A Story in Words and Music, of a 'Christ-tide' long ago, when the English Parliament banned Christmas.

for Narrator and Orchestra

Music by

LAWRENCE KILLIAN

Story and Narration by

SARAH JOHNSTON



FULL SCORE

DURATION APPROX: 15 minutes

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INSTRUMENTATION

Piccolo

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in Bb

*Bass Clarinet

2 Bassoons

2 French Horns

3 Trumpets in Bb

2 Tenor Trombones

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Timpani

Percussion (2 Percussion Players Required)

Strings

Narrator (with handbell)

*Although the Bass Clarinet part is optional (covered in the bassoons), this instrument will add much to the texture and drama of the score if a player is available. The composer's preference is for a bass clarinet to be used if possible.

Percussion 1: Snare Drum, Tenor Drum or Medium Tom-Tom, Sleigh Bells,

and Vibra Slap

Percussion 2: Glockenspiel, Suspended Cymbal, Bass Drum, Tambourine,

Triangle, Sleigh Bells, and Vibra Slap

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The standard orchestral layout for a concerto with the Narrator at the front will work well for a performance of this piece. A microphone may assist in bringing the narration to the focus of the performance.

It is recommended that a more **theatrical approach** is used to enhance the story's impact on the audience. For example, the Narrator could dress in costume(s), use props, and move around the auditorium for heightened dramatic effect.

Other characters from the story could also be introduced to good effect in the various tableaux.

Sound effects could also be used along with images projected behind or around the performers.

PROGRAMME NOTE

Combined with the narration, the music conjures up images of a busy English town during preparations for Christmas in 1647.

At that time, the Puritan government had officially banned Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun festivities, church services and celebrations, including festivities at home. There were fines if this law was broken, and in some places, the threat of sending 'offenders' to prison. This varied in each area depending on how rigorously the so-called 'Rule of the Major Generals' was upheld.

The Christmas ban was unpopular, with riots in Kent and other places. This was also the time when the country was in disarray due to the Civil War. Some riots may have been an excuse for pro-Royalist rebels to cause trouble for the Parliamentarians on the opposite side.

Our story unfolds through the eyes of a young girl, Ivy Johnston, who, like many, couldn't wait for Christmas to come.

The structure of the music and narration follows the descriptive headlines within the story:

M Orchestral Prelude, Setting the Scene: An English town in early December 1647.

Once Upon a Time

A Change in the Air

No More Fun

The Watchmen

No Christmassing!

Secret Celebrations

M Orchestral Interlude 2: Into the Woods

The Mince Spies

N Orchestral Interlude 3: Those Devious Mince Spies

Act of Bravery

The Rebellion

M Orchestral Interlude 4: 'Bun-fight'

The Mayor

Finale

M Orchestral Interlude 5: Christmas Celebrated

Epilogue

For Narrator and Orchestra

Mince Spies

*Handbell required for the Narrator at Cue 2c, in bar 53
Story and Narration by Sarah Johnston

A Story in Words and Music, of a 'Christ-tide' long ago, when the English Parliament banned Christmas.

Music by Lawrence Killian Duration Approx. 15 minutes







Narration 1a: Bar 19 (over Cello note)

Once upon a time in the Kingdom of England, T'was almost December, and excitement was brewing



Narration 1b: Bar 26 (over Music) - repeat bar until narration is finished

And young Ivy Johnston, like many, couldn't wait, For Christmas to come and to celebrate, With fireside feasts and festive delight, And carollers singing by candlelight.





Narration 2a: Bar 38 (over Music) - repeat bar until finished

Hush, listen! Ivy paused

In the distance,

A sound of belling and yelling echoed around.



Narration 2b: Bar 44 (over Music) - repeat bar until finished

She chased the noise down the street to discover, A crowd at the inn and town crier above her. And declared by post on the innkeeper's door, Christmas was cancelled:



Mince Spies Narration 2c: Bar 53 (no Music) - use the G.P. bar, after narration, for a stunned silence. *Narrator to ring a handbell (4 times) before shouting: "Oyez! Oyez! " *Narrator then rings the bell again (twice) and continues: "No Christmassing, by order of the law!" Cue 2c G.P. G.P. G.P. G.P. sf Bs. Dr. To Sn. Dr. sfCue 2c G.P.

