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3 November 1966

**SPACE**

**EVENT**

**REPORT**

LUNA-8 -- 3 DECEMBER 1965

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
DIRECTORATE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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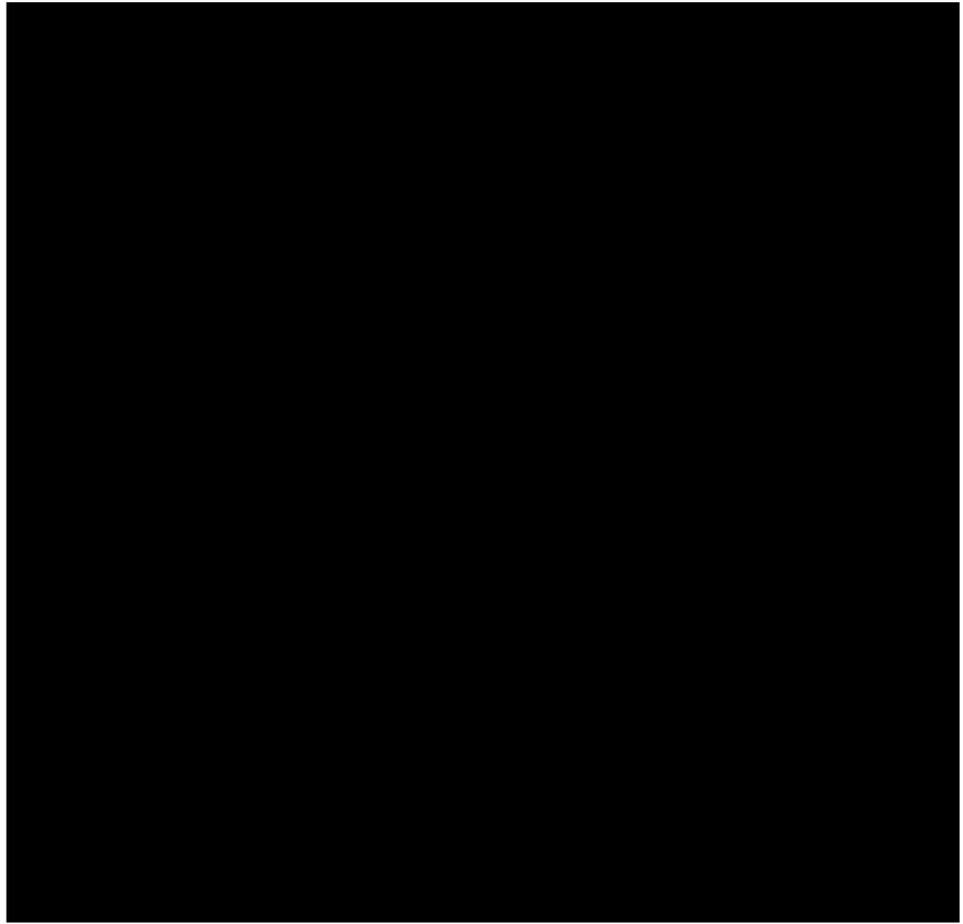
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SPACE EVENT REPORT

LUNA-8 -- 3 DECEMBER 1965

SUMMARY

Luna-8, another Soviet probe intended to soft land on the moon, was launched from the Tyuratam Missile Test Range [REDACTED] on 3 December 1965. The vehicle was initially placed in a parking orbit and then ejected onto a translunar trajectory. A midcourse correction was successfully accomplished [REDACTED] on 4 December. [REDACTED]

Luna-8 marked the eighteenth failure in twenty attempts identified with the Soviet lunar program. According to TASS announcements Luna-8 weighed 1552 kilograms, as compared with 1506 kilograms for Luna-7.

[REDACTED]

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DATA

Soviet Press Announcements

[REDACTED]

1516Z, 3 Dec 65 [REDACTED]: The Soviet Union today launched an automatic lunar probe, Luna-8. The main purpose of the launch is the further refinement of the elements of a soft lunar landing and scientific studies. The probe weighs 1,552 kilograms.

The previous probe, called Luna-7, was launched on 4 October 1965. When the probe was near the moon most of the operations necessary to achieve a soft landing on the lunar surface were carried out. Some operations, however, were not performed and need additional refinement. The flight of Luna-7 supplied large practical material for further work.

Luna-8 carries scientific, telemetering and other measuring equipment which is automatically switched on according to the flight program and also on commands from the earth. Preliminary measurements show that the probe is moving on a trajectory close to the prescribed (course). All the equipment aboard the station is functioning normally.

The flight is tracked by a special ground-measuring complex. All the incoming data is being processed by the coordination computing center.

At 1800 hours Moscow time, 3 December 1965, Luna-8 was 45,670 kilometers away from the earth over a point on the earth's surface with coordinates: 41 degrees 19 minutes northern latitude, and 83 degrees 21 minutes eastern longitude.

1440Z, 4 Dec 65 [REDACTED]: By 1800 hours Moscow time today Luna-8 was at a distance of 213,000 kilometers from the earth. This moon probe was launched on Friday.

Four communications sessions have already been held with the station. Telemetric information and trajectory measurements were obtained during these sessions. According to this information all systems on board are working normally and the trajectory is close to the planned one.

The main purpose of this probe is the further refinement of the system of soft landing on the moon.

1524Z, 4 Dec 65 [REDACTED]: Ukrainian Academician Nikolay Barabashov described the launching of the Soviet Luna-8 automatic station as an important stage in the study of the moon.

The scientist recalled that after the launching of Luna-3 in 1959 and the Zond-3 automatic station in July 1965 Soviet scientists had obtained photographs of just about the entire surface of the lunar sphere. Now only five percent of the moon's surface remains "a blank spot."

Barabashov emphasized that a soft landing on the moon is a complex scientific and technical task and that Luna-8 is primarily intended to perfect this. The successful solution of this problem will open up colossal opportunities for research. It will, in particular, be possible to transmit to earth reports on the minutest details of the lunar surface, data on its physical properties and chemical composition. Such information is required by the designers of future scientific stations on the moon.

Barabashov said that he did not doubt that a station would eventually appear on the moon.

0338Z, 5 Dec 65 [REDACTED]: At 2200 Moscow time on 4 December a correction of the trajectory of the flight of the automatic station Luna-8 was carried out.

The station is proceeding along close to the projected trajectory which will secure a meeting with the moon in a specified region. The astro-navigational system and the correcting propulsion device worked in accordance with calculations. All systems are working normally.

At six o'clock in the morning Moscow time on 5 December 1965 the station receded from the earth at a distance of 260,000 kilometers.

1917Z, 5 Dec 65 (FBIS 65): Two communications sessions were held today with the Soviet moon probe Luna-8. Trajectory measurements were made and telemetry information received.

All systems on board are functioning normally. The results of the trajectory measurements conducted after the correction have confirmed that trajectory is as planned.

The Luna-8 station will reach the surface of the moon in the area of the Sea of Storms at about 0050 Moscow time on 7 December.

