Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

3’22”

Composed by Ziyan Li

Heel of Destiny

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3’22”

Program Notes:

The Heel of Destiny explores the powerful and tragic story of Achilles, one of the greatest heroes in Greek mythology, whose fate was determined by a single vulnerability—his heel. Known for his invincible strength and unmatched prowess on the battlefield, Achilles seemed destined for eternal glory. Yet, his legend is also a poignant reminder of the fragile balance between heroism and mortality.

This piece captures the dual nature of Achilles’ life, with soaring, intense melodies representing his ambition, strength, and desire for immortality through glory. The opening of the piece bursts with energy, embodying the fearless and seemingly invincible warrior as he charges into battle. These forceful themes reflect his relentless pursuit of honor, driven by an ambition that propels him toward greatness but also toward his eventual demise.

As the music progresses, the music shifts to a more introspective and lyrical section, marked by a melody that conveys the human side of Achilles—the man behind the legend. Here, the listener feels the weight of Achilles’ destiny bearing down on him, as if fate itself is whispering in the quieter moments. The haunting echoes of vulnerability linger, even as the music remains beautiful, signifying Achilles’ struggle with the inevitability of his tragic end.

In the final moments, the piece returns to a fragment of the intense opening, a reminder of Achilles’ strength and the powerful legacy he leaves behind. But it quickly fades, giving way to a soft, haunting conclusion. The music lingers on the image of the heel—the small but fatal weakness that brings about his fall. This tender closing reflects the inescapable power of destiny, where even the mightiest of heroes must face their end.

The Heel of Destiny is a meditation on ambition, fate, and the human condition, exploring the tension between greatness and vulnerability. It reminds us that even the strongest among us are bound by the threads of fate, and that a single flaw, hidden beneath layers of strength, can determine the course of our lives.

