WERE YOU? for organ (2020)

Verses on the hymn tune "Were You There?"

Arthur B. Hunkins

Performance Notes:

Were You? is a sacred organ composition in 5 verses plus optional coda. Its somber tone makes it appropriate for Holy Week, especially Maundy Thursday or Good Friday.

It is unusual in that it may be played in a number of ways: 1) (the usual way) straight through - with or without either of two optional Codas; 2) any lesser contiguous sequence of Verses with or without added Coda; 3) all Verses (with or without Coda) in ascending order, split up into single or small groups of Verses dispersed throughout a service; 4) Verse 1, then other single verses, in *any* order, dispersed throughout a service - a Coda not played unless Verse 5 is the last of the verses in the service, whereupon one or the other Coda is attached to it.

Option 3 would seem particularly suited to Holy Week services. Individual verses could be played during the interval between readings. In addition, a solo melody instrument (e.g., flute or cello) might initially present the original tune - either at the beginning of the service, or at some point prior to these verses.

Dynamics are relatively soft throughout.

Tempo for Verse 1 and the regular Coda are the same, with the beat at MM60 *or slower*. All other music is rhythmically free, with no beat - but with the same rhythmic "feel." Note durations are varied, and up to spontaneous interpretation by the performer. "Whole notes" simply indicate generally long notes, while "double whole notes" mean **longer** ones. The latter occur at the end of phrases, and are accompanied by commas to indicate a brief lifting of the fingers. *Notes of Verse 5 (the shortest verse) should be further lengthened overall*.

Articulation is completely legato, with breaks only at commas (end of phrases) or rests.

Suggested Registration (these are *guidelines only*):

Verse 1: 2 manuals; Dulciana 8' or String Celeste 8' on lower voice, Stopped Flute 8' on upper
Verse 2: single manual; Stopped Flute 8'
Verse 3: 2 manuals; 2 8' stops similar to Stopped Flute (but different from one another), one on each manual
Verse 4: 2 manuals plus pedal; add another 8' stop to each manual; pedal, Flute 8'
Verse 5: single manual; all divisions coupled, 8' tone only; both manuals coupled to pedal
Coda: same as Verse 5; at downbeat of last measure, pedal Flute 8' only
Alternate Coda: same as Verse 5; toward middle of last ("double whole") note, switch to pedal Flute 8' only

Special thanks to David Ratchford for his helpful suggestions regarding registration, as well as other performance options.

