Grade Level: 2½

THE HIGHLAND/ETLING STRING ORCHESTRA SERIES

LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG

For String Orchestra, Percussion and Narrator

By Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)

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INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Viola	5
Cello	5
String Bass	3
Narrator	1
Chimes (or Bells)	1
Suspended Cymbal	1
Snare Drum	1

Written to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the *Gettysburg Address*, this piece is a guaranteed centerpiece for any orchestra concert. This imaginative original work for string orchestra, narrator, and percussion conveys the intense emotional and patriotic drama of Lincoln's most famous words, including events leading to the speech. Recalling several Civil War-era melodies, the music complements a richly descriptive narration—offering opportunities to involve guest speakers in the concert—and culminates in a moving finale that will bring the audience to its feet.

HIGHLAND/ETLING
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Please note: Our band and orchestra music is now being collated by an automatic high-speed system. The enclosed parts are now sorted by page count, rather than score order.

Program Notes

Lincoln at Gettysburg was written to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*, certainly one of the most eminent and familiar speeches in American history. The piece combines a descriptive narration with an accompanying original musical score. It begins in a somber and reflective mood conveying Lincoln's own deep sense of sadness over the catastrophic loss of life in the battle—over 51,000 soldiers—that engulfed the small Pennsylvania village the previous July. Themes borrowed from several famous Civil War-era songs are heard, including "Kingdom Coming" by Henry C. Work and "Just Before the Battle, Mother," a poignant parlor song by George F. Root. As the piece builds to a patriotic finale, additional melodies join in, first from the marching tune "The Battle Cry of Freedom"—also by George F. Root—and finally "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" by William Steffe. The piece conveys Lincoln's successful struggle to find the words that would reassure a grieving nation, and would live on to inspire and unify generations of Americans to follow.

Notes to the Conductor

This work depicts—through music and words—the emotions and events leading to the presentation of the president's famous *Gettysburg Address*. The narration is central to the work, and is not optional. Cues in the score indicate key entrances for the narrator. If the narrator enters when indicated and continues reading the script at a comfortable pace, the speaker should be able to complete each section without requiring tempo alterations by the conductor. However, fermatas and optional vamp sections are provided for performance flexibility and to realign the narration with the orchestra if the need arises (mm. 16, 25, 67, 95–96, 121–122, 171). These may be extended, shortened, or eliminated by the conductor as performance circumstances dictate. Percussion parts (may be covered by two players) are provided to enhance the performance and the dramatic effect. The percussion parts are optional, but their effect will be sorely missed if absent.

The original score is loosely based on four Civil War-era songs, still familiar a century and a half after the conflict. The composition begins quietly and reflectively with a rhythmically and harmonically augmented setting of "Kingdom Coming" (mm. 1–35) by Henry C. Work. The tempo should not be rushed, and efforts should be made to play legato throughout. The melodic material begins in the second violins and violas, shifting (m. 12) to the first and second violins. The sparse percussion should remain understated. A transition (mm. 36–43) suggests motives drawn from the subsequent theme, "Just Before the Battle, Mother," a poignant parlor song by George F. Root. This main melody—with consistently extended cadences—is presented in full by the celli (mm. 44–55), then doubled by the violas (m. 56) and harmonized along when the second violins join (m. 62). Throughout this section (mm. 45–67), a snare drum is heard intermittently. The drum should have loose but audible snares, and be muffled (using a damping object on the head, such as a wallet, rubber pad, etc.) to suggest a distant military funeral procession. A new transition section (mm. 68–94), somewhat slower in tempo, follows and combines motives from the two melodies heard thus far. It is joined by strains of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" by William Steffe (m. 76), building in intensity. A faster tempo and repetitive bass/snare drum rhythm (m. 95) herald melodic material borrowed from "The Battle Cry of Freedom," also by George F. Root, presented primarily in the first violins (m. 103). The orchestra strikes a *subito pianissimo* (m. 109)—the only point in the piece where it is essential for the narration ("The audience immediately grew still…") to be exactly coordinated with the music. An optional vamp (mm. 121–122; can be eliminated if not needed) can re-align the group with the speaker. The final section (mm. 123–172) continues the development of "The Battle Cry of Freedom," accompanied by an incessant and ominous rhythm pattern in the snare drum accompanied by alternating sections (mm. 123–160). The piece concludes with a heroic presentation of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" (m. 161–172) to accompany Lincoln's famous closing words. Note that the chord on beat 3 of m. 171 can be held—with a fermata—or eliminated as necessary to coordinate with the narrator's final words.

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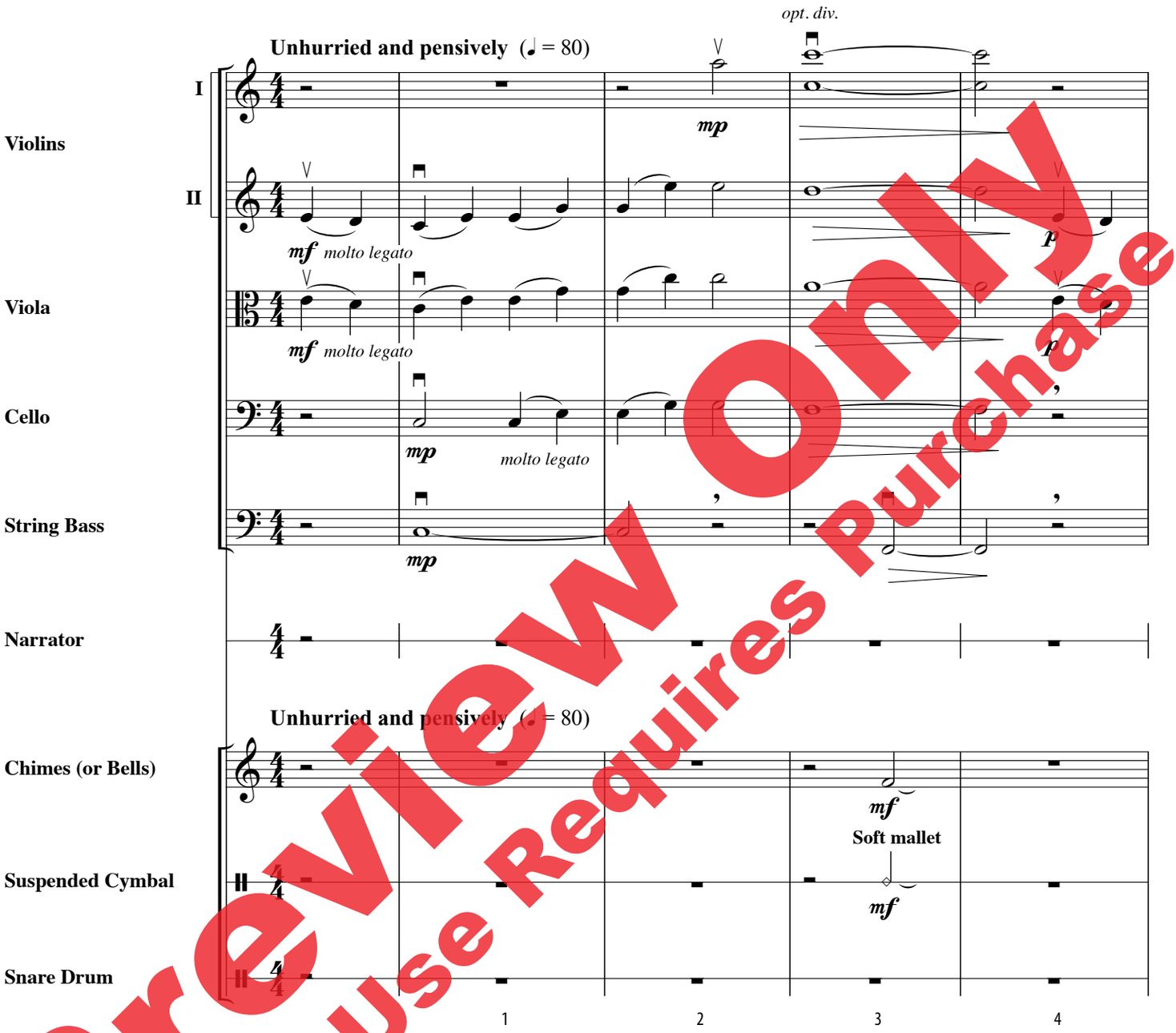
Lincoln at Gettysburg

For String Orchestra, Percussion and Narrator

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 8:00

Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)



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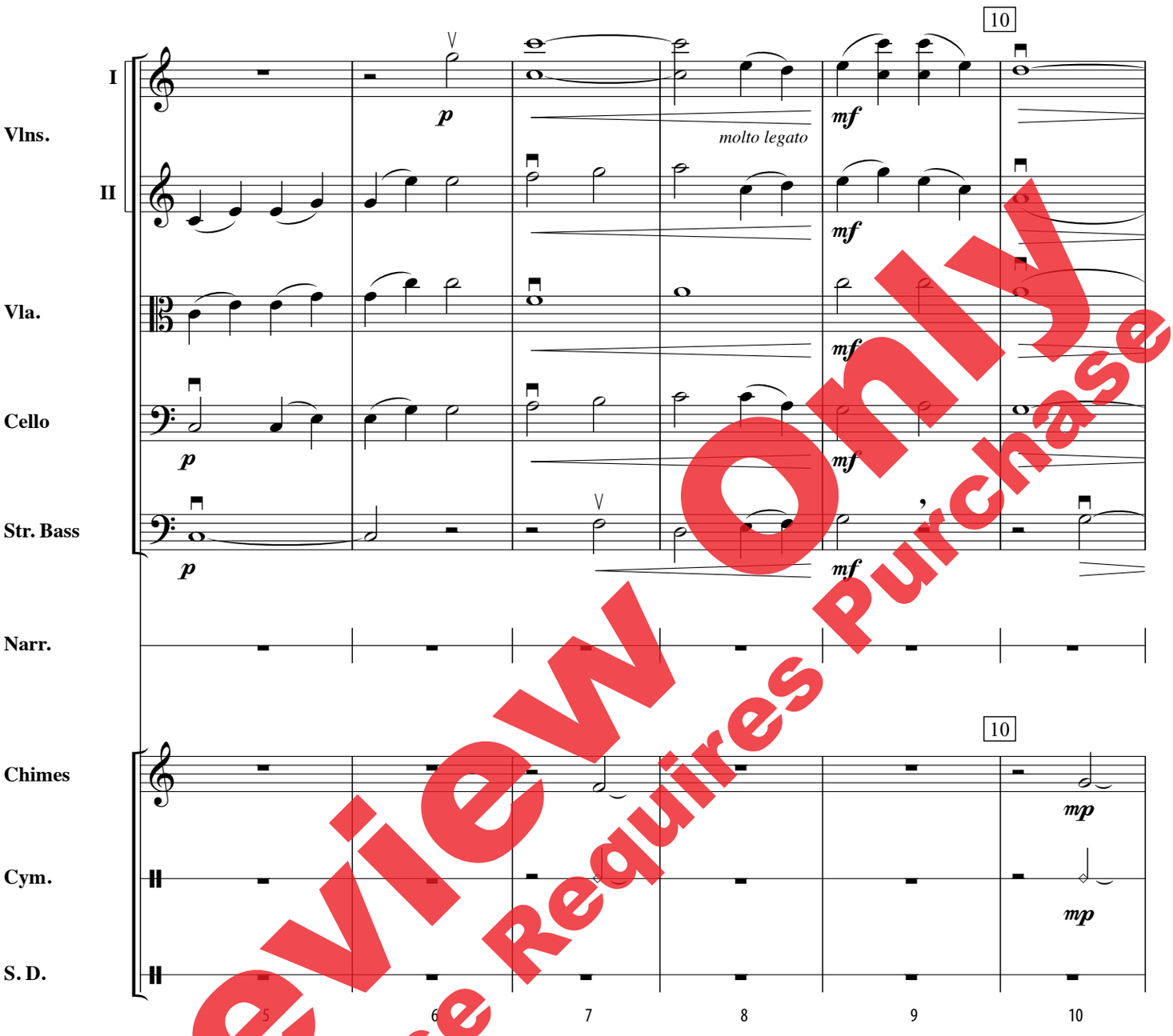

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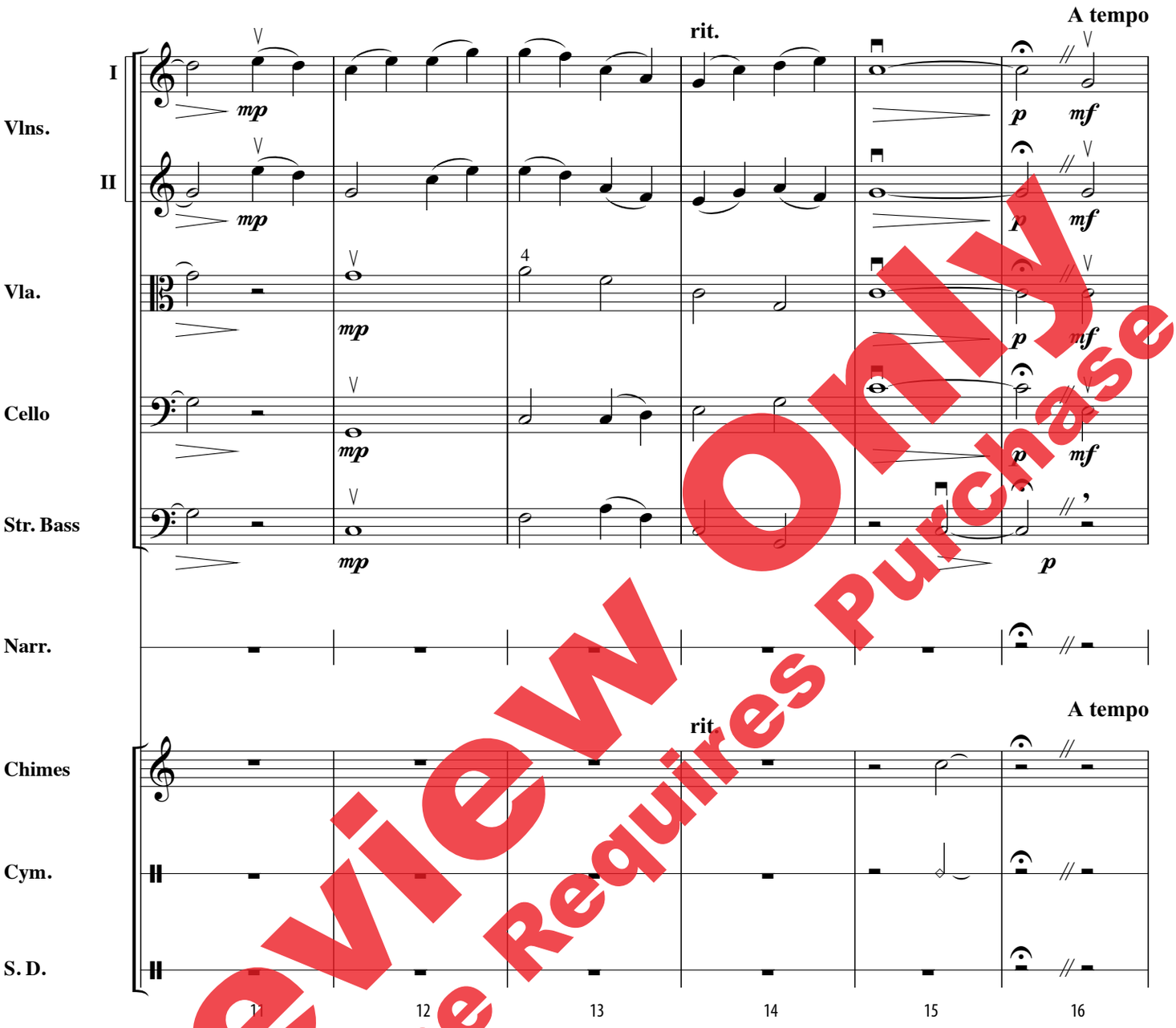