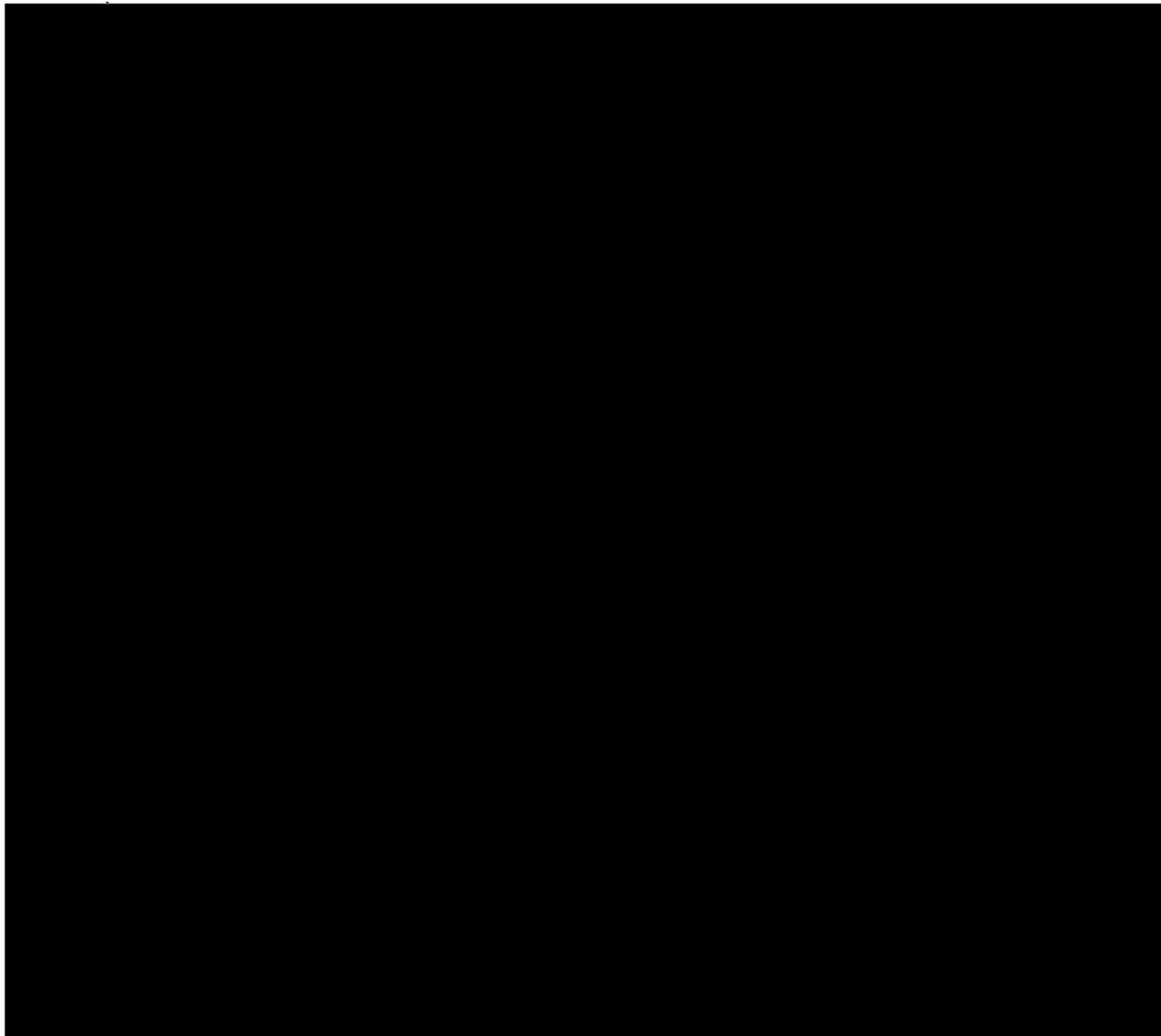
The coordinating and computing center is continuing to process the incoming information.

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0020Z, 7 Dec 65 [REDACTED]: Today, 7 December at 0051 hours 30 seconds Moscow time, the automatic station Luna-8 reached the surface of the moon at the point 9 degrees 8 minutes north latitude and minus 63 degrees 18 minutes longitude.

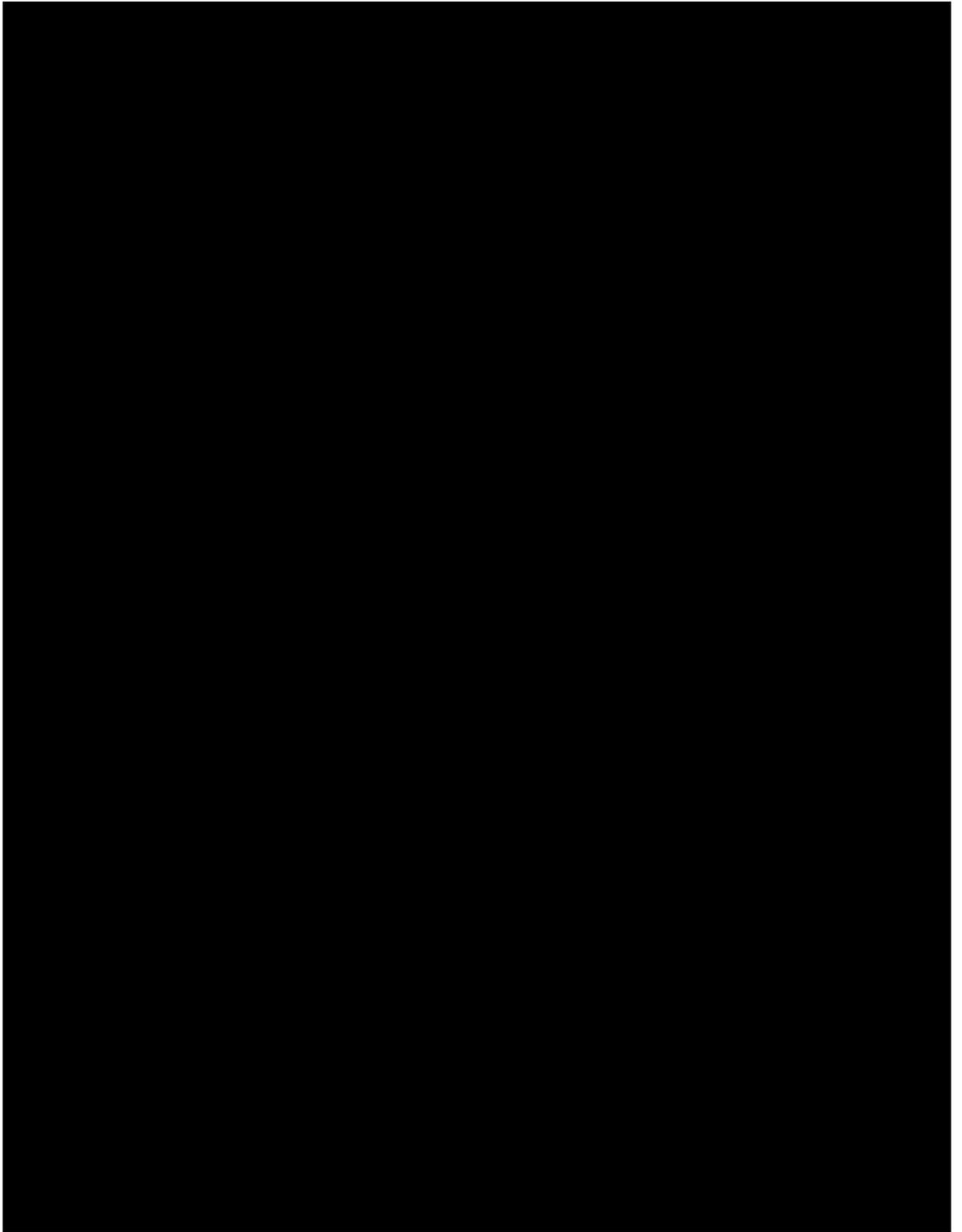
As the station was approaching the moon the functioning of the soft landing system was checked. The check showed that the systems of the station were functioning normally at all stages of the landing except the final touchdown.

As a result of the flight of the station Luna-8 a further step was made toward the realization of a soft landing.



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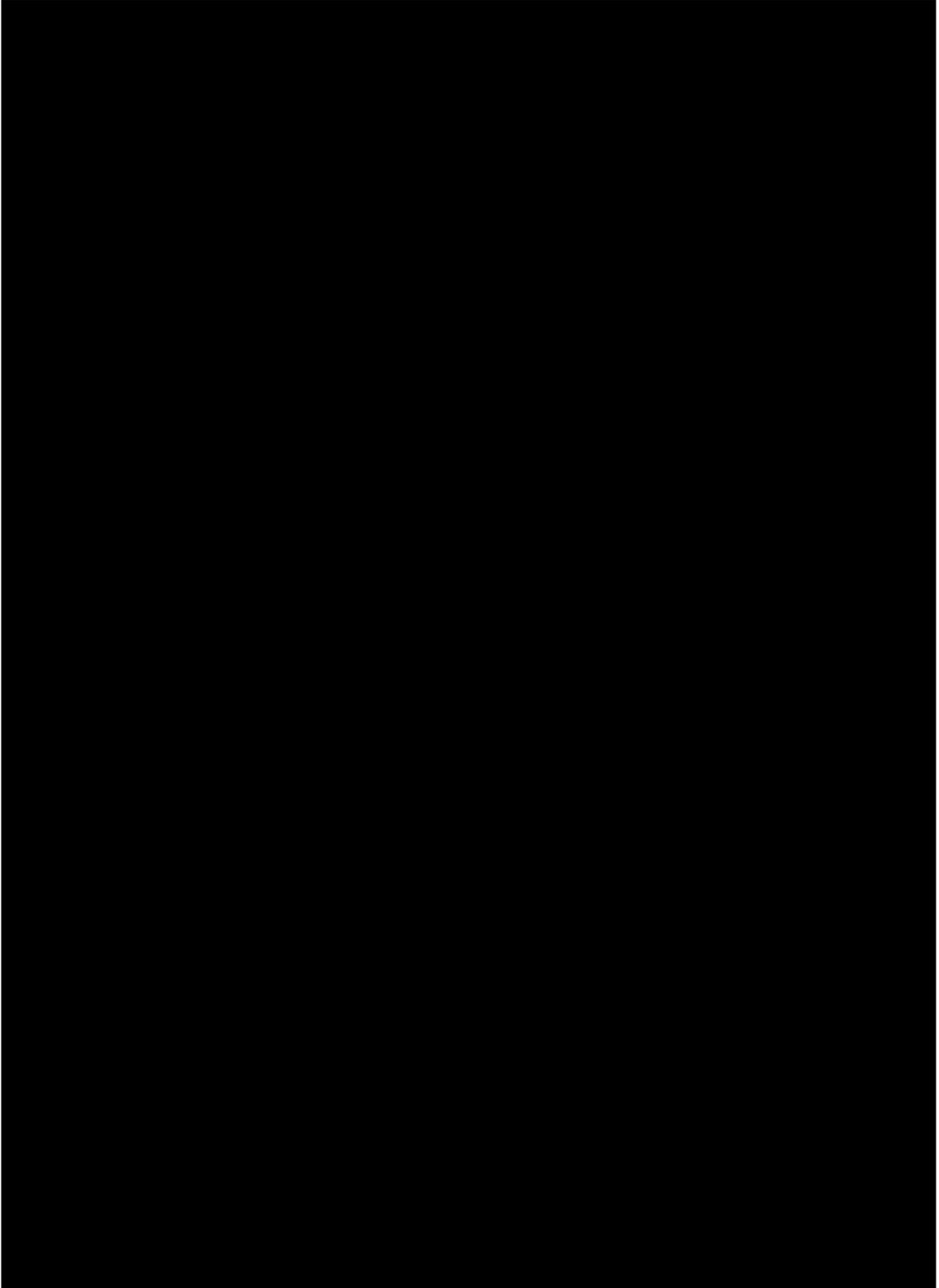