Heel of Destiny

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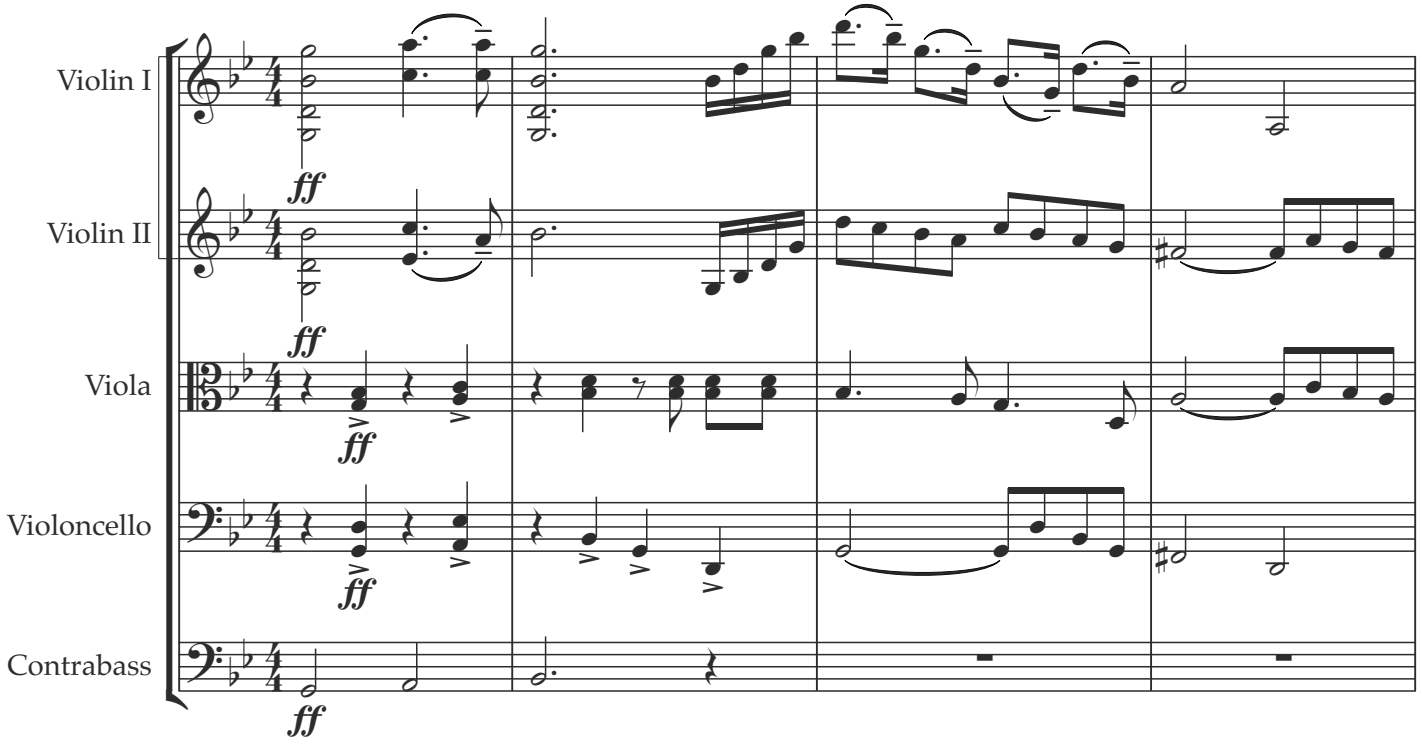
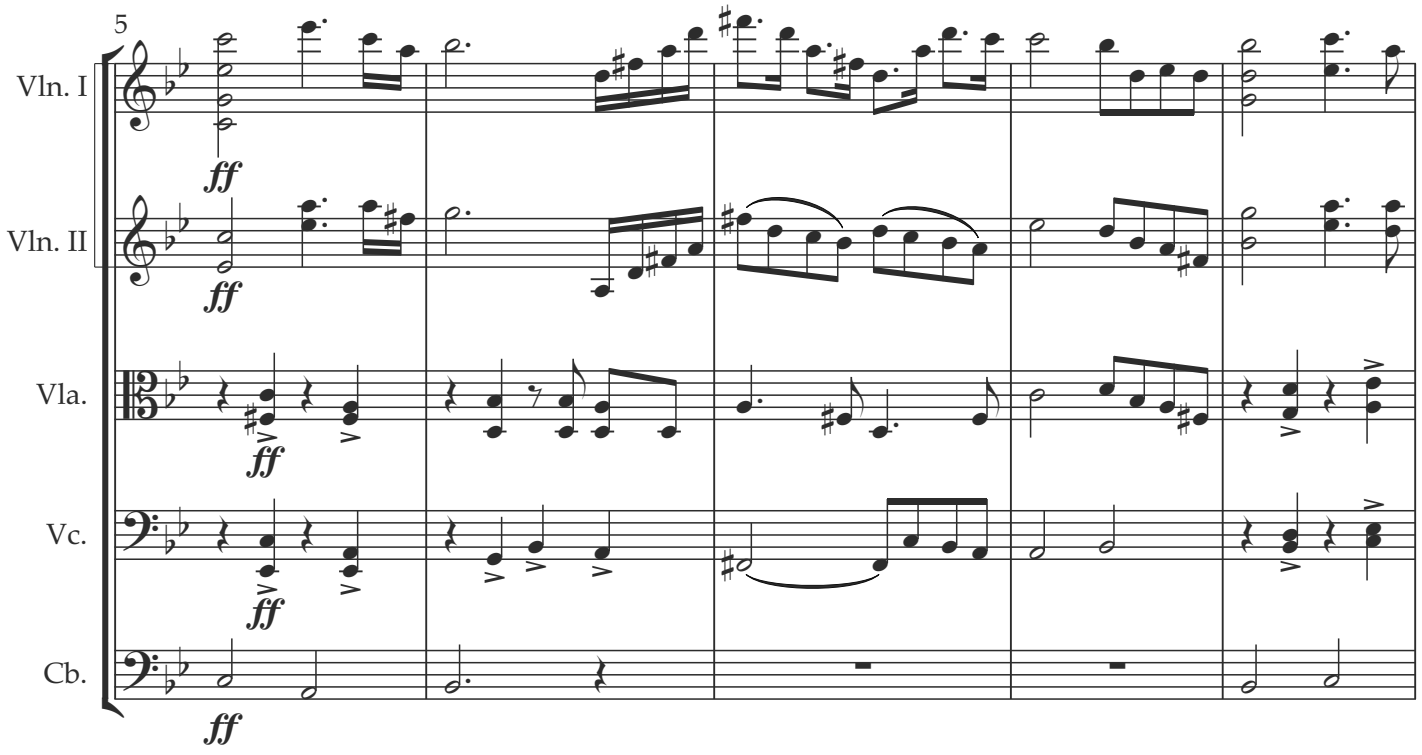
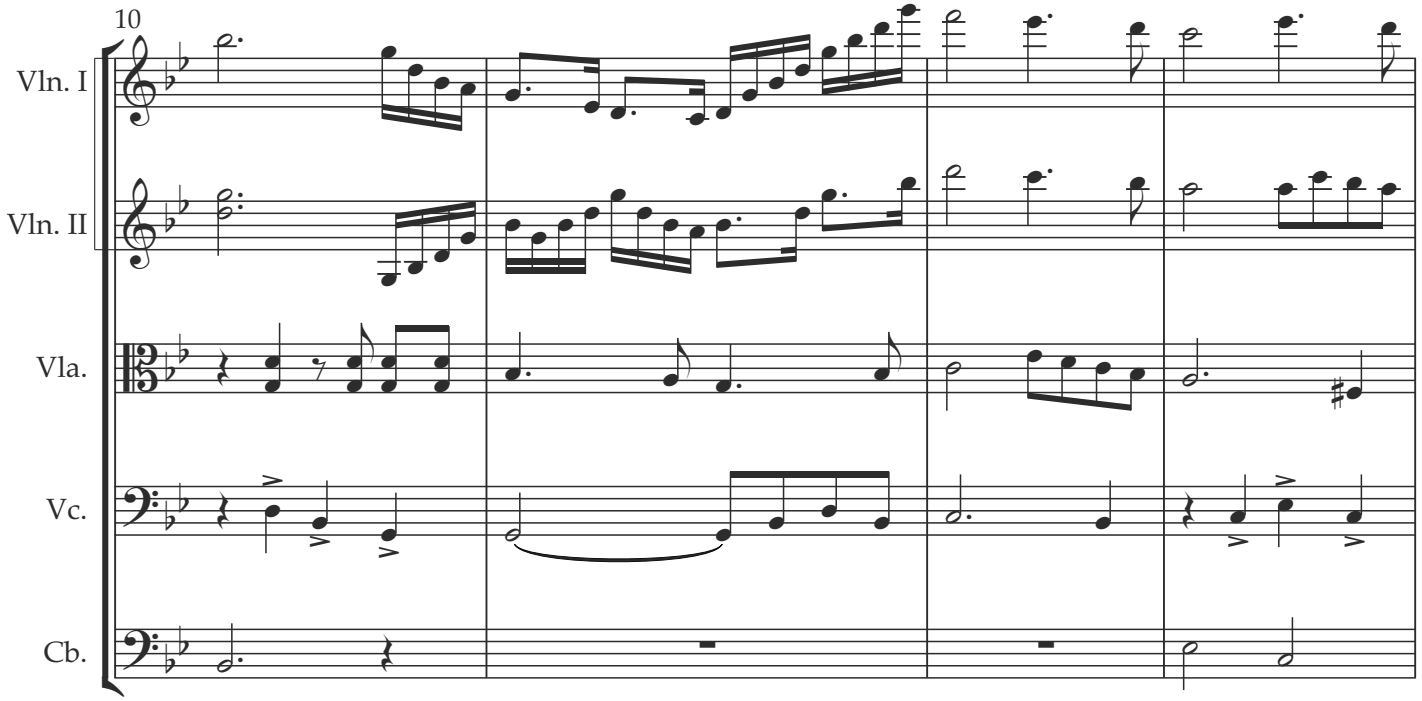
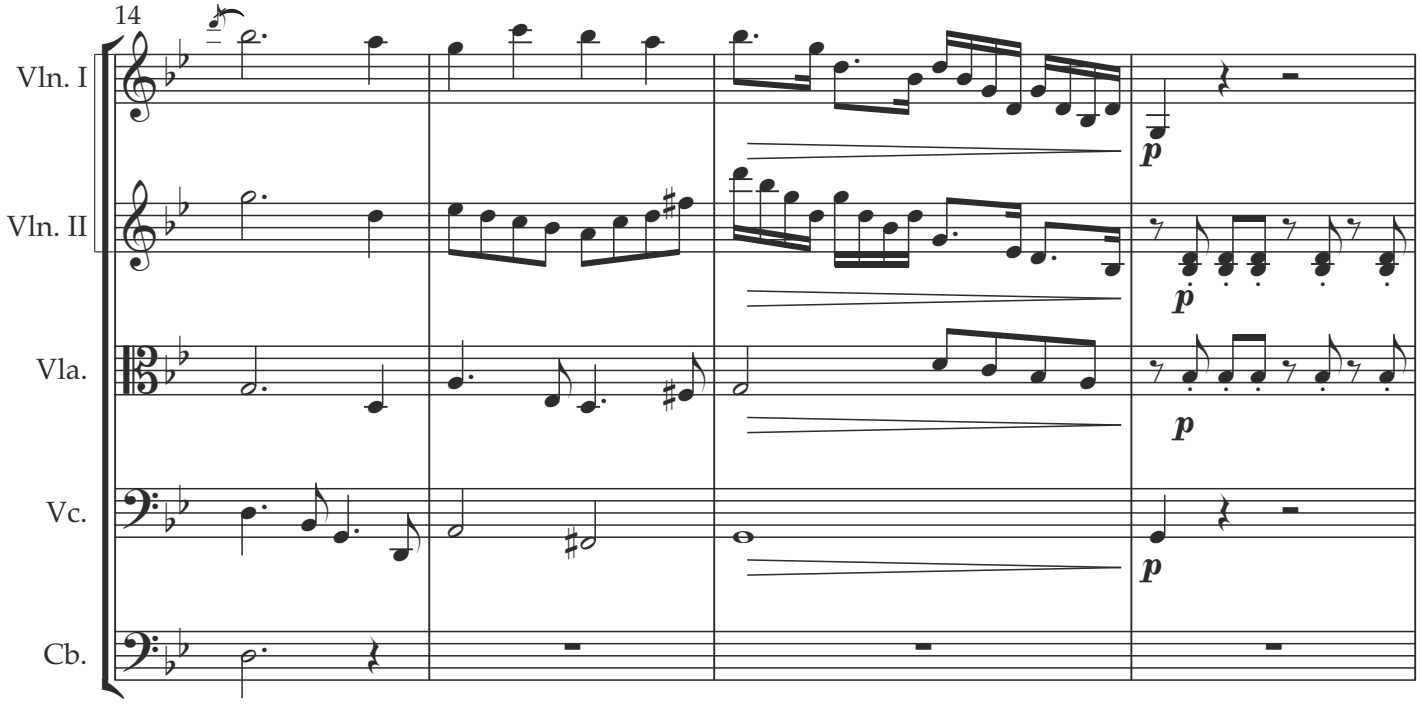
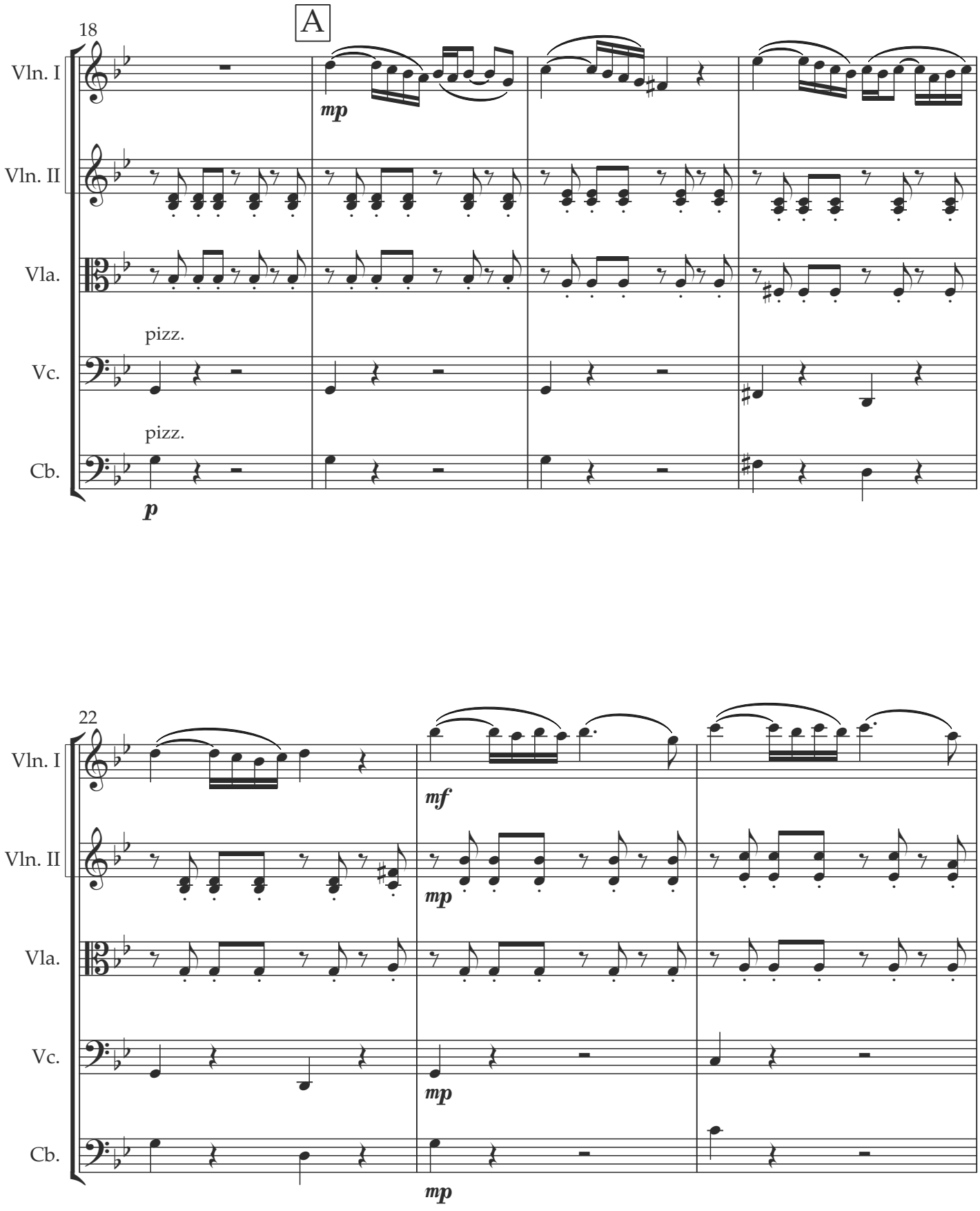
Ziyan Li

