THE HIGHLAND/ETLING STRING ORCHESTRA SERIES

Two Folk Dances

By Nira Chen and Nicholas Roubanis
Arranged by Lauren Bernofsky

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INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Viola	5
Cello	5
String Bass	5

Want your students to fall in love with music? Then this is the piece for you! These two gems of folk dance music have been artfully arranged for intermediate string orchestra. Have a hot violinist in your orchestra that you'd like to showcase? "Misirlou" begins and ends with impressive-sounding solo cadenzas, framing the unforgettable theme. "Dodi Li" is a hauntingly beautiful love song, and in this enchanting arrangement, each instrument gets a chance to play melody and harmony, arco and pizzicato.

HIGHLAND/ETLING
A DIVISION OF Alfred

Please note: Our band and orchestra music is now being collated by an automatic high-speed system. The enclosed parts are now sorted by page count, rather than score order.

Program Notes

Two Folk Dances is taken from a collection of folk dances that I arranged for string orchestra as a 50th wedding anniversary gift to my parents, who met while folk dancing. "Dodi Li" is based on a Hebrew love song written by Nira Chen. This hauntingly beautiful music is a favorite at weddings, and it has also been used for folk dancing. "Misirlou" is an interesting case of what can happen to a piece of folk music in the hands of, well, the folk. Originally a Greek tune by Nicholas Roubanis, this intriguing piece has also been adapted into various other cultures, including klezmer (traditional East European Jewish music), Middle Eastern belly dance music, and American surf-rock. The piece gets its "color" from its scale, which contains two augmented seconds.

Notes to the Conductor

The melody in "Dodi Li" is passed around the various instrument groups, making it an excellent opportunity to focus on voicing. The melody should always be heard clearly above any accompanying lines. The accompaniment will sound best when the different "characters" in the music are brought out. In the accompaniment figure beginning at measure 4, Violin II and Viola should aim for a delicate and almost pale sound as a backdrop to a more robustly played theme in the lower strings. Pizzicati should be warm and graceful, never strident. And, finally, longer sustained notes, such as at measure 14 in the lower strings, are best heard as a quiet undercurrent to the other voices, quieter than even the syncopated figure in the Violas. After the beginning of these notes, the sound should die away slightly, so we can better hear the moving lines. Grace notes should be played before the beat.

The cadenzas in "Misirlou" can give the solo violinist a chance to indulge in a great deal of musical liberty. The other players of the orchestra can then learn to rely solely on the conductor, since the time will not be constant. The tune itself should be gutsy and earthy, with heavy weight on the beginnings of syncopated figures, as in the beginnings of measures 13 and 14 in the violins. Part of the intrigue of this piece is due to the tempo, which should be steady and never pushing forward. The bass line in the lower strings should be short, "secco," and obstinately so, throughout the main body of the movement. The last bit of "spice" is provided by the Violas. At measure 20, for example: for the "flavor" to be just right, make sure any notes with dots are very short, and grace notes are quick and before the beat.

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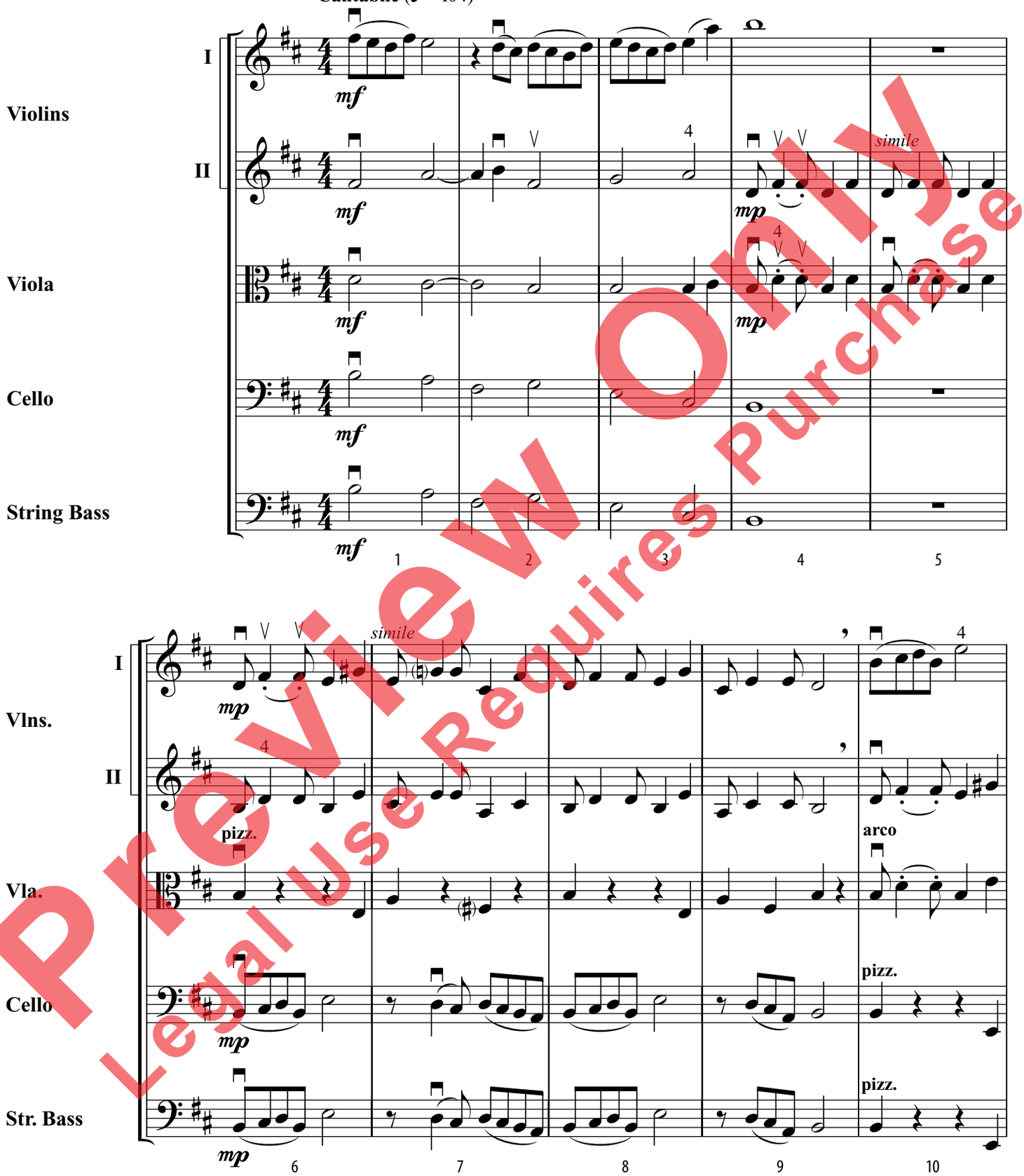
Two Folk Dances

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 5:30

I. Dodi Li

Music by Nira Chen
Arranged by Lauren Bernofsky

Cantabile (♩ = 104)



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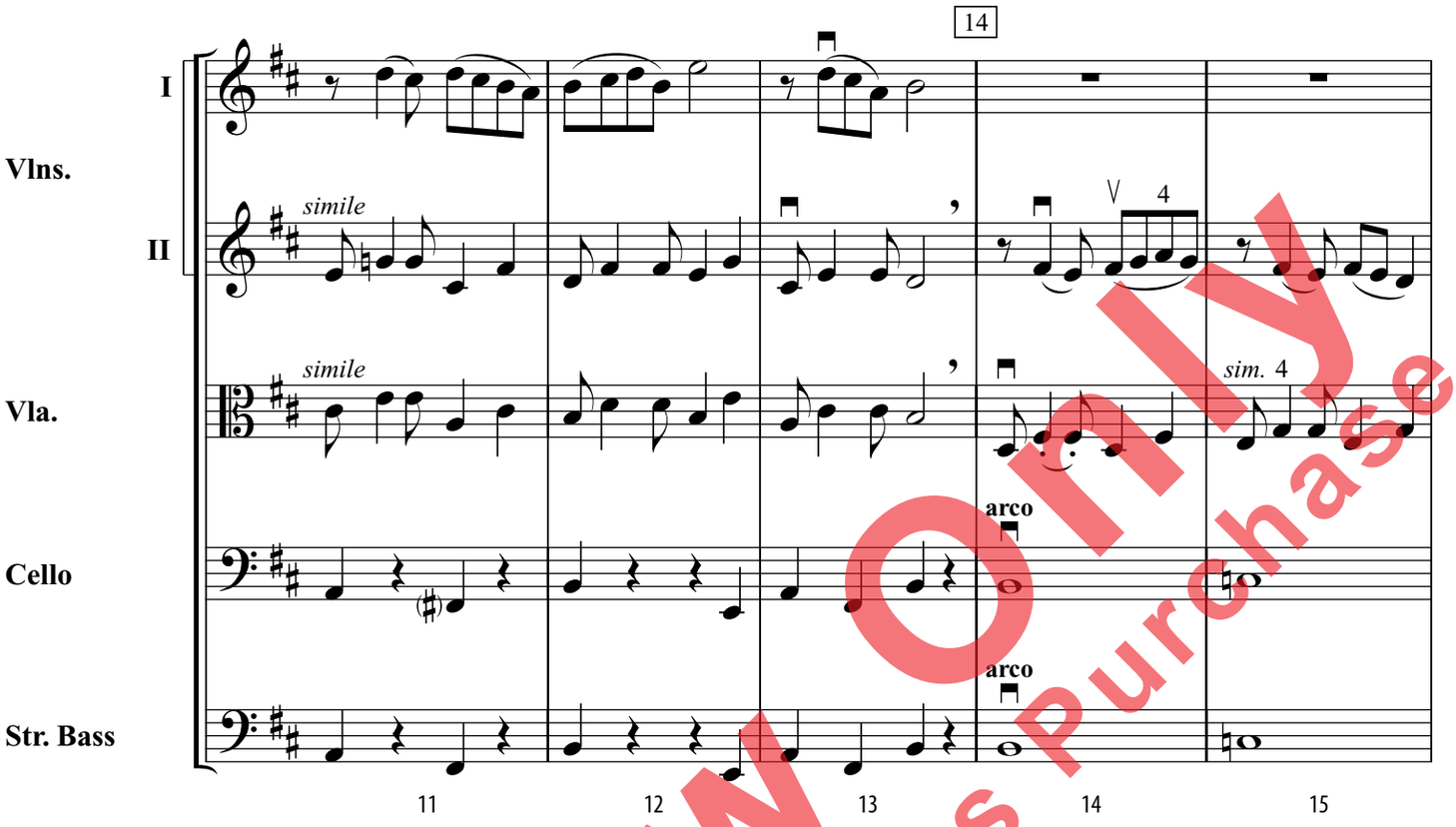