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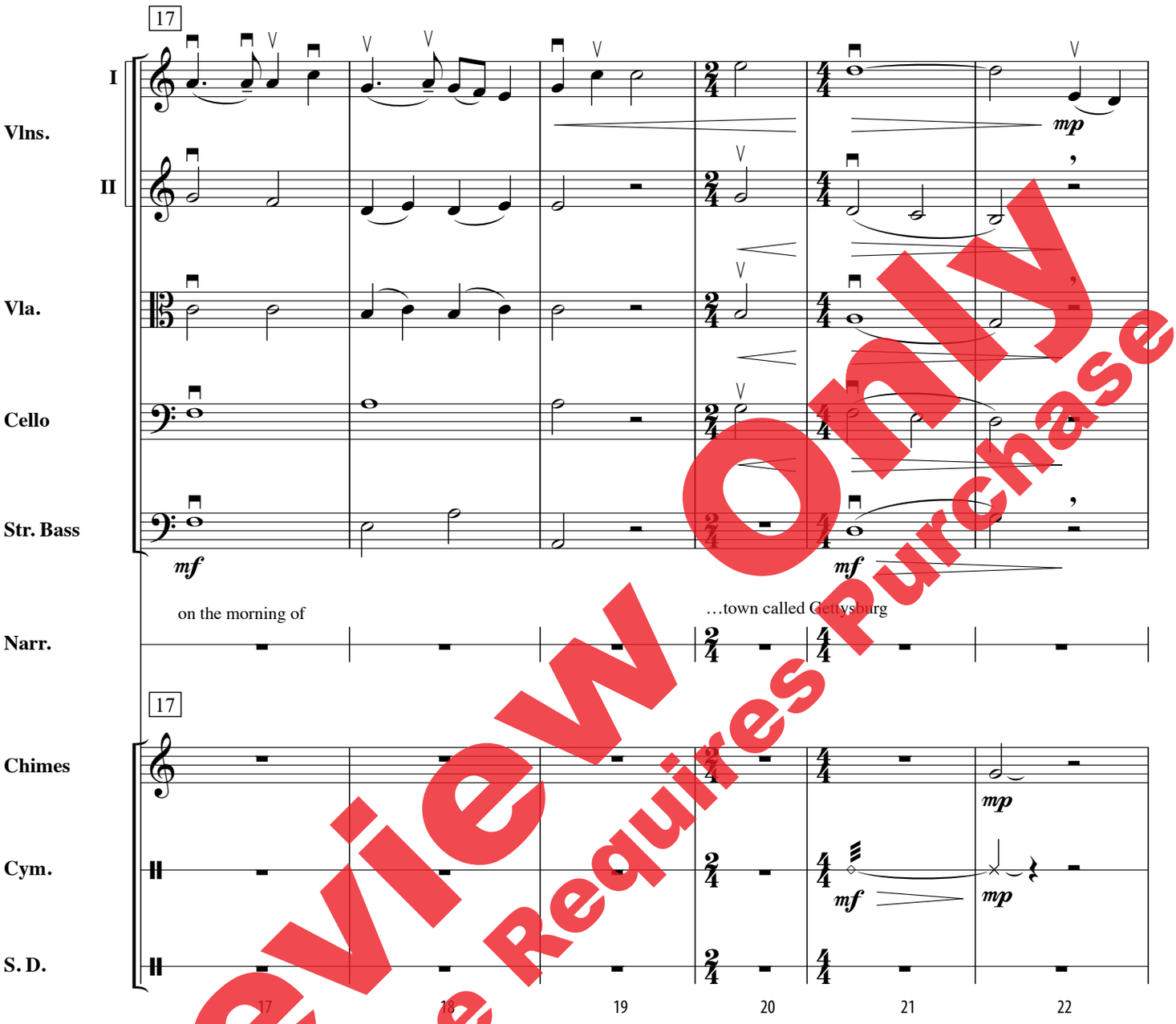

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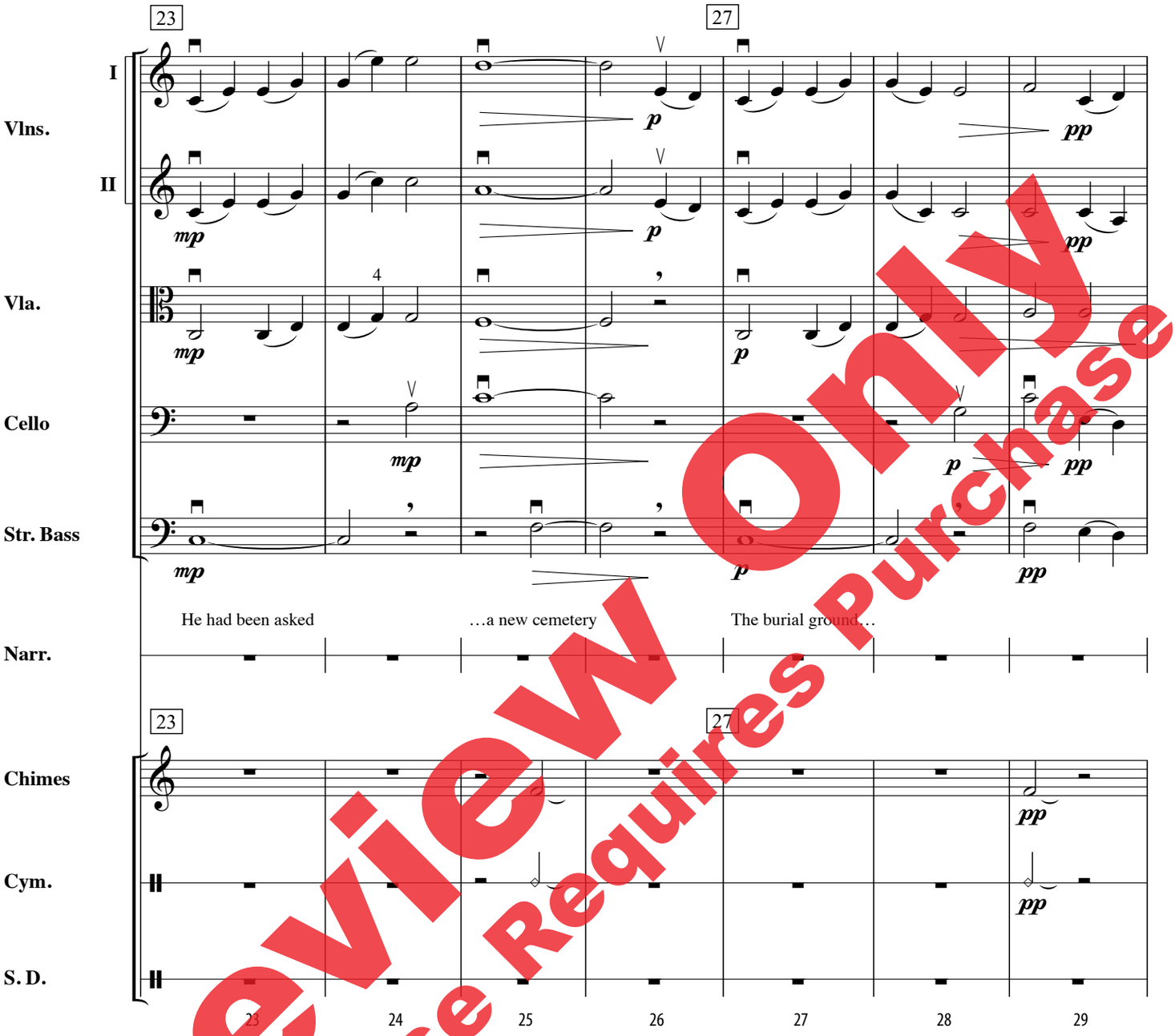

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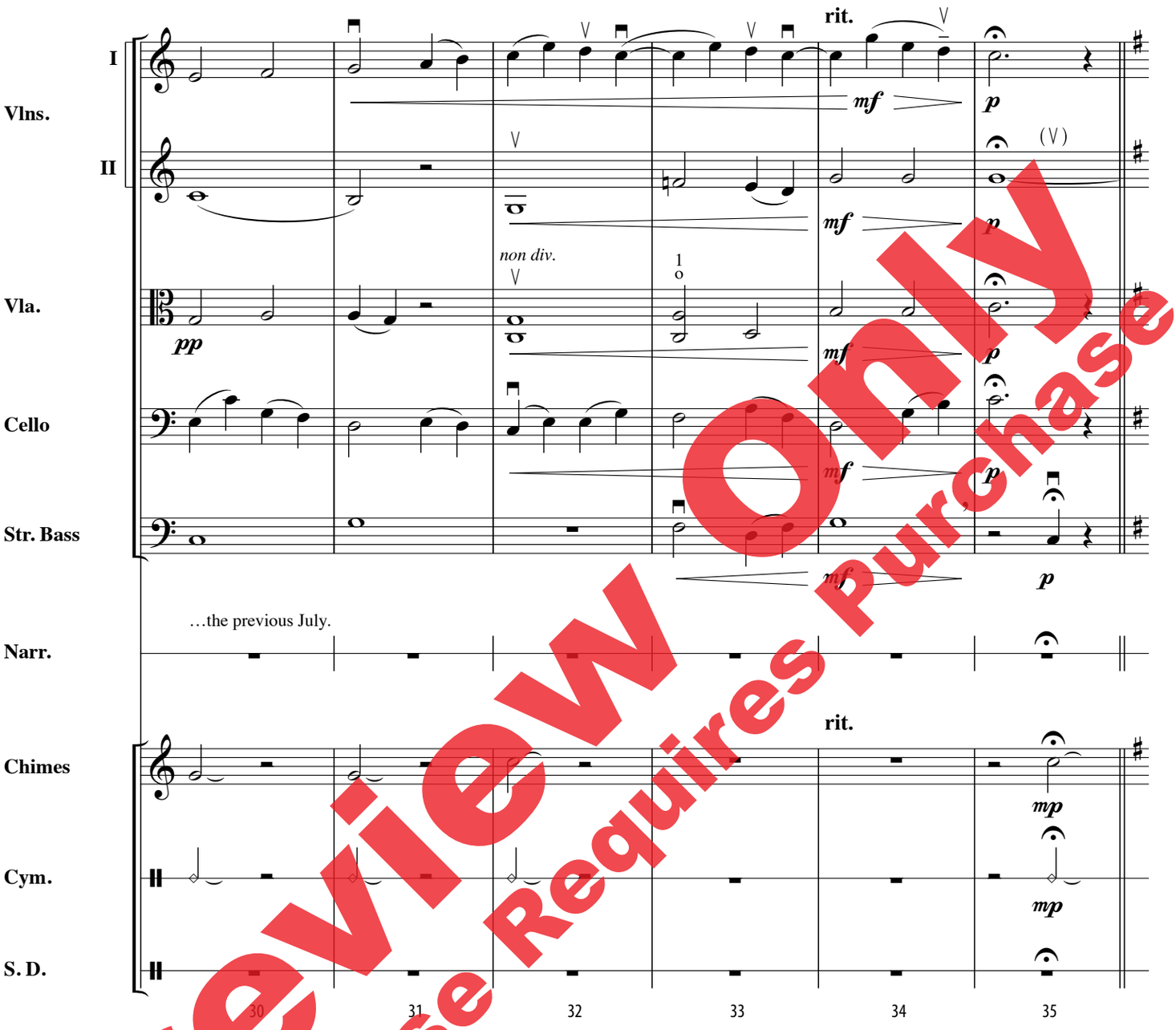

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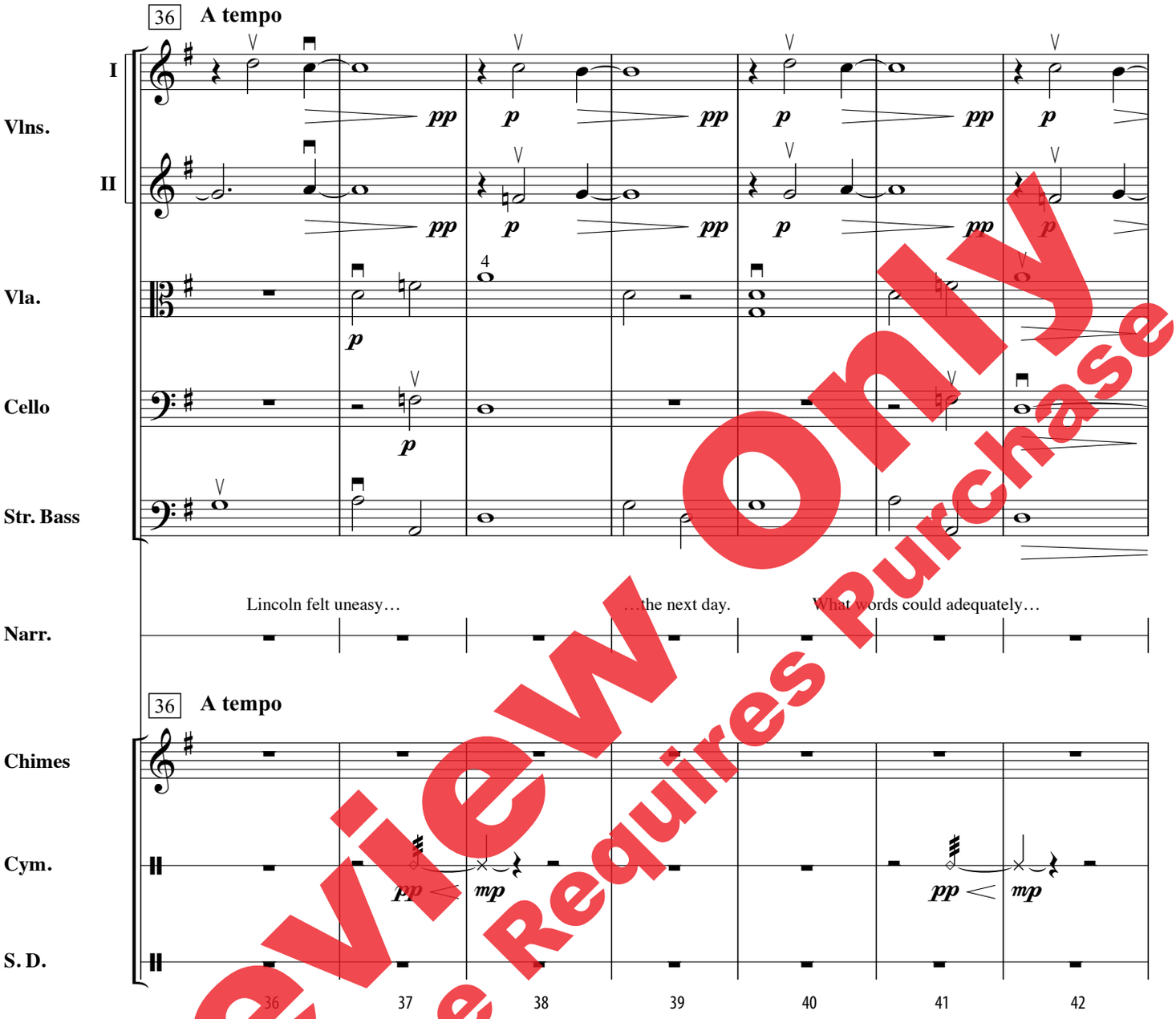

