Gwyneth Walker

Sounds and Colors

for String Quartet

"Shades of Blue"
"Green in Happening"
"Bright Yellow and Yellow Dots"
"Red to Crimson to Silver"
"Many Colors"

Program Notes:

The aural experience of listening to music is often matched by visual associations. Listeners *see* landscapes, movement and colors. It is this last connection which has inspired the creation of **Sounds and Colors**.

The composer has selected colors, or color groups, as the theme for each movement. Perhaps colorful slides will be displayed during the performance. Or perhaps the musical/color association will be left to the listeners' imagination!

"Shades of Blue" opens with *sky blue*, reaching up to the sky. This is followed by *deep ocean blue*, the *blues*, *royal blue* and, as a casual ending, *blue jeans!*

"Green is Happening" associates the color green with Spring, with *buds opening*, a *fullness of sound* (blurred patterns), *playful, light touches*, and *flowers popping up*.

"Bright Yellow and Yellow Dots" is *cheerful and sunny*, opening with *sunbursts*. Little *dots* fill the middle section. Joy returns, leading to a final *sunburst*.

"Red to Crimson to Silver" focuses on the warmth of the color red. The notes *huddle* together. They rise with the warmth of the heart to a *jubilant, bright red*. The music grows in intensity to a *crimson* strength, then a softer *silver* fading to a *pure white silence*.

While creating this quartet for players in Orlando, FL, the composer has kept strongly in mind the tragic shooting on June 12, 2016. The community responded with rallies, displaying rainbow-colored banners and posters in support and unity. The composer has created "Many Colors" within this spirit of *together-with-diversity*.

The music opens in unison, and then spreads out to include many notes (i.e., *many colors*), rising to a triumphant statement of the theme. The notes then converge to a unison ending. The listener may hear the rhythms of the following phrase *spoken* by the instruments at beginning and end:

We are of many colors – the rainbow 'neath the sun.
All that we hope and all that we ask is to live together as one.

Sounds and Colors

for String Quartet

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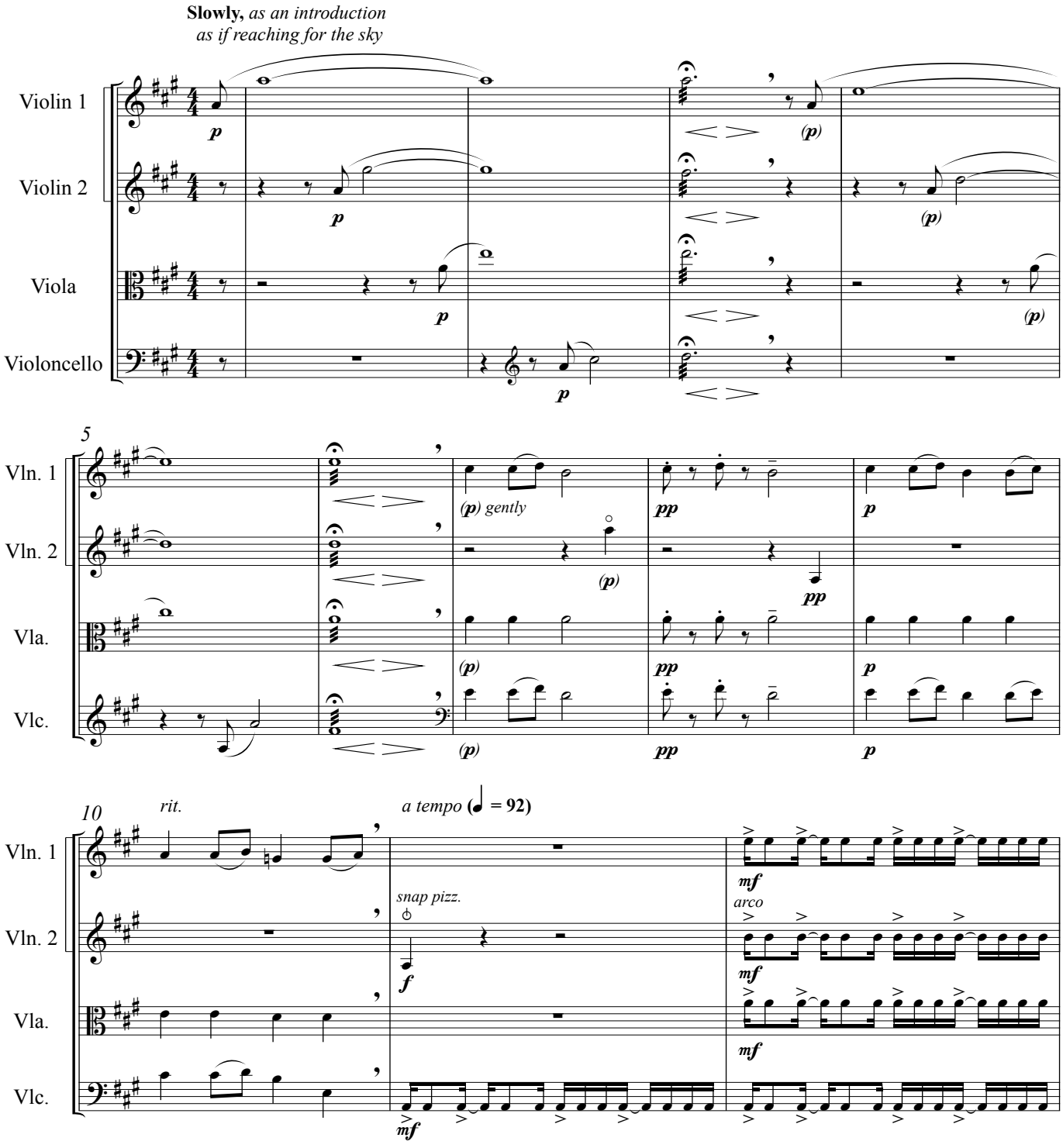
1. Shades of Blue



