The Fish Who Played Hooky

and Other Stories

Max Wolpert

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On Using this Book

Each tune in this book is built on the structure of a traditional dance form. Some hew fairly close to that tradition; some go off into outer space. In the name of this book's accessibility to musicians of all stylistic backgrounds, the following front matter is provided to describe ornaments that may be unfamiliar. Similarly, the printed bowings provided are a good starting point for string players who may not be fluent in the traditional styles (or riffs on traditional styles) found in this book.
<u>However....</u>
This material, as with all the material in this book (ornaments, bowings, chord progressions, and the notes and rhythms of the tunes themselves), should be treated as suggestions, or ideas which hopefully inspire, rather than ironbound absolutes. Let this book jumpstart your own creativity. Put the ornaments from one tune in a different one! Try tunes faster, or slower, or swung, or not! Create variations! Reharmonize! Take solos! Decompose and recompose! In a word....play.

Rolls

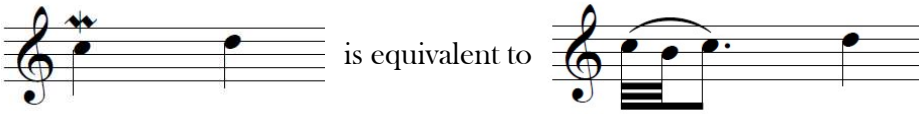
~ indicates a roll. Rolls consist of rapid grace notes above the target note, back to the target note, below the target note, and finally back to the target note again.

Bends and Neutral Pitches

) above a note indicates a bend. Slightly slide upward into the indicated note, on the beat. If desired, the target note may be a neutral pitch somewhere between a natural and a sharp.

Mordents

𝆏 indicates a lower mordent. All mordents should as short and fast as possible, and fall on the beat.

 is equivalent to

Ghost Notes

Notes with **small noteheads** should be read as ghost notes. These notes should still be played (so as to keep the rhythmic activity and integrity of the right hand) but they can be so small that the actual sound may or may not be audible to the audience, and may only be heard as a rhythmic attack without defined pitch content. The goal is to create a perpetual, steady rhythmic framework within the right hand, and, rather than **accent** the notes which constitute the melody, **reduce** or "carve away" these ghost notes which **do not** constitute the melody.

Nonstandard Tuning

The last tune of this book, "Snake Doctor," was written in mind of the fiddle tuned to DDAD, a traditional old-time tuning. Two staves are provided for this tune; the top staff consists of the actual pitches of the tune, and may be used to play the tune in standard tuning. The bottom staff is notated **positionally;** performers may read from this staff as though in standard tuning. Notes on this staff given a separate down-facing stem should be played stopped on the lowest string.

Finally, if you enjoy playing in nonstandard tunings, I encourage you to experiment with other tunings for other tunes! Most musical traditions have a rich variety of interesting tunings for stringed instruments (including, by the way, the Western classical tradition well through the lifetime of J.S. Bach). To start out, try playing "Card-Carrying Carrot Carriers" in slack-bass tuning (EDAE), or "Sealskin" in cross-G tuning (GDGD). Go wild!

Listening

Lastly and most importantly, the reader is encouraged to remember that music does not live in books. Listen, to recordings old and new, to musicians across a wide spectrum of styles and homelands. Listen with an open mind and voracious curiosity. A complete list of the musicians and recordings that inspired the tunes in this book would be longer than the book itself; if you're curious, visit www.maxwolpertmusic.com to get in touch with me – I would be happy to pass along the names of my favorites!

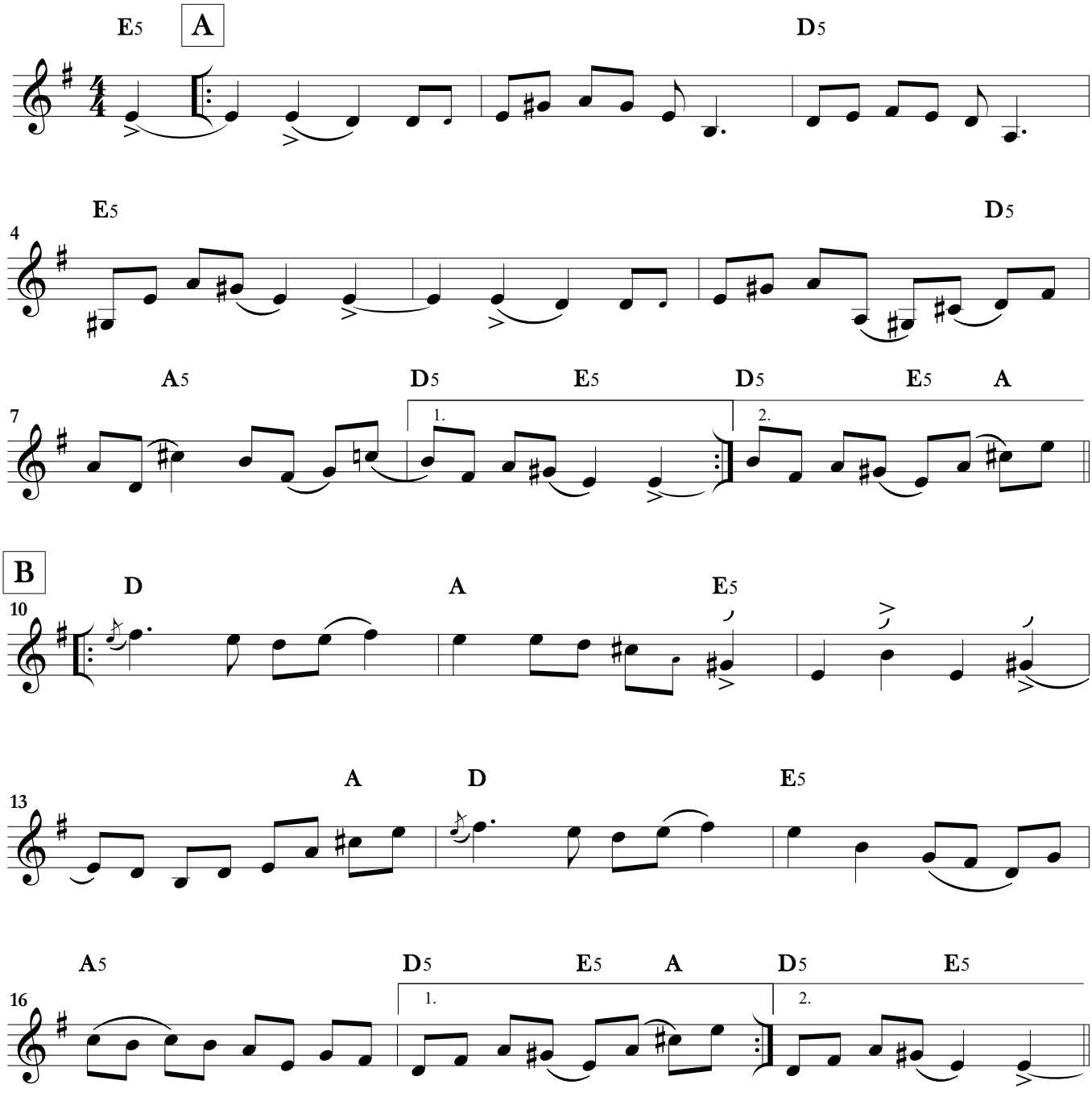
Acknowledgements

This book was made possible by a grant from the City of Boulder Office of Arts + Culture. Stephen Brackett, Damon Wood, Patrick Sites, Ryan Sapp, Jen Herling, David Becher, and Lisa White all contributed tune titles, whether through intention or sheer scintillating conversation.

