Gwyneth Walker

Close to Home

Sounds of New England
for Viola and Guitar

Thanksgiving
Fallen Leaves
Rhythms

commissioned by the Alturas Duo
Carlos Boltes, Viola
Scott Hill, Guitar

for premiere at the Connecticut Guitar Festival
February 10, 2019
Westport, CT

These duets for Viola and Guitar were composed in a New England folk music style characterized by simplicity of language, and sparseness of texture. The rural landscape speaks through the notes.

Since the music was composed during the Autumn of 2018, indeed started on Thanksgiving Day (!), there is a youthful purity to the opening movement (as if remembering Thanksgiving days from childhood). This is simply a melody for Viola, accompanied by Guitar. The theme is exchanged between the instruments, a rhythmic section serves as an interlude, and the theme returns with more full accompaniment.

A connection to the second movement, "Fallen Leaves," incorporates the tuning down of the Guitar lowest string to D with a *falling* Viola *glissando*. The theme itself is marked *mournfully*, and is exchanged between Guitar and Viola. The middle section features chromatic descending chords and arpeggios in Guitar.

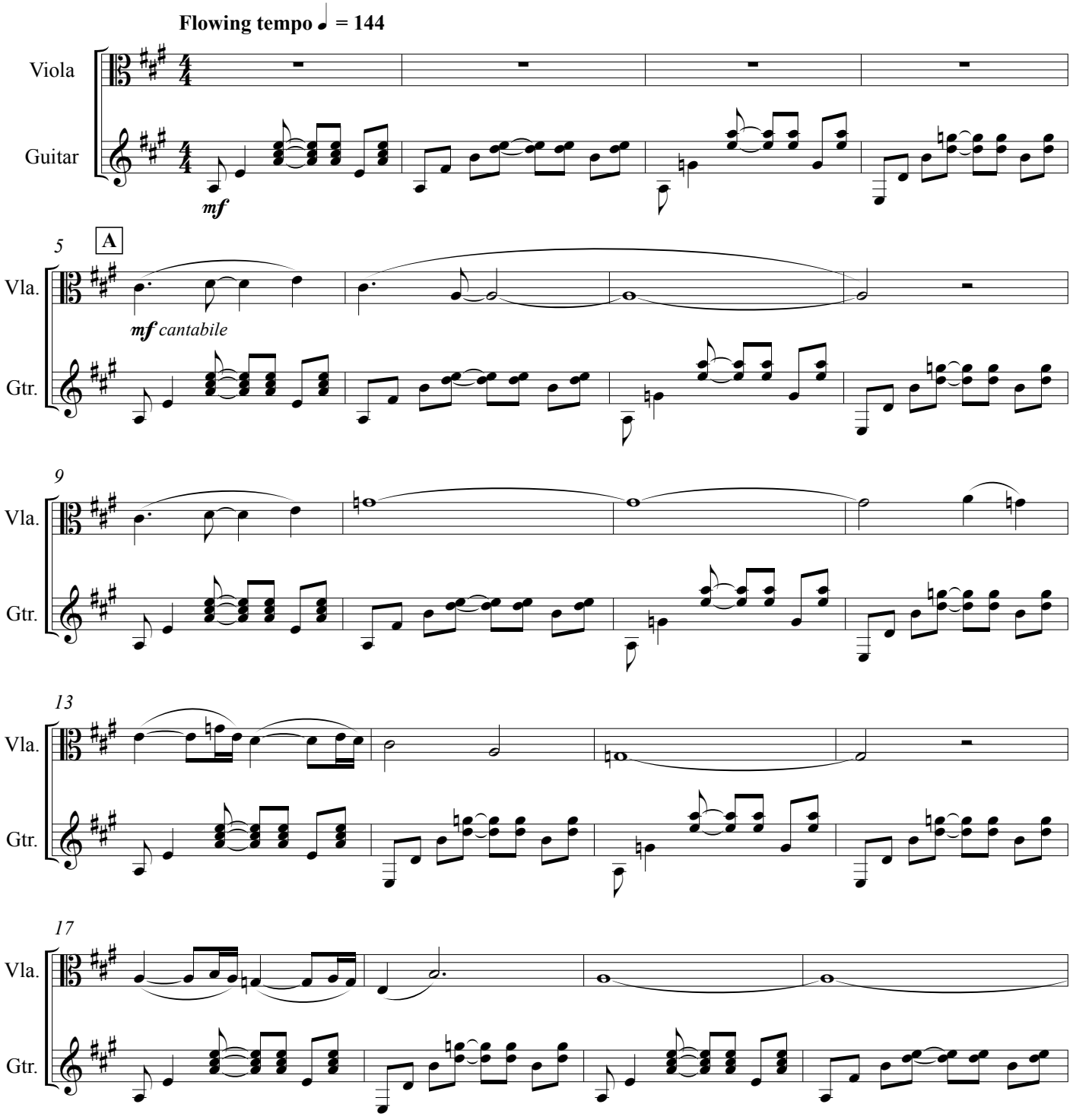
"Rhythms" starts calmly, with Guitar tuning back up to E. This is followed by the Guitarist enjoying tapping the strings, treating the Guitar as a percussion instrument. Viola joins in this percussion exploration of sounds. The New England inspiration for this movement comes from the joy of rhythm as a life force.

