FULL SCORE

Concert String Orchestra

CARL FISCHER PERFORMANCE SERIES

Grade 3

Ides of March

Sean O'Loughlin

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CAS67

INSTRUMENTATION

Full Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Violin III (Viola T.C.)	2
Viola	5
Cello	5
Bass	5
Piano	1

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About the Composition

Pulse-pounding and haunting are two very distinct characteristics in *The Ides of March*. This dramatic composition for string orchestra celebrates my love of modern film music and is an exercise in economy of musical material. This economy is often referred to as minimalism, although I would not go so far as to include this composition in that world.

"The Ides of March" is a phrase that first appeared in the play *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare and represented the time when a coup d'etat happened in the Roman government. "Et tu, Brute?" is the famous line recited by Julius Caesar at the climactic scene. The music reflects this heart pounding pace and the events leading to the coup d'etat or overthrow of the government in power.

The music starts with a three note idea that permeates the entire composition. The first section of the piece from mm. 1-35 is essentially one big crescendo. Different elements get added to the core three-note idea to increase its complexity. The swells in the low strings provide a grounding element to the rhythm above. The rhythm starts to break away from itself at m. 13 with the addition of a counterrhythm in the first violin. This counterrhythm becomes the main driving force at m. 21 with some melodic material introduced in the lower strings. The two eighth-note rhythmic ideas unite once again at m. 29 with a third rhythmic idea brought into the lower strings to provide the final push into m. 35.

The rhythmic cycle starts up again at m. 36, but this time it welcomes a lyrical line in the first violins. The pizzicato notes in the celli and basses should have a light and spirited quality to them. A counterline joins the lyrical line at m. 46 with several intriguing moments of dissonance. The rhythm lets up a touch at m. 54, but quickly returns at m. 62 with the same three note rhythm displaced by one beat between the violins and the viola and celli. A build-up follows that releases into the big lyrical and haunting moment of the piece at m. 74. The sound here should be broad, rich and triumphant. Bring out the eighth notes at mm. 80-81 while having the sustained notes pull back a bit. The soft dynamic at m. 90 signals a return to the rhythmic cycle. As before, layers of rhythms keep being added to increase the intensity of the moment. This crescendo finally releases itself at the end. Be mindful of the two beats of tutti rest in m. 117 that sets up the final climactic gesture in the following measure.

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About the Composer

Sean O'Loughlin (b.1972) is a fresh voice and a rising name in the music world. His music is characterized by vibrant rhythms, passionate melodies, and colorful scoring. Commissions from the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra highlight and showcase his diverse musical abilities. As a conductor, he has led performances with the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Vancouver Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Houston Symphony, and the Seattle Symphony amongst others. He was the assistant conductor and arranger for a production of *Sgt. Pepper Live* at the Las Vegas Hilton featuring the band Cheap Trick.

As an arranger and orchestrator, he has worked with such artists as Natalie Merchant, Chris Isaak, Feist, Blue Man Group, Pink Martini, Brandi Carlile, Belle and Sebastian, The Decemberists, Josh Ritter, Gloria Gaynor and others. The Los Angeles Times calls his orchestrations "...colorful" while adding "...even more dimension..." to the compositions. Daily Variety heralds Sean's writing as "most impressive ..." with a "wide range of coloring in the orchestra..." that "...adds heft and rolling energy."

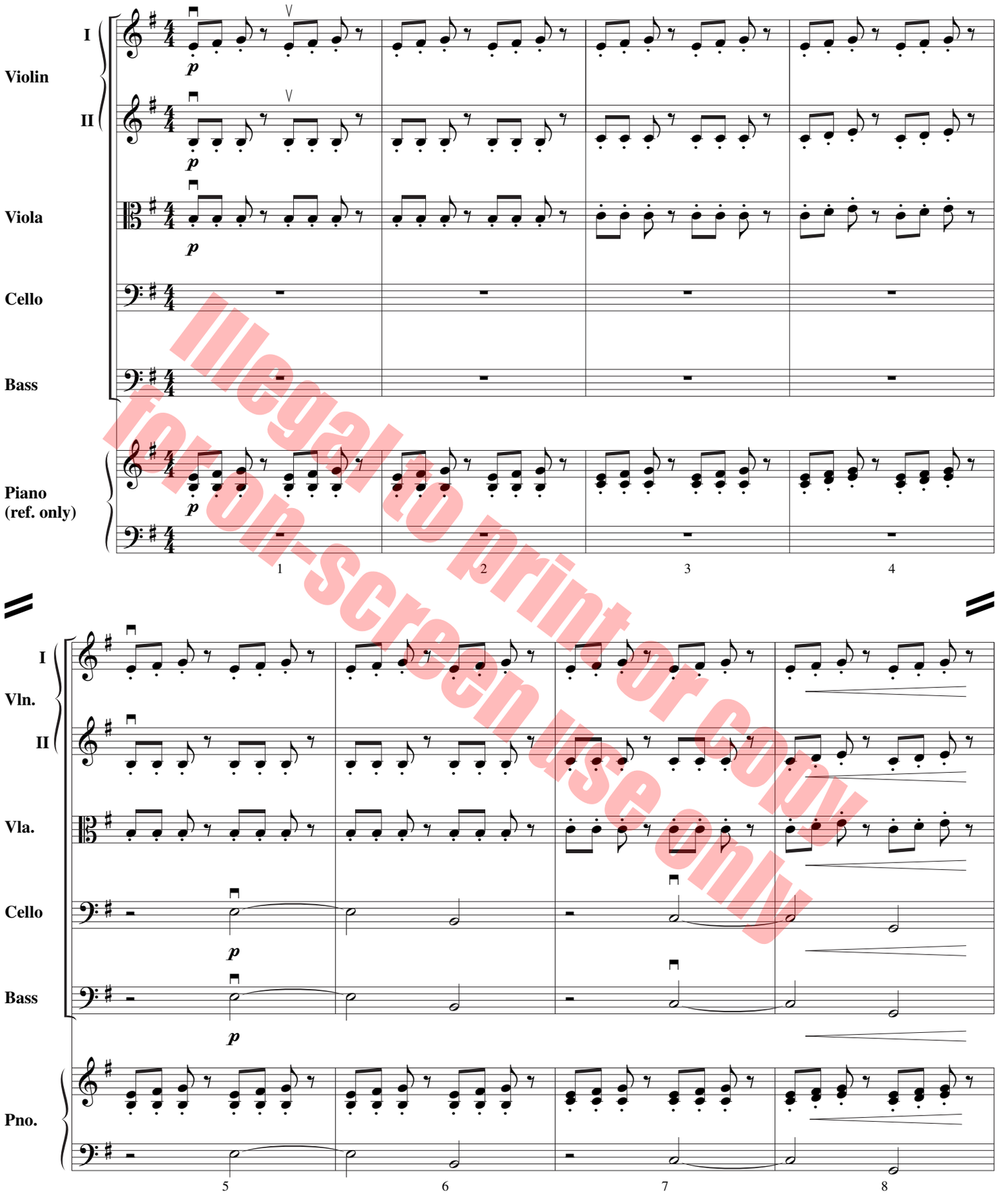
Growing up in Syracuse, NY, Sean displayed a passion for music and showed musical talent at an early age. Sean benefited from loving parents who supported his musical aspirations and challenged him to explore music as a career. During his undergraduate years at Syracuse University, Sean's musical career began to take shape with the guidance of Larry Clark. As Vice-President at Carl Fischer Music, Larry continues to be a major influence in Sean's professional career as mentor and friend.