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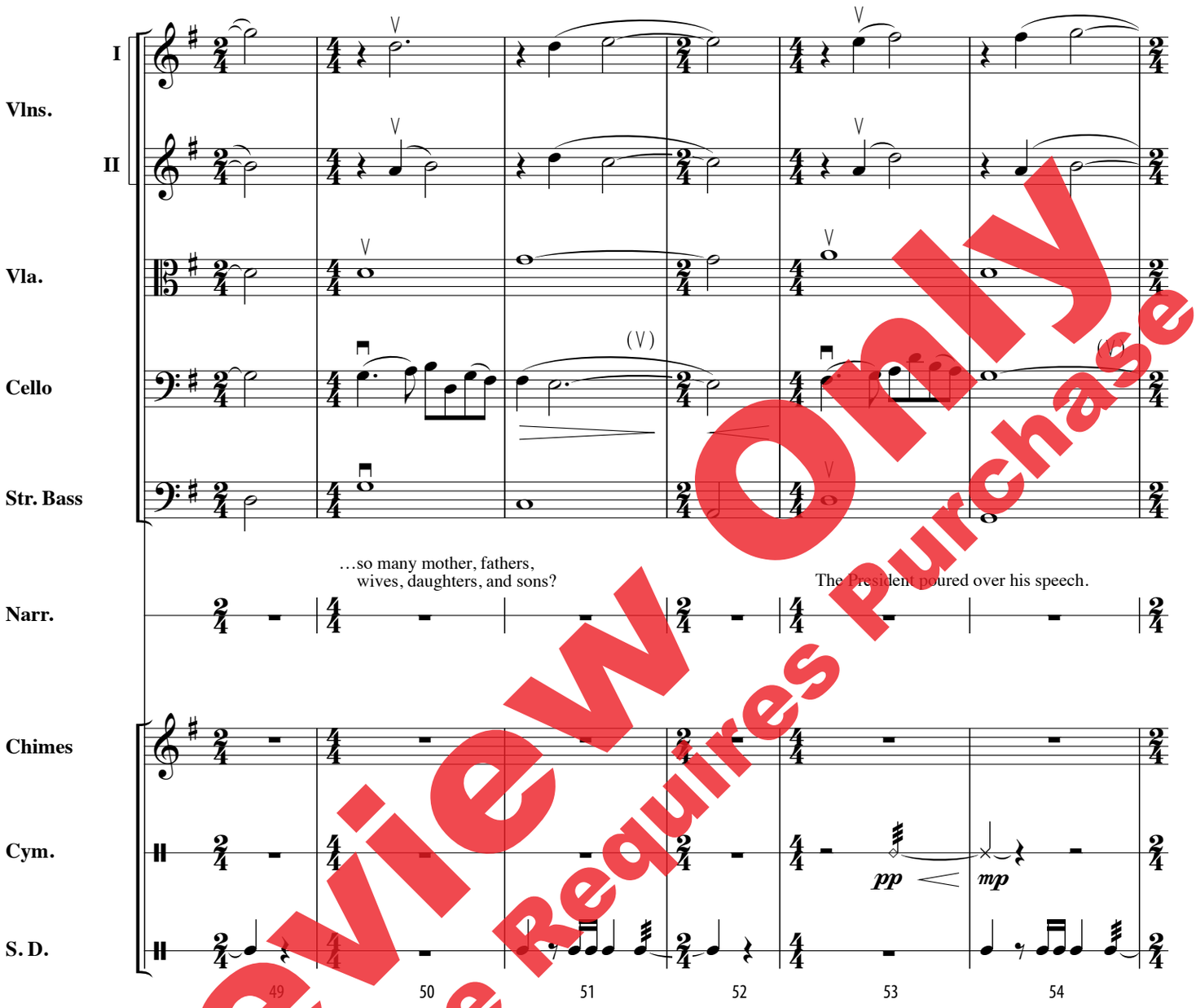

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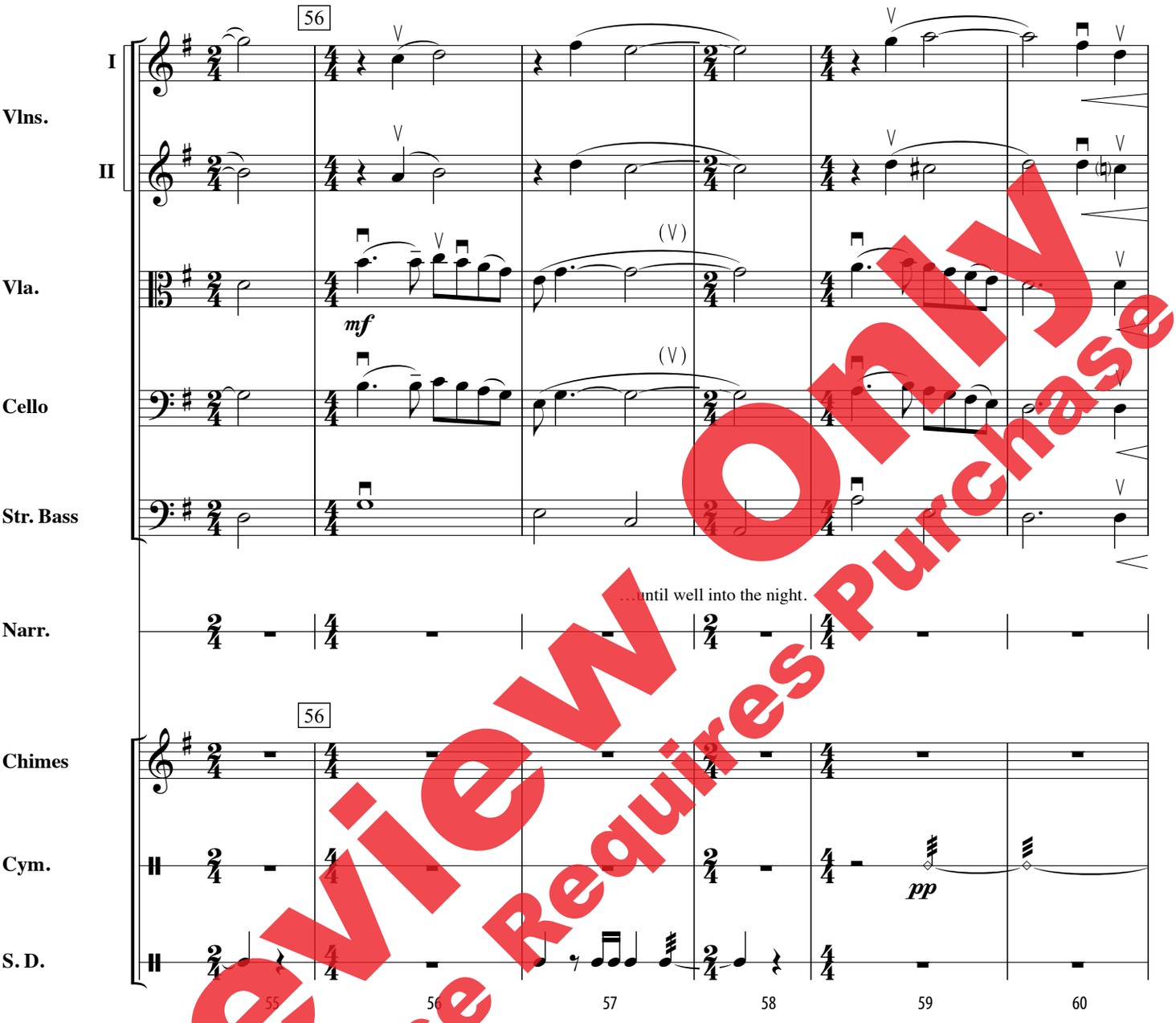

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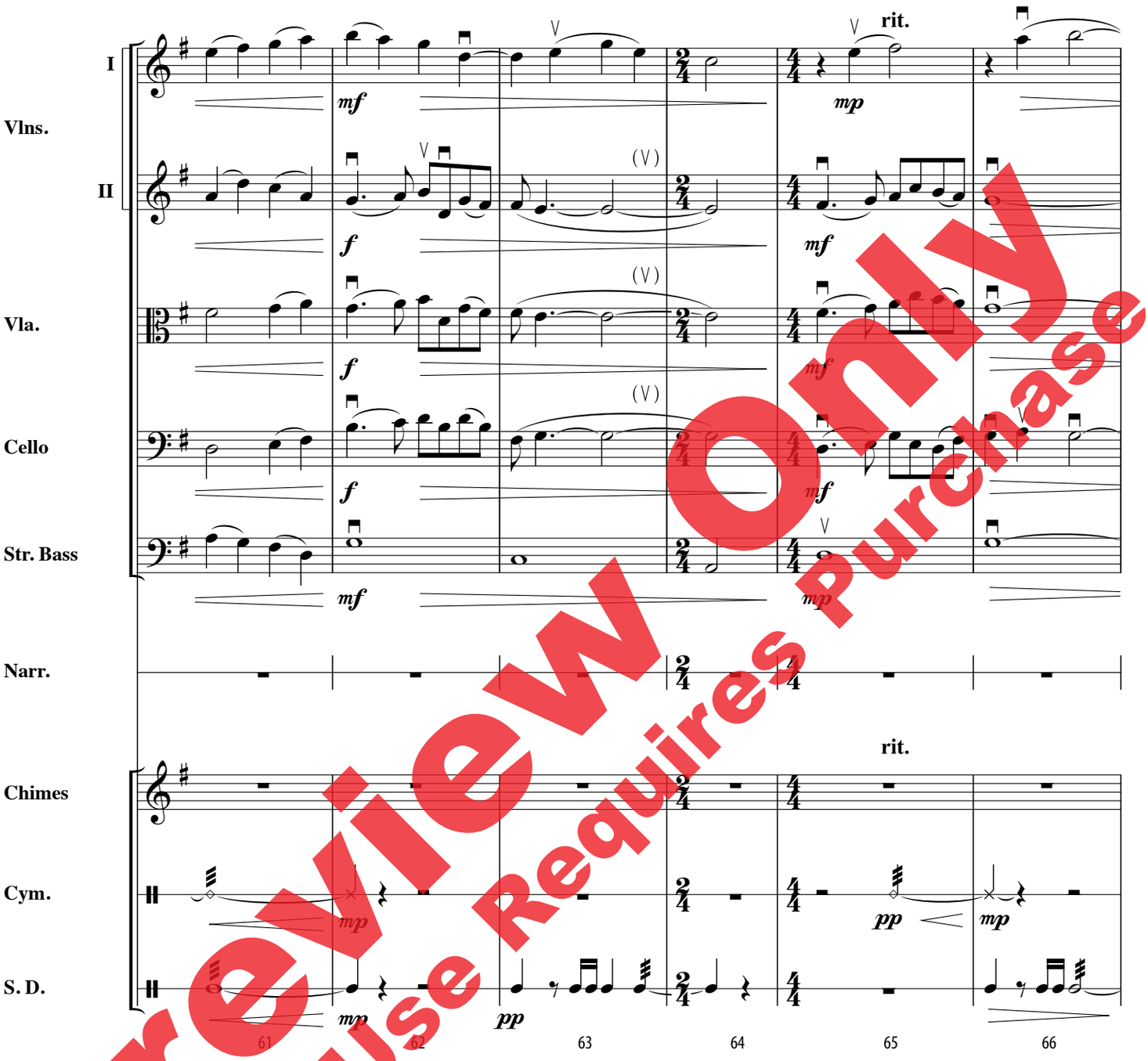

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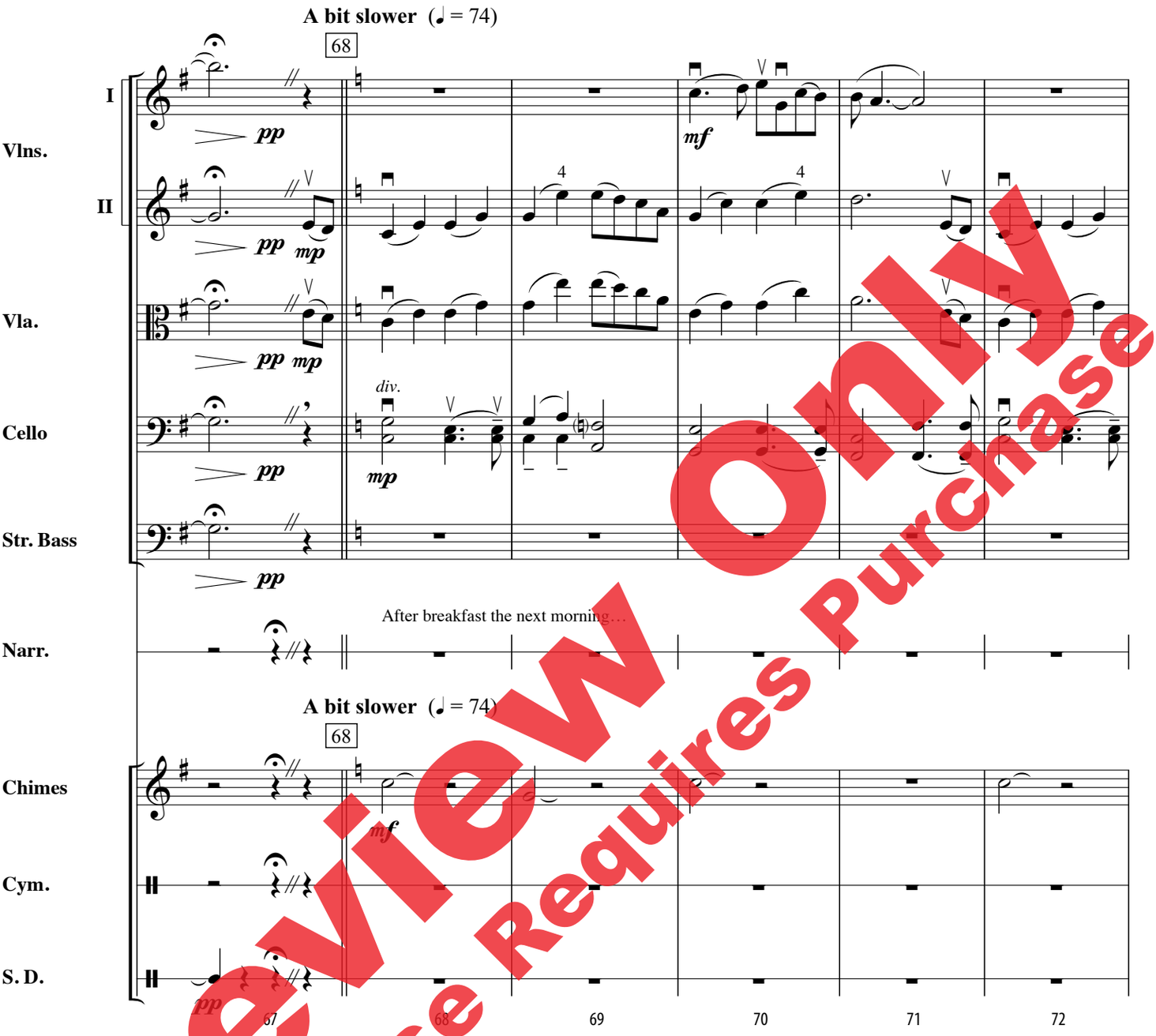

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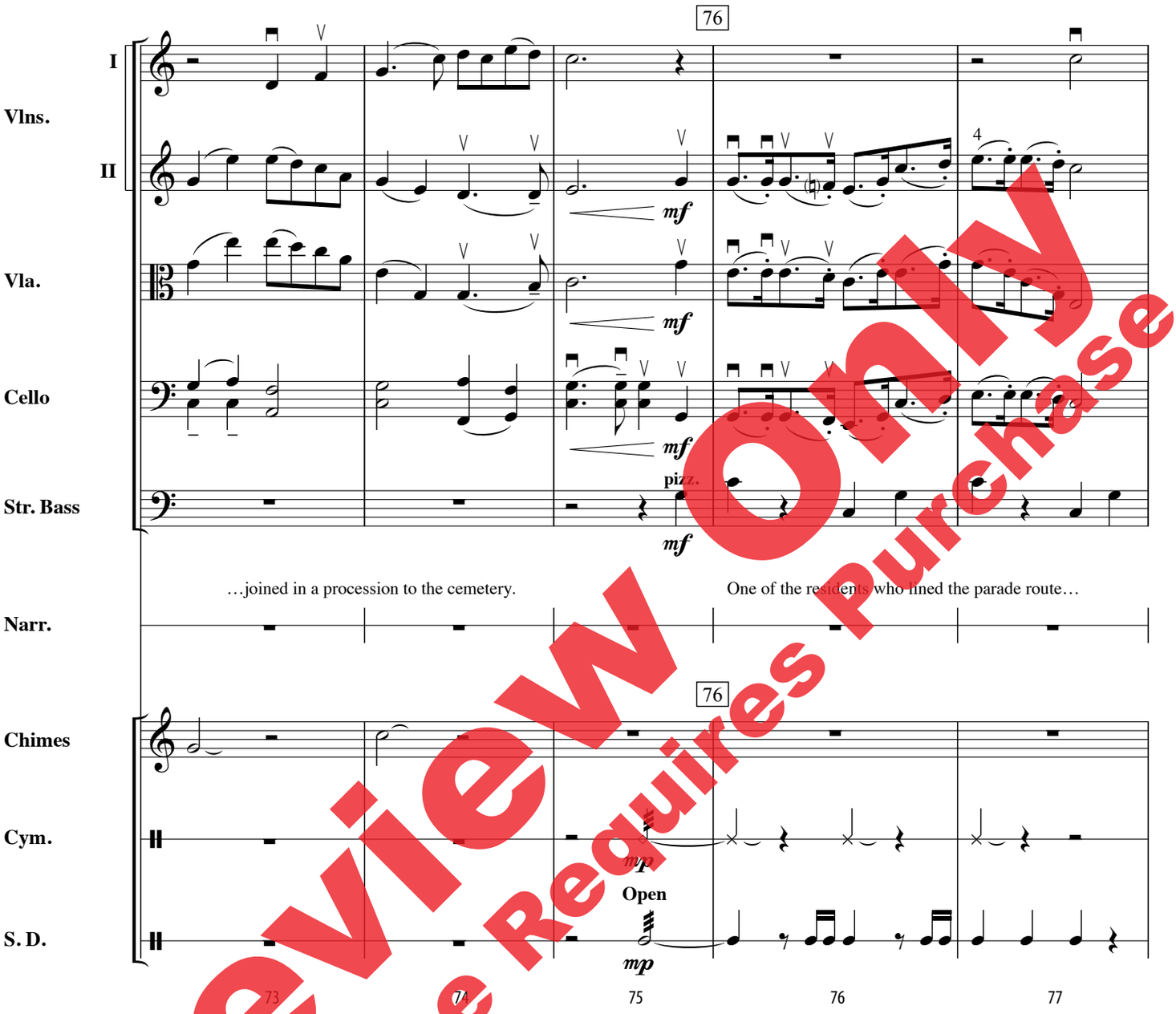

