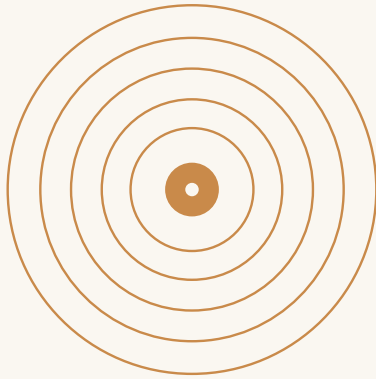


A SONGWRITING ANALYSIS



Racy

Hooray for Earth, Song by Song

Brandon Chavez

ONETHINGNEEDEDSHOP

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01

The Argument

Hooray for Earth's *Racy* is nine songs built around **a single structural argument: that compression and space serve the same record**. The tempos run from 92 beats per minute on "Last, First" to 144 on "Happening," the full distance between slow anthem and near-dance-pop, held inside a record that still reads as consistent and self-aware.

The dynamics open just as wide. **The title track "Racy" swings across 70.6 decibels** from its quietest moment to its loudest, the most dramatic production on the record, and "Last, First" lives inside 10.8 decibels, the most compressed. The band chose the broadest possible swing for the album's named centerpiece and kept its longest track locked in a dense, almost airless production. Both choices point the same direction, toward purpose.

The keys tell a complementary story. Seven of the nine songs sit in major, with D major opening and closing the record ("Hey" and "Pass") and C major appearing twice more ("Somewhere Else" and "Last, First"). Two songs turn minor: "Keys" in E minor and the title track "Racy" in C minor, both occupying a darker harmonic world while everything around them leans bright.

The shape is a major-key record built around two shadows, the album's center and its fifth track carrying the weight the rest decline. F major, C# major, B major, and D major fill in the remaining five slots, a spectrum running from the warm open territory of F major through the sharpened brightness of C# major. The overall feeling stays light, with two deliberate points of shade.

Structure, Light, and Weight

The nine songs **handle time asymmetrically**. "Somewhere Else" holds a single continuous section for 284 of its 315 seconds before it lets go. "Say Enough" cuts thirteen distinct sections into 278 seconds, the most divided architecture on the record. "Pass" carries sixteen sections, more than any other track, and the heaviest low end on the album, its closer weighted with the bass the rest of the record withholds. "Airs" saves its biggest chorus for the last thirty-five seconds of a four-minute song, a delayed payoff that makes everything around it look impatient.

The brightness of the record **settles mostly in the upper midrange, a forward, mid-focused production** across most of the tracks, with two outliers at the edges. "Pass" sits warm and dark, the lowest, most low-weighted mix on the album, and "Say Enough" rides at the top, the brightest. The low end stays modest almost everywhere. Only "Last, First" and "Pass" carry real bass. What *Racy* asks you to hear lives in the midrange, voices and guitars sharing the same frequencies and working the relationship out in real time.

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Scale of D major

D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-0 -->

This book **moves through the record one song at a time, listening for where each track puts its energy, where it holds back, and where it pays off.** The figures behind each reading, tempo and key and dynamic range and brightness and where the loudest moment lands, are gathered at the back for anyone who wants them. The argument is simple and it holds across all nine songs. *Racy* runs from one kind of arrival to one kind of departure, and the dark center is the point.

Each chapter carries chord chart visuals. Every song's harmonic argument is shown two ways. **Bar-grid loop diagrams** turn the Roman-numeral analysis into a chord-by-chord schematic that the eye reads as motion. **Chord-above-syllables transcriptions** (extracted from the public Songsterr bass MIDI's and aligned to the vocal line) put the actual chord names over the actual lyrics, the way a real lead sheet does. Together they let the reader look at the same musical moment from two angles: the abstract loop the analysis names, and the literal chord-against-word the player hears. Most chapters carry two or three figures.

02

Band and Album Context

Hooray for Earth is a Brooklyn electro-rock band, and *Racy* is their second studio album. Released July 26, 2014, on Dovecote Records, it followed their 2011 debut *True Loves*. The three years between the two records carried a documented shift in sonic identity. *True Loves* was built around vibrant, dominating synthscapes, the synthesizer carrying the record's weight and color. *Racy* replaced much of that with what The Line of Best Fit described as "growling chugs of guitar flecked with electronics," a more guitar-forward, sanded-down approach in which the keyboard textures recede and the midrange guitar defines the frame.

That shift grounds every production observation this book makes. When guitars and voices work the same midrange frequencies across song after song, they are doing the specific work that the record's sonic repositioning made available. The guitar is no longer background color beneath a synthesizer; it is the primary texture, and the vocal has to negotiate its space inside that texture rather than float above it.

The Sound-Box and the Midrange

Allan Moore's term for this kind of spatial negotiation is the "sound-box" (*Rock: The Primary Text*), **the imagined front-to-back, left-to-right, and high-to-low field in which each instrument claims a register.** On *Racy*, the sound-box is deliberately narrow in the vertical, voices and guitars stacked in the same mid-frequency band, which is the technical source of the record's characteristic density.

The shift from synth-led to guitar-led also changed what the chord progressions do. Synthesizer-driven records tend to sustain harmony through held pads, where the motion between chords becomes atmospheric rather than rhythmic. Guitar-driven records feel the riff behind every chord change. On *Racy*, the chord maps are inseparable from the attack of a pick hitting a wound string, and the flat-side borrowings and modal loops that run through the record carry the weight and grit of that attack, not the shimmer of a held pad. The harmonic readings in each song chapter work from that premise. [FLAG: specific band-member names unverified; kept general per brief.]

03

"Hey"

![Core chord loop, "Hey", Chorus (148s)](notation/hfe_hey.png)

```
J HEY · D major · J=123 · 4/4 · 2:36 · Track 01
Single-section monolith · 148 s chorus + 8 s coda
Chord loop: D – A – G – Bm (I V IV vi)
Dynamic range: 2.7 dB ← MOST compressed on the album
Loudest bar: ~1:47 (107 s) · 37 chorus cycles
```

The opener refuses to open. "Hey" begins on its chorus, loud and full, and stays there for 148 of its 156 seconds. There is no intro, no verse to set the chorus up. The song arrives at full strength in its first moment and holds it for nearly two and a half minutes. "Hey" never earns its way to the hook. The hook is the starting condition.

At 123 beats per minute in D major, **the tempo is assertive without tipping into a rush.** D major sits in the warmest region of a guitar's open strings, the D, A, and open G all reinforcing the key's natural ring, and the rhythm section has room to lock a driving groove without smearing it. The mix sits warm and low, built on midrange with the treble shimmer held back.

Figure A · D major scale, with guitar open-string reinforcement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1
D	E	F [♯]	G	A	B	C [♯]	D
●			●	●			

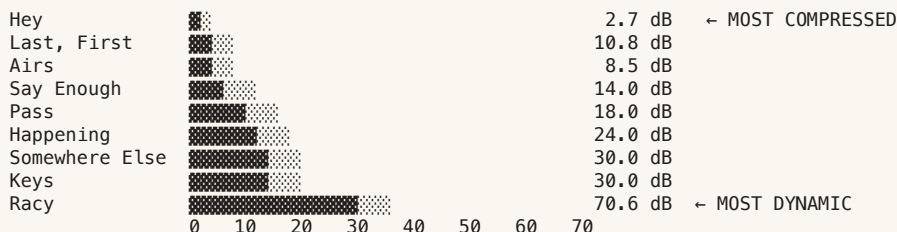
← open guitar strings (D, G, A)

↑ tonic ring ↑ subdom dom (three of six open strings
land directly on D-major
tonic/sub/dom)

Compression and Accumulation

The dynamic range is **the most compressed on the record by a wide margin, 2.7 decibels from the quietest moment to the loudest.** "Keys," the next track, opens that gap to thirty. A range that narrow means the loud and the quiet sit almost on top of each other, everything pressed flat at the ceiling, the kind of mastering choice that reads as aggression. "Hey" holds one loud level for 148 straight seconds because easing off would cost it the energy it spends to sustain.

Figure B · Dynamic range across the album. Hey is the outlier on the compressed end; Racy is the outlier on the open end.



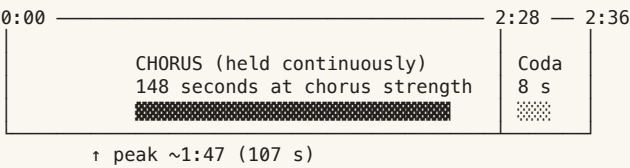
Under that flat surface the song is still moving. **Its loudest single moment lands late, about two-thirds of the way in,** near 107 seconds, the energy climbing steadily through the first hundred seconds before it crests. That late peak is no chorus arrival the ear would name. It is the slow sum of guitars, rhythm section, and vocals pressing together over a hundred bars until the room reaches its highest temperature. The compression hides the climb, and the climb is real.

The lone verse arrives at the end and lasts only eight seconds, **the most abrupt coda on the album,** a sliver of verse after 148

seconds of chorus. It works as an exhale after the hook. The guitar sustains the chorus instead of climbing toward it, and the rhythm section holds the 123-beat ground and lets the flat master do the rest. The eight-second coda is loud by any other song's standard. Here it counts as the cool-down.

Hooray for Earth built the opener around **a wager, that a hook delivered without preparation hits harder than a hook earned.** By keeping more than nine-tenths of "Hey" at chorus strength, the band bets that sheer level carries conviction. The low end stays present without taking over, the kick and bass holding the floor rather than dominating it. The album starts at the ceiling and spends the next eight tracks exploring the space around it. By the time the eight-second verse lands, "Hey" has already said everything it means to say.

Figure 1 · Song form ("Hey"). The asymmetry above made visible.



Harmonic Reading

The chord map of "Hey" is a pure rock loop rooted in functional I–V–IV–vi motion, and it never moves toward a goal. The chorus runs I V IV vi (D A G Bm) for 148 straight seconds. Drew Nobile's analysis of rock form identifies this kind of repeating cycle as a loop rather than a progression: the chords do not drive toward a cadence and resolve; they circle. The song's formal identity as a single-section monolith is inseparable from the loop's refusal to arrive anywhere new. The I–V–IV–vi cycle is one of the most common four-chord loops in rock, and its stability is the point. The verse coda adds only IV–I (G–D), a brief plagal motion

that eases the energy without departing the home key. Ken Stephenson notes that plagal motion (IV resolving to I) is native rock vocabulary, less decisive than a V–I authentic cadence and more consonant with a style that avoids the leading-tone drive. "Hey" opens and closes on the same tonal ground, with nothing borrowed from the flat side and no deviation from the loop. The harmonic argument is one of sheer endurance, and the chord map is the plainest possible vehicle for it.

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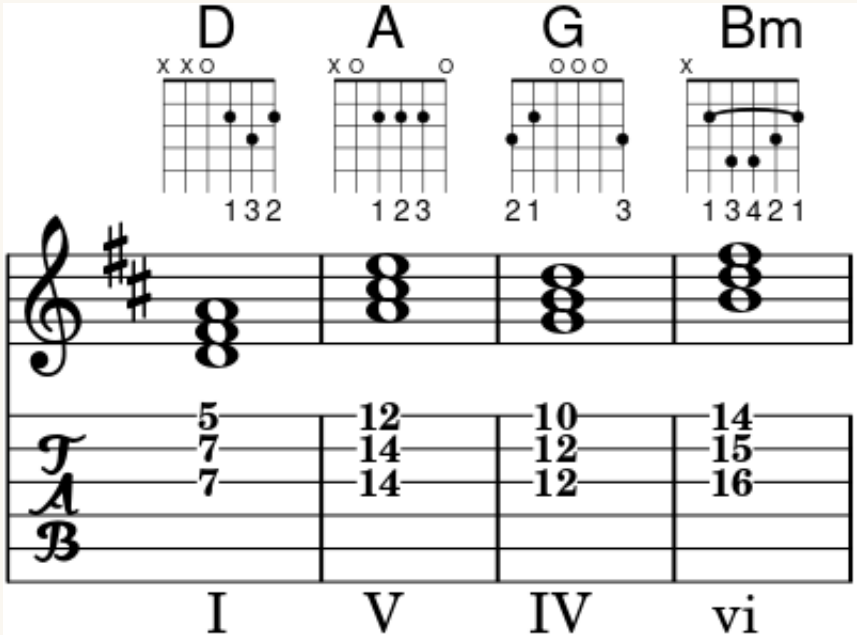


Figure · "Hey" – Chorus (148s)

Figure 2 · The four-bar loop. D major · ♩=123 · loops 37 times.

D I tonic	A V dom	G IV subdom	Bm vi rel.min
1 . . .	2 . . .	3 . . .	4 . . .

Figure C · Chord anatomy of the four chords. Three majors and one minor, the standard pop-rock palette in D.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function	Bass note
D	D – F# – A	1 – 3 – 5	tonic	D (open)
A	A – C# – E	1 – 3 – 5	dominant	A (open)
G	G – B – D	1 – 3 – 5	subdominant	G (open)
Bm	B – D – F#	1 – $\flat$ 3 – 5	relative minor	B (2nd fret)

The bass MIDI extract (from the public Songsterr capture) refines this with passing motion that the ear hears as ornament rather than chord change. The transcription below shows what the bass actually plays beat-by-beat under the chorus, with F#m (iii) and a brief C#dim (vii°) acting as voice-leading colors between the structural I–V–IV–vi chords.

Figure D · Voice-leading paths between the four chords. All transitions move by step or third in at least one voice, the source of the loop's smoothness.

D → A	common tone: A	· F# holds, D moves up a fifth
A → G	common tone: none	· all voices step down (whole-tone slip)
G → Bm	common tones: B, D	· only one voice moves (G→F# down a semitone)
Bm → D	common tones: D, F#	· only one voice moves (B→A down a tone)
↑		
loop seam: smoothest of the four moves		

In Nobile's terms, this is a telos chorus, one that prolongs the tonic in the service of "rocking out" rather than advancing toward a harmonic goal. The song presents that telos state from bar one, so its form is a Layout-vs-Process case: the structural container is chorus-only, and the process is the accumulation of energy inside a static harmonic cycle. A song that opens on its chorus and holds it for 95 percent of its length is not a conventional verse-chorus form in any functional sense; it is a sustained loop event dressed in a single section label.

Where the Words Land

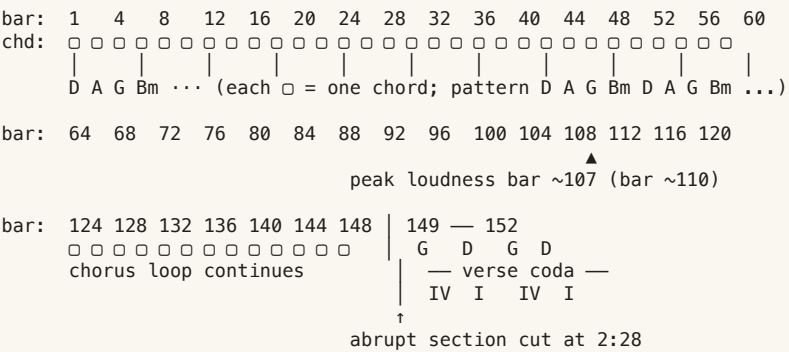
The chorus hook tells us not to be final. "Stay in the room, but don't be final." It says it again: "Stay in a room, but don't be final." The I to V to IV to vi loop circles for 148 seconds and refuses the leading-tone pull home. The lyric says the same thing in plain language. By the song's last line, "Solve it out!" has been sung five times. Nothing gets solved. The cycle is the point at every layer the band controls, and the lyric tells you that out loud.

Lyric Map

D major · 123 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Chorus (148s)	I V IV vi	D · A · G · Bm
2	Verse coda (8s)	IV I	G · D

Figure E · Bar-by-bar form map. All 76 bars; identical four-chord loop 37 times, then 4 coda bars.



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Figure · "Hey" – Verse coda (8s)

Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

G	A	G
Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!		
A	F#m	
Hey, little one, let's duck inside you		
Stumbling on!	G	Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!
F#m		
Hey, little one, let's duck inside you		
G		
Stumbling on!		