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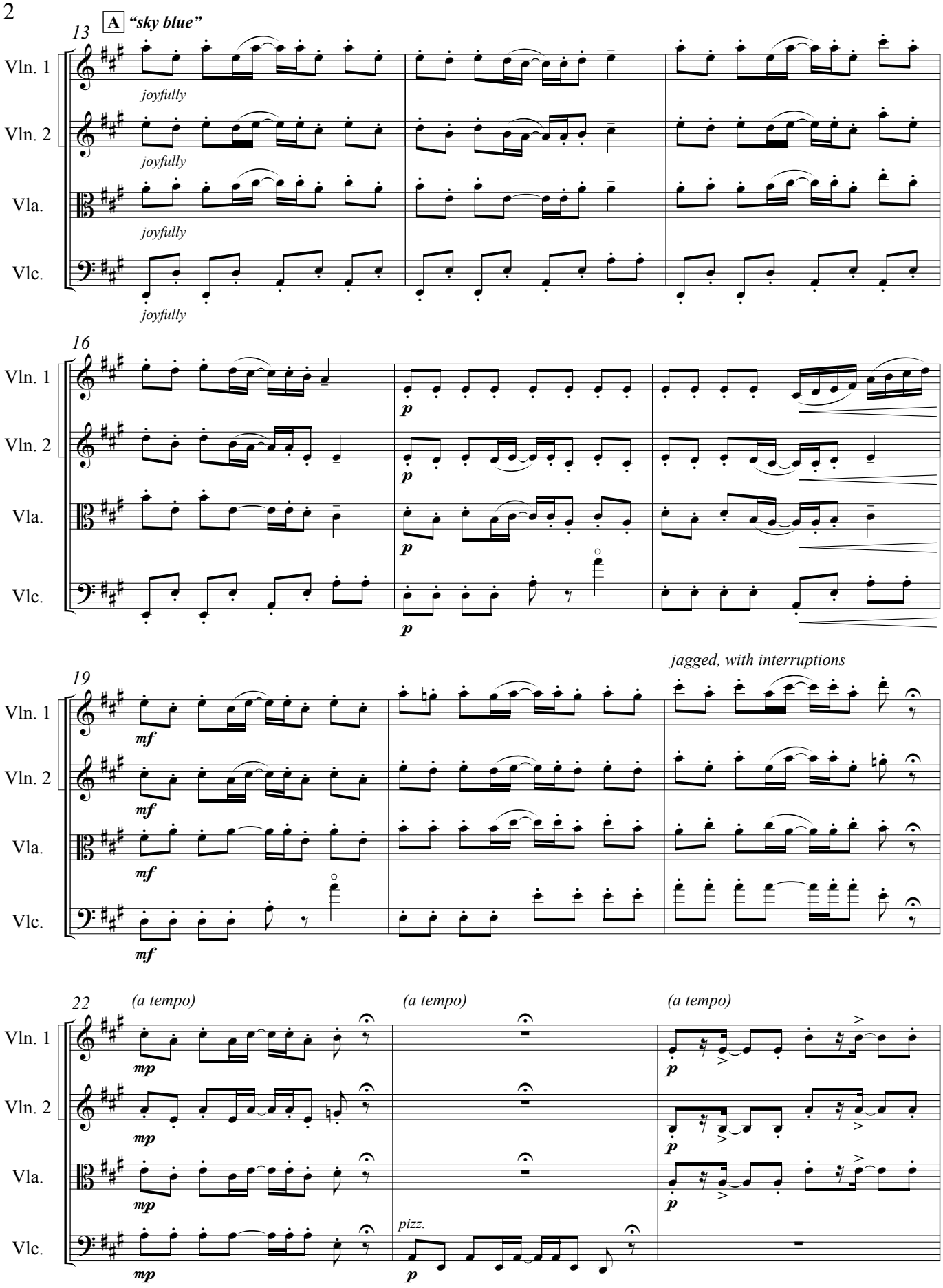
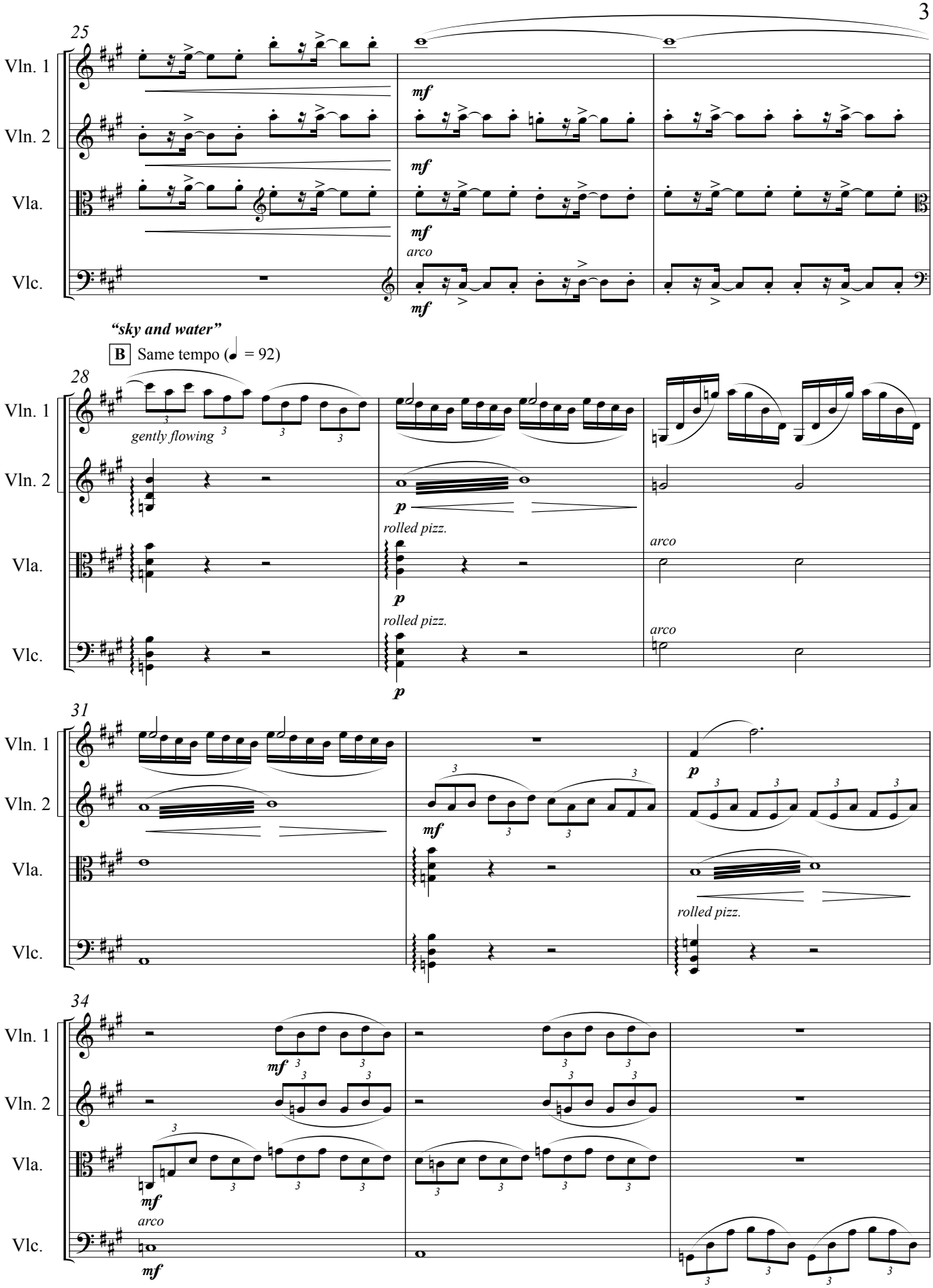
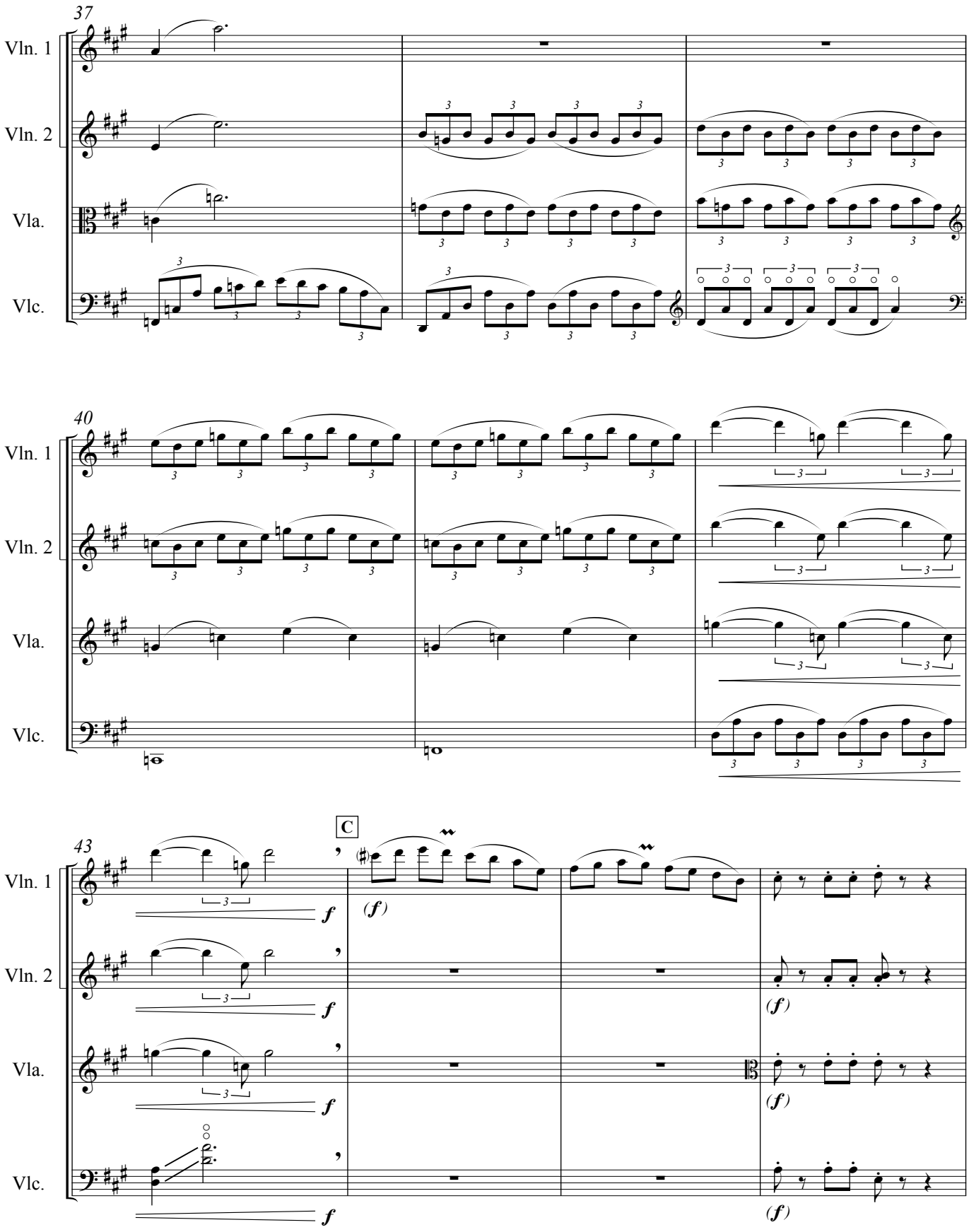
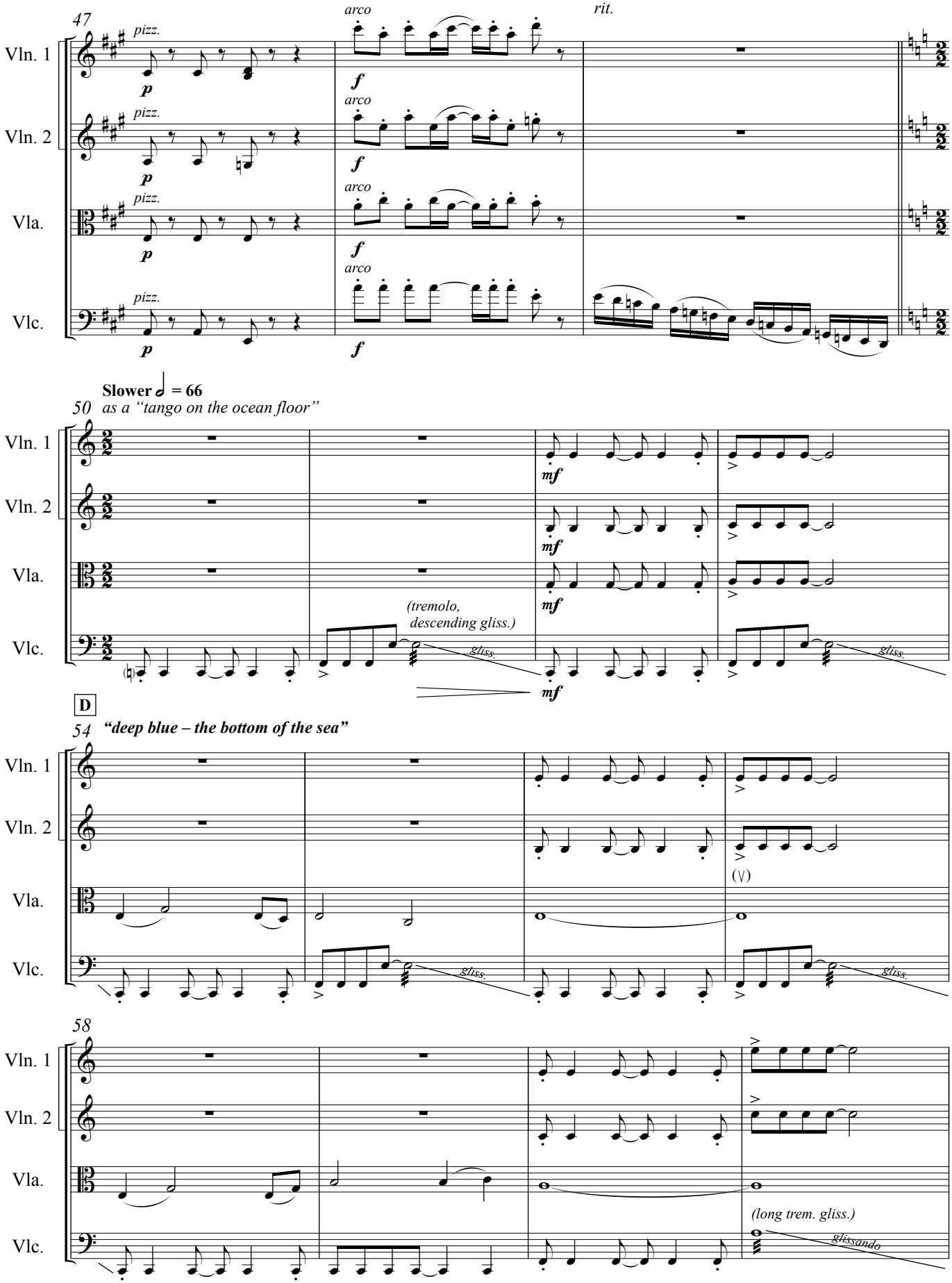
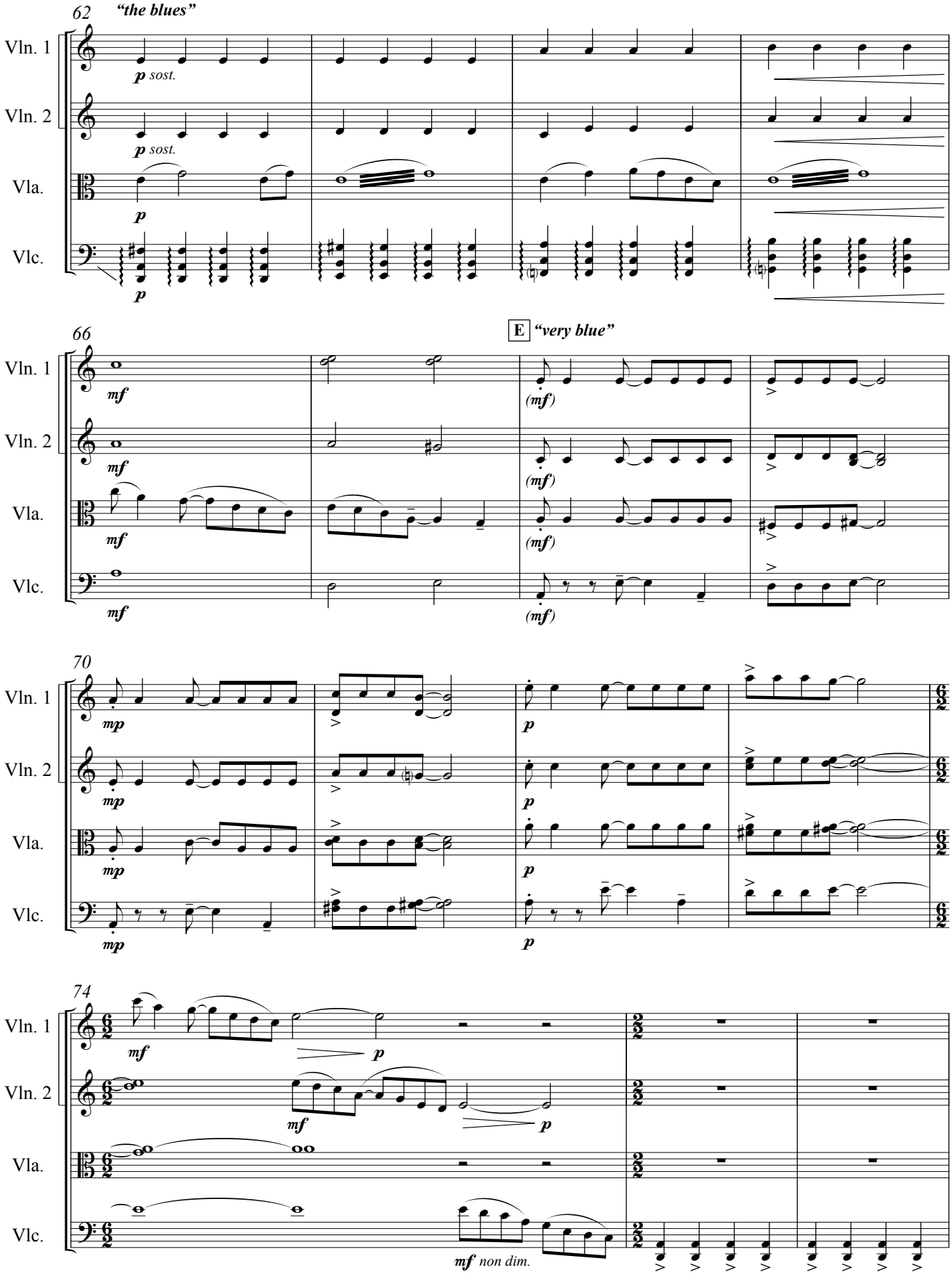
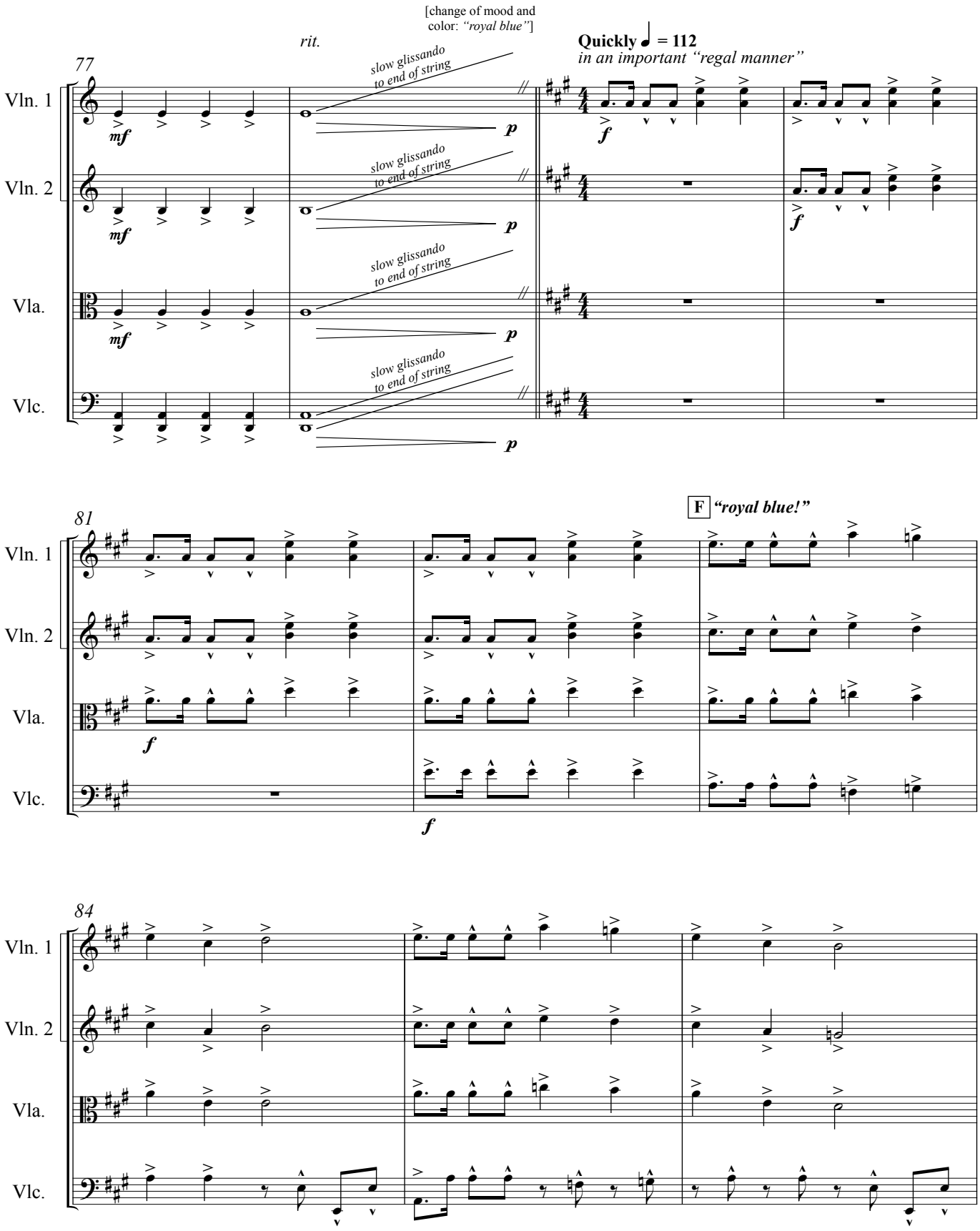

A "sky blue"
13
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
joyfully
16
p
19
mf
jagged, with interruptions
22
(a tempo)
mp
pizz.

