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To Launch a Thousand Ships

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To Launch a Thousand Ships

by

Daniel Silva

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Music, Hunter College
The City University of New York

2022

1/3/2022	Professor Shafer Mahoney
Date	Thesis Sponsor
1/3/2022	Professor Philip Ewell
Date	Second Reader

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Hunter College Music Department for providing a welcoming environment with abundant academic resources, especially during a global pandemic. In particular, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Professor Shafer Mahoney, for his diligent guidance, consistent encouragement, and for introducing me to twentieth-century works from Barber, Elgar, Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff, and Sibelius. I am grateful to have found my artistic voice through the one-on-one instruction with Professor Mahoney. In addition, I would also like to thank Professor Philip Ewell, whose Russian Opera course introduced me to the great Rimsky-Korsakov. Furthermore, I would like to thank all my colleagues and classmates whose inquisitive minds and musical talents continue to inspire my passion for music.

Program Notes

To Launch a Thousand Ships
by
Daniel Silva

Inspired by Madeline Miller's novel *The Song of Achilles* (2012), this orchestral composition, *To Launch a Thousand Ships,* encompasses the breadth and nuances of the Trojan War as illustrated by the characters of the iconic hero Achilles, his companion Patroclus, and Achilles' mother Thetis. The French horn depicts the warrior prowess of Achilles, and the English horn and oboe capture the soft yet resilient strength of Patroclus. The strings section highlights the comradery of the Greek army, while the bassoon colors the regality of the Trojan noblemen and women. After the blood-pounding launch of Trojan fleet and yearning intimacy of the warriors' relationship as represented in the first and second movements, the third movement zeroes-in on Thetis' piercing supernatural powers as showcased by the violin's marcato solo. *To Launch a Thousand Ships* explores humanity's fragility in the face of violence and reveals the affective relationships beneath the hero archetype.

First Movement: I. The Trojan Shoreline

Achilles, the best warrior of his generation, leads the Greek invasion across the Trojan shoreline. Heroes from both armies prepare for battle. The Trojan noblemen and women perch on top of their fortress, anticipating the clash of shields, spears, and iron. Achilles hurls his spear a hundred yards over the Trojan infantry and strikes its commander. First blood is drawn by the Greeks; the Trojan War has begun.

Second Movement: II. Patroclus' Supplication

Patroclus, Achilles' companion, lover, and trusted advisor, recounts their childhood memories, including their loss of innocence and their rites of passage into manhood. Patroclus kneels before the water's edge in supplication and prays that Thetis will keep Achilles safe.

Third Movement: III. The Waves of Thetis

Thetis, the sea nymph, conjures the power of the ocean. As Achilles' mother and protector, her watchful and vengeful eye spreads a supernatural wave of protection over the Greek army. A grey mist engulfs the Greek battle camps, which hides their location from the Trojan scouts.

Fourth Movement: IV. Aristos Achaion

The Greek army gathers around the funeral pyre. Achilles' body and armor is washed and cleansed by Thetis' servants, who are sea nymphs from the deep ocean. The Greek infantry gathers around the pyre, shaking their spears and striking their swords against their shields. Envious Greek commanders stare from afar; they are too scared to approach the ever-watchful eye of Thetis. Soldiers and nymphs lament, "Aristos Achaion Achilles!" Hail Achilles, the best warrior of a generation!

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I. THE TROJAN SHORELINE

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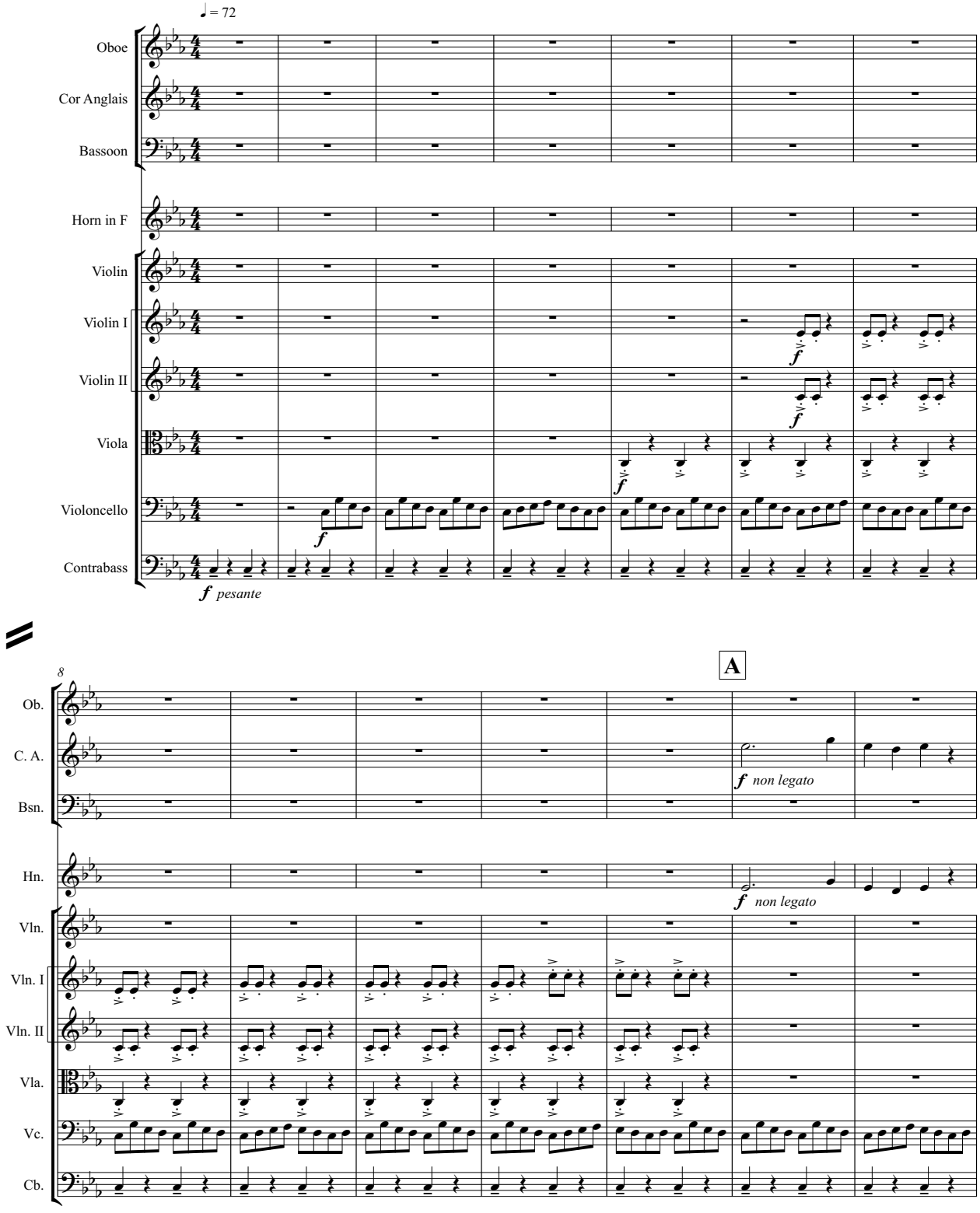

