Dances for Guitar

Michael Bemmels
2018

Dances for Guitar – Composer's Notes

Well, here is yet another example of music I create in my spare time. This set of six dances is very varied, and will probably be labeled as "postmodern" or something in that vein. I'm not sure exactly what the point of this composition is. Is it a clever depiction of the incessant, widely variegated exposure to music encountered by the average citizen in the digital age of the 21st century? Or, perhaps it's simply a nonsensical, incongruent, and tasteless amalgam of my own flawed folly! I like to imagine that some future music scholars will have an argument about the merit of this composition and how the composer's intentions should be understood (since music and humans are obviously objective static entities that permanent scientific language can encapsulate accurately!). Better yet, maybe some future guitarist will be awarded a large amount of money for playing my composition faster, louder, and with fewer mistakes than other guitarists at a festival, and the musical community will for some reason think that is a meaningful and worthwhile thing for people to do.

I suppose I wrote this because this is what I happen to find interesting at this point in my life. Mostly I just feel excited and laugh a lot when I compose (that's how I feel writing this introduction too, hee hee!). I remember for one of the dances, the tune developed in my head during a long road trip on the west coast of America about four or five years ago. I imagined a lanky boy wearing lederhosen playing with his pet rabbit in the woods at the visual accompaniment to the tune. I began composing another one of these dances shortly after watching a certain Hollywood movie about jazz music. I don't think my composition sounds anything like the film's soundtrack though…

Oh dear, my notes so far don't sound very professional, academic, or conventional (but there is certainly no shortage of ingenuous humour!). Our best hope is that some poor graduate student 200 years from now will painstakingly analyze this work and formulate a more respectable and emotionless explanation of my intentions and the meaning of this work (and the more serious, critical, and complicated something is, the more valuable and truthful it is, you know). If my ghostly self came back to peruse the contents of such a dissertation, I would probably be scratching my head and wondering if the writing serves to communicate any actual truth about myself, my intentions, and inherent features of the composition, or if the writing rather serves to fulfill artificially-created demands of the academic aesthetics that happen to be in vogue at the time of writing?

Ok, I think that's enough preamble/trash-talk for now. Maybe the world just needs a few more minimalist-style 12-bar blues in natural harmonics. I don't know. I don't really know what I'm doing.

