-Tune Up-

Chris Potter's solo from a
London, UK, Masterclass
November 12, 2011

Transcribed by
Charles McNeal

Introduction

My introduction to this Chris Potter solo was a Facebook message that contained a YouTube video link and the words “Check This Out!” I did and after about 4 minutes of listening I had made up my mind that I would transcribe this solo...

Chris Potter is one of the most creative and technically gifted saxophonist of his generation. Whether he's performing straight-ahead acoustic jazz, adventurous electronic music or in a more Pop based music ensemble he always pushes himself and the other musicians to a higher level. It would seem that any idea that comes into his head he is able to execute on the horn flawlessly. I remember a masterclass that I attended in college given by the great jazz trumpeter “Red Rodney.” He talked about the talents of a young 19 year old saxophonist who had just joined his band. A comment he made that stuck with me was “keep an eye out for this kid, I think he's gonna be one of the greats!” In my opinion Chris has definitely lived up to that expectation.

This transcription was one of the most technically challenging solos that I have ever attempted. Some of the things that Chris played I had no idea how I would notate the actual phrase. Also, since this was an unaccompanied performance I didn't have the luxury of a rhythm section to provide a steady pulse to aid in figuring out rhythms. With that in mind I chose to write this transcription in a manner that would facilitate reading. You'll run across quite a few odd metered bars which in my opinion is easier to deal with as opposed to writing “speed up, slow down” over various parts of the phrase. There's also a very short portion of the solo (page 19) where Chris plays about 11 bars using overtones almost exclusively. I had a very difficult time hearing the notes and notating those bars so I just wrote out the pitches that I could actually hear and indicated the use of overtones (sorry for those bars not being as clear as they should be...). The last few minutes of the solo were performed as an extended Cadenza so again I notated it in a way that I feel makes it easier to read. I'm sure if any other musicians transcribed the exact same section of the solo the notation would look entirely different but I'm confident that if you learn this solo while playing along with Chris my notation will be easy to follow. I always feel that a transcription should be played along with the recording while trying to match the articulation and phrasing of the original performance therefore I don't put a lot of articulation markings in my transcriptions. “Play the solo with the recording!!!” There are a number of programs that can be found on the internet that will slow down audio files without lowering the pitch, this is the only way you should play through any transcription.

This transcription is offered to anyone as a free download from “charlesmcneal.com.” I know that many have downloaded other transcriptions from my site and there have been a few people who have sold my transcriptions through various means. I just want to say “THIS IS NOT FOR SALE” I offer these transcriptions as a way for fellow musicians to study the solos of the master saxophonist that I also enjoy listening to and I hope that my love of transcribing inspires other students of the music to do the same. Transcribing sax solos has been more beneficial to my growth as an artist than anything I have ever studied. All the answers you seek are in the great recordings that are available to all of us...just learn to listen. Doing your own transcriptions makes hearing the music much easier....

Enjoy..... Charles McNeal

Tenor Sax

Tune Up

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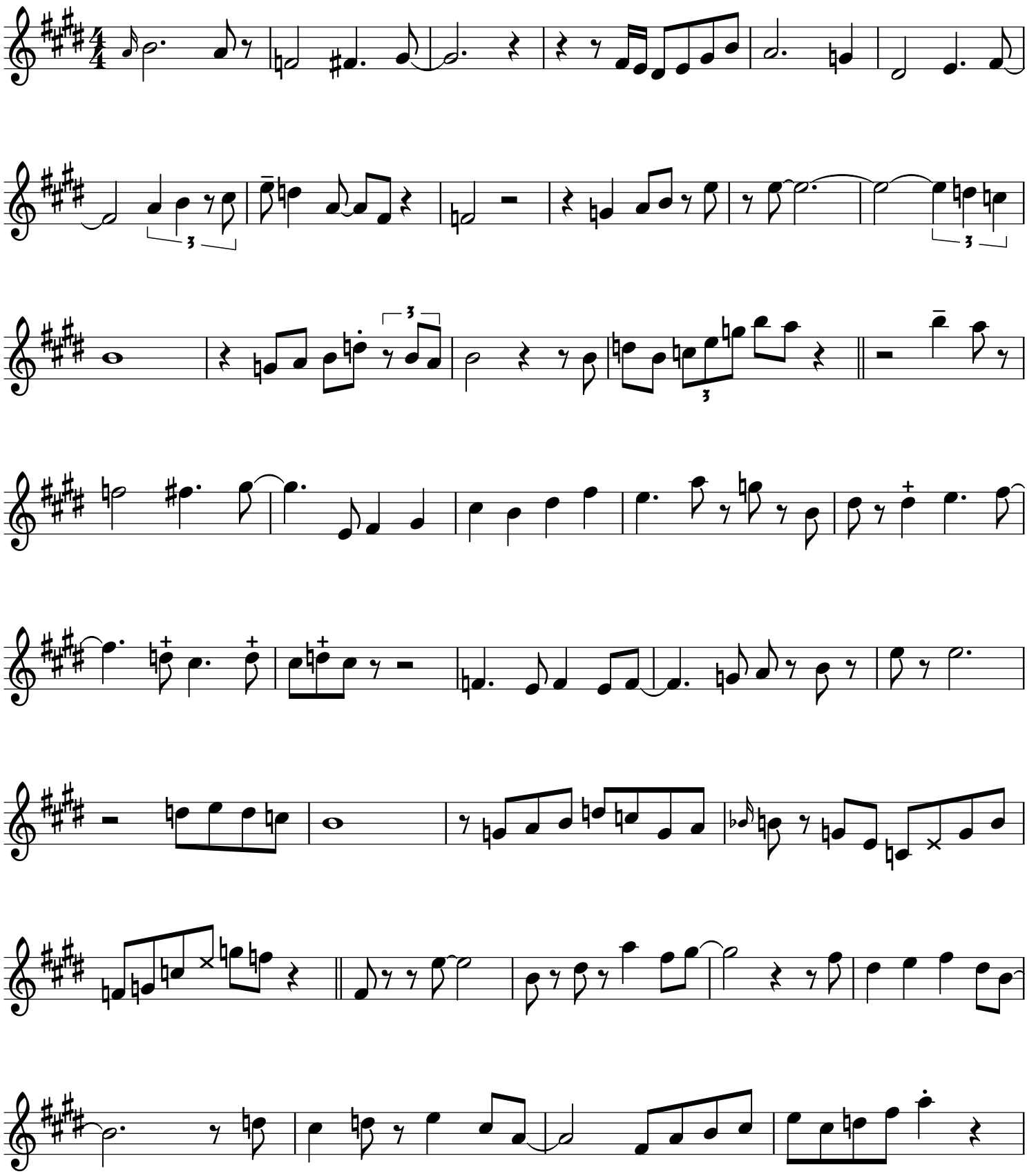
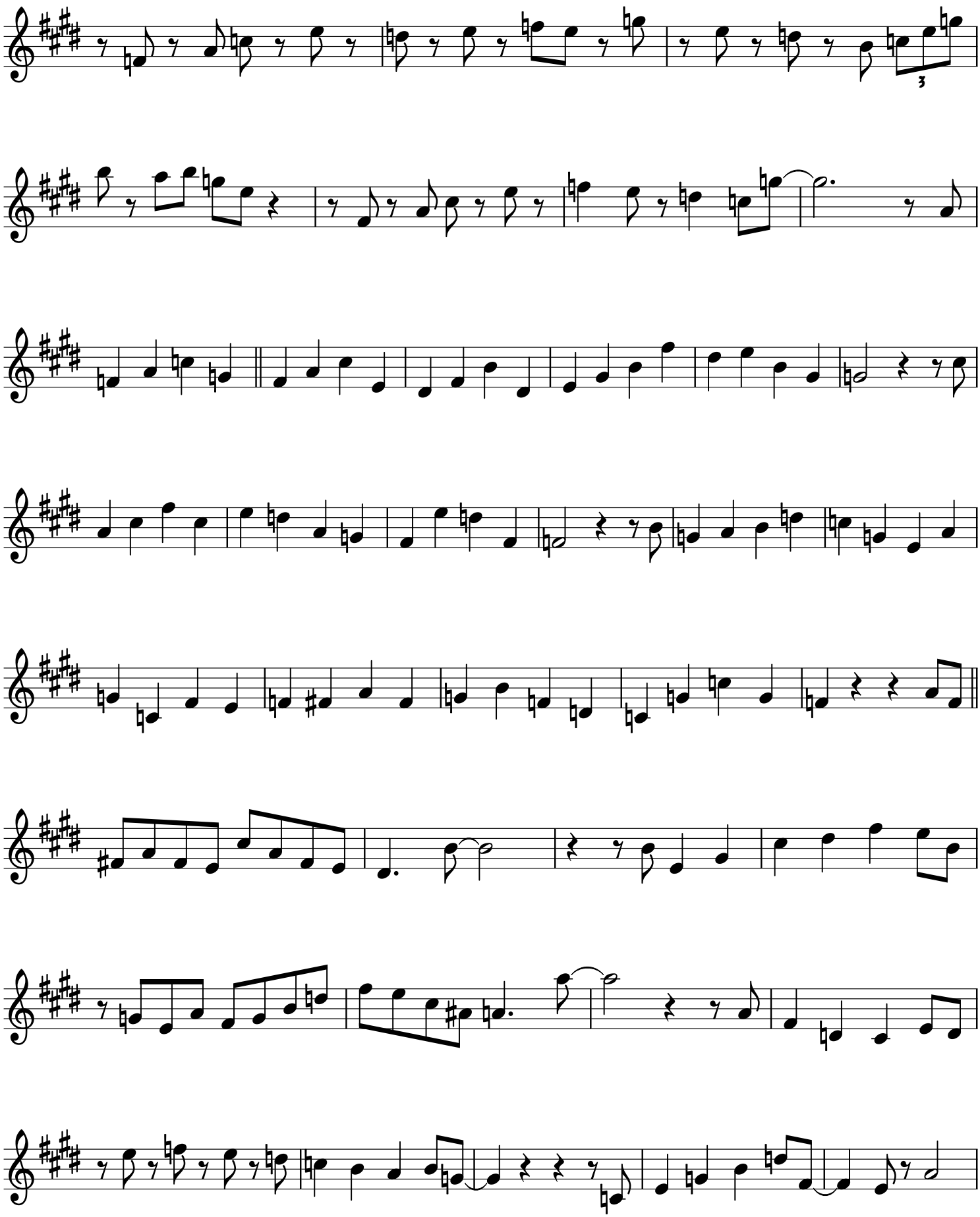
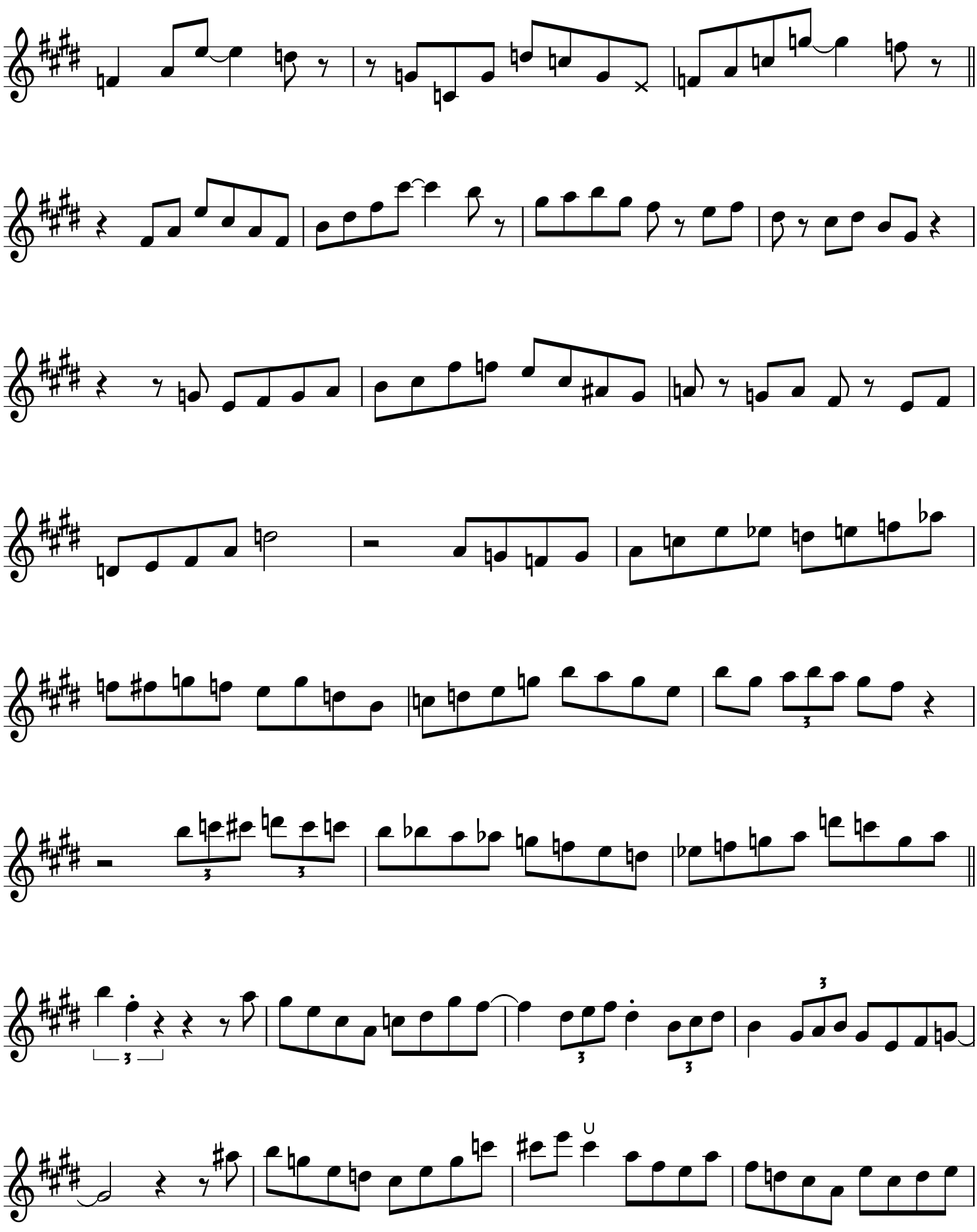
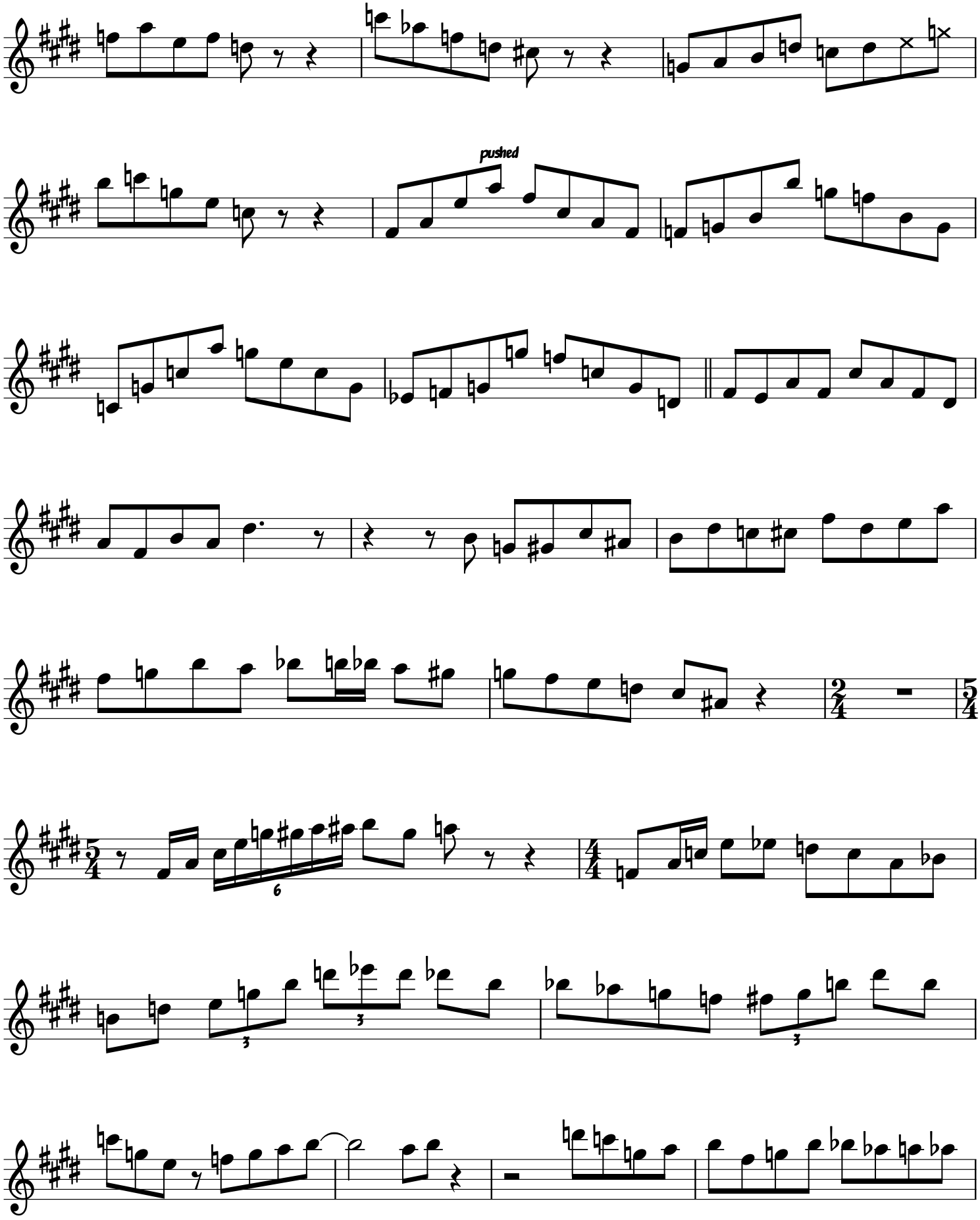
250 bpm





