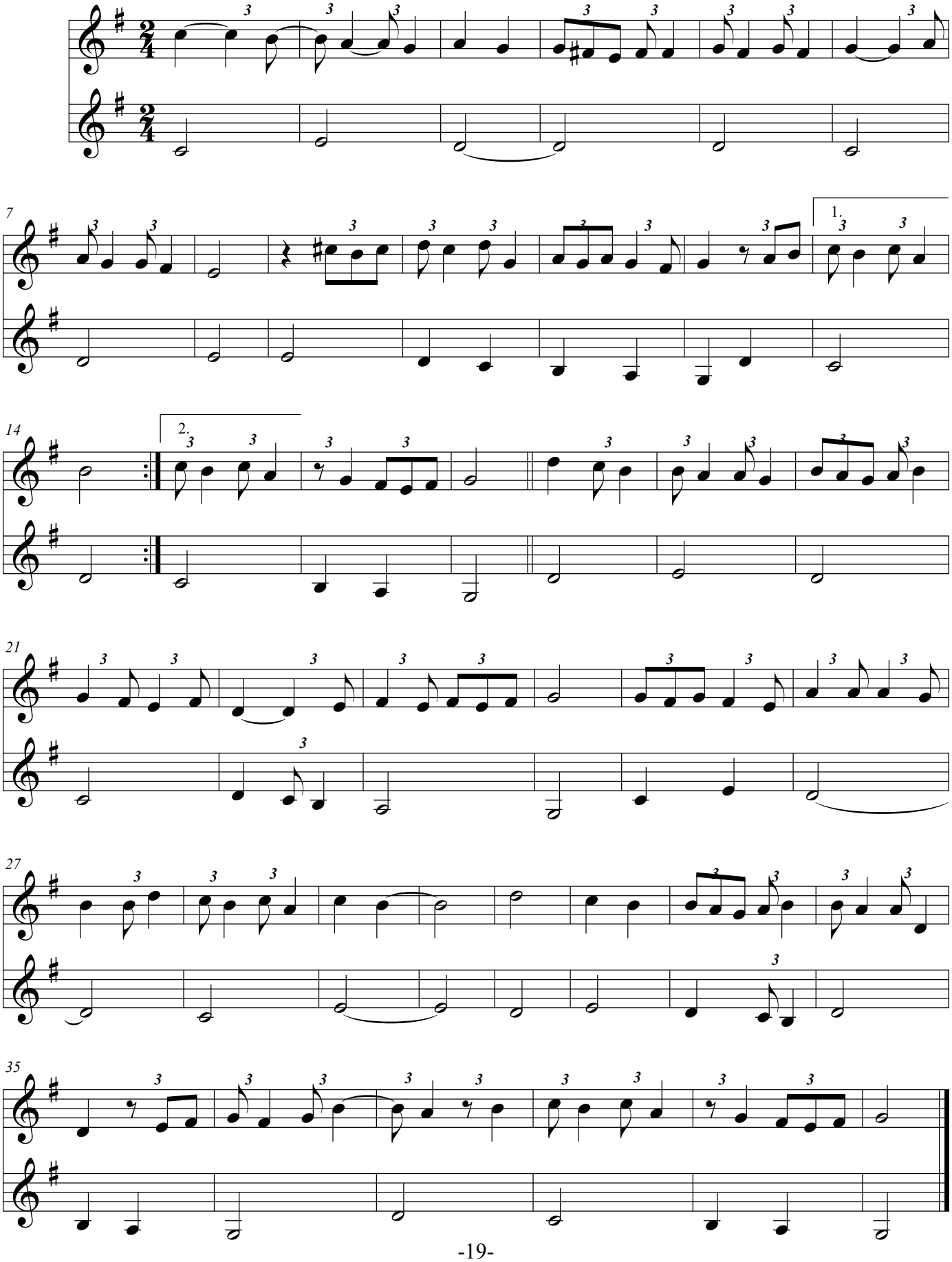


J'aime mieus languir

Ballade 7

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



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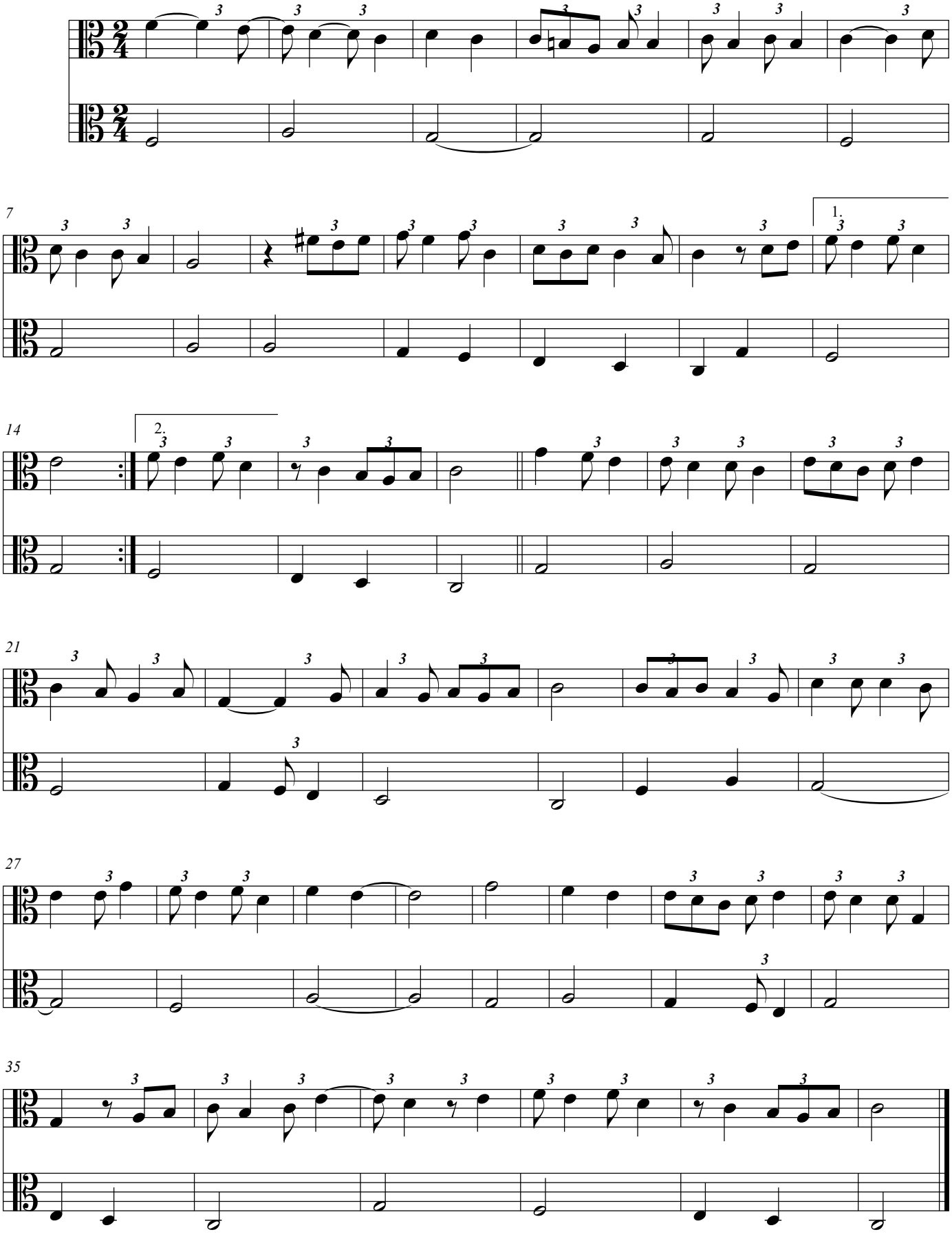

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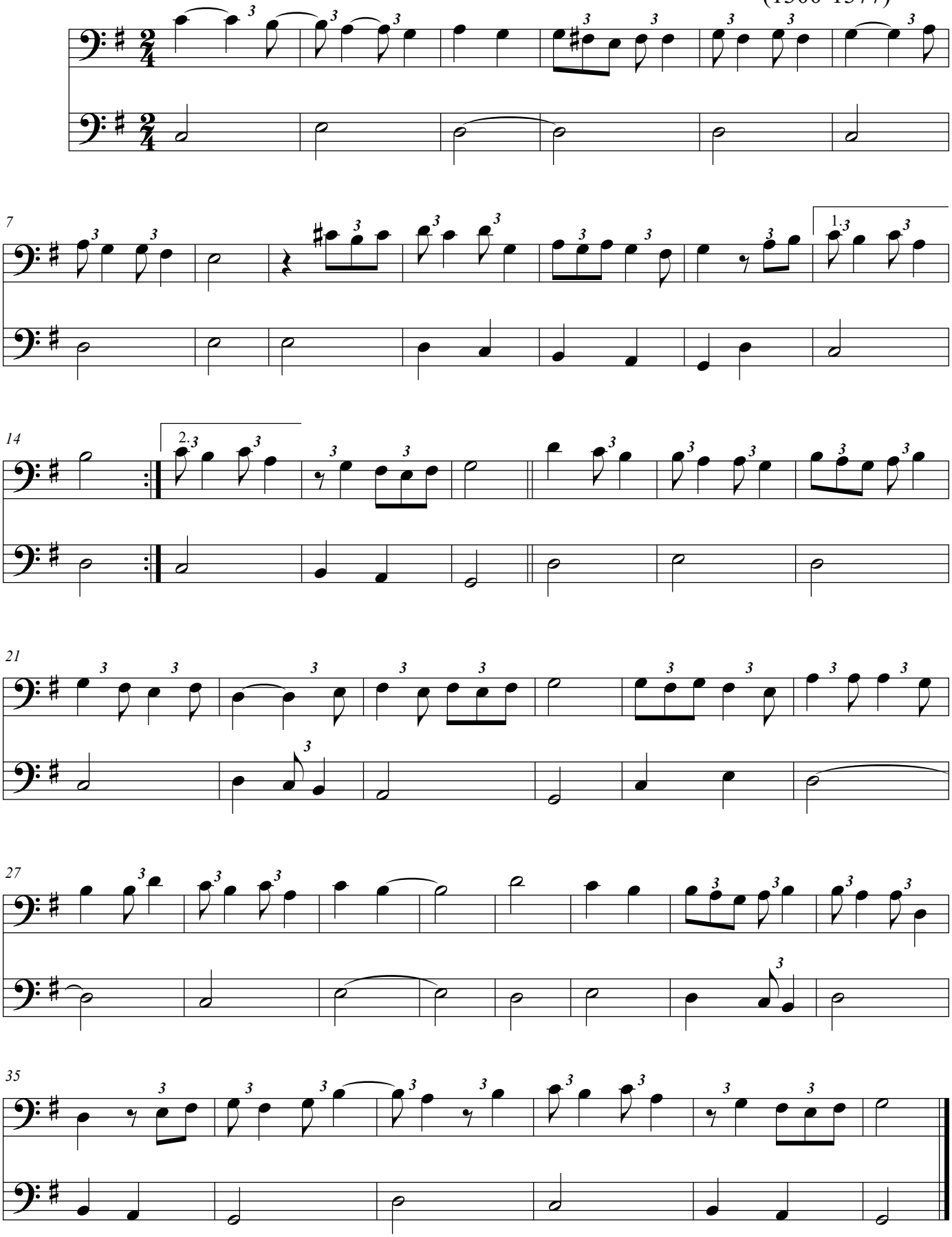
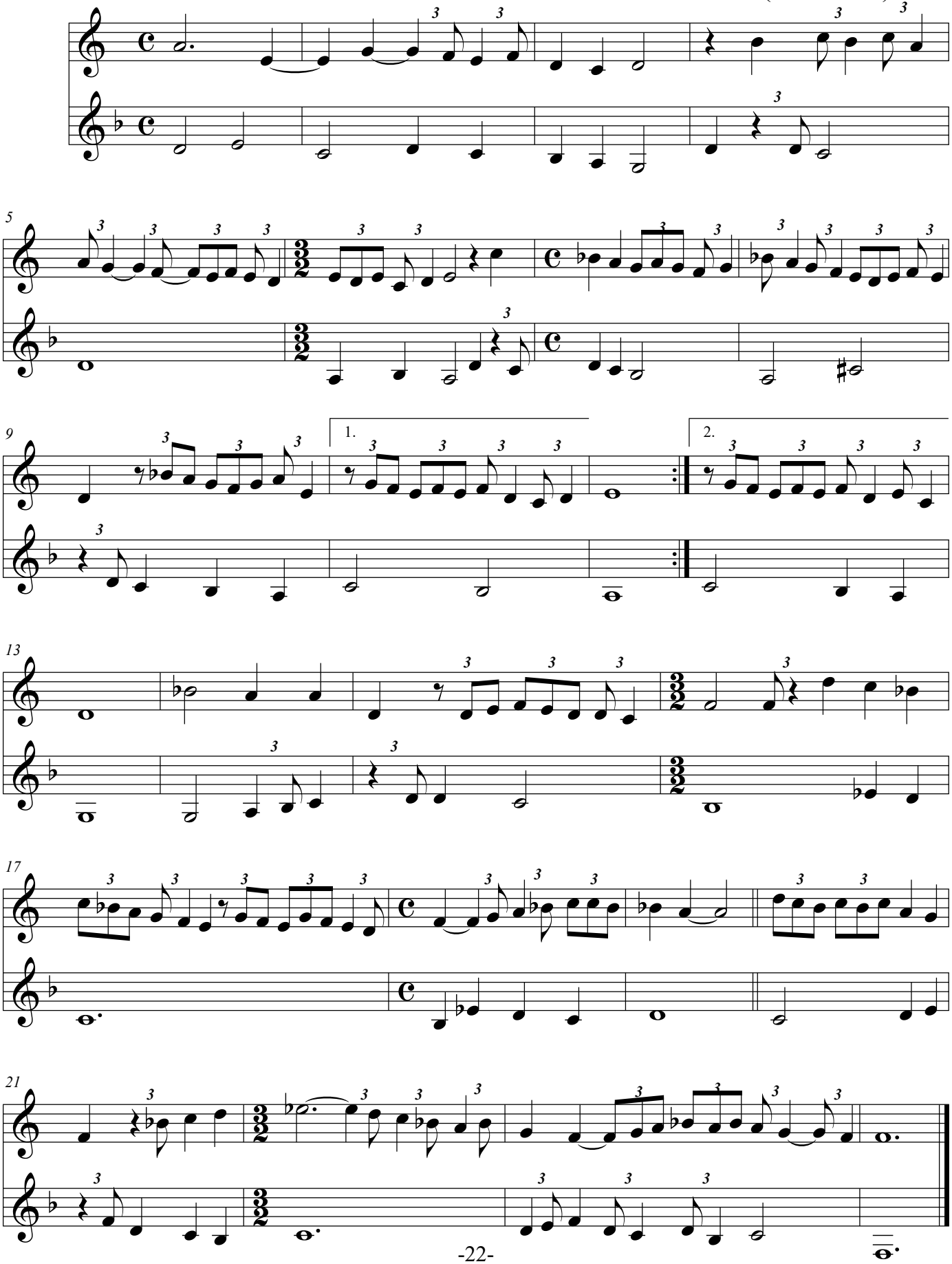


De desconfort, de martyre amoureus

Ballade 8

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



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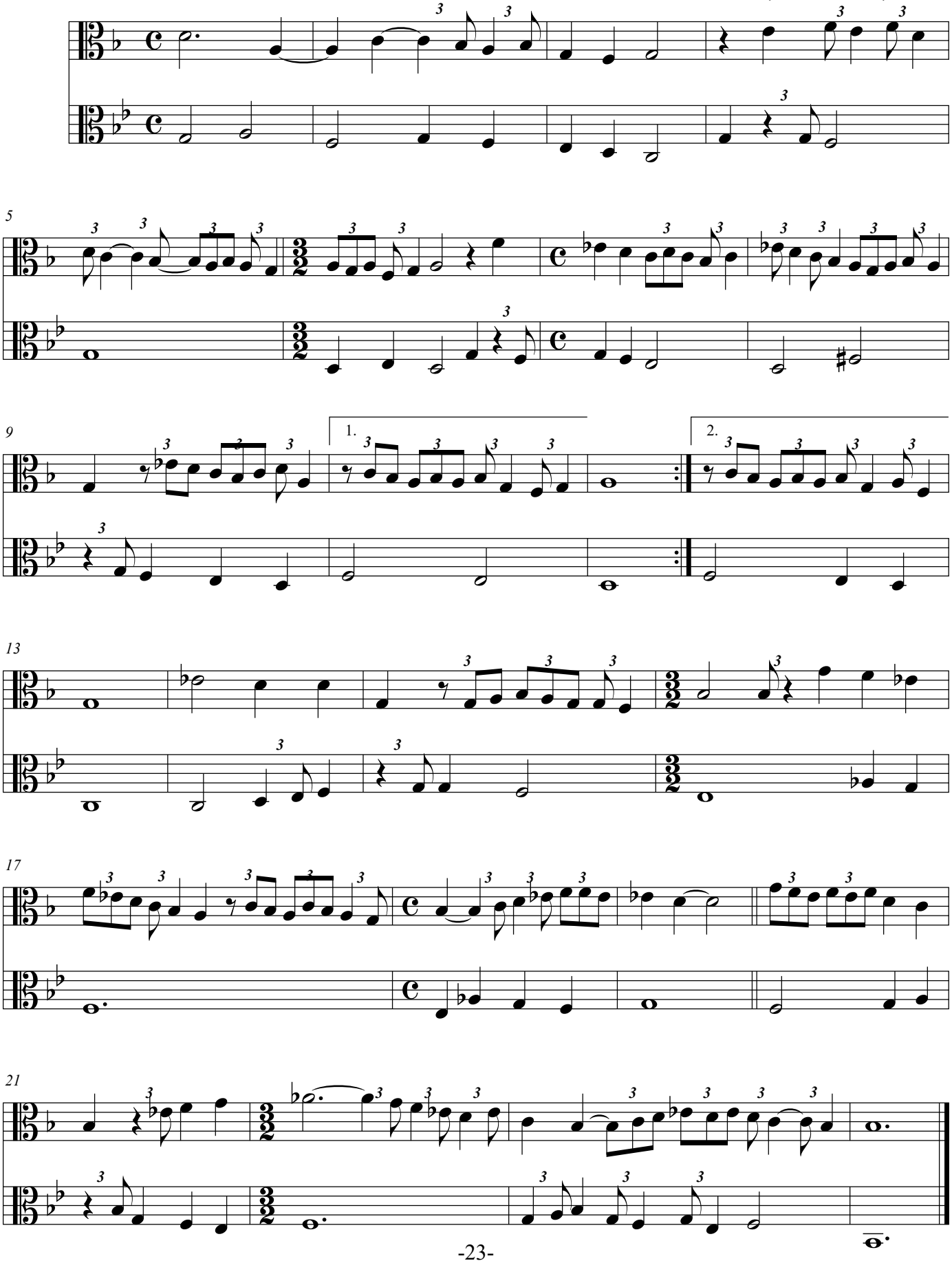