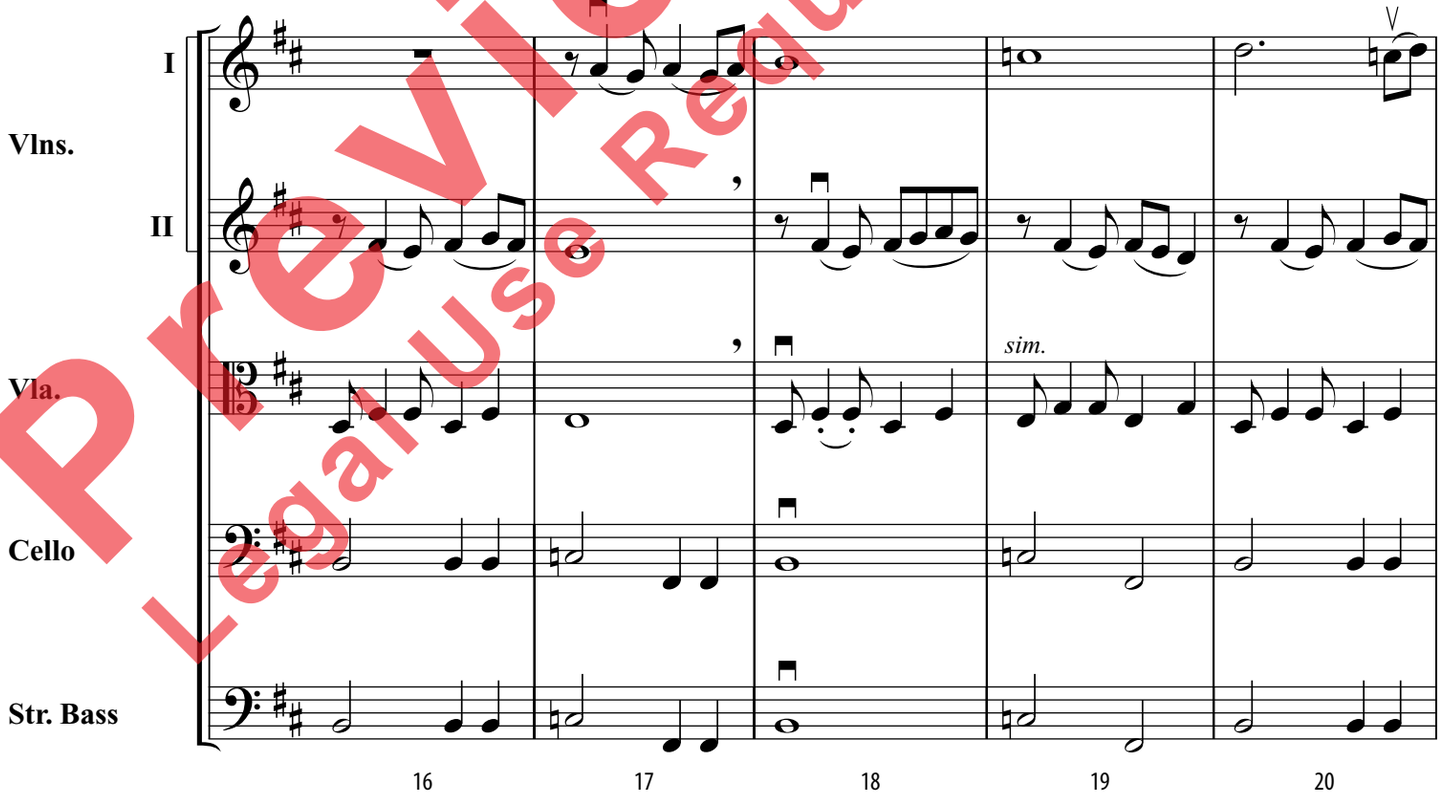

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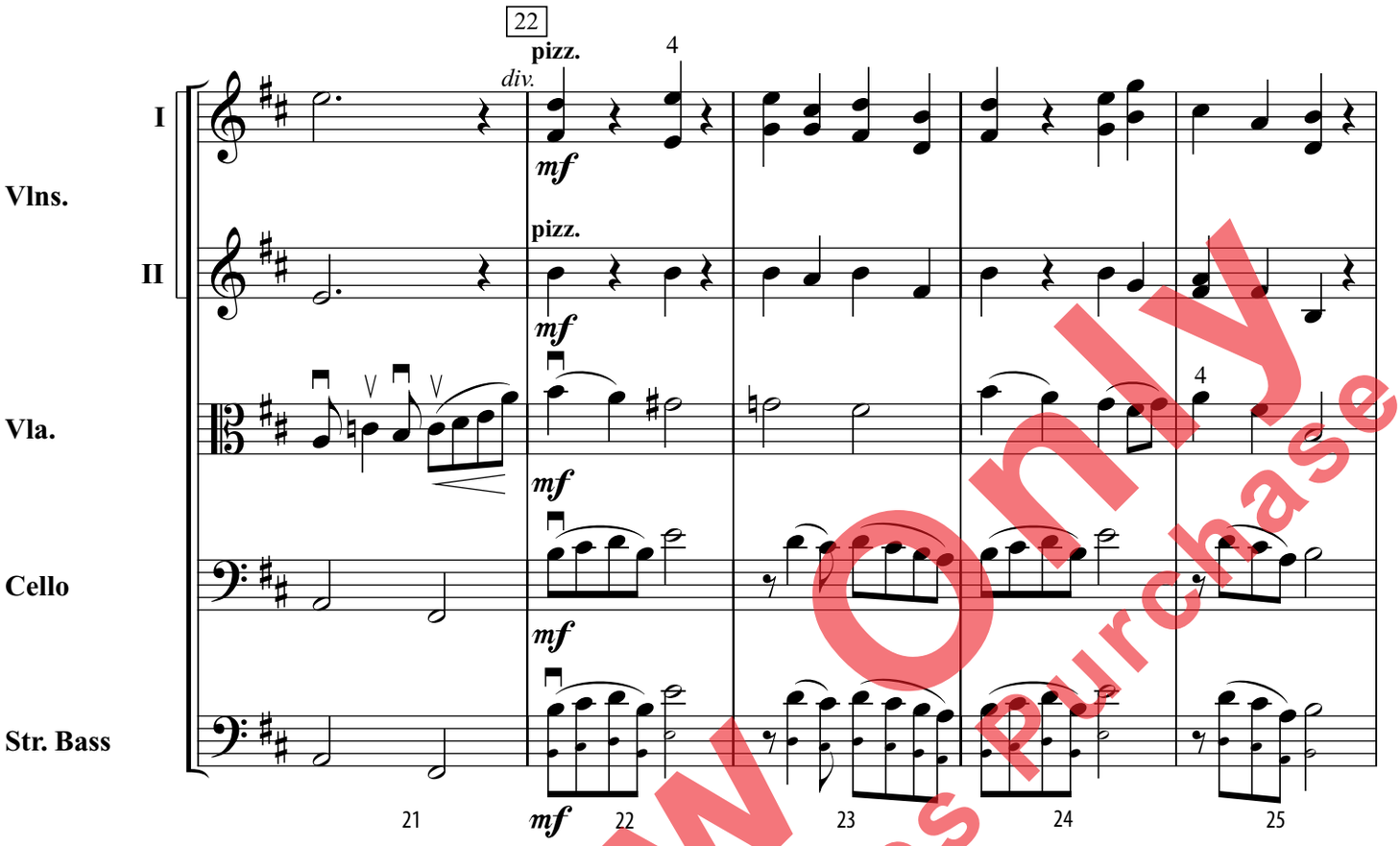

