Lincoln Quintet

For clarinet, string quartet and narrator

Rami Levin

1. Melancholy

Narrator:

Abraham Lincoln overcame many hardships in his life. His mother passed away when he was nine years old, a younger brother died in infancy, his sister Sarah, with whom he was close, died during childbirth, and his first love, Ann Rutledge, succumbed to typhoid at a young age. Only one of his four sons survived to adulthood.

Lincoln was known for his melancholy and tendency toward depression. After a breakup with Mary Todd, who would later become his wife, he wrote to his first law partner John Stuart:

"I am now the most miserable man living. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would be not one cheerful face on the earth. Whether I shall ever be better I cannot tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or be better, it appears to me."

William Herndon, another of his law partners wrote:

" He was a sad looking man; his melancholy dripped from him as he walked. His apparent gloom impressed his friends and created sympathy for him – one means of his great success. He was gloomy, abstracted, and joyous, rather humorous by turns; but I do not think he knew what real joy was for many years. The perpetual look of sadness was his most prominent feature."

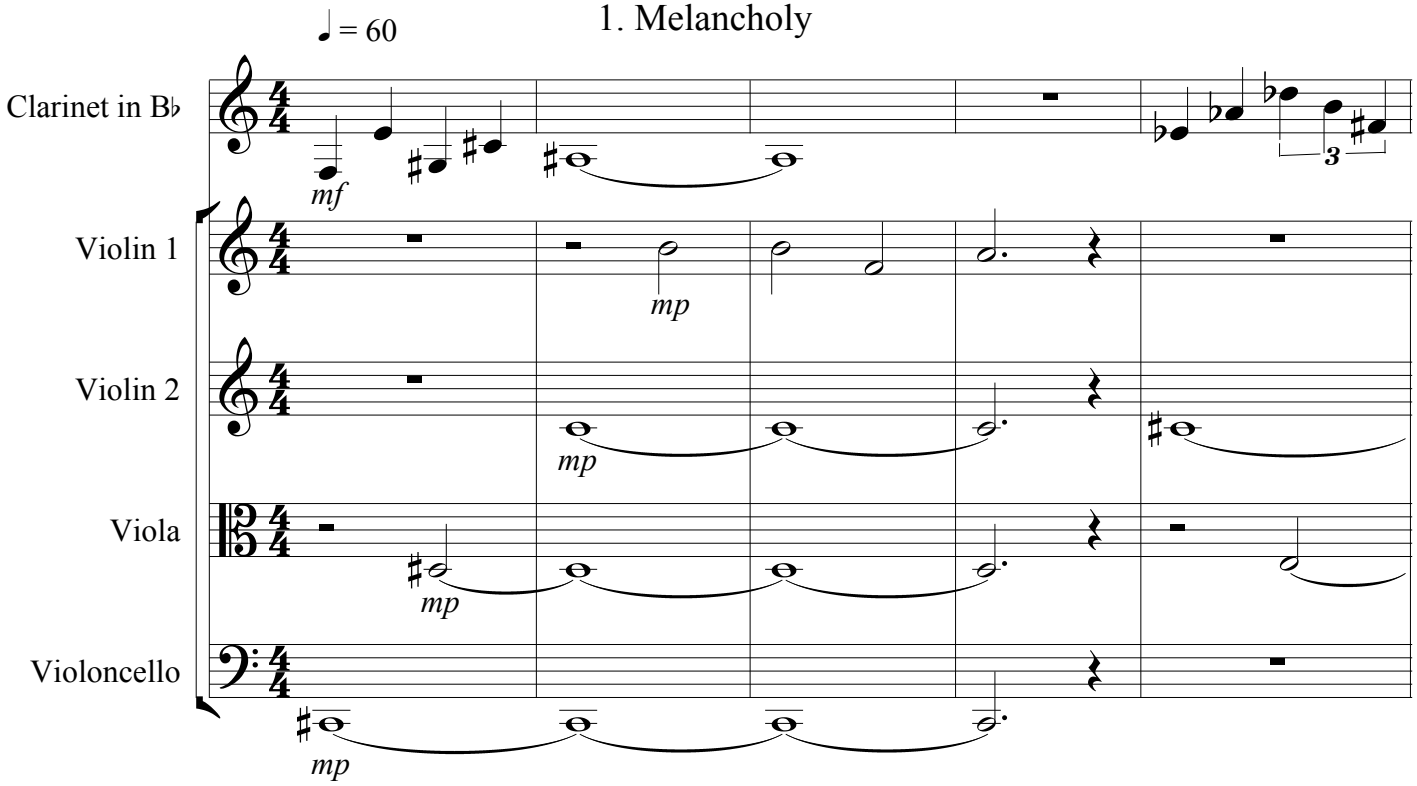
Lincoln's closest friend, Joshua Speed wrote:

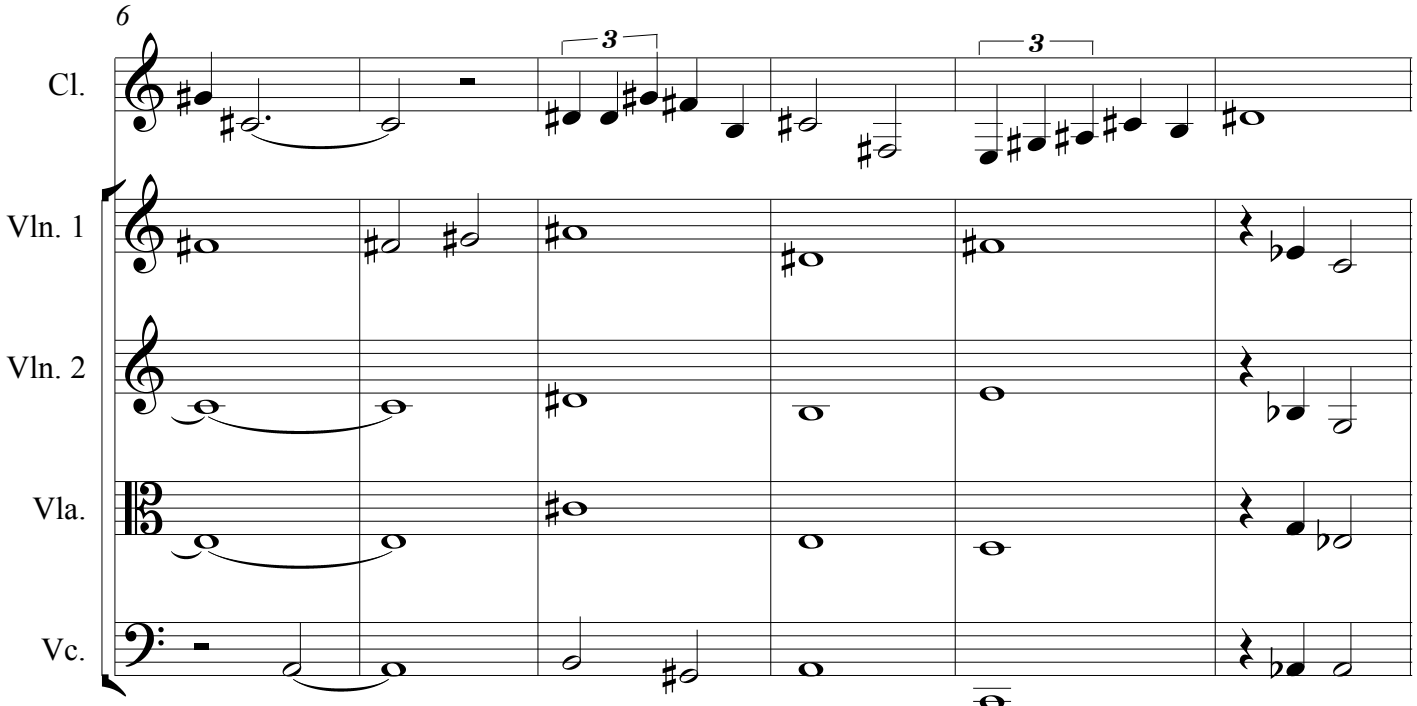
"I never saw a sadder face. No element of Mr. Lincoln's character was so marked, so obvious and ingrained as his mysterious and profound melancholy."

