and the world - a wonder waking

for mezzo-soprano, ensemble and tape-delay

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Nicholas Sackman

and the world - a wonder waking

for mezzo-soprano, ensemble and tape-delay

poem by Bill MacCormick

Flute, Oboe, Clarinet (B-flat): Trumpet (B-flat), Trombone: Vibraphone, Bass Drum, Tam-tam: Violin, Cello.

NOTES

1. The Percussion part is most easily performed with two players - one for the Vibraphone, the second for the Bass Drum and the Tam-tam. The Percussion part (two copies) contains all three instrumental lines.

2. The 'tape'-delay system is for the Mezzo-Soprano. It is essential to have a delay-unit which can be switched between different lengths of delay without thereby cancelling the current delay-setting.. Alternatively, a unit capable of 'morphing' between settings can be used. It is best if the required delay-settings can be pre-set in the unit's memory (preferably in a numerical order which corresponds to the score's requirements).

A basic system would comprise -
a) high-quality vocal microphone (not omni-directional)
b) audio mixer with Send and Return connections to the delay unit (the ability for the mixer to separately route the singer's voice directly to the main outputs is most desirable)
c) delay-unit, power amplifier and suitable speakers

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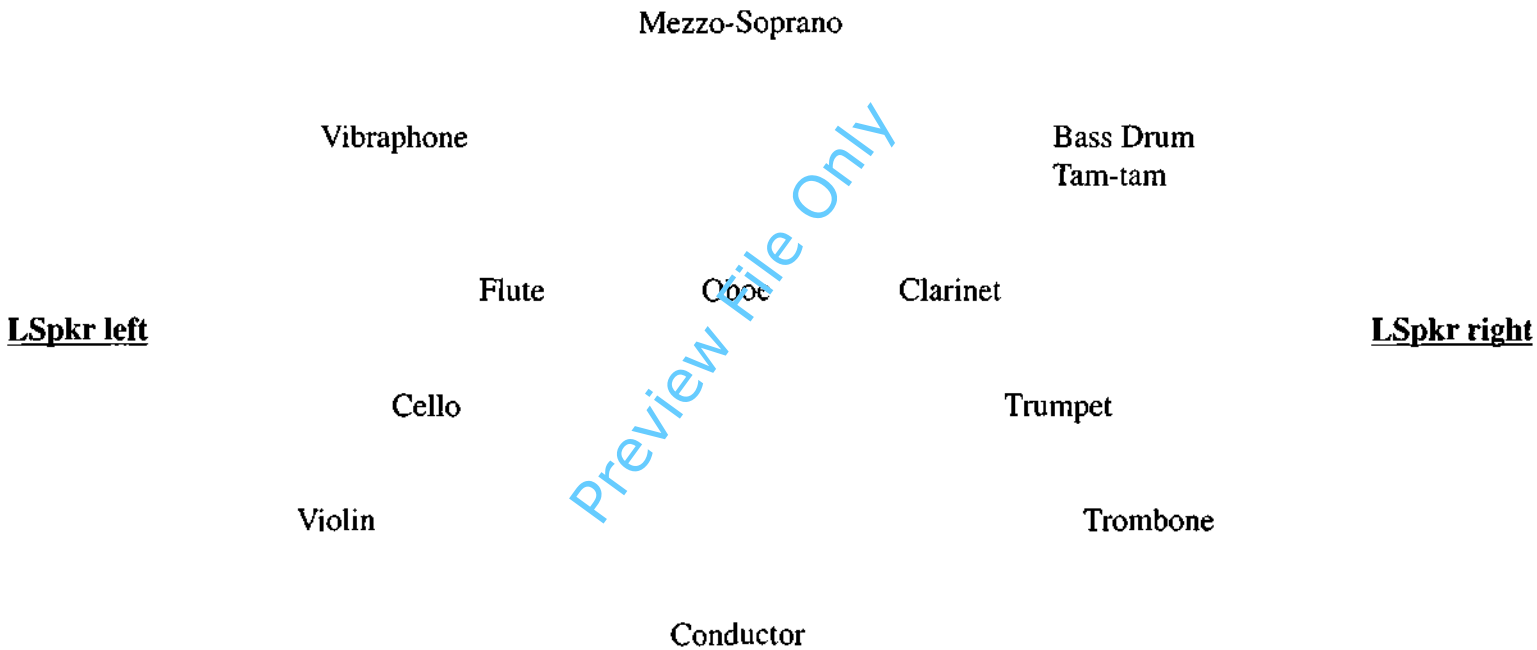
It is not expected that open-reel tape-recorders will be used to generate the delay (although they were at the first performance).