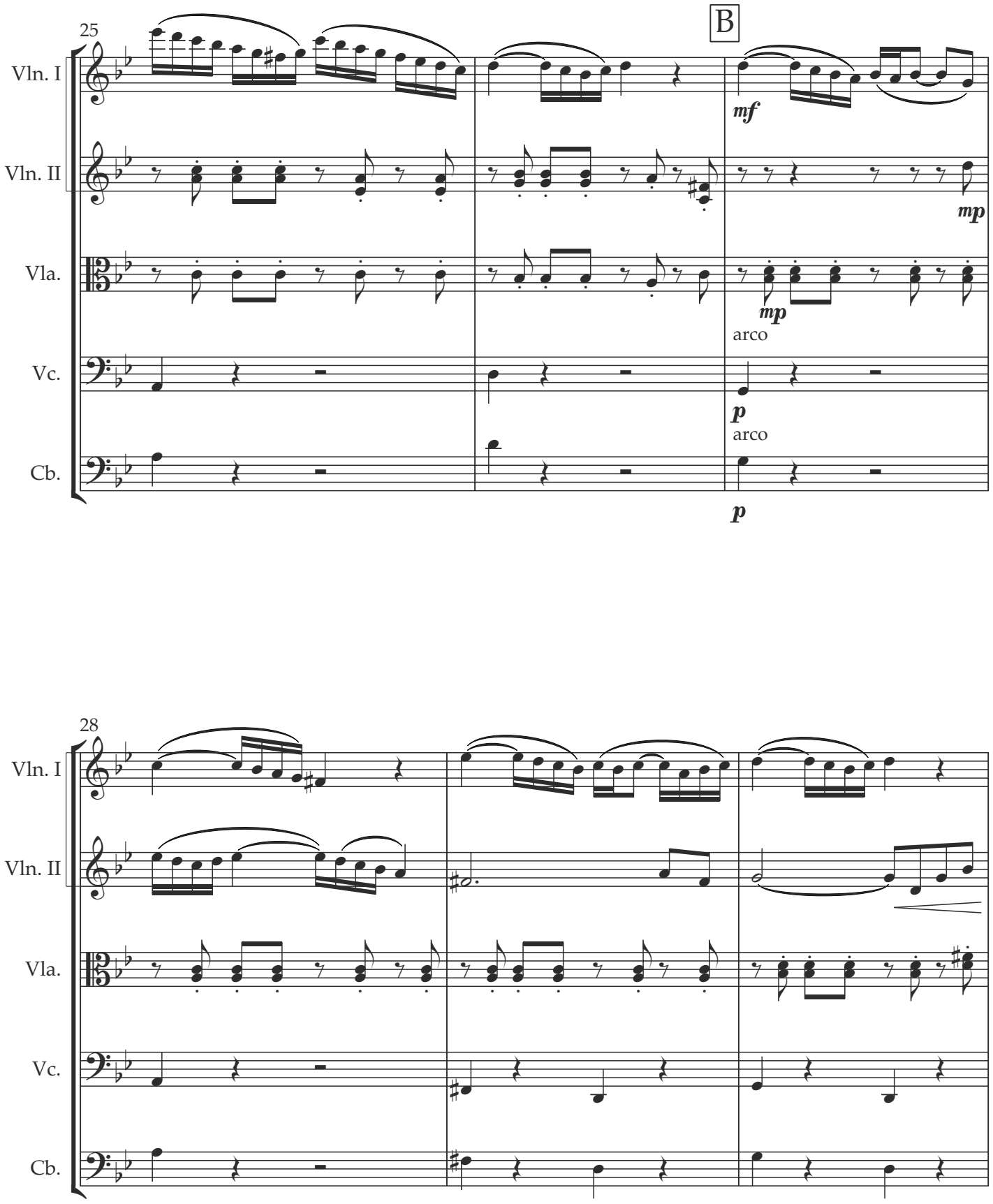


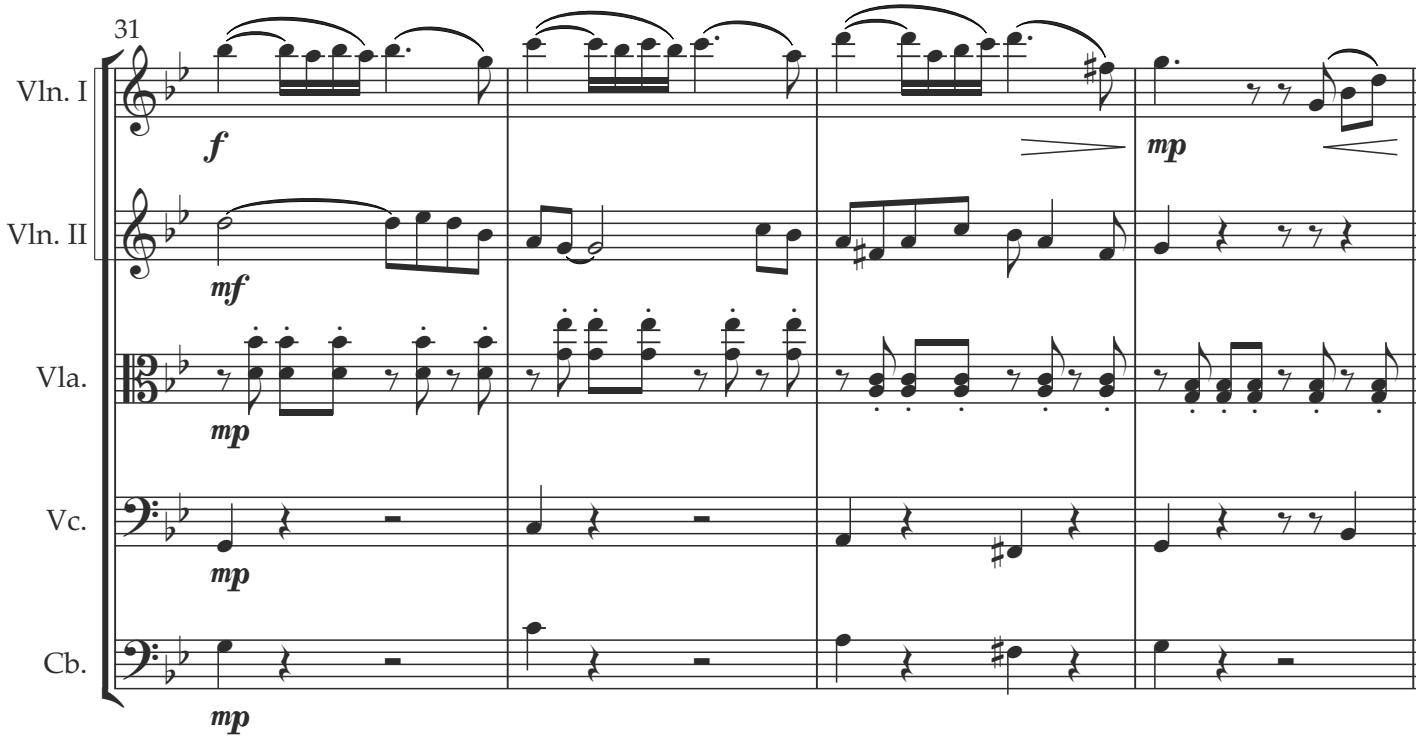


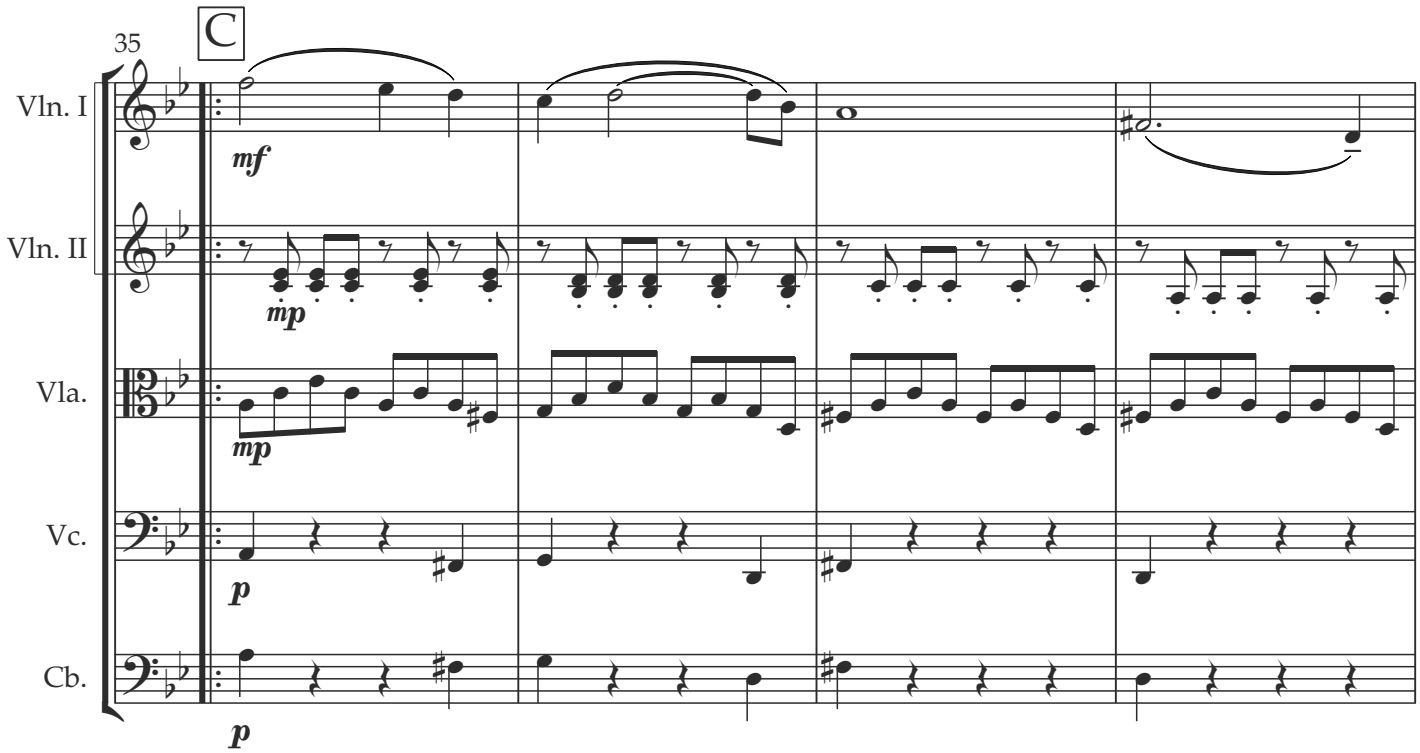

10
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

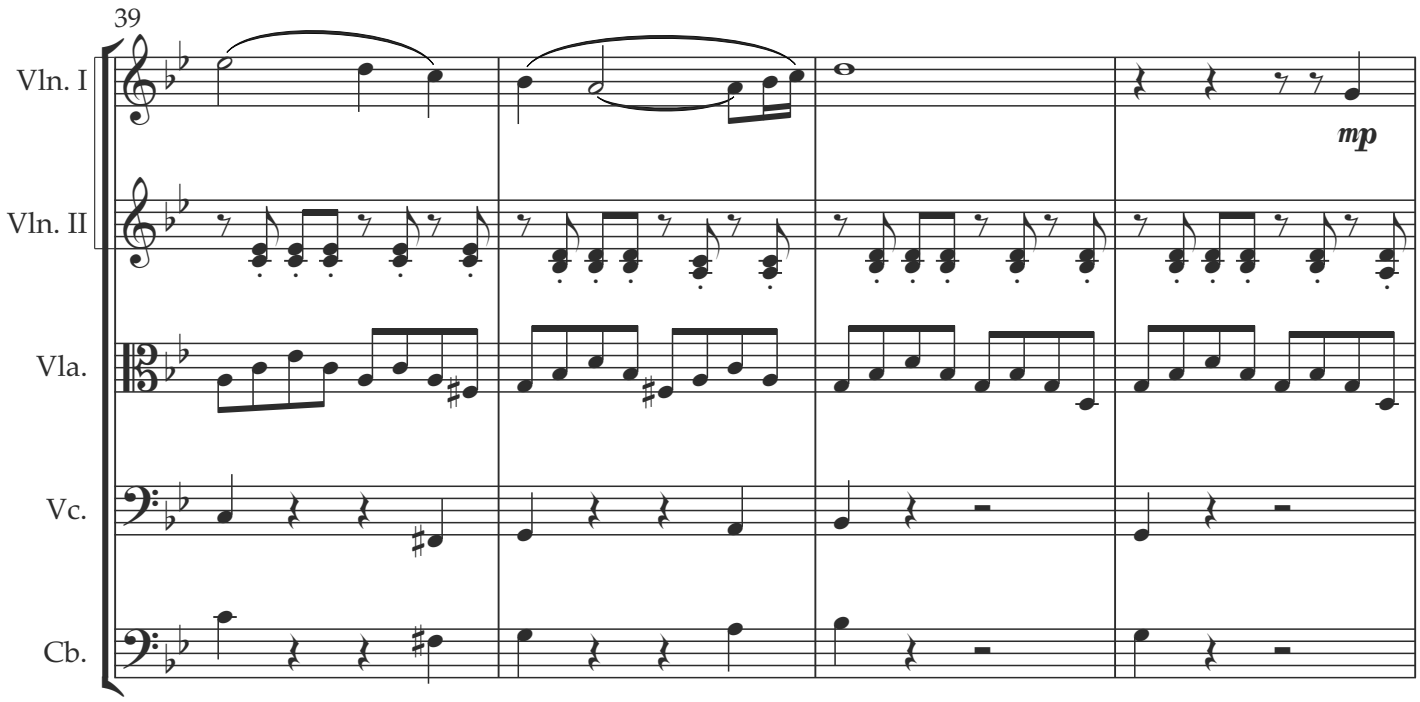

14
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
p
p
p
p

