Please note that not all pages are included. This is purposely done in order to protect our property and the work of our esteemed composers.

If you would like to see this work in its entirety, please order online or call us at 800-647-2117.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Rebels in the Vents	3
II. Three Generals	7
III. Esmeralda and Joachim	9
IV. The Accompanist Dies	15
V. Simon Thibault Makes Coq au Vin	16
VI. Gen Translates for Roxanne	17
VII. Carmen Studies Grammar	24
VIII. Gen Arranges a Meeting	27
IX. Cesar Sings	30
X. In the Garden	33

DURATION: 34:00

Elena Ruehr (b. 1963)

For biographical information visit:
www.elenaruehr.org

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String Quartet No. 5 (Bel Canto)

A string quartet in ten movements based on the novel by Ann Patchett, commissioned by and dedicated to the Cypress String Quartet.

PROGRAM NOTES

I. Rebels in the Vents

This movement is based on two pieces mentioned in *Bel Canto*: Puccini's *Vissi d'arte* (beginning) and Dvořák's *Song to the Moon* (end). Violin 1 represents the sound of Roxanne's voice as the rebels sneak through the vents. The rhythm is inspired by Peruvian dance music.

II. Three Generals

Schubert's *Der Doppelgänger* is the source, but the music moves relentlessly faster and higher than the original.

III. Esmeralda and Joachim

Esmeralda, the nanny, calmly stitches the vice-president's face. Joachim is a hostage negotiator on vacation who is called in to help.

IV. The Accompanist Dies

The various instruments represent voices in a chorus—including Roxanne (soprano), the priest, vice president Iglesias, and Mr. Hosokawa—expressing a general sentiment of loss.

V. Simon Thibault Makes Coq au Vin

A lovely light hearted moment in the book, this is based on *Vissi d'arte,* but now with the focus on a simplified and light version of the ending material.

VI. Gen Translates for Roxanne

Here, the harmony is derived from the famous Japanese folk song *Sakura*, and is combined with the rhythmic drive of Peruvian dance music. The violoncello acts as the voice of Russian romantic Fyodorov and also Japanese businessman Mr. Hosokawa. Violin 1 is Roxanne, adored soprano, and at center stage, but not obviously, is the viola, playing the part of Gen, the translator.

VII. Carmen Studies Grammar

Carmen is a young woman who is one of the rebels. She is a naturally gifted linguist and her love of language brings her to Gen, who illicitly studies grammar with her in a closet, late at night, after all the others are sleeping. Here, the viola and violoncello use the opening of Dvořák's *Song to the Moon* as a basis for musical grammar, as Violin 1 (Carmen) and Violin 2 (Gen) begin their studies. As the piece progresses, Carmen becomes more and more certain of her skills, until she excels in such an astonishing way that Gen is visibly impressed. She is embarrassed and stops suddenly.

VIII. Gen Arranges a Meeting

Based loosely upon the style of Japanese koto playing, this movement should sound both intense and cautious. Throughout the book, Gen arranges meetings: between Mr. Hosokawa and Roxanne Cass, between himself and Carmen, between the hostage negotiator and the generals.

IX. Cesar Sings

One of the young guards, Cesar, is a natural singer, and he imitates Roxanne's voice in his own naïve way. Here, the viola takes center stage, using the melody of movement II with an accompaniment based upon the music with which Cesar might have grown up.

X. In the Garden

Carmen leads Gen into the garden, Cesar runs into the garden to hide and; eventually, the hostages are released into the garden for some air. They play soccer and pull weeds, run, sing, and enjoy the sun. Eventually, the rebels are killed in the garden. And it is in a garden in Europe, much later, that Simon and Edith Thibault, and Roxanne and Gen meet for a wedding.

—Elena Ruehr

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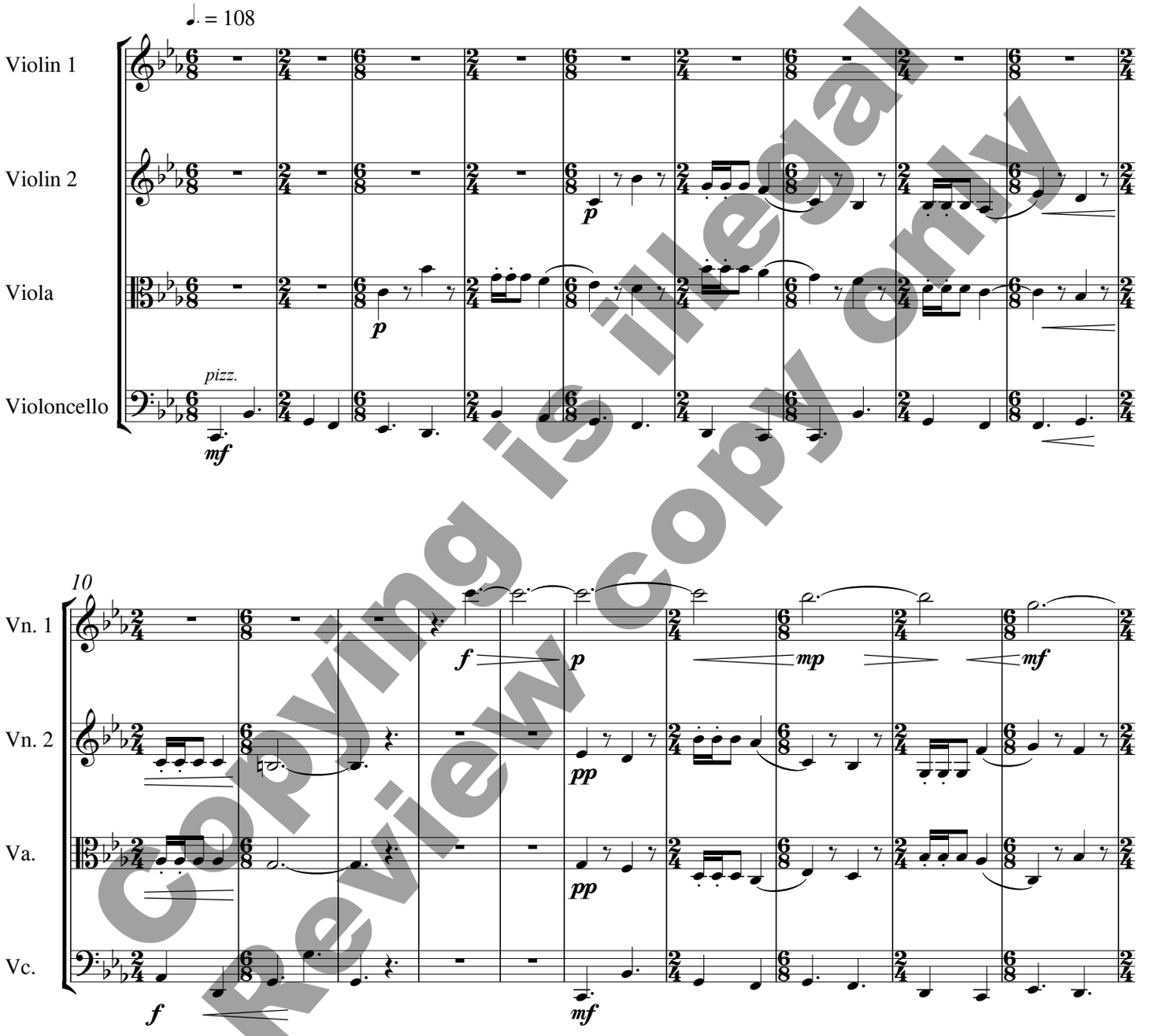
dedicated to the Cypress String Quartet

String Quartet No. 5
(Bel Canto)

