JIMI HENDRIX

LIKE A ROLLING STONE

Hendrix' unique chordal style exposed! Creating new possibilities.

LESSON

Jimi Hendrix recognized Bob Dylan's lyrical genius and was deeply affected by his use of imagery, especially in the context of a sociopolitical commentary. So it was an apropos move when Jimi covered "Like A Rolling Stone" with the Experience at their first American engagement, the Monterey Pop festival in June of 1967. His complete show is documented on the Alan Douglas produced lp, "Jimi Plays Monterey."

In this song you'll get a chance to examine some of the facets of Hendrix' unique, almost pianistic, chordal style. To free up his other fingers to play melodies within a given chord he often fretted bass notes with his thumb, an approach analogous to the function of a keyboardist's left hand. The first example here of this unorthodox technique is when he plays an F major chord (F A C) in measure 3 and frets the root on the 6th string with his thumb. The G major (G B D) that follows is played the same way, thus making it possible for it to be sustained as the final E note is hammered on (Fig. 1).

As you learn this piece you'll become aware of numerous melodic and harmonic possibilities within these two chords that would other wise be unavailable to you if they were played with the traditional first finger barre. Besides giving you the option to fret additional notes there is also immediate access to any open strings. For example, Jimi often replaces F major with Fsus2 in this progression. By fretting with the thumb this substitution just requires the removal of the middle finger from the 3rd string. In the first verse he uses the sus2 form again on beat 3 of measure 8, but this time it's a Gsus2 (Fig. 2). It is played by transposing all the notes of the Fsus2 up a major second or two frets, which necessitates playing in the 2nd position. This shift is accomplished by fretting D, the fifth of the chord, on the 3rd fret of the 2nd

figure 1

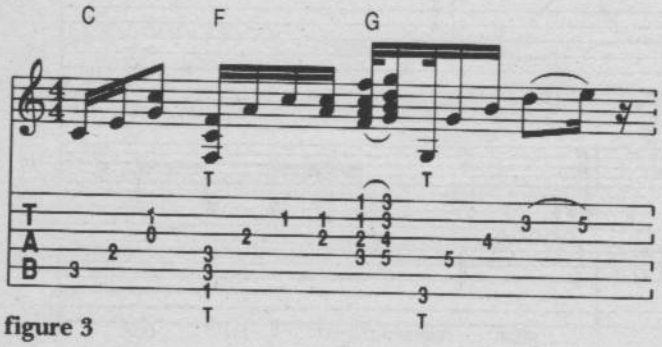
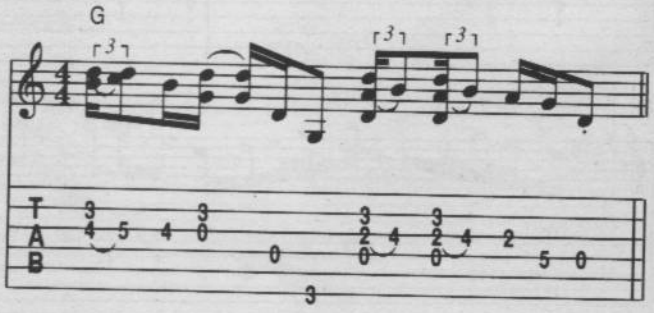


figure 2



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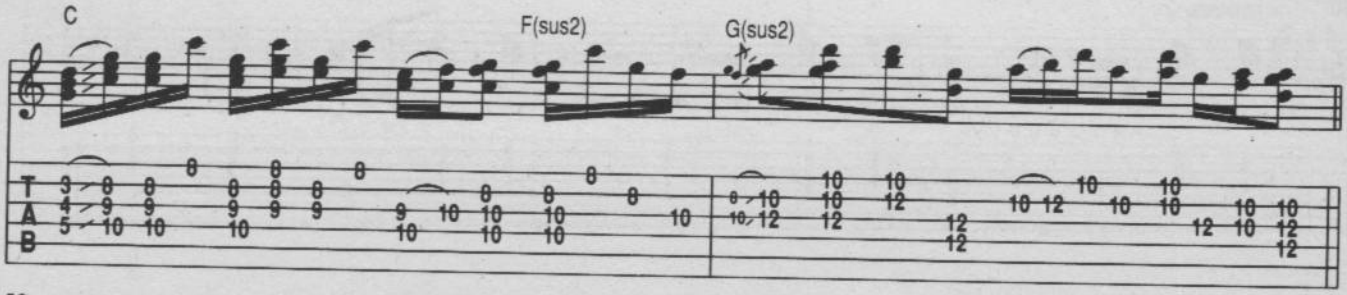
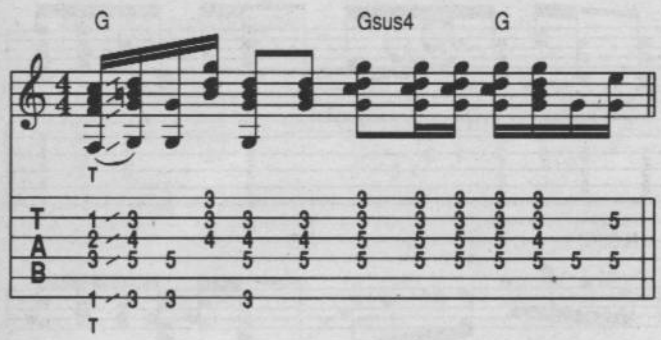


string with the middle finger and the A note, the suspended second, can then be played on the 2nd fret of the 3rd string with the index finger. By fretting B, the third of the chord, on the 4th fret of the 3rd string with the ring finger the suspension is resolved. G, the root, was already fretted by the thumb on the 6th string between beats 2 and 3. In the two measures preceding the first verse and in measures 5-6 of the first chorus he uses an additional form of the sus2 in the upper register (Fig. 3).

Another common suspension also appears in measure 8 known as a sus4 (Fig. 4). Whereas the sus2 replaces the third of a chord with the note directly below it, that is the second degree of its related mode or scale, the exact opposite is true with the sus4. In this case, the chord in question is a Gsus4 and the third is temporarily replaced by the note above it, the fourth degree of its related mode. In measure 1 of the first verse you'll note that Jimi commences using the sus4 idea in conjunction with a Dm7 (Fig. 5).

It should be obvious that with some formal training in music theory one can go a step beyond just imitating Jimi and begin to understand his music a little better. If the idea of nonharmonic tones is new to you, then for your first homework assignment look for other examples of sus2 and sus4 chords in your favorite songs.