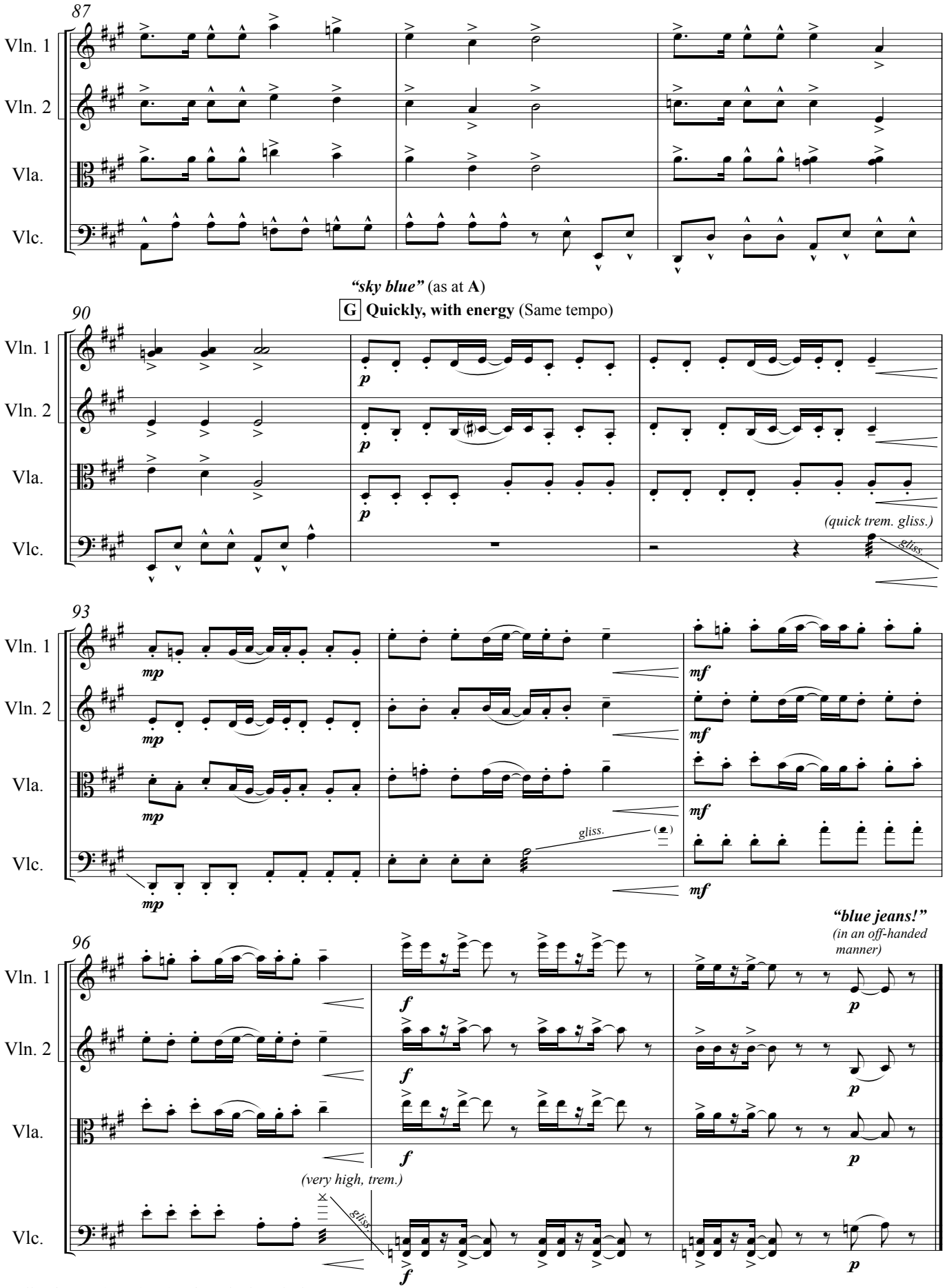

25
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
mf
arco
"sky and water"
B Same tempo (♩ = 92)
28
gently flowing
p
rolled pizz.
arco
31
34


37
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
40
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
43
C
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
f
(f)


47
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
pizz.
arco
rit.
p
f
Slower ♩ = 66
50
as a "tango on the ocean floor"
mf
(tremolo, descending gliss.)
gliss.
D
54
"deep blue – the bottom of the sea"
(∨)
58
(long trem. gliss.)
glissando

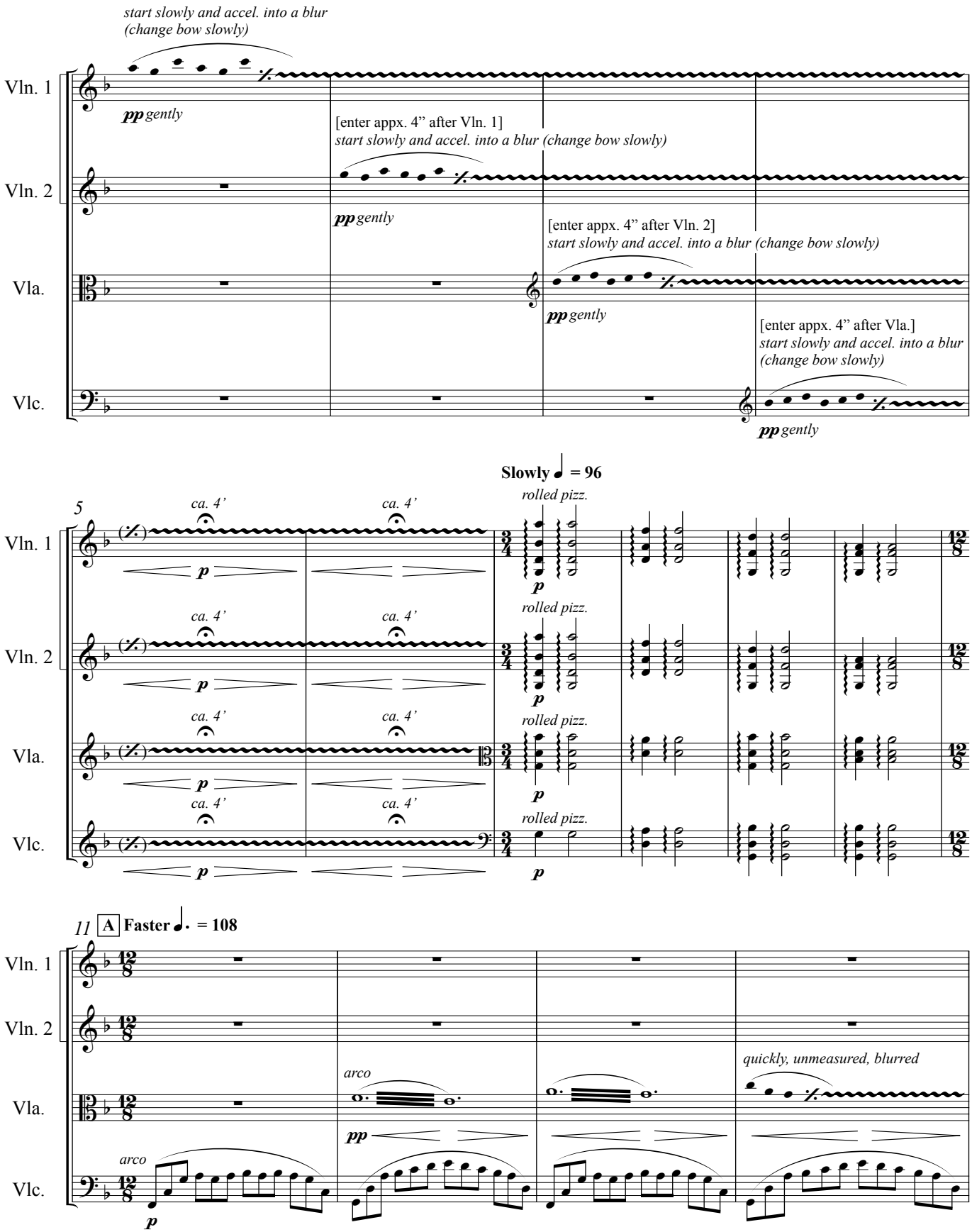

62
"the blues"
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
p sost.
p sost.
p
p
66
E "very blue"
mf
mf
mf
mf
(mf)
(mf)
(mf)
(mf)
70
mp
mp
mp
mp
p
p
p
p
74
mf
p
mf
p
mf non dim.


77
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
rit.
[change of mood and color: "royal blue"]
slow glissando to end of string
Quickly ♩ = 112
in an important "regal manner"
mf
p
f
81
F "royal blue!"
84

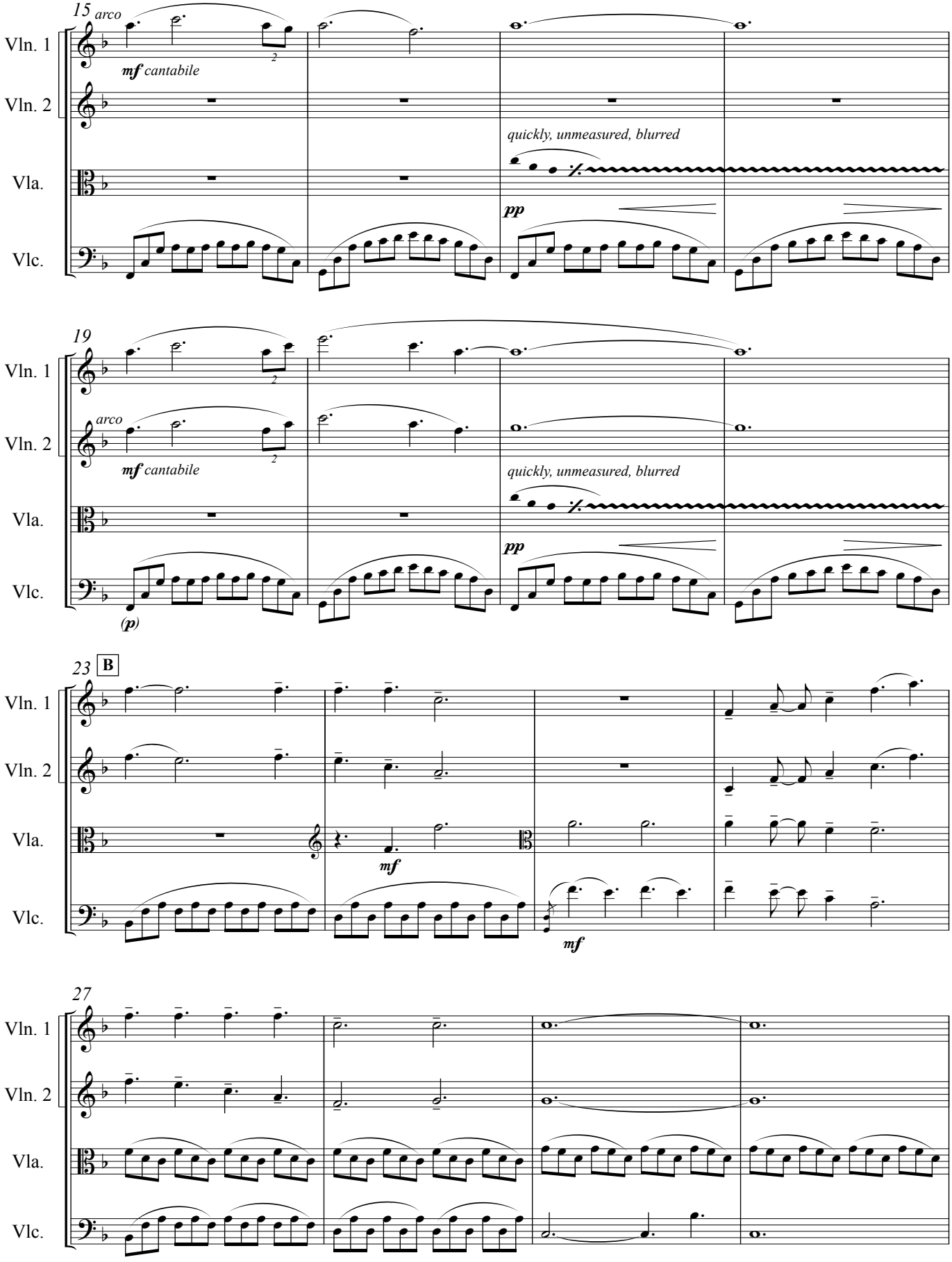

87
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
"sky blue" (as at A)
G Quickly, with energy (Same tempo)
90
p
(quick trem. gliss.)
gliss.
93
mp
mf
gliss.
96
"blue jeans!"
(in an off-handed manner)
f
(very high, trem.)