49

Fl. 1.2

Ob. 1.2

Cl. in B♭ 1.2

Bsn 1.2

F. Hn in F 1.2

Tba

Timp.

Perc.1

Narration 3a: Bar 56 (over Music) - use the pause in bar 60 for dramatic effect.

So, the Kingdom, commanded by parliament rules, Now frowned upon festive, frolicking fools. Gifts, carols and gluttonous diet, Replaced by fasting and solemn quiet.



Narration 3b: Bar 67 (during the pause on beat 3)

The Mayor confirmed it; there was no debating. No laughter, no joy, no plum pudding baking.



Narration 3c: Bar 72 (during pause bar)

And anyone caught celebrating at all, Were locked up by watchmen behind a cell wall!



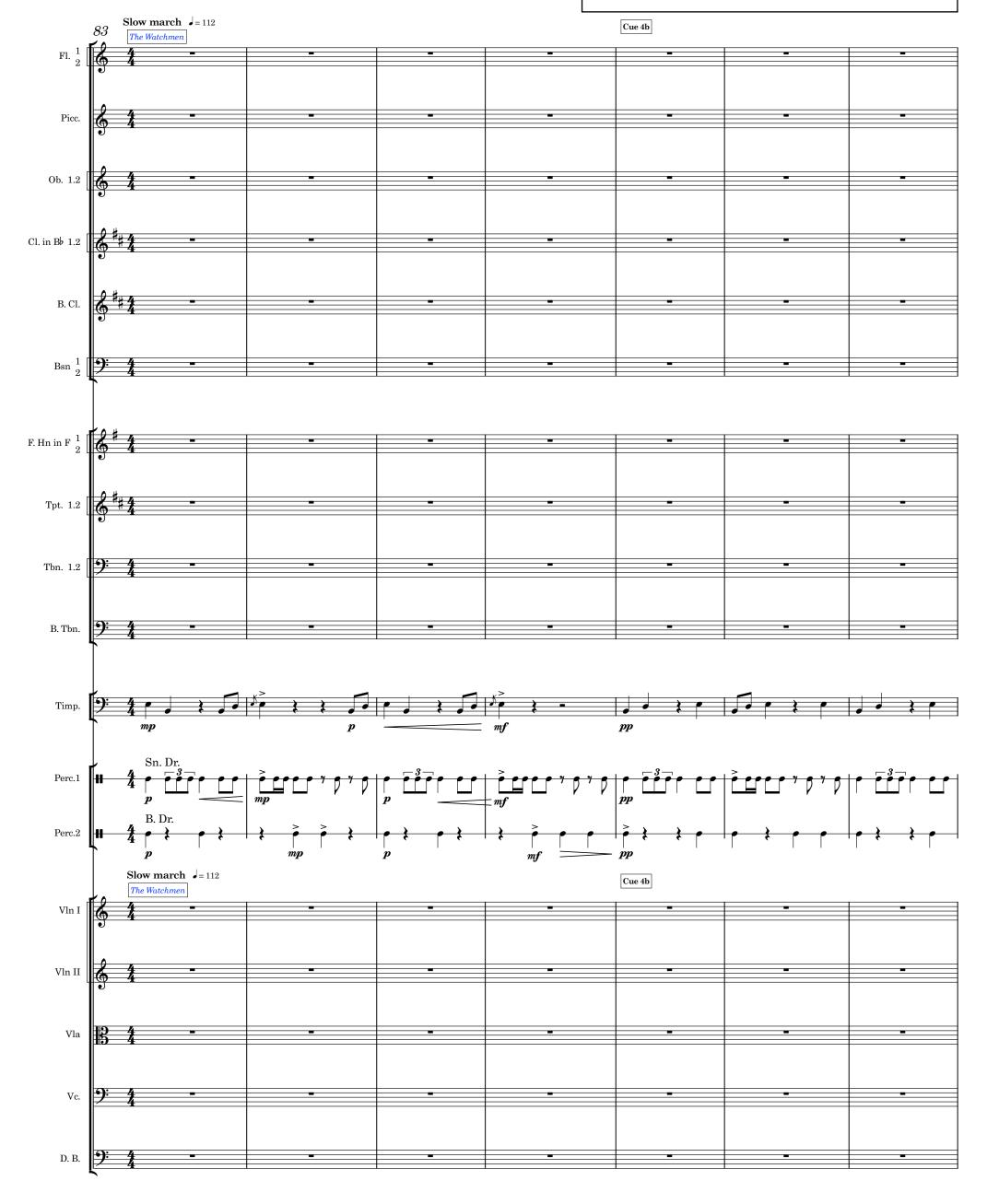
Narration 4a: Bar 81 (over soft Timpani roll)

