

THE MASSIFIE THE SOUTH OF THE SOUTH AND THE

Transcribed by DANNY BEGELMAN

"Creeque Alley" Interpretation Courtesy of RICHARD THORPE www.richard-thorpe.co.uk/creeque

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Creeque Alley - An Interpretation

Courtesy of Richard Thorpe

John and Mitchie were gettin' kinda itchy just to leave the folk music behind

John Phillips had been playing in a folk band known as The Journeymen. The band, whose lineup included Scott McKenzie, played old folk standards but, like other similar bands at the time, was going nowhere. They had split up by early 1964. Later that year John and his wife Michelle formed The New Journeymen with Marshall Brickman. Denny Doherty joined them to play at a New Year's engagement in Washington. By 1965 Phillips was getting restless and eager to try something new.

"Mitchie" refers to John's wife Michelle who, as well as singing in The New Journeymen, had been doing modeling work but was soon to become a singer with The Mamas and the Papas.

Zal and Denny workin' for a penny tryin' to get a fish on the line

Zal Yanovsky and Dennis Doherty had been playing together in a folk trio called The Halifax Three. Halifax is a fishing port in Nova Scotia and may account for the fishing reference in this line.

In a coffee house Sebastian sat . . . and after every number they passed the hat

"Sebastian" is John Sebastian. At the time, he was playing with Jim Kweskskin's Jug Band and other minor folk bands. They passed the hat" is a reference to the way some bands were paid in the coffee houses of the sixties. They literally passed around a hat or a basket and more or less took up a collection.

McGuinn and McGuire just-a gettin' higher in L.A. you know where that's at

The early musical and drug explorations of Jim McGuirn (who changed his name to Roger McGuinn in 1967) and Barry McGuire would eventually produce the Byrds' unique fusion of psychedelic rock and country music and a string of hits such as "Egitt Miles High."

And no one's getting fat except Mama Cass.

No one was making any money playing folk music but Cass Elliot who, being on the large side, was not only "getting fat" but was also having success as a solo jazz singer in Washington, D.C. Cass Elliot was born Ellen Naomi Cohen in 1941 and adopted the name Cass Elliot during her teens. The name Mama Cass evolved from her involvement with The Mamas and the Papas.

This is what John Phillips said about Cass in an interview in August 1995 at Paramount Studios: "Her father had a deli there [in Alexandria, Virginia]. I remember her as a little chubby girl with the stained apron on behind the counter. [Laughs] We were sort of infamous in that area, and when she got to New York, she knew who we were, but we didn't know who she was. And she had met Denny, and Denny said, 'I know this girl who sings wonderfully. We should have her over and sing with her.' It happened to be that LSD was actually legal at the time. It wasn't a banned drug or anything. We searched all over the Village and found some contemporary artist who had some, and he gave it to us. We were about to take it that night, when a knock on the door came and Cass came in. So we all had it together the same night, for the first time, and I think that formed a bond between the four of us that we just never stopped singing. We just went on and on and on and on, until the trip wore off, which was about four years later."

Zallie said, "Denny, you know there aren't many who can sing a song the way that you do" (Let's go south)

A reference to Dennis Doherty's singing abilities. "Let's go south" is a reference to leaving Canada for New York, which is exactly what The Halifax Three did by way of Montreal, Toronto, and then New York.

Denny said, "Zallie, golly, don't you think that I wish I could play guitar like you"

A reference to Zal's guitar-playing abilities.

Zal, Denny and Sebastian sat (at the Night Owl)

The Night Owl Cafe in Greenwich Village.

And after every number they passed the hat McGuinn and McGuire just are gettin' higher in L.A. you know where that's at And no one's getting fat except Mama Cass.

When Cass was a Sophomore, planned to go to Swarthmore, But she changed her mind one day

This is a rather oblique reference to Cass's on-again, off-again educational career. She was a very intelligent young woman (with an IQ of 165) whose uncles were mostly doctors, and her parents planned for her to go to medical school. But she discovered show business during her last year in high school and dropped out two weeks before graduating. A few years later, with her career not exactly catching fire yet, she attended American University in Washington, D.C. (on the strength of her SAT scores and on a provisional basis since she didn't have a diploma). She did not reach her sophomore year by any means. By her own admission, she couldn't stay away from the drama department and kept hanging around there instead of concentrating on whatever was supposed to be her major. She planned to continue at Goucher College (a female college near her home in Baltimore), not Swathmore College in Pennsylvania, but apparently John Phillips couldn't make a rhyme out of "provisional freshman" and "Goucher." In any case, she dropped out again and went back to singing after only a few weeks.

Standing on the turnpike, thumb out to hitchhike, Take her to New York right away

This refers to her return to the Big Apple to perform and her probable means of transportation; she was pretty much broke at this point, as they all were. The "turnpike" is the New Jersey Turnpike, which is the road from Maryland to New York.

When Denny met Cass he gave her love bumps

Denny loved Cass as a friend. However, Cass was in love with Denny from the moment she met him during their days with the Mugwumps (see next line). During the group's visit to the Virgin Islands (see later), she discovered that Michelle had slept with Denny behind John's back! This caused much tension with the group. In fact, Cass went to Michelle and said, "You can have any man you want . . . why did you have to sleep with the one man I love?" For Denny and Michelle's affair John wrote "I Saw Her Again" and made them sing it as a form of punishment.

Call John and Zal, and that was the Mugwumps

The Mugwumps was a band comprising Denny Doherty, Cass Elliot, Zal Yanovsky and Jim Hendricks (Cass's first husband).

McGuinn and McGuire couldn't get no higher but that's what they were aiming at and no one's getting fat except Mama Cass.

Mugwumps, hi-jumps, low slumps, big bumps, don't you work as hard as you play Drink-up, break-up, everything is shake-up Guess it had to be that way

This refers to the inevitability of the break-up of the Mugwumps. In fact, they lasted only about ten months.

Sebastian and Zal formed the Spoonful

John Sebastian and Zal Yanovsky formed the Lovin' Spoonful. Zal now runs a restaurant in Kinsgton, Ontario, called Chez Piggy. I've had correspondence from Brad Fallon, who tells me the restaurant ". . . is in a 150-year-old grey limestone building, and the walls are covered with memorabilia from his days with the Lovin' Spoonful and his earlier days with the Maritimes and with Denny. I seem to remember some great pictures of The Mamas and the Papas, too, from his own private collection." Sounds good to me.

