Changing Tonic Identity and Function in Max Reger's *Variations on a Theme of Mozart* (1914)

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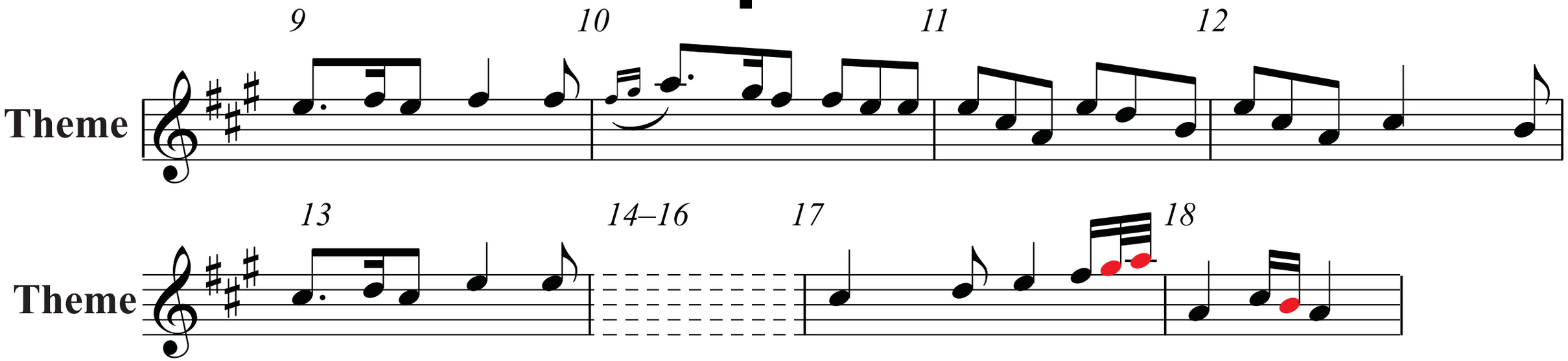
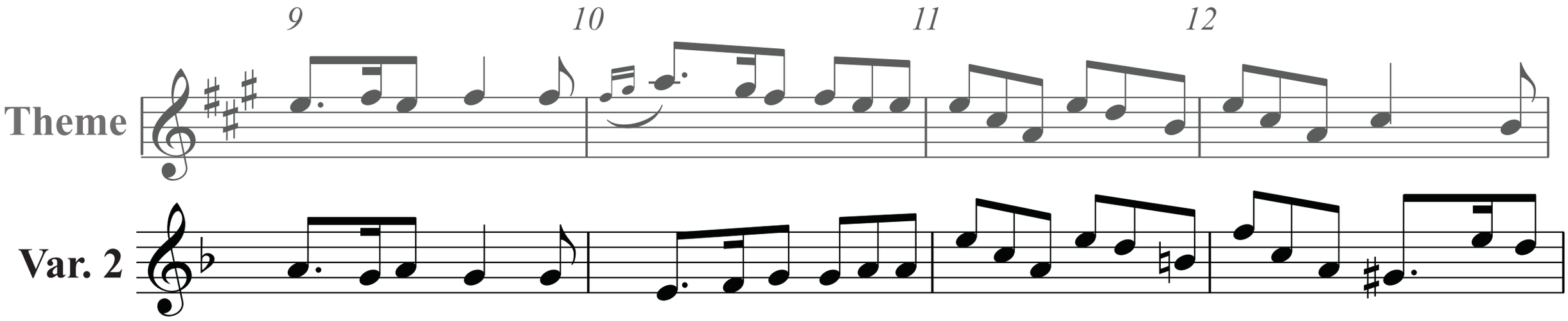
Theme, Contrasting Middle and Reprise

