LED ZEPPELIN

WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS

by Jimmy Page/Robert Plant/John Paul Jones/John Bonham/Memphis Minnie

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WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS

GUITAR

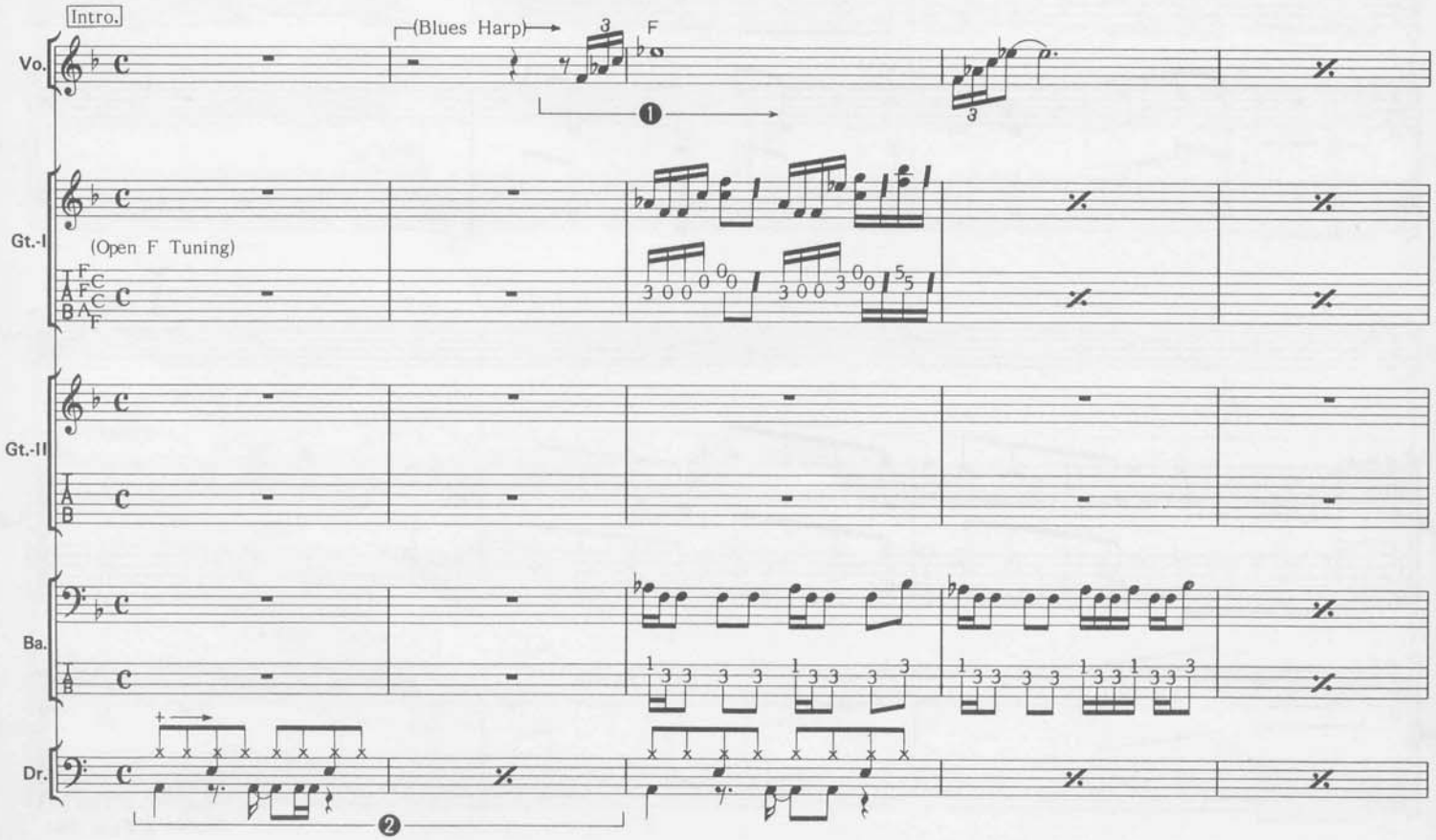
An unorthodox open F tuning is used for Gt.-I: from the first string - F,C,F,C,A,F. Bottleneck is used in places, so have one handy on the little finger of your left hand. Gt.-II, which is tuned normally, also requires a bottleneck.

BASS

The bass playing is quite free for the most part, but here and there are phrases where the bass player must be together with the guitarist. The best approach is a basic pattern with decorative fills. Note values are often small, but you'll need to feel the drummer's groove to make every beat count.

