Intabolatura de Lauto
di
Bernardino Balletti

Libro Primo

edited
by
Gian Luca Lastraioli

TREE EDITION

Corpus of Italian Renaissance Lute Music
Volume I

Intabolatura de Lauto
di
Bernardino Balletti

Di varie sorte de balli
Novamente data in Luce

Libro Primo
in Venetia
Apresso di
Antonio Gardane
1554

edited
by
Gian Luca Lastraioli

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TREE EDITION
Albert Reyerman

Almost nothing is known about the life of the Italian lutenist and composer Bernardino Balletti. We ignore the place and date of his birth but we know that he died on August 21st 1568 in Piacenza, the city where he had probably spent most of his life. Balletti must have been a town celebrity if a document related to his funeral mentions that „almost the entire city of Piacenza mourned over his death".

The most important trace of Balletti's professional activity as composer of music for the lute is his *Intabolatura de Lauto Libro Primo* which was published in Venice by the printer Antonio Gardane in 1554. In the preface to his book the composer himself stated that he was the lute teacher of Count Honorio Scotto, a member of one of the most influential families of Piacenza. To Count Scotto, of whom Balletti considered himself a *servidor* („servant"), the composer dedicated his book.

Balletti's *Intabolatura* is meant to be played on a six course lute and is notated in Italian tablature. For this edition, which I based on the copy of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek of Vienna, I have transcribed the original Italian into French tablature.

Balletti's book contains fourteen pieces: with the exception of a short *Toccata,* all of them are dance settings. (Given the composer's family name – Balletti in Italian translates as „dances" – this is hardly surprising).

Each piece of the *Intabolatura* is normally treated according to the usual scheme of „theme and divisions" which is typical of the lute music of the period. The themes treated by Balletti are the familiar ones of the Italian Renaissance: *La Favorita* (i.e. *Romanesca*), *La Gamba, La Rocca e il Fuso, Ciel Turchino, La Moretta, Il Sgazotto* (i.e. *Bergamasca*) etc. All together, the fourteen pieces of the *Intabolatura* virtually constitute a practical treatise on how to write (or, even better, on how to improvise) divisions for the lute in the Italian Cinquecento style. In their structural simplicity, Balletti's dances are examples of high quality lute music: they are always neatly written even though not always easy to play.

None of the pieces of the *Intabolatura* bear any meter or time signature (like C or 3 or similar). I have decided not to add any editorial meter indication in order to preserve the metrical ambiguity of Balletti's dances, continuously switching, as they do, from double to triple meter. Choosing the accents to be stressed in any given bar should therefore become one of the most interesting aspects to consider for the modern lutenist who plays Balletti's music.

Original bar lines and rhythmic values have been preserved.

Gardane's edition of Balletti's *Intabolatura* was remarkably accurate and, in my opinion, there are only a few „mistakes" in the whole book. A complete list of all the bars which I editorially corrected can be found at the end of this edition. I decided to transcribe the „original bars" into French tablature in order to give the reader the immediate possibility to compare them with the „corrected versions". Needless to say that the „originals" were actually written in Italian tablature.

I hope this edition will encourage more reserach about the life of Bernardino Balletti.

Gian Luca Lastraioli
Florence, Italy
September 2002

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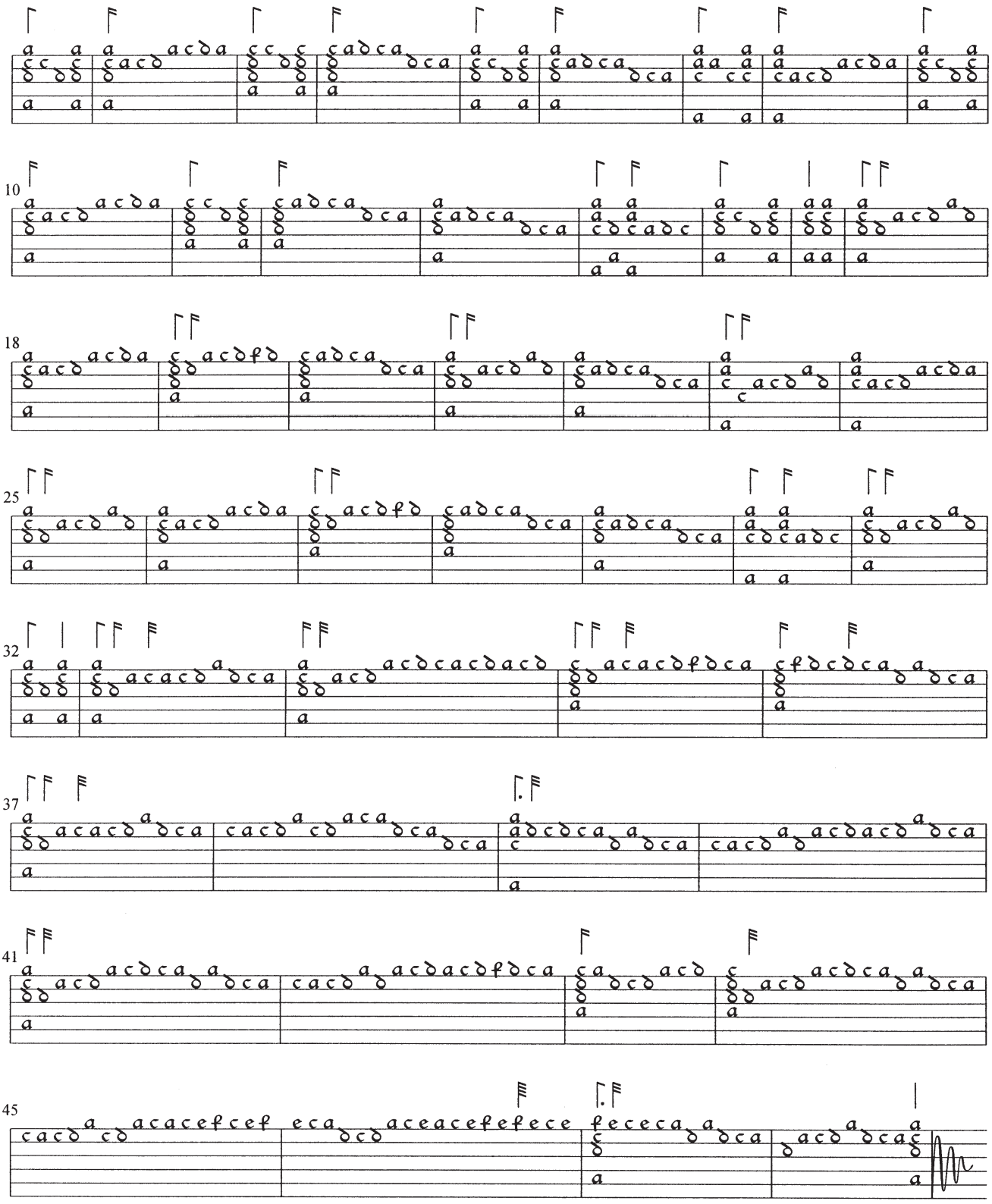

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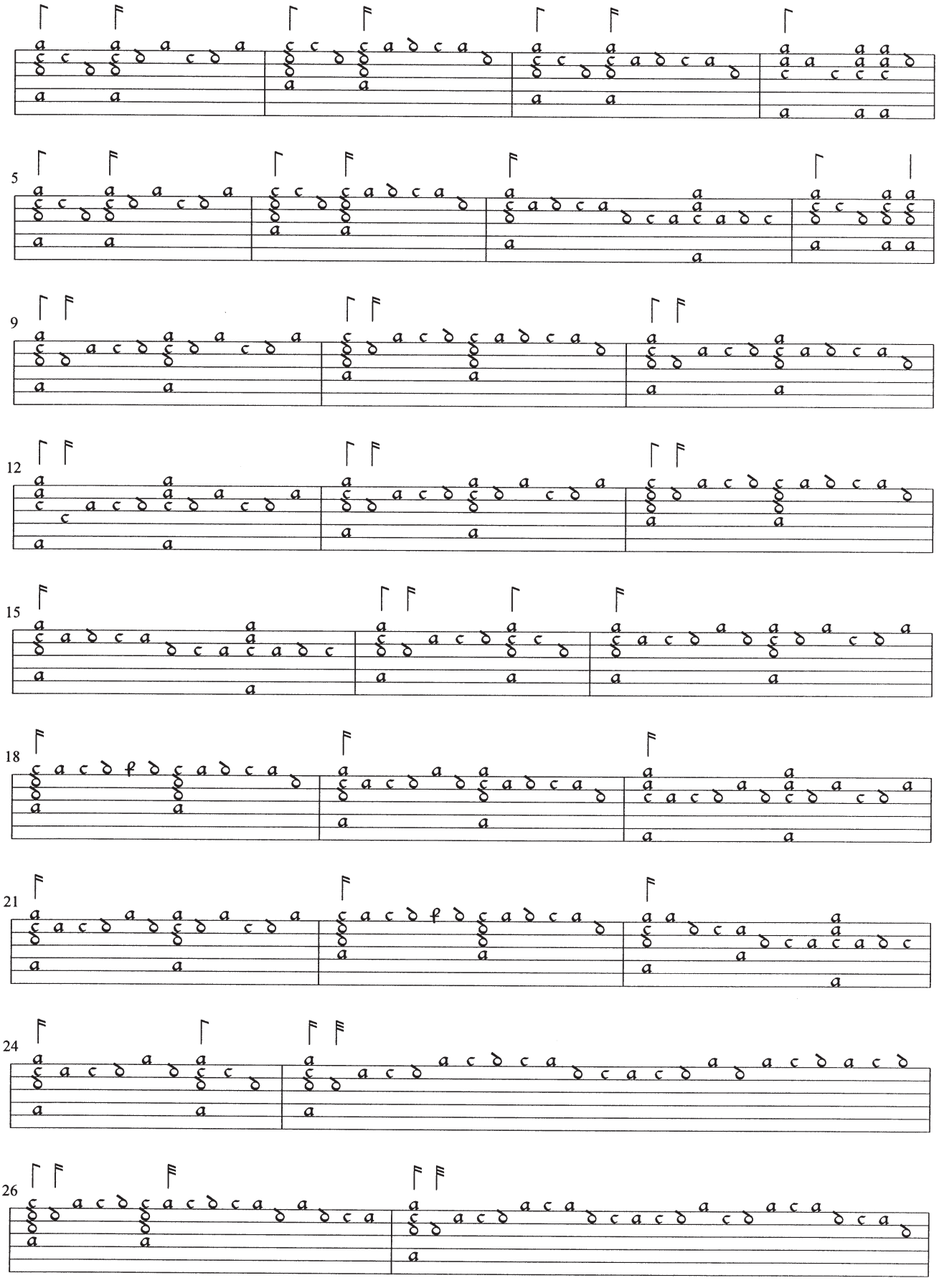