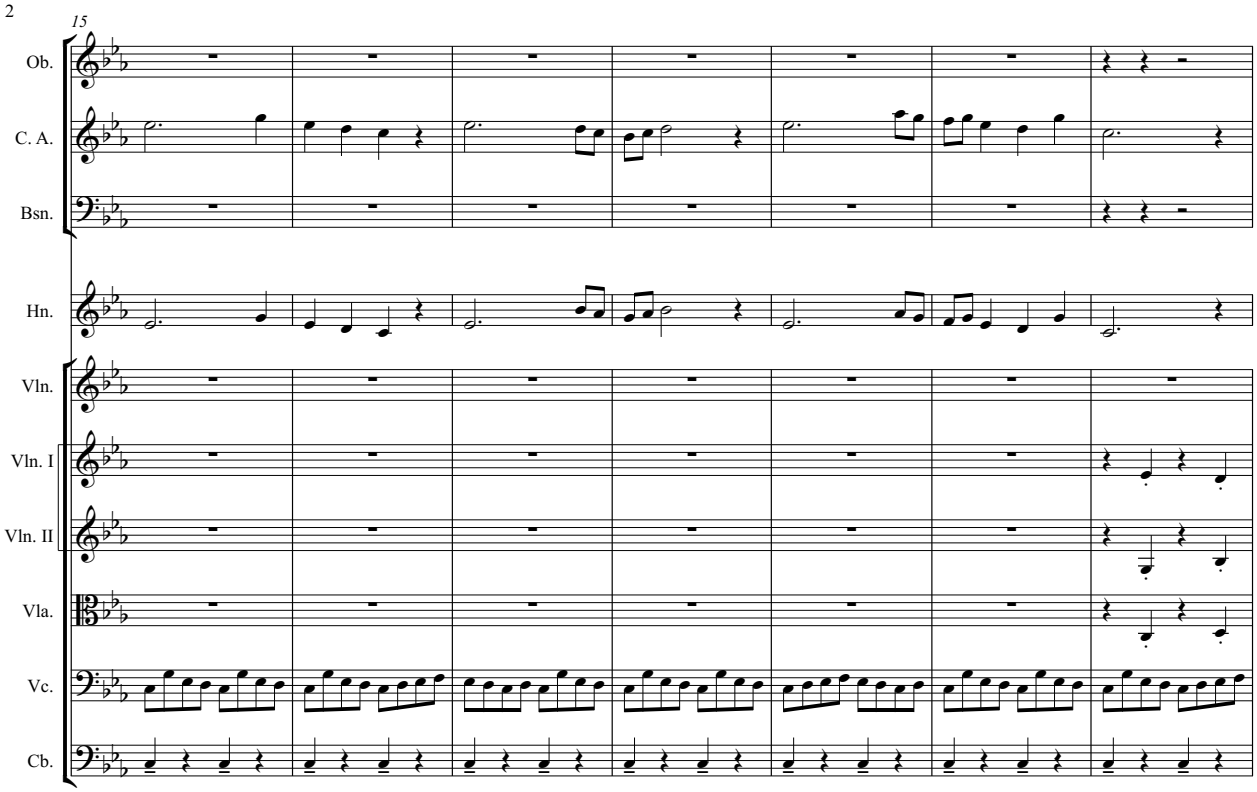
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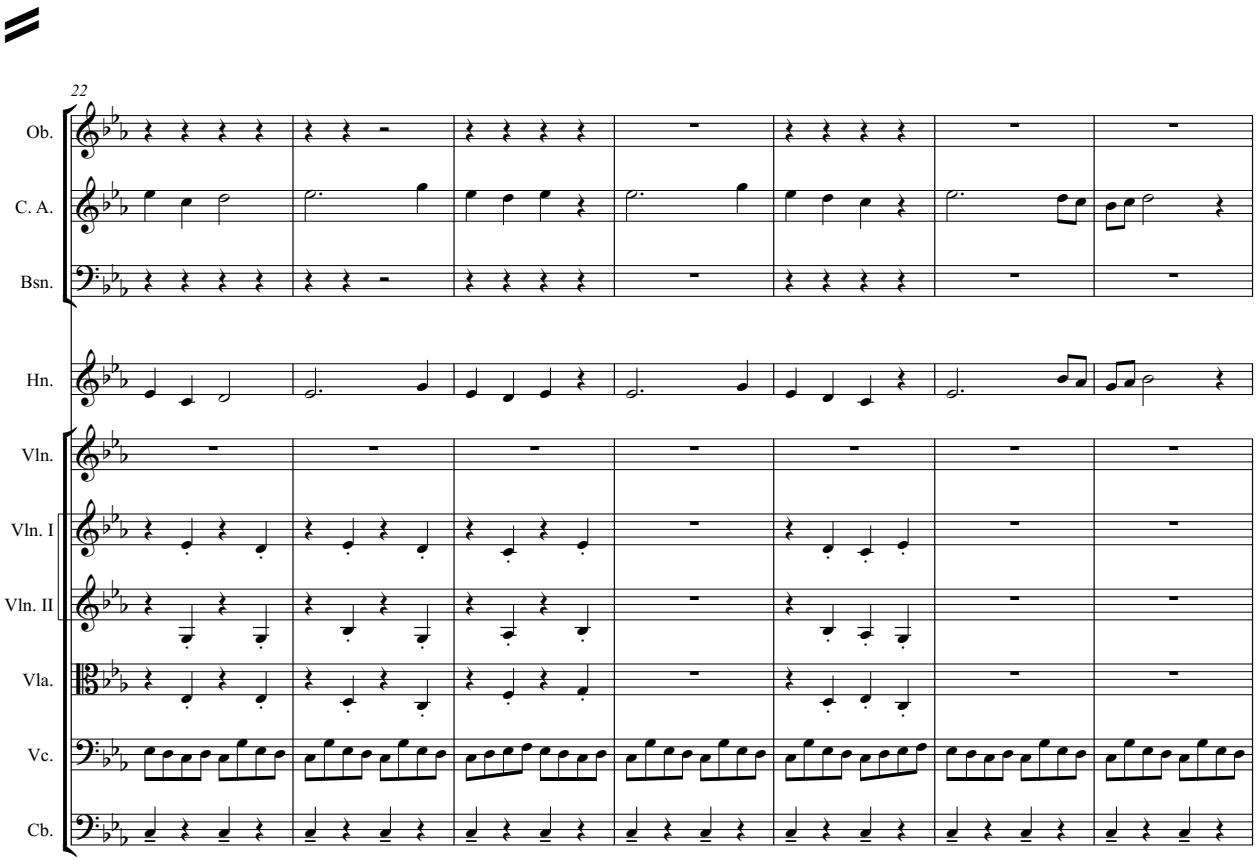
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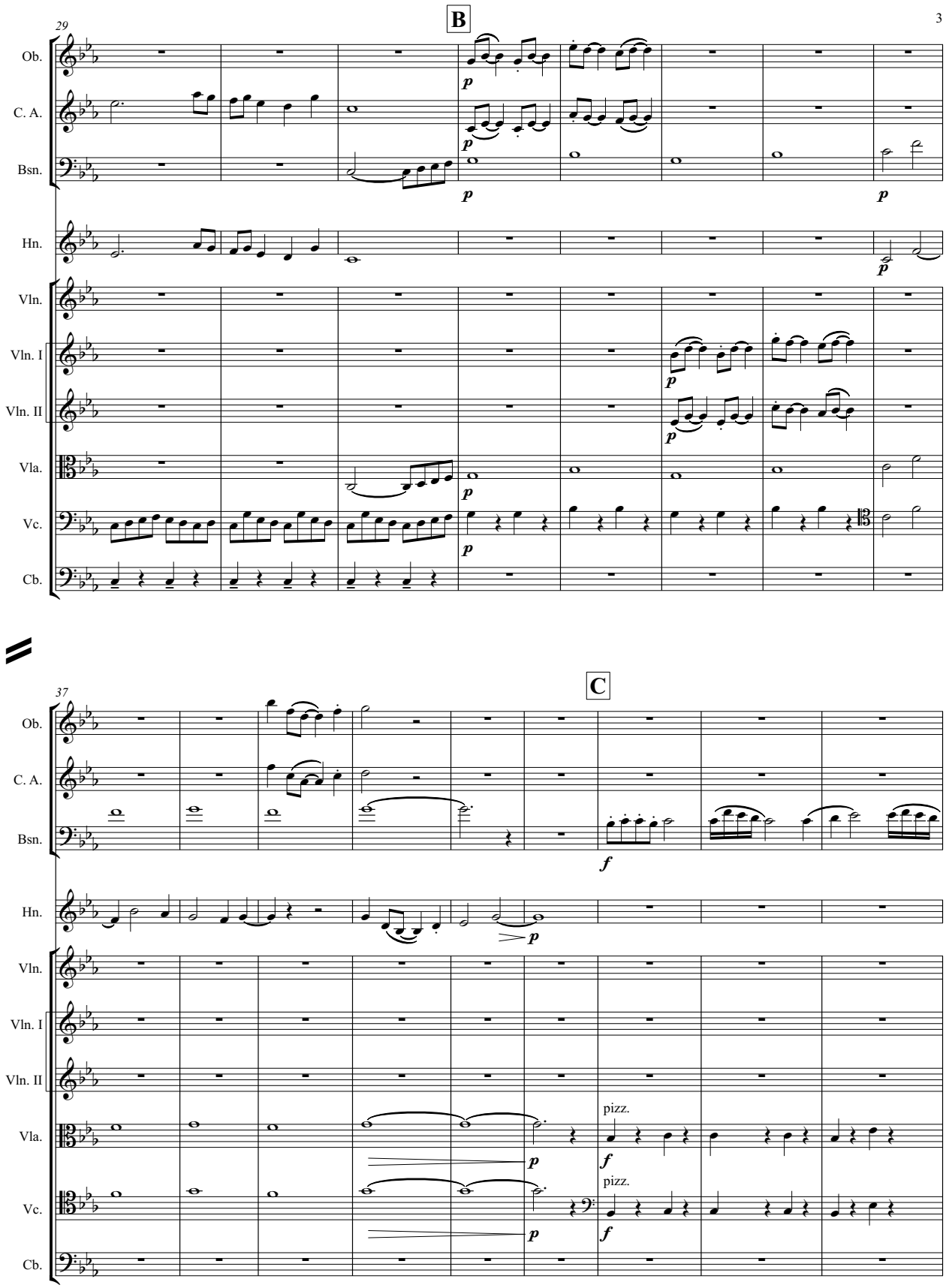
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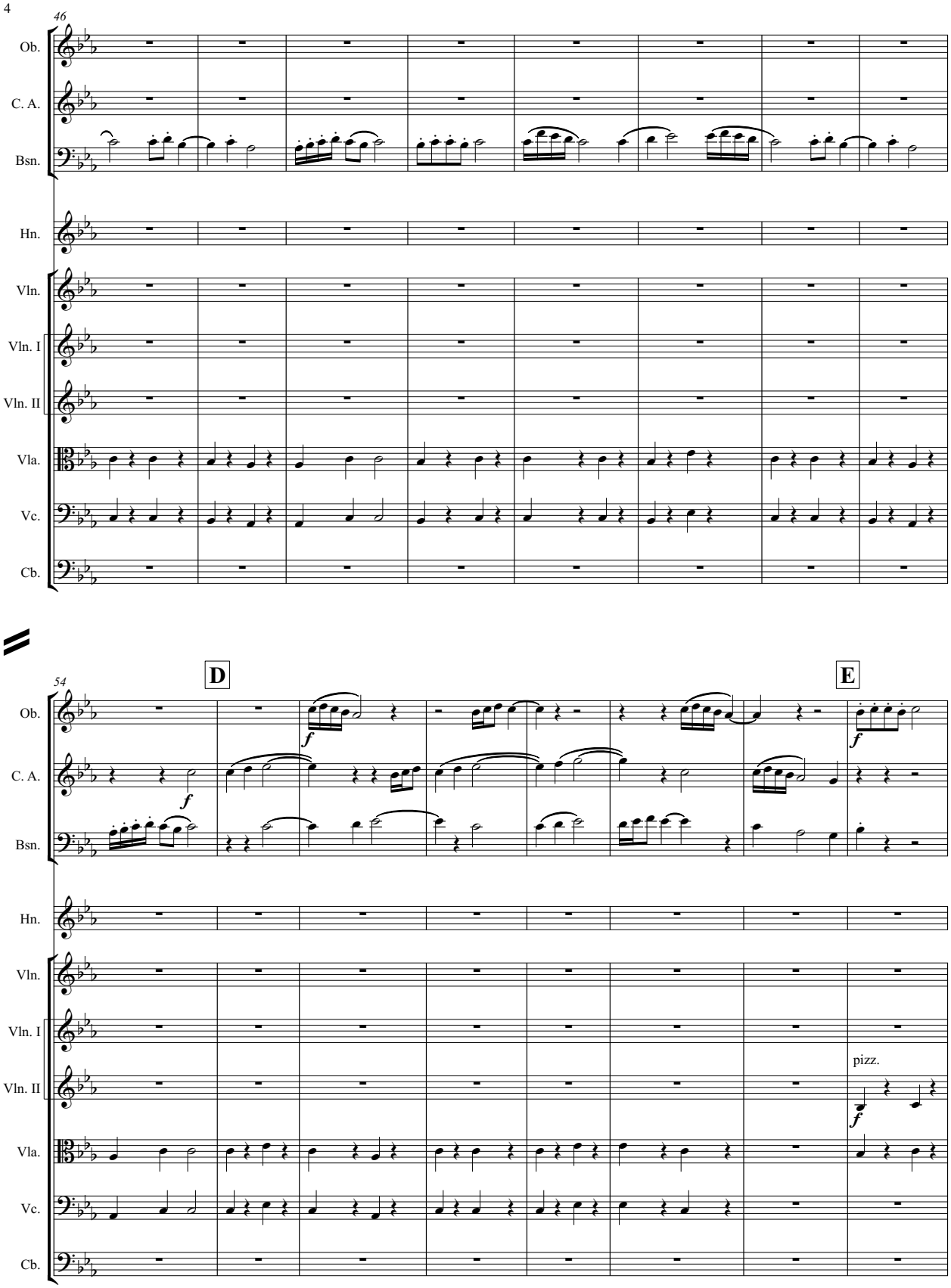
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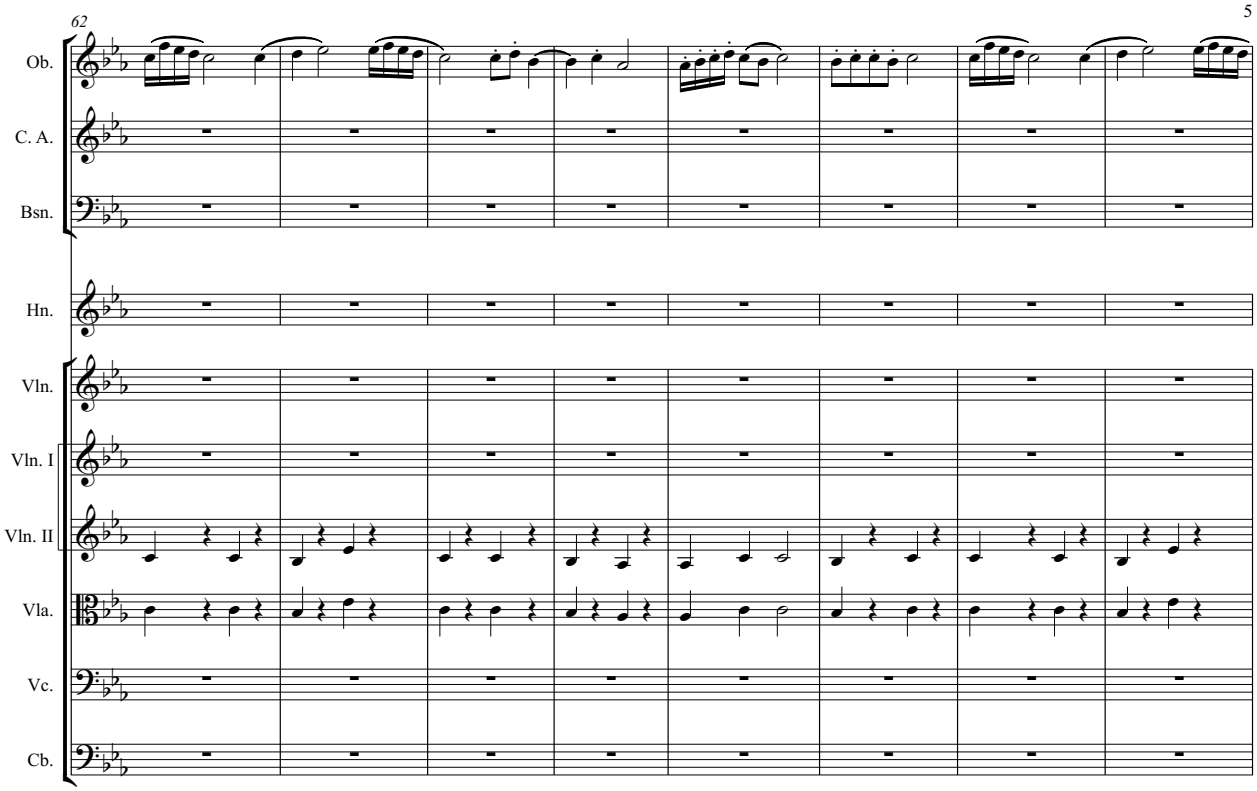
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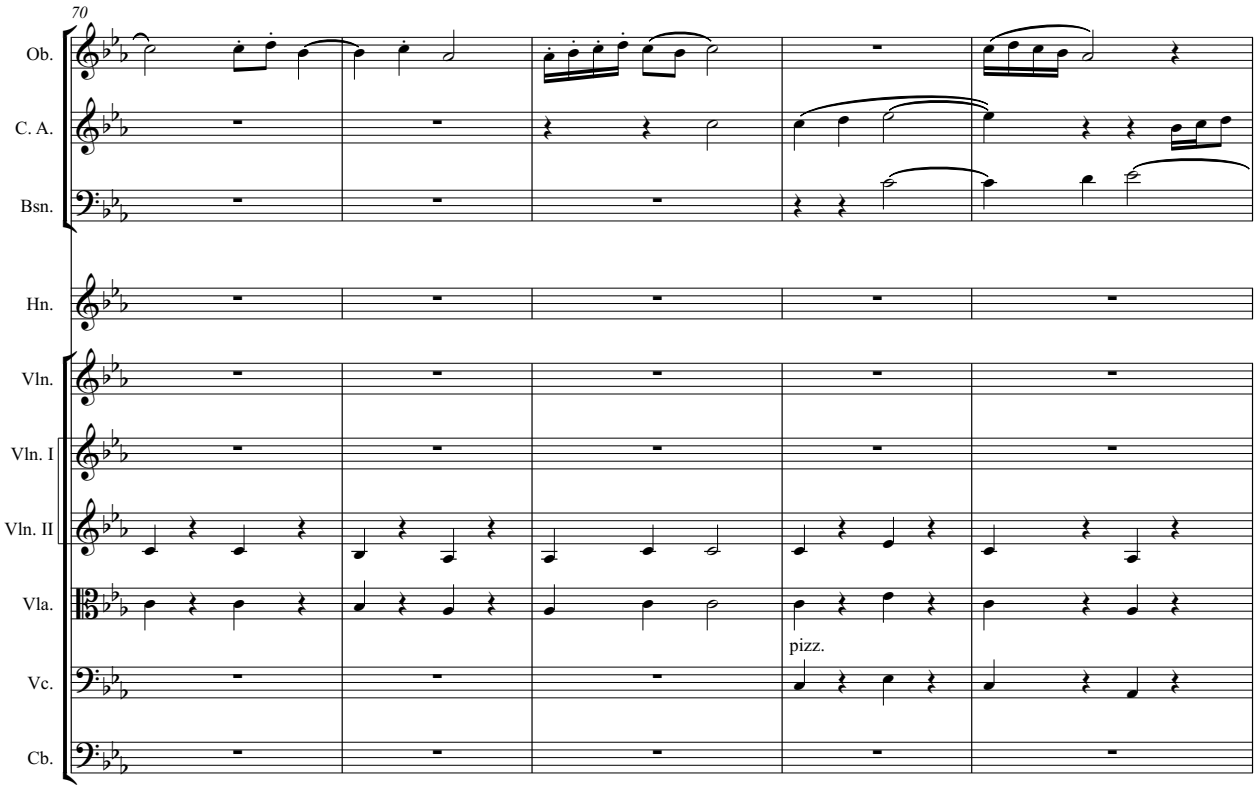
