TRIANGULATE

Kevin Sluder

String Orchestra
Grade 3

Violin 1
Violin 2
Viola
Cello
Double Bass
Violin 3 (Viola TC)
Bass on Cello

Preview Sample

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PROGRAM NOTES

Triangulate was commissioned for the opening year of Rakow Middle School in Rockwall, TX, and subsequently, the opening year of the orchestra program there.

Anytime a new school opens, students are uprooted from their original campus plan, often having to make new friends and say goodbye to old ones. For fine arts performance programs (like orchestra), there is an added challenge to form new bonds in a setting where you normally have multiple years in which to gradually grow together.

Triangulating, by definition, refers to dividing a surface into triangles, mapping an area via trigonometry, or fixing a position using two known points. It is commonly used to calculate precise locations in surveying and navigation.

Triangulate trains students to shift to new positions on their instrument through calculated repetitions.

CONDUCTOR NOTES

Triangulate was written to strategically teach the violins and violas to comfortably move between 1st and 3rd position. For cello, it is 1st to 2nd position. For bass, 1st to 4th (since 3rd position is already standard operating procedure by this stage of development). Slurred glissandos are a great way to practice making smooth shifts. They are also a lot of fun. Note: at moments like m25, the cellos can also use 4th position for the gliss to A (1st finger) for a more-dramatic slide.

The 8ths notes should be performed with a wide brush stroke on the frog side of the balance point. The only exception is the first violins at m30, m57, and m73, where the staccato 8ths need to be light, on the side of the hair, and spiccato. From m34-35 and m61-62, however, the firsts should gradually elongate the notes back to a standard brush stroke to match the other parts.

While the shifting and glissandos are fun, the syncopation and accents are the heart of the piece. Make the beginning of the accent "pop" and then release weight for the remainder of the note. There are a lot of crossing voices, and strong accents will help create a really cool effect in the ensemble.

A "bass on cello" part is included for groups that have no bass players (or too few).

Preview Sample

ABOUT THE COMPOSER



Kevin Sluder is an orchestra director in the North Texas area and has been teaching in the public school system since 2007. His program at Lawler MS was named the TMEA MS Honor Full Orchestra in 2024 and 2026.

Born and raised in Mansfield, TX, Mr. Sluder obtained his bachelor's degree in music education from the University of North Texas in Denton. A bass player by trade, he also has experience in percussion and guitar, with a deep love of rhythm.

Outside of the classroom, Mr. Sluder spends a great deal of time composing and arranging music. He also runs two podcasts. *Rite of String*, co-hosted with Matthew Moreno, is focused on string education. *SluderMusic* is a showcase of Mr. Sluder's published pieces. In addition to his work in the "classical" world, he has written and recorded several albums that are available on most streaming services.

Mr. Sluder currently resides in McKinney, TX with his wife (and fellow orchestra director) Bethany Hardwick. In his limited spare time, he enjoys taking naps, camping, and playing video games.
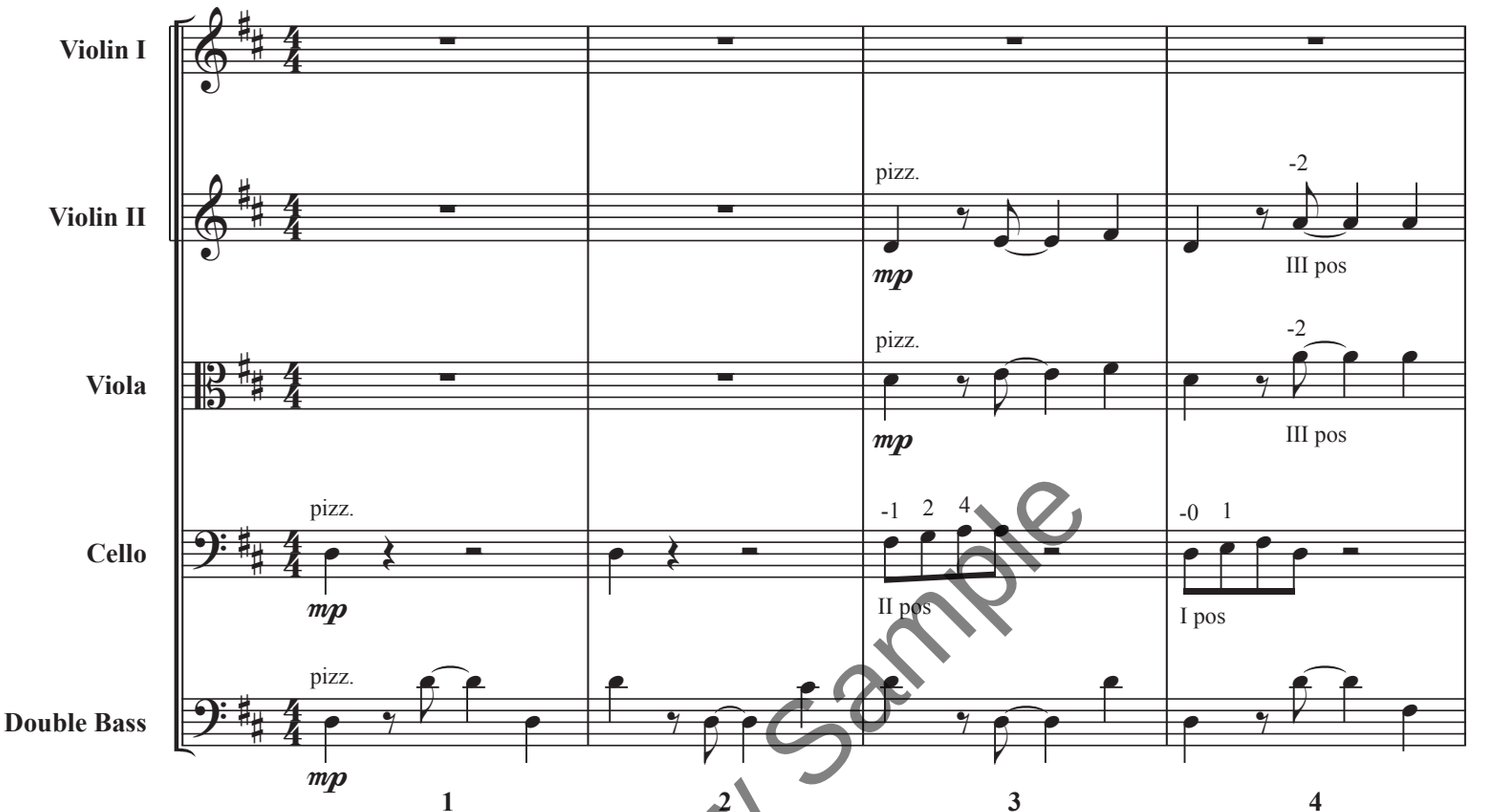
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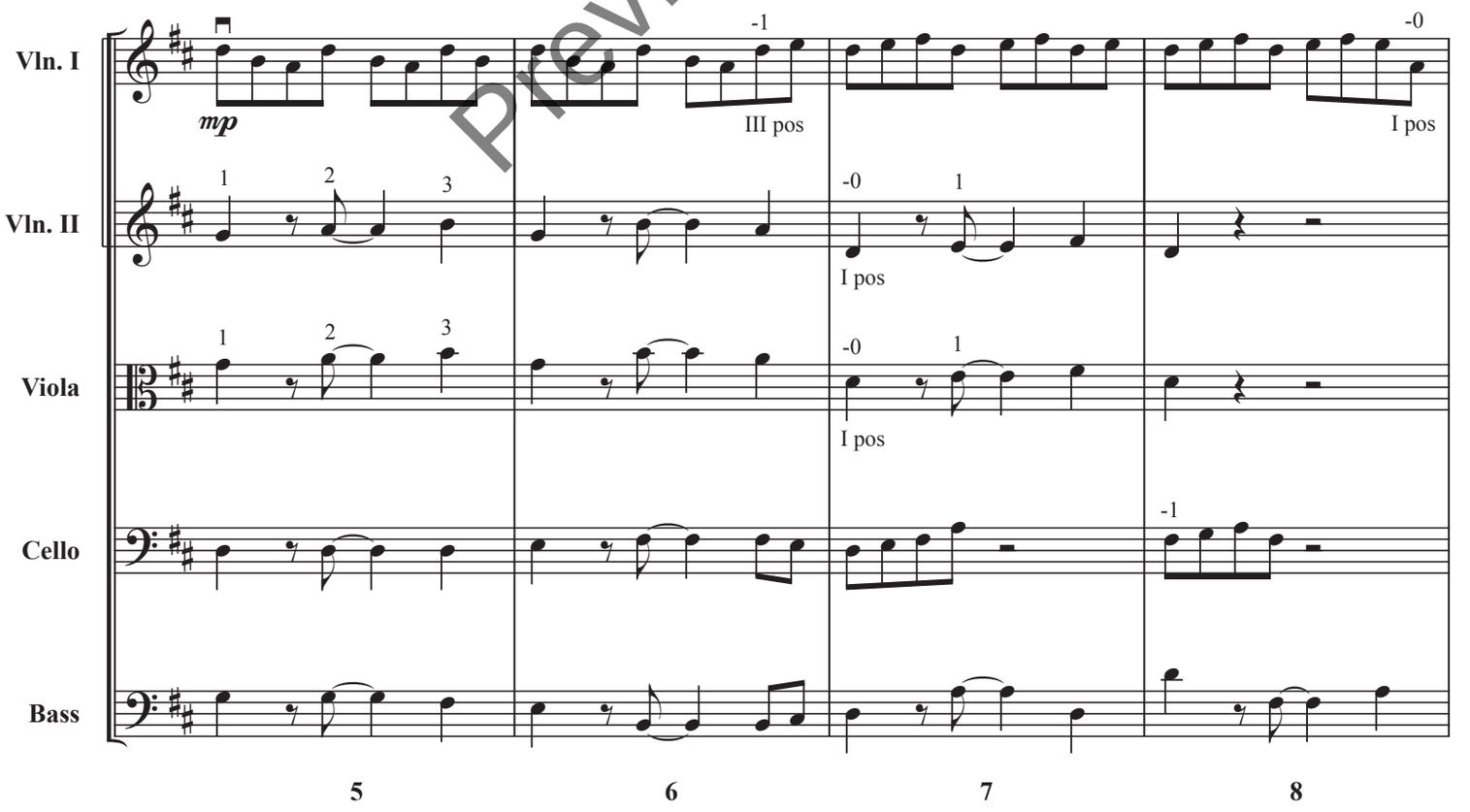
Triangulate