Lincoln Quintet

1. Melancholy

Rami Levin





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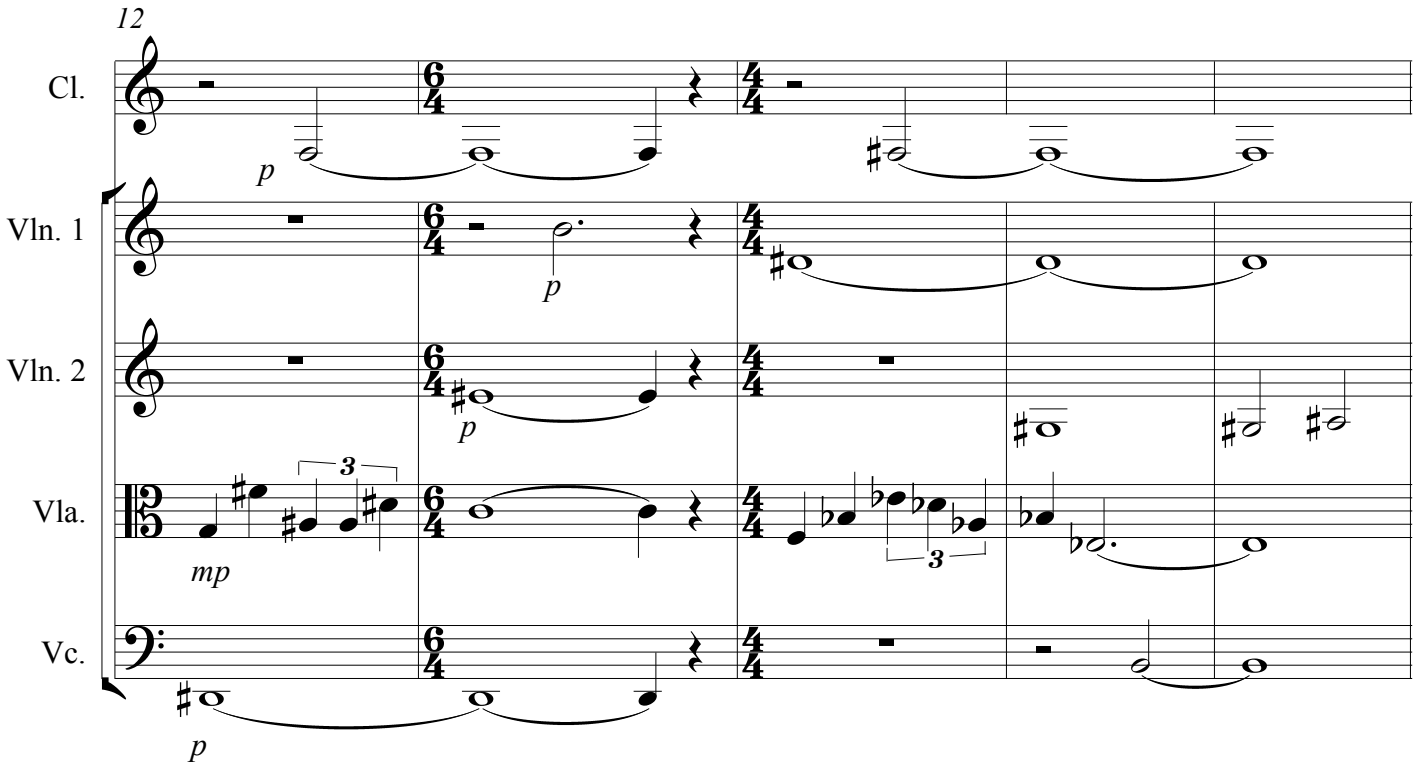
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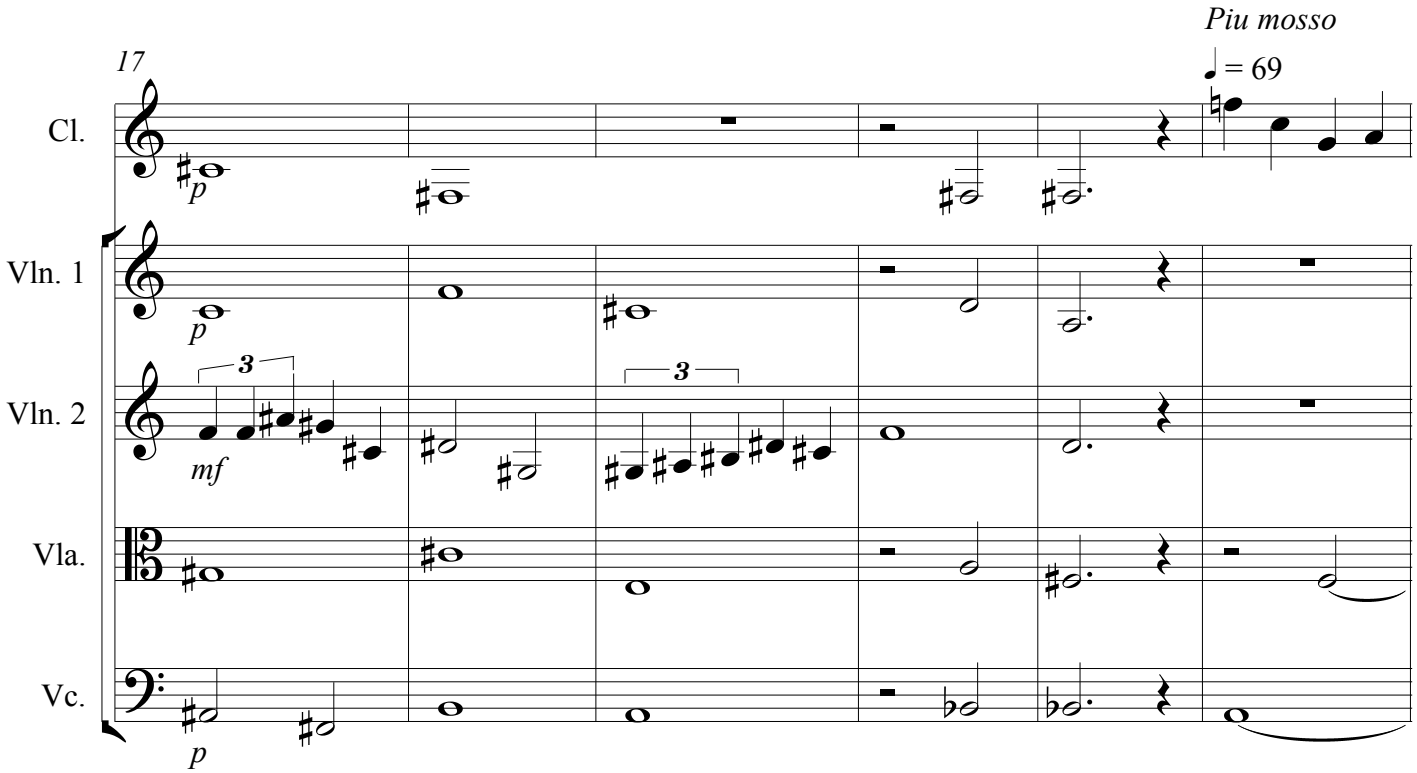
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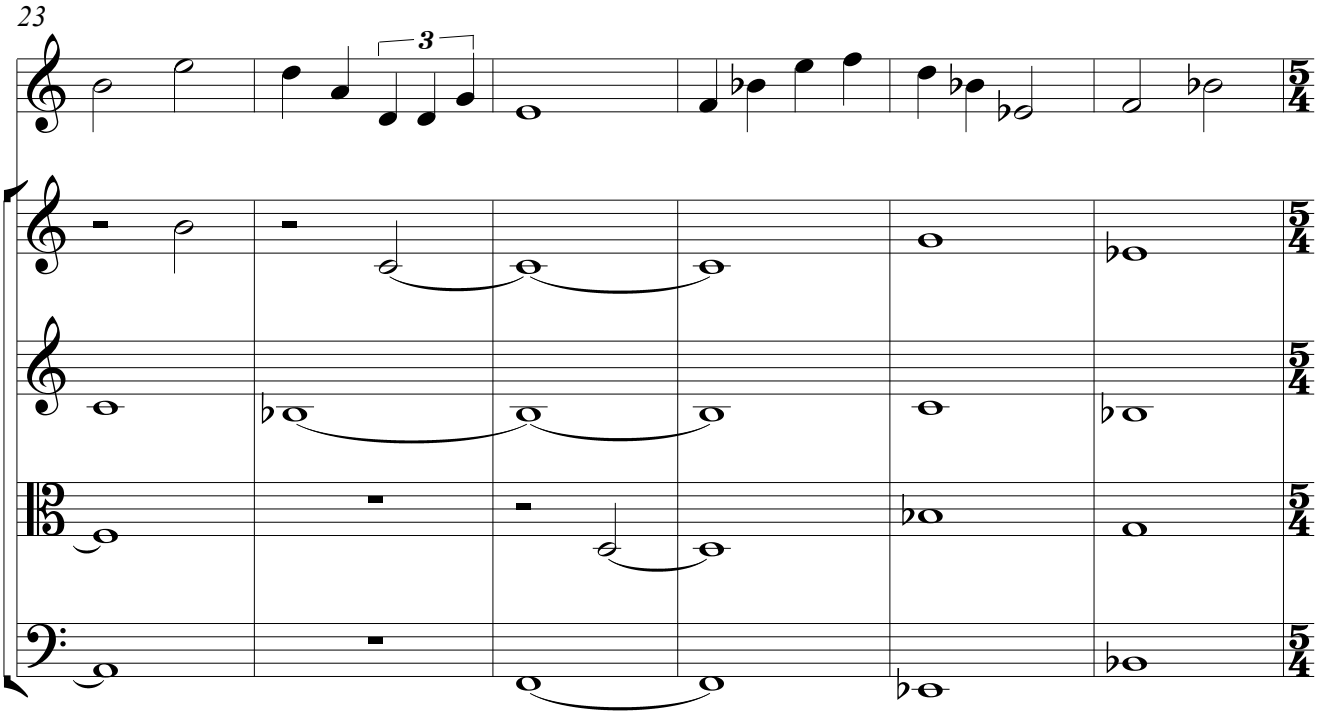
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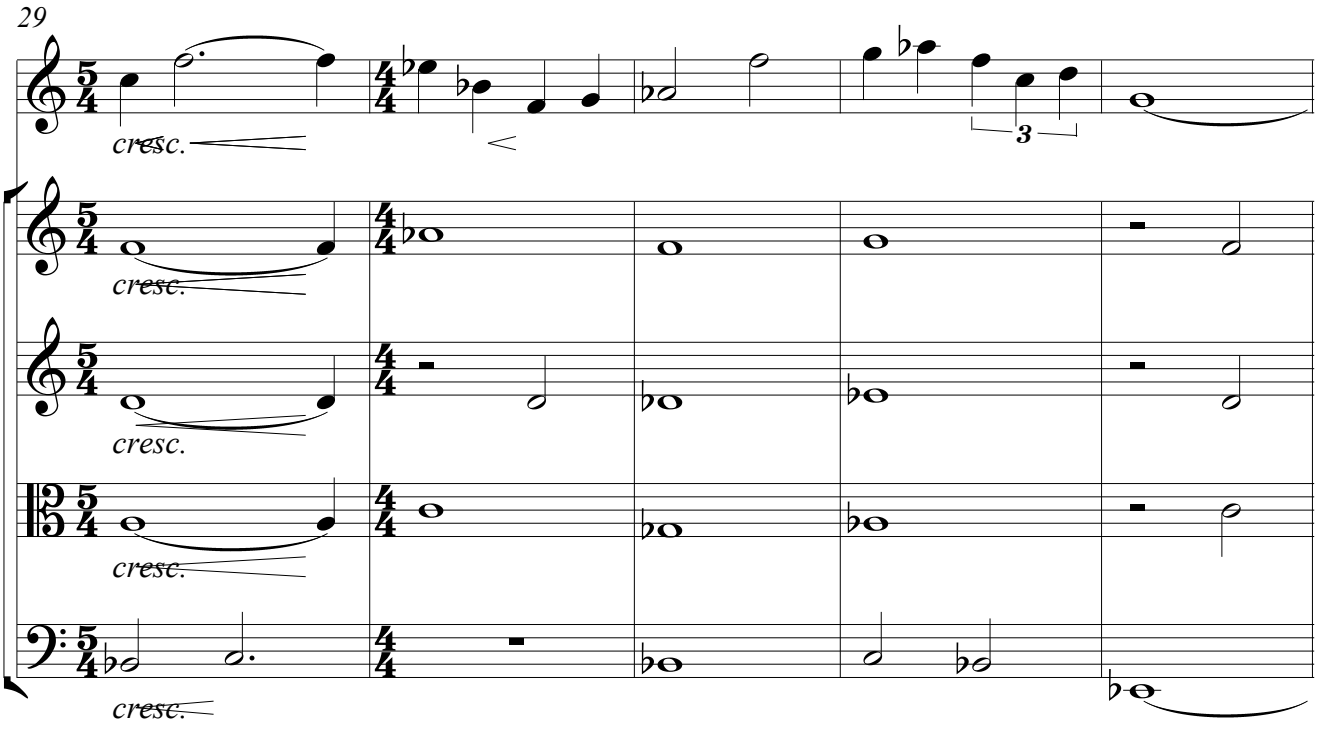
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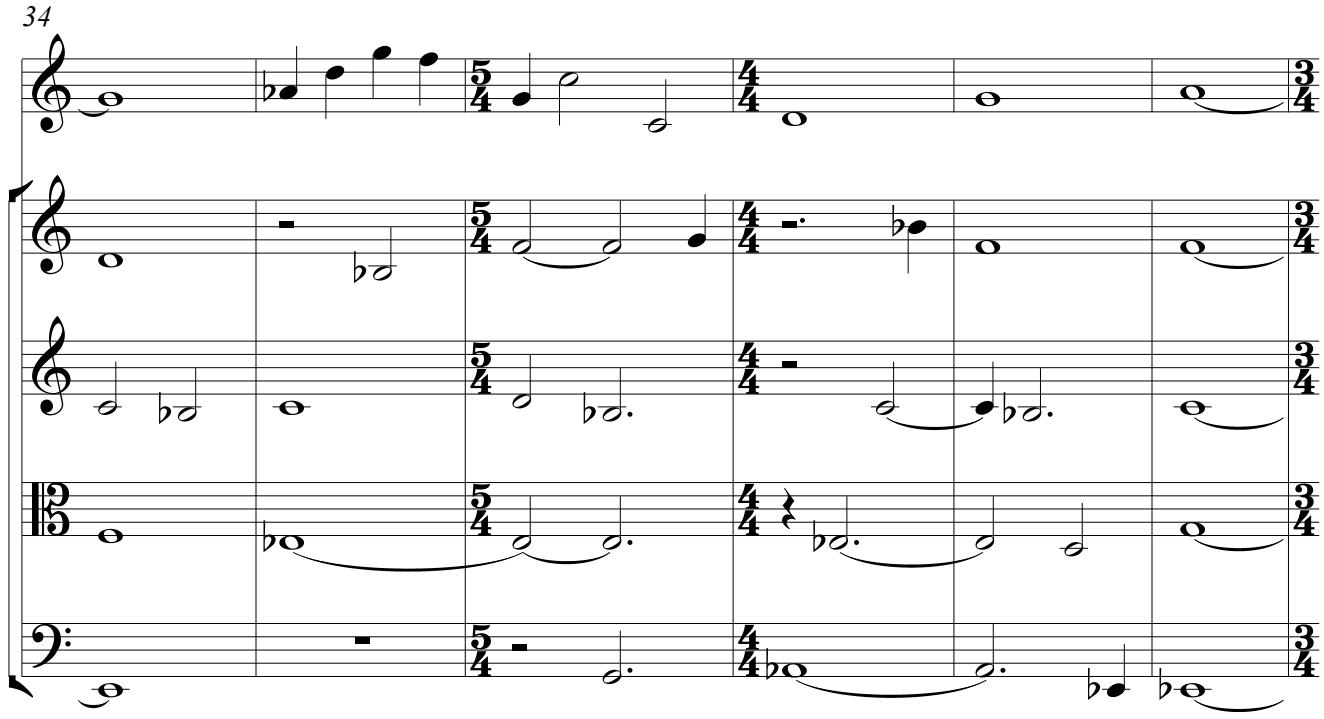
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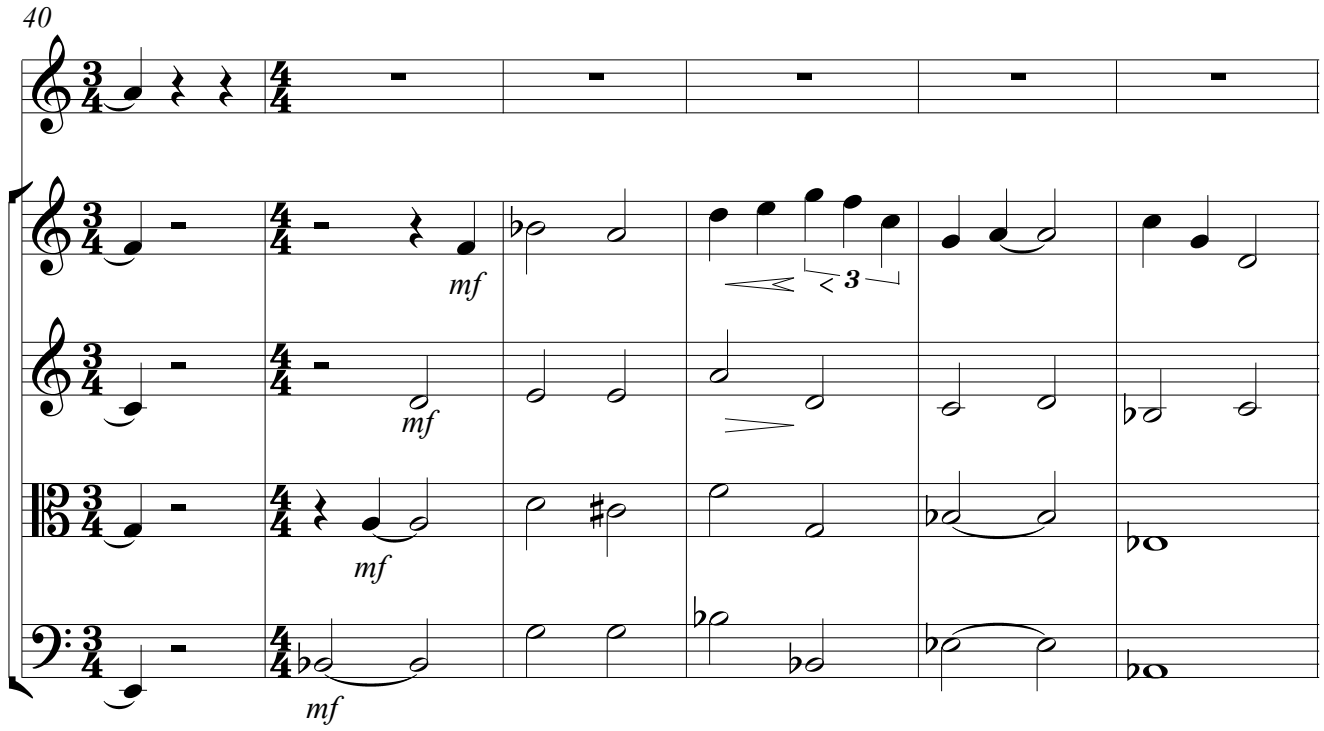
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mf
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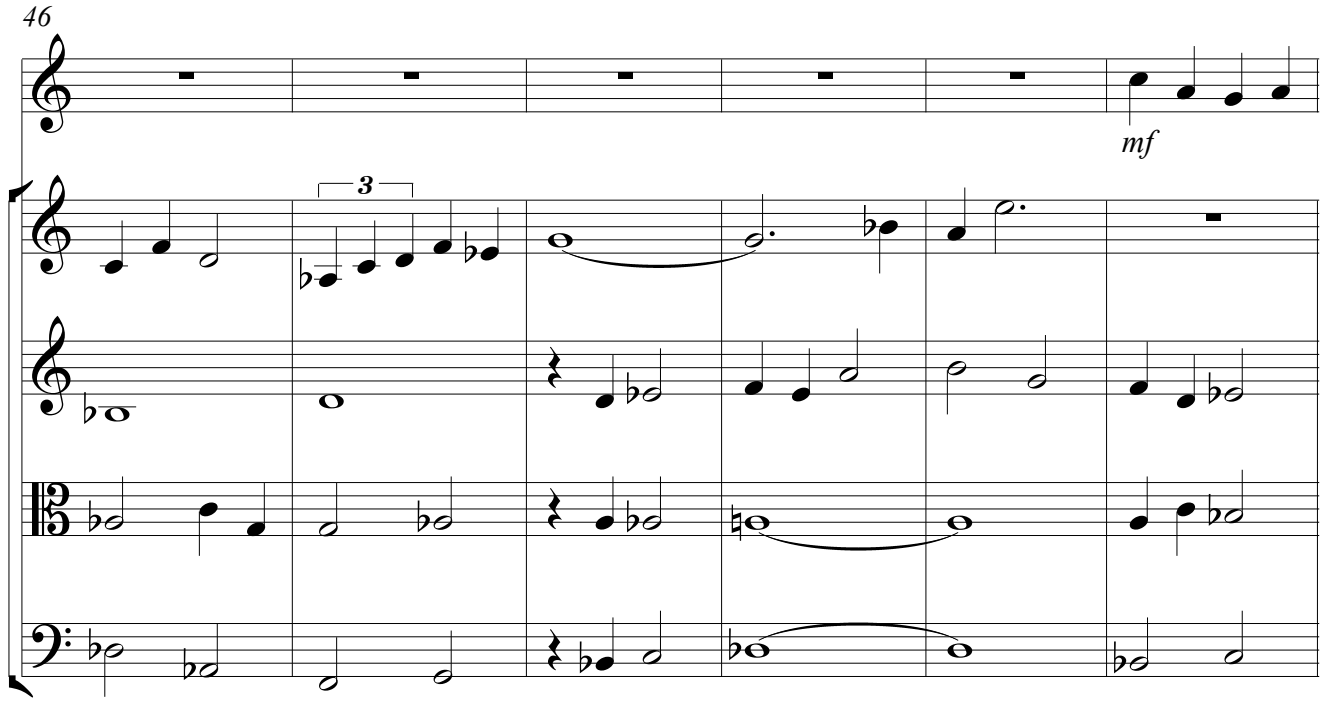
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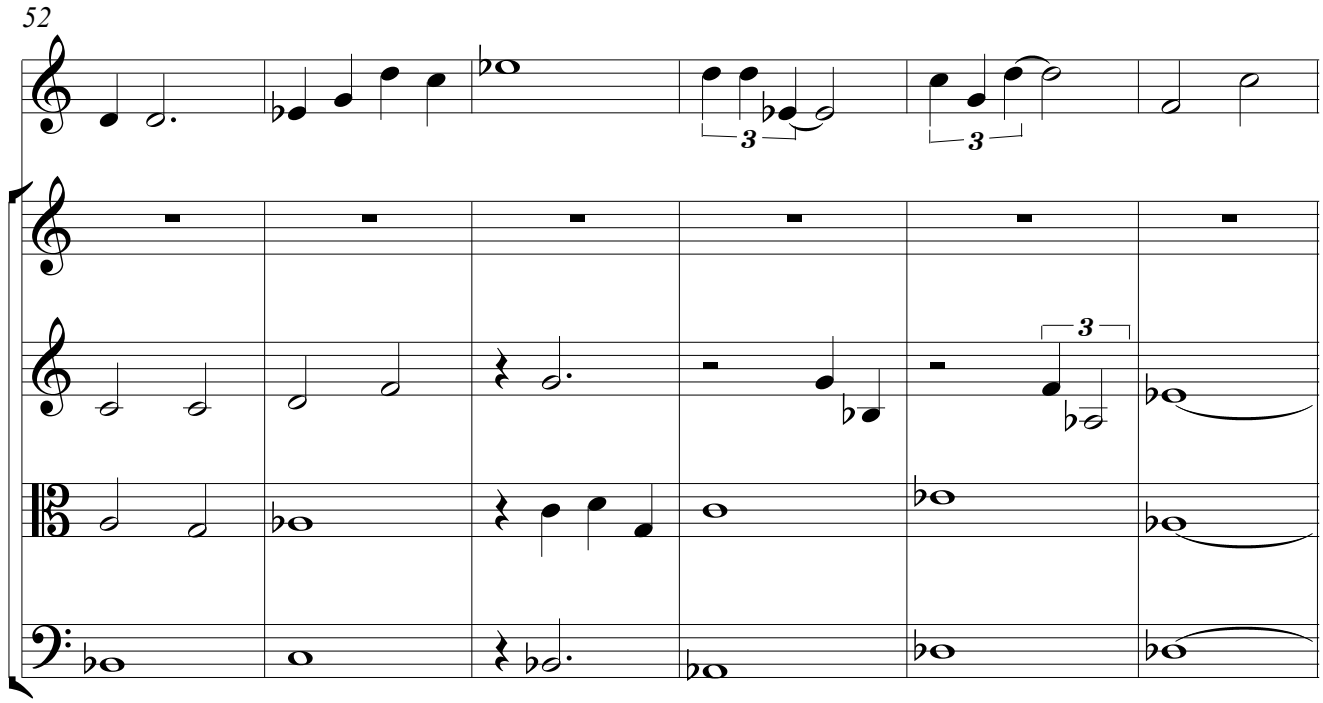
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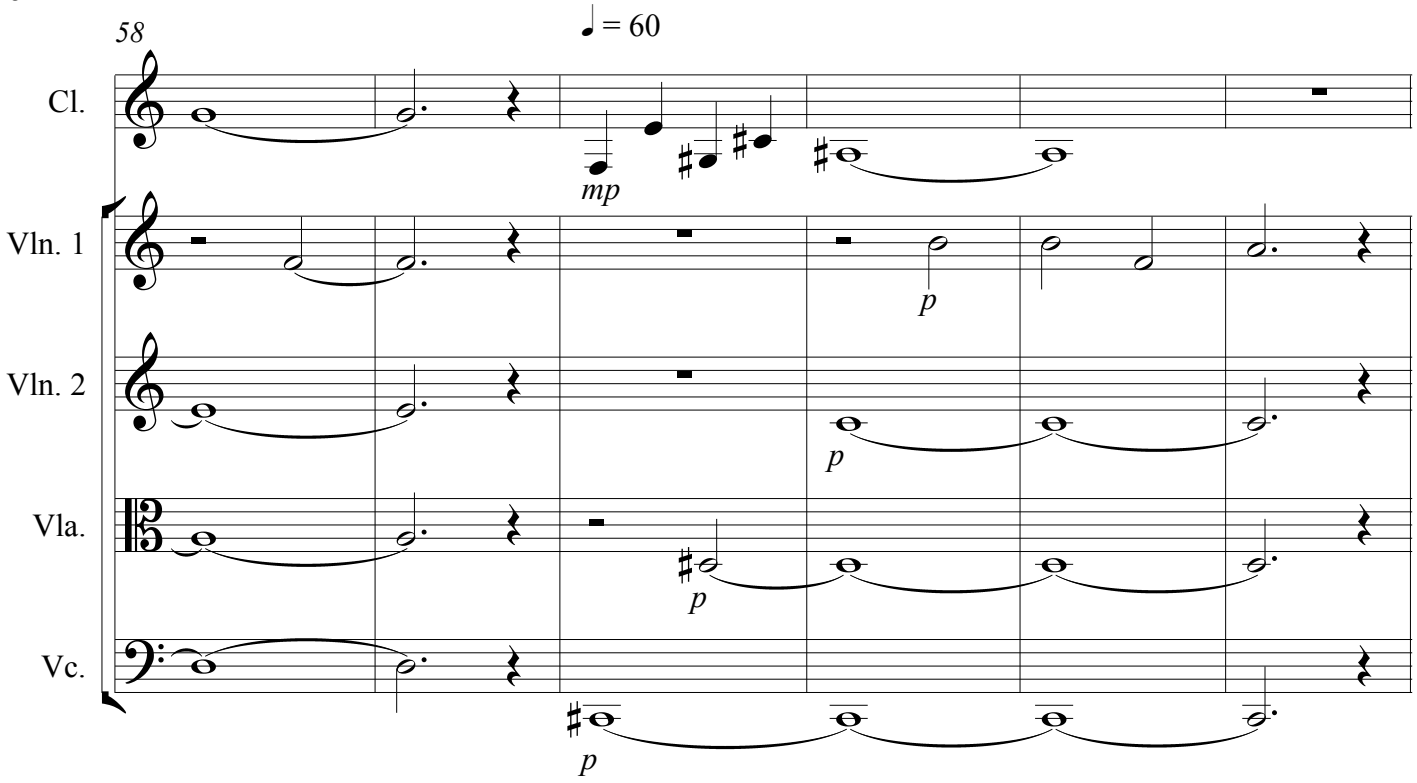
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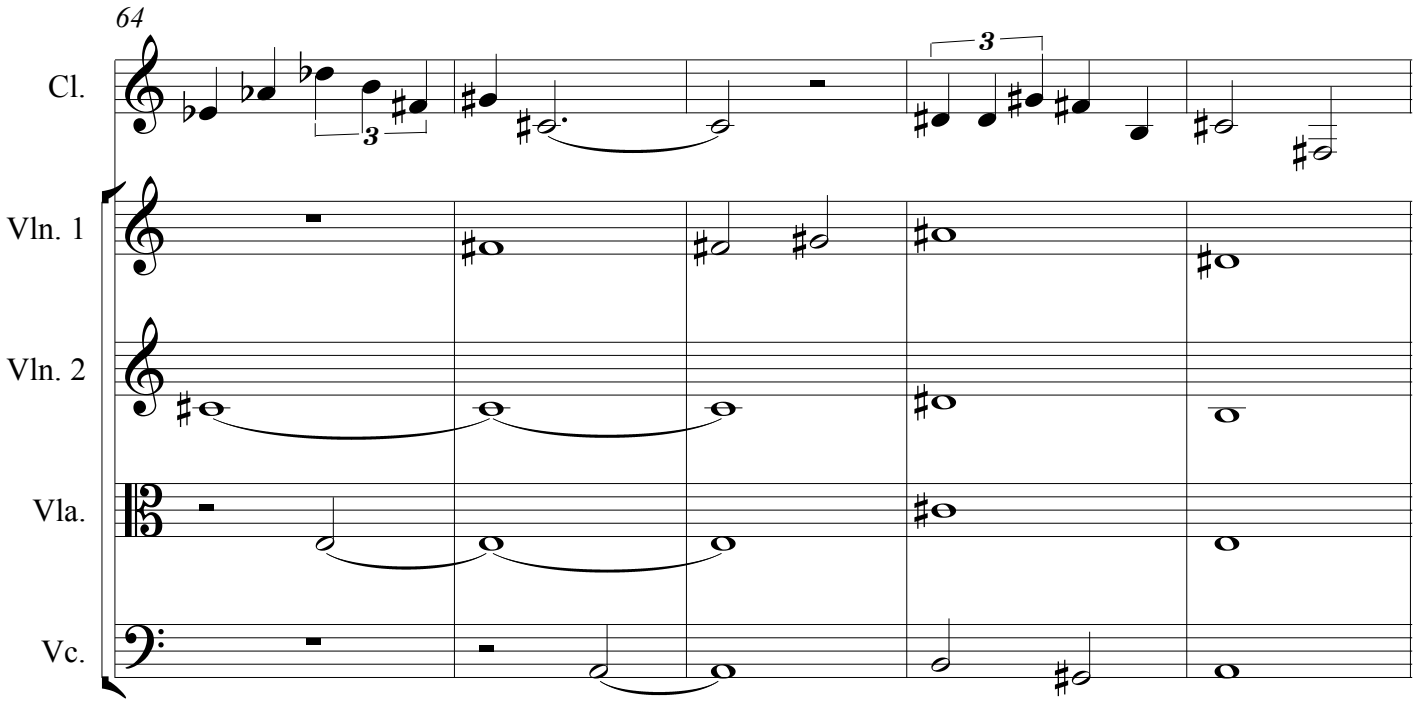
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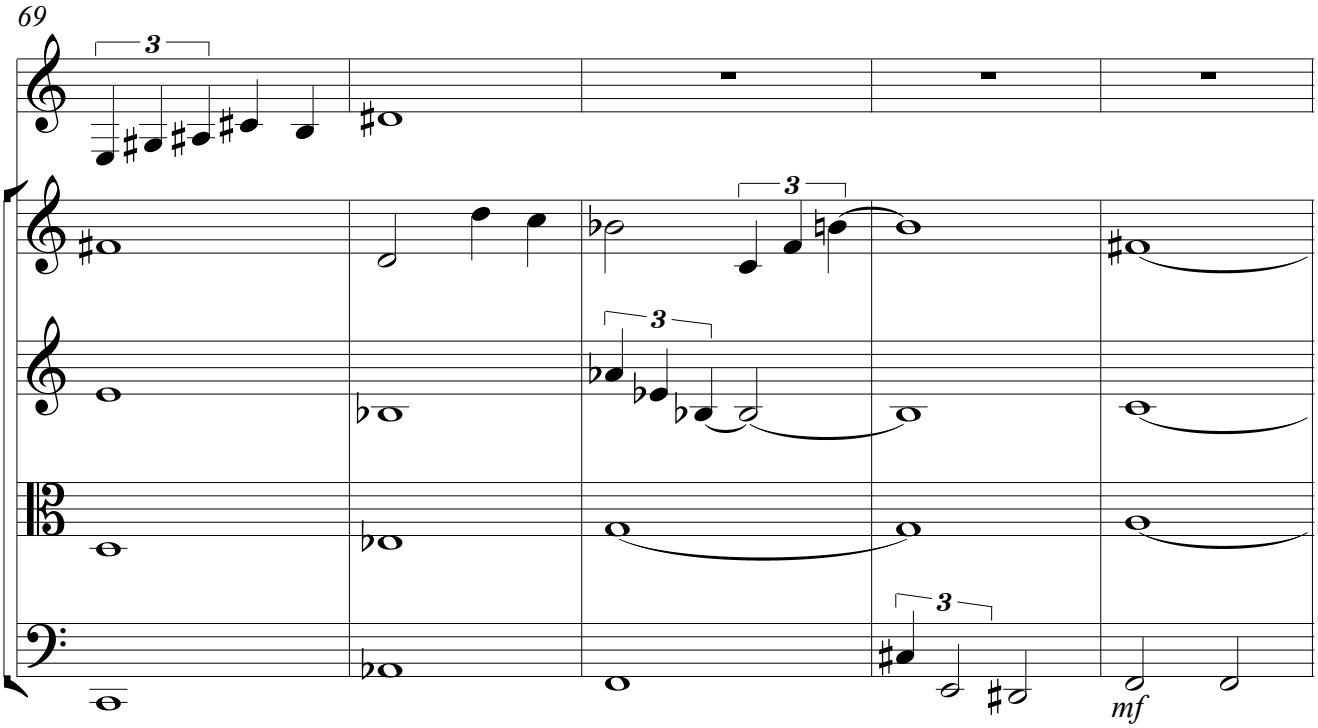
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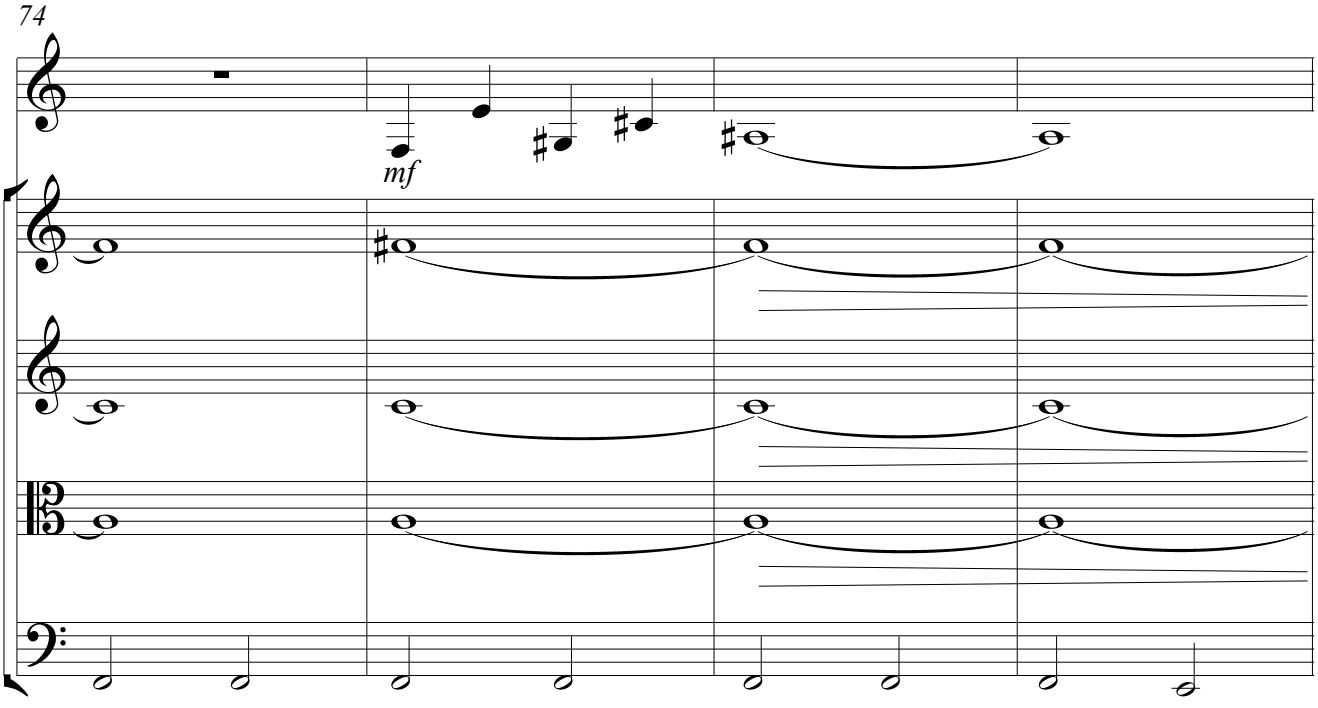
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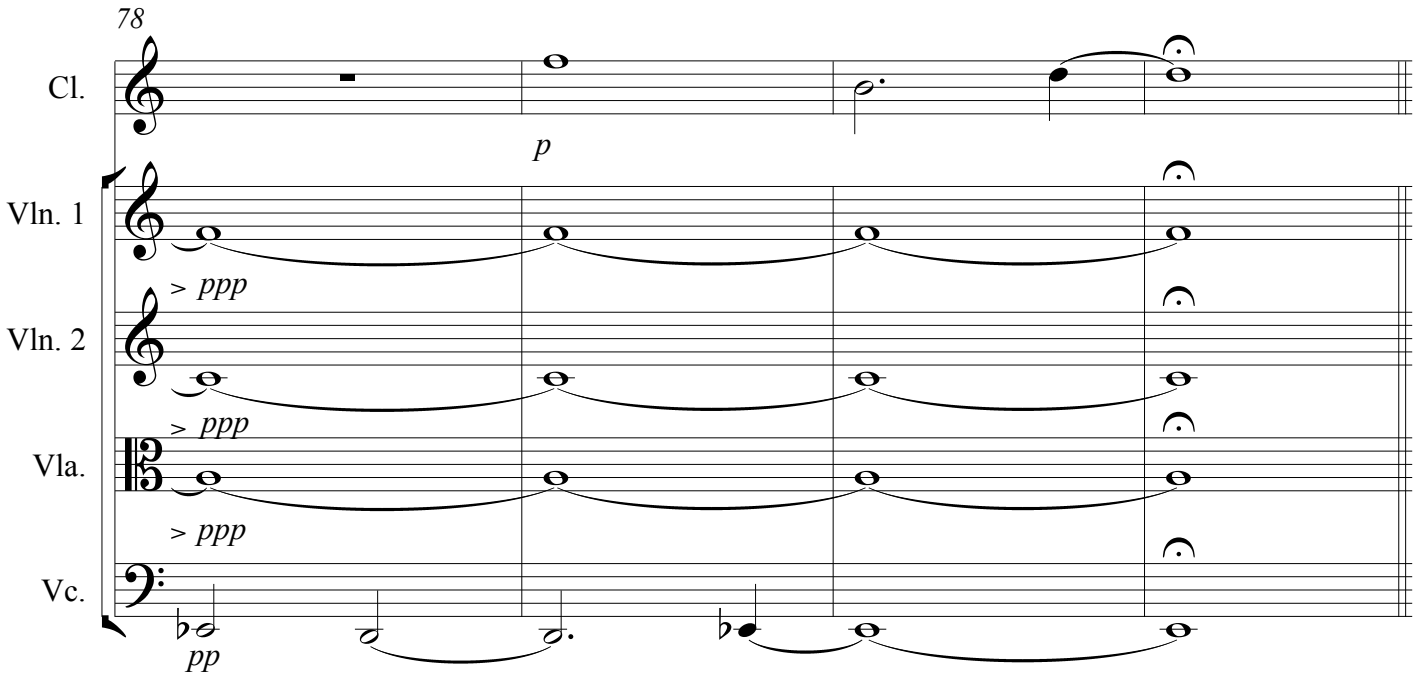
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> ppp
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> ppp
Vc.
pp

2. Wit

Narrator:

Abraham Lincoln was also known as an extraordinarily funny man with great wit and a life affirming sense of humor. His gentle nature can be seen in the following exchange.

In the fall of 1860, Lincoln was the Republican nominee for president of the United States. Election Day was less than a month away. Mr. Lincoln, a lifelong beardless man, received a letter written by Grace Bedell, an 11-year-old girl from Westfield, New York. Written October 15th, 1860, the letter urged him to grow a beard. The letter read:

Dear Sir,

My father has just come home from the fair and brought home your picture and Mr. Hamlin's. I am a little girl only 11 years old, but want you should be President of the United States very much so I hope you wont think me very bold to write to such a great man as you are. Have you any little girls about as large as I am if so give them my love and tell her to write to me if you cannot answer this letter. I have got 4 brother's and part of them will vote for you any way and if you let your whiskers grow I will try and get the rest of them to vote for you you would look a great deal better for your face is so thin. All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husband's to vote for you and then you would be President. My father is going to vote for you and if I was a man I would vote for you to but I will try to get every one to vote for you that I can I think that rail fence around your picture makes it look very pretty I have got a little baby sister she is nine weeks old and is just as cunning as can be. When you direct your letter direct to Grace Bedell Westfield Chatauque County New York

I must not write any more answer this letter right off Good bye

Grace Bedell

The Republican presidential nominee responded on October 19th. Mr. Lincoln wrote:

My dear little Miss

Your very agreeable letter of the 15th is received - I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughters - I have three sons - one seventeen, one nine, and one seven years of age - They, with their mother, constitute my whole family - As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin it now?

