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FJH DEVELOPING STRINGS

Grade 2.5

SWEET PETITE WINTER SUITE

(FOUR CANDY CHARACTER PIECES)

I. CANDY CANES
II. HOT CHOCOLATE
III. PEPPERMINT BARK
IV. GINGERBREAD MAN

Brian Balmages

Instrumentation

1 - Conductor's Full Score
8 - Violin 1
8 - Violin 2
5 - Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
5 - Viola
5 - Violoncello
5 - Double Bass
1 - Piano

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FJH is now using a high-speed sorting system for parts.
As a result, all single page parts are collated before multiple page parts.

THE F·J·H MUSIC COMPANY INC.
Frank J. Hackinson

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The Composer

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an award-winning composer, conductor, producer, and performer. He holds a bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and a master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. His compositions have been performed worldwide at the state, national and international level. His active schedule of commissions and premieres has incorporated groups ranging from elementary schools to professional ensembles, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony Orchestra, University of Miami Wind Ensemble, Boston Brass, and the Dominion Brass Ensemble. In 2012, Mr. Balmages received the prestigious Albert Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association. He is also a 2010 winner of the Harvey G. Phillips Award for Compositional Excellence, presented by the International Tuba-Euphonium Association.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys engagements with numerous all-state and regional honor bands and orchestras along with university and professional groups. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, National Association for Music Educators, American School Band Directors Association, CBDNA, the Kennedy Center, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. He has also served as an Adjunct Professor of Instrumental Conducting and Acting Symphonic Band Director at Towson University in Maryland.

Currently, Mr. Balmages is the Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company Inc. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He resides in Baltimore with his wife Lisa and their two sons.

About the Music

Anyone who knows me will tell you that I have a major sweet tooth. So as the winter holidays approach, I look forward to all the typical treats we associate with the holiday season. The idea for this piece came to me just after Thanksgiving, when our sons got their first candy canes of the year and we made hot chocolate on a cold winter night. Subtitled *Four Candy Character Pieces*, this four-movement work is based on original themes that are supplemented with a little holiday cheer here and there.

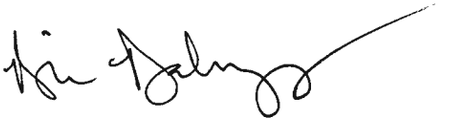
The opening movement, *Candy Canes*, is a spirited and joyful celebration that captures all the excitement of a child (or adult) opening the first candy cane of the season. It is in the style of a light dance and is composed in Phrygian mode. Toward the end of the movement, we hear little snippets of "jingle all the way" and "white horse open sleigh." It is a festive opening to the entire work.

The second movement, *Hot Chocolate*, is inspired by the feeling of sitting by a warm fire after being in the snow for a while. In fact, the opening melody hints vaguely at *The Christmas Song* (specifically "chestnuts roasting on an open fire"). The note sequence in violin 1 follows the exact sequence with a few added notes: G - G - F♯ - (G - F♯) E - (G - F♯) D. There are several phrase extensions that occur throughout this movement, symbolic of a feeling of contentment that we all want to last just a bit longer.

The third movement, *Peppermint Bark*, is a humorous movement cast in a simple multi-meter form. It can be conducted with a quarter note pulse, or it can be done in one with the 4/4 measures in cut-time. The offbeats throughout the movement almost sound like a dog barking, perhaps frolicking in the snow. Ideally, quarter notes should not be full value so the music has a light dance-like quality to it. Off the string is ideal, but short notes on the string is also an option.

The last movement, *Gingerbread Man*, has a tempo marking of "Can't Catch Me!" and should be played accordingly. The movement depicts a gingerbread man running around while being chased by different holiday carols. These carols appear in different styles and use various altered harmonies and melodies. Listeners will hear brief appearances of *Good King Wenceslas, Jingle Bells, Up on the Housetop, Jolly Old Saint Nicholas, Deck the Halls,* and even the sound of sleigh bells.

It is my hope that this music will take you back to some of your favorite memories with some of your favorite holiday treats!



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Duration: 4:30

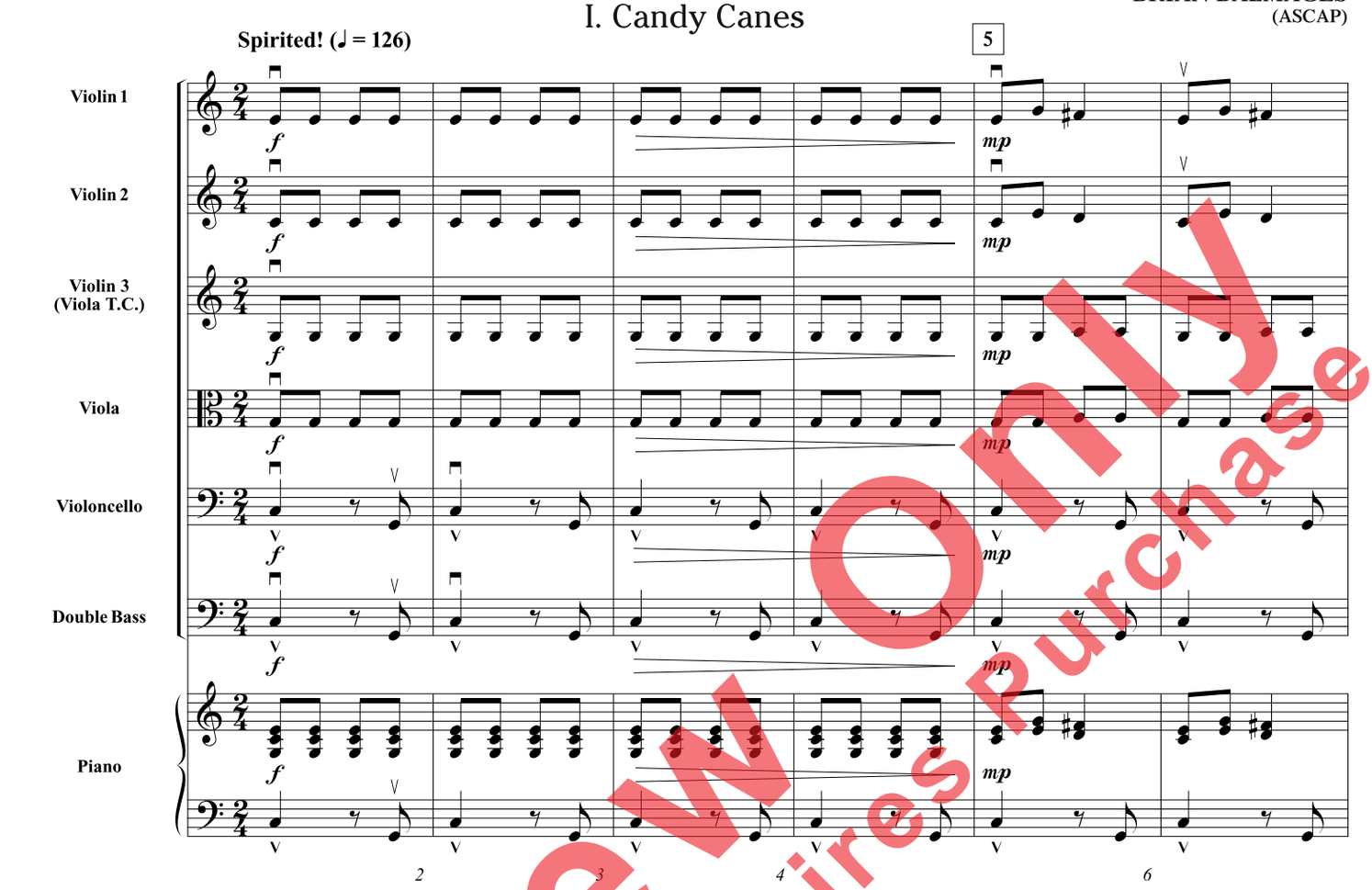
SWEET PETITE WINTER SUITE

(Four Candy Character Pieces)

I. Candy Canes

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)

Spirited! (♩ = 126)