figure 4



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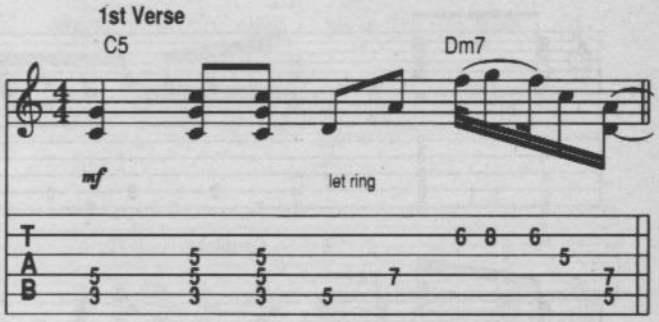
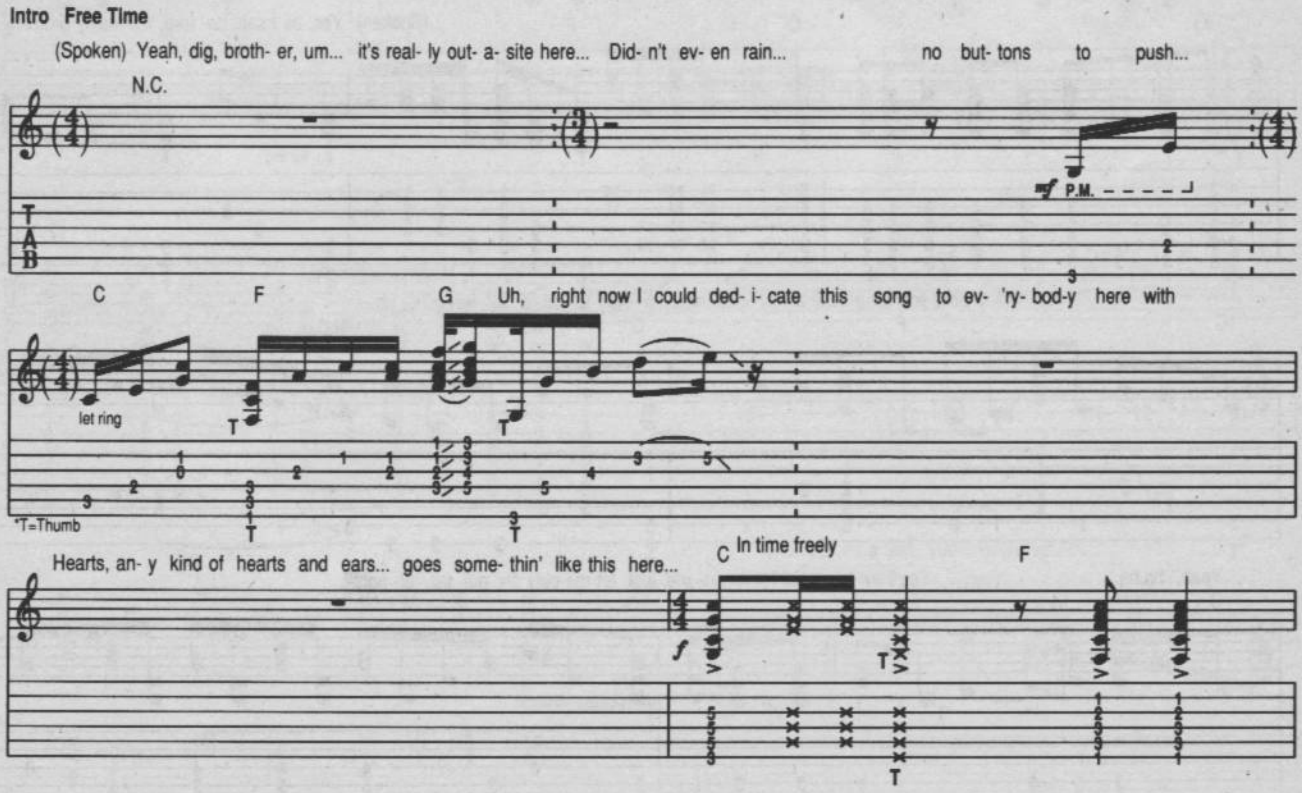