Through his growing number of commissions and published works, Sean is excited to continue contributing to the rich history of orchestral and wind band literature. He is a frequent guest conductor and clinician at honor bands around the country. An annual ASCAP Special Awards winner, Sean was a composition fellow at the Henry Mancini Institute in Los Angeles, and holds composition degrees from New England Conservatory and Syracuse University. Sean, his wife Dena and daughter Kate reside in Los Angeles. For more information, please visit Sean's web-site at www.seanoloughlin.com.

The Ides of March

Allegro ♩ = 138

SEAN O'LOUGHLIN



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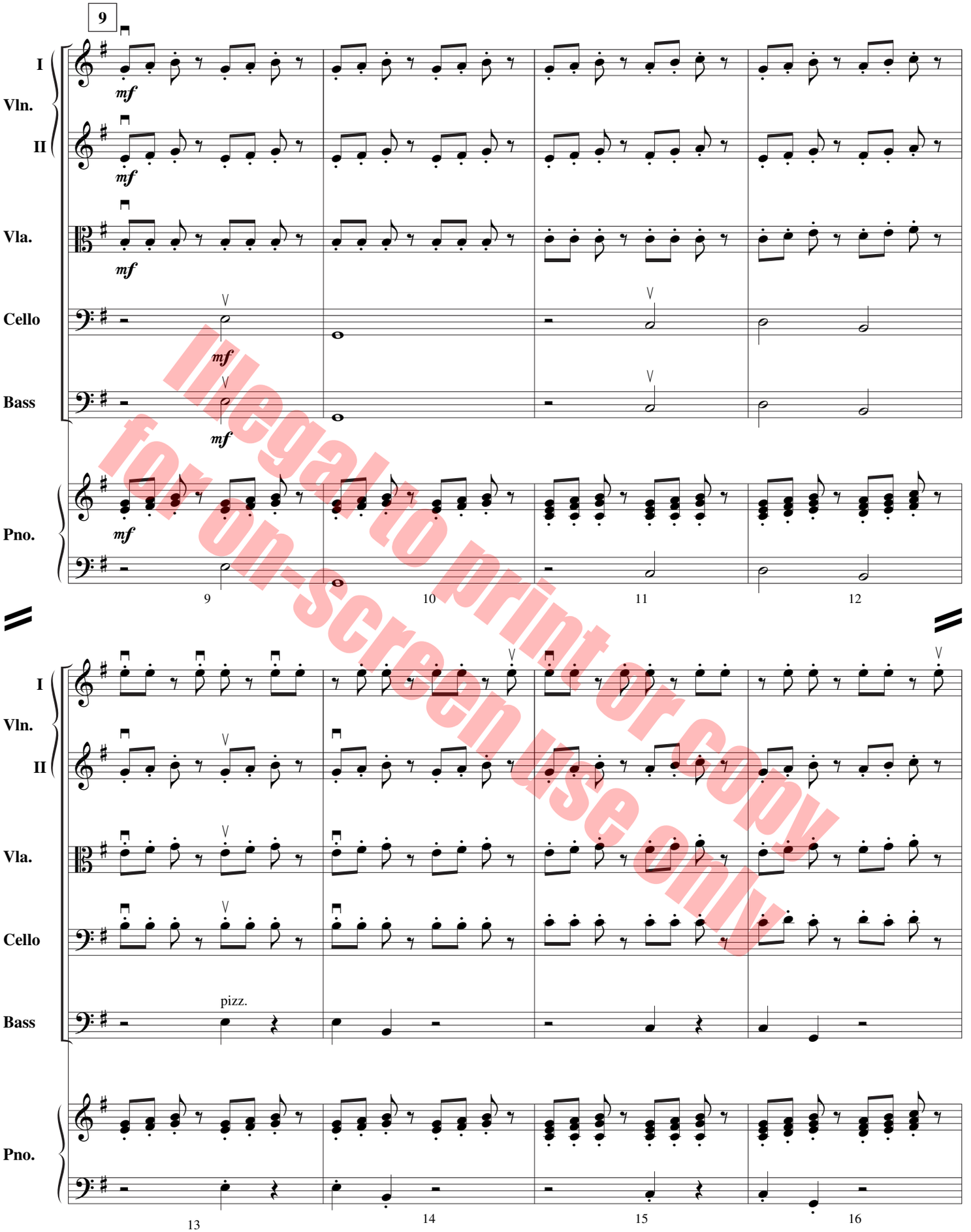

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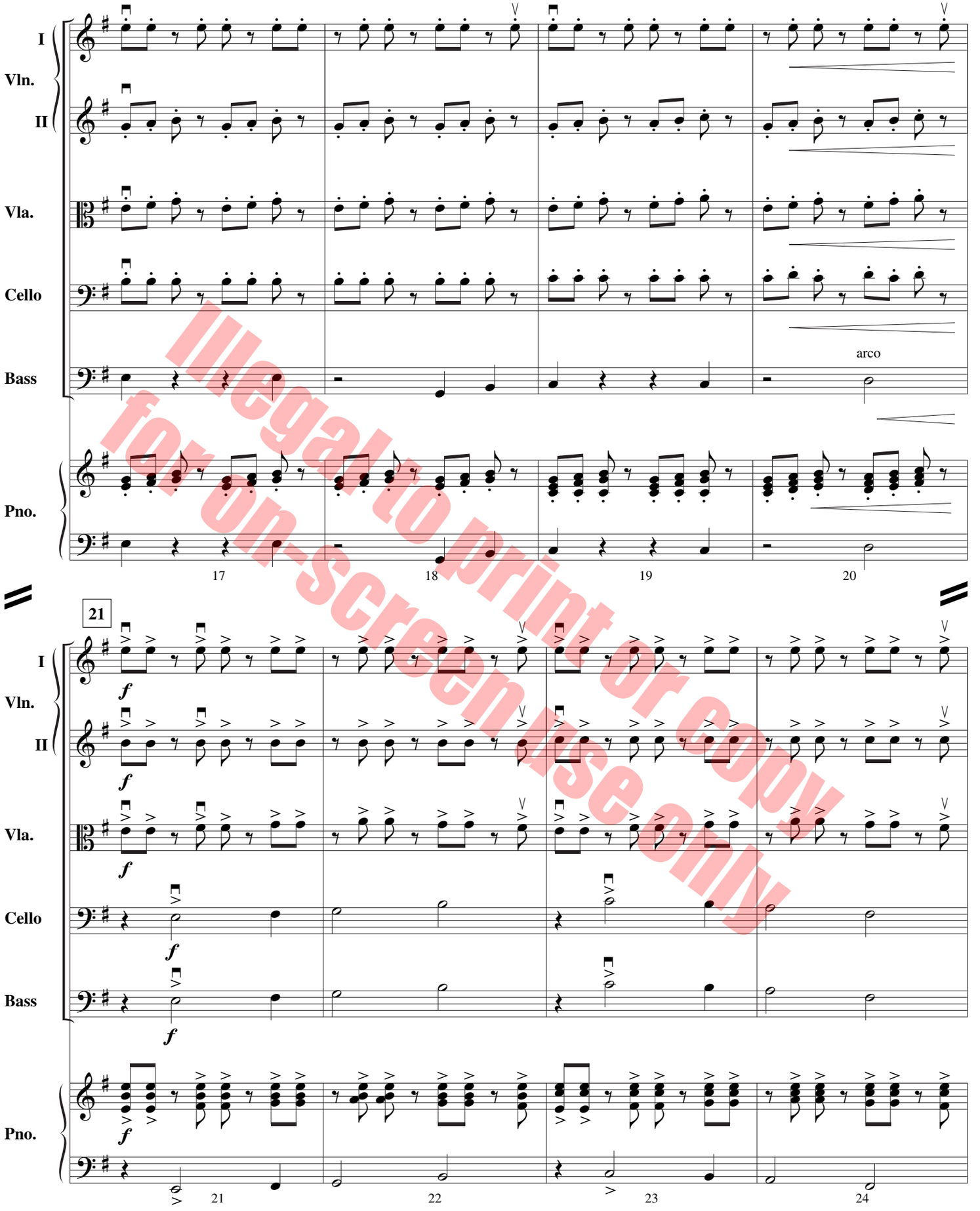