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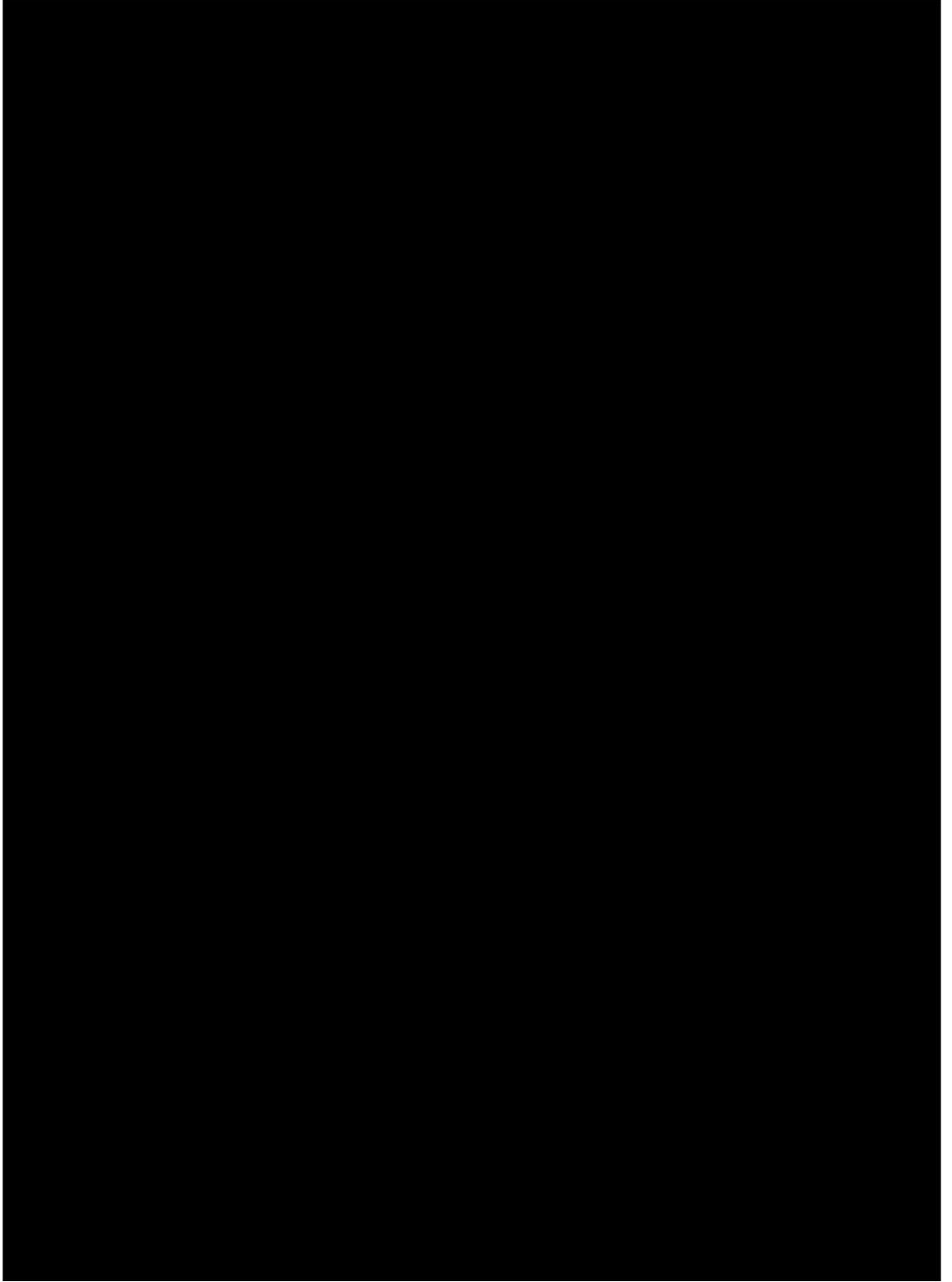
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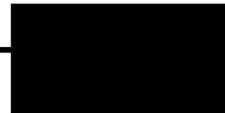


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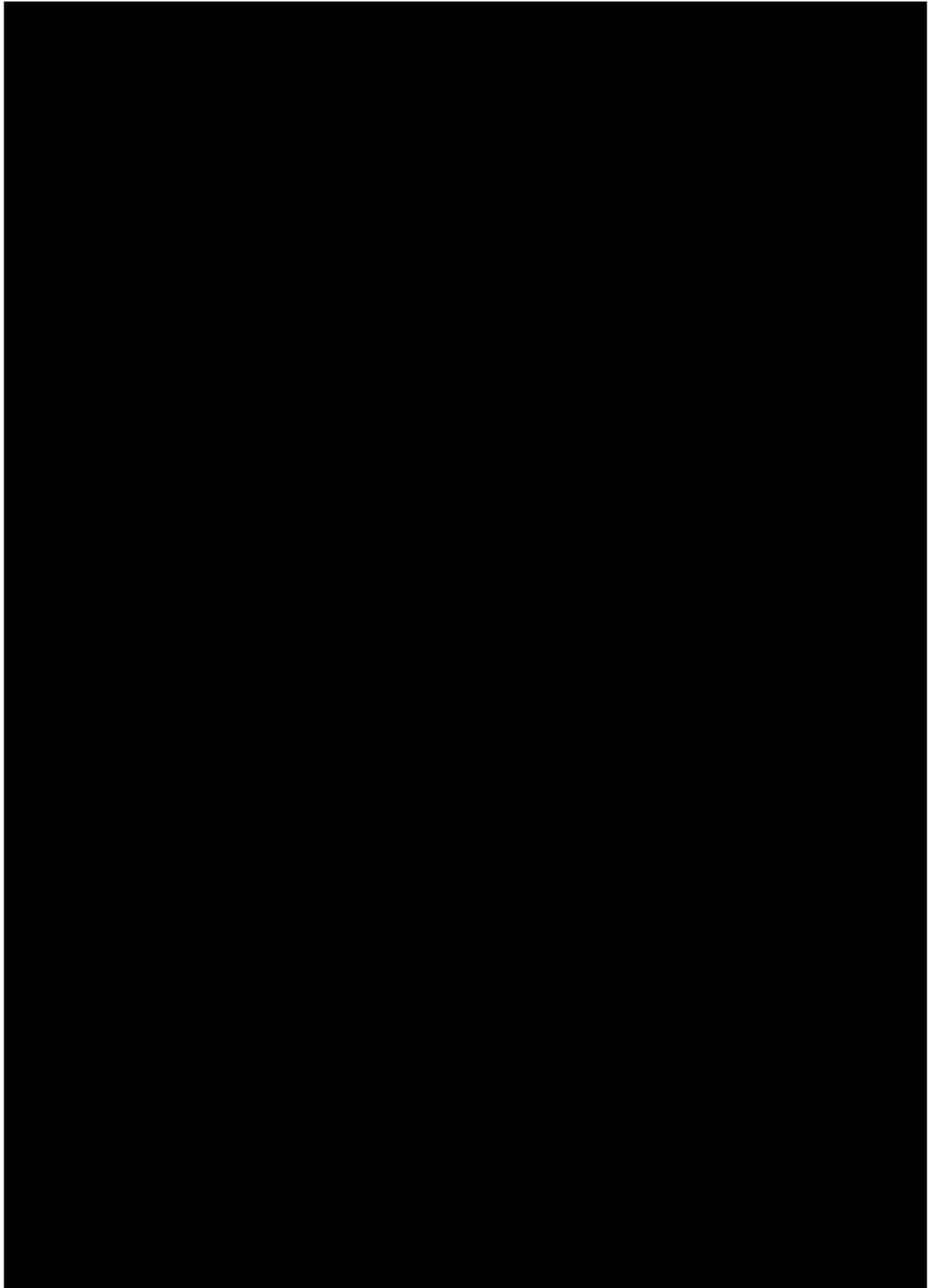


