



Big Shot

Billy Joel

♪ Niveau 45/100 (Ambitieux)

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BIG SHOT

Words and Music by Billy Joel

In one of Billy Joel's most vicious songs, he cuts down a NYC socialite who evidently made a fool of herself while under the influence. Joel's scathing commentary on the jet-set crowd rings true as he tells the "big shot" in question about her embarrassing behavior at some uptown party the night before, and rips into her for going "over the line" and making a fool of herself. This is a classic Joel hit, and his sneering vocals deliver the song's message perfectly.

Figure 32—Intro and Verse 1

"Big Shot" is in the key of C major, but it starts out feeling very much like E minor due to the way the chords are used. Notice that the intro begins in bass clef, as the low piano doubles the classic guitar riff that starts the song. The first four measures go through the Em7sus–G riff twice, with hits on the "and" of beats 1 and 3 in measure 4. The Bm chord (over a D bass note) in measure 6 works very well as a link from Em to C.

A repeated Em(sus) chord in measure 8 leads into the verse, which continues along the same basic chord progression as the intro. Notice how the notes D and A are suspended throughout the dark verse chords, until the release on measures 15–16 with the C and F/C.

Fig. 32

Intro

Fast Rock ♩ = 149

Em7sus

1

f

G

Em7sus

4

G

Em7sus

D6

C

F/C

8vb

48 Full Band