. Michelle, John and Denny gettin' very tuneful

Michelle and John Phillips together with Denny Doherty had formed The New Journeymen in 1964.

McGuinn and McGuire just are catchin' fire in L.A. you know where that's at

With early hits such as "Eve of Destruction," the Byrds were beginning to establish themselves as one of the most popular and influential bands of the era.

And everybody's gettin' fat except Mama Cass.

The musical circle of friends that had always surrounded The Mamas and the Papas, such as the Lovin' Spoonful, the Byrds, Scott McKenzie, and Spanky and Our Gang, were all "gettin' fat"—achieving success and national acclaim.

Broke, busted, disgusted, agents can't be trusted, and Mitchie wants to go to the sea

This is a reference to the Virgin Islands. The New Journeymen was over, and they were sitting around one day and just wanted to take a vacation. Michelle, whose home was California, despised the coldness of New York. The story goes that they spun a globe and she, with her eyes closed, pointed to a spot. They decided to go wherever her finger landed—so the Virgin Islands it was.

Cass can't make it, she says we'll have to fake it

This could be a reference to Cass's inability to sing the arrangements that John wrote. As the story goes, Cass was walking down the street in the Virgin Islands when she was hit in the head by a pipe. (Someone threw it from a pile of junk they were going through.) Cass was knocked unconscious. When she awoke, it had affected her range by increasing it by two or three notes. This increase in range allowed her to sing the arrangements that John wrote. Thus, the group's main excuse for keeping her out was no longer an issue. As further support for this claim, Cass once said that the arrangements were so high that at times she would become light-headed during the recording sessions. This suggests that Cass was singing at the top of her range. Furthermore, if you hear any of The Mamas and the Papas' live recordings, the songs are lowered considerably, making the songs more comfortable to sing.

BUT...

This is a transcript of an interview with Michelle Phillips, which appears on the *Forrest Gump* CD-ROM (published by Upstream Multimedia)

Question: There was a story we heard about how a pipe fell on Cass in the Virgin Islands and changed her voice. Can you tell us about that?

M. Phillips: Well, John has claimed that Cass actually got her upper range after the pipe fell on her head (laughs). She was walking past a construction site and a small lead pipe fell on her head. And when we were singing, later on that afternoon, she did seem to (laughs) have a much higher range. I don't know if it's really true or if there's any reason to believe this story, but it's a lie that we (laughs) told a long time if it's not true.

ALSO . . .

The following is a transcript of an e-mail I received recently, which seems to support the view that the pipe incident happened, but there is no real evidence that it was the cause of Cass's extended range. Many thanks to David Redd for this (and to Maryann Sapanara):

"I happened to catch a re-run of "Behind the Music" with The Mamas and the Papas on VH-1, and they discussed it with John, Michelle, and Cass's sister. Basically, they all agreed that the pipe hitting Cass and knocking her out happened. But while John seemed sure that it changed her ability to get "that extra note," Cass's sister didn't seem to believe it at all. Michelle said that the story had been told so often she wasn't sure of anything anymore but that, while she couldn't say that the bump on the head caused it, it did seem Cass was hitting notes afterward that she hadn't before."

We knew she'd come eventually

Cass Elliot knew that The New Journeymen were in the Virgin Islands. She missed Denny so much that, together with John's cousin Billy Throckmorton, she went down and joined them.

Greasin' on American Express card

The group had an American Express card, which was used to finance the trip to the Virgin Islands. It was actually owned by one of the other Journeymen and had been intended for Journeymen business expenses. Of course, no one was making any payments on it by this time, and the group's departure from the Islands was actually precipitated by an American Express representative finally confiscating the card when John went to the local AmEx office to get a cash advance on it. AmEx was eventually reimbursed with the royalties from the songs written during the group's stay in the Islands.

Tents, low rents, and keepin' out the heat's hard Duffy's good vibrations, and our imaginations, can't go on indefinitely

These lines suggest that the group was starting to tire of life in the Virgin Islands where, amongst other things, they had camped out on the beaches and generally acted in an unsociable way. Duffy's is the name of the boarding house on Creeque Alley (pronounced "Creaky Alley") in Charlotte Amali where some of the group's early songs were composed. Although Duffy himself was very encouraging and liked the group (giving out "good vibrations"!) they were not making a living. Their day-to-day existence on the island was very much an exercise in deficit spending and living by their wits,

and that COULD NOT go on indefinitely. The reference to their "imaginations" not going on indefinitely could also be a comment on how the group felt at the time "Creeque Alley" was released in the summer of 1967—they knew they weren't going to last forever. (But of course their music lives on all these years later!)

This is what John Phillips said about their time on the island in an interview at Paramount Studios in August 1995: "Well see, we went to the Virgin Islands the summer of '65 to rehearse and just put everything together. Cass and Denny and Michelle and I and the doctor who played guitar and Peter Pilafian who played violin. All these strange people. We took dogs with us and motorcycles and children. McKenzie, my daughter, went with us. She had her own tent on the beach. We were the last campers to arrive and we got the worst camping site. We called it Camp Torture. There was a mosquito bog right behind it. We went across the main island. We had this on St. John. Went across the main island, St. Thomas, and we got a job there, working at a club, Duffy's. Duffy was a great help to us-singing, and we were trying to sing country pop, folk pop at that time, and we weren't quite sure how to do it or what to do. One day we heard "Turn! Turn! Turn!"—the Byrds—and they mentioned Jim McGuinn, Roger McGuinn now. Denny said, 'We can do that. What's the big deal?' So we came back to the mainland and got a drive-away car and drove across the country to California and started recording, almost as soon as we got here."

And California Dreaming is becoming a reality.

Now back in good old New York City, paradise a fading memory, California was looking like the place to be. But this is also a neat reference to "California Dreaming," The Mamas and the Papas' first recording, which was released in October 1965 and was to go on to become a major hit and all-time classic.

In the Paramount Studios interview, John Phillips was asked how "California Dreaming" came to be written. He said: "It's my recollection that we were at the Earle Hotel in New York and Michelle was asleep. I was playing the guitar. We'd been out for a walk that day and she'd just come from California and all she had was California clothing. And it snowed overnight and in the morning she didn't know what the white stuff coming out of the sky was because it never snowed in Southern L.A., you know, Southern California. So we went for a walk, and the song is mostly a narrative of what happened that day-stopped into a church to get her warm, and so on and so on. And so as I was thinking about it later that night; I was playing and singing and I thought 'California Dreamin" was what we were doing, actually, that day. So I tried to wake Michelle up to write the lyrics down that I was doing. And she said, 'Leave me alone. I want to sleep. I want to sleep.' 'Wake up. Write this down. You'll never regret it. I promise you, Michelle.' 'Okay.' Then she wrote it down and went back to sleep. [Laughs] And she told me up to this day, she's never regretted getting up and [laughs] writing it down-since she gets half of [the royalties for] the writing of the song."