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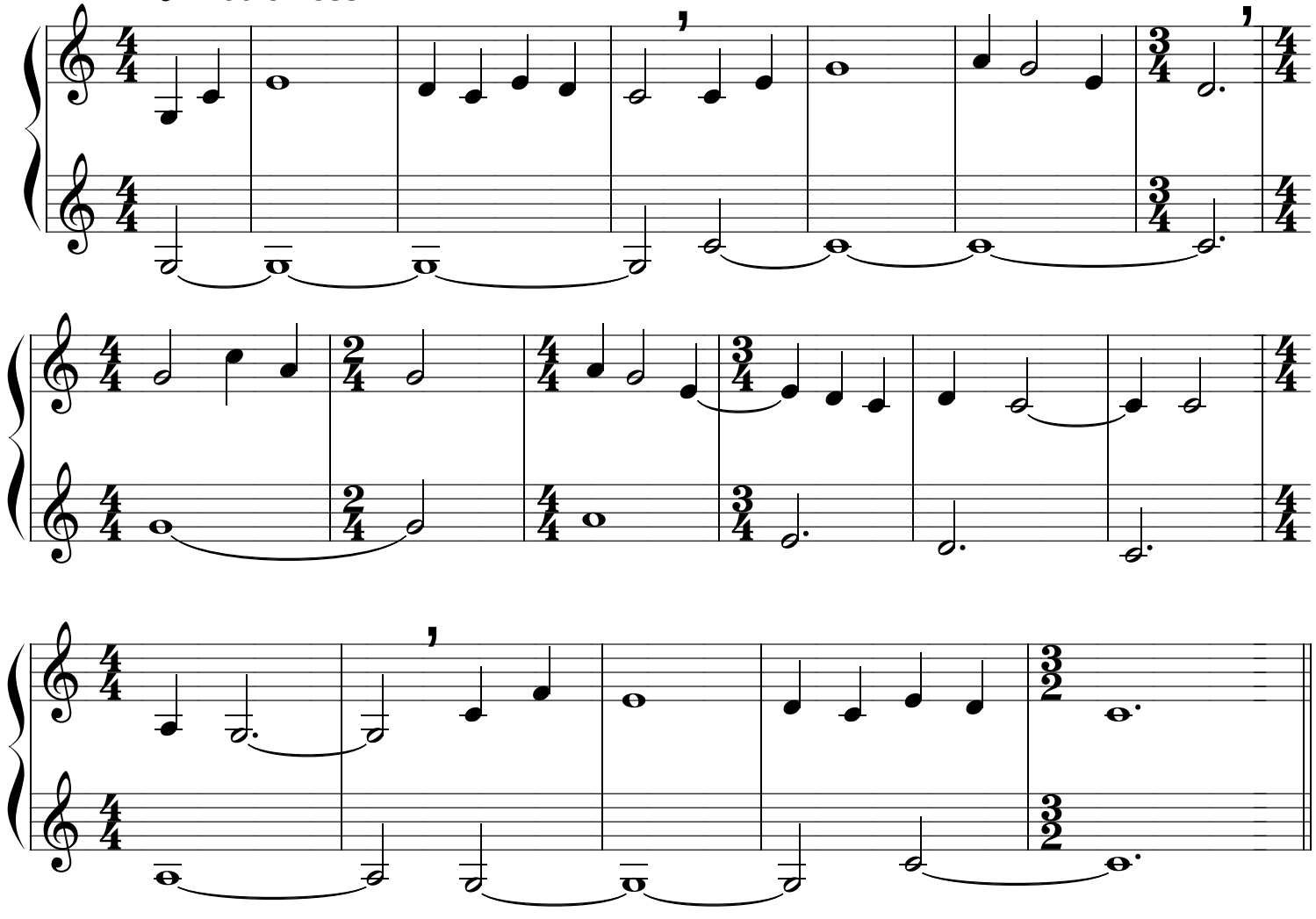
Verse 1

