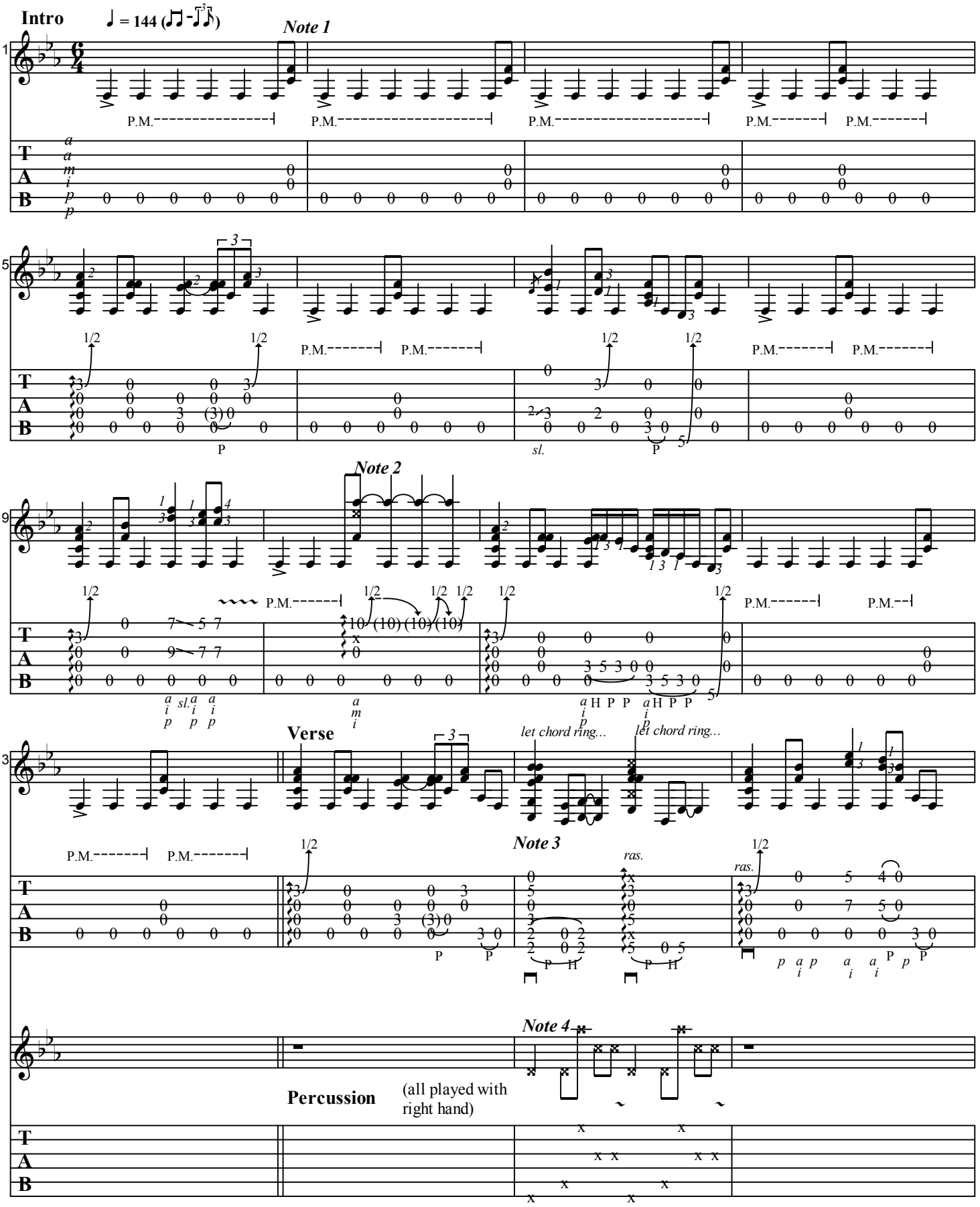
STUPID BLUES

As recorded by Jon Gomm

(From the 2015 Album LIVE IN THE ACOUSTIC ASYLUM)