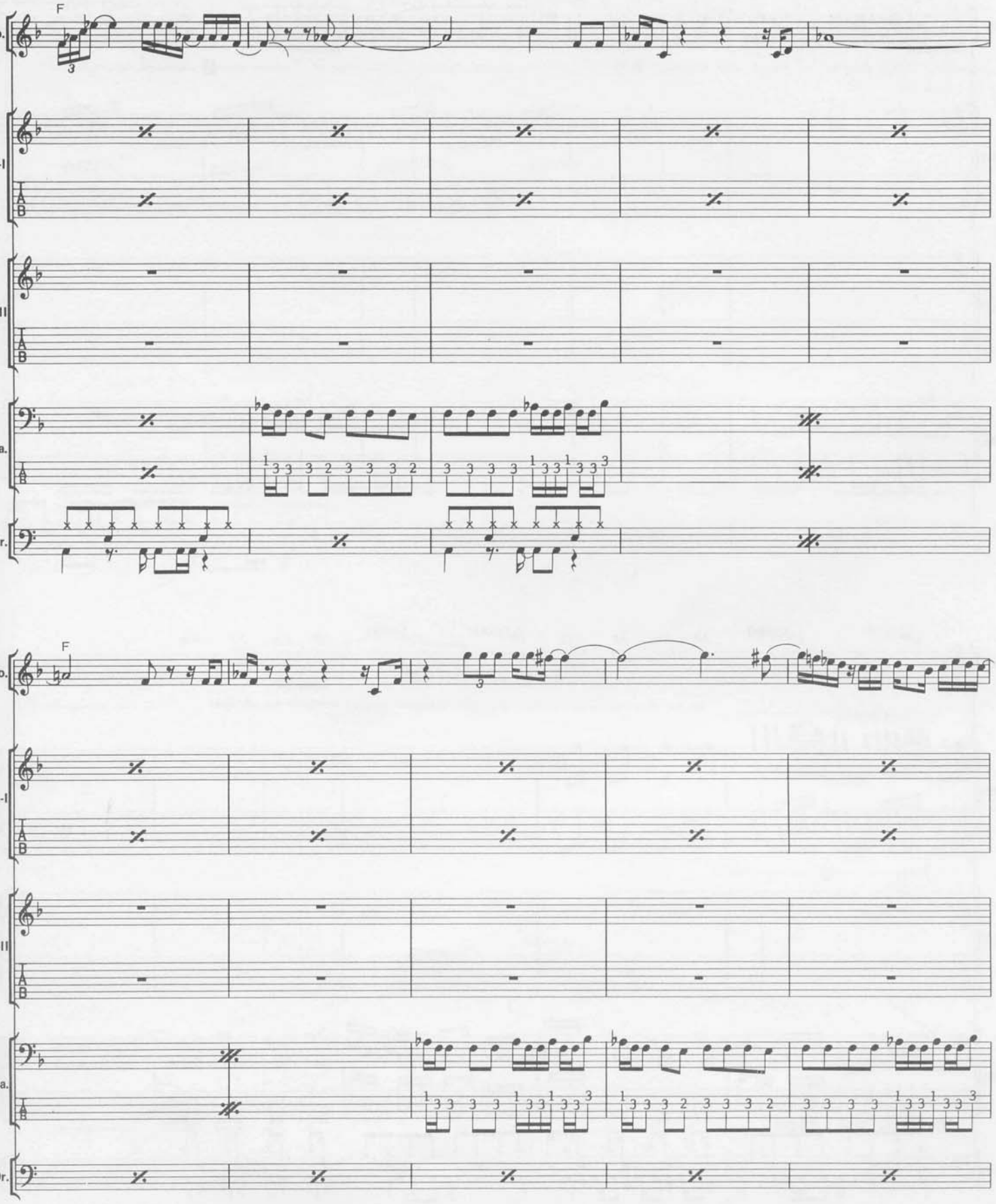
DRUMS

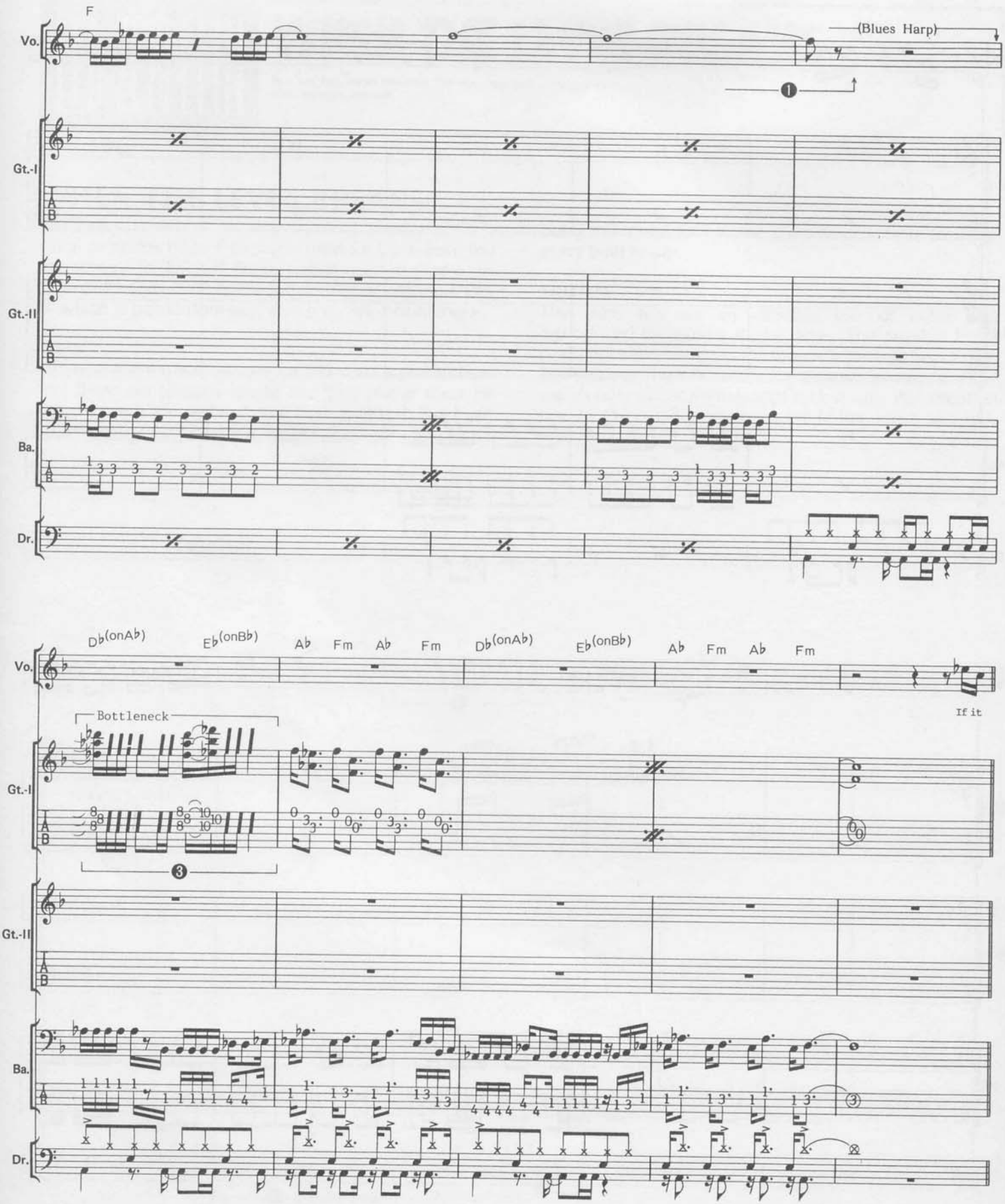
The intro features an effective use of echo best reproduced by using a digital delay. The number has a basic 16 beat feeling, yet the groove is a really heavy one. Every stroke must be played with great power, and the eighth note hi-hat rhythm kept rock steady. Pay attention also to the balance between the hi-hat, snare and bass drum.



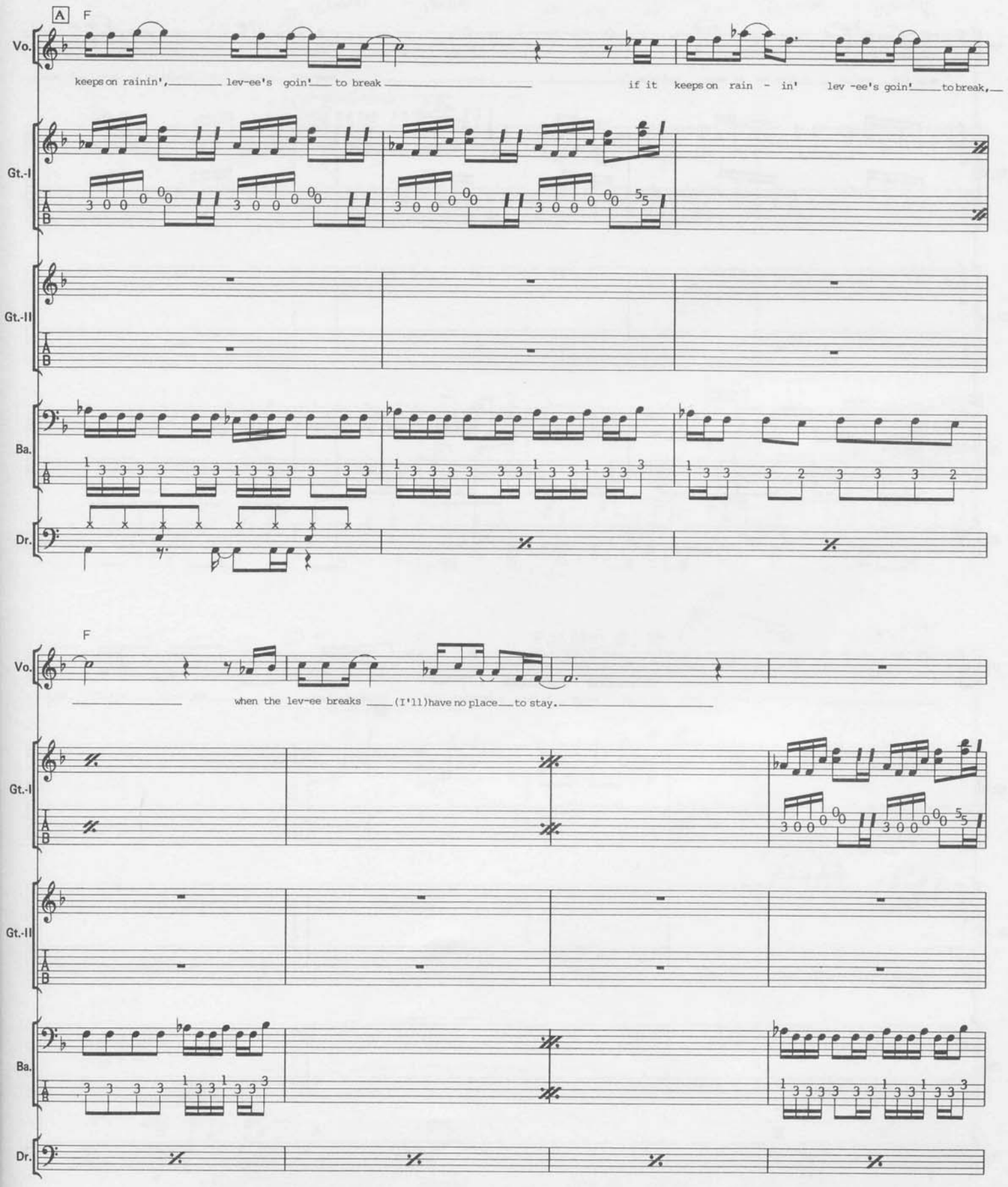
❶(B.H.) : This is an Eb major blues harp with plenty of reverb.