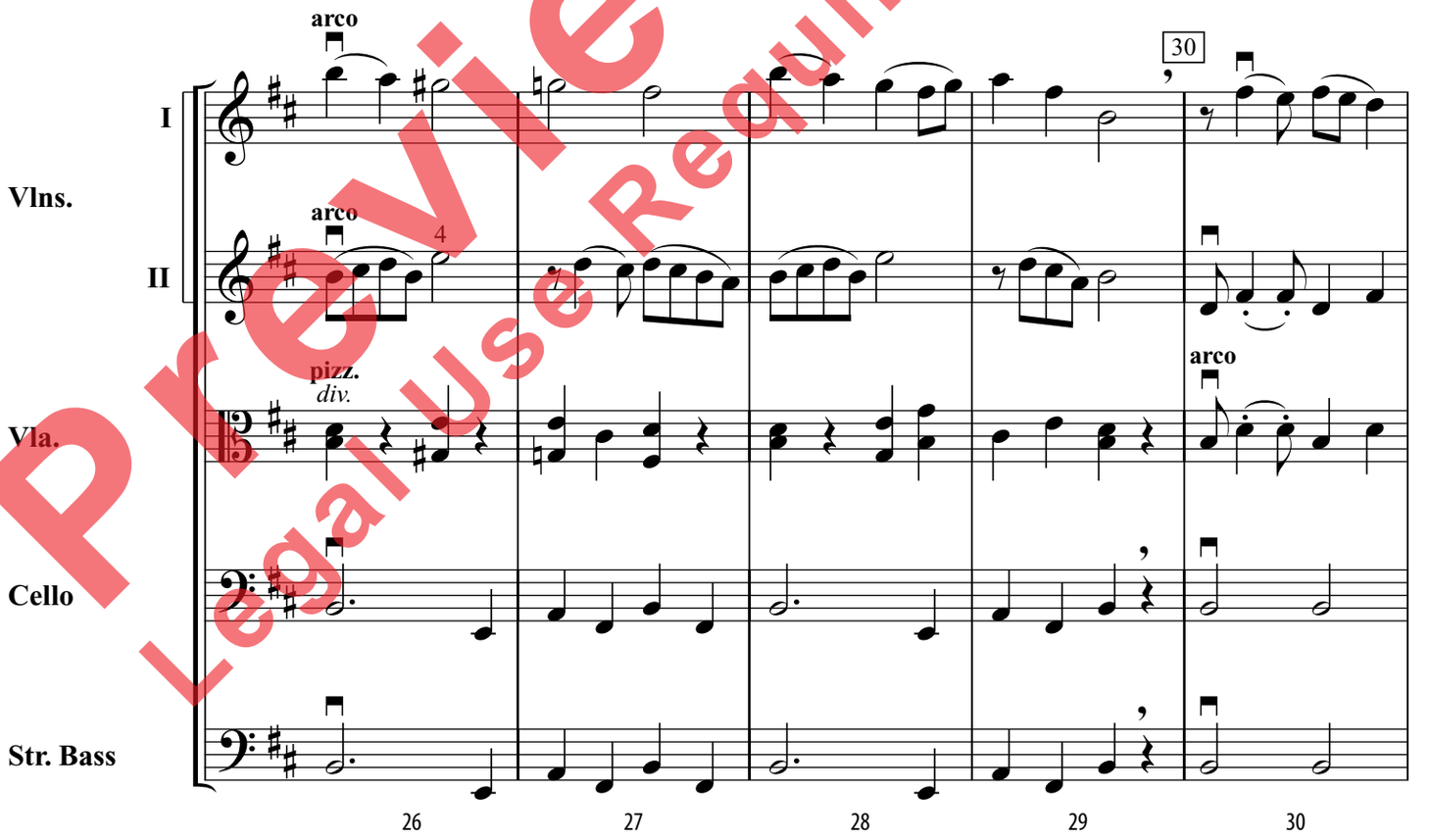

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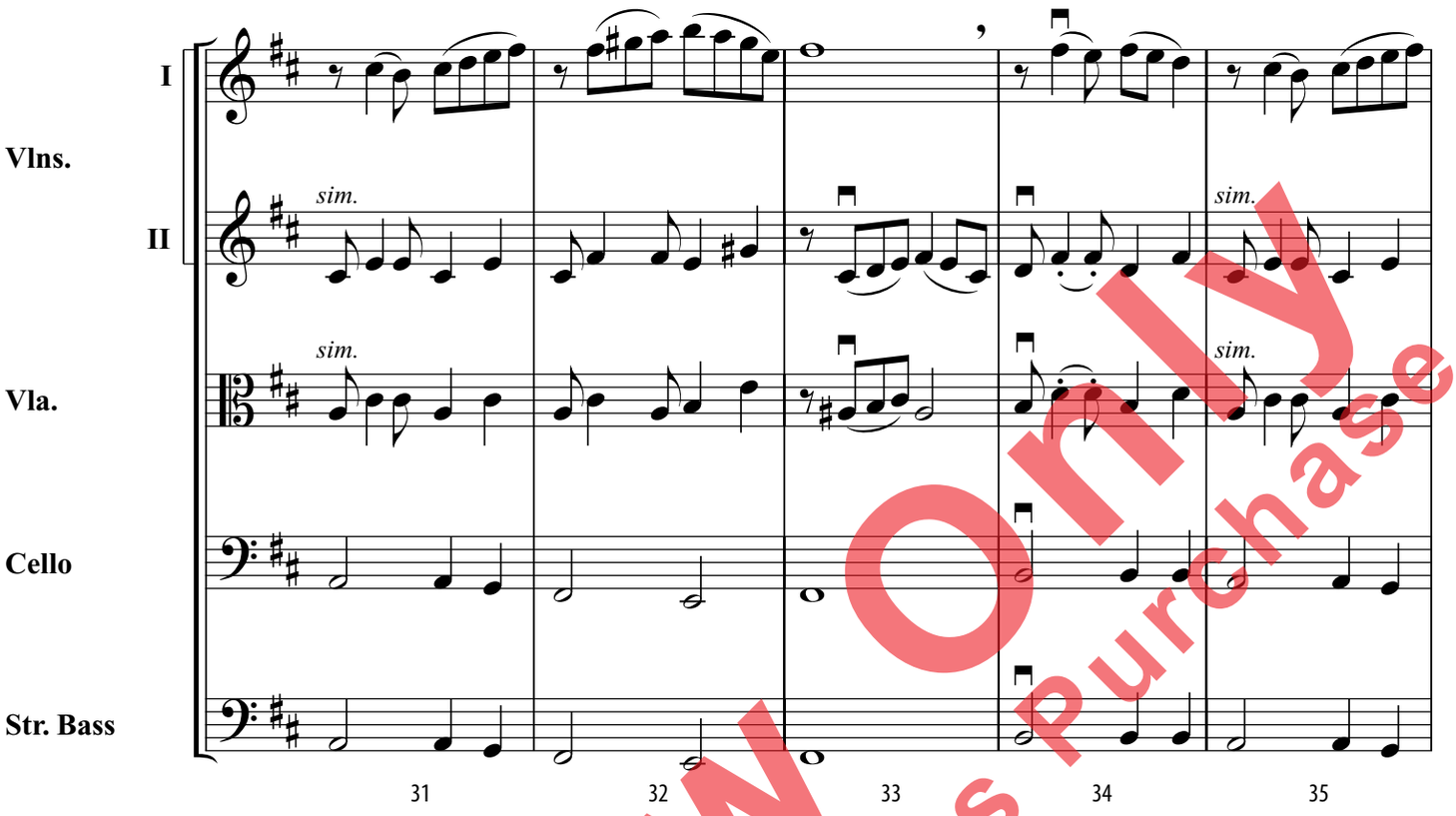

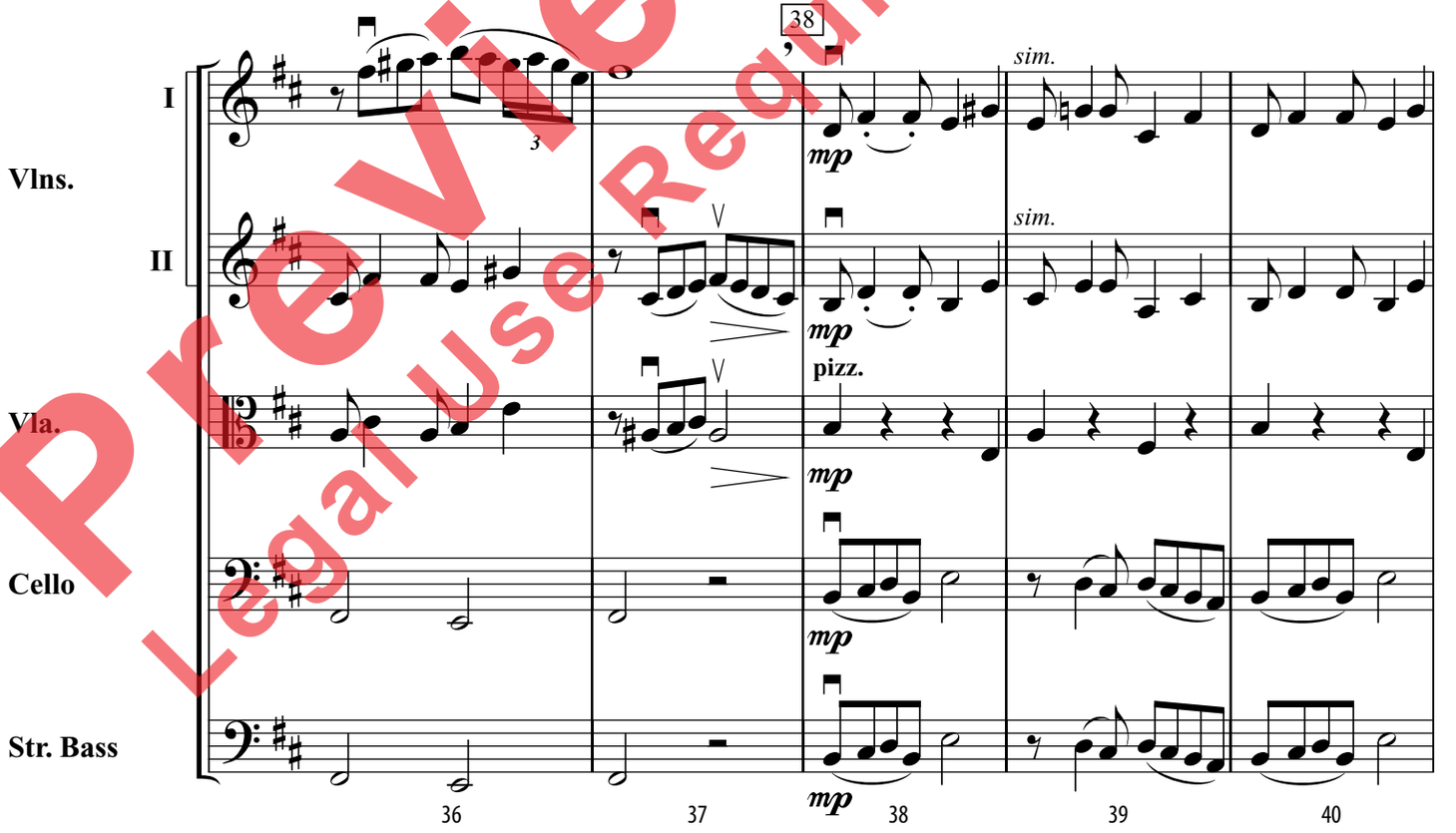

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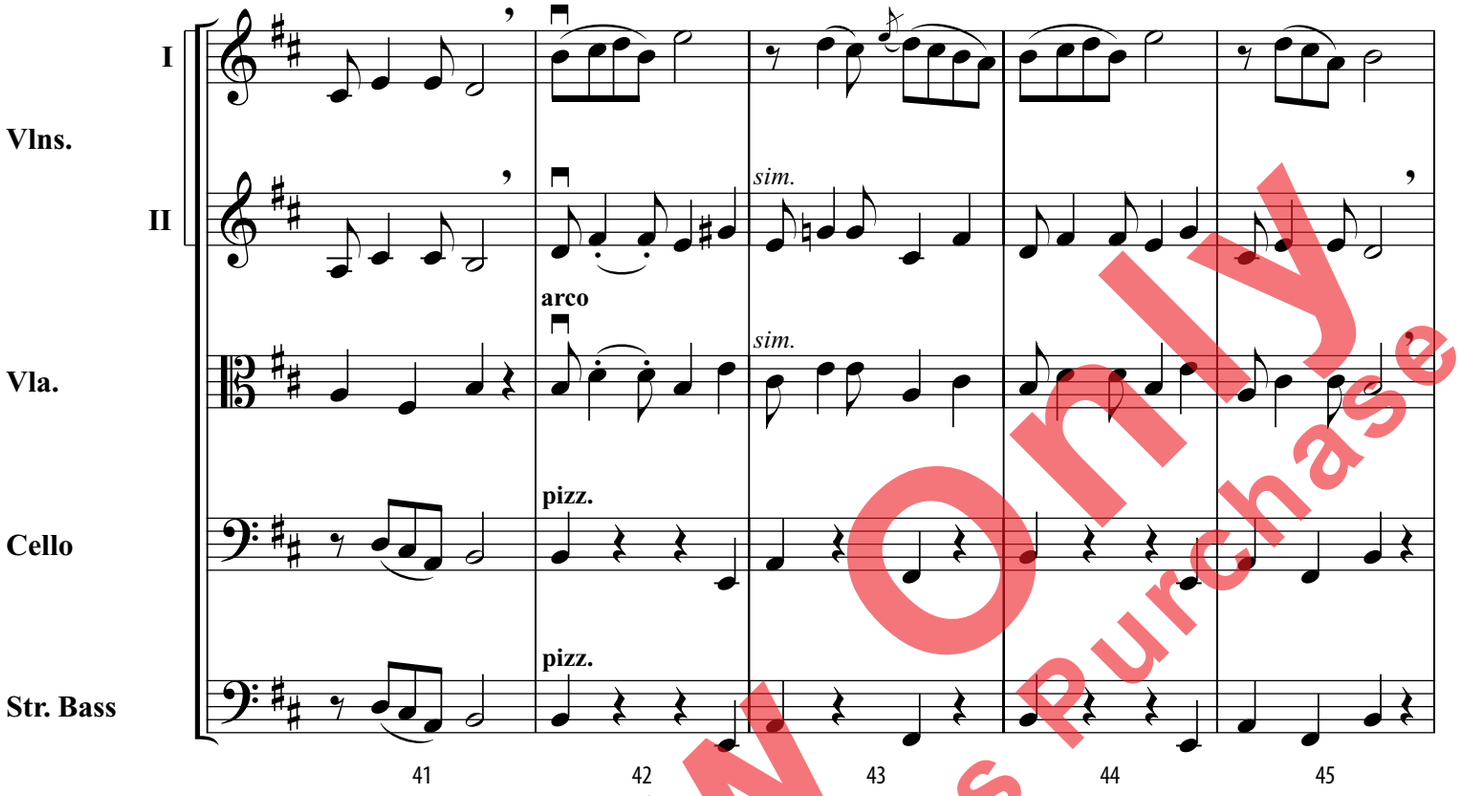