Written for the Inaugural Year of the Rakow Middle School Orchestra in Rockwall, TX

Kevin Sluder
(ASCAP)
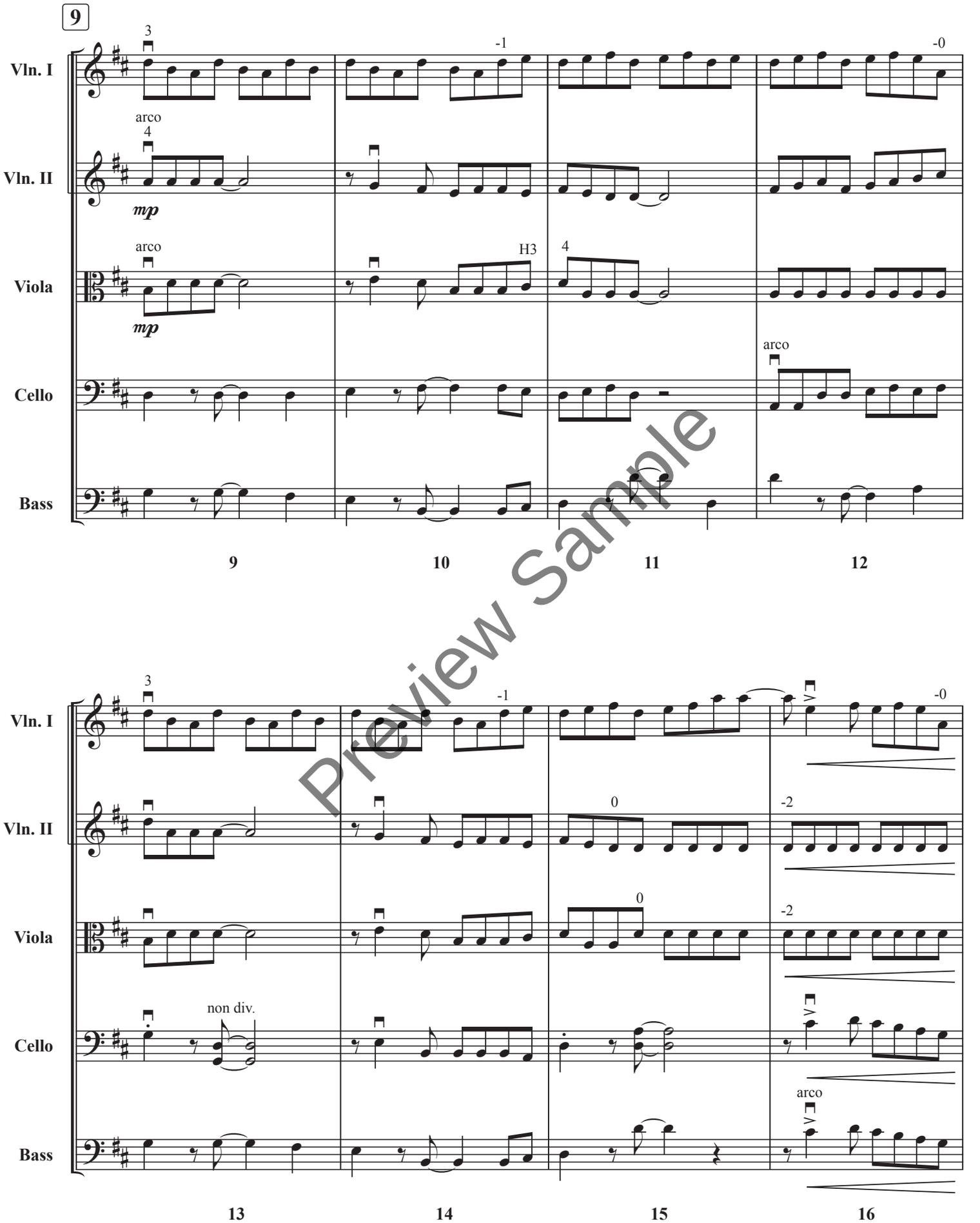
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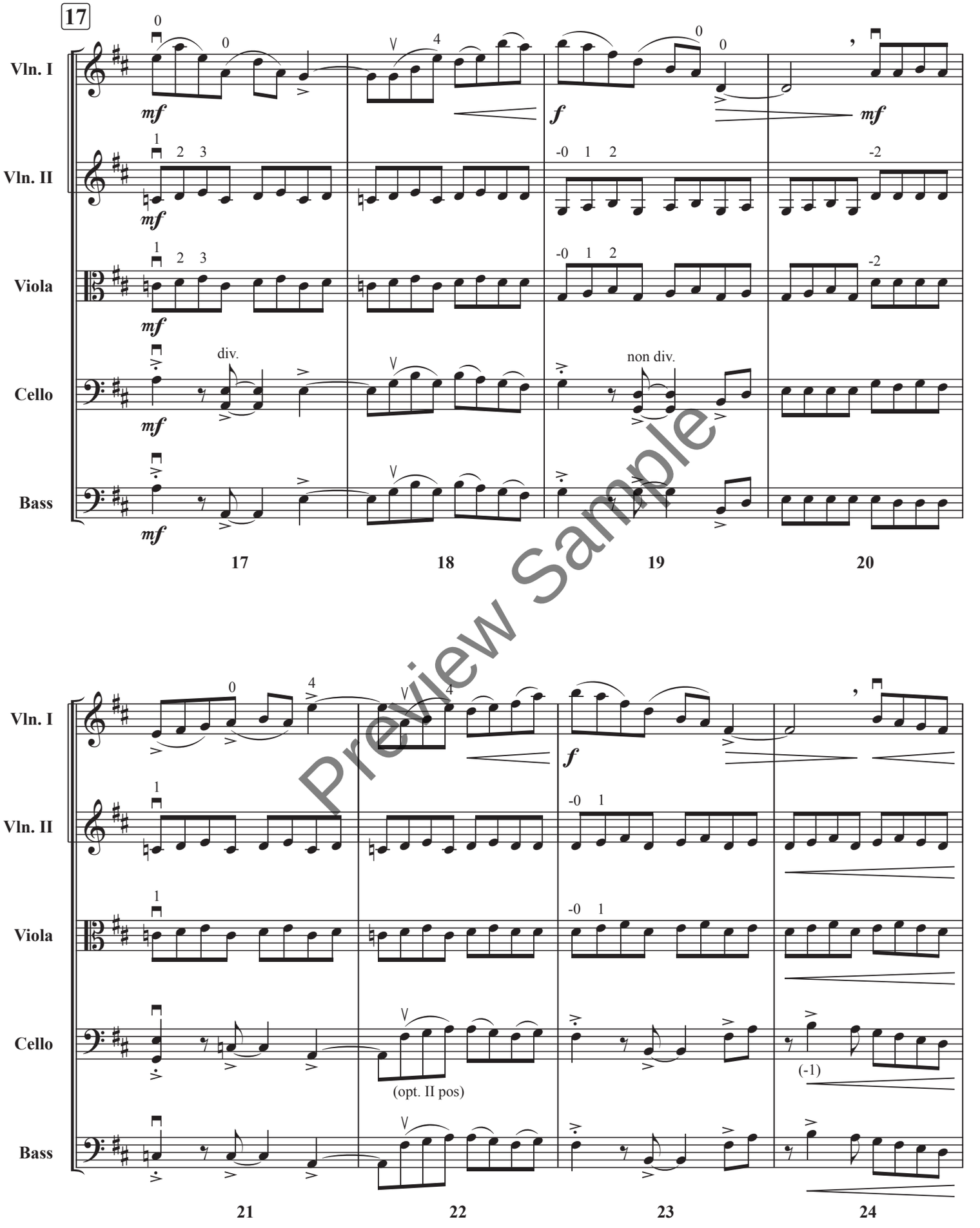