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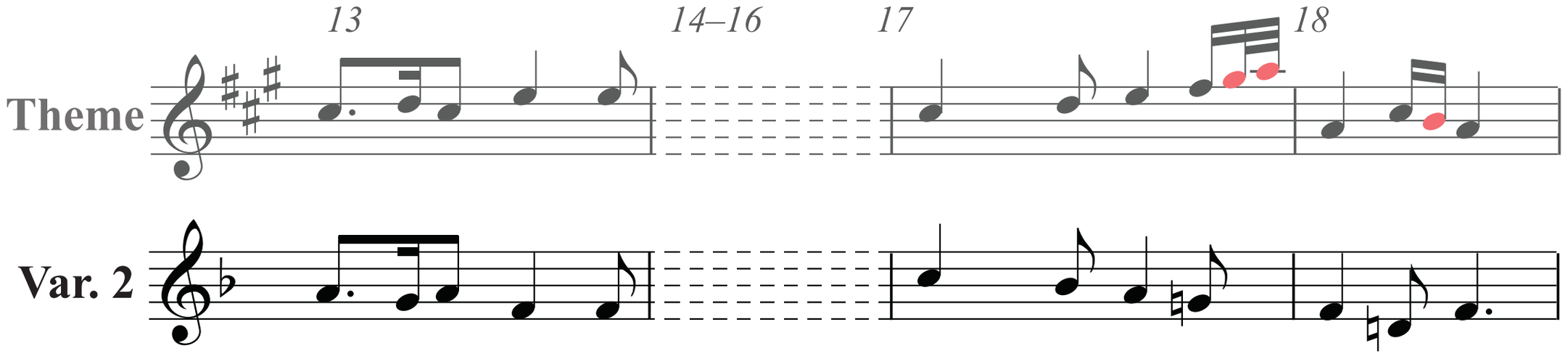
Theme
Var. 2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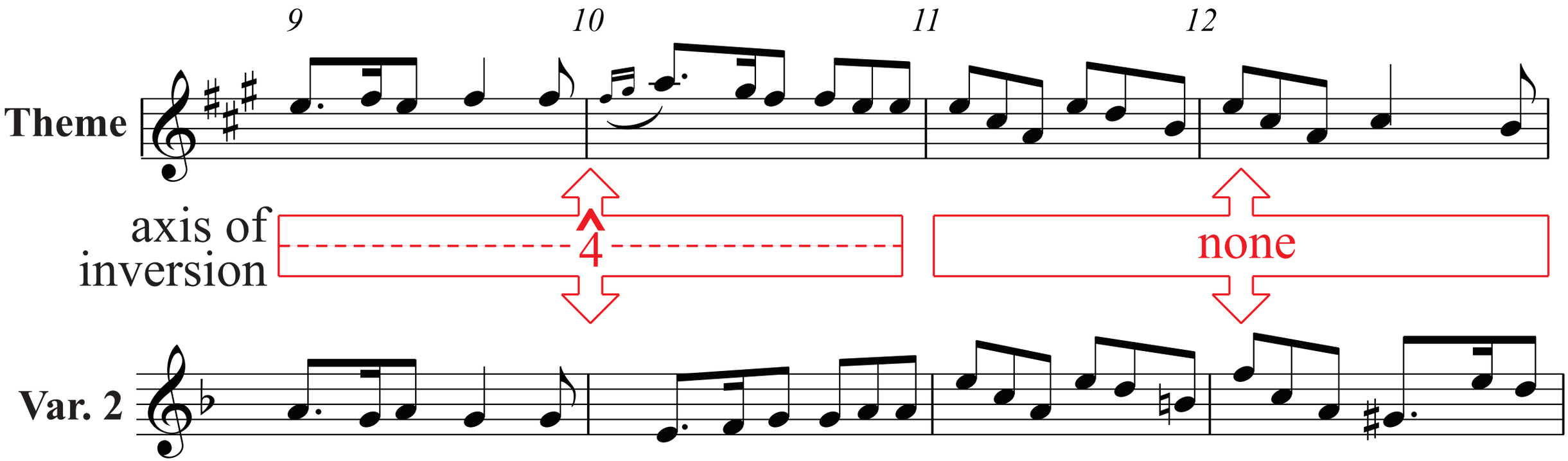
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10
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Theme
axis of inversion
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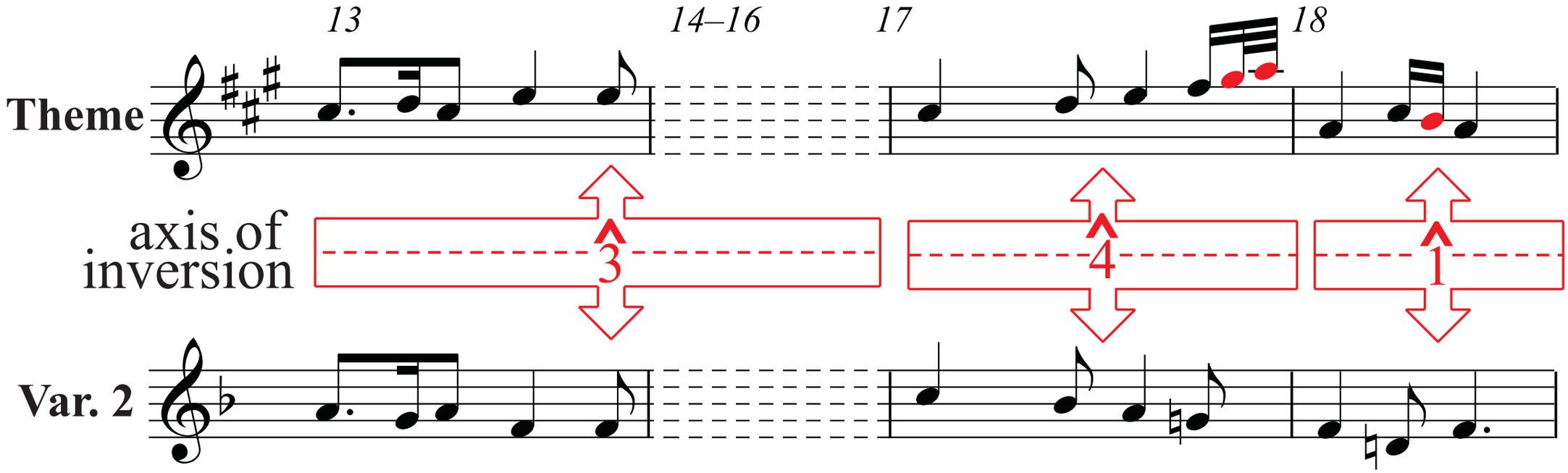
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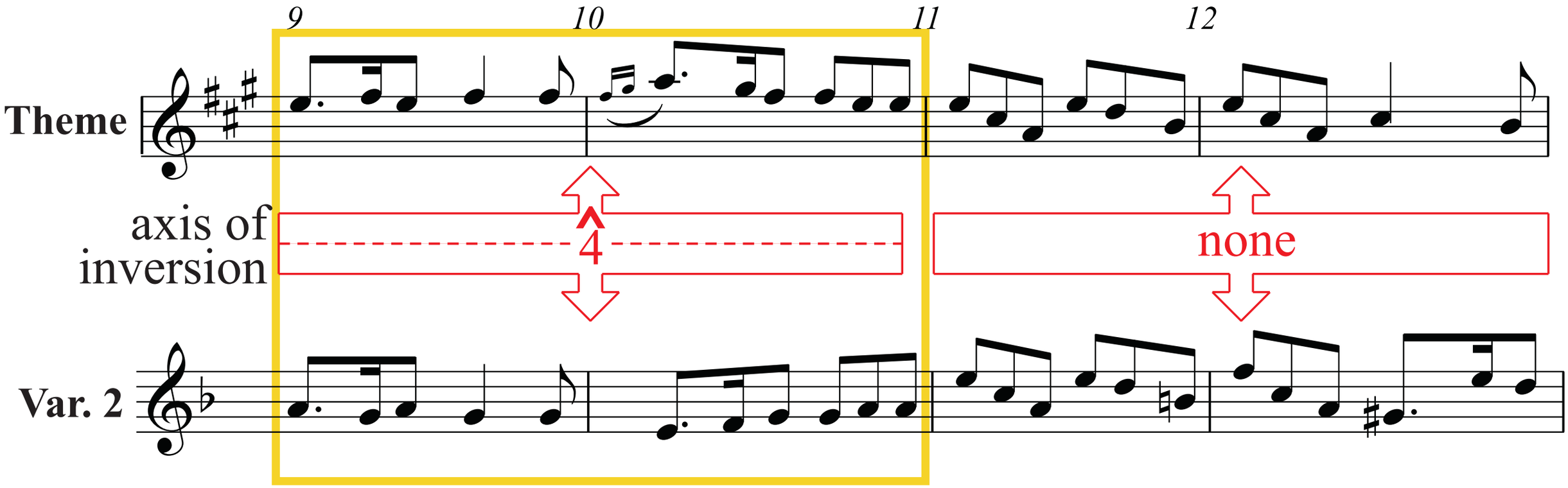
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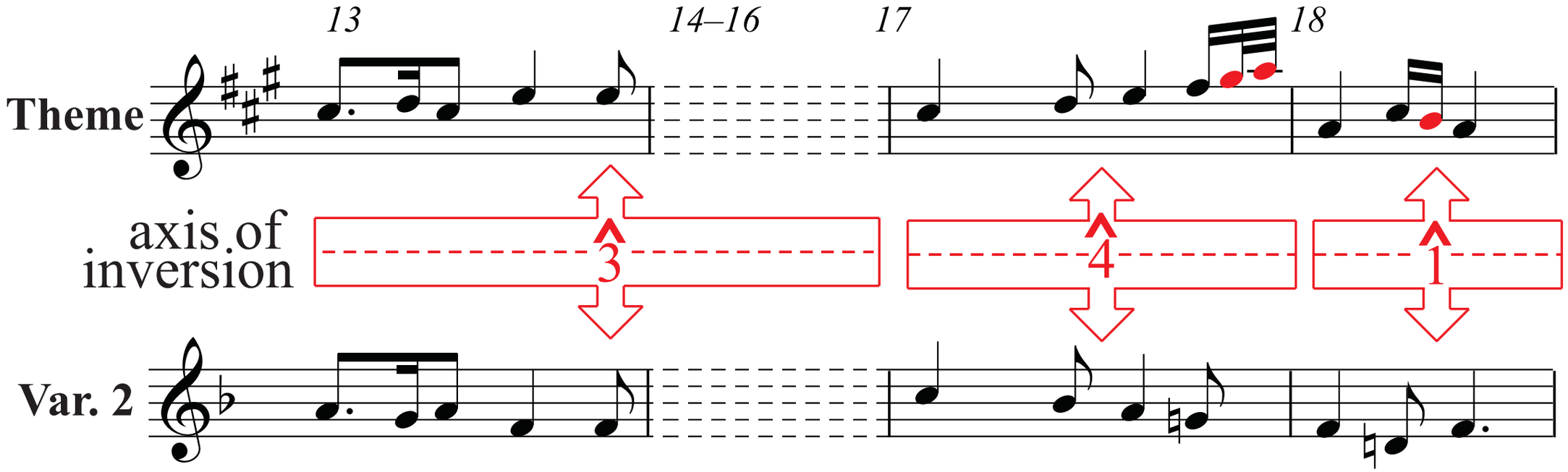
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14–16
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Theme
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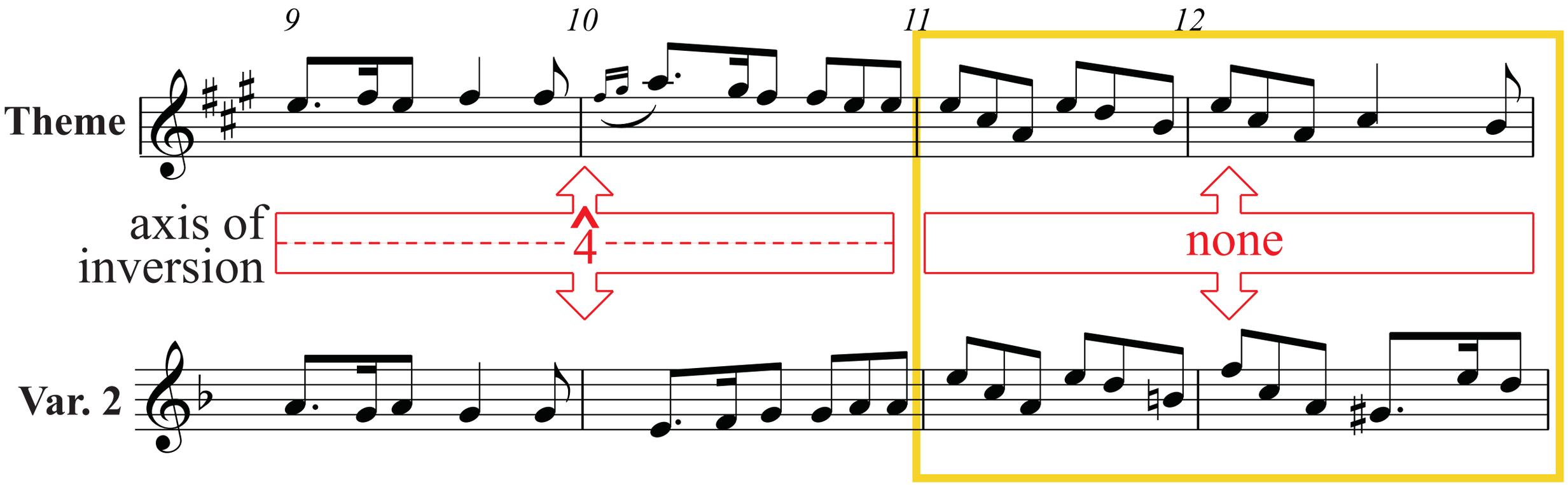
Var. 2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10
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none
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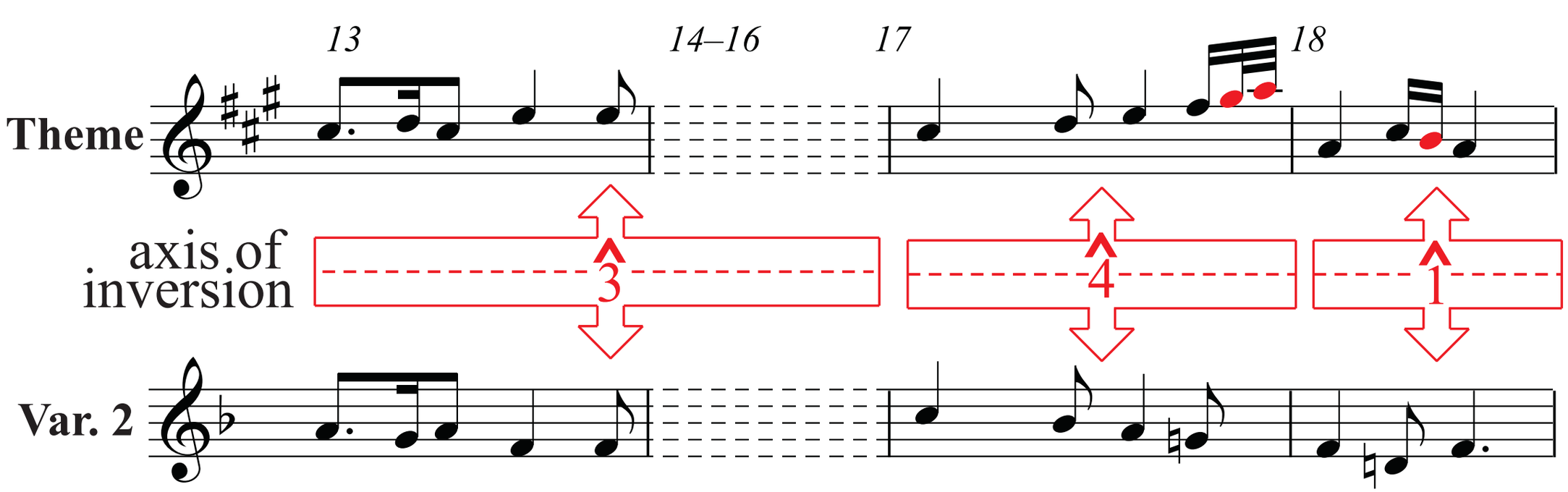
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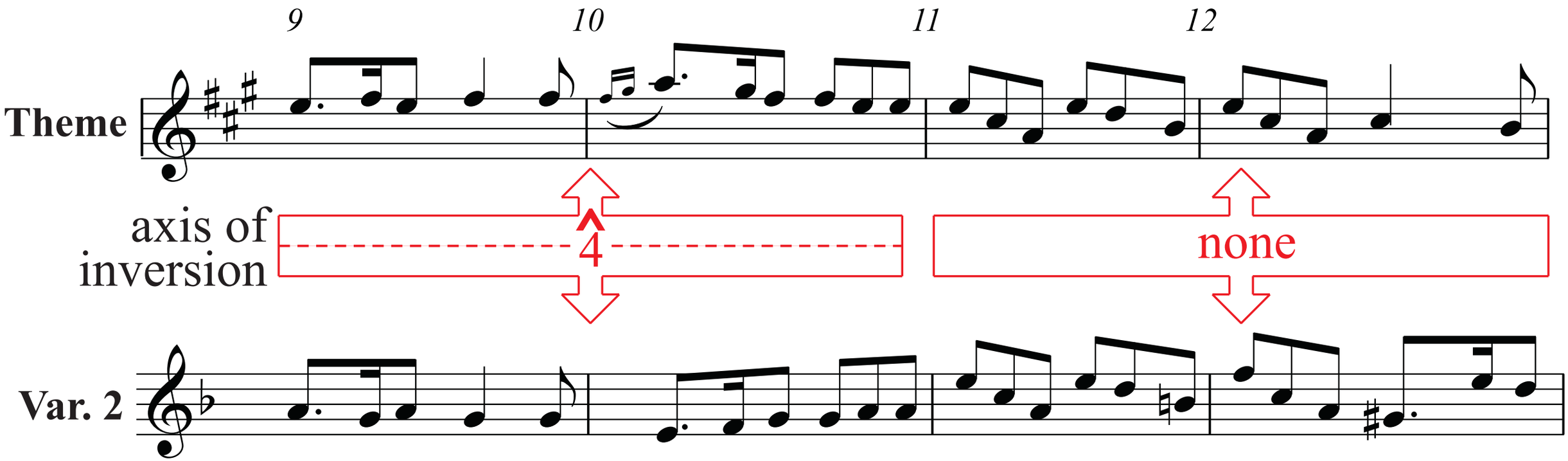
Var. 2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Theme
axis of inversion
4
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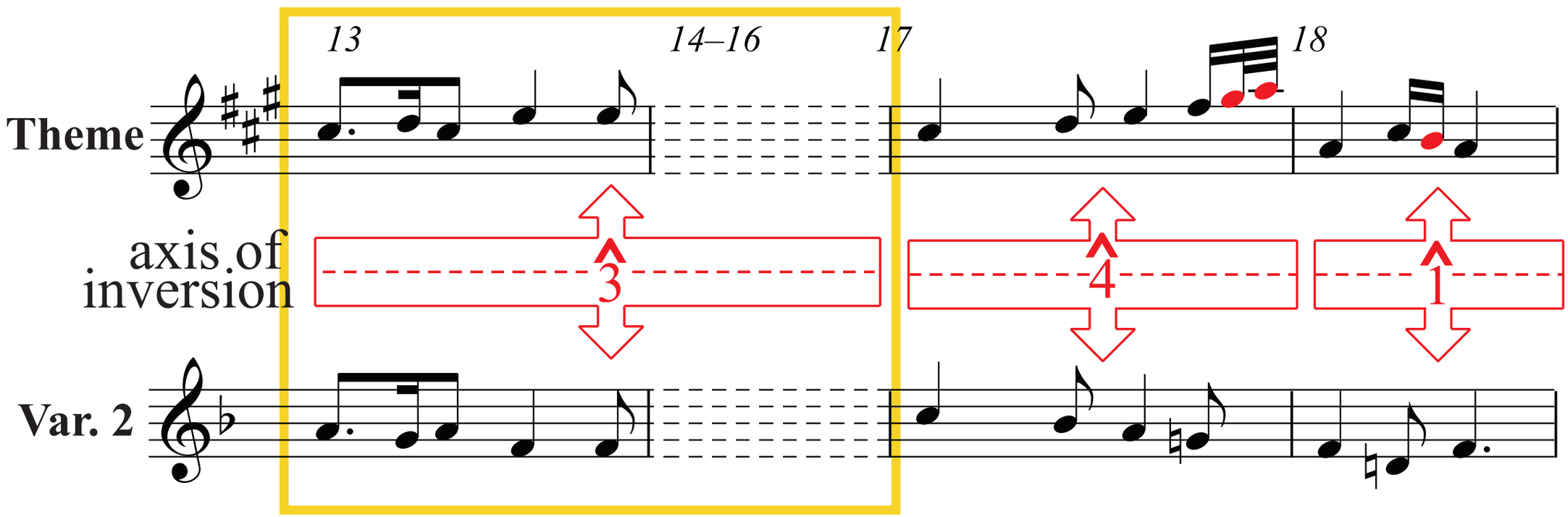
Var. 2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14–16
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Theme
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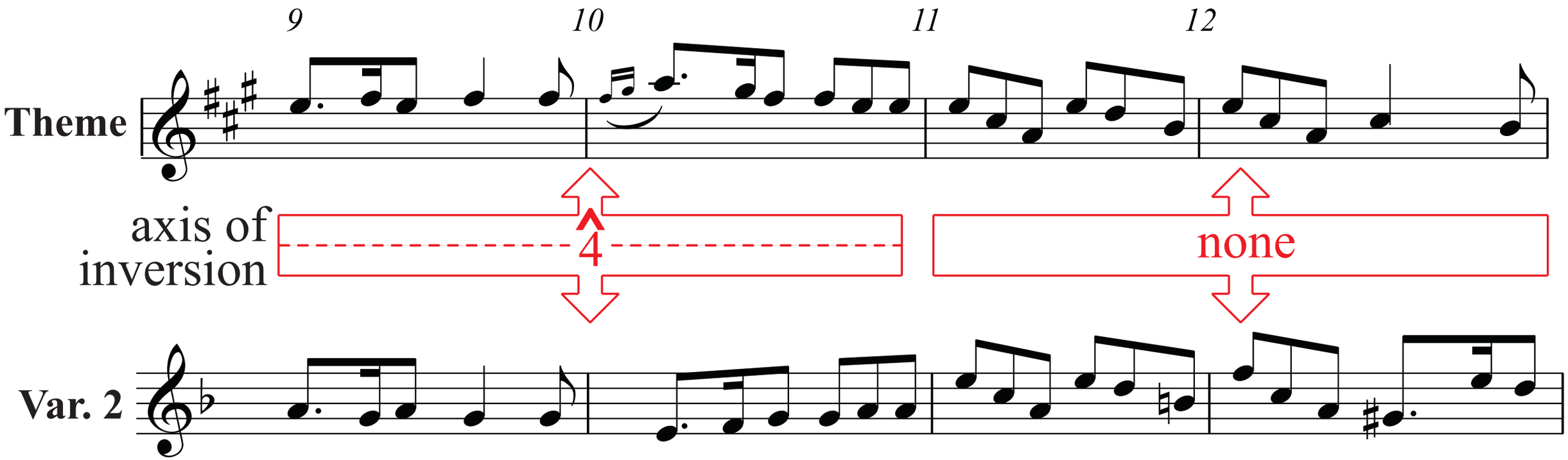
3
4
1
Var. 2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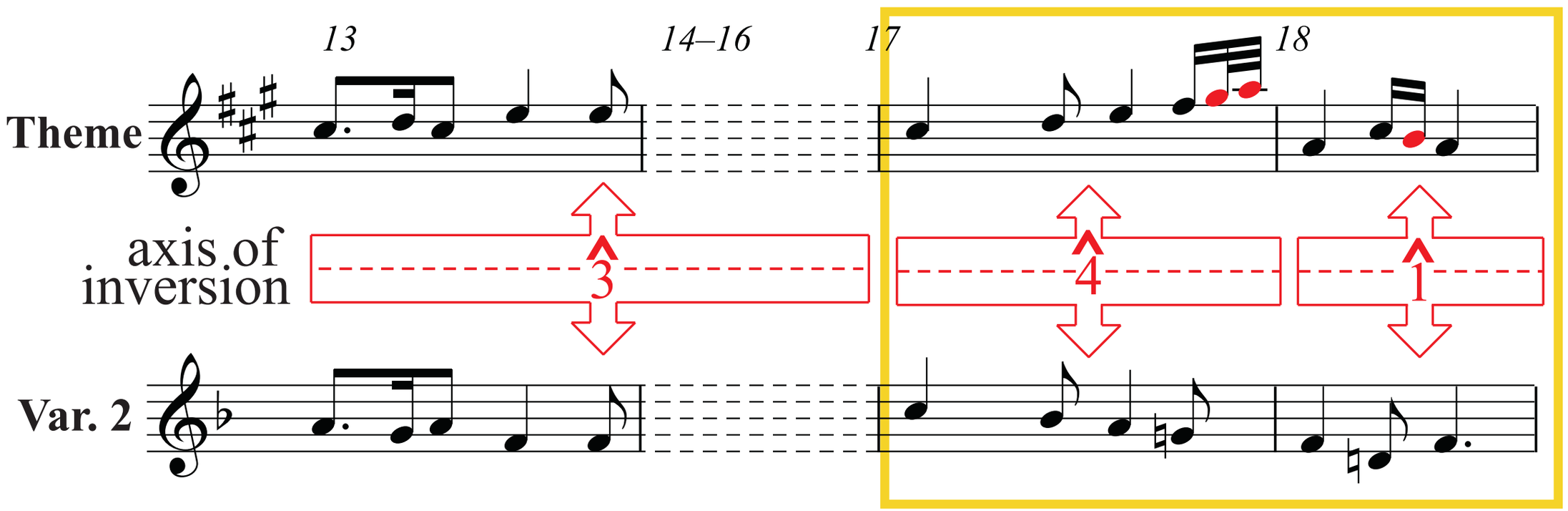
4
none
Var. 2