Elena Ruehr

I. Rebels in the Vents



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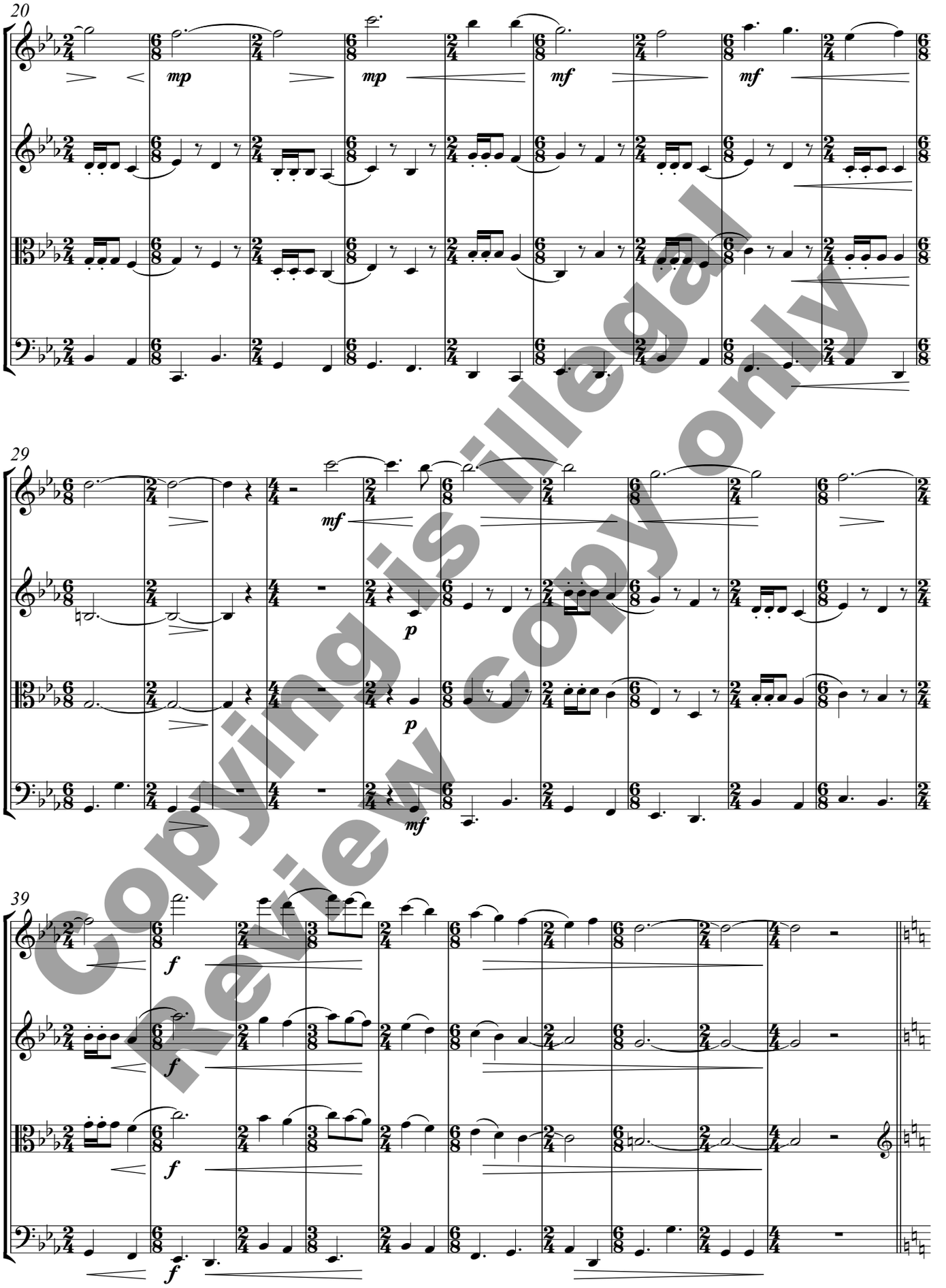

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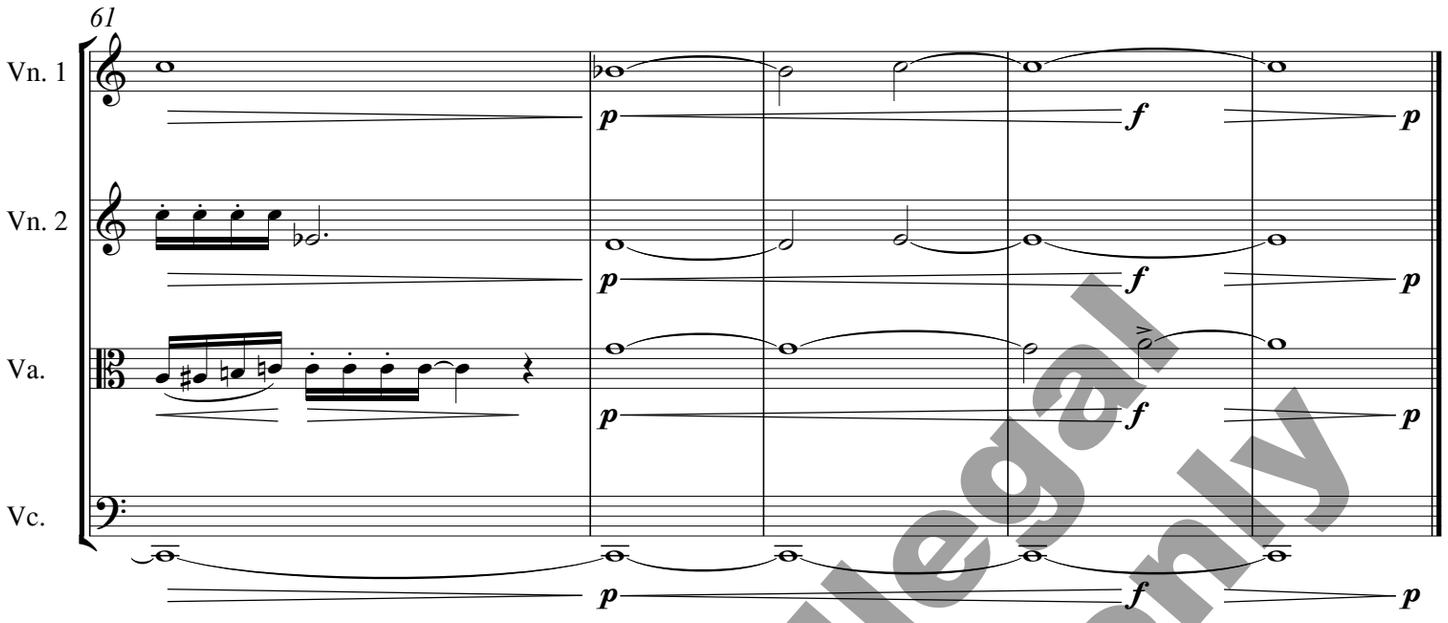
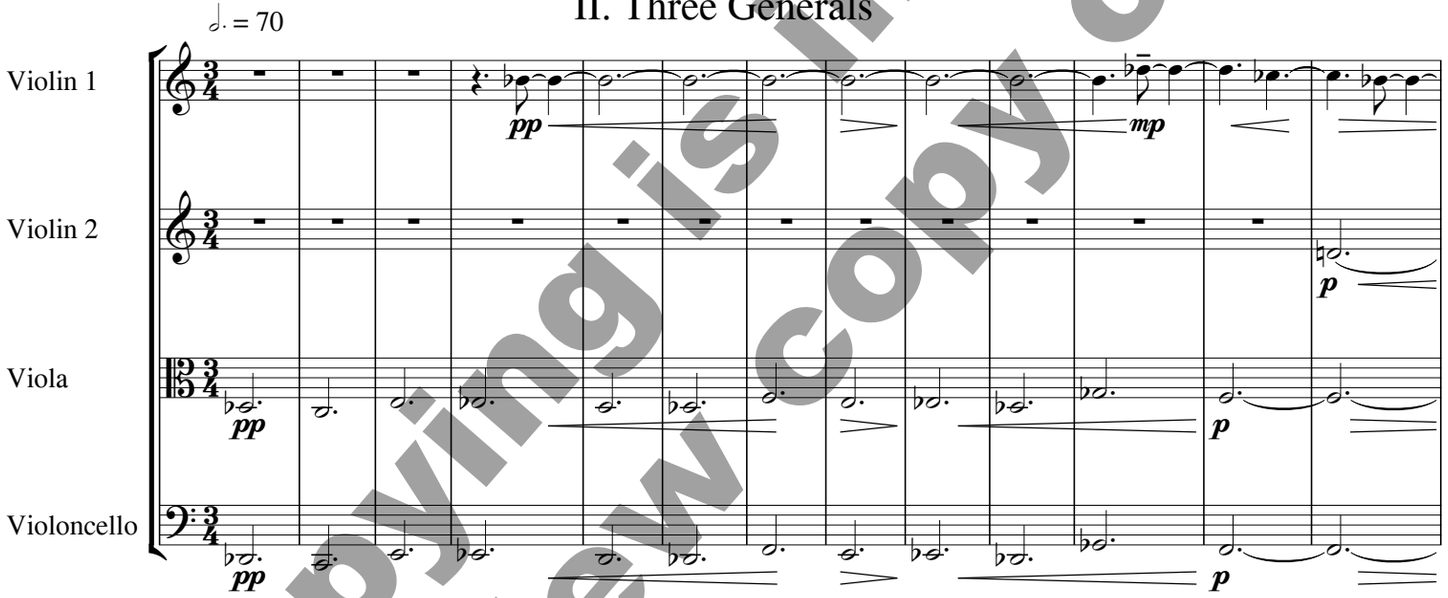
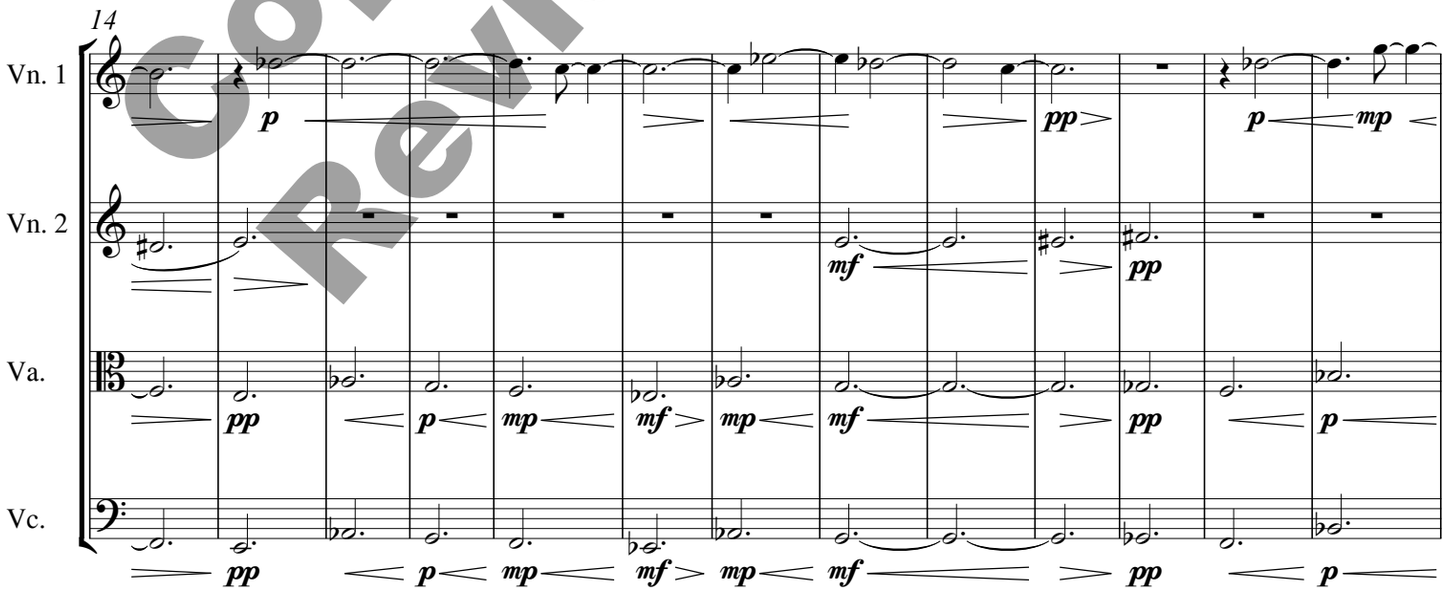