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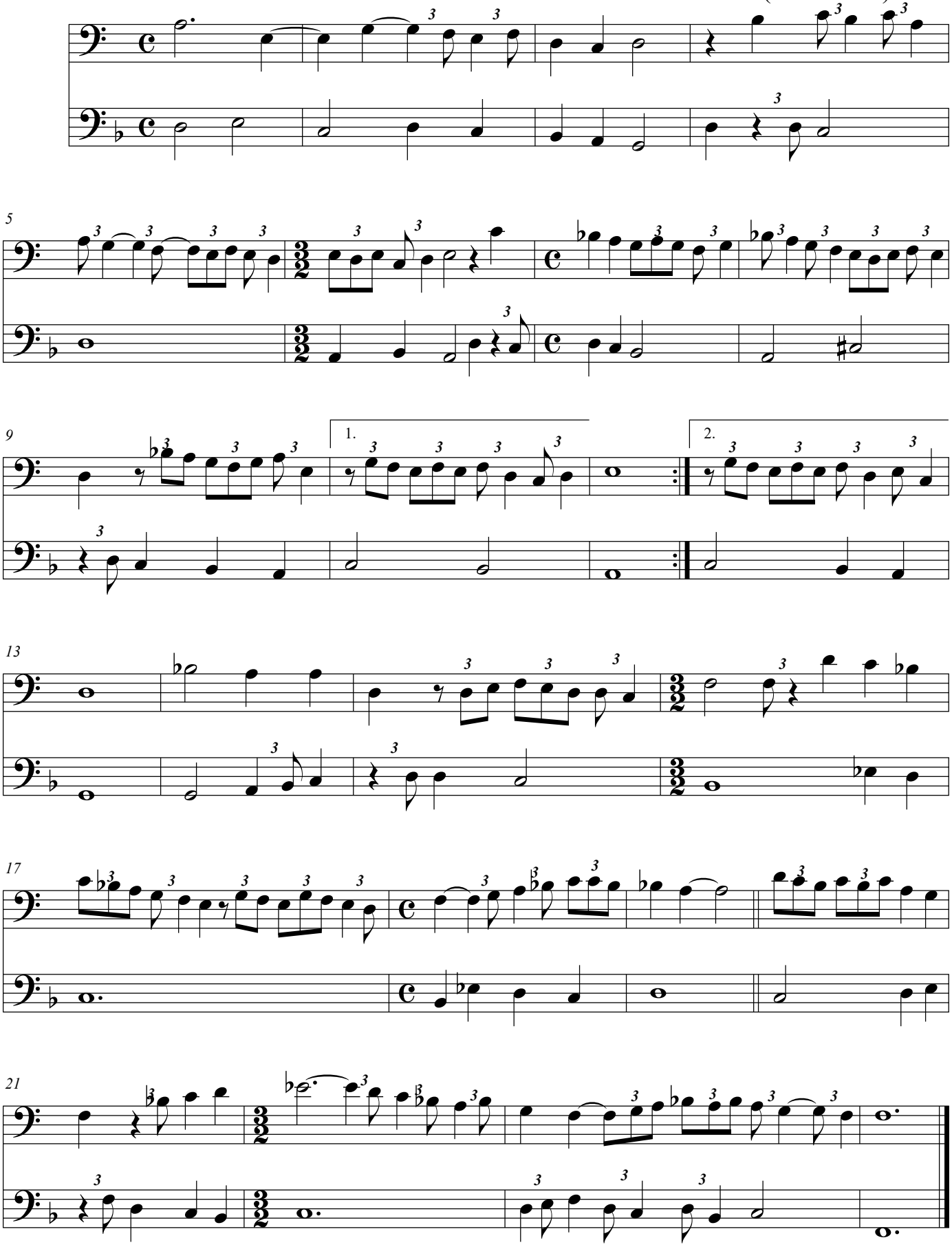
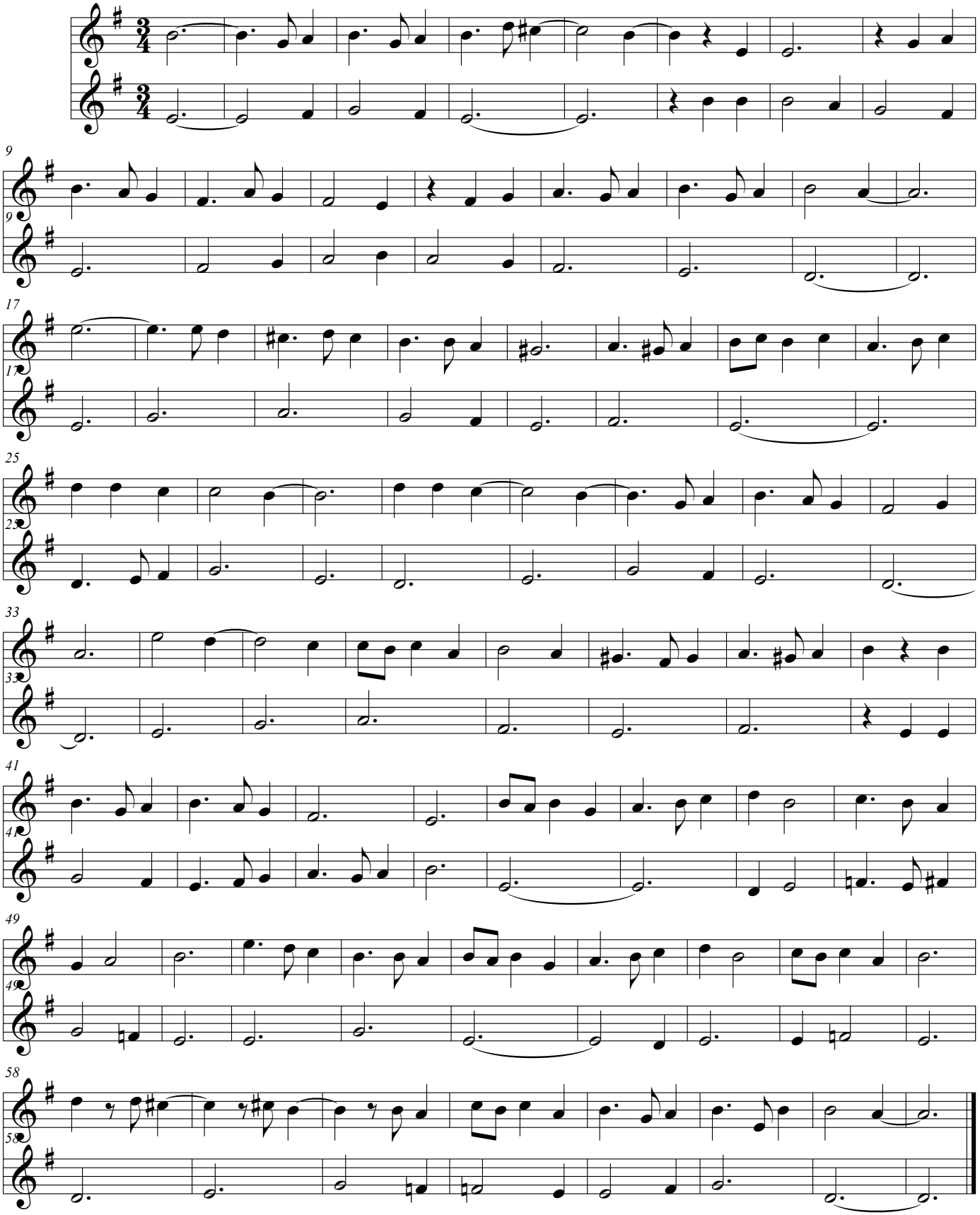


Dame, ne regardes pas

Ballade 9

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



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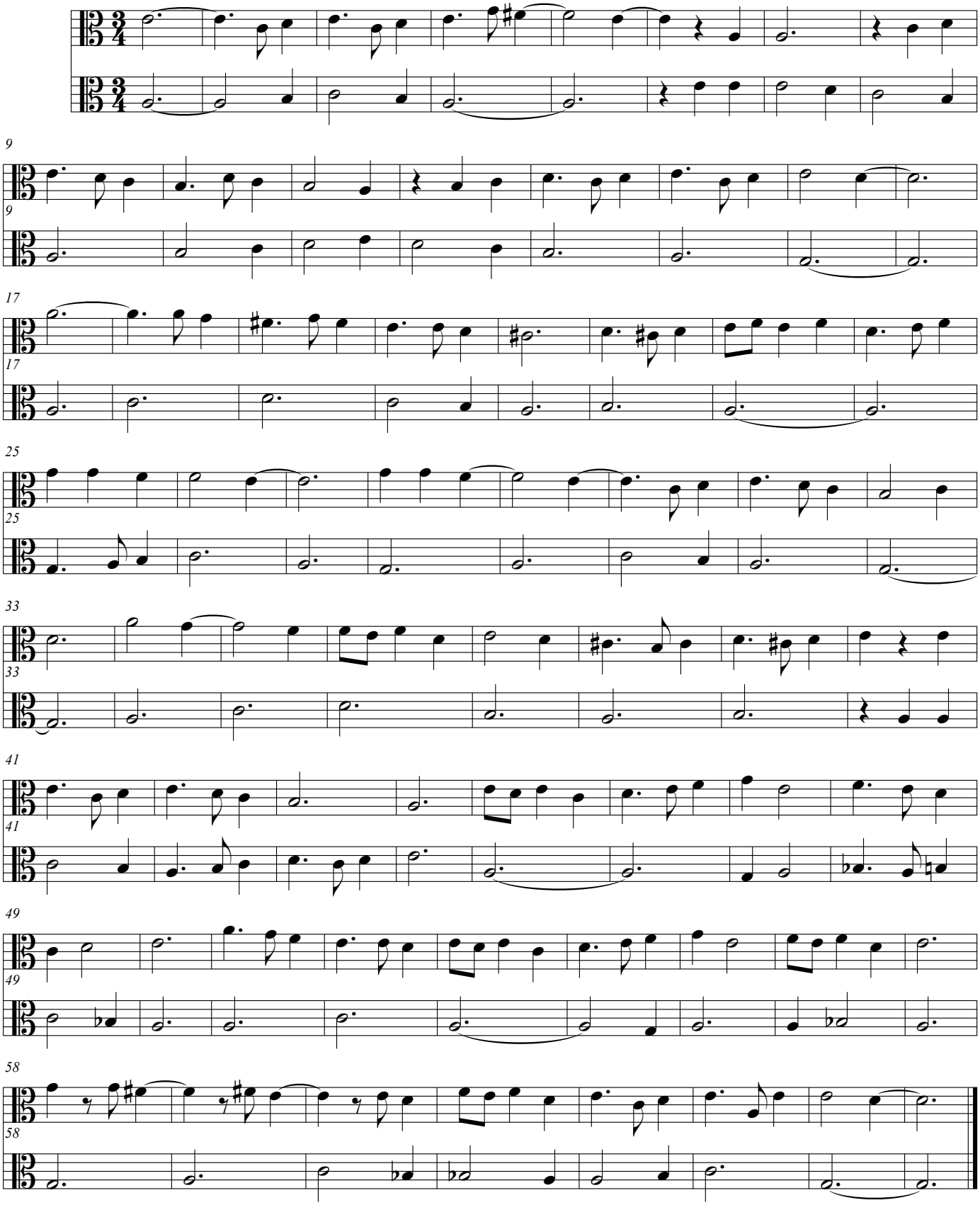