Each day and each night the watchmen paraded. They marched through the town, people's homes they invaded,
Just to ensure no Christmassing happened.



Narration 4b: Bar 87 (over music as it continues)

Stop wreaths going up, stop geese being fattened. Unashamedly horrid, and brazenly bold, Ensuring the townsfolk, did just as they were told.













Narration 5a: Bar 122 (during pause)

As the days went by, and Twelfth Day nearing, The townsfolk tired of the bold domineering.

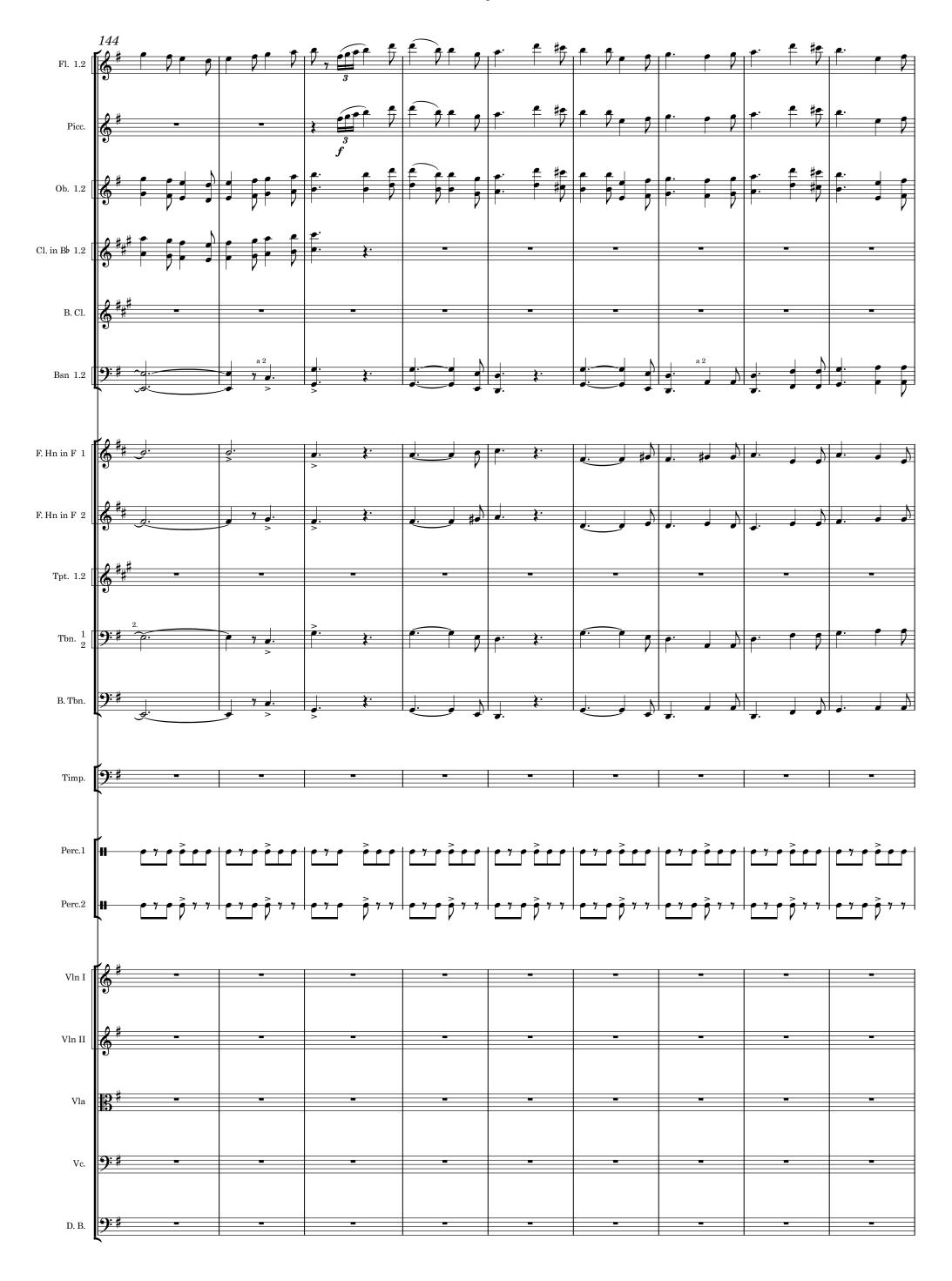


Narration 5b: Bar 127 (during pause, and over cello note)

Many Families snook to the woods in their hoods, To sing Christmas carols and scoff figgy puds. They baked festive treats in the darkest of night, With holly and Ivy displayed out of sight.









Narration 6a: Bar 172 (during pause bar)

25

The watchmen, however, soon found out,
They started to peek and sneak about,
Stopping secret celebrations, catching all by surprise,
And they soon became known as the devious mince spies.



Narration 6b: Bar 176 (during pause bar) [Music continues as soon as narration finishes]

"Those mean Mince Spies," cried Mrs McFarne
"They've taken the gifts that I hid in the barn"!



Narration 6c: Bar 180 (during pause bar)

[Music continues as soon as narration finishes.]

"They're horrid those mince spies", agreed Mr Figg, "They locked up our neighbours for dancing a jig"!







Narration 6d: Bar 199 (during pause bar)

By the 10th day of Christmas, there were hundreds in prison, There was simply no way to keep Christmassing hidden!



Narration 7a: Bar 205 (during pause)

Ivy gloomily slumped by her window, and saw Some Mince Spies tiptoeing towards her neighbour's door, Where her neighbours, The Coopers, were roasting a bird.

Narration 7b: Bar 211 (during pause)

Their shutters were shut, and they could not be heard. But the glorious smell of the feast was escaping, And the mince spies outside, were ready and waiting.



Narration 7c: Bar 220 (during pause bar) [Music continues immediately after narration]

What meanies Ivy thought - this just isn't right. She squeezed her bread roll in her fist super tight, And despite trembling hands and fear in her chest, She aimed at the mince spies to halt their arrest.