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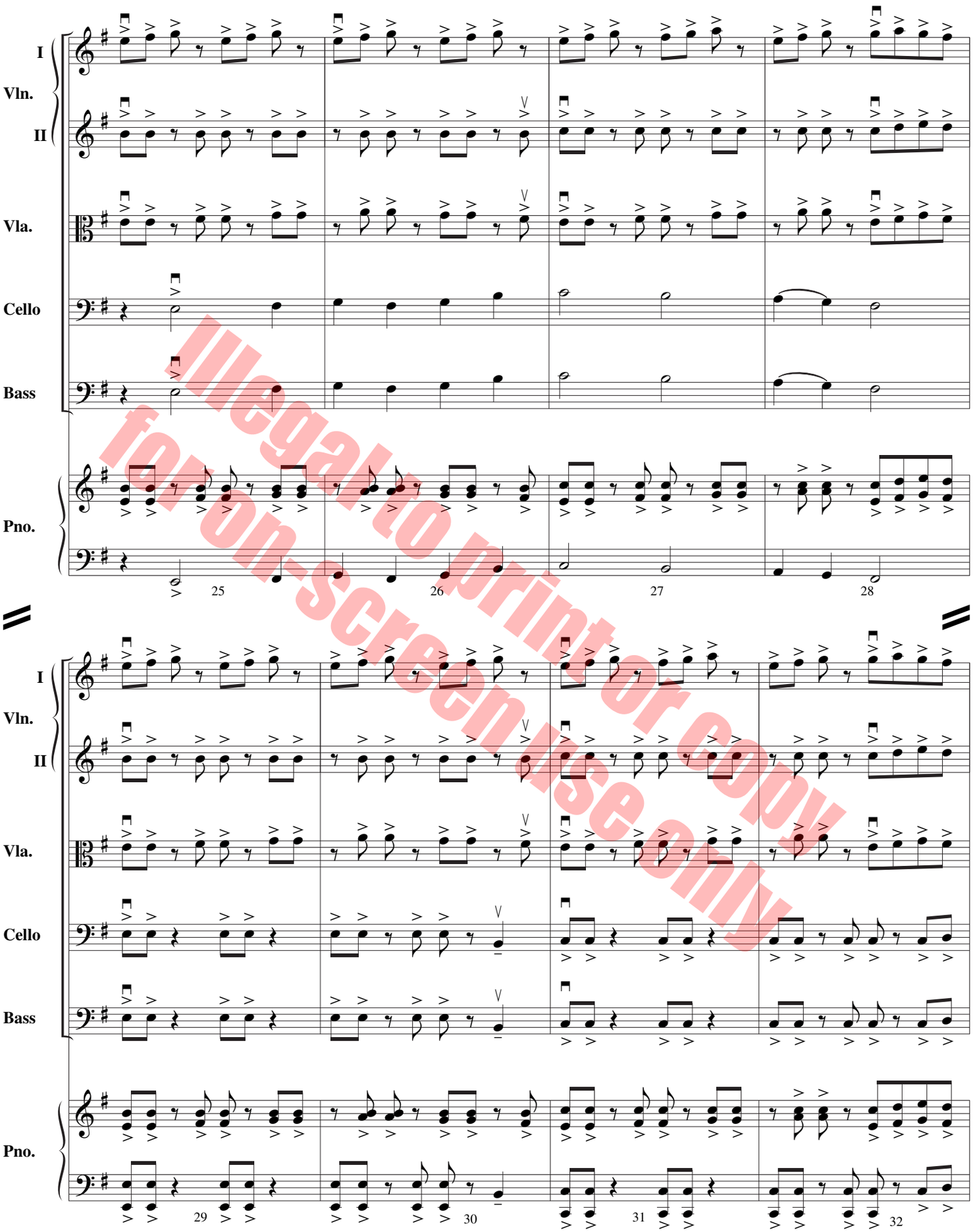

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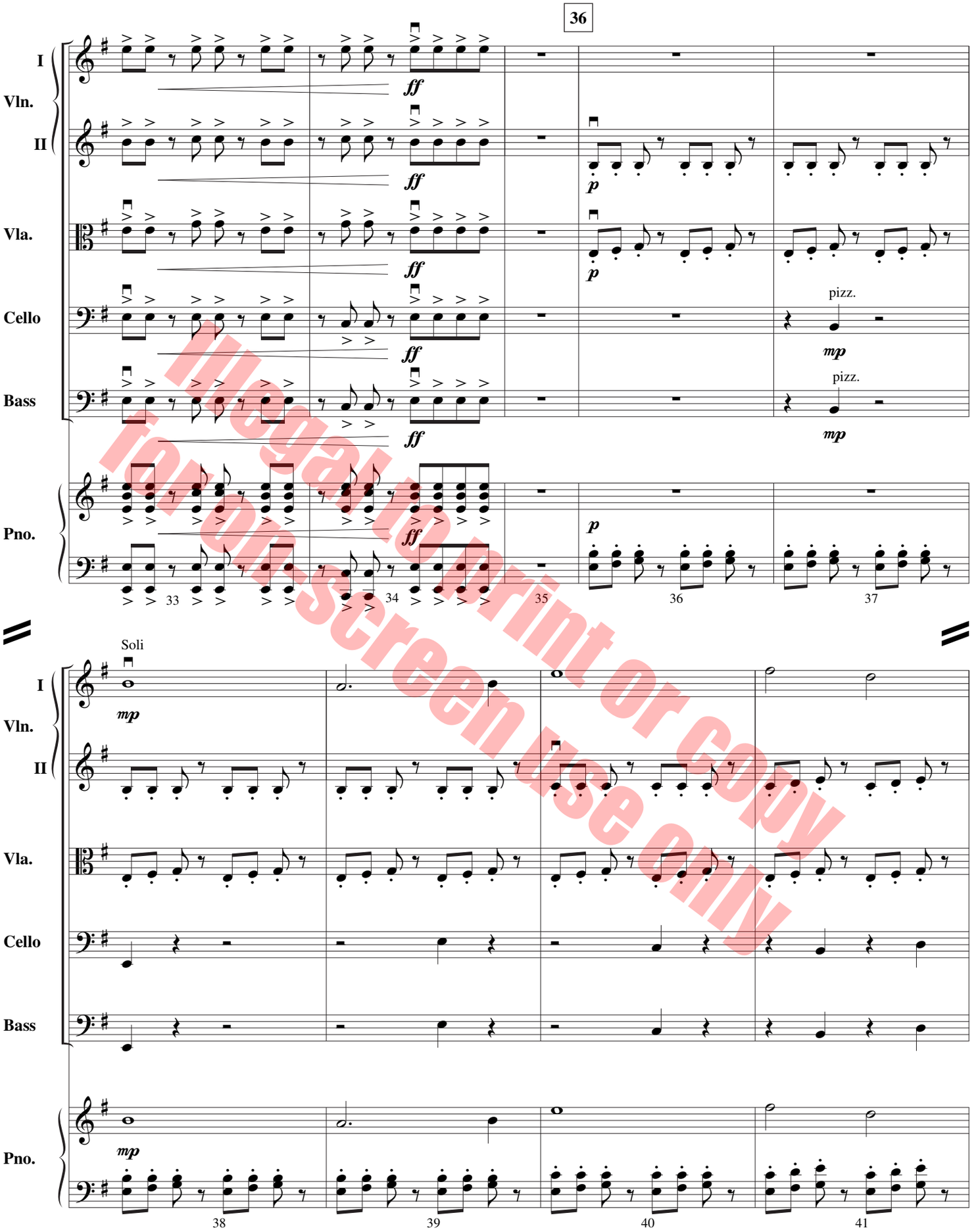