Dame, ne regardes pas

Ballade 9

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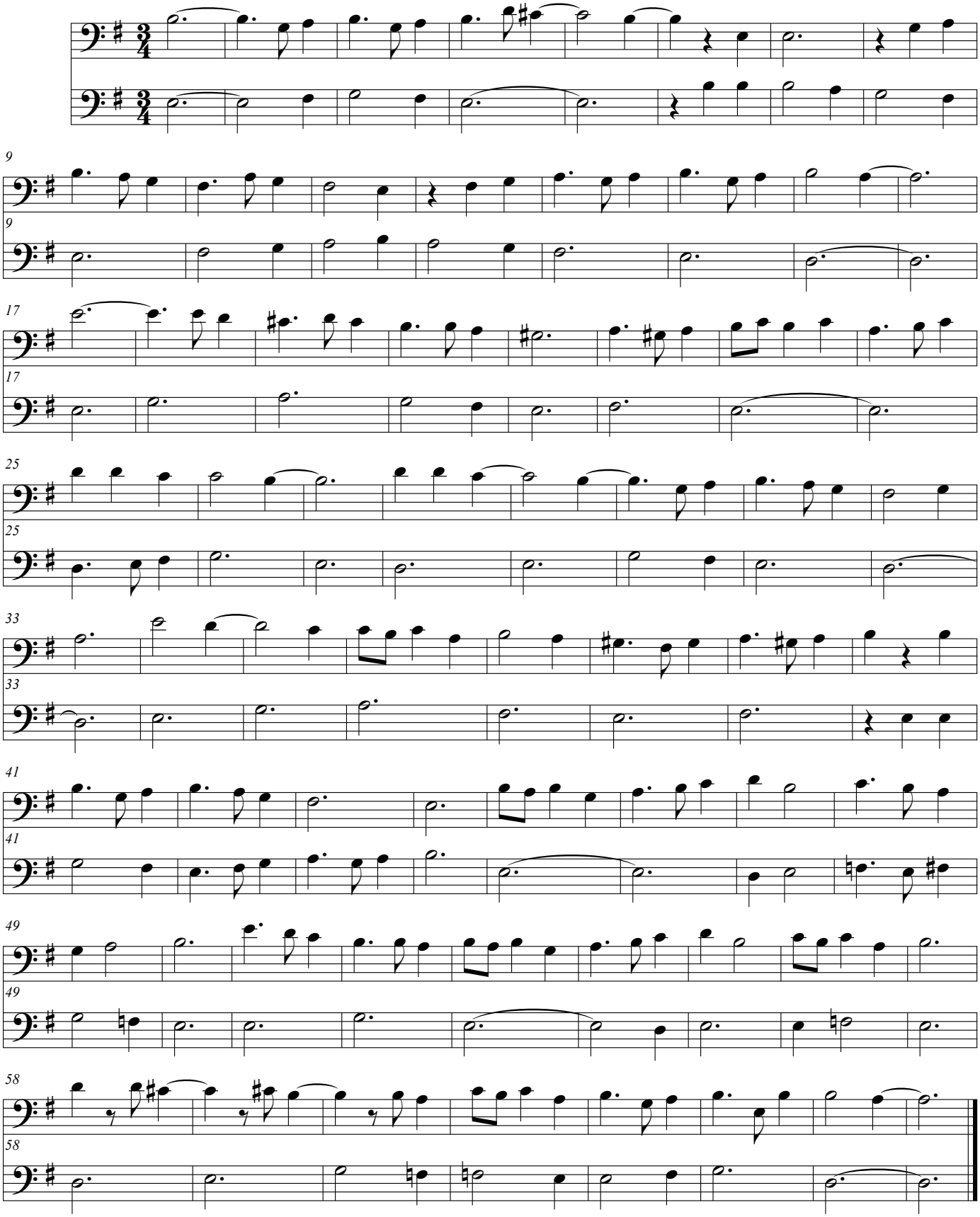
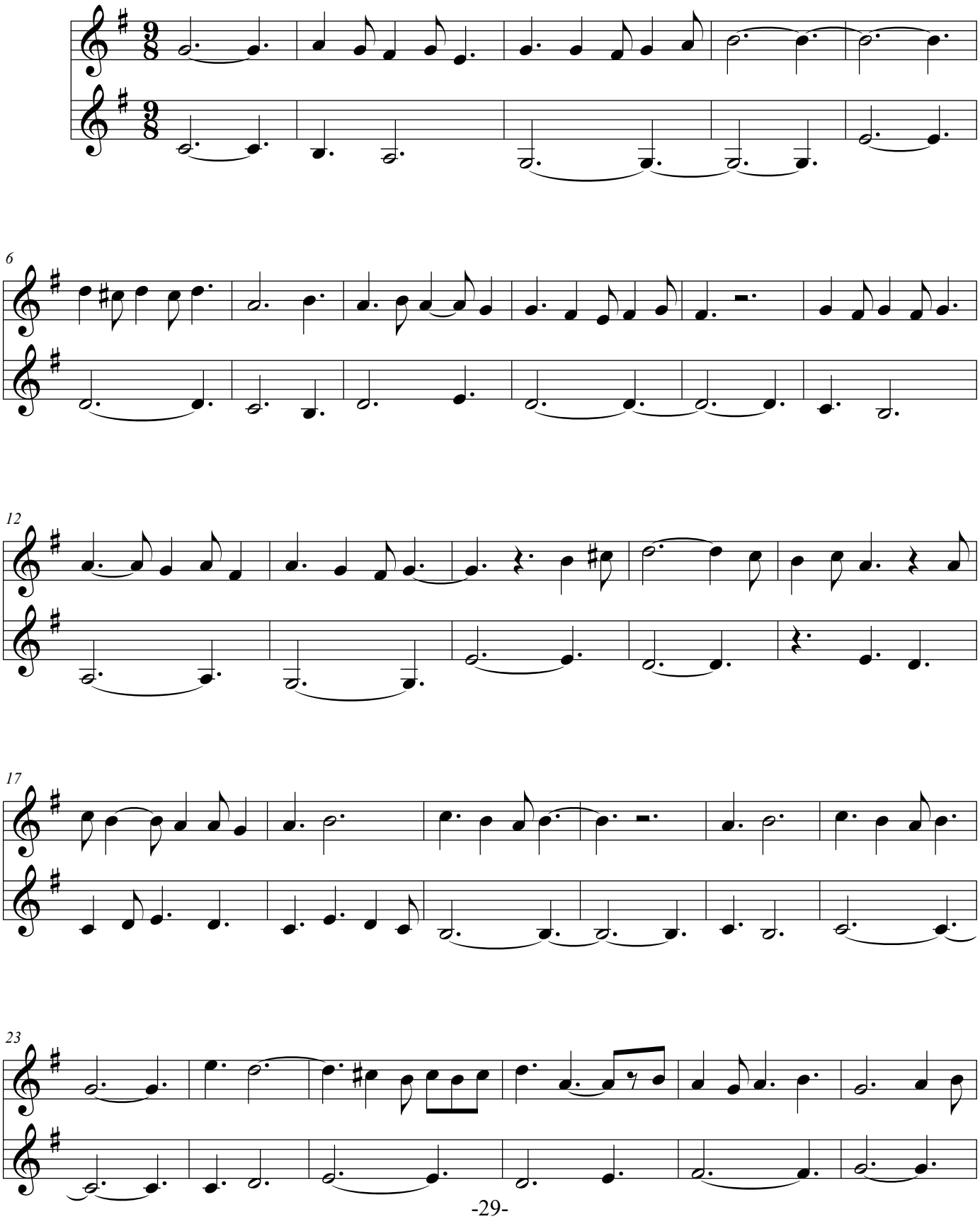
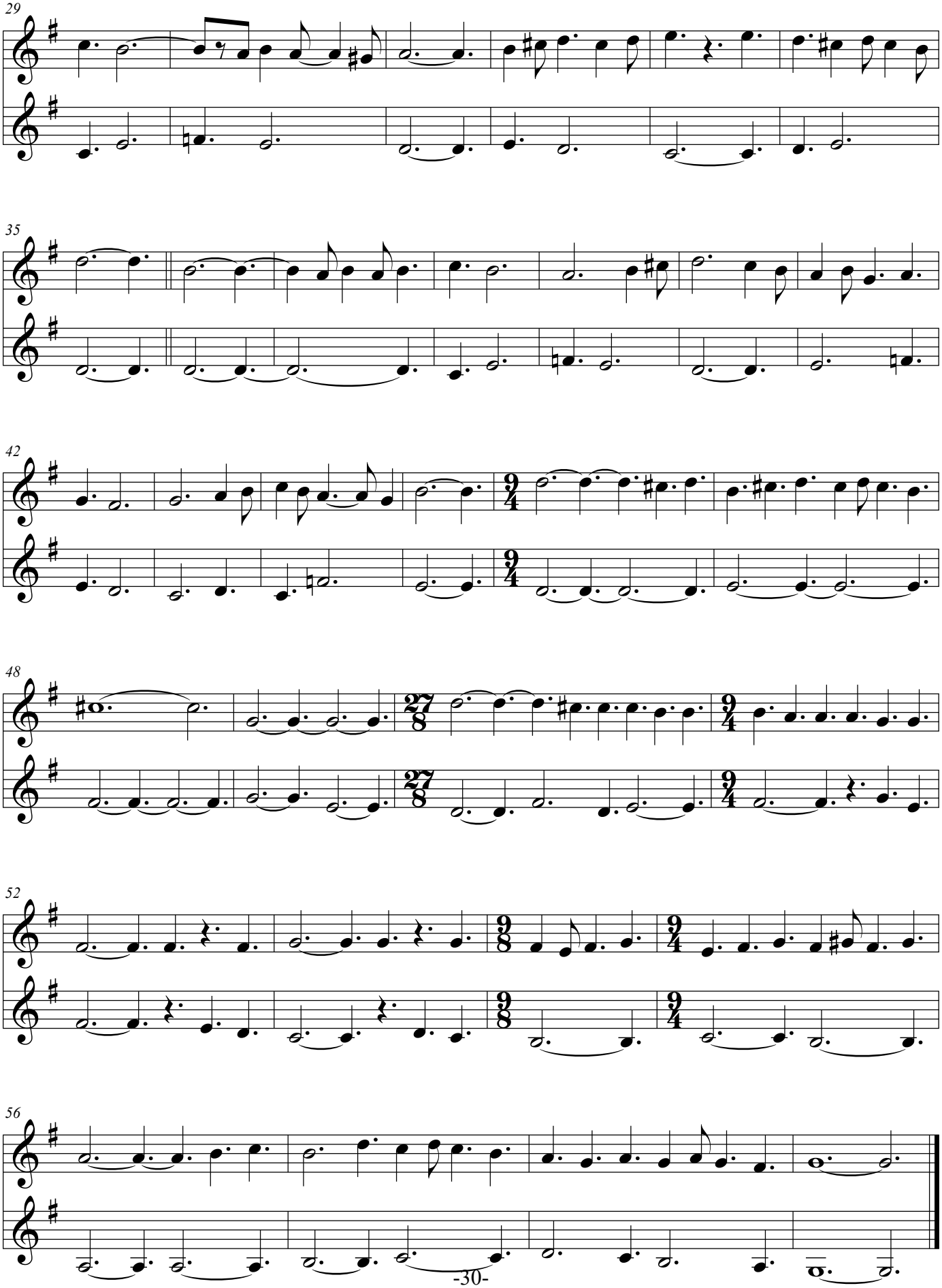


Ne penses pas, dame

Ballade 10

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

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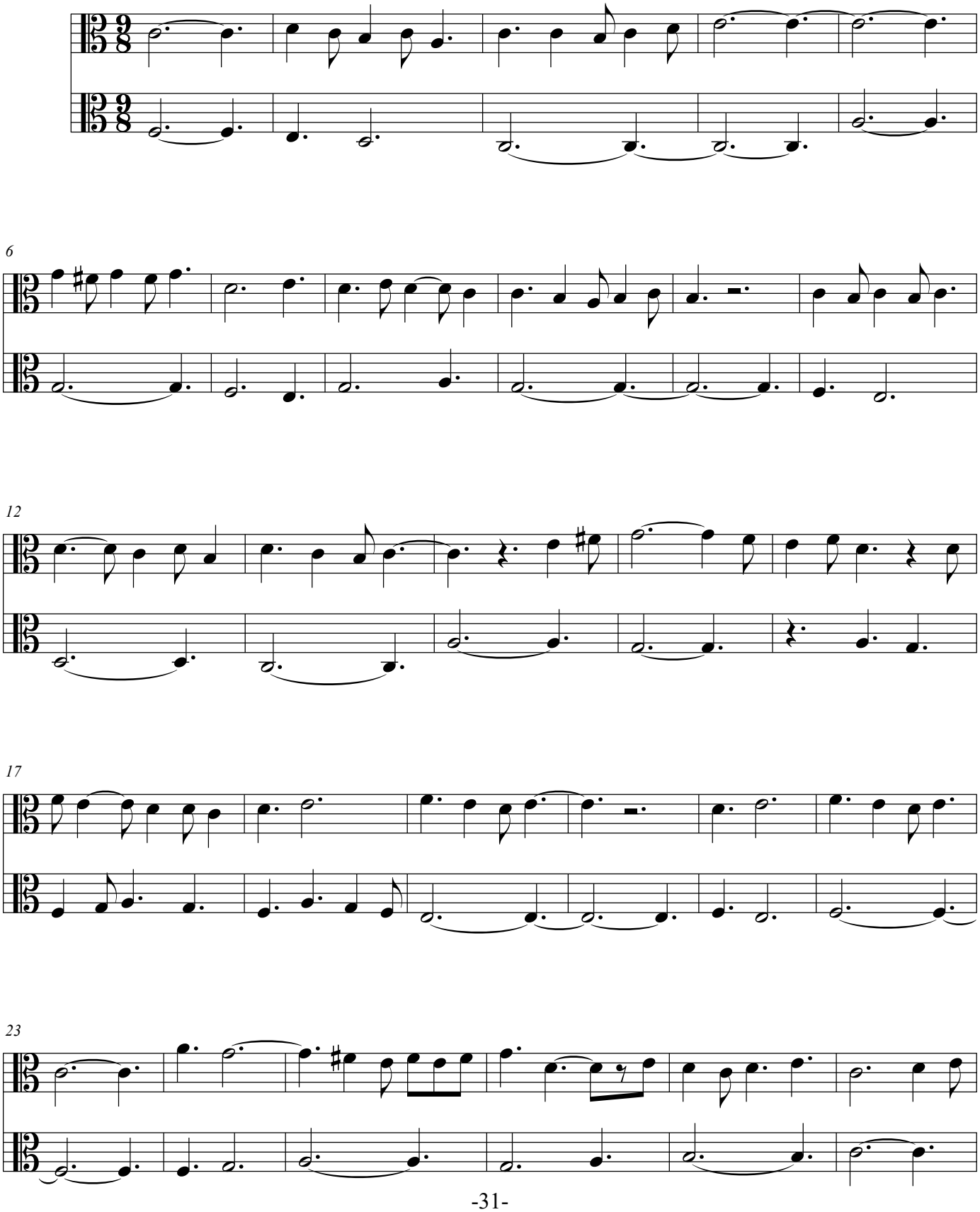
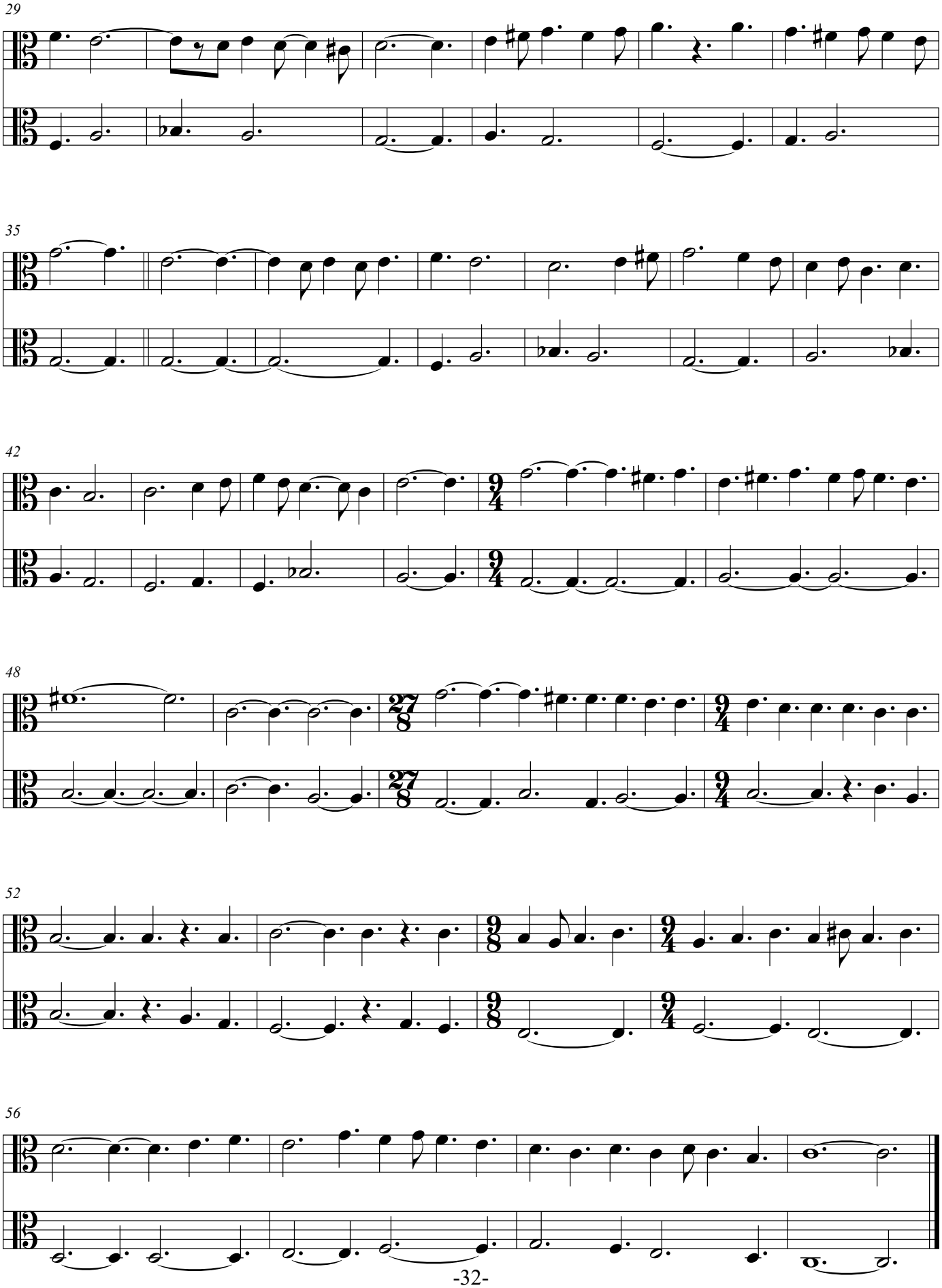
Ne penses pas, dame

Ballade 10

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)

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Ne penses pas, dame

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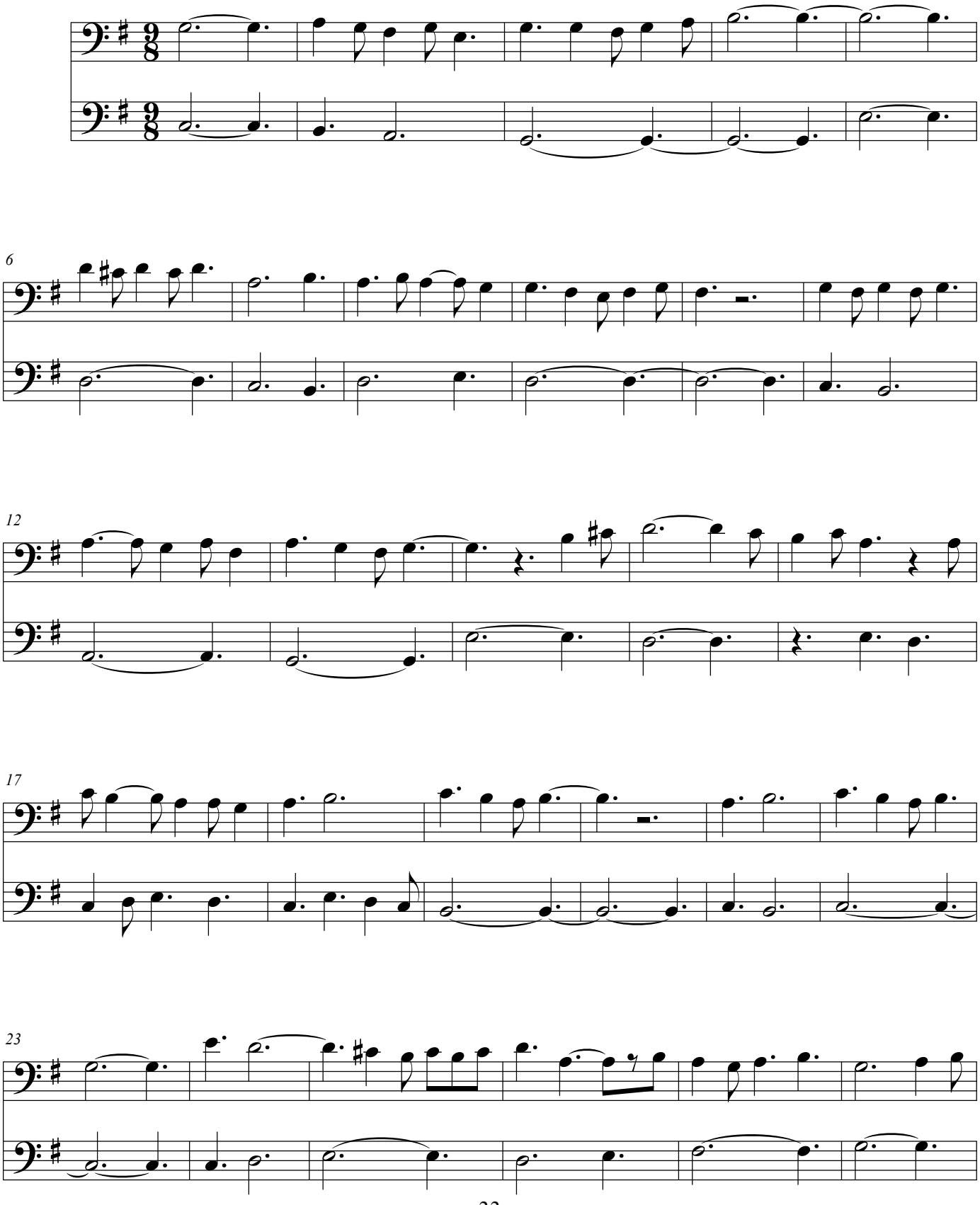