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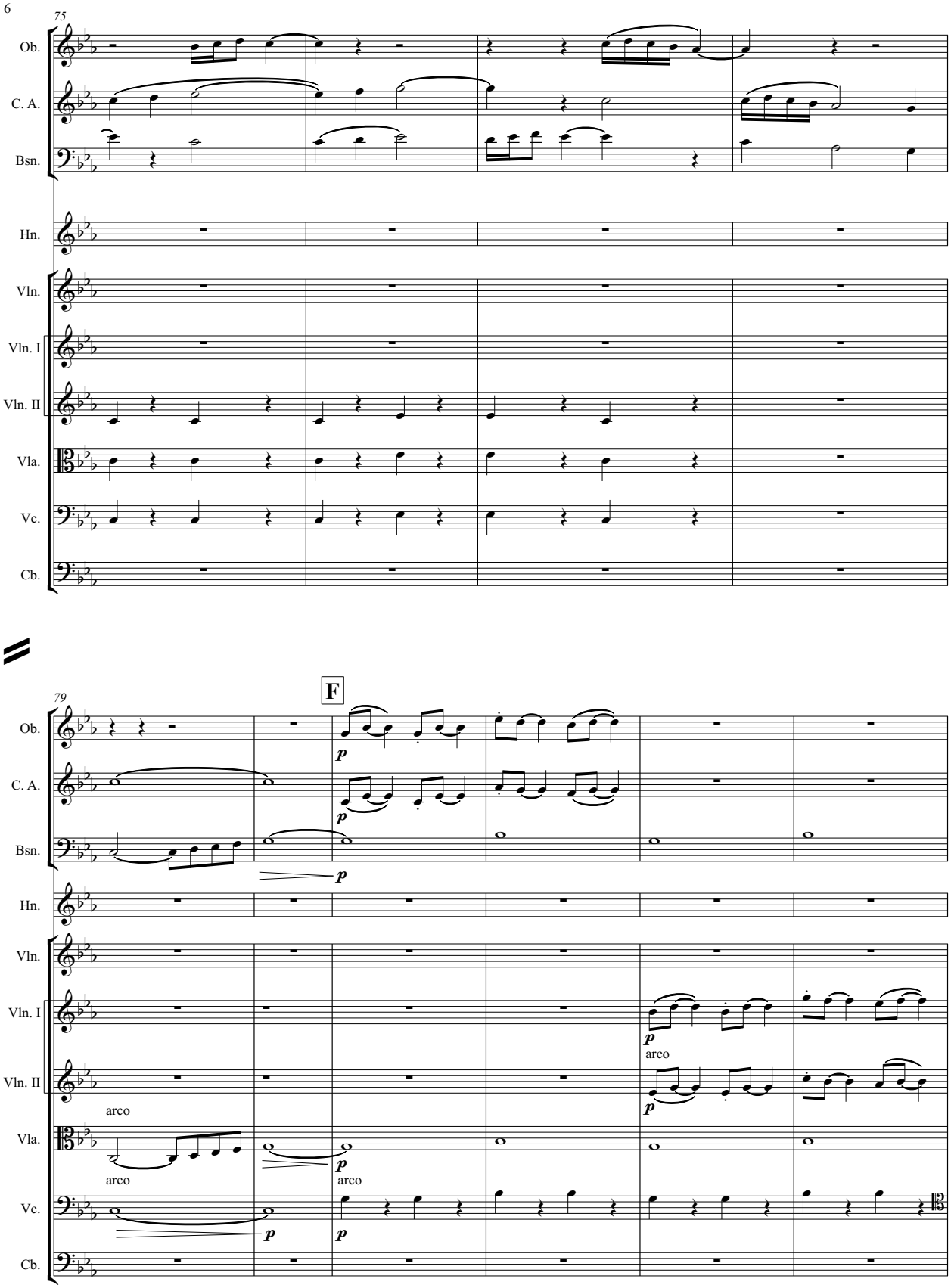
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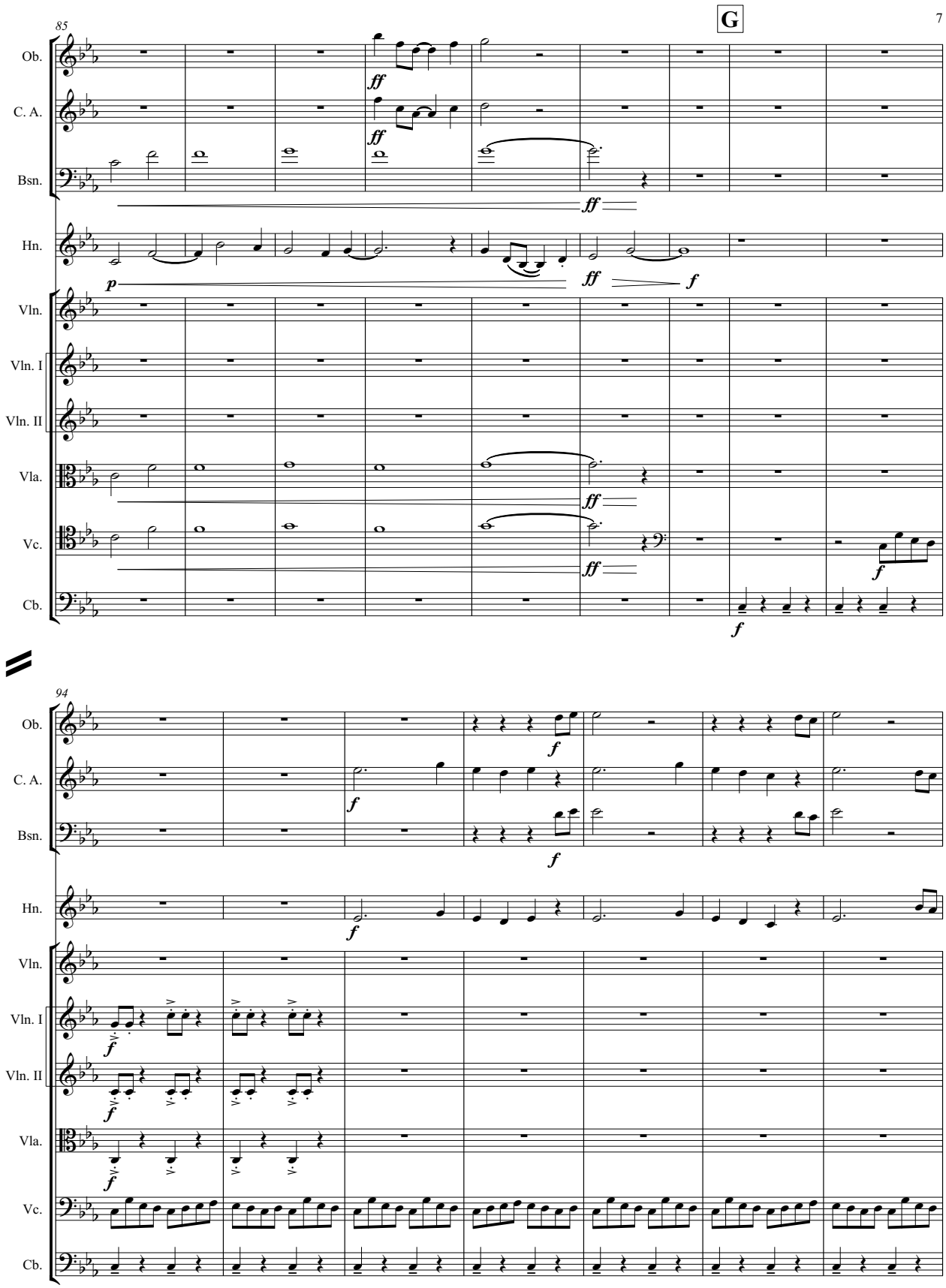
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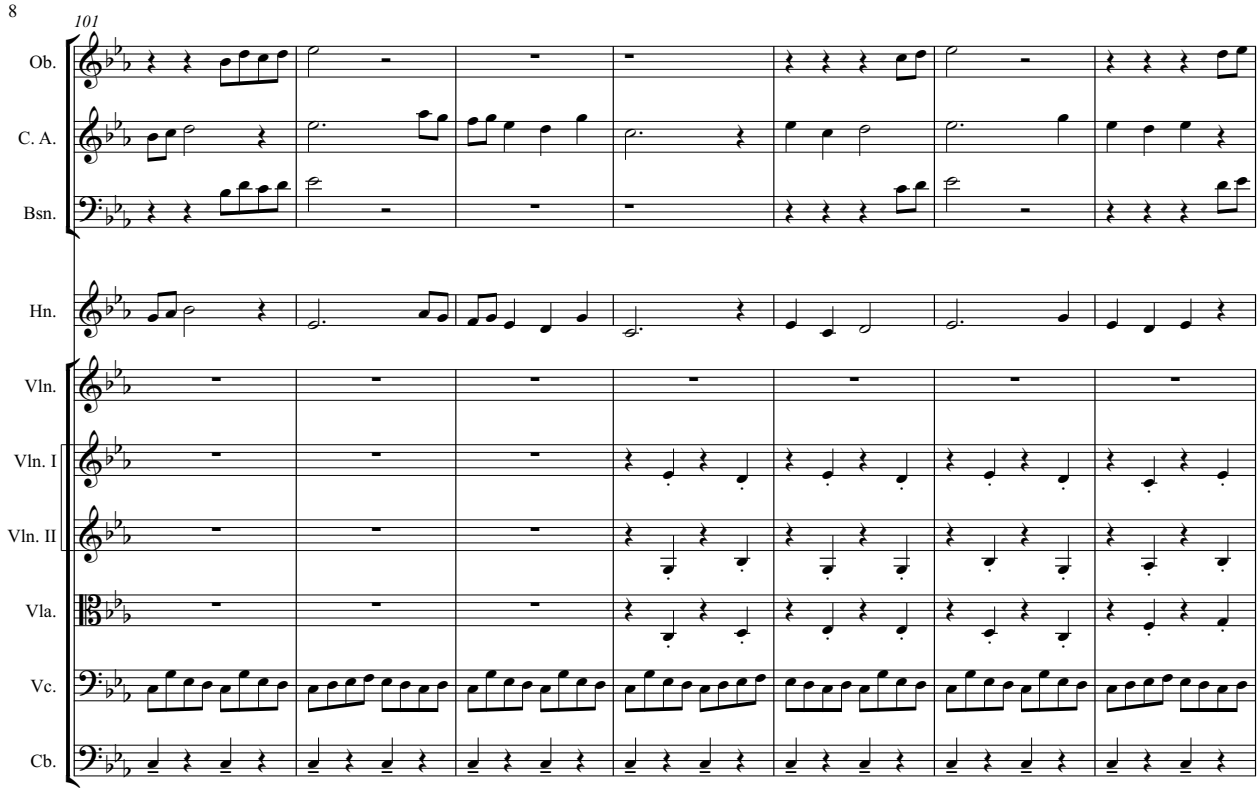
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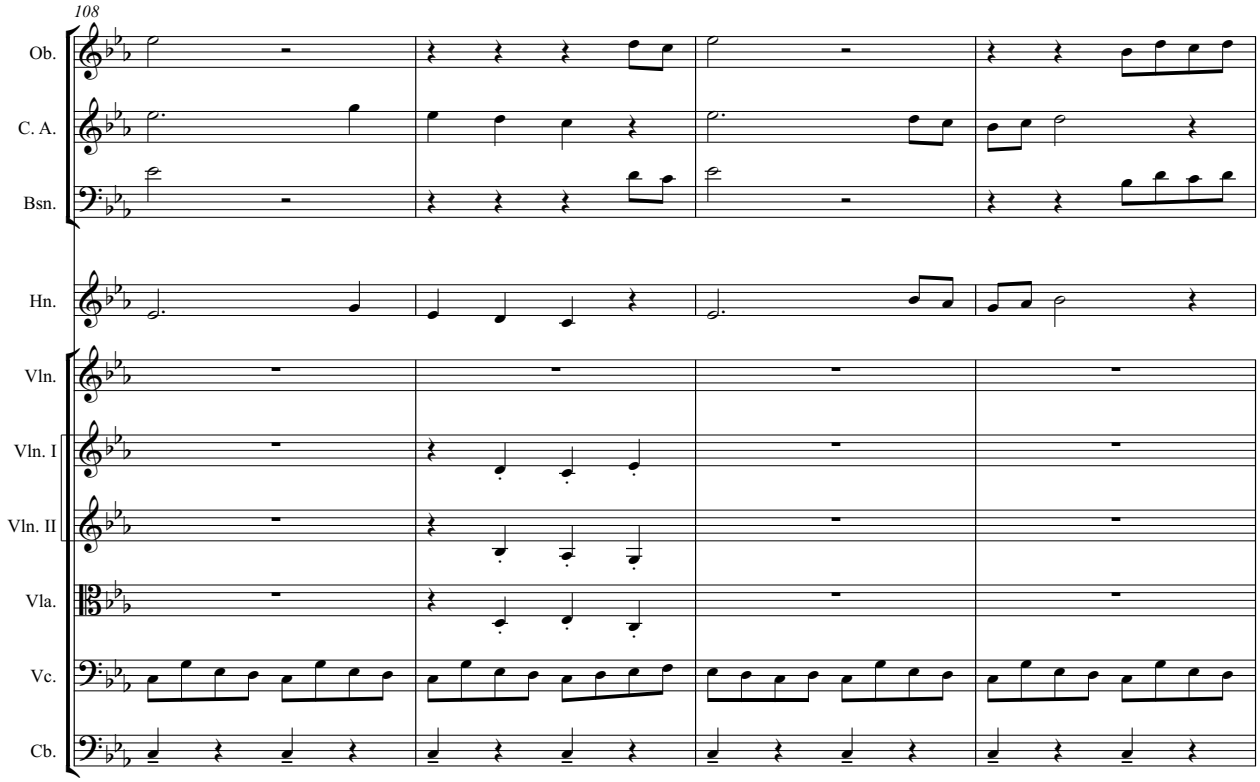
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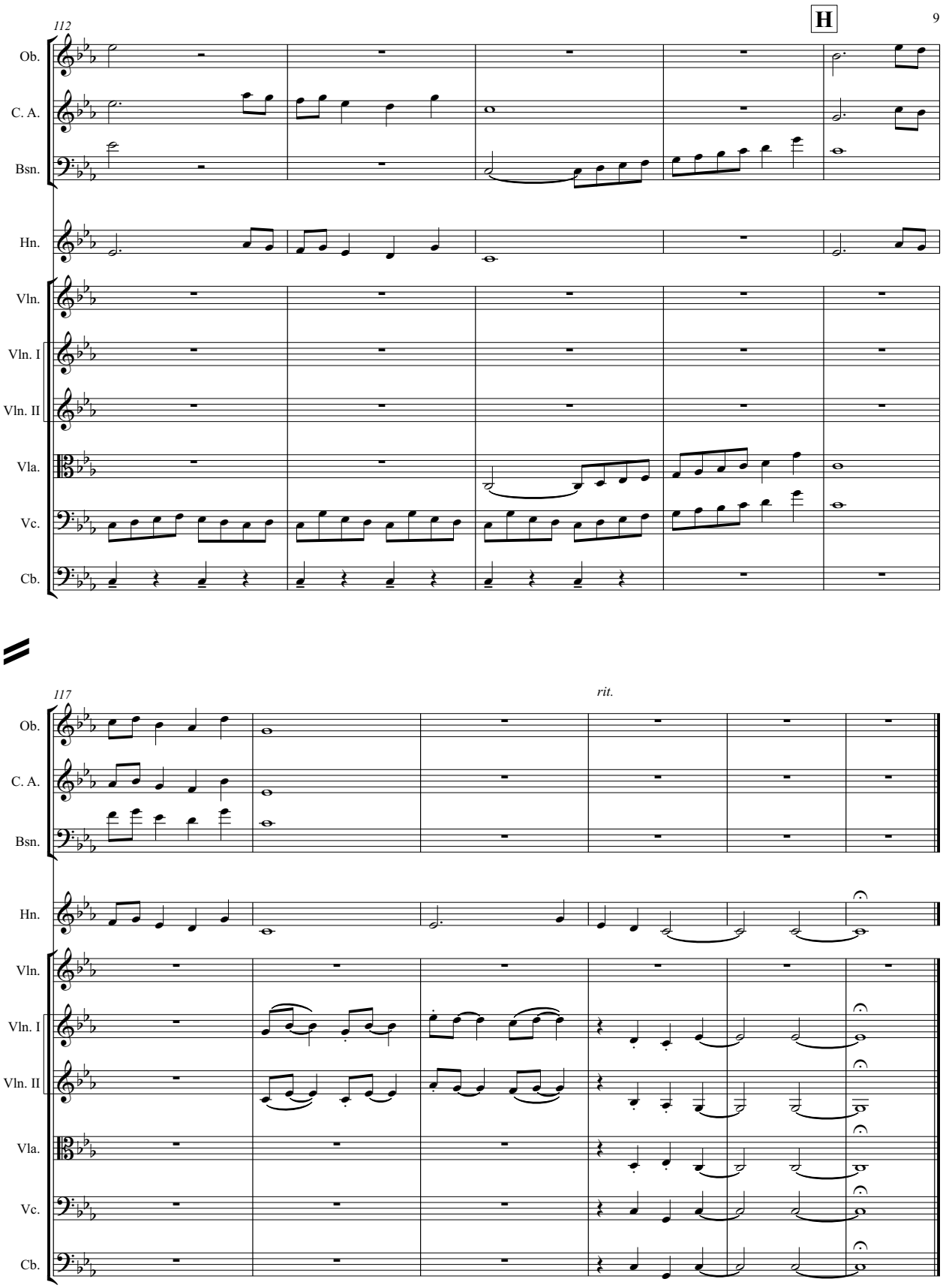
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II. PATROCLUS' SUPPLICATION