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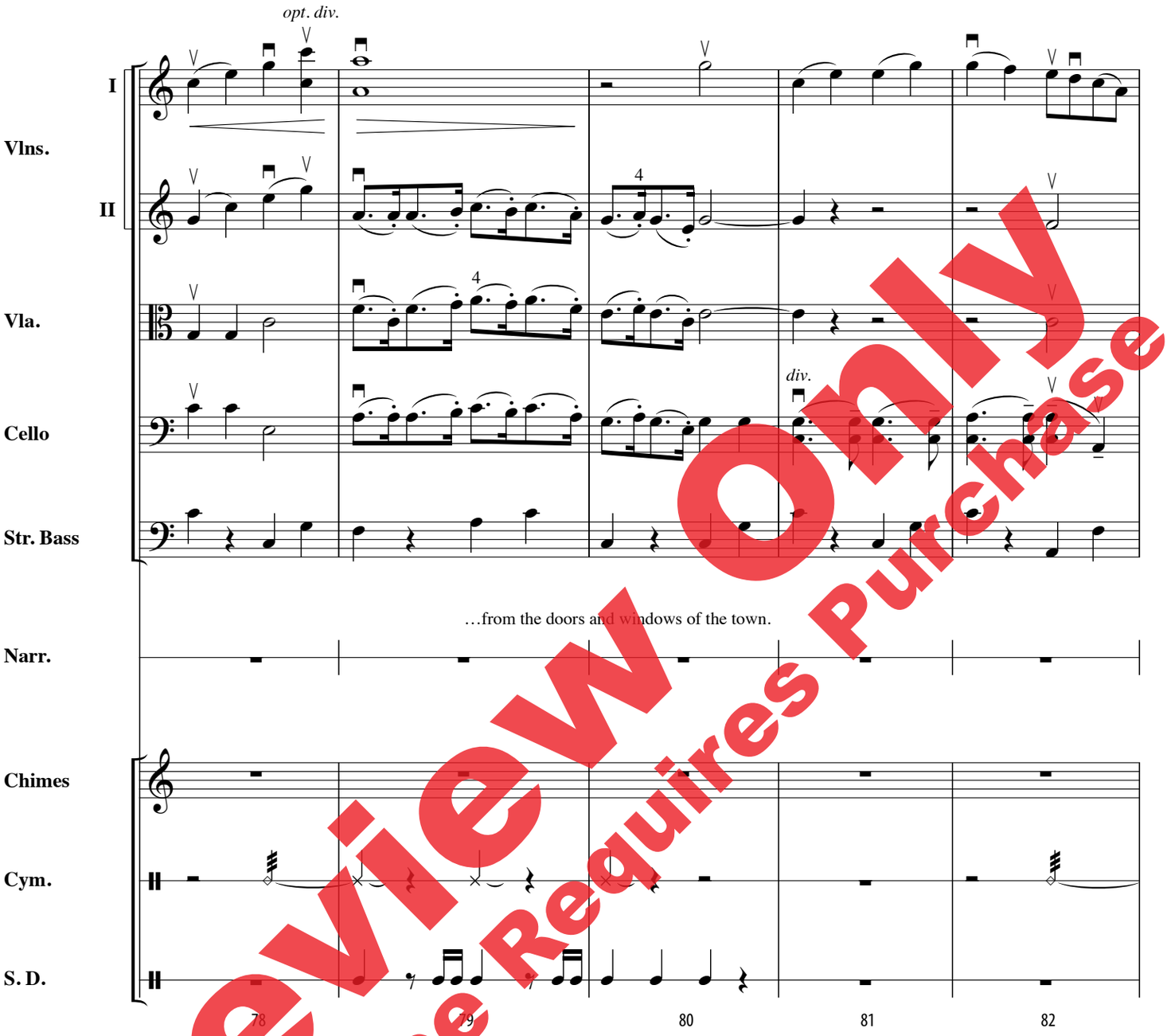

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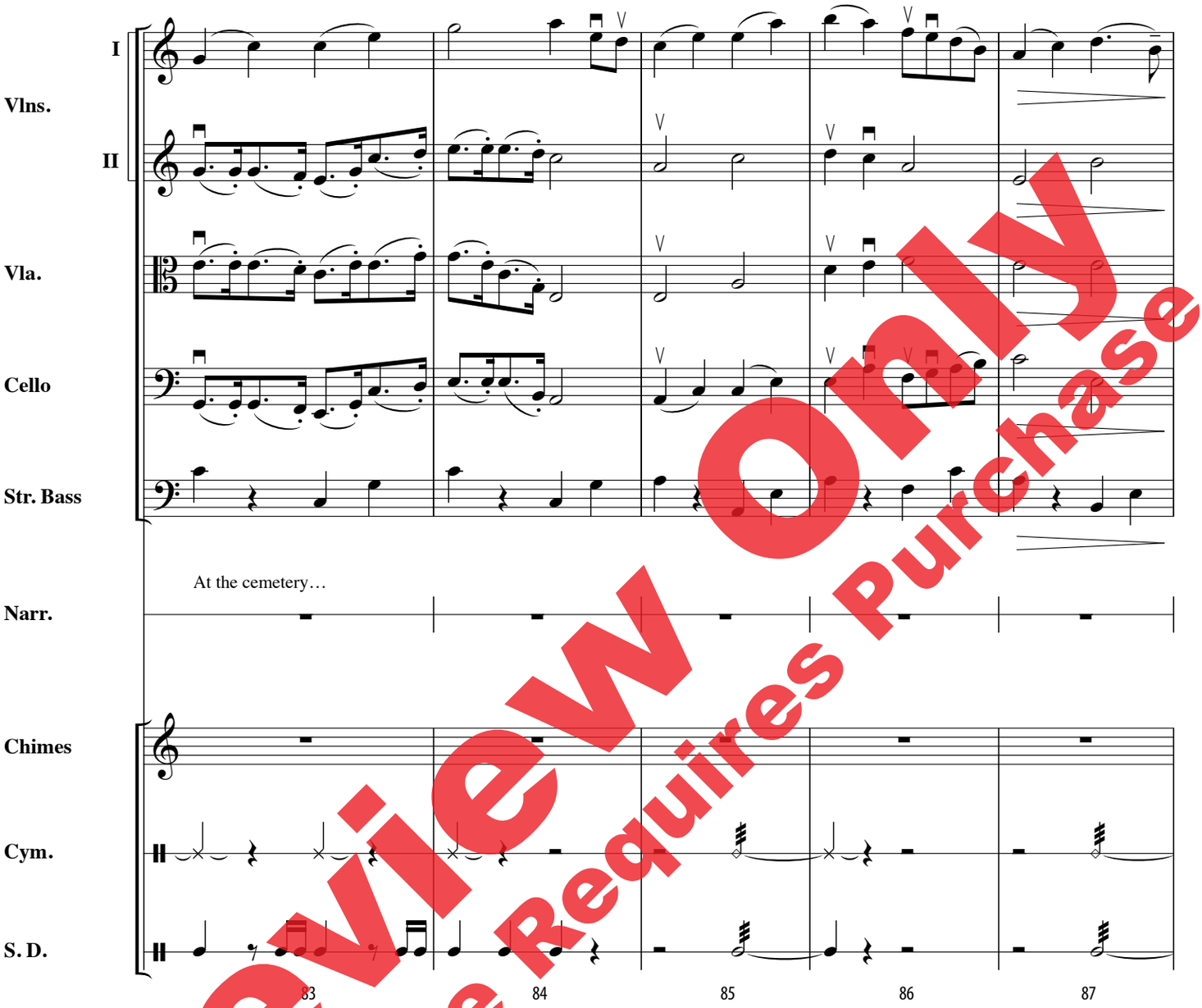

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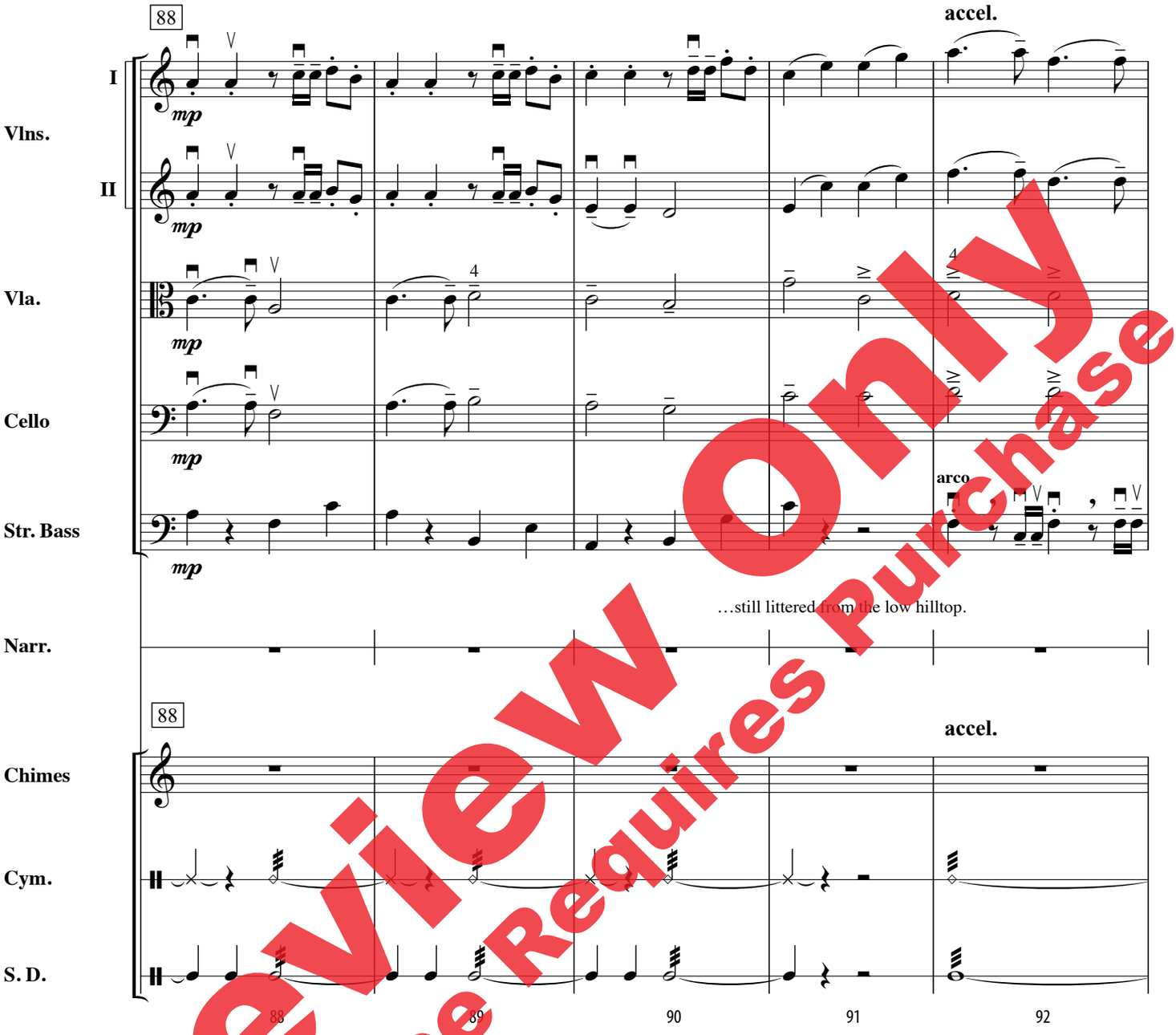

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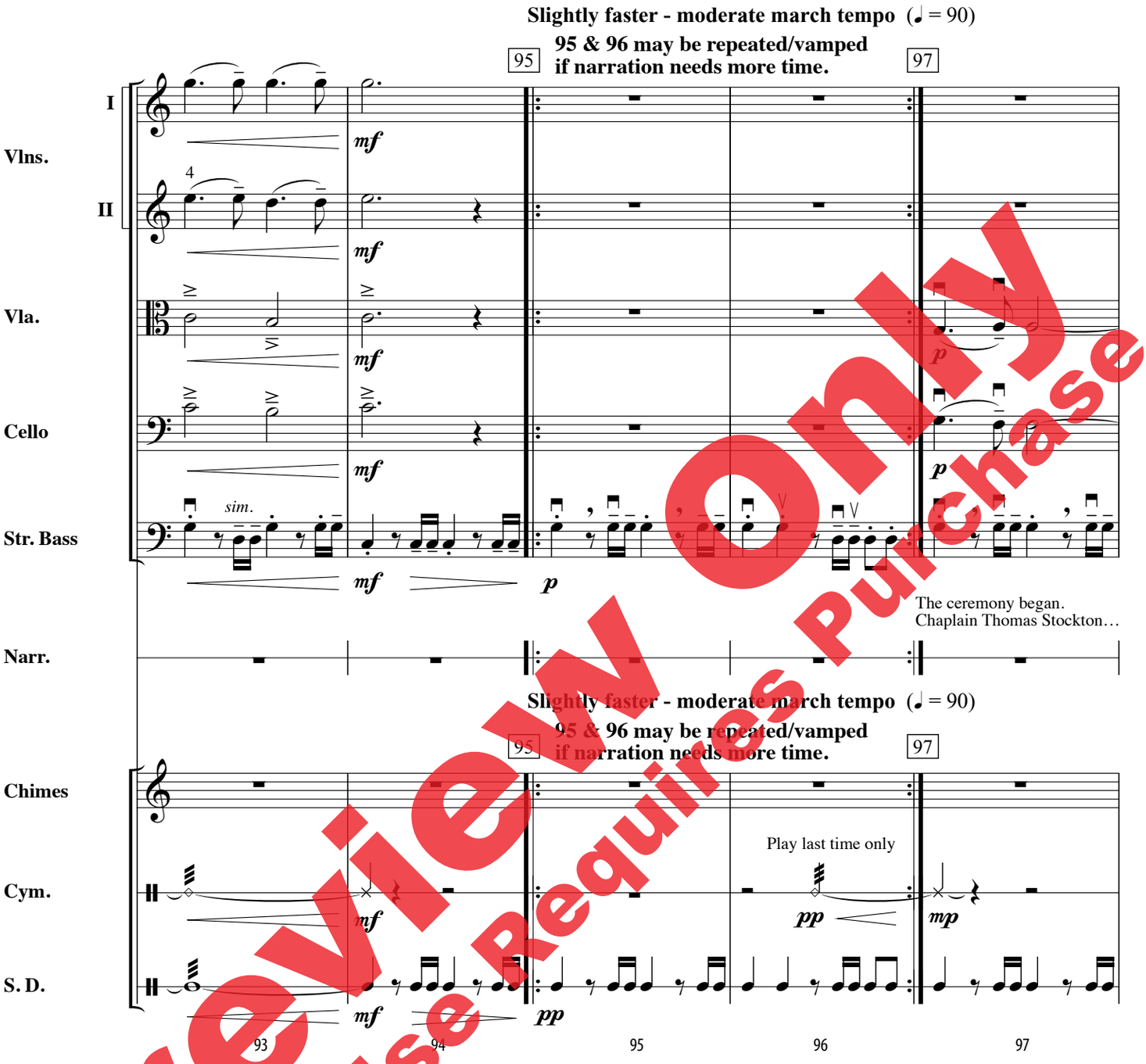