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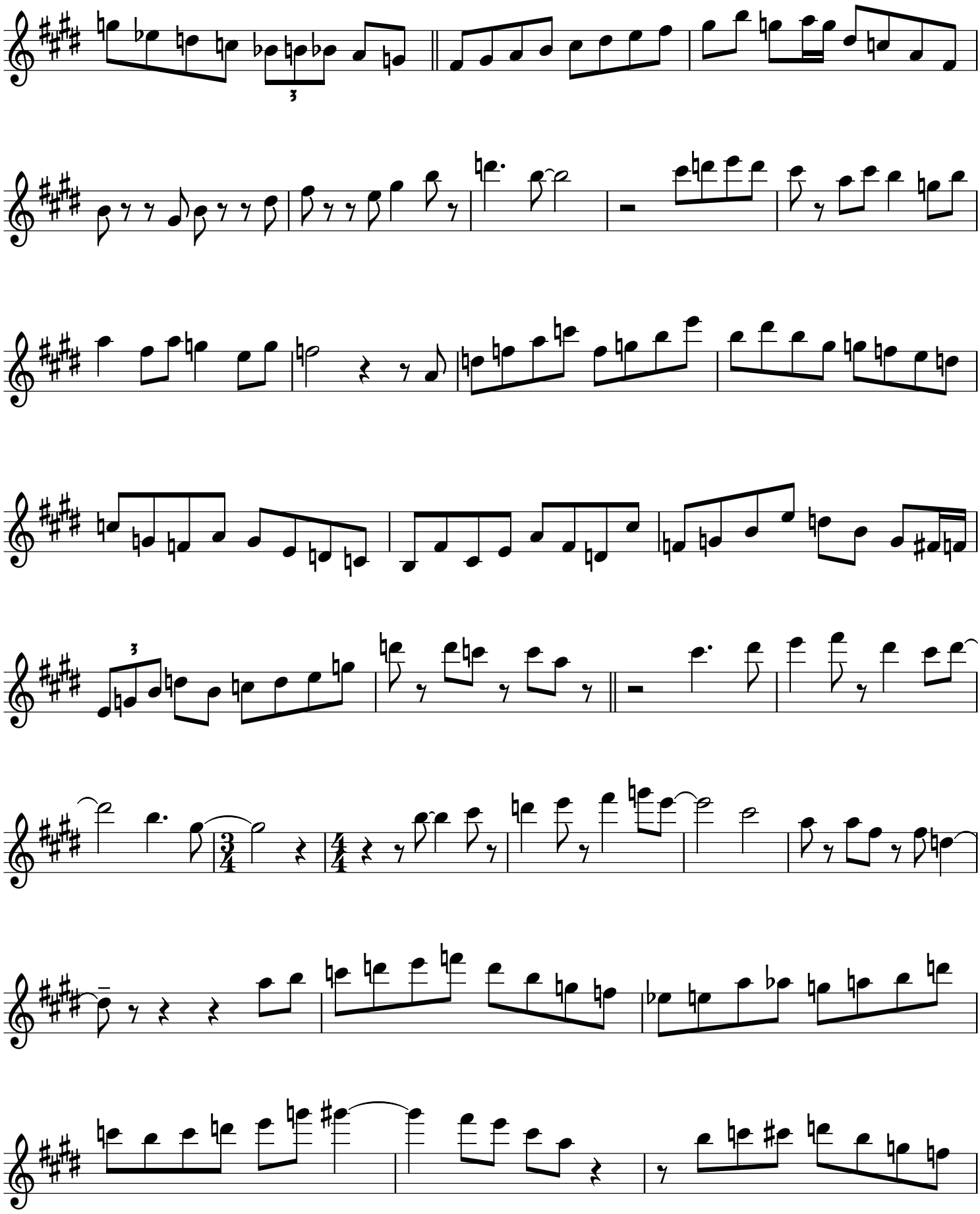