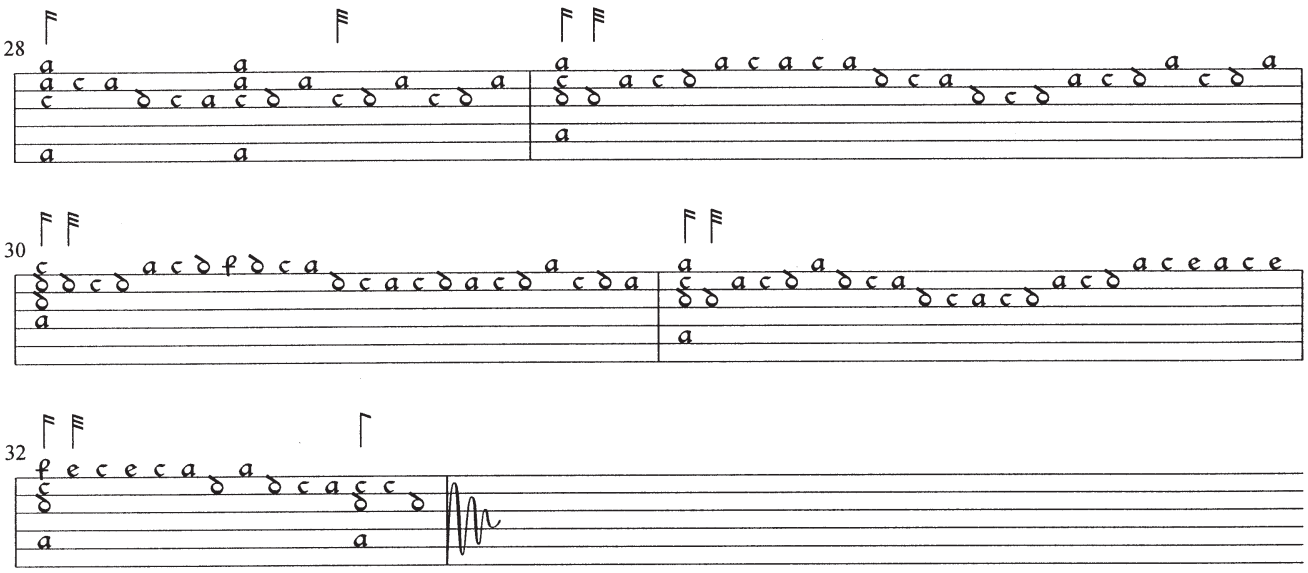
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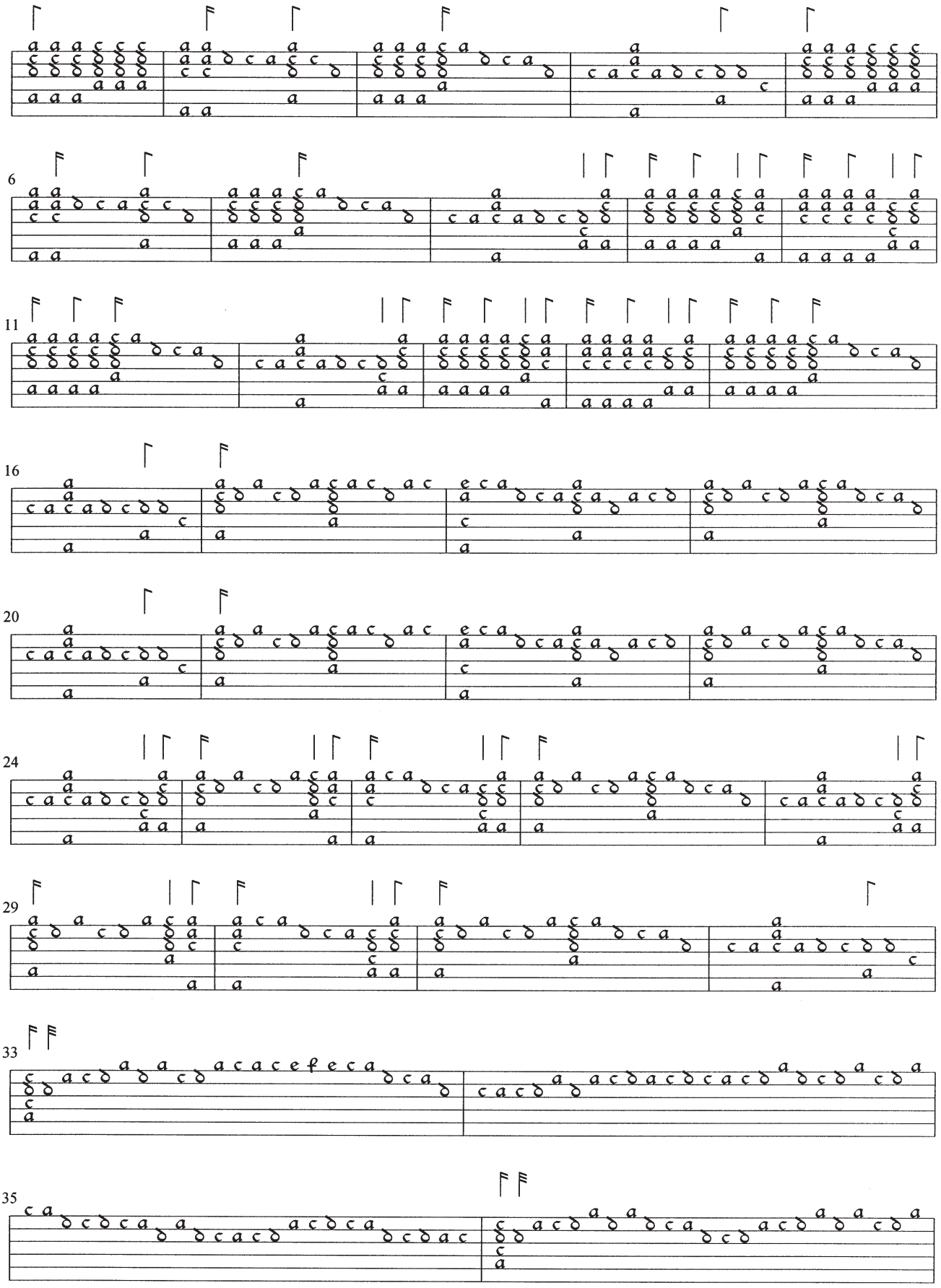

