

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

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) C ↓

C G Am Dm F
A long, long time ago, I can still re-member,
Am G7 | G7sus4 G7 G7sus2 G7
how that music used to make me smile.

C G Am Dm F
And I knew if I had my chance that I could make those people dance
Am F G7 | G7sus2 G7 G7sus4 G7 G7sus2 G7
And maybe they'd be happy for a while.

Am ↓ Dm ↓ Am ↓ Dm ↓
But February made me shiver, with every paper I'd deliver.
F C Dm F G [4 3 2 1]
Bad news on the doorstep, I couldn't take one more step.

C G Am Dm G
I can't re-member if I cried, when I read about his widowed bride
C G Am F G7 C↓↑↓ F↓ C↓
Something touched me deep inside the day the music died. So . . .

Chorus

C F C G C F C G
Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.

C F C G
Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,
Am ↓ D7↓↑↓ Am ↓ D7↓ Am ↓ G7 | G7*
Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die. ↑ 1st Time Only
D | D7

C Dm F Dm
_ Did you write the Book of Love and do you have faith in God above?
Am G7 | G7sus4 G7 G7sus2 G7

_ If the Bible tells you so.

C G Am Dm F
Now do you be-lieve in rock and roll? Can music save your mortal soul? and
Am D7 G7 | G7sus4 G7 G7sus2 G7
_ can you teach me how to dance real slow?

Am ↓ G ↓ Am ↓ G ↓ - G
Well, I know that you're in love with him 'cause I saw you dancing in the gym.
F C D7↓↑↓ D7sus2↓↑ D7↓
You both kicked off your shoes.

F G7↓↑↓ G7sus4↓ G7↓
Man, I dig those rhythm and blues.

C G Am Dm F
I was a lonely teenage broncin' buck with a pink carnation and a pickup truck.

C G Am F G7 C↓↑↑↑ F↓↑↑↑ C↓↑↑↑ G7↓↑↑↑
But I knew I was out of luck the day the music died. I started singin' **Chorus**

C **Dm** **F** **Dm**
 Now for ten years we've been on our own and moss grows fat on a rolling stone

Am **G7** | **G7sus4** **G7** **G7sus2** **G7**
 But ___ that's not how it used to be.

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 When the jester sang for the king and queen in a coat he borrowed from James Dean and

Am **D7** **G** | **G7**↑↑↑ **G7sus2**↓ **G7**↓
 a voice that came from you and me.

Am ↓ **G** ↓ **Am** ↓ **G** ↓ - **G** ↓↑↓
 Oh, and ___ while the king was looking down, the jester stole his thorny crown,

F **C** **D7**↑↑ **D7sus2**↑↑ **D7**↓ **F** **G7**↑↑↓ **G7sus4**↓ **G7**↓
 The courtroom was ad-journed, no verdict was re-turned.

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 And while Lenin read a book on Marx, the quartet practiced in the park

C **G** **Am** **F** **G7** **C**↓↑↑↑ **F**↑↑↑↑ **C**↓↑↑↑ **G7**↓↑↑↑
 And we sang dirges in the dark the day the music died. **We were singin'** **Chorus**

C **Dm** **F** **Dm**
 Helter-skelter in a summer swelter, the birds flew off for the fallout shelter

Am **G** | **G7**
 ___ Eight miles high and falling fast,

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 it landed foul on the grass, the players tried for a forward pass,

Am **D7** **G** | **G7**
 with the jester on the side-lines in a cast.

Am ↓ **G** ↓ **Am** ↓ **G** ↓ - **G**
 Now the half time air was sweet perfume, while sergeants played a marching tune.

F **C** **D7**↑↑ **D7sus2**↑↑ **D7**↓ **F** **G7**↑↑↓ **G7sus4**↓ **G7**↓
 We all got up to dance, oh, but we never got the chance,

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 'Cause the players tried to take the field, the marching band re-fused to yield.

C **G** **Am** **F** **G7** **C**↓↑↑↑ **F**↑↑↑↑ **C**↓↑↑↑ **G7**↓↑↑↑
 Do you re-call what was revealed the day the music died? **We started singin'** **Chorus**

C **Dm** **F** **Dm**
 Oh, and there we were all in one place, a generation lost in space

Am **G** | **G7**↓↑↑↑ **G7sus2**↓ **G7**↓
 With no time left to start a-gain.

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 So come on Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, Jack Flash sat on a candlestick

Am **D7** **G** | **G7**
 'cause fire is the devil's only friend.

Am ↓ **G** ↓ **Am** ↓ **G** ↓ **G** ↓ **G** ↓ - ↓↓
 Oh and as I watched him on the stage, my hands were clenched in fists of rage.

F **C** **D7**↑↑ **D7sus2**↓↑ **D7**↓ **F** **G7**↑↑↓ **G7sus4**↓ **G7**↓
 No angel born in hell could break that Satan's spell.

C **G** **Am** **Dm** **F**
 And as the flames climbed high in-to the night to light the sacri-ficial rite

C **G** **Am** **F** **G7** **C**↓↑↑↑ **F**↑↑↑↑ **C**↓↑↑↑ **G7**↓↑↑↑
 I saw Satan laughing with delight the day the music died. **He was singin'** **Chorus**

“Freely” (with limited strums)

C G Am Dm F
 _ I met a girl who sang the blues and I asked her for some happy news,
 Am G7 | G7↑ G7sus4↓ G7↓ G7sus2↓ G7↓
 But she just smiled and turned away.
C G Am C Dm C F
 I went down to the sacred store, where I heard the music years before,
 Am F G7 | G7↓ G7sus4↓ G7↓ G7sus2↓ G7↓
 but the man there said the music wouldn't play.
 Am ↓ Dm ↓ Am ↓ Dm ↓
 And in the streets the children screamed, the lovers cried and the poets dreamed.
 F C Dm F G - D5 A5 C5
 But not a word was spoken; the church bells all were broken.
C G Am C F G7
 And the three men I ad-mire most, the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost,
C G Am F Dm G7 C↓↑ F↓ C↓
 They caught the last train for the coast the day the mu - sic died. **G7↓** And they were singin'

Chorus (Measured)

C F C G C F C G
 Bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie, drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.
C F C G
 Them good old boys were drinkin' whiskey and rye,
Am ↓ D7 ↓ D7sus4 ↓ Am ↓ G | G7
 Singin' this'll be the day that I die. This'll be the day that I die.

Outro (Up Tempo)

G7 G7sus2 G7 G7sus2 C F C G
 They were sing - in' bye, bye Miss A-merican Pie.
C F C G
 Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry.
C F C G
 Them good old boys were drinking whiskey and rye, **(Ritard.)**
F↓ G7↓ C↓ F↓ C↓
 Singing this'll be the day that I die. **(Hold)**