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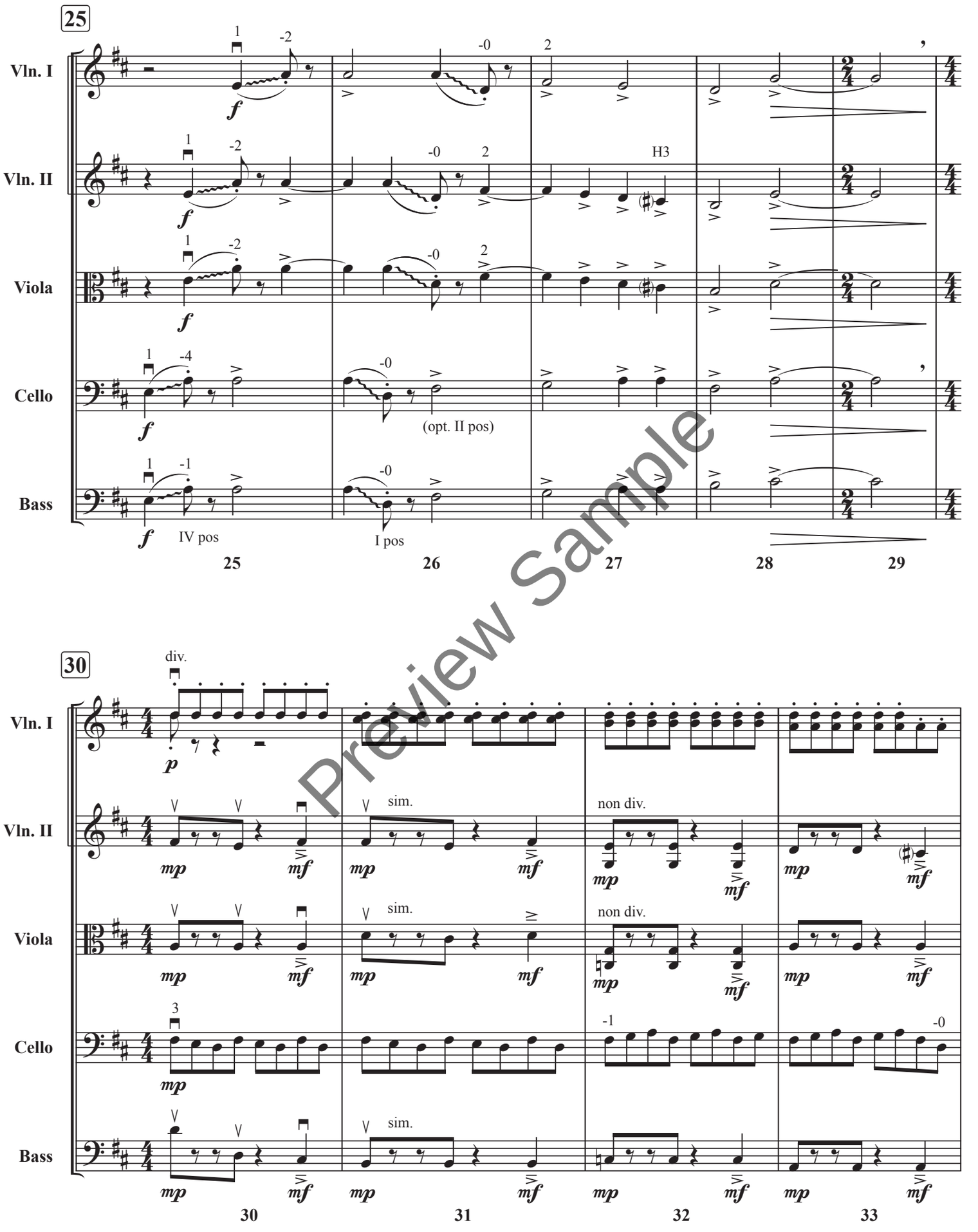
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