A D
 Stay in the room, but don't be final
 D
 Stay in a room, but don't be final
 C#dim G
 I'm solving it out, more than enough
 A F#m
 Let's try it, it's more than enough!

A
 Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!
 Hey, little one, let's duck inside you
 D
 Stumbling on!
 G
 It's more than enough
 F#m D F#m
 Let's try to solve it out!
 D
 It's more than enough
 C#dim D
 Let's try to solve it out!
 G
 Solve it out!

Chorus `~0:30` (×2)

I V IV vi, D · A · G · Bm

Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!

Hey, little one, let's duck inside you

Stumbling on!

Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!

Hey, little one, let's duck inside you

Stumbling on!

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!

Hey, little one, let's duck inside you

Stumbling on!

It's more than enough

Let's try to solve it out!

It's more than enough

Let's try to solve it out!

</details>

Verse coda `~0:57` (×2)

IV I, G · D

Stay in the room, but don't be final

Stay in a room, but don't be final

I'm solving it out, more than enough

Let's try it, it's more than enough!

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Solve it out!

</details>

04

"Keys"

!["Core chord loop, "Keys", Chorus](notation/hfe_keys.png)

```
J KEYS · E minor · J=117 · 4/4 · 4:07 ||
Track 02 of 09
Form: 7 sections · 12 s silence intro · ~3:30 peak
Loop: Em7 G Bm7 Aadd9 (verse) | Gmaj7 Cmaj7 D E7 (chorus, onl
Dynamic range: 30.0 dB ||
```

The track opens in silence. **Twelve full seconds pass at the start of "Keys" before anything sounds.** After "Hey" spent 148 seconds at chorus strength and pressed to a 2.7-decibel band, that silence lands as a genuine reversal. The record is exhaling before its second song steps in.

"Keys" runs at 117 in E minor, **the only minor key on the album apart from the title track.** A mid-tempo minor, neither brooding-slow nor agitated-fast, it carries a groove's forward motion without the urgency that would tip into anxiety. The dynamic range opens to thirty decibels, the widest on the record after "Racy" and "Pass." The twelve-second hush at the start and the loudest bar near the song's two-thirds mark sit at opposite ends of that span, and the distance between them is what the architecture is built on.

Seven sections across 247 seconds make a moderate shape, **short of the thirteen in "Say Enough" or the sixteen in "Pass,"** enough to give the song clear movement. The first verse, just after the silence, comes in quiet and deliberate. The first chorus arrives near the one-minute mark with a clear lift, more than double the verse, guitar and rhythm section rising together to meet it.

The next verse settles back below the chorus, and the second chorus confirms the gap. **Even the quieter verses hold a level that would read as a chorus on some other song,** a sign the band plays at a steady floor of intensity here.

Mode, Brightness, and Arrival

The mix sits mid-bright, brighter than "Hey" but short of the treble edge where "Say Enough" and "Happening" live. **E minor carries the vocabulary of the relative minor,** the same note collection as G major rooted a sixth lower, which opens access to the major chords on the seventh and fourth degrees and makes the mode feel modal rather than strictly functional. At 1:17 those borrowed major chords pull the color up from where the bare E-minor root would sit, a brightness the minor label alone would miss. The keys the title points to sit above the guitars, pad or piano voicings carrying that mid-bright color. The low end stays modest, grounded without weight.

Late in the song a verse and then a break **walk the energy back down.** The track leaves the upper register of its choruses and eases toward its opening hush without returning all the way to the floor. The final quiet runs fuller than the first. The song has moved from one register to another and come down, stopping just short of where it began.

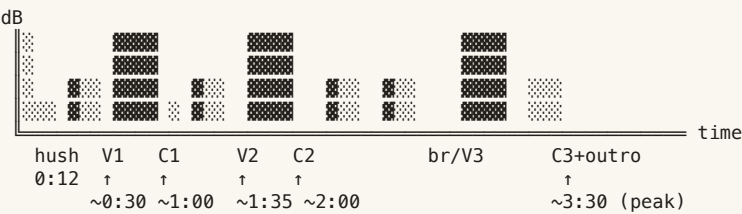
This is a minor-key track **playing major borrowed harmony at a walking tempo, using thirty decibels of range to make every arrival feel earned**. The silence at the top is the setup. The loudest bar is the payoff.

Figure · Scale of E minor, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

E	F#	G	A	B	C	D	E
1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7	1

E (open low) & B (open) reinforce tonic and dominant

Figure 1 · Dynamic shape and section grid ("Keys"). Seven sections, 30 dB swing.



Harmonic Reading

"Keys" is the album's most harmonically varied song, and its chord map is a textbook illustration of what Ken Stephenson calls the **flat-side borrowing native to rock**. The verse sits on i III v IV (Em7 G Bm7 Aadd9), a pattern that roots in E minor but immediately reaches to the major III chord (G) and the major IV chord (Aadd9). Both are borrowed from the parallel Aeolian or natural-minor scale, and both are standard rock vocabulary. Stephenson's point is that these form the primary harmonic palette of the style rather than deviations from a classical tonal norm, where the flat side of the key carries as much idiomatic weight as the diatonic chords do.

Figure 2 · Verse loop ("Keys"). E minor · ♩=117.

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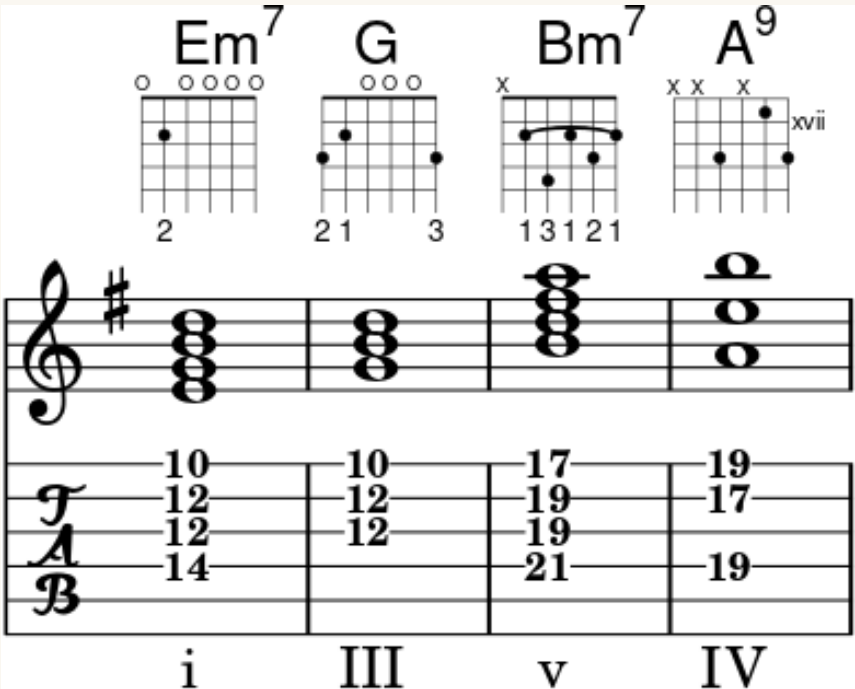


Figure · "Keys" – Verse

Em7 i tonic	G III rel-maj	Bm7 v min-dom	Aadd9 IV borr-IV
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The chorus map, III bVI bVII V7 (Gmaj7 Cmaj7 D E7), is the most striking progression on the record. It opens on the major III, rises through a flat-six borrowed chord (Cmaj7, a half-step above the V), continues to the major bVII (D), and then resolves through V7 (E7) back to the tonic. In Aeolian terms, bVI and bVII (C and D in the key of E) are the defining flat-side borrowings, the chords that identify a minor-key rock song as modal rather than functionally tonal. The V7 at the end is the only chord in the chorus that carries a leading-tone drive, the one moment where

functional resolution is available. That V7 landing at the phrase boundary gives the chorus a cadential arrival the verses deliberately avoid, which is why the chorus reads as a goal even inside a modal harmonic language. Nobile would identify this as a continuation chorus that begins off-tonic (on III) and builds toward that V7 cadence, rather than a pure telos loop. The outro further confirms the modal language with its i III I bVI (Em7 G D Cmaj7), the large-roman I here most likely the parallel major tonic, a bright Picardy-style arrival inside an Aeolian frame.

Figure 3 · Chorus & outro maps ("Keys"). The flat-side borrowings made visible.

CHORUS · the only authentic cadence on the record

Gmaj7 III rel-maj	Cmaj7 bVI borr	D bVII borr	E7 V7 AUTH→i
-------------------------	----------------------	-------------------	--------------------

↑
leading-tone G#, only one in the song

OUTRO · Picardy-edged Aeolian

Em7 i	G III	D I (?)	Cmaj7 bVI
----------	----------	------------	--------------

Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
Em7	E – G – B – D	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	tonic 7th
G	G – B – D	1 – 3 – 5	rel-maj (III)
Bm7	B – D – F# – A	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	minor dominant (v7)
Aadd9	A – C# – E – B	1 – 3 – 5 – 9	borrowed IV with added 9
Gmaj7	G – B – D – F#	1 – 3 – 5 – 7	III major-7 (chorus open)
Cmaj7	C – E – G – B	1 – 3 – 5 – 7	bVI major-7 (flat-side borrowing)
D	D – F# – A	1 – 3 – 5	bVII major
E7	E – G# – B – D	1 – 3 – 5 – b7	V7, only authentic dominant on t

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
Em7 → G	common D	G shares G,B,D, minimal motion

G → Bm7	common B,D	the F# on top is the only new note
Bm7 → Aadd9	common A	step-down by whole tone
Gmaj7 → Cmaj7	common G,B	♭VI arrives sounding like a tonic-substitute
Cmaj7 → D	common D	stepwise ♭VI → ♭VII rise
D → E7	common D	the only leading-tone (G#) appears here

Where the Words Land

The title carries two meanings and the song wires them together. "Jangling keys and a creak in the floor / Before you answer" gives you the keys to a door. The pads and piano voicings above the guitar give you the keys of a keyboard, the production layer the analysis already named. "Don't really think it's a home / Only affluence" runs in parallel to the harmony. The ♭VI and ♭VII chords are borrowed from outside the diatonic, the same way the lyric's "affluence" is borrowed belonging. The flat-side modal palette is the lyric's economic critique made audible.

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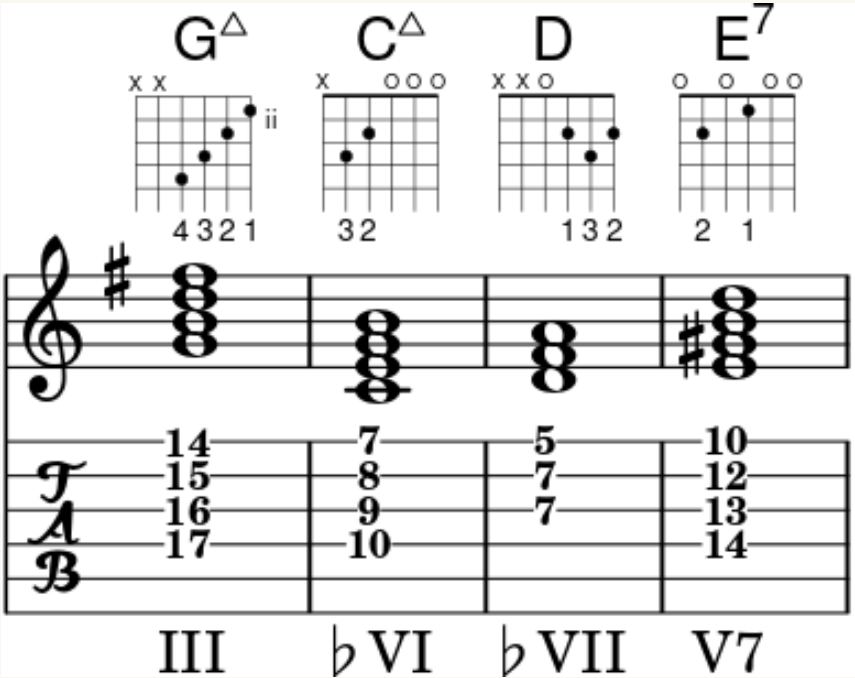


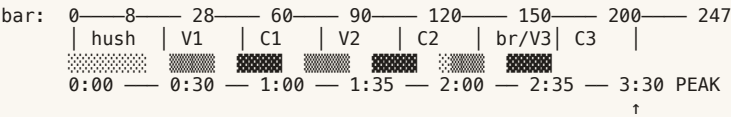
Figure · "Keys" – Chorus

Lyric Map

E minor · 117 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Verse	i III v IV	Em7 · G · Bm7 · Aadd9
2	Chorus	III bVI bVII V7	Gmaj7 · Cmaj7 · D · E7
3	Outro	i III I bVI	Em7 · G · D · Cmaj7

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

Know that it's me from a creak in the floor^D
 Before you answer^G
 Everything aligns for you and I cross way^{Em D G}
 Changing our lives, fortune flies^{C Bm}
 Don't put them over her^{D G}

Know that it's me at the door^{C Em}
 Before you answer^D
 Jangling keys and a creak in the floor^{G C D}
 Before you answer^G
 Everything aligns for you and I cross way^{C Em D G}
 Changing our lives, fortune flies^{C Bm}
 Don't put them over her^{D G}

Same as before, call the nights cross way^{C Em Am G}
 And everything aligns for you and I^{C Bm}

Wake up, wake up^{Am}
 Don't really think it's a home^C
 Only affluence^D
 No, I don't really think it's a home^{G Am C}

Everything aligns for you and I cross way^{D G C Em D}
 Changing our lives, fortune flies^{G C}
 Don't put them over her^{Bm D}
 Same as before, call the nights cross way^{G C Em F#dim}
 And everything aligns for you and I^{G C}

Chorus `~1:19` (×4)

III bVI bVII V7, Gmaj7 · Cmaj7 · D · E7

Know that it's me at the door

Before you answer

<details> <summary>Occurrence 2 (variant) </summary>

Before you answer

Everything aligns for you and I cross way

Changing our lives, fortune flies

Don't put them over her

Know that it's me at the door

Before you answer

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 3 (variant) </summary>

Before you answer

Everything aligns for you and I cross way

Changing our lives, fortune flies

Don't put them over her

Same as before, call the nights cross way

And everything aligns for you and I

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 4 (variant) </summary>

Everything aligns for you and I cross way

Changing our lives, fortune flies

Don't put them over her

Same as before, call the nights cross way

And everything aligns for you and I

</details>

Verse `~1:58` (×3)

i III v IV, Em7 · G · Bm7 · Aadd9

Know that it's me from a creak in the floor

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Jangling keys and a creak in the floor

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

Wake up, wake up

Don't really think it's a home

Only affluence

No, I don't really think it's a home

</details>

05

"Say Enough"

![Core chord loop, "Say Enough", Chorus](notation/hfe_say_enough.png)

```
J SAY ENOUGH · B major · J=103 · 4/4 · 4:38 ||  
Track 03 of 09 ||  
Form: 13 sections, the most divided architecture on the reco ||  
Loop: B F#m7 Aadd9 Badd9 (verse) | C#m7 Aadd9 Badd9 F#m7 (cho ||  
Dynamic range: 14.0 dB ||
```

No other track on the album **moves this much**. Thirteen sections in 278 seconds, a structural event roughly every twenty-one, make "Say Enough" the most restless architecture on the record. Verse and chorus trade places again and again, less a fixed form than a negotiation, the chorus arriving, receding, returning at a new strength, receding again, building across pass after pass until the choruses late in the song reach the loudest readings on the track. The most detailed map on the album is also its brightest.

The mix **rides higher than anything else here, up in the top third of the spectrum**, treble forward, the guitars running above their fundamentals with plenty of upper harmonic content from distortion, reverb, or both. B major at 103 feeds that brightness. B major is a sharp-heavy key, five sharps, and its tonic places the bass note unusually high for a guitar-rock song, the open B string being the second-highest open string on a standard guitar. Its

chord shapes lean on higher frequencies than the same shapes would in D or G. The low end stays light, the song's center of attention held up top.