II. Three Generals





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III. Esmeralda and Joachim

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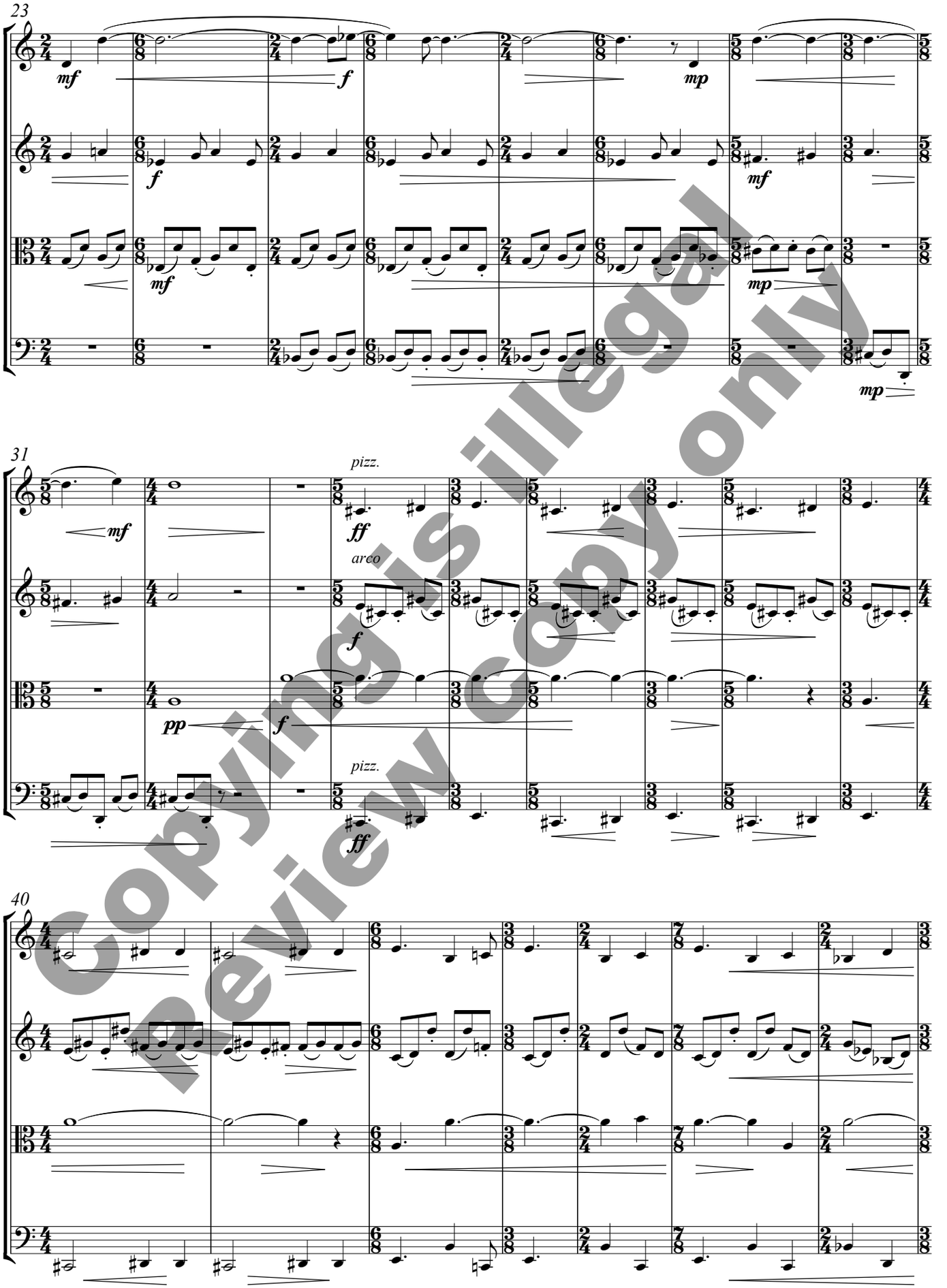