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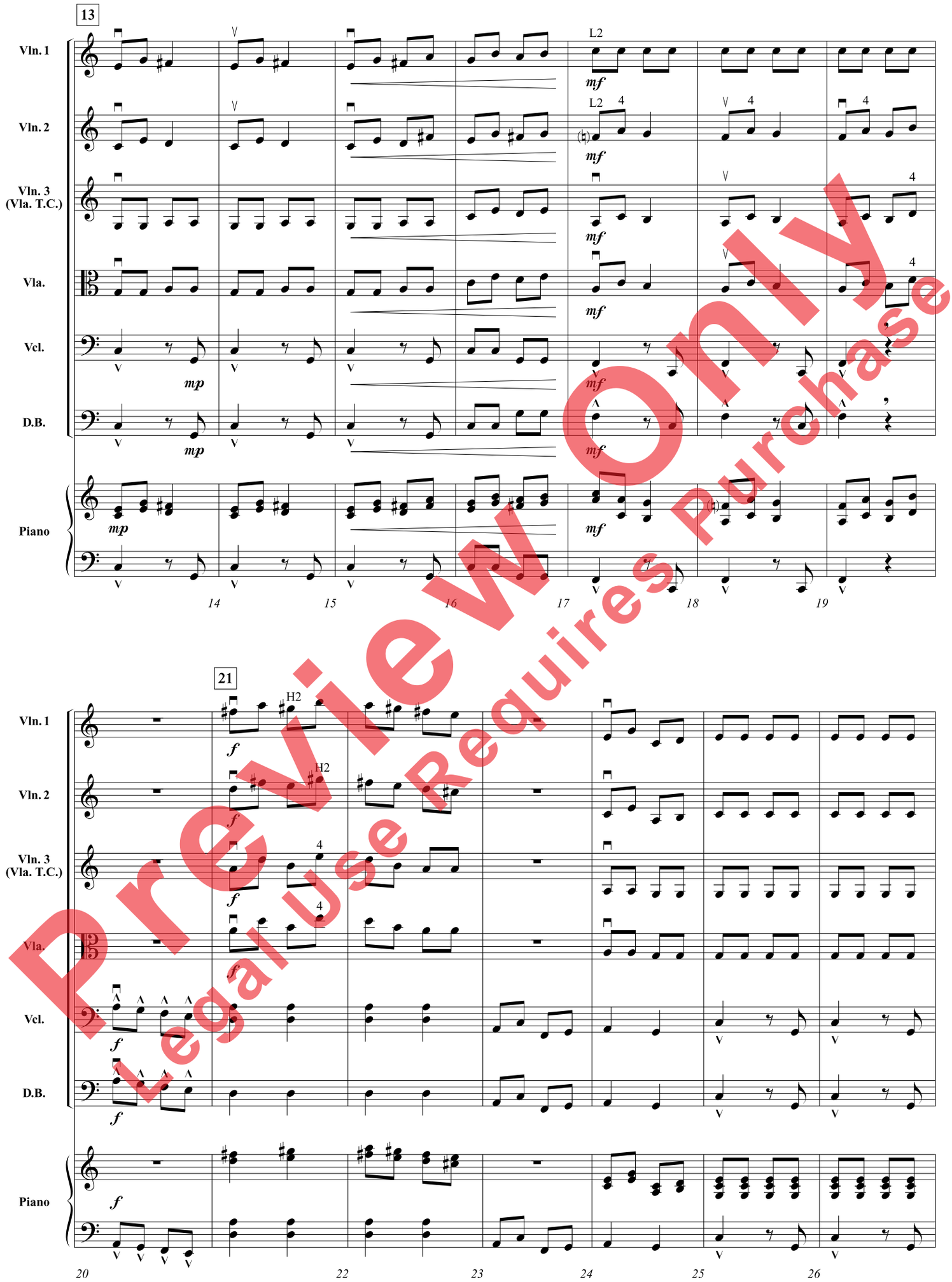

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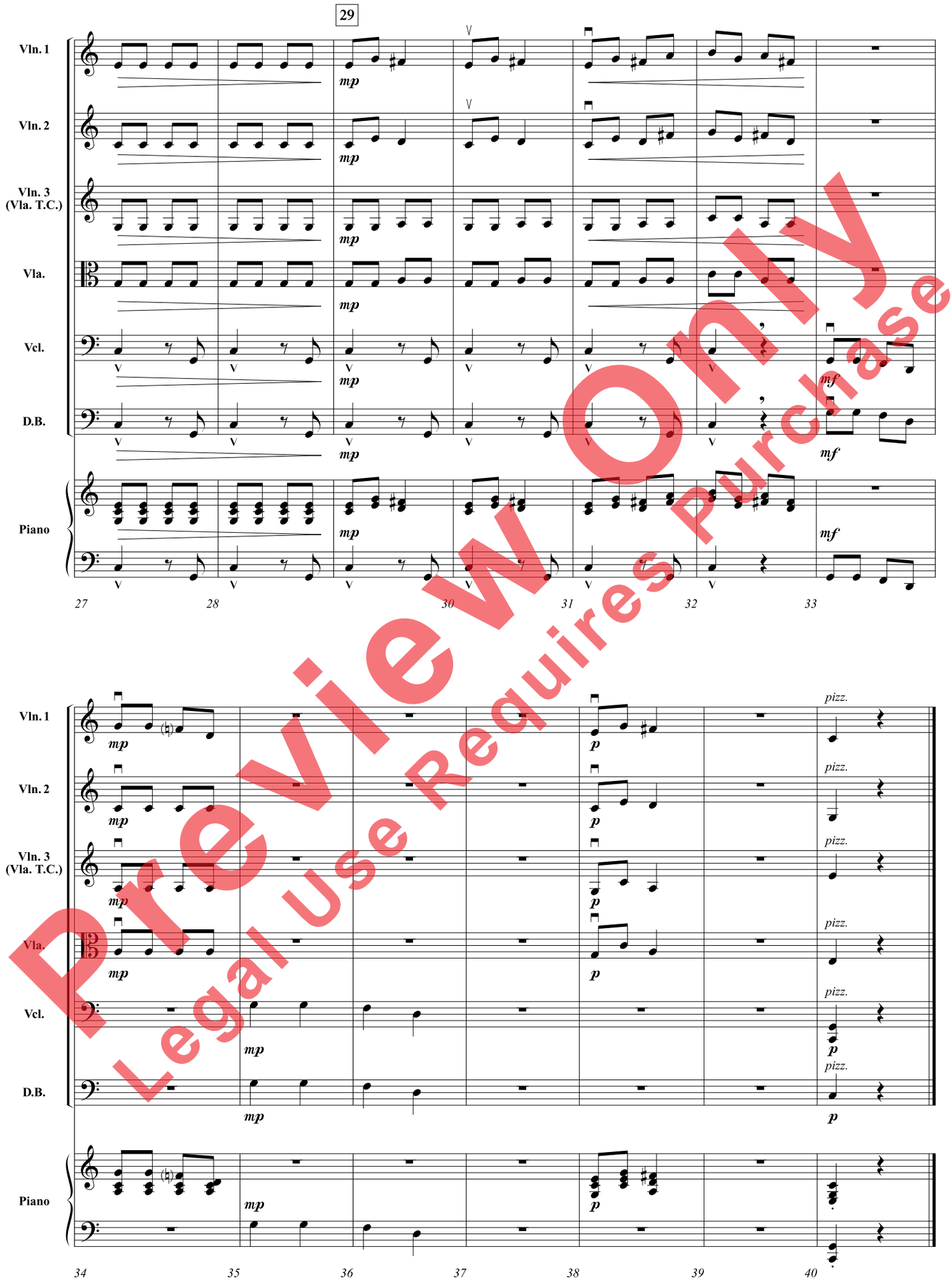

