



Honesty

Billy Joel

🎵 Level 41/100 (Ambitious)

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HONESTY

Words and Music by Billy Joel

“Honesty” is one of Joel’s “moral of the story” songs, touching on a subject with which everyone struggles at some point or another. Joel switches back and forth from second to first person in his exploration of truth and communication, searching for sincerity from others while alluding to the false security that empty promises and sympathy bring only temporarily. In the chorus, he tells us that “everyone is so untrue,” but that the honesty he really needs is not from everyone in the world, but from his lover. The song’s delicate feel and descending and rising chord progressions mirror this sentiment.

Figure 35—Intro, Verse, and Chorus

“Honesty” is in B \flat Major, but Joel clearly begins in B \flat minor, only moving toward the major after the F7 is struck in measure 2. During the verse, he plays primarily diatonic chords in a simple quarter-note rhythm. Just before the chorus he plays a ii–V in G—only to resolve to E \flat , a deceptive resolution that is sometimes heard in the key of G minor.

In the chorus, Joel seems centered in G minor, partly due to the strong D/F \sharp –Gm resolutions, and also because of the prominent D7s (V of Gm), even though they invariably resolve deceptively to E \flat .

Fig. 35

52 Full Band

Intro
Slowly $\text{♩} = 66$

1. B \flat m B \flat m/A \flat G \flat maj7 F7 B \flat E \flat

1. If you search for ten - der - ness

4. F Dm7 E \flat Gm7 Am7 Cm7 F7

it is - n't hard to find. You can have the love you need to live,

8vb