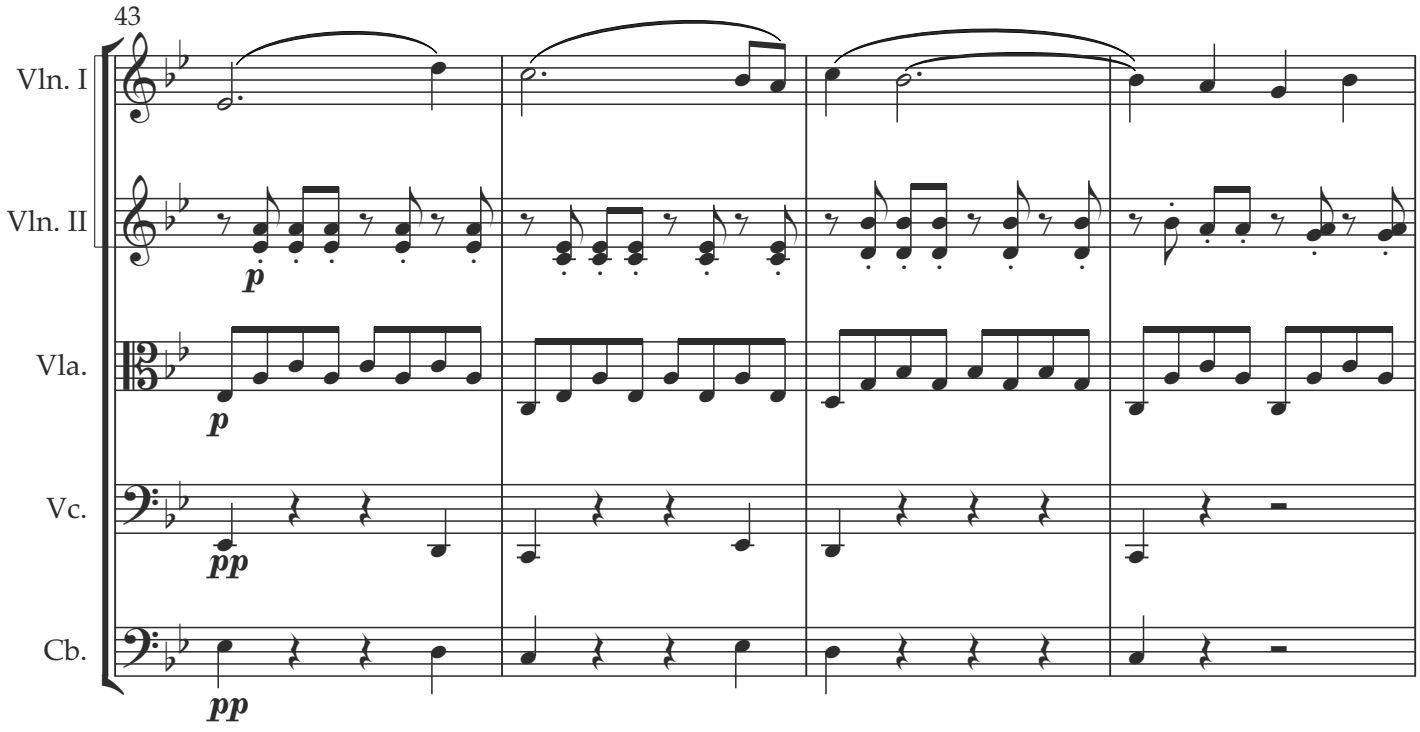

18
A
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp
pizz.
pizz.
p
22
mf
mp
mp
mp

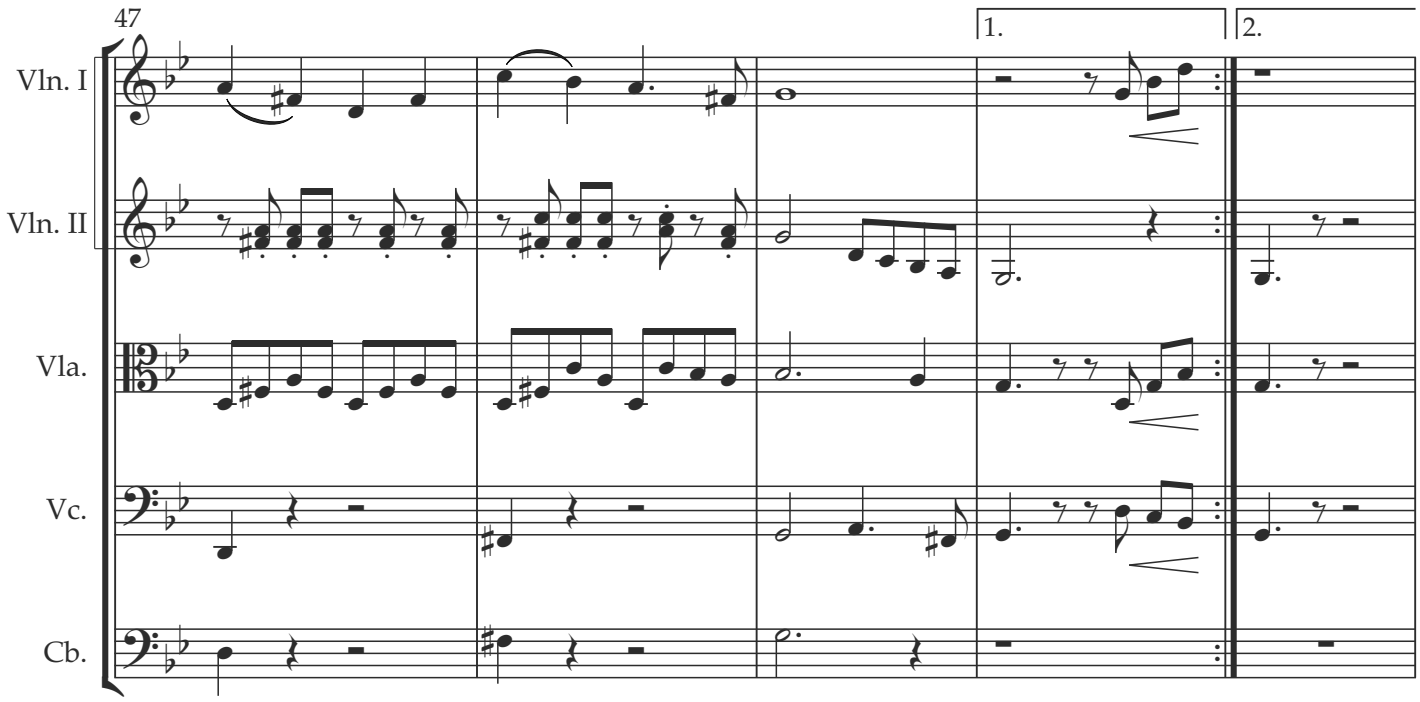

25
B
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mf
mp
mp
arco
p
arco
p
28
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.