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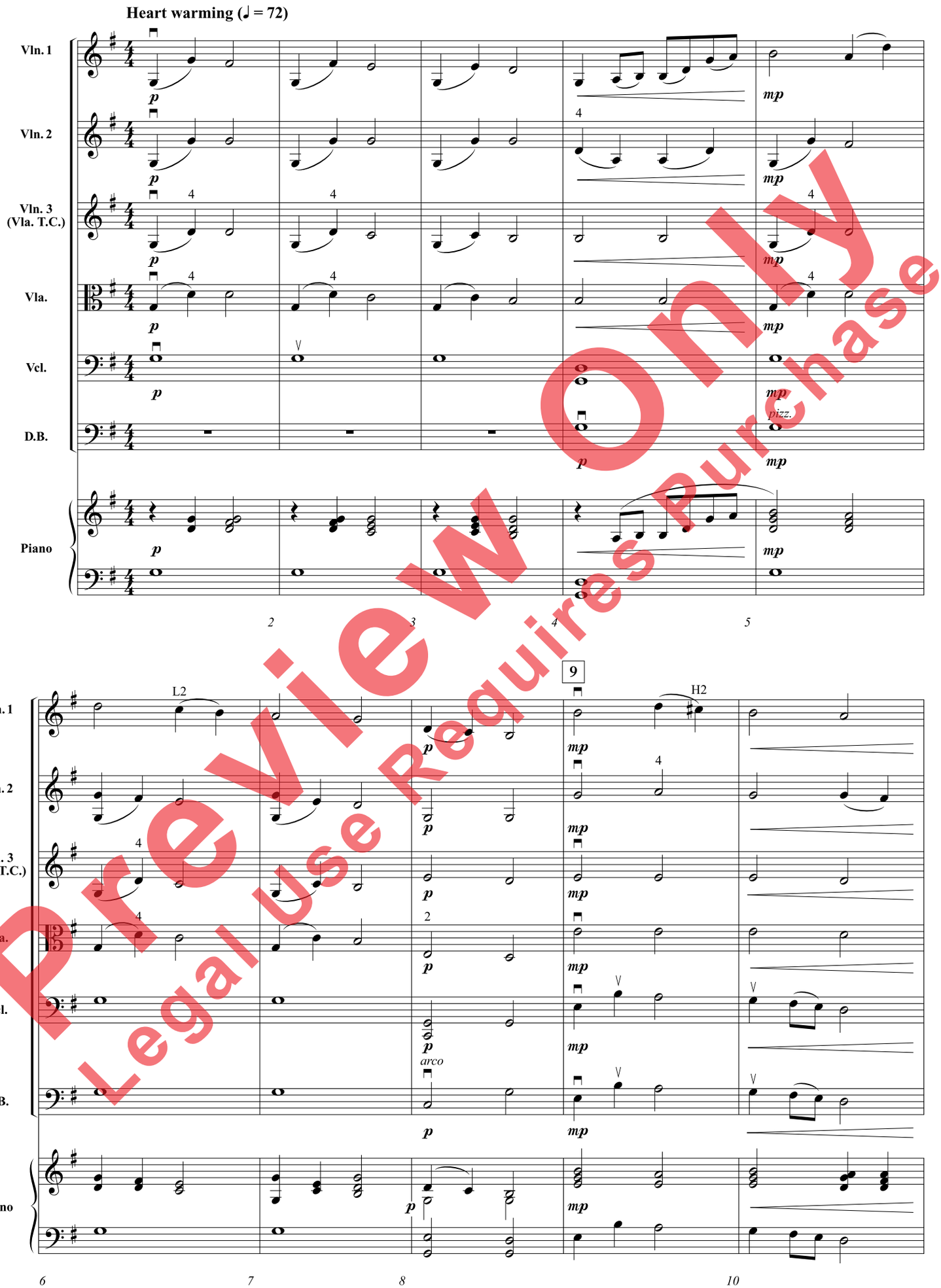
II. Hot Chocolate



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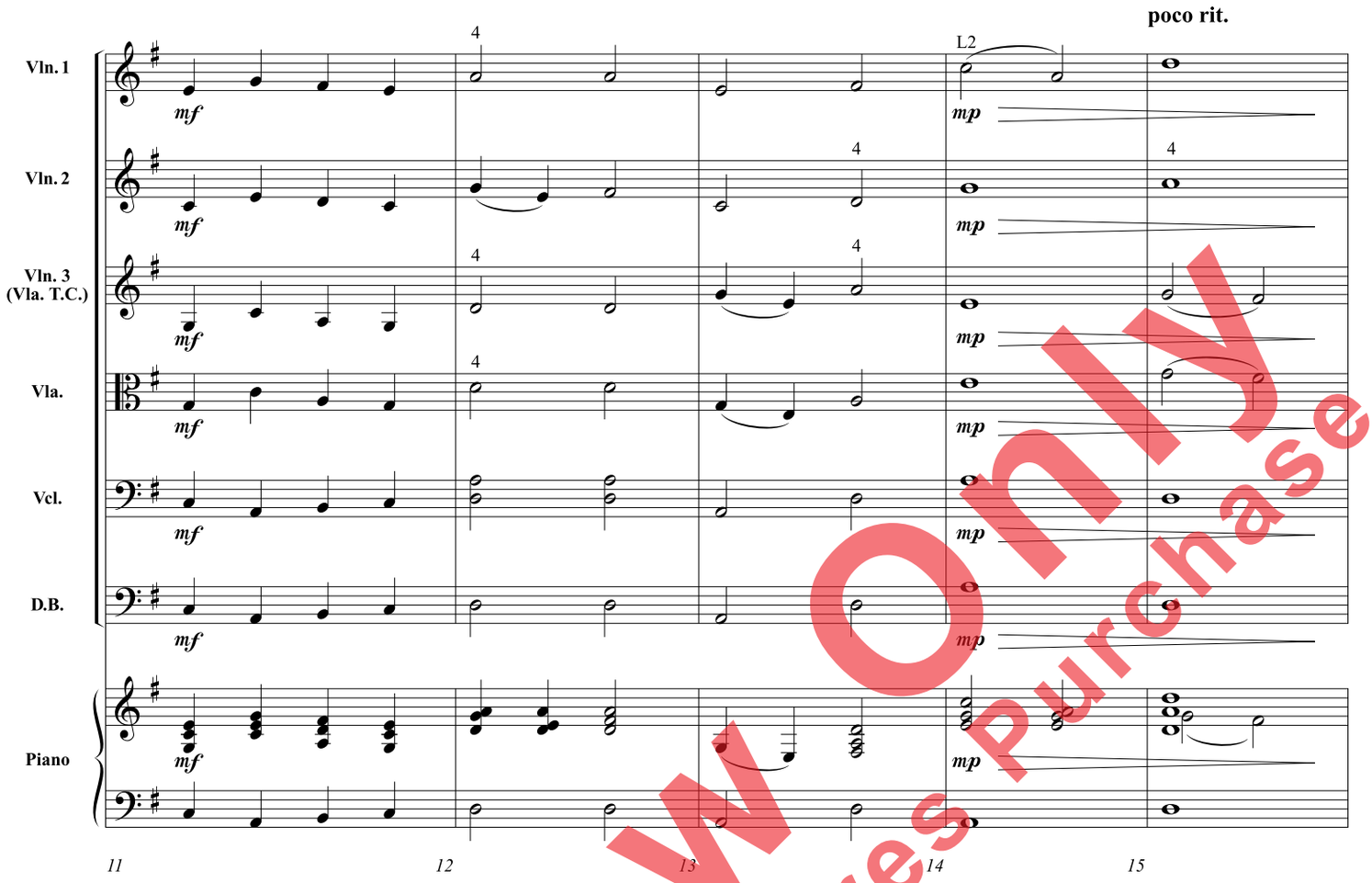