The dynamic range **sits in the middle, fourteen decibels**, away from the 2.7 of "Hey" and the extremity of "Racy." At 103 the song runs slower than most of the album's front half, and the slower clock gives all thirteen sections room to breathe. The loudest single bar lands near 93 seconds, in the neighborhood of the third chorus, where the drums and rhythm section seem to do their hardest work.

Structure and Suppressed Drama

The opening few seconds work as a hushed intro before the verse slips in quiet. **The first chorus lifts cleanly.** The next verse stays up where the chorus had been, and the chorus after it settles just beneath that verse. This is the song's argument in miniature, sections that should rank clearly above one another instead leveling out, the verse holding into chorus territory, the chorus easing down to meet it. By the midpoint the spread between them has nearly closed.

Then something turns near 108 seconds. **The chorus there is the first to clearly top the verses in the second half.** The next verse drops, the chorus after it rises to the loudest reading on the track, the following verse falls again, and the next chorus climbs back near the top. The back half builds the drama the front half kept suppressing. The song earns its payoff by first making you doubt one is coming.

The final stretch is **the album's most dramatic single-track fade.** From the loud chorus late in the song the energy steps down, then down again, then into near-silence across the last eighty seconds.

The closing gesture is a true diminuendo, the second half's chorus energy bleeding out in three clear steps.

Figure · Scale of B major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

B	C#	D#	E	F#	G#	A#	B
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

B (open) reinforces tonic; the key sits high on the neck

Figure 1 · The thirteen-section ladder ("Say Enough"). Verse and chorus levels trade dominance; the back half builds the drama the front suppressed.

<!-- notefig@page-9 -->

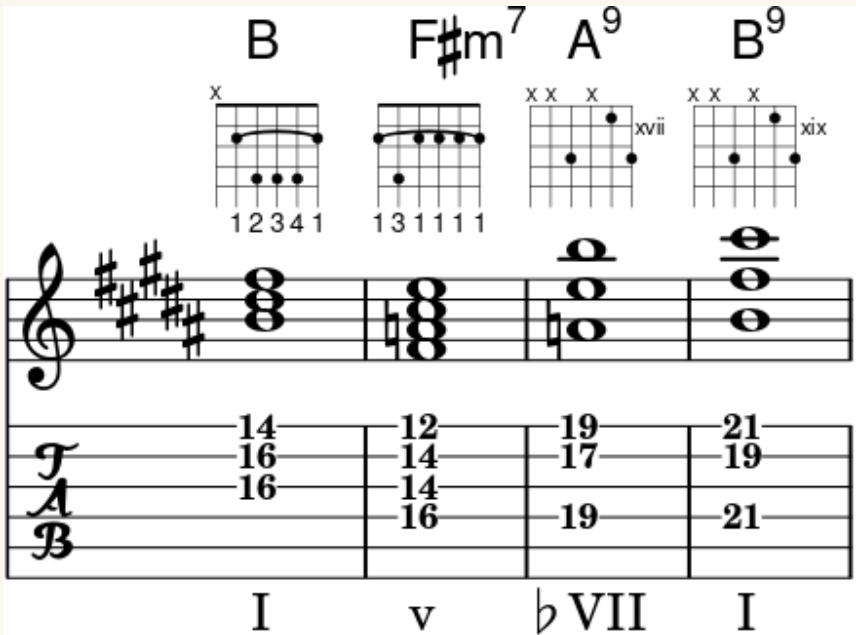
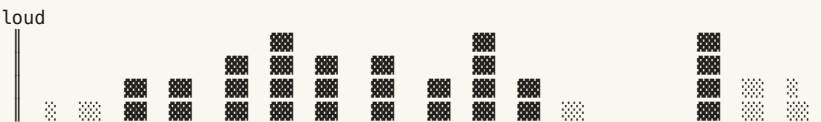
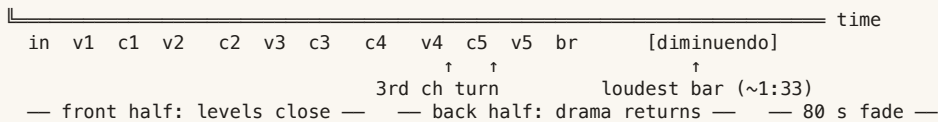


Figure · "Say Enough" – Verse





Harmonic Reading

"Say Enough" runs on a flat-side Mixolydian inflection that sits at an angle to its declared key of B major. The verse map, I v bVII I (B F#m7 Aadd9 Badd9), contains the key gesture: the bVII chord (Aadd9) is A major, a whole step below the tonic, and A is not diatonic to B major. Ken Stephenson identifies the bVII as one of the most common flat-side borrowings in rock, a chord borrowed from the Mixolydian mode (the major scale with a lowered seventh degree). Its presence in the verse alongside the minor v (F#m7, where B major would expect a major V) signals that the song's harmonic world is Mixolydian-inflected major, not purely functional. The phrase ends by returning to I (Badd9), so the bVII does not resolve forward; it color-modifies the tonic region. Stephenson notes that in rock, bVII–I is a common closing gesture that confirms the tonic without a leading-tone drive, and that is exactly what the verse does.

Figure 2 • Verse and chorus loops ("Say Enough"). The minor v + flat-VII inflection visible.

VERSE • I v bVII I • bVII colors but does not pull

B I tonic	F#m7 v min dom	Aadd9 bVII Mixo	Badd9 I add9 return
-----------------	----------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

CHORUS • ii bVII I v • no V anywhere, no leading tone

C#m7 ii	Aadd9 bVII	Badd9 I	F#m7 v
------------	---------------	------------	-----------

OUTRO TAG • V7 finally surfaces, only as a coda

B I	A bVII	B7 V7→	(the song's only dominant)
--------	-----------	-----------	----------------------------

The chorus map, ii bVII I v (C#m7 Aadd9 Badd9 F#m7), is a loop that cycles through the same flat-side bVII and avoids V entirely. There is no dominant chord in the chorus, and no leading-tone resolution. In Nobile's terms, this is a loop rather than a progression: four chords that circle without a goal cadence, the ii and the v providing tonal color while the bVII anchors the Mixolydian inflection. The outro moves to I bVII V7 (B A B7), the only moment in the song where V7 appears, and it comes at the end as a tag rather than a structural arrival. The song withholds dominant function for nearly its entire length, then introduces it only as a coda. Thirteen sections built on a dominant-free Mixolydian loop, with V7 arriving as an afterthought, explains why the song's accumulating energy feels lateral rather than directed: the harmonic language has no target to aim at.

Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
B	B – D# – F#	1 – 3 – 5	tonic
F#m7	F# – A – C# – E	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	minor v (no leading tone)
Aadd9	A – C# – E – B	1 – 3 – 5 – 9	bVII, Mixolydian flat-7
Badd9	B – D# – F# – C#	1 – 3 – 5 – 9	tonic with added 9
C#m7	C# – E – G# – B	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	ii7, chorus opener
B7	B – D# – F# – A	1 – 3 – 5 – b7	tonic 7, outro tag, song's

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

<!-- notefig@page-10 -->

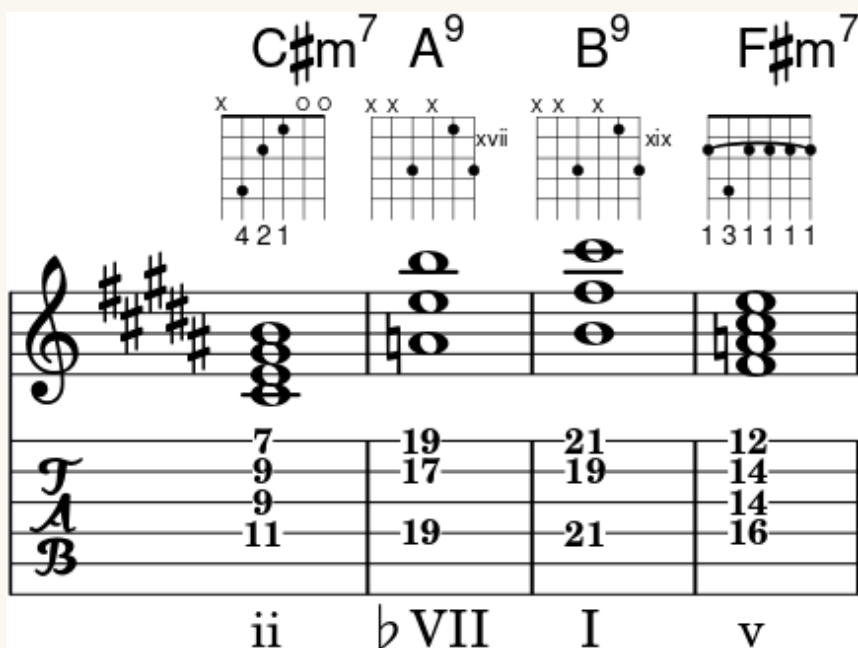


Figure · "Say Enough" – Chorus

Transition	Common tones	Motion
B → F#m7	common F#	tonic to minor v, no leading-tone pull
F#m7 → Aadd9	common A	step-up to bVII, Mixolydian color
Aadd9 → Badd9	common B	bVII → I closing gesture, no V involved
C#m7 → Aadd9	common E	ii to bVII, leftward by third
Aadd9 → F#m7	common A,C#	loop seam, most chord tones held

Where the Words Land

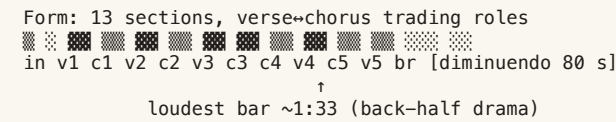
The song's lyric is its own analytical claim. "Saying that it can't be done / Knowing that it can't be done!" is the chorus, repeated six times, never stopped. The thirteen sections trade verse and chorus levels back and forth without arriving anywhere, and the lyric describes that lateral accumulation in words. "All we do is fight / And love!" is a relationship reduced to oscillation, the same oscillation the volume curve traces. The outro tag finally lets V7 through. The lyric mirrors it: "Inside growing is too hard." The dominant chord and the admission arrive at the same place.

Lyric Map

B major · 103 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Verse	I v bVII I	B · F#m7 · Aadd9 · Badd9
2	Chorus	ii bVII I v	C#m7 · Aadd9 · Badd9 · F#m7
3	Outro	I bVII V7	B · A · B7

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

Staying out of money, watch the worry go!
F#

Saying that it can't be done
B F#

Knowing that it can't be done!

B

Playing out the story in the morning, oh
C#m F#

Saying that it can't be done
B F#

Knowing that it can't be done!

B

Pray I'm something in your heart
F#

Do you know me always on?
C#m B F#

Pray I'm something in your heart
C#m

Is it going alright?
B F#

Pray I'm something in your heart
B

Do you know me always on?
F# C#m

Is it going, is too hard?
Do you know me alright?

F#

Staying out of money, watch the worry go!

B F#
 Saying that it can't be done
 G#m B
 Knowing that it can't be done!

 C#m
 I could say I'm sorry!
 F#
 But the merit's gone
 B
 Saying that it can't be done
 Knowing that it can't be done!

 F# C#m
 Pray I'm something in your heart
 B F# C#m
 Do you know me always on?
 G#m D#m
 Pray I'm something in your heart
 D
 Is it going alright?
 F# C
 Don't you wanna see how I... still?
 B C#m B
 All we do is fight
 And love!

F#
 Pray I'm something in your heart
 Do you know me always on?
 C#m B F#
 Pray I'm something in your heart
 C#m
 Is it going alright?
 B F#
 Pray I'm something in your heart
 C#m B
 Do you know me always on?
 F#
 Inside growing is too hard
 C#m
 Do you know me alright?

Chorus `~0:25` (×6)

ii bVII I v, C#m7 · Aadd9 · Badd9 · F#m7

Staying out of money, watch the worry go!

Saying that it can't be done

Knowing that it can't be done!

<!-- notefig@page-11 -->

The image shows musical notation for the 'Say Enough' - Outro section. It includes guitar chord diagrams for B, A, and B7, a treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 6/8 time signature, and a bass clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 6/8 time signature. The chords are I, bVII, and V7.

Figure · "Say Enough" – Outro

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Saying that it can't be done

Knowing that it can't be done!

Pray I'm something in your heart

Do you know me always on?

Pray I'm something in your heart

Is it going alright?

Pray I'm something in your heart

Do you know me always on?

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

Do you know me alright?

Staying out of money, watch the worry go!

Saying that it can't be done

Knowing that it can't be done!

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 4 (variant)</summary>

Saying that it can't be done

Knowing that it can't be done!

Pray I'm something in your heart

Do you know me always on?

Pray I'm something in your heart

Is it going alright?

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 5 (variant)</summary>

Pray I'm something in your heart

Do you know me always on?

Pray I'm something in your heart

Is it going alright?

Pray I'm something in your heart

Do you know me always on?

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 6 (variant)</summary>

Do you know me alright?

</details>

Verse `~0:41` (×5)

I v bVII I, B · F#m7 · Aadd9 · Badd9

Playing out the story in the morning, oh

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Is it going, is too hard?

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

I could say 'I'm sorry!'

But the merit's gone

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 4 (variant)</summary>

Don't you wanna see how I... still?

All we do is fight

And love!

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 5 (variant)</summary>

Inside growing is too hard

</details>

06

"Somewhere Else"

![Core chord loop, "Somewhere Else", Sustained chorus](notation/hfe_somewhere_

```
J SOMEWHERE ELSE      · C major      · J=129 · 4/4 · 5:15 ||
Track 04 of 09
Form: 1 sustained chorus (284 s = 90% of song) + 4 s verse +
Loop: Am7 Dm7 G C (vi ii V I, circle-of-fifths, lands on I ||
Dynamic range: 30.0 dB ||
```

The most extraordinary structural fact about "Somewhere Else" is **the size of its single idea**. One labeled section, a chorus, runs from the fourth second to the 284th, four minutes and forty seconds, ninety percent of the song. No verse, no bridge, no breakdown inside that span. Just the chorus, sustained, at near-constant high energy. A short verse arrives at 284 seconds for four seconds, and a break holds the rest. The song is a monolith, one section where most tracks cycle through several.

C major at 129 **explains part of it**. C major has no sharps and no flats, the most central key in Western music, the one that maps to the white keys without adjustment. At 129 the tempo builds momentum without rushing, and C major's open harmonics let guitar and bass sustain energy across a long span without the key itself adding friction. The mix sits mid-bright, away from the treble edge of "Say Enough" and the warmth of "Hey." The low end stays

grounded without turning heavy, the kick and bass keeping rhythmic pulse under the long chorus rather than adding mass.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-12 -->

Scale of C major

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-12 -->

The dynamic range is wide, **the third-widest on the album**, almost all of it the distance between the quiet opening verse, the near-silent break at the end, and the long sustained chorus in between. The song reaches its physical maximum around the two-minute mark, still deep inside that one long section.

The Chorus as the Whole Song

What those first four seconds of chorus establish, after only four seconds of opening verse, is a plain claim: **this is the sound of the song, and it will stay this way for almost the whole runtime.** Guitar and rhythm section lock the 129-beat C-major groove and hold, snare and kick the only steady markers of time passing in a section that never changes its name. The bass sustains its role beneath the guitar. The vocal rides the harmonic cycle without the arrangement shifting under it. There are no section walls to lean on, no verse to fall back to, no bridge to reframe the material. The listener stays inside the chorus, and the song asks whether that turns suffocating or hypnotic.

The hardest pressing comes in the song's middle, **the energy of sustained, uninterrupted playing reaching its top before the final release.** The short verse near the end reads as an arrival, the close of something long rather than a recovery from it.

The break that follows, twenty-seven seconds of near-silence, **is the song's only real space**. Coming after 284 seconds of held chorus, it lands with the force of something earned by sheer duration. The song reaches that quiet without moving through sections to get there.