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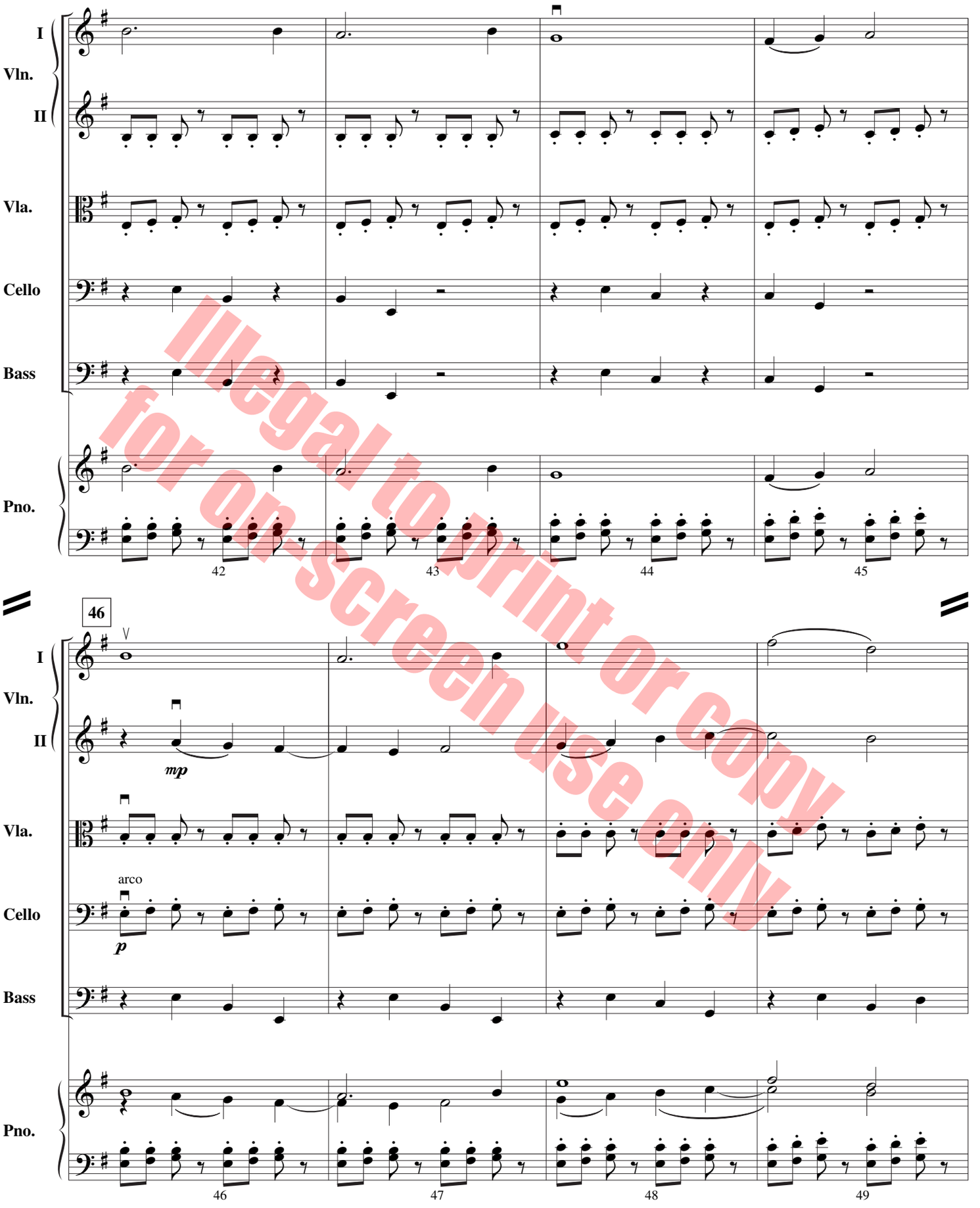