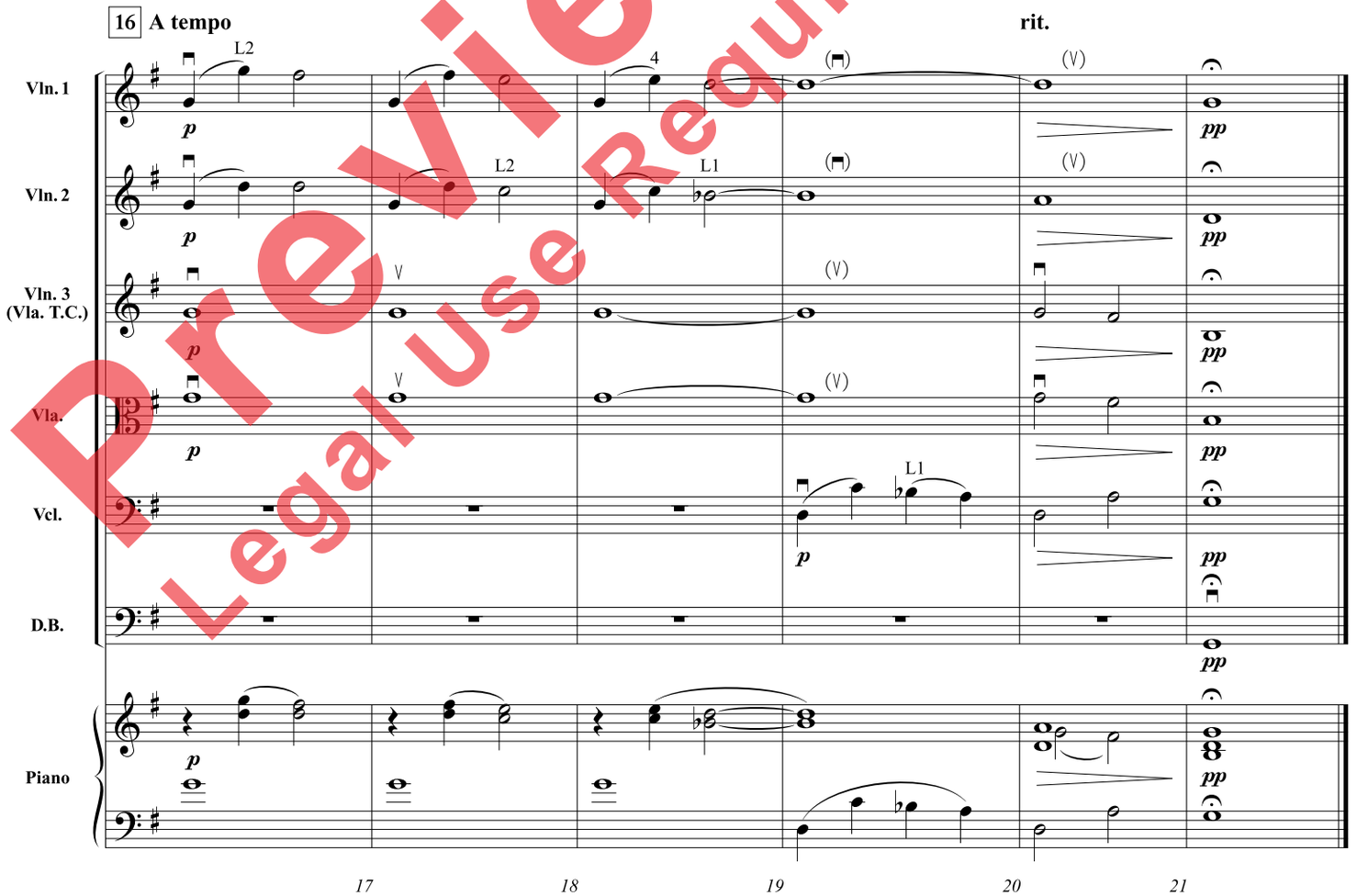

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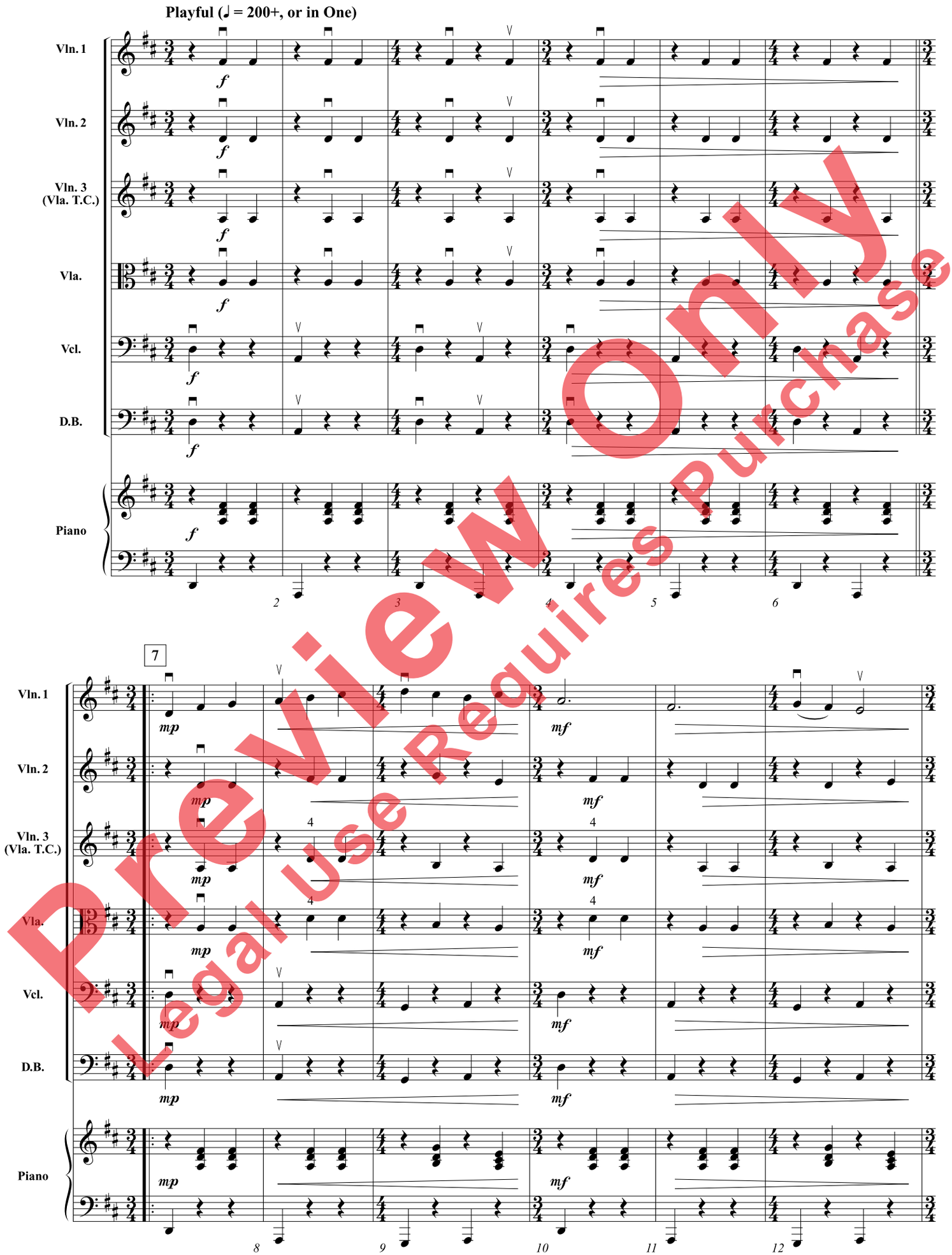
III. Peppermint Bark