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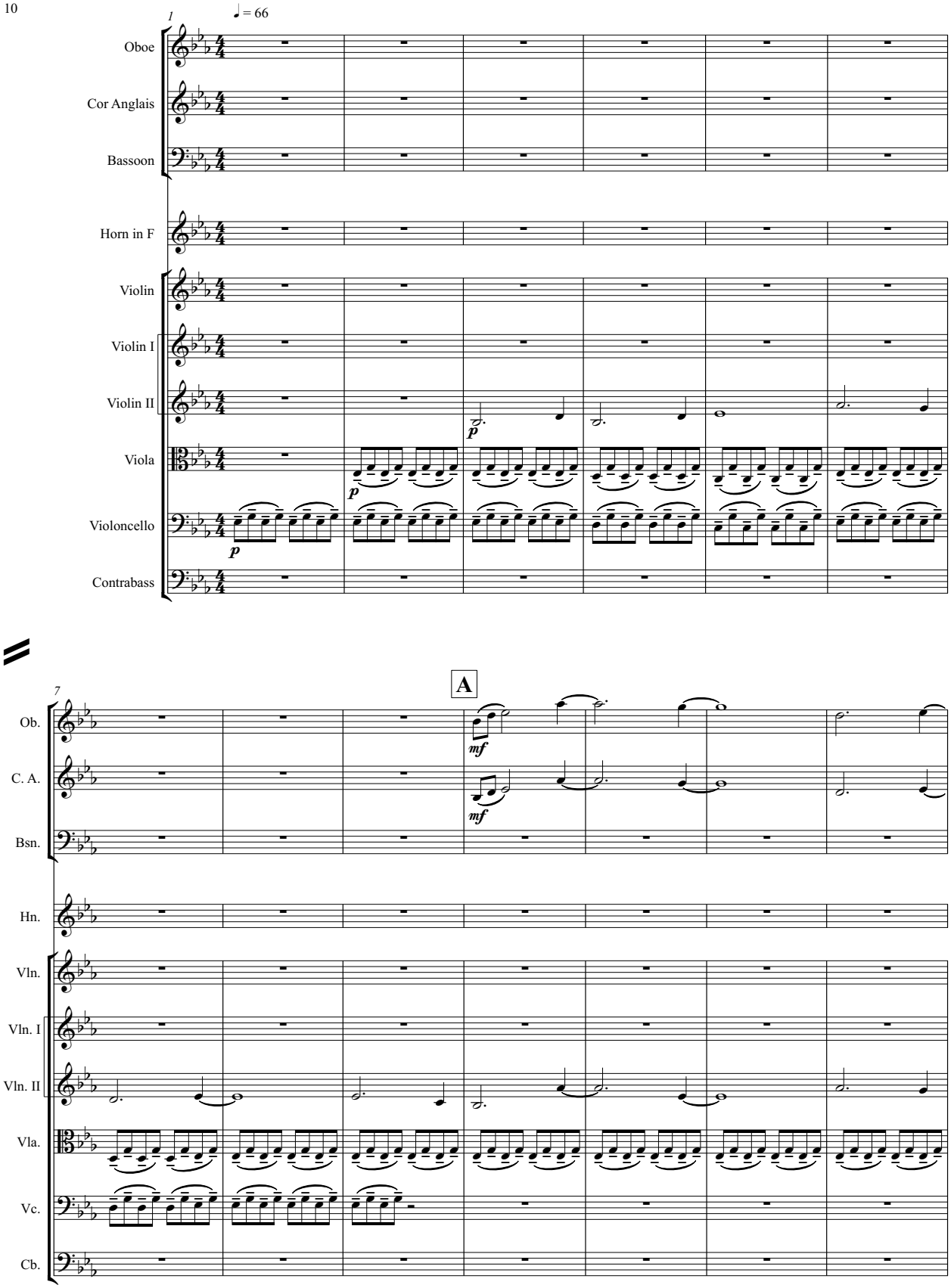

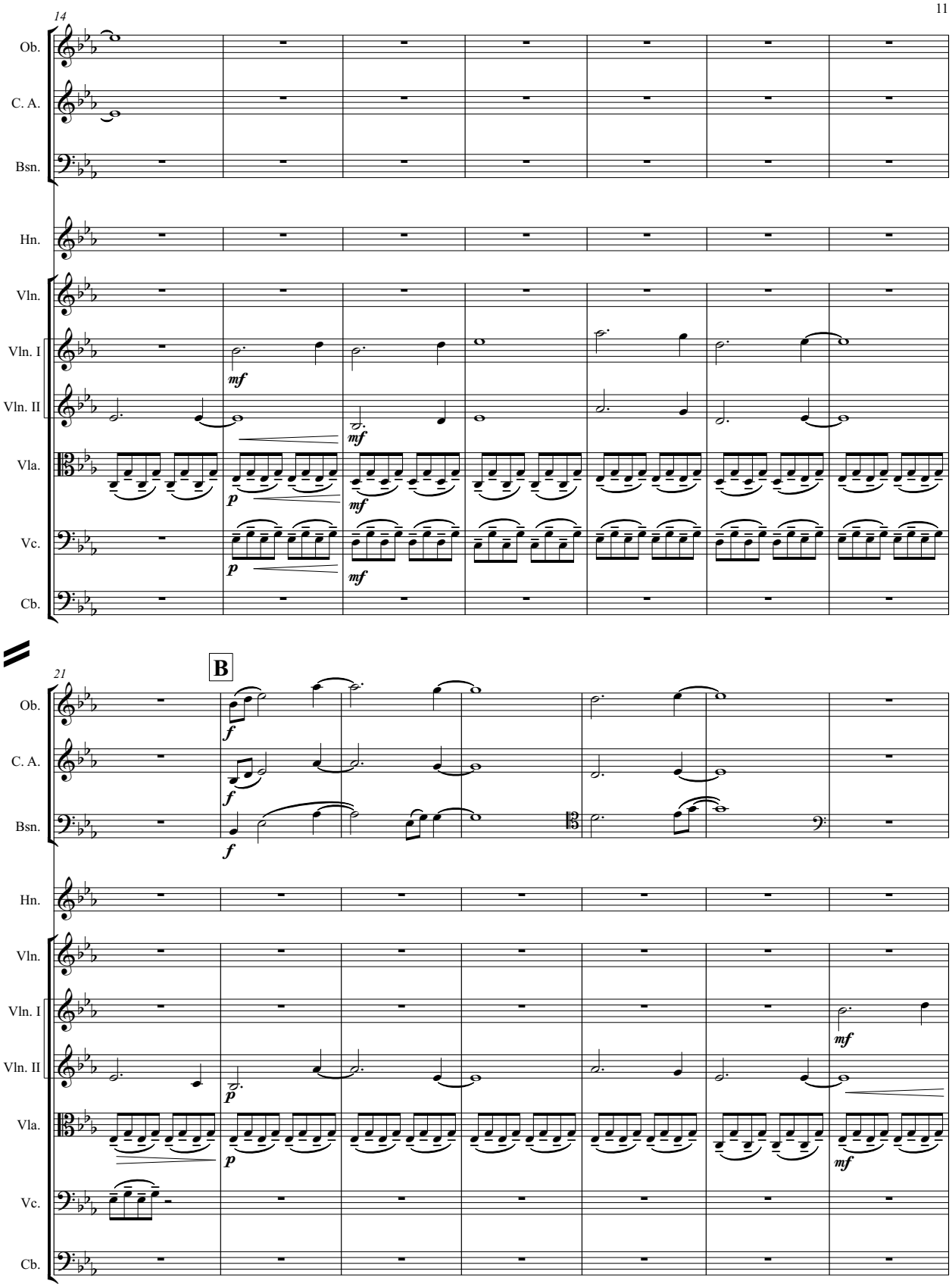
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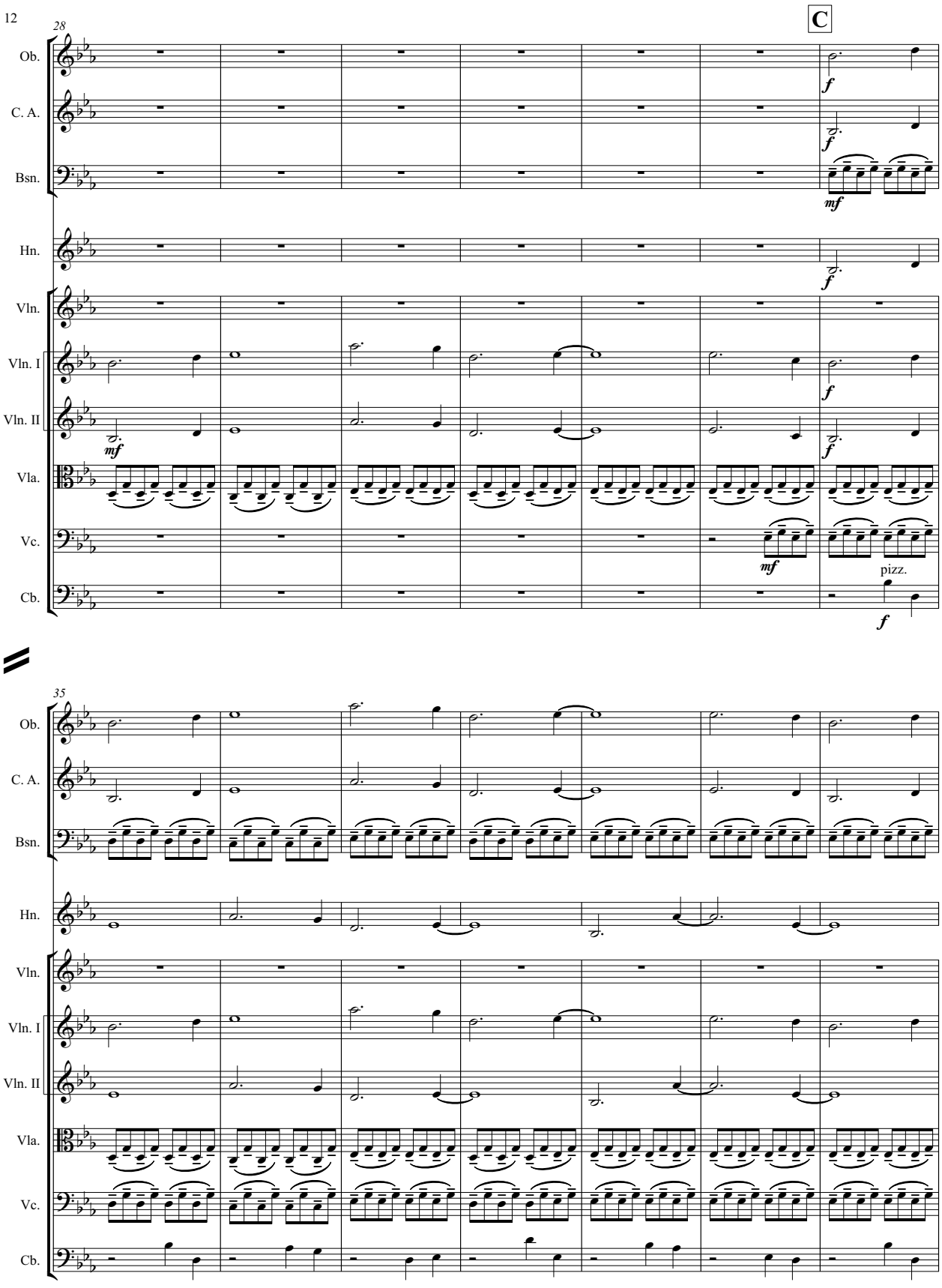
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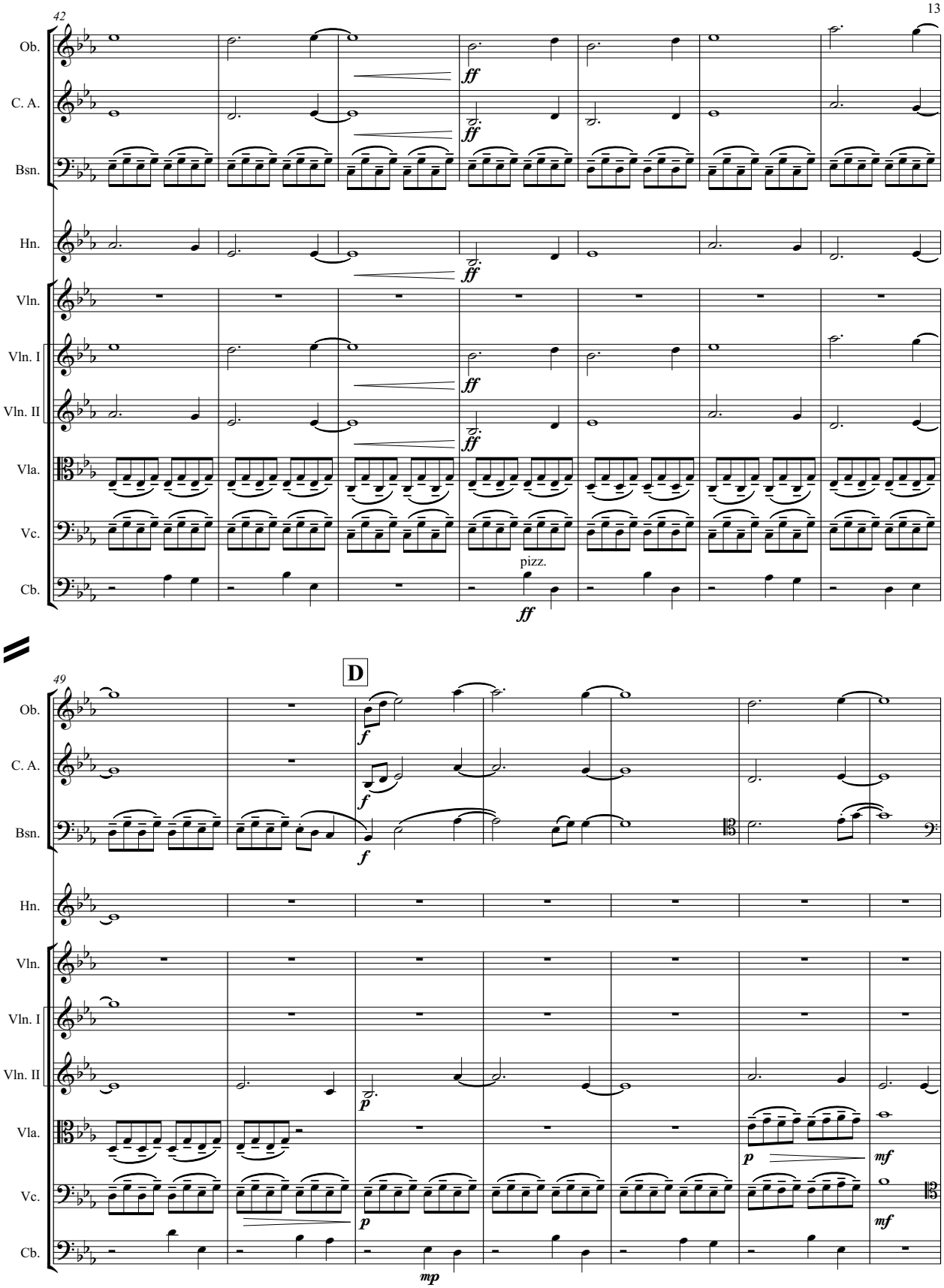
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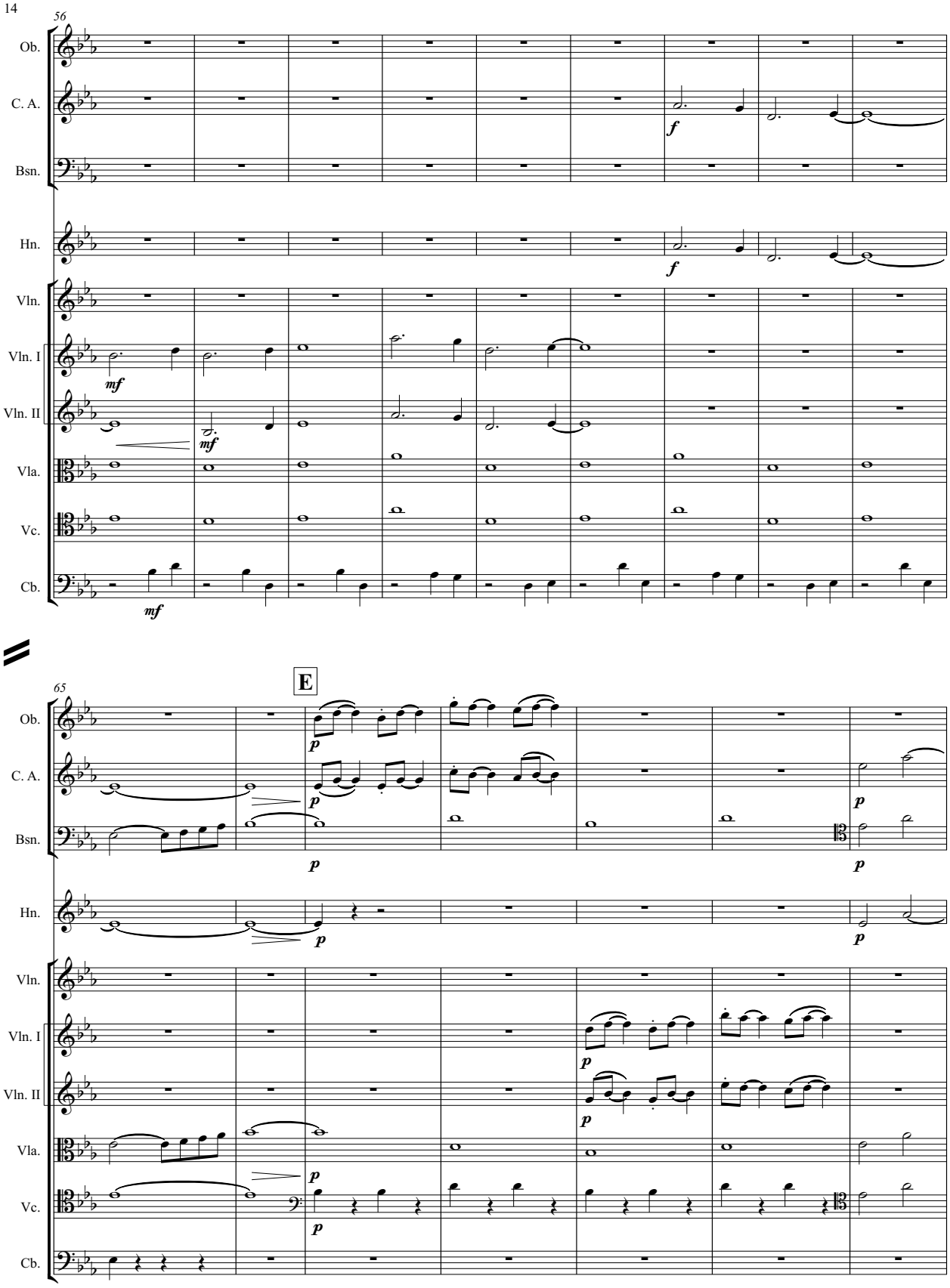
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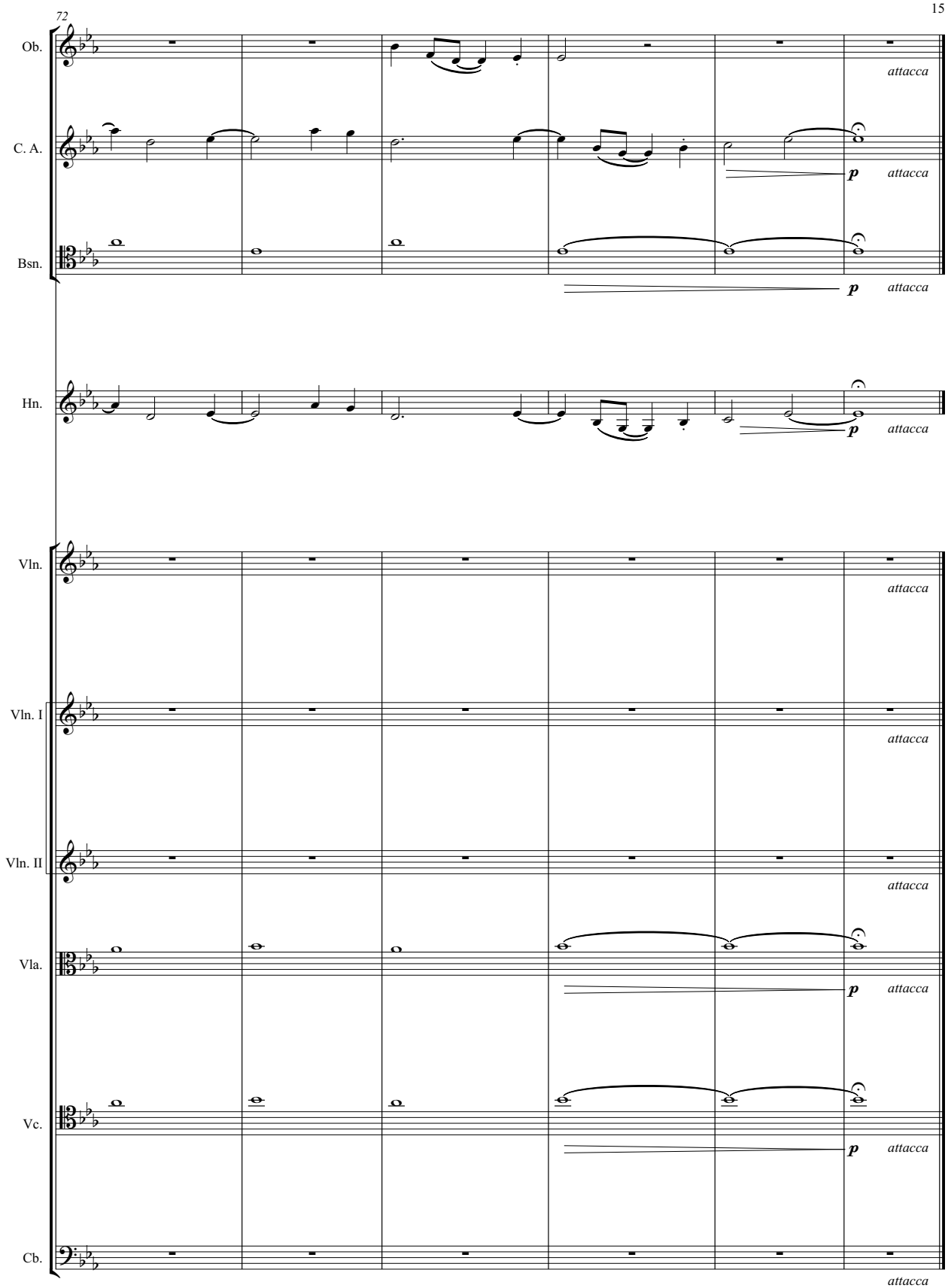
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III. THE WAVES OF THETIS