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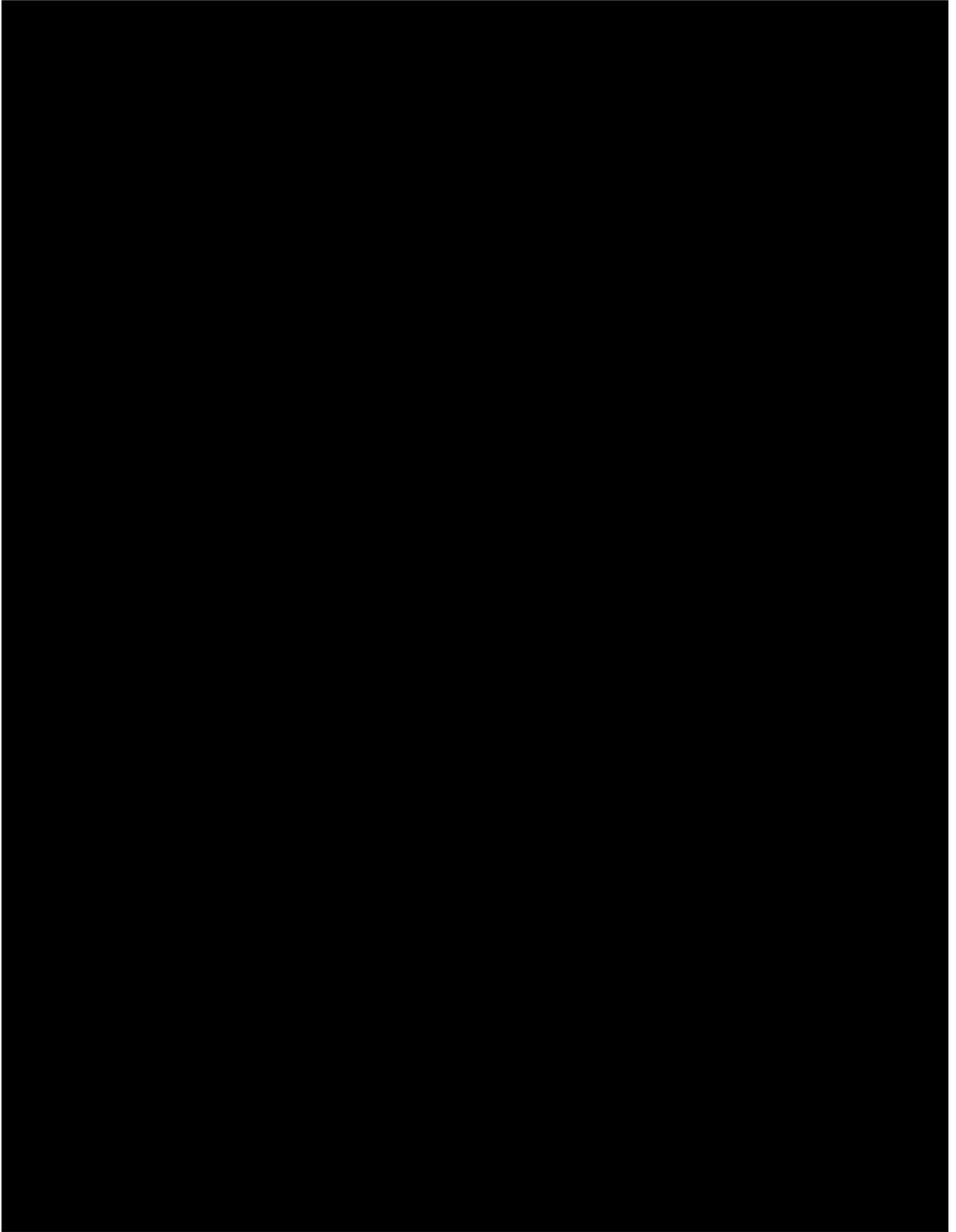


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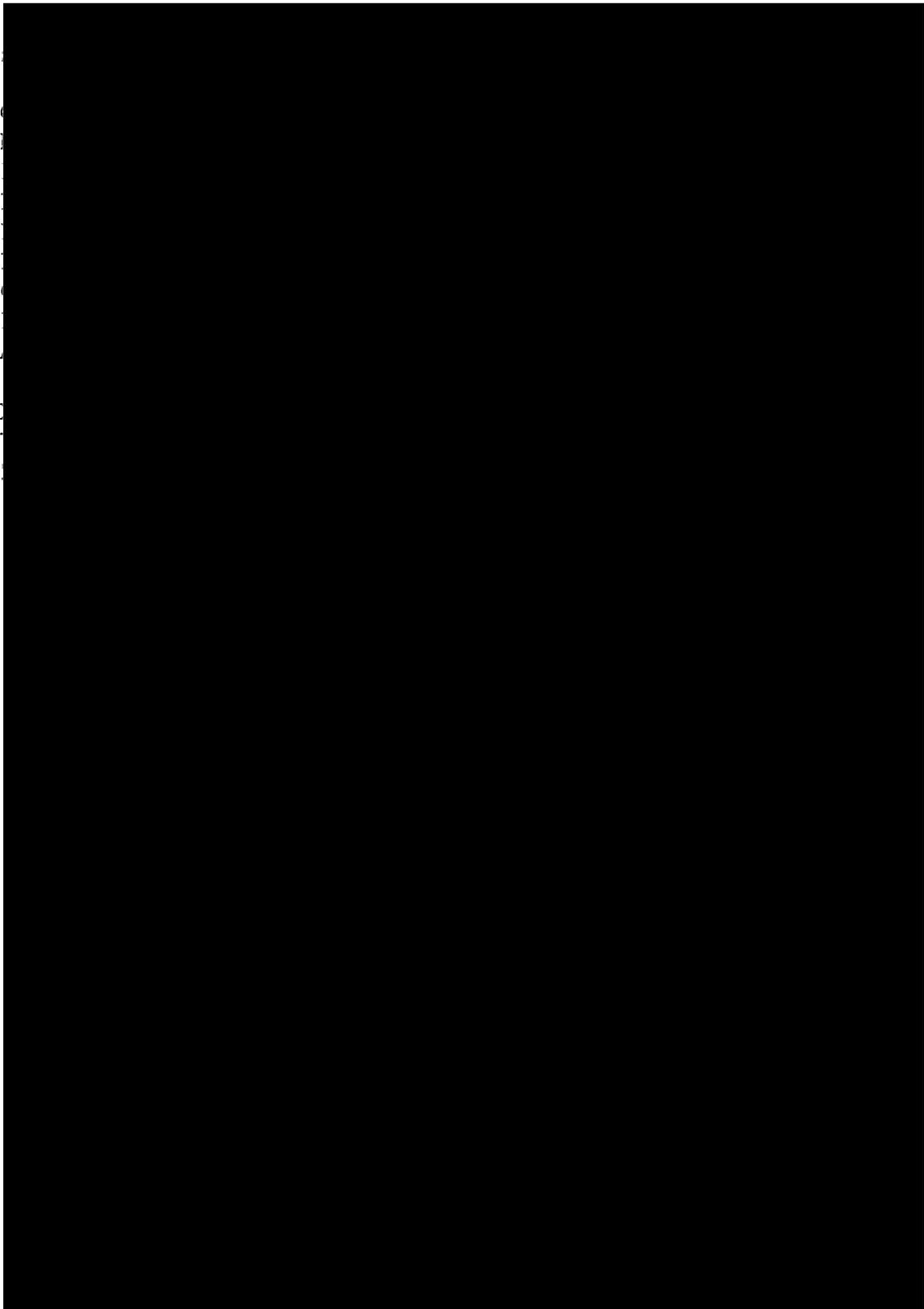