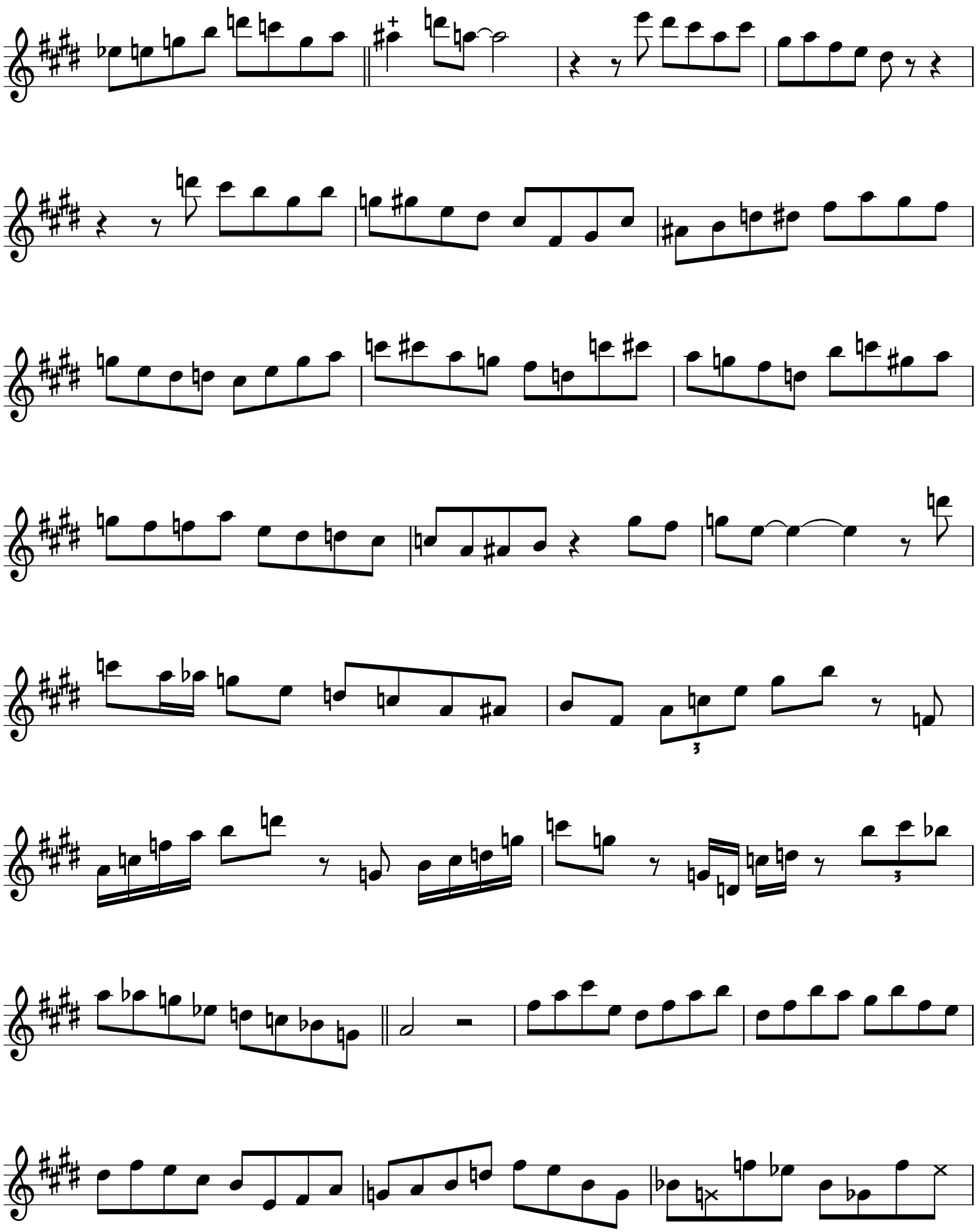

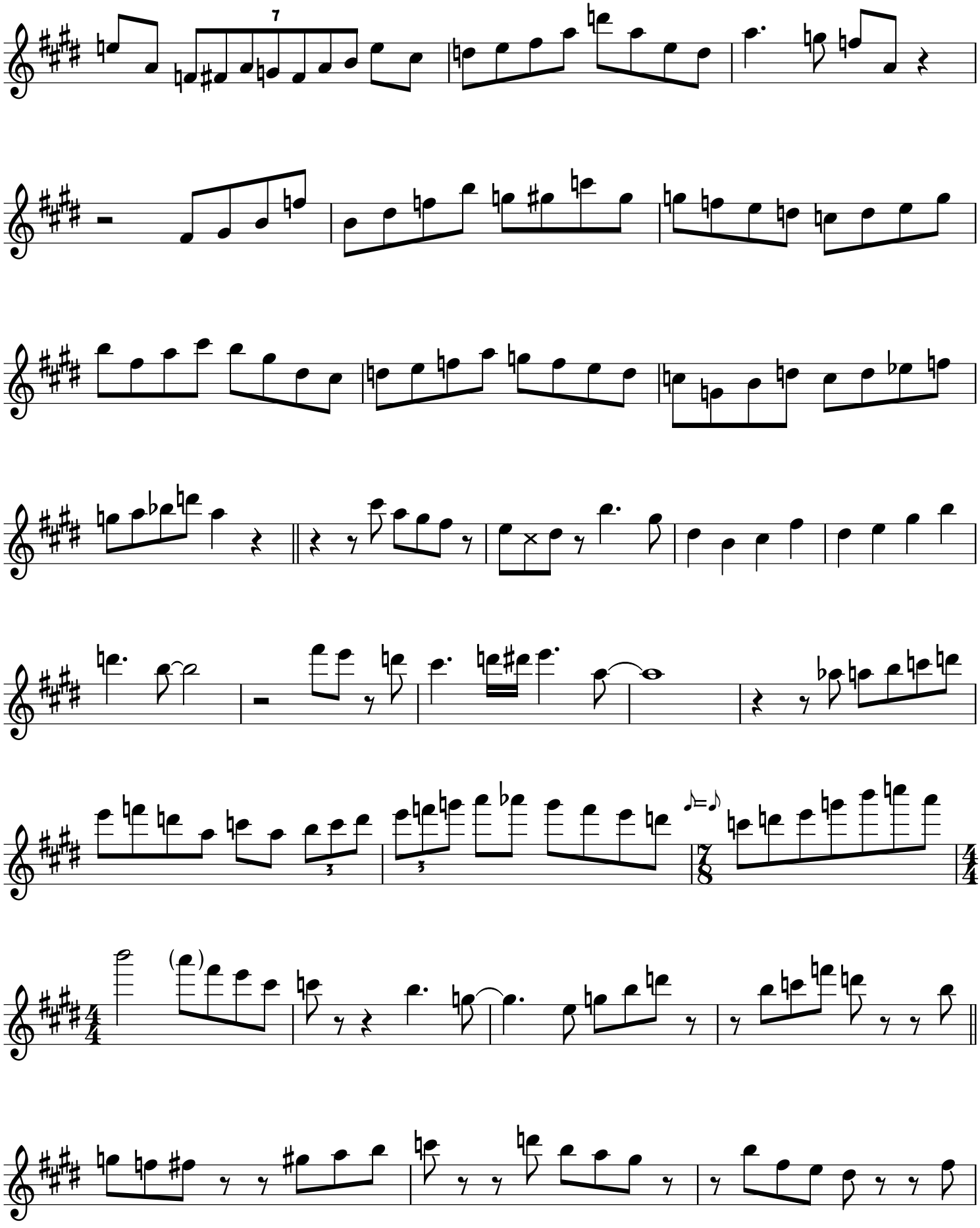
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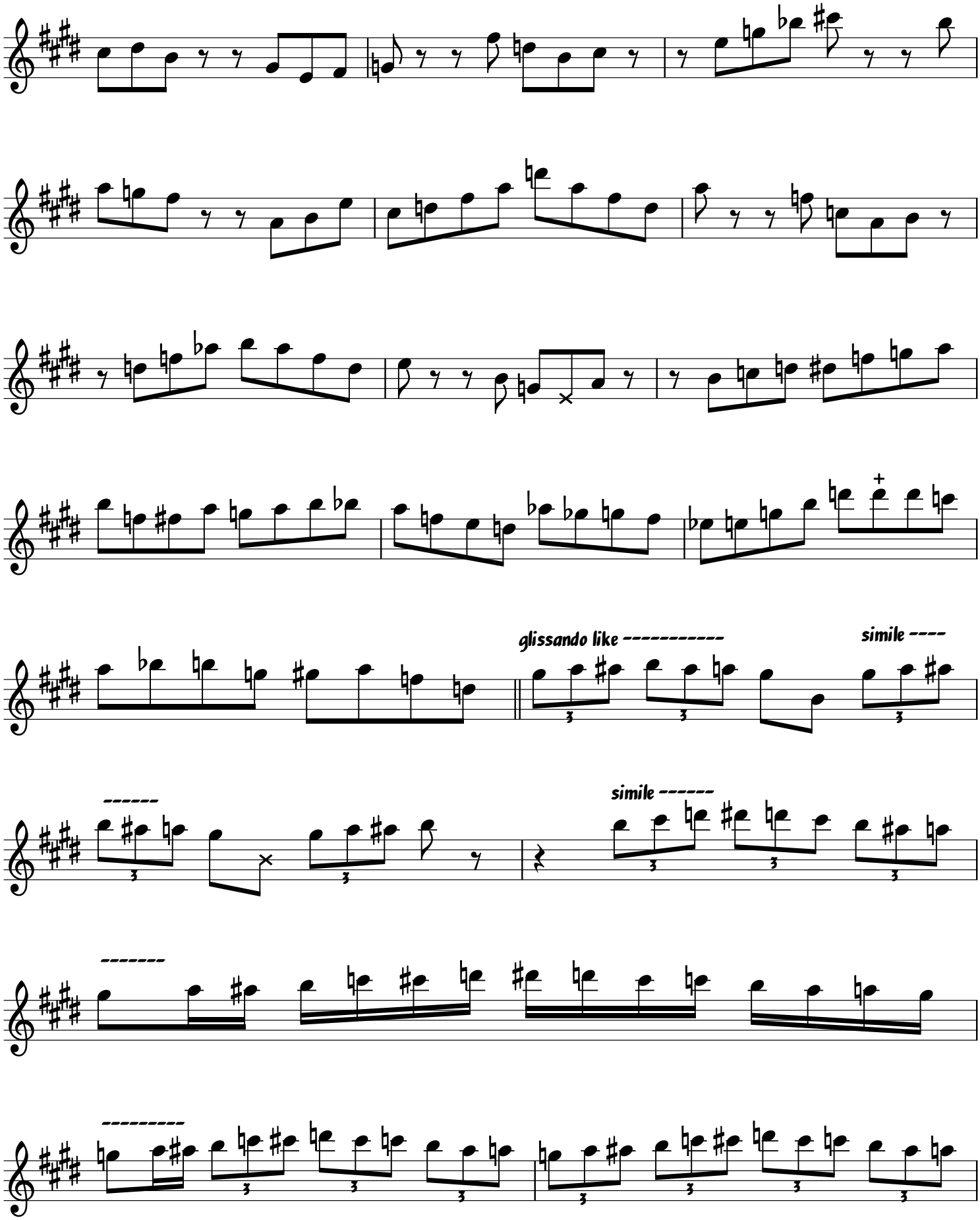
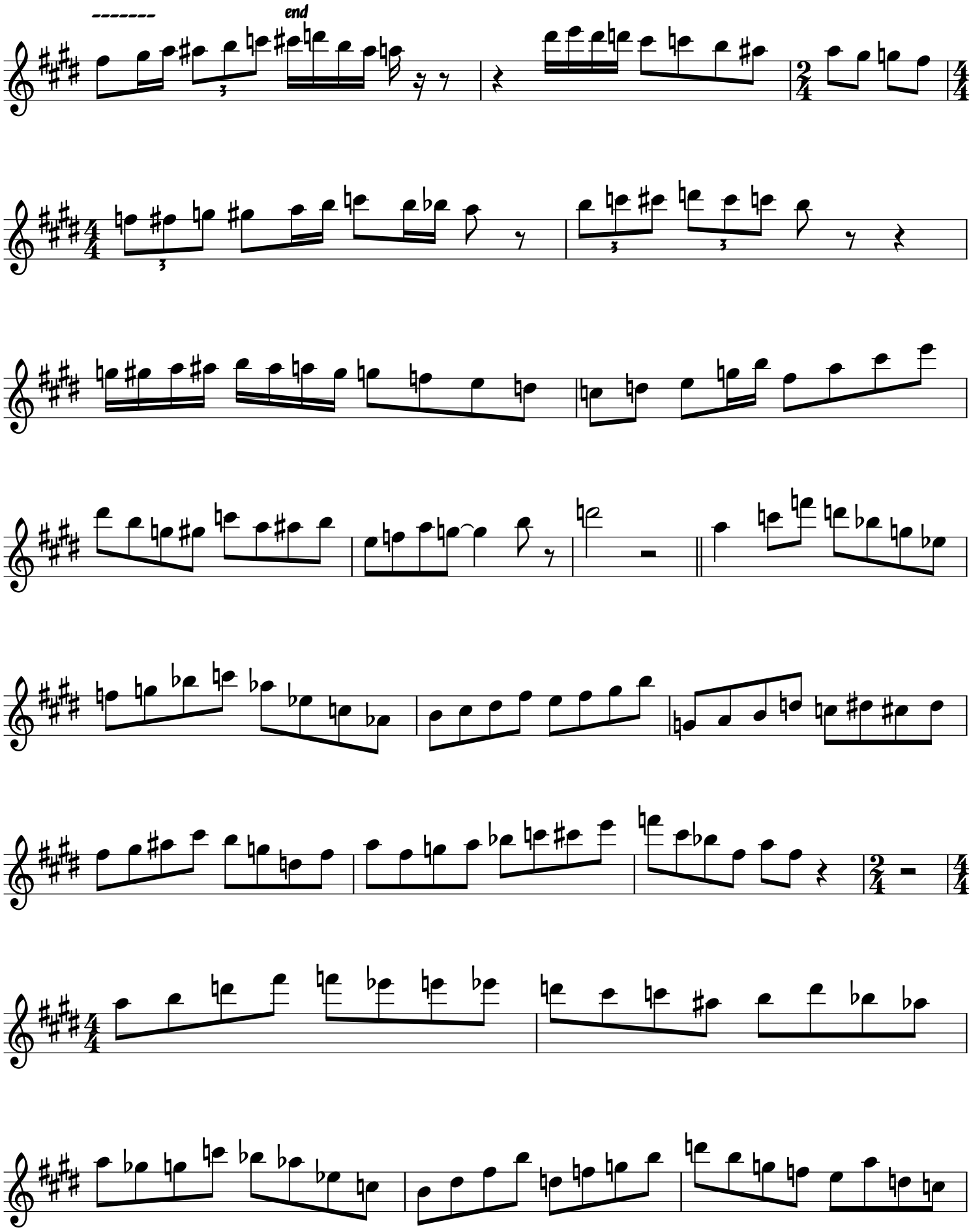