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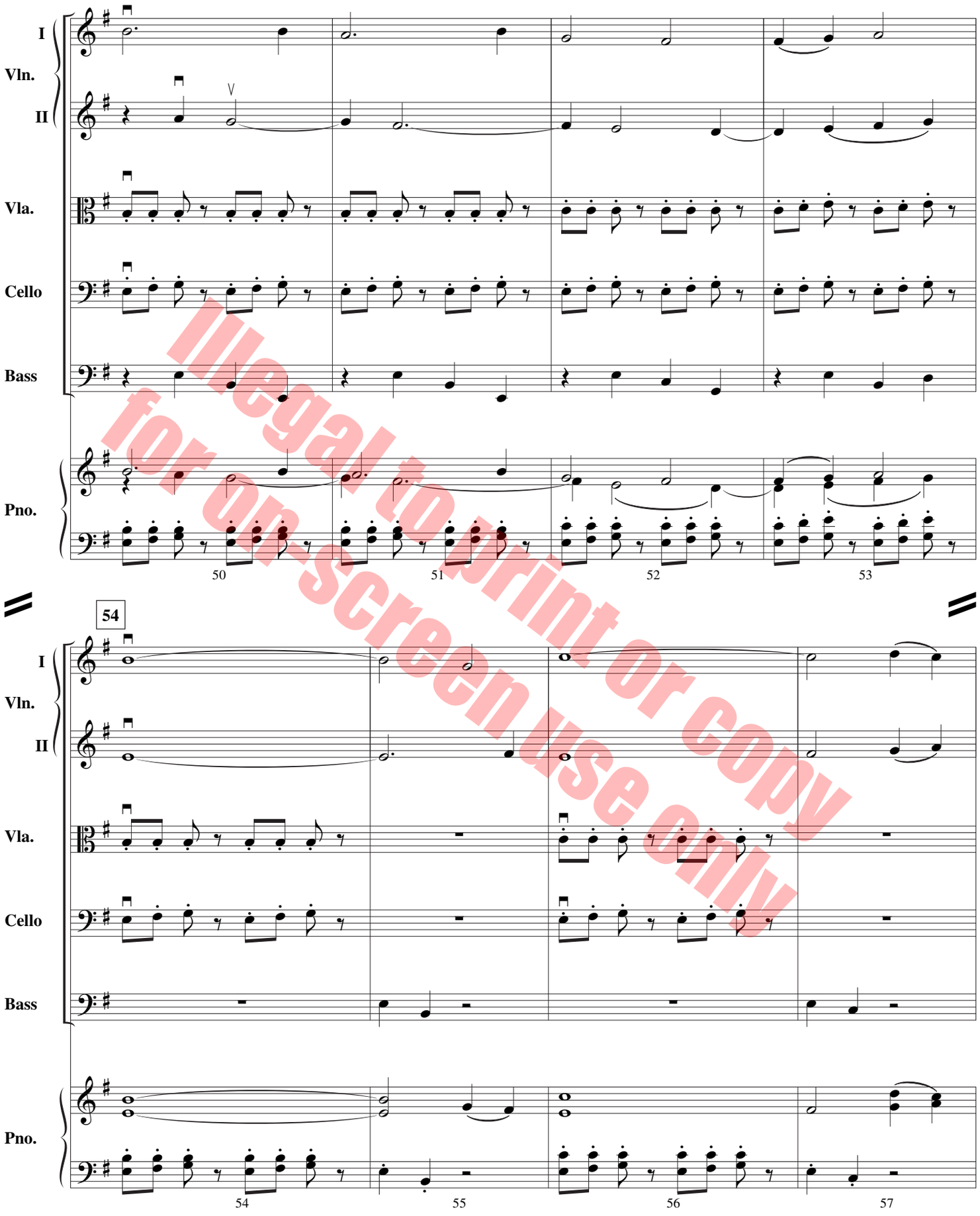

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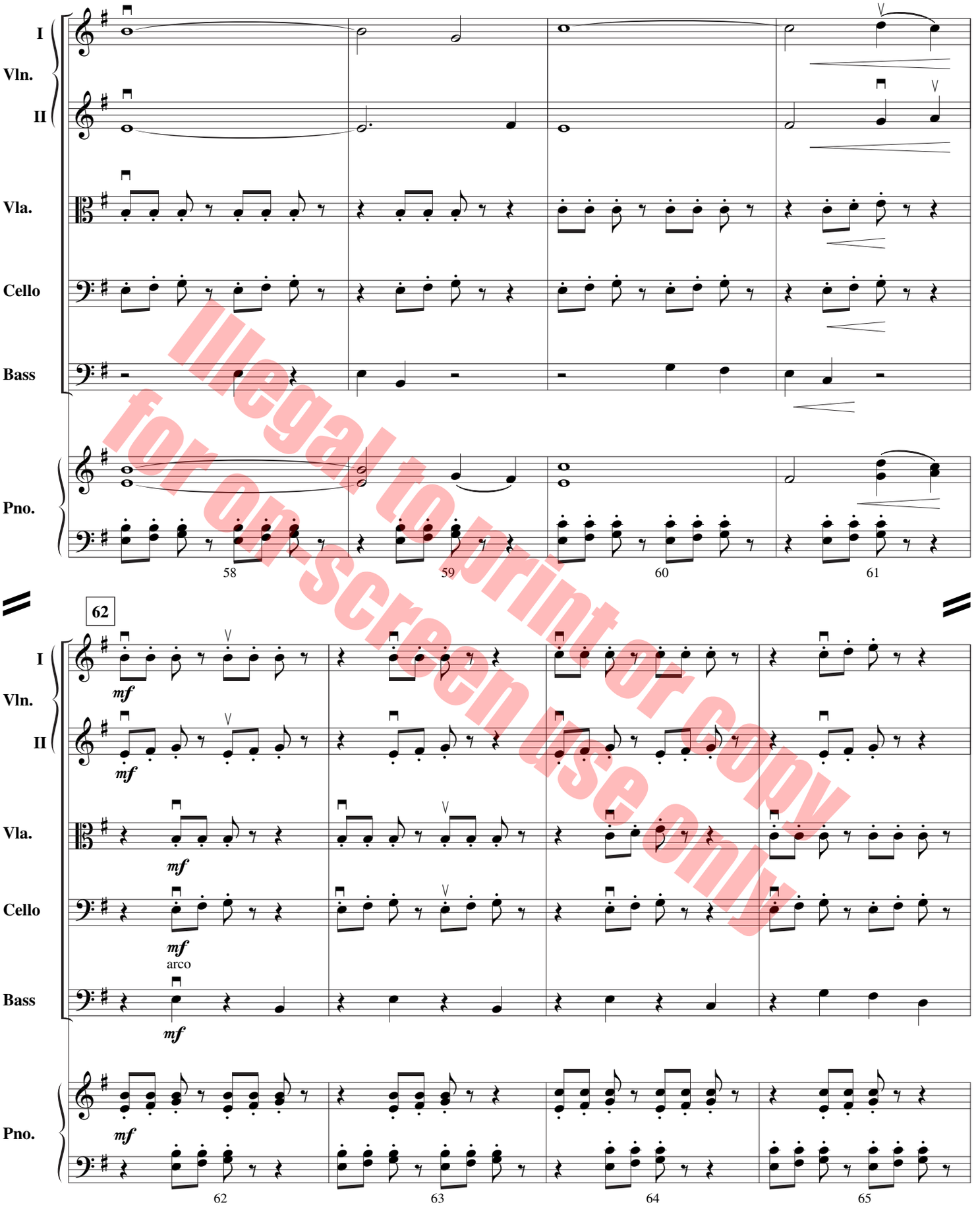