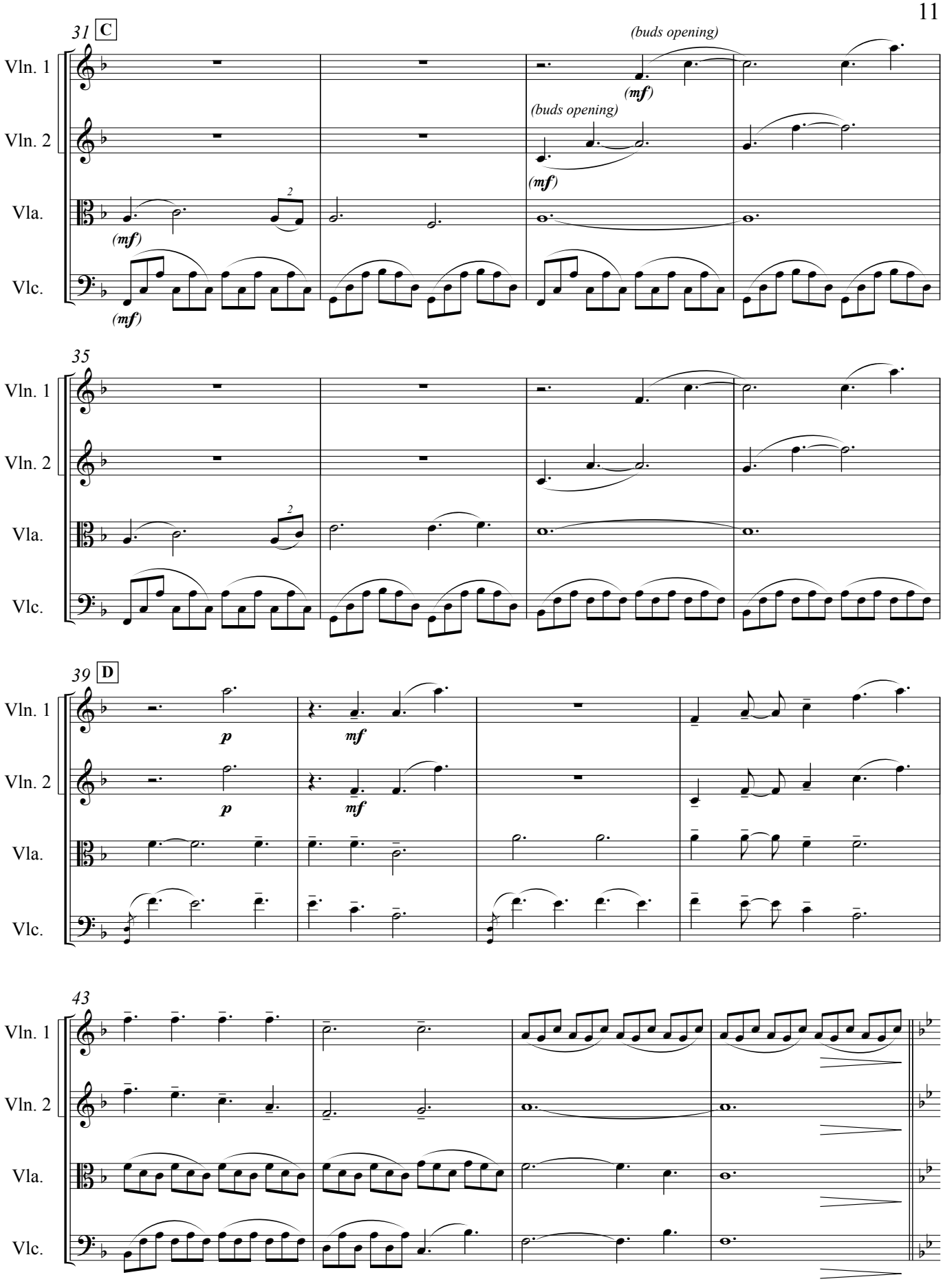
2. Green is Happening

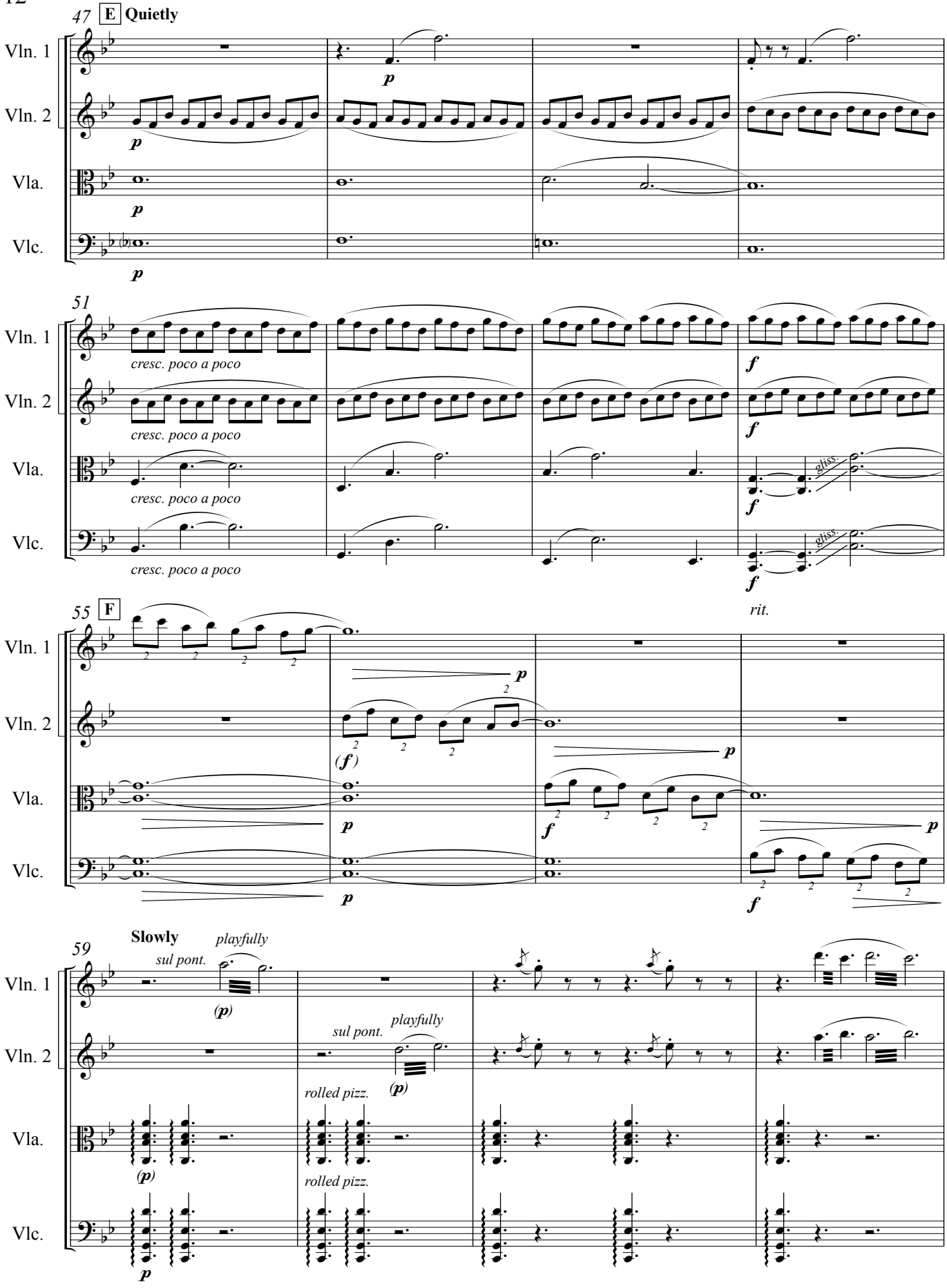
"to suggest the arrival of Spring, with buds opening"

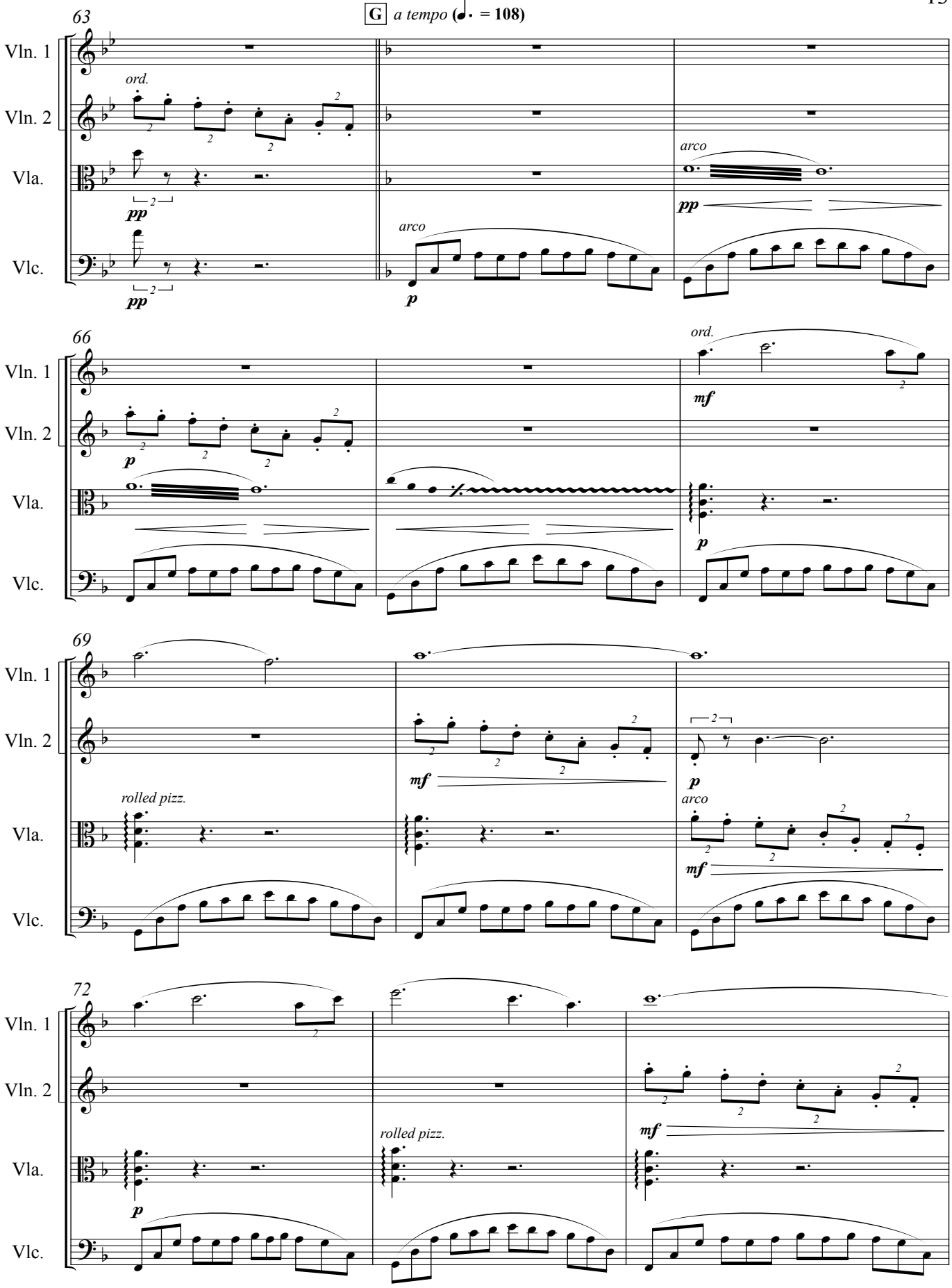


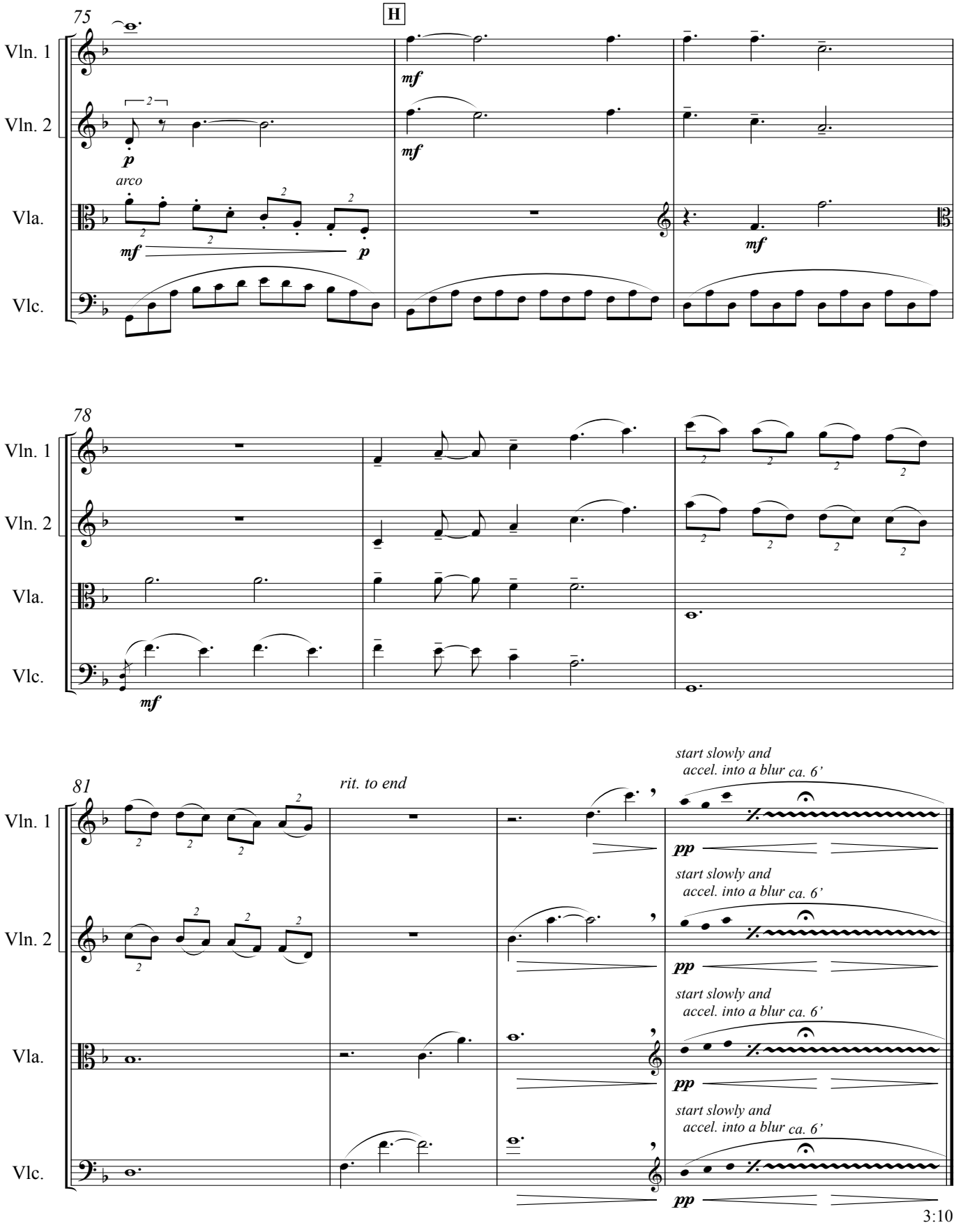
"as the full beauty of Spring green-ness"