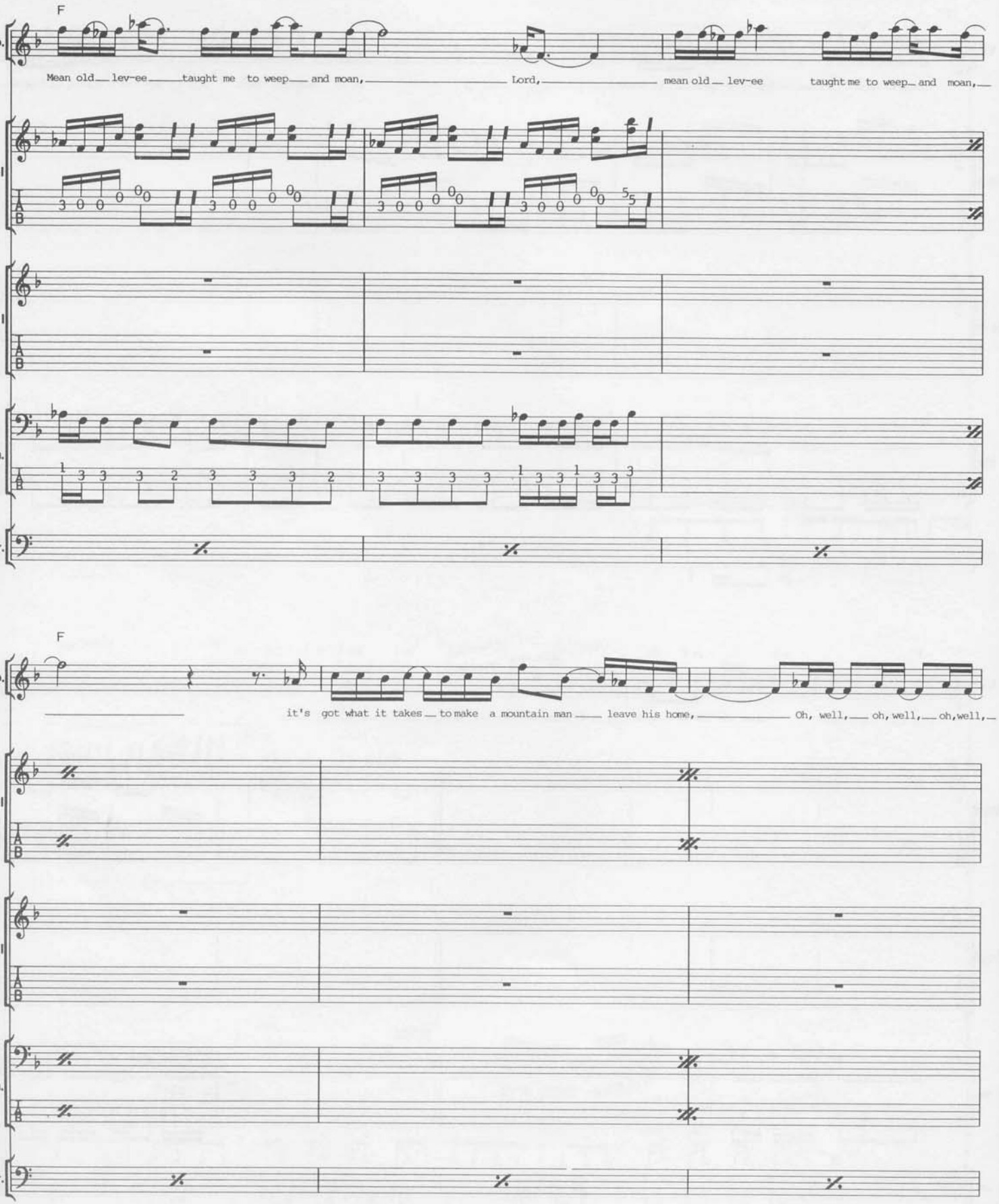
❷(Dr.) : Note the use of echo. Set the delay for 16th note timing.