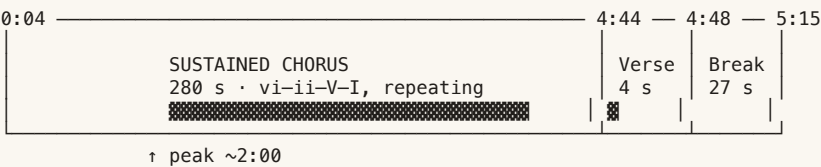
It is the album's most formally extreme choice, **a song that asks one question for ninety percent of its length** and returns to the verse only to confirm the question was always the answer. C major at 129 is the most comfortable harmonic and rhythmic ground for that kind of sustained commitment. The key is a deliberate choice.

Figure · Scale of C major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

no open strings reinforce C major directly, pure middle-key territory

Figure 1 · The 90 % monolith ("Somewhere Else"). Form as one held thing.



Harmonic Reading

"Somewhere Else" sustains its 284-second chorus on a **functional progression**, and that functionality is exactly what **makes the extended loop coherent**. The sustained chorus map, vi ii V I (Am7 Dm7 G C), is a circle-of-fifths descent through the diatonic chords of C major: vi down to ii, ii down to V, V resolving to I. This is one of the most tonally stable, goal-directed progressions in any Western style, and Stephenson notes that in

rock its functional pull is often the source of a chorus's sense of inevitability. The cycle resolves to I each time around, which means the chord map provides a new tonic arrival on every repetition. Rather than the loop feeling open-ended because it avoids resolution, this one feels closed on every pass. The song sustains its energy through repeated delivery of arrival, and the listener gets 284 seconds of repeated resolution.

<!-- notefig@page-13 -->

The figure displays the musical notation for the intro of the song "Somewhere Else". At the top, two guitar fretboard diagrams are shown. The first diagram is for a G major chord, with notes on the 2nd, 1st, and 3rd strings (labeled 2, 1, 3) and three open strings (labeled O O O). The second diagram is for a Dsus4 chord, with notes on the 5th, 8th, and 7th strings (labeled 5, 8, 7) and three muted strings (labeled X X X). Below the fretboards, a piano accompaniment is shown. The treble clef staff contains two chords: a G major triad (G-B-D) and a Dsus4 dyad (D-A). The bass staff contains figured bass notation: 10, 12, 12 for the first chord and 5, 8, 7 for the second chord. The chords are labeled V and II below the staff.

Figure · "Somewhere Else" – Intro

Nobile's framework helps explain why this extended loop reads as a telos chorus despite its unusual length. A telos chorus prolongs the tonic in a state of arrival and intensity, "rocking out" rather than driving toward a goal. The vi–ii–V–I cycle lands on I every four bars, confirming the tonic without departing from it, so the section-level sensation is one of continuous tonic prolongation. The intro's V II (G Dsus4) motion, which opens the song before the

chorus, and the bridge's IV I V (Fmaj7 Cadd9 Gsus4), which appears only once late, both work as parenthetical departures from the chorus's circle. The song's form is a Layout-vs-Process case that runs in the opposite direction from "Hey": where "Hey" sustains a loop by avoiding harmonic motion, "Somewhere Else" sustains a loop by repeating complete harmonic motion at an unusually large scale.

Figure 2 · The circle-of-fifths chorus ("Somewhere Else"). Each bar drops a fifth; bar 4 lands home and immediately restarts.

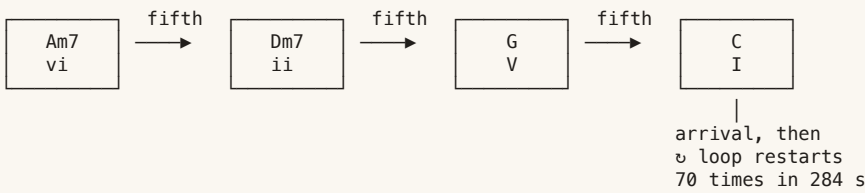


Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
Am7	A – C – E – G	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	vi7, relative minor with 7th
Dm7	D – F – A – C	1 – b3 – 5 – b7	ii7, supertonic with 7th
G	G – B – D	1 – 3 – 5	V, proper dominant
C	C – E – G	1 – 3 – 5	I, tonic, arrived
Dsus4	D – G – A	1 – 4 – 5	II sus4, intro only
Fmaj7	F – A – C – E	1 – 3 – 5 – 7	IV maj7, bridge
Gsus4	G – C – D	1 – 4 – 5	V sus4, bridge close

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
Am7 → Dm7	common A,C	circle of fifths, bass drops a fifth (A → D)
Dm7 → G	common D	circle of fifths, bass drops a fifth (D → G)
G → C	common G	AUTHENTIC CADENCE, full V→I resolution
C → Am7	common C,E	loop seam, only one new note (G), smooth rest

Where the Words Land

The earlier chapters in this book named a question and never quoted it. The song does. "Somewhere else / Somewhere better

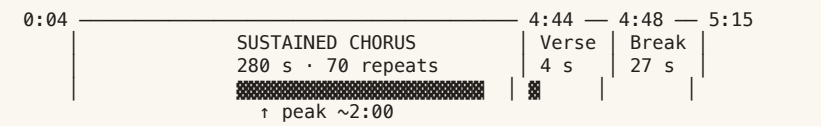
than here / Somewhere else to go." That is the question. The reversal arrives near the end of the long sustained chorus. "Nowhere else / No one better than you / Nowhere better than here / And it's all this ever was." That is the answer. The vi ii V I cycle lands on tonic on every pass for 284 seconds. The lyric lands on the same I, the same affirmation: this is the answer.

Lyric Map

C major · 129 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Intro	V II	G · Dsus4
2	Sustained chorus (284s)	vi ii V I	Am7 · Dm7 · G · C
3	Bridge	IV I V	Fmaj7 · Cadd9 · Gsus4

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

C
Somewhere else
Dm
Somewhere better than here
G
Somewhere else to go
C
Somewhere else
Dm
Somewhere better than here
Somewhere else to go

F C
We let ourselves
G Dm
So that matters is fear
G Am
Turn my hands to guns
Oh, oh, oh!
F

Take your time

Am
Gonna ... over here

F Em
No one has to know!

F
Soul is devil lost

Am G
Suddenly, all the answers come

C G
Suddenly, going on forever

Dm G
Suddenly, all the answers come to me!

Am
Nowhere else

G Dm
No one better than you

Someone glamorous

G F Am
But that's my start

Em
Nowhere better than here

F
Fold my hands close

Am F
And it's all this ever was!

Em F
Suddenly, all the answers come

Am
Suddenly, going on forever

F Em
Suddenly, all the answers come

F Am
Like a submarine floating up

F
Suddenly, all the answers come

Em F
Suddenly, going on forever

Am G Dm
Suddenly, all the answers come to me!

<!-- notefig@page-14 -->

Am⁷ Dm⁷ G C

2 1 2 1 3 3 2 1

15 8 10 3
17 10 12 5
17 10 12 5
19 12

vi ii V I

Figure · "Somewhere Else" – Sustained chorus

Sustained chorus `~1:41` (×5)

vi ii V I, Am⁷ · Dm⁷ · G · C

Somewhere else

Somewhere better than here

Somewhere else to go

Somewhere else

Somewhere better than here

Somewhere else to go

<details> <summary> Occurrence 2 (variant) </summary>

We let ourselves

So that matters is fear

Turn my hands to guns

Oh, oh, oh!

Take your time

Gonna ... over here

No one has to know!

Soul is devil lost

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 3 (variant) </summary>

Suddenly, all the answers come

Suddenly, going on forever

Suddenly, all the answers come to me!

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 4 (variant) </summary>

Suddenly, all the answers come

Suddenly, going on forever

Suddenly, all the answers come

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 5 (variant) </summary>

Suddenly, all the answers come

Suddenly, going on forever

Suddenly, all the answers come to me!

</details>

Intro `~3:12`

V II, G · Dsus4

Nowhere else

No one better than you

Someone glamorous

But that's my start

Nowhere better than here

Fold my hands close

And it's all this ever was!

Bridge

IV I V, Fmaj7 · Cadd9 · Gsus4

Like a submarine floating up

07

"Racy"

![Core chord loop, "Racy", Chorus](notation/hfe_racy.png)

♪ RACY · C minor · ♩=129 · 4/4 · 3:13

Track 05 of 09

Form: 3 acts: opening chorus, two-min middle, fade, peak at

Loop: Cm Gm Bb Ab (i v ♭VII ♭VI) · pure Aeolian descent

Dynamic range: 70.6 dB

||
||
||

The title track holds **the widest dynamic range on the record, 70.6 decibels from floor to ceiling**. It opens on a short break, a few seconds of near-quiet, and then it begins. A chorus arrives at the fourth second, loud and full. Across the whole track the energy runs from almost nothing to the loudest single moment on any song here, a stretch of near-absolute silence at one end and a peak at the other. The title track lives in the largest possible dynamic territory.

C minor at 129 is **one of two minor keys on the record**, alongside "Keys" in E minor, and it gives the song its identity as the album's dark center. C minor's natural harmonics favor the major chord a whole step below the root, the fourth, and the major chord on the flat sixth, a palette of borrowed major chords inside a minor frame, the same push and pull that gives minor-key pop its tension and release. At 129, matching "Somewhere Else" and "Airs," the tempo

manufactures no urgency. The urgency comes from the harmony alone.

Six sections fill 193 seconds: a break, then the opening chorus, a long verse-and-bridge passage, a second chorus, more of that verse-and-bridge, and a closing near-silence. **The shape divides into three acts**, opening chorus, middle, closing fade. The middle runs from roughly the 48th second to the 176th, more than two minutes, alternating a single verse-and-bridge with the second chorus and then holding the verse-and-bridge to the end of the span. The song's long center leans on the verse rather than the chorus. The choruses came early, both loud, and the last two minutes settle into the verse register, easing down.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-15 -->

Scale of C minor

C	D	E ^b	F	G	A ^b	B ^b	C
1	2	^b 3	4	5	^b 6	^b 7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-15 -->

Peak, Descent, and the Dark Center

The loudest bar comes early, around the 23rd second, inside that opening chorus. The song hits its peak in the first half-minute. Everything after is measured as distance from that peak.

The mix runs near-bright, **the second-brightest on the album after "Say Enough."** In C minor that means the production sits in the upper-mids, the guitar reaching for higher voicings or distortion harmonics to push the color above where a warm minor-key mix would land. This is the minor-key track that sounds nearly as bright as the major-key album around it. The low end stays low, so the weight is not down there. The brightness is a

production choice more than a consequence of the key.

Late in the song the verse-and-bridge **eases off the chorus energy without a formal breakdown**, the level simply falling as the section stretches. The near-silence at the close is the song's resolution, the full 70.6-decibel range on display, the near-zero at the end set against the peak that came before.

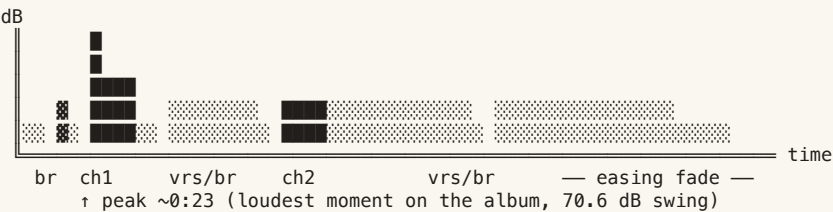
The album's title lives in C minor, **carrying the widest dynamic range of the nine**. That alignment is deliberate. Hooray for Earth handed the album's name to the song most able to swing between silence and volume, most willing to spend its peak in the first half-minute and then live 165 seconds in the aftermath. The minor key works as a structural argument, not a color. Seven of the nine songs on *Racy* are major. The title track and "Keys" are the exceptions, and they share the weight of the record's dark center.

Figure · Scale of C minor, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

C	D	E $\flat$	F	G	A $\flat$	B $\flat$	C
1	2	$\flat$ 3	4	5	$\flat$ 6	$\flat$ 7	1

D-standard tuning (D G C F A D) puts A $\flat$ at fret 4 of the low string, flat-side power chords lie under the hand

Figure 1 · Dynamic arc ("Racy"). The peak comes first; everything after is descent.



Harmonic Reading

The chorus map of "Racy," i v bVII bVI (Cm Gm Bb Ab), is a natural-minor flat-side descent, and it is the album's most explicitly Aeolian harmonic statement. Stephenson identifies this type of progression, descending through the flat side of a minor key using the diatonic chords of the Aeolian mode, as one of rock's most common minor-key vocabularies. The bVII (Bb) and bVI (Ab) are not borrowed from classical minor; they are the native chords of the Aeolian mode, built on the natural seventh and sixth scale degrees. The v chord (Gm, a minor dominant) is equally idiomatic: natural minor does not raise the seventh degree to create a leading tone, so the dominant chord stays minor. Stephenson's point is that the absence of a major V or V7 is a stylistic choice in this idiom, not a gap to be filled. "Racy" uses a dominant that does not function as a dominant, and the tension in the song comes from the flat-side descent rather than any leading-tone pull toward the tonic.

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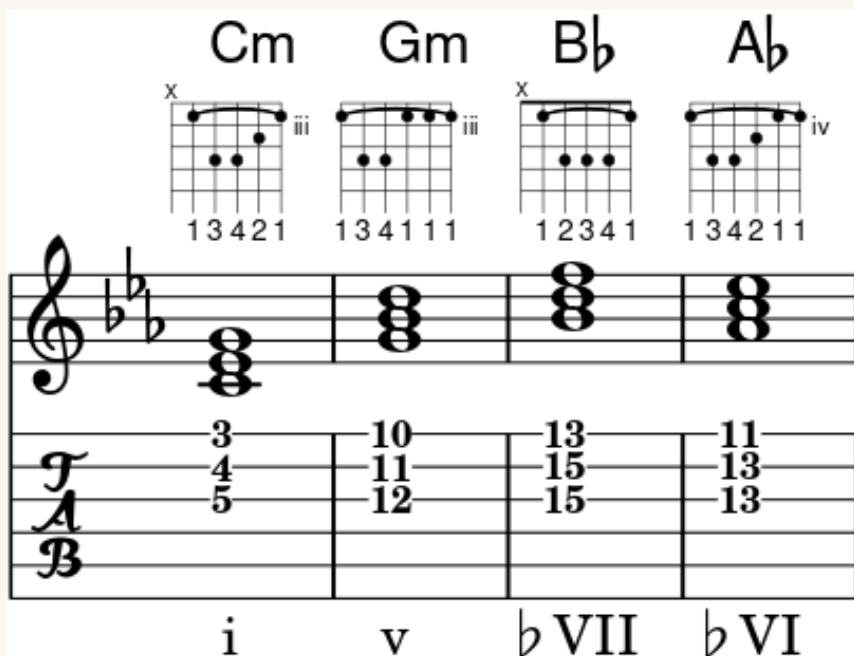


Figure · "Racy" – Chorus

Figure 2 · The Aeolian descent ("Racy"). Step-down through the flat side; no leading tone, no V resolution.

CHORUS · i v bVII bVI (the album's most explicit Aeolian statement)

Cm i tonic	Gm v min dom	Bb bVII descend	Ab bVI
------------------	--------------------	-----------------------	-----------

↓ loop restart, NO V→i pull

VERSE / BRIDGE · i v bVII i (chorus motion pared; bVI withheld)

Cm7 i	Gsus4 v sus	Bbadd9 bVII	Cm i
----------	----------------	----------------	---------

suspended v removes the third

DECLINE · i bVI v (the chorus reversed, then left open)

Cm i	Ab bVI	Gm v
---------	-----------	---------

fades to silence; never returns to i

The verse map, i v bVII i (Cm7 Gsus4 Bbadd9 Cm), contracts the chorus motion into a smaller loop that withholds the bVI

entirely. Where the chorus sweeps down through all four Aeolian degrees, the verse pares the motion to a three-chord cell, root to minor dominant to flat-seven and back. The suspended dominant (Gsus4) removes even the minor third from the v chord, making the "dominant" function still more ambiguous. The decline section, i bVI v (Cm Ab Gm), reverses the chorus's direction: the descent that ended on bVI in the chorus becomes the starting point, and the phrase settles on the minor v without returning to the tonic, an open, unresolved ending. Nobile would read this final section as a dynamic-form event rather than a harmonic arrival, the chord sequence left open as the volume falls to near-silence. The song's 70.6-decibel dynamic range and its Aeolian descent share the same formal logic: both move from a high point to an unresolved open end.