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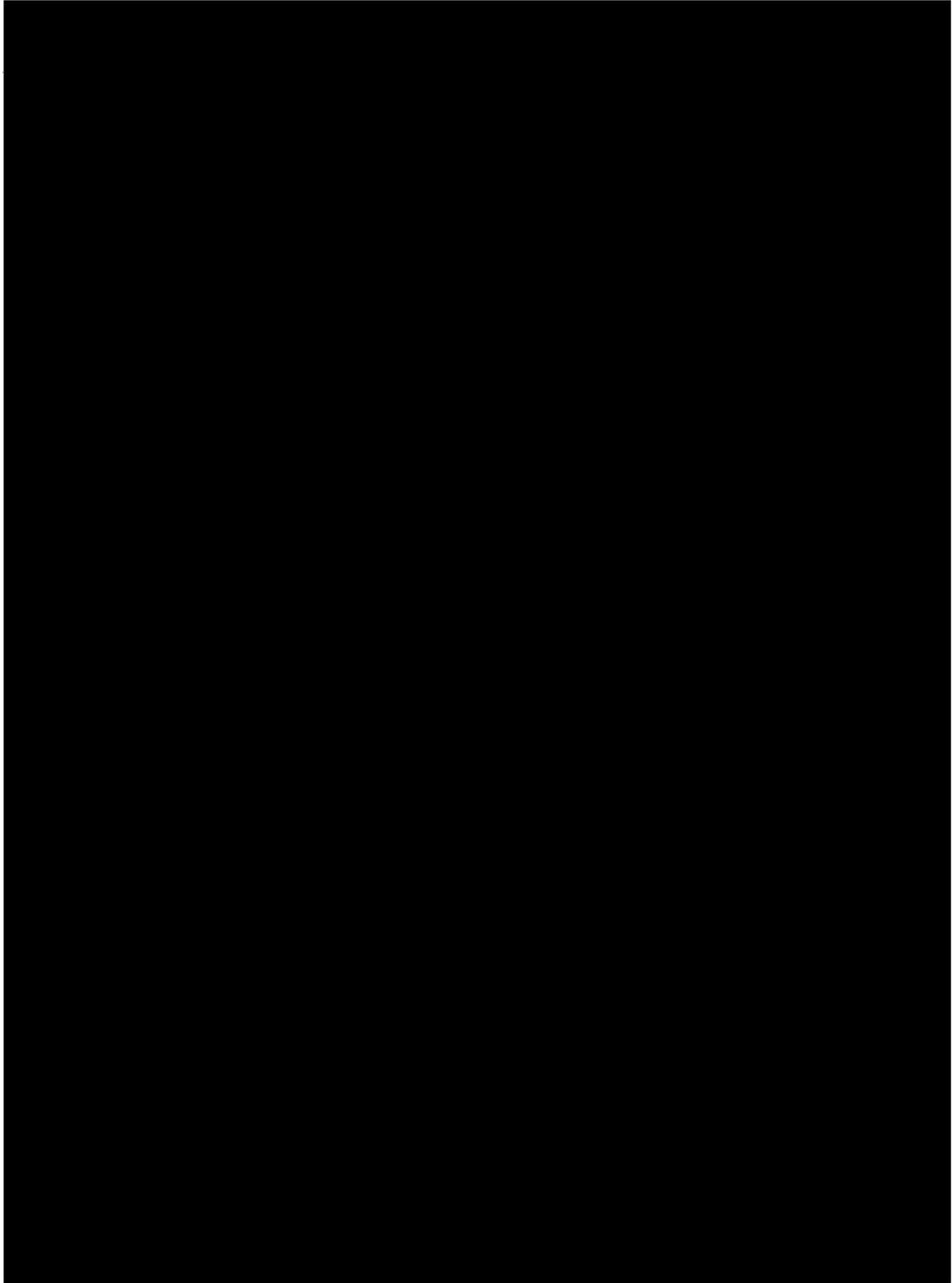


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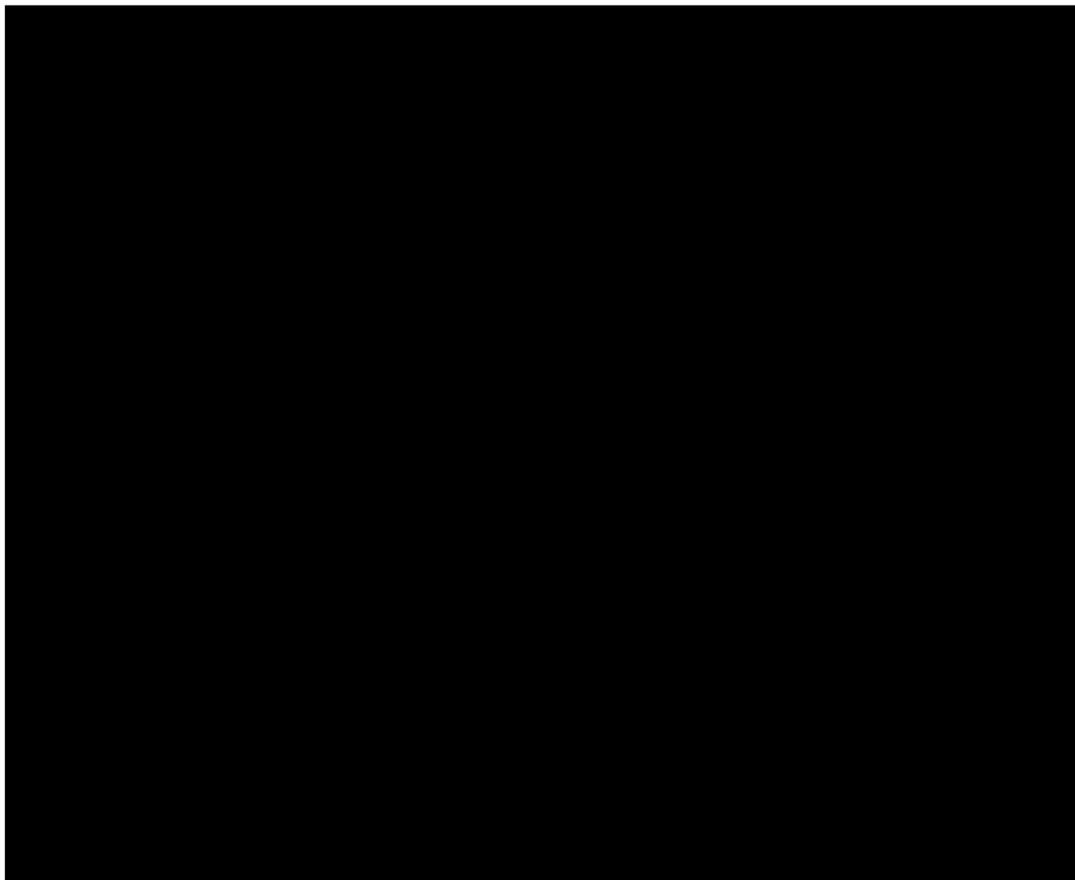


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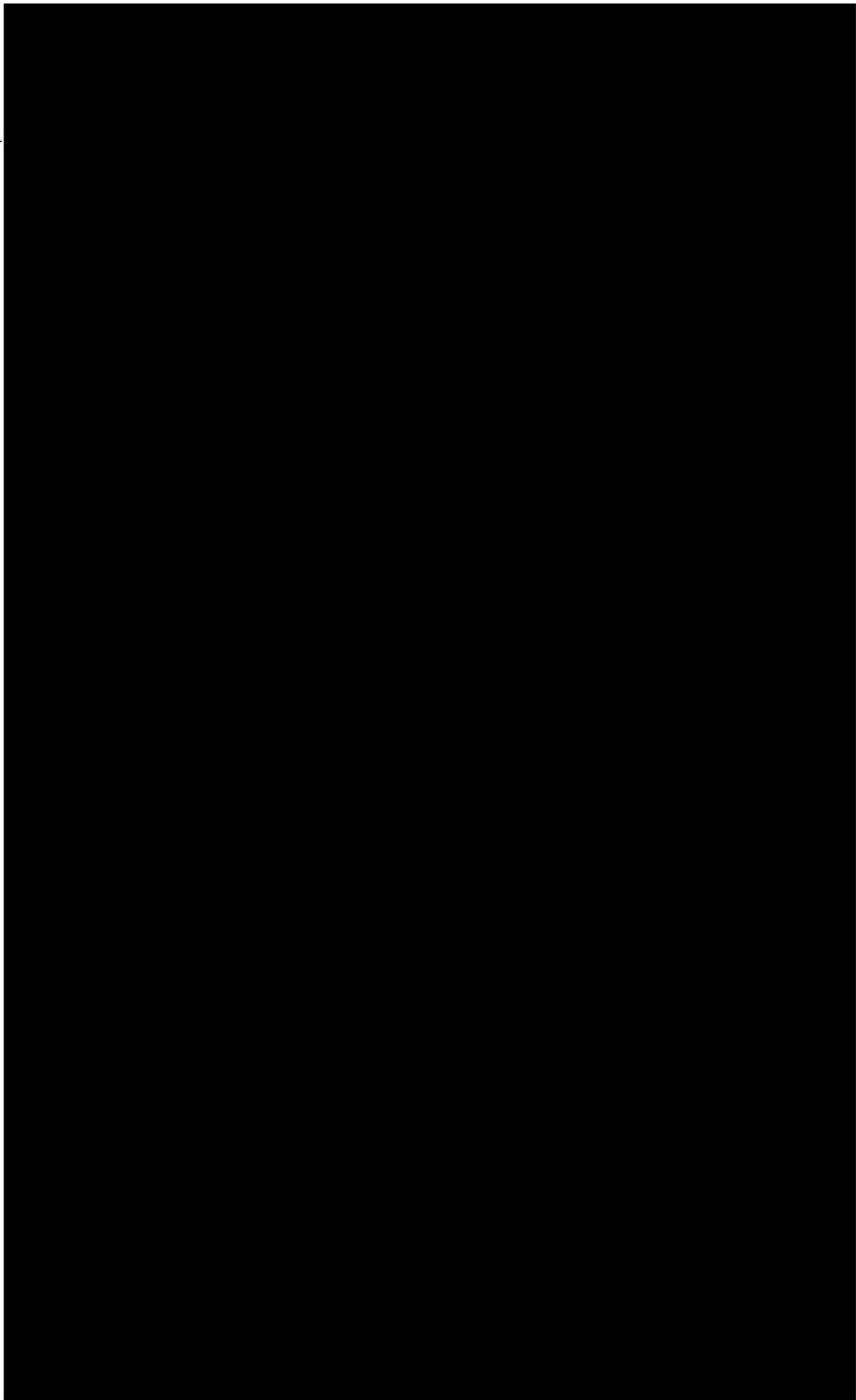