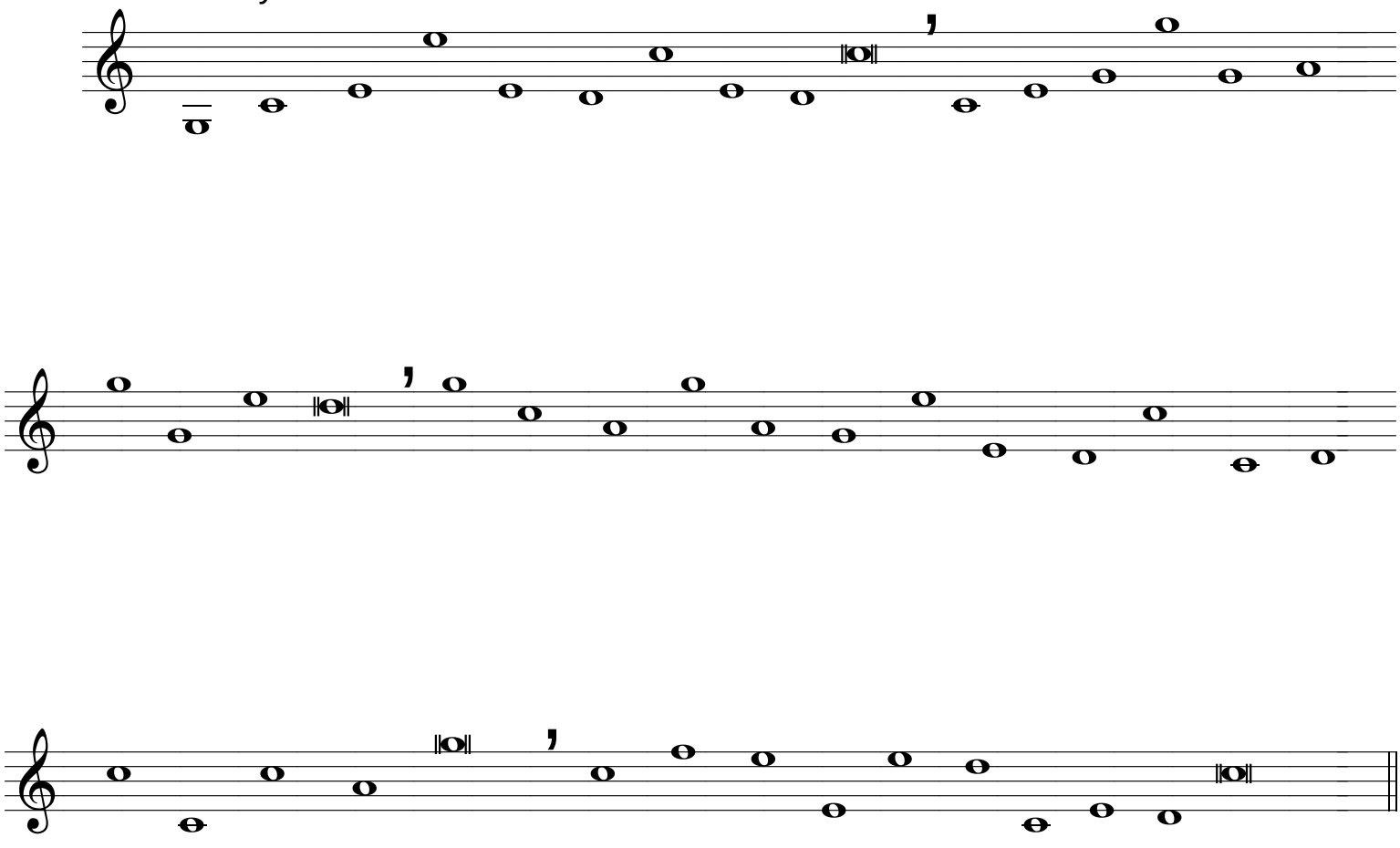
See Performance Notes for suggestions about registration