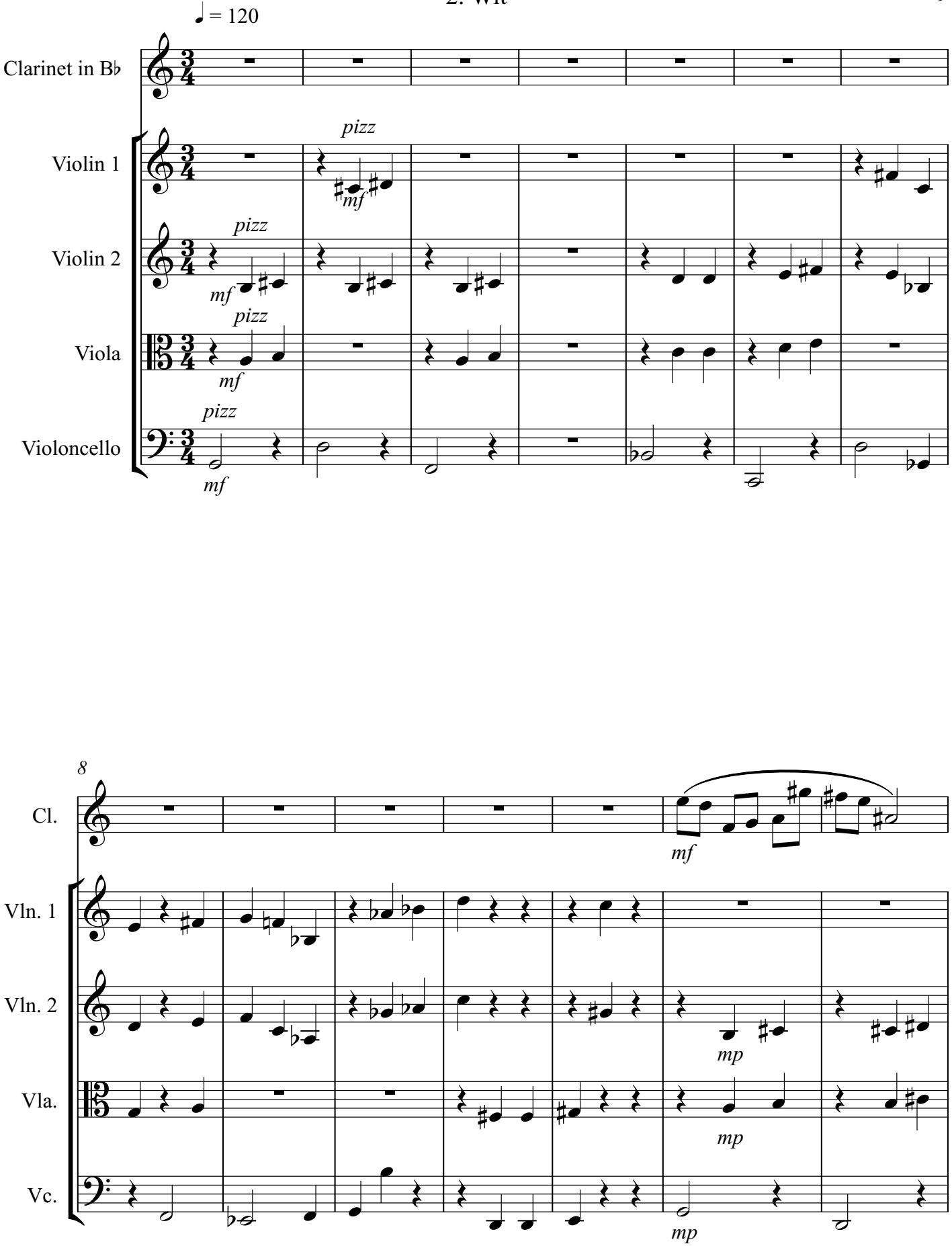
Your very sincere well-wisher
A. Lincoln

The rest is history. When Abraham Lincoln left Springfield on February 11th, 1861, bound for the White House, he was fully bearded. On February 16th the train stopped in Westfield, New York. The president-elect appeared on the train platform, and he called out for Grace. Grace was in the crowd with her two sisters, Alice and Helen. She came forth, Lincoln kissed her, and he said he took her advice. 1

(Pause)

An example of Lincoln's wit is his response to Stephen Douglas, who asserted that Lincoln was two faced. Lincoln remarked, "If I had two faces, would I be wearing this one?"