13
14–16
17
18
Theme
axis of inversion
3
4
1
Var. 2

Theme

9 10 11 12

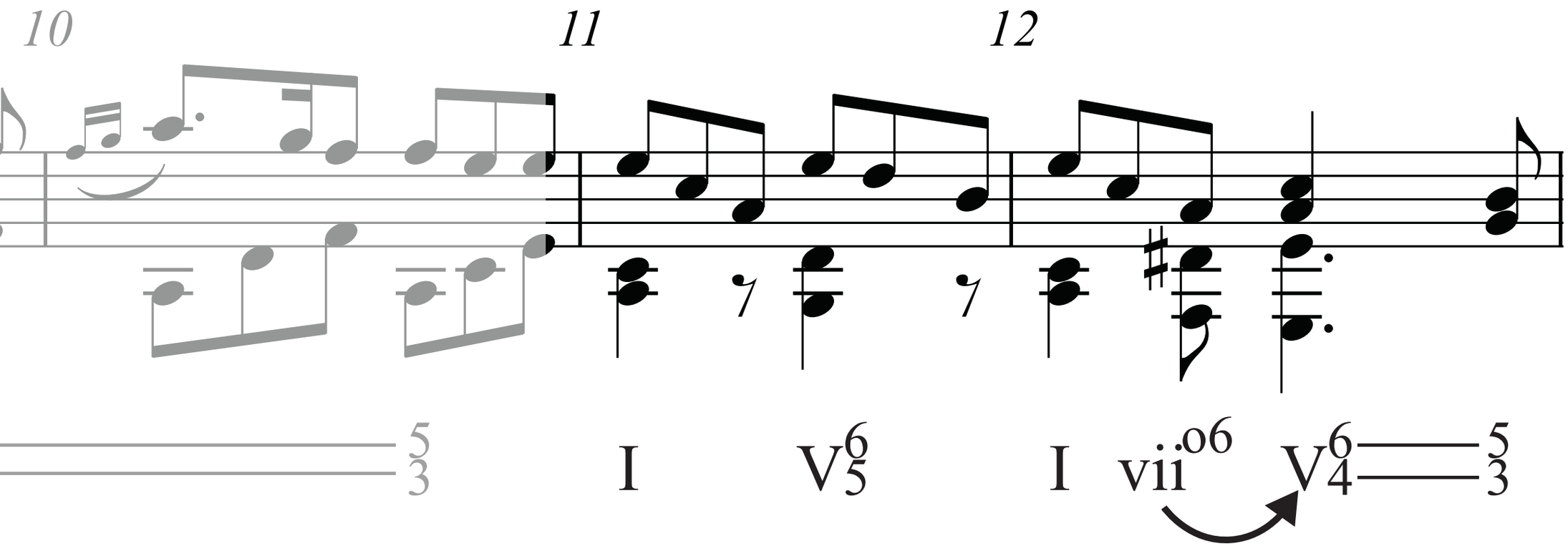
A: I^{5}_{3} $^{6}_{4}$ $^{5}_{3}$ I V^{6}_{5} I vii^{o6} V^{6}_{4} $^{5}_{3}$

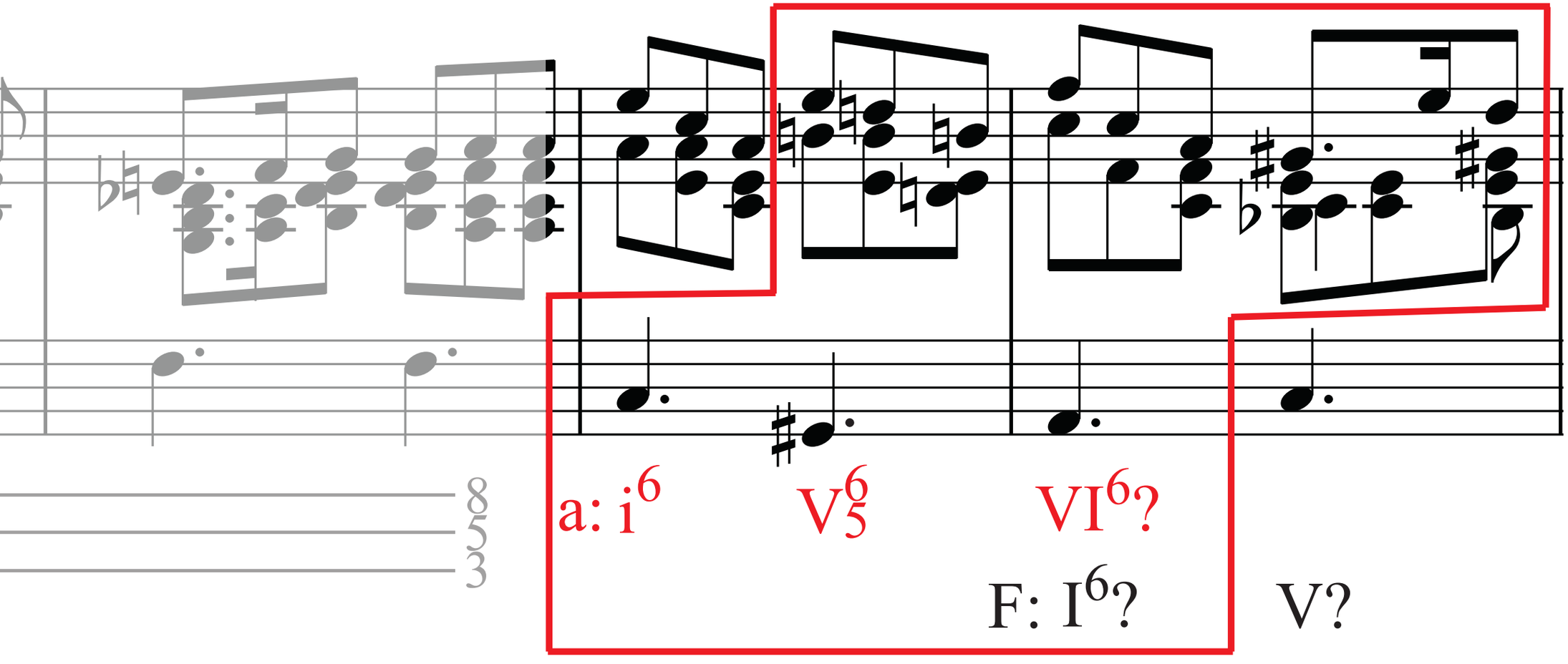
Var. 2

F: $I^{\flat 7}$ $^{9}_{7}$ $^{8}_{\flat 6}$ $^{5}_{4}$ ^{3}

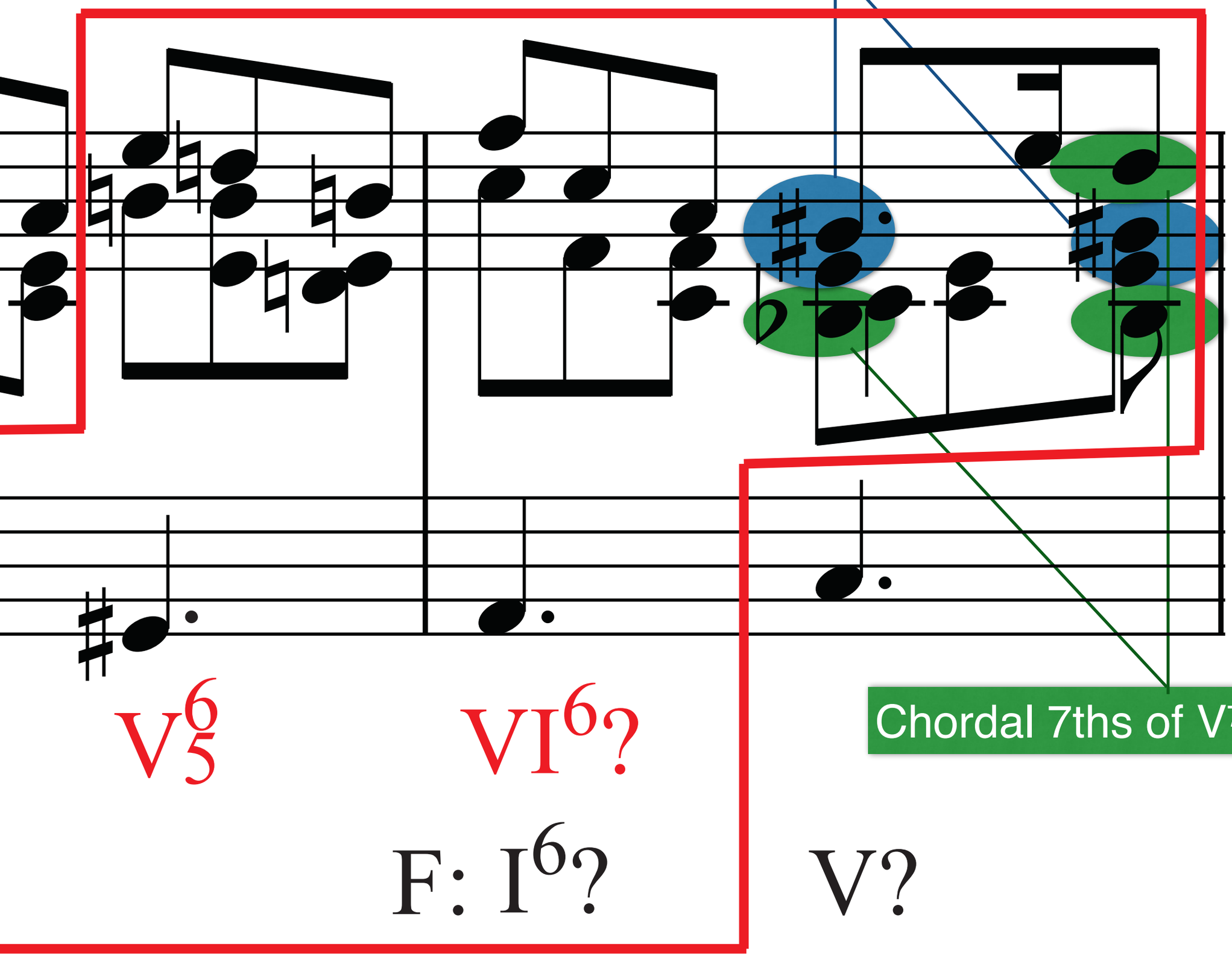
a: i^{6} V^{6}_{5} VI^{6}?

F: I^{6}? V?


10
11
12
5
3
I
V 6 5
I
vii o6
V 6 4 5 3


8
5
3
a: i6
V 6 5
VI6?
F: I6?
V?

