

I'll Be Your Water

Words and music by Keb' Mo' and John Lewis Parker, from the album *Suitcase*



"I'll Be Your Water" offers a particularly good chance to check out Keb Mo's playing up close, as it's the one unaccompanied track on *Suitcase*, with Mo's guitar and vocal carrying the entire tune. If the very next track, "Life Is Beautiful," is a funky wooden shack built from sturdy alternating-thumb acoustic guitar riffs, "I'll Be Your Water" is more of an abstract modern sculpture, with a few lean, curving lines defining the plentiful open spaces in between.

In the intro and chorus, the chord changes are sketched out using tenth intervals (an octave plus a third). It's the same sound Paul McCartney used in "Blackbird," and in fact Mo' turns to this sound at other times on *Suitcase*, most notably on "Remain Silent" but also for the walkdown between the opening vamp and the vocal on "Eileen" and, to a lesser extent, on "Still There For You." Try fretting the low F notes

throughout the tune (like the one in the very first full measure) with your thumb; that will help the rest of your fingers fall into place whenever you're in open position.

The chords in the verse are a great example of how emptying out a chord fingering and either using one of the resulting open strings or adding in one new note can make ordinary, open-position I, IV, and V chords sound fresh. The Fsus2 is just an F chord (again, try fretting the sixth string with your thumb) with the fifth-, third-, and first-string notes of the usual fingering left out; the G on the open third string is what makes it a sus2 chord. For a G chord, Mo' doesn't worry about fretting the fifth string, thereby freeing up his left-hand ring finger to grab the second fret on the third string; that A note is what makes the resulting chord a Gadd9.

—DAVID HAMBURGER

Intro

♩ = 76

Fsus2 C/E Dm C G/B Am7 C

Verse

Fsus2 Gadd9 Fsus2 Gadd9

4 1. Do you ev-er get wor-ried? And your load is hard to bear. And your
2. See additional lyrics.

Fsus2 Am7 Dadd9/F# Fsus2 G C

8 life is like a sad, sad sto-ry and no one, no-bod - y real-ly cares. But if you ev-er

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Chorus

12 need some one to talk to and if you ev-er need a help-ing hand I'll be your

Chords: F_{sus2} C/E D_m C G/B Am7 G F_{sus2} C/E D_m C G

16 ship out on the o - cean, I'll be your wa-ter in the des - ert sand.

Chords: F_{sus2} C/E D_m C Am7 D_{add9/F#} F_{sus2} G C

To Coda ⊕ 1

20 And af-ter you've found your way you won't owe me noth - ing 'cause

Chords: C_{sus2} G/B G_{m/Bb} F_{add9/A}

Bridge

23 you're gon - na know that your well would nev - er run dry, nev - er run dry. If you ev-er

Chords: F_{m(add9)/Ab} C/G G7_{sus4} G7 D.S. al Coda

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Coda

C **Fsus2** **G7 C** **Fsus2** **G7sus4**

26 I'll be your wa-ter and I will give you shel-ter

P *H* *(continue simile)*

C **Fsus2** **G7sus4** **Cadd9** **Fsus2** **G7sus4** **C** **G/B**

30 I'll be your wa-ter I will be there for you I'll be your

Am7 **C/G** **Dadd9/F#** **Fsus2** **G7sus4** **C**

35 ship out on the o - cean And I'll be your wa-ter in the des - ert sand

rit.

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1. **Fsus2** **Gadd9**
Do you ever get worried

Fsus2 **Gadd9**
And your load is hard to bear

Fsus2 **Am7 Dadd9/F#**
And your life is like a sad, sad story

Fsus2 G C
And no one, nobody really cares

Chorus

Fsus2 C/E Dm C G/B Am7 G
But if you ever need someone to talk to

Fsus2 C/E Dm C G
And if you ever need a helping hand

Fsus2 C/E Dm C Am7 Dadd9/F#
I'll be your ship out on the ocean

Fsus2 G C
I'll be your water in the desert sand

2. **Fsus2** **Gadd9**
I've been there I've felt like you do

Fsus2 **Gadd9**
Feeling like winter would never turn to spring

Fsus2 **Am Dadd9/F#**
And everybody I know has got problems

Fsus2 G C
But there's a solution to everything

Repeat Chorus

Bridge

Csus2 G/B Gm/Bb Fadd9/A
And after you've found your way, you won't owe me nothing

Fm(add9)/A C/G G7sus4
'Cause you're gonna know that your well would never run dry,

G7
never run dry

Repeat Chorus

Fsus2 G7 C Fsus2 G7sus4 C
I'll be your water and I will give you shelter


Fsus2 G7sus4 Cadd9 Fsus2 G7sus4 C
I'll be your water, I will be there for you

Am7 C/G Dadd9/F#
I'll be your ship out on the ocean

Fsus2 G7sus4 C
And I'll be your water in the desert sand

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