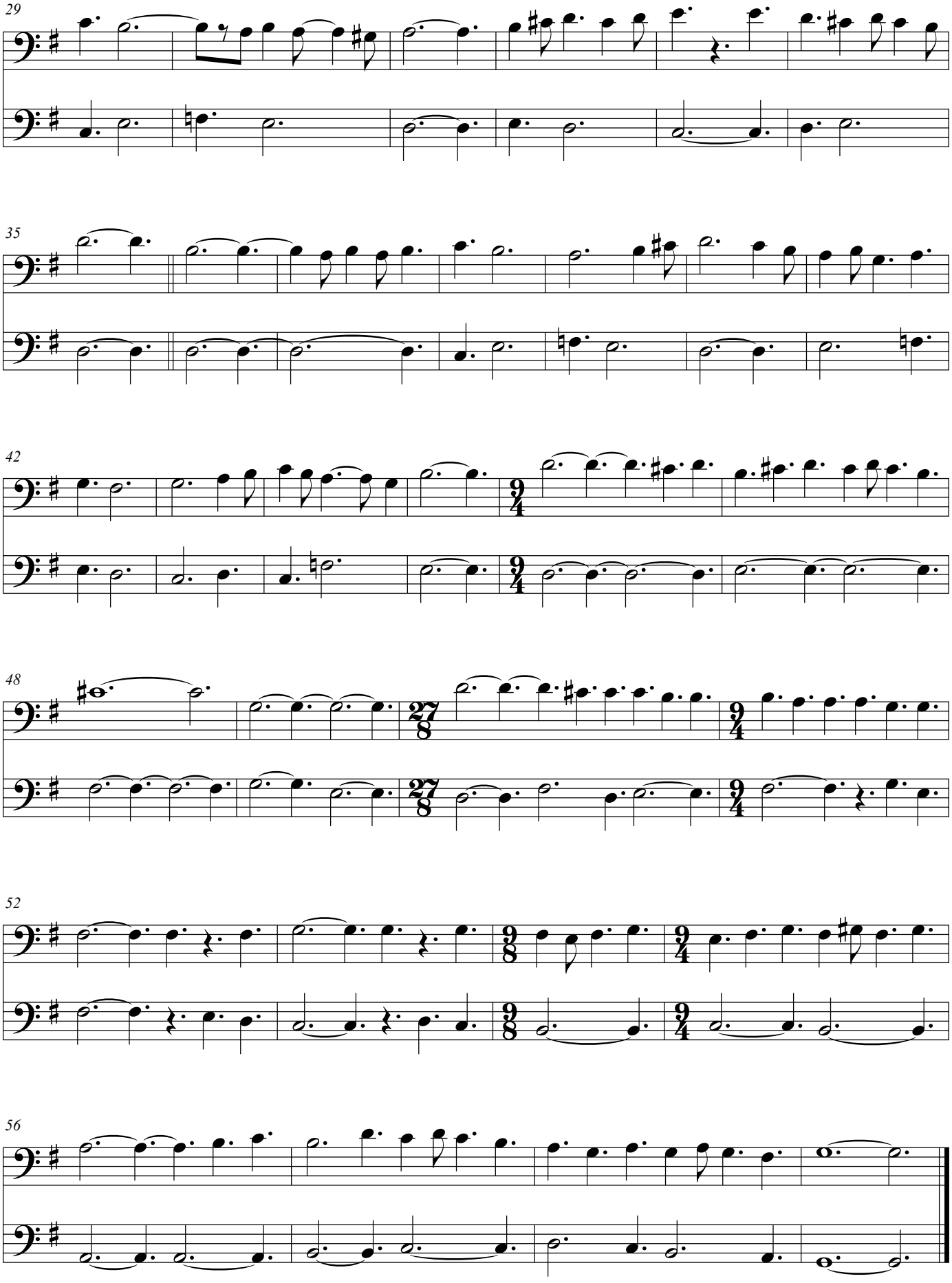
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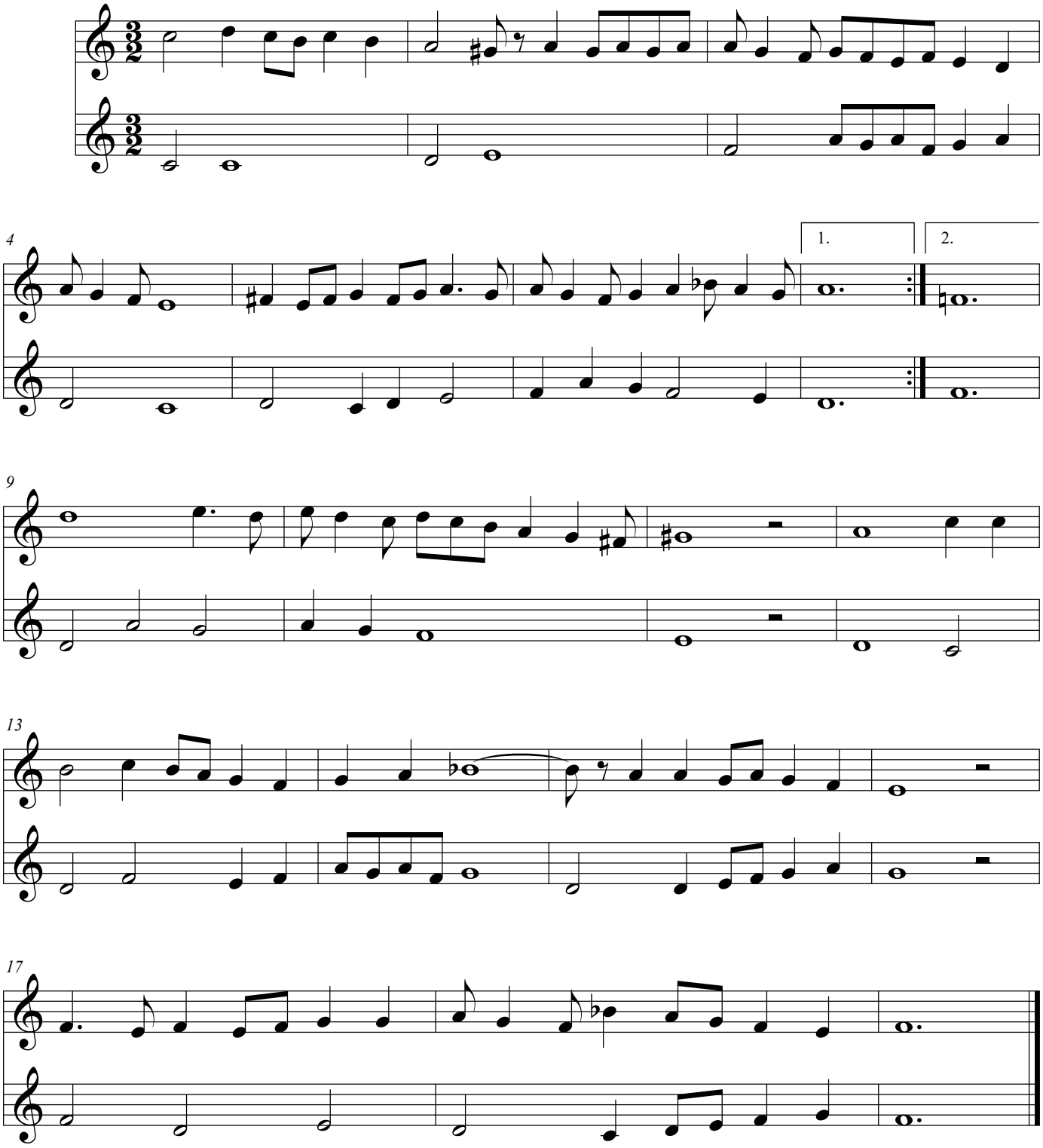
N'en fait n'en dit n'en pensee

Ballade 11

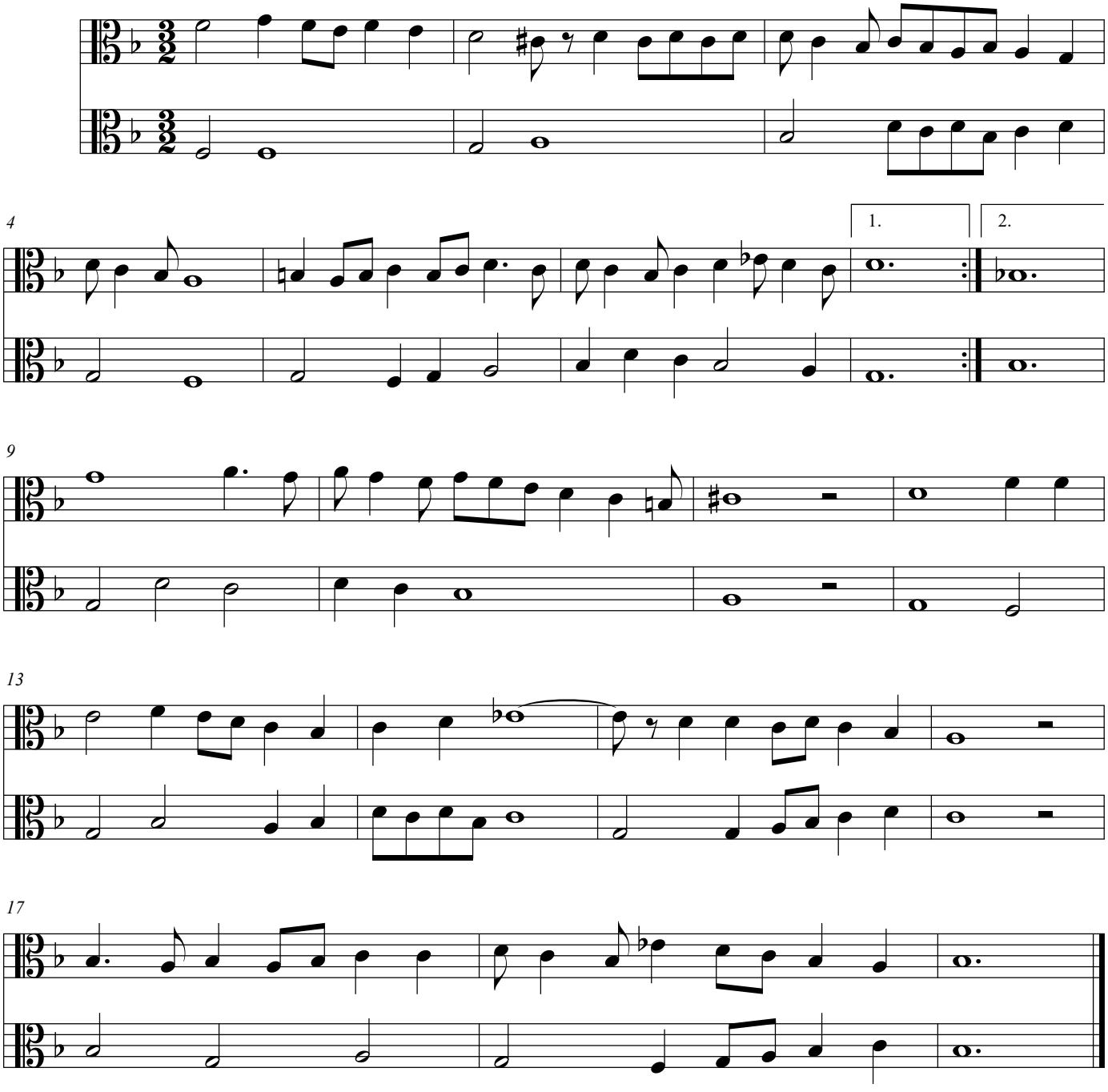
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



N'en fait n'en dit n'en pensee

Ballade 11

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



N'en fait n'en dit n'en pensee

Ballade 11

Guillaume de Machaut
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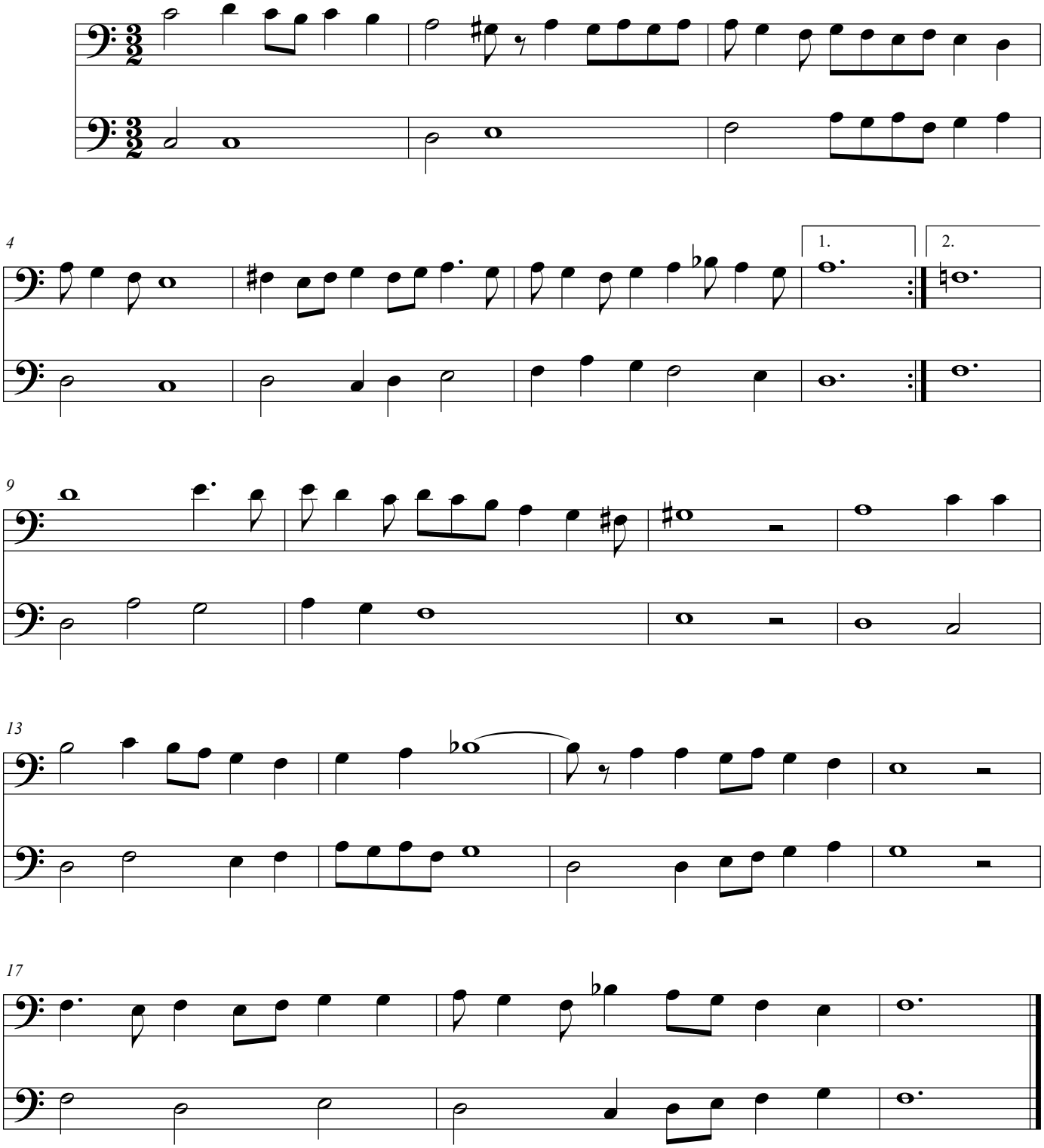
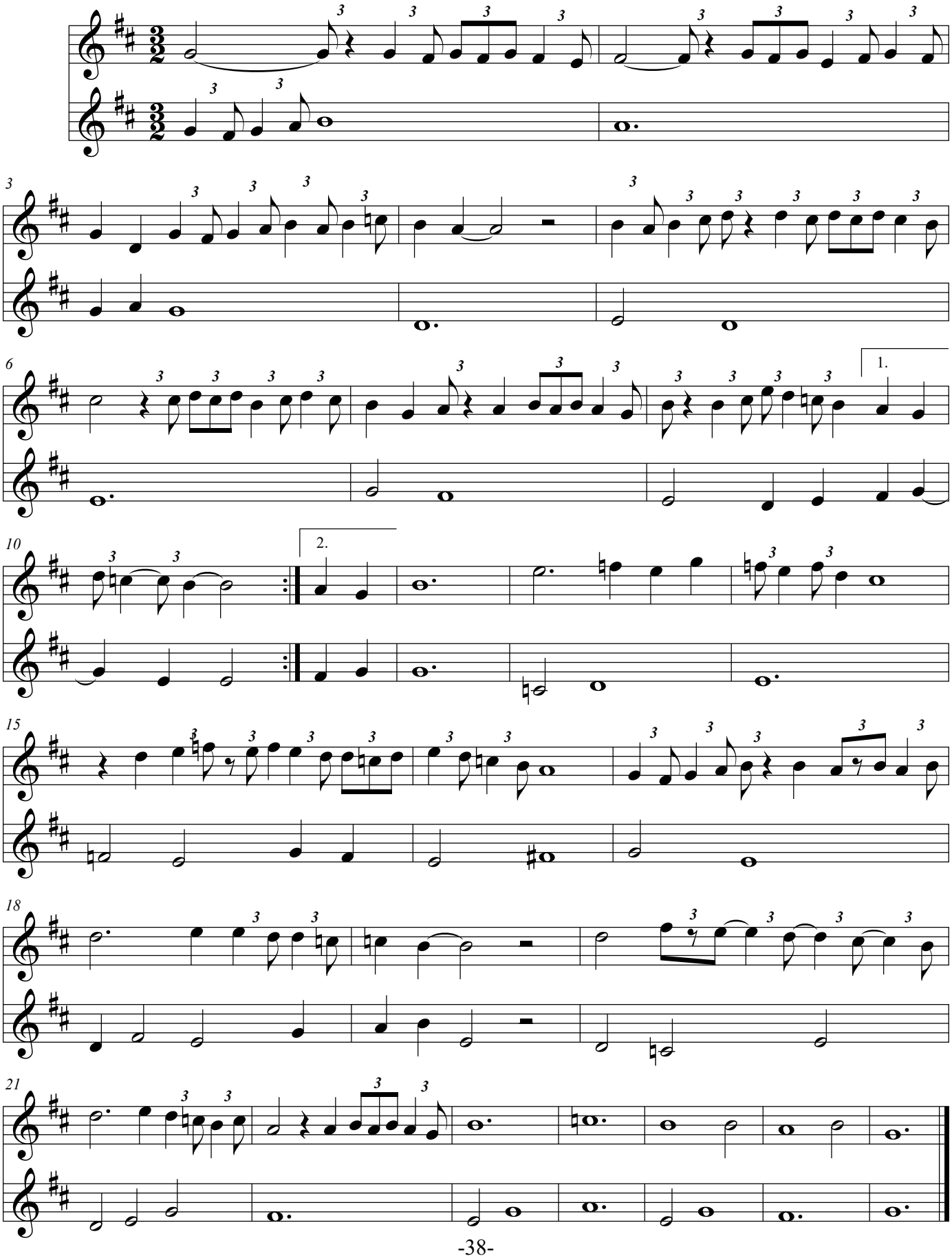