glissando like ----------
simile ----
simile ------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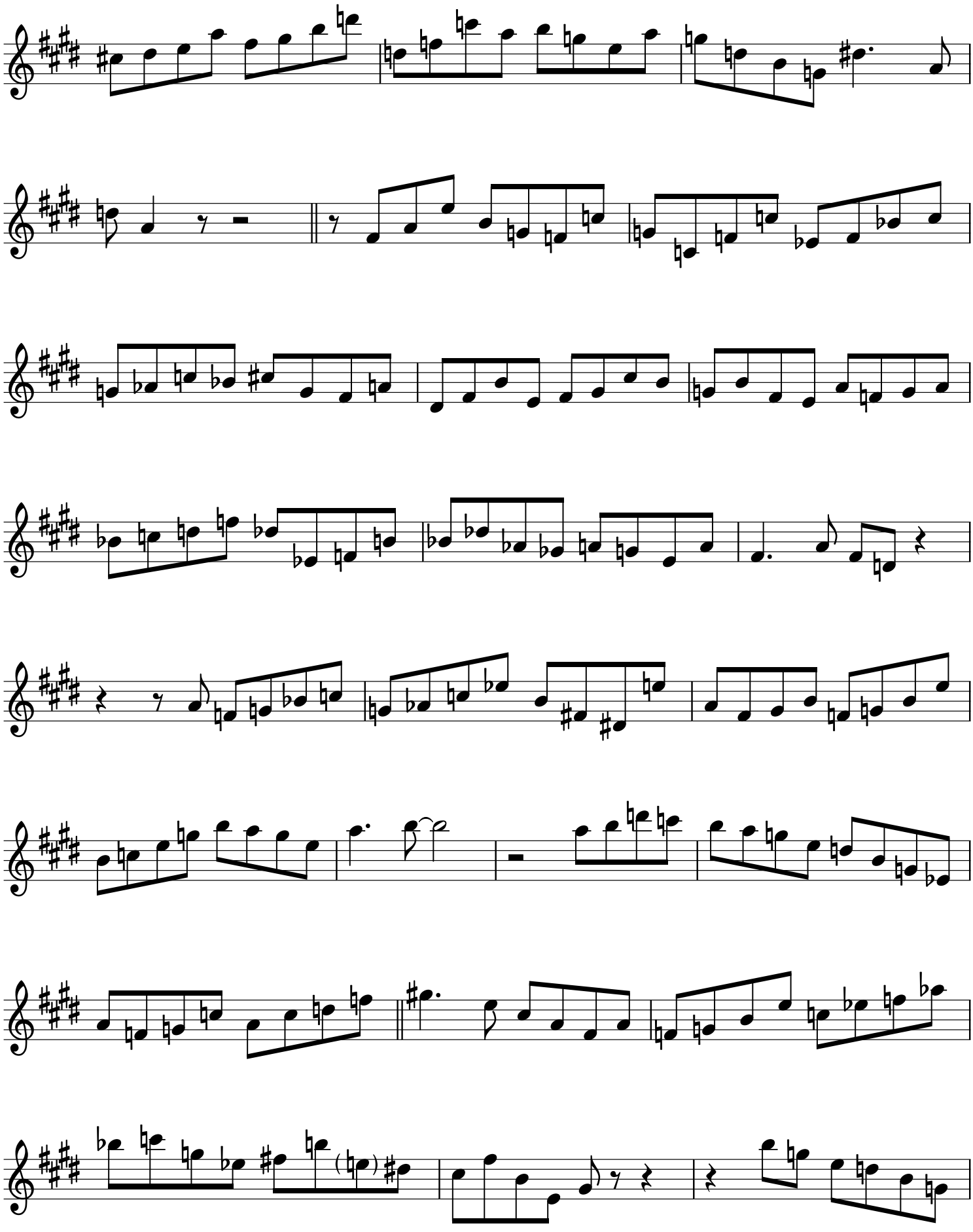
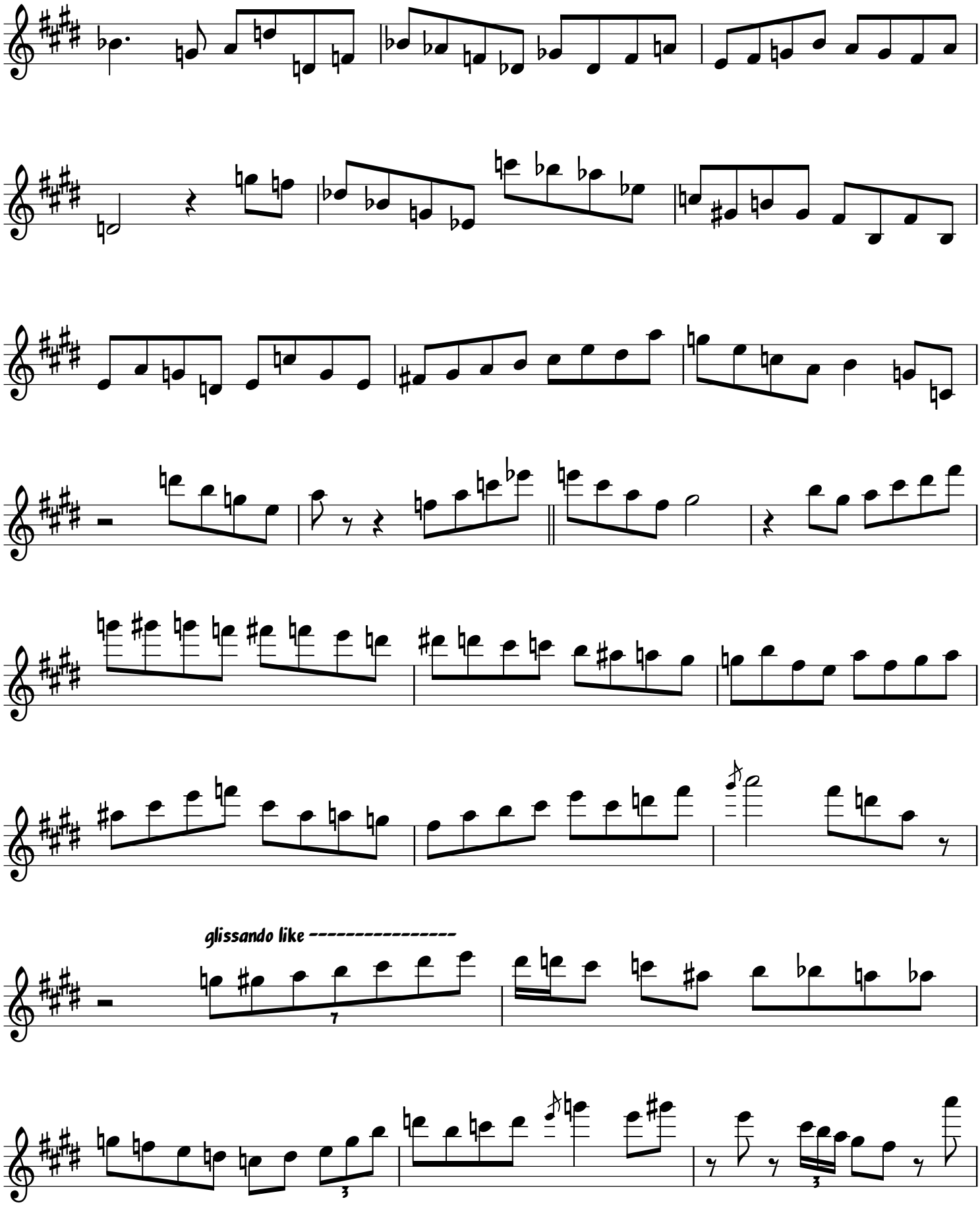