♩ = 60 or less

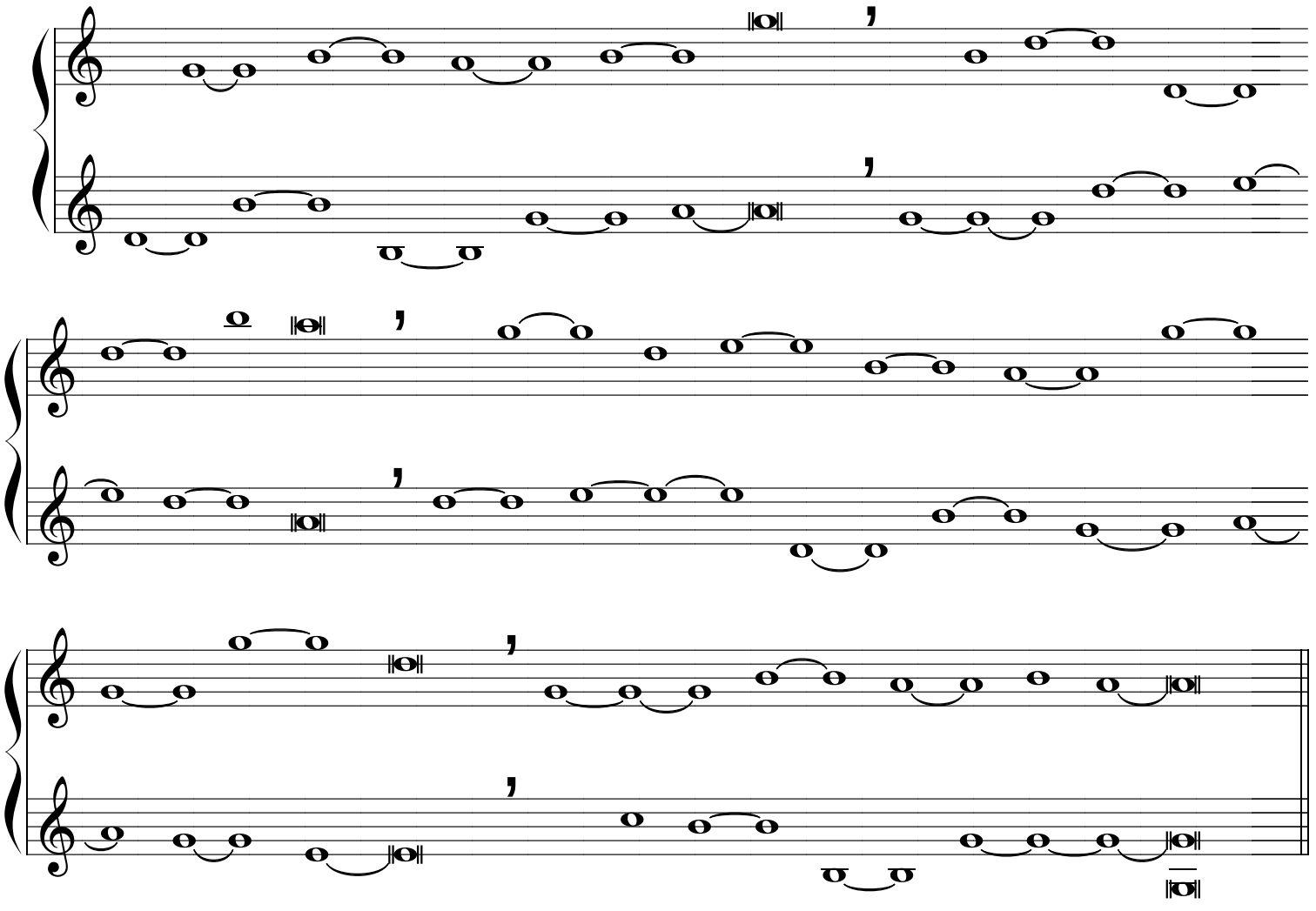


Verse 2