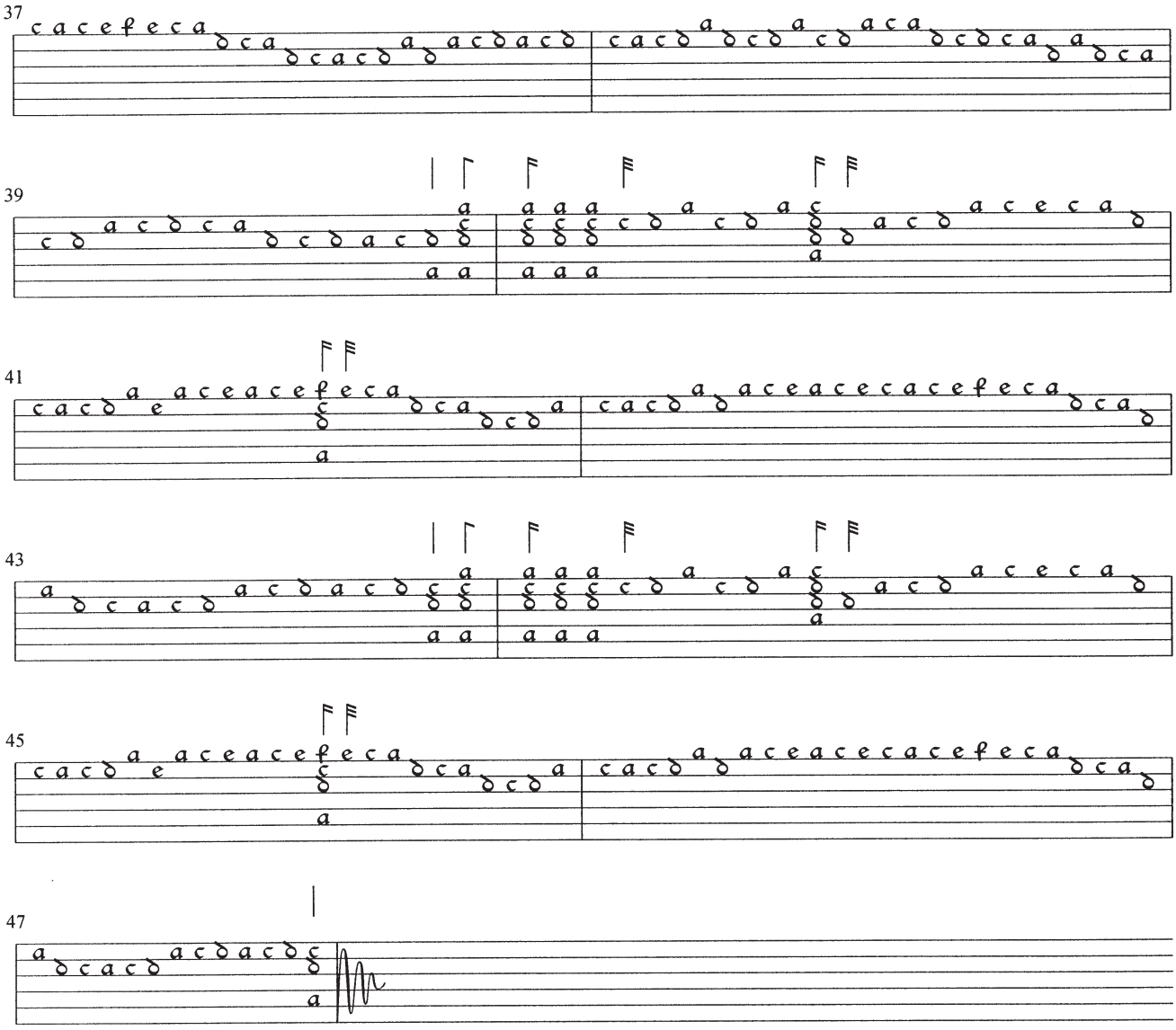
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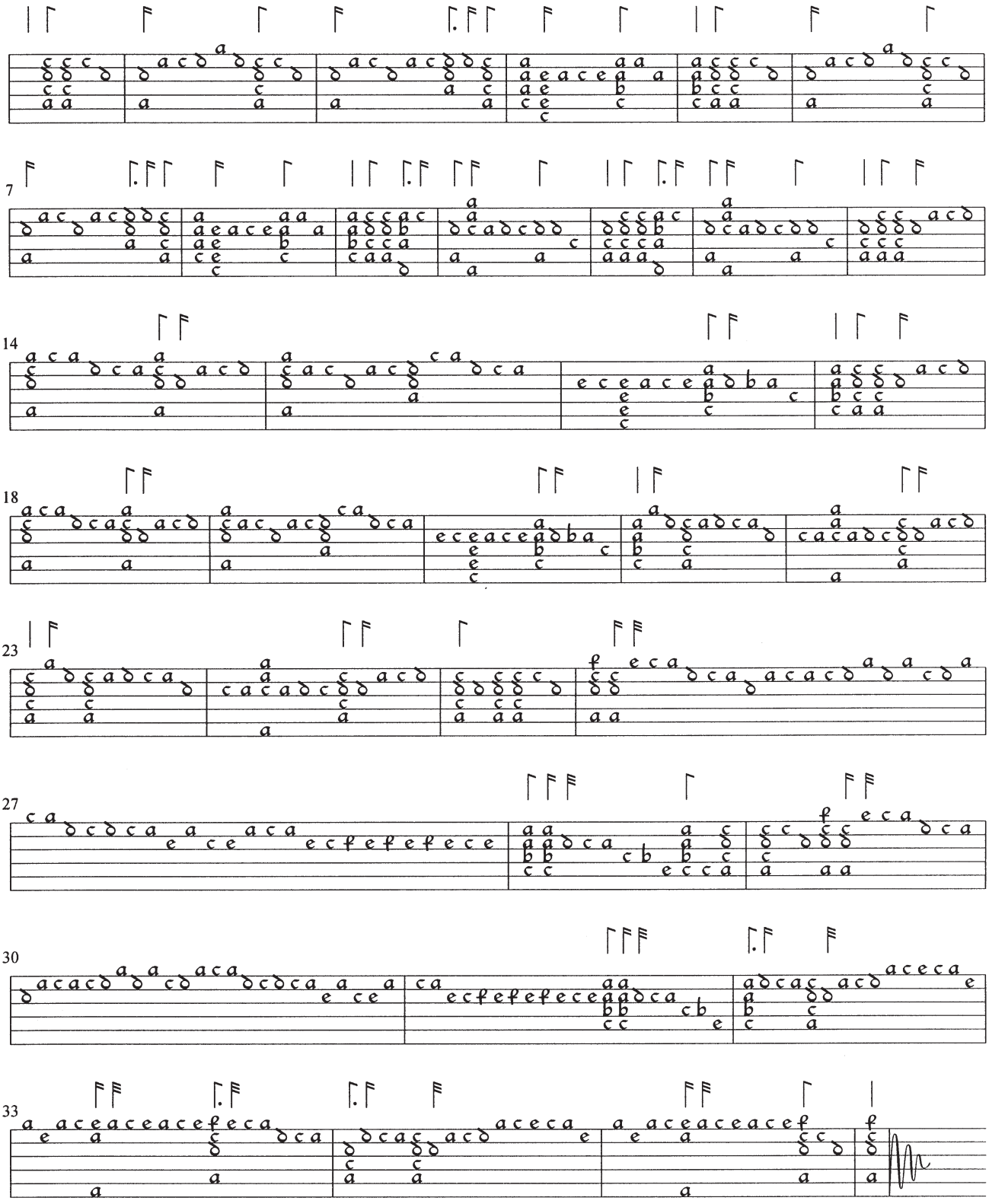
4. Non ti partir da me



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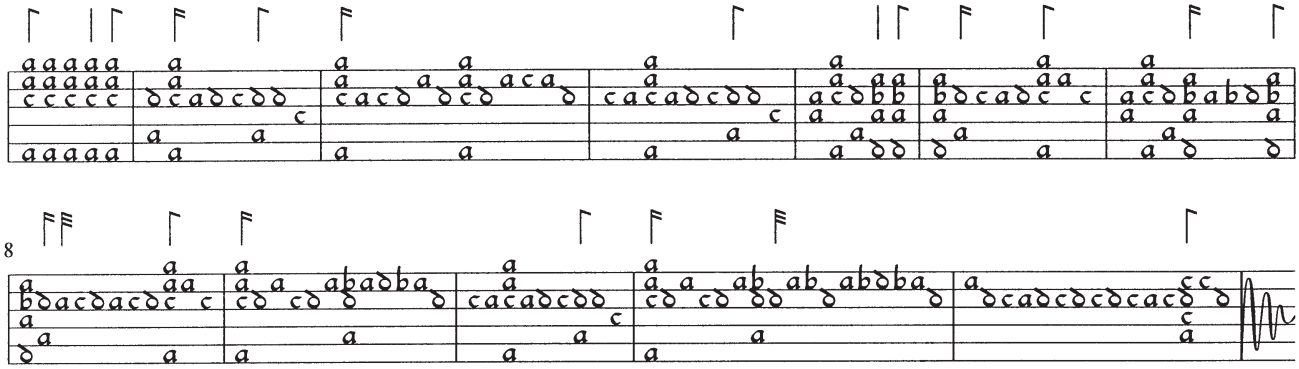

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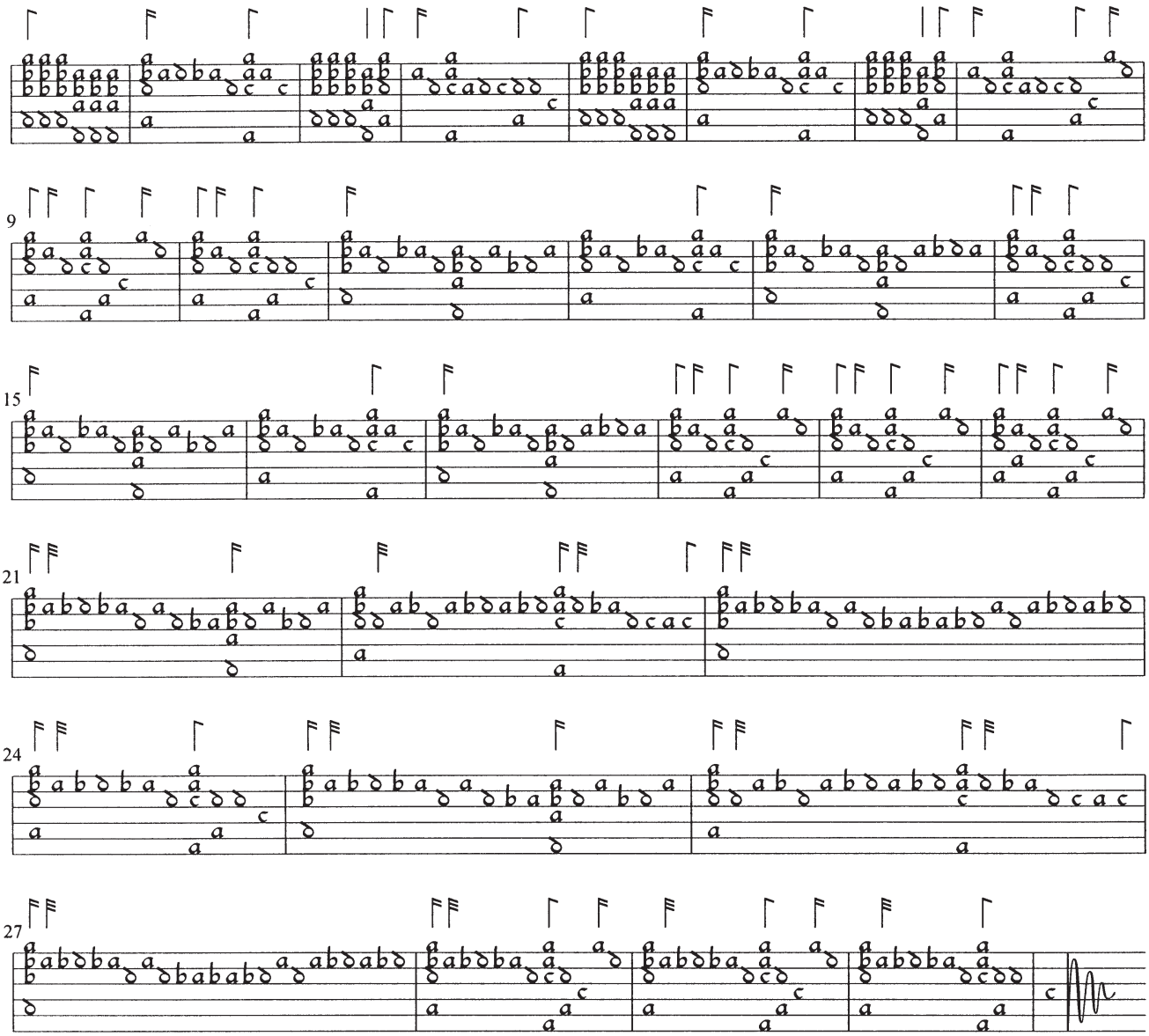

