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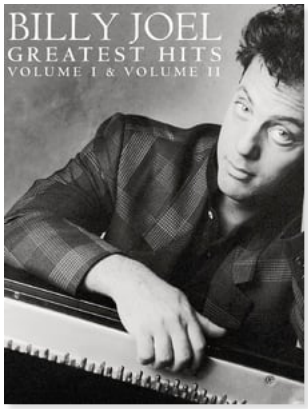

You're Only Human (Second Wind)

Billy Joel

♪ Level 45/100 (Ambitioniert)

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YOU'RE ONLY HUMAN (SECOND WIND)

Words and Music by Billy Joel
From the album *Greatest Hits Volume I and II,* released in 1985.

"You're Only Human (Second Wind)" addresses the issue of suicide prevention among young people. (Joel himself contemplated suicide in 1970.) With reassuring words, he assures the listener that "it's alright" and urges him to "hold on" during the rough times. The song features an insistent shuffle rhythm and two synthesizer parts.

Figure 21 – Interlude/Verse 2/Chorus/Bridge

Figure 21 begins with the instrumental interlude prior to the second verse. The harmonic pattern of B♭–Gm7–A♭–Fm7 is a kind of variation on the standard pattern of I–vi–ii–V, with A♭ and Fm7 functioning as colorful substitute chords.

Synth 1, using a plucky keyboard patch, plays the shuffle pattern. Triads on the upbeats are played in the right hand, and the left hand plays a punchy bass line. Synth 2, using a brass section patch, provides rhythmic punches and short fills.

The verse is in B♭, but the chorus moves briefly into a D♭ tonal center. Note the very blues-like voicing of the D7♯9 chord at measures 23 and 42.

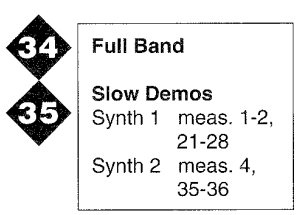
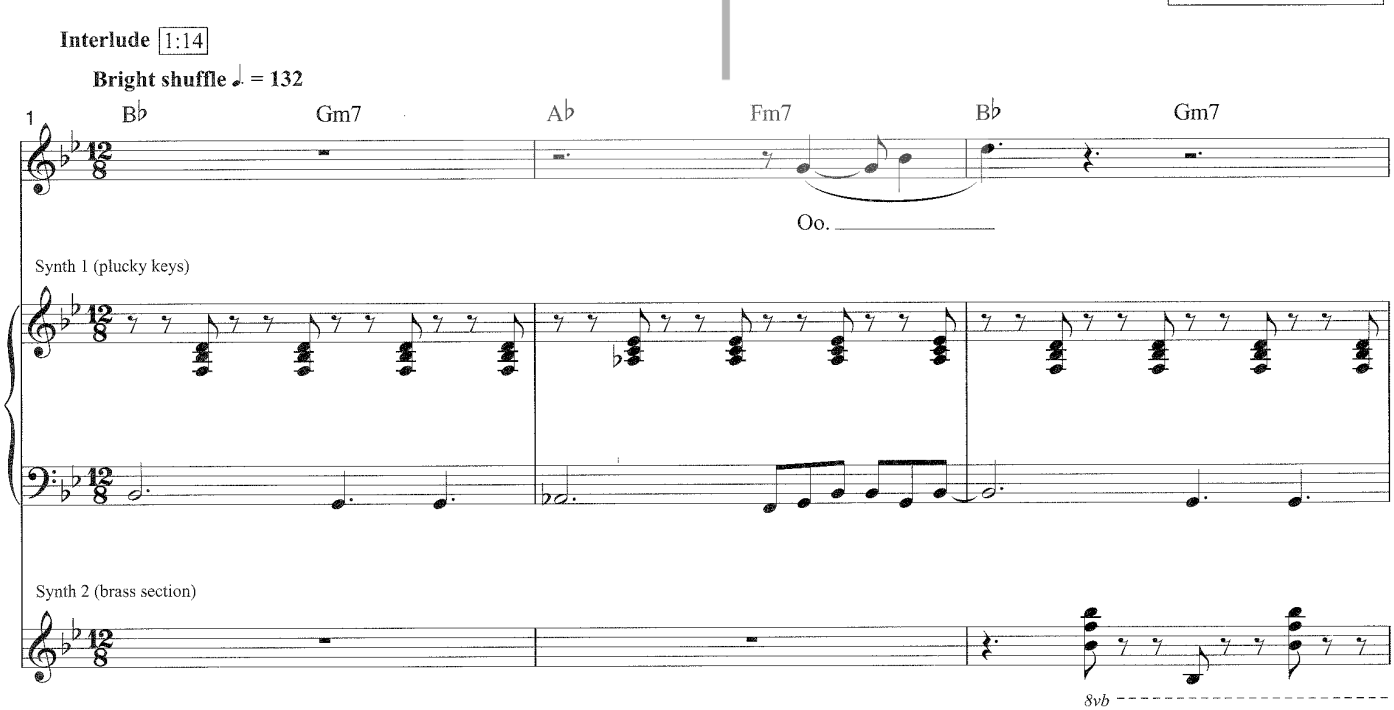


Fig. 21



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