LIKE A ROLLING STONE

Words and Music by
BOB DYLAN



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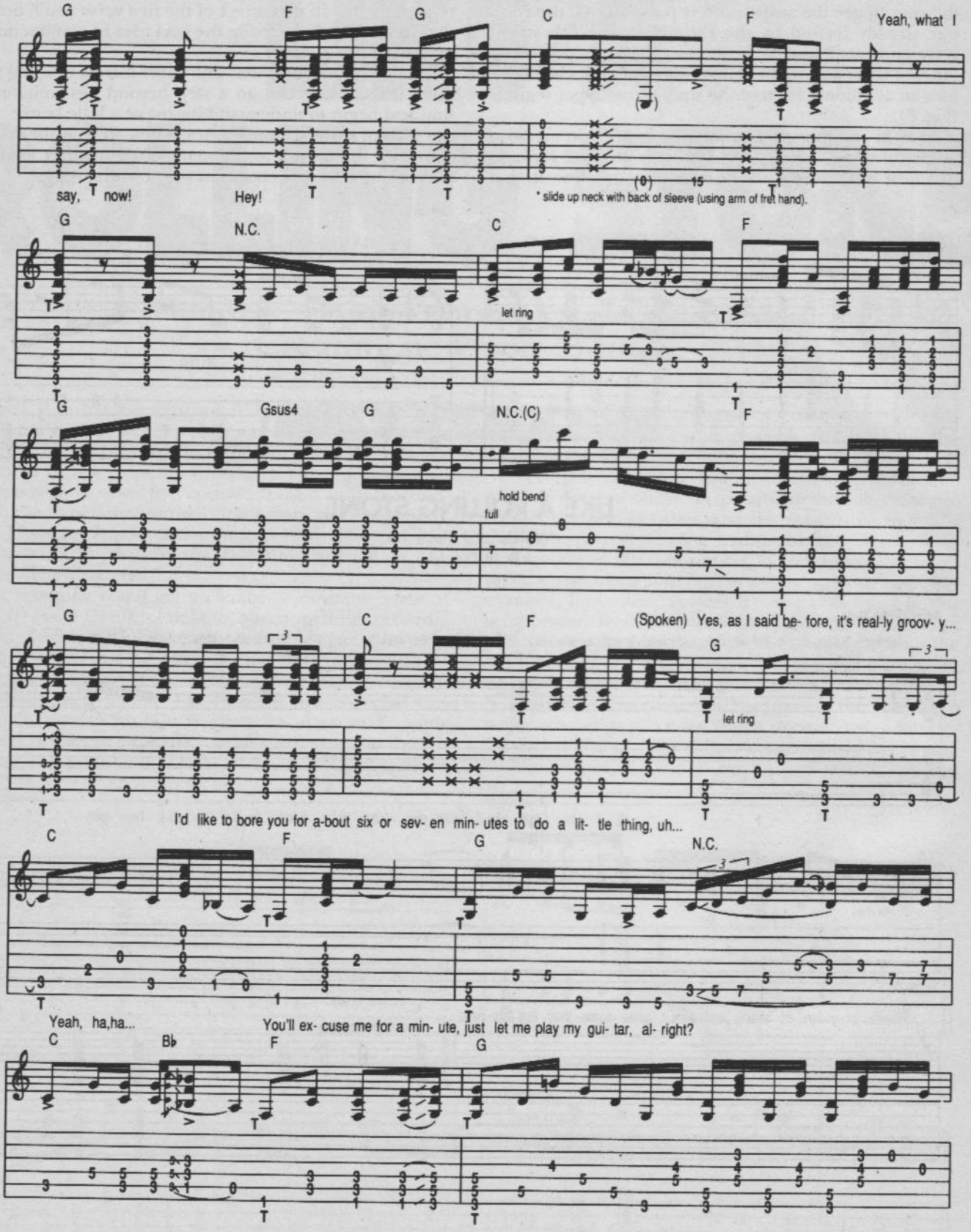
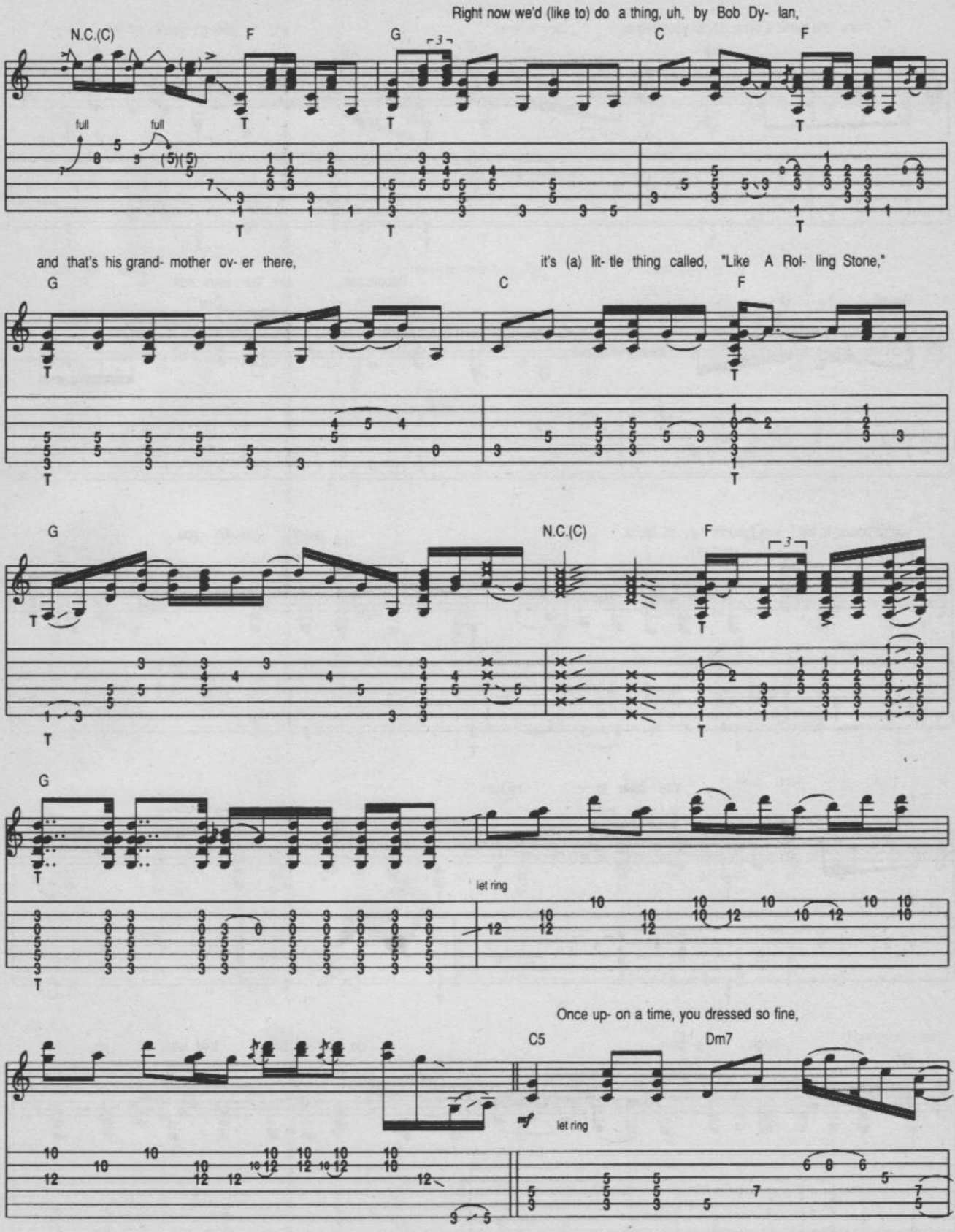
