

Me and Bobby McGee

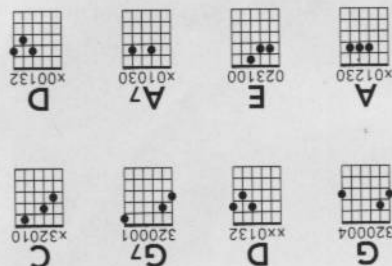
Words and music by Kris Kristofferson and Fred Foster, from *Pearl*



In 1971, Janis Joplin had a No. 1 hit with "Me and Bobby McGee," though, sadly, she was no longer around to witness it. Penned by Kris Kristofferson, whom Joplin briefly dated, "Me and Bobby McGee" was recorded by countless acts, including Kristofferson and Canadian songwriter Gordon Lightfoot (featured in this month's Songbook). The acoustic-guitar part (Joplin's nickname. Try the strum pattern below, playing the bass note on the downbeat of each measure. Joplin played minor embellishments, like simultaneously hammering onto the first fret of the second string and the sec-

ond fret of the fourth string to create a C/G chord after singing "New Orleans." The song modulates up a whole step to A for the second verse, and Joplin sings impromptu lyrics while the band jams over the first half of the verse. They then repeat that half-verse jam section five times to finish the song. Once you're comfortable singing the song, try coming up with your own vocal embellishments.

Chords, Capo 1



1. Busted flat in Baton Rouge, waitin' for a train
And I was feelin' near as faded as my jeans
Bobby thumbed a diesel down just before it rained
It rode us all the way into New Orleans
I pulled my harpoon out of my dirty red bandana
I was playin' soft while Bobby sang the blues
Windshield wipers slappin' time, I was holdin' Bobby's hand in mine
We sang every song that driver knew

Chorus
Freedom's just another word for "nothin' left to lose"
D C G
Nothin' don't mean nothin', hon', if it ain't free
D C G
And feelin' good was easy, Lord, when he sang the blues
D
You know, feelin' good was good enough for me
G
Good enough for me and my Bobby McGee

2. From the Kentucky coal mine to the California sun
Hey, Bobby shared the secrets of my soul
Through all kinds of weather, through everything we done
Yeah, Bobby, baby, kept me from the cold
One day up near Salinas, Lord, I let him slip away
He's lookin' for that home and I hope he finds it
But I'd trade all my tomorrows for one single yesterday
To be holdin' Bobby's body next to mine

Strum Pattern

Chorus
Freedom's just another word for "nothin' left to lose"
D C G
Nothin', that's all that Bobby left me
D A
But feelin' good was easy, Lord, when he sang the blues
E
Hey, feelin' good was good enough for me
A
Good enough for me and my Bobby McGee
Improvisation: over first half of Verse, repeat five times