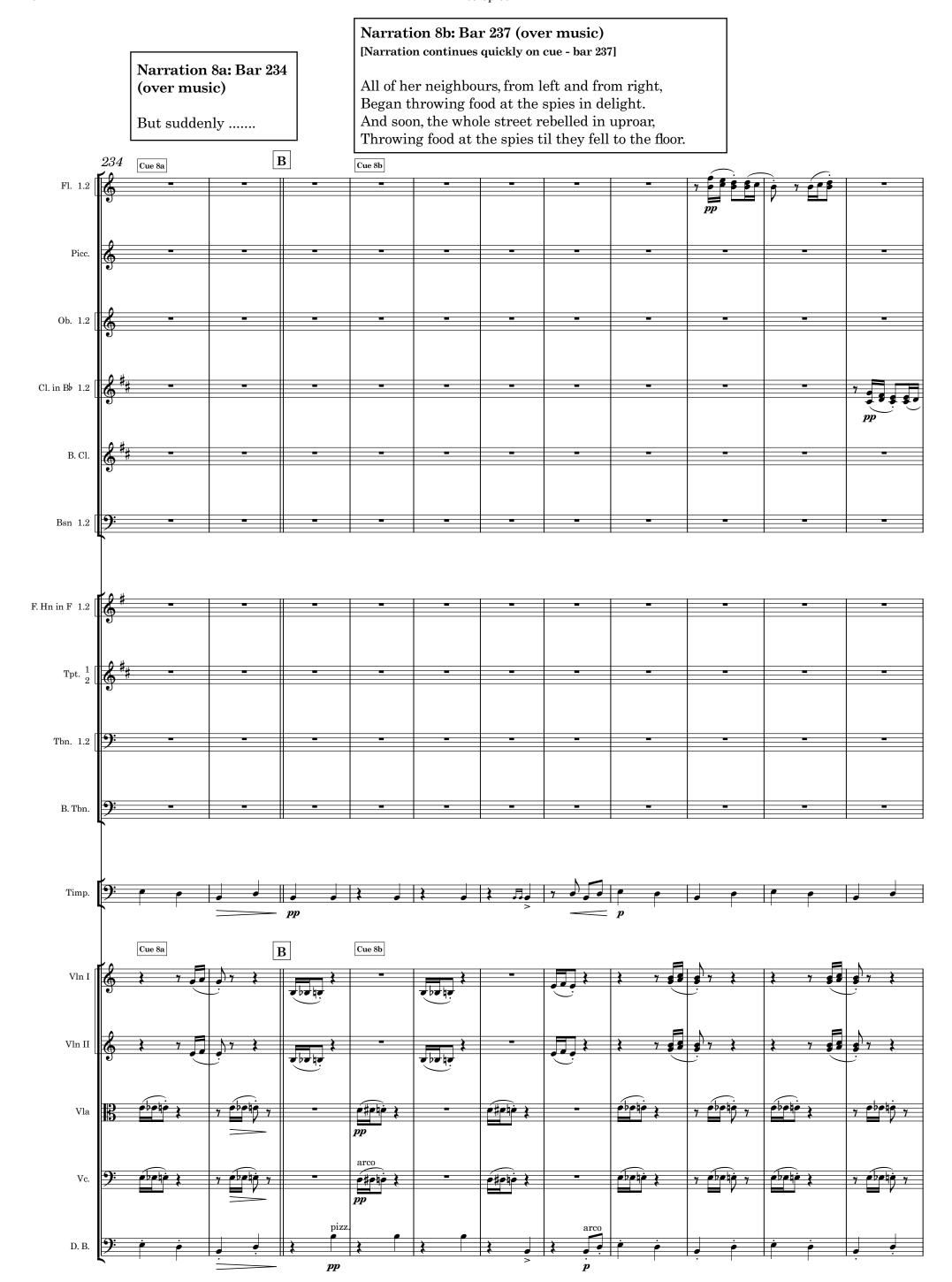
Narration 7d: Bar 224 (during pause bar) [Music continues after a slight pause for 'Ivy Froze']

The bread roll shot past the first mince Spie's nose, He swerved towards Ivy, and Ivy froze.

Narration 7e: Bar 227 (over music) [Narration continues quickly]

"Oi!" the spies roared as they stormed her way, Help, she thought, I'll be locked up today!







Narration 8c: Bar 234 (over music) [Use short G.P. if the narration has already finished]

There was jelly on their faces, and crusts in their hair, And they threatened the townsfolk, but the townsfolk didn't care!











Narration 9a: Bar 285 (quickly on cue)

[Music interjects quickly after narration]

"Stop!", the Mayor ordered

Narration 9b: Bar 287 (quickly on cue)

[Music interjects quickly after narration]

.... What on earth has arisen?



Narration 9c: Bar 289 (During pause bar)

[Leave silence/ space after narration, then continue music]

"Christ-mass-ing!", the mince spies called \dots they must all go to prison!

All eyes looked his way, he pondered...he huffed...

Well, there's simply no room - they're already stuffed!