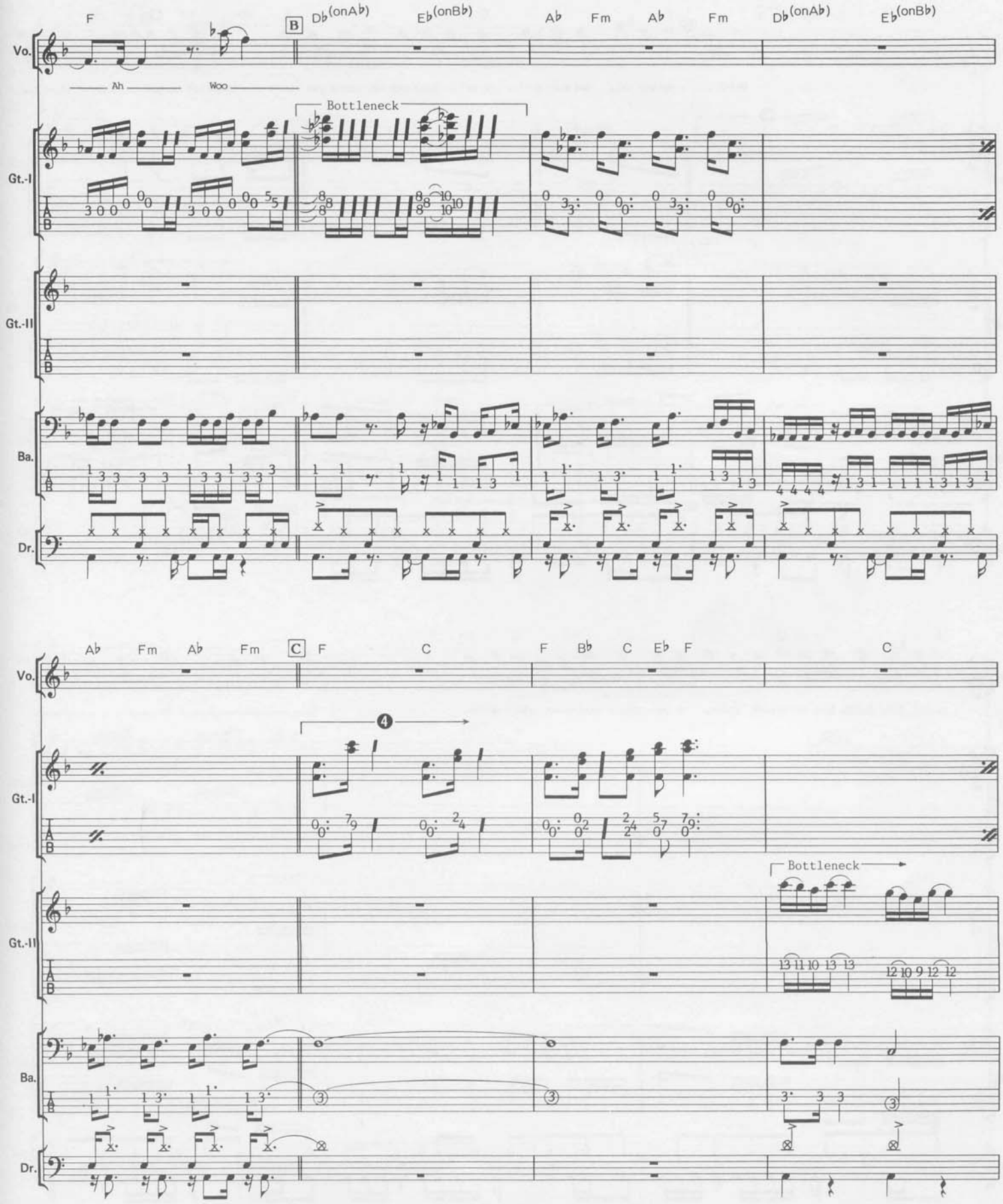

F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.



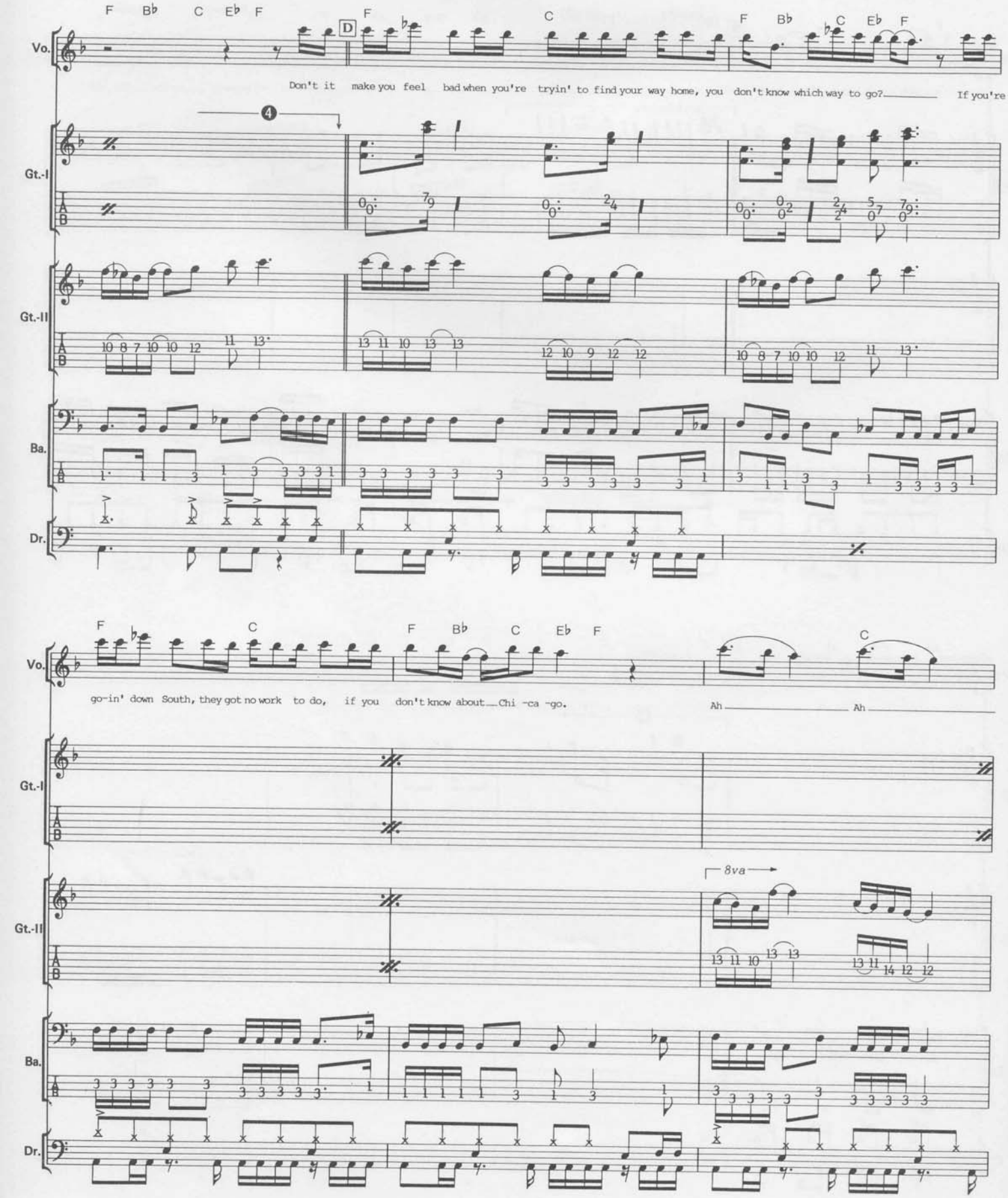
❸(Gt.) : The bottleneck is used for just this phrase. Play through it with the bar on the little finger of your left hand.

