

American Pie (Don McLean, ca. 1971) (A)

American Pie by Don McLean (1971) (G @ 138)

Concerning the impact of Feb. 3, 1959, "the day the music died"

Capo 5 — 4/4 Time

Intro (Note or chord) A ↓

A E F#m Bm D
A long, long time ago, I can still re-member,
F#m E7 | E7sus4 E7 E7sus2 E7
how that music used to make me smile.

A E F#m Bm D
And I knew if I had my chance that I could make those people dance
F#m D E7 | E7sus2 E7 E7sus4 E7 E7sus2 E7
And maybe they'd be happy for a while.

F#m ↓ Bm ↓ F#m ↓ Bm ↓
But February made me shiver, with every paper I'd deliver.

D A Bm D E [4 3 2 1]
Bad news on the doorstep, I couldn't take one more step.

A E F#m Bm E
I can't re-member if I cried, when I read about his widowed bride

A E F#m D E7 A↓↑↑ D↓ A↓
Something touched me deep inside the day the music died. So . . .

Chorus

A D A E A D A E
Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.

A D A E
Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,

F#m ↓ B7↓↑↑ F#m ↓ B7 ↓ F#m ↓ E7 | E7*
Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die. ↑ 1st Time Only
D | D7

A Bm D Bm
_ Did you write the Book of Love and do you have faith in God above?

F#m E7 | E7sus4 E7 E7sus2 E7
_ If the Bible tells you so.

A E F#m Bm D
Now do you be-lieve in rock and roll? Can music save your mortal soul? and

F#m B7 E7 | E7sus4 E7 E7sus2 E7
_ can you teach me how to dance real slow?

F#m ↓ E ↓ F#m ↓ E ↓ - E
Well, I know that you're in love with him 'cause I saw you dancing in the gym.

D A B7↓↑↑ B7sus2↓↑ B7 ↓
You both kicked off your shoes.

D E7↓↑↑ E7sus4 ↓ E7 ↓
Man, I dig those rhythm and blues.

A E F#m Bm D
I was a lonely teenage broncin' buck with a pink carnation and a pickup truck.

A E F#m D E7 A↓↑↑↑ D↓↑↑↑ A↓↑↑↑ E7↓↑↑↑
But I knew I was out of luck the day the music died. I started singin' **Chorus**

A **Bm** **D** **Bm**
 Now for ten years we've been on our own and moss grows fat on a rolling stone

F#m **E7** | **E7sus4** **E7** **E7sus2** **E7**
 But ___ that's not how it used to be.

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 When the jester sang for the king and queen in a coat he borrowed from James Dean and

F#m **B7** **E** | **E7↓↑↑↑** **E7sus2↓** **E7↓**
 a voice that came from you and me.

F#m ↓ **E** ↓ **F#m** ↓ **E** ↓ - **E** ↓↑↑
 Oh, and ___ while the king was looking down, the jester stole his thorny crown,

D **A** **B7↑** **B7sus2↑** **B7↓** **D** **E7↑↑↓** **E7sus4↓** **E7↓**
 The courtroom was ad-journed, no verdict was re-turned.

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 And while Lenin read a book on Marx, the quartet practiced in the park

A **E** **F#m** **D** **E7** **A↓↑↑↑** **D↓↑↑↑** **A↓↑↑↑** **E7↑↑↑↑** **We were singin'** **Chorus**
 And we sang dirges in the dark the day the music died.

A **Bm** **D** **Bm**
 Helter-skelter in a summer swelter, the birds flew off for the fallout shelter

F#m **E** | **E7**
 ___ Eight miles high and falling fast,

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 it landed foul on the grass, the players tried for a forward pass,

F#m **B7** **E** | **E7**
 with the jester on the side-lines in a cast.

F#m ↓ **E** ↓ **F#m** ↓ **E** ↓ - **E**
 Now the half time air was sweet perfume, while sergeants played a marching tune.

D **A** **B7↑** **B7sus2↑** **B7↓** **D** **E7↑↑↓** **E7sus4↓** **E7↓**
 We all got up to dance, oh, but we never got the chance,

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 'Cause the players tried to take the field, the marching band re-fused to yield.

A **E** **F#m** **D** **E7** **A↓↑↑↑** **D↓↑↑↑** **A↓↑↑↑** **E7↑↑↑↑** **We started singin'** **Chorus**
 Do you re-call what was revealed the day the music died?

A **Bm** **D** **Bm**
 Oh, and there we were all in one place, a generation lost in space

F#m **E** | **E7↑↑↑↑** **E7sus2↓** **E7↓**
 With no time left to start a-gain.

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 So come on Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack Flash sat on a candlestick

F#m **B7** **E** | **E7**
 'cause fire is the devil's only friend.

F#m ↓ **E** ↓ **F#m** ↓ **E** ↓ **E** ↓ **E** ↓ - ↓↓
 Oh and as I watched him on the stage, my hands were clenched in fists of rage.

D **A** **B7↑** **B7sus2↑** **B7↓** **D** **E7↑↑↓** **E7sus4↓** **E7↓**
 No angel born in hell could break that Satan's spell.

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 And as the flames climbed high in-to the night to light the sacri-ficial rite

A **E** **F#m** **D** **E7** **A↓↑↑↑** **D↓↑↑↑** **A↓↑↑↑** **E7↑↑↑↑** **He was singin'** **Chorus**
 I saw Satan laughing with delight the day the music died.

“Freely” (with limited strums)

A **E** **F#m** **Bm** **D**
 _ I met a girl who sang the blues and I asked her for some happy news,
F#m **E7** | **E7**↓↑ **E7sus4**↓ **E7**↓↑ **E7sus2**↓ **E7**↓
 But she just smiled and turned away.
A **E** **F#m** **A** **Bm** **A** **D**
 I went down to the sacred store, where I heard the music years before,
F#m **D** **E7** | **E7**↓↑ **E7sus4**↓ **E7**↓↑ **E7sus2**↓ **E7**↓
 but the man there said the music wouldn't play.
F#m ↓ **Bm** ↓ **F#m** ↓ **Bm** ↓
 And in the streets the children screamed, the lovers cried and the poets dreamed.
D **A** **Bm** **D** **E** - **B5** **F#5** **A5**
 But not a word was spoken; the church bells all were broken.
A **E** **F#m** **A** **D** **E7**
 And the three men I admire most, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost,
A **E** **F#m** **D** **Bm** **E7** **A**↓↑↓ **D**↓ **A**↓ **E7**↓
 They caught the last train for the coast the day the music died. **And they were singin'**

Chorus (Measured)

A **D** **A** **E** **A** **D** **A** **E**
 Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.
A **D** **A** **E**
 Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,
F#m ↓ **B7** ↓ **B7sus4** ↓ **F#m** ↓ **E** | **E7**
 Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die.

Outro (Up Tempo)

E7 **E7sus2** **E7** **E7sus2** **A** **D** **A** **E**
 They were sing - in' bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie.
A **D** **A** **E**
 Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.
A **D** **A** **E**
 Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and rye, **(Ritard.)**
D↓ **E7**↓ **A**↓ **D**↓ **A**↓
 Singing this'll be the day that I die. **(Hold)**