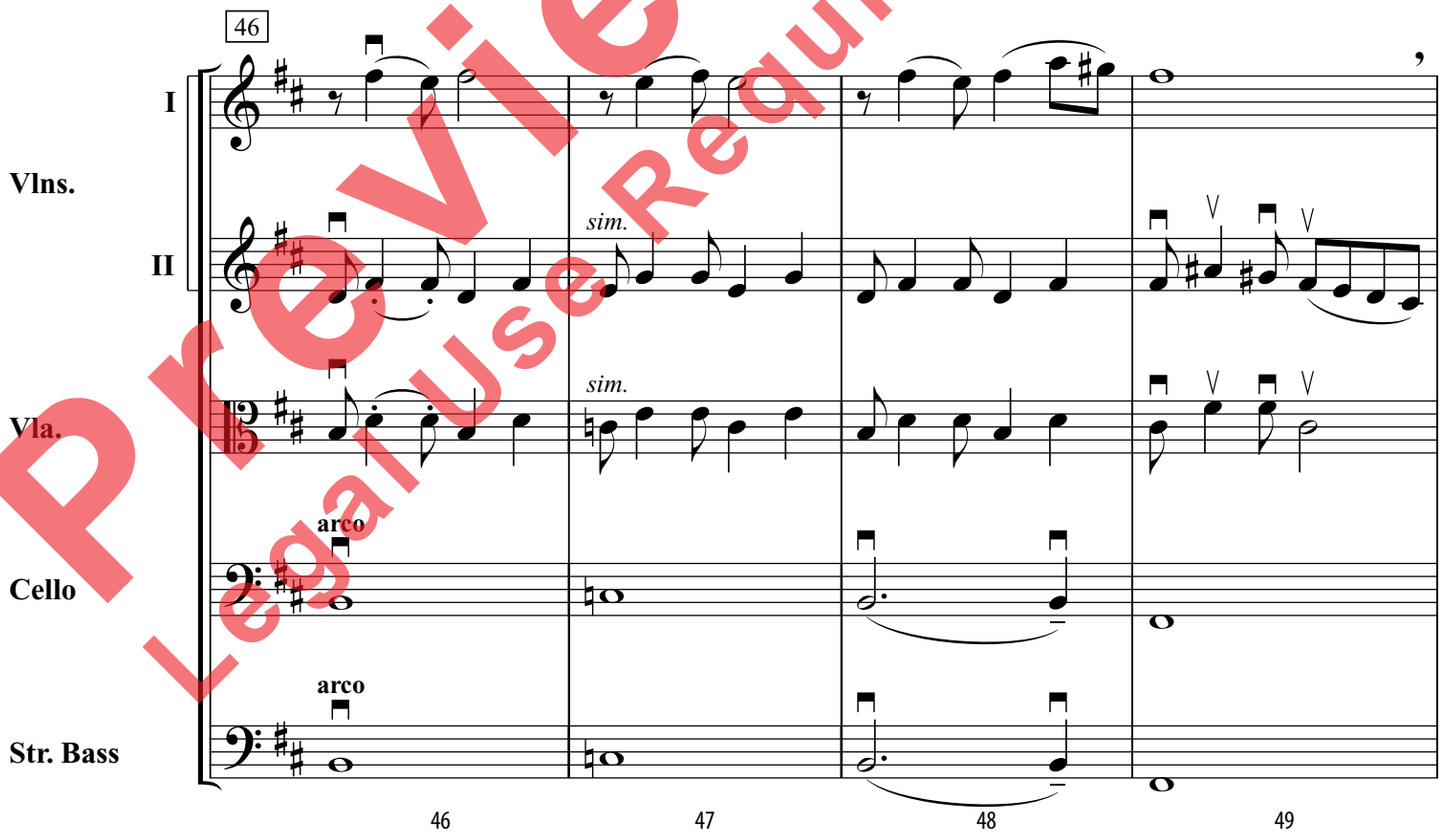

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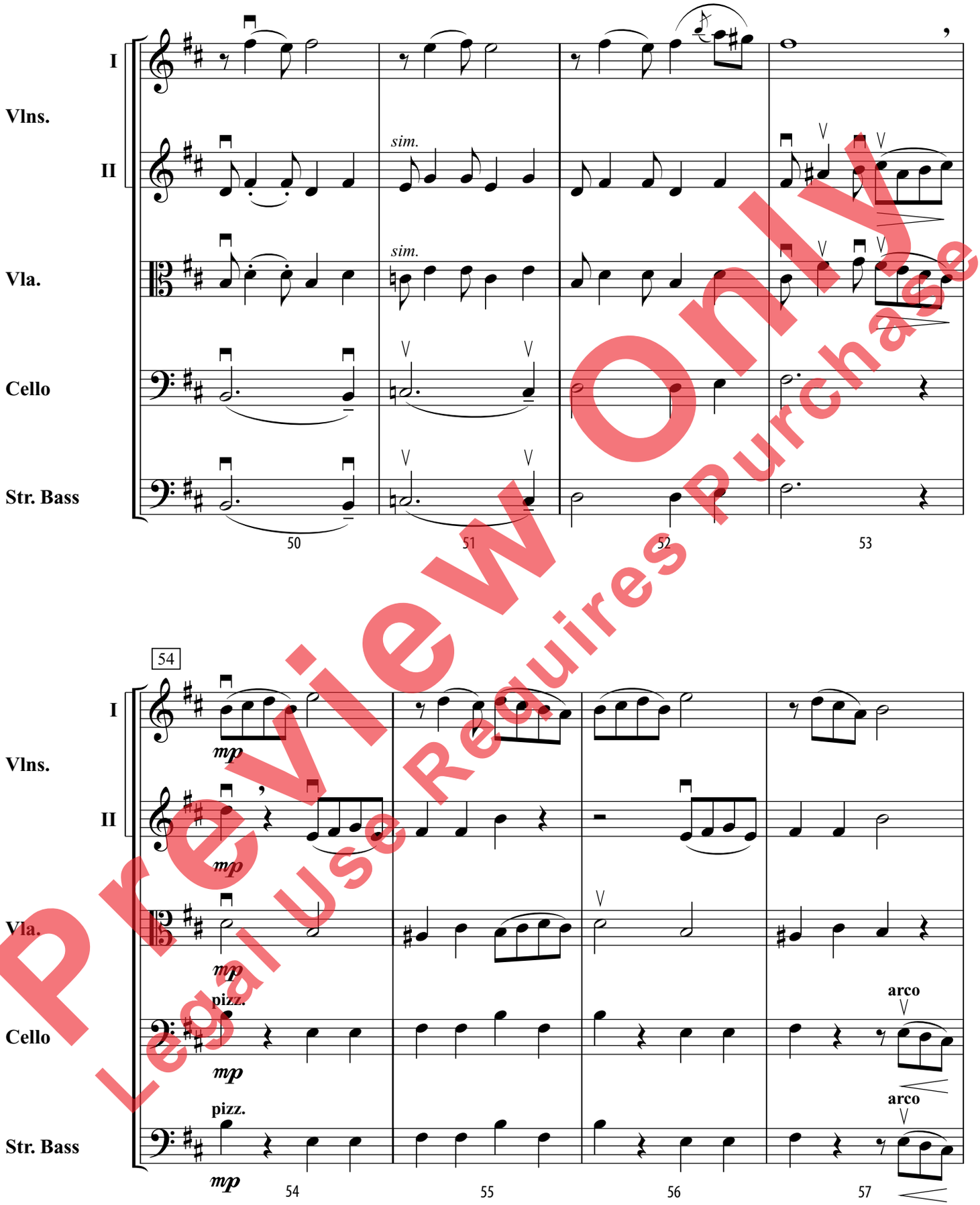

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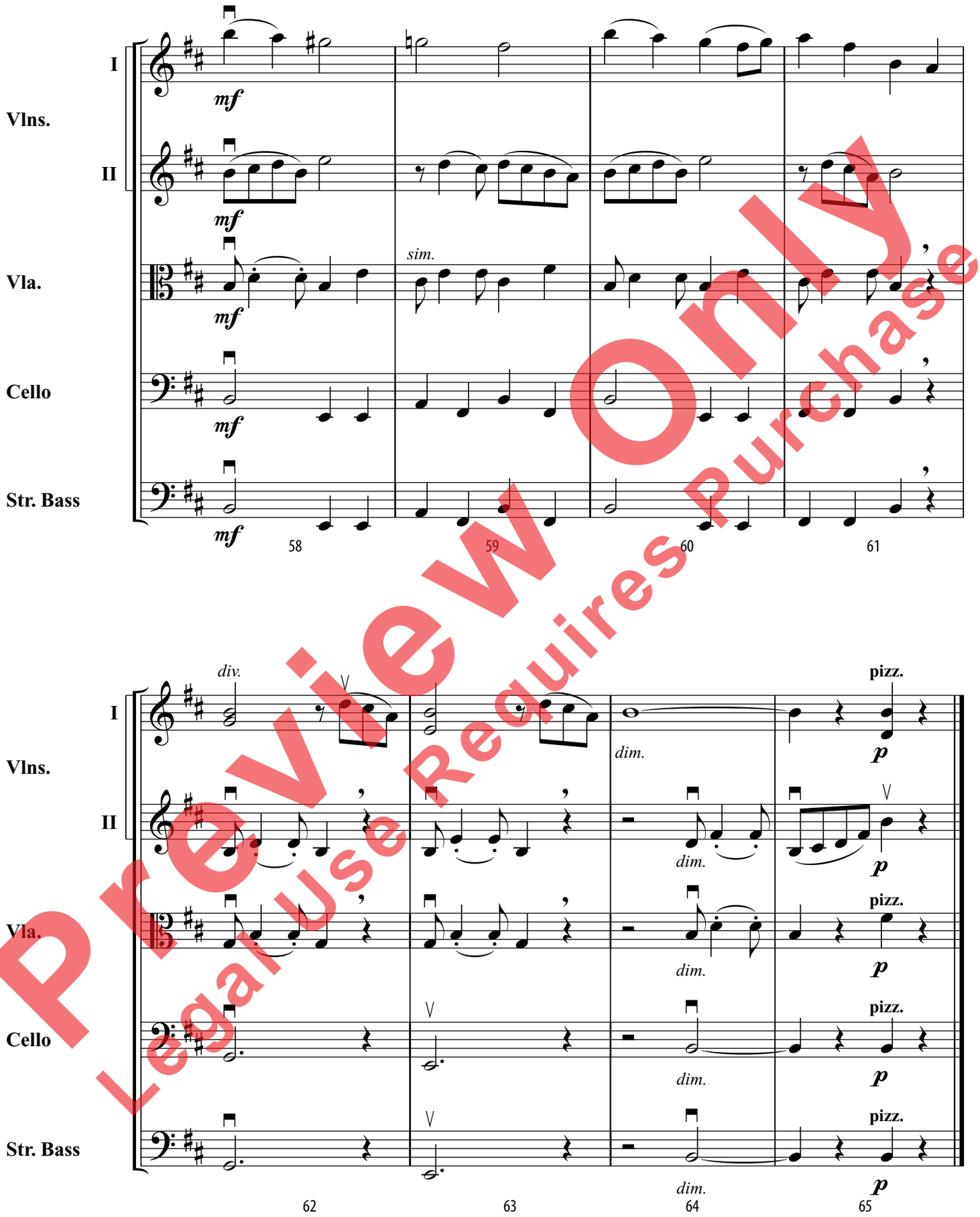

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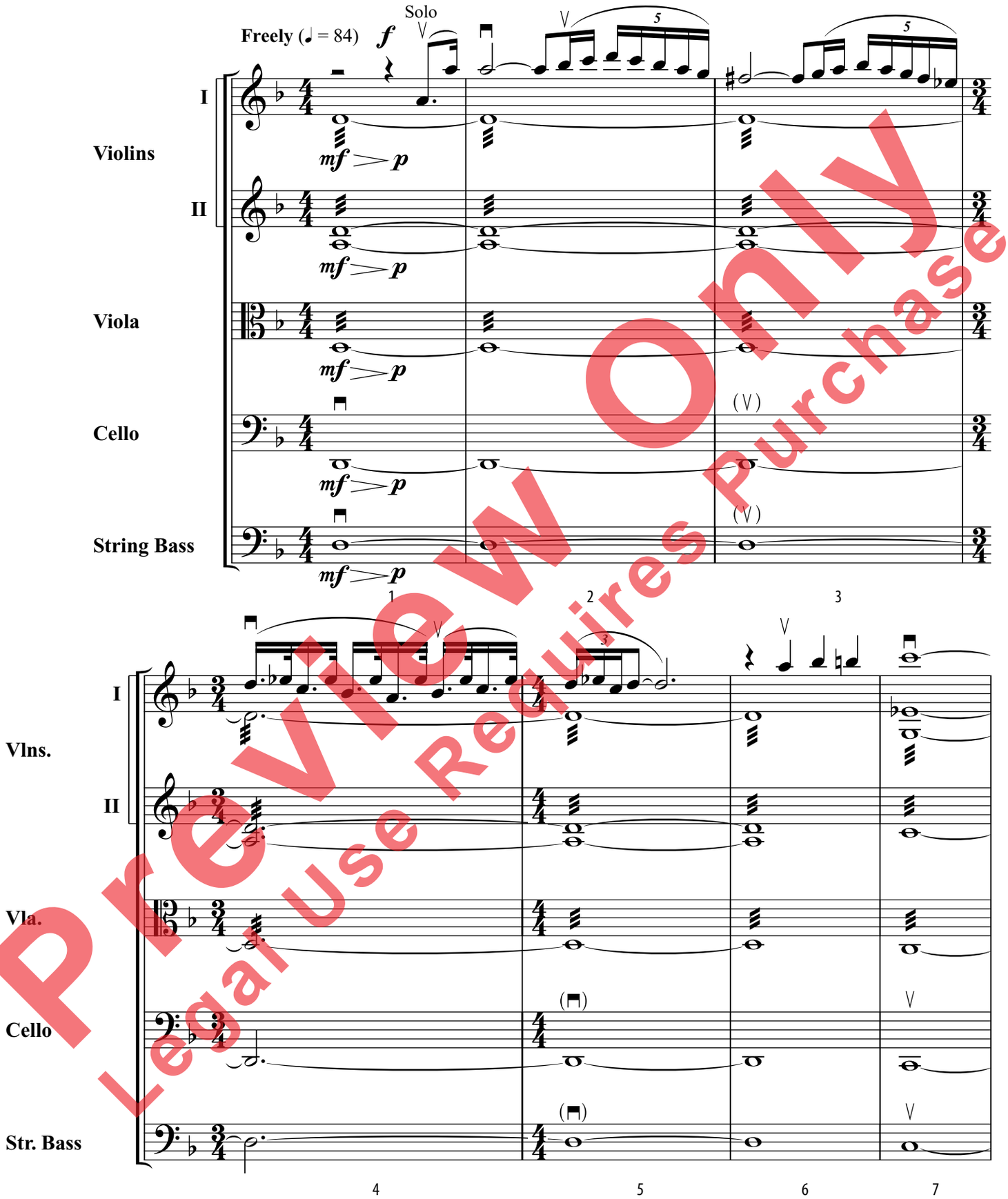
II. Misirlou

