

Backwater Blues

Bessie Smith

open-D tuning (D A D F# A D)

Intro: D7 D7 D7 D7

vs1

G (G F) D7 D7
When it rains five days and the skies turn dark as night (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
There's gonna be trouble in the lowlands, trou—ble to—night

vs2

G (G F) D7 D7
I woke up this morning and I can't get out of my door (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
What am I to do____where can I go?

vs3

G (G F) D7 D7
They rowed a little boat about five miles 'cross the way (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
I packed up my suitcase____they rowed me a—way

vs4

G (G F) D7 D7
When it thunders and lightnin' and the wind be—gins to blow (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
There's thousands of people____with no place to go

vs5

A (F G) D7 D7
Then I went and stood upon a high and lonesome hill (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
I looked down on the house where____I used to live

vs6

G (G F) D7 D7
Backwater blues caused me to pack my things and go (x2)
A (F G) D7 D7
My house fell down and I can't__live there no more

Arr. by Brooks Williams
open-D tuning

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"D" chord guitar riff

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Andante ♩ = 96

Chord diagrams: D7, G

5

Chord diagrams: F, D7, G, F

6

Chord diagrams: D7, A

11

Chord diagrams: F, G, D7

14