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IV. The Accompanist Dies

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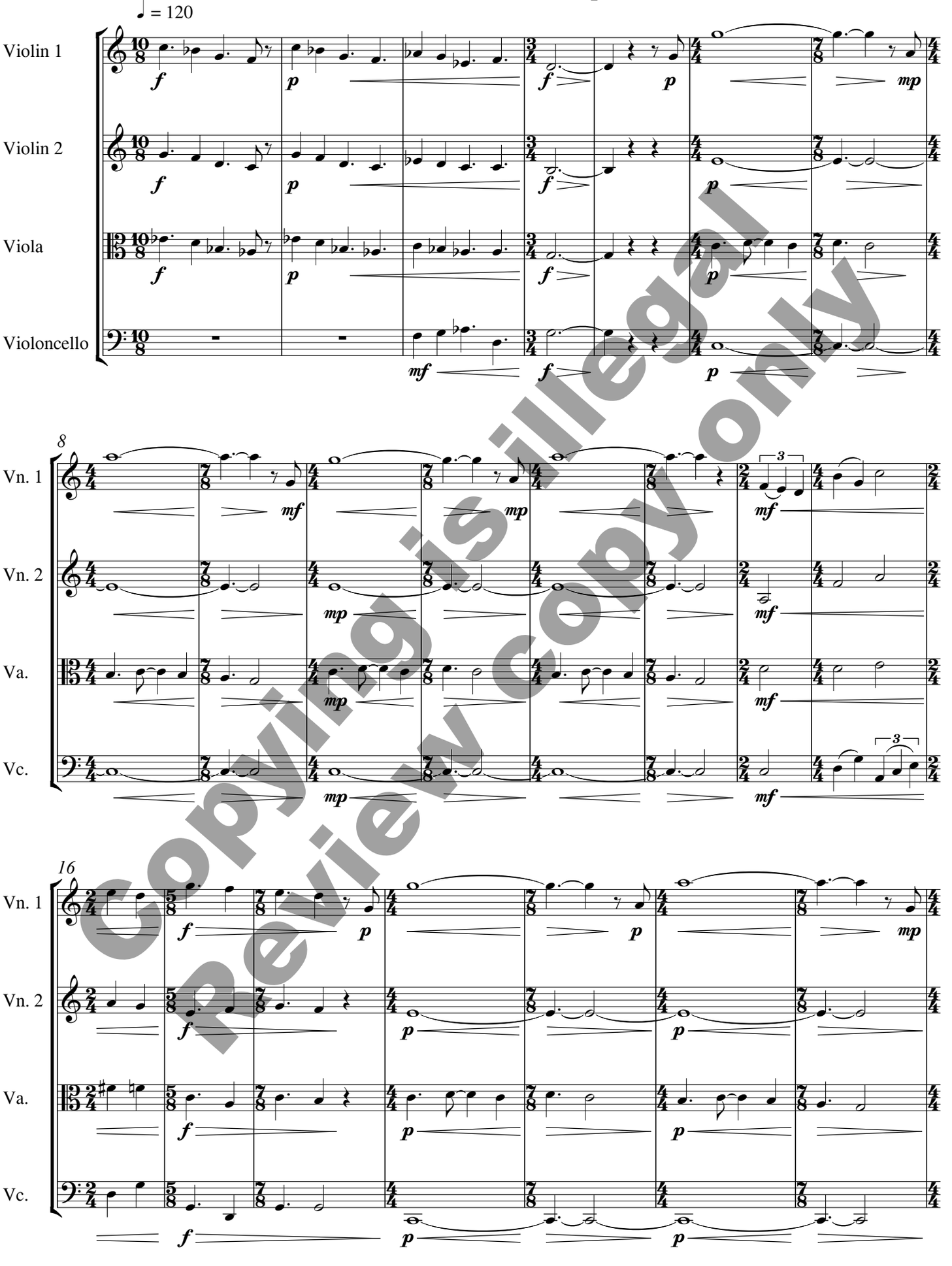
V. Simon Thibault Makes Coq au Vin



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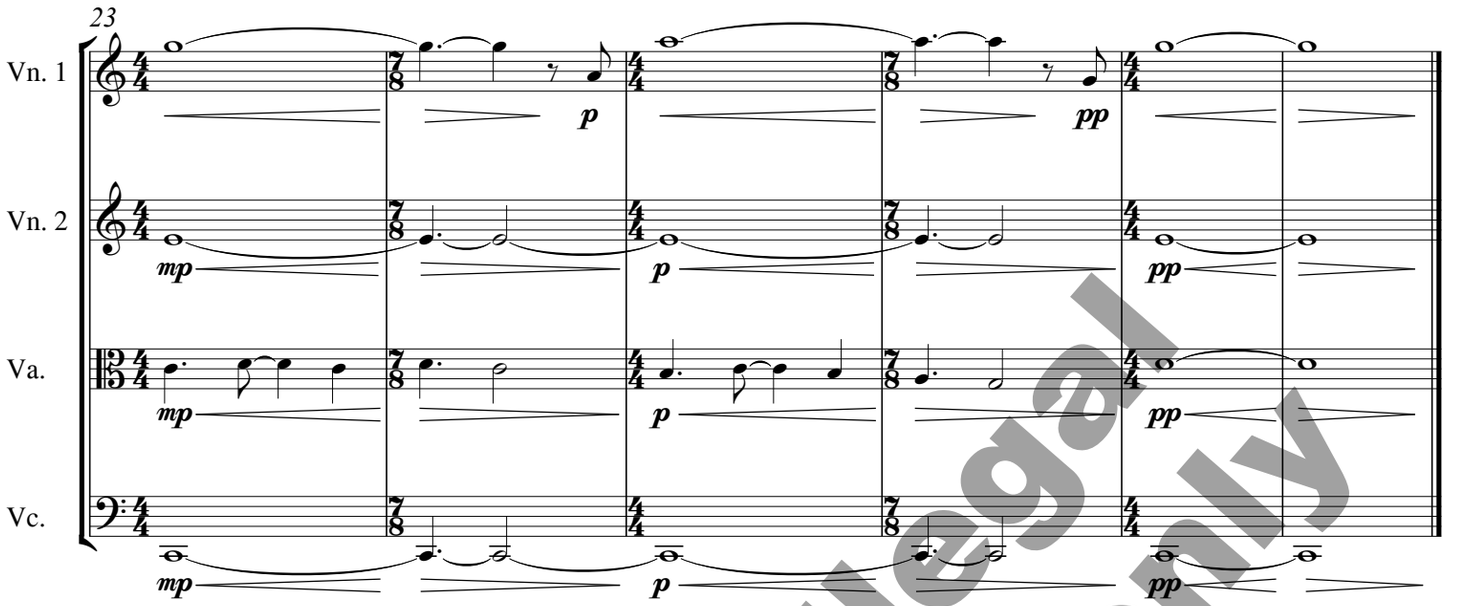
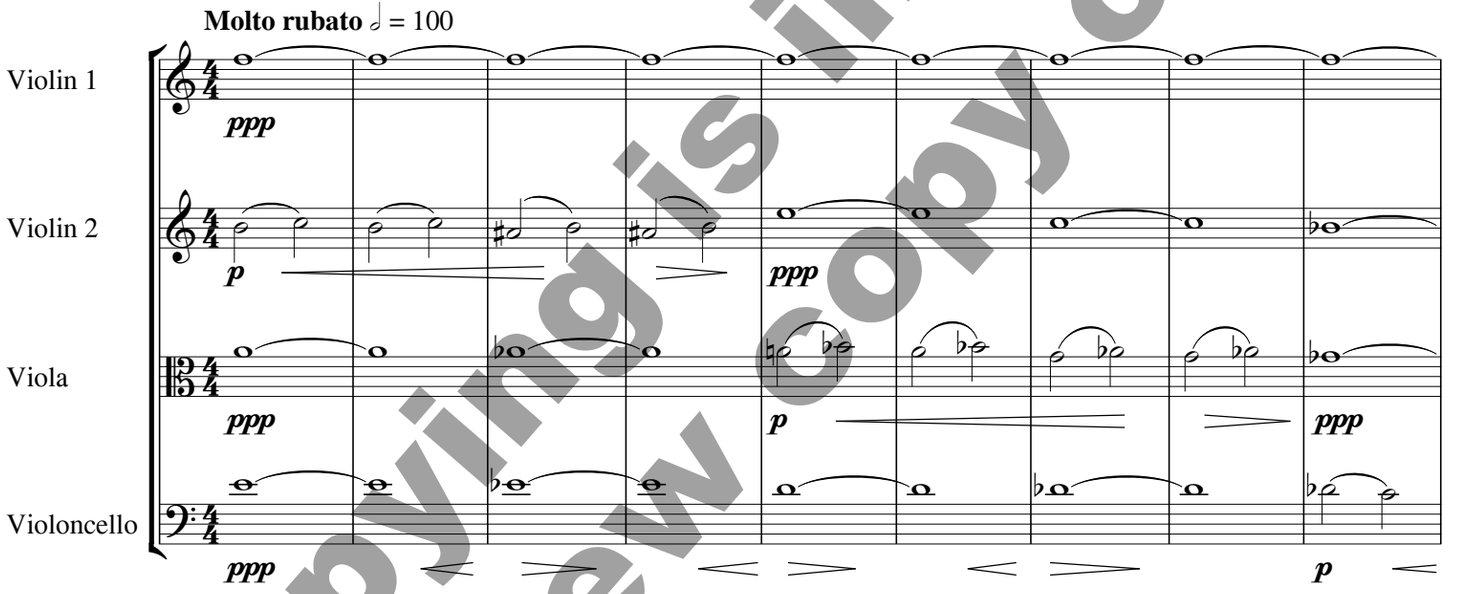
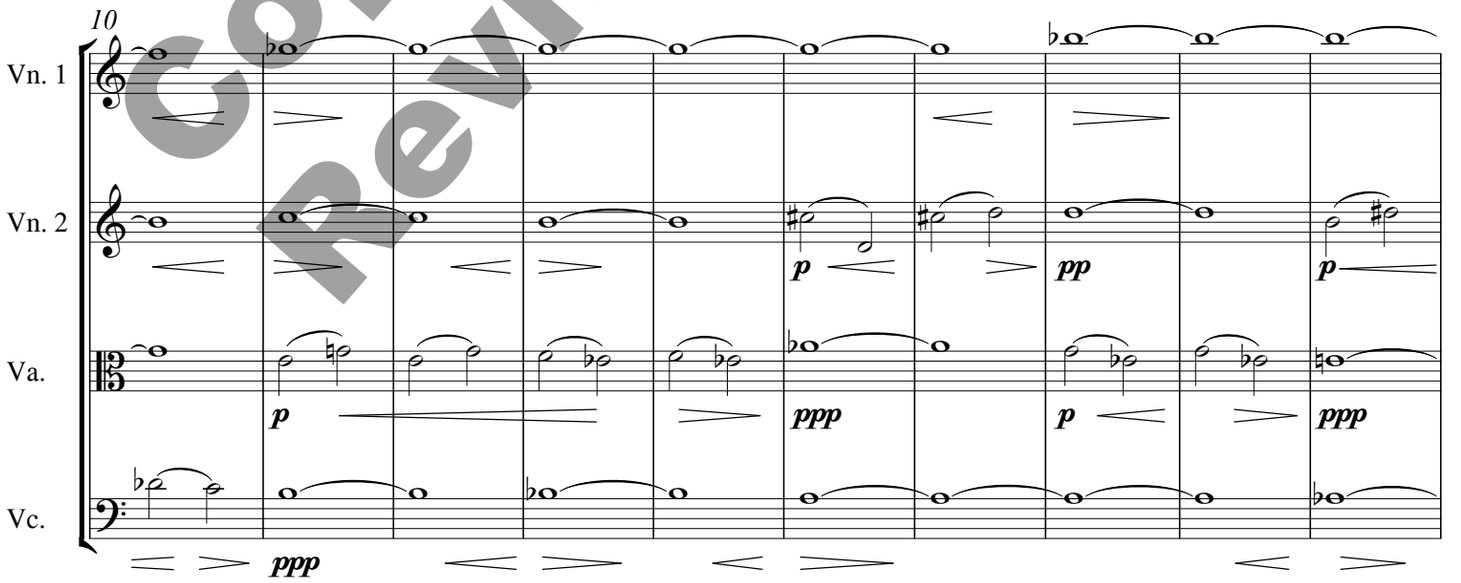


