On the CD

TRACK 32

Fire And Rain, played once through (no repeats). This solo acoustic version is identical to the part on the album *Sweet Baby James* except for some extra chords in the chorus

Guitars: Kit Morgan

Fire And Rain

JAMES TAYLOR

James Taylor's song-writing skill and sensitive playing continues to influence musicians today. KIT MORGAN transcribes this 1970 hit in full.

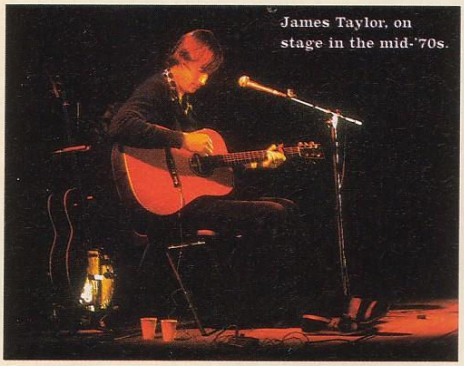
FOR many people James Taylor epitomises the post-hippy era of the '70s. However, *Fire And Rain* was written around the time he was suffering from depression and heroin addiction in a US mental institution. Lyrically and musically, it sums up his (thankfully brief) frail and troubled state of mind at the time. His minimalistic acoustic picking compliments the song perfectly, with lines that move within the chord structure and against the melody. This transcription is taken from the recording which appeared on his second album, *Sweet Baby James*.

TECHNIQUE

The first thing to notice is that he used a capo at the third fret, transposing the open strings sound up a minor third. From bottom to top, the strings sound G, C, F, Bb, D, G. The notation is transposed, but the tab takes into account the use of the capo, so don't be confused by this – I've shown the 'real' chord shapes in brackets above.

It's okay to let notes ring on throughout most of the tune, especially if you're trying to play the song unaccompanied. At bar 4 there's a particularly nice phrase based on the major seventh chord shape which crops up in various forms throughout the song. It's important to get these as accurate as possible, because anyone listening who knows the tune will notice straight away if they're missing!

In the the original recording's chorus, the guitar was just playing the descending root notes, without a chord in sight! To fill it out a little, and make it suitable for the solo player, I've arranged it as Taylor might play it on his own, using the piano accompaniment as a guide. TG



James Taylor, on stage in the mid-'70s.

THE LYRICS

Just yesterday morning they let me know you were gone
Suzanne the plans they made put an end to you
I walked out this morning and I wrote down this song
I just can't remember who to send it to

I've seen fire and I've seen rain
I've seen sunny days that I thought would never end
I've seen lonely times when I could not find a friend
But I always thought that I'd see you again

Won't you look down upon me, Jesus
You've got to help me make a stand
You've just got to see me through another day
My body's aching and my time is at hand
And I won't make it any other way

(repeat chorus)

Been walking my mind to an easy time, my back turned towards the sun
Lord knows when the cold wind blows it'll turn your head around
Well, there's hours of time on the telephone line to talk about things to come
Sweet dreams and flying machines in pieces on the ground

(repeat chorus)

Thought I'd see you one more time again
There's just a few things coming my way this time around, now
Thought I'd see you, thought I'd see you fire and rain, now (etc)

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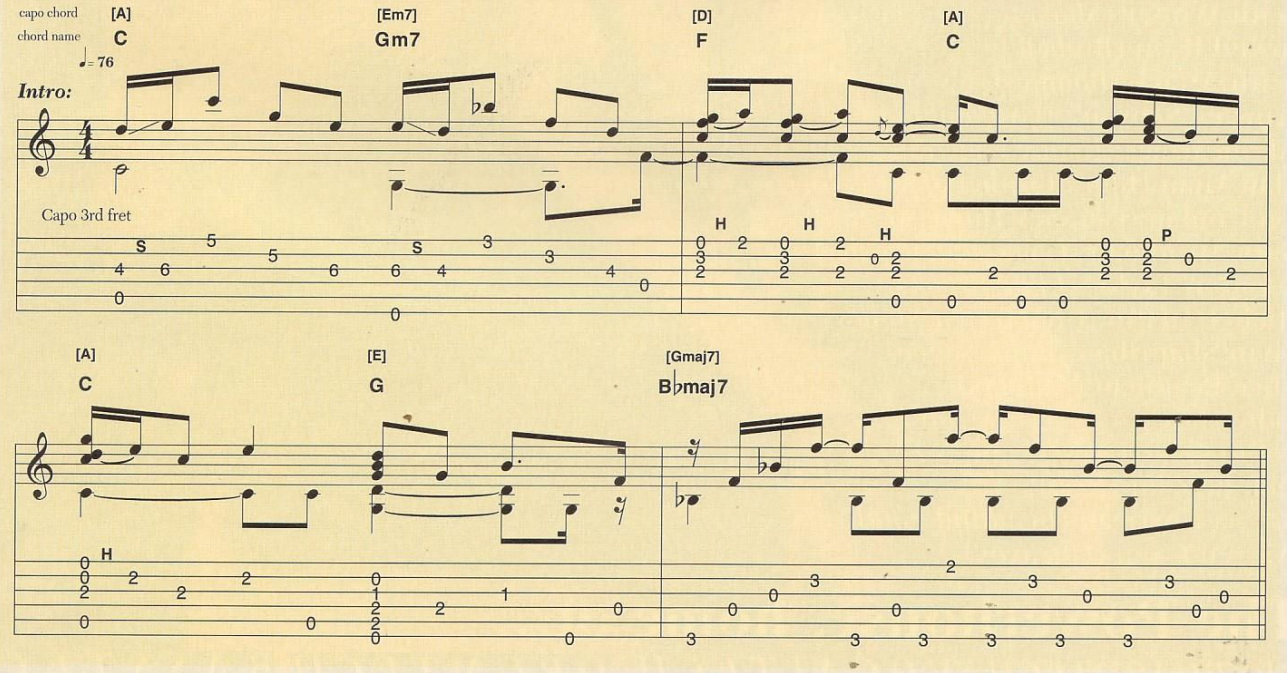