Figure • Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
Cm	C – E♭ – G	1 – ♭3 – 5	tonic minor
Gm	G – B♭ – D	1 – ♭3 – 5	minor dominant, no leading tone
B♭	B♭ – D – F	1 – 3 – 5	♭VII, Aeolian seventh
A♭	A♭ – C – E♭	1 – 3 – 5	♭VI, flat-side anchor, the gravi
Cm7	C – E♭ – G – B♭	1 – ♭3 – 5 – ♭7	verse: tonic with added 7
Gsus4	G – C – D	1 – 4 – 5	verse: even the third is withhel
B♭add9	B♭ – D – F – C	1 – 3 – 5 – 9	verse: ♭VII open, no resolve dr

Figure • Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
Cm → Gm	common G	tonic to minor v, Aeolian, no pull
Gm → B♭	common B♭,D	step-down by minor third
B♭ → A♭	common none	all voices step down, gravitational drop
A♭ → Cm	common C,E♭	loop seam, two voices held, only A♭→G moves

Where the Words Land

The Aeolian descent has no leading tone. The lyric has no forward pull either. "I could be watching you / It's keeping me away / And

keeping you the same." Watching freezes both the watcher and the watched, exactly the gravity the i v $\flat$ VII $\flat$ VI loop creates by refusing the V7 that would resolve home. "Now that you said it / I start to forget." Speech undoes memory; the harmony undoes destination. The closing lyric trails off: "If you don't have wonder / It's because ..." The chord sequence trails off into silence at the same moment.

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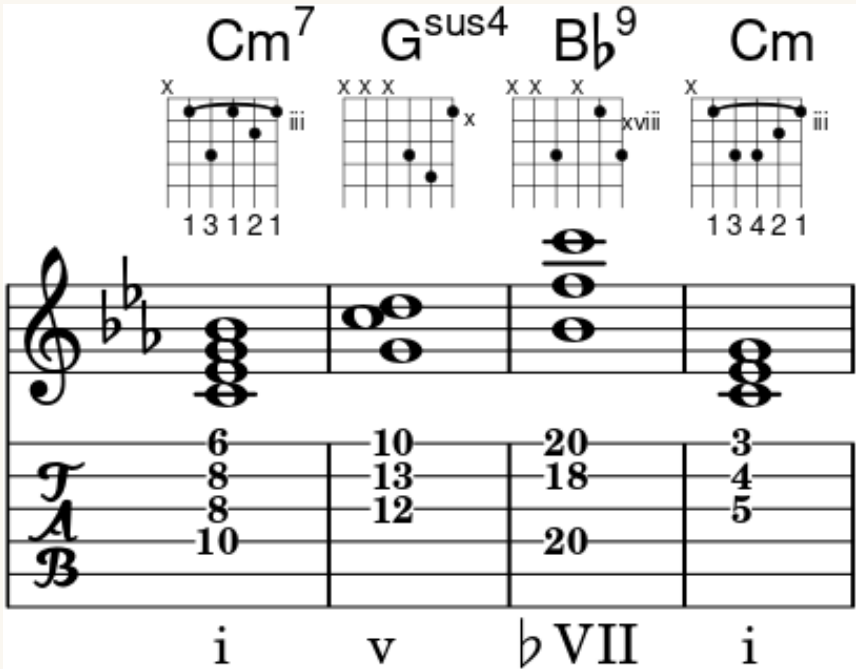


Figure · "Racy" – Verse / bridge

Where the Words Land

The title reverses a sequence and so does the lyric. "I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine / I'll find it on my own." Yours to mine to my own. The production is a near-palindrome of compression and weight, and the lyric is a palindrome of

possession. "So much dark embrace / Words are caught in space, the air." Words caught in space match the way the 11-decibel range traps sound in a tight window. The closing "She sees me open every door" pairs with the chapter's plagal outro: the only undeferred tonic arrival of the song, the line that lets something in.

Lyric Map

C minor · 129 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Chorus	i v bVII bVI	Cm · Gm · Bb · Ab
2	Verse / bridge	i v bVII i	Cm7 · Gsus4 · Bbadd9 · Cm
3	Decline	i bVI v	Cm · Ab · Gm

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

Gm Cm
Now that you said it
Bb
I start to forget
Gm Cm
I know the desire and the rest
Now that you said it
I start to forget
I know the desire and the rest

Bb
But I could be watching you
Cm
It's keeping me away
Gm
And keeping you the same
Cm
But I could be watching you

Bb Fm Cm
Now that I said it
Leave it up, leave it down

Ab
 It's always the time for the past
 If you don't have wonder
 It's because ...

Cm Bb Cm
 Well I could be watching you
 It's keeping me away
 And keeping you the same
 Bb Eb
 But I could be watching you
 Cm
 Well I could be watching you

See also: the long-form Racy chapter in

`racy\_textbook\_chapter\_poc.md`, same song, expanded with voice-leading analysis (79 melody notes, Ab ≥ tonic in pitch-class count), a "how to steal it" songwriting move section, and sources-cited footnotes.

Chorus `~0:30` (×2)

i v bVII bVI, Cm · Gm · Bb · Ab

Now that you said it

I start to forget

I know the desire and the rest

Now that you said it

I start to forget

I know the desire and the rest

But I could be watching you

It's keeping me away

And keeping you the same

But I could be watching you

<details> <summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

It's keeping me away

And keeping you the same

But I could be watching you

</details>

Verse / bridge `~1:36` (×2)

i v bVII i, Cm7 · Gsus4 · Bbadd9 · Cm

Now that I said it

Leave it up, leave it down

It's always the time for the past

If you don't have wonder

It's because ...

Well I could be watching you

<!-- notefig@page-18 -->

The image displays musical notation for the piece "Racy" - Decline. At the top, three guitar fretboard diagrams are shown for the chords Cm, Ab, and Gm. Each diagram includes a sequence of numbers (1 3 4 2 1, 1 3 4 2 1 1, and 1 3 4 1 1 1 respectively) and Roman numerals (iii, iv, and iii). Below these, a three-part instrumental arrangement is shown on staves. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats. The middle staff is in alto clef, and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The arrangement consists of three measures, each containing a chord. Below the staves, the Roman numerals i, bVI, and v are written.

Figure · "Racy" – Decline

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Well I could be watching you

</details>

Decline

i bVI v, Cm · Ab · Gm

(instrumental fade, open, unresolved)

08

"Last, First"

![Core chord loop, "Last, First", Chorus (92s)](notation/hfe_last_first.png)

```
J LAST, FIRST · C major · J=92 · 4/4 · 5:36 ||
Track 06 of 09
Form: 11 sections · slowest + longest · first chorus held 92
Loop: C Em Am F (verse) | F C G Am (chorus, V-vi deceptive) ||
Dynamic range: 10.8 dB
```

At 92 beats per minute, **this is the slowest song on the album**. It is also the longest, just over five and a half minutes, so the slowness has time to settle in. "Last, First" commits to its tempo and its length at once, and the result is the record's most heavily occupied production: a compressed range of about eleven decibels, second only to "Hey," and the second-heaviest low end on the album. The bass is present and dense. The mix is pressed together. At 92 in C major, this is the heaviest slow track on the record.

C major is the most harmonically neutral key, and at 92 **the chords change less often than on any other track**. The phrases run longer. The sustain between changes stretches out. The eleven-decibel compression keeps those long stretches close in volume, the bass and drums holding the 92-beat pulse inside a narrow window, the kick landing in a tight band, the C-major motion rolling through its cycle without the dynamic swing that

faster or more open tracks lean on.

Eleven sections fill the five and a half minutes, but **the sections run long**. An opening near-silence gives way to a quiet verse, then the first chorus near the twelve-second mark, and that chorus holds for ninety-two straight seconds, a minute and a half inside one payoff. The lift into it comes from the keys or a second guitar stacking over the verse.

The verse that follows steps down for real, **the next chorus barely clears it**, the gap between them almost nothing. A later chorus and verse sit just as close, pressed against each other in volume.

Weight, Duration, and Low End

The loudest bar lands around 143 seconds, deep in that first long stretch, **about forty percent of the way through**. That is the song's high point, and it comes early. The span between quietest and loudest is tight by this album's standards, and at eleven decibels with that dense low end, the tightness is the whole idea. "Last, First" sustains rather than varies.

The mix sits in the midrange, warmer than the album's bright tracks, short of the warmth of "Hey" or "Pass." **The low end does real work here, a foundation the other C-major song, "Somewhere Else," never reaches for**. At 92 the kick and bass have more time to build each hit's low frequencies. Slower tempos give every frequency more room to develop before the next hit, so they can carry more bass per beat. "Last, First" uses its tempo to make weight.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-19 -->

Scale of C major

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-19 -->

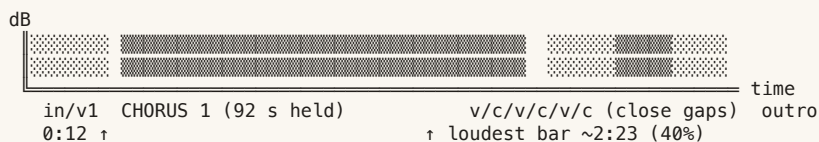
A closing section near the end and then a final silence **bring the track back close to its starting volume**. Late in the song the verse drops to its lowest sustained level, and the choruses that follow hold flat rather than climbing. "Last, First" begins compressed, sustains compressed, and ends near where it started. The title reverses a sequence, and the production is nearly a palindrome too, open a little, chorus, sustain, return. The 92-beat tempo is slow by design, not for lack of ideas. The song's central idea, compression and duration and low-end weight, needs the slow tempo to establish itself.

Figure · Scale of C major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

low-end heaviest on the record, slow tempo lets bass hits accumulate weight per beat

Figure 1 · Compressed sustain ("Last, First"). 11 dB range, 92 BPM, an unusually long first chorus.



Harmonic Reading

"Last, First" runs on two of rock's most durable diatonic loops, and the choice of loops for verse and chorus is a small formal argument about harmonic weight. The verse map, I iii vi IV (C Em Am F), is a descending stepwise motion through the major key: tonic to mediant to submediant to subdominant, four chords linked by stepwise bass motion. Stephenson notes that this cycle, common

across multiple rock eras, derives its stability from the bass line rather than from functional harmonic pull; the chords follow the bass down in thirds and the progression feels smooth, not directed. No dominant chord appears in the verse, and no leading tone. The loop runs quietly through the song's slow tempo without generating tension.

The chorus reversal, IV I V vi (F C G Am), reorders the same four chords to end on vi rather than IV. The move from V to vi at the phrase end is a deceptive cadence by classical standards, and in rock it has a specific character: the expected I arrival is deferred in favor of the relative minor, which keeps the phrase slightly open. Stephenson describes the deceptive cadence as a common rock gesture for maintaining forward momentum, a way of avoiding full closure at the phrase boundary. In "Last, First," the chorus loop closes on vi and then turns back to IV to begin again, so the deceptive cadence is the hinge of the loop rather than an exceptional move. At 92 beats per minute, with an eleven-decibel compressed dynamic range, the harmonic loop's lack of full closure matches the production's refusal to vary: neither the dynamics nor the chord map provides a definitive ending point. The song sustains by keeping both the volume and the harmony at a constant, unresolved simmer.

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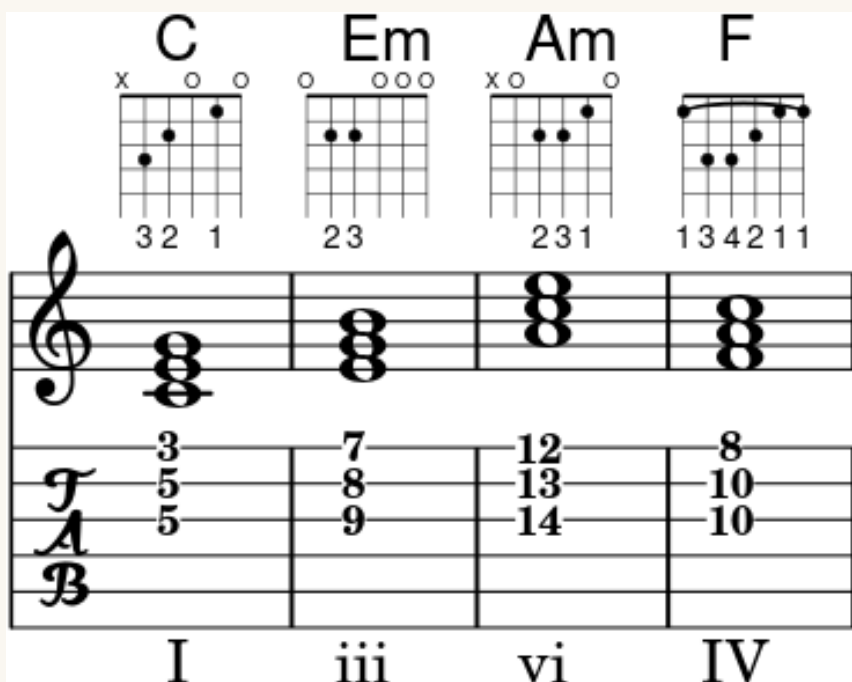


Figure · "Last, First" – Verse

Figure 2 · Verse and chorus loops ("Last, First"). Same four notes (C E G A) anchor both; only the bar order changes.

VERSE · stepwise descent through diatonic thirds

C I tonic	Em iii — descending bass (C→B→A→F) →	Am vi	F IV
-----------------	--	----------	---------

CHORUS · reorder + deceptive cadence

F IV	C I	G V	Am vi
---------	--------	--------	----------

V→vi: tonic deferred, loop reopens

OUTRO · plagal half-close

F IV	C I
---------	--------

the only undeferred I in the song

Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
C	C – E – G	1 – 3 – 5	tonic
Em	E – G – B	1 – $\flat$ 3 – 5	iii, descending-third hinge
Am	A – C – E	1 – $\flat$ 3 – 5	vi, relative minor, deceptive cl
F	F – A – C	1 – 3 – 5	IV, subdominant
G	G – B – D	1 – 3 – 5	V, proper dominant, used in cho

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
C → Em	common E,G	stepwise bass descent C → E (down a third, bu
Em → Am	common E	bass falls a fifth (E → A), circle motion
Am → F	common A,C	bass falls a third (A → F)
F → C	common C	PLAGAL outro arrival, the only undeferred I
G → Am	common none	DECEPTIVE, V resolves to vi instead of I, loo

Where the Words Land

The title reverses a sequence and so does the lyric. "I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine / I'll find it on my own." Yours to mine to my own. The production is a near-palindrome of compression and weight, and the lyric is a palindrome of possession. "So much dark embrace / Words are caught in space, the air." Words caught in space match the way the 11-decibel range traps sound in a tight window. The closing "She sees me open every door" pairs with the chapter's plagal outro: the only undeferred tonic arrival of the song, the line that lets something in.

Lyric Map

C major · 92 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Verse	I iii vi IV	C · Em · Am · F
2	Chorus (92s)	IV I V vi	F · C · G · Am
3	Outro	IV I	F · C

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.

