

Watch What Happens

Ted Greene, from his “Solo Guitar” album
Transcribed by Nick Stasinis

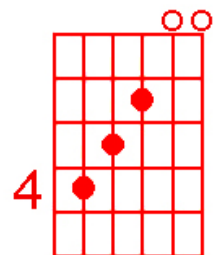
My transcription for “Watch What Happens” from Ted’s “Solo Guitar” album was literally decades in the making. At this point, I would like to give a nod to Mark Thornbury who did an amazing job of going through the entire “Solo Guitar” album within a short period after the album’s release and single-handedly nailed it. Mark, you are my hero! I had not seen his chord grid sheets until after Ted’s departure in 2005. Mark was instrumental in proofing this transcription.

If you read Jim Hilmar’s 1996 Spotlight interview of Ted about “Solo Guitar” in *Vintage Guitar Magazine*, Ted introduced this song by saying his grandmother swore it was a Russian folk song from her childhood: [Ted Greene VGM 1996](#). He repeated it to me, too! Yep...or rather, Da! That’s her story and she’s sticking to it!

First things first! I transcribed this song at concert pitch, however, to match Ted’s guitar tuning on the recording, all six strings go down a half step. The first half of the piece is played in a brisk Bossa feel. Halfway through, where it modulates from the key of E to Ab, Ted launches into a full-on swing with a lively walking bass. There are lots and lots of ghost notes sprinkled in between the targeted bass notes. Ted teaches this walking bass effect at a 1978 GIT (Guitar Institute of Technology) seminar to achieve an authentic bass player feel: [Ted Greene GIT Seminar 1978](#). There were so many ghost notes of a non-diatonic nature that I had to decide whether to include them or take them out altogether. I think I left most of them in, but you will find more.

Another point to make while transcribing recorded music is the decision of documenting a missed note or the supposed intended note. I did this twice, at measures 12 and 21, where Ted intended a note on the 6th string, but played an open E instead. Measure 66 is another place in the song where he plays the last note as a G, but the melody is actually an Ab. Ted said, “I am at odds with the Lord of Melody at this point. Leave it in!” So I did! I need also to draw attention to another measure where I think Ted overshot his target with the walking bass. Measure 46, Ted plays an Ab before landing on Eb. François Leduc has it as a G before going to Eb (measure 47 on his transcription). That will be my personal tweak there!

Here’s something fun! Did I mention Ted was trying to improve upon the original recording from the onset? He introduced an alternate chord for the introduction, which sounds way cool! In measure 2, instead of playing the stock C#7#9, play this one instead! Name that chord!



There are many Van Eps-isms throughout this piece, notably the “Fifth-finger” technique from George’s 1939 yellow method book. This is where you would bar across strings with a finger on adjacent frets. You would straddle the fret with one finger to get two notes. For example, the 1st finger covers both the 2nd string at the 5th fret and the 1st string at the 4th fret.

In measure 62, I added some undetermined slide lines into the Bbm9 chord. This is typical in Ted’s playing of him emulating his guitar hero, Wes Montgomery. You will notice Wes style glisses (plural form, not a real word in itself, short for glissando) and slides into chords and notes all throughout this song.

At one time, I thought the format of notation with tablature, chord grids and names was a little too much and made the page look too busy, but after careful consideration, I decided to leave it all in. After all, Ted created most of his songs and exercise sheets to be more accessible to guitarists who could not read notation. Take note: There is not a chord grid for every place where Ted plays a chord. You can break out your trusty chord stamp and add one yourself by looking at the Tab section. Some of the chord grids have fingerings to demonstrate how Ted would specifically hold a chord. I tried to add a bar line in the grid where the chord is being barred by a finger, but not when it competed for the field where I needed to place finger numbers. A very common fingering Ted uses is at measure 16, where he plays the F#9, goes to the companion minor C#m9, and then back to the F#9. You don’t have to use any of the fingerings in the transcription. Experiment and find what works best for you.

Share your findings, whether it is an error in my transcription (you won’t hurt my feelings), a cool fingering, an alternate chord position, or the harmonic analysis of why Ted made changes to the stock progression (Ex. measures 19 – 21). The harmonic analysis is a topic unto itself. Too vast to cover here!

Most of all have fun!

Nick

Watch What Happens

(As played by Ted Greene on "Solo Guitar")

Tune down 1/2 step to match recording

Michel LeGrand

Bossa ♩ = 138

Telecaster

B \flat 13 3fr. A 9 2fr. G \sharp 7(#5) 4fr. C \sharp 7(#9) 3fr. ← See performance notes for alternative chord

F \sharp 7 \flat 9 2fr. B 11 5fr. B 11(\flat 9) 5fr. E 6 2 3 1 5fr. B 7(#5) 7fr. E Maj7 6fr. B 7/6 7fr. E 6 3 3 2 1 4fr. F \sharp 13 2fr.

3

C \sharp m7 2fr. F \sharp 9 2fr. F \sharp m9 2fr.