3. The amplifier 'gain' levels are indicated in the score as 1, 2 & 3. The highest gain-level (3) should be that which helps *somewhat* to redress the balance between the Mezzo-Soprano and the ensemble two bars before letter J. The lowest level (1) should produce a quieter sound through the speakers than the 'live' sound of the singer, i.e. a genuine echo.

4. It is wise to fade out the singer's microphone whenever possible (to avoid the microphone also sending the ensemble's sounds through the delay unit).

5. Depending on the acoustic conditions of the performance-venue it might be desirable to add a little resonant ambience to the mixer's main outputs.

Instrumental layout



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and the world - a wonder waking

Memories are fallow
of a time before the ages of
descent were come,
when a depthed look of innocence
broke the glory of a less sullen world.
Together gold and goodness
o'erflowed the tide of welcoming,
as when stars
were influence, not ends
(fireflies of indeterminate species)
and the world
- a wonder waking,
not needing seven especials.

Then, life was to gather, great.

Bill MacCormick

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commissioned by the University of Nottingham
with funds provided by East Midlands Arts

N. Sackman
1981

Slow delay: 2-3 seconds. Amplifier Gain = 1

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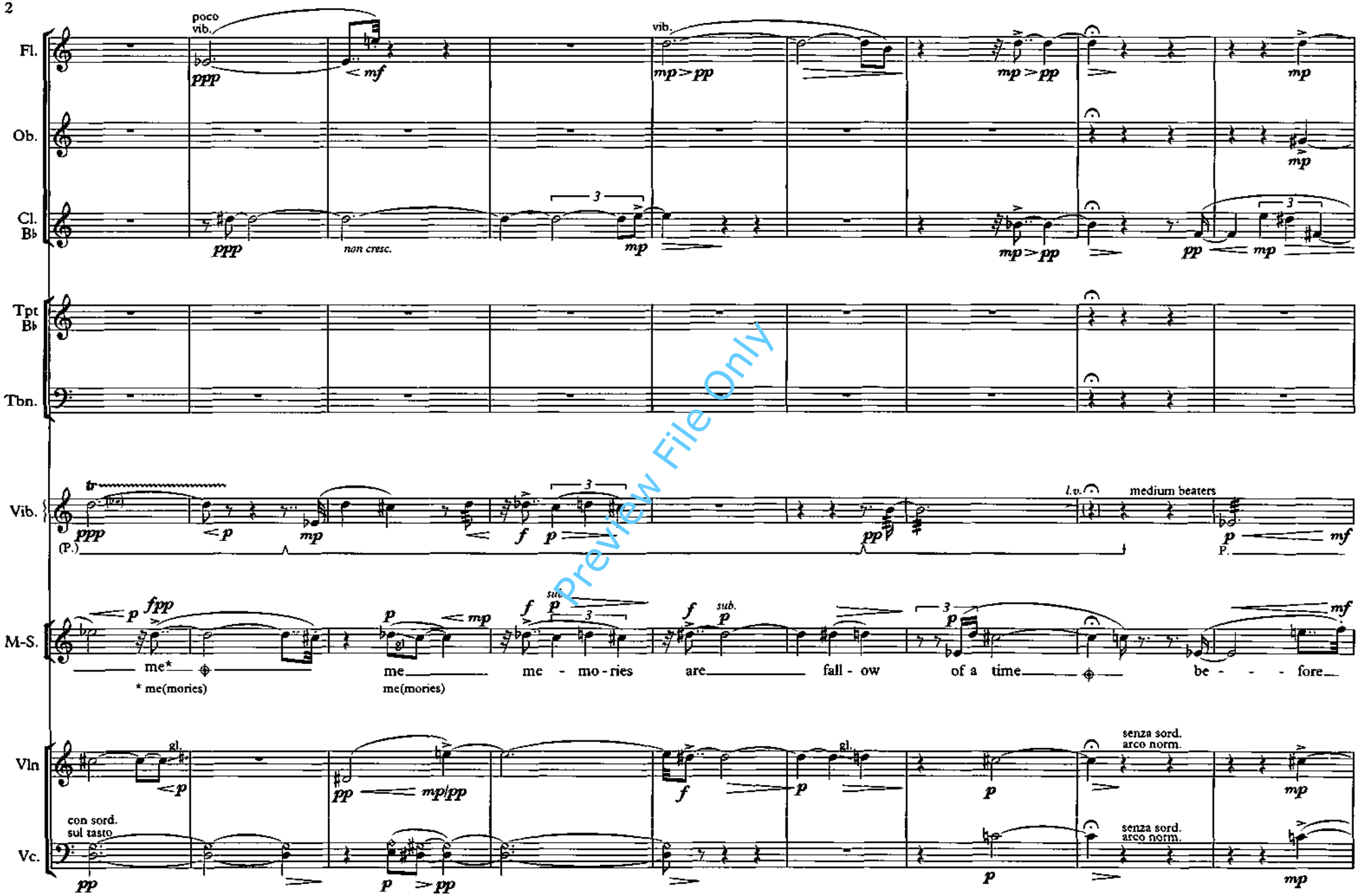