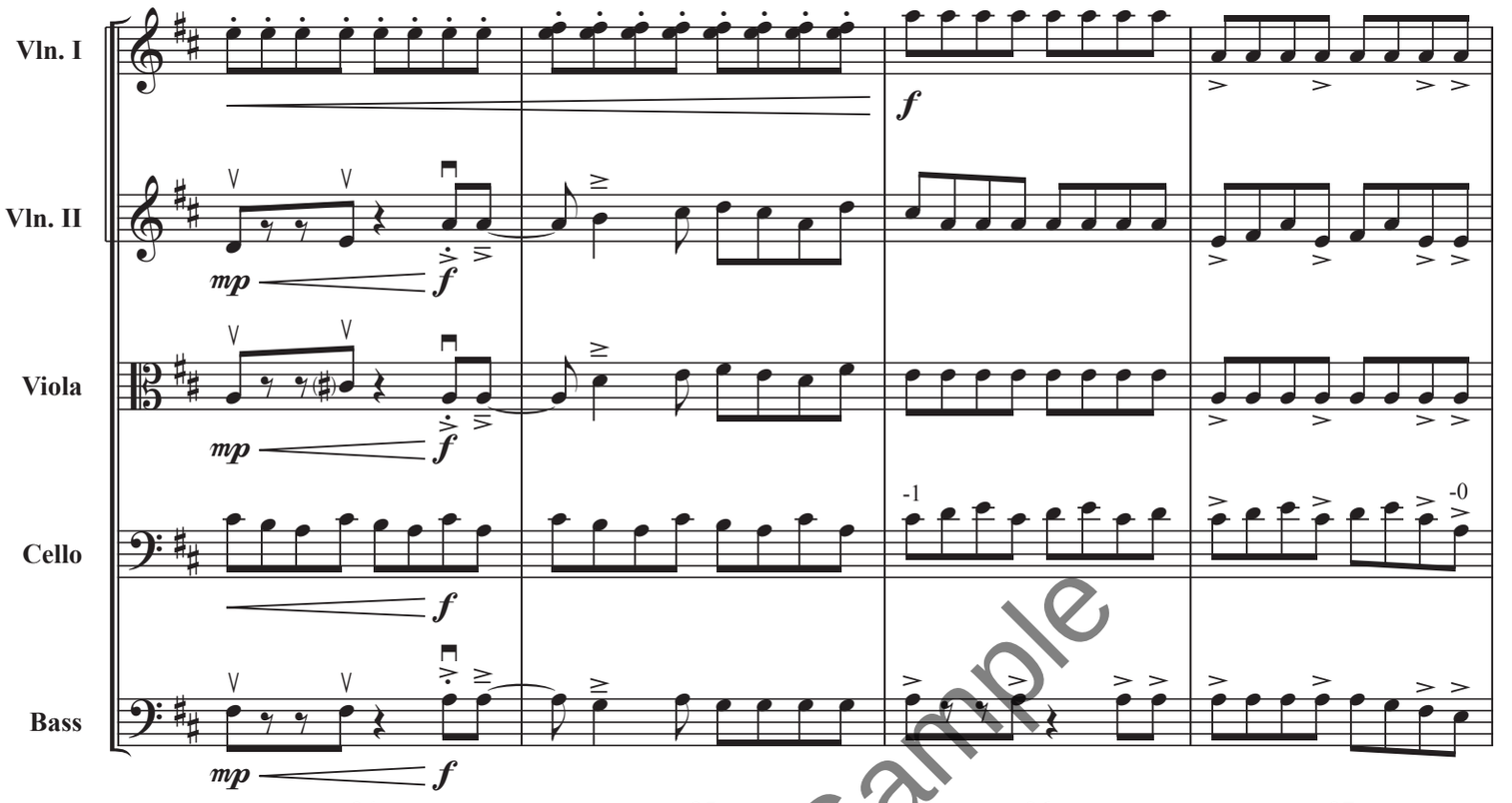


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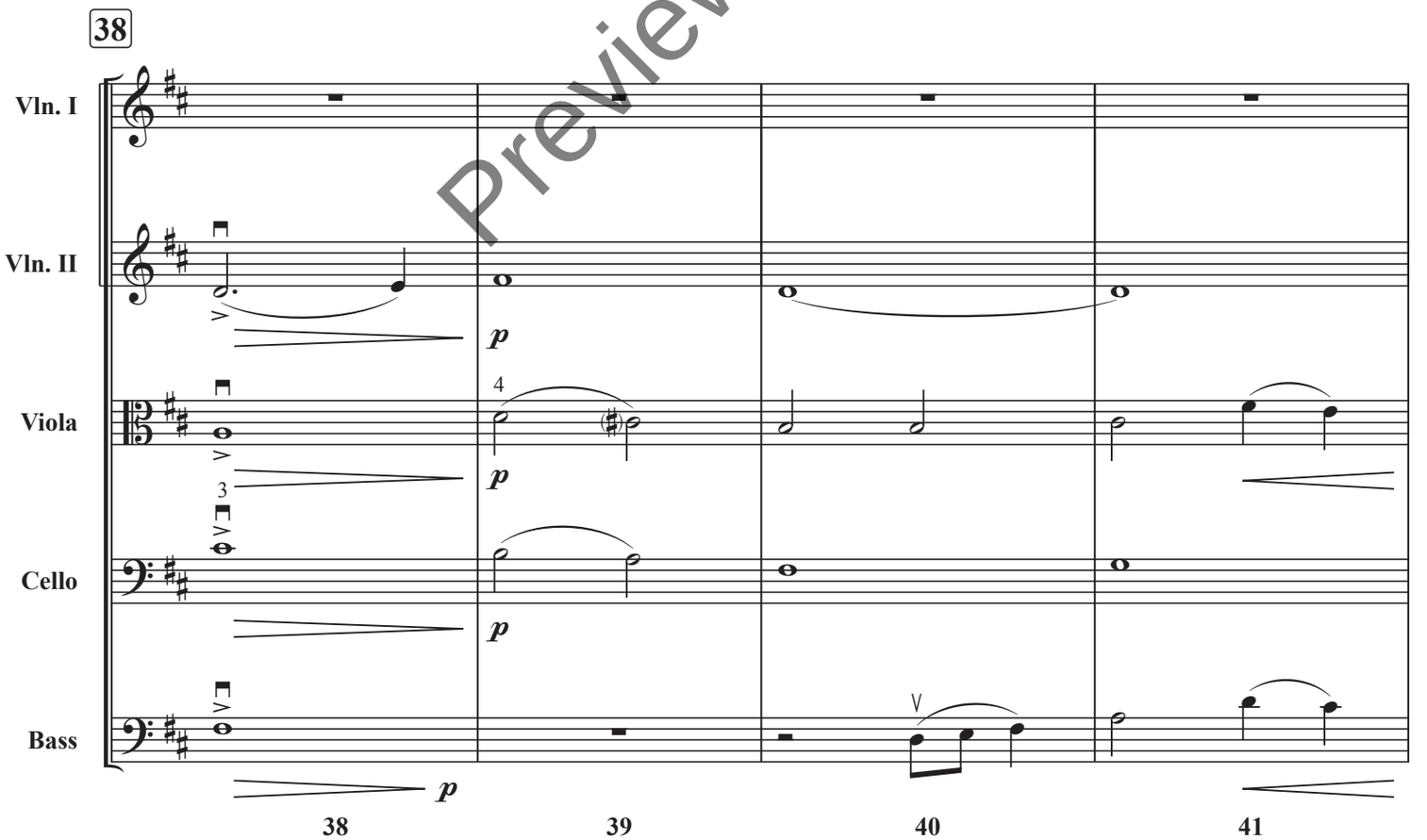