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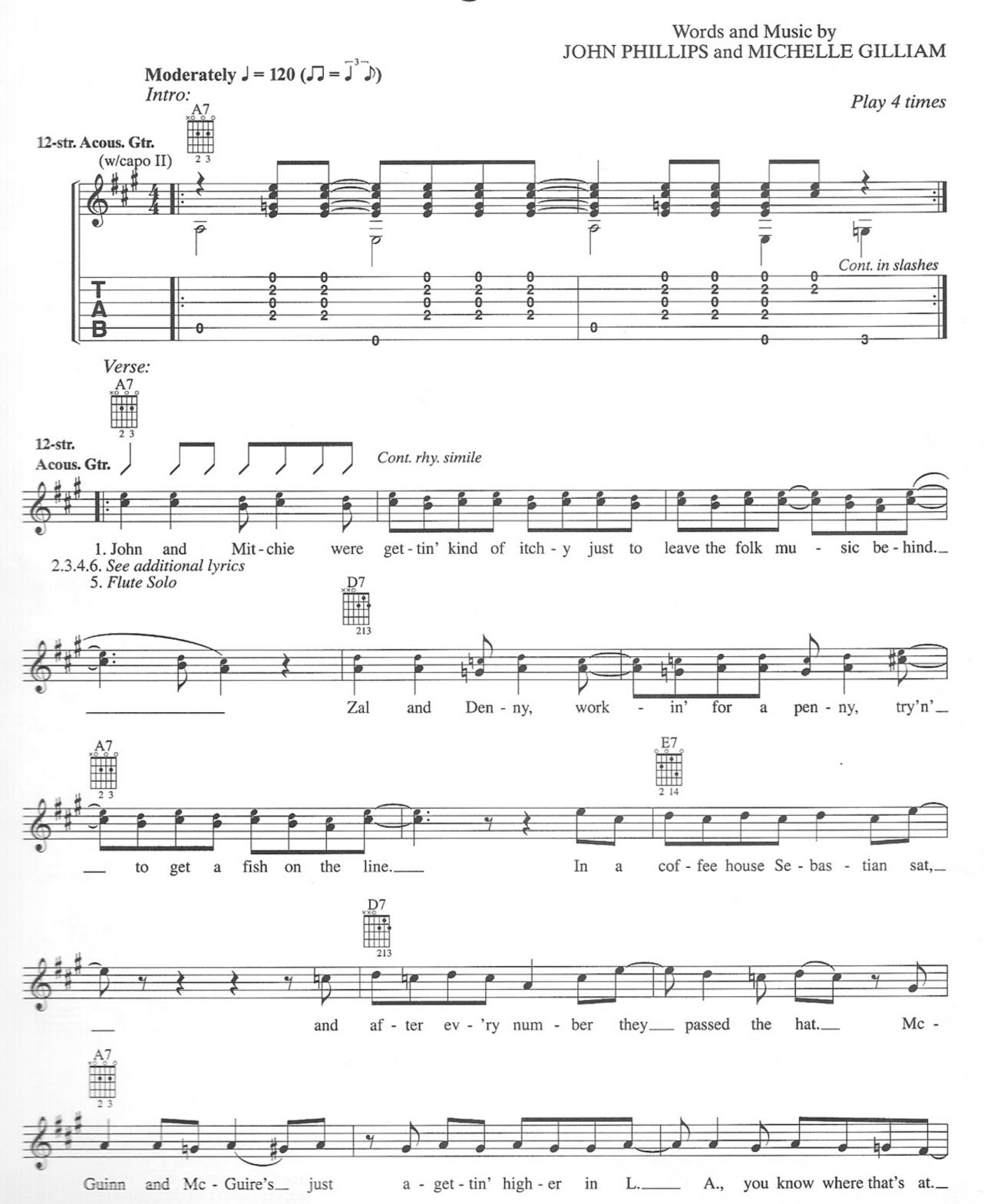
CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