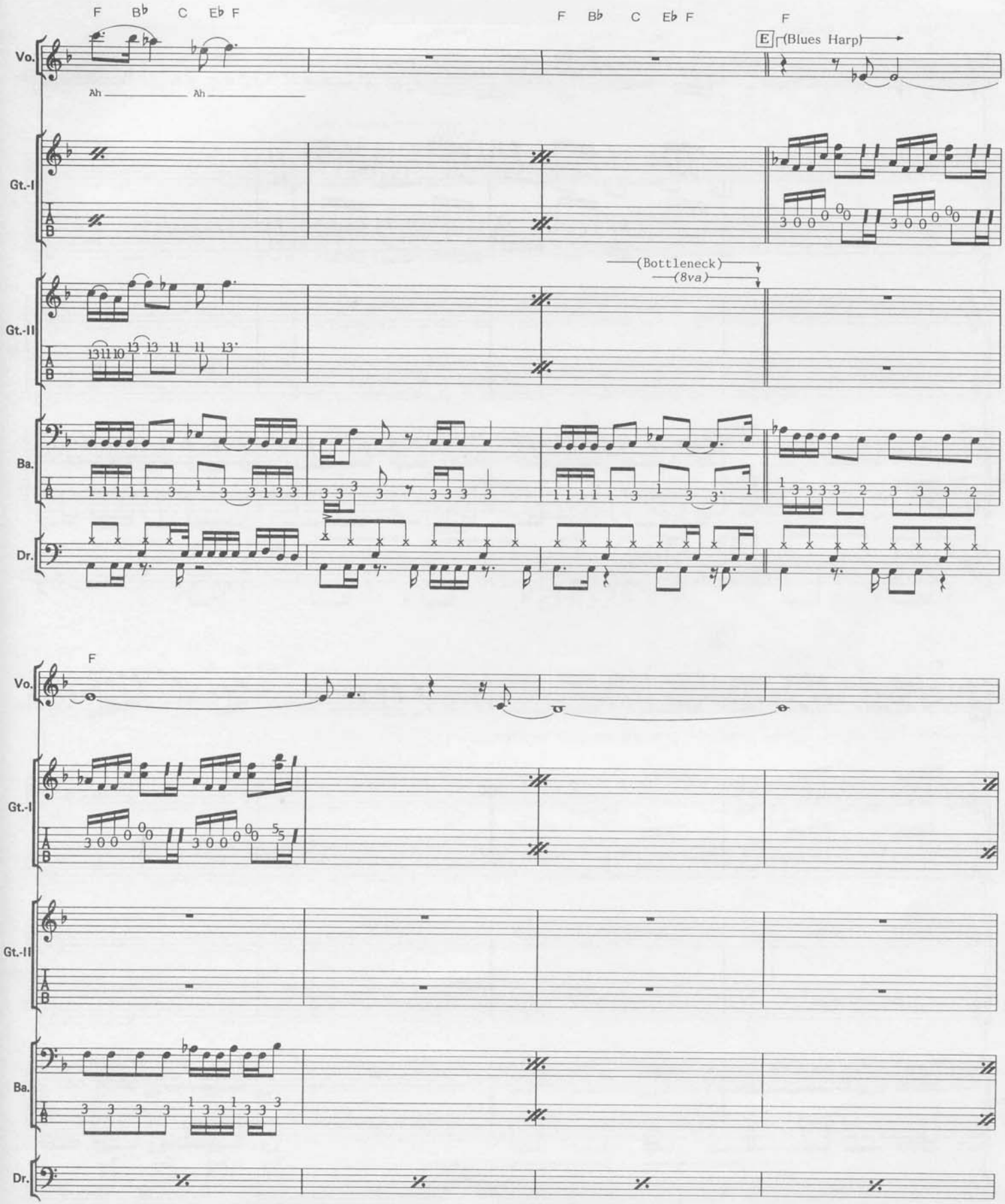

A
F
Vo.
keeps on rainin', lev-ee's goin' to break
if it keeps on rain - in' lev -ee's goin' to break,
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F
Vo.
when the lev-ee breaks (I'll)have no place to stay.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.

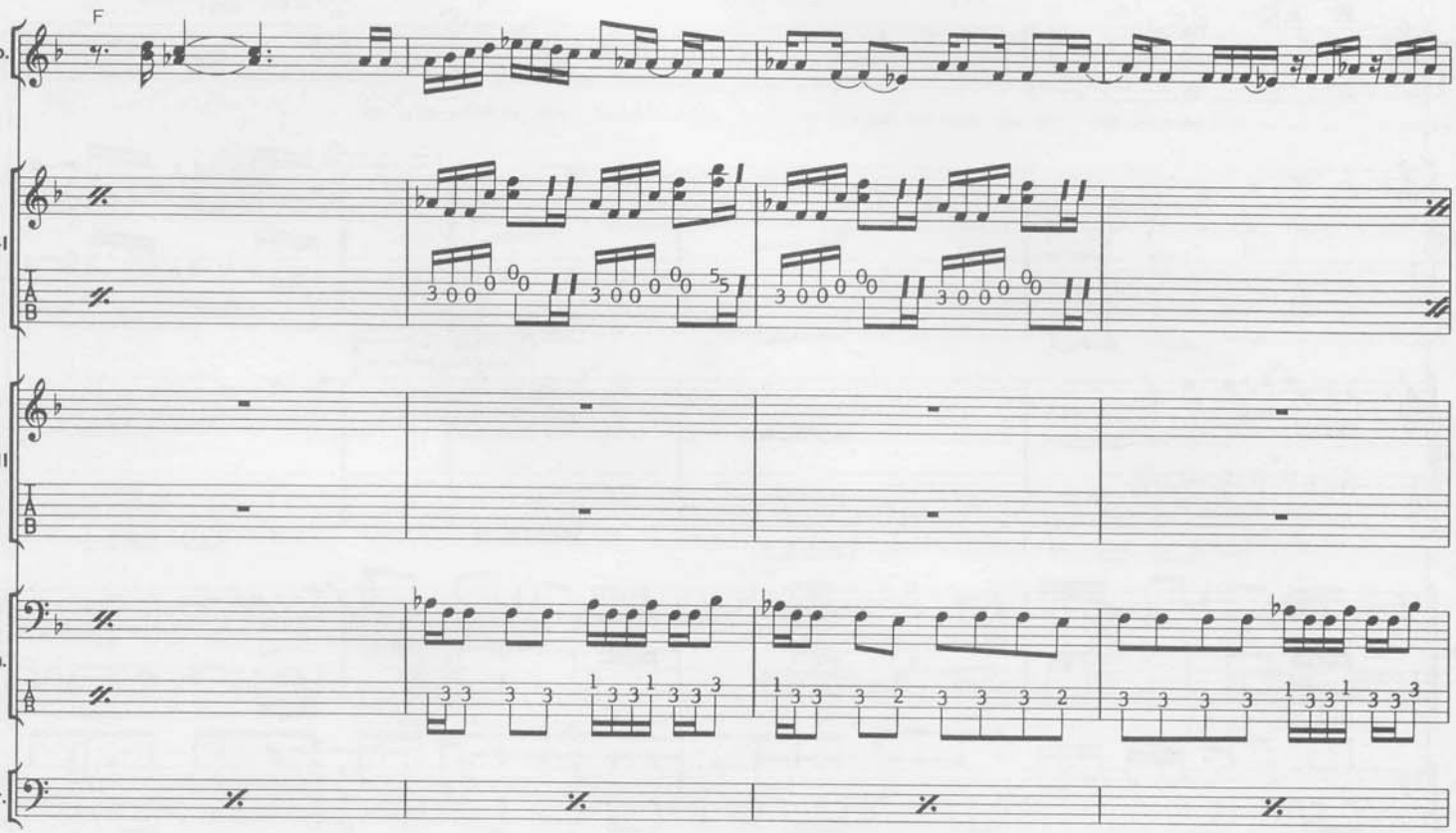

F
Vo.
Mean old lev-ee taught me to weep and moan, Lord, mean old lev-ee taught me to weep and moan,
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F
Vo.
it's got what it takes to make a mountain man leave his home, Oh, well, oh, well, oh, well,
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.