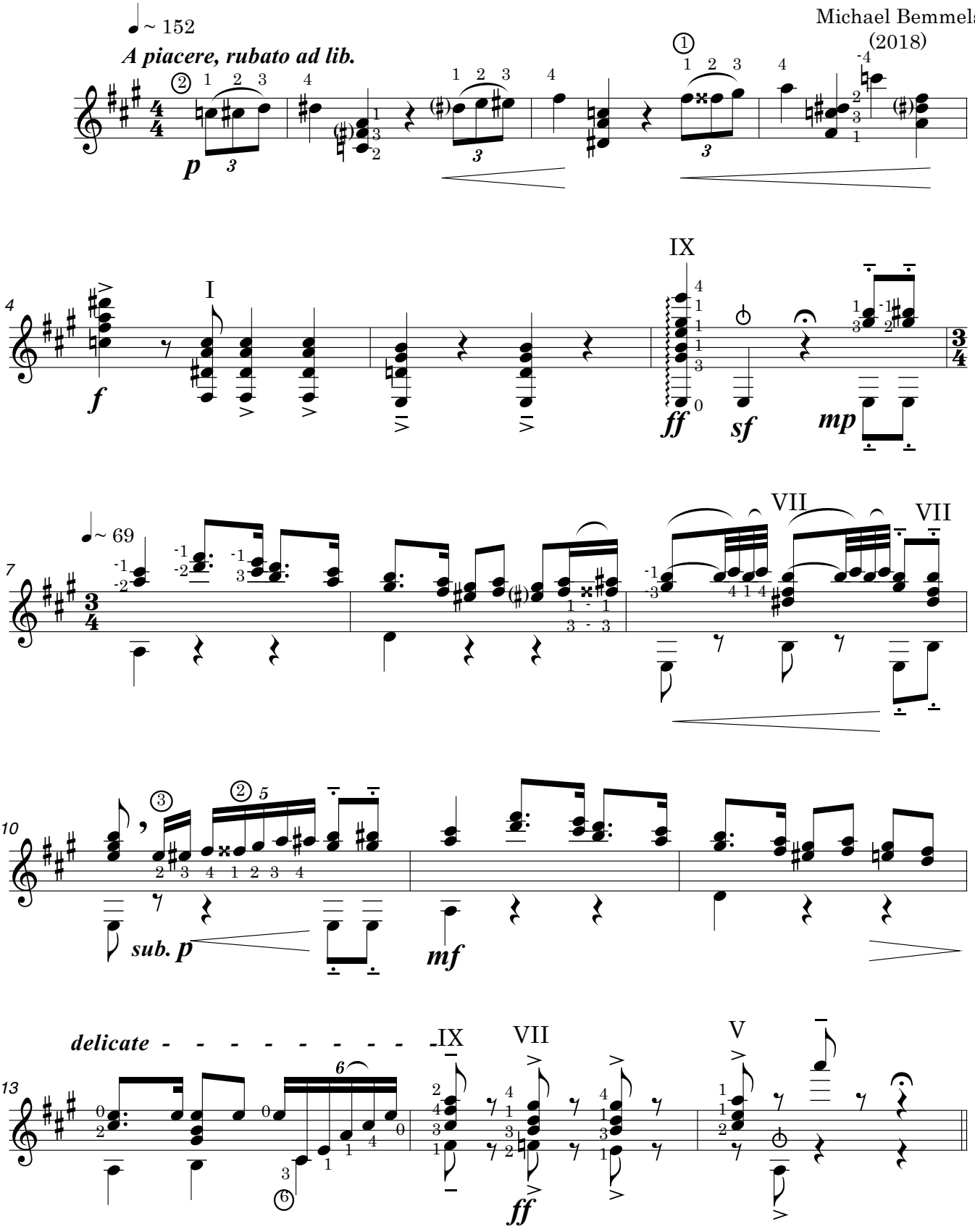
Michael Bemmels

March 2018
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

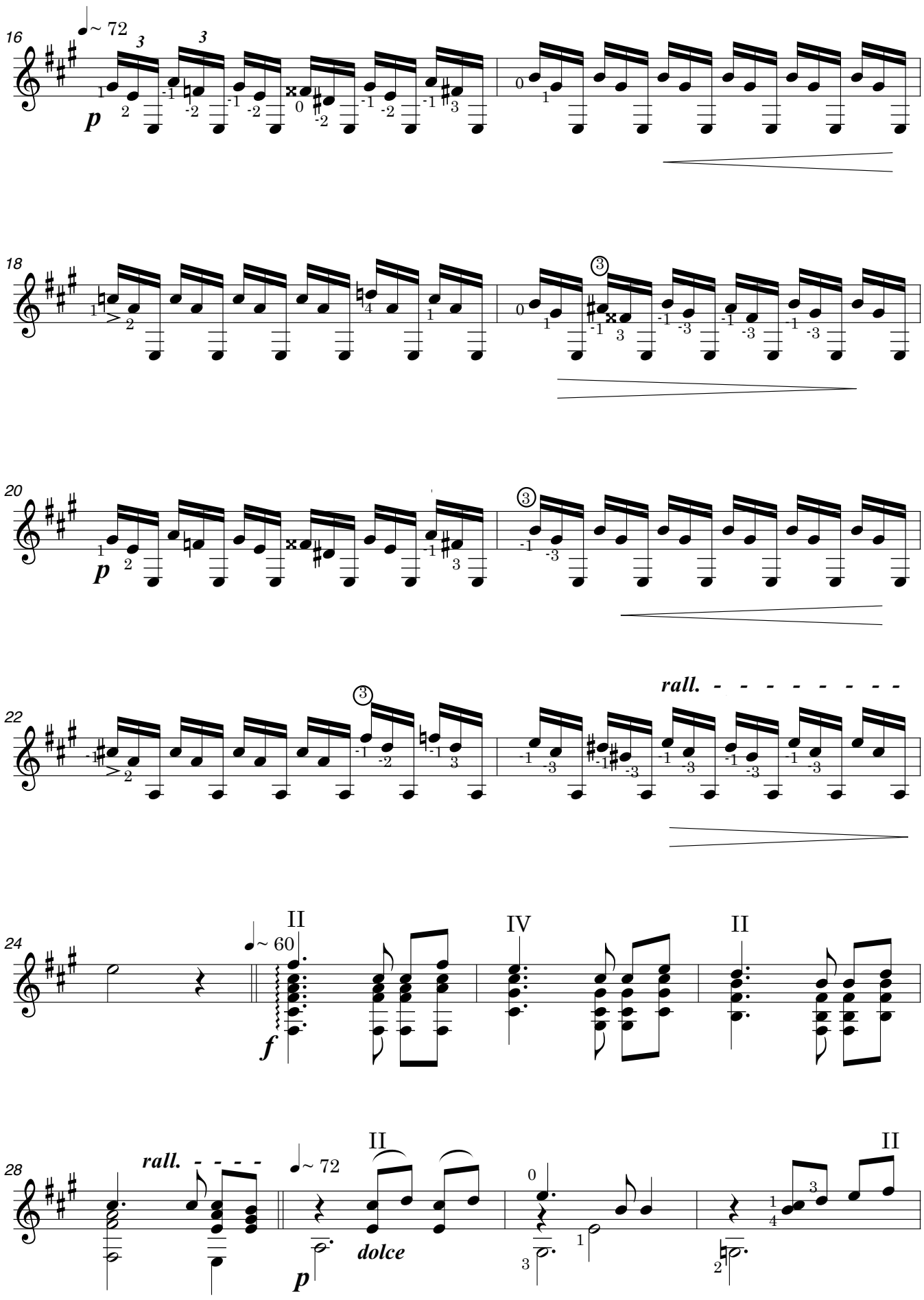
Dances for Guitar

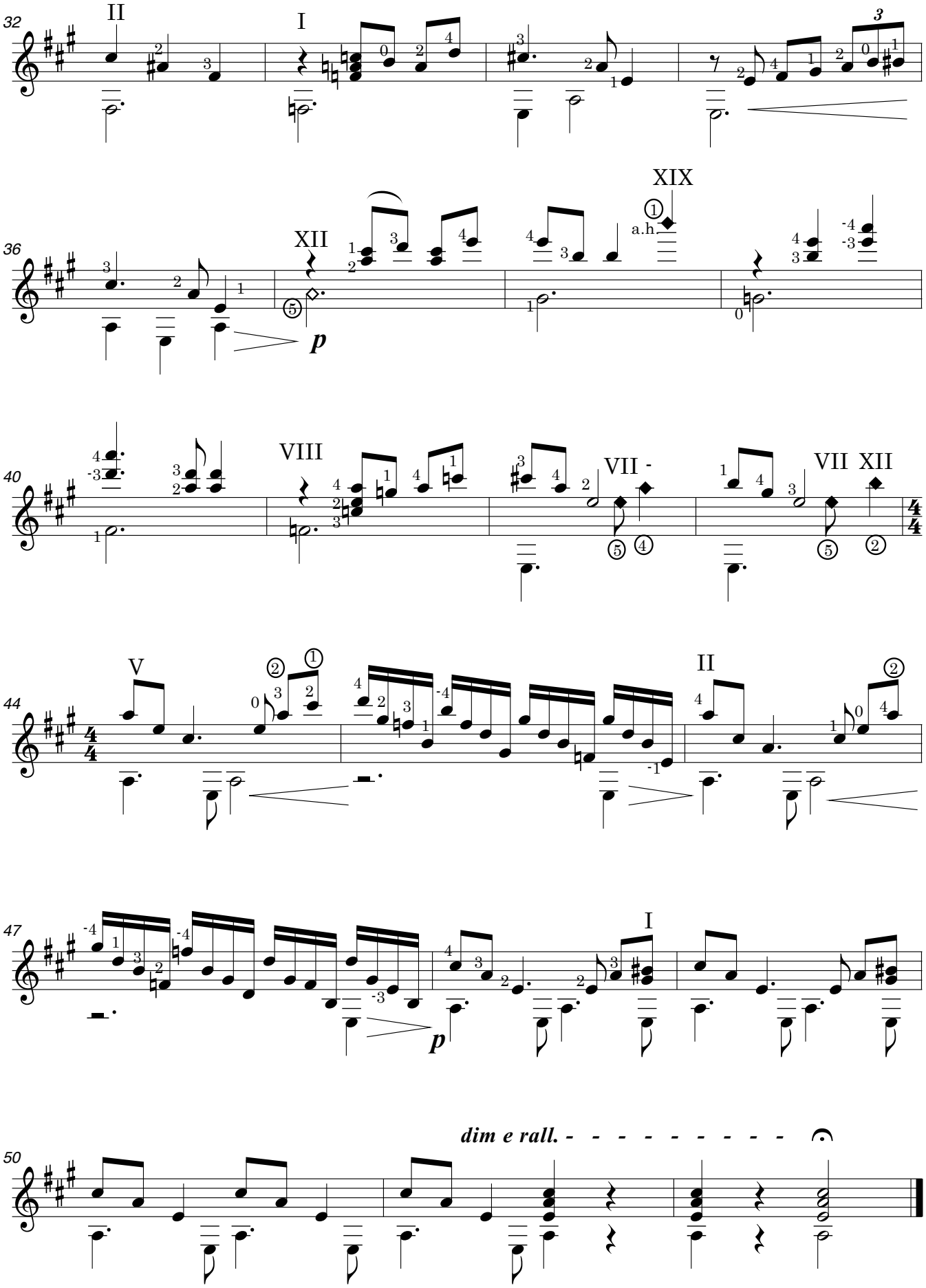
I. Facetious

Michael Bemmels
(2018)