Card-Carrying Carrot Carriers

Max Wolpert

Laid-back old-time ♩ = 72



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Halstad

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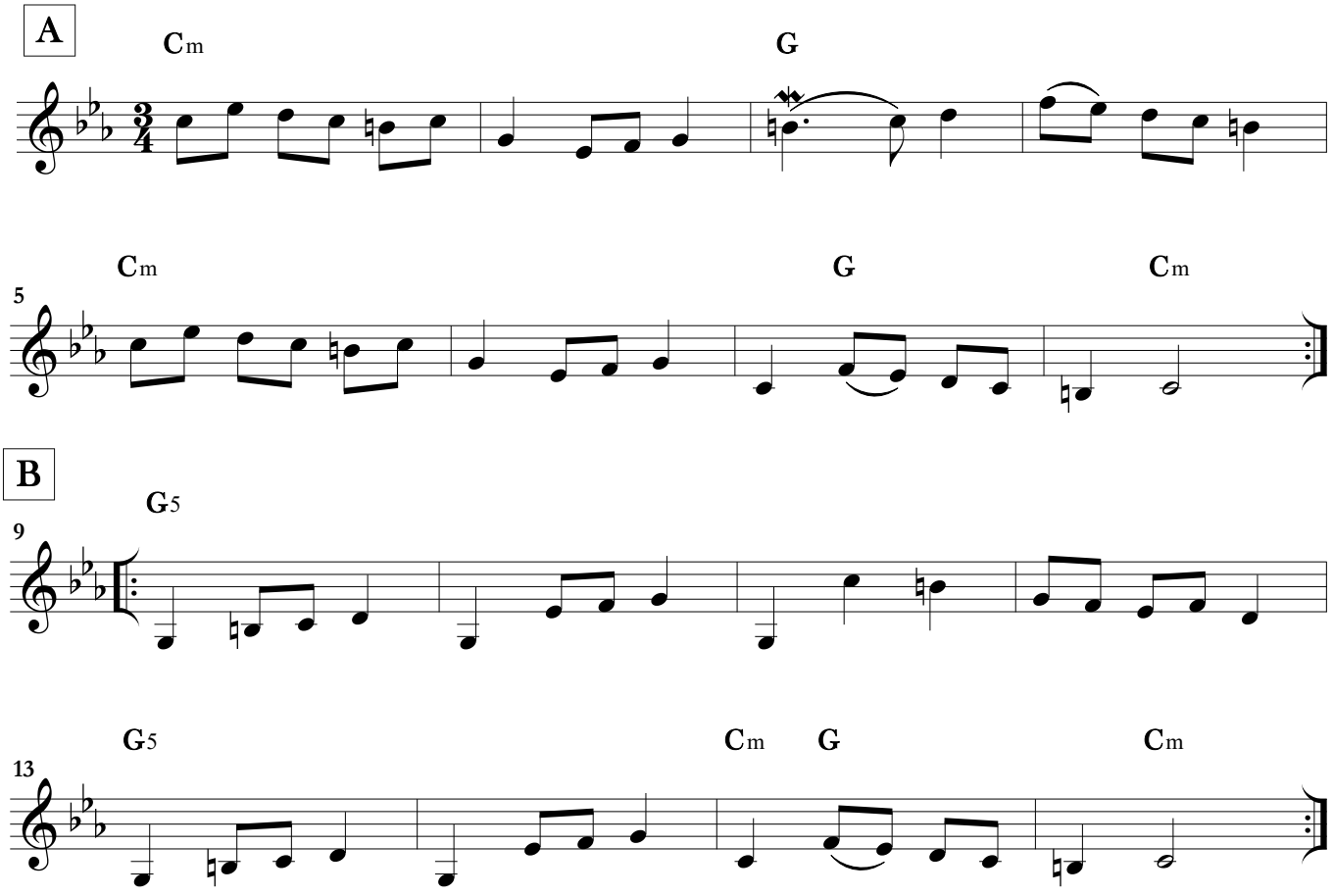
Långdans ♩ = 108 (straight ♪s)



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Sealskin

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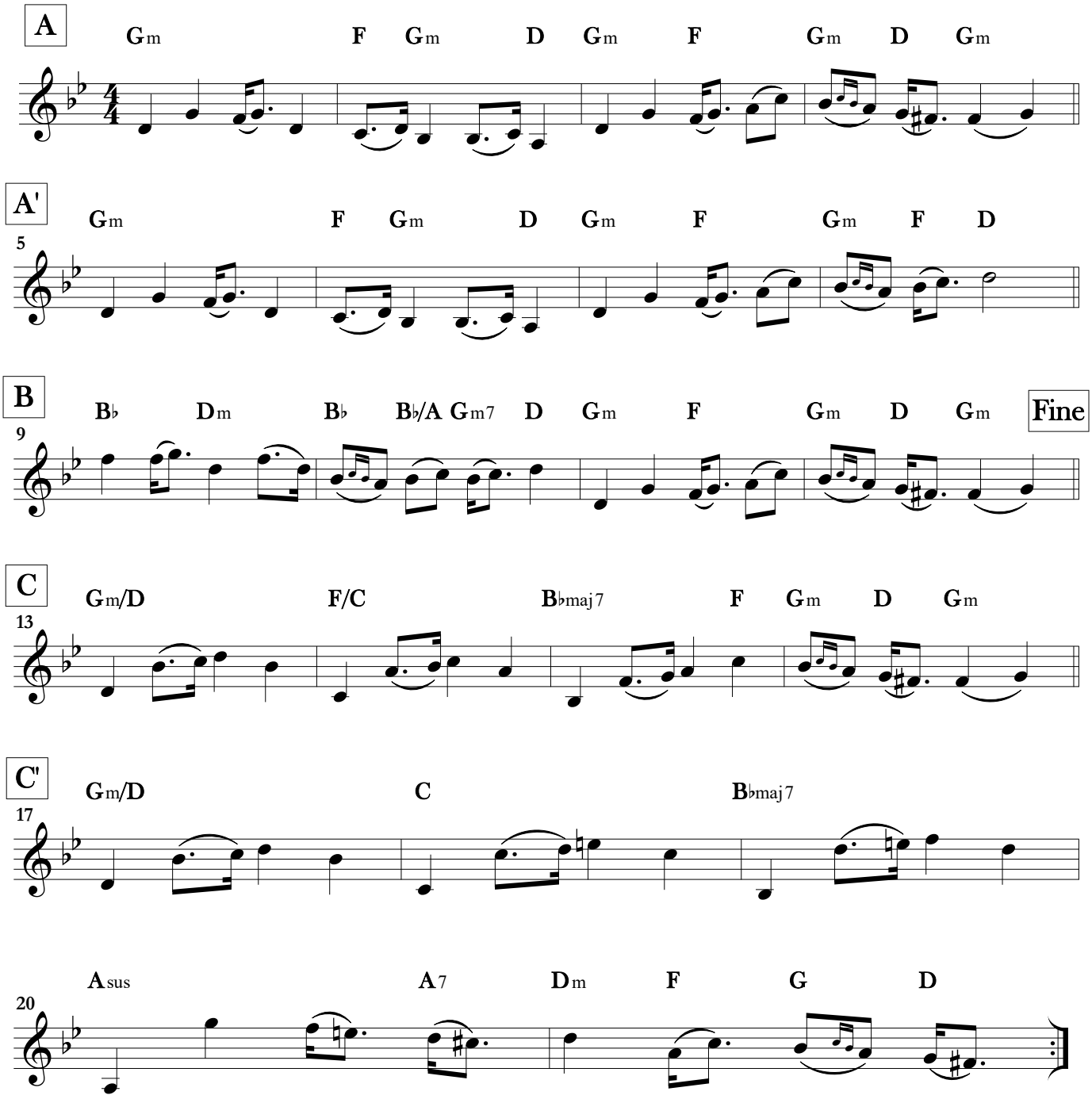
Air ♩ = 70, freely