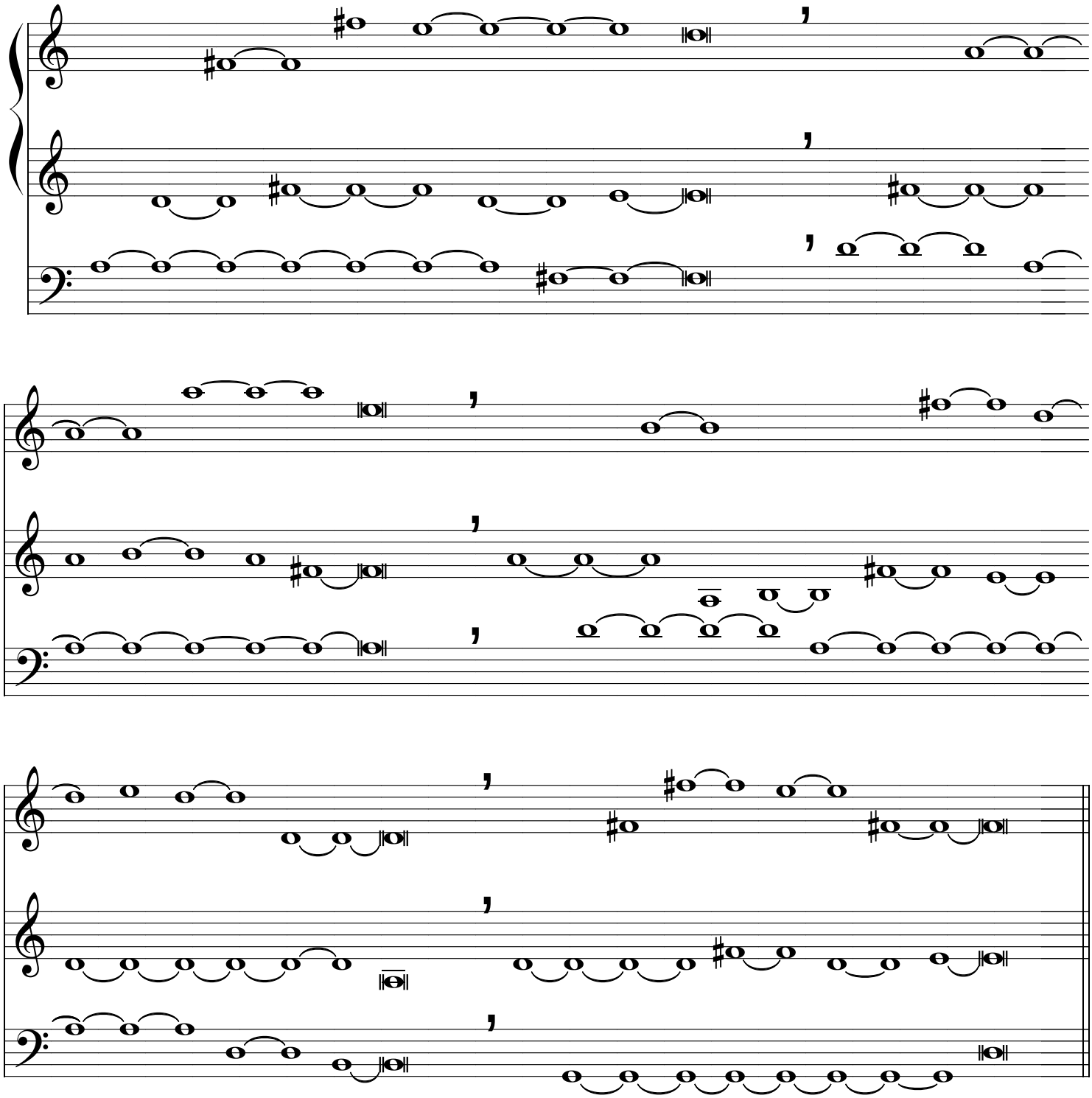
Free rhythm



Verse 3

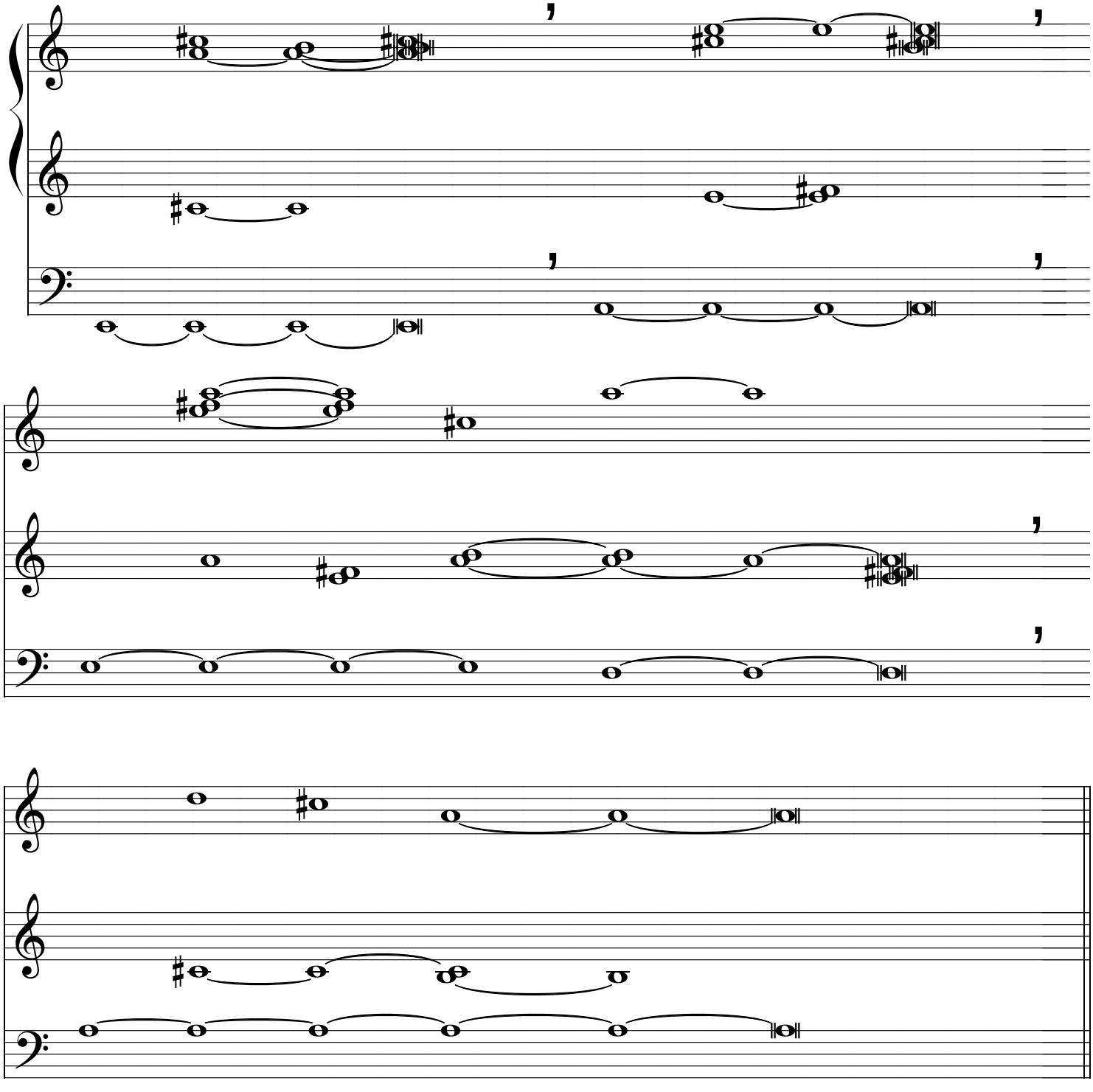