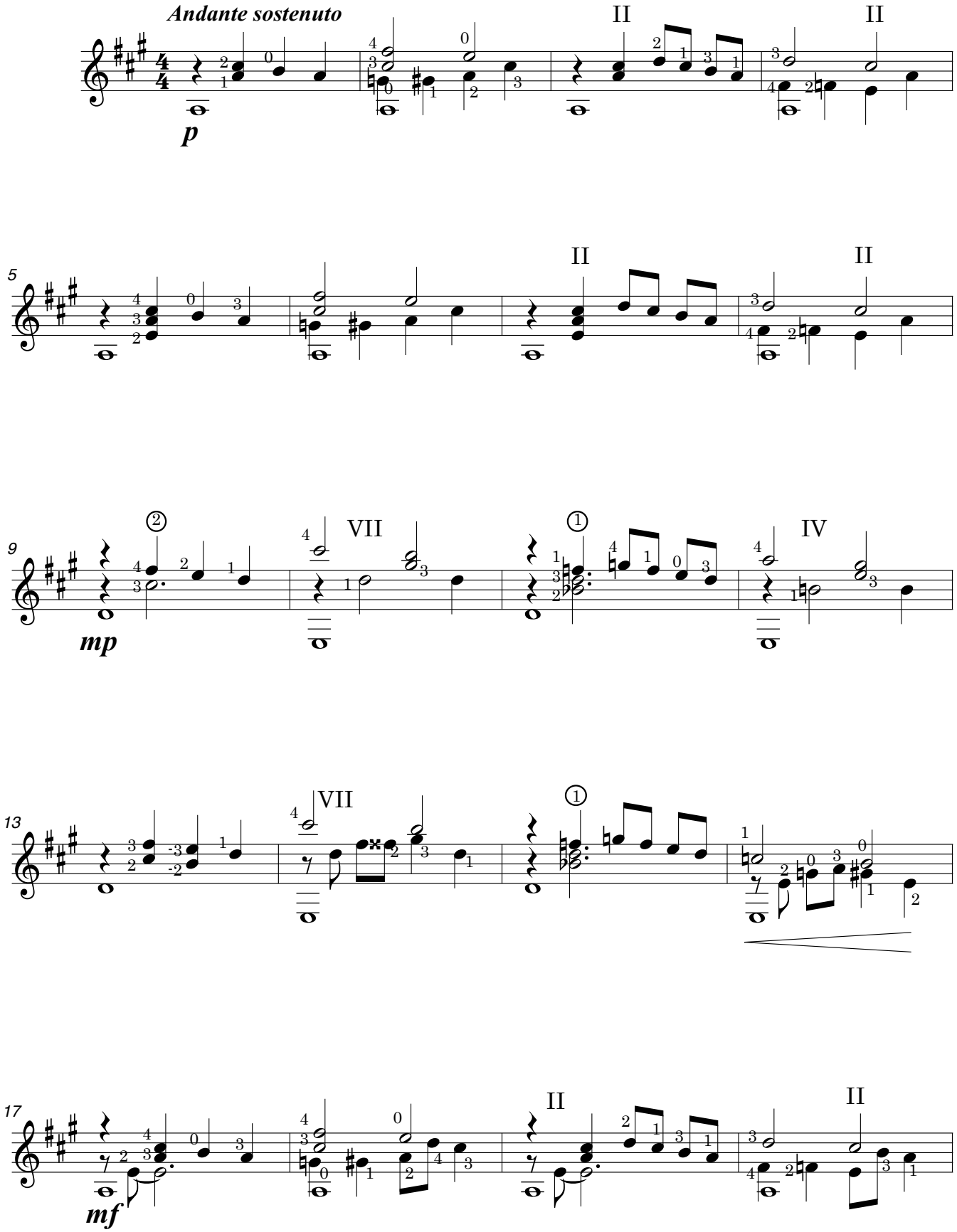


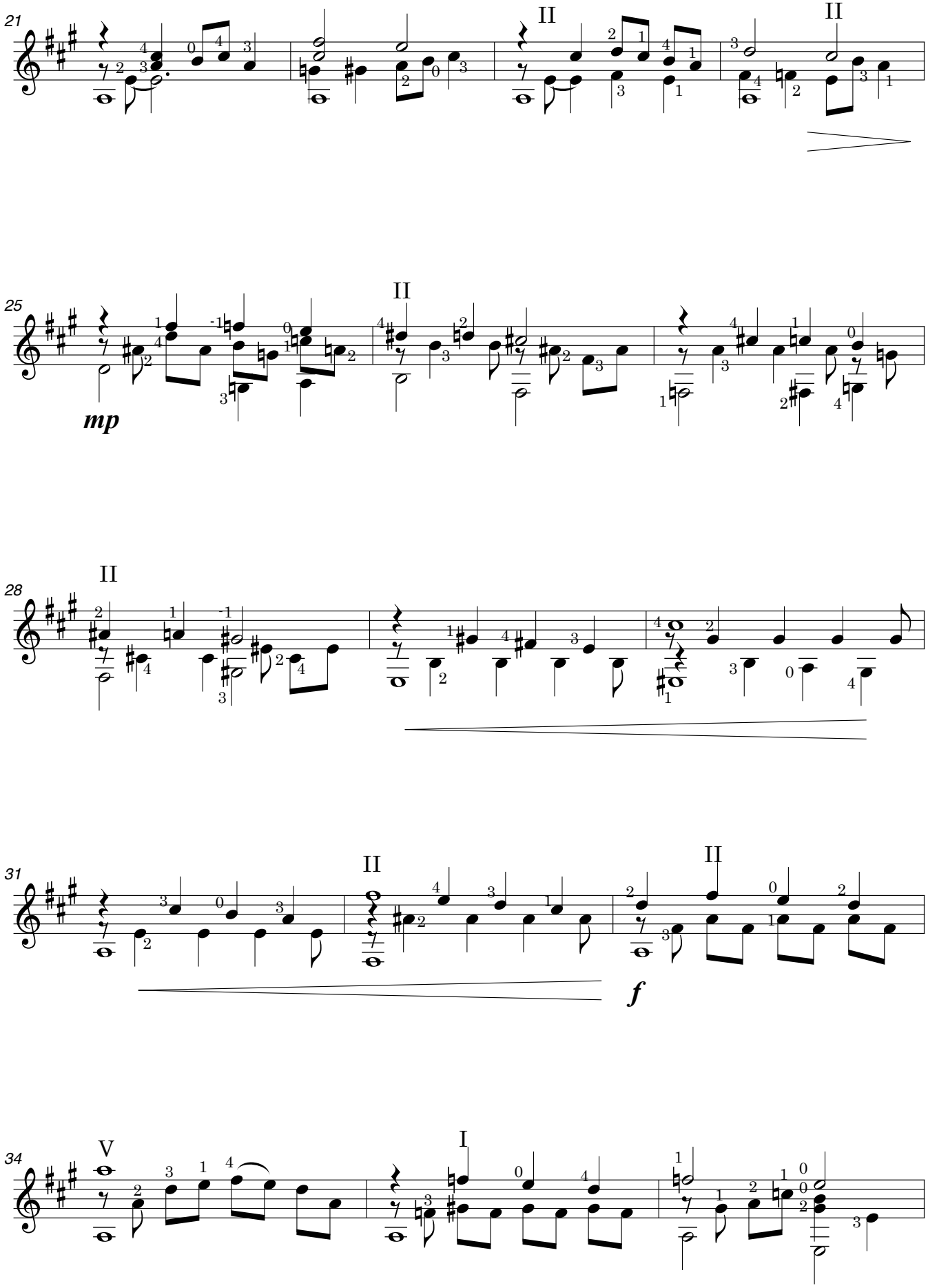
© Michael Bemmels 2018

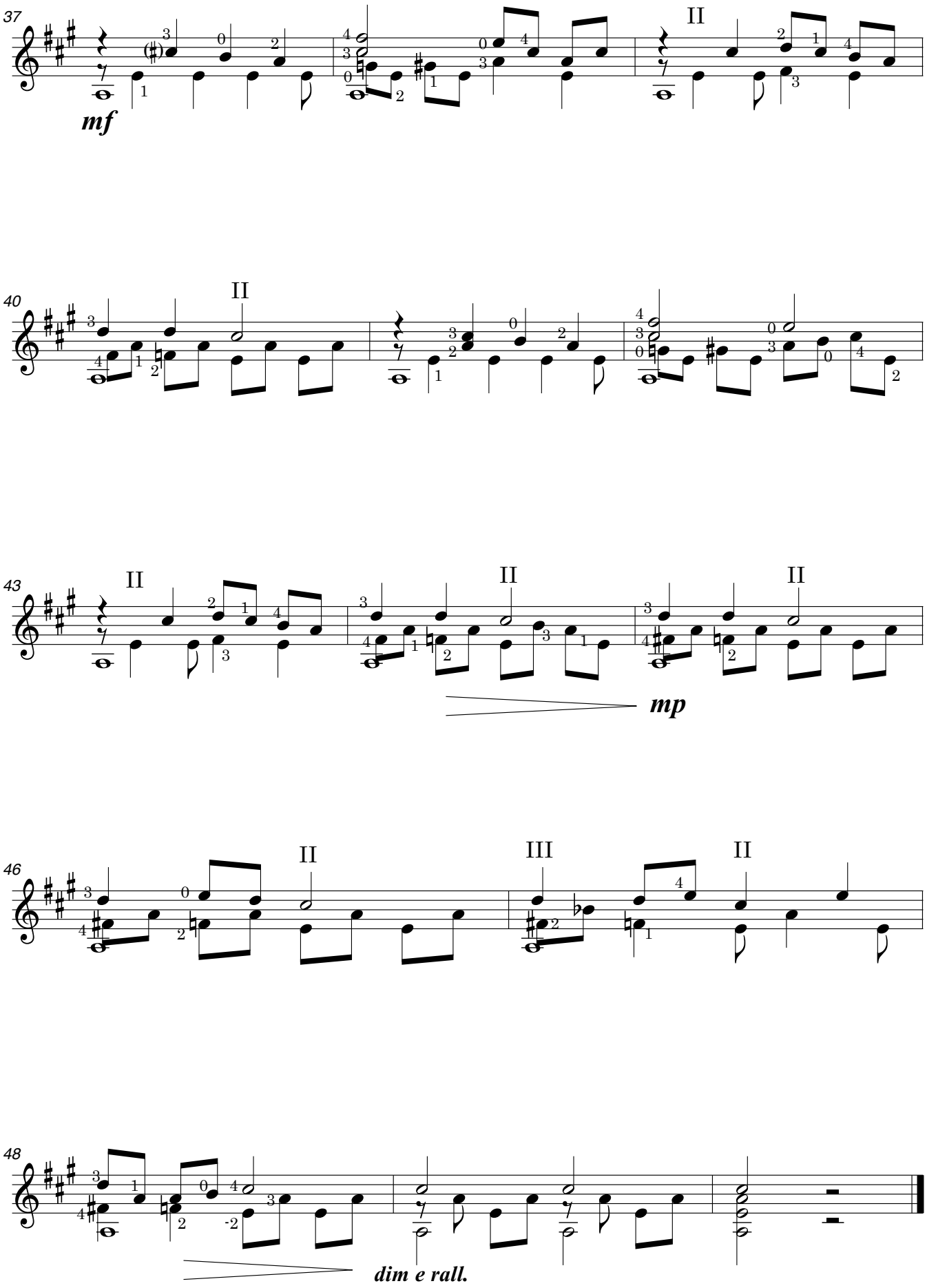

16
~ 72
p
18
20
p
22
rall.
24
II
~ 60
f
IV
II
28
rall.
~ 72
II
p
dolce
II


32
II
I
3
36
XII
XIX
a.h.
p
40
VIII
VII -
VII XII
44
V
II
47
I
p
50
