

BEFORE YOU ACCUSE ME (TAKE A LOOK AT YOURSELF)

Words and Music by Eugene McDaniels

Figure 3 – Intro and Verse

“Before You Accuse Me” looks back to Eric’s early musical beginnings. In fact, this was very likely one of the first records he ever heard. A solid Bo Diddley composition, it is a straight 12-bar blues in E—allowing Clapton maximum space for reinterpretation. He had played the tune as an electric number in concert for years, and recorded it that way on 1989’s *Journeyman*. In 1992, it found its way into the *Unplugged* set as an attractive two-guitar arrangement.

Eric and second guitarist Andy Fairweather Low approach “Before You Accuse Me” as a moderate shuffle on twin steel-string flat-top acoustics. Their fingerstyle articulation is eclectic and somewhat random, combining fingerplucking and fingertip strumming—as on the E7 triad in measure 15. In the verses, Clapton’s part is the straighter of the two and assumes a rhythm guitar role, comprised mainly of root-fifth to root-sixth blues comping. Andy’s playing provides color and contrast in the form of subtle lead fills and single-note counterlines.

7

Featured Guitars:
Gtr. 1 meas. 1-16

8

Slow Demos:
Gtr. 1 meas. 1-4;
5-8; 9-13;
13-16

Fig. 3

Intro
Medium Shuffle ♩ = 96 (♩ = ♩³)

Verse

5 **E7** **A7**

fore — you ac-cuse me, — take a look at your —

mf

Rhy. Fig. 1

7 **E7**

self. — Be —

tr

9 **A7**

fore you — 'cause me, — take a look — at your —

11 E7

self. _____ (you) say I'm

1/4

End Rhy. Fig. 1

13 B7 A7

spend-in' my mon-ey on oth-er wom-en you tak-in' mon-ey from some-one

let ring ----- let ring -----

15 E7 B7 E7

else. 2. I called

0:40

let ring ----- let ring -----

Figure 4 – Outro Guitar Solo

Eric's ending solo (3:04) is a high point of the *Unplugged* session, and an engrossing study of his blues improvising approach. He begins with double stops implying the E7 chord of the progression in measures 1–3 followed by a bluesy single-note lick in E minor pentatonic (E–G–A–B–D) in measure 4. Over the A7 chord in measures 5, 6, and 10, Clapton uses a hybrid scale which is a familiar blues-guitar concept. Here, he adds the C# note (the major 3rd of A) to the E blues scale (E–G–A–Bb–B–D), purposely accentuating the chromatic effect of the B–Bb–A melody line. In measures 7 and 8, Eric plays lower-register blues licks based on the E Mixolydian mode (E–F#–G#–A–B–C#–D). Note the mix of triad and single-note textures and the inclusion of the G note in measure 7 and in the trill figure of measure 8. The B7 chord in measure 9 is a country blues staple; it is arpeggiated and allowed to ring for full duration. Clapton ends the song with bent double stops which have been an E.C. signature lick since "Ramblin' on My Mind" on *Blues Breakers*. The final cadence employs the ascending progression of D#9–E9, a standard blues closer, for a solid and authoritative result.

9	Featured Guitars: Gtr. 1 meas. 1-12
10	Slow Demos: Gtr. 1 meas. 1-4; 5-8; 9-12

Fig. 4
Outro Guitar Solo 3:04
 Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1

The musical score for the Outro Guitar Solo is presented in three systems, each with a treble clef staff and a guitar tablature staff. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 12/8. Measure 1 is marked with an E7 chord and shows a double-stop pattern on strings 1 and 2. Measure 4 features a single-note lick in E minor pentatonic. Measures 5-10 are over an A7 chord with a hybrid scale. Measure 9 features a B7 chord that is arpeggiated and allowed to ring. The piece ends with bent double stops and a D#9-E9 cadence.

7 E7 .

let ring - - - - -

let ring - - - - -

9 Gtr. 1 B7 A7

let ring - - - - -

10 Gtr. 2

1/4

11 N.C. D#9 E9 3:34

grad. bend

1/4 1/4

let ring