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The Fish Who Played Hooky

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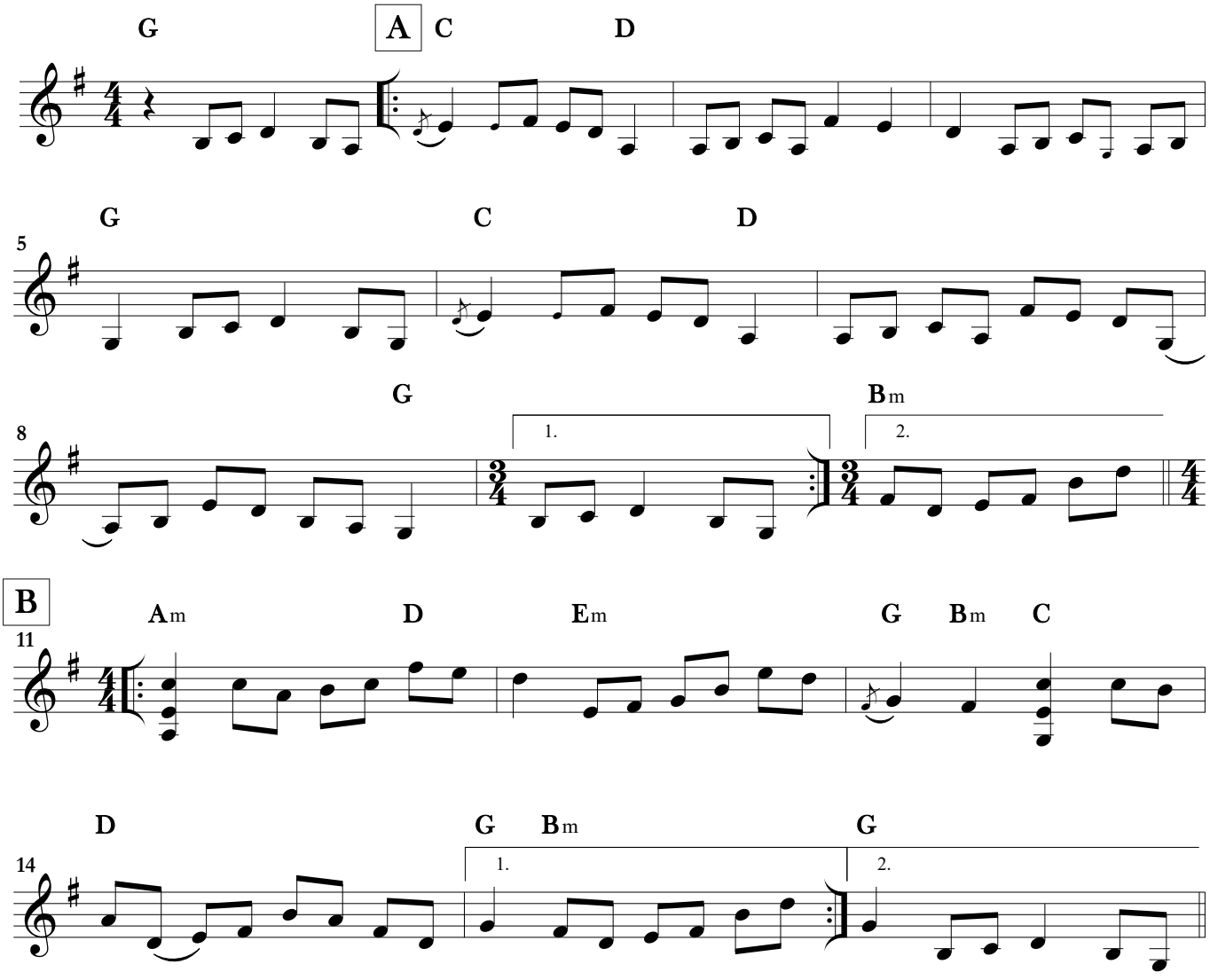
With motion, but relaxed ♩ = 116 (straight ♪s)