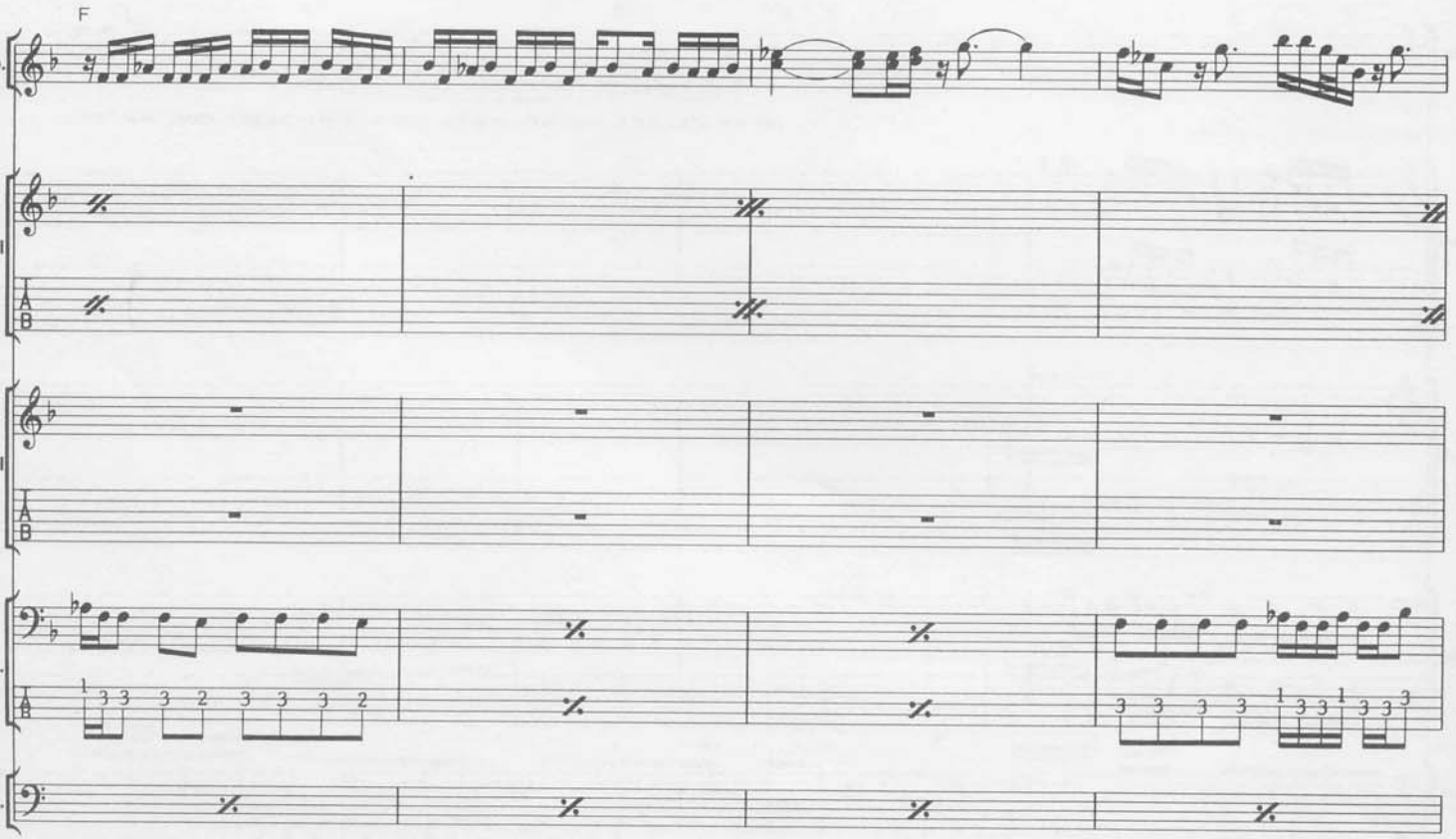


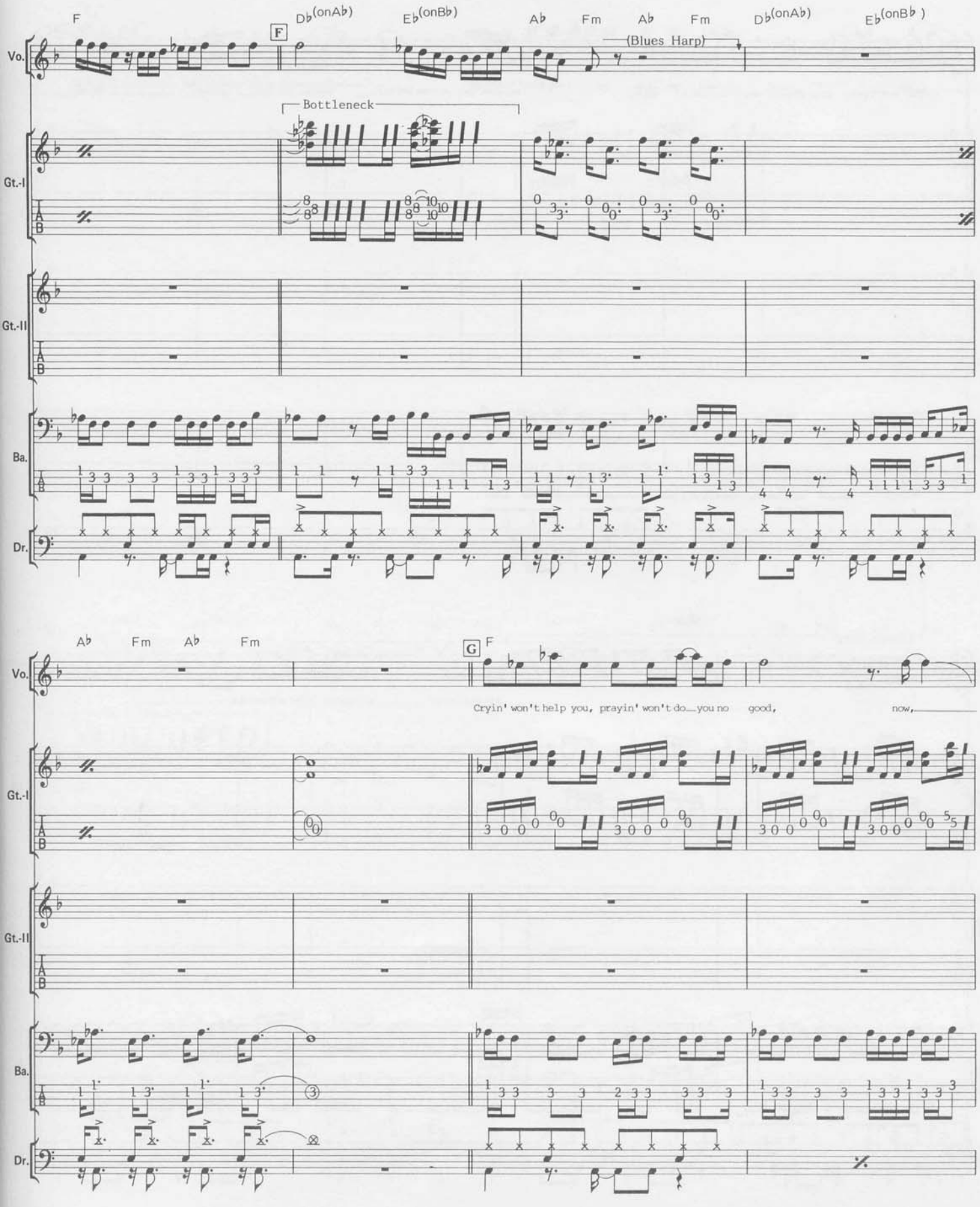
❹(Gt.) : The F on the open 3rd string is played as a pedal tone.