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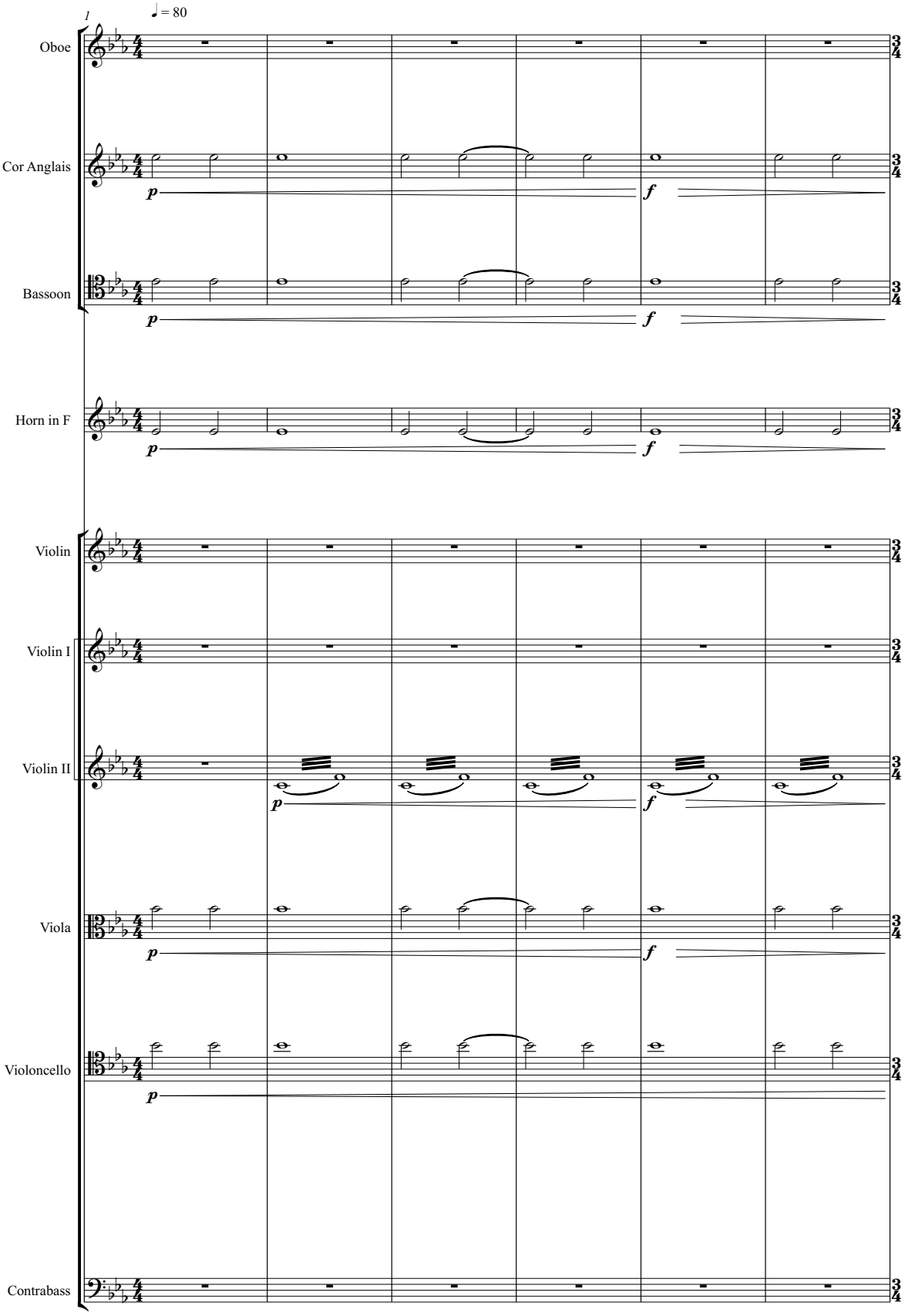