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Focus the Squirrel

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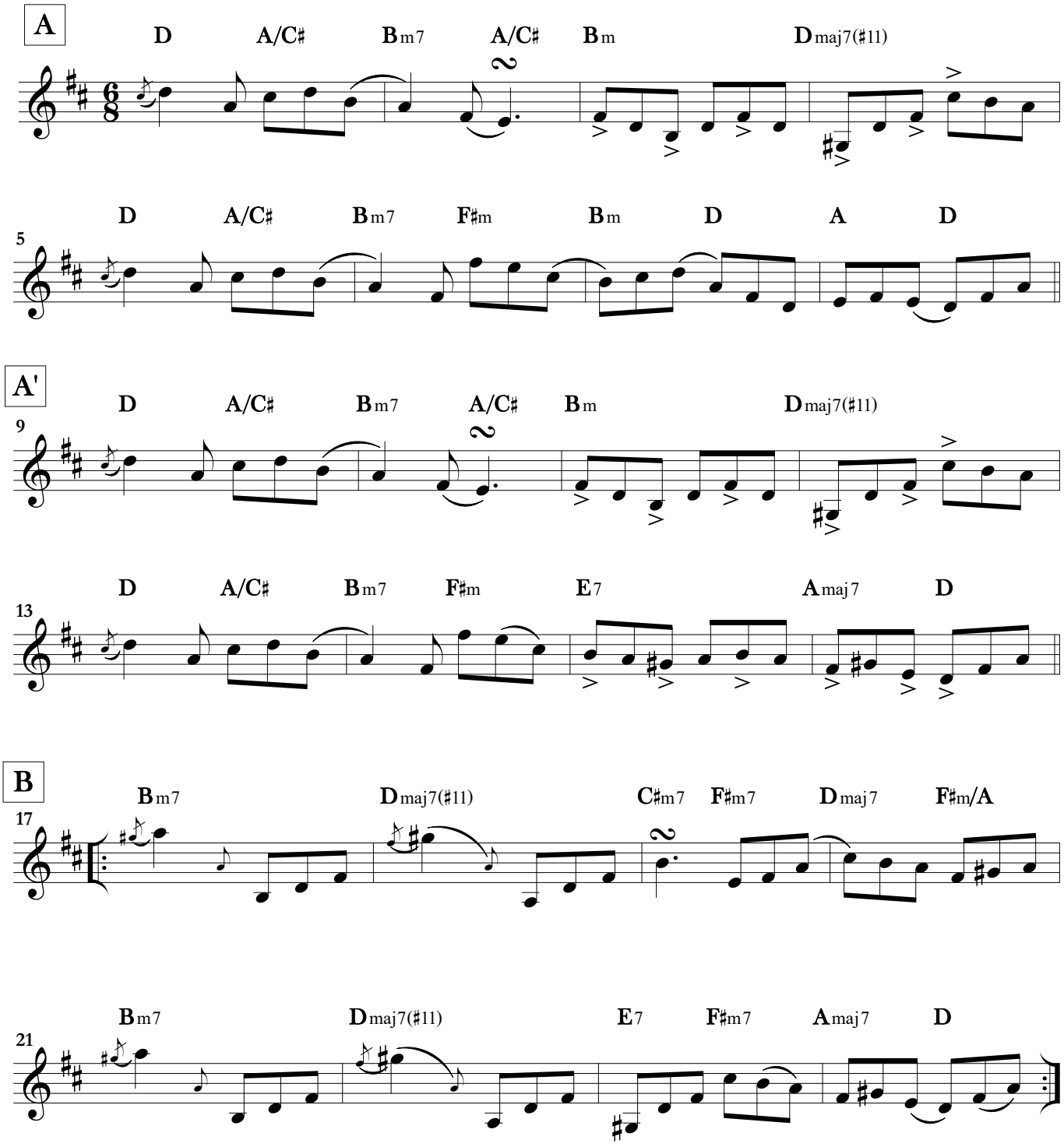
Jig ♩. = 110



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Up Penrose Stairs

Quasi-polska ♩ = 78

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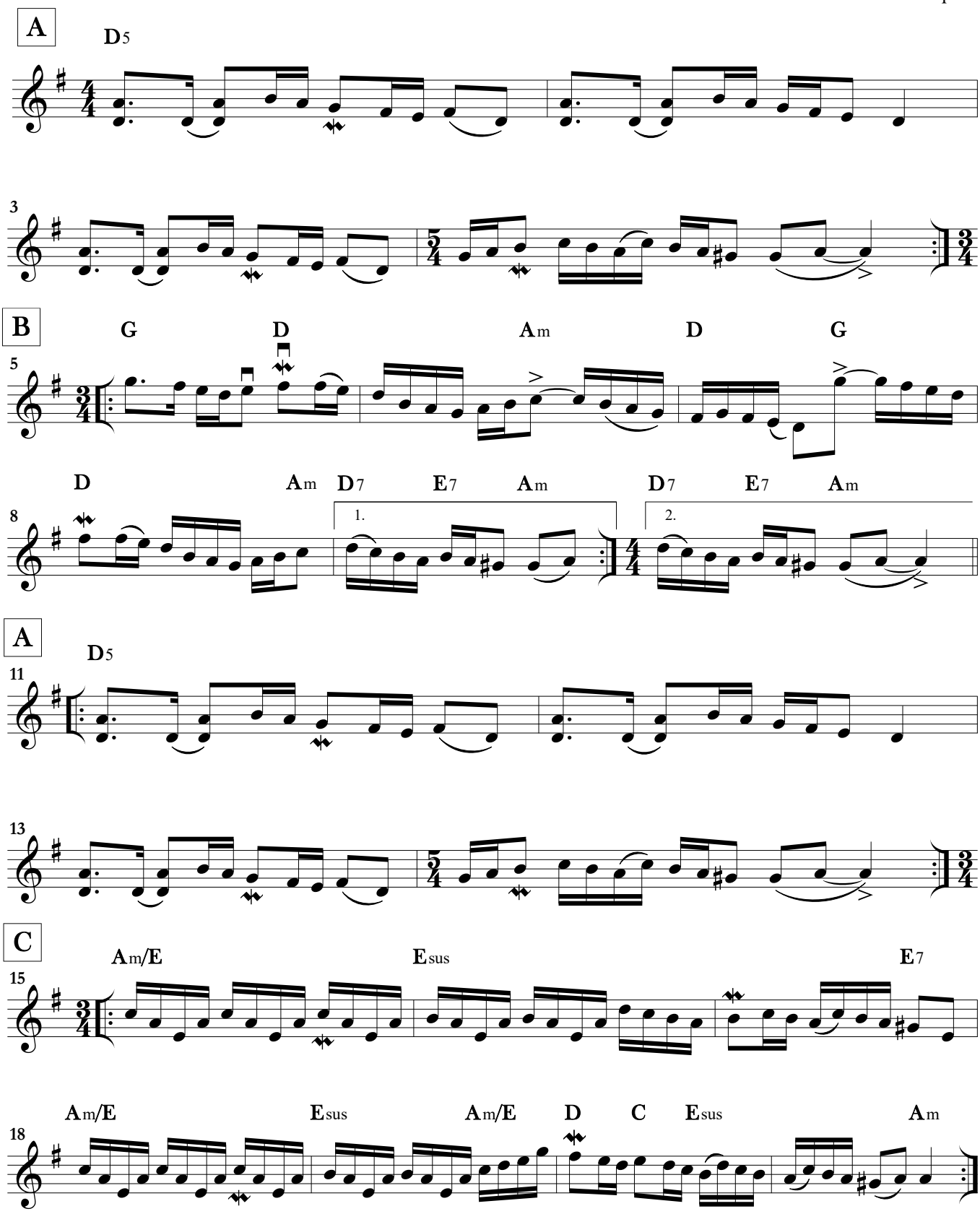