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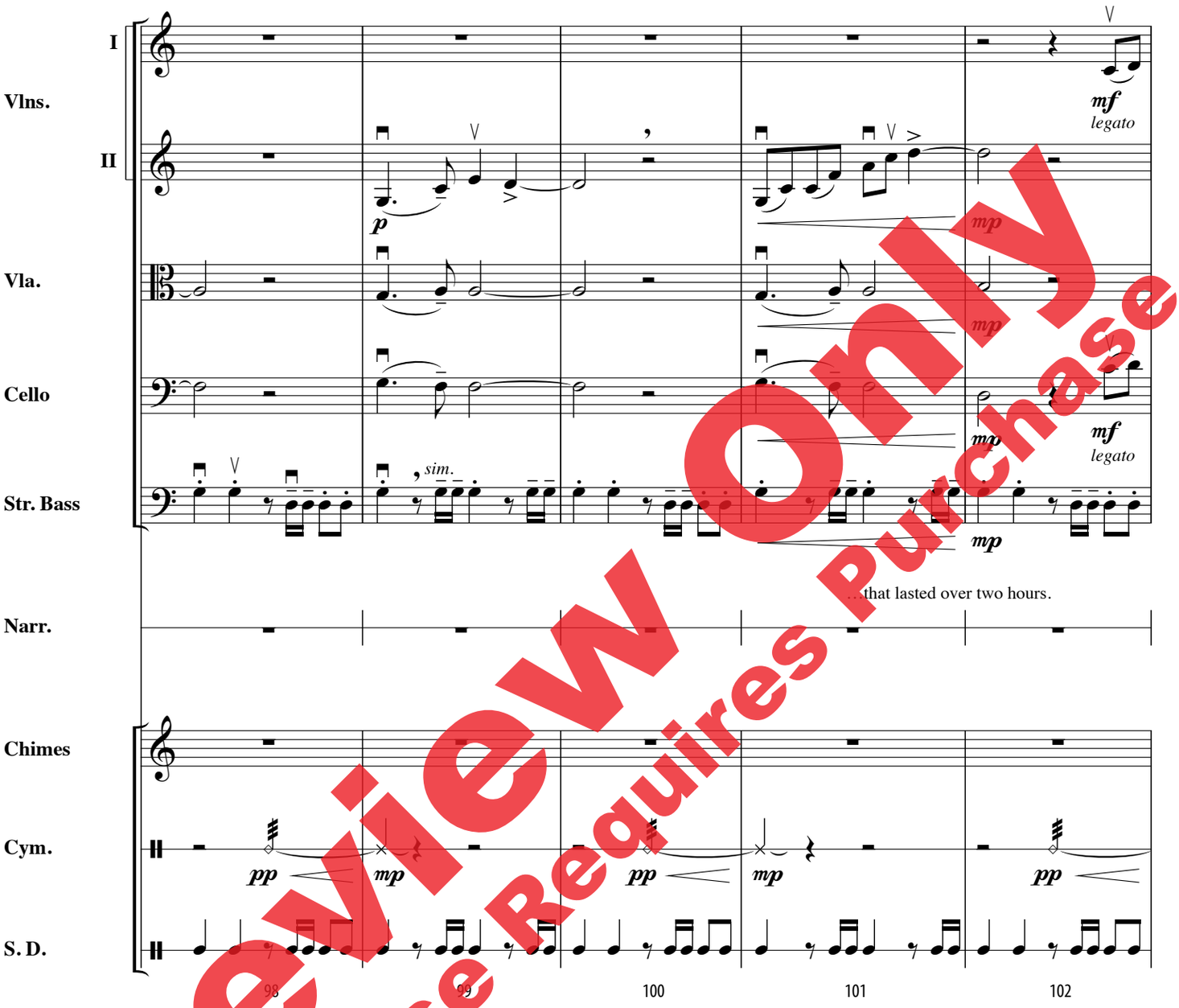

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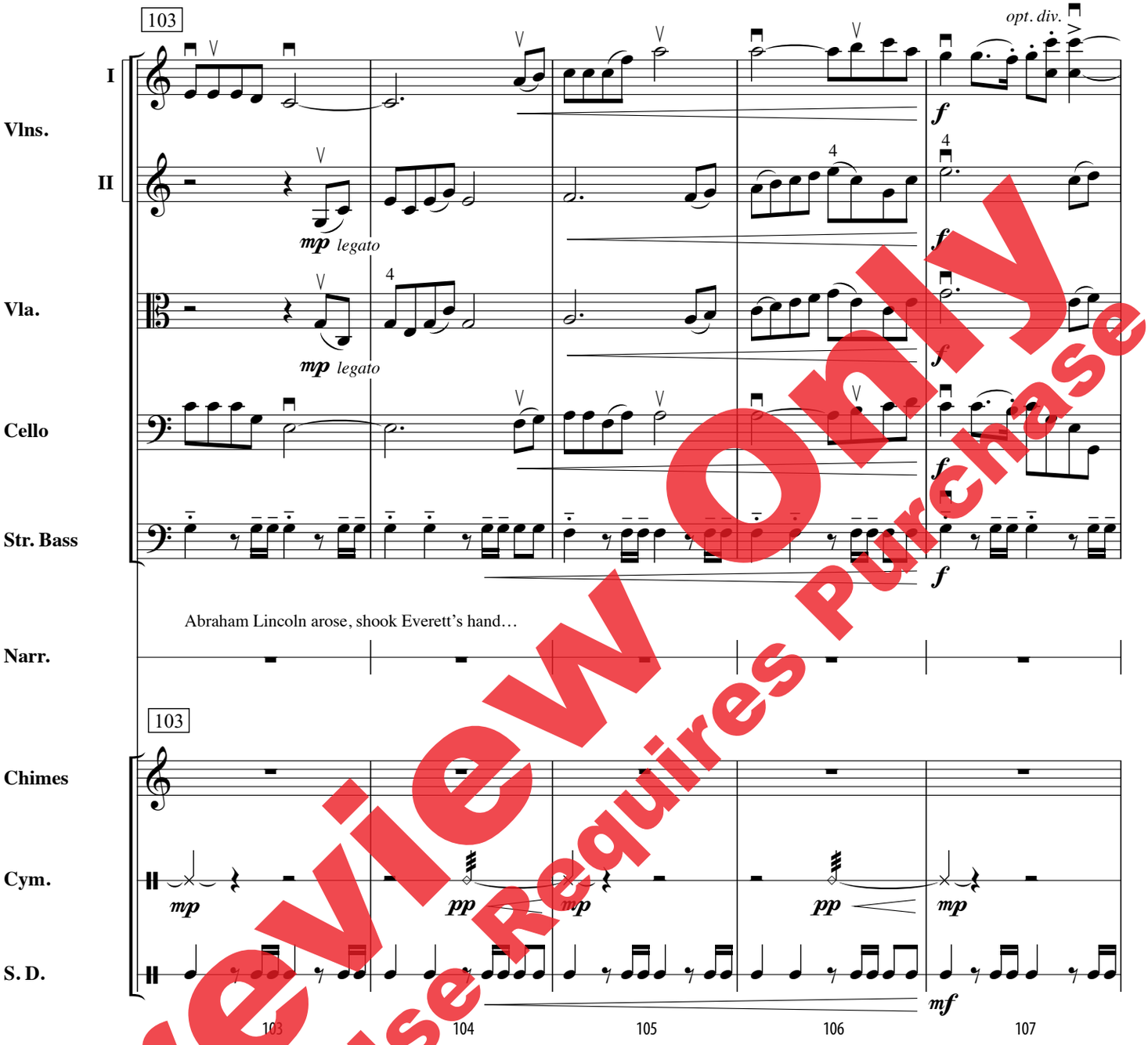

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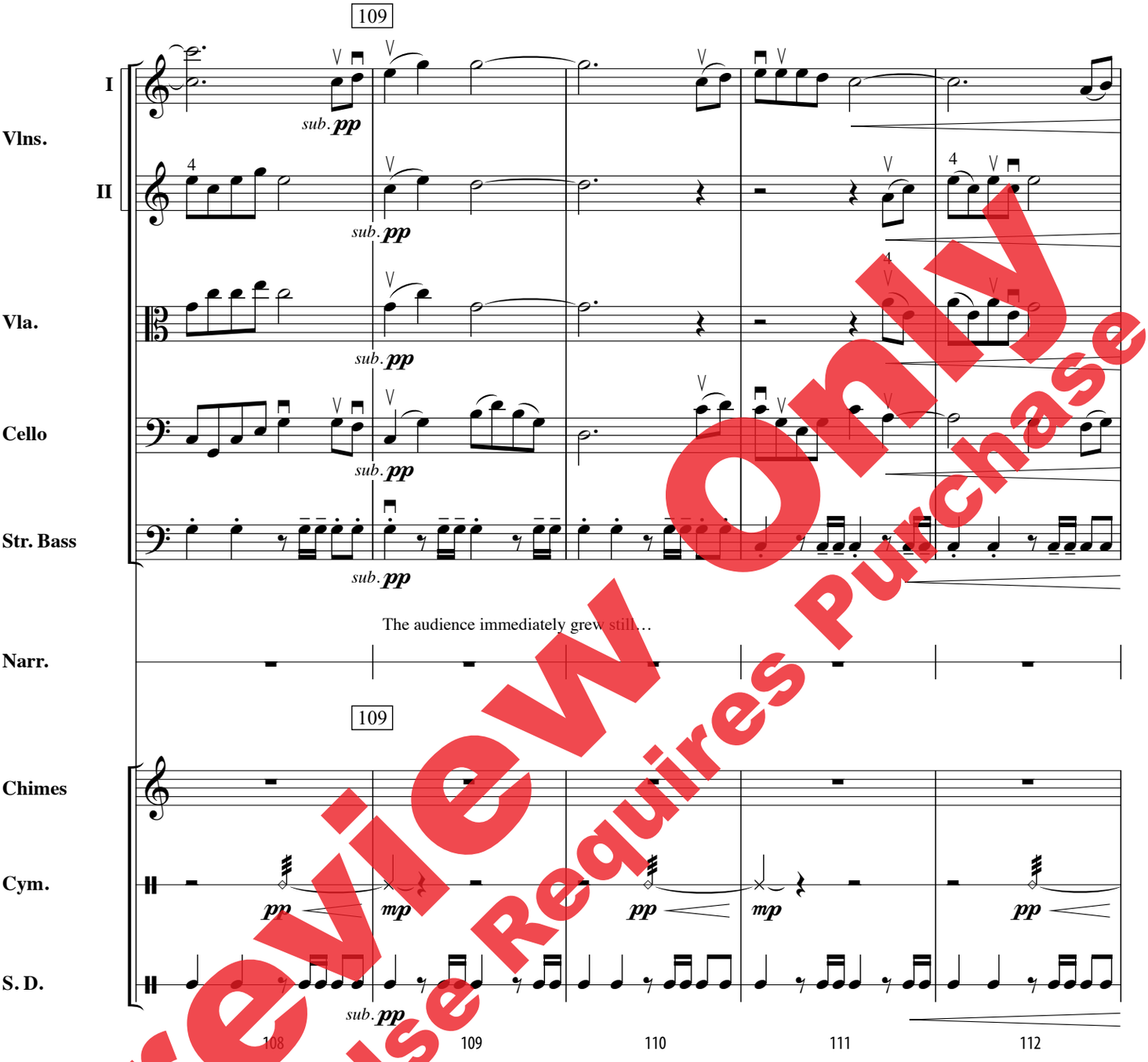

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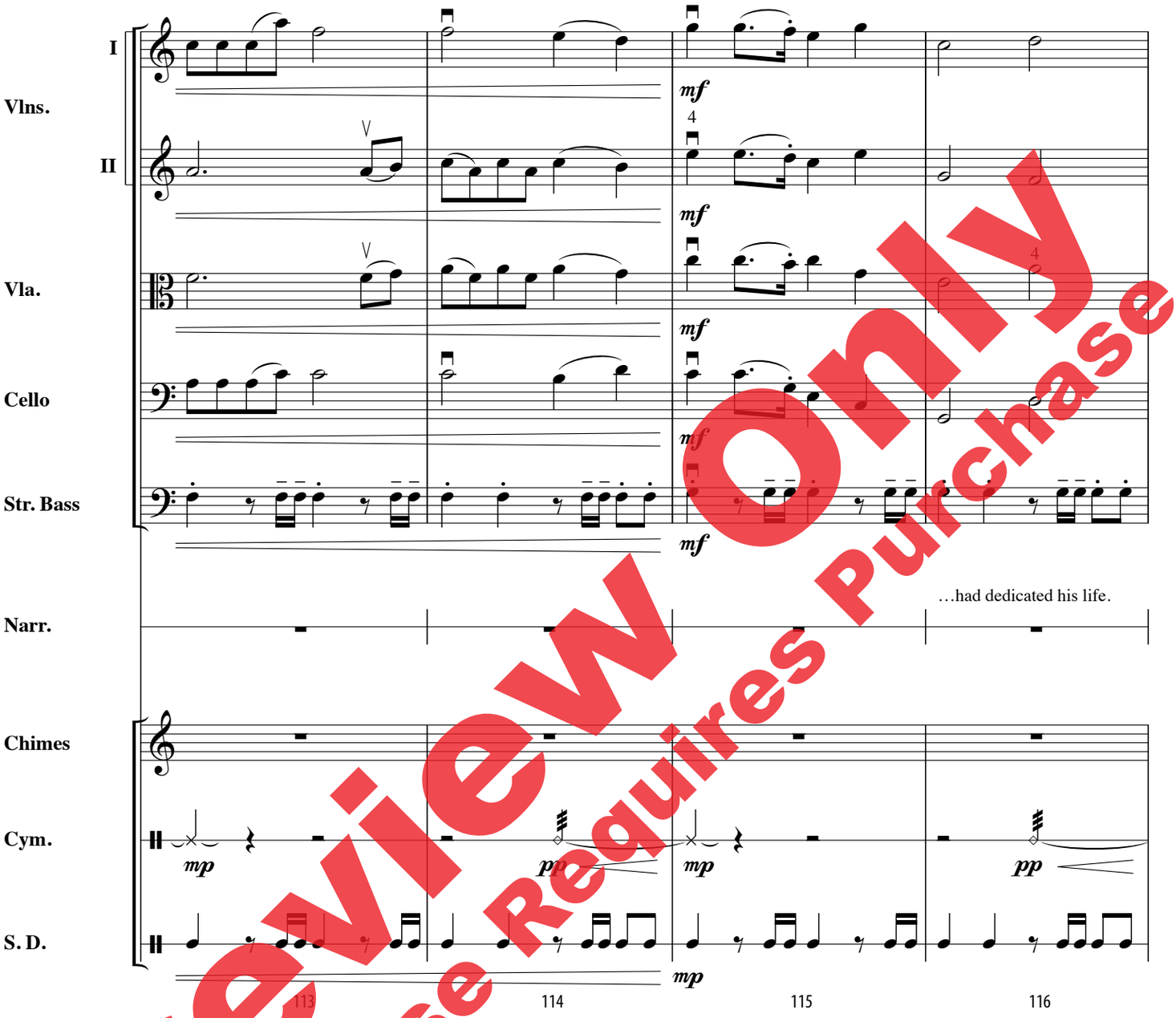