dim e rall.

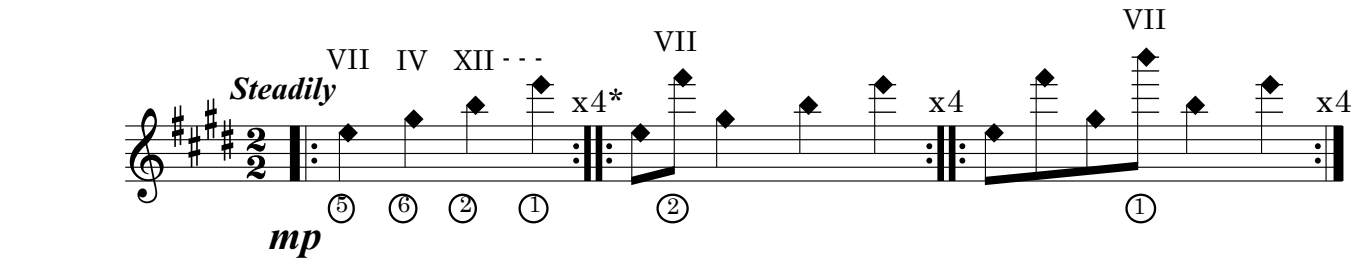
II. Wistful



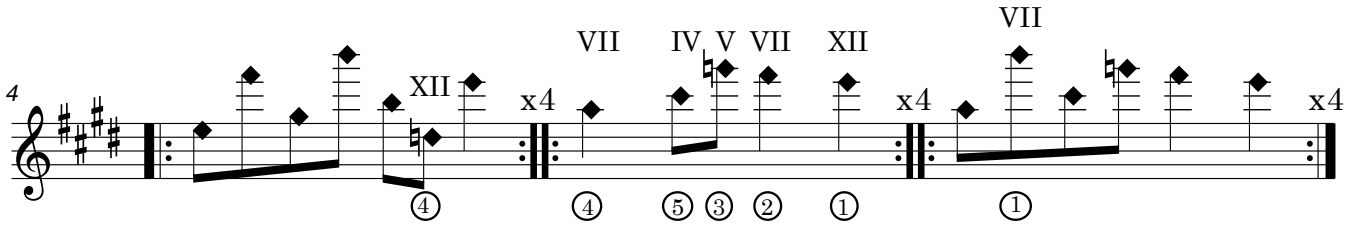

21
II
II
25
II
mp
28
II
31
II
II
f
34
V
I

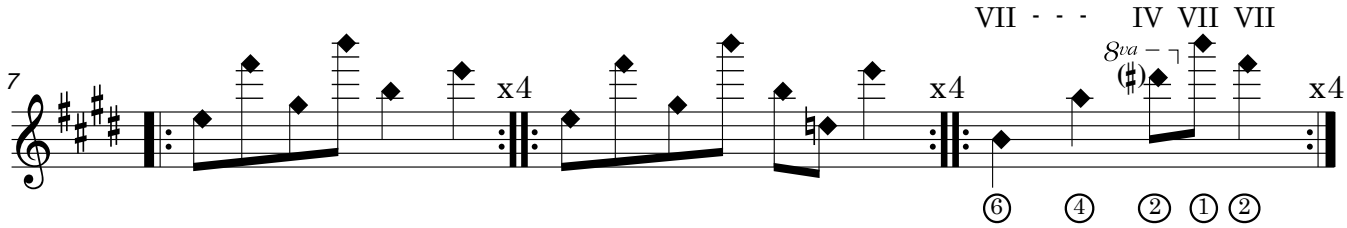

37
II
mf
40
II
43
II
II
II
mp
46
II
III
II
48
dim e rall.

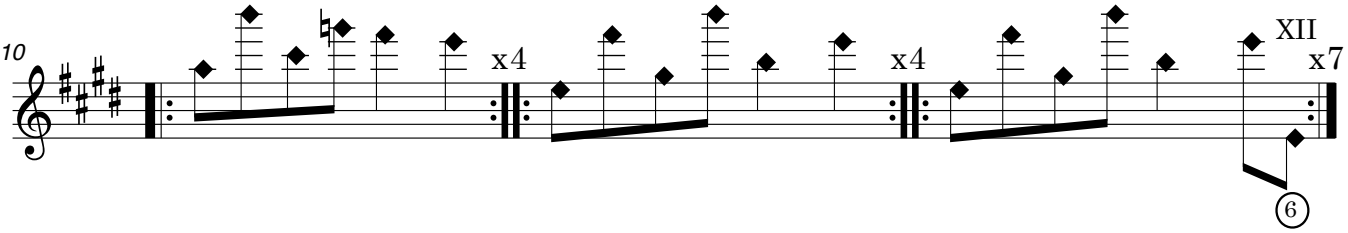