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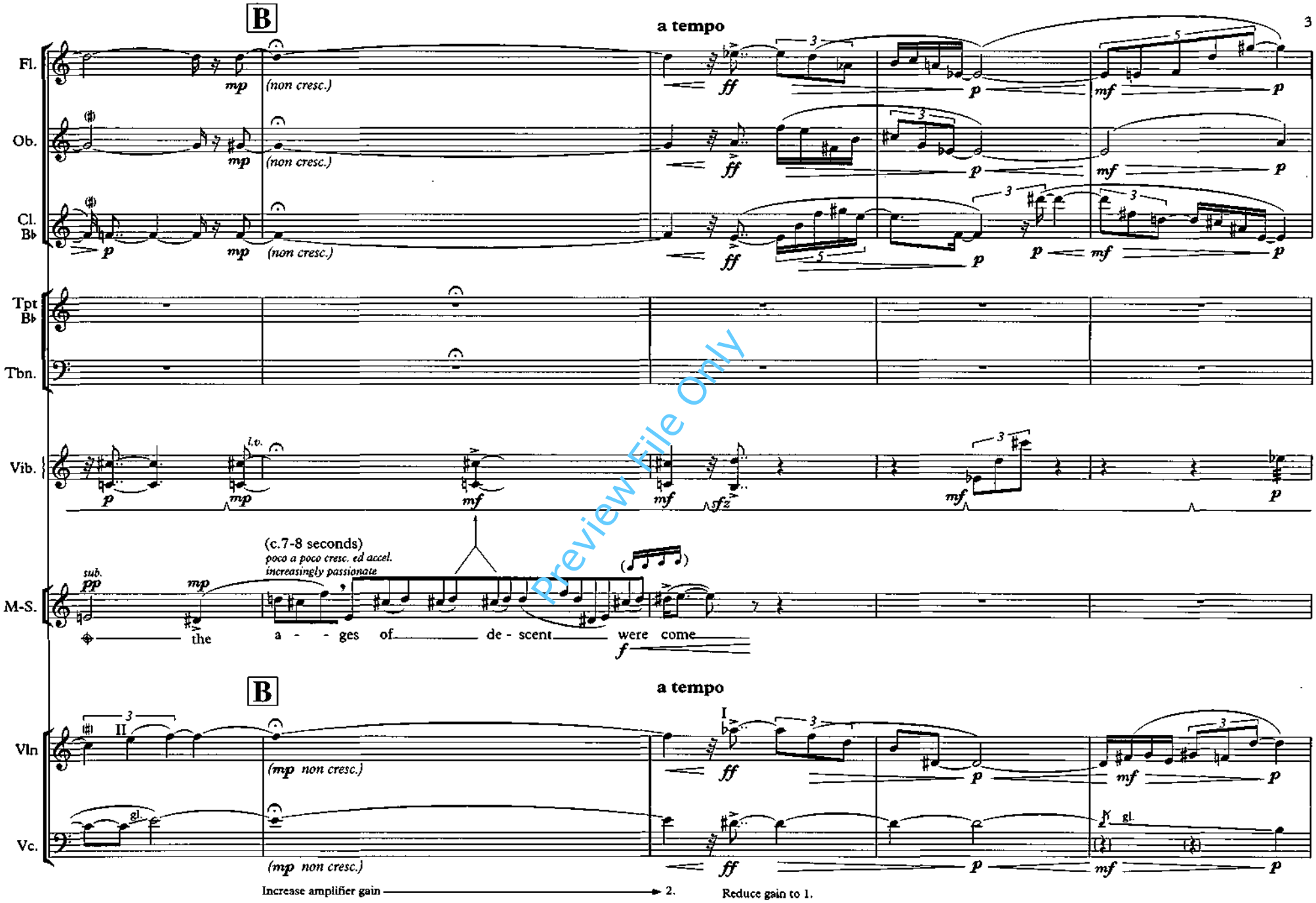