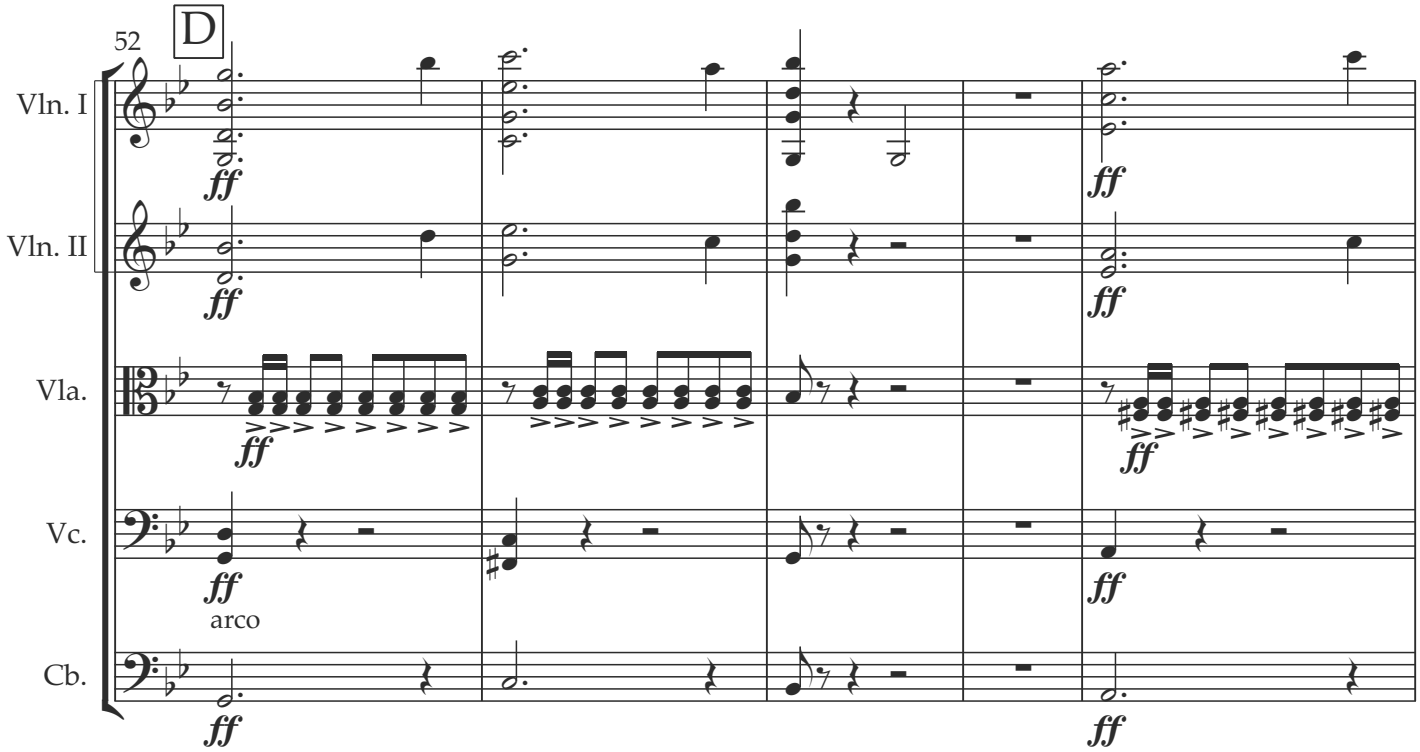

31
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
f
mf
mp
mp
mp
mp

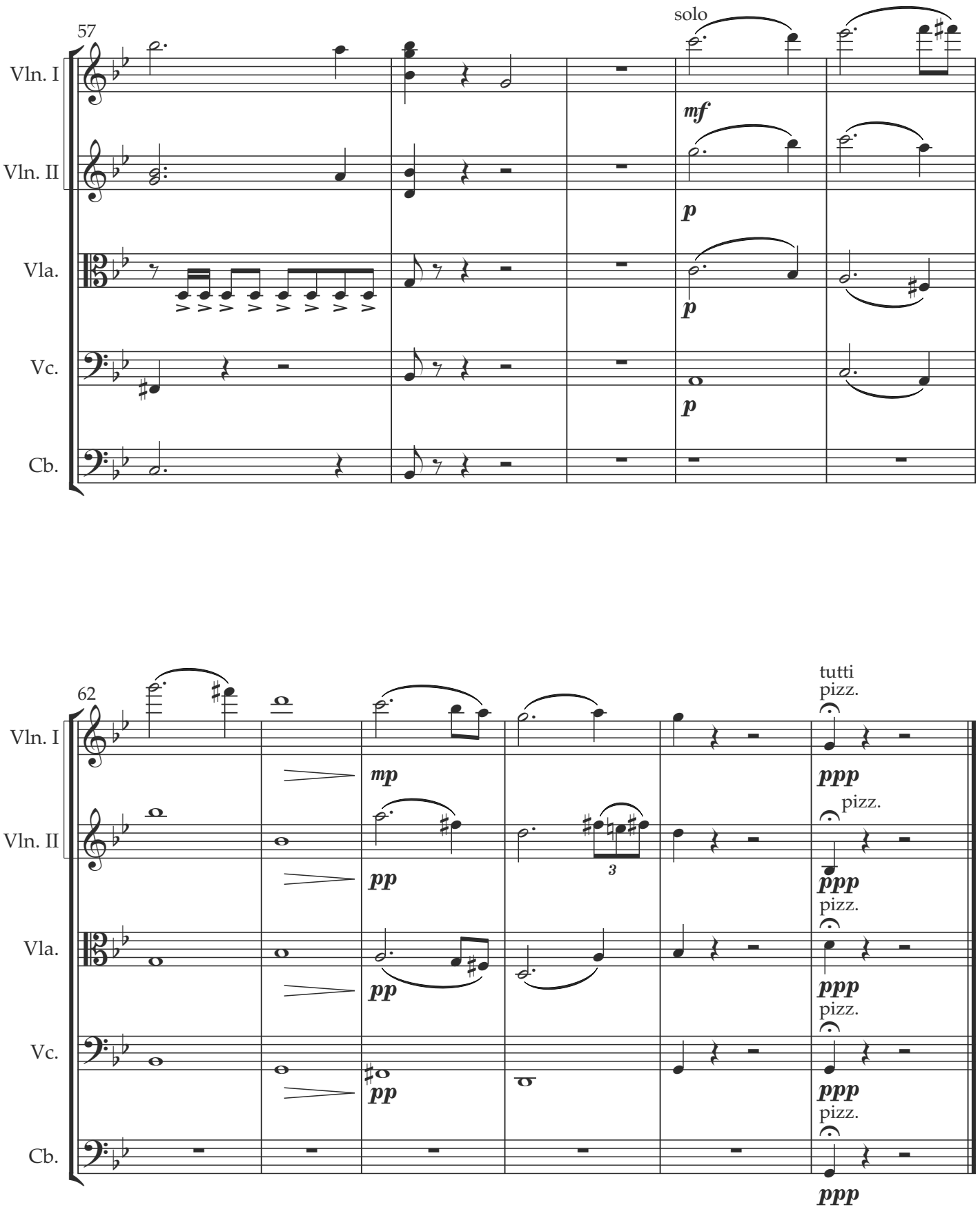

35
C
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mf
mp
mp
p
p


39
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp


43
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
p
p
pp
pp


47
1.
2.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.