VI. Gen Translates for Roxanne





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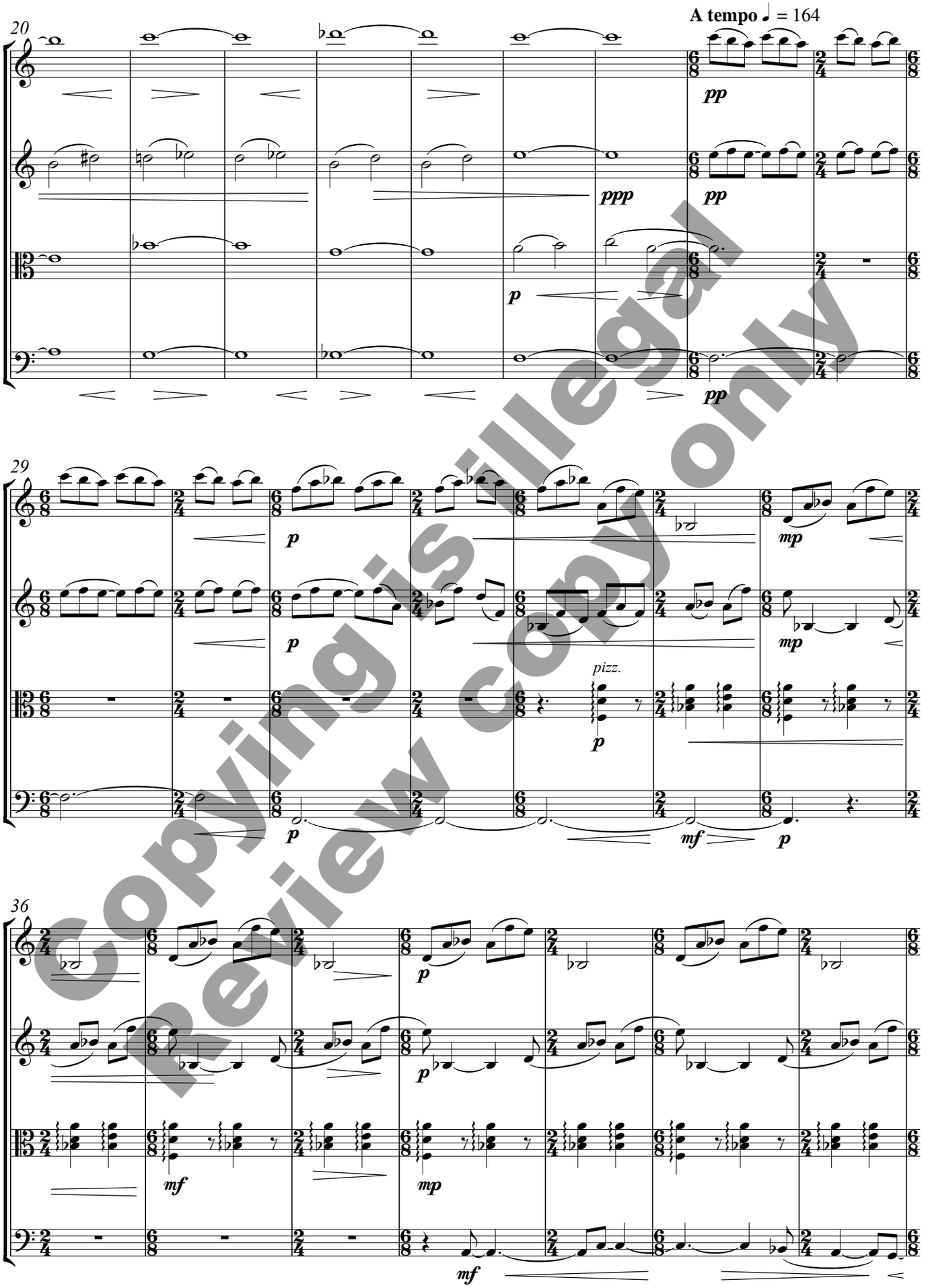