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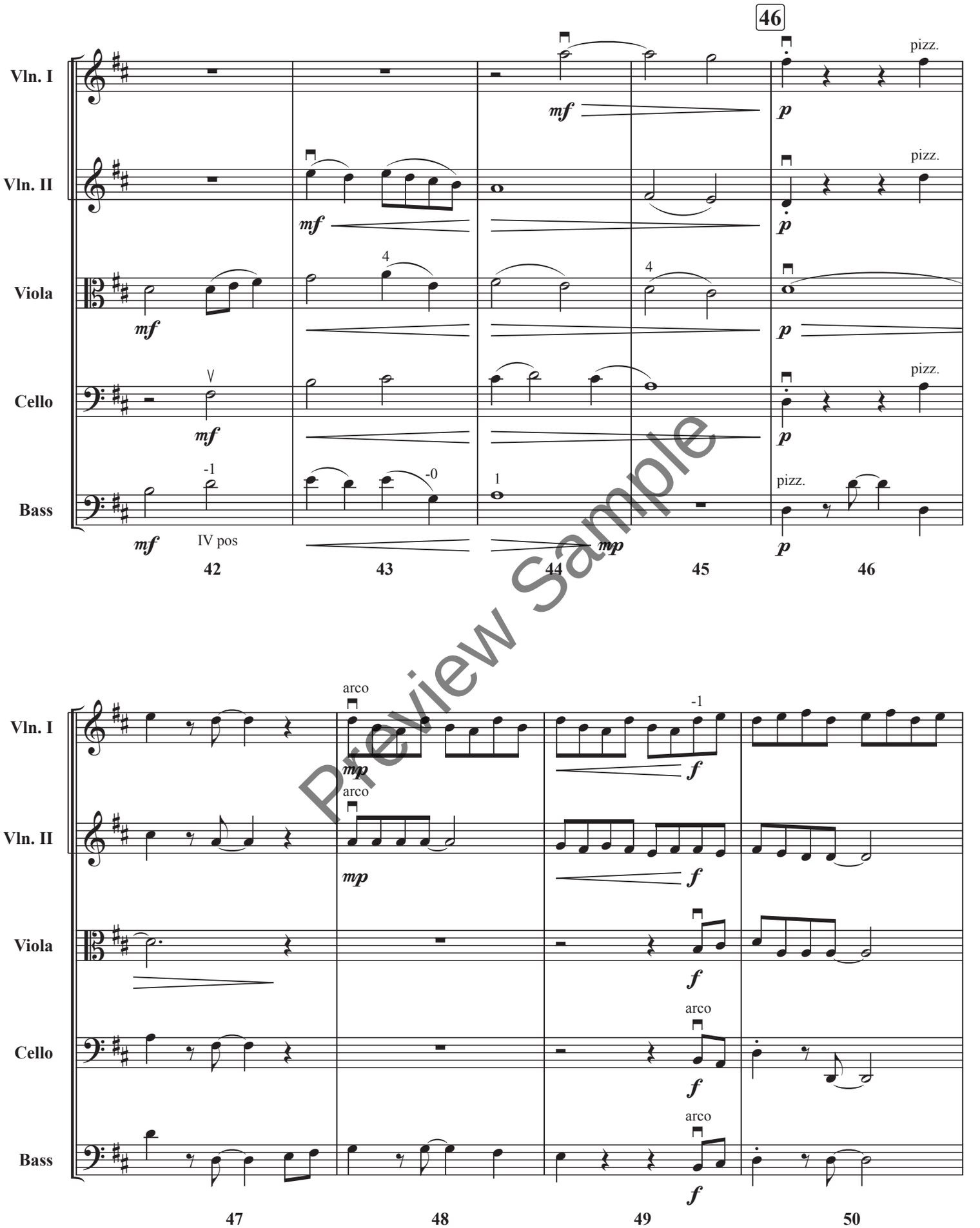