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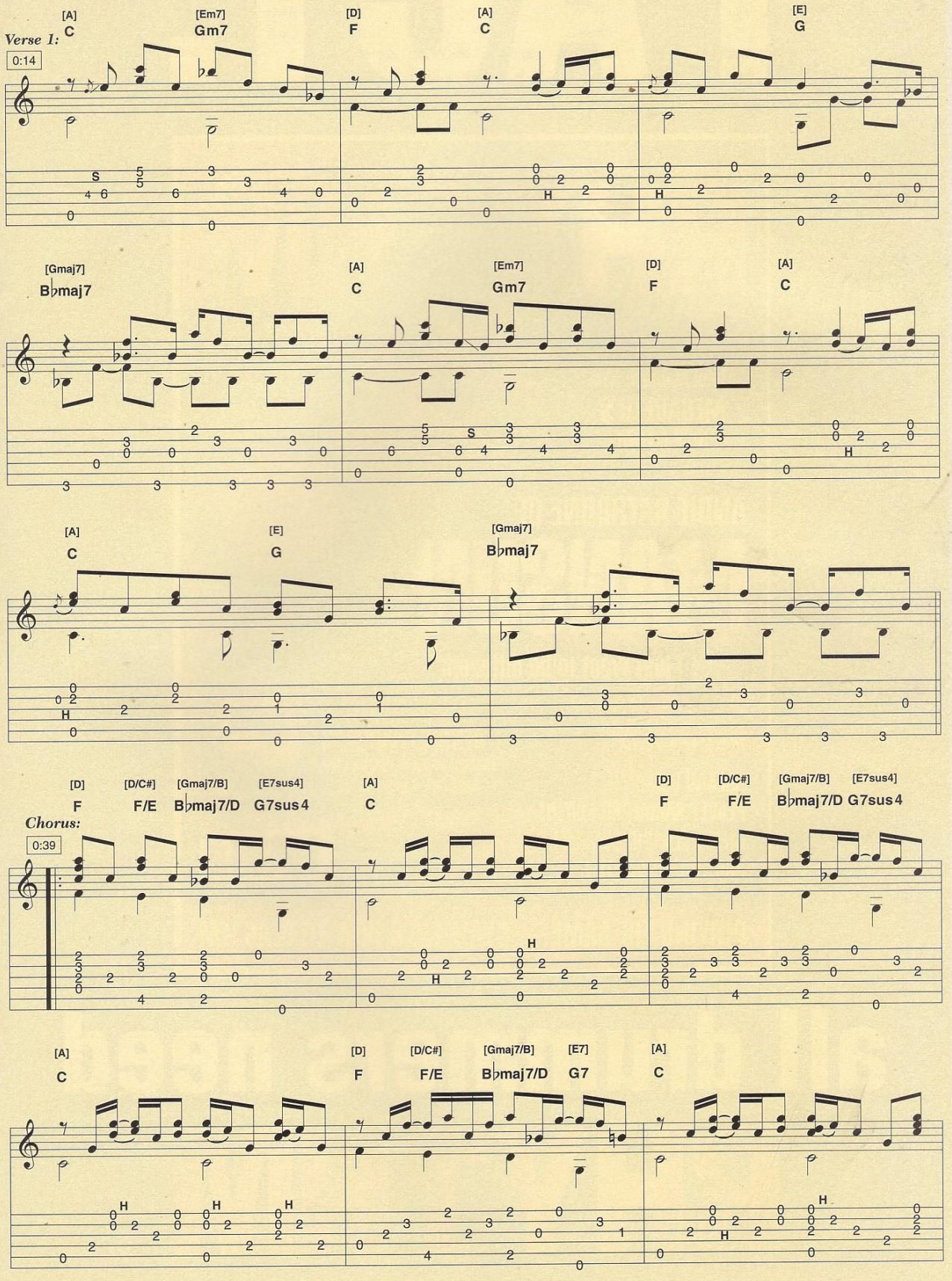