2003 Jon Gomm
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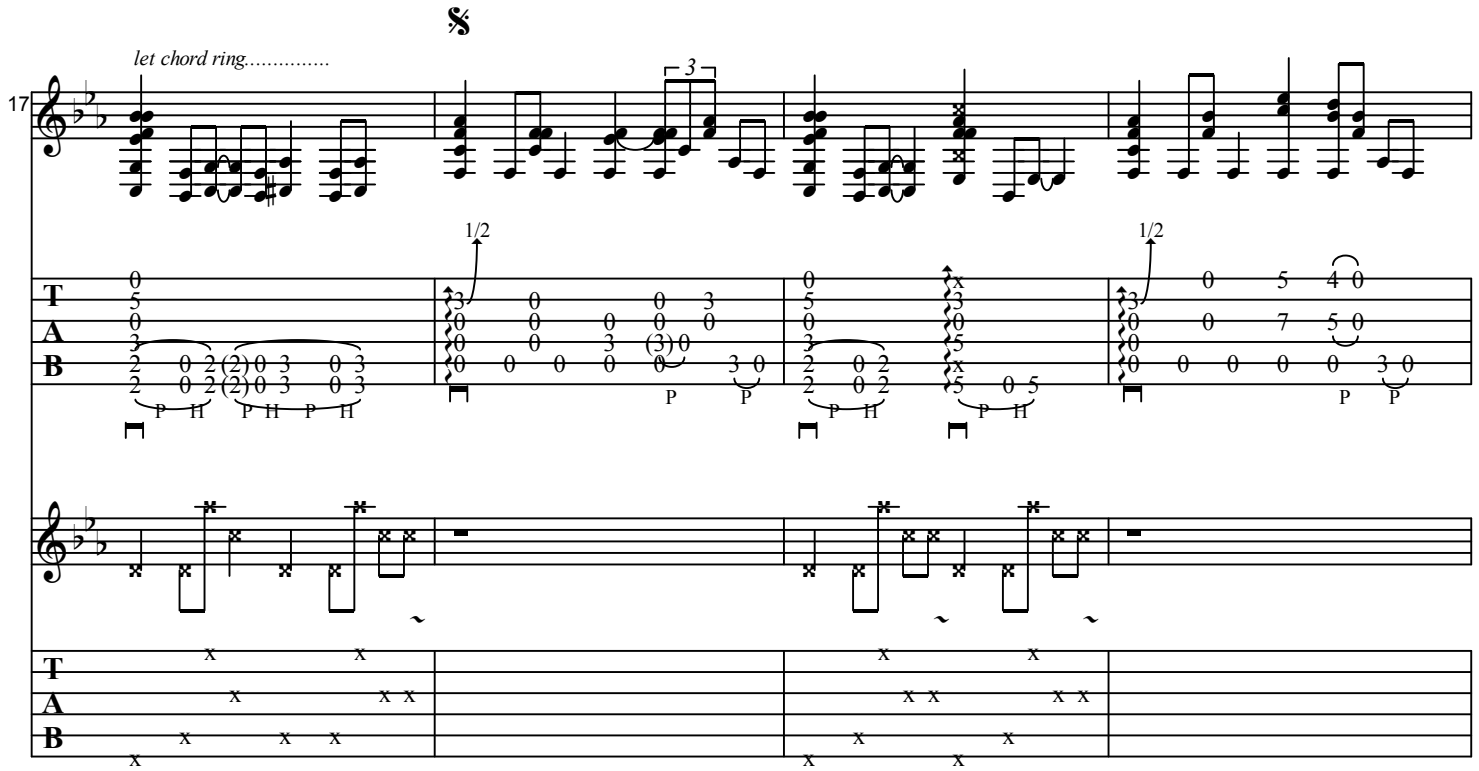
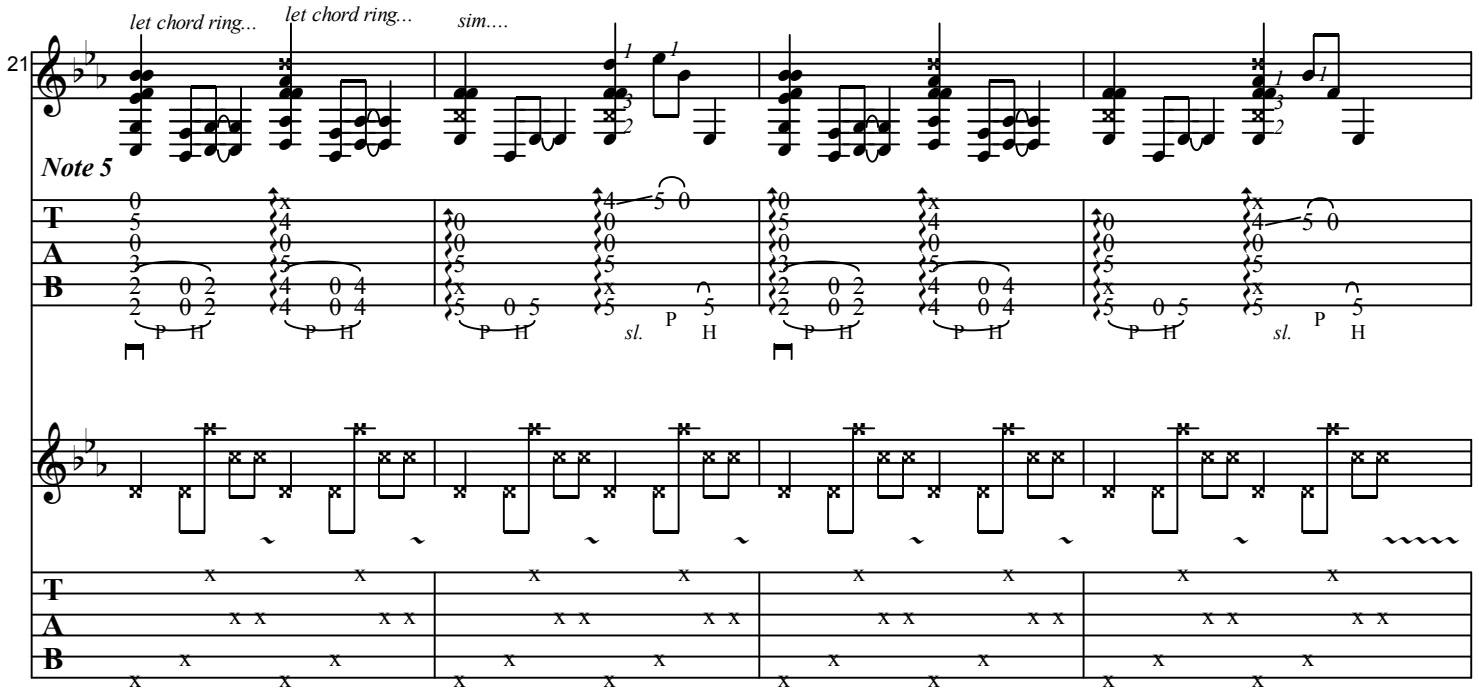
