The Great Bicycle Race

MICHAEL HOPKINS

INSTRUMENTATION

1 Conductor
8 1st Violin
8 2nd Violin
5 3rd Violin (Viola 𝄞)
5 Viola
5 Cello
5 String Bass

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

This energetic new work is a musical depiction of the Seacoast Century, a 100-mile bike race along the coasts of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. This is a great work to teach string crossings, legato and staccato bowing, dynamic contrasts, bow placement, lifts and retakes, double stops, divisi, balance and blend. All parts contain melodic material and are playable in first position.

The programmatic aspects of this piece will make it enjoyable for students to learn the many challenges in this work. Have fun discussing with students what the feelings of the riders might be in each part of this piece and how this would be reflected in the music.

The program for this work is as follows:

mm. 1–8 – The bikers slowly line up at the starting line.
m. 9 – The race begins as the riders race out of the city towards the coast.
m. 17 – Biking on the open road, the riders are along the ocean shore with the beach on the right.
m. 37 – In the forest next, the canopy forms a tunnel over the road, and the bikers ride in the shade.
m. 55 – The riders climb to the top of a hill, and then coast down to a lighthouse on the shore.
m. 61 – Turning around and riding back along the ocean coast, the racers pass a row of mansions on their right side.
m. 77 – Heading back into the city, the riders see the finish line approaching in the distance.
m. 97 – The bikers cross the finish line, and coast gradually to a triumphant stop.

The sixteenth note string crossing rhythm is best played with a small amount of bow in the middle of the bow. The bowing at m. 33 in the violins is challenging. It is important to start m. 33 away from the frog, and to use a slow bow on the quarter note. The legato melody, first heard in Violin 1 at m. 17, should be played with long bows. Students will need to alter the speed of their bow (moving slightly faster with less weight on the quarter, and slower with more weight on the half note) to achieve evenness of sound.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

All Belwin string parts have been carefully bowed and fingered appropriately by level. The Yellow Very Beginning series includes many bowings as well as reminder fingerings for first-time readers. The Red Beginning series includes frequent bowings to assist younger players. Fingerings for altered pitches are often marked. The Green Intermediate series includes appropriately placed bowings for middle-level students. Fingerings and positions are marked for notes beyond first position. The Blue Concert series includes bowings appropriate for the experienced high school player. Fingerings and position markings are indicated for difficult passages.

Bob Phillips
Belwin/Pop String Editor

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The enclosed parts are now sorted by page count, rather than score order.

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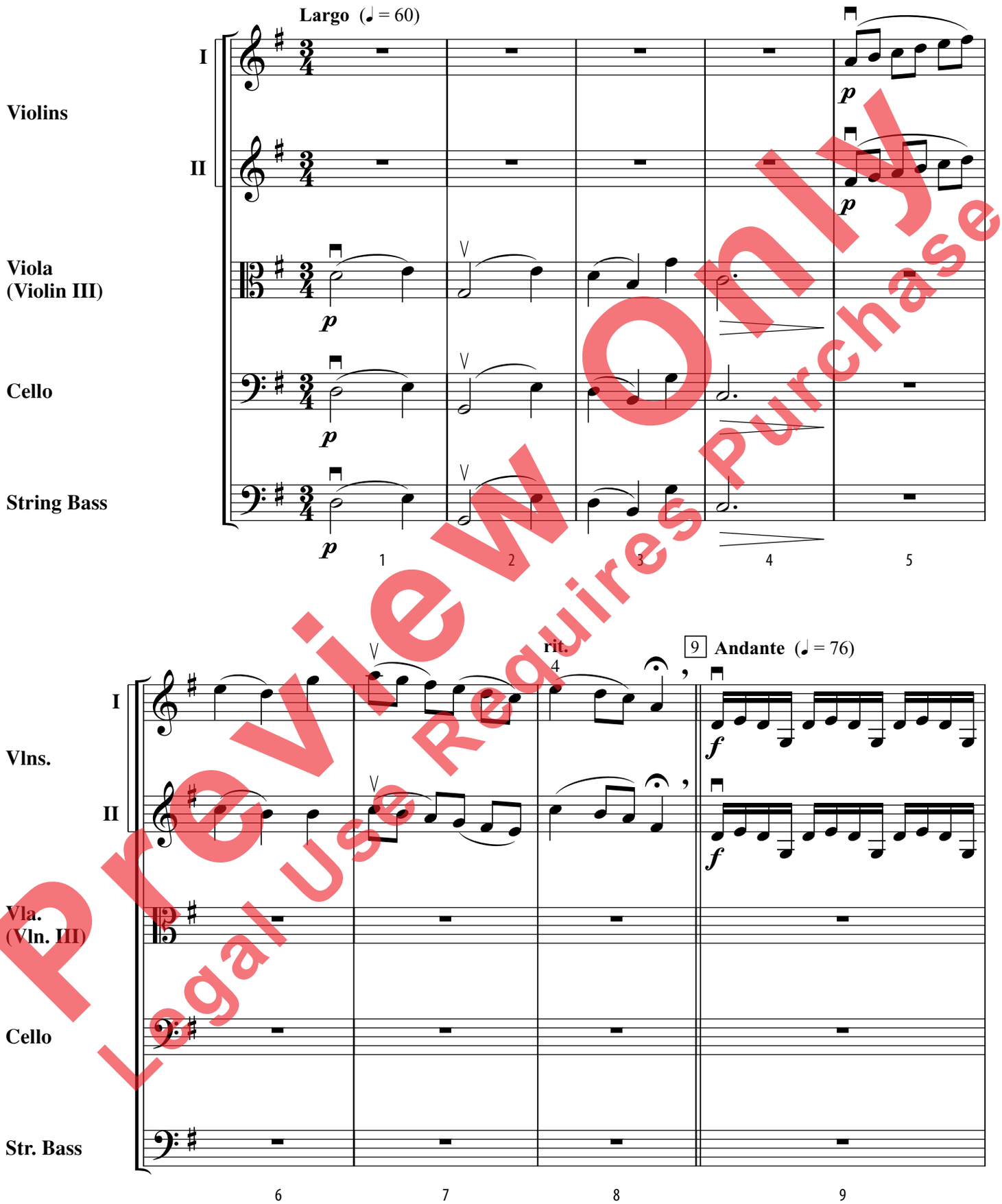
The Great Bicycle Race

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 3:50

Michael Hopkins



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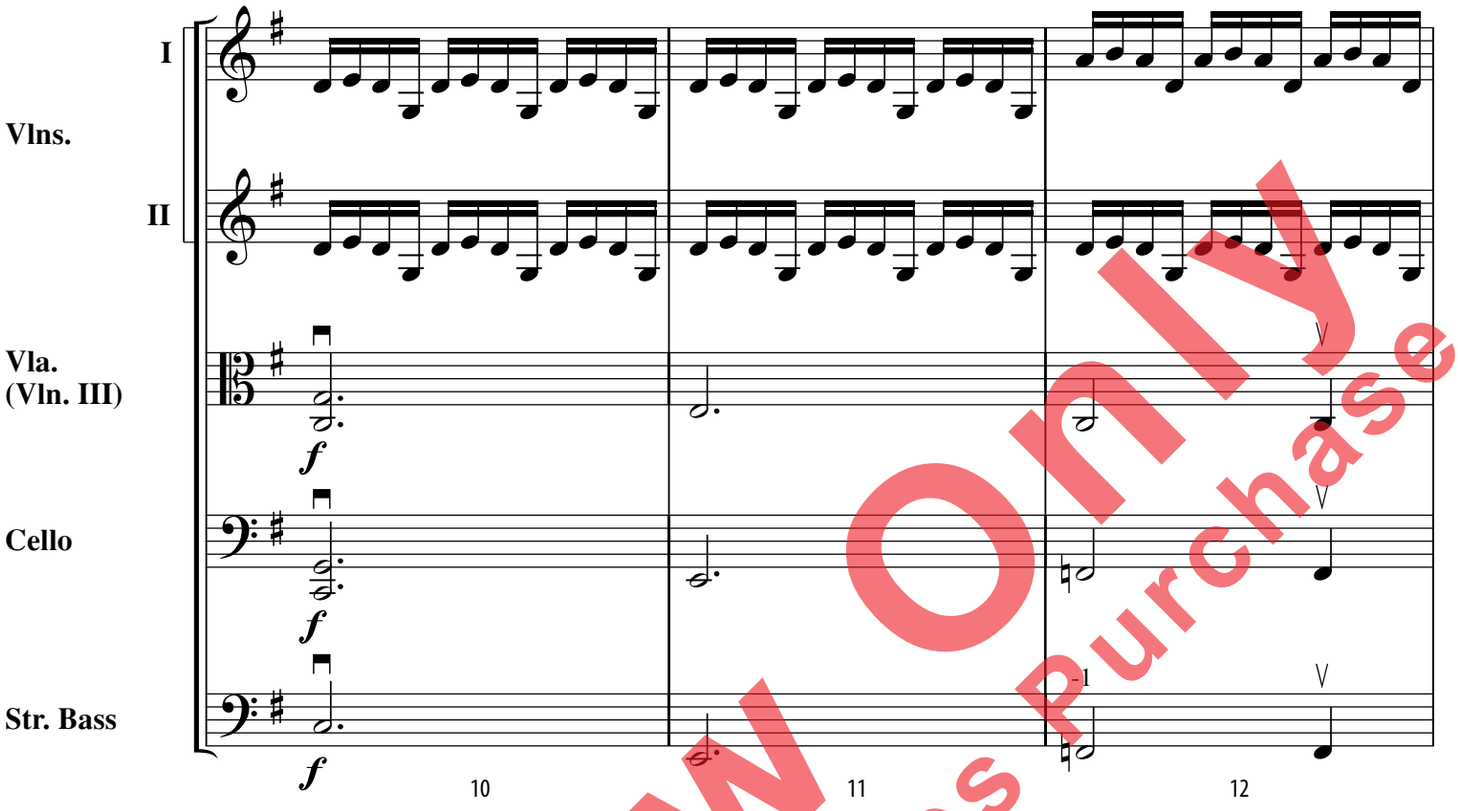