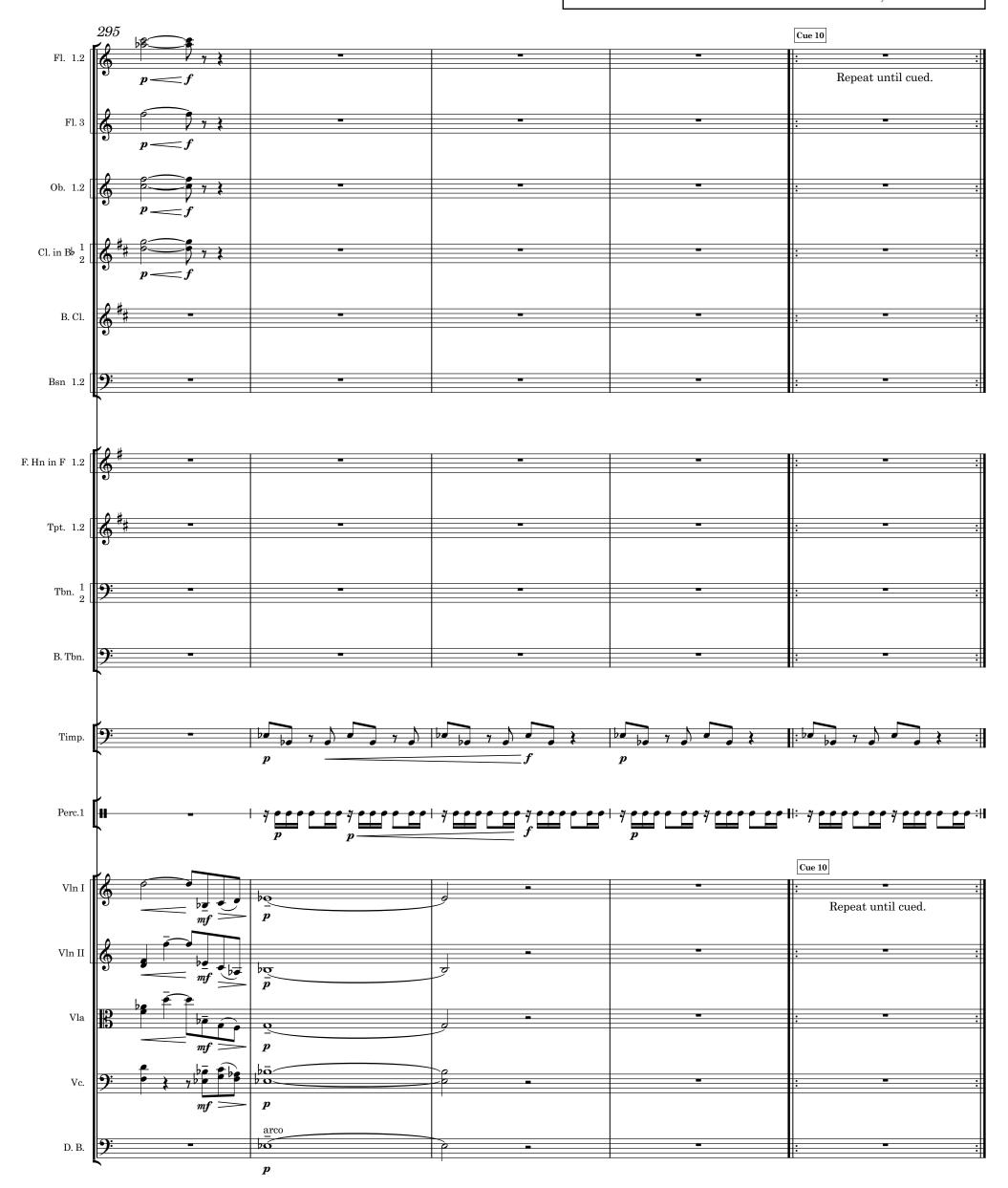


Narration 10: Bar 299 (Over music)

[Repeat bar until narration finish]

43

The mince spies, henceforth, by the mayor were compelled
To ignore any Christmassing when people rebelled.
By the 12th day of Christmas festivities were revived
The presents and feasts no longer disguised.
The town was ablaze with music and laughter,
And Christmas was celebrated, forever after.











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322

Fl. 1.2

Ob. 1.2

Cl. in Bb 1.2

Tbn. $\frac{1}{2}$

B. Tbn.

Timp.

Perc.1

Perc.2



sffz