Pour ce que tous mes chans

Ballade 12

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Pour ce que tous mes chans

Ballade 12

Guillaume de Machaut
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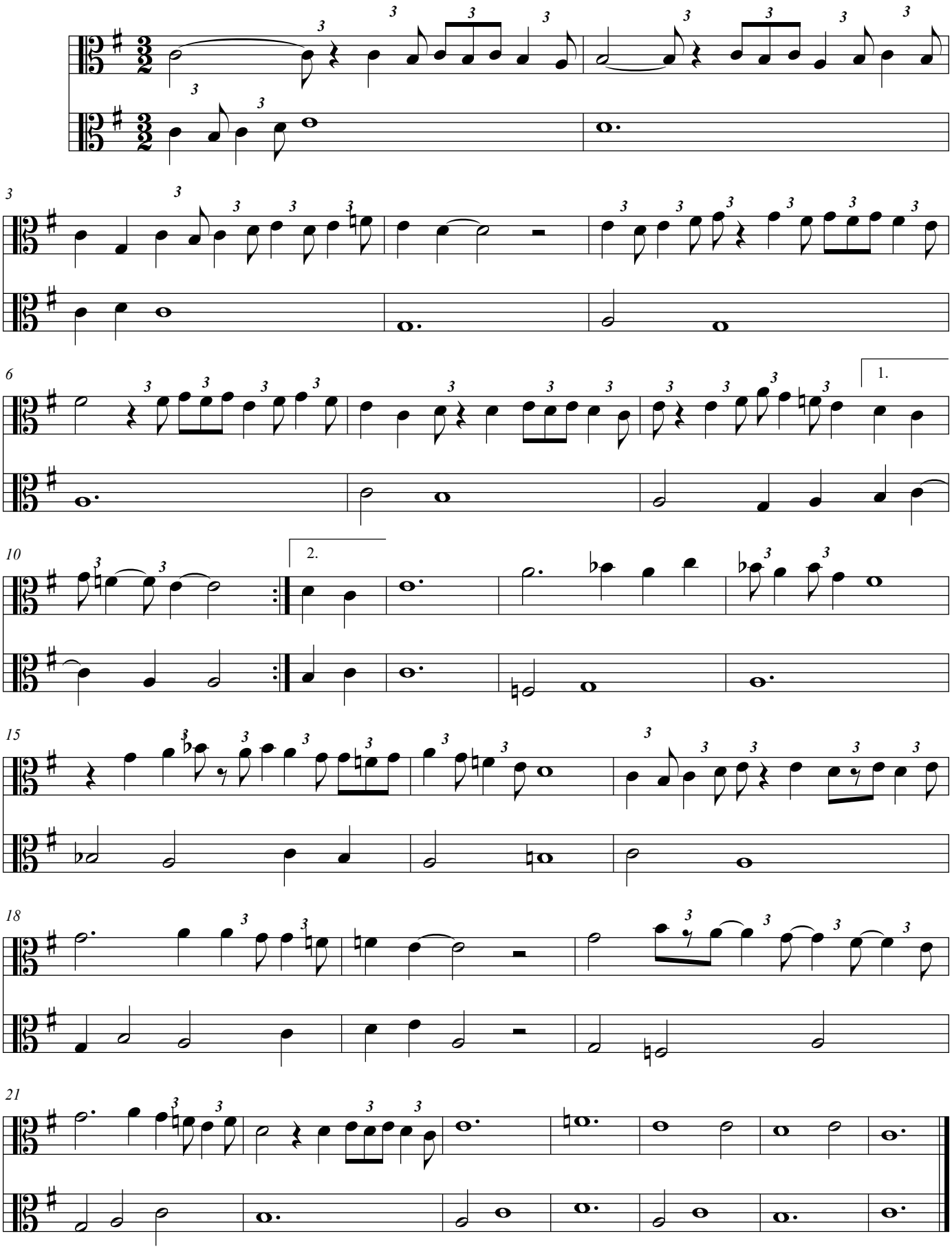

Pour ce que tous mes chans

Ballade 12

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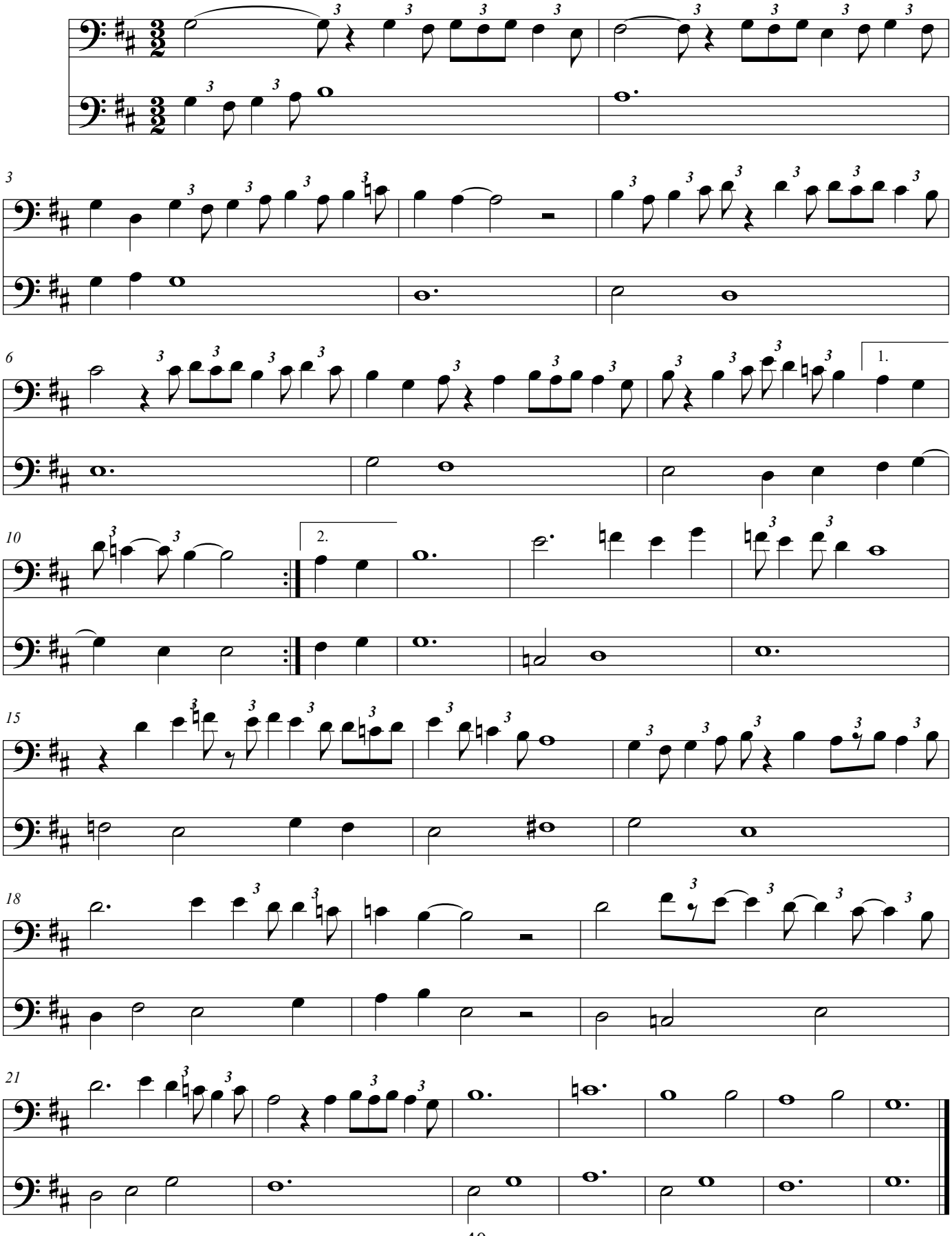
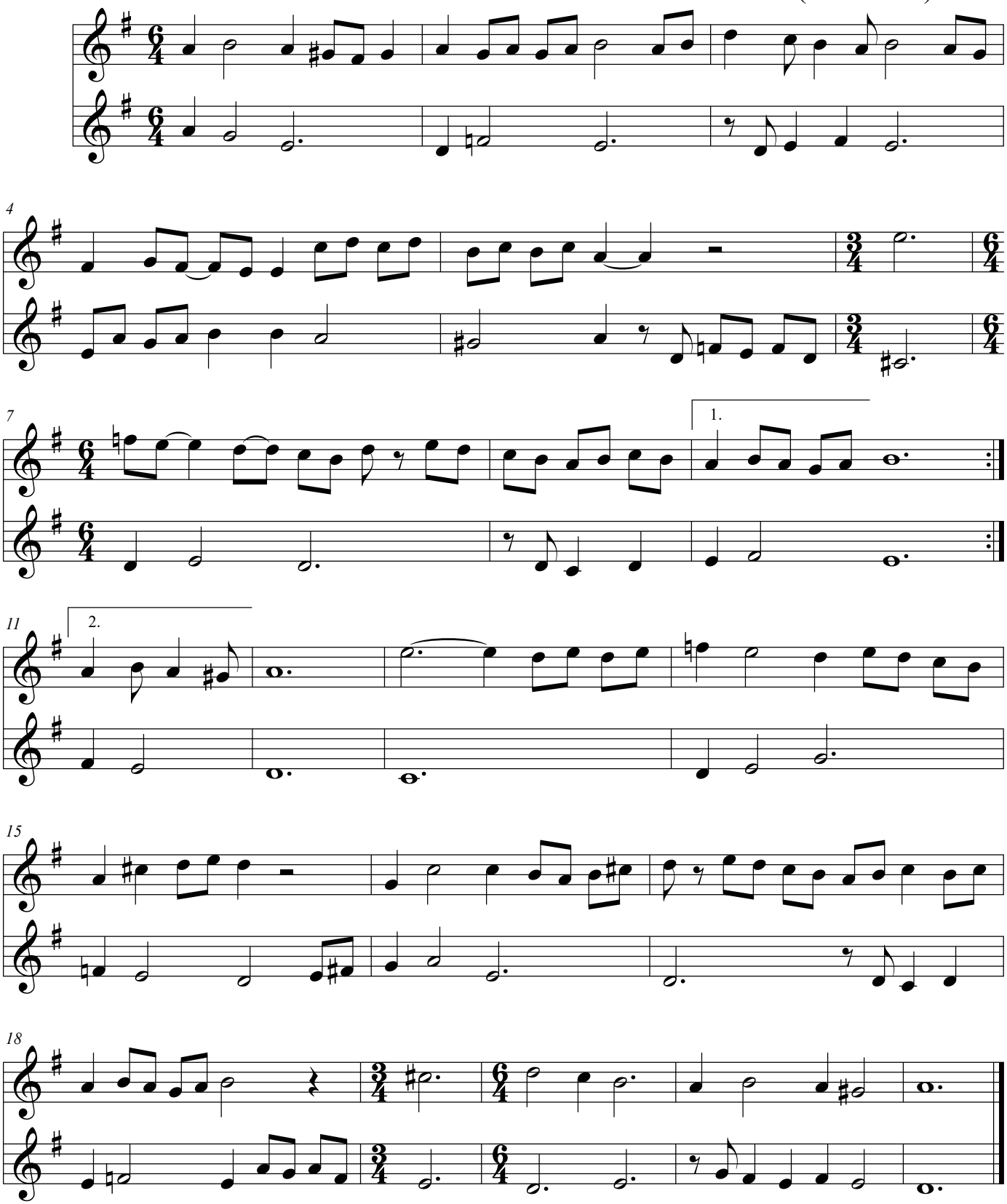


Esperance qui m'asseure

Ballade 13

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Esperance qui m'asseure

Ballade 13

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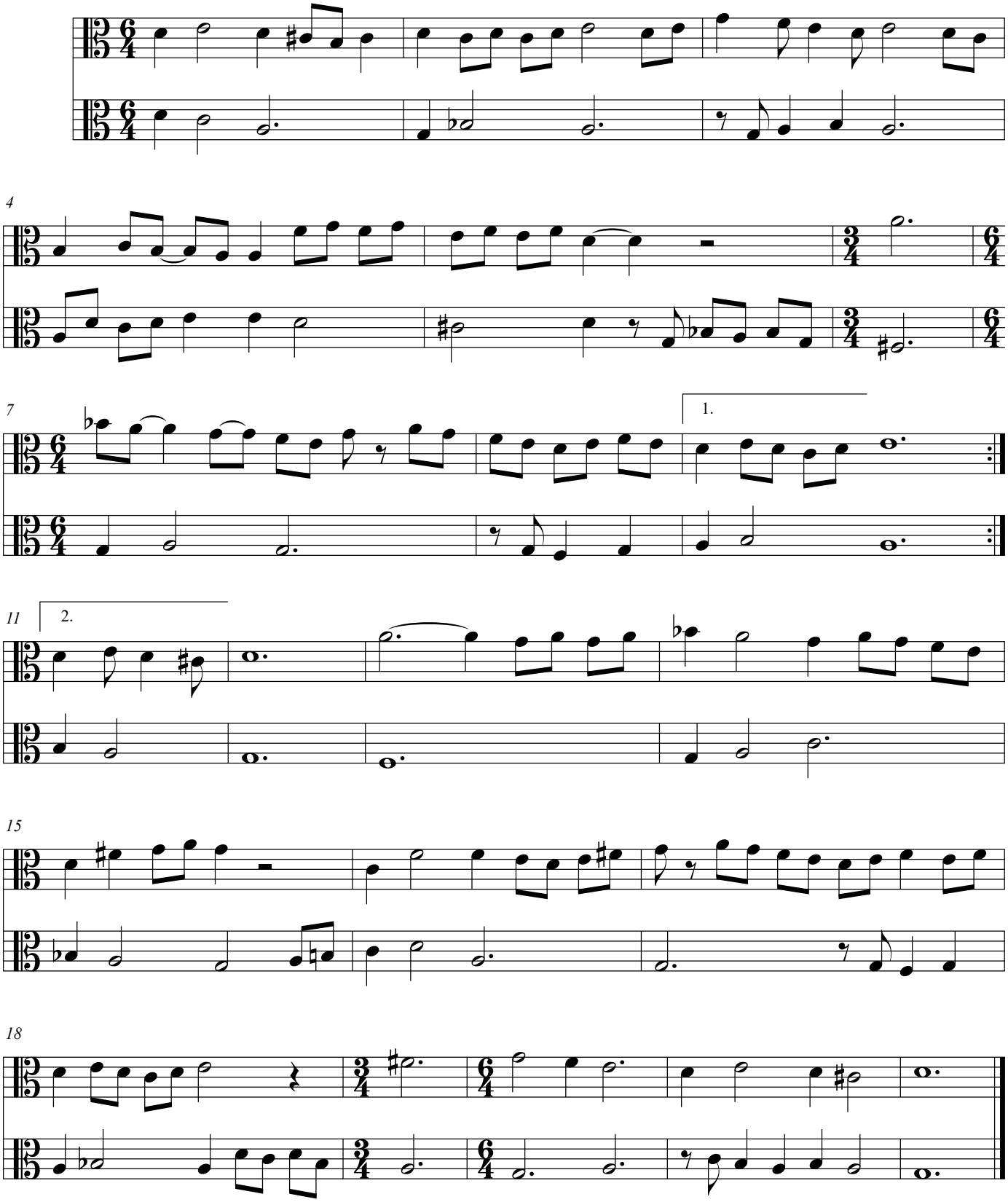