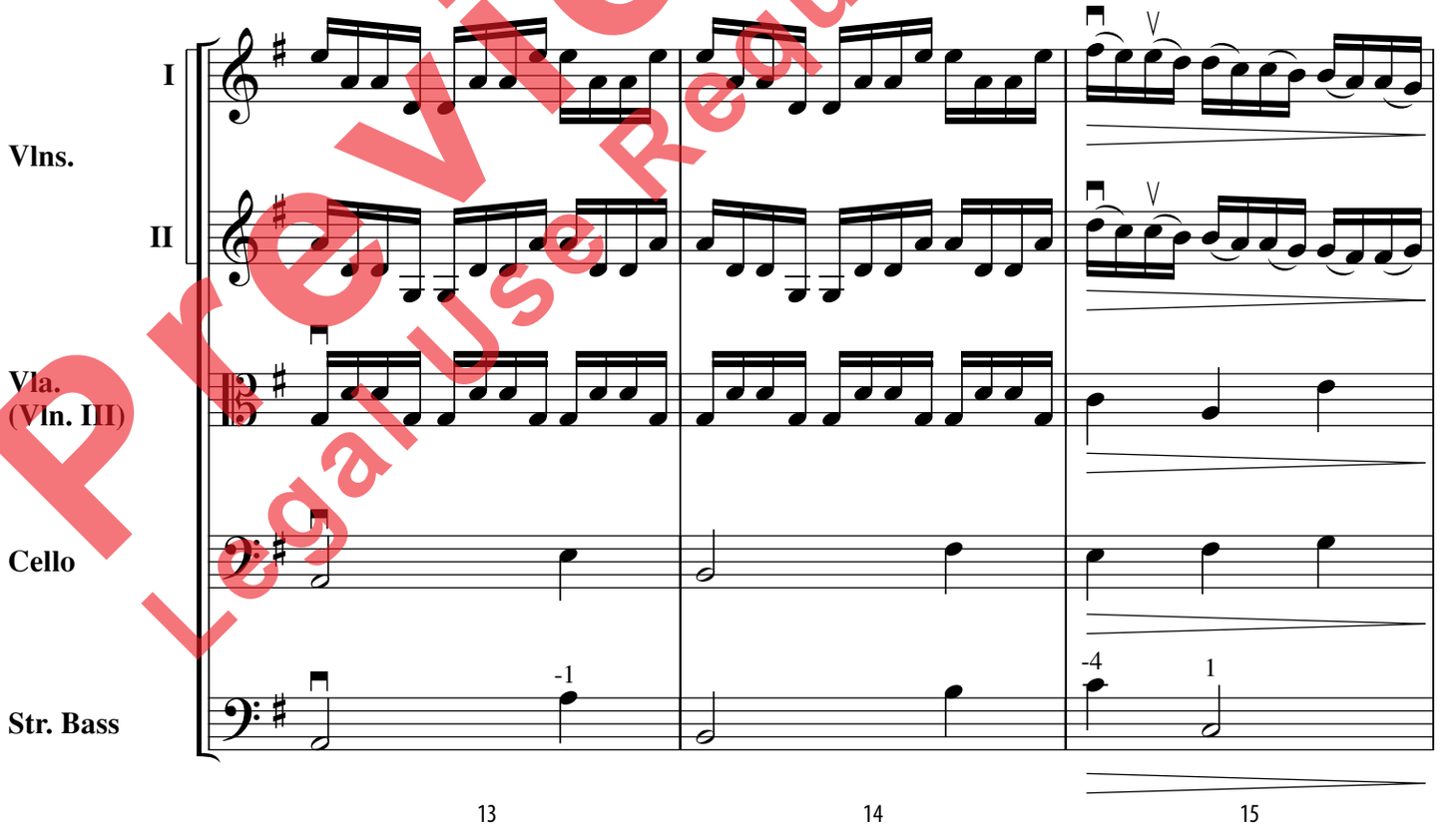

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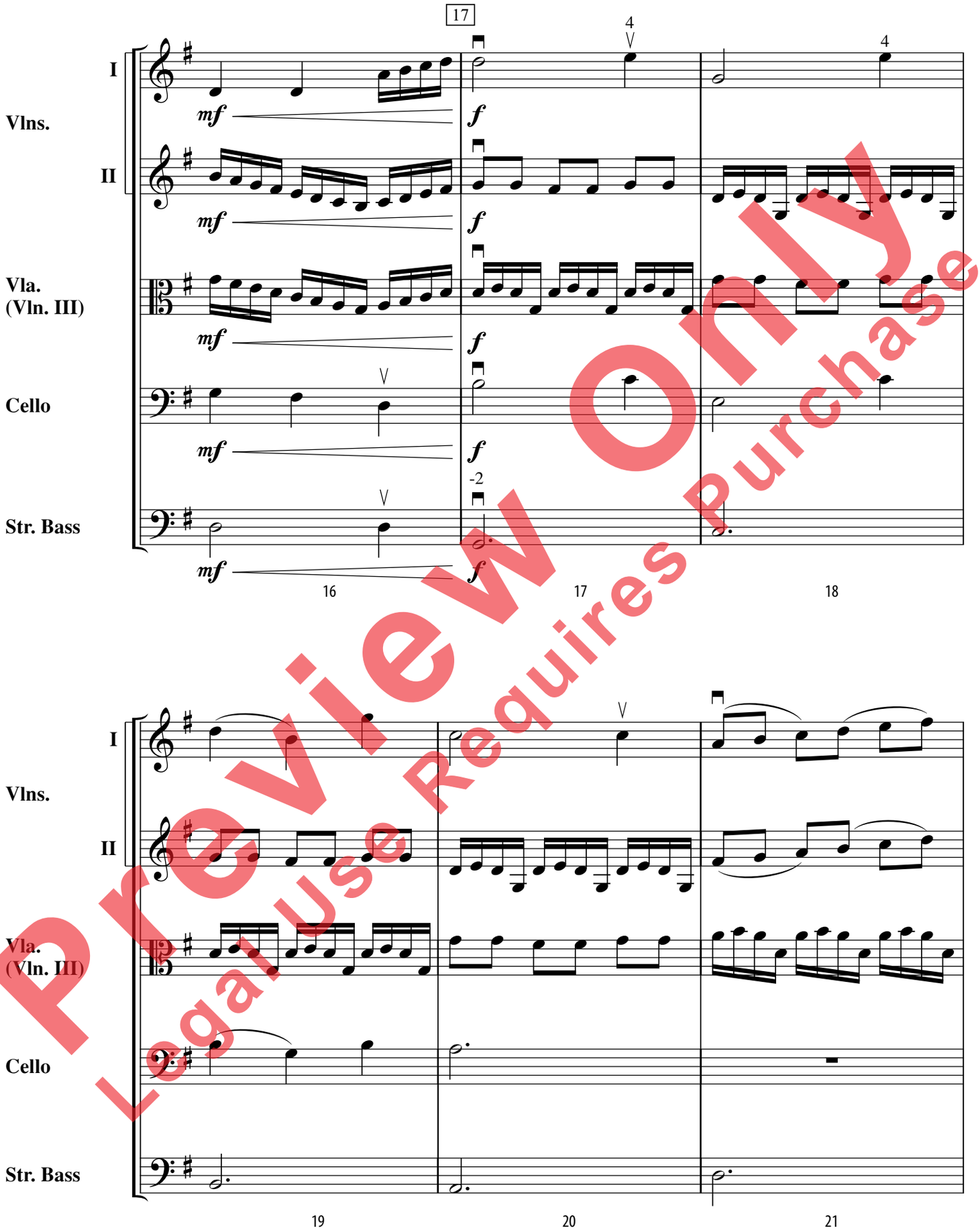

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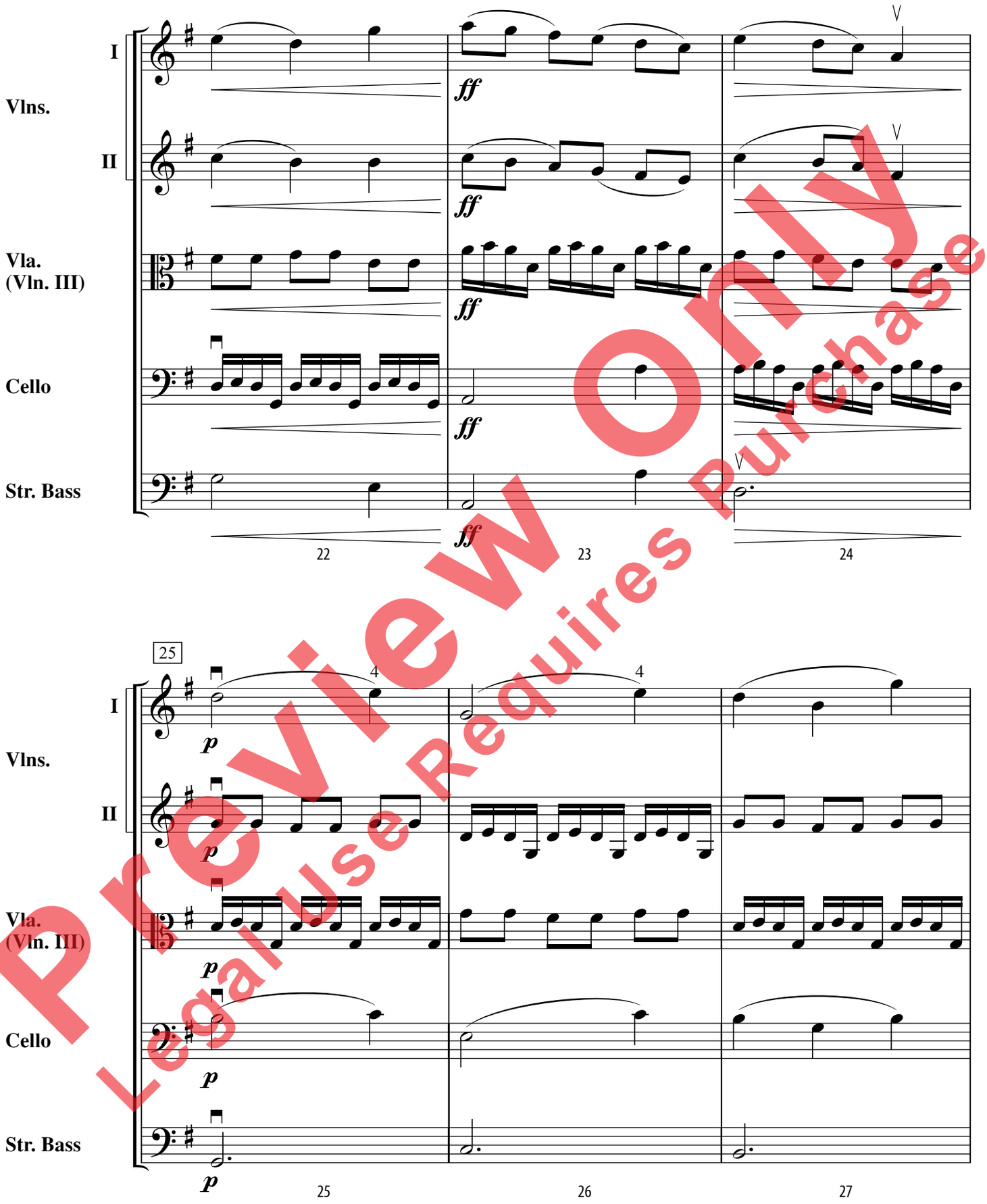