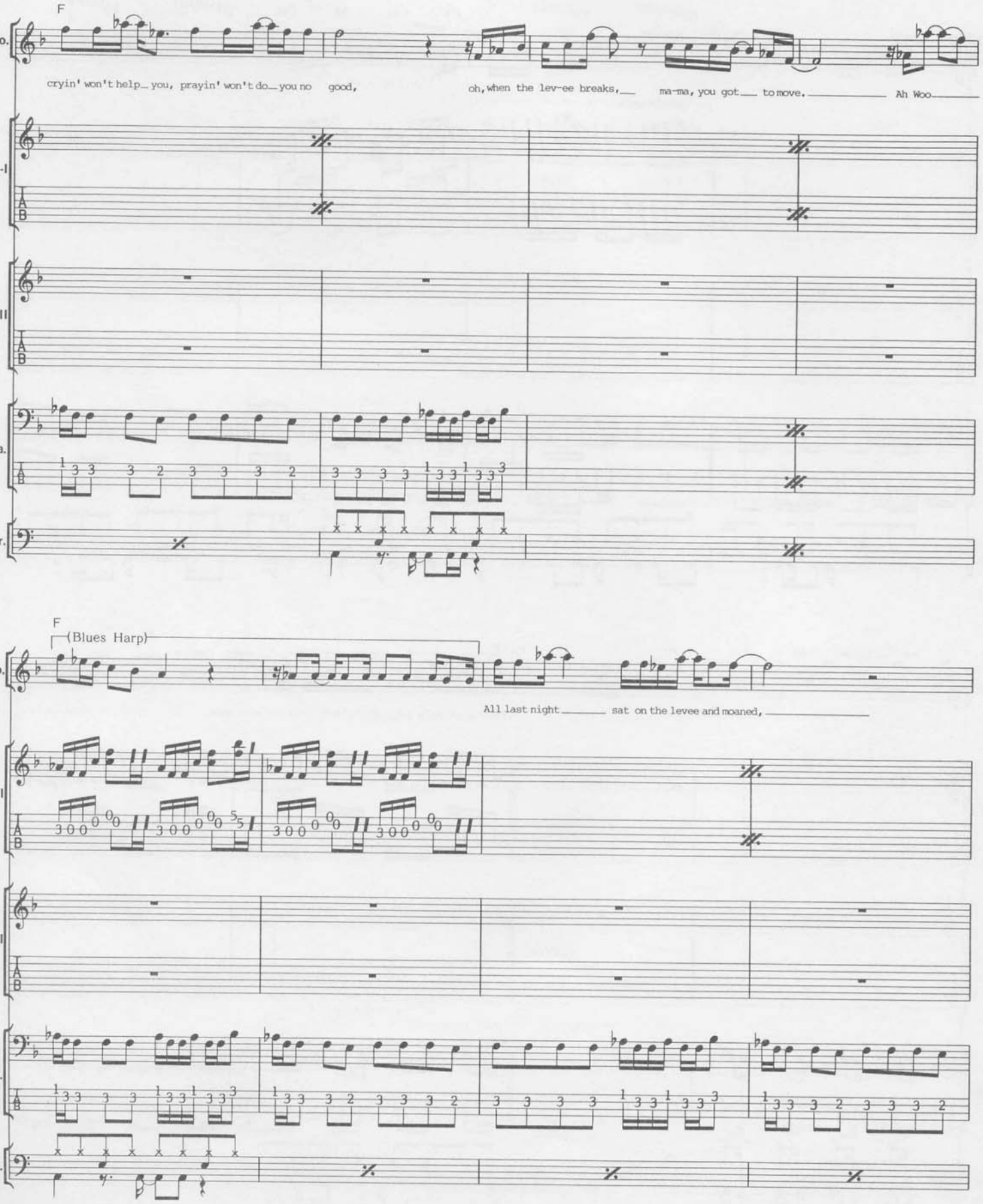

F B♭ C E♭ F
D
F
C
F B♭ C E♭ F
Vo.
Don't it make you feel bad when you're tryin' to find your way home, you don't know which way to go? If you're
4
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F C F B♭ C E♭ F C
go-in' down South, they got no work to do, if you don't know about Chi -ca -go.
Ah Ah
8va

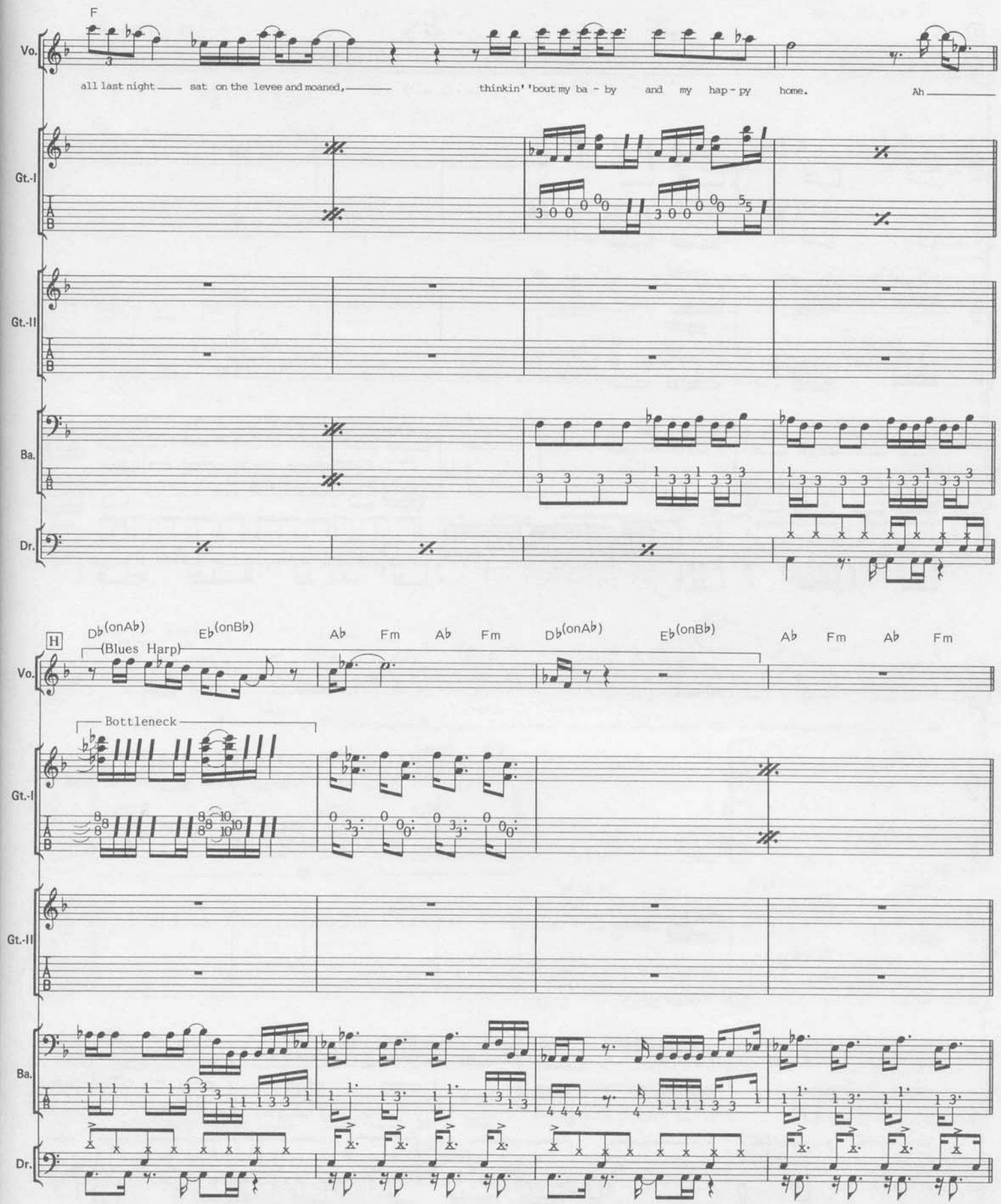

F B♭ C E♭ F
F B♭ C E♭ F
F
E (Blues Harp)
Ah Ah
(Bottleneck)
(8va)
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.