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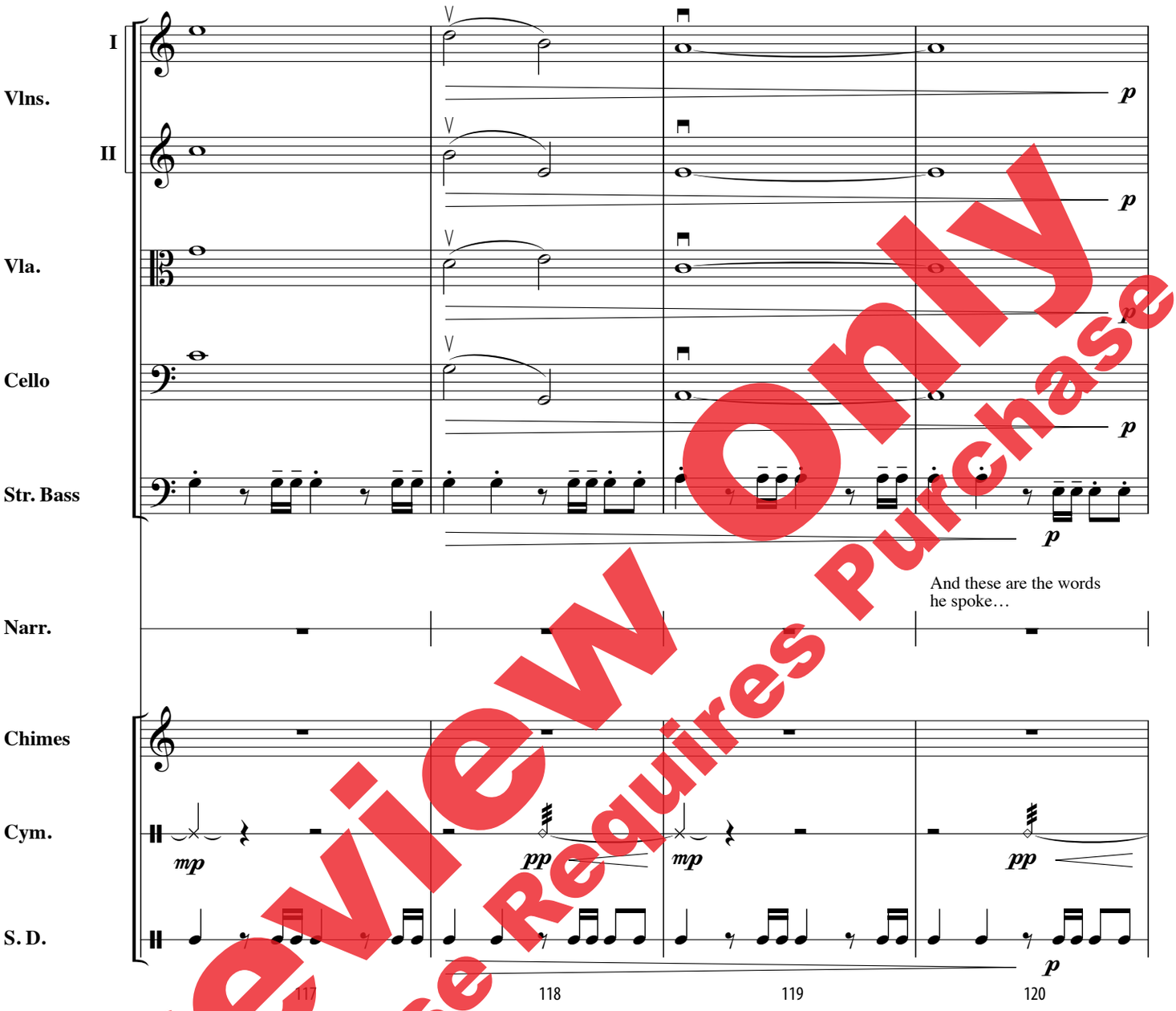

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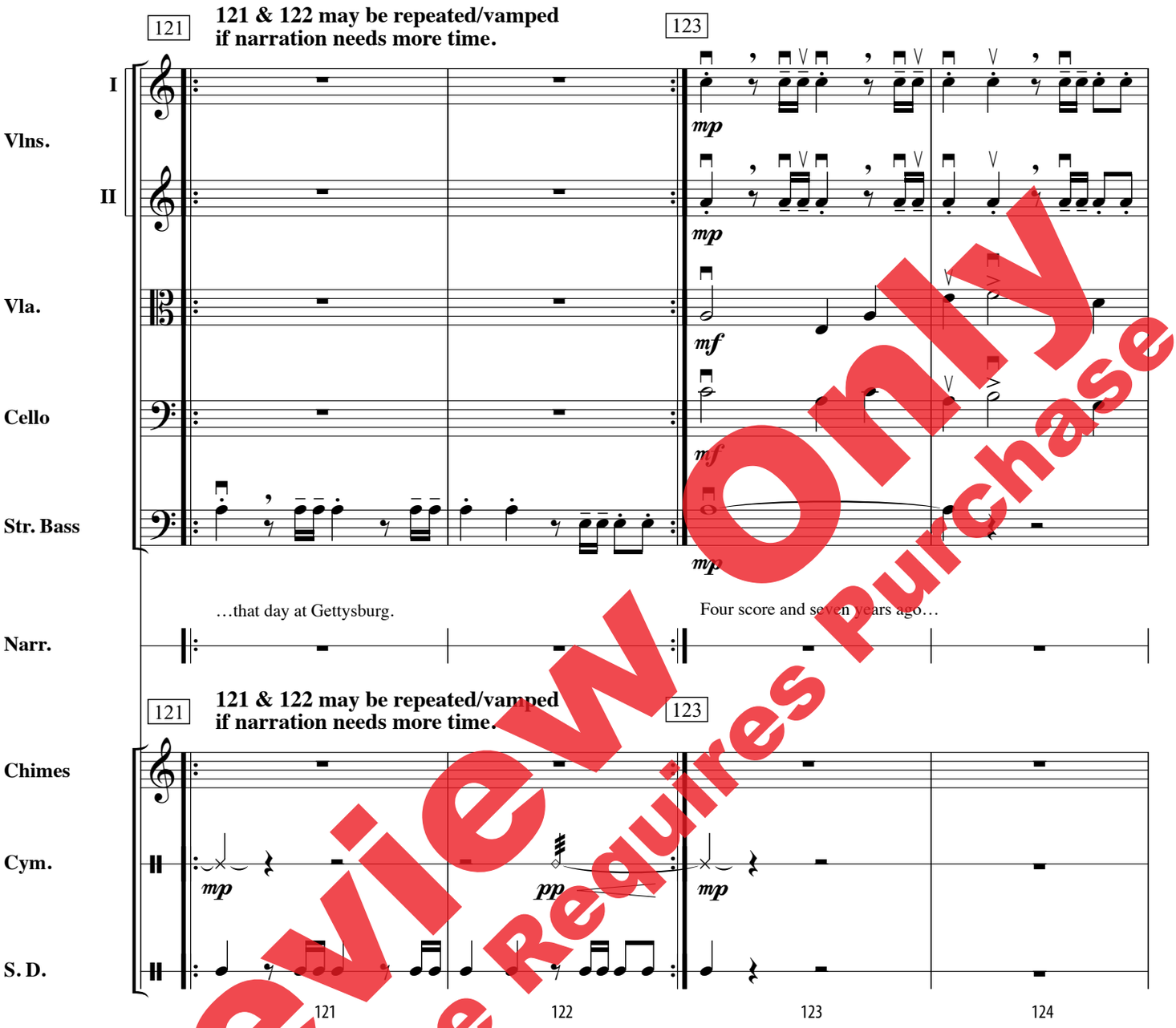

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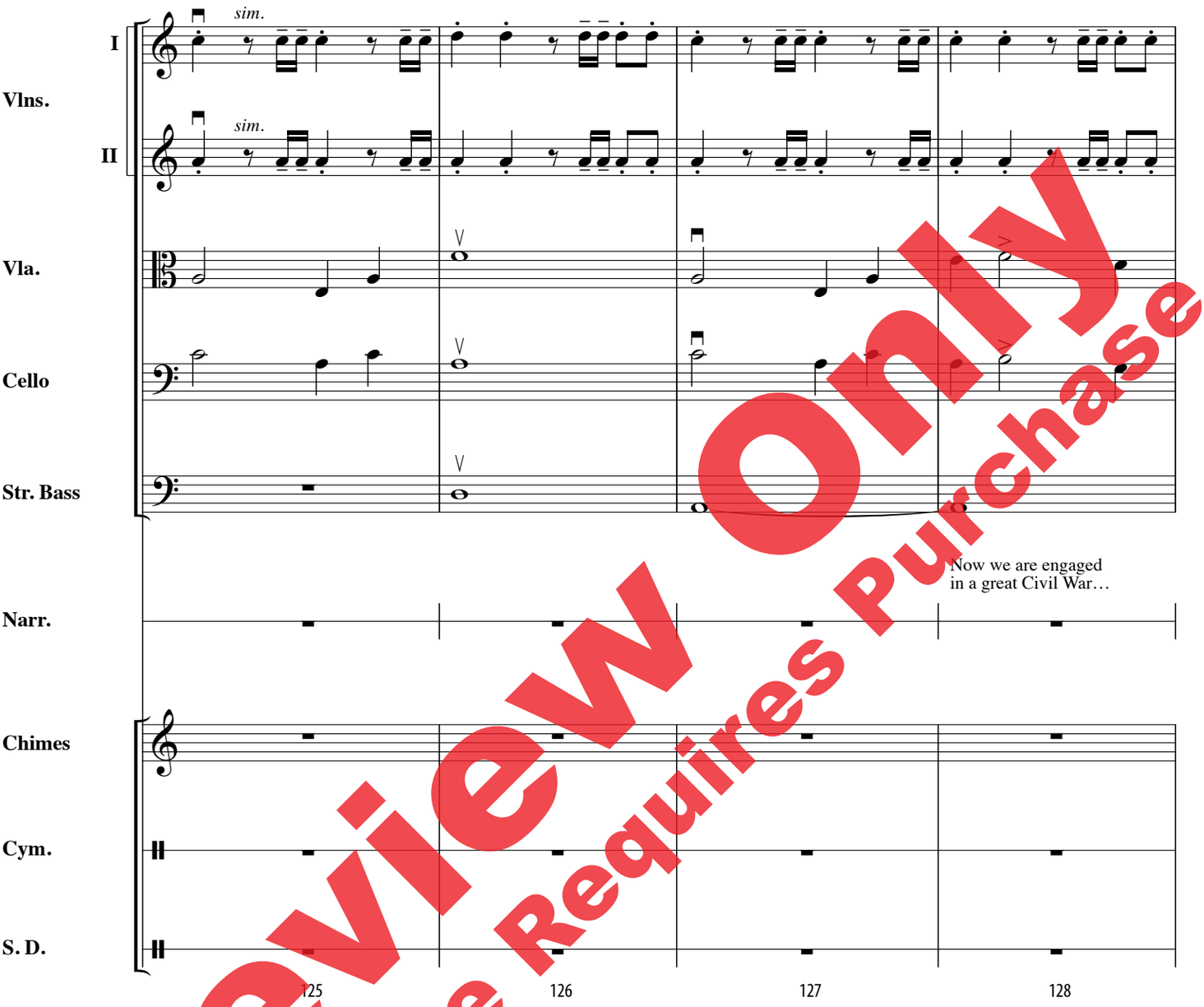

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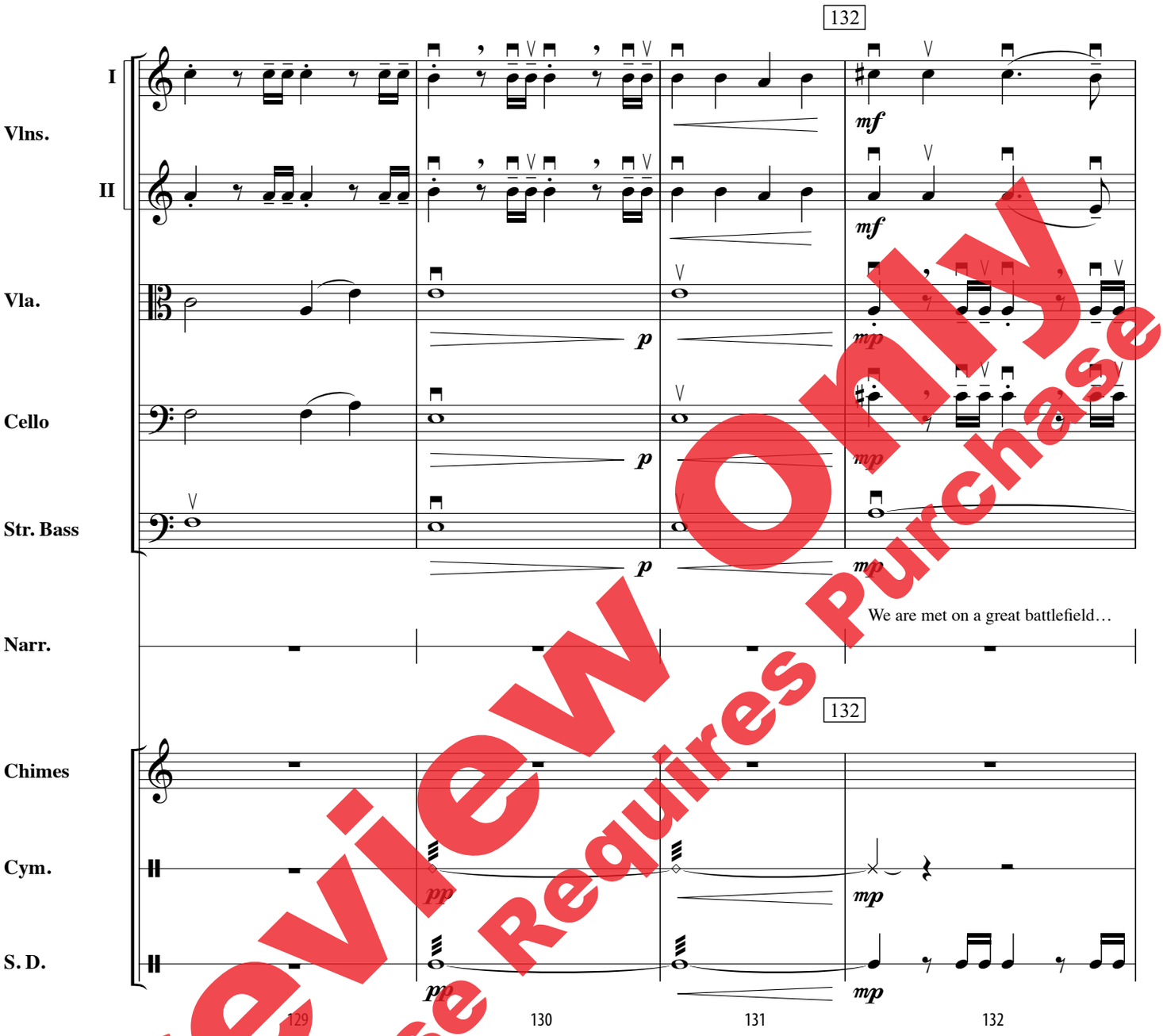