Music by Nicholas Roubanis



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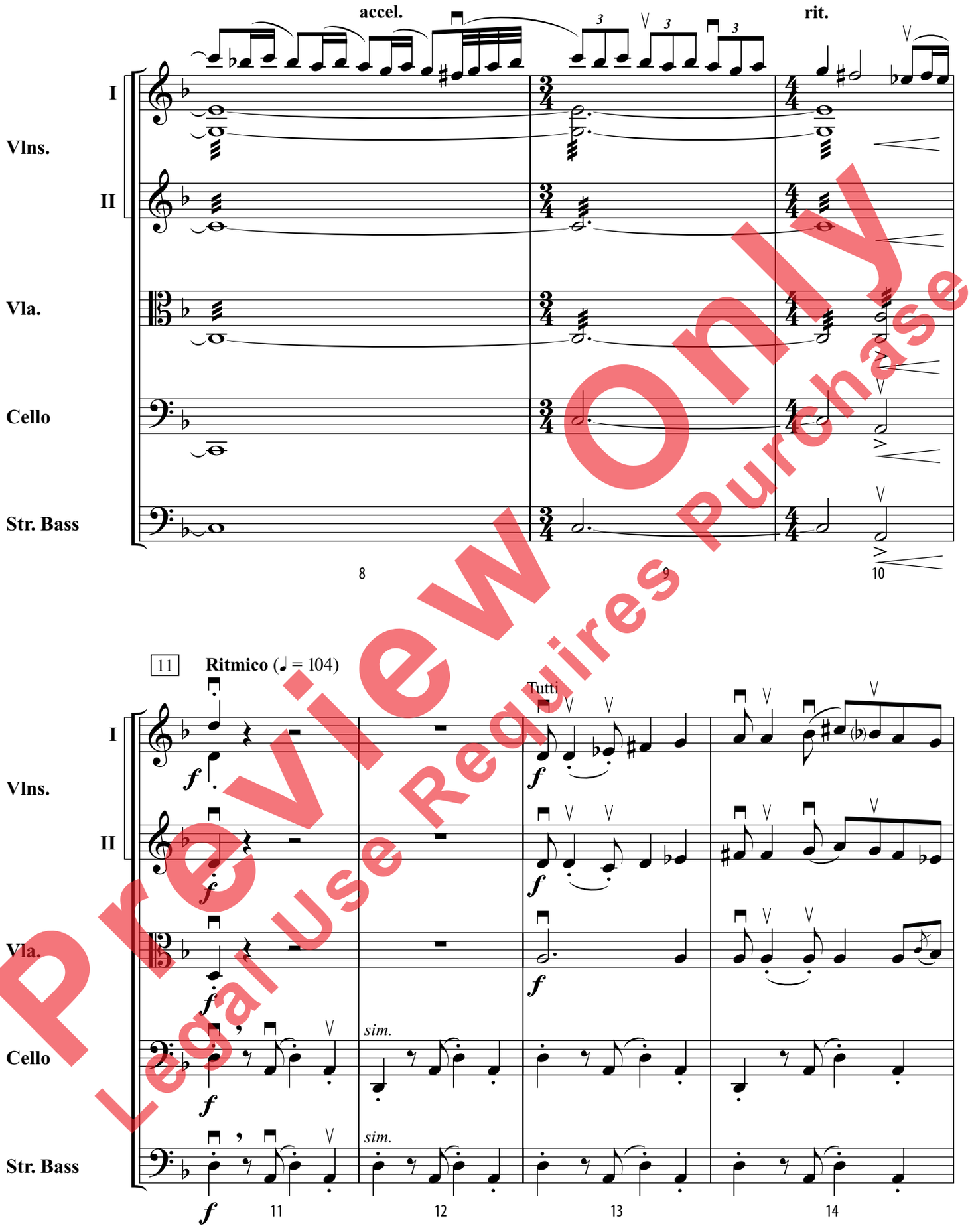

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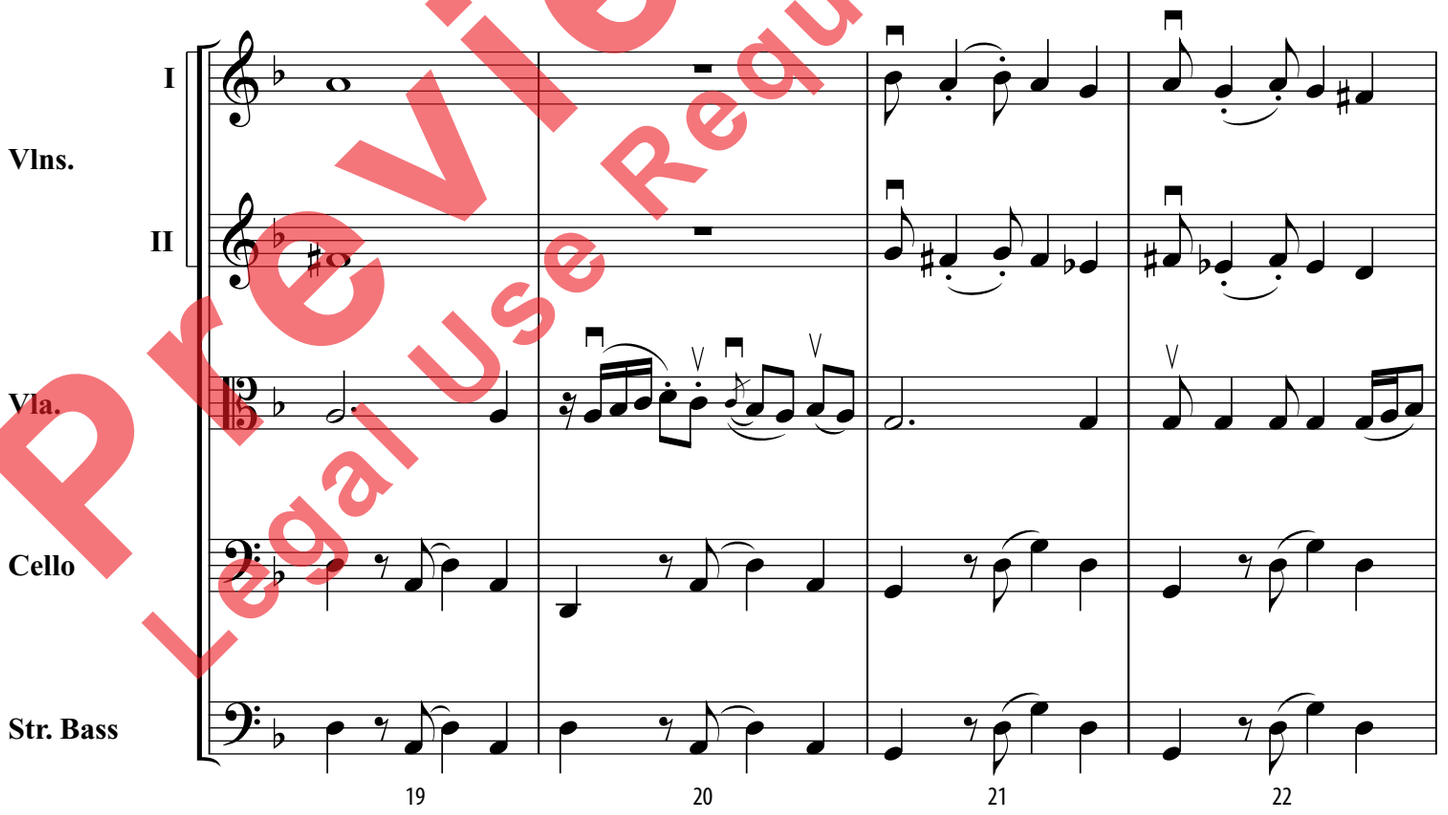

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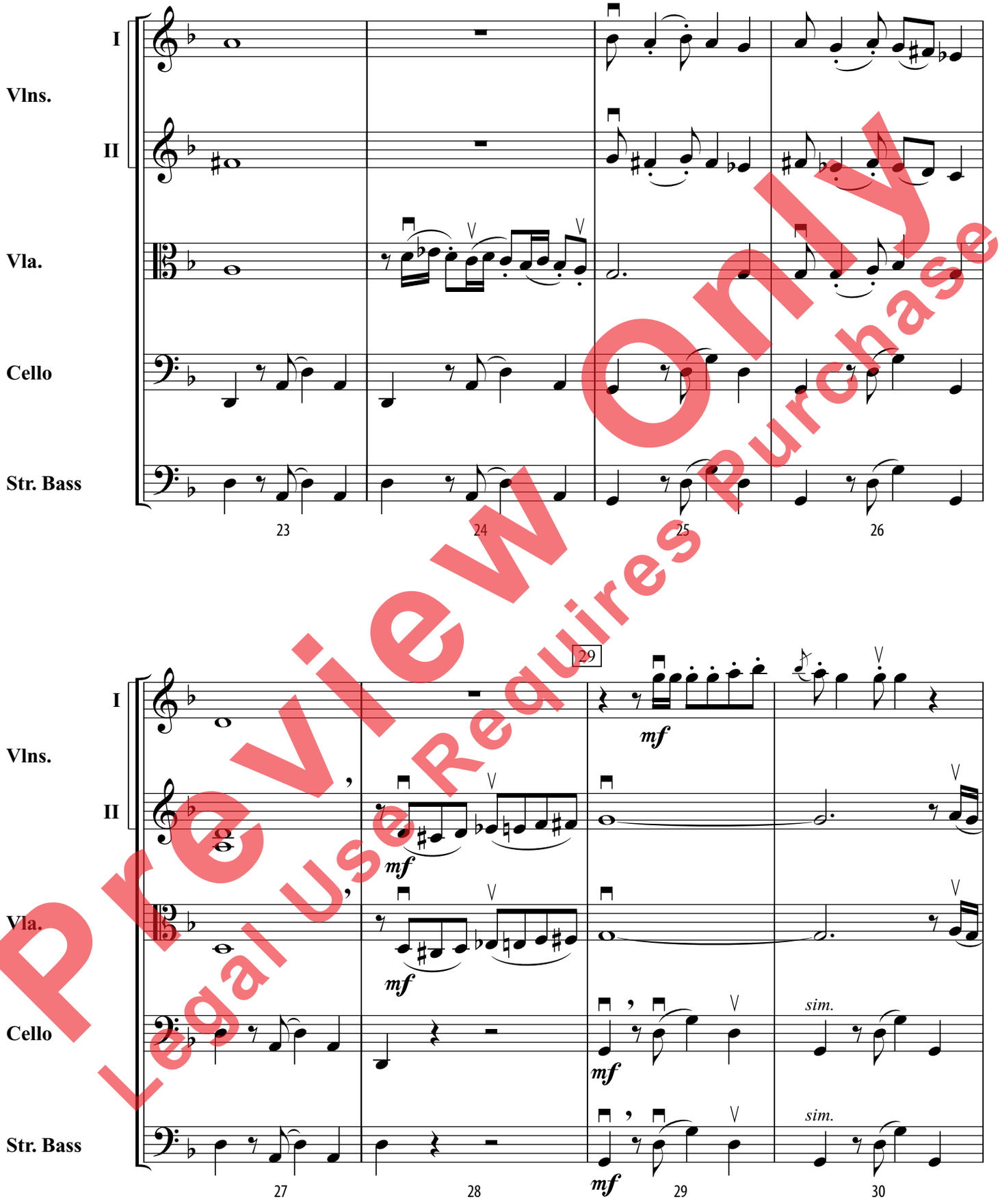