1. http://home.att.net/~rjnorton/Lincoln50.html, part of the Abraham Lincoln Research Site (http://home.att.net/~rjnorton/Lincoln2.html), written by Roger Norton.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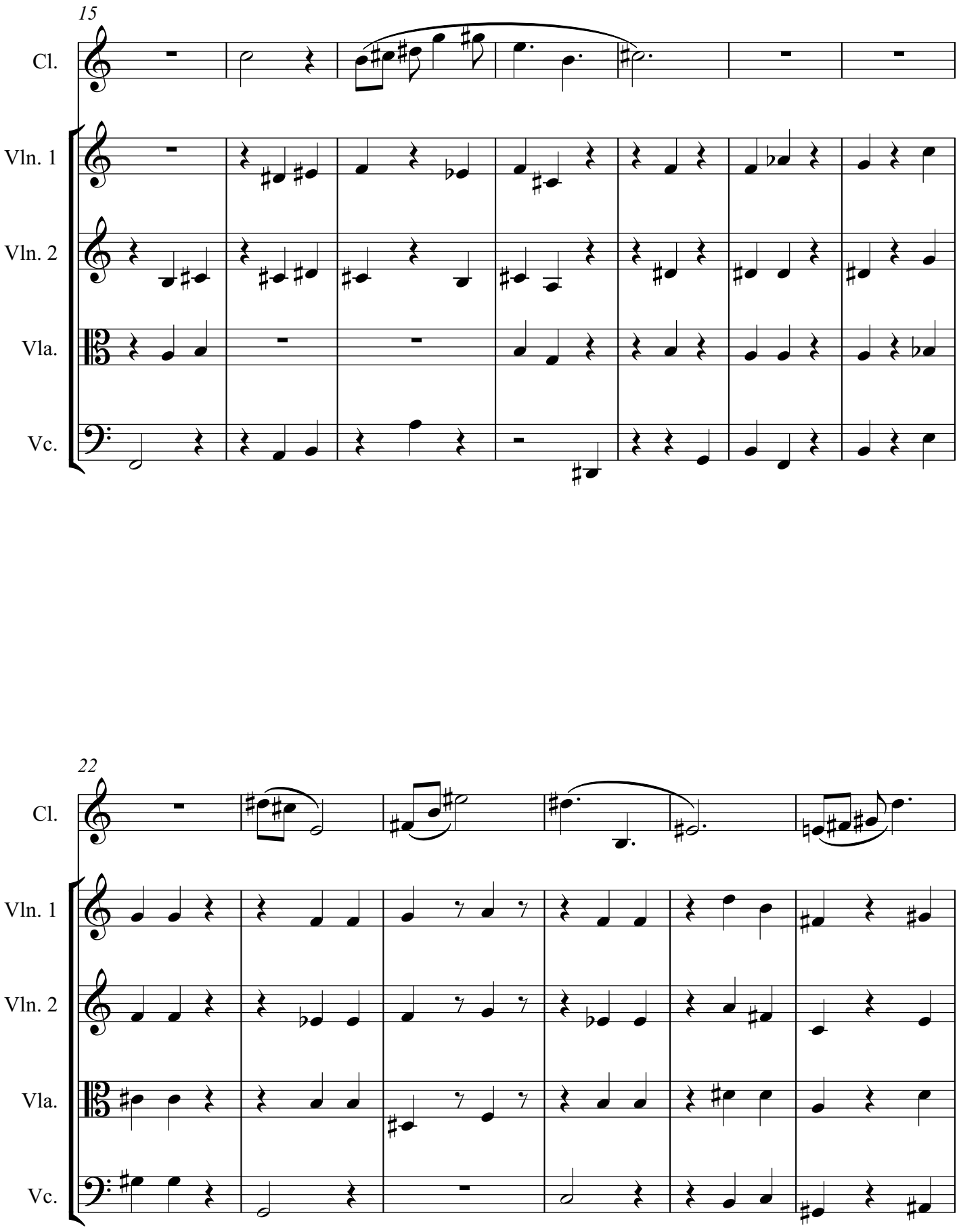
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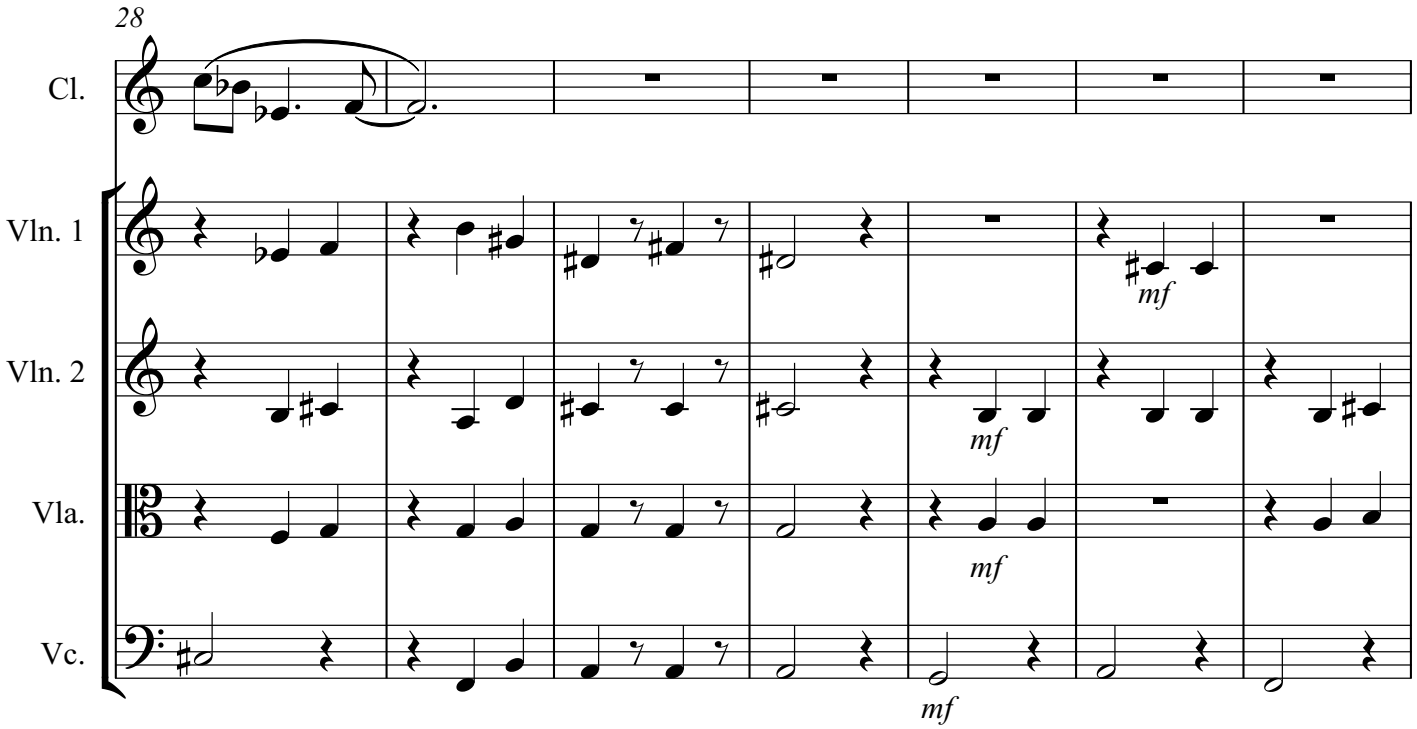
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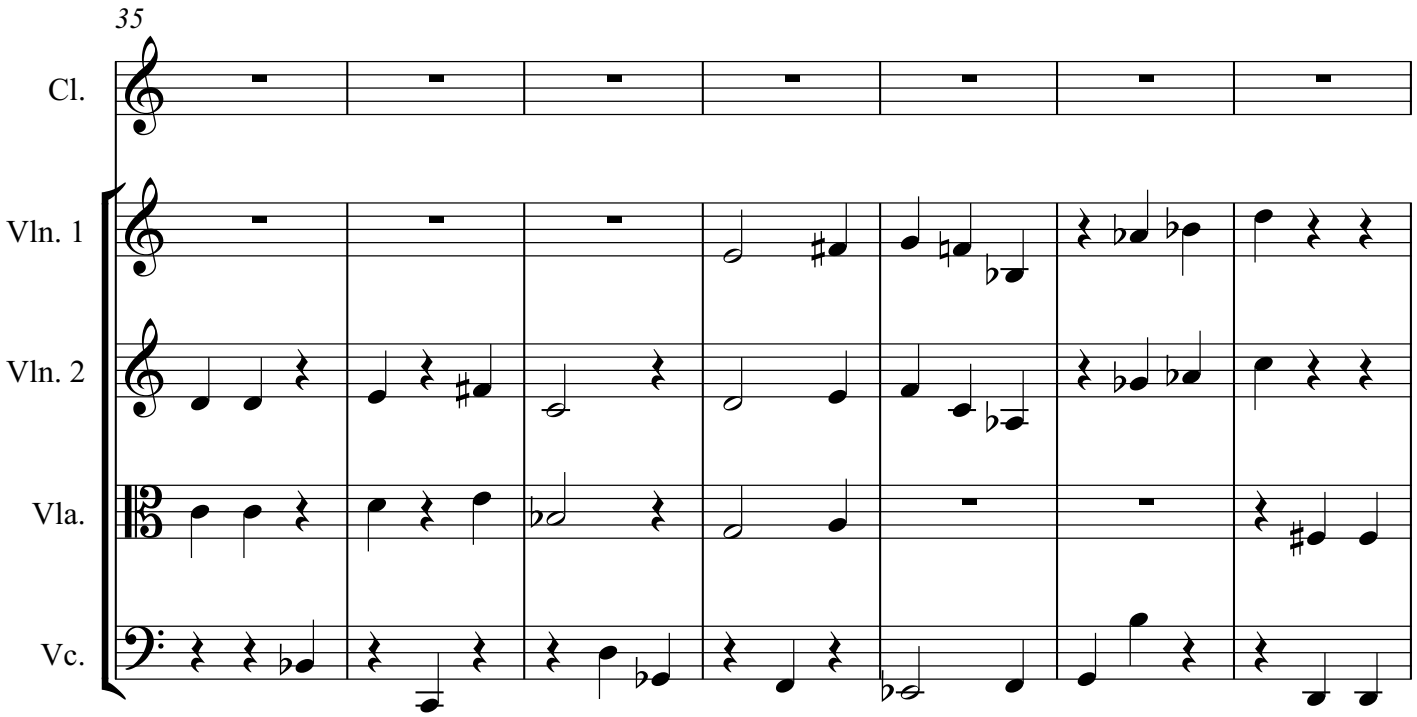
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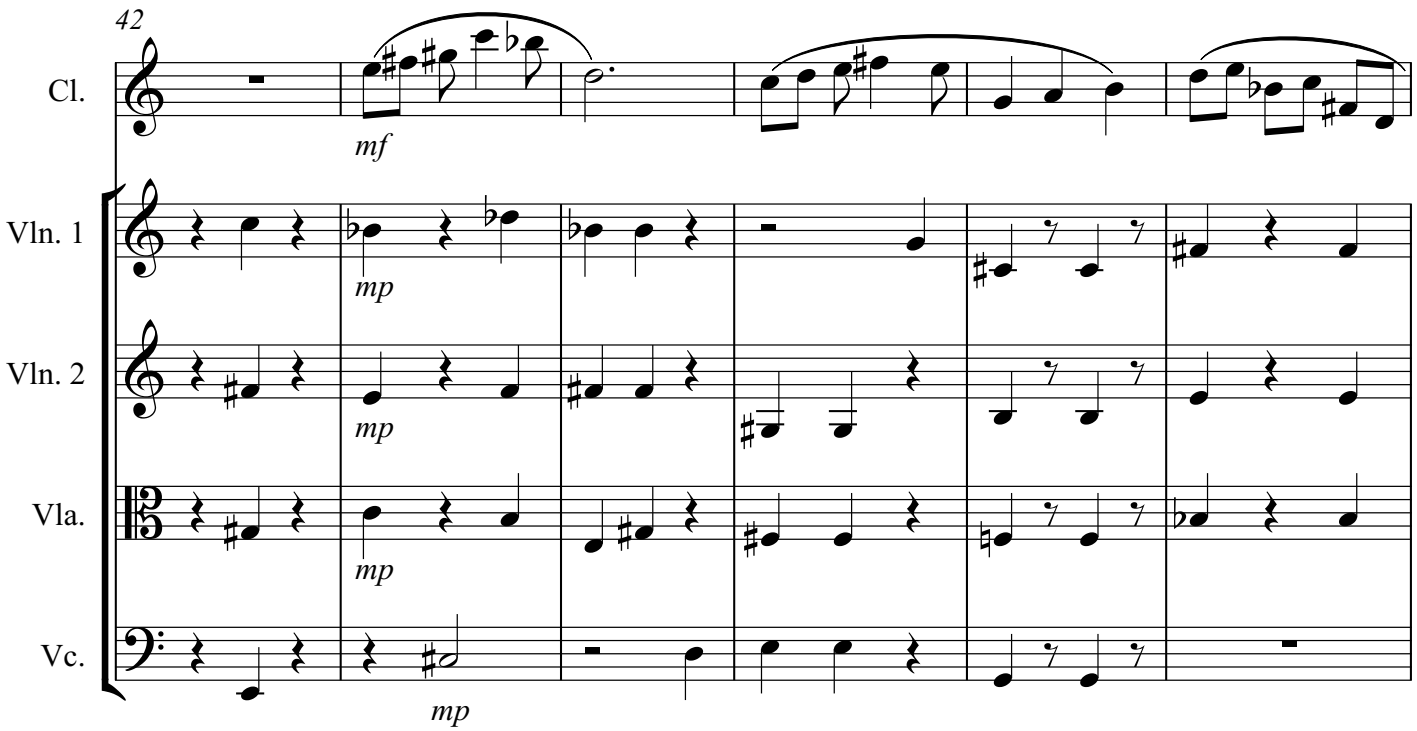
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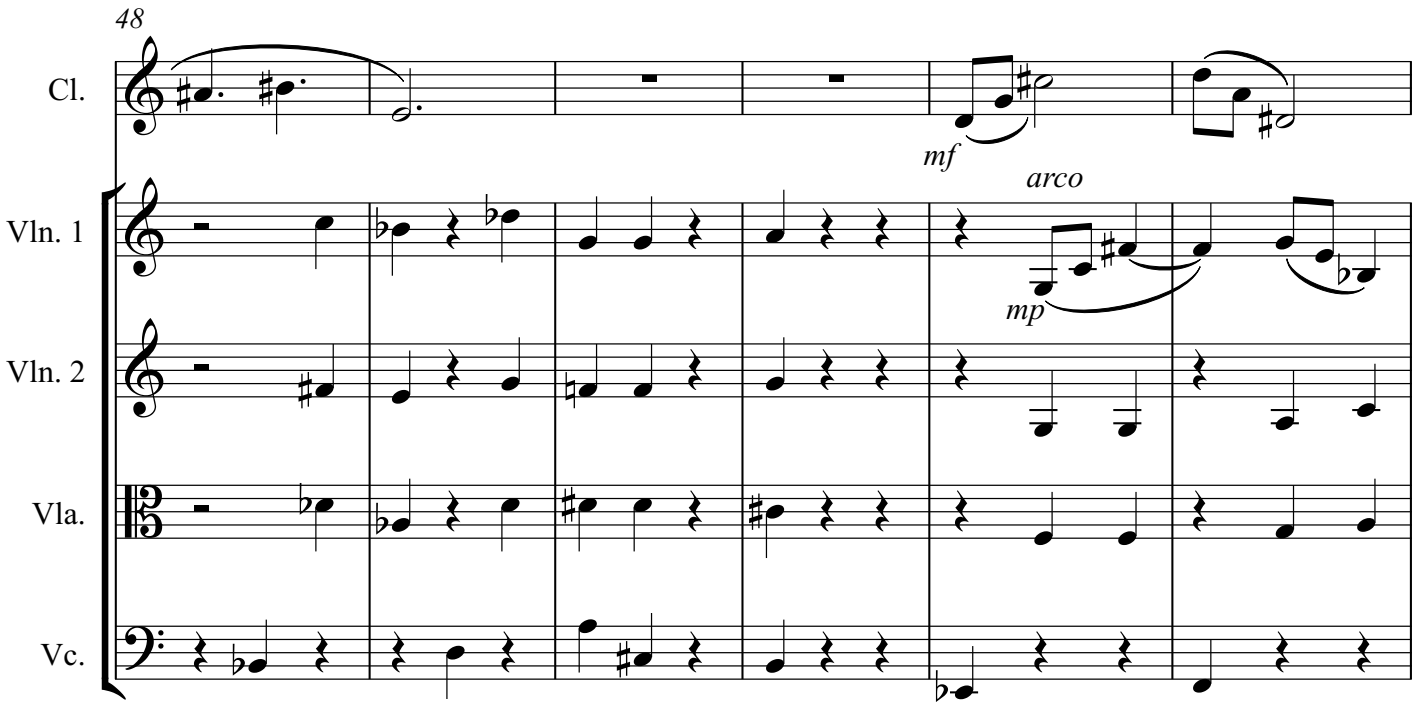
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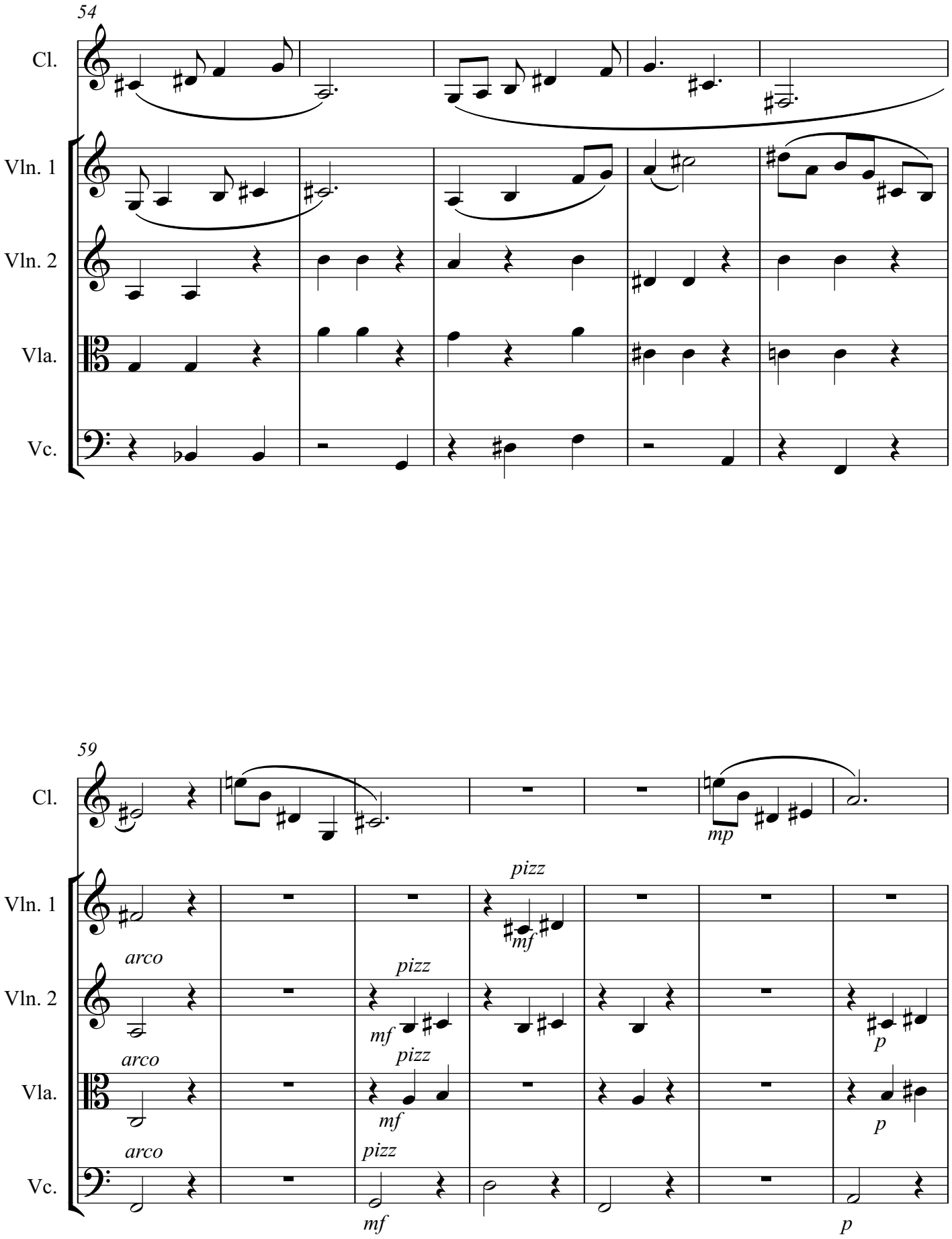
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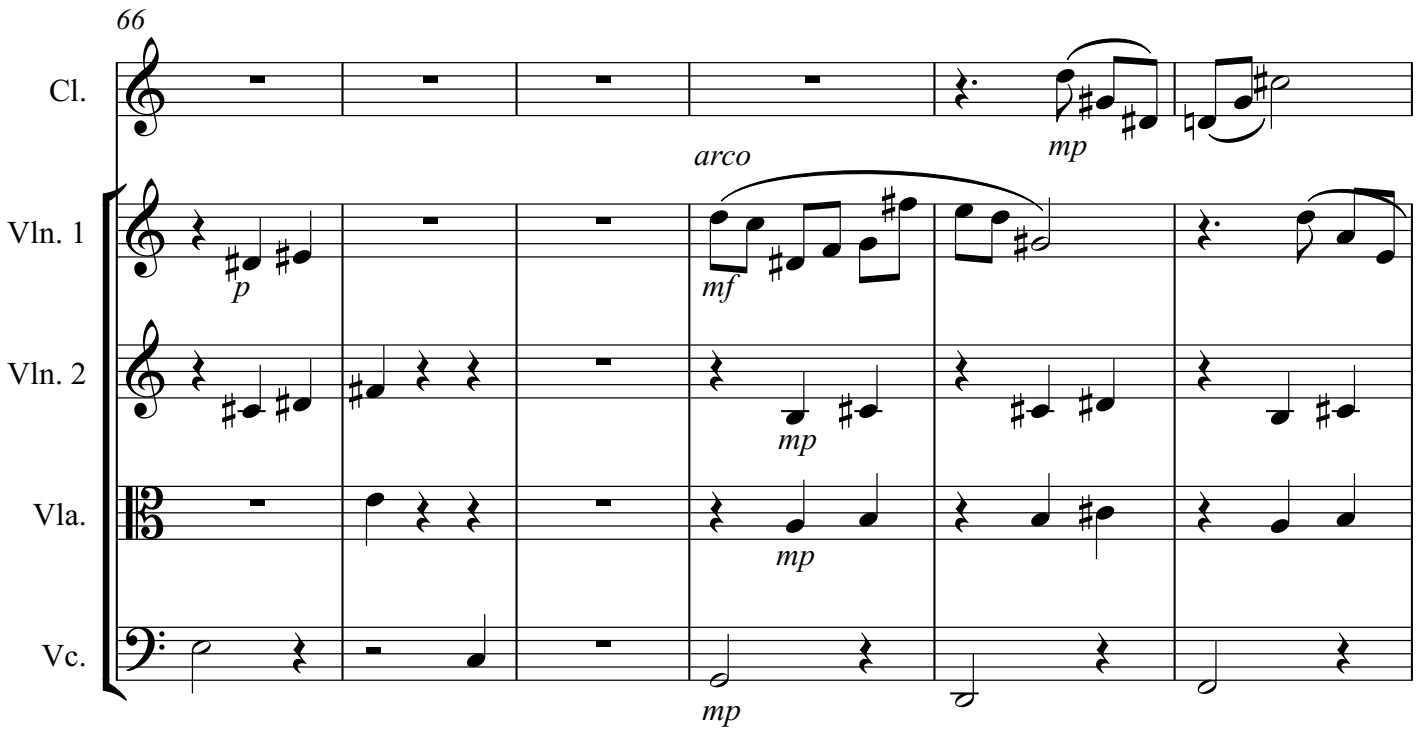
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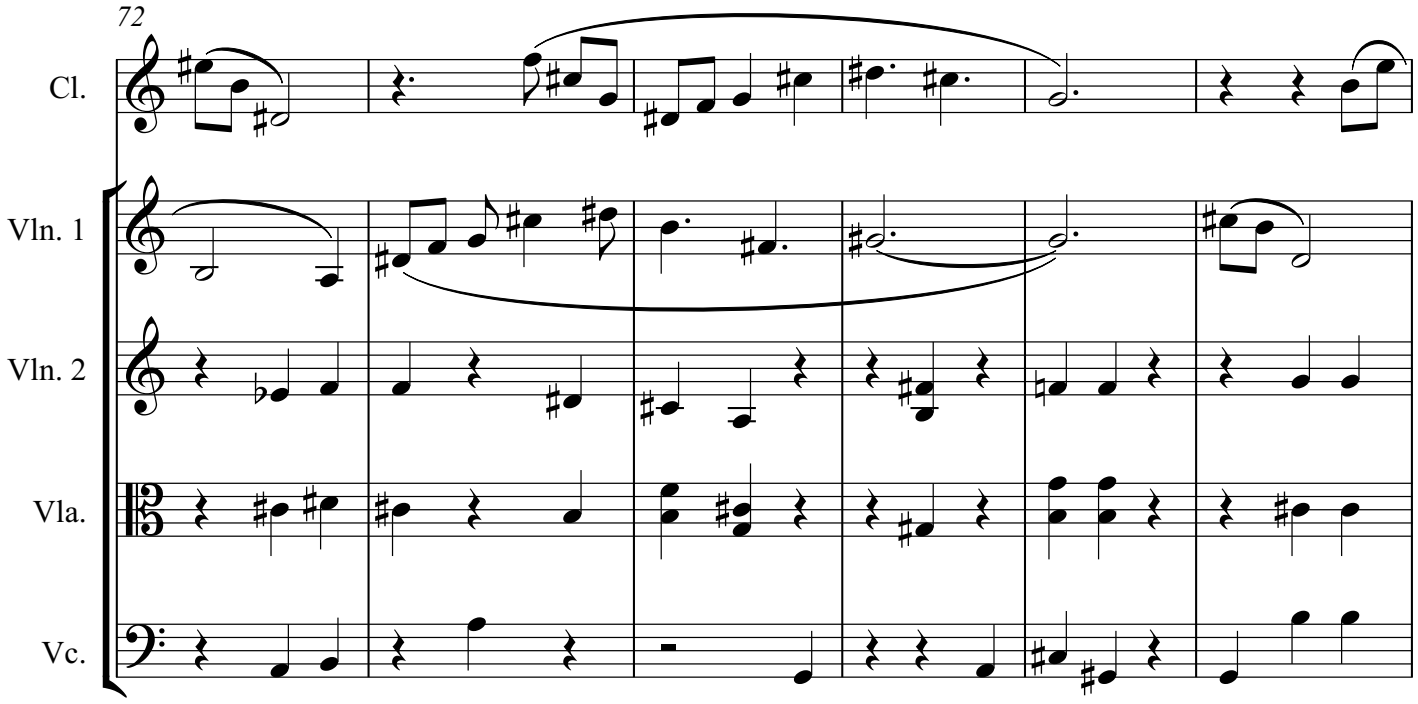