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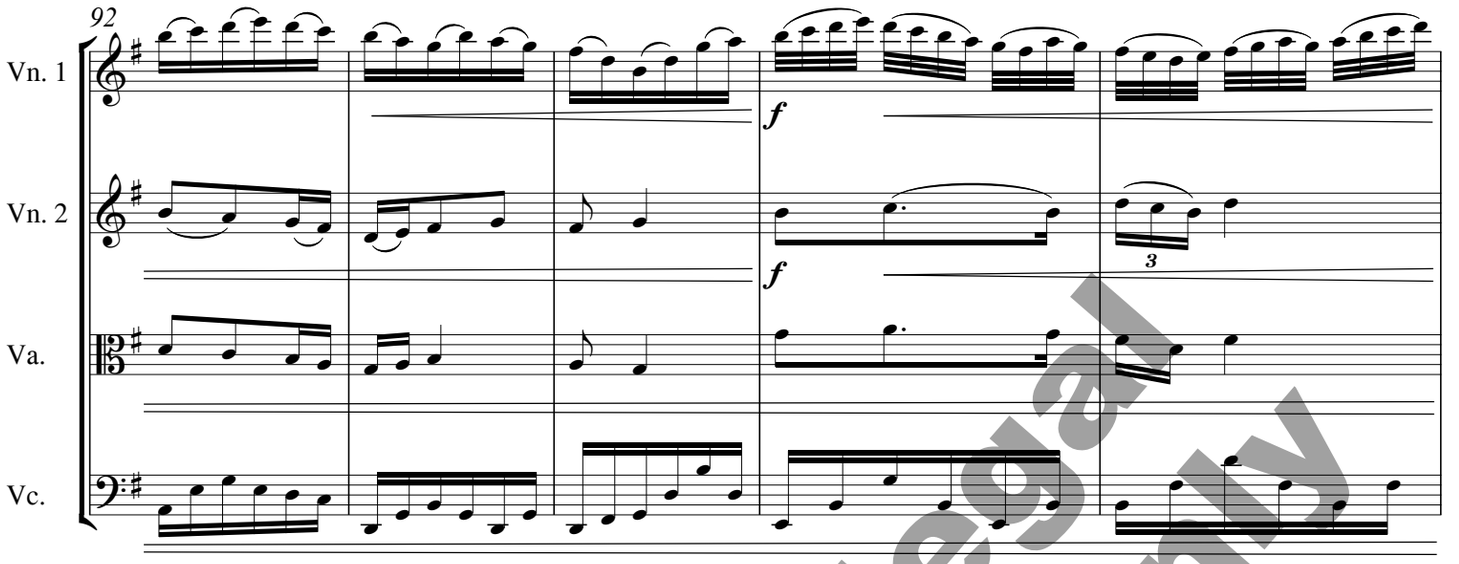
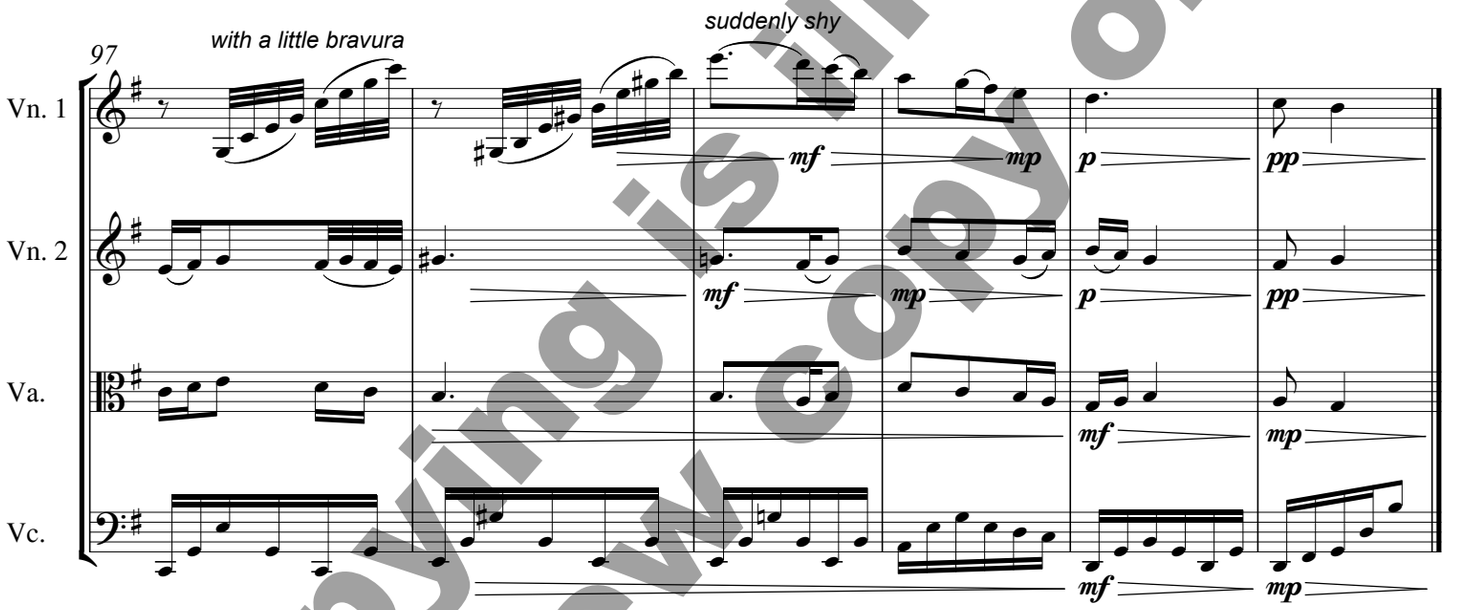
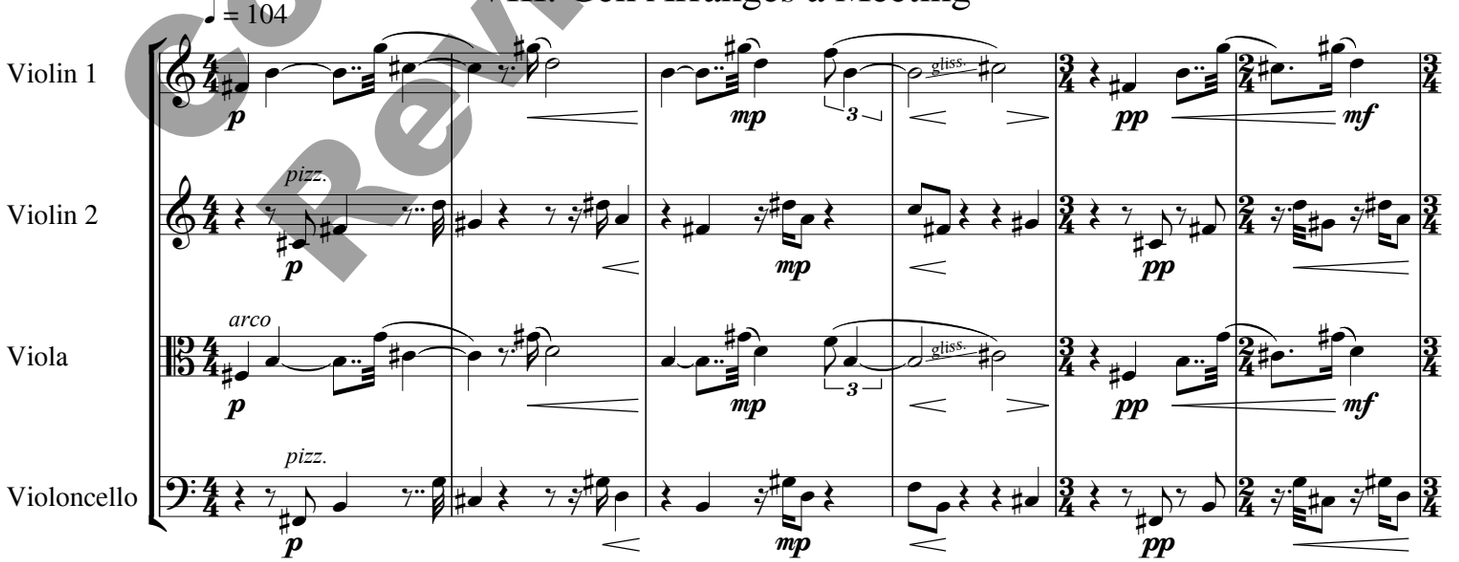




VIII. Gen Arranges a Meeting



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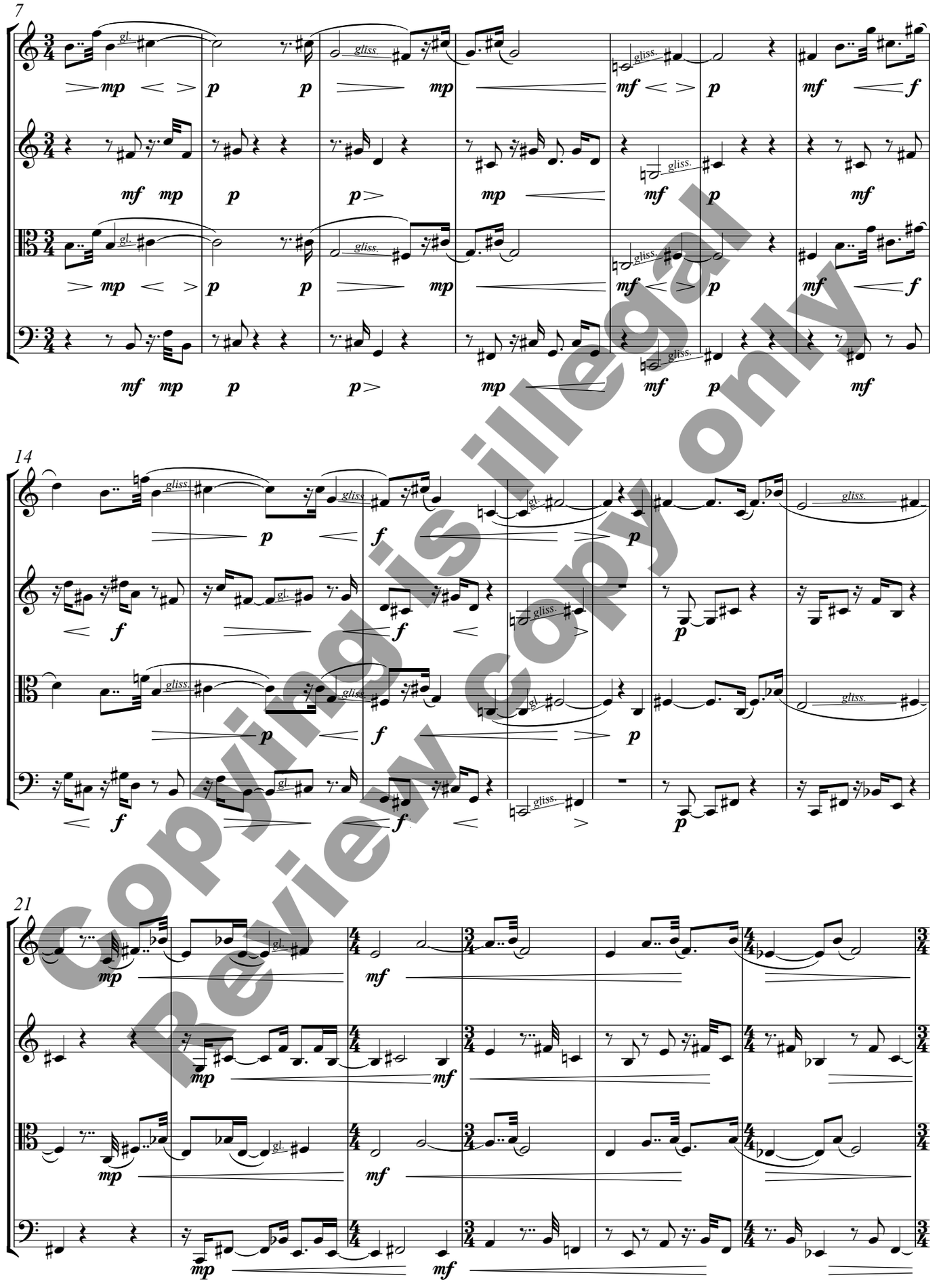