III. Pure

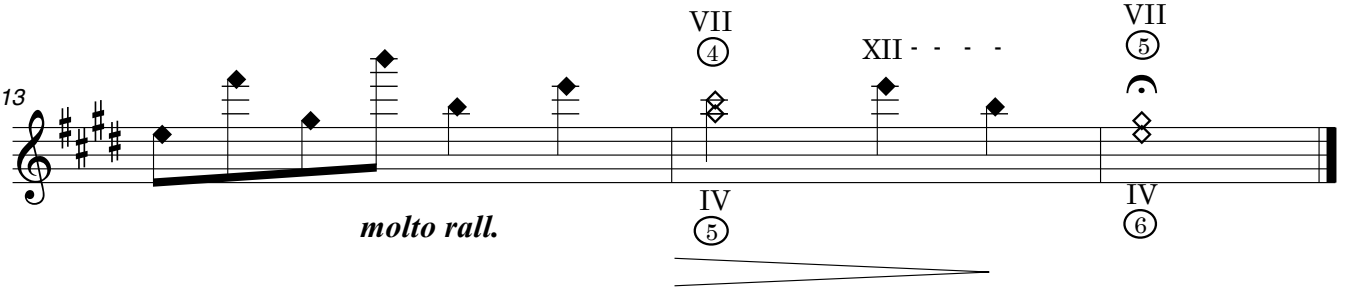


*play m. 1 a total of 4 times

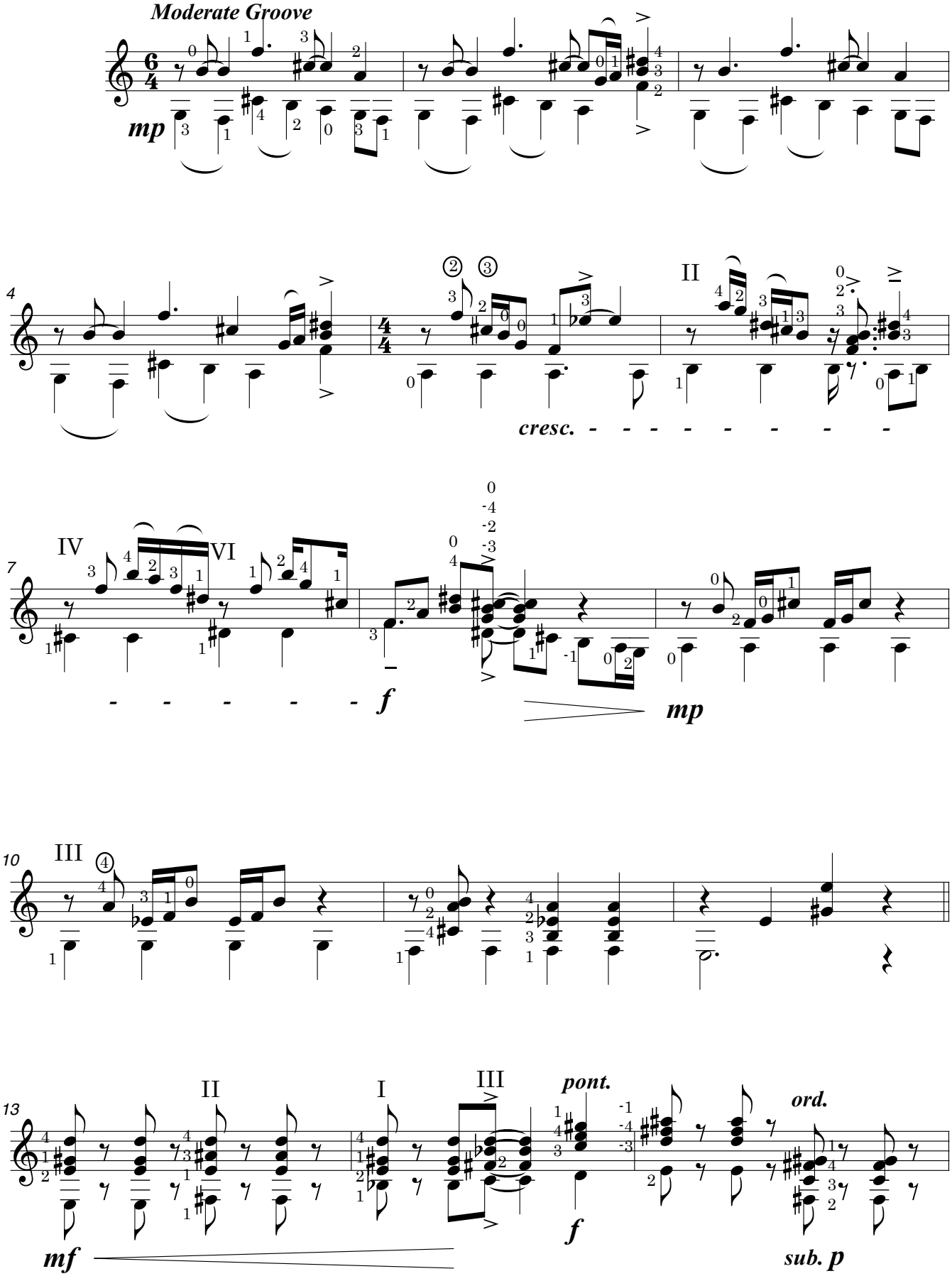


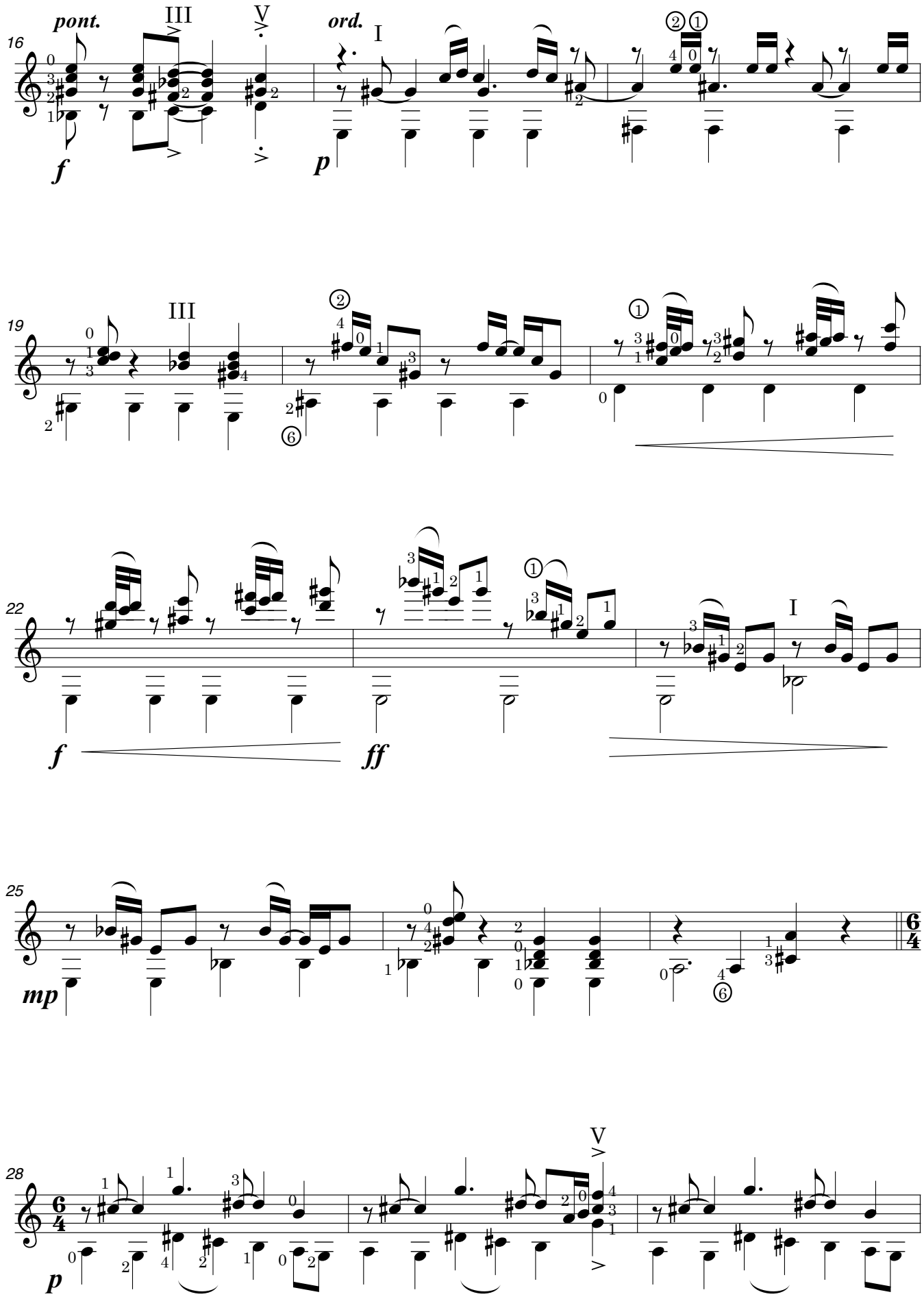


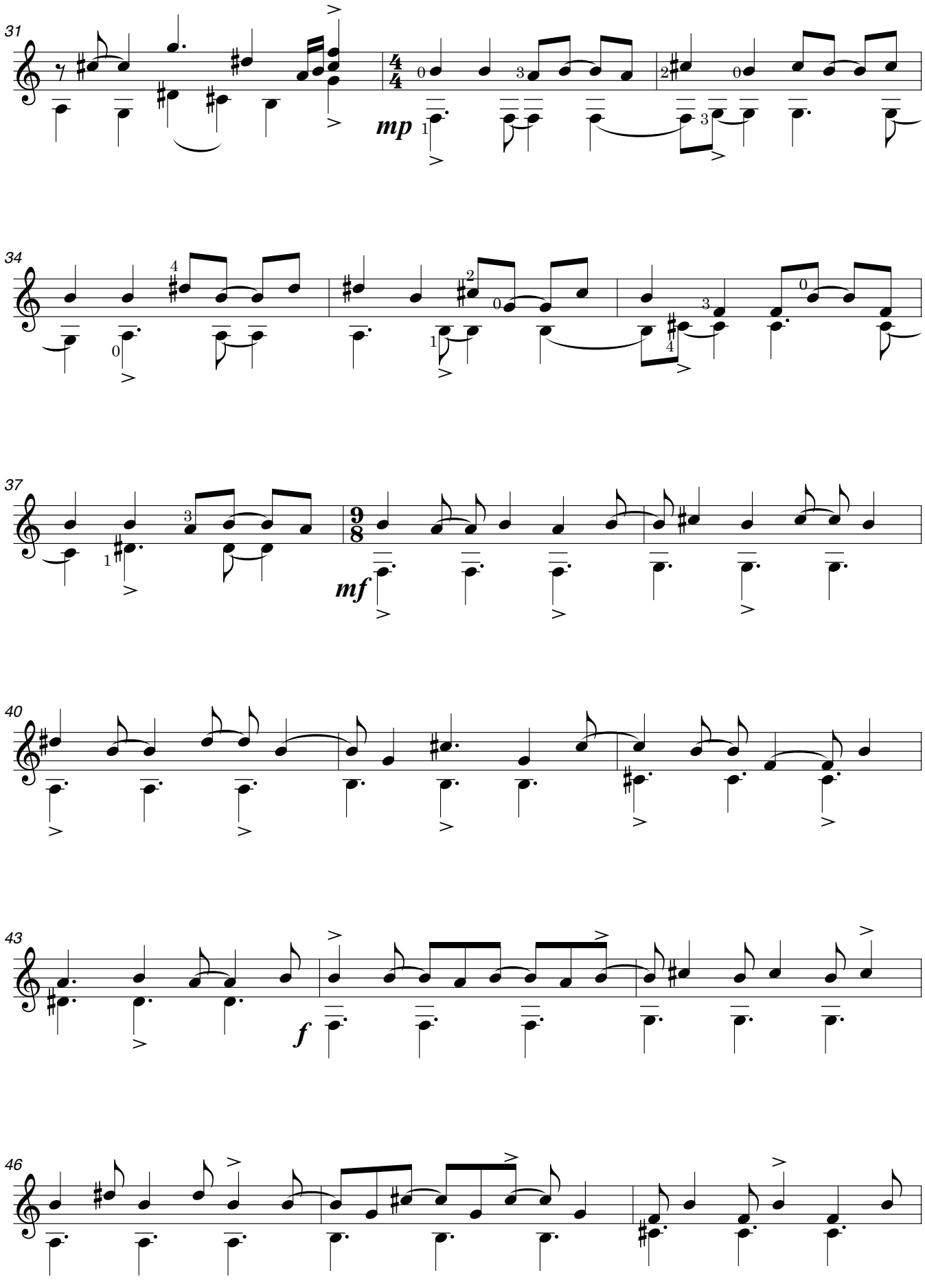


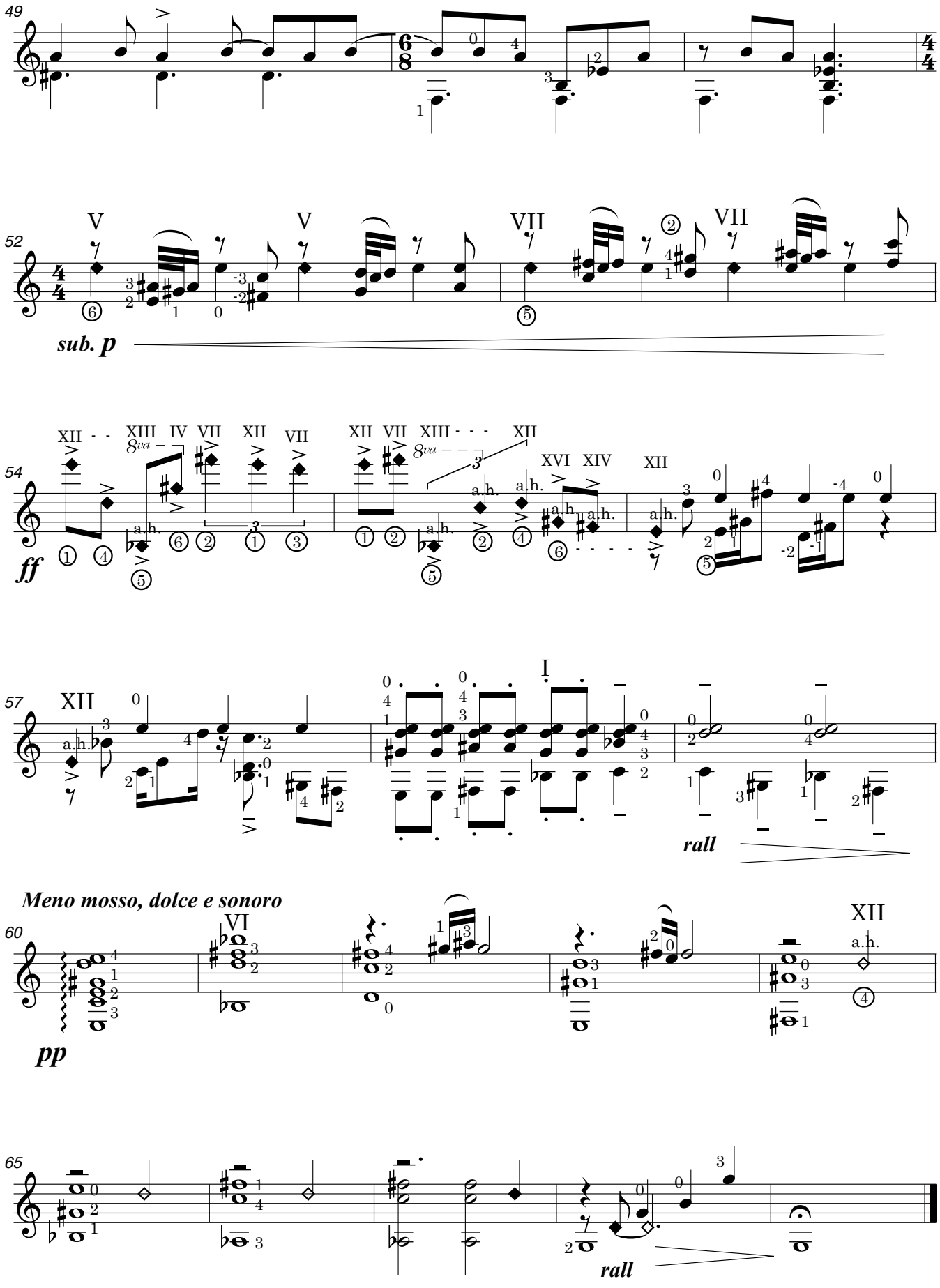


IV. Inebriated