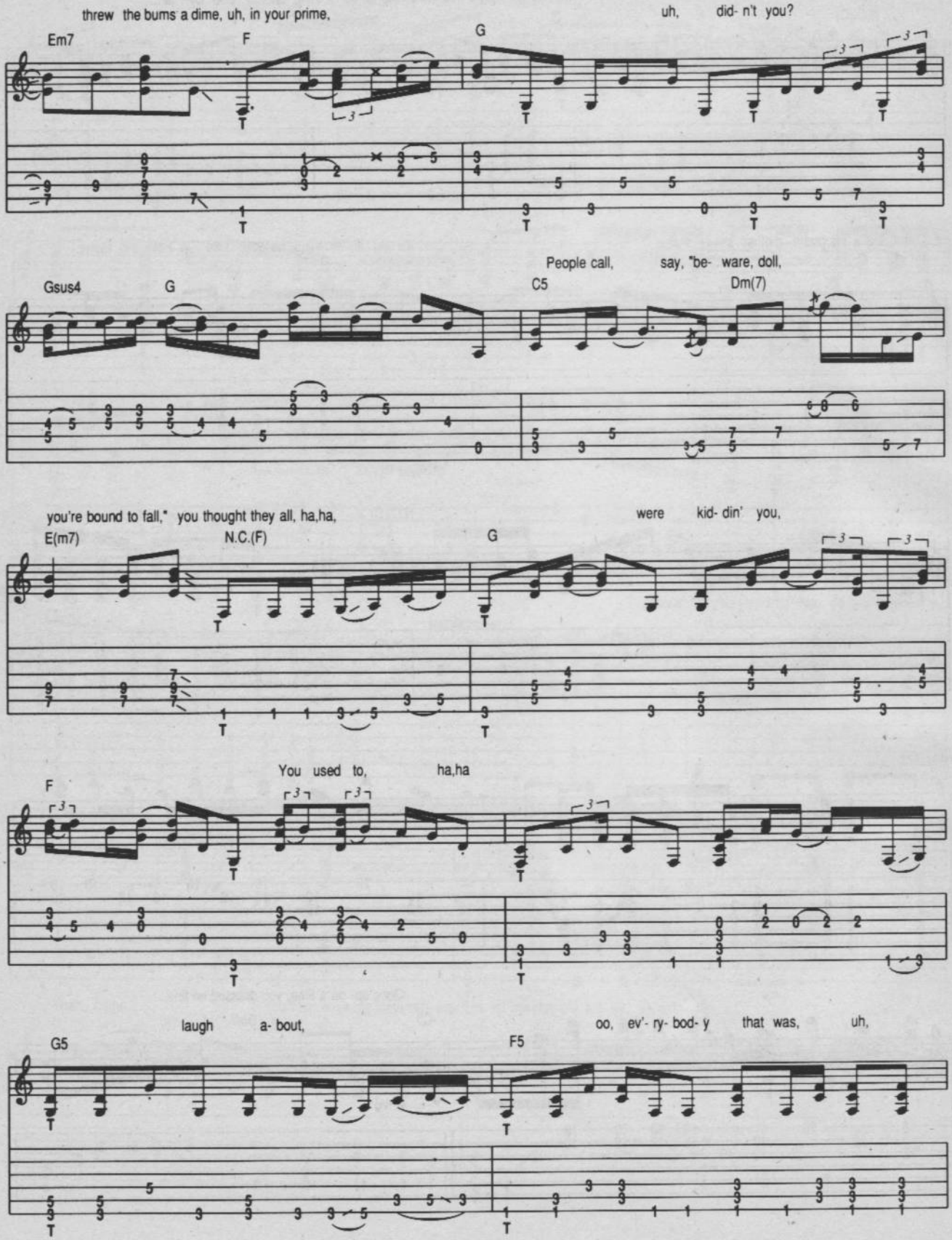
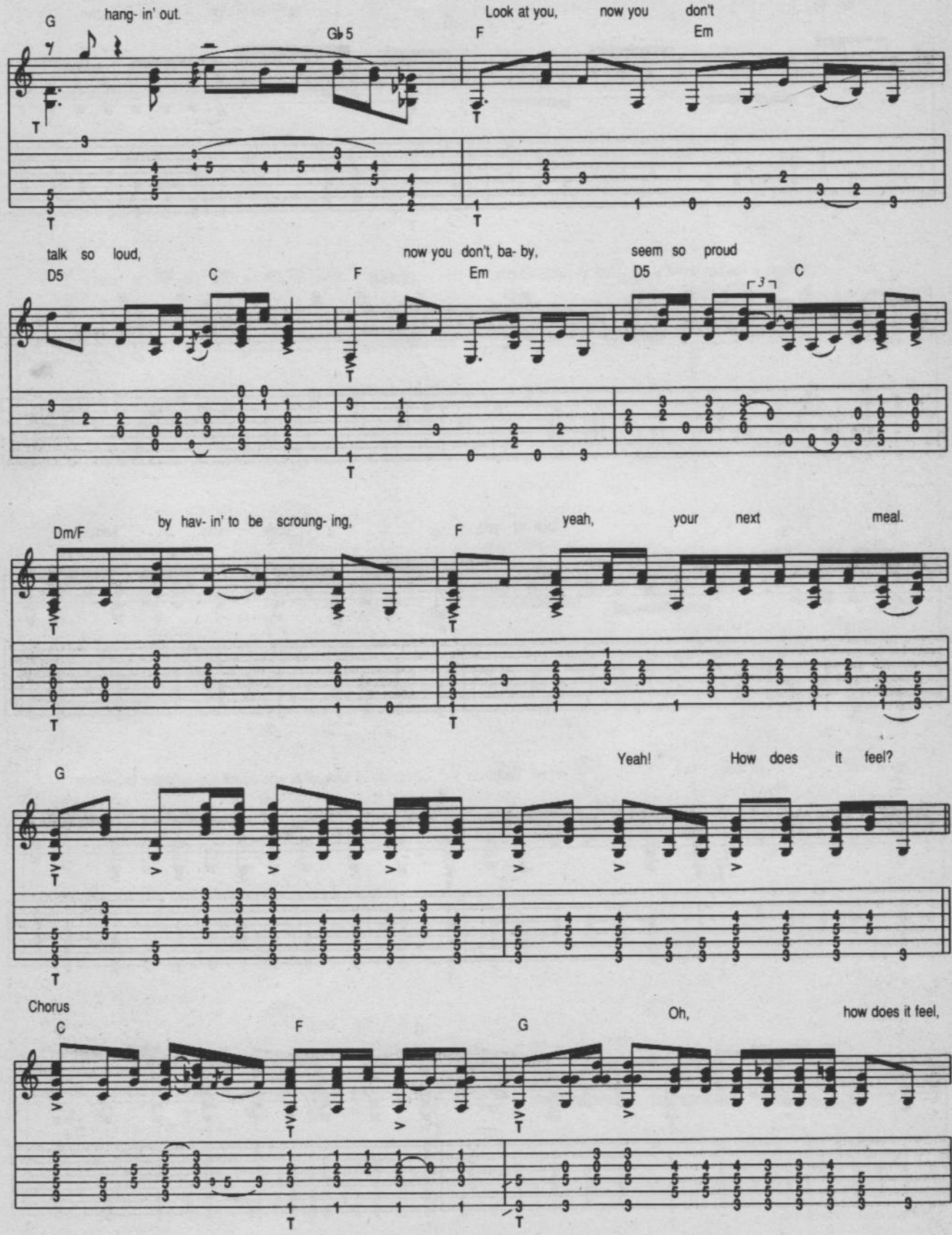
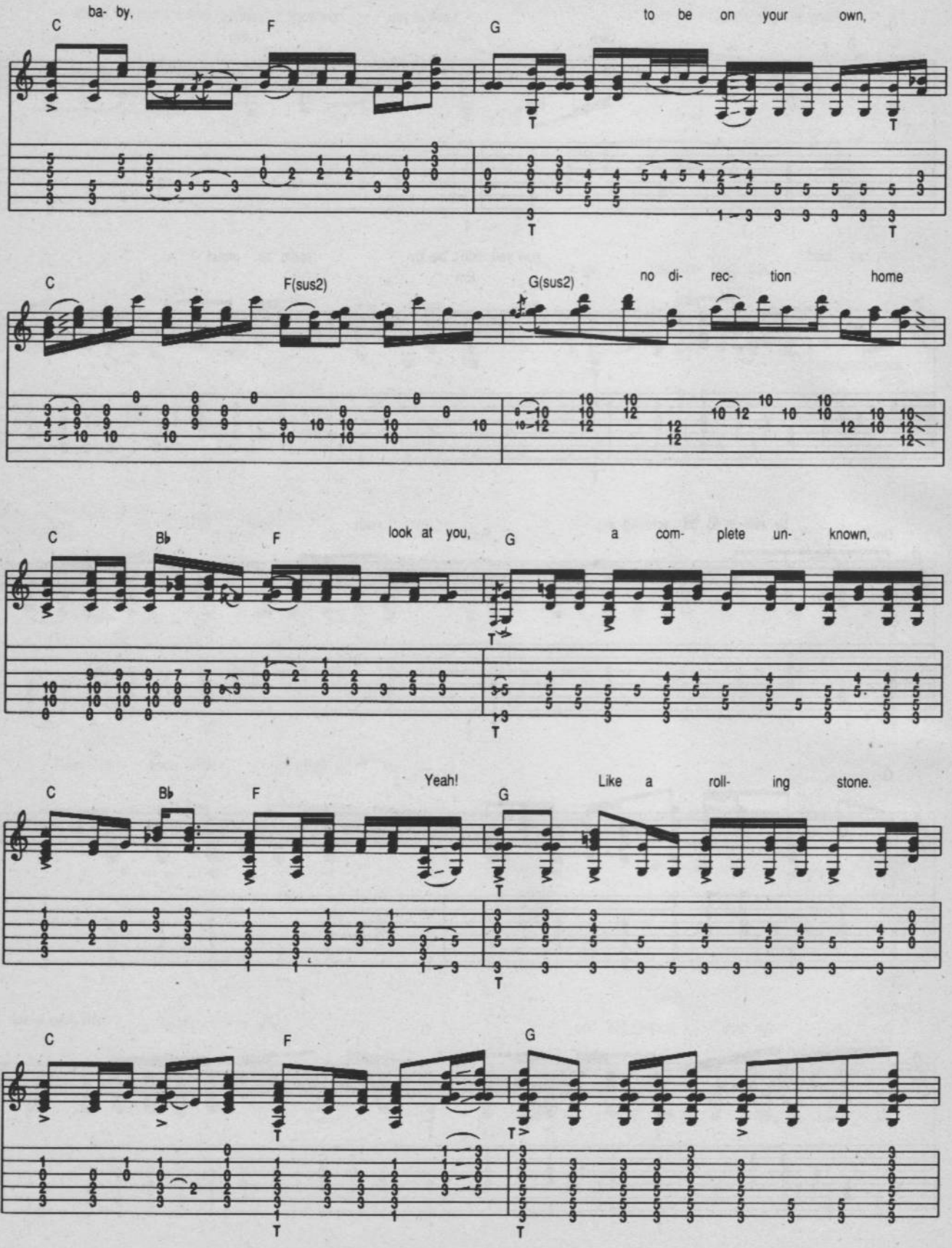
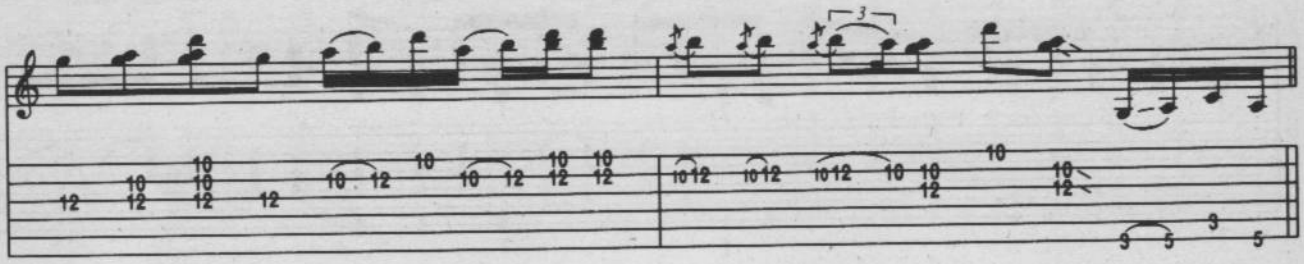