Close to Home

Duets for Viola and Guitar

Gwyneth Walker

1. Thanksgiving



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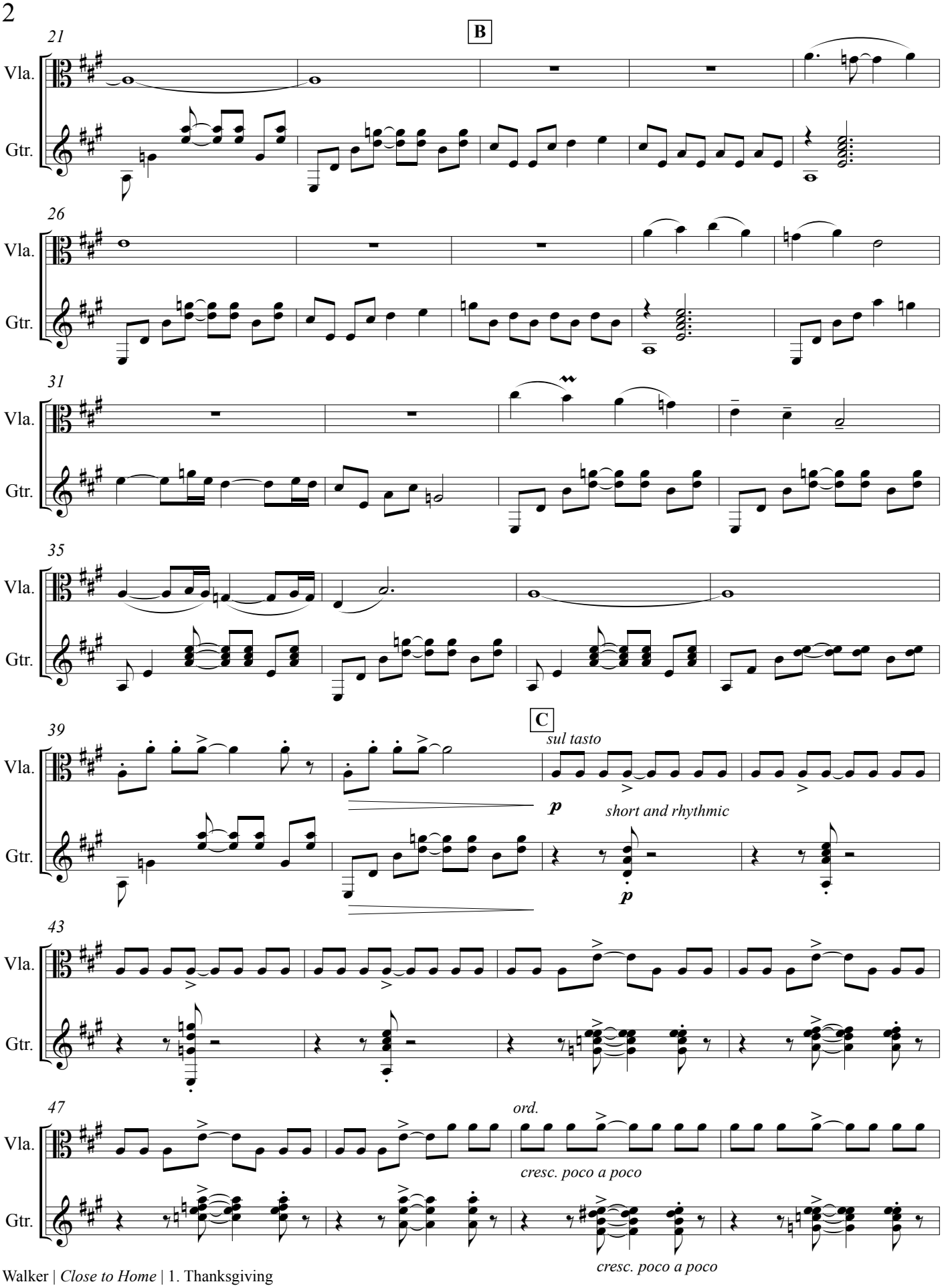
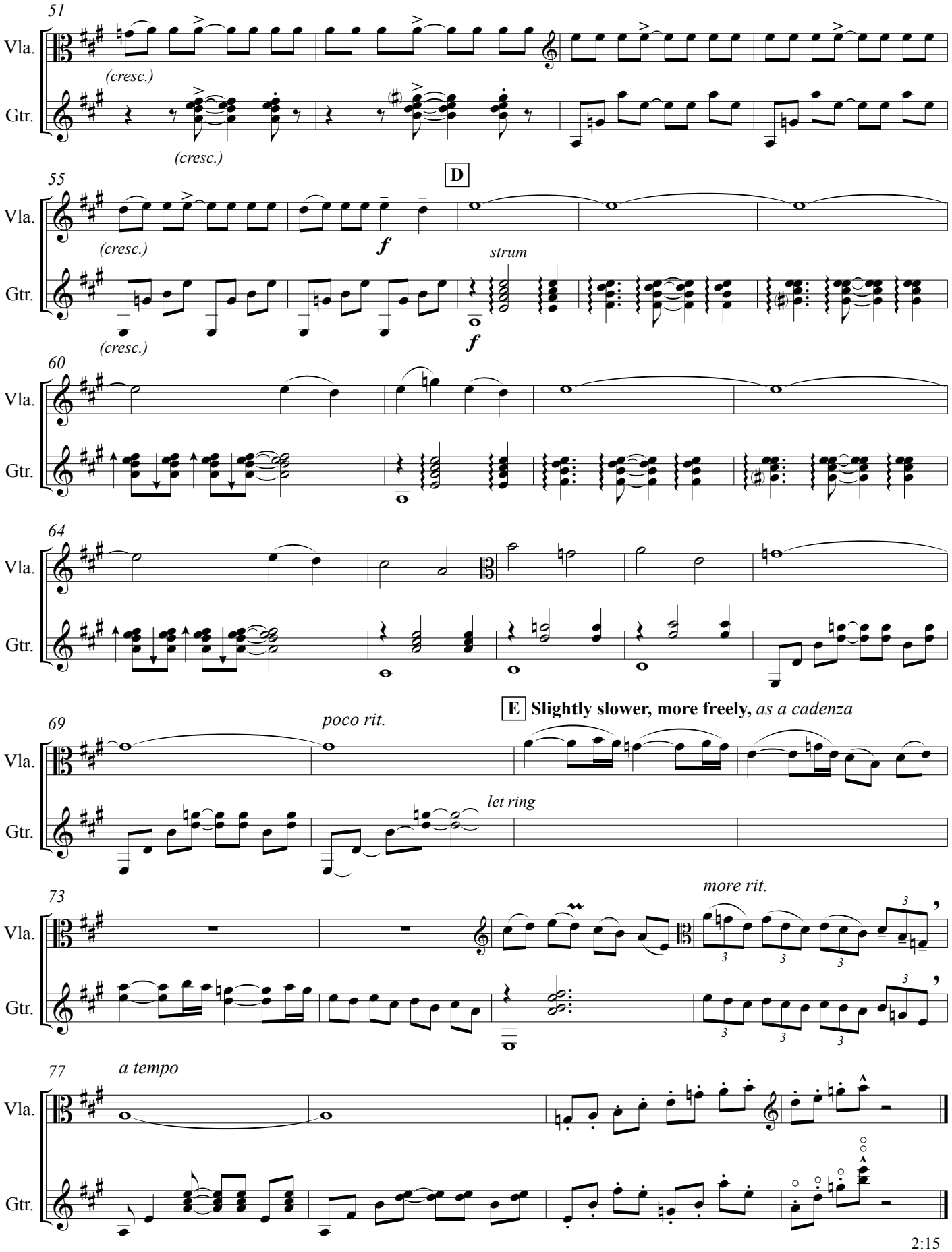
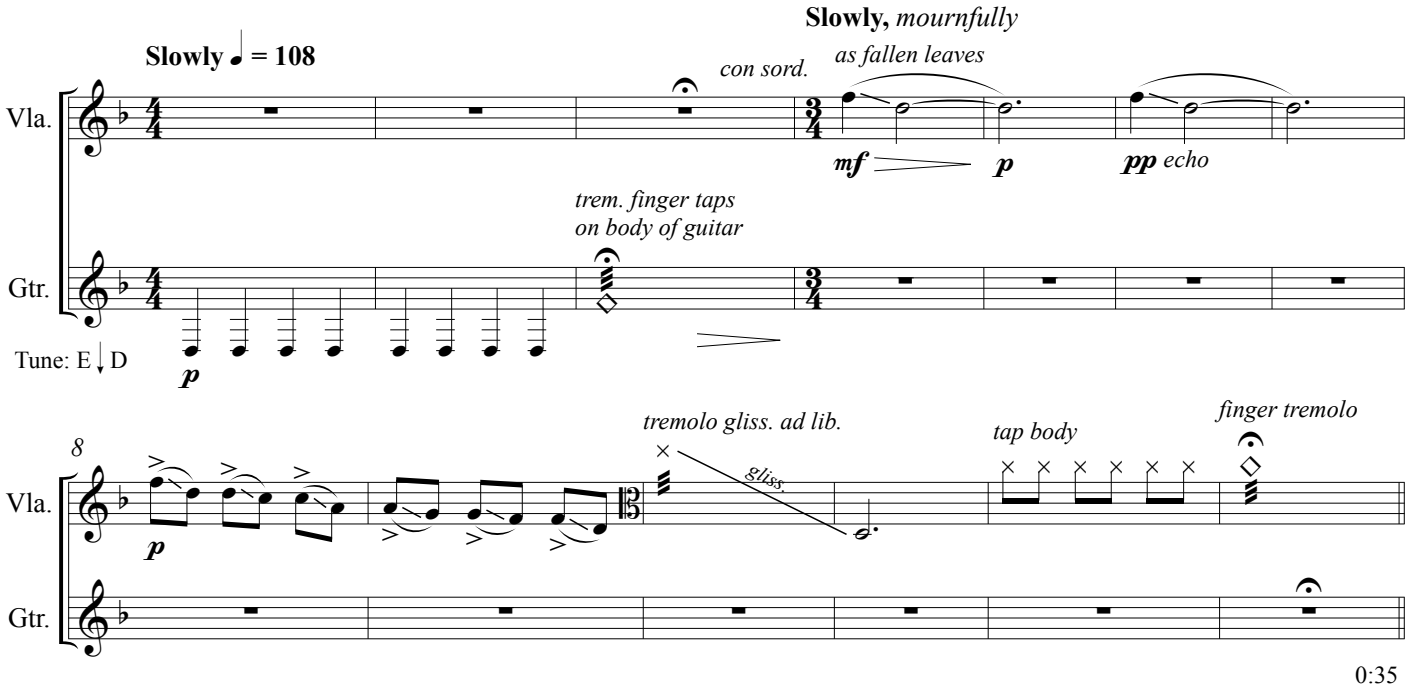