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Feather Share

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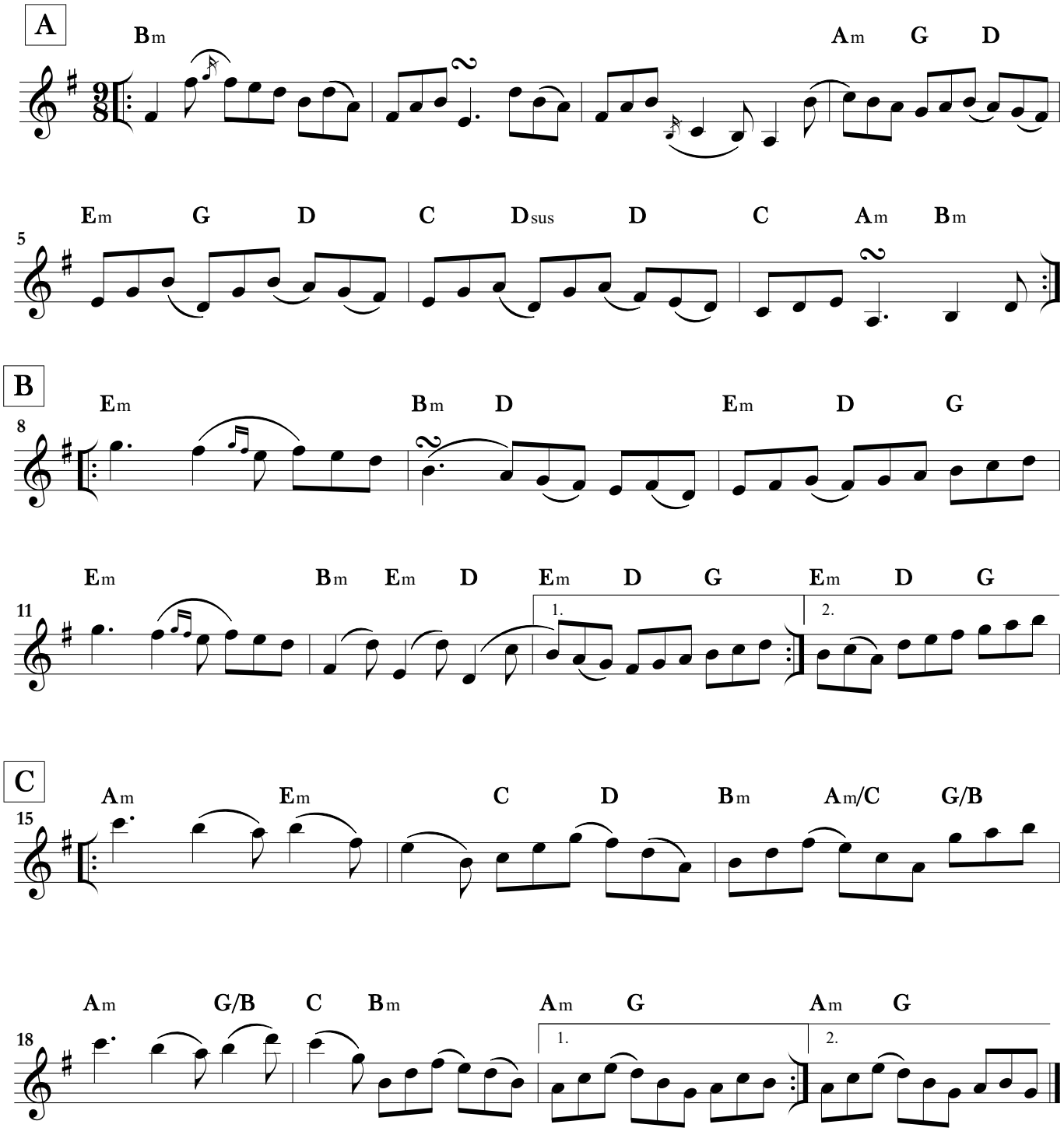
Slip-jig ♩. = 108



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Jessup, Nevada

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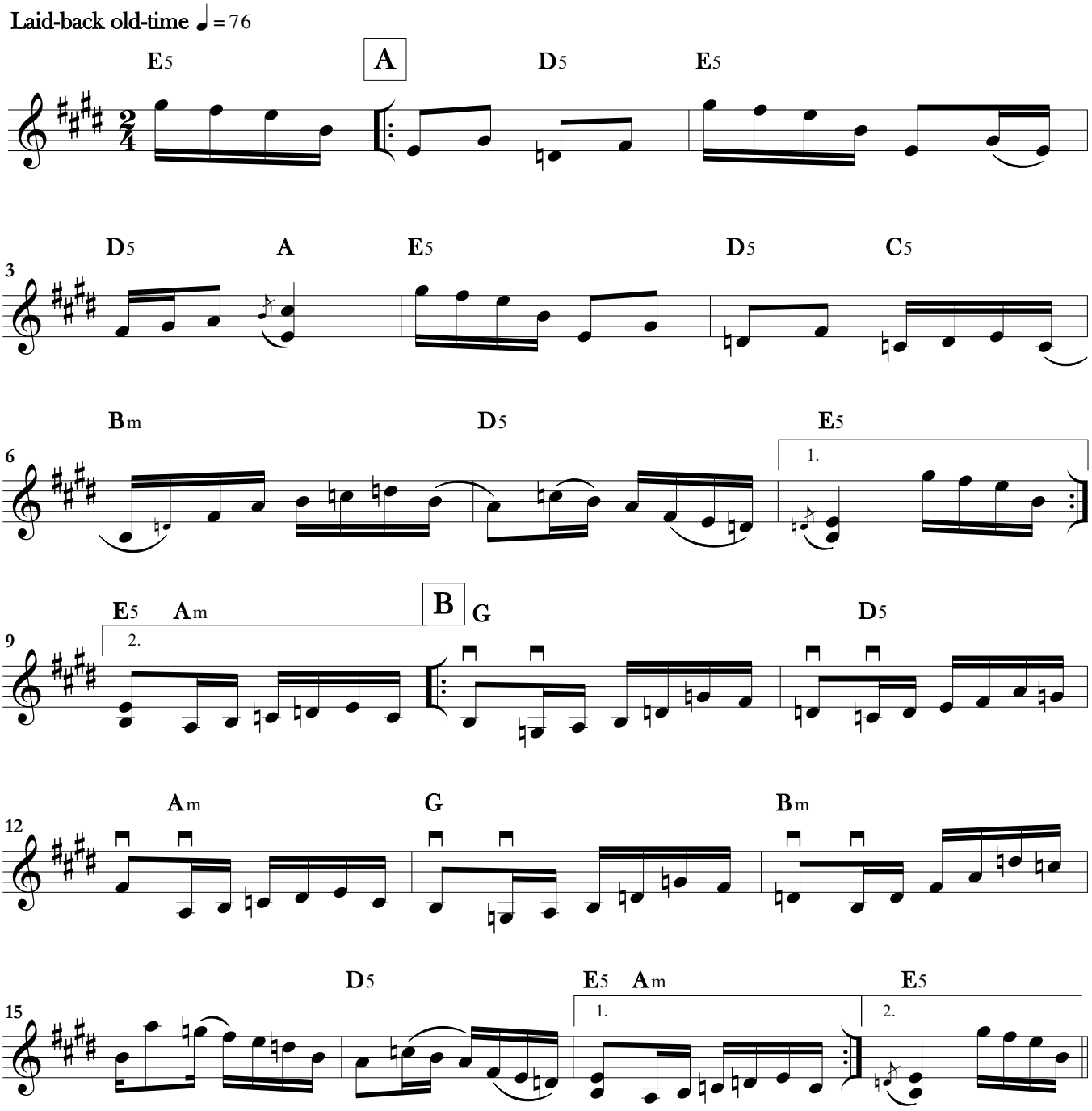