Verse 4

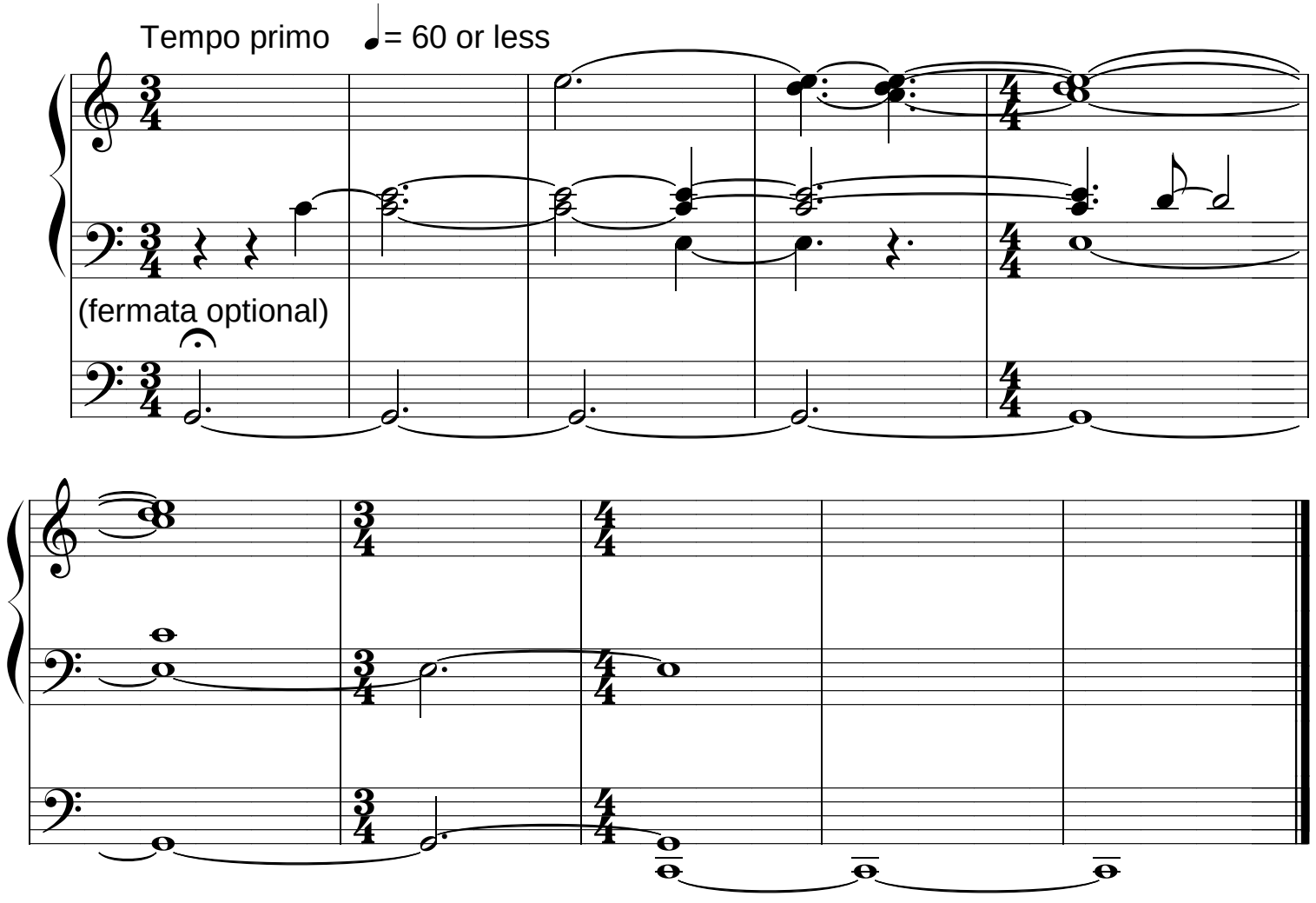


Verse 5

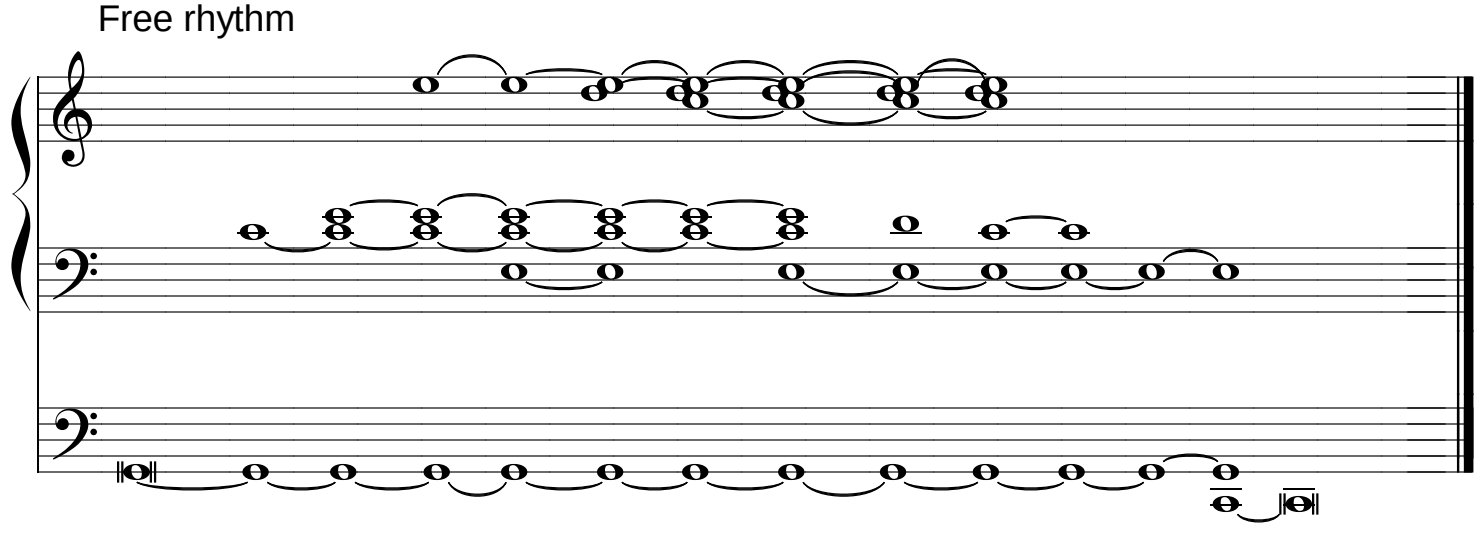
Lengthen notes overall compared to other "free" verses



Coda (optional)