0:00 — 0:12 ————— ~1:44 — ~2:23 — ~5:00 — 5:36

in/v1 CHORUS 1 (92 s held) v/c/v/c/v/c outro
 r loudest bar ~2:23 (40%)

Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

Db C
 Socialite, for the night and take me out
 Db C Db C
 Oversight, wouldn't try to pick me back up & cause you find it in my eyes
 Bb Db C
 Sunlight, fading torrent, my hands broken
 Bb F
 Sometimes, waiting for it is why I'm eroding
 Eb Dm
 I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine
 F
 Crying a lonely laugh
 Eb Dm Am
 I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine
 Db
 I'll find it on my own
 C
 Socialite, for the night and take me out
 Do you violate my path?
 Db C
 Oversight, wouldn't try to make me up again
 Bb C
 Yeah, you cry it out so fine
 F Eb
 Do you find it in my eyes?
 Dm F
 I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine
 Eb
 Crying a lonely laugh
 Dm Am Eb
 I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine
 Dm
 I'll find it on my own
 F Eb
 Say you will hope then
 Dm Am
 Crying a lonely laugh
 G
 I was acting over-the-line
 F Am
 Saying you were mine
 F
 I'll find it on my own
 G
 So much dark embrace
 F
 She sees me open every door

Words are caught in space, the air ^{Am}
 So much dark embrace
 She sees me open every door ^F
 Words are caught in space, in the air ^G
 So much dark embrace ^F
 Could it be she's opened every word ^{Am}
 Words are caught in space, in the air ^F

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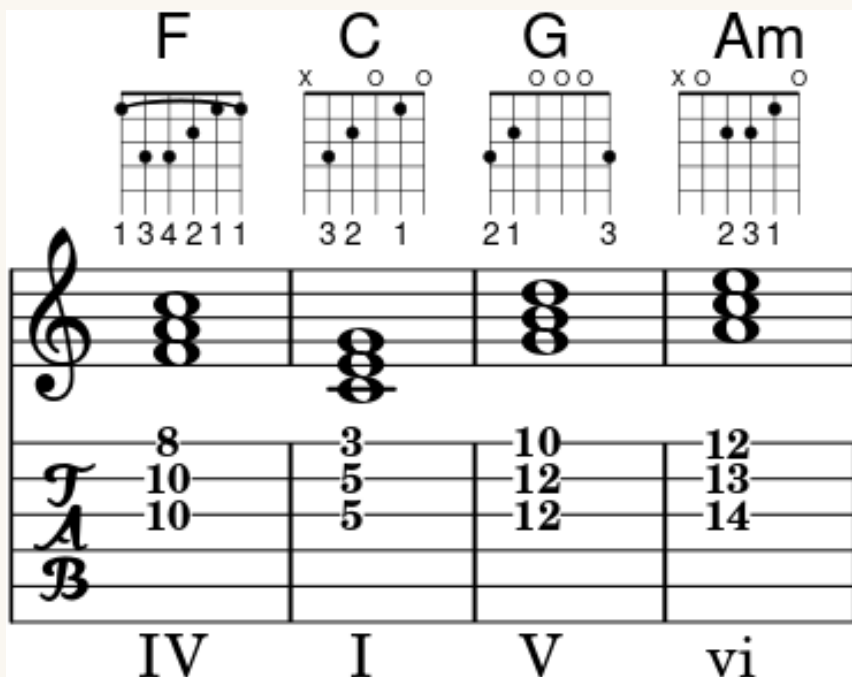


Figure · "Last, First" – Chorus (92s)

Note · the chart extracts borrowed chords (Db, Eb, F, G) that don't appear in the Lyric Map's four-chord scheme. These are bass passing notes / brief modal departures the analytical loops abstract away; they show as flat-side colors (bII, bIII, IV, V) inside the C-major frame.

Chorus `~0:20` (x7)

IV I V vi, F · C · G · Am

Socialite, for the night and take me out

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine

Crying a lonely laugh

I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine

I'll find it on my own

Socialite, for the night and take me out

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine

Crying a lonely laugh

I was acting over-the-line, saying you were mine

I'll find it on my own

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 4 (variant)</summary>

Crying a lonely laugh

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 5 (variant)</summary>

I'll find it on my own

So much dark embrace

She sees me open every door

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 6 (variant)</summary>

So much dark embrace

She sees me open every door

Words are caught in space, in the air

So much dark embrace

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 7 (variant)</summary>

Words are caught in space, in the air

</details>

Verse `~0:39` (×6)

I iii vi IV, C · Em · Am · F

Oversight, wouldn't try to pick me back up 'cause you find it in my eyes

Sunlight, fading torrent, my hands broken

Sometimes, waiting for it is why I'm eroding

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Do you violate my path?

Oversight, wouldn't try to make me up again

Yeah, you cry it out so fine

Do you find it in my eyes?

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 3 (variant) </summary>

Say you will hope then

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 4 (variant) </summary>

I was acting over-the-line

Saying you were mine

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 5 (variant) </summary>

Words are caught in space, the air

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 6 (variant) </summary>

Could it be she's opened every word

</details>

09

"Airs"

![Core chord loop, "Airs", Chorus](notation/hfe_airs.png)

```
J AIRS · C# major · J=129 · 4/4 · 4:08 ||
Track 07 of 09
Form: 7 sections · biggest moment is its last 35 s
Loop: C# G# (verse) | C# F# G# A#m (chorus) | C# F# A#m G# (F
Dynamic range: 8.5 dB ||
```

The song's biggest moment is its last. The closing chorus, arriving in the final thirty-five seconds of a four-minute song, is the loudest chorus on the entire album, louder than any section on any other track. Hooray for Earth spent three and a half minutes setting it up. That is a specific bet: hold the peak until the song is nearly over.

C# major at 129 gives "Airs" **a brightness and forward push that its structure plays against.** C# major carries five sharps, putting its tonic and common voicings in the upper range of guitar territory. The mix sits mid-bright, in line with the key, short of the treble edge of "Say Enough." At 129 the tempo matches "Somewhere Else" and "Racy," a driving midtempo pulse in a bright key, pointing forward through the song's seven sections.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-22 -->

Scale of C major

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-22 -->

The dynamic range is tight, **around eight and a half decibels, second only to "Hey."** That matters for the loud finale. A range that narrow means the track sweeps no path from silence to explosion. The closing peak is reached by steady, incremental movement, with no sudden jump out of a quiet bed. The floor of "Airs" already sits higher than the floor of most songs here. The track works entirely in a zone of high ambient energy and then finds another level inside that zone for its close.

Delayed Payoff and the Two Kinds of Peak

The seven sections trace a clear path. **A brief silence gives way to a high opening verse.** The first chorus confirms the gap between verse and chorus with a clean lift. Then the song settles into a long middle, verse and chorus keeping that gap. A later verse eases back a little. And then the finale arrives.

The loudest single bar comes early, around 47 seconds, near the first chorus, so **the bar-level peak and the section-level peak fall apart from each other.** The highest instantaneous energy is in that first chorus window. The highest sustained section is the closing chorus. These are two kinds of peak, the moment of maximum push and the delivery of a long-deferred payoff. A sustained final peak inside a range this compressed points to a deliberate move, a guitar doubling, a synth layer, a burst of reverb brought in right at the close that was absent or lower everywhere before.

The low end is moderate, **present without being the song's center.** The frequency focus stays in the guitar's mid-bright zone. The weight of the finale comes from energy and arrangement

density, from low-frequency content least of all. The song runs bright, holds that brightness throughout, and intensifies it at the last moment. In a fair world "Airs" would close a show. Instead it closes side one and opens onto whatever "Happening" decides to do with what is left in the room.

Figure · Scale of C# major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

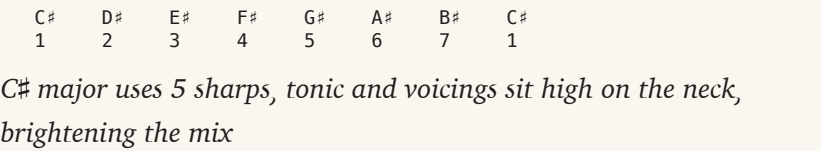
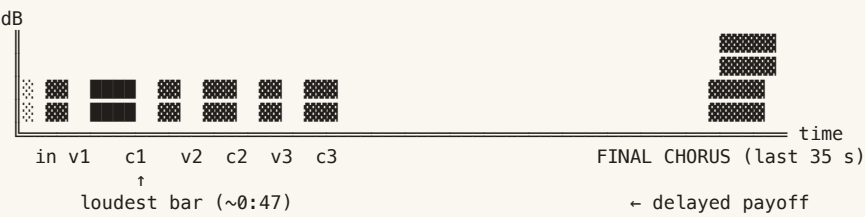


Figure 1 · Two kinds of peak ("Airs"). Bar peak comes early; section peak comes last.



Harmonic Reading

"Airs" is built on a split between two nearly identical chord maps, and the reordering of two chords in the final chorus is the harmonic event that delivers the deferred payoff. The verse holds a two-chord I V loop (C# G#), the simplest possible major-key alternation, a tonic-dominant oscillation that Stephenson identifies as the purest rock cadential cell. Verse after verse of I-V sustains the energy without providing any motion at all; the two chords do not progress, they alternate. The chorus adds IV and vi (F# and A#m) to produce I IV V vi (C# F# G# A#m), a loop that still ends on vi, the deceptive cadence hinge described above in "Last, First."

<!-- notefig@page-23 -->

The image displays musical notation for the final chorus of "Airs" – Verse. It features a treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The notation shows a sequence of notes: F#, C#, G#, F#, C#, G#, F#, C#, G#, F#. Above the staff, two guitar fretboard diagrams are shown. The first diagram is for the C# chord, with fingerings 3, 1, 2, 1 and two 'x' marks above the first two strings. The second diagram is for the G# chord, with fingerings 1, 3, 4, 2, 1, 1 and a 'iv' marking above the fifth string. Below the staff, a bass staff shows the bass line with notes 4, 6, 6, 11, 13, 13. The bass staff is labeled with 'I' and 'V' below it, indicating the chord progression. The bass staff also has a 'T' above the first measure and an 'A' above the second measure.

Figure · "Airs" – Verse

The final chorus rewrites the last two positions of that loop, producing I IV vi V (C# F# A#m G#), and that single transposition is the delayed telos arrival. By placing V at the end of the phrase rather than in the penultimate position, the final chorus moves toward an authentic cadential resolution rather than a deceptive one. Nobile's concept of a delayed telos arrival is precisely this: a song that withholds authentic cadential motion through most of its length, then delivers it at the structural end as the payoff. The tight 8.5-decibel dynamic range means the delivery

of this payoff is a harmonic event as much as a volume event, the loudest section arriving at the same moment the chord sequence finally points toward a decisive V resolution. The song spent three and a half minutes on an open vi cadence, and the finale closes it.

Figure 2 · The two-chord swap that takes 3:30 to arrive ("Airs"). Bars 3 and 4 reverse. The whole song is built to deliver that reversal.

VERSE · I V · pure oscillation, no motion

C# I	G# V	tonic ↔ dominant, no progress alternates verse after verse
---------	---------	---

CHORUS ×3 · I IV V vi · deceptive cadence at the end

C# I	F# IV	G# V	A#m vi	V→vi: keeps it open
---------	----------	---------	-----------	---------------------

FINAL CHORUS · I IV vi V · authentic cadence finally available

C# I	F# IV	A#m vi	G# V →	V at the end now points home
↑ swap 3 and 4 reversed		↑ swap the song's structural payoff		

Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
C#	C# – E# – G#	1 – 3 – 5	tonic
G#	G# – B# – D#	1 – 3 – 5	dominant
F#	F# – A# – C#	1 – 3 – 5	subdominant
A#m	A# – C# – E#	1 – b3 – 5	relative minor, deceptive close

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
C# → G#	common G#	verse: tonic ↔ dominant alternation, zero motion
C# → F#	common C#	chorus: tonic to subdominant
F# → G#	common none	step-up
G# → A#m	common none	deceptive cadence (chorus 1–3), V to vi
A#m → G#	common none	FINAL chorus only: order reverses, V comes last

Where the Words Land

The final-chorus swap delivers an authentic V resolution after three and a half minutes of deceptive V→vi. The lyric, in the same final chorus, says the word for what the harmony just did. "Still in time for closure." The bridge plea before the explosion is "I want to go away / I want to go away," twice, then the loudest section on the album. The economic theme runs alongside the form. "They want to buy over us / Believe me tonight I'm not the owner." The deferred payoff is bought, refused, and finally taken at the close. The harmonic closure and the lyric closure land in the same bar.

Lyric Map

C# major · 129 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Verse	I V	C# · G#
2	Chorus	I IV V vi	C# · F# · G# · A#m
3	Final chorus (208s)	I IV vi V	C# · F# · A#m · G#

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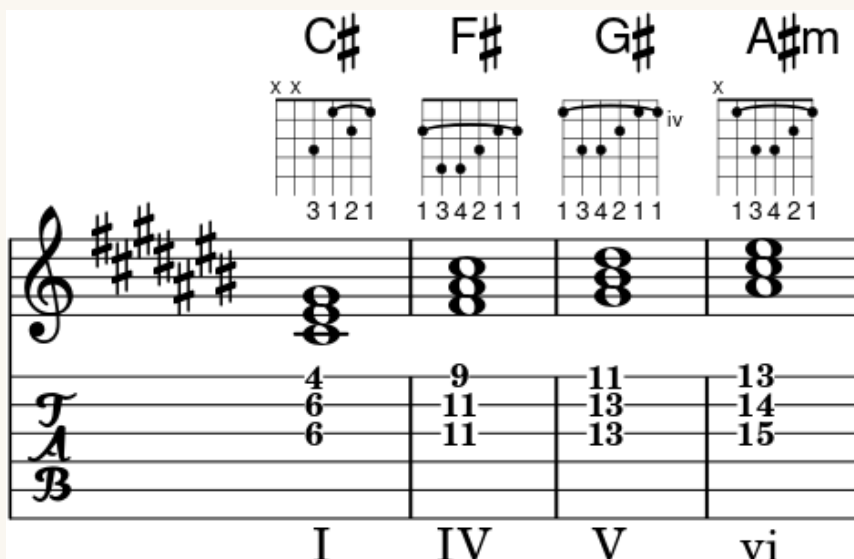
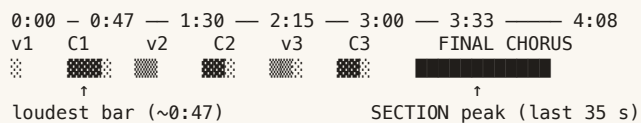


Figure · "Airs" – Chorus

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

F#
Sing it tonight
G#
It's out of order
F# Fm
In the corners, but there's no corner
C#
Sing it tonight
F#
It's out of order
G# C#
In the corners, but there's no corner
G# Cdim F#
Feed the time you count it over
G#
Just promote you, gesture and the hour
F# Fm
They want to buy over us
C# F#

You learn nothing
 G#
 Now I have them surrounded
 C# G#
 Just help it out and pray it out
 F#
 Cause I remember
 G#
 Still in time for closure

 F# Fm
 Believe me tonight I'm not the owner
 C# F# G#
 The sun rose in the corner
 F#
 It's time to buy and turn around
 G#
 To be in the corner

 Fm
 They want to buy over us
 You learn nothing
 C# F# G#
 Now I have them surrounded
 C# G#
 Just help it out and pray it out
 Cause I remember
 Cdim C# Fm
 Still in time for closure

 Cdim D#m
 I want to go away
 F#
 I want to go away

 G#
 They want to buy over us
 F# Fm
 You learn nothing
 F#
 Now I have them surrounded
 G#
 Just help it out and pray it out
 C# G#
 Cause I remember
 Cdim
 Still in time for closure
 Fm
 They want to buy

Note · the Fm and Cdim above are bass passing chromatics that color the cycle without disturbing the C# I IV V vi frame; the bass darts to them between the structural chord beats.

Chorus (×3)

I IV V vi, C# · F# · G# · A#m

Sing it tonight

It's out of order

In the corners, but there's no corner

Sing it tonight

It's out of order

In the corners, but there's no corner

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

They want to buy over us

You learn nothing

Now I have them surrounded

Just help it out and pray it out

Cause I remember

Still in time for closure

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

They want to buy over us

You learn nothing

Now I have them surrounded

Just help it out and pray it out

Cause I remember

Still in time for closure

I want to go away

I want to go away

They want to buy over us

You learn nothing

Now I have them surrounded

Just help it out and pray it out

Cause I remember

Still in time for closure

</details>

Verse (×3)

I V, C# · G#

Feed the time you count it over

Just promote you, gesture and the hour

<details><summary>Occurrence 2 (variant)</summary>

Believe me tonight I'm not the owner

The sun rose in the corner

It's time to buy and turn around

To be in the corner

<!-- notefig@page-25 -->

The image displays a musical score for the final chorus of the piece "Airs" (208s). It features a guitar part with four measures, each corresponding to a specific chord: C#, F#, A#m, and G#. Above each chord is a guitar fretboard diagram showing the fingerings and positions. Below the guitar part is a bass line with four measures, each corresponding to the same chords. The bass line is written in a simplified notation with numbers 1-5 on a five-line staff. The chords are labeled with Roman numerals: I, IV, vi, and V.