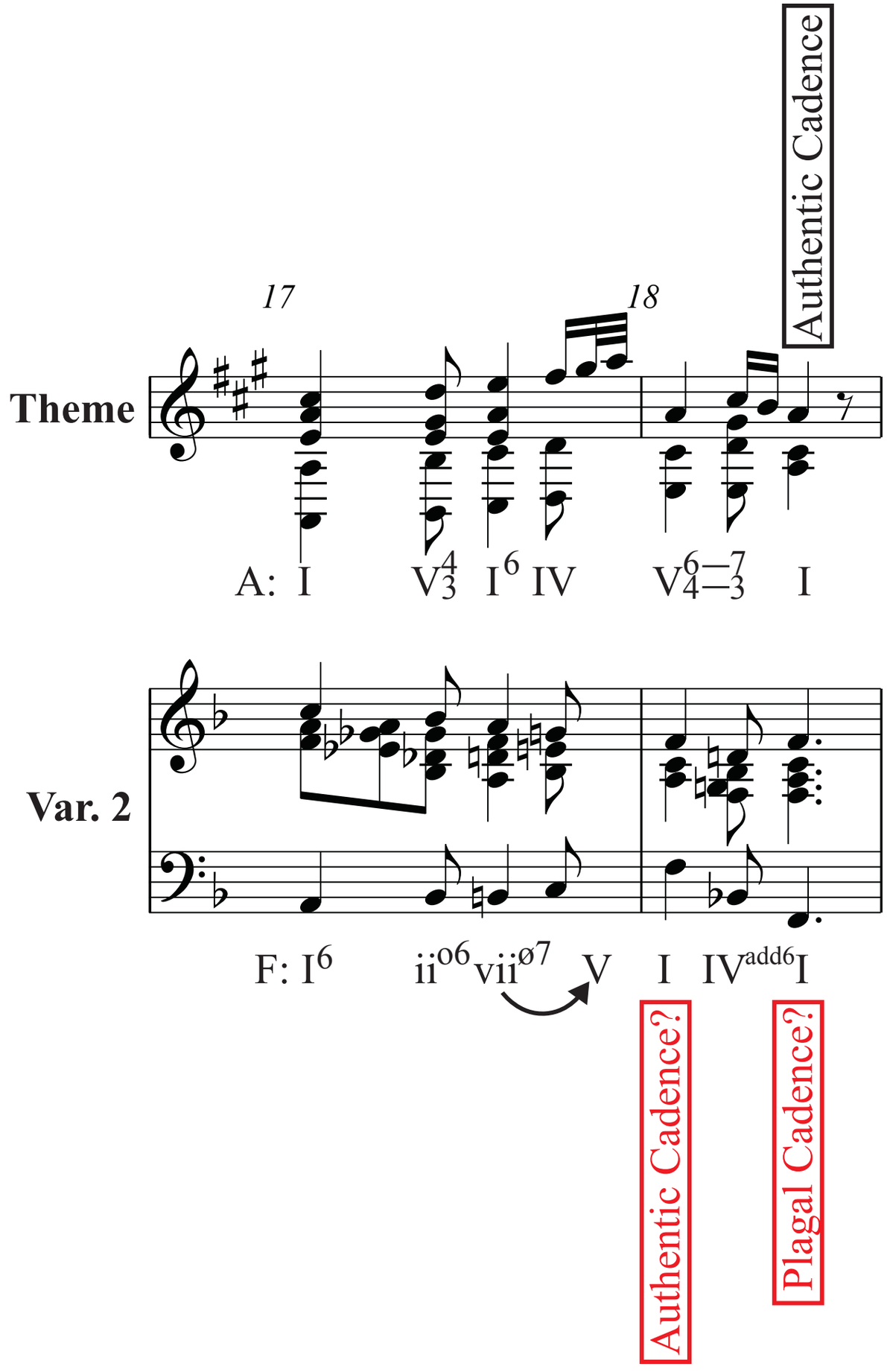
Leading tones of F and A

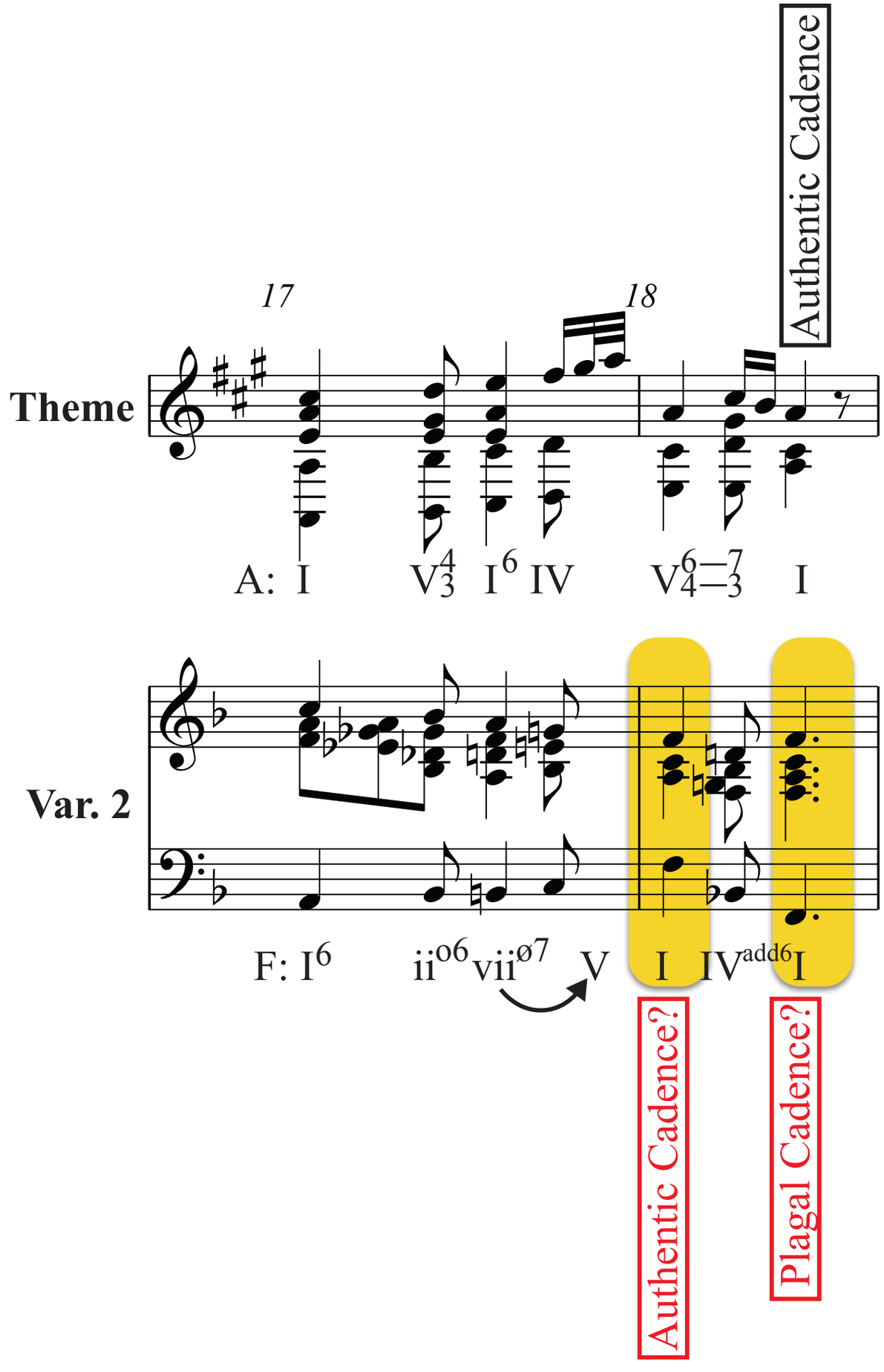


Chordal 7ths of V^7 in F and A

V^6_5 VI^6?

F: I^6? V?


Authentic Cadence
17
18
Theme
A: I V4 3 I6 IV V6—7 4—3 I
Var. 2
F: I6 iio6 viiø7 V I IVadd6 I
Authentic Cadence?
Plagal Cadence?


Authentic Cadence
17
18
Theme
A: I V4 3 I6 IV V6—7 4—3 I
Var. 2
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Authentic Cadence?
Plagal Cadence?

Tonic

(1)Tonic is a *pitch-class* identity.
(2)Tonic is a *chord function.*
(3)Tonic is a property of of a melodic theme.

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“(a) a focal pitch class
(b) with respect to which all remaining pitch classes in some musical passage are hierarchically arranged and perceived
(c) even in its acoustic absence.”

Rings 2019

Tonic

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Property of single chords by which they create a sufficient effect of stability to at least temporarily remove the need for continuation and to extinguish expectation about what chord will occur next.

Doll 2017

Tonic

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(3)Tonic is a property of of a melodic theme.

"[T]hematic exposition and lengthy Tonics are closely associated in chromatic music; indeed, the presence of one often induces a sense of the other."

Harrison 1994

Unravelling the Tonic

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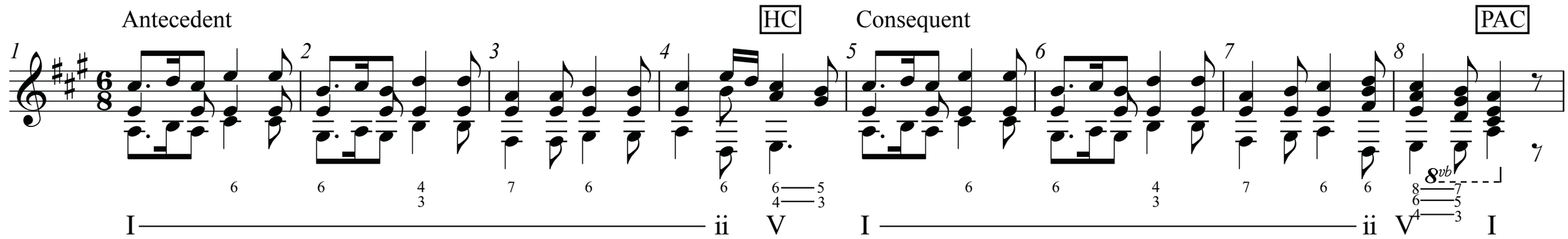
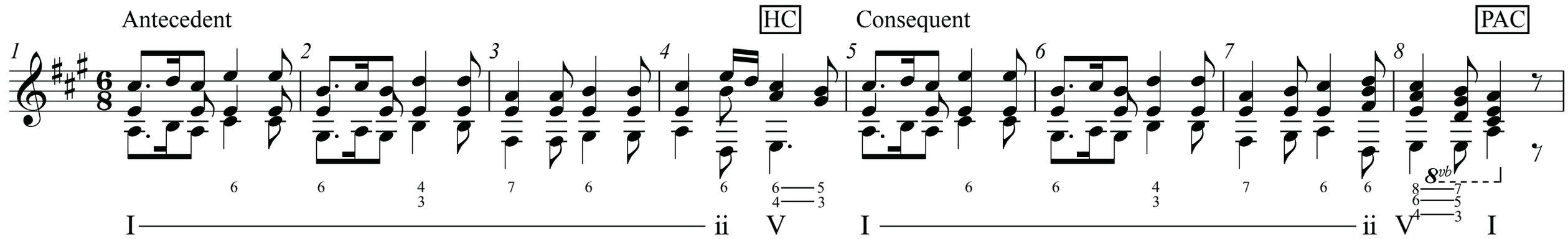
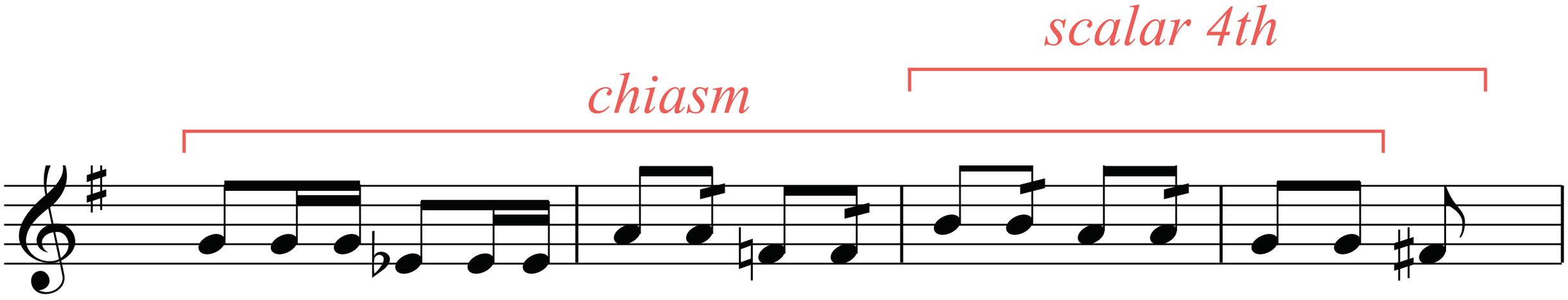
Exposition of Mozart's Theme



Important motives



Motives in Variation 4



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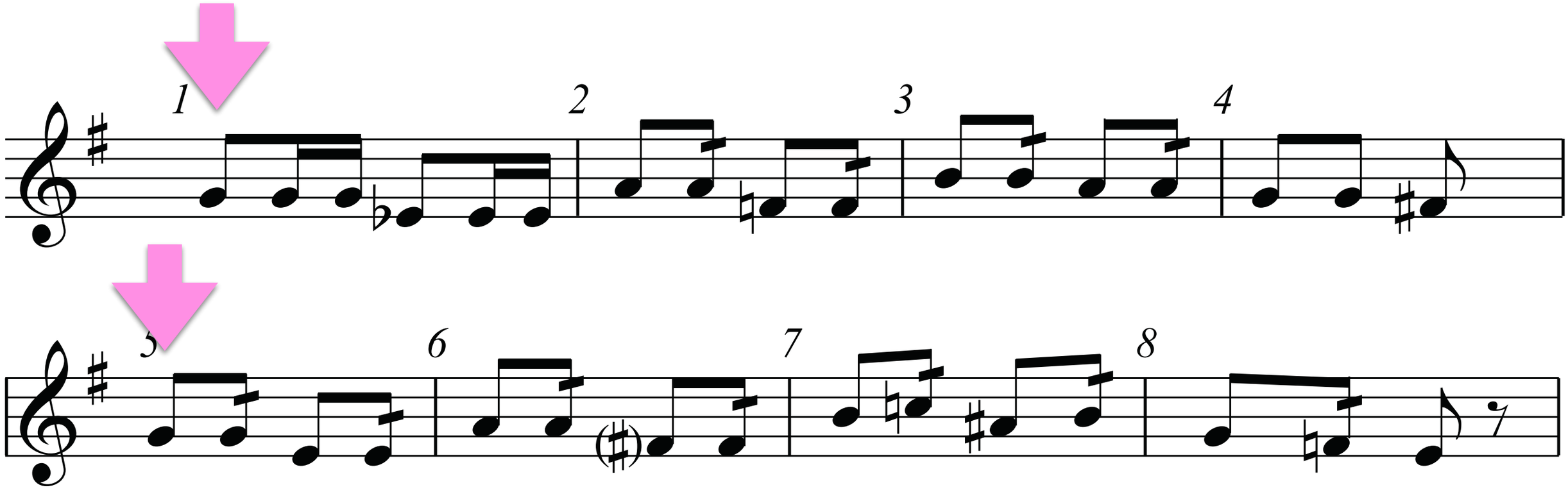
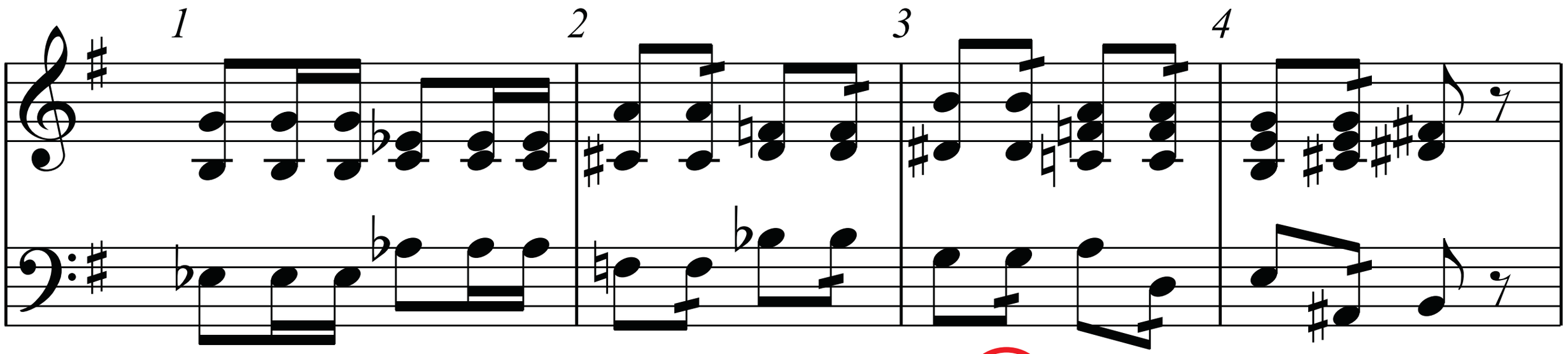