21
B
Vla.
Gtr.
26
31
35
39
C
sul tasto
p
short and rhythmic
43
47
ord.
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco

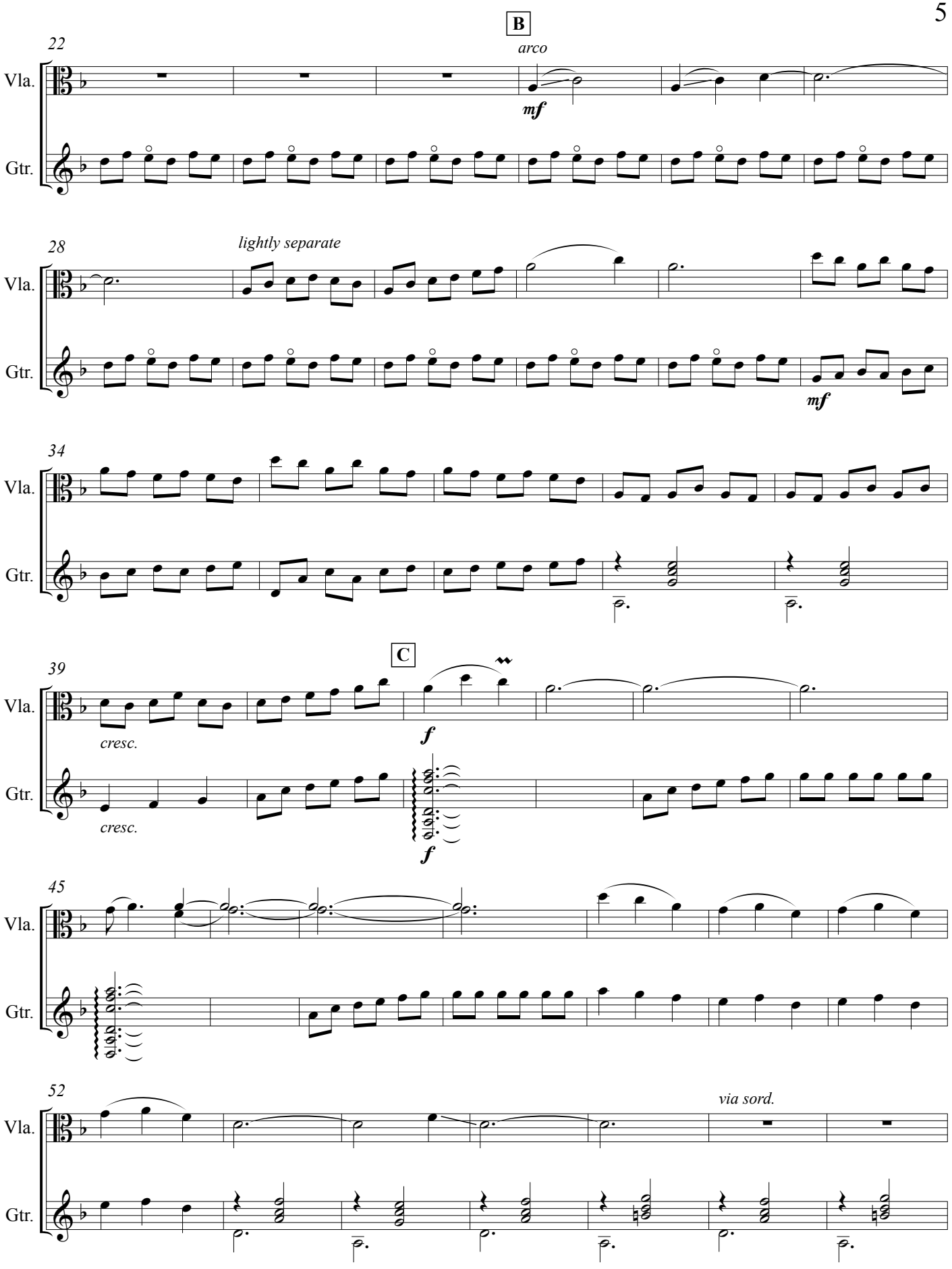

51
Vla.
(cresc.)
Gtr.
(cresc.)
55
D
Vla.
(cresc.)
f
strum
Gtr.
(cresc.)
f
60
Vla.
Gtr.
64
Vla.
Gtr.
69
poco rit.
E Slightly slower, more freely, as a cadenza
Vla.
let ring
Gtr.
73
more rit.
Vla.
Gtr.
77
a tempo
Vla.
Gtr.

