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“House of the Rising Sun” is a traditional tune in the key of A Minor. Notice that it includes the A Minor chord. Eric Burden and the Animals recorded this song in the 1960s, and it became an instant rock classic. Their arrangement featured a great rock keyboard part. In the arrangement provided here, the first section has the vocal melody in the right hand. The second section has chords in the right hand and a single-note bass line in the left.

This tune uses the  $\frac{12}{8}$  time signature. There are 12 beats in each measure but we think of them in groups of three, with 1, 4, 7 and 10 being the “strong” beats (slightly accented). The result is really four beats per measure with each beat divided into three eighth notes (count 1-&-ah, 2-&-ah, etc.). This is called a *compound meter*. Four beats per measure with each beat divided into two eighth notes,  $\frac{4}{4}$ , is called a *simple meter*.

Here is how the rhythm to this song is counted:

(1) & ah 2 & (ah) 3 & ah 4 & (ah)

The first note in this tune is a *pickup note*, which is a note that occurs before the first full measure. This one comes on the “ah” after beat “4.” This incomplete measure is always balanced by an incomplete measure at the end.

**f** = *Forte*. Loud

Track 3 *House of the Rising Sun*

$\text{♩} = 69$

Chords: Amin, C, D, F, Amin, C, E, Amin, E, Amin

Measure 10: *mf*

Measure 12: *f*

Incomplete measure

# Chapter 12: Rock Ballads

There comes a time when even the wildest rockers have to show their sensitive sides. Even rockers like Green Day have come up with sensitive ballads such as “Good Riddance (Time of Your Life),” which made their music accessible to a wider audience. Now is the time to put the spotlight on that time-honored tradition: the rock ballad. Yes, it’s that time of the night—the slow dance—when you can get romantic with your date.

Let’s look back at the styles of the first rock ballads. Following are variations on early rock ballads in the doo-wop style of the 1950s.

♩ = 56

53  
Track  
22

Musical score for Track 22, "Roll On". The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 56 beats per minute. It features a piano accompaniment with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature is one flat (Bb). The score is divided into four measures, each with a chord label above it: C, Amin, F, and G. The first measure starts with a piano (*mp*) dynamic. The bass line begins with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes G4-A4-Bb4-C5. The right hand plays chords with fingerings: C (5-3-1), Amin (5-3-1), F (5-3-1), and G (5-3-1).

Track 23 *Roll On*

♩ = 58

Musical score for Track 23, "Roll On". The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 58 beats per minute. It features a piano accompaniment with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature is one flat (Bb). The score is divided into four measures, each with a chord label above it: F, Dmin, Gmin, and C. The first measure starts with a piano (*mp*) dynamic. The bass line begins with a quarter note Bb3, followed by eighth notes Bb3-C4-D4-Eb4. The right hand plays chords with fingerings: F (5-3-1), Dmin (5-3-1), Gmin (5-3-1), and C (4-2-1). The instruction "Play 3 times" is written at the end of the piece.

Musical score for Track 23, "Roll On" (continued). The piece is in 12/8 time with a tempo of 58 beats per minute. It features a piano accompaniment with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature is one flat (Bb). The score is divided into five measures, each with a chord label above it: F, Bb, F, C, and F. The first measure starts with a piano (*mp*) dynamic. The bass line begins with a quarter note Bb3, followed by eighth notes Bb3-C4-D4-Eb4. The right hand plays chords with fingerings: F (5-3-1), Bb (5-3-1), F (5-3-1), C (4-2-1), and F (5-3-1). The instruction "Finger substitution" is written below the first measure, with a bracket under the first two notes of the bass line (Bb3 and C4) and the text "While holding the key down, switch from the 1st finger to the 4th finger."

*Finger substitution.* While holding the key down, switch from the 1st finger to the 4th finger.

The band Rush doesn't have a full-time keyboard player (in concert, the band members trigger synth parts with foot pedals), yet they've been a huge influence in the progressive rock movement. Their keyboard parts tend to be more thematic than solo-oriented.

"Sub-Plots" is in the style of Rush's "Subdivisions," which has what is probably the closest they ever came to a keyboard solo. Try using a synth with a solid string sound and a quick attack time.

Like many progressive rock songs, this one changes time signatures frequently. The trick here is to keep the quarter-note pulse steady, whether there are seven beats per measure ( $\frac{7}{4}$ ), five beats per measure ( $\frac{5}{4}$ ), four beats per measure ( $\frac{4}{4}$ ) or six beats per measure ( $\frac{6}{4}$ ). Once you feel this beat, count the correct number of beats for each measure, and you'll be able to keep up with the shifting time signatures.

Track 76 *Sub-Plots*

♩ = 134

G Aadd9 F#min G A Bmin A F#min G Aadd9

Aadd9 Bmin F#min G A Bmin A F#min

G A F#min G A F#min G A F#min

G A F#min G A F#min Bmin