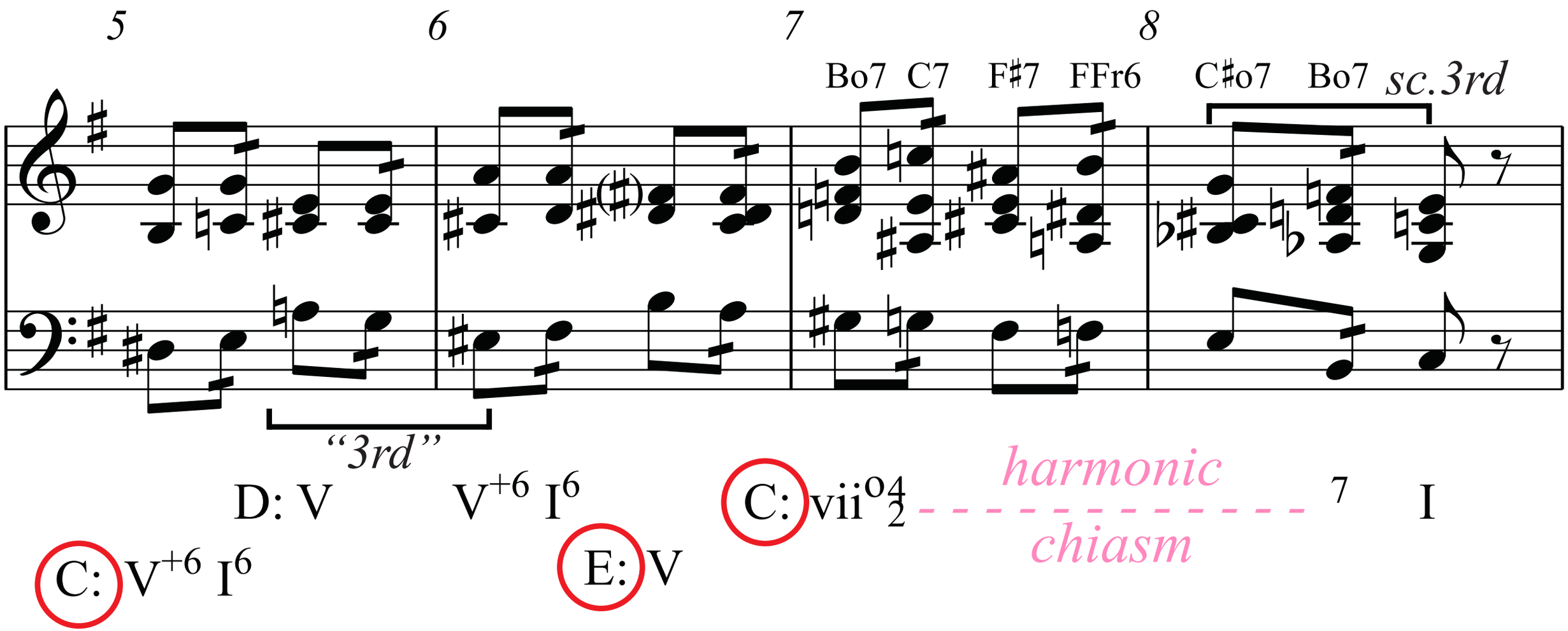
Harmonization in Variation 4



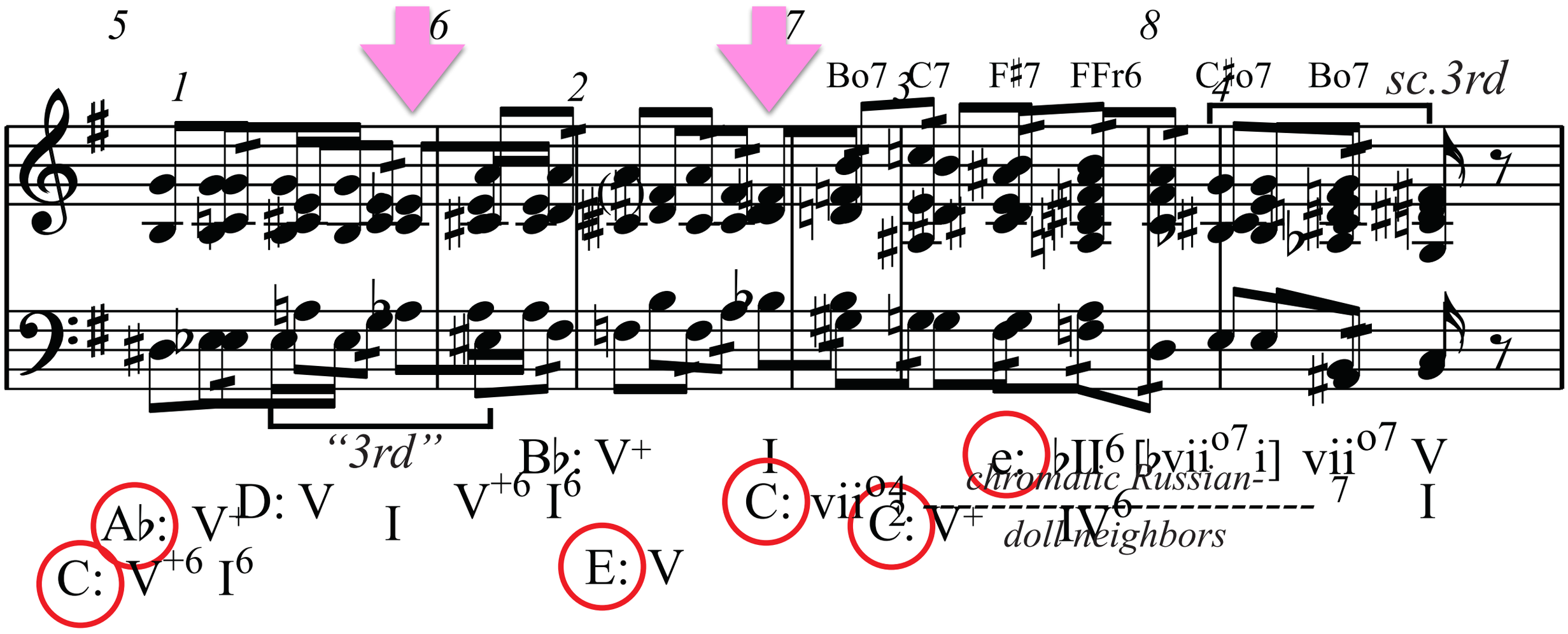
B♭: V+ I e: ♭II6 [♭vii°7 i] vii°7 V

A♭: V+ I C: V+ IV6

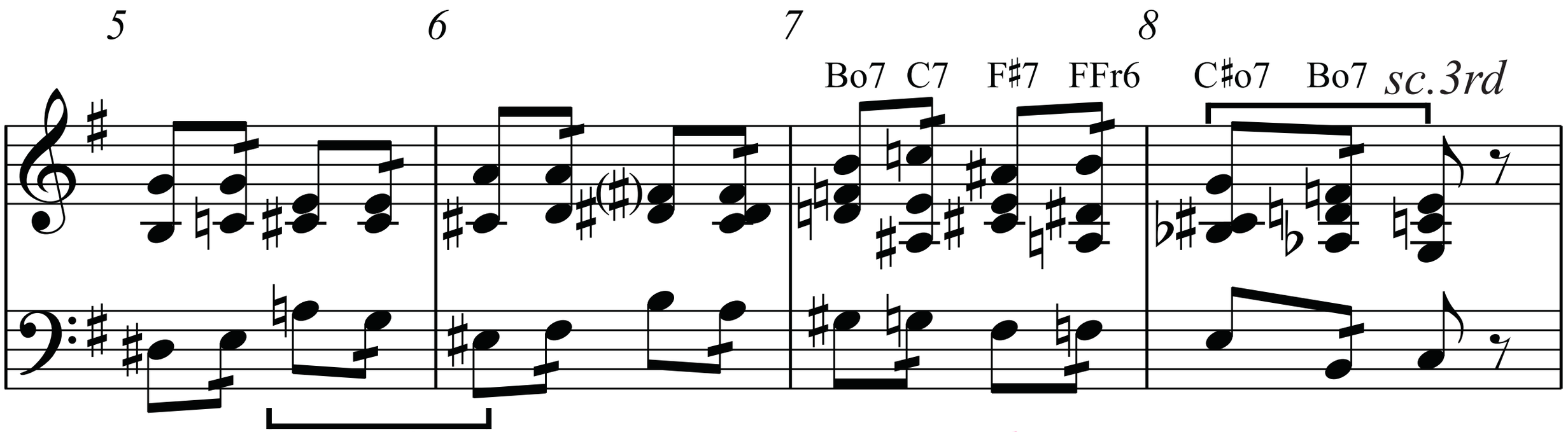
Harmonization in Variation 4



Harmonization in Variation 4



Harmonization in Variation 4



"3rd"

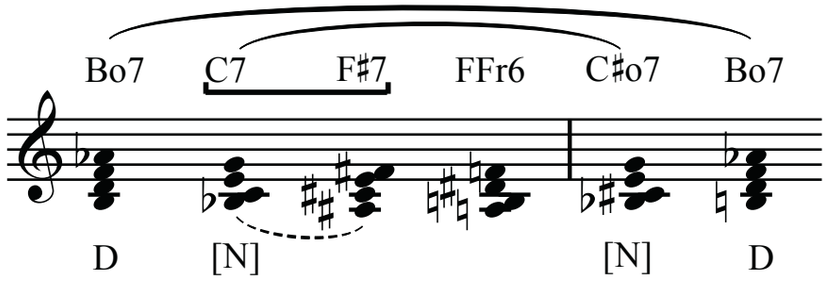
D: V V+6 I6

C: V+6 I6

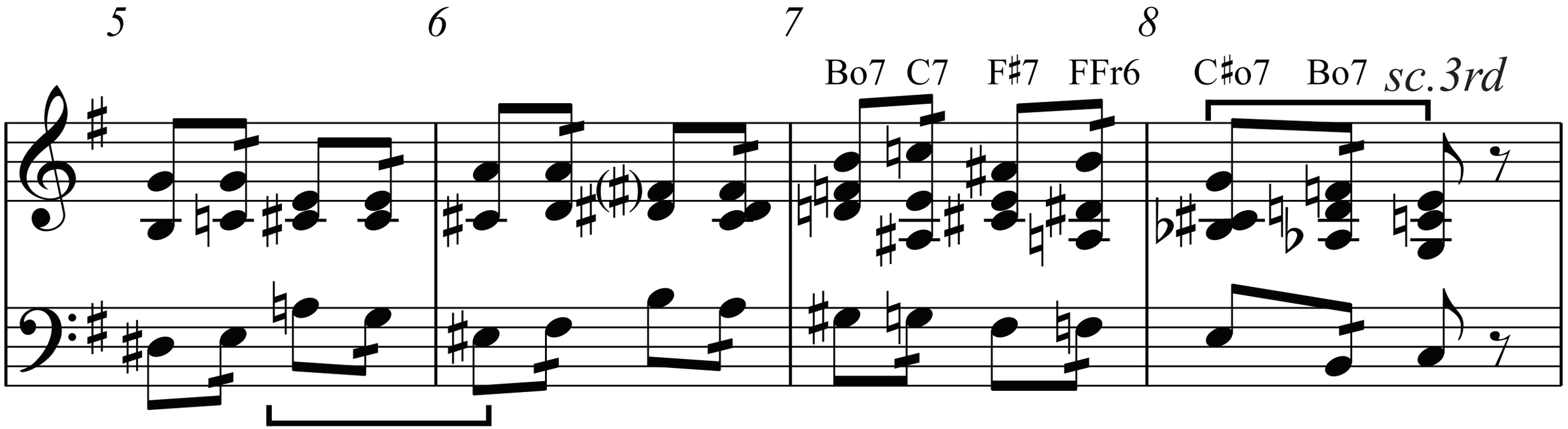
E: V

C: vii°4/2 7 I

harmonic chiasm



Harmonization in Variation 4



"3rd"