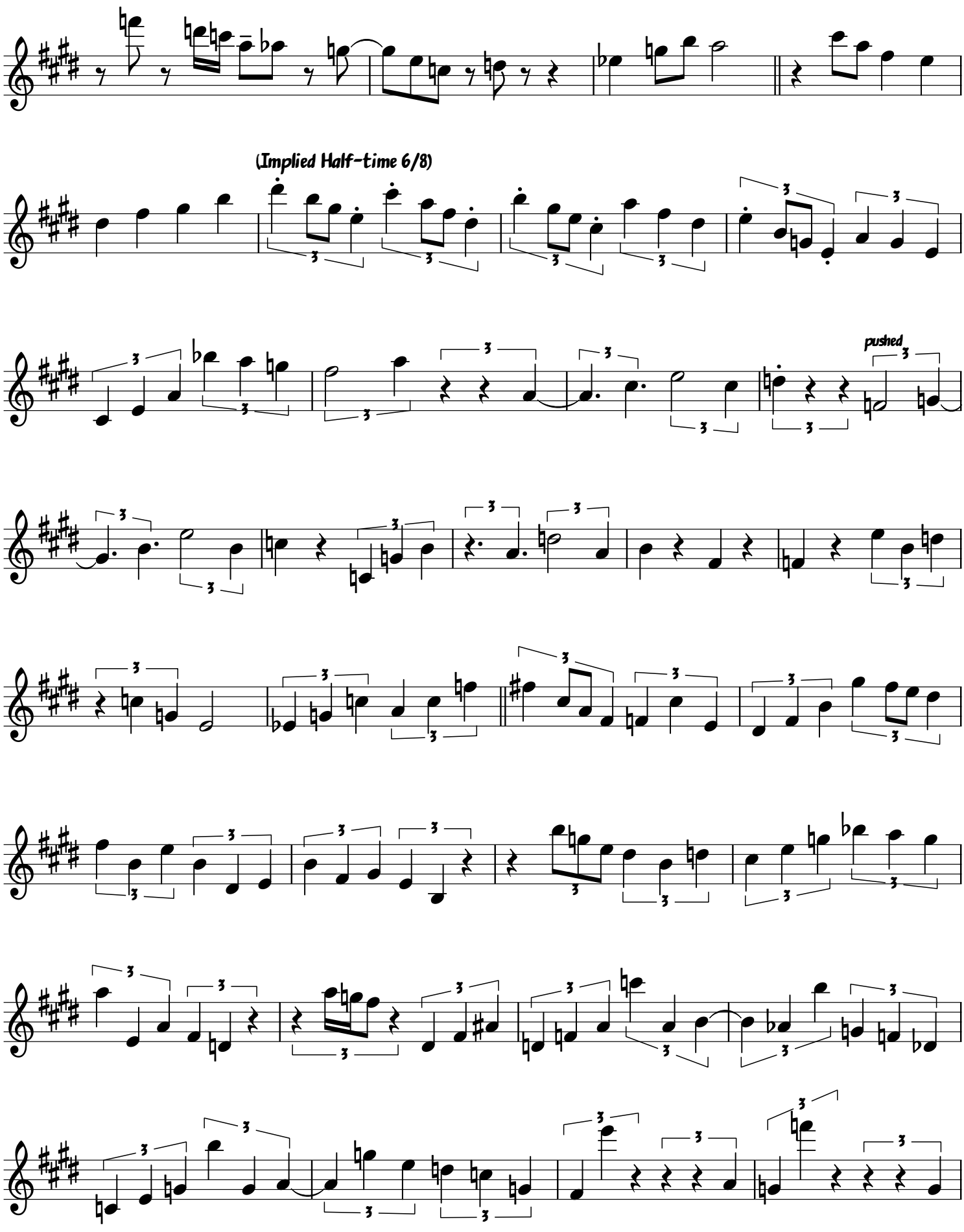
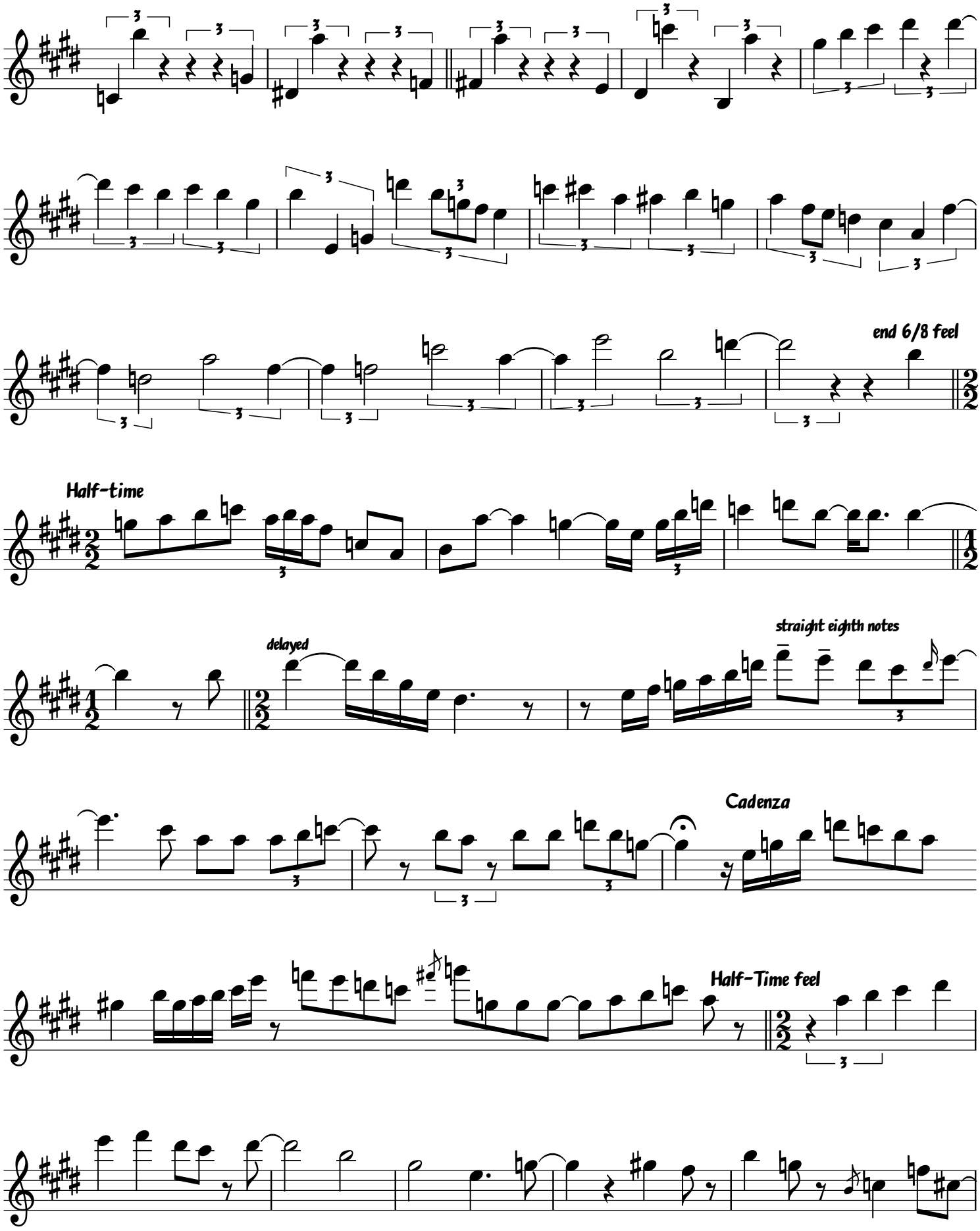
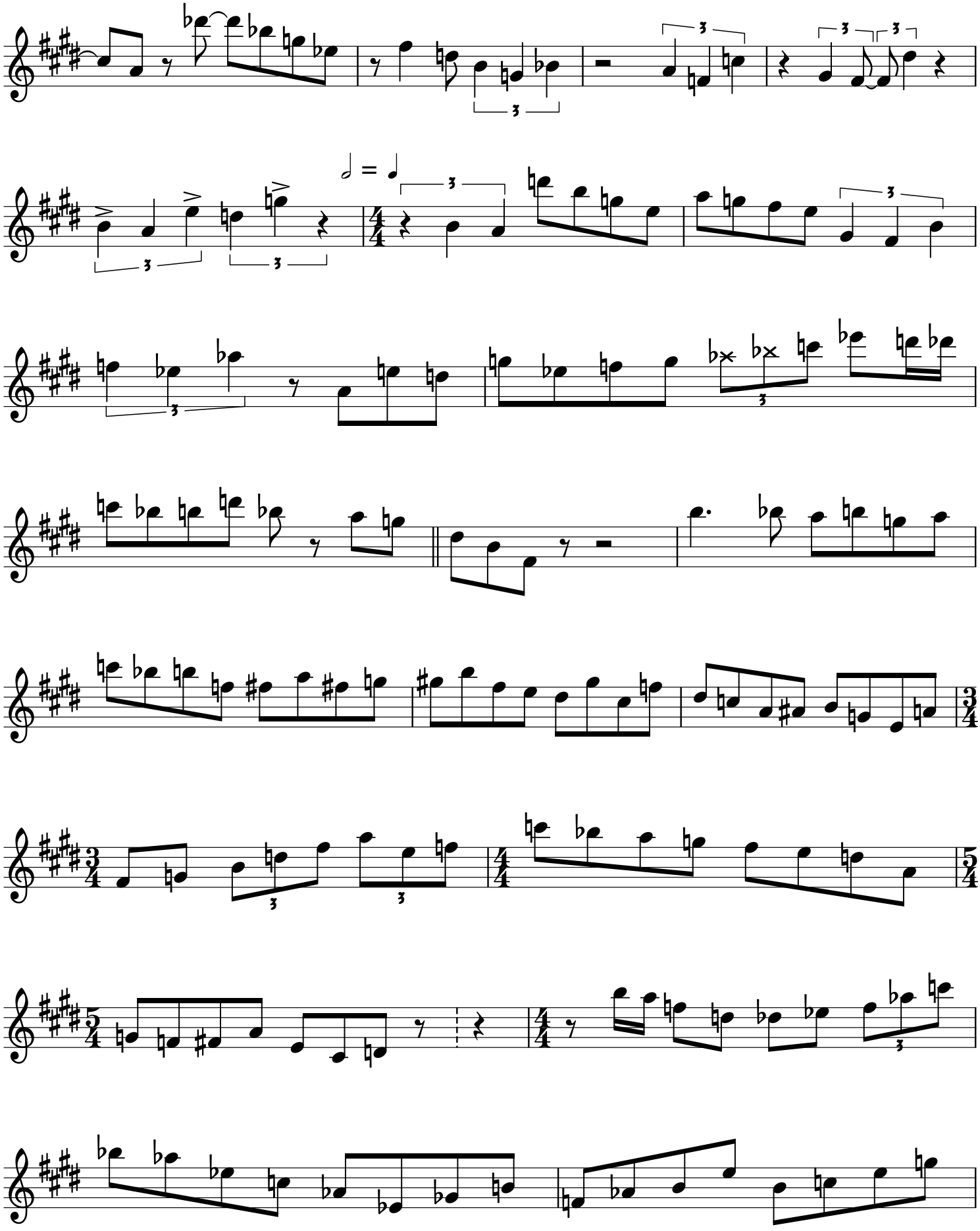
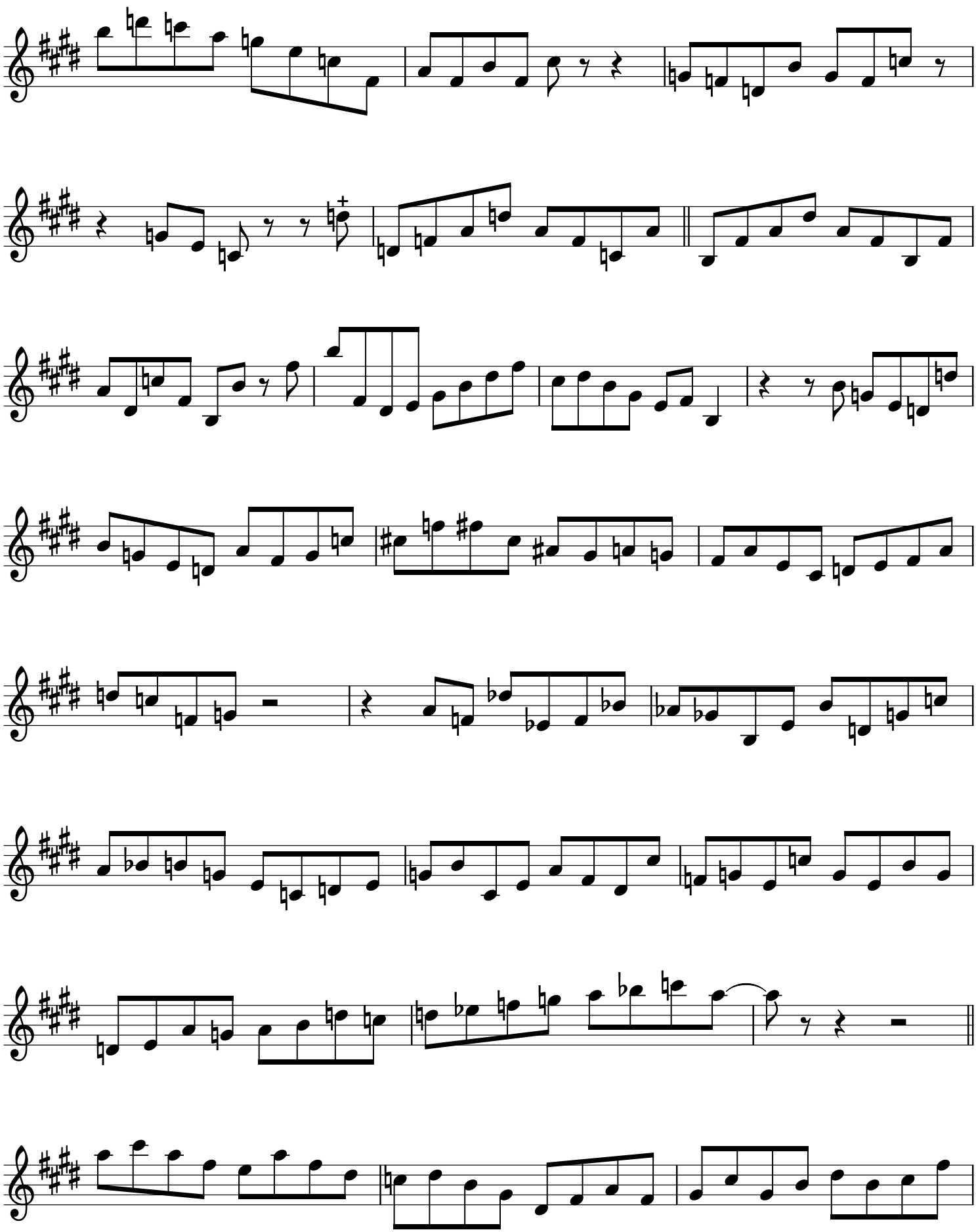