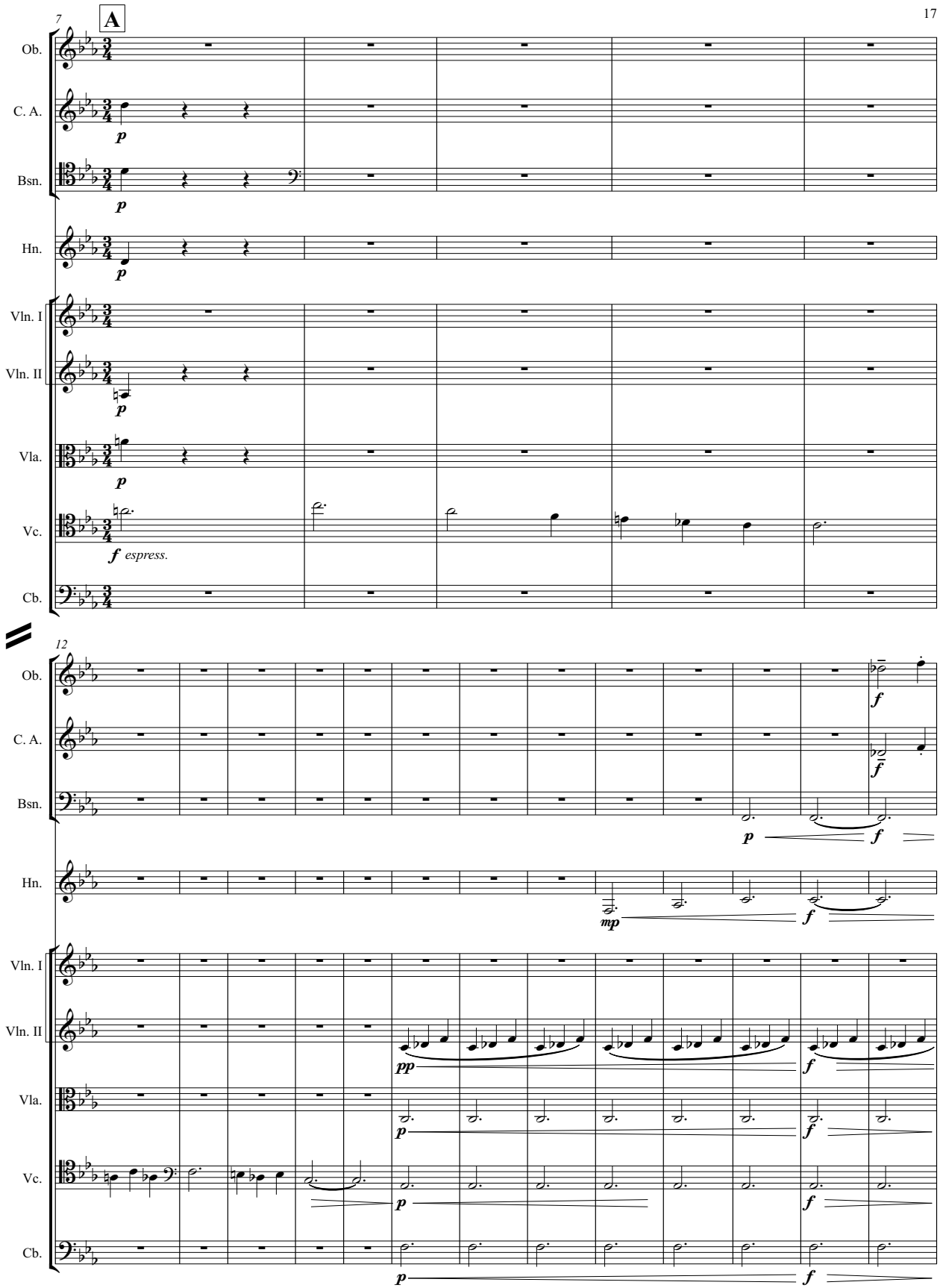
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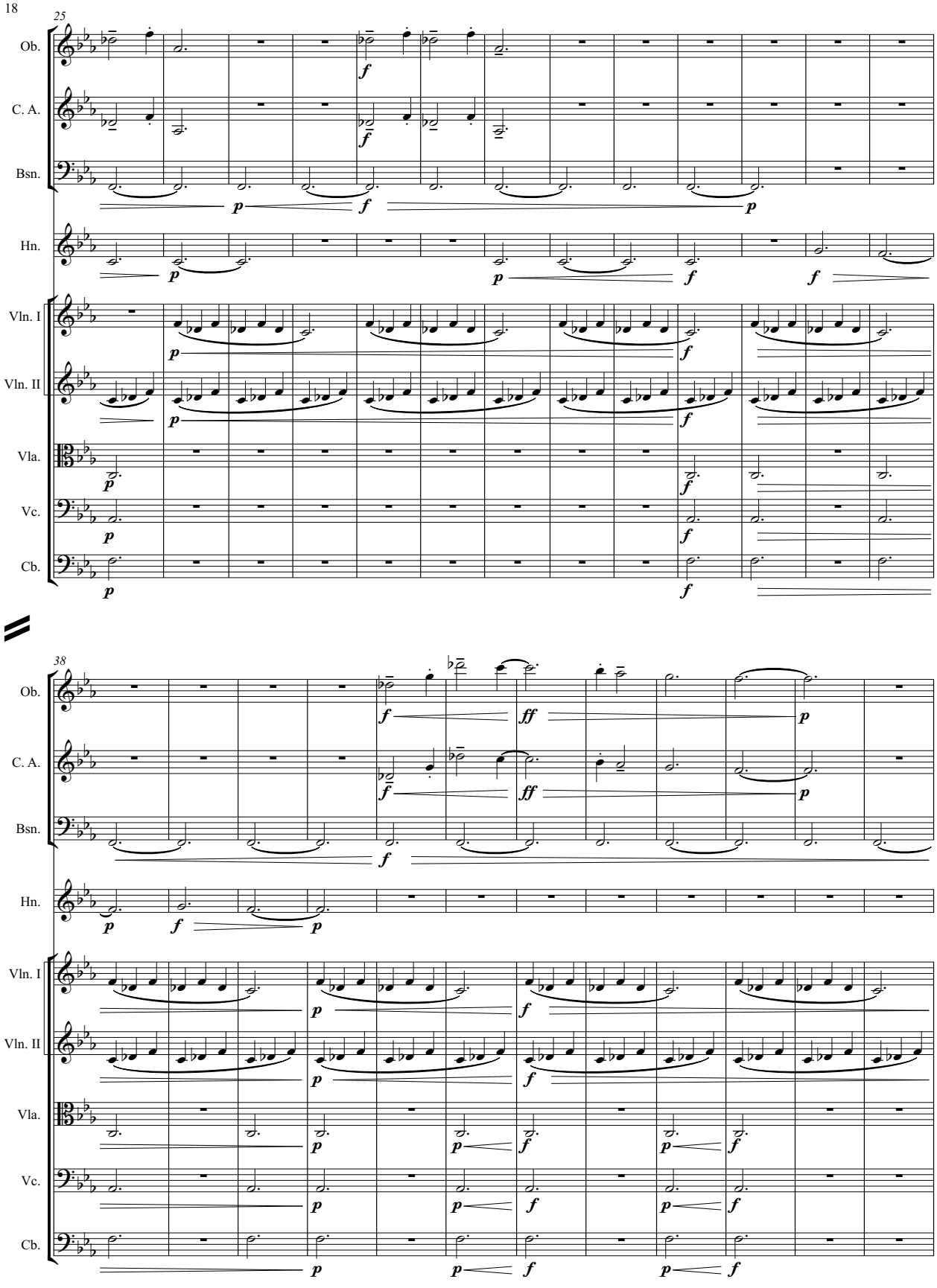
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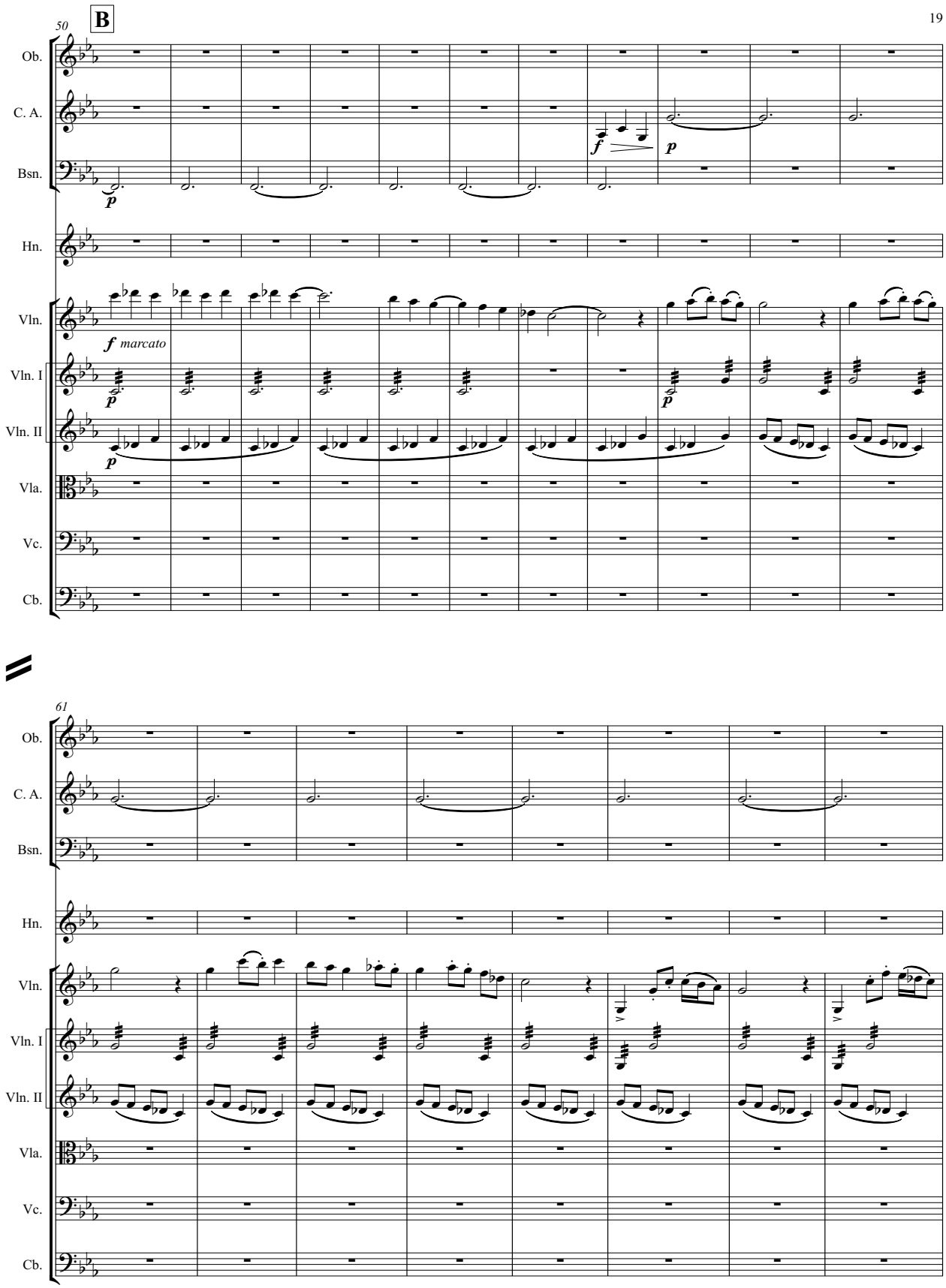
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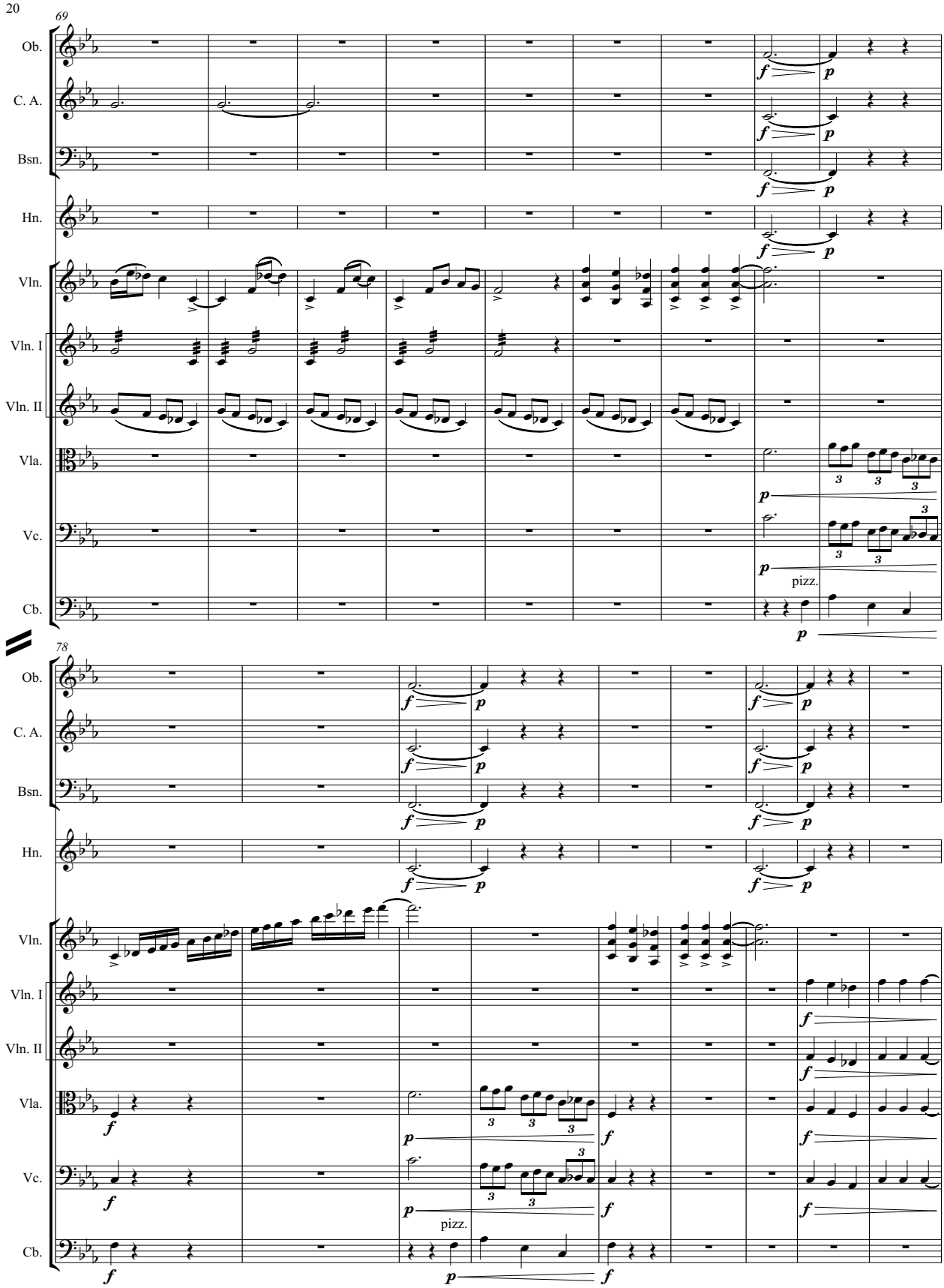
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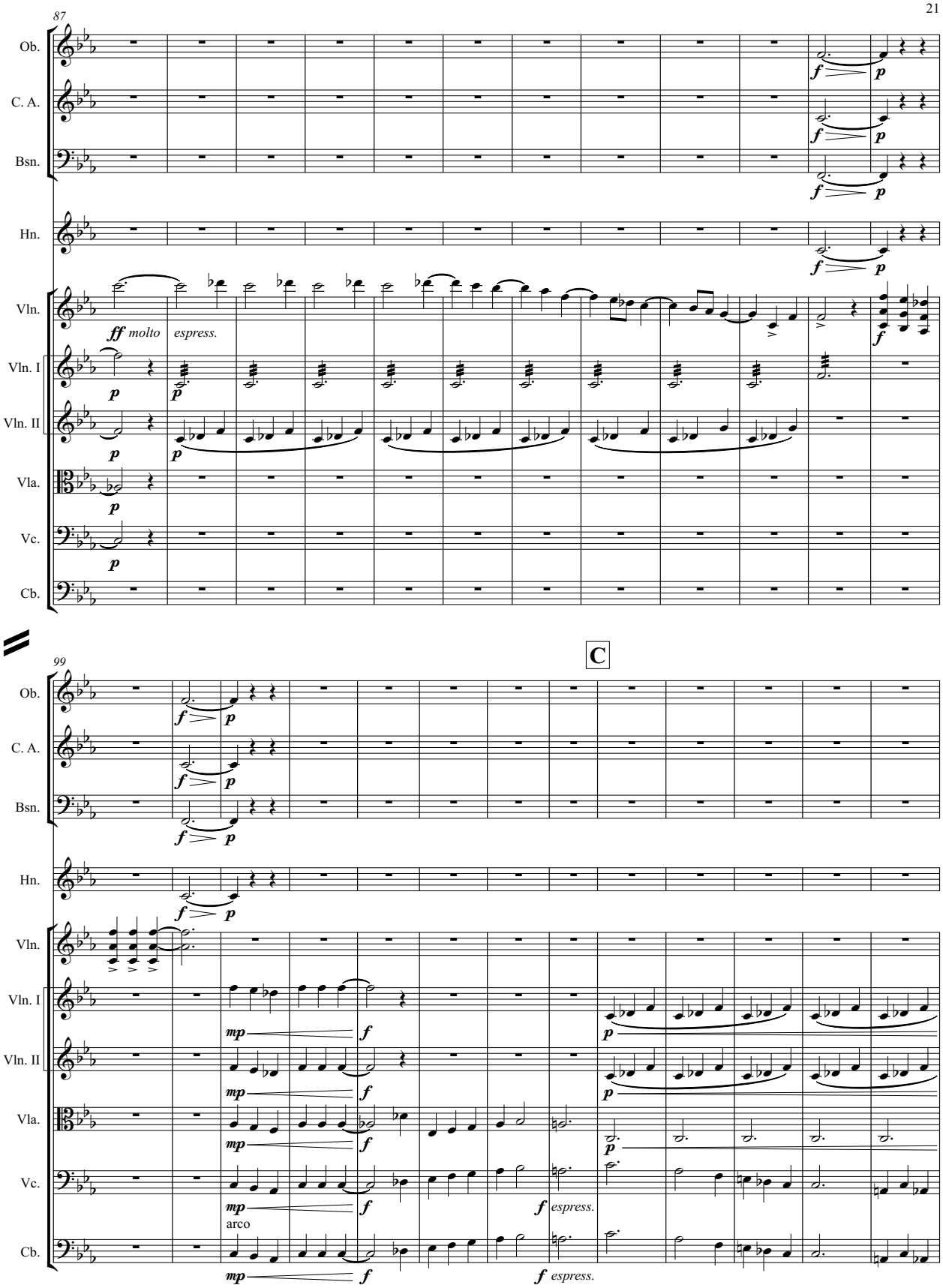
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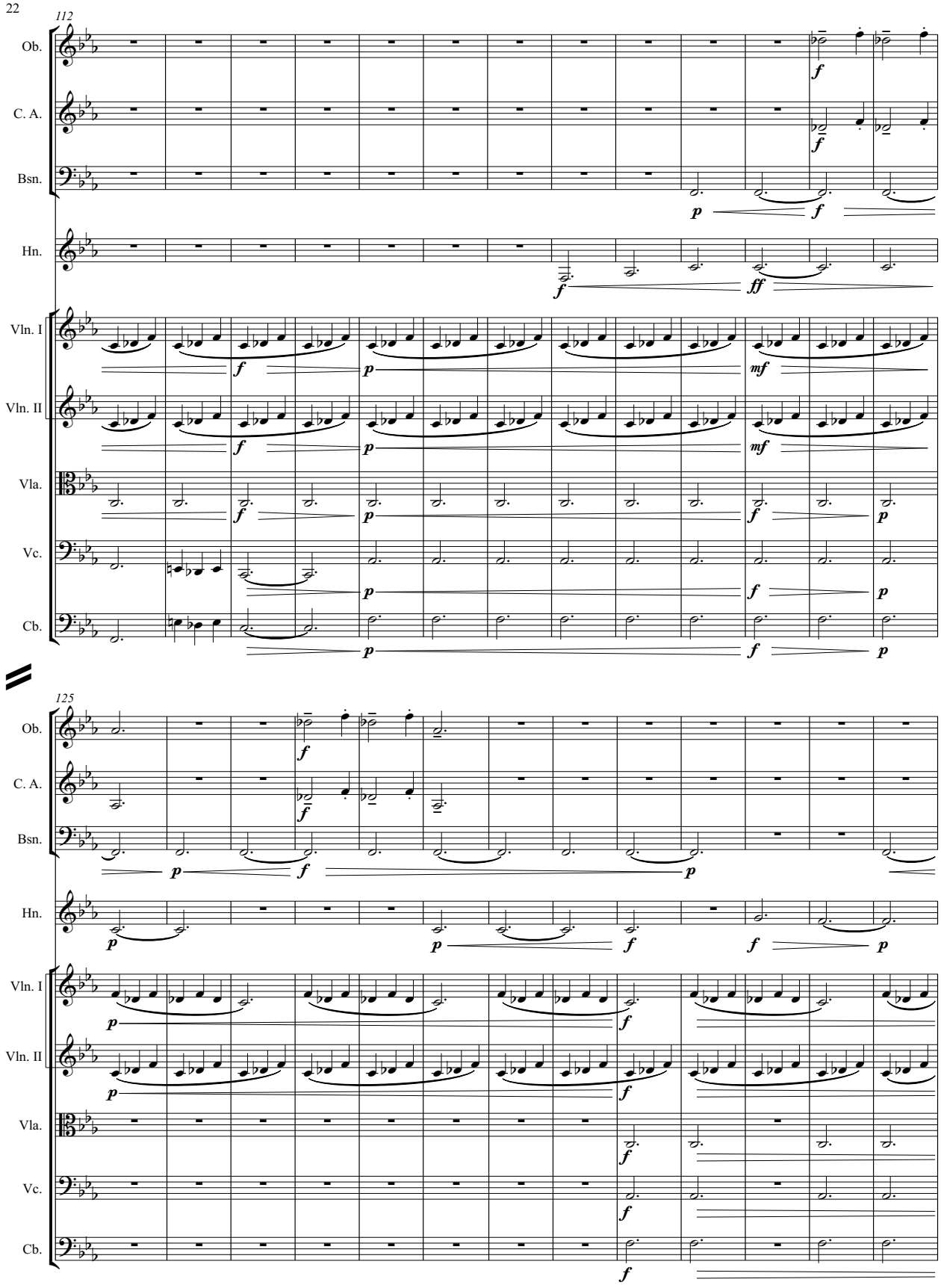
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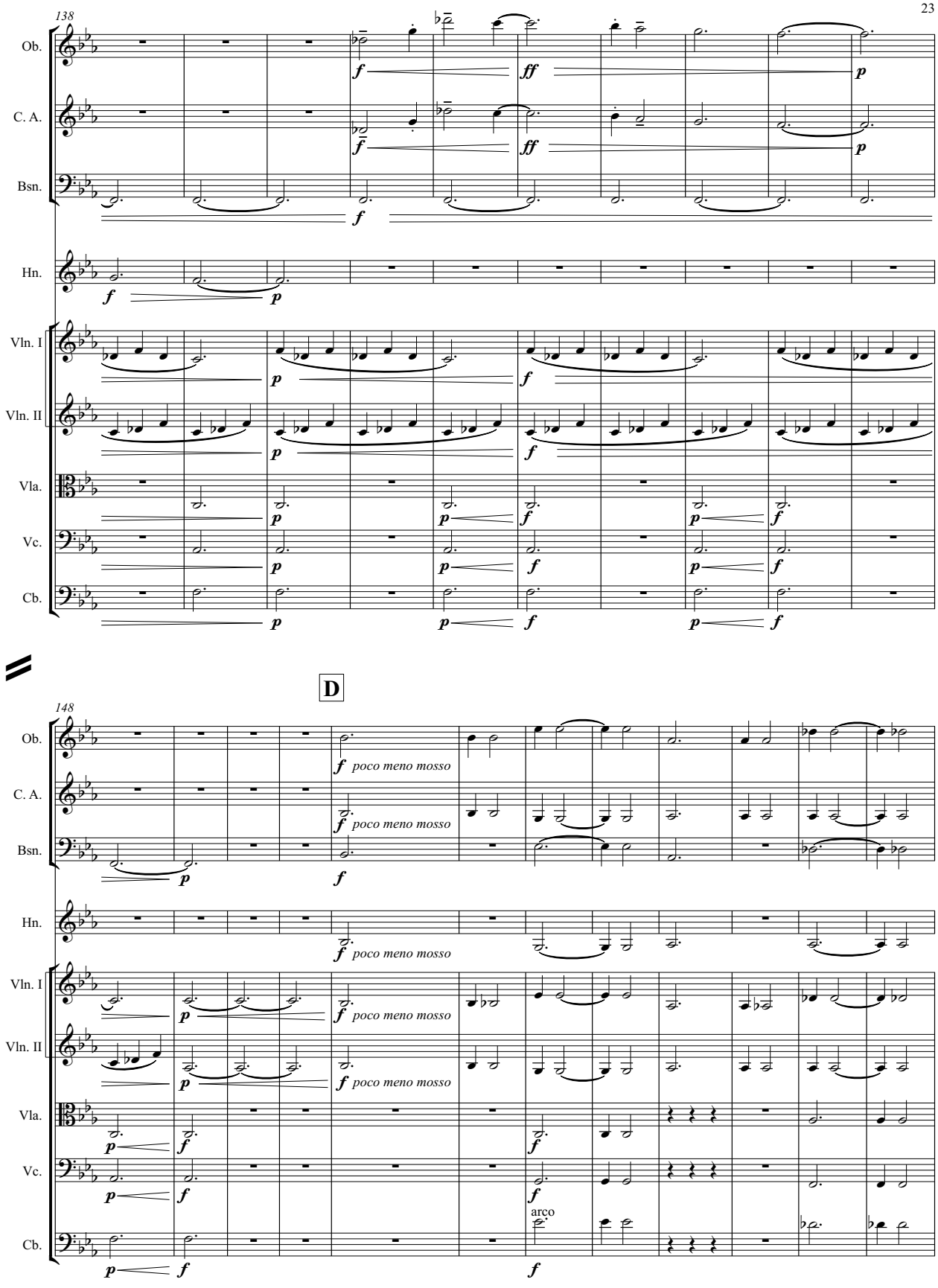
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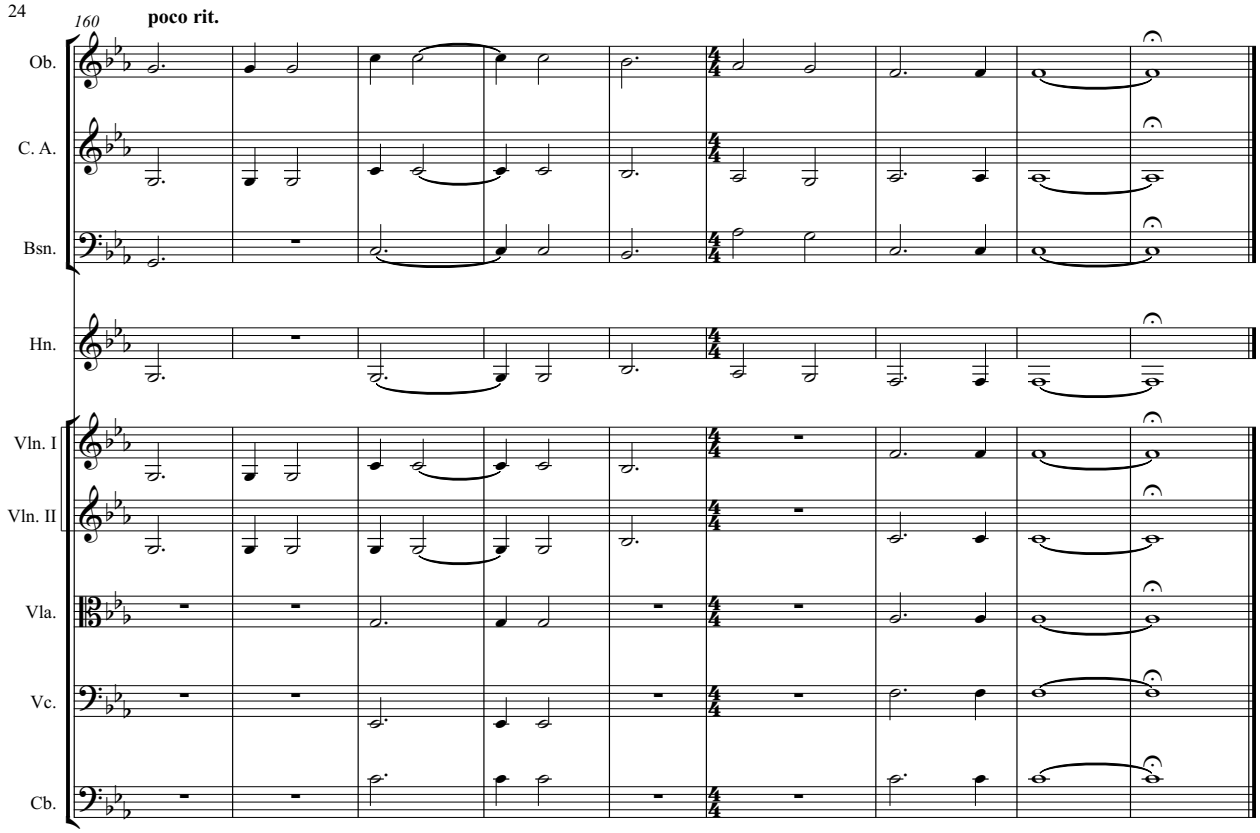
p
D
148
poco meno mosso
arco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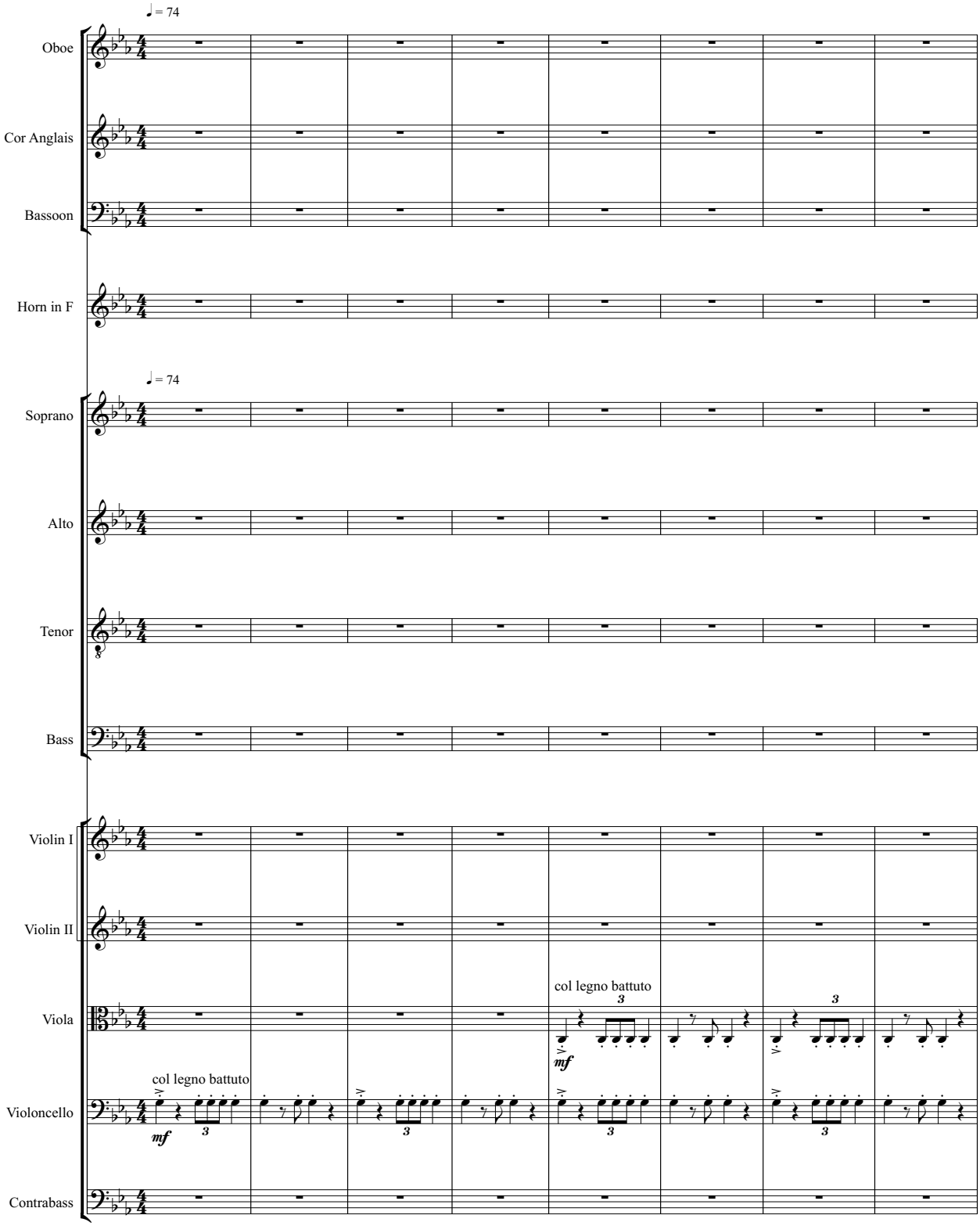
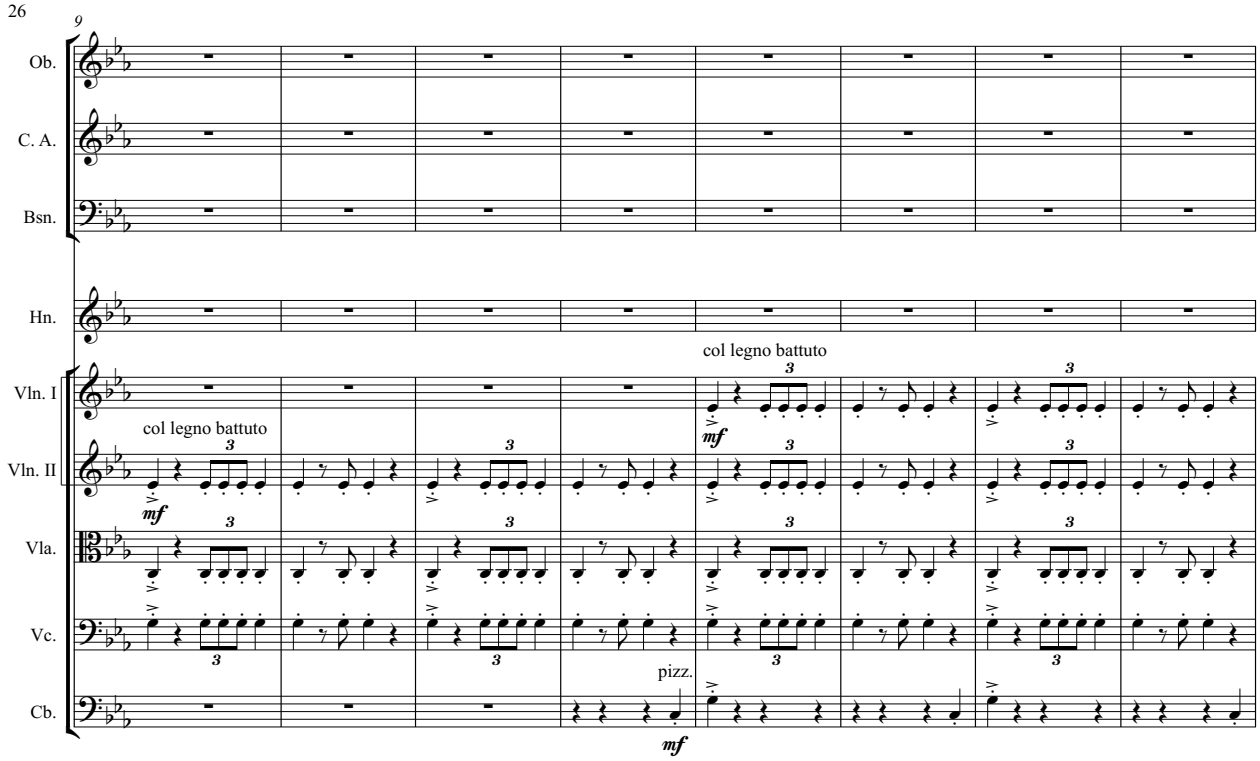
IV. ARISTOS ACHAION