Esperance qui m'asseure

Ballade 13

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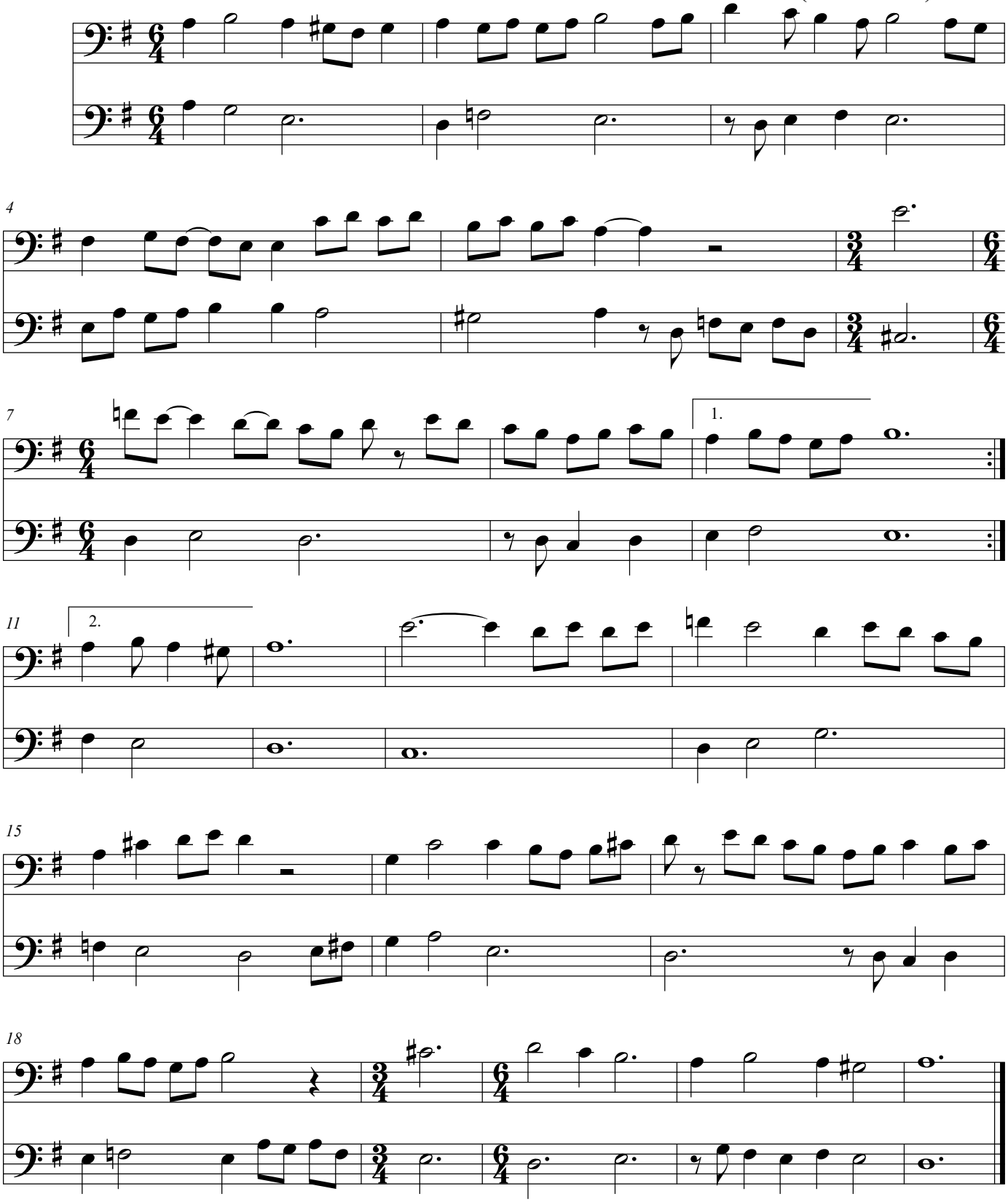
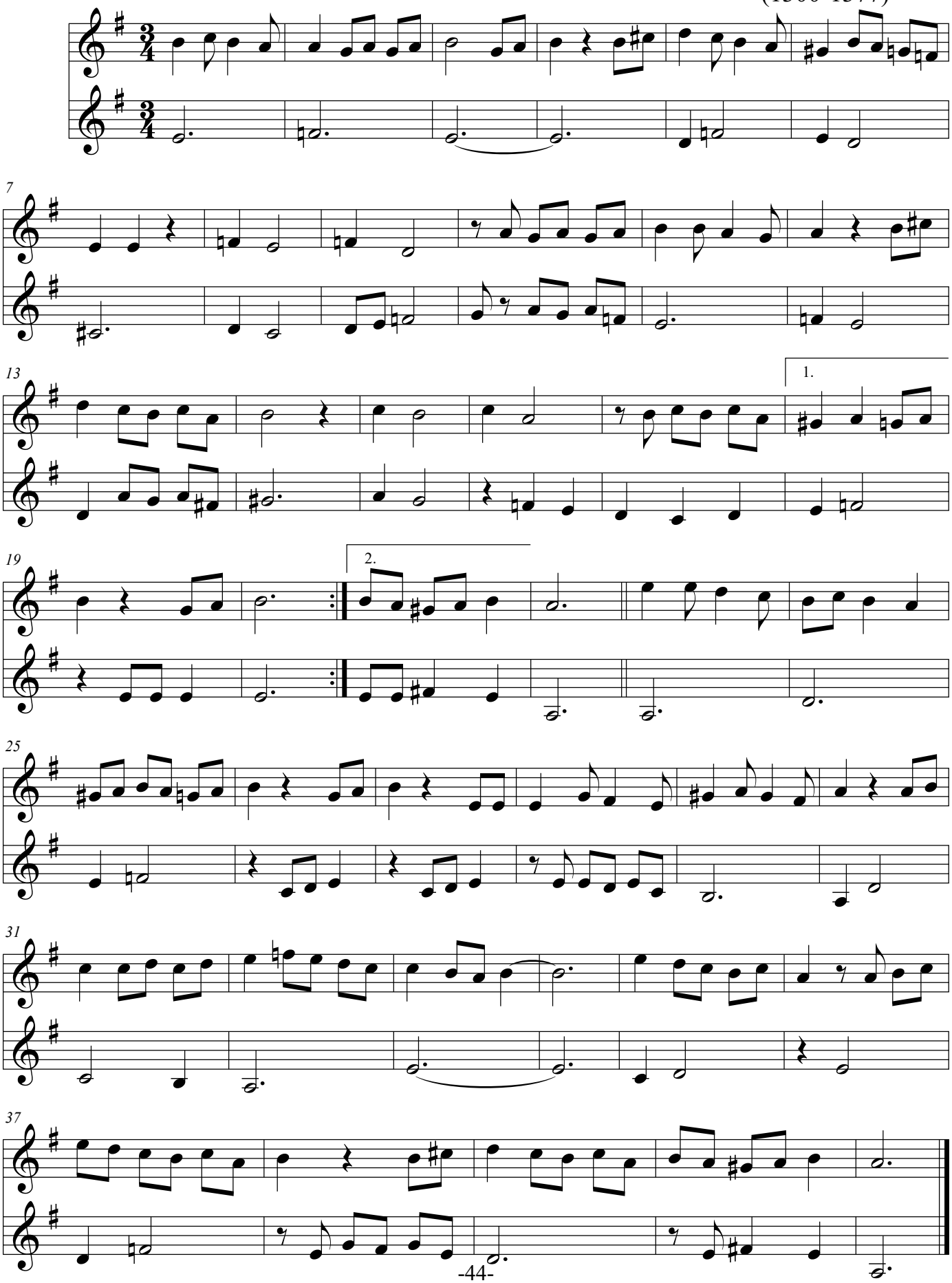
(1300-1377)



Je ne cuit pas qu'onques a creature

Ballade 14

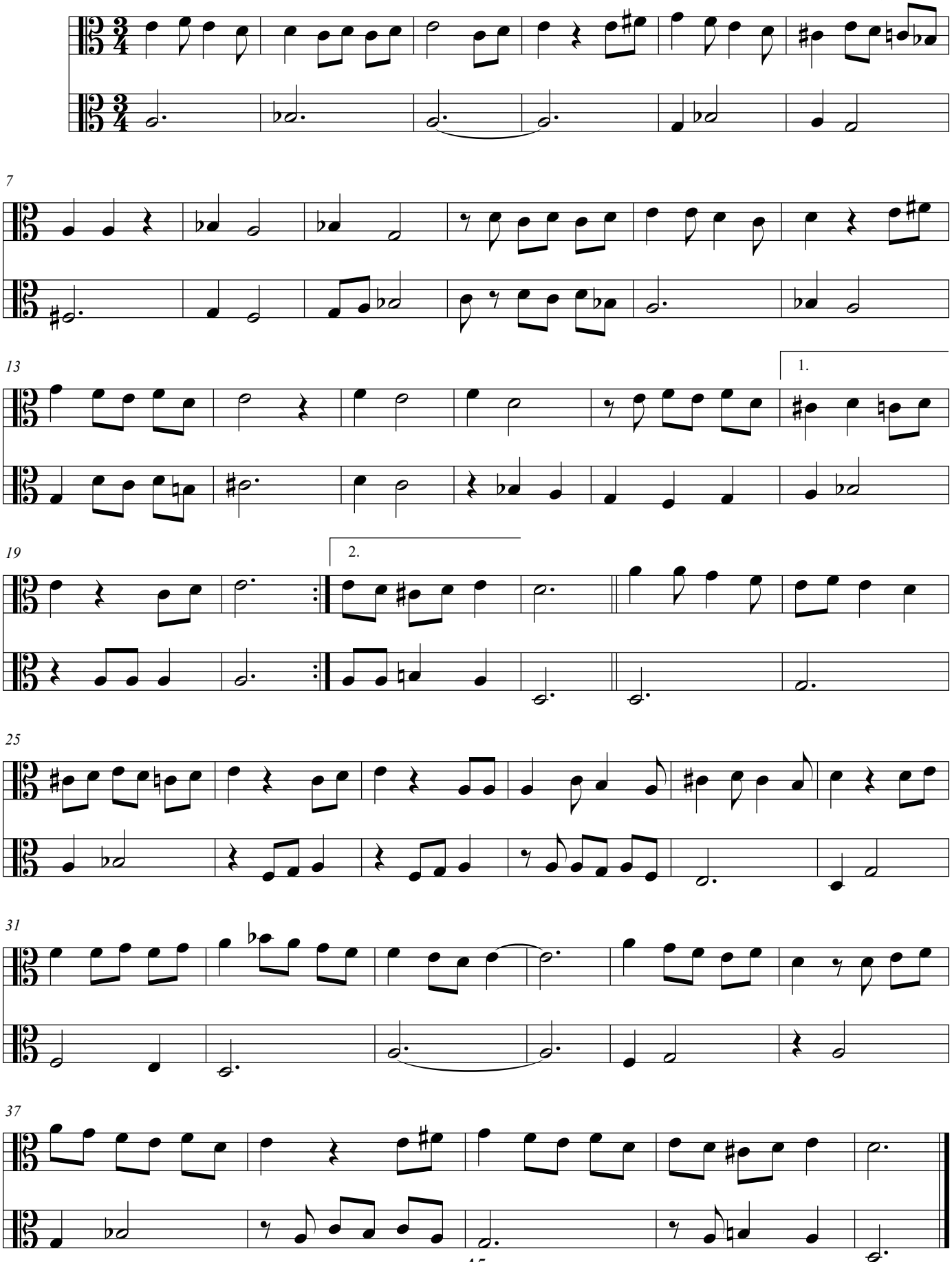
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Je ne cuit pas qu'onques a creature

Ballade 14

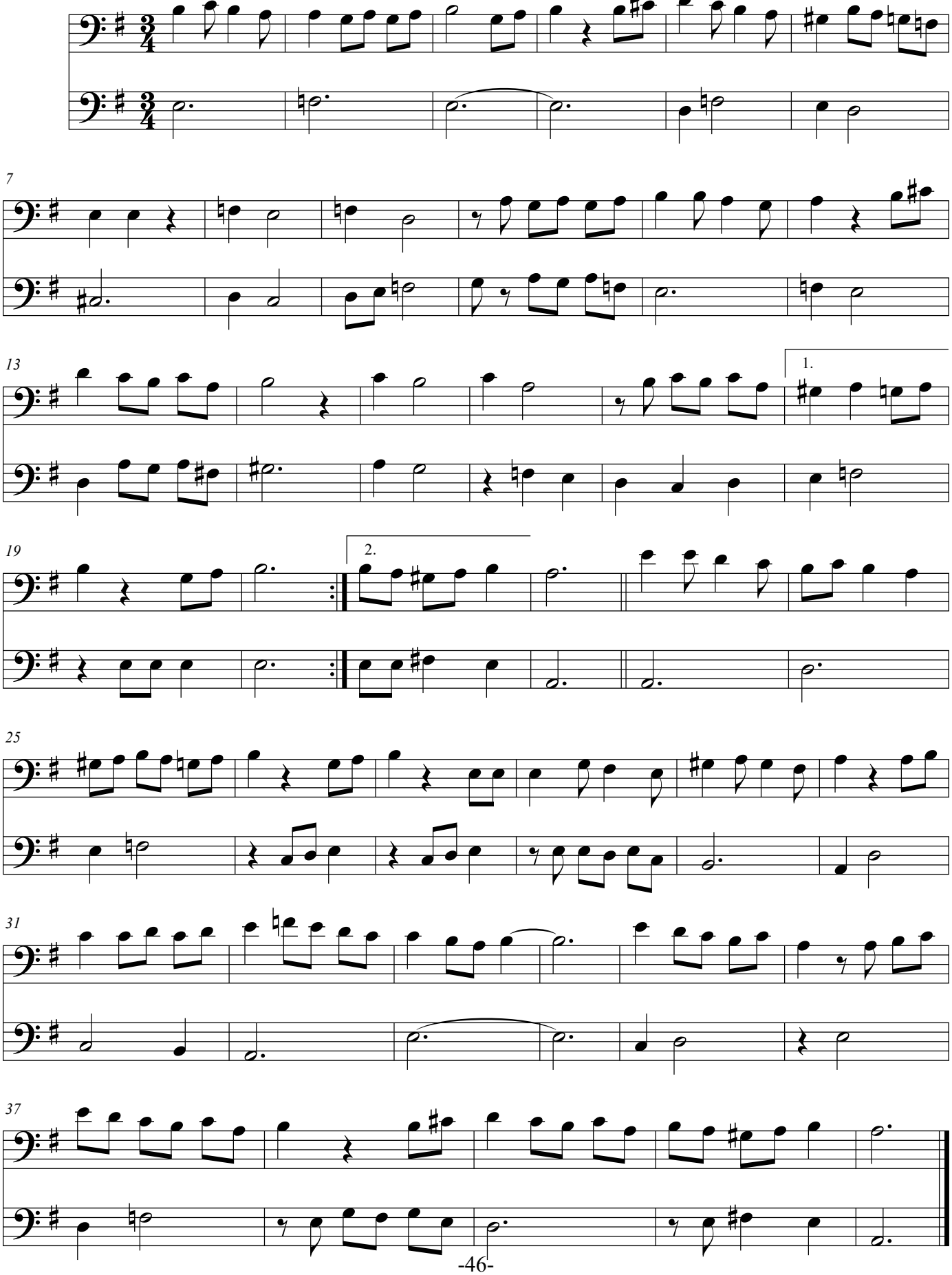
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Je ne cuit pas qu'onques a creature