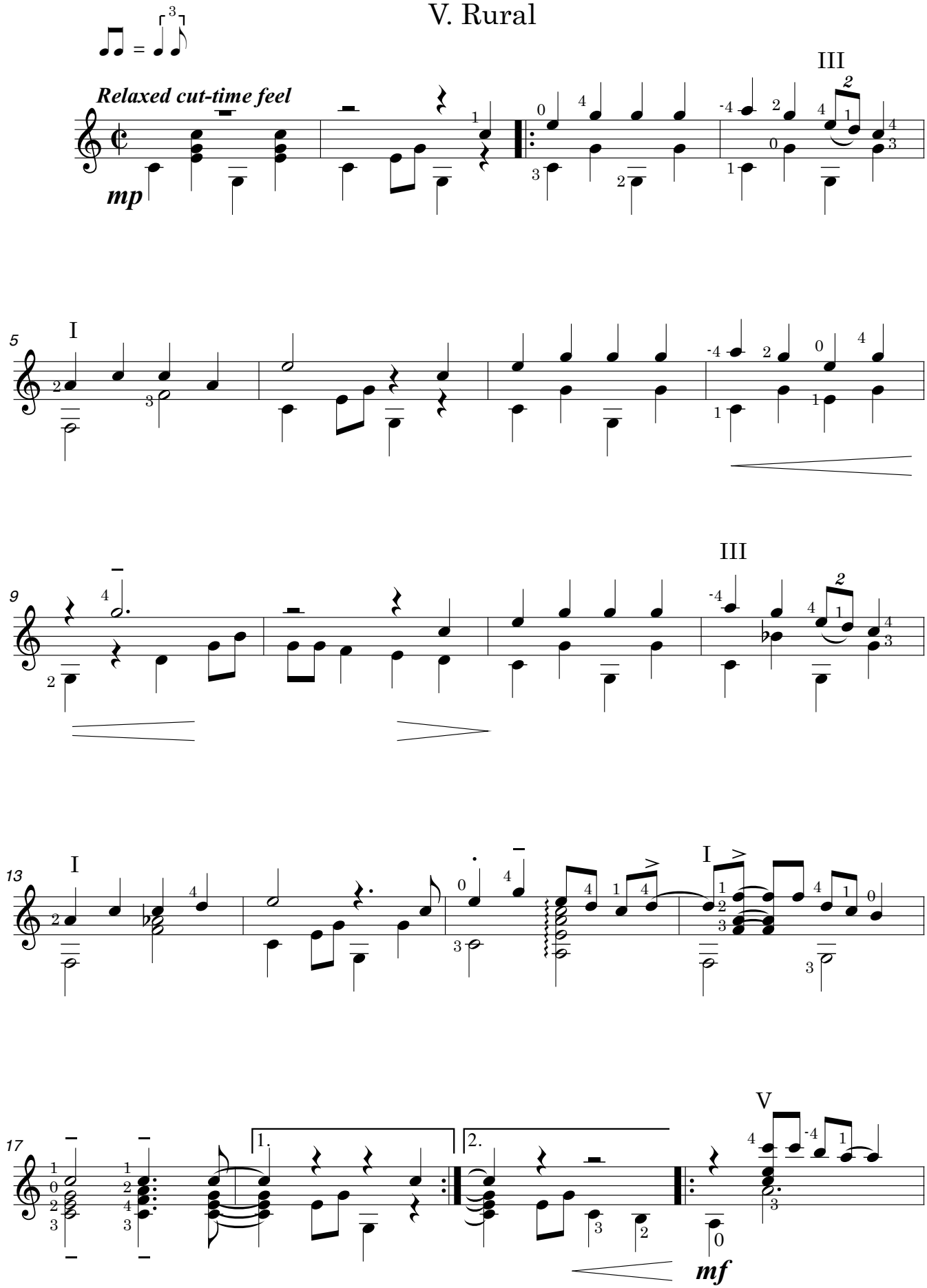


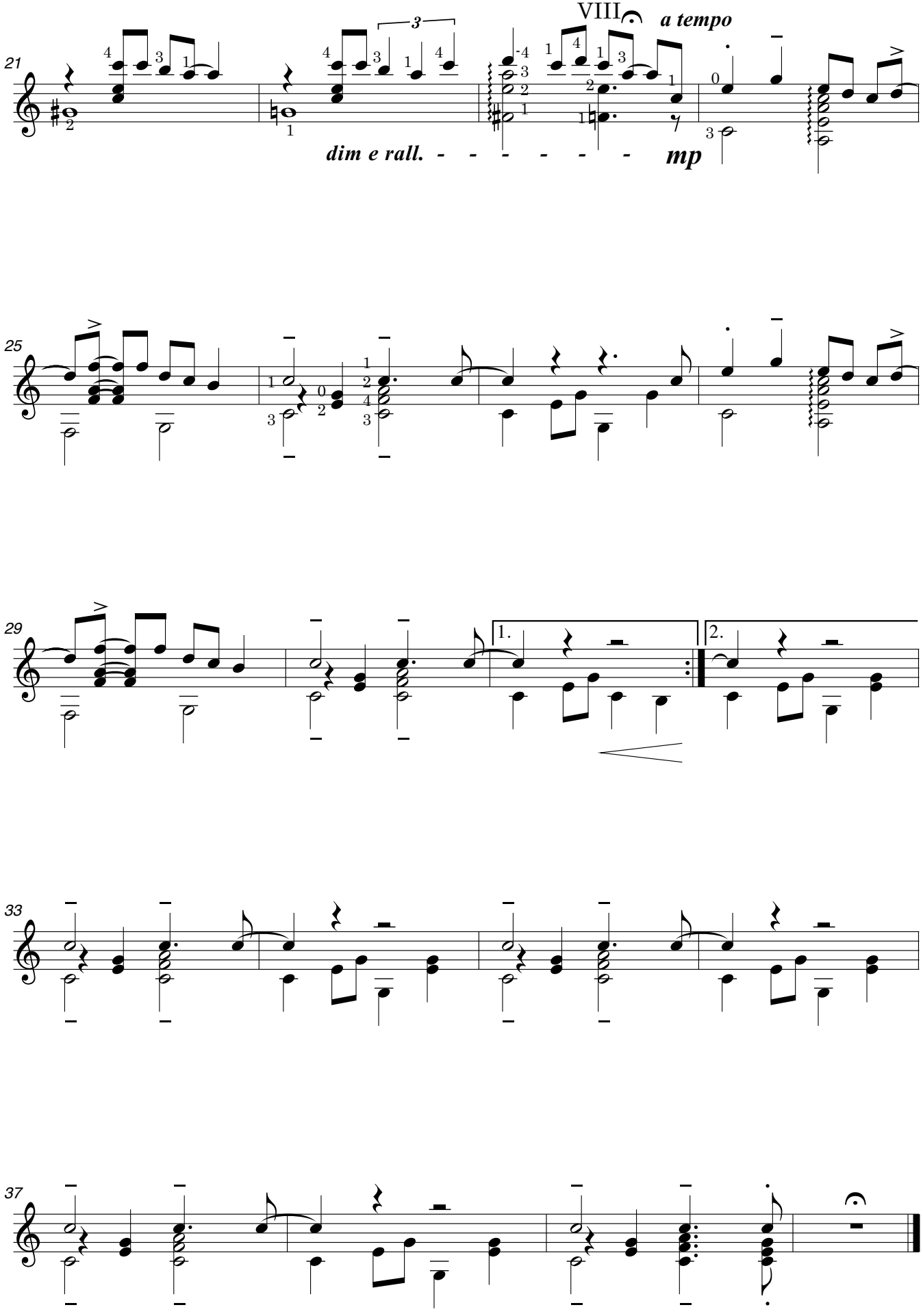

16
pont.
III
V
ord.
I
f
p
19
III
22
f
ff
I
25
mp
6/4
28
6/4
p
V


31
mp
34
37
mf
40
43
f
46

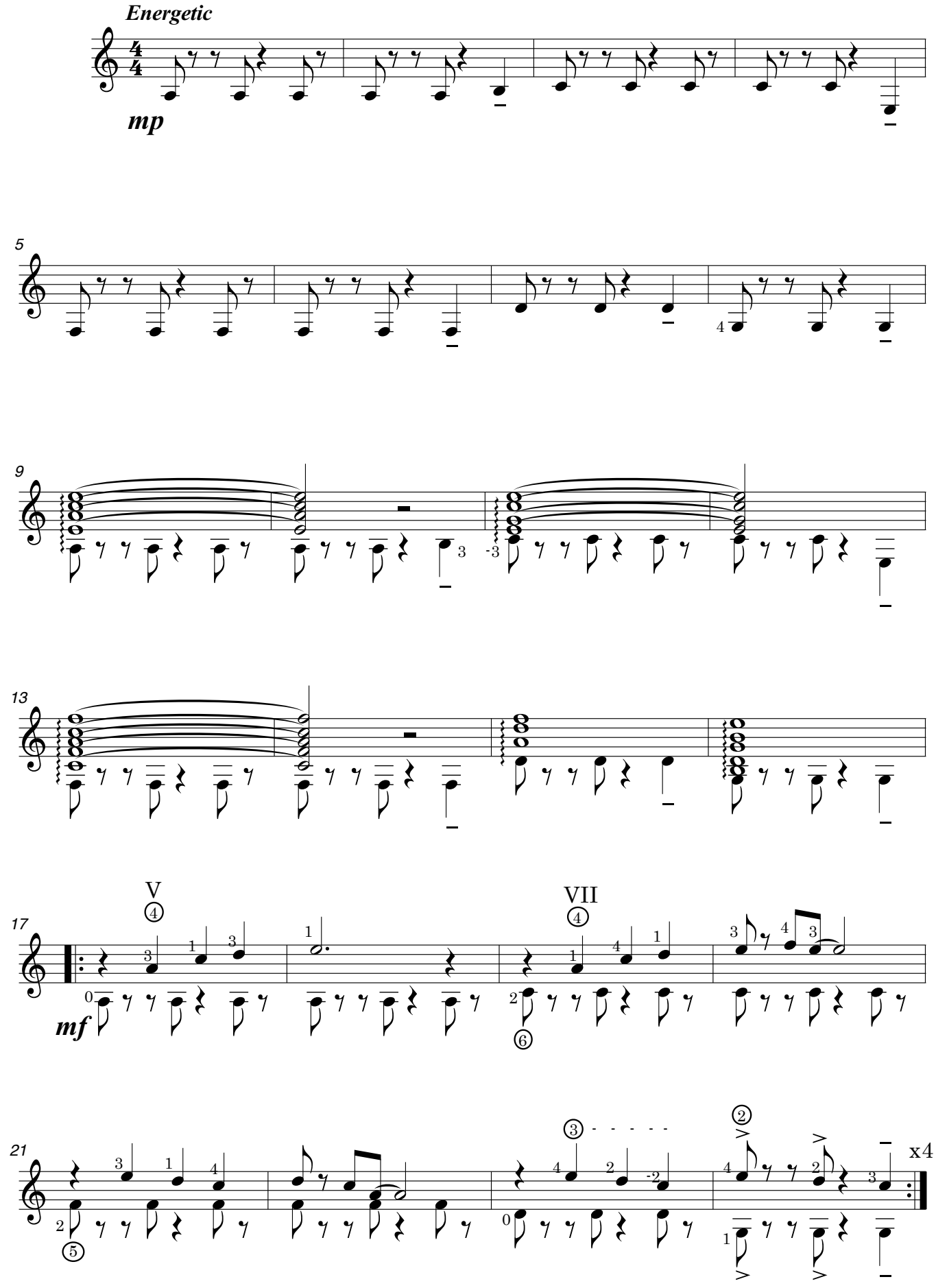

49
52
sub. p
54
ff
57
rall
Meno mosso, dolce e sonoro
60
pp
65
rall

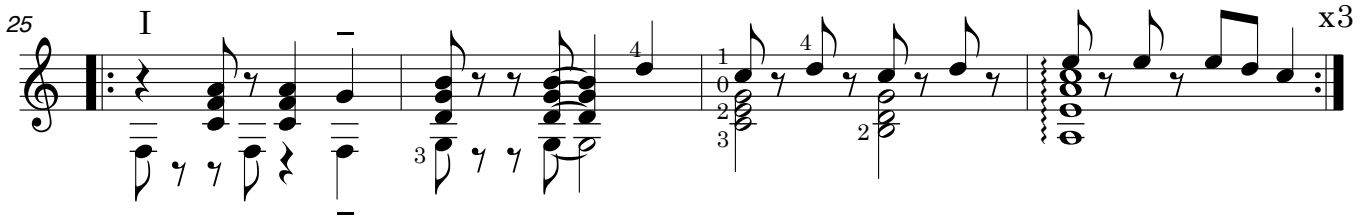