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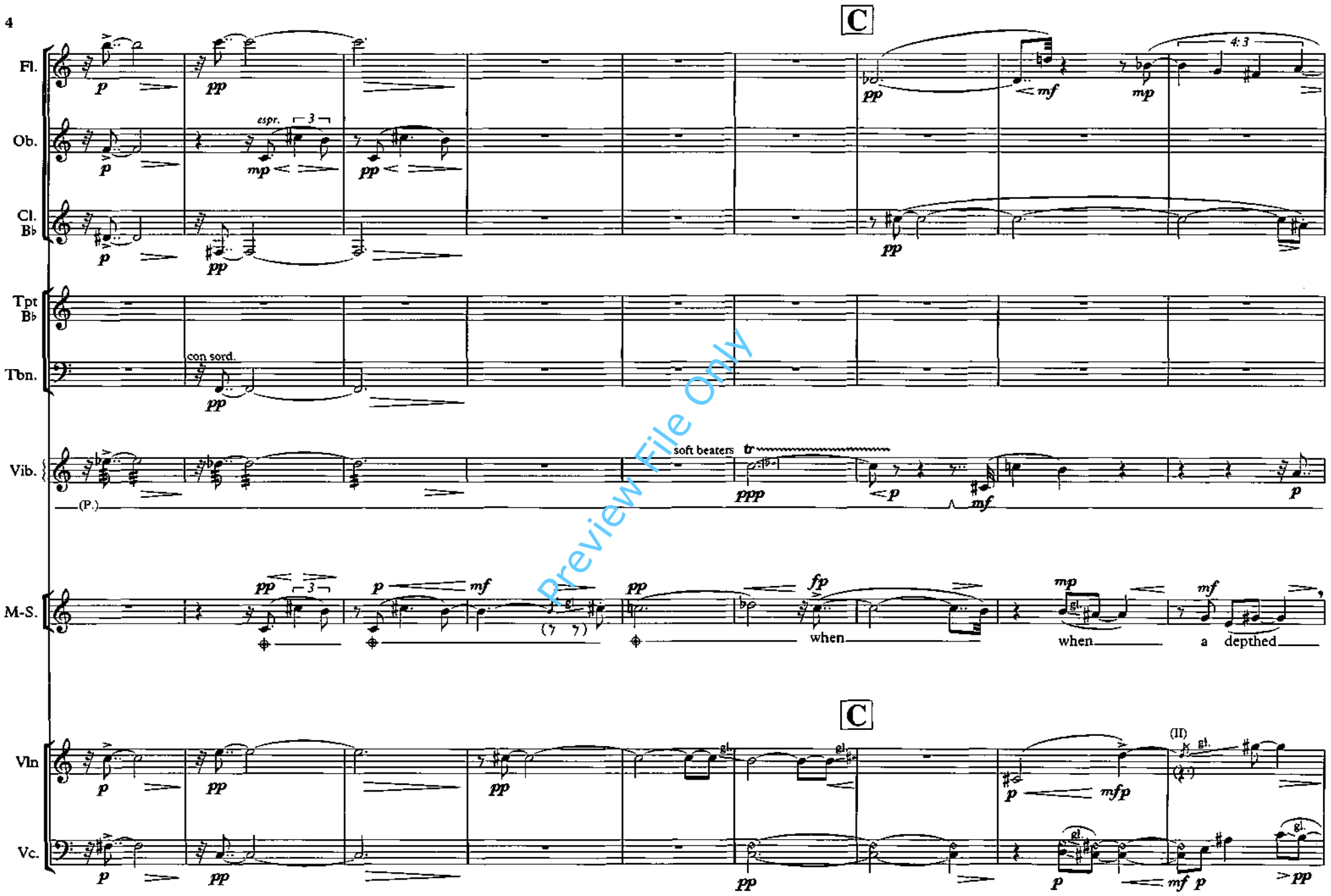