52
D
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
ff
arco

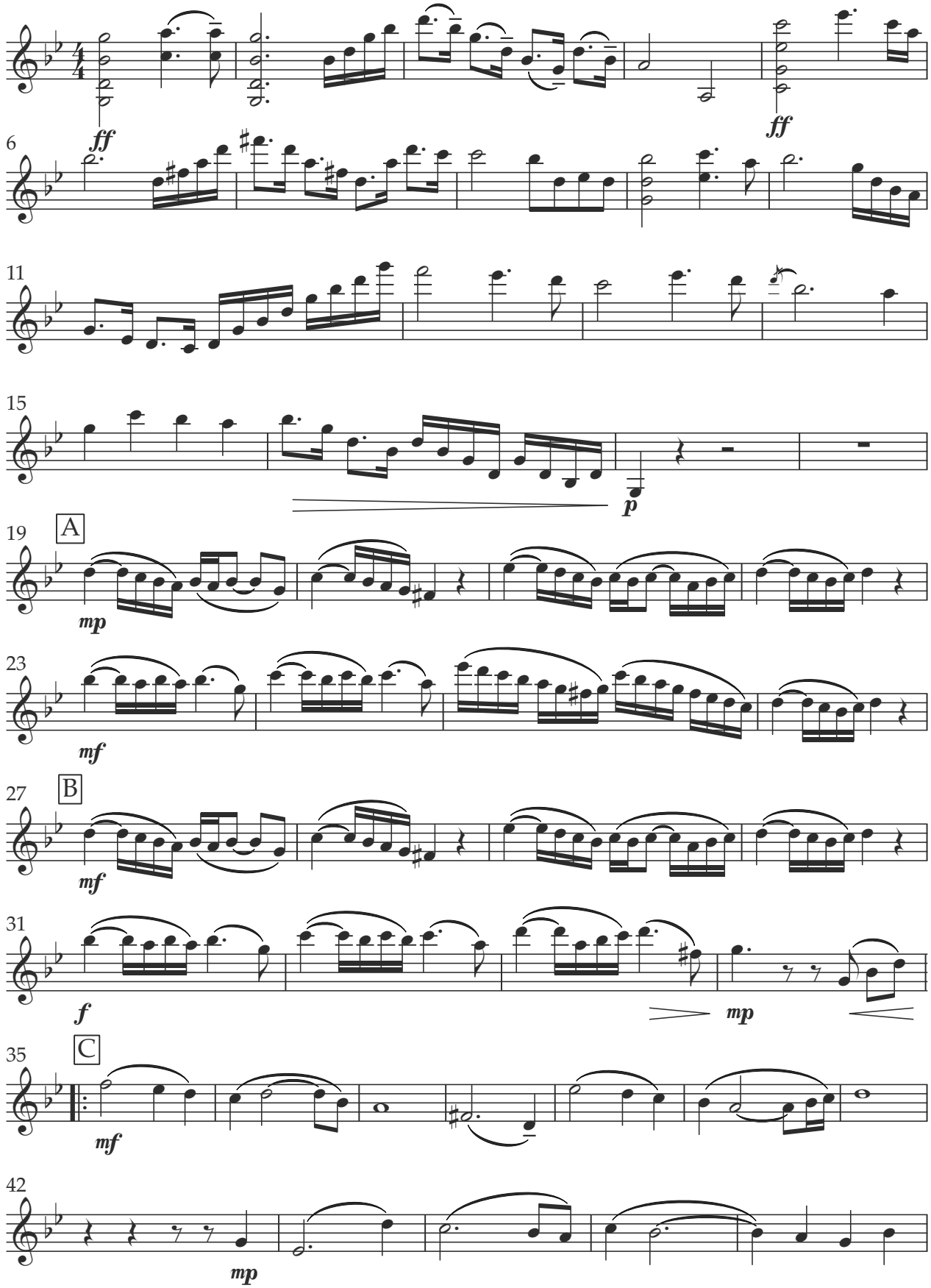

57
solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mf
p
p
p
62
tutti
pizz.
mp
pp
pp
pp
3
ppp
pizz.
ppp
pizz.
ppp
pizz.
ppp
pizz.
ppp

Violin I

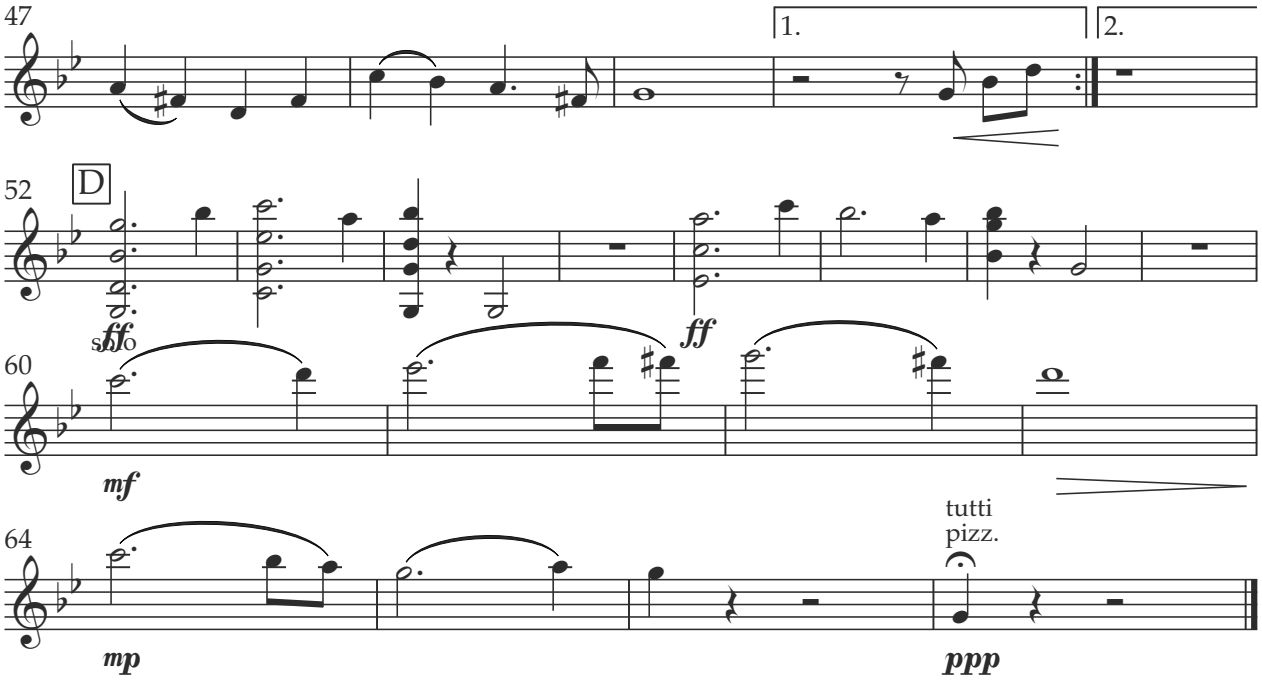
Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

Ziyan Li



V.S.