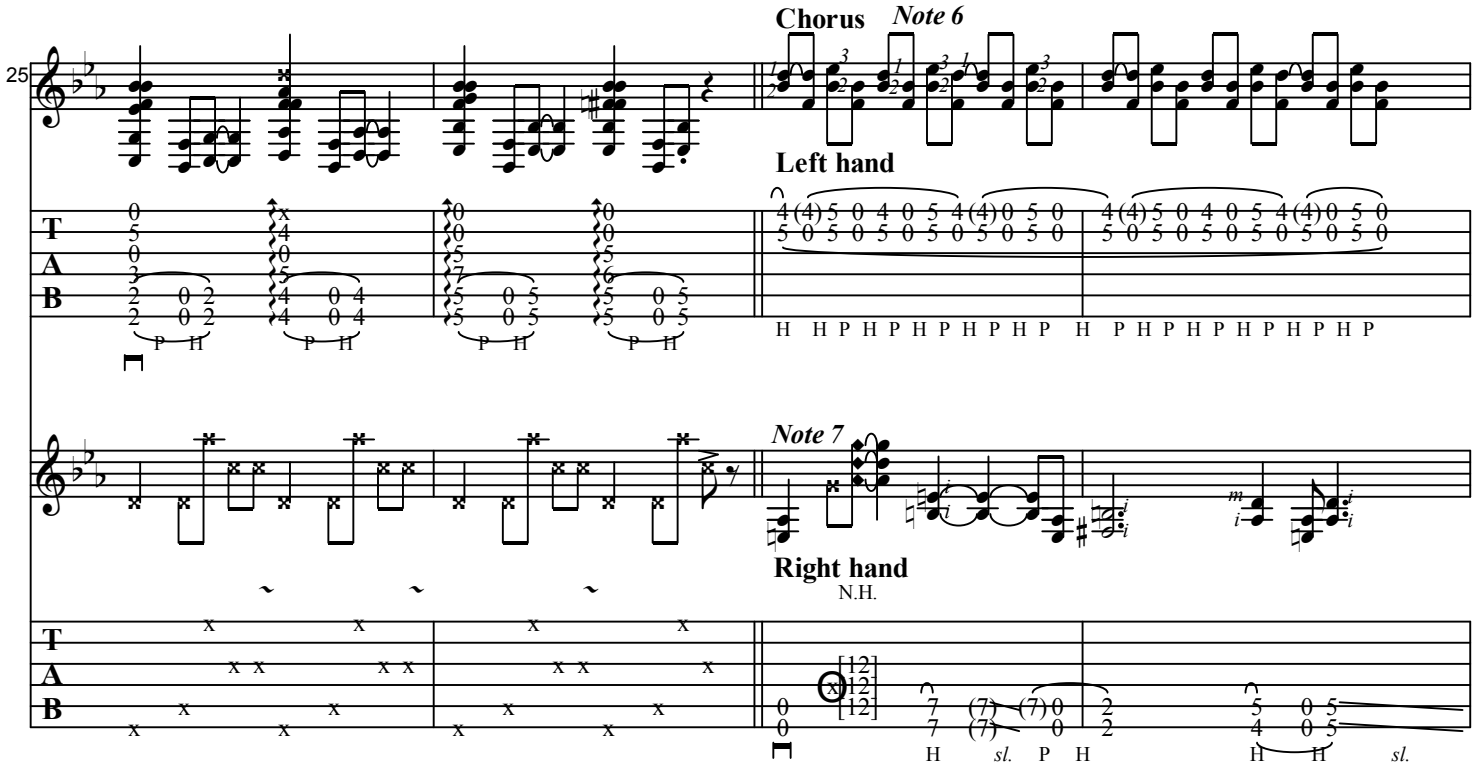
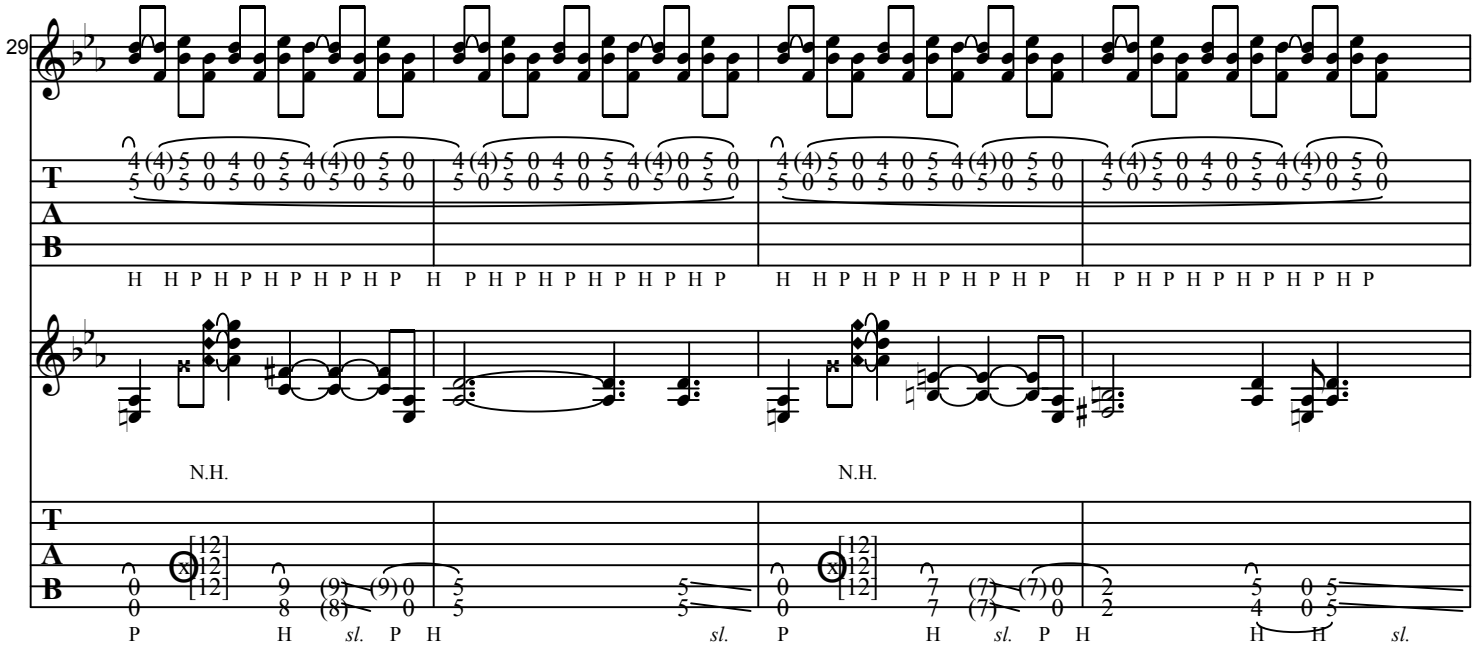
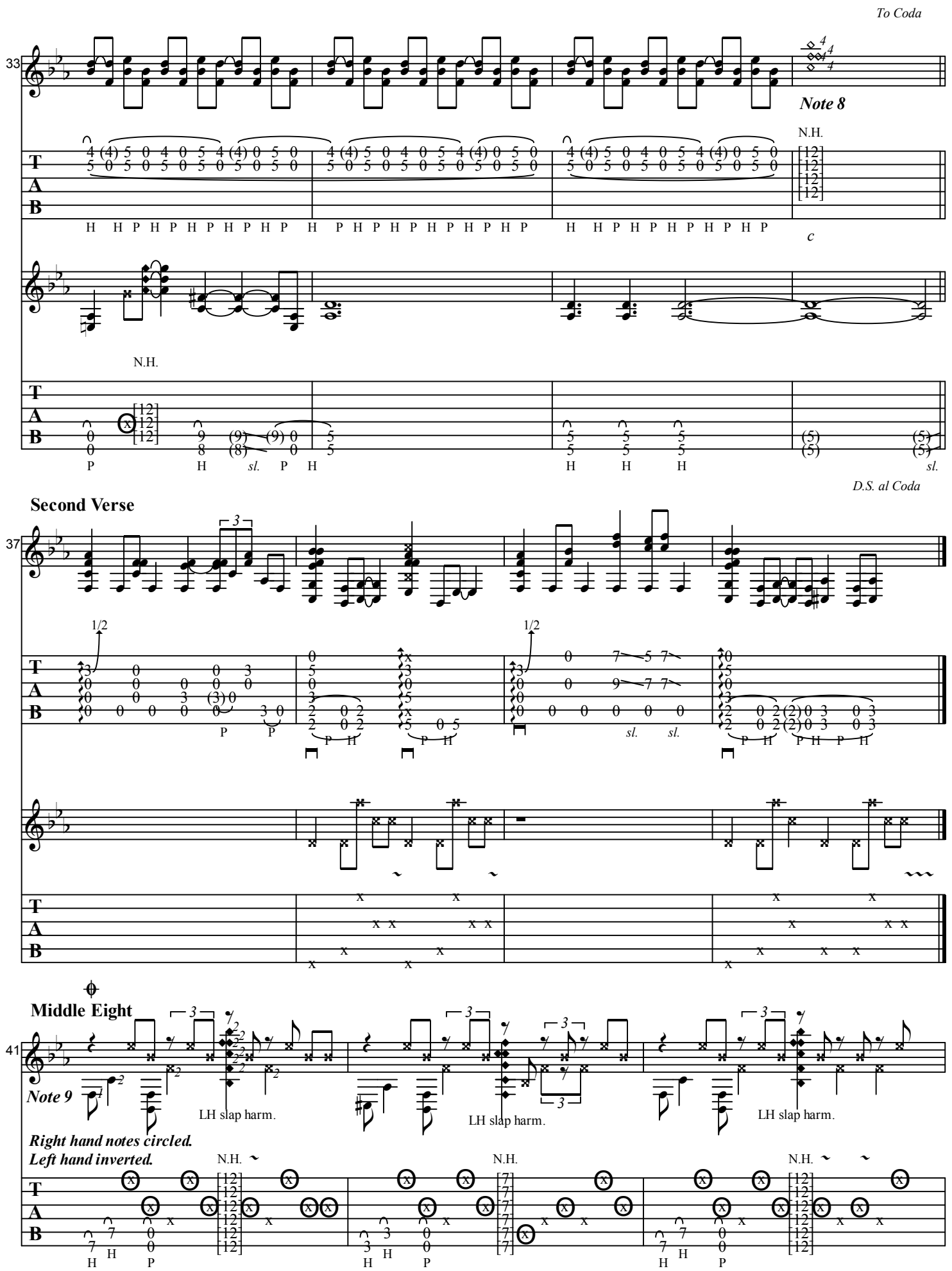
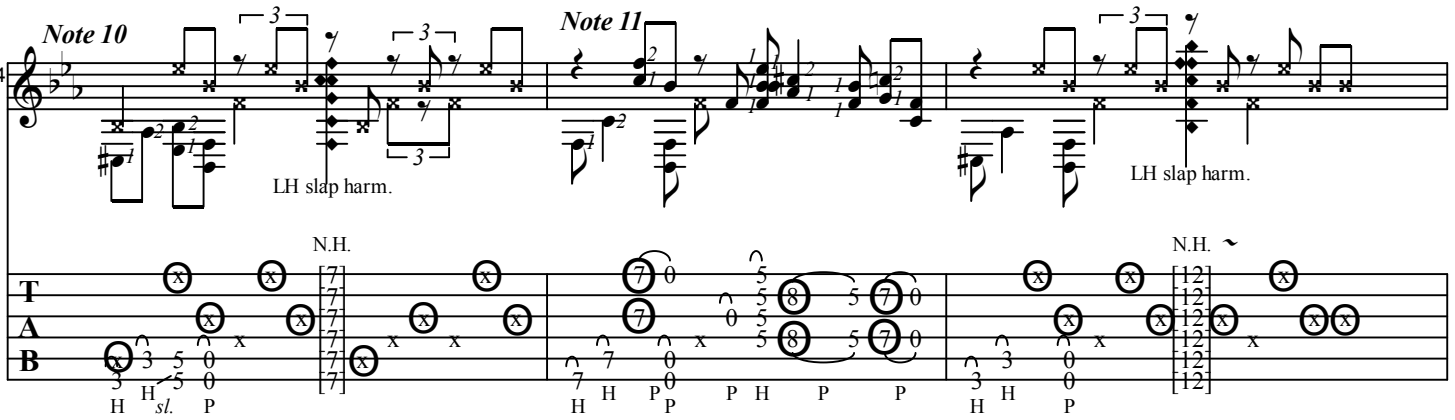