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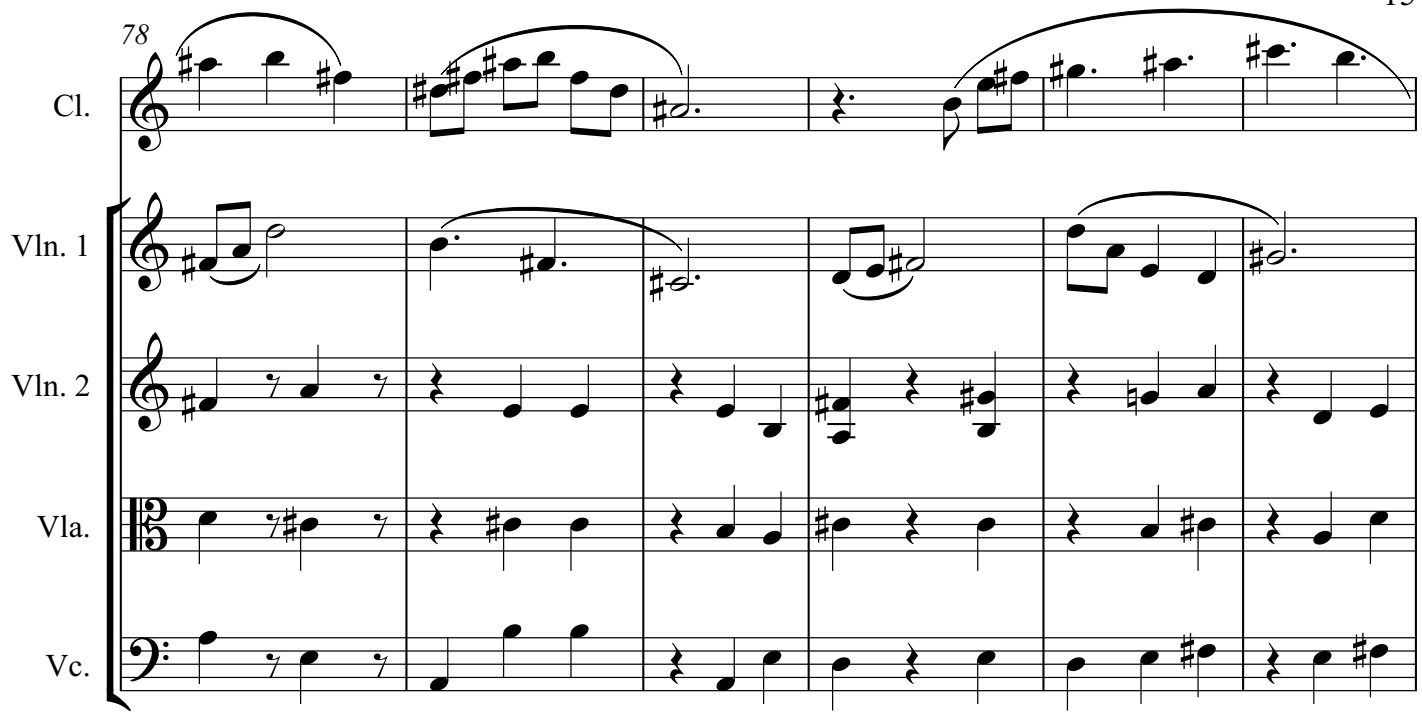
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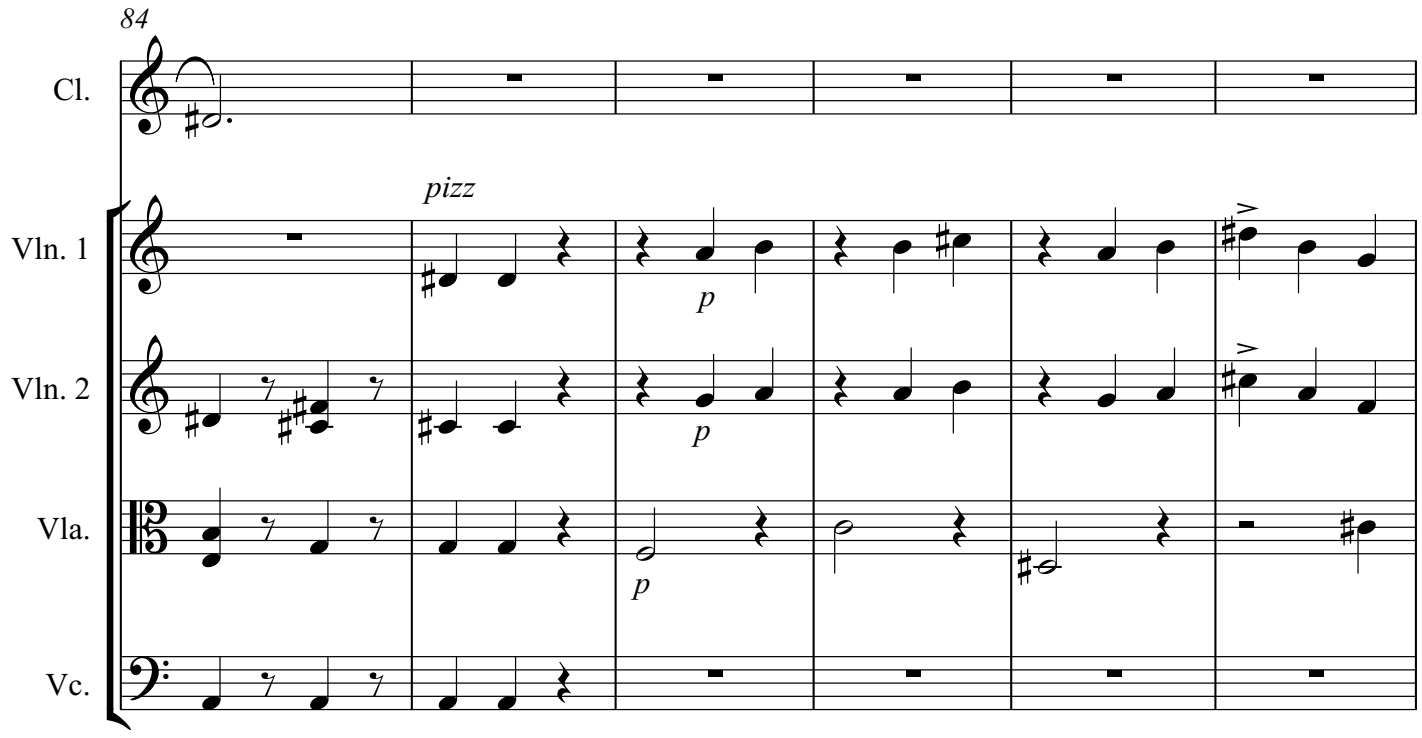
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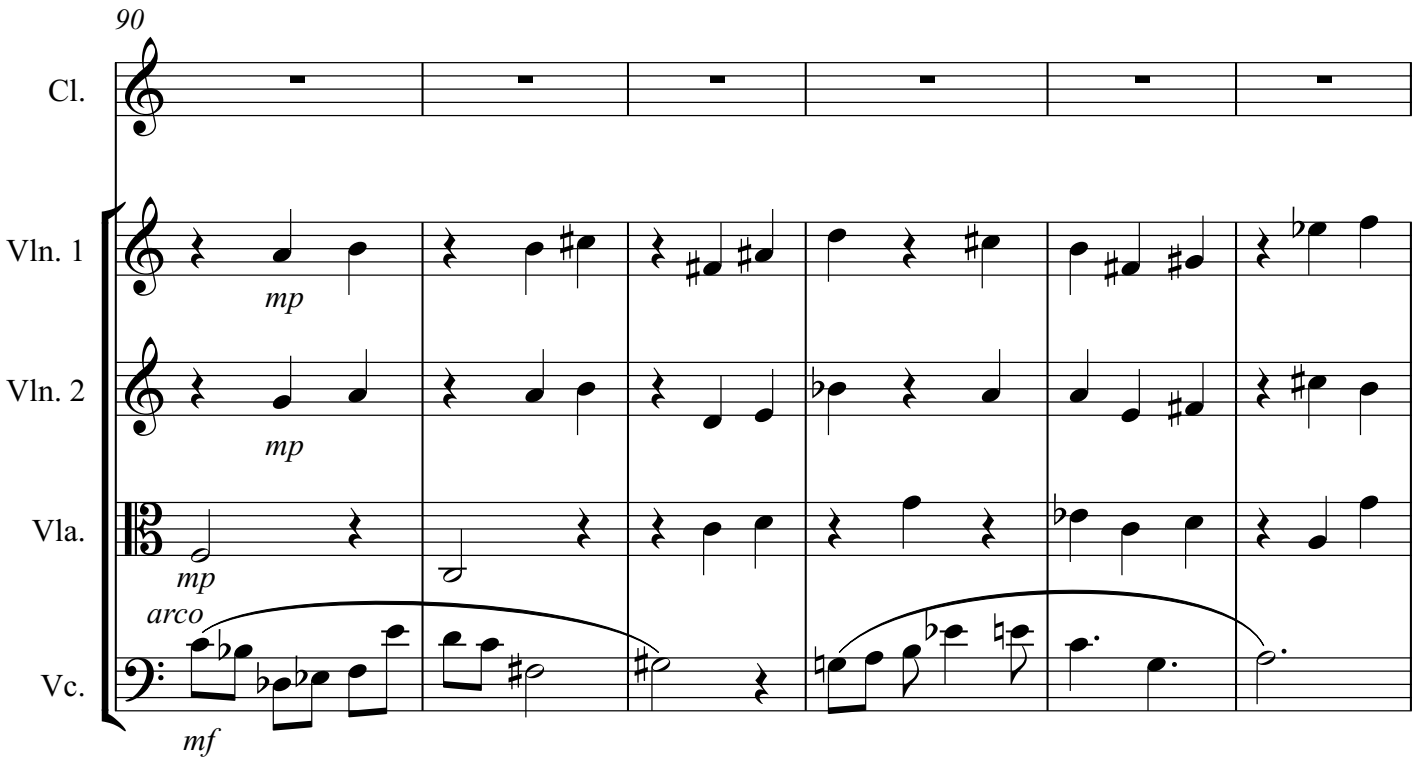
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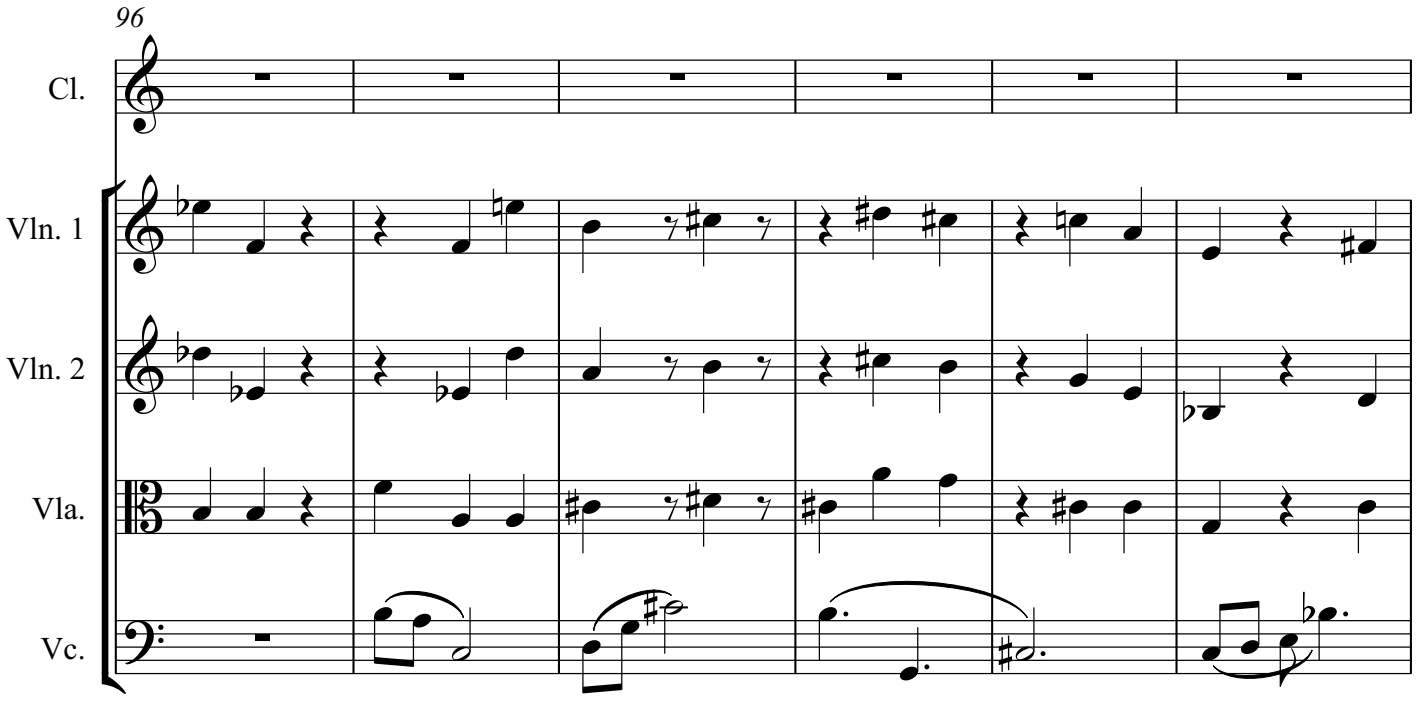
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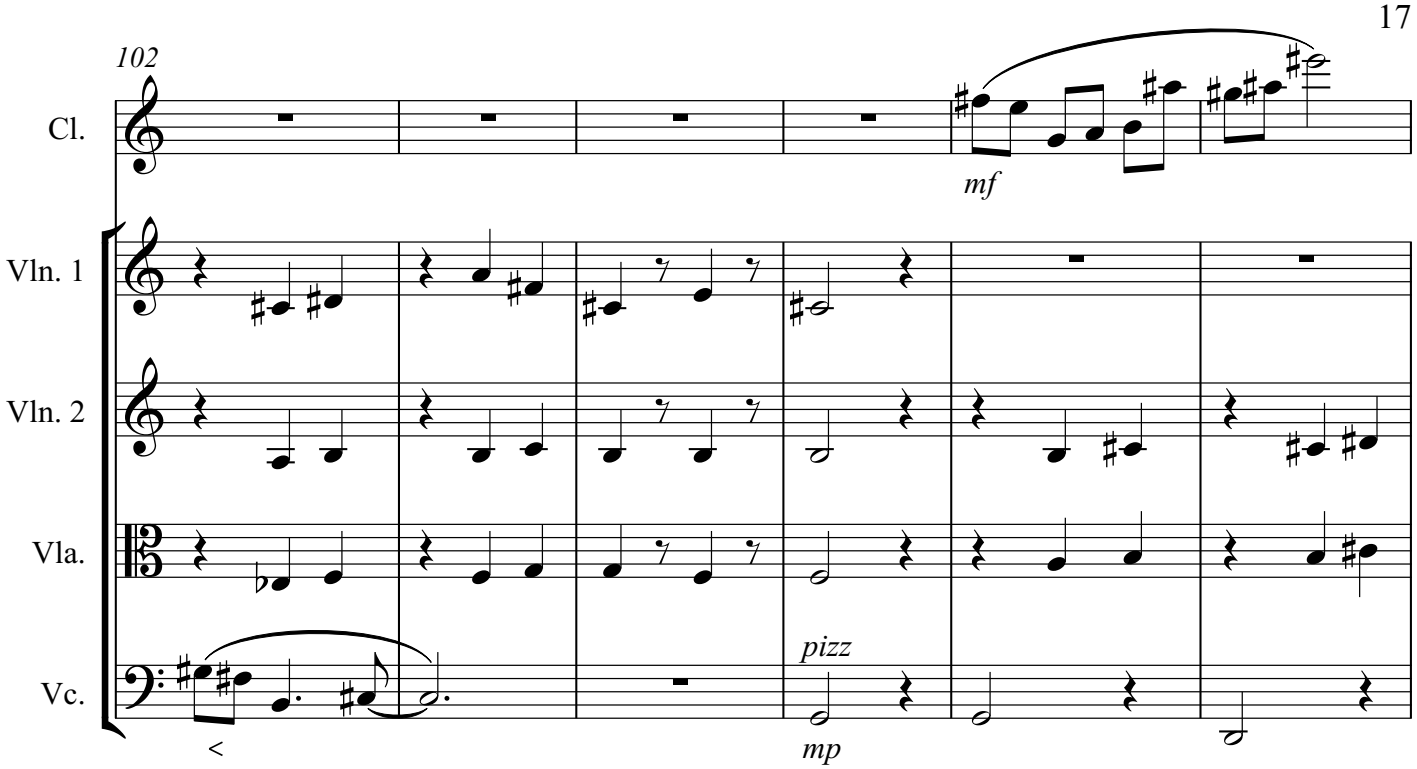
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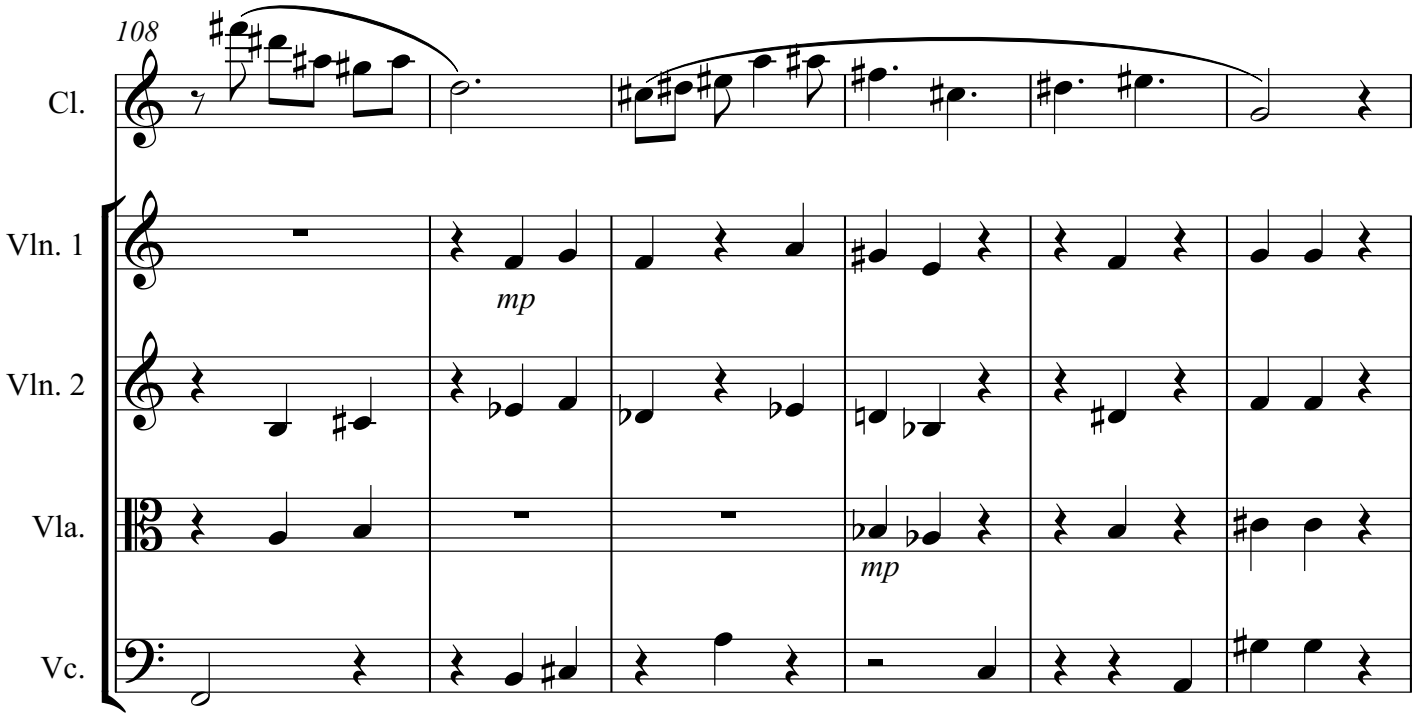
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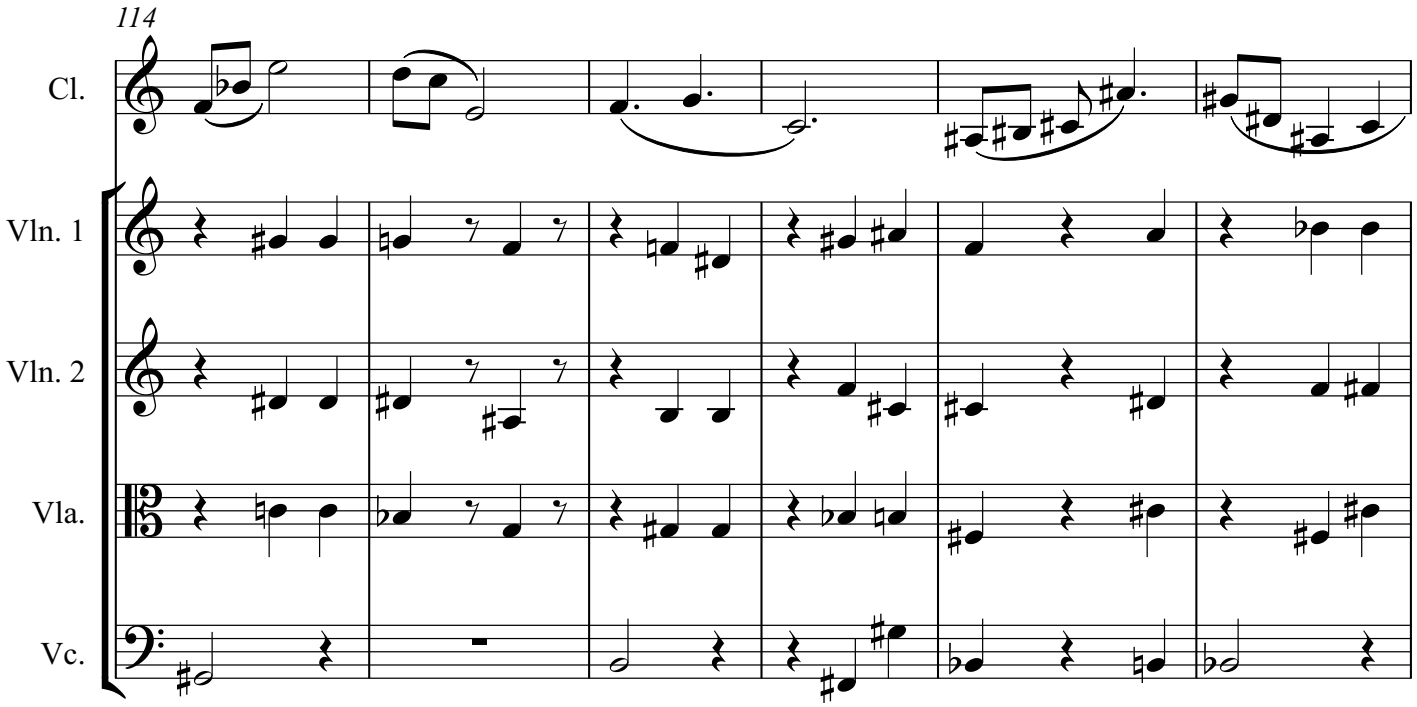
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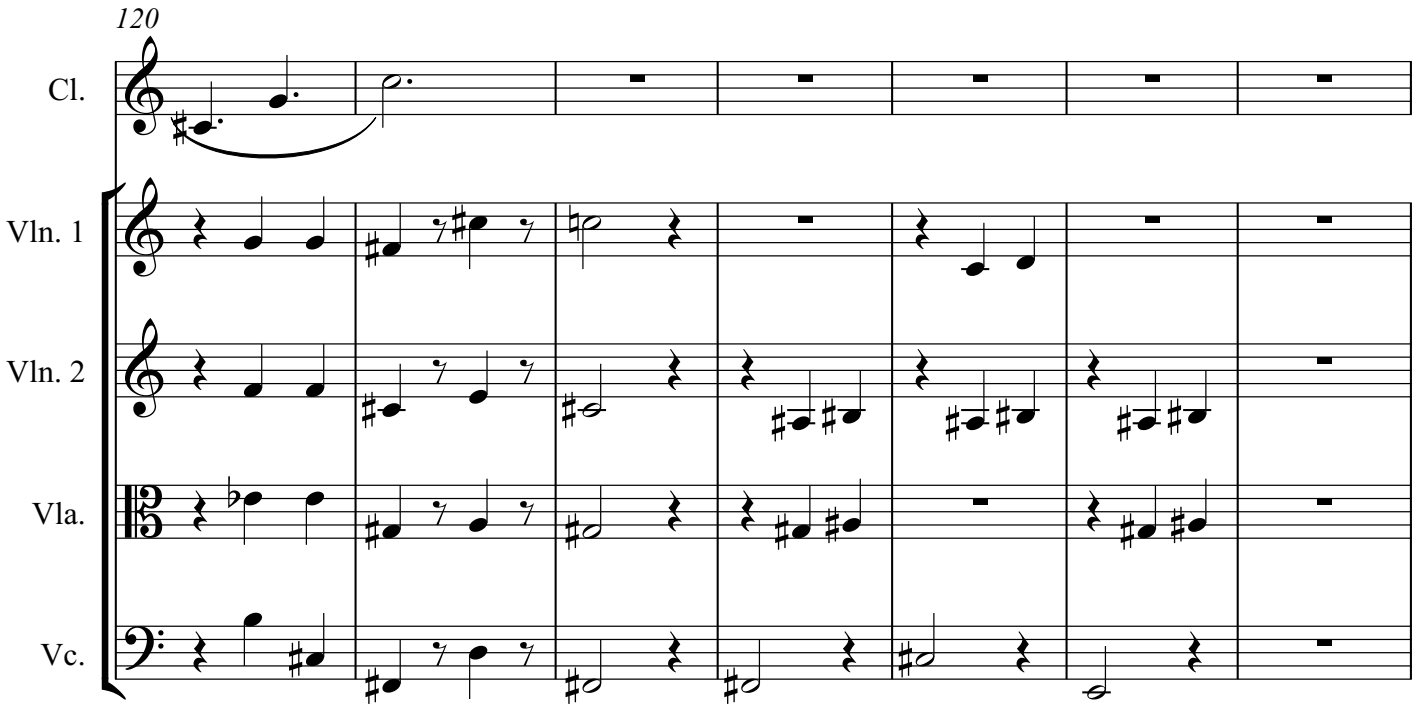
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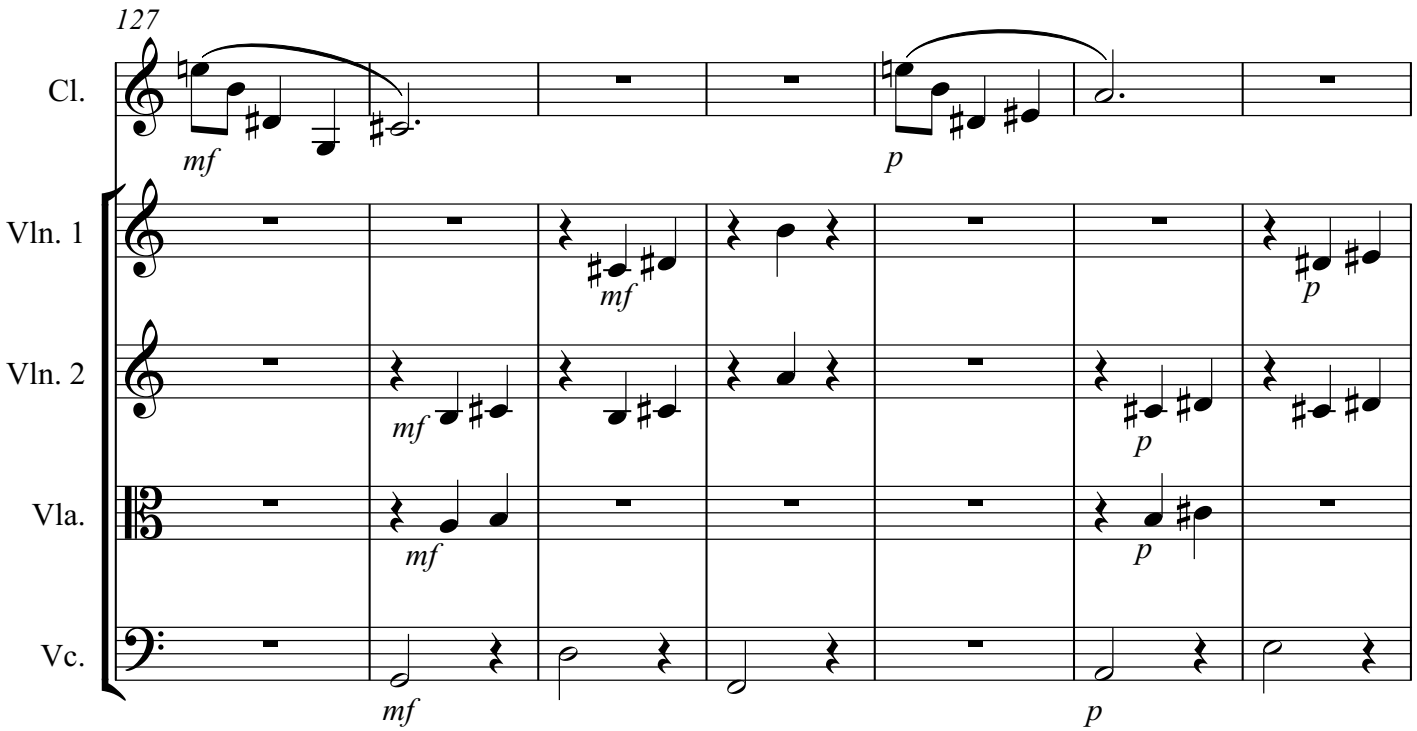