Measure	Chord	Guitar Fingering (Diagram)	Bass Line (Numbers)	Roman Numeral
1	C#	3 1 2 1	4 6 6	I
2	F#	1 3 4 2 1 1	9 11 11	IV
3	A#m	1 3 4 2 1	13 14 15	vi
4	G#	1 3 4 2 1 1	11 13 13	V

Figure · "Airs" – Final chorus (208s)

</details>

<details><summary>Occurrence 3 (variant)</summary>

They want to buy

</details>

10

"Happening"

![Core chord loop, "Happening", Chorus](notation/hfe_happening.png)

```
J HAPPENING · F major · J=144 · 4/4 · 3:51 ||
Track 08 of 09
Form: 8 sections · regular verse/chorus alternation · fastest
Loop: F Dm Bb C (verse) | Bb F C Dm (chorus, V→vi deceptive) ||
Dynamic range: 24.0 dB ||
```

The fastest song on the album starts without a runway. The first sound is already a verse, and the first chorus lands by the sixteen-second mark. No silence, no atmospheric setup. At 144 in F major, "Happening" needs no lead-in. The tempo carries the momentum from the first downbeat.

144 is the album's ceiling. "Hey" sits at 123, and "Somewhere Else," "Racy," and "Airs" at 129, all fast, and **"Happening" clears them by at least fifteen beats, a real perceptual jump at this speed.** The bars are shorter. The sections turn over faster. The sixteen seconds before the first chorus is barely thirty-eight bars at this tempo.

F major sits on the flat side of the key signatures, one flat, **its center warm and open.** The mix runs bright anyway, second only to "Say Enough," the guitar and production working the upper-mids and treble despite the key's warmth. That is a production decision, distortion or reverb or high-register voicings

pulling the color up past where F major's harmonics would put it. The low end stays light, in line with the brightness.

Speed, Regularity, and Form

The dynamic range is wide, fourth on the album, and **at 144 the song crosses it fast**, section changes arriving quickly with real volume shifts between them. The floor is low, and the loudest bar lands around 36 seconds, in or just after the first chorus. Eight sections fill the song, verse and chorus trading cleanly. The second chorus is the loudest section, above both the first chorus and the third, the first chorus the arrival and the second the confirmation.

The verses sit notably low and even, and the choruses sit a consistent step above them, **the same gap each time across all three chorus windows**. "Happening" has the album's most regular verse-to-chorus difference. The verse is the verse, the chorus is the chorus, and the distance between them holds steady. On a record that specializes in subverting structure, the single section of "Somewhere Else," the flat constant of "Hey," the deferred finale of "Airs," "Happening" is the most conventional shape of all.

At 144 in F major **the guitar runs a repeating riff that opens into the chorus**, the rhythm section the propulsive core, kick and snare driving the song forward rather than sustaining it. The last verse drops below the earlier ones, and a closing silence makes the final twenty-two seconds a deliberate step down, no fourth chorus to extend the middle's three-chorus run. F major at top tempo with a bright mix and a wide swing is a specific combination, and the regularity is efficiency, not simplicity. "Happening" knows exactly what it is and runs that knowledge across its full length without a wasted bar.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-26 -->

Scale of F major

F	G	A	A#	C	D	E	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

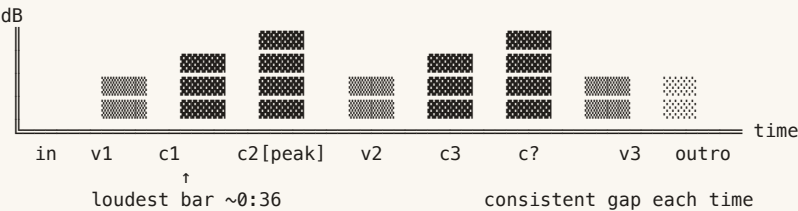
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Figure · Scale of F major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

F	G	A	B $\flat$	C	D	E	F
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

F major, only one flat (B $\flat$), warm key with bright production (mix sits high)

Figure 1 · Regularity at 144 BPM ("Happening"). Verse and chorus alternate with the album's most consistent step between them.



Harmonic Reading

"Happening" is the most conventionally functional song on the record, and its chord maps confirm what the production statistics already suggest: this is the album's straight-ahead track. The verse runs I vi IV V (F Dm B $\flat$ C), the four-chord loop that Stephenson describes as among the most tonally stable in rock, moving from tonic through the relative minor, subdominant, and dominant without any flat-side borrowing or modal inflection. All four chords are diatonic to F major, the V is a proper major dominant, and the cycle closes with a strong dominant-to-tonic pull. For an album that everywhere else trades in Aeolian descents, Mixolydian flat-sevens, and deceptive cadences, a pure I–vi–IV–V

loop is a deliberate return to harmonic ground level.

The chorus map, IV I V vi (Bb F C Dm), reorders the same four chords to open on IV and close on vi. This is the same deceptive-cadence hinge found in "Last, First" and "Airs," the V–vi substitution that keeps the phrase open at the boundary. In Nobile's terms, the chorus here is a telos chorus that prolongs the tonic region through a repeating loop, and the loop's consistent return across all three chorus passes is the source of the song's regularity. The outro's IV I (Bb F) is a plagal settling of the tonic, the same plagal motion that closes "Hey." At 144 beats per minute, a pure diatonic loop feels relentless rather than static; the speed turns the harmonic conventionality into propulsion. "Happening" earns its title by moving fast on the most stable harmonic ground the album offers.

Figure 2 · Pure diatonic loop ("Happening"). Four chords, two orderings, zero borrowings.

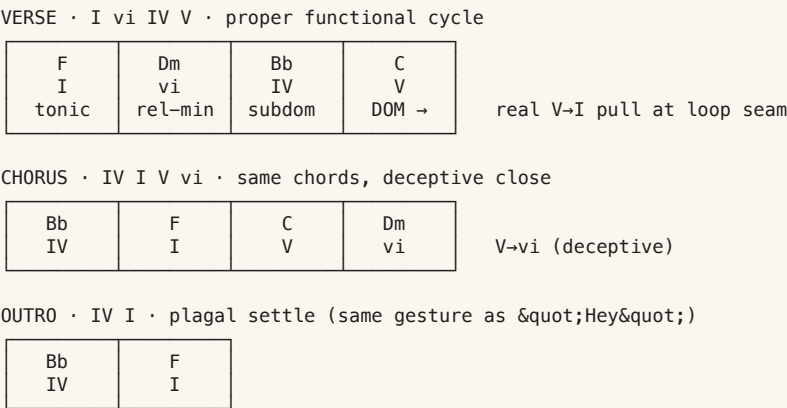


Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song's harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
F	F – A – C	1 – 3 – 5	tonic
Dm	D – F – A	1 – $\flat$ 3 – 5	relative minor (vi)

B $\flat$	B $\flat$ - D - F	1 - 3 - 5	subdominant
C	C - E - G	1 - 3 - 5	proper major dominant

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

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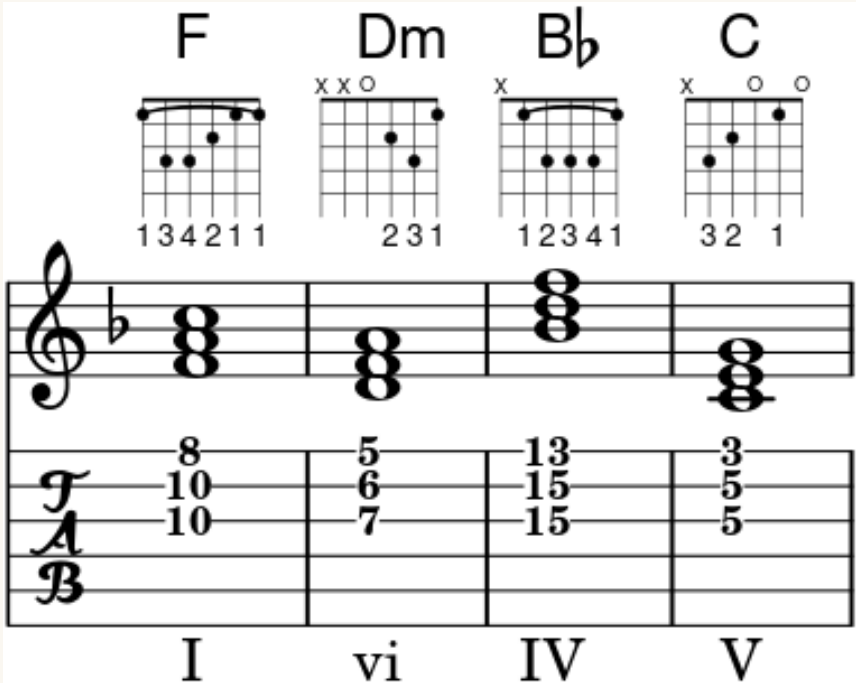


Figure · "Happening" – Verse

Transition	Common tones	Motion
F → Dm	common F,A	stepwise bass descent (F → D)
Dm → B $\flat$	common D,F	stepwise bass descent (D → B $\flat$)
B $\flat$ → C	common none	step-up to V
C → F	common C	AUTHENTIC CADENCE (verse seam), V→I
C → Dm	common none	DECEPTIVE (chorus close), V→vi

Where the Words Land

The opener said "Hey, little one, I'm going to find you!" The closer answers. "It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it." The lyric repeats this twenty times across the plateau and the two peak-and-drops.

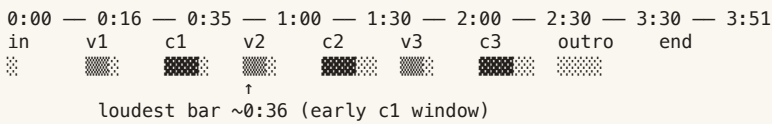
The chord loop under those drops, I V IV vi, is the exact map "Hey" used for 148 seconds. The album's harmonic frame closes on itself, and the lyric closes on itself. The arc from "going to find you" to "I found it" is the album's structural argument made audible in three words. "Pushin' my luck" is the plateau. The break resets, and the peak-and-drops land the finding before the outro fade carries it past the edge.

Lyric Map

F major · 144 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Verse	I vi IV V	F · Dm · Bb · C
2	Chorus	IV I V vi	Bb · F · C · Dm
3	Outro	IV I	Bb · F

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables)

[Verse 1]
Wasted in an empty parking lot
Bb
Spacing out for something
Am F
Deeper into knowing what is wrong
Gm
Over and over now
Bb Gm
Reaching out for something

[Chorus]
It isn't happening
Happening this time
Bb
It isn't happening
Eb F Am
Where have you been all night

Bb
 It isn't happening
 Eb
 Happening this time
 Am Bb
 We worry nothing is
 Eb
 Permanent

[Verse 2]
 Exclamations pour in front of us
 Gm
 Over and over now
 Bb Gm
 Taking off for something
 Am F
 What could I have ever proven wrong?
 Gm
 Through my heart goes the night
 Bb Gm
 Spacing out for something
 Am

[Chorus]
 Bb
 It isn't happening
 Eb
 Happening this time
 Am Bb
 It isn't happening
 Eb F Am
 Where have you been all night
 Bb Eb
 It isn't happening
 Am
 Happening this time
 Bb
 We worry nothing is
 Eb
 Permanent

[Bridge]
 F Ab
 The sky is open
 Bb Am Gm
 But it's just a moment's time
 Edim
 Confident, who am I?
 Gm Am
 No longer alone

[Chorus]
 Bb Eb
 It isn't happening
 Am
 Happening this time
 Bb
 It isn't happening
 Eb Am
 Where have you been all night

Bb
 It isn't happening
 Eb F
 Happening this time
 Am Bb
 We worry nothing is
 Eb
 Permanent

[Outro]
 Wasted in an empty parking lot

Note · the bass-MIDI shows borrowed Eb (bVII) and Ab (bIII) in the chorus and bridge, modal colors the I vi IV V loop summary abstracts away.

<!-- notefig@page-28 -->

The figure displays the chord progression for the chorus of the song "Happening". It includes guitar and bass diagrams for four chords: Bb, F, C, and Dm. The guitar diagrams show fingerings and fret numbers (1-4 for Bb, 1-4 for F, 3-2 for C, and 2-3 for Dm). The bass diagrams show fingerings and fret numbers (13-15 for Bb, 8-10 for F, 3-5 for C, and 5-7 for Dm). The chords are labeled as IV, I, V, and vi respectively.

Chord	Guitar Fingering	Bass Fingering	Scale Degree
Bb	1 2 3 4 1	13 15 15	IV
F	1 3 4 2 1 1	8 10 10	I
C	3 2 1	3 5 5	V
Dm	2 3 1	5 6 7	vi

Figure · "Happening" – Chorus

Verse `~0:25` (×3)

I vi IV V, F · Dm · Bb · C

Wasted in an empty parking lot

Spacing out for something

Deeper into knowing what is wrong

Over and over now

Reaching out for something

<details> <summary>Occurrence 2 (variant) </summary>

Exclamations pour in front of us

Over and over now

Taking off for something

What could I have ever proven wrong?

Through my heart goes the night

Spacing out for something

</details>

<details> <summary>Occurrence 3 (variant) </summary>

The sky is open

But it's just a moment's time

Confident, who am I?

No longer alone

</details>

Chorus `~2:24` (×3)

IV I V vi, Bb · F · C · Dm

It isn't happening

Happening this time

It isn't happening

Where have you been all night

It isn't happening

Happening this time

We worry nothing is

Permanent

Outro

IV I, Bb · F

Wasted in an empty parking lot

11

"Pass"

![Core chord loop, "Pass", Post-break chorus](notation/hfe_pass.png)

J	PASS	·	D major	·	J=99	·	4/4	·	5:10	
	Track 09 of 09									
	Form: 16 sections, most complex on album · includes 2 'peak-									
	Loop: D Bm G A (plateau) G D A Bm (post-break) D A G Bm (									
	Dynamic range: wide									

The closer **carries the most complex architecture on the album**, sixteen sections in 310 seconds, a structural event roughly every nineteen, and it includes a kind the rest of the record never uses: the peak-and-drop. Two of them land late in the song, the only sections on the whole album given that name instead of verse or chorus, a label for structure that has moved into real dynamic-event territory. The second peak-and-drop is the loudest section in the song, the point the track has aimed at since its first bar.

D major at 99 **puts "Pass" in the same key as the opener "Hey"** and closes the album's tonal frame. Where "Hey" was pressed to under three decibels and built as a single monolith, "Pass" runs wide open across sixteen sections, the formal opposite. The album opens with a compressed major-key statement and ends with a dynamically open, structurally complicated version of the same key

at a more reflective tempo. 99 sits between the album's midtempo grooves and its slow songs, authoritative without urgency.

The mix is **the warmest and darkest on the album by a clear margin**, the lowest brightness of the nine tracks. In D major that means the production sits in the warm lower-mids, guitars sustaining below their overtones, the mix leaning on fundamentals more than harmonics. The low end is the heaviest on the record, more than double the album's average, which confirms what the warmth suggests.

"Pass" is heavy at the bottom. The kick and bass are forward, the floor is low, and the warmth is structural, not decoration.

Plateau, Silence, and Peak-and-Drop

The first eight sections form a series of chorus-verse-chorus turns **at near-uniform volume**, the choruses barely louder than the verses, the gap between them almost nothing, a flat plateau held across the first 160 seconds. The song accumulates through this stretch rather than building.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-29 -->

Scale of D major

D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-29 -->

Then a near-silence at 164 seconds, **the longest low-energy moment in the track**, a break that runs into the chorus after it. That chorus is the first meaningfully louder than the plateau. The silence reset the reference, and everything after it lands louder by contrast. A peak-and-drop, then a chorus, then the second, loudest peak-and-drop.