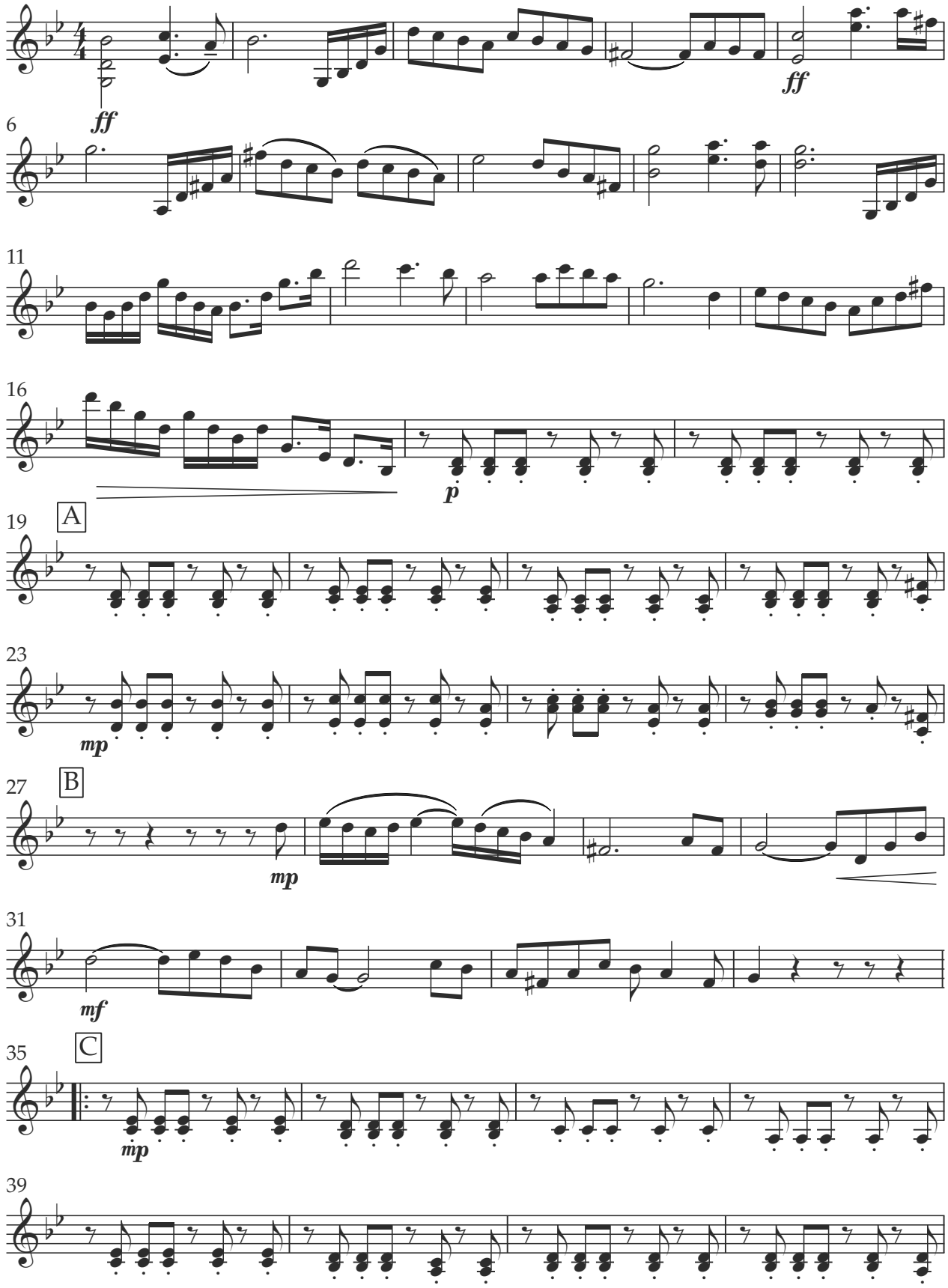

47
1.
2.
52
D
ff
ff
60
solo
mf
64
tutti
pizz.
mp
ppp

Violin II

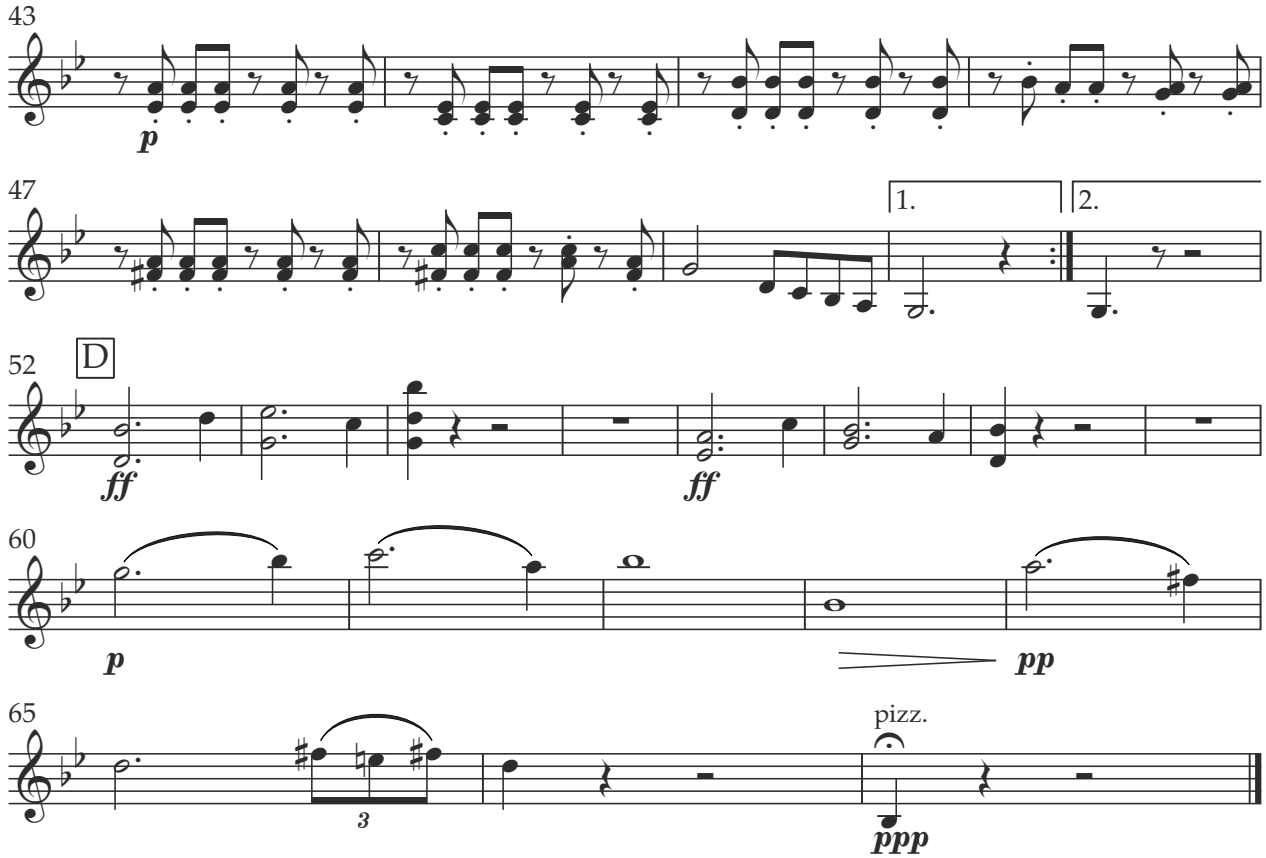
Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

Ziyan Li



V.S.

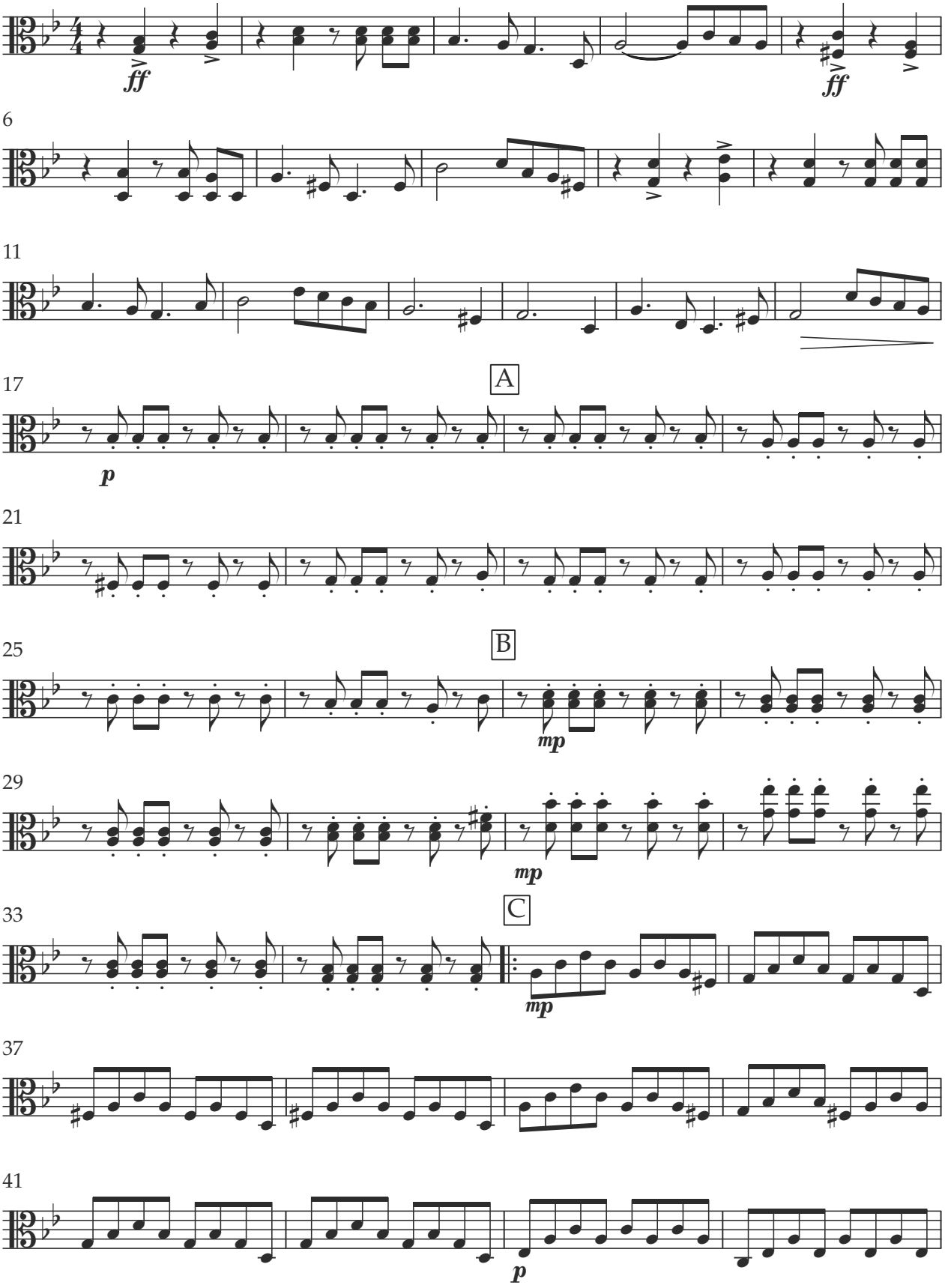

43
p
47
1.
2.
52
D
ff
ff
60
p
pp
65
3
pizz.
ppp

Viola

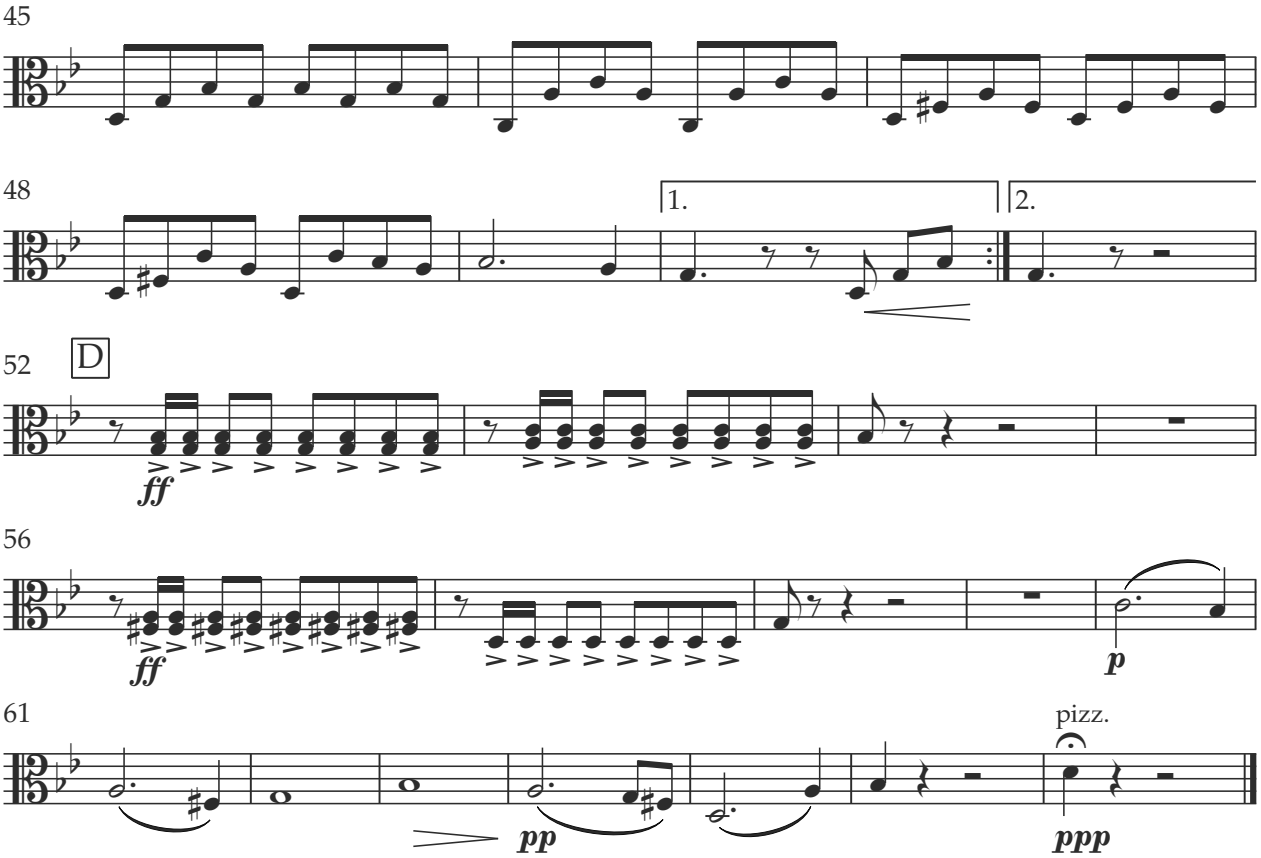
Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

Ziyan Li



V.S.