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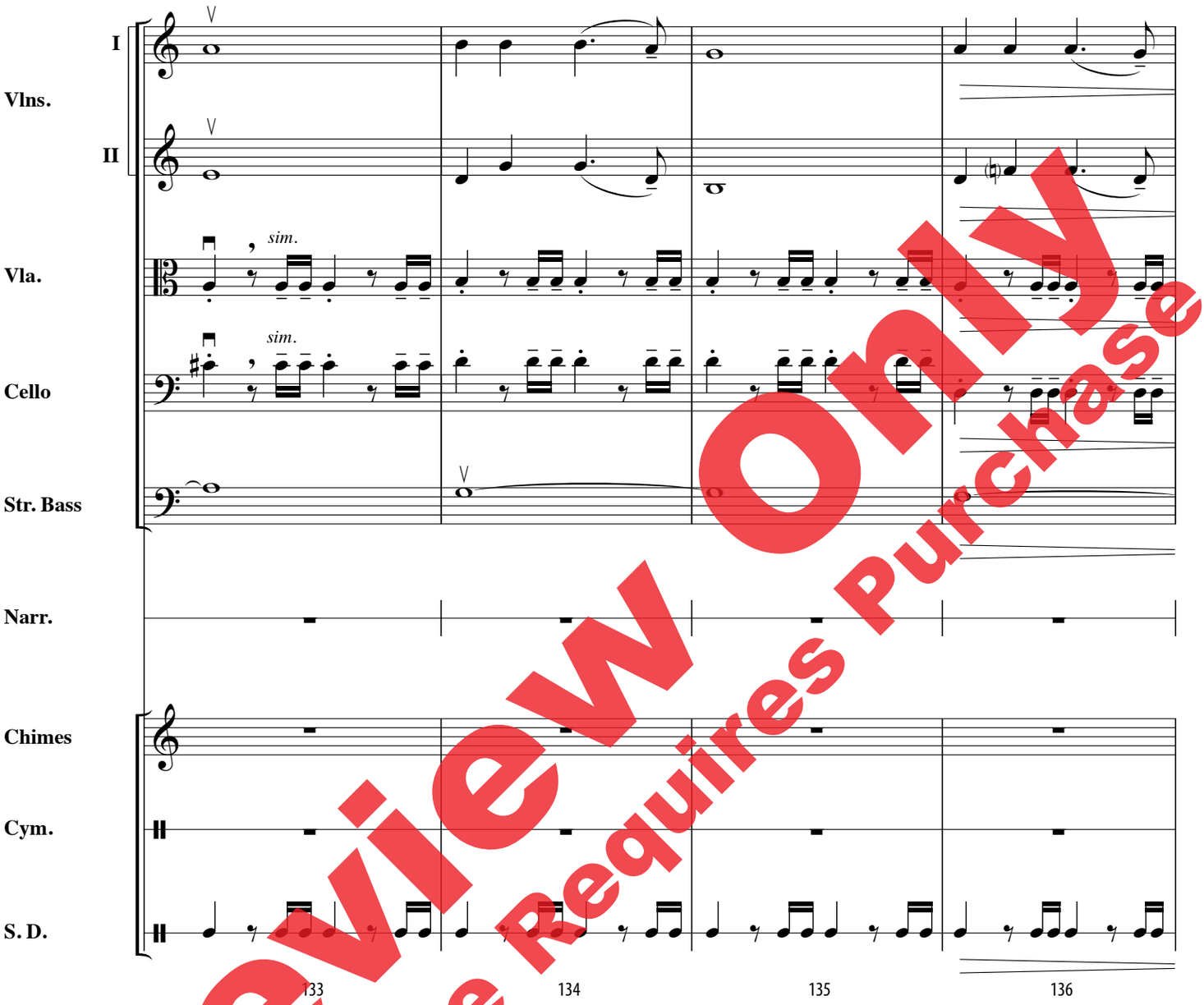

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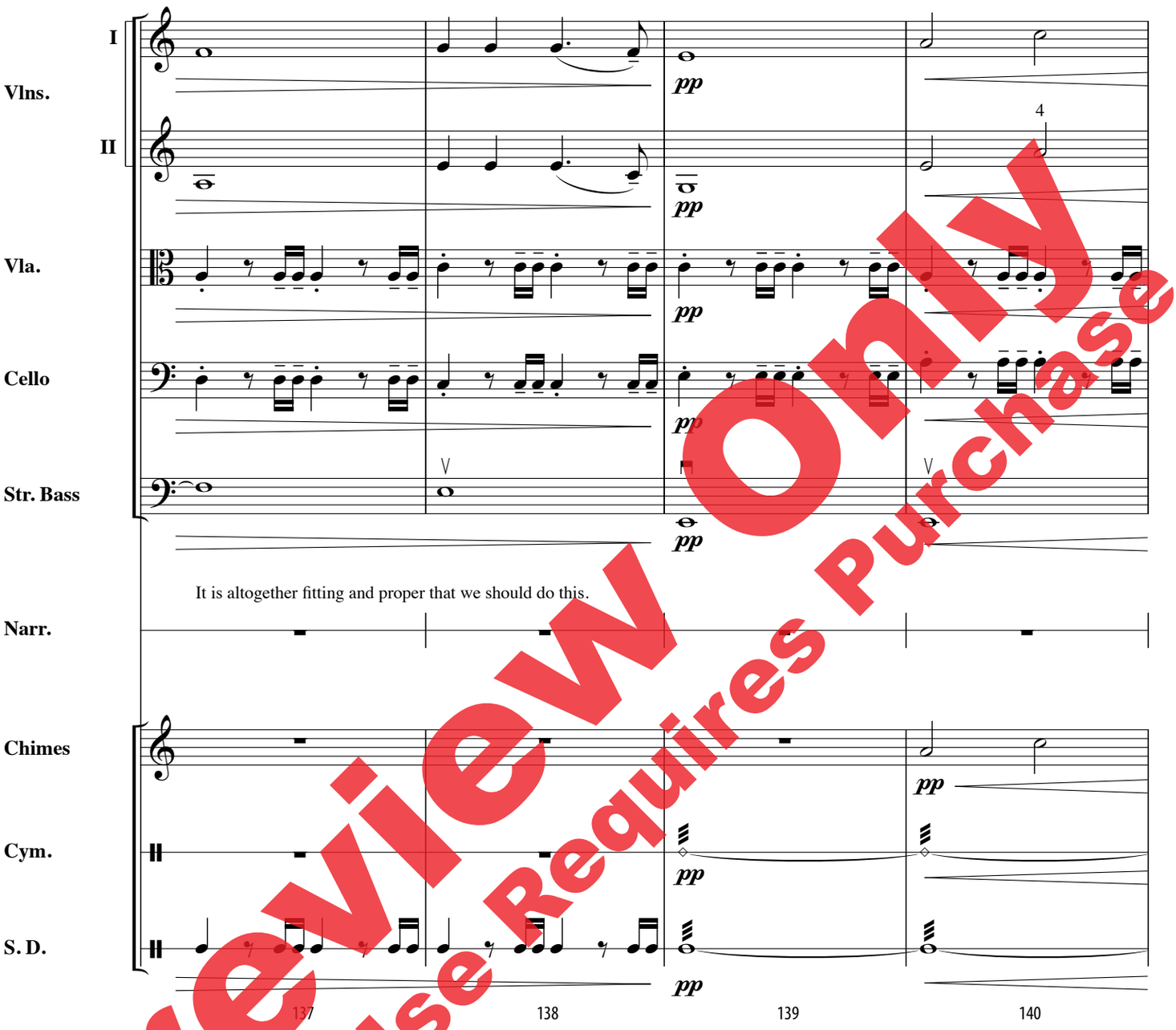

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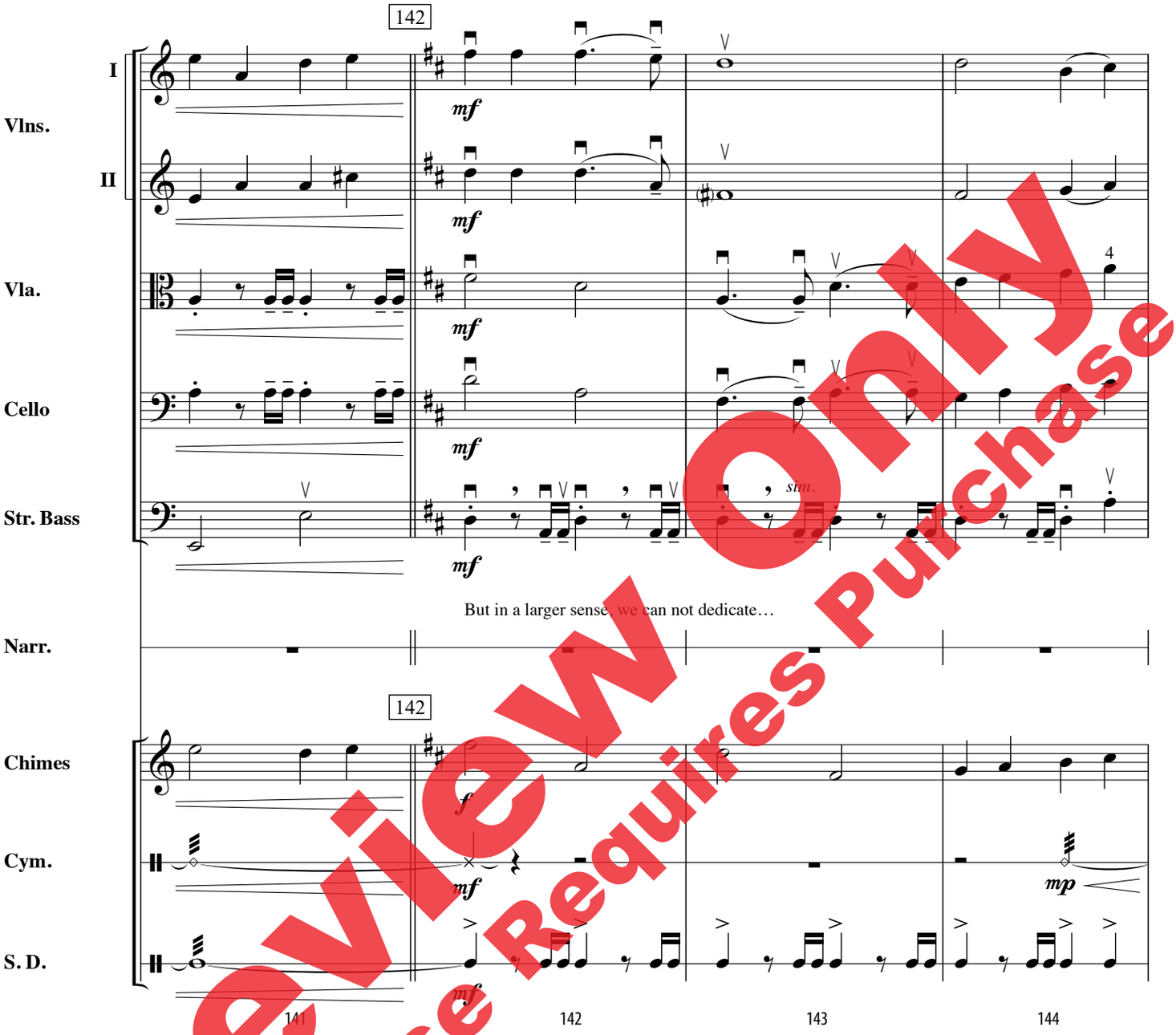

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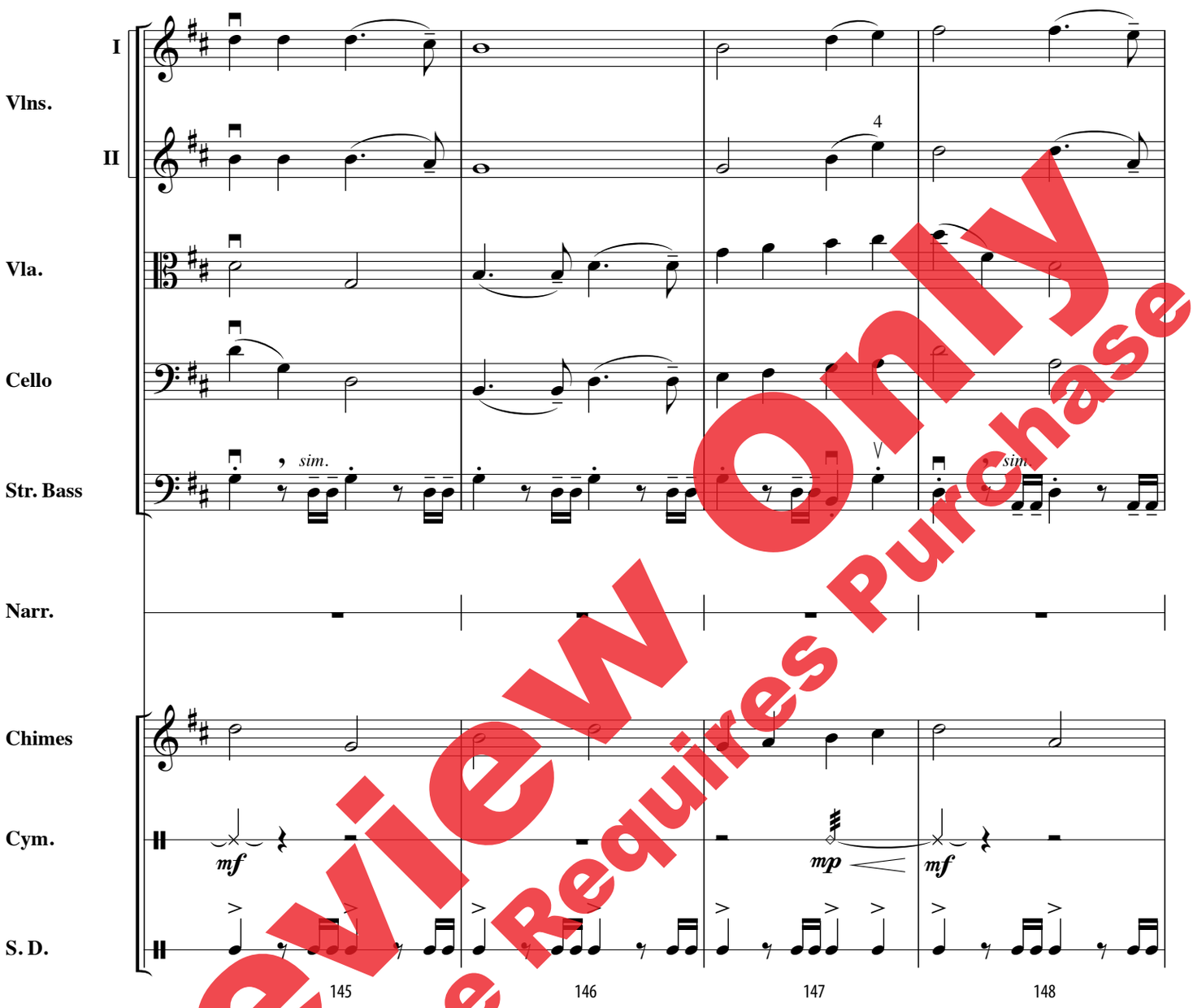

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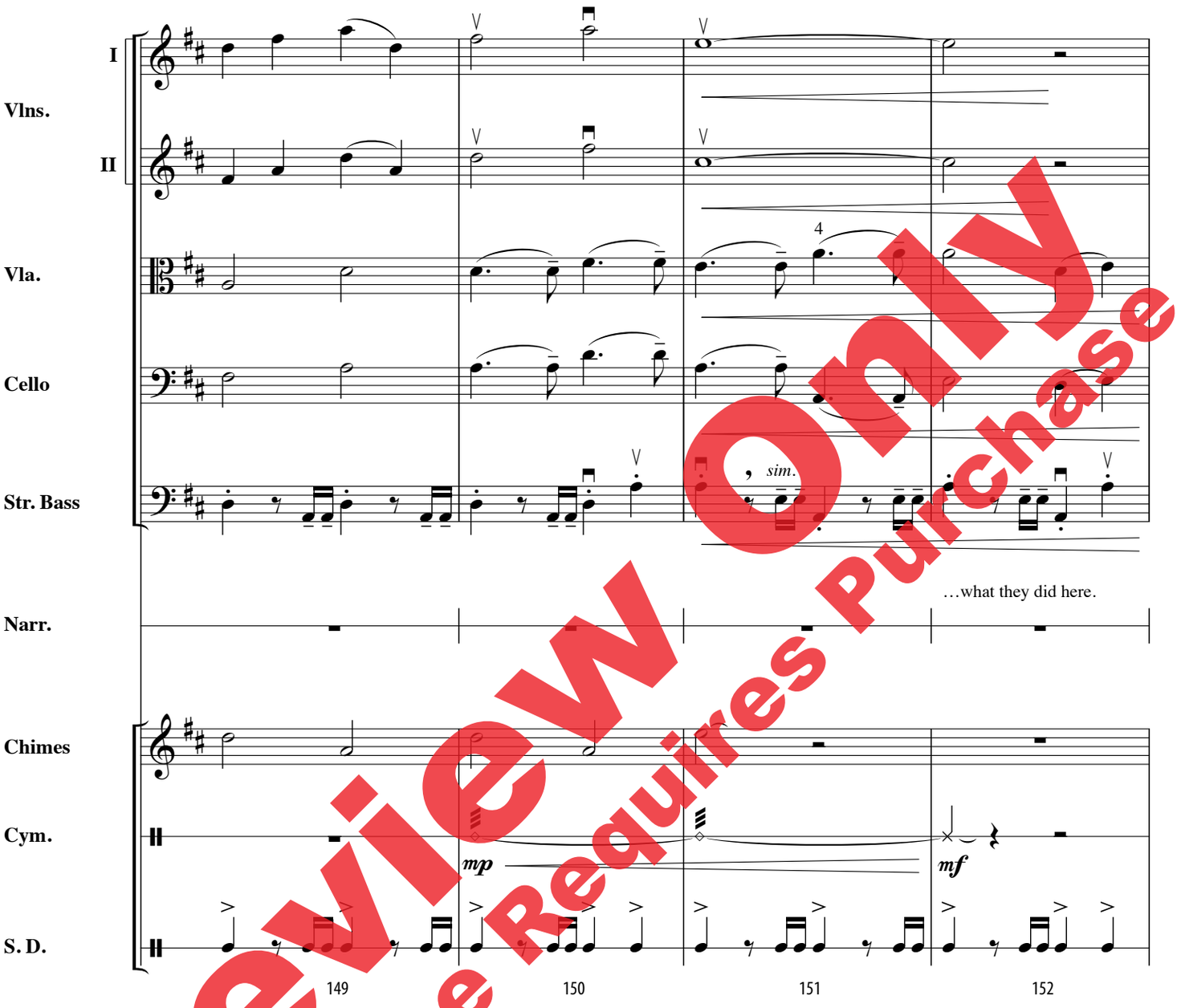