D: V V+6 I6

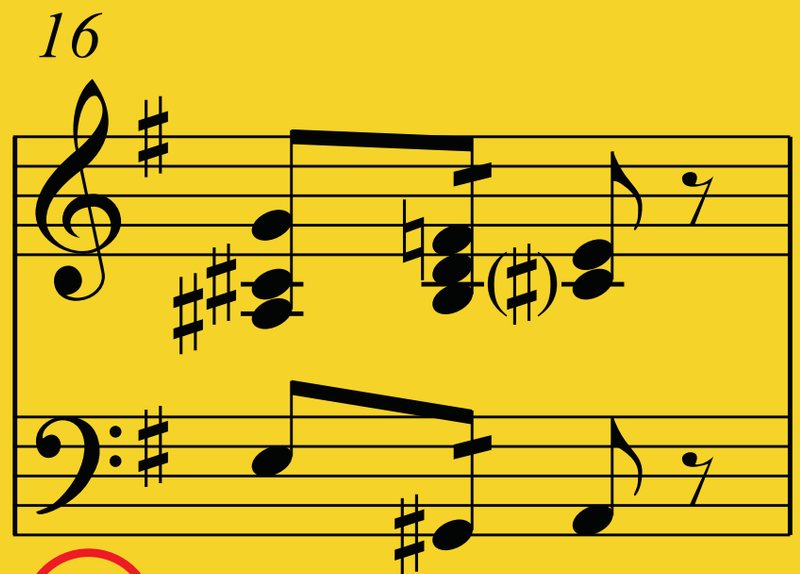
C: V+6 I6

E: V

C: vii°4/2 - - - - - - - - - - - - 7 I

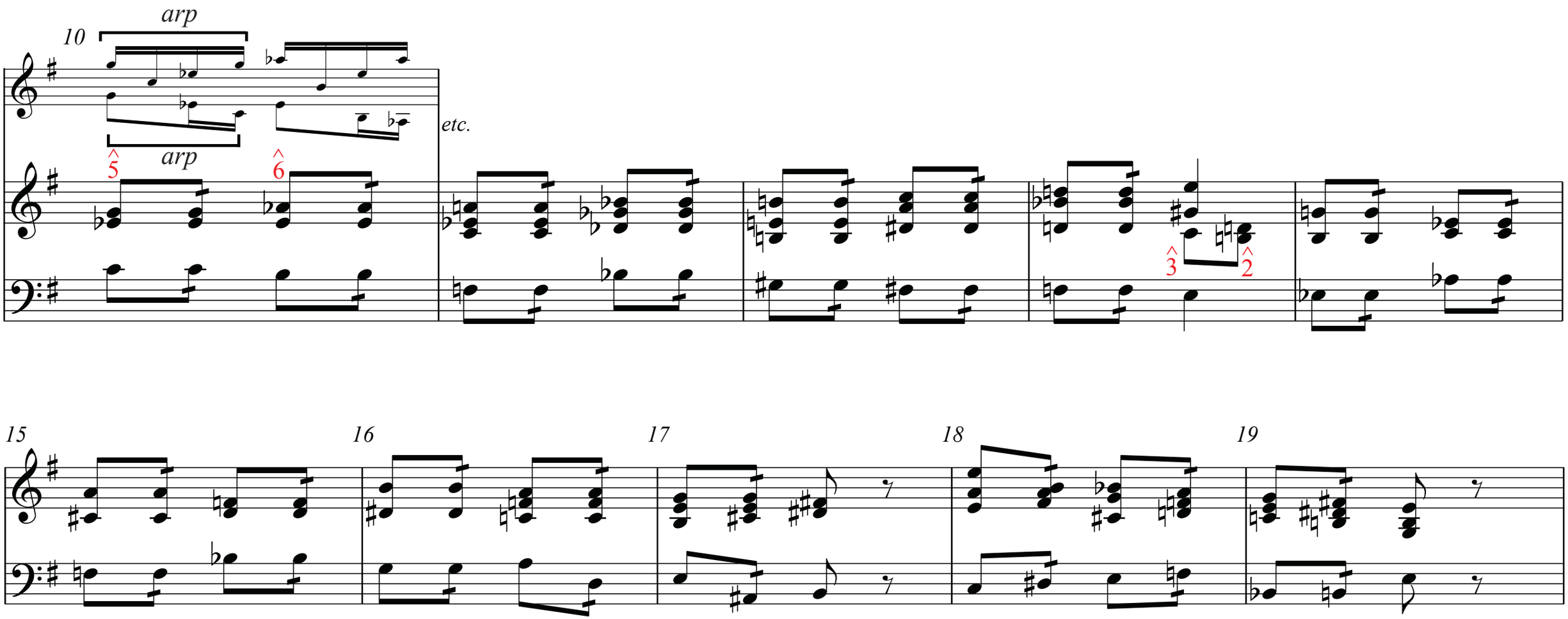
harmonic chiasm

Altered ending in written-out repeat

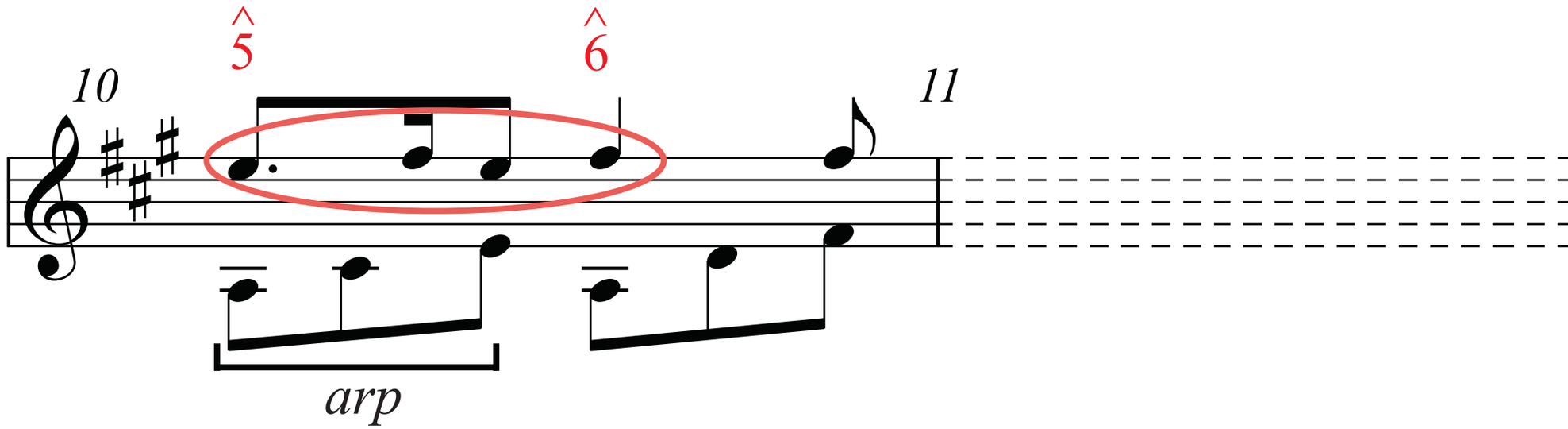


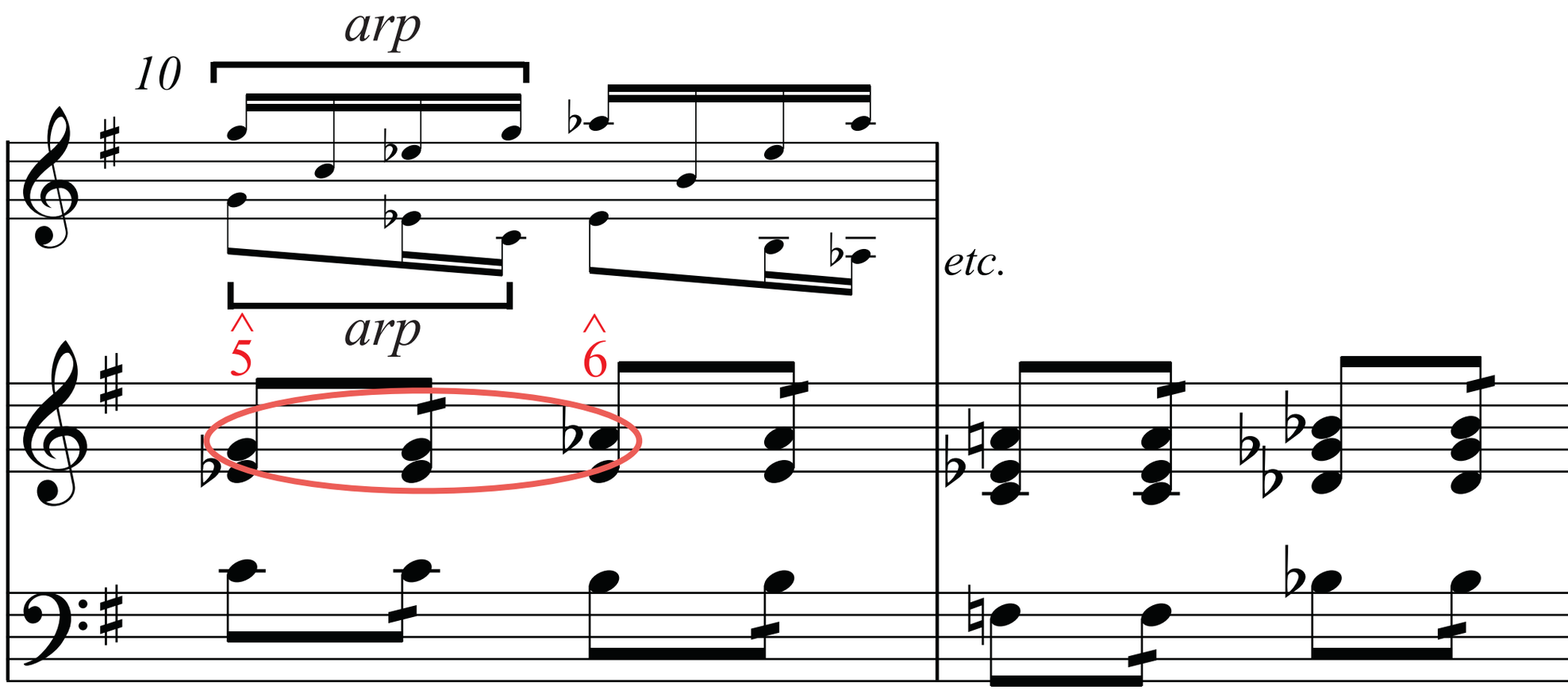
A: ♭vii°4/2 vii°7 I

Variation 4, contrasting middle and beginning of reprise

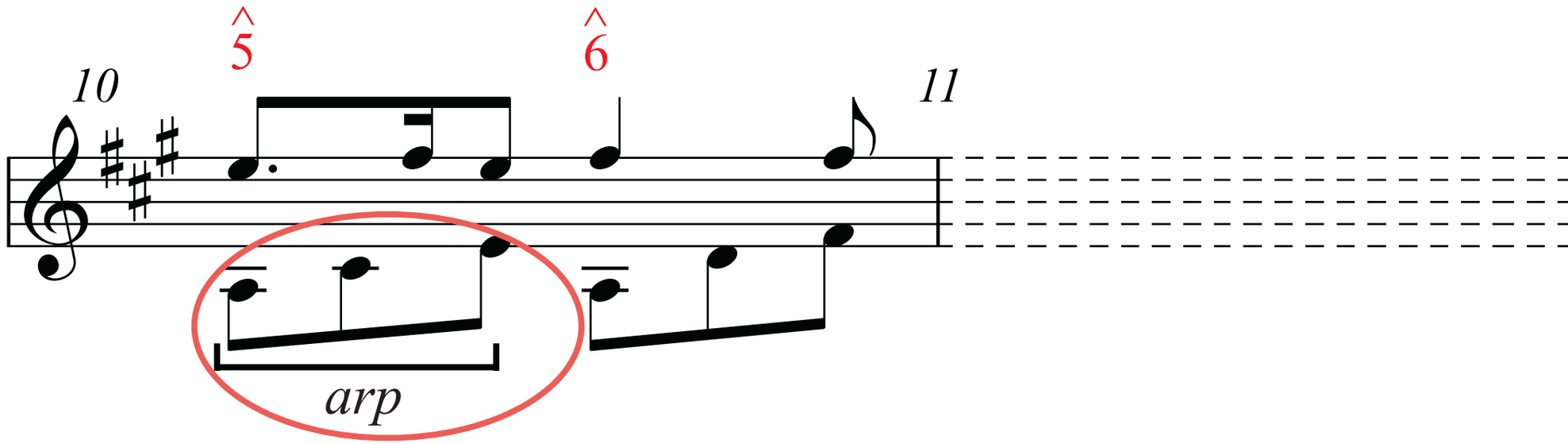


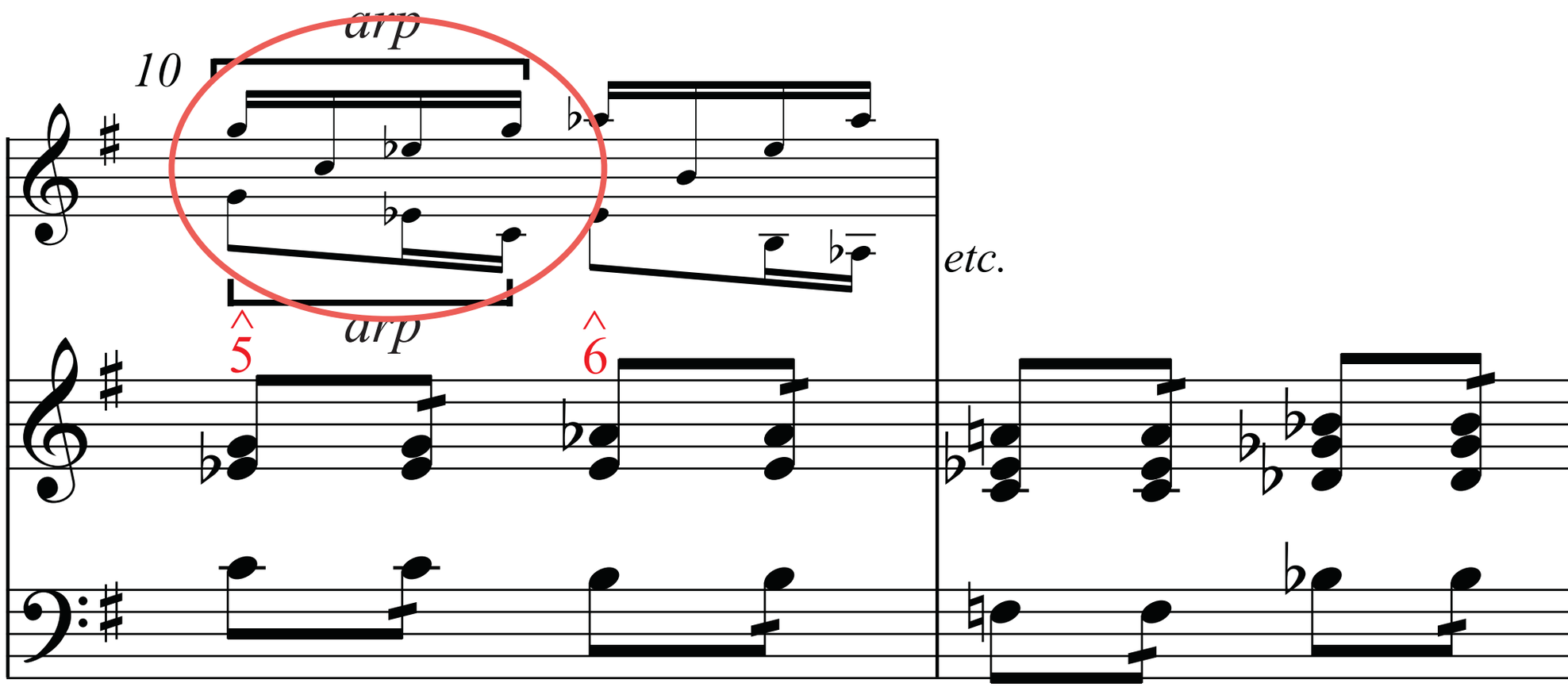
Variation 4, contrasting middle and beginning of reprise