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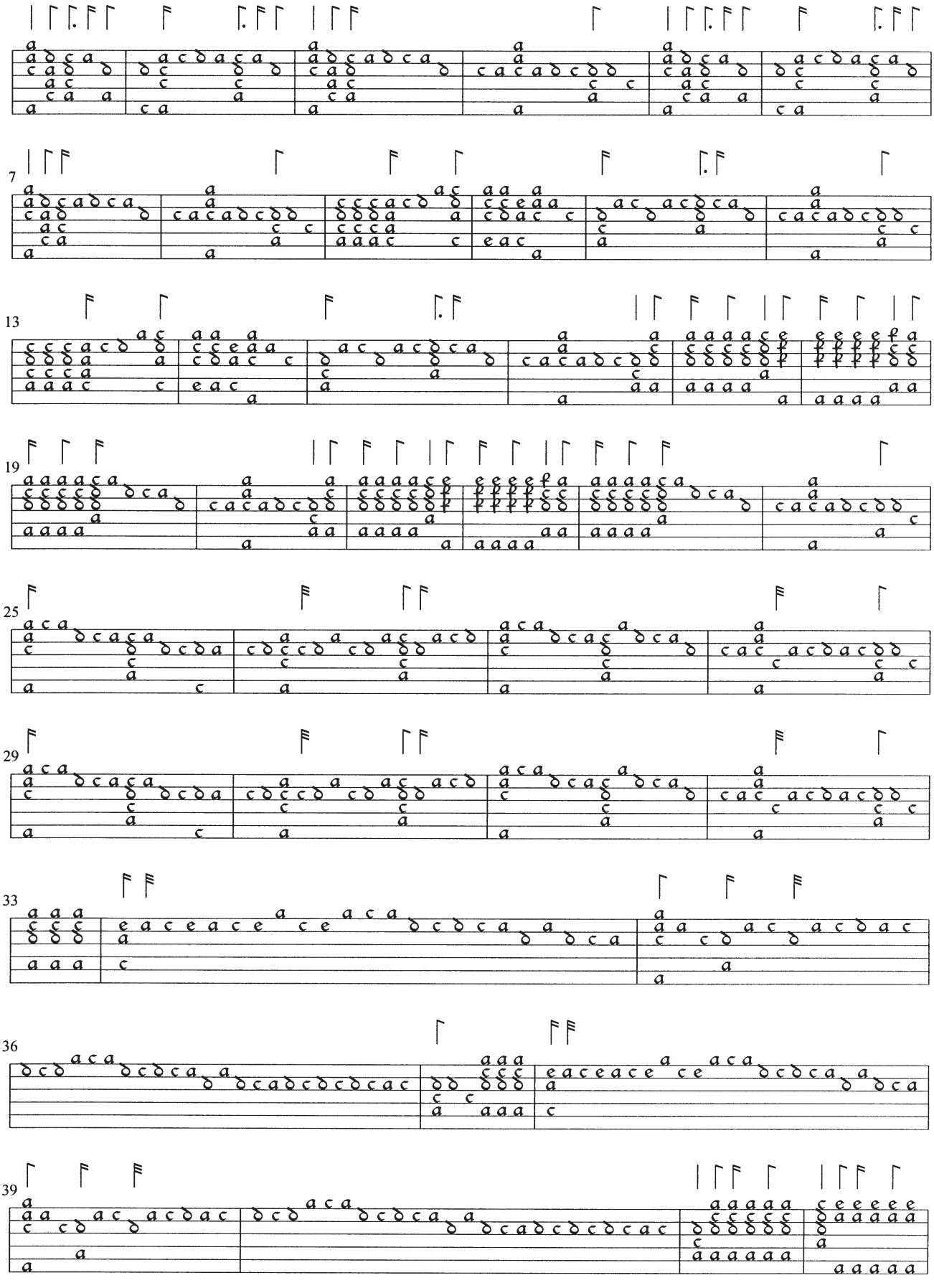

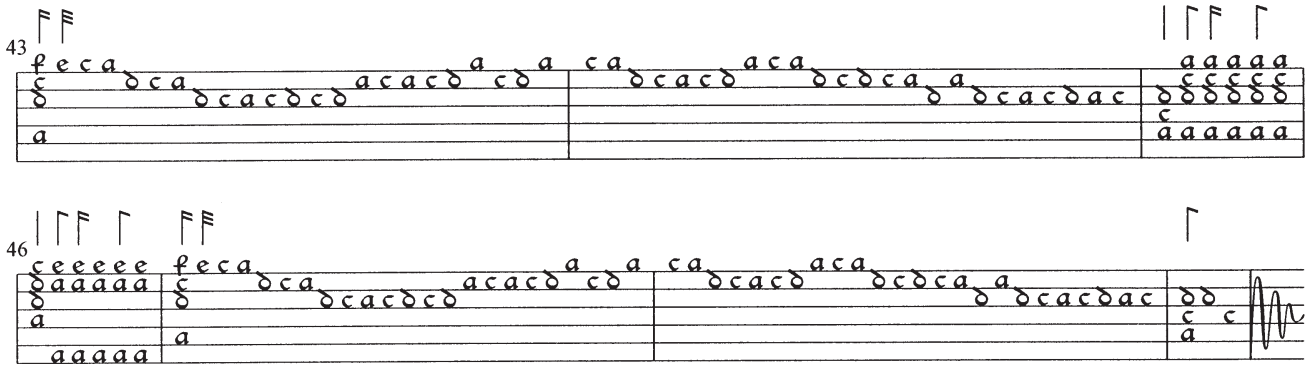
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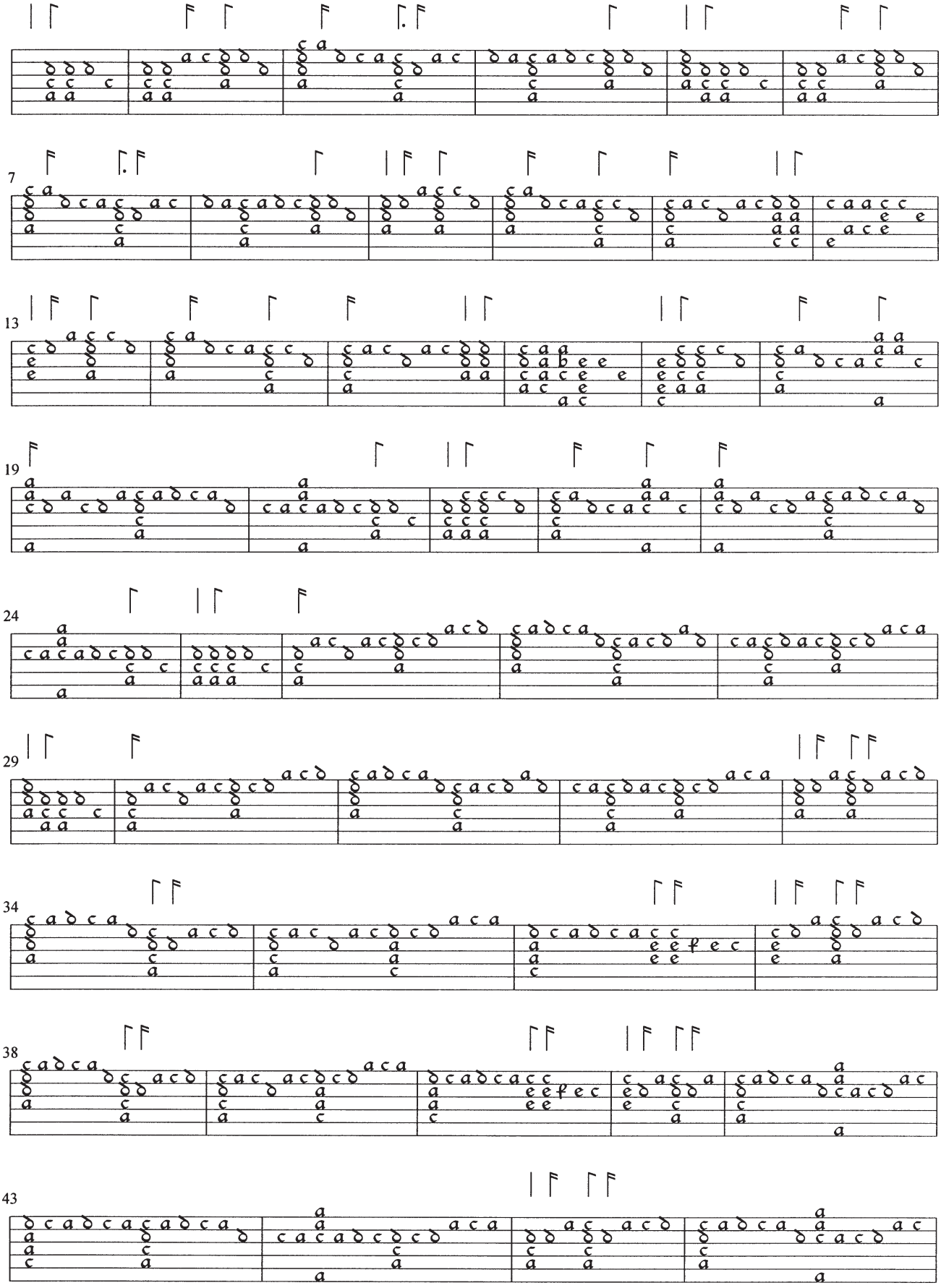