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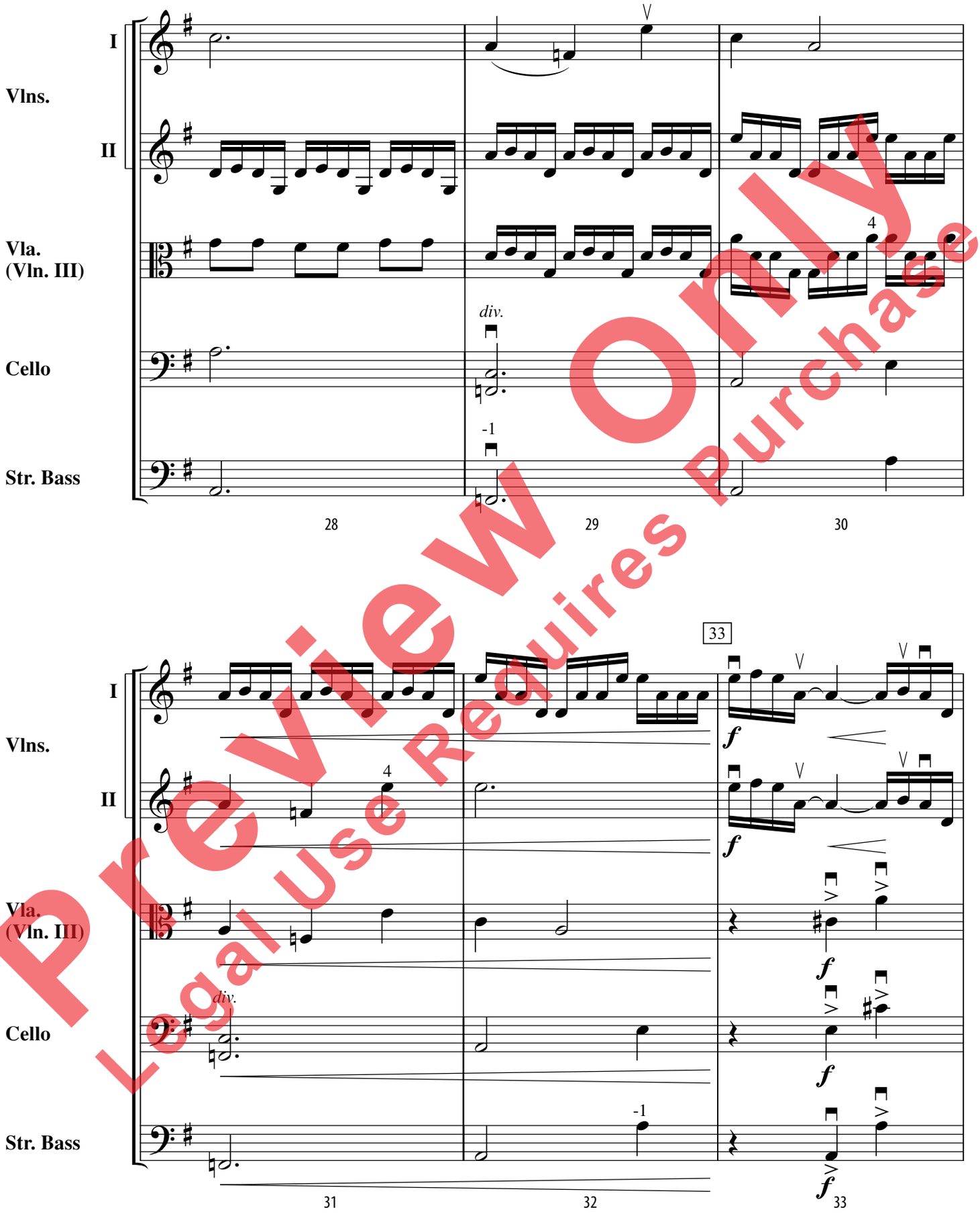

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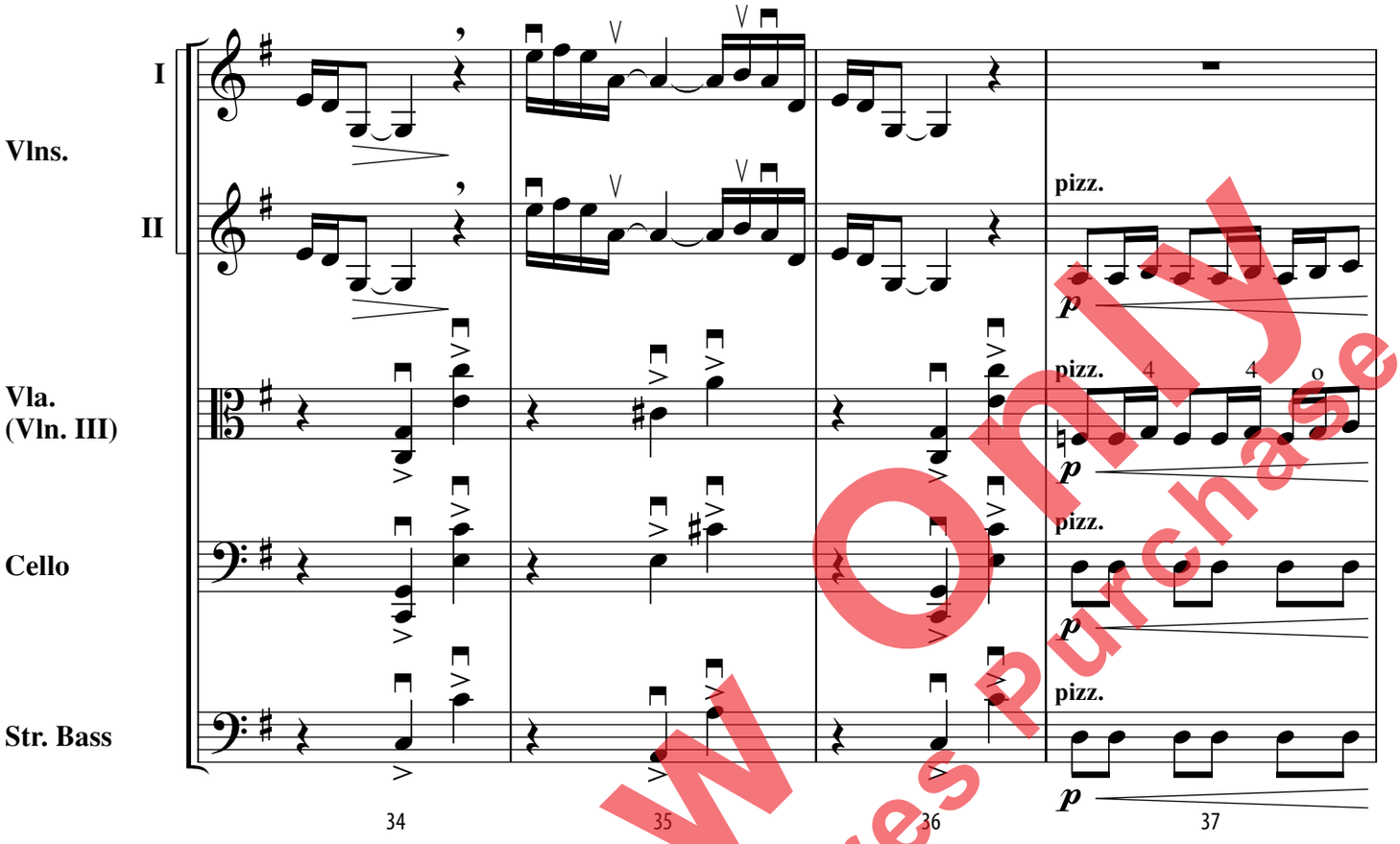

