THE ALLIGATOR

Shiner — BELIEVEYOUME

Brandon Chavez

ONETHINGNEEDEDSHOP

The Alligator

Shiner — BELIEVEYOUME (2025) · Chapter 2 of 10

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First edition.

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■ ■ 02 · THE ALLIGATOR · G minor · ■=80.7 ■

■ Form: Front-loaded, hook at second zero ■

■ Loop: i , ♭III , iv , ♭VI (Gm , B♭ , Cm , E♭), with a chromatic ■

■ B major (III) as the striking intrusion ■

■ Peak: 0 , 15 s opening burst ■

■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
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Lyrics: The Alligator

Figure , Scale of G minor.

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G A B♭ C D E♭ F G

1 2 ♭3 4 5 ♭6 ♭7 1

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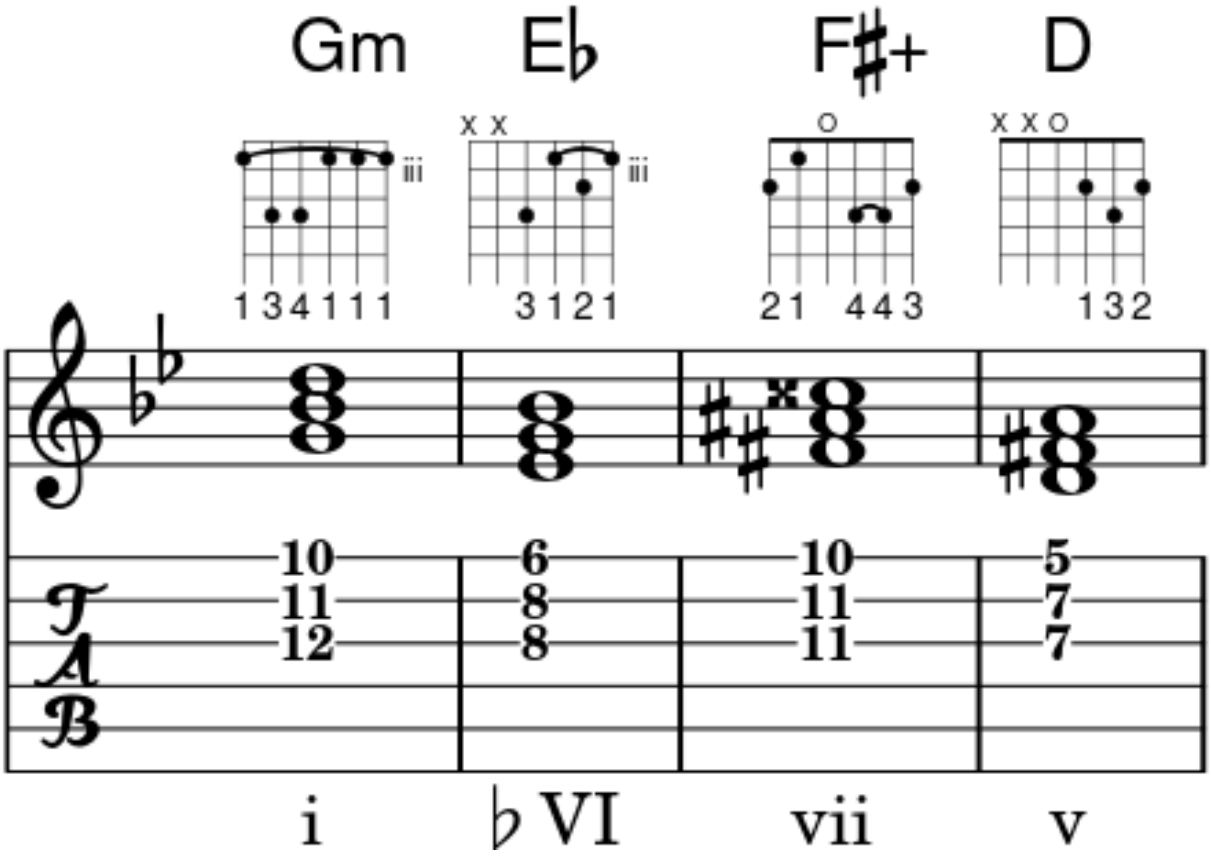
Standard tuning, G minor voices naturally on the low strings; the lone B major chord reaches outside the scale for its one bright shock.



Core chord loop, "The Alligator" (G minor)

The hook arrives at second zero. The analysis marks the peak vocal RMS section as 0.0–15.0 seconds, vocal RMS 0.0359, sustain 0.88 seconds per note. There is no buildup, no intro, no earned arrival. The song begins at full throat and trusts the listener to catch up. This is an unusual structural bet, and it defines everything that follows.