V. Rural

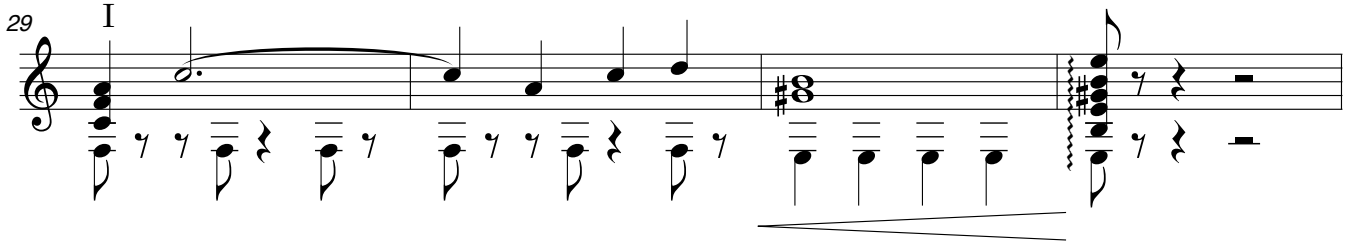


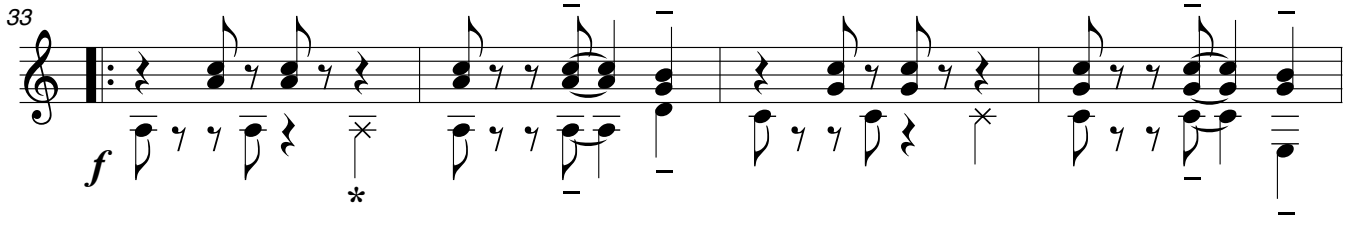

21
VIII
a tempo
dim e rall.
mp
25
29
1.
2.
33
37

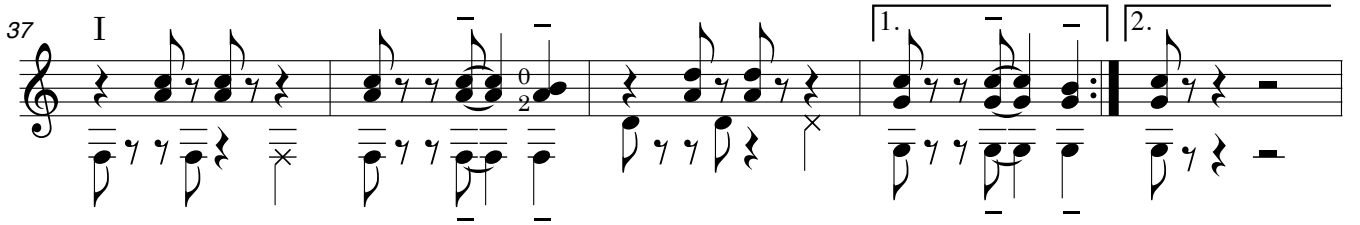
VI. Urban



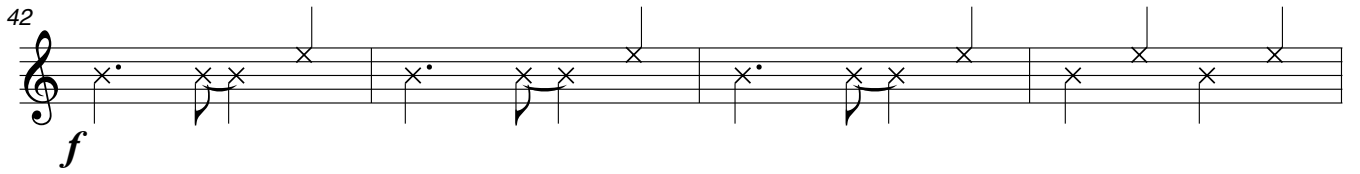


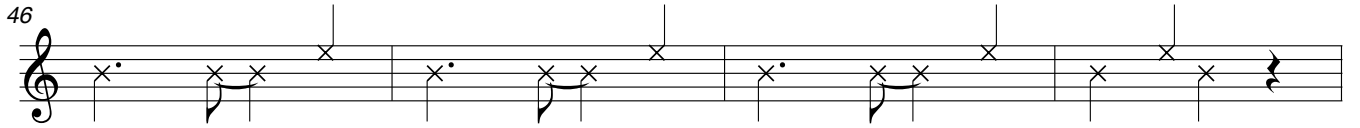