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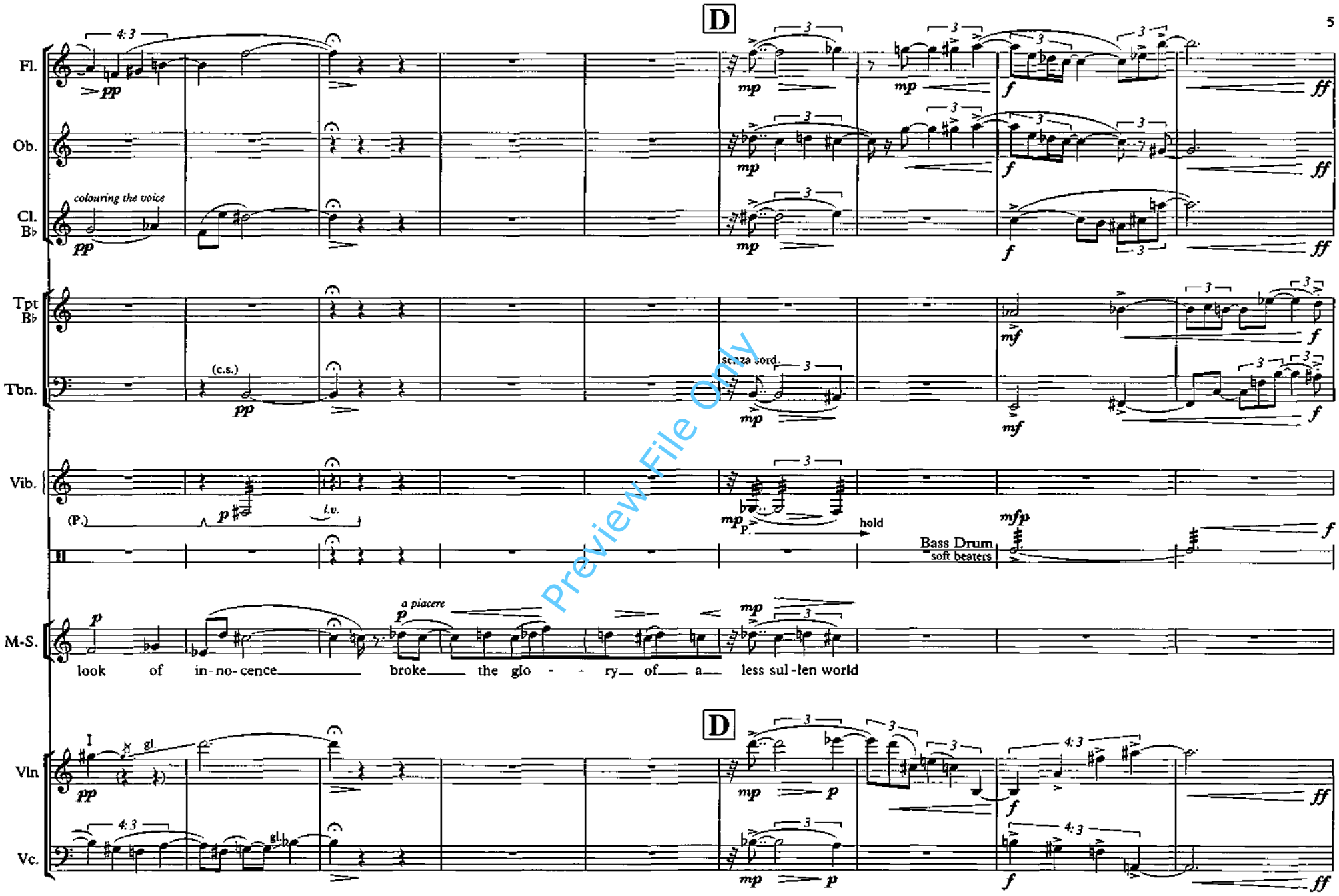

