

# Death Letter Blues

## (Son House "The Original Delta Blues" tab)

Words & Music:  
Eddie "Son" House

(tabbed by Adrian Dumchus)

Open G tuning (D G D G B D from low to high)

V - loud percussive down stroke with fingernails or thumb (rattle the string)

v - down stroke with thumb

^ - up stroke with index and/or middle finger

x - mute string

b - bend

~ - vibrato

T - thumb (on fretting hand)

play fretted notes inside (\* \*) with a slide

This should give you a basic idea of how the song is played. The strummed parts don't always have to be exact as far as what strings to hit since they're not always the same on the album, just stay close to the strings that are written. I also put in some of the picking pattern (up/down stroke) to give an idea of how he creates the rhythm - he uses a very loud/aggressive playing style with a lot of banging on the guitar with the thumb (usually for when the lowest D string is hit alone) or fingernails (when more than one note is hit) which I tried to show with the capital V's.

Intro: (play the intro 3 times, playing it faster each time)

(*                          *) V ^ ^                          ^ ^                          v ^		
D- -----3/5~-----		
B- -----0-----0-		
G- -----2/3-0-----0-	play 3x	
D- ---0-2/3-----0---		
G- ---0-----0-----		
D- -3-----		
T		

1st verse:

	v ^ v                          v ^	V ^ V ^                          ^ V	^ V ^                          ^ V ^ V
D- ---8-8-8-8-8-5h8-	---0-0-0---0-0-	---3-----3---	---3-----3---0-
B- -----0-----	---0-0-0---0-0-	---3-----3---	---3-----3---0-
G- -----0-----	---3-3-3-0---0-3-	-3b3b3b3b--3b3b-	---0-----0-3-0-
D- -0-----0---0-	---0-0-0---0-0-	-0-0---0---0-0-	-0---0---0---0-0-
G- -0-----0---0-	-0-----	-0-----0---	-0---0---0---0-0-
D- -----x-----			
T			

I got a letter this morning ...	... the girl you ...
is dead	

	(*                          *)	(*                          *)
V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	^ v ^                          ^ ^
D- ---5---8---0-	---5---8---5-	-0-0-----3/5~---
B- ---5---5-0-	---5---5---5-5-	-0-0-----0-----
G- ---5---5---5-5-0-	---5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-0-----
D- /5-5---5---5-5-0-	/5-5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-----
G- /5-5---5---5-0-	/5-5---5---5-5-	-0-0-----
D- -----		---3-----
		T

I got a letter this morning ...

	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )
D-	-----7---10---7-	-----5---8---5-	-0-0-----3/5~	-----3/5~
B-	---7-----7-7-	---5-----5-5-	-0-0-----0-----	-----0-----
G-	---7---7---7-7-7-	---5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-0-----	-0-----2/3-0-----
D-	/7-7---7---7-7-7-	/5-5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-----	-0---0-2/3-----
G-	/7-7---7---7---7-	/5-5---5---5---5-	-0-0-----	-0---0-----
D-	-----	-----	-----	-----3-----

T

...the girl ...

the rest of the verses:

	v ^ v ^ ^ v V	v ^ v ^ ^ v V	v ^ v ^ ^ v V	v ^ v ^ ^ v
D-	-----	-----	-----	-----
B-	-----0---	-0-----0---	-0-----0---	-0-----0---
G-	---3b---3b---3b0---	-0-3b---3b---3b0---	-0-3b---3b---3b0---	-0-3b---3b---3b0---
D-	---0---0---0-0---	-0-0---0---0-0---	-0-0---0---0-0---	-0-0---0---0-0---
G-	-0---0---0---	-0---0---0---	-0---0---0---	-0---0---0---
D-	-----3---	-----3---	-----3---	-----

T                      T                      T

Well I grabbed up my suitcase...

...on the ...

	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )
D-	-----5---8---0-	-----5---8---5-	-0-0-----3/5~	-----3/5~
B-	---5-----5-0-	---5-----5-5-	-0-0-----0-----	-----0-----
G-	---5---5---5-5-0-	---5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-0-----	-0-----2/3-0-----
D-	/5-5---5---5-5-0-	/5-5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-----	-0---0-2/3-----
G-	/5-5---5---5---0-	/5-5---5---5---5-	-0-0-----	-0---0-----
D-	-----	-----	-----	-----3-----

T

Well I grabbed up my suitcase...

	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	V V ^ v ^ v ^ v	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )	( * ^ v ^ ^ ^ )
D-	-----7---10---7-	-----5---8---5-	-0-0-----3/5~	-----3/5~
B-	---7-----7-7-	---5-----5-5-	-0-0-----0-----	-----0-----
G-	---7---7---7-7-7-	---5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-0-----	-0-----2/3-0-----
D-	/7-7---7---7-7-7-	/5-5---5---5-5-5-	-0-0-2/3-----	-0---0-2/3-----
G-	/7-7---7---7---7-	/5-5---5---5---5-	-0-0-----	-0---0-----
D-	-----	-----	-----	-----3-----

T

...on the ...

Ending:

	v ^ v ^ ^ ^ v ^ ^
D-	-5-5-5-5---3-2-0-0---2---3-
B-	-0-0-0-0---0-0---0-----
G-	-0-0-0-0---0-----
D-	-0-0-0-0---0-----
G-	-0-0-0-0---0-----
D-	-----