

What's Between The Lines



Red Hot Chili Peppers "Breaking the Girl"

By Dale Turner

In June 1992, "Breaking the Girl" was released as the fourth single from the Red Hot Chili Peppers' landmark album, *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* (Warner Bros.). The track, propelled by guitarist John Frusciante's 12-string textures, demonstrated a subtler side of RHCP—a Beatlesque pop hit, far removed from the band's funk-rap roots. Ironically, John Frusciante left RHCP in May

1992, before "Breaking the Girl" was released as a single and video. (Arik Marshall, Frusciante's temporary replacement, appears in the "Breaking the Girl" video.)

THE GEAR AND TUNING

For this song, Frusciante tunes all six courses (each string pair on a 12-string) down 1/2 step (low to high: E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat). This was most likely done to reduce the tension on

the strings, making the 12-string more comfortable to play, and to place the song in a range suited to Anthony Kiedis' vocals. In addition to the 12-string, a clean-toned electric (also tuned down 1/2 step) makes an appearance in the song's outro.

THE INTRO AND VERSES

Frusciante kicks off "Breaking the Girl" with a syncopated strumming figure spawned from an A major chord played in open position [Fig. 1A]. Playing in 6/8 meter (six beats per measure, eighth notes receiving the beat) Frusciante strictly adheres to a strumming rhythm derived from 16th notes (counted: *one-and, two-and, three-and, four-and, five-and, six-and*). While practicing this rhythm using the introductory A chord, make sure you keep your right hand relaxed while strumming in steady 16ths, striking the guitar's strings with the appropriate down/up strum that corresponds to the specified rhythm (indicated by the italicized syllables in the earlier counting prompt). Notice Frusciante also interjects a 5th string pull-off into the mix (on "four-and"). Once you've locked into Frusciante's groove, all you need to do is move the A triad shape (the fretted notes on strings 2-4) up through the 4th, 5th, 7th, and 9th frets, applying the same strumming rhythm. Then you'll

end on the A major chord shown in Fig. 1B.

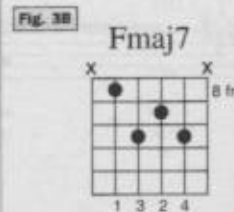
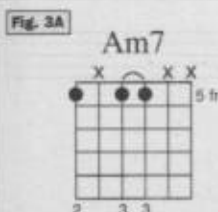
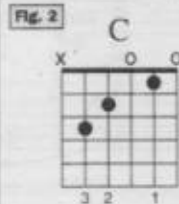
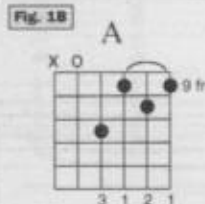
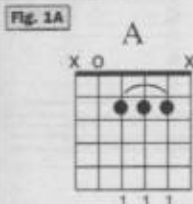
THE PRE-CHORUS

A healthy handful of traditional open-position "cowboy chords"—C, G, Am, and Fmaj7 [Fig. 2]—are strummed in an identical rhythm and help drive this song's pre-chorus. Okay, so maybe Fmaj7 doesn't qualify as a simple "cowboy chord," but it is a great "thumb voicing" found in open position—a Frusciante favorite, which the guitarist possibly nabbed from the opening of one of his hero's tunes: David Bowie's "Space Oddity."



THE CHORUS

The arrangement of chords used in this song's chorus—Am7-E7/B-C6-G/D-E7 [Fig. 3A]—is built on an ascending bass line that begins with the note A (5th fret, 6th string) and follows the A natural minor scale (A-B-C-D-E-F-G) all the way up to E (7th fret, 5th string). The tricky chord voicings owe much to Frusciante's fascination with a particular jazz icon. "The chords for the chorus came from a Duke Ellington piano book," Frusciante explains. "I learned like three chords of a song that probably has 50 chords in it, and I took those three chords somewhere else." Every eight bars, Frusciante punctuates his chorus passage with another Fmaj7 voicing, found at the 8th fret [Fig. 3B]. ♪





BREAKING THE GIRL

As Recorded by the Red Hot Chili Peppers
(From the Warner Bros. Recording BLOOD SUGAR SEX MAGIK)

Our Red Hot Chili Peppers Signature Licks book/CD pack (00695173, \$19.95) provides detailed breakdowns of a dozen of their funky best. Order by calling 1-800-837-2852, or visiting www.musicdatapatch.com.