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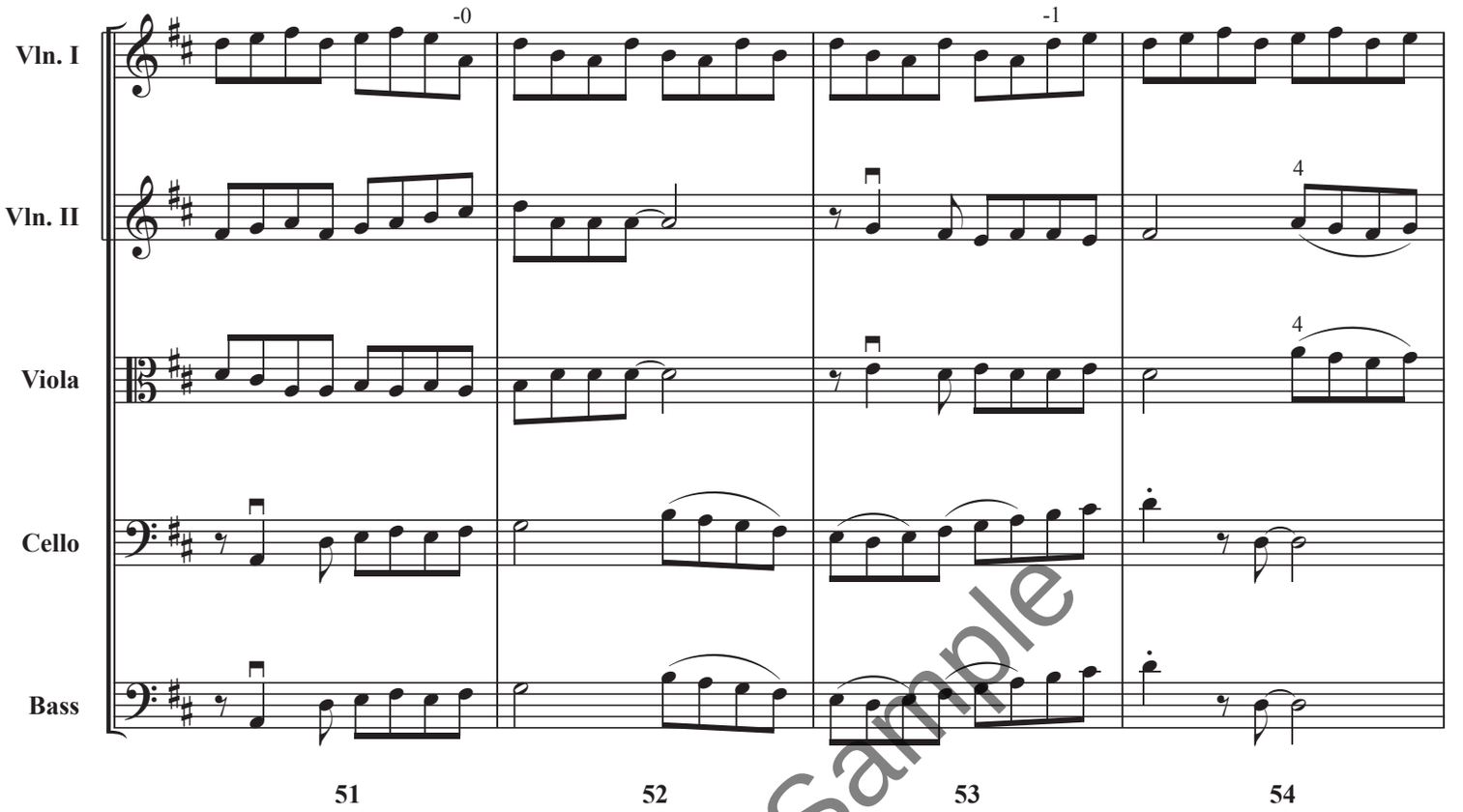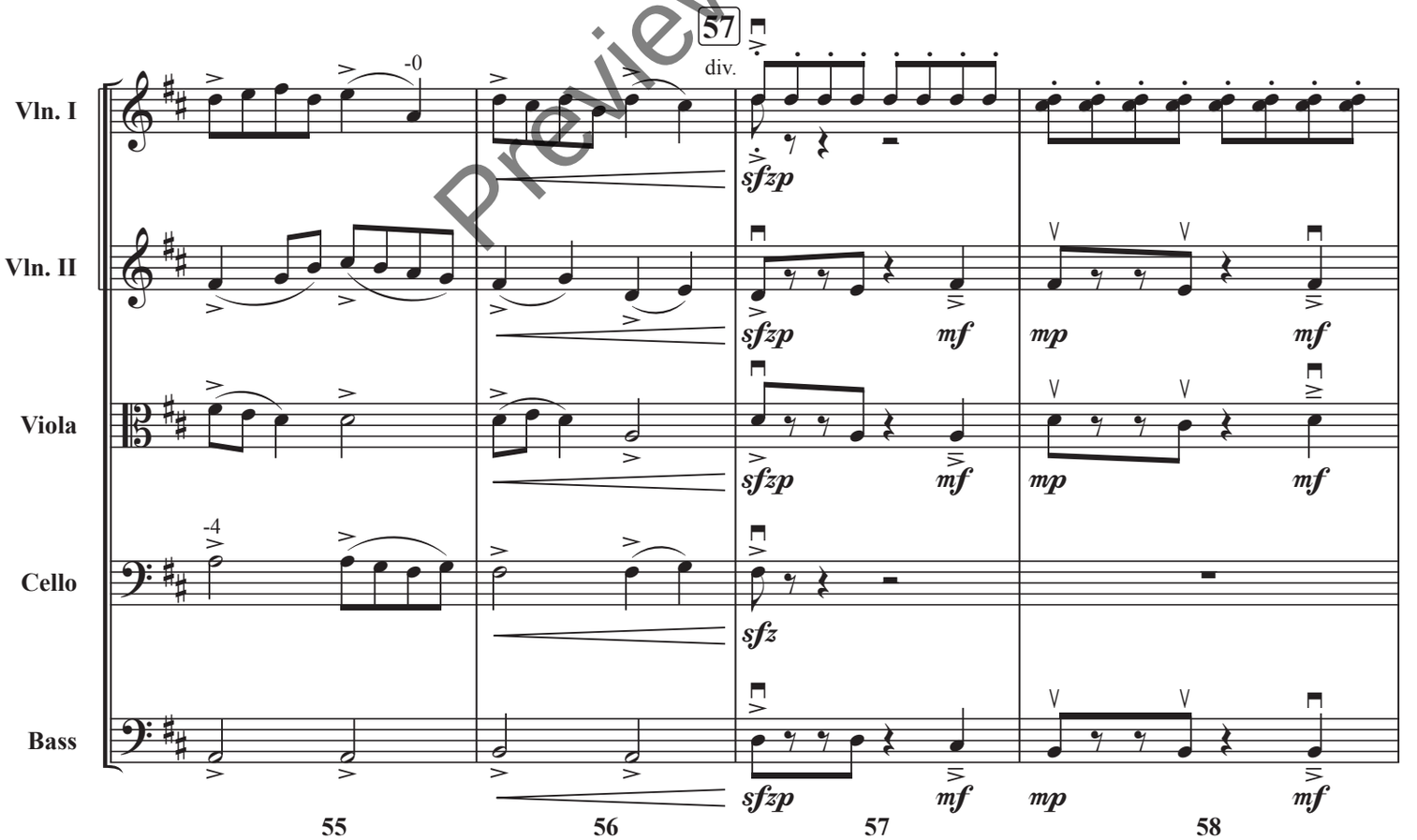