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Unpolished Boots

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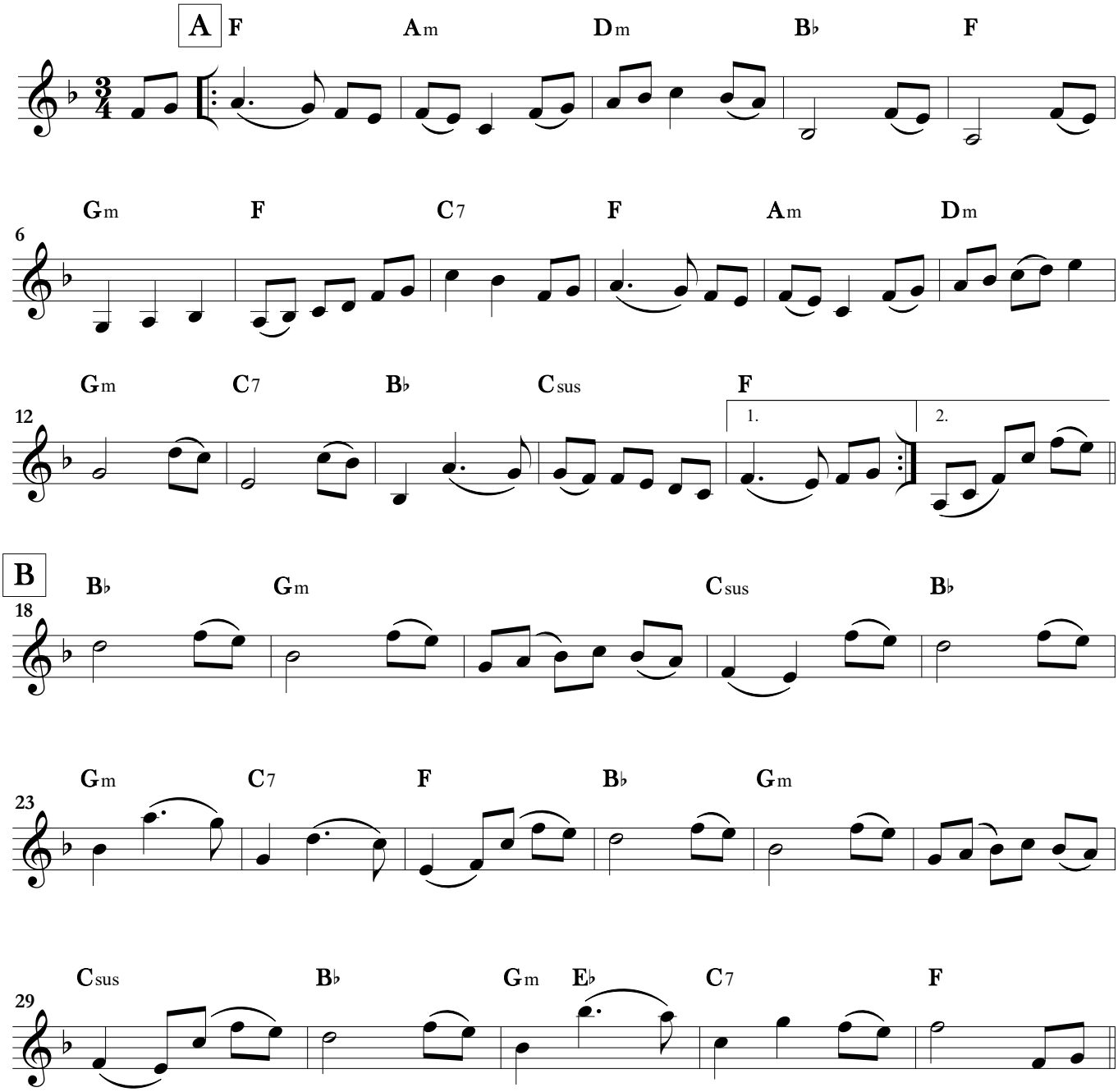
Ungar/Mason waltz ♩ = 88 (straight ♪s)



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Dust Hazard

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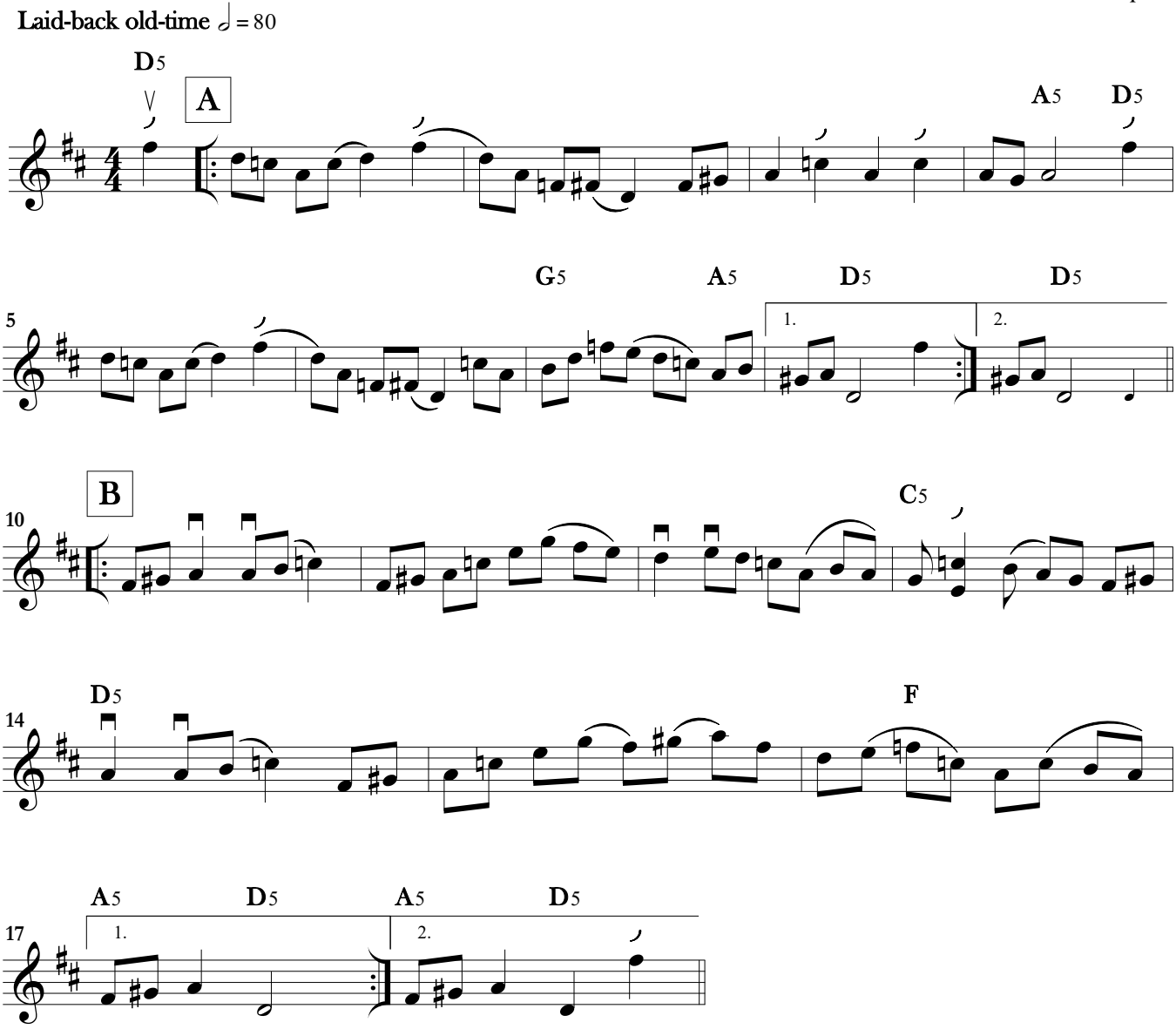