Daniel Silva

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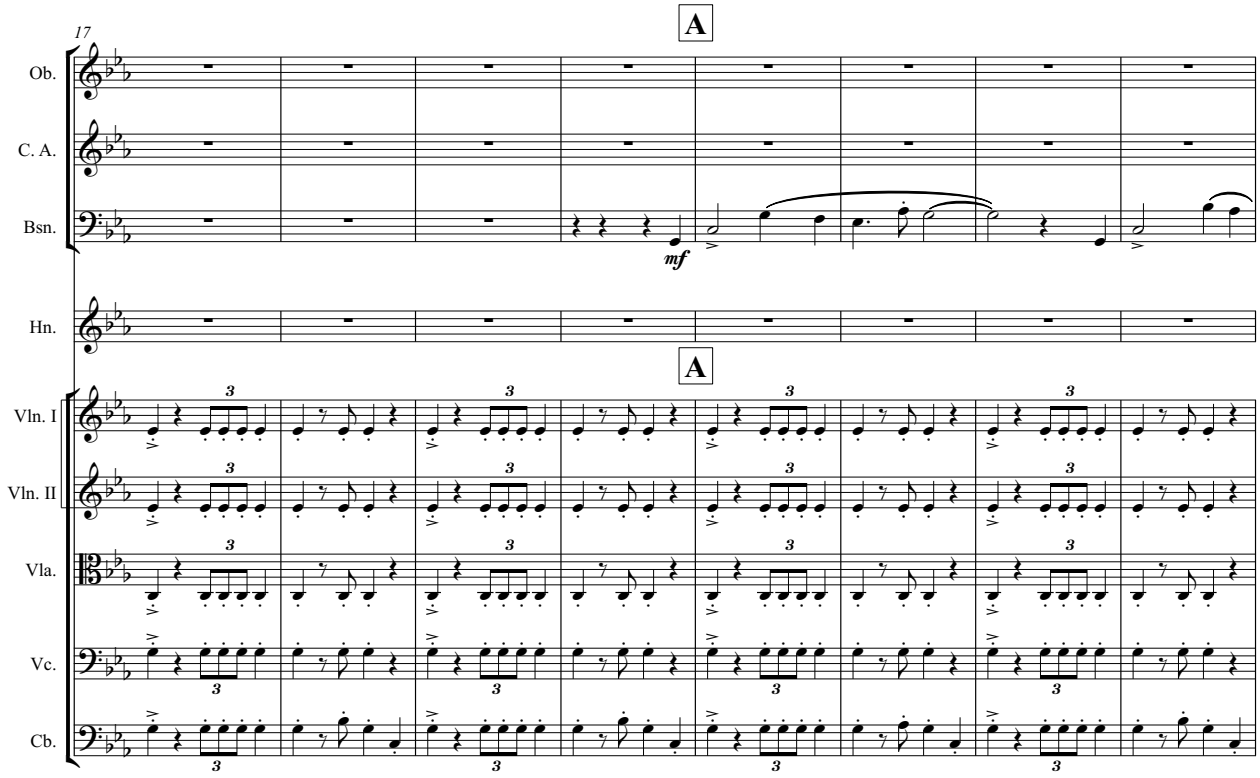
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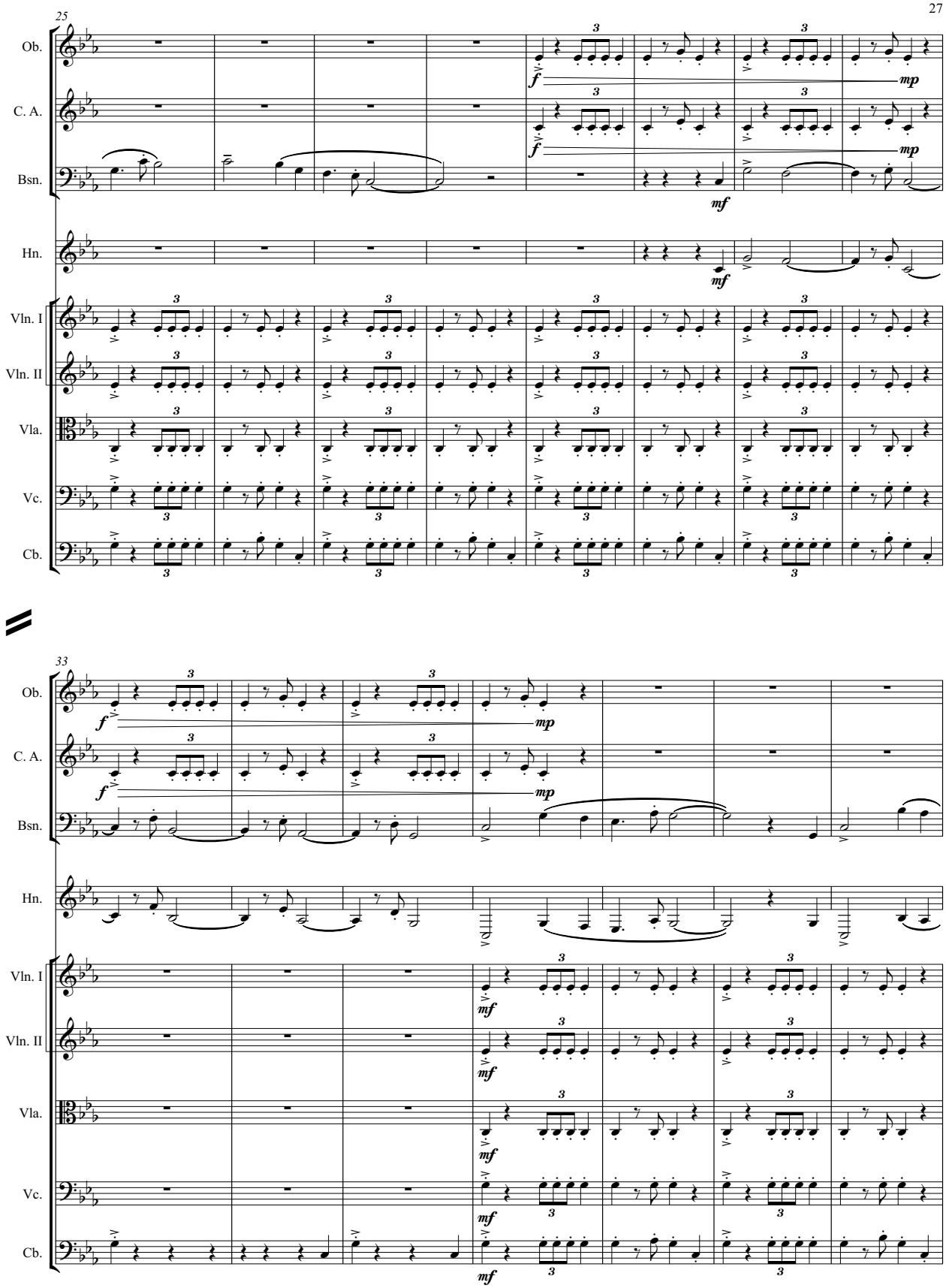
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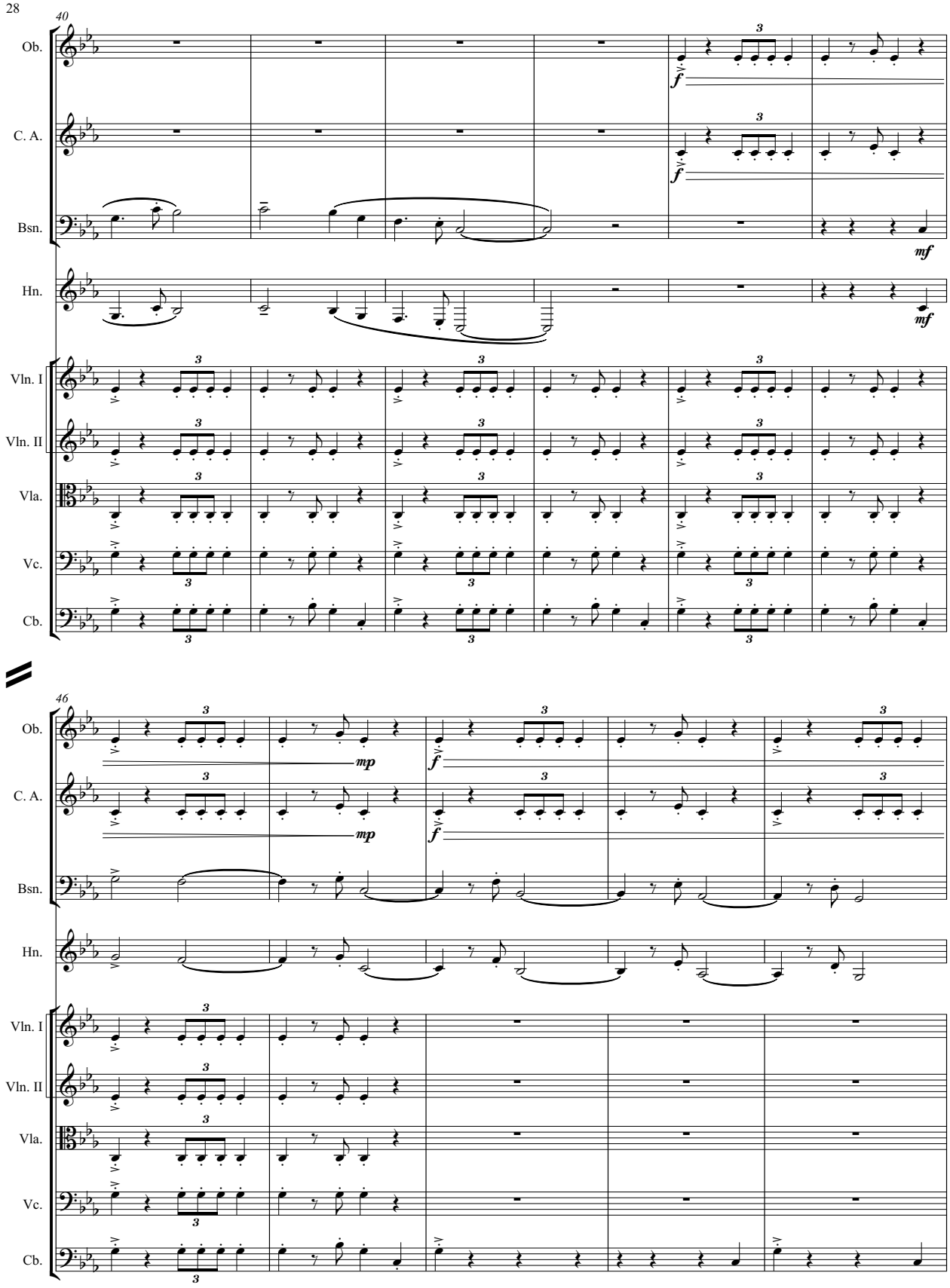
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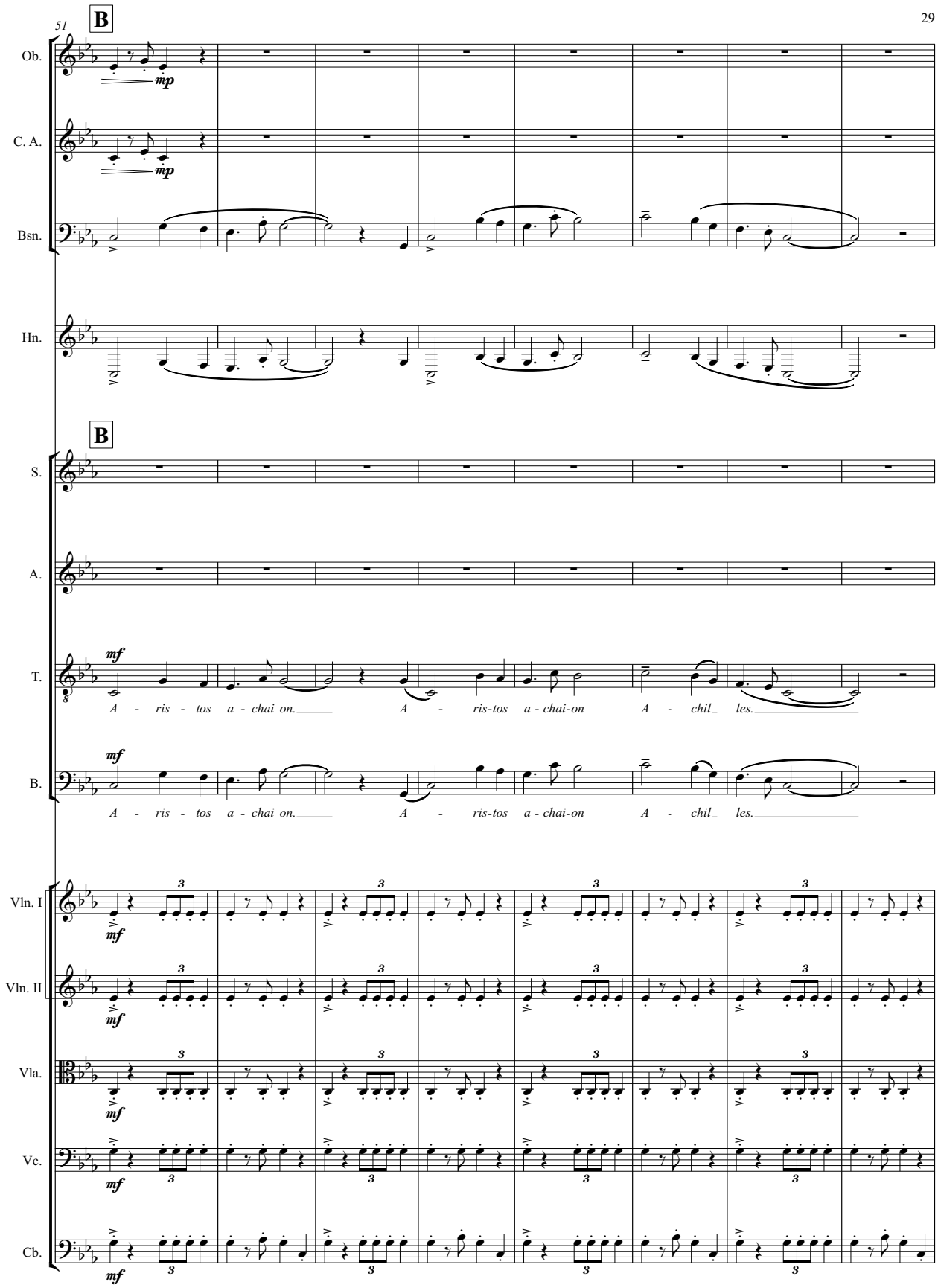
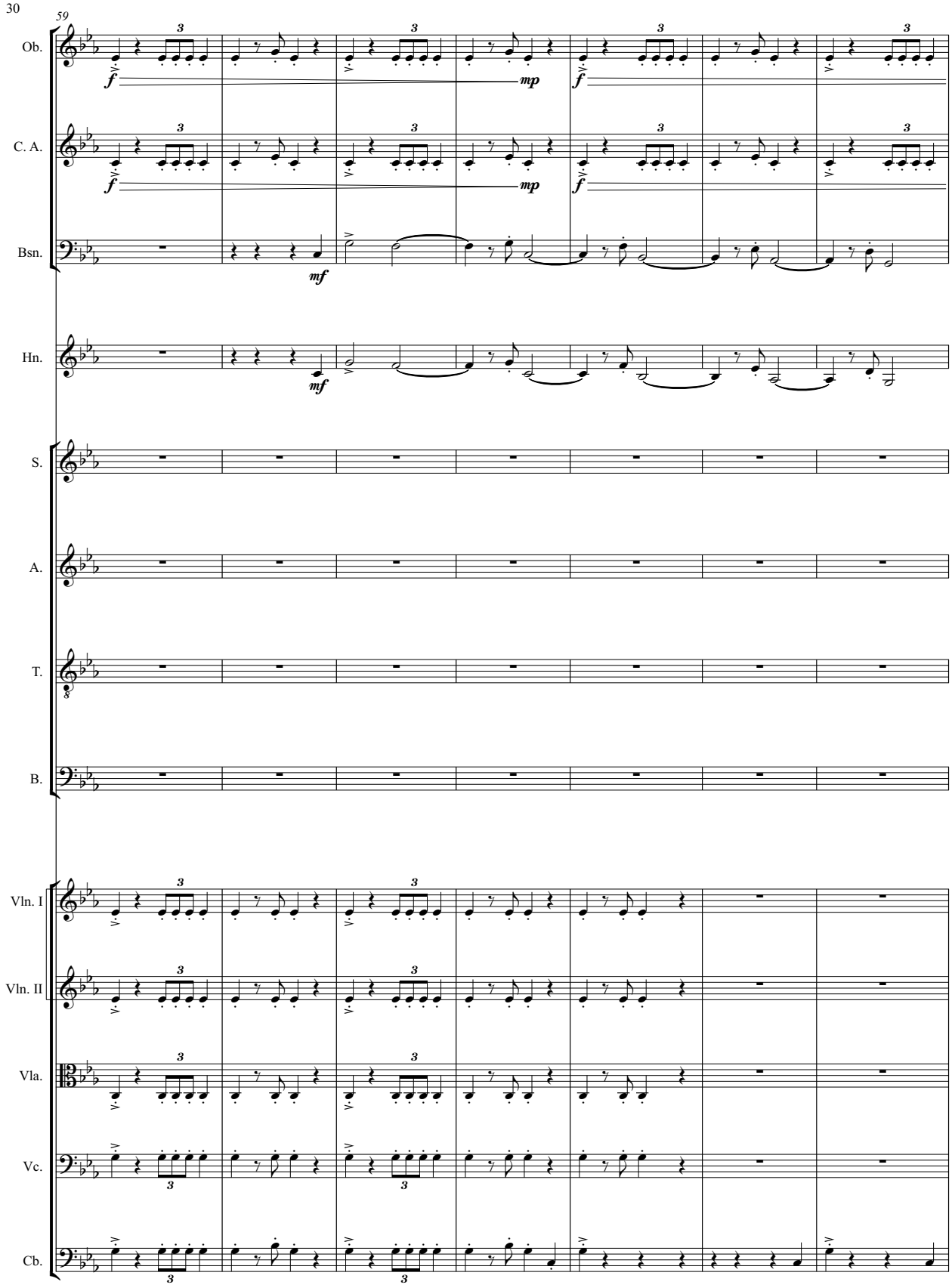
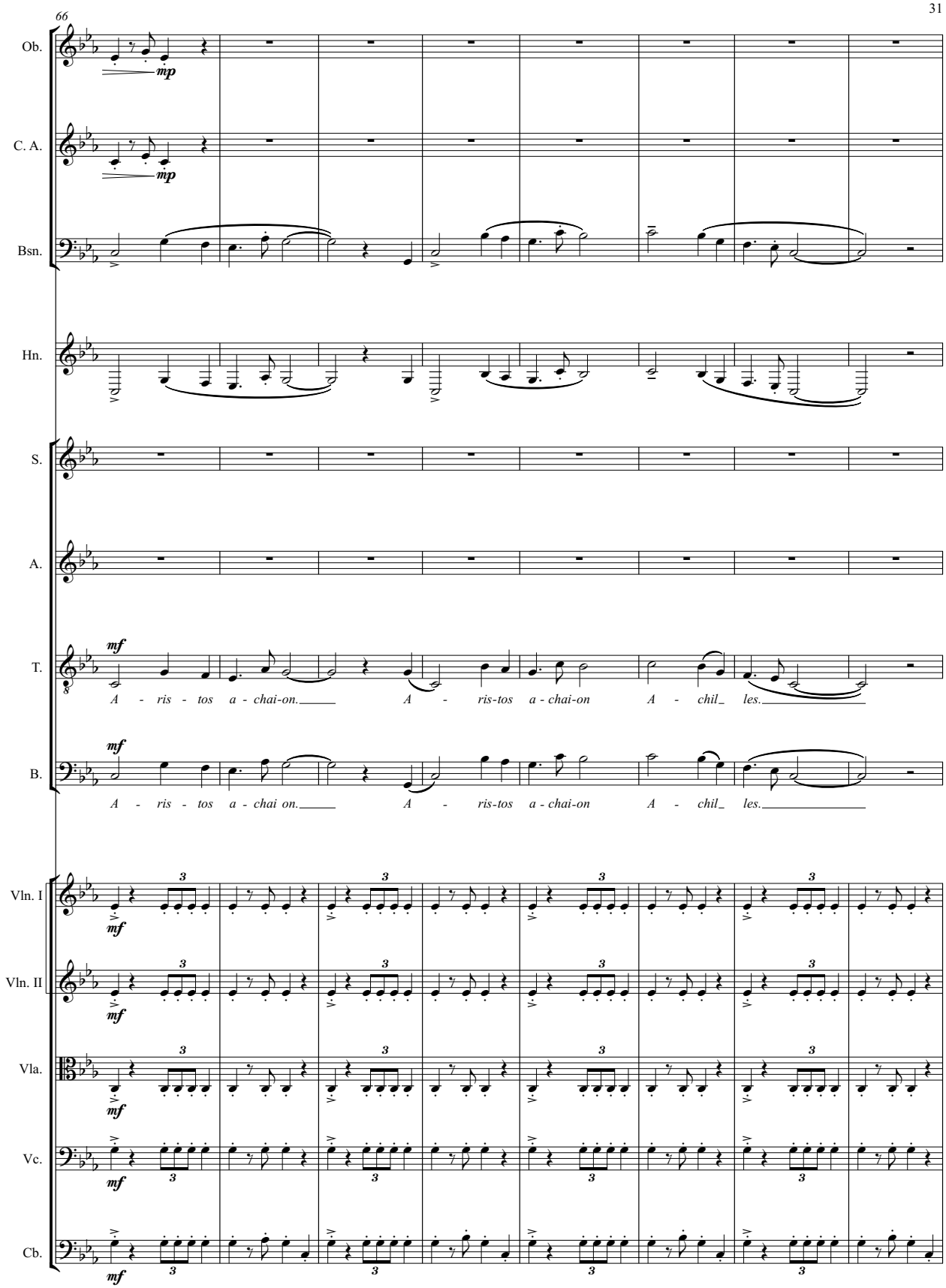
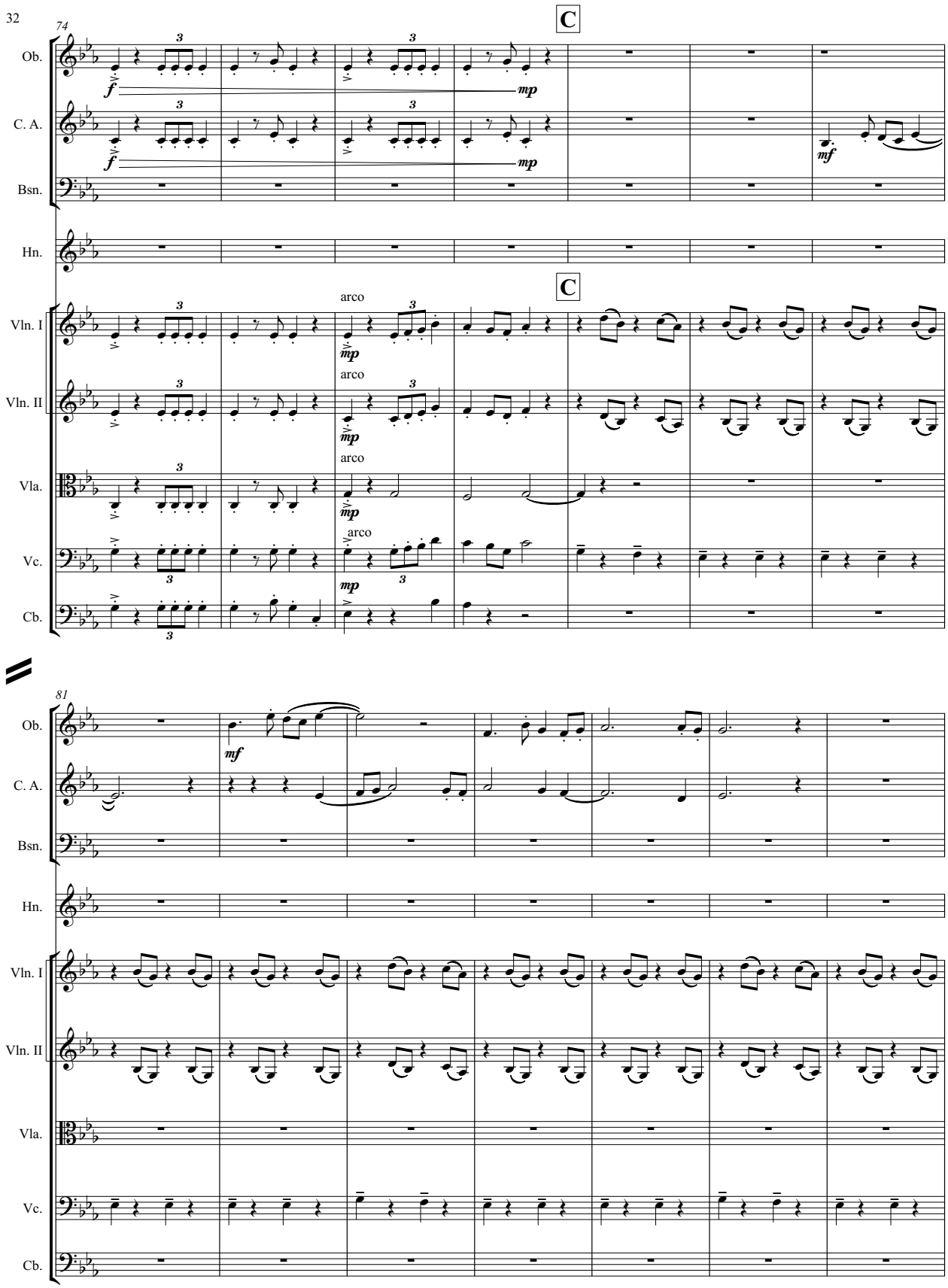
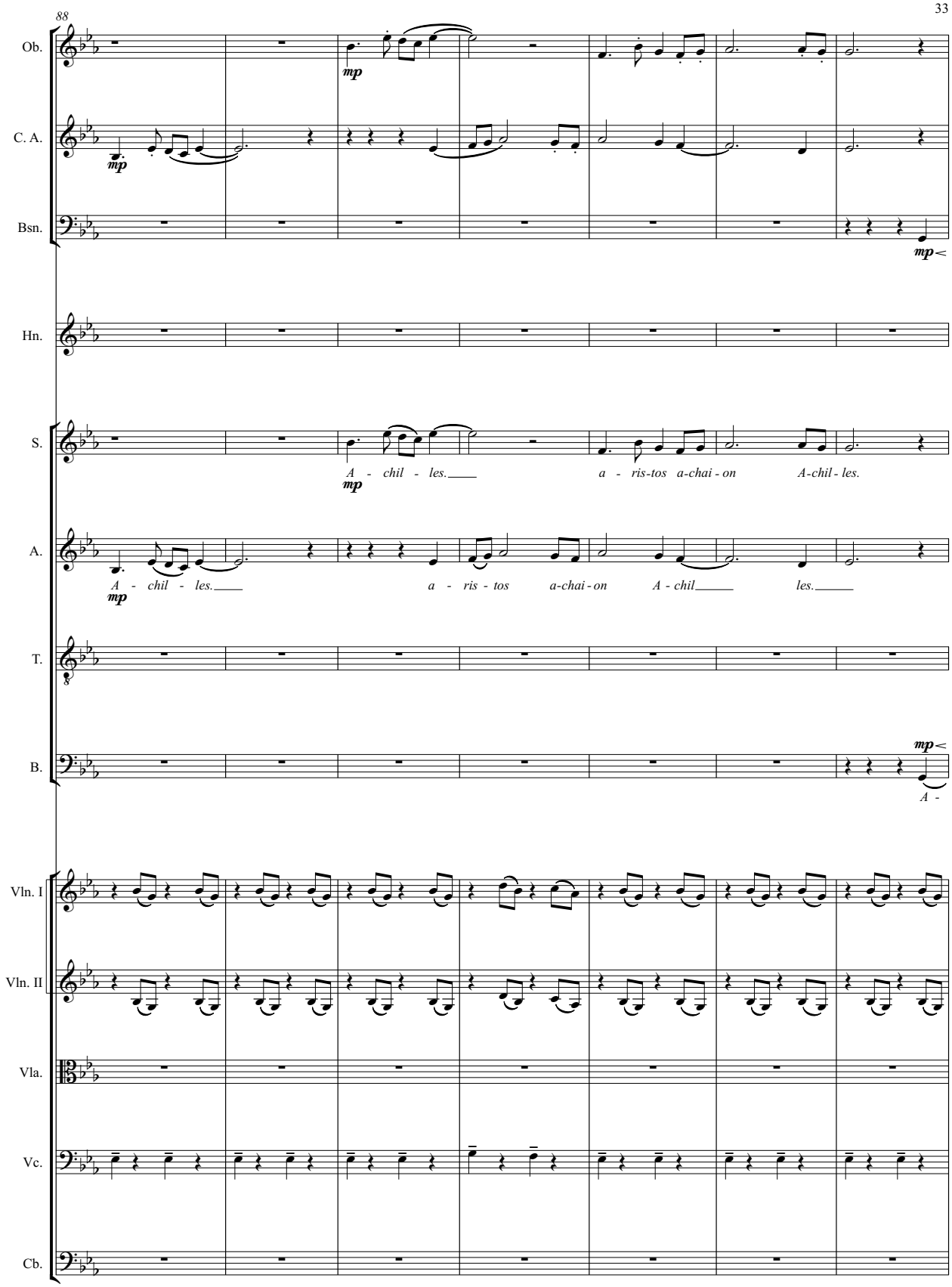
mf
46
mp

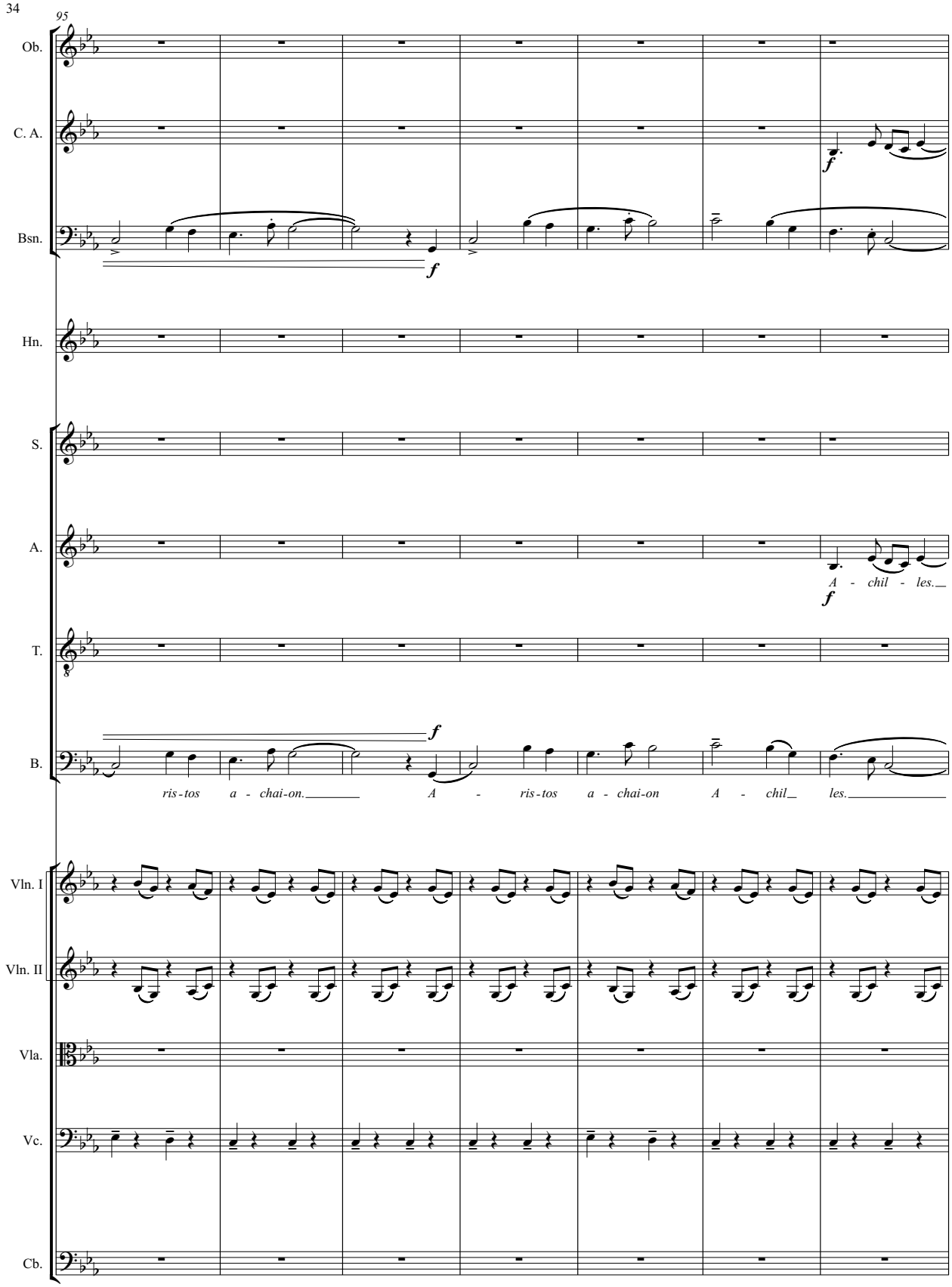

51
B
Ob.
mp
C. A.
mp
Bsn.
Hn.
B
S.
A.
T.
mf
A - ris - tos a - chai on. A - ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
B.
mf
A - ris - tos a - chai on. A - ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
Vln. I
mf
Vln. II
mf
Vla.
mf
Vc.
mf
Cb.
mf