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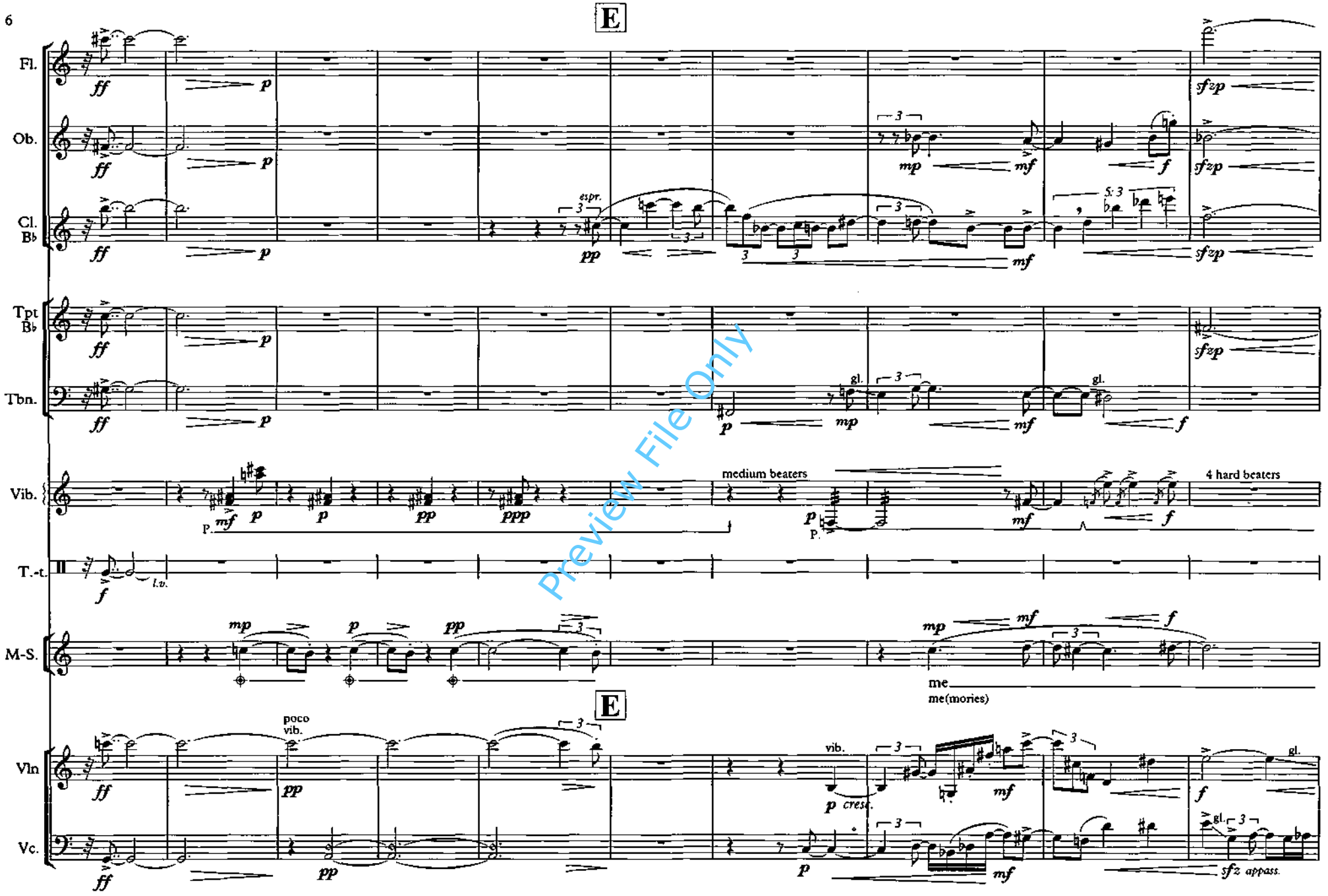

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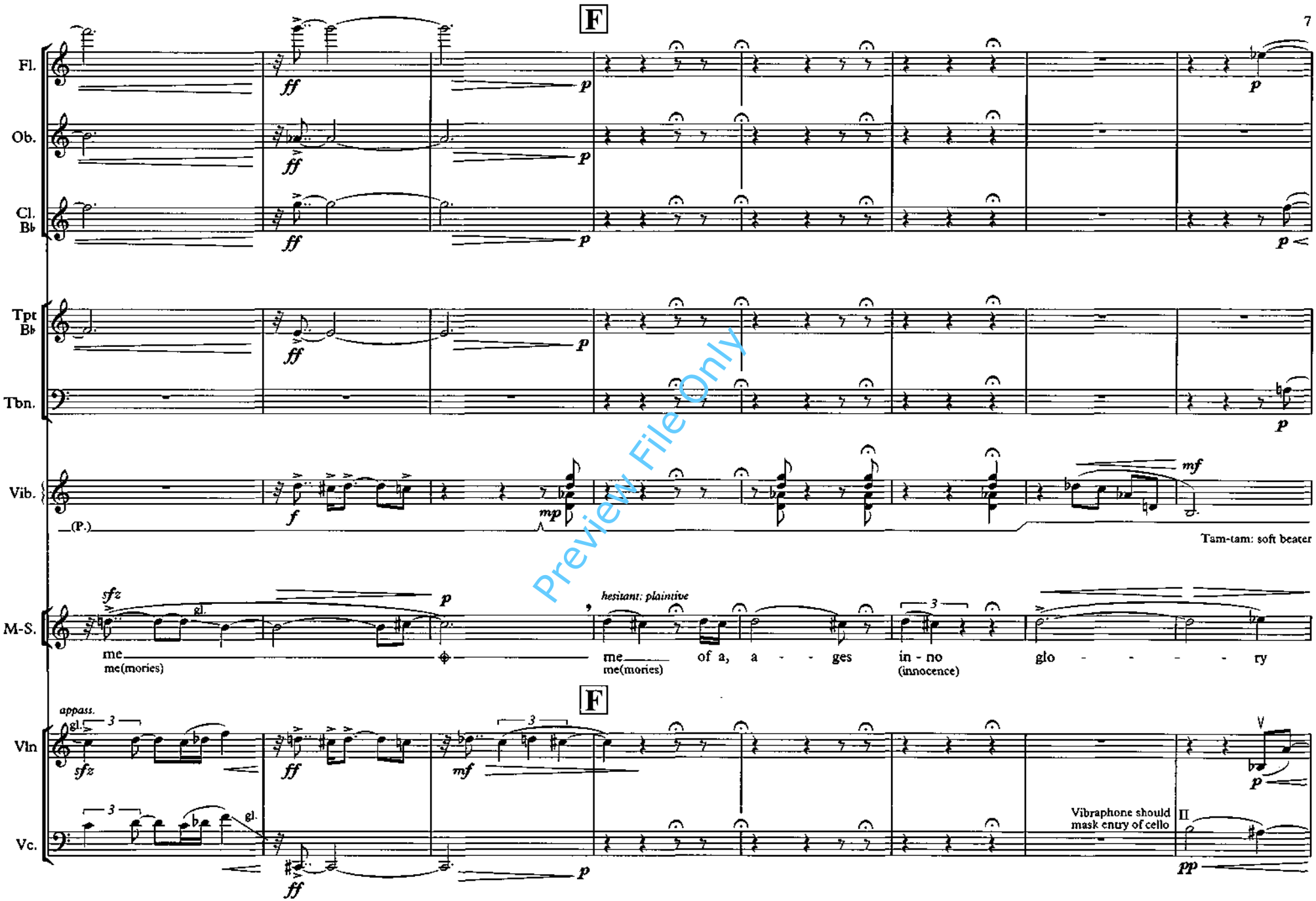