G F G C F Yeah, what I
say, now! Hey!
* slide up neck with back of sleeve (using arm of fret hand).
G N.C. C F
let ring
G Gsus4 G N.C.(C) F
hold bend
full
G C F (Spoken) Yes, as I said be- fore, it's real-ly groov- y...
G
let ring
I'd like to bore you for a-bout six or sev- en min- utes to do a lit- tle thing, uh...
C F G N.C.
Yeah, ha,ha...
You'll ex- cuse me for a min- ute, just let me play my gui- tar, al- right?
C B♭ F G

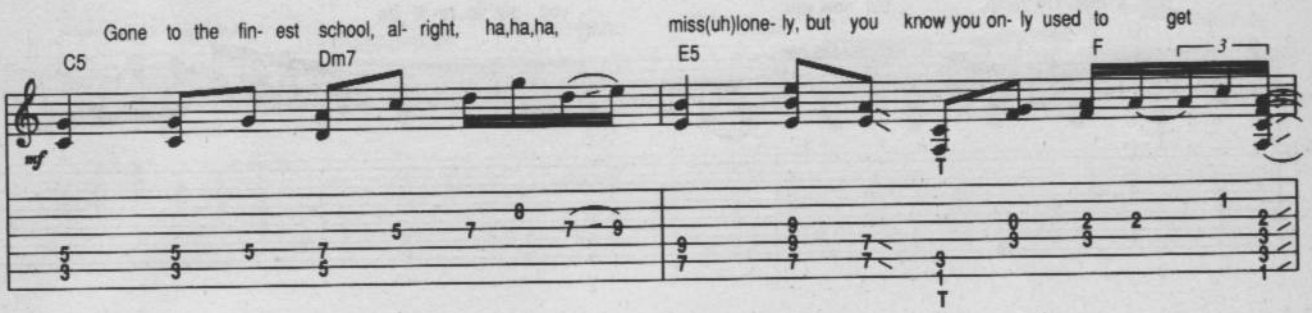

Right now we'd (like to) do a thing, uh, by Bob Dy- lan,
N.C.(C)
F
G
C
F
full
full
and that's his grand- mother ov- er there,
it's (a) lit- tle thing called, "Like A Rol- ling Stone,"
G
C
F
G
N.C.(C)
F
G
let ring
Once up- on a time, you dressed so fine,
C5
Dm7
let ring

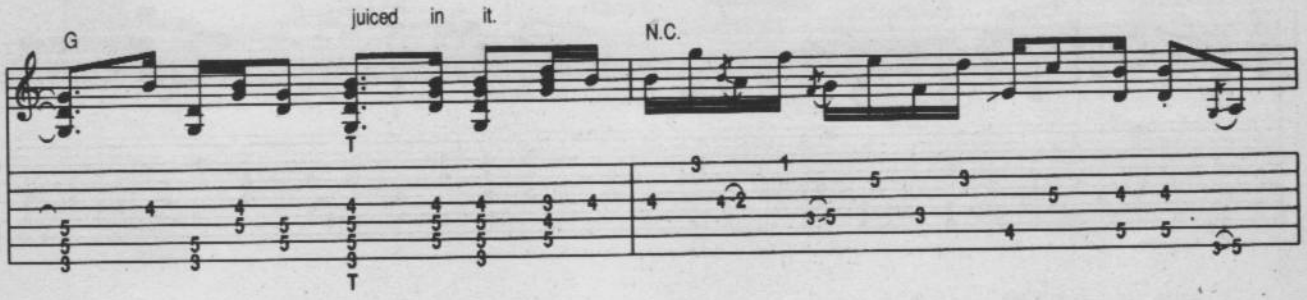

threw the bums a dime, uh, in your prime,
uh, did- n't you?
Em7
F
G
People call, say, "be- ware, doll,
Gsus4
G
C5
Dm(7)
you're bound to fall," you thought they all, ha,ha,
were kid- din' you,
E(m7)
N.C.(F)
G
You used to, ha,ha
F
laugh a- bout,
oo, ev'- ry- bod- y that was, uh,
G5
F5

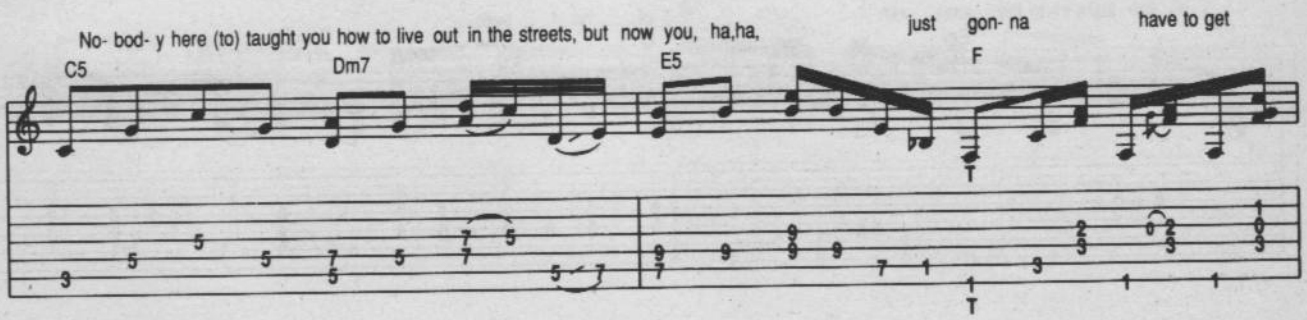

G
hang- in' out.
Gb5
F
Look at you, now you don't
Em
talk so loud,
D5
C
F
now you don't, ba- by,
Em
seem so proud
D5
C
Dm/F
by hav- in' to be scroung- ing,
F
yeah, your next meal.
G
Yeah! How does it feel?
Chorus
C
F
G
Oh, how does it feel,

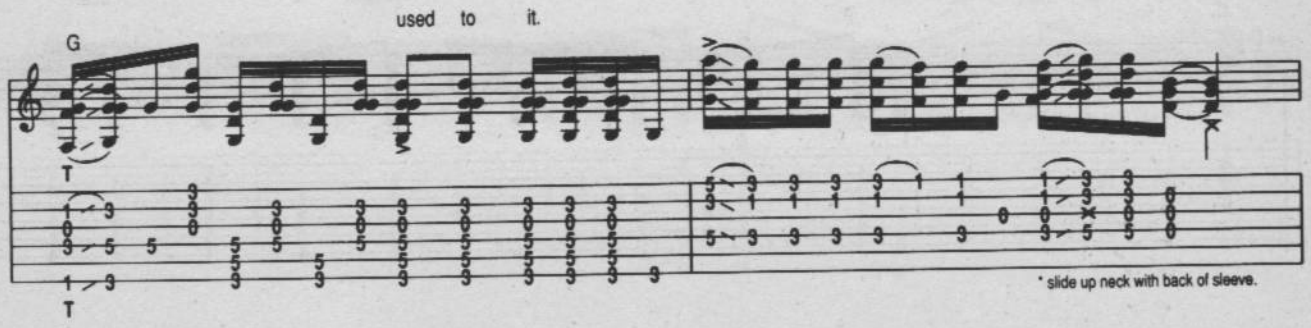

C
ba- by,
F
G
to be on your own,
C
F(sus2)
G(sus2)
no di- rec- tion home
C
B♭
F
look at you,
G
a com- plete un- known,
C
B♭
F
Yeah!
G
Like a roll- ing stone.
C
F
G