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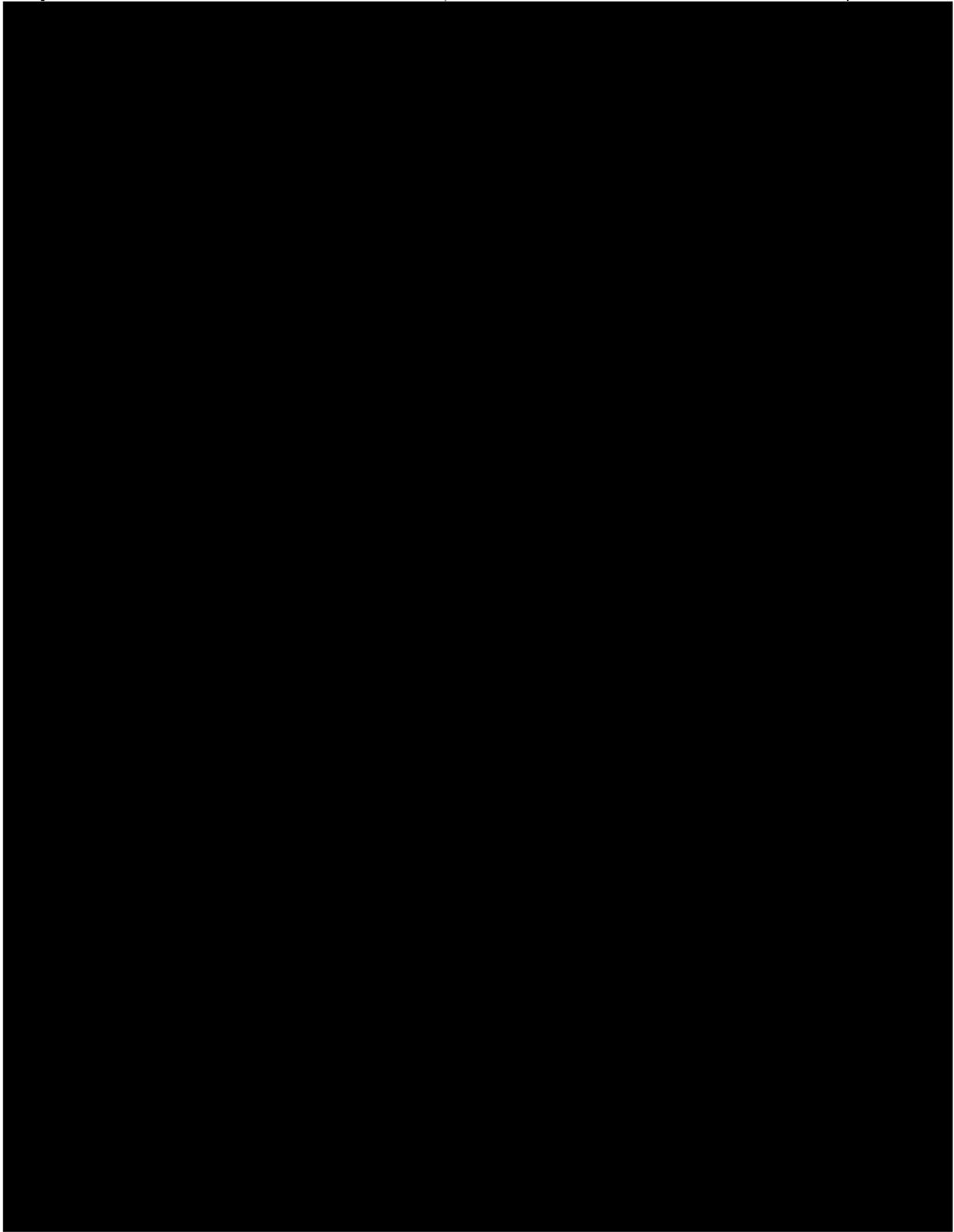


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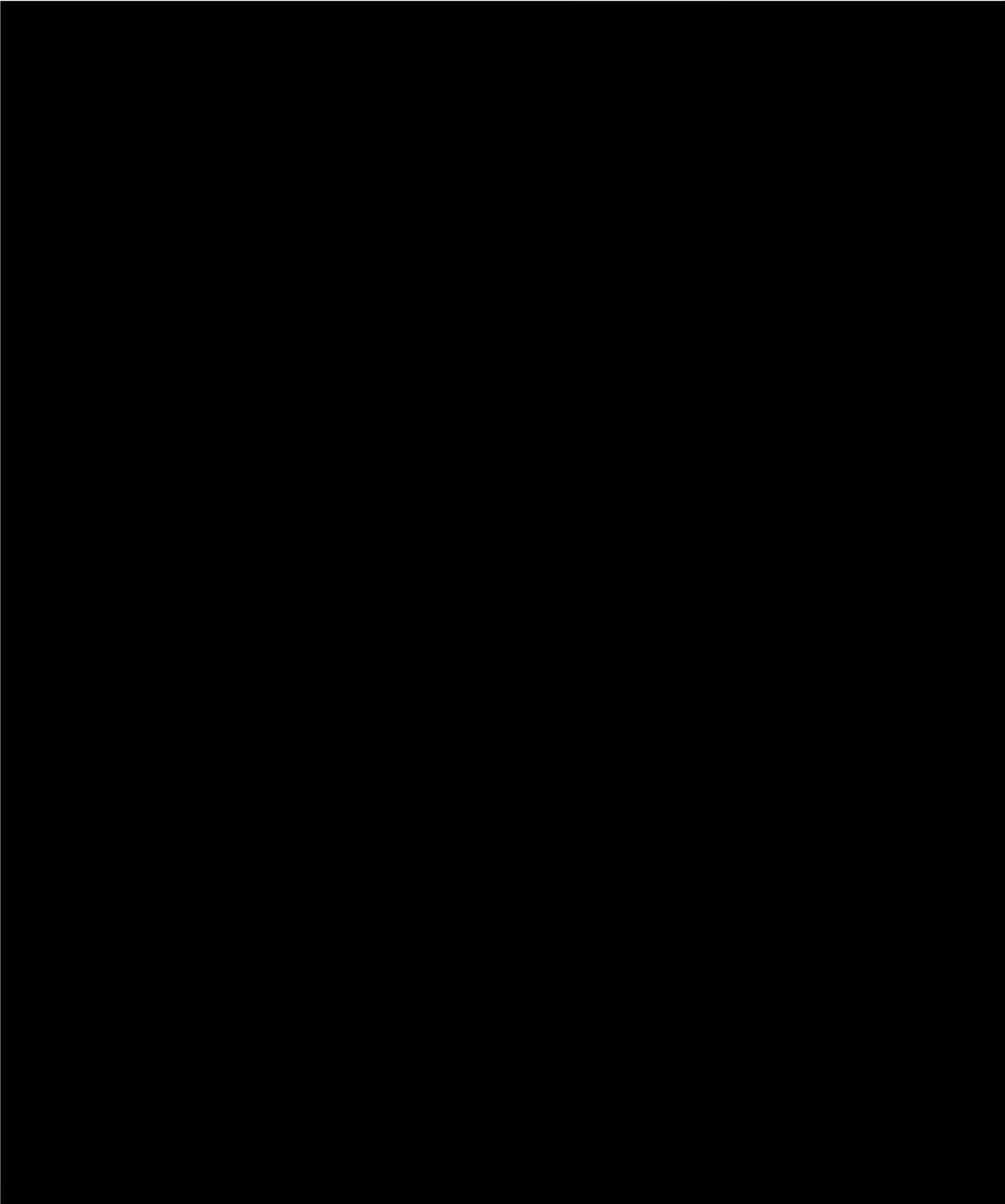