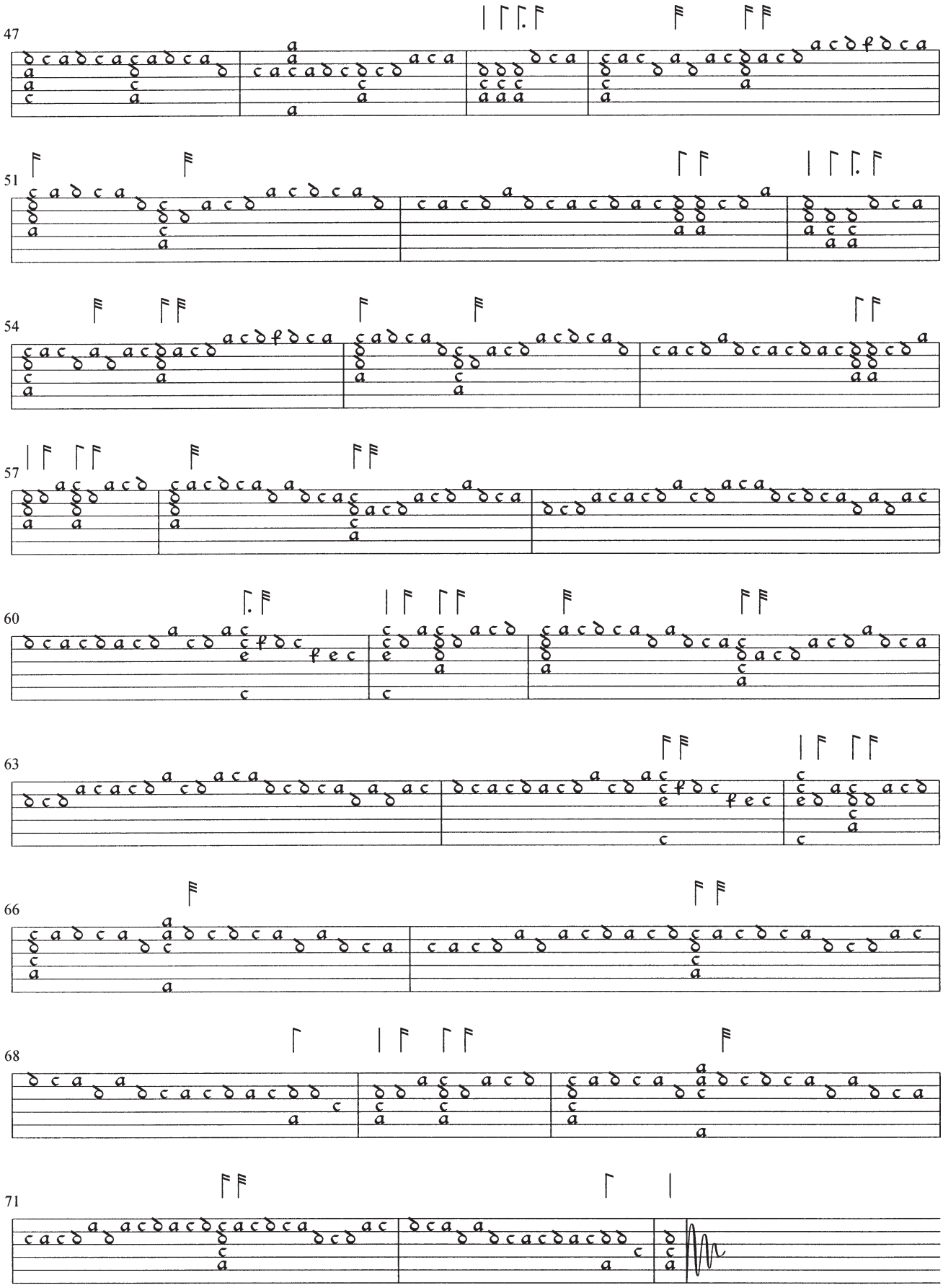

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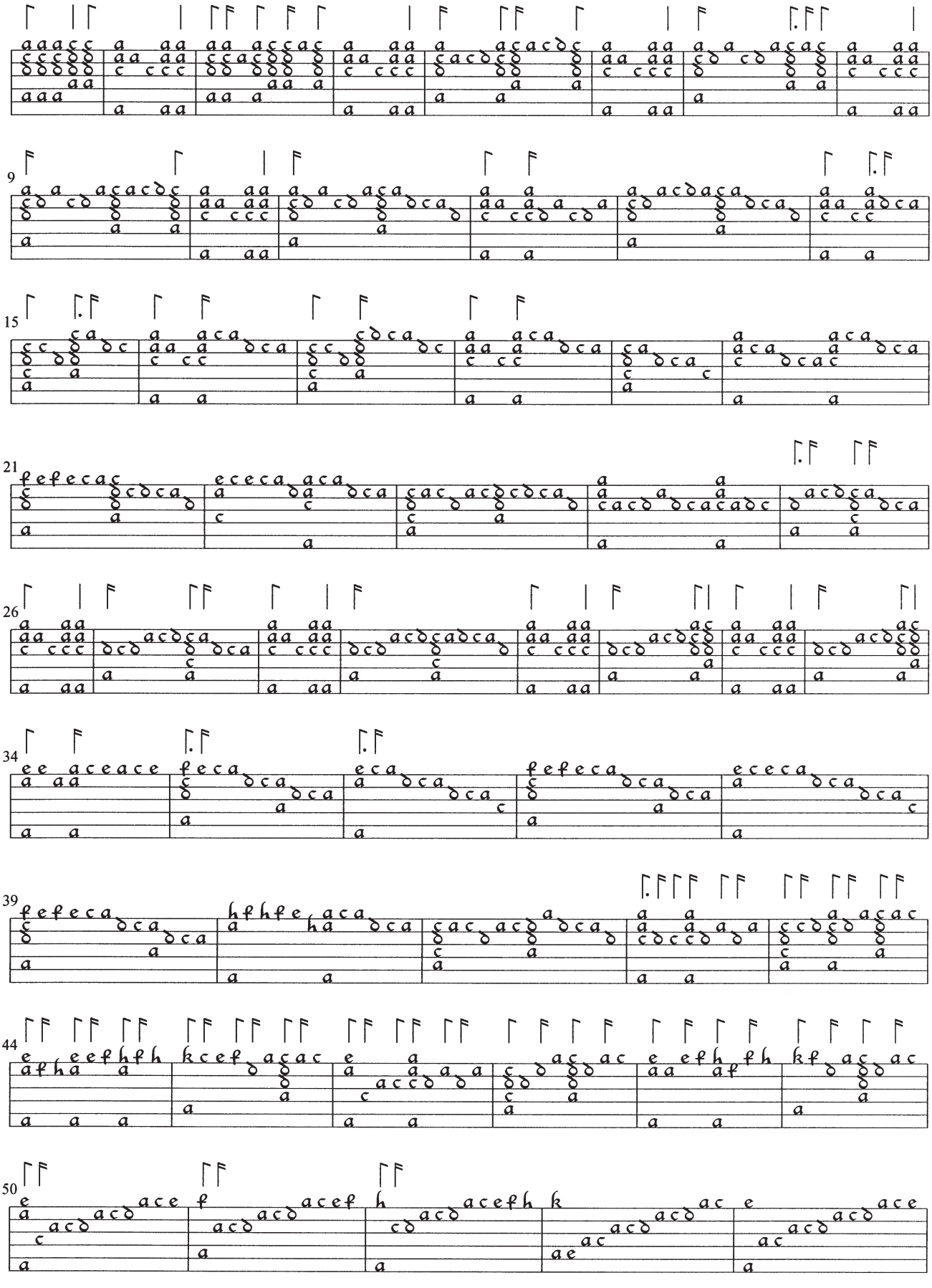