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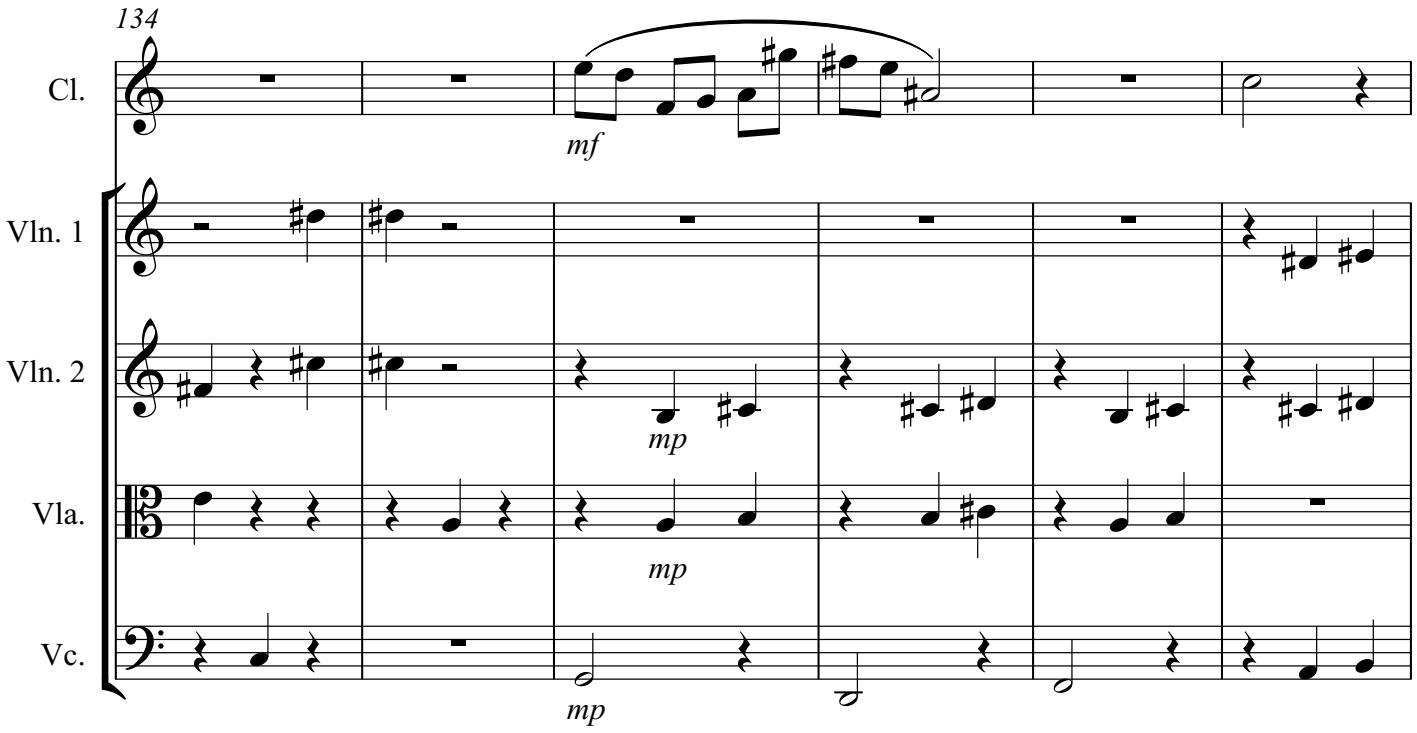
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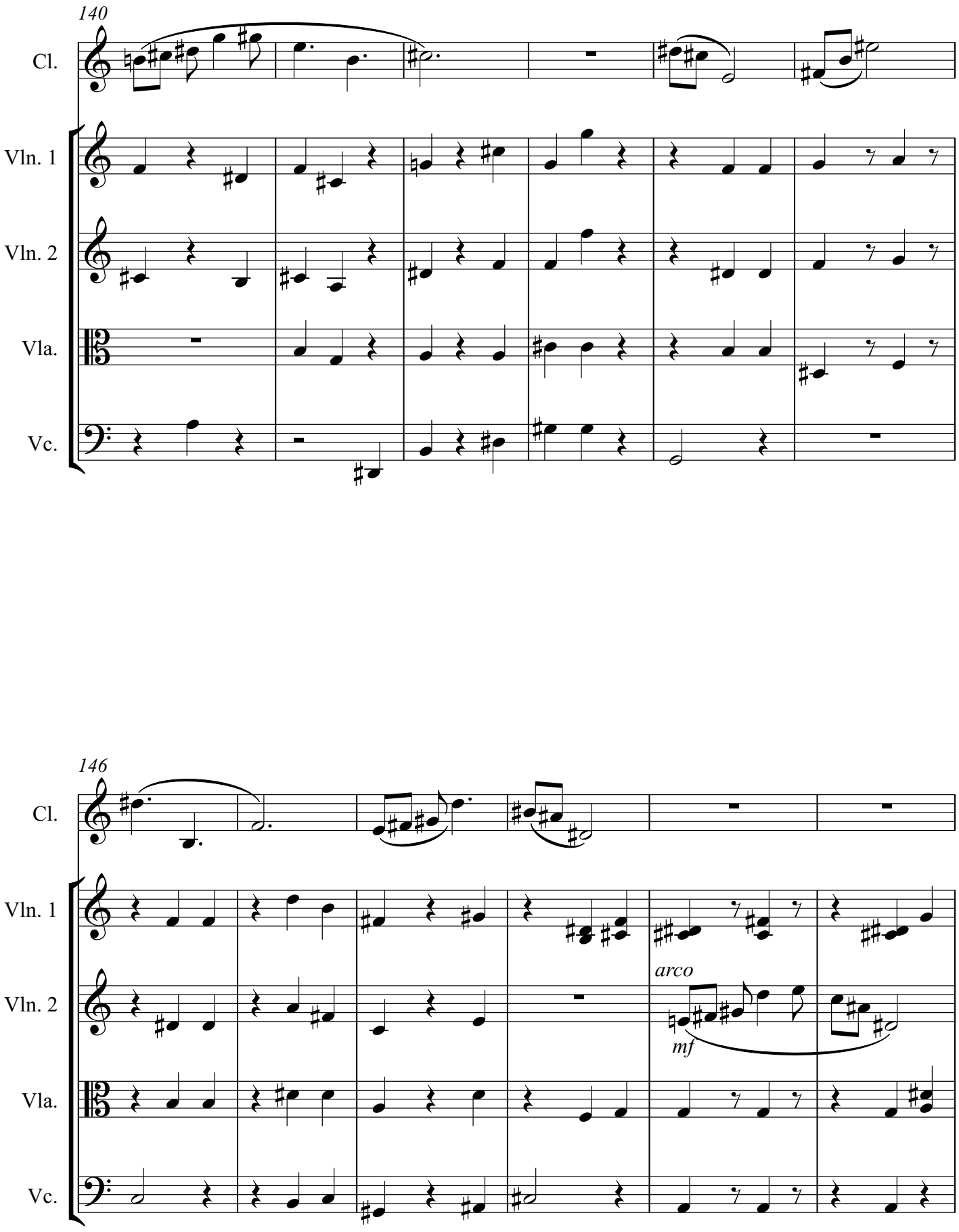
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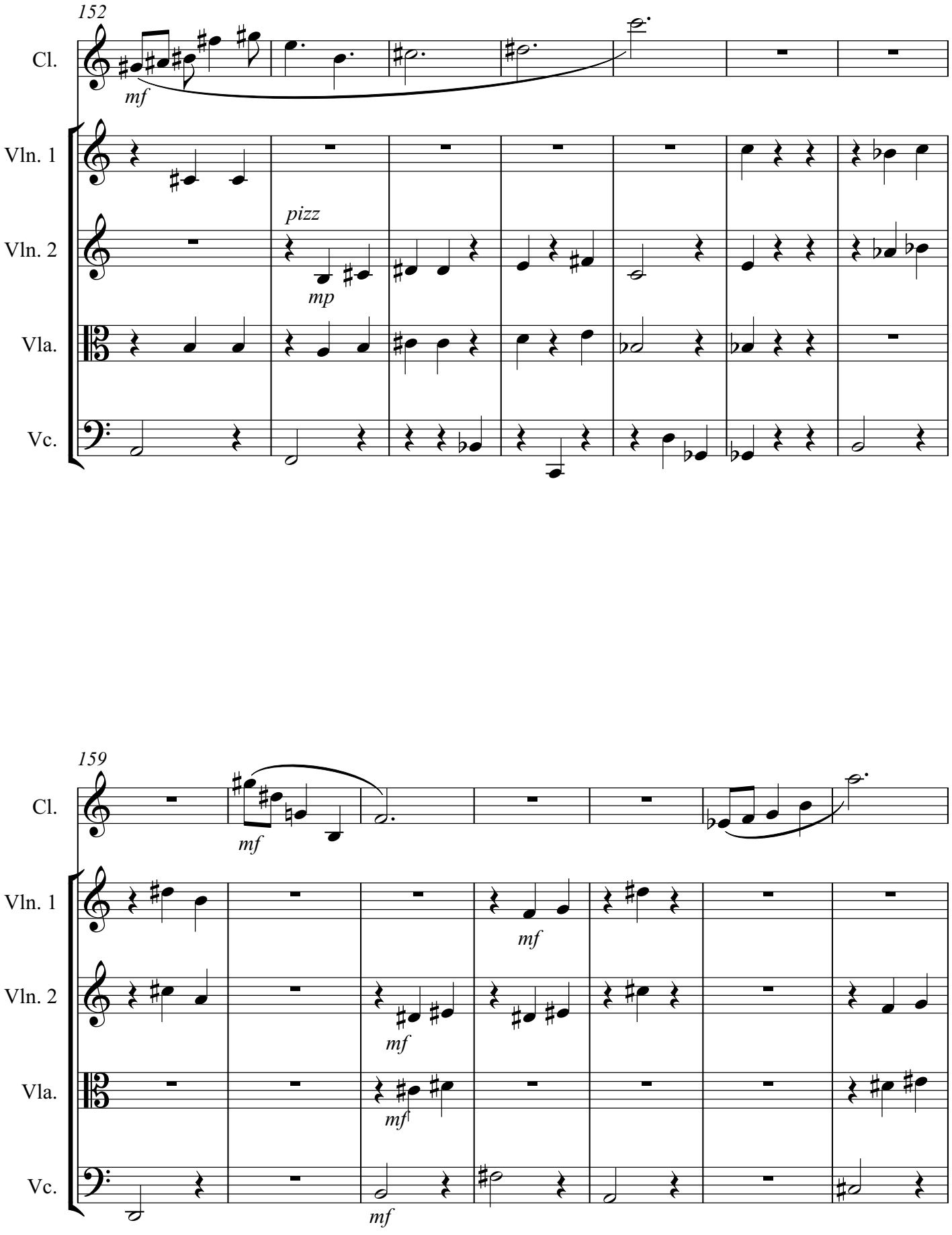
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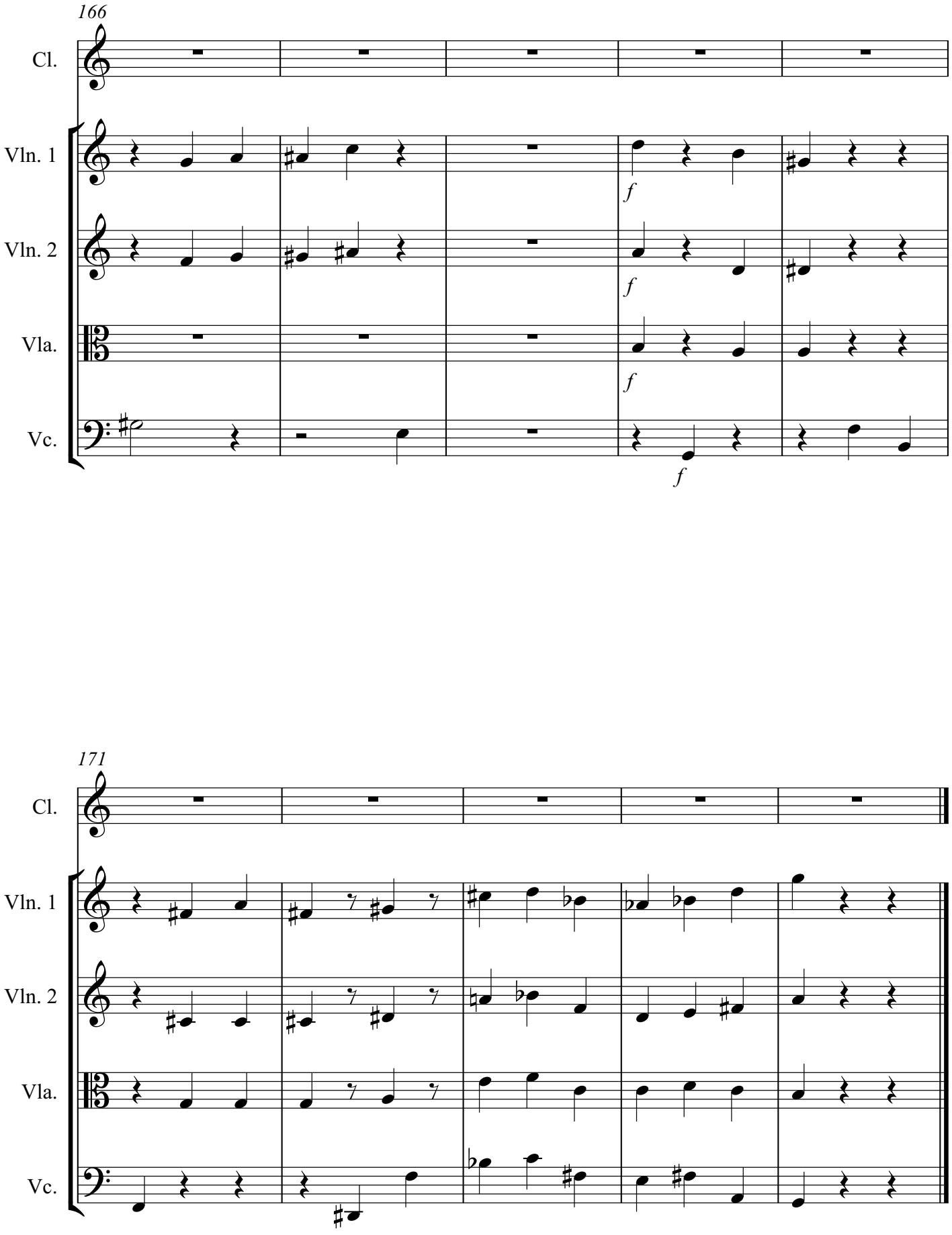
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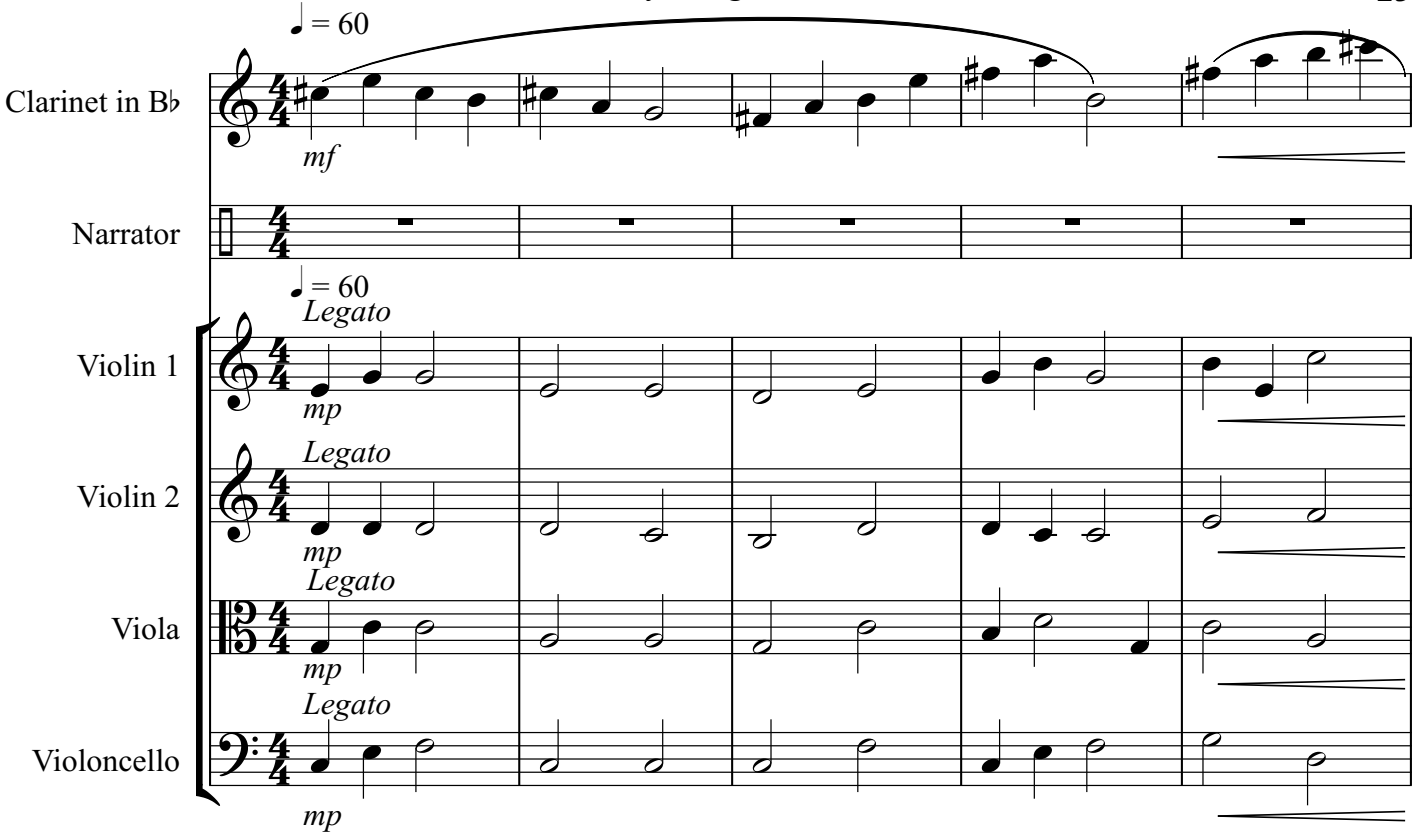
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Narrator
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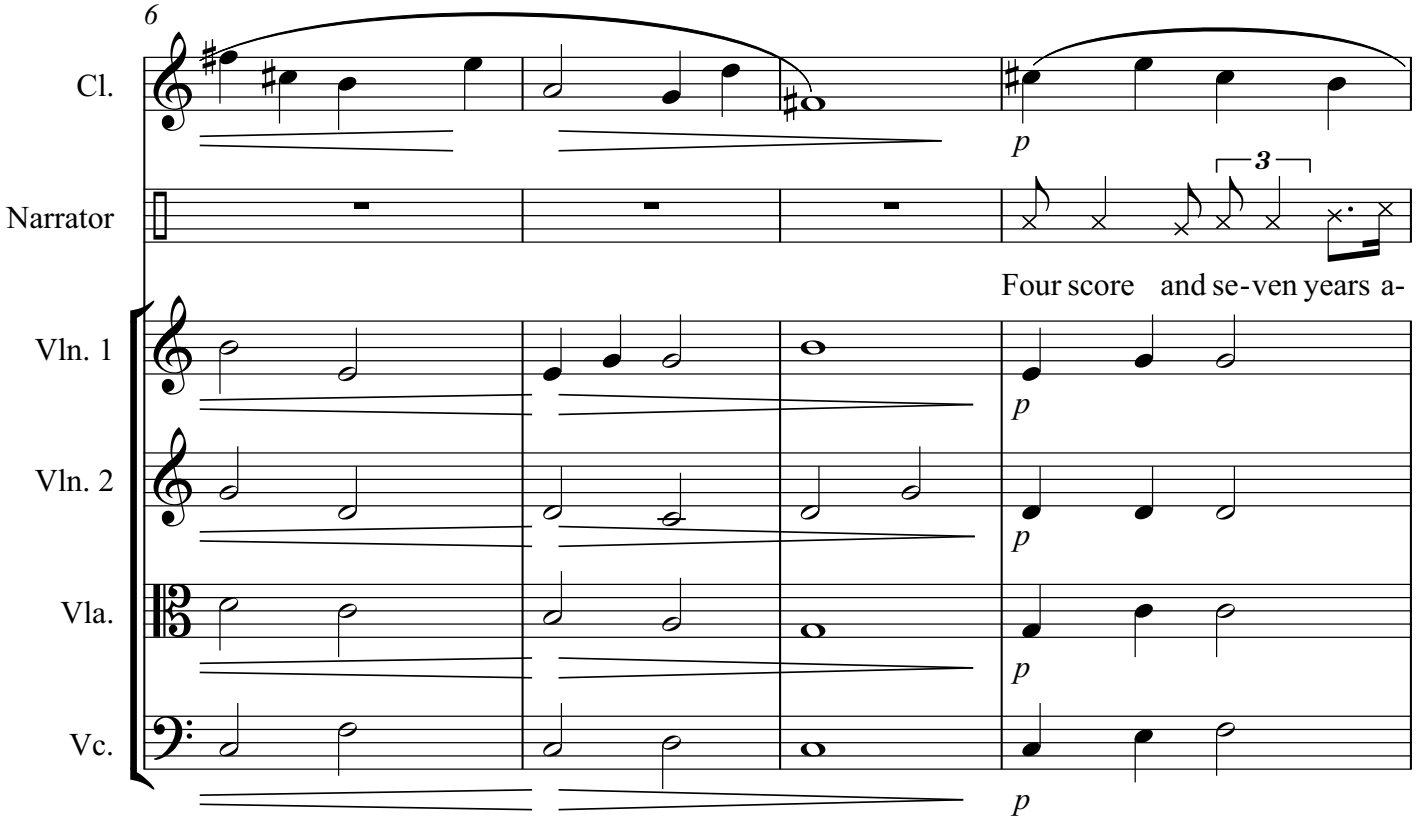
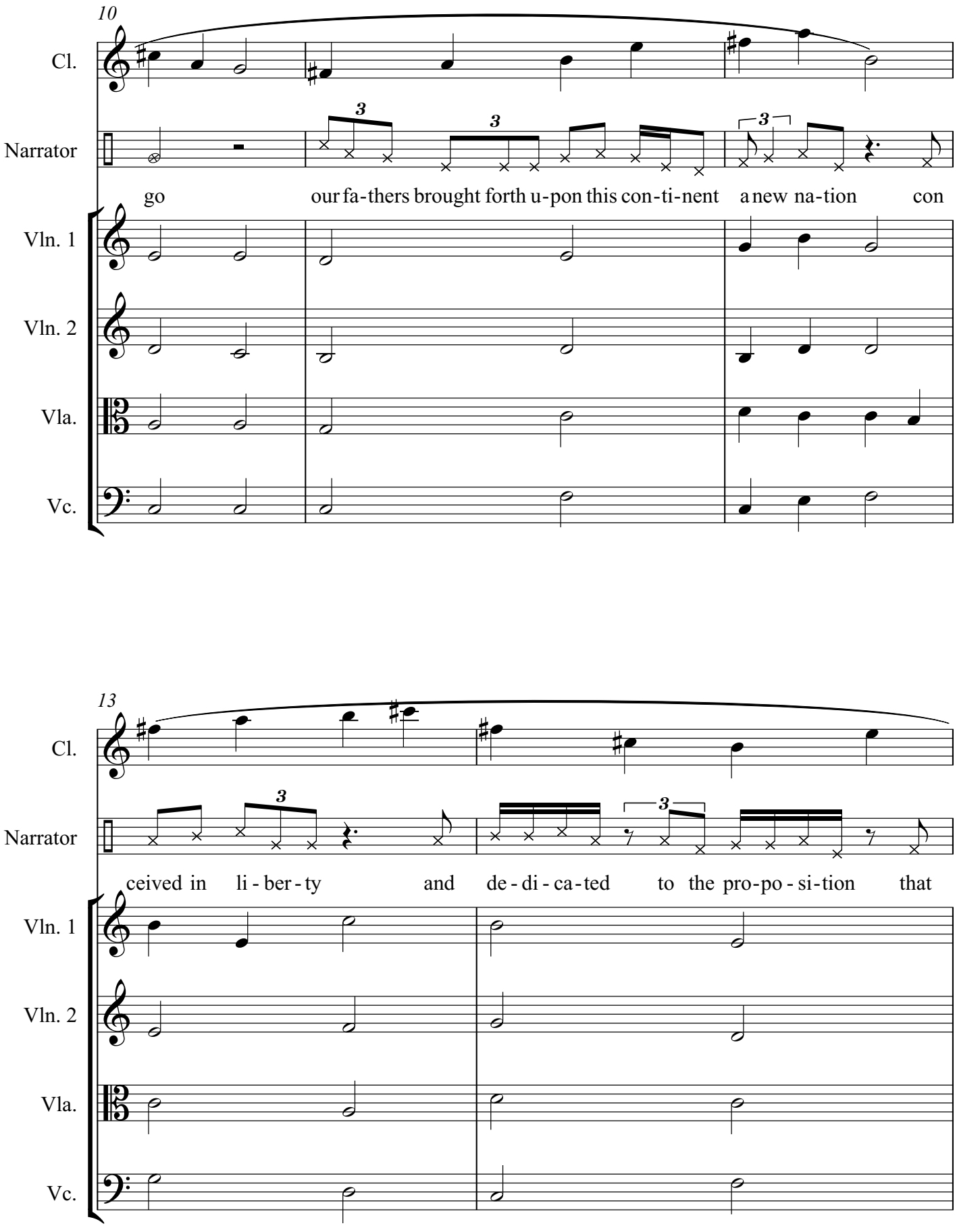
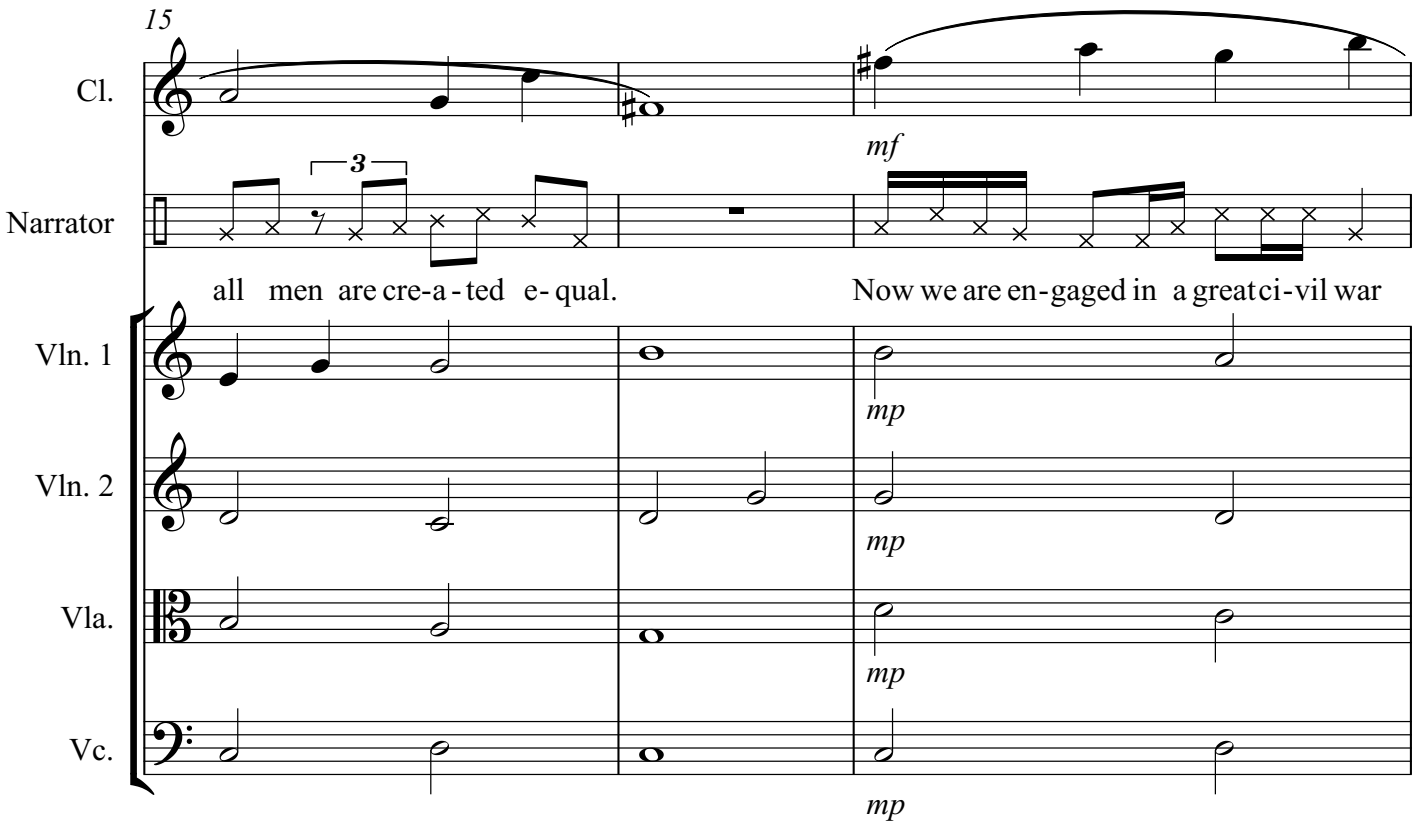
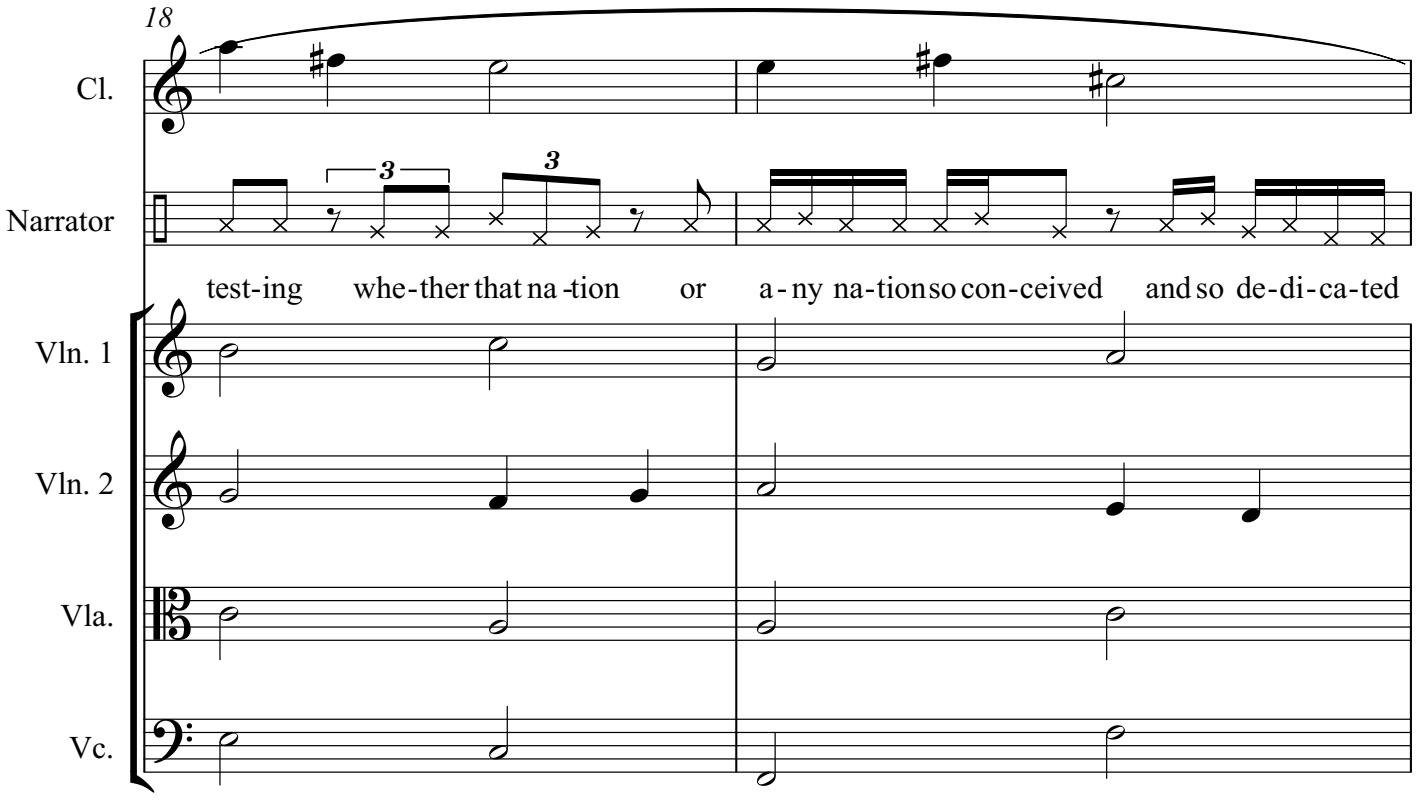
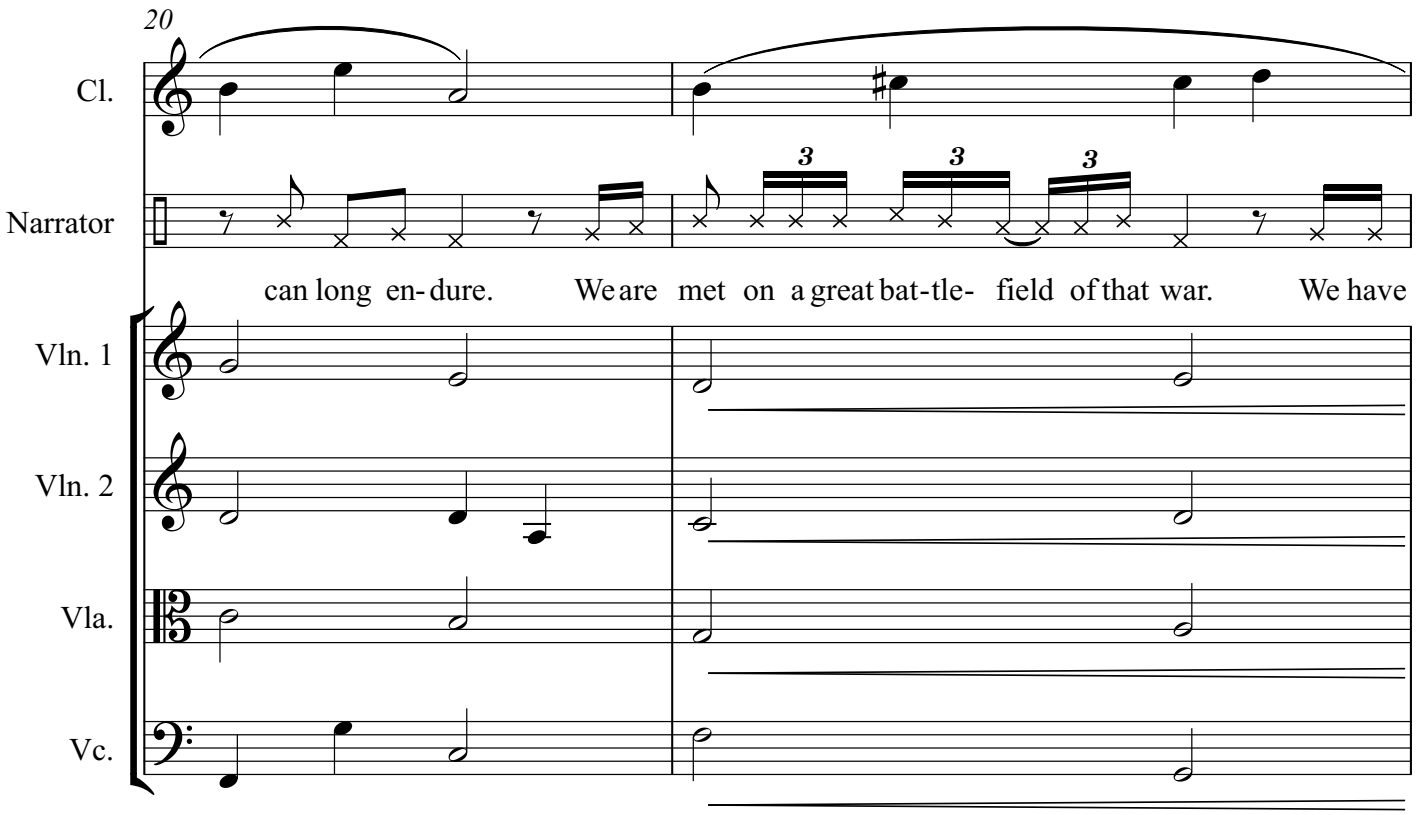
Legato
Violin 2
mp
Legato
Viola
mp
Legato
Violoncello
mp