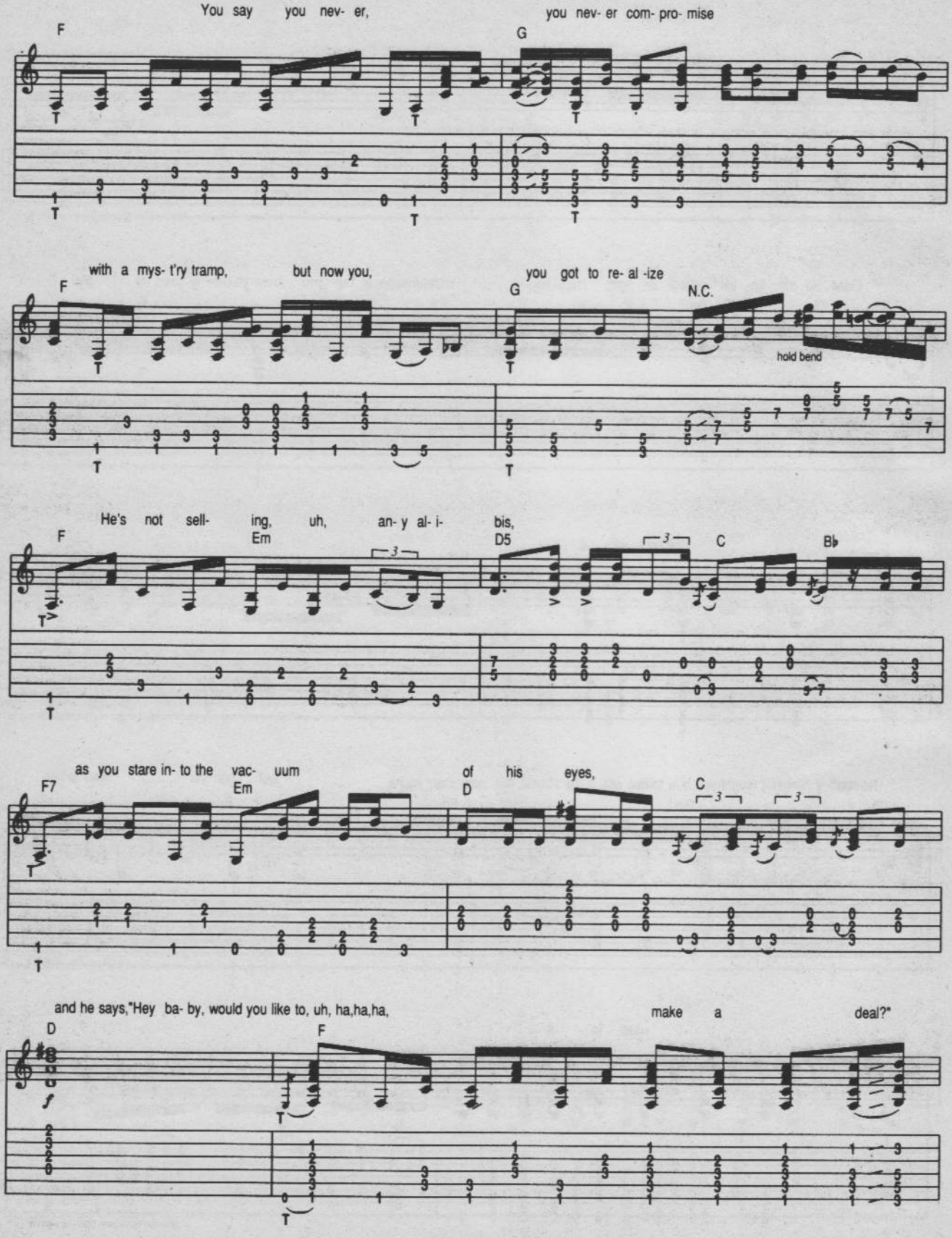


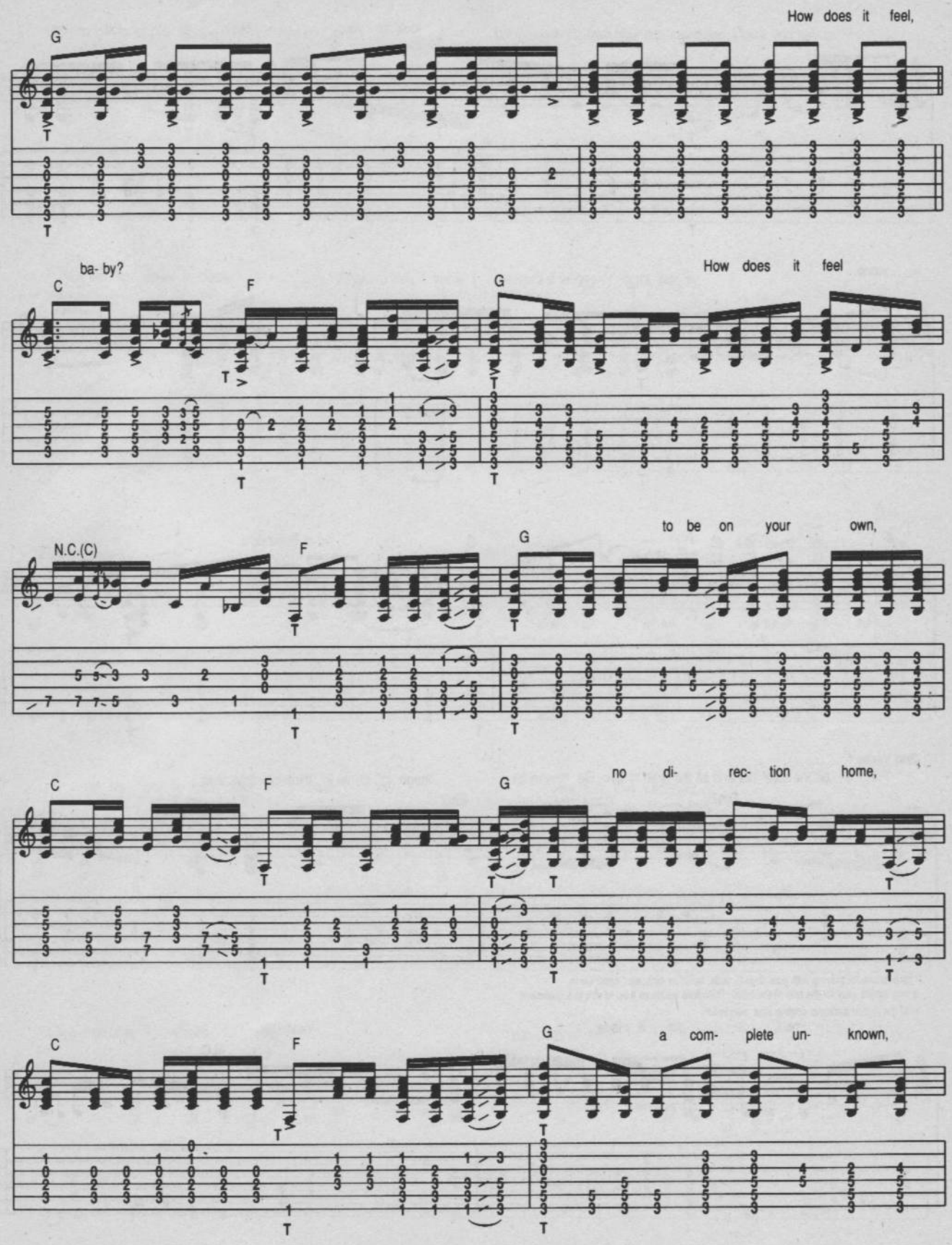

Gone to the fin- est school, al- right, ha,ha,ha,
C5
Dm7
E5
miss(uh)lone- ly, but you know you on- ly used to get
F