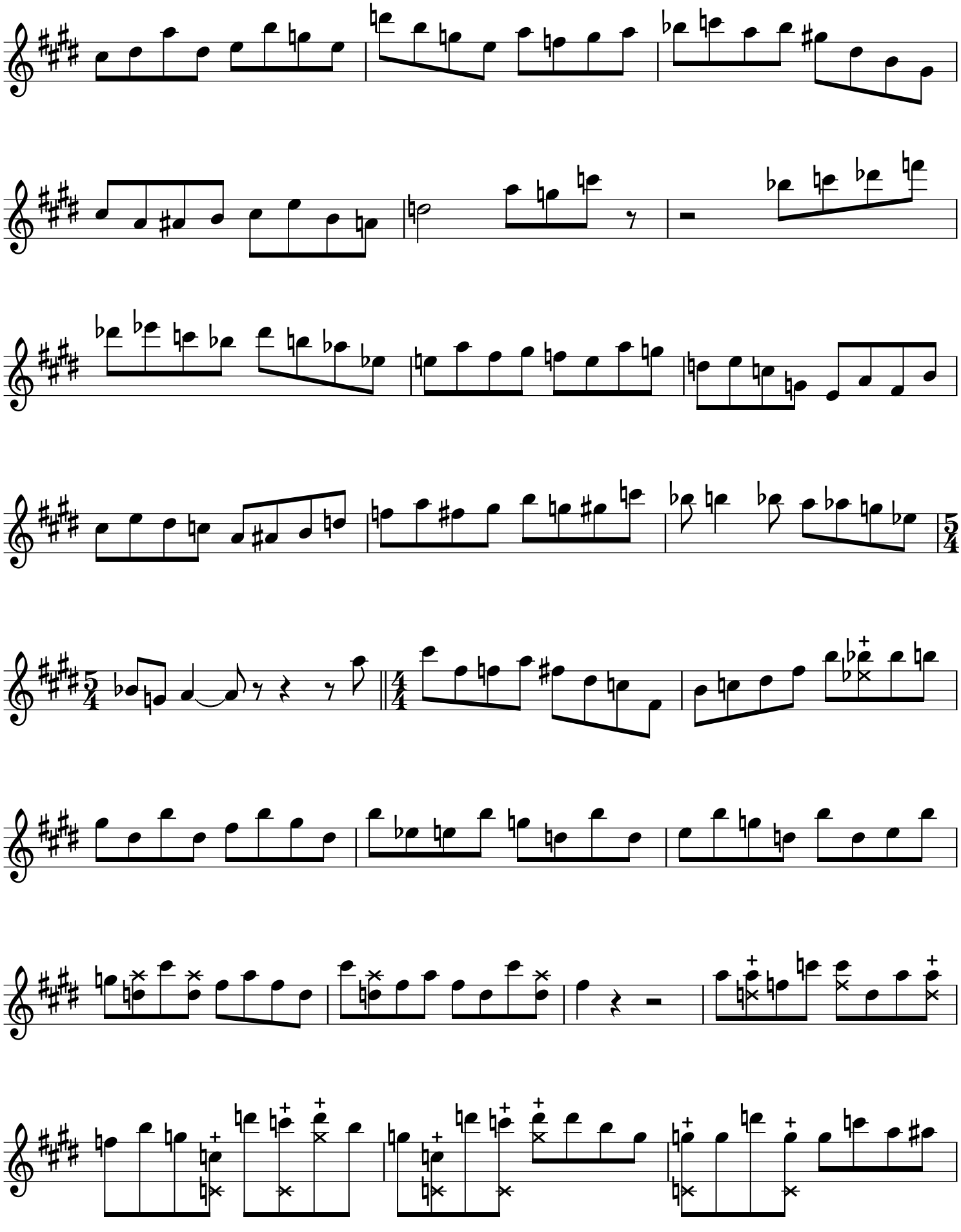

glissando like ----------

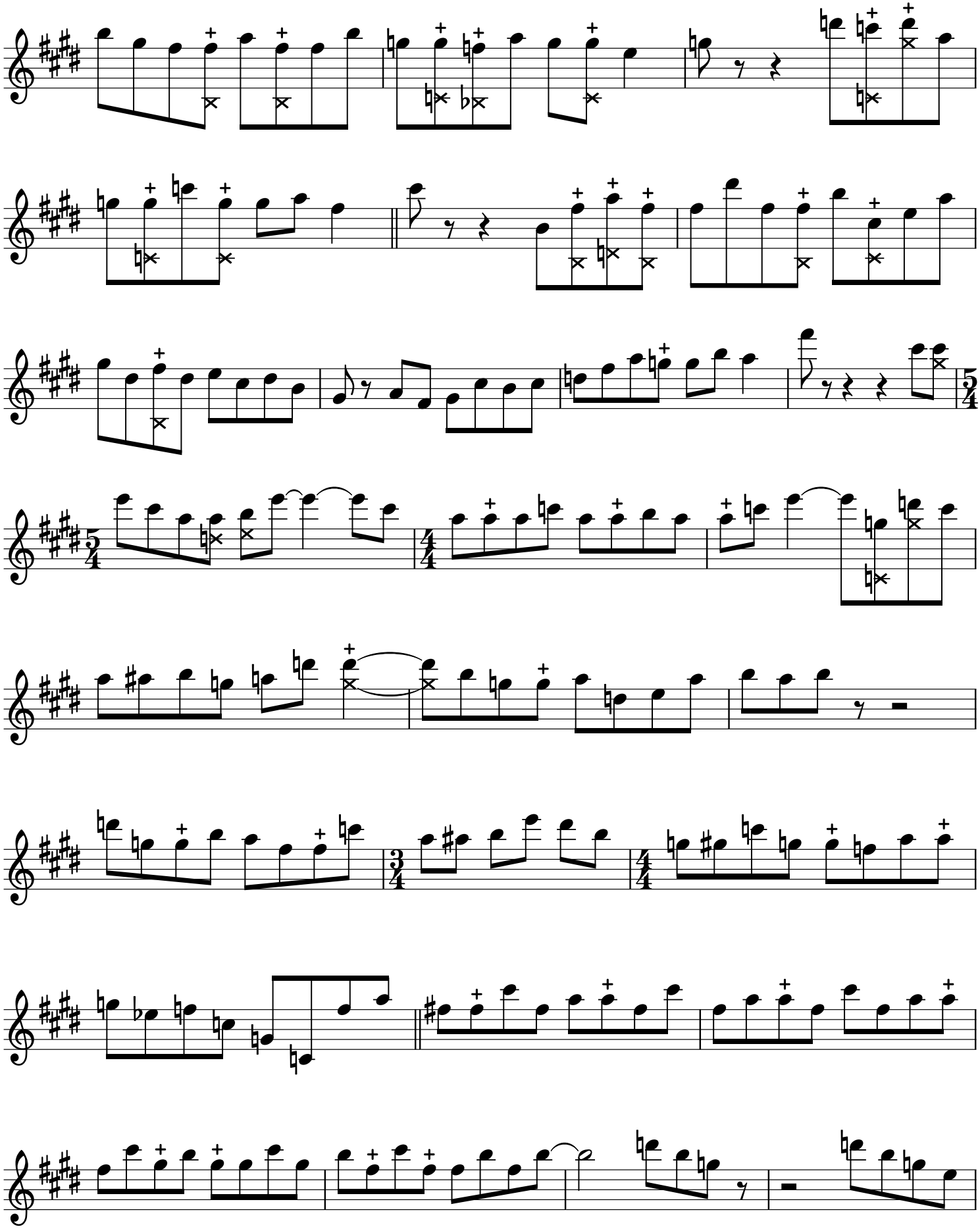

(Implied Half-time 6/8)
pushed

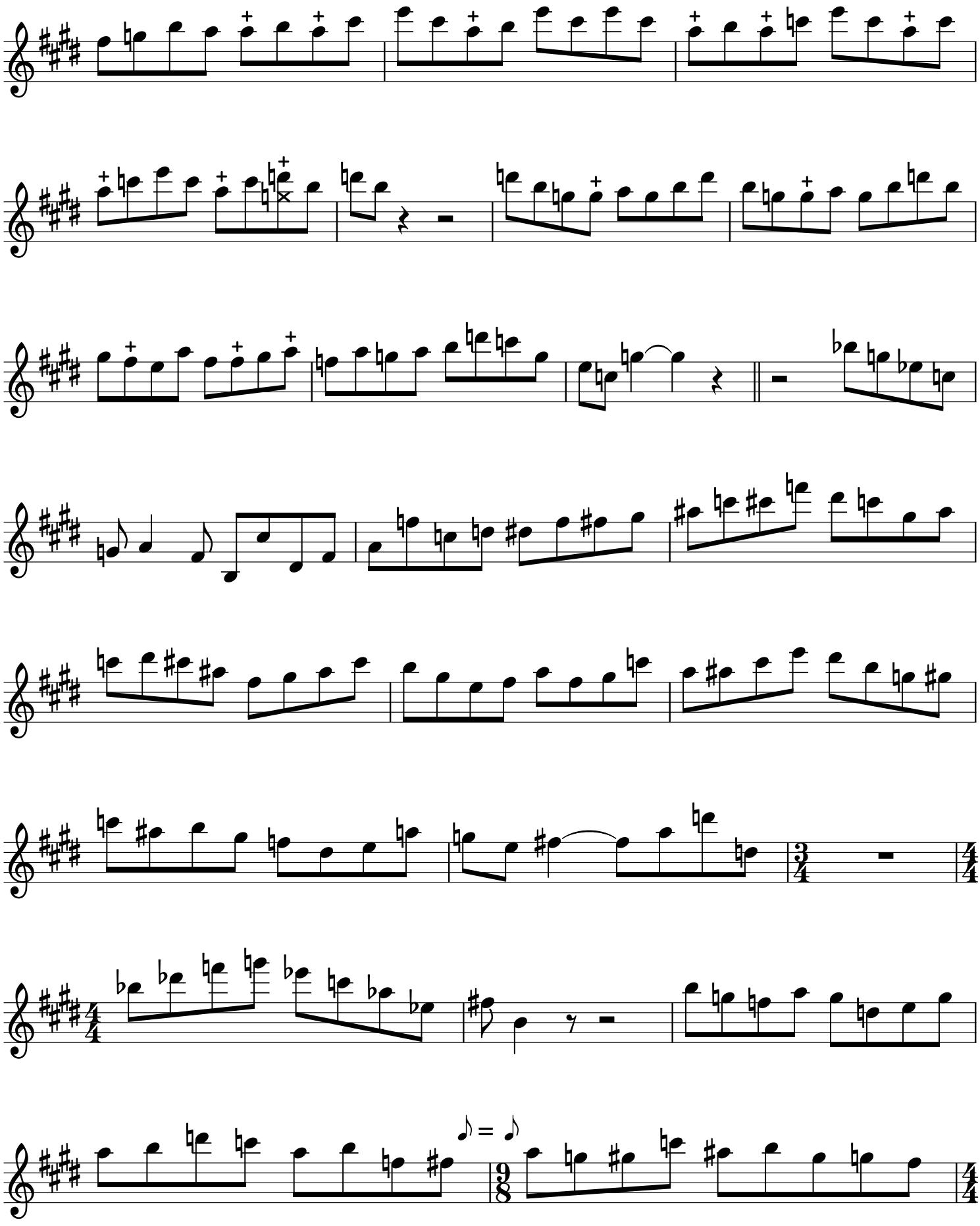

end 6/8 feel
Half-time
delayed
straight eighth notes
Cadenza
Half-Time feel

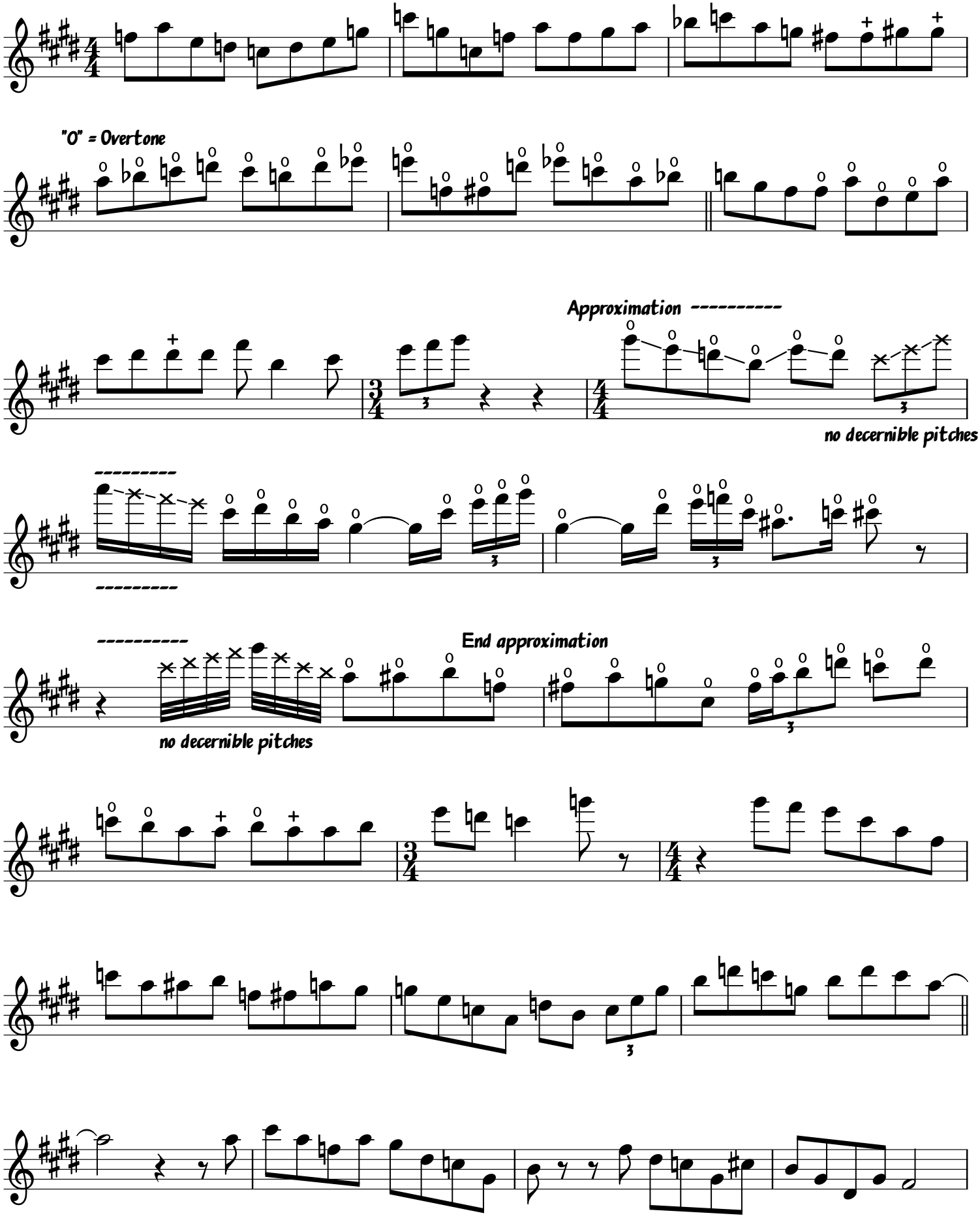




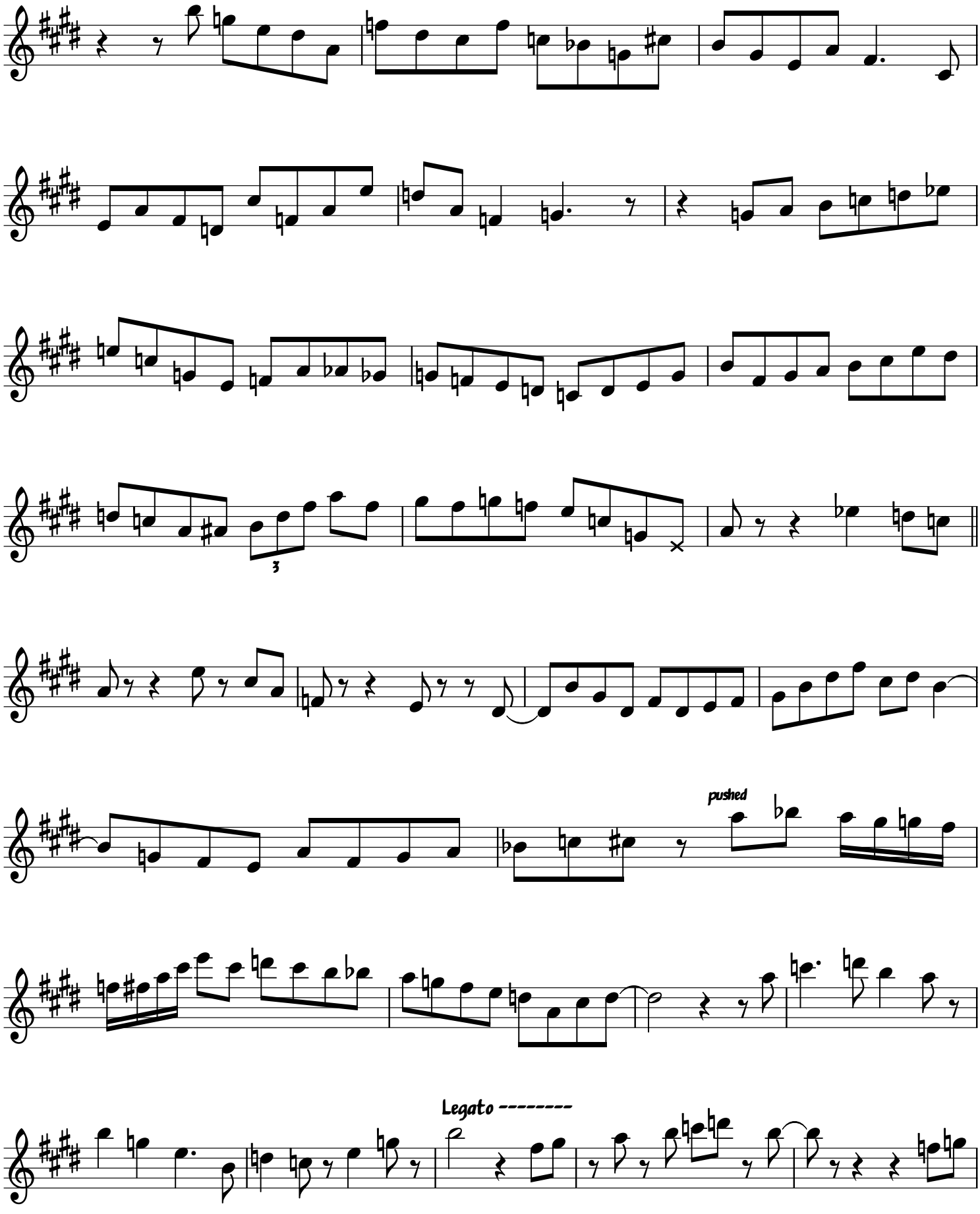