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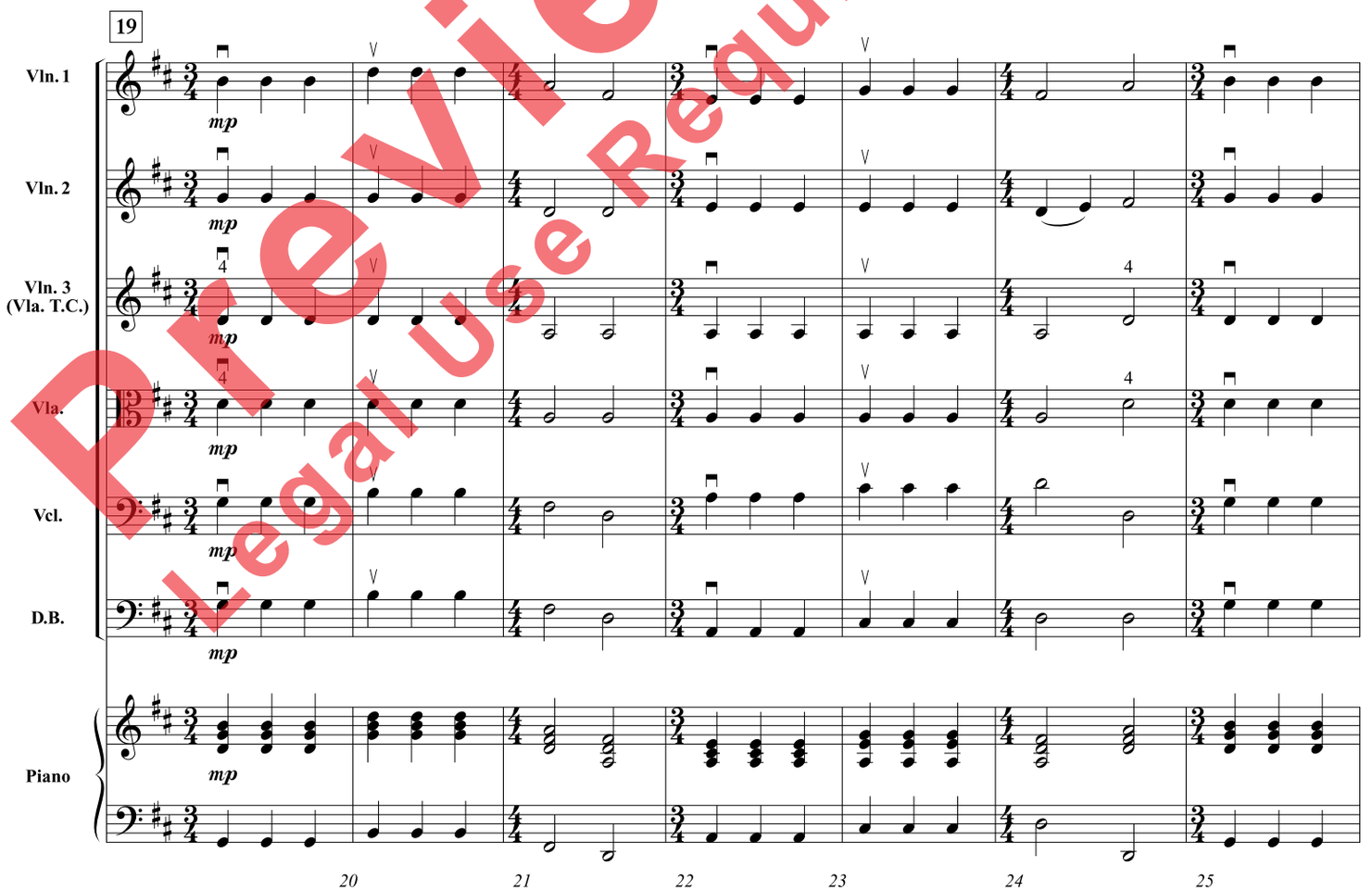

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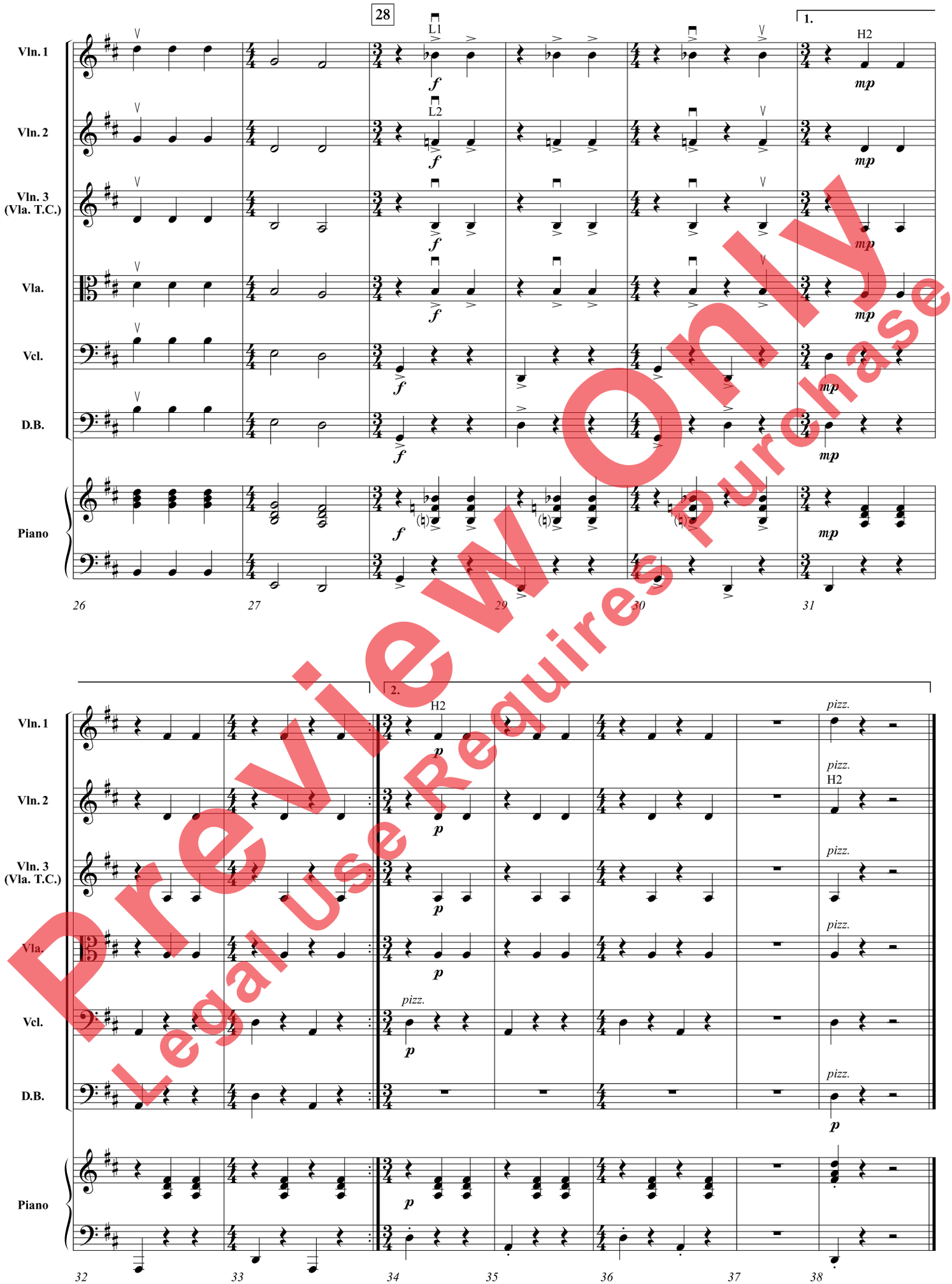

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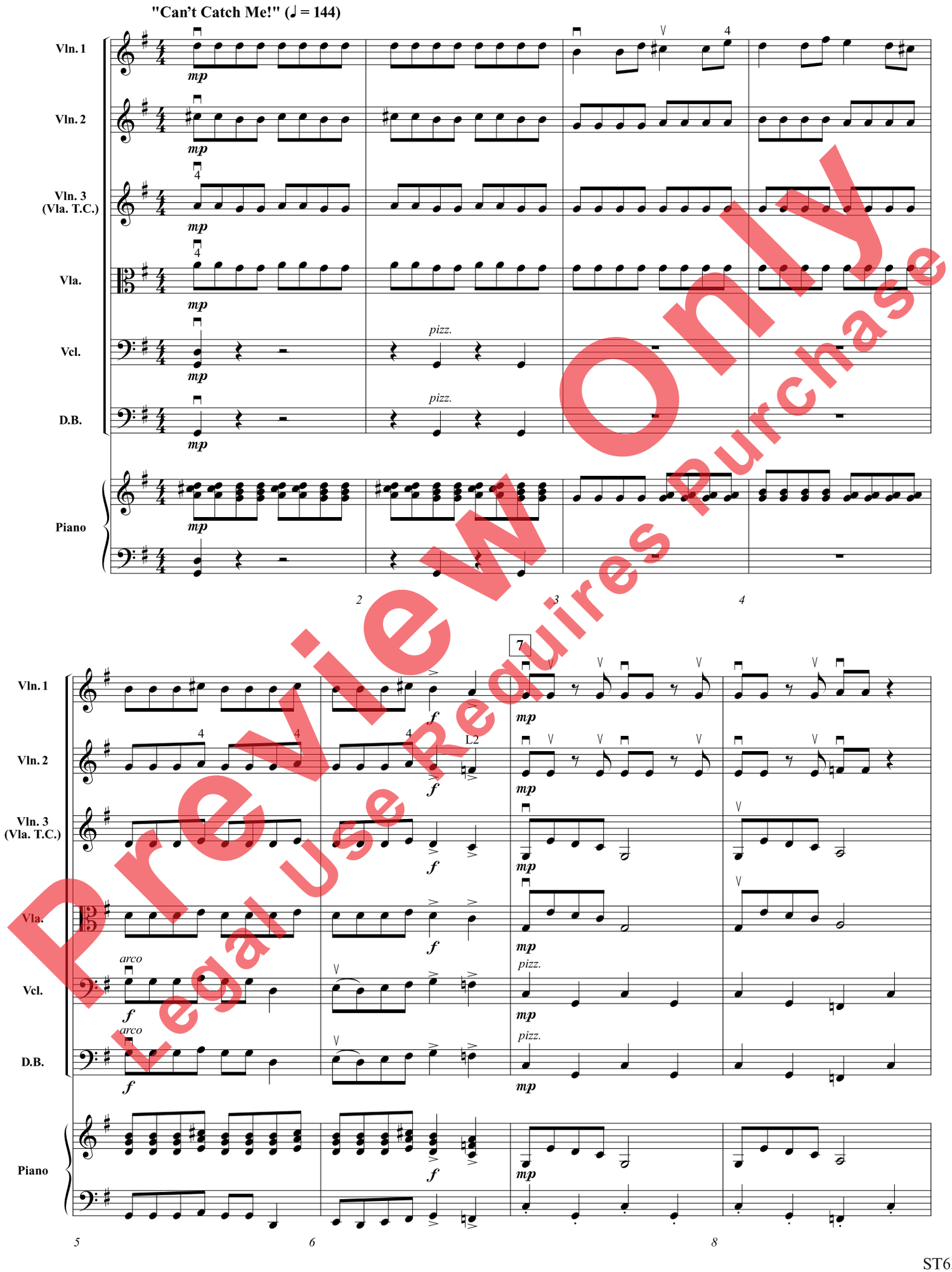
IV. Gingerbread Man