let chord ring.....
17
1/2
1/2

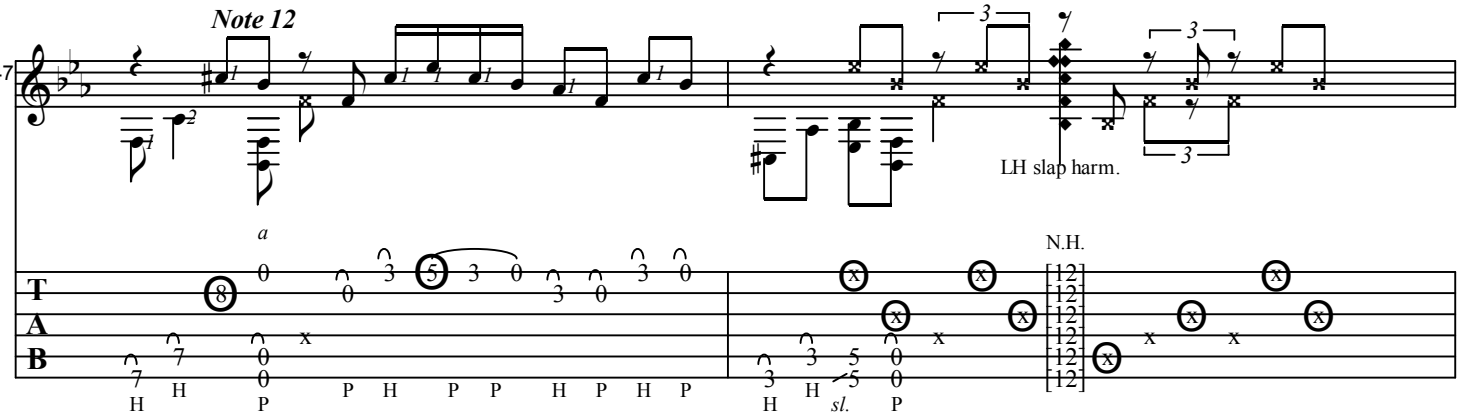

let chord ring...
let chord ring...
sim....
21
Note 5
sl.
sl.

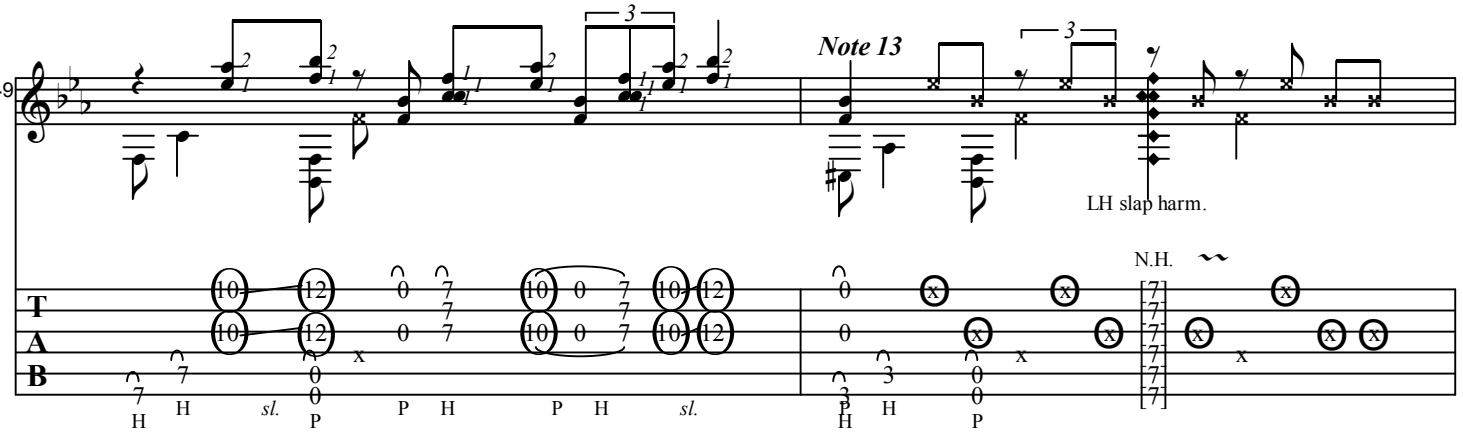

25
Chorus
Note 6
Left hand
Note 7
Right hand
N.H.

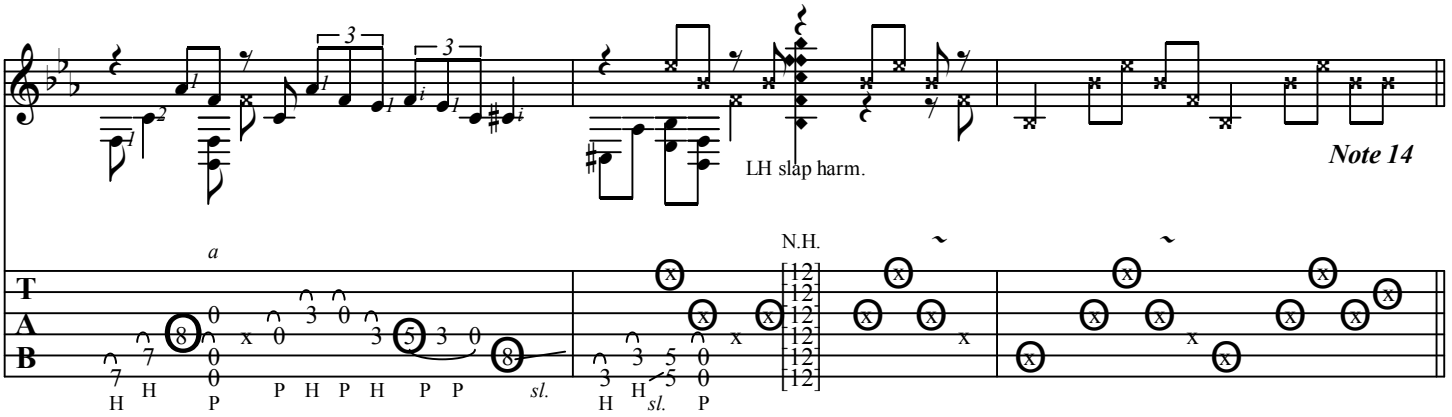

29
N.H.
N.H.


To Coda
33
Note 8
N.H.
c
N.H.
D.S. al Coda
Second Verse
37
1/2
Middle Eight
41
Note 9
LH slap harm.
Right hand notes circled.
Left hand inverted.