"The Alligator" runs at 80.7 BPM in G minor, and the chord language is deeply Aeolian. The bass-MIDI transcription reads the vocabulary plainly: Gm is the home chord, with B♭ (♭III), Cm (iv), E♭ (♭VI), and F (♭VII) filling out the natural-minor field. The one move that reaches outside the key is a **B major chord**, the chromatic III, a bright major triad built a major third above the tonic that has no business in G minor and breaks like a shaft of light through the gloom. It is the song's single most striking harmonic event, and it works because everything around it stays strictly inside the mode. The Ground Never Settles identifies a second chromatic-outsider chord in this song's vocabulary: ♭**VII♯5** (F♯ augmented in G minor), a chord that sits outside any standard palette in Stephenson's system and whose augmented fifth (D♯) generates chromatic voice-leading pull against the G minor tonic (Stephenson 2002, Ch. 4). The predecessor reads this ♭VII♯5 as the **defining borrowed chord of the Shiner idiolect**, functioning as a refrain-substitute that appears at every phrase boundary where a chorus might

be expected and deflects arrival each time. The bridge expands the texture by an octave with contrary motion against the descending bass, a register crescendo using no new harmonic material (Moore 2001, Ch. 2 on register as formal cue). The E♭ (♭VI) is the flat sixth of G minor, present across the stems and the strongest Aeolian color on the track. The song leans on i and ♭III for its body and saves the chromatic B and the F♯ augmented for its jolts.

The drum pattern in the representative section is the most striking on the album: kick ··XXXXXXXXXXX···, snare ··XXXXXXXXXXX···· Both stems hit nearly every consecutive 16th note from position 3 through 13, then break at the tail. This is not a typical rock groove. This is a flood, a cluster of hits packed into the middle of the bar and leaves the front and back edges empty. At 80.7 BPM that represents about 0.7 seconds of near-continuous kick-and-snare hits. The hihat runs ·XX·XXXXXXXXX··X, dense and slightly offset from the kick-snare wall. The effect is a mid-bar surge that creates a wave shape, silence, flood, silence.

The vocal pitch vocabulary centers on scale degrees 5, b6, 7, #4, and b7 in G minor. The phrase endings cluster on b6, 5, 7, and b7, none of which are the tonic. In practical terms the vocalist frequently arrives at the flat sixth, which in G minor is E♭, a half-step above the minor fifth. That is a specifically melancholy choice: it falls just above where you expect a phrase to resolve (D), creating the impression of a line that almost resolves but tips slightly sharp. The pitch range in the analyzed section returns 410 semitones, a flag indicating the analysis encountered harmonic content beyond the expected vocal range, possibly from the piano stem bleeding into the vocal analysis window, though the voiced ratio of 0.303 suggests substantial genuine vocal activity.

The payoff audit tells the story of a song that fires its one confirmed lift at the beginning and then holds even. Chorus at 15 seconds: payoff arrives, keys delta +2.33, vocals +1.42, guitar +0.22, bass +0.19. After that, the next four chorus boundaries are flat or declining. The keys stem delivers a large entry at 60 seconds (+15.64) that the analysis reads but the ear may register as a pad sweep rather than a dynamic lift, since guitars decline at the same moment. The second half of the song is a long sustained plateau after the opening burst.

By Moore's four-layer stratification (Moore 2001, Ch. 2): the vocals lead from the opening second, high RMS and active onset density; the drums hold with their unusual flood-cluster pattern beneath; the bass holds supportively; the keys function as an arrival marker at section boundaries; the guitar supports and occasionally builds but never leads. The song is front-loaded by design, and the 15 sections spread across the remaining runtime carry the opening energy as a memory rather than renewing it.

"The Alligator" is the album's aggressive bet that you can spend the entire song living off the interest of a hook that paid out. The slow tempo at 80.7 BPM means each section is long, each

plateau is extended, and the held-down drum flood gives the groove a sense of pressure rather than drive. The song does not chase you. It waits, jaws open, from the first second to the last.

Figure 1 · Core chord loop *(G minor, ■=80.7)*

Verse · i ♭III iv ♭VI, with a chromatic B major (III) as the outlier

```
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
■ Gm ■ B♭ ■ Cm ■ E♭ ■
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
■ i ■ ♭III ■ iv ■ ♭VI ■
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
■ tonic ■rel major■subdom min■flat-side■
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
outlier: B major = III (chromatic), the song's one bright shock
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Figure 2 · Representative drum pattern (16th-note grid)

Mid-bar flood. Kick + snare fire ~13 consecutive 16ths; the bar shape is silence → cluster → silence.