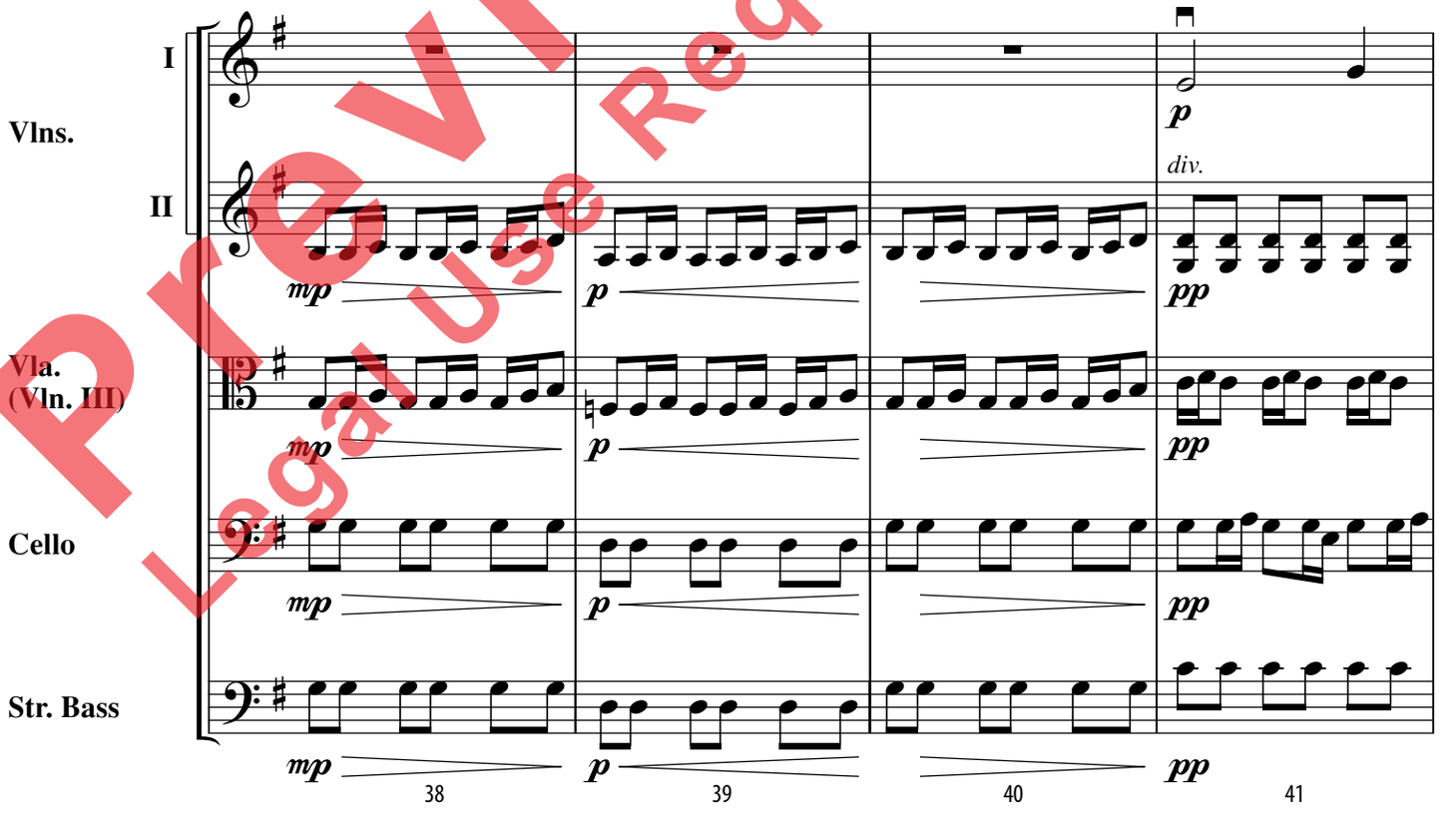

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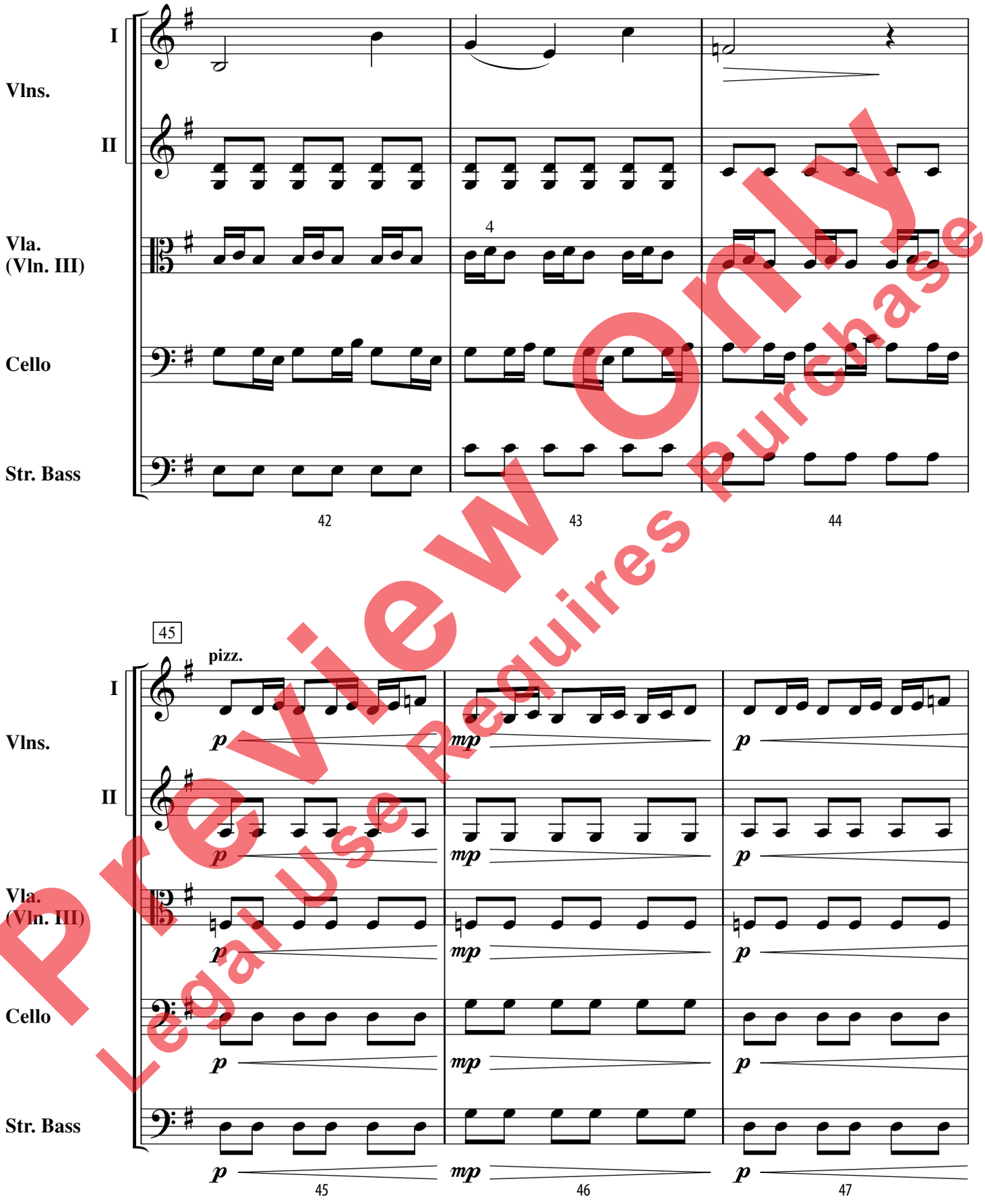

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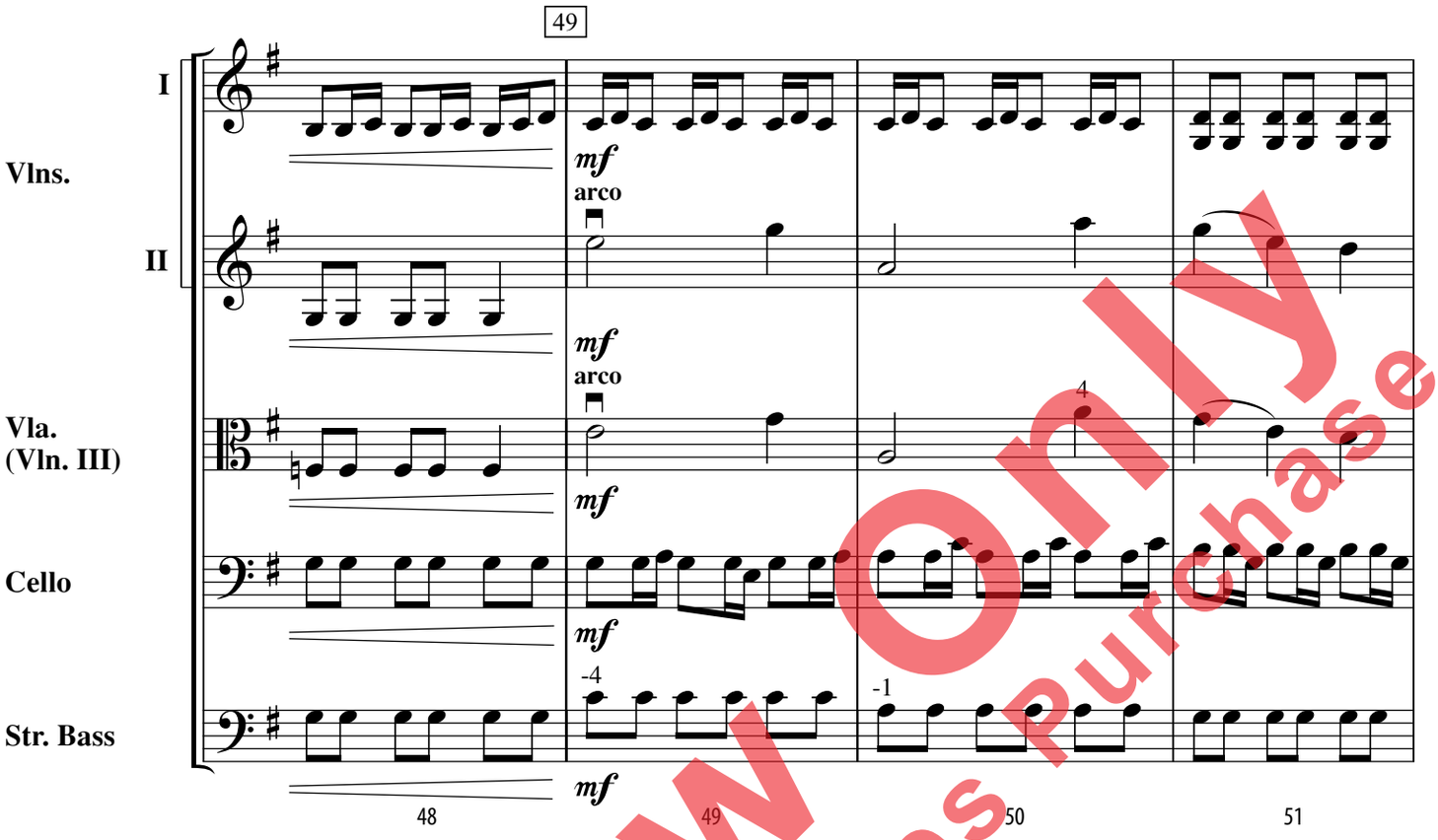