Words and Music by Anthony Kiedis, Flea, John Frusciante and Chad Smith

Transcribed by Adam Perlmutter

Tune down 1/2 step:
(low to high) E \flat -A \flat -D \flat -G \flat -B \flat -E \flat

Intro

Moderately $\text{♩} = 60$ ()

Gr. 1 (12-str. acous.)

A B/A Am7

Rhy. Fig. 1

mf

D/A E/A A End Rhy. Fig. 1

Verse

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 1 (4 times)

A B/A Am7

1. I _____ am a man, _____
2. Raised _____ by my dad, _____

D/A E/A A

cut girl _____ from _____ the know, _____
girl _____ of _____ the day.

B/A Am7

Rare _____ ly do friends _____
He _____ was my man, _____

D/A E/A A

come _____ and _____ then go, _____
that _____ was _____ the way.

© 1991 MOEBETBLAME MUSIC
All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission
Reprinted by Permission of Hal Leonard Corporation

Breaking the Girl

B/A Am7

She was a girl, girl,
She was the girl,
soft but es - tranged.
left a lone.

D/A E/A A

We were the two, our
Feel ing the need to

B/A Am7

D/A E/A A

lives re - ar - ranged.
make me her home.

Gr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fill 1

Pre-Chorus

C G

Feel - ing don't so good that
I don't know what, when, or

Gr. 1

Am

day.
why.

Rhy. Fill 1

Gr. 1

Breaking the Girl

C G

A The feel - ing light of love had that
The twi - light of love had that ar

Fmaj7

day,
rived.

*T = Thumb on 6th str.

Chorus

Am7 E7B C6 G/D

Twist - ing and turn - ing, your feel - ings are burn - ing, you're

Rhy. Fig. 2

E7

break - ing the girl.

Am7 E7B C6 G/D

She meant you no

Chord diagrams for guitar accompaniment: Am7, E7B, C6, G/D.

Fmaj7

harm.

End Rhy. Fig. 2

Chord diagrams for guitar accompaniment: Fmaj7.

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 2 (1st 7 meas.)

Am7 E7B C6 G/D

Think you're so clever, but now you must sever. You're

break - ing the girl.

Am7 E7B C6 G/D

He loves no one

Chord diagrams for guitar accompaniment: Am7, E7B, C6, G/D.

To Coda

1. Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fill 2 F7 E7

2. Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fill 2 F7 E7

Fmaj7

else.

Chord diagrams for guitar accompaniment: Fmaj7, F7, E7.

Rhy. Fill 2

Gtr. 1

Chord diagrams for guitar accompaniment: F7, E7.

Breaking the Girl

Interlude

Am

*Dm/C

8th time, D.S. al Coda

Play 8 times

⊖ Coda

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fill 2

Fmaj7

E7

Outro

Gtr. 1: w/ Rhy. Fig. 2 (3 times)

Am7

E7B

C6

G/D

Gtr. 2 (elec.)

mf w/ clean tone

E7

Am7

E7B

C6

G/D

Fmaj7

Play 3 times and fade

W

Albert
“(The

By Dave Ru

n a blu
Albert
Vaugh
recorded ja
Occurring
epochal st
David Bow
ended up
that the o
combined
for poster
Stormy M
Walker slo
both string
to show the
Along wit
Lonnie Mac
biggest infl
was sensit
copping his
adept at it
choice other
olently on h

ALBERT KING

According to
checked it
recorded ev
employed a
idiosyncratic
high it ran C
The advant
many, inclu