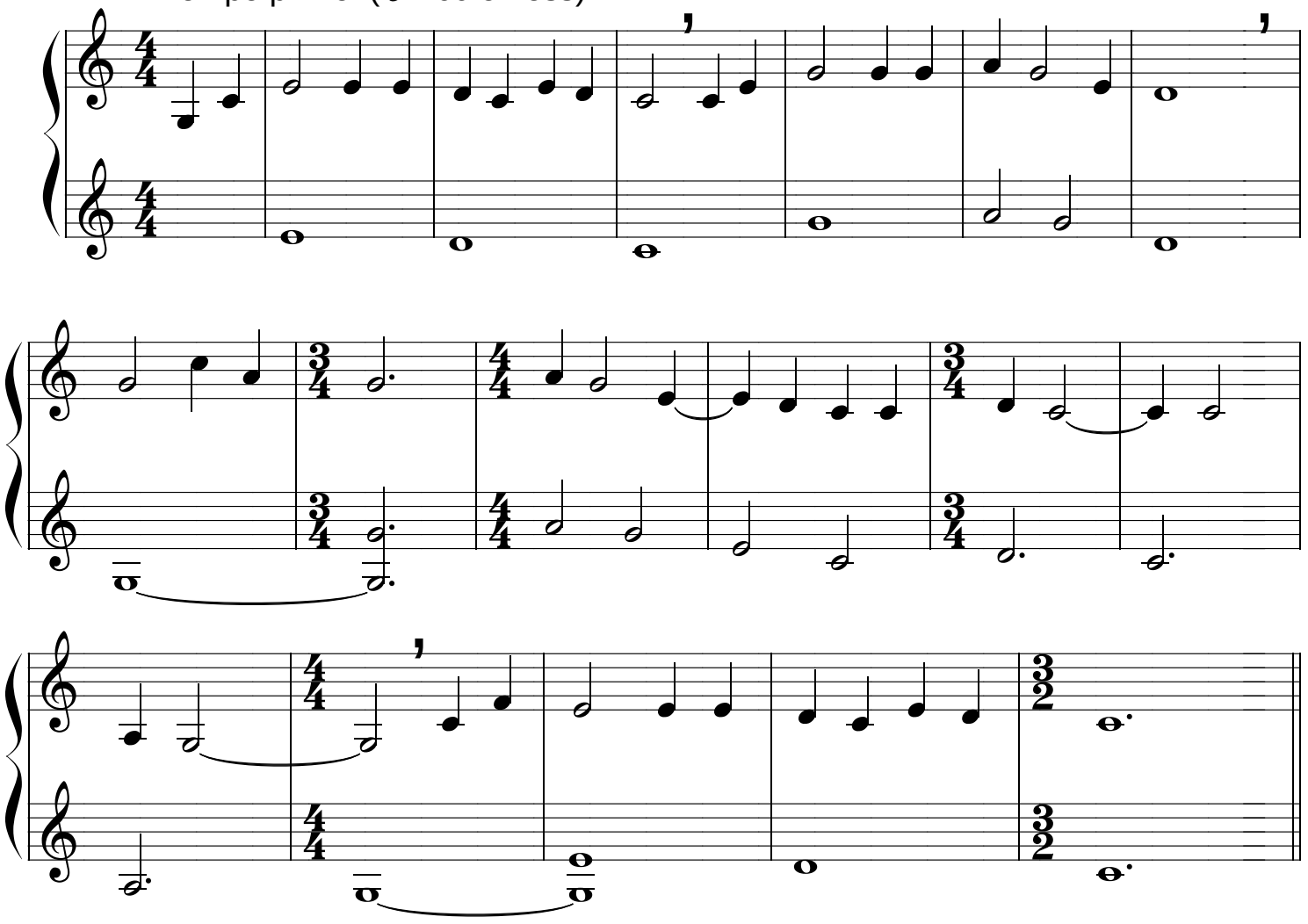


Alternate Coda (optional)



Verse 1a is an *optional* verse that can *replace Verse 1* in any of the 4 contexts described in Performance Notes. It can also serve as an *additional* verse under option 4, where verses are performed in any order. In such a case, either Verse 1 or Verse 1a is played first, with the other taking any position except immediately following. This includes the possibility that with either Verse 1 or 1a first, the other could be last. (In this case there will be no Coda.)

Registration (as well as tempo) is identical to Verse 1.

Verse 1a

Tempo primo (♩ = 60 or less)