The loudest single bar comes around 138 seconds, just before that near-silence, **in the plateau's final bars, the last moment before the break**. The song presses hardest right before it stops. What reads as a flat plateau at the section level holds, at the bar level, a steady climb to maximum density.

The bass is **the defining voice of the song's first movement**, supplying the low-end heft the album's bright tracks held back. Across the sixteen sections the rhythm section holds the 99-beat pulse through the plateau, opens the near-silence that resets the energy, and drives the two peak-and-drops to the album's loudest section readings.

A late verse and then a final silence **close the album with no last chorus**, the final vocal stepping down and the track ending quiet. "Pass" hands the energy back to the listener on the way out rather than finishing at full volume.

The album opened with "Hey" at chorus level from the first bar, pressed to under three decibels, refusing to build because it had already arrived. It closes with "Pass" building across sixteen sections, hitting two peak-and-drops at the album's highest section energy, then easing through a verse and a silence back to almost nothing. **The structural argument of Racy runs from one kind of arrival to one kind of departure**. The frame is D major to D major. The center, the dark center, is "Racy" in C minor, alone in its key, the widest swing from silence to volume on the record, the album's name on its most extreme production. That is the argument, stated plainly. Everything else is the evidence.

Figure · Scale of D major, the degree map for the chord/melody analysis below.

D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

D major closes the album in the same key as 'Hey', open strings ring strong; heaviest low end on the record

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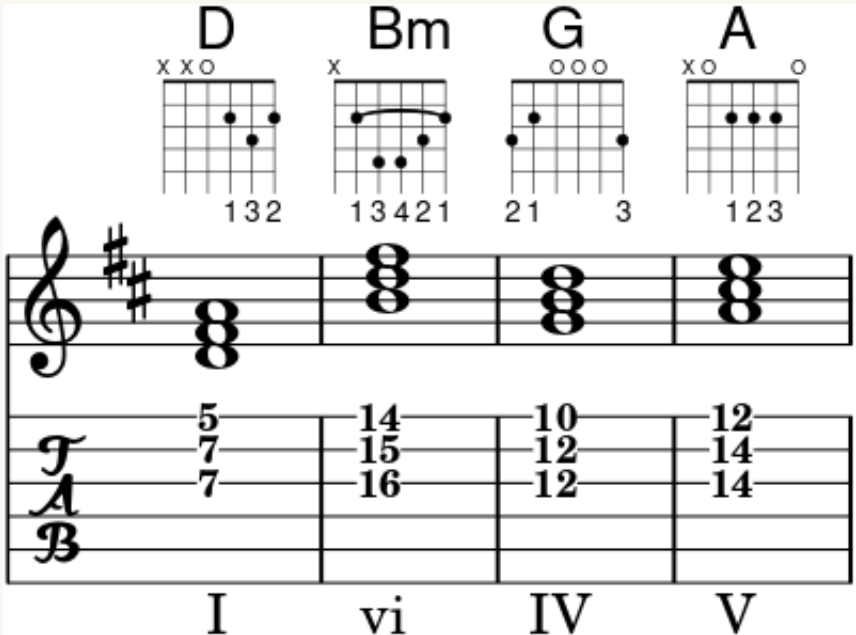
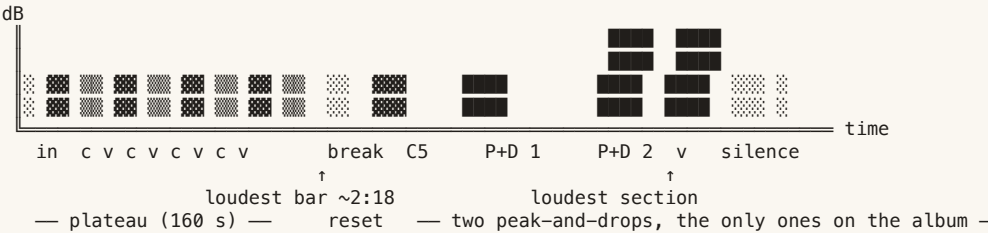


Figure · "Pass" – Plateau

Figure 1 · The sixteen-section closer ("Pass"). Plateau □ reset
 silence □ peak-and-drop ×2 □ fade.



Harmonic Reading

"Pass" mirrors "Hey" harmonically the way it mirrors it structurally: the plateau runs the same I vi IV V loop as "Hey"'s

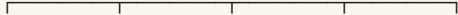
main cycle, but in D major, and it arrives through accumulation rather than immediate saturation. The plateau map, I vi IV V (D Bm G A), is the same four-chord diatonic loop as "Happening"'s verse, transposed to D. The V chord (A major) provides a proper dominant with a leading tone, making this a fully functional, goal-directed progression by classical and Stephenson's rock-functional standards. The plateau's near-uniform volume masks what is a genuinely directed harmonic cycle; the drama is suppressed, not the motion.

The post-break section inverts the loop to IV I V vi (G D A Bm), the same chorus reordering seen in "Airs" and "Happening," placing IV at the opening and ending on the deceptive vi. After the near-silence resets the listener's dynamic reference, this IV-first version of the loop lands with additional weight because the flat-side opening chord (IV) arrives before the tonic, giving the post-break chorus an upswing character. The peak-and-drop sections bring the loop back to its I V IV vi form (D A G Bm), matching the map of "Hey" almost exactly, which confirms the tonal-frame argument the book makes at the structural level: the closer's climactic sections use the opener's harmonic map. Nobile's peak-and-drop is a dynamic-form event, not a new harmonic section, and the chord map beneath both peak-and-drops is the same loop that sustained "Hey" for 148 seconds, here compressed into a high-energy burst at the album's structural climax. The outro's vi IV I (Bm G D) is the reverse of the plateau's opening motion, a gradual harmonic unwinding that matches the production's step-down to silence.

Figure 2 · Four reorderings of the same four chords ("Pass").

The album's tonal frame, restated in motion.

PLATEAU · I vi IV V (the same loop as "Happening"'s verse, transposed)



D I	Bm vi	G IV	A V →	functional V at the seam
--------	----------	---------	----------	--------------------------

POST-BREAK · IV I V vi (same chord pool, IV-first, deceptive close)

G IV	D I	A V	Bm vi
---------	--------	--------	----------

PEAK-AND-DROP x2 · I V IV vi ← exact map of “Hey”’s 148-s loop

D I	A V	G IV	Bm vi	the album’s frame, restated
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OUTRO · vi IV I (plateau’s opening motion, run backwards to silence)

Bm vi	G IV	D I
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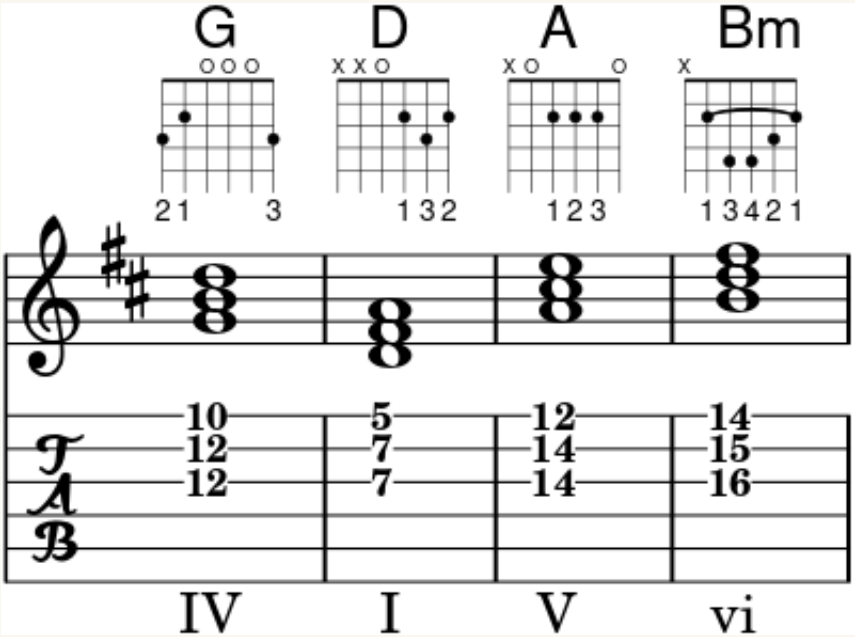
Figure · Chord anatomy. Each chord in the song’s harmonic palette, broken down.

Chord	Notes	Intervals	Function
D	D – F# – A	1 – 3 – 5	tonic, same as opener
Bm	B – D – F#	1 – b3 – 5	relative minor
G	G – B – D	1 – 3 – 5	subdominant
A	A – C# – E	1 – 3 – 5	proper dominant

Figure · Voice-leading paths. Which notes hold and which move at each chord change.

Transition	Common tones	Motion
D → Bm	common D,F#	stepwise bass descent
Bm → G	common B,D	third drop
G → A	common none	step-up to V
A → D	common A	AUTHENTIC CADENCE, V→I, only at plateau seam
G → D	common D	PLAGAL outro, the album’s frame closing

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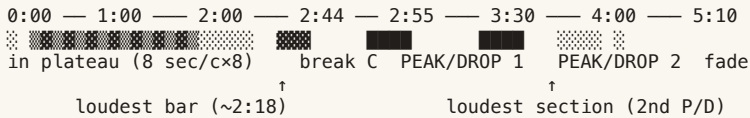
Lyric Map

D major · 99 BPM · 4/4

#	Section	Roman	Chords
1	Plateau	I vi IV V	D · Bm · G · A
2	Post-break chorus	IV I V vi	G · D · A · Bm
3	Peak / drop (220s)	I V IV vi	D · A · G · Bm
4	Outro	vi IV I	Bm · G · D

(Genius lyrics unavailable, Whisper reference only)

Figure · Bar-by-bar form map.



Chord Chart (bass-MIDI transcription, chords above syllables, Whisper reference)

Pushin' my luck, I can find it in you

A F#m D

Sayin' no words, empty notes Pushin' my luck, and the fire in you

C
It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

Bm F#m

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

G D

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

C A G C

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

Bm

Anywhere

F#m C D C
It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

A G D Bm

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

F#m C D Bm

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

F#m D G

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

D A

It's upon me, it's upon me

Bm A
Ooh, platified, everyone's right, we'll push another

And I can find you, okay

G D Bm

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

F#m D

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

A

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

G D

Ooh, it's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

F#m

Ooh, it's upon me, it's upon me

C D

It's upon me, it's upon me

Note · the F#m (iii) and brief C (bVII) the bass plays under "Pass" are the same voice-leading colors the opener used; the closer ornaments its loops the same way "Hey" did, just laid across 16 sections instead of 2.

Plateau

I vi IV V, D · Bm · G · A

Pushin' my luck, I can find it in you

Sayin' no words, empty notes

Pushin' my luck, and the fire in you

Post-break chorus `~3:19`

IV I V vi, G · D · A · Bm

Ooh, platified, everyone's right, we'll push another

And I can find you, okay

Peak / drop `~3:38`

I V IV vi, D · A · G · Bm

It's upon me, it's upon me, I found it

Outro

vi IV I, Bm · G · D

(fade, Whisper: "It's upon me, it's upon me")

12

Appendix

Appendix A: The Data Behind the Listening. A note on methodology: every reading in this book comes from a section-by-section and stem-by-stem listen to *Racy*, checked against a librosa analysis pass over the masters that measured tempo, musical key, dynamic range (the distance in decibels from a track's quietest moment to its loudest), spectral brightness (where the mix centers in the frequency range), the placement of each track's loudest moment, and the portion of energy sitting in the low end. The prose keeps those figures in plain language. The numbers themselves are gathered here, song by song, for readers who want them. Loudness is reported on a 0 to 1 scale, where higher means louder. Low-end presence is the portion of a track's energy in the sub-bass, where higher means heavier.

<!-- notefig@page-32 -->

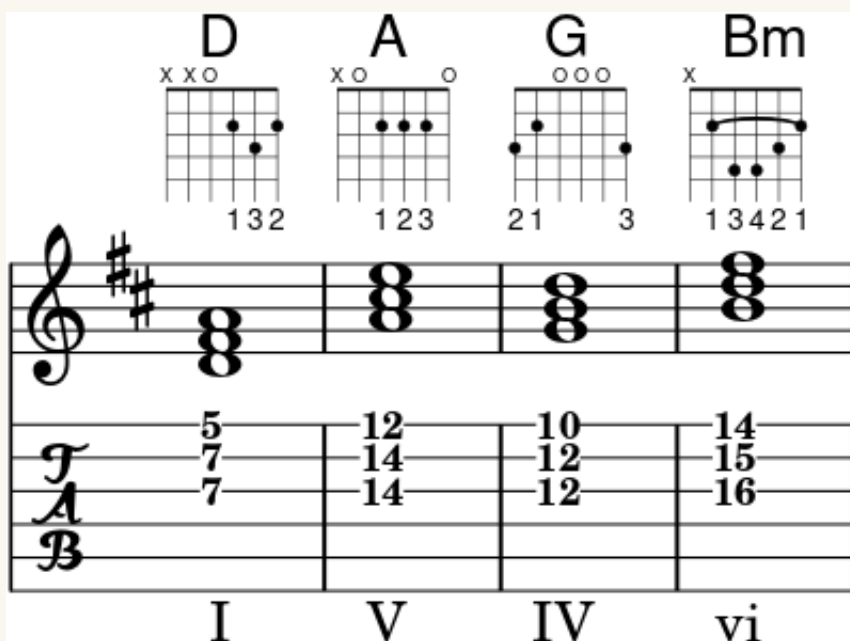


Figure · "Pass" – Peak / drop (220s)

"Hey." Tempo 123, D major. Dynamic range 2.7 dB, the most compressed on the album. Brightness warm lower-mid. Loudest moment near the two-thirds mark. Low-end presence light, near 0.05.

"Keys." Tempo 117, E minor. Dynamic range 30.0 dB. Brightness mid-bright. Opens on twelve seconds of near-silence; loudest bar near the two-thirds mark. Low-end presence modest, near 0.07.

"Say Enough." Tempo 103, B major. Dynamic range 14.0 dB. Brightness the highest on the album. Thirteen sections; loudest moment near 93 seconds. Low-end presence the lightest here, near 0.04.

"Somewhere Else." Tempo 129, C major. Dynamic range 27.6 dB. Brightness mid-bright. One continuous section for 284 of 315 seconds; loudest moment near 131 seconds. Low-end presence

grounded, near 0.06.

"Racy." Tempo 129, C minor. Dynamic range 70.6 dB, the widest on the album. Brightness near-bright. Peaks in the first half-minute, falls to near-silence at the close. Low-end presence low, near 0.04.

"Last, First." Tempo 92, the slowest; C major. Dynamic range 10.8 dB. Brightness midrange. The longest track at about five and a half minutes; loudest moment near 143 seconds. Low-end presence heavy, near 0.10, the second-highest on the album.

"Airs." Tempo 129, C# major. Dynamic range 8.5 dB. Brightness mid-bright. Saves its loudest chorus for the final thirty-five seconds. Low-end presence moderate, near 0.065.

"Happening." Tempo 144, the fastest; F major. Dynamic range 29.7 dB. Brightness second-highest on the album. Eight sections; loudest moment near 36 seconds. Low-end presence light, near 0.047.

<!-- visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-32 -->

Scale of D major

D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1

<!-- /visual:SCALE_DEGREE_MAP@page-32 -->

"Pass." Tempo 99, D major. Dynamic range 26.2 dB. Brightness the warmest and darkest on the album. Sixteen sections, two peak-and-drops late; loudest moment near 138 seconds. Low-end presence the heaviest on the record, near 0.16.

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Other Books in This Series

Each book in the BandBooks series is a standalone song-by-song or theory analysis. Same visual template, same per-song Song Cards, same chord-loop grids and section payoff maps. Pair any two for a deeper view of a band's catalog.

- BELIEVEYOU ME
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