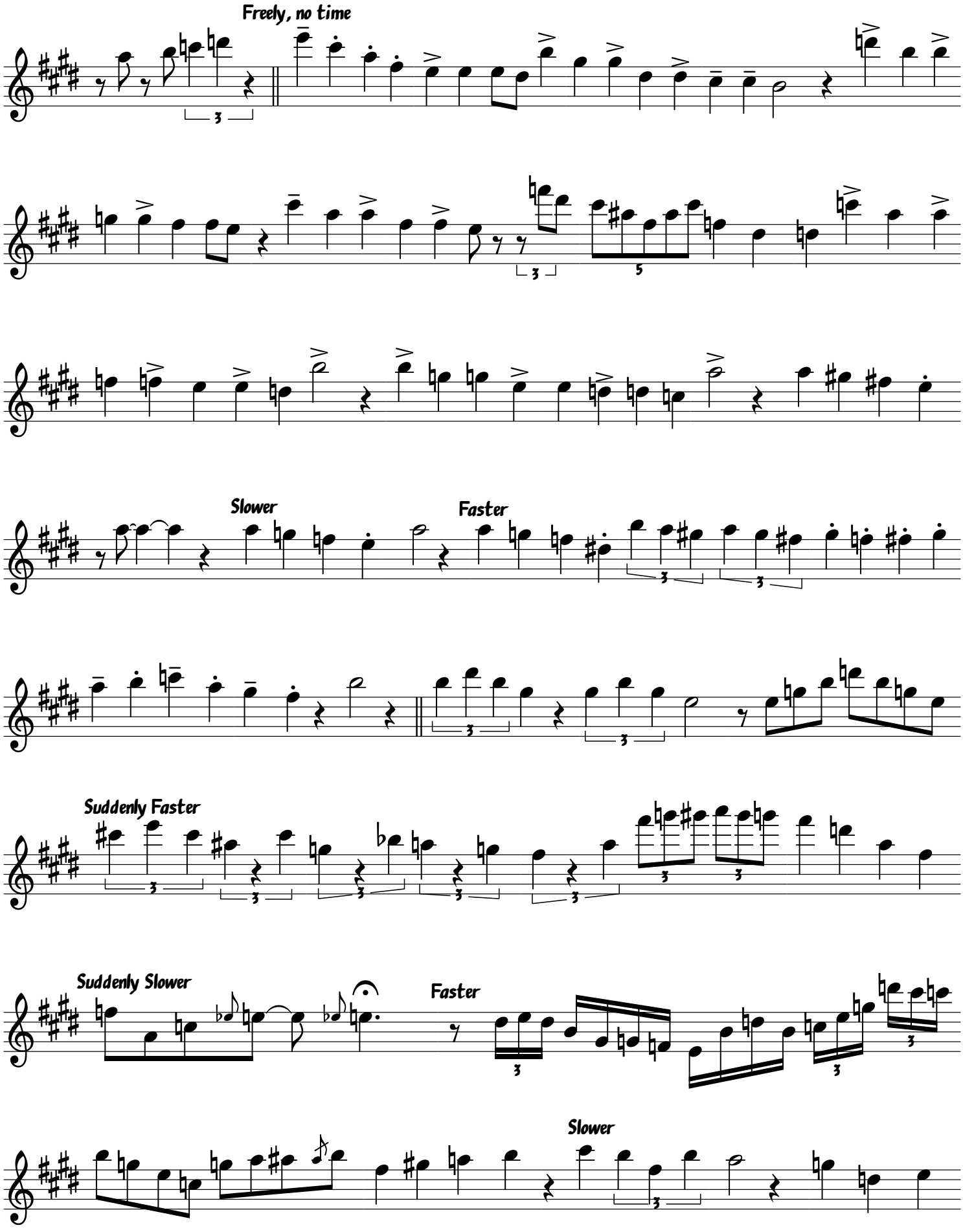


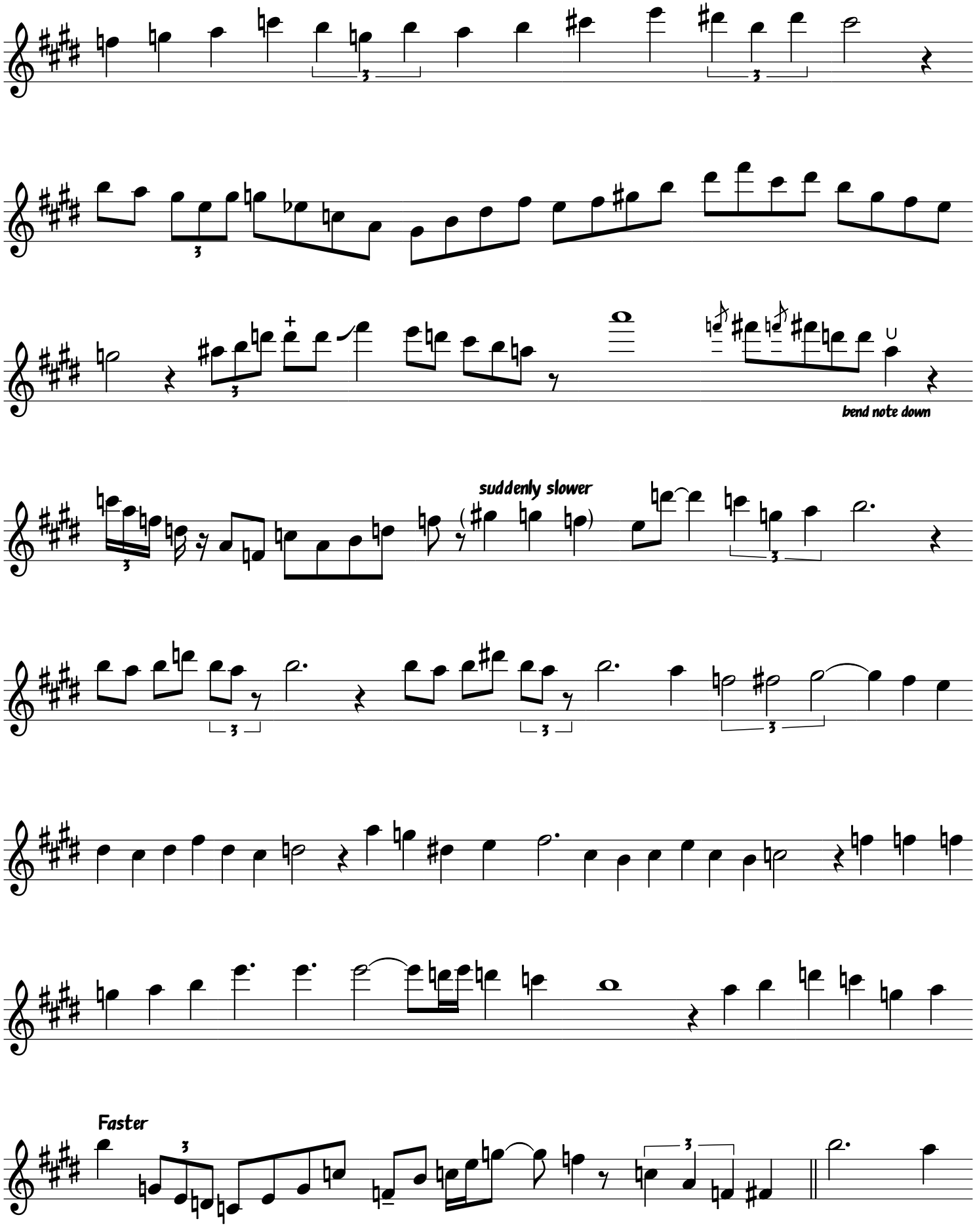


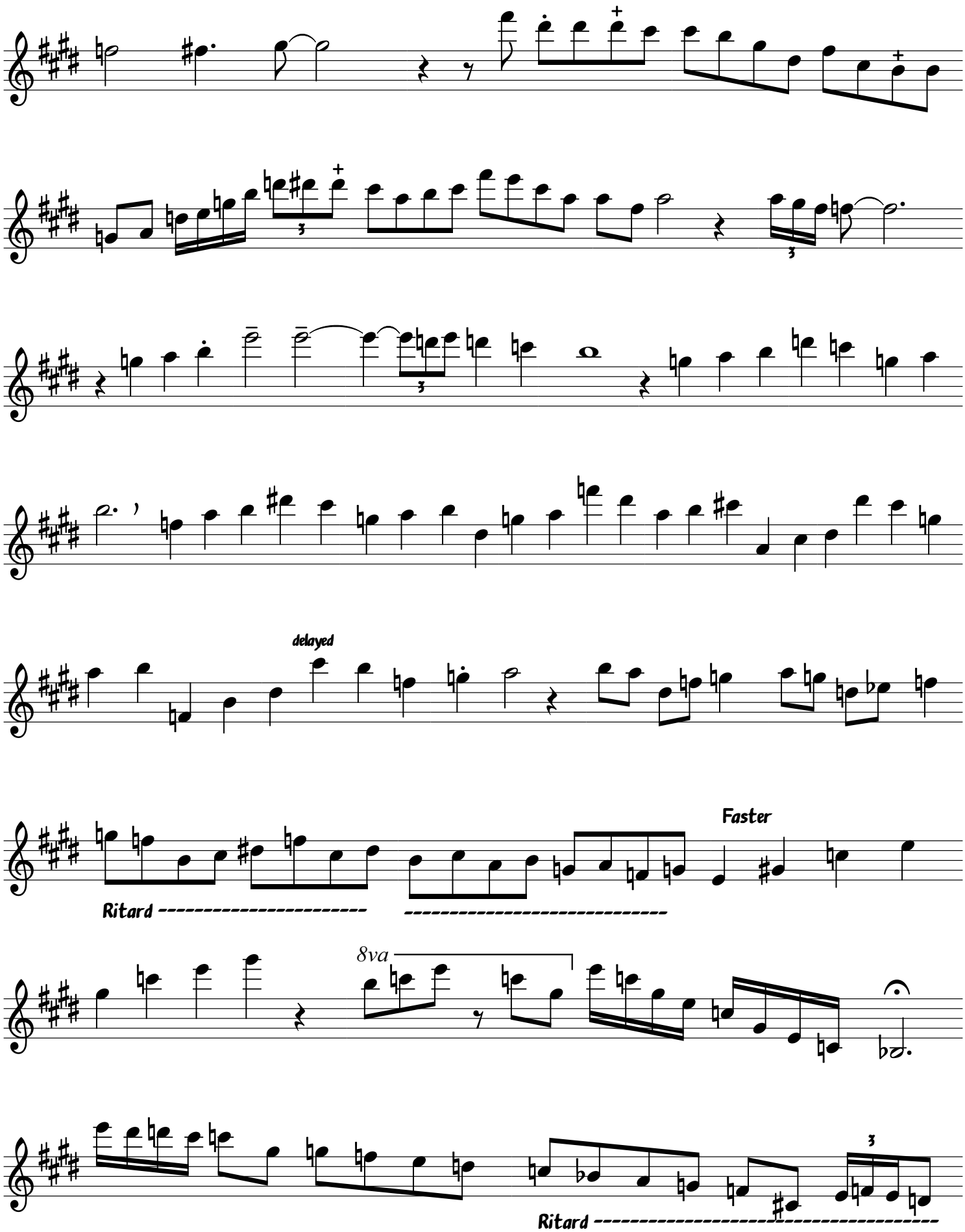

"O" = Overtone
Approximation ----------
no decernible pitches

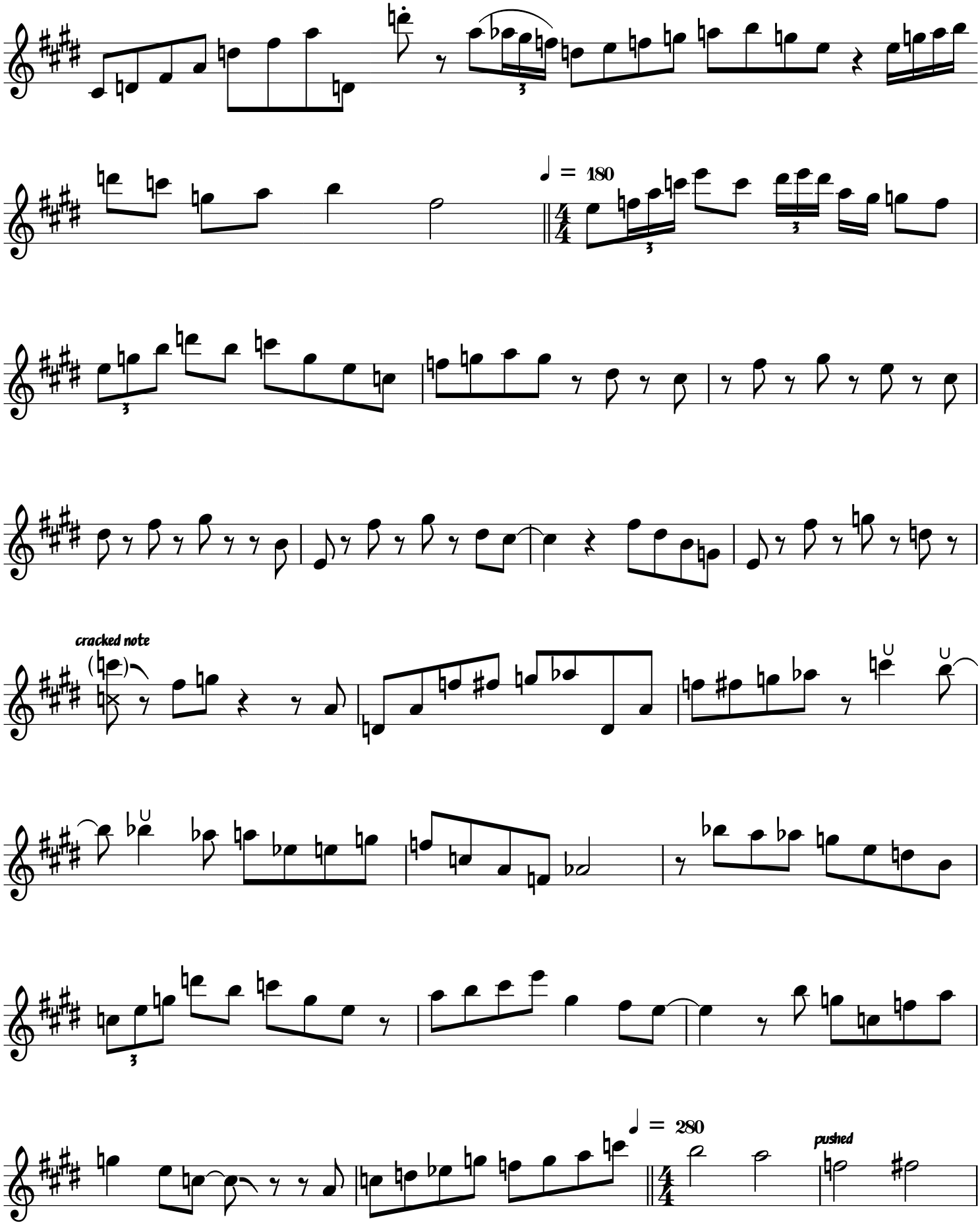
End approximation
no decernible pitches

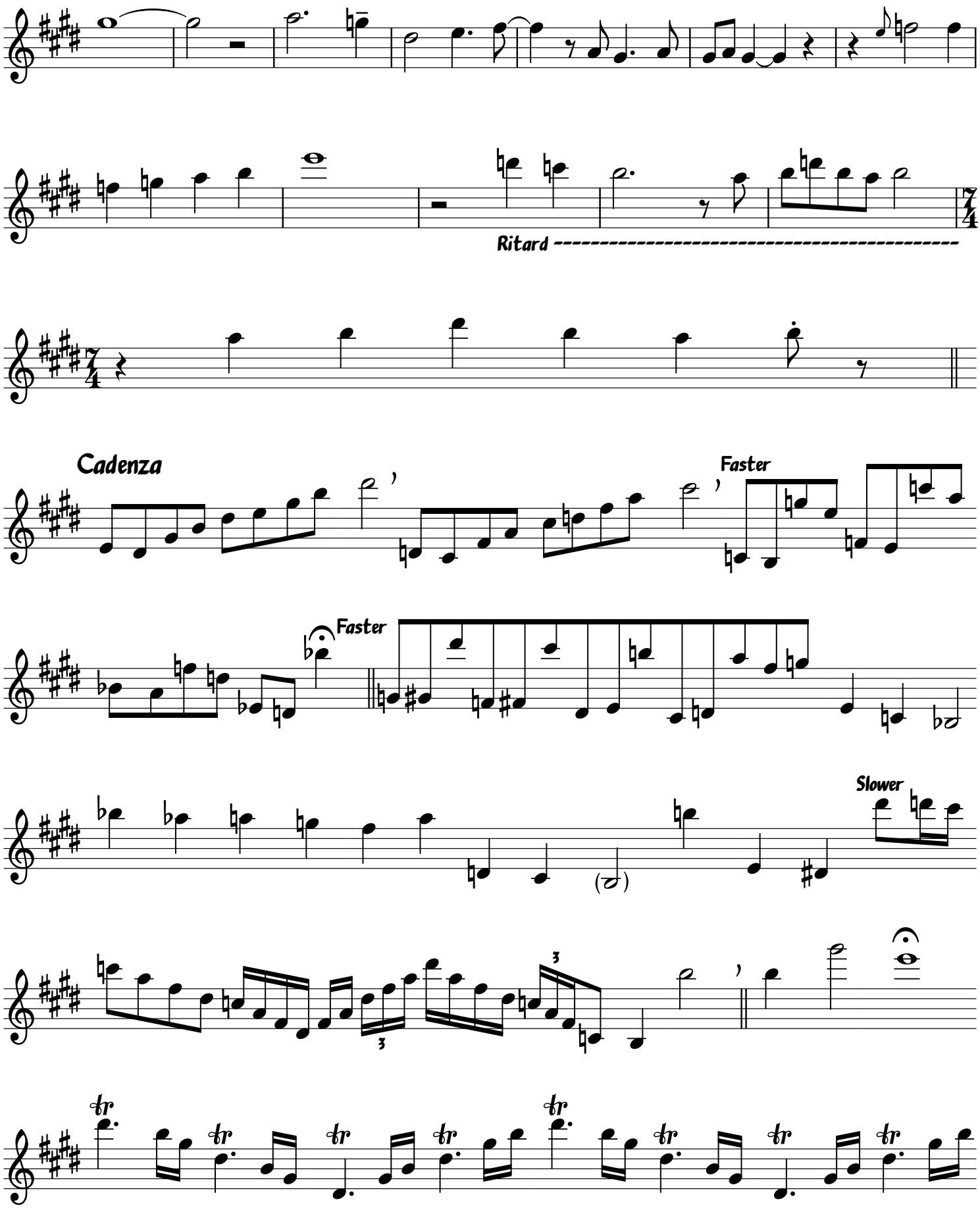

3
pushed