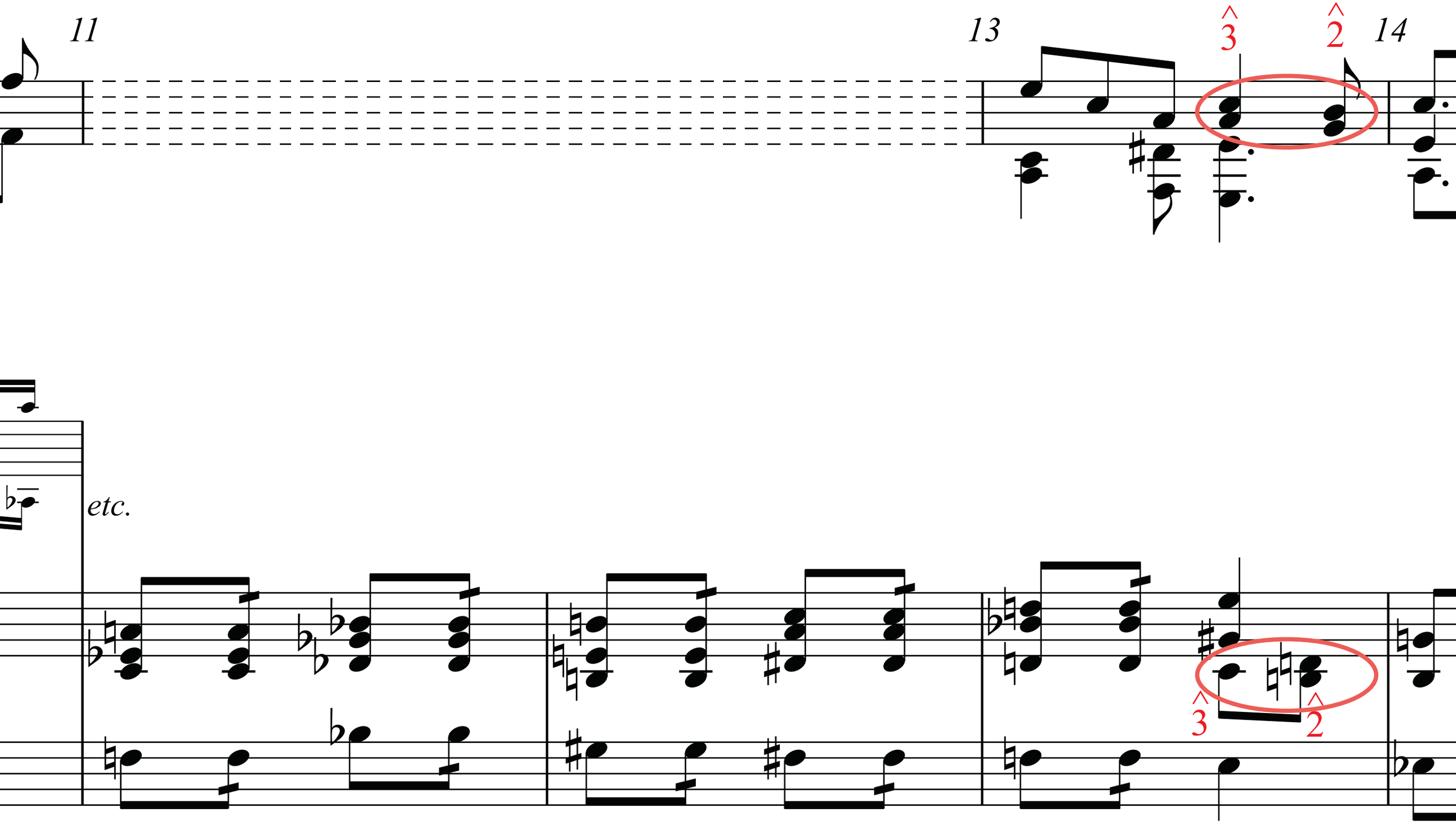


Variation 4, contrasting middle and beginning of reprise

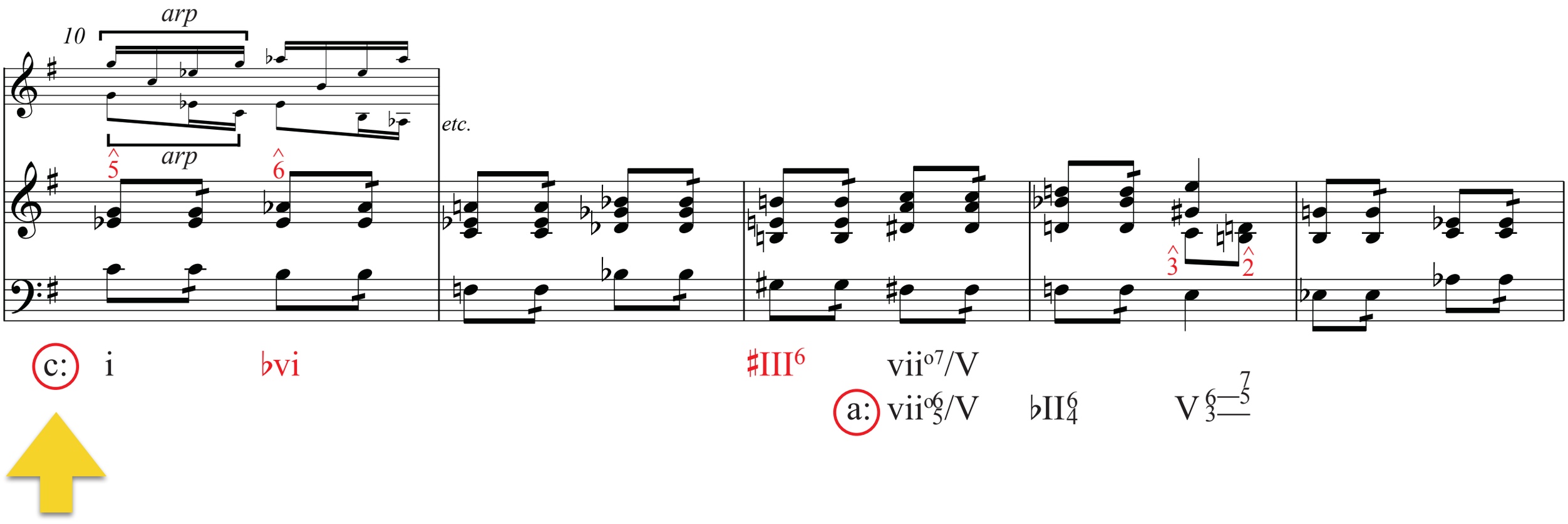




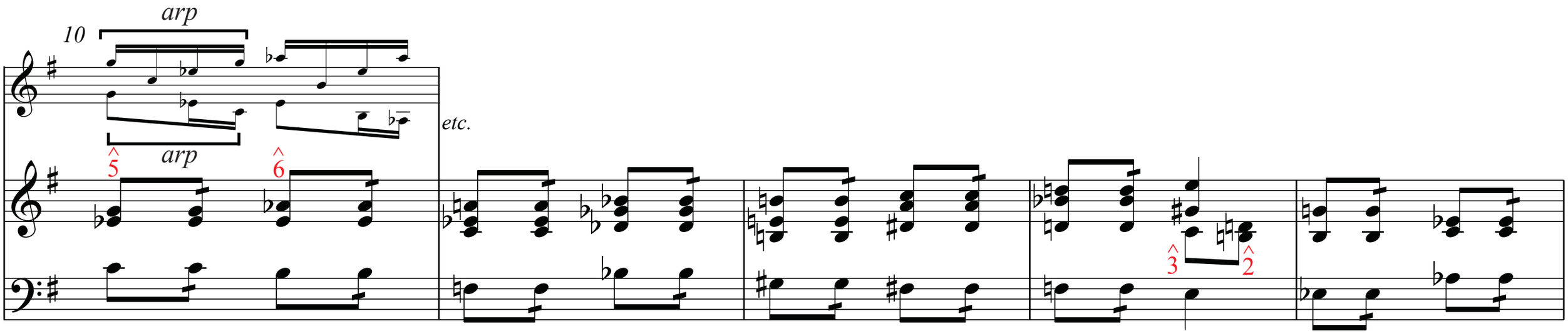
Variation 4, contrasting middle and beginning of reprise



Variation 4, tonic identities from first two phrases



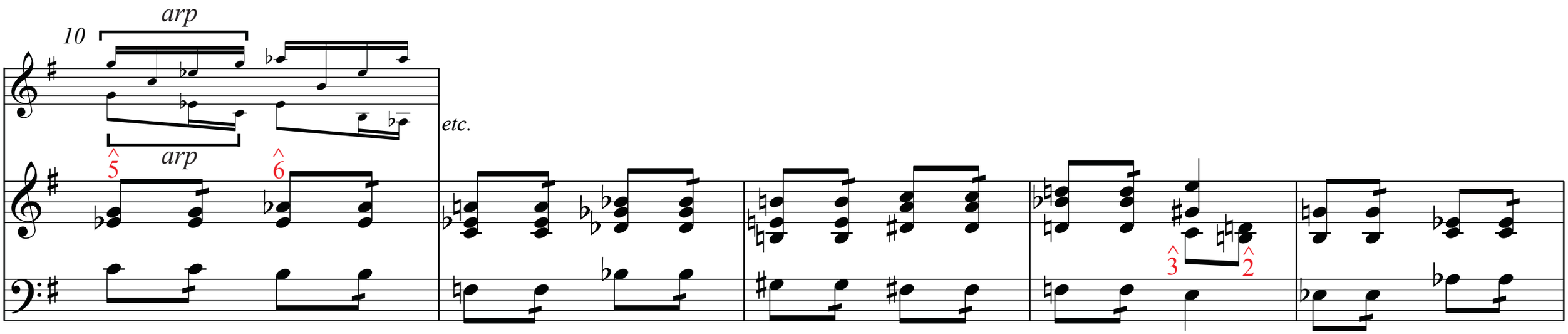
Variation 4, tonic identities from first two phrases



c: i ♭vi ♯III^{6} vii^{o7}/V

a: vii$^{o6}_{5}$/V ♭II$^{6}_{4}$ V $^{6}_{3}$–$^{7}_{5}$

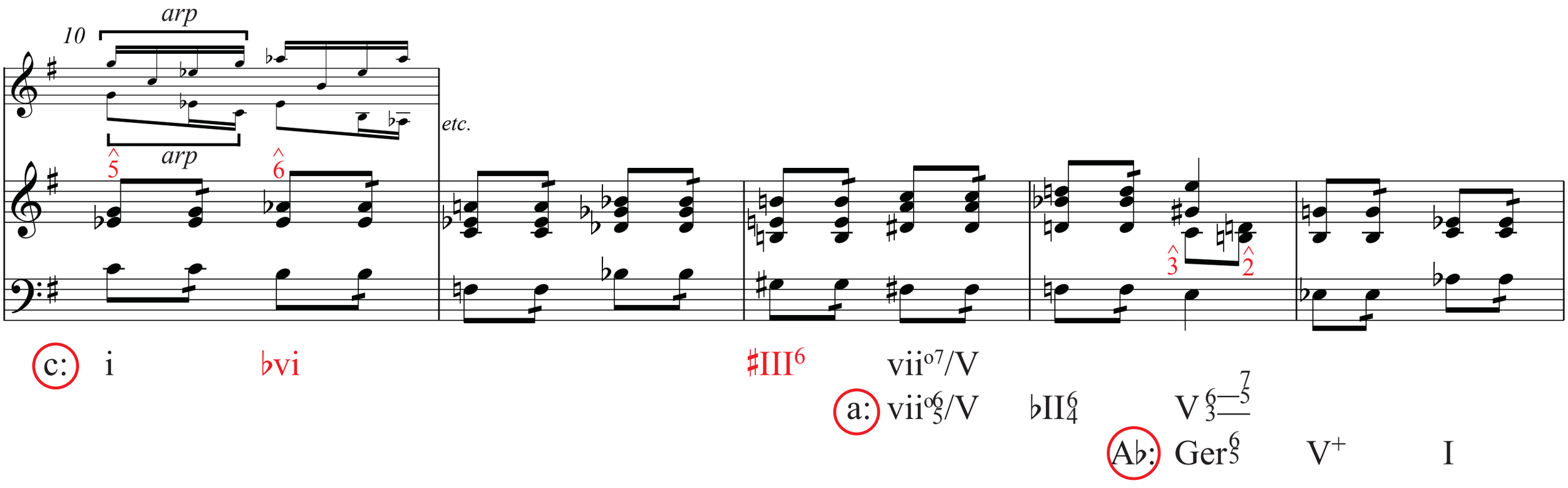
Variation 4, tonic identities from first two phrases