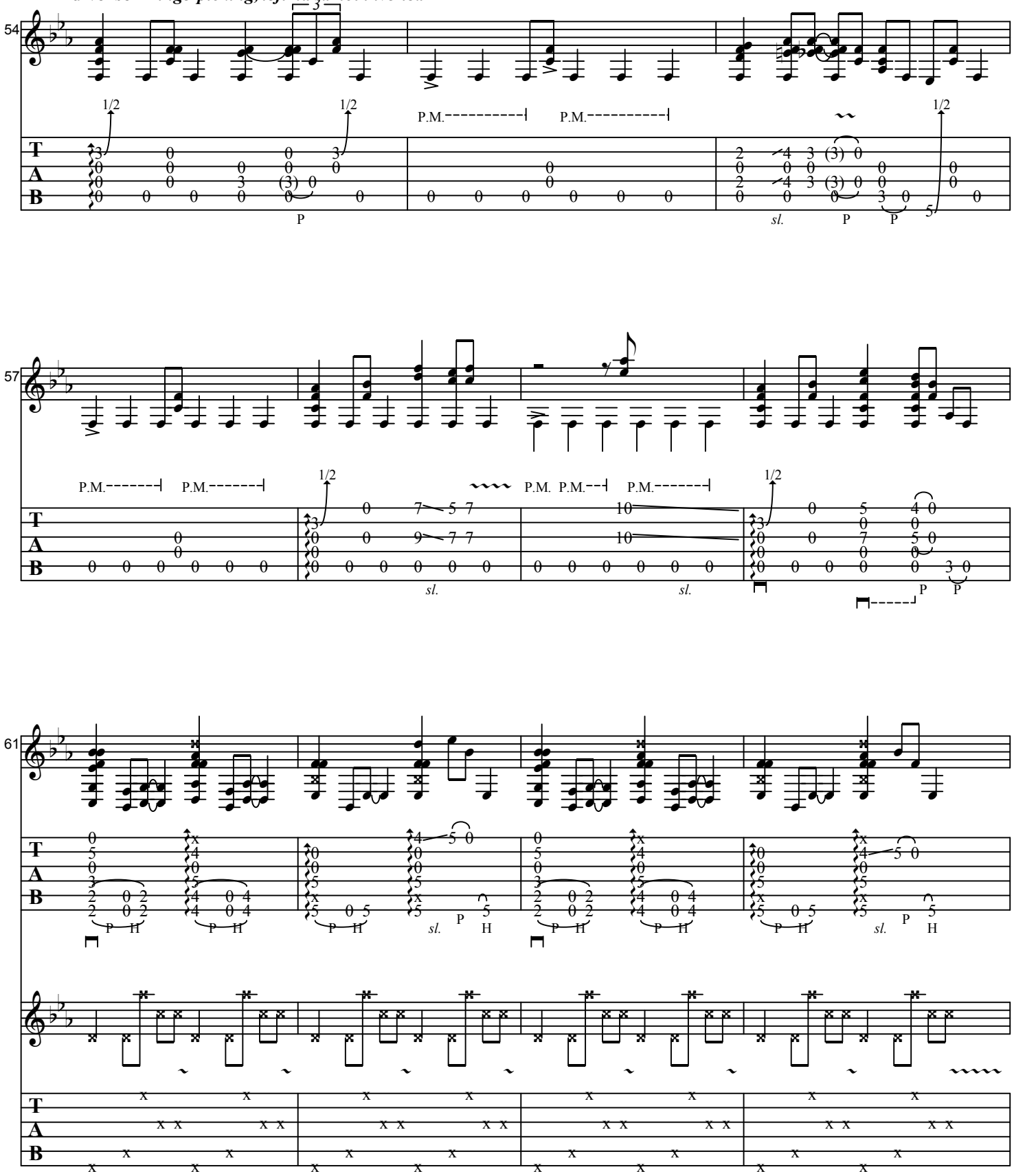

Note 10
Note 11
44
LH slap harm.
LH slap harm.
N.H.
N.H.
T
A
B

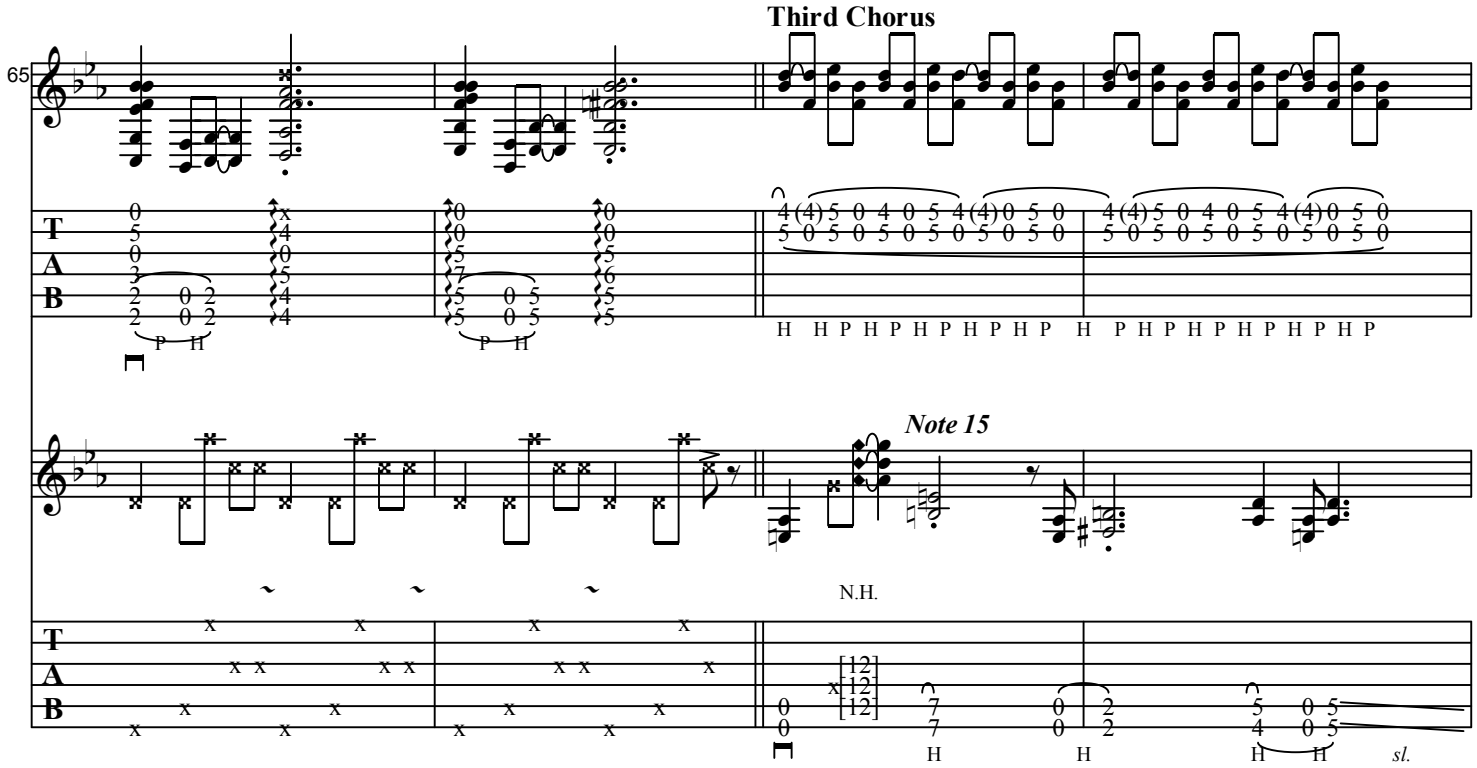

Note 12
47
a
LH slap harm.
N.H.
T
A
B

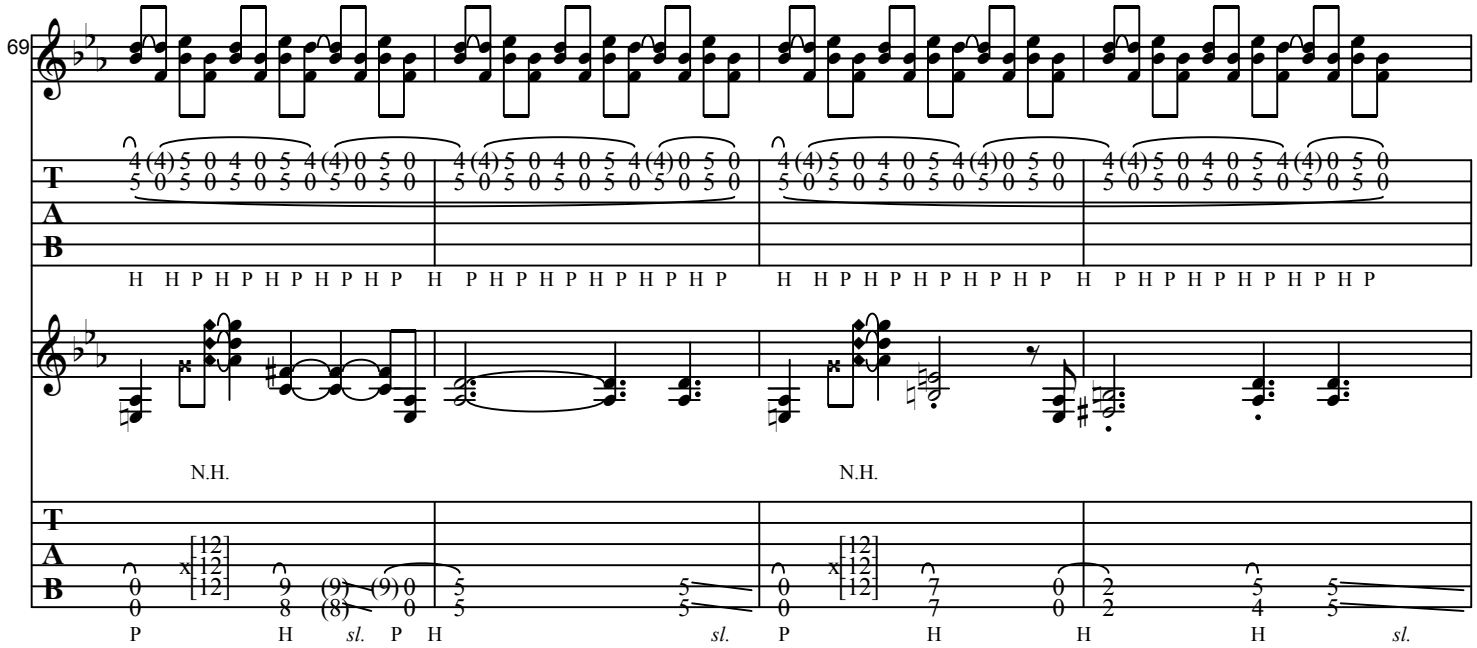

Note 13
49
LH slap harm.
N.H.
T
A
B

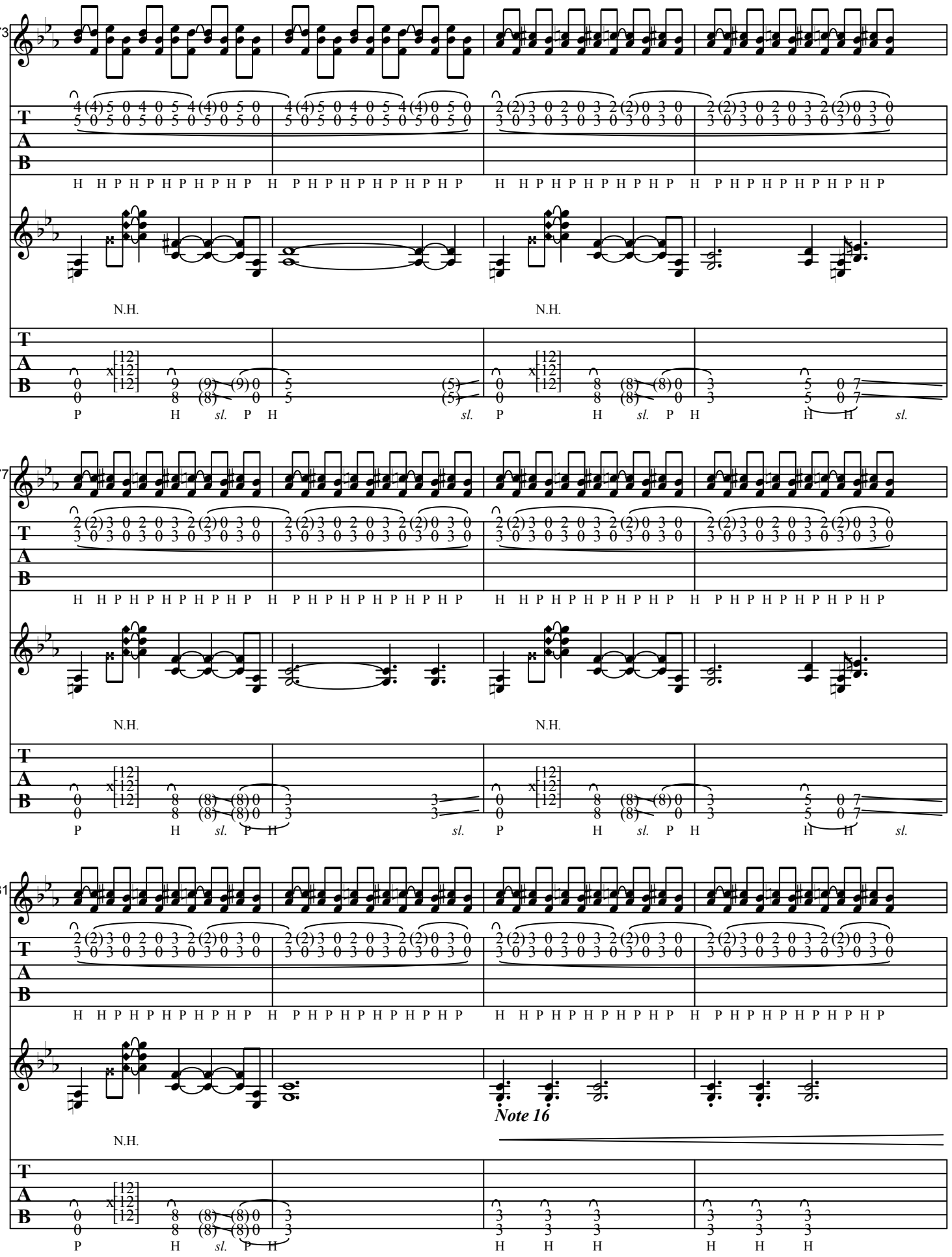

51
a
LH slap harm.
Note 14
N.H.
T
A
B

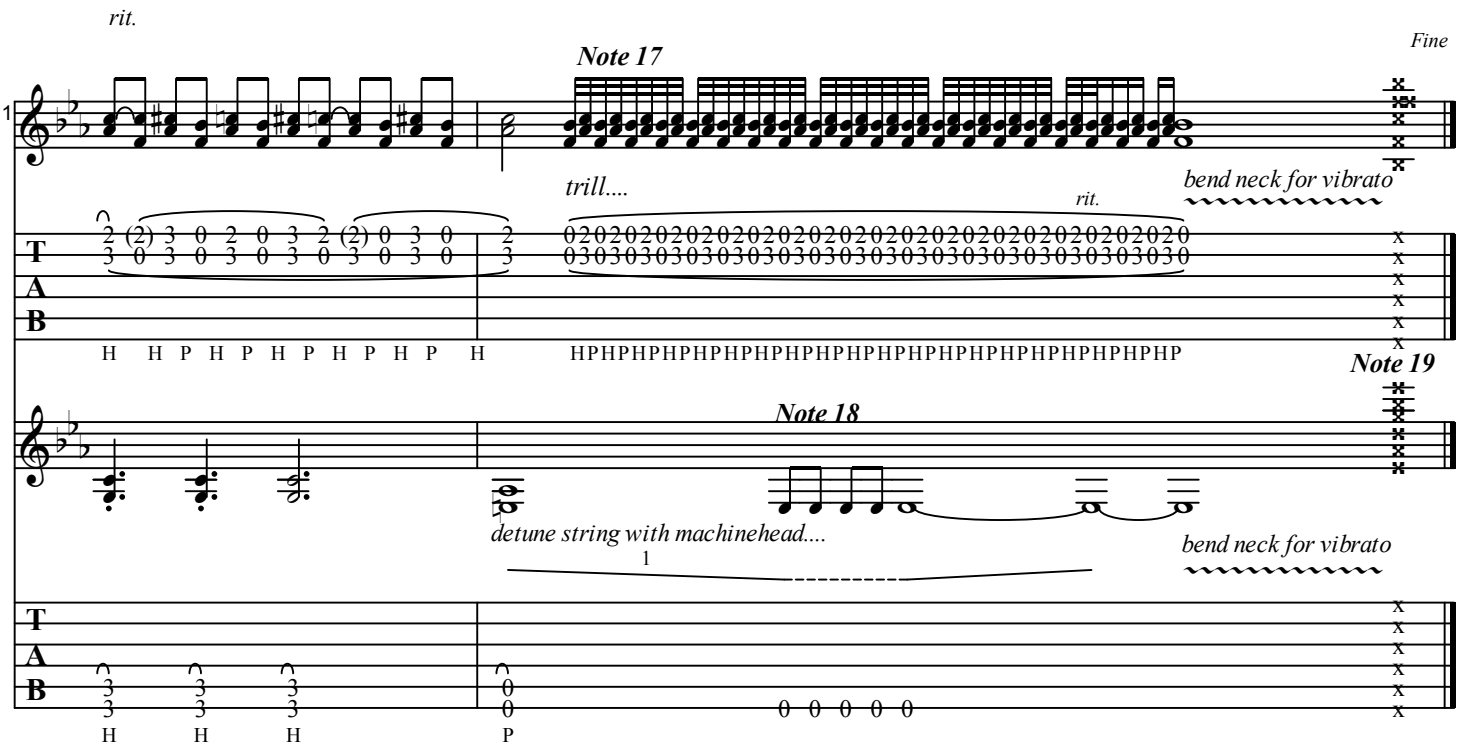
Third verse ***Fingerpicking, left hand not inverted***




Third Chorus
65
Note 15
N.H.
sl.


69
N.H.
N.H.
sl.
sl.


73
77
81
T
A
B
N.H.
Note 16


rit.
Note 17
Fine
1
trill....
rit.
bend neck for vibrato
T
A
B
H H P H P H P H P H P H
HPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHPHP
Note 19
Note 18
detune string with machinehead....
1
bend neck for vibrato
H H H
P

Stupid Blues by Jon Gomm - Performance Notes

GUITAR PERFORMANCE NOTES:

Referring closely to the official video at youtube.com/jongomm will help you learn this song.