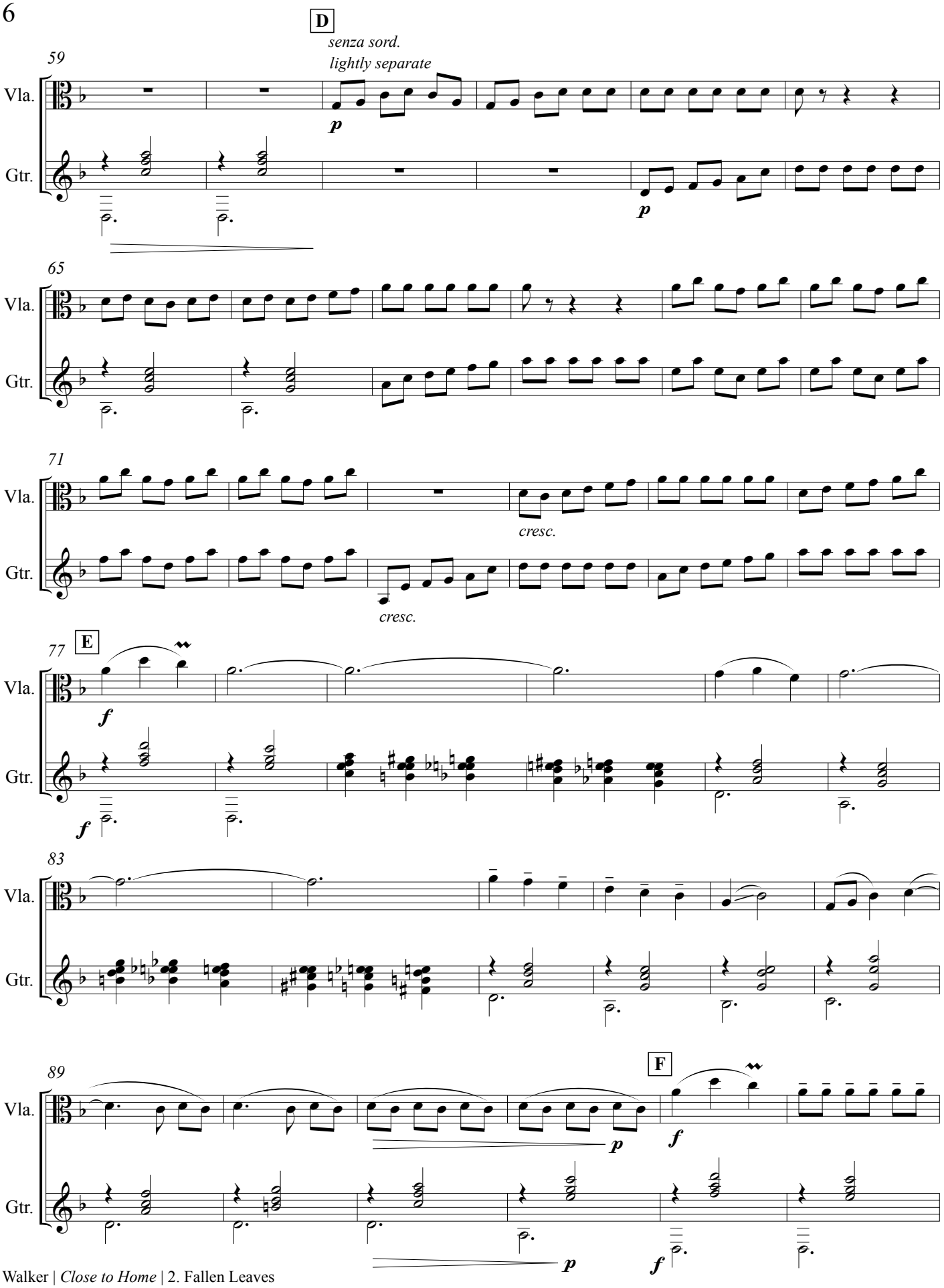
2:15

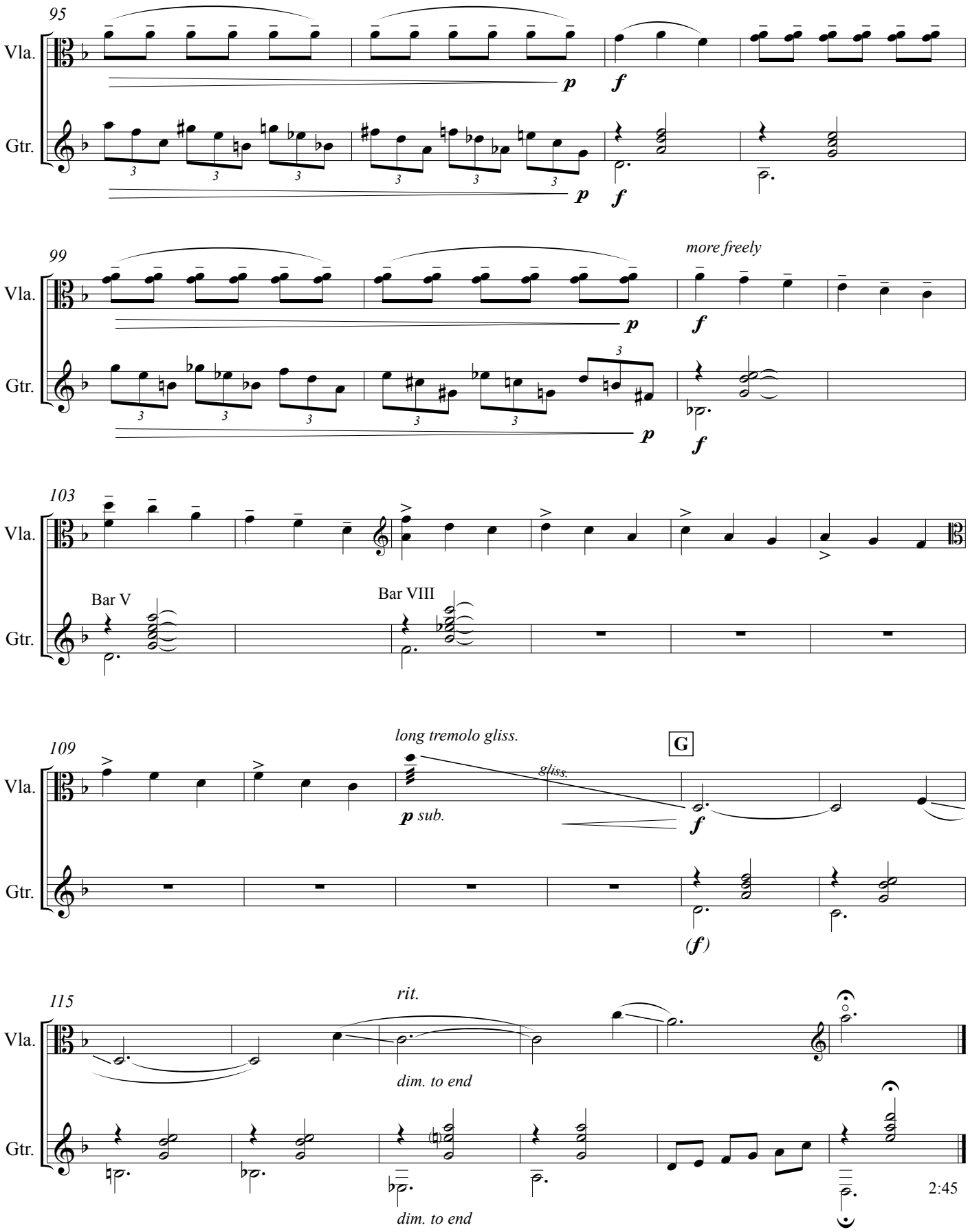
Interlude



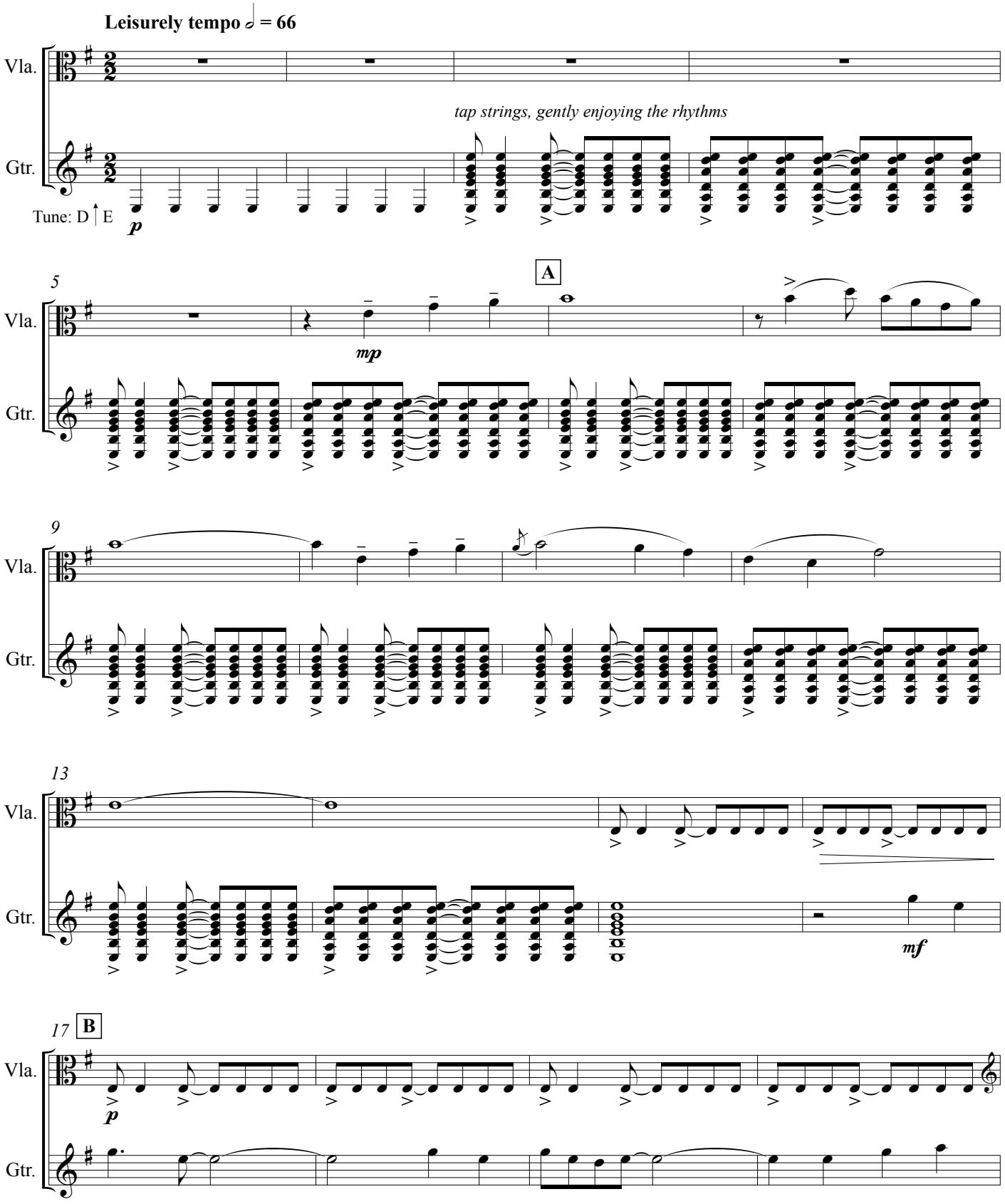
2. Fallen Leaves