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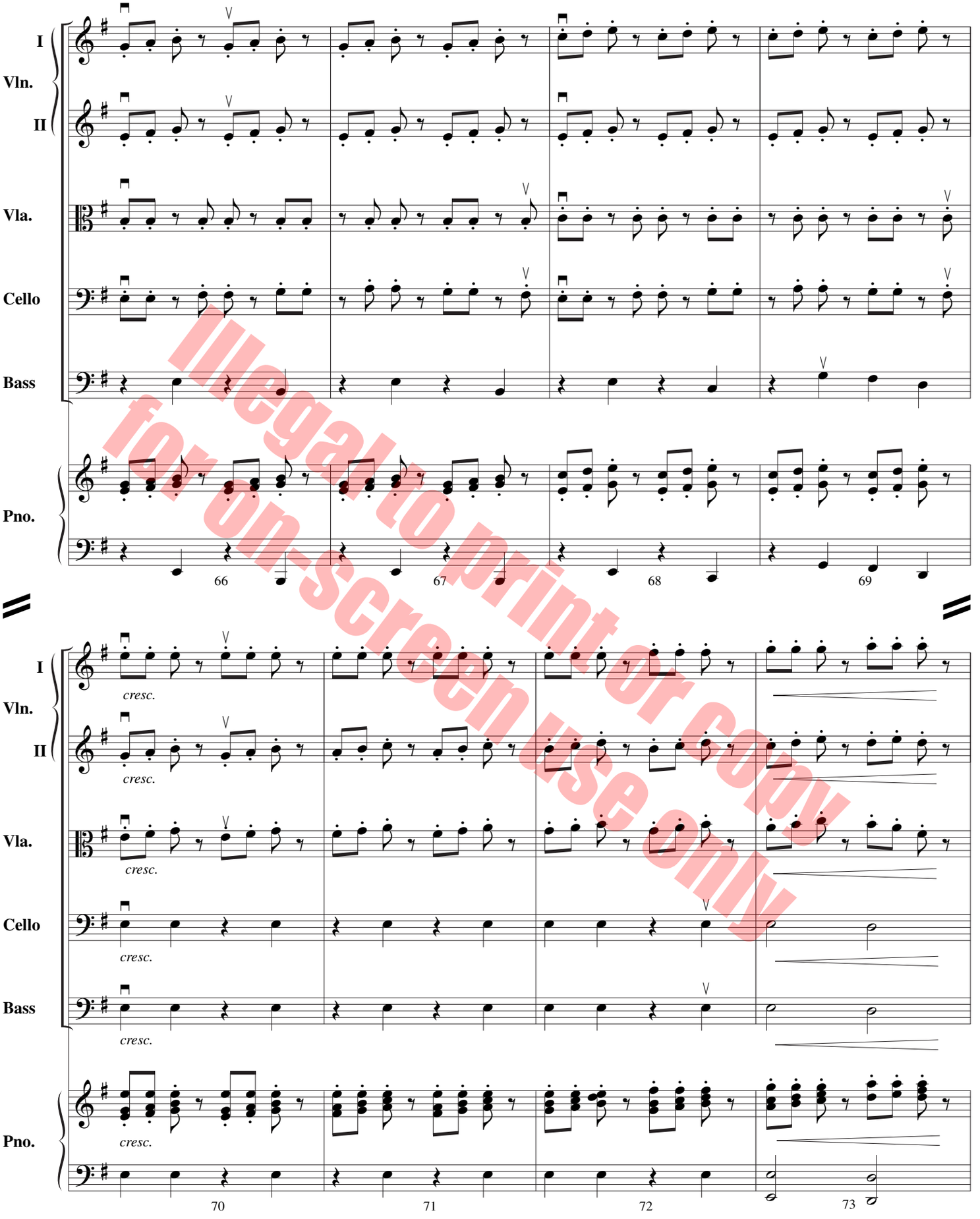

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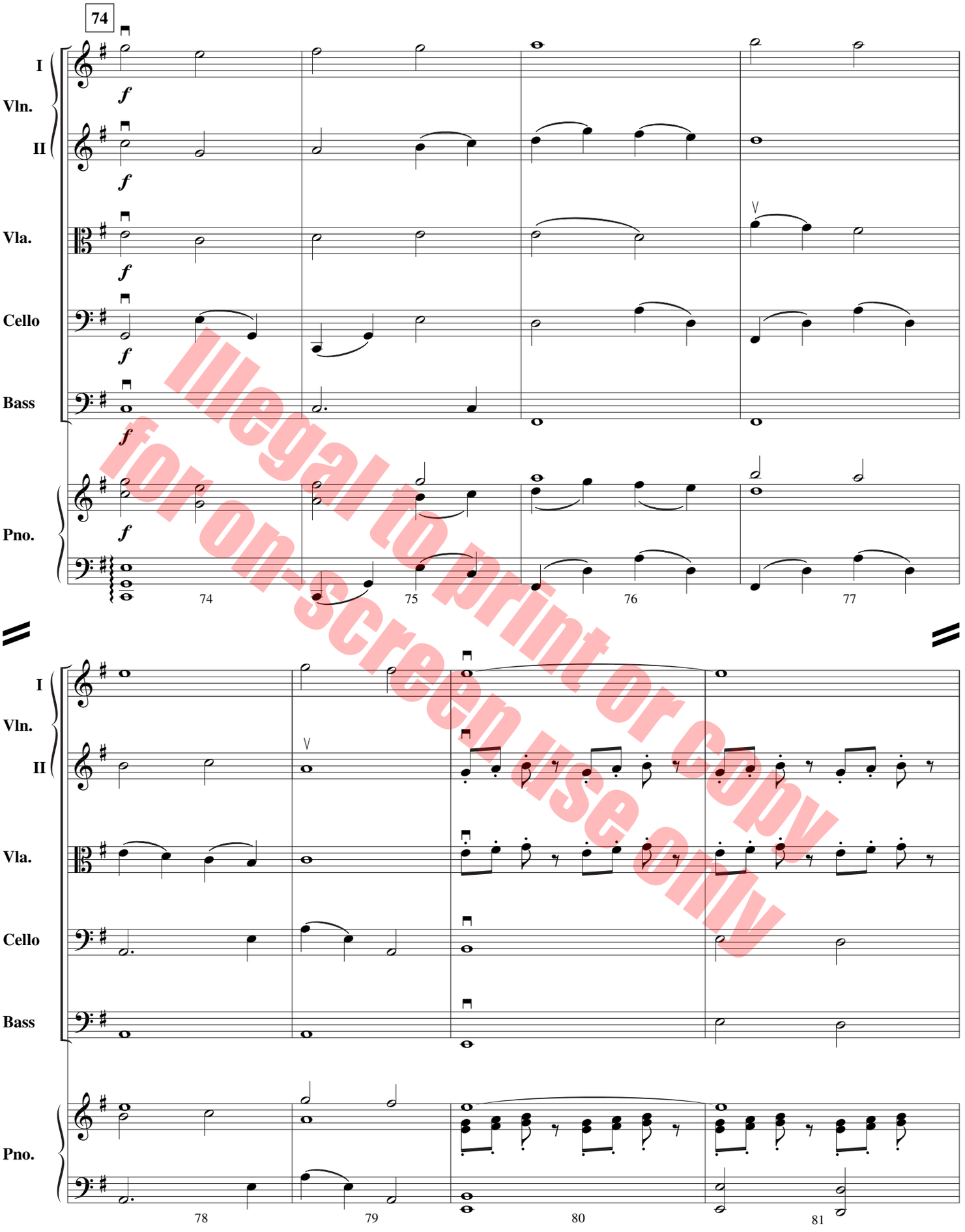