```
Beat 1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
Kick ■ · · ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ · · · ■ → 11/16
Snare ■ · · ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ · · · ■ → 11/16
Hihat ■ · ■ ■ · ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ · · ■ ■ → 12/16
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■
```

Figure 3 · Vocal phrase-ending compass

Top-5 scale-degree vocabulary and where the vocal phrases resolve.

```

Degree 1 ♭2 2 ♭3 3 4 ♯4 5 ♭6 6 ♭7 7

■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

· · · · · · ■ ★ ★ · ★ ★

■ top-5 ◆ phrase-ending ★ both · voiced: 30.3% range: 410 st ■ range flag: piano bleed-through likely

(G minor)

```

Figure 4 · Section-by-section payoff/lift map

▲▲ *= confirmed lift across all stems · , = chorus boundary that does NOT lift · · = section with no lift expected*

```

Time Section Lift? Notes

■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

0:00 Hook (full throat) ▲▲ LIFT, keys +2.33, vocals +1.42

0:15 Verse , flat

1:00 Chorus 2 , flat (keys read +15.64, pad only)

1:30 Chorus 3 , flat

2:00 Chorus 4 , flat, sustained plateau after opening burst

```

Figure · Chord anatomy.

```
```

Chord ■ Notes ■ Intervals ■ Function

■■
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

Gm ■ G , B♭ , D ■ 1 , ♭3 , 5 ■ i , tonic minor

B♭ ■ B♭ , D , F ■ 1 , 3 , 5 ■ ♭III , relative major

Cm ■ C , E♭ , G ■ 1 , ♭3 , 5 ■ iv , subdominant minor

E♭ ■ E♭ , G , B♭ ■ 1 , 3 , 5 ■ ♭VI , strongest Aeolian color

F ■ F , A , C ■ 1 , 3 , 5 ■ ♭VII , subtonic (appears once)

B ■ B , D♯ , F♯ ■ 1 , 3 , 5 ■ III , chromatic, the one note from outside the key

```

**Figure , Voice-leading paths.**

```

Transition ■ Common tones ■ Motion

■■
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

Gm → B♭ ■ common B♭,D ■ i to ♭III, the relative-major lift

B♭ → Cm ■ common none ■ ♭III to iv, step up the flat side

Cm → E♭ ■ common E♭,G ■ iv to ♭VI, deepening the Aeolian color

Gm → B (chromatic) ■ common D (→D♯) ■ the one move outside the key, i to III

```

**Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.**

```

0:00 ■■■ 0:15 ■■■■■ 1:00 ■■■ 2:00 ■■■ 2:30 ■■■ 3:30

hook ■■■■ plateau ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■ ■■■■■■ end

↑

front-loaded peak, RMS 0.0359, sustain 0.88s

```

**Chord Chart** *(composite chord: guitar + bass + vocal. Chord shown only on first occurrence; repeated chord carries until next change. Key: G major — vocal supplies ♮3 (B natural) throughout.)*

```

■■ VERSE 1 ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

G

What is that you say?

Bb

What is it you think you have to say?

G

I know what you need.

Bb

I know what you love and where you've been.

B → G

What is that you say?

I know what you think before you say it.

■■ HOOK ■■

G

I'm an alligator.

Bb

I'm an alligator.

■■ VERSE 2 / PRE-CHORUS ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

G

I know what you need.

Eb

I know what you need and where to get it.

Cm

I can let you see.

Eb

I won't leave you cold in stormy weather.

Cm

I can let you know.

G

I can keep you deep inside a hole.

■■ BRIDGE ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

B

I can let you know.

I can keep you deep inside a hole.

G

I know what you need.

B → G

I know what you need and where to get it.

■■ HOOK REPRISE ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■

G

I'm an alligator.

Bb

I'm an alligator.

G

I'm an alligator.

(I can let you know) (I can let you know)

Bb

I'm an alligator.

(I can let you know)

G

(I can eat you whole)

■■ OUTRO ■■

G

I can eat you whole.

Bb

I won't let you go.

G

I can eat you whole.

Eb

I won't let you go.

G

I can eat you whole.

(I am an alligator)

F

I won't let you go.

(I am an alligator)

Eb

G

I can eat you whole. I won't let you go.