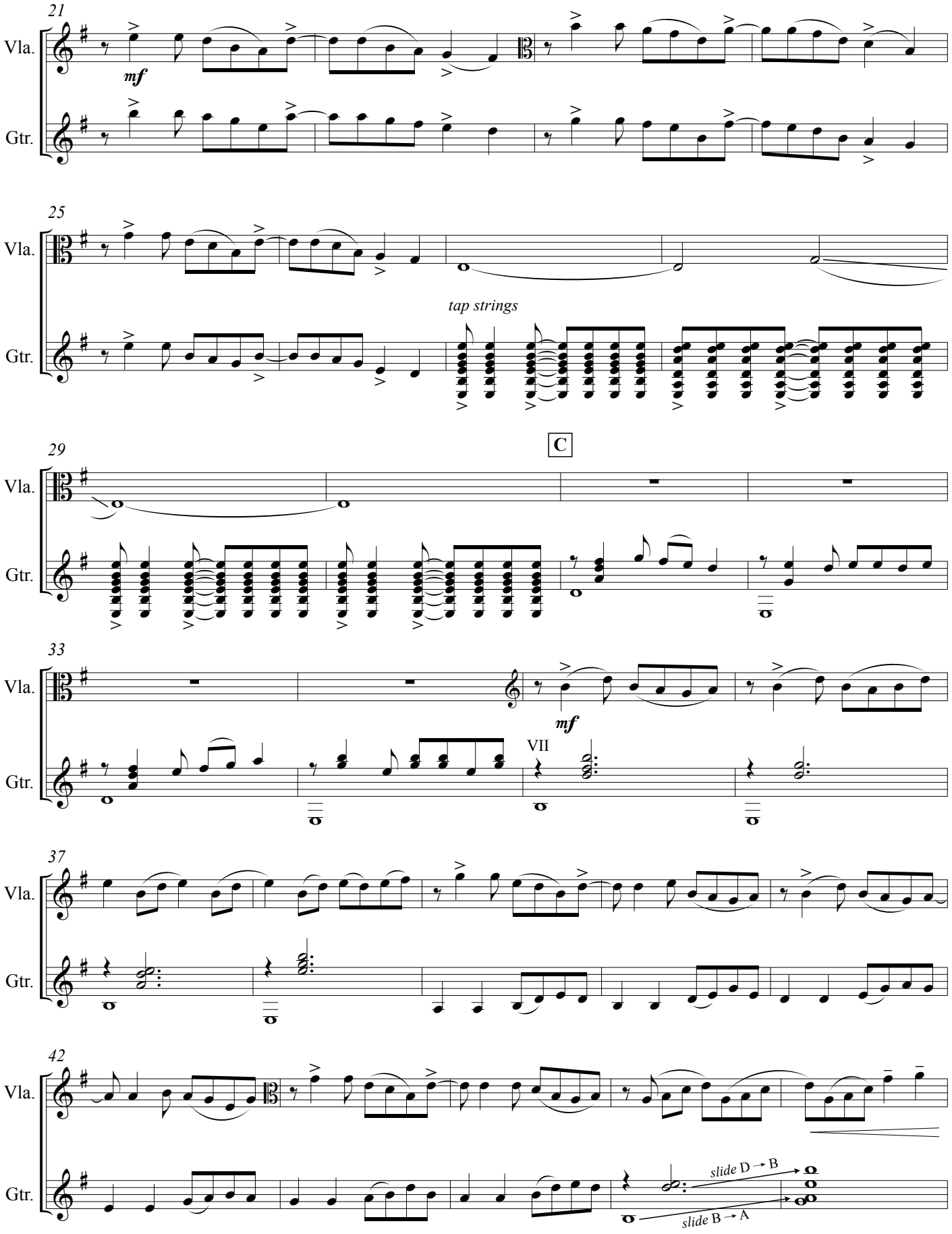

B
22
arco
Vla.
Gtr.
mf
28
lightly separate
mf
34
C
39
cresc.
f
45
52
via sord.

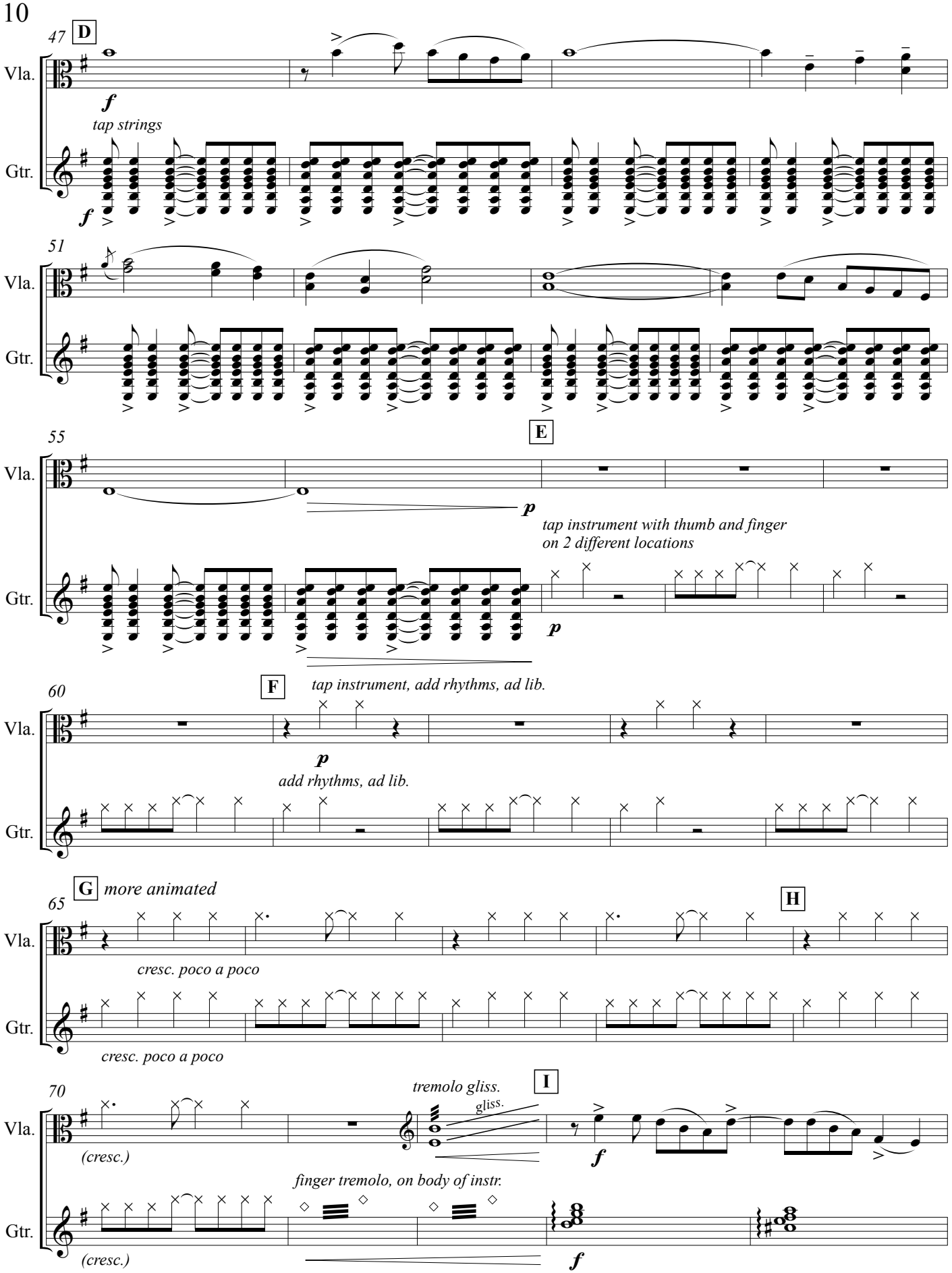

D
senza sord.
lightly separate
59
Vla.
Gtr.
p
p
65
Vla.
Gtr.
71
Vla.
Gtr.
cresc.
cresc.
77
E
Vla.
Gtr.
f
f
83
Vla.
Gtr.
89
F
Vla.
Gtr.
p
f
p
f