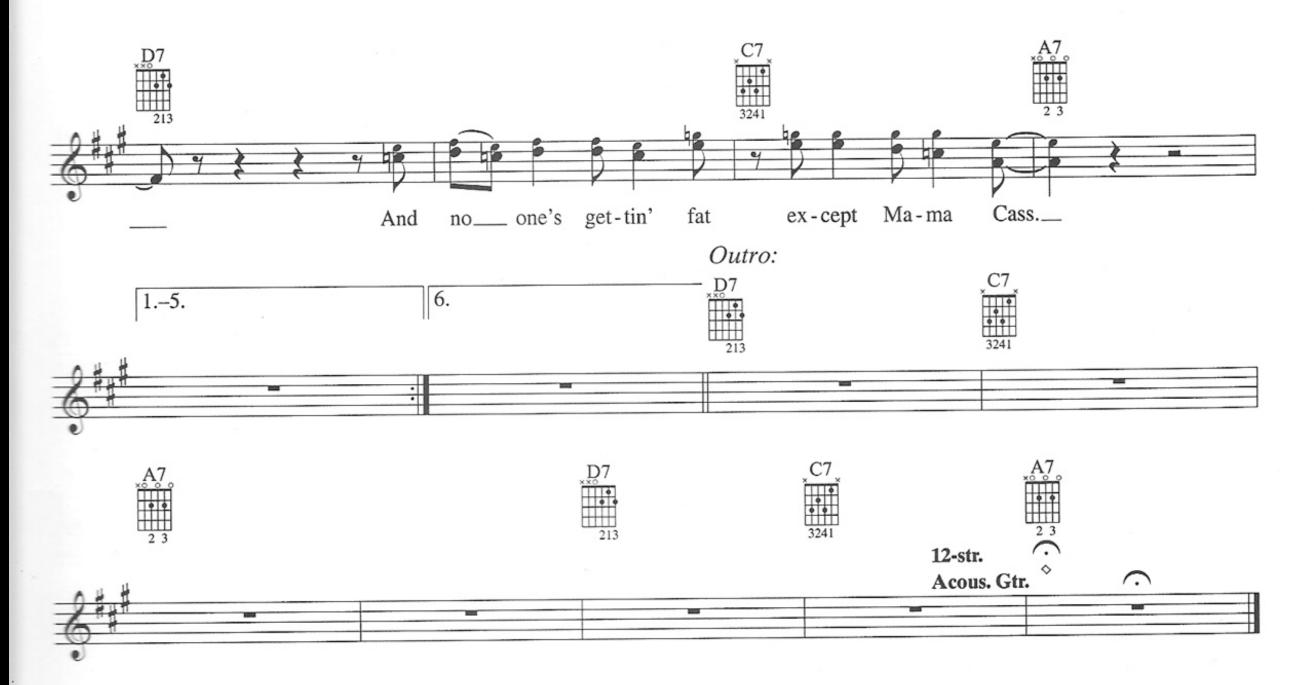




California Dreamin' - 2 - 2 PGM0009

CREEQUE ALLEY





Verse 2:
Zally said, "Denny, you know there aren't many
Who can sing a song the way that you do."
"Let's go south." Denny said, "Zally, golly, don't you think that
I wish I could play guitar like you?"
Zal, Denny, and Sebastian sat, (at the Night Owl)
And after every number they passed the hat.
McGuinn and McGuire still are gettin' higher in L. A...

McGuinn and McGuire still are gettin' higher in L. A., You know where that's at.
And no one's gettin' fat except Mama Cass.

Verse 3:

When Cass was a sophomore, planned to go to Swarthmore, But she changed her mind one day. Standin' on the turnpike, thumb out to hitchhike, Take her to New York right away. When Denny met Cass, he gave her love bumps, Called John and Zal and that was the Mugwumps. McGuinn and McGuire couldn't get no higher But that's what they were aimin' at. And no one's gettin' fat except Mama Cass.

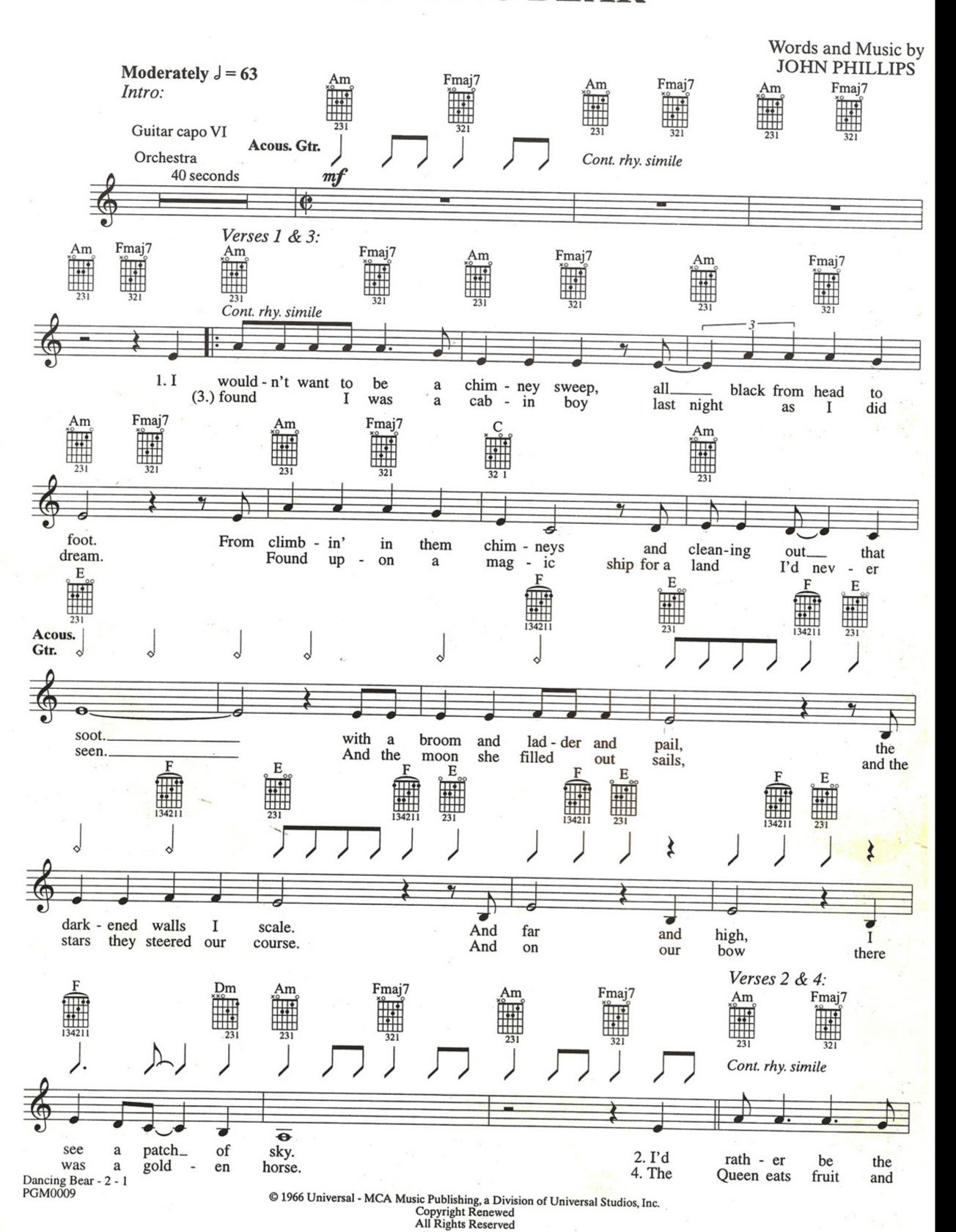
Verse 4:

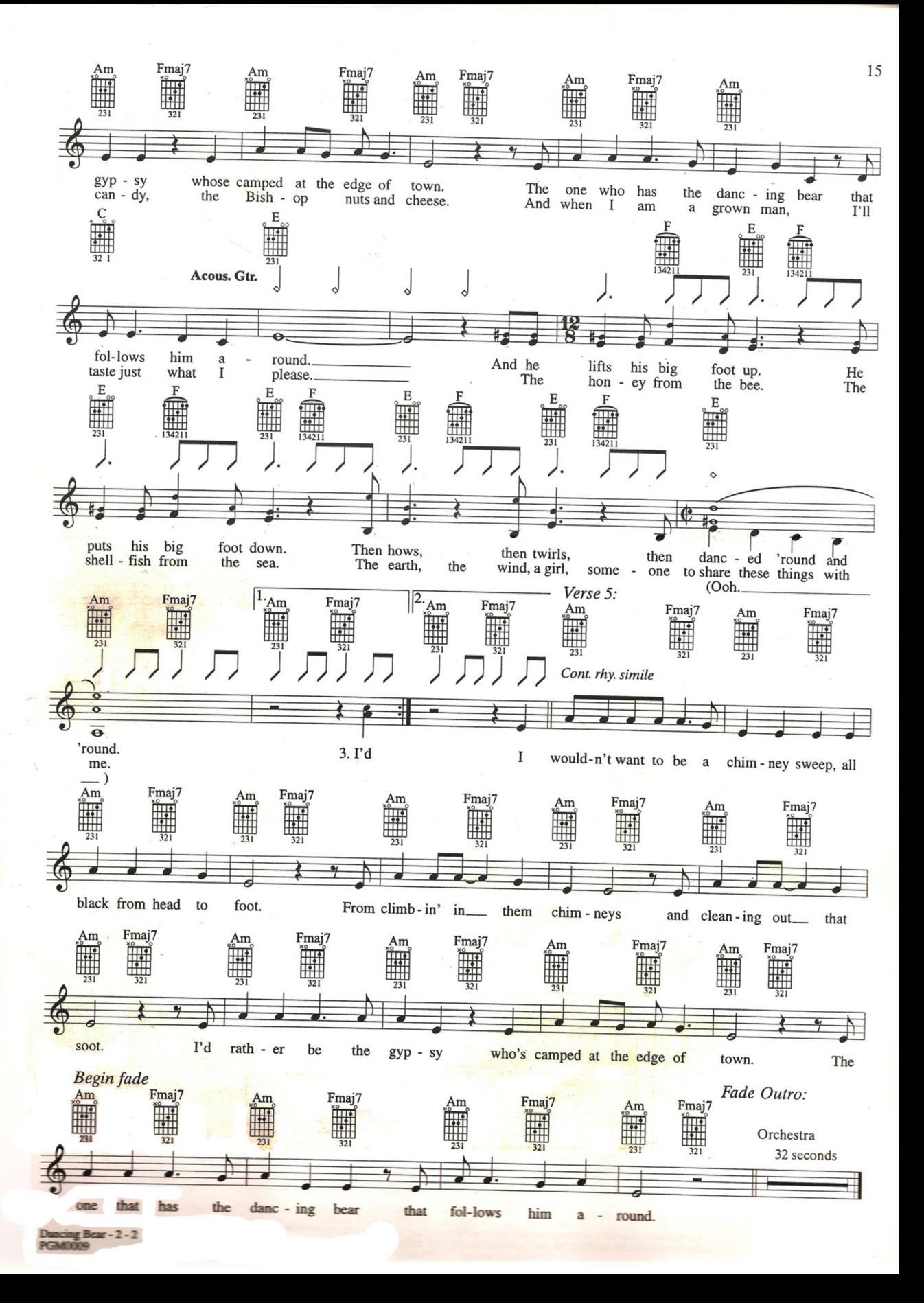
Mugwumps, high jumps, low slumps, big bumps, Don't you work as hard as you play?
Make-up, break-up, everything you shake up, Guess it had to be that way.
Sebastian and Zal formed the Spoonful, Michelle, John, and Denny gettin' very tuneful. McGuinn and McGuire, just a-catchin' fire in L.A., You know where that's at.
And everybody's gettin' fat except Mama Cass. (To Flute Solo:)

Verse 6:

Broke, busted, disgusted, agents can't be trusted,
And then she wants to go to the sea.
Cass can't make it, she says, "We'll have to fake it."
We knew she'd come eventually.
Greasin' on American Express cards, tents, low rent,
But keepin' out the heat's hard.
Duffy's good vibrations and our imaginations
Can't go on indefinitely.
And California dreamin' is becoming a reality.

DANCING BEAR





DANCING IN THE STREET







DEDICATED TO THE ONE I LOVE

Words and Music by LOWMAN PAULING and RALPH BASS









DO YOU WANNA DANCE?

Words and Music by BOBBY FREEMAN







DREAM A LITTLE DREAM OF ME



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Dream a Little Dream of Me - 4 - 2 PGM0009