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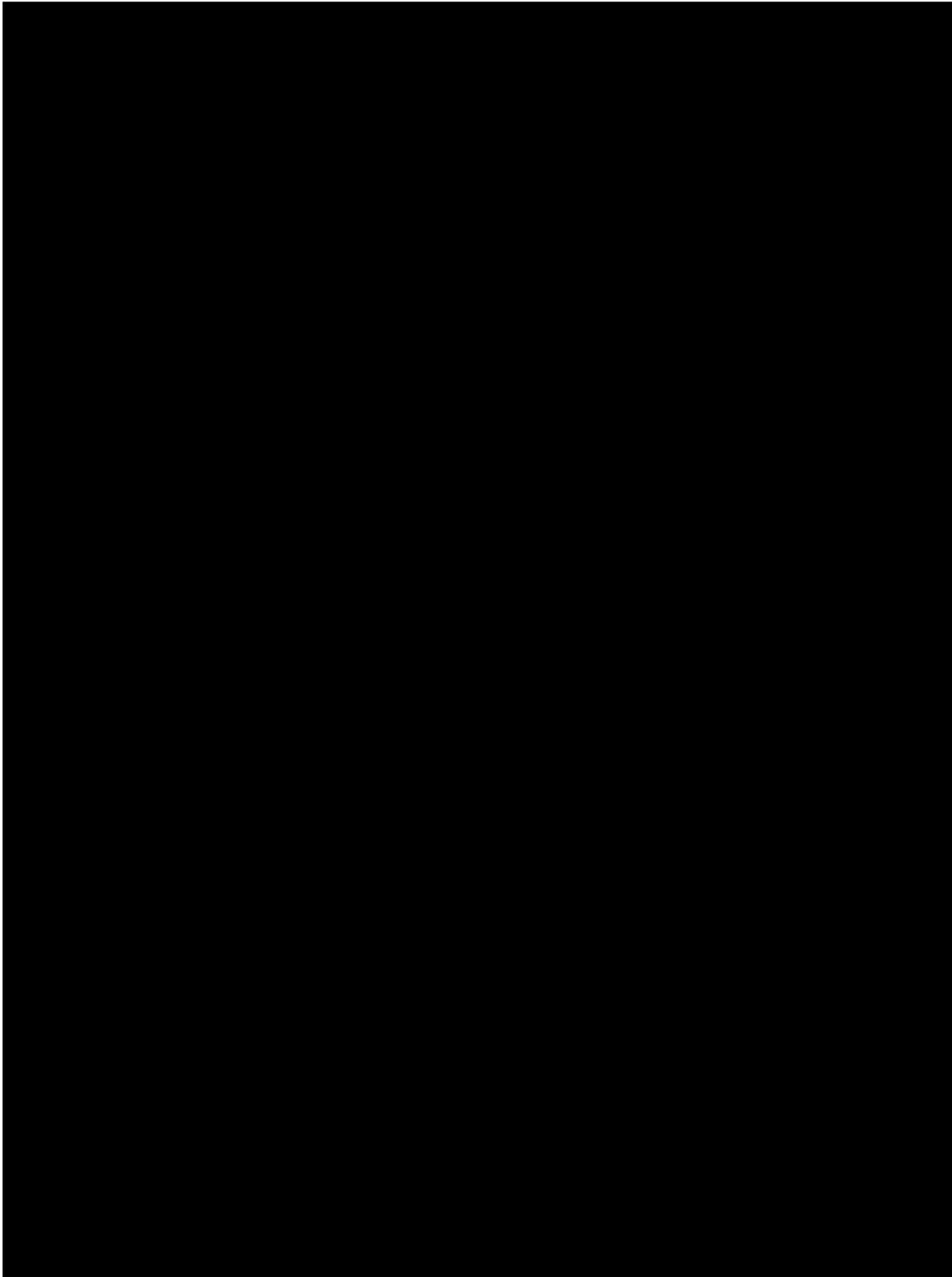
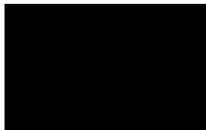


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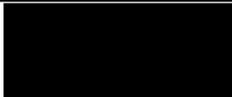