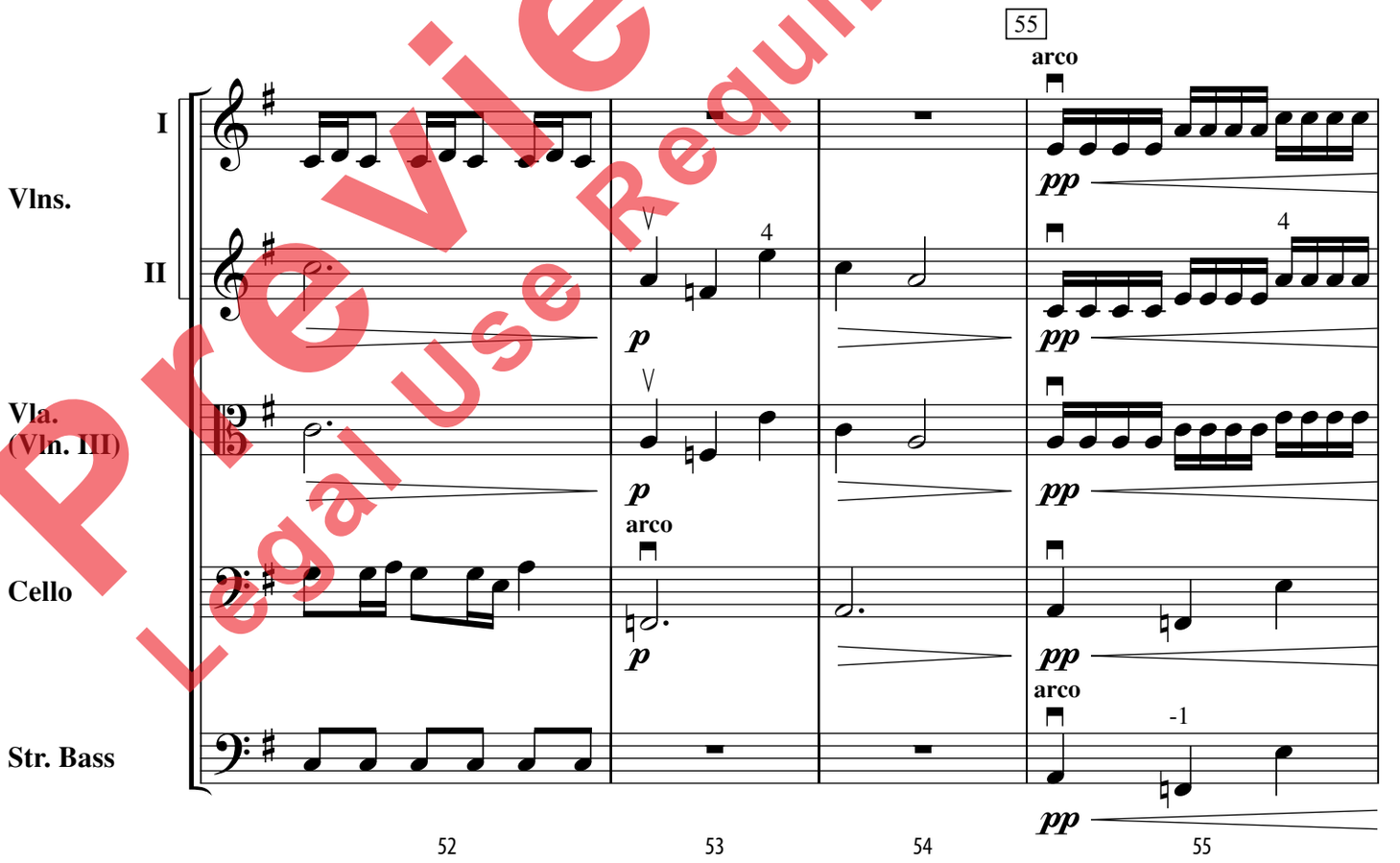

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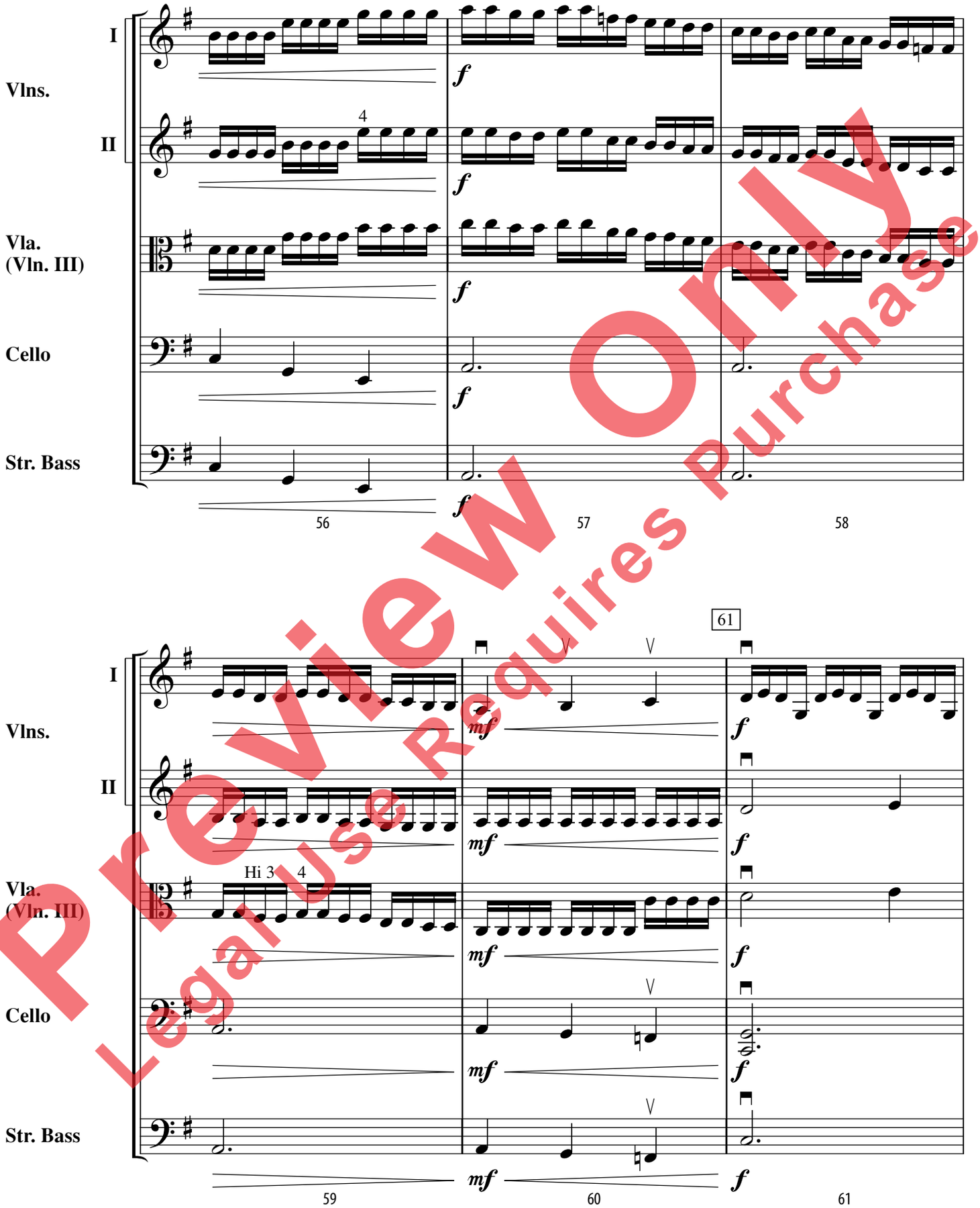