GO WHERE YOU WANNA GO







I SAW HER AGAIN LAST NIGHT







I CALL YOUR NAME



I Call Your Name - 2 - 1 PGM0009

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MONDAY, MONDAY

Words and Music by JOHN PHILLIPS



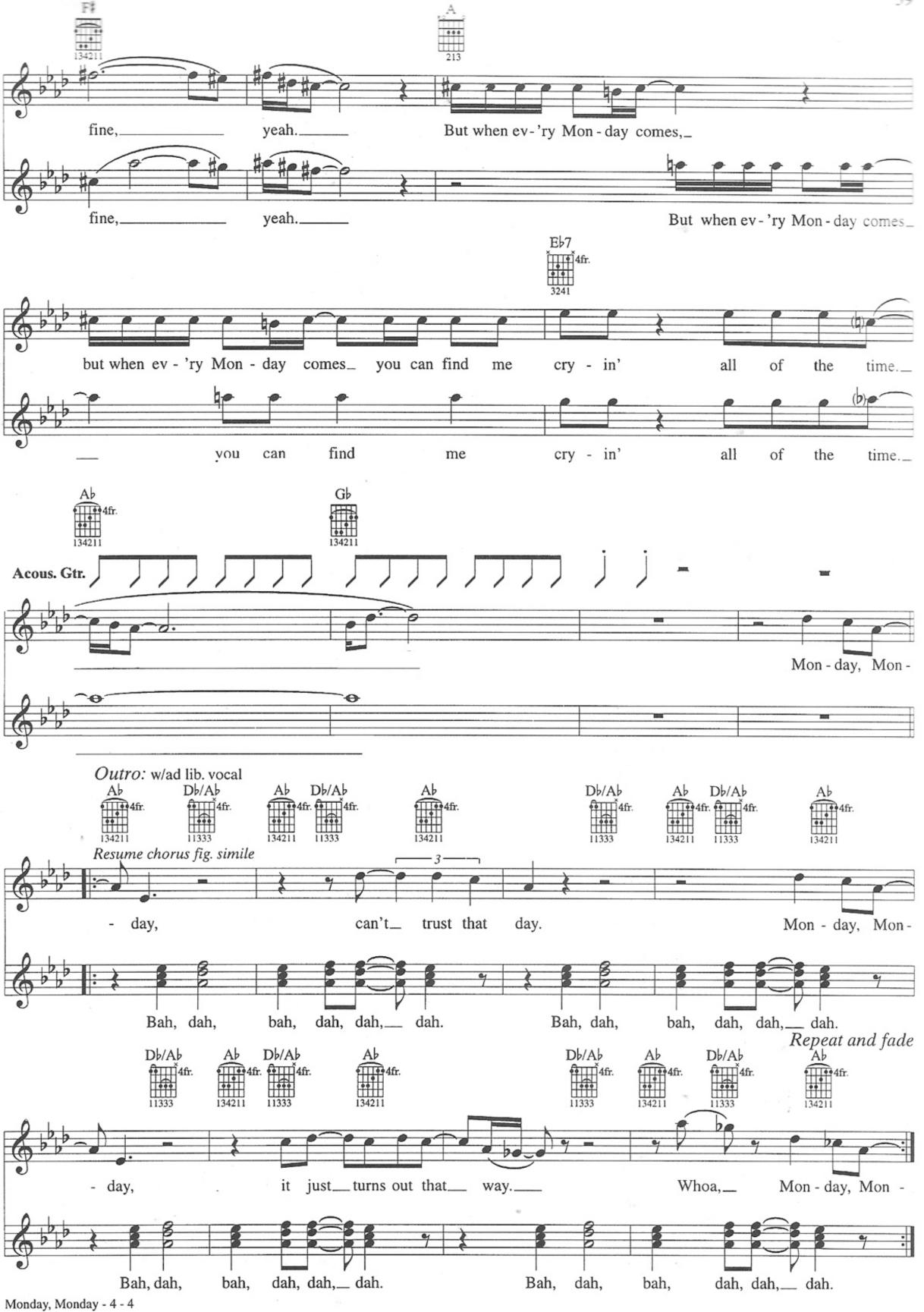


Ev-'ry oth-er day,

ev-'ry oth-er day of the week is

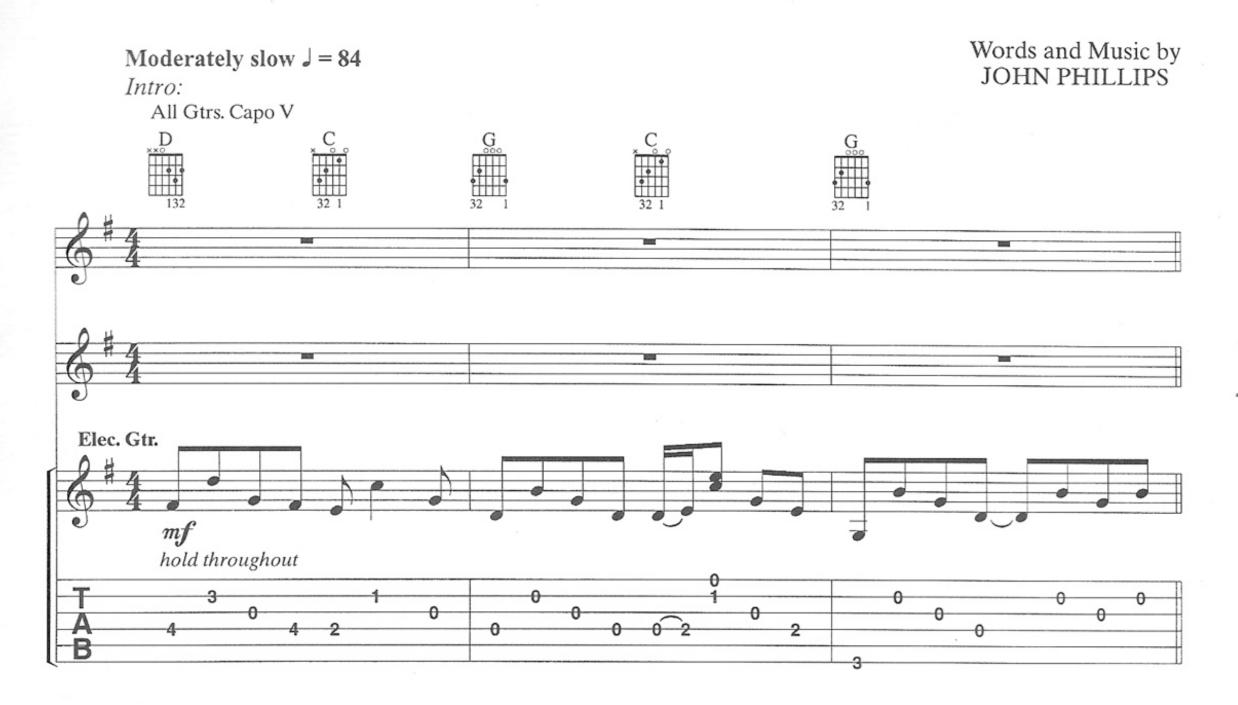
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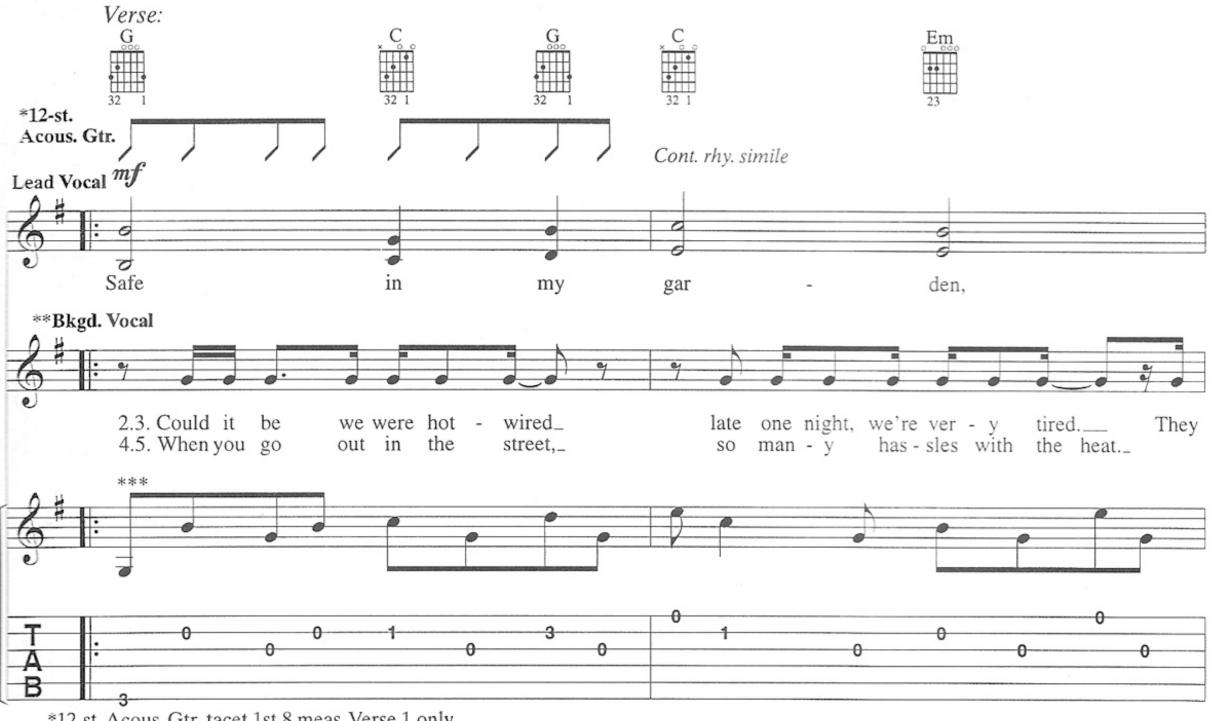