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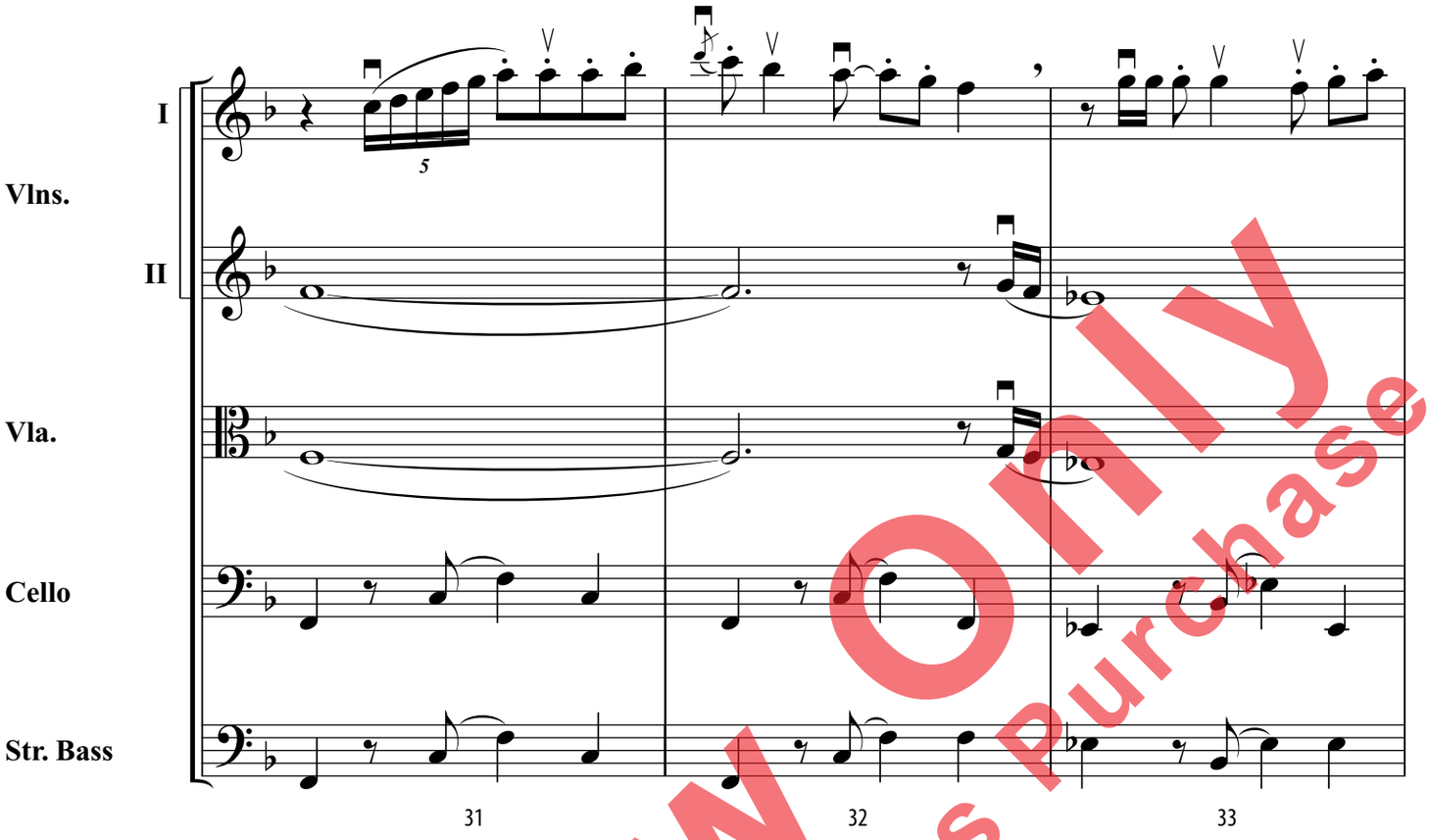

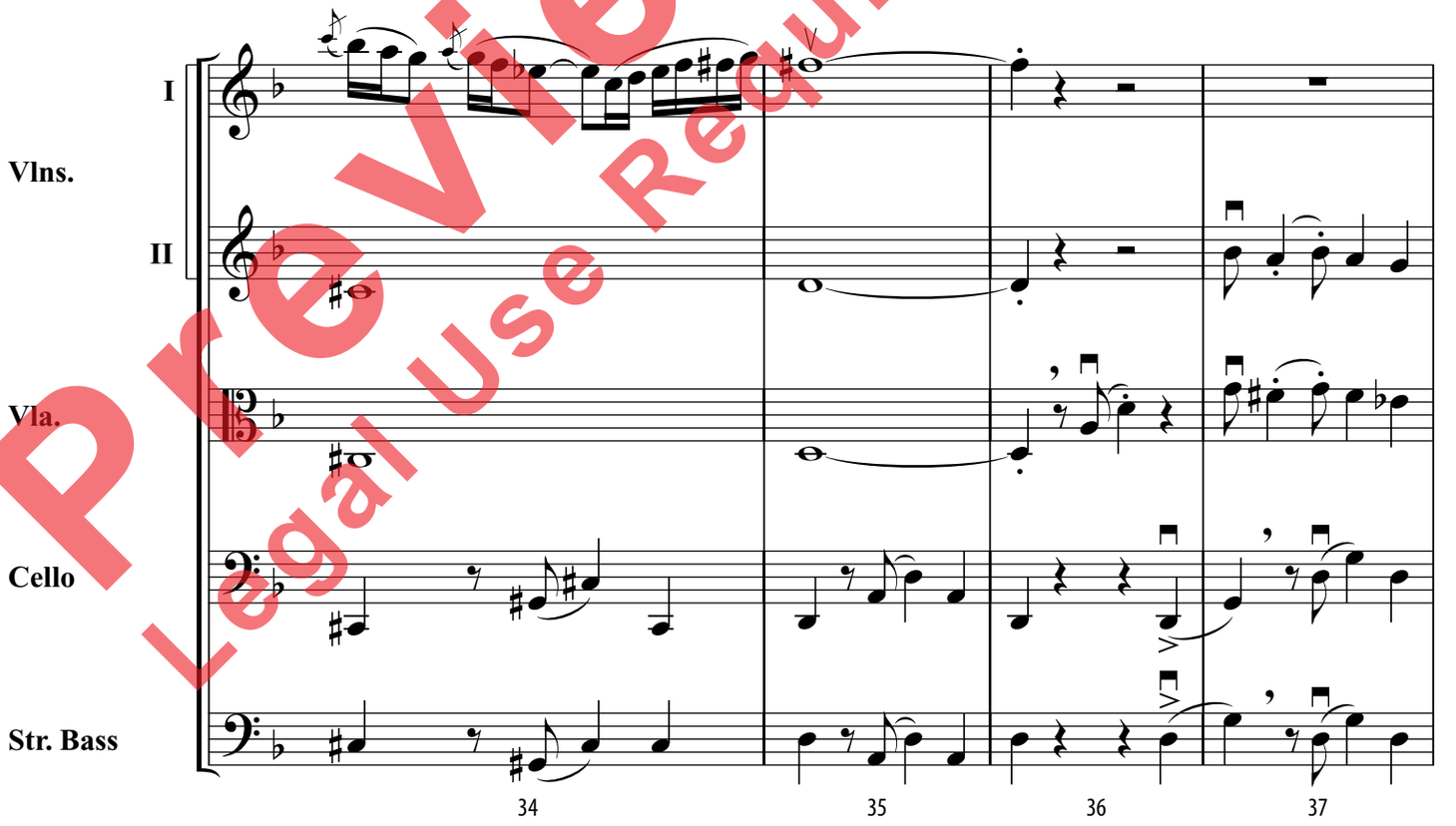

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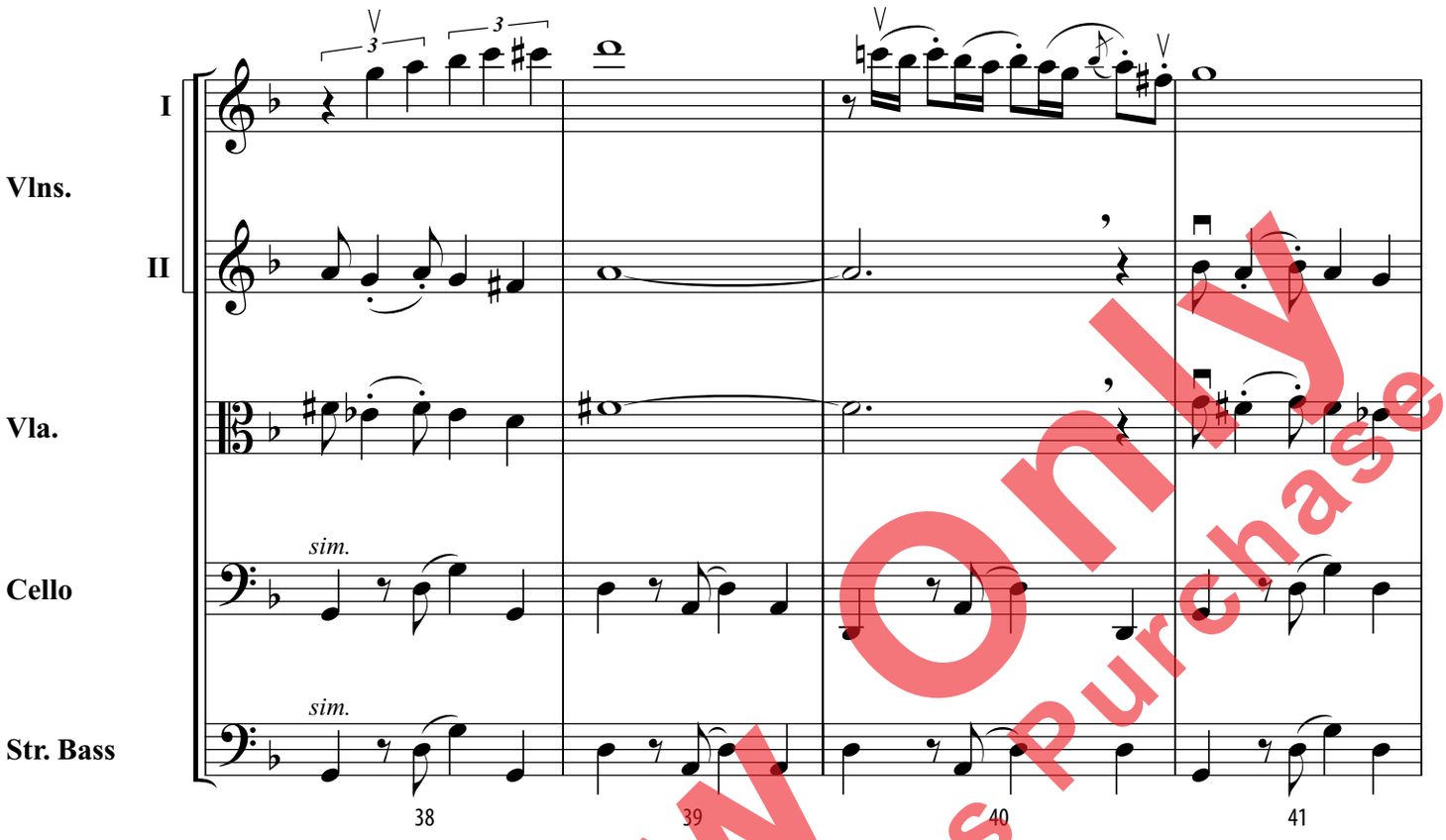