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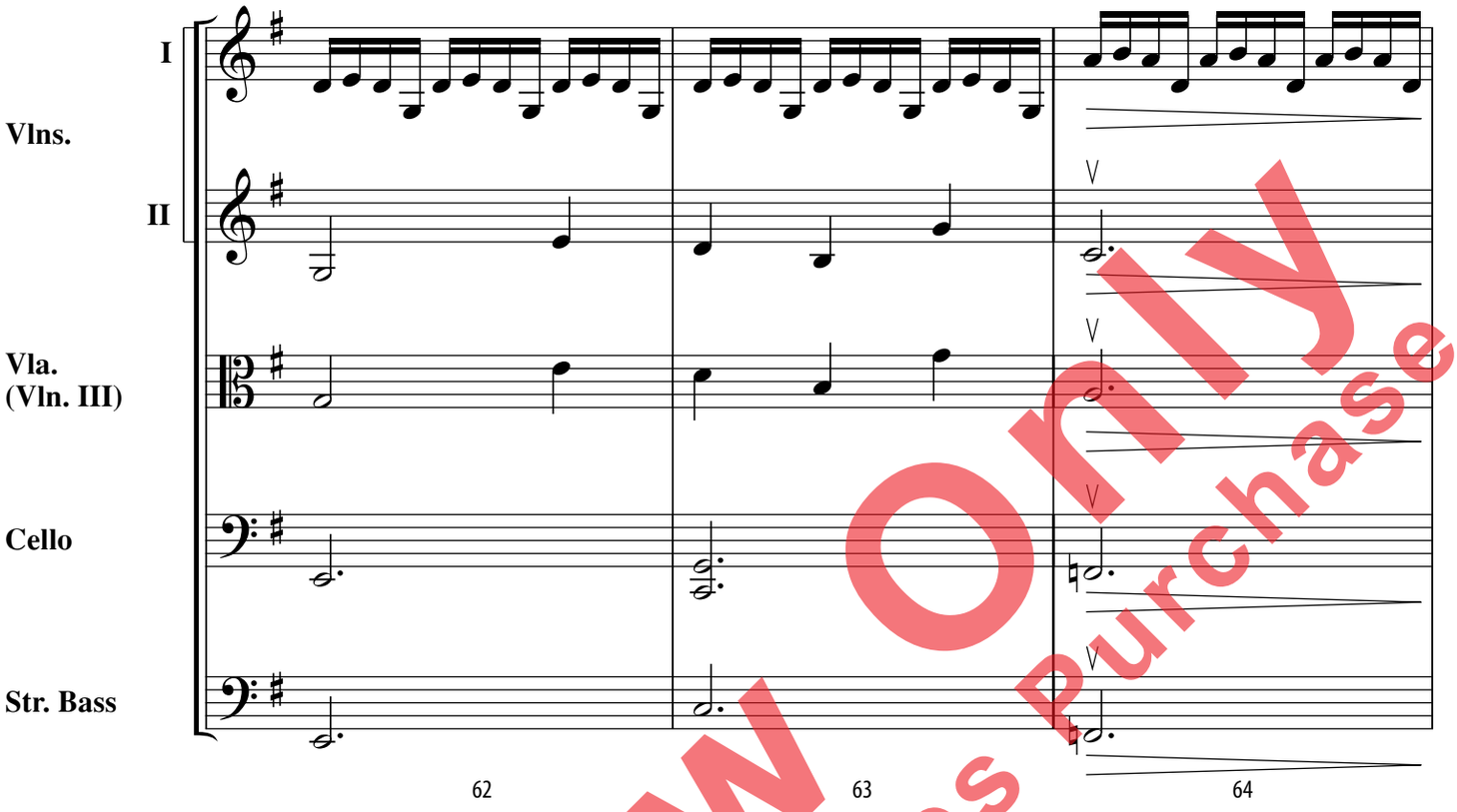

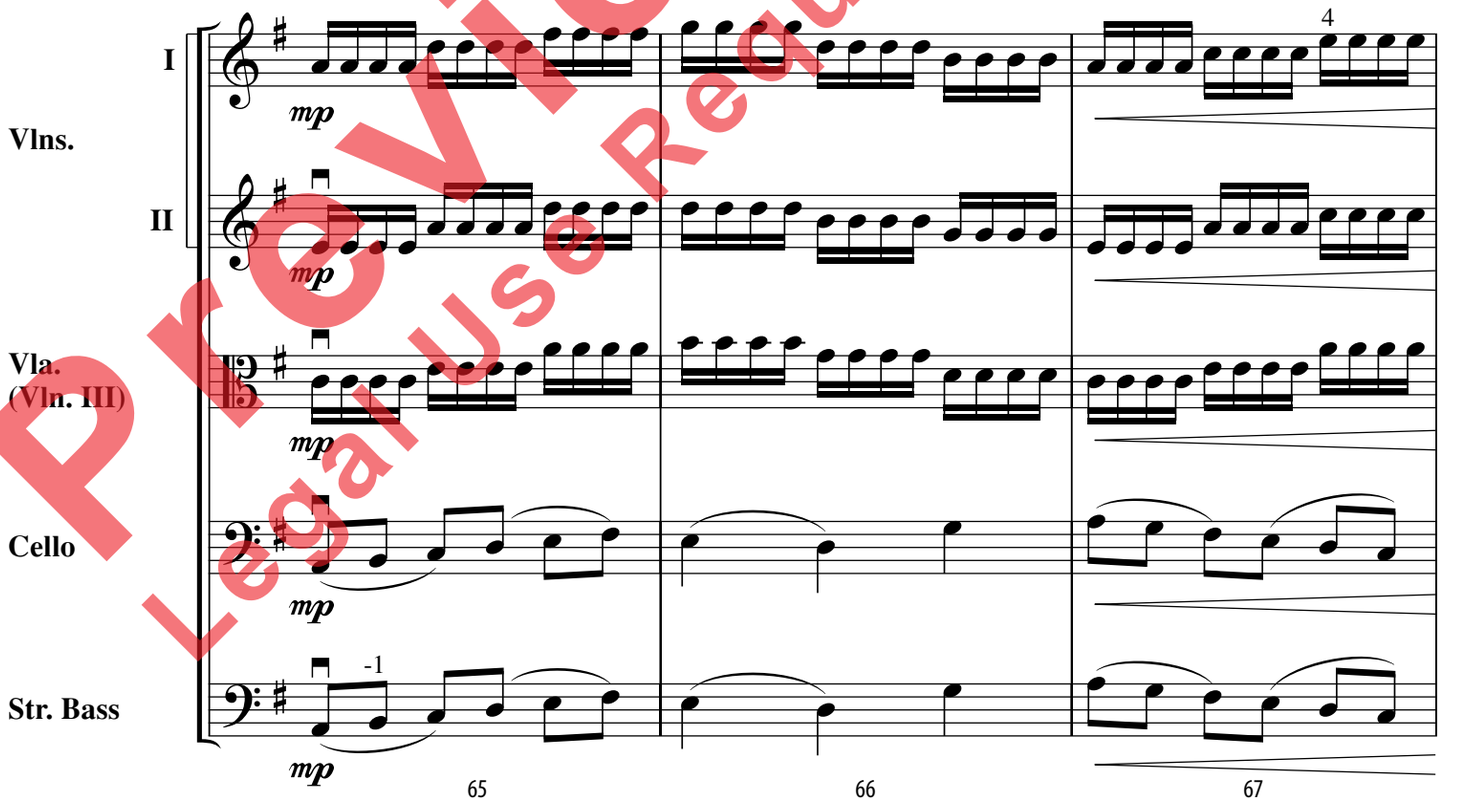

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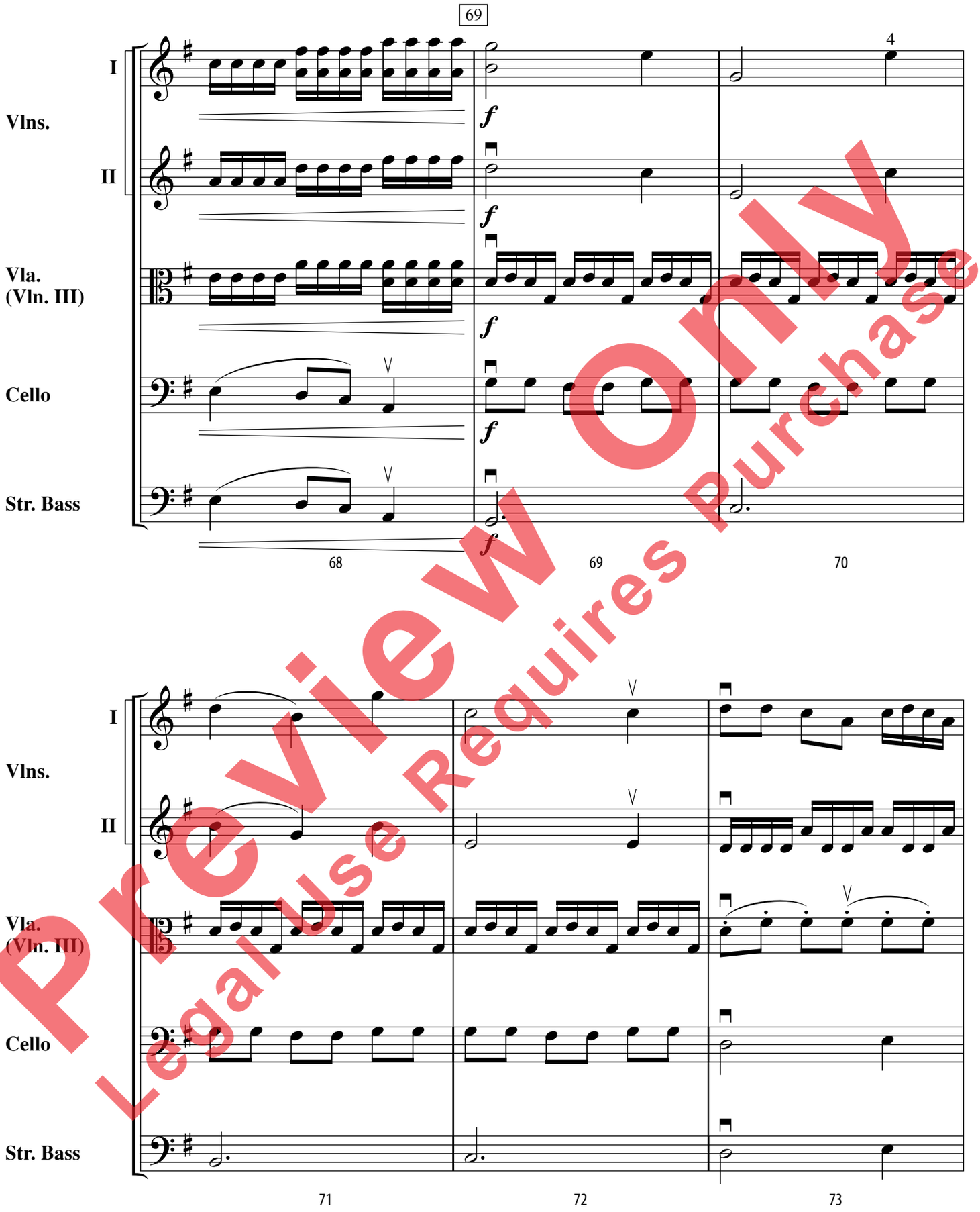