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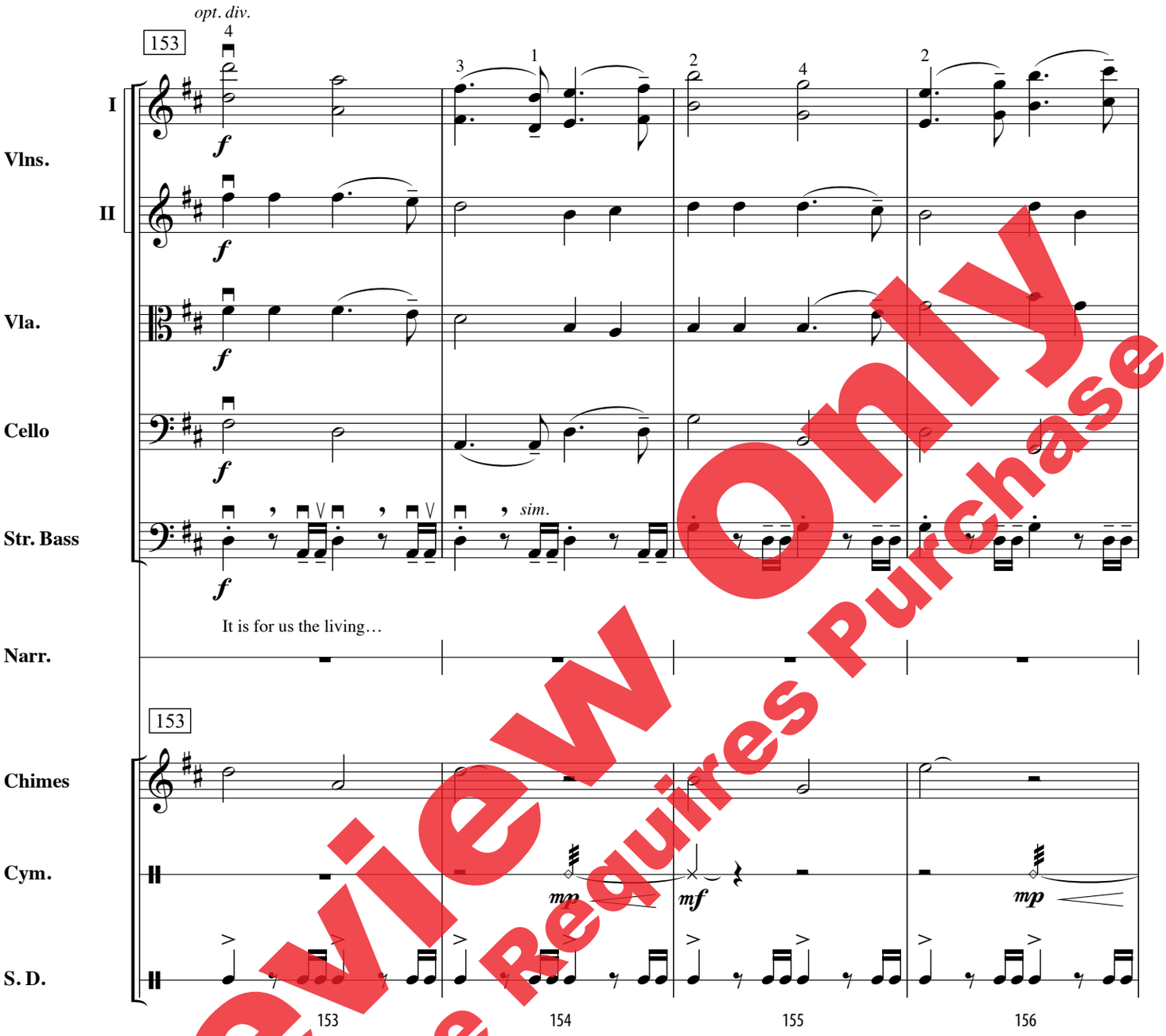

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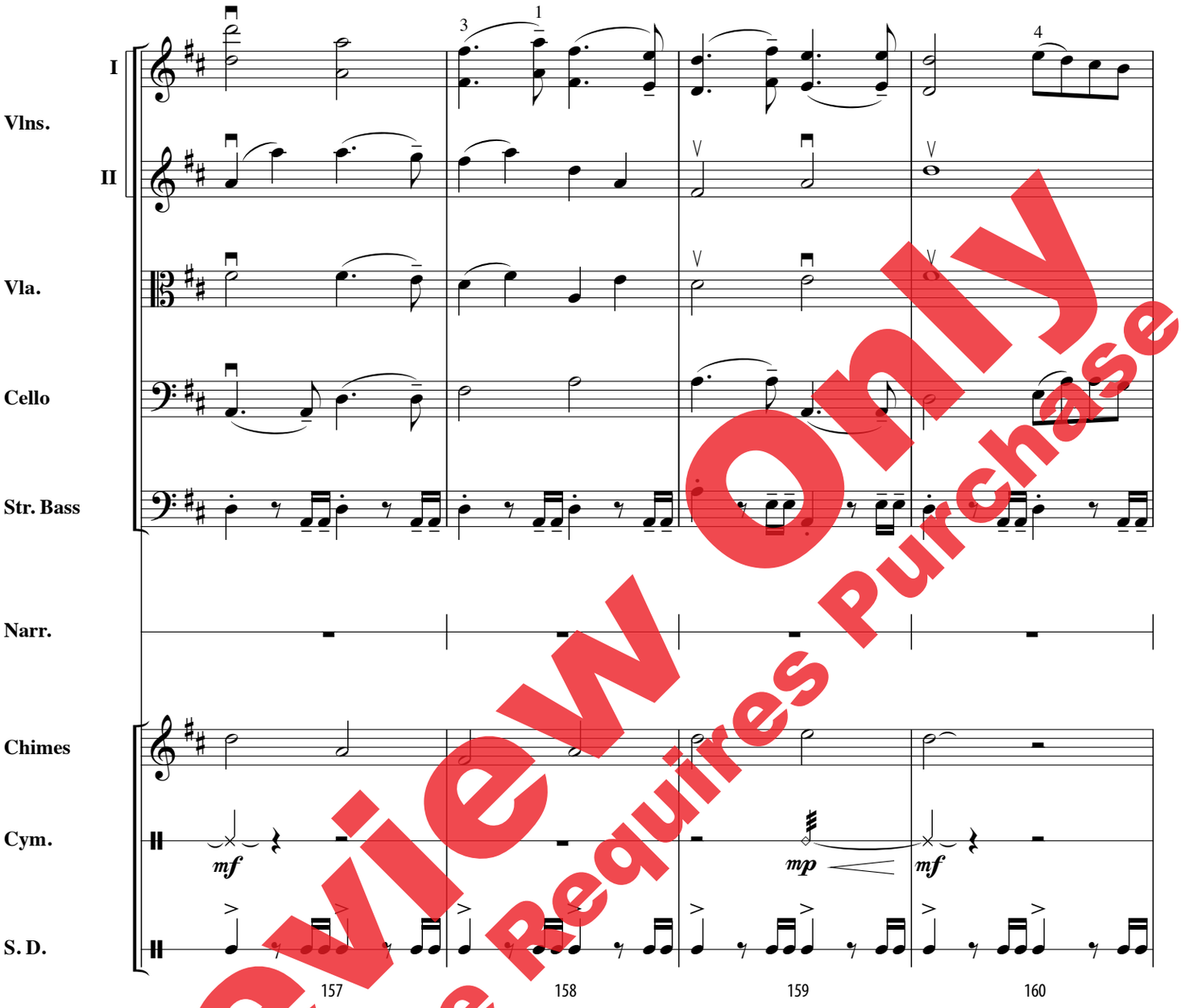

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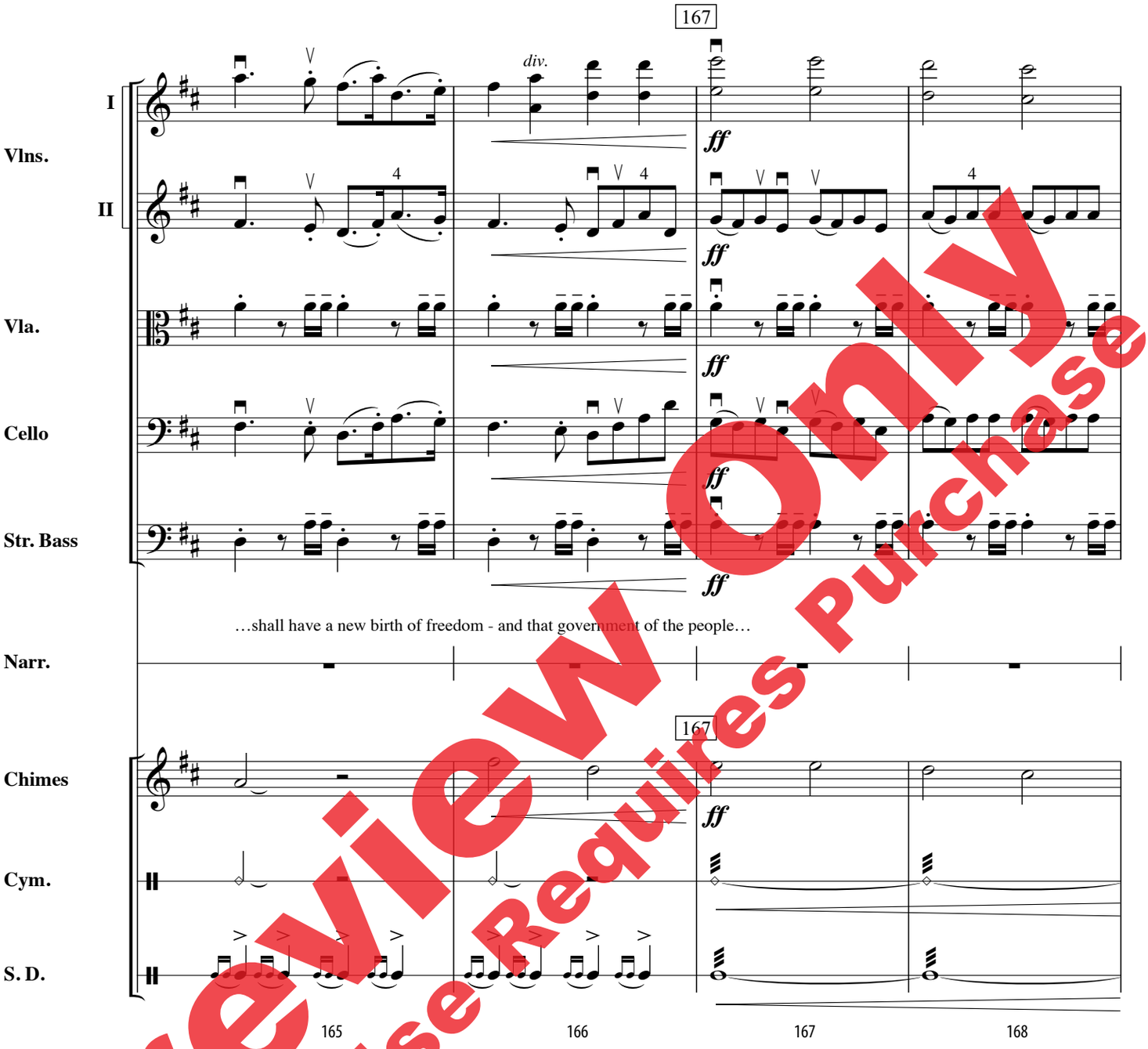

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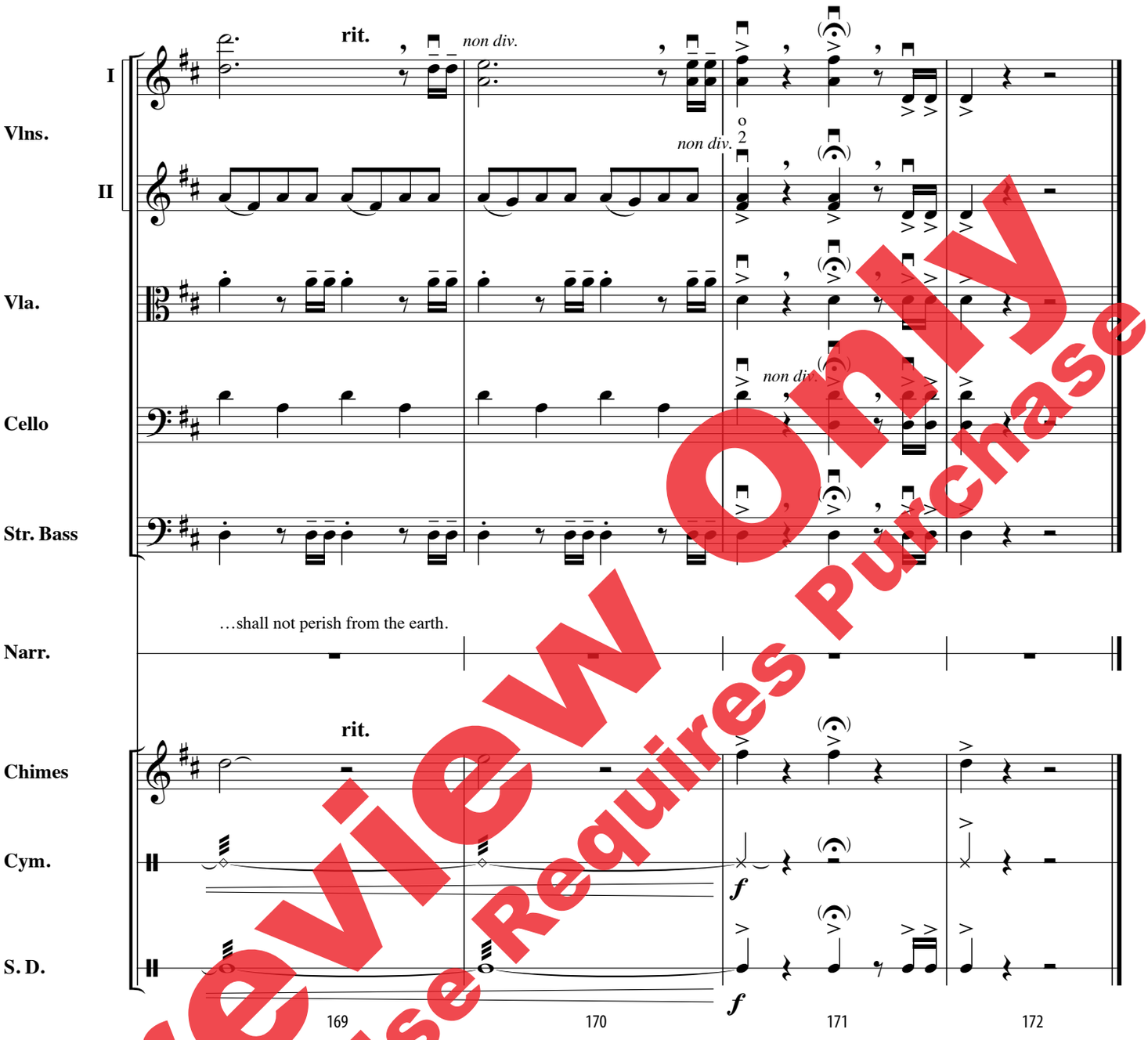

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