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Library Susan

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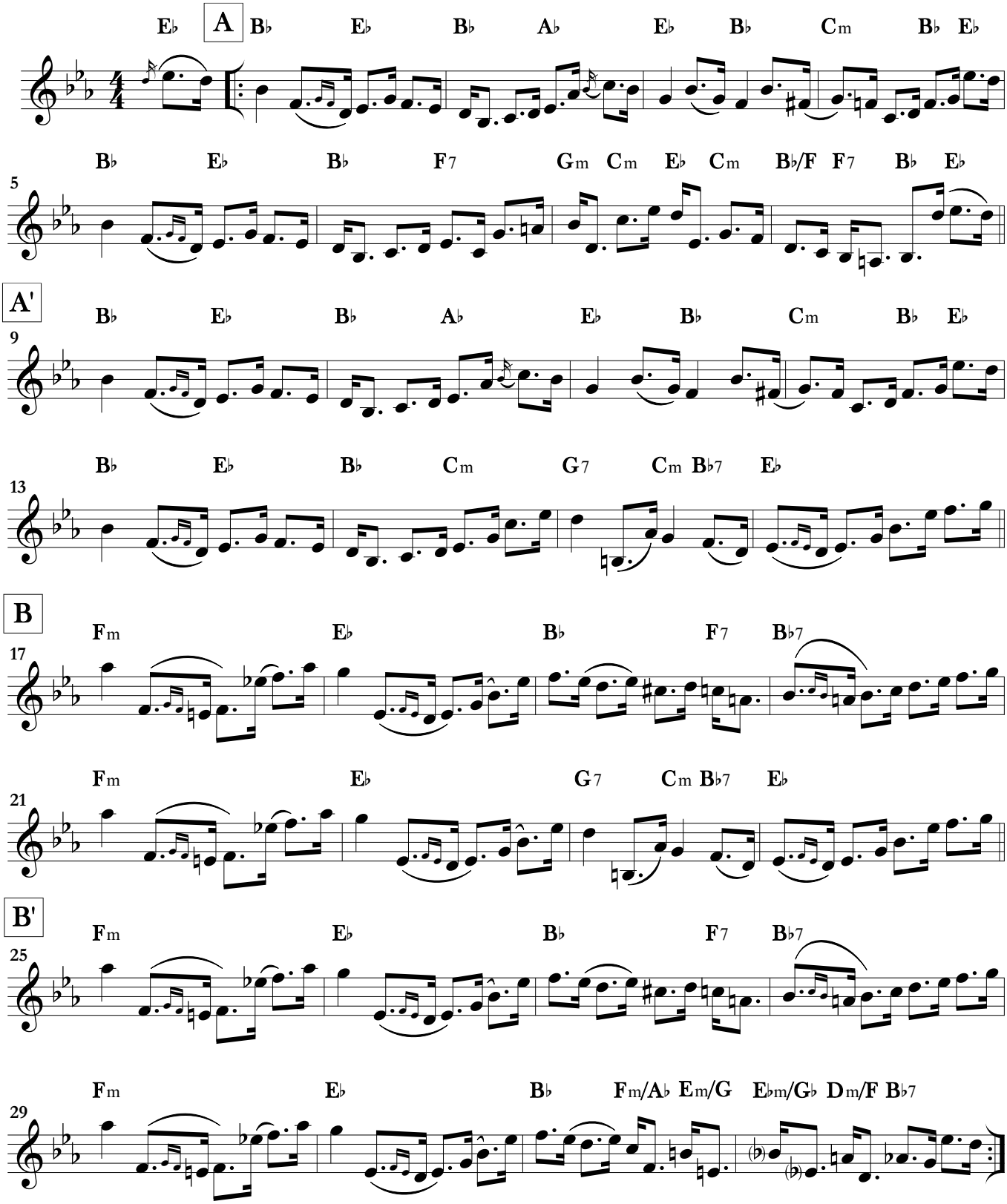
Dignified strathspey ♩ = 126