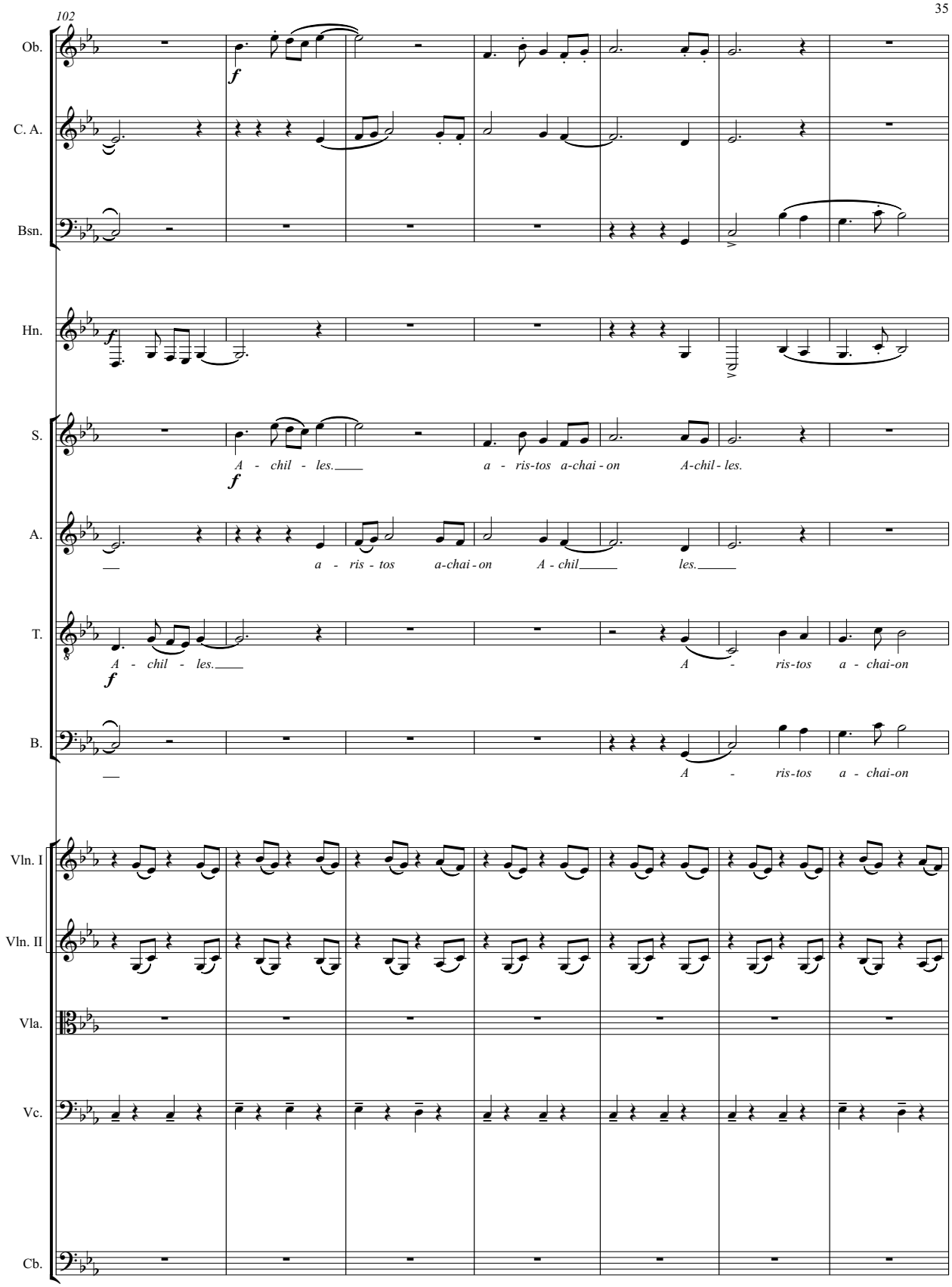

59
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
f
mp
mf

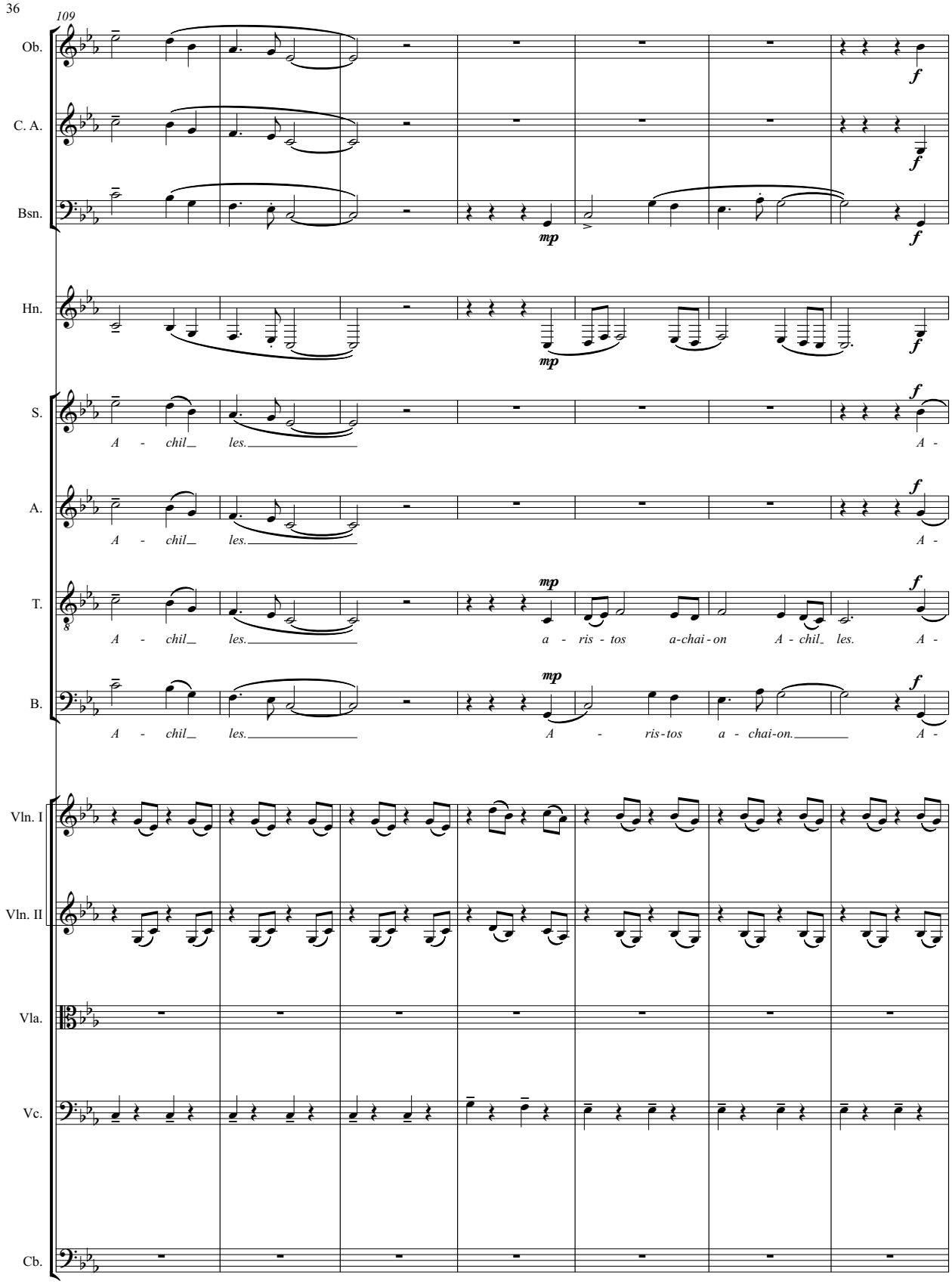

66
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp
mf
A - ris - tos a - chai-on. A - ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
A - ris - tos a - chai on. A - ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.

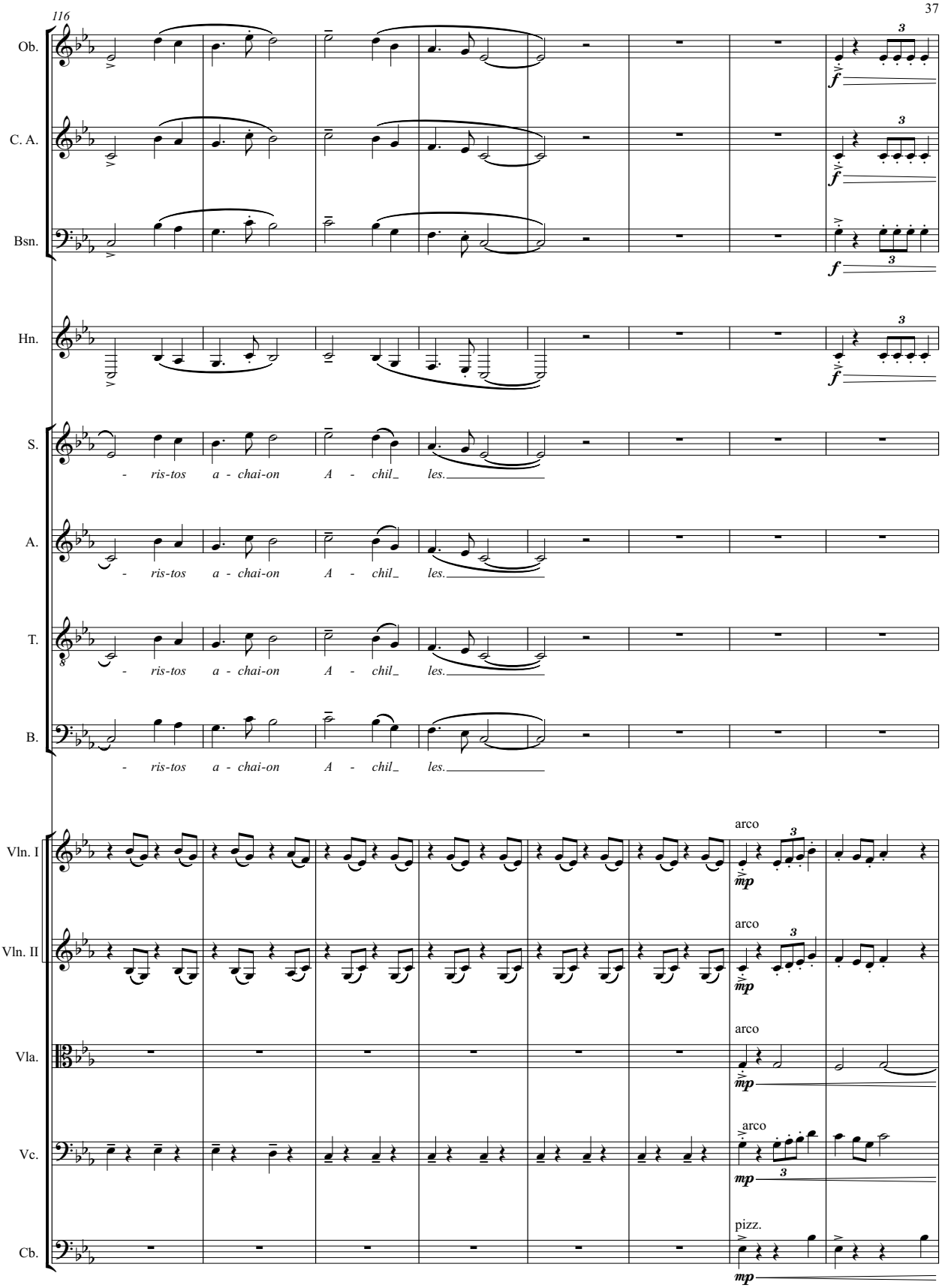

74
C
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
C
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
arco
81

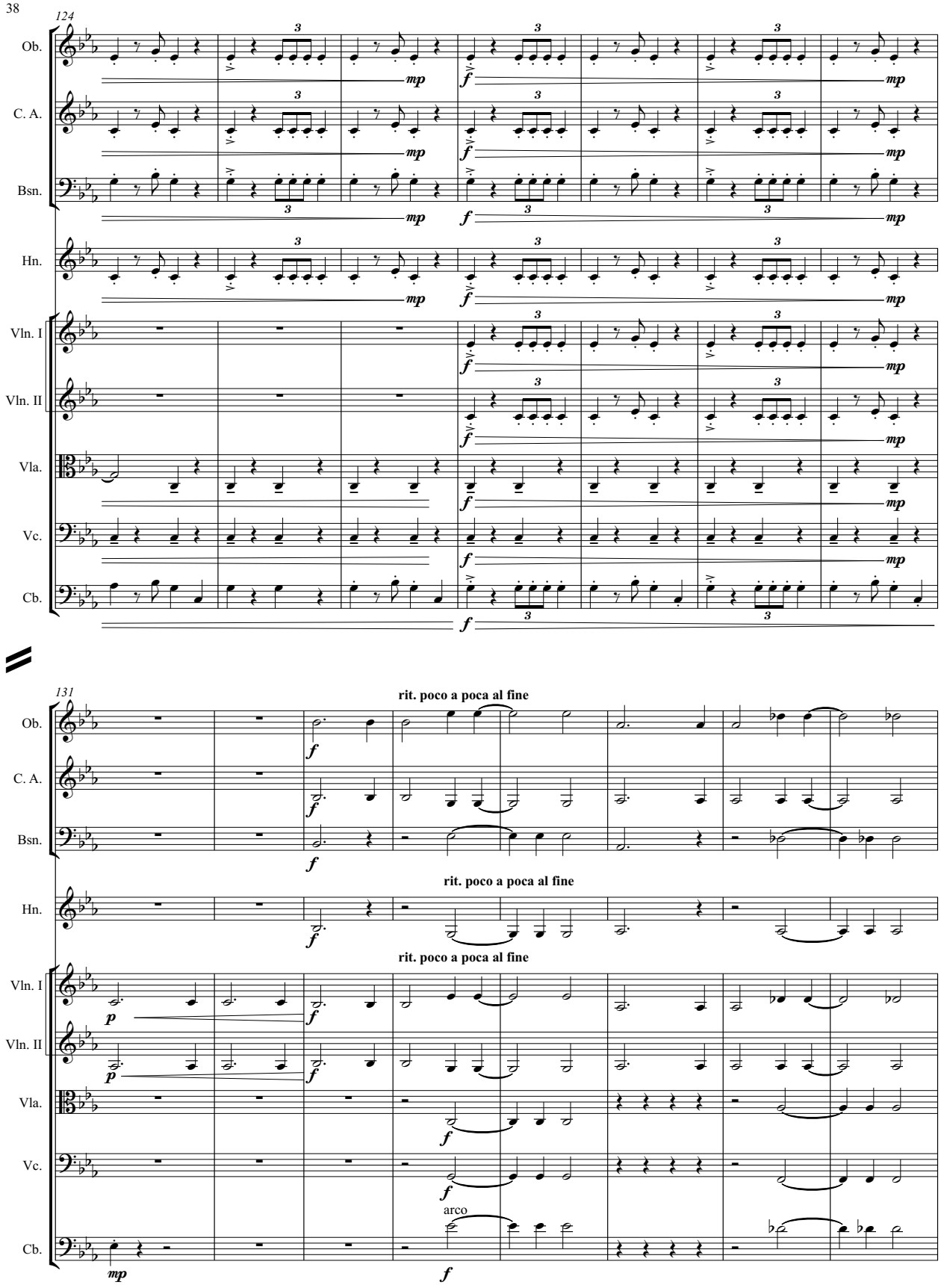

88
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp
A - chil - les.
a - ris-tos a-chai - on
A-chil - les.
a - ris - tos
a-chai - on
A - chil
les.
A -

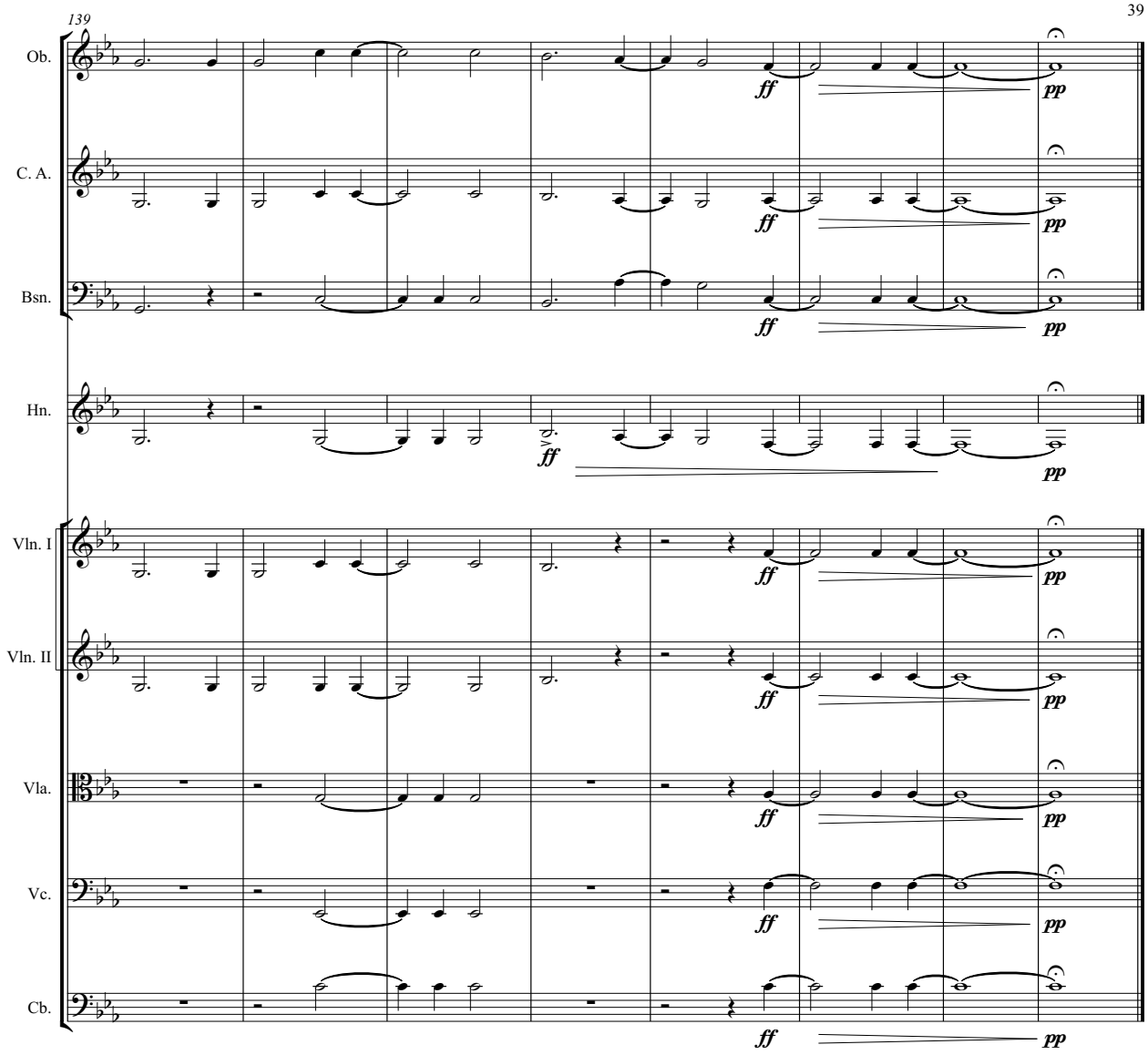

95
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
f
A - chil - les.
ris - tos a - chai - on. A - ris - tos a - chai - on A - chil_ les.


102
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
f
A - chil - les. a - ris-tos a-chai - on A-chil - les.
a - ris - tos a-chai - on A - chil les.
A - chil - les. A - ris-tos a - chai-on
A - ris-tos a - chai-on


109
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
A.
T.
B.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp
f
A - chil_ les.
A -
a - ris - tos a-chai - on A - chil_ les.
A - ris - tos a - chai-on.


116
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
S.
- ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
A.
- ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
T.
- ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
B.
- ris-tos a - chai-on A - chil_ les.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
arco
pizz.
f
mp


124
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
131
rit. poco a poca al fine
rit. poco a poca al fine
rit. poco a poca al fine
arco


139
Ob.
C. A.
Bsn.
Hn.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
ff
pp