Sweet Jane

Words and music by Lou Reed

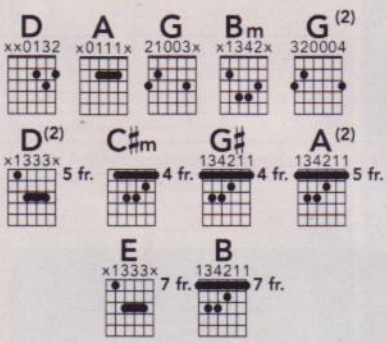
If asked, you could probably name about a million pop/rock tunes with stronger melodies than the Velvet Underground's "Sweet Jane" (from 1970's *Loaded*) but you'd be hard pressed to name a song with more swagger. Vocalist Lou Reed serves these lyrics with self-confidence so over the top that he blurs the line between song and spoken word.

While the vocal delivery is anything but regular, the unmistakable guitar groove gives this song a perfectly solid foundation. The same riff carries throughout the chorus, although the steady two-chord pattern shown here (played by an acoustic guitar in the track's left channel) gives the section an extra bit of drive that helps separate it from the verses. Also presented here are chords for the song's bridge section, though on some older versions of *Loaded*, the song ends after the third chorus, omitting the bridge. The full version presented here clocks in around 4:09.

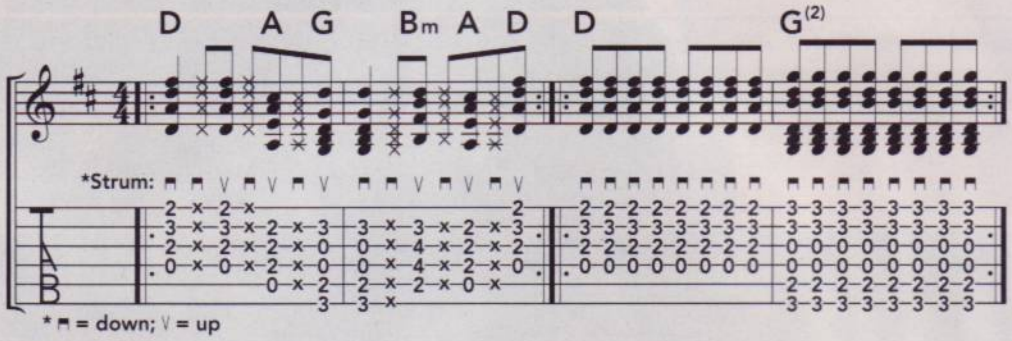
The Velvet Underground also released a stripped-down recording of "Sweet Jane" on the band's album *1969: The Velvet Underground Live*. The live, down-tempo version features a different set of lyrics and a somewhat simplified chord progression, but it includes a similar syncopation throughout the verse and chorus sections, as well as a bridge section analogous to the original. That alternate take on the song inspired Canadian alternative-rock band Cowboy Junkies' noteworthy cover, which first appeared on the group's breakout 1988 album, *The Trinity Session*.

—DAN APCZYNSKI

Chords



Verse Riff



Chorus Riff

D A G Bm A
1. Standing on the corner

D A G Bm A
Suitcase in my hand

D A G Bm A
Jack is in his corset, Jane is in her vest

D A G Bm A
And me I'm in a rock 'n' roll band

D A G Bm A
Ridin' in a Stutz Bearcat, Jim

D A G Bm A
You know, those were different times

D A G Bm A
Oh, all the poets they studied rules of verse

D A G Bm A
And those ladies, they rolled their eyes

Chorus

D G(2)
Sweet Jane *(play 3x)*

(With verse riff)

2. I'll tell you something
that Jack, he is a banker
And Jane, she is a clerk
And both of them save their monies
And when, when they come home
from work
Oh, sittin' down by the fire
The radio does play the
classical music there, Jim
The march of the wooden soldiers
all you protest kids
You can hear Jack say

Repeat Chorus

(With verse riff)

3. Some people, they like to
go out dancing
And other peoples they
have to work
And there's even some
evil mothers
Well they're gonna tell you that
everything is just dirt
Y'know that, women never really faint
And that villains always blink their eyes
And that, you know, children are
the only ones who blush
And that life is just to die
But everyone who ever had a heart
They wouldn't turn around and break it
And anyone who ever played a part
Oh wouldn't turn around and hate it

Repeat Chorus

Bridge

D(2) C♯m G♯
Heavenly wine and roses seem to whisper

A(2) B
to her when he smiles *(play 2x)*

E B D(2) A(2)
La la la, la la la, la la la, la la la *(play 2x)*

Repeat chorus and fade

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