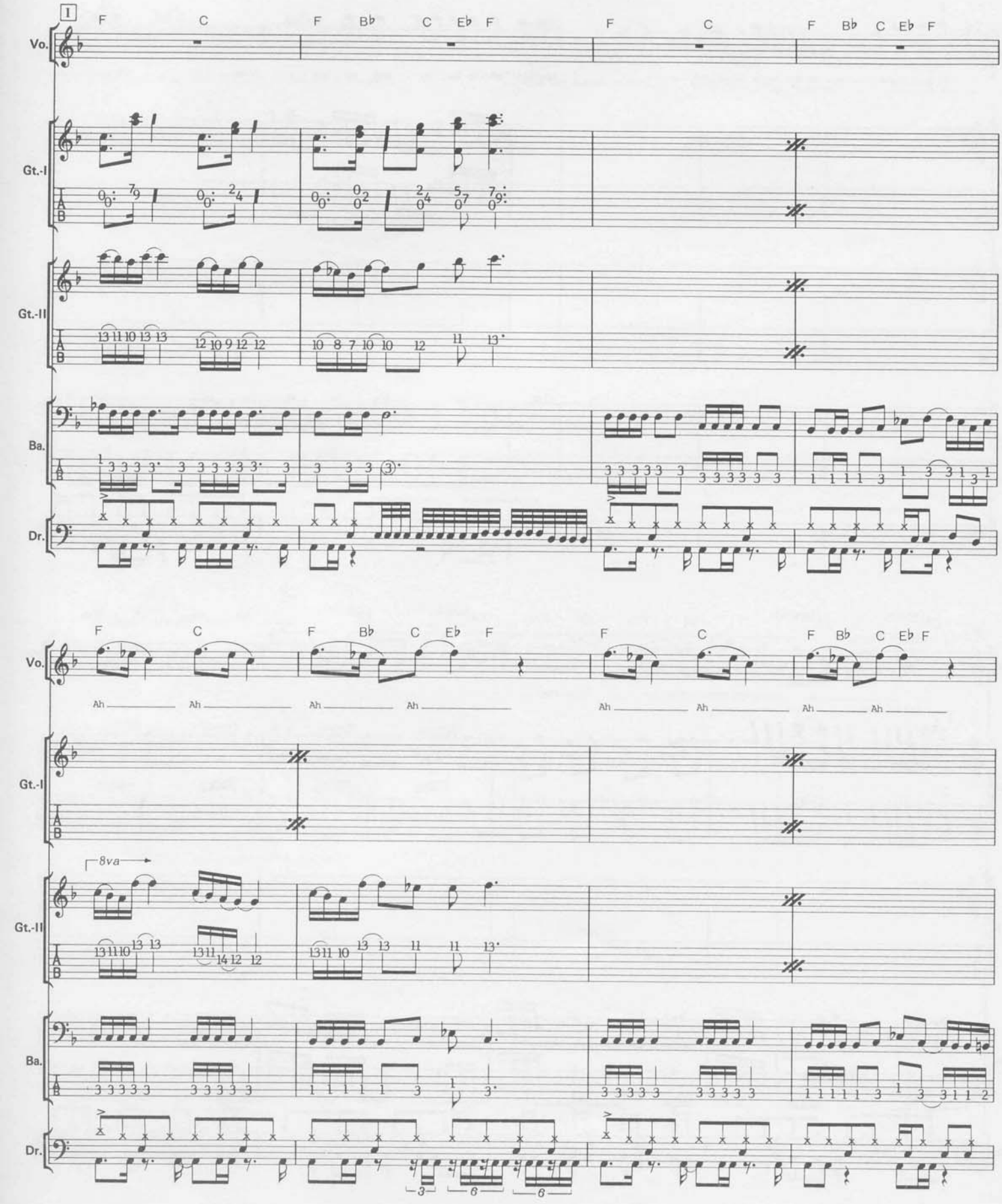

F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.

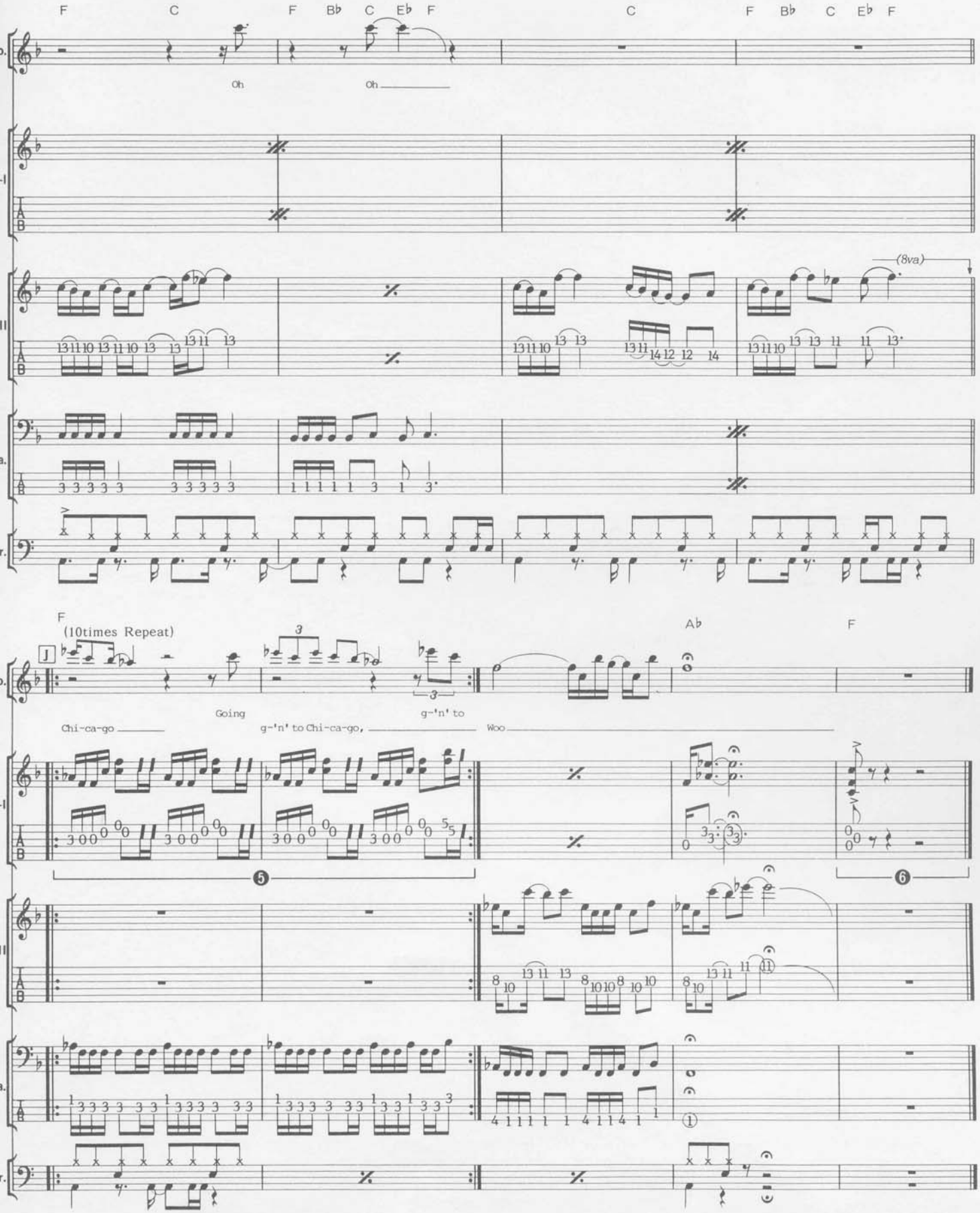

F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.


F
Db(onAb)
Eb(onBb)
Ab
Fm
Ab
Fm
Db(onAb)
Eb(onBb)
F
(Blues Harp)
Bottleneck
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
Ab
Fm
Ab
Fm
G
F
Cryin' won't help you, prayin' won't do you no good, now,


F
Vo.
cryin' won't help_ you, prayin' won't do_ you no good,
oh, when the lev-ee breaks,_ ma-ma, you got_ to move._ Ah Woo_
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
F
(Blues Harp)
Vo.
All last night_ sat on the levee and moaned,_
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.


F
Vo.
all last night sat on the levee and moaned,
thinkin''bout my ba - by and my hap - py home.
Ah
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
H
Db(onAb)
Eb(onBb)
(Blues Harp)
Ab
Fm
Ab
Fm
Db(onAb)
Eb(onBb)
Ab
Fm
Ab
Fm
Bottleneck


I
F C F B♭ C E♭ F F C F B♭ C E♭ F
Vo.
Gt.-I
Gt.-II
Ba.
Dr.
Ah
8va



❺(Gt.) : You'll need delay here too.

❻(Gt.) : Reverse echo here for the final flourish. We can't show it on the score. Experiment with digital delay.