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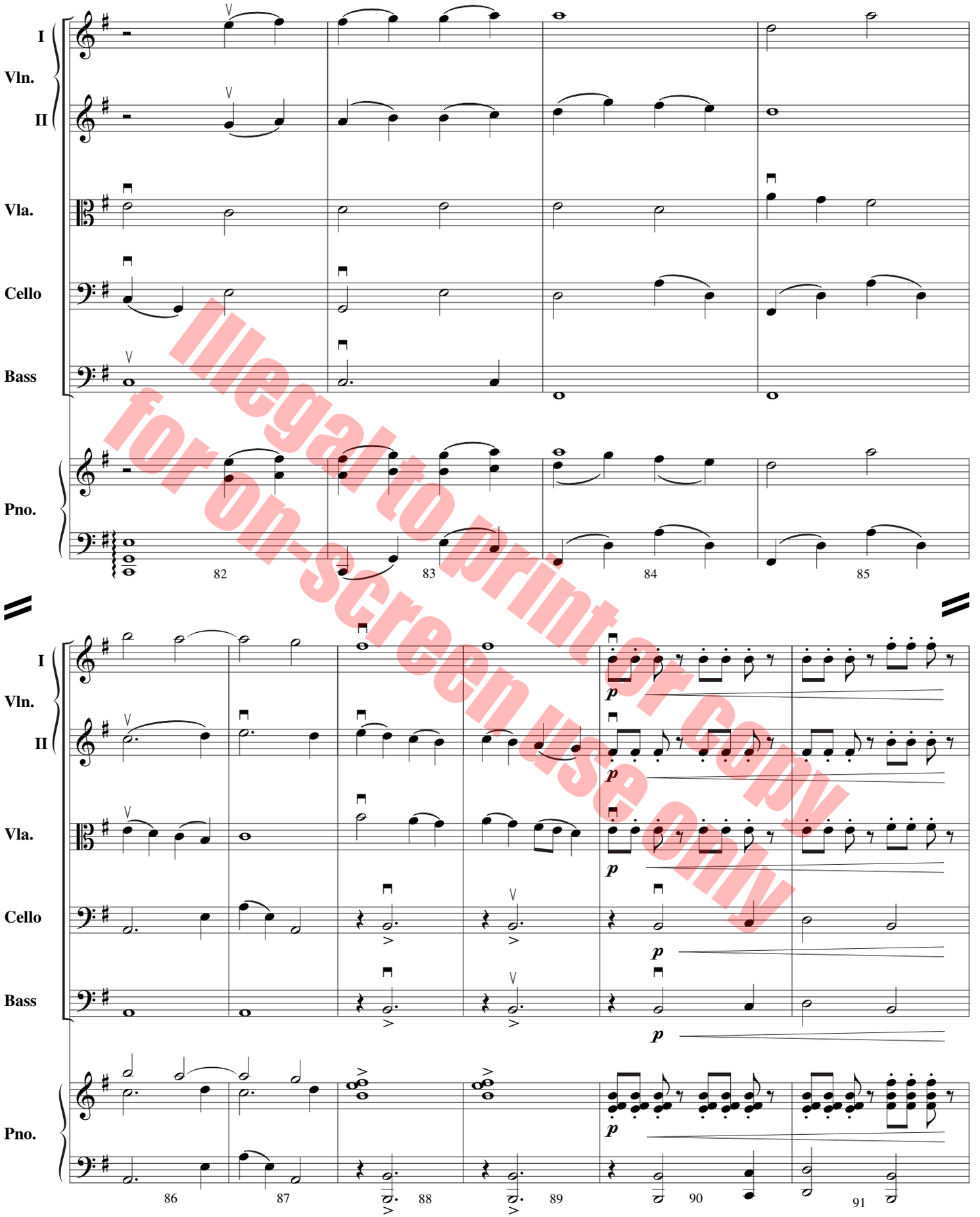

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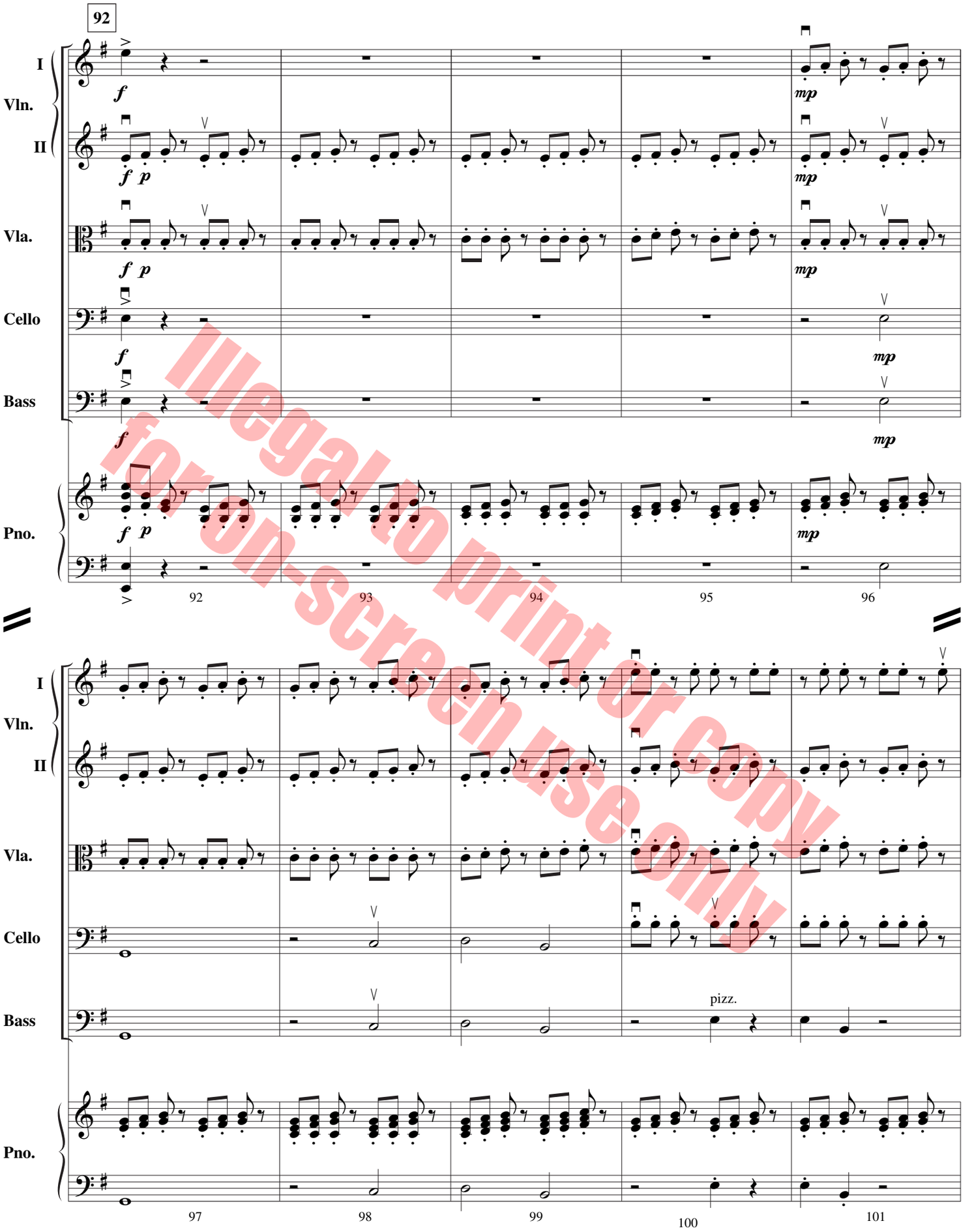