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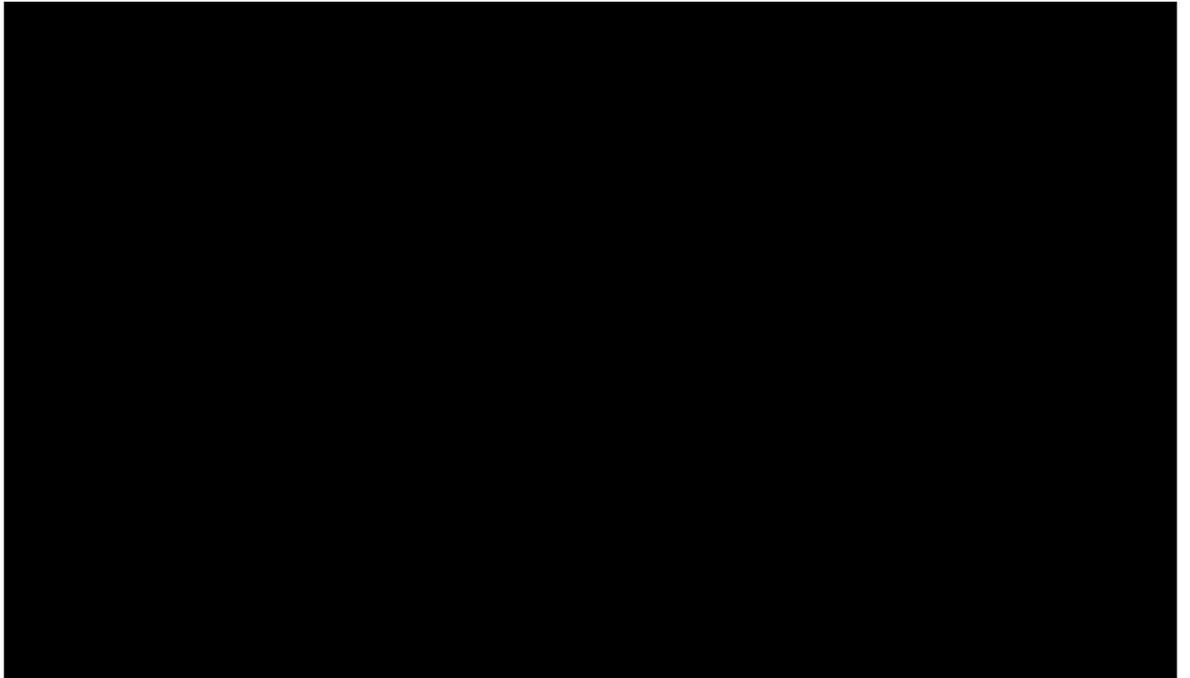
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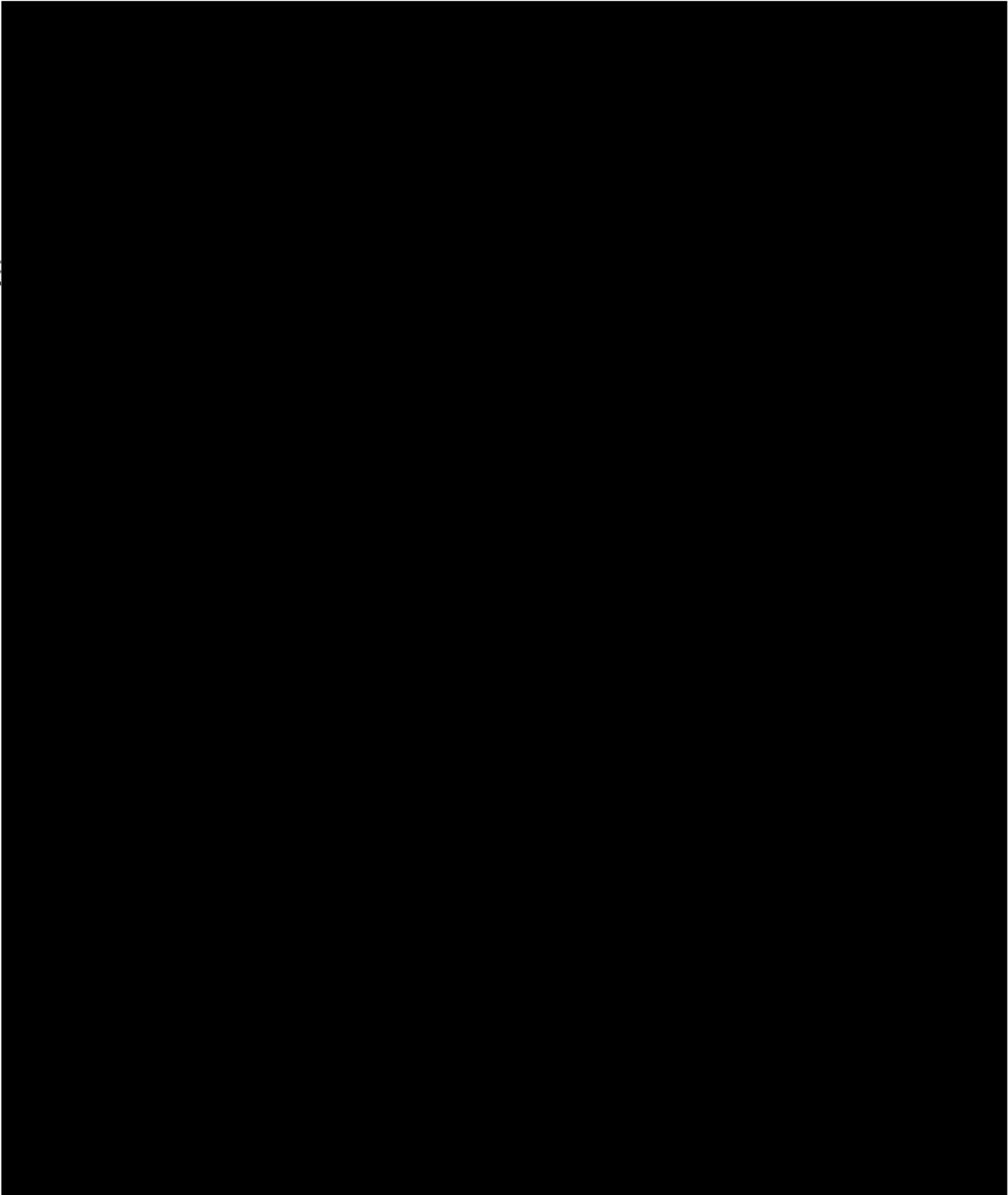
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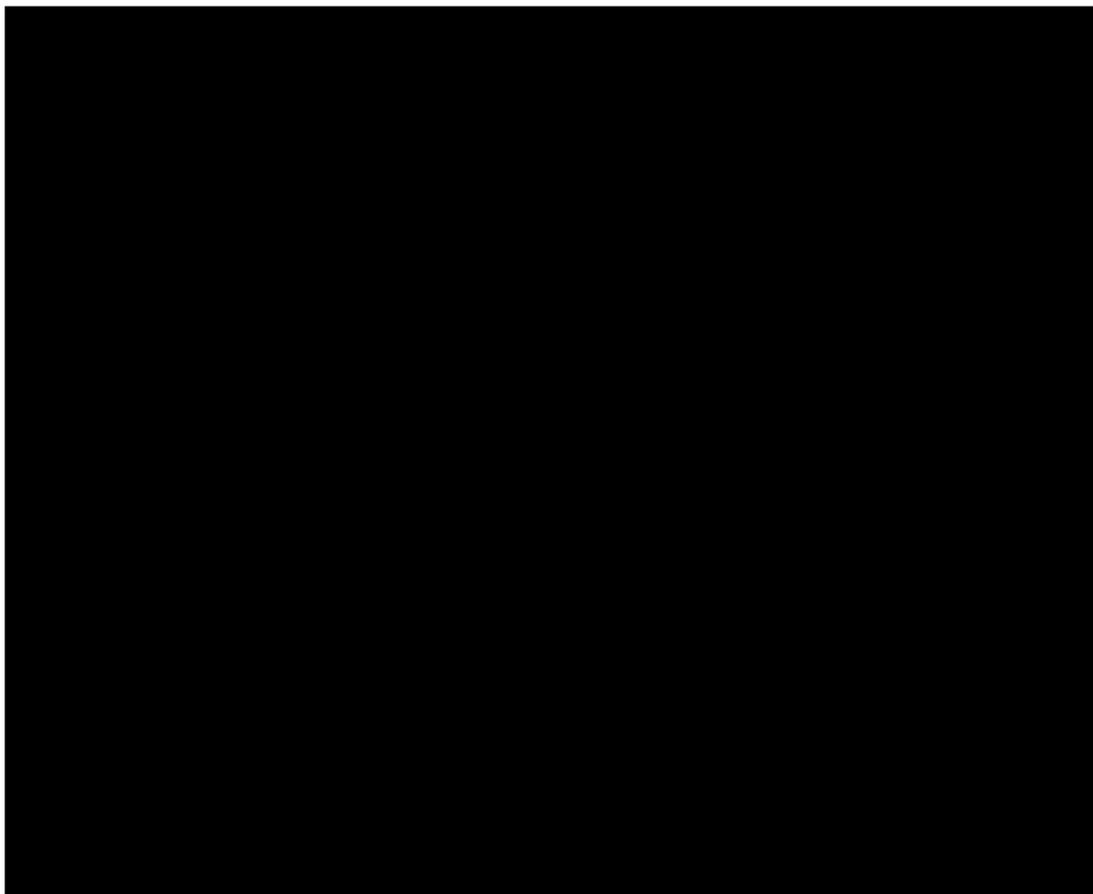


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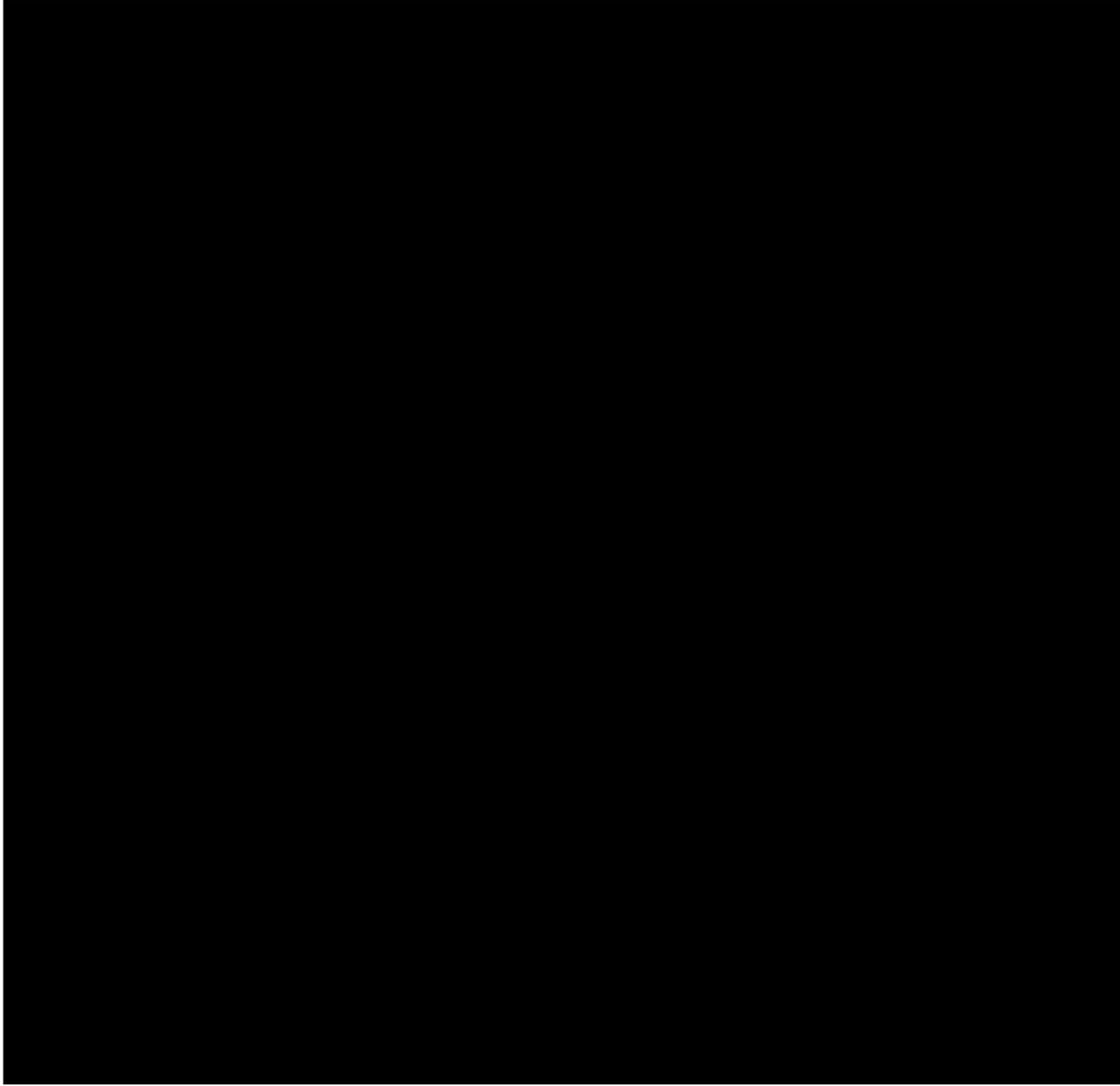
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