ALL PERCUSSION SHOULD BE PLAYED SOFTLY. This will improve your tone, give a better balance between percussion and guitar, and protect your instrument.

TUNING:

For this song, Wilma was tuned to **A#**^{1} **F**^{2} **C**^{3} **F**^{3} **F**^{3} **A#**^{3} (low to high).
This tuning is very low and works best with heavy gauge strings. I use my signature 14-68 gauge strings made by Newtone in Derbyshire, England, and you can order them online. If you're using more normal strings, you could try tuning up a wholestep, which would give you **C G D G G C**.

TRANSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE NOTES:

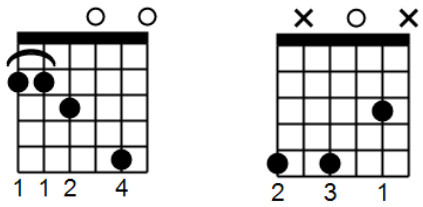
While working through the transcription, please keep an eye out for fingerings in the musical notation!

Notes in brackets, e.g. (5), are usually tied notes (they're just sustaining from a previous note), and can be ignored.

Note 1 – The short, sharp chord stabs here are cut off when the edge of your hand comes down to resume the Palm Muting ("P.M."). Notice the right hand fingering drawn on the appropriate string lines at the start of measure 1.

Note 2 – As the 3rd finger holds the 10th fret note on the 1st string, its very tip touches the 2nd string, muting it (shown by "x").

Note 3 – Measure 15: The fingerings for the chords here are in the boxes below. The muted strings (shown by "**x**") in the second chord are muted with the underside of the 2nd and 1st fingers.



The 1st chord is strummed with the backs of the fingernails (I use all four fingers). The 2nd chord is a staggered or frailed downstroke, called a *rasgueado* (shown by "*ras.*"), where the fingers fan out one by one (starting *c*, then *a*, *m*, and finally *i*) creating a series of very very fast downstrokes.