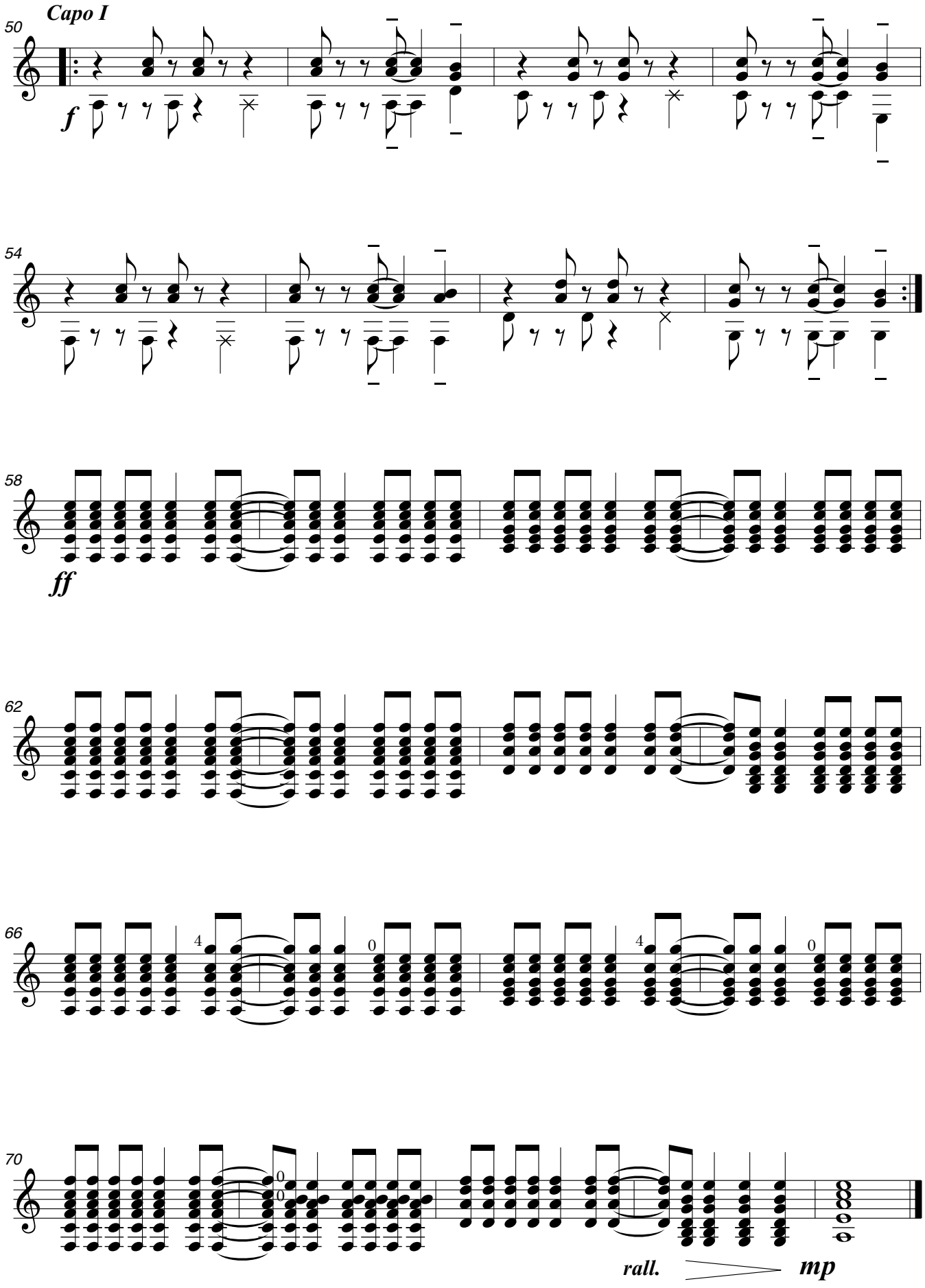


Mm. 42-49 - Use the right hand to place the capo on the 1st fret while playing percussive sounds with the left hand





* Make a percussive sound on the strings with the right hand thumb.


Capo I
50
f
54
58
ff
62
66
4
0
4
0
70
0
0
rall.
mp