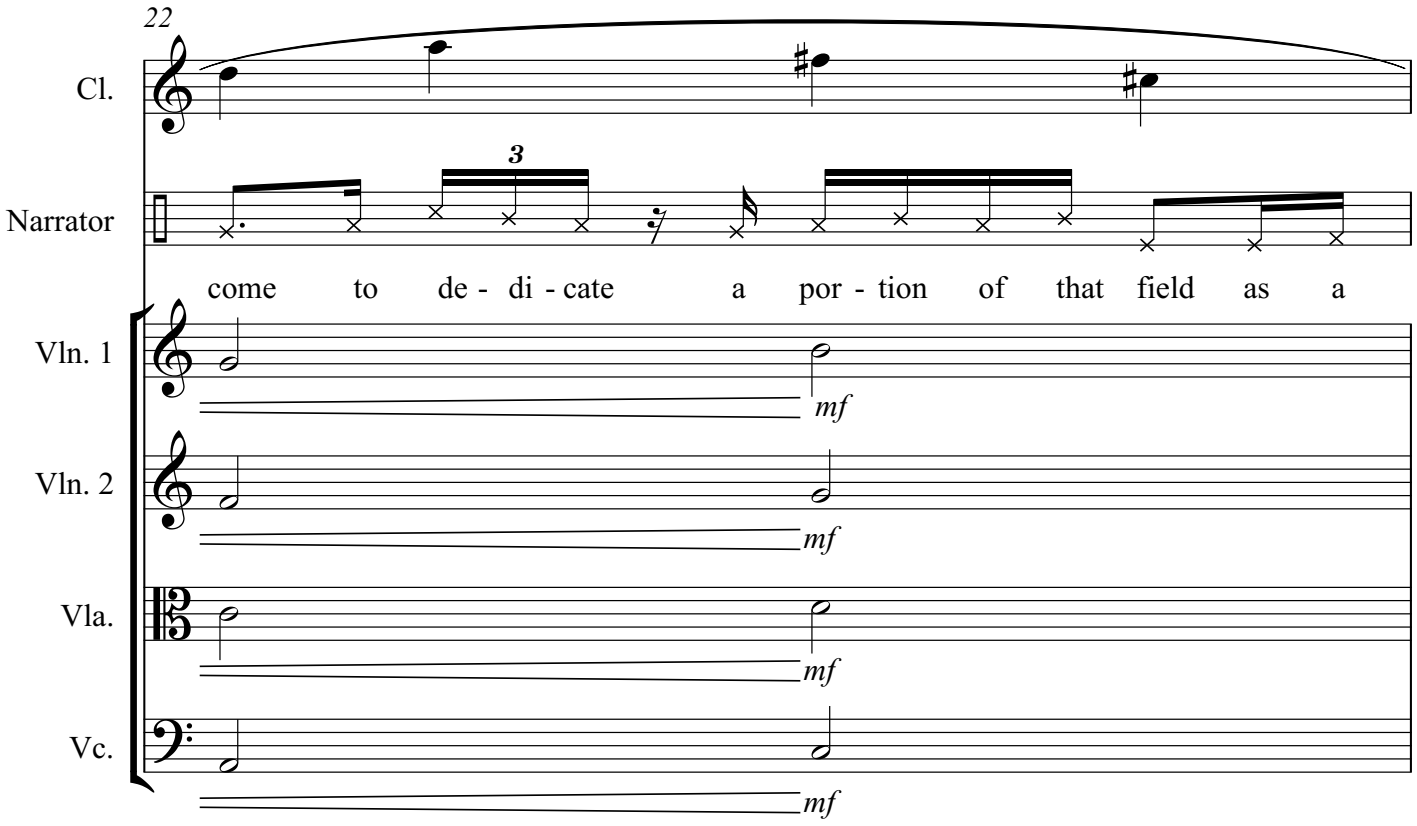

6
Cl.
p
Narrator
3
Four score and se-ven years a-
Vln. 1
p
Vln. 2
p
Vla.
p
Vc.
p

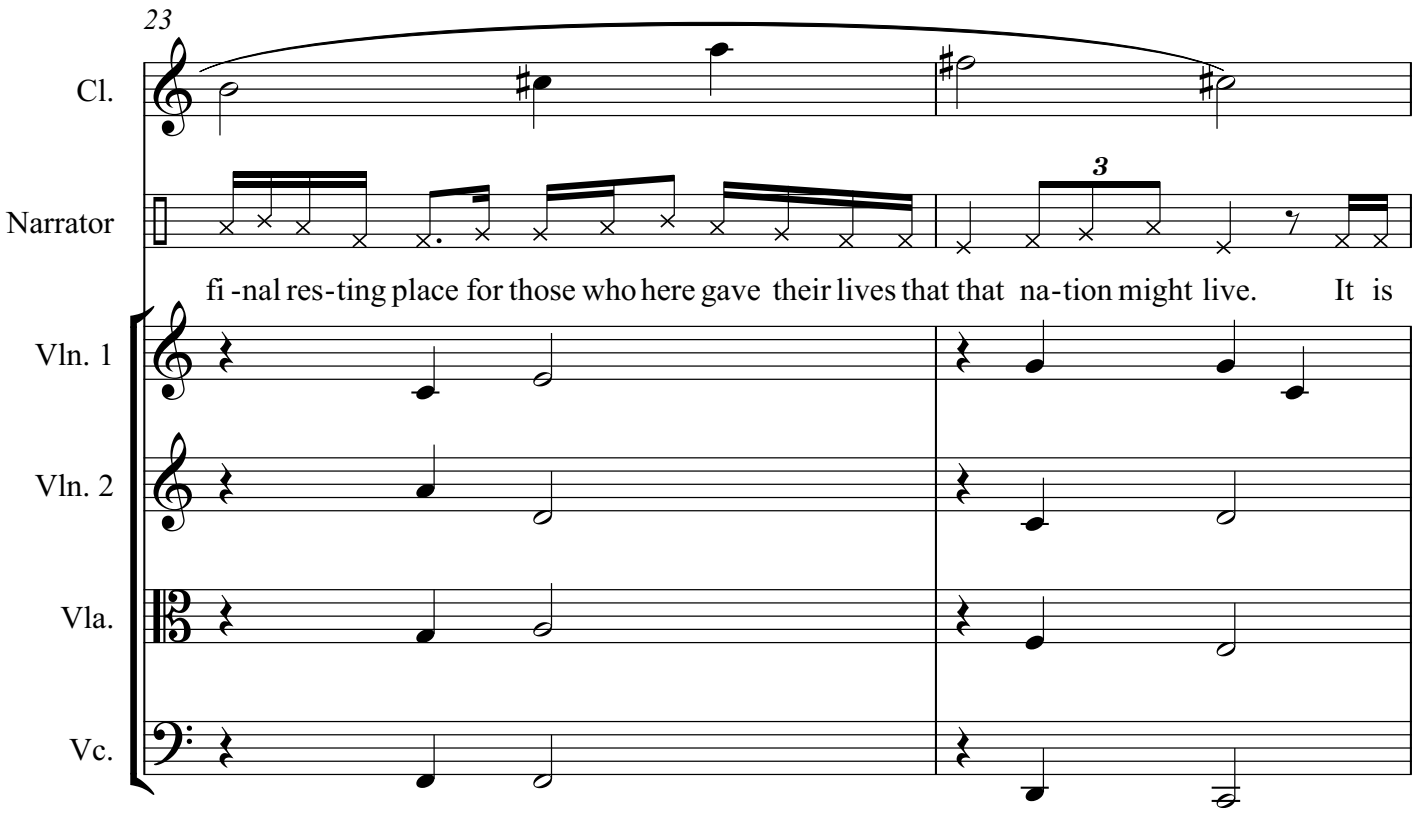

10
Cl.
Narrator
go
our fa-thers brought forth u-pon this con-ti-nent
a new na-tion
con
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
13
Cl.
Narrator
ceived in
li - ber - ty
and
de - di - ca - ted
to the pro-po - si-tion
that
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

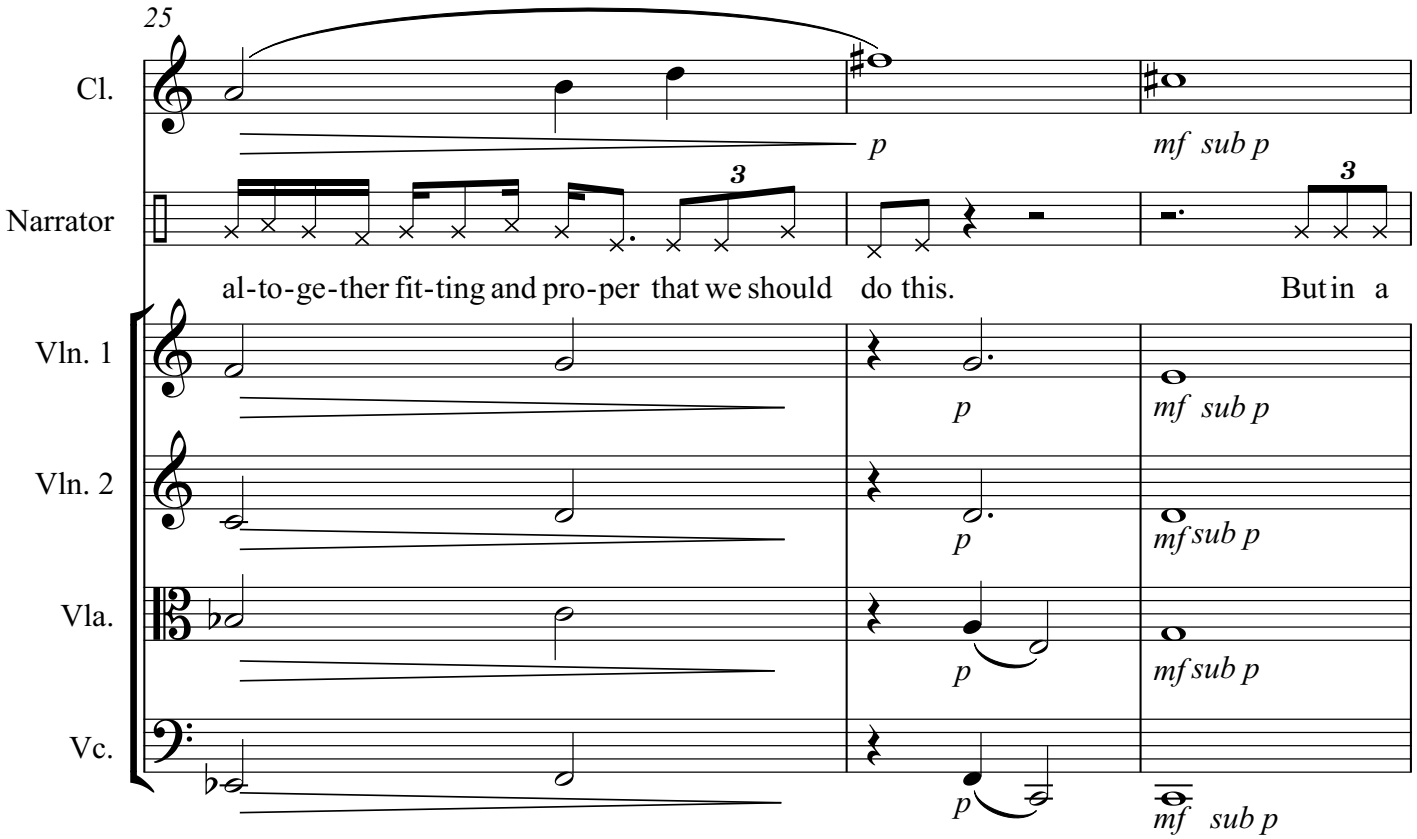

15
Cl.
Narrator
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
3
mf
all men are cre-a-ted e-qual.
Now we are en-gaged in a great ci-vil war
mp
mp
mp
mp

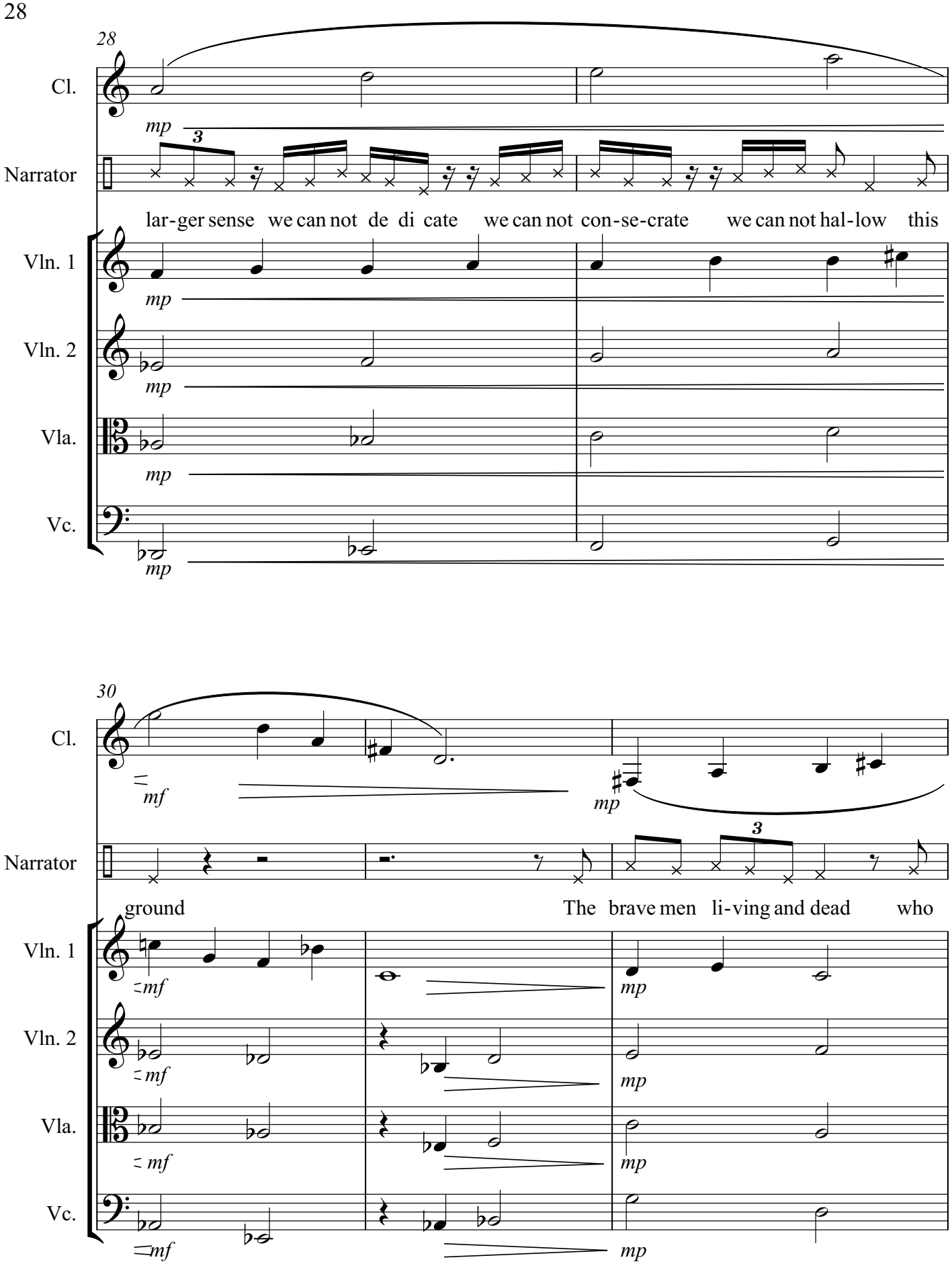

18
Cl.
Narrator
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
3
3
test-ing whe-ther that na-tion or a-ny na-tion so con-ceived and so de-di-ca-ted

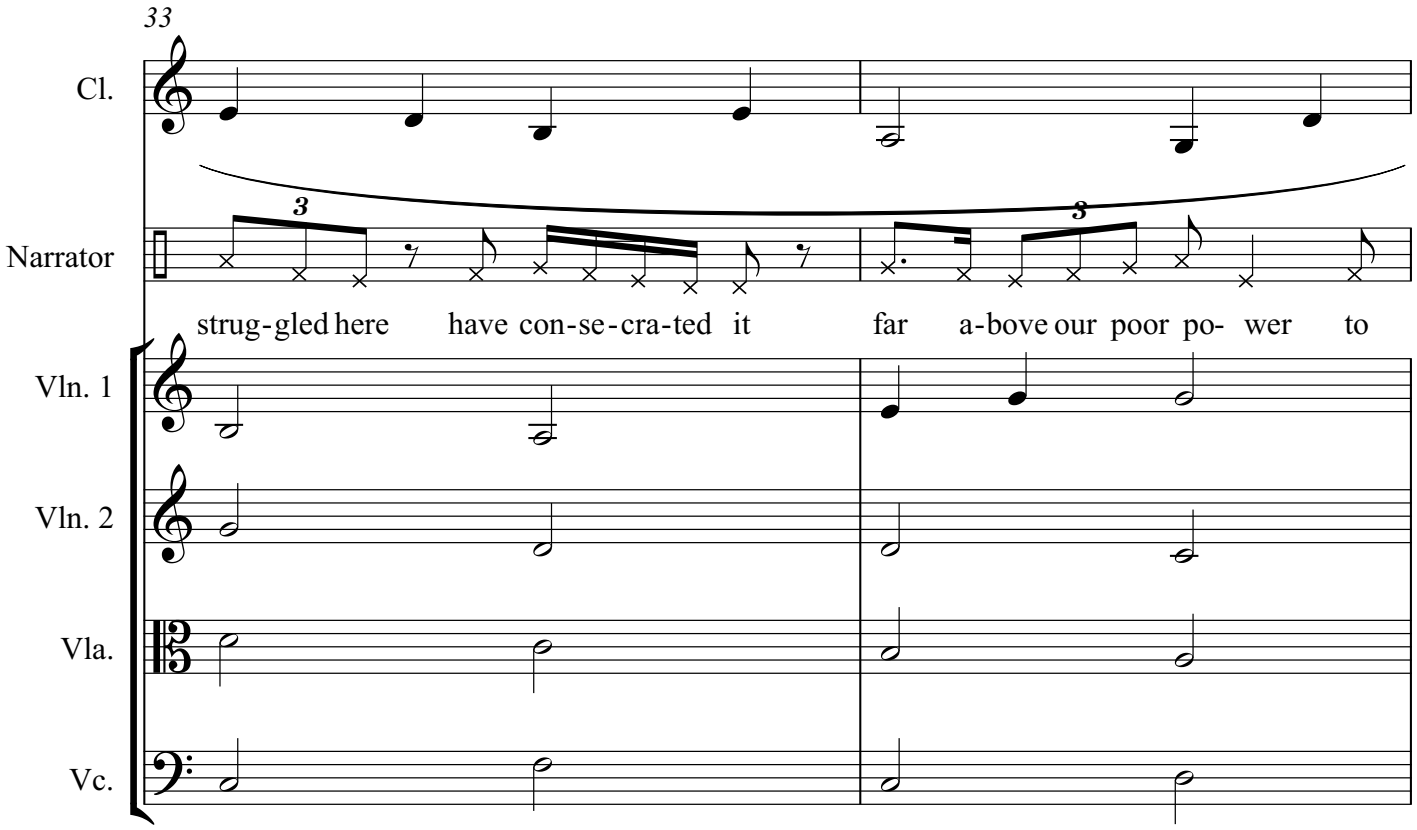

20
Cl.
Narrator
3
3
3
can long en- dure. We are met on a great bat-tle- field of that war. We have
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

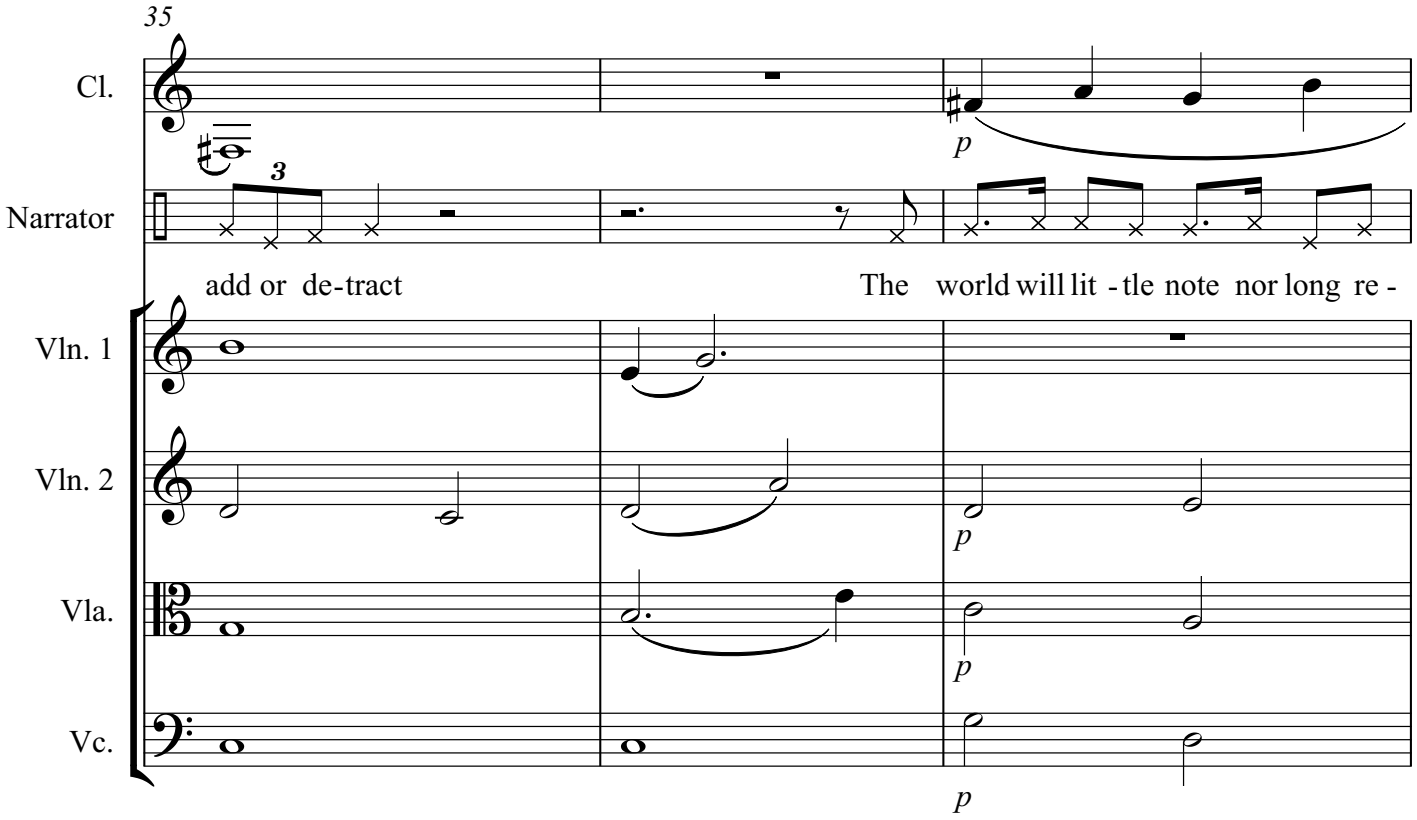

22
Cl.
Narrator
3
come to de - di - cate a por - tion of that field as a
Vln. 1
mf
Vln. 2
mf
Vla.
mf
Vc.
mf

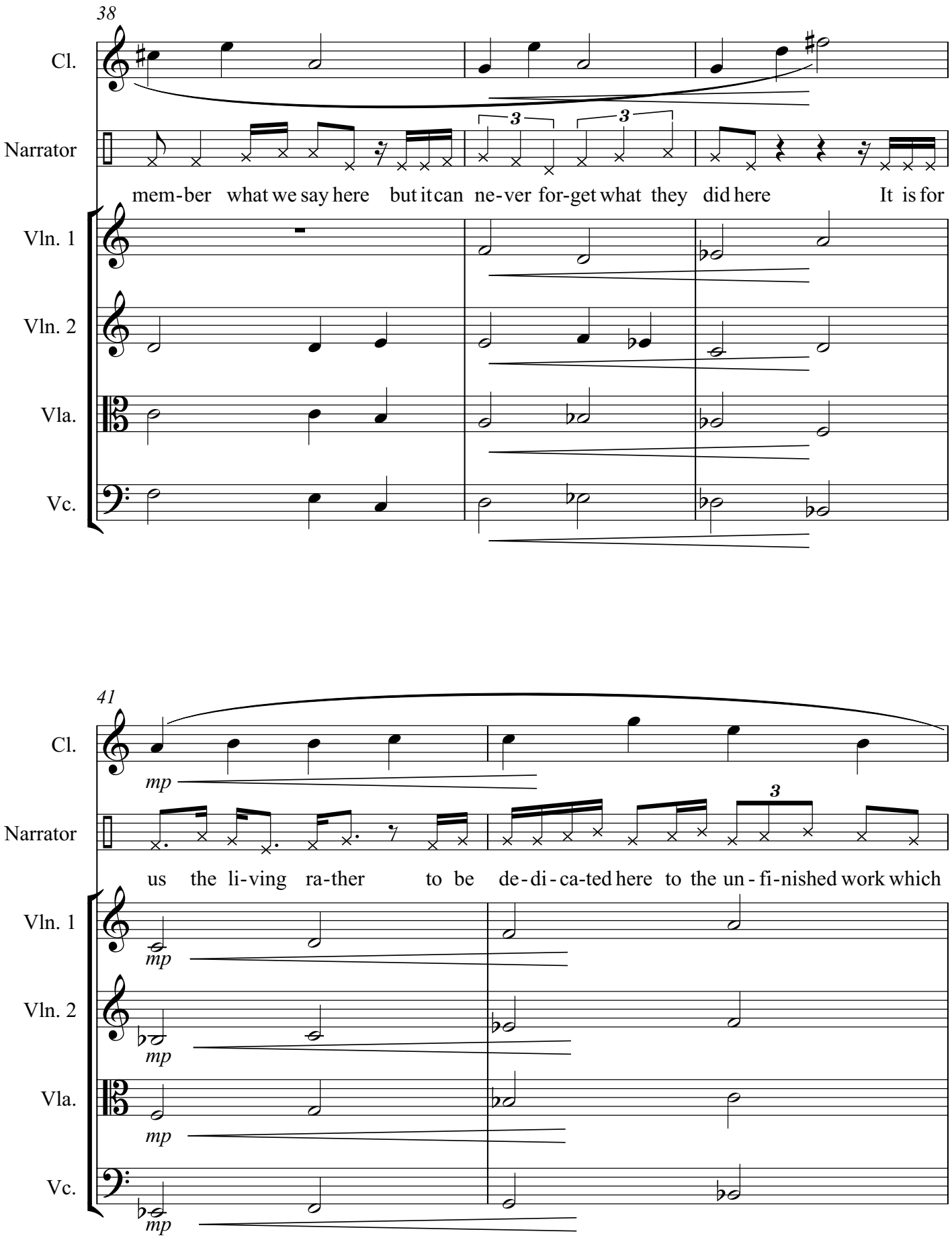

23
Cl.
Narrator
3
fi -nal res-ting place for those who here gave their lives that that na-tion might live. It is
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