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SAFE IN MY GARDEN





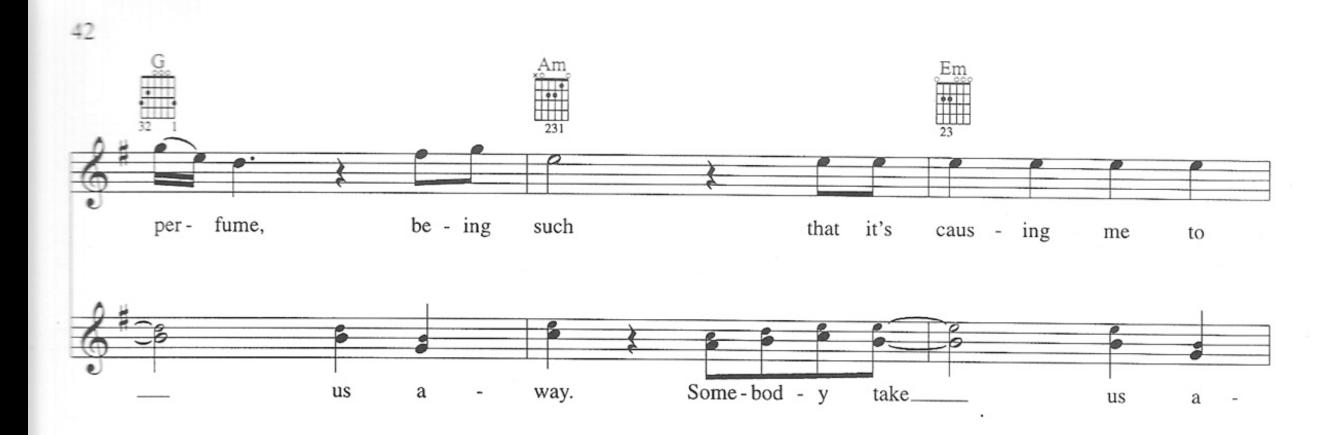
^{*12-}st. Acous. Gtr. tacet 1st 8 meas. Verse 1 only.

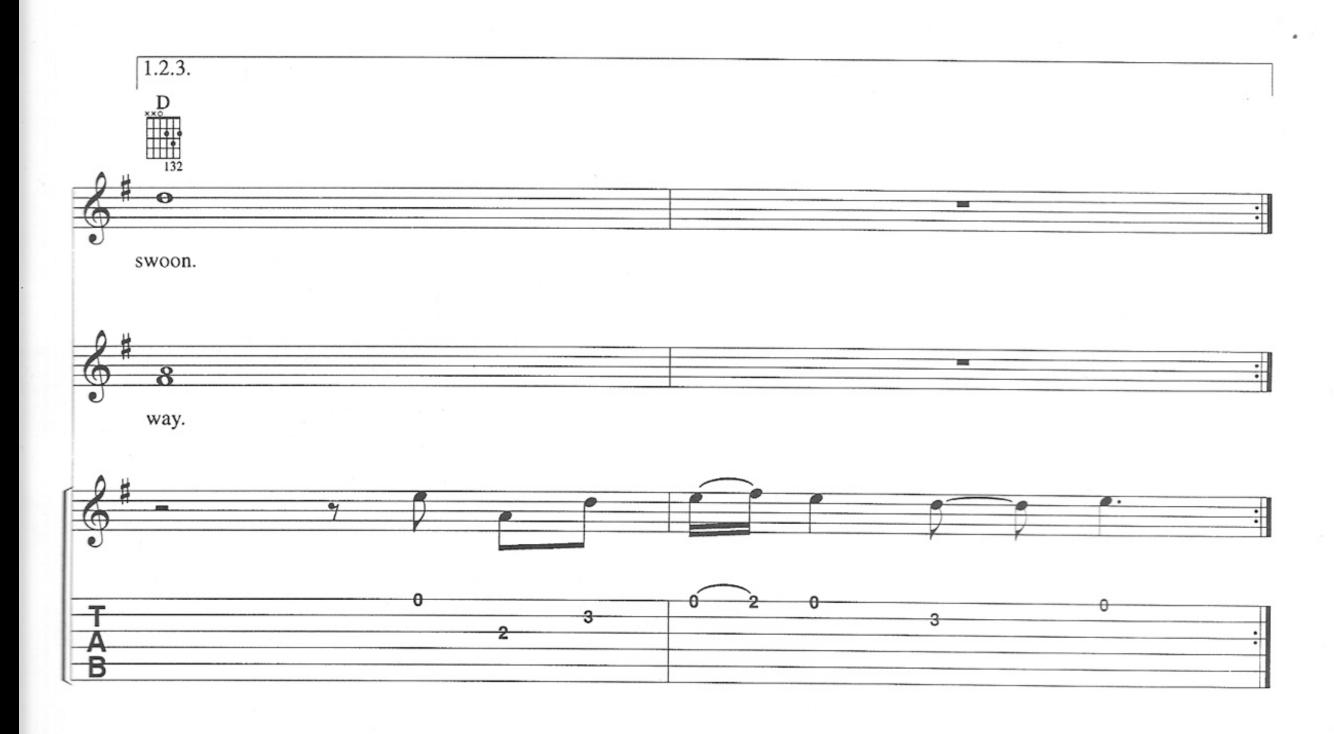
^{**}Bkgd. Vocals enter Verse 2.