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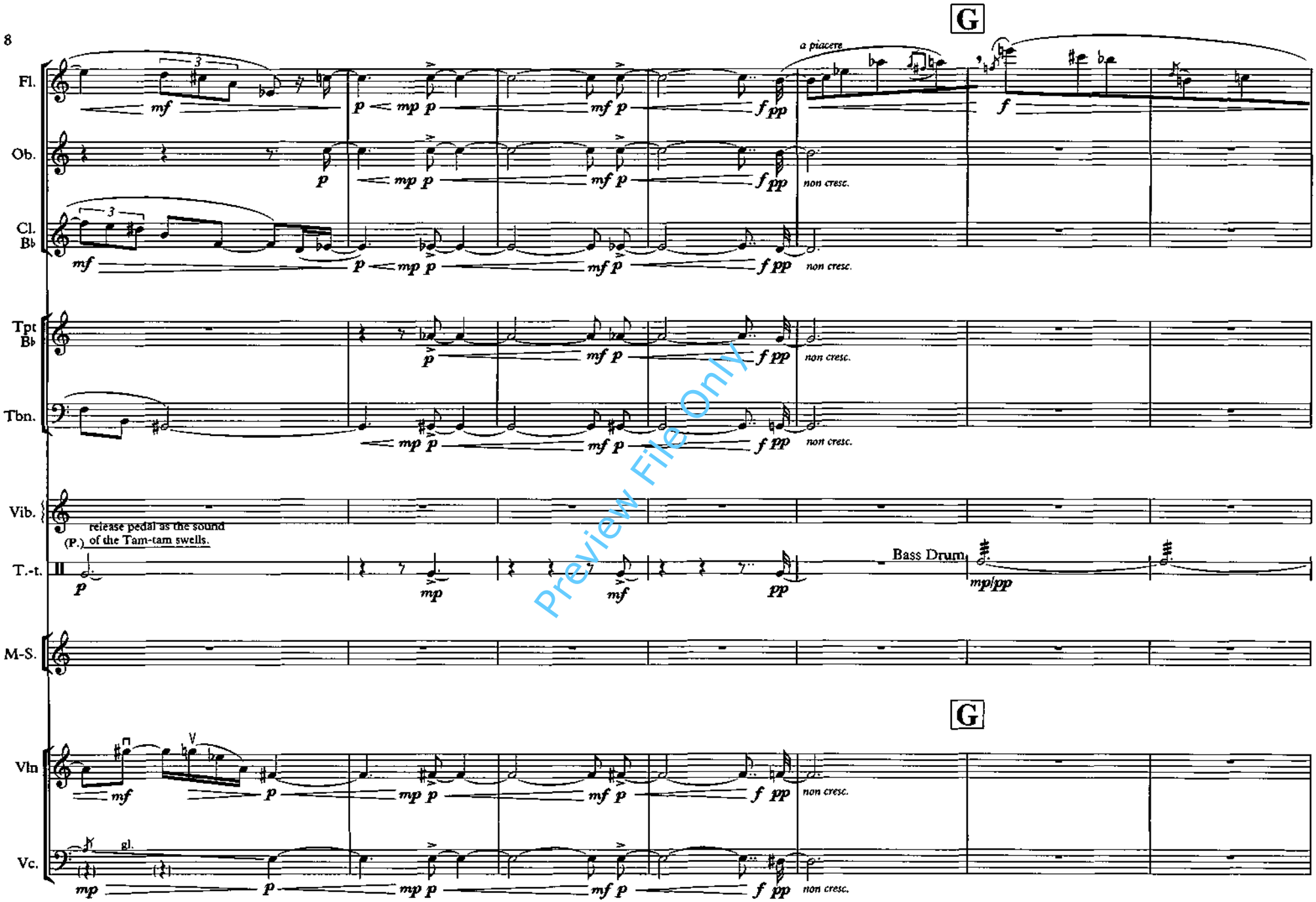