```

**From The Ground Never Settles, The Alligator chapter (Song Studies).** The predecessor introduces this song's borrowed chord, **the ♭VII♯5 (F♯ augmented in G minor)**, as the defining harmonic event of the Shiner idiolect: a chord outside any standard palette in Stephenson's system, with an augmented fifth (D♯) that generates chromatic voice-leading pull against the G minor tonic. The chord appears at every phrase boundary where a chorus might be expected and deflects arrival each time, **functioning as a refrain-substitute**. The bridge expands the upper-register texture by an octave with contrary motion against the descending bass, a **register crescendo using no new harmonic material**, the same i, ♭VI, ♭VII♯5, V cycle as the verse. The current BELIEVEYOUME revision flags a key-reading reconciliation (the predecessor calls Alligator G minor at 120 BPM, the current chord-card revision prefers "Drop C open-string field" then "G-centered argument"). *Predecessor citation: Stephenson, What to Listen for in Rock, Ch. 4 (chromatic-minor palette, chords outside standard palettes); Moore, Rock: The Primary Text, Ch. 2 (four-layer stratification, register as formal cue).*
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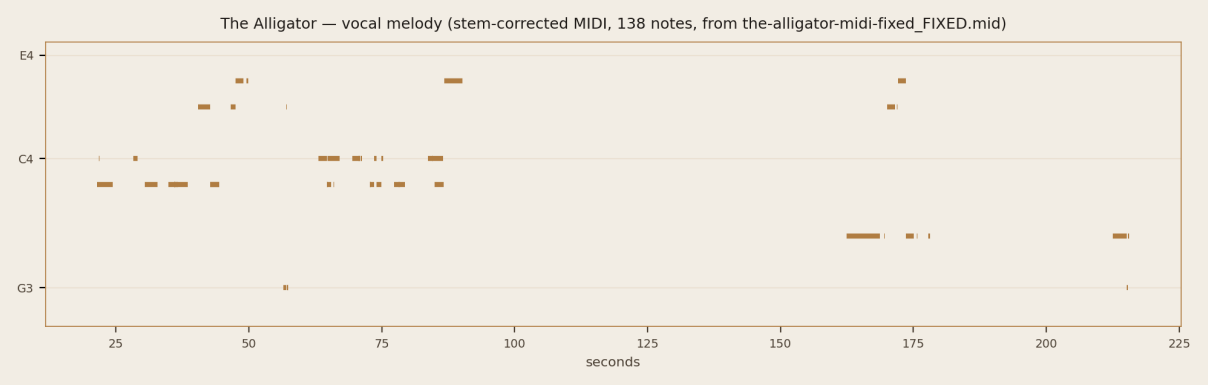
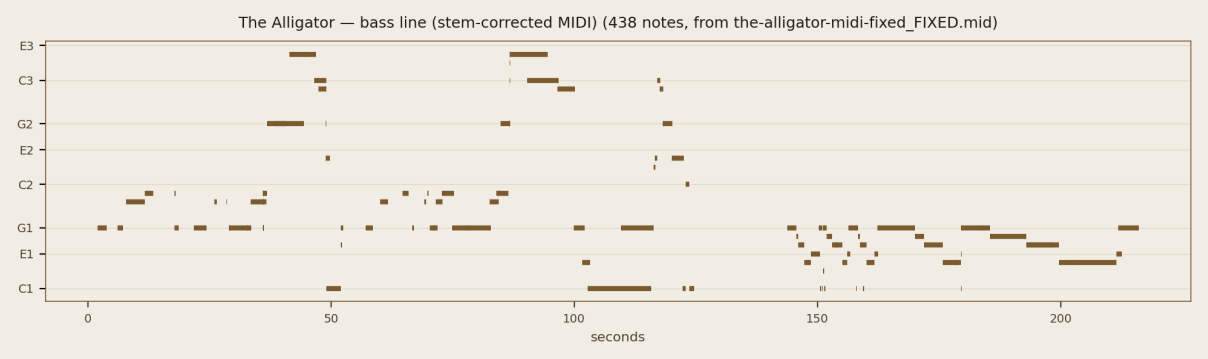
Notation appendix



Vocal melody, stem-corrected MIDI (piano-roll, full song)



Bass line, stem-corrected MIDI (piano-roll, full song)

The Alligator — chord progression by section

from the chord+lyric chart (the_alligator_chord_lyric_FIXED_HYBRID.md)

Verse pattern

```
G | Bb | (B passing) | G → G | Bb | (B passing) | G
```

Pre-chorus pattern ("I can let you see")

```
Cm Eb Cm G
```

Bridge pattern ("I can let you know")

```
B (chromatic) → G
```

Hook ("I'm an alligator")

```
G | Bb (two bars)
```

Outro ("I can eat you whole")

```
G → Bb → G → Eb → G → F → G → Eb → G
```

Chord progression by section, from the chord and lyric chart