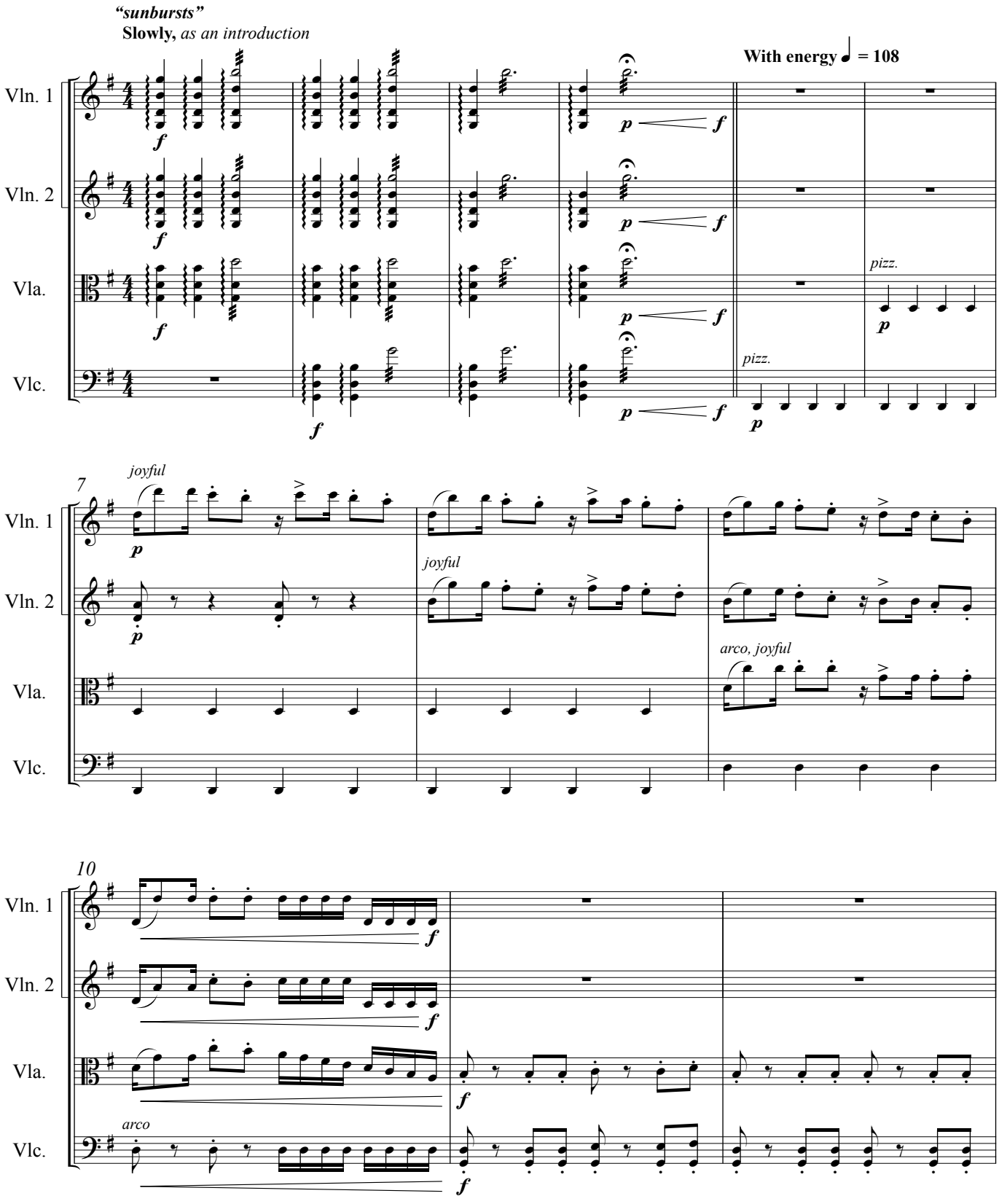

31
C
(buds opening)
(mf)
(buds opening)
(mf)
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
(mf)
(mf)
35
39
D
p
mf
p
mf
43

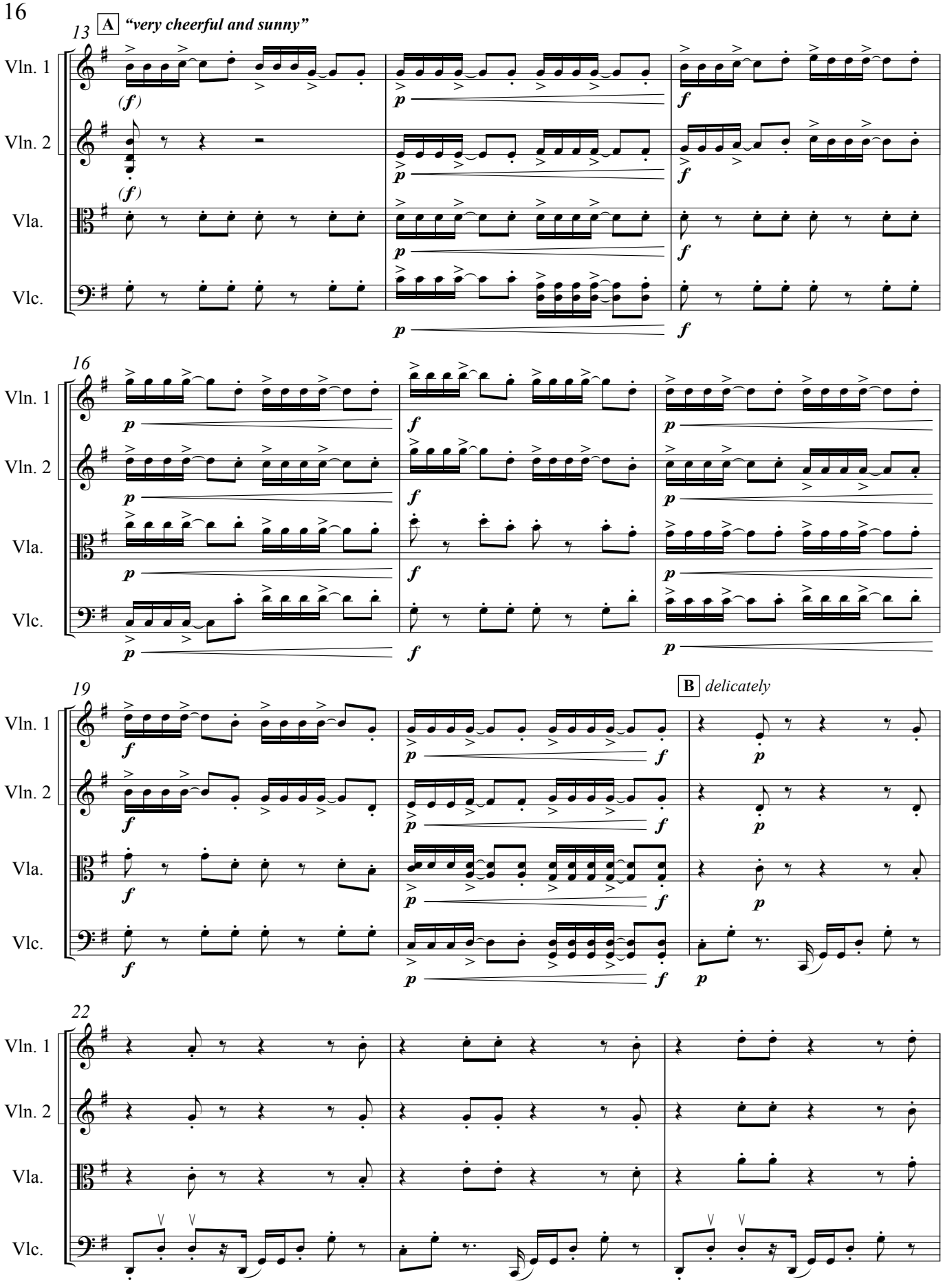

47
E
Quietly
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
p
51
cresc. poco a poco
f
gliss.
55
F
rit.
(f)
59
Slowly
playfully
sul pont.
(p)
rolled pizz.

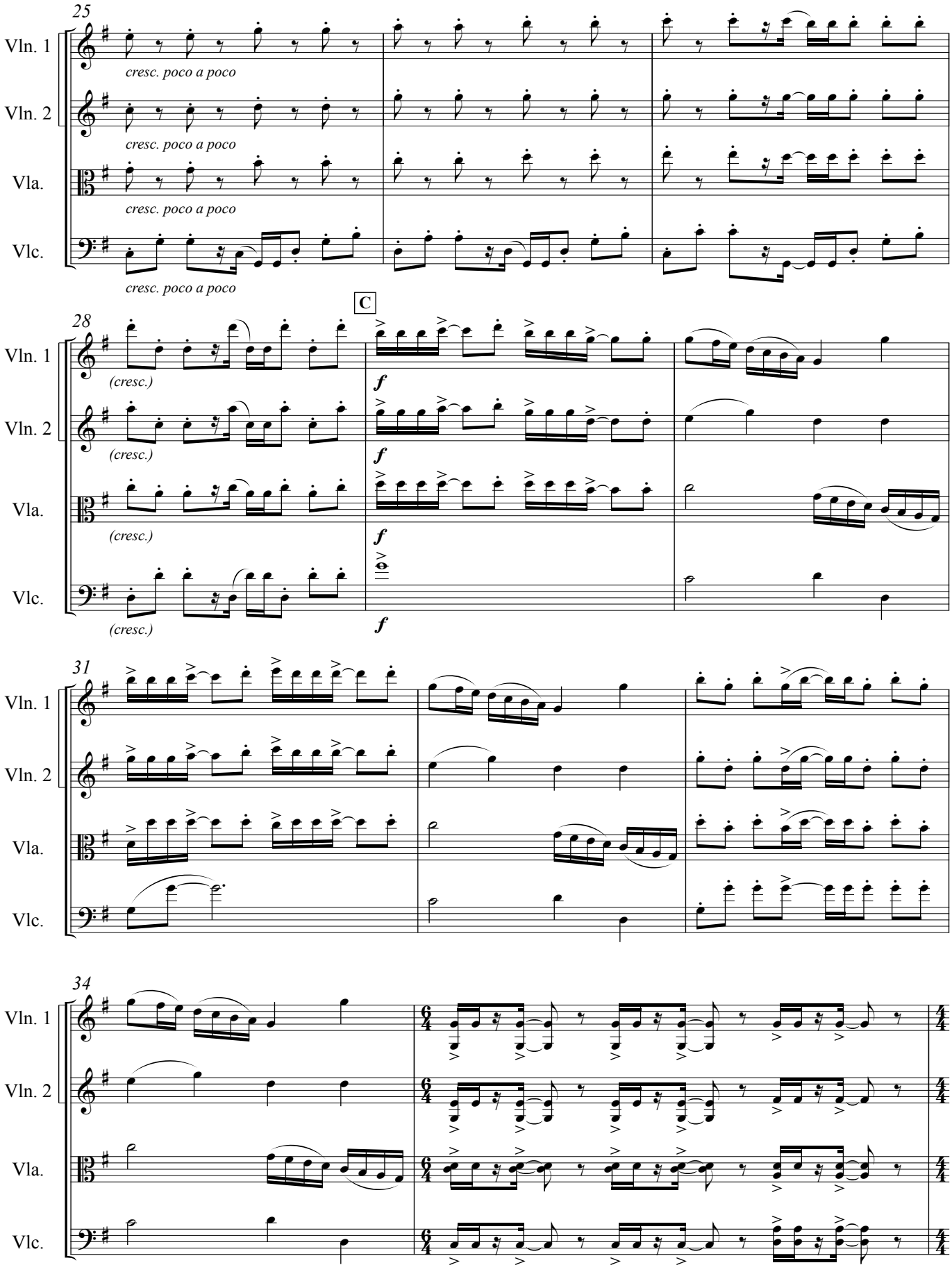

63
G a tempo (♩. = 108)
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
ord.
pp
arco
p
66
mf
69
rolled pizz.
72

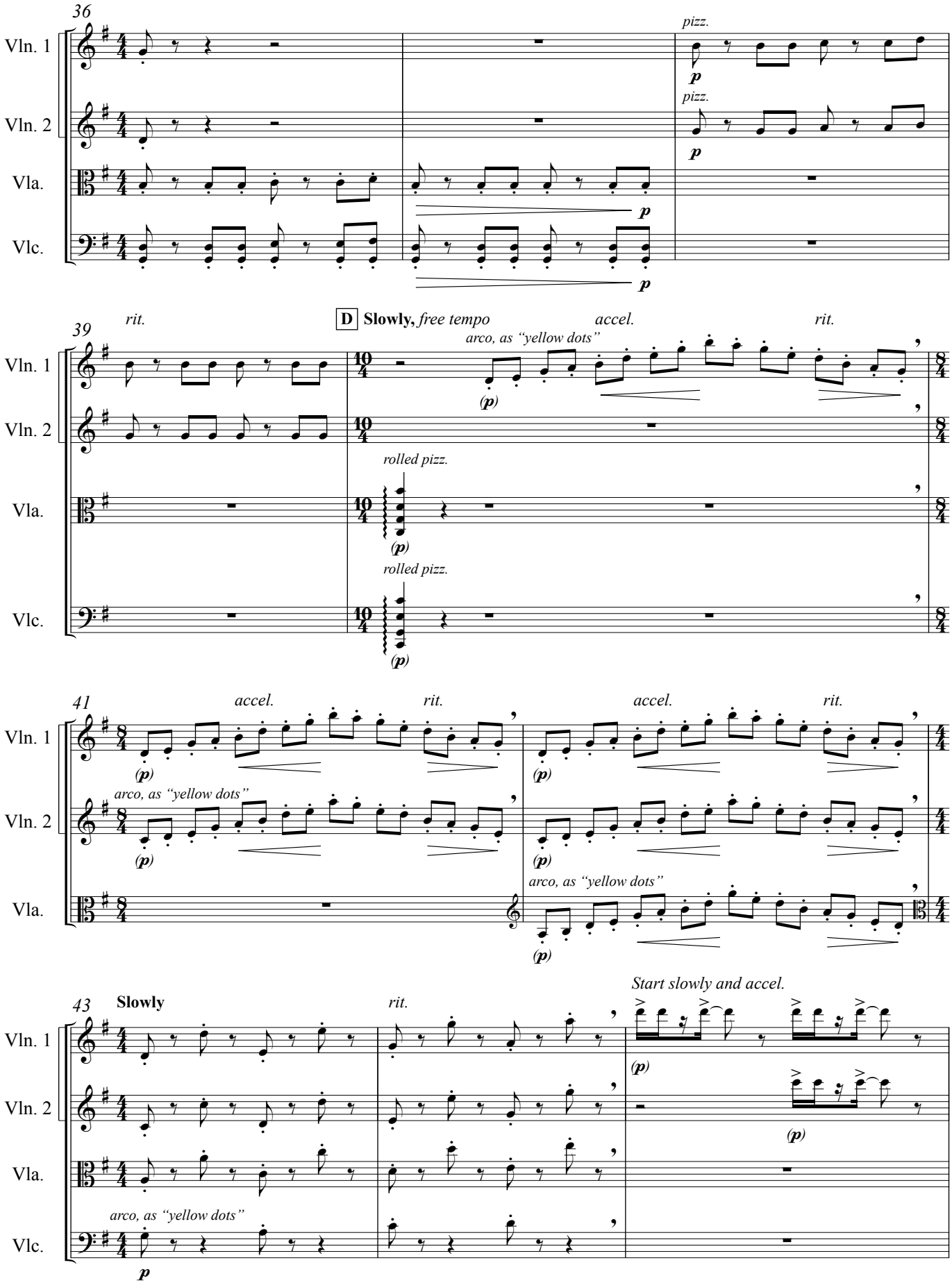

75
H
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
mf
p
arco
78
81
rit. to end
start slowly and
accel. into a blur ca. 6'
pp
3:10

3. Bright Yellow and Yellow Dots




13
A
"very cheerful and sunny"
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
16
19
B
delicately
22


25
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
cresc. poco a poco
C
28
(cresc.)
f
31
34


36
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
pizz.
p
39
rit.
D Slowly, free tempo
accel.
rit.
arco, as "yellow dots"
rolled pizz.
41
accel.
rit.
43
Slowly
Start slowly and accel.