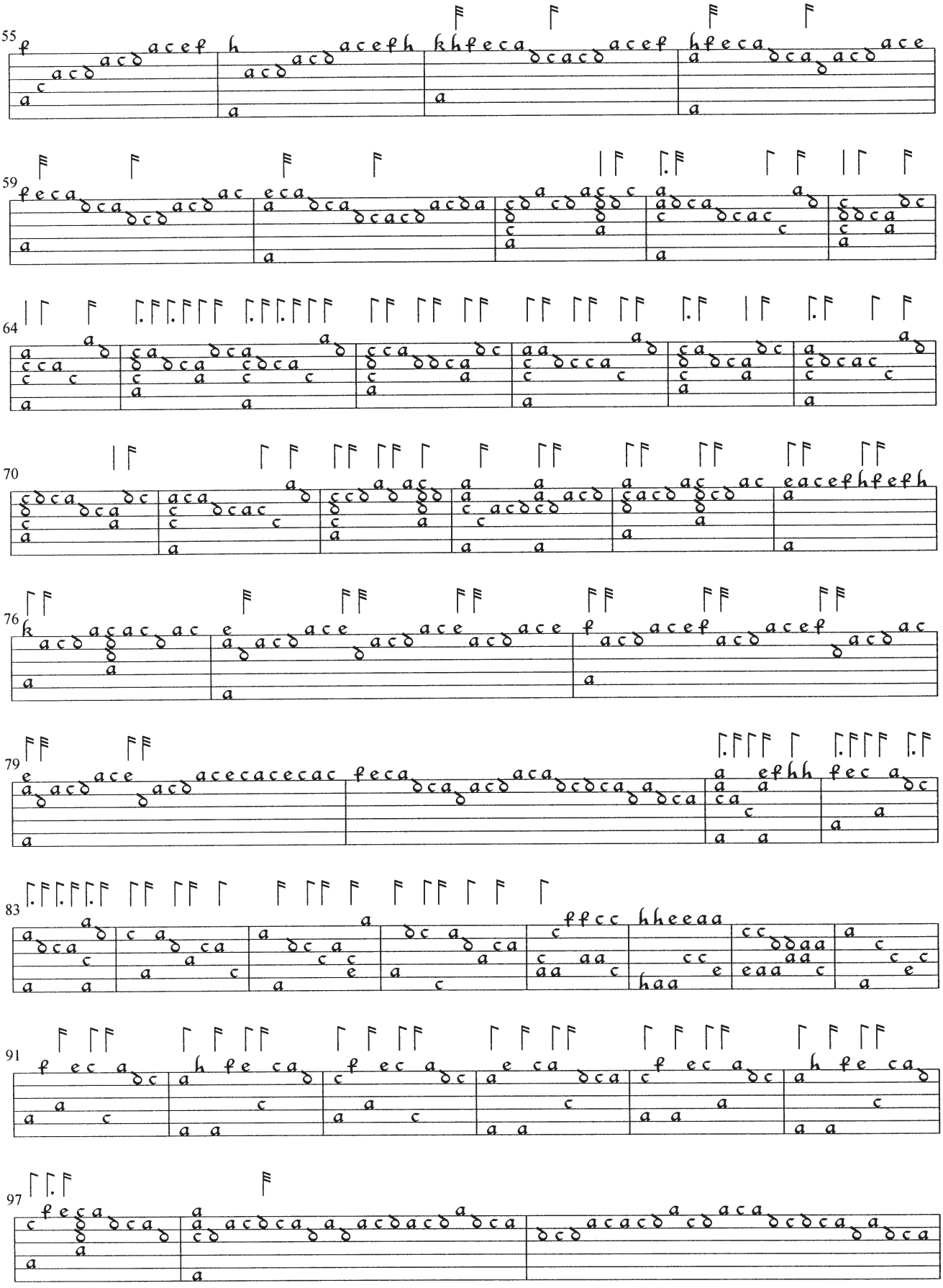

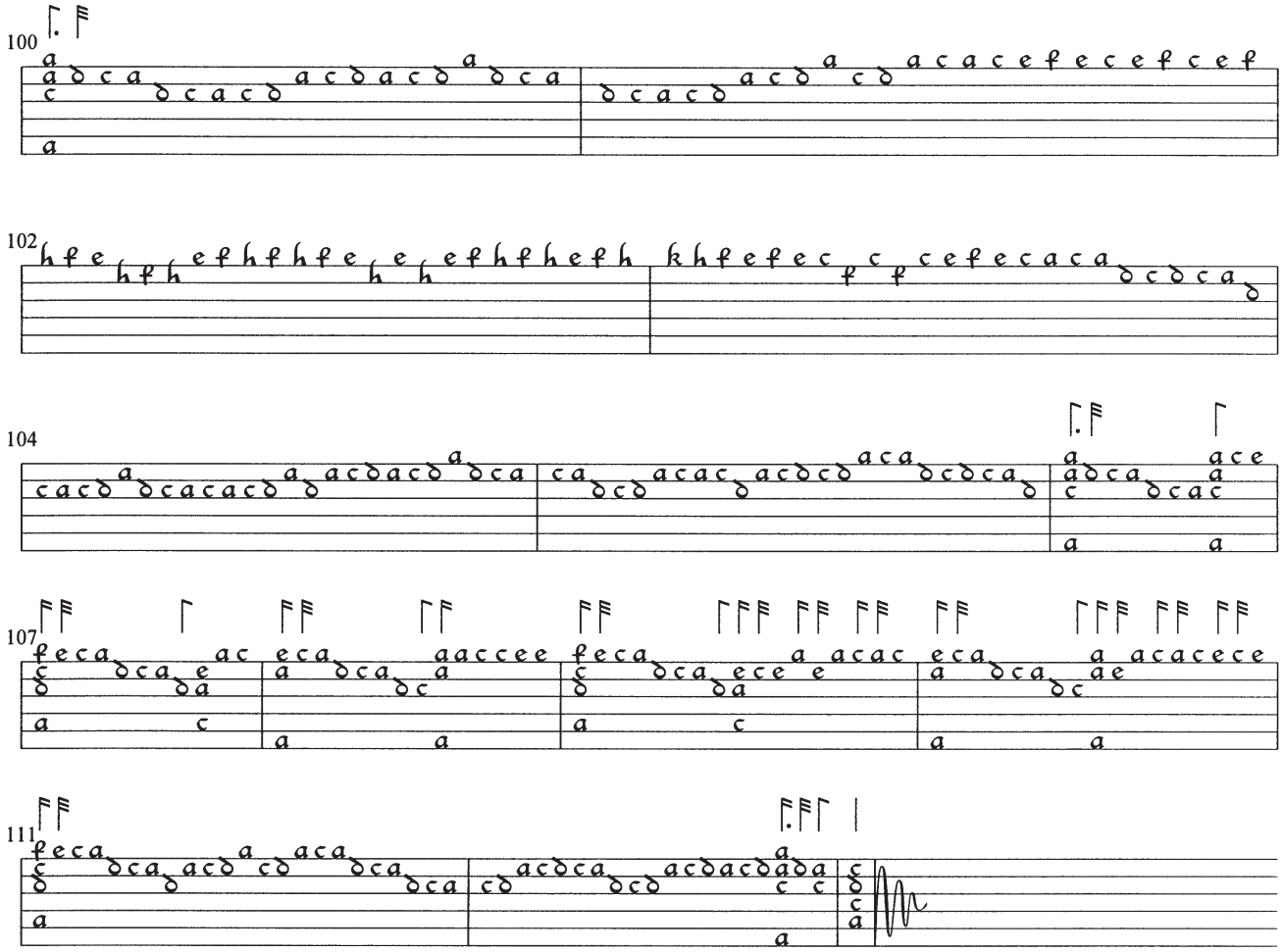

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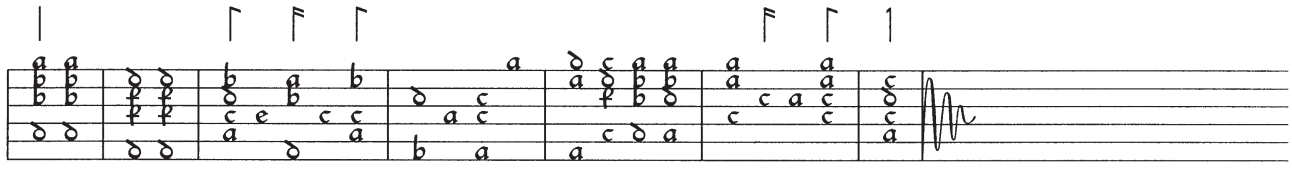

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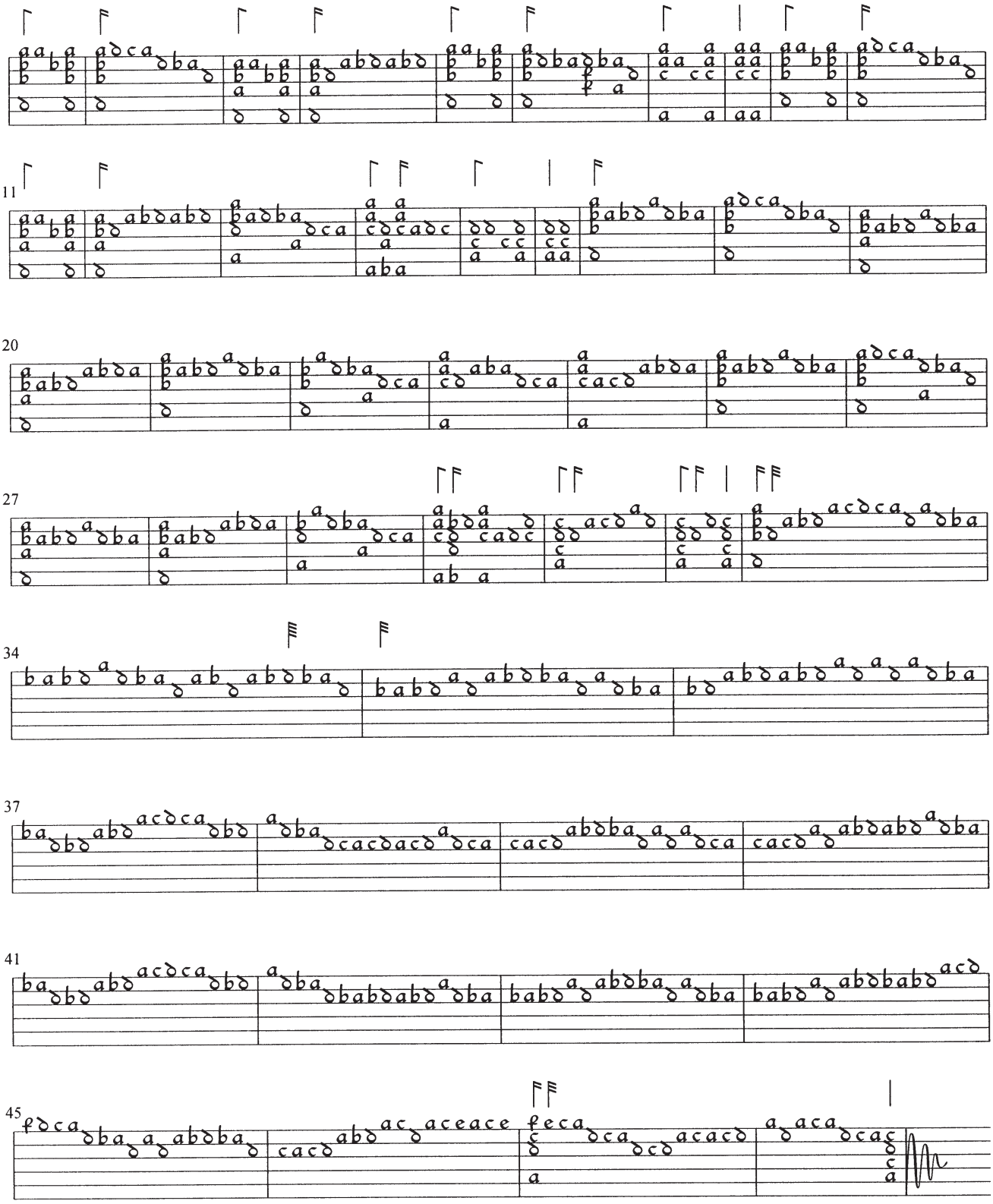