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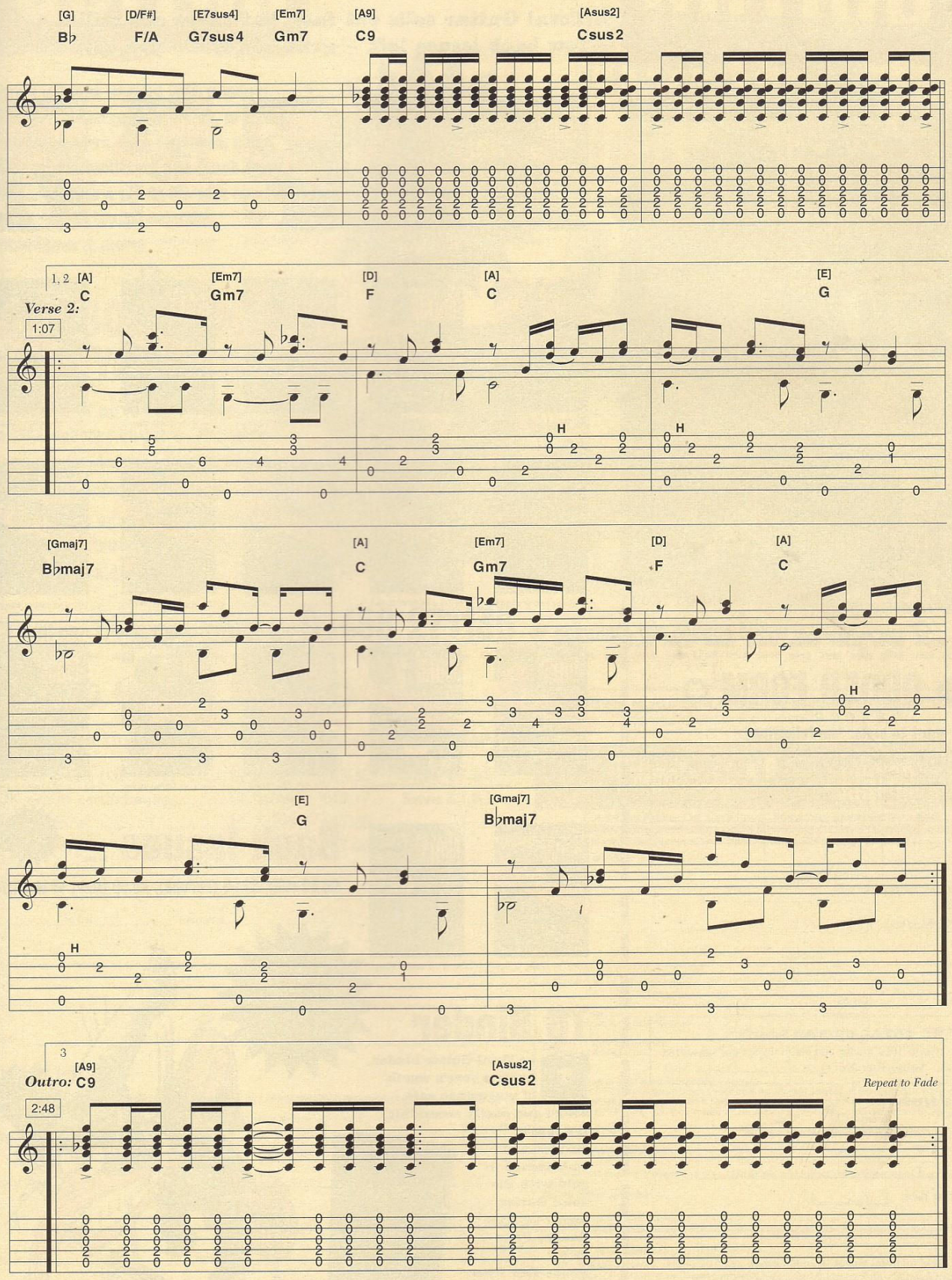
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