7

Ghost note

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Transcribed and Engraved by Nick Stasinios
Stazz Music Productions

10

B 13sus 4fr. Use George Van Eps' 5th finger technique also here!

E Maj7 6fr.

F Maj7 7fr.

F# Maj7 8fr.

F Maj7 7fr.

13

E 4fr.

F#9 8fr.

C#7(#5) 9fr.

Missed note! Open E heard on recording.

16

F#9 8fr.

C#m9 9fr.

F#9 8fr.

F#m9 7fr.

B 13sus 4fr. Use George Van Eps' 5th finger technique here!

(Companion minor)

1st finger straddles fret

19

E Maj7 6fr.

A 7/6 5fr.

Bb m7 6fr.

D#7(#9)#5 5fr.

G# Maj7 4fr.

D#7 5fr.

B13sus



4fr. Use George Van Eps' 5th finger technique also here!

E 6



5fr.

B 7(#9),5



6fr.

B 7(b9)



4fr.

E 6



5fr.

34

Musical notation for measures 34-36. Includes treble and bass staves with notes, chords, and fret numbers. Annotations include "1st finger straddles fret" and "Sustain notes".

B 7(#9),b5



6fr.

B 7(b9)



4fr.

E 6



5fr.

A 9



2fr.

Bbm7(b5)



5fr.

37

Musical notation for measures 37-39. Includes treble and bass staves with notes, chords, and fret numbers. Annotation includes "Ghost note".

E b7



4fr.

A bMaj7 E bMaj7



4fr.



5fr.

F m9



6fr.

A bMaj7



4fr.

Swing

40

Musical notation for measures 40-42. Includes treble and bass staves with notes, chords, and fret numbers.

B b9



12fr.

F m7



8fr.

B b13



6fr.

B b m9



6fr.

43

Musical notation for measures 43-45. Includes treble and bass staves with notes, chords, and fret numbers.

46

E \flat 13 8fr. A Maj7 9fr. B \flat Maj7 10fr. A Maj7 9fr.

8 8 10 11 8 8 8 10 11 9 9 9 11 12

49

A \flat Maj7 4fr. E \flat 7/6 8fr. A \flat 6 3 2 2 8fr. B \flat 13 6fr. F m7 6fr.

Van Eps Roll

8 8 8 10 11 8 8 8 10 11 8 10 11 8 11 9 10 10

52

B \flat 7/6 6fr. E 13 6fr. B \flat m9 6fr. B \flat m7 8fr. E \flat 7/6 8fr.

Ghost note Slide Ghost note

8 8 7 9 6 6 6 8 10 8 9 8 8 10 11

55

A \flat Maj7 4fr. D \flat 7/6 9fr. D m7 2 3 3 3 10fr. G7#9 2 1 3 4 4 9fr. C Maj7 1 3 2 4 4 8fr. G7 #9 2 1 3 4 4 9fr.

Ghost note

8 8 10 11 9 10 10 10 9 10 9 10 9 10 10

Cadd11

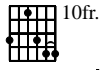
C

C m7

C m7

F#13

F 13



58

Musical notation for measures 58-60, including a treble clef staff with notes and a guitar staff with fret numbers. Measure 58 starts with a Cadd11 chord. Measure 59 features a C chord. Measure 60 contains F#13 and F 13 chords.

Bb

F7/6

Bb11

Bb

Bbm7

Bbm7



61

Musical notation for measures 61-63. Measure 61 starts with a Bb chord. Measure 62 features a Bbm7 chord. Measure 63 includes a Bbm7 chord and a ghost note. Annotations include "Slide into chord" and "Ghost note".

Eb7

Db

Eb7

Abmaj7

Eb7/6

Abmaj7



64

Musical notation for measures 64-66. Measure 64 includes a ghost note. Measure 65 features a Bb13 chord. Measure 66 includes an E13 chord. Annotations include "Ghost note".

Bb13

F 7(#9)

Bb13

E 13

Bbm9



67

Musical notation for measures 67-69. Measure 67 features a Bbm9 chord. Measure 68 includes an E13 chord. Measure 69 includes a Bbm9 chord. Annotations include "Ghost note".

70

E \flat 7/6 8fr. E \flat 11 9fr. E \flat 7 8fr. A \flat 6 3 2 2 1 9fr.

E \flat 7 \sharp 11 10fr. E \flat 7(\flat 9) 8fr. A \flat 6 3 2 2 1 9fr.

Slide

Ghost note

F 7(\sharp 9) 7fr. B \flat 13(\flat 9) 6fr. B \flat 7 6fr. E \flat 7 6fr. A \flat 7/6 4fr. F 7(\sharp 9) 7fr.

73

Ghost note

Ghost note

B \flat 7(\flat 9) 6fr. E \flat 11 6fr. A \flat 7/6 4fr. F 7(\sharp 9) 7fr. B \flat 7(\flat 9) 6fr. E \flat 7 3 4 6fr. E \flat 7(\sharp 5) 6fr.

76

Ghost note

Ghost note

A \flat 6 4fr. A 13 2fr. A \flat 13 1fr.

79