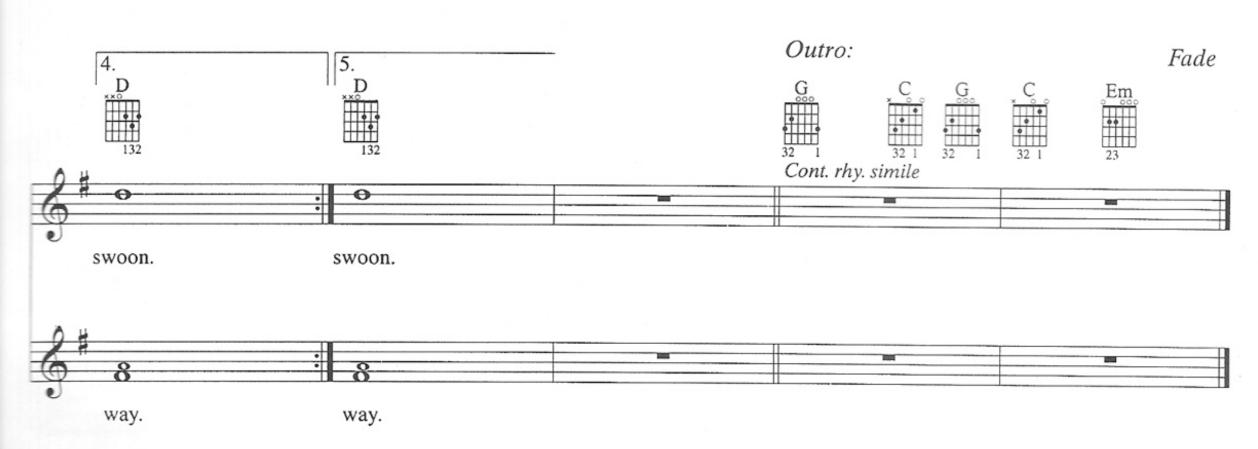
^{***}Elec. Gtr. Verse 1 only.



Safe in My Garden - 3 - 2 PGM0009







WORDS OF LOVE



Words of Love - 3 - 1 PGM0009

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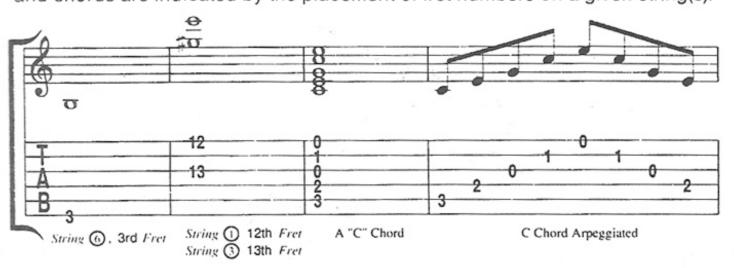




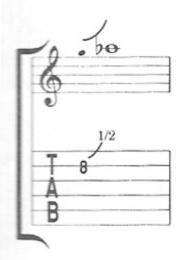
GUITAR TAB GLOSSARY **

TABLATURE EXPLANATION

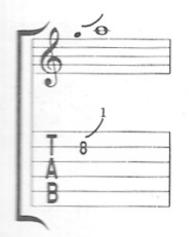
READING TABLATURE: Tablature illustrates the six strings of the guitar. Notes and chords are indicated by the placement of fret numbers on a given string(s).



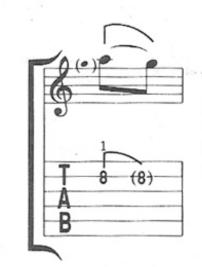
BENDING NOTES



HALF STEP: Play the note and bend string one half step.*



WHOLE STEP: Play the note and bend string one whole step.



PREBEND AND RELEASE: Bend the string, play it, then release to the original note.

RHYTHM SLASHES

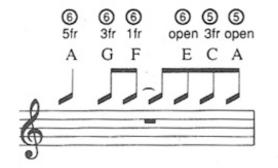


STRUM INDICA-TIONS: Strum with indicated rhythm.

The chord voicings are found on the first page of the transcription underneath the song title.

*A half step is the smallest interval in Western music; it is equal to one fret. A whole step equals two frets.

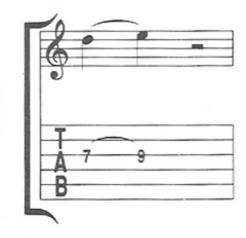
**By Kenn Chipkin and Aaron Stang



INDICATING
SINGLE
NOTES
USING
RHYTHM
SLASHES:
Very often

single notes are incorporated into a rhythm part. The note name is indicated above the rhythm slash with a fret number and a string indication.

ARTICULATIONS



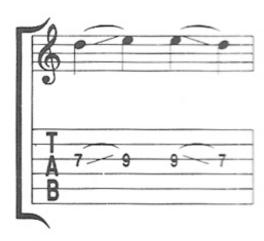
HAMMER ON:

Play lower note, then "hammer on" to higher note with another finger. Only the first note is attacked.



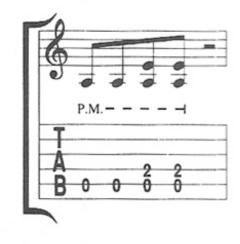
PULL OFF:

Play higher note, then "pull off" to lower note with another finger. Only the first note is attacked.



LEGATO SLIDE:

Play note and slide to the following note. (Only first note is attacked).



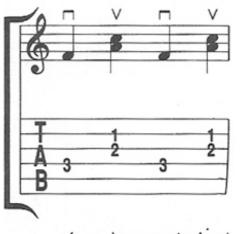
PALM MUTE:

The note or notes are muted by the palm of the pick hand by lightly touching the string(s) near the bridge.



ACCENT:

Notes or chords are to be played with added emphasis.



DOWN STROKES AND UPSTROKES:

Notes or chords are to be played with either a downstroke

(n.) or upstroke (v) of the pick.

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California Dreamin'

Creeque Alley

Dancing Bear

Dancing in the Streets

Dedicated to the One I Love

Do You Wanna Dance?

Dream a Little Dream

Go Where You Wanna Go

I Call Your Name

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Monday, Monday

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Words of Love



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