Legato --------

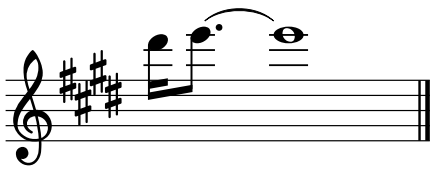
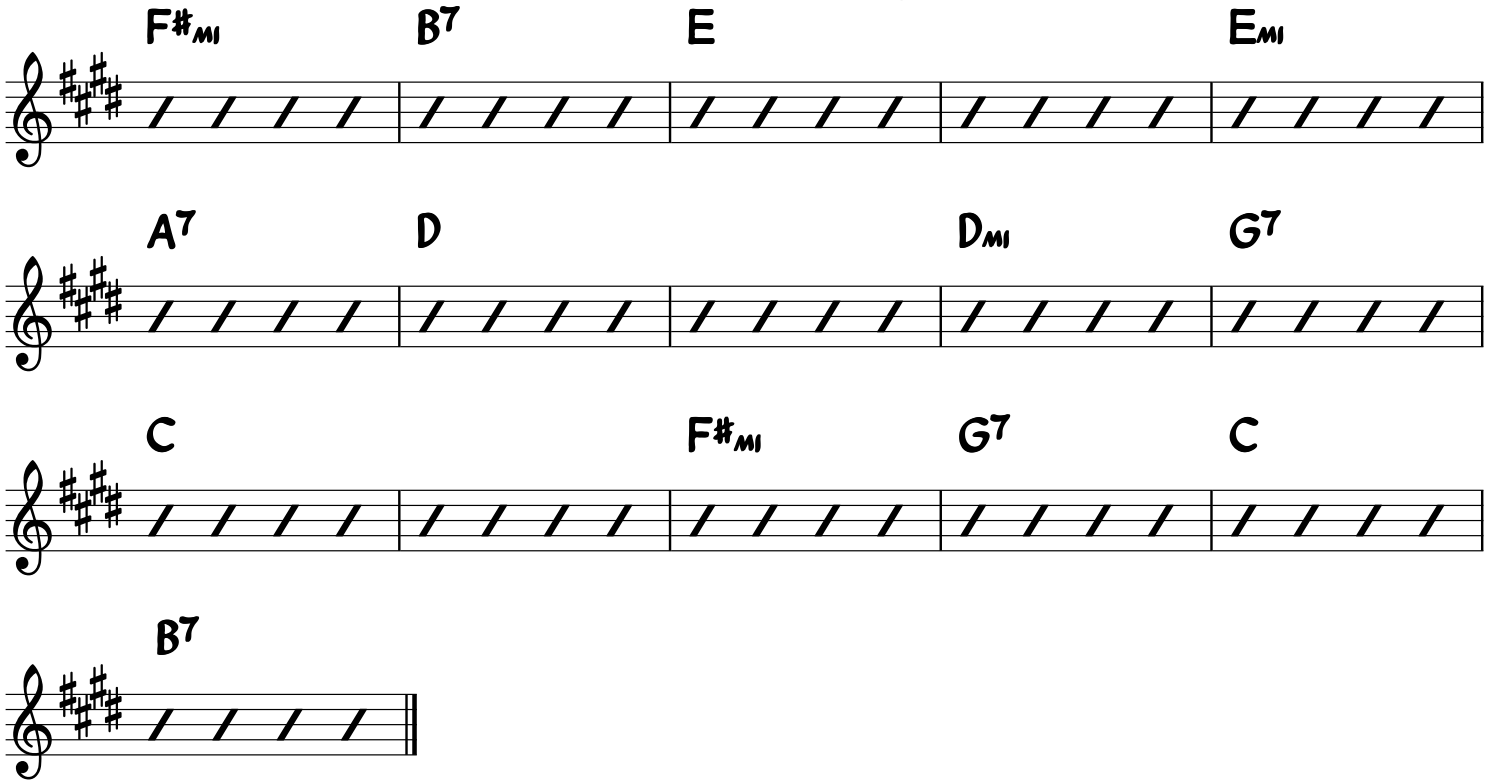

Freely, no time
Slower
Faster
Suddenly Faster
Suddenly Slower
Faster
Slower


bend note down
suddenly slower
Faster


delayed
Faster
Ritard
8va
Ritard


♩ = 180
cracked note
♩ = 280
pushed


Ritard
Cadenza
Faster
Faster
Slower



Basic Chord Changes