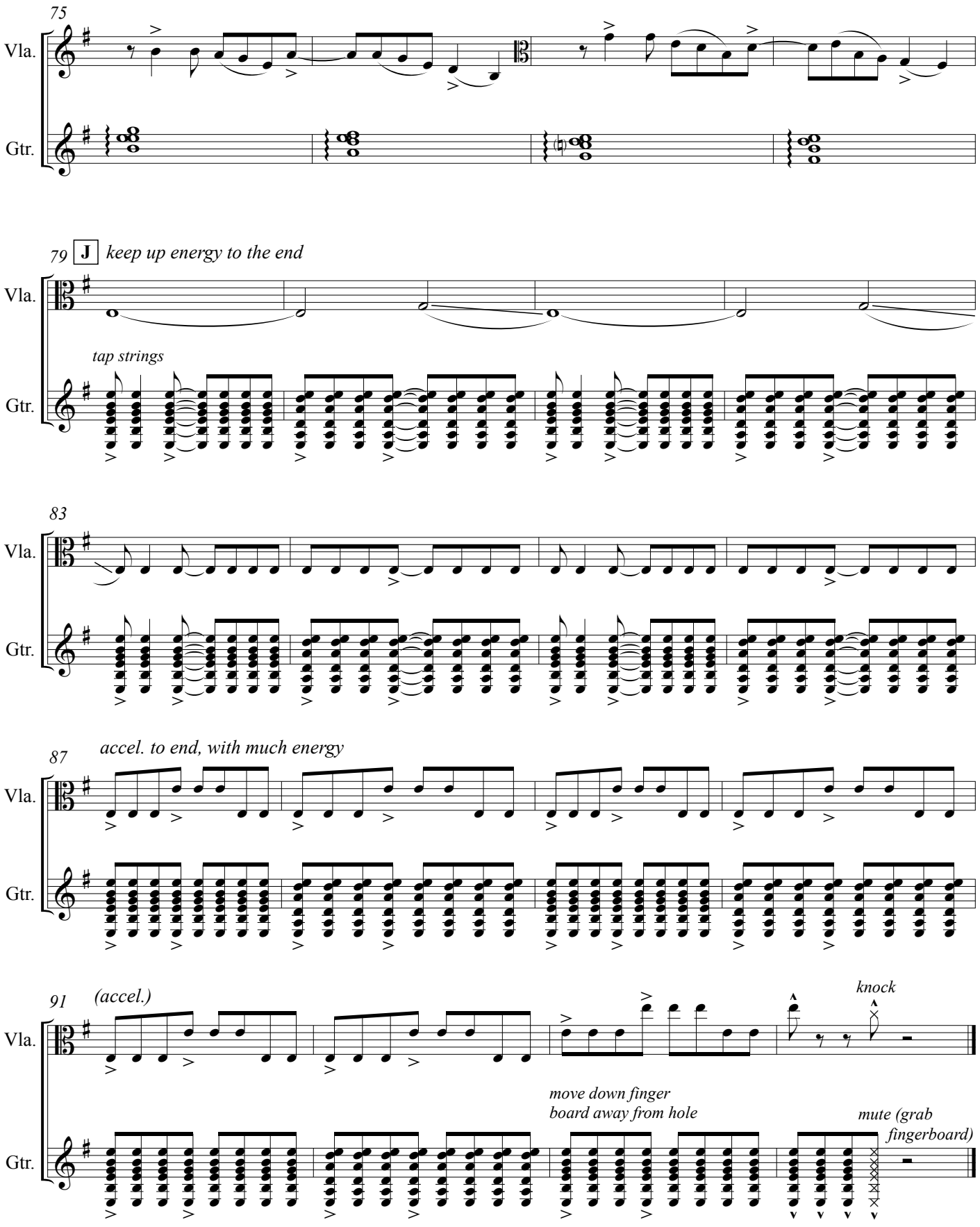

95
Vla.
Gtr.
p
f
99
more freely
103
Bar V
Bar VIII
109
long tremolo gliss.
G
gliss.
p sub.
(f)
115
rit.
dim. to end
2:45

3. Rhythms


Leisurely tempo ♩ = 66
Vla.
Gtr.
tap strings, gently enjoying the rhythms
Tune: D ↑ E
p
5
A
mp
9
13
mf
17
B
p


21
Vla.
mf
Gtr.
25
Vla.
tap strings
Gtr.
29
C
Vla.
Gtr.
33
Vla.
mf
Gtr.
VII
37
Vla.
Gtr.
42
Vla.
Gtr.
slide D → B
slide B → A


47
D
Vla.
f
tap strings
Gtr.
f
51
Vla.
Gtr.
55
E
Vla.
p
tap instrument with thumb and finger
on 2 different locations
Gtr.
p
60
F
tap instrument, add rhythms, ad lib.
Vla.
p
add rhythms, ad lib.
Gtr.
65
G
more animated
H
Vla.
cresc. poco a poco
Gtr.
cresc. poco a poco
70
tremolo gliss.
gliss.
I
Vla.
(cresc.)
f
finger tremolo, on body of instr.
Gtr.
(cresc.)
f


75
Vla.
Gtr.
79
J
keep up energy to the end
Vla.
tap strings
Gtr.
83
Vla.
Gtr.
87
accel. to end, with much energy
Vla.
Gtr.
91
(accel.)
knock
Vla.
move down finger
board away from hole
mute (grab
fingerboard)
Gtr.