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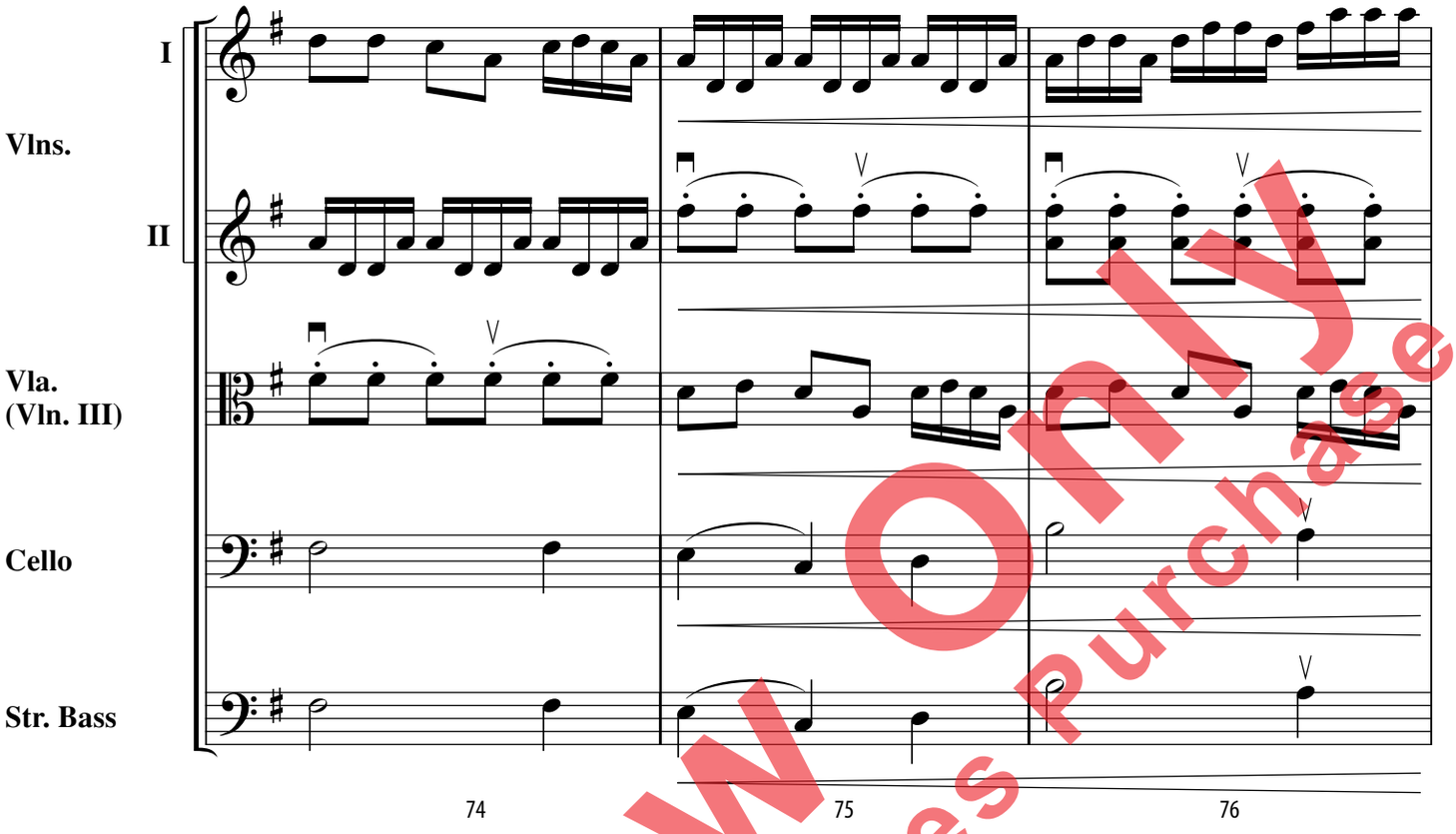