Ballade 14

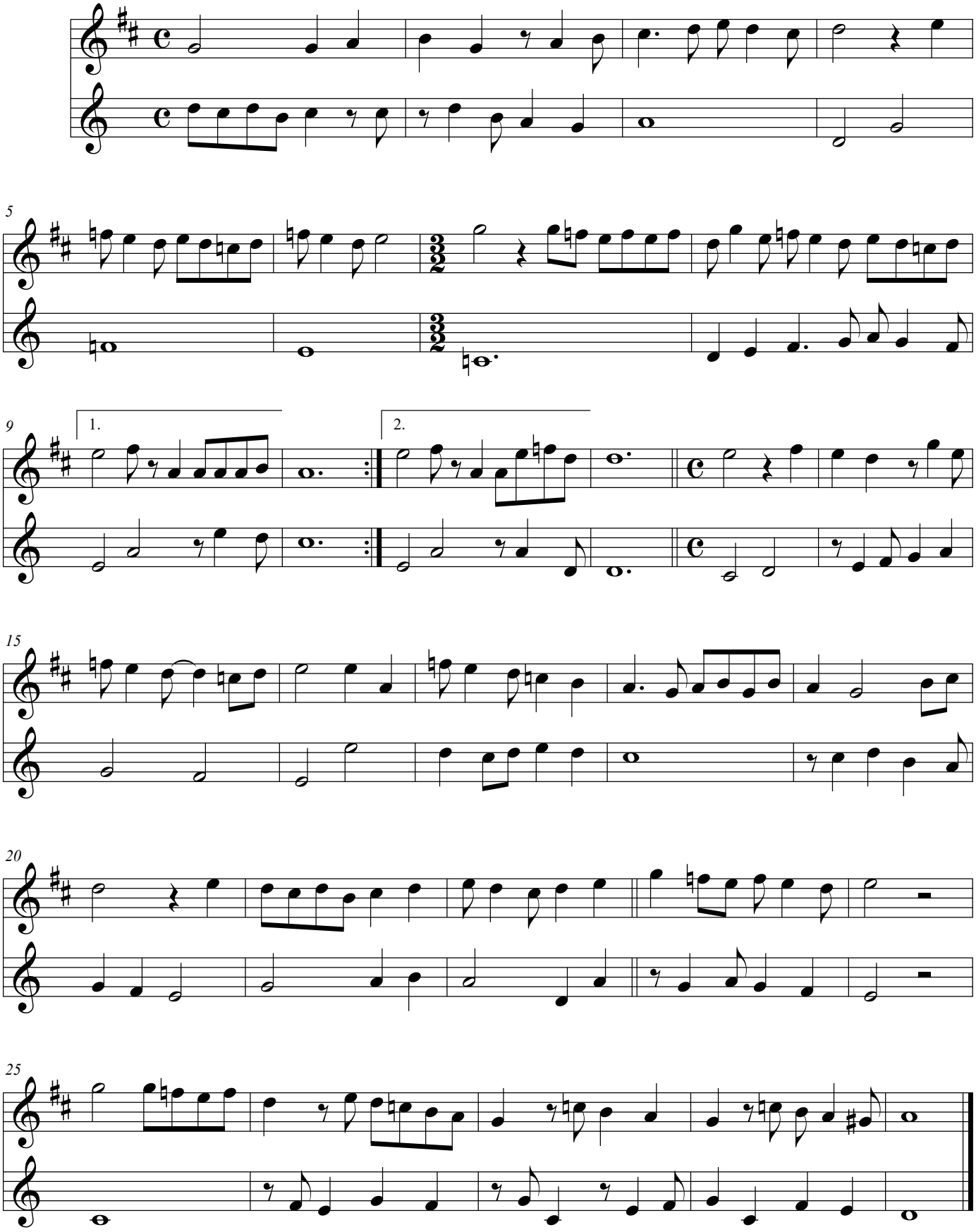
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Se je me pleing n'en puis mais

Ballade 15

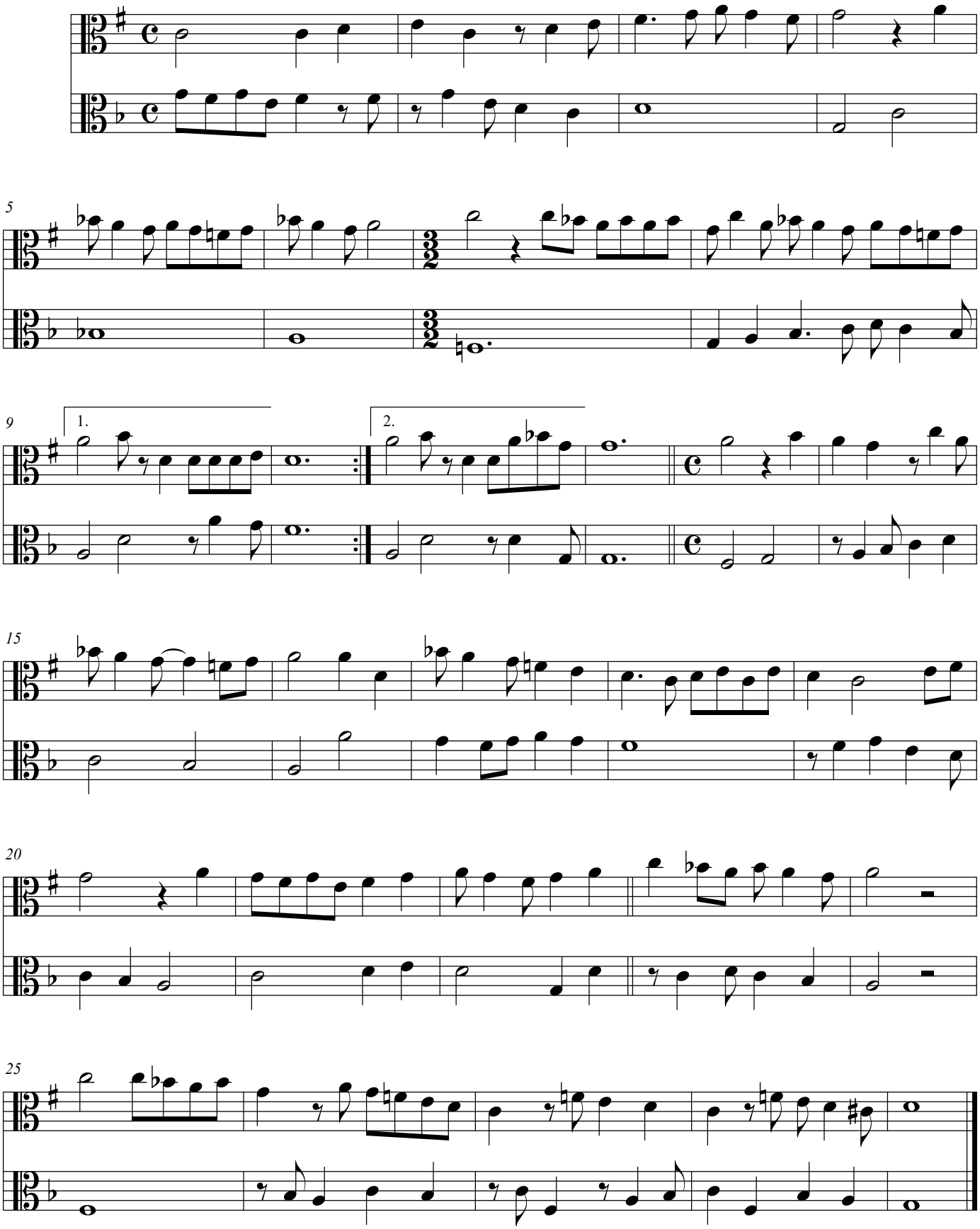
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Se je me pleing n'en puis mais

Ballade 15

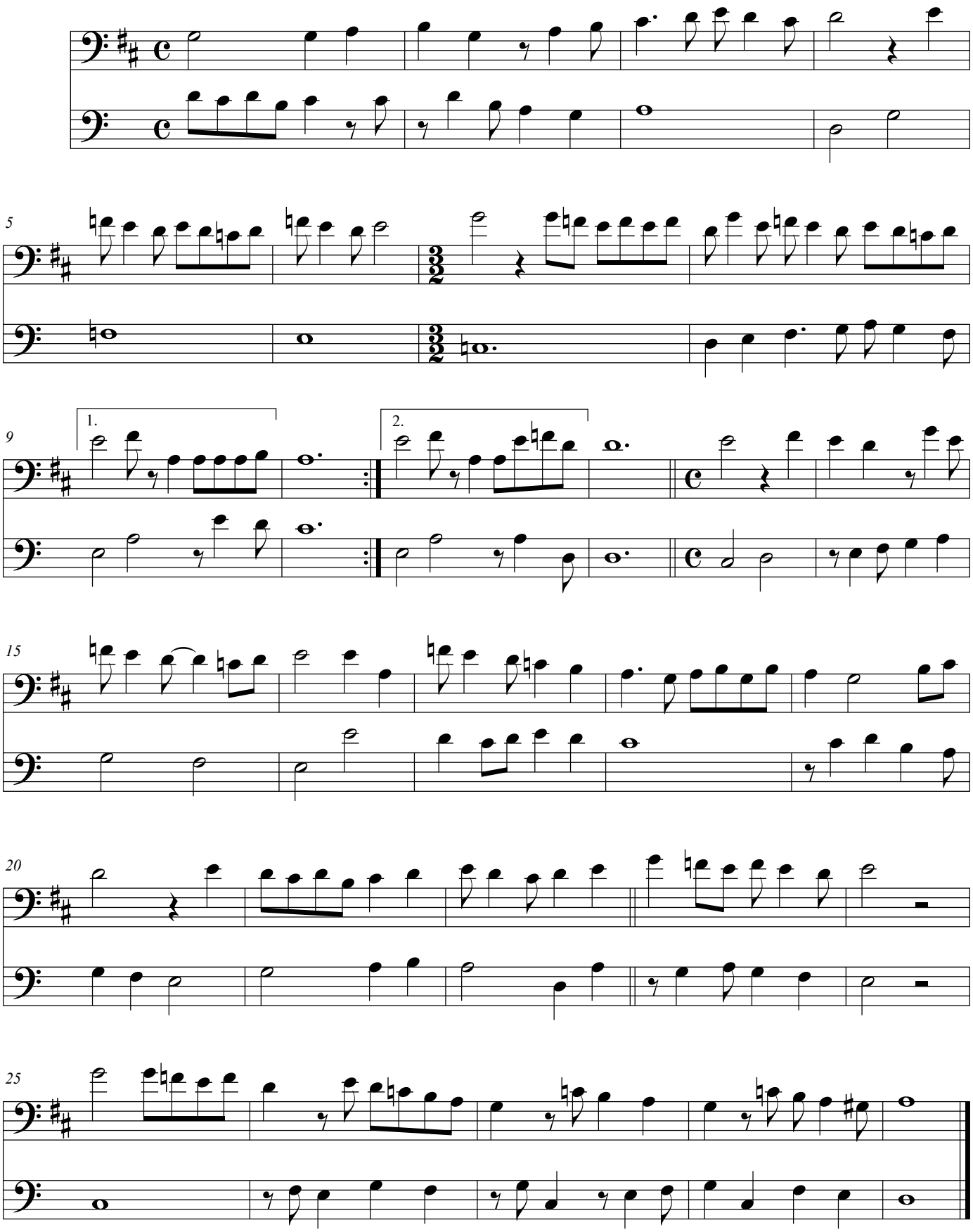
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Se je me pleing n'en puis mais

Ballade 15

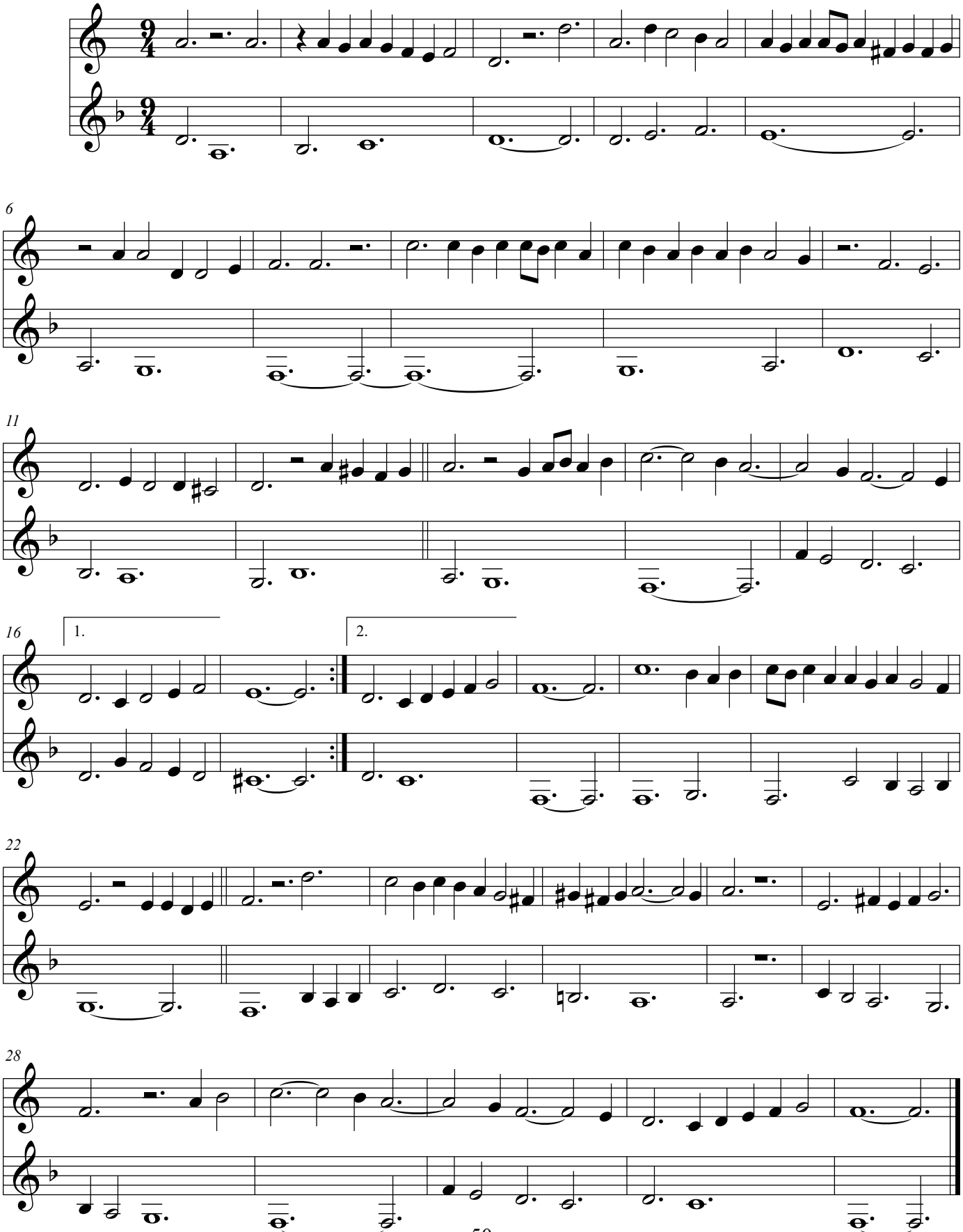
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Dame, comment qu'amez de vous ne soie

Ballade 16

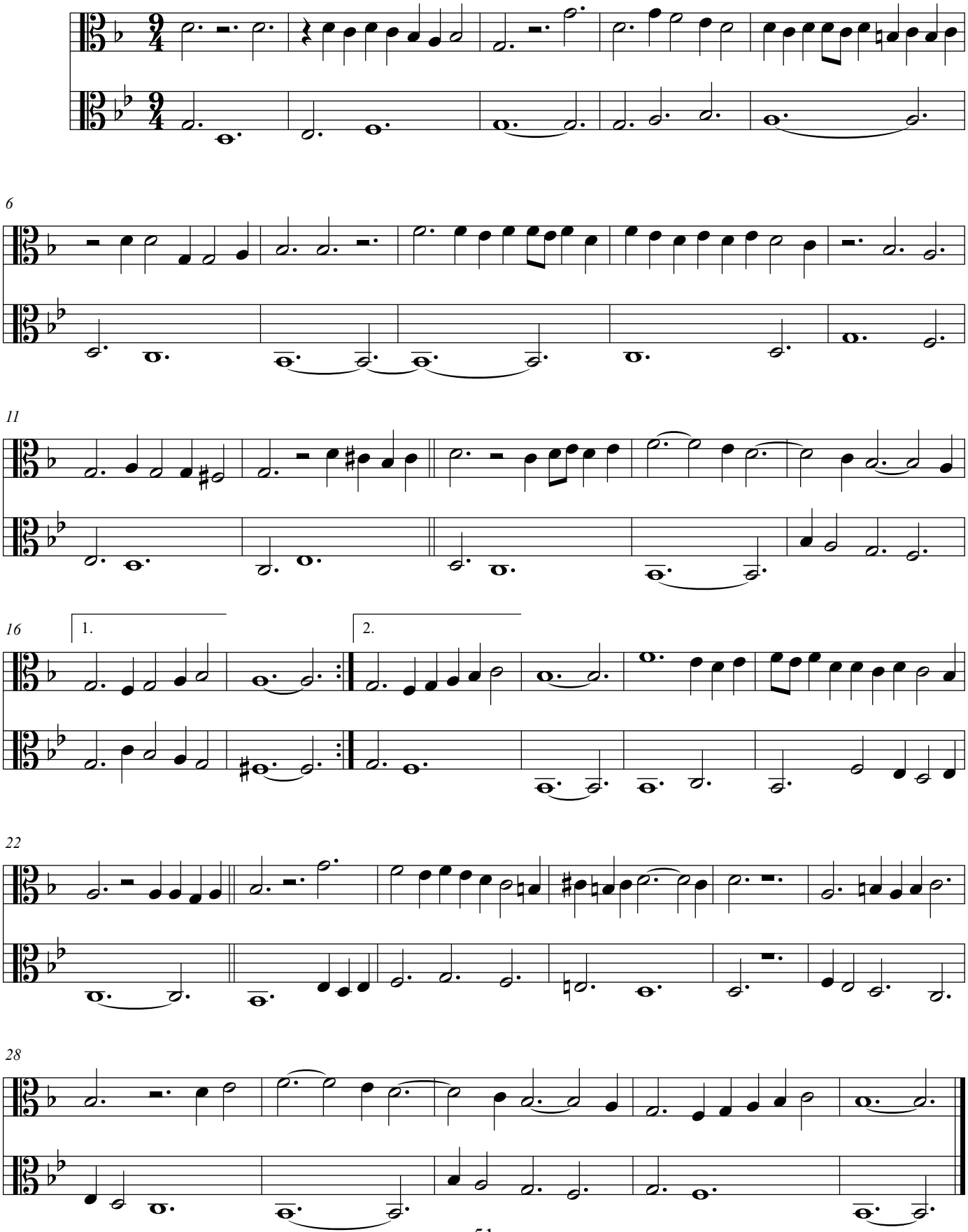
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Dame, comment qu'amez de vous ne soie