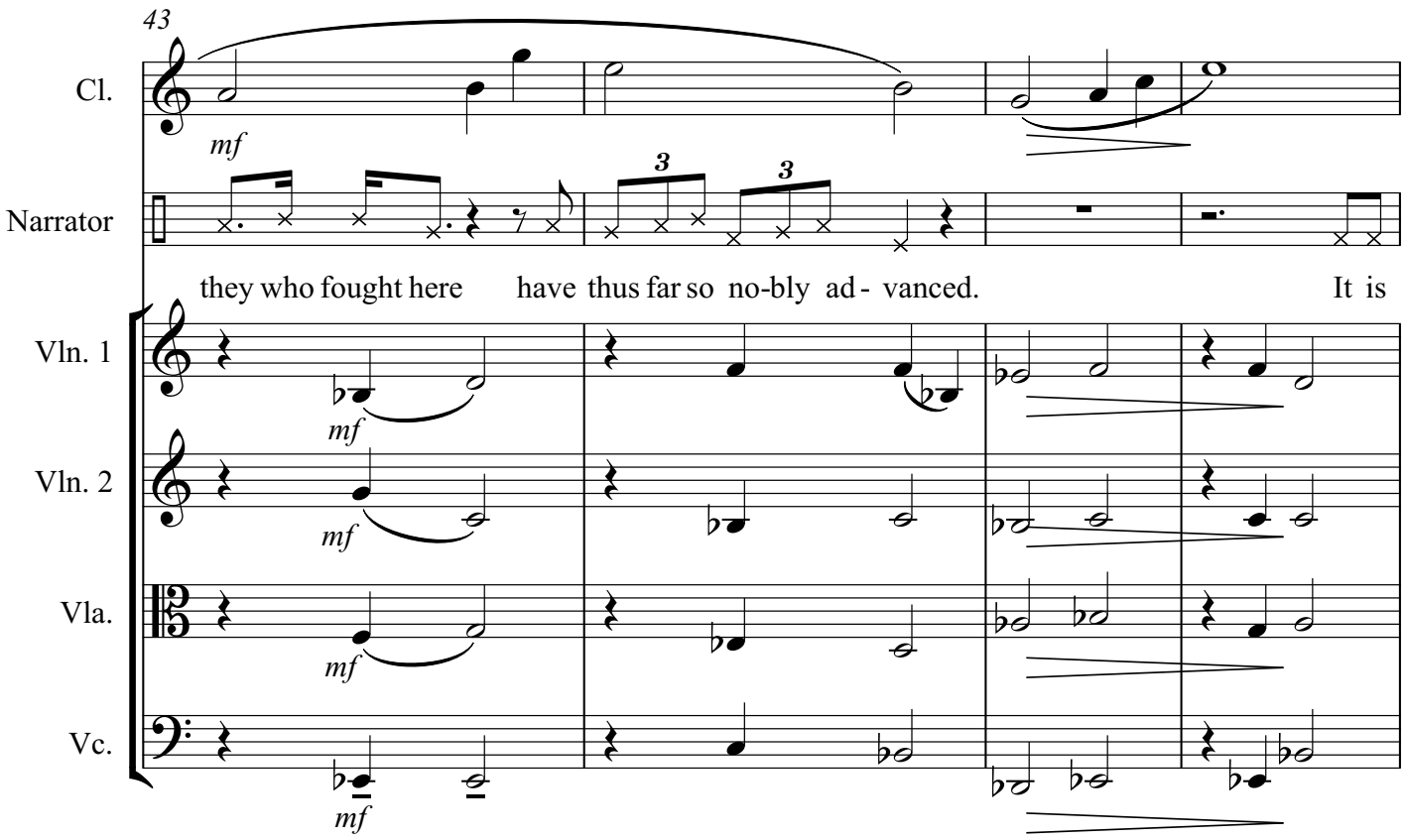

25
Cl.
p
mf sub p
Narrator
3
3
al-to-ge-ther fit-ting and pro-per that we should do this. But in a
Vln. 1
p
mf sub p
Vln. 2
p
mf sub p
Vla.
p
mf sub p
Vc.
p
mf sub p

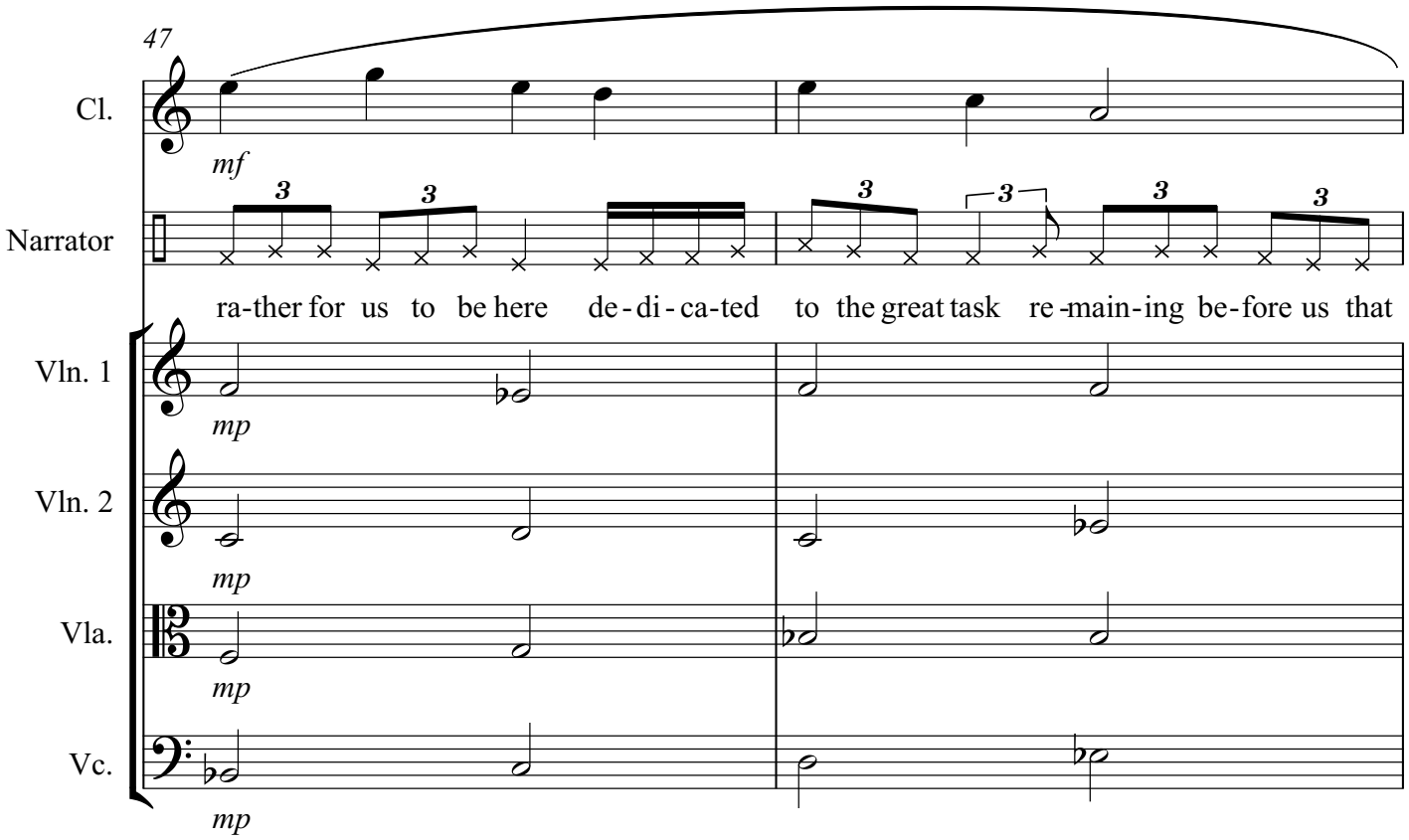

28
Cl.
mp
3
Narrator
lar-ger sense we can not de di cate we can not con-se-crate we can not hal-low this
Vln. 1
mp
Vln. 2
mp
Vla.
mp
Vc.
mp
30
Cl.
mf
mp
Narrator
3
ground
The brave men li-ving and dead who
Vln. 1
mf
mp
Vln. 2
mf
mp
Vla.
mf
mp
Vc.
mf
mp

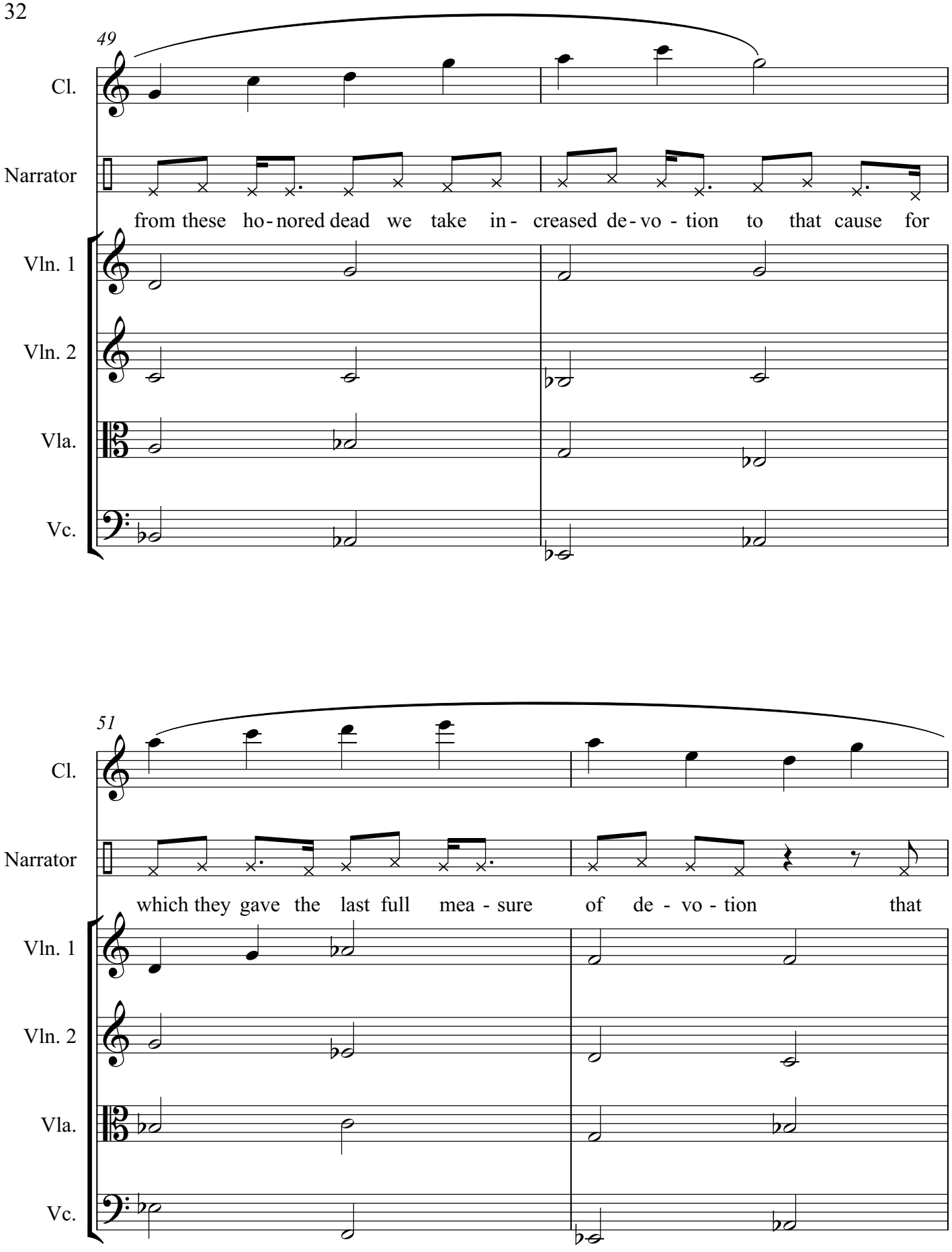

33
Cl.
Narrator
strug-gled here have con-se-cra-ted it far a-bove our poor po- wer to
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.

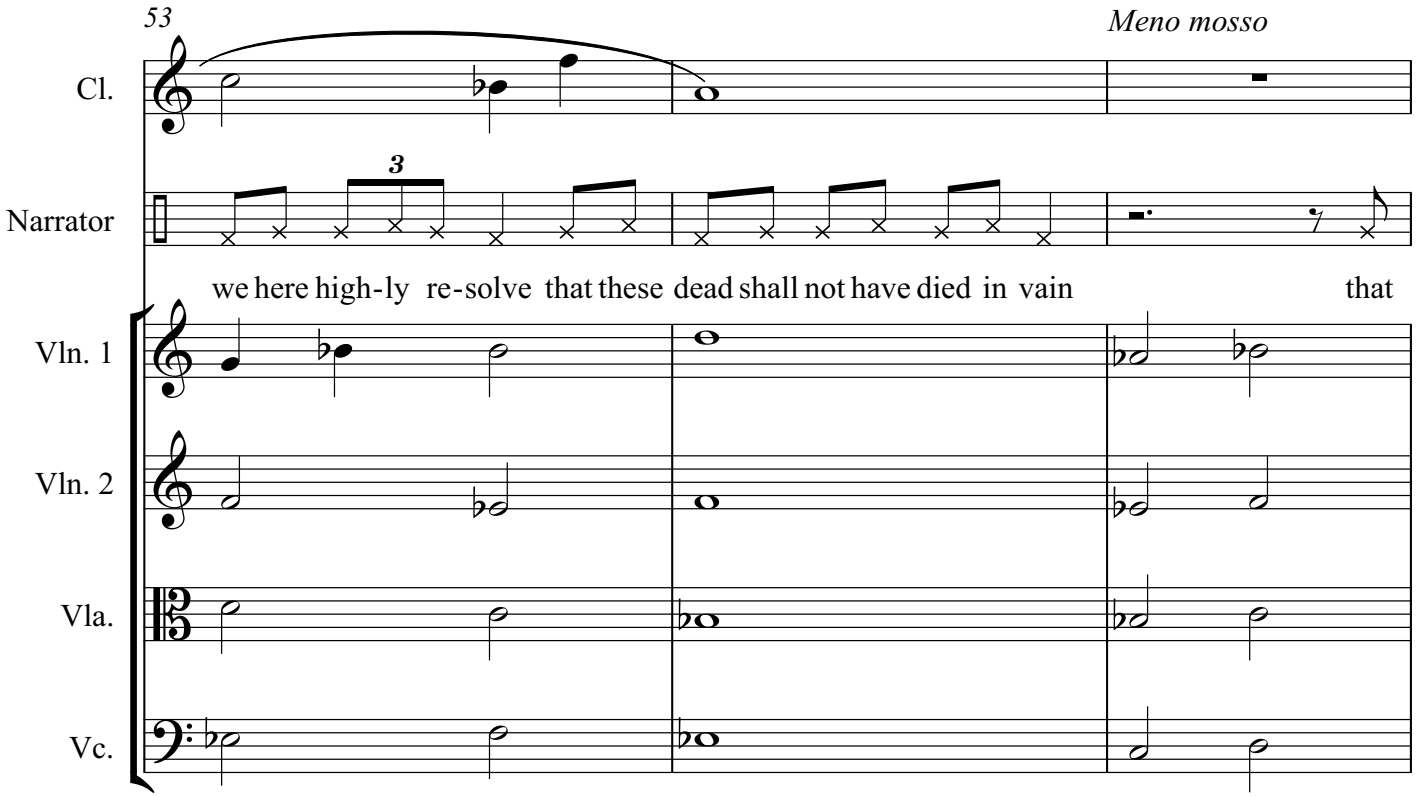

35
Cl.
p
Narrator
add or de-tract The world will lit - tle note nor long re -
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
p
Vla.
p
Vc.
p

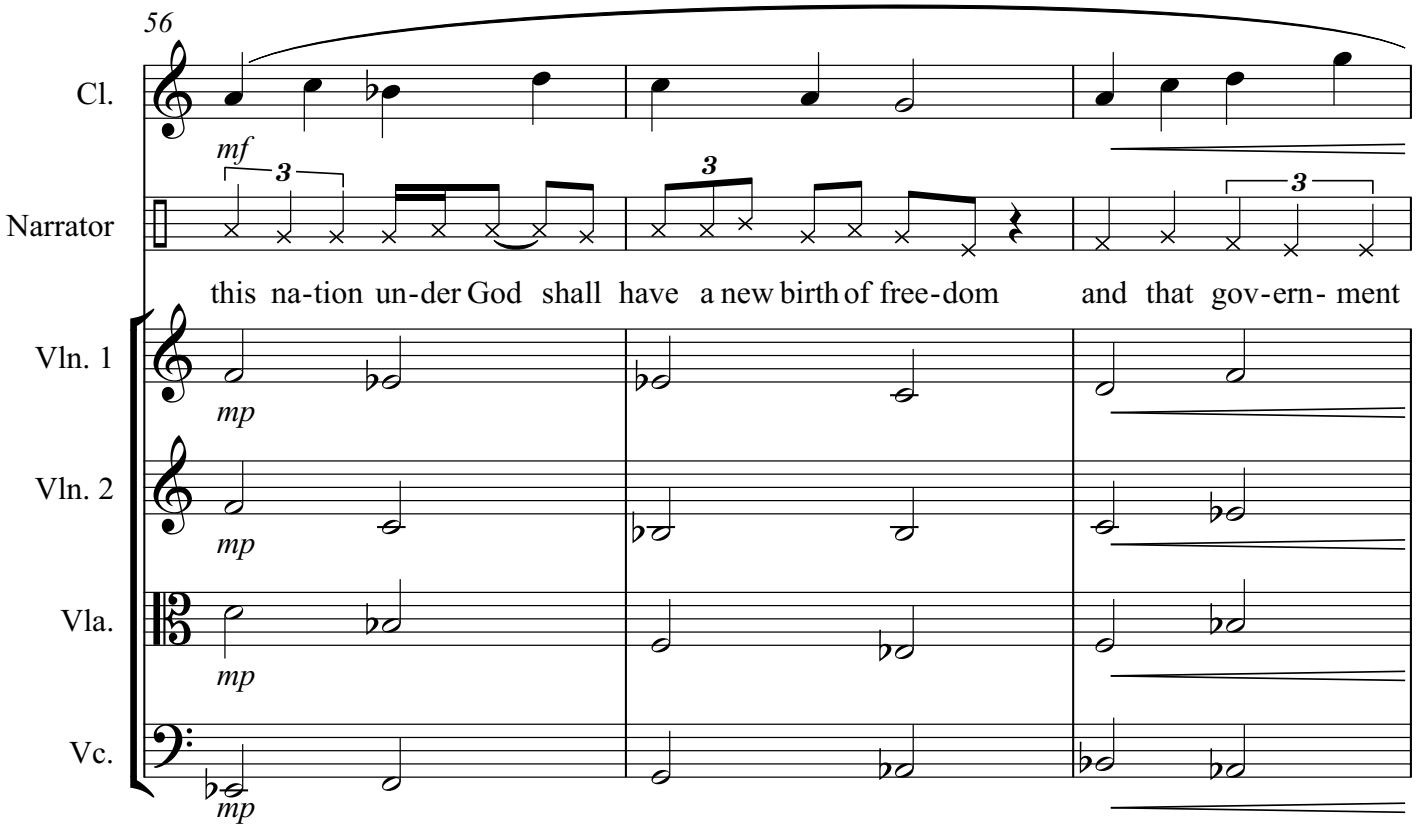

38
Cl.
Narrator
mem-ber what we say here but it can ne-ver for-get what they did here It is for
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
41
Cl.
mp
Narrator
us the li-ving ra-ther to be de-di-ca-ted here to the un-fi-nished work which
Vln. 1
mp
Vln. 2
mp
Vla.
mp
Vc.
mp

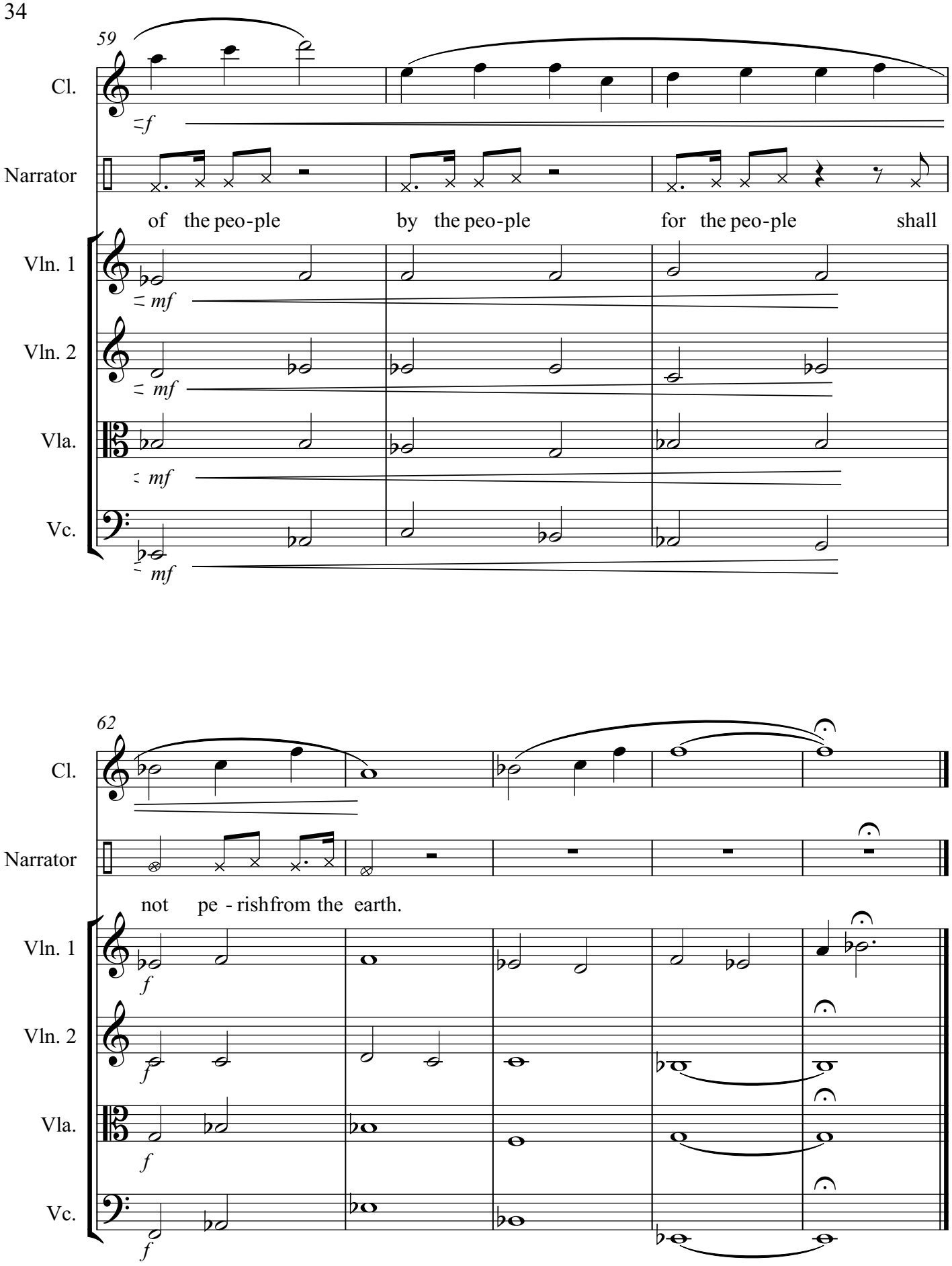

43
Cl.
mf
Narrator
3
3
they who fought here have thus far so no-bly ad- vanced. It is
Vln. 1
mf
Vln. 2
mf
Vla.
mf
Vc.
mf


47
Cl.
mf
Narrator
3
3
3
3
3
3
ra-ther for us to be here de-di-ca-ted to the great task re-main-ing be-fore us that
Vln. 1
mp
Vln. 2
mp
Vla.
mp
Vc.
mp


49
Cl.
Narrator
from these ho - nored dead we take in - creased de - vo - tion to that cause for
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
51
Cl.
Narrator
which they gave the last full mea - sure of de - vo - tion that
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.


53
Meno mosso
Cl.
Narrator
we here high-ly re-solve that these dead shall not have died in vain that
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.


56
Cl.
mf
Narrator
this na-tion un-der God shall have a new birth of free-dom and that gov-ern- ment
Vln. 1
mp
Vln. 2
mp
Vla.
mp
Vc.
mp


59
Cl.
f
Narrator
of the peo-ple by the peo-ple for the peo-ple shall
Vln. 1
mf
Vln. 2
mf
Vla.
mf
Vc.
mf
62
Cl.
Narrator
not pe - rishfrom the earth.
Vln. 1
f
Vln. 2
f
Vla.
f
Vc.
f