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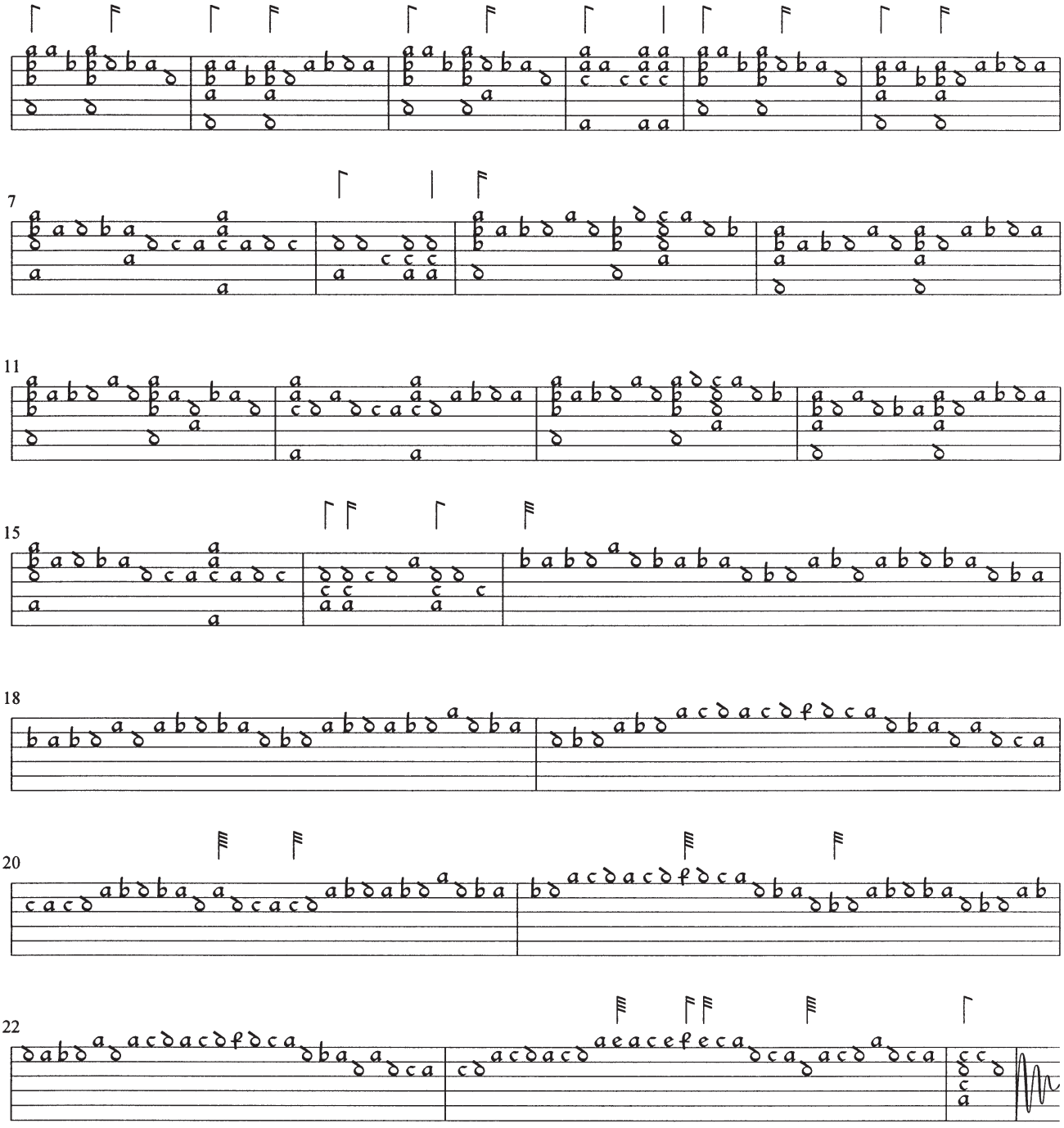

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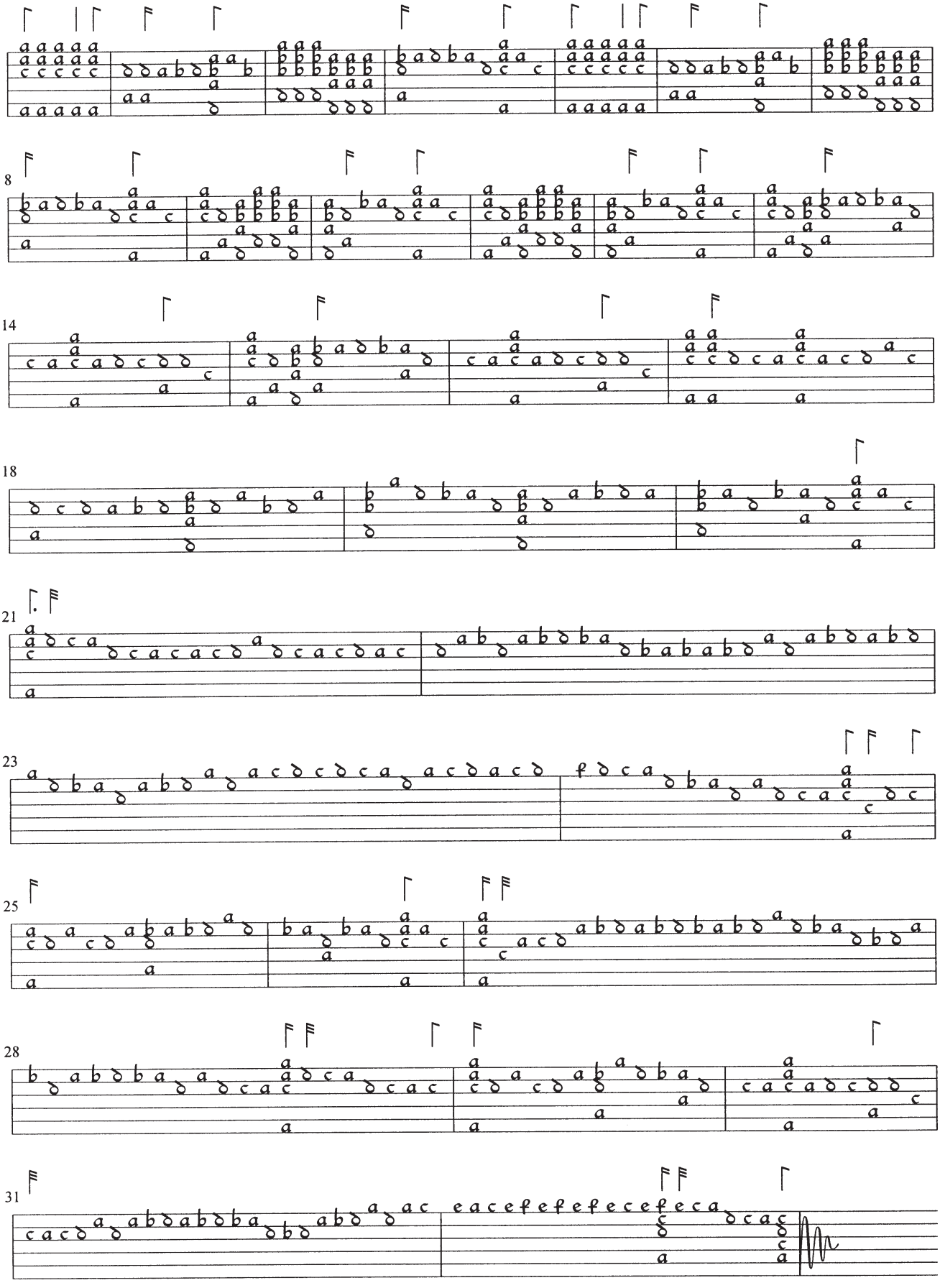

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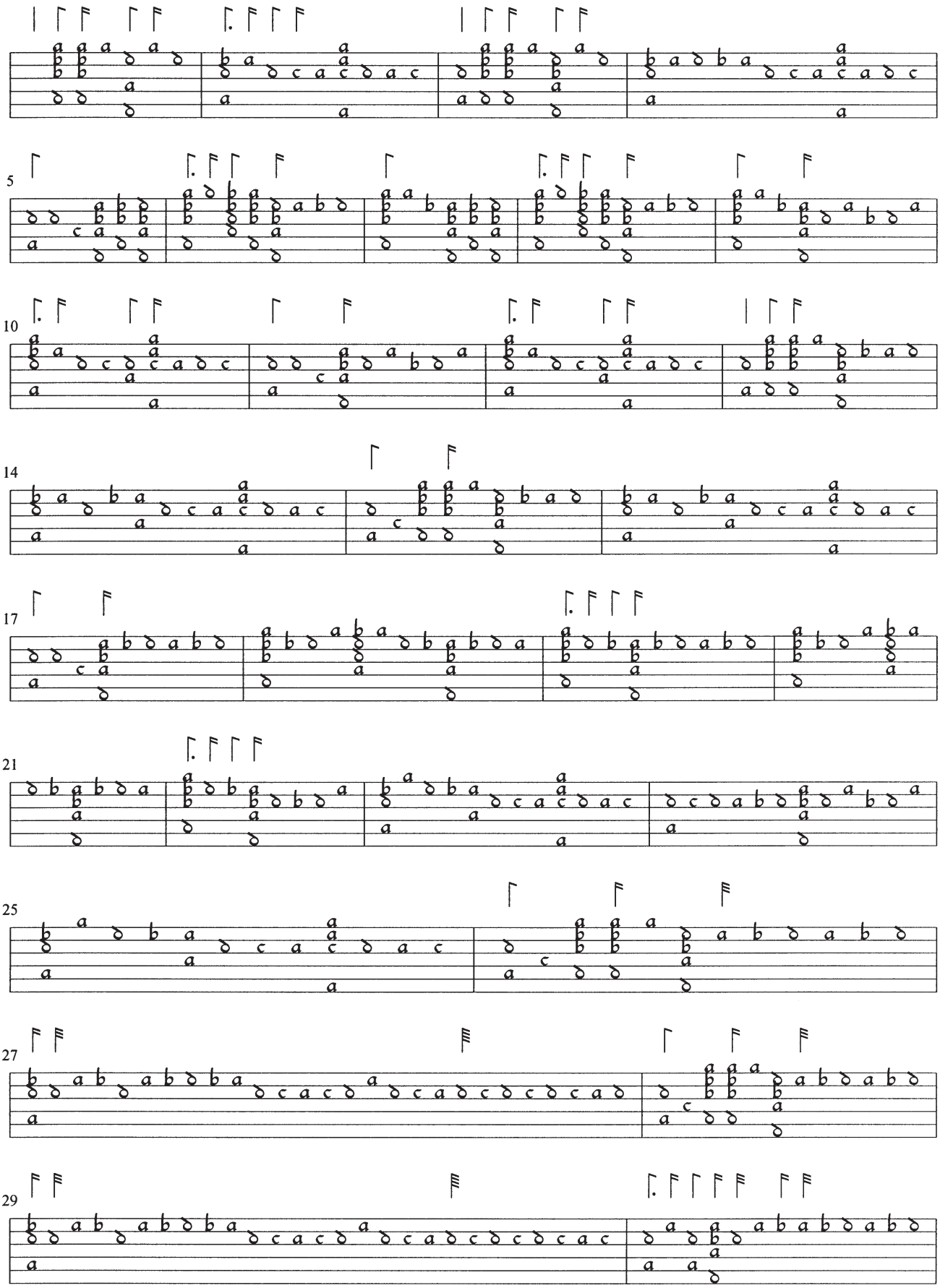