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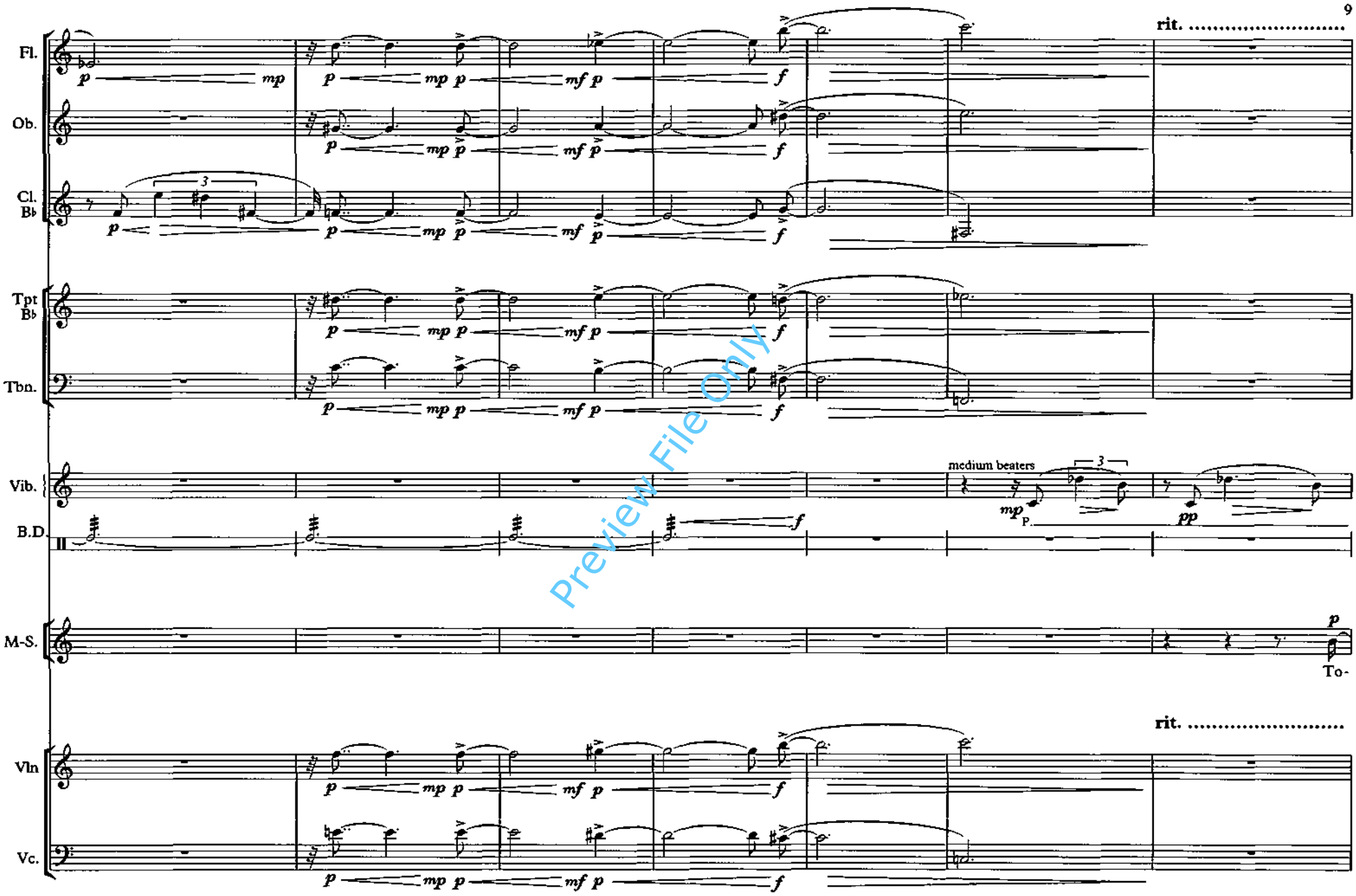

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