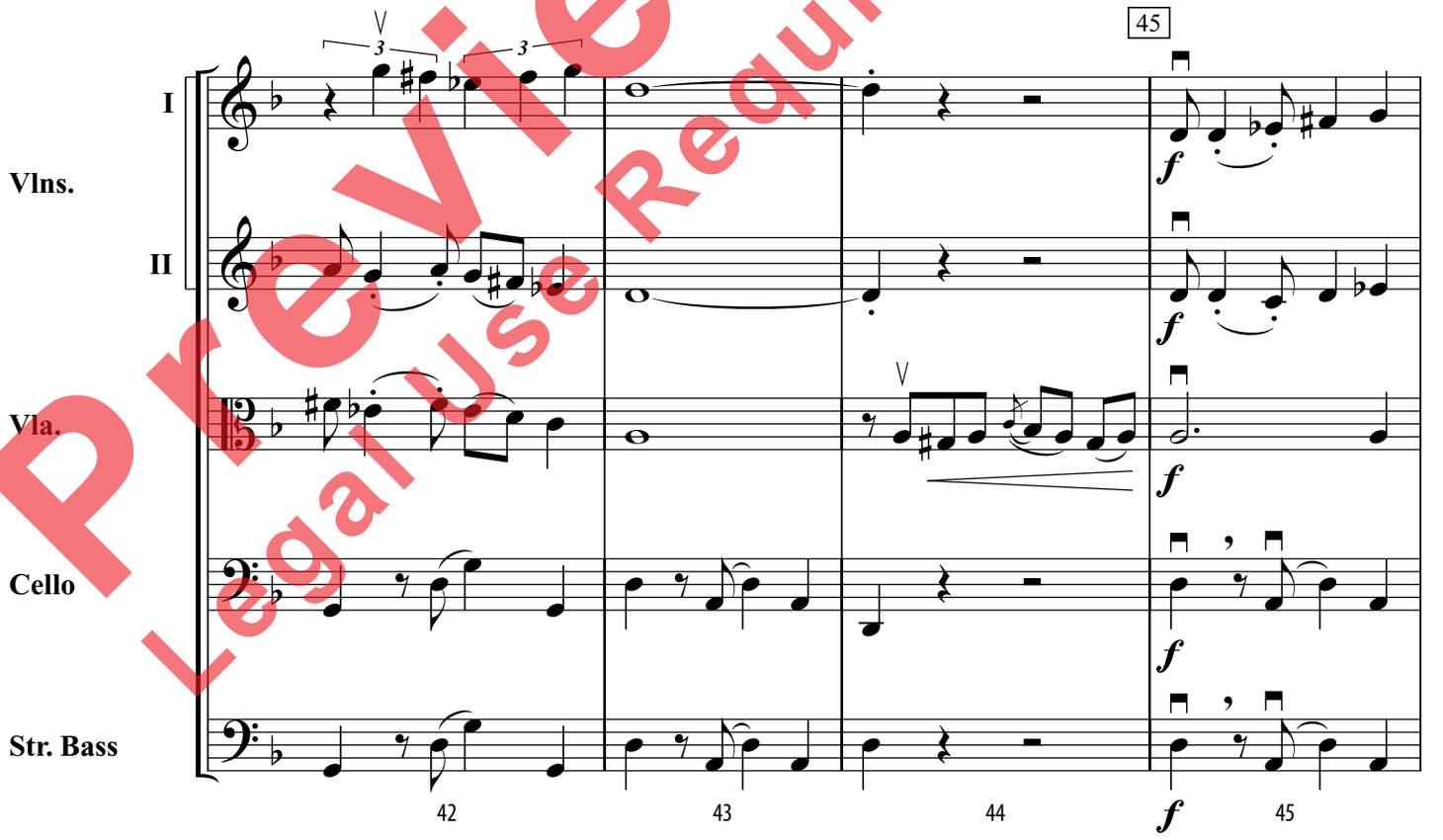

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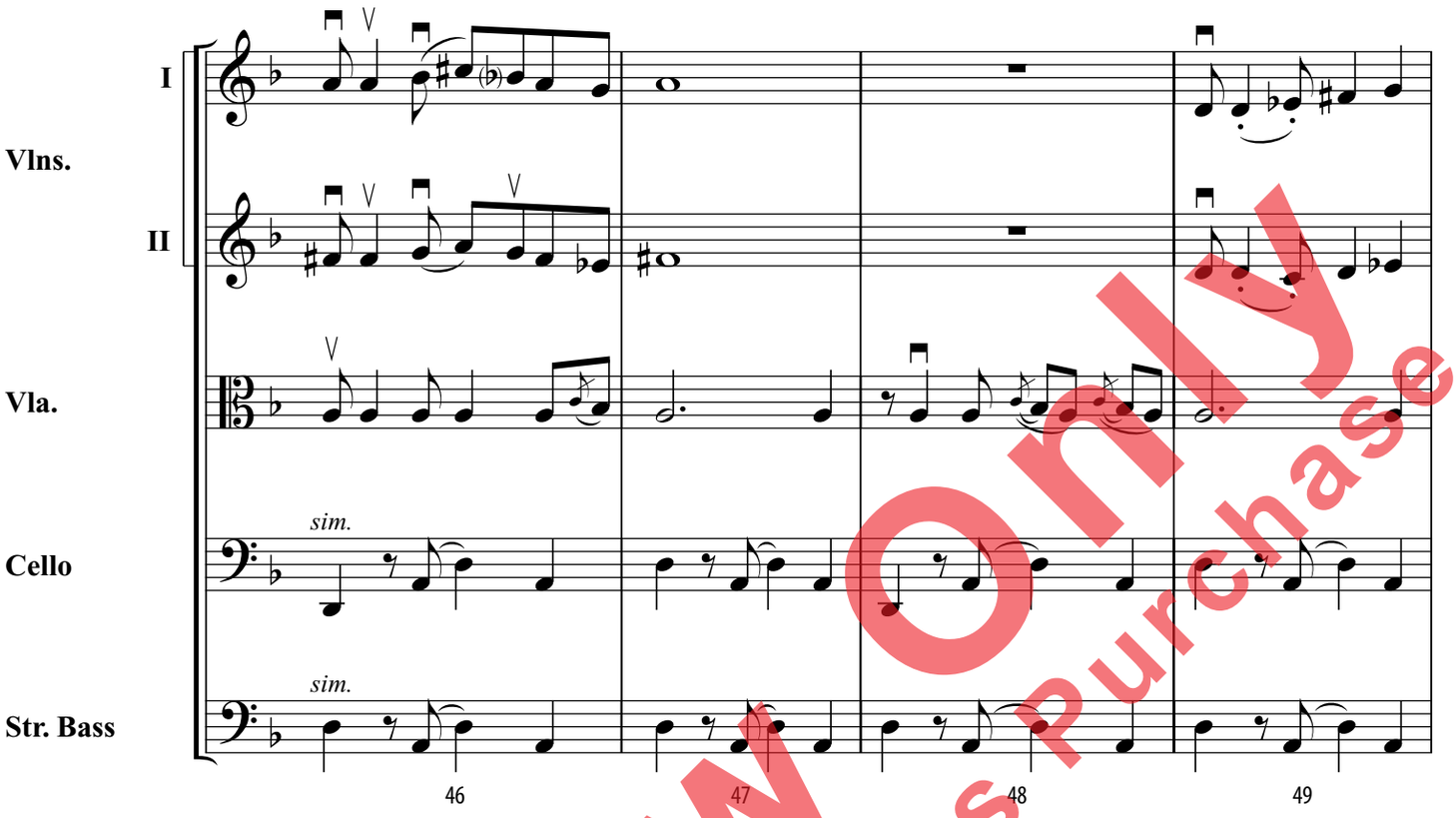