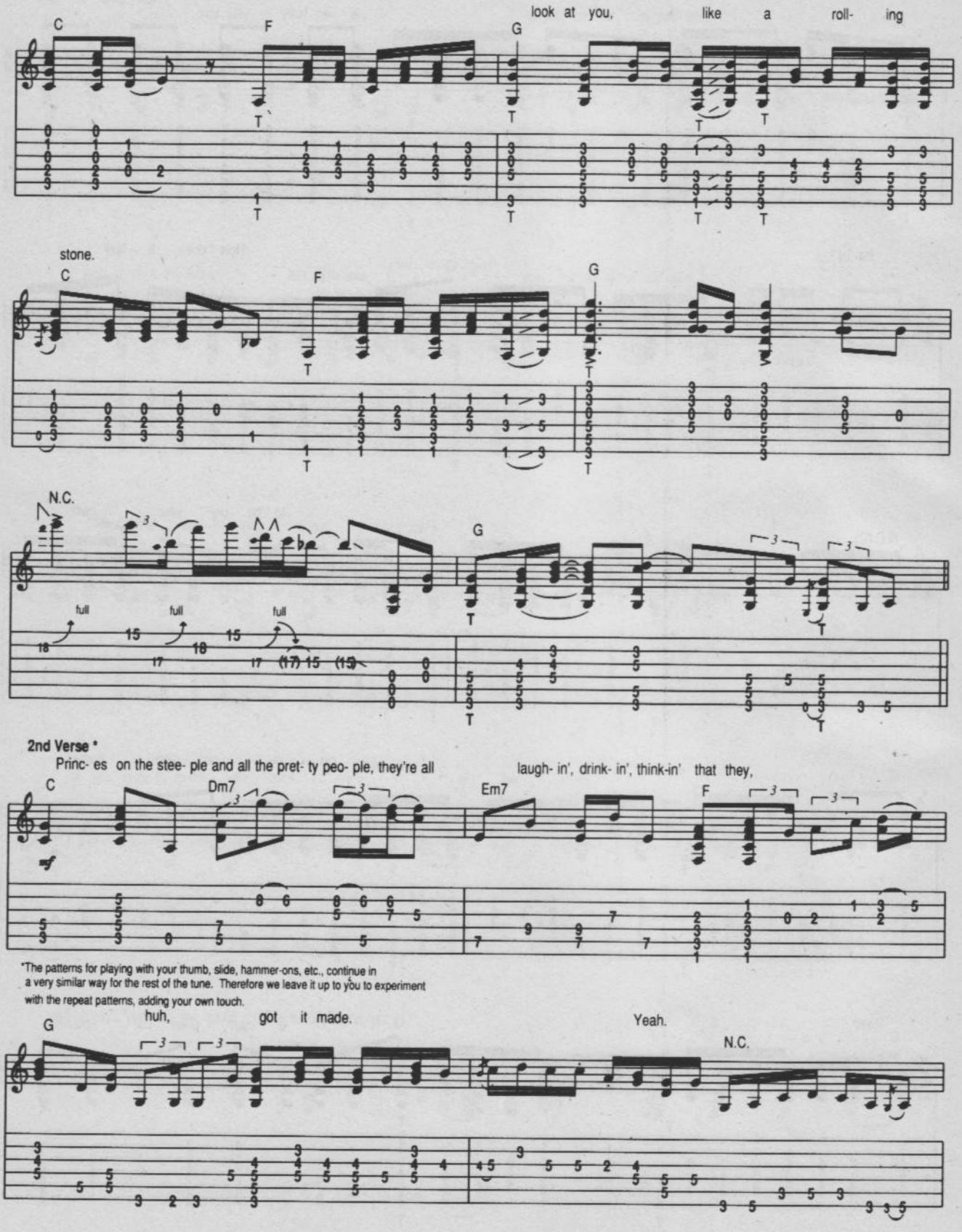

juiced in it.
G
N.C.

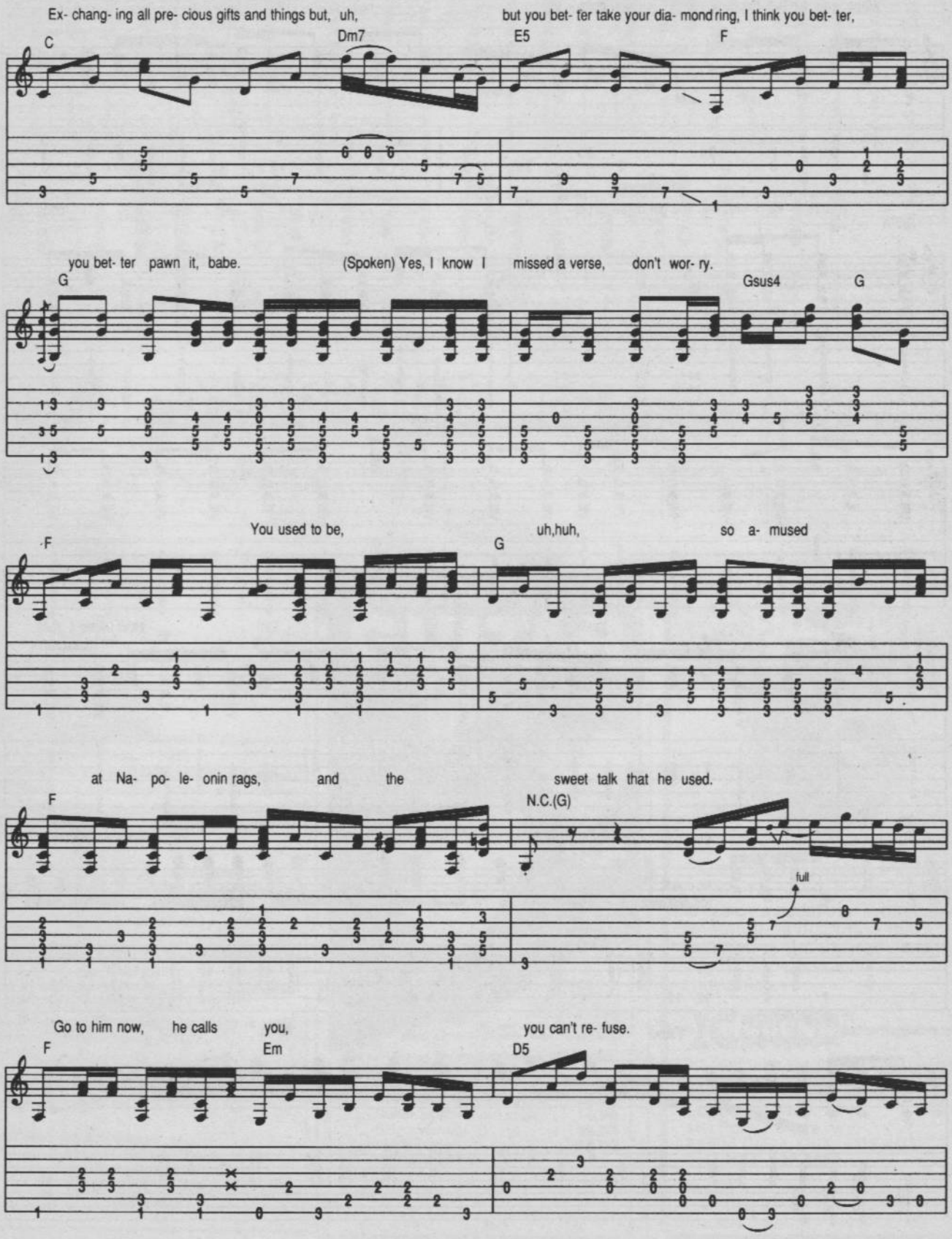

No- bod- y here (to) taught you how to live out in the streets, but now you, ha,ha,
just gon- na have to get
C5
Dm7
E5
F