"very cheerful and sunny"

(accel.)

E *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

46

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vlc.

f

(*p*)

49

52

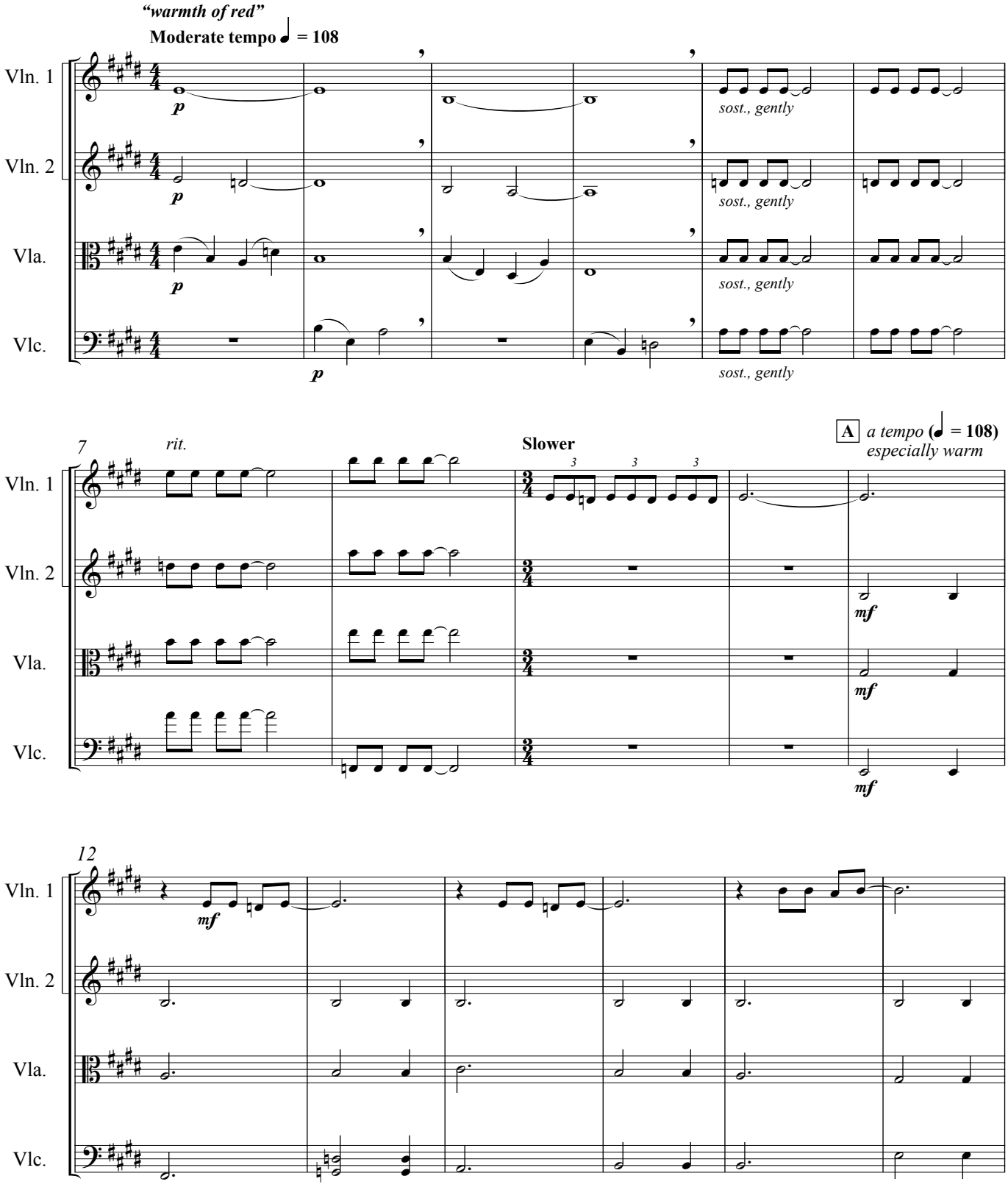
"final sunburst"

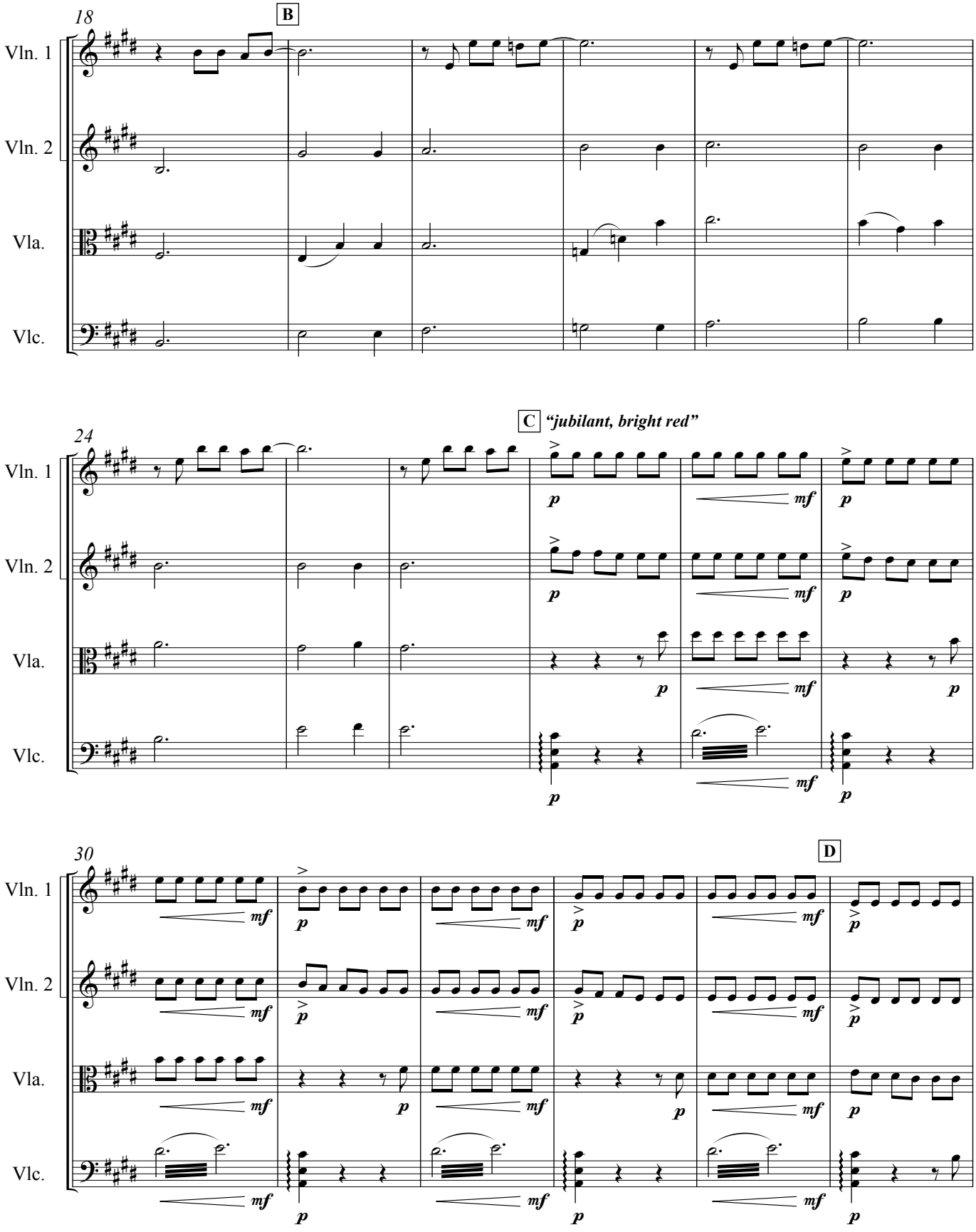
54

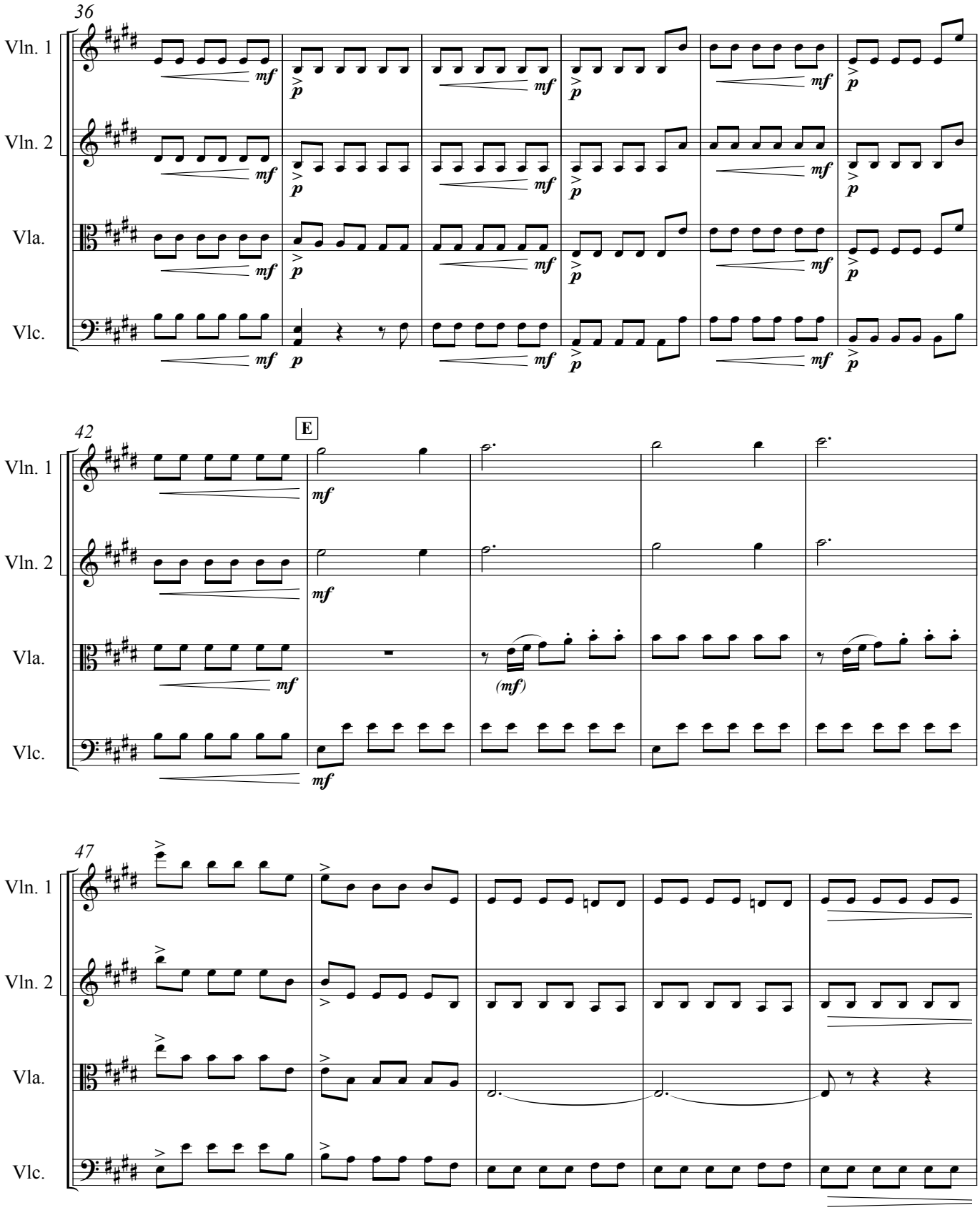
rit.