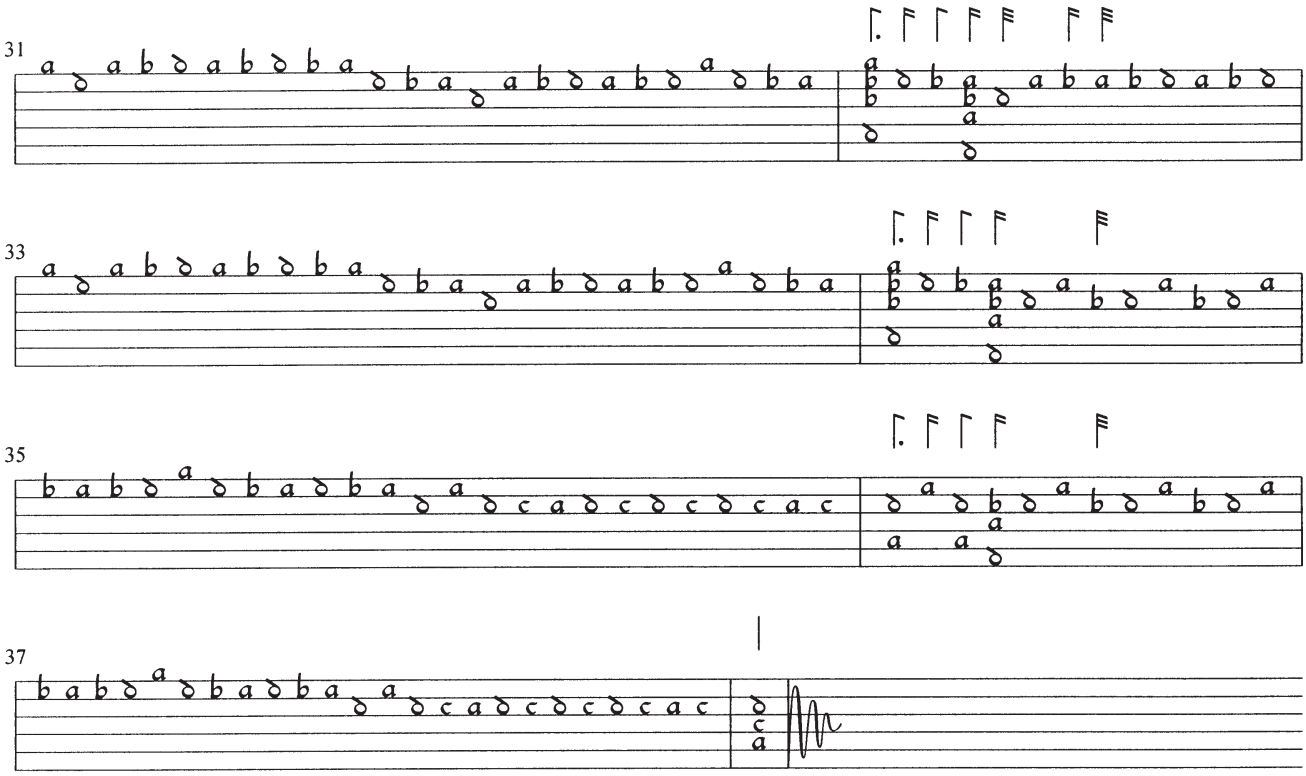
31
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ORIGINAL BARS EDITORIALLY CORRECTED IN THE TEXT

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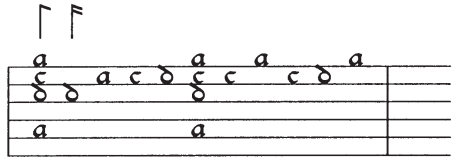
Bar 13



Il sgazotto
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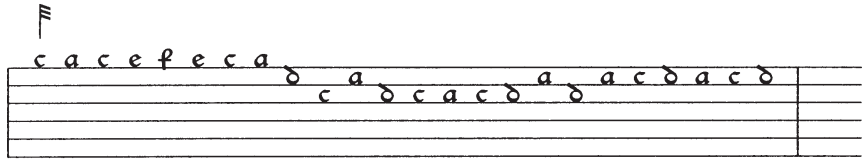
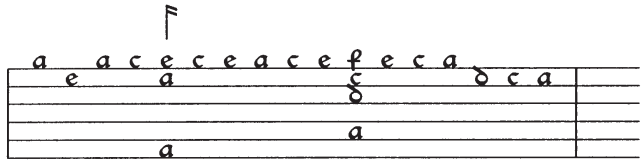


Non ti partir da me
Bar 33



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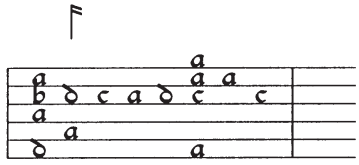

La favorita
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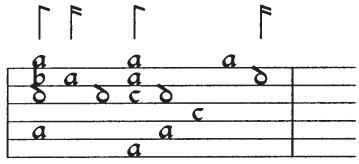

La favorita
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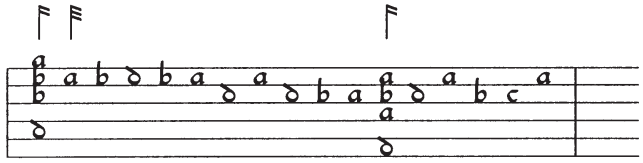

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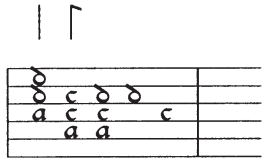

La moreta
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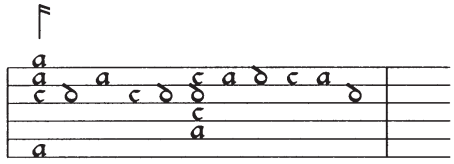

La moreta
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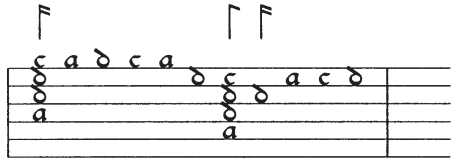

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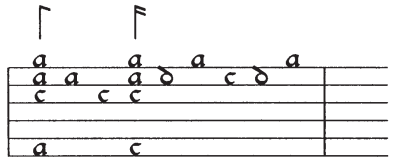

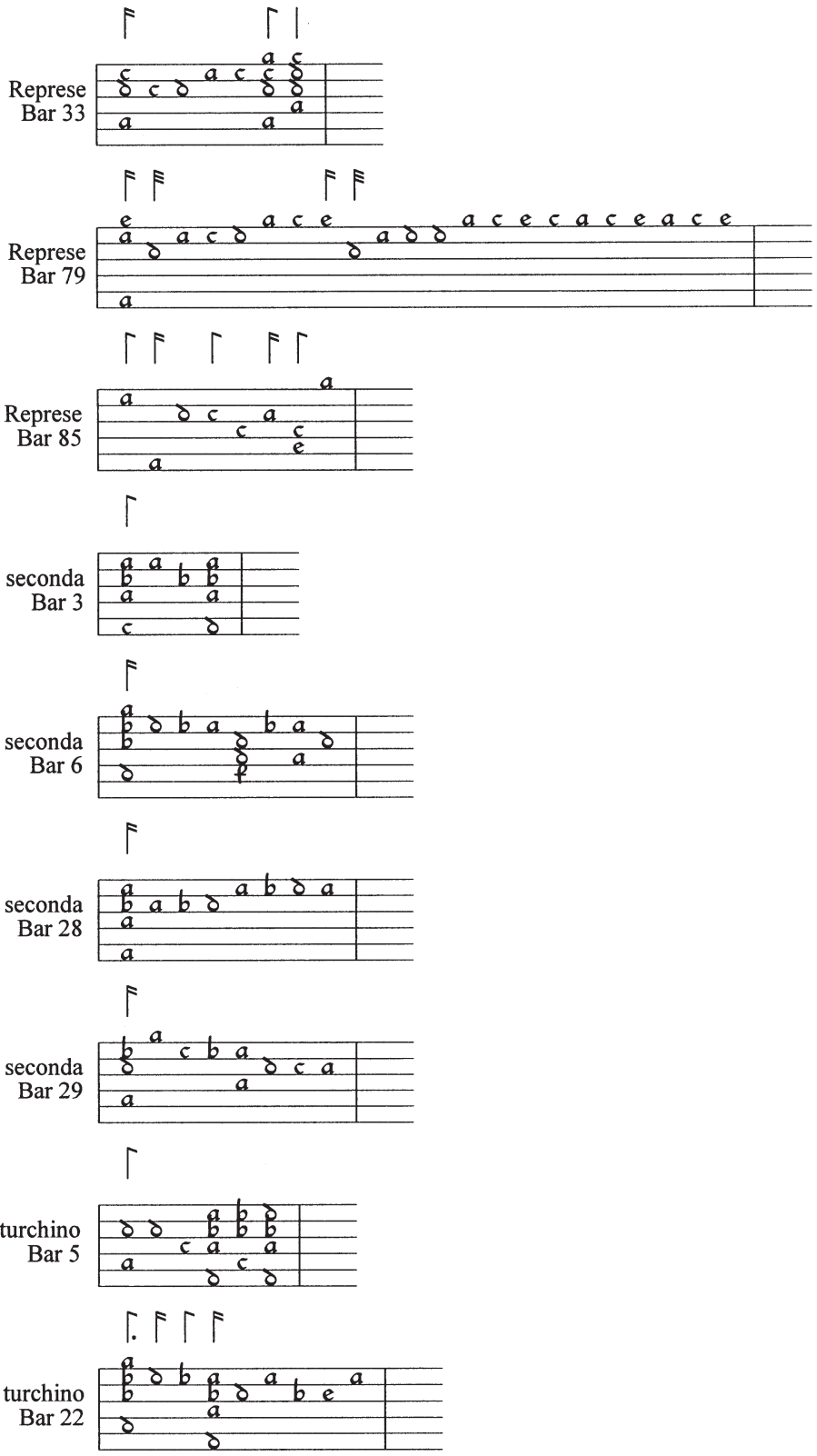
Represe
Bar 33
Represe
Bar 79
Represe
Bar 85
Padoana seconda
Bar 3
Padoana seconda
Bar 6
Padoana seconda
Bar 28
Padoana seconda
Bar 29
Ciel turchino
Bar 5
14. Ciel turchino
Bar 22

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