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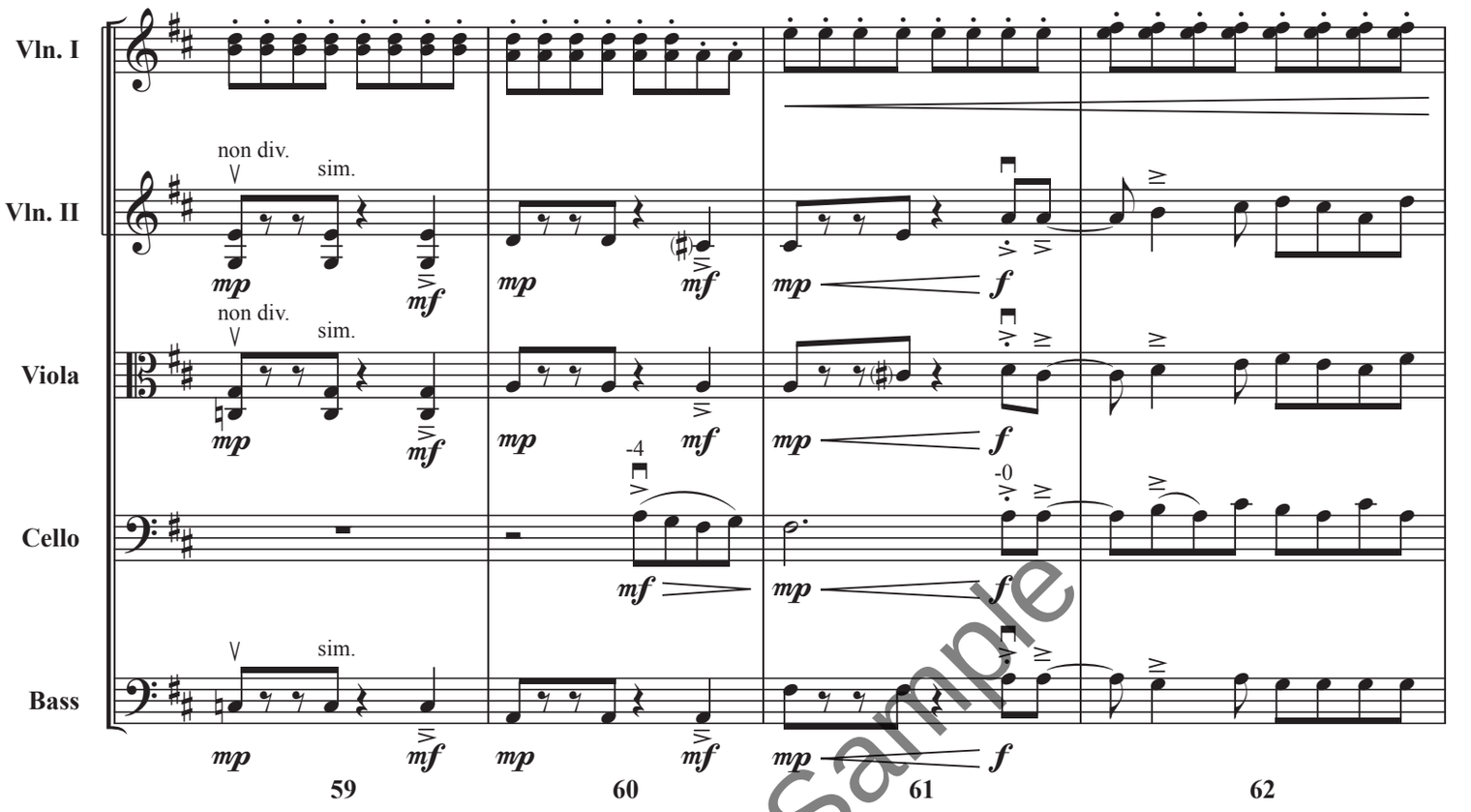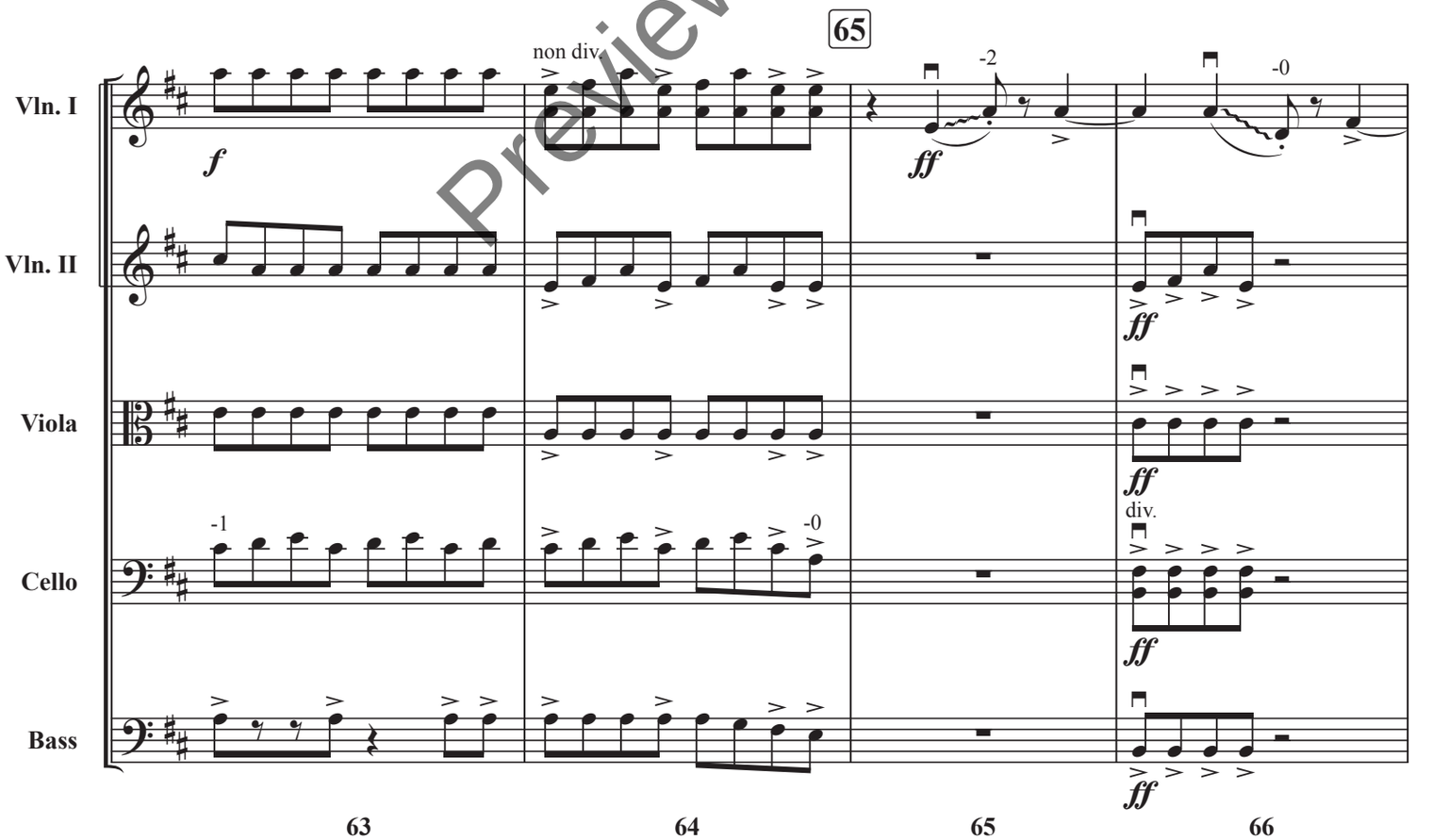


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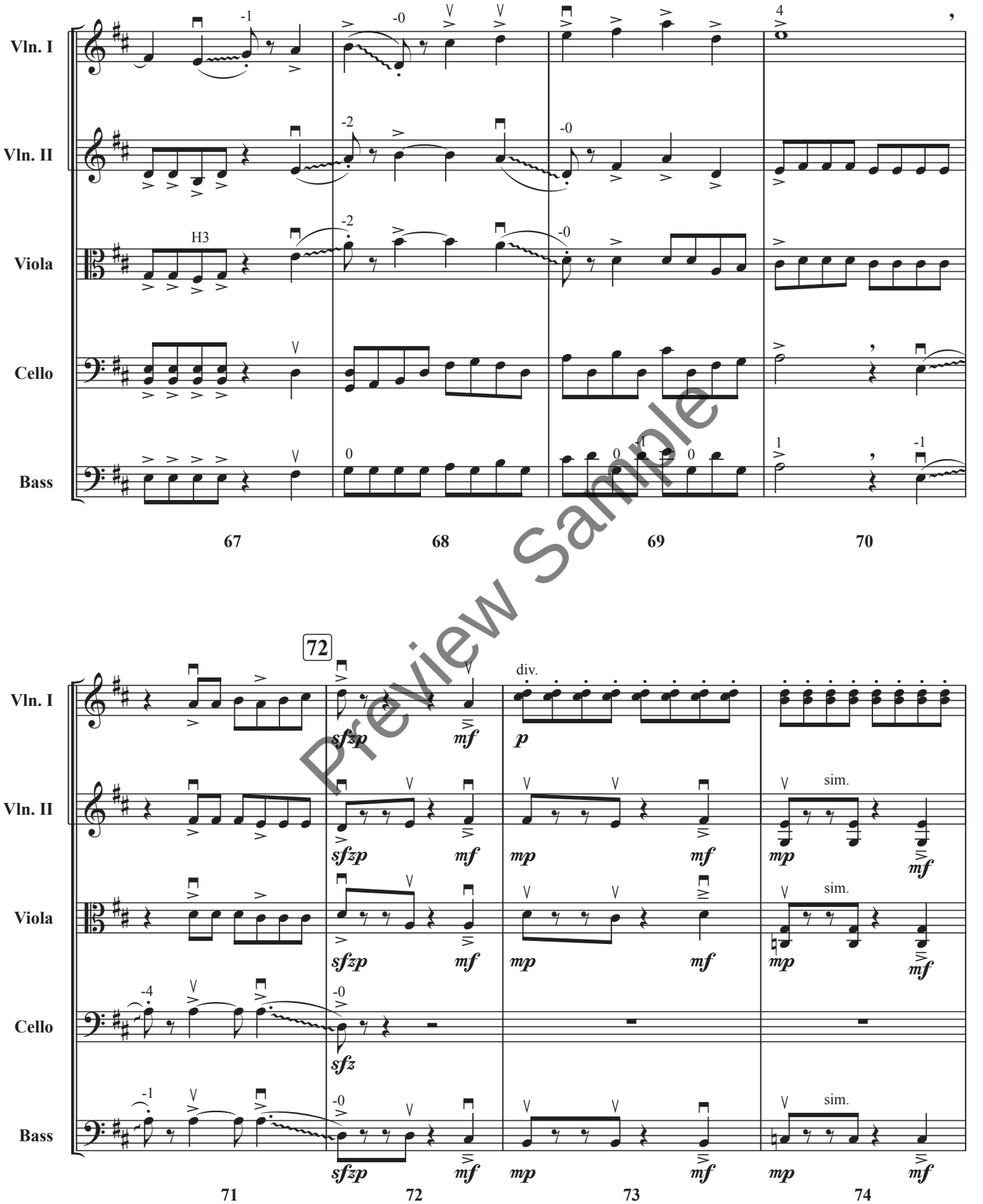




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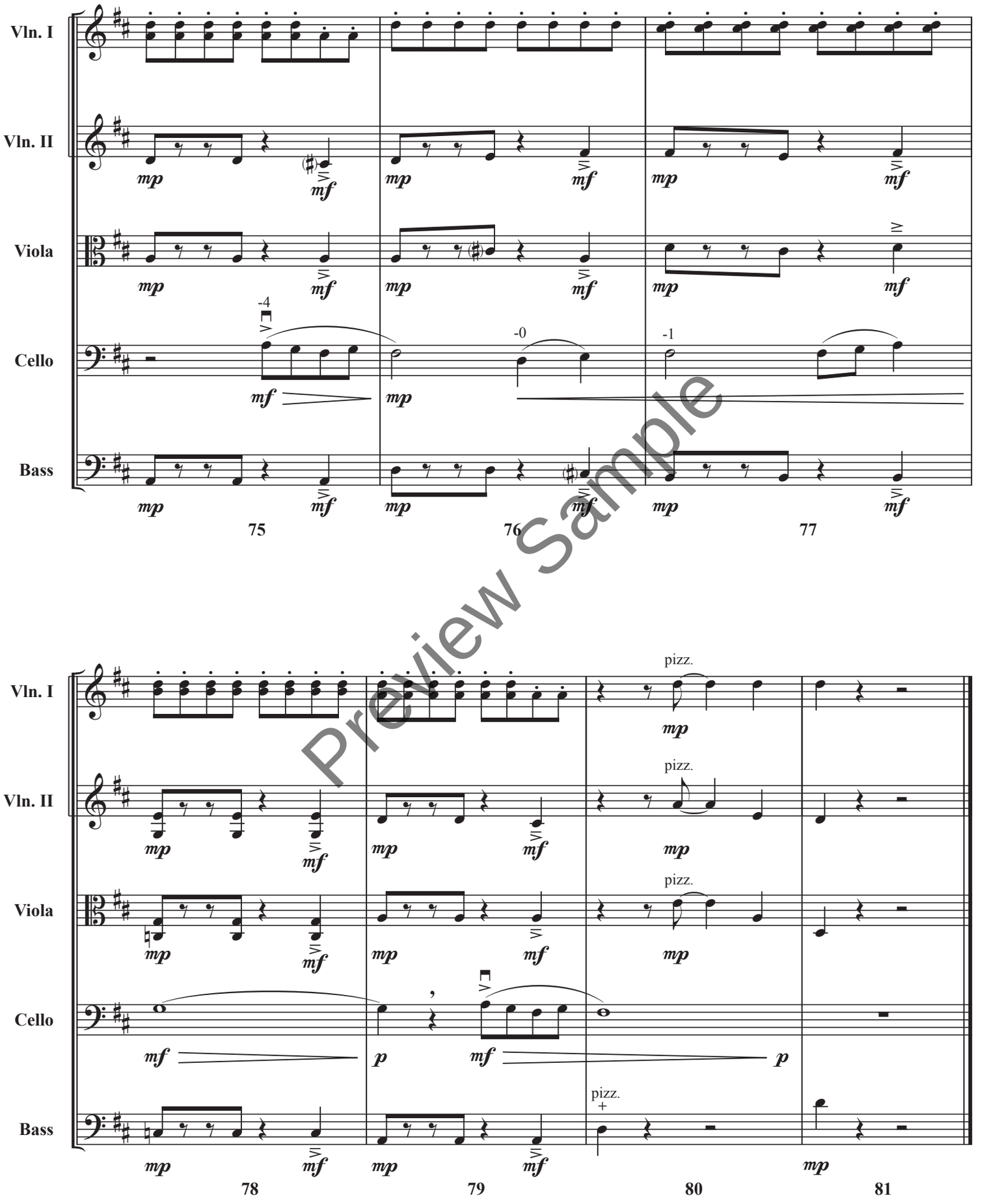




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