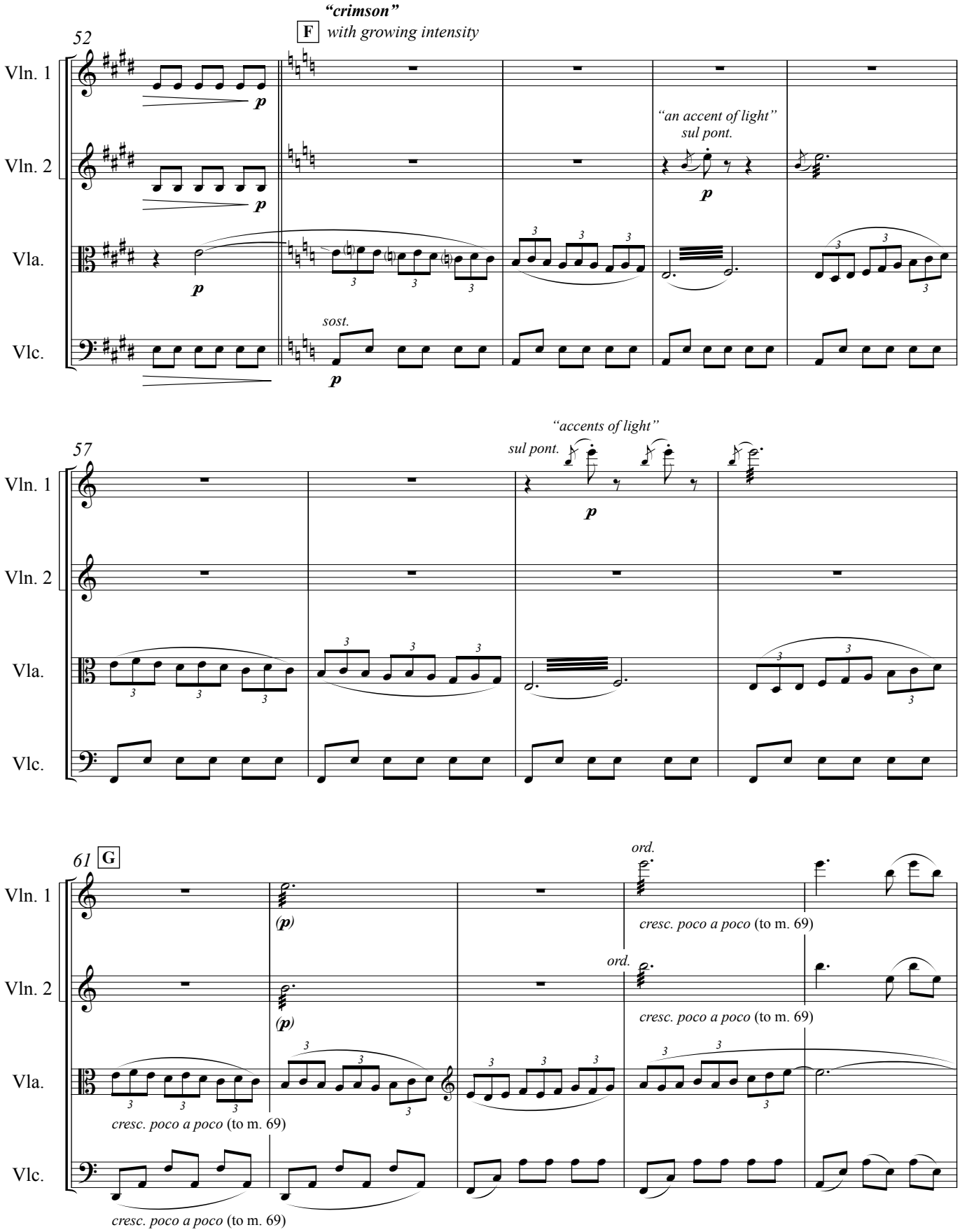
p *ff*

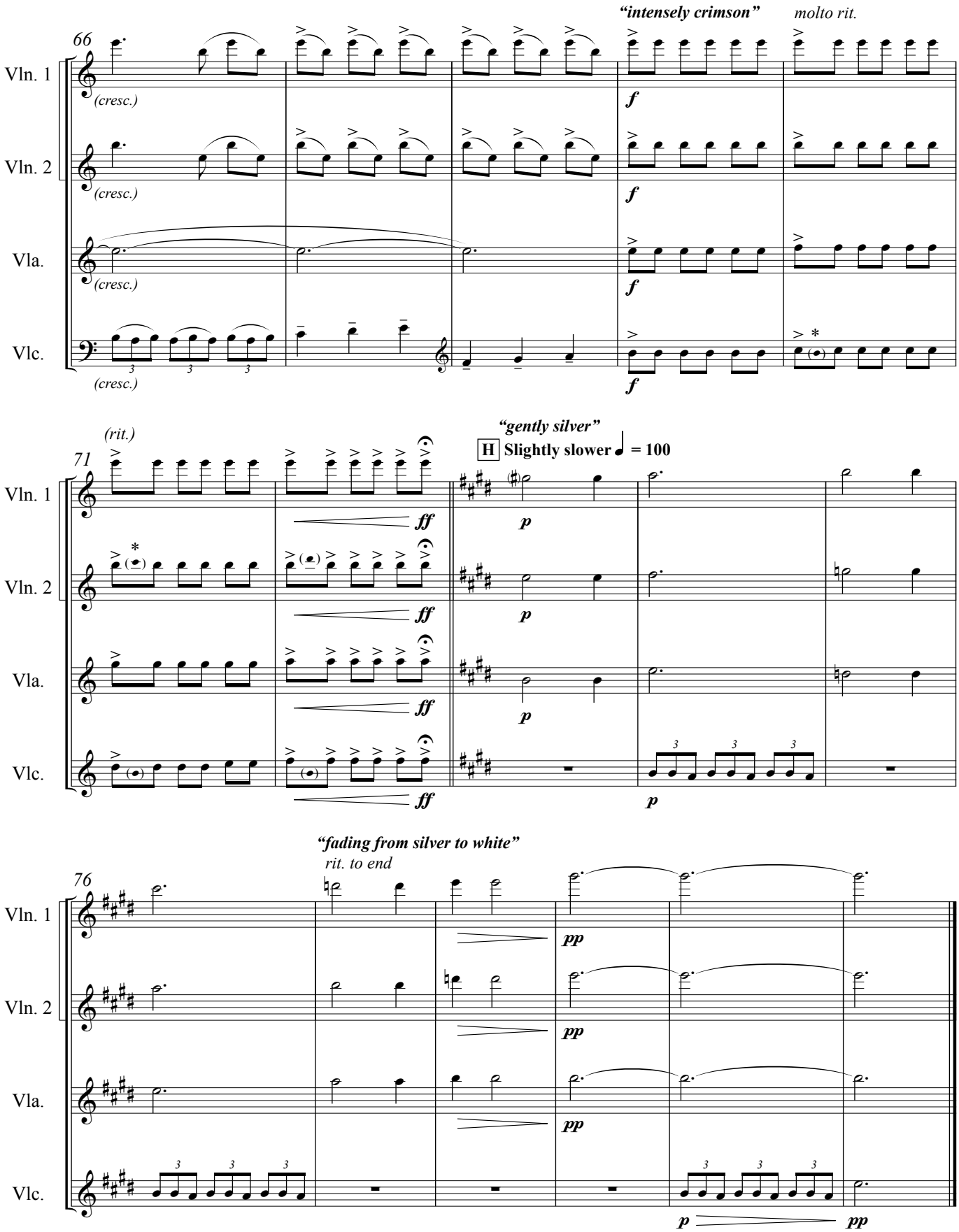
4. Red to Crimson to Silver




18
B
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
24
C
"jubilant, bright red"
30
D
p
mf


36
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
mf
p
42
E
(mf)
47


"crimson"
F with growing intensity
52
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
p
"an accent of light"
sul pont.
sost.
57
"accents of light"
sul pont.
61 G
ord.
(p)
cresc. poco a poco (to m. 69)

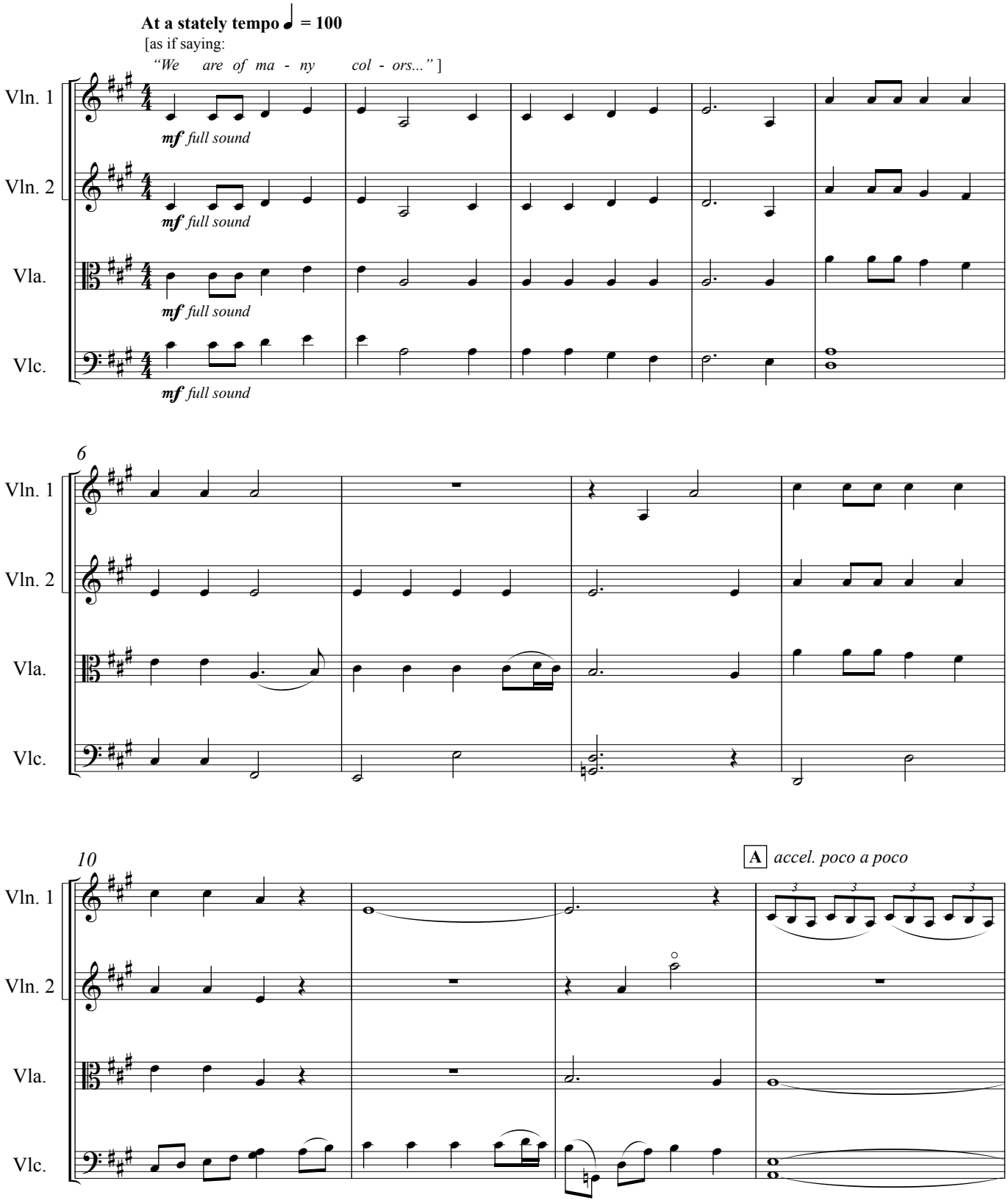


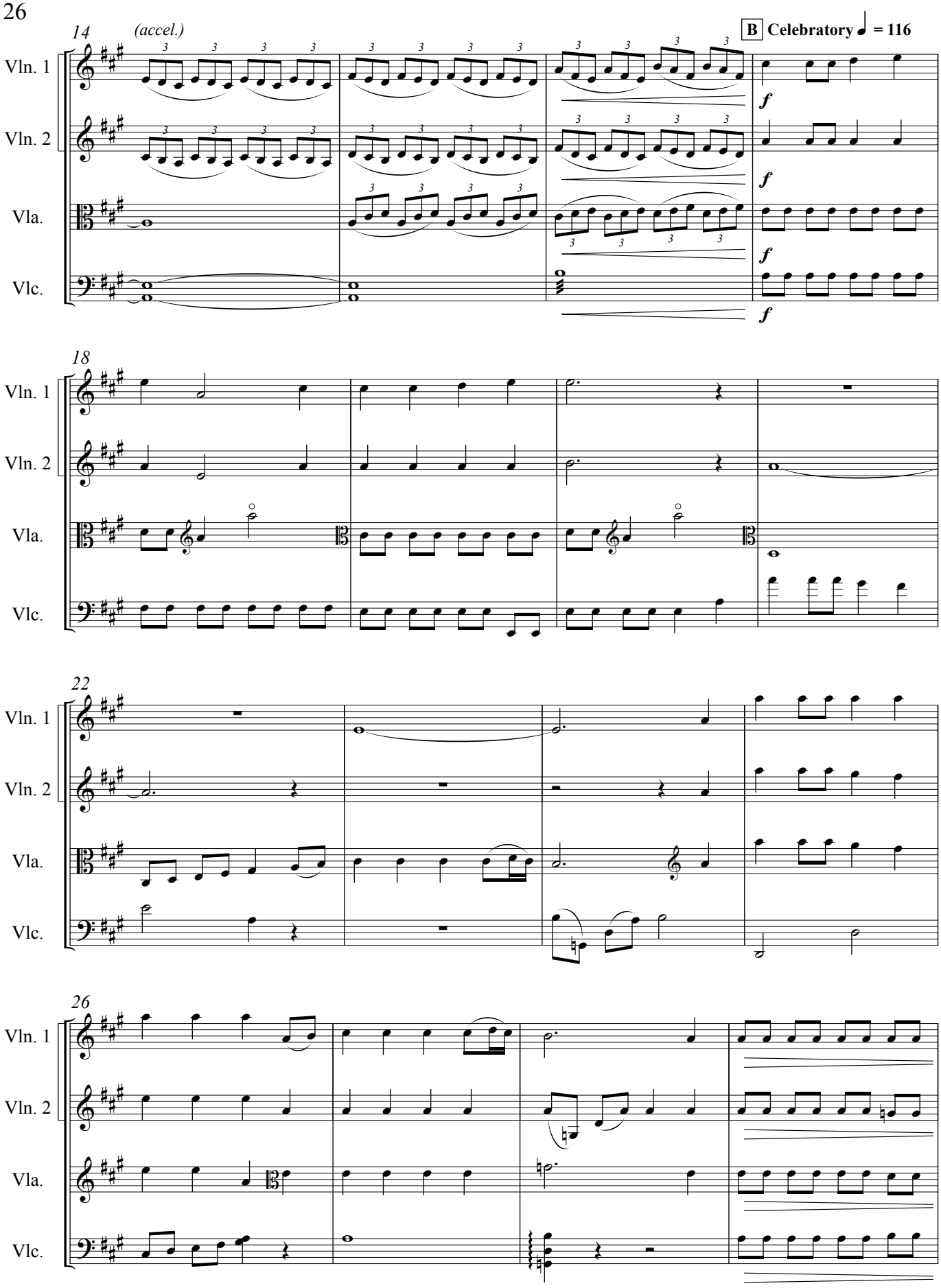
*Parenthetical, cue-sized notes (in Violin 2 and Violoncello) are to be substituted for the entire measure if the full-sized notes are too high for comfortable playing.