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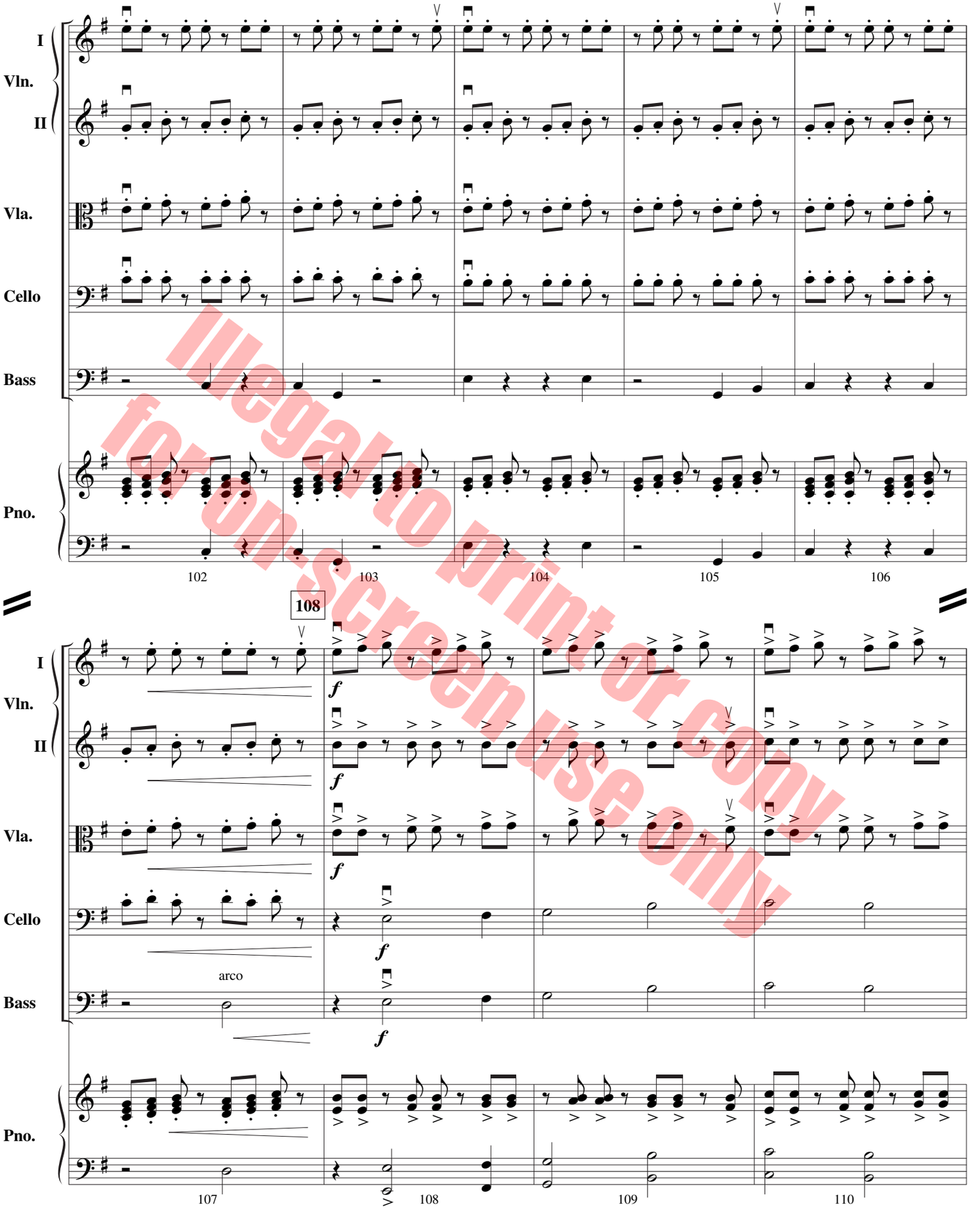

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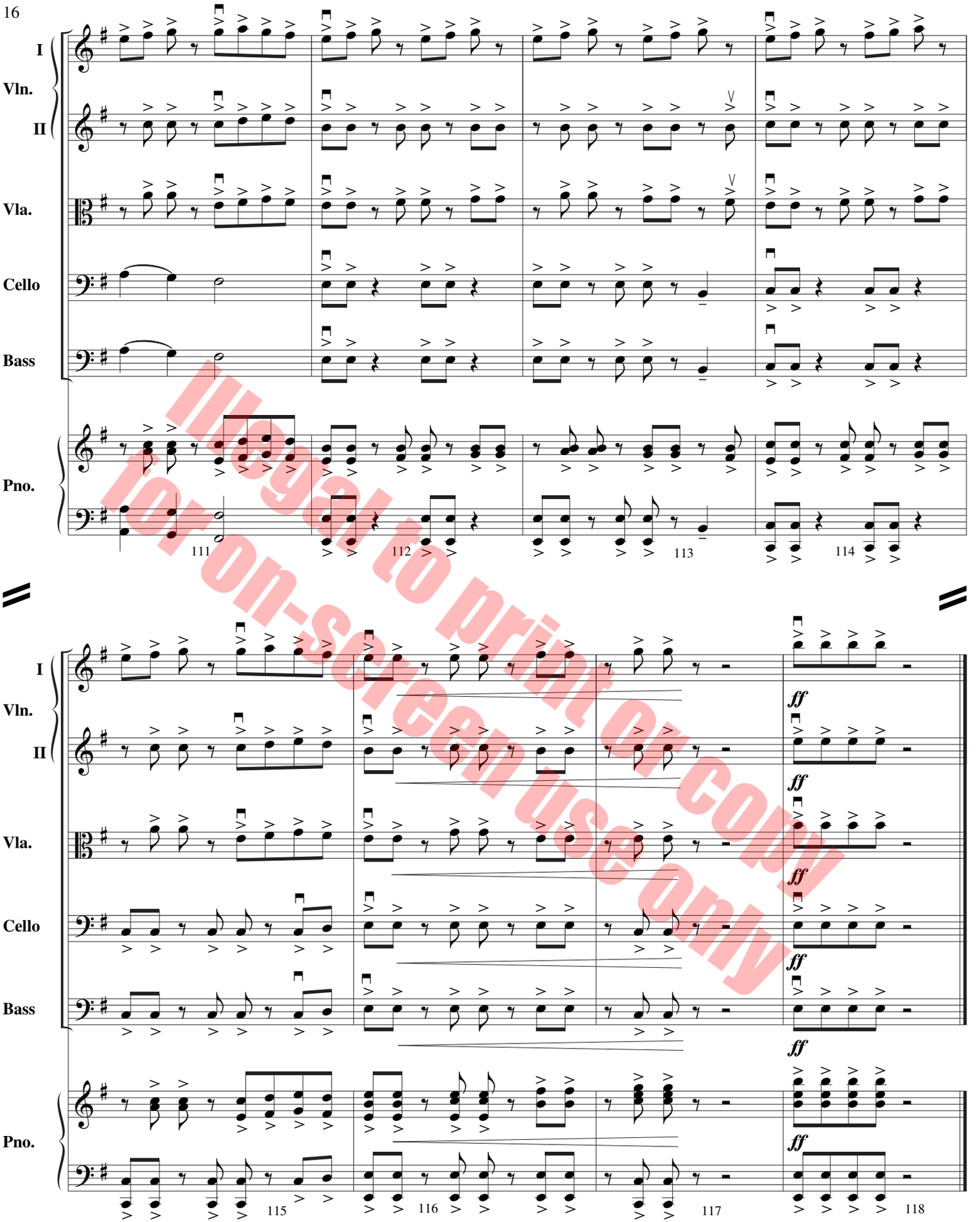

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