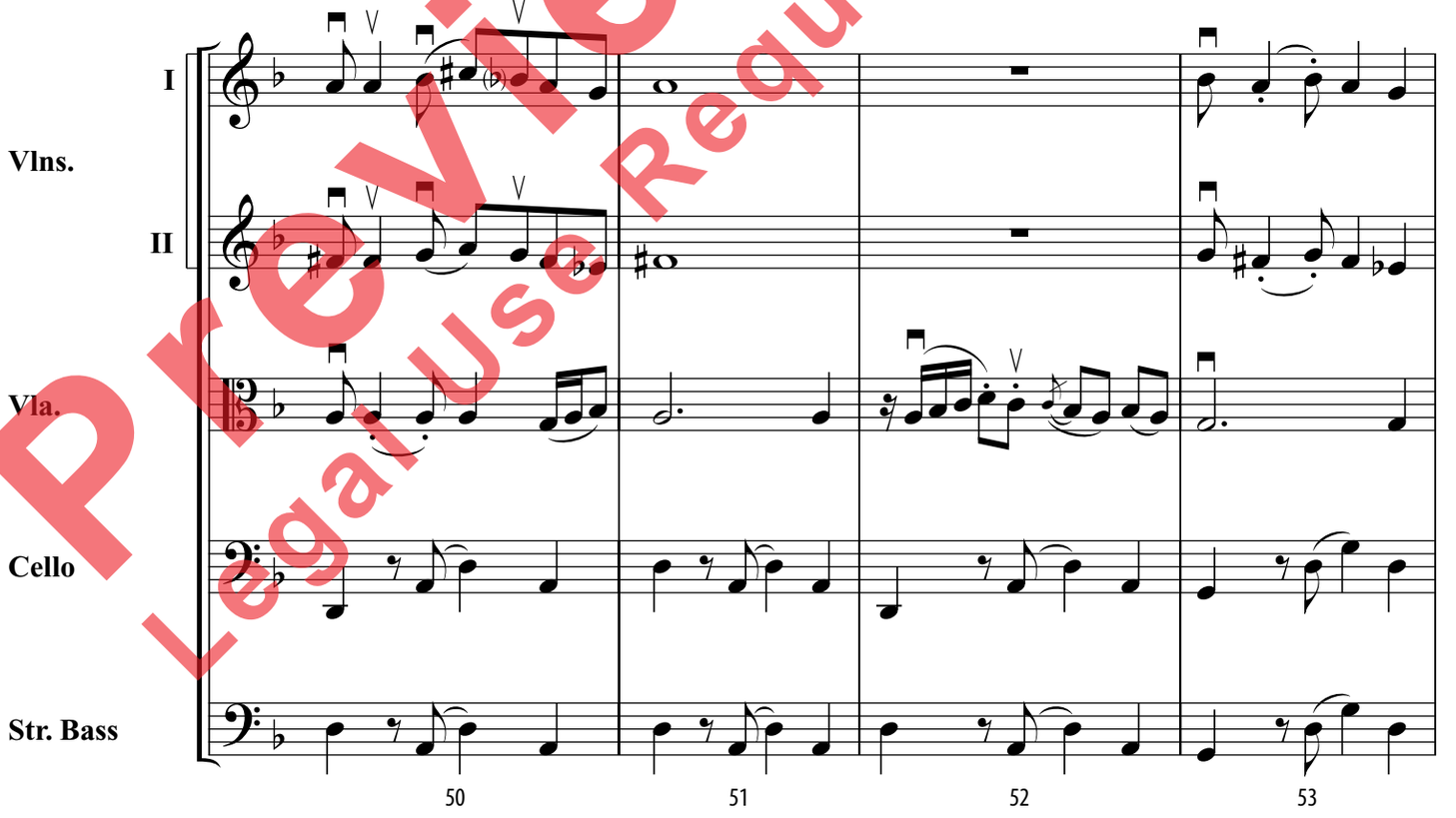

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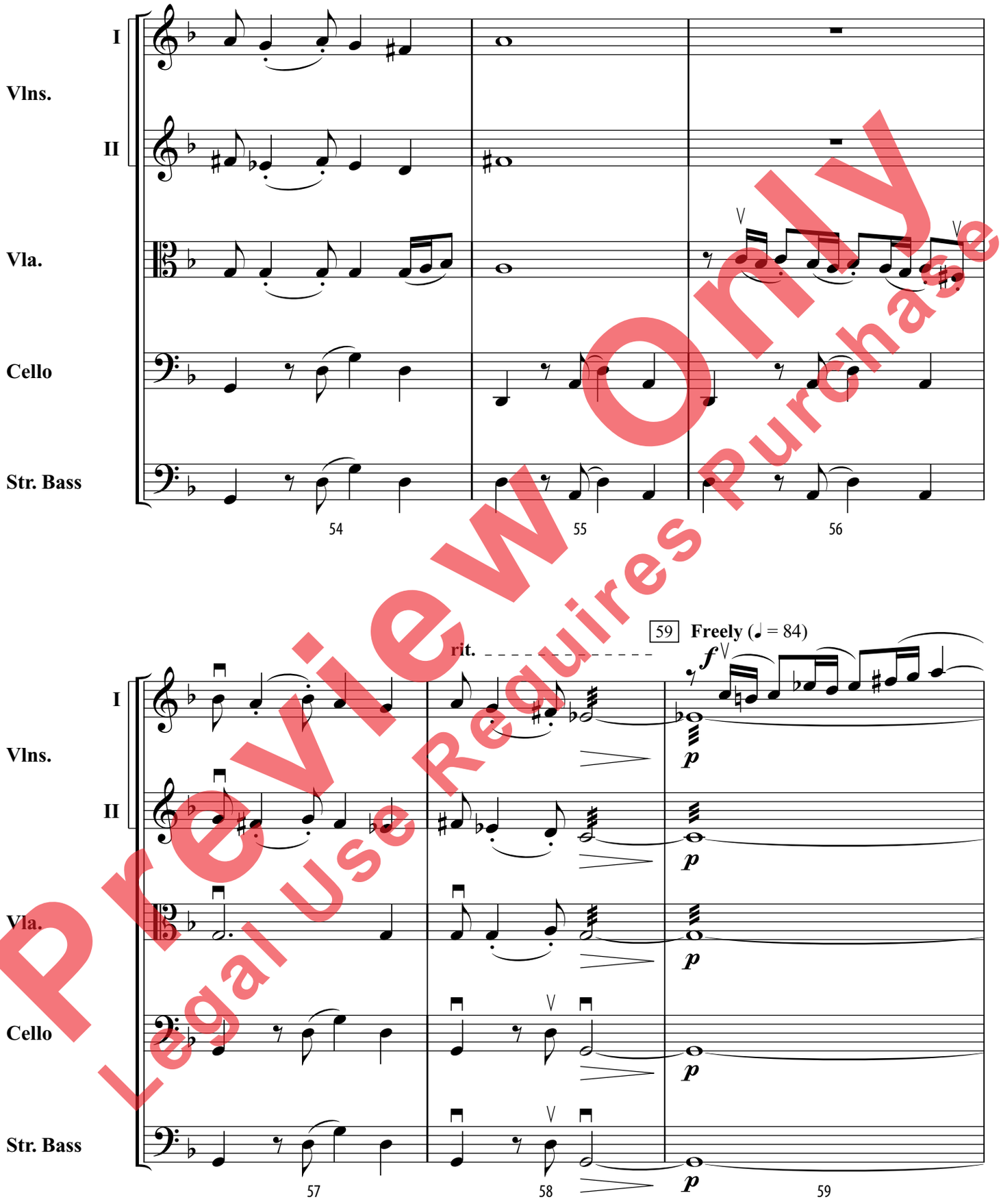

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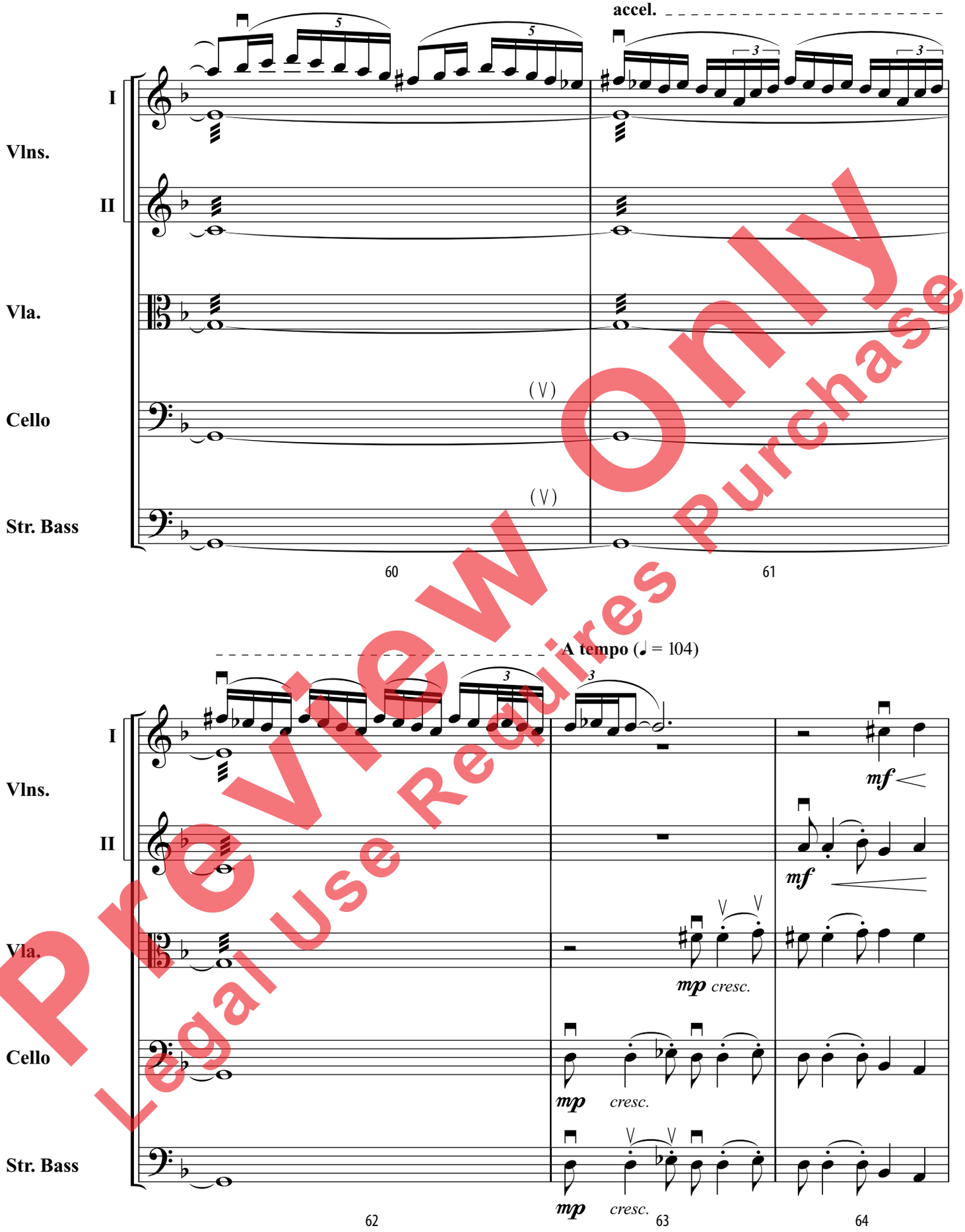

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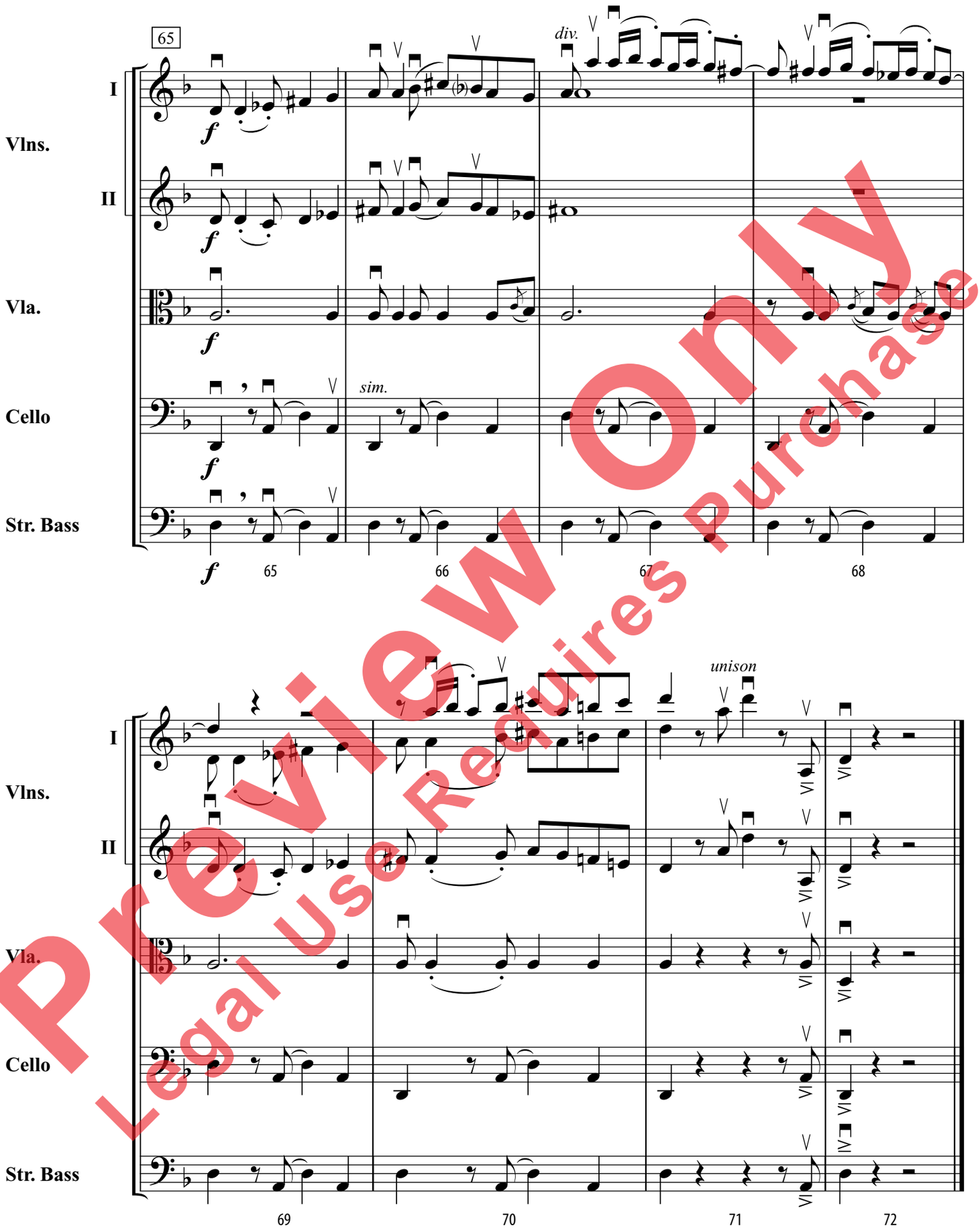

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