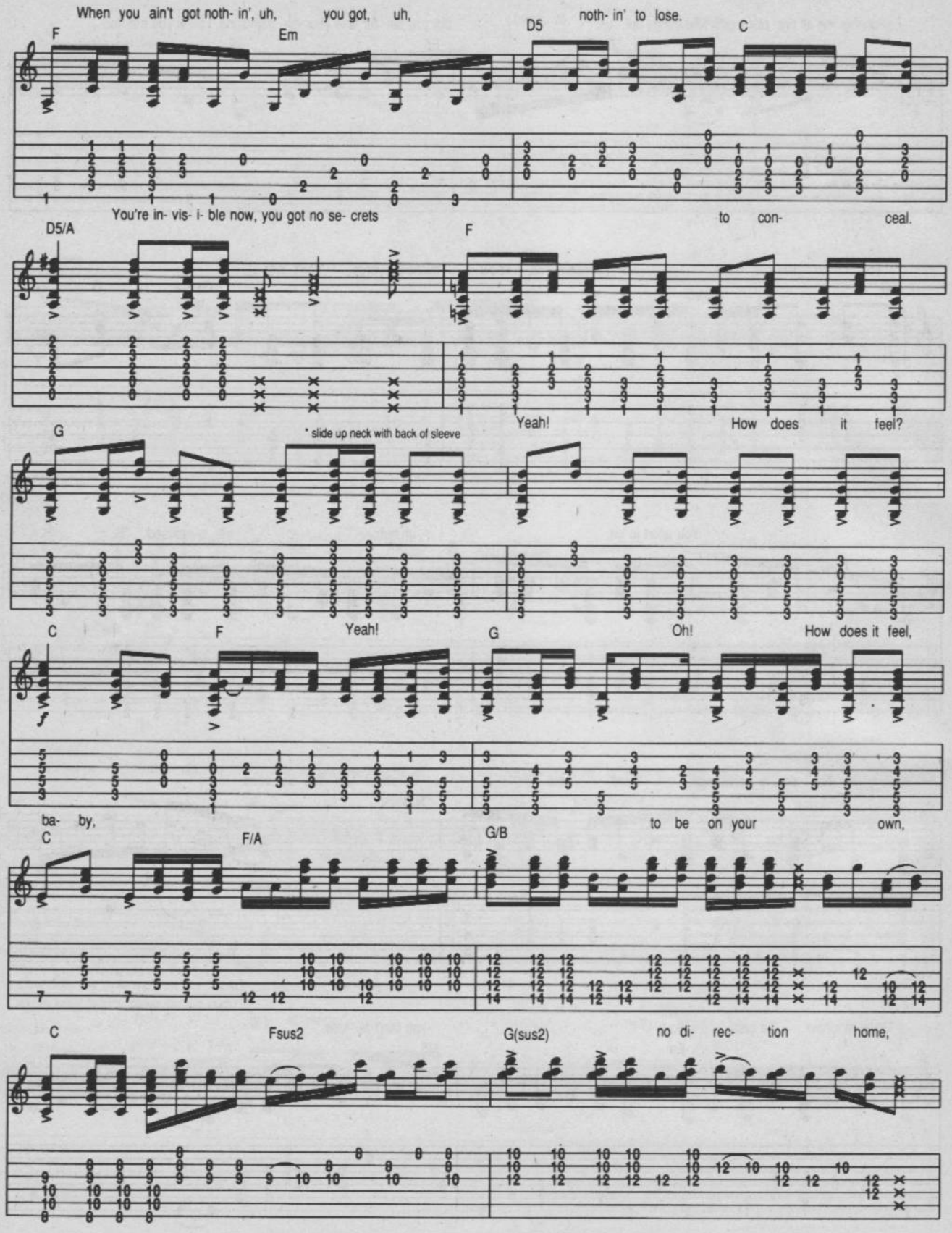

used to it.
G
* slide up neck with back of sleeve.

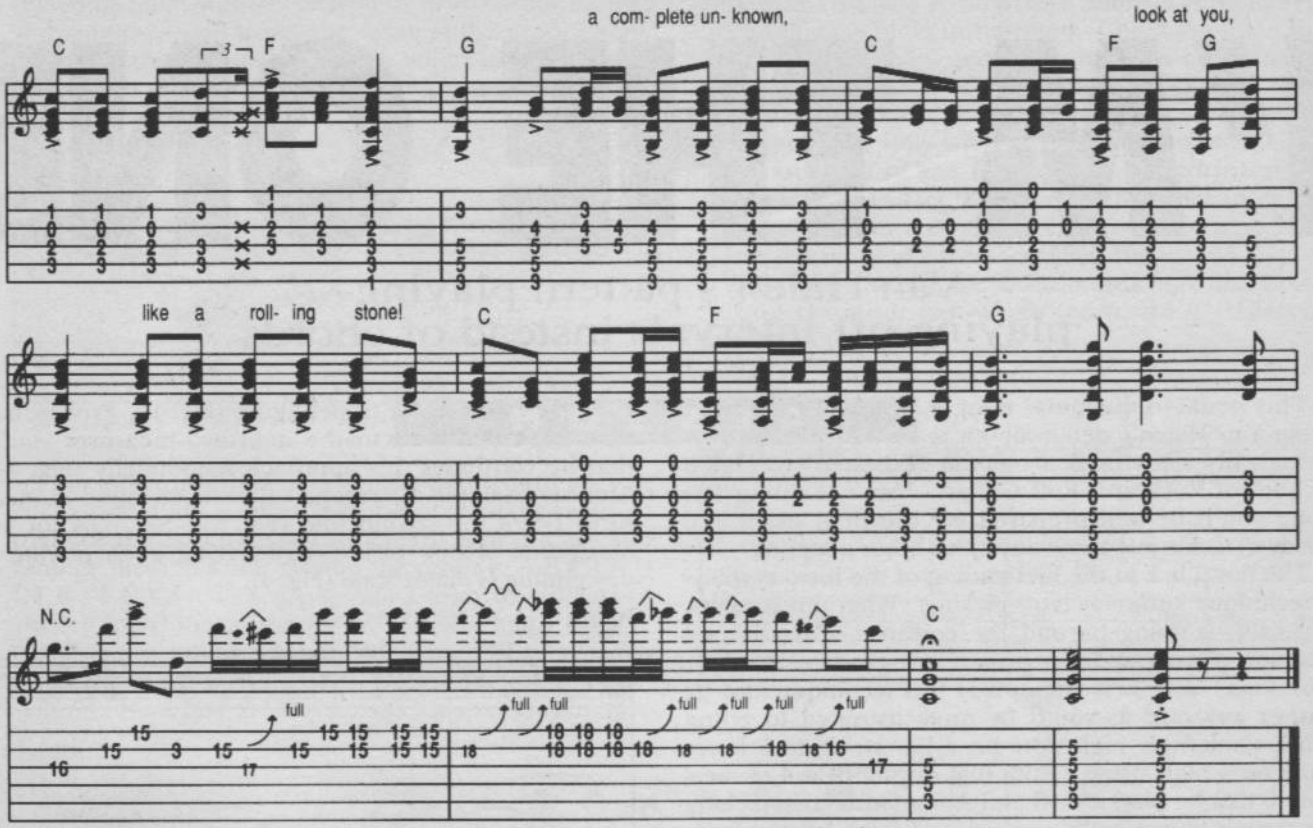

You say you nev- er, you nev- er com- pro- mise
F
G
with a mys- t'ry tramp, but now you, you got to re- al -ize
F
G
N.C.
hold bend
He's not sell- ing, uh, an- y al- i- bis,
F
Em
D5
C
B♭
as you stare in- to the vac- uum of his eyes,
F7
Em
D
C
and he says,"Hey ba- by, would you like to, uh, ha,ha,ha, make a deal?"
D
F


How does it feel,
G
ba- by?
C
F
G
How does it feel
N.C.(C)
F
G
to be on your own,
C
F
G
no di- rec- tion home,
C
F
G
a com- plete un- known,


C
F
G
look at you, like a roll- ing
stone.
C
F
G
N.C.
G
full
full
full
2nd Verse *
Princ- es on the stee- ple and all the pret- ty peo- ple, they're all laugh- in', drink- in', think-in' that they,
C
Dm7
Em7
F
*The patterns for playing with your thumb, slide, hammer-ons, etc., continue in a very similar way for the rest of the tune. Therefore we leave it up to you to experiment with the repeat patterns, adding your own touch.
G
huh, got it made.
Yeah.
N.C.


Ex- chang- ing all pre- cious gifts and things but, uh,
but you bet- ter take your dia- mond ring, I think you bet- ter,
C
Dm7
E5
F
you bet- ter pawn it, babe.
(Spoken) Yes, I know I
missed a verse,
don't wor- ry.
G
Gsus4
G
You used to be,
uh,huh,
so a- mused
F
G
at Na- po- le- onin rags,
and
the
sweet talk that he used.
F
N.C.(G)
full
Go to him now,
he calls
you,
you can't re- fuse.
F
Em
D5


When you ain't got noth- in', uh, you got, uh, noth- in' to lose.
F
Em
D5
C
You're in- vis- i- ble now, you got no se- crets to con- ceal.
D5/A
F
Yeah! How does it feel?
G
* slide up neck with back of sleeve
C
F
Yeah!
G
Oh! How does it feel,
ba- by,
C
F/A
G/B
to be on your own,
C
Fsus2
G(sus2)
no di- rec- tion home,



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