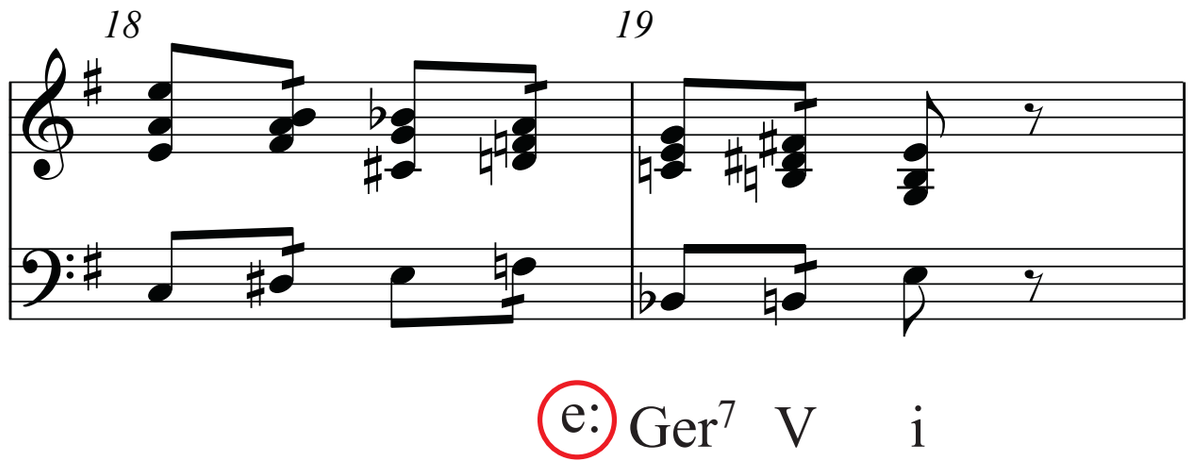


c: i ♭vi ♯III^{6} vii^{o7}/V

a: vii$^{o6}_{5}$/V ♭II$^{6}_{4}$ V$^{6}_{3}$–$^{7}_{5}$

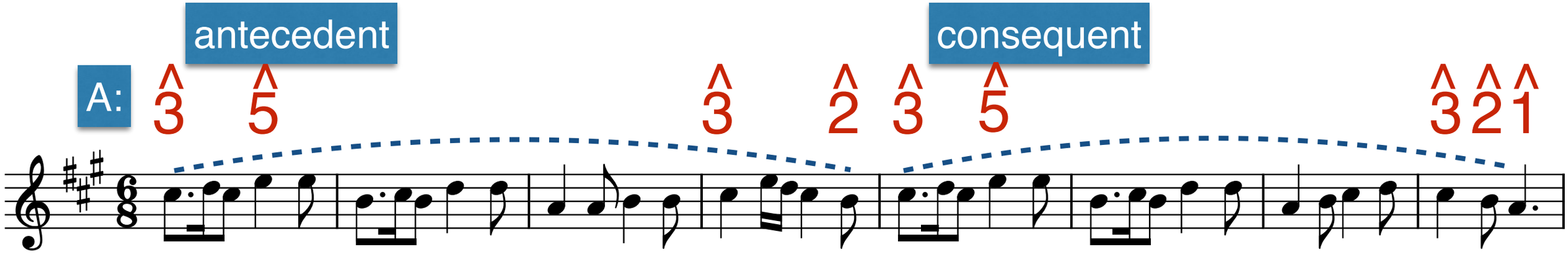
A♭: Ger$^{6}_{5}$ V^{+} I

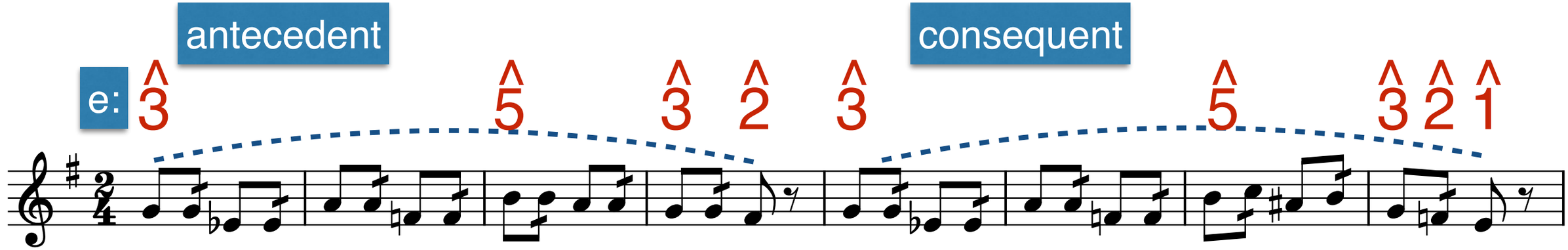




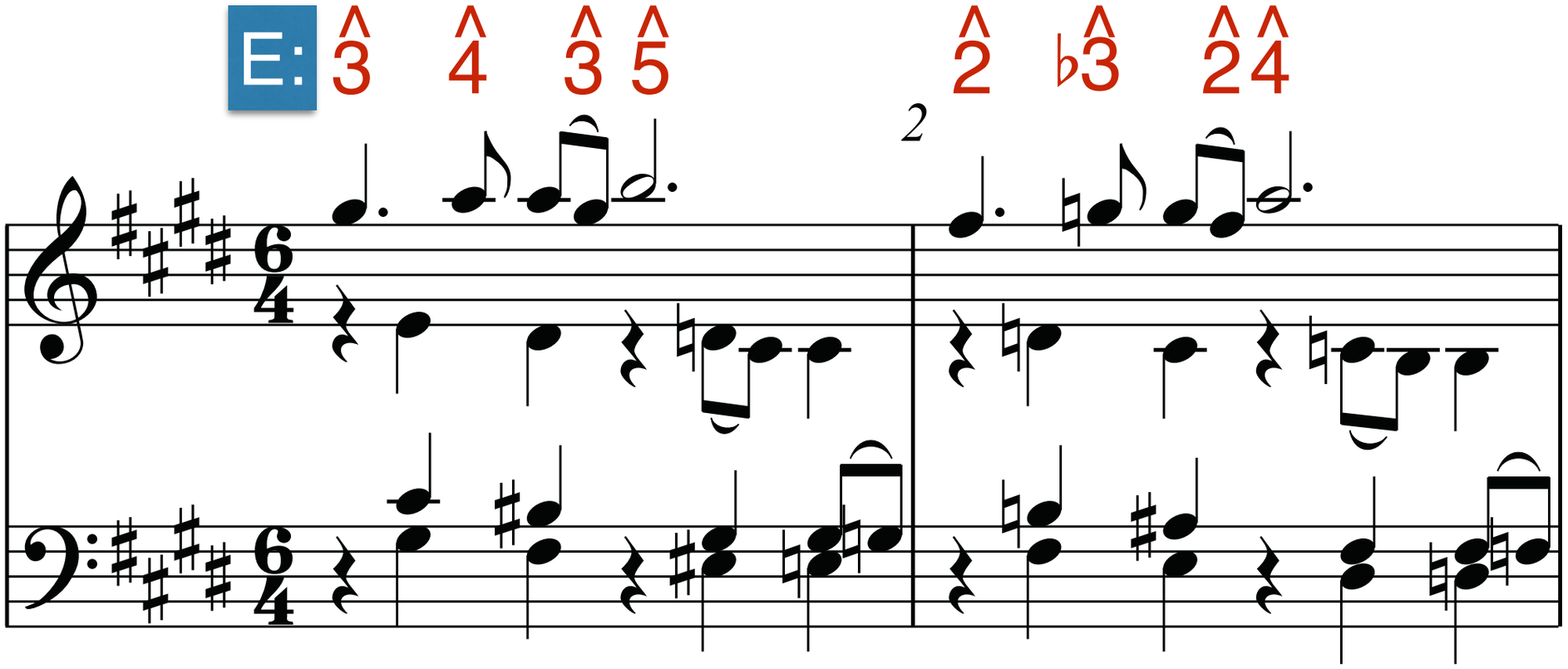
Variation 4, conclusion

Thematic Structure of Theme & Variation 4





Opening of Variation 8



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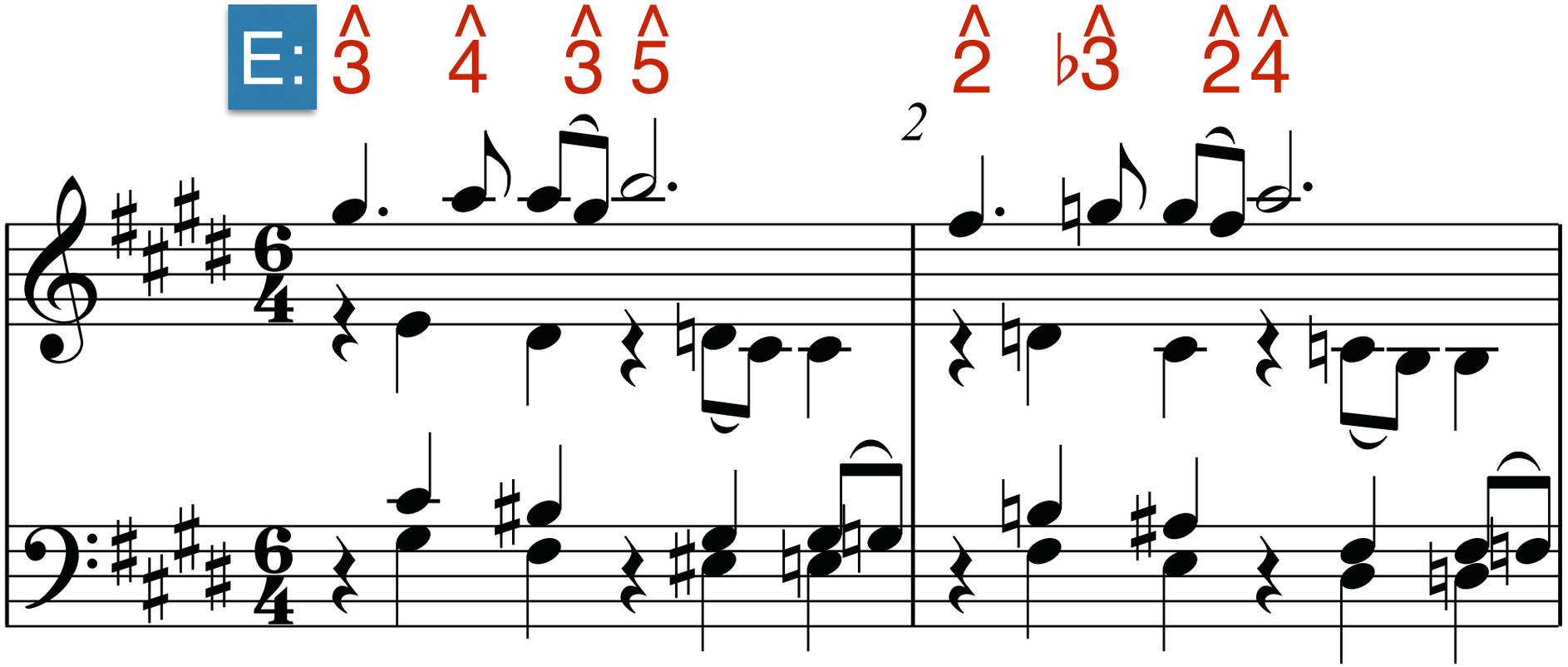
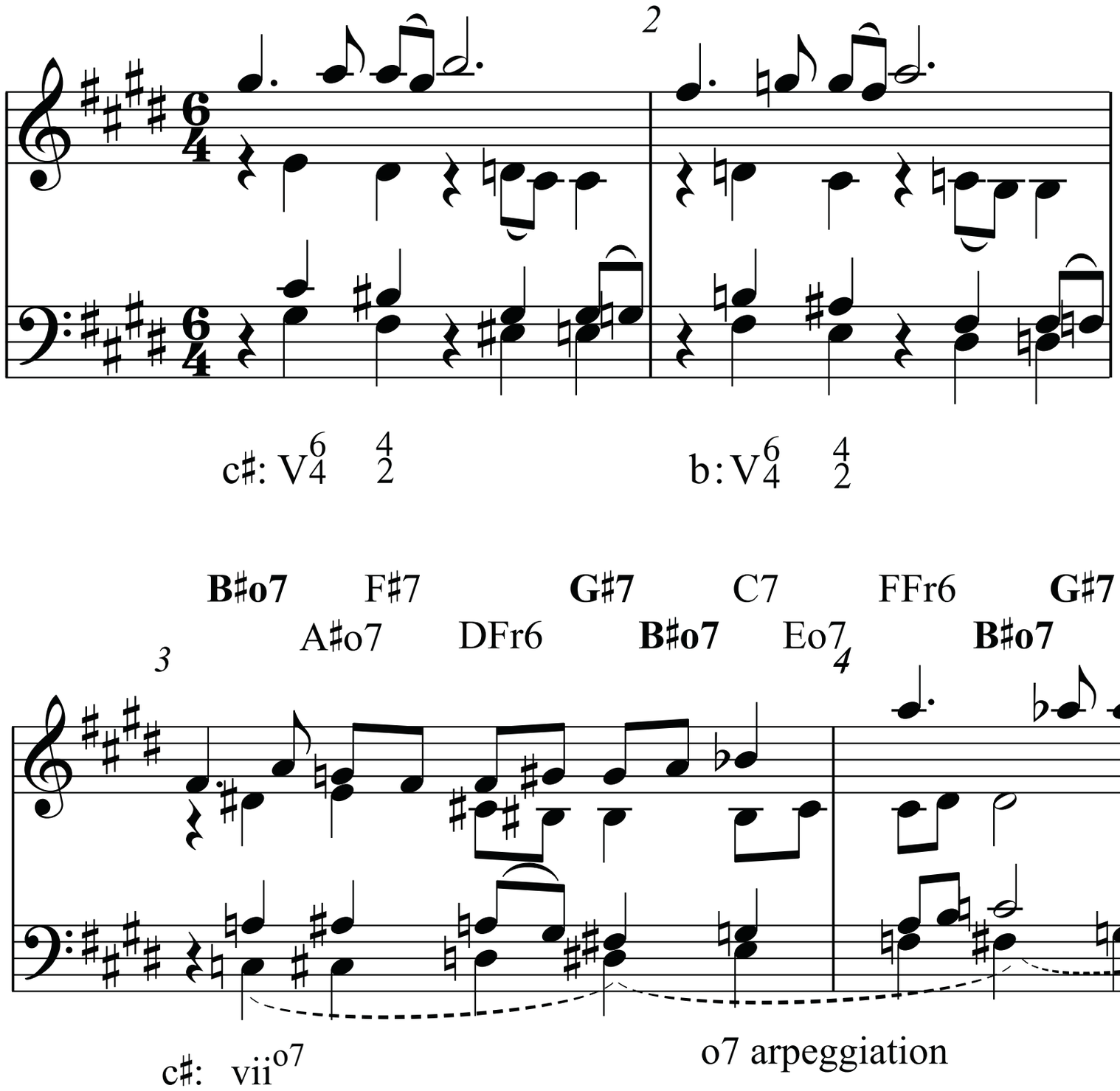


c♯: V_4^6 $_2^4$ b: V_4^6 $_2^4$

Opening of Variation 8



Conclusions

(1)Tonic is a *pitch-class* identity.
(2)Tonic is a *chord function.*
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References

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