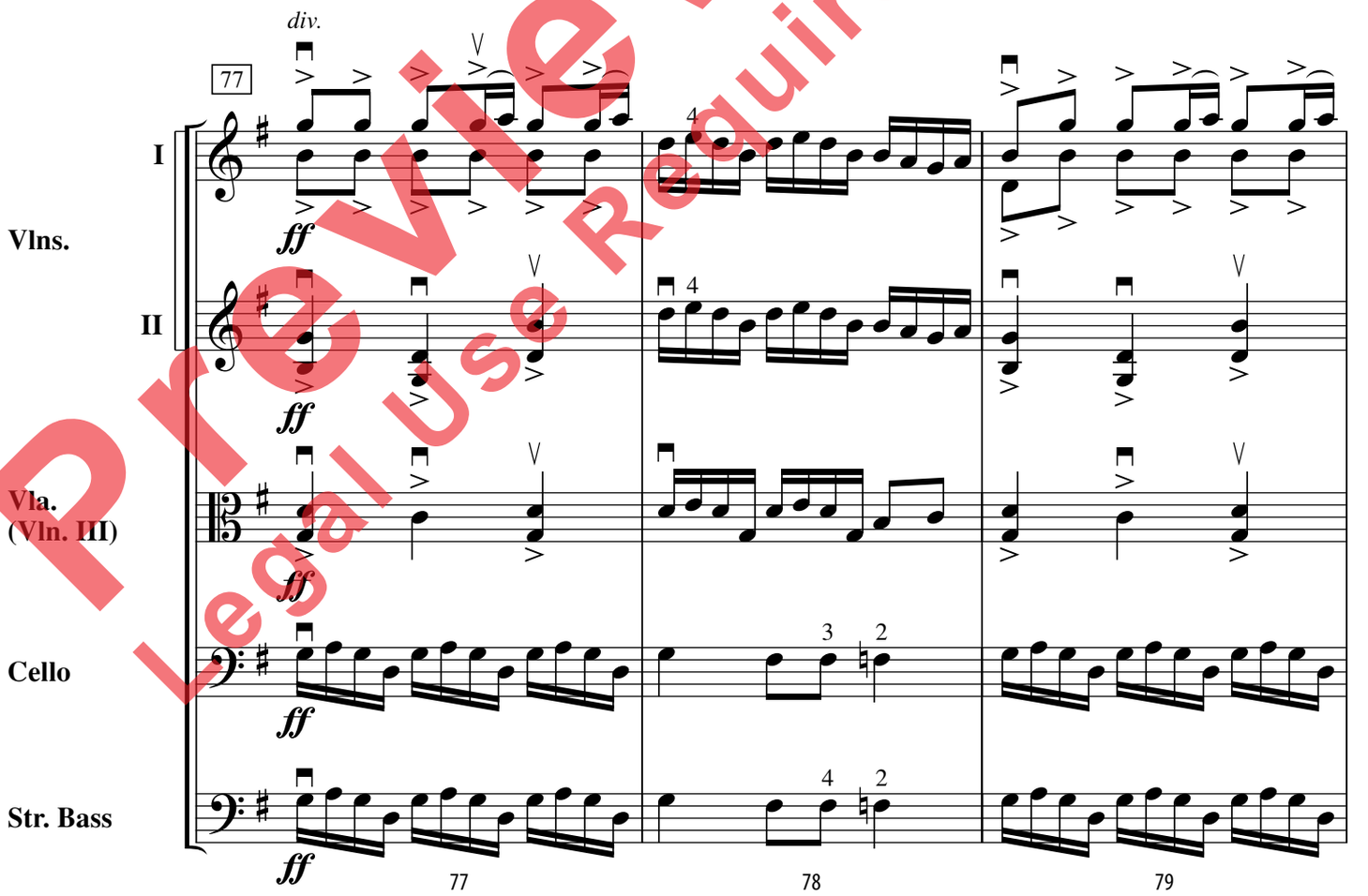

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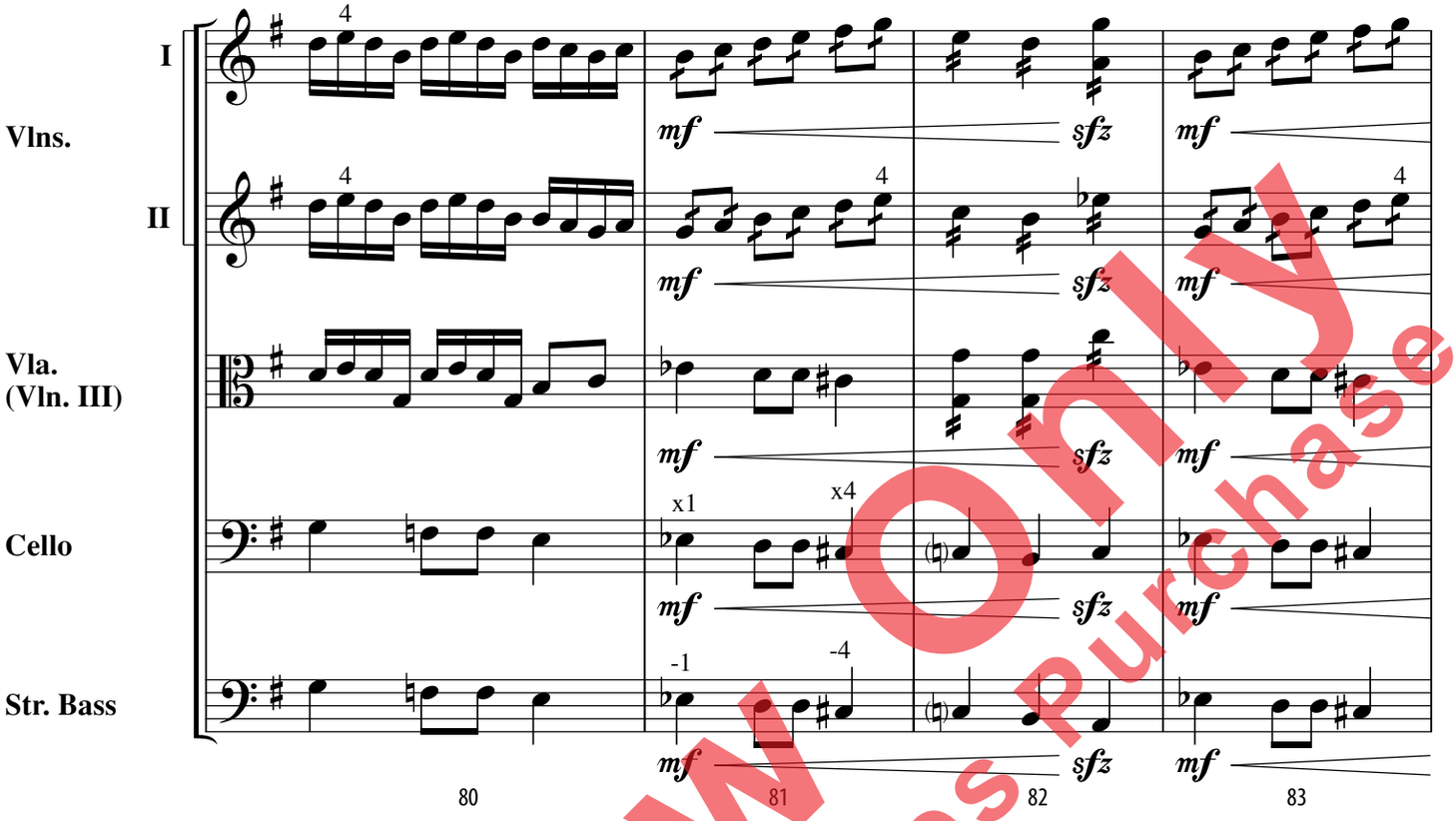

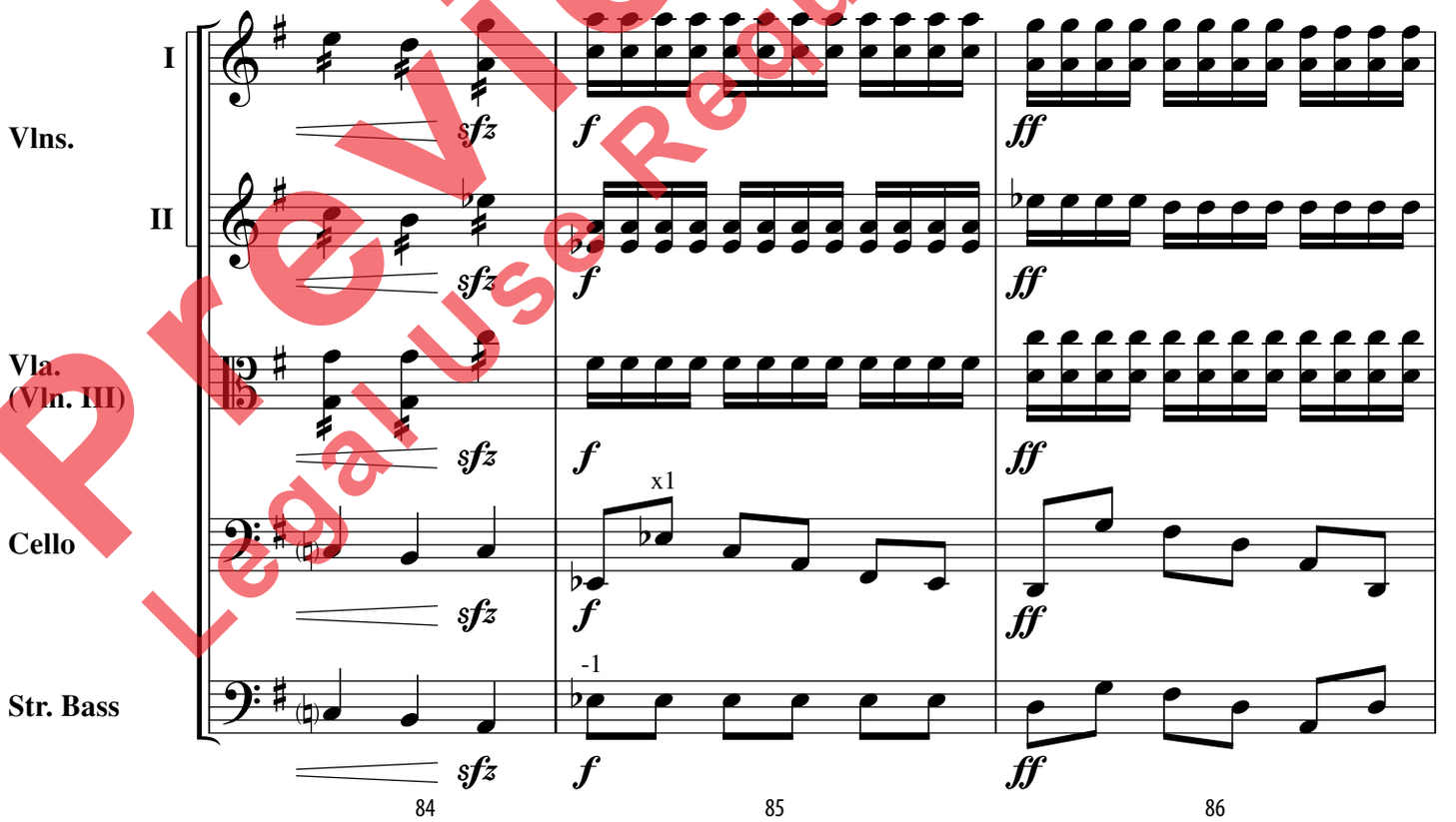

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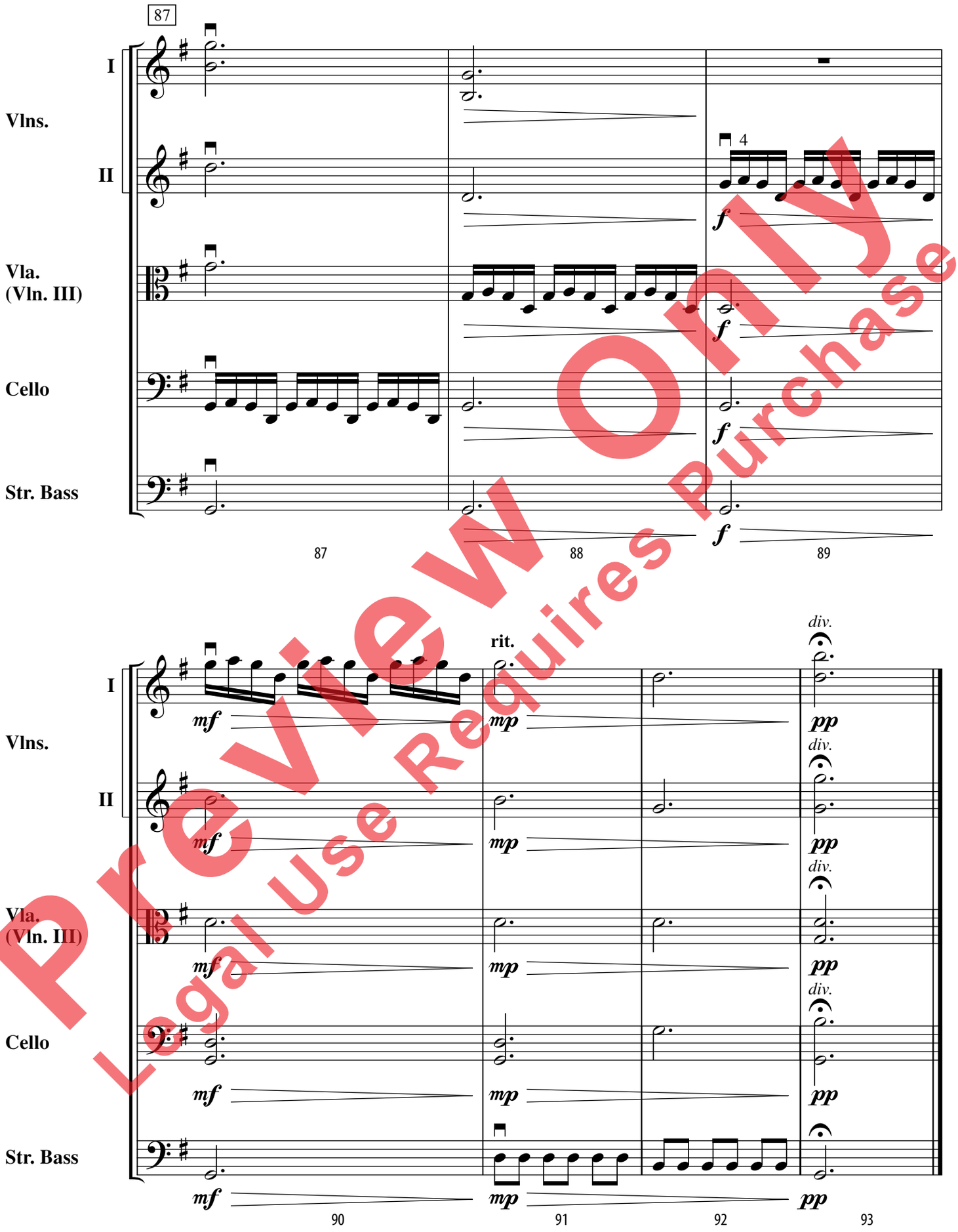

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