



# MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

## As Recorded by the Police (From the A&M Recording REGATTA DE BLANC)

Transcribed by Adam Perlmutter

Music and Lyrics by Sting



The song's signature riff is played by Gtr. 1 and harmonized primarily in diatonic 3rds by Gtr. 2. (If you're a band's only guitarist, just play Riff A throughout the song, as that part is most prominent.) Note the major 2nd (C#-D#) formed between the two guitars on the Bsus2 chord. Both guitars play sus2 chords. Fret each voicing, lowest note to highest, with your 1st, 2nd or 3rd, and 4th fingers, holding each grip for as long as possible.

### Intro

Moderately Fast ♩ = 150

0:06 1:00 2:10

♩ Verses 1-3

Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Riffs A & A1 (8 times)

Chords: C#sus2, Asus2, Bsus2, F#sus2

Gtr. 1 (slight dist.) **Riff A** *mf* let ring throughout

Gtr. 2 (slight dist.) **Riff A1** *mf* let ring throughout

End Riff A 16

End Riff A1 16

0:32 1:25 2:35

### Pre-Chorus

Gtrs. 1 & 2 A5 D5 E5 A5 D5 E5

I'll send an S. O. S. is the world. I'll send an S. O. S. to the world.

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8 F#5 D5 F#5 D5

I hope that someone gets my, I hope that someone gets my,

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 0 | 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 0 | 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 0 | 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 0  
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 | 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 0 | 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 | 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 0

To Coda ♪ Chorus

2nd time, Gtr. 3: w/ Fill 1

Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (2 times)

12 F#5 D5 C#5 A C#m

Rhy. Fig. 1 End Rhy. Fig. 1

I hope that someone gets my message in a bottle, yeah.

4 4 4 4 4 4 4 0 | 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 | 4 5 6 7 4 | 5 5 6 7 5  
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 | 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 | 4 5 6 7 4 | 5 5 6 7 5

Low in the mix, an overdubbed guitar (Gtr. 3) adds tasty fills during the chorus. These lines are drawn from the C# minor pentatonic scale (C#-E-F#-G#-B) in 9th position. Key to nailing this part is playing the bends in-tune, so if necessary, get the pitch of the 11th-fret F# in your head before bending up a whole step, from the 9th-fret E. Also, be sure to listen carefully to Summers's trademark sweet vibrato, so that you can cop it exactly. You should also try improvising some of your own in this section.

A C#m A F#m7

Gtr. 3 (slight dist.) Gtrs. 1 & 2

Message in a bottle, yeah.

11 (11) 11-9-11 (11)-9 11

Fill 1  
Gtr. 3

11 11 (11)-9 11-11-9 (9)-11-11 11 11 (11) 11 (11)-9 11-9 (9)-11

2.  
Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (4 times)

Gtr. 3  
22

C#m A C#m A

Oh, message in a bottle, yeah.

26

C#m A C#m A

Message in a bottle yeah.

Bars 32-33 contain some lovely harp harmonics, a technique more closely associated with country and jazz guitarists like Chet Atkins and Lonny Breau. To play this part, barre you 1st finger across all six strings at the 2nd fret. Pick all of the regular notes with your right hand's thumb, in the vicinity of the 14th fret. For each 2(14)/diamond notehead you see, lightly touch your right hand's index finger directly above the given fret while picking the string with your right-hand thumb, producing a chime-like tone. Let all of the notes ring together, for a nice cascading effect.

Gtrs. 1 & 2

30

F#m F#m7

D.S. al Coda

let ring  
H.H. H.H. H.H. H.H. H.H.

⊕ Coda

Chorus

Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (7 times)

Gtr. 3  
34

C#m A C#m

message in a bottle yeah.

37

A C#m A C#m

Message in a bottle, yeah.

41

A C#m A C#m

45

A C#m A F#m7

Message in a bottle, yeah.

Gtrs. 1 & 2

3:16

Outro

Gtr. 1: w/ Riff A (2 times)  
Gtr. 3 tacet

Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Riffs A & A1 (9 times)

50

4 18

Summers really branches out in this outro solo. Bars 52-55 come from the C# natural minor scale (C#-D#-E-F#-G#-A-B), in 19th position, and the next four measures come from the 12th-position box of the C# minor pentatonic scale. Then there's a bit of arpeggio work: a C#m (C#-E-G#) triad in bar 61 and an A triad (A-C#-E) in 65. Learn Summers's lines diligently, paying careful attention to the syncopated rhythms and smart, economical phrases. Then, as with the chorus, improvise your own solo based on all of the materials presented here.

Gtrs. 1 & 2: w/ Riffs A & A1 (till end)

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

Gtr. 3

52

8va

56 *loco*

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

60

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

64

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

8va

68

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

8va

*loco*

*Begin Fade*

72

C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

8va

76

C#sus2 8va Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

80

C#sus2 loco Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2

84

C#sus2 8va Asus2 Bsus2 F#sus2 C#sus2 Asus2

Lyrics

Verse 1

Just a castaway, an island lost at sea, oh.  
Another lonely day, with no one here but me, oh.  
More loneliness than any man could bear,  
Rescue me before I fall into despair, oh.

Verse 2

A year has passed since I wrote my note.  
But I should have known this right from the start  
Only hope can keep me together.  
Love can mend your life but  
Love can break your heart.

Verse 3

Woke up this morning,  
I don't believe what I saw.  
Hundred billion bottles washed up on the shore.  
Seems I never noticed being alone.  
Hundred billion castaways, looking for a home.