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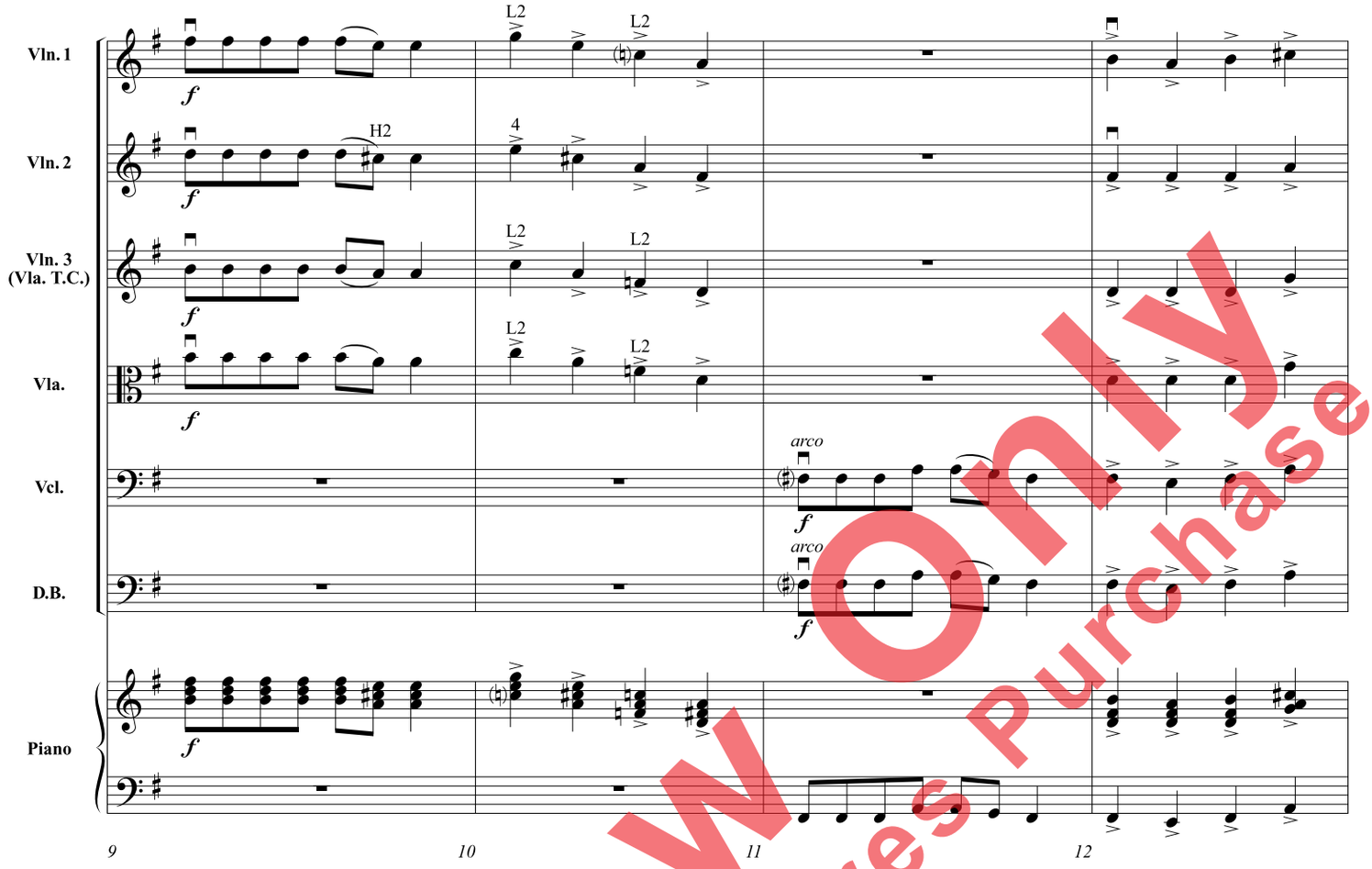