Note 4 – Now we have some percussion. Each "x" represents a different drum hit.

***X on the 6th string* = Bass Thump.** As you downstroke the chord, drop the heel of your hand (the bony bit at the very base of the thumb near the wrist) against the bridge, for a low, satisfying sub-bass thud. This can hurt at first, so go gently and wait til you build a callus.

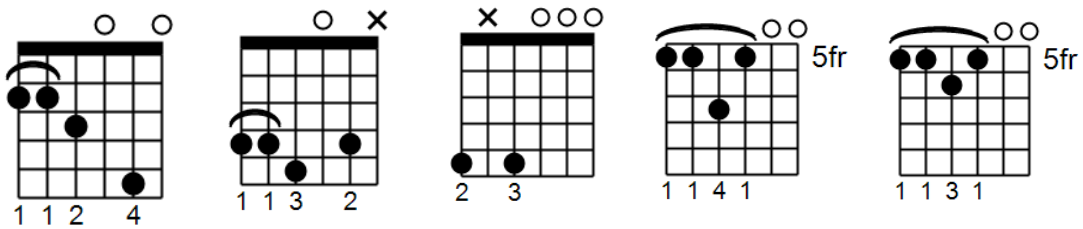
***X on the 5th string* = Kick Drum.** Drop your wrist/forearm against the soundboard, below and to the right of the bridge.

***X on the 1st string* = Snare.** Clap against the side of the guitar with all four fingers of the right hand, again anywhere below and to the right of the bridge.

***X on the 3rd string* = Low Bongo.** Hit the soundboard with the side of the thumb, anywhere that's handy. Be pariticularly careful not to do this hit too hard (it's easily done).

***X on 3rd string with vibrato mark ~ above* = Bongo Roll.** This move is pretty much unique to this song (as far as I'm aware it's unique in all guitar playing!) First, catch the bridge with your thumbnail as you fly past it, moving up and left, to get into strumming position. Then, as you perform the *rasgueado* strum of the chord, actually allow your fingers to hit the bridge, one at a time. This whole move is super fast and just sounds like one very short drum roll. It's totally not essential that every digit strikes the bridge cleanly.

***Note 5* –** The trickiest part here is in the second half of measure 22, where the chord is being held with fingers 2 & 3, and the 2st finger plays the 4th fret then slides under the other two fingers. Finger yoga! Here's some handy chord boxes for the chords from measure 21 to 26, in order of appearance:



Note 6 – Chorus, Left Hand. This is very Michael Hedges inspired, and is trickier than it might seem at first. The 2nd finger is playing a super-simple repeated hammer (H) pull-off (P) on the 2nd string. Meanwhile, the 1st and 3rd fingers are playing a pattern on the 1st string which goes H, H P H P H P, P H P. (As mentioned earlier, notes in brackets are just held tied notes and can be ignored). There are pauses in this pattern while a note is held, but the 2nd finger just keeps going in eigth notes. This sounds far more effective than simple on-off hammer-pull-off patterns which are so temptingly easy, but painfully boring. The tiny inner details of this music tickle the brain of the listener.

Note 7 – Chorus, Right Hand. Start by strumming the bass chord with the back of your fingernails. Then we have a drum:

***Circled 'X' on the 4th string* = High Bongo**. Hit the soundboard somewhere above the 17th fret, using the side of your right thumb.

Next we have the [12] harmonics – these are **Slap Harmonics.** Slap the strings with a barred index finger at the 12th fret. Don't press, instead imagine you are bouncing the strings off the 12th fret. It's not essential you hit the exact strings notated.

The subsequent bass notes are tapped (right hand hammer ons) or pull offs. The fingering is in the musical notation.

Note 8 - The 12th fret harmonics here are sounded in a pretty bizarre way. The left hand barres the 12th fret (top four strings only), gently touching the strings. I use my 4th finger. The right hand is holding the 5th fret bass notes with the index finger, and while doing so the little finger strums the the 4th to 1st strings, with the back of the fingernail in a downwards motion, to sound the harmonics. Crazy.

***Note 9 - Middle Eight* –** Here we have lots more two-handed tapping and percussion, but I've elected to write both hands on one stave. The right hand notes are all circled (including the percussion) so you can easily try the left and right hand parts separately, before trying to combine them.

The left hand is now “inverted”, which means it's upside down, above the neck. To play the slap harmonic from above, I prefer my middle finger, and I flick down with the wrist and the finger, for double speed

(which means double volume!)

All the percussion is as notated in previously with one small change:

***'X' on the 4th string* – High Bongo.** Hit the soundboard somewhere above the 17th fret as before, but using the left hand middle finger. (Use either the tip, or the inside of the last joint for a louder hit.)

Also, the **Bongo Roll** moves in this section are more simple fingertip rolls: I start with *c* (4th finger), then *a, m, i* and finishing with *p* (thumb). These are ususally immediately followed by a left hand High Bongo.

The trickiest move in these first four bars is probably the left hand bassnotes pull-off, at the same time as the right hand thumb plays a Low Bongo.

Note 10 - Here we have a Kick Drum in the right hand, simultaneous with a bassnote hammer on in the left hand 1st finger. The left hand 2nd finger then hammers on the second bass note, and then this two note shape is slid up two frets.

***Note 11* –** I'm gonna talk you through this measure so it's completely clear. First, tap the two bass notes with the inverted left hand. Then tap the right hand dyad (two-note chord) with fingers *m* and *i*. Next, pull off *m* in the right hand and both left hand fingers, all simultaneously, to sound the open strings. The right hand *i* is still holding its note. Then, the left hand reaches across for the High Bongo hit. Next, pull off *i*. Now the left hand hammers on a barre chord at the 5th fret and holds it there, followed by another right hand dyad. With the left hand barre still in place, the right hand pulls off, then hammers on a fret lower. Now the left hand barre quietly comes off, and then the right hand pulls off.

***Note 12* –** With the 8th fret right hand note still held, the open 1st string is sounded by plucking with ring finger (*a*) of the right hand.

Note 13 – Notice that, at the start of this measure, at the same time as the now-familiar bassnote hammer-on in the left hand, you also have a right hand pull-off, from the 12th fret dyad.

Note 14 - 'X' on the 2nd string – Bridge Click - The last hit here is played thus: My thumbnail catches the bridge as my right hand travels up to get into fingerpicking position.

***Note 15* –** Notice that unlike the other choruses, some of the bassnotes here are staccato (notated by a dot under the note, in the musical notation).

***Note 16* –** More staccato bassnotes here, and a big drop in volume, gradually building to the ending.

Note 17 – The hammer ons and pull-offs here are a trill – the exact number of notes, and the exact speed, are not important. Express yourself!

Note 18 – Your right hand reaches right over to the headstock to tune the string down. The open strings then are played near the nut (don't bother to travel all the way back to normal fingerpicking position). Then tune back up to pitch.

Note 19 – The last big hit is the right hand dropping down against the strings/soundboard, over the soundhole, muting all the strings and providing a dramatic ending. Bam.

OK, that should cover everything, but if you have any questions, please post them on my wall at facebook.com/jongommofficial **or email** info@jongomm.com **with the subject "Tab question for Jon". Have fun and don't hurt yourself, or your guitar. :)**