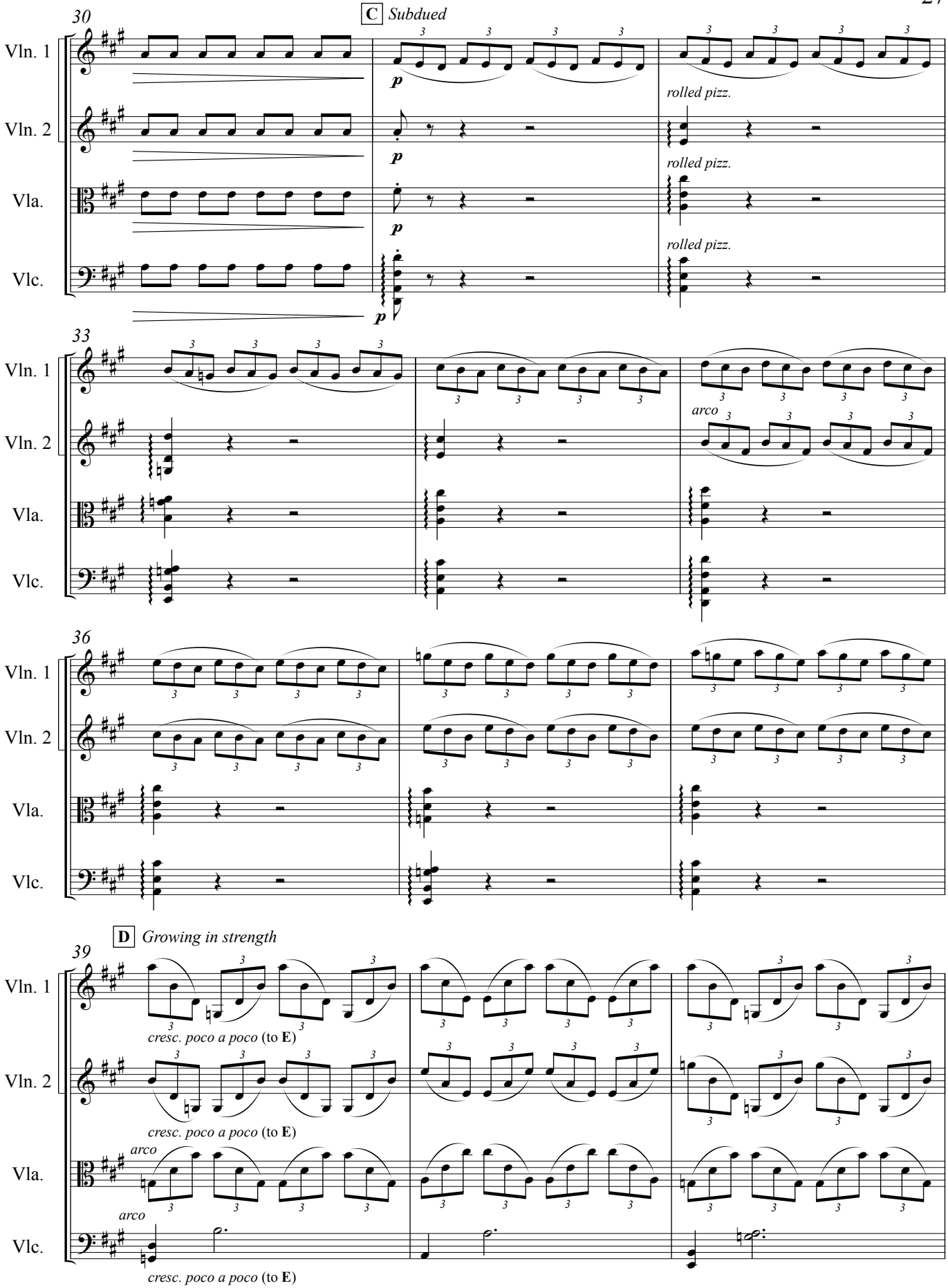
Dedicated to the community of Orlando, Florida, after the tragic shooting of June 12, 2016

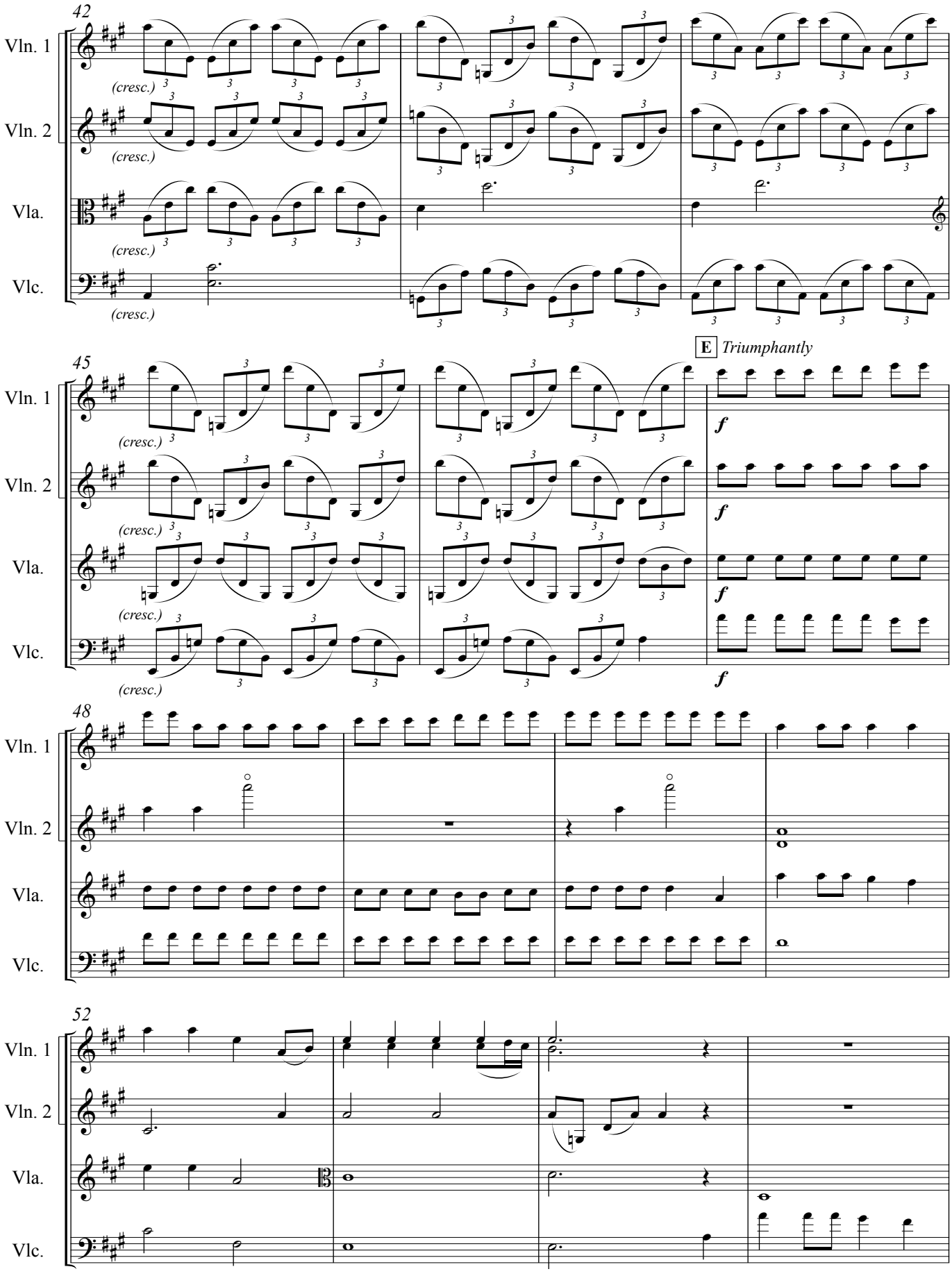
5. Many Colors

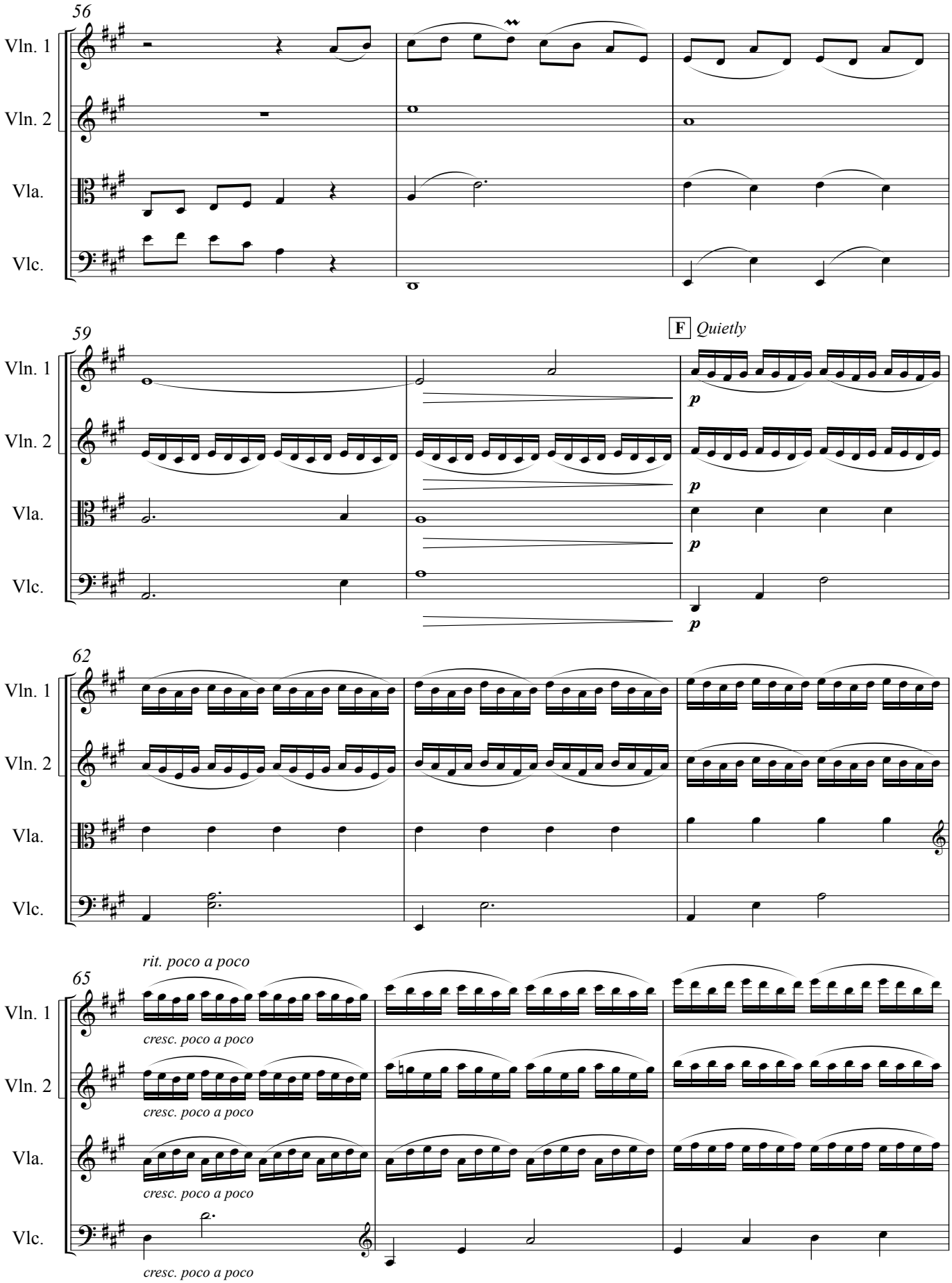
"We are of many colors – the rainbow 'neath the sun.
All that we hope and all that we ask is to live together as one."

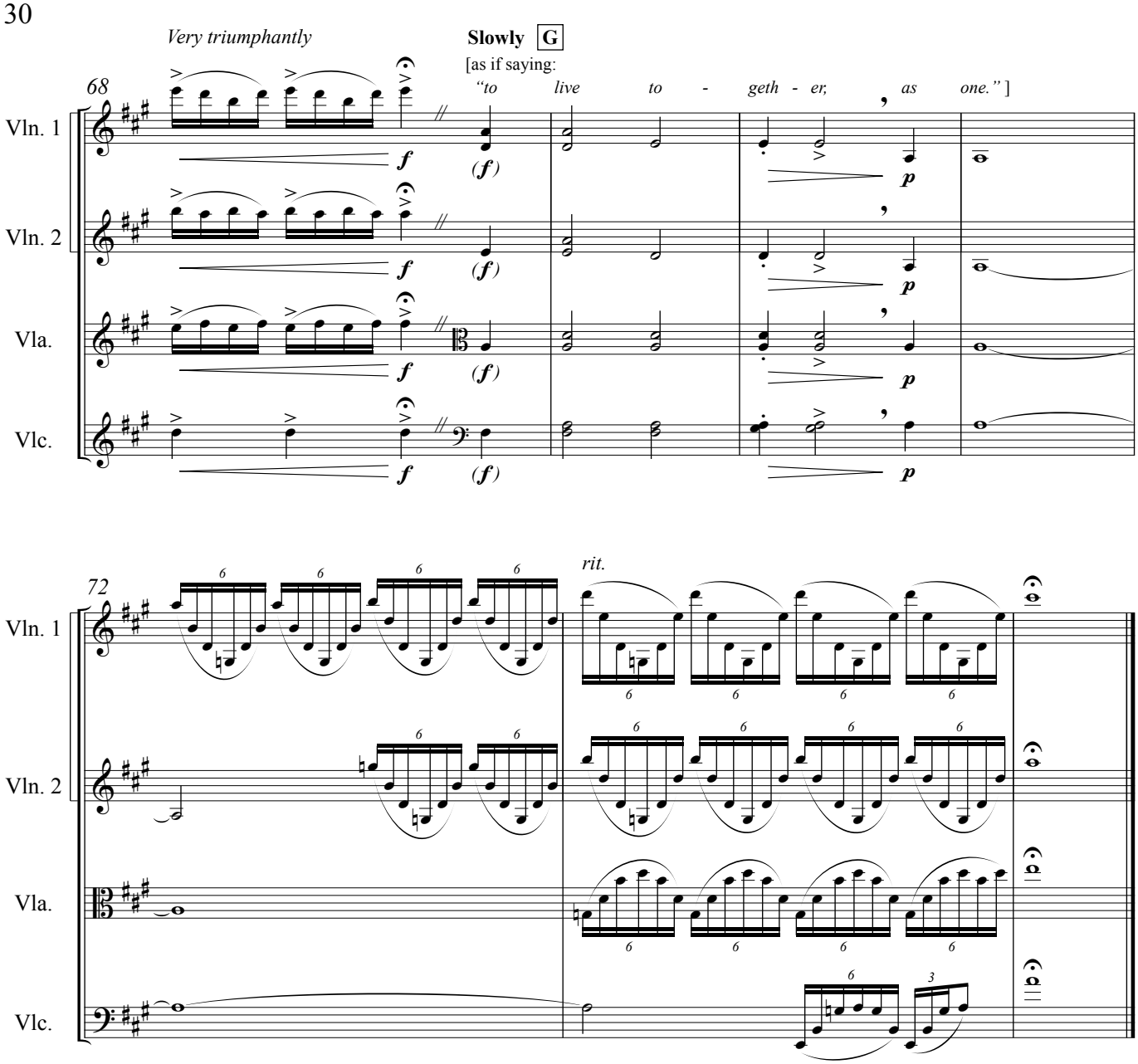



14
(accel.)
B Celebratory ♩ = 116
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
f
18
22
26


30
C Subdued
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
p
rolled pizz.
33
arco
36
39
D Growing in strength
cresc. poco a poco (to E)
arco


42
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
(cresc.)
45
E Triumphantly
f
48
52


56
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
59
F Quietly
p
62
65
rit. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco



2:40
Total: 12:35
August 18, 2016
New Canaan, Connecticut