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Snake Doctor

A **Fast and driving** ♩ = 110

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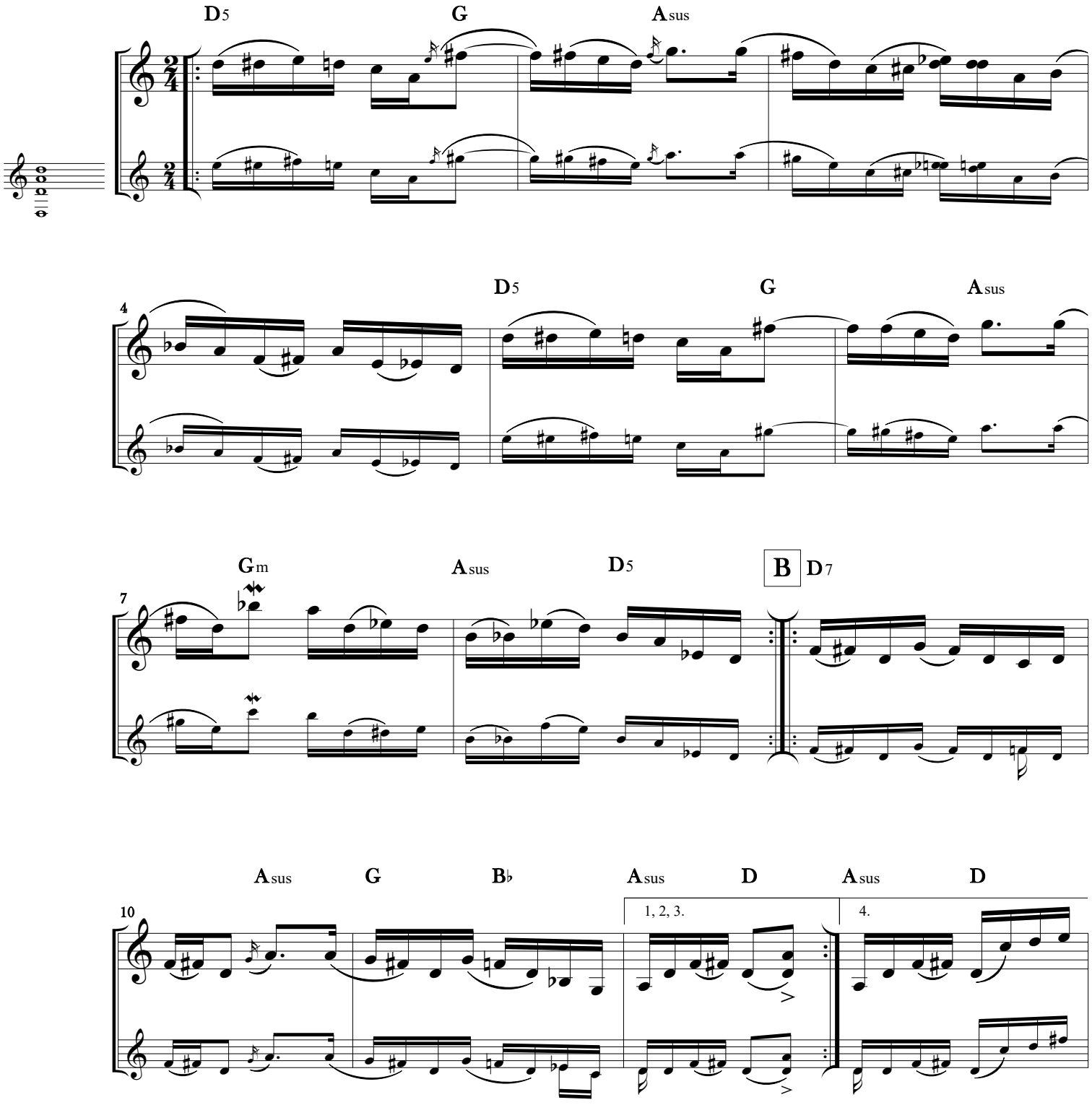

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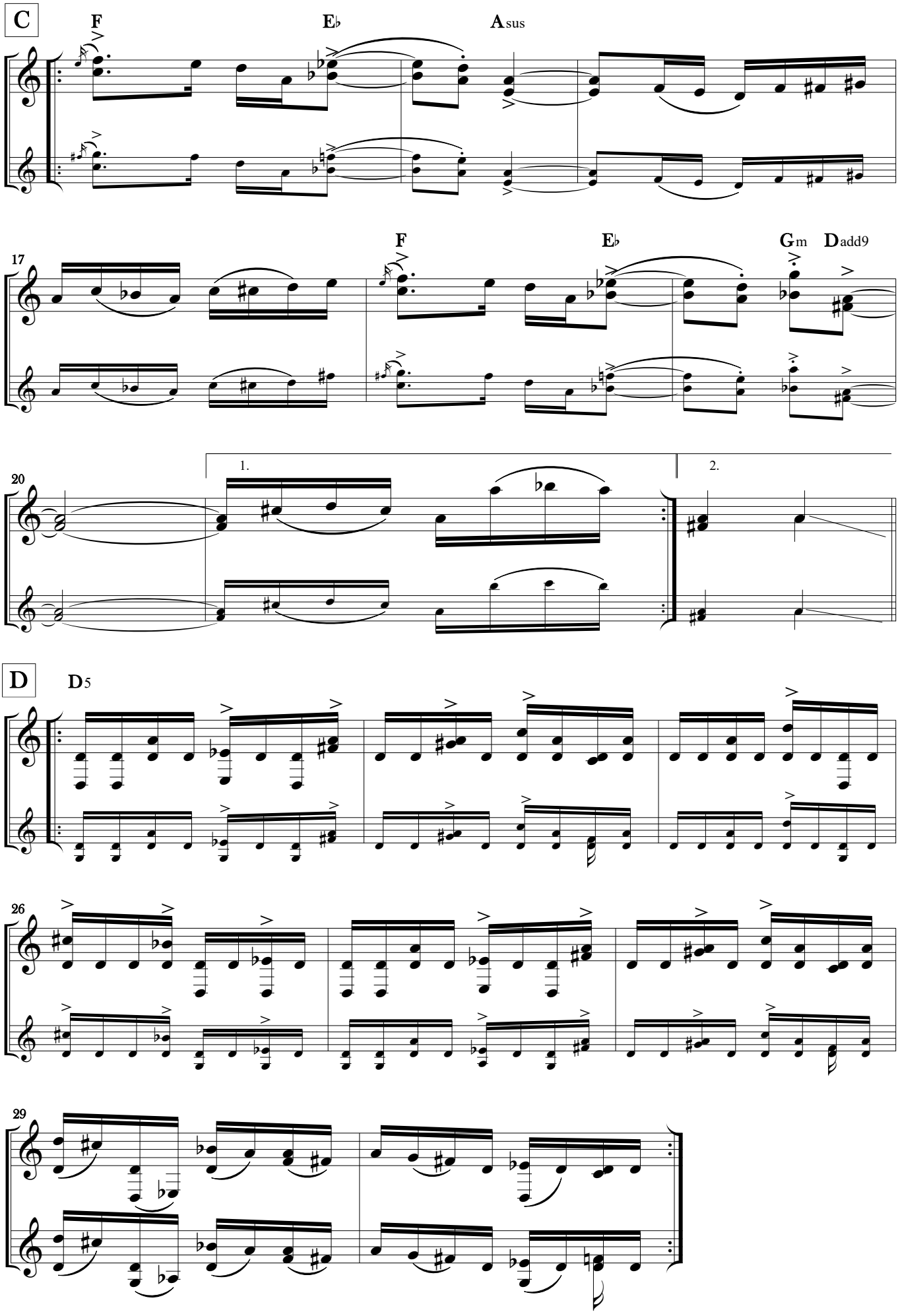
C
F
E♭
Asus
17
F
E♭
Gm
Dadd9
20
1.
2.
D
D5
26
29