Wanted Dead or Alive

Words and music by Jon Bon Jovi and Richie Sambora



The third single from Bon Jovi's 1986 album Slippery When Wet, "Wanted Dead or Alive" was purportedly the inspiration for MTV's wildly popular Unplugged series. Executives are said to have conceived of that show after seeing singer Jon Bon Jovi and guitarist Richie Sambora, armed with just their acoustic guitars, play the song at the 1989 MTV Video Music Awards.

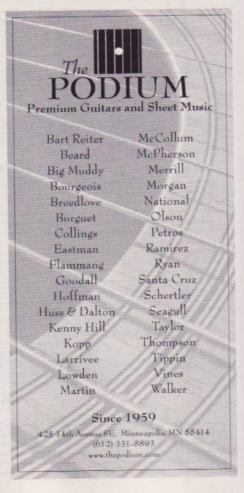
"Wanted" is built around Sambora's ringing 12-string riffs, which he wrote as a response to the paucity of acoustic guitar in rock 'n' roll at the time. Seen in the first four bars and reappearing in measure 21, the main riff is built from a series of broken sixths in D-Dorian mode (D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D) pitted against the open D string. Use the picking directions provided to maximize economy of movement; strive for evenness and let each note ring as long as possible. To execute the bluesy quarterstep bends in bar 5, gently nudge the fretted notes toward the floor so that their pitch is slightly raised. This move is a bit harder on a 12-string than on a six-string, but it (and the rest of the song) sounds great with either.

For those inclined to play along with the original recording, note that the form of this arrangement has been slightly truncated. After the second verse, there's a wicked eightbar electric guitar solo that has been omitted here. No new acoustic parts are introduced in the solo, though, and the solo's chord progression is identical to that of the verse. Also cut from this arrangement is the extended outro section, during which the band plays the last chorus a second time (with the lyric "I've got the night on my side" substituted for the "steel horse" line) then repeats the "dead or alive" phrase several times before cycling into the -ADAM PERLMUTTER final riff.

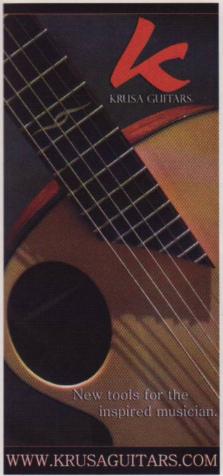


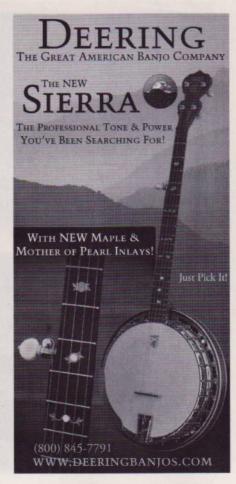






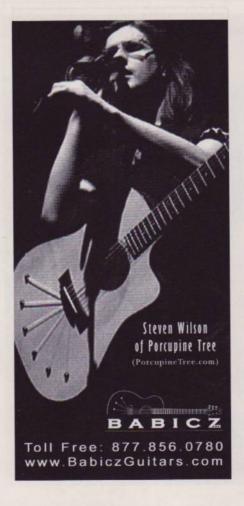
















Cadd9 1. It's all the same, only the names will change

F D Ev'ryday it seems we're wasting away

Cadd9 Another place where the faces are so cold

Cadd9 G I'd drive all night just to get back home

Chorus

I'm a cowboy, on a steel horse I ride

I'm wanted

D Dead or alive

C G Wanted

Dead or alive

2. Sometimes I sleep, sometimes it's not for days G Cadd9 The people I meet always go their sep'rate ways Cadd9

And times when you're alone, all you do is think

Sometimes you tell the day by the bottle that you drink G

Cadd9

Repeat Chorus

Cadd9 3. And I walk these streets, a loaded six-string on my back

G Cadd9 I play for keeps, 'cause I might not make it back

Cadd9 G I been ev'rywhere, still I'm standing tall

I've seen a million faces, and I've rocked them all

Repeat Chorus and End