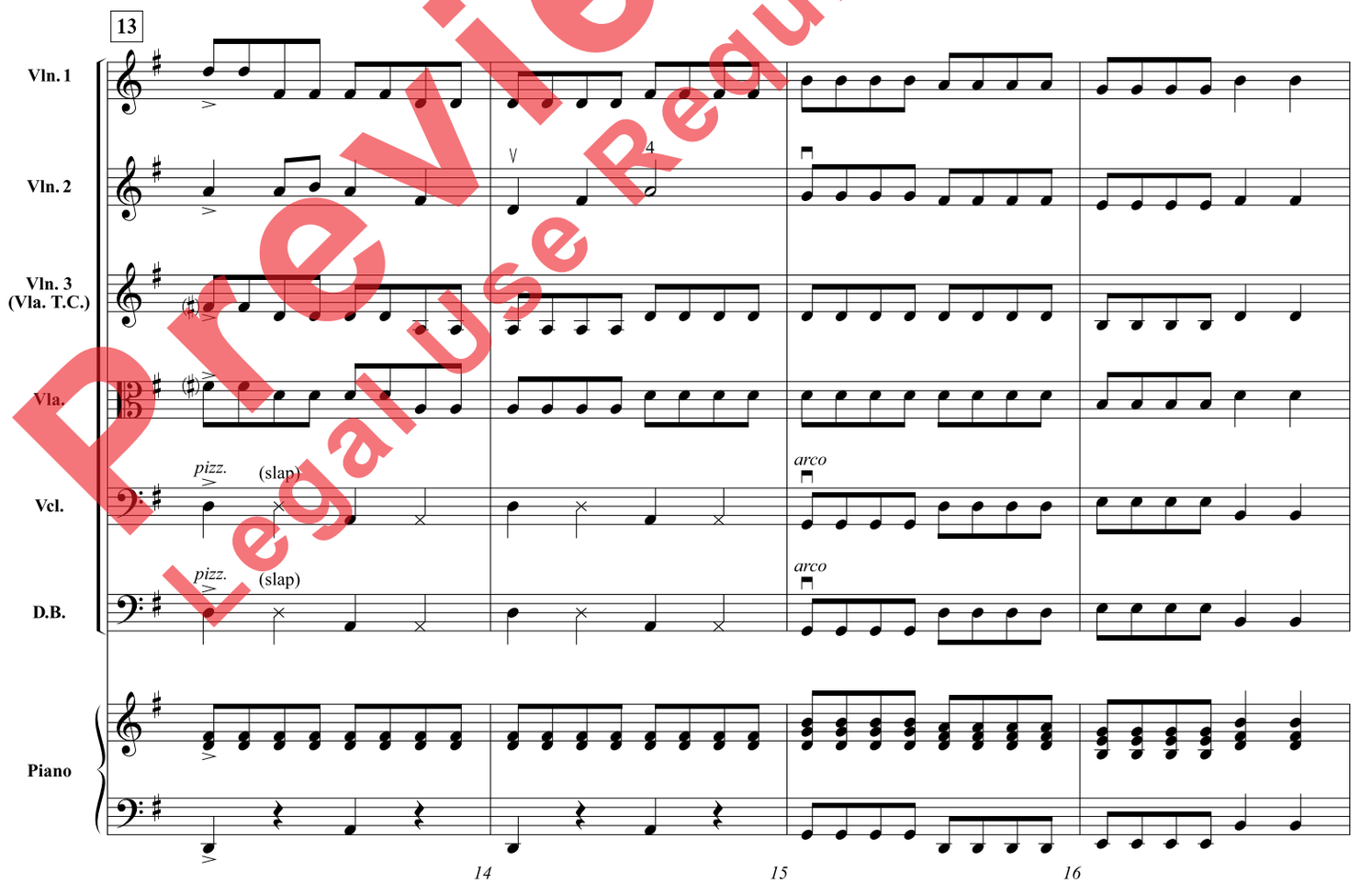

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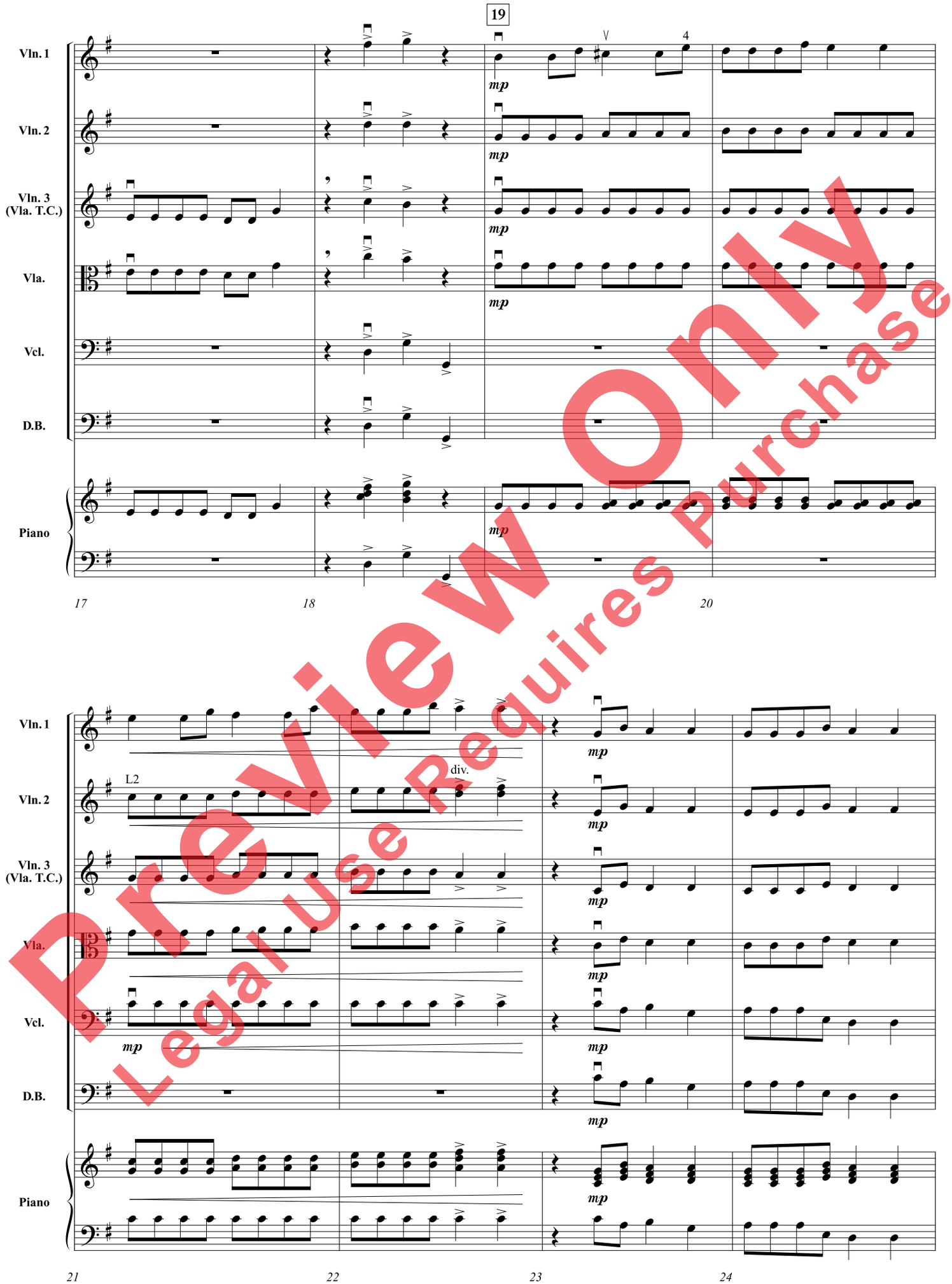

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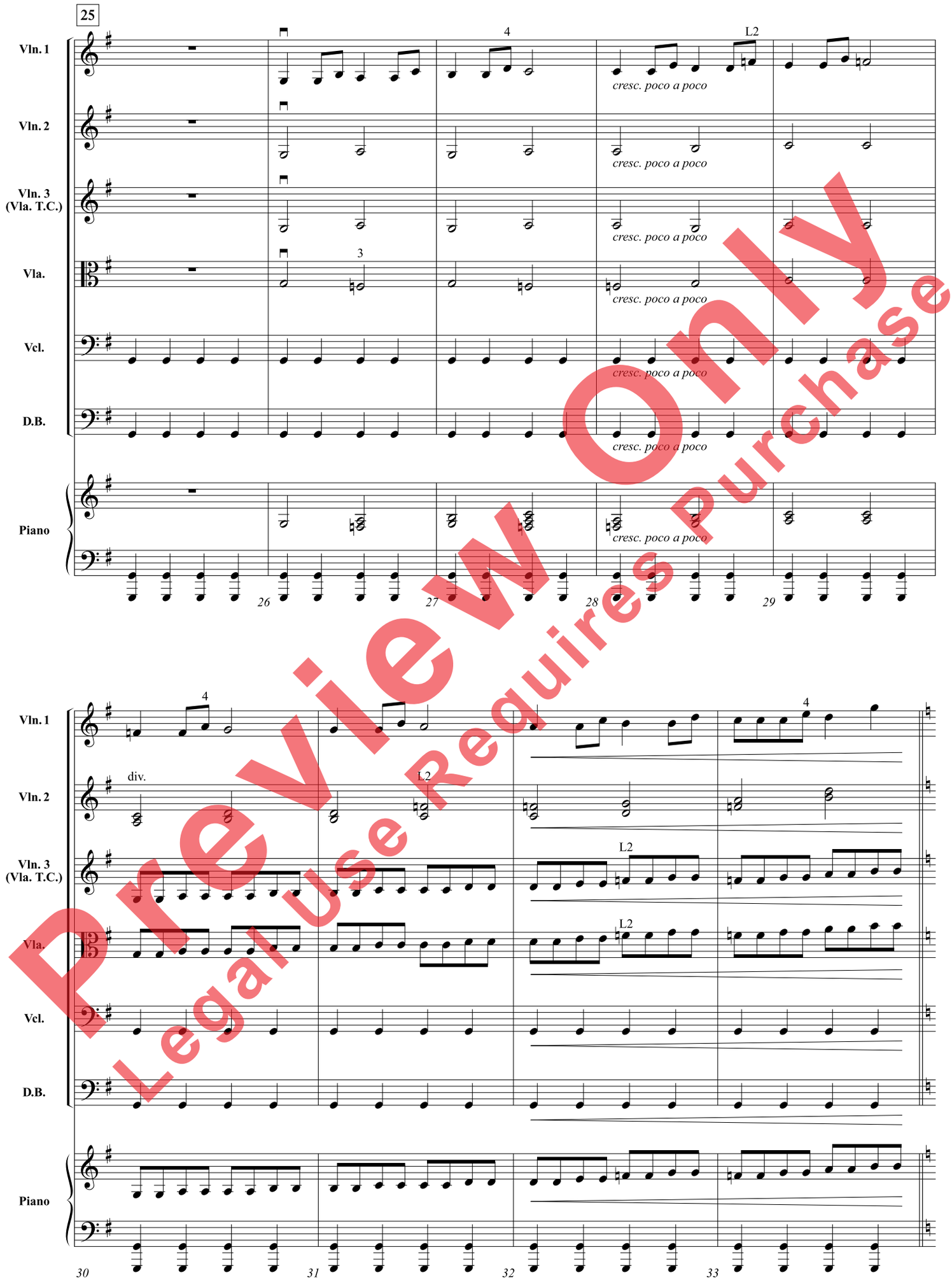