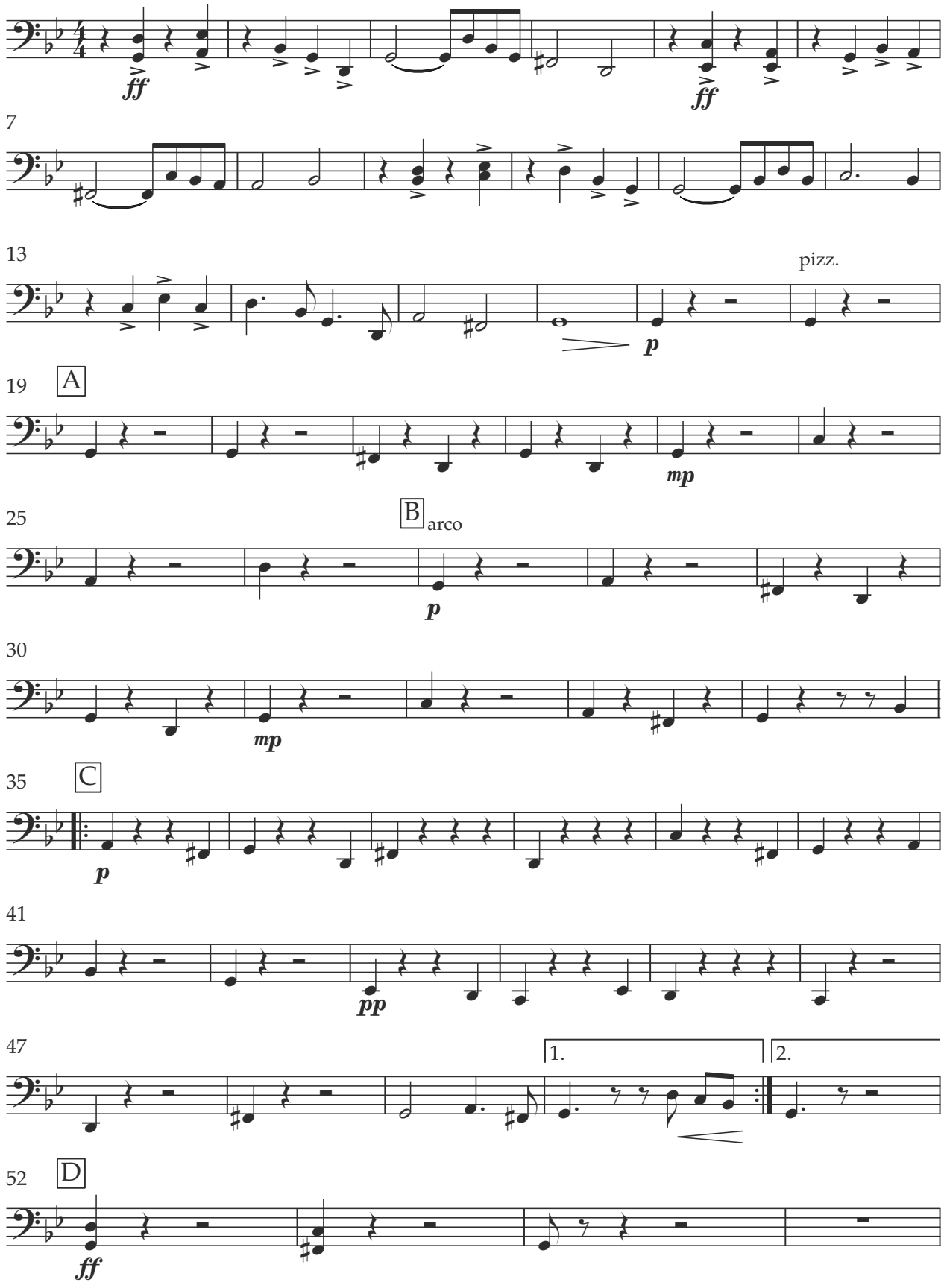

45
48
1.
2.
52
D
ff
56
ff
p
61
pizz.
pp
ppp

Violoncello

Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

Ziyan Li



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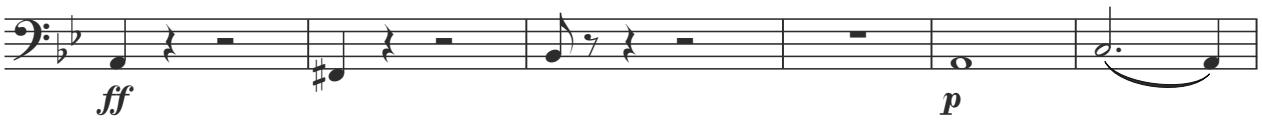

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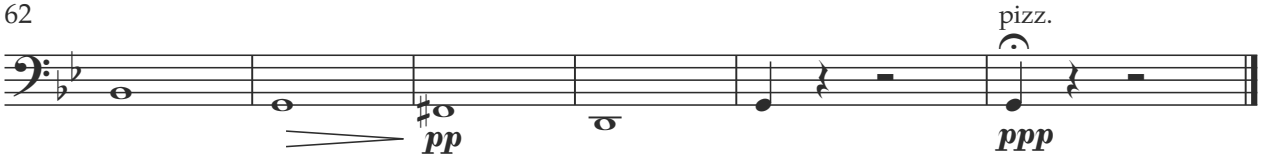
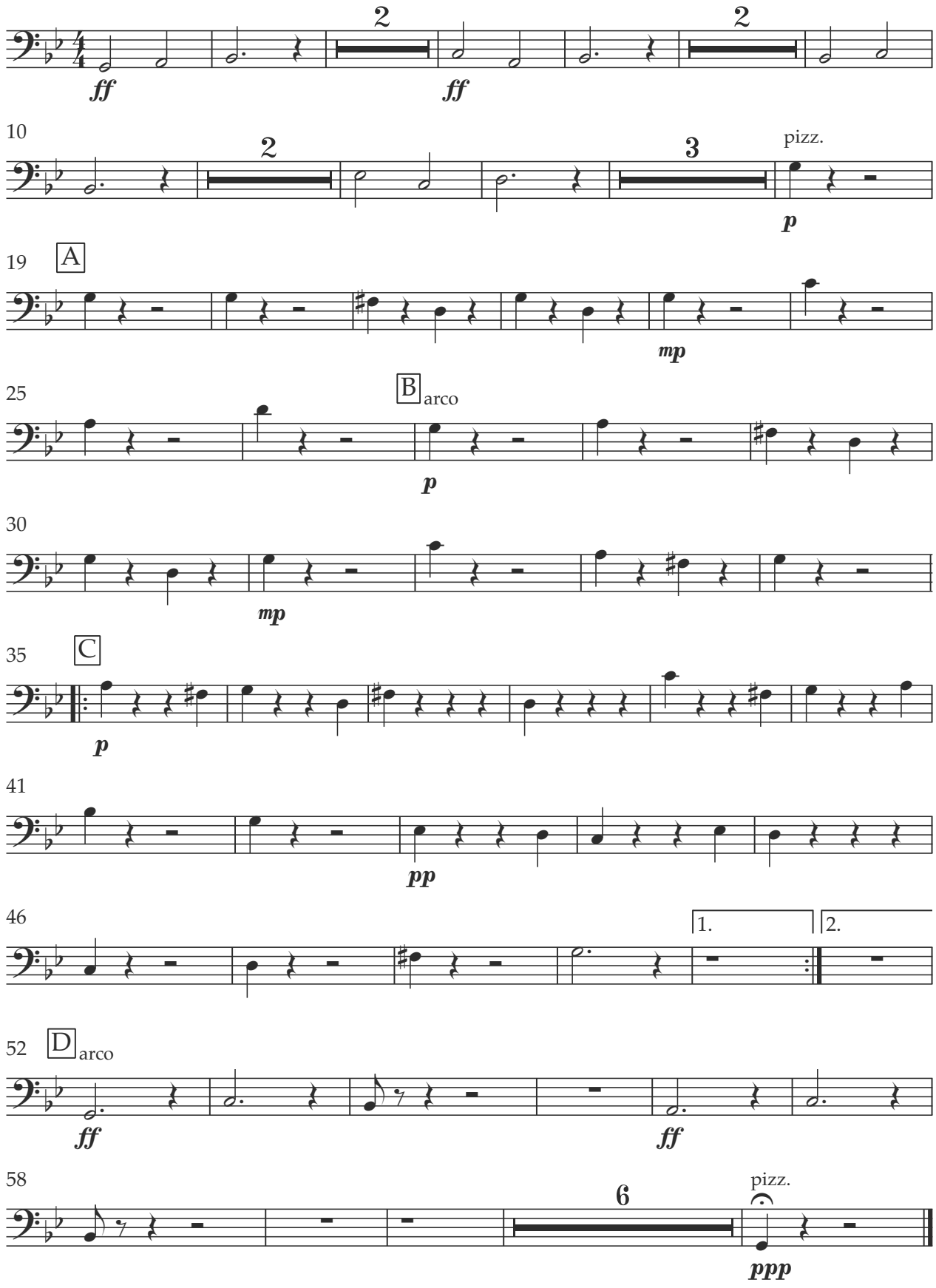


Contrabass

Heel of Destiny

for String Orchestra

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