Ballade 16

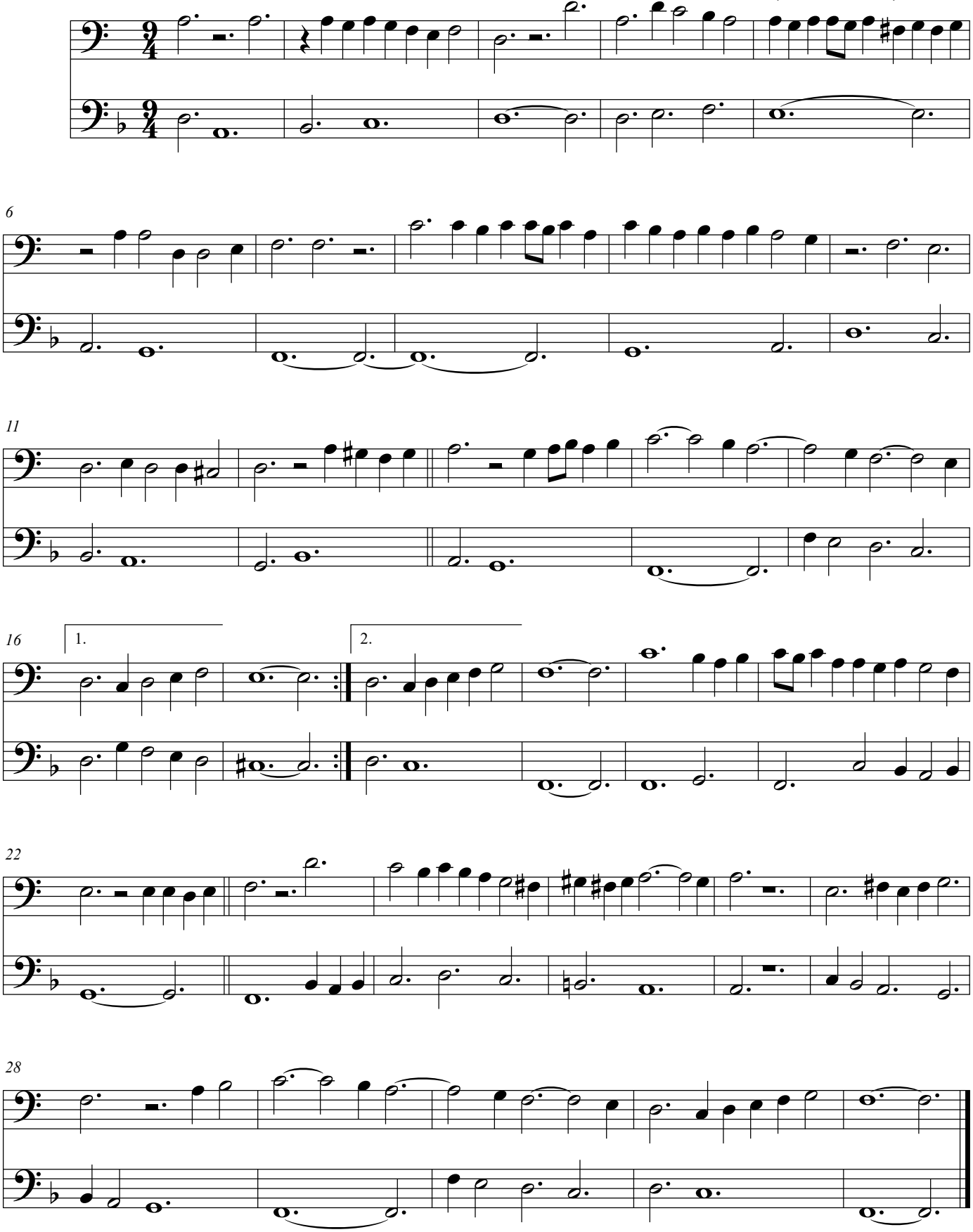
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Dame, comment qu'amez de vous ne soie

Ballade 16

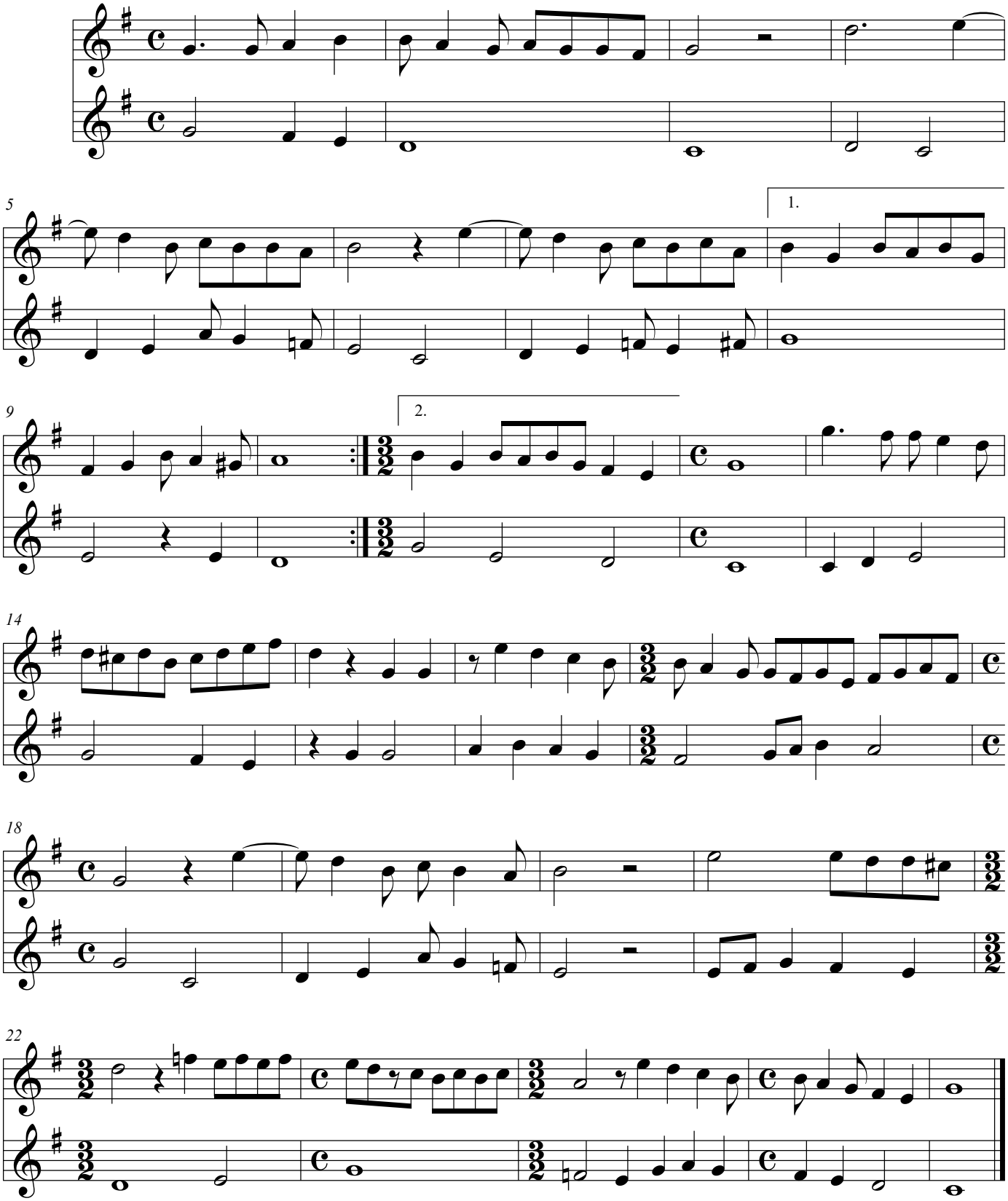
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Tres douce dame que j'aour

Ballade 24

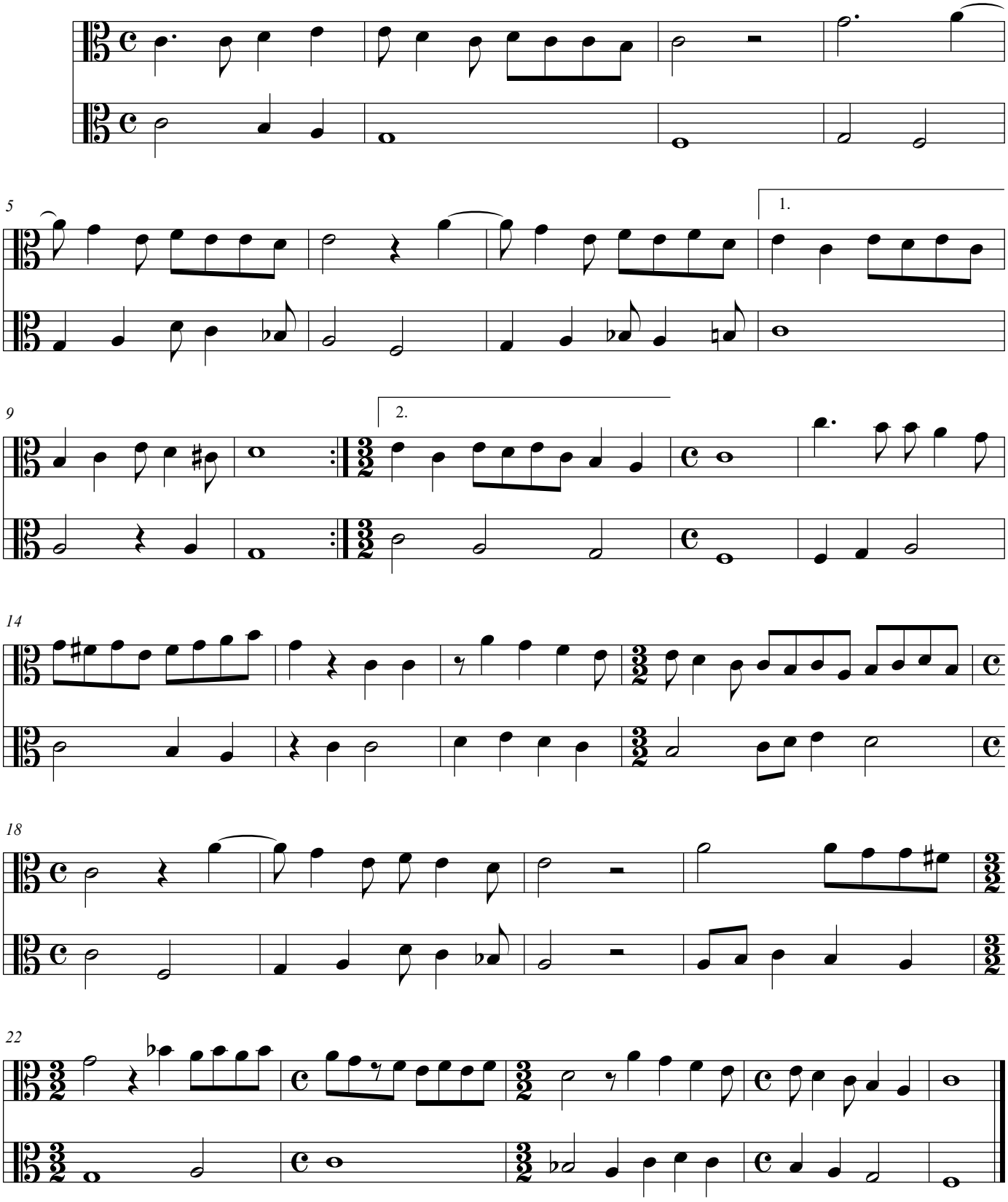
Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



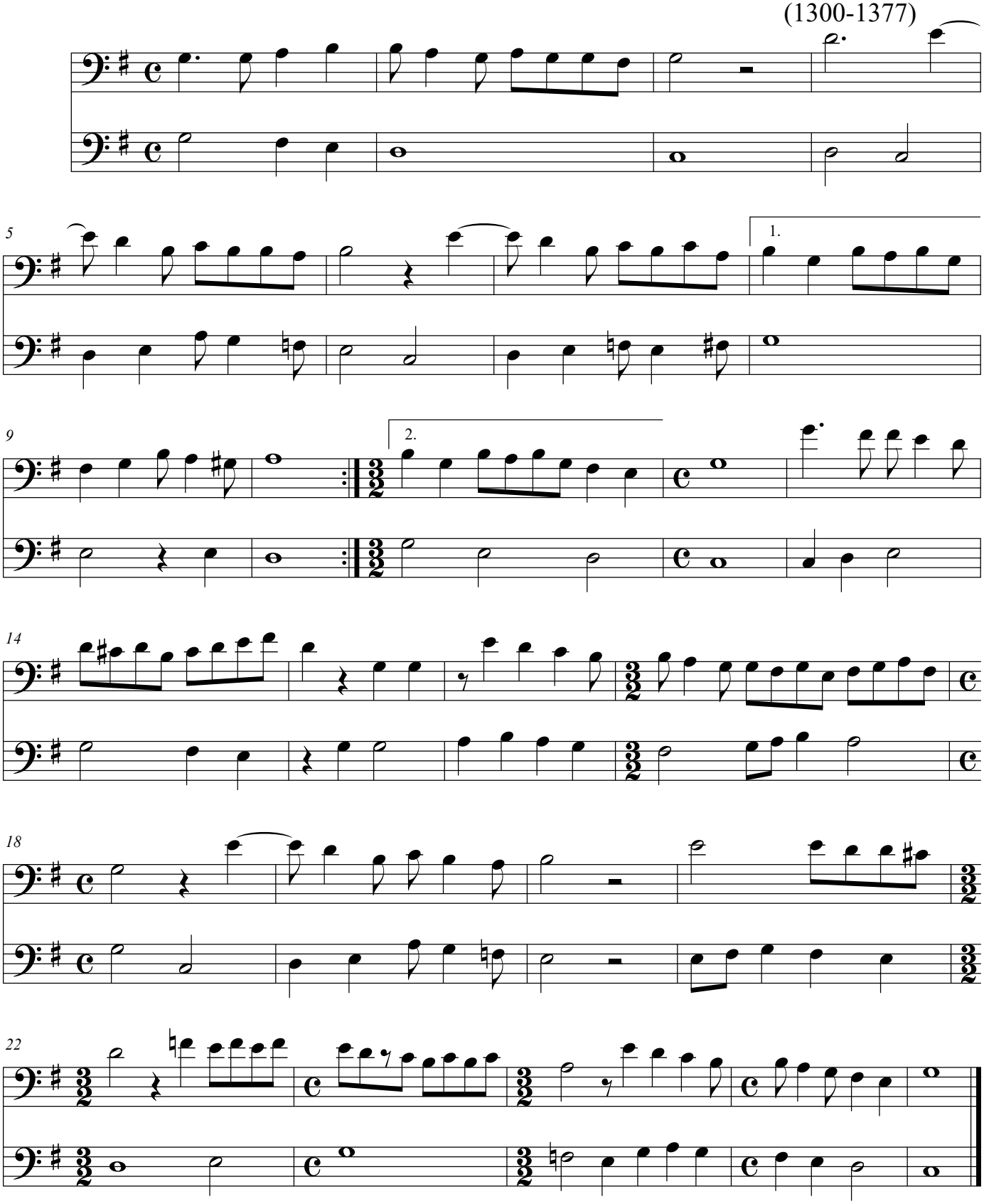
Tres douce dame que j'aour

Ballade 24

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)



Tres douce dame que j'aour

Ballade 24

Guillaume de Machaut
(1300-1377)