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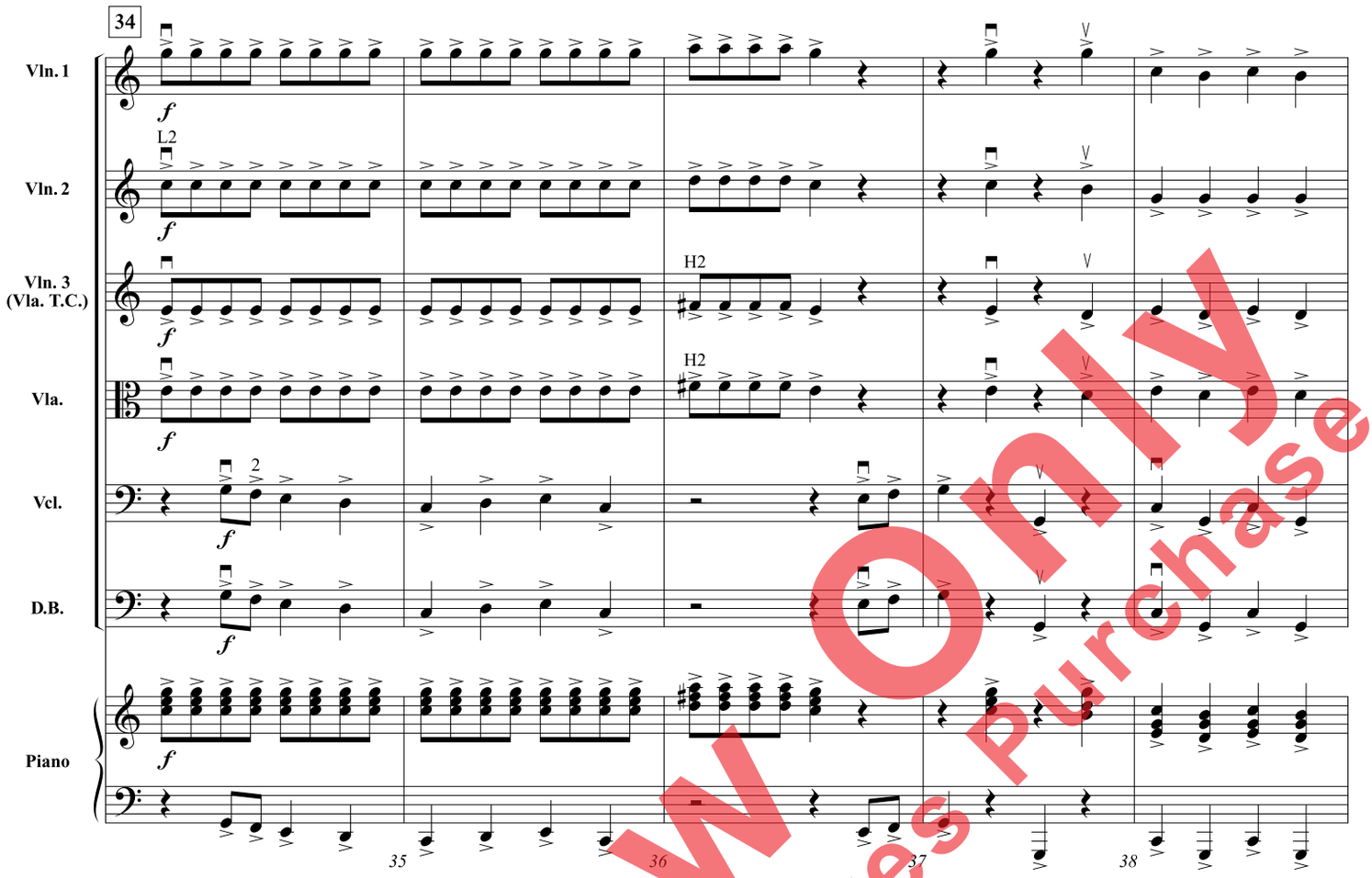

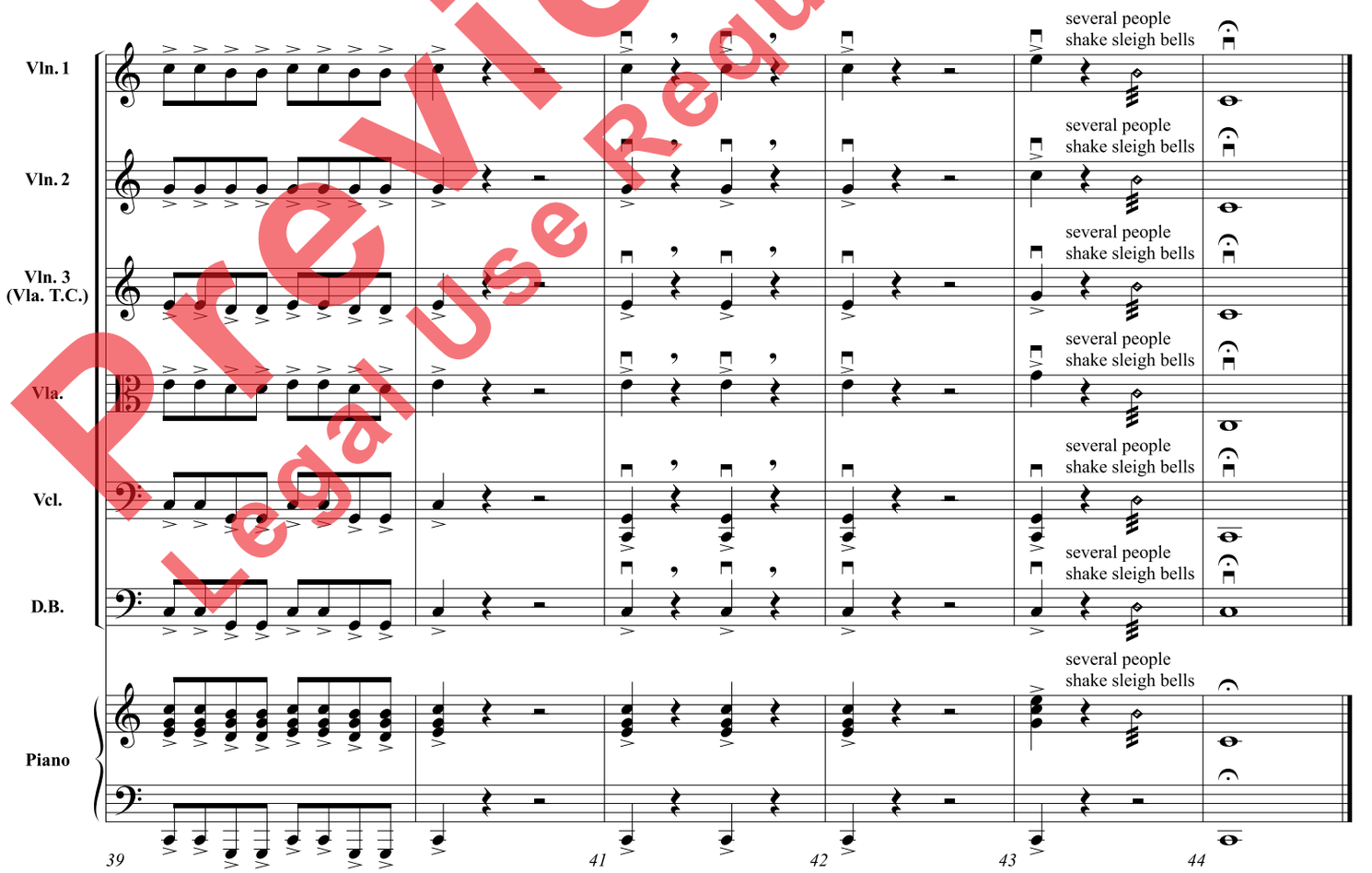

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