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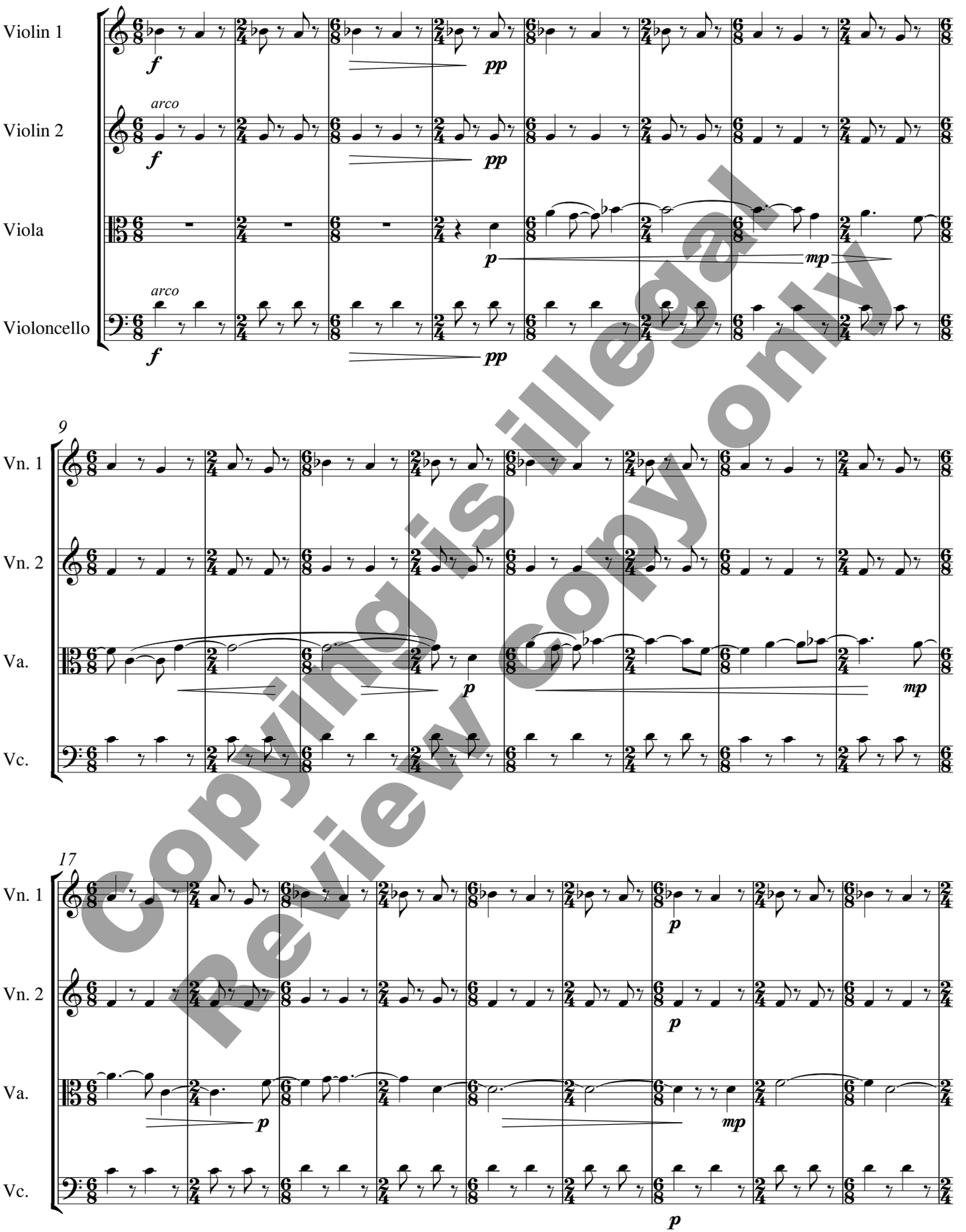
IX. Cesar Sings



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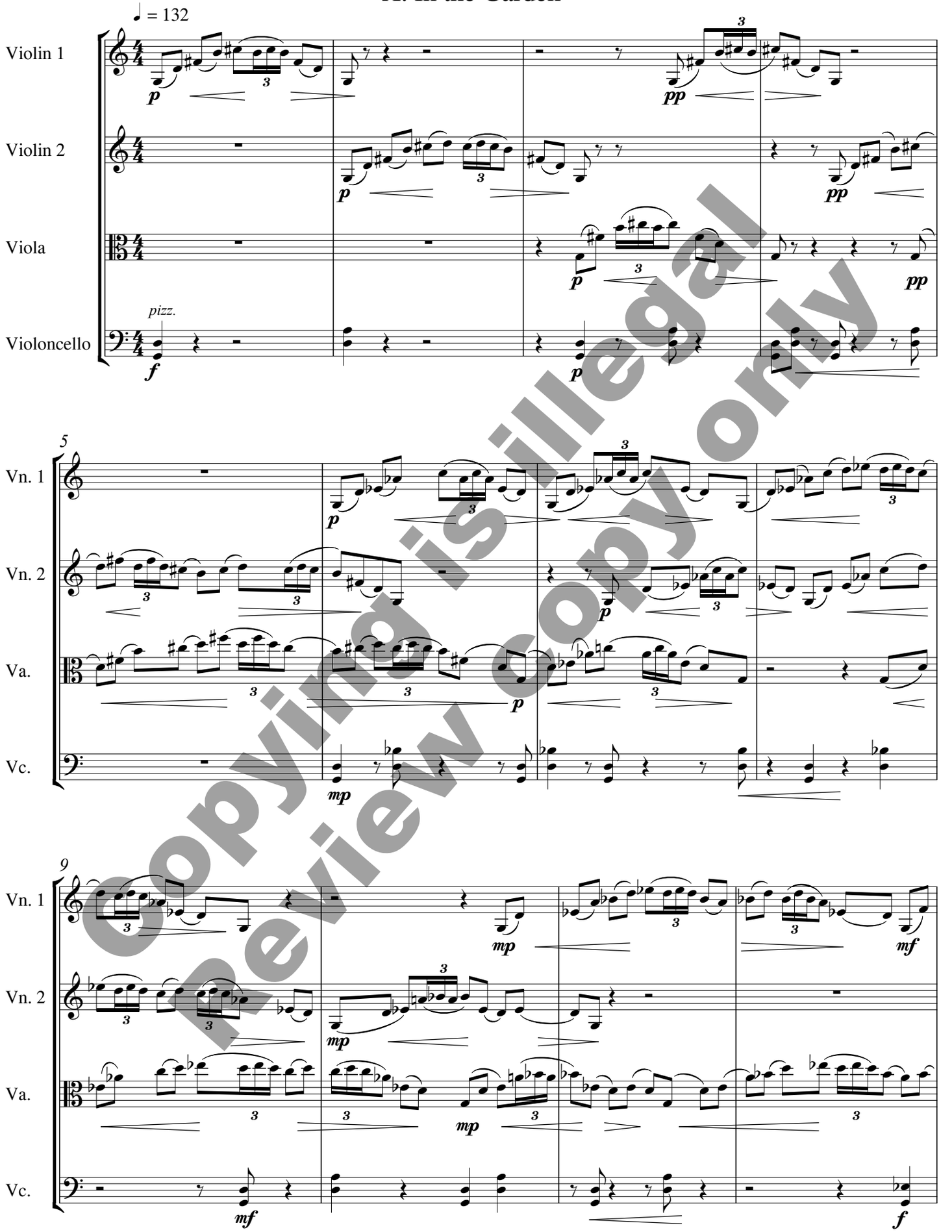
X. In the Garden



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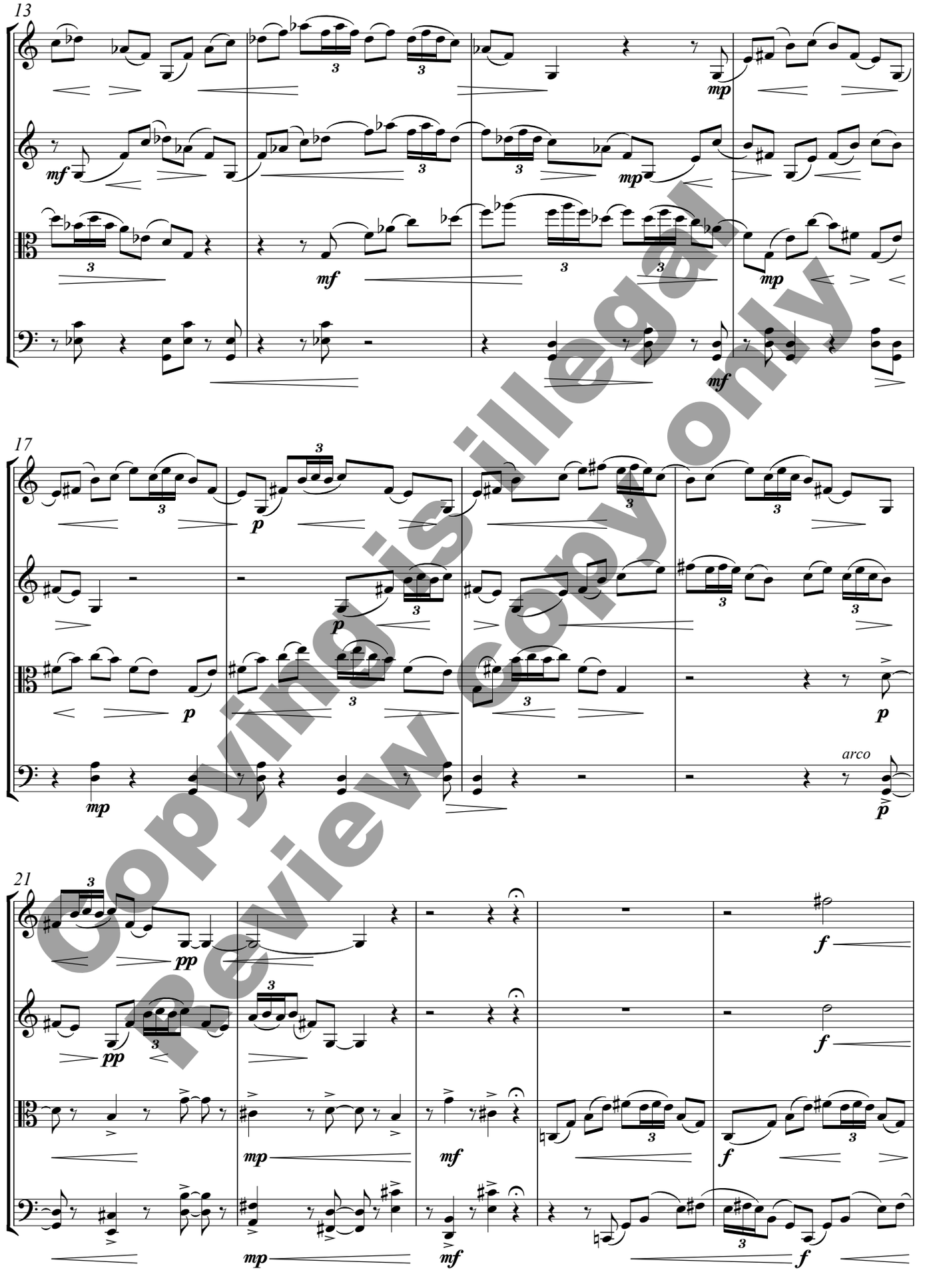

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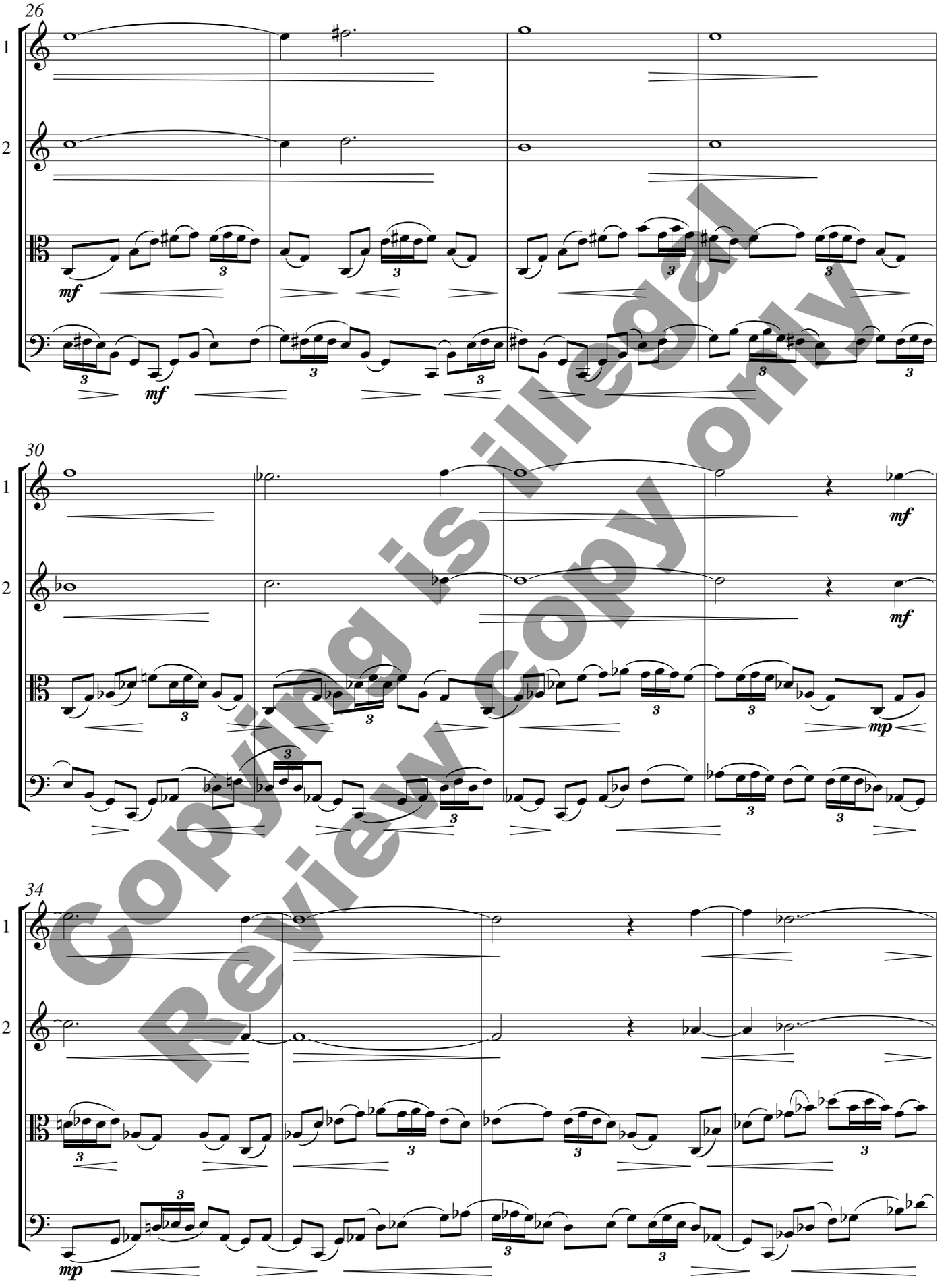

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