



Say Goodbye To Hollywood

Billy Joel

♪ Level 45/100 (Ambitious)

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SAY GOODBYE TO HOLLYWOOD

Words and Music by Billy Joel

Billy Joel has always been known as a quintessential New York songwriter, though he has his forays into the west-coast lifestyle in songs such as “Los Angelenos” and “Say Goodbye to Hollywood.” The “goodbye” here is not just to the city itself, but also to old friends and lovers who don’t stick around for long. Hollywood has always been used as a symbol of all that the city embodies, from greed and ego to fame and fortune. In a town full of fleeting moments, the bright lights and dirty streets are just a backdrop to the characters who come and go.

Figure 16—Verse (Second Half) and Chorus

This melancholy song is in C, and doesn’t often venture outside the key. Throughout, Joel plays heavy eighth-note repetitions of the chords on top of a left-hand bass line in octaves, over an early rock-style beat—complete with castanet flourishes—that echoes Billy’s early session work with the Shangri-La’s. The verse chords outline a basic I–IV progression. An extra “breather” measure of F that appeared in the first half of the verse (not shown here) is not repeated; rather, measure 4 is truncated and launches us right into the chorus.

The chords used in the chorus are more adventurous, as evidenced by Joel’s starting on the ii chord (Dm7) and his use of colorful harmonies, such as the Dm7/G instead of a G or G7. He also avoids the tonic for eight measures, substituting the vi chord (Am) in its place, and creating an unsettled feeling.

Fig. 16

26 Full Band

Verse (2nd half)
Moderately ♩ = 124

1 C

He joins the lov - ers in his heav - y ma - chine, ___ it's a scene ___ down on Sun - set

4 